A. Introductions

Larry Bertollini
Janelle Boyce
Cynthia Chiara
Lara Edwards
Lisa Krueger
Norm LePage
Michael Steinberger
Resident, Adjacent to S. Eton
Planning Board
Resident, S. Eton – Lincoln to 14 Mile
Multi-Modal Transportation Board
Advisory Parking Committee
Business Owner
Resident, N. Eton – E. Maple to Derby

B. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

C. Establish Date and Time for Regular Meetings

D. Overview of the Ad Hoc Rail District Committee’s Mission

E. Introduction to Existing Master Plans and Studies for Rail District

1. Eton Road Corridor Plan - 1998
2. Rail District Sidewalk Plan – 2007
3. Rail District Streetscape Committee - 2008
5. Multi-Modal Master Plan - 2012

F. Discussion of Existing Conditions

G. Miscellaneous Communications

H. Meeting Open to the Public for items not on the Agenda

I. Adjournment
DATE: April 28, 2016

TO: Ad Hoc Rail District Review Committee

FROM: Jana L. Ecker, Planning Director

SUBJECT: Ad Hoc Rail District Review Committee’s Mission

Last year, the City Commission directed the Multi-Modal Transportation Board “(MMTB)” to study S. Eton to determine if there were ways to create more parking on the street to help address parking issues that had been raised in the area.

On November 23, 2015, staff presented the findings and recommendations of the MMTB with regards to the S. Eton corridor. The MMTB recommended that the on-street parallel parking configuration remain as is; sharrows be installed to encourage bicycle use; the addition of paint demarcated parking lanes to make the road feel narrow and reduce speeds; the improvement of sight distance at corners by providing all of the streets on the west side of S. Eton from Villa to Cole a larger vision clearance zone; and the improvement of pedestrian crossings by adding bump-outs at Villa, Bowers, and Cole. After much discussion, the City Commission directed staff to return with parameters to establish a committee for the purpose of studying an integrated approach for the S. Eton corridor and the Rail District. Specifically, the City Commission requested that a new committee be formed to study parking capacity in the Rail District, related zoning issues, shared parking, on-street parking options and work to incorporate the Multi-Modal Plan’s concept for bike lanes on S. Eton.

On January 11, 2016, the City Commission again discussed the creation of an Ad Hoc Rail District Review Committee for the purpose of studying and recommending an integrated approach to address parking, planning and multi-modal considerations along the S. Eton corridor and Rail District. The City Commission voted to approve the creation of an ad hoc committee to be made up of representatives from the Advisory Parking Committee, the Planning Board and the Multi-Modal Board, and to include one business owner in the Rail District and three resident members of the adjacent neighborhoods, all of whom would serve a term through December 31, 2016.

Minutes from each of the above meetings are included for reference. In addition, please find attached the following for your review:

- **Appendix A:** Resolution Establishing the Ad Hoc Rail District Review Committee
- **Appendix B:** Study Area
- **Appendix C:** Excerpts from the Eton Road Corridor Plan (1998)
- **Appendix D:** Rail District Sidewalk Plan (2007)
- **Appendix E:** Rail District Streetscape Committee Findings Memo (2008)
- **Appendix F:** Cole/Commerce/Lincoln Sidewalk Plans (2009)
Appendix G: Excerpts from the Multi-Modal Master Plan (2012)

The purpose of the first meeting of the new Ad Hoc Rail District Review Committee will be to discuss the mission of the Committee as established by the City Commission, to review sections of the relevant master plans and studies that have been conducted relating to this area, and discuss existing conditions.
City Commission Minutes  
November 23, 2016

11-277-15 MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD RECOMMENDATION SOUTH ETON ROAD CORRIDOR FROM VILLA TO LINCOLN

City Engineer O’Meara explained that the Commission had asked the Multi-Modal Transportation Board (MMTB) to look at the South Eton Road Corridor to determine if there were ways to create more parking on the street to help address parking issues. The MMTB recommended to leave the parking as is because there is no other layout that would create additional parking; install sharrows to encourage vehicles to understand that bikes may be in the area; use demarcated parking lanes which makes the road feel more narrow and reduce speeds; improve the sight distance by giving all the streets on the west side of Eton from Villa and Cole additional clearance zone; and improve the pedestrian crossings with bumpouts at Villa, Bowers, and Cole.

In response to a question from Mayor Hoff regarding bumpouts, City Manager Valentine clarified that the location of the bumpouts is being discussed, not the condition, scale and size by which they will be installed.

Mayor Pro Tem Nickita questioned if there had been calculations on the current parking configuration and what it would be with the additional yellow curb. Mr. O’Meara explained that it would be about four spaces lost.

Commissioner Sherman questioned the parking demand in the rail district – what it is currently and what it is as it is being developed. He expressed concern and suggested returning this item to staff or appoint a small committee to figure out the parking needs in the rail district before deciding what to do on the west side of Eton.

