Atlantic Station Report

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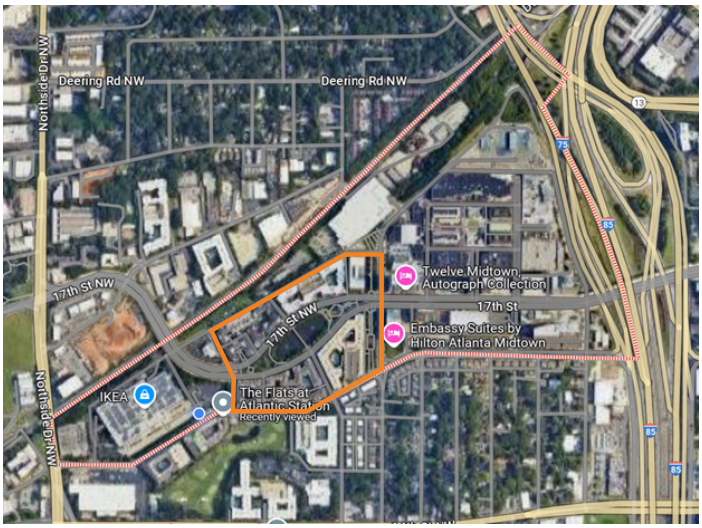
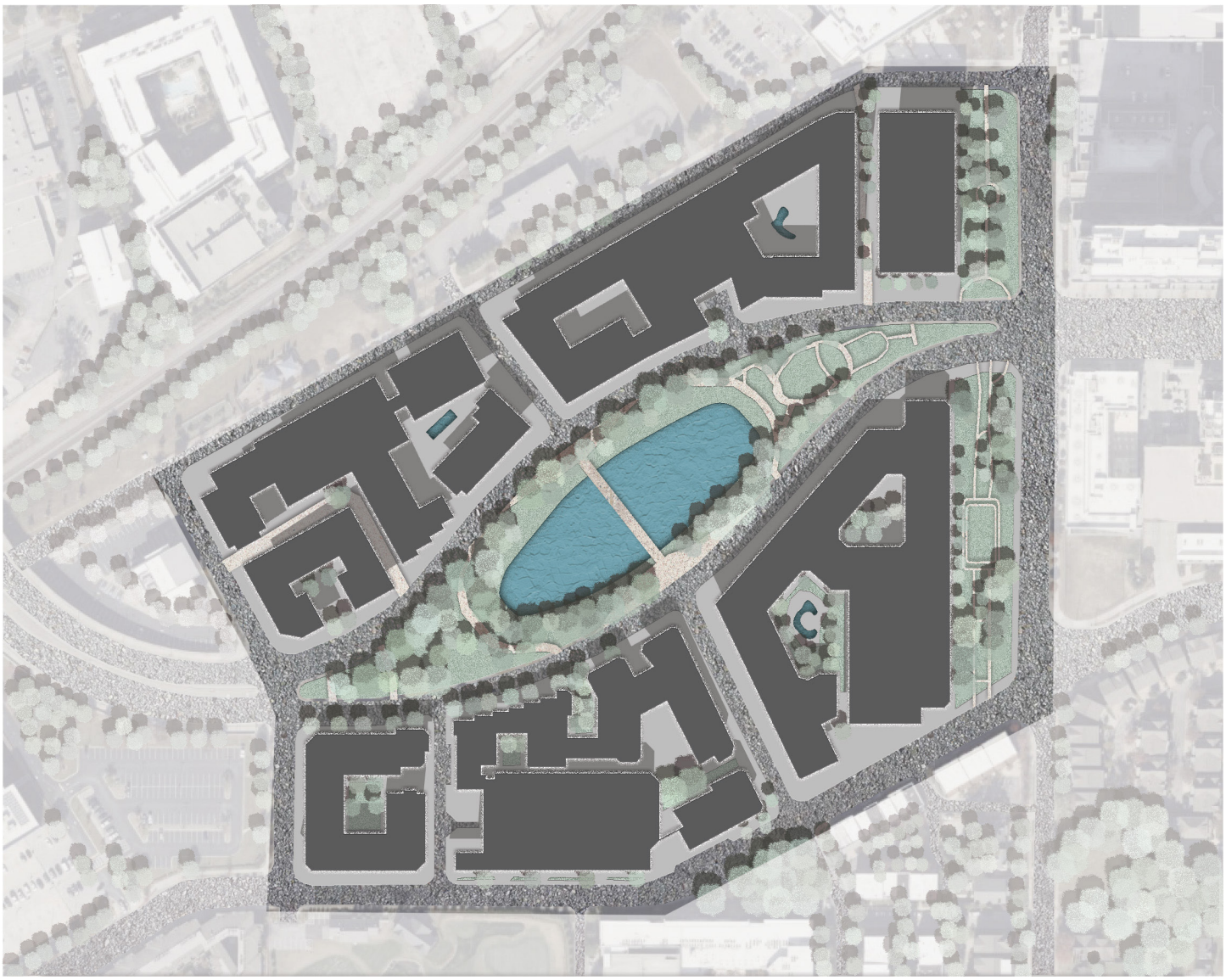
Atlantic Station: Bridging Barriers

