



**WEST DAVIS CORRIDOR STUDY**  
design strategy



# WEST DAVIS CORRIDOR STUDY

design strategy

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DOWNTOWN DALLAS

TRINITY RIVER

W DAVIS STREET

## INTRODUCTION

In 2011, the City of Dallas hosted a series of meetings to help identify the priorities for improving West Davis as part of the city's Complete Streets initiative. From that series of meetings came a list of key priorities for re-imagining the corridor as a street for both pedestrians and automobiles that reflects the future of the district and surrounding neighborhoods.

The city's 2012 bond program included a number of corridors targeted for complete streets improvements as a series of demonstration projects. As part of this package, voters approved \$979,000 for the West Davis corridor. The Dallas CityDesign Studio has been charged by the Office of Economic Development and the Davis Garden TIF Board to translate the complete street priorities identified in 2011 into a direct design program responding to the specific challenges and opportunities found along the West Davis corridor. Through public input and engagement, a vision and direction for the corridor emerged.

West Davis is a unique and diverse corridor with a variety of uses, building types, and sidewalk conditions. Its inception as an auto-centric state highway and its

current evolution into a regional draw with a mix of uses has left the street in a state that is not wholly conducive to the emerging character of the neighborhoods surrounding it.

A special characteristic of this corridor is its ability to hold onto the original character and historical influences that have defined it to this day. Unfortunately, these same influences have also engendered less than ideal conditions for the increased pedestrian activity being drawn to the area. The network of sidewalks, parking, and street amenities that exist today are not indicative of a thriving mixed use community.

Through a wealth of community input and participation, a clear message has been expressed that the West Davis of today must find a respectful balance between its auto-centric past and its clear need for a pedestrian-friendly future.



*west davis street*



*west davis street*

STEVENS PARK

KESSLER PARK

KIDD SPRINGS

KINGS HIGHWAY

WEST  
KESSLER

LO DANIELS

DALLAS LAND & LOAN

BISHOP ARTS  
DISTRICT

WINNETKA  
HEIGHTS

SUNSET HILLS

RUTH MEADE PLACE



 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AREA

## CONTEXT

West Davis Street was constructed shortly after Oak Cliff's official founding in 1887 by T.L. Marsalis. West Davis has been a vital regional and national roadway since its commissioning as a U.S. Highway in 1926. Spanning 3,000 miles across the United States, U.S. Highway 80 started in Tybee Island, Georgia, and terminated in San Diego, California.

As the primary east-west thoroughfare from Dallas to the mid-cities and beyond, this transcontinental roadway established West Davis Street as a haven for auto-centered commerce, leading to the creation of numerous filling stations, auto repair shops and retailers by as early as the 1940s. This reputation is still present along the corridor today.

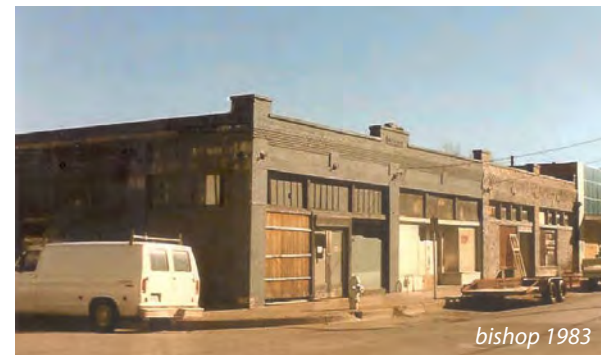
As auto use continued to rise, shopping malls and freeways began to pull traffic away from the corridor and led West Davis to fall into decline. In the early 1970s, a large demographic shift occurred due to the low housing costs attributed to the rapidly declining area. New immigrant families revived empty shop fronts along the corridor; largely Latino-oriented businesses such as restaurants, retail, and tax/immigration and

other services became commonplace. Yet despite this initial investment, crime in the neighborhoods surrounding West Davis continued to rise and the housing stock continued to fall into severe disrepair.

It wasn't until the late 1990s that a renewed interest in the corridor began to place investment along the once bustling corridor. In conjunction with the redevelopment of Bishop Arts, an urban design study began to lay out guidelines for redevelopment and revitalization, leading to efforts in Bishop Arts District beginning in 2001 with streetscape improvements. These improvements have become a catalyst for further changes in Bishop Arts District and the surrounding neighborhoods, leading to recently increased interest on the West Davis Street corridor.



*historic kessler theater*



*bishop 1983*



7th & north bishop, 1929



7th & north bishop 1929



7th & north bishop, 1929



7th & north bishop today



7th street streetcar

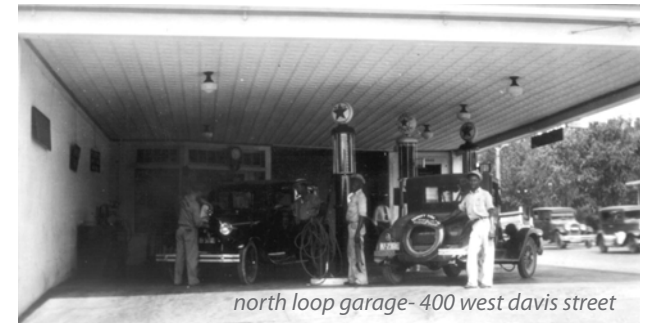




bishop fire station- 600 north bishop



811 north bishop, 1910



north loop garage- 400 west davis street



600 north bishop today



kemp garage - 634 west davis street



634 west davis street today

historic photographs courtesy of the dallas public library



## PROCESS

In Spring of 2013 the Dallas City**Design** Studio officially kicked off the effort to create a vision for West Davis with residents, stakeholders and business owners. Through a collaborative design approach, the process began to translate the complete street priorities outlined in 2011 into a vision for the design of West Davis street.

To begin this process, an in-depth study of the existing conditions of the corridor was conducted and cataloged. By carefully analyzing the existing physical conditions of West Davis Street, the specific opportunities and challenges were identified and documented.

With this information the City**Design** Studio engaged area residents, business owners and stakeholders in a collaborative design process to listen to the specific concerns of the corridor and to help begin to shape the previously identified complete streets priorities into a design for the street.

The feedback received from each community meeting was cataloged and translated into a list of primary

objectives for the proposed street improvements to achieve. These objectives were applied to create preliminary concept plan for West Davis to define the parameters for the future improvements of the corridor. A primary list of design elements tailored for addressing the unique challenges of this street was then developed.

In mid July 2013, the community was invited back to provide feedback on the concept for the street.

Through this effort, the proposed primary elements of the street were prioritized on a block by block basis. Individual blocks, and their specific conditions were analyzed to define the critical elements to focus on in order to re-stitch the corridor together.

This information and input was then used to finalize the scope of the construction of the complete street project for West Davis.





sidewalk conditions on west davis street





*unclear pedestrian zone/drive entry conditions; lack of crosswalks*



*sidewalk not present*



*adequate sidewalks*



*sidewalk in good condition*

# PROJECT TIMELINE



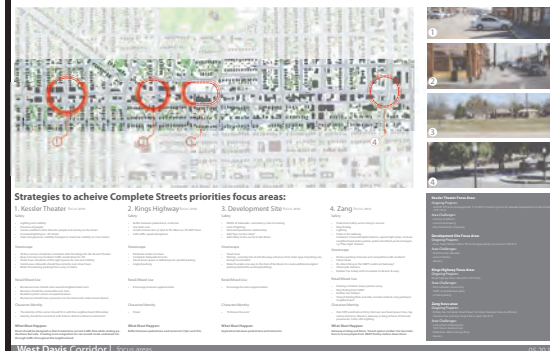
**2013: may**  
conversations with stakeholders



