



Walkable Places

Presented by
Planning & Development Department
City of Houston

Walkable Places Subcommittee
Wednesday, January 11, 2017

Meeting Agenda



- I. Welcome
- II. Introduction of Subcommittee Members
- III. Role of Subcommittee
- IV. Project Objective
- V. Project Schedule
- VI. Defining the Problem
- VII. Upcoming Topics
- VIII. Public Comment

III. Role of Subcommittee



- Propose Ordinance /Policy Amendments
- Bring your experience / expertise
- Participate Openly
- Be a Champion

IV. Project Objective



- Promote walkability by :
 - updating Houston's development related ordinances and policies to maximize the opportunity for walkable urban places
 - Providing recommendations to the Planning Commission

Existing Guidance



Final Report

September 30, 2015



planhouston.org

PLAN
HOUSTON

Houston

Opportunity. Diversity. Community. Home.



Goals and Topics



People



Place



Culture



Education



Economy



Environment



Public Services



Housing



Transportation

Core Strategies



- ✓ Spend money wisely.
- ✓ Grow responsibly.
- ✓ Sustain quality infrastructure.
- ✓ Nurture safe, healthy communities.
- ✓ Connect people and places.
- ✓ Support our global economy.
- ✓ Champion learning.
- ✓ Foster an affordable city.
- ✓ Protect and conserve our resources.
- ✓ Communicate clearly and with transparency.
- ✓ Partner with others, public and private.
- ✓ Celebrate what's uniquely Houston.

Grow Responsibly



- Anticipate growth and plan for it, ensuring that infrastructure and services accommodate growth.
- Adopt policies supporting existing and future activity centers that enable a combination of live, work and play options.
- Support community investment in public transit and adopt policies that coordinate transit with supporting land development.
- Encourage targeted development and redevelopment that support the City's vitality.

Nurture safe and healthy neighborhoods



- Expand partnerships to support healthy neighborhoods.
- Use localized planning to help neighborhoods improve and maintain quality of life.
- Encourage development that fosters healthy lifestyles for Houstonians of all ages
- Coordinate with partner agencies to maintain safe, healthy neighborhoods.

Connect People and Places



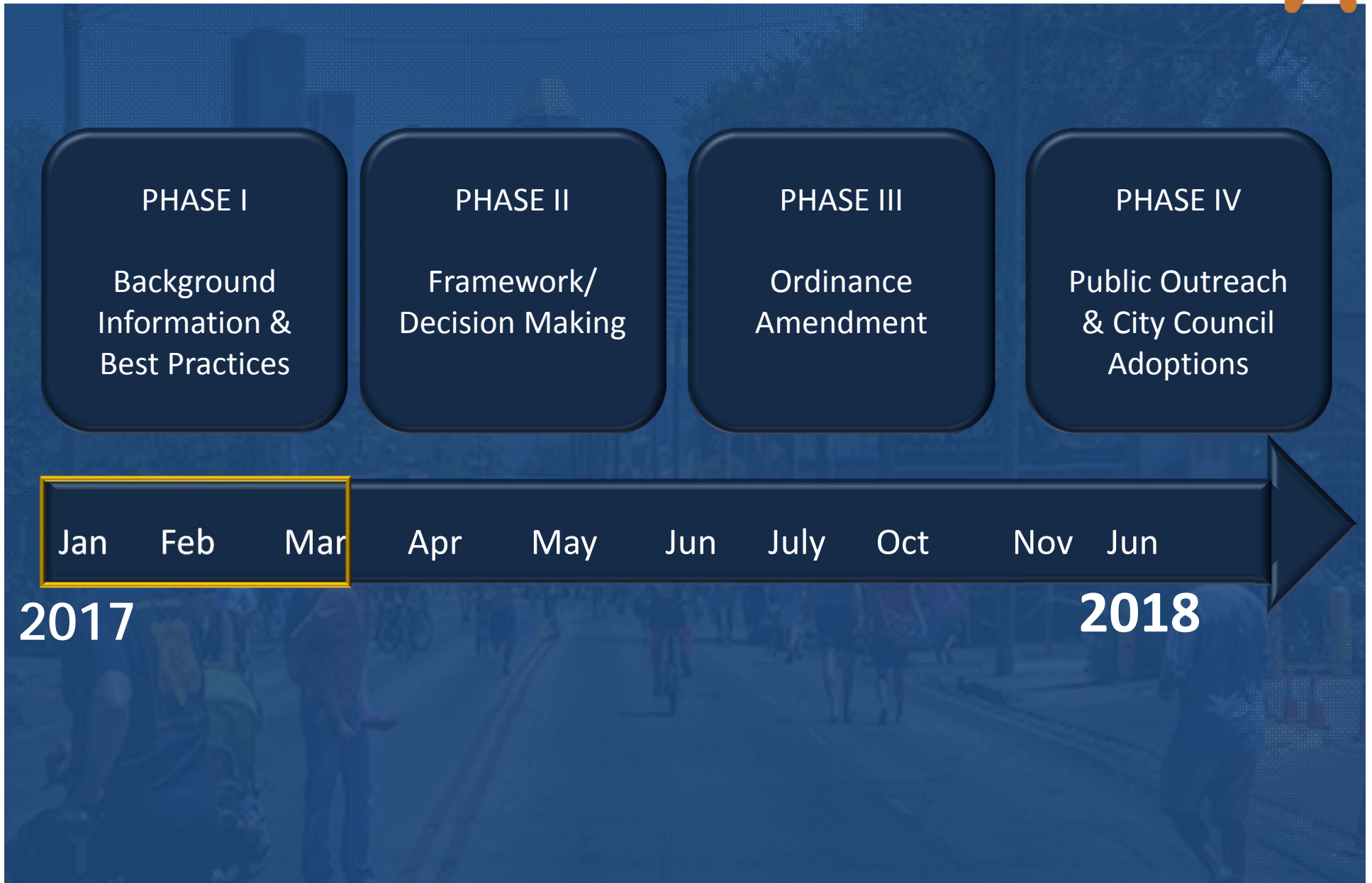
- Encourage compact, pedestrian-friendly development around transit.
- Support a well-connected transportation network that includes transit, bicycle and pedestrian options.
- Maintain a parking strategy that supports economic development, protects neighborhoods, and achieves vibrant, walkable activity centers.

Related Efforts



- Houston Complete Streets and Transportation Plan (HCSTP)
- Houston Bike Plan
- Transit Corridor Ordinance (TCO)
- Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan (MTFP)
- Complete Communities

