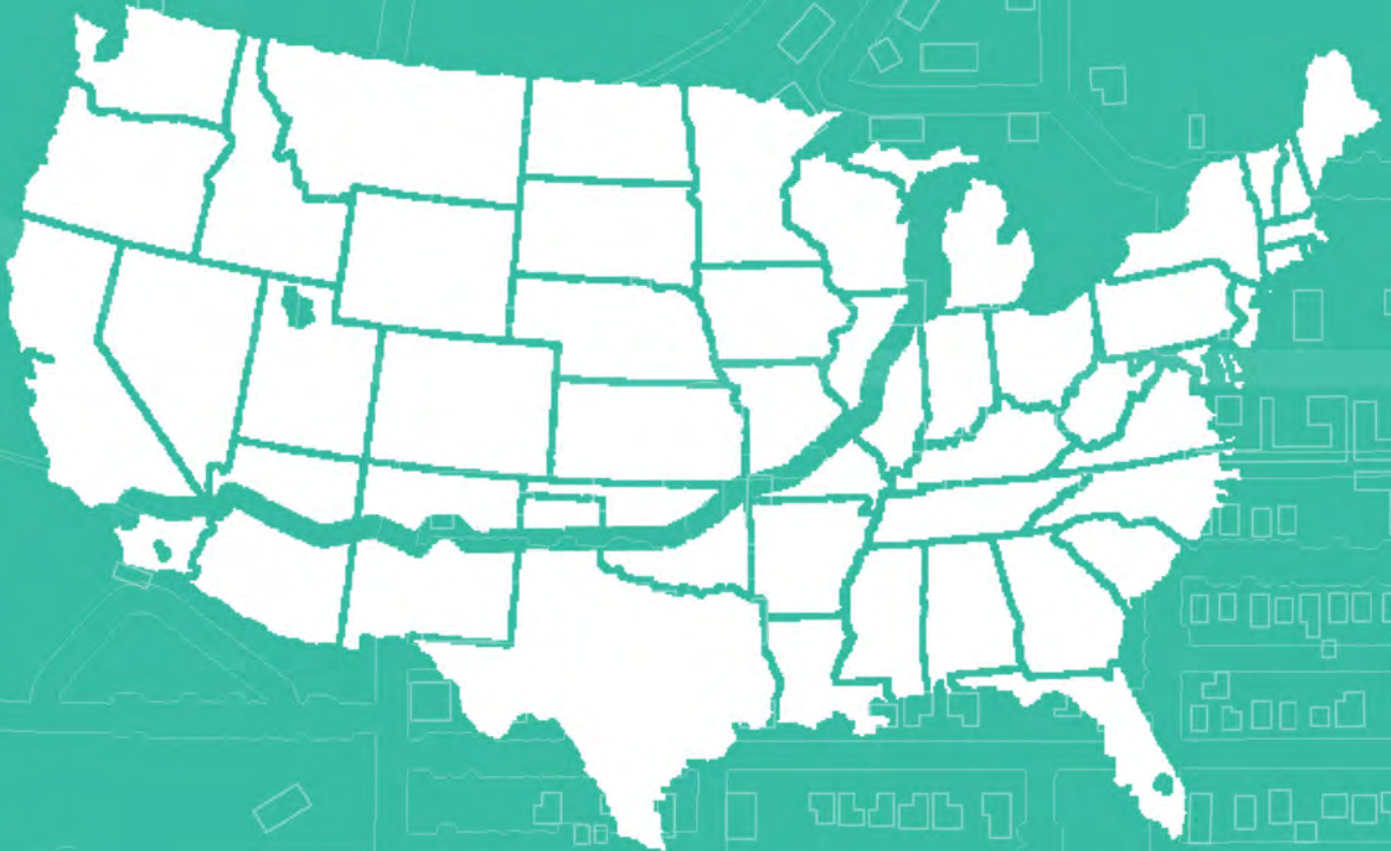


EL RENO

SUNSET DRIVE/ROUTE 66



City of El Reno
Association of Central Oklahoma Governments
OU Institute for Quality Communities
höffnerdesignstudio

CONTENTS

About CERI	1
Project Introduction	2
Recommendations Summary	4
Funding & Implementation	6
Sunset Drive Study Area	8
Sequential Views: Existing	10
Character Areas	16
Streetscape Concepts	25
Street Features	26
Node 1	28
Node 2	34
Sequential Views: Proposed	40
Research & Engagement	45
Community Engagement	46
El Reno Assets	54
Historic Context	56
Urban Form Analysis	58
Route 66 Traveler Perspectives	60
Route 66 Best Practices	62
Collaborators	69

Digital Supplement:

Additional data and research available as a PDF.



<https://issuu.com/ouiqc/docs/elreno-websupplement>

CERI: Community Economic Resiliency Initiative

In 2021, the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) initiated the Community Economic Resiliency Initiative (CERI) to offer municipalities the opportunity to develop plans that model strategic investment, sustainable economic recovery, and long-term resiliency in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

ACOG partnered with the University of Oklahoma Institute for Quality Communities (IQC) and Oklahoma Main Street Center to collaborate in shaping the program and providing services to communities selected to participate in CERI. Through a competitive application process, three cities were selected.

This document compiles recommendations based on research and engagement carried out by the OU Institute for Quality Communities in response to these community-driven proposals.

El Reno: The City of El Reno sought a corridor study of Route 66 west of downtown El Reno, known as Sunset Drive. The IQC team conducted regular steering committee meetings, stakeholder interviews with local institutions, design workshops for the public and for high school students, and additional research. The process resulted in “three pillars” for Sunset Drive including safety, economic development, and public image. These goals were explored through proposals for new streetscapes and development patterns.

Guthrie: The City of Guthrie sought a plan for a new cultural and recreational area for “The Elbow,” an area west of downtown that was previously an African American community before it was condemned after a century of flooding. The IQC team conducted extensive historical research and interviews. The process resulted in recommendations for cultural and recreational trails in the Elbow, as well as an augmented reality platform for experiencing the Elbow’s history. Additional urban design recommendations are proposed to tie the recreational area to downtown Guthrie and beyond.

Harrah: The City of Harrah sought a plan for its downtown, known as “Sweeney Switch.” The IQC team conducted monthly steering committee meetings and attended two local festivals to engage with residents, in addition to research and data collection. The process resulted in “five big moves” to advance Sweeney Switch, covering urban design, development, and parking strategies.

Project Introduction

The City of El Reno's Comprehensive Plan, Route to the Future, underpinned by significant community engagement, identifies Sunset Drive as a target area for redevelopment. Sunset Drive/Route 66 is, in itself, a cultural resource with a local and national history and significance. The road also connects other cultural resources in the community. This proximity positions Sunset Drive for redevelopment that can directly benefit the community while targeting tourism income.

The one-mile corridor analysis contained in this report examines the Route 66 connection from Petree Plaza and the historic central business district to Adams Park. The purpose of this inquiry is to provide recommendations for the Sunset Drive corridor based on information in the Comprehensive Plan and new research by the project team. That research consists of historic and demographic research; meetings with the community and stakeholder groups; and coordination with a Steering Committee comprised of El Reno leaders.

The report is prepared directly for the City of El Reno Administration and the Steering Committee and reflects the desires and aspirations of the community that arose through community engagement. The feedback received from the community settled into Three Pillars for Sunset Drive, on the facing page.

Through a series of short term and long-range actions, the report imagines a Sunset Drive that is a clearly defined district with a beginning and an end, with all the accoutrements supporting a district "brand." It is a place where motorized vehicles slow down a bit and the safety and comfort of pedestrians and cyclists has increased priority. It is a place that supports development that will encourage people to linger and walk from venue to venue. It is a unique, memorable place that recognizes where Route 66 came from while anticipating what it means to remain relevant.

The intent is that the report will help City Administration and the community to identify, plan and prioritize projects and policies that will lead to sustainable success of this proposed district.

The funding for this report was provided through a grant from ACOG [Association of Central Oklahoma Governments] managed by IQC [Institute for Quality Communities] at the University of Oklahoma Christopher C. Gibbs College of Architecture. The work in this report was accomplished by graduate students in planning, architecture, and landscape architecture with professional and academic oversight.

Sunset Drive Pillars

Each pillar represents a key priority that emerged from community engagement and research, toward the goal of a prosperous Sunset Drive.

Safe Place for All

Make a safe streetscape for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists.

Pedestrians feel safe crossing the street

Pedestrians feel safe walking on the sidewalks

Cyclists feel safe riding along or crossing the street

Lighting levels impact a sense of security for non-motorists and motorists alike

Community and Economic Development

Create an environment to attract entrepreneurs and have them be successful.

Public commitment to creating a district attracts entrepreneurs to Sunset Drive

Businesses and Services on Sunset serve tourists and locals alike

Public Image

Create an Identifiable district for both locals and travelers.

There is civic pride for Sunset Drive

Properties are well maintained along Sunset Drive

When you experience Sunset Drive...

Tourists respond to cues inviting them to stop and get out of their cars.

Tourists easily navigate Route 66 in El Reno.

People have multiple reasons to stop, linger, spend money, and depart El Reno with good memories.

People learn something or develop civic pride about something particular to El Reno.

Recommendations Summary

The list of recommendations for Sunset Drive are based on feedback from the steering committee. This matrix categorizes recommendations based on their fit with the Three Pillars for Sunset Drive. It also categorizes them based on whether they fit with categories of "Immediately Actionable," "Resiliency or Environment," and "Infrastructure."

Specific Recommendations						
	A Safe Place For All	Comm & Econ Dev	Public Image	Immed. Actionable	Resilience/Environment	Infrastructure
Connect bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to paths, sidewalks, trails, bike lanes outside the study area.	X	X	X			X
Mitigate watershed to North Canadian River [detention; constructed wetland]	X	X	X			X
Community cleanup event ahead of cultural events.		X	X	X		
Reallocate Right of Way to include bicycle lanes, sidewalks, buffer zone, one vehicular lane each way and center turn lane	X	X	X		X	X
Lower speed limit to 25 MPH; restripe to appropriate lane width	X	X		X		X
Crosswalks	X	X	X	X		X
Prioritize protected crosswalks; Study stop signs versus traffic lights with pedestrian controls [stop signs safer for pedestrian users of crossing VS. convenience that traffic light affords motorists who would otherwise need to stop regardless of whether anyone is using crosswalk]. Top priority routes include Intrada to Dollar General and CBD [could be stop sign]; Choctaw and Sunset Drive [High School and Intrada, crossing signal needed.]	X	X	X			X
Create an on-brand system of support signage - wayfinding, interpretive or didactic markers at points of cultural interest/link to enhanced online information; Kiosks at key points disseminating "things to do/visit" in Sunset District [Initial placement: Petree Plaza and west Plaza [bookend sculpture adjacent to Adams Park]	X	X	X			X
Provide EV Charging stations at Community Parking, e.g. Petree Plaza		X	X		X	X
Encourage initial development in a cluster to facilitate the notion of walking from venue to venue		X	X		X	
Bookend/Instagram moment at Adams Park end to compliment Petree Park 66.		X	X			

Sunset Drive District / Overlay Zoning Ordinance Recommendations						
	A Safe Place For All	Comm & Econ Dev	Public Image	Immed. Actionable	Resilience/Environment	Infrastructure
Create an official Sunset Drive District - zoning overlay; Neighborhood/Business Association with chair/committee or E.D./B.O.D.; create a brand/logo and use it consistently across all platforms [signage, promotional materials, online/media		X	X			X
Review ordinance re: businesses that abut residential areas, i.e. light intrusion visual buffer.			X	X		
Adopt telecommuting enabling features at Sunset District - community broadband; ease restriction on in-home occupation [signs, employees, parking]; allow accessory commercial units; expedite temporary uses;		X	X	X	X	X
Increase density of neighborhoods within walking distance to Sunset - Allow accessory dwelling units; innerblock development; pocket neighborhoods, etc.		X	X	X	X	
Zoning: Consider establishing a minimum height and maximum setback for buildings [walkability]	X	X	X	X		
Encourage/incentivize reduction in the number of times a car can cross the pedestrian path, i.e. establish maximum number and maximum width of curb cuts; encourage/incentivize/invest in community parking lots	X		X	X		
Encourage/incentivize enhanced streetscape amenities outside R.O.W. Streetscape buffer zone is narrow because of property line position, making it challenging to support healthy tree conditions and safe amenity zone.	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mitigate Urban Heat Island Effect: Encourage less/lighter color paving		X	X	X	X	
Mitigate Urban Heat Island Effect: Replace redundant paving with landscaping		X	X		X	
Mitigate Urban Heat Island Effect: Encourage canopy trees, esp to shade paving		X	X	X	X	
Mitigate Urban Heat Island Effect: Adopt a tree "canopy goal," i.e. 30% coverage		X	X	X	X	
Encourage white roofs; vegetated roofs; or "cool" [heat reflecting] roofs		X	X	X	X	
Deploy Community Parking Lots - Owned/maintained by City of El Reno; district overlay that reduces/eliminates requirement for on-site parking incentivizes development; legitimizes getting out of car and walking to more than one destination; reduces number of times vehicular path crosses pedestrian path; allows for density	X	X	X	X	X	X

Funding & Implementation

The report recommends a variety of actions, largely related to streetscapes, additional policy changes, and private property development. Funding and implementation will require a variety of funding sources, including city funds, government and non-profit grants, donations, and private sector participation. Some implementation measures rely on non-profit organizers and volunteers.

