

# South Holyoke

Architectural Guidelines for New Development  
Around Carlos Vega Park



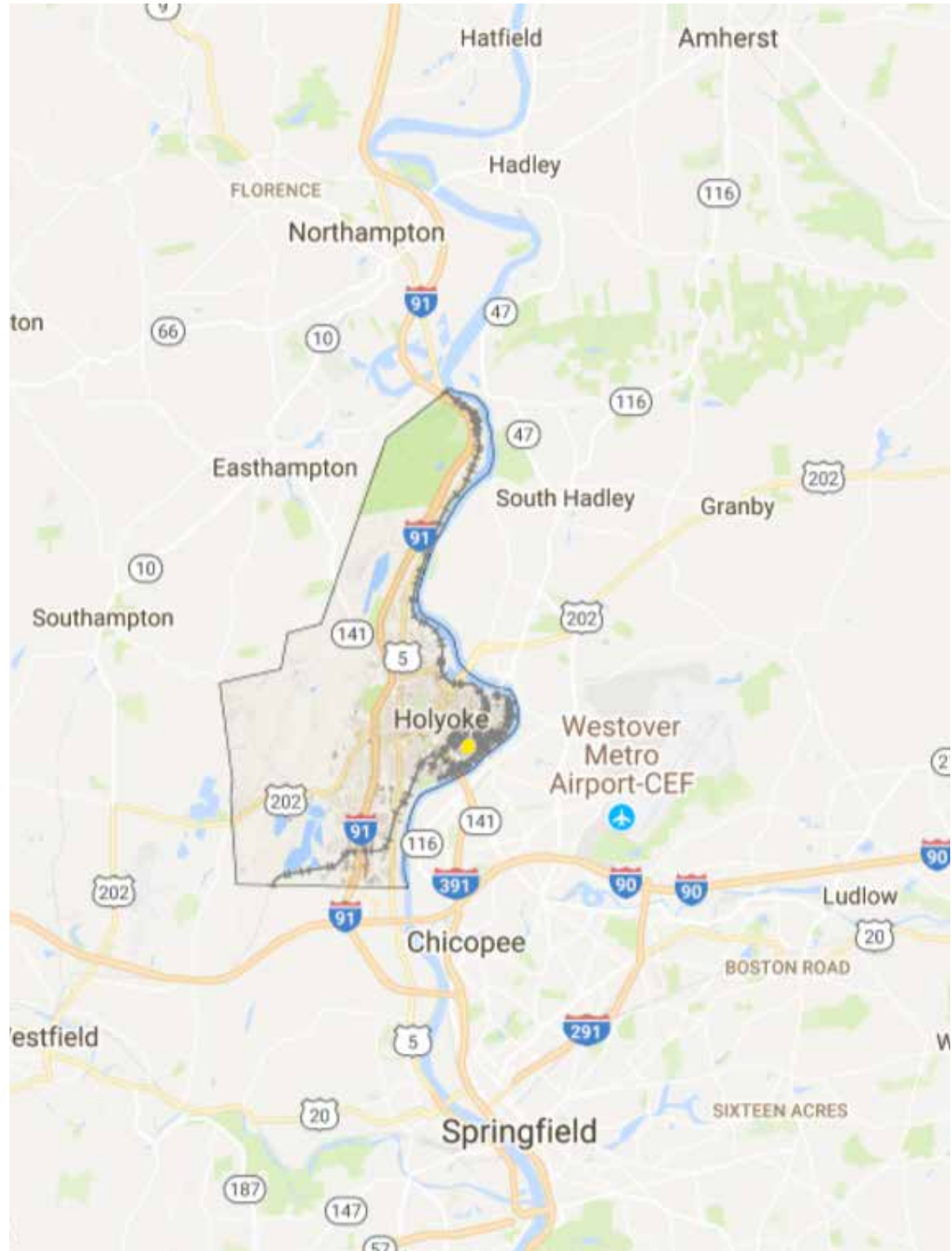
Prepared By:  
**Steffian Bradley Architects**  
DRAFT: August 2017

# A Brief History of Holyoke

Holyoke is a city in Hampden County, Massachusetts situated between the Mt. Tom Mountain Range and the western bank of the Connecticut River. Officially incorporated in 1850, it quickly became a manufacturing center, most notably of paper and cotton. An abundance of new factories and worker housing went up throughout Holyoke and especially along its southern, riverside edge, known today as South Holyoke and The Flats. Additionally, a canal and dam system was built to supply electricity to the city. Between 1890 and 1930, Holyoke's population grew from 35,700 to 60,000. It was during this era of thriving industry and growth that Holyoke gained its nickname: The Paper City.

Along with many Northern US cities, Holyoke experienced a decline in industry in the middle of the 20th century. While Holyoke is still home to some manufacturers of specialty paper goods, the majority of its factories went out of production and the need for factory workers fell to just a small fraction of what it once was.

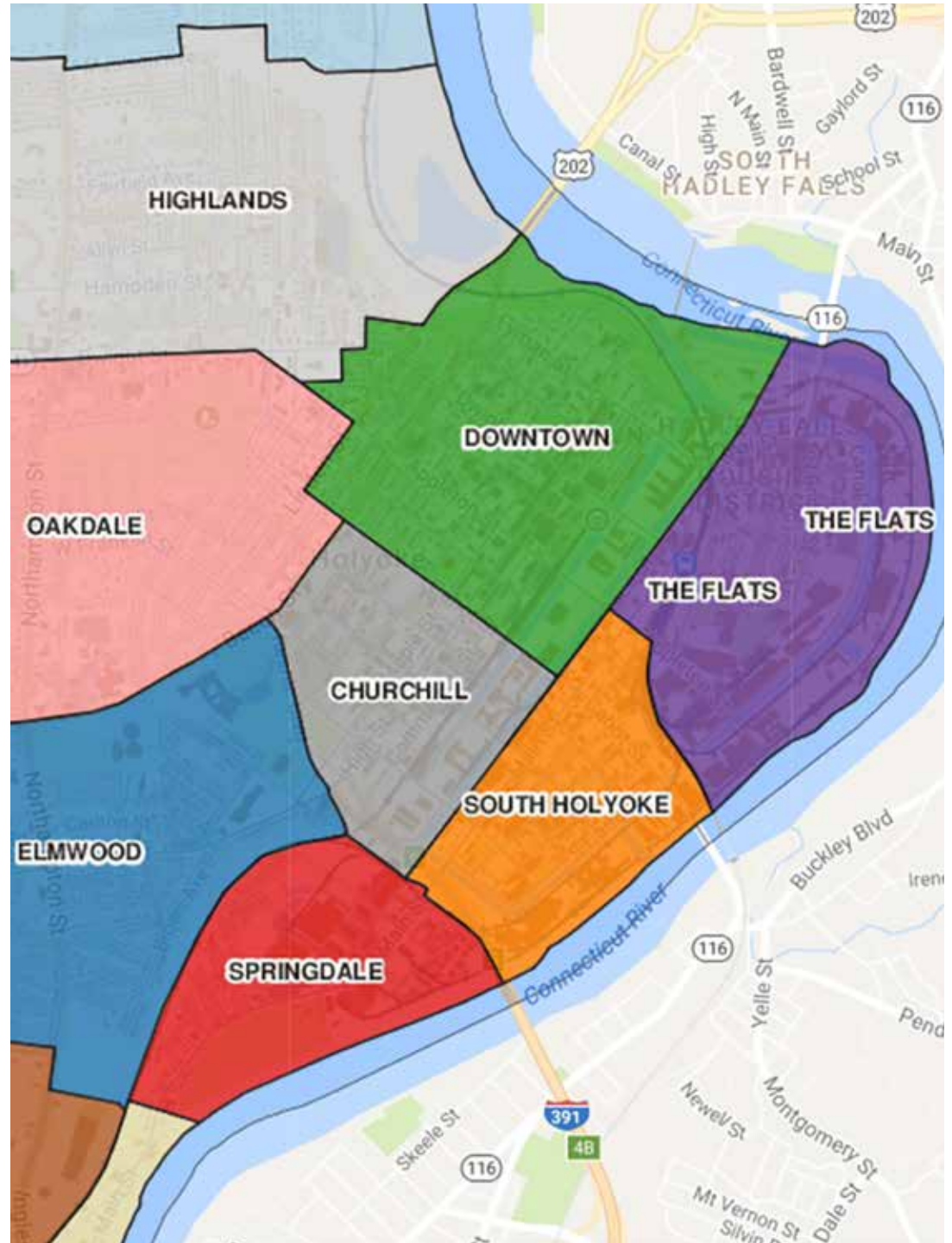
Today, evidence of Holyoke's rich history scatters its architectural landscape. The people and the community of Holyoke give the city an identity that has attracted recent investment. Closed factories, large housing units, strewn new construction and vacant lots create a difficult but promising opportunity for reinvigoration and growth.