Atlantic Station & Four Surrounding Blocks

Atlantic Station area is a vibrant mixed-use development in Midtown Atlanta, originally developed from a brownfield site in 2015. It features a diverse mix of shopping areas, dining options, entertainment venues, and office spaces. Notable attractions include a central green community space, wide pedestrian sidewalks with ambient music, and annual events such as Cirque du Soleil and the Museum of Illusions. It also houses daily grocery shops – Target and Publix. Despite its central location and bustling activities,

Atlantic Station experiences significant connectivity issues with surrounding neighborhoods.

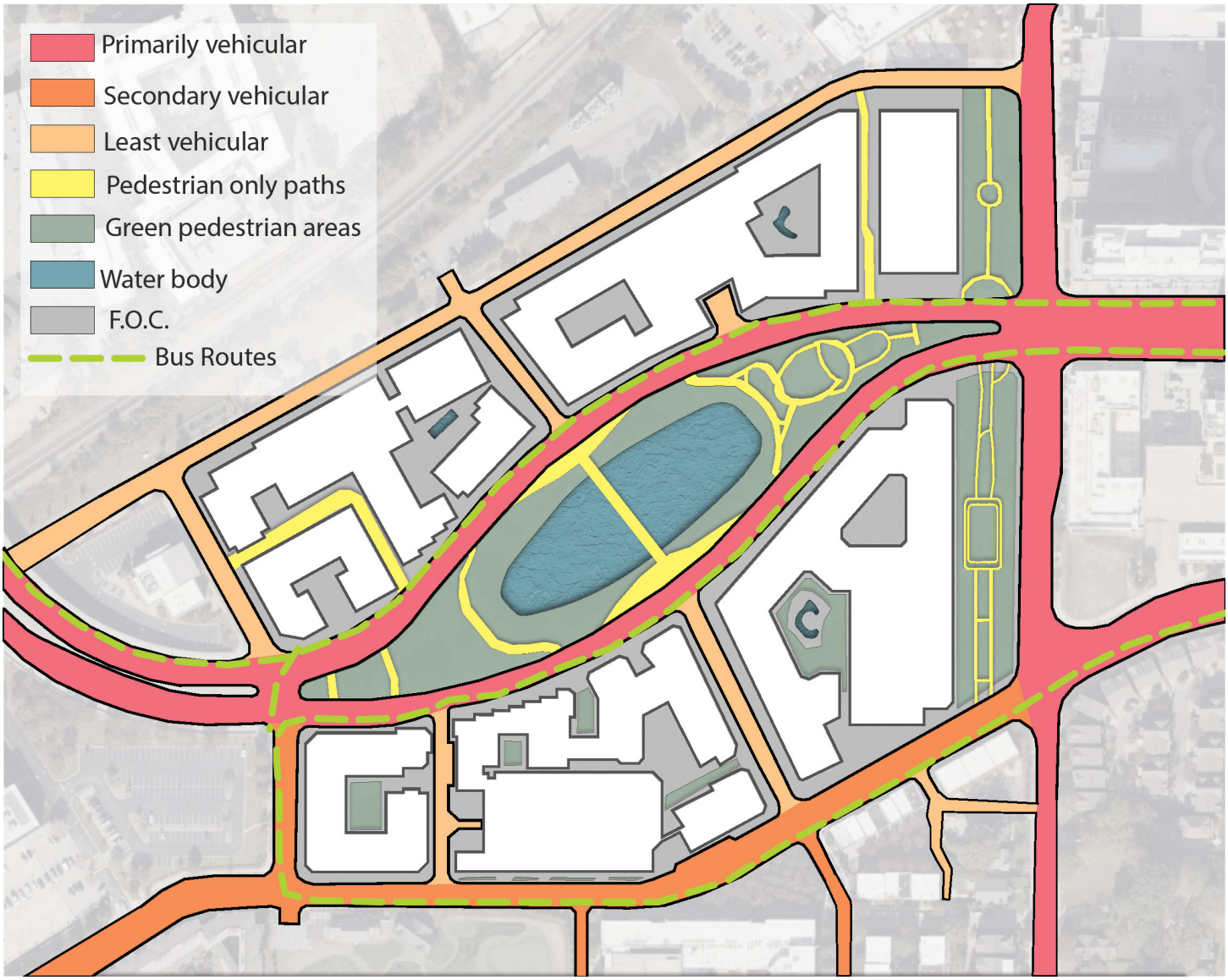




The site consists of four blocks surrounding Atlantic Station Commons Park, centered around the Atlantic Station Lake. This area features a mix of dense multifamily residences, commercial establishments, and recreational spaces, with major roads framing its periphery. The park, with its green spaces and monuments, serves as a focal point for activity and pedestrian movement. Despite its vibrant character, the site faces challenges related to connectivity and pedestrian infrastructure.

Analysis of Existing Conditions

a) Circulation Patterns



The circulation diagram reveals that Atlantic Station is dominated by vehicular movement, especially along the peripheries (Northside Drive and 17th Street). While some internal pathways are pedestrian-oriented, access to and from the surrounding neighborhoods remains largely auto-centric.

Analysis of Existing Conditions

b) Spaces and Zoning

Analysis of spatial zones illustrates:

1. Heavy street encirclement limiting pedestrian permeability.
2. Pedestrian paths existing only in fragmented pockets.
3. Dominance of liminal pedestrian spaces (spaces without clear function or safe design).