V. Project Schedule



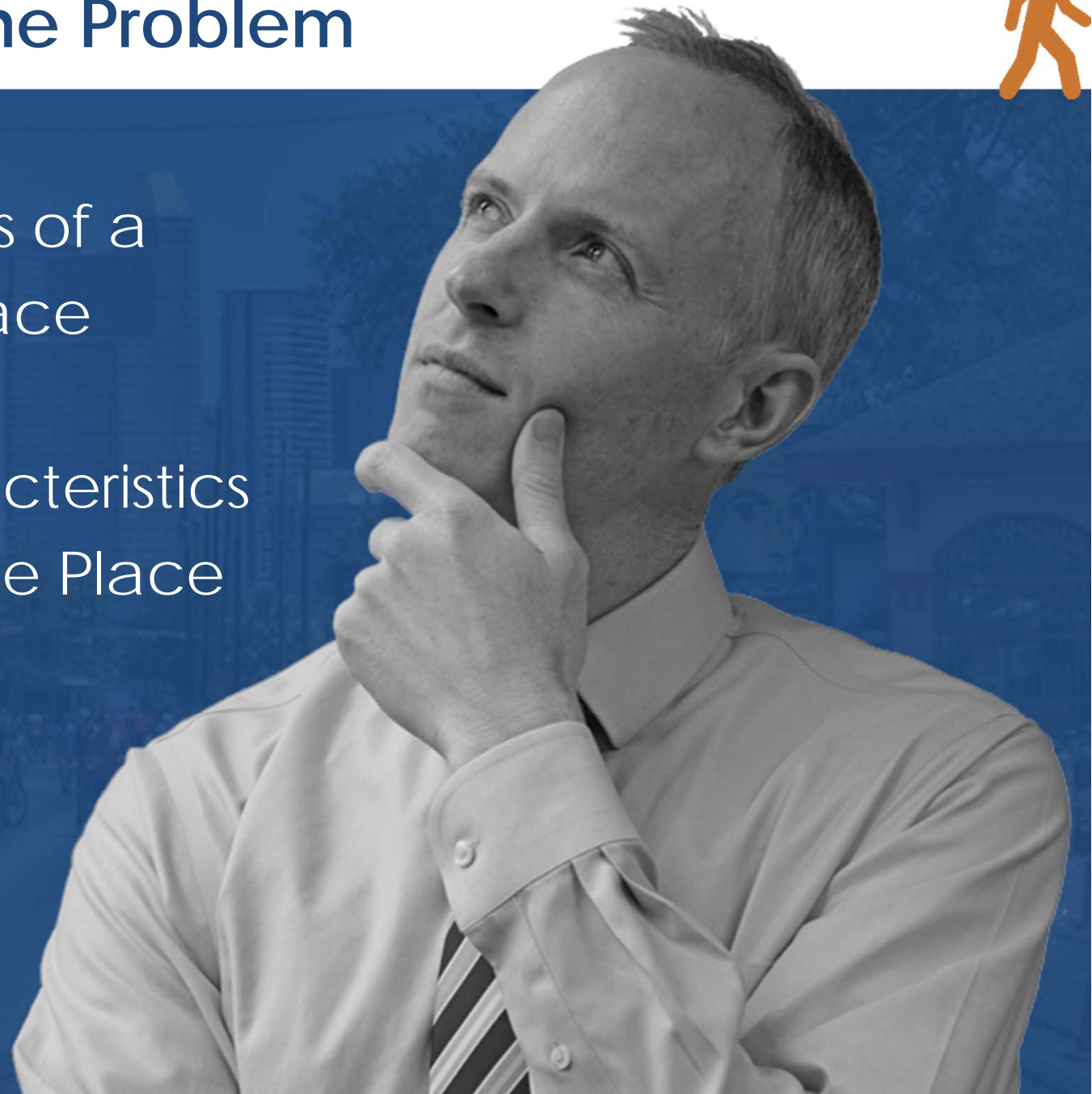
VI. Defining the Problem



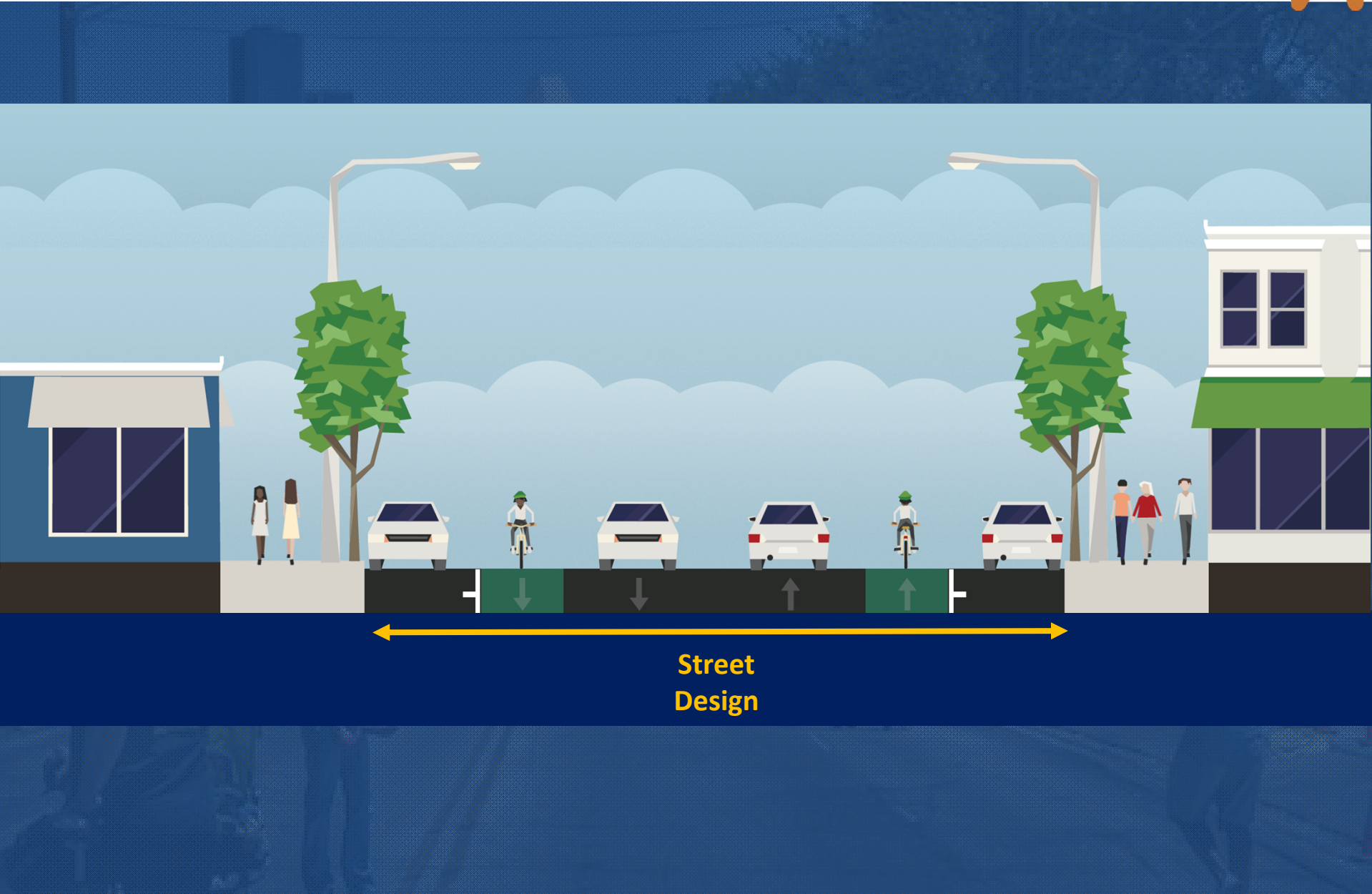
Components of a
Walkable Place

Major Characteristics
of a Walkable Place

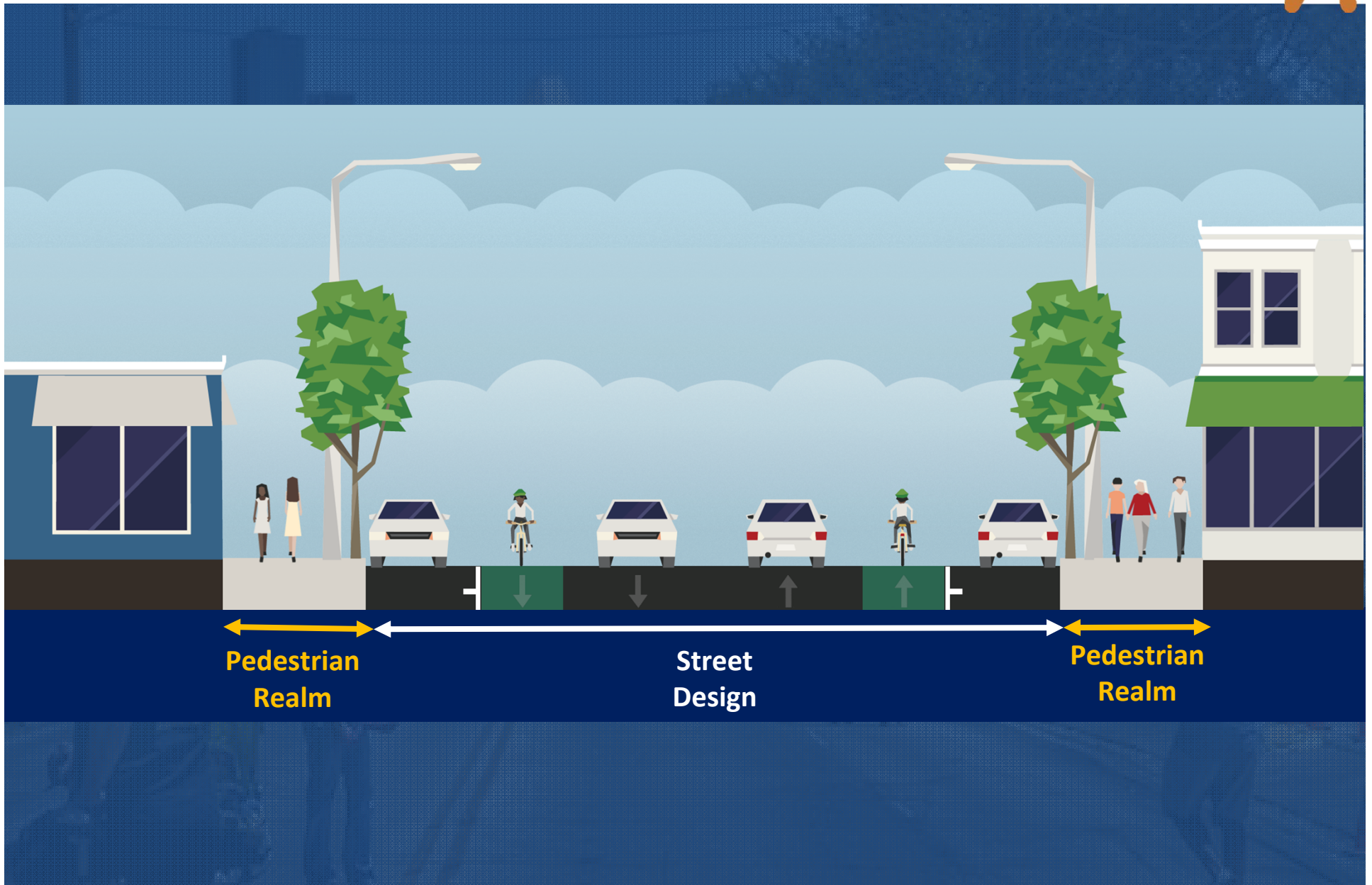
Director Patrick Walsh



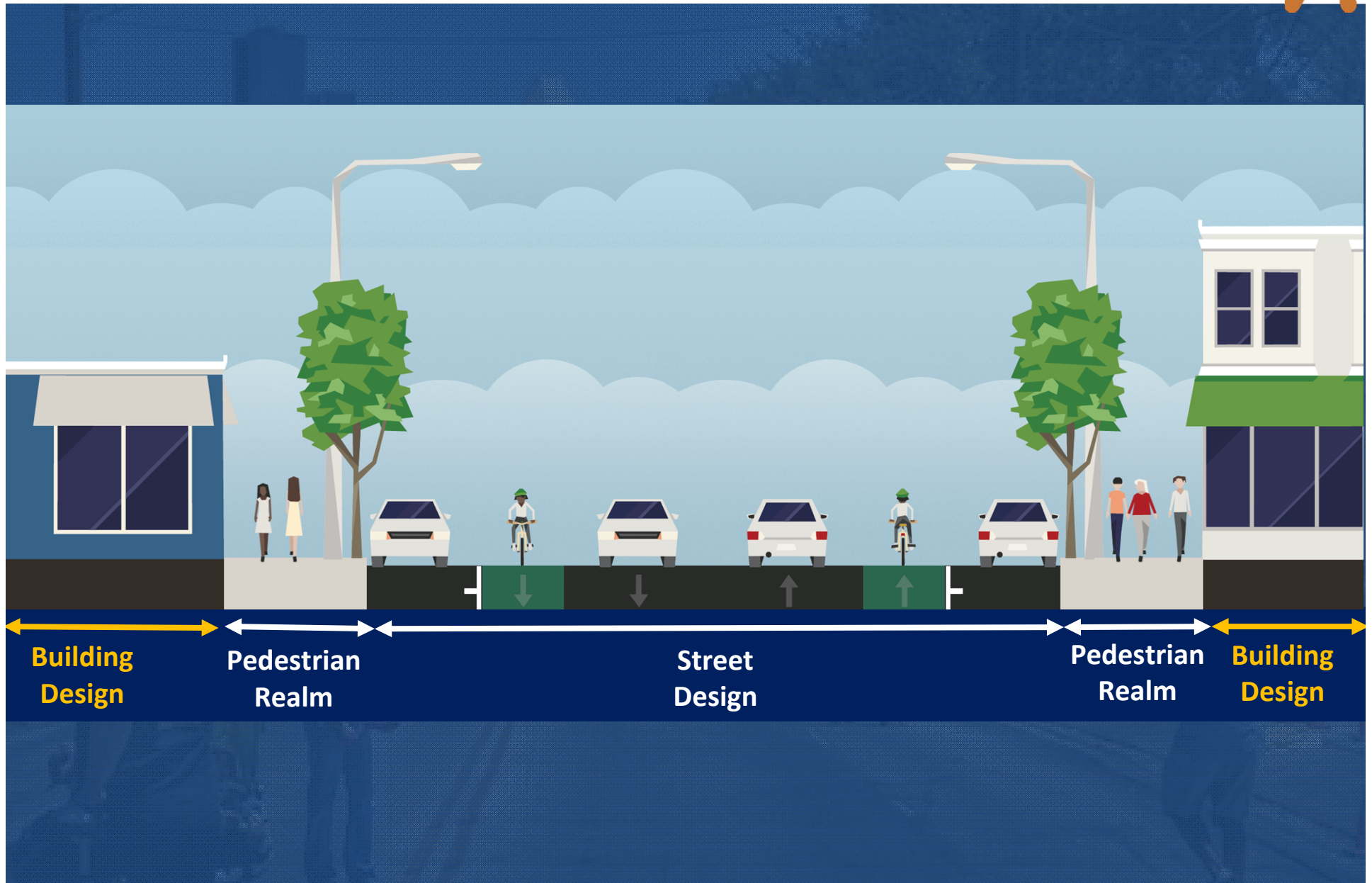
Components of a Walkable Place



Components of a Walkable Place



Components of a Walkable Place



Street Design



Multi-modal



Auto-oriented Street

Pedestrian Realm



Integrated



Non-integrated

Building Design: Transparency



Transparent



Opaque

Building Design: Interaction



Interactive



Disengaged

Building Design: Scale



Human Scale



Imposing

Components of a Walkable Place



- Street Design
 - Speed
 - Street typology
 - Context Area
- Pedestrian Realm
 - Sidewalk Corridor
 - Landscaping
 - Utilities
- Building Design
 - Transparency
 - Active Ground Floor
 - Scale



Major Characteristics of a Walkable Place



- Mix of Land Uses
- Active Ground Floor
- Pedestrian Scale
- Integrated Pedestrian Realm