# The Existing Context of South Holyoke

This study proposes development within the neighborhood of Holyoke known as South Holyoke. South Holyoke hugs the Western edge of the Connecticut river and, along with the directly northern neighborhood known as The Flats, contains the 4.5-mile-long canal system.

Most buildings pre-date 1930 and exist today in conditions varying from well-kept to condemned. Especially along the canals and riverside, large brick factories exist that are largely out of use. Instances of more recent construction exist such as The William G Morgan elementary school on Sargent Street, built in the 1970s, and the seven-story housing building at 68 Cabot Street.



# South Holyoke

The 17 lots for which this study makes proposals directly surround Carlos Vega Park. The park narrows as it moves northwest toward Sargeant Street. While much of the housing in South Holyoke sits close to the sidewalk, Carlos Vega Park offers a unique opportunity to imagine a shared, front-yard space. This study proposes construction that responds to the progressing scale of the park as well as to the existing style and program of its surroundings. The zoning of these lots is downtown residential district (DR).





Architectural Guidelines for New Development Around Carlos Vega Park

# Context



Architectural Guidelines for New Development Around Carlos Vega Park

## Brick/Multi-Unit Buildings



## Wood Homes



## Noteable Attractions



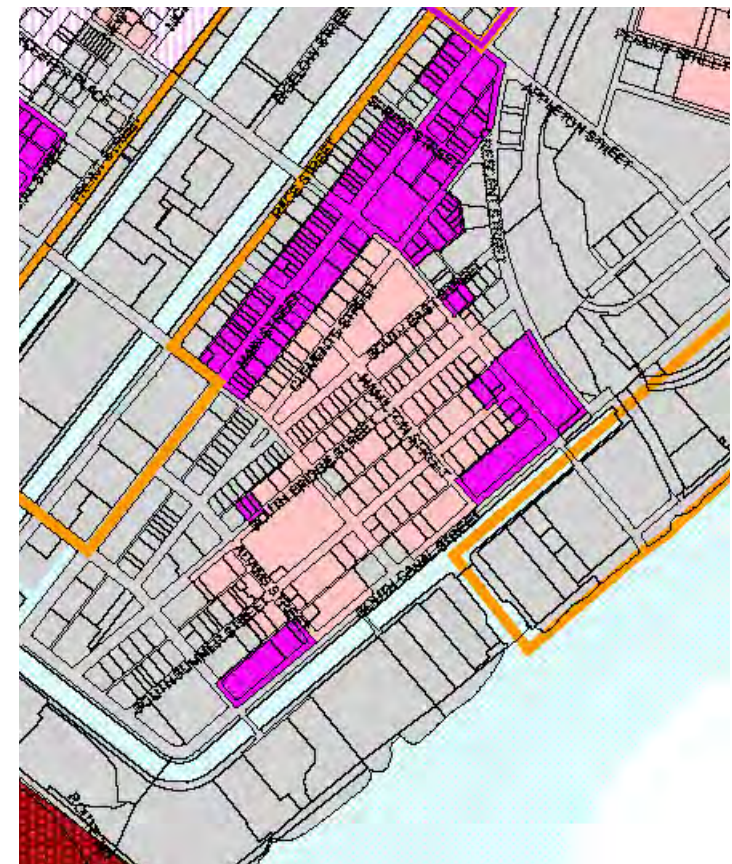
# Zoning

One lot under consideration in this study falls under the Highway Business (BH) zoning district. The other seventeen lots under consideration in this study fall under the Downtown Residential (DR) zoning district. The DR district was established in order to increase property values in downtown residential neighborhoods by encouraging infill and redevelopment of vacant lots between the existing, neighboring buildings and structures. The DR district allows for a flexible approach to the redevelopment of larger parcels of land that can include a mix of residential and small-scale commercial uses in the same building and neighborhood. Commercial uses are only allowed to occupy the first floor of a building, provided there are a minimum of two dwelling units in the remainder of the building and the building is a minimum of three stories high.

## Dimensional Regulations

DR Zoning District – Per the City of Holyoke Zoning Ordinance dated February 19, 2002, “the maximum setback, maximum lot coverage, maximum number of stories, and minimum area per dwelling unit shall be the average of these features on the nearest (5) lots containing structures on the same side of the street on the same block.” Since this area has many vacant lots, it is not feasible to take the average of the nearest 5 lots. In cases such as these, the zoning requirements are as follows:

Minimum Lot Size:	6,000 square feet
Minimum Setback:	10 feet
Minimum Frontage:	60 feet
Maximum Height:	90 feet (7 stories)



### Districts

	BC	Downtown Business
	BG	General Business
	BH	Highway Business
	IG	General Industry
	IP	Industrial Park
	DR	Downtown Residential



The majority of existing lots under consideration do not meet the requirements for minimum lot size and minimum frontage. This proposal suggests ways to strategically combine lots/ change lot lines in order to meet the 60 feet minimum frontage requirement, which will also ensure they meet the minimum lot size requirement. Setback variances will need to be considered for the row home/townhomes option illustrated in this proposal.