These pages list relevant grants and programs outside of the City of El Reno that can support the projects.

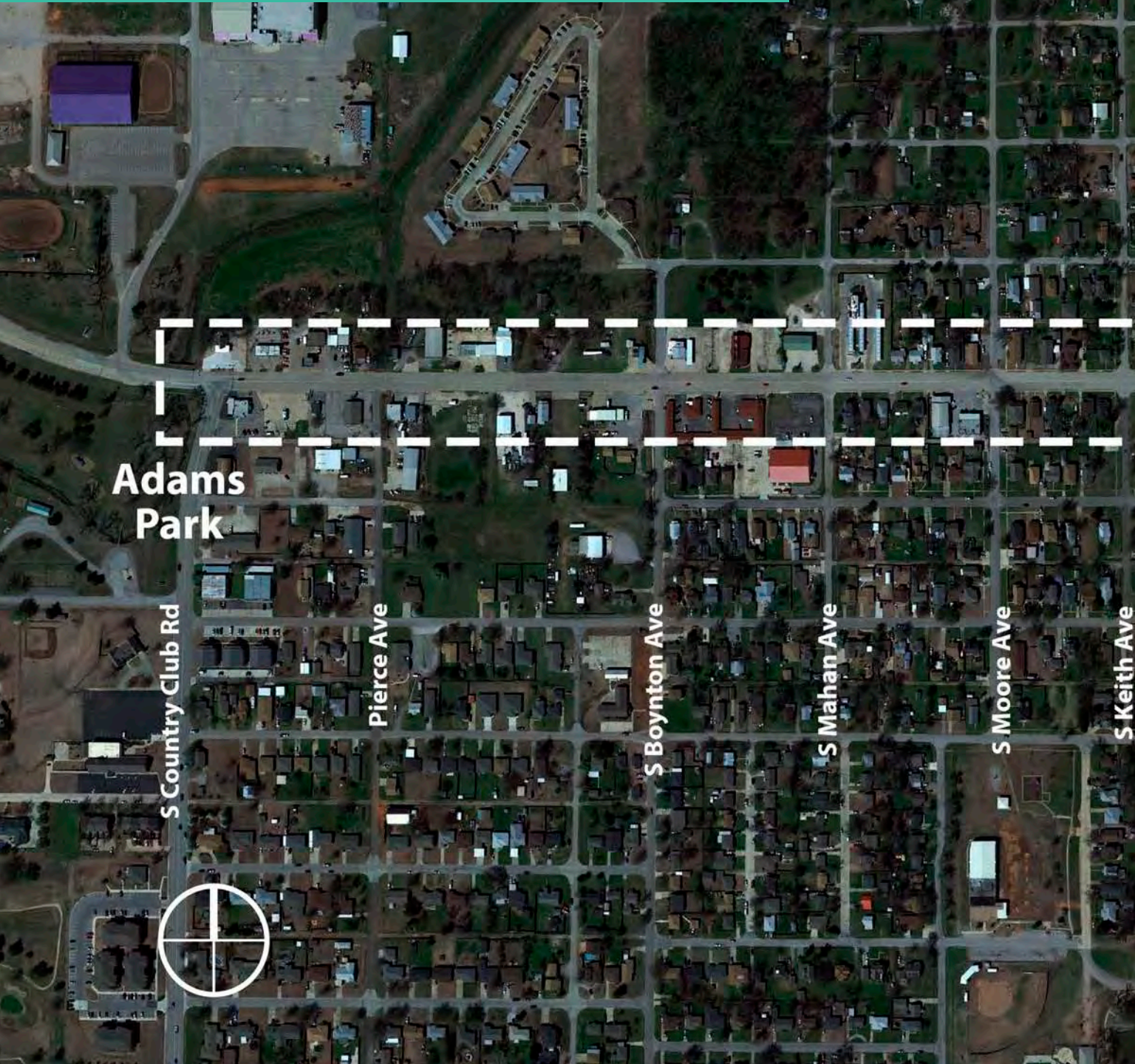
Funding & Resources Guide	
Type of Project	Funding and Resources
<p>Interim Design Recommendations & Special Programs</p> <p>(Short-term placemaking, streetscapes, public art, events, activations, etc.)</p>	<p>Local Financial Support Donors and sponsors for special programs may include local businesses, service providers, banks, utility providers, nearby auto dealerships, charitable foundations, etc.</p> <p>Local Volunteerism and In-Kind Labor Don't forget the value of in-kind contributions of materials, equipment, and labor from skilled local workers for programs and interim design changes.</p> <p>Placemaking Grant The National Association of Realtors provides funds up to \$5,000 for eligible parks, trails, and play/fitness areas projects. Applicants must coordinate with the local Realtor Association to apply. The placemaking grant offers up to two levels of funding.</p> <p>AARP Community Challenge The AARP Community Challenge provides grants to fund public places and transportation-related projects. Public places and transportation-related projects include the following: 1) open spaces, 2) parks, and 3) bike/walk mobility.</p> <p>Community Arts Grants The Oklahoma Arts Council provides matching funds for programs, artist fees, and more which could support programs, organizations, or public art projects.</p>
<p>Interim Building Improvements</p> <p>(Landscaping, paint, touch-ups, and signage)</p>	<p>Paint Oklahoma Beautiful Keep Oklahoma Beautiful runs this grant program providing paint for community structures. Local volunteers complete the painting project.</p> <p>Create a Local Landscape/Facade Incentive Municipal funds can incentivize landscape, signage, and facade enhancements.</p>

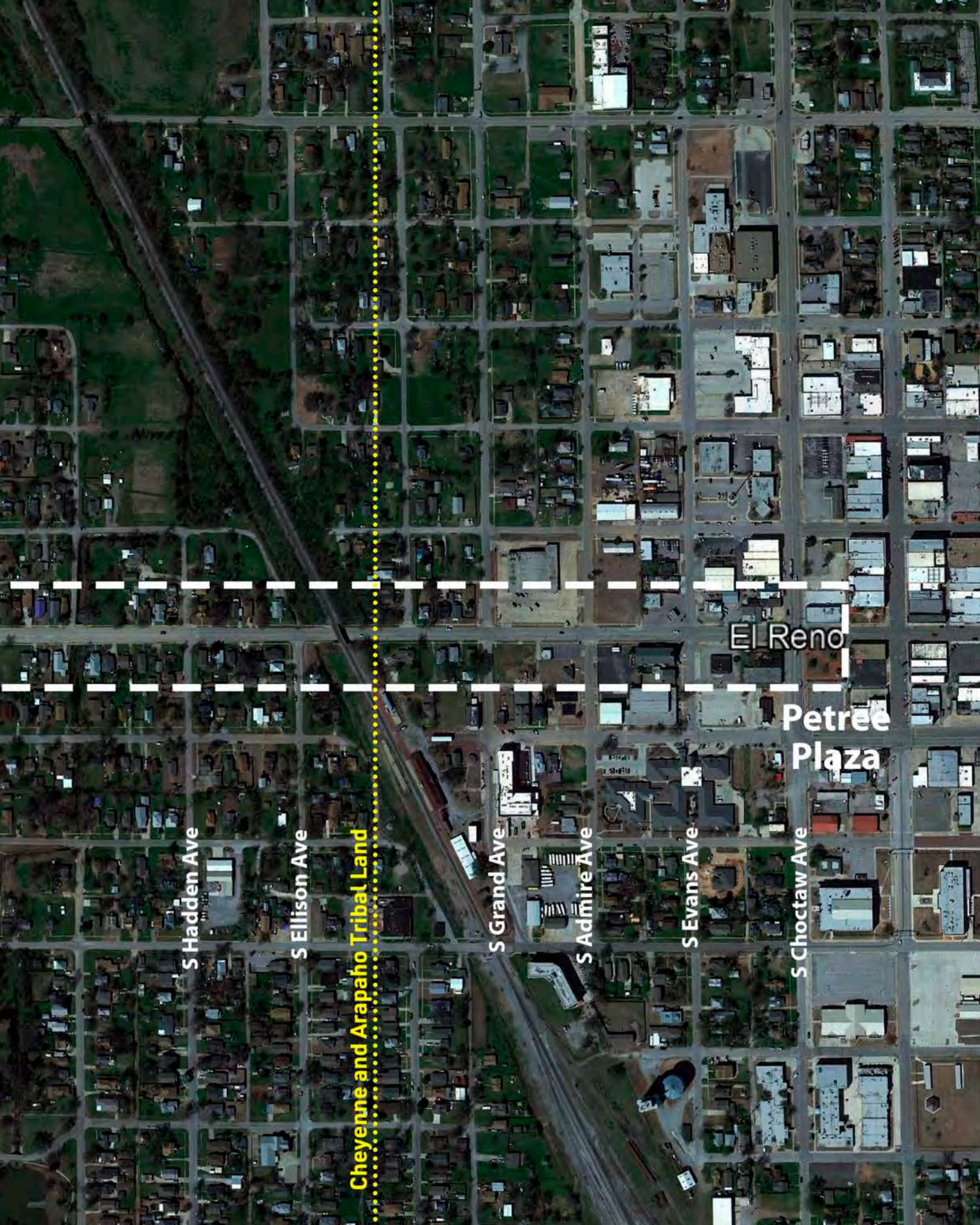
Funding & Resources Guide

Type of Project	Funding and Resources
<p>Long-Term Design Recommendations</p> <p>(Permanent Streetscapes, Placemaking, etc.)</p>	<p>Municipal Funding General Obligation Bonds or regular funds from the City of El Reno may be a source of funding for permanent enhancements.</p> <p>Air Quality Small Grant Program ACOG manages a competitive grant program for transportation projects that address long-term reductions in emissions that contribute to ground-level ozone and improve regional air quality.</p> <p>Federal Transportation Funds ACOG can distribute federal transportation funds for local projects based on regional planning goals and priorities. This includes the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) which can fund sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, community improvements, environmental landscapes, and more.</p> <p>Oklahoma Department of Transportation ODOT is currently funding new sidewalks since this portion of Sunset Drive is a state highway.</p> <p>Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Department - Division of State Parks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land & Water Conservation Fund: Reimburses up to 50% of expenses from projects that include acquisition of land and/or development of outdoor recreation facilities. Facilities might include sports facilities, playgrounds, campgrounds, trails, swimming facilities, splash pads, etc. • Recreational Trail Program: Matching grants for local governments for the development or renovation of public outdoor recreational trails and amenities. <p>TSET Healthy Incentive Grants - Communities Sponsored by Oklahoma’s Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust, The TSET Healthy Incentive Grants for Communities provides funds to construct public facilities related to health and wellness. In efforts to promote physical activity opportunities and improve the quality of life among residents, eligible projects include 1) walking trails, 2) sports/recreational facilities, and 3) farmers market.</p>
<p>Major Building Enhancements</p> <p>(Redevelopment Projects)</p>	<p>Historic Tax Credits Properties on the National Register for Historic Places can pursue tax credits which function as a reimbursement of qualifying rehabilitation expenses on approved projects.</p>
<p>Route 66 Related Improvements</p>	<p>Oklahoma Route 66 Association Contact the Oklahoma Route 66 Association, at http://oklahomaroute66.com</p>

Sunset Drive Study Area

The study area is a one-mile segment of Route 66 that passes through El Reno, Oklahoma. Known as Sunset Drive, it connects two cultural assets: Petree Plaza in the east and Adams Park in the west. El Reno's Comprehensive Plan, Route to the Future, identified Route 66 as an important yet underdeveloped feature of El Reno. Community engagement and research around this corridor informed the recommendations in this report.





Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribal Land

El Reno

Petree Plaza

S Hadden Ave

S Ellison Ave

S Grand Ave

S Admire Ave

S Evans Ave

S Choctaw Ave

Sequential Views

Driver's View Tour of Study Area Existing Conditions





1. Wade Street looking west; Petree Plaza is on the right.



2. Turning from Wade Street to head north on Choctaw Avenue - what is currently happening here to facilitate people getting out of their cars?