Commissioner Harris noted that the limited charge of the Multi-Modal Transportation Board is to implement the plan. He questioned whether the instruction exceeded that charge, how to address the issue and who is responsible for coming back with the data.

Larry Bertollini, 1275 Webster, commented on the importance of a bike loop as South Eton should be in the plan, however it is not the easiest street to maneuver. He noted that a parking count should be taken to determine a reasonable layout of cars.

Communications received from the following individuals expressing concern with the Multi-Modal Transportation Board recommendations regarding South Eton.

- Alice Thimm
- Larry Bertollini
- Jerry Yaldoo
Mayor Pro Tem Nickita suggested the Planning Department take the lead and have the Planning Board review this as there are capacity and development issues. He pointed that the Multi-Modal Transportation Plan includes the bike loop as it is part of implementing the plan. The Commission discussed creating a committee to address this topic with a representative from the Multi-Modal Transportation Board, Advisory Parking Committee and Planning Board.

**MOTION:** Motion by Sherman, seconded by Nickita:
For staff to return with the makeup of a committee for the purpose of looking at parking capacity in the rail district, the zoning issues, the shared parking, on-street parking in district and incorporating the Multimodal concept of bike lanes in the area and how best to integrate it explicit to the rail district and to look at it as an integrated approach.

Cindy Chiara, 1622 South Eton, suggested a traffic study be done further south on Eton as the issues are trickling down the street to the Sheffield/Eton area.

**VOTE:** Yeas, 7  
Nays, None  
Absent, None
01-06-16 ESTABLISHMENT OF AN
AD HOC RAIL DISTRICT REVIEW COMMITTEE

City Planner Ecker explained that the Multi-Modal Transportation Board (MMTB) reviewed the parking on South Eton, as well as site distance issues and the addition of sharrows. The City Commission decided to create a new ad hoc review committee that would broaden the perspective, the study and type of input in studying this area of South Eton. The Ad Hoc Committee would consist of one member from the Advisory Parking Committee, one member from the Planning Board, one member from the Multi-Modal Board, one business owner in the Rail District, and three resident members from the that area to look at the parking situation, planning ramifications, and multi-modal ramifications.

In response to a question from Mayor Hoff, Ms. Ecker confirmed that there is no formal definition of the Rail District however the common understanding is that it includes South Eton from Maple to Lincoln and South Eton to the railroad.

Mayor Pro Tem Nickita noted that shared parking is a common part of parking scenarios. He suggested a study be done to identify where there could be opportunities for increased parking and as well to understand how parking in that area works. He commented that long term parking ideas that should be considered for parking consolidation such as a parking deck.

MOTION: Motion by Nickita, seconded by Sherman:

To approve the establishment of an Ad Hoc Rail District Review Committee to provide a coordinated review of the Rail District while considering all of the elements and input needed to formalize an integrated approach to addressing parking, planning and multi-modal considerations within this mixed use district, including the S. Eton corridor:

Whereas, the City of Birmingham is desirous of studying the needs of the Rail District to develop an integrated approach to address parking capacity and demands while incorporating multi-modal and planning concepts in this district, and

Whereas, over time the City of Birmingham has studied individual elements of the Rail District, however, a review of these various elements is now desired in order to integrate parking, planning and multi-modal efforts under a single coordinated approach; and

Whereas, the Eton Road Corridor Plan contemplated a mixed use vision for this district, and

Whereas, the Multi-Modal Transportation Plan contemplated a multi-modal approach, including a bike lane and enhanced pedestrian crossings along S. Eton Road, and

Whereas, the City Commission wishes to establish an Ad Hoc Rail District Review Committee to provide a coordinated review of the Rail District while considering all of the elements and input needed to formalize an integrated approach to addressing parking,
planning and multi-modal considerations within this mixed use district, including the S. Eton corridor.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that an Ad Hoc Rail District Review Committee is hereby established to develop a recommended plan for addressing parking, planning and multi-modal issues in the Rail District and along S. Eton Road, while considering capacity needs and various plan concepts as follows:

1. The Committee will be Ad Hoc. The term of the Committee shall continue through December 31, 2016 and the Committee will cease functioning unless otherwise directed by the Commission.

2. The City Commission hereby appoints a seven (7) member Ad Hoc Committee to be comprised of the following members. Each respective board shall recommend an appointee for consideration by the City Commission.
   a) One member from the Advisory Parking Committee
   b) One member from the Planning Board
   c) One member from the Multi-Modal Board
   d) One business owner in the Rail District
   e) Three resident members from the general public; one living in the neighborhood adjoining S. Eton between Maple and Lincoln; one living in the neighborhood adjoining S. Eton between Lincoln and 14 Mile Road; and one living in the neighborhood adjoining N. Eton between Maple and Derby.

The City Commission also hereby appoints the Planning Director as an ex officio member of the committee and the City Manager may designate respective city staff members to serve as ex officio members of the committee to assist in providing information and assistance as may be required.

