



**RICHARDSON** **IQ**  
**PLACEMAKING +**  
**OPEN SPACE**  
**TOOLKIT**



**RICHARDSON**  
TEXAS

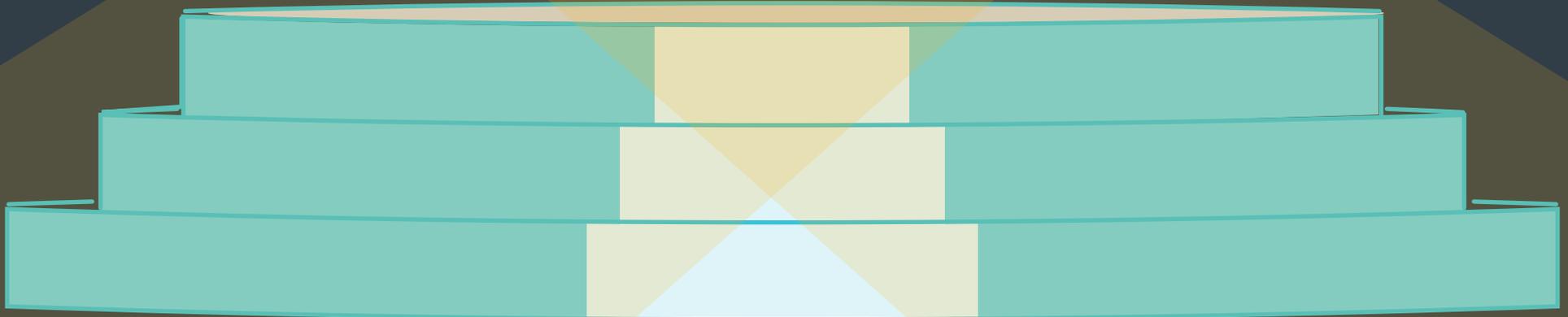
# SET THE STAGE

In 2020, parks and open space provided a much-needed respite from the quarantine necessary in many cities to slow the spread of COVID-19, underscoring the mental and physical health benefits of access to the outdoors. In the post COVID-19 world, quality outdoor open space will not just be an amenity, but a necessity for businesses and workers in the Richardson IQ.

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide **Richardson IQ property owners** with inspirational ideas and best practices to **improve and invest** in their properties while providing new attractive amenities for businesses and workers. This toolkit includes:

- *A variety of possible open space and placemaking improvements, from modest to transformative, for major building types found within the Richardson IQ.*
- *Helpful tips about planning and executing a project.*

Investing in quality, useable outdoor areas will improve the attractiveness of lease space to potential tenants and distinguish the Richardson IQ from other business districts.



# contents

## **BACKGROUND.....01**

- *District Background*
- *What is Placemaking?*
- *Encouraging Placemaking + Open Space Through Zoning*
- *Land Use Framework Map*

## **BUILDING TYPES.....05**

- *Present Building Types*
- *Flex Space*
- *Low Rise Commercial*

## **PLANNING YOUR PROJECT.....09**

- *Select a Location*
- *Tips for Project Success*
- *Placemaking + Open Space Examples*

## **BUILDING YOUR PROJECT.....17**

- *The Approval Process*
- *Site Elements*
- *Landscape Materials*

## **APPENDIX.....23**



# ***Background***

*DISTRICT BACKGROUND  
WHAT IS PLACEMAKING?  
ENCOURAGING PLACEMAKING  
+ OPEN SPACE  
LAND USE FRAMEWORK PLAN*

# DISTRICT BACKGROUND

In 2018, the City of Richardson developed a visioning study and 10 main strategies for the Richardson IQ, which includes a **LAND USE, MARKET, MOBILITY, AND OPEN SPACE ANALYSIS**.



**LAND USE**



**MARKET**



**MOBILITY**



**OPEN SPACE  
ANALYSIS**



Two specific strategies identified in 2018 were related to placemaking and open space:

1. Encourage vibrancy through placemaking activities



2. Create new open space amenities to attract and retain businesses



It is the City of Richardson's goal to increase the amount and quality of parks, open space, trails, bike facilities, and green space in the Richardson IQ. Visibly vibrant open spaces are an essential part of creating a place where people want to work and invest, helping innovation to thrive.

# WHAT IS PLACE-

MAKING?

While definitions vary among different groups, the most widely understood definition of placemaking is the practice of creating or enhancing a community or district's assets to improve its overall attractiveness and livability. This includes large-scale projects such as the creation of public spaces and alternative transportation infrastructure, but also small-scale amenities such as pop-up retail, food, or coffee shops and beautification projects.

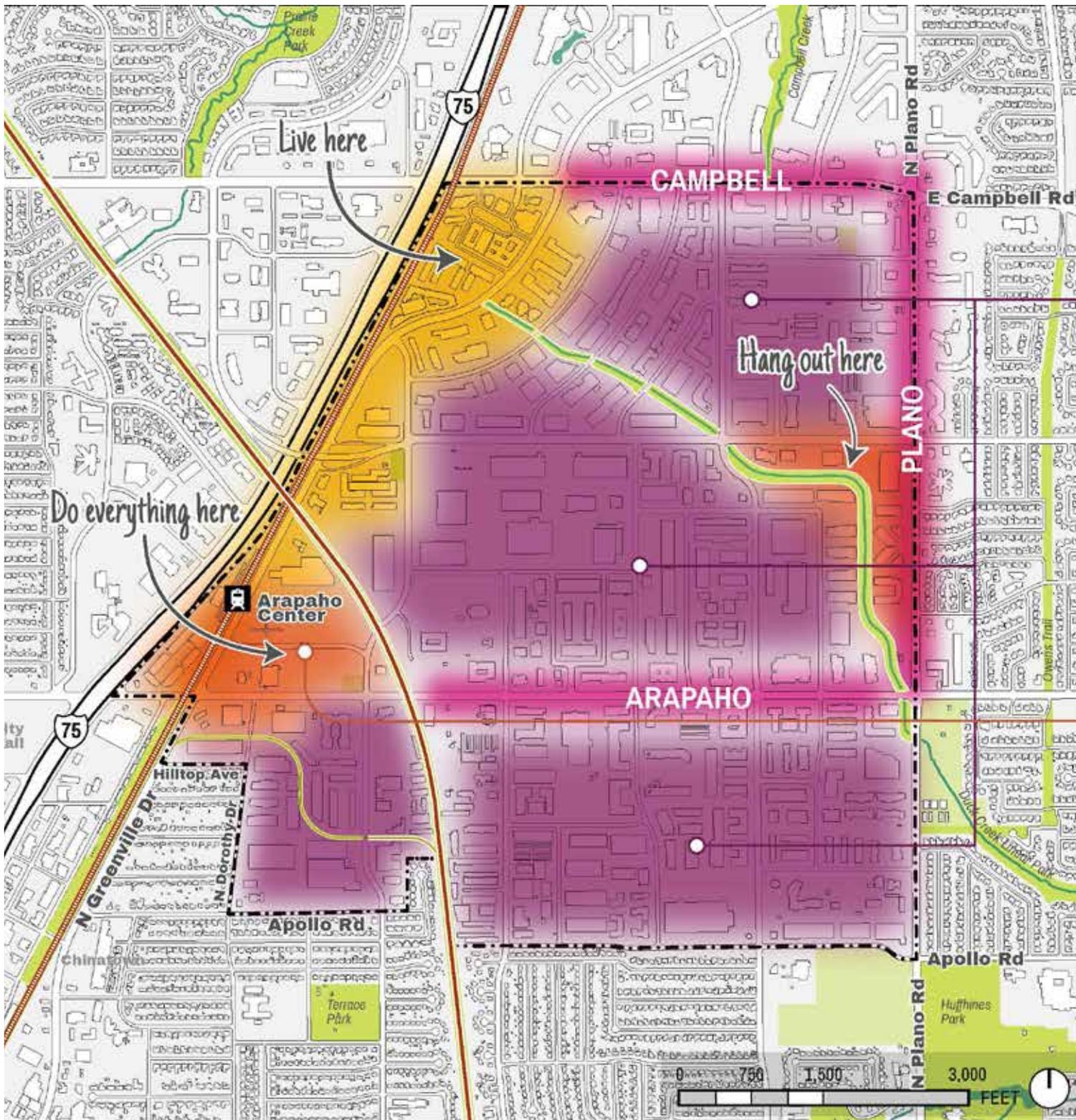


## ENCOURAGING THIS THROUGH ZONING



In an effort to allow greater flexibility on private property for open space and placemaking activities, the City of Richardson adopted a new zoning code in 2019 which reduced minimum parking requirements, permitted new land uses like food truck parks, and encouraged temporary and permanent outdoor seating areas. These changes were intended to remove zoning barriers for property owners and activate the Richardson IQ with new amenities and activities for workers.