3. Turning from Choctaw Avenue onto Sunset Drive. Definition of a district boundary - where should that occur?

4. A handful of larger scale buildings are on the east side of the tracks - the church, Dollar General, and the Fitness Center. There is a moderate affinity with the historic CBD due to proximity.



5. Murals in deteriorating condition; rust stains will be an ongoing challenge. Bridge could use a fresh coat of paint too.



6. Emerging from the underpass, a segment of the Sunset corridor is lined with houses.





7. Deferred maintenance of some properties is evident. Beyond on the north side is “The Lord’s Harvest,” beyond which the corridor changes complexion.



8. Historic Motel on left, [original features no longer evident] and a restaurant - the beginnings of a reason for a traveler to stop.



9. Where are the likely places that people might want to cross the street? Current jaywalking is reported near this position already.

10. Under-developed block at intersection of Boynton and Sunset, looking west.



11. A logical place for a district edge as Adams Park and County Fairgrounds are beyond.



Sunset Drive Character Areas

Sunset Drive has three distinct character areas, based on function and aesthetics. Each character area may require unique streetscape and land use strategies.

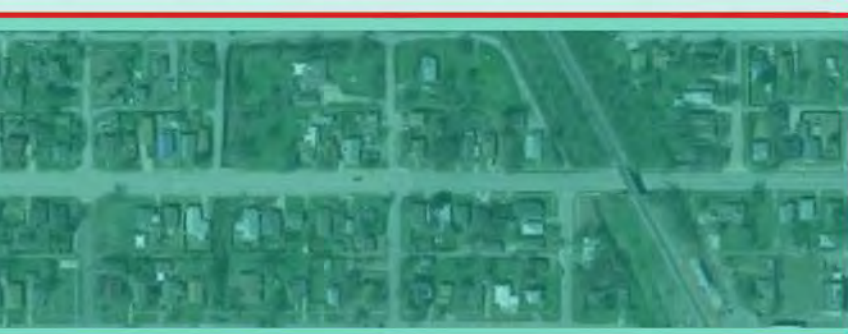
Automobile-Centric



The Automobile-centric area is characterized by its largely automobile-centric businesses.

Located between Adams Park and Mahan Avenue, this area has 15 businesses with 7 of them being car-related, such as a car wash, gas station, truck repair and a drive-in restaurant with no indoor seating. The building construction types range from pole barns to brick buildings/structures and concrete block buildings.

Single Family Residential



The Single-Family Residential area is characterized by the residential neighborhood on Sunset Drive.

Located between Mahan Avenue and Grand Avenue, there are 51 homes. The most common style of home is early 1900s Craftsman Style. There are vacant lots, vacant homes, inhabited homes, and a few other public buildings. There is a sidewalk on both sides of the road in this zone.

Central Business District Adjacent



The Central Business District adjacent area reflects the scale and construction types of a downtown adjacency.

This zone extends from Grand Avenue to Petree Plaza. Located here is a fitness center, the Dollar General, a large Catholic Church, and the Squawk-N-Skoot Chicken Art Installation. There are many different building uses and building construction ranging from brick buildings, concrete block and natural stone buildings. This zone also includes a patchwork of sidewalks, vacant buildings, and lots.



Automobile-Centric Area

The challenges posed in this area are connectivity, pedestrian access, sidewalks, vehicular traffic, signage, wayfinding, parking lot maintenance, empty lots, building setbacks, vacant buildings, and lack of identity.



Typical view. Sunset Drive and Boynton Avenue.



Single-Family Residential Area

Challenges this area faces include connectivity, sidewalks, street condition, vacant lots, older murals, wayfinding, vehicular focus, pedestrian accessibility.



Typical view. Sunset Drive near Hadden.



Business District Adjacent Area

Challenges present in this zone include identity, pedestrian access, connectivity, street and sidewalk condition, vehicular focus, areas with no sidewalk, older murals



Typical view. Sunset Drive at Evans.



Looking toward Petree Plaza.

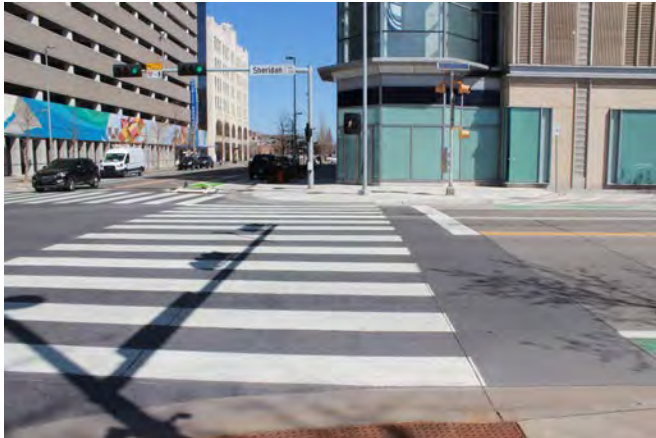




STREETSCAPE CONCEPTS & GUIDANCE

Street Design Features

The following street design features appear in streetscape concepts for Sunset Drive.



Boldly striped crosswalks increase visibility to both drivers and pedestrians. Project 180, Oklahoma City.



Center turn lanes help move more traffic with fewer lanes. North Carolina.



Bicycle lanes can offer a range of protection, from a simple striped lane to a physical separation. Norman.



Route 66 Gateway creates a sense of arrival. Tulsa.



Street trees, lighting, and furnishing can be located in an amenity zone adjacent to the sidewalk. Project 180, Oklahoma City.



Bicycle parking can be located in the pedestrian amenity zone. Project 180, Oklahoma City.



Trash receptacle in the pedestrian amenity zone. Project 180, Oklahoma City.



Electric vehicle charging stations are a modern convenience and destination for drivers. Tulsa.



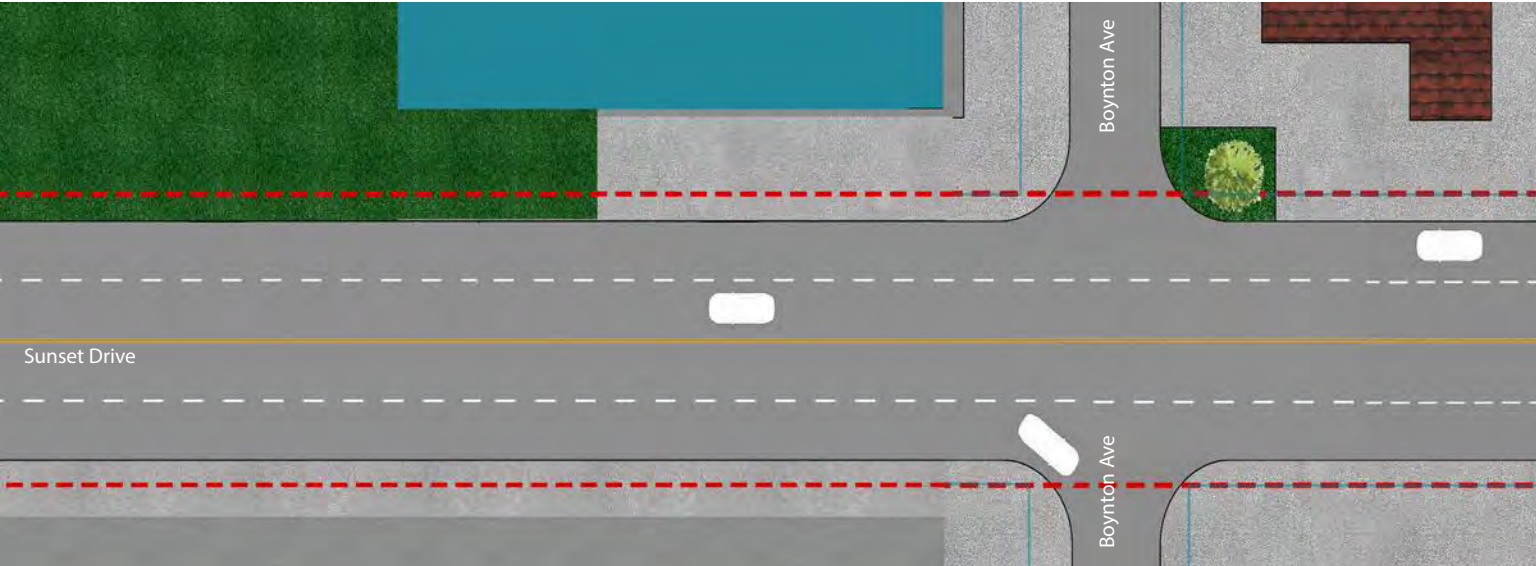
Street lighting is needed to serve both drivers and pedestrians. Project 180, Oklahoma City.



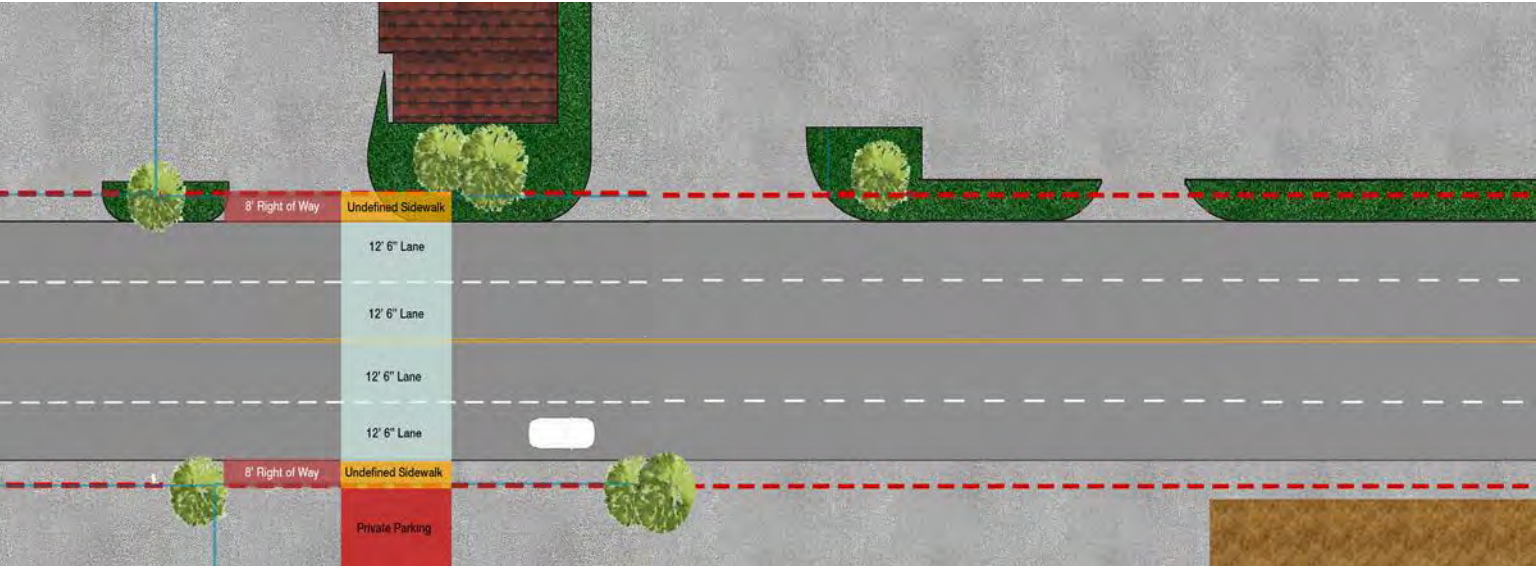
Two benches facing each other is a nice feature in a pedestrian amenity zone. Project 180, Oklahoma City.

Node 1: Existing Conditions

Current streetscape conditions near Boynton Avenue in the Automobile-Centric Character Area.