3. The scope of the Committee shall be to develop a recommended plan on how to best proceed in addressing the current and future parking demands, along with planning goals and multi-modal opportunities for this district in accordance with the following:

   a. Review the Eton Road Corridor Plan, Multi-Modal Transportation Plan, and previous findings of the Rail District Committee in order to identify and recommend how to best incorporate these elements into an integrated approach for this district.
   b. Calculate the long-term parking demands for both the north and south ends of the Rail District, while considering on-street and off-street parking, shared parking arrangements, use requirements and other zoning regulations which impact parking.
   c. Review planning and multi-modal objectives for the Rail District with the findings from the long-term parking calculations and develop recommendations to integrate planning and multi-modal elements with parking solutions. Recommendations should consider:
      i. Considerations for on-street and off-street parking
      ii. Road design initiatives
      iii. Multi-modal uses
      iii. Neighborhood input
      iv. Existing plans and findings
d. Compile the committee's findings and recommendations into a single report to be presented to the City Commission by the end of the committee's term.

4. The Committee may request professional services as may be required in the analysis of parking considerations.

5. The Committee is not authorized to expend funds or enter into agreements. All recommendations made by the committee shall be in the form of a report to the City Commission.

All meetings of the committee shall be open to the public. Agenda and minutes for all meetings shall be prepared.

VOTE: Yeas, 7
Nays, None
Absent, None
Appendix A:

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION

Whereas, the City of Birmingham is desirous of studying the needs of the Rail District to develop an integrated approach to address parking capacity and demands while incorporating multi-modal and planning concepts in this district, and

Whereas, over time the City of Birmingham has studied individual elements of the Rail District, however, a review of these various elements is now desired in order to integrate parking, planning and multi-modal efforts under a single coordinated approach; and

Whereas, the Eton Road Corridor Plan contemplated a mixed use vision for this district, and

Whereas, the Multi-Modal Transportation Plan contemplated a multi-modal approach, including a bike lane and enhanced pedestrian crossings along S. Eton Road, and

Whereas, the City Commission wishes to establish an Ad Hoc Rail District Review Committee to provide a coordinated review of the Rail District while considering all of the elements and input needed to formalize an integrated approach to addressing parking, planning and multi-modal considerations within this mixed use district including the S. Eton corridor.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that an Ad Hoc Rail District Review Committee is hereby established to develop a recommended plan for addressing parking, planning and multi-modal issues in the Rail District and along S. Eton Road, while considering capacity needs and various plan concepts as follows:

1. The Committee will be Ad Hoc. The term of the Committee shall continue through December 31, 2016 and the Committee will cease functioning unless otherwise directed by the Commission.

2. The City Commission hereby appoints a seven (7) member Ad Hoc Committee to be comprised of the following members. Each respective board shall recommend an appointee for consideration by the City Commission.
   a) One member from the Advisory Parking Committee
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   c) One member from the Multi-Modal Board
   d) One business owner in the Rail District
   e) Three resident members from the general public; one living in the neighborhood adjoining S. Eton between Maple and Lincoln; one living in the neighborhood adjoining S. Eton between Lincoln and 14 Mile Road; and one living in the neighborhood adjoining N. Eton between Maple and Derby.

The City Commission also hereby appoints the Planning Director as an ex officio member of the committee and the City Manager may designate respective city
staff members to serve as ex officio members of the committee to assist in providing information and assistance as may be required.

3. The scope of the Committee shall be to develop a recommended plan on how to best proceed in addressing the current and future parking demands, along with planning goals and multi-modal opportunities for this district in accordance with the following:

   a. Review the Eton Road Corridor Plan, Multi-Modal Transportation Plan, and previous findings of the Rail District Committee in order to identify and recommend how to best incorporate these elements into an integrated approach for this district.

   b. Calculate the long-term parking demands for both the north and south ends of the Rail District, while considering on-street and off-street parking, shared parking arrangements, use requirements and other zoning regulations which impact parking.

   c. Review planning and multi-modal objectives for the Rail District with the findings from the long-term parking calculations and develop recommendations to integrate planning and multi-modal elements with parking solutions. Recommendations should consider:
      i. Considerations for on-street and off-street parking
      ii. Road design initiatives
      iii. Multi-modal uses
      iv. Neighborhood input
      v. Existing plans and findings

   d. Compile the committee’s findings and recommendations into a single report to be presented to the City Commission by the end of the committee’s term.

4. The Committee may request professional services as may be required in the analysis of parking considerations.

5. The Committee is not authorized to expend funds or enter into agreements. All recommendations made by the committee shall be in the form of a report to the City Commission.