**2013: june**  
meetings with neighborhood groups

**2012**  
TIF funds available

**2013: june**  
staff synthesize input into design program document





**2013: august**  
citydesign studio recommendation

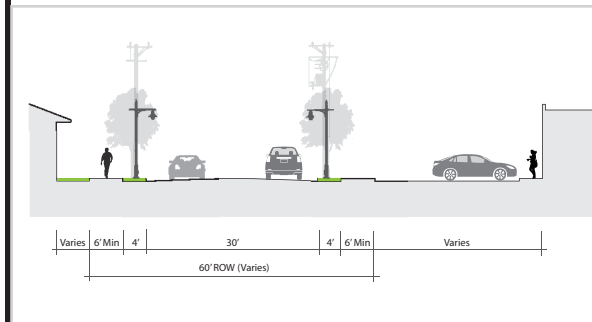


**2014: january**  
design award

**2013: july**  
confirm/refine feedback



**2013: september**  
project presented to TIF board

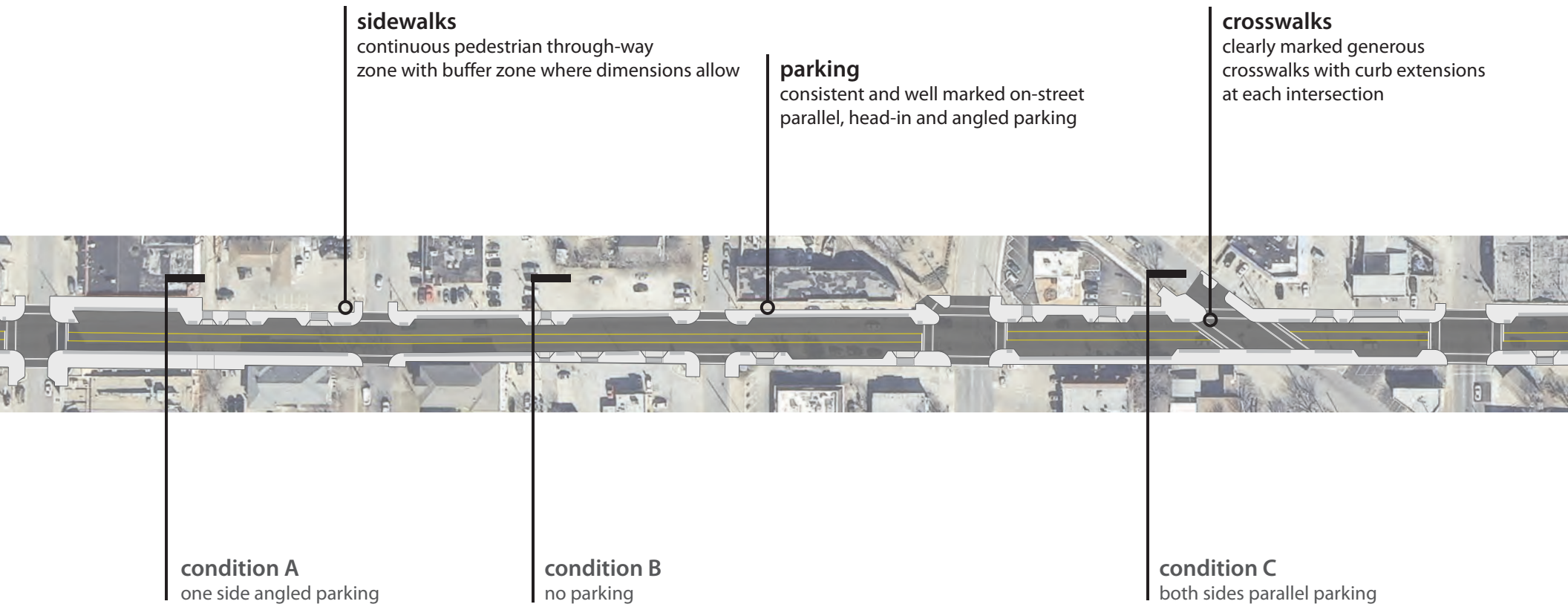


**2014**  
design  
completion

# STRATEGY

The strategy for West Davis can be divided into a series of elements that together a clear and consistent vision for the design of the corridor.

The image below represents a section of the total 1.5 mile technical plan [which can be viewed in its entirety in the appendix]



Note: Each street section type above can be found illustrated in the appendix.



**driveway entrances**

drive aprons confined within the sidewalk buffer zone, minimizing curb cuts and prioritizing a continuous pedestrian sidewalk

**buffer zone**

consistent zone for landscaping and pedestrian amenities located on the sidewalk between the pedestrian thoroughway and the curb.

**lighting**

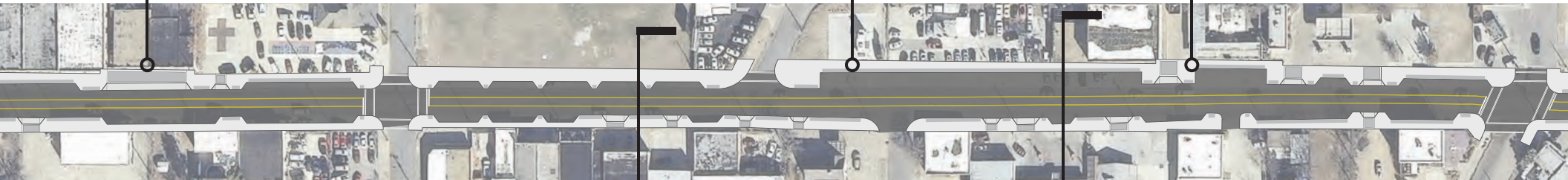
consistent, pedestrian oriented lighting located in the sidewalk buffer zone

**condition D**

one side parallel parking

**condition E**

parallel/head-in parking





*existing sidewalk condition*



*sidewalk with clear buffer zone*



*existing sidewalk condition*



*sidewalk with clearly marked parking*

## Sidewalks

The first and most critical element to be considered in the design of West Davis is the introduction of continuous sidewalks.

One of the most prominent concerns expressed by the area neighborhoods is the lack of continuous, predictable sidewalk from block to block. As a key component of the design of West Davis, generous sidewalk through-way should be available for pedestrians the entire length of the study area.

The unique conditions found on each block of West Davis represent a specific set of design elements that will be critical to take into account in order to create a safe and walkable street that also has the design flexibility to maintain its current charm and historical character.

Among these considerations are three basic elements:

1. Clear and generous through-way path for pedestrian movement.
2. Elements that create a buffer between pedestrians and vehicular traffic.
3. Creating drive entrances that prioritize the pedestrian sidewalk over the vehicle.

By implementing a clear and strategic design approach to these common design elements, West Davis can be designed as a street that functions for both cars and pedestrians, while maintaining its identity to the neighborhoods around it and the city as a whole.



## Driveways

Maintaining the current level of access to individual properties is key to the life and vitality of West Davis. In many cases, this often comes at the expense of pedestrian movement by creating harsh curb cuts that prioritize vehicles over pedestrians.

Adopting a strategy for drive entrances that do not interrupt the pedestrian sidewalk but maintain vehicular accessibility is critical to the future success of West Davis as a walkable pedestrian corridor. Locating drive aprons within the sidewalk buffer zone allows vehicles to access drives while creating a consistent unimpeded pedestrian sidewalk. Additionally, drive openings will be consolidated or removed wherever possible as building uses change and defined parking and pedestrian accessibility become greater priorities.



## Parking

Another prominent concern in the area is the demand for parking. As part of the design for West Davis, on-street parking should be introduced or preserved wherever possible.

On-street parking serves two purposes on West Davis. First, it provides convenient access to the retail and restaurants along the entire corridor. Second, it provides the significant added benefit of a buffer between vehicular traffic and pedestrians.

As a key component of the design process, on-street parking must be clearly defined and marked on the street. Ambiguously defined parking zones create confusion and inhibit the predictability that contributes to a safe pedestrian environment.



## Crosswalks

West Davis is and will continue to be a prominent vehicular corridor through Oak Cliff. Because of this, clearly marked and defined crosswalks should be implemented at each intersection along the corridor.

West Davis includes both light controlled and non light controlled intersections. As most of the corridor is comprised of uses that create pedestrian activity, two types of crossings should be utilized to create safety and predictability:

1. Light controlled intersections should incorporate generous, clearly marked crosswalks that utilize color and materiality to mark the pedestrian zone.
2. Non light controlled intersections should incorporate signage and markings at minimum, and ideally include user-activated pedestrian crossings with lighting that alert vehicles that a pedestrian wishes to cross.





*existing lack of buffer zone*



*street trees act as a pedestrian buffer*



*example of drought resistant landscaping*

## Buffer Zone

The term buffer zone refers to the part of the sidewalk dedicated to streetscape, trees, plantings, and lighting located between the curb and the sidewalk throughway.

Consistent street trees should be placed wherever the available dimension allows along the entire corridor. This zone will also allow for individual business and retail a consistent area to spill activity onto the sidewalk and bring life to the street.

There are various cost effective and sustainable landscaping options that can be used in place of street trees while also maintaining neighborhood character, such as decompressed granite and native Texas plants that require less irrigation and maintenance.

## Lighting

Lighting should be consistent and predictable along the length of the corridor. Pedestrian scaled lighting that directs light toward the street and sidewalk rather than skyward should occur at a reasonable frequency.

This lighting should occur within the sidewalk buffer zone located between either the drive lane or on street parking and the unimpeded sidewalk throughway. Additional sidewalk lighting can also be provided by building facades.

Continuous and predictable lighting is key to the perception of safety and sense of place for West Davis.



