



JOSEPH AVENUE ARTWALK MASTER PLAN

JULY 2025



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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REPORT PREPARATION



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This report was prepared by Colliers Engineering & Design with assistance from Steele Landscape Architecture.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

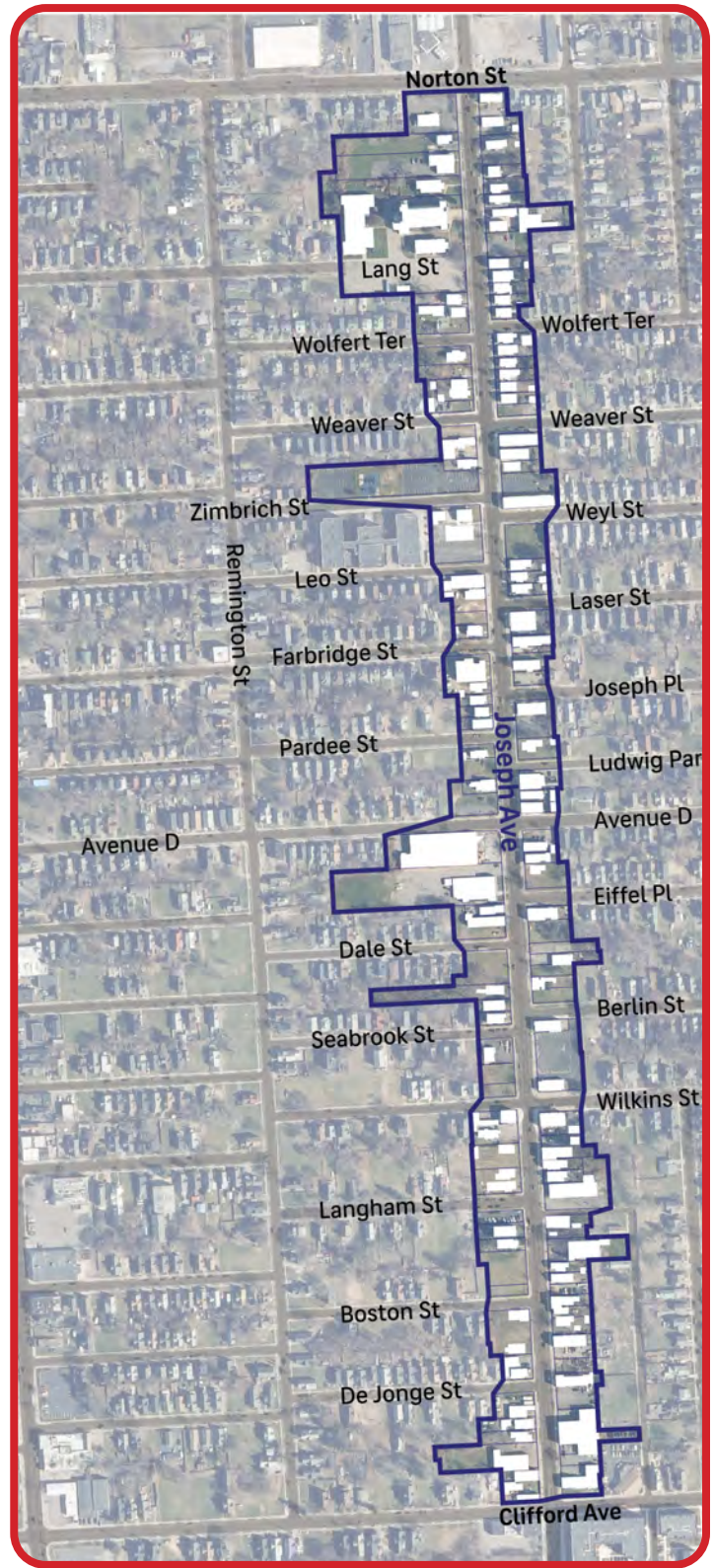
PROJECT PURPOSE AND GOALS

The City of Rochester, with funding provided by the Genesee Transportation Council (GTC), commissioned the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk (JAA) Master Plan. The targeted corridor begins at Norton Street and extends south to Clifford Avenue.

Community members and arts advocates have invested significant time and resources in recent years to establish Joseph Avenue as a recognized arts corridor. However, the existing transportation infrastructure and public spaces along Joseph Avenue were not originally designed to support or complement these creative initiatives. The current configuration presents challenges for all users, including but not limited to pedestrians, cyclists and public transit users, while also limiting opportunities for community gatherings and artistic expression.

This project offers a comprehensive plan to redesign the Joseph Avenue corridor between Clifford Avenue and Norton Street. Building on current and proposed arts initiatives along the avenue, the plan integrates innovative placemaking techniques with strategic transportation enhancements to achieve multiple community benefits: improved safety conditions, expanded multimodal transportation options, enhanced connectivity throughout the area, and further development of the corridor as a vibrant center for arts and cultural activity. This plan contains the following elements:

- Existing Conditions Analysis;
- Corridor Needs and Opportunities Assessment;
- Corridor Recommendations; and
- Implementation Strategy.



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The planning team engaged the community through various outreach methods during the JAA corridor planning process to gather input on multi-modal transportation and placemaking priorities for the area.

The project team used multiple public participation methods throughout the JAA corridor planning process, including a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) with local arts organizations, businesses, residents, and agency staff, stakeholder interviews with seven key community representatives, and three public workshops that gathered input on community needs, design alternatives, and final recommendations. This comprehensive outreach helped identify community priorities for multi-modal transportation, placemaking opportunities, and establishing the corridor as an arts and cultural destination.

Community feedback centered on revitalization without gentrification, with safety as the top priority—both traffic safety at key intersections and crime prevention through reclaiming spaces for positive activities. Other priorities included corridor beautification through streetscape improvements, transforming vacant lots into community gathering spaces, integrating arts through public installations and artistic infrastructure, and supporting economic development by increasing foot traffic and improving retail visibility.



Public Workshop #1: October 8, 2024



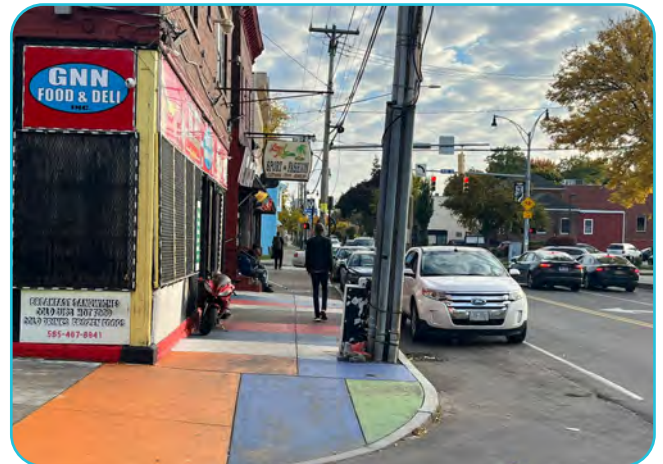
Public Workshop #2: February 5, 2025

KEY FINDINGS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The JAA Master Plan includes an existing conditions analysis of socio-economic and physical characteristics of the JAA Corridor. This analysis identified key opportunities and needs for public realm improvements and multimodal expansion. These are summarized below.

- There are ample opportunities for placemaking strategies, vacant lot activation, and transportation safety improvements.
- Existing neighborhood-based plans for the JAA corridor highlight the need for infill development. This should include affordable housing and strategic commercial infill to provide long-term stability and vital services for the community. These investments will support the vision for a healthy and thriving arts corridor, but will take time to advance.
- 23 vacant properties, or five (5) acres along the corridor offer opportunities for eventual infill, and in the interim, pop-up programming and temporary uses.
- Recommendations for temporary uses include community gardens, temporary installations (art/culture), play spaces, and community services.
- There is a strong opportunity to establish a consistent streetscape with uniform lighting, materials, and a healthier tree canopy.
- Public art opportunities include gateways, cultural beacons, art as infrastructure, and temporary installations. These opportunities can build off of the three (3) key anchor institutions: Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School (north), The Avenue Blackbox Theatre (center), and Joseph Avenue Arts and Culture Alliance (south), as well as community partners such as the Lincoln Branch Library and Upper Family Worship room.

Existing Conditions in the JAA Corridor.



KEY FINDINGS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- The preferred design for the corridor includes a buffered bike lane on the west side; further opportunities for bike facilities should be considered during engineering design. Key intersections identified for improvements are Clifford, Norton, Avenue D, Wilkins, and Zimbrich. Additionally, safety enhancements in school zones are recommended, such as raised crosswalks and other traffic calming measures.
- Building a more resilient neighborhood economy and sustainable stewardship of any new art installations or programs will require long-term collaboration among local businesses, residents, neighborhood-based organizations and the City.

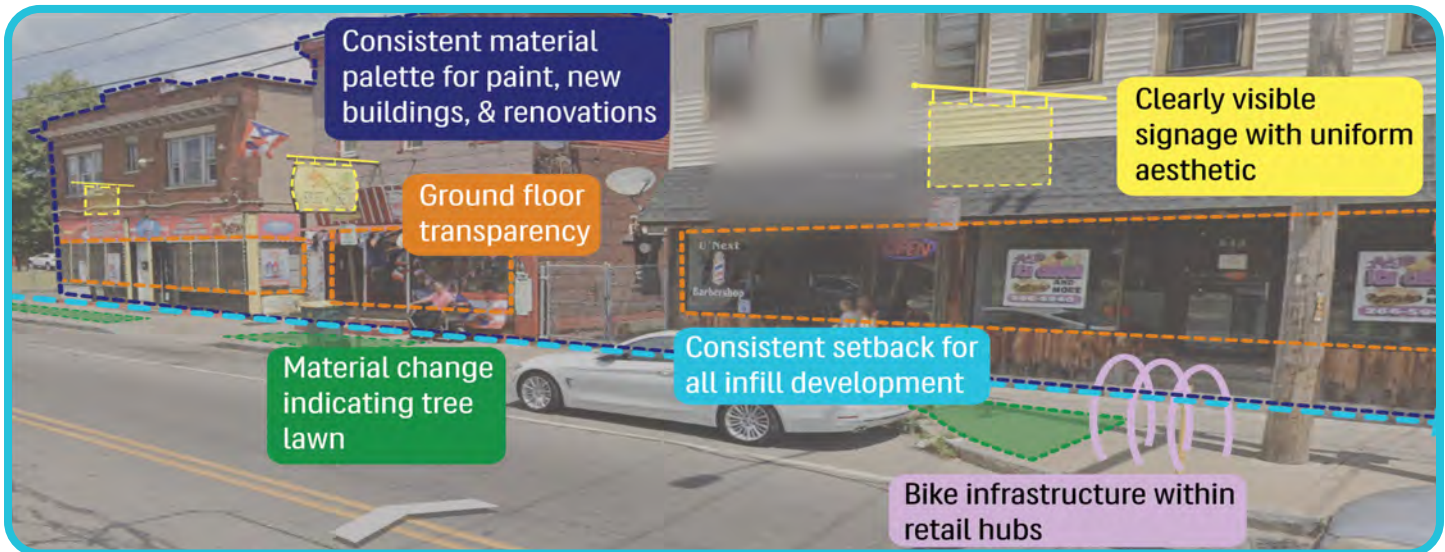
Proposed Vacant Lot Improvements: Perspective A - Joseph + Wilkins Street

A concept for modified shipping containers that could offer temporary retail spaces, pop-up municipal services, or community program space.



TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

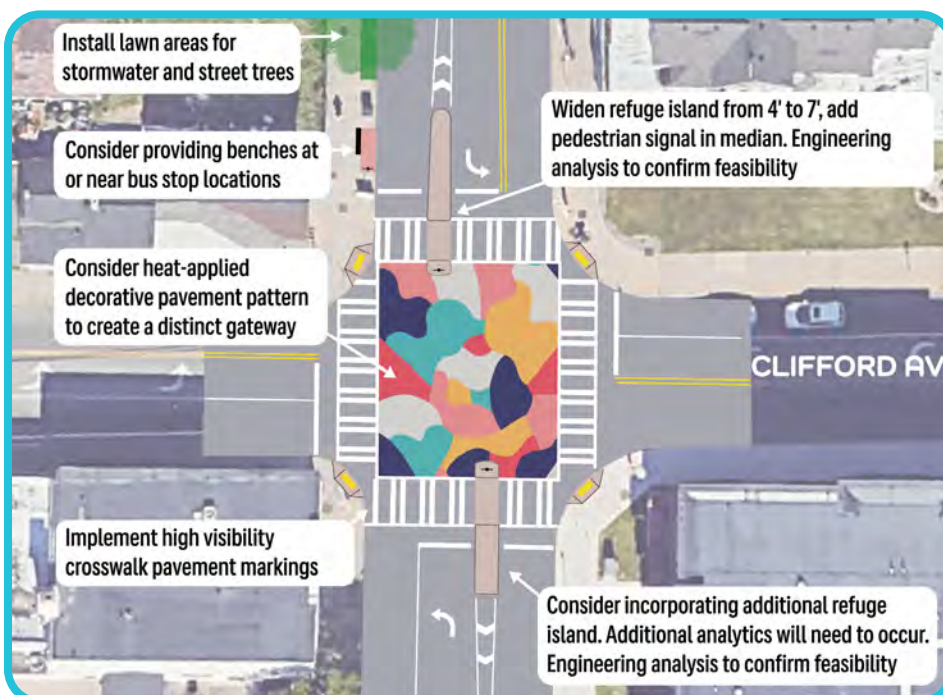
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ESTABLISHING A CONSISTENT STREETSCAPE



Commercial.



Residential.



Preferred Design Concept: Refuge island expansion, heat-applied decorative pavement markings.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

An implementation strategy for proposed improvements was created as guidance for the City of Rochester as well as its partners. This implementation strategy includes phasing information, funding sources, and other important details for recommended improvements and future investments. Immediate term priorities for the City to consider are listed below. Immediate-term actions were prioritized based on their potential to improve safety and address pressing transportation needs. Several improvements were also classified as immediate because of their potential to be integrated into near-term transportation projects that the City of Rochester is actively pursuing.

Mid- to long-term projects were identified as initiatives that can be implemented incrementally over time, independent of future transportation projects. These efforts are primarily focused on supporting the long-term vision of establishing Joseph Avenue as a recognized arts and cultural destination. All recommendations are planning concepts and require analysis during engineering design to confirm feasibility. A glossary of abbreviations is provided at the end of the report.

Timeline	Project No.	Location on Joseph Ave	Improvement	Funding Source	Responsible Party	Notes
IMMEDIATE TERM	Multi-Modal					
	1	Corridor-Wide	Buffered Bike Lane (west side) and Shared-Use Lane (east side)***	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, STBG, New York Main Street, ESD (Smart Growth Community Fund), TA	City of Rochester	Assume 3' buffer with 5' wide bike lane, restriping of center stripes and east shoulder, and bump-out alignments/modifications. Consider flexible posts in buffer. Assess 10' travel lanes and 5' bike lanes as alternative option.
	2		Baseline Streetscape Enhancements	Local Funding, TAP/CMAQ, CDBG, NEA Our Town Grants, STBG, TA, NYSCA, Complete Streets, NYSDEC Urban Forestry Grants, CSC, EPF, GIGP, RAISE*, SS4A*	City of Rochester, RTS	Inclusive of bicycle storage facilities, street furniture, trash receptacles, pedestrian-scale lighting, a continuous tree lawn with street trees, and benches at high volume bus stops
	Key Intersections					
	3A	Joseph and Norton	Bump-outs with Bike Lane (west side only), Repaint Crosswalks***	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, TA, CDBG, New York Main Street	City of Rochester	Bumpout to be installed on the east side
	3B		Raised Table Intersection	Local Funding, TAP/CMAQ, HSIP, STBG, BUILD	City of Rochester	Localized traffic calming; pending final City policy on tabled intersections
	4A	Joseph and Clifford	Expand Refuge Island, Install Pedestrian Signal Button, and Repaint Crosswalks***	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, BUILD, STP, STBG, AARP, TA	City of Rochester	Modification to existing refuge island, consider new refuge island on south side of intersection
	4B		Bump-outs and repainting crosswalk	Local Funding, Private Funding, TAP/CMAQ, CDBG, NEA Our Town Grants, NYSCA, SS4A*, RAISE*	City of Rochester	This option requires the removal of the refuge island and would only be appropriate if the refuge island could not be increased in width and was deemed unsafe
	4C		Raised Table Intersection	Local Funding, TAP/CMAQ, HSIP, STBG, BUILD	City of Rochester	Localized traffic calming; pending final City policy on tabled intersections

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Timeline	Project No.	Location on Joseph Ave	Improvement	Funding Source	Responsible Party	Notes
IMMEDIATE TERM	5A	Joseph and Wilkins	Raised table intersection***	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, BUILD, STP, AARP, STBG, TA, SSFA*	City of Rochester	Localized traffic calming; pending final City policy on tabled intersections
	5B		Re-Paint Existing Crosswalk and Curb Ramp Replacement**	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, BUILD, STP, AARP, STBG, TA, SSFA*	City of Rochester	Repaint existing southern crosswalk, remove existing north crosswalk, curb ramp reconstruction to the north to match recently replaced curb ramps on southern corners
	6	Joseph and Avenue D	Bump-outs, Re-touching Crosswalks after Construction, New Curb Ramps, and New APS Pedestrian Signal***	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, BUILD, STP, SSFA*, RAISE*	City of Rochester	Establishment of community center, traffic calming in highest pedestrian crash volume intersection within study area
	SCHOOL ZONE					
	7A	Adjacent to EMHCS Middle and High School Entrance	Raised Crosswalk***	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, BUILD, STP, AARP, STBG, TA, SS4A*, SRTS*	City of Rochester	Local traffic calming at school entrance and establishment of north school zone area, raised crosswalk is approximately 500' south of the nearest crossing location on Norton Street
	7B		Crosswalk across Joseph Ave**	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, BUILD, STP, AARP, STBG, TA, SS4A*, SRTS*	City of Rochester	Inclusive of bump-outs, ADA curb ramps, pavement symbols, high visibility crosswalk markings, and one RRFB to the north
	8A	Zimbrich	Raised Table Intersection and High Visibility Crosswalks***	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, BUILD, STBG, TA, SS4A*, SRTS*	City of Rochester	Localized traffic calming at school entrance and establishment of south school zone area, subject to final City policy on raised crossings
	8B		Enhance existing crossing*	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, BUILD, STP, AARP, STBG, TA, SS4A*, SRTS*	City of Rochester	Inclusive of bump-outs, ADA curb ramps, pavement symbols, high visibility crosswalk markings, and one RRFB to the south

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

TIMELINE	PROJECT NO.	LOCATION ON JOSEPH AVE	IMPROVEMENT	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	NOTES
MID TO LONG TERM	MULTI-MODAL					
	9	Corridor-Wide	On-Going Streetscape and Street Furniture Improvements	Local Funding, TAP/CMAQ, CDBG, NEA Our Town Grants, STBG, TA, NYSCA, Complete Streets, RAISE*, SS4A*	City of Rochester	For any improvements not implemented in the immediate term, continue to install additional street furniture and artistic elements to support the ArtWalk theme
	KEY INTERSECTIONS					
	10	Norton	Decorative Pavement Markings for Intersection	Local Funding, Restore NY, CDBG, NYSCA, NEA Our Town Grants, NYFA, REDC, NY Main Street	City of Rochester, Community Partners	Decorative pavement to be installed to match gateway at Clifford. Pavers are scheduled to be removed during the reconstruction of Seneca Avenue, starting at Seneca Avenue and Norton Street. Decorative pavement to be designed with community input, opportunity to engage local artists
	11	Clifford	Decorative Pavement Markings for Intersection	Local Funding, Restore NY, CDBG, NYSCA, NEA Our Town Grants, NYFA, REDC, NY Main Street	City of Rochester, Community Partners	Decorative pavement markings to be designed with community input, opportunity to engage local artists
	ArtWalk					
	12	Clifford & Norton	Gateway Art Installations	Local Funding, Restore NY, CDBG, NYSCA, NEA Our Town Grants, NYFA, REDC, NY Main Street	City of Rochester, Community Partners	Designed/selected with community input, opportunity to engage local artist
	VACANT LOT PROGRAMMING					
	13	Wilkins	Community Services	Local Funding, Restore NY, CDBG, New York Main Street, EPF - Parks	City of Rochester, Community Partners	Modified shipping containers to house flexible program including co-work stations, pop-up retail, and community services, pocket park includes gathering space, public art, tree planting within lot and to shade pavement in ROW
	14	Weyl	Recreational Services	Local Funding, Restore NY, CDBG, New York Main Street, EPF - Parks, CSC	City of Rochester, EMHCS, Community Partners	Recreational programming for all ages, such as a bike safety course, environmental education, and nature play, potential partnership with EMHCS Charter School

Notes:

* = Program funding status unknown under the current federal administration.

** = Baseline Alternative

*** = Preferred Concept

- All new crosswalks must comply with the Monroe County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) Traffic Studies Procedure Manual requirements.
- A Traffic Study will be needed for any recommendations that involve removing turning lanes at intersections or reducing lane widths.
- A parking study will be needed to confirm the feasibility of parking changes and Traffic Control Board approval will be required for changes to parking regulations.
- The public has expressed the need for more bus shelters, in addition to seating at transit stops. Transit stops with the highest ridership within the study area include the southbound stops at Clifford, Zimbrich.

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

REGIONAL CONTEXT

CORRIDOR STUDY AREA

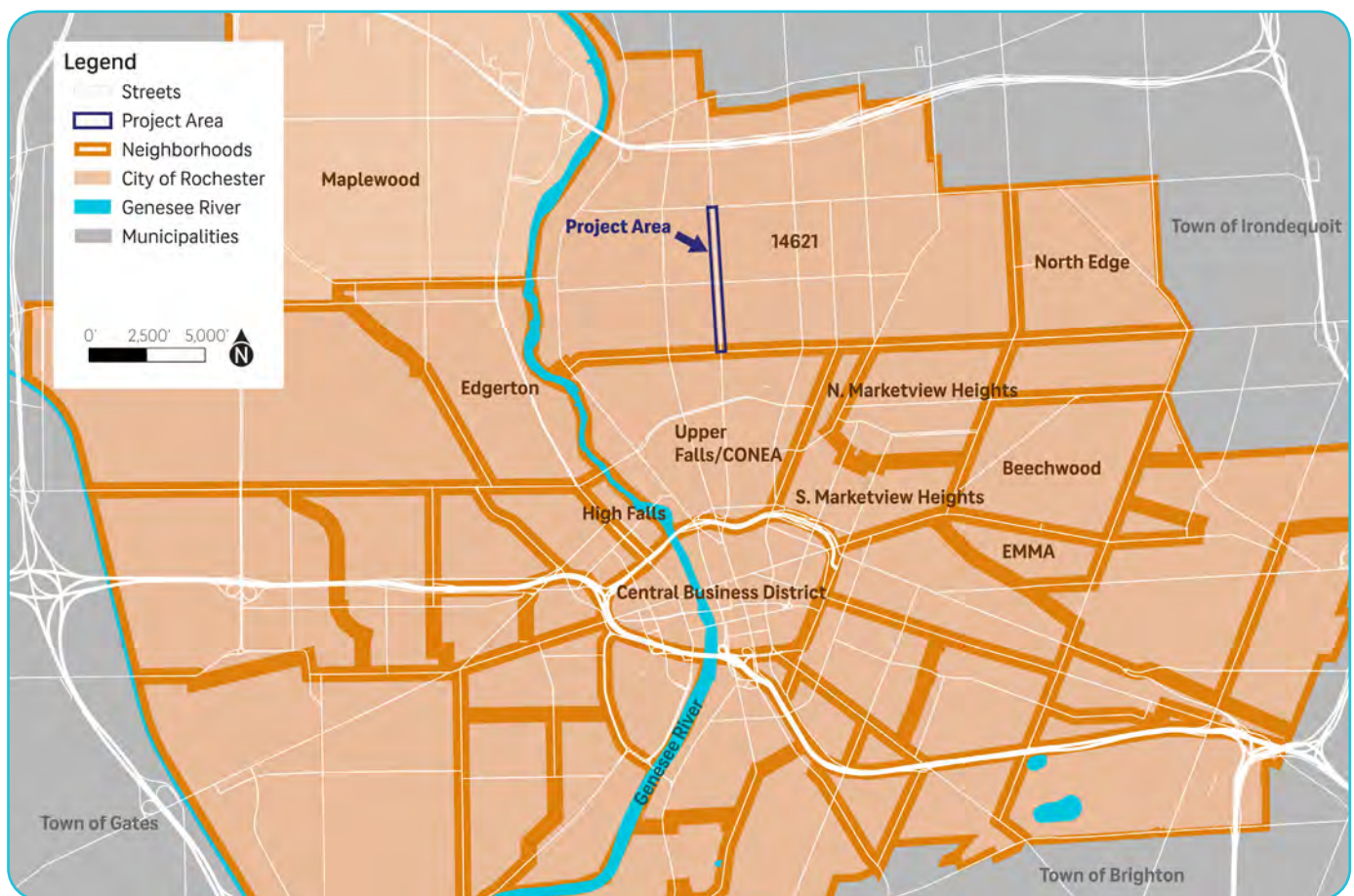
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

RECENT PLANS,
INITIATIVES & POLICIES

REGIONAL CONTEXT

REGIONAL CONTEXT

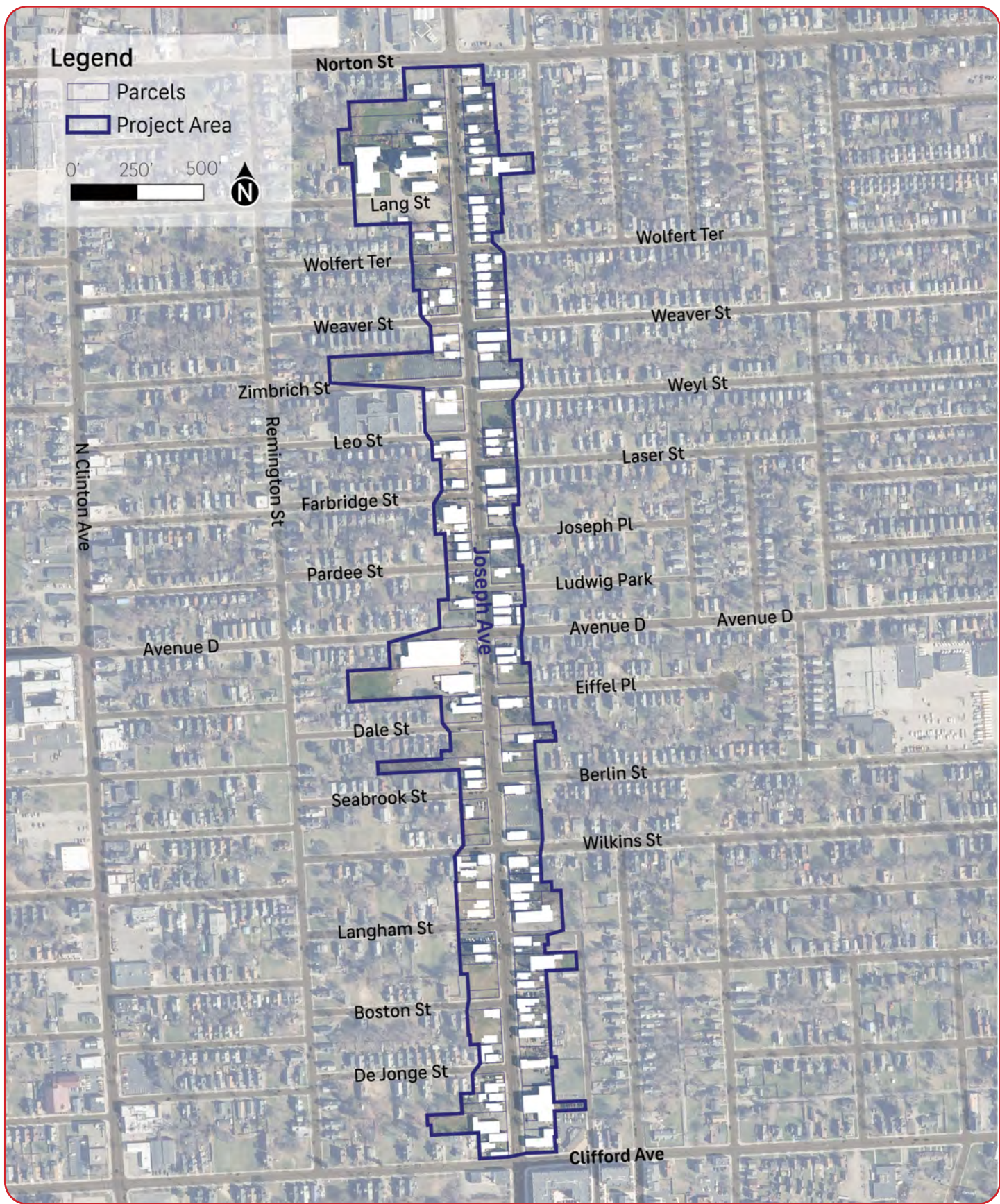
The Joseph Avenue ArtWalk (JAA) corridor is located in the northeast quadrant of the City of Rochester. The Avenue begins just north of Andrews Street in Rochester's downtown and is bounded by Norton Street to the north. The JAA corridor runs parallel to both North Clinton Avenue and Hudson Avenue, nestled within the Upper Falls and 14621 neighborhoods, and connects downtown Rochester with the Town of Irondequoit. Within a short distance, you'll find other neighborhoods where the City and communities have partnered to establish arts themes and branding, including Neighborhood of the Arts. Joseph Avenue has its own distinct arts and cultural identity that can be incorporated into efforts to improve its streetscape and other elements of the public realm.



STUDY AREA

The JAA corridor is approximately 4,100 feet (about three-quarters of a mile) long, extending from Norton Street to the north to Clifford Avenue to the south. In addition to the roadway and right-of-way, the master plan area includes the buildings and lots, both vacant and occupied, on both sides of the corridor. The corridor is home to some key cultural assets, including the Avenue Blackbox Theatre, the Lincoln Branch of the Rochester Public Library system, and the future headquarters of the Joseph Avenue Arts and Culture Alliance.

CORRIDOR STUDY AREA



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The project team employed a number of public participation methods to inform and obtain feedback from the community throughout the JAA corridor planning process. Input helped the project team to understand community priorities related to multi-modal transportation and placemaking opportunities throughout the corridor.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

An advisory committee was formed at the beginning of the planning process, including arts organizations, local businesses and residents, and staff for GTC, the City, Monroe County, and partner agencies. The committee met on a regular basis throughout the planning process to discuss needs, opportunities, and challenges for the corridor, guide discussions, and provide feedback on proposed transportation and placemaking improvements discussed in the report.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

As part of the planning process, seven interviews were conducted with key stakeholders from the Joseph Ave neighborhood, representing diverse user groups with varying priorities, including public safety, transportation, education, business, and the promotion of arts and culture. The interviews yielded valuable insights that the project team used to inform design recommendations and designate priority projects. Interviewees included:

- Sherman Dickerson – Joseph Ave Business Association
- Marlen Quintero – Northeast Quadrant Neighborhood Service Center
- David Pacific – Joseph Avenue Arts and Culture Alliance
- Eugenio Marlin – Ibero American Development Corporation
- Okey Ikpeze – Action for a Better Community
- Dan Kenyon – Regional Transit Service
- Sandra Chevalier Blackman and John Harris – Eugenio de Maria de Hostos Charter School (EMHCS)

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

The planning team hosted three (3) public meetings. The first two were conducted in an open house format, where display boards were used to gather community feedback. Workshop #1 introduced the project and collected input on community needs, opportunities, priorities, and preferences. Workshop #2 presented design alternatives developed using feedback from the first workshop, stakeholder interviews, and project advisory committee discussions, allowing the public to provide input on each option. The final meeting was a formal presentation where the preferred design concepts and implementation plan were shared for last comments before finalizing the report.