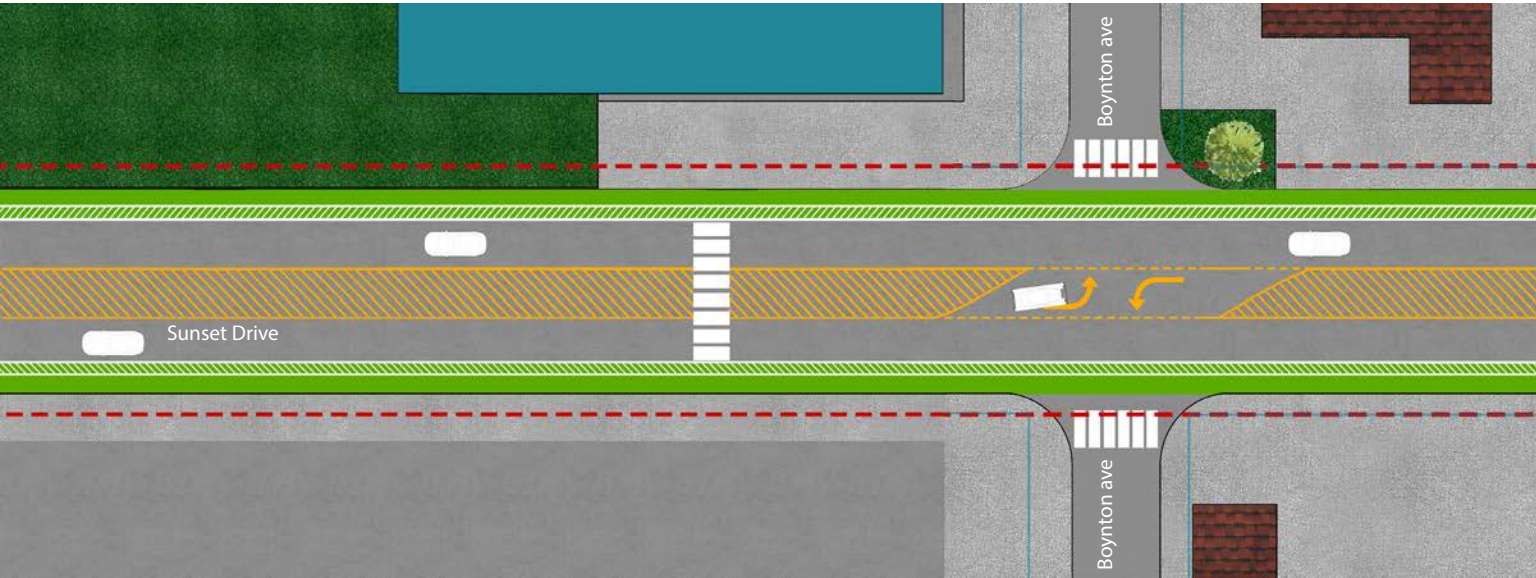


Topic	Condition
Environment	An automobile dominant environment: few cues exist to help drivers understand that pedestrians and cyclists may be present
Traffic Lanes	4 lanes of traffic
Right-of-Way	Right of way is 66'; with roadway approximately 51' from back of curb to back of curb; leaving 7.5' pedestrian zone on each side of street
Traffic Speeds	35 MPH Speed Limit [anecdotal evidence suggests that actual driving speed is considerably faster]
Crosswalks	Absent or deteriorating crosswalks, scheduled to be addressed through the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) grant
Sidewalks	Sidewalks are in disrepair, scheduled to be replaced through ODOT grant
Driveways	Sidewalks are not clearly delineated where they cross driveways and parking lots; Curb cuts [driveways] are excessively wide, creating a dangerous condition for vehicle/pedestrian accidents
Zoning Overlays	No specific design controls.
ADA Accessibility	Pedestrian zone is not ADA compliant
Drainage	Storm drainage to North Canadian River: concrete box structure beneath Sunset Drive connects open flow-ways on each side of street.

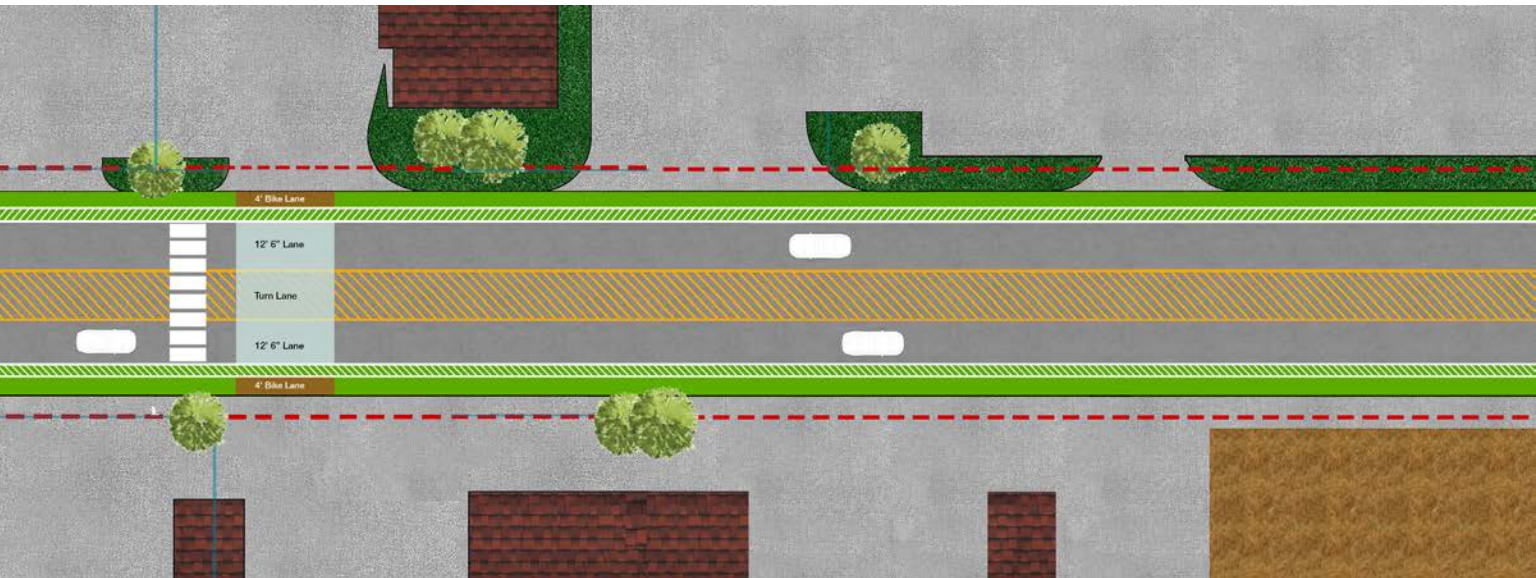


Node 1: Interim Recommendations

Interim recommendations are advancements that can be made without moving curbs, mostly with paint.



Topic	Proposed Interim Features
Environment	An environment that introduces cues to increase drivers' awareness that pedestrians/cyclists are present
Traffic Lanes	Reduce to 2 lanes of traffic and center turn lane, bicycle lanes
Right-of-Way	Curbs remain where they are; "left over" street width becomes a striped off buffer zone between bicycle lane and vehicular traffic lane; 7.5' pedestrian zone on each side of street remains as is.
Traffic Speeds	Lower Speed limit from 35 MPH to 25 MPH.
Crosswalks	ODOT funded crosswalks are constructed
Sidewalks	ODOT funded sidewalks and curb ramps are constructed
Driveways	Delineation of sidewalks will be improved through construction joints where they cross existing driveways and parking lots. Property owners may already participate in incentives to replace redundant paving with landscaping
Zoning Overlays	New district zoning overlay limits width and number of curb cuts.
ADA Accessibility	Pedestrian zone is ADA compliant
Drainage	Storm drainage to North Canadian River: concrete box structure beneath Sunset Drive connects open flow-ways on each side of street.



Action Items

1. Repaint the lanes.
2. Resolve to change speed limit to 25 MPH, change out signs.
3. Construct Crosswalks, Construct sidewalks
4. Public outreach campaign to raise awareness of new walkability features along Sunset.
5. ODOT funded sidewalks and curb ramps are constructed
6. Create District Zoning overlay; initiate District Committee
7. Engage consultant services to develop district identity package
8. Storm drainage to North Canadian River: concrete box structure beneath Sunset Drive connects open flow-ways on each side of street.
9. Begin a hydrology study to determine best practices to mitigate stormwater management, while prioritizing health of North Canadian River, meanwhile, maintain flow way landscaping; keep litter clear possibly through partnership between City of El Reno and District Committee.

Node 1: Long-Range Recommendations

Long-range recommendations are more complete and transformational long-term visions for the streetscape.



Topic	Proposed Long-Range Features
Environment	An environment that features many cues to help all users to engage in safer street-use behavior, raising awareness of other modes of transportation; pedestrian, bicycle, automobile, motorcycle, scooter, etc.
Traffic Lanes	Reduce to 2 lanes of traffic and center turn lane, bicycle lanes
Right-of-Way	Curbs remain where they are; "left over" street width becomes a striped off buffer zone between bicycle lane and vehicular traffic lane; 7.5' pedestrian zone on each side of street remains as is.
Traffic Speeds	Lower Speed limit from 35 MPH to 25 MPH.
Crosswalks	ODOT funded crosswalks are constructed
Sidewalks	ODOT funded sidewalks and curb ramps are constructed
Driveways	Delineation of sidewalks will be improved through construction joints where they cross existing driveways and parking lots. Property owners may already participate in incentives to replace redundant paving with landscaping
Zoning Overlays	New district zoning overlay limits width and number of curb cuts.
ADA Accessibility	Pedestrian zone is ADA compliant
Drainage	Storm drainage to North Canadian River: concrete box structure beneath Sunset Drive connects open flow-ways on each side of street.



Action Items

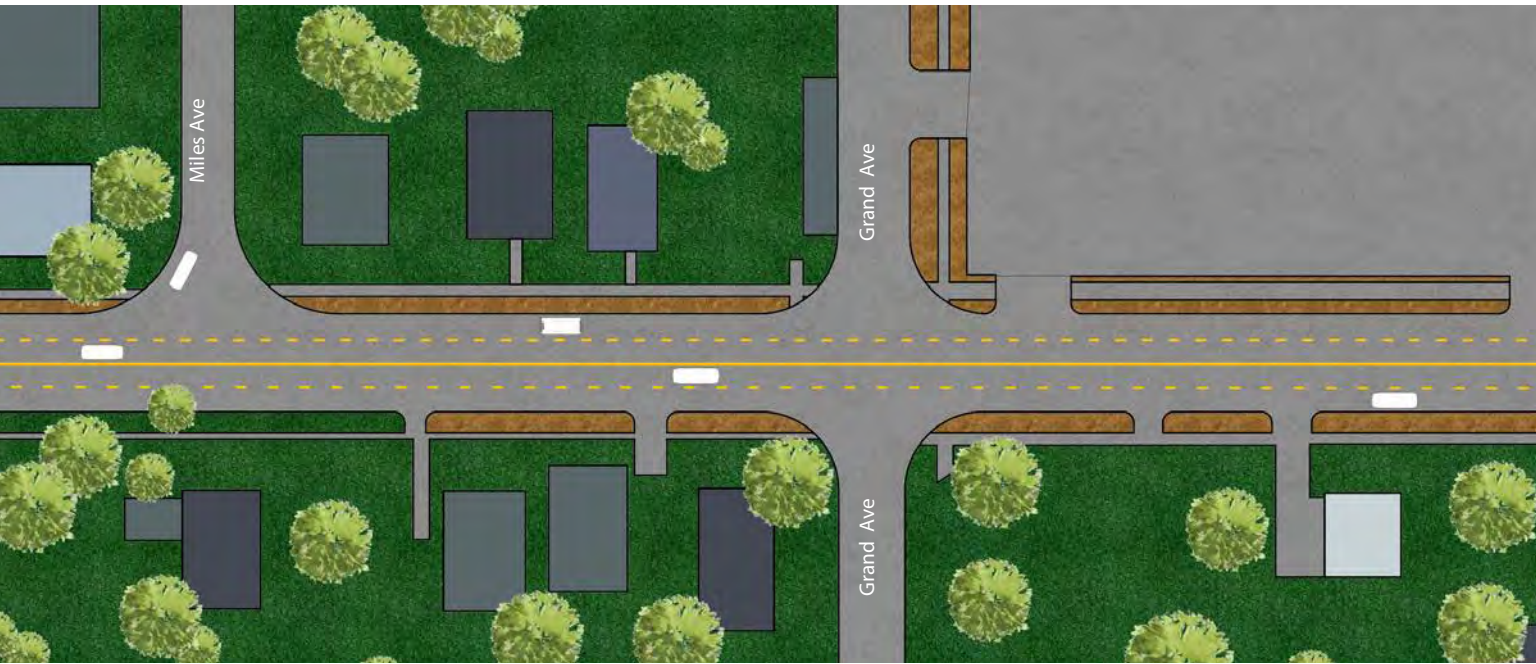
1. Relocate curbs to new position, increasing width of streetscape buffer zone, construct curb cuts that are in compliance with District Zoning Overlay
2. Install Streetscape Buffer Trees
3. Decorate Crosswalks with on-brand graphics or art
4. Continue public outreach campaign re: walkability, add brand-awareness content.
5. Develop on-brand sidewalk color/material/joint pattern/tactile warnings to be implemented for future sidewalk replacement
6. Revisit District Zoning overlay; update, revise as needed
7. Implement recommendations of hydrology study

Node 2: Existing Conditions

Current streetscape conditions near the railroad tracks in the Single-Family Residential Area.