*existing street lighting along corridor*



*alternative street lighting along corridor*

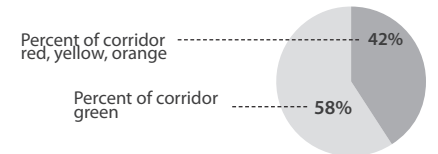


*lighting provided by buildings*

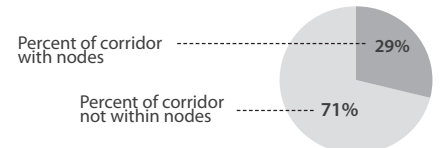
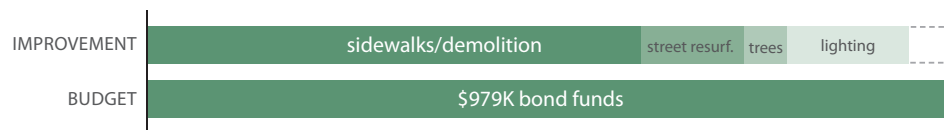
## Strategic Approach

Below is a graphic that was presented to the community as a representation of two approaches for the street improvements based on available funding: either to create a continuous sidewalk along the whole corridor or to improve four specific focus areas with full streetscaping. The final recommendation is a hybrid approach of these two options.

### Approach 1 Continuous sidewalk Repair Most Critical Conditions [RED-ORANGE-YELLOW]



### Approach 2 Focus on activity nodes Full Build Out of Block Faces at Each Node



## IMPLEMENTATION

By first identifying the challenges and opportunities specific to West Davis and then developing a set of key primary design elements, a strategy emerged to guide the implementation of the West Davis Improvements.

Based upon the desires of the surrounding communities, each element was prioritized in relation to the performance of the street as a whole and applied to the street block by block to achieve a unified vision.

In the first phase of construction, two key concepts will be implemented in order to achieve the greatest positive impact on the corridor. First and foremost will be the construction of a continuous sidewalk throughout the study area. This will help to re-stitch the corridor and create continuous pedestrian connectivity along the study area in its entirety.

This approach will also incorporate a demonstration zones within the corridor. These zones will incorporate all elements of streetscape within the first phase of

construction. These areas will serve to set the standard for future improvements as funding becomes available.

This vision and first phase strategy will be used as a tool to define the scope of the project for the design team so that the final design is a product of the specific goals of the community and a reflects a vision for West Davis that addresses the challenges, maintains the character, and creates the pedestrian environment that this corridor must have in place to achieve its full potential.



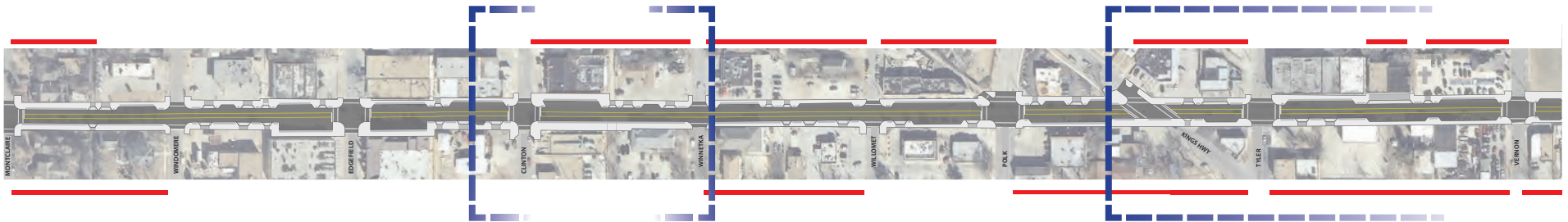
## Recommended Approach

### 1. re-stitching the street

#### Zones for Sidewalk Reconstruction

This strategy would provide a safe and complete pedestrian zone along West Davis by focusing the bond funds on reconstructing severely lacking sections of sidewalk while creating the infrastructure for future improvements. This would consist of introducing or rebuilding roughly 30,000 sqft. of new sidewalk (denoted in red on plan below).

Continuous sidewalk from Montclair to Zang would incorporate infrastructure for future design elements such as street furnishings, lighting and more extensive landscaping that could be added as future funding is located.



potential funding sources:  
cog grant for kessler theater, bond funds

potential funding sources:  
existing TIF funds allocated to projects, private development, bond funds

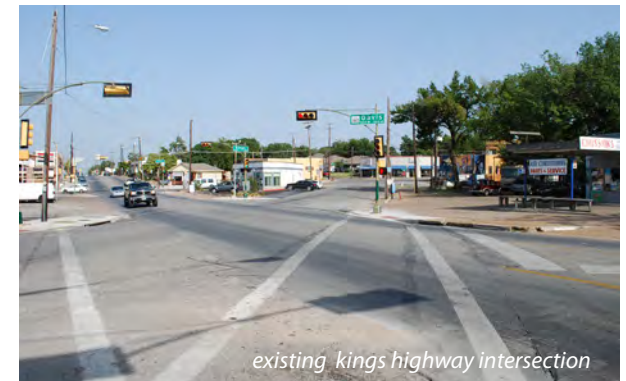


## 2. create demonstration zones

### Study Zones for Complete Streetscape Application

The remaining portion of the bond funds would be used to create a complete streetscape along portions within marked study areas of West Davis with all desired crosswalks, lighting, landscaping, and paving (*candidate areas denoted in blue on plan below*). This would act as a demonstration zone for future projects and it would allow future standards to be set in place now.

These zones would be placed within the study zones to work in conjunction with current projects already underway, and accomplished through a combination of Bond, NIP, TIF and COG funds. The extent of the demonstration zone will be determined by the balance of funds remaining from the sidewalk reconstruction.



potential funding sources:  
neighborhood investment  
program funding



TEXAS  
180 Davis  
900 W 900 W

Kings  
1000 900

## NEXT STEPS

In the near future, the City of Dallas will be selecting a design consultant to design the improvements for the corridor. This document, along with the coordination and involvement of the CityDesign Studio, Public Works and Transportation, the Office of Economic Development and other various city departments, will steward the design of the street to reflect the vision and priorities of the surrounding communities and participants that have taken part in this study.

As a design consultant is selected they will meet with the related city staff to identify priorities and define the parameters of the project based upon the input we have heard from you. This will be a community driven design process and will continue to involve all the participants who helps shape the vision for the corridor.

The design of West Davis will be coordinated along with all other area projects such as Bishop Street design and proposed two way conversion plans for both Tyler and Polk. Additional funding sources are also being investigated to complement existing bond funding. These sources include city of Dallas Streets Department annual operating budget along with coordination with other capital projects at both City and County level. Key City projects include Bishop Ave. improvements, Adams Street improvements, Neighborhood Improvement Program

projects, and TIF incentivised private development.

Proposed two way conversion plans for both Tyler and Polk will also be taken into consideration as opportunities to combine area efforts are investigated. As these projects are designed, careful study and coordination will need to be done to ensure that all the areas efforts are working together to create a unified design.