6. All meetings of the committee shall be open to the public. Agenda and minutes for all meetings shall be prepared.

January 11, 2016
Appendix C:

THE PLANNING PROCESS

2. THE PLANNING PROCESS

Successful plans -- the plans that are actually implemented -- require the participation of “stakeholders”. The stakeholders are people who will be affected by the decisions being made and have the resources and ability to implement change. Eton Road stakeholders include property and business owners, the City Commission and other boards and commissions, City administration, residents from the adjacent neighborhoods, and other people from the community who shape policies and influence public opinion.

At the initiation of this planning process, over 250 stakeholders were identified, including City Commission members and other City board and commission members. Stakeholders were invited to attend an evening visioning session where they were asked to identify issues and draft vision statements for the corridor. More than fifty people participated in the session including several representatives from the City Commission, Planning Board, property owners, and nearby residents. Participants were divided into groups of seven to eight people to discuss issues affecting the sub-area including: opportunities and constraints; potential future land uses; vehicular and pedestrian circulation; and, design considerations. Following their individual discussions, each group was asked to develop a vision statement which reflected their view of how they wanted to see the corridor develop. These issues and vision statements were then presented to the group.

The issues identified through this exercise, and the vision statements that were created serve as the foundation for this plan.

Vision for the Eton Road Corridor

Creation of a vision began with the identification of opportunities and constraints within the corridor. Stakeholders expressed strong support for residential uses mixed with new, small-scale commercial development that would satisfy existing and future neighborhood residents. Minimizing the impacts of traffic on the existing residential neighborhoods was identified as a high priority. All of the stakeholders shared concern about the appearance of the corridor, as reflected by their desire for development that is visually compatible with the adjacent residential neighborhoods, streetscape improvements, quality architecture, and improved screening.
THE PLANNING PROCESS

The following vision statement is based on the issues and vision statements drafted by participants, and serves as the driving force guiding the remainder of the planning process:

Vision Statement: "The Eton Road Corridor will be a mixed use corridor with a range of commercial, service, light industrial and residential uses that serve the needs of the residents of Birmingham. Creative site planning will be encouraged to promote high quality, cohesive development that is compatible with the existing uses in the corridor and the adjacent single-family residential neighborhoods."
4. ETON ROAD FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

Overview

The preceding analysis of the subject area, input received at the visioning session, and discussions with City representatives have led to the creation of the following Future Land Use Plan. The Future Land Use Plan responds to specific goals related to land use, traffic/circulation, and building and site design identified through the initial planning process. Description of the recommended building and site design implementation strategies are included in a separate section of the Plan.

The intent of Eton Road Future Land Use Plan is to promote the mixed use development of the sub-area with a range of uses that will continue to provide necessary services to the community in a development pattern and scale that is compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Map 8, The Future Land Use Plan, includes a mix of recommended land uses which are compatible and which will continue to serve the needs of the residents of Birmingham. Potential land uses in the sub-area include, light industrial/office/research, service, neighborhood commercial, public facilities, recreation, and parking. Although specific locations for these uses are not identified in the Future Land Use Plan, general guidelines for the appropriate location of these uses are discussed in the Future Land Use section below. Recommendations for improved traffic and circulation patterns as well as design guidelines are also presented in subsequent sections. Map 6 highlights recommendations for improving a number of the existing uses and conditions which help create the existing character of the sub-area.

Future Land Use Goals

- Promote the continued mixed use and redevelopment of the corridor area.
- Ensure that public and recreational uses, and their accessory uses remain compatible with and accessible to the single-family residential neighborhood.
ETON ROAD FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

- Discourage large-scale commercial and industrial uses that are incompatible with the adjacent single-family neighborhood.

- Continue to preserve the adjacent stable single-family residential district to the west.

- Encourage the retention and expansion of existing uses that help define the corridor area including the continued use of the historic depot landmark building and the existing passenger rail service facility.

- Allow mixed use developments that include residential uses.

- Enhance the image of the sub-area by creating entrance features consisting of landscaping, lighting and low profile signage.

Future Land Use Plan

The 65 acre Eton Road Corridor sub-area currently provides the City of Birmingham with a wide range of light industrial, service, neighborhood commercial, and recreational uses. Designating this area as mixed use, as illustrated in Map 8, will allow these light industrial and service uses to be provided while also allowing new uses that are compatible with the existing development pattern to be incorporated as demand for new and compatible uses evolve.

Light Industrial/Office

The proposed mixed use designation for the sub-area will allow for the preservation of the existing small-scale commercial and light industrial uses located in the southern portion of the sub-area that currently serve the needs of the community. Arts-oriented facilities such as working studios where artists share facilities and distribute their work from their studios and small business incubators would be compatible uses that could create a unique and exciting environment within the sub-area without displacing some of the existing uses. Existing and future similar uses should be encouraged to re-locate toward the interior of the sub-area taking advantage of newly created access roads as discussed below. Service uses such as communications facilities should also be encouraged to locate toward the interior of the sub-area.

