THE TOWN'S BLUEPRINT

A VISION & CODE FOR HISTORIC CHARLOTTE AMALIE

GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

SUMMARY REPORT

DECEMBER 12, 2011

THE TOWN'S BLUEPRINT

was created by:

DOVER, KOHL & PARTNERS
town planning

HALL PLANNING & ENGINEERING
transportation planning

URBAN ADVISORS
economic & implementation advisors

CHAEL, COOPER & ASSOCIATES
architecture

SPRINGLINE ARCHITECTS
landscape architecture

EDUARDO CASTILLO & AARON COOK
urban design

THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR)

Department of Public Works (DPW)

...together with participants from the Charlotte Amalie community.

The Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands, with the generous support of the Richard H. Driehaus Charitable Lead Trust and in coordination with the Department of Planning and Natural Resources and the Department of Public Works, is sponsoring this planning and Form-Based Code writing effort for Charlotte Amalie and the USVI. CFVI contracted a team led by Dover, Kohl & Partners to work with the community to establish the vision and draft the Form-Based Code. For more information, please contact:

Dover, Kohl & Partners
town planning
1571 Sunset Drive
Coral Gables, FL 33143
305.666.0446

CONTENTS

“Thank you for hosting and holding these very important meetings concerning the future planning of Charlotte Amalie. Let your voice be heard… Good work!”

– Hands-on Design Session participant

A VISION & CODE FOR CHARLOTTE AMALIE 1

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The Town's Blueprint is a special component of the U.S. Virgin Islands' (USVI) Zoning and Subdivision Code Update initiative: a pilot project to demonstrate and test the application of a "Form-Based Code" in historic Charlotte Amalie.

A form-based code is a type of zoning intended to encourage, preserve, and restore high-quality public spaces, with a primary emphasis on the physical form of the built environment. Form-based codes prescribe key physical details that define a community's character. The first step to creating a form-based code is to confirm the community's vision for a specific area. This vision is then translated into new form-based regulations. The vision and code together, when adopted, are used to guide future development in the applicable area.

The goal for *The Town's Blueprint* planning effort is to create a new Form-Based Code (FBC) District that could be carefully applied in selected areas throughout the Territory. The historic core of Charlotte Amalie was selected as the first "pilot" area to test this approach; if desired by the community, similar visioning processes and form-based code districts could be applied in other towns and settlements in the USVI in the future.

BACKGROUND

The U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR), under the leadership of Governor John deJongh and DPNR Commissioner Robert Mathes, initiated a project to update the Territory's zoning and subdivision regulations in June 2010. The goal of the project is to provide the Territory with a modern, easy-to-navigate, and well-written set of regulations that are responsive to property owners, businesses, and residents and that reflect the broader public's desires regarding growth and development in the Territory in the 21st century.

The existing regulations have not undergone a comprehensive revision since their original adoption in 1972. The old laws are simply no match for the type and pace of development that has and continues to take place on the islands. The existing rules are not responsive to current economic, housing, employment, and environmental conditions. Many of the rules are vague and open to multiple interpretations, which have caused confusion and sometimes mistrust among residents, community groups, property owners, developers, government agency representatives, and elected and appointed officials.

The Territory has entered into a contract with Rutgers University, which has subcontracted with Duncan Associates to draft the revised code. Prior to the start of the code update, the Rutgers /Duncan team conducted an assessment of the existing zoning and subdivision codes, completed in July 2009. The findings of that report have provided an initial to-do list of (1) needed revisions to the text of the existing codes and (2) a comprehensive reorganization of the existing code document[1].

As part of this zoning update, a new chapter will be created to enable the option of using Form-Based Code (FBC) Districts as an alternative to the existing zoning provisions. A form-based code is a land development regulatory tool that places primary emphasis on the physical form of the built environment with the end goal of producing a specific community character. Simple and clear graphic prescriptions for building height, how a building is placed on a site, and building elements (such as location of windows, doors, etc.) are used to control development. Land use is not ignored in form-based coding, but regulated using broad parameters that can better respond to market economics, while also restricting the locations of certain undesirable combinations of uses.

Form-based codes were first implemented in the United States in the early 1990s; since then, this type of zoning has become a popular method for regulating land development and FBCs are often included as a part of modern zoning codes. Having a floating FBC zone as one tool in the zoning code will allow towns and settlements in the VI to have the opportunity to apply to use this type of zoning in the future, if desired.

A form-based code can be advantageous, as it is set up to deliver an identified citizen planner vision. In historic settings, a form-based code could ensure that new development maintains the characteristics that make these places special, with any changes or new development making a positive contribution.

[1] *U.S. Virgin Islands Zoning and Subdivision Code Update Public Involvement Plan*, Prepared by the Center for Planning Practice, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, and Duncan Associates, Chicago, Illinois, for the Department of Planning and Natural Resources, U.S. Virgin Islands.

Form-based codes have the potential to ensure that new development maintains the character of the place.

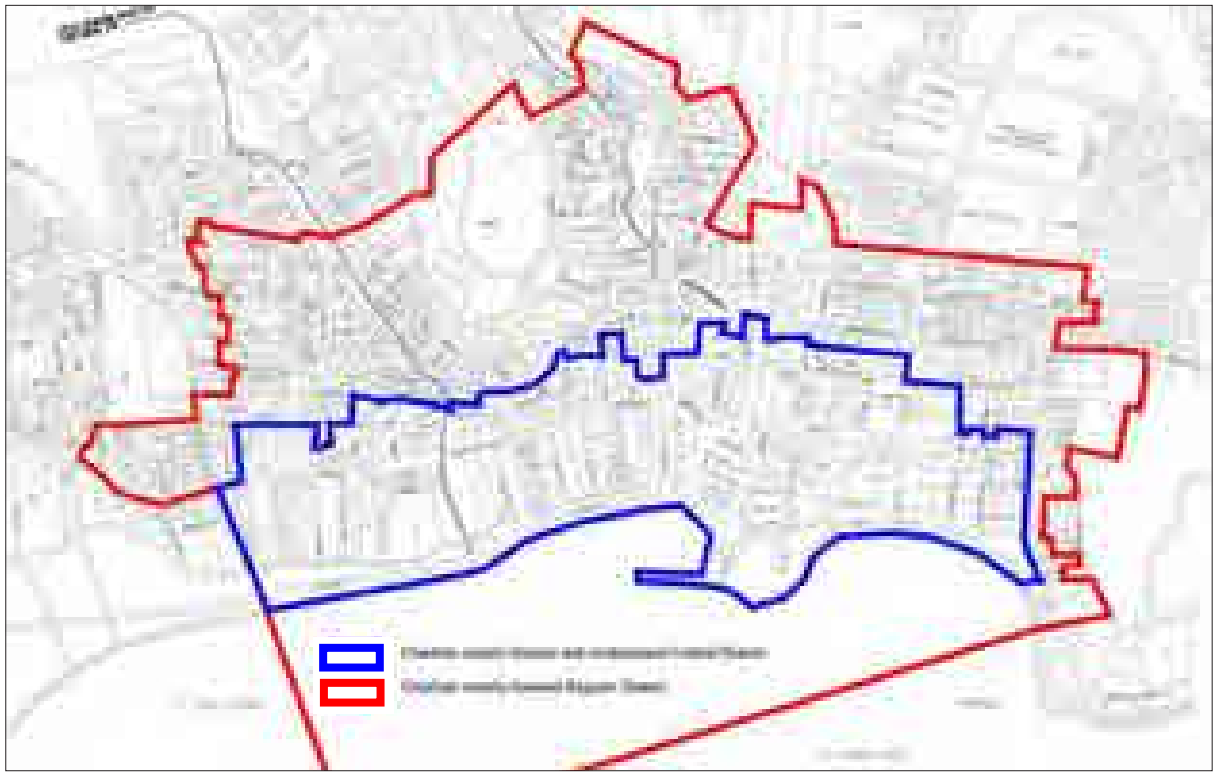
Buildings in Charlotte Amalie have distinctive architectural features, massing, and proportion; form-based regulations will use these features as precedents to establish the rules for new development.

In addition, the certainty of outcome that this type of code provides yields predictability and assurance for property owners of what could happen with surrounding buildings, encouraging upkeep and reinvestment. Although the FBC may have additional regulations to address (when compared to conventional zoning), the outcome has already been pre-scrutinized by the community during the planning and visioning process, and thus property owners can be confident that new proposals that follow these provisions will be met with approval. In many instances, the process for approvals under the FBC is streamlined compared to what is required under conventional zoning, further encouraging property owners to use the code.

WHY A VISION & CODE FOR CHARLOTTE AMALIE?

Under the direction of Governor John P. deJongh Jr., the Department of Public Works (DPW) embarked on the development of a revitalization plan for downtown Charlotte Amalie. A task force subsequently convened to identify the key components which would ultimately comprise this plan. While this effort was underway, the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) was spearheading a related project to review and assess the Territory's zoning code. As such, this became the most opportune time for both agencies to work collaboratively in formulating a vision for the Historic District that would incorporate its unique cultural and historical characteristics. This unified approach would ultimately work in unison with the vision identified by the Charlotte Amalie community.

The Richard H. Driehaus Charitable Lead Trust issued a grant to the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI) to fund a pilot Form Base Code (FBC) project to demonstrate how a public visioning process, and resulting code, could be used to benefit historic preservation efforts and lead to quality new development in the Virgin Islands. The CFVI and DPNR executed a Memorandum of Understanding in September 2010 to outline the manner in which both organizations will work together to effectuate the intent of the grant for the benefit the Virgin Islands community.



Charlotte Amalie National Register District (Source: VI SHPO)

A team led by Dover, Kohl & Partners (town planners) was contracted to collaborate with the Rutgers/Duncan team to draft the form-based chapter of the code update. This chapter will include general regulations that would apply anytime the FBC option is used, as well as a framework of elements that would need to be calibrated to each location within the USVI Territory where the code is desired. The Government of the Virgin Islands (GVI), via DPW and DPNR, is working in conjunction with the Dover-Kohl team on a "pilot" demonstration project, which will result in a new zoning district and regulating plan that can be applied to specific streets and parcels in a particular town.

The historic portion of Charlotte Amalie was selected as the pilot study area due to the investment in transportation and infrastructure improvements already

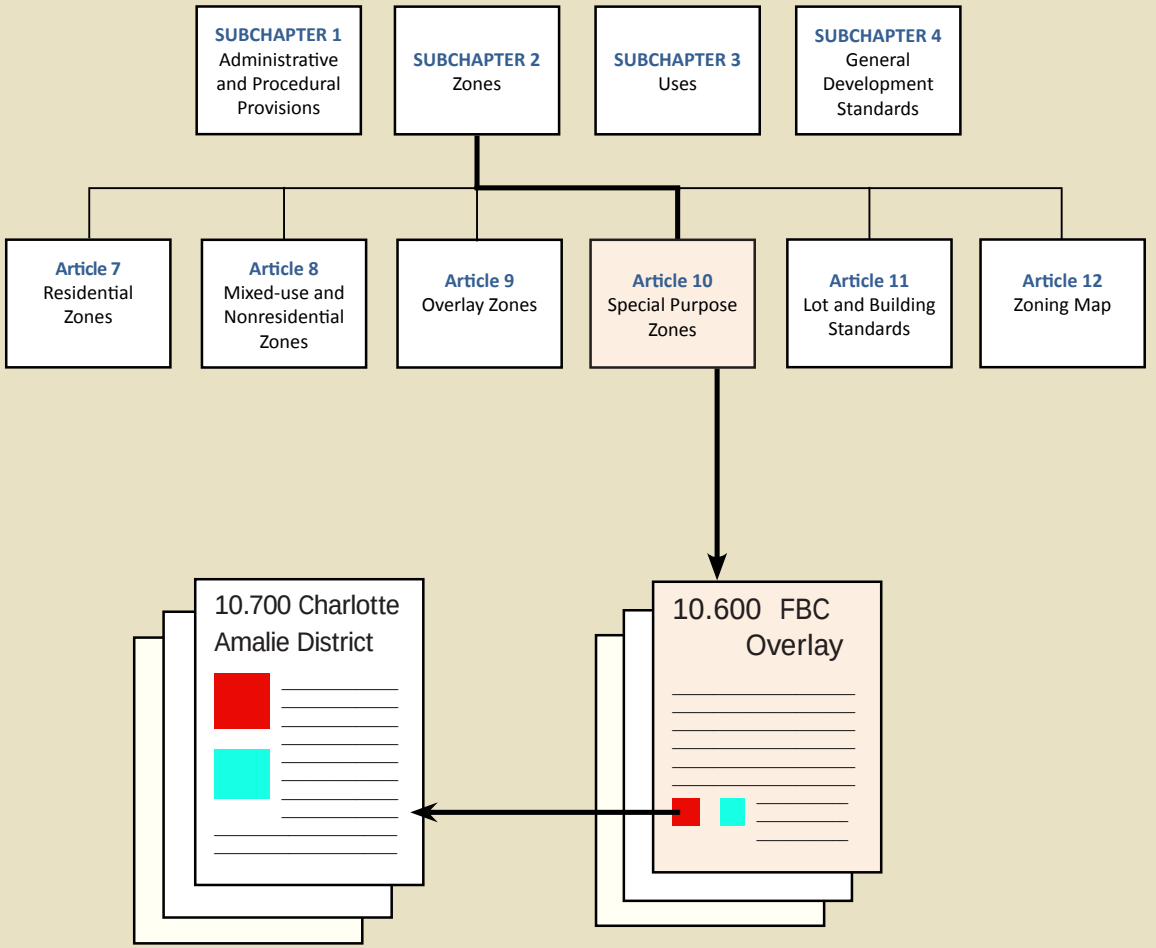
underway as a part of the Charlotte Amalie Revitalization Plan, led by DPW. These projects include the enhancements to Market Square and Main Street, Waterfront Safety and Beautification Project, Renovation of Fort Christian, Parking Improvements, and the development of additional Marine Transportation. The FBC would build upon these efforts, planning for future land uses to complement and enhance these investments. The tremendous amount of historic building fabric present in Charlotte Amalie was also considered; the use of a form-based code can be a medium in which to further protect and build upon this asset.

The boundaries of the study area were carefully considered. Initially, the team proposed to just include the streets and parcels along the waterfront, as a small demonstration area for FBCs. Based on citizen input at preliminary community meetings in August 2010, this area was expanded to include the neighborhoods beyond, so that the historic core could be studied as a whole. At the time of the December 2010 public planning process (called a "charrette"), the study area was generally the area within the National Register of Historic Places District, with a few key additions (made to include entire neighborhoods). The exact boundary of the Charlotte Amalie Form-Based Code District may continue to change as additional Town's Blueprint community meetings are conducted.

The VI Zoning and Subdivision Code Update is anticipated to be complete by February 2012. After approval by the Legislature, it will be possible for individual FBC Districts (such as the one being created for the pilot area of Charlotte Amalie) to be submitted for approval.

For more information on the zoning update visit www.vizoning.com.

HOW DOES THE FBC DISTRICT FIT INTO THE UPDATED ZONING AND SUBDIVISION CODE?



The updated Virgin Islands zoning code will be broken into 4 Subchapters: Administrative and Procedural Provisions, Zones, Uses, and General Development Standards. Under Subchapter 2 (Zones) there will be a section for Special Purpose Zones (Article 10). Section 10.600 will establish provisions required to create a Form-Based Code district. This option will be available for any portion of the Territory, should the property owner and community choose to employ it. Immediately following section 10.600 will be the specific regulations for form-based districts that have been created; Charlotte Amalie will be the first such district if the provisions created as a result of this planning process are adopted.

Charlotte Amalie Form-Based Code District Study Area: Throughout the planning process the design team worked closely with DNPR, the SHPO, community groups, citizens, and key stakeholders to refine the study area and boundary for the Form-Based Code District. The red boundary line represents an initial study area proposed; during the August 2010 Site Visit the team received feedback on the boundary and the study area was modified to include additional areas of importance. The yellow boundary areas were added to create a comprehensive study area that would allow for the Vision and Code to fully address all of the opportunities and challenges in Charlotte Amalie.

URBAN FORM OBSERVATIONS

The focus of *The Town's Blueprint* planning initiative is the creation of a vision and code for historic Charlotte Amalie, serving as a pilot project that could be replicated in other districts. The Dover-Kohl team began this process by becoming familiar with the existing buildings, streets, transportation networks, and economic conditions that influence the urban form found in Charlotte Amalie today. The team conducted a series of interviews with community stakeholders as well as government officials and staff, and carried out an examination of existing conditions. In addition, community members shared books, historic maps, and photos, so that the team could better understand the place. This section contains a brief summary of the urban and economic conditions that shape Charlotte Amalie today, as learned through interviews and observations.

CHARLOTTE AMALIE'S URBAN STRUCTURE

With its excellent natural harbor, Charlotte Amalie gained prosperity in the 18th and 19th centuries as a major trade center for the eastern Caribbean. The town was home to a diverse population. There were streets lined with large homes to accommodate wealthy merchants, and others with smaller homes to accommodate the working class. The town reached a maximum population of over 11,000 inhabitants in 1880; following this, the birth of the steamship and the telegraph brought an end to Charlotte Amalie's relevance as a trading hub. The local economy went into a depression until after World War II, when tourism brought renewed prosperity to the island.

Much of the buildings that are seen in Charlotte Amalie today were built in the early 19th century, following a series of fires that destroyed large portions of Town. The long period of slow economic growth caused many of Charlotte Amalie's streets and buildings to remain significantly unchanged; as a result, there are a number of historic architectural treasures still present today, as well as a number of vacant buildings and lots in disrepair.

Historic quarters of Charlotte Amalie

HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD QUARTERS

Historic Charlotte Amalie is comprised of three urban neighborhood quarters: Kongens (King's) Quarter, Dronningens (Queen's) Quarter, and Kronprindsens (Crown Prince's) Quarter. The uphill portions of these quarters are primarily residential areas, but do also contain some storefronts with neighborhood-serving commercial uses. The quarter edges are defined by drainage "guts" that carry water from the hilltop to the harbor. Although there is potential to improve portions of the guts and use the space as public greenways with trails or sidewalks, today the guts are generally overgrown and unused except as stormwater conveyance channels. Charlotte Amalie contains the largest collection of step streets (45) in the world. The step streets were included in the original layout of the town to connect streets where normal streets were not feasible due to the steep slopes. This facilitated pedestrian movements on the hillside. Today, many of the step streets sit in disrepair, neglected and overgrown with bush. This discourages pedestrian traffic and seriously restricts access to interior lots.

Building heights are generally 1 to 2 stories. Typical architectural detailing that can be found includes sloping, hipped roofs; symmetrical placement of

Charlotte Amalie once took pride in its step streets. The steps were carefully crafted using time-tested construction techniques and their importance was enhanced by the surrounding buildings and views. Work has begun to restore the streets back to prominence.

doors and windows on facades; elaborate cornices of wood, brick, or stone; wooden louvers over window coverings (sometimes in place of windows); heavy outer shutters to protect openings during hurricanes; plaster finish over masonry on building walls; and cast iron gates and galleries (often, with the galleries suspended over the sidewalk at the second story level). Buildings incorporate passive sustainable design feature such as cross-ventilation and second story porches, to allow residents to take advantage of island breezes.

Charlotte Amalie's urban quarters are diverse, yet the street design varies little, with narrow building-to-building width and shallow building setbacks. There is generally a gridded network, interrupted by step streets where grade presents an issue. Further north and up the hill, grades are steep and streets are narrow, yielding minimal motor vehicle mobility and no pedestrian/bicycle mobility. Sidewalks, where present, are often covered by parked cars and obstructed by utility poles. Many streets contain no sidewalks at all, leaving only the drainage guts for pedestrian refuge when wide vehicles pass. The prevalence of wide "safari bus" taxis further complicates the situation on narrow streets.

Further obscuring pedestrian mobility is the presence of utility poles. Overhead utility wires not only add undesirable visual clutter, but are also troublesome during hurricane season.

There is a general shortage of parking in the quarters. Lots are typically small, with buildings constructed before the advent of the automobile, and as a result there is not additional space on each lot suitable for parking. On-street parking is problematic, due to the generally narrow width of neighborhood streets. On weekdays, parking needs for downtown businesses further the demand for neighborhood parking areas. As a result, many vacant parcels have been converted to parking lots. These parking lots degrade the pedestrian environment and deteriorate the urban character of the street.

Within each of the quarters there are active neighborhood groups organized to facilitate preservation, improvements, and awareness of the cultural and historical significance of the historic quarters. These groups include We from UpStreet (in the King's Quarter); Garden Street (in the Queen's Quarter); and We Savaneros (for the Savan[1] neighborhood portion of the Crown Prince's Quarter). Also, the Savan neighborhood has been designated as an Enterprise Zone; the VI Economic Development Authority has worked with residents to formulate a Strategic Plan for improvements. To date this has included a facade painting program and the boarding up of vacant homes. There are other initiatives included in the Strategic Plan, such as a new community garden near the intersection of General Gade and Silke Gade, that have been incorporated into *The Town's Blueprint* drawings.

During the team's initial visits to St. Thomas, residents and property owners discussed a number of ideas for improvements and voiced concerns about current conditions. Combined with the team's observations of the physical form of Charlotte Amalie, community input on a variety of pertinent issues helped to frame the challenge for the Dover-Kohl team:

Historic Preservation

The preservation of the historic fabric was cited as a top priority throughout *The Town's Blueprint* planning process. There are several challenges to be faced; on one hand, there are numerous vacant and dilapidated structures found throughout the quarters, in danger of being lost. Solid guidelines are needed to ensure that these can be restored to their former prominence, and once again contribute to a lively streetscape. At the same time, there are reports of property owners that feel the current guidelines are too burdensome, and

[1] The Savan neighborhood, as it is commonly referred to today, was originally known as "Savanne". In the early 1700s, the streets were laid out and land was set aside for the growing free-colored population of Town. The new Strategic Plan for this area hopes to revive the historic spelling of the neighborhood name.

the high costs for materials and skilled workers to properly restore buildings according to preservation guidelines prevent them from being restored, and thus the homes fall into disrepair. This dilemma will need to be addressed.

Parking
Community members stressed the need to add parking and to re-design existing parking areas in a pedestrian-friendly manner, more appropriate for the neighborhood.

Pedestrian Amenities
Although limited spatially by the narrow building-to-building widths, there is great desire to find a solution to improve pedestrian amenities.

Overhead Utilities
Investing in the undergrounding of utilities would have a positive visual impact, and could lead to savings over time due to less maintenance required after storms.

Safety
There is a perception that Charlotte Amalie is unsafe after nightfall. This is exacerbated by the fact that almost all of the businesses close by 6 pm, further reducing the number of people on the street and resulting in long areas of closed shopfronts.

Complex Land Ownership
Many properties in Charlotte Amalie have been handed down over generations. It is common for one small plot to have as many as 30 different family members with claims to ownership. Often, these lots and buildings sit vacant, as the large group cannot come to consensus on how to use the property: who should live there, and if it should be kept or sold. This was reported by many as the reason for the large number of vacant lots, and a reason why past improvement efforts have not been able to achieve successful results.

The current configuration of the waterfront (a bare concrete apron and a vehicular street with limited pedestrian facilities) does little to enhance the waterfront experience or the view of Charlotte Amalie from the water.

THE WATERFRONT

Much like the historic quarters, the downtown waterfront portion of Charlotte Amalie was developed in a traditional, compact pattern, with slow, narrow streets. Buildings here are generally commercial in use. Sidewalks are present, yet not ample. There is a general shortage of parking in the waterfront, as is also found in the residential neighborhoods. This parking problem is compounded by the fact that the existing businesses and tourist destinations have a much increased parking demand. The lack of parking creates a major problem for the core's mobility. The parking that is found here is generally provided in surface parking located along the waterfront, notably in lots that line the northern edge of Veterans Drive and in a large municipal parking lot located adjacent to Fort Christian.

The retail center of the waterfront area is Main Street. Main Street has subtle cranks as it parallels the waterfront; with each curve one can find a slightly varying character. As the character changes, so does the street name through each quarter (from Kronprindsens Gade, to Dronningens Gade, to Norre Gade). The waterfront area south of Main Street historically consisted of warehouses; long wooden docks used to extend from the narrow, linear buildings into the harbor. In the 1950s, these docks were removed and replaced with a three-lane waterfront highway (Veterans Drive) and a new bulkhead. The north side of Main Street traditionally consisted of merchants' homes, with a store located on the ground floors and residences or offices above. Today, Main Street continues to function as a center of commerce, but the majority of goods sold here are tar-

View of cruise ships in the Charlotte Amalie harbor. The cruise industry is vital to the long-term economic vitality of Charlotte Amalie. However, the needs of tourists must be balanced with those of the Charlotte Amalie community.

geted to tourists. On days with high numbers of cruise passengers, Main Street becomes congested with slow-moving taxis, attempting to draw passengers for rides back to the ship. This not only congests the street for vehicular traffic, but also makes it uncomfortable for pedestrians to walk the street. The historic warehouse structures have been converted to shopping malls, an efficient re-use of the unique building forms. Few residences remain in the waterfront area. Most of the shops close once cruise ship passengers have left for the day, generally between 4 to 6 pm.

Immediately adjacent to the water, the current configuration of Veterans Drive separates the town from its waterfront. The high speed of vehicles discourages pedestrians from walking along it or crossing the street. The lack of street trees, presence of utility poles and boxes, and lack of separation between the sidewalk and moving vehicles makes the pedestrian experience uncomfortable.

There are a number of notable historic structures located in the waterfront; the two most prominent are perhaps Fort Christian and the Legislature Building. Originally constructed in the 1600s as a military fortress, Fort Christian has served many purposes, including police station, government house, and a museum. The fort has been undergoing restoration in recent years. Adjacent to the fort is the historic Legislature Building, site of the transfer of the islands to the United States in 1917. Although this historic structure will be preserved, there have been discussions in recent years of changing its use, and moving the legislative functions to a building that could better accommodate the modern demands for office space.

Located adjacent to Fort Christian is Vendors Plaza, an outdoor marketplace catering to tourists. The plaza is crowded with removable tents and stalls and the haphazard use of the space does not capture the potential for this prominent portion of the waterfront. The goods sold are often low-quality souvenirs and are not reflective of local craftsmanship. In the evenings, the vendors pack up their goods and the plaza space can be used for other purposes.

The newly-established Downtown Revitalization, Inc. (DRI) hopes to spearhead revitalization efforts downtown. The group is comprised of property owners, business owners, and Charlotte Amalie residents. The organization has identified five steps to revitalizing the downtown area: parking and traffic control; harbor transportation; mixed-use development; public safety; and beautification and historic preservation. Many group members were actively involved during the charrette, sharing their knowledge of the challenges and opportunities found in downtown Charlotte Amalie.

Ideas and concerns voiced by residents and property owners about the waterfront included:

Parking
Waterfront parking lots limit pedestrian mobility. Although the lots do provide needed parking, they also can be viewed as prime opportunities sites for pedestrian-friendly infill or public open space should a more efficient parking solution be established elsewhere.

Veterans Drive
Improvements for Veterans Drive have been discussed for a number of years; there is currently a proposal being evaluated by the Department of Public Works. The potential to redesign Veterans Drive holds promise to rectify some of the urban design problems present today, to tame the speed of traffic and to introduce pedestrian-friendly design elements.

Back Street
At one time, Back Street (located just north of Main Street) was a center for nightlife and entertainment for residents, inhabited with popular bars and restaurants. Today, there are a few destinations that remain, but residents cite safety concerns as reasons that this practice has declined. Many community members expressed a desire for a resurgence of Back Street as an entertainment destination.

Taxi Staging
A lack of enforced taxi staging areas was cited as a concern. Designated taxi staging areas could address concerns about Main Street congestion.

Vendors Plaza

Re-imagining Vendors Plaza was a popular topic of conversation throughout the planning process. Residents discussed a desire to improve upon the aesthetics of the plaza. There were also some who wished to explore the potential to relocate the vendors to another location, in order to free the existing plaza space for other purposes.

Overhead Utilities

As in the residential neighborhoods, overhead utilities are an issue in the waterfront. Overhead utility wires not only cause visual clutter, but also present issues in the pedestrian realm where utility poles are located in sidewalks.

Safety

St. Thomas residents cited a lack of safety as one of the primary reasons they did not frequent the waterfront area at night. This was also reported as one of the primary reasons that residential units were not desirable in this area.

Charlotte Amalie has a rich architectural traditional based on its Danish roots. Many of the town's best historic structures are still standing and serve as an excellent resource for the design of new buildings and the restoration of older ones.

Adaptive reuse of the historic warehouses has created a building type unique to Charlotte Amalie. The interior passageways and courtyard spaces provide cozy addresses for shops and restaurants. On the north and south the buildings have frontage on Main Street and Veterans Drive, respectively.

Veterans Drive as it passes by Fort Christian (left) and the Legislature Building (right). The narrowing of the roadway to two lanes between these two historic buildings is one cause of traffic congestion in the waterfront.

Civic buildings announce their presence in a variety of ways. The prominent staircase and front porch of the Government House help to demonstrate its importance within the community.

ECONOMIC OBSERVATIONS

Urban Advisors (the Dover-Kohl team's economist) conducted a series of interviews with local business owners and residents, as well as economic researchers and government officials, to better understand the economic forces shaping Charlotte Amalie today. These conversations helped to shape the overall vision for the future of Charlotte Amalie while ensuring that the vision is sensitive to market realities. Community input and research relating to the economic climate of Charlotte Amalie have been summarized as a set of ambitions for the future:

Increase utility of downtown for local and tourism markets:

Downtown retail has been oriented toward cruise ship tourism and as a result commercial space rents are highest for uses that serve only tourism. Rents are so high for these uses that local-serving businesses are unable to compete for space. At the same time, there are empty residential units and retail spaces along the alleys and adjoining the neighborhoods that languish. The historic core of Charlotte Amalie has lost its balance between middle class residential use and its attendant retail and services on the one hand, and exclusively tourist-oriented business catering to a very specific niche of duty free merchandise on the other. Residents and business owners both felt that downtown Charlotte Amalie needed a greater diversity of businesses in order to recapture local markets and better serve tourism beyond the business that caters to duty free sales of jewelry, tobacco, and alcohol products.

Attract new business and residents:

A common theme heard in the interviews and conversations was the need to attract new businesses and residents. In doing so, the town will be able to support more retail and service offerings.

Improve conditions and opportunities for businesses and all islanders:

A general concern among many individuals interviewed is that downtown has become the province only of cruise ship tourism and no longer addresses the needs of the local neighborhoods or the needs of the many islanders who used to come to downtown for everyday needs, dining, entertainment, and services. At the same time, residents expressed the desire that the vision should be especially careful to preserve the ability for long-time neighborhood residents to participate in change. The Charlotte Amalie envisioned for tomorrow should benefit the residents who are here today, and not lead to gentrification. Residents also stressed that the vision and implementation strategy needs to address issues in a way that responds to the needs of all islanders.

To achieve these economic aspirations of a more diverse downtown and healthy neighborhoods, there is a need to first address several underlying conditions: transportation, parking, safety, authenticity and preservation.

Many St. Thomas residents reported they do not visit downtown during its highest hours of demand. The inability to travel along Main Street is cited as a problem as is the congestion on Veterans Drive. The result has been the location and use of retail facilities outside the downtown area that cater to the needs of local islanders. This further limits the economic ability to support a diversity of business in the downtown.

Daytime activity in Charlotte Amalie is focused on the shops of Main Street and the establishments within its historic buildings. At night, the hustle and bustle gives way to boarded up storefronts and an uninviting lack of activity.

A lack of parking and concerns for safety were cited as problems throughout Town. Residents and businesses alike noted parking and safety as a hindrance to attracting new businesses and residents.

There is a general perception that portions of Charlotte Amalie and St. Thomas have lost authenticity, overtaken by strip-like commercial development of the mid-to-late 20th century that is common throughout the mainland. This reduces the value for tourism and alienates islanders. Especially relevant in the historic core of Town, the need for the preservation of historic features is critical to maintaining the area as a tourism destination.

DESIGNING IN PUBLIC 2

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Direct community input shaped the ideas and recommendations found in *The Town's Blueprint* for historic Charlotte Amalie. On December 3 - 9, 2010, the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) and the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI) invited the St. Thomas community to participate in a series of public events, called a "charrette".

More than 200 residents, property/business owners, and government staff and officials attended the charrette presentations and design sessions, and visited the On-Site Design Studio at the Grand Hotel where each day's progress was displayed. Participants shared their goals and ideas through open microphone sessions, exit questionnaires, interactive keypad polling, one-on-one meetings and conversations with members of the planning team, and by drawing and writing ideas on base maps.

The transparent planning process used for *The Town's Blueprint* provides a solid foundation for the vision and Form-Based Code. Ultimately, for the concepts and ideas to be implemented, it will require teamwork and collaboration from the plan's many authors in St. Thomas and the USVI.

CHARRETTE PREPARATIONS

The planning process for *The Town's Blueprint* began months before the first charrette meeting. On August 20 – 25, members of the Dover-Kohl team accompanied the Rutgers/Duncan team for a series of meetings on each island (St. Thomas, St. John, and St. Croix) to kick-off the VI Code Revision project. The purpose of these meetings was to inform community members and USVI staff and officials about the goals and objectives of the initiative. The Rutgers/Duncan team gave presentations on what was planned to be included as part of the code revision, and the Dover-Kohl team provided an introductory presentation on Form-Based Codes (explaining how this zoning tool works and how it can best be utilized in the Virgin Islands). On each island, the group met with a Community Advisory Group (comprised of community members tasked with providing input to the Rutgers/Duncan team at various intervals during the code revision process); a Technical Review Group (consisting of representatives of territorial government agencies as well as divisions of DPNR, tasked with reviewing and providing technical input to code drafts); and also conducted a public meeting for interested citizens.

WHAT IS A CHARRETTE?

Charrette is a French word that translates as ''little cart.'' At the leading architecture school of the 19th century, the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, students would be assigned a tough design problem to work out under pressure of time. They would continue sketching as fast as they could, even as little carts, charrettes, carried their drawing boards away to be judged and graded. Today, ''charrette'' has come to describe a rapid, intensive and creative work session in which a design team focuses in a particular design problem and arrives at a collaborative solution. Charrettes are product-oriented. The public charrette is fast becoming a preferred way to face the planning challenges confronting American communities.

On St. Thomas, the Dover-Kohl team conducted additional meetings to better understand the dynamics of development and preservation in Charlotte Amalie, and to gather input on the size and extent of the area to be included in the pilot project. The team met with representatives of the St. Thomas State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), members of the St. Thomas Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), and the St. Thomas Historical Trust (STHT), as well as coordination meetings with CFVI, DPNR, and the Department of Public Works (DPW). The Dover-Kohl team also began to walk and photograph key streets in each quarter, taking measurements or "synoptic surveys" of dimensions on streets and public spaces.

In November 2010, members of the Dover-Kohl team returned for a second site visit focused specifically on the Form-Based Code (FBC) effort. The visit began with a briefing to Senator Shawn-Michael Malone, Chairman of the Legislature's Planning and Environmental Committee and Collette Monroe, Chief of Staff for Senate President Louis Hill. Public meetings were again held on each island, this time to explain the upcoming public planning process to be conducted for Charlotte Amalie and to explain how the FBC pilot project fits in to the Zoning and Subdivision Code Update process. Invitations to these meetings (by phone and e-mail) were sent to neighborhood and community group leaders to

Flyers in English, Spanish, and French Creole were distributed throughout the study area prior to the charrette.

encourage their participation, including members of Downtown Revitalization, Inc. (DRI), We from Upstreet, Garden Street Neighborhood Group, We Savaneros, and the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). Dover-Kohl team members conducted additional technical and coordination meetings with representatives from CFVI and DPNR, local preservation experts (SHPO's office, HPC and STHT members), local architects and landscape architects working in the study area, the Taxi Commission, the Chamber of Commerce, UVI/East End Caribbean Center, the Tourism Department, and the Bureau of Economic Research. These meetings provided the team with valuable insights into the physical, social, and market forces shaping historic Charlotte Amalie.

During the month of November, the Dover-Kohl team worked with CFVI and DPNR to publicize the charrette events. Over 200 flyers were distributed to participants at the site visit meetings; following the site visit, over 1,000 additional flyers were printed and distributed door-to-door to businesses and residents in the study area. Stories about the pilot project and charrette events were run in the paper (VI *Daily News*), online (VI Source) and on television (WTJX) during this time. Ads announcing upcoming meetings were placed in the *Daily News*, on local radio stations (Radio One AM 1000; KISS 101.5FM; Isle 95; and Sunny 99.5), and online in the VI Source. Specific invitations for charrette events were made to various stakeholder groups, technical experts, and VI government staff and leaders from the Dover-Kohl team and DPNR. A website (thetownsblueprint.com) was established as an additional medium in which project information could be distributed.

Participants in meetings during the November site visit also helped to spread the word about the charrette. Members of the HPC and STHT devoted their time during an hour of the Sam Topp morning radio show to discuss the charrette; architect Robert deJongh wrote an Op-Ed that ran in local papers; and, We from Upstreet, DRI, and the AIA held meetings encouraging members to participate so that their voice would be heard. As the charrette drew near, banners were hung above Veterans Drive (on the bridge by Cancryn School) and at the Grand Hotel (the location of the on-site studio during the charrette week). As the first day of the charrette approached, community members were ready and eager to participate.

Architect Robert deJongh wrote an op-ed that ran in the *Daily News* and online at the VI Source, encouraging the community to participate and have their voices heard.

During the pre-charrette site visits, the Dover-Kohl team took measurements of key streets and public space.

WTJX ran a detailed story that explained the upcoming planning process for Charlotte Amalie.

THE CHARRETTE

The charrette began on December 3, 2010 with a morning walking tour of key sections of the study area, led by Felipe Ayala (Chairman of the St. Thomas HPC) and Sean Krigger (historian and Senior Planner at the VI SHPO office). The entire Dover-Kohl team, as well as members of DPNR, the HPC and STHT, participated in the tour.

WALKING TOUR

During the tour, the planning team walked and recorded the existing conditions of the area through photographs, maps, and measurements. The team identified and took special note of details such as street design elements (pavement width, sidewalk locations, utility locations, and gutters); the location and physical condition of step streets; architectural details (including building materials and the proportion of appurtenances); the green "guts" that divide the neighborhood quarters; and, other unique conditions that could inform the vision and code. The team also noted the location of vacant properties and abandoned buildings. The planners and designers used aerial base maps to examine the existing urban fabric and network of streets, blocks and lots, building types, and building forms, and identified potential areas for infill or redevelopment. The walking tour was the first of many carried out by team members during the charrette week, to study the existing urban forms and characteristics along the waterfront and in each neighborhood in historic Charlotte Amalie.

Felipe Ayala led the design team on a walking tour of the study area, the first of many conducted during the charrette week.

The team toured the streets and public spaces, and was able to explore the interiors of several key structures to better understand the existing urban form.

During the walking tour, the team observed the great potential for step street improvements exhibited by the 99 steps restoration.

The Kick-off Presentation marked the start of the charrette.

Reverend Manners welcomed the crowd to Christ Church Methodist Sanctuary for the Kick-off Presentation.