# RICHARDSON IQ LAND USE FRAMEWORK PLAN



STUDY AREA

## WORK AREAS

- New, modern flex space
- Affordable space for existing businesses
- Scalable affordable space for growing businesses
- Specialized space for emerging industries
- Amenities & a range of things to do

## ARAPAHO CENTER STATION

- "Signature" space
- Specialized space for emerging industries
- Places to gather & exchange ideas
- Amenities & a range of things to do
- Coworking spaces



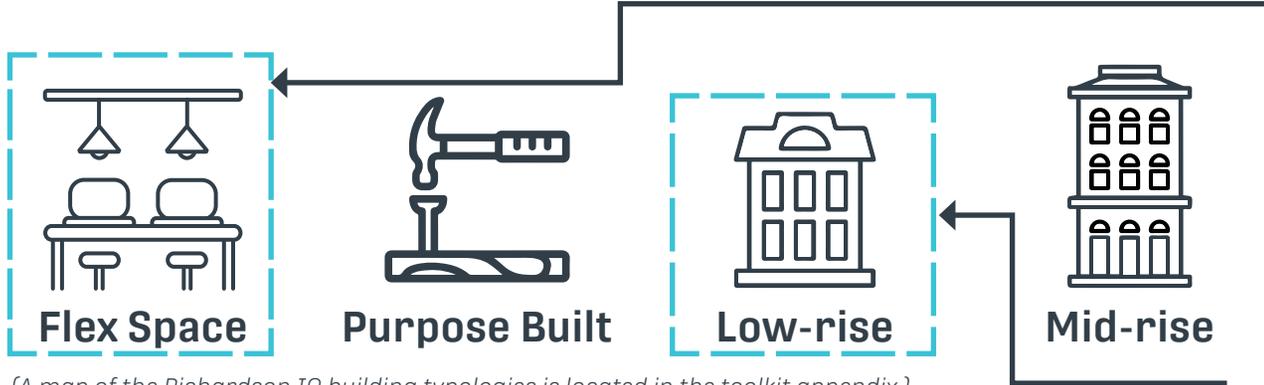
02

# ***building types***

***PRESENT BUILDING TYPES  
FLEX SPACE  
LOW RISE COMMERCIAL***

# PRESENT BUILDING TYPES

Buildings in the Richardson IQ are grouped into four typologies, according to the building's configuration, presence of loading area, and height. These categories include:

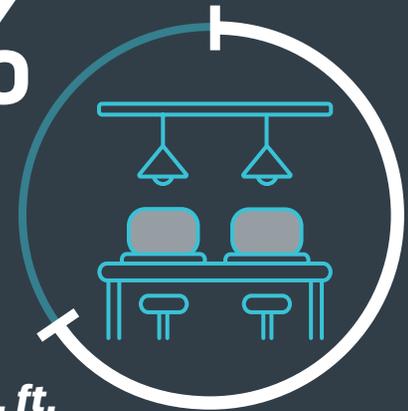


*(A map of the Richardson IQ building typologies is located in the toolkit appendix.)*

**Flex Space** accounts for the majority of the space available in the Richardson IQ, with 253 properties equivalent to 7.5 million square feet. The Richardson IQ's flex space is an important product type that is vital for small businesses needing affordable space that can be expandable as they grow. Low-rise commercial, which is the second most-common building type in the Richardson IQ, accounts for 1.4 million square feet of total building area in the district. Further categorized, there are three types of flex space buildings and two types of low-rise commercial buildings in the Richardson IQ, which are described on the following pages. While this toolkit focuses on ideas for flex space and low-rise commercial buildings, many of the ideas and best practices are applicable to any building.

## FLEX SPACE

**61%**  
total bldg.  
area  
**7.5 Million sq. ft.**

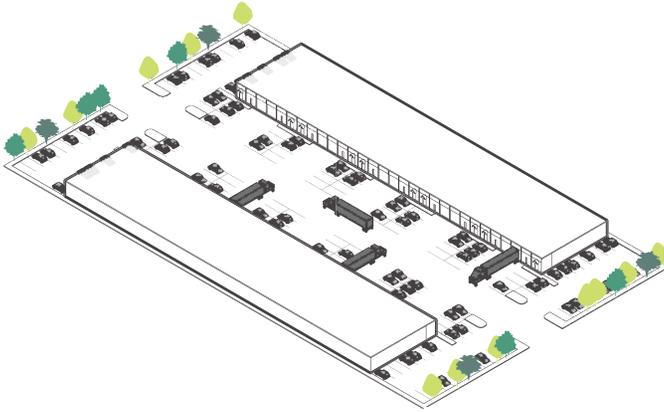


## LOW-RISE

**12%**  
total bldg.  
area  
**1.4 Million sq. ft.**

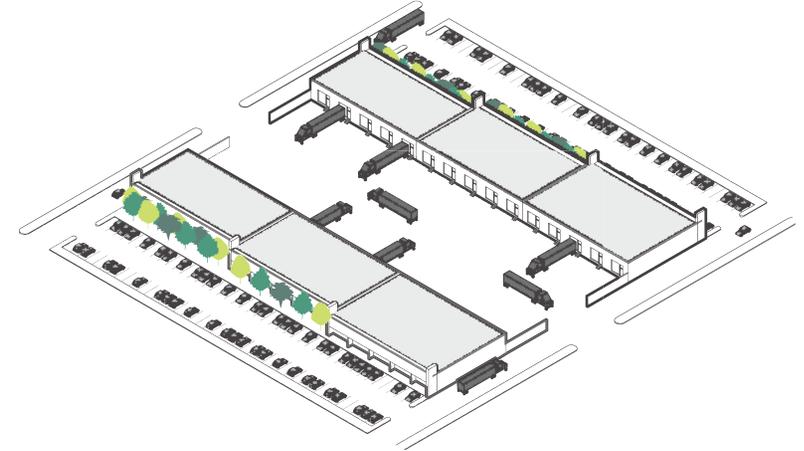


# Flex Space



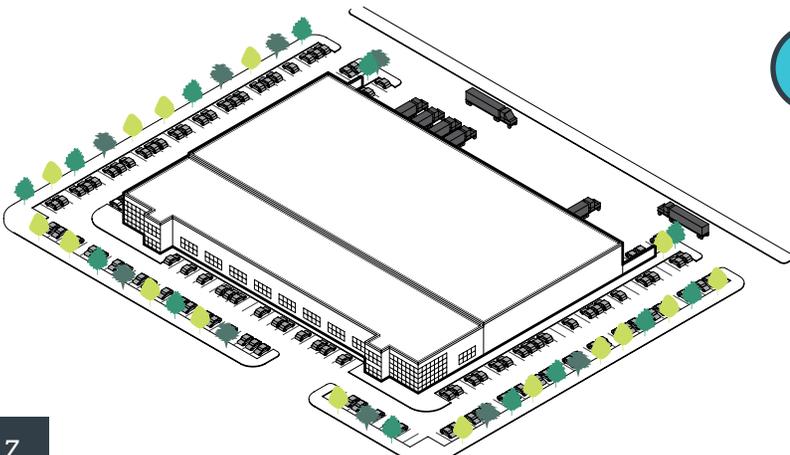
## 1A FLEX SPACE - FRONT LOADING

In the post war era, many industrial buildings had loading docks in front of the building. This site configuration requires employees, visitors, and trucks to utilize the same parking and entrance space. This building type is designed fit a variety of uses, including industrial, warehouse, and distribution of goods, and is typically characterized by low ceilings (typically under 20') and one or two active facades.