BH Zoning District – Per the City of Holyoke Zoning Ordinance dated February 19, 2002, the dimensional regulations are as follows:

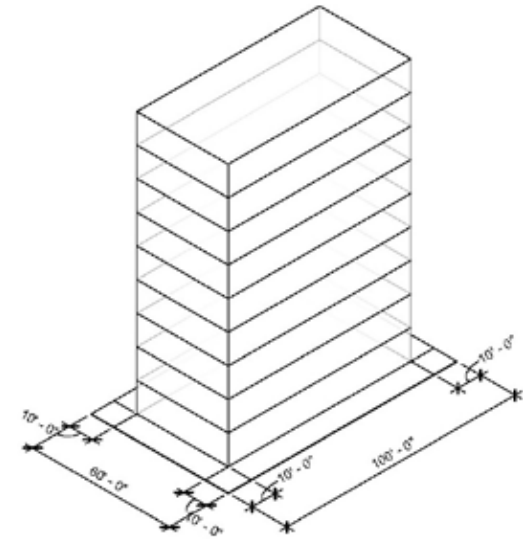
- Minimum Lot Size: 10,000 square feet
- Minimum Setbacks: 30 feet (front), 25 feet (rear), 10 feet (side)
- Minimum Frontage: 100 feet
- Maximum Height: 35 feet (2 stories)

The existing lot under consideration in the BH zoning district does not conform to the minimum lot size and will not accommodate the front and rear setback requirements, therefore variances will need to be considered in order to build on this lot.

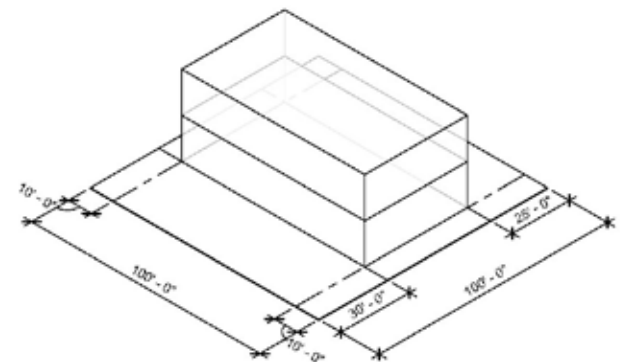
**Parking Requirements**

In both the DR and BH zoning districts, the minimum parking requirement is 2 parking spaces per residential unit. The graphics within this proposal identify the number of street parking spaces available on each street under consideration. Parking needs for each housing option are identified and compared with existing available parking. Where there are deficiencies, additional parking should be considered as part of future development.

**DR Zoning District**



**BH Zoning District**



# Housing Types

The lots surrounding Carlos Vegas Park offer a multitude of planning options while working within the existing context of the neighborhood. Development around the park could take the form of the classic apartment buildings on Clemente Street and Bridge Street built during the early 1900's or the smaller scaled two-family structures built in the last couple of decades. Either building type is appropriate for the South Holyoke area. Single-family homes, however, seem out of place due to their lack of critical mass.

Any new development should encourage the integration of a variety of housing types, densities and housing forms that will provide a variety of housing options while still promoting a strong and unified residential character.

- **Low Density Residential**  
Single-Family Dwellings
- **Medium Density Residential**  
Two-Unit Dwellings (Duplex)
- **High Density Residential**  
Multi-Unit Dwellings (Townhouse, Condominium)
- **Mixed Use Residential**  
Multi-Unit Dwellings (Townhouse, Condominium)  
with First Floor Commercial

MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL  
Two-Family Dwellings (duplex)

185/189 CLEMENTE STREET



553/557 SOUTH BRIDGE STREET



HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL- Multi-Family Dwellings  
(Townhomes)

JACKSON STREET



HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL- Multi-Family Dwellings  
(Condominiums with potential first floor commercial)

549 SOUTH BRIDGE STREET



328-364 MAPLE STREET



74 CABOT STREET



# Type A Housing

## Duplex Units

Housing Type A is based on an existing typology located within the study area. This type creates a two dwelling units on a single lot and obeys the DR zoning setback requirements. Each duplex would have its living areas on the first level (kitchen, dining room, living room, etc.) and the bedrooms up on the second level.

This Housing Type could support two or three bedroom units depending on the overall building footprint.

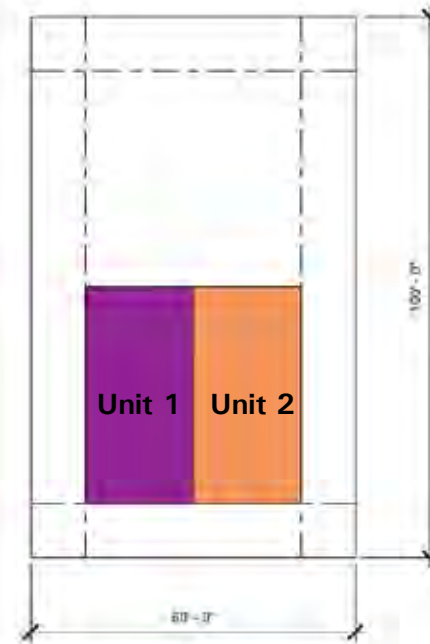
## Type A Development

The Duplex provides two units per parcel. Based on the current zoning regulation is the DR district, the study area can support 12 Duplex Type structures.

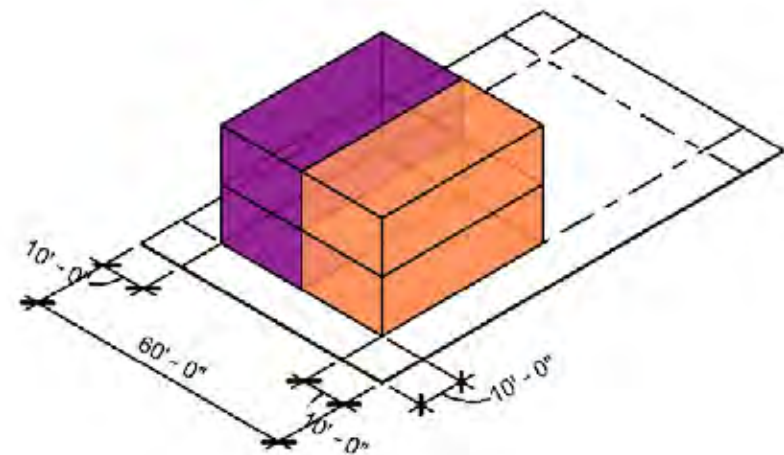
- Number of Duplexes: 12
- Number of Units: 24

Note: There is one lot within the study area that does not support this typology. We feel that it could support a Type C Structure (Condominium) which, if modified to fit the lot, could provide an additional three housing units to this development layout.