Topic	Condition
Environment	An automobile dominant environment; obvious single family residential use may increase understanding that children, pedestrians and cyclists may be present
Traffic Lanes	4 lanes of traffic
Right-of-Way	Right of way is 66'; with roadway approximately 51' from back of curb to back of curb; leaving 7.5' pedestrian zone on each side of street
Traffic Speeds	35 MPH Speed Limit [anecdotal evidence suggests that actual driving speed is considerably faster]
Crosswalks	Absent or deteriorating crosswalks, scheduled to be addressed through the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) grant
Sidewalks	Sidewalks are in disrepair, scheduled to be replaced through ODOT grant
Rail Crossing	Steel railroad overpass atop concrete headwalls. Murals on the concrete headwalls are rust-stained from the bridge structure, faded and delaminating from surface. Railroad crossing is a streetscape width pinch point
Drainage	Vegetated storm drainage channel flows along west side of railroad tracks, crossing beneath the street in a concrete box structure.
Residential Frontage	Streetscape resolves to the residential property in the same way it does the commercial - retaining walls near the bridge is the main exception
Land Use	Housing is primarily single family detached



Node 2: Interim Recommendations

Interim recommendations are advancements that can be made without moving curbs, mostly with paint.



Topic	Condition
Environment	An automobile dominant environment; obvious single family residential use may increase understanding that children, pedestrians and cyclists may be present
Traffic Lanes	Reduce to 2 lanes of traffic and center turn lane, bicycle lanes
Right-of-Way	Curbs remain where they are; "left over" street width becomes a striped off buffer zone between bicycle lane and vehicular traffic lane; 7.5' pedestrian zone on each side of street remains as is.
Traffic Speeds	Lower Speed limit from 35 MPH to 25 MPH
Crosswalks	ODOT funded crosswalks are constructed
Sidewalks	ODOT funded sidewalks and curb ramps are constructed; ADA Compliance
Rail Crossing	Murals at railroad overpass are replaced with new art. Railroad crossing remains a pinch point
Drainage	Remains the same.
Residential Frontage	Remains the same.
Land Use	Housing remains primarily single family detached



Action Items

1. Restripe lanes.
2. Resolve to change speed limit to 25 MPH, change out signs.
3. Construct Crosswalks, Construct sidewalks
4. Public outreach campaign to raise awareness of new walkability features along Sunset.
5. ODOT funded sidewalks and curb ramps are constructed
6. Create District Zoning overlay; allow/encourage/incentivize Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), "pocket" developments [densifying measures], initiate District Committee
7. Engage consultant services to develop district identity package
8. Storm drainage to North Canadian River: concrete box structure beneath Sunset Drive connects open flow-ways on each side of street.
9. New mural [temporary solution, 8 years expected lifespan]
10. Begin coordinating a plan for eventual railroad bridge replacement that spans at least the full right-of-way (ROW) so sidewalks, buffer zone and bicycle lanes can continue under bridge as a consistent streetscape section. Consider physical barrier between bicycle and vehicular lanes. Plan for lighting and art/beautification as part of the project.
11. Begin a hydrology study to determine best practices to mitigate stormwater management, while prioritizing health of North Canadian River, meanwhile, maintain flow way landscaping; keep litter clear - possibly through partnership between City of El Reno and District Committee
12. Encourage/incentivize streetscape enhancement on private side of sidewalk, e.g. Eastern Redbuds at half the spacing of streetscape buffer trees

Node 2: Long-Range Recommendations

Long-range recommendations are more complete and transformational long-term visions for the streetscape.



Topic	Condition
Environment	An environment that introduces cues to increase drivers' awareness that pedestrians/cyclists are present
Traffic Lanes	Reduce to 2 lanes of traffic and center turn lane, bicycle lanes
Right-of-Way	Curbs remain where they are; "left over" street width becomes a striped off buffer zone between bicycle lane and vehicular traffic lane; 7.5' pedestrian zone on each side of street remains as is.
Traffic Speeds	Lower Speed limit from 35 MPH to 25 MPH
Crosswalks	ODOT funded crosswalks are constructed
Sidewalks	ODOT funded sidewalks and curb ramps are constructed; ADA Compliance
Rail Crossing	Construct rail underpass improvements.
Drainage	Remains the same.
Residential Frontage	Understory trees behind sidewalks differentiate residential streetscape from commercial
Land Use	Population density has doubled in ¼ mile offset from Sunset Drive, increasing economic health of the district



Action Items

1. Relocate curbs to new position, increasing width of streetscape buffer zone, construct curb cuts that are in compliance with District Zoning Overlay
2. Install Streetscape Buffer Trees
3. Decorate Crosswalks with on-brand graphics or art
4. Continue public outreach campaign re: walkability, add brand-awareness content.
5. Develop on-brand sidewalk color/material/joint pattern/tactile warnings to be implemented for future sidewalk replacement
6. Revisit District Zoning overlay; update, revise as needed
7. Determine whether railroad bridge improvements should happen independently or in conjunction with possible bridge improvements by the railroad. Accordingly, construct improvements, including lighting; guardrails of current safety standards; new art project [consider something with a longer lifespan than a mural] Improvements are on-brand with district identity package.
8. Implement recommendations of hydrology study.

Sequential Views of Proposals

Follow a driver and pedestrian view of proposed improvements.

Improved crosswalks and sidewalks near Petree Plaza.

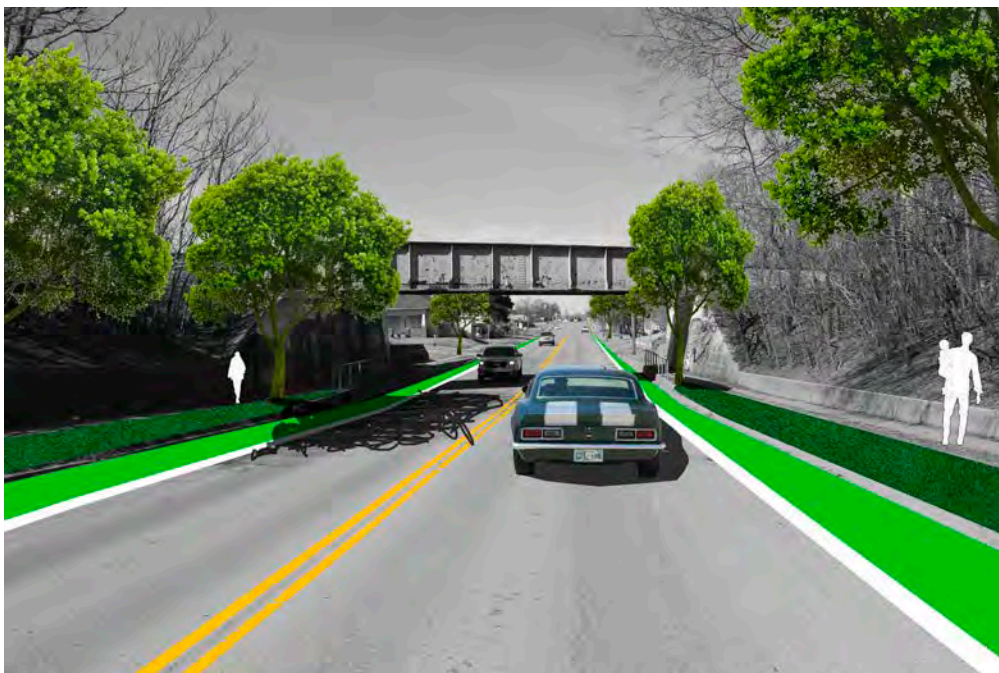


Bike lanes and sidewalk amenities in the business district adjacent area.





Improved crossings turning left to Sunset Drive.



Bike lanes and improved sidewalks crossing into Sunset Drive.

Pedestrian view of improvements to sidewalk near railroad crossing.

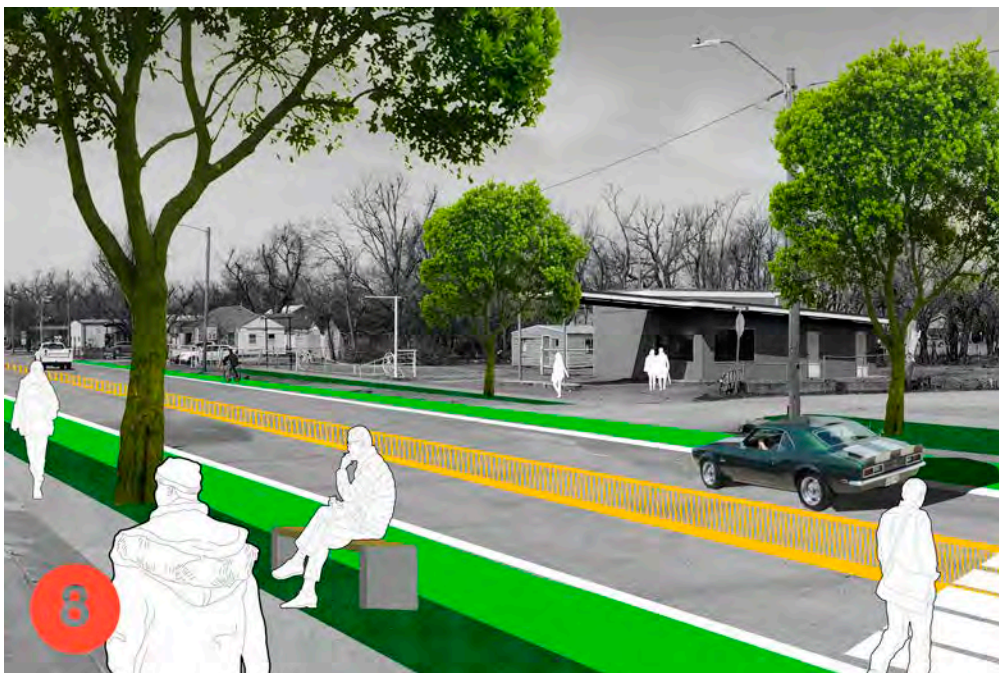


View of striped median buffer, bike lanes, and new street trees in residential area.





Drivers view of consolidated curb cuts and new street trees in commercial area.



Pedestrian view of new sidewalk amenity zones and crosswalks in the commercial area.

Pedestrian view of improvements to sidewalk.



View of new gateway monument near Adams Park.





RESEARCH & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Engagement

This project is informed by community engagement methods that helped the planning team and steering committee understand what the public would like to see in the future of Sunset Drive.

The community engagement strategy for this project centered around a steering committee, interviews with key community leaders, a public workshop, and a high school classroom workshop. In addition, the team maintained a project website and placed articles in the El Reno Tribune.

Overarching Priorities Learned from Community Engagement

The priorities that were heard from the Sunset Drive Steering Committee and other community leaders align with what was discussed at the general community meeting. The people of El Reno desire improved quality of life and economic development along Sunset Drive that capitalizes on their current assets and strengthens El Reno's unique identity. The three major themes that we have heard specifically emphasize:

- Pedestrian safety and walkability (artistic crosswalks and lighting, bike lanes, accessible sidewalks, street furniture and landscaping, dog stations and trash cans, etc.)
- Code enforcement (ordinance updates and enforcement, zoning overlays, design review commissions, connecting residents to programs that help pay for house repairs and weatherization, etc.)
- Facilitation of development for Route 66 tourism and local fun (programming, infrastructure, and quality of life improvements that will incentivize businesses to locate in the area)



El Reno Public Schools Superintendent at the Community Meeting



Steering Committee members at the Community Meeting



Community engagement with El Reno High School students.

Community Engagement: An In-Class Group Project

On February 28, 2022, the project team visited two AP English classes at El Reno High School and guided the students in a team project. A short presentation was made about public feedback included in El Reno's Long Range Plan "Route to the Future," and shared information about how the "Three Pillars" of this study arose from own open community engagement event held in El Reno on December 8, 2021.



We brought the large map used at the open public event, as an example of how to record thoughts about improving Sunset Drive. Students were also given 11x17 prints of the map so they could work on the assignment from their desks.

The image on the left was shown to the students to demonstrate options for interacting with the maps.

The students broke up into small groups and spent about 20 minutes working on the project; then we spent about 15 minutes listening to the students present their thoughts and reactions to the map.