Approximately 20 acres of under utilized land, including the eleven acre former Erb Lumber property, offer an immediate opportunity for
ETON ROAD FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

redevelopment. The intent is to allow for integrated development of this area that would include a range of uses that are compatible with the existing development pattern and would not have negative impacts such as excessive traffic generation.

The Future Land Use Plan allows for the expansion of uses that are currently experiencing overcrowding and over-development of their existing sites. By encouraging development of an internal road network, several acres of property will be made more accessible for development. Allowing these uses to expand or to relocate onto larger sites within the district will allow parking to be removed from the public right of way and replaced with landscaping, improving the overall image of this area.

Neighborhood Commercial

Neighborhood commercial uses with the possibility of accessory residential units on the second floor may be developed along Eton Road. Neighborhood commercial uses with possible residential units on the second floor fronting on Eton Road should be small scale and low intensity. This type of development could serve the existing residential neighborhood and provide a pedestrian-oriented transition between the more intensive uses within the sub-area and the residential neighborhood to the west. Off-street parking for uses along Eton Road should be located to the rear of the buildings to maintain a pedestrian-oriented environment along Eton Road.

Public and Recreational Facilities

The mixed use designation will also allow for the possible expansion of public uses such as the City of Birmingham DPS. Recreational facilities such as those identified by the Parks and Recreation Board (e.g. skate park or golf dome) could also be accommodated in the Eton Road sub-area. Additional open space connections should be encouraged to provide access to the recreational amenities in this area.

The recently renovated and expanded Public Service facility represents a stable anchor within the corridor. The Birmingham School District bus storage and maintenance facility located on Lincoln is experiencing growing pains. The relocation of the school bus facility to an alternative site that would allow for expansion and
ETON ROAD FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

Improved access would make several acres of land available for shared parking between the businesses along Cole and the recreational facilities on the south side of Lincoln.

Residential Development

The Future Land Use Plan proposes a mix of uses ranging from industrial to neighborhood commercial and residential development. Any residential development occurring within the corridor area such as townhomes and live-work units should be an integrated component of an overall mixed-use development consisting of those uses permitted within the mixed-use district. Buildings containing a mix of uses, such as studio or office space on the ground floor with living units on the upper floors, are encouraged. Creative site planning concepts that avert potential land use conflicts and promote the long term compatibility of the wide range of existing and future uses within the corridor area are encouraged. Site planning for mixed-use developments with residential uses should respect the existing mixed-use character of the corridor area. Developments which include residential uses should not create isolated enclaves that restrict the potential growth and expansion of the non-residential uses within the corridor area.

Heavy Industrial Uses

Approximately 9.6 acres along the Canadian National Railroad consist of more intensive industrial uses, some of which are dependent on the adjacent rail line. These more intensive uses are currently limited to an area that will have minimal impact on surrounding uses and should not be permitted to expand without careful site planning consideration.

Preserve Recreational Uses Located South of the Sub-Area

South of Lincoln is a combination of public and private recreational facilities including the swim club, racquet club, ice arena, ball fields, and police training facility. These recreational uses provide an excellent transition to the single family neighborhood to the south.
Eton Road Future Land Use Plan

Maintain the Amtrak Station

One of the major assets of the corridor is the Amtrak passenger station. This facility has the highest ridership on the line and represents a regional facility that could enhance Birmingham's regional exposure. The presence of an active passenger rail line that transports riders to and from Birmingham has the potential of augmenting Birmingham's existing image as an exciting community to live in and shop in. It could also serve as the center of a Transportation Oriented Development where the uses around the station, residential, commercial, office, etc., would benefit from the location adjacent to an active passenger station bringing customers, employees, and residents to and from the area. Every effort should be made to retain this facility within the sub-area and to increase its visibility and accessibility. The City should continue to work with property owners in the area of the existing station to provide adequate parking for the station and other uses which require substantial parking facilities such as the Big Rock Chop and Brew House. Shared parking arrangements should be encouraged between uses.

Preservation of Historic Depot

The historic depot that is now the Big Rock Chop and Brew House and multiple family developments on the west side of Eton Road form the primary entrance into the corridor. Provisions have been made in the Plan to allow for the continued use and expansion of the historic depot as a regional destination use. Providing shared parking facilities will allow existing or future users of the facility the ability to expand and maintain a viable use of this landmark building.

The expansion of this general commercial area at the north end of the corridor will likely have minimal impacts on the single family residential neighborhoods to the west and south; provided the parking area continues to be buffered from Eton Road and access to the site is improved.