Mix of Land Uses



Less Walkable



More Walkable

Active Ground Floor



Less Walkable



More Walkable

Integrated Pedestrian Realm



Less Walkable



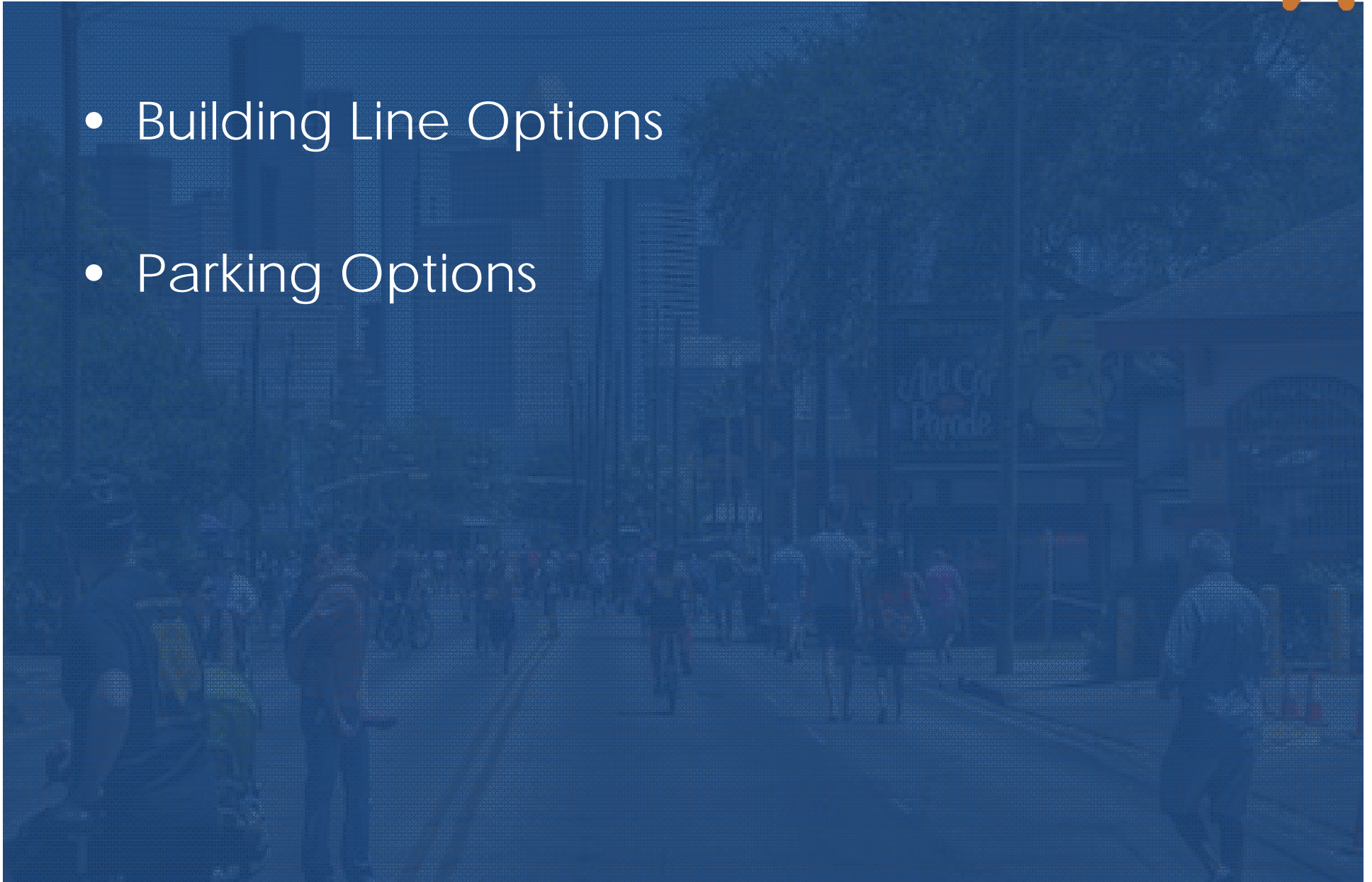
More Walkable



Current Regulations



- Building Line Options
- Parking Options

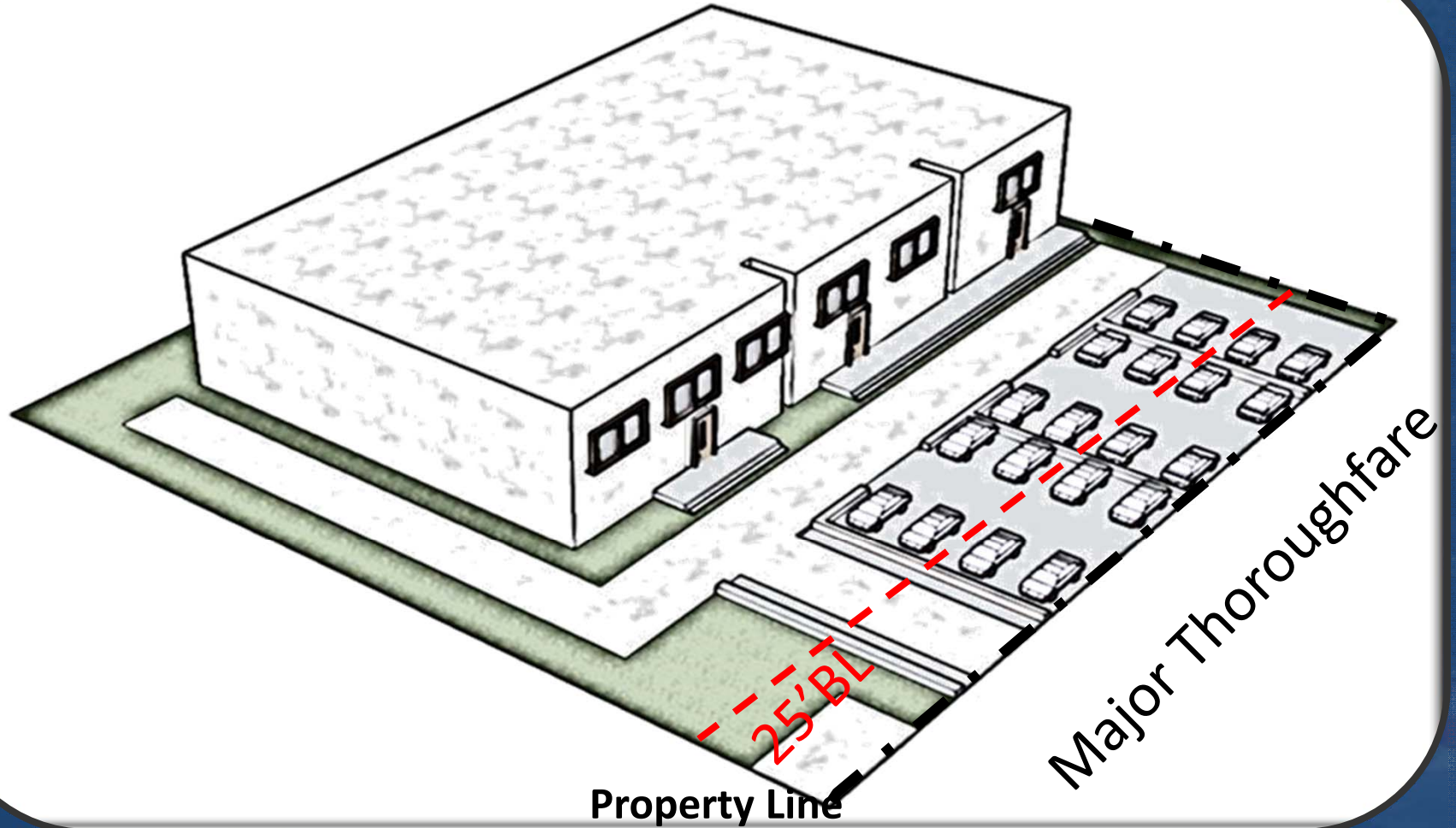


Building Line Options



- Ordinance Required Building Line
- Performance Standards:
Reduced Building Line Subject to Specific Criteria
- Building Line Variance:
Planning Commission approved Building Line