Typical Two Unit Duplex Plan



Typical Two Unit Duplex Axonometric



# Type A Development



Architectural Guidelines for New Development Around Carlos Vega Park

# Type B Housing

## Townhouse Units

Housing Type B is based on the concept of providing a less suburban feeling option of home ownership. This type creates a multi-story townhouse unit with the living spaces on the lower level and bedrooms on each floor above. Subtle variations could be incorporated into this style of living:

- A garage could be located on the ground floor with automobile access from the alley
- The upper floors could incorporate rooftop decks

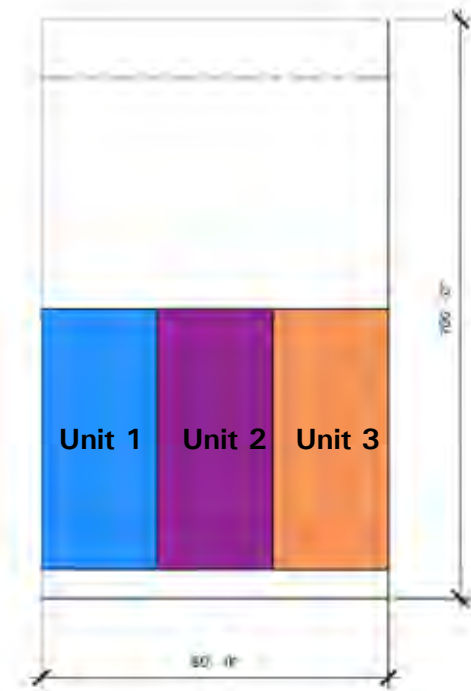
## Type B Development

Assuming the same size parcel that was used in the Type A description, each parcel could support three units. The Type B Housing creates a more urban feeling neighborhood by eliminating the side setback and locating the buildings closer together.

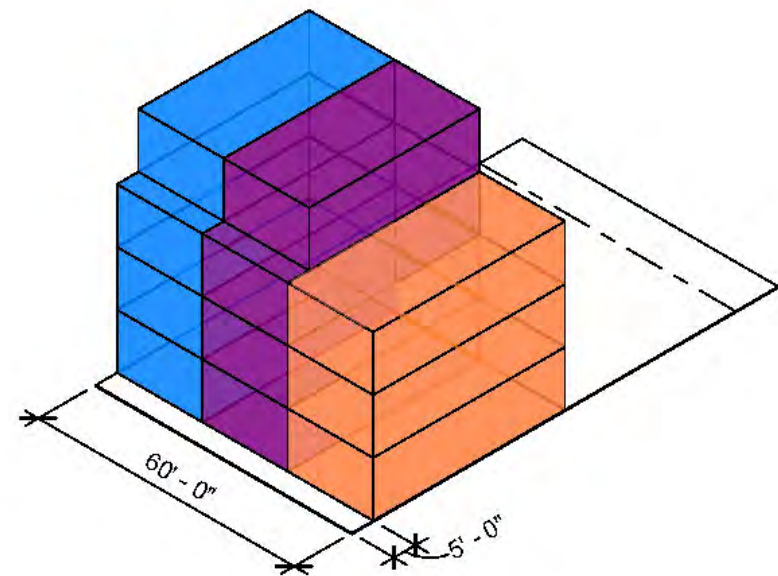
- Number of Townhomes: 24
- Number of Units: 24

Note: There is one lot on Hamilton Street that does not support the Type B Housing type. We feel that it could support a Type C Structure (Condominium) which, if modified to fit the lot, could provide an additional three housing units to this development layout. The two lots on Bridge Street support the Type A Housing best and the plan represents this.

Typical Multi Unit Townhouse Plan



Typical Multi Unit Townhouse Axonometric



# Type B Development



Architectural Guidelines for New Development Around Carlos Vega Park

# Type C Housing

## Townhouse Units

Housing Type C looks to modify the traditional apartment block and convert multi unit living in condominiums. This housing type has a much larger footprint than Types A and B, but each floor of the structure houses multiple living units. Type C would provide a common entrance from the sidewalk that would be shared by the owners. For this study, it is assumed that the three units per floor would each have two bedrooms, but there is flexibility with the internal layout. This style building could provide a mix of unit types - studios, one bedroom, two bedroom, or three bedroom condos.

A variation on the Type C Housing is to locate commercial space on the street level. Locating mixed use buildings on Sargeant Street and Hamilton Street would support all the residents in the neighborhood.

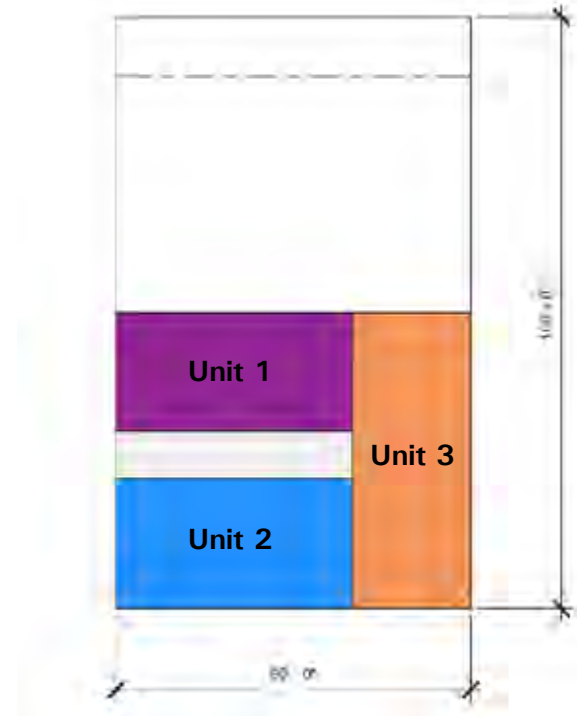
## Type C Development

Because there are three units per floor in each building, the Type C housing creates more density than the Type A and B styles.

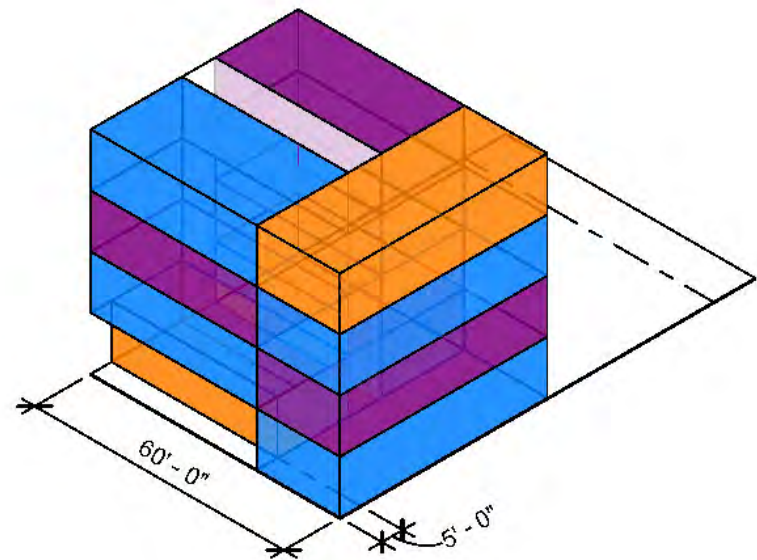
- Number of Condominiums: 16
- Number of Units: 184

Note: The Hamilton Street lot supports a building with a smaller foot print with only four units.