Public Workshop #1: October 8, 2024

WHAT WE HEARD

Revitalization without gentrification was a common theme in initial discussions with both stakeholders and neighbors.

Safety:

Addressing traffic safety and concerns about crime were community priorities. There was consensus that an arts corridor needs to address both topics in order to succeed.

Stakeholders and community members noted the need for safe crossing locations for pedestrians and especially for youth using the corridor for school or programs, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

Key intersections were identified as community priorities for traffic calming and crime related safety improvements including:

- Clifford – traffic calming / safe crossing
- Wilkins – traffic calming / reclaiming community space
- Berlin and Seabrook – safe crossing
- Ave D. – traffic calming / safe crossing
- EMHCS pedestrian crossings – traffic calming / safe crossing
- Norton – traffic calming / safe crossing

There was robust discussion about the need to reclaim spaces that attract negative, unwanted or illicit behaviors for positive community activities. Opinions varied on how to address challenges such as illicit drug use and community members experiencing homelessness in the corridor.

However, there was a general consensus to focus design recommendations on enhancing the public realm by reclaiming spaces for positive activities, supporting the needs of the general community who are positively impacting the neighborhood, while also providing assistance to those in need. The project team and stakeholders recognize the complexity of these issues and have carefully considered them in shaping recommended public realm improvements.

Public Realm:

Overall beautification of the corridor was brought up consistently by community members as needed to uplift the neighborhood and foster a sense of ownership and pride. Proposed improvements included but were not limited to street furniture, street trees, cohesive lighting, and improvements to paving and accessibility.

Vacant lots were discussed as opportunity areas for needed community gathering space. Proposed activities included:

- Play space
- Active and passive recreation
- Intergenerational programming
- Community services

Arts and Culture:

Community members and stakeholders were interested in several strategies to integrate arts into the corridor including:

- Interpretive / educational signage.
- Public arts installations like murals and sculpture.
- Art as infrastructure – using artistically designed site amenities such as street furniture and lighting.
- Decorative pavement markings.

Economic Development:

Promoting business was a central priority throughout public outreach. Priorities from the business community included:

- Increasing walk-by and drive-by traffic.
- Improving access and visibility of local retail.
- Unifying the commercial aesthetic, i.e. uniform signage, storefronts, building materials.
- Promote increased neighborhood business to serve neighborhood needs (such as restaurants or small-scale grocers).

RECENT PLANNING INITIATIVES + POLICIES

The City of Rochester, partner agencies and neighborhood organizations have developed multiple plans in recent years related to transportation, the streetscape, local businesses, and other topics important to the JAA corridor. These previous plans and initiatives are the basis for planning for the future of the ArtWalk. The significance of multi-modal accessibility and placemaking across the City are recurring themes.

URBAN FOREST MASTER PLAN (2024)

The Urban Forest Master Plan, updated in 2024, is a comprehensive strategy to preserve and expand Rochester's urban forest, focusing on environmental sustainability, public health, and community engagement. The plan emphasizes the importance of trees in mitigating climate change, improving air quality, and enhancing the overall quality of life in Rochester. It also highlights the role of urban forests in supporting biodiversity and providing aesthetic and recreational benefits to the community. Public engagement and equity are central to the plan, ensuring that all neighborhoods, particularly underserved ones, benefit from increased tree canopy and green spaces.

Applicability to this plan:

The Urban Forest Master Plan's emphasis on integrating green spaces and tree-lined streets through the Tree Expansion and Beautification Initiative aligns with the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk's vision of fostering a sustainable and resilient environment. By enhancing the corridor with trees and landscaping, the ArtWalk can offer shade, beauty, and a natural setting for public art installations. The numerous vacant parcels along the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk provide ideal opportunities for adding trees and planters, further enriching the corridor's aesthetic and environmental appeal.

The plan's emphasis on the positive impact of trees on public health aligns with the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk's goals of fostering a healthier and environmentally just community. By incorporating trees and green spaces, the ArtWalk can create natural inviting hubs for gathering, relaxation, and cultural events, while also delivering significant health and environmental

benefits, such as reducing exposure to pollutants, managing stormwater, and decreasing air and noise pollution.

The Urban Forest Master Plan's dedication to providing equitable access to green spaces throughout the City of Rochester perfectly aligns with the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk's mission to serve as an inclusive cultural hub that honors the diverse history and heritage of the Joseph Avenue community. The plan emphasizes the importance of equity and environmental justice in urban forestry, advocating for fair access to green spaces, recognizing cultural differences in planning and engagement, and setting clear goals for equitable tree distribution.

ROC VISION ZERO (2024)

In June 2024, the City of Rochester announced a Vision Zero initiative to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries while promoting safe, healthy, and equitable mobility for all. Acknowledging that human error is inevitable, Vision Zero advocates for road system designs and policies that minimize the chances of such errors leading to severe outcomes. This entails improving roadway environments, implementing speed management policies, and enhancing related systems to reduce crash severity. Vision Zero also takes a multidisciplinary approach, involving various stakeholders to tackle this complex issue. It addresses multiple factors influencing safe mobility, such as roadway design, speeds, behaviors, technology, and policies.

Applicability to this plan:

ROC Vision Zero includes 10 priority actions, several of which are relevant to this plan. They include an emphasis on traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements in areas heavily

RECENT PLANNING INITIATIVES + POLICIES

used by youths, older adults and/or transit users, as well as building on the Active Transportation Plan's recommendations to continue implementing a more robust bicycle network.

CITY OF ROCHESTER ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (2023)

The Rochester Active Transportation Plan (ATP) is a comprehensive strategy to make the city safer and more accessible for all forms of active transportation, including walking, biking, and the use of mobility aids. The plan emphasizes traffic safety, accessibility, and the expansion of transportation options. It also focuses on transportation justice, aiming to address past inequities in access and ensure that all residents, particularly marginalized communities, have safe and reliable transportation choices. Key components include enhancing pedestrian and bike networks, improving infrastructure, and fostering community engagement to create a more connected and inclusive city.

Applicability to this plan:

The ATP's emphasis on improving pedestrian and bicycle safety aligns with the goals of the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk by making the transportation network safer and more accessible for all users. Joseph Avenue is one of the Pedestrian Safety Focus Corridors highlighted within the plan. This prioritization is a step toward necessary improvements along the corridor that will support Joseph Avenue becoming an art destination.

MONROE COUNTY COUNTYWIDE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (2023)

The Monroe County Countywide Active Transportation Plan (CATP) is a comprehensive strategy to enhance active transportation throughout Monroe County. The plan emphasizes the importance of walking, biking, and other forms of active transportation as integral parts of the transportation system, not just recreational activities. The CATP focuses on creating a safe, comfortable, and connected network for all

ages and abilities, prioritizing equity, climate change mitigation, and public health. Key elements include developing a 500-mile active transportation network, improving pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and promoting policies that support active transportation.

Applicability to this plan:

By prioritizing infrastructure improvements that enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety, the CATP can contribute to creating a more secure and welcoming environment along Joseph Avenue, encouraging greater foot traffic along the JAA corridor.

Analysis from the report indicates that the project area experiences moderate to moderately high pedestrian crash density and low to moderate bicycle crash density. Additionally, the corridor is identified as a high-stress facility for bicyclists, with a lower network analysis score. These findings highlight the importance of integrating safety improvements into the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk's public realm enhancements to ensure a safer and more accessible environment for all users. The plan's emphasis on promoting active transportation as a strategy to address climate change and enhance public health also aligns with the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk's broader goals of creating a vibrant, healthy, and sustainable community space.

REIMAGINE RTS FINAL RECOMMENDATION REPORT (2020)

The Reimagine RTS Final Recommendation Report details a comprehensive redesign of the public transit system in Monroe County, aimed at making it more effective, sustainable, and responsive to community needs. The redesigned system is intended to increase ridership, enhance customer experience, and ensure financial sustainability by focusing resources on areas with the highest potential for transit use and integrating new mobility options.

RECENT PLANNING INITIATIVES + POLICIES

Applicability to this plan:

Route 3 - Joseph was part of the original frequent 15-minute service route tiers outlined by the RTS Reimagine plan in 2020 and launched in May 2021. Due to resource constraints in late 2021, however, frequent service was discontinued. As resources become available, this route will be monitored for potential future addition of frequent service.

ROCHESTER COMPREHENSIVE ACCESS AND MOBILITY PLAN (2019)

The Rochester Comprehensive Access and Mobility Plan (CAMP), completed in 2019, aims to create a transportation system that enhances the quality of life in Rochester by ensuring efficient, safe, and comfortable access and connectivity across the city. The plan focuses on improving the city's transportation infrastructure for walking, bicycling, transit, goods movement, and emergency services. It outlines various strategies, including the development of a walkable and bikeable city, a transit-ready city, and better transportation demand management (TDM) practices. The plan emphasizes the importance of stakeholder engagement, sustainable practices, and the integration of transportation improvements with land use planning to create a more connected and accessible urban environment. This Plan is designed to create a transportation system that aligns with community values and meets specific performance goals by 2034.

Applicability to this plan:

The CAMP's focus on creating a walkable and bikeable city aligns with the goals of the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk Master Plan by enhancing pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure, making the JAA corridor safe and inviting for people interacting with the corridor.

This plan aims to double the percentage of residents who can reach local activity centers, like the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk, within a safe

ten (10) minute walk, enhancing accessibility and encouraging community engagement. Additionally, the plan strives to ensure that all residents have access to green spaces, trails, or open areas within a ten (10) minute walk. This could further enrich the environment around the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk as vacant lots are prioritized to get transformed to usable community spaces.

ROCHESTER 2034 (2019)

The Rochester 2034 Comprehensive Plan, adopted on November 12, 2019, is a long-term strategic plan guiding the city's development until its 200th birthday in 2034. The plan outlines a vision for Rochester as a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable city with a focus on revitalizing neighborhoods, improving transportation, enhancing public spaces, and promoting economic growth. Key initiatives include placemaking, strengthening multi-modal transportation, fostering economic growth, and promoting equity and environmental sustainability. The plan is a blueprint for public and private sector decisions on land use, development, and resource allocation, aiming to position Rochester as a resilient and thriving community.

Applicability to this plan:

The emphasis on placemaking in Rochester 2034 aligns with the goals of the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk Master Plan, enhancing the area's cultural identity and community engagement through thoughtful public space design.

The Rochester 2034 plan's focus on arts and culture supports the goals of the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk Master Plan by advocating for strategic investments in cultural infrastructure. This includes public art installations, cultural programming, and the development of cultural spaces, all of which are directly aligned with the ArtWalk's objectives. The plan's emphasis on arts and culture as a means to build community

RECENT PLANNING INITIATIVES + POLICIES

identity and inclusion resonates with the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk's mission to celebrate and uplift the local community through the arts.

CITY OF ROCHESTER STREET DESIGN GUIDE (2019)

The City of Rochester Street Design Guide, released in April 2019, is a detailed framework for designing streets in Rochester to ensure they are safe, accessible, and functional for all users. The guide emphasizes the Complete Streets policy, which requires street improvements to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, and people with disabilities. The guide includes street typology definitions, design elements, and performance metrics, with a focus on creating self-enforcing designs that naturally encourage safe driving behaviors. The goal is to create a street network that supports neighborhood context and community goals while improving connectivity and accessibility throughout the city.

Applicability to this plan:

By improving street connectivity and accessibility, the guide supports the integration of the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk into the broader urban network, increasing its visibility and accessibility to residents and visitors.

The guide offers several design recommendations that could greatly enhance the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk, including public seating and amenities, enhanced crosswalks, protected bike lanes, improved street lighting, and on-street parking for both cars and bicycles.

14621 BROWNFIELD OPPORTUNITY AREA REVITALIZATION STRATEGY NOMINATION STUDY (2017)

The 14621 Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Revitalization Strategy Nomination Study, outlines a comprehensive strategy to revitalize the 14621 neighborhood in Northeast Rochester. The study focuses on addressing the challenges posed by

brownfield sites, vacant properties, and economic disinvestment. It provides a detailed analysis of the area's existing conditions, including land use, economic trends, and environmental factors, and offers recommendations for stabilizing residential neighborhoods, enhancing the public realm, creating economic opportunities, and engaging youth. The study aims to transform the 14621 BOA into a vibrant, safe, and thriving community with improved access to housing, services, and recreational spaces.

Applicability to this plan:

A strategic site located at the corner of Avenue A and Joseph Avenue was identified as an ideal location for a new park, given the current lack of parks and playgrounds in the area. As noted in the plan, the site could accommodate a variety of recreational amenities. Developing this additional recreational space would offer more opportunities for community interaction and enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors on the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk. Joseph Avenue is also identified as a corridor recommended for beautification in the BOA study.

To stabilize and revitalize residential neighborhoods, the study recommends assembling and redeveloping underutilized properties. A key focus area for long-term assembly and redevelopment is identified as the area bounded by Norton Street to the north, Joseph Avenue to the east, Clifford Avenue to the south, and North Clinton Avenue to the west. This initiative could significantly contribute to revitalizing the JAA corridor by converting vacant buildings and lots into functional community spaces. As the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk develops, these efforts will make the corridor more inviting and accessible, enhancing the overall environment for residents and visitors alike.

RECENT PLANNING INITIATIVES + POLICIES

JOSEPH AVENUE BUSINESS DISTRICT VISION PLAN (2013)

The Joseph Avenue Business District Vision Plan was developed by the Joseph Avenue Business Association (JABA) in collaboration with the Rochester Regional Community Design Center (RRCDC). The plan aims to revitalize the JAA corridor by creating a vibrant and attractive business district that serves the neighborhood and broader community. It focuses on improving the quality of life for residents and businesses, establishing distinct gateways, enhancing the streetscape, and addressing issues such as vacant properties, pedestrian safety, and commercial facade improvements. The plan incorporates ideas from community visioning sessions, resulting in a set of guiding principles and strategies for the long-term development of the area.

Applicability to this plan:

The Vision Plan explicitly supports the installation of murals and public art along Joseph Avenue to beautify the area and strengthen its cultural presence. This aligns directly with the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk's objective to use art as a tool for community engagement and visual enhancement.

The plan proposes the redevelopment of the historic synagogue at 692 Joseph Avenue into a Museum of History and Religion to celebrate the history and culture of the area. This site is now designated as the future home of the Joseph Avenue Arts and Culture Alliance's Center for Performing and Visual Arts. Similar to the museum's intended impact, the Center for Performing and Visual Arts will complement the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk's efforts to position the area as a cultural hub, drawing both residents and visitors to the corridor for its artistic significance with opportunities for another community gathering place.

The Vision Plan calls for the establishment of distinct gateways at key entry points along Joseph Avenue. These gateways are envisioned

as opportunities to incorporate public art and cultural symbols, which could serve as focal points within the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk, marking it as a significant cultural and art destination.

The plan encourages the hosting of cultural events and activities that celebrate the neighborhood's diverse history and heritage. This supports the ArtWalk's mission to organize cultural programming that engages the local community and showcases the area's artistic talents.

CITY OF ROCHESTER COMPLETE STREETS POLICY (2011)

The City of Rochester Complete Streets Policy aims to create a transportation network that accommodates all modes of travel, ensuring safety, accessibility, and convenience for everyone, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. This policy mandates that streets be designed, operated, and maintained in a way that allows safe and comfortable movement for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, and people with disabilities. It emphasizes integrating active transportation into the planning and design of all street projects to support the overall community goals and neighborhood context.

Applicability to this plan:

This policy encourages a balanced approach to transportation that considers the needs of all users, promoting safer streets, and fostering a more connected and accessible urban environment. The policy aids in ensuring improvements on the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk will be made, enhancing safety, accessibility, and inclusivity.

EXISTING CONDITIONS INVENTORY + ANALYSIS

This review of the corridor's existing conditions aims to inform recommendations for future multi-modal improvements and public realm enhancements. This section examines existing conditions throughout the corridor, including socio-economic factors, land use patterns, zoning details, transportation infrastructure, connectivity, and amenities for pedestrians and cyclists.

A DREAM RISES
GUIDED BY THE SUN

FREDY
SAM 2013





SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS + MARKET TRENDS

This section explores the socio-economic characteristics of the community to help understand its composition and needs. This exploration will provide contextual information to define opportunities and challenges related to transportation improvements and land use changes for the corridor.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

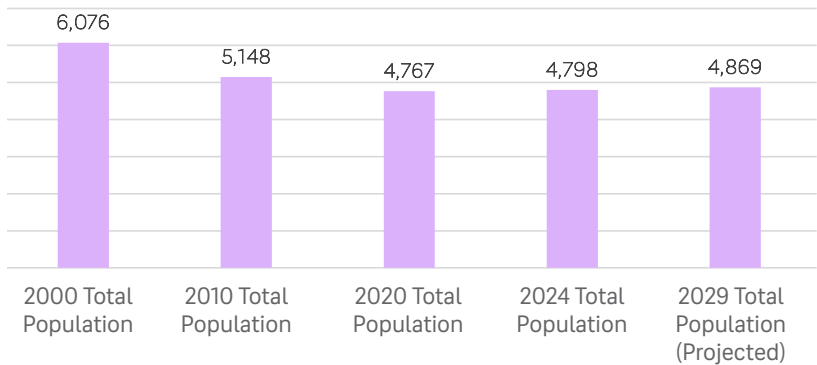
The socio-economic characteristics and market conditions identify opportunities, challenges, and trends within the JAA Corridor and the City of Rochester. The area used for this analysis is the combined Census block groups that touch the JAA corridor. The source for this data is Esri Business Analyst (U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey) unless otherwise stated.

POPULATION TRENDS

The 2024 population of the JAA corridor was **4,798**. Similar to the City of Rochester, the corridor saw a drop in population between 2000 through 2020. But unlike the City of Rochester, the corridor has experienced estimated population growth of 0.15% since 2020.

While the population of the City of Rochester is slowly decreasing, the population of the JAA corridor is expected to continue to increase through 2028. This increase in population should be considered in the development of future multi-modal enhancements.

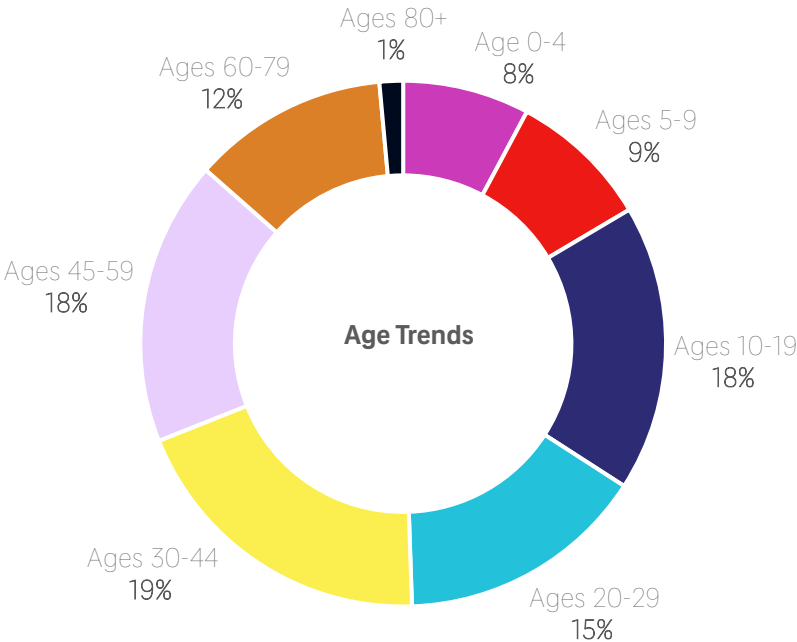
Population Trends



AGE CHARACTERISTICS

The median age of the corridor is **31.6**, younger than the City's median age of 34. About 35% of the population is under 19. Only 9% of the population is aged 65+, while 8% of the population is between 0-4 years old.

Joseph Avenue has a younger population than the City as a whole, representing a need for multimodal enhancements that can be used by residents of all ages, especially children and families who may rely on bikes and walking for transportation.

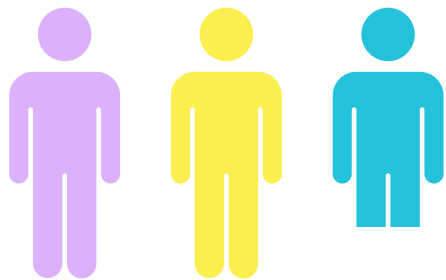


SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Household size indicates the size and type of families in an area. The average household size in the JAA corridor is **2.74**, larger than the City's average household size of 2.15.

Pairing Joseph Avenue's larger household sizes with a younger population trend, it can be assumed there is a higher percentage of families with children living in the corridor.

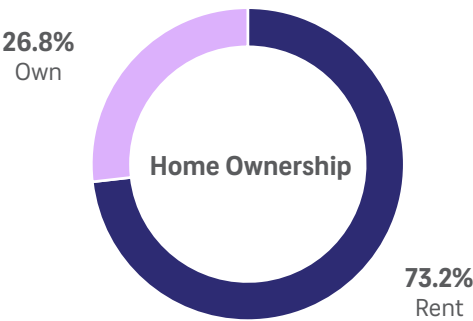


Average Household Size (2024)

HOUSING TENURE

Approximately **73.2%** of the residents in the JAA corridor rent their homes/apartments, compared to 67.6% in the City of Rochester.

Higher levels of renters can signal economic instability or affordability issues, and may affect long-term wealth accumulation and community investment.



MEDIAN HOME VALUE

The median home value for the JAA corridor is **\$45,605**, lower than the City's (\$153,879).

Lower median home values often indicate economic challenges, such as lower incomes, reduced market demand, and poor housing conditions.



\$45,605
Joseph Avenue



\$153,879
City of Rochester

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The median household income for the JAA corridor is **\$34,054**, lower than the City's median household income of \$42,910.

Lower median household incomes often correlate with higher rates of poverty, and less access to financial resources.



\$34,054
Joseph Avenue



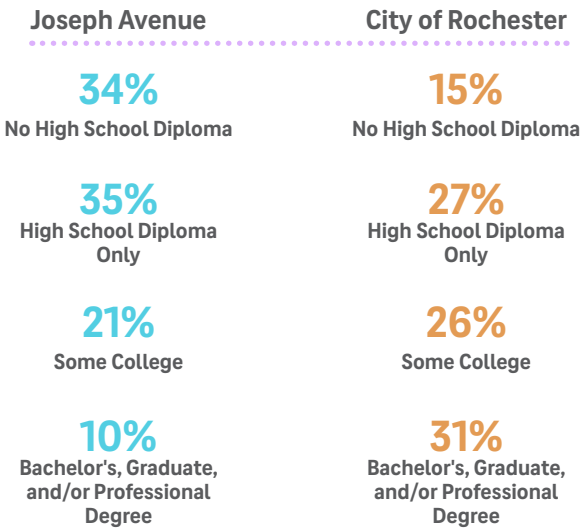
\$42,910
City of Rochester

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The JAA corridor has lower levels of educational attainment than the City as a whole. 34% of the population lack a high school diploma, compared to 15% in the City overall.

The JAA corridor has a less educated workforce than the rest of the City. This may impact access to job opportunities.

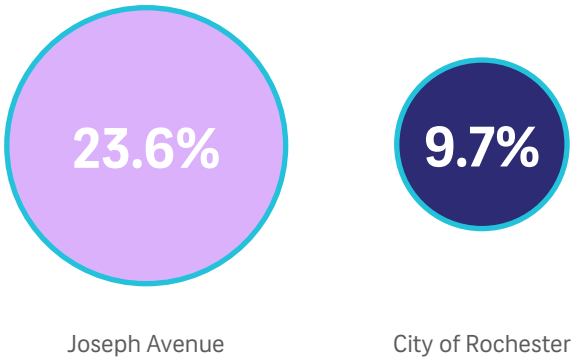


EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Employment rates can be an indicator of a community's economic strength. The current unemployment rate for Joseph Avenue is **23.6%**, which is substantially higher than the City's rate of 9.7%.

High unemployment rates may indicate a lack of access to jobs. This presents a need to expand job opportunities in the area.

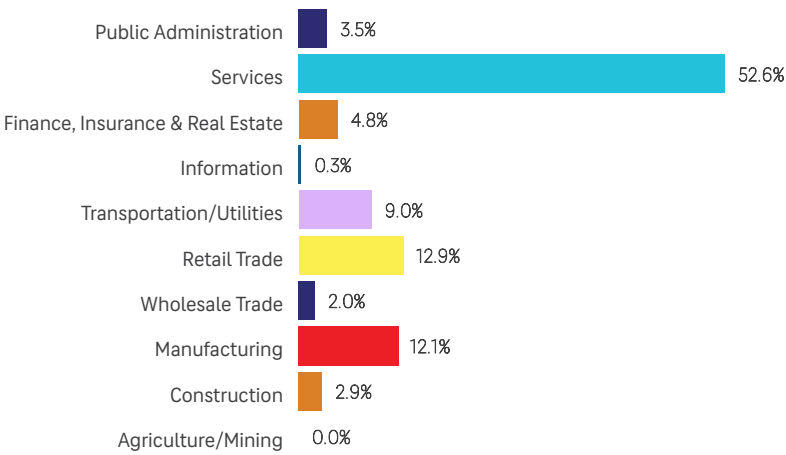
Unemployment Rates (2024)



TOP EMPLOYMENT SECTORS

The service industry represents the top employment industry for residents living in the JAA corridor, accounting for 52.6% of jobs, followed by retail trade (12.9%), manufacturing (12.1%), and transportation/utilities (9%).

In conjunction with educational attainment, this presents an opportunity to provide workforce development services/training for residents to expand employment opportunities within and outside of the service industry.

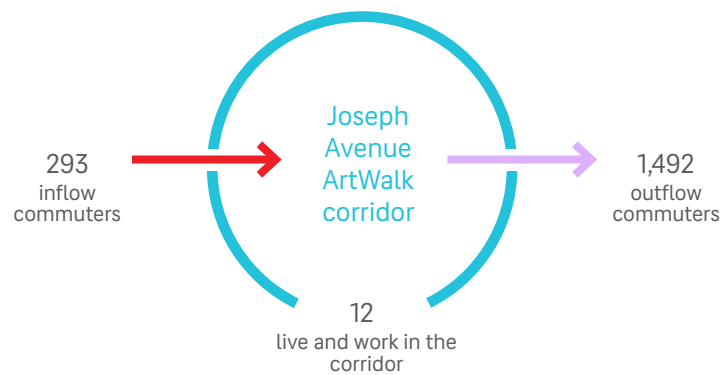


SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

COMMUTING PATTERNS

Within the JAA corridor, 293 individuals commute into the corridor for work, 1,492 residents leave the corridor for work, and 12 individuals both live and work within the corridor.

With the majority of residents leaving the corridor for work, there is an opportunity expand job opportunities in the corridor.

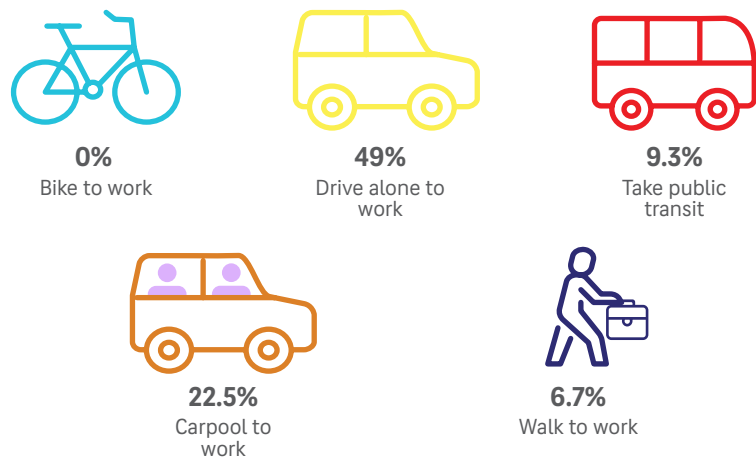


Source: Census Bureau On The Map

TRANSPORTATION TO WORK

Overall, residents of the JAA corridor are more likely to walk, carpool, or take public transportation than the City as a whole. 0% of residents bike to work, compared to 1.2% of the working population of the City. However, people can be observed cycling in the project area year-round, suggesting they may use bikes for purposes not captured in the Census data.

This is opportunity to enhance and improve multi-modal infrastructure and amenities throughout the corridor to encourage more cycling, walking, and public transportation.

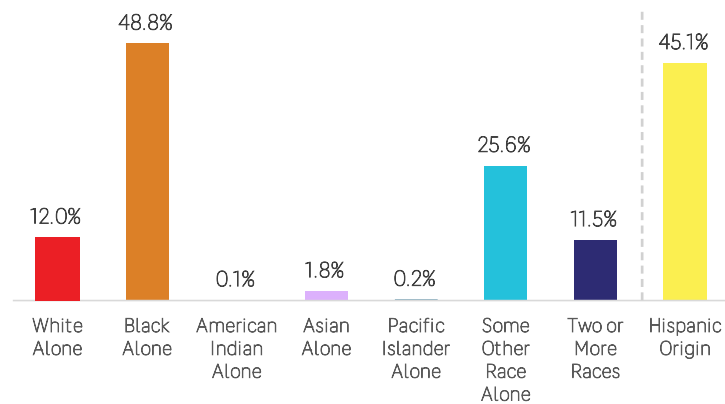


RACE & ETHNICITY

These demographics reveal a community with a diverse racial and ethnic composition, where Black individuals constitute nearly half of the population (48.8%) and a substantial proportion identifies as Hispanic.

This diversity highlights the need for tailored solutions to address the unique cultural, economic, and social needs of this community, particularly given the high unemployment rate and potential disparities in resources and opportunities.

Race & Ethnicity (2024)



SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

BUSINESS MIX

The business environment in the JAA corridor is characterized by a diverse mix of small-scale enterprises, with a total of 92 businesses employing 463 people (ESRI and US Census Bureau). The service sector dominates, accounting for 52.2% of all businesses, followed by retail trade at 31.5%. There's a notable concentration of food stores (15.2% of businesses) and automotive services (8.7%), suggesting these are key industries for the corridor. This business landscape indicates a local economy primarily focused on serving the immediate needs of the community, with an emphasis on essential services and retail. The relatively low number of employees per business (average of five) suggests a prevalence of small businesses.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The JAA corridor offers opportunities in affordable housing, basic retail, food businesses, and workforce development, leveraging its diverse population and existing small business base. Health care services and community support programs also show potential. However, the area faces significant challenges, including low income levels, limited consumer spending power, high unemployment, and a transient renter population. These factors may deter some investors but also present opportunities for targeted economic development strategies that address community needs while fostering business growth. Success in this market likely depends on balancing affordability with essential services and leveraging the area's diversity, existing educational institutions, and vibrant arts and cultural spaces that can strengthen community bonds and attract visitors.



LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS + REGULATIONS

This section outlines existing zoning, land use patterns, and physical characteristics of the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk Corridor. Understanding and evaluating these elements will inform opportunities for future pedestrian and bicycle enhancements.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Understanding the historical context is crucial to this planning process to provide insights into the social, cultural, and political landscape that has shaped the community over time and provides an informed decision-making process for the future.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Joseph Avenue has a rich history shaped by its industrial roots and predominantly Eastern European immigrant communities. Once part of a vibrant neighborhood, the JAA corridor was home to numerous shops and factories that provided employment for local residents. From the late 19th to early 20th century, the JAA corridor thrived as a commercial hub, attracting workers from various ethnic backgrounds. However, mid-century urban decline brought significant economic challenges, leading to the closure of many businesses and the migration of residents to the suburbs.

During the 1950s, while a large Jewish community remained, an influx of African American and Puerto Rican families moved into the area, seeking work opportunities. By 1964, escalating racial tensions and dissatisfaction with housing conditions, employment and policing resulted in an uprising that caused extensive property damage along the JAA corridor. This unrest contributed another wave of suburban migration, leaving the area in a state of disinvestment.

Today, Joseph Avenue is a diverse neighborhood with an evolving identity as a hub for arts and culture. Although it is no longer recognized as a bustling commercial melting pot, recent revitalization efforts are focused on preserving and building on the neighborhood's cultural heritage and addressing its economic needs. Joseph Avenue is on a path to becoming a symbol of both the challenges and resilience of the community and the greater 14621 neighborhood.

National Register of Historic Places



The Joseph Avenue ArtWalk corridor is home to a number of historic buildings, including one that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places located at 692 Joseph Avenue. The Congregation B'nai Israel Ahavas Achim building was constructed in 1928, originally serving as a synagogue for the Jewish community. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2015. Much of the building was destroyed in a fire in 2023, but the historic facade was preserved. The Joseph Avenue Arts and Culture Alliance plans to develop its Performing Arts Center on the site, using the facade as its public face.

HISTORIC CONTEXT



Joseph Avenue north of Boston Street, 1913. Note the streetcar line.
Image credit: Rochester Images digital collection, Rochester Public Library.



Man sells Christmas Trees at home (653 Joseph Avenue) brought from the Adirondacks (1922)
Image credit: Rochester Museum and Science Center repository, Rochester Public Library.

EXISTING LAND USE

Existing land use patterns provide context for the activities that take place along the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk corridor. This characterization informs the anticipated visitors and users along the JAA corridor. The JAA corridor consists of 126 parcels, covering 28.2 acres of land.

COMMERCIAL

The JAA corridor features numerous lots dedicated to commercial purposes. The majority of these commercial activities take place in detached row buildings, typically with retail shops and services on the ground floor and offices or apartments on the upper levels—such as Papi’s Convenient Inc. at the corner of Wilkins Street and Joseph Avenue. Less common are commercial uses in buildings converted from residential structures, such as the U-Haul building at the intersection of Clifford Avenue and Joseph Avenue.

RESIDENTIAL

Residential uses are dispersed throughout the JAA corridor, comprising a variety of housing types, including single-family, two-family, and three-family homes, as well as vacant residences. The corridor is characterized by a high concentration of single-family homes and numerous vacant residential lots. Additionally, there are two parcels on the east side of the corridor designated for apartment buildings. Just south of the study area boundary is a large 164-unit apartment complex that was completed in 2023.

VACANT

There are four (4) vacant parcels available for commercial development. Two (2) of these parcels are adjacent to each other at the northern corner of Joseph Avenue and Berlin Street, currently consisting of a grass field and the former Iglesia Fuego y Sanidad church. This site is currently being used for the Mindfulness Unraveling Sacred Expression (MUSE) project, a collaboration of the Avenue Blackbox Theatre, local artists, and Joseph

Avenue residents to create an interim space for public art. The remaining vacant commercial lots are also open grass fields, offering potential for future development.

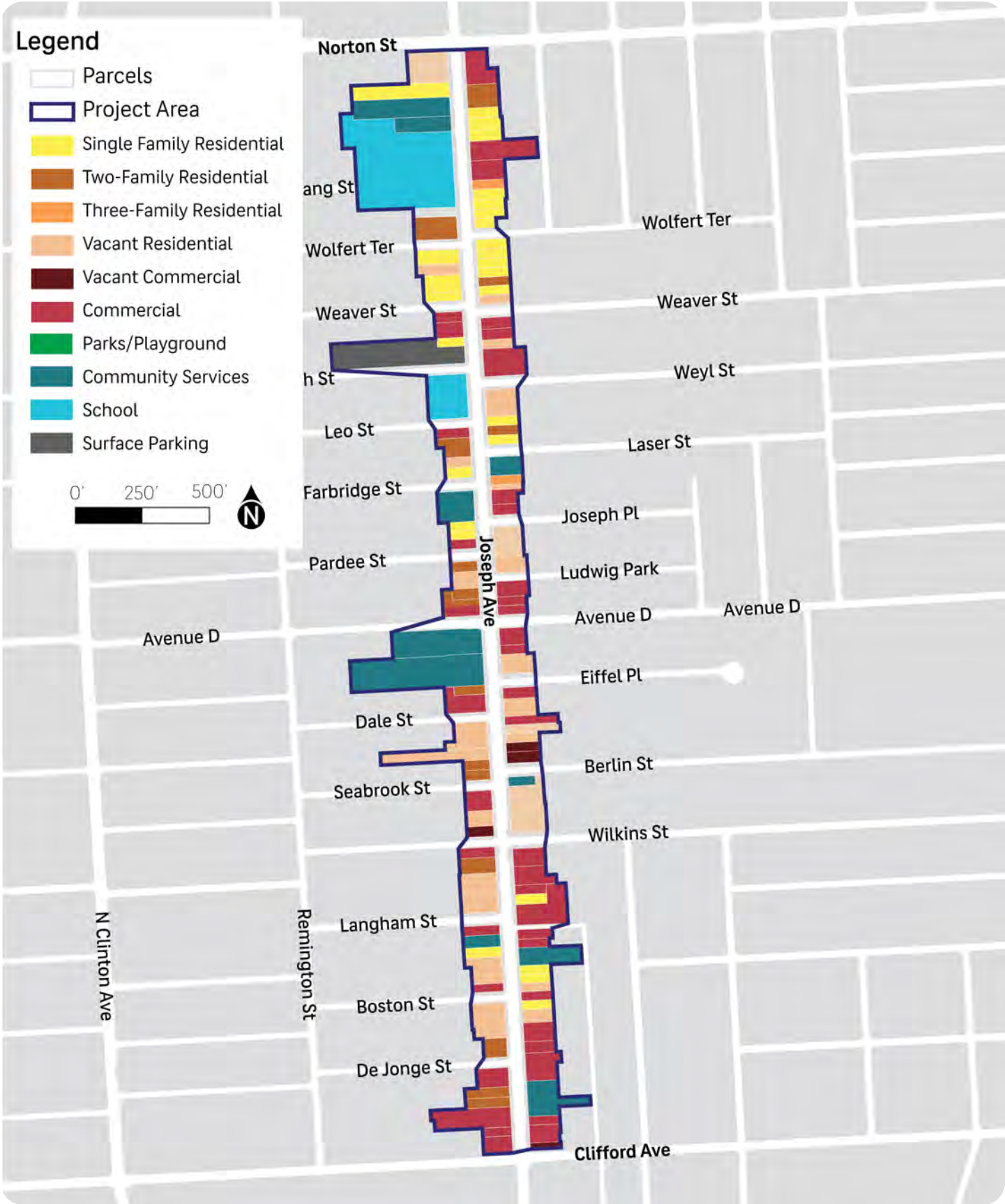
PUBLIC SERVICES

The JAA corridor hosts a diverse array of institutional and community-based uses that are integral to the local neighborhood. This includes the Eugenio Maria De Hostos Charter School (EMHCS) for grades 7-8, with its K-6 campus and playground just around the corner on Zimbrich Street. The corridor is also home to multiple religious institutions, such as the Upper Room Family Worship Center, Iglesia Fuego y Sanidad, and the Helping Hand Missionary Baptist Church. The former Our Lady of Perpetual Help site, currently vacant, holds potential for future institutional use. Additionally, the site of the former synagogue, Congregation B’nai Israel Ahavas Achim, is set for redevelopment into the Joseph Avenue Arts and Culture Alliance Performing Arts Center. The Lincoln Branch Library also plays a vital role in the community, offering a wide range of resources beyond books, including events and a toy library.

OTHER USES

The JAA corridor includes a variety of other uses that contribute to the area’s functionality and support local businesses. These include the Avenue Blackbox Theatre and other arts initiatives, parking lots, auto body and tire shops that offer vehicle maintenance services, and distribution facilities that help manage the flow of goods within the community. Additionally, several office spaces are located along the JAA corridor, housing various businesses and professional services.

EXISTING LAND USE



EXISTING ZONING

Zoning and land use regulations define the types of development permitted on individual parcels, shaping the character and functionality of neighborhoods. The Joseph Avenue ArtWalk corridor encompasses three distinct zoning districts, each contributing to the area's unique identity and development potential.

Rochester Zoning Alignment Project

The Rochester Zoning Alignment Project (ZAP) is an extension of the Rochester 2034 plan. The ZAP intends to align the city's zoning code with recommendations outlined in the Rochester 2034 Comprehensive Plan, ensuring the zoning code reflects the current development regulation needs of the city. The ZAP was in process when this plan was developed, but proposed to zone much of the corridor as medium-density residential and neighborhood mixed-use.

Up to date information on the ZAP can be found at the link below:

<https://rochesterzap.com/>



R-1 LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

The R-1 Low Density Residential district along the JAA corridor predominantly features single-family detached and attached homes. While there is a mix of higher-density residential options, the corridor is primarily characterized by low-density residential zoning, especially towards the northern end. This zoning maintains the area's residential character and community-focused atmosphere.

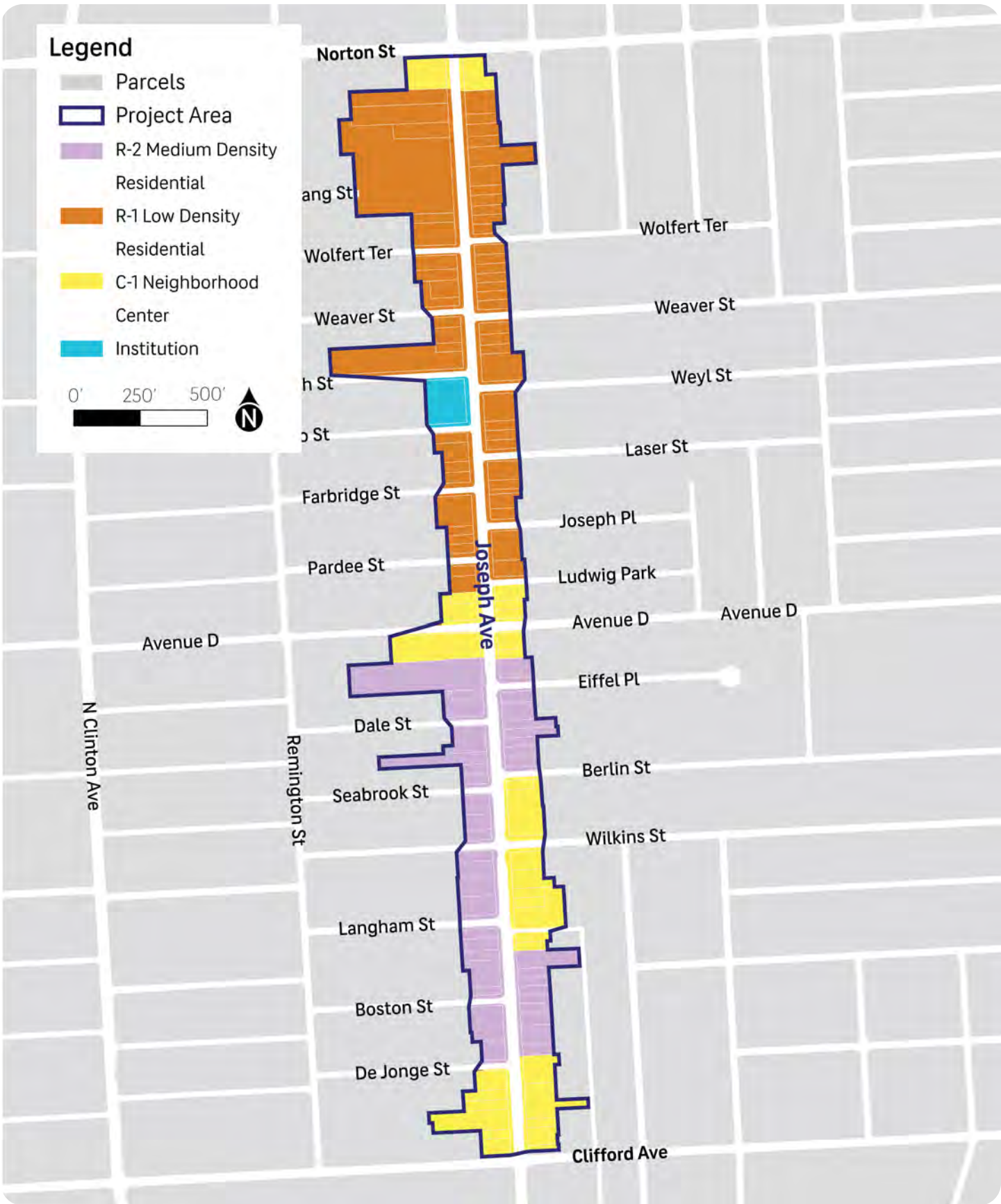
R-2 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

The R-2 Medium Density Residential district, located primarily at the southern end of the JAA corridor, allows for a diverse range of housing options, including single-family, two-family, and multi-family residences. This zoning supports a variety of housing choices while seamlessly blending with the neighborhood's character, maintaining a scale that complements the surrounding lower-density areas.

C-1 NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

The C-1 Neighborhood Center district along the JAA corridor features small-scale commercial uses that primarily provide convenience shopping and services for the surrounding residential areas. C-1 Neighborhood Center areas are throughout the corridor, offering a variety of stores, food options, and services that cater to local needs. The commercial areas blend seamlessly with the neighborhood, preserving its character and maintaining a scale that complements the community.

EXISTING ZONING



PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

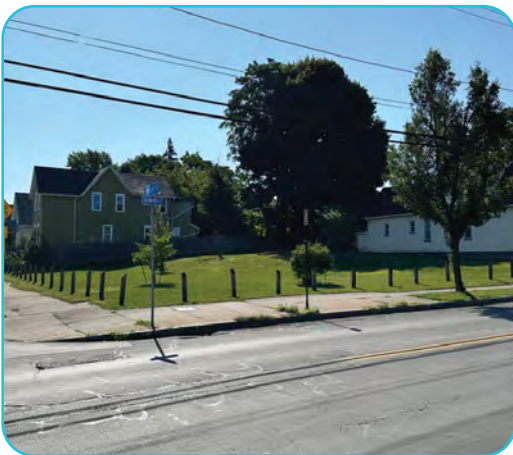
Property ownership patterns are important when considering potential future land use changes and transportation improvements, and identifying placemaking opportunities. The availability of public owned land, and especially vacant public owned land, can be advantageous to advance the objectives of this ArtWalk Master Plan.

CITY-OWNED

There are 23 properties owned by the City of Rochester along the JAA corridor, covering 4.7 acres of land. Many of these properties are residential vacant land, but also include the library, and commercial vacant land.

VACANT

There are 23 vacant properties, covering approximately five (5) acres, along the JAA corridor, six (6) of which are on private property, and 17 of which are on City-Owned property. Many of these parcels are located on the corners of street intersections surrounded by wooden posts to deter vehicles from entering the property.



Vacant lot at corner of Weyl Street and Joseph Avenue with bollards and street trees.

Source: All photos by project team unless otherwise noted.



ART + CULTURAL RESOURCES

Joseph Avenue is decorated with arts institutions, projects, and murals. Wall\Therapy has played a major role in leading these public and community-level interventions, seeing mural art as a vehicle to address the need for inspiration, based in Rochester, NY.

MURALS

Rochester Dream, Daze, 2015

Located at 646 Joseph Avenue and on Joseph Express, Daze painted these murals in collaboration with FUA Krew, through the Wall\Therapy mural art project.¹

Portrait of a Young Woman in Profile, Brittany Williams, 2015

Located at 488 Joseph Avenue, Williams created this mural to depict a portrait of a young woman in profile, whose mind splits open to reveal petal flowers flowing from her mind. The mural was completed through Wall\Therapy.

LNy, 2013

Located at 847 Joseph Avenue, this mural is not named, but reflects LNy's artistic nature, creating drawings and murals that question politics, injustice, and public identity. Often, he makes visible the stories of those who are invisible to the cities he works in. This mural was completed through Wall\Therapy.

Memorial Tribute to Edgar SantaCruz, Chloe Smith, 2024

Located at the Lincoln Branch Library at 851 Joseph Avenue, Smith devoted this mural to a beloved community member who was struck and killed, along with his dog, by a hit-and-run driver in December, 2022.

ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

Arts and cultural organizations along the corridor include The Avenue Blackbox Theatre and the Joseph Avenue Arts and Culture Alliance. The Blackbox Theatre was founded in 2018 and is a creative performing arts space offering

affordable, meaningful, and culturally rich experiences inclusive to many community groups. The Joseph Avenue Arts and Culture Alliance is a non-profit organization established in 2014 with a mission to provide safe and inspiring arts and cultural experiences to underserved families and youth to create a catalyst for community transformation. The Alliance is currently planning to develop a performance and gallery space on the former site of the synagogue on Joseph Avenue.

Additional cultural institutions within the study area include the Lincoln Branch Public Library, the Upper Room Family Worship Center, and the Eugenio María de Hostos Charter School (EMHCS). Both the library and the Upper Room have collaborated with the Joseph Avenue Arts and Culture Alliance by offering venue space for the organization's programs and events. EMHCS serves primarily students from the Joseph Avenue neighborhood, with many staff members also residing locally. In discussions with school leadership, the project team learned that EMHCS is actively seeking new opportunities to engage and partner with the local community.

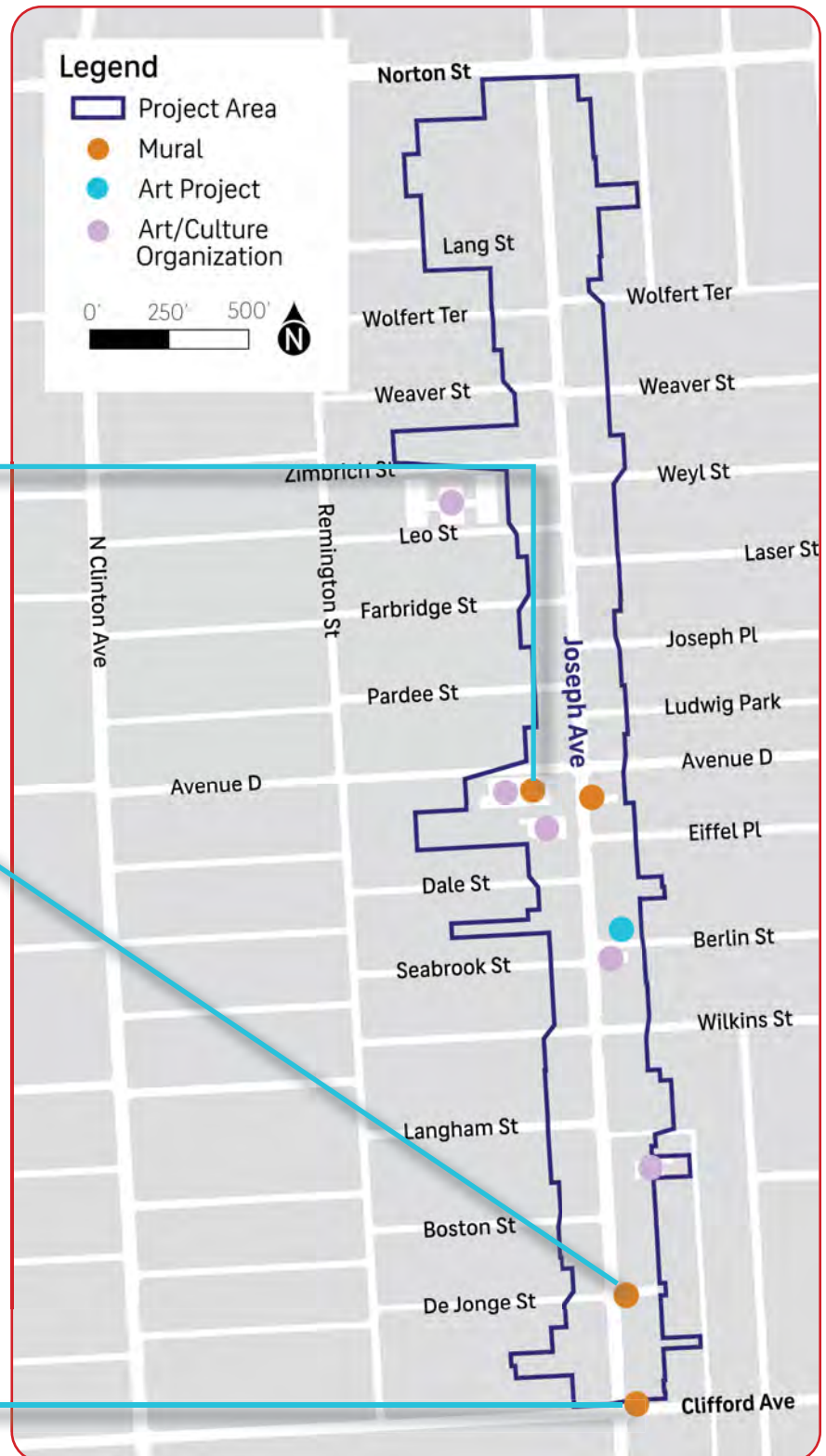
PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

The Avenue is partnering with the City of Rochester, ArtWalk, and neighborhood members to transform a vacant parcel north of Berlin Street into a sacred and exciting community space. The project identifies as MUSE, or Mindfulness Unraveling Sacred Expression, and is being led by Shawn Dunwoody. Concept ideas are in development, and project leaders are seeking funding sources to move forward with design and construction.

Notes:

¹ More information about Wall\Therapy can be found at <https://www.wall-therapy.com>.

ART + CULTURAL RESOURCES



PUBLIC REALM CHARACTER

Inviting public spaces offer opportunities for the community to gather and foster local pride. The Joseph Avenue ArtWalk Corridor offers opportunities to turn vacant and/or underutilized space into public spaces to foster a sense of community, and to extend this character into the streetscape.

UNDERUTILIZED SITE OPPORTUNITIES

A number of vacant and underutilized spaces in the JAA corridor have the potential to be transformed into useful and productive public spaces for the community to enjoy.

There have been multiple instances where the community has attempted to add programs to utilize these spaces. This includes a community garden, a sunflower plot, and enhancements to the existing wooden bollards with fencing.

Vacant lots at prominent intersections, such as the southeast corner of Weyl Street, the northeast corner of Ludwig Park, and between Dale Street and Berlin Street, present opportunities for redevelopment. For example, the vacant lot at Weyl Street, with its topography, has the potential to become a distinctive and memorable public space.

The lots between Dale Street and Berlin Street could be considered together and collectively enhance connectivity with the Blackbox Theatre's plans for outdoor art installations and programming.



PUBLIC REALM CHARACTER

Though not ‘public’ space, there are pockets of obvious care and effort in property enhancements among residential and commercial properties throughout the corridor. Particularly between Norton Street and Weaver Street, at Leo Street and north of Clifford Avenue, there are well-tended gardens, property ornamentation and distinct building face paintings/murals.



Sunflowers blooming in a seasonal community garden.



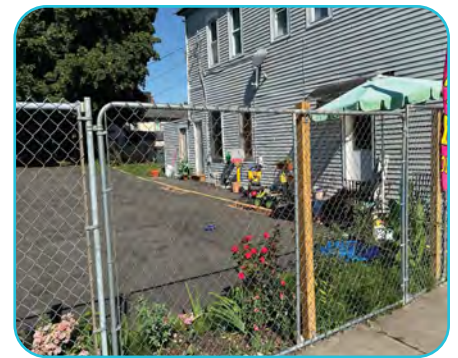
Benches and a concrete planter next to a vacant lot.

GREENSPACE & STREET TREES

Both sides of Joseph Avenue feature sidewalks and tree lawn areas for street trees. However, overhead power lines along the east side of the corridor restrict tree planting locations and mature size. The community is interested in longer-term options to relocate or improve the utility poles.



Well kept building facades along Joseph Avenue.



Well maintained residential properties.

Tree species should be carefully selected for tree planting locations based on the surrounding conditions.

Many of the existing trees are showing signs of stress, evident in suckering and scarring at the base of the trees.



Power lines on the east side of Joseph Avenue restrict where street trees can be planted. Existing tree lawn on west side of Joseph Avenue limits the size and species of trees that can be used.



Improved tree species selection and proper maintenance practices are encouraged to promote healthy street trees with lower mortality rates. Tree-lined streets can have positive impacts on community health, the environment, and property values.



Different styles of lighting on Joseph Avenue



Painted utility box at the corner of Clifford Avenue and Joseph Avenue.

PUBLIC REALM CHARACTER

To create an inviting public space and create a sense of place, site furnishings, signage and lighting are needed. Furnishings and amenities help make the community feel welcome, while signage helps with wayfinding, and lighting creates a sense of safety.

SITE FURNISHINGS

Site furnishings add visual character to streetscapes, offering placemaking qualities, rest points, and destinations.

Recent upgrades to the library site and the adjacent parking area, such as new sidewalks, curbed planting areas, and custom bike racks, have enhanced the visual character of the property.

Building on these improvements could further elevate the overall appearance of the entire corridor.

Basic single loop bike racks are located near Eiffel Place, the Blackbox Theatre, and at the east side of the intersections of Joseph Avenue with Boston Street and Dejonge Street.

There are gaps in the availability of bike racks / parking along the corridor. Additionally, adopting a style of decorative, but functional bike rack could improve the visual appeal and better compliment other site furnishings throughout the corridor.

The only benches present along the corridor are located within a vacant lot on the northwest corner of Wilkins Street and within the bus shelter adjacent to the Lincoln Regional Branch Library. The benches at Wilkins Street are set back from the sidewalk and are not ADA accessible.

Consideration should be given to expanding public seating opportunities throughout the corridor.

Garbage receptacles along the corridor are primarily located in areas adjacent to commercial use. Litter is highly visible in the areas around the garbage receptacles.

SIGNAGE

Signage plays an important role in sharing a neighborhood's identity and can serve as a welcoming feature, specifically at neighborhood gateways. The corridor signage is limited to light pole banner signs which celebrate the Joseph Avenue Black Heritage Trail and showcase the Joseph Avenue Business Association branding.

Expanding and unifying the banner sign designs should be explored to reinforce the community identity.



Joseph Avenue light pole banners.

LIGHTING

The primary street light throughout the corridor are cobra head or teardrop style fixtures mounted to utility poles. However, at locations of recent streetscape improvements at Pardee Street, Weaver Street, and Avenue D at the Lincoln Branch Library there are post mounted street lights.

To improve visual cohesion throughout the corridor, it would be beneficial to consider using consistent lighting fixtures with adequate illumination levels for both vehicles and pedestrians.





TRANSPORTATION NETWORK + STREETScape AMENITIES CONDITIONS

This section includes an inventory and analysis of the existing streetscape and transportation network amenities within the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk corridor, which provides insight into the network's character, mobility, and safety.

ROADWAY CONDITIONS

Functional classification is the process by which roads, streets, and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of service they provide. It defines the role the road should play in serving the flow of trips through a transportation network and the type of access it provides to adjacent properties.

ROADWAY DESCRIPTION

Joseph Avenue is a two-way street with 11' wide shared-use travel lanes and eight foot wide shoulders to accommodate parallel parking.

FUNCTIONAL CLASS

Joseph Avenue is classified as a major collector street, which is defined by New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) as a road that collects traffic from local roads and channels it into arterial roads. Major collector streets are typically longer than 3/4 of a mile and have slower speeds and less traffic than arterial roads. Avenue D is also a major collector street.

To the north and south of Joseph Avenue, Norton Street and Clifford Avenue are both minor arterials, which are roads that serve moderate-distance trips at a slower speed than a principal arterial street. The other streets in the project area are classified as local roads that primarily provide direct access to abutting properties.



ROADWAY CONDITIONS

Joseph Avenue is accessed by vehicles from Exit 13 (Inner Loop) off of I-490. It runs parallel to North Clinton Avenue and Hudson Avenue, two major north-south streets that connect the City of Rochester to the Town of Irondequoit.

TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) is calculated by NYSDOT by dividing the total number of vehicle trips on a road or highway in a year by 365 days. This calculation includes all vehicle trips in both directions.

Joseph Avenue experiences higher traffic volumes north of Avenue D than surrounding neighborhood streets, with approximately 10,800 vehicles traveling this portion of the corridor each day. This means on average 450 vehicles per hour are traveling this portion of the corridor. Approximately 2-3% of the traffic through this section of the corridor is trucks.

Joseph Avenue also experiences higher traffic volumes south of Avenue D, with approximately 11,400 vehicles traveling this portion of the corridor each day. This means on average 475 vehicles per hour are traveling this portion of the corridor. Approximately 2-3% of the traffic through this section of the corridor is trucks.



PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure are essential for ensuring connectivity throughout a corridor, creating a safe, welcoming, and accessible environment for users of all ages and abilities. Where feasible, it is important that these facilities provide continuous, predictable connections for cyclists and pedestrians.

INTERSECTIONS/CROSSWALKS

Crosswalks vary in ADA compliance throughout the JAA corridor, specifically curb ramps.

The intersection at Norton Street features brick pavers in moderate conditions. These will be removed during a separate City project due to maintenance concerns; however, this is a notable element that could inspire visually similar enhancements in targeted locations throughout the corridor.

The intersection at Avenue D and Joseph Avenue contains non-compliant curb ramps in the crossing and worn crosswalk markings. There is a need to improve crossing infrastructure for ADA compliance, to support pedestrians, and to increase visibility for all road users.



Norton Street intersection contains existing pavers in moderate condition.



Recent streetscape improvements (Weaver Street).

SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks are generally in good to moderate condition throughout the corridor. There are select areas with heaving and cracking.

Recent improvements on Weaver Street, including new sidewalks, ADA-compliant curb ramps, light poles, and street trees, have enhanced accessibility and corridor character. There are other opportunities to create additional safe, ADA-accessible and distinct pedestrian crossings along Joseph Avenue.

BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Sharrows on Joseph Avenue indicate that vehicles should share the travel lane with bicycles. Existing pavement markings are faded and do not stand out. Also within the corridor is a bicycle boulevard on Wilkins Street and bicycle lanes on Norton Street west of its intersection with Joseph.