1

	A Safe Place for All
X	Community and Economic Development
X	Public Image
	Immediately Actionable
	Resilience / Environment
	Infrastructure

2 Reno Sunset

	A Safe Place for All
X	Community and Economic Development
X	Public Image
	Immediately Actionable
	Resilience / Environment
	Infrastructure

3 rive / U.S. Ro

	A Safe Place for All
X	Community and Economic Development
X	Public Image
	Immediately Actionable
	Resilience / Environment
	Infrastructure

4

	A Safe Place for All
	Community and Economic Development
X	Public Image
	Immediately Actionable
	Resilience / Environment
	Infrastructure

5 Drive / U.S. Route

	A Safe Place for All
X	Community and Economic Development
X	Public Image
	Immediately Actionable
	Resilience / Environment
X	Infrastructure



Overhead sign after going under bridge so it's like a signpost

On our maps make bridge walk instead of

6 Sunset Drive / U.S. Route 66

- X A Safe Place for All
- X Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- X Infrastructure

Sometimes inter-active (making your own)

Family friendly fun for bowling unique food (old fashioned)

Bright neon (radiator springs other neon signs)

PARK CULTURE

Route 66 sign

lot of the cross here, food so has something for kids that have to walk

I walk here during the summer and having a better sidewalk (grit and interlocking tile)

Using murals or beautiful architecture to make the residents feel more at home

making the names of side roads making for easier navigation

7 Sunset Drive / U.S. Route 66

- X A Safe Place for All
- X Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- X Infrastructure

Route 66 sign

dollar store

lot of the cross here, food so has something for kids that have to walk

Route 66

murals or architecture like the residents at home

names of side roads far easier

direction signs - continue the unique shopping - bring attention to the murals that see more hidden other things in town - road quality - car culture

8 Sunset Drive / U.S. Route 66

- X A Safe Place for All
- X Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- X Infrastructure

Sometimes a drive in Tuxedo would be VERY fun

A way to get people to fix the front of their houses/businesses (that pick up on signs, make them nice)

Many drivers for windows that hang down from front

9 El Reno Sunset Drive / U.S. Route 66

- X A Safe Place for All
- X Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- Infrastructure

Many drivers for windows that hang down from front

Signs that are fun

A mural where people can show their own shops

Road Quality

Some murals on the way

Reconnect across from the city?

Colorful crosswalks are way better than white

10 Sunset Drive / U.S. Route 66

- X A Safe Place for All
- X Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- X Infrastructure

11 Sunset Drive / U.S. Route 66

- X A Safe Place for All
- X Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- X Infrastructure

12 Sunset Drive / U.S. Route 66

- X A Safe Place for All
- X Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- X Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- X Infrastructure

13 Sunset Drive / U.S. Route 66

- X A Safe Place for All
- X Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- X Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- Infrastructure

14 Sunset Drive / U.S. Route 66

- X A Safe Place for All
- X Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- X Immediately Actionable
- X Resilience / Environment
- X Infrastructure

Community Engagement: An In-Class Group Project



El Reno High School AP English teacher Brian Rucks visits with one of the student teams.

15

- X A Safe Place for All
- Community and Economic Development
- Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- X Infrastructure

16

- X A Safe Place for All
- Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- Infrastructure

17

- X A Safe Place for All
- Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- X Infrastructure

18

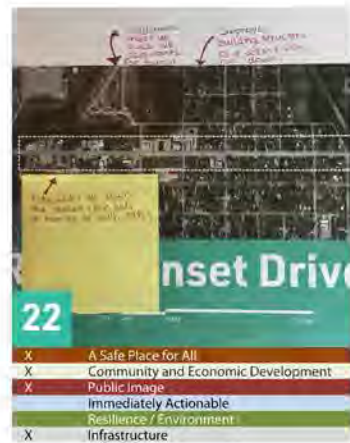
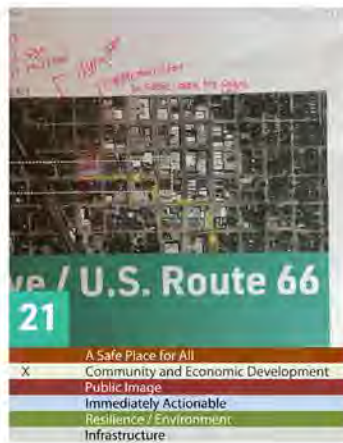
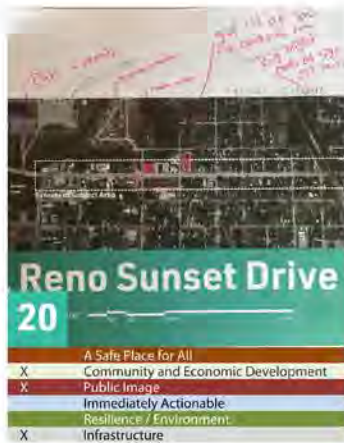
- X A Safe Place for All
- Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- X Infrastructure

19

- X A Safe Place for All
- Community and Economic Development
- Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- X Infrastructure



A representative from one of the student teams presents their assignment results.



Takeaways

There was wide-ranging discussion with the students about issues that they care about and effect them.

1. There was a lot of specific interest in having a Chic-fil-A restaurant near the High School. The students are not supposed to leave town during lunch, but they do anyway, so they can go to their favorite restaurant.
2. Discussion about how residential properties have a different relationship to the street and call for a different streetscape design.
3. Many students are already dialed in to the car-culture aspect of Route 66 and are interested in its history
4. Many students cross Sunset Drive on the way between home and school, and acknowledged that conditions are **unsafe** - crosswalks are unmarked, poorly marked and lacking pedestrian controlled crossing signals.

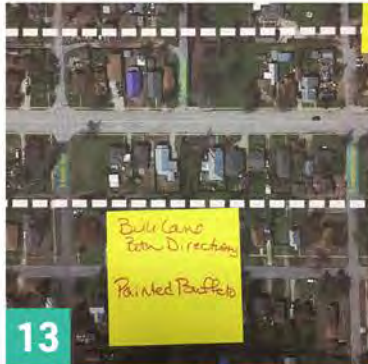
Specific proposals referenced by response number from above

- A. Specific Chain Restaurant: 1, 16, 20
- B. Recreation and Entertainment, i.e. paint ball, bowling, drive-in, pool hall: 1, 5, 7, 9, 20
- C. Branded signage, i.e. district identity, directional, Route 66, High School team: 1, 6, 7, 8, 10, 20
- D. Other restaurants, including local, "unique," Route 66 theme, etc: 2, 7, 10, 22
- E. Redevelop, renovate buildings and properties: 2
- F. Address deferred maintenance, houses, murals: 3, 6, 9, 13, 16, 22
- G. Express community identity, car culture: 4, 8
- H. Specific streetscape items i.e. pedestrian bridge, furniture: 7, 17
- I. Sidewalks, crosswalks, footpaths: 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, 18, 22
- J. Road repairs: 8, 10
- K. Crosswalk call button repair: 11, 12
- L. Get utility improvements teed up for development: 14
- M. Hangout spots for high schoolers: 17, 18
- N. Address pinch point at RR bridge: 19

Characteristics of Map Responses: Tally


- 11 - A Safe Place for All
- 17 - Community and Economic Development
- 16 - Public Image
- 3 - Immediately Actionable
- 0 - Resilience / Environment
- 18 - Infrastructure

Community Engagement: Open Meeting at the Red Barn



13

- X A Safe Place for All
- X Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- X Infrastructure




14

- X A Safe Place for All
- X Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- X Infrastructure



15

- X A Safe Place for All
- X Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- X Infrastructure



16


- X A Safe Place for All
- X Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- Infrastructure



El Reno Steering Committee members discuss the project with other participants. Attendees circulated in and out during the afternoon event.



17



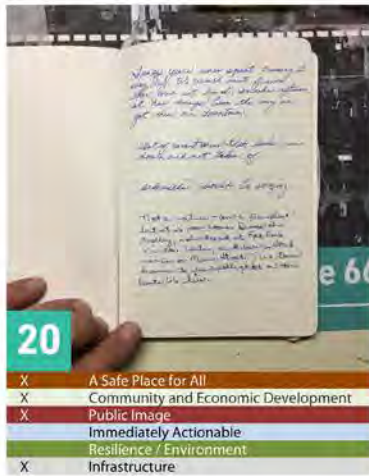
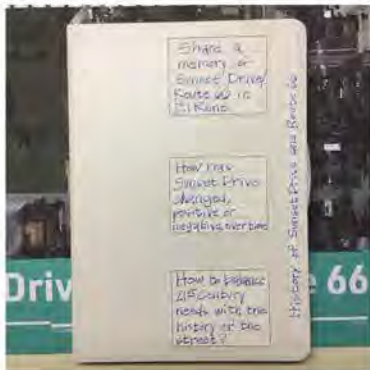
18

- X A Safe Place for All
- X Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- Infrastructure



19

- X A Safe Place for All
- X Community and Economic Development
- X Public Image
- Immediately Actionable
- Resilience / Environment
- Infrastructure



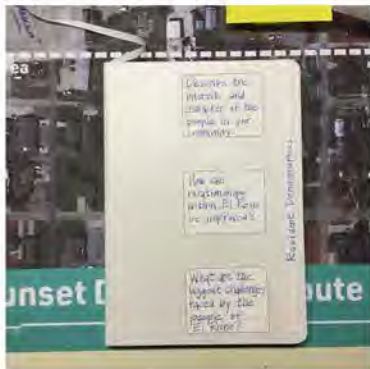
Takeaways

Major topics of discussion during the open Community Engagement event included:

1. Safety, including slowing down traffic, sidewalk, crosswalks and even an idea for a pedestrian bridge at Grand Avenue.
2. Aspirations for cultural attractions that Sunset Drive might support.
3. Importance of car culture.
4. Giving Sunset Drive an identity through the use of thresholds, signage attractions.

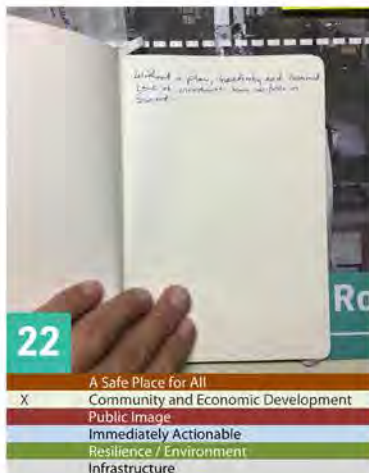
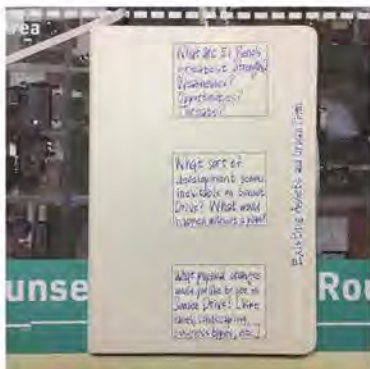
Specific proposals

- A. Maintain, clean up - 1, 9, 20
- B. Adult attractions: Grill/Brewery - 2, 19
- C. Crosswalks, particularly at Choctaw & Sunset and new development - 2, 11
- D. Stop sign on Choctaw southbound at Wade: dangerous on-street parking - 4
- E. Sidewalk all along Sunset and address foot traffic @ Grand - 5, 15, 20
- F. Pedestrian bridge @ Grand - 6
- G. Museum, cultural - 3, 7, 11, 12, 18
- H. District branding, art - 6, 8, 13, 16, 19
- I. Street furnishings - 10
- J. Bike Lanes - 11, 13, 15
- K. Hydrology/flooding - 12, 14
- L. Link to Adams Park - 15



Characteristics of Map Responses: Tally

- 11 - A Safe Place for All
- 17 - Community and Economic Dev.
- 18 - Public Image
- 4 - Immediately Actionable
- 7 - Resilience / Environment
- 13 - Infrastructure



El Reno Assets

El Reno has a variety of assets for travelers & residents, including historical landmarks and structures, parks, adult education complexes, medical centers, and a regional airport.

El Reno hosts many community events each year to celebrate the city and its people.

El Reno has a good number of historical, natural, and civic features for a small city of less than 20,000 residents, all of which will be critical to El Reno's future vitality and growth.

Historic Landmarks & Structures

Sunset Drive has experienced some loss, but the study area still has 74 structures built during the Route 66 era from 1920-1965, as well as a handful of structures built earlier. There are several unique buildings that used to be ice cream shops, grocery stores, restaurants, and service stations ("Assessor"; Canadian). Additional historic and cultural assets beyond the study area include the historic downtown district, the Canadian County Historical Museum complex, the trolley, the 98th Meridian, Fort Reno, and the cultural history of several Indigenous tribes.