Multi Unit Condominium Plan



Multi Unit Condominium Axonometric





# Development Layout



Architectural Guidelines for New Development Around Carlos Vega Park

# Recommended Approach

The preferred development approach would be to incorporate a mixture of Housing Types A, B, and C. The recommended layout uses Carlos Vega park as the focus of the overall development.

- **Townhouses:** The multi story units very comfortably line the edges of the park. The Type B Housing frames the edges of the park and creates a more intimate public space. And owning a home that fronts the park would be desirable.
- **Condominiums:** The larger scaled structures with the higher density of units are located on the busier streets - Sargeant and Hamilton. The recommendation would to make these mixed use buildings providing commercial opportunities to support the other new residential buildings.
- **Duplexes:** While this scaled structure feels out of place on the park, it fits very well on South Bridge Street adjacent to other homes of the same scale.

## Recommended Development

Because there are three units per floor in each building, the Type C housing creates more density than the Type A and B styles.

- Number of Duplexes: 2
- Number of Units: 4
  
- Number of Townhomes: 17
- Number of Units: 17
  
- Number of Condominiums: 5  
(with street level commercial space)
- Number of Units: 45

**Total Number of Units: 66**

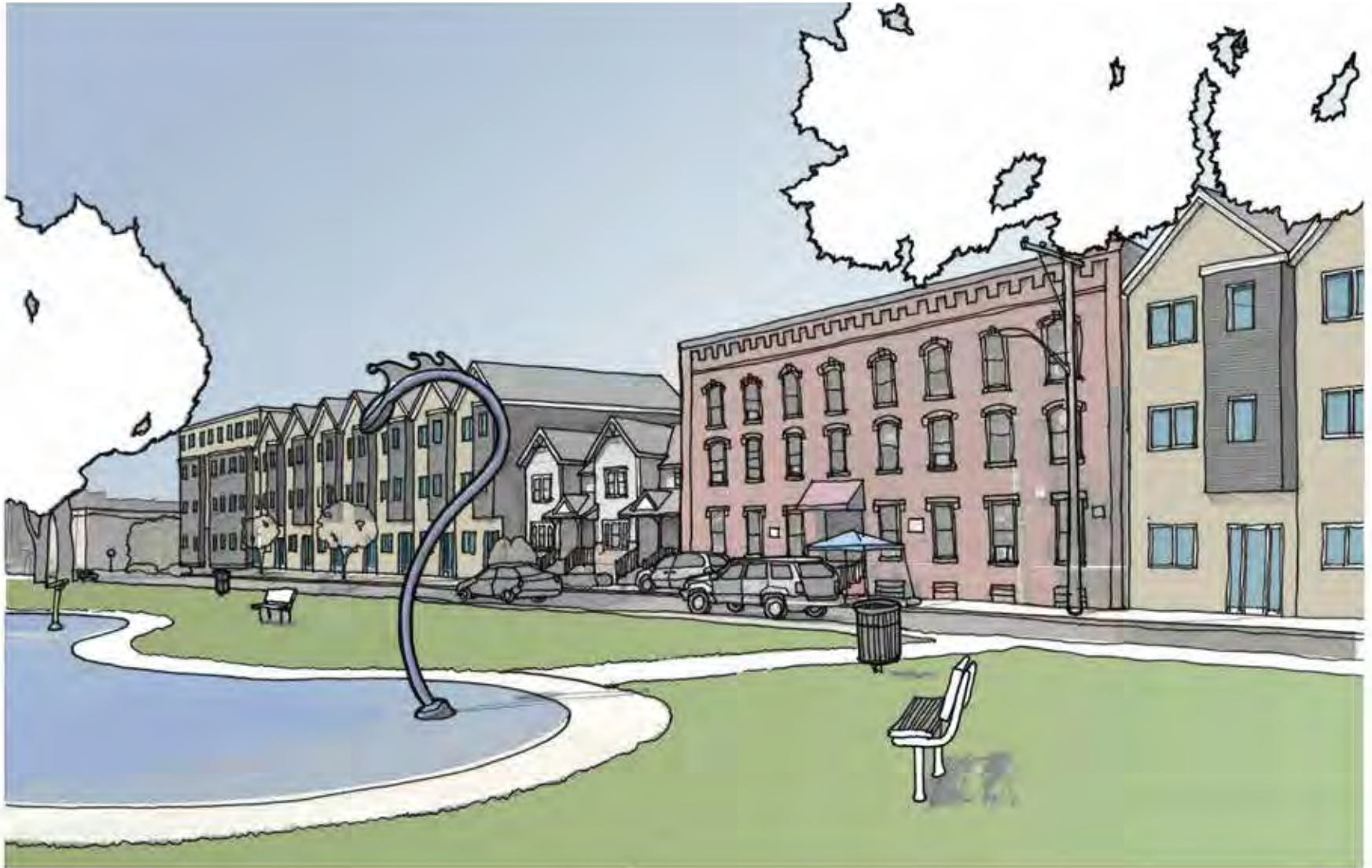
# Recommended Development Layout



Architectural Guidelines for New Development Around Carlos Vega Park

# Recommended Approach





Architectural Guidelines for New Development Around Carlos Vega Park

# Design Guidelines

The intent of these guidelines is not to mimic existing buildings, but to create new housing that is a product of its time – interpreting Holyoke’s historic character in contemporary building design.

## Configuration/Height

- Type 1 – Duplex, 2 units/lot; 2 stories
- Type 2 – Row Home/Townhouse, 3 units/lot; 3-4 stories
- Type 3 – Condominium, 12 units/lot; 4 stories
- Gradual transitions are preferred between taller buildings and lower, smaller buildings
- Upper floors on taller buildings can be recessed to de-emphasize their height

## Scale/Massing

- Massing should reflect surrounding buildings or be visually divided into smaller identifiable parts with vertical changes/roof changes that relate to the units within.
- Long, flat, unbroken walls should be avoided

## Materials

- Red Brick should be incorporated whenever possible on lower levels of buildings or whole buildings
- Wood or Fiber Cement Siding can be used on the upper levels of buildings

## Roof

- Pitched roofs and flat roofs can both be used
- Dormers and bay windows can add interest

## Ornamentation

- Decorative cornices on flat roofs
- Decorative cornices around windows and doors
- Victorian styling is common within the city and downtown area

## Entrance

- Primary entrance should be on the front façade of the building
- Prominent and clear to visitors
- Recessed doorways or awnings are encouraged
- Adequate doorway lighting is needed to provide a safe atmosphere

## Fenestration

- Windows should reflect the repeating pattern in adjacent/nearby buildings
- Windows should be largest on the first level