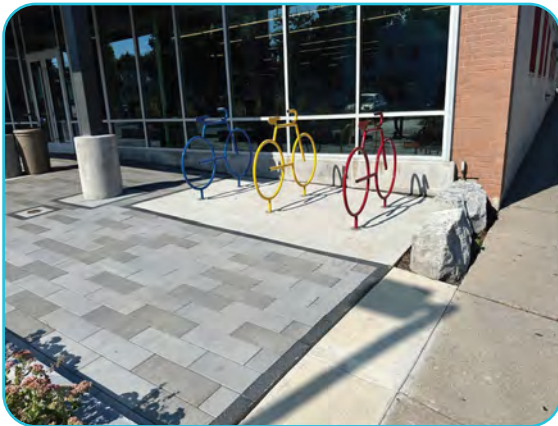
To further improve the bicycle network, enhancements should be considered to encourage more cycling and connectivity along the corridor.



Recent curbed planter enhancements at northwest corner of Avenue D.

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

The JAA corridor provides a range of infrastructure to support pedestrians and bicyclists including shared-use lanes, bike racks, sidewalks, crosswalks, ADA curb ramps, and a rapid rectangular flashing beacon (RRFB) to assist pedestrians crossing at the Wilkins Street intersection.



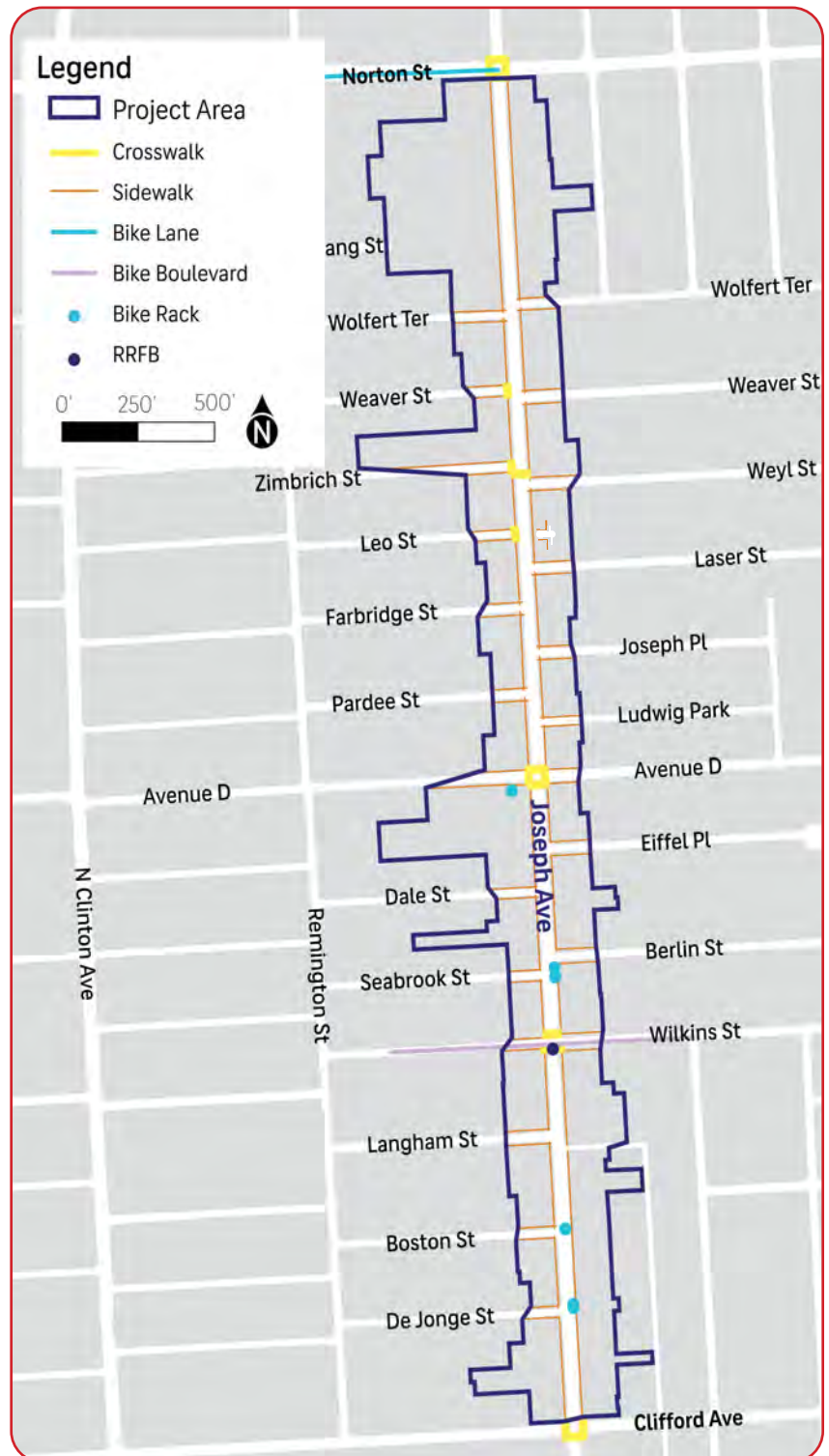
Custom bike racks at Library.



Typical sharrow in the corridor.



Standard bike rack near Dale Street.



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Reliable public transportation is essential to an equitable and just transportation system. Access to public transit alleviates dependence on personal vehicles and traffic congestion while improving air quality, fuel emissions and overall sustainability. Of the occupied housing units in the JAA Corridor, 3% of owner occupied and nearly 30% of renter occupied have no personal vehicle.

REGIONAL TRANSIT SERVICE (RTS)

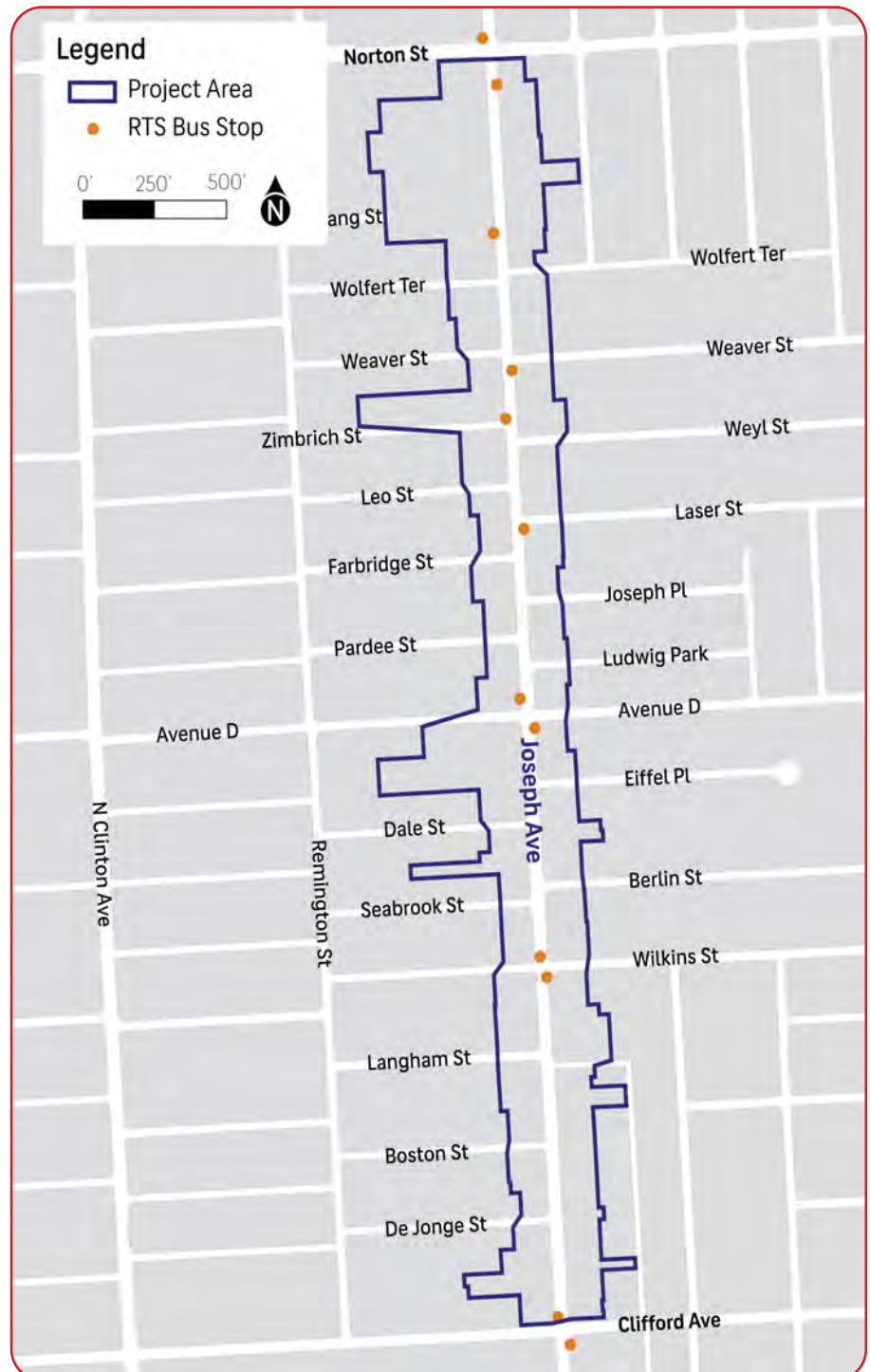
RTS provides public transportation services throughout the JAA corridor on Route 3, with 10 total bus stops between Clifford Ave and Norton St. within the project limits. The bus stops at the intersection of Clifford Ave and Avenue D are high volume customer stops. Average weekday boardings and alightings (disembarkements) for these high volume stops are in the table below:

Bus Stop ID	Name	Avg Weekday Boardings	Avg Weekday Alightings
1908 (out)	Joseph & Clifford	23	86
1900 (out)	Joseph & Ave D	16	53
1909 (in)	Joseph & Clifford	68	25
1901 (in)	Joseph & Ave D	73	18

Source: RTS

The route has other key destinations adjacent to the corridor that are important for riders. These include the apartments at Hudson Ridge Towers, Seneca Manor and Keeler Park, north of the corridor, and at the end of the route, Hudson Walmart. Walmart is one of the top three destinations within the system.

There is a need for bus stop enhancements and street design elements to improve safe, efficient and accessible movements of buses throughout this area.



TRAFFIC COLLISIONS

Crash data from the past 10 years (2013-2023) was collected using the NYS Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Crash Location and Engineering Analysis Repository (CLEAR) system. The record of pedestrian, bicyclist, and vehicular crashes provide an understanding of traffic related incidents in the JAA Corridor.

CRASH DENSITY

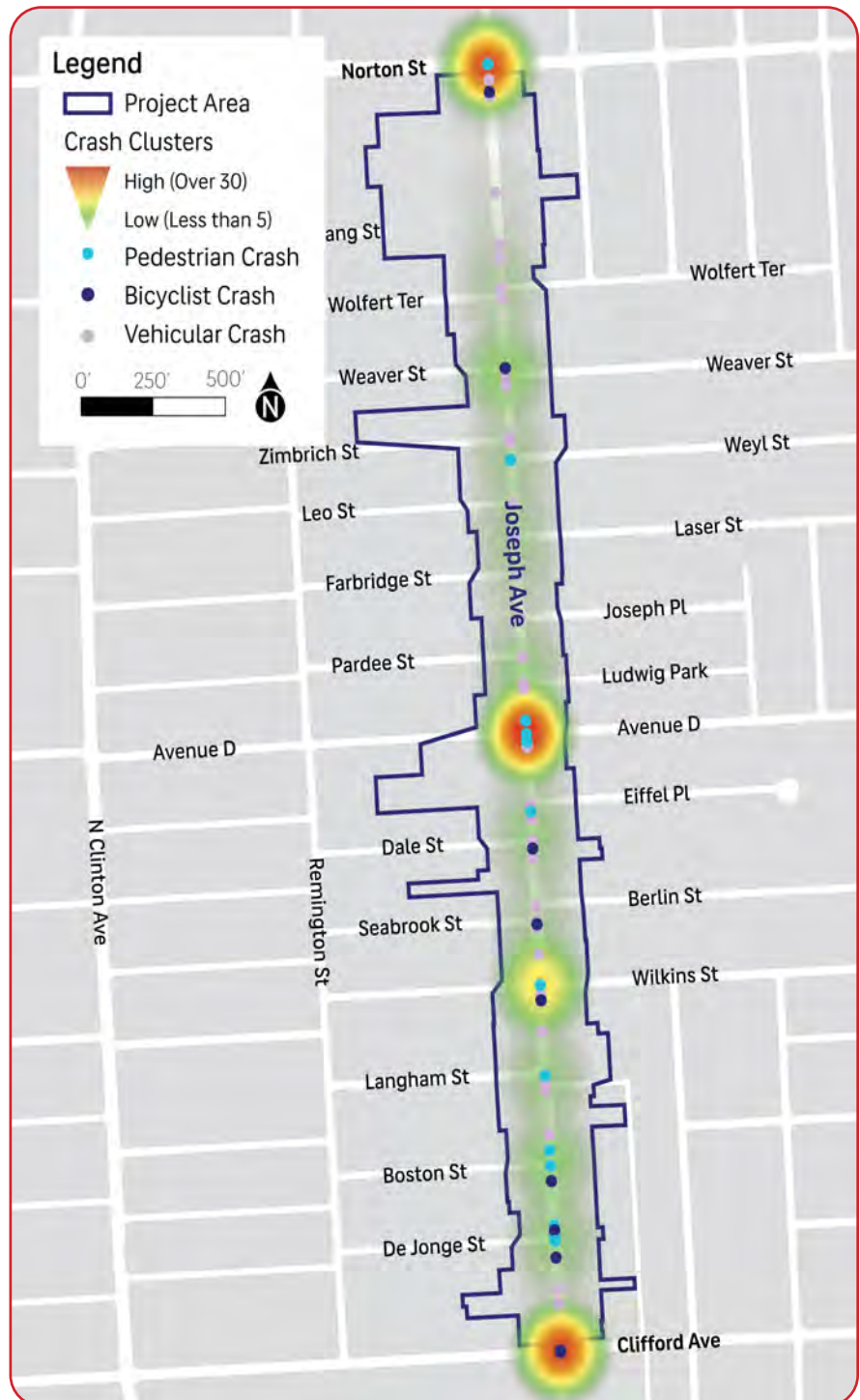
High density crash locations (across all crash types) are located at the north end of the corridor, where Joseph Avenue intersects with Norton Street (five (5) pedestrian/bicyclist), at the center of the corridor where Joseph Avenue intersects with Avenue D (12 pedestrian/bicyclist), and at the southern end of the corridor, where Joseph Avenue intersects with Clifford Avenue (three (3) pedestrian/bicyclist).

There are medium density crashes located at the intersection of Joseph Avenue and Wilkins Street.

There are low density crashes at the intersections with Weaver Street, Pardee Street, Boston Street, and De Jonge Street.

CRASH INCIDENTS

In the past 10 years (2013-2023), 222 crashes have occurred throughout the corridor. 18 crashes have occurred involving a bicyclist and 24 crashes have occurred involving a pedestrian. All bike and pedestrian crashes resulted in injury, with no fatalities. There is no pattern of crashes related to time of day or weather conditions. Among the classified collision types, many were right angle or rear end collisions. It should be noted that not all crashes can be prevented by design, but street design can play a role in reducing crash severity in some instances.



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NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES ASSESSMENT

An assessment of needs and opportunities along the Joseph Avenue Corridor was conducted, informed by site visits and key findings in the preceding existing conditions analysis. This assessment identifies the primary concerns and potential opportunities related to multimodal transportation improvements along the corridor, enhancing safety for all types of users, and establishing Joseph Avenue as a center of arts and cultural activity. Findings related to needs and opportunities of the corridor are organized by the following primary topic areas:

1. Transportation
2. Public Safety
3. Public Realm
4. Art
5. Vacant Lots

TOPIC AREA 1: TRANSPORTATION

The following describes the key findings related to transportation needs along the Joseph Avenue Corridor.

NEEDS

PEDESTRIAN SIDEWALKS/CURB RAMPS

- ▶ Sidewalks are continuous along the length of the corridor on both sides of the street and are in fair condition.
- ▶ Accessible curb ramps are not uniform throughout the corridor. There are two (2) primary types of detectable warning surfaces at the base of curb ramps including detectable warning concrete pavers and truncated dome panels (surface-applied or embedded).
- ▶ Detectable warning pavers need replacement. Some show heaving from freeze thaw cycles and others have vegetation growing through sand swept joints. These pavers should be replaced with a detectable warning surface such as truncated domes, etc.
- ▶ Catch basins at the base of curb ramps can create potential obstacles—when they become blocked with debris, puddling will occur at the base of the ramp, creating obstacles for those using mobility aids and seniors.



Intersection of Wilkins and Joseph: drainage inlet near base of curb ramp; detectable warning surface.



Intersection of Laser and Joseph: Curb ramp without detectable warning strip.

TOPIC AREA 1: TRANSPORTATION

CROSSWALKS/INTERSECTIONS

Any crosswalk improvement recommendation will need to be verified under the County's Marked Crosswalk Policy during design.

- ▶ Crosswalk improvements are needed to enhance ADA accessibility and visibility of pedestrians to drivers. Most critical are the intersections at Clifford, Wilkins, Avenue D, and Norton, because these intersections have been identified as high-density crash locations, including pedestrian crashes. There are several locations along the corridor without ADA compliant curb ramps at marked crossings.
- ▶ There are no mid-block crossings along the corridor. The addition of mid-block crossings could improve pedestrian safety, make pedestrian crossing locations more visible and predictable, and reduce conflicts between pedestrians and motor vehicles.
- ▶ Audio/visual cues and crossing times should be analyzed at all high-crash intersections with traffic lights (Norton, Avenue D, and Clifford) to ensure safe passage and adequate crossing times for pedestrians of all ages and abilities.
- ▶ A refuge island has been built into the center of Joseph Ave at the Clifford/Joseph intersection, reflecting previous efforts to improve this high-volume, wide crossing for pedestrians.. The refuge area is small, fitting at most two (2) pedestrians at one time and may pose as an accessibility challenge for those in wheelchairs. The associated crosswalk is faded and difficult to see, the perimeter curb has been worn down, and the detectable warning pavers are in need of maintenance or replacement.
- ▶ Improvements to this crosswalk and refuge island should be considered, including but not limited to enlarging the refuge island, improving pavement markings for improved visibility, and adding pedestrian signage to indicate an active crossing.

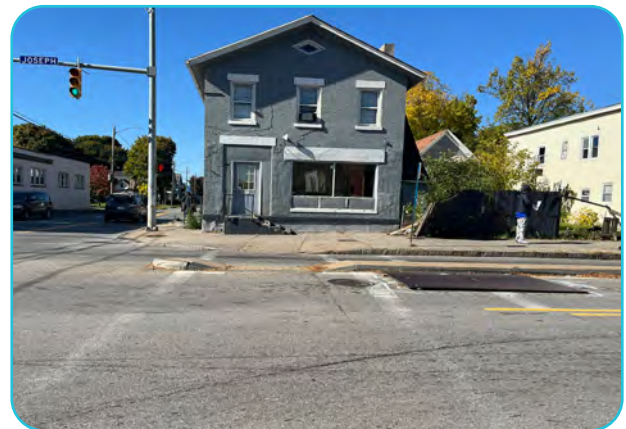
Truncated domes

Truncated domes or detectable warnings are a distinctive surface pattern of domes detectable by cane or underfoot that alert people with vision impairments of their approach to street crossings and hazardous drop-offs.

Source: <https://www.access-board.gov/prowag/detectable-warnings-update.html>



New curb ramps with detectable warning surfaces at Weaver and Joseph Ave.



Intersection of Clifford and Joseph: Faded crosswalk, detectable warning pavers, and refuge island.

Pedestrian Refuge Island

According to the US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Pedestrian refuge areas at marked crosswalk locations have been shown to reduce pedestrian crashes by 46%.

TOPIC AREA 1: TRANSPORTATION

VEHICULAR

- ▶ Joseph Avenue has high traffic volumes with many vehicles moving at high speeds, using the corridor to travel in and out of the city. There is a need to balance the high vehicular volume/speed with safety for all users.
- ▶ Cars turning onto Joseph Avenue from side streets reportedly move quickly, which can be dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists at intersections.
- ▶ Line of sight must be considered at all intersections to ensure driver/pedestrian/cyclist visibility.



Intersection of Wilkins and Joseph: Clean-up after a traffic collision.

TRANSIT

- ▶ There are ten (10) bus stops within the project area (running on a 30-minute schedule) and only one (1) bus shelter at the Avenue D and Joseph Ave stop.
- ▶ While bus shelters have been criticized for attracting illicit or unwanted activities, residents have expressed the need for more shelters to promote transit use by providing environmental comfort in Rochester's climate.
- ▶ Adequate street lighting is needed at all shelter locations.
- ▶ The City and RTS are collaborating to improve overall bus stop amenities in Rochester, such as concrete landing pads and seating. RTS has specific criteria for bus shelters that can be considered in coordination with RTS as space, funding and maintenance allow. Opportunities for improved bus stop amenities should be considered where there is sufficient sidewalk width in coordination with the Bus Stop Improvement Project.



Bus stop in front of Eugenio Maria De Hostos Charter School (EMHCS) without seating or shelter.

Bus Shelters

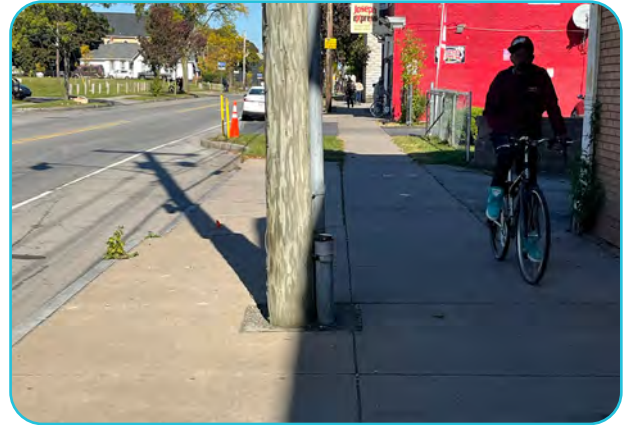
Studies have shown that the presence of bus shelters and other stop-amenities can dramatically increase ridership of public transit.

Source: Shi, Xiao, et al. "Does improving stop amenities help increase Bus Rapid Transit ridership? Findings based on a quasi-experiment." *Transportation research interdisciplinary perspectives* 10 (2021): 100323.

TOPIC AREA 1: TRANSPORTATION

BIKE INFRASTRUCTURE SIDEWALKS/CURB RAMPS

- ▶ There are no dedicated bike lanes along the corridor. Shared lanes with painted sharrows are the only option for cyclists. Due to the speed and volume of traffic, cyclists commonly use the sidewalk for their own safety, creating potential conflicts with pedestrians.
- ▶ The use of the sidewalk by cyclists indicates that sharrows/shared use lanes are not sufficient to ensure perceived bike safety along Joseph Ave.
- ▶ Bike racks are located in four (4) locations along the corridor. More bike racks are needed with priority given to highly-traveled areas, i.e. retail, food services, entertainment, etc.



Cyclist using the sidewalk south of Joseph Express store.



The Avenue Blackbox Theatre: Bike rack and pavement markings.



Painted sharrows in foreground, bicyclist using sidewalk in the distance.

TOPIC AREA 1: TRANSPORTATION

The following describes the key findings related to transportation opportunities along the Joseph Avenue Corridor.

OPPORTUNITIES + STRATEGIES

PEDESTRIAN

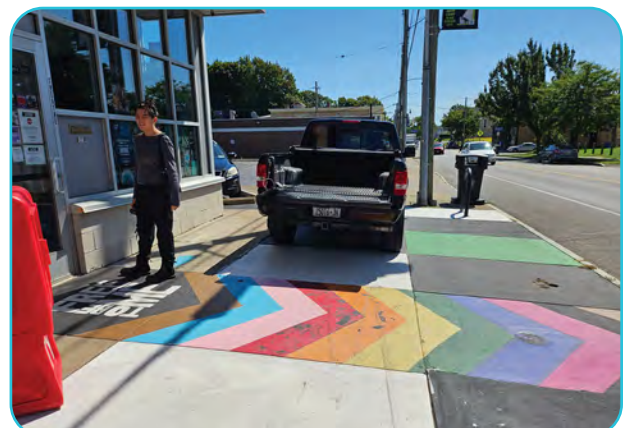
- ▶ Enhanced or raised crosswalks present opportunities to improve pedestrian safety and direct walkers to preferred locations to cross the street.
- ▶ There is an opportunity to standardize truncated domes/detectable warning surfaces as replacement is needed. Color should contrast appropriately with surrounding pavement.
- ▶ Pavement markings on the sidewalk can be used to enhance the identity of the corridor and as a wayfinding strategy to draw pedestrians into the corridor, increase foot traffic, support existing/new business, and establish an arts identity.



Source: <https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/crosswalk-visibility-enhancements>



Intersection of Norton and Joseph: Brick paver crosswalk/intersection



The Avenue Blackbox Theatre: Pavement markings.

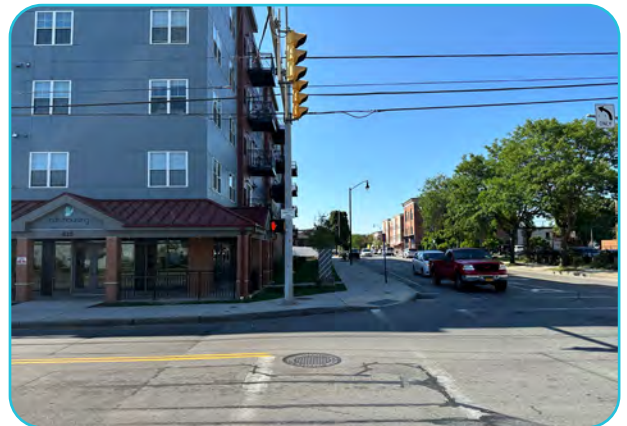
TOPIC AREA 1: TRANSPORTATION

VEHICULAR

- ▶ The intersections at Norton St., Avenue D, Wilkins, and Clifford Ave have the highest volumes of motor vehicles, presenting the greatest need for traffic calming measures and opportunities for improved safety.
- ▶ Traffic calming measures to consider for high-volume intersections include improved and new crosswalks, tabled intersections, and curb bump-outs at corners. Bump-outs that impact bus stops should be coordinated with RTS, which provides regular input on other City street projects.
- ▶ In addition to active intersections, general traffic calming measures should be integrated throughout the corridor, including but not limited to street trees, midblock crossings, rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs) where appropriate (and where they meet City RRFB policy), dedicated bike lanes, and pedestrian scale streetscape amenities.
- ▶ Residents report concerns about illicit activities at Joseph and Wilkins. Improvements to this corner have the potential to also deter loitering and negative behaviors.



Intersection of Avenue D and Joseph: Newly painted crosswalk and planters at corner.



Intersection of Clifford and Joseph Ave.

TRANSIT

- ▶ RTS and the City are considering opportunities to add seating and shelters at high-ridership stops.
- ▶ RTS plans to install a new standard shelter at Joseph Avenue and Avenue D in 2025/26, which should be coordinated with plans for any improvements to Joseph Avenue.



Bus shelter at Avenue D and Joseph Ave.

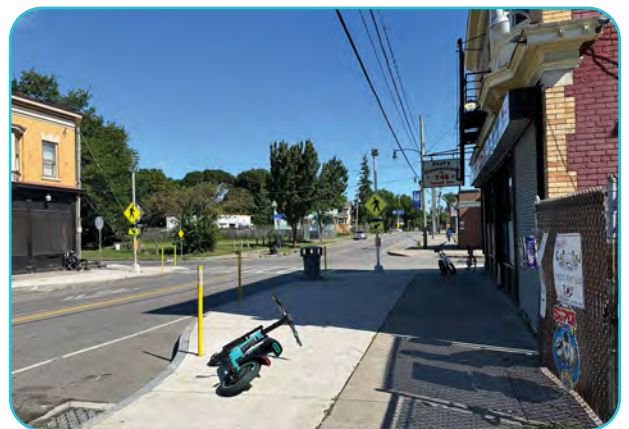
TOPIC AREA 1: TRANSPORTATION

BIKE

- ▶ There are existing dedicated bike lanes on Norton Street west of its intersection with Joseph Avenue. Dedicated bike facilities along Joseph Avenue could both better serve cyclists on Joseph and provide a direct connection to the active transportation network on Norton. Also within the corridor, Wilkins Street is a bicycle boulevard, or a relatively low-traffic route that runs parallel to busier streets.
- ▶ Within the existing width of the street, the addition of dedicated bike lanes or a single buffered lane in one direction could increase bike use and cyclist/pedestrian safety. On-street parking would need to be evaluated for removal from one side of the street to accommodate any on-street bike facilities.
- ▶ Artistic bike racks, like those in front of the Lincoln Branch Library, can be used to promote placemaking and support the artistic vision of the corridor. Custom bike racks should be aesthetically cohesive for the length of the corridor.



Intersection Norton and Joseph: Dedicated bike lane running west



E-bikes and electric scooter improperly parked outside Papis' Convenient store, partially obstructing pedestrian movement.

TOPIC AREA 2: PUBLIC SAFETY

The following describes the key findings regarding safety-related needs and opportunities along the Joseph Avenue Corridor.

NEEDS

- ▶ Residents and neighbors along Joseph Avenue have consistently raised drug activity as a central concern.
- ▶ Drug paraphernalia such as discarded needles are a health and safety concern for the right-of-way and public gathering spaces, especially those catering to children and the elderly.
- ▶ Installing sharps disposal boxes in key locations, as well as needle sweeps before public events are strategies to alleviate immediate cleanup needs but do not address the source of the issue.
- ▶ Drug activity cannot be addressed principally through redesign of infrastructure / the public realm alone. Successful strategies will need to include multiple agencies responsible for providing social services as well as law and code enforcement to address the root sources of illicit drug use and sales.
- ▶ Buildings along the project area do not have a consistent setback distance from the street, which creates dark areas that pedestrians must navigate.
- ▶ Vandalism and litter are evident throughout the corridor, increasing the perception of an unsafe environment.
- ▶ Vacant and underutilized buildings can pose a safety threat to communities by providing cover for unsavory activities like vandalism and drug activity.



Inconsistent setback along Joseph Ave creates dark pockets along the corridor.



Boarded up storefronts increase perceived lack of safety.



Visible litter increases perceived lack of safety.

TOPIC AREA 2: PUBLIC SAFETY

The following describes the key findings regarding the needs and opportunities relating to safety along the Joseph Avenue Corridor.

OPPORTUNITIES + STRATEGIES

- ▶ Public realm improvements, increased business and foot traffic, and infill of vacant lots will help mitigate safety issues related to illicit behavior. Strategies must consider community services, neighborhood liaisons/ambassadors, police presence, and trust.
- ▶ Vacant lots and buildings present an opportunity to infill the corridor with needed community services.
- ▶ New, aesthetically cohesive lighting fixtures will help mitigate crime related safety concerns along the corridor while also providing an opportunity to promote the arts/culture and placemaking.
- ▶ Increased business along the corridor will provide more eyes on the street from invested business owners and increase the presence of transparent storefront windows at ground level further improving the perception of safety and surveillance.
- ▶ A consistent setback should be utilized for infill development along the corridor to allow for a uniform streetscape width that can be appropriately and evenly illuminated to increase visibility and perception of safety.
- ▶ Increased and improved trash receptacles and maintenance practices will improve the aesthetic of the corridor.