Provide a Southern Gateway

The northeast corner of Lincoln and Eton consists of a vacant parcel currently owned by the City of Birmingham. This provides an excellent opportunity to establish a gateway into the corridor from the south by creating a landscape entrance feature similar in character to the landscaping at the north end of the corridor at Eton and Mapie. An entrance feature at this location would improve the image of the corridor and provide directional information for the recreational uses on the south side of Lincoln.
Appendix D:

Sidewalk Classifications

- Priority 1
- Priority 2
- Priority 3
- Priority 4
- Priority 5
- Planned Development
- Existing Sidewalk
- Added as part of Crosswinds Project

Rail District Overview

1 inch equals 750 feet

0 100 200 400 Feet

Sidewalk Plan - 1-27-07.gif
MEMORANDUM

Date:     November 6, 2008
To:       Rail District Streetscape committee
From:     Matthew Baka, Planning Intern
Subject:  Streetscape Standards; Rail District meeting #2

Intro
The Eton Road Corridor Plan has been in effect since 1999, with the goal of this plan to transform the once industrial zone of Birmingham into a mixed use, pedestrian oriented area that enhances Birmingham with another vital district. The implementation of the plan is well under way with projects like the Crosswinds development, District Lofts and the Cole Street area. Planning and public support for the improvement of the pedestrian system is becoming solidified. When these connections are made streetscape elements, such as pavement treatment, pedestrian scale street lights, benches and trash receptacles will be necessary. There are already some streetscape elements in use in the rail district, pictures of which are attached for your review. The Rail District Committee may wish to consider if these elements are acceptable as the standard for that area or if additional options should be considered.

Background
At the Planning Board meeting held on June 11 2008, Rail District streetscape standards were discussed. A presentation by staff illustrated the continuing development of the area, specifically the progress of the Crosswinds area and Cole Street. The Board stated that it is important to recognize the need for streetscape standards that could brand the district. This should be established so that current and future developments will combine to form a cohesive identity for the area. Also, the Board indicated that the previous prioritization of the sidewalk installation should be reconsidered as the existing list is based on conditions at the time of the creation of the Rail District plan (1999). As a result of this discussion it was decided that a committee should be formed that includes board members, staff and local stakeholders in the district. This committee would be charged with establishing a brand for the area as well as making recommendations for streetscape elements, including benches, lighting, trash receptacles and bike racks.
On August 18, 2008 the Rail District Study Committee held its first meeting. At that time the committee reviewed the current state of streetscape in the Rail District and discussed what the collective vision for the area could be. The topics included:

- Sidewalk construction priority: A sidewalk priority list was provided to the committee that indicates the previously ordered sequencing to the development of sidewalks in the Rail District. It was agreed that the sequence should be reconsidered. Also discussed was the composition of the sidewalk, should it include grass strips, exposed aggregate, etc.

- Rail District logo/brand: It was discussed that a symbol and logo should be designed and incorporated into an aesthetic that identifies with the historic use of the area as a railway stop. Suggestions for the basis of the design were that it be hip and edgy, clean lines, using wrought iron materials in matte black, and brushed or stainless steel.

- Gateway signage: Consider the possibility of implementing gateway signage identifying the Rail District at the north and south end of the district at Maple and Eton as well as Lincoln and Eton.

- Street furniture: Standard street furniture and accessories should be selected for the district. This should include benches, trash receptacles, tree grates and pedestrian scale lights.

- Improve walkability: Implement pedestrian scale lights on Eton and Cole, mirror streetscape on both sides of the street.

- Public art/garden: It would improve the sense of place to incorporate sculpture and gardens into the district where possible; the area at Lincoln and Eton was suggested.

- Relocation of overhead utilities: Specifically on Cole St. It would improve the appearance of the area to bury the overhead utility lines that clutter the street.

Included with this report you will find several documents intended to further the discussion on these topics. Please review the following items for discussion at the Nov. 7th meeting:

- New action list for sidewalk implementation;

- Rail District logos;
• Examples of gateway signs from the Birmingham Wayfinding study;

• Examples of street furniture and lighting available from current Birmingham suppliers;

• District Map to be used for selection of possible public art locations.
BI R M I N G H A M P L A N N I N G B O A R D P R O C E E D I N G S
REGULAR MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 2007
A C T I O N I T E M S
05-100-07

STUDY SESSION
Streetscape Standards

Ms. Ecker advised that the Engineering Dept. feels they have design standards for the streetscape and that they implement them. However, the Planning Board feels that there are no particular streetscape standards. Over the course of time since the streetscape standards were first put into play, some things that were put into place have not worked. So, they have been tweaked as they went along. Ultimately the decision will come down to the City Commission to determine which standards should be put into place. Presently, the streetscape standards are being discussed more closely at the Planning Board level as projects come through. These standards are currently used downtown, but there are other areas in town where the City is really attempting to create a pedestrian oriented walkable environment. Now, as the Rail District is starting to gain momentum, they are also interested in having some streetscape standards.

Chairman Boyle thought the standards should be considered in the broader sense; and that is, how to improve them overall, what mechanisms there are, and how to affect both the public and the private sectors.

Mr. Nickita said the fundamental point in his mind is to make the downtown as good as it can be. The problem is not taking advantage of the assets we have and not polishing them in the right way. Every chance we have to make the public realm brand new, we should be consistent.