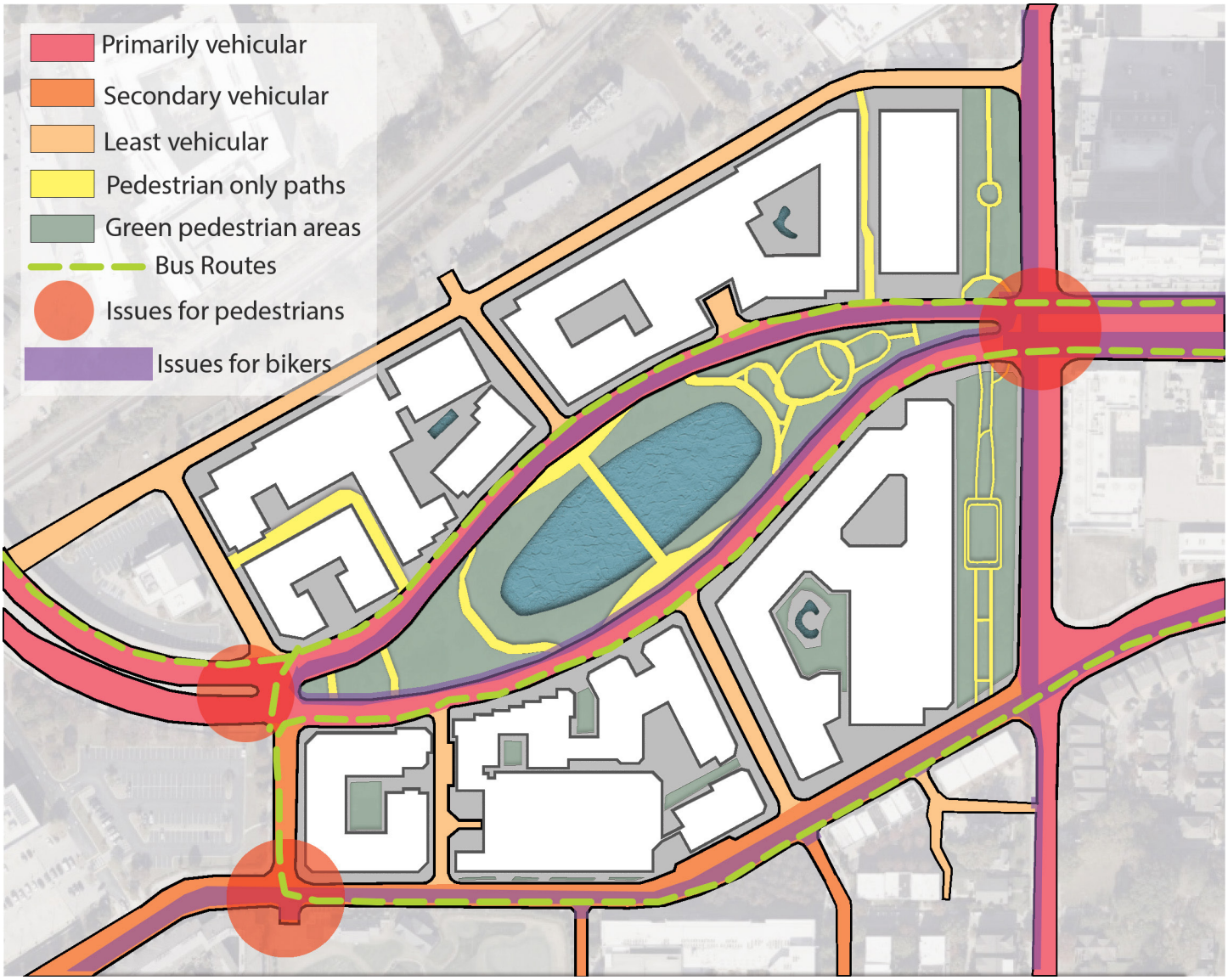
Recreational areas being largely insular rather than connected to wider pedestrian networks.

c) Issues Identified

Three main nodes of conflict for pedestrians were identified at key intersections:

1. Intersection at 17th Street Bridge and Northside Drive.
2. Southernmost entry to Atlantic Station at 16th Street.
3. Western entry point at the intersection adjacent to the parking structures.

Additionally, the absence of dedicated bike lanes around the central green space exacerbates conflicts between pedestrians, bikers, and vehicles.



Community Engagement

To ensure that the proposed design interventions genuinely reflect community needs and perceptions, a comprehensive public engagement exercise was conducted using a structured online survey, "Walkability/Bikability Around Atlantic Station." The survey targeted both residents of Atlantic Station and visitors frequenting the area, gathering insights on their primary modes of transportation, perceived safety levels, mobility concerns, and specific suggestions for improving walkability and bikability.

Survey Structure

The survey (Accessed through: Survey) collected data across several dimensions:

1. Residency and Accessibility: Determined if respondents lived in Atlantic Station or the selected site area and identified accessibility needs.
2. Primary Modes of Transportation: Explored how respondents navigate within Atlantic Station generally, and specifically within the selected project area.
3. Perceived Safety: Respondents rated their sense of safety walking and biking in the area on a scale from "Very Unsafe" (1) to "Very Safe" (5).
4. Qualitative Feedback: Allowed participants to elaborate on their safety ratings, suggest improvements, identify primary destinations, and share additional comments.

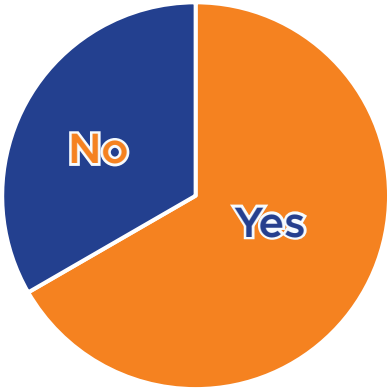
Most respondents who had connection to the Atlantic Station area lived in Atlantic Station. Some of them had physical disabilities.