Intersection of Weyl and Joseph: Vacant lot in front of Charter School.

Areas of Concern Identified through Public Outreach

- ▶ Corner of Joseph and Wilkins
- ▶ Parking lot between Joseph Place and Ludwig Park
- ▶ Area between Joseph Avenue and Loomis Street

TOPIC AREA 2: PUBLIC SAFETY

- ▶ Selective removal and pruning of public trees to clear underbrush in key locations along the corridor can also be employed to increase visibility. The densely planted shared lawn space between Seabrook Street and Dale Street could be an asset to the neighborhood and surrounding homes if improved.

***Traffic Related Safety is discussed in the Transportation section.



Transparent storefront on Joseph Ave increases feeling of eyes on the street.

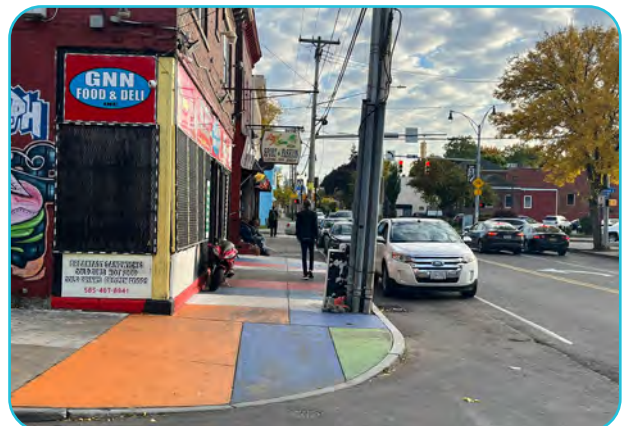


Increased lighting with cohesive aesthetic will increase visibility and perceptions of safety.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

"Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a multidisciplinary approach to crime prevention that uses urban and architectural design and the management of built and natural environments. CPTED strategies aim to reduce victimization, deter offender decisions that precede criminal acts, and build a sense of community among inhabitants so they can gain territorial control of areas, reduce crime, and minimize fear of crime."

Source: International Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Association: <https://www.cpted.net/>



Neighborhood center north of Avenue D with consistent setback for retail.

TOPIC AREA 3: PUBLIC REALM

The following describes the key findings related to the needs for public realm improvements along the Joseph Avenue Corridor.

NEEDS

STREET TREES

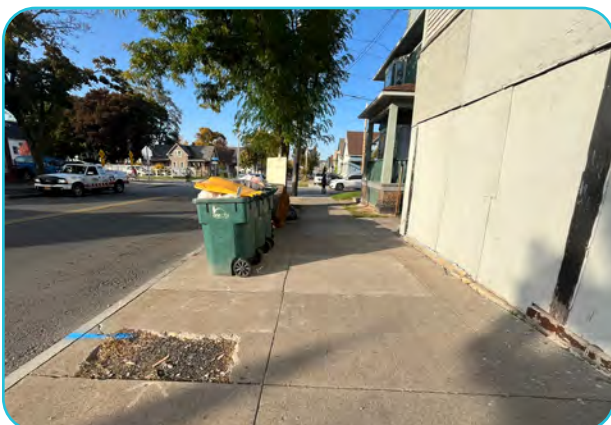
- ▶ A consistent tree lawn is not present along the corridor.
- ▶ Street trees are not uniform in size, species, or spacing.
- ▶ Many street trees along the corridor show signs of poor health.
- ▶ Tree roots have lifted sidewalk flags in many locations, impeding safe pedestrian passage.
- ▶ Overhead power lines present an obstacle for healthy tree establishment and maturation.

BUILDING FACADES

- ▶ Many facades along Joseph Ave are boarded up or have metal caging / bars installed to protect ground floor, storefront windows. Barriers on building facades provide protection of the physical property but also create the perception that the area is unsafe, which in turn can spark disinvestment and fear.



Metal caging to fortify storefront promotes perception of unsafe environment.



Tree pit where street tree has been removed.

Benefits of street trees include:

- ▶ Improved air quality
- ▶ Reduced urban heat island and increased shade
- ▶ Increased property values
- ▶ Improved walkability
- ▶ Traffic calming
- ▶ Reducing energy costs for homes and business
- ▶ Providing wildlife habitat
- ▶ Reducing stress and anxiety
- ▶ Reduced stormwater runoff

Source: US Forest Services

TOPIC AREA 3: PUBLIC REALM

STREET FURNITURE / AMENITIES

- ▶ There are very few seating opportunities along the corridor, making it difficult for people with disabilities, the elderly, and those traveling with young children to traverse the corridor.
- ▶ The only benches along the corridor are installed in a vacant lot on Wilkins St. and are not accessible for people with mobility issues.
- ▶ Bike racks are sparsely placed along the corridor and are not uniform in appearance.
- ▶ Trash receptacles are surrounded by visible litter.

SIGNAGE

- ▶ Improved signage is needed for businesses to capitalize on drive-by/walk-by traffic.



Improvements to business signage are needed to attract business from walk-by/drive-by traffic.



Two benches installed in the vacant lot, north of Wilkins St. and Joseph Ave are not ADA accessible.

TOPIC AREA 3: PUBLIC REALM

The following describes the key findings related to the opportunities associated with public realm improvements along the Joseph Avenue Corridor.

OPPORTUNITIES + STRATEGIES

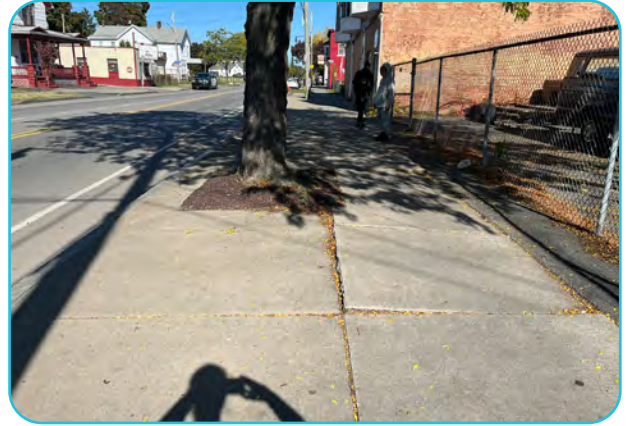
STREET TREES

Tree installations will need to consider visibility of signage and pedestrian safety features.

- ▶ On average, the project area has a combined sidewalk and tree lawn width of +/-10-12' which allows for a 5-6' wide sidewalk and tree lawn.
- ▶ Planting low maintenance, pollution tolerant street trees at 40' intervals along the length of the corridor will provide many benefits to the streetscape including decreased heat island effect, increased environmental comfort for residents, pedestrians and cyclists, sense of enclosure, traffic calming, and sense of place.
- ▶ Tree protection can be designed artistically to enhance placemaking.
- ▶ Sight lines and visibility for drivers must be prioritized when planting trees near intersections.
- ▶ In locations with overhead utility wires, proper consideration must be given to selecting trees based on mature height restrictions or choosing compact tree varieties that remain below power lines. Alternately, removal and replacement of existing trees may be necessary beneath power lines. Relocating utilities underground could be considered as a long-term solution.

BUILDING FACADES

- ▶ Creative façade treatments could be used as an opportunity to improve the appearance and perception of the corridor by eliminating/reducing boarded up and armored storefronts.
- ▶ Murals, mosaics, or colorful paint can serve as temporary visual enhancements for vacant properties until infill development occurs.



Existing sidewalk width can accommodate a consistent tree lawn and circulation.



Overhead power lines impact healthy street tree growth and establishment along Joseph Ave.



Transparent storefront on Joseph Ave increases feeling of eyes on the street.

TOPIC AREA 3: PUBLIC REALM

- ▶ Infill development should match the mixed-use nature of Joseph Ave, which includes ground floor retail with upper floor residential. This creates transparency and a more welcoming feeling along the corridor.
- ▶ Many homes along Joseph Ave have a front porch or stoop, fostering the activity of observation and spontaneous interaction between neighbors. Proposed residential infill should include front porches to promote eyes on the street and community connection.



Front porch on residence on Joseph Ave

SITE FURNITURE/AMENITIES

- ▶ Standardizing the aesthetic of bike racks, benches and trash receptacles will improve visible cohesion of the neighborhood and promote an overall neighborhood identity.
- ▶ Street furniture can be custom designed to serve both as amenity and public art along the corridor.

SIGNAGE

- ▶ Existing signage celebrating the Joseph Avenue Black Heritage Corridor, and the Joseph Ave Business District are displayed from utility poles along Joseph Ave.
- ▶ Interpretive signage provides an opportunity to promote community organizations, celebrate the history of the corridor, and foster neighborhood pride/identity.



The rich history of Joseph Ave provides opportunities for interpretation through signage and public art

Research supports that providing benches along circulation routes will increase walking and time spent outdoors, especially for older adults and people with mobility challenges.

Source: National Institutes of Health (NIH)

TOPIC AREA 4: ART

The following describes the key findings related to needs and opportunities for establishing Joseph Ave as an arts and cultural corridor.

NEEDS

- ▶ The study area within the Joseph Ave corridor lacks a cohesive aesthetic.
- ▶ While arts and cultural organizations are invested in Joseph Ave, the streetscape does not consistently reflect that arts activity.
- ▶ There is a need for youth programming along the corridor that could be supported by arts programs.

OPPORTUNITIES + STRATEGIES

- ▶ There are four (4) existing murals along the corridor. Two (2) were created through the Wall\Therapy mural program, using art as a catalyst for social healing and change.
- ▶ There is a rich history along the Joseph Ave corridor that can be showcased through interpretive signage and art installations.
- ▶ Existing arts institutions are invested in neighborhood revitalization and can be partners in establishing the corridor as an arts and cultural destination, i.e., The Blackbox Theatre, Joseph Avenue Arts and Culture Alliance.
- ▶ Vacant lots present opportunities for arts programming (ex: outdoor concert series) and art installations.
- ▶ Infrastructure improvements can be utilized to enhance the arts identity along the corridor, i.e., artistic street furniture, bike racks, trash receptacles, bus shelters, and lighting.



The Avenue Blackbox Theatre and adjacent M.U.S.E. lot offers performing arts along the corridor.



Historic synagogue B'nai Israel site, purchased by the Joseph Avenue Culture Alliance, is set to be a center for the arts.

TOPIC AREA 5: VACANT LOTS

The following describes the key findings on needs and opportunities related to vacant lots along Joseph Avenue.

NEEDS

- ▶ There are numerous vacant lots along the corridor that promote the perception of urban blight, lack of safety, and negatively impact property values.
- ▶ Vacant lots can become an eye-sore when not maintained. Many are littered with trash and needles.
- ▶ Wood bollards are used to keep people from driving onto the vacant lots but add to the corridor's appearance of being run down.
- ▶ Community gardens have been installed on some of the lots but lack maintenance.



Community Garden off of Joseph Ave at Dale and Remington.

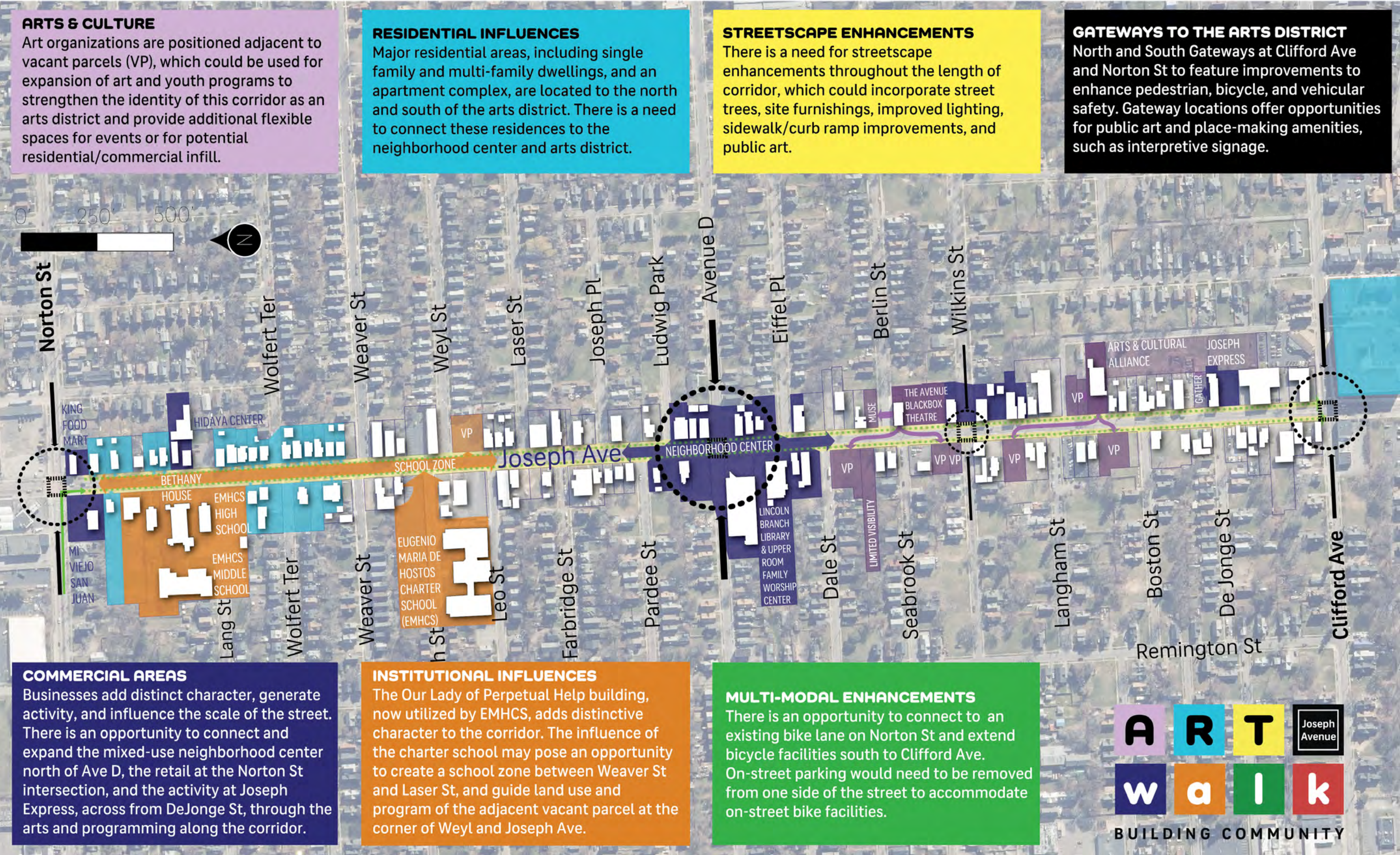
OPPORTUNITIES + STRATEGIES

- ▶ Community gardens can be implemented to provide fresh food and foster physical activity. Ownership and maintenance responsibilities must be well established for successful execution. Gardens could focus on cut flowers to reduce maintenance needs.
- ▶ The open space available in the vacant lots could be an asset to the Joseph Ave community and be utilized for active recreation, intergenerational programming, and art installation.
- ▶ Vacant lots can be used as tester locations to introduce program amenities and services to Joseph Ave before brick-and-mortar locations are developed:
 - ▶ Vacant lots can enhance the arts culture by providing space for community events like annual festivals and outdoor performances.
 - ▶ Vacant lots can also be used to provide access to a myriad of community services such as Rec on the Move or mobile healthcare clinics.
- ▶ Residential and commercial infill should be prioritized for vacant lots along the corridor to reestablish the street wall, streetscape, and sense of community.



Vacant lot at Zimbrich and Joseph.

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES



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CORRIDOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the inventory of existing conditions and the analysis of needs and opportunities, this chapter recommends corridor improvements to enhance multimodal transportation access and safety and establish Joseph Ave as an arts and cultural corridor.

Recommendations will build off current initiatives along the corridor, local insights with respect to opportunities and challenges, and community priorities established through public engagement and stakeholder outreach. This chapter is organized into the following sections:

Public Realm

1. Arts + Culture
2. Placemaking
3. Vacant Lots

Transportation

4. Multimodal Improvements
5. Key Intersections
6. School Zone

THE BIG PICTURE

Overall project goals for both public realm and transportation improvements include:

- *Daylighting/Connecting Arts and Cultural Assets*
- *Fostering Economic Development and*
- *Enhancing Safety (traffic and crime related)*

The plan leverages existing opportunities and current initiatives along the Corridor to achieve these goals.

EXISTING OPPORTUNITIES

ARTS AND CULTURE

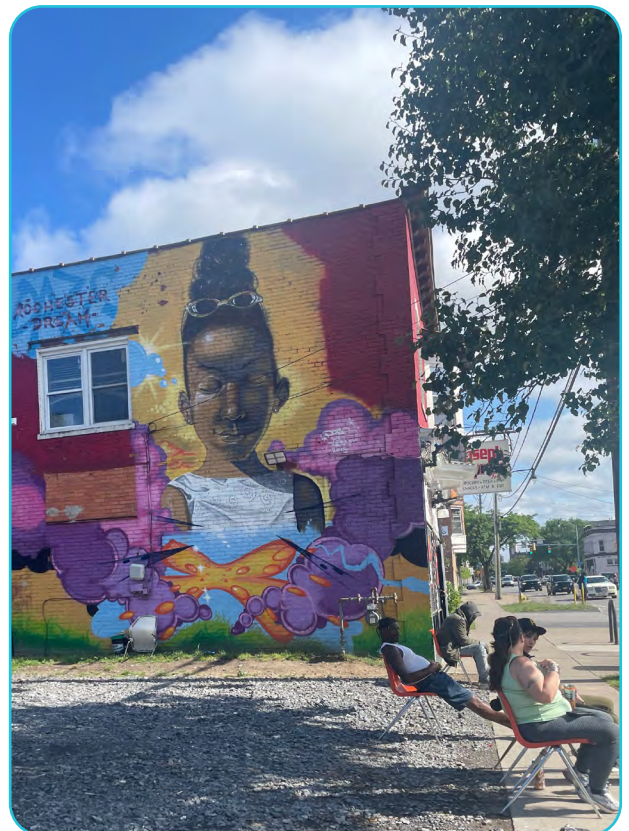
There are three (3) key arts and cultural institutions that can serve as anchor points along the ArtWalk: **Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School (EMHCS)** in the north, **The Avenue Blackbox Theatre** in the center, and **The Joseph Avenue Arts and Culture Alliance (JAACA)** in the south. While EMHCS and The Blackbox Theatre have brick and mortar locations, JAACA currently partners with local institutions like the Lincoln Branch Library and the Upper Room Worship Center to host arts programming. JAACA also utilizes Rochester's mobile stage for performances in vacant lots and park spaces, providing flexibility to infuse arts along the corridor. Each anchor institution has adjacent vacant lots with potential for community, recreation, and arts programming.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Similar to arts and cultural institutions, commercial activity is spread throughout the corridor. There is existing retail at both the north and south gateways, a retail hub north of Avenue D, and an active neighborhood gathering space north of Joseph Express at the south. In addition to these retail hubs, there are several small businesses offering goods and services throughout. Unifying the study area through a cohesive aesthetic, improved wayfinding, enhanced multimodal transportation, and the daylighting/connection of arts and cultural anchor points can boost foot traffic, increase patronage of existing businesses, and stimulate economic growth along the corridor.

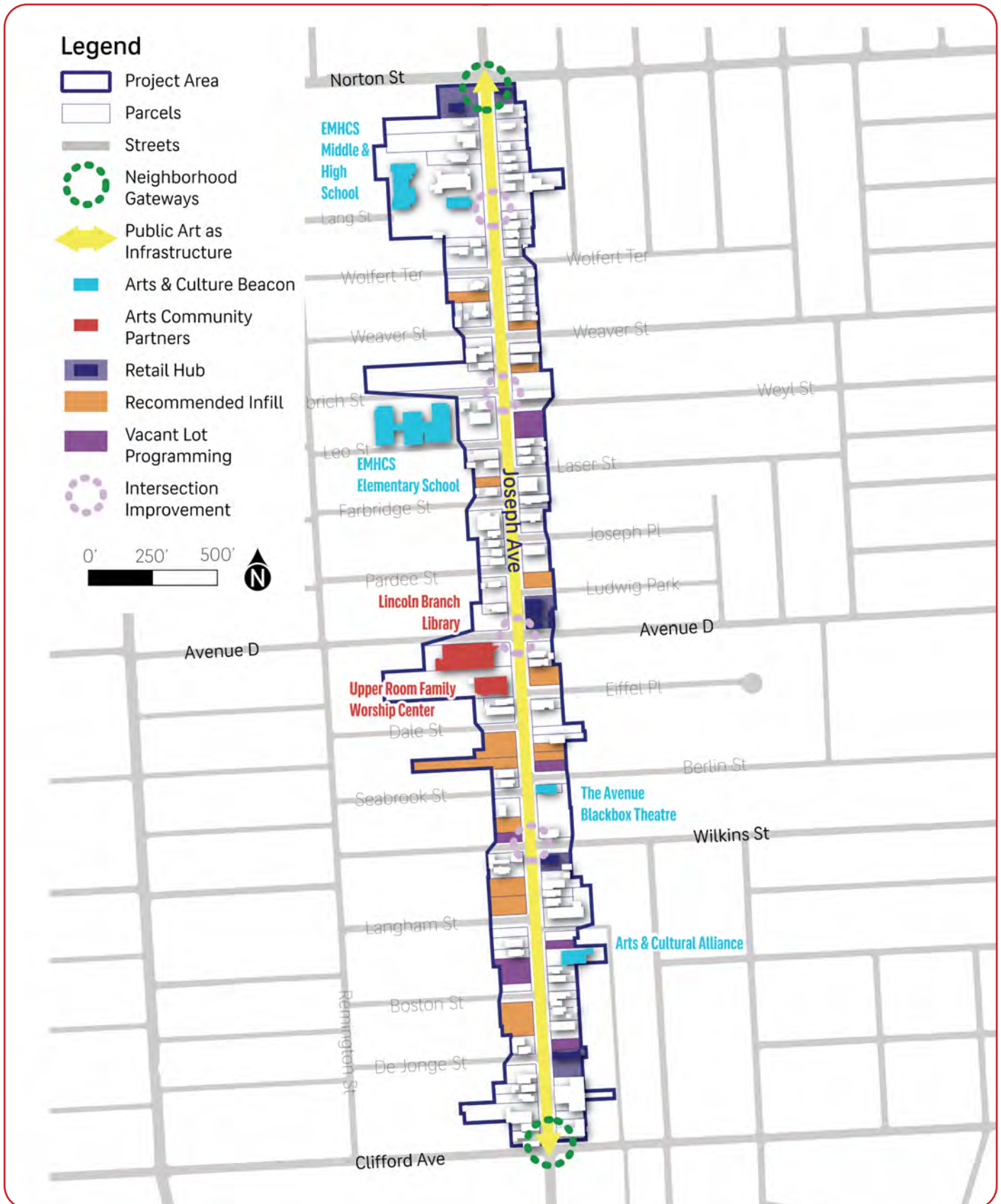
WALKABILITY

Existing zoning along the corridor is a combination of R-1 Low Density Residential, C-1 Neighborhood Center, and R-2 Medium Density Residential. This zoning allows the ArtWalk corridor to maintain a mixed-use character, with residential areas within walking/biking distance of retail hubs and arts and cultural anchor points. Under the Zoning Alignment Project, which will update the City's Zoning Code, much of the corridor is proposed to be Neighborhood Mixed Use or Medium-Density Residential, with Boutique Mixed Use proposed at the intersection with Norton Street.



Gathering space north of Joseph Express.

THE BIG PICTURE



THE BIG PICTURE

CURRENT INITIATIVES

JOSEPH AVE ARTS AND CULTURE ALLIANCE (JAACA)

JAACA is a nonprofit offering free arts and cultural programming throughout the year, featuring a minimum of 35 programs over 42 weeks annually. They turn fields into concert halls and churches into opera houses showcasing performances by artists from around the country and world. They have purchased the historic synagogue at 692 Joseph Ave, which they plan to convert into a 330-seat performance space. 85% of artists contracted are BIPOC artists, reflecting the community this organization serves.

AVENUE BLACKBOX THEATER AND M.U.S.E.

A black-owned business presenting theatre productions to uplift BIPOC and LGBTQ+ voices. Owner and founder Reenah Golden created an inclusive space bringing the art of theatre to Joseph Ave. Mindfulness Unraveling Sacred Expression, M.U.S.E., is a sister initiative, in collaboration with the City of Rochester, ArtWalk, and local neighbors. It aims to transform the vacant lot just north of the theatre at the corner of Berlin St. and Joseph into a space for public art installation.

EUGENIO MARIA DE HOSTOS CHARTER SCHOOL (EMHCS)

EMHCS is a bilingual (Spanish/English) Charter School that uses learning to advocate for social justice. With 1000 students enrolled, they are currently investing in the renovation and expansion of their campus. Renovations include a state-of-the-art gym, lounge, and meetings spaces. Their administration is focused on community partnerships and is considering opening portions of the renovated campus for public use.

JOSEPH AVENUE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (JABA)

JABA, established in 2008, is dedicated to revitalizing Joseph Avenue's economy. Comprised of local business owners, JABA advocates for economic development and neighborhood improvements in collaboration with the City of Rochester and local institutions.

LINCOLN BRANCH LIBRARY AND THE UPPER ROOM WORSHIP CENTER

Both of these institutions partner with the JAACA and offer their spaces for performances, festivals, and other community events.

Art as a catalyst for Change

The Joseph Ave Arts and Culture Alliance offers at least 35 programs each year, running over 42 weeks. Transforming fields into outdoor concert venues and churches into opera houses, they create unique opportunities for community members to experience and engage with the arts at no cost.



Public Realm

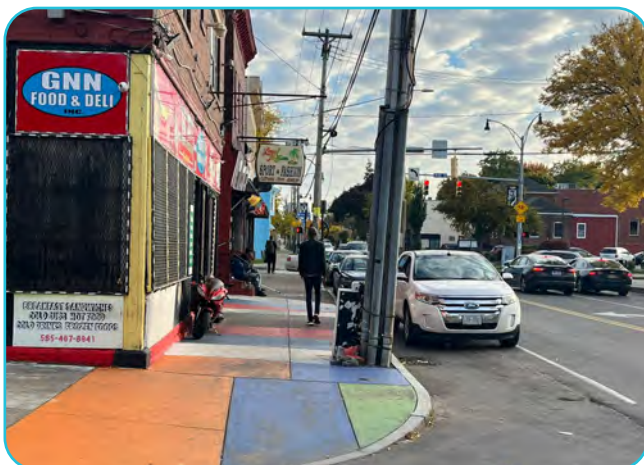
The following section outlines design recommendations for the physical character of the public realm relating to arts and culture, placemaking, and vacant lot programing. The recommended improvements provide a framework to guide future development.

PUBLIC REALM

The public realm plays a crucial role in building community. The look, feel, and function of public spaces influence not only how people interact with their surroundings but also with one other. This section outlines a strategy to achieve public realm goals by celebrating local arts and culture, enhancing placemaking, and activating vacant lots.

GOALS

- ▶ Reclaim public space for positive community use
- ▶ Increase perceived and actual safety
- ▶ Reduce/eliminate loitering and illicit behaviors
- ▶ Overall beautification
- ▶ Promote and foster arts and cultural activities along the corridor
- ▶ Instill neighborhood pride
- ▶ Interpret and share history of neighborhood through placemaking intervention
- ▶ Foster social interaction and community connection
- ▶ Establish programming for vacant lots



Existing Conditions in the JAA Corridor.



ARTS + CULTURE

ESTABLISHING AN ARTS AND CULTURAL DESTINATION

The overall strategy for establishing an ArtWalk along the Joseph Ave corridor utilizes four (4) primary building blocks:

Gateways will welcome visitors and signal their arrival into the district.

Arts and Cultural Beacons will serve to anchor the corridor from north to south. Beacons are supported by Arts and Cultural partners providing supplemental space to host arts/community programs.

Vacant lots, designated for flexible community programming, will host temporary art installations, aid in wayfinding, and draw people through the corridor.

Art as infrastructure will create a unifying thread, connecting the district and establishing a cohesive corridor (see page 79).

Building Blocks

Gateways



Norton and Joseph to the north, Clifford and Joseph (pictured) to the south.



Precedent Gateway.

Arts + Cultural Beacons



Avenue Blackbox Theater (left), Joseph Avenue Arts + Culture Alliance (right), Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School (EMHCS) (not pictured).



Creating the Joseph Ave Art Walk

Connecting Arts and Culture



- Neighborhood Gateway
- Arts and Cultural Beacon
- Arts Community Partners
- Vacant Lots Programming
 - Arts
 - Recreation
 - Community Services
 - Retail Incubator
- Public art as Infrastructure + Streetscape Improvements

PUBLIC ART

Public art can provide clear visual cues, signaling to neighbors and visitors that they have entered an arts and cultural district. To effectively contribute to placemaking, public art must authentically connect with the community, be easy to maintain, and durable, among other factors. The following are recommendations for siting and administering public art along the JAA.

PARAMETERS FOR SITING PUBLIC ART

- ▶ The parcel must be owned by the City of Rochester or community partner willing to permanently house and maintain the artwork.
- ▶ Location must be accessible from the public Right of Way and comply with accessibility standards.
- ▶ Location must not interfere with the line of site of drivers or bicyclists.
- ▶ Location must not contribute to increased safety concerns.
- ▶ Power supply is preferable.
- ▶ Water supply should be available near the installation location for maintenance.

PUBLIC ART ADMINISTRATION

A qualified individual or organization should be identified to manage the public art acquisition process, which includes working with the community and/or stakeholders to establish an art acquisition process and associated criteria, administration of a Call for Art (request for artist qualifications or proposal), artist management, and providing oversight during fabrication and installation. The following items should be established for each public art opportunity:

- ▶ There must be an established and sustainable budget to support the professional services (project management/administration, engineering), artist fees (design, fabrication,



Photo Credit: Anila Quayyum; Prachyl.



Photo Credit: Dylan Mortimer; Brian Rice.



Photo Credit: Agi Miagi.

and installation), and ongoing operations and maintenance of all proposed public art.

- ▶ Eligibility criteria should be established after review of any requirements established by the funding source. Restricting eligibility to local artists may be preferred to support local artists, although some funding sources do not permit residency restrictions.
- ▶ Design criteria should be established for the specific location such as dimensional restrictions, weight restrictions, desired themes or narratives, or any other site specific design requirements.
- ▶ Durability and maintenance criteria should be established and made available to artists prior to soliciting artist qualifications and/or proposals. All permanent artwork must be durable, low maintenance, engineered for safe installation, and appropriate to the location.
- ▶ Selection criteria should include the following, at a minimum, and expand based on the unique location and goals of the individual art installation:
 - The artwork should reflect the history, culture and identity of the Joseph Ave community.
 - The artwork should not present an ‘attractive nuisance’ and public interaction should not result in a hazard, such as climbing.
 - Artist and fabricator experience requirements should be established.
- ▶ A clearly defined selection process should be established. The selection process for a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) or Request for Proposals (RFP) will vary. The process should include the following, at a minimum, and expand based on the individual installation:
 - Indicate if the proposals will be made available to the community and what the community role will be.