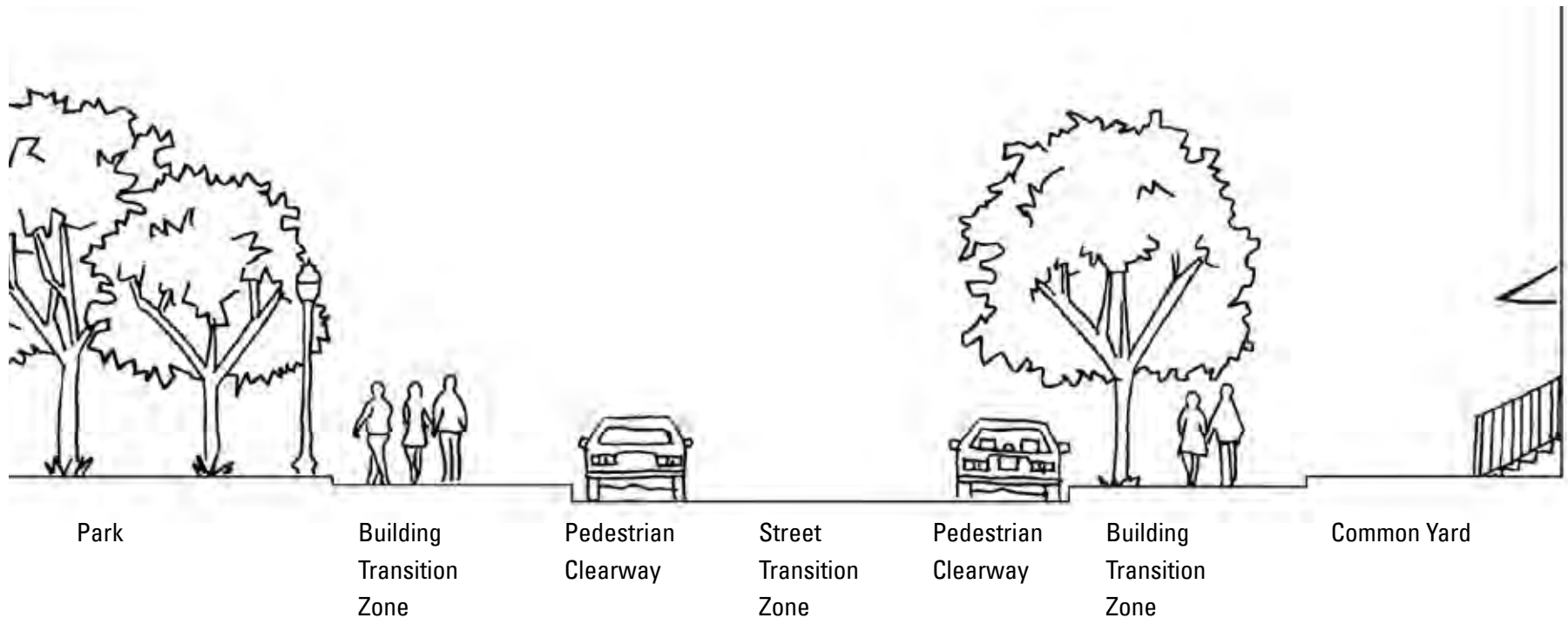
## Color

- Color should be used to add visual interest
- Contrasting colors can be used for window frames, door frames, cornices, and mouldings

# Streetscape

Parking will be limited to on street parking where possible. Where deficiencies occur between available on street parking and required parking spaces per unit based on zoning, off street parking solutions should be explored.

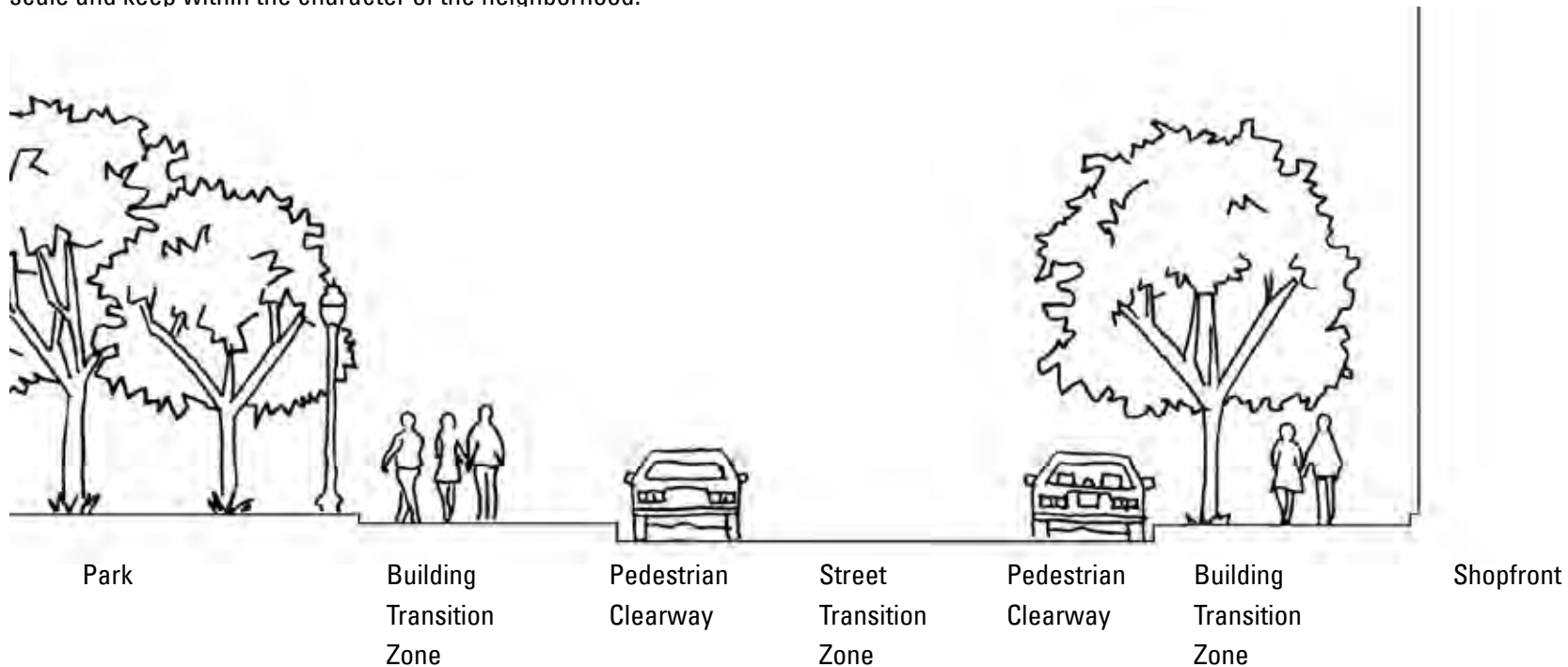
Sidewalks can be maximized in width and use durable, low maintenance, surface materials. Accessible curbs and connections to crosswalks shall be provided.