## FLEX SPACE - REAR LOADING 1B

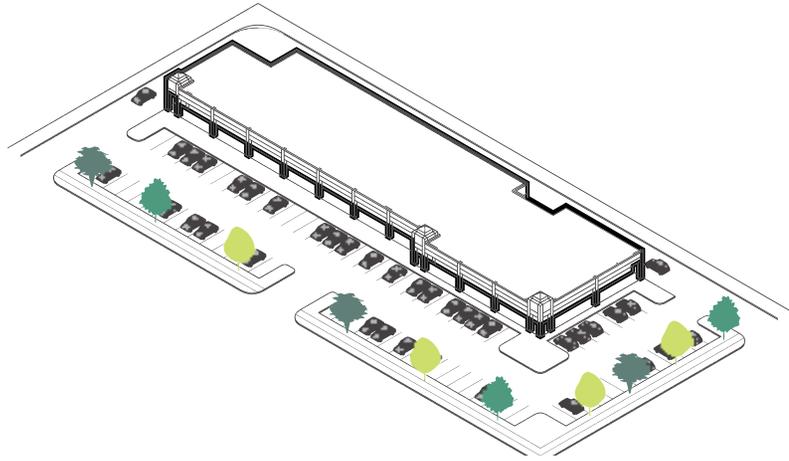
The 1980s saw demand for more office space and more attractive industrial buildings with a dedicated front entrance for visitors and employees that is separated from loading areas in the rear. This building type is designed fit a variety of uses, including office, retail, industrial, and warehouse, and is typically characterized by low ceilings (typically under 20') and one or two active facades.



## 1C FLEX - MODERN

A more recent building type is modern flex, with consolidated rear loading, a surplus of parking, and a larger building footprint. A key difference with modern flex is the taller ceiling heights (up to two stories high, or approximately 36' tall) and increased column spacing for greater flexibility of use. Modern flex generally serves as any one or a combination of corporate office space, research facilities, and light manufacturing.

# Low-rise Commercial



2A

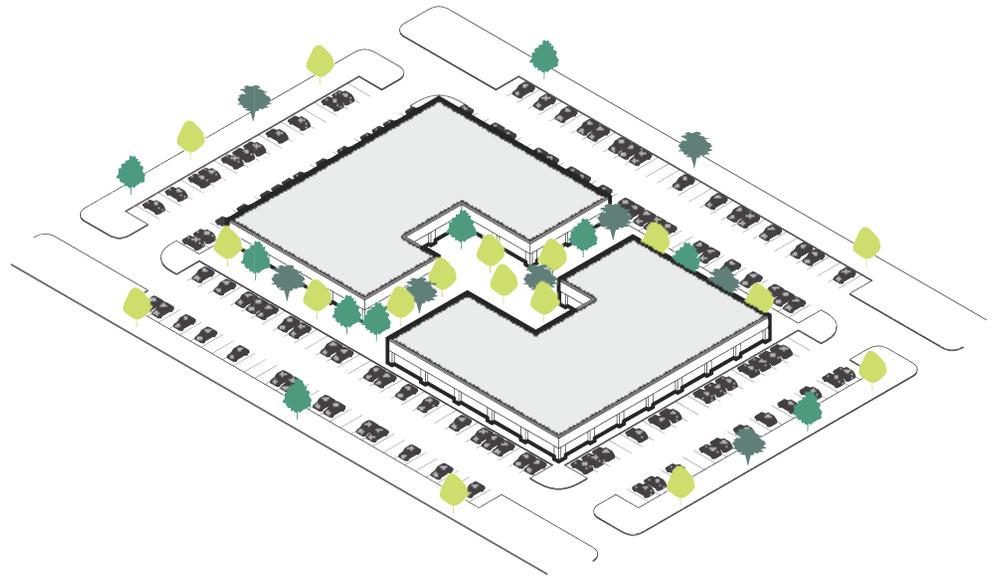
## STRIP RETAIL

Strip retail is usually dedicated for retail, office, and services uses and typically do not have loading areas, though they do have rear entrances for employees and deliveries. The building's physical structure is generally elongated, single-standing, one-story with one active facade. Strip retail typically faces major arterials with large parking lots in front.

2B

## OFFICE CENTER

Office centers are usually dedicated for office use, and typically do not have loading areas. The building's physical structure can be elongated, single-standing or a group of several buildings, one-story with one or two active facades. Parking is provided along the perimeter of the site and the configuration could include tenant public space in the interior.



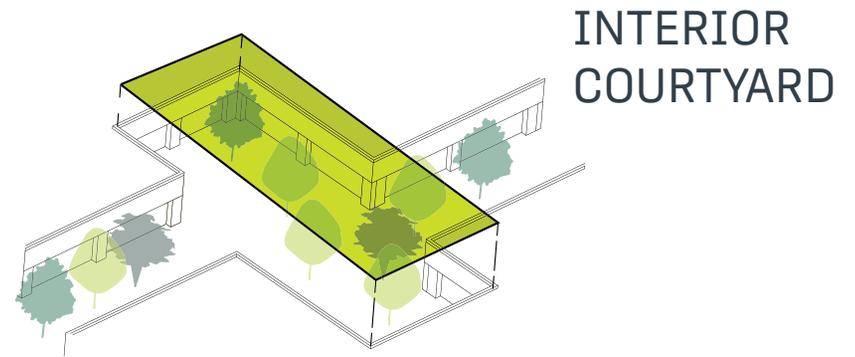
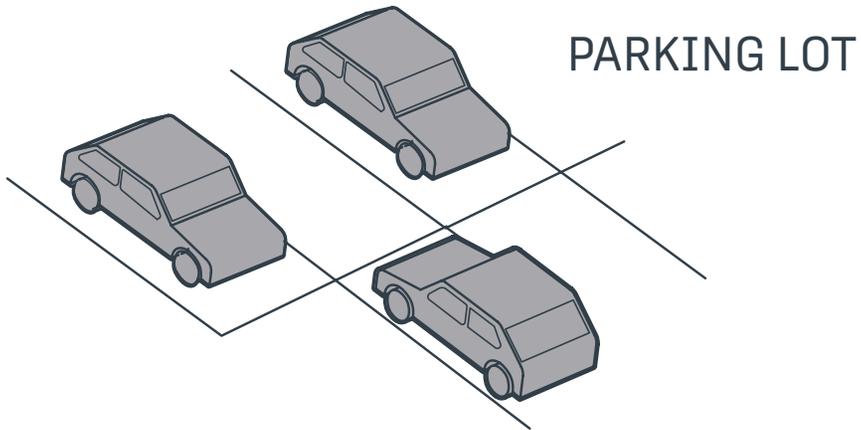
# 03