- Identify the selection committee composition. The selection committee should be composed of five (5) to seven (7) individuals and must include at least one community resident, local stakeholder, arts based professional, and architect/engineer with construction expertise.
- Indicate if interviews will be conducted and if they are required to be in-person.



Patterson Park in Baltimore.

The Value of Public Art

- ▶ 70 percent of Americans believe that the “arts improve the image and identity” of their community.
- ▶ Aesthetics is one of the top three characteristics of why residents attach themselves to a community.
- ▶ 72 percent of Americans believe “the arts unify our communities regardless of age, race, and ethnicity.”

Source: Why Public Art Matters, 2018, AmericansForTheArts.org

PUBLIC ART OPPORTUNITIES

Neighborhood Gateways: The north and south gateways (Norton Street and Clifford Avenue) offer a unique opportunity to site public art and establish an entry point into the arts district.

Art & Cultural Beacons: Siting public art adjacent to the established arts organizations can assist with wayfinding and identification of an arts destination. This can elevate the organization's presence and provide opportunities for individuals to engage with arts-based programming.



Example of a Neighborhood Gateway installation.
Photo Credit: Cliff Garten Studio; Matt DeTurck.



Example of an Arts & Cultural Beacon installation.
Photo Credit: Sue Steele.

ARTS + CULTURE

Public Art as Infrastructure: The strategic placement of artful streetscape amenities along the Joseph Avenue corridor will create a unifying thread, connecting the neighborhood gateways and fostering a cohesive identity throughout the corridor.

Temporary Art: Vacant lots can be strategically utilized for temporary art installations and programs, activating underutilized spaces and fostering community engagement and pride.



Public Art as Infrastructure. Photo Credit: Sue Steele.



Public Art as Infrastructure. Photo Credit: Sue Steele.



Temporary Art. Photo Credit: Agi Miagi.



Temporary Art. Photo Credit: A. M. Rea.



Temporary Art - Peace Poles. Photo Credit: Unknown.

PLACEMAKING

PLACEMAKING

Placemaking is the art and science of shaping private development, public facilities, and the public realm into places of great character.¹ Joseph Ave has a rich history shaped by generations of diverse communities, evolving into a vibrant hub of art, culture, and community pride.

The following recommendations provide a framework for establishing a placemaking strategy along Joseph Ave.

¹City of Rochester, “Rochester’s 2034 Comprehensive Plan.” (2019)

A place isn’t just
“anywhere” because it
reflects the values and
harnesses the assets of
the people who use it.



Local examples of placemaking methods in action.

ESTABLISHING A CONSISTENT STREETScape

Streetscape is the arrangement of physical elements in the public realm along streets. It includes sidewalks, street trees, lighting, seating, signage, and other features that contribute to the functionality, safety, and aesthetic appeal of the Joseph Avenue corridor.

Prioritizing pedestrian comfort and safety is vital to creating inclusive and functional streetscapes. Sidewalks should be designed to accommodate diverse users, including those with disabilities, ensuring accessibility for all. Uniform lighting is essential to illuminate sidewalks, crossings, and public spaces, enhancing pedestrian visibility and safety.

Equally important is committing to maintenance and longevity. Streetscape elements should be constructed using high-quality, low-maintenance materials capable of withstanding weather and heavy use. Establishing clear maintenance plans and forming partnerships can ensure regular upkeep, preserving the streetscape's functionality and aesthetic appeal over time and pride in their neighborhood.

Future capital improvement projects should focus on providing high-quality streetscape improvements following best practices and utilizing durable, time-tested materials rather than incorporating decorative or untested materials for design sake. Additionally, too often durable materials and construction details are value engineered to gain a larger project footprint. This should be avoided and rather strategic, smaller scaled, high-quality investments should be made to ensure a durable streetscape is realized that will contribute to the sustainable future with lessened maintenance requirements.

With thoughtful and inclusive design, streetscape improvements can catalyze a transformation, turning the community perception of neglect into a vibrant, safe, and valued corridor.



A neighborhood with a healthy tree canopy.

PLACEMAKING

The Joseph Ave Corridor is characterized by commercial and residential sections each punctuated by intermittent surface parking lots. Establishing a cohesive language throughout the corridor will strengthen neighborhood identity and sense of place. The following section provides a framework to establish a visual language for commercial and residential development and to screen the parking needed to support future growth.

Commercial:

- Façades should feature a cohesive palette of materials and paint colors.
- Storefronts should have ample transparency on the ground floor to promote the perception of safety and foster increased walk-by business.
- Signage should maintain consistent aesthetic and prioritize visibility for walk by/drive by traffic.

Residential:

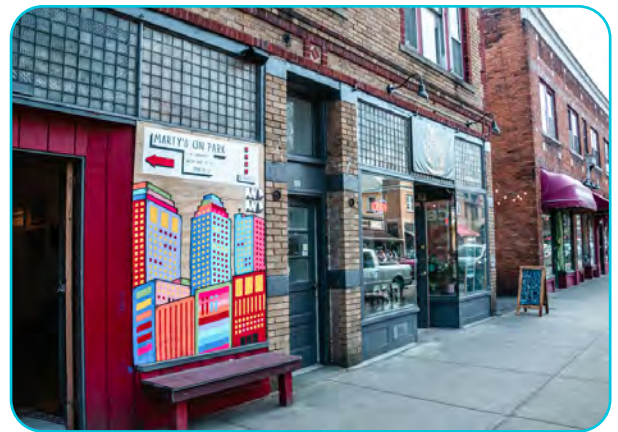
- Infill residential development should include a front porch or stoop to encourage spontaneous interactions between neighbors and strengthen sense of community.

Surface parking

- Parking should be placed behind new construction where feasible to establish a continuous street wall.
- Where surface parking is located along the public right of way, landscape/hardscape screening should be introduced to mitigate for negative visual impact.
- Decorative paving or reinforced grass should be considered in surface lots along the public right of way, to encourage flexible use.

General:

- Building setbacks should be consistent throughout the corridor in both residential and commercial sections.
- A continuous tree lawn should run on both sides the street for the length of the corridor .
- Site amenities like benches, bike racks, and trash receptacles should have a uniform design and be sited consistently throughout the corridor – such as within the tree lawn.



Park Avenue, Rochester, NY.



Example of front porch culture.

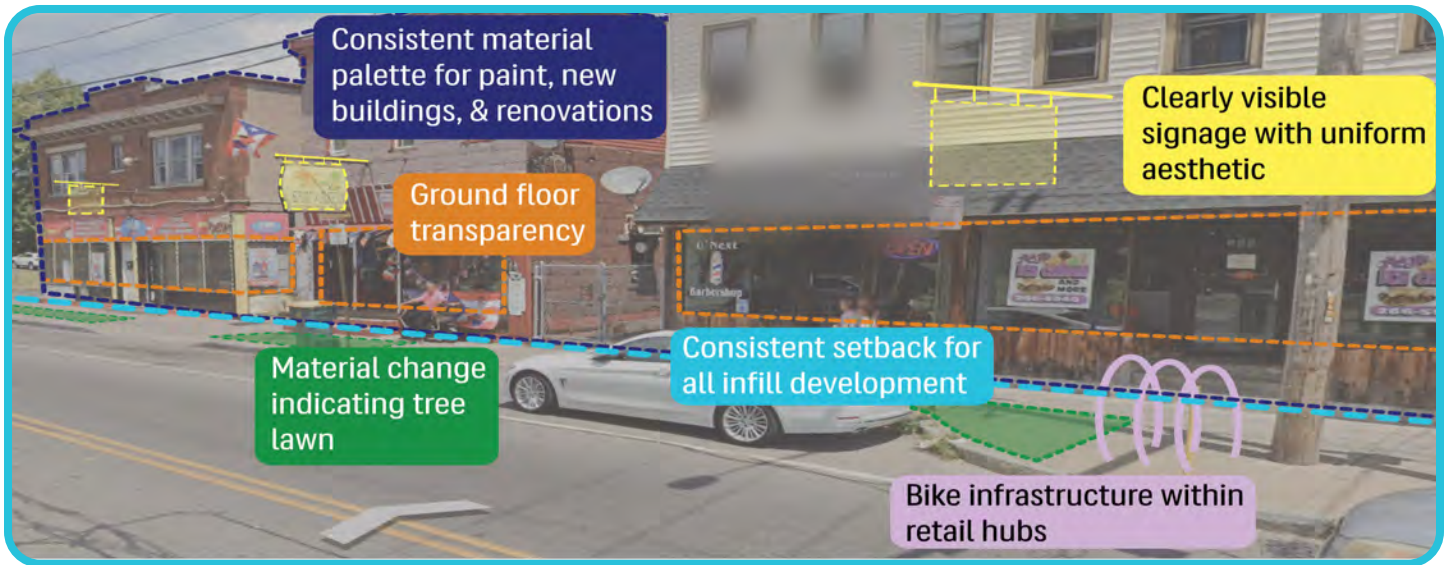
Parking Lots

Parking lots can be designed for flexible use, allowing them to convert into public plazas supporting community activities, such as pop-up markets, when not needed for parking.

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines, developed with community input, would ensure new development aligns with the ArtWalk vision by establishing criteria for building and paving materials, parking and utility screening, signage, wayfinding, and other key elements.

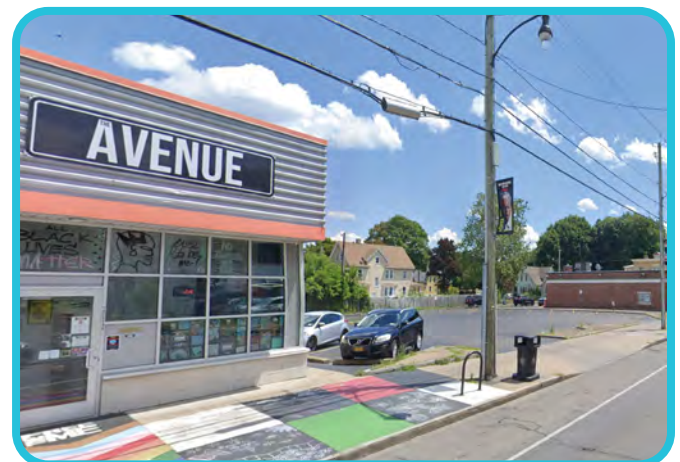
PLACEMAKING



Commercial.



Residential.



STREET TREES

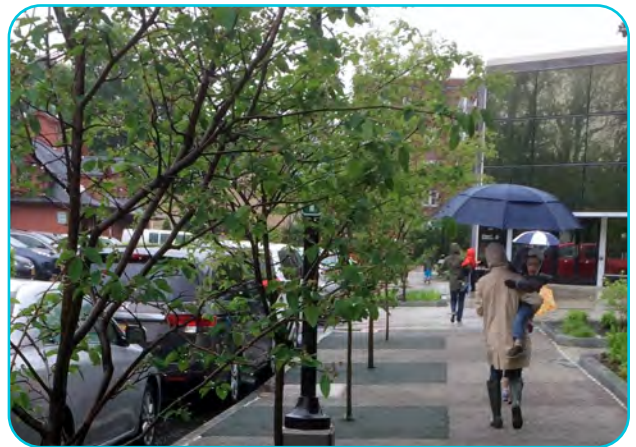
Rochester's urban forest is a vital component of the city's infrastructure, as highlighted in key planning documents such as Rochester 2034 and the 2024 Urban Forestry Master Plan. These plans emphasize the urban forest's role in enhancing sidewalk networks, mitigating climate change, improving quality of life, and enhancing long-term property values. The Urban Forestry Master Plan also outlines specific challenges and recommendations for preserving and expanding the city's urban canopy.

High quality street tree canopies play an outsized role in defining high quality community character. However, establishing urban street trees involves more than choosing a location and species. It requires careful site preparation to ensure adequate soil volume, the use of modern planting practices like silva cells or structural soils to enhance moisture and oxygen availability while reducing soil compaction, and consistent watering and maintenance during the critical establishment period, particularly in the first three (3) years.

Often streetscape infill planting efforts prioritize immediate visual appeal but lack the resources to ensure long-term success. To achieve the long-term vision of a healthy urban forest, significant investment in tree planting and tree establishment, including proper site preparation and establishment care, should be incorporated in the construction budgets for any future streetscape improvement.



A continuous tree lawn gives trees more soil volume which allows roots to spread naturally, improves water retention and nutrient access, and promotes healthier, long-lasting tree growth.



Porous pavement is a durable, permeable surface made from recycled tires that reduces waste, filters pollutants, manages stormwater, and mitigates heat island effects while remaining ADA-compliant.

Additional Tree Establishment Strategies to Consider

Structural soil developed at Cornell University is an engineered mix of crushed stone, soil, and a binder that supports tree growth while stabilizing pavement in urban areas. It provides a porous, load-bearing surface that allows root expansion without damaging sidewalks or roads.

Silva Cells support healthy tree growth by providing soil structure for root expansion while managing storm water beneath paved surfaces.

**** These systems are more expensive and have maintenance implications. Their use must be approved and coordinated with the City of Rochester's Forestry Department to ensure feasibility.*

PLACEMAKING

Beyond tree planting initiatives, key considerations for street tree planting include:

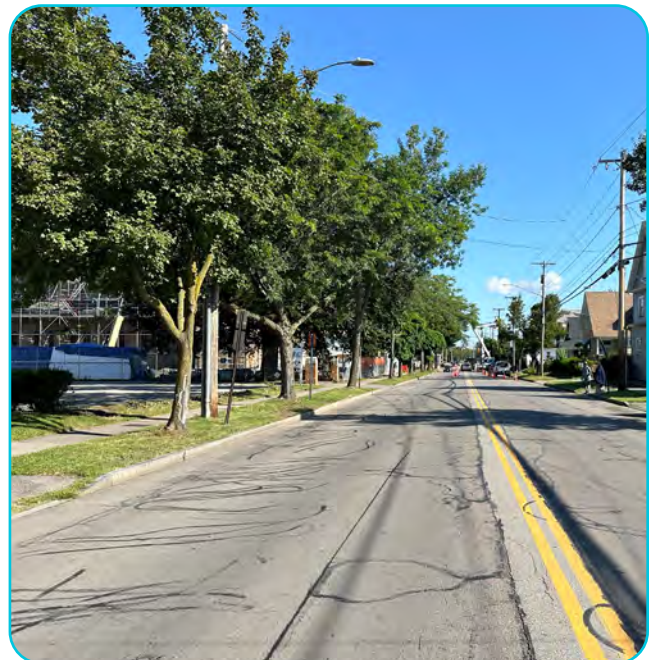
Stay Informed and Engaged: The City’s Forestry Division maintains extensive mapping of existing trees, available planting sites, planned removals, pruning, and proposed plantings. Best practices guide site and species selection, and community members can participate in species selection when desired.

Example: In 2024, the Forestry Division planned to plant five (5) trees in the spring and four (4) in the fall across 18 available planting sites on Joseph Ave. Species selection considered challenges such as overhead utilities, road salts, and drought conditions.

Promote Neighborhood Engagement and Workforce Development: Street tree initiatives provide opportunities to foster community pride and create jobs. Collaboration with local organizations and schools can train residents in urban forestry and landscaping. Hiring locally for planting and maintenance tasks reinforces economic investment in the community.

The 2024 Urban Forestry Master Plan recommends expanding the Tree Ambassador Program to engage and educate residents on the benefits of urban forestry. Building on that recommendation, the City could foster neighborhood ‘champions’ and provide training in tree establishment care to strengthen the long-term success of Rochester’s ambitious tree expansion initiative.

Combat Vandalism: Including damage from vehicles and individuals, vandalism poses significant threats to the urban forest. Public education and outreach can help build appreciation for the value of trees and reduce incidents of damage.



Example of existing tree canopy conditions in the JAA corridor.

Enhance Protection and Establishment: Urban street trees face unique challenges, including compacted soils and pollution. Protective measures such as tree guards and soil enhancements improve health and longevity. Clear maintenance schedules and shared responsibilities between city agencies and local partners are critical for success.

Key Recommendations for priority streetscape elements are outlined below:

Right Tree / Right Place

There is interest in moving power lines underground to allow for larger street trees, but this is costly and difficult due to power loss and required system upgrades. The lines along the east side of Joseph Avenue are high-voltage making this option especially challenging. Tree planting beneath these lines must balance aesthetics with utility restrictions, trees must remain small at maturity—no taller than 30 feet—to prevent interference with the overhead wires.

Although there are hundreds of tree species, only a limited number are suitable for urban street tree planting. This list becomes even more restricted when site-specific criteria are applied. In Rochester, street trees must be hardy to the regional climate and capable of thriving in challenging urban conditions. These include poor soil quality, exposure to de-icing salts, air pollution, and periods of drought. Furthermore, street trees must meet the following additional criteria:

- Mature height restrictions where overhead wires are present.
- Avoidance of obstructing sight lines for vehicles and pedestrians.
- Species diversity to reduce vulnerability to pests and diseases.

The City of Rochester Forestry Division maintains a list of tree species that are appropriately sized, resilient to urban conditions, and proven to establish successfully throughout the city.

Recommended Urban Street Trees

Cultivars exist for many of the trees listed below. Cultivars are variations of a species which have been cultivated for a specific trait. Cultivars should be reviewed for commercial availability and suitability for the unique constraints of each tree planting location.

Medium to Large Trees:

- ▶ Honeylocust, Red Maple, Zelkova, Ginko, Sugar Maple, Elm hybrids, Littleleaf Linden, Oaks (Red, White, Pin), Hackberry, Sweetgum, Kentucky Coffetree

Small Trees (under 30’):

- ▶ Serviceberry, Hornbeam, Hawthorn, Amur Maackia, American Hophornbeam, Hedge Maple, Redbud, Perrotia, Tree Lilac

PUBLIC ART AS INFRASTRUCTURE (SITE FURNISHINGS & LIGHTING)

Incorporating creative site furnishings can enhance visual appeal, reflect community identity and foster a sense of pride. With thoughtful planning and a cohesive design, these elements contribute to vibrant, memorable streetscape. Artist-designed site furnishings can provide an opportunity for community values to be reflected in a more meaningful way. When incorporating artist designed site furnishings, it is critical that the primary utilitarian function is not lost to artistic vision or design trends. An alternative approach would be to engage a manufacturer that offers options to customize site furnishings with unique colors and pattern selections. This option has become an increasingly common and affordable option in the current site furnishings market.



Bike racks.



Seating elements.



Lighting.

PLACEMAKING

Key recommendations for priority streetscape elements are outlined below:

Bike racks which can be sculptural and reflect the culture of the area. As seen at the Lincoln Branch Library, bike racks shaped like bicycles add a playful touch. Artist designed bike racks can reinforce the creative energy of the neighborhood as long as they do not sacrifice the basic function as a convenient place to park bikes. Incorporating unique forms provide both functionality for cyclists and striking visuals that reinforce the neighborhood's identity.

Seating elements are another canvas for creativity. As seen in the Neighborhood of the Arts, benches with a unique shape, such as those on University Avenue or made from reclaimed materials such as the carved boulder on East Avenue can serve as an iconic beacon. These installations can reinforce the arts district, encourage social interaction, and foster a welcoming environment.

Tree Establishment Barriers are required during the first few years of urban tree establishment. Robust wood-constructed barriers can provide an opportunity for temporary community-based art initiatives. Simple interventions such as surface paint, engravings, or fiber art can contribute to an artful and memorable streetscape.

Lighting should be incorporated at all permanent sculptural installations, whether integrated or to illuminate the artwork. Where budget and maintenance agreements exist, dynamic lighting that changes colors or patterns to mark seasonal events, holidays, or neighborhood celebrations should be considered to further reinforce a sense of place.

Due to the operational and maintenance requirements for garbage and recycling receptacles, it is not recommended to incorporate artist designed elements. The risk of damage, cost

to replace/ repair, and potential operational concerns often outweigh the value they may add to the streetscape. It is recommended that the receptacles selected align with City operations and maintenance and perform their primary function. If feasible, customization with manufacturer colors should be considered to compliment the neighborhood.



Tree Establishment Barriers.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Engage the community to ensure designs reflect local history and culture.
- Invite local artists and professional artists to participate.
- Durability and maintenance should be central to the design process. This will preserve the artistic and functional value over time. Dilapidated materials and furnishings are a negative influence and will detract from the character.
- Establish design standards to maintain cohesion. This can be through consistent use of colors, materials, or thematic motifs. Even with diverse artistic elements, a harmonious design language ensures that individual pieces complement each other and reinforce the neighborhood's identity.

By pairing creativity with intentional planning, streetscape amenities can transform functional elements into engaging public art. Coupled with visual examples, these designs can inspire a shared vision of placemaking that enhances community pride and creates destinations people want to visit and remember.



PAVING

Standard concrete sidewalks are a highly durable, time-tested, low maintenance pavement surface. Specialty paving treatments can be applied to concrete sidewalks to highlight a destination, program space, or designated routes such as an art trail. It is recommended that both durability and local contractor qualifications be considered when selecting a specialty concrete pavement treatment.

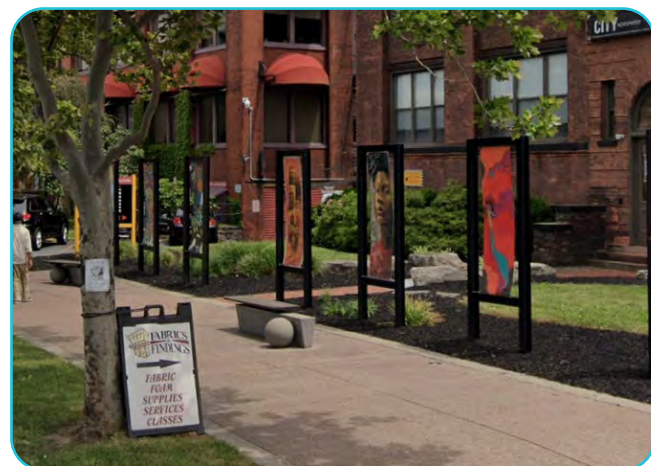
Recommended specialty concrete pavement treatments include integral colors, stamped concrete, sandblasted patterns and designs, and exposed aggregate finishing. Less durable treatments for sidewalk applications include surface applied stains and paints or adhesive applied products. These surface applied enhancements should generally be avoided due to the high maintenance, unless there is a maintenance plan in place to repaint and reapply on a regular basis.

Unit paving, such as bricks and granite pavers, can further enhance the visual appeal of an exterior space. However, specialty materials are costly to install correctly and should only be considered if sufficient budget is available. During the design process, high end materials are often replaced with cheaper alternatives or construction details are modified to reduce costs. These downgrades compromise durability which leads to higher long-term maintenance needs (or removal), and general lower quality visual appeal. A durable intact sidewalk is far more valuable to an urban streetscape over time than a failing specialty material.

Granite curbing is recommended due to the exposure to de-icing materials and snow plowing because it far more durable than concrete and requires less maintenance over time. Granite is a classic material and elevates the streetscape aesthetic, contributing to a quality streetscape.



Standard concrete is highly durable, time-tested, low maintenance pavement surface.



Exposed aggregate paving adds visual interest and enhance sense of place but will add cost to the project.



Play Walk Rochester, NY, uses temporary markings on concrete paving to enhance sense of place and wayfinding.

PLACEMAKING

SIGNAGE

Signage can play a key role in establishing neighborhood identity by incorporating design elements that reflect the community's character and history. Thoughtfully placed, consistent signage can guide residents and visitors, highlight neighborhood landmarks, and foster pride within the neighborhood.

Commercial Signage

- Consistent signage for businesses and community services can be achieved through standardized design guidelines (discussed on page 73).
- Community partners of arts institutions should display signage that illustrates their collaboration



Example of uniform commercial signage.

Interpretive signage

- Interpretive signage can be placed at key locations, such as arts institutions, vacant lots with community programs, and sites of historical significance, to educate residents and visitors about the history of Joseph Ave and highlight ongoing initiatives

Wayfinding

- Pavement markings, designed with community input, can be integrated into proposed pedestrian improvements to help people navigate the ArtWalk corridor, connect arts and cultural beacons, and retail hubs



Example of interpretive signage at Canalside in Buffalo, New York.



Example of wayfinding signage. Photo credit: James Wratt.

VACANT LOTS

OPPORTUNITY IN VACANCY

Along the Joseph Avenue Corridor, there are 23 vacant properties totaling roughly five (5) acres. Six (6) of these properties are privately owned, while the remaining 17 belong to the City. While vacant lots contribute to the negative perception of urban blight, they also offer significant opportunities for community programming as well as residential and commercial development along the corridor. The following recommendations provide a framework for both programming and infill of vacant lots.

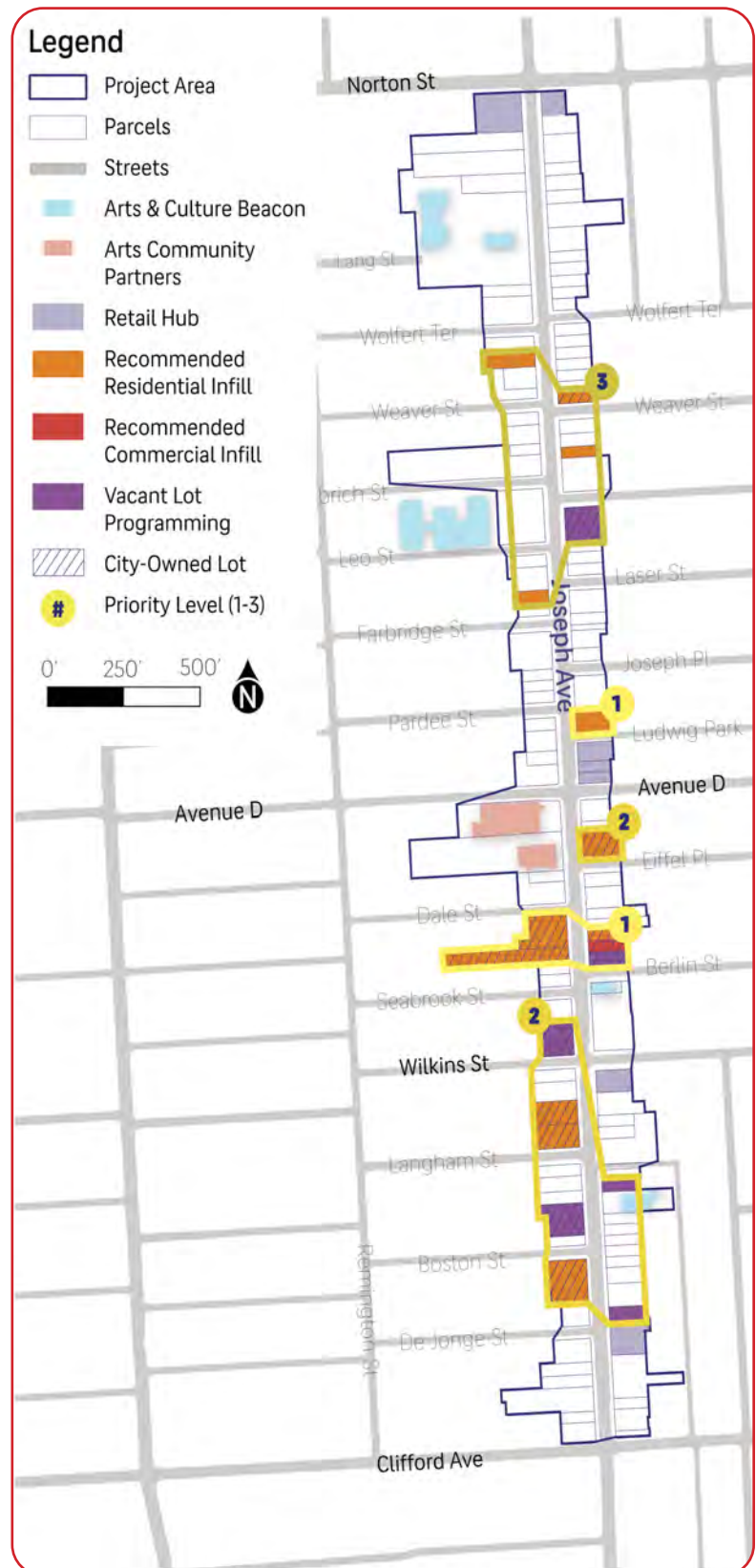
Priorities within the buildout plan were established to focus on distinguishing Joseph Ave an arts and cultural destination, supporting long-term economic growth, and revitalizing residential areas.

Priority levels range from most to least urgent, with Priority 1 at the top and Priority 3 at the bottom.

Priority 1: These centrally located lots include the only commercially zoned parcel and sit between key arts and cultural anchors. This group includes a parcel at a prominent corner at Ludwig and Joseph, just north of an active neighborhood center.

Priority 2: Located near the future JAACA site, this cluster includes high-visibility vacant lots at Wilkins and Joseph, community-identified for reinvestment and safety improvements, and parcels adjacent to cultural anchors like the Lincoln Branch Public Library and Upper Room Worship Center.

Priority 3: This primarily residential area has the fewest vacant lots. While suitable for infill, it holds less potential for economic impact compared to more commercially active zones.



VACANT LOTS

Temporary utilization of vacant lots to support community-based programs and initiatives is an interim solution to address the persistent challenge of vacant lots. However, current challenges such as drug use, illegal activities, and community concerns with availability of police resources present significant obstacles to implementing safe and successful temporary use strategies.

Temporary Strategies for Vacant Lots include:

Community Gardens

The City of Rochester has an established program for permitting community gardens on vacant lots. This program offers both annual garden permits for short-term projects and five-year permits for longer-term initiatives. These programs have seen mixed success in the corridor due to safety concerns and challenges with long-term management of the sites.

Taproot Collective, a local nonprofit, supports community gardening through resources, programs, and policies. The organization also integrates youth workforce development into these gardening initiatives, fostering skill-building and community engagement.

Temporary Installations

With strong community leadership and organization, temporary installations can transform vacant lots into vibrant spaces that attract visitors and promote economic activity.

- Art Installations could be an opportunity to support local artists, providing a platform to celebrate the community. A competition could be held to support the installation of a series of conceptual installations throughout the corridor, with multiple installations the corridor could become a destination for immersive arts.
- Modified shipping containers can offer temporary retail spaces, allowing entrepreneurs a low-cost opportunity to test market demand and launch businesses. These containers can also house pop-up municipal resources, making



Example of live music. Photo credit: Erin Sintos.



Example of a temporary installation. Photo credit: Martin Band.



Example of a temporary installation in a vacant building. Photo credit: Ian Brill.

VACANT LOTS

services more accessible to the community. Such an arrangement would require significant partnership among community stakeholders and the City. Careful planning, design, management, and maintenance are needed to make these successful. They can become nuisances or dilapidated.

Play Space

Temporary play spaces create opportunities for outdoor recreation and youth development. However, these spaces must prioritize safety, site lights, and address current concerns such as discarded needles and other hazards before implementation. A well-maintained play space can strengthen neighborhoods and provide children with a safe environment to access nature and engage in physical activity.

Temporary strategies for vacant lots offer a pragmatic approach to building community resilience and fostering economic growth. While these initiatives face significant challenges, strong leadership, effective resource allocation, and a commitment to addressing safety concerns can help ensure their success. These strategies can serve as interim solutions while the City develops a comprehensive long-term plan for the revitalization of the available vacant lots with a balanced mix of permanent public green space, housing, and economic development opportunities.