*examples of complete streets with active street life*



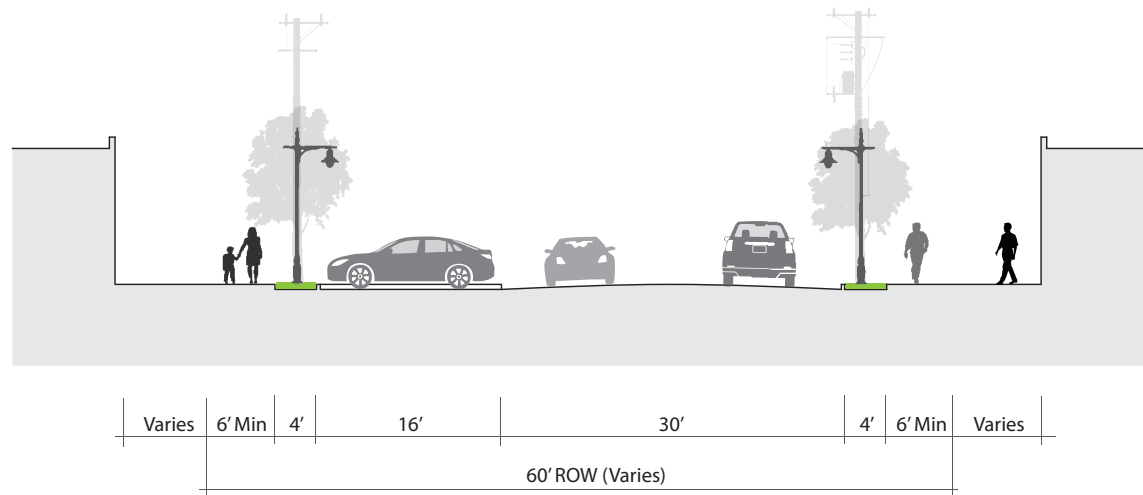
# APPENDIX

## Street Sections

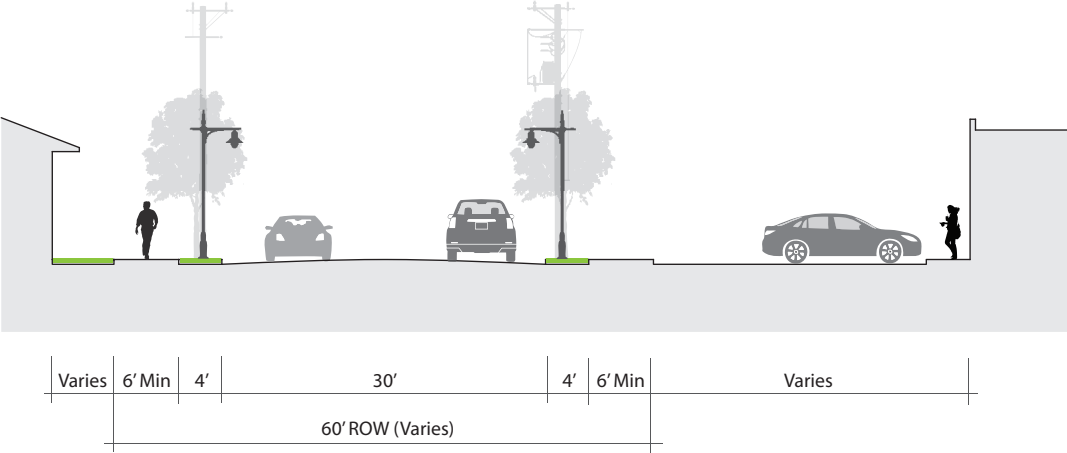
Conditions on West Davis vary block by block. Below are street sections illustrating the allocation of space and street elements within the most prominent conditions found in the study area.

Each condition can be referenced by location on the concept plan.