## *planning your project*

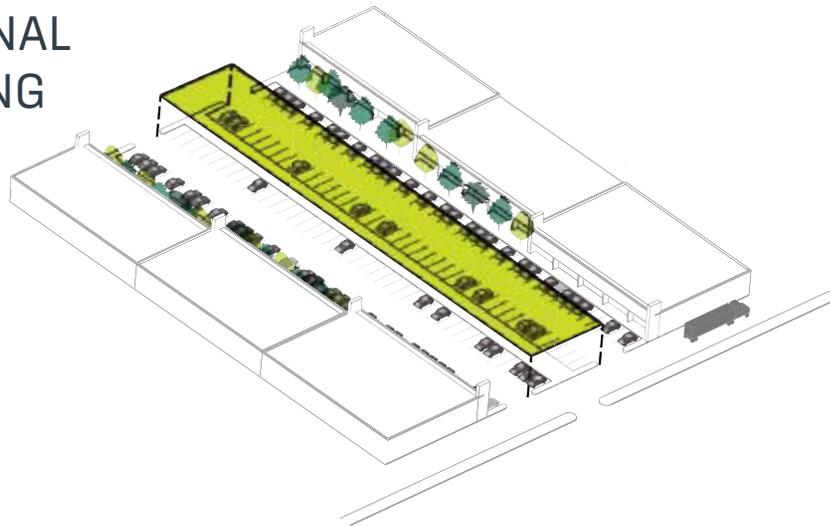
*SELECT A LOCATION  
TIPS FOR PROJECT SUCCESS  
PLACEMAKING + OPEN SPACE EXAMPLES*

Vitality and a sense of place are key selling points of innovation districts. Cities and business owners across the country have realized that in order to attract high-wage, high-growth industries, they must offer quality amenities that are attractive to talented knowledge workers. There are several unique opportunities in the Richardson IQ to re-purpose underutilized land, parking lots, and rights-of-way to create open space amenities and encourage placemaking activities.

## Select a Location



INTERNAL  
PARKING



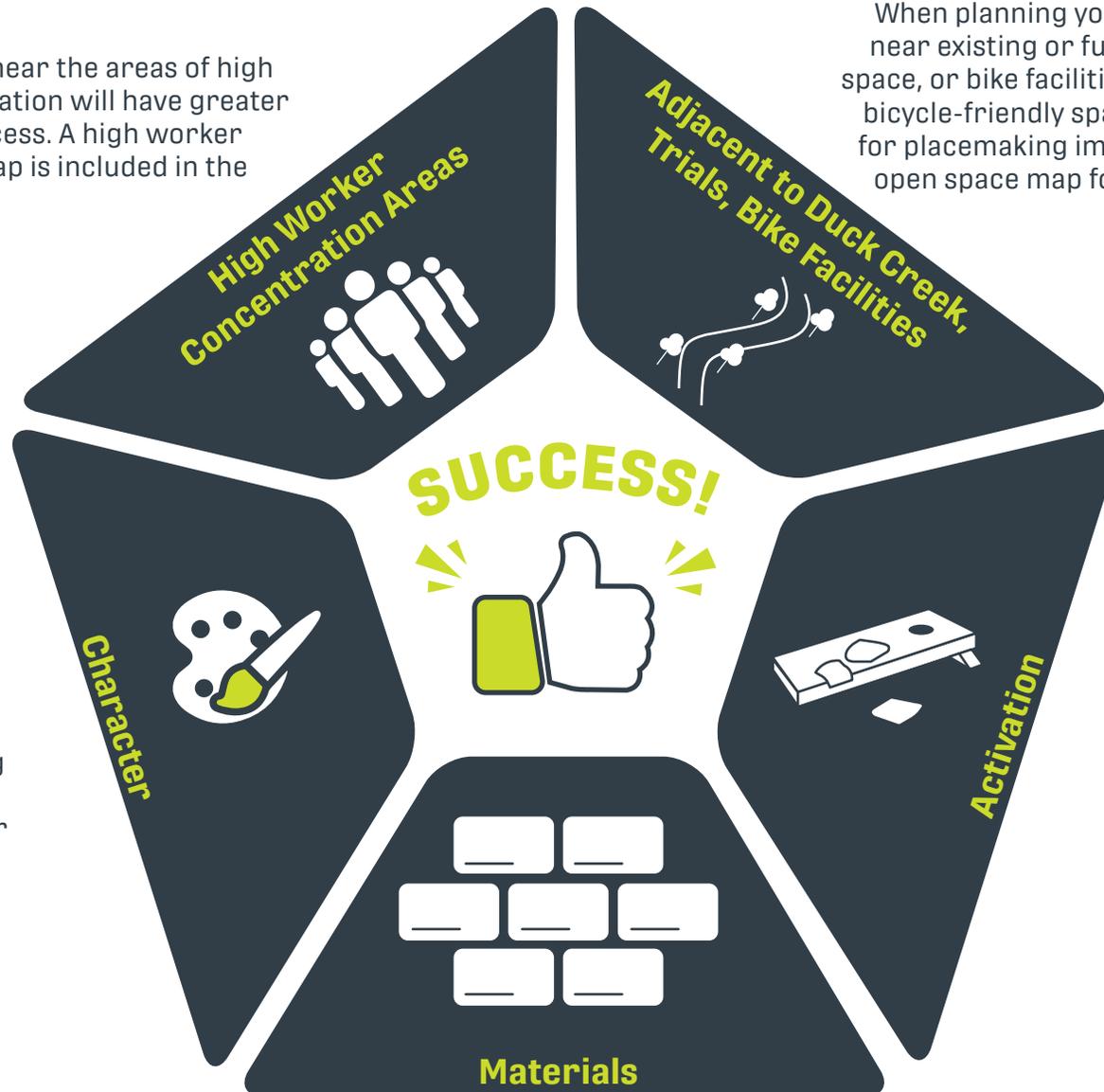
OTHER UNDERUTILIZED  
SPACES



# Tips for Project Success

Properties in or near the areas of high worker concentration will have greater potential for success. A high worker concentration map is included in the toolkit appendix.

When planning your project, identify areas near existing or future planned trails, open space, or bike facilities. These pedestrian and bicycle-friendly spaces make a good setting for placemaking improvements. A proposed open space map for the Richardson IQ is in the toolkit appendix.



People like to spend time in places that are unique and appealing. Locations that feature eye-catching buildings, public art, or meaningful landmarks are great spots for placemaking activities. And don't forget the shade for those summer months!

Passive open spaces certainly bring value to the Richardson IQ, but as you are planning your project, think of ways to activate the space with activities or programs. Even a simple setup of horseshoes or cornhole can enhance the space.

Installing durable materials and landscaping that can last through our turbulent North Texas climate is key to a successful project. On page 19, you'll find our best practices on what to use to ensure your project is resilient.

# Placemaking & Open Space Examples



# Open Space Flex Space Examples

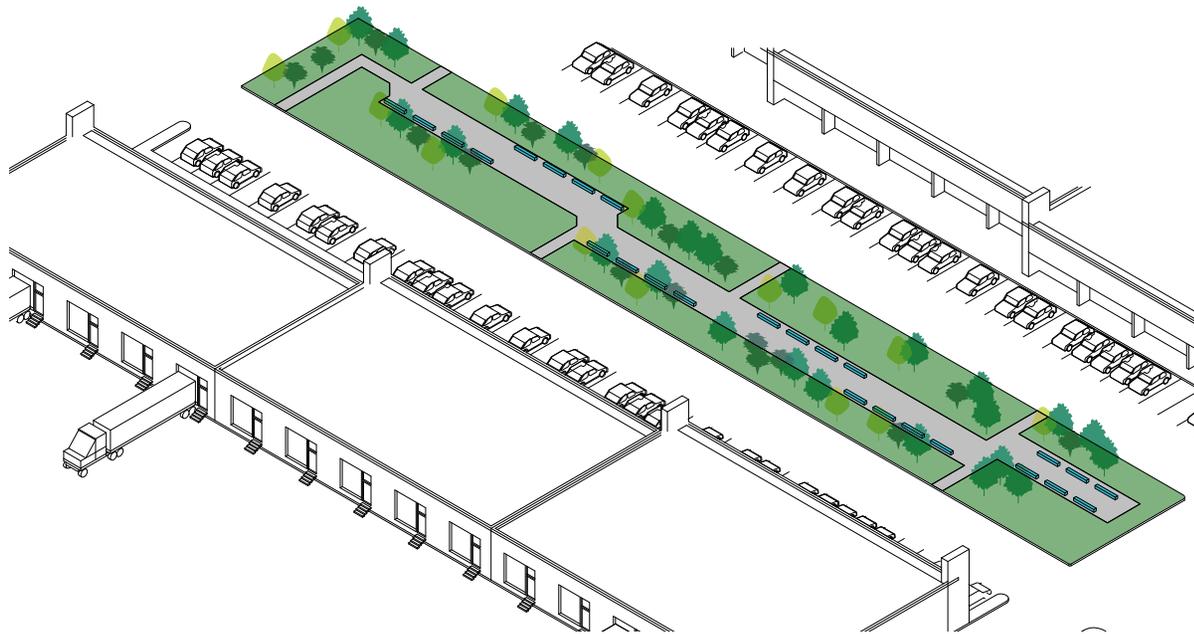
## 1A FLEX SPACE - FRONT LOADING

Front-loading flex space buildings typically have active facades (entrances, loading docks) internal to the site, leaving underutilized and overflow parking along the street. These areas, combined with the public sidewalk and parkway, can make for great open space opportunities with outdoor seating, landscaping, and other activities. Blank walls facing these spaces are great candidates for murals or public art to enhance the overall feel of the site. Consider incorporating a parking space for food trucks to be integrated with the space.