COMMUNITY KICK-OFF PRESENTATION

On the evening of December 3, approximately 120 community members gathered for a Kick-off Presentation at Christ Church Methodist Sanctuary on Market Square. Reverend Manners (pastor, Christ Church Methodist) welcomed the gathering, followed by Carmelo Rivera (DPNR Acting Commissioner) and Dee Brown (CFVI President). Victor Dover (Principal, Dover, Kohl & Partners) then explained the upcoming charrette process, and gave a "food for thought" presentation on Form-Based Codes and sustainable infill in traditional towns. Victor highlighted the community's role in the charrette, emphasizing that they were the authors of the vision and code, and stressed the importance of continuous public involvement throughout the planning effort. He explained that participating in the process would ensure a vision representative of community ideals.

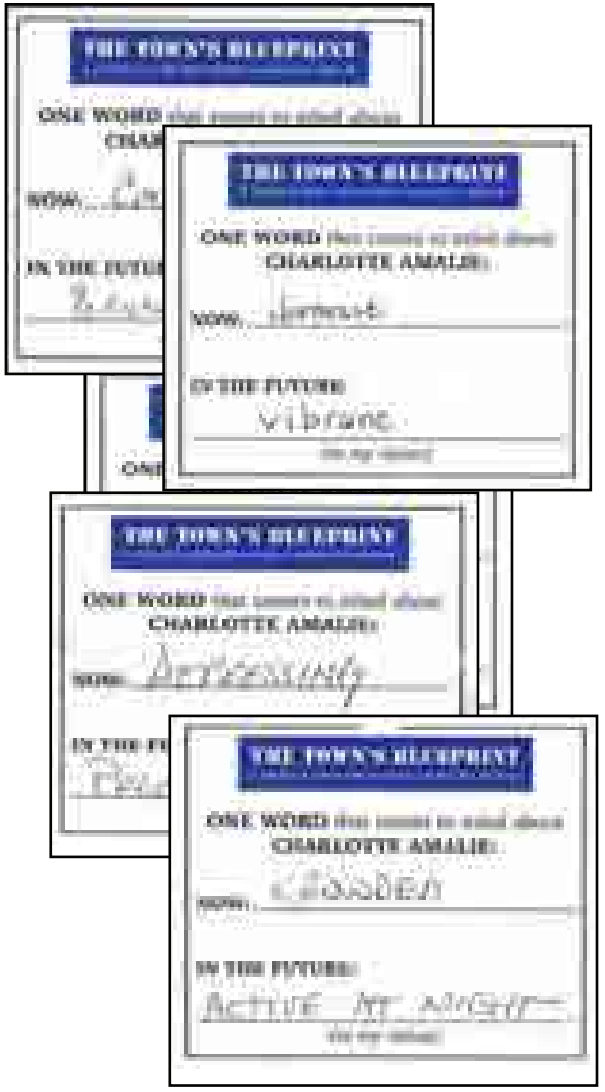
Myron Jackson (Historian, Executive Director of the VI Cultural Heritage Institute and President of We from Upstreet) provided an informative presentation on the history of Charlotte Amalie's neighborhoods. Rick Hall (Principal, Hall Planning & Engineering) wrapped up the presentation with an introduction to livable transportation planning, explaining how to design streets that are safe and welcoming for many modes of travel, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motor vehicles.

At the conclusion of the presentation, an open microphone session was conducted and attendees were encouraged to stand up and voice questions about what they had just heard, identify areas of concern, and share their vision for Town. Further input was gathered with "one word cards"; attendees were given small cards and asked to list one word describing the historic core of Charlotte Amalie today and one word describing their vision for its future. These cards were collected at the end of the evening's presentation and reviewed by the team.

Dee Brown introduced Dover-Kohl to the community.

Myron Jackson gave a presentation on the history of Charlotte Amalie's three historic quarters.

Over 120 people participated in the event.



Citizens used one word to describe their vision for the future of Charlotte Amalie.

An open microphone session allowed participants an opportunity to ask questions and share their vision for historic Charlotte Amalie.

Residents offered their own observations and suggestions for the team and community to consider during the charrette.

HANDS-ON DESIGN SESSION

On Saturday December 4, participants gathered at Lockhart Elementary School for the Hands-on Design Session. The intent of the session was to identify areas of consensus and begin to create a long-range community vision for the future of Charlotte Amalie. More than 70 people participated in the session, many of whom had attended the Kick-off Presentation the night before. Victor Dover began with a short introduction and briefing, explaining the goals of the public design session, setting ground rules for the group planning process, and orienting everyone to the base maps. After the briefing, participants were organized into groups of about ten people. Each group joined a planning facilitator from the Dover-Kohl team, where they were encouraged to write and draw their ideas.

The group planning effort began with an exercise to identify those building types, public spaces, and architectural details that make up "the best" of historic Charlotte Amalie and which could be used to inform the code-writing process. The groups were given a sheet of photos from the study area. Participants were each given ten green dots, and asked to identify which building details and open spaces they liked the most. They were encouraged to write notes on each photo explaining why they picked particular elements over others on the sheet. The exercise started active conversations as each group debated the building types, greens, courtyards, and building details that typified their town. These elements would serve as precedents or "DNA" on which the Form-Based Code dimensions, proportions, and detailing would be based.

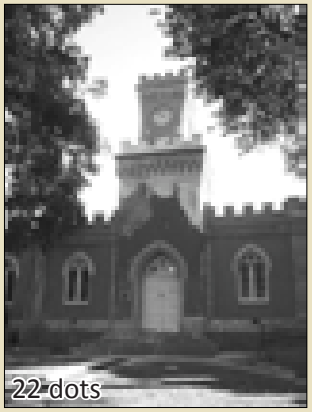
During the second part of the workshop participants focused on a large map of the study area. Citizens circled areas of interest, documenting locations of both exemplary buildings and public spaces, as well as vacant parcels and areas of concern. They wrote their ideas for the future, including potential locations for public open spaces or public buildings (including new neighborhood schools), street design details (such as street tree locations and new sidewalks and crosswalks), desired transportation system improvements (such as trolley paths, taxi loading zones, and water transportation connections), and desired infrastructure improvements (such as utility upgrades). At the end of the workshop a spokesperson from each table reported the findings and major points from his or her group to the entire assembly. The presentations allowed the community and planning team to see common interests emerge, laying the foundation for a set of priorities for the continued evolution of Charlotte Amalie.

Participants discussed and drew their ideas while experts circulated around the room to answer technical questions.

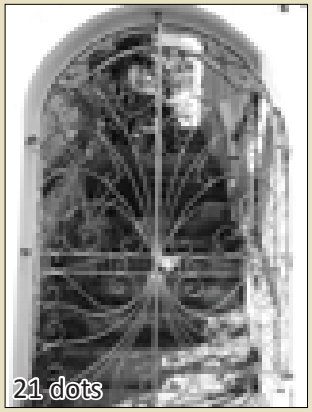
Community members worked together, sharing ideas for the future of historic Charlotte Amalie.

CHARLOTTE AMALIE – SELECTED DNA ELEMENTS

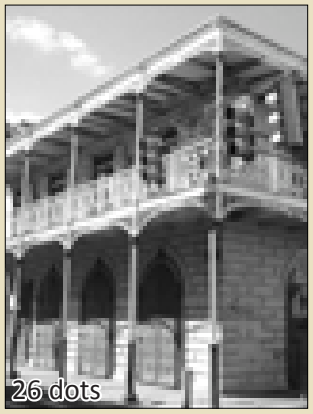
- restore
- unique
- connection



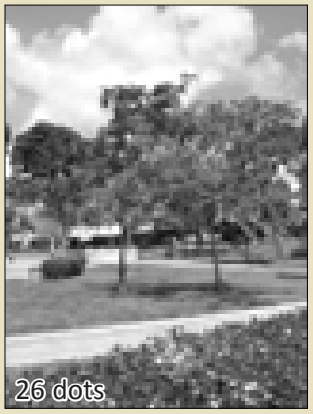
- symbolic
- restore
- historic



- delicate
- function
- visibility



- railing
- beautiful balconies
- show me love!



- trees
- walking
- benches

- trees
- shading
- gate detail

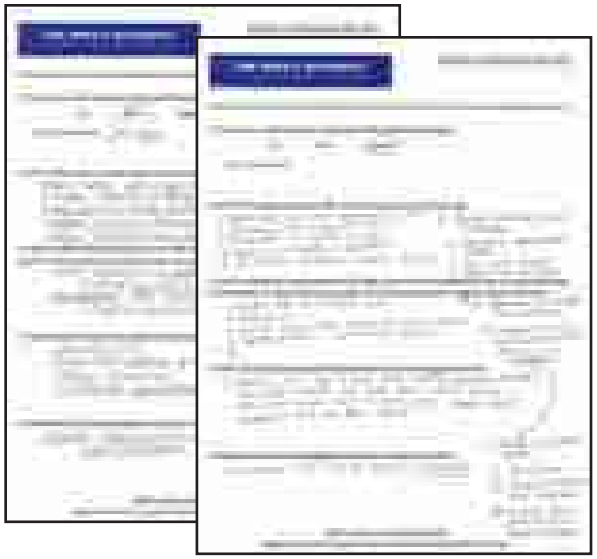
At the start of the Hands-on Design Session, each small group was shown a collection of photos of existing spaces in Charlotte Amalie, including buildings, parks, streets, and architectural details. Participants were given green dots, and asked to place them on images they felt best exemplified the character and spirit of Charlotte Amalie; they were also encouraged to write why they liked the image on the sheet. The images at left are those that received the greatest number of dots, along with a sampling of explanatory comments that were written on the photos.

The input received can be used to make decisions about the future built environment. These elements, identified by the community as most representative of Town, can serve as the "DNA" for any new development. The design team can study the proportions and dimensions of these spaces, and use this input to shape the parameters in the Form-Based Code. This way, new development in town will continue to reflect and respect the historic character already established.

Many participants wore blue T-shirts with *The Town's Blueprint* logo to various events throughout the week. The shirts were distributed by the Dover-Kohl team at the Kick-off Presentation.

One representative from each table presented their table's work to the entire group.

Each table's suggestions were noted by the team. The notes from each table map were documented and incorporated into a synthesis map, which was posted in the Design Studio. These ideas were used to inform the Illustrative Plan.



At the end of the Hands-on Design session, participants were asked to complete an exit survey for any additional comments and ideas.

Sample Hands-on Session exit survey responses:

Of the many ideas you heard today, which ones seem the most exciting?

- Create a 24-hour town; reversing the "shut in" mentality
- Reduce and calm traffic on Veterans Drive, and develop a waterfront harbor for full recreational use
- Need a series of green spaces around Town
- Limiting vehicular travel on Main Street, promote walkability!
- Highlight step-streets for recreational use
- Extending Main Street; keeping historic architectural integrity
- Revitalizing Savan and the Hospital Grounds
- Water taxi connection from port to port
- Underground utilities
- Enhancing existing parks and rehabilitating historic houses, commercial buildings, and churches
- Danish colonial architecture in Town, with commerce on the street level, and residences above
- Park and Ride area for commuters
- Move Carnival to the West
- Relocating vendors to the first level of the Fort George parking structure, with a proper tourist welcoming plaza
- Do not reinvent - build and use what we have
- Renovate and utilize the Guts
- Use more local art to beautify downtown
- Hidden parking structures
- Update Lionel Roberts Stadium

ON-SITE DESIGN STUDIO

From December 5 through 9, the design team continued to work with the community at an On-Site Design Studio. The studio was located at a central location in the heart of Downtown Charlotte Amalie, in the old Grand Hotel building adjacent to Emancipation Gardens. Residents, business and property owners, local leaders, VI government staff, and other interested citizens were encouraged to stop by the studio throughout the week to check on the status of the vision, provide additional input, and to ensure that the planning team was on the right track. Over 100 people visited the studio to check on the team's progress. The studio was open each day from 9am to 6pm, offering community members the flexibility to stop by when they were available. Community drawings from the Hands-on Design Session were placed around the room for new participants to review as they joined the planning process.

Local architects and historians stopped by the studio to provide input, and brought valuable resources for the Dover-Kohl team to review, including books on the history and architectural styles of St. Thomas, historic postcards and paintings, and historic maps. Community members volunteered their time to take members of the Dover-Kohl team to specific areas of Town to show firsthand where they felt great opportunities existed or areas that were in the greatest need for improvement. In addition to drop-ins to the On-Site Design Studio, members of the planning team met with key stakeholders and experts in scheduled technical meetings. These meetings included sessions with available members of the legislature, DPNR and DPW staff, business and property owners, historic preservation organizations, neighborhood leaders, representatives from neighborhood groups and civic organizations, local vendors, and developers and architects. These technical meetings served to shape the detailed elements of the vision and helped to ensure that the ideas being proposed were feasible and shared by many parties.

As citizens and technical experts frequented the studio, they helped the planning team to further develop the "Big Ideas" or guiding principles, and other concepts in-progress. Working in Town allowed the team ready access to the study area during all hours and days of the week. The team observed day-to-day traffic patterns, visited local businesses, and experienced other details of everyday life. The team worked to synthesize the many ideas heard from the community throughout the week into a cohesive vision for the historic core of Charlotte Amalie. Diagrams, drawings, and plans were created to clearly illustrate the initial concepts of the vision for the community.

Tecnical meetings were held with various agencies, groups, and organizations at the Design Studio.

The multi-disciplinary planning team synthesized concepts from community members into a draft vision.

OPEN HOUSE

On Tuesday evening (December 7), the design studio remained open until 8pm and a more formal Open House event was held. The planning team stopped drawing for a couple of hours and pinned their draft work up on the walls for the community to review. Members of the planning team were available to answer questions and gather feedback on the drawings and illustrations in-progress.

At the Open House, participants studied the in-progress illustrations and provided input to the Dover-Kohl team.

Members of the public were encouraged to share ideas with the design team.

The Dover-Kohl team pinned up maps and drawings for public review.

WORK-IN-PROGRESS PRESENTATION

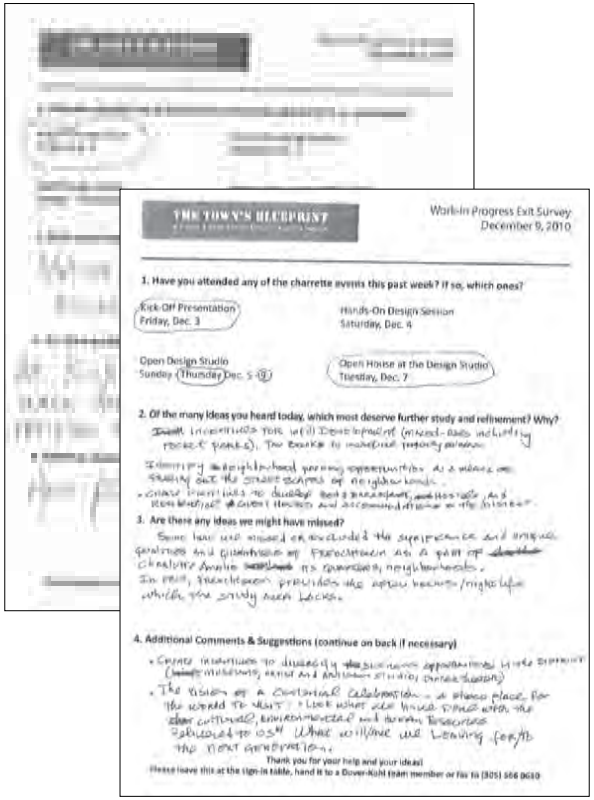
On December 9, community members returned to Lockhart Elementary School for the conclusion of the charrette, the Work-in-Progress Presentation. A crowd of over 100 people attended the event, eager to see the draft results of the charrette. Several VI leaders and government representatives were in attendance, including Senate President Louis Hill, Department of Public Works Commissioner Darryl Smalls, and Department of Tourism Commissioner Beverly Nicholson.

Felipe Ayala welcomed the crowd to the Work-in-Progress Presentation. He applauded the public process, and stressed the importance of continued citizen involvement in the refinement of the vision and creation of the code. Victor Dover then began the evening's presentation with a summary of the charrette events. He presented the draft concepts formulated over the week, illustrating possibilities for preservation, infill, and redevelopment in the historic core of Charlotte Amalie. Hand-drawn illustrations showing "before and after" scenarios helped attendees to envision the ideas discussed. An Illustrative Plan showed potential locations for infill buildings, new open spaces and landscaping features, an enhanced Veterans Drive, and other physical elements of the vision. Victor explained how small interventions could be used to mend and improve Charlotte Amalie's neighborhoods, and how details like street design (wide sidewalks, crosswalks, on-street parking, and slow design speeds) and new public open spaces could make the waterfront more accessible to all. By getting these details right, Charlotte Amalie could become even more special, and evolve into one of the Caribbean's most desirable waterfront towns in which to live, work, and visit. Rick Hall, the team's transportation consultant, then spoke about walkable street design, parking solutions, and transit improvements proposed in the draft vision. Ed Starkie (Principal, Urban Advisors), the team's economist, wrapped up the presentation by presenting initial ideas for implementation, including economic goals, potential public funding sources, and new programs to help existing property owners to be able to afford maintenance and improvements to their homes and businesses.


Virgin Islands
DAILY NEWS
Crowd gets a look into the future
Disaster drill

The *Daily News* reported on the concepts shown at the Work-in-Progress Presentation.

Throughout the presentation, the group would break for keypad polling questions; this interactive polling method helped the Dover-Kohl team to get an initial sense on how the concepts explained were received by those in attendance. An exit survey was also distributed to gauge public response to the ideas presented. Victor Dover concluded the Work-in-Progress Presentation by reminding attendees that the work presented was a draft, and that community members must continue to offer input on the vision and code. All were encouraged to keep *The Town's Blueprint* in the news in the coming months by writing letters to the editor and informing decision-makers about portions of the vision that they deem important. Everyone was encouraged to invite friends and neighbors to participate in future meetings, and to continue to send ideas to the Dover-Kohl team directly via phone, e-mail, on the project website, or by contacting DPNR and/or CFVI.


THE TOWN'S BLUEPRINT

Work-in-Progress Exit Survey
December 9, 2010

1. Have you attended any of the charrette events this past week? If so, which ones?

Kick-Off Presentation
Friday, Dec. 3

Hands-On Design Session
Saturday, Dec. 4

Open Design Studio
Sunday (Thursday) Dec. 5 - 9

Open House at the Design Studio
Tuesday, Dec. 7

2. Of the many ideas you heard today, which most deserve further study and refinement? Why?

3. Are there any ideas we might have missed?

4. Additional Comments & Suggestions (continue on back if necessary)

Thank you for your help and your ideas!

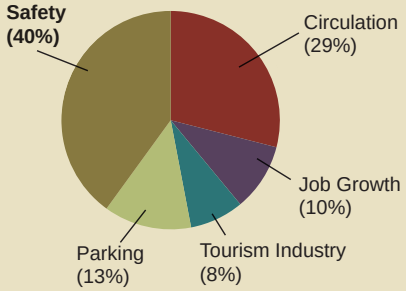
Please leave this at the sign-in table, hand it to a Dover-Kohl team member or fax to (305) 666 0610

In addition to interactive keypad polling during the meeting, a written survey was used to gather input at the end of the Work-in-Progress Presentation

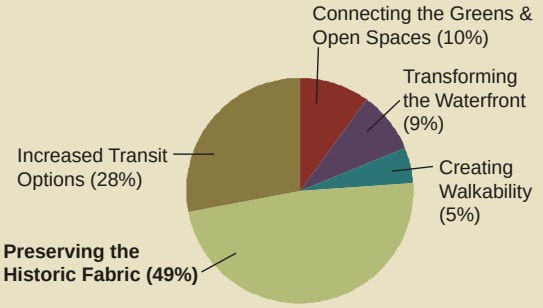
COMMUNITY RESPONSES AT THE WORK-IN-PROGRESS PRESENTATION

DECEMBER 9, 2010:

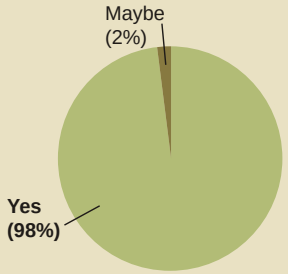
WHICH OF THESE CONCERNS ARE OF THE MOST URGENT PRIORITY?



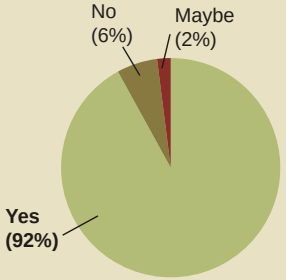
OF THE MANY IDEAS YOU HAVE HEARD, WHICH ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU (CHOOSE THREE)?



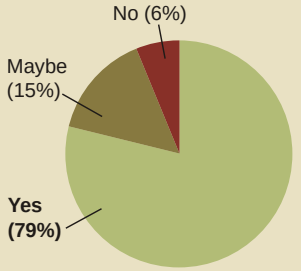
HAS THIS PROCESS BEEN HELPFUL AND WORTHWHILE?



ARE YOU WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN FUTURE EVENTS AND HELP ESTABLISH THE VISION AND CODE?



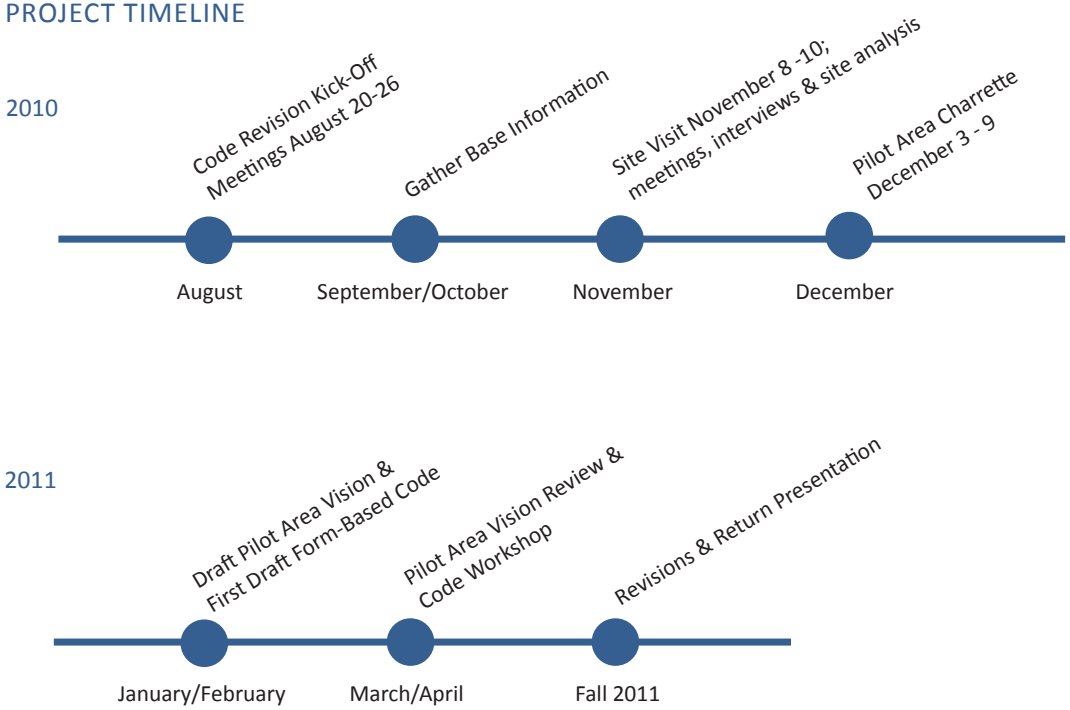
DO YOU THINK THE VISION (THE TOWN'S BLUEPRINT) IS GENERALLY ON THE RIGHT TRACK?



NEXT STEPS

Following the charrette, the plans and drawings were made available for review on the project website, www.thetownsblueprint.com. An Executive Summary, documenting the ideas generated, was prepared for community review. The planning team worked to continue to synthesize the ideas generated with additional input received, refined the illustrations, and completed a first draft of this summary report and the Form-Based Code. The team returned to the Territory for a presentation of the refined vision, and to conduct a public workshop to gather input on the draft code in March 2011. It is anticipated that the revised vision and code documents will be complete by fall 2011, and that the new Charlotte Amalie code will be submitted to the Legislature for adoption after the VI Code Update is complete in early 2012.

PROJECT TIMELINE



BIG IDEAS 3

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The “Big Ideas” generated though the community-driven planning process describe the general roadmap for revitalization and regulation in the historic core of Charlotte Amalie. Physical design concepts for specific sites will likely evolve over time, but the “Big Ideas” are intended to remain constant. The ideas embody both the citizenry’s vision for the future of their town and the basics of planning for highly livable settlements. They will guide the work of municipal agencies, Territory leaders, and community members to ensure that future improvements and land use decisions are true to the community’s vision. The Big Ideas are:

REAFFIRM & PROTECT THE TRADITIONAL WAY OF BUILDING

Incentivize & require respectful infill

TRANSFORM THE WATERFRONT INTO THE FINEST PUBLIC SPACE IN THE CARIBBEAN

Pedestrian-friendly, beauty first, reconnect town to waterfront

CONNECT

Multi-modal: pedestrians, bicyclists, taxi, transit, & harbor transportation; step streets & guts provide greenway connections; new waterfront public spaces connect people to the water

MAKE WALKABILITY THE FIRST PRIORITY IN DESIGN

Smart street design, architecture, and parking solutions

CONTROL THE SCALE; SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

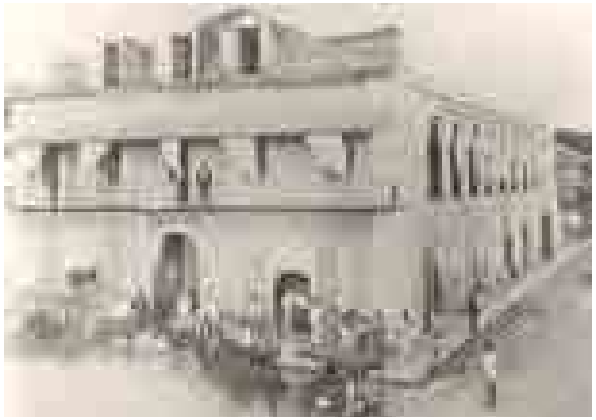
Code; promote building preservation/revitalization; 100% model projects

BRING TOWN TO LIFE AT NIGHT & FOSTER OVERNIGHT STAYS

Improve parking, public safety, transportation; bring a diverse mix of residences, entertainment and services to Town

EMBRACE OUR DIVERSITY & IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL

Make Town a place for all islanders to work, live, and play



REAFFIRM & PROTECT THE TRADITIONAL WAY OF BUILDING

Charlotte Amalie has a wealth of historic buildings and street spaces with a very distinctive architectural character, dating to the 17th century and reflective of the Town's history as a busy trading port. Today, these historic treasures bring great value to the island, both in terms of establishing community identify and continued tourism appeal.

As any town must, Charlotte Amalie will continue to change and grow to accommodate the needs of a vibrant community. It is important that future changes protect and enhance the great historic resources found here. Proposals for rehabilitation, streetscape retrofits, or redevelopment must be evaluated with this in mind. At the same time, rehabilitation efforts should be encouraged and incentivized to ensure that historic buildings remain usable and habitable, part of a living town.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) currently uses a series of Preservation Guidelines to instruct applicants in the correct dimensions, proportions, and techniques to be used for new construction. There is now an opportunity to further strengthen these guidelines by including preservation provisions into the land development regulations, using a form-based zoning approach. The new Form-Based Code can stipulate key aspects of the urban realm that impact the character of a place, such as building placement, height, and architectural detailing, using the buildings and public spaces in Town today as precedents to establish the rules and regulations. Using a form-based approach will help to ensure future change and development is in keeping with the historic urban fabric present today.

top row: Historic photos of Charlotte Amalie, courtesy of the Virgin Islands State Historic Preservation Office Collection

middle & bottom row: Examples of the historic treasures found in Charlotte Amalie today

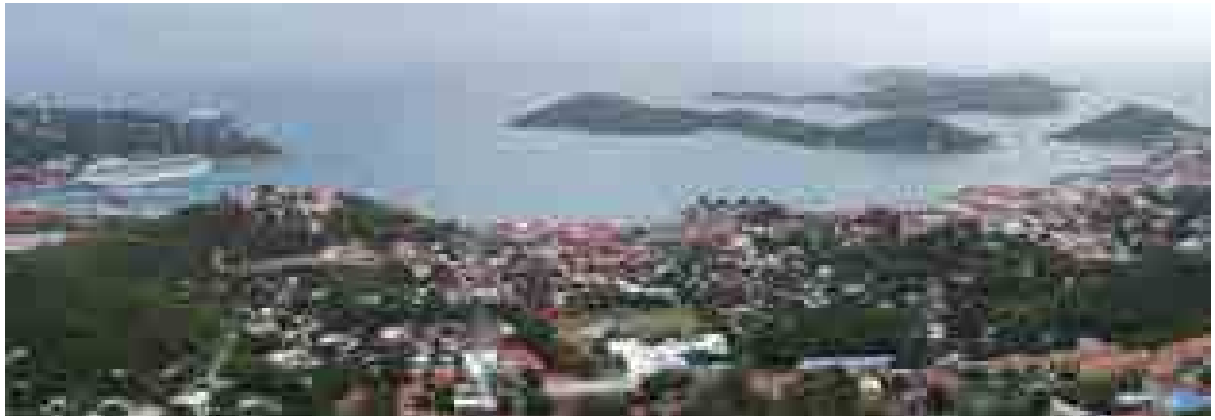
TRANSFORM THE WATERFRONT INTO THE FINEST PUBLIC SPACE IN THE CARIBBEAN

The Charlotte Amalie harbor provides beautiful vistas of sparkling blue water, the natural greens of Hassel Island, and views back to the three hills that make up Town. There is potential to make this waterfront experience even more memorable, transforming it into the finest public space in the Caribbean.

Charlotte Amalie's waterfront buildings are perhaps the most visible on the island; seen not only by pedestrians but also by ships in the harbor and vehicles on the highly-traveled waterfront drive. Priority should be placed on the enhancing the appearance of these buildings, which should exemplify the very best of St. Thomas.

It is essential that the waterfront be pedestrian-friendly, to attract residents and tourists alike to enjoy the scenic vistas, and connect the town to its waterfront. Today, there are a number of obstacles for pedestrians to navigate, including fast-moving traffic on Veterans Drive, waterfront parking lots, no trees and few shading devices, and sidewalks adjacent to moving traffic lanes. Designs that keep pedestrian comfort at the forefront must be a high priority.

Creating high-quality public spaces that front the water will further connect Town to the waterfront. Implementing new parking solutions can allow waterfront parking lots to become greens and plazas, which front wider sidewalks and outdoor cafes. High quality public space on the waterfront will ensure that the community is able to enjoy this unique asset.



top row: Charlotte Amalie harbor, from above

middle row: Charlotte Amalie waterfront buildings

bottom row: The pedestrian experience on the waterfront today

CONNECT

In order to improve access to downtown Charlotte Amalie, greater connectivity should be a top priority. Strong communities are well-connected in many ways. Pedestrians, bicyclists, taxis, transit, and harbor transportation vessels should all be welcome, and streets and public infrastructure should be designed to accommodate all of these users.

Many of the features that allowed connectivity between the waterfront and the historic neighborhoods in the past, including step streets, drainage guts, and common sidewalks, have been allowed to deteriorate. As a result, much of historic Charlotte Amalie is inaccessible except by automobile. These connections must be restored in order to integrate the neighborhoods back into the life of the town. Step street restoration will not only mean potential life for vacant parcels that are currently inaccessible, it can also be a means for visitors to discover the architectural and cultural treasures located uphill from the waterfront. Trails and sidewalks introduced into the guts can provide a pleasant greenway connection uphill.

top left: One of many step streets located in the historic neighborhoods

top, middle right: Many of the typical streetscapes in Charlotte Amalie's historic neighborhoods do not include sidewalks.

bottom left: One of many pedestrian courtyards, which provide a unique way to move through the waterfront area.

bottom right: Existing gut which could be retrofitted with sidewalks and plantings to become a pleasant pedestrian connection.

MAKE WALKABILITY THE FIRST PRIORITY IN DESIGN

As improvements are made to Charlotte Amalie's street infrastructure, it is essential that walkability be the first priority in design. Transportation policies which give precedence to the motor vehicle have proven ineffective in creating walkable, sustainable places. The core of the historic Town should be the most walkable place on St. Thomas. To achieve walkability, different approaches to transportation design and, specifically, unique thoroughfare types and transportation policies that complement the context will be required.

Smart street and parking solutions create walkable places. Street improvements (including those planned for Veterans Drive and Main Street) must provide top-rate pedestrian accommodations; this includes comfortable sidewalks free from obstructions (such as utility poles and light posts), street trees for shade, and pedestrian-scaled lighting. Parking not provided on the street should be shielded from view; this includes new parking structures with habitable liner buildings and parking lots located to the side or rear of buildings.

Walkable design also depends on the adjacent land use. In urban settings, buildings of a uniform setback define a consistent streetwall, as is the condition in much of historic Charlotte Amalie today. To further enhance the pedestrian realm, gaps in the streetwall created by vacant lots or parking lots should be filled. A low garden wall could serve this purpose in the short term, until a more permanent structure can be constructed.

Top row, left: An existing residential street with limited pedestrian facilities.

Top row, right: A view of Veterans Drive; when the time comes to improve the corridor, priority must be given to bettering pedestrian facilities.

middle row: Waterfront parking lot along Veterans Drive

bottom row: Existing conditions on Main Street

WALKABLE URBAN DESIGN BASICS

"Walkability," as used in *The Town's Blueprint* effort, describes the extent to which places are comfortable for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users as well as motor vehicles. Walkable places require a mix of uses, public spaces, a fine-grained network of connected streets that provides many options for travel, managed vehicle speeds and human-scaled development placing amenities and services within a ¼ mile radius of one's home. Walkable communities are created by a number of factors, including on-street parking, narrow streets, buildings fronting streets, and sidewalks.

VEHICULAR SPEED AND WALKABILITY

Vehicular speed is a key factor in urban design because it plays a critical role in the walkability of an area, due to its relationship with pedestrian fatalities. As shown in the figure to the right, a pedestrian's chance of being killed in a crash is graphed against vehicle speed. The graph indicates that in a crash with a vehicle traveling greater than 30 mph, a pedestrian's odds of dying are better than 45%, increasing to 85% for a vehicle traveling 40mph. For this reason, thoroughfares in walkable districts must be designed for a target speed of 35mph or less, usually in the 25 to 30mph range.

"Target" speed versus "design" speed is an important distinction in that design speed is defined by curvature and super-elevation whereas target speed incorporates and relies upon many elements of the urban street environment to achieve the resulting speed. Elements such as narrow travel lanes, on-street parking, adjacent building frontages, street trees, presence of sidewalks, and short block lengths all help to inherently manage speed. These elements must be managed and coordinated on both sides of the right-of-way line. When these elements are present, drivers "read" a street and travel with care and caution, driving at managed speeds that are appropriate to the intended urban environment.

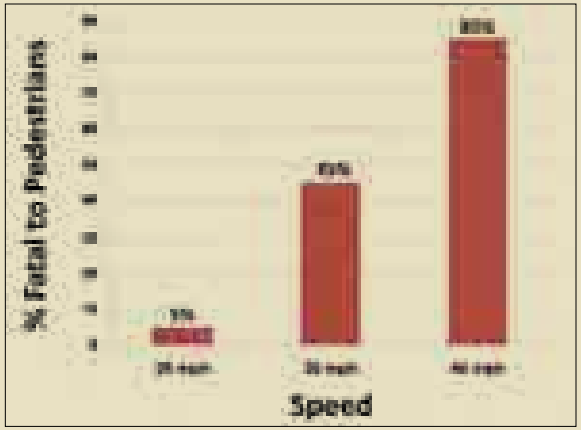
A NEW PARADIGM – LAND USE 1ST, TRANSPORTATION 2ND

Urban places with greater safety, capacity, and economic viability require pedestrians, bicycles, and transit vehicles as part of the mobility mix. To achieve these places, the patterns of proposed development must be specified first, during the community planning stage. Then, transportation plans for balanced mobility can be crafted with walkability considered first and vehicle mobility second (development patterns first, transportation second or "LU1-TR2"). This is not to imply that motor vehicle mobility will be dramatically reduced, but that pedestrians exposed to the open environment are more vulnerable than are drivers, and solutions for their safety and comfort are more complex. Often, greater walkability yields only small reductions in motor vehicle capacity, even though vehicle speeds are lower.

CONVENTIONAL TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERING (ARTERIAL SYSTEM)

Walkable policies often stand in sharp contrast to suburban or conventional policies that were created to serve the single-use function of the automobile. Places that were created by conventional policies promote higher speeds (to serve the greatest need of the automobile) and are not walkable or human scale; thus it is not desirable to apply such policies in an urban setting such as Charlotte Amalie. Highways designated as arterials change little as they approach developed areas. Generally posted speeds drop from 55 to 45/35 mph, but elements to reduce the design speed such as on-street parking are generally not used. Arterial street designs, by definition, tend to exclude intersections with side streets of limited volume, leading to longer block size and higher speeds, both of which cause difficulty for pedestrians.

Street-oriented buildings coupled with new pedestrian amenities such as a wide sidewalks, street trees, and on-street parking create a walkable neighborhood center.



Percent of Crashes Fatal to Pedestrians, Related to Vehicle Speed

Source: U.K. Department of Transportation, *Killing Speed and Saving Lives*, London, 1987.

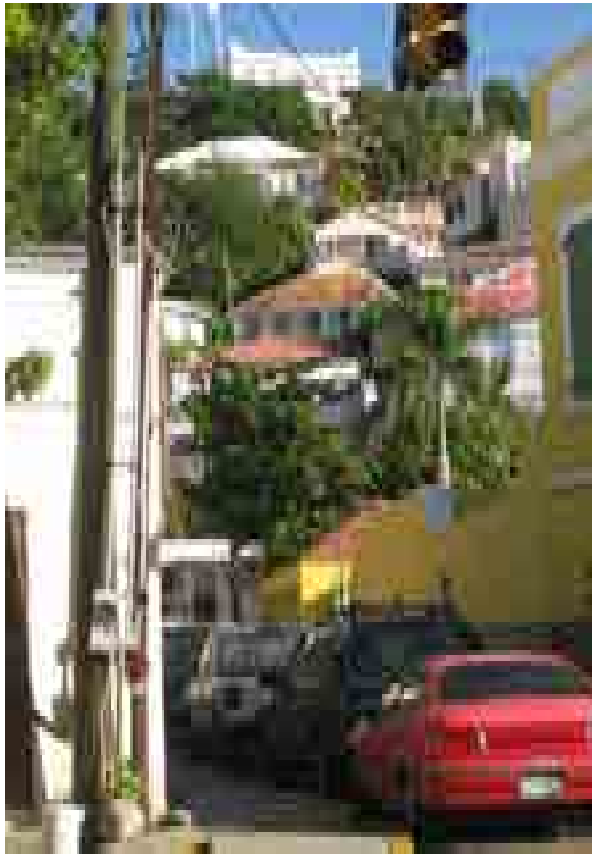
CONTROL THE SCALE; SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

The scale of development in Charlotte Amalie is part of what makes the town so unique. The great variety of structures found here can be traced to the town's history as a major trading center, when the varied mix of housing and shopfront building sizes and types accommodated the diverse population.