Public Places & Recreation

The study area is bookended by Petree Plaza – a parklet with a Route 66 and railroad monument – on the east and Adams Park – a large community park that includes sports fields, playsets, a frisbee golf course, picnic areas, and a dog park – The El Reno Public schools sports complex at the western end. Beyond the study area, Legion Park is a community hotspot, and Lake Reno is a recreational destination for both visitors and residents.

Citywide Assets

El Reno Regional Airport
Redlands Community College
Canadian Valley Technology Center
SSM Health Medical Group

El Reno Events & Activities

Small Town Weekend
Burger Day Festival
Smoke on the Water
Fly El Reno
Canadian County fair
Grascar and ATV racing
Youth sports
Rodeo events



Rock Island Depot, now Canadian County Historical Society Museum



El Reno Burger Day Festival (Billings)



Fly El Reno ("Fly-In")



1992 Jet Ski Competition (Canadian)

Historic Context

One of El Reno's greatest strengths is its celebration of the past, particularly of the city's historic routes.

People & History

The historic lands of El Reno have been home to many peoples over time as well as a place of passage for others. As the immemorial homelands of the Osage Nation and the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes as well as the long-time homes of other tribal nations, including the Cheyenne-Arapaho, Comanche, Caddo, Delaware, Kiowa, and Kickapoo tribes, El Reno had a vast history before the city was established by settlers in the 1889 Land Run.* The natural assets and location of El Reno have attracted a wide variety of human flows through the years, including Native American tribes, colonial settlers, armies, farmers, businesses, tourists, and everyday people in want of a home, all of whom have helped build El Reno as we know it today.

Celebrating History in the Present

Rich with history, El Reno bears many marks of previous residents and travelers, including the beautiful downtown businesses and housing from the early 1900s, Fort Reno, the Rock Island Depot, public art and parks, the historic streetcar, and the stretch of Route 66 that weaves through town. El Reno's character is still defined by its historic routes that connected the city to the rest of the state and the nation, namely the railroad, the streetcar, and Route 66. Presently, tourists and residents can experience that history at the Canadian County Historical Museum, which is located in the 1906 Rock Island train depot. In addition to extensive artifacts and historic El Reno buildings throughout the property, the museum also has two train cars on display as well as an operational streetcar on rails used for historical tours.



Southern Hotel and Interurban Station to OKC in El Reno, now Intrada Apartments (Canadian)



Woman standing in front of train car in El Reno (Canadian)

* Sources: Native-Land.ca; Comanche Nation; "In the Beginning"; "History"; Oklahoma; Obermeyer; "Kiowa"; "Osage"; "A Ho Pi Ti Ke No"

Dozens of Route 66 era signs and structures remain on Sunset Drive, ready to be revitalized to match local enthusiasm for classic cars, diner food, and good times.

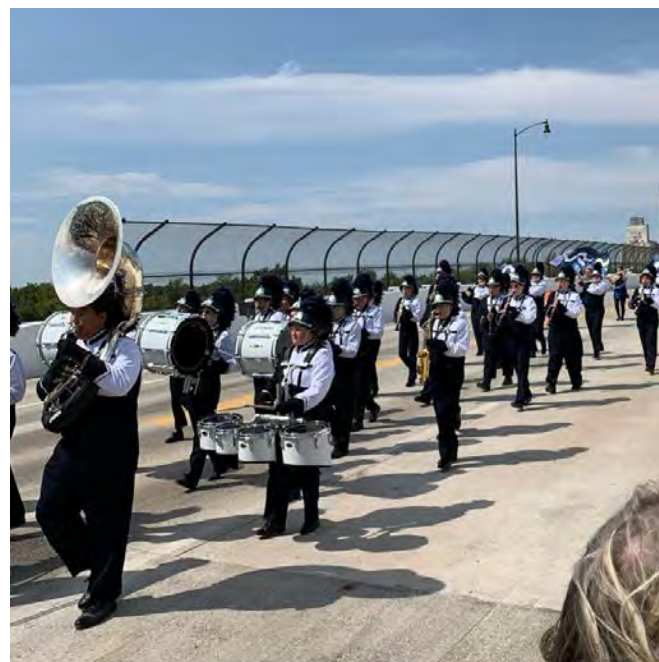
Historic Route 66 in El Reno's Present

El Reno has made recent Route 66-themed dedications, including a monument in Petree Plaza and a freshly renovated bridge with new Route 66 markers. Various types of buildings from that era remain along the portion of Route 66 that runs through town, including 74 existing buildings that were built from 1920-1965 within the project study area. Currently, many of these buildings consist of personal storage and automotive shops, single-family housing, and a few office and commercial uses; however, in the past, this stretch of road also boasted a series of cafés, restaurants, ice cream shops, grocery stores, and a plant nursery.* Despite the disappearance of many businesses along Route 66 in El Reno, the culture still remains. Each year, the city hosts events that celebrate Route 66 and the automotive spirit of the city, including the Small Town Weekend, drag races, Smoke on the Water, Grascar and ATV races, and Fly El Reno.

El Reno was well-traveled and a common rest stop for many decades, whether one was moving by train, trolley, or car, but traffic slowly diminished as the railroad went bankrupt, personal vehicles replaced the Interurbans, and the interstate redirected traffic away from Route 66. Although El Reno has many great amenities and historical attractions, particularly for a city of 20,000, travelers often bypass the city; as a result, El Reno misses out on the potential tourism and sales taxes needed to support residents.



Newly renovated 66/81 bridge (Sandidge)



Marching band at 66/81 bridge ribbon cutting (Sandidge)

* Source: Canadian County Assessor.

Architectural Character



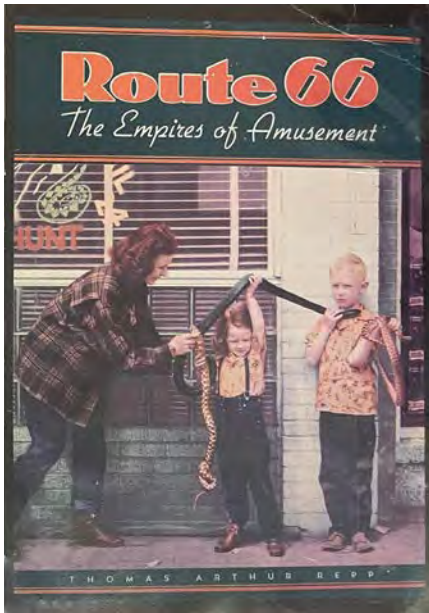
Sunset Market grocery store on Sunset Drive (Canadian)



Burger restaurant on Sunset Drive (Canadian)



The Topper Cafe on Sunset Drive (Canadian)



Rt. 66 brochure (Canadian)



120 S Choctaw Ave (Canadian)



Smoothing roads in El Reno, 1910 (Canadian)



Hutchinson Nursery, 1206 Sunset Drive (Canadian)



The Topper Cafe, 219 Sunset Drive (Canadian)

Route 66 Traveler Perspectives

Route 66 Economic Impact Study: Synthesis of Findings, published by Rutgers University, summarizes information from surveys of Route 66 travelers, placed at stops along Route 66.

Travelers experience challenges in their trip, particularly regarding wayfinding, poor road conditions, and closed businesses.

Traveler suggestions focus on improving wayfinding, repairing roads, encouraging historic preservation, and helping businesses along the Route thrive.

History & Nostalgia

The Rutgers study found that the main draw of Route 66 for the participants was history, including both personal nostalgia and general historic appreciation. 78.9% of participants knew “some or a lot” about Route 66 and its historical significance, and a similar percentage stated that historical significance influenced how they planned their trip. Specifically, “historic sites and monuments” and “notable places and landmarks” were the top two most important features of survey participants’ Route 66 trips. Likewise, history and nostalgia were the two most common responses to the study’s open-ended question about what travelers associated with Route 66 (Rutgers 19).

Challenges on Route 66

The study also found that the most prevalent challenges that travelers faced centered on the quality of infrastructure and the availability of businesses and lodging. Specifically, participants ranked the lack of clear and consistent signage as the top challenge, followed by high numbers of closed businesses, poor road conditions, and lack of lodging.

Suggestions for Route 66

Participants of the study provided valuable suggestions on how the trip could be improved in response to these issues. Participants called for wayfinding improvements, road upgrades and maintenance, historic preservation with modern amenities, more publicity about landmarks and attractions, more community cooperation, programs to help businesses stay open, and more celebration of the authentic Route 66 themes.

Traveler Spending on Route 66

Additionally, the study found that participants spent most of their travel expenses on lodging, followed by food and drinks and then direct travel expenses, such as fuel and vehicle rental (Rutgers 20-21). Because El Reno has a goal of increasing Route 66 tourism, particularly along Sunset Drive, plans should consider these challenges and suggested improvements in order to enhance travelers’ experiences in El Reno. El Reno may benefit from following the suggested improvements related to Route 66 spending, such as aid to existing business owners, incentives for historic preservation, and incentives that will attract lodging and food companies.

Most Important Route 66 Sites

1. Historic sites and monuments
2. Notable places and landmarks
3. Landscape
4. Small towns
5. US history
6. National Parks
7. Vintage motels and restaurants
8. Gateway to the West
9. Car cruising culture
10. Navigating highways
11. Bars and nightclubs
12. Entertainment and amusement

Challenges for Route 66 Travelers

1. Lack of signage/lack of consistent signage/lack of comprehensive signage (not clear or only in English)
2. Lots of closed businesses
3. Poor road conditions on older sections
4. Difficulty finding lodging between towns
5. Weather
6. Difficulty seeing all the attractions/time management

Note on Rutgers University Survey Participants

Survey participants hailed from all fifty US states and forty foreign countries, but skewed toward white, married, older adults and the survey was provided in English only.

- 85% US residents, mostly from Route 66 states
- 15% international, mostly Canada and Europe
- 97% white, non-Hispanic
- 70% married
- Over half ages 55+, including nearly 50% over 60
- 40% retired
- Median income of \$62,500
- Most traveling parties (67%) consisted of two adults
- 18% consisted of three or more adults
- 12.5% had children present

Images, thoughts, and attractions

1. History
2. Nostalgia
3. Americana/Roadside oddities
4. 1950s/60s American culture (classic cars, vintage diners and motels, neon signs, open spaces, music)
5. Cars, the Pixar film
6. Good food
7. Specific landmarks
8. Friendly locals; local shops and restaurants/mom and pop places
9. Individuality
10. The overall journey
11. Freedom

Travelers' Suggested Improvements

1. Route 66 specific GPS route
2. Install consistent and clear signage
3. Install better signage/markers for highway and landmarks
4. Get AAA to highlight Route 66 on their maps
5. Clean and repair roads
6. Historic preservation
7. More advertising and publicity
8. More community cooperation
9. Renovate motels to be more accommodating and modern inside
10. Help businesses stay open
11. Encourage the authentic Route 66 themes

Route 66 Best Practices

Best practices for community development emphasize walkability, accessibility, and continuous community engagement.

Route 66 communities also emphasize historic preservation, resources for local businesses, community programming, neighborhood identity, and advertising.

Walkability

Designing for a walkable environment increases connectivity independent of cars and helps encourages interactions between people and businesses. The design elements necessary for walkability – density, sidewalks, landscaping and trees, public art, resting places, etc. – facilitate outside investment and economic growth. Although Sunset Drive was built during a car-centric era, that does not mean that El Reno cannot reap the benefits of walkability here as well. Design guidelines or streetscape projects that set standards for new parking lots, encourage density and a mix of uses, encourage trees and landscaping, and install sidewalks and crosswalks can increase walkability while maintaining the character of the neighborhood.

Accessibility

Accessibility as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act is required by law and is necessary to be an inclusive community, but accessibility is also critical to a healthy and equitable community. For El Reno, accessibility would mean ADA-compliant sidewalks and crosswalks as well as amenities and services that are easily available to everyone, such as recreational spaces and grocery stores.

Community Engagement & Ongoing Management

Continuous community participation is critical to quality city improvements. When residents are left out of the process, city projects typically fail because they do not meet the needs of the people living there currently. When a community is not continuously engaged after a project is complete, it is often left unused and eventually left in disrepair. Ongoing management, coordination, and community ownership may depend on a new organization, like a Route 66 community group that coordinates events, organizes improvements, and advocates for those living and working along Sunset Drive.

Route 66 Practices

Precedents of Route 66 cities, including some explored in this chapter, also offer some specific practices for these towns:

- Resident-based groups that help maintain and advocate for their local Route 66 district
- Ordinances that encourage a cohesive Route 66 neighborhood identity
- Walkability and connectivity
- Increased advertisement of the city's assets
- Mixtures of historic preservation and modern amenities
- Technology
- Community programming, particularly car shows

Precedents

Precedents are examples of previous or ongoing projects similar to what a team is working on in their own city. They provide guidance and inspiration. Just because a strategy works in one place does not mean it will work elsewhere, so precedents should be carefully considered and altered in the context of one's own place and project.