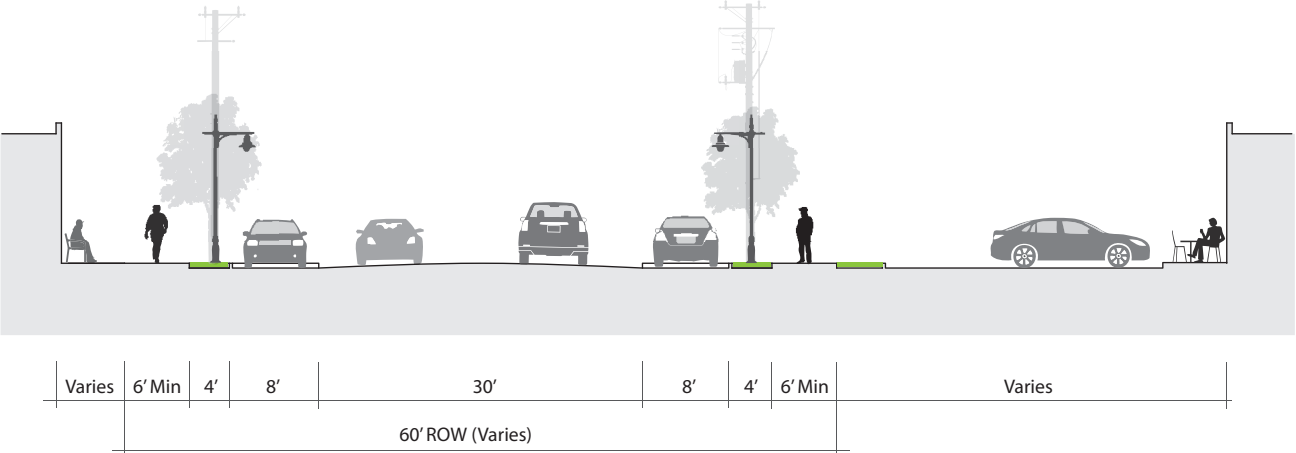
### section A: one side angled parking



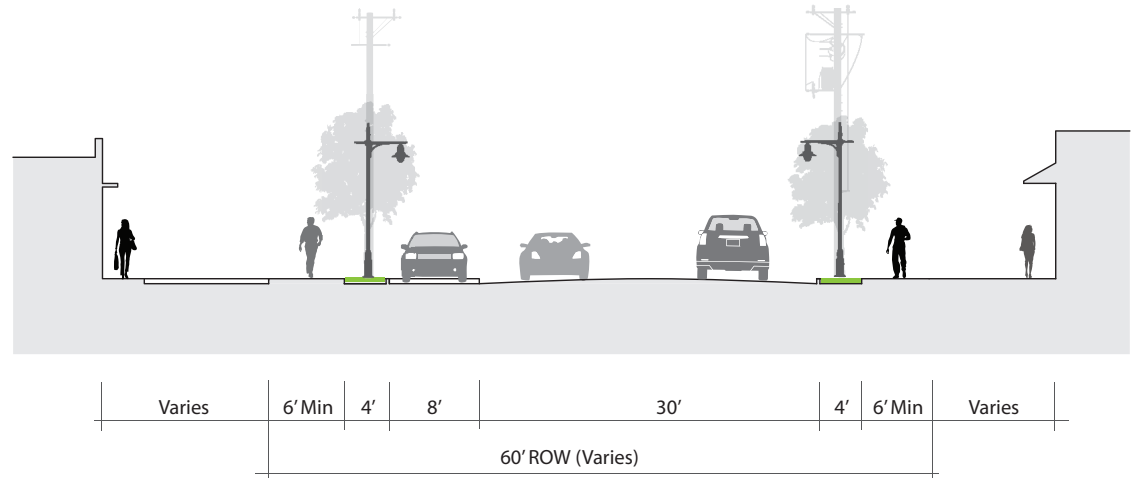
section B: no parking



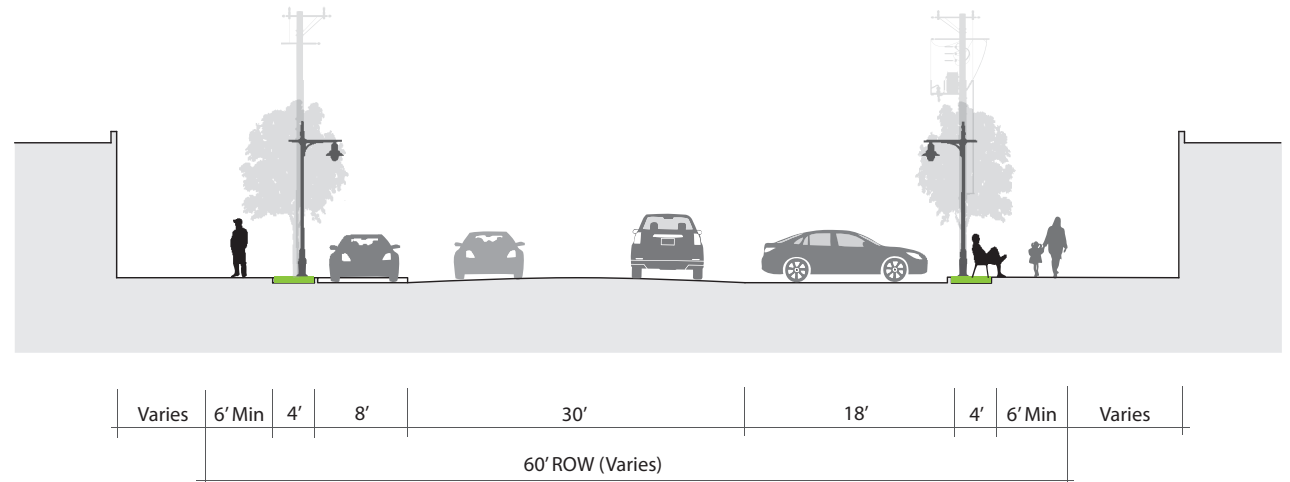
section C: both sides parallel parking



section D: one side parallel parking

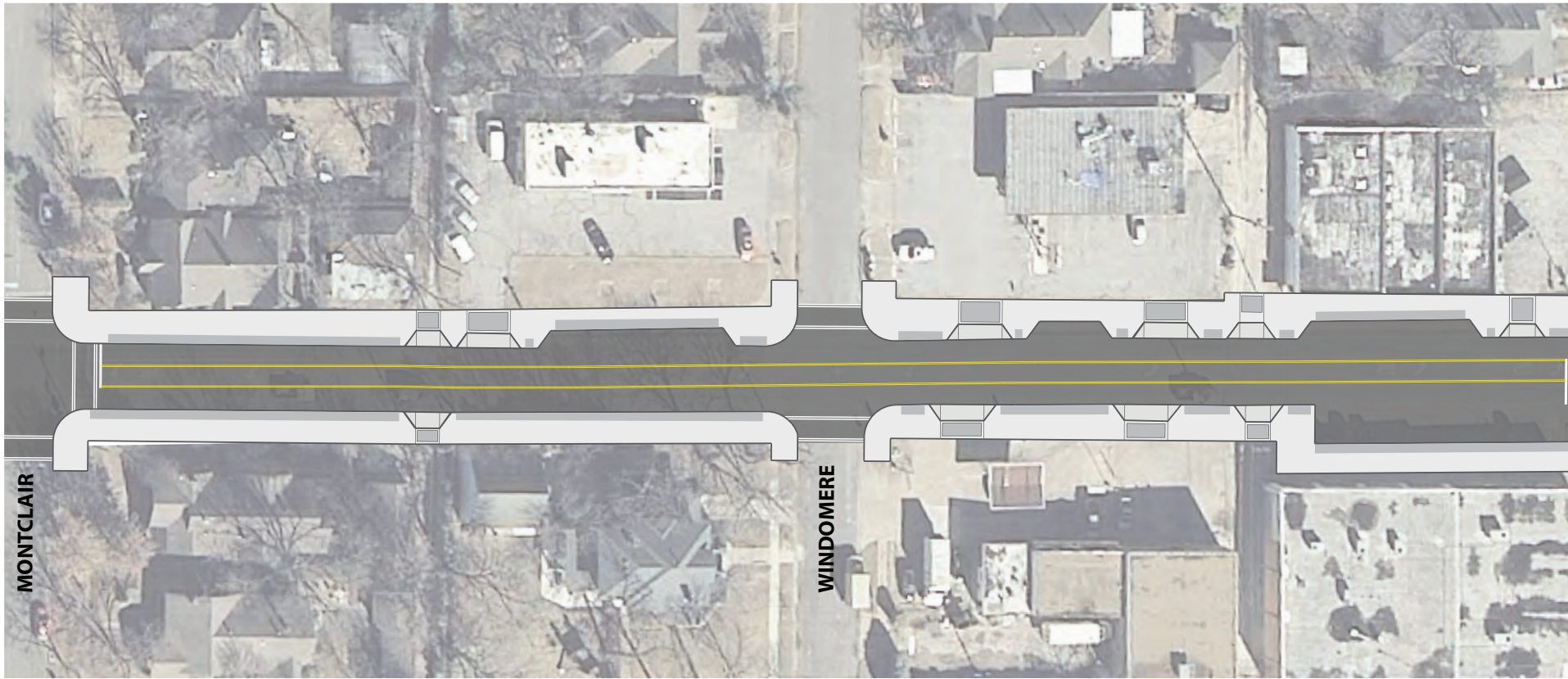


section E: parallel/ head-in parking



# Street Plan

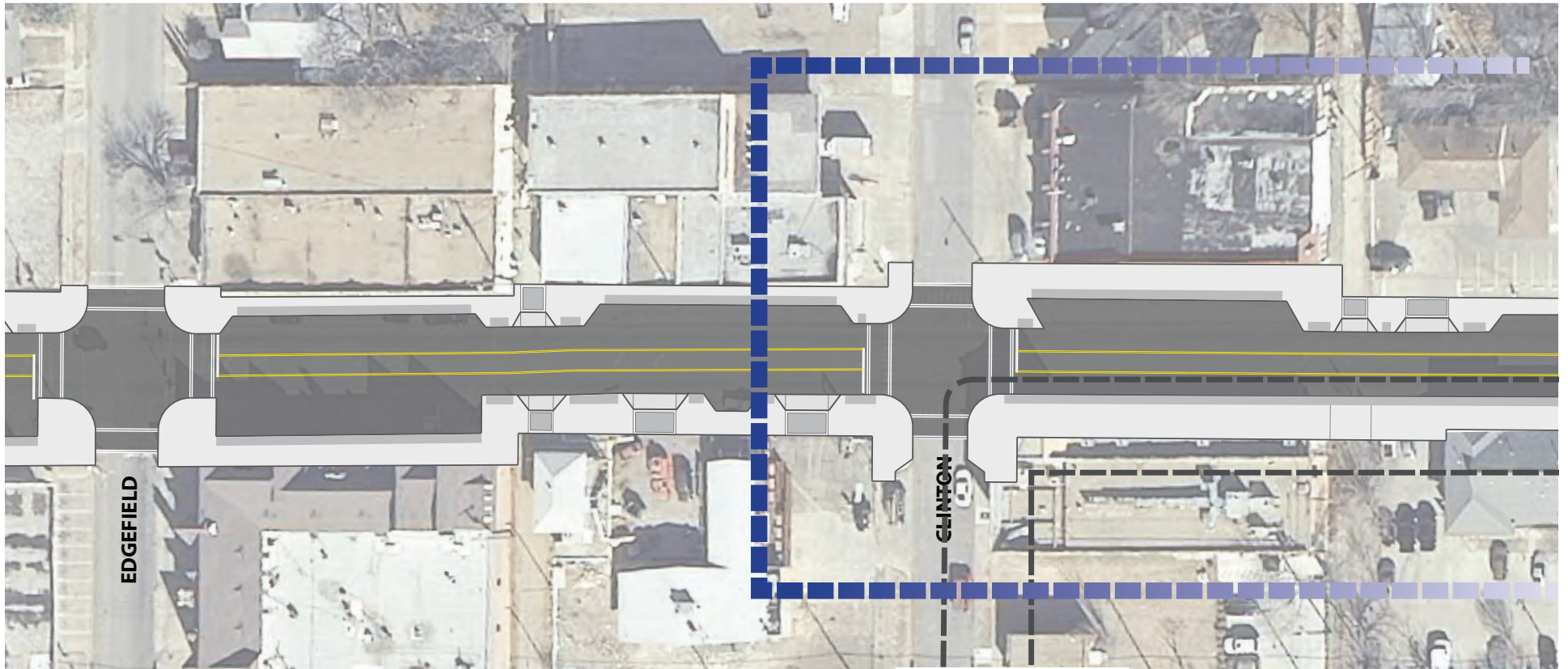
The following is the entire plan for West Davis from Montclair to Zang, highlighting areas recommended for sidewalk improvements based on current conditions.



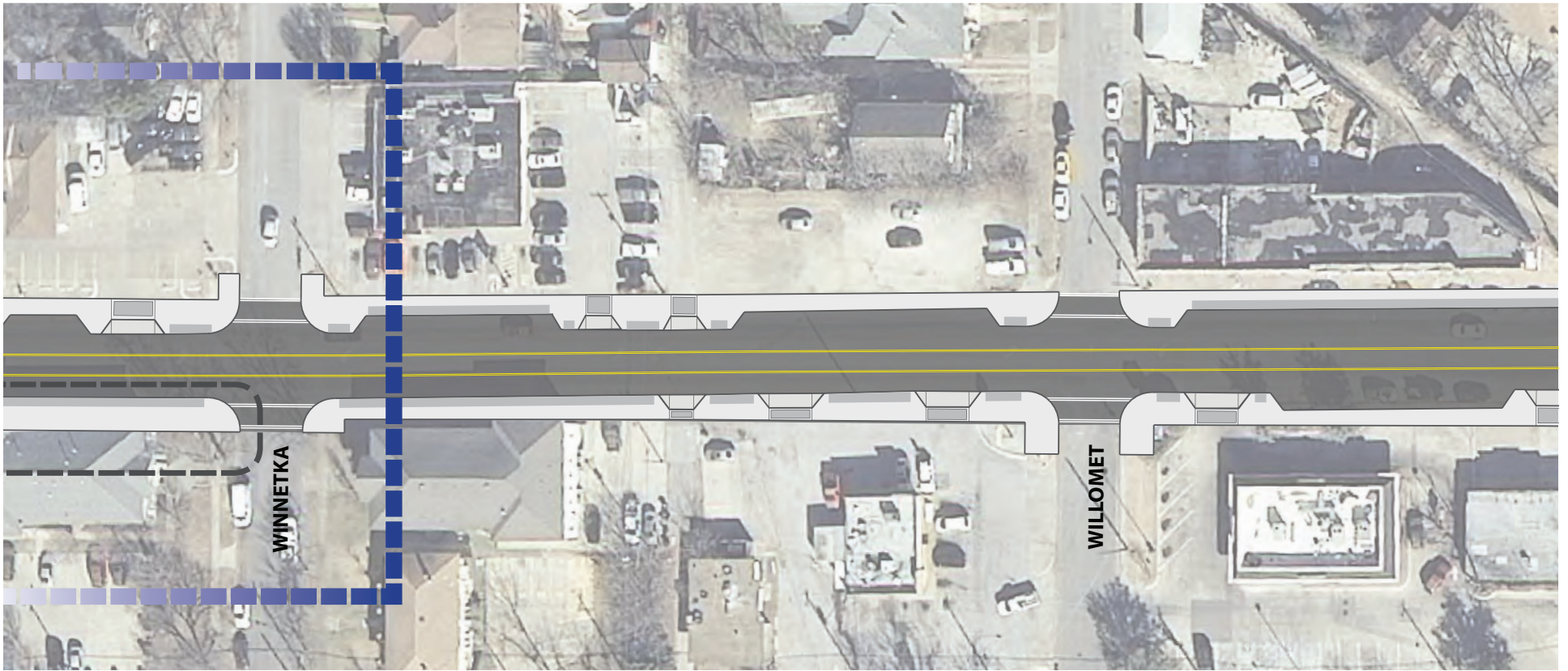
### sidewalk conditions

-  sidewalk focus area
-  planned improvement area
-  demonstration zone study area







**kessler theater improvements:** 60k in TIF funds, leveraged with 179k in matching COG grant funds for sidewalk improvements.