Preservation efforts should focus on preserving a variety of building types. Revitalization should not trade small homes on small lots for larger buildings, which would be out of context in many of the historic neighborhoods. Preserving a range of sizes for neighborhood homes and businesses will also help to ensure that Charlotte Amalie can continue to house a diverse population.

The new Form-Based Code can contain provisions that encourage a mix of building types and sizes. For example, existing regulations for parking and setbacks that make it illegal to build what is present today should be carefully evaluated and revised, making it easier for homeowners on small lots to fix up and rehabilitate their structures.

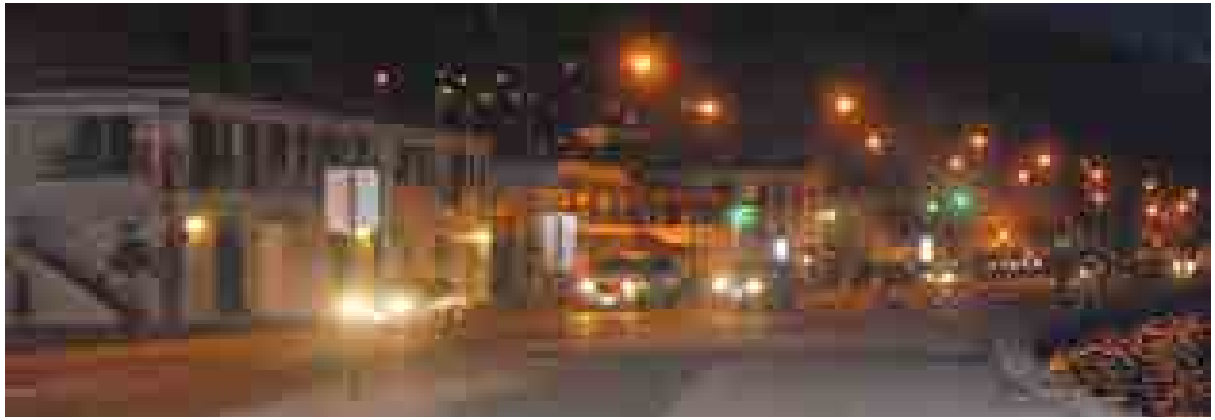
Revitalization efforts should also take a "small is beautiful" approach. Small increments of change, as individual property owners are ready to make investments, pay off over time. Neighborhoods can encourage "100% models" or demonstration areas to encourage future investment. 100% models focus investment to both sides of the street, creating a 360-degree experience of what is possible.

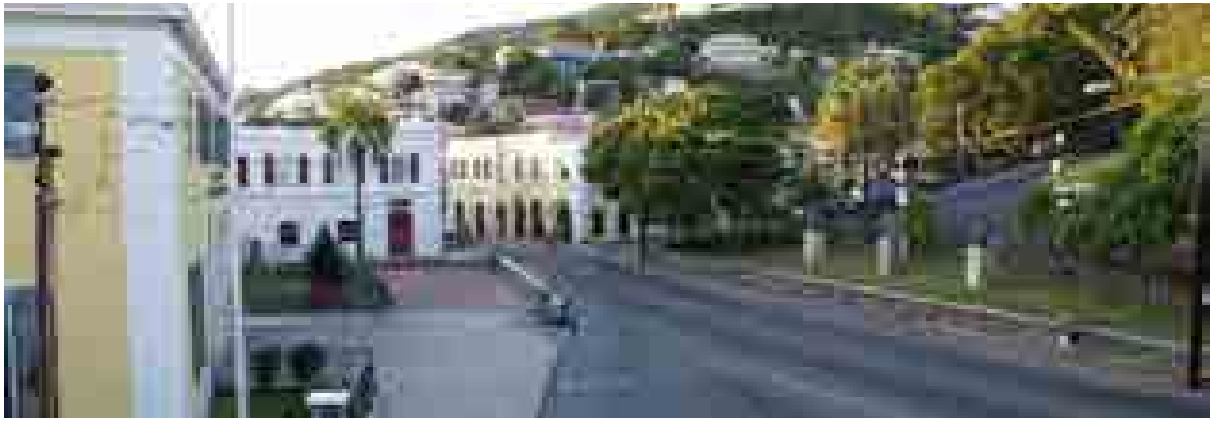


top row: Existing residences in Charlotte Amalie,

middle row, bottom left: Small neighborhood shopfront buildings.

bottom right: The Queen's Quarter hillside in historic Charlotte Amalie showcases a variety of homes.





BRING TOWN TO LIFE AT NIGHT & FOSTER OVERNIGHT STAYS

Charlotte Amalie was once an entertainment destination for island residents. Recently, a lack of parking, congested roadways, and public safety issues prevent many islanders from visiting Town unless absolutely necessary. When cruise ship passengers depart for the day, many of the storefronts close, leaving the waterfront area deserted until store owners return the following morning.

For the Charlotte Amalie waterfront to return to being a highly functioning part of the town, it must have activity during the day and evening. Once parking, transportation, and safety concerns are adequately addressed, the waterfront will be a desirable destination for residents once again. A new residential base will bring with it demand for a mix of entertainment, service, and retail options, which cater to more than tourists. Back Street can once again be a vibrant center for restaurants and entertainment. Main Street can have storefronts that sell everyday needs as well as tourism-based goods. Hotels along Veterans Drive can become a viable alternative to resorts or cruise ships, with customers who want to experience a slice of life in a lively Caribbean town. In the short term, extra efforts such as increased security or valet parking may be needed to address safety concerns; over time, the population present will provide much-needed “eyes on the street”, bringing natural surveillance to deter illegal activity.

top row: The waterfront at night

middle row, left: One of few waterfront dining options present today.

middle row, right: Back Street, once a center of nightlife and entertainment, could become vibrant again.

bottom row: Post Office plaza along Main Street, after cruise ship passengers have left for the day.

EMBRACE OUR DIVERSITY & IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL

Perhaps the most important goal of all is that investment in rehabilitation or revitalization should be for the benefit of existing Charlotte Amalie property owners and residents, as well as the greater St. Thomas community. The vision must preserve the ability for long-time property owners and residents to participate in change without losing their place within the neighborhood. Throughout its long history, Charlotte Amalie has been home to a diverse population. The vision should focus on improving the quality of life for the existing community.

Town plays an important role in the life of all islanders, regardless if they live in one of the historic quarters or on another part of St. Thomas. There is a general opinion that Town has been overtaken by tourism, which is alienating for some island residents. Although the tourist economy is an important lifeline for the local economy, investments in public infrastructure must consider the needs of residents and islanders. Charlotte Amalie should be a place for all islanders to work, live, and play, and not simply a prominent tourism destination.

top row, left: Myron Jackson, Executive Director of the VI Cultural Heritage Institute, with Charlotte Amalie resident.

top row, right: Market Square in the Savan neighborhood

bottom row: View from above the Queen's Quarter of historic Charlotte Amalie.

ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

The Illustrative Plan for Charlotte Amalie created during the charrette shows one way in which the Big Ideas could be applied in the built environment. The plan illustrates approaches to physically accommodate desired elements and proposes strategic additions to the neighborhoods and waterfront areas to make the town more complete. Detailed information about interventions drawn, including concepts for implementation, can be found in the following chapters.

MEND & IMPROVE THE NEIGHBORHOODS 4

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Establishing a common vision is an important first step; after the vision has been articulated and documented, it can be used to shape new regulations and direct public and private investment to realize community goals.

Through *The Town's Blueprint* planning process, the community identified a series of actions and priorities aimed to better the quality of life for residents, and provide an improved experience for island visitors. This chapter includes details of the key recommendations to mend and improve Charlotte Amalie's historic neighborhoods:

FILL IN VACANT LOTS TO COMPLETE THE NEIGHBORHOODS

RESTORE & REOCCUPY VACANT BUILDINGS

CREATE HIGH-QUALITY NEIGHBORHOOD OPEN SPACES

SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS

PROVIDE SMART PARKING SOLUTIONS

CREATE WALKABLE, LIVABLE STREETS

Additional detail describing how to apply these recommendations to each neighborhood quarter, including example "100% model" projects which explored concepts on specific sites during the charrette week, can be found with the illustrative plans in this chapter. The illustrative plans show one hypothetical way in which the recommendations could be applied; the exact locations for improvements will depend on a number of factors, including decisions by private property owners and the availability of funding. Implementation details are contained in Chapter 6.

FILL IN VACANT LOTS TO COMPLETE THE NEIGHBORHOODS

Today, there are a scattering of vacant lots throughout Charlotte Amalie's historic neighborhood quarters. These properties impose physical blight and safety concerns for nearby residents. Small increments of change, such as the addition of one new building in place of a vacant, overgrown lot, can make a big difference for adjacent residents. Encouraging infill on vacant lots will spark pride and encourage reinvestment along every street. With every addition, the neighborhoods will become more complete.

The Form-Based Code will provide standards for infill buildings, addressing building placement and massing, parking requirements, architectural detailing, and other elements relevant to good urban form. These standards will ensure that new buildings contribute positively to neighborhood character. In order to encourage quality infill by private property owners, the code will attempt to lift barriers to new development. Overly-restrictive on-site parking requirements (which excessively limit permitted building footprint) must be addressed; an answer to this may be found with district parking solutions (see more on parking on page 4.14). The code will allow and encourage a variety of building types and sizes compatible with the surrounding historic fabric. The Vision and Form-Based Code documents will provide clear instructions for what is permitted by-right, to reduce confusion and uncertainty. Experience in other towns and cities has proven that if property owners know what will be able to be approved, and have clarity on how the approval process will work, they will be more likely to invest in new development.

Not every vacant property owner is ready or able to invest in new development. Until they are ready, vacant lots could be sought out for other community benefit. There is a need for additional parking areas, and also for small "pocket" parks, community gardens, and other public gathering areas. Acquisition of these parcels on a temporary (long-term lease) basis could facilitate this re-use, while still preserving property owner rights long-term.

The Form-Based Code will provide standards for the design of parking areas. Generally, parking should be shielded from view of the street, using buildings or a combination of low garden walls and/or landscaping. These elements help to define the pedestrian realm on the sidewalk, and continue a consistent streetwall. Parking need not be elaborate – small plazas of crushed gravel paving with some landscaping would provide an inexpensive alternative to expensive asphalt or concrete, and would better fit into the existing character found in the historic neighborhoods. On weekends, when downtown parking demand is not as great, well-landscaped parking areas could also be utilized for cook-outs and other community gatherings.

Right, following page: During the charrette, the Dover-Kohl team sketched hypothetical building designs for several infill lots in the study area. These study sketches show the potential to create new mixed-use and residential apartment buildings with compact footprints, in a character fitting with the surrounding historic fabric.

NEIGHBORHOOD INFILL – ARCHITECTURAL STUDIES

Elevation

Upper Floor

Ground Floor

INFILL DUPLEX,
SMAL STRADE, SAVAN

NEIGHBORHOOD INFILL – ARCHITECTURAL STUDIES

Elevation

Upper Floor

Ground Floor

APARTMENT BUILDING,
SMAL STRADE, SAVAN

Elevation

Ground Floor

MIXED-USE INFILL WITH PARKING COURT,
HOSPITAL LINIEN, KINGS QUARTER

SAVAN NEIGHBORHOOD INFILL

General Gade in the Savan neighborhood, existing conditions December 2010

Interim Use: In the near future, the vacant lot could be utilized temporarily as public parking.

In the future (proposed): A new building follows precedents established by other cherished buildings and traditional streets in the neighborhood; it is set back from the corner to provide a small courtyard space for the community to enjoy.

CROWN PRINCE'S QUARTER (SAVAN NEIGHBORHOOD)

Key Recommendations:

- **A** See Chapter 5 for waterfront area details.
- **B** Infill buildings create a continuous street frontage and respect the character of the neighborhood with similar massing and architectural detailing.
- **C** Pocket parks and community vegetable gardens are a productive public use for vacant parcels. Parks could be accomplished on a temporary basis through a long-term lease of the property.
- **D** Infill buildings on vacant lots respect the scale and character of the neighborhood.
- **E** Infill on parking lots located on General Gade continues the street edge, reinforcing the urban character of this neighborhood commercial street. A small urban plaza can be created at the corner, providing space for community gathering.
- **F** Vacant lots can be utilized for surface parking; in this case, minor site improvements such as a garden wall along the edge of the sidewalk should be made to improve the pedestrian experience and define the streetwall.
- **G** The guts can be cleaned of litter and debris and enhanced with new plantings. Walking trails should be added where feasible; these natural greenways can become part of the pedestrian network, creating an amenity out of this utilitarian drainage feature.
- **H** A community garden can be created on this vacant lot adjacent to the new community center. The produce grown could be sold at neighborhood shopfronts, or in Market Square.

RESTORE & REOCCUPY VACANT BUILDINGS

Complex ownership and heavy regulation have resulted in a large number of vacant buildings, creating safety concerns as well as eyesores along neighborhood streets. Many vacant buildings in the study area are owned by multiple owners, heirs of the original owners, making it difficult to reach consensus about basic actions (whom should live there, if the property should be rented, sold, etc). Such indecision can lead to vacancy, absentee ownership, and neglect.

A second potential cause of abandonment reported during the charrette was inability to fund needed maintenance due to the high cost of materials and construction methods necessary to meet historic preservation standards. While these standards are necessary to protect the historic resources, rules and procedures must make it more feasible to rehabilitate buildings and less financially attractive to neglect them.

One component of the solution may be creating programs to incentivize investment and catalyze restoration projects. Senator Louis Hill has created a bill (The Virgin Islands Historic Properties Preservation and Rehabilitation Act of 2010) which addresses many components of the historic preservation dilemma, including the facilitation of grants, loans, tax incentives, and other financial relief. An existing program in the Savan Enterprise Zone has helped address vacant buildings by boarding them up. This program could be enhanced to include initiatives for fix-up and rehabilitation. Other alternative programs could offer free rent (resulting in home occupancy) in exchange for maintenance of property.

Local contractors should be trained in historic restoration techniques so that renovations can be accomplished at a reasonable cost. This will also provide employment opportunities for local artisans.

REHABILITATION OF VACANT BUILDINGS

In the neighborhoods there is a need to restore vacant buildings, but this is difficult because of absentee owners or fragmented absentee ownership by heirs of original owners. Such vacant properties cause problems with squatters, suffer criminal trespass and sometimes stripping of the interior parts that are salable, and lower the vitality and safety of the neighborhoods in which they are located. At the same time, there is the desire to help existing owners retain property rights. While there are programs for the rehabilitation of buildings, legal issues involved with vacant properties make action difficult. During charrette discussions, a process was identified with the goal of restoring vacant buildings while also retaining the rights of absentee owners.

STEP 1: A revolving pool of money for rehabilitation funding is established by a government or not-for-profit agency.

STEP 2: Neighborhood groups identify vacant buildings.

STEP 3: DPNR sends notice to owner(s); a lien is filed due to blight or unpaid taxes.

STEP 4: A minimum rehabilitation plan (identifying what is needed to make the building livable) is created.

STEP 5: An offer is made to owner to pay the lien, finance rehabilitation, and amortize rehabilitation cost back to the owner at below market rates, if necessary. This could be set-up similar to a typical mortgage structure, allowing for a portion of future rents collected to pay the rehab cost off over time.

This offer will be contingent on median income rental rates after rehab (preventing owners from quickly flipping properties for profit, which could result in neighborhood gentrification).

STEP 6: If accepted by owner, perform the rehabilitation.

The goal of the suggested process is to retain property rights, to rehabilitate without gentrification, and to encourage local participation in neighborhood renovation. This process is just a suggestion presented as food for thought; the details of a real working strategy will need to be determined by the community and government. For the health and vitality of the Charlotte Amalie neighborhoods, addressing this challenge is essential.

Another solution may be to revise selected portions of the historic preservation standards – for example, removing certain provisions for interiors, and focusing primarily on the exterior facades (which contribute to the neighborhood's historic value). This would make it reasonable for people who live in historic structures without the means to pay for restoration (for whom a tax benefit would have no impact) to be able to afford to maintain their homes, and can reduce the number of properties that fall victim to demolition. Standards of the SHPO can be carefully evaluated to determine their associated cost implications and adjustments for acceptable substitutions could be made where possible.

In the case of already vacant properties, more proactive measures such as the acquisition (using condemnation, if necessary) or leasing of vacant parcels may be necessary in some circumstances. These parcels can be either returned to private ownership or used for public uses. Restoring a sense of ownership and pride to Charlotte Amalie's neighborhoods is an important component to spurring the investment of both time and money.

SAMPLE POCKET PARK DESIGN

Sample park design for the Intersection of Hospital Gade and Hospital Linien:

- A New plaza within historic ruins on high-traffic corner.
- B New plantings utilizing existing trees plus predominantly native plants.
- C Domino tables under existing shade tree.
- D New arched bridge across historic gut.
- E Pleasant seating areas provide space for gathering and relaxation.

CREATE HIGH-QUALITY NEIGHBORHOOD OPEN SPACES

Within each of the historic neighborhood quarters, there is a need for additional open spaces, for community gatherings, gardens, and rest/relaxation/recreation. These spaces could be enjoyed by residents as well as visitors. Creating open spaces does not require large land assembly; for example, vacant lots provide prime opportunity sites. In addition, the Form-Based Code will encourage the addition of small courtyards and plaza space on private parcels, which will add to the neighborhood supply of open spaces as individual properties choose to make improvements.

VACANT LOTS AS OPPORTUNITY SITES

Several vacant lots with potential for use as community open spaces were identified during the charrette, and depicted as such in the Illustrative plan; neighborhood groups could identify and nominate additional candidates to DPNR. Once the lots are acquired through purchase or lease, park designs should be created with public input. Neighborhood groups could organize a review of concepts to give feedback. Once the site plan is in place, funding could be sought from both private and public sources for construction and maintenance.

STEP STREETS AS A CULTURAL, HISTORIC, AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCE

In its over forty step streets, Charlotte Amalie has a unique cultural resource that is underutilized by many visitors and residents. Found in all three quarters, the historic steps are in varying physical conditions ranging from carefully restored and maintained steps with beautiful landscaping to cracked and broken steps with overgrown bush . The step streets and the freegangs which connect them to one another mid-block were historically used by town residents to move efficiently throughout the hilly town on foot. Today, many of the step streets are still in use by community resi-

dents. But, the state of disrepair and overgrown bush makes them unsafe. During the charrette, many community members communicated that the steps are an important part of the island's history and should be restored to be cultural resources. Marketing of the step streets as a historic and recreational amenity (including hosting new step street events, such as a 10K race) can further create appeal and identity. Restoration of these important resources can provide incentive for residents to consider in town living as they can reduce their dependence on the automobile to get to and from work and enjoy the healthful benefits of regular walking of the step streets.

The St. Thomas Historical Trust (STHT) has begun to carefully document and identify opportunities for rehabilitation of step streets. Members of the community (in particular, members of Downtown Revitalization, Inc., or "DRI") were encouraged by the idea of private "adoption" of step streets, with donations to restore each street made by private individuals or organizations. An important first step would be for the STHT to inventory repairs needed, and then a detailed cost estimate for each step street could be prepared. To facilitate the donations needed for repairs, a public/private partnership could be established between the government and non-profits such as the Community Foundation for the Virgin Islands (CFVI). Private sector donations to CFVI to pay for improvements would qualify for tax benefits; following restoration, the government department of Public Works would commit to continued maintenance of the repaired street. With a successful private-public partnership Charlotte Amalie's step streets can once again be a source of great civic pride.

The above diagram identifies the location of Charlotte Amalie's 45 step streets.

NEIGHBORHOOD GUTS AS GREENWAY CONNECTIONS

The "guts," or drainage ditches that separate each neighborhood quarter, are another prime opportunity for the creation of high-quality public spaces. Today, the guts simply function to carry water from the hilltop to the harbor, and many are in need of maintenance; the guts can be re-imagined as a source of civic art, as well as a recreational amenity. The guts are public lands that can be cleaned, replanted and enhanced to become green connections through town. Trails within these greens can further neighborhood connectivity.

Step street in the Queen's Quarter, existing conditions, December 2010

In the future (proposed): Community organizations and nearby residents can help maintain and restore step streets.

QUEEN'S QUARTER

Key Recommendations:

A See Chapter 5 for Waterfront Details.

B Vacant lots that front deteriorating step streets become viable for infill buildings once again when these areas are restored. New buildings should respect the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood.

C An infill building, which reflects the architectural character of the historic core, can mark this entry to town.

D Restored step streets can become part of a walking tour to explore the Queen's Quarter.

E Infill buildings respect the scale and character of the neighborhood.

F Improvements to neighborhood streets should prioritize pedestrian comfort. Sidewalks should be provided where possible, especially in mixed-use areas; grates should be used to cover drainage ditches to make walking possible as vehicles pass; and utilities should be placed underground to remove poles from the sidewalk.

G Vacant lots can be utilized for surface parking; in this case, minor site improvements such as a garden wall along the edge of the sidewalk, should be made to improve the pedestrian experience and define the streetwall.

H The guts can be re-planted and should include trails where feasible; these natural greenways can become part of the pedestrian network, creating an amenity out of this utilitarian drainage feature.

SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS

Throughout the charrette public support was expressed for the inclusion of schools or community centers in Charlotte Amalie's neighborhoods, resuming the strong tradition of neighborhood schools. Integrating these institutions within the neighborhood will provide opportunities for additional educational programs such as after school activities or evening classes. These types of activities help to increase community identity, pride, and safety.

Civic uses are essential to every vibrant neighborhood; the illustrative plan identifies several sites for civic purposes in each neighborhood. In particular, a site in the Upstreet neighborhood (on Bjerge Gade) that contains an existing parking lot was identified by community members as a site that had been allocated for a neighborhood school which was never built. During the charrette, a plan for the school was created, showing how the new building could be sited to contribute positively to the pedestrian realm. Pedestrian connectivity is especially important near neighborhood school sites.

Bjerge Gade in the Upstreet neighborhood, existing conditions, December 2010

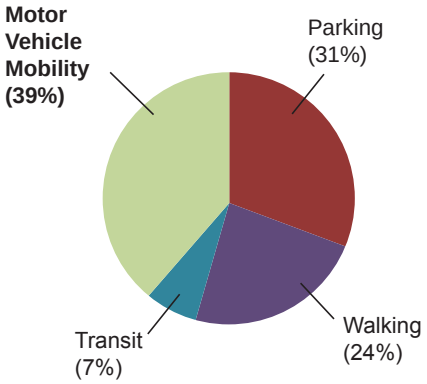
In the future (proposed): A neighborhood school is built on the site long-promised for this purpose in the Upstreet neighborhood. An additional structure could be placed in front of the existing basketball court to further define the street edge.

PROVIDE SMART PARKING SOLUTIONS

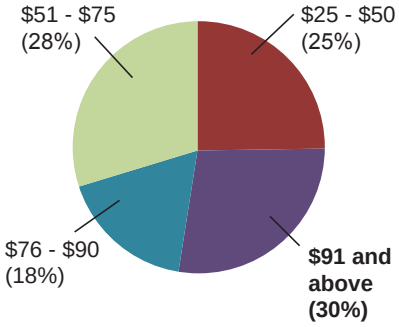
One of the major issues identified during the charrette is the need for improved parking solutions. An overall undersupply of parking exists, as does inadequate policies for existing parking. Parking problems downtown spill over into the neighborhoods; in addition, lot sizes and topographic change make parking on-site challenging for many lots. Two solutions identified during the charrette to alleviate neighborhood parking problems include instituting a parking permit program (for residential neighborhoods as well as downtown) and utilizing vacant lots as public parking locations.

A Neighborhood Parking Permit Program would give residents and businesses greater certainty about the availability of parking. These programs should be implemented on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis only where the program is desired and where there is sufficient support to monetarily administer the program. A parking pilot project on Crystal Gade is currently pending – this will be an opportunity to understand how to best implement a wider program for other areas.

WHICH ARE THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT MOBILITY FUNCTIONS FOR YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE?



WHAT DO YOU THINK IS A FAIR PRICE FOR A **YEARLY** RESIDENTIAL PARKING PERMIT?



Interactive keypad polling was used to gather input from community participants during the Work-in-Progress Presentation.

PARKING SOLUTIONS IN HISTORIC TOWNS AND CITIES

There are a number of parking permitting program examples in other historic, tourist cities that experience similar demand for parking as Charlotte Amalie. In Charleston, SC, for example, the City has established nine (9) districts (see image below). These parking districts operate like zones each with their own set of rules and regulations.

Savannah, Georgia's permitting program allows residents to park within a 1-street radius of their home, but not in front of a commercial building. These permits cost $125 per year.

The parking program in Key West, Florida allows residents living in the business district without off-street parking to park at meters, at a cost of $160 per year. Residents in Old Town can park in any residential space (free).

Parking Districts in Charleston, SC

KING'S QUARTER

Key Recommendations:

A See Chapter 5 for Waterfront Details.

B The existing canal could be rehabilitated with new sidewalks and landscaping to provide a pleasant walking experience.

C This site, long ago designated for a neighborhood school, could finally be used for that purpose. Providing neighborhood schools allows children to walk to school, provides convenient opportunities for adult education in the evening, and reinforces community pride.

D A "100% model" is created when infill buildings that define the streetwall and respect the historic context are placed on all four corners of an intersection. Concentrating efforts to create complete environments and demonstration areas is one way to make sure investment has a larger impact.

E A new VI Capitol complex could be sited atop this prominent hillside (*one of several sites under consideration*). The existing legislature building is inadequate to hold the offices and legislative functions needed today. If the health care uses located at this site today were to relocate closer to the hospital, it would become ideal for redevelopment. The new Capitol complex can provide a civic presence above the King's Quarter.

F Infill buildings on vacant lots respect the scale and character of the neighborhood.

G Improvements to neighborhood streets should prioritize pedestrian comfort. Sidewalks should be provided where possible, especially in mixed-use areas; grates should be used to cover drainage ditches to make walking possible as vehicles pass; and utilities should be placed underground to remove poles from the sidewalk.

CREATE WALKABLE, LIVABLE STREETS

One of the Big Ideas resulting from the charrette is to make walkability the first priority in design. This big idea sets the vision or foundation for transportation planning and design, and is supported by the objective of "creating walkable, livable streets." When rebuilt, streets should have a pedestrian-friendly scale maintaining the best features of the traditional street design.

A number of needed improvements for neighborhood streets were discussed during the charrette. Today, there is not a consistent network of sidewalks for pedestrians to navigate; where sidewalks are present they are often blocked by obstacles, either permanent (such as utility poles) or temporary (parked vehicles). Re-establishing a network of usable sidewalks will make it easier to walk through town. Placing utilities underground will not only clear pedestrian passageways but also upgrade aesthetics and boost community pride. Re-establishing the street wall on vacant parcels, through infill buildings or garden walls, will help to define a sense of enclosure. Pedestrian-scaled lighting along street edges is needed to improve safety in the evenings. In locations where sidewalks are not possible due to narrow rights-of-way widths, grates can be used to cover drainage gutters, making pedestrian activity possible.

Today, the physical width of streets is a challenge to walkability in town. When wide vehicles enter these narrow streets where no sidewalk is present, pedestrians must seek refuge on stoops or within building doorways. A potential solution to this problem is to limit vehicle sizes and types permitted on certain streets at certain hours, to increase livability. During the charrette, a program was discussed that would include color-coding vehicle type at the time of registration. A sticker would be placed on each vehicle's windshield. Streets would also be assigned a color, dictating the types of vehicles permitted there. This system would be easy to understand for users, and would make it easy to identify and enforce violations, and is one possible way to implement this concept.

The Form-Based Code for Charlotte Amalie will contain street standards, or regulations for the design of neighborhood streets. The street cross-sections will vary based on their intended application within Town, ranging from the neighborhood center context (most walkable areas) to the neighborhood edge context (most vehicular areas). The thoroughfares also vary by their configuration: number of lanes, direction of lanes and presence or absence of on-street parking, to fit within the existing building-to-building widths. A first draft of the specific configurations and dimensions recommended for each neighborhood zone is contained in Appendix B of this document. After review by DPNR, DPW, and the community, the final recommended street sections will become part of the Form-Based Code. Once adopted, these standards will be used to direct future street improvements in Town, ensuring that walkability is a design priority.

Drainage grates can be used to provide refuge area for pedestrians to step out of travel lanes.

FIVE STAR WALKABILITY RATING SYSTEM

What factors contribute to an excellent pedestrian experience? Observations and design know-how suggest the following prioritized features, the lowest number indicating the highest importance.

10. NARROWER STREETS
9. STREET TREES
8. LOWER TRAFFIC VOLUMES
7. SIDEWALKS
6. INTERCONNECTED STREETS
5. ON-STREET PARKING
4. LOWER TRAFFIC SPEEDS
3. MIXED LAND USE
2. BUILDINGS FRONTING THE STREET
1. SMALL BLOCK SIZE

These parameters have proven themselves in the field. When a majority of these are combined in one location, pedestrians are routinely seen. A one - to five-star walkability rating system can be used to describe the degree to which these parameters are applied to Charlotte Amalie's neighborhoods:

ONE-STAR – Outer edge of Town: The least amount of walkable policies are applied in more suburban, auto-dominant places.
TWO-STAR – Neighborhood Edge: Improvements within the thoroughfare right-of-way (transportation-only policies) are applied to achieve some walkability in a drivable setting.
THREE-STAR – Neighborhood General: Some land development pattern policies are also applied.
FOUR-STAR – Neighborhood Center: Significant land development pattern policies are combined with tested walkable thoroughfare design.
FIVE-STAR – Town Center: Maximum application of policies impacting transportation design and land development structure.

One- or two-star walkability requires the least amount of regulation, encouraging minimal walkability. Policies to achieve one- or two-star walkability take place only within the thoroughfare right-of-way and are "transportation-only" solutions. Three- to five-star walkability applies the most sophisticated policies to land development and transportation planning, encouraging the highest degrees of walkability. These policies have land use implications and alter the built environment inside and outside of the thoroughfare right-of-way.

ENHANCE DOWNTOWN & THE WATERFRONT 5

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The Charlotte Amalie waterfront is a premier tourist destination; it also serves as a work and recreation destination for many island residents. There is great opportunity to further enhance the physical and economic function of the waterfront area, to better serve these purposes. During *The Town's Blueprint* charrette, the following actions and priorities were identified:

MAKE VETERANS DRIVE A CATALYST FOR WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION

INTEGRATE PARKING AND TRANSIT

ATTRACT MORE RESIDENTS

PROVIDE WATERFRONT GREENS AND GATHERING SPACES

CONNECT TO HASSEL ISLAND

CONTINUE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE MAIN STREET

Additional detail demonstrating how to apply these recommendations to the waterfront area, including several alternatives for the design of Veterans Drive, can be found within this chapter. Implementation details are contained in Chapter 6.

MAKE VETERANS DRIVE A CATALYST FOR WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION

The planned investment in improvements for Veterans Drive is a tremendous opportunity to positively impact the Charlotte Amalie waterfront. Veterans Drive is a major component of the St. Thomas transportation network; it also serves as the interface between Charlotte Amalie and the waterfront, and is the first thing many visitors see when arriving on the island. This important thoroughfare must provide both capacity and character. In addition to facilitating the movement of cars, trucks, taxis, bicycles, pedestrians, and transit vehicles, it also establishes the ambiance of public spaces and quality of Charlotte Amalie's harbor vistas. The street design details are particularly important to the future of Charlotte Amalie and its relationship with the waterfront. Careful consideration must be applied when accessing potential improvements, to ensure they meet the above goals. Road designs that prioritize vehicular mobility at the expense of pedestrian comfort and placemaking could inadvertently damage the Town's character.

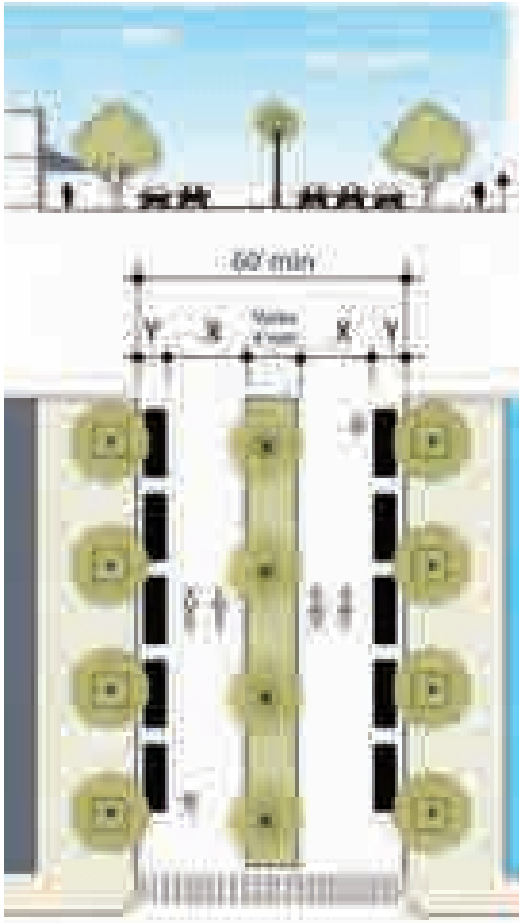
During the charrette week, many community members expressed concerns over the treatment of Veterans Drive and the waterfront. Since modifications to Veterans Drive have immense potential to positively or negatively impact the vitality and livability of Town, it became a topic of detailed study during the charrette. The community and the planning team identified several key design components to be included in future improvements, as well as options for vehicular mobility around the waterfront.

BEAUTIFICATION & WALKABILITY

The current configuration of the waterfront (a bare concrete apron and a vehicular street with limited pedestrian facilities) does little to enhance the waterfront experience or the view of Charlotte Amalie from the water. Many citizen planners expressed a desire for a more aesthetically pleasing, walkable, and accessible waterfront. Conversations with the Department of Public Works staff also revealed an interest and conviction to improve the character of the waterfront. Thus, the walkable design elements discussed focus on alternatives for success.

To achieve these goals, certain design details must be incorporated into future roadway and waterfront designs. Design elements such as street trees, pedestrian-scaled lighting, crosswalks, and ample sidewalks (especially fronting retail areas) must be included to increase pedestrian comfort and safety along the waterfront and to enhance its appearance. Street design details are vital to creating a walkable waterfront; pedestrians respond and react to the physical cues of public spaces. Motor vehicle speed and noise levels are strong contributing factors in the degree of livable design. Creating a more pleasant and memorable waterfront experience will help enhance St. Thomas' competitive edge in the tourism marketplace, will spur opportunity for additional retail, and will encourage the community to activate the water's edge.

During the charrette, a recommended street section for the redesigned Veterans Drive (west of Fort Christian and the Legislature Building) was created by the Dover-Kohl team. This section was based on the in-progress designs provided by DPW, with suggested refinements to be added as their drawings



Veterans Drive, recommended street section. This section can be modified (narrowed) to remove lanes of on-street parking where necessary, where space is constrained by existing buildings. Ample sidewalks and a waterfront promenade (20' - 30' wide typical) with street trees should be provided outside the curb-to-curb dimension shown.

RECENT PLANS FOR VETERANS DRIVE IMPROVEMENTS

Discussions regarding improvements to Veterans Drive on the Charlotte Amalie waterfront date back to the 1970s. The need to carry a high vehicular volume (due in large part to a lack of alternative routes) has yielded poor levels of service for motor vehicles during peak times of the day. Mobility is further constricted as the four-lane facility narrows to two-lanes between Fort Christian and the Legislature Building. In addition, although there are amazing harbor views, there are also narrow sidewalks in some locations, frequent waterfront parking lots, fast-moving vehicles at certain times of the day, large distances between crosswalks, and a lack of shade that produces a sub-par pedestrian environment.

Recent planned improvements under consideration by the Department of Public Works have focused on improving mobility operations along Veterans Drive and providing a four-lane "bypass" around the Legislature Building, constructed out into the Bay. This option routes four travel lanes (2 in each direction) on a newly built bridge around the Legislature peninsula.

The new bridge extending south of the Legislature Building is proposed to include two travel lanes in each direction of 11-feet each. A 16-foot raised promenade is planned for the south side of the street and a 9-foot shoulder for the north side.

PREVIOUSLY PROPOSED PLAN FOR VETERANS DRIVE "BYPASS OPTION"

Proposed plans by DPW call for improvements along Veterans Drive, including the following:

- Widen entire right-of-way
- Add a landscaped median
- Widen travel lanes to 11-feet each
- Widen promenade along the water
- Intersection improvement with signalization
- Begin two-lane east-bound at Tolbod Gade.

The design speeds for these improvements are near the 35mph threshold for pedestrian comfort. During the charrette, citizens voiced concerns about the potential for high speeds and also for the impact on waterfront views by building the bridge. In addition, there was widespread sentiment among citizen planners that Veterans Drive improvements must include a multi-modal approach.

Images this page prepared by Parsons Brinkerhoff for the USVI Department of Public Works

VETERANS DRIVE – PREVIOUSLY PROPOSED SECTION

VETERANS DRIVE PREVIOUSLY PROPOSED SECTION – NEW BRIDGE AROUND LEGISLATURE BUILDING BULKHEAD

become further detailed. The thoroughfare section includes four travel lanes (two in each direction) of 40 feet total and an on-street parallel parking lane of 8-feet. Sidewalks are widened to an ample 20 foot minimum, including a pedestrian promenade on the water side, and street trees.

Street trees will be an essential element of the new pedestrian-friendly Veterans Drive; selecting the correct species is important to ensure long life in the waterfront habitat. The Autograph Tree (see image, right) has many characteristics which make it an ideal choice for a street tree. It is native to the Virgin Islands, has an easy to maintain size and shape, and is very habitat tolerant. The trunks are readily pruned to create a wide umbrella shape and the desired height to allow views under and above the canopy while providing plentiful shade. The Autograph Tree can tolerate and recover from tropical storm conditions if the crown is appropriately thinned to reduce wind load prior to arrival of a storm. In addition, this tree is very attractive, with rich green foliage and decorative flowers and fruits.

An important suggested change to what has been planned to-date for Veterans Drive is the addition of on-street parking. There are many benefits of this, such as speed management and increased parking supply. Another benefit of parking on the main thoroughfare (instead of in off-street parking lots along the water frontage) is the facility will be more efficiently utilized for two uses. This exhibits a better use of public infrastructure, and also opens up the frontage space now dedicated to parking lots to more desirable uses, such as wide sidewalks, greens, and outdoor cafes.

DEDICATED TRANSIT/TAXI LANES

During critical rush hours (especially on days when multiple cruise ships are in Town), Veterans Drive is inundated with vehicular traffic. One straightforward way to optimize capacity is to encourage the use of transit, taxis, and other multiple passenger vehicles. This strategy improves travel time for the most efficient (highest occupancy) vehicle. The planned improvements should include dedicated lanes for high-occupancy vehicles (HOV) or transit/taxi vehicles to further aid the movement of passengers, at least during critical time periods. This improvement to Veterans Drive can be implemented almost immediately.