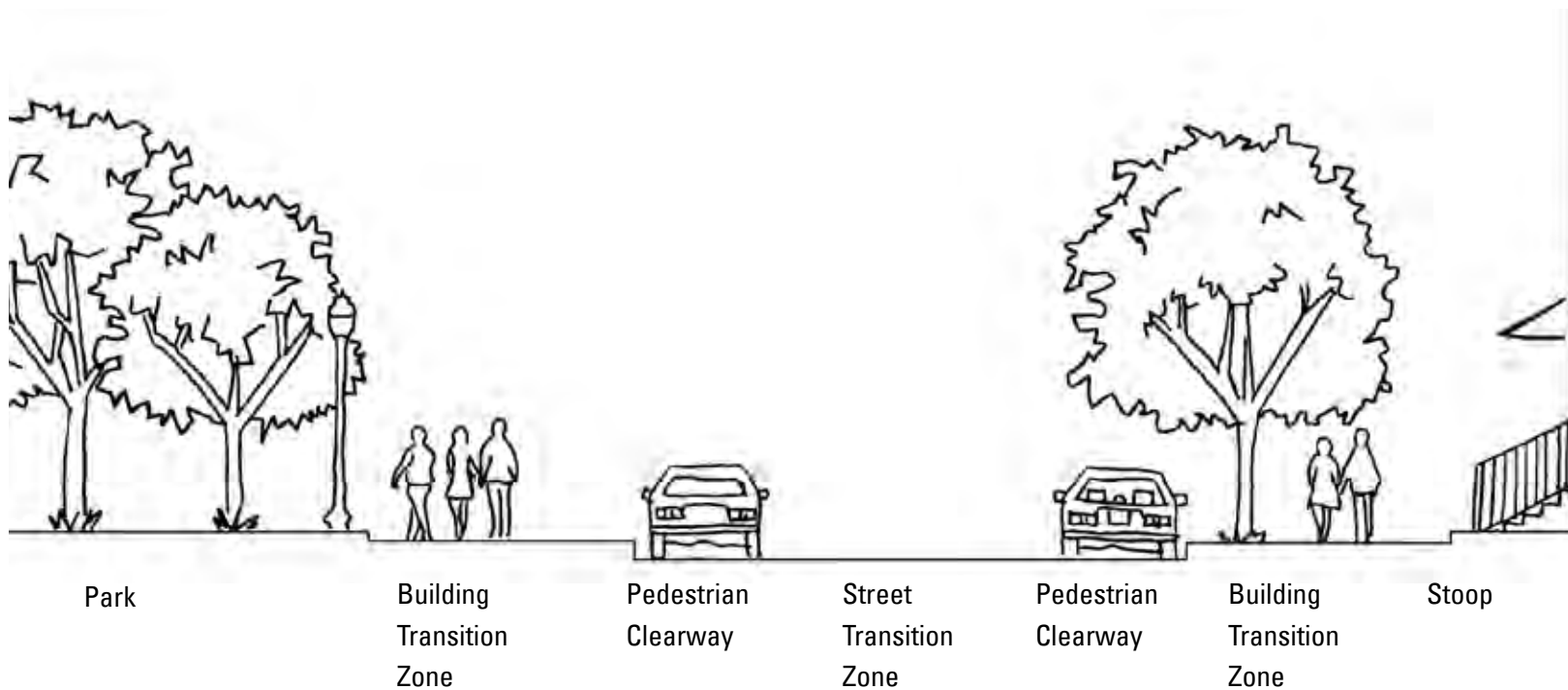
# Streetscape

A tree line should be considered on Clemente Street and South East Street to add to the residential feel of the neighborhood. Street trees should be planted at regular intervals where space permits, and the species selection shall be coordinated with the City Tree Warden.

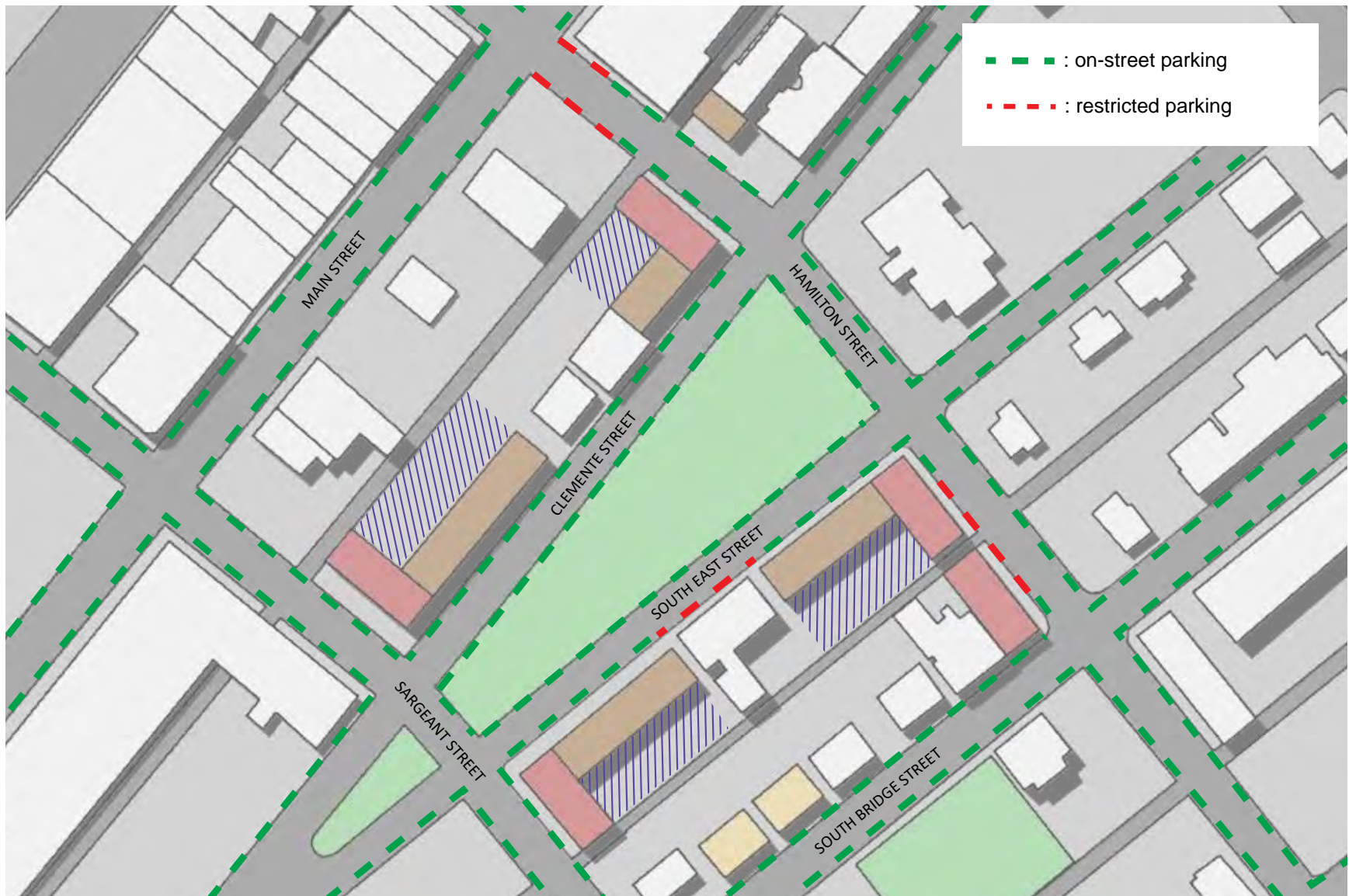
Site lighting should be carefully located and screened so as to not shine in the eyes of pedestrians and drivers, but ensure a feeling of security. Safety lighting should also be considered throughout the Carlos Vega Park. Lighting shall be at a pedestrian scale and keep within the character of the neighborhood.