Ordinance Required Building Line



Ordinance Required Building Line



Challenges: Ordinance Required Building Line

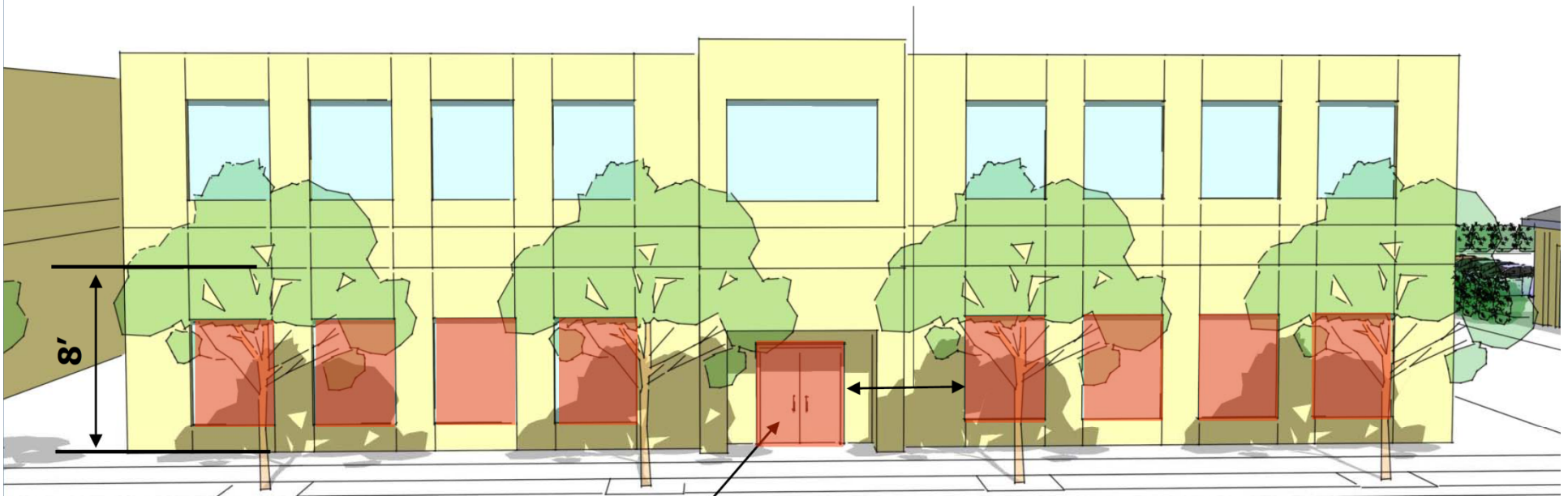


- One size fits all approach
- Indirectly isolates development activities from the street
- Indirectly encourages building lines larger than the required minimum building lines

Building Line Performance Standards Transit Corridor



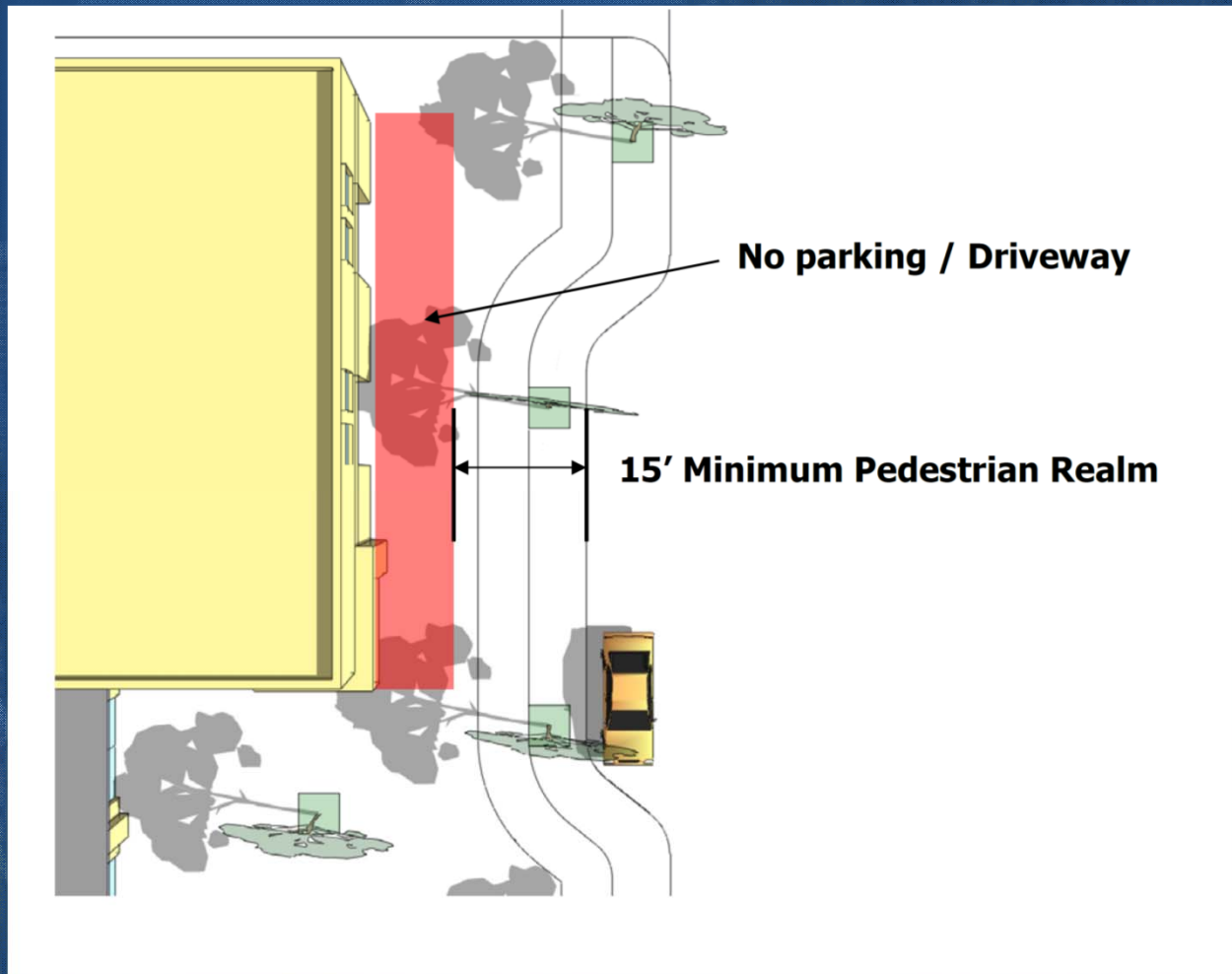
Maximum 20' interval between Transparent openings



Public Entrance

**Transparency is 30% of façade surface
Area consisting of doors and windows
Between 0' and 8' height**

Building Line Performance Standards Transit Corridor



Building Line Performance Standards Transit Corridor



Building Line Performance Standards Transit Corridor



Building Line Performance Standards Transit Corridor



Challenges: Building Line Performance Standards



- Performance Standards are optional
- Minimum criteria
- Lack of detailed design guidance
- Development conflicts with intent