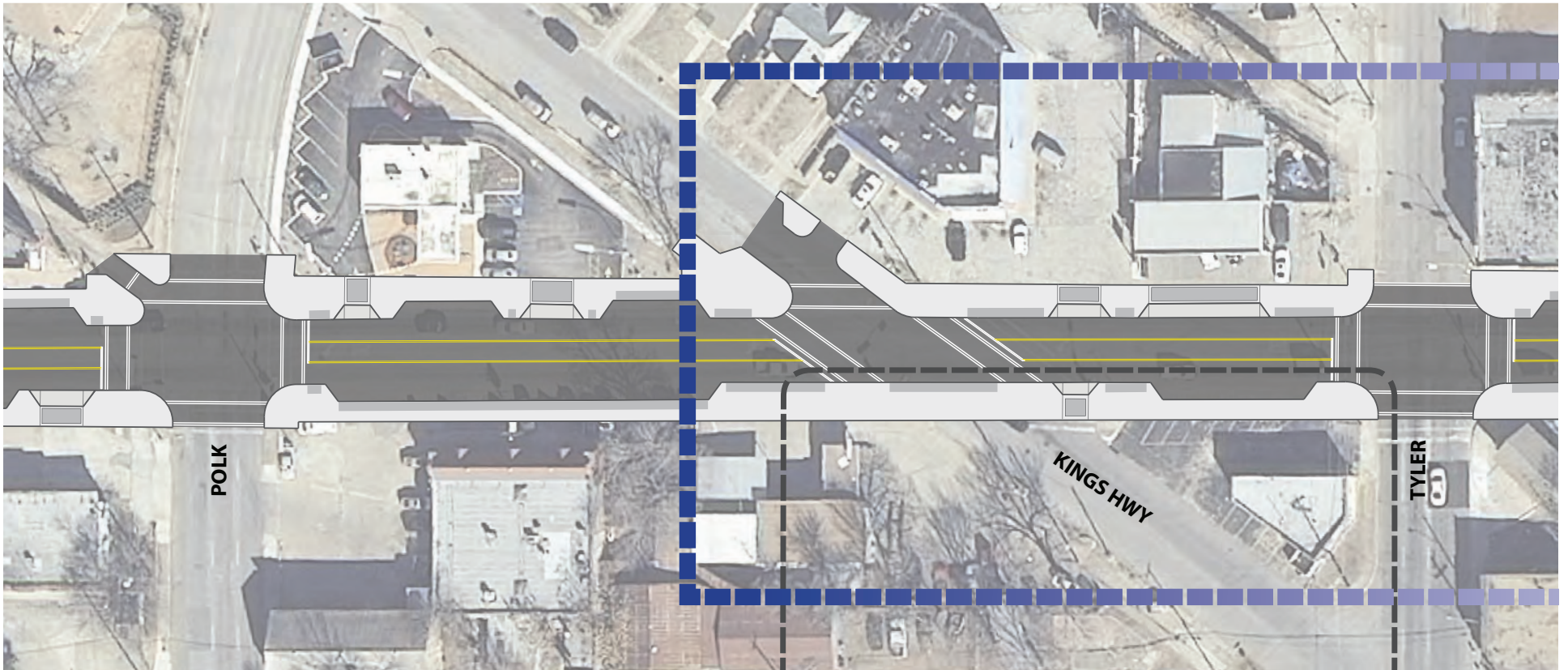


**sidewalk conditions**

 sidewalk focus area

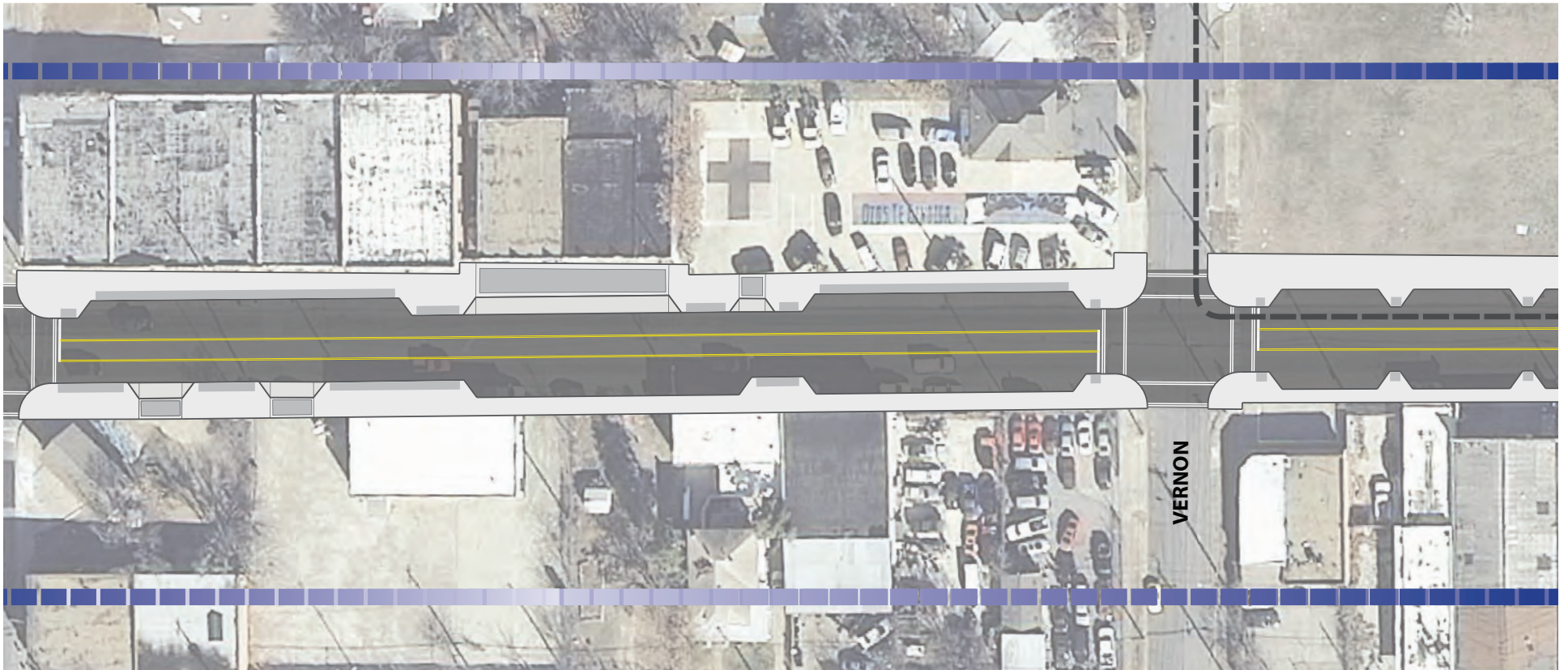
 planned improvement area

 demonstration zone study area



kings highway improvements: 442.5k in TIF funds allocated to improvements at kings highway


davis street market: 4M in TIF funds associated with public realm and infrastructure improvements.