UPGRADING CAPACITY

Veterans Drive is currently a four-lane street through much of Charlotte Amalie; today, the cross section is reduced to two lanes as it passes between Fort Christian and the historic Legislature building. One of the greatest challenges facing the redesign of Veterans Drive is the desire to increase capacity to four travel lanes in this portion of Town. To achieve this goal, several interventions have been studied:

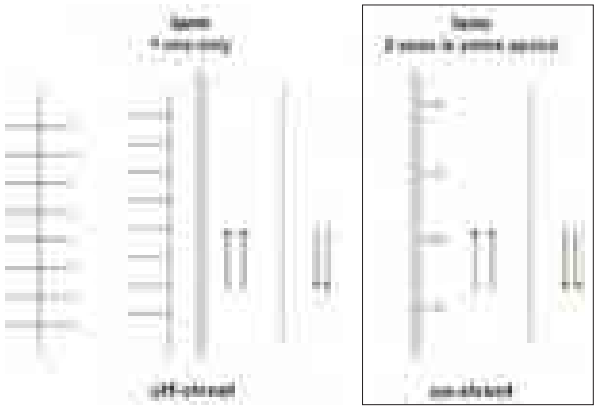
Network Component

One way to add capacity to the existing network is to open a section of new, two-lane street around the north side of the fort (referred to in this document as the "Network Component"). This would result in the addition of some collector street capacity in the east-west direction. This would also greatly enhance pedestrian and bicycle mobility.

Bypass Phase

In the future, if further capacity is needed, four travel lanes (2 in each direction) could be routed around the Legislature peninsula, either on a bridge

The Autograph Tree (*Clusia Rosea*) is native to the Virgin Islands and is an ideal tree species to be planted along Veterans Drive. *Photo source: Don Bailey*



Off-street vs. On-street Parking

The diagram at left shows the existing conditions along Veterans Drive today, with waterfront parking located immediately adjacent to the thoroughfare in separate parking lots. For comparison, at right the parking is located on-street. This provides easier access to parking, and managed vehicle speed.

UPGRADING CAPACITY AROUND THE LEGISLATURE

THE NETWORK COMPONENT

- **A** Fort Christian (existing)
- **B** Legislature Building (existing)
- **C** A new compact, two-lane street north of the fort would provide additional capacity.
- **D** Emancipation Gardens (existing)
- **E** Vendors Plaza could be enhanced with new structures (temporary or permanent) that are appropriate for the character of St. Thomas.
- **F** A parking garage, shielded from view by liner buildings, would provide additional parking in an efficient and aesthetically pleasing form.
- **G** A large, formal community green space can replace the existing parking lot, enhancing views to Fort Christian and serving as a gathering space for community events.

THE BYPASS PHASE

- **H** A reflective pool could be added west of the fort, replicating the historic relationship of the fort to water.
- **J** The Legislature building and its relationship to the waterfront, including the harbor views, remain as is (*Network Component*).
- **K** The two-lane street between the fort and Legislature remains; this could be a one-way street, acting as a pair with a new street to the north (C) or two-way street (*Network Component*).
- **L** A new four-lane street is provided around the edge of the Legislature point, to provide additional capacity. If constructed on fill, newly added land here could be used to create a signature community gathering space (*Bypass Phase*).
- **M** The area between the fort and Legislature could become pedestrian-only (*Bypass Phase*).

or on fill at the waters' edge. This strategy is currently being considered by the Department of Public Works. The Bypass Phase could be implemented with or without the Network Component.

There are several benefits to taking a phased approach. Due to the relatively minimal amount of intervention, the Network Component can be more easily implemented, while still increasing total capacity to a helpful degree. The shoreline and Legislature peninsula would remain in their current state, protecting the views enjoyed today. Post construction studies could evaluate network performance for all modes prior to undertaking the more substantial Bypass Phase. Automatic traffic counters could be placed in critical locations to monitor the situation. The Network Component still allows the option to construct the Bypass as a future phase, if needed.

Existing Conditions: Veterans Drive is currently a four-lane thoroughfare through much of Charlotte Amalie. Buildings on the waterfront often have parking lots in front, which face Veterans Drive. The street width is reduced to two lanes as the street passes between Fort Christian and the historic Legislature building.

Implementation of the Bypass Phase provides added capacity, and locates vehicles further from the historic structures. The layout of the Bypass provides the opportunity to remove the existing two-lane street between the Fort and Legislature building. This area could become a pedestrian-only zone, uniting these two historic treasures If fill is utilized at the waters' edge to construct the new roadway, the added land could also be utilized for a new signature public open space with waterfront views.

Technical Details to Consider

Due to the location of the Network Component, the proposed new street brings some additional vehicles into Town. Questions about the vibration effects of larger volumes of traffic in closer proximity to the historic buildings in this part of Town must be resolved. The precise alignment of the new street must be carefully considered to minimize impacts to existing buildings, public spaces, and infrastructure. This process will include an evaluation of property ownership along the intended configuration to aid in securing the necessary right-of-way. Consideration of enhancing walking, cycling, and transit should be part of this evaluation. Healthy downtowns encourage all travel modes.

The cost of the construction (either for a new bridge or fill) is a major consideration of the Bypass Phase. This new configuration would forever alter the relationship between the Legislature building and the water. A bridge structure, if utilized, would greatly impact the views from the harbor as well as views from within the Legislature peninsula.

If the Bypass Phase is implemented, special attention should be paid to the design details of the new street and its waterfront apron. Designs should strongly encourage appropriately low motor vehicle speeds; this can be accomplished through geometric design. Large, sweeping curves should be avoided in favor of straight segments connected by smaller radius curves which help manage driving speeds. The plan at right illustrates one potential configuration of the Veterans Drive Bypass. Since the street would essentially become the new waterfront edge, pedestrians should feel comfortable walking along it, and be able to experience the beauty of the Charlotte Amalie harbor. Small viewing platforms can be included at select intervals. In addition, the potential to create a new signature green space at the waters' edge, to be used for community gatherings (such as Carnival events) could be realized if utilizing fill to create the new roadway.

Potential Future Improvements, with the Network Component: A new, two-lane street around the north side of the fort is constructed to add additional capacity to the existing network. Pedestrian and bicycle mobility is greatly enhanced by a new waterfront promenade and enhanced sidewalks, and the addition of street trees and crosswalks. Wide sidewalks and waterfront greens replace surface parking lots in the fronts of buildings, providing space for gathering and outdoor dining.

Potential Future Improvements, including Veterans Drive Bypass: A future phase of improvements could include an additional four lanes of motor vehicle capacity around the Legislature peninsula. This phase would allow the existing street between the fort and the Legislature to become pedestrian-only. If utilizing fill to create the roadway, part of the newly-constructed waterfront edge could be used for a new community gathering space with views of the harbor.

CHARLOTTE AMALIE WATERFRONT (VETERANS DRIVE TO BACK STREET)

Key Recommendations:

A A signature gateway feature can be created here to mark a the entrance into Downtown Charlotte Amalie.

B On-street parking is added to the redesigned Veterans Drive; this helps to keep traffic speed at a pedestrian-friendly level, and is an efficient way to provide needed parking.

C Street trees, wider sidewalks, crosswalks, and a landscaped median improve the pedestrian environment along Veterans Drive.

D A new parking structure can be located on this site, which will help to free up waterfront surface parking lots for more desirable uses.

E Waterfront parking lots can become high-quality green spaces as alternative parking solutions (such as on-street parking and parking structures) are implemented.

F Over time, new buildings can be added to provide a public frontage to face streets and waterfront paks and greens.

G Small waterfront plazas that terminate north/south streets can be part of the newly-designed bulkhead.

H Vendors Plaza could be enhanced with new structures (temporary or permanent) that are appropriate for the character of St. Thomas.

J Harbor transportation can be an alternative to supplement existing ground transportation options.

K A new street connection added here can help to provide additional capacity to Veterans Drive; for more details see page 5.5 - 5.7.

L A new building can replace the vacant , unsafe structure located here. New buildings should follow precedents established by the existing historic structures for setbacks, heights, and massing.

M This existing canal can be improved with sidewalks and landscaping to provide a pleasing pedestrian connection between the Upstreet neighborhood and the waterfront.

N Infill buildings fill in vacant lots to complete the streetwall.

O A parking garage, shielded from view by liner buildings, provides additional parking in an efficient and aesthetically pleasing form. This additional parking will allow the adjacent parcels (today a surface parking lot) to become community green space. For more details see page 5.16.

P Refer to page 5.6 for detailed drawings of this portion of the waterfront.

INTERIM IMPROVEMENTS ON WATERFRONT PARCELS

The Illustrative Plan on pages 5.10 and 5.11 depicts a long-term vision for the Charlotte Amalie waterfront. In community meetings, many property owners expressed an interest in undertaking improvements to their property to implement the big ideas of *The Town's Blueprint*, including new plantings / beautification to enhance the public realm, providing new waterfront greens and gathering spaces, and making walkability a top priority. However, there was a reluctance to invest money in improvements on private property that may need to be replaced when future public improvements (such as the redesign of Veteran Drive) are implemented.

The sketches on this page were an initial "case study" of an example waterfront condition, showing how smaller, incremental improvements could be undertaken immediately, and still be consistent with the long-range vision.

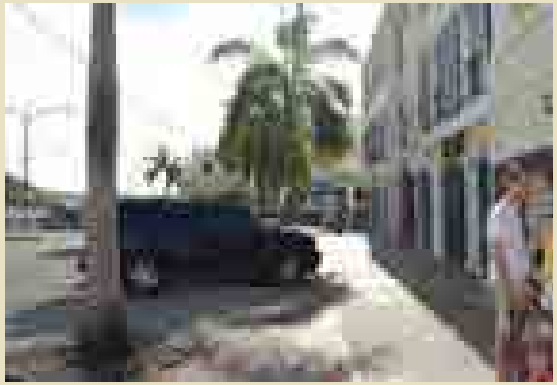


Image A (and pictured at left): Existing Conditions, Veterans Drive and Store Tvaer Gade. Existing surface parking lots in front of buildings, a typical condition along Charlotte Amalie's waterfront, detract from pedestrian continuity and the quality of the waterfront's public space.

Image B: The planned future addition of new parking structures could open up opportunities for sites such as these to begin to reduce some parking in front of buildings, and add new green areas - in this case planters, trees, and benches. Even before new parking structures are implemented, if property owners can demonstrate that this parking can be accommodated elsewhere, small-scale improvements such as this one (which includes the removal of seven parking spaces) could be implemented. This would greatly improve the pedestrian environment in front of waterfront businesses.

In this scenario, the row of parking closest to Veterans Drive remains.

Image C: A variation on image B, the above depicts additional parking converted to a plaza area, which could be utilized for outdoor dining. Depending on local parking demands / needs, this is another option for interim improvements that could be implemented in the short term.

Image D: A third variation, this image shows all of the waterfront parking removed from one parcel, expanding the new green / planting area. This would likely be most feasible once another source of public parking has been provided in the waterfront area (such as the planned waterfront parking garage on the Fort Christian parking lot). This option could be phased in as a second step to the improvements shown in image B.

Image E: This image shows the long-term vision for Veterans Drive, as depicted in the Illustrative Plan. The initial improvements shown in images B through D can remain, and work in concert with new street trees, on-street parking, and crosswalk enhancements to create a pedestrian-friendly, high quality public space.

INTEGRATE PARKING AND TRANSIT

A commonly-heard complaint during the charrette is that downtown today is inaccessible due to lack of parking and traffic congestion. The lack of parking in downtown results in parking problems for the surrounding neighborhoods during the day, and prevents many from outside the area from visiting downtown unless absolutely necessary. Common parking areas (including parking lots or structures, appropriately "lined" with inhabited spaces and screened from view) are needed to manage the existing parking crunch downtown. Parking solutions should be linked with transit, including a trolley/circulator and/or enhanced taxi service to serve downtown businesses, and to allow for remote employee parking for workers. Bringing pedestrians (residents, employees, and visitors) efficiently to the downtown/waterfront area is the desired goal.

STRUCTURED PARKING

In addition to the on-street parking as described as part of the Veterans Drive improvements, there will remain a need for greater supply, especially as the Town revitalization continues. Parking structures have been depicted in the draft Illustrative Plan in strategic locations where structures seem feasible. The Illustrative Plan demonstrates how these garages could be appropriately designed, with parking located in mid-block locations, and liner buildings facing primary frontages. Portions of the vision that include public functions (like public parking infrastructure) require public control of land, which can be accomplished if utilizing land government already controls, or by acquisition, land swaps, and/or long term leases of private land. There are a range of responses depending on the unique circumstances of each property. That is to say, the exact locations for public parking structures will be determined by individual property owners, and may not be exactly as illustrated in the vision documents. The important detail for implementation is that parking structures are built in locations where there is great demand (within walking distance of downtown destinations).

SMART PARKING REGULATIONS

Regulating the existing supply of parking to increase efficiency is another way of increasing available supply at any given time. Following input given by citizen planners and technical experts during the charrette, the following recommendations are made for consideration:

Duration

Proper parking timing is a major component of smart parking. Different land uses require different parking durations to ensure the most efficient use of the resource. Currently, there are few options in the Town other than 1 or 2 hour on-street, which is presently inadequate.

The Dover-Kohl team proposes that the Territory implement a neighborhood parking permit program in Charlotte Amalie (described in Chapter 4) and that public parking structures be built in the downtown/waterfront area. Once these two tasks are underway, the Town should start monitoring the use of on-street parking, specifically identifying the occupancy rate of spaces.

Donald Shoup (nationally-recognized parking expert) recommends the optimum occupancy rate at 85% (15% vacancy rate). The Town should consider implementing a fee to park, if more than 85% of the spaces are consistently occupied. The parking rate is too low if the occupancy rate is greater than 85% and too high if below. Shoup suggests the right price will emerge when the desired occupancy rate is achieved. Meters can be dynamic, offering a variety of prices for peak and off-peak hours, or even seasonally[1].

A hypothetical daily pricing scheme for meters follows:

Time of Day	Price Per Hour	Minutes per $0.25
Midnight – 6 a.m.	Free	
6 a.m. – 8 a.m.	$0.50	30
8 a.m. – 6 p.m.	$1.00	15
6 p.m. – midnight	$0.50	30

If fees become necessary, Charlotte Amalie could create a seasonal pricing scheme to optimize parking space availability and profit during peak seasons. This is a dynamic process requiring monitoring and adjustment. The typical practice of establishing the pricing could be as follows:

- Start with a range that is expected to yield an 85% occupancy rate (may look to other historic, tourist-friendly towns such as Savannah, GA and Charleston, SC for initial guidance)
- Monitor occupancy over short and long term
- Adjust rates accordingly to develop seasonal variation.

This strategy provides opportunities to utilize high season profits to recoup costs from lower season revenues. A seasonal scheme can also build-in parking holidays and be used during low season to attract more shoppers to the area.

[1] Pricing and parking occupancy information obtained from Donald Shoup. *The High Cost of Free Parking*. 2005. Chicago, IL: The American Planning Association. pp. 297-303.

STRUCTURED PARKING ESSENTIALS

The Charlotte Amalie waterfront must accommodate parking, but parking should be handled in smart ways so that it does not dominate the environment and detract from the historic character of the place. Real habitable buildings activate the public spaces they face, but exposed parking garages fail to do so. They have a sterilizing effect on the value of surrounding real estate. Parking should instead be located near the middle of blocks so that the valuable street edges and waterfront are reserved for urban architecture or green space. Parking lots and structures should be lined with buildings so that parking does not visually dominate the street scene or public spaces. This is particularly crucial in waterfront locations. Lining parking structures with multi-story habitable space is crucial to natural surveillance and liner buildings provide an opportune location for housing, offices, retail, and small businesses. Any parking garage should meet minimum architectural requirements to be harmonious with Charlotte Amalie's architectural character and should be lined with habitable space.

If liners on all sides of the garage are not feasible due to existing site constraints, an exception could be made on minor street frontages (frontages that are not facing the waterfront; a park, plaza, or other community gathering space; or streets with high volumes of pedestrians). In this circumstance, architectural treatments should be used to conceal the appearance of the garage. Garage ramps should never be visible from the street; openings should be vertically-oriented of a similar size and proportion to windows on surrounding buildings, and may be covered with architecturally-appropriate grates.

Parking structures should be organized with public parking allowed on the bottom floors. Reserved spaces for employees in the area should be restricted to a very few for department heads only. Other monthly-paid employee parking should be open without specific reserved spaces, on the upper floors.

Rates within parking structures should be priced to maintain 80% occupancy. Ideally, parking structure rates are lower than on-street parking, to incentivize their use. As on-street parking is currently free within the downtown, this will not be the case. Should the Town begin charging for on-street parking, they should work to ensure the price differential is optimal in encouraging use of the parking structures. Different than residential permits, parking structures should be licensed to hunt versus reserved spaces; parking permit by color of permit (maybe some reserved spaces for department heads); paid public parking on bottom floors.

Architectural detailing can be used to conceal parking structures on minor street frontages. (Rollins College, Winter Park, FL)

A liner building separates the garage from the street. (Mizner Park, West Palm Beach, FL)

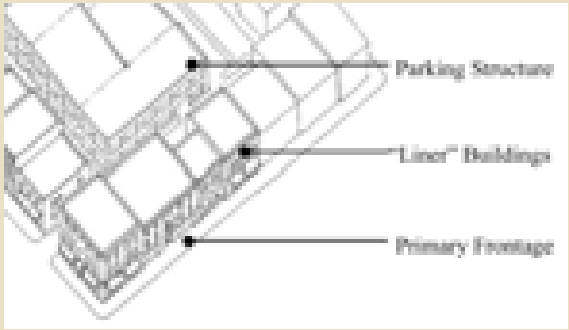


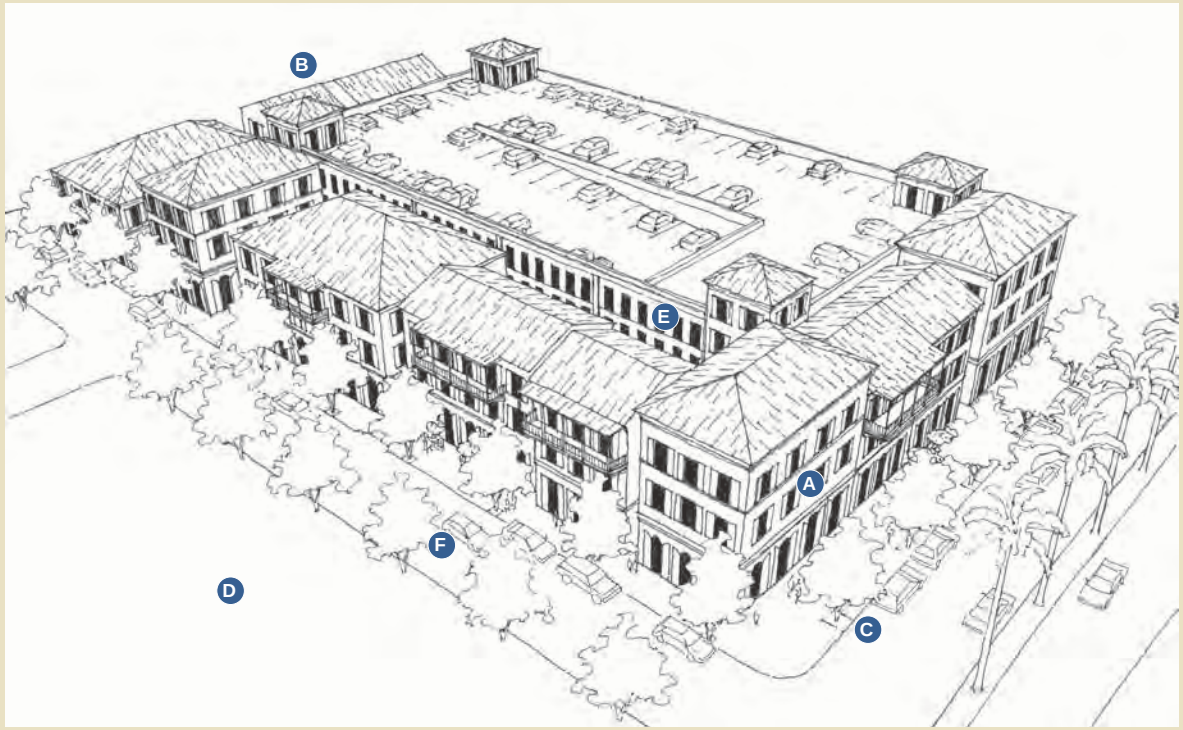
Diagram showing correct placement for liner buildings

STRUCTURED PARKING ADJACENT TO FORT CHRISTIAN

In March 2011, the USVI Senate considered bills to add parking in the waterfront area and implementation of a new passenger fee that could help finance the improvements. The Senators' proposed solution, supported by DPW, was to put fees collected from the Fort Christian Parking Lot toward a new multilevel parking structure on the site of the existing surface lot.

At this time of this report, the GVI and DPW is assembling a request for qualifications (RFQ) seeking to form a public-private partnership to develop, construct and manage a parking facility on this site.

The addition of this new parking structure is an exciting opportunity to implement many of the concepts contained in The Town's Blueprint. Key ideas for the form and design of the structure, consistent with the priorities expressed by the community and with the draft Charlotte Amalie Form-Based Code, are shown at right. The potential garage footprint location in plan view (with habitable liner buildings) is included in the illustrative plan on page 5.11.



A Habitable liner buildings are located in front of the garage facing the waterfront and newly-created park space. Liner buildings should be tall enough to shield view of the garage, and could contain a mixture of uses, including vendors / shopfronts, offices, and / or lodging

B Existing buildings can be used to line the facade of the garage from Norre Gade

C A reconfigured Veterans Drive contains on-street parking, which supports ground floor retail uses in garage liner buildings.

D Large community open space/green provided adjacent to Fort Christian

E Garage facades that do not have liner buildings shall have architectural treatments compatible with Charlotte Amalie's existing historic buildings; ramps shall not be visible from the exterior, and openings shall be vertical (with screens or grates to conceal view of interior parking)

F Garage footprint placement / orientation allows space for potential future street connection between Fort Christian and the new garage, as illustrated in plan view on page 5.11.

The following pricing categories could be considered to start, based in part on comparable rates in similar cities:

- Off-peak season (define dates) - $0.75 per hour
- Mid-peak season (define dates) - $1.00-1.50 per hour
- Peak season (define dates) - $2.00 per hour

Parking meters have advanced considerably and do not need to mar the aesthetics of Charlotte Amalie's fine streets. Specifically, if needed, Charlotte Amalie could install pay and display meters for fee collections. These meters differ from traditional single space parking meters in that one machine can service a much higher number of vehicles. The meters reduce sidewalk clutter and personnel costs of maintaining the meters. Meters are also technologically capable of altering the fees based on season as described above.

Another parking issue for Charlotte Amalie, which is common to most vibrant towns, is the use of on-street parking by employees of adjacent businesses. While this is common, it can be corrected through regulation by business owners. Business owners must incentivize employees using proposed structures or lots to free up on-street spaces for customers. Incentives could include discounts or subsidized parking.

As incentive for the business owner, studies have shown that a single parking space in front of a business can yield significant sales annually to that business. Bob Gibbs, considered one of the leading American urban retail planners, estimates that one parallel parking space can yield $125,000 - 250,000 annually in gross annual sales for the adjacent business, depending on the number of daily turnovers[1]. Gibbs states that each stall directly supports one small, urban business. Therefore, merchants cannot afford to have on-street parking occupied by employees or staff.

Loading Zones

Common to vibrant towns, like Charlotte Amalie, are parking issues that arise from the number and location of loading zones. To better regulate this use, the Town should constantly monitor all Town-approved loading zones, at least annually, to determine if:

- the location is still good
- the land use still requires loading or
- if specific loading times could be applied.

As these zones are established, regulation of loading zones must be enforced as attentively as public parking is by parking attendants.

Enforcement

The degree to which these parking policies will successfully improve Charlotte Amalie's parking and mobility, is based on the "Three Es": engineering, education, and enforcement. The design and engineering of the complete transportation system, including parking and where it is located, has to be done properly. The public has to be educated and understand the expectations for parking (i.e., where is it, how much does it cost, how long, etc.). The internet and mobile applications are serving this purpose very well in many similar cities and towns. If the engineering/design and education are done properly, parking policies become significantly easier to enforce.

[1] Information provided by Bob Gibbs of Gibbs Planning Group. www.gibbsplanninggroup.com

TAXI/TRANSIT

Public transit can play an important role to increasing mobility downtown, reducing the needed amount of parking, or providing linkages between parking resources and downtown destinations. The major mode of public transportation in Charlotte Amalie today is the private taxi system. Though there are some government-funded transit bus routes, many visitors and residents alike prefer the "safari bus" taxis as they are the only source of connections to popular destinations. Taxis are vital in moving a large number of tourists and residents around the island, particularly downtown, but the number and size of the safari buses impedes on other users. Motorists and pedestrians are often placed in uncomfortable situations when passed by these oversized vehicles.

The taxi organizations offer a great source of manpower and infrastructure to operate as a more formal transit system for the island. This is a labor force that is trained and motivated. While there is an established Taxi Commission and an organization of taxi groups (Taxis-in-Unity), there seems to be a lack of individual taxi management. Routes are not well established, or are not used by drivers if they exist. Pick-up locations are random. The current system causes traffic congestion and hinders mobility in Town while simultaneously failing to maximize the efficiency and profits of the individual driver-owners. If travel to Charlotte Amalie continues to grow, the system, which appears to have reached a point of counterproductive congestion, will be unable to respond. There is a series of steps that could increase efficiency, lower congestion, improve business for retail, increase access for local islanders and produce more profitable trips for drivers.

RECOMMENDATION #1: ORGANIZED TAXI STAND

First, an organized taxi stand program should be implemented articulating where taxis can stop, utilizing standard queuing employed all over the world. This is especially applicable in the waterfront area of Charlotte Amalie, along Veterans Drive and Main Street.

Today, Main Street is often very congested due to taxis driving at walking speed to pick up tourists. This can be remedied by specifying pickup and drop off to avoid Main Street use by taxis. (This will require a legislative change, as there is an outdated public safety law mandating a set number of dedicated taxi spaces on Main Street). Taxi staging areas along the waterfront can be added that will allow efficient pickup and drop-off of cruise customers by adding dedicated taxi pullout staging as a part of the redesign of Veterans Drive. This would reduce traffic elsewhere, relieve congestion on downtown streets, and guarantee full taxis with reduced travel time by having an orderly process for pickup and drop-off. As part of this reorganization it is suggested that machines to dispense taxi vouchers could be installed at staging areas. Tourists would know to return to their drop-off location and be ready to board without having to exchange cash. Such an innovation would allow tourists using credit cards to avail themselves of the taxi services without any confusion about rates.

An improved taxi system would also produce another result that is beneficial for local business. To get to the waterfront staging locations, many more tourists would use the small alleys between the waterfront and Main Street (as opposed to being picked up on Main Street). Increased foot traffic would increase business in shops located along the alleys and increase the potential for new business locations there. The impact of large numbers of tourists passing by areas that are currently more lightly used cannot be underestimated.

RECOMMENDATION #2: SIX-STAGE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

A second recommendation is for the government to implement its funded six-stage certification program for drivers (training, customer service, crime prevention, ADA, first aid, and culture/history training). This would not only further assure that all drivers are competent, but also make each driver capable of acquainting tourists with the historic features of Charlotte Amalie and widen their prospects beyond those who only want to return to their cruise ships, adding a potentially lucrative market segment to their business.

RECOMMENDATION #3: TAXI DELEGATION

A third recommendation is to further formalize the use of taxis as the preferred system of public transit by establishing a form of delegation, whereby the government provides the infrastructure (streets) but delegates the maintenance and operation of vehicles to the private sector (taxi organizations and owners). The goal of this is to find a better balance between the less-regulated and less reliable taxi driver (safari system) and the expensive government transit system alternative. This delegation of authority is not only practical from a cost perspective, it is contextually sensitive, in that it is sensitive to the political reality and strength of the existing taxi system. If taxis are to serve as the preferred method of public transit, they should agree to the following rules:

- Continue permit caps, to regulate the number of taxis in operation.

Typical "Safari Bus" taxi in Charlotte Amalie

- Pass vehicle safety inspections. A number of federal programs exist, making it easy to purchase transit vehicles. Doing so would require standard inspections and short-term leases to a specific number of taxi organizations. This would help regulate the number of taxi vehicles in operation and ensure their safety. New transit vehicles owned and driven by taxi drivers could replace the safari buses, which do not meet standard vehicle safety regulations.
- Begin to have different divisions with individual taxis taking on certain routes. For instance, some would take the longer airport route, others the cruise route, while others travel up and down Veteran's as a loop trolley. These different routes could be highlighted by different vehicle design.

The government's lack of interest in implementing another form of transit should give taxi organizations incentive to undertake these changes. If these changes cannot be realized, other transit systems to better meet the needs of residents and tourists should be explored and implemented.

HARBOR TRANSPORTATION

During the charrette week, many participants advocated the use of water transportation to supplement ground transportation. The waterfront provides an opportunity to move people around the island without contributing to congestion on already busy roads. There are numerous precedents for water transportation found in the Caribbean and around the world. The ability for ships to pull directly up to bulkhead adjacent to Veterans Drive makes Charlotte Amalie an ideal candidate to implement this mode of travel.

In the past, there has been resistance to harbor transportation, or "water taxi," in the Charlotte Amalie harbor by the existing taxi organizations, due to concern over loss of passengers to this new transit option. Operation of a water taxi requires a watercraft license, which existing taxi drivers do not have, making it difficult for existing drivers to take advantage of potential profits earned by this new transit option. However, there could be a way to make harbor transportation a win-win solution for all concerned. One idea proposed during the charrette was a profit-sharing structure to allow land taxi organizations and drivers to benefit from water taxi profits. In addition, by removing some of the congestion from the roadways (particularly during critical rush hours when cruise passengers are departing and returning to the ship), land taxis will be able to move more quickly between destinations, potentially increasing the number of passengers they could accommodate in that timeframe (and thereby increasing profits as well).

There are many details to be worked out to make harbor transportation a reality for St. Thomas, including the types of vessel and organizational structure. However, due to the limited ways in which road capacity can be improved, and the ever-increasing demands for better mobility for both residents and tourists, the waterfront seems an obvious solution which should be pursued.

ATTRACT MORE RESIDENTS

Today, the downtown/waterfront area is essentially vacant after 6pm, when cruise passengers return to their ships for the day. Attracting a residential base to this area is desirable for a number of reasons. A larger residential base can support stores offering a variety of goods, open into the evening. A larger variety of commercial offerings will in turn increase the allure of downtown for both locals and visitors.

Barriers to attracting residents to this area were presented during the charrette, including a lack of accessibility and safety. Potential solutions for downtown accessibility (parking and vehicular mobility) are described in detail in the previous paragraphs. Having residential units downtown could actually be a part of the solution, as Town dwellers would be able to walk to shops and offices, thereby reducing the number of vehicles on the road or needing to find parking at any given time.

If downtown is to become an attractive destination again for more residents and businesses, safety will need to be addressed. Safety is a basic pre-requisite for neighborhood stability and commercial success. As visitors, the Dover-Kohl team received many warnings about venturing downtown after dark, and those warnings were reinforced often particularly in reference to the Back Street area. The following are suggestions to increase safety in downtown:

- Institute police and security patrols from the waterfront to Back Street;
- Make monitoring and patrols 24 hours to assure safety at all hours;
- Review the potential for private security paid by downtown merchants to add to public efforts;
- Implement valet parking for apartment buildings or restaurants open after 8 pm so that residents and customers stay within a patrolled safety zone; this could be financed by homeowners dues or merchants associations;
- Add pedestrian scale lighting so that there are no dark corners or doorways.

If parking, transportation, and safety concerns can be solved, then downtown will become a desirable place for additional residential units, including households of many income levels. This residential base will revitalize Charlotte Amalie after nightfall. The addition of more people to the downtown afterhours will itself also increase safety, providing needed "eyes on the street", a proven crime deterrent.

PROVIDE WATERFRONT GREENS AND GATHERING SPACES

There was strong sentiment during the charrette that residents of Town and visitors be better connected with the waterfront. Part of the solution may be found with the planned improvements to Veterans Drive, increasing pedestrian access to the area. In addition, the provision of waterfront greens and gathering spaces will help residents and visitors alike better appreciate the amazing beauty and amenity of the harbor.

Waterfront parking lots along Veterans Drive, existing conditions

Veterans Drive, in the future: Improvements can include street trees and on-street parking to replace waterfront parking lots. This efficient configuration of parking provides space for wider sidewalks, waterfront greens, and outdoor dining.

Vendors Plaza, December 2010

Example of an outdoor market in Sydney, Australia

Part of the improvements to Veterans Drive include a waterfront promenade. As this area is designed, it could also include small greens or plazas at the water's edge. These greens or plazas could be located at the terminus of neighborhood/waterfront streets, designed for active (accommodating gatherings or vendors) or passive (seating/viewing areas) uses.

The redesigned waterfront parking lots as parallel or angled parking along Veterans Drive provides a great opportunity for wide sidewalks, greens, and outdoor cafes in front of waterfront buildings. The replacement of parking with high-quality outdoor space will greatly improve the function and aesthetics of the waterfront.

Vendors Plaza, an existing waterfront gathering space, is a Charlotte Amalie landmark well-known to the community and tourists that visit the island. During the charrette there was strong community consensus regarding the need to improve the plaza aesthetically, and varying opinions on how this could be achieved. The alternatives discussed include:

- Maintain the plaza's current use for vendors, but make aesthetic improvements to the temporary structures that are used for shelter. Public sentiment that supported this option felt the ability to remove the structures and use the space for other purposes (such as a staging area during Carnival) was essential.
- Maintain the plaza's current use for vendors, but provide permanent structures designed to fit the historic architectural character of Charlotte Amalie. Permanent structures give more options to greatly improve the aesthetics of the plaza.
- Relocate the vendors to an alternate location within Town, allowing the plaza to be used for recreational and community uses. Suggested locations include the first floor of a planned parking structure (on the site of the existing waterfront surface lot) or to a new building just west of the plaza (currently occupied by an uninhabitable building). There was concern voiced by some that moving the vendors into a building would irrevocably change the function and atmosphere of the Vendors Plaza marketplace.

Whichever alternative is chosen, it is most critical that the aesthetics of this highly-visible plaza be tasteful and reflective of the best of St. Thomas and the USVI. The final layout could be a combination of the above approaches, and include both temporary and more permanent features.

CONNECT TO HASSEL ISLAND

In 1978 the Virgin Islands National Park was expanded to include Hassel Island, a small island located in St. Thomas' Charlotte Amalie Harbor. In recent years, the Saint Thomas Historical Trust and the Friends of the VI National Park have been working with the National Park Service to restore and preserve the island's historic sites. Today, limited hiking and kayaking activities are permitted on the island.

The National Park Service is currently working on a plan to expand access to the island for locals and tourists alike. Kayaks or boat tours could depart from Frenchtown marina or the Charlotte Amalie waterfront and arrive at up to three landing points on island. From there, visitors could enjoy hiking, kayaking, guided tours of historic areas (such as the Creque Marine site) and other park-based activities. Special four-hour excursions could be arranged

for cruise ship passengers, adding an exciting new option for visitors to St. Thomas to consider. The Park Service estimates these expanded activities could be offered as early as January 2013.

The Charlotte Amalie waterfront area could benefit from increased activity to and from Hassel Island. If the point of departure is located directly along the waterfront apron, the increased activity could mean increased business for restaurants and shops. A land-based organization (such as the Fort Christian Museum) could sell tickets, and perhaps feature an exhibit on the history of the island. Local businesses and non-profits will need to coordinate with the National Park Service in the coming years, so that when increased connectivity to Hassel Island becomes available, it can be mutually supportive to businesses and living along the Charlotte Amalie waterfront.

CONTINUE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE MAIN STREET (DRONNINGENS GADE)

Main Street plays an important role in the identity of historic Charlotte Amalie; it is a destination for tourists and a recognizable center for residents, historically functioning as a community hub and primary shopfront destination. Today, Main Street does not function at its full potential, with narrow sidewalks obstructed by utility poles, overhead utilities, and no shading devices (trees or awnings) to give shelter to pedestrians. The narrow building-to-building dimension limits options for improvements. In addition, during the day the one-way travel lane is often obstructed by slow-driving taxis endeavoring to attract passengers for rides to the cruise ships.

There have been many ideas for Main Street improvements over the years. The latest plan, completed by a group led by Jaredian Design Group for the Department of Public Works, proposes many positive improvements. The plan includes a widened sidewalk (approximately 7 to 9 feet on each side), undergrounding of utilities, pavers for street and sidewalk, and the introduction of palm trees.

These plans should continue to be pursued, as they would result in a greatly improved pedestrian environment and highly functional Main Street environment. As the designs are refined, careful attention should be given to the dimensions of travel and parking lanes. The Dover-Kohl team detailed street sections for the draft form-based code that utilize the positive features of this current plan. The sections vary in that one allows an option for one-street parking to remain, while the second option offers only a single lane of travel with no parking, allowing for expanded sidewalks. Both sections strive to achieve the goals of increased pedestrian comfort, improved aesthetics and better overall function. As the design for Main Street is refined, this decision (whether or not to include on-street parking) will dictate the dimensions of the travelway.