Infill Development

Although infill development is often the preferred solution for urban vacancy, long-term use of each vacant lot should be based on the value it provides the community and determined with community input.



Temporary skate park and signage. Photo credit: Gapfiller.



Example of a temporary play space. Photo credit: Sue Steele

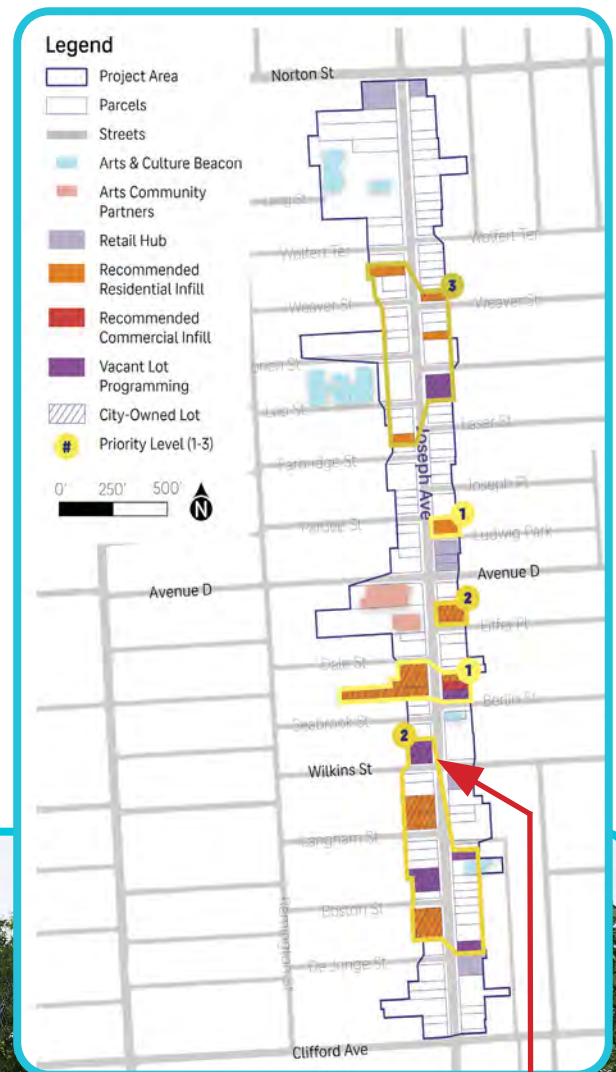
VACANT LOTS

Community Services

The vacant lot at the corner of Wilkins and Joseph is recommended to host community programming as a strategy to reclaim the corner for positive community activities. Modified shipping containers could house municipal services, startup retail, or serve as performance spaces, increasing street activity and transforming the space into a valued community asset. Community stakeholders offered differing views on what type of pop-up installation would best serve this location, but shared the view that the site should be reclaimed for positive activities.

Perspective A - Joseph + Wilkins Street

Modified shipping containers could offer temporary retail spaces, municipal resources and services, or program space.



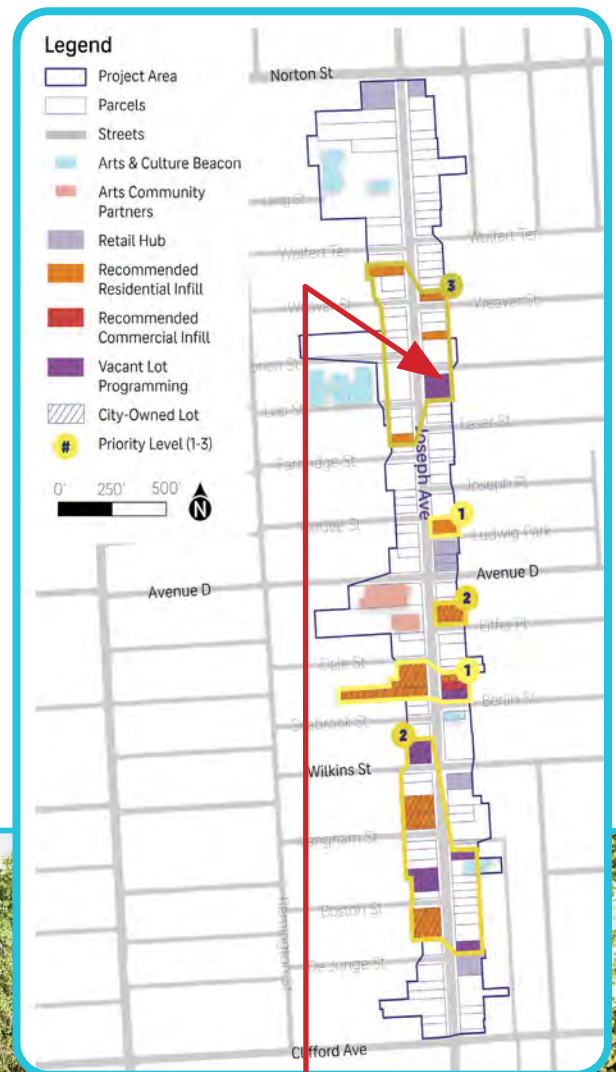
VACANT LOTS

Recreation

The vacant lot at the corner of Weyl and Joseph is recommended for intergenerational active recreation, making use of its natural topography and its proximity to the EMHCS Charter School. Any consideration of permanent playground facilities is subject to a forthcoming master plan for parks in the City of Rochester; however, nature-based play elements and the existing landscape can be used to create flexible play opportunities. Paved walking loops could also function as bike skills courses for youth, while seating and shade provide comfortable spaces for caregivers, elders, and teens. The use of this site should be informed by a forthcoming master plan for the City's parks.

Perspective B - Joseph + Weyl Street

Play Spaces & Recreation: A well-maintained play space can strengthen neighborhoods, providing children with a safe environment to access nature and engage in physical activity.



VACANT LOTS

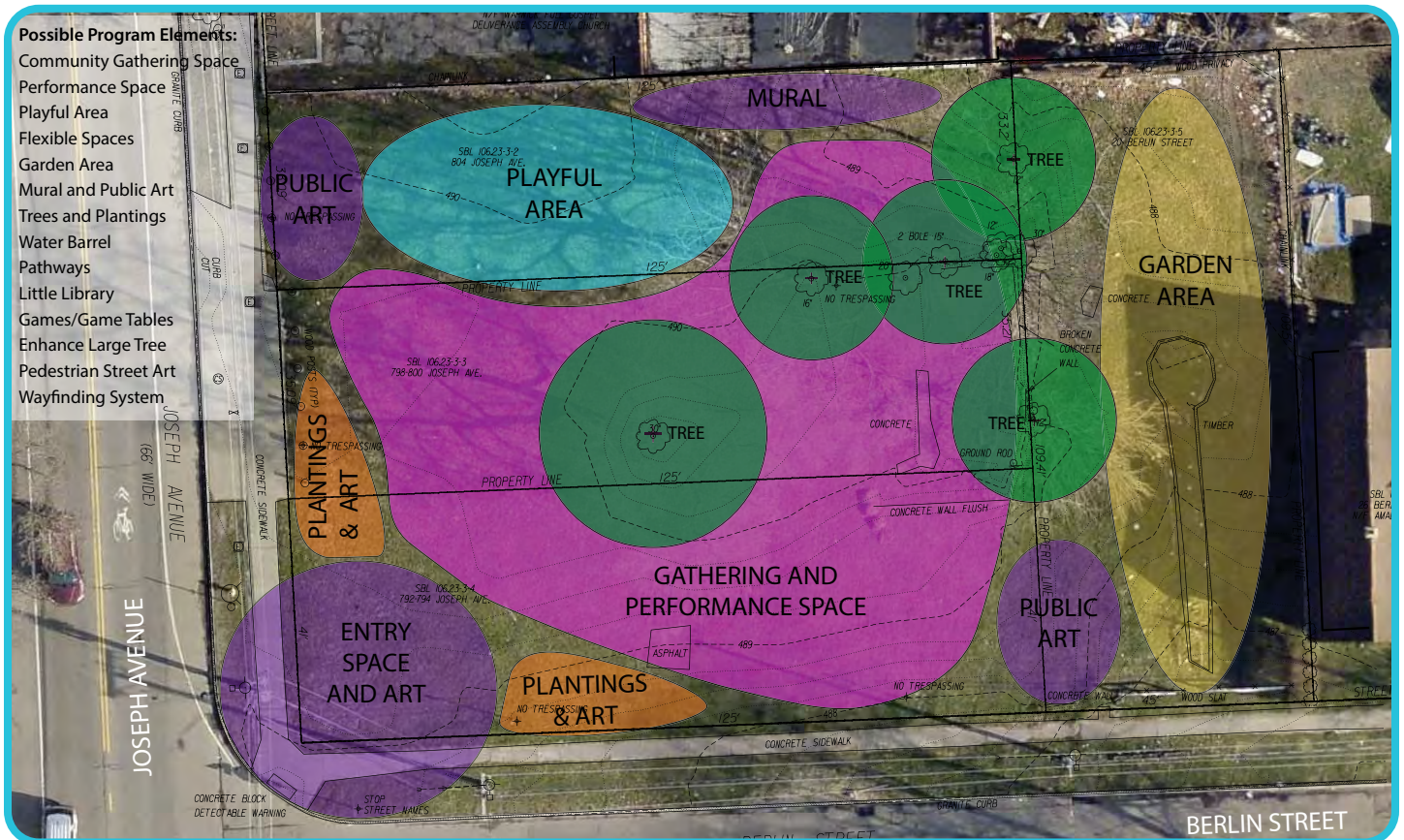
Art

The M.U.S.E. lot, located north of the Avenue Blackbox Theatre at the corner of Joseph and Berlin, is being designed as a pocket park featuring performance space, art installations, gardens, and other community programs. This vision aims to transform the vacant lot into a permanent, artistic, and valuable community asset.



Existing Conditions.

Proposed M.U.S.E Plan.



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Transportation

The quality and accessibility of transportation infrastructure significantly impact the quality of life for local residents by affecting their access to jobs, food, recreation, and essential services. It also plays a key role in ensuring the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. This chapter outlines recommendations for improving this infrastructure and is organized into the following sections:

- Multimodal Improvements
- Key Intersections
- School Zone

TRANSPORTATION

Immediate actions for short-term implementation will be outlined first, followed by design recommendations for medium- to long-term improvements

GOALS

- ▶ Enhance pedestrian crossing safety and accessibility
- ▶ Separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic, where feasible
- ▶ Decrease driving speeds along the corridor
- ▶ Decrease quantity and severity of vehicular, pedestrian, and bicyclist crashes
- ▶ Promote healthy lifestyle (physical / emotional)

Existing Conditions.



MULTIMODAL IMPROVEMENTS

MULTIMODAL IMPROVEMENTS

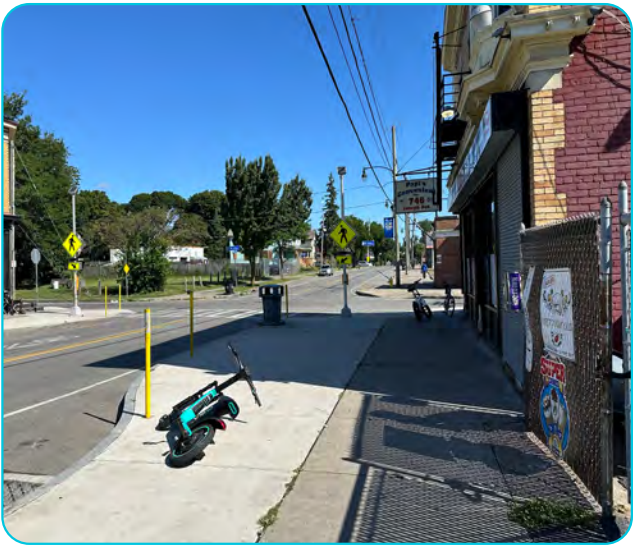
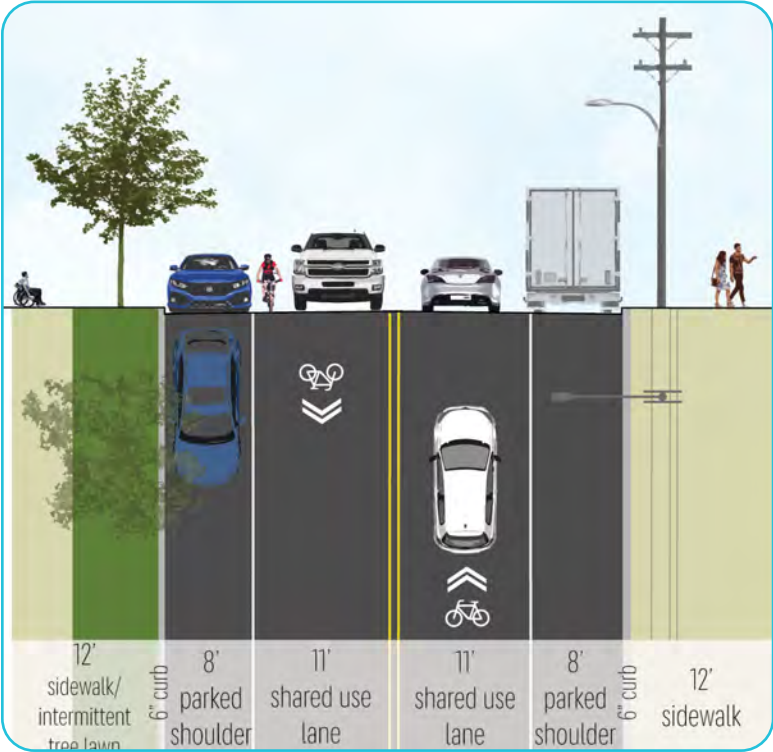
EXISTING CONDITIONS

The existing road width along the corridor is 38 feet, which currently accommodates two (2) 11’ drive lanes and two (2) eight (8) foot on-street parking lanes. Sharrows are painted in the drive lanes in both directions to indicate that lanes are to be shared by both drivers and cyclists. Many cyclists opt to ride on the sidewalk because of the perception of unsafe conditions when sharing the road with fast-moving motorists.

Existing Conditions.



Existing Conditions.



MULTIMODAL IMPROVEMENTS: IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

PREFERRED DESIGN CONCEPT

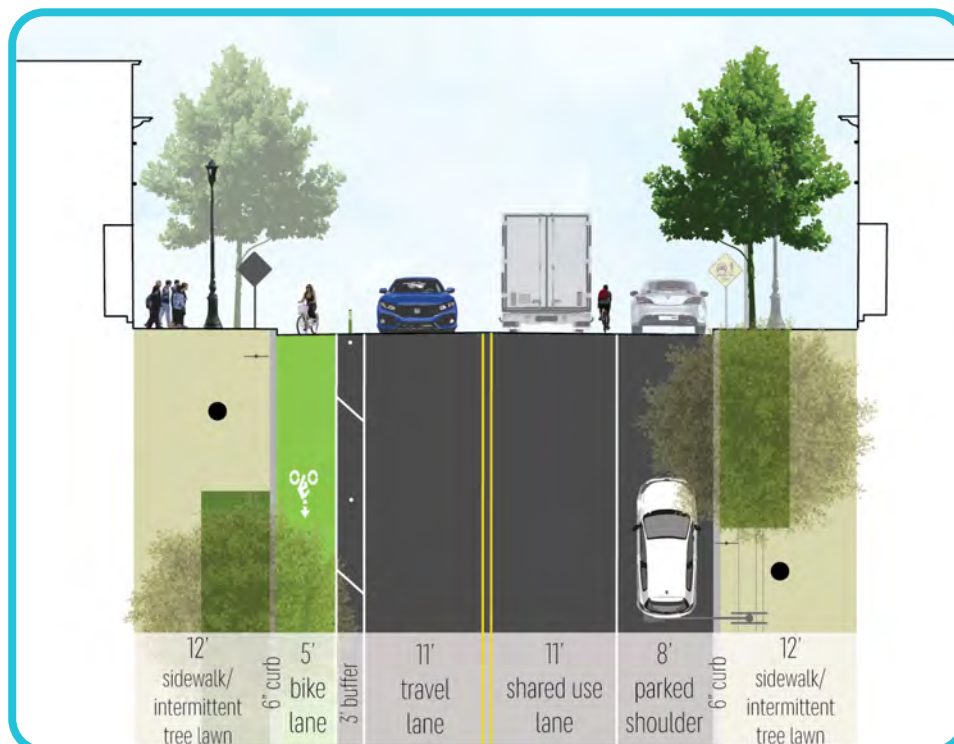
BUFFERED BIKE LANE AND SHARED USE LANE

Joseph Avenue is not identified as a bicycle spine corridor nor a supporting on-street corridor in the City's Active Transportation Network. Nonetheless, cycling improvements are recommended, consistent with the City's Complete Streets Policy. Improvements also could improve conditions for cyclists observed in the project area riding on sidewalks.

The preferred design prioritizes safety for active transportation. Given the existing street width of thirty eight feet (38'), accommodating two buffered bike lanes in both directions is not feasible. Instead, this option introduces a dedicated bike lane on the west side of the corridor. This lane will connect to the existing eastbound bike lane on Norton Street to the north and transition to a shared-use lane at Clifford Avenue, linking with the shared-use lane running south along Joseph Avenue. This design aligns with the City's broader efforts to promote active transportation. Additional wayfinding signage is recommended to guide cyclists to nearby bike facilities, including North Clinton Avenue, which is recommended as a bicycle spine route in the Active Transportation Plan and is scheduled for improvements in 2026, and Wilkins Street, which is a bicycle boulevard.

On-street parking would need to be removed from the western side of the road to accommodate the buffered bike lane. A parking study will be required to determine how many spaces could be removed or relocated to accommodate Joseph Ave's current and future program.

Another design option is to install ten (10) foot travel lanes with five (5) foot bike lanes while retaining one (1) eight (8) foot parking lane. This option was not recommended, as a buffer or separation is preferred between vehicle and bicycle lanes. The feasibility of ten (10) foot lanes can be explored during engineering design. Additional options for on-street bike lanes should be explored, particularly if a topographical survey finds additional space in the right of way. Sharrows will not be replaced, per the City's policy not to use sharrows on collector and arterial streets except to indicate transitions or conflict points.



Option 3. Buffered Bike Lane + Shared Use Lanes.

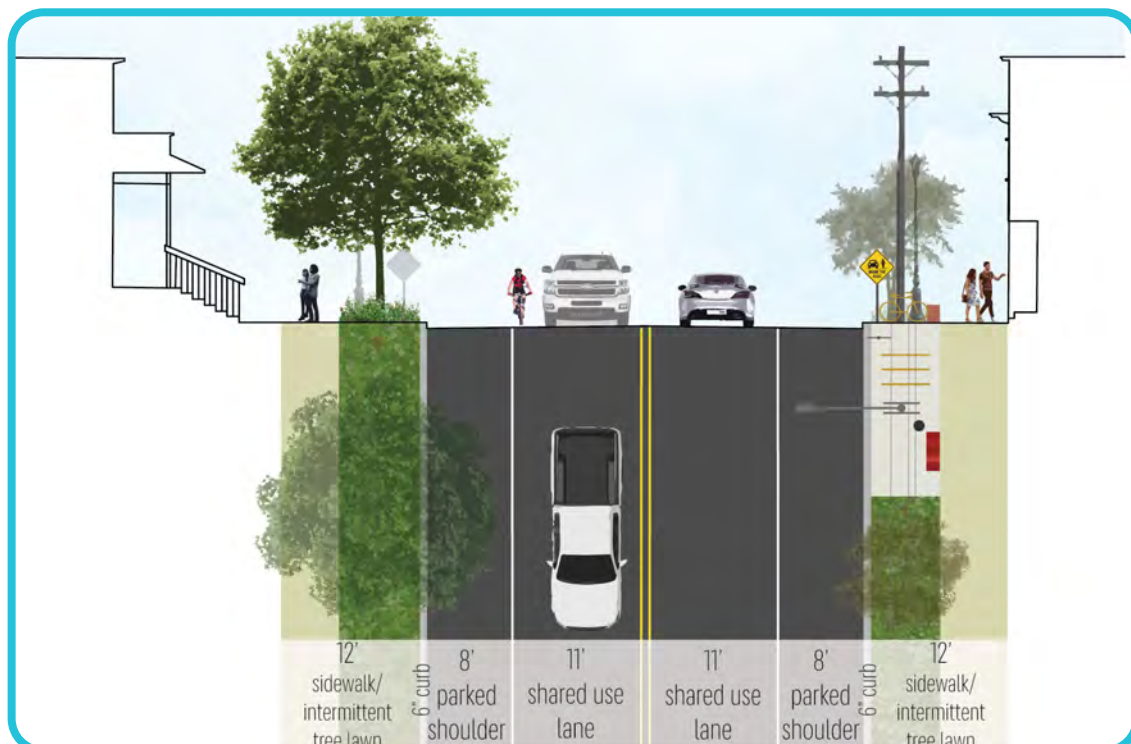
MULTIMODAL IMPROVEMENTS: IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

BASE LINE STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

If bicycle facilities are found to be infeasible during street maintenance projects, a well-designed streetscape featuring effective traffic calming measures can enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety, aligning with successful implementations in other city neighborhoods. This base line option retains the existing road layout while introducing streetscape improvements to slow traffic and enhance walkability and bikeability. The recommended traffic calming strategies included in this option are:

- Continuous tree lawn with shade trees for the length of the corridor
- Consistently places site amenities such as benches, bike racks, and trash receptacles
- Pedestrian-scale lighting
- Clear pavement markings for on street parking
- Curb bump-outs at high traffic intersections
- Clearly painted crosswalks

Option 1. Base Line Enhanced Streetscape.



KEY INTERSECTIONS

OVERVIEW

Creating safe intersections is crucial for enhancing corridor safety and fostering a walkable and bikeable neighborhood environment, as well as driver and pedestrian education. During public feedback sessions, participants voiced concerns about motorists speeding when accessing Joseph Avenue from side streets. Ensuring safe crossing points for school-age children near the EMHCS Charter School and the Avenue Blackbox Theatre were also identified as priorities. By combining insights from public engagement with crash data analyzed in the existing conditions section of this report, key intersections were identified for multimodal improvements with a focus on pedestrian safety. These intersections include:

Corridor Gateways

- Clifford
- Norton

Internal High-Volume Intersections

- Avenue D
- Wilkins

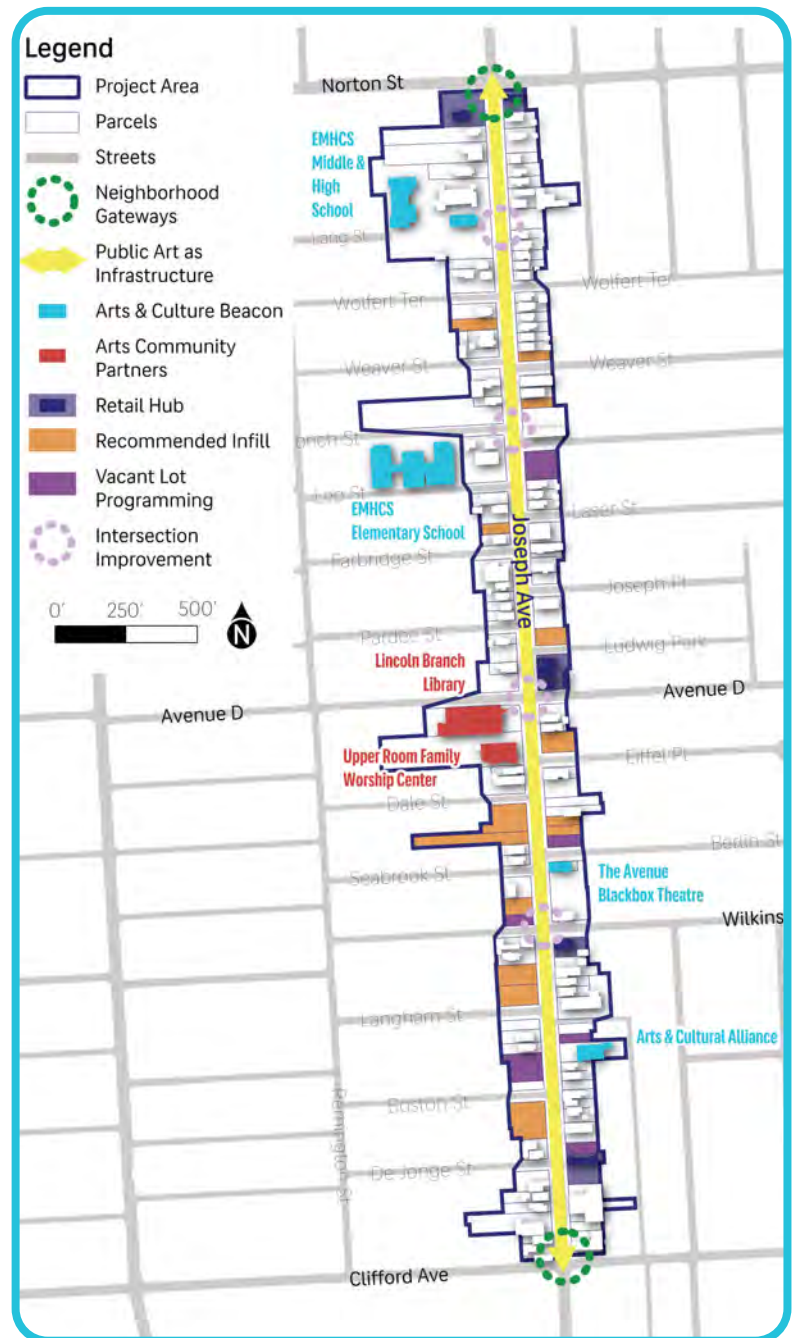
Safe Crossing for Youth

- Adjacent to EMHCS middle and high school entrance
- Zimbrich

A crosswalk was also requested at Joseph, Seabrook, and Berlin to facilitate safe crossing for youth attending programs at the Avenue Blackbox Theater. After evaluation, it was determined that a crosswalk in this location is not warranted because it does not meet the City's crosswalk policy.

Important to note:

- These recommendations are subject to engineering analysis, confirmation of feasibility, budget, and compliance with applicable City, County, State and Federal policies and guidelines.
- Detection systems at signalized intersections as well as the repositioning of pedestrian poles/APS/ etc. should be evaluated to improve overall intersection safety.
- Alongside engineering solutions, educating drivers and pedestrians on safe crossing practices is important to enhance safety.



KEY INTERSECTIONS: IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

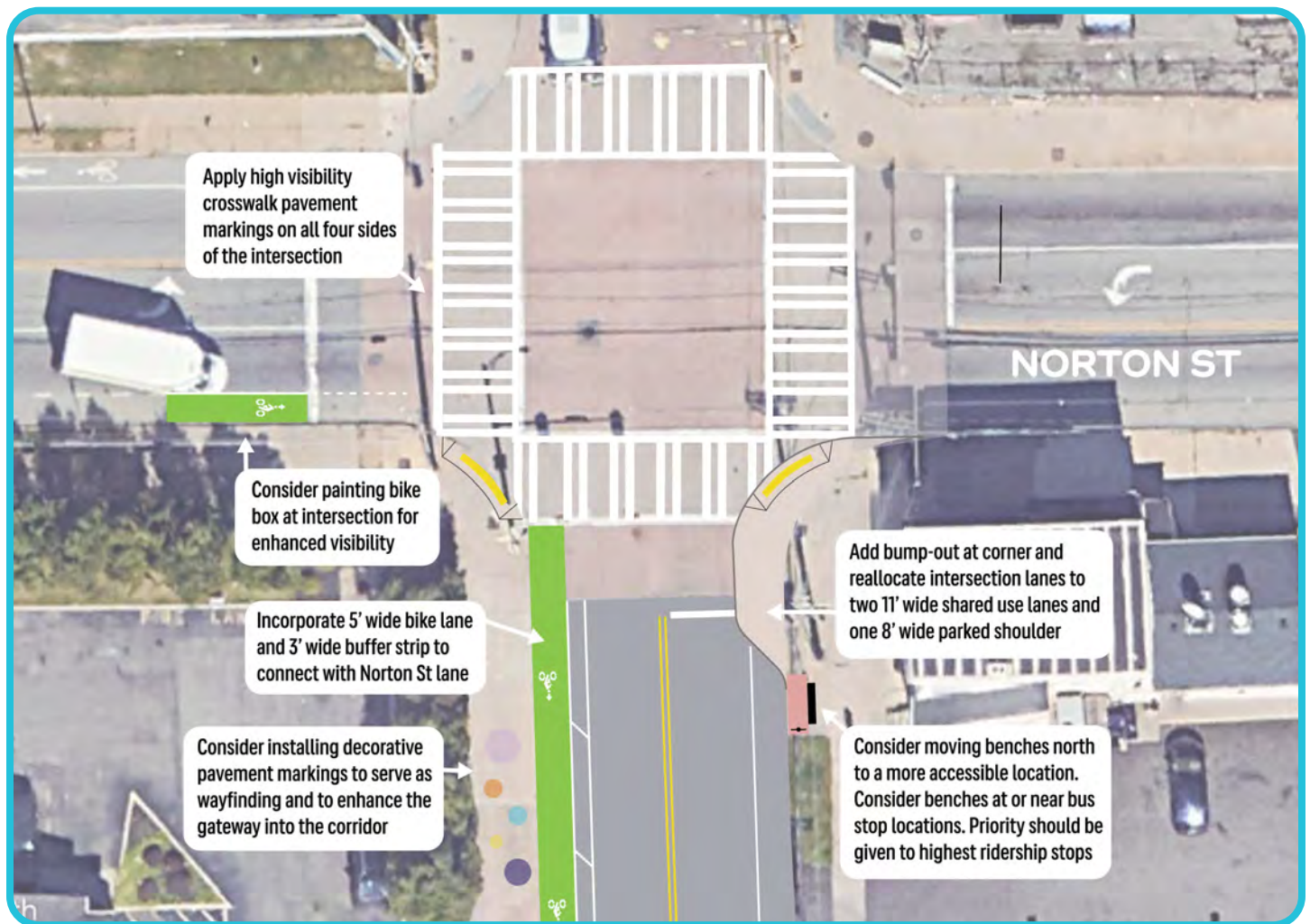
PREFERRED DESIGN CONCEPT

NORTON AND JOSEPH

BUMP OUTS WITH WESTERN BIKE LANE + DECORATIVE PAVEMENT MARKINGS FOR CROSSWALK + INTERSECTION

The preferred design adds a curb bump-out at the southeastern corner of the intersection and adds a buffered bike lane to connect with the existing bike lane running east on Norton Street.

Bump-outs with western bike lane, high-visibility crosswalk markings on all four legs of the intersection.