Mr. Nickita conducted a slide show to demonstrate inconsistent application of the streetscape alternatives. Ms. Ecker commented during the presentation that currently the Architectural Review Committee reviews projects that don’t go before any other board, at the discretion of the city manager.

Motion by Mr. Blaesing
Seconded by Mr. Nickita to extend the meeting 15 minutes to 11:15 p.m.
Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE
Yeas: Blaesing, Nickita, Lazar, Boyle, Dilgard, Haberman, Williams
Nays: None
Absent: None
Ms. Ecker noted that several years ago there wasn’t as much attention paid to the streetscape as there has been in recent years. The internal process has been changed when it comes to reviewing a streetscape agreement. She signs off on them now; whereas she didn’t a year ago.

Mr. Blaesing suspected that each project manager hires a private contracting company to build the streetscape according to the agreement. If the streetscape ends up different than the plan, should they be made to tear it out and rebuild it, or should it be accepted because it is close enough. That is his impression of what has probably happened.

Mr. Nickita thought that a drawing should be submitted of what is going to be built, like a shop drawing. The drawing should then be reviewed to see how it accommodates the different concerns that are there.

Ms. Bashiri recalled when she worked for the City of Detroit, DPW always had to come before the Historic District Committee to get anything approved that they planned to put into the Historic District. If some of the areas turned out badly, the sub-contractors were required to remove them and replace them. If this board were to set some strict guidelines as to what they feel is appropriate for particular areas, and then have the appropriate boards review them before they are actually put down, she thinks that would contribute to eliminating inconsistencies throughout the City.

Ms. Ecker said she will take this discussion to a staff meeting and discuss how to proceed and then come back to the board with some guidance as to where to go with it. Certainly more coordination and more oversight are needed.
STUDY SESSION  
Streetscape Standards  
Rail District

Mr. Baka advised that the Eton Road Corridor Plan has been in effect since 1999. The goal of this plan is to transform the once Industrial Zone of Birmingham into a mixed-use, pedestrian oriented area that enhances Birmingham with another vital district. There are already some streetscape elements in use in the Rail District, and the Planning Board may wish to consider if these elements are acceptable as the standard for that area or if additional options should be considered.

Several Planning Board meetings have been held on this subject and at their March 12, 2008 meeting the board further discussed streetscape elements for the Triangle District and the Rail District. At that meeting, members of the public expressed a strong desire to begin implementing the sidewalk plan that was proposed for the Rail District as soon as possible and that any streetscape standards in the Rail District should reflect the history and character of the area and consider the branding already done by the Rail District Business Group.

Mr. Baka gave a short presentation which depicted current conditions. The only consistent standard is the streetlights that Crosswinds has put in.

Chairman Boyle thought discussion should start with the concept of branding the district with its own identity. Ms. Ecker suggested that banners would be a relatively inexpensive manner of identifying the Rail District.

Mr. Nickita pointed out that it would be important to have someone speaking for the City. Also, there are prominent groups in the Rail District that could be brought in. If the Planning Board doesn’t include them in its discussions there will be a bunch of creative people that may feel disconnected because they weren’t part of the process and therefore they won’t buy-in. Ms. Ecker agreed wholeheartedly and suggested the board members offer some ideas to them as to what they are thinking.

Chairman Boyle said that the Planning Board should go to that group with a fairly clear statement that the City will be in a position to budget and deliver lighting, sidewalks, tree grates, and signage. Ms. Ecker said the City assesses for sidewalks. Set up of the Special Assessment District is moving forward with the City Commission. Mr. Blaesing noted that sidewalks along Villa should be a priority because they lead to the Amtrak stop.

Chairman Boyle summarized the discussion to this point:
- The Planning Board needs to take a proactive stance in getting the existing property owners together, feed off their energy, and get this moving forward.
- He thinks this should be brought to the City Commission to demonstrate that while there will be a special assessment for sidewalks, there may well be some expenditure for lighting. Ms. Ecker thought a special assessment may also be needed for lighting.

Ms. Whipple-Boyce and Mr. Blaesing offered to attend a meeting with businesses and others interested in making these decisions for the Rail District. Ms. Ecker thought the City could send out notices to all the property owners and interested parties in the area for a public hearing that would be held at the Dept. of Public Service or other appropriate accommodation in the Rail District.