There is currently a law that mandates a set number of taxi parking spaces be included on Main Street; this law would need to be changed if parking was to be eliminated. Charrette participants supported this amendment in exchange for establishing designated taxi pick-up and drop-off locations in other waterfront areas or even on Main Street, itself. Minimizing taxi parking, through designation of stands and improved management, would help to reduce congestion on Main Street. However, all parking need not be eliminated. Economic research

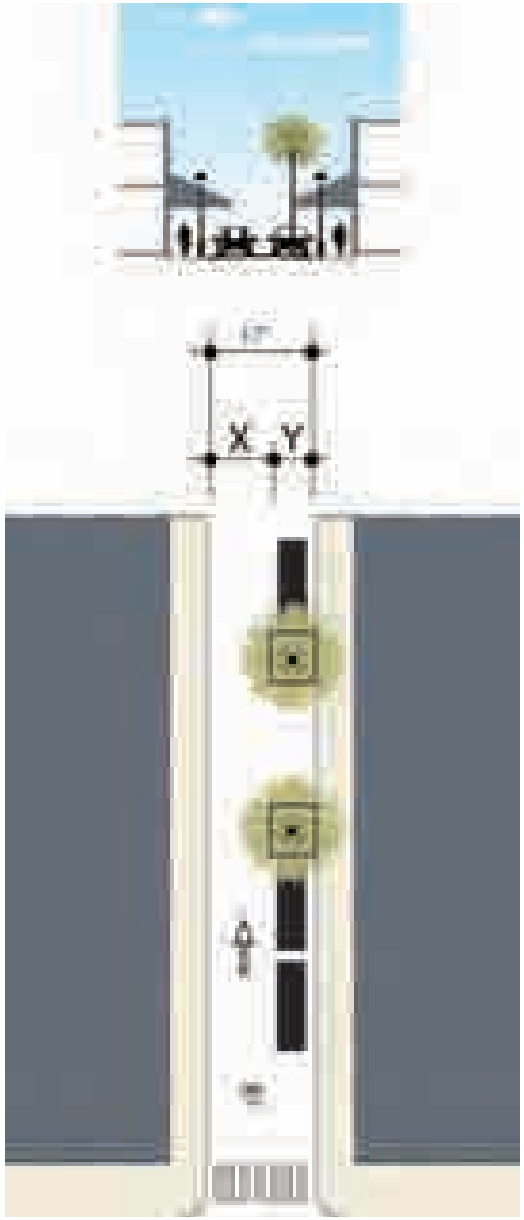
Main Street, existing conditions

Main Street Beautification Plan rendering prepared by Jaredian Design Group

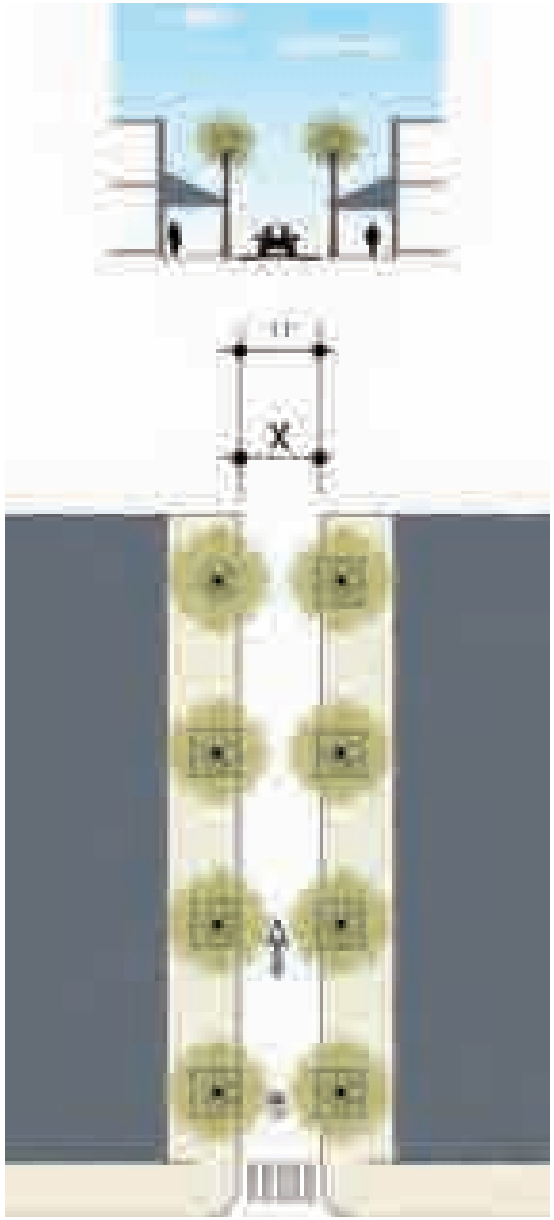
has shown that Main Street storefronts generally greatly benefit by the presence of on-street parking. Thus, it should be preferred that parking be provided, if it is properly managed. The trade-off in this case is the extra 6 feet (3 feet on each side) of sidewalk that could be gained by eliminating parking.

If Main Street is to have on-street parking, there are a couple of design details that are recommended; first, the section must be wide enough to accommodate both a parked car and a moving vehicle. The recommended dimension is 17 feet (10 feet for travel lane and 7 feet for parked vehicles). If the roadway is narrower than this, it may result in vehicles parked on sidewalks, or no vehicles parked at all (resulting in a much wider travel lane), neither of which is desirable. If there are no parked vehicles present, moving vehicles will utilize the entire paved area, and will feel comfortable moving at much higher speeds than desired. Also, it is important that the spaces be clearly striped as well, to further instruct motorists and for easier enforcement.

Street tree plantings are another important design detail to consider. The need for landscaping and shade is important in the Caribbean climate; the current proposal contains palm trees in planters along the sidewalks. Palm trees are often the planting of choice in tropical Main Street environments, as the canopy is tall and does not block signage on shopfronts. If on-street parking is included, street tree plantings could be used to define the limits of parking areas. By locating the trees in planters that occur in line with parking spaces, the limited sidewalk area will be less constrained. If parking is included on Main Street, it is recommended that landscaping also occur in this zone, to maximize sidewalk space for pedestrians.



Main Street, Option 1 (one way travel with on-street parking, trees in parking lane)



Main Street, Option 2 (one way travel with widened sidewalks, trees in tree wells)

NEXT STEPS 6

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The vision for Charlotte Amalie has been documented in the preceding chapters of this report through plans, illustrations, and text. This chapter identifies the necessary steps for realizing the place depicted in the imagery, transforming the community vision into reality.

The following steps summarize planning strategies, policy recommendations, community involvement opportunities, and various funding mechanisms that can be used to implement the vision. Those steps identified as priorities for the near-term have been described in the beginning of this chapter; longer-term initiatives are also included toward the end of the chapter.

It should be noted that there are several ideas and recommendations in chapters 4 and 5 of this report regarding where future uses could be located (such as relocating of the Legislature to create a new VI Capitol complex, and ideas regarding the future location of vendors currently at Vendors Plaza). These are not included as specific initiatives in this chapter as there are still many details to be resolved before any change can take place. When more details are known, proposals such as these should be evaluated for consistency with the vision and big ideas outlined in this document before approval.

NEAR-TERM INITIATIVES

The following actions (some of which are already in-progress) could be undertaken immediately to begin to realize the vision for historic Charlotte Amalie:

1. ADOPT THE VISION

The Town's Blueprint charrette established a strong foundation of core principles and main ideas that can guide future revitalization and regulation in Charlotte Amalie. Following-up on the charrette, in March 2011, the refined vision and draft Form-Based Code concepts were presented to the community, and updates and revisions made based on input received.

A next logical step would be for the main ideas of the vision to be adopted (in concept) by the Government of the Virgin Islands, either by executive order or by act of legislature. This will send an important message to property owners and residents that the Territory and community support the vision and intend to implement the Big Ideas. By adopting the vision, DPNR staff will have a clear direction to instruct future applicants to meet these goals. The subsequent Form-Based Code, which can be adopted at the time of the overall Zoning and Subdivision Code Revision, will transform the vision into clear and concise regulations to guide future development in the historic core. Adopting the vision will establish support of the proposed policies and initiatives in this interim time period, and help to facilitate implementation.

2. ADOPT THE FORM-BASED CODE

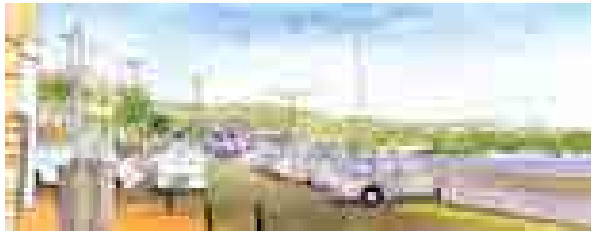
The VI Zoning and Subdivision Update will contain a provision to enable the creation of Form-Based Code Districts in the Virgin Islands. Once this code is adopted (projected for early 2012), it will be possible for the Charlotte Amalie District Code to then be adopted, to guide land use and preservation in the historic core.

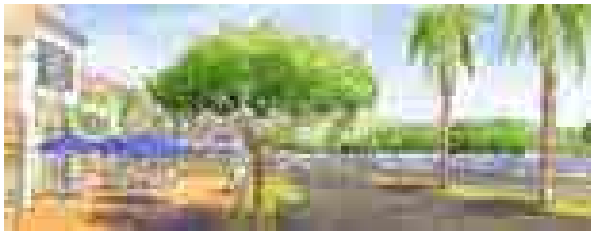
A Form-Based Code would allow by-right development of property in congruence with standards set forth in the code, and eliminate the guessing game often associated with conventional zoning. Appropriate regulations that are supportive of community-endorsed planning policies can encourage development by providing clarity and certainty. By establishing clear standards that support the community's vision and provide a visual guide to design criteria, people can also be assured that infill development will be desirable, not harmful, to the character and function of the historic Town.

3. USE VETERANS DRIVE IMPROVEMENTS AS A CATALYST FOR REVITALIZATION

Leveraging the dollars to be spent on public infrastructure is a way to improve conditions for residents and businesses within existing budgets and plans that would be undertaken in any case. Most infrastructure design is merely utilitarian, but the expenditure can do much more. An example of this is the planned improvements for Veterans Drive; if the redesign of the roadway creates needed motor vehicle capacity, and also provides needed pedestrian improvements and a better interface between the town and waterfront, this will be an advantage for all concerned.

The current conditions along Veterans Drive consist of a series of broken parking lots and congested traffic that acts as a barrier between downtown and the harbor. To support the vitality of downtown it is necessary that any public infrastructure investments reinforce the sense of authenticity and the character of downtown. A reconfigured Veterans Drive can act as an economic engine; the design details suggested in *The Town's Blueprint* create an attractive boulevard that will improve access for island and local traffic and improve pedestrian access. The improvements will create the setting for a reconfigured first-class waterfront that will add to the value of businesses and increase opportunities for residents and tourists to enjoy





For more information on Making Veterans Drive a Catalyst for Revitalization, please refer to pages 5.3 – 5.9.

the unique beauty of the harbor. It is essential that the design details described (wide sidewalks, street trees, on-street parking, crosswalks, pedestrian-scaled travel lanes, etc.) be incorporated into the planned improvements.

A reconfiguration of Veterans Drive can set the stage to make the Charlotte Amalie waterfront a world-class destination and set the stage for further urban improvements downtown.

4. IMPLEMENT WALKABLE, LIVABLE DESIGN CONCEPTS

A part of realizing the vision will include implementing road and infrastructure improvements that accommodate all modes of travel: pedestrian, bicycle, automobile, taxi, and bus, with no single use taking priority. In addition, roadways can be designed not merely as traffic conduits, but as generators of economic benefit for those areas served by the improvement.

The draft Form-Based Code prescribes specific thor-

oughfare sections to be used in the Charlotte Amalie district that meet the above goals for multi-modal design. Once the code is adopted, these standards can be used to guide new improvements. In the interim, the Department of Public Works should consider adopting a policy to evaluate all road improvement projects according to the new ITE manual for context sensitive design, Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities, available by download from ITE at http://www.ite.org/bookstore/RP036.pdf. This manual demonstrates how context sensitive concepts and principles should be applied in roadway improvement projects, to be consistent with the given physical setting. The document was produced by the Institute of Transportation Engineers in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency and in partnership with the Congress for the New Urbanism.

Funding for planning for neighborhood sustainability and walkability is available from the Housing and Urban Development Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities. Over $100 million in funding has been made available for these efforts. Funding specifically for the design of context sensitive infrastructure is available through TIGER Community Challenge grants from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Department of Transportation Surface Transportation Discretionary Grants may be available for infrastructure funding. It is important to note that the status of all grants is uncertain at this time; the current congressional effort to reduce funding may eliminate these sources.

5. IMPLEMENT SMART PARKING SOLUTIONS

Neighborhood residents and islanders both cited parking as a problem to be resolved in historic Charlotte Amalie. A lack of parking in downtown partially results in parking problems for the surrounding neighborhoods during the day, and prevents many of those outside the area from visiting downtown unless absolutely necessary.

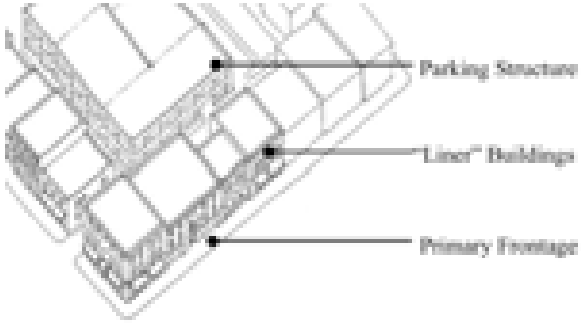
To resolve local and regional access to parking, potential solutions include:

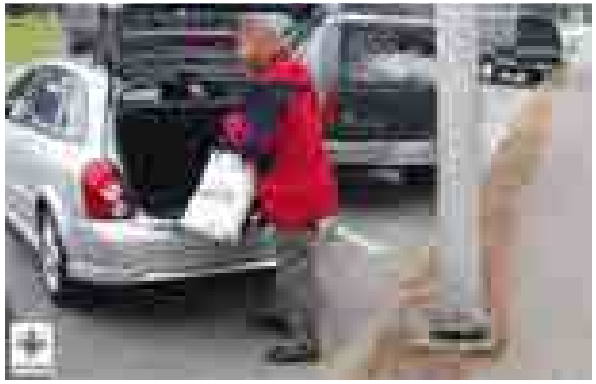
- residential permits for downtown and neighborhood residents
- remote employee parking for downtown workers
- timed parking in specific locations downtown
- new downtown parking structures to simplify access for non-local traffic, and
- neighborhood parking locations on unused land that can be used on weekends as public space

A parking permit pilot project on Crystal Gade is pending. This program could be extended to all downtown neighborhood areas once the pilot program has given sufficient data to understand the exact implementation strategy that will work for Charlotte Amalie.

Parking structures for downtown can be expensive to build, but the private sector is already planning to build parking now without public assistance. In addition, in March 2011 the VI Senate approved a bill to help finance a new garage on the existing Fort Christian surface lot by implementing a new passenger fee for tourists. This was one of two potential sites illustrated for future parking in the waterfront area in *The Town's Blueprint*.

The funding of this garage is great news, and is an essential component of *The Town's Blueprint* to be implemented. As with the improvements to Veterans Drive, it is essential that this improvement consider not only the utilitarian function of car storage, but also that this investment be a catalyst for other improvement. This can be achieved if the design considers the pedestrian environment. The Form-Based Code will contain provisions to ensure that new garages are not "naked," i.e. that the structures have active ground floor frontage





For more information on Smart Parking Solutions, please refer to pages 4.14 and 5.14.

(to facilitate pedestrian movement) and that upper floors match the historical context. Along designated Primary Frontages, a liner building will be required to shield view of parking from pedestrians along important viewsheds, such as on the waterfront and along Main Street. Until the code is adopted, decision-makers should use the principles established in Chapter 5 of this document as guidance to review proposals for compliance with the community's vision.

Parking in downtown Charlotte Amalie can be further improved by removing taxi access to Main Street and adding parking for local traffic. As noted in Chapter 5, this will require both policy and infrastructure changes.

Finally, as described in Chapter 4, the design of parking lots within the neighborhood can be designed as shared space, which could be utilized for parking but also for neighborhood gatherings and cook-outs, an informal civic space. In order to achieve this, lots can be designed of materials other than asphalt (such as gravel), and be properly landscaped. Guidance for this is provided in the draft Form-Based Code.
Funding for the Transportation or Planning agencies to implement neighborhood parking policies may be available through TIGER Challenge Grants or through grants from the HUD Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities.

6. MANAGE TAXI TRAFFIC TO ACCOMMODATE GROWTH

The taxi system is an essential component for mobility in Charlotte Amalie. However, the current system causes congestion and does not operate to its fullest potential. The policy for taxi service should be to promote full taxis and better profits for operators while providing regularized service at known costs to tourists and islanders in a way that decreases congestion and increases efficiency.

In order to do this, three recommendations are proposed in Chapter 5 of *The Town's Blueprint*:

- implement an organized taxi stand to reduce congestion on Main Street
- implement the already-funded six-stage certification program
- delegate the maintenance and operation of transit vehicles to taxi associations and owners

Removal of taxis from Main Street is a policy matter; after this is resolved, implementation action by the government or transportation agency is needed to change existing rules and street striping. Other elements of the recommendations that have to do with staging, pickup and drop-off points. The possibility of ticket purchase at pickup and drop-off areas will require action from both the government and the transportation agency. First they must establish and design the areas into the proposed improvements for Veterans Drive, and evaluate the potentialof ticketing mechanisms as well as their costs and benefits.

7. IMPLEMENT HARBOR TRANSPORTATION

During the charrette, many participants advocated the use of water transportation to supplement ground transportation. The waterfront provides an opportunity to move people around the island without contributing to congestion on already busy roads.

In the past, resistance to implementation of harbor transportation or "water taxi" has come from the land taxi organizations. During the charrette, a profit-sharing structure was suggested, to allow land and water taxis to be mutually beneficial. This idea seemed to hold promise; the implementation details will need to be worked out among all parties. Due to the limited ways in which road capacity can be improved and ever-increasing demands for mobility, using the waterfront as an additional means of transportation is an obvious solution that should be a top priority.

For more information on managing taxi traffic, please refer to pages 5.5 & 5.17 - 5.18.

8. IMPROVE SAFETY

Safety in downtown and in the surrounding neighborhoods is an important element that is critical to revitalizing downtown. If downtown is to become an attractive destination again for more residents and more business, safety will need to be addressed. Safety is a basic pre-requisite for commercial success and for neighborhood stability.

The following are suggestions to increase safety in downtown:

- institute patrols from waterfront to Back Street
- make monitoring and patrols 24 hour to assure safety at all hours
- review the potential for private security paid by downtown to add to public efforts
- use valet parking for restaurants open after 8 pm so that customers stay within a safe zone
- add pedestrian scale lighting so that there are no dark corners or doorways.

The following are suggestions to increase safety in neighborhoods:

- restore community policing to work with residents on safety
- fix derelict/vacant buildings to eliminate potential problems
- add pedestrian scale lighting so that all pedestrian areas are visible to passersby.

Two approaches are available for the implementation of increased safety in downtown Charlotte Amalie and its surrounding neighborhoods. If local businesses join together in their self-interest to form a Business Improvement District (BID), the new district can be used to fund safety patrols that are in addition to local police patrols. This would provide added security for all property owners. The BID would have the ability to charge a nominal amount to fund improvements and operation costs for safety in partnership with the government;

COMMUNITY POLICING FUNDING

According to the Department of Justice, community policing funding may be approved for any of the following uses:

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Collaborative partnerships between the law enforcement agency and the individuals and organizations they serve to develop solutions to problems and increase trust in police. Partnerships may include:

Other Government Agencies
Community Members/Groups
Nonprofits/Service Providers
Private Businesses
Media

ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

The alignment of organizational management, structure, personnel, and information systems to support community partnerships and proactive problem solving. This can include:

Agency Management:
Climate and culture
Leadership
Labor relations
Decision-making
Strategic planning
Policies
Organizational evaluations
Transparency
Organizational Structure
Geographic assignment of officers
Despecialization
Resources and finances

Personnel:
Recruitment, hiring, and selection
Personnel supervision/evaluations
Training

Information Systems (Technology):
Communication/access to data
Quality and accuracy of data

PROBLEM SOLVING

The process of engaging in the proactive and systematic examination of identified problems to develop and rigorously evaluate effective responses. This can include:

Scanning: Identifying and prioritizing problems

Analysis: Researching what is known about the problem

Response: Developing solutions to bring about lasting reductions in the number and extent of problems

Assessment: Evaluating the success of the responses. Using the crime triangle to focus on immediate conditions (victim/offender/location)

thus the goal for downtown could be reached with minimal public cost and the security would benefit all property owners. The majority of shopping is done between five and seven pm on weekdays and on the weekend. A place that feels unsafe and closes around five pm will never attract new business that is not just for the cruise ship tourists.

A second implementation step is to re-establish community policing in the neighborhoods. There was a community policing program that is in cessation. One feature of community policing that has been tried successfully elsewhere is a partnership between the police force and citizen patrols that have been provided with communications equipment, official vests, and training.

Neighborhood Community policing funding may be available through the US Department of Justice COPS initiative. The COPS program offers funding grants and training to municipalities and jurisdictions that wish to implement any of the identified goals (refer to box at left). Fiscal Year 2010 grants for development of Community Policing were between approximately $250,000 to $499,000 per agency grant awarded.

9. PRESERVE THE HISTORIC FABRIC

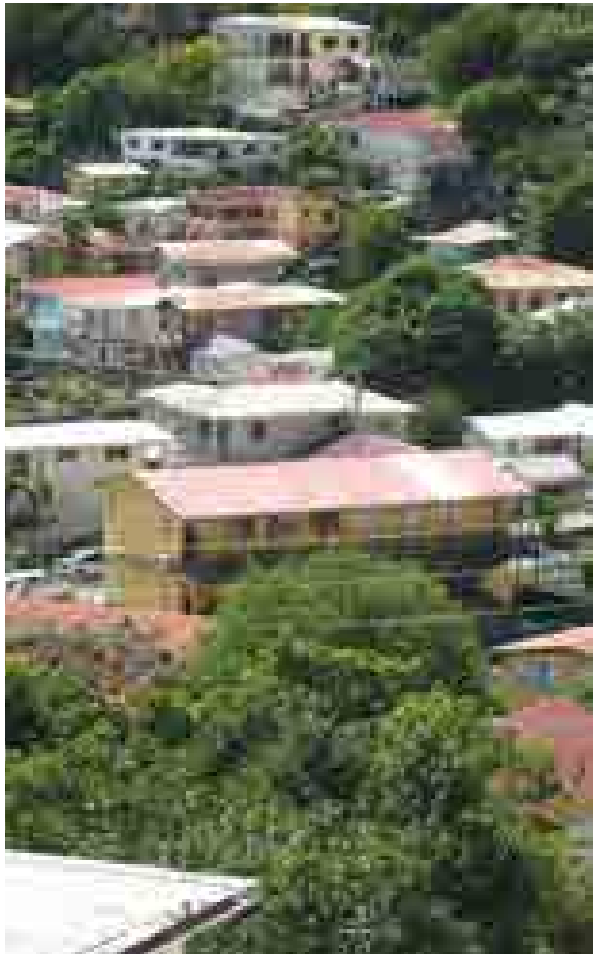
Maintaining the character of Charlotte Amalie was a top priority for all charrette participants. (When asked at the Work-in-Progress presentation, a majority of respondents stated that "Preserving the Historic Fabric" was the most important idea they had heard that week.) For residents, the concern is cultural, of maintaining and even recapturing the cultural assets that make this place unique. For businesses and those reliant on tourism, there is the recognition that people come here because of the history and the charm of downtown.

There is proposed legislation (The Virgin Islands Historic Properties Preservation and Rehabilitation Act of 2010) to implement a funding program for historic preservation of any structures so designated by the government historic commission, including residences. In addition, for commercial buildings there are historic tax credits for designated structures.

Capacity and capital improvement grants (National Endowment for the Humanities Funding Opportunity Number: 20110504-CH) are available for agencies and historical societies for the following purposes:

> *NEH challenge grants are capacity-building grants, intended to help institutions and organizations secure long-term improvements in and support for their humanities programs and resources. Grants may be used to establish or enhance endowments or spend-down funds (that is, funds that are invested, with both the income and the principal being expended over a defined period of years) that generate expendable earnings to support ongoing program activities. Grantees may also use funds for one-time capital expenditures (such as construction and renovation, purchase of equipment, and acquisitions) that bring long-term benefits to the institution and to the humanities more broadly. Because of the matching requirement, these NEH grants also strengthen the humanities by encouraging nonfederal sources of support. Applications are welcome from colleges and universities, museums, public libraries, research institutions, historical societies and historic sites, scholarly associations, state humanities councils, and other nonprofit entities. Programs that involve collaboration among multiple institutions are eligible as well, but one institution must serve as the lead agent and formal applicant of record.*

A pressing priority is to prevent devaluation of existing neighborhood housing. The repair of local housing may be possible through the American Recovery



For more information on preserving historic fabric and restoring vacant buildings, please refer to page 4.8.

and Reinvestment Act and Community Development Block Grant funding. As a start, historic assets need to be surveyed, mapped, and designated as valuable assets. The survey should include buildings that must be historically restored, those which can merely be painted or cosmetically fixed so that they contribute, and those which do not contribute but which can be made contributory through minor cosmetic restoration. At the same time, local contractors should be trained in historic restoration techniques so that renovations of each category can be accomplished at a reasonable cost, and to provide employment opportunities for local artisans.

There is a need to increase funding for programs to fix and paint, and for basic rehabilitation. To accomplish this it is suggested that the various programs for these activities be consolidated to lower management costs and allow a sharper focus on the most needed areas and buildings.
Many communities have instituted façade renovation grants for commercial buildings. A typical program offers grants or below-market funding that has some amount of matching funding from the owner. In Charlotte Amalie, it is also recommended that the funding include approval for design services so that renovation of facades will correspond to the character of the district in which the building is located.

In the neighborhoods there is a need to restore vacant properties to use, but there is a difficulty because of absentee owners or fragmented absentee ownership by heirs of original owners. Chapter 4 contains a detailed strategy conceived during the charrette week that could be used to implement this goal.

10. CONSOLIDATE HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

Consolidating functions for housing rehabilitation may take legislative action by the government, or may be accomplished through interagency agreement and assignment of a core team to accomplish this objective. It may be possible to gain funding for planning this effort this through the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities; funding for the rehabilitation may be available from HUD 14.225 Community Development Block Grants.

11. CREATE A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)

A Business Improvement District is a taxing entity created by consent of a majority of property owners within a defined district in order to provide improvements or operations funding for the district. A downtown improvement district would thus have no tax impact on any surrounding areas or the island in general, but would allow for funding of lighting, security or other uses determined by an overseeing board. Among other things, funding could be used for downtown security, common area improvements on the waterfront, and to begin to revitalize Back Street.

Creating a BID will require enabling legislation by the USVI government. Examples of typical BID enabling legislation can be found on the Cornell University website at: *http://government.cce.cornell.edu/doc/reports/econdev/bids.asp#StateEnablingLegislation*

12. ESTABLISH A GREEN SPACE / PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

There is already the beginning of a green space and trails network in historic Charlotte Amalie. *The Town's Blueprint* vision formalizes this to increase walkability and to provide a lasting amenity to residents of close in neighborhoods.

Current conditions do not allow easy pedestrian access between the historic neighborhoods and downtown. Many of the features that allowed this in the past including step streets, the guts, and common sidewalks, have been allowed to deteriorate. Neighborhood accessibility and the inclusion of the neighborhoods into the economic life of the city is crucial. To accomplish this it will be necessary to improve the neighborhood pedestrian network, including the step streets and guts, as well as sidewalks and courtyards. In addition, new civic spaces such as waterfront parks and plazas, and neighborhood greens and community gardens should be included as well.

For more information on creating high-quality neighborhood open spaces and a connected pedestrian network, please refer to pages 4.9 - 4.10.

It may be possible to fund a greenspace network that is used as a pedestrian network through Surface Transportation Discretionary Grants from the US Department of Transportation. Unfortunately, as of this writing, Congress is looking to cut or eliminate funding for such programs. As a proactive measure, it is suggested that plans for these areas be prepared and submitted for infrastructure funding pending the outcome of congressional deliberations. An option to begin implementation is to appeal to private foundations for interim planning funding.

13. REPAIR THE STEP STREETS

Restoring the step streets will add back an essential and historic part of Town infrastructure that can be useful to residents and attractive as a tourism experience as well. The St. Thomas Historical Trust has estimated that the renovation of all the step streets could be accomplished for a budget of approximately $200,000, and be implemented over a four-year period if funding were received for all step streets. Funding by donations given by members of the private sector to a non-profit agency might be the best course for implementation; actual improvements could be undertaken as a partnership between the non-profit agency and the Department of Public Works. (This is further described in Chapter 4.)

In addition, a second option for implementation is through federal funding for Historical Societies as noted above.

14. RESTORE THE GUTS

The "guts" or drainage ditches that separate each neighborhood are another prime opportunity for creating greenway connections. While they are still present, they are in need of maintenance and restoration. Programs that may provide funding for the repair of the guts include:

- *Clean Water Act Nonpoint Source Grant* (Section 319 Grants) – Congress amended the Clean Water Act (CWA) in 1987 to establish the Section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Program because it recognized the need for greater federal leadership to help focus State and local nonpoint source efforts. Under Section 319, States, Territories, and Indian Tribes receive grant money which supports a wide variety of activities including technical assistance, financial assistance, education, training, technology transfer, demonstration projects, and monitoring to assess the success of projects that have been implemented.

- *Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)* – The CWSRF program has provided more than $4.5 billion annually in recent years to fund water quality protection projects for wastewater treatment, stormwater management, nonpoint source pollution control, and watershed and estuary management. View the CWSRF document: Green Infrastructure Approaches to Managing Wet Weather with Clean Water State Revolving Funds (PDF 6 pp, 458 K).

- *Community Development Block Grant Program* – The Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) is a flexible source of funding that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs.

15. SITING AND FUNDING FOR A FARM STORE AND AN ARTISAN INCUBATOR

Many residents discussed the need for better local grocery, especially produce. While local stores have agreed to carry produce, a high-quality produce store requires specialized refrigeration and humidification units in order for the produce to stay fresh. Based on local incomes, there may be USDA funding to assist in providing such a facility if coupled with a program to provide year-round support for local agriculture. The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service has grants for up to $100,000 to establish markets for locally grown agricultural products. The grants are intended to:

> *"help communities support local food systems through direct marketing. Direct marketing includes farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture, and agri-tourism. Priority is given to projects that increase access to local foods by low-income consumers, develop training and educational programs for new direct farm marketers, or provide professional training for market management."*

There is also an effort to create a local artisan workshop with training certified by the US Department of Labor. This should be pursued to provide employment, but also to provide local arts and cultural artifacts for

For more information on cleaning, maintaining and restoring the guts, please refer to pages 4.10

sale to visitors and residents. Arts incubators may be funded in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, but NEA grants are now under legislative threat in congress. A more typical funding implementation strategy is through a combination of government sponsorship, grants from private foundations, business-arts partnerships and private donations.

16. REINFORCE AUTHENTICITY

The most successful downtowns, whether tourism oriented or simply acting as destinations for locals have a quality in common: authenticity. Authenticity means having a unique character that expresses the culture and values of the specific place and local population. To reinforce authenticity it is necessary to reinforce the existing assets of Charlotte Amalie including its unique building styles, unique cultural and natural attributes, unique lifestyle and its unparalleled diversity and tolerance.

An authentic place reinforces existing assets and identity. It fulfills Islanders' material and cultural needs first, and by doing so provides a higher quality of life for all. When downtown is a place for all Islanders to live work and play, it will reflect the culture of the island as opposed to being a set of blocks of duty free business that could be located virtually anywhere. Tourism that can appeal to both the duty free shopper and to those who wish for an authentic cultural experience is possible—in essence it lets the residents of St. Thomas invite and welcome visitors not just into its shop fronts but into its cultural living room, a place unique in the world that visitors will want to revisit again and again.

LONGER TERM INITIATIVES

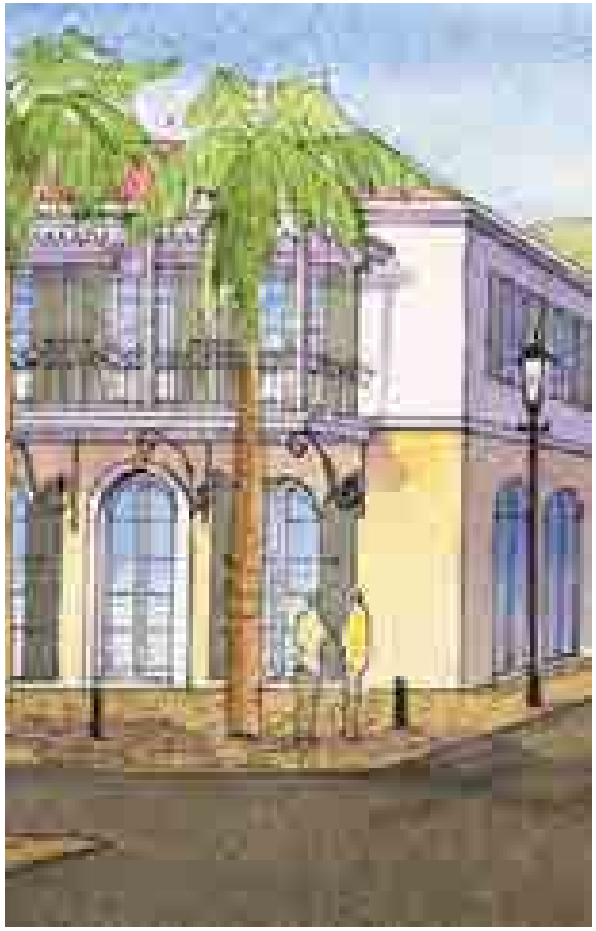
Over time, as a safe and attractive urban framework is becoming evident, the following can take place:

17. PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN DIVERSIFICATION

Diversifying the downtown economy is important, but not necessarily economically feasible until the challenges enumerated in this report have been addressed. For diversification, downtown residential population and spending by local residents must increase.

18. INFILL HOUSEHOLDS FROM THE WATER TO BACK STREET

If the renovation of the waterfront into a first class destination can be accomplished, and safety issues addressed, attracting new residents downtown will be feasible for the private sector at market rates. It is most likely that residential infill would start at the waterfront, that units along the alleys might fill next and that eventually Back Street may eventually house more residents. If the earlier goals are accomplished by the public sector, the private sector can undertake this effort feasibly.



For more information on the infill of vacant lots in a style and character that reinforces authenticity, please refer to pages 4.3 - 4.6.

APPENDIX A

FORM-BASED CODE DETAILS

APPENDIX A SUMMARY

The Town's Blueprint included an assessment of Charlotte Amalie's existing conditions and a public planning process, and has resulted in an Illustrative Master Plan that can be used to guide future preservation and infill/development in Charlotte Amalie.

In order to implement this vision, a draft Form-Based Code is being prepared. Form-Based Codes are unique in that they focus on the physical form of development, and can be used to implement a desired community vision. This Appendix includes a summary of some of the key concepts that will be included in the first draft of the code: the Regulating Plan and Sub-districts. A complete first draft of the code may be viewed on the project website, www.thetownsblueprint.com.

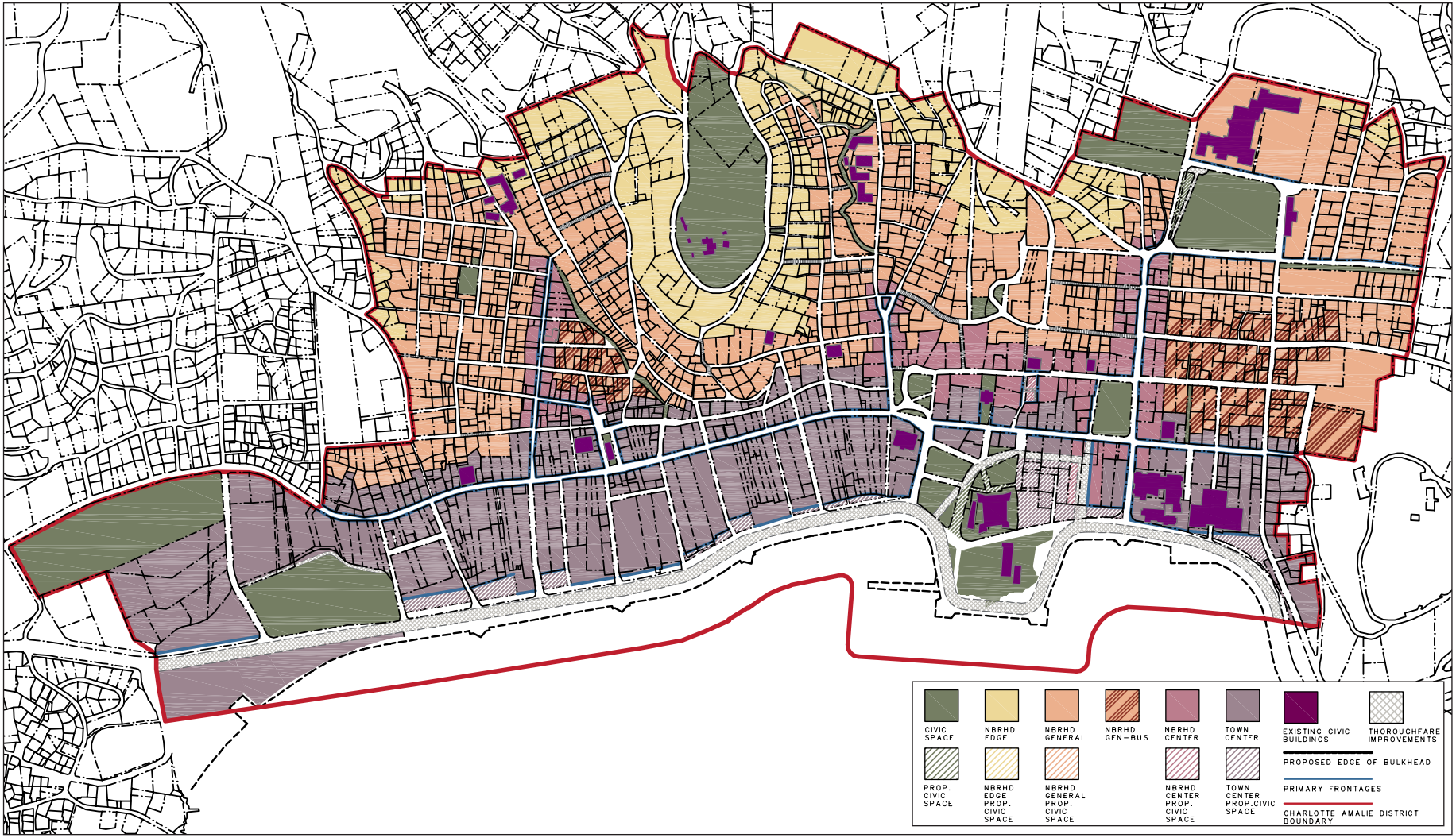
The Town's Blueprint is a special component to the VI Zoning and Subdivision Code Update process that is currently being undertaken by the VI Department of Planning and Natural Resources, assisted by a consultant team led by Rutgers University and Duncan Associates. The Code Update is anticipated to include a provision to allow for the creation of Form-Based Code districts. Charlotte Amalie is the first area to test the form-based zoning technique. After the Code Update has been approved, the Charlotte Amalie District Code could be the first Form-Based Code approved in the Virgin Islands.

REGULATING PLAN

The Regulating Plan is derived from the community vision for historic Charlotte Amalie, as depicted in the Illustrative Master Plan. Traditional towns and neighborhoods have physical forms that vary in character and intensity. The Regulating Plan establishes five Sub-districts, that each have varying urban form and character, from the center of Town to the neighborhood edge. Each Sub-district contains regulations fitting with the existing historic context.

The Regulating Plan designates Primary Street Frontages; these streets are to be held to the highest standards for urban form and architectural detailing. Specific regulations for lots that face Primary Street Frontages will be contained in the Form-Based Code.

The Regulating Plan also denotes the location for planned improvements, such as proposed new civic spaces, and the locations for proposed new or retrofitted streets.