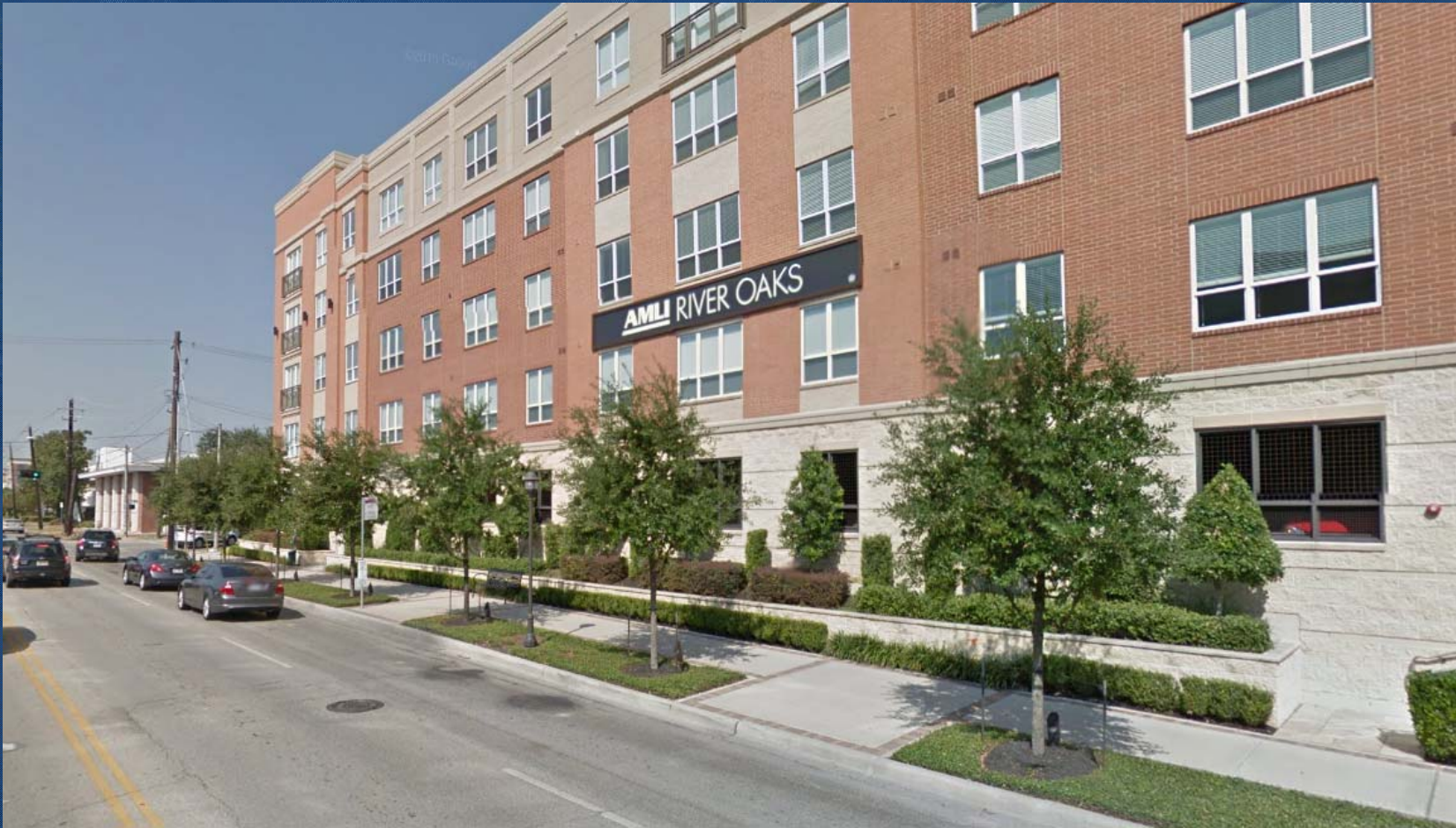
Building Line Variance



- Intent
- Hardship
- Impact
- Context



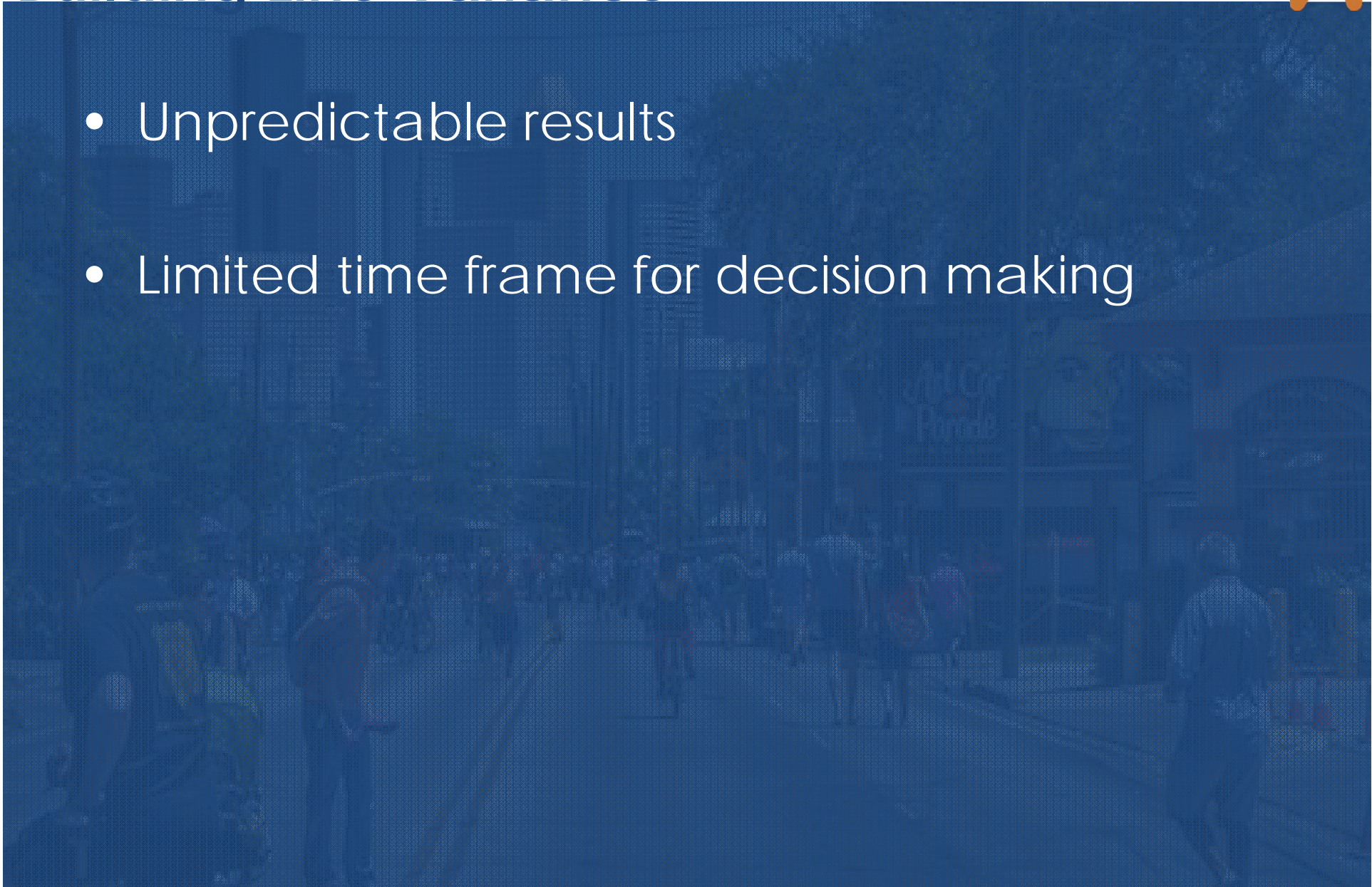
Building Line Variance



Challenges: Building Line Variance



- Unpredictable results
- Limited time frame for decision making



Parking Options



- Ordinance Parking Requirement
- Shared Parking:

Reduced Parking Subject Time Constraints

- Parking Variance:

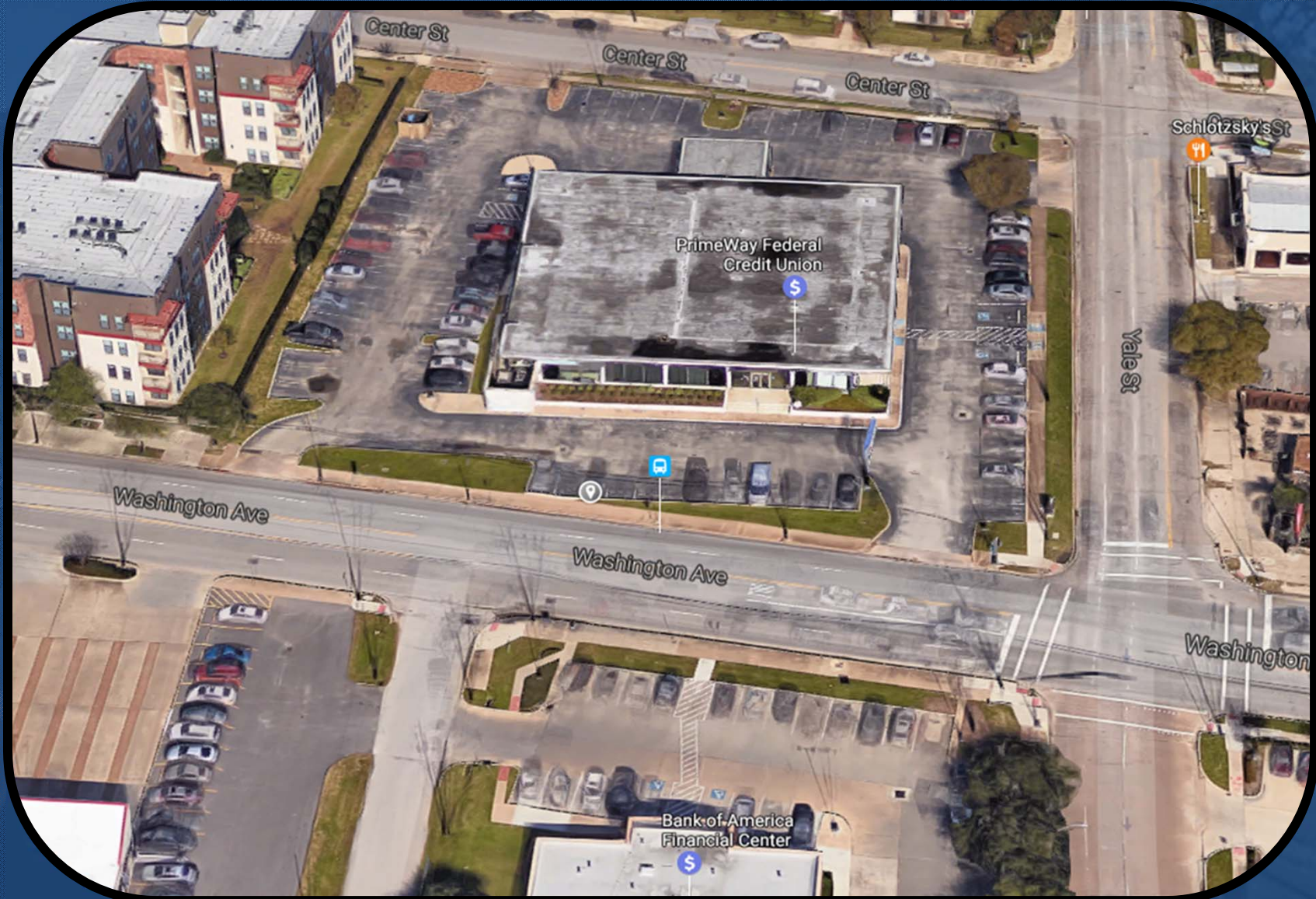
Planning Commission approved parking requirement

Ordinance Parking Requirements



- Minimum parking requirements
- Reduced parking for additional bicycle spaces
- Reduced parking for historic buildings
- Reduced parking for transit oriented development
- Shared parking use
- Special parking area