It was suggested that Mr. Baka pick street furniture with an industrial flavor that is within budget to present in a slide presentation. Benches, trash receptacles, light fixtures, banners would be featured.
FIGURE 3.1E OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED MULTI-MODAL NETWORK

Legend
- Proposed Crossing Improvement
- Proposed Off-road Trail
- Proposed Neighborhood Connector Route
- Proposed Bike Lane
- Proposed Buffered Bike Lane
- Proposed Shared-lane Marking

MultiModal Plan

Quarton Rd
Chesterfield Ave
Oak Ave
Old Woodward
Bowers
W Brown
Saxon Dr
W 14 Mile Rd
W Maple Rd
S Cranbrook Rd
N Adams Rd
Derby Rd
N Eton Rd
E Maple Rd
S Eton Rd
E Lincoln St
W 14 Mile Rd
Coolidge Hwy
S Crandall Rd
Cranbrook Rd
Woodward Ave
Woodward/Ave
Pierce St
S Southfield Rd
W Maple Rd
W Lincoln St
Quarton Rd

Appendix G:
42 CURB EXTENSIONS ARE PROPOSED

- Curb Extensions reduce the effective street width by extending the sidewalk or curb into the parking lane
- Curb Extensions shorten the pedestrian’s crossing distance and increase visibility between pedestrians and motorists
- Curb Extensions create small curb radii that control traffic speeds around corners
- Curb Extensions reduce the effective street width which encourages motorists to drive slower
- When curb extensions are used on a road with bike lanes, the bike lane continues past the curb extension
- Landscaping may be incorporated
18 ROAD CROSSING UPGRADES ARE PROPOSED

Many of the proposed improvements include upgrades such as ramps, detectable warnings, pedestrian signals, and high visibility crosswalk markings.

Please refer to the Network Implementation Plan and Special Area Concept Plans for more details.
3.6 SHARED LANE MARKINGS

DESCRIPTION

Shared Lane Markings are used to indicate to bicyclists a recommended lane position and to indicate to motorists to expect bicycles. They are used on roads with speeds of 35 mph or less. Shared lane markings may be used to help position bicyclists a safe distance from parked cars (so that they do not run into opening car doors). They are also used in conjunction with bike lanes where the bike lane is discontinued for a stretch of roadway due to limited road width.

Colored Shared Lane Markings are Shared Lane Markings placed on top of a continuous green lane. They should be used in areas where a higher level of visibility is desired.

For the most up-to-date guidelines please refer to Chapter 9 of the MUTCD, Chapter 4 of AASHTO’s Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, and the Bikeway Signing & Marking section of NACTO’s Urban Bikeway Design Guide.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to the desire to keep on-street parking, Shared Lane Markings are proposed on most collector roads and some arterial roads. Please refer to the Network Implementation Plan for more details.

Colored Shared Lane Markings are proposed on segments of Bowers Street and E Lincoln Street where they cross Woodward Avenue. Please refer to the Network Implementation Plan and Special Area Concept Plans for more details.
Shared Lane Markings

- **Proposed Shared Lane Markings**
- **Proposed Colored Shared Lane Markings**

Approximately 10.7 miles of new shared lanes markings are proposed, and 0.2 miles of colored shared lane markings are proposed.
FIGURE 3.7A PROPOSED NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTOR ROUTES

PROPOSED NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTOR ROUTES

- Proposed Routes on Local Roadways
- Proposed Off-Road Trail

APPROXIMATELY 15.4 MILES OF NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTOR ROUTES AND 2.25 MILES OF PAVED OFF-ROAD TRAILS ARE PROPOSED.
4.1 NETWORK PHASING OVERVIEW

PHASE 1
Phase 1 focuses on already planned road and infrastructure projects in the City that are included within the City’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Integrating improvements into other larger projects is typically the most cost effective way to implement improvements. Some elements of Phase 1 are incidental to the cost of the currently planned projects, others expand the scope and cost of the planned projects. The implementation plan identifies the costs that exceed the original scope of the project.

PHASE 2
For the next ten or so years (depending on available funding), the project should focus on establishing the core network. This network includes improvements that may be accomplished by relatively modest changes to the existing road system. It creates connections all the way across the City and establishes the backbone to the multi-modal system. The connections incorporate existing facilities, proposed bike lanes and shared lane markings on primary roads, proposed bike routes on local roads, proposed road crossings improvements, and connections to transit locations. While not everyone will be comfortable using all of these facilities, they will provide a strong foundation from which to build a more comprehensive multi-modal network.

The goal is that with the completion of Phase 1 and Phase 2 there will be a substantial multi-modal network in place that provides connections to key destinations around the City on routes that a large majority of the population would be comfortable using.

PHASE 3
Phase 3 focuses on expanding the network via cost-effective projects that may generally be accomplished within the existing road cross section. This phase includes all the of the remaining network improvements. Some projects in phase 3 may be dependent on items in phases one and two being completed.

PHASE 4
For some roads such as 14 Mile Road, E. Maple, Quarton Road and Coolidge Highway there are limited cost effective solutions for some mode types in the near-term. In the future, when these streets are reconstructed they should be evaluated at that time to see what types of improvements are possible and desired.
CONCURRENT STUDIES
Numerous concurrent studies were underway on the Woodward Avenue Corridor during the creation of this plan. Due to this occurrence, implementation recommendations for this corridor were not provided. Details on the Woodward Avenue Corridor can be found under the Specific Area Concept Plans.