SUB DISTRICT STANDARDS

Great towns and neighborhoods feature a wide range of building types and street scenes of varied character that differ from center to edge, for example, in building height, distance between buildings, and land use intensity. The center of a neighborhood is usually developed in a mixed-use manner with more intense uses than the general and edge areas. This delicate gradient from center to edge provides visual variety as well as a variety of housing options. The Regulating Plan designates all land within historic Charlotte Amalie to one of five Sub-districts:

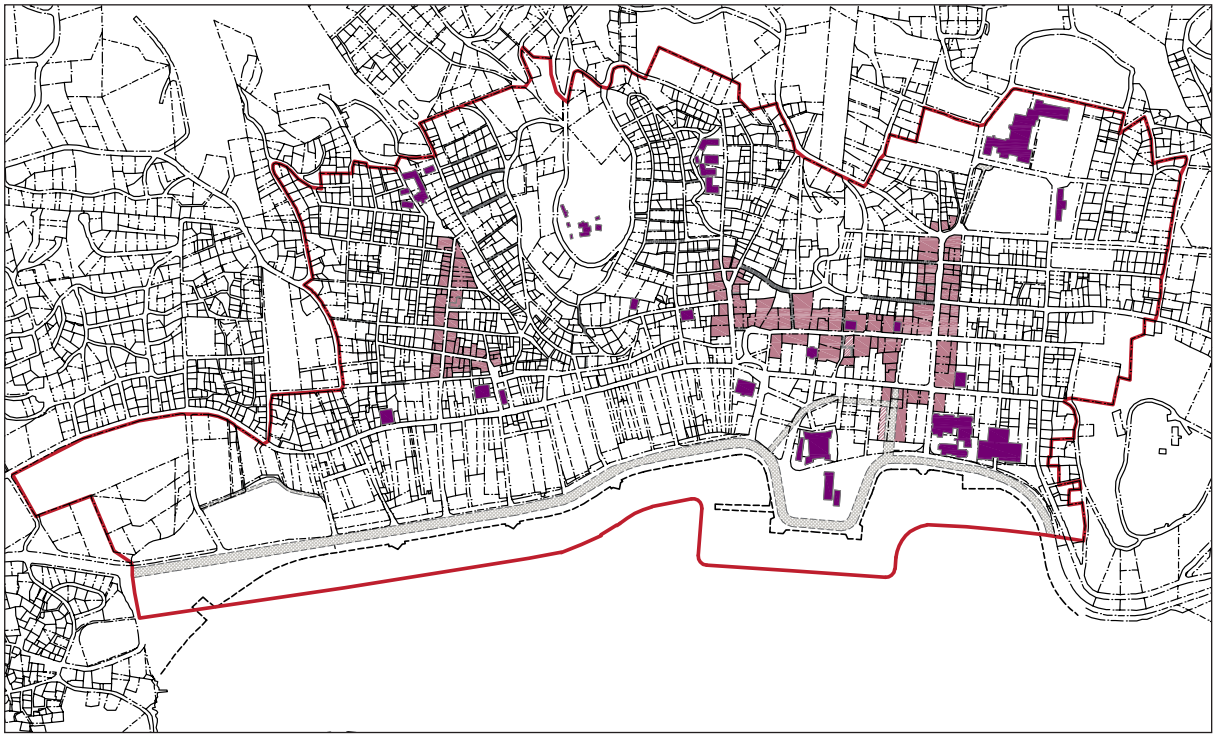
- Town Center Sub-district
- Neighborhood Center Sub-district
- Neighborhood General Sub-district
- Neighborhood Edge Sub-district
- Civic Space Sub-district

Each Sub-district controls the placement and intensity of buildings and other uses of land, as well as the design of thoroughfares that pass through the zone. A description of the five Sub-districts is contained on the following pages; for thoroughfare details please refer to Appendix B.

Town Center Sub-district Areas (existing civic buildings shown in purple)

TOWN CENTER SUB-DISTRICT

The Town Center Sub-district is Charlotte Amalie's most intense and commercially-oriented area. This Sub-district contains many of historic Charlotte Amalie's most recognizable tourist destinations, as well as offices and businesses that serve residents throughout St. Thomas. The Town Center Sub-district should allow a mix of commercial, office, entertainment, and residential uses, and features primarily attached buildings. Multi-story buildings are designed for changing uses over time. Walkability should be greatest in this zone, with widest sidewalks, ample on-street parking, buildings located to form a continuous, consistent streetwall, and shade from awnings, overhead balconies, or street trees. Parking may be located on-street or in a centralized location, within easy walking distance of shops and businesses.



Neighborhood Center Sub-district Areas (existing civic buildings shown in purple)

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER SUB-DISTRICT

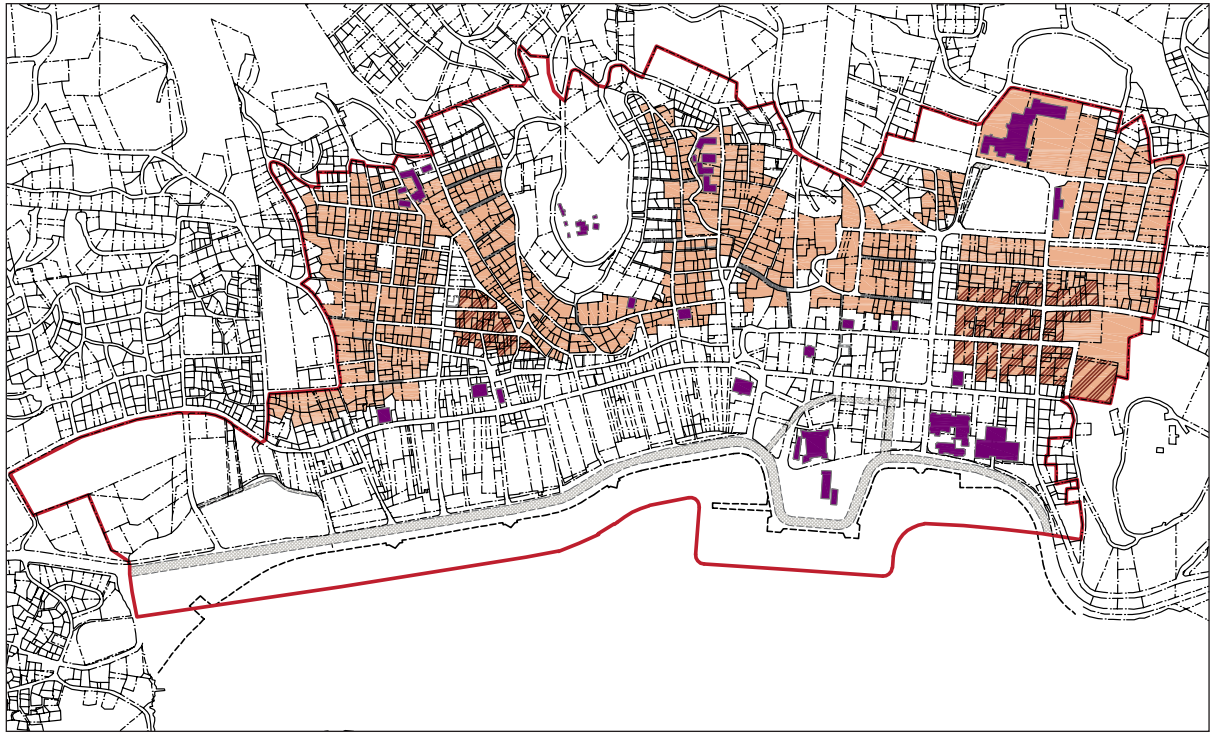
Within the neighborhoods of Charlotte Amalie, there are areas which feature a greater range of building types (many of them attached) as well as neighborhood-serving commercial establishments. The Neighborhood Center Sub-district is spatially compact and is more likely to have attached buildings compared to Neighborhood General and Neighborhood Edge Sub-districts.

There should be a mix of uses permitted, with neighborhood-oriented commercial or retail establishments nestled among surrounding homes. Multi-story buildings here are well-suited to accommodate a mix of uses, such as apartments or offices above shops. Walkability is a high priority; streets should contain usable sidewalks, on-street parking, and buildings that form a continuous streetwall. Parking may be provided on-street or in a centralized location, within easy walking distance of shops and businesses.

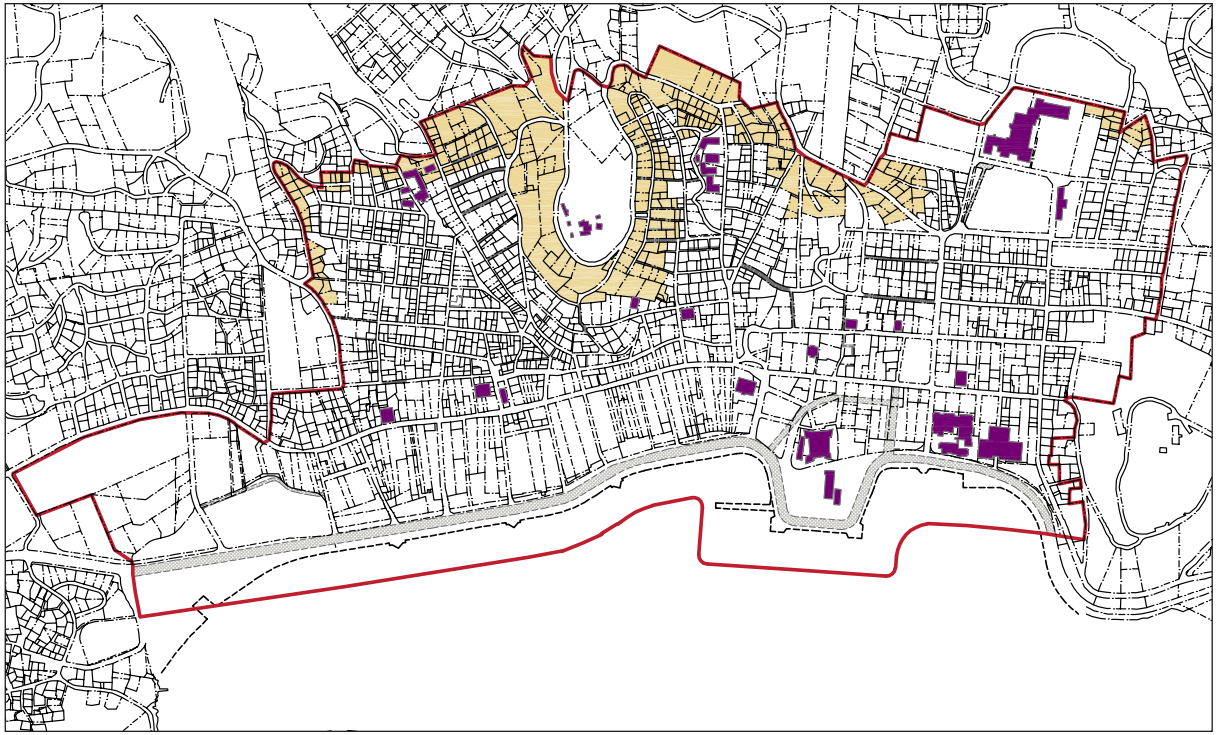
NEIGHBORHOOD GENERAL SUB-DISTRICT

The Neighborhood General Sub-district contains the largest area of the Charlotte Amalie District. This sub-district consists of primarily residential (multi- or single-family) uses and shares a similar mix of building forms and lot sizes. Homes located in the Neighborhood General Sub-district may be set on the front property line; however, some homes are set back to allow a small yard with a porch or stoop. This varying streetwall gives this zone a less urban character than the Neighborhood and Town Center Sub-districts.

Within the Neighborhood General Sub-district, there are a few streets that today contain a mixture of homes and businesses. The urban form (building-to-street relationship and overall building massing) is the same as in other Neighborhood General areas, but with a differing use. These areas have been designated with a Neighborhood General Business Overlay. In the Form-Based Code, the same urban form standards will apply to these areas, but greater flexibility in permitted use.



Neighborhood General Sub-district Areas (existing civic buildings shown in purple)



Neighborhood Edge Sub-district Areas (existing civic buildings shown in purple)

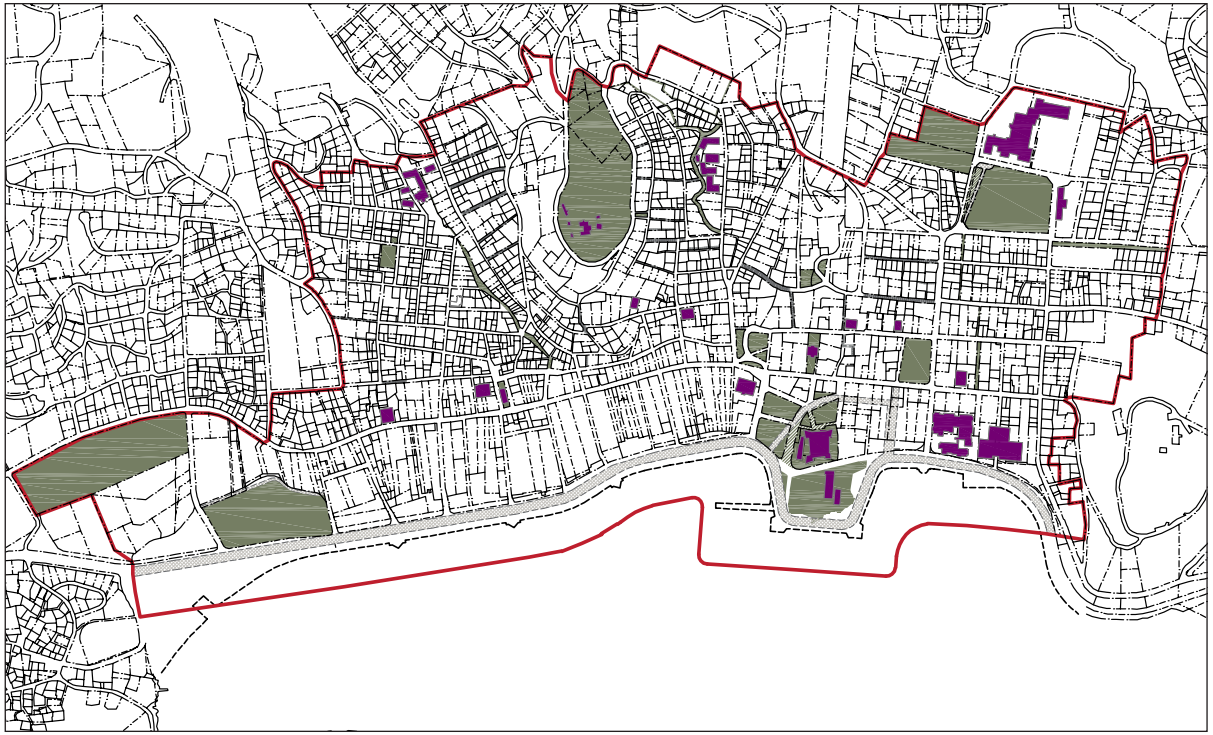
NEIGHBORHOOD EDGE SUB-DISTRICT

The hills which separate and shape Charlotte Amalie's neighborhoods greatly affect the built form of structures on the edge of each area. Further uphill where the topographic change is most dramatic, changes occur to the lot configuration and building design and placement to accommodate steep slopes. The Neighborhood Edge Sub-district's intent is to protect the character of hillside development within the neighborhoods of Charlotte Amalie.

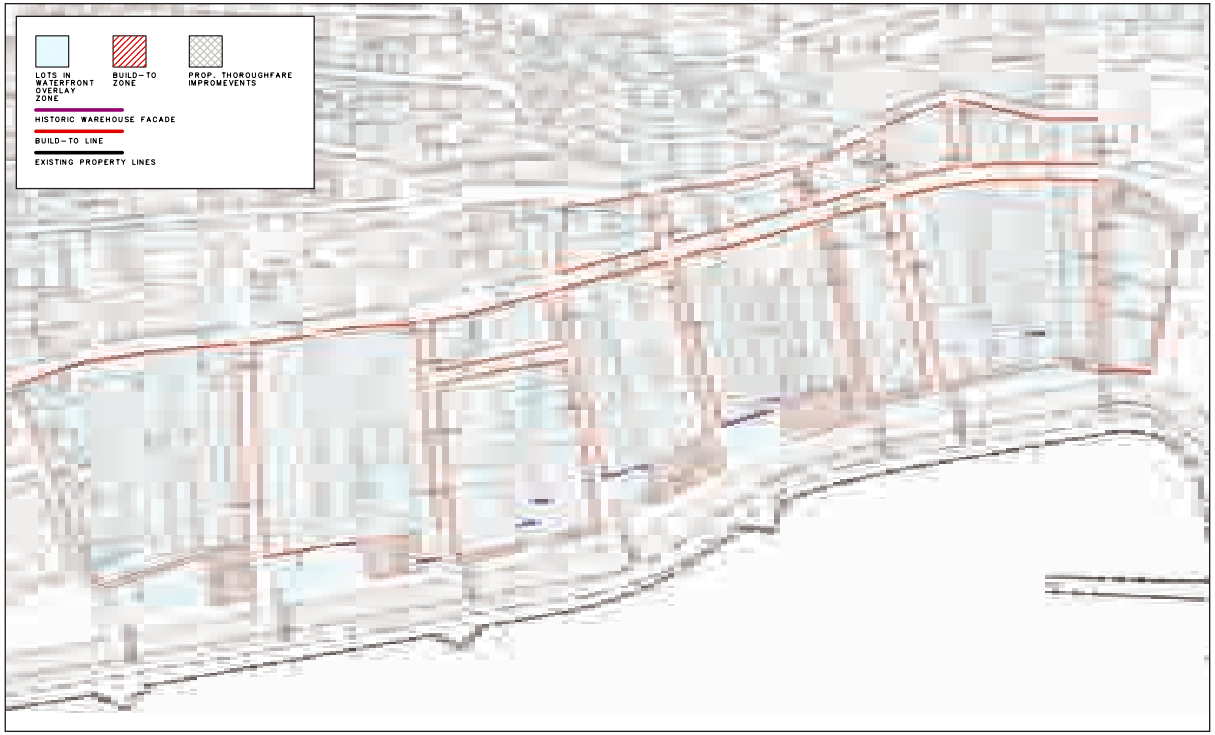
The Neighborhood Edge areas have the least activity and are residential in character, with detached buildings and less intense development than other Sub-districts. Building-to-street relationships may vary to allow for best placement on steep slopes; thus, the urban character is the least formal in this area.

CIVIC SPACE SUB-DISTRICT

The Civic Space Sub-district is space intended to be used for community purposes; examples of uses found here include playgrounds or play fields, public open spaces (such as parks, greens, and plazas), a marina, school, or church. This space is typically used to provide areas for active and passive recreation, community gathering, site drainage and water retention, community gardens, and natural vegetation. Structures that are accessory to the uses permitted in this Sub-district, such as pavilions, restrooms, and utility buildings, are also found in this Sub-district.



Civic Space Sub-district Areas (existing civic buildings shown in purple)



Charlotte Amalie Waterfront Overlay Regulating Plan

WHAT IS A BUILD-TO LINE OR ZONE?

Build-to lines or zones are often used in place of setbacks in Form-Based Codes, to specify where a building should be placed. The intent is to create a more predictable, consistent urban environment. These terms may be defined as:

Build-to Line: A line parallel to the property line, along which the front wall of a building shall be built.

Build-to Zone: A range of allowable distances from a street right-of-way that the building shall be built to in order to create a moderately uniform line of buildings along the street.

CHARLOTTE AMALIE WATERFRONT OVERLAY

In addition to the Sub-district Standards, the Charlotte Amalie Waterfront Overlay Regulating Plan contains additional standards for the waterfront warehouse lots located in the Town Center Sub-district.

Due to its history as a working waterfront, Charlotte Amalie is home to a unique linear building type along its harbor. The long, linear buildings span from the waterfront approximately 400 feet to Dronningens Gade (Main Street). Prior to the construction of Veterans Drive, these buildings were used as warehouses, backing directly up to the water's edge to serve the ships docked in the port. The harbor side of the buildings functioned as service and storage spaces, while the Main Street shopfronts provided a place to sell wares.

After the closure of the working waterfront and the introduction of Veterans Drive, the warehouses were retrofitted to house a variety of shops and restaurants that serve the tourism industry. One of the most interesting aspects of the warehouse buildings are their courtyards, light courts, paseos, and passageways which connect Veterans Drive with Main Street. These spaces are also home to shops and restaurants and create intimate areas that serve as an escape from the activity of Main Street and Veterans Drive.

The Charlotte Amalie Waterfront Overlay Regulating Plan is intended to preserve the character of the Charlotte Amalie waterfront and its historic warehouses while enhancing the public realm and pedestrian spaces along the waterfront. As the lots which contain these unique building types have multiple frontages of pedestrian importance (not a simple public frontage and private rear lot, as found on most other lots in the district), specific build-to lines or zones where building walls must be placed are noted on the plan. Historically significant facades along the waterfront are maintained; infill buildings are permitted in front of non-essential facades, to shape public spaces.

APPENDIX B
TRANSPORTATION DETAILS

APPENDIX B SUMMARY

Thoroughfares and their design elements are uniquely tied to the urban context in which they are located. This ensures that thoroughfares are subordinate to and compatible with the desired community character. For this reason, Thoroughfare Standards are typically included as a part of a Form-Based Code, to guide the design or retrofit of streets in the study area according to the community vision.

This appendix includes the thoroughfare design concepts created for *The Town's Blueprint*. It contains design standards and sample thoroughfare sections recommended for each of the Sub-districts described in Appendix A. These sections incorporate the transportation planning concepts described in the Big Ideas and in chapters 4 and 5 of this Summary Report document. These recommendations and standards will become a part of the draft Form-Based Code.

THOROUGHFARE DESIGN DETAILS

Recommendations for thoroughfare and frontage designs and parking solutions are provided in this section. These are categorized by the context in which they are located: Town Center, Neighborhood Center, Neighborhood General, and Neighborhood Edge (as defined on the Regulating Plan - see Appendix A). These recommendations were made to complement the historic urban fabric.

One of the Big Ideas resulting from *The Town's Blueprint* Charrette is to make walkability the first priority in design. This big idea sets the vision or foundation for transportation planning and design, and is supported by the objective of "creating walkable, livable streets." When built or rebuilt, streets should have a pedestrian-friendly scale maintaining the best features of the traditional street design.

The proper assembly of thoroughfares in the Charlotte Amalie District is summarized in the table on page B.4. The assembly table describes various elements of thoroughfare design, such as:

- target speed
- lane configuration (number of lanes and direction)
- lane width
- presence and type of on-street parking
- curb radii
- sidewalk widths
- tree planting information and
- bicycle facilities.

Different combinations of these elements support a particular target speed, creating various levels of walkability, and complement the characteristics of the Sub-district or context zone in which they are used.

Sample thoroughfare sections are illustrated for each Sub-district or context zone, to illustrate the proper arrangement of elements from the assembly table on page B.4. Future thoroughfare design or reconfiguration should be based on the sample sections, but calibrated to each specific street, based on existing building-to-building conditions. Specifically, before design and construction of these proposed thoroughfares, for any given neighborhood, detailed measurements should be taken to ensure use of the most appropriate cross section. In addition, street design will need to conform with existing and future historic preservation policies.

The sample thoroughfares vary by their configuration: number of lanes, direction of lanes, and presence or absence of on-street parking. In most zones, the frontage details are similar. In the Neighborhood Edge zone, for example, buildings are set further back from the streets. More discussion on these sections and their implications can be found in chapters four and five.

Each thoroughfare has a unique title with the following information:

- Sub-district or other form of name recognition
- travel direction
- presence of on-street parking (either none, one side or both sides).

For example, the thoroughfare titled "TC-1-1" can be found in the Town Center, is a one-way street and is parked on one side. The exception to the Sub-district naming designation is Veterans Drive and Main Street, which are designated by "VD" and "Main," respectively, even though they are both found within the Town Center Sub-district, the sections illustrate very specific recommendations for these streets.

THOROUGHFARE ASSEMBLY

Sub-District (Context Zone)	Town Center	Neighborhood Center	Neighborhood General	Edge
Walkability Grade[1]	Five-Star	Five and Four-Star	Three-Star	One- and Two-Star
Thoroughfare Type	Boulevard, Main Street, Neighborhood Street	Neighborhood Street	Neighborhood Street	Neighborhood Street
Sample Thoroughfares	VD-52, VD-60, MS-11, MS-17, TC-1-1, TC-1-2, TC-2-0, TC-2-1, TC-2-2	NC-1-0; NC-1-1; NC-2-0; NC-2-1; NC-2-2	NG-1-0; NG-1-1; NG-2-0; NG-2-1	NE-1-0; NE-1-1; NE-2-0; NE-2-1; NE-2-0 Rural
Target Speed	15-25 MPH	20-25 MPH	20-25 MPH	20-25 MPH
Travel Lane Configuration	2 way/1 lane each direction; 2 way/2 lanes each direction; 1 way/1 lane each direction	2 way/1 lane each direction, 1 way/1 lane each direction	2 way/1 lane each direction; 1 way/1 lane each direction	2 way/1 lane each direction; 1 way/1 lane each direction
Travel Lane(s) Width (X)	2 way: 16' minimum 1 way: 11' minimum	2 way: 16' minimum 1 way: 9' minimum	2 way: 16' minimum 1 way: 9' minimum	2 way: 16' minimum 1 way: 9' minimum
Parking Type	Parallel or Angled	Parallel	Parallel	Parallel
Parking Configuration	0, 1 or 2 sides	0,1 or 2 sides	0 or 1 side	0 or 1 side
Parking Width (Y)	Parallel: 7'-8' Angled: 16' minimum	Parallel: 6' minimum	Parallel: 6' minimum	Parallel: 6' minimum
Pavement Type	Paved	Paved	Paved or unpaved	Paved or unpaved
Pavement Width	X+Y	X+Y	X+Y	X+Y
Curb Radius	5'-25'	5-15'[2]	5-15'[2]	5-15'[2]
Sidewalk Configuration	1 or 2 sides	0, 1 or 2 sides	0, 1 or 2 sides	0, 1 or 2 sides
Sidewalk Width	5' minimum	No minimum	No minimum	No minimum
Drainage	Grated gutter	Grated gutter; swale	Grated gutter; swale	Grated gutter; swale
Median	Allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed
Planter Type	Treewells (may be in parking lane)	Planting strip or treewells in parking lane	Planting strip or treewells in parking lane	Planting strip where space allows
Landscape Type	Trees 30' o.c. typ.	Trees 30' o.c. typ.	Trees 30' o.c. typ.	None
Bicycle Facility	Shared Lanes	Shared Lanes	Shared Lane; Bike Lanes	N/A

Notes:
1. See Chapter 4 for more explanation on "Walkability Grade".
2. Thoroughfares with travel lanes less than 10' and with no on-street parking, will need a 15' curb radius, to accommodate large trucks. If parked one-side, a 10' curb radius is acceptable.

GENERAL CONCEPTS

The following elements are seen throughout most of the thoroughfare sections described in this appendix:

- Sharrows
- Bike parking
- Drainage grates

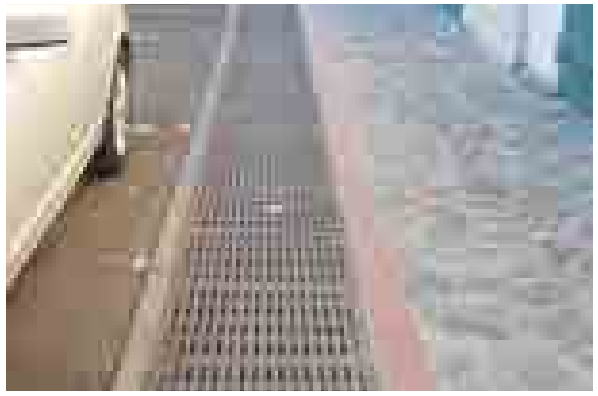
Sharrows are the preferred facility type for bicyclists on thoroughfares with posted speeds between 20mph and 30 mph, particularly for streets with on-street parking. The sharrow pavement marking consists of a bicyclist or bicycle symbol with two chevrons on top, indicating the direction of travel (see photo, right). The sharrow should be located such that the center of the marking is along an imaginary line 5 feet away from the edge of the parking lane, if a parking lane is present, or 5 feet from the curb face if no parking lane is present. On multilane thoroughfares, the sharrow is located in the rightmost lane. The sharrow should be placed at the beginning and end of each block and at least once mid-block. If desired, a sign indicating "Share the Road" or "Bicyclists Sharing Road" may also be used in conjunction with the sharrow.

Bicycle parking is often overlooked but critical to encouraging bicycle usage. Ideally, bicycle parking should be provided in the front of a store or building, in plain sight, easily visible from inside the store or building. The simple “U” rack is recommended for bicycle parking (see photo, right). The “U” rack is simply 2” or 3” diameter pipe, bent into a “U” shape, and anchored into the sidewalk like an upside-down “U”. A single rack can accommodate two bikes, one on either side, locked through the front wheel as well as the bike frame. Alternatively, the rack can accommodate up to four bikes if only the front wheels are locked to the rack, but the bikes will have no other support and will need kickstands to remain upright.

A minimum of one bicycle rack, capable of supporting two bikes should be placed within the public frontage for every five vehicular parking spaces, oriented parallel to the street. This will allow the parked bicycles to take up space between the tree wells, rather than block the sidewalk.

Most of the proposed sections include grates covering the gutters. This is a major improvement recommended wherever high pedestrian activity is anticipated, as seen in the image at right, taken in the waterfront area.

Sharrow Marking



Drainage grates downtown provide places for pedestrians to step out of travel lanes.

U-Racks Installed on a Sidewalk (Photo from Cycle Safe Bike Racks)

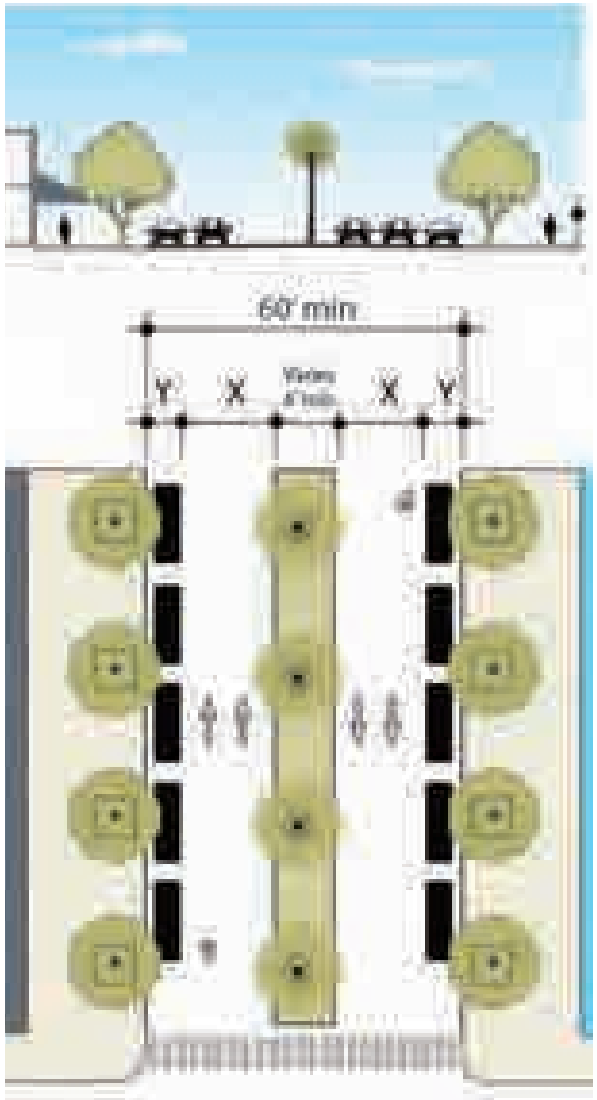
TOWN CENTER SUB-DISTRICT

The sample thoroughfares described below are recommended for the Town Center Sub-district.

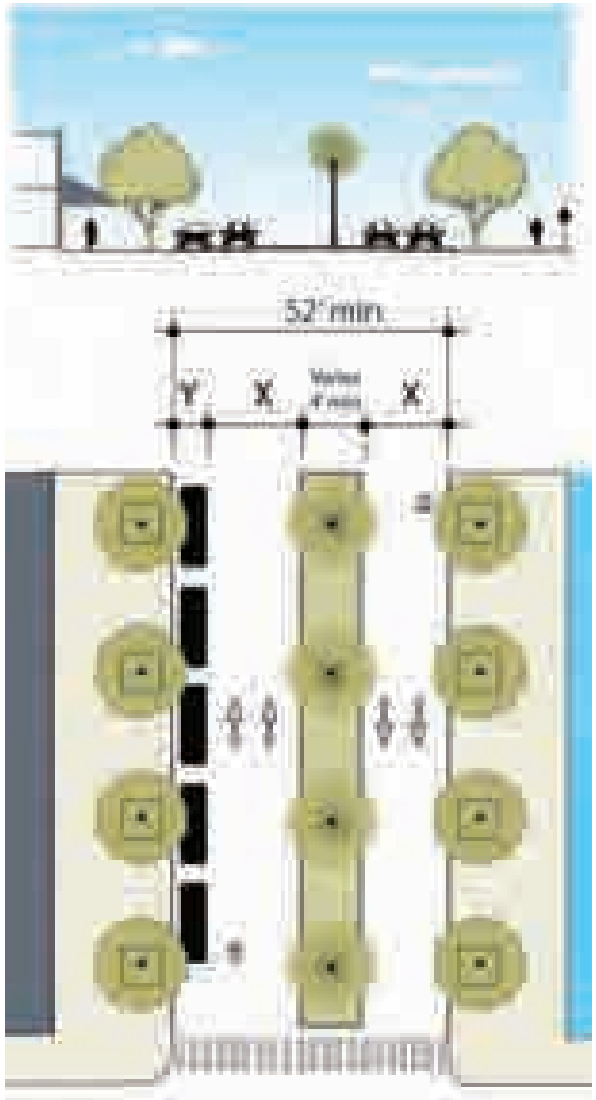
The Town Center Sub-districts will have the greatest level of walkability (five-star). In the Town Center, retail frontages should provide wide sidewalks, shading devices (such as street trees, awnings, or second-floor balconies), and on-street parking for pedestrian comfort. Target speeds will not exceed 25 mph, with most of the thoroughfares designed for a target speed of 15-20 mph. Bicyclists can be expected to share the lane with motor-vehicles; these shared lanes should be marked by a sharrow.

The two sections at right illustrate the proposed redesign of Veterans Drive. The VD-60 (right) is the typical section for most of Veterans Drive. This section includes two travel lanes in each direction divided by a planted median of varying width. Parallel parking is placed on both sides of the street. An ample 20-foot minimum promenade along the waterfront provides great opportunities for destination and recreational walking and bicycling. The north-side sidewalk along businesses should also be increased to provide opportunities for café dining and in concert with the Town Center character of this area.

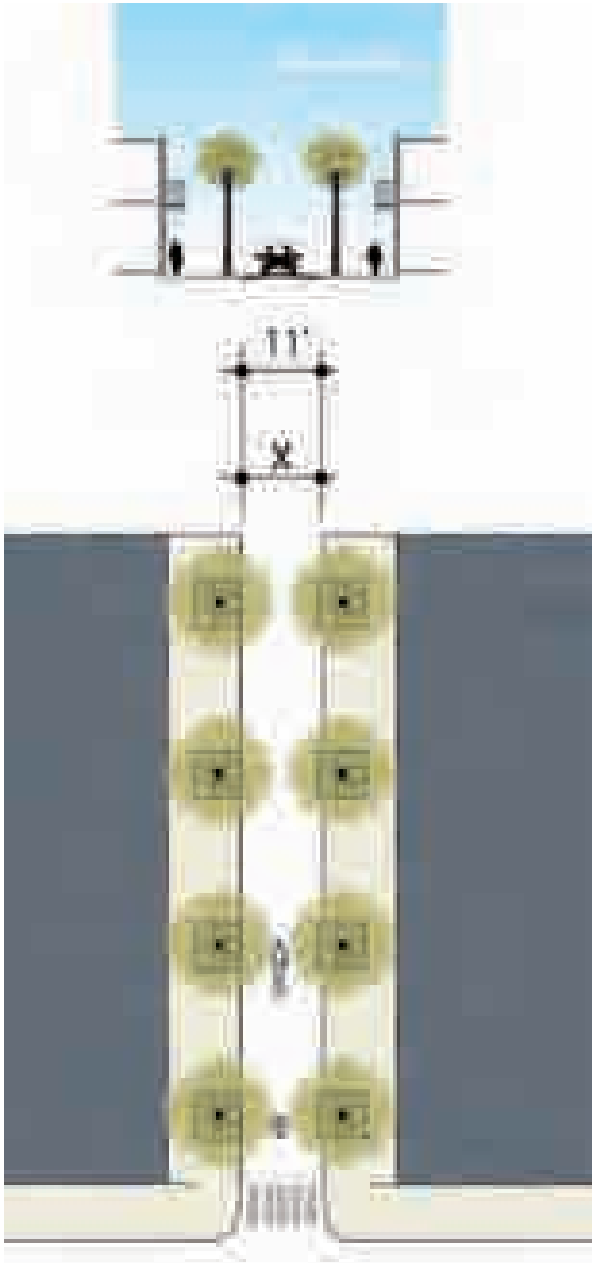
A second section illustrated for Veterans Drive is the VD-52. This section should be used sparsely in locations along the corridor where buildings are set closer to the corridor, constraining the right of way in these areas. This alternate section only includes parallel parking on one side and may require narrowing of the promenade, depending on existing building conditions.



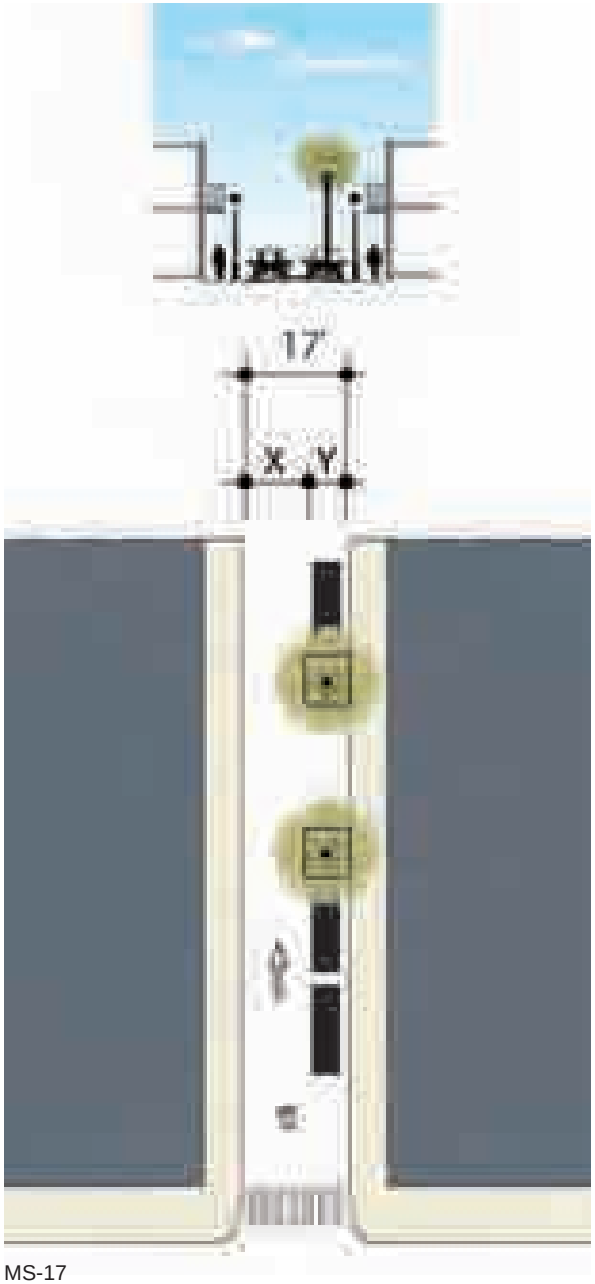
VD-60



VD-52



MS-11



MS-17

Two sections are illustrated for the commercial portion of Main Street (Dronningen's Gade) from Kongens Gade westward.