Key Findings

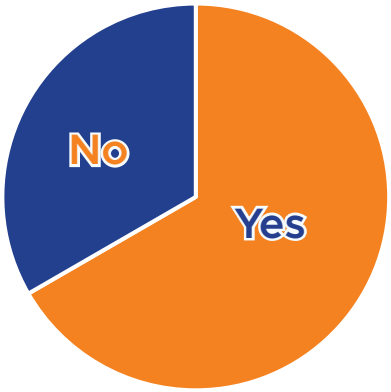
According to the results of our survey, we have identified 5 directions of key findings.

a) Respondent Population

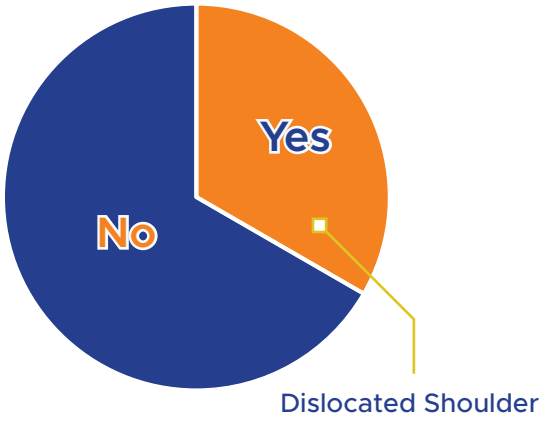
Do you live in Atlantic Station?



Do you live in the selected site?

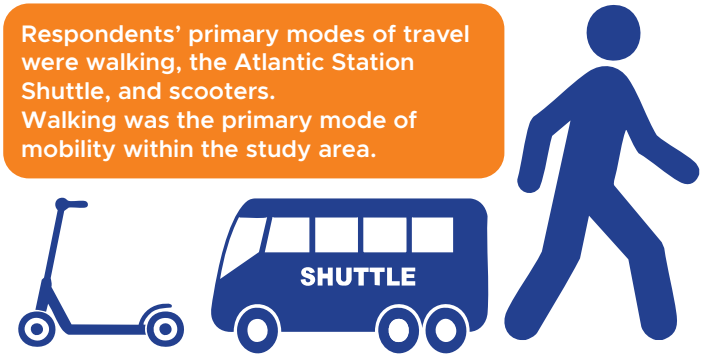


Do you have a disability/any mobility access needs?



b) Modes of Transportation

Respondents' primary modes of travel were walking, the Atlantic Station Shuttle, and scooters.
Walking was the primary mode of mobility within the study area.



None of the respondents reported using a private automobile as their mode of transportation. They used various forms of transit but primarily relied on walking to move within the area. This could indicate either a preference for walking or a lack of interest in other forms of active transit.

c) Safety Ratings

In the site area, how safe do you feel walking/biking?

Walk Score	Bike Score
4.7	3.0

The ratings for walking were really high, with only one person holding back from rating of 5 stating that sidewalks were a bit narrow.

d) Suggested Improvements

Suggested improvements
- **Dedicated bike lanes**
- **Lower speed limits**

Frequently suggested improvements to include enhanced pedestrian crossings, dedicated and clearly marked bike lanes, reduced vehicular speeds, and better wayfinding.

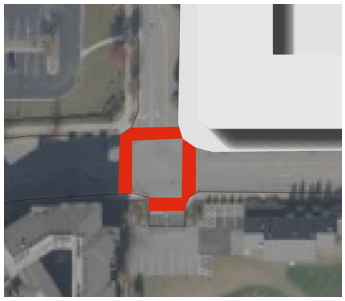
e) Primary Destinations

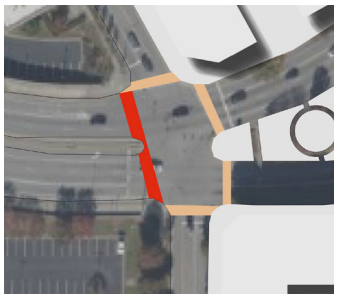
Primary Destinations:
Target, Publix

Popular destinations included the central green space, commercial establishments off the site, and recreational amenities, reinforcing the necessity of improving pedestrian and cyclist connectivity. However respondents mostly cited superstores as destinations, making it seem that another consideration is distance and ease of carrying items.