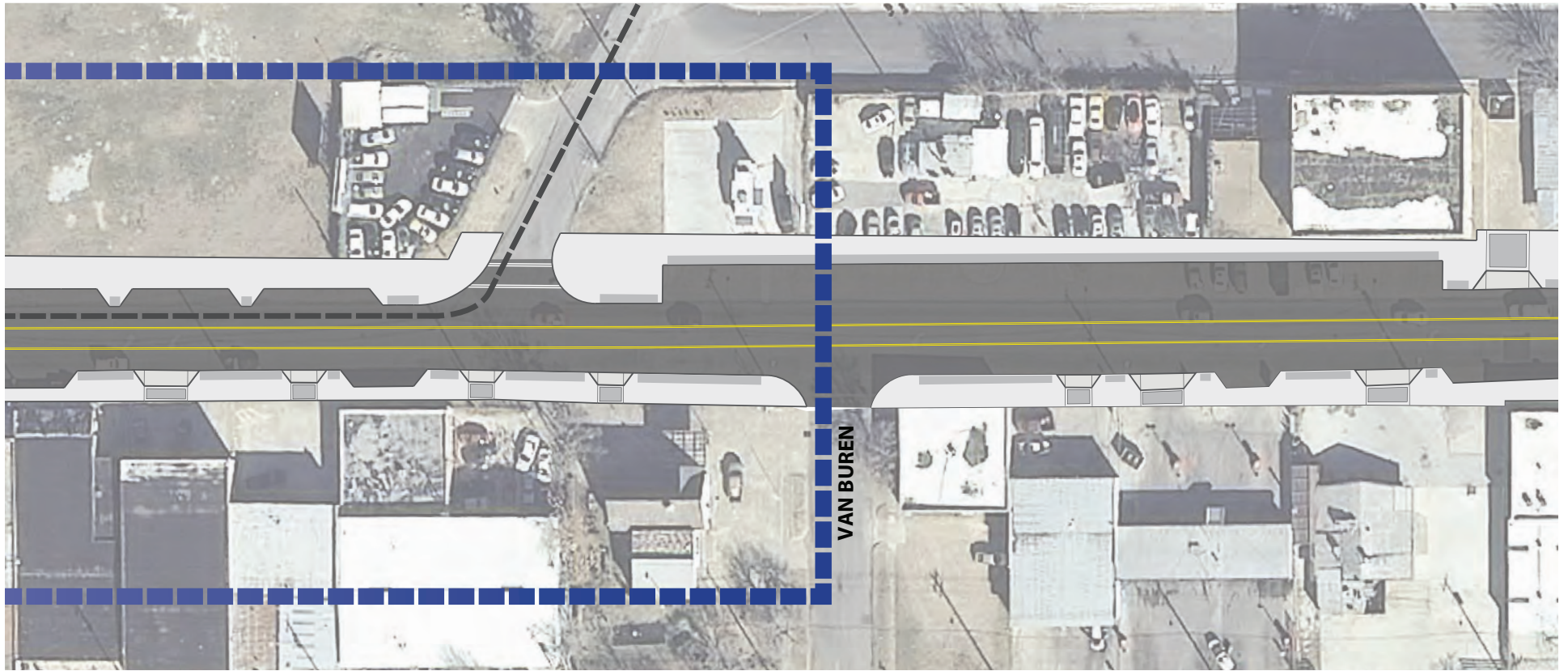


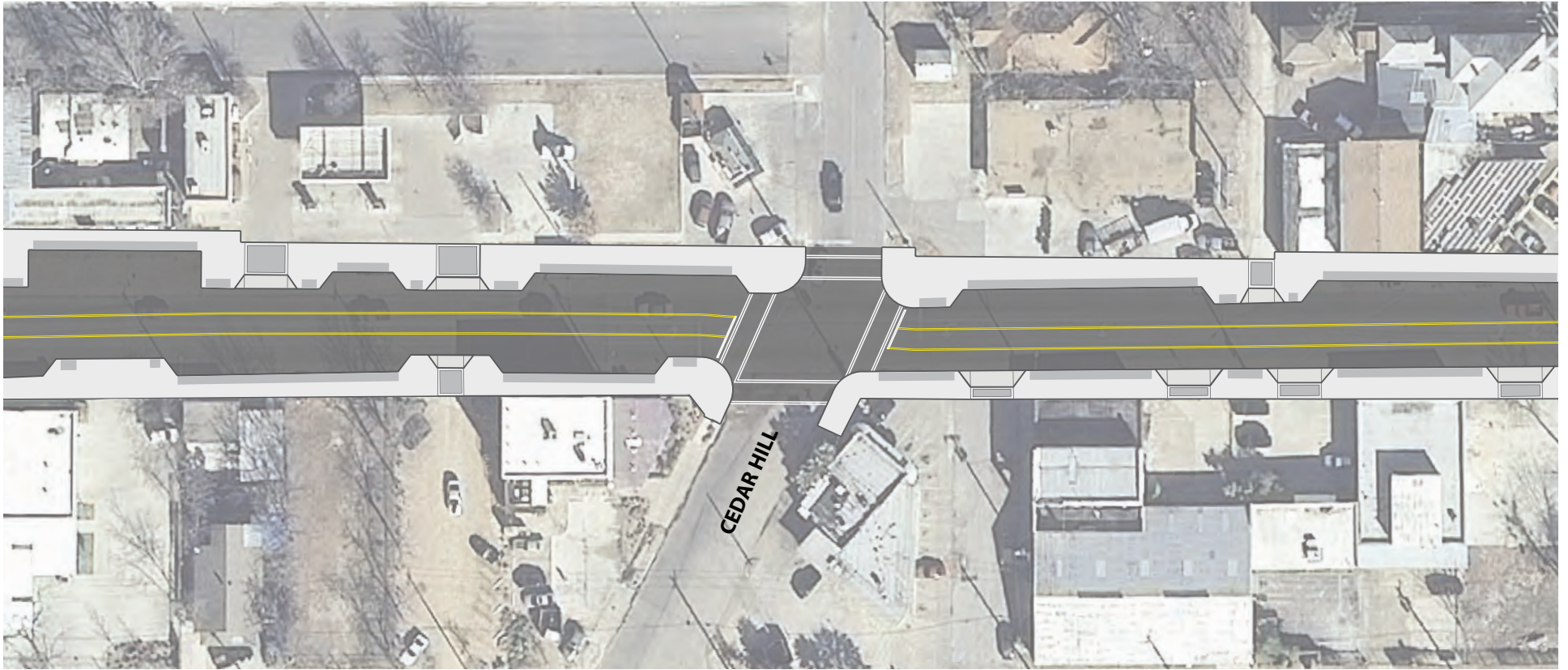
**sidewalk conditions**

 sidewalk focus area


 planned improvement area


 demonstration zone study area




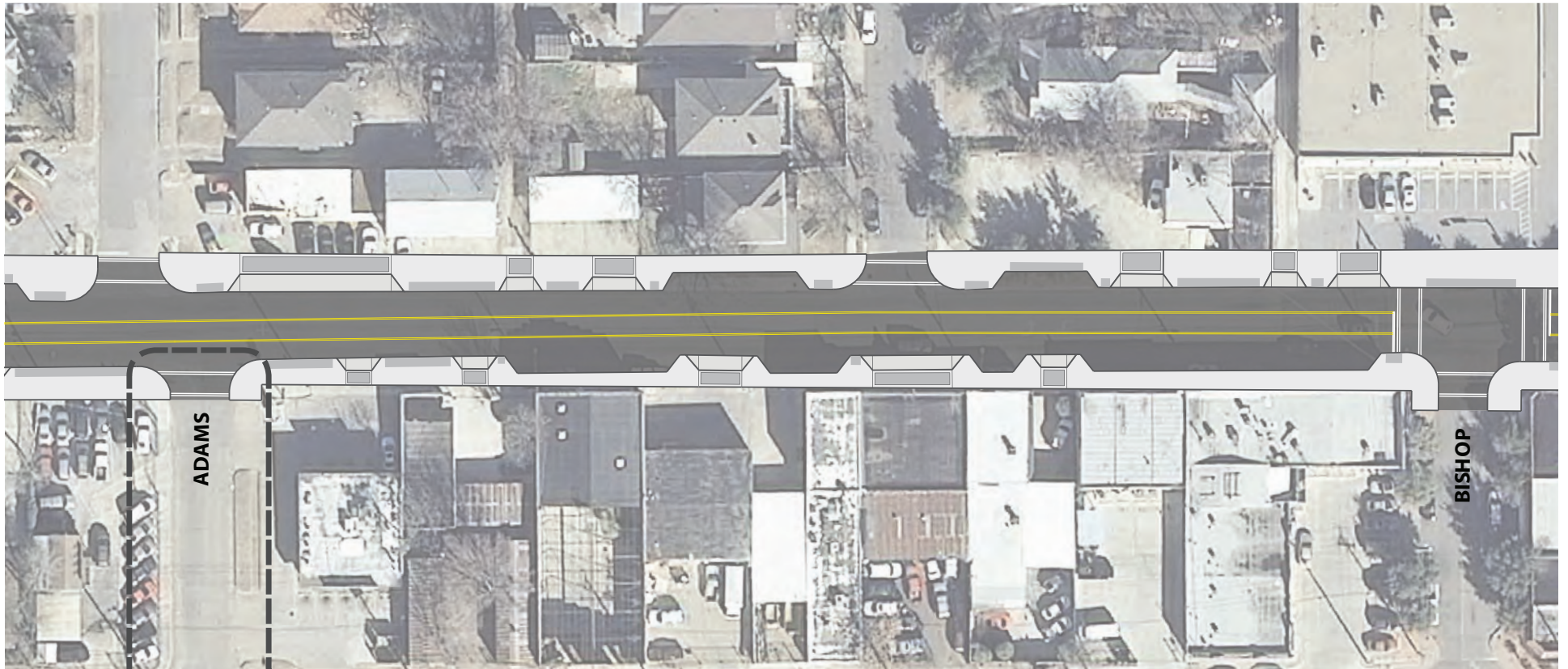


**sidewalk conditions**

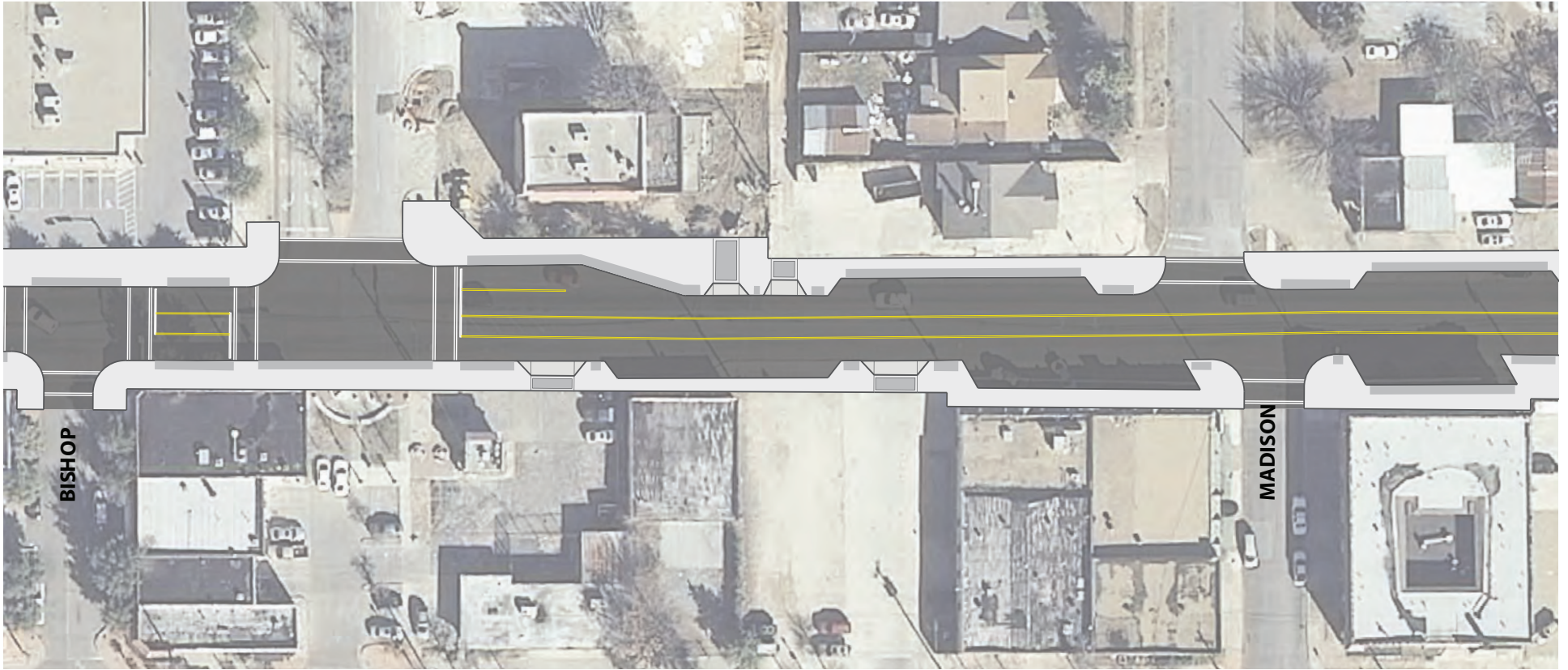
 sidewalk focus area

 planned improvement area


 demonstration zone study area





 **adams street:** funding associated with adams street improvements



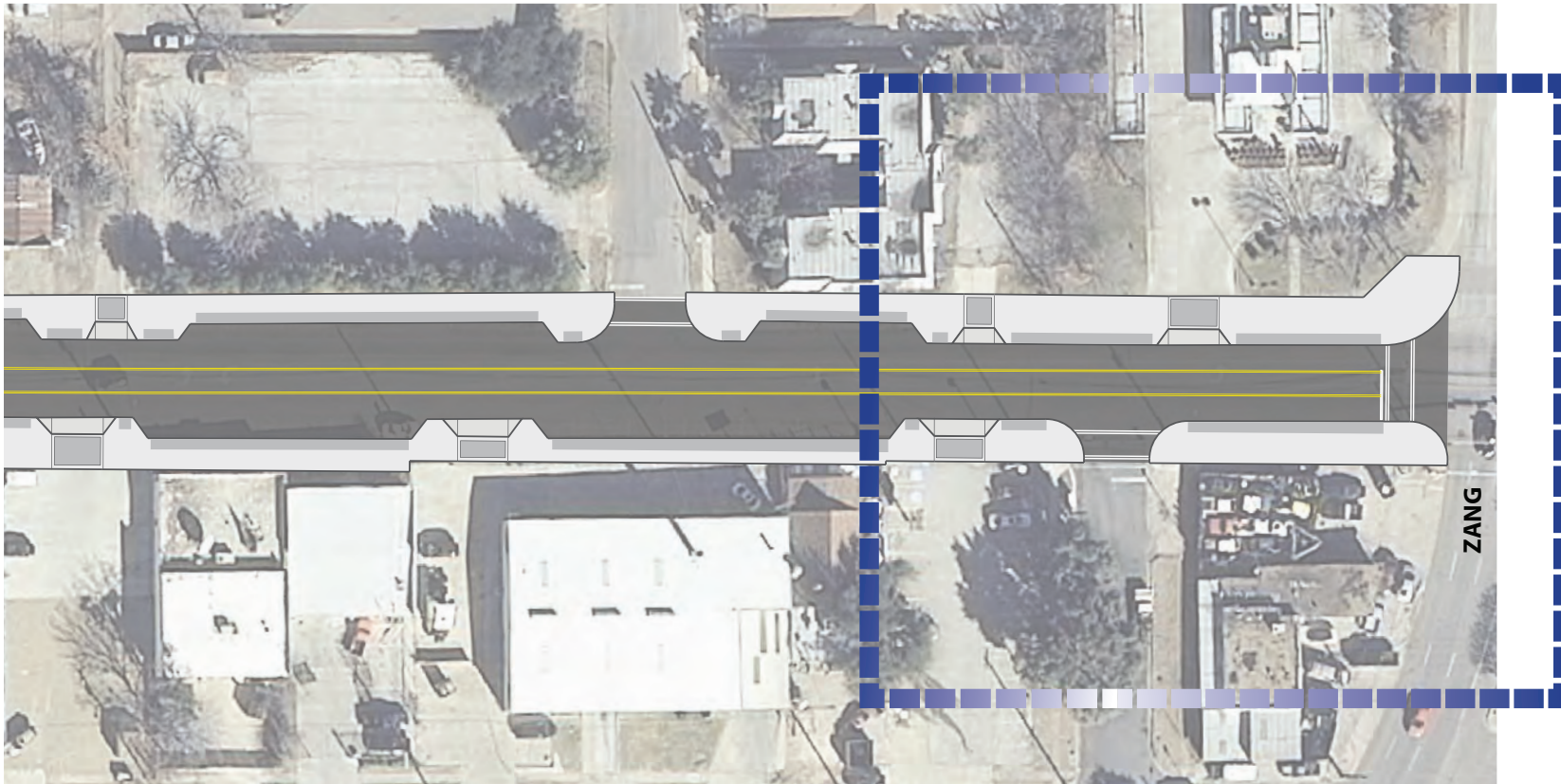