The MS-11 illustrates a one-way, no parking redesign of Main Street. In this example, sidewalks are widened to approximately 10 to 13 feet with ample space for trees planted in grates.

Alternately, the MS-17 includes on-street parking with trees planted in planters within the parking lane, every two or so spaces. This configuration allows for much needed parking and widened sidewalks of 7 to 9 feet, while still providing some shade and greenery.

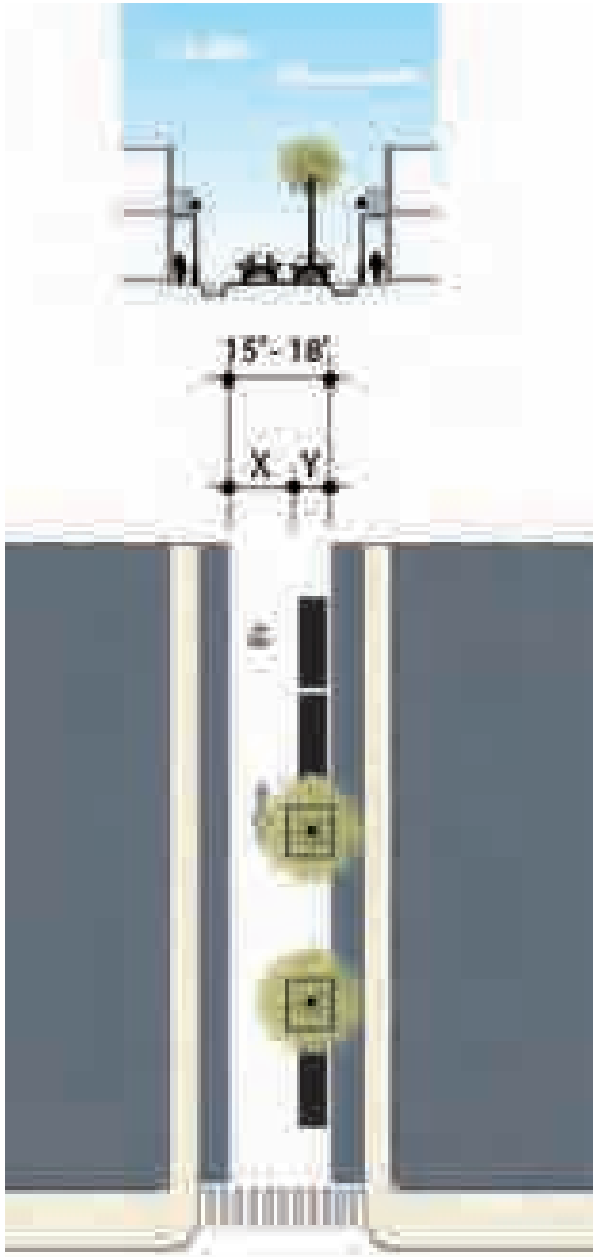
The preferred alternative for this portion of Main Gade should be chosen carefully, as each have their advantages and disadvantages, as noted in Chapter 5.

The following are descriptions for other sections that can be used within the Town Center Sub-district.

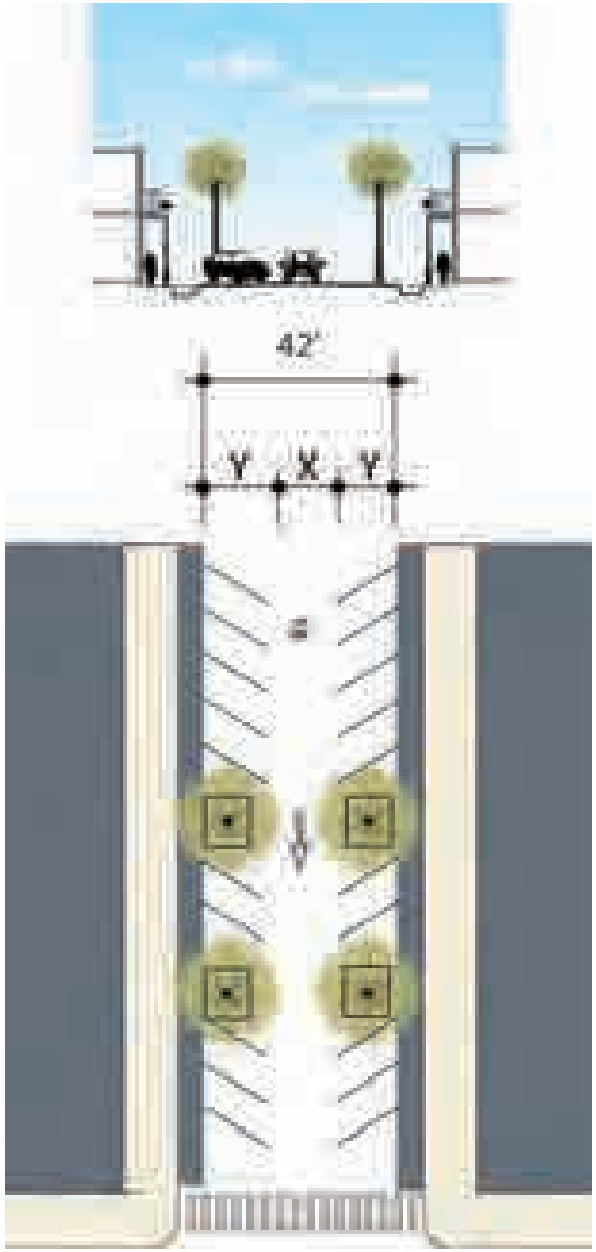
The TC-1-1 is a one-way thoroughfare with parallel parking on one side of the street, a fairly common configuration in downtown Charlotte Amalie.

This section has one travel lane of 9 to 11 feet and a parking lane of 6 to 7 feet for a total pavement width of 15 to 18 feet. On-street parking, narrow travel lanes, and shallow setbacks will maintain a target speed of less than 20 mph.

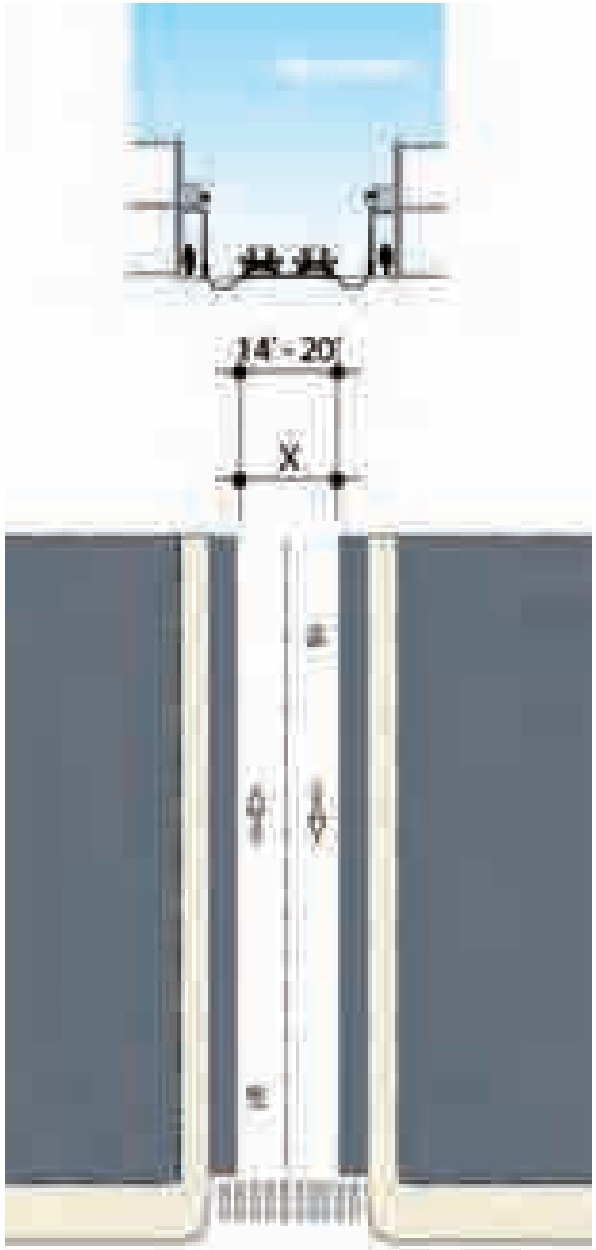
Where right of way widths permit, the TC-1-2 is proposed. This section has one travel lane of 10 feet and two reverse angle parking lanes of 16 feet for a total pavement width of 42 feet. On-street parking, narrow travel lanes, and shallow setbacks will maintain a target speed of less than 20 mph.



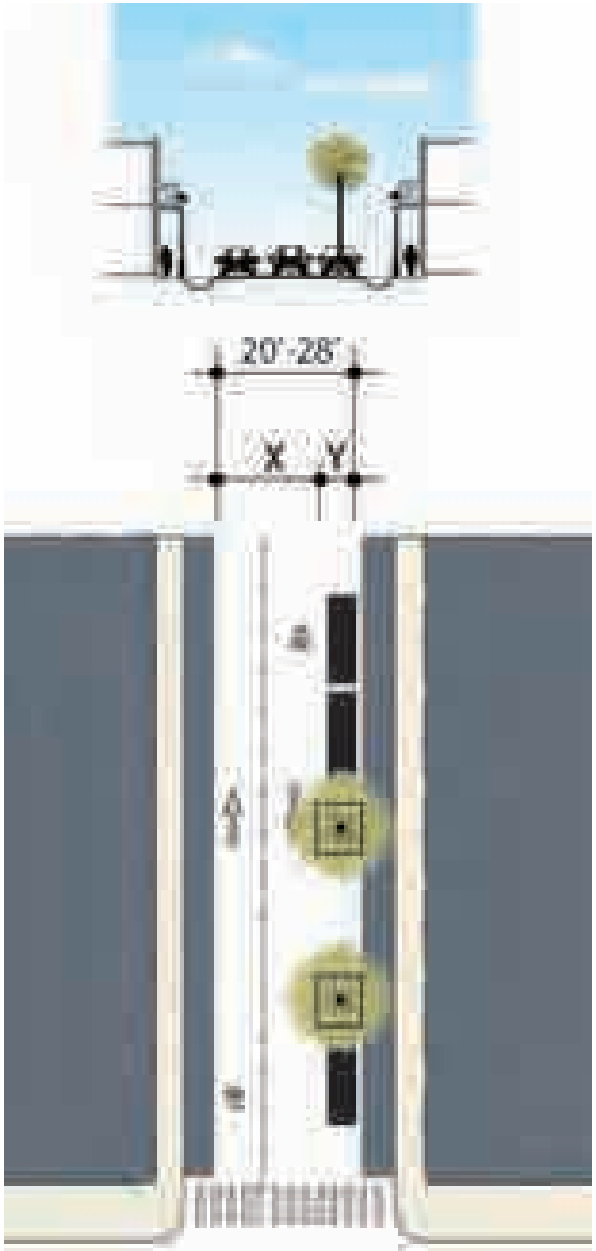
TC-1-1



TC-1-2



TC-2-0



TC-2-1

The TC-2-0 illustrates a two-way thoroughfare with no on-street parking. This section, with a target speed of 20 to 25 mph, has two travel lanes, one in each direction, totaling 14 to 20 feet. All other features are similar to the one-way thoroughfare: pedestrian scaled lighting should be provided where possible and drainage grates should be installed where walkability is most promoted.

The TC-2-1 is a two-way thoroughfare section with parking on one side. Target speeds for this section are also 20 to 25 mph, with two travel lanes (one in each direction) totaling 14 to 20 feet and a parallel parking lane of 6 to 8 feet, yielding a pavement width of 20 to 28 feet.

The TC-2-2 includes two lanes, one in each direction, and parallel parking on both sides. Travel lane dimensions are 14 to 18 feet for two lanes, with parallel parking lanes of 6 to 7 feet, totaling 26 to 32 feet of pavement.

Building balconies and awnings distinguish these Town Center thoroughfares from similar sections seen in other Sub-districts.

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER SUB-DISTRICT

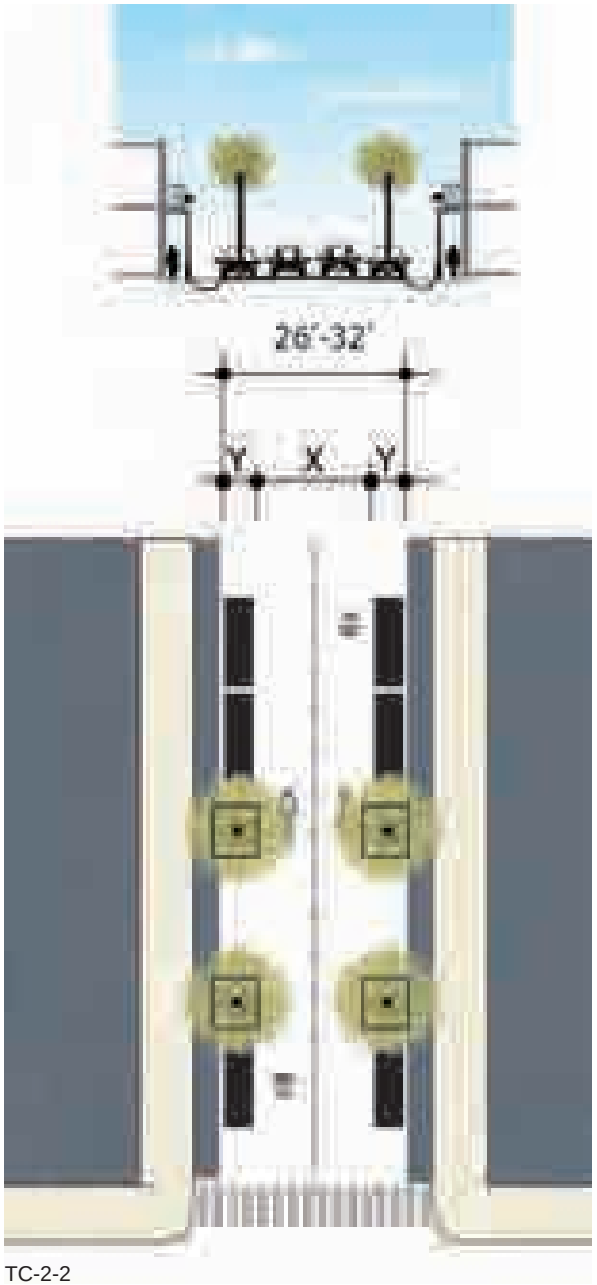
The following sample thoroughfares may be utilized in the Neighborhood General Sub-district:

- One-way, no parking
- One-way, one side parking
- Two-way, no parking
- Two-way, one side parking
- Two-way, two sides parking

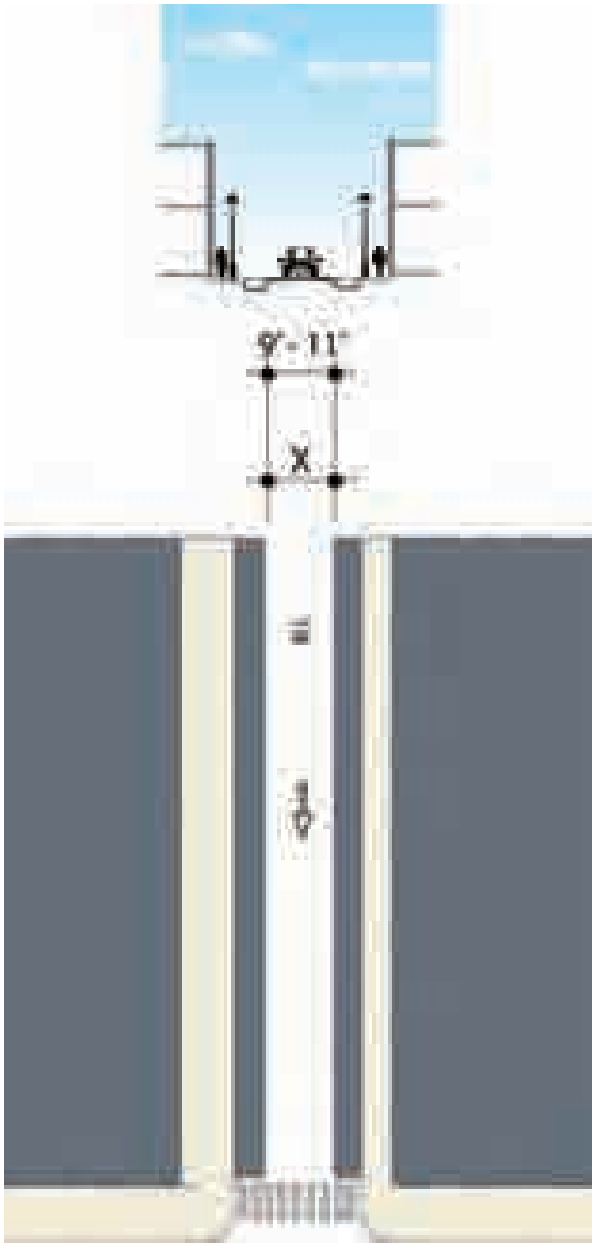
Neighborhood Center thoroughfares should provide great walkability (five and four-star) with wide sidewalks, shade from trees, covered grates, and short block lengths. More on-street parking should be provided. Bicycles will be best accommodated by sharing lanes with motor-vehicles in this slow speed environment

Neighborhood Center thoroughfares are very similar to those found in the Town Center Sub-district, with most of the differences occurring in the street-side details, outside of the travelway.

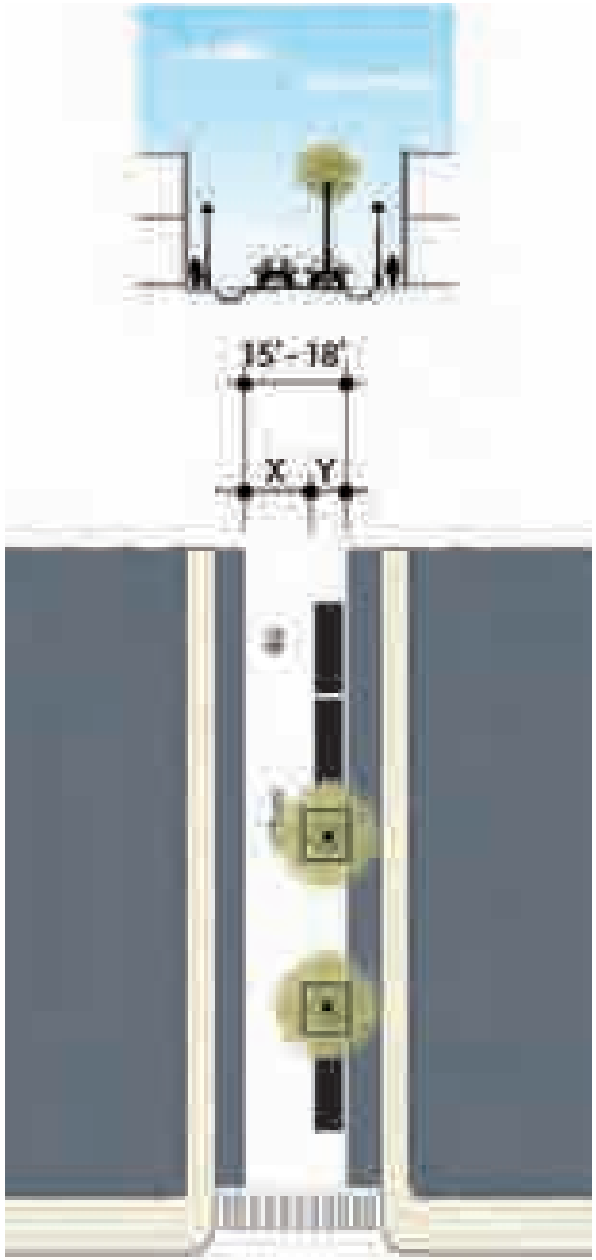
The NC-1-0 illustrates a one-way street with no on-street parking with a target speed of less than 20 mph. Travel lane width varies from 9 to 11 feet.



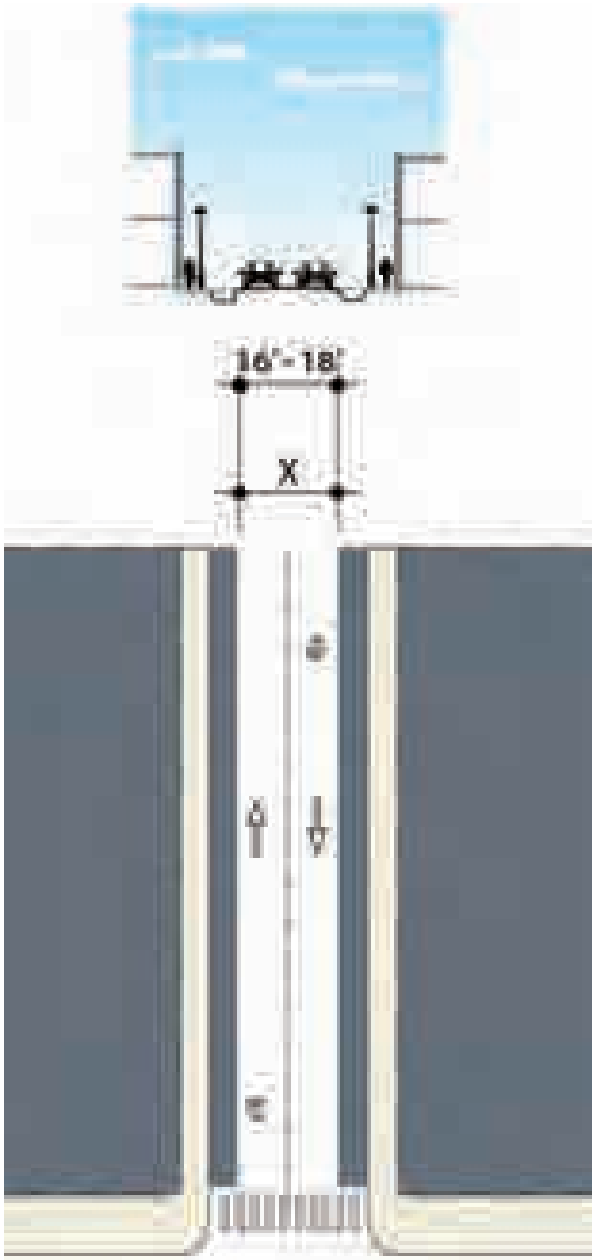
TC-2-2



NC-1-0



NC-1-1



NC-2-0

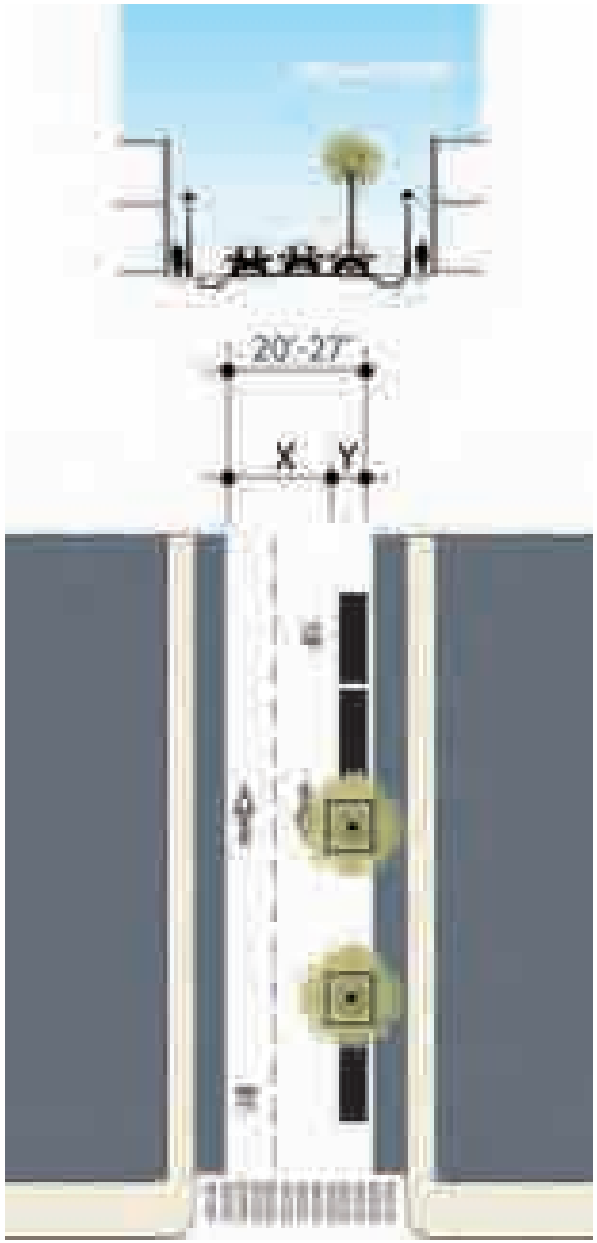
The NC-1-1 is a one-way thoroughfare with parallel parking on one side of the street.

This section has one travel lane of 9 to 11 feet and a parking lane of 6 to 7 feet for a total pavement width of 15 to 18 feet. On-street parking, narrow travel lanes, and shallow setbacks will maintain a target speed of less than 20 mph.

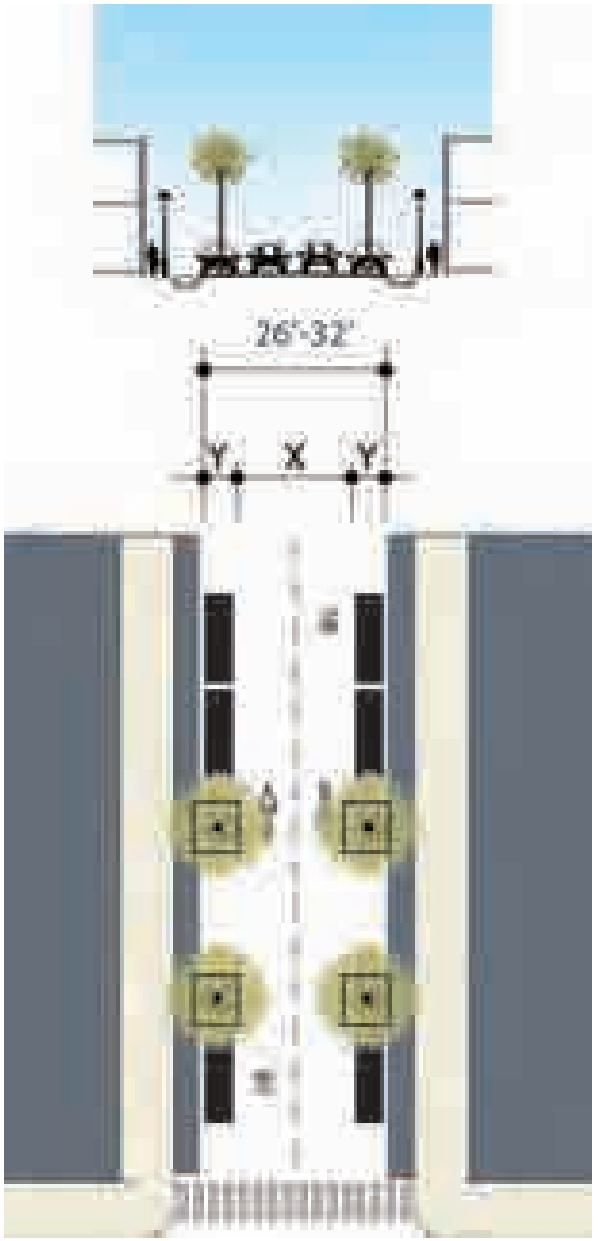
The NC-2-0 illustrates a two-way thoroughfare with no on-street parking. This section, with a target speed of 20 to 25 mph, has two travel lanes, one in each direction, totaling 16 to 18 feet. All other features are similar to the one-way thoroughfare: pedestrian scaled lighting should be provided where possible and drainage grates should be installed where walkability is most promoted.

The NC-2-1 is a two-way thoroughfare section with parking on one side. Target speeds for this section are also 20 to 25 mph, with two travel lanes (one in each direction) totaling 14 to 20 feet and a parallel parking lane of 6 to 7 feet, yielding a pavement width of 20 to 27 feet.

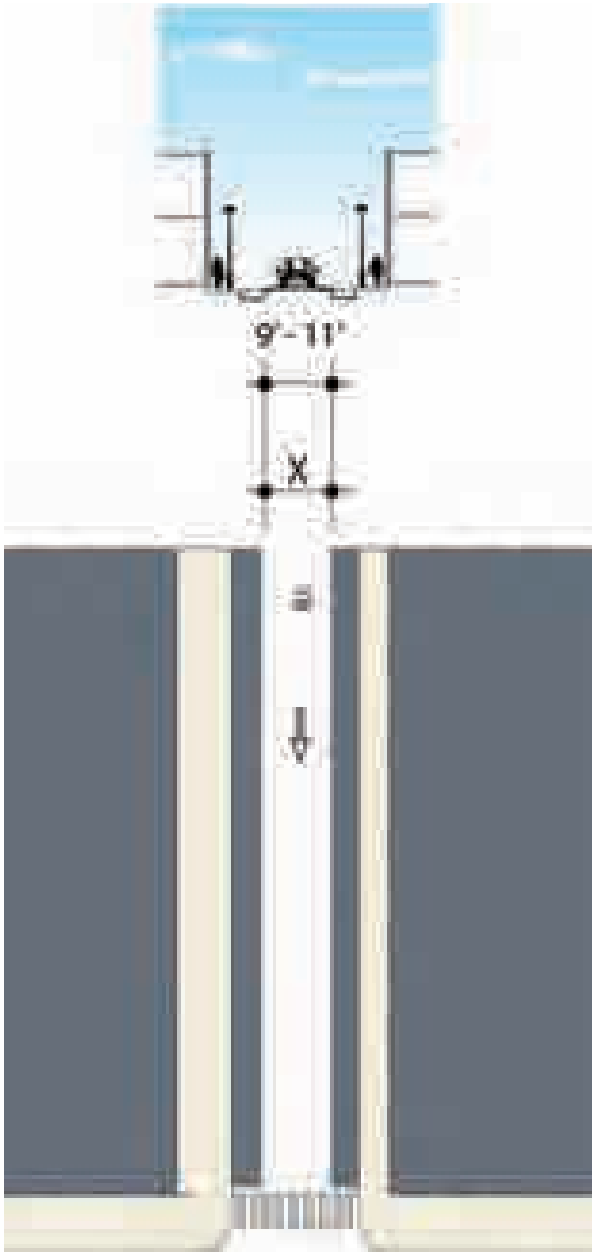
The NC-2-2 contains two-lanes, one in each direction, and parallel parking on both sides. Travel lane dimensions are 14 to 18 feet for two lanes, with parallel parking lanes of 6 to 7 feet, totaling 26 to 32 feet of pavement.



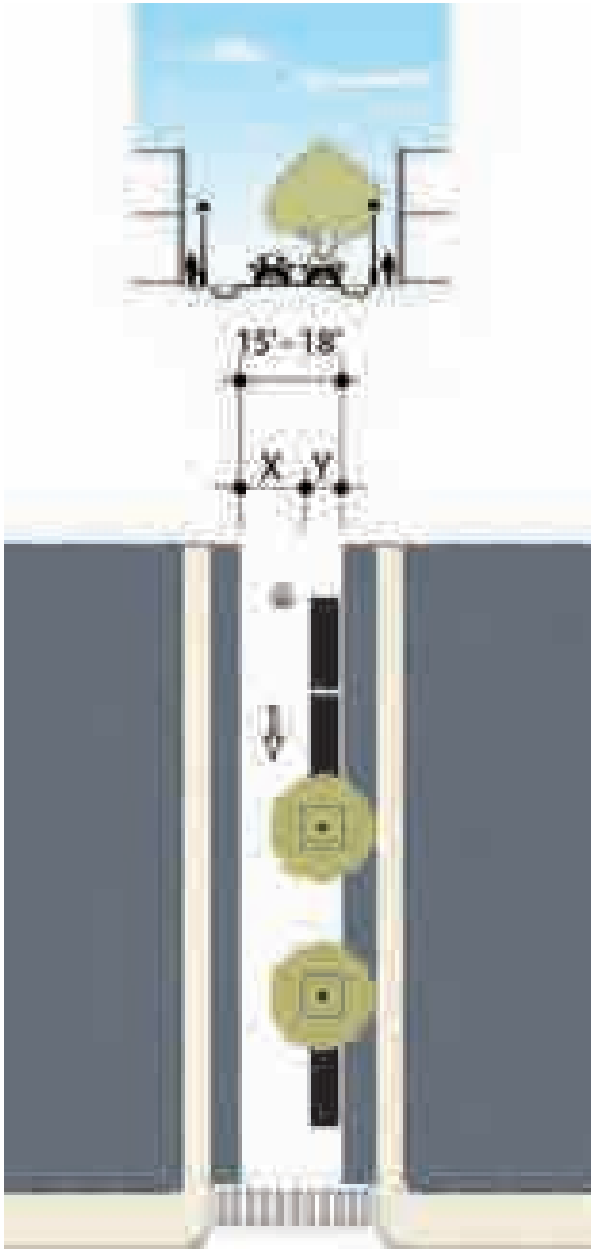
NC-2-1



NC-2-2



NG-1-0



NG-1-1

NEIGHBORHOOD GENERAL SUB-DISTRICT

The following thoroughfares may be utilized in the Neighborhood General Sub-district:

- One-way, no parking
- One-way, one side parking
- Two-way, no parking
- Two-way, one side parking

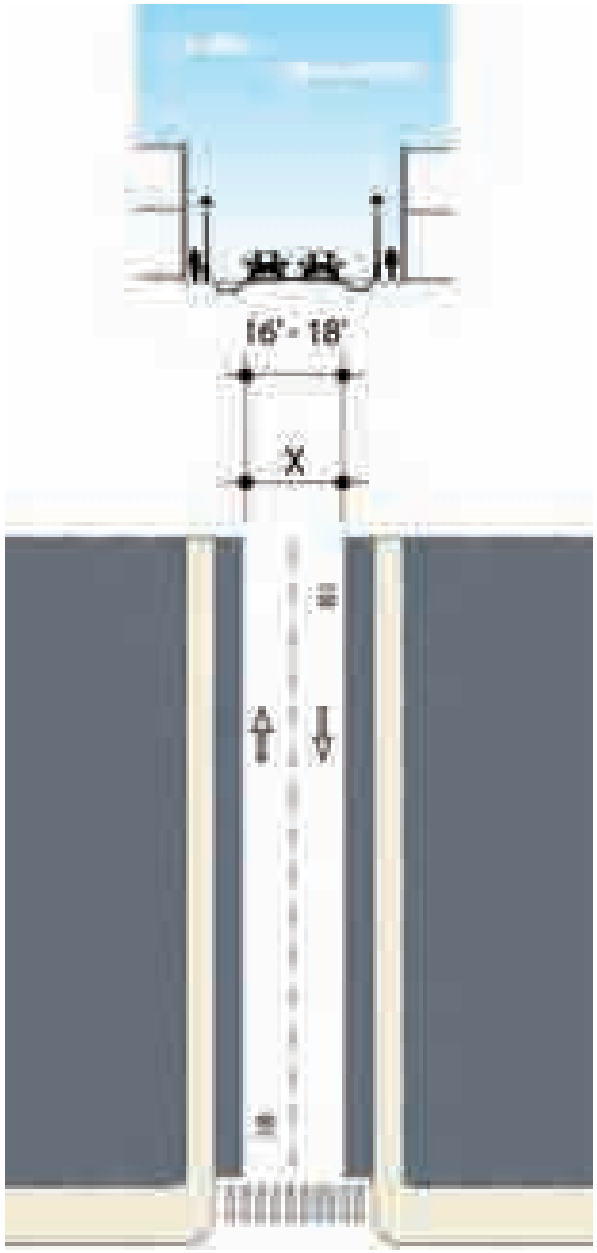
Thoroughfares within the Neighborhood General Sub-district should be designed with greater consideration for pedestrians than in Edge conditions (three-star walkability). More areas should be identified where the utilities are buried and pedestrian scaled lighting and shade trees are provided. Where possible, sidewalks should be widened and bicycle facilities provided where cyclists will be most present. Where grades allow, and target speeds for a thoroughfare are under 25 mph, bicyclists can be expected to share the lane with motor-vehicles. These shared lanes should be marked by a sharrow.

The NG-1-0 is a one-way thoroughfare with no on-street parking, and a target speed of less than 20 mph. This section has one travel lane of 9 to 11 feet.

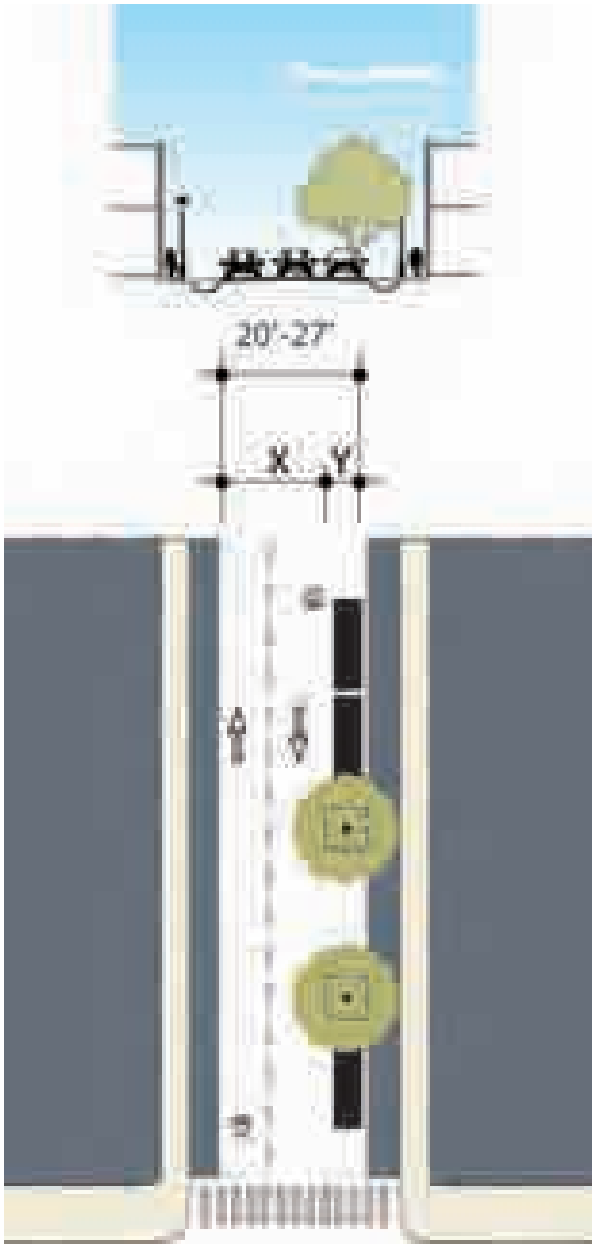
The NG-1-1 has one travel lane of 9 to 11 feet and a parking lane of 6 to 7 feet for a total pavement width of 15 to 18 feet. On-street parking, narrow travel lanes, and shallow setbacks will maintain a target speed of less than 20 mph.