KEY INTERSECTIONS: IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

PREFERRED DESIGN CONCEPT

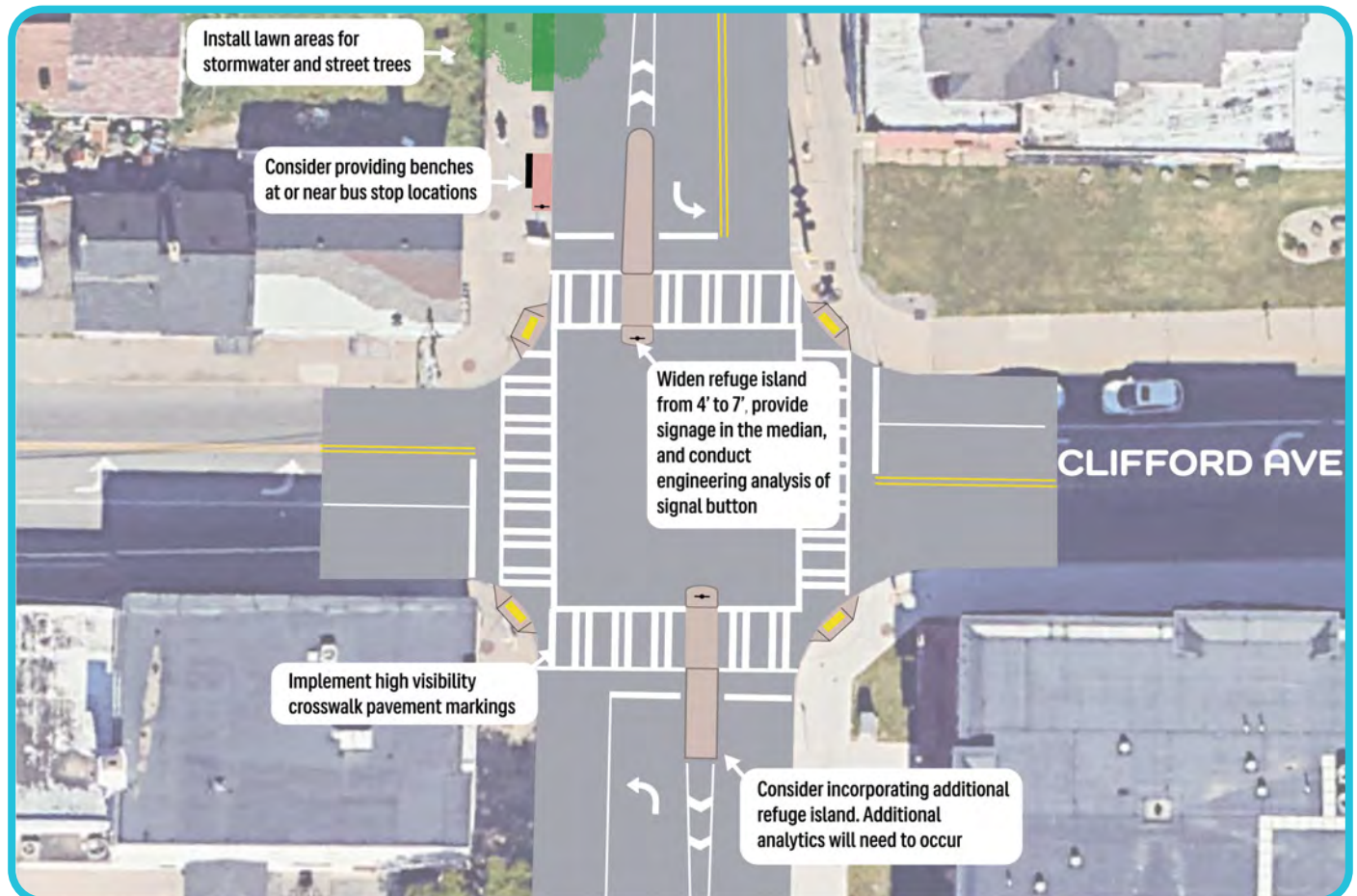
CLIFFORD AND JOSEPH

INCREASE REFUGE ISLAND + REPAINT

During the public comment period, the project team learned that the refuge island at Clifford and Joseph is well-used and important to retain. Residents would prefer to see the island improved rather than removed. However, participants noted it is also narrower than design guidance recommends. Additionally, the island's limited width prevents two (2) wheelchairs from fitting comfortably, making it challenging for people with disabilities to cross safely. To address this, the project team proposes widening the refuge island to seven feet (7') , expanding the waiting area to a minimum of sixty inches (60") to ensure two wheelchairs can wait comfortably, and adding a pedestrian signal button. Achieving this will require reducing the width of the left-turn lane from thirteen feet (13') to eleven feet (11').

A traffic engineering study will be required to confirm that large vehicles such as buses can safely turn onto Joseph Avenue from Clifford with the proposed reduction of the left-turn lane from thirteen feet (13') to eleven feet (11').

Multimodal improvements.



KEY INTERSECTIONS: IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

PREFERRED DESIGN CONCEPT

AVENUE D AND WILKINS

Improvements to the intersections at Avenue D and Wilkins are proposed as part of the preferred design concept in the near term. Avenue D ranks among the highest in crash data, particularly for pedestrian incidents, along with Norton Street and Clifford Avenue. Wilkins follows closely behind in crash frequency and also is a designated bicycle boulevard route, meaning that cyclists may need to cross frequently at Joseph Avenue.

Both intersections have recently received upgrades—Avenue D now has newly painted crosswalks and planters, while Wilkins features bump-outs and new curb ramps on its southern corners. However, safety concerns persist at both locations.

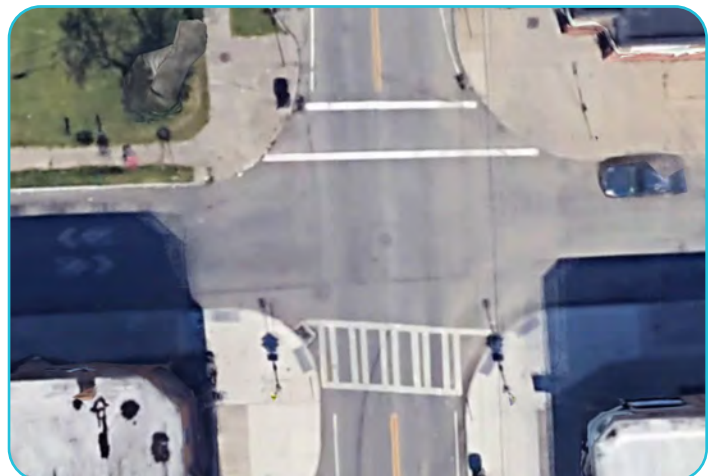
To further improve pedestrian safety and reduce vehicle speeds, the preferred design includes:

- Avenue D:
 - Adding bump-outs at all four corners of the intersection, which improves pedestrian safety by reducing crossing distance and requiring vehicles to slow down when turning.
 - Installing new directional curb ramps and separate APS pedestrian signal poles and push buttons.
- Wilkins:
 - Installing a raised table intersection at Wilkins, which will help to calm traffic speeds at a high-crash intersection. This recommendation is subject to a final City policy on the use of tabled intersections.
 - Remove crosswalk on northern portion of intersection to guide pedestrians to use RRFB on southern leg of intersection.

Avenue D: Existing conditions.



Wilkins: Existing conditions.



KEY INTERSECTIONS: IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

BASELINE CONCEPT

WILKINS AND JOSEPH – REPAINT CROSSWALK AND CURB RAMP IMPROVEMENTS

During the Planning process, the intersection at Wilkins and Joseph was identified as a priority for improvements due to concerns relating to both crime and transportation safety. If securing funding for the preferred concept takes longer than expected, we propose a "light" option that can be implemented as an interim solution. This option includes repainting the crosswalk on the southern portion of the intersection as high-visibility crosswalk and installing new curb ramps and detectable warning strips on the northern corners to match the recent upgrades on the southern corners.



Existing conditions: Curb ramp on northwest corner.



Existing conditions: Newly installed curb ramp on southwest corner.

SCHOOL ZONE: IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

PREFERRED DESIGN CONCEPT

RAISED CROSSING AND TRANSIT SEATING

EMHCS is located on the west side of the road, at the north end of the study area. The K-12 campus consists of a cluster of buildings located approximately one hundred and seventy feet (170') south of Norton Street, which house the middle and high schools, as well as a larger building just north of Leo Street that contains the elementary school. Many students and some staff live in the Joseph Ave neighborhood and walk or bike to school. Implementing traffic calming measures and providing clear pavement markings for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians is crucial in the school zone to manage high volumes of multimodal traffic during pickup and drop-off times, and to ensure the safety of students and staff throughout the day.

A challenge facing EMHCS is that RTS bus stops adjacent to their campus do not offer seating or shelter. As a result, transit users sit on the school's steps to wait for the bus, which has the potential to negatively impact school safety.

The preferred design alternative for the school zone includes:

- Placing benches or other seating at each bus stop within the school zone to discourage people from sitting on building steps while waiting for transit.
- Installing additional signage to help slow traffic including:
 - Signage indicating that drivers have entered a school zone and must slow down.
 - Radar speed signage displaying the speed of motorists.
 - Pedestrian crossing signage (double posted with reflective sign post strips that meet PSAP guidelines) and RRFBs on the north side of the crossing adjacent to the middle and high school entrance and south side of the crossing at Zimbrich street.

Beyond these improvements, traffic calming efforts should be evaluated at the middle and high

school entrances.

- While not typical at a charter school, a crosswalk should be evaluated at the middle and high school entrance per EMHCS reports that many staff and students walk there. A raised crossing with an RRFB should be considered if warranted.
- Proposed improvements at Zimbrich Street include a raised table crossing designed for a three-way elevated crossing, along with an RRFB on the south side to slow motorists approaching from that direction. This is subject to a final City policy on the use of raised crossings.

BASELINE ALTERNATIVE

If funding for the preferred concept takes longer than anticipated, a light option is proposed as an interim solution that includes:

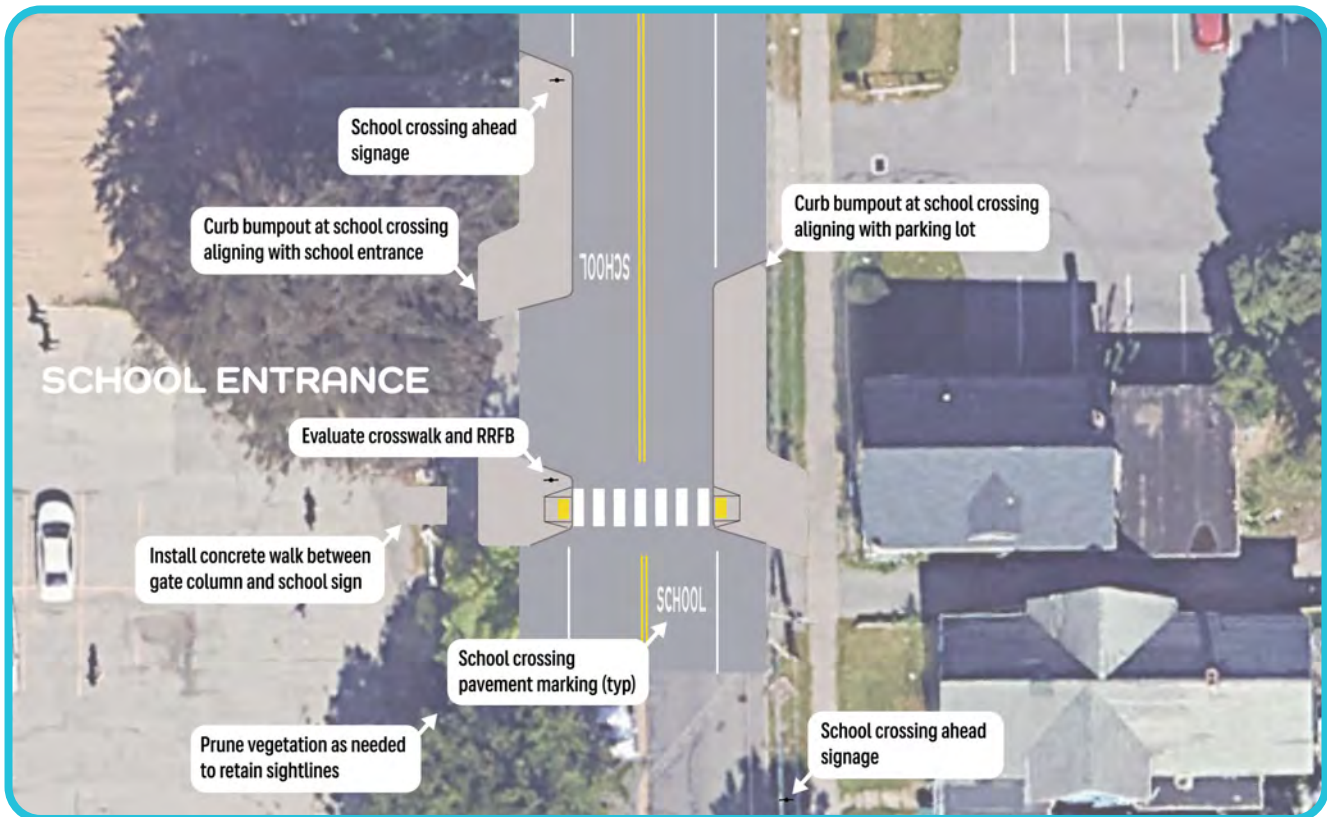
- An accessible high-visibility crosswalk (Type LS) to provide safer access to the middle and high school students.
- Adding bump-outs and a three-way accessible high-visibility crosswalk (Type LS) at Zimbrich Street to improve access to the elementary school.

All proposed crosswalks and RRFB's will need to meet the City's Marked Crosswalk and RRFB policies.



Example of Raised Crosswalk. Photo credit: Brandon Whyte, www.pedbikeimages.org

SCHOOL ZONE: IMMEDIATE ACTIONS



Raised crossing at middle and high school entrance.



Raised crossing and decorative intersection opportunity at Zimbrich and Joseph.

KEY INTERSECTIONS: MID TO LONG TERM ACTIONS

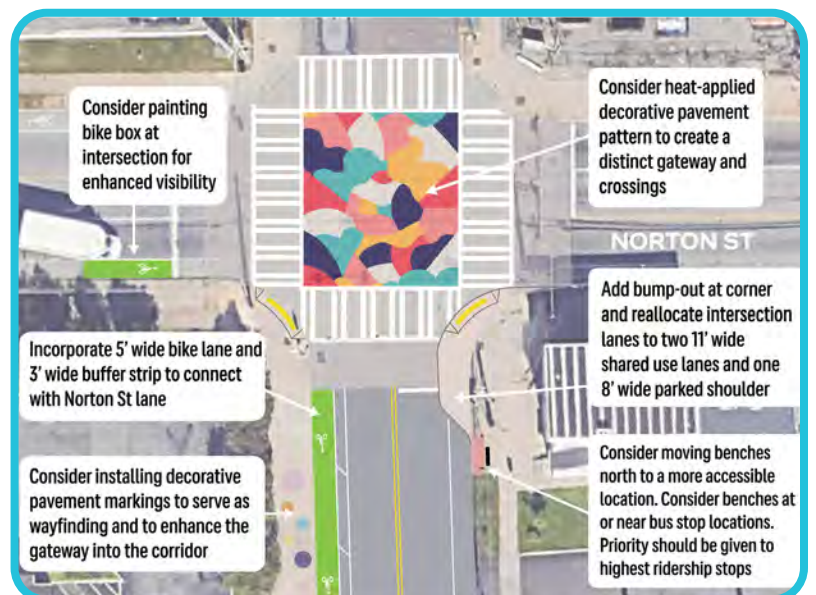
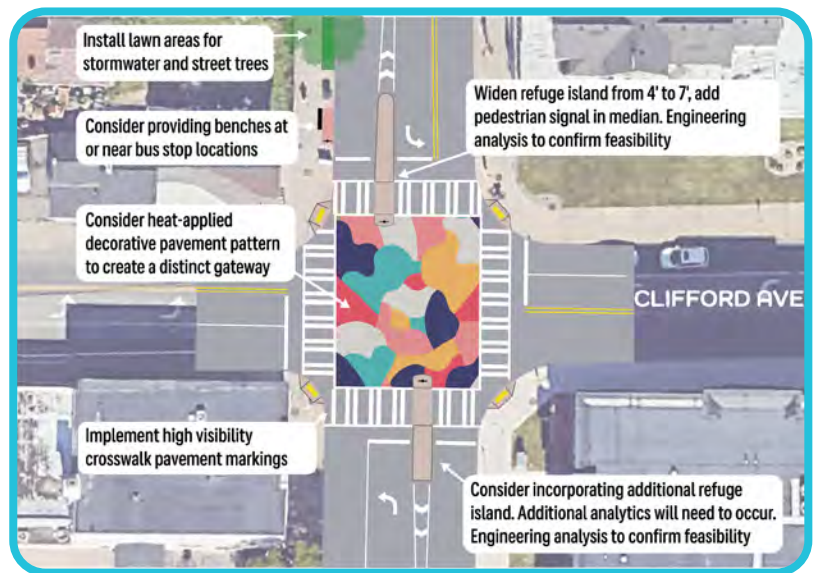
PREFERRED DESIGN CONCEPT

CLIFFORD AND JOSEPH DECORATIVE PAVEMENT MARKINGS FOR INTERSECTION

The mid- to long-term actions focus on enhancing placemaking along the corridor. At the Clifford and Norton intersections, heat-applied decorative pavement markings are proposed for the intersection interiors, establishing unified gateways into the ArtWalk.

To implement this at Norton Street, the existing unit pavers would need to be removed, as the City of Rochester is transitioning away from them due to maintenance concerns. This recommendation replaces the pavers with a more durable material that aligns with the proposed treatment at Clifford, reinforcing the artistic identity of both intersections as key entry points to the ArtWalk.

These markings should be designed with community input to reflect the neighborhood's identity.



Example of Decorative Pavement in Intersection.

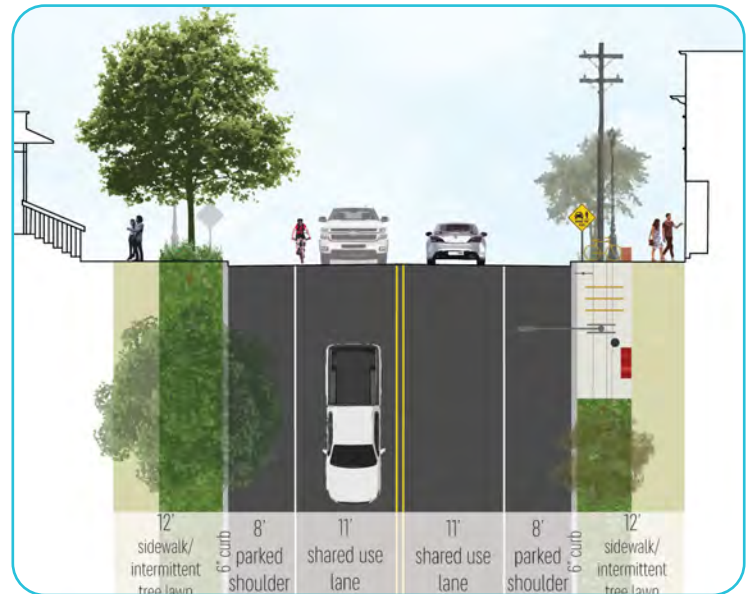
KEY INTERSECTIONS: MID TO LONG TERM ACTIONS

MULTIMODAL IMPROVEMENTS

BASE LINE STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

Streetscape improvements can be implemented gradually over time. Any elements that cannot be completed in the short term should remain part of a continuous long-term effort to beautify the corridor and establish it as a vibrant arts and cultural district.

The mid- to long-term plan includes ongoing streetscape improvements that integrate art into infrastructure including site amenities such as benches, bike racks, trash receptacles, and pedestrian-scale street lighting, along with a continuous tree lawn and consistent, appropriate street trees throughout the corridor.



Proposed baseline streetscape improvements.

ARTWALK

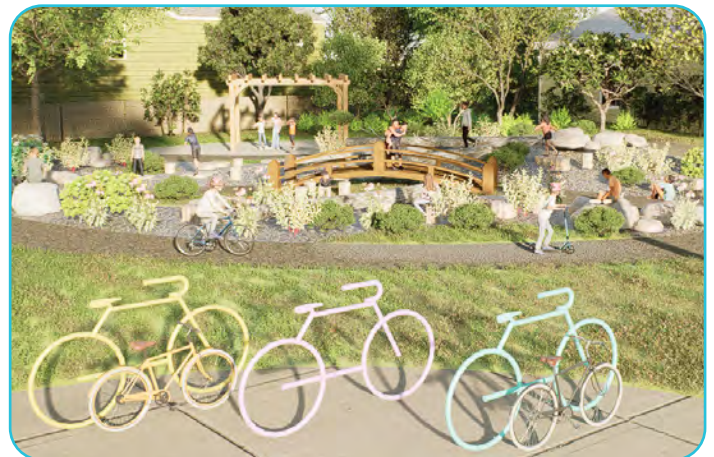
Beyond streetscape enhancements, the mid- to long-term plan includes artistic gateway features to improve wayfinding and reinforce the neighborhood's identity as an arts district. These elements, along with intersection improvements, will help create a cohesive and recognizable character for the area. All artistic features should be designed and selected with input from the local community.



Neighborhood Gateway at Humboldt Park, Chicago.

VACANT LOT PROGRAMMING

The mid- to long-term plan also includes programming and improvements for vacant lots. Transforming these spaces will require a collaborative effort involving invested stakeholders including but not limited to nonprofits, arts organizations, property and business owners, institutions, and the City of Rochester. Successful implementation will take time and careful planning.



Proposed improvements in vacant lot at Joseph Ave + Weyl Street.



IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

To effectively realize the recommended improvements along the Joseph Avenue ArtWalk corridor, a comprehensive implementation strategy was created. This section provides the City of Rochester and key project partners with a clear set of actions to implement the preferred transportation concepts and placemaking recommendations. The implementation strategy also includes a list of funding sources at the local, state and federal level. A cost estimate table with an overview of each project is also included.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Priority actions for the City of Rochester are listed below, in order of immediate action to mid- to long-term actions. All recommendations are planning concepts and require analysis during engineering design to confirm feasibility. A glossary of abbreviations is provided at the end of the report.

Timeline	Project No.	Location on Joseph Ave	Improvement	Funding Source	Responsible Party	Notes
IMMEDIATE TERM	Multi-Modal					
	1	Corridor-Wide	Buffered Bike Lane (west side) and Shared-Use Lane (east side)***	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/ CMAQ, STBG, New York Main Street, ESD (Smart Growth Community Fund), TA	City of Rochester	Assume 3' buffer with 5' wide bike lane, restriping of center stripes and east shoulder, and bump-out alignments/ modifications. Consider flexible posts in buffer. Assess 10' travel lanes and 5' bike lanes as alternative option.
	2		Baseline Streetscape Enhancements	Local Funding, TAP/ CMAQ, CDBG, NEA Our Town Grants, STBG, TA, NYSCA, Complete Streets, NYSDEC Urban Forestry Grants, CSC, EPF, GIGP, RAISE*, SS4A*	City of Rochester, RTS	Inclusive of bicycle storage facilities, street furniture, trash receptacles, pedestrian-scale lighting, a continuous tree lawn with street trees, and benches at high volume bus stops
	Key Intersections					
	3A	Joseph and Norton	Bump-outs with Bike Lane (west side only), Repaint Crosswalks***	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/ CMAQ, TA, CDBG, New York Main Street	City of Rochester	Connect bike lane on Norton to Joseph. bumpout to be installed on the east side
	3B		Raised Table Intersection	Local Funding, TAP/CMAQ, HSIP, STBG, BUILD	City of Rochester	Localized traffic calming; pending final City policy on tabled intersections
	4A	Joseph and Clifford	Expand Refuge Island, Install Pedestrian Signal Button, and Repaint Crosswalks***	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/ CMAQ, BUILD, STP, STBG, AARP, TA	City of Rochester	Modification to existing refuge island, consider new refuge island on south side of intersection
	4B		Bump-outs and repainting crosswalk	Local Funding, Private Funding, TAP/CMAQ, CDBG, NEA Our Town Grants, NYSCA, SS4A*, RAISE*	City of Rochester	This option requires the removal of the refuge island and would only be appropriate if the refuge island could not be increased in width and was deemed unsafe
	4C		Raised Table Intersection	Local Funding, TAP/CMAQ, HSIP, STBG, BUILD	City of Rochester	Localized traffic calming; pending final City policy on tabled intersections

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

TIMELINE	PROJECT NO.	LOCATION ON JOSEPH AVE	IMPROVEMENT	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	NOTES
IMMEDIATE TERM	5A	Joseph and Wilkins	Raised table intersection***	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, BUILD, STP, AARP, STBG, TA, SSFA*	City of Rochester	Localized traffic calming; pending final City policy on tabled intersections
	5B		Re-Paint Existing Crosswalk and Curb Ramp Replacement**	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, BUILD, STP, AARP, STBG, TA, SSFA*	City of Rochester	Repaint existing southern crosswalk, remove existing north crosswalk, curb ramp reconstruction to the north to match recently replaced curb ramps on southern corners
	6	Joseph and Avenue D	Bump-outs, Re-touching Crosswalks after Construction, New Curb Ramps, and New APS Pedestrian Signal***	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, BUILD, STP, SSFA*, RAISE*	City of Rochester	Establishment of community center, traffic calming in highest pedestrian crash volume intersection within study area
	SCHOOL ZONE					
	7A	Adjacent to EMHCS Middle and High School Entrance	Raised Crosswalk***	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, BUILD, STP, AARP, STBG, TA, SS4A*, SRTS*	City of Rochester	Local traffic calming at school entrance and establishment of north school zone area, raised crosswalk is approximately 500' south of the nearest crossing location on Norton Street
	7B		Crosswalk across Joseph Ave**	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, BUILD, STP, AARP, STBG, TA, SS4A*, SRTS*	City of Rochester	Inclusive of bump-outs, ADA curb ramps, pavement symbols, high visibility crosswalk markings, and one RRFB to the north
	8A	Zimbrich	Raised Table Intersection and High Visibility Crosswalks***	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, BUILD, STBG, TA, SS4A*, SRTS*	City of Rochester	Localized traffic calming at school entrance and establishment of south school zone area, subject to final City policy on raised crossings
	8B		Enhance existing crossing*	Local Funding, HSIP, TAP/CMAQ, BUILD, STP, AARP, STBG, TA, SS4A*, SRTS*	City of Rochester	Inclusive of bump-outs, ADA curb ramps, pavement symbols, high visibility crosswalk markings, and one RRFB to the south

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

TIMELINE	PROJECT NO.	LOCATION ON JOSEPH AVE	IMPROVEMENT	FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	NOTES
MID TO LONG TERM	MULTI-MODAL					
	9	Corridor-Wide	On-Going Streetscape and Street Furniture Improvements	Local Funding, TAP/CMAQ, CDBG, NEA Our Town Grants, STBG, TA, NYSCA, Complete Streets, RAISE*, SS4A*	City of Rochester	For any improvements not implemented in the immediate term, continue to install additional street furniture and artistic elements to support the ArtWalk theme
	KEY INTERSECTIONS					
	10	Norton	Decorative Pavement Markings for Intersection	Local Funding, Restore NY, CDBG, NYSCA, NEA Our Town Grants, NYFA, REDC, NY Main Street	City of Rochester, Community Partners	Decorative pavement to be installed to match gateway at Clifford. Pavers are scheduled to be removed during the reconstruction of Seneca Avenue, starting at Seneca Avenue and Norton Street. Decorative pavement to be designed with community input, opportunity to engage local artists
	11	Clifford	Decorative Pavement Markings for Intersection	Local Funding, Restore NY, CDBG, NYSCA, NEA Our Town Grants, NYFA, REDC, NY Main Street	City of Rochester, Community Partners	Decorative pavement markings to be designed with community input, opportunity to engage local artists
	ArtWalk					
	12	Clifford & Norton	Gateway Art Installations	Local Funding, Restore NY, CDBG, NYSCA, NEA Our Town Grants, NYFA, REDC, NY Main Street	City of Rochester, Community Partners	Designed/selected with community input, opportunity to engage local artist
	VACANT LOT PROGRAMMING					
	13	Wilkins	Community Services	Local Funding, Restore NY, CDBG, New York Main Street, EPF - Parks	City of Rochester, Community Partners	Modified shipping containers to house flexible program including co-work stations, pop-up retail, and community services, pocket park includes gathering space, public art, tree planting within lot and to shade pavement in ROW
	14	Weyl	Recreational Services	Local Funding, Restore NY, CDBG, New York Main Street, EPF - Parks, CSC	City of Rochester, EMHCS, Community Partners	Recreational programming for all ages, such as a bike safety course, environmental education, and nature play, potential partnership with EMHCS Charter School

Notes:

* = Program funding status unknown under the current federal administration.

** = Baseline Alternative

*** = Preferred Concept

- All new crosswalks must comply with the Monroe County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) Traffic Studies Procedure Manual requirements.
- A Traffic Study will be needed for any recommendations that involve removing turning lanes at intersections or reducing lane widths.
- A parking study will be needed to confirm the feasibility of parking changes and Traffic Control Board approval will be required for changes to parking regulations.
- The public has expressed the need for more bus shelters, in addition to seating at transit stops. The City is working with RTS to install shelters at high-ridership locations. Transit stops with the highest ridership within the study area include the southbound stops at Clifford Zimbrich.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AARP (American Association of Retired Persons): While primarily known as an organization for older Americans, AARP advocates for transportation options that serve aging populations.

BUILD (Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development): A discretionary grant program that supports road, rail, transit, and port infrastructure projects.

CDBG (Community Development Block Grant): A federal program providing communities with resources to address community development needs, including infrastructure improvements.

Complete Streets: A transportation policy and design approach requiring streets to be planned, designed, and maintained to enable safe access for all users regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation.

CSC (Climate Smart Communities): A New York State program that supports municipalities in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change, including transportation initiatives.

EPF - Parks (Environmental Protection Fund - Parks): A New York State funding source for parks, recreation, and conservation projects that may include transportation access elements.

ESD (Empire State Development Smart Growth Community Fund): A New York State economic development funding program promoting sustainable development patterns including transit-oriented development.

HSIP (Highway Safety Improvement Program): A federal funding program aimed at reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries on public roads.

NEA Our Town Grants (National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grants): Funding that supports creative placemaking projects that may include transportation-related public space improvements.

NY Main Street: A New York State program providing financial resources and technical assistance for revitalization efforts including streetscape improvements.

NYFA (New York Foundation for the Arts): An organization that supports artists and arts organizations, sometimes funding public art in transportation contexts.

NYSCA (New York State Council on the Arts): A state agency providing grants for arts and cultural initiatives, which may include transit-related public art.

NYSDEC Urban Forestry (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Urban Forestry Program): Supports tree planting along streets and in public spaces to improve urban environments.

RAISE (Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity): A discretionary grant program for surface transportation projects with significant local or regional impact.

REDC (Regional Economic Development Council): New York State's regional approach to economic development, which includes transportation infrastructure funding.

Restore NY: A New York State funding program for municipalities to revitalize commercial and residential properties, often including streetscape improvements.

SRTS (Safe Routes to School): A program to improve safety on walking and bicycling routes to school and encourage children to walk and bicycle to school.

SS4A (Safe Streets and Roads for All): A federal program providing funding for initiatives to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries.

STBG (Surface Transportation Block Grant): A flexible federal funding program for state and local transportation projects.

STP (Surface Transportation Program): A federal aid program providing flexible funding for road, bridge, transit, and pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure projects.

TA (Transportation Alternatives): A set-aside of the Surface Transportation Block Grant program for smaller-scale transportation projects.

TAP/CMAQ (Transportation Alternatives Program/ Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program): Federal programs funding projects that enhance transportation systems while improving air quality.