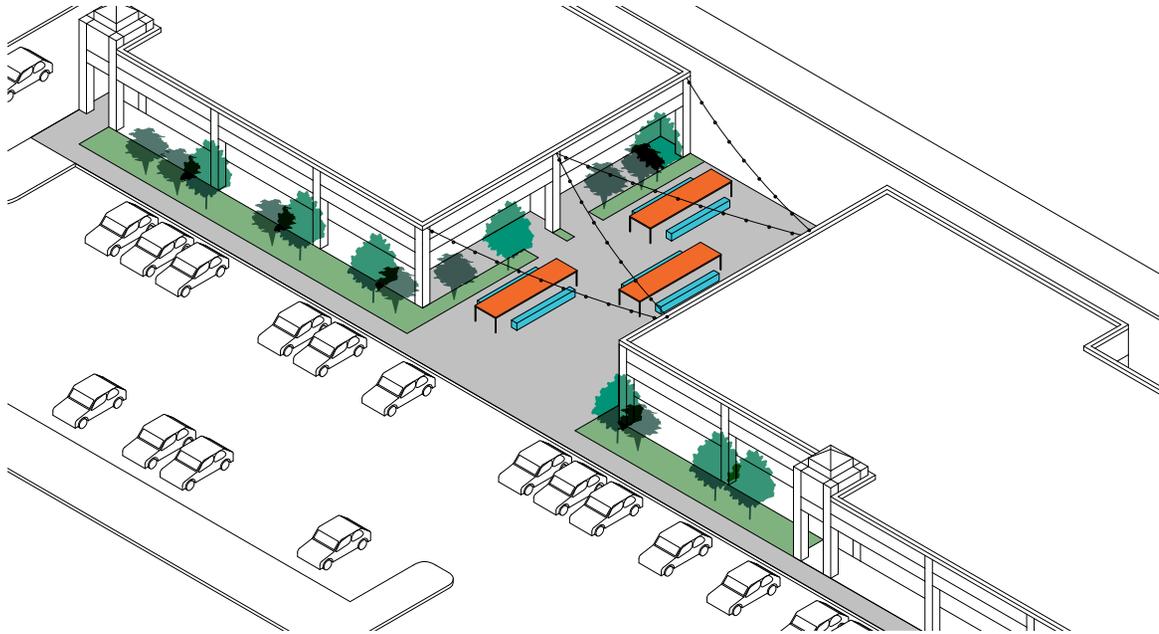


## 1B FLEX SPACE - REAR LOADING

With the reduction of minimum parking requirements in the Richardson IQ, rear loading flex space buildings are uniquely laid out to transform interior parking areas into common linear courtyards. Many of these areas already have landscaped islands and could be expanded to provide new open space for all the businesses in the complex. The front doors of the businesses would face the open space, enhancing the businesses entrances for visitors while providing a new outdoor amenity for workers.



# Open Space Strip Retail & Office Examples

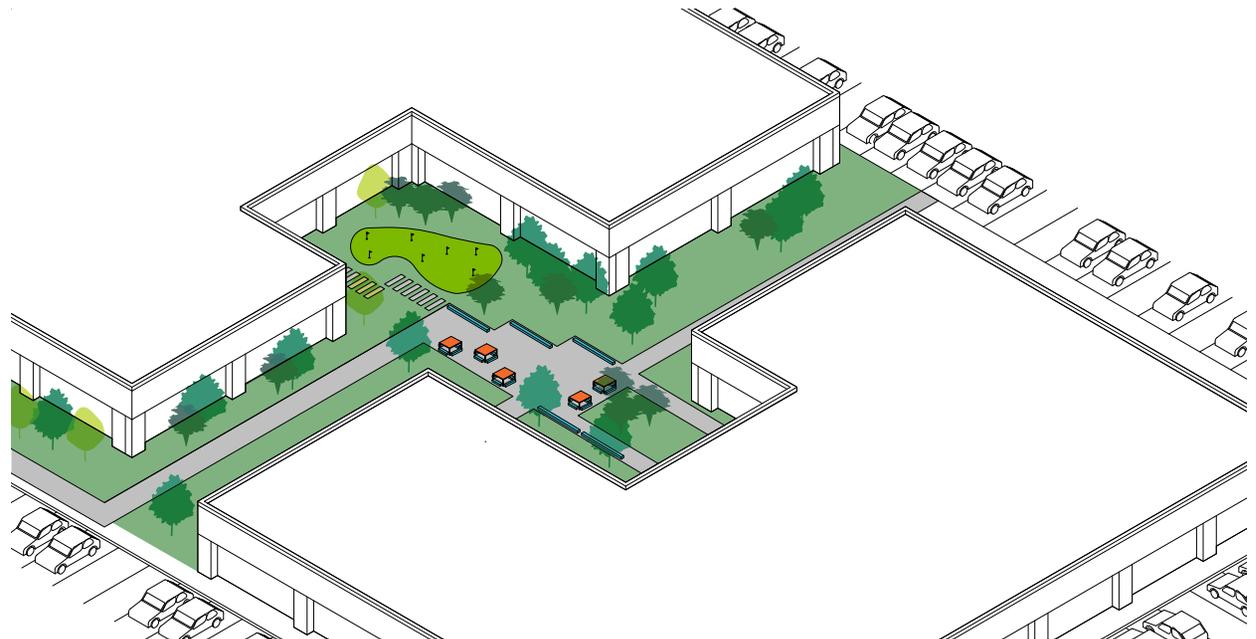


## 2A STRIP RETAIL

The changing market demands of brick-and-mortar retail stores have some owners thinking creatively about adding new value and amenities to their centers. Retail center owners are removing a portion of the building and replacing it with a new outdoor amenity. These outdoor seating areas are in high demand by cafes and restaurants, and this retrofit creates two additional end-cap leasable spaces. The outdoor space adds significant value to the tenants and amenities like string lights, outdoor seating, and areas for outdoor live music attract customers.

## 2B OFFICE CENTER

Office spaces with interior courtyards provide a great opportunity to enhance existing outdoor space with new activities and amenities. This may include new outdoor seating, landscaping, pop-up activities like cornhole or horseshoes, or even transforming the courtyard into a small putting green. While historically underutilized, these courtyards now provide great value to tenants when amenitized and activated.



# Test Your Ideas

Before diving into a full-fledged construction project, it may make sense to pilot innovative ideas to determine the best solution. **Pop-up demonstrations use lighter, cheaper, and easily available materials to temporarily improve a space and test ideas and concepts.** They can be organized and implemented quickly overtime and can take many forms.

For example, a pop-up “parklet” or small park with seating can easily be installed in a parking spot or on a vacant portion of land and can be activated during the afternoon with food trucks. Creating environments that encourage social interaction can improve community cohesion and networking in the Richardson IQ.