The NG-2-0 illustrates a two-way thoroughfare with no on-street parking. This section, with a target speed of 20 to 25 mph, has two travel lanes, one in each direction, totaling 16 to 18 feet. All other features are similar to the one-way thoroughfare: pedestrian scaled lighting should be provided where possible and drainage grates should be installed where walkability is most promoted.

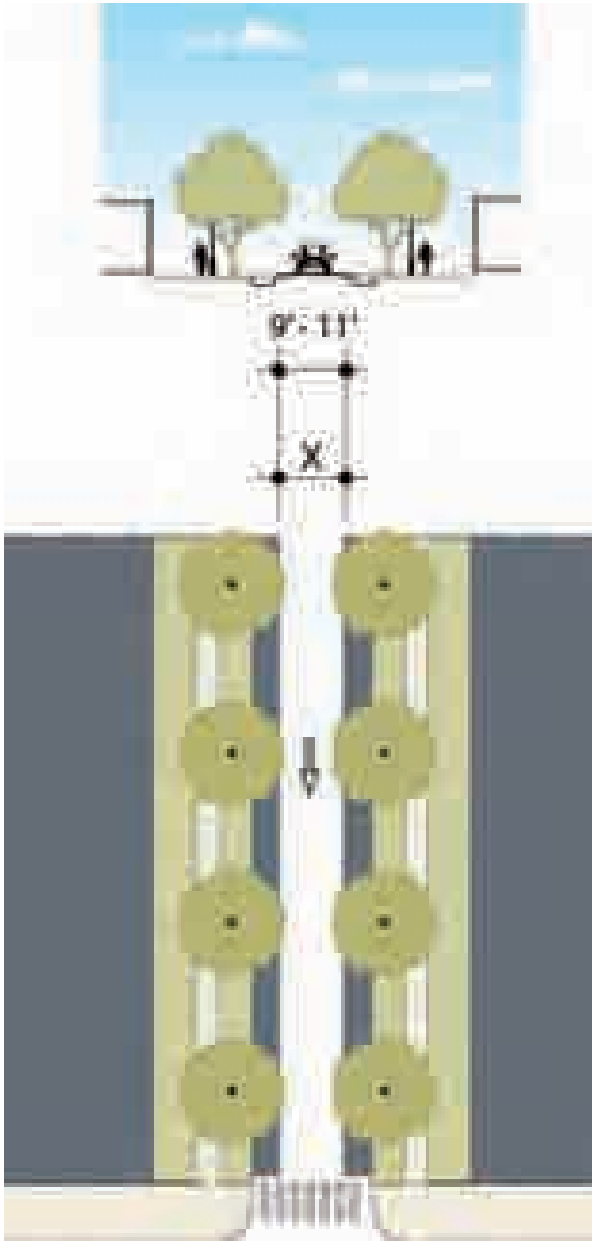
The NG-2-1 is a two-way thoroughfare section with parking on one side. Target speeds for this section are also 20 to 25 mph, with two travel lanes (one in each direction) totaling 14 to 20 feet and a parallel parking lane of 6 to 7 feet, yielding a pavement width of 20 to 27 feet.



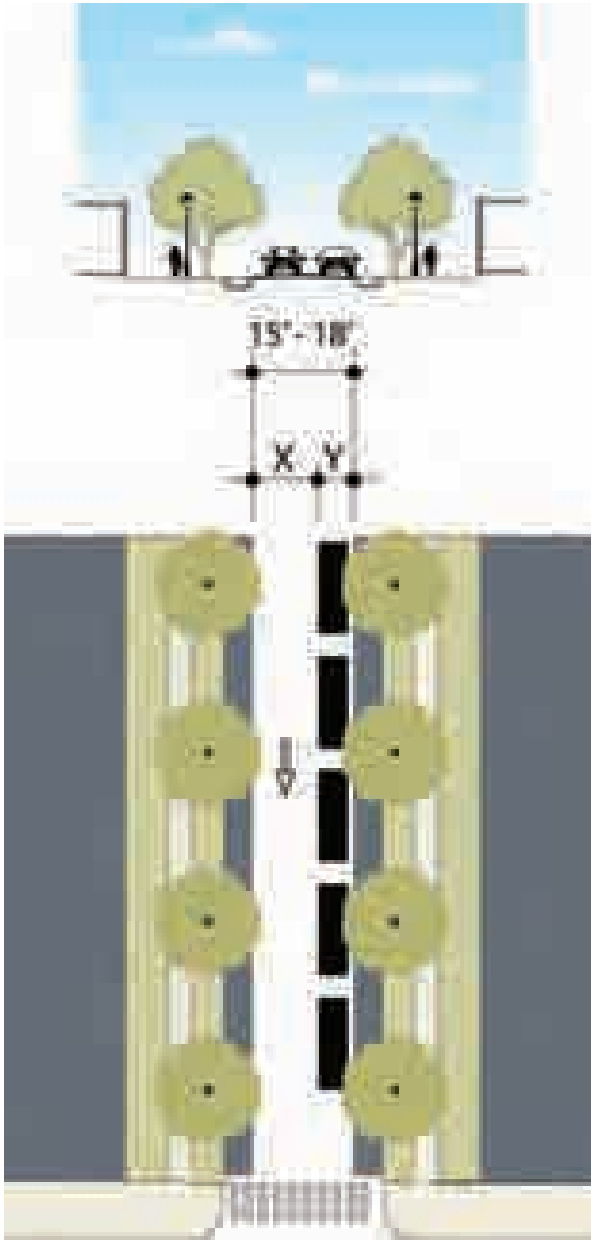
NG-2-0



NG-2-1



NE-1-0



NE-1-1

NEIGHBORHOOD EDGE SUB-DISTRICT

Streets in the Town's Neighborhood Edge Sub-district are currently auto-dominant, functioning mostly to move motor vehicle traffic, with little opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle movement due to the grades and sharp curves of the streets traversing the outer edge of the downtown. Streets are narrow, which along with the grade and curves, keep speeds to a minimum. Buildings are set back and often at separate grades from the street.

Streets within this zone will remain mostly auto-dominant and offer minimal (one or two-star) walkability, if any. Sidewalks should be constructed, where possible, but in many cases the street edge is inappropriate for such facilities.

The following sample thoroughfares may be utilized in the Neighborhood Edge zone:

- One-way, no parking
- One-way, one side parking
- Two-way, no parking
- Two-way, one side parking

Frontage details within the Edge zones will differ from those seen in the previously described Sub-districts. Buildings, if present, will be set further back from the thoroughfare and in some cases, further north, at a separate grade.

In this Edge condition, trees are planted in planting strips or more naturally occurring along the street's edge.

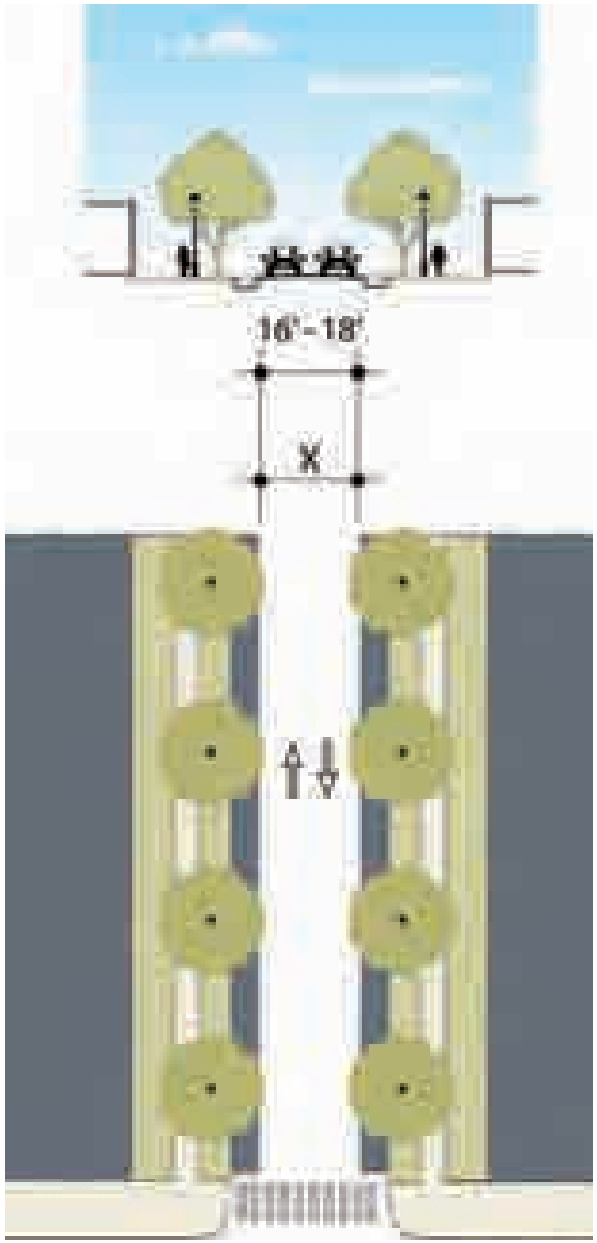
The NE-1-0 is a one-way thoroughfare with no on-street parking, and a target speed of less than 20 mph. This section has one travel lane of 9 to 11 feet.

The NE-1-1 is a one-way thoroughfare with parallel parking on one side of the street.

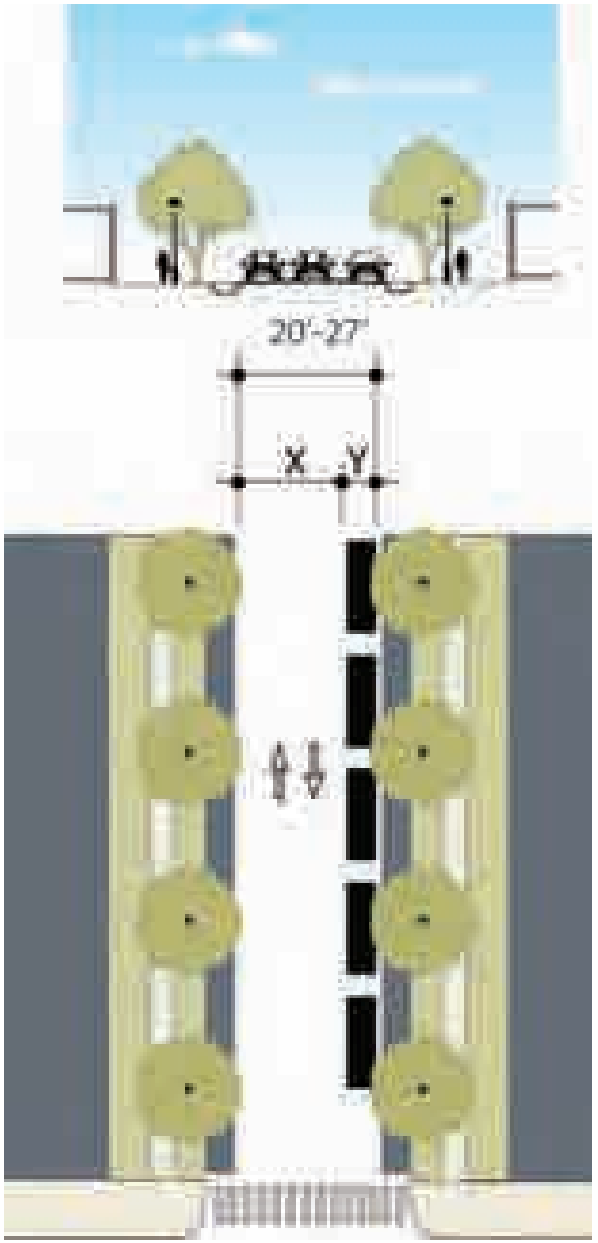
This section has one travel lane of 9 to 11 feet and a parking lane of 6 to 7 feet for a total pavement width of 15 to 18 feet. On-street parking, narrow travel lanes, and shallow setbacks will maintain a target speed of less than 20 mph.

The NE-2-0 illustrates a two-way thoroughfare with no on-street parking, probably the most common thoroughfare found in the Edge condition. This section, with a target speed of 20 to 25 mph, has two travel lanes, one in each direction, totaling 16 to 18 feet. All other features are similar to the one-way thoroughfare: pedestrian scaled lighting should be provided where possible and drainage grates should be installed where walkability is most promoted.

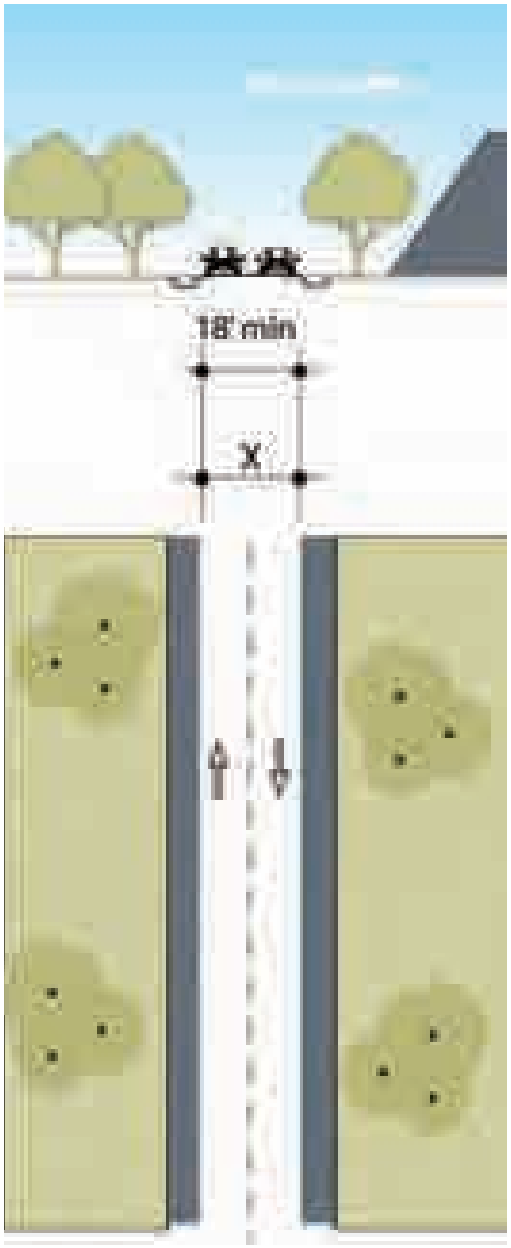
The NE-2-1 is a two-way thoroughfare section with parking on one side. Target speeds for this section are also 20 to 25 mph, with two travel lanes (one in each direction) totaling 14 to 20 feet and a parallel parking lane of 6 to 7 feet, yielding a pavement width of 20 to 27 feet.



NE-2-0



NE-2-1



NE-2-0 Rural

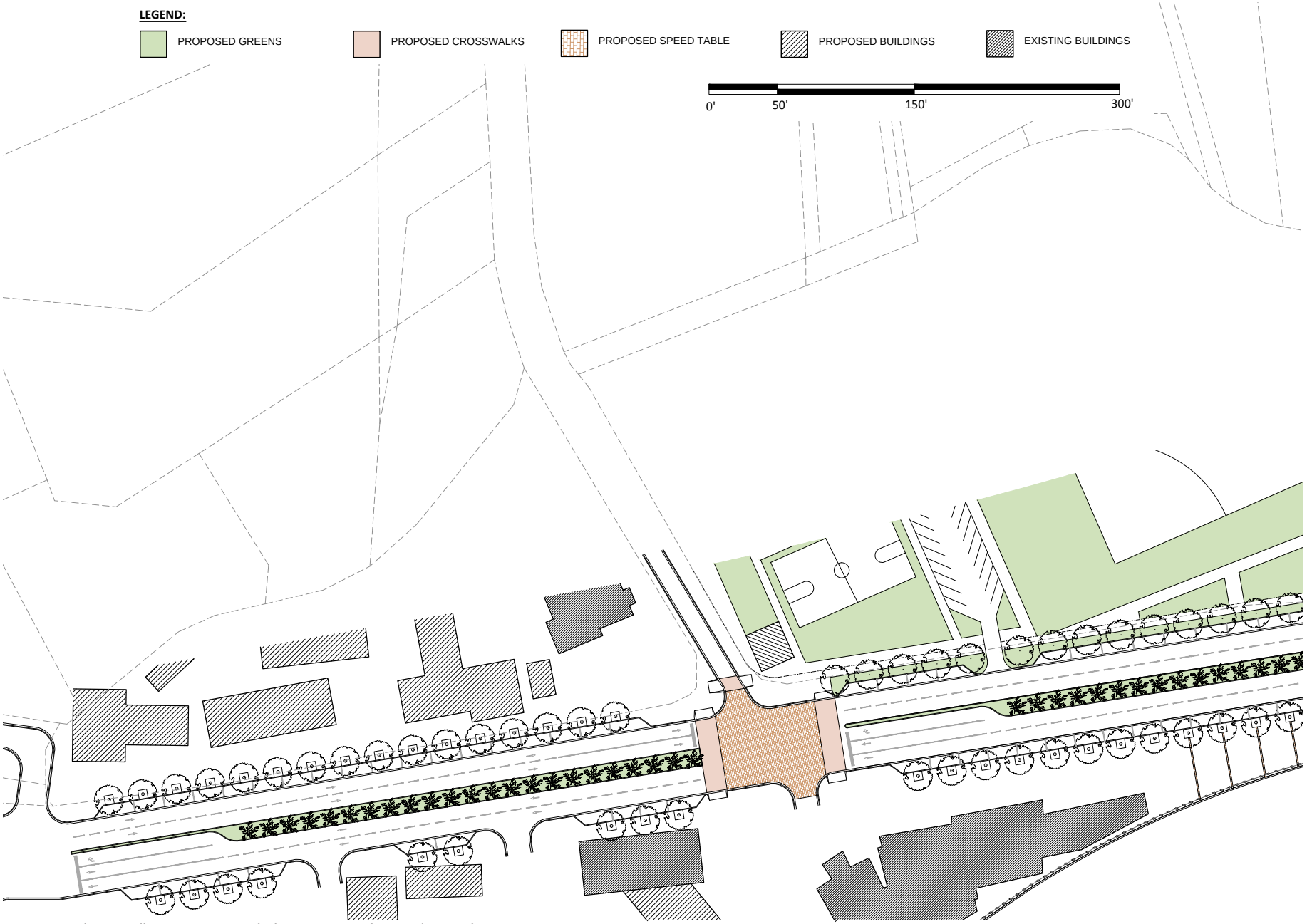
The NE-2-0 Rural (rural road) can be used specifically where nature or hillsides are adjacent to the thoroughfare. In this condition, walkability is minimal and the thoroughfare functions mostly to move motor-vehicles. Lane widths are typically greater in this setting, with a minimum of two 9 foot travel lanes, one in each direction.

APPENDIX C
VETERANS DRIVE DETAILS

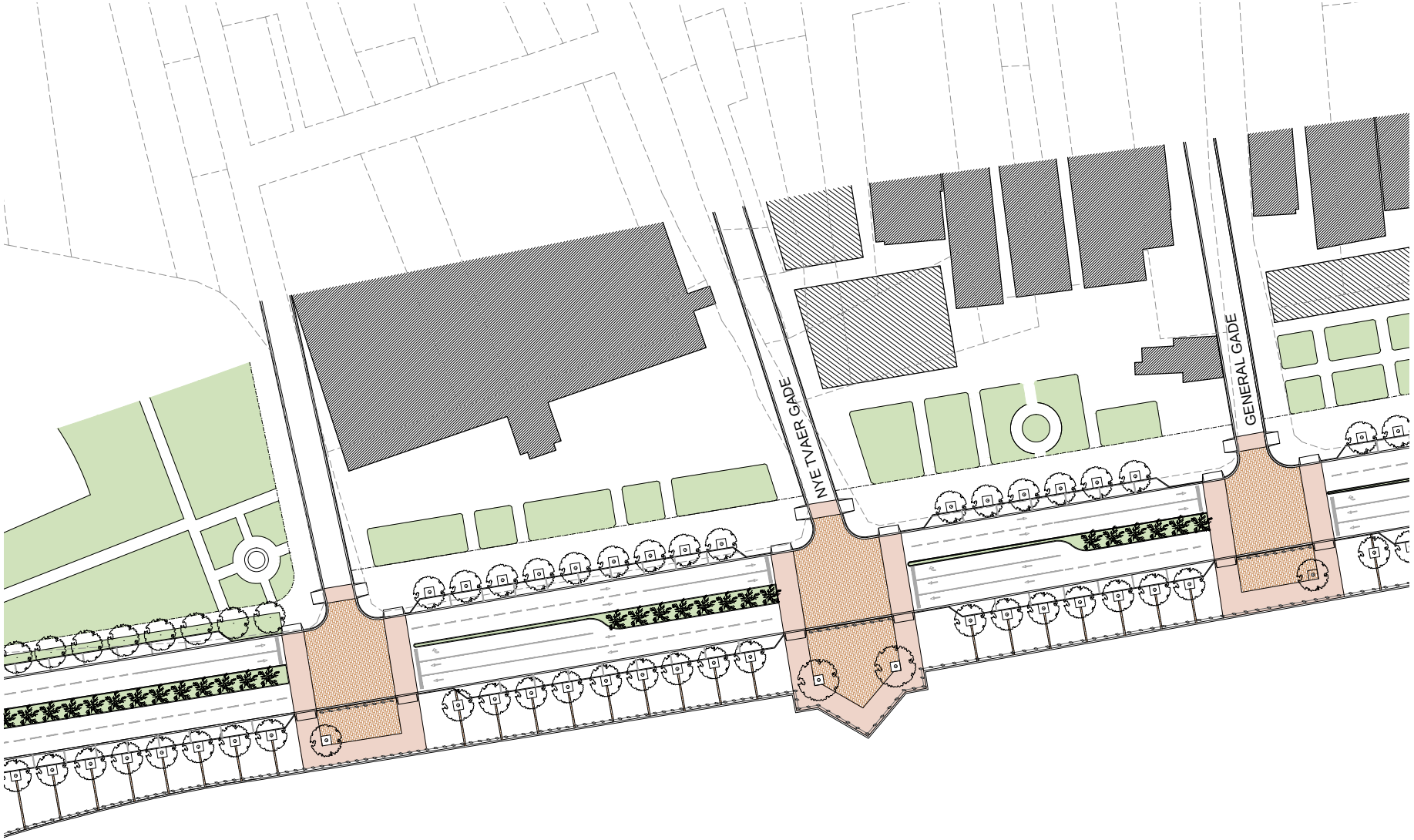
APPENDIX C SUMMARY

In Chapter 5 of this report, the vision for the Charlotte Amalie waterfront is described. A major component of the waterfront area is Veterans Drive; the planned roadway enhancements have potential to greatly improve the appearance and functionality of the waterfront.

In order to accurately depict the vision in the Illustrative Plan (pages 5.10 - 5.11), the proposed roadway improvements were drafted in greater detail. The conceptual drawing in this appendix can be used as a tool to inform further detailing that will be necessary as engineering drawings are prepared.

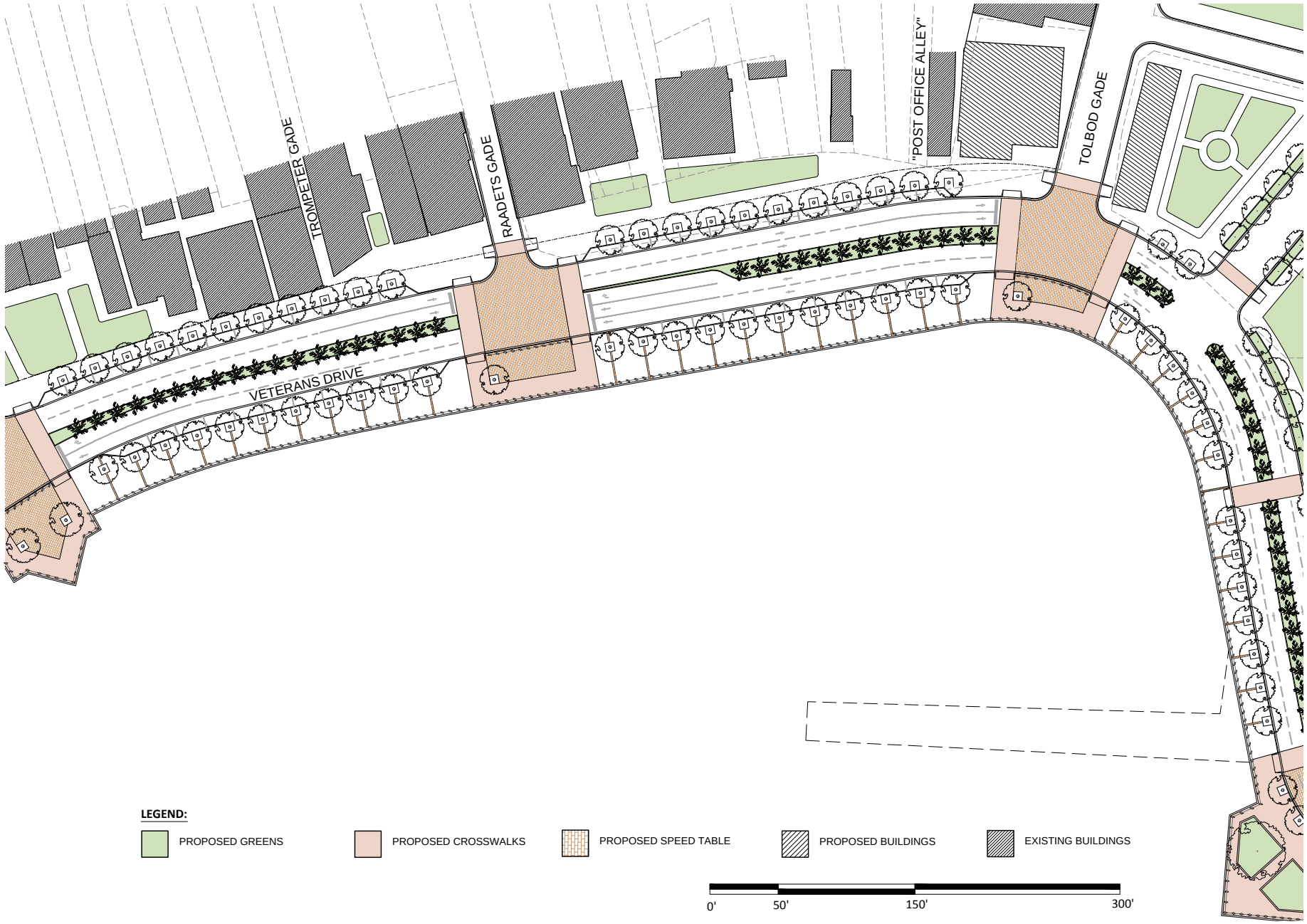


Veterans Drive Detail, Rue De St Barthelemy to east of Gasveien Gade

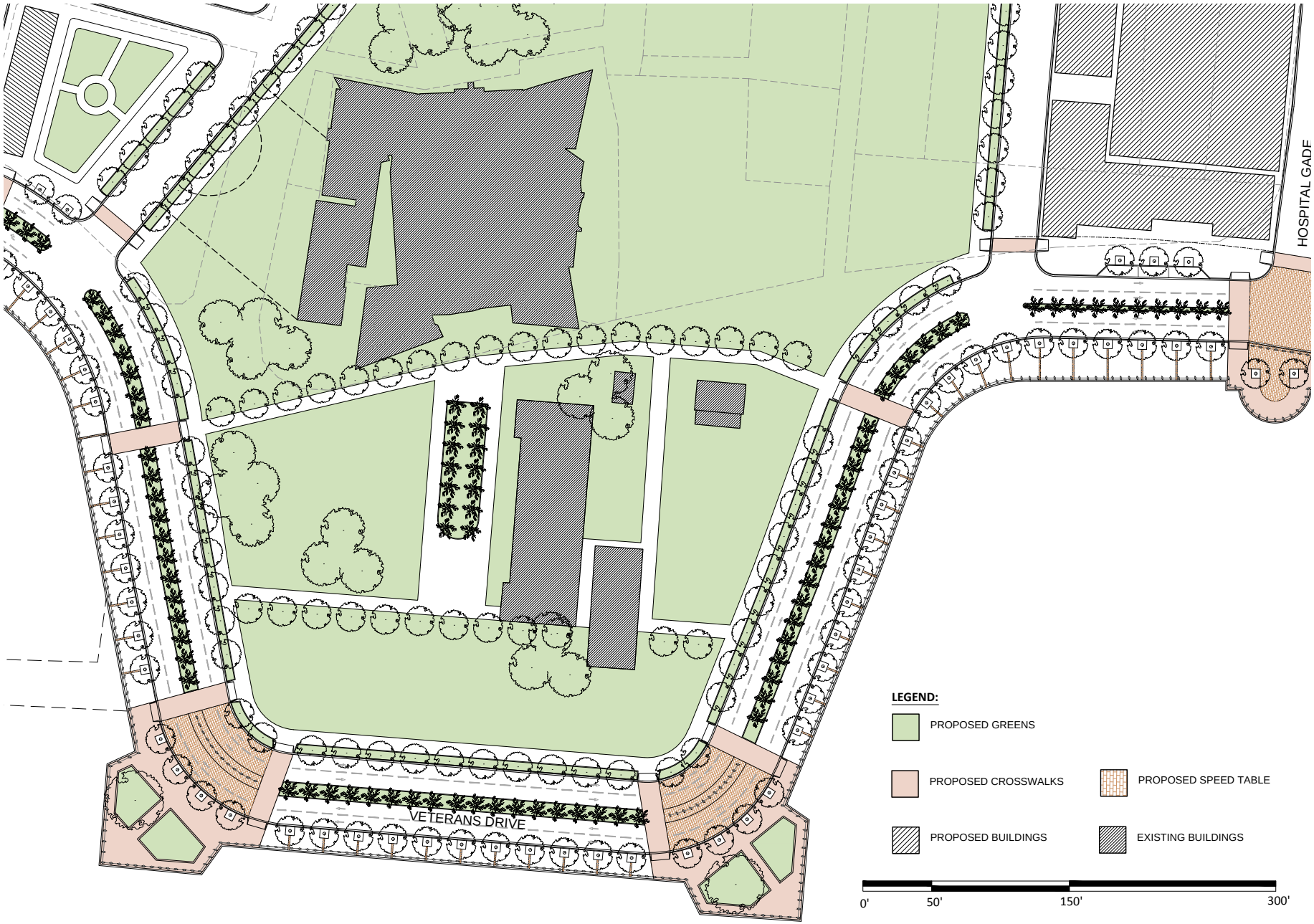


Veterans Drive Detail, East of Gasveien Gade to General Gade

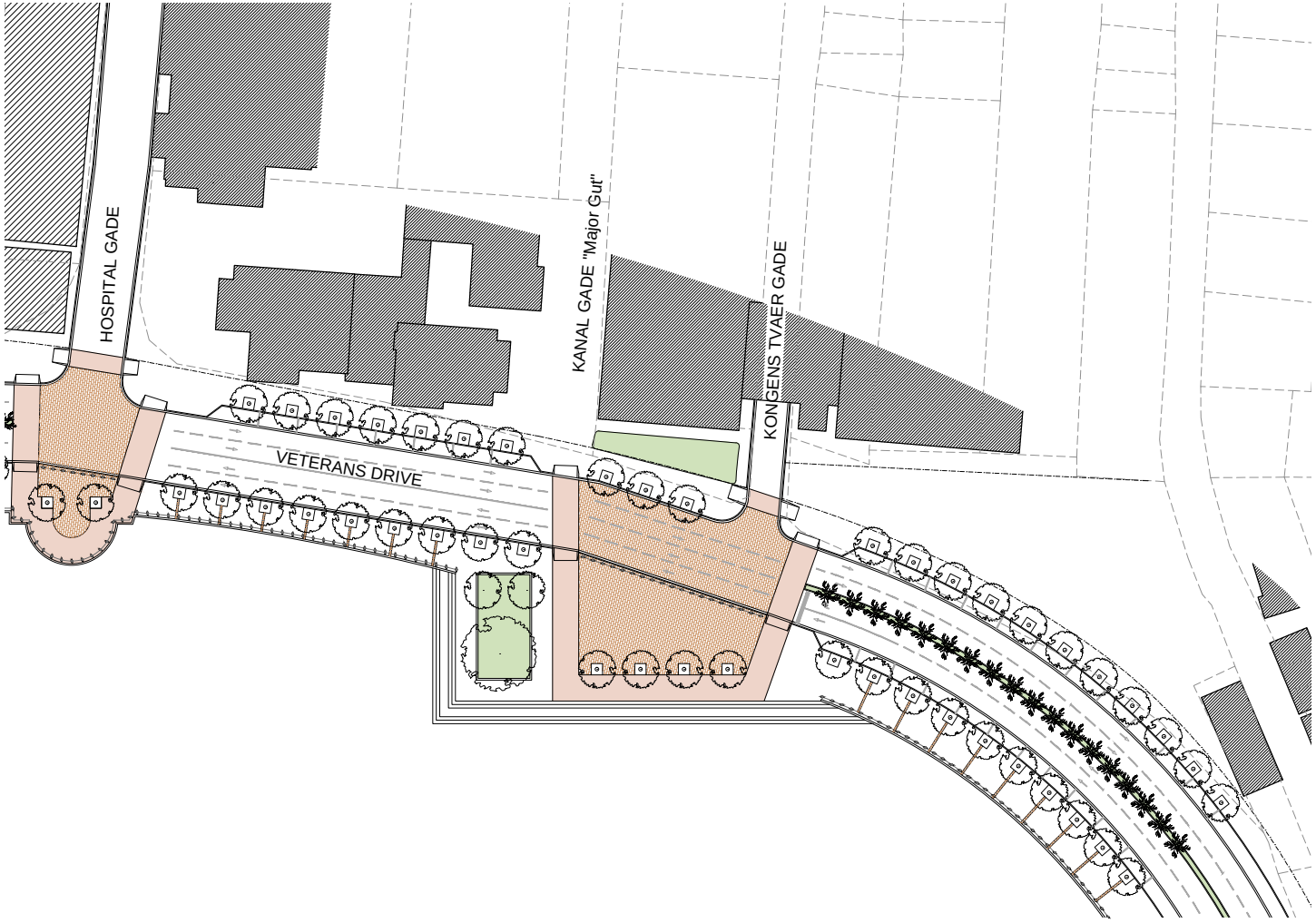
Veterans Drive Detail, General Gade to Store Tvaer Gade



Veterans Drive Detail, Store Tvaer Gade to east of Tolbod Gade



Veterans Drive Detail, east of Tolbod Gade to Hospital Gade

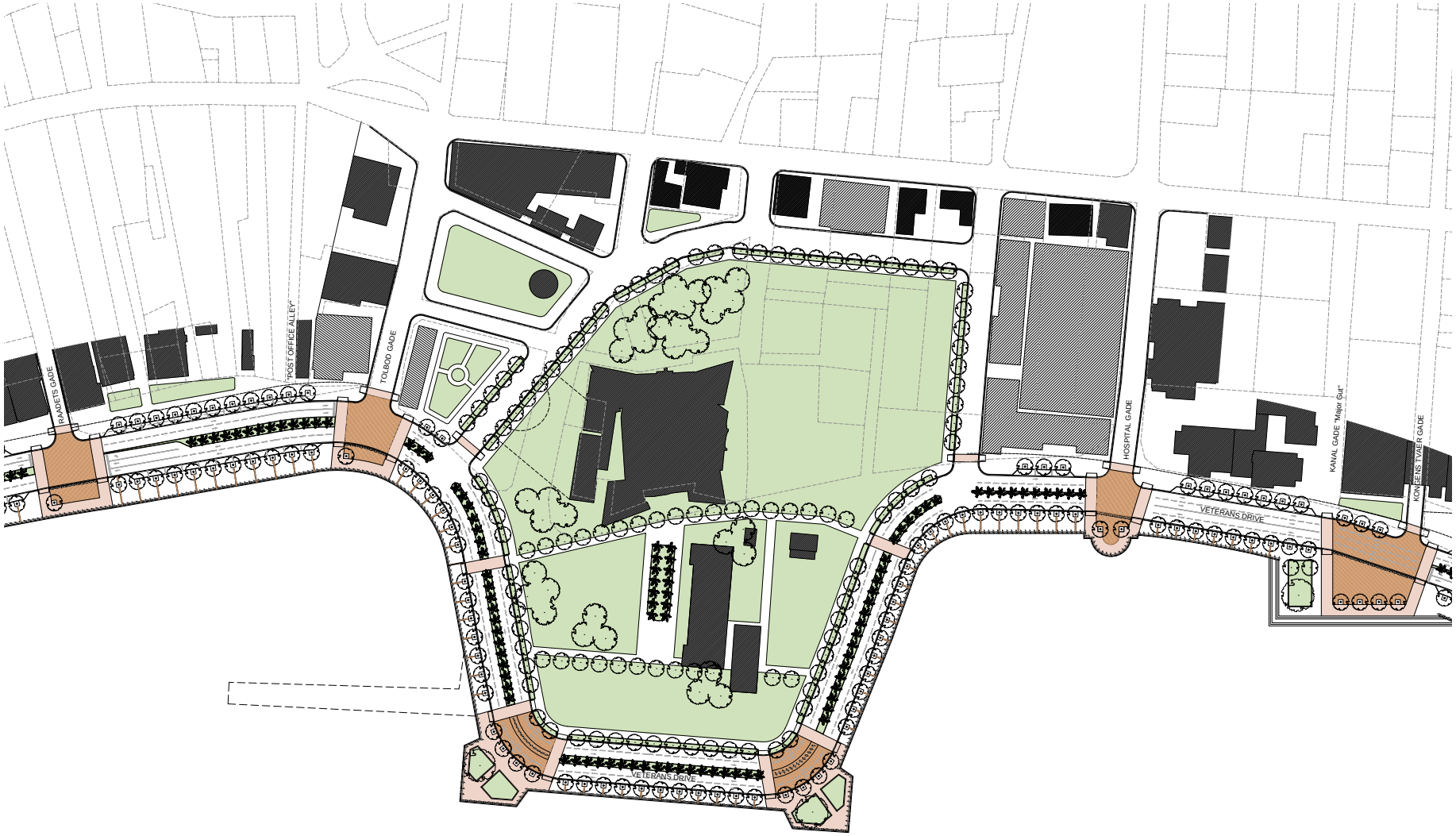


LEGEND:

PROPOSED GREENS | PROPOSED CROSSWALKS | PROPOSED SPEED TABLE | PROPOSED BUILDINGS | EXISTING BUILDINGS

0' 50' 150' 300'

Veterans Drive Detail, Hospital Gade to east of Kongens Tvaer Gade



LEGEND:

PROPOSED GREENS | PROPOSED CROSSWALKS | PROPOSED SPEED TABLE | PROPOSED BUILDINGS | EXISTING BUILDINGS

0' 50' 150' 300'

Veterans Drive Bypass Detail (Raadets Gade to Kongens Tvaer Gade, including the proposed Network Component).