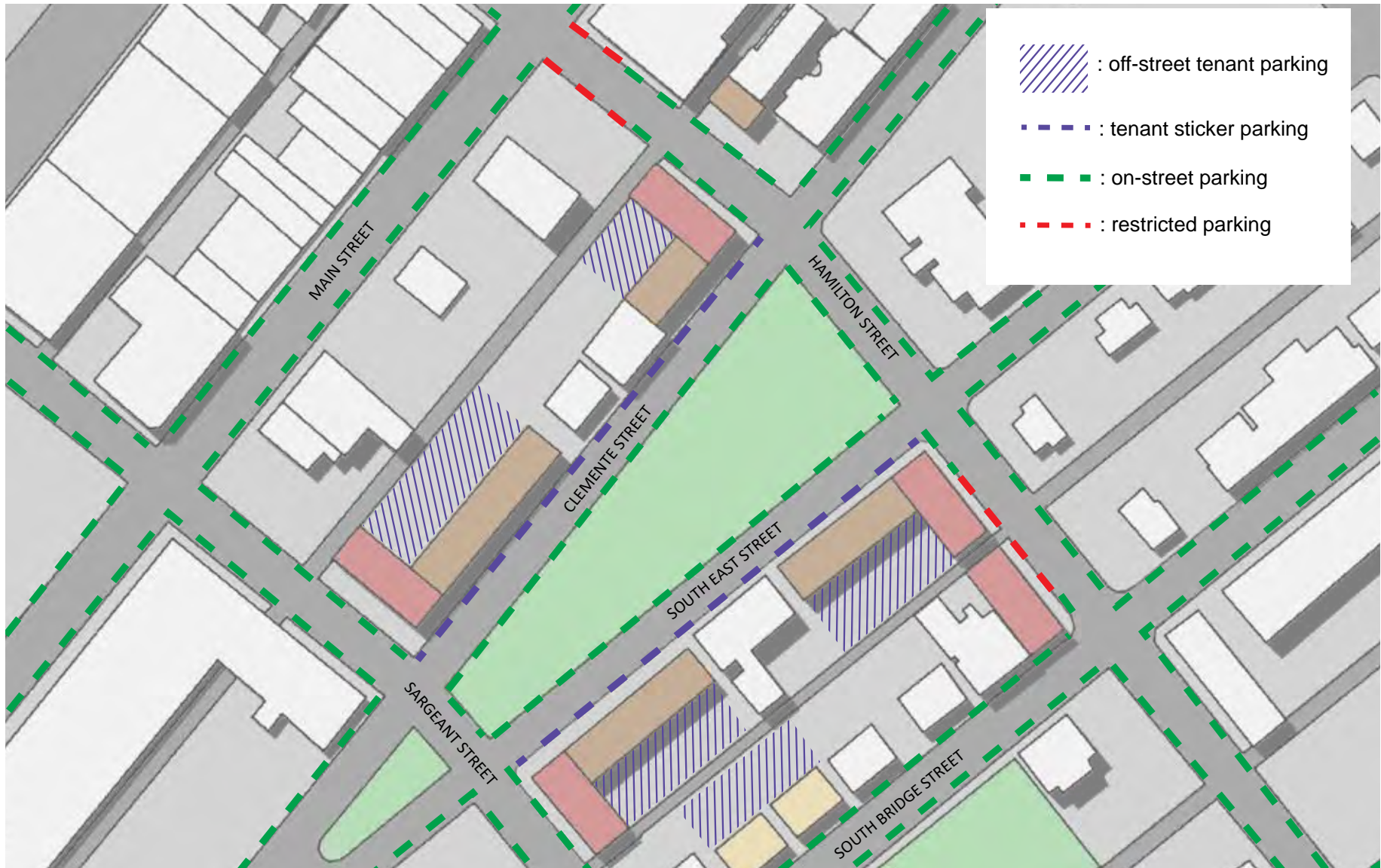




# Existing Parking



# Proposed Parking



# Proposed Park Connection



# Park Connection Precedents

Q STREET GREEN ALLEY: WASHINGTON, DC  
RHODESIDE AND HARWELL

BEFORE



AFTER



FAIRY ALLEY: AUSTIN, TEXAS

COMMUNITY ART



# Work Cited

Holyoke Planning Board (February 19,2002, latest revision June 8, 2011). City of Holyoke Zoning Ordinance. Retrieved from <http://www2.holyoke.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/ZONING-ORDINANCE.pdf>

The Cecil Group (March 2008). South Holyoke Revitalization Strategy. Retrieved from <http://www.holyokeredevelopment.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/FINAL-REPORT-030508.pdf>

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (December 2012). Historic Preservation Plan Update Report, City of Holyoke. Retrieved from <http://www.holyoke.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Holyoke-Preservation-Plan-Update-1.pdf>

Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (August 2009). Holyoke’s Center City Vision Plan: A Plan for the Heart of Our Community. Retrieved from <http://www.mass.gov/hed/docs/dhcd/cd/gateway/holyoke.pdf>

Westfield State University’s Course GARP 219 – Land Use and Resource Planning with supervisory and editorial assistance of Associate Professor Marijoan Bull, PhD, AICP (June 2014). Design Guidelines, Holyoke, MA: A Guide for Creating Value and Supporting the Rehabilitation of Buildings with Local Character. Retrieved from [http://www.westfield.ma.edu/uploads/geography-regional-planning/Holyoke\\_Design\\_Guidelines\\_July\\_1.pdf](http://www.westfield.ma.edu/uploads/geography-regional-planning/Holyoke_Design_Guidelines_July_1.pdf)

Westfield State University’s Course GARP 219 – Land Use and Natural Resource Planning with direction and editing by Assistant Professor Marijoan Bull, PhD, AICP (May 2012). A Profile of South Holyoke: Data and Information to Inform a Neighborhood Renewal Strategy. Retrieved from [http://www.westfield.ma.edu/uploads/geography-regional-planning/South\\_Holyoke\\_Profile\\_Complete.pdf](http://www.westfield.ma.edu/uploads/geography-regional-planning/South_Holyoke_Profile_Complete.pdf)