## Potential Pop-Up Elements



### Note:

To ensure safety is accommodated it is best to work with the City to discuss locations and dimensions for temporary features.

# Example Pop-up Photos



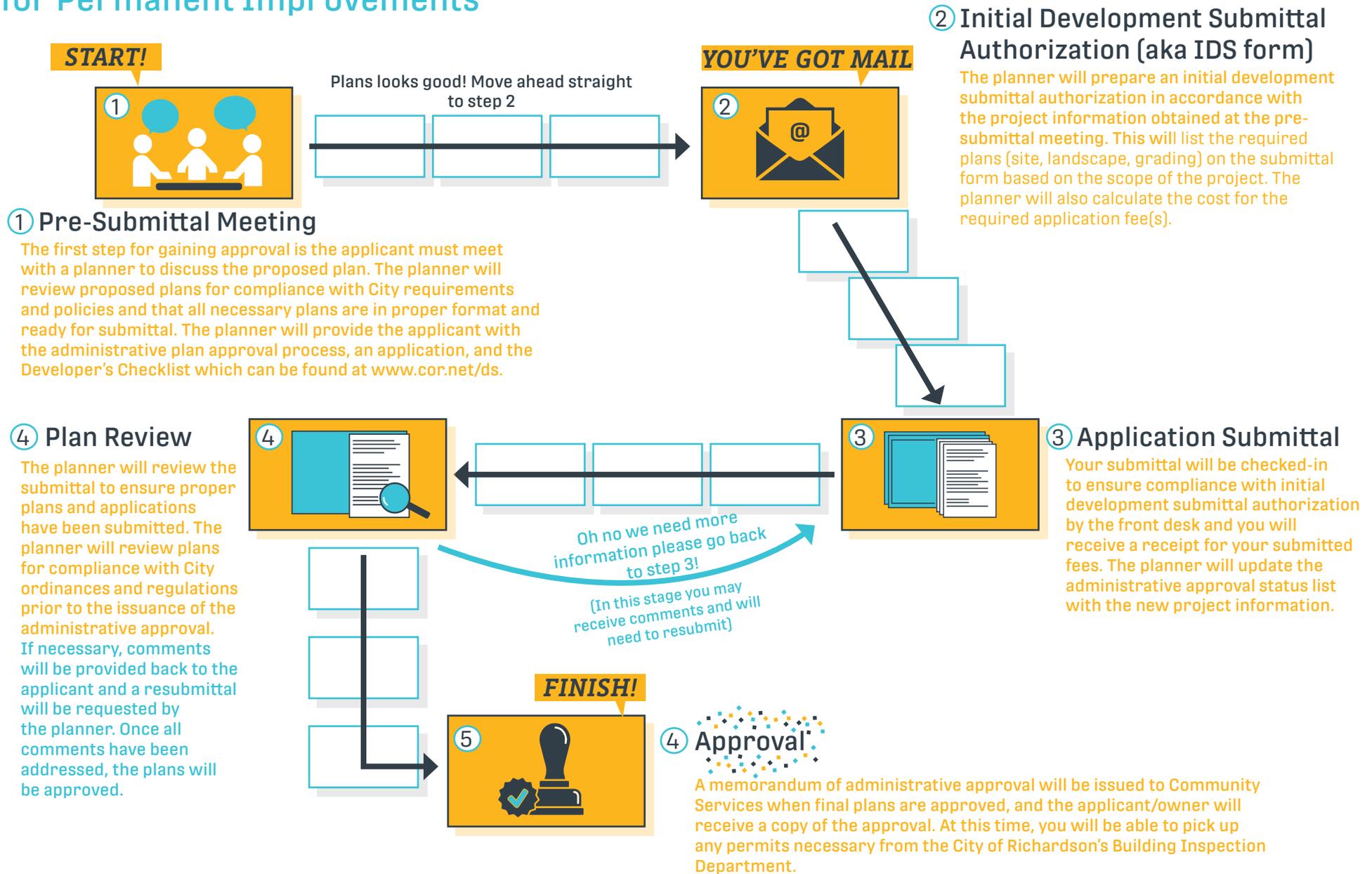


# ***building your project***

***THE APPROVAL PROCESS  
SITE ELEMENTS  
LANDSCAPE MATERIALS***

# The Approval Process

## for Permanent Improvements



# Site Elements

## BENCHES & CHAIRS



Landscape Forms - MultipliCITY Collection

For any type of seating the main criteria is comfortability but a close second is durability of materials. Preferred materials for benches and chairs include steel, wood, and various metals. Seating should be placed in the shade to provide refuge during the hot Texas months. Retractable umbrellas may also be used to provide shade for the seating.

## DISTRICT LIGHTING



Landscape Forms - Alcott Light Collection

Lighting should always be incorporated in any scale design or redevelopment. Well-lit sites provide a positive and safe atmosphere for workers and deters crime. Exterior illumination of building walls, landscaping, walkways, outdoor seating (suspended cable lights) and parking areas should be considered.

## SITE FURNISHINGS



Landscape Forms - MultipliCITY Collection

Site Furnishings is a broad category that relates to trash receptacles, bike racks, planters, bollards, etc. When choosing a style for your property it is important to look for a cohesive look. The best way to achieve this is by picking a collection of materials from one supplier.

## ARTIFICIAL TURF & GRAVEL



Artificial Turf Civic Installation

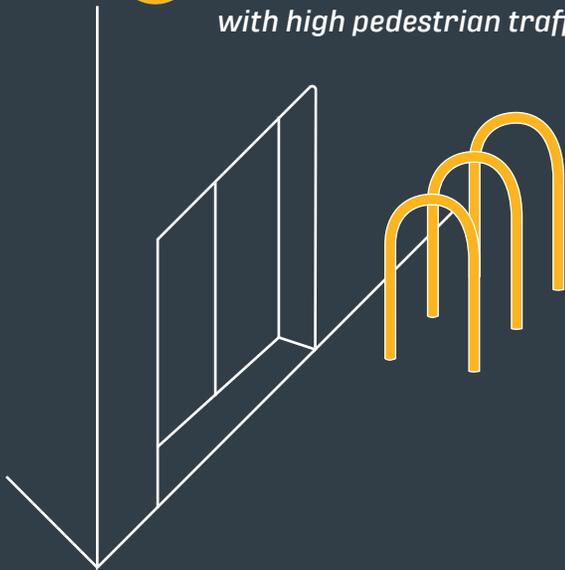
Artificial turf is a great option for low maintenance shady areas such as interior courtyards. Decomposed Gravel or a River Rock is another great options for shady areas or as a replacement for groundcover in xeriscape beds.

# Bike Parking Best Practices

The vision for the Richardson IQ is to be highly walkable and bikeable, and to make it easier to get around without a car. Bicycle parking is an important supporting element for this vision because bicyclists need a safe and convenient place to park or store their bicycles along or at the end of trips. Below are four best practices to installing bike racks on your property.

1

Place bike racks near entrances and other areas with high pedestrian traffic.



3

Generally, two bikes require a parking space area of 84"x32".



2

Concrete is the best and least expensive surface material for a variety of rack types and installation methods.



4

At a minimum, a good bike rack will allow both the frame and at least one wheel of the bike to be secured with a u-style lock. For orderly parking, the rack should make at least two points of contact with the bike.



# Landscape Materials

## GO NATIVE!



Native plants have formed symbiotic relationships with native wildlife over thousands of years, and therefore offer the most sustainable habitat. A plant is considered native if it has occurred naturally in a particular region, ecosystem, or habitat without human introduction.