Themes from Route 66 Precedents

For Sunset Drive, we chose to research mostly Route 66 cities and towns of various sizes and geographies; overall, we saw the subsequent themes:

- Zoning overlays and code ordinances that regulate aesthetic, signage, and land use to help create a neighborhood identity associated with history, to encourage clear and consistent wayfinding, to promote historic preservation and sustainability, etc.
- Streetscaping and multi-modal transportation infrastructure, including sidewalks, transit, bike lanes and racks, ride-share, benches, street trees, parklets, etc.
- More advertisement of historic sites, landmarks, and recreation; outdoor education/informationals; online resources and self-guided tour pamphlets
- Integration of new and old, such as historic motels with modern amenities, old gas stations with electric vehicle charging stations, etc.
- Regular community programming, particularly car shows and history-centered events
- Expanding current or creating new festivals that transform the streets in historic areas (downtown, Sunset Drive, etc.) into pedestrian-only walkways
- Murals and public art by local artists with regular upkeep
- A community task force or committee to help manage the district, including organizing events, improving the streetscape, and acting as advocates for the businesses and residents in the area
- Active efforts to collaborate continuously with nearby Tribes

Round Barn and Pops

Arcadia, Oklahoma

Relation to El Reno...

- Route 66 Town
- Like El Reno, Arcadia also has historical sites from the 1800s

Solutions Learned...

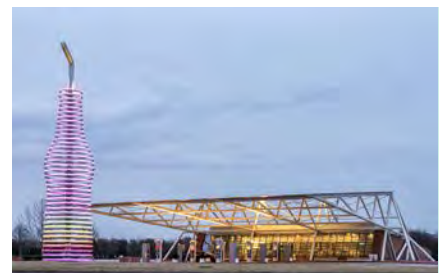
- More advertisement of historical sites and museums for history-lovers
- Unique businesses that reimagine historical motifs for the 21st century
- Mix of very old and very modern (Rutgers 44-46)



Arcadia, OK, Pops 66 Soda Ranch (Rutgers)



Arcadia Round Barn (Rutgers)



Pops 66 Soda Ranch ("Arcadia")

South Porter

Norman, Oklahoma

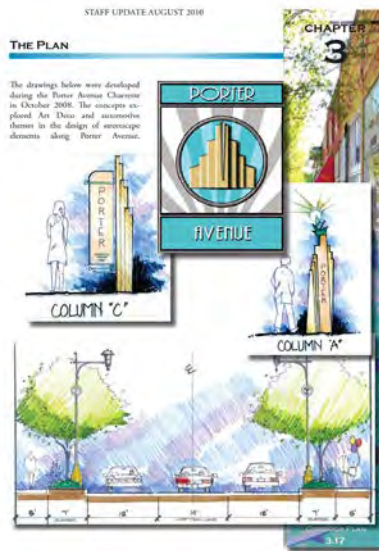
Relation to El Reno...

- Similar corridor: Transportation-centered historical focus, placement near downtown, mix of retail and residential, etc.
- Similar local goals: Corridor identity inspired by Route 66, walkability and connectivity, beautification to encourage reinvestment, adaptive reuse, historic preservation

Solutions Learned...

- Zoning overlay district to regulate the balance of commercial and residential
- Establish a corridor identity inspired by transportation history with related aesthetic components in code ordinances
- Improve walkability and connection with ADA-compliant sidewalks, crosswalks, and outdoor furniture

See Also: Ochsner



Oklahoma Route 66 Museum

Clinton, Oklahoma

Relation to El Reno...

- Historical Museum
- Route 66 Town

Solutions Learned...

- More Route 66 additions to the Canadian County Historical Museum
- More advertisement and activities for the museum
- History fairs celebrating the museum or regular public programming at the museum like classes, kids' story time, etc. (Rutgers 47-48)



Oklahoma Route 66 Museum, Clinton, OK (Rutgers)

Streetscaping & Sustainability

Weatherford, Oklahoma

Relation to El Reno...

- Similar sized Route 66 city
- Historic downtown
- Historical museum including Route 66 and other eras
- Annual Car show

Solutions Learned...

- Tying the car show to a holiday (Father's Day, Trunk-or-Treat, etc.)
- Improving the streetscape downtown and along Sunset, including sidewalks, wayfinding signs, street furniture, district identity signs, etc.
- Adding more Rt. 66 items to the museum
- Sustainability initiatives with related outdoor educational activities



Weatherford, OK, Wind Energy Center (Weatherford)



Weatherford, OK, Museum Prefab Diner (Weatherford)



Weatherford, OK Downtown Car Show (Weatherford)

Public Art

Cuba, Missouri

Relation to El Reno...

- Severe economic difficulties due to major employers closing and the interstate rerouting tourism
- Both cities have a high number of murals, though many of El Reno's are worn

Solutions Learned...

- Murals and other public art that have a committee in charge of regular maintenance
- Close off parts of historic downtown or Sunset Drive as pedestrian only corridors during festivals (Rutgers 49-50)



Cuba, MO, regular mural face lift (Cuba)



History at the 4-Way murals on garage doors (Cuba)



Cuba, MO, Veterans mural (Rutgers)



Cuba, MO, Veterans mural (Rutgers)



Cuba, MO, Veterans mural (Rutgers)

Route 66 Mother Road Festival

Springfield, Illinois

Relation to El Reno...

- Route 66 city with annual car show
- Historic downtown

Solutions Learned...

- Establish a separate car show/Route 66 festival with a fundraiser to go toward improvements along Sunset Drive
- Connect the car show with historic downtown
- Close off parts of historic downtown or Sunset Drive as pedestrian only corridors during festivals (Rutgers 49-50)

Promotions, Programs, and Races

Amarillo, Texas

Relation to El Reno...

- Similar proposed district: About a 1-mile-long historic Route 66 district which ends at a park and includes historic buildings
- Similar car and race culture

Solutions Learned...

- Frequent programming along the Sunset Drive, specifically car cruises or other small but regular events
- A community group to help manage the district, including organizing events, improving the streetscape, and acting as advocates for the businesses and residents in the area
- A self-tour guide of downtown and Sunset Drive with explanations of specific businesses and landmarks, including notable features, historic meaning, and building origins
- Opportunities for visitors to view or partake in El Reno races (“Eat”)



Amarillo, TX, Rt 66 fundraiser (“Eat”)



Amarillo, TX, mobile shop (“Eat”)



Amarillo, TX, Rt 66 programming (“Eat”)

Sustainable Technology

Shamrock, Texas

Relation to El Reno...

- Route 66 City
- Interest in electric vehicles

Solutions Learned...

- Electric vehicle charging stations next to Route 66 historic landmarks and attractions ("Historic")



Shamrock, TX, plaza next to an EV charging station ("Historic")



Shamrock, TX, old Rt 66 gas station turned into a cafe with EV charging ("Historic")



Shamrock, TX, EV charging station at an old Rt 66 gas station ("Historic")

Historical Tourism

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Relation to El Reno...

- Attractions include historical architecture from before the 20th century and from Rt 66 era and art that reinterprets rather than imitates historical architecture
- Overlap with Tribal lands
- Goals of multi-modal transportation and connectivity

Solutions Learned...

- Collaborating with the Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes to include Indigenous history and input in the area
- Create a simple self-guided tour instructional for El Reno visitors
- Launch a marketing campaign with an emphasis on post-COVID travel and experiences
- Transportation center with bus stops, scooters, bike racks, and pedestrian rest stop amenities (seating, water fountains, bathrooms, etc.)
- A Route 66 visitor center
- Public Art that celebrates El Reno's history without imitating it
- Establish a taskforce or committee to oversee car/racing culture promotion and events in El Reno (Visit; "City"; "Cruising")



Albuquerque, NM, neon gateway to Nob Hill (NHMS)



Albuquerque, NM Old Town (Visit)

Collaborators

Sunset Drive Route 66 Steering Committee

Bob Ballhorn, City Council Representative
JP Fitzgerald, Chair, El Reno Chamber of Commerce Board, BancFirst
Shana Ford, Executive Director, El Reno Main Street
Hailey Goad, Manager, Intrada El Reno
Kara Lehman, Public Relations Manager
Lucky Star Casino/Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes
Karen Nance, Executive Director, El Reno Chamber of Commerce
Rosalia Pecina, Pecina's Mexican Restaurant
Vicki Proctor, Director, Canadian County History Museum
Pete Stapperfend, City Council Representative
Gerardo Troncoso Municipal Planning Commission, Great Plains Bank

The City of El Reno

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Matt Sandidge, AICP, CMO, City Manager
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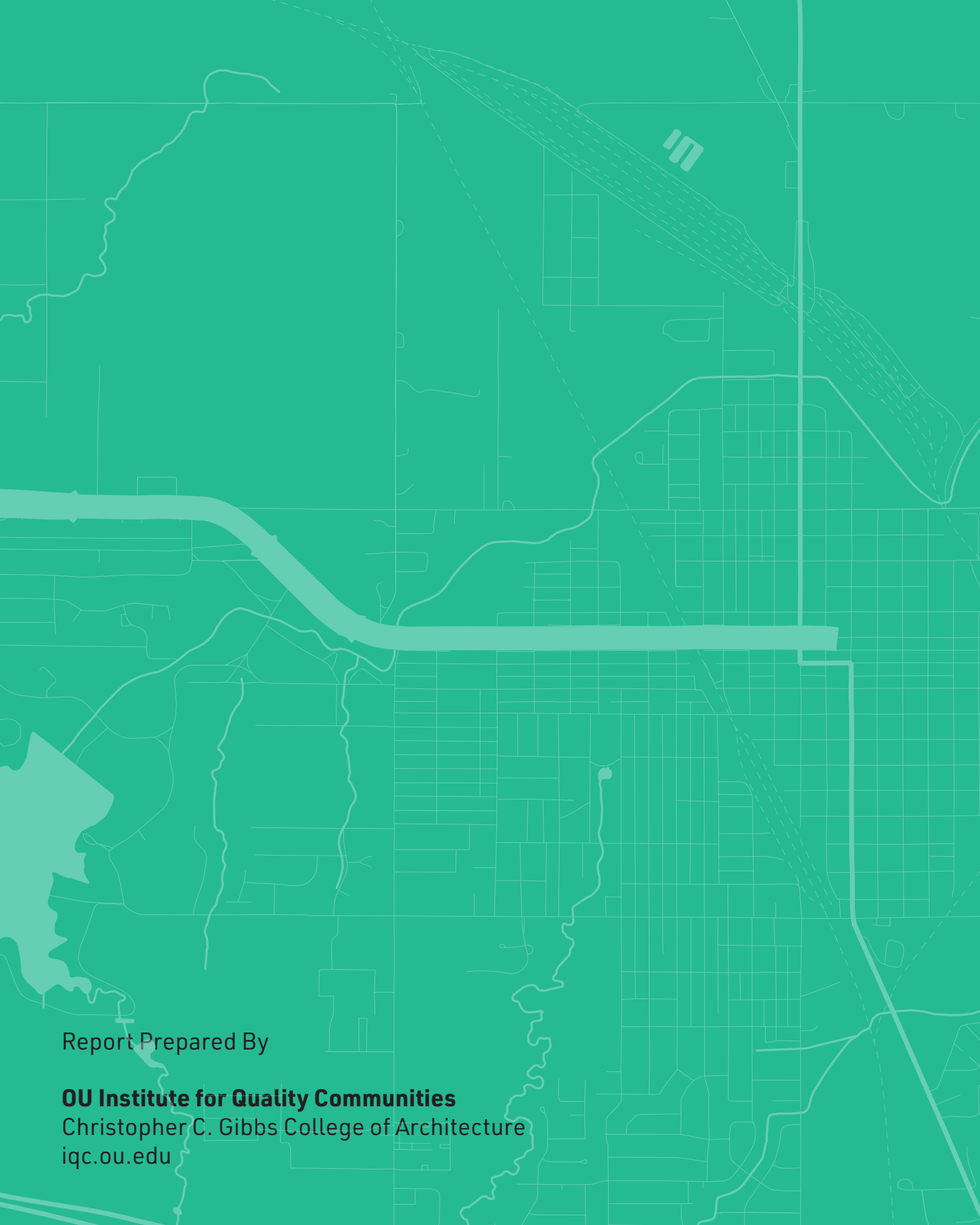
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