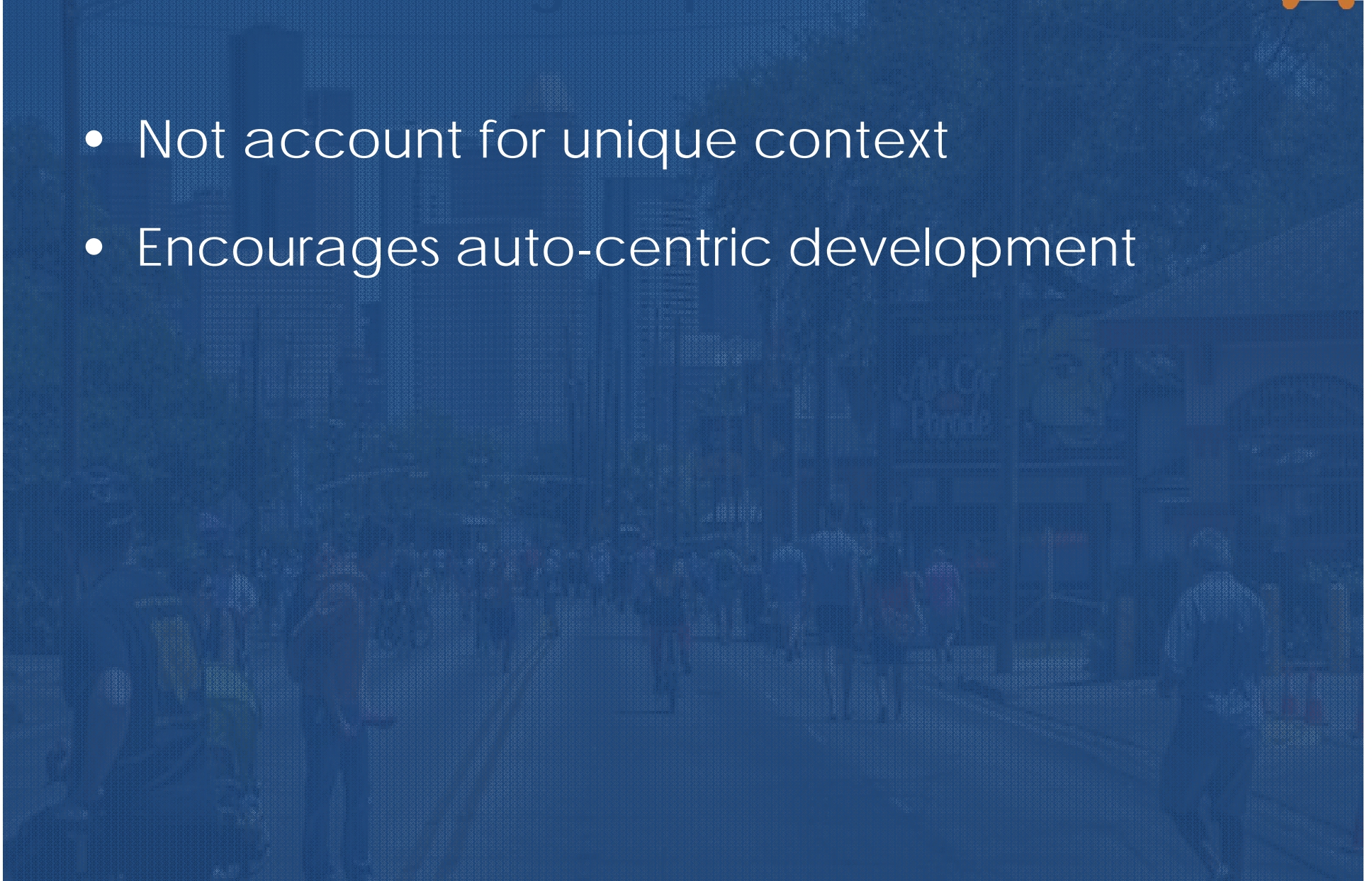
Ordinance Parking Requirements



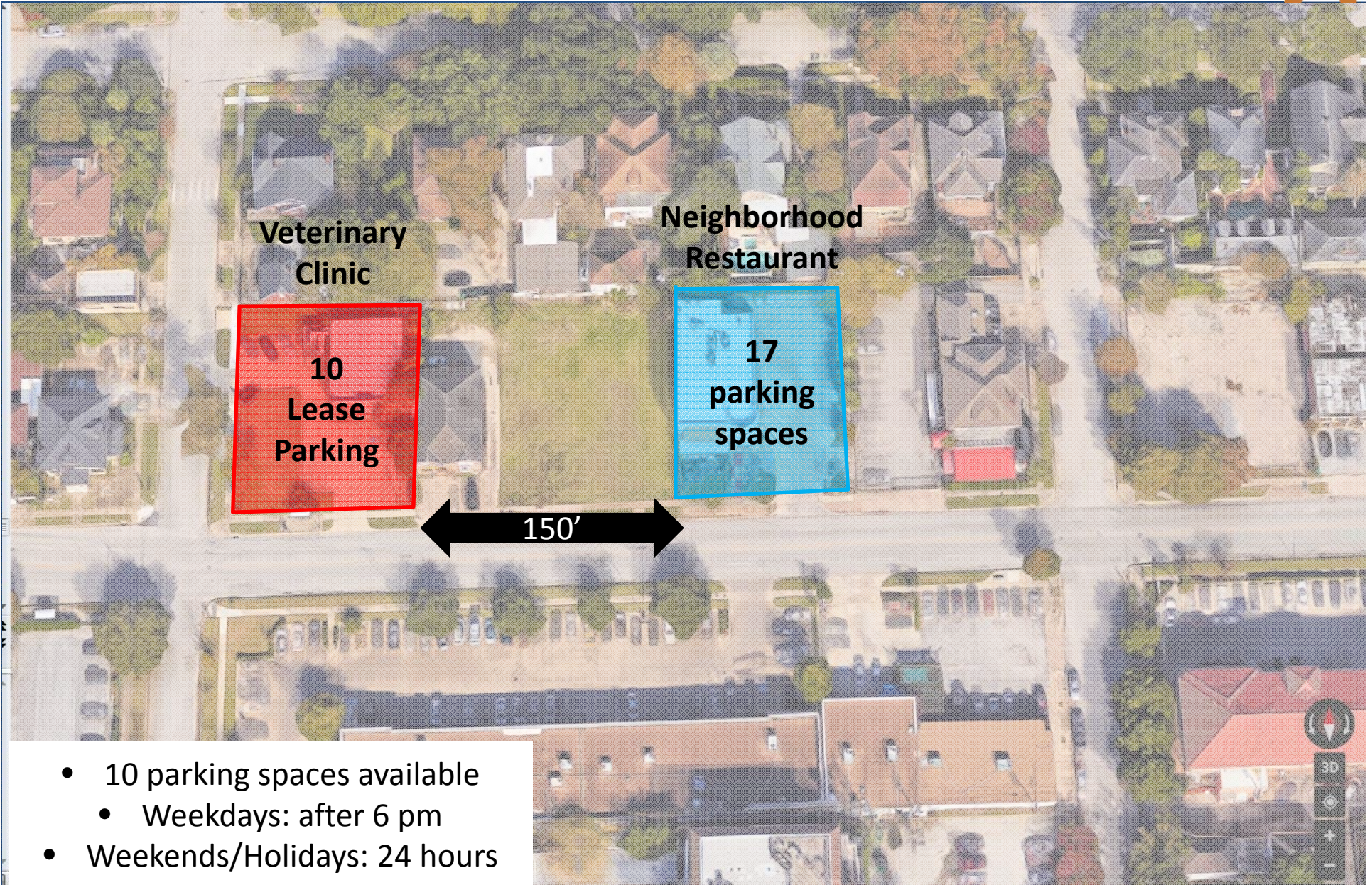
Challenges: Ordinance Parking Requirements



- Not account for unique context
- Encourages auto-centric development



Shared Parking



Challenges: Shared Parking



- The strict time frame requirements make this option less feasible

Parking Variance



LEASED AND ON-STREET PARKING SUMMARY

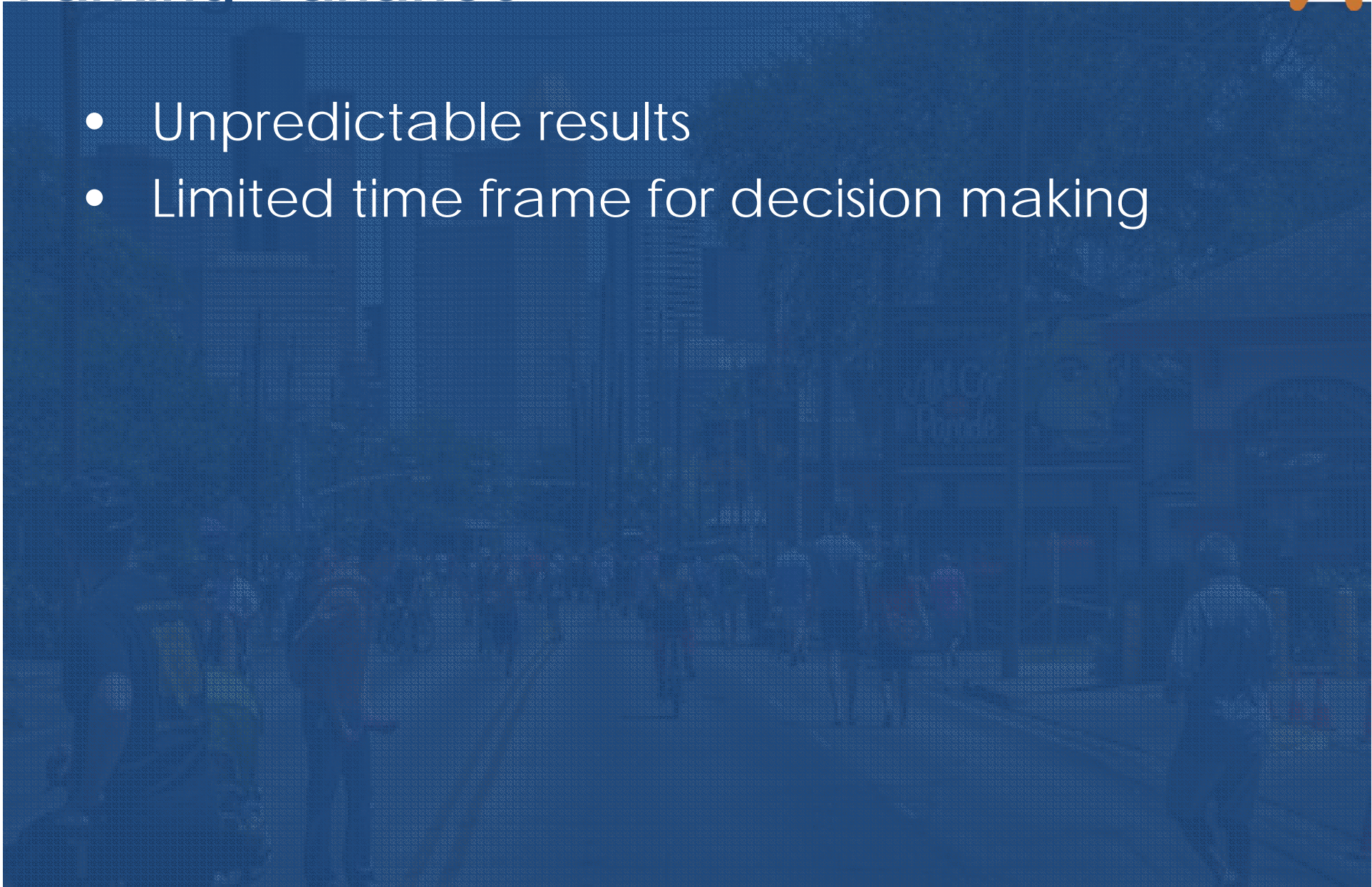
- A** 16 leased spaces all hours and 7 bike racks (4 bikes per rack)
- B** 29 leased spaces after 6pm
- C** 73 street parking on 19th between Rutland and Ashland
- D** 28 street parking on Ashland between 18th and 20th St.
- E** 35 street parking on Rutland between 18th and 20th St.
- 181** total available spaces

Required Parking Spaces	Provided Parking Spaces
54	45 + 7 Bike Racks

Challenges: Parking Variance



- Unpredictable results
- Limited time frame for decision making





Discussion



- Have we defined the problem correctly?
- Did we capture the problems caused by the City's existing building line and parking requirements correctly?

Homework



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VII. Upcoming Topics



- CoH Ordinance Constraints
- Case Studies in Houston
- Best Practices of Other Cities

VIII. Public Comment