- National Wildlife Federation

### Benefits of Native Plants

 Saves Money & Water	 Adapted to Climate	 Less Maintenance
 Restores Natural Habitat	 Rarely Invasive	 No pesticides needed

### SUN LOVING NATIVE PLANTS

- Agarita
- Autumn Sage
- Dwarf Palmetto
- Flame Acanthus
- Gulf Muhly
- 'Henry Duelberg' Salvia
- Little Bluestem
- Mealy Blue Sage
- Mexican Feather Grass
- Pale Leaf Yucca
- Prickly Pear Cactus
- Red Yucca
- Switchgrass
- 'Texas Gold' Columbine
- Texas Lantana
- Texas Sotol

### SHADE LOVING NATIVE PLANTS

- American Beautyberry
- Coralberry
- Dwarf Palmetto
- Gulf Coast Penstemon
- Four Nerve Daisy
- Fragrant Sumac
- Frogfruit
- Inland Seoats
- Maximilian Sunflower
- Meadow Sedge
- Purple Coneflower
- Texas Sotol
- Turk's Cap
- Tropical Sage
- Wright's Purple Skullcap

**NOTE: Plants not specifically identified in the Richardson IQ zoning district may be approved by minor modification with the Development Services Department.**

# Tree Planting

(Why are we so interested in trees?)

**THEY HAVE MANY BENEFITS**



**PURIFIES  
1/3rd  
OF AIR  
POLLUTANTS**



**SHADES &  
COOLS  
20-45°**



**INCREASES  
PROPERTY  
VALUE UP TO  
27%**

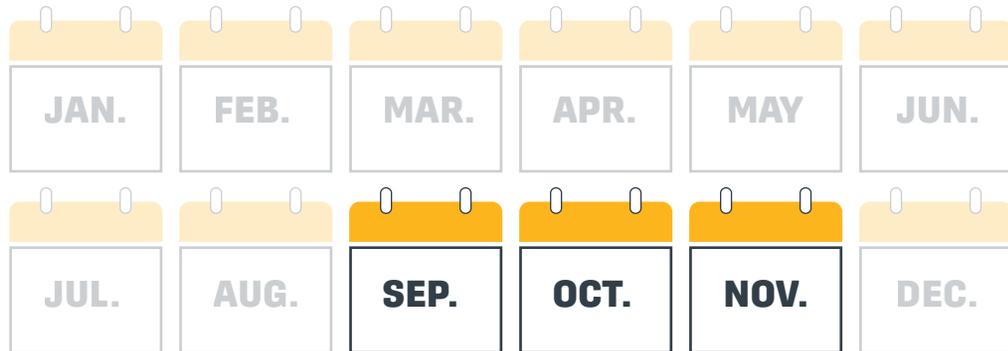


**REDUCES:**

- STRESS
- NOISE
- POLLUTION
- VIOLENCE

Reference : [www.arborday.org/trees/treefacts/](http://www.arborday.org/trees/treefacts/)

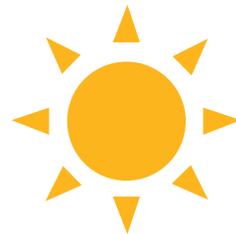
## BEST TIME TO PLANT



## BEST TIME TO TRIM / MAINTENANCE



## ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS



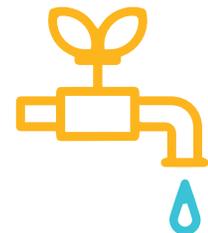
### *Proper Sunlight*

Areas that receive good sunlight will result in max height and spread of your trees.



### *Proper Space Requirements*

Tree success can be determined by the space allotted for them: 4'x4' is generally the min. amount of space.



### *Irrigation*

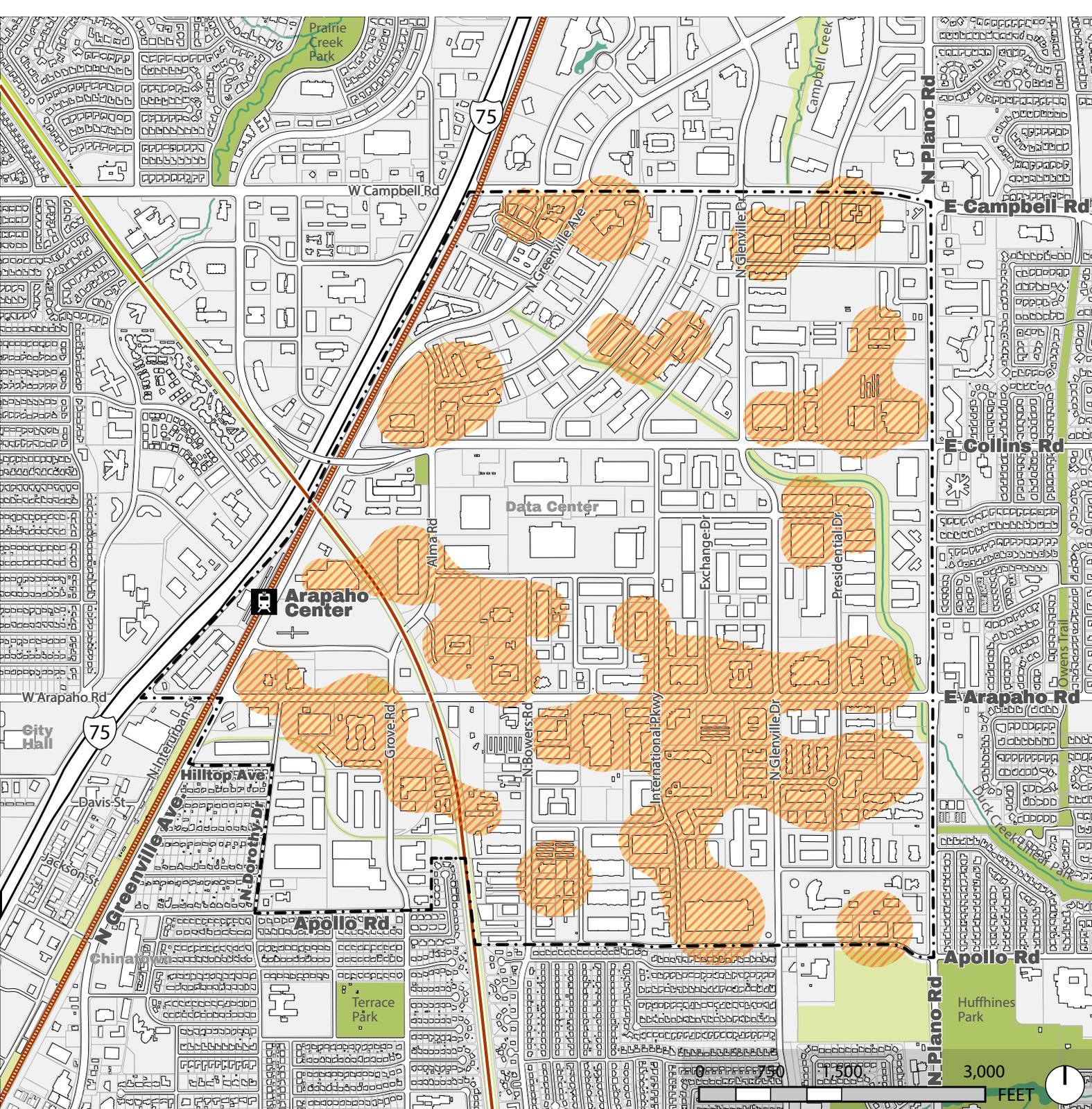
Tree bubblers are the preferred recommendation from the city for irrigation