**sidewalk conditions**

 sidewalk focus area

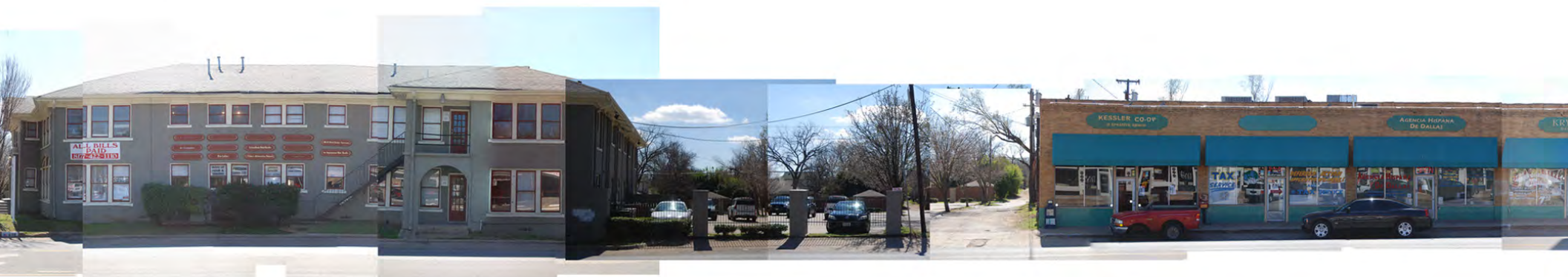
 planned improvement area

 demonstration zone study area





Neighborhood Improvement  
Program: funding associated area  
Neighborhood improvement  
Program



**special thanks to:**

bc workshop  
City of Dallas Office of Economic Development  
City of Dallas Public Works & Transportation  
The good people of Oak Cliff