# 05

## *appendix*

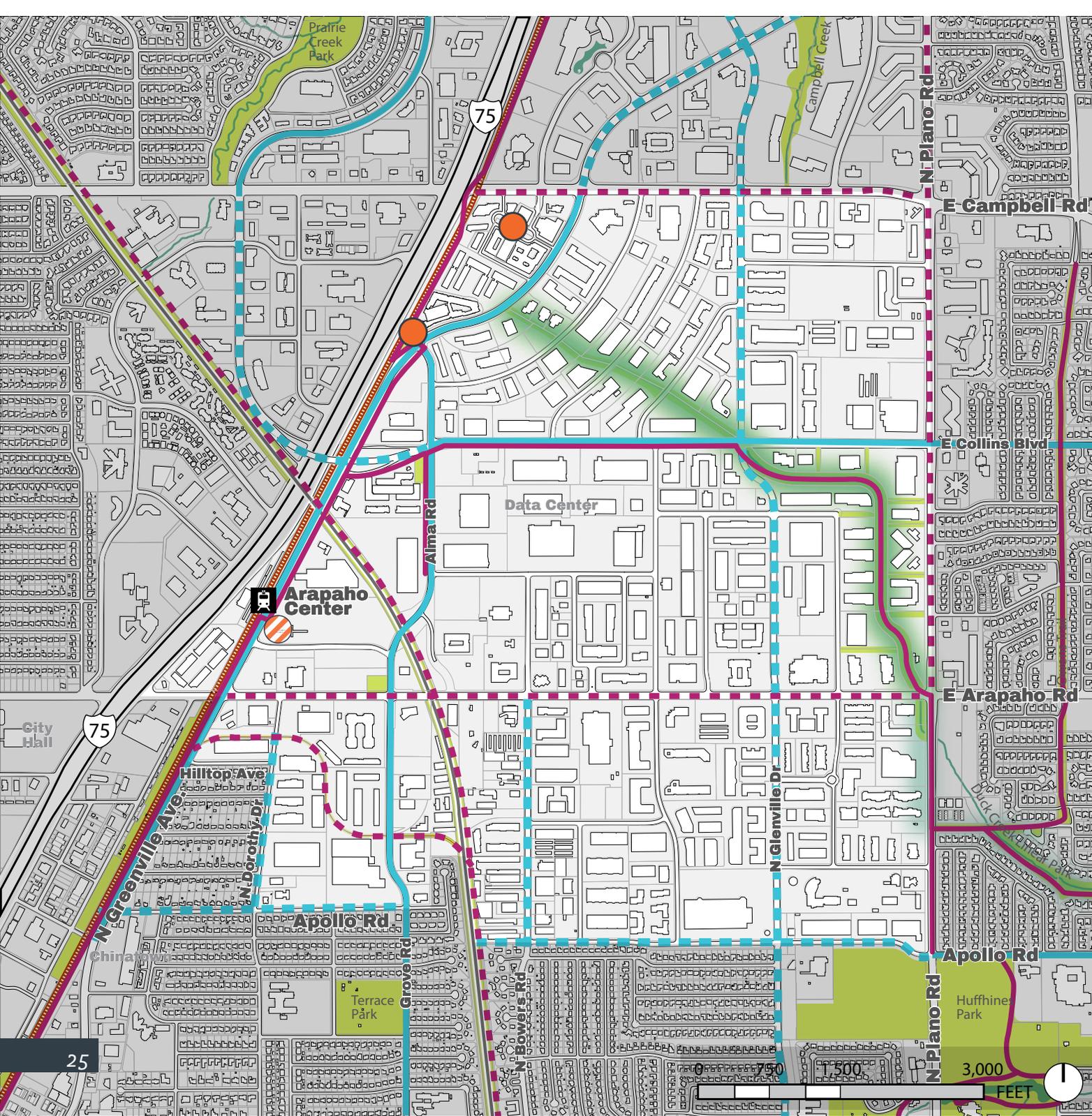
# High Worker Concentration

-  RICHARDSON IQ BOUNDARY
-  HIGH WORKER CONCENTRATION



# Trails, Bike Lanes, & Open Space

Proposed & Existing



RICHARDSON IQ BOUNDARY

DUCK CREEK

BIKE LANES

FUTURE BIKE LANES

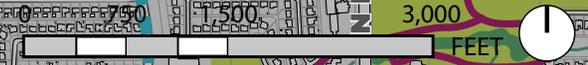
TRAILS

FUTURE TRAILS

PLAZA

PROPOSED PLAZA

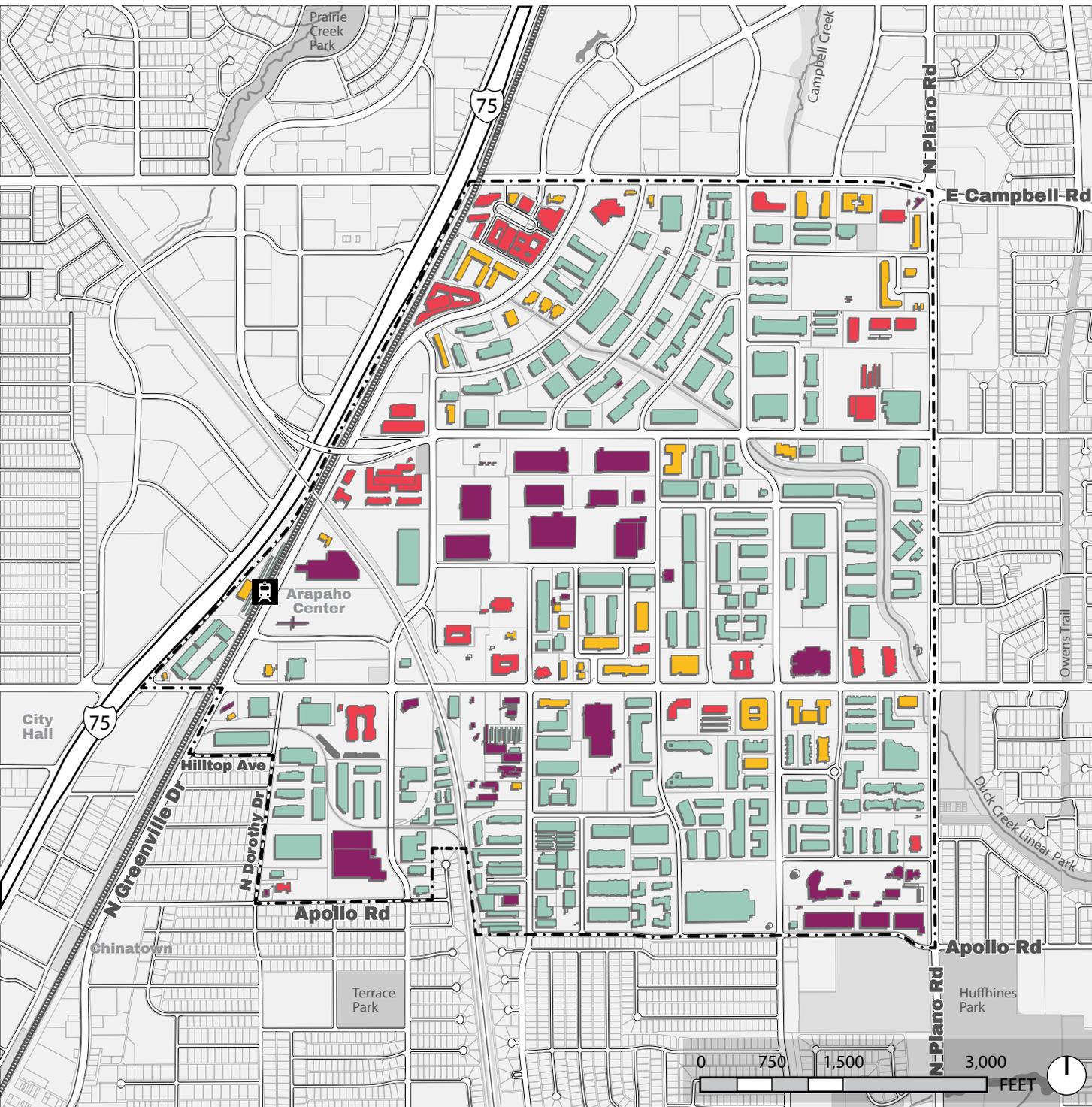
EXISTING OPEN SPACE



# Building Typologies

Source: Interface Studio Field Survey, 2018

 RICHARDSON IQ BOUNDARY



**58%** of the building stock is **flex space**, which amounts to **7.5 million SF** or **61% of the total building area**