Design and Policy Recommendations

a) Pedestrian Crosswalk Enhancements





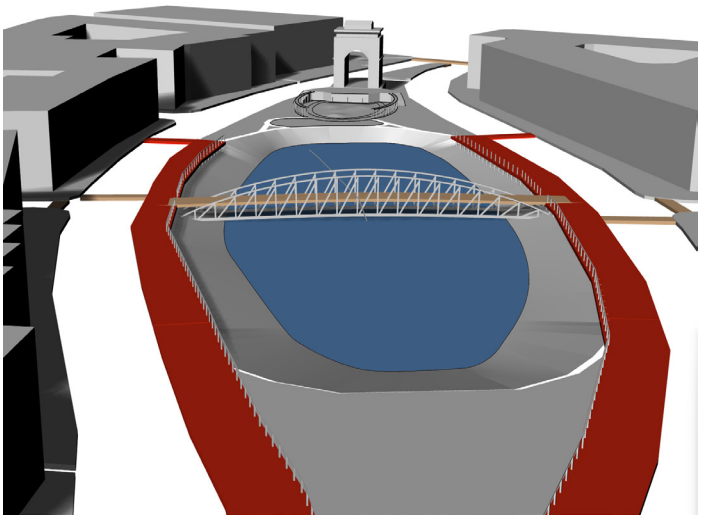
To improve pedestrian safety and accessibility, we propose new crosswalks at:

1. 17th Street Bridge intersections.
2. 16th Street southern entrance.
3. Western vehicular entry point.

These interventions will include raised crossings, pedestrian signalization, and curb extensions to enhance visibility and safety.

b) Dedicated Bicycle Path

A continuous bikeway is proposed to loop around the central green space, providing cyclists with a dedicated lane that minimizes conflicts with pedestrians. This intervention is envisioned as a painted or segregated lane within the internal pedestrian realm.



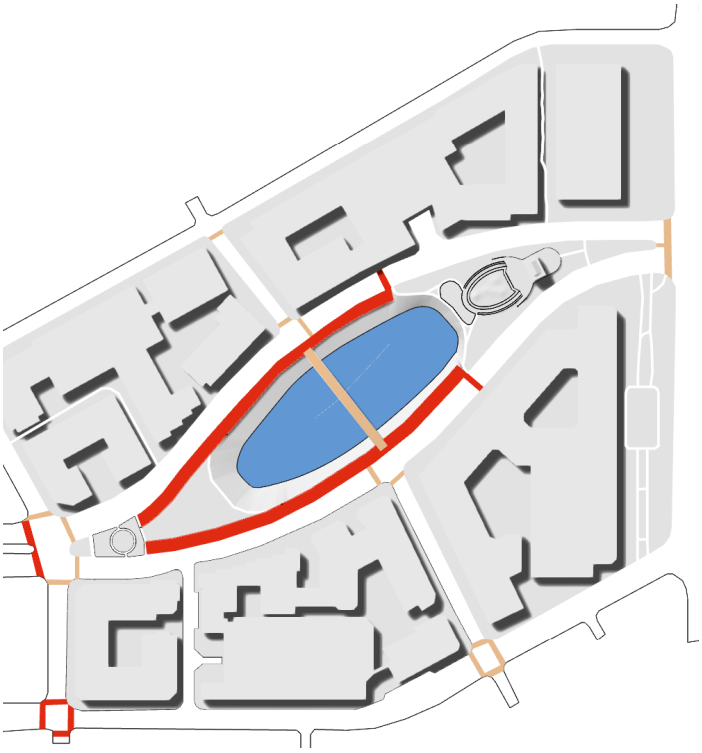
c) Public Realm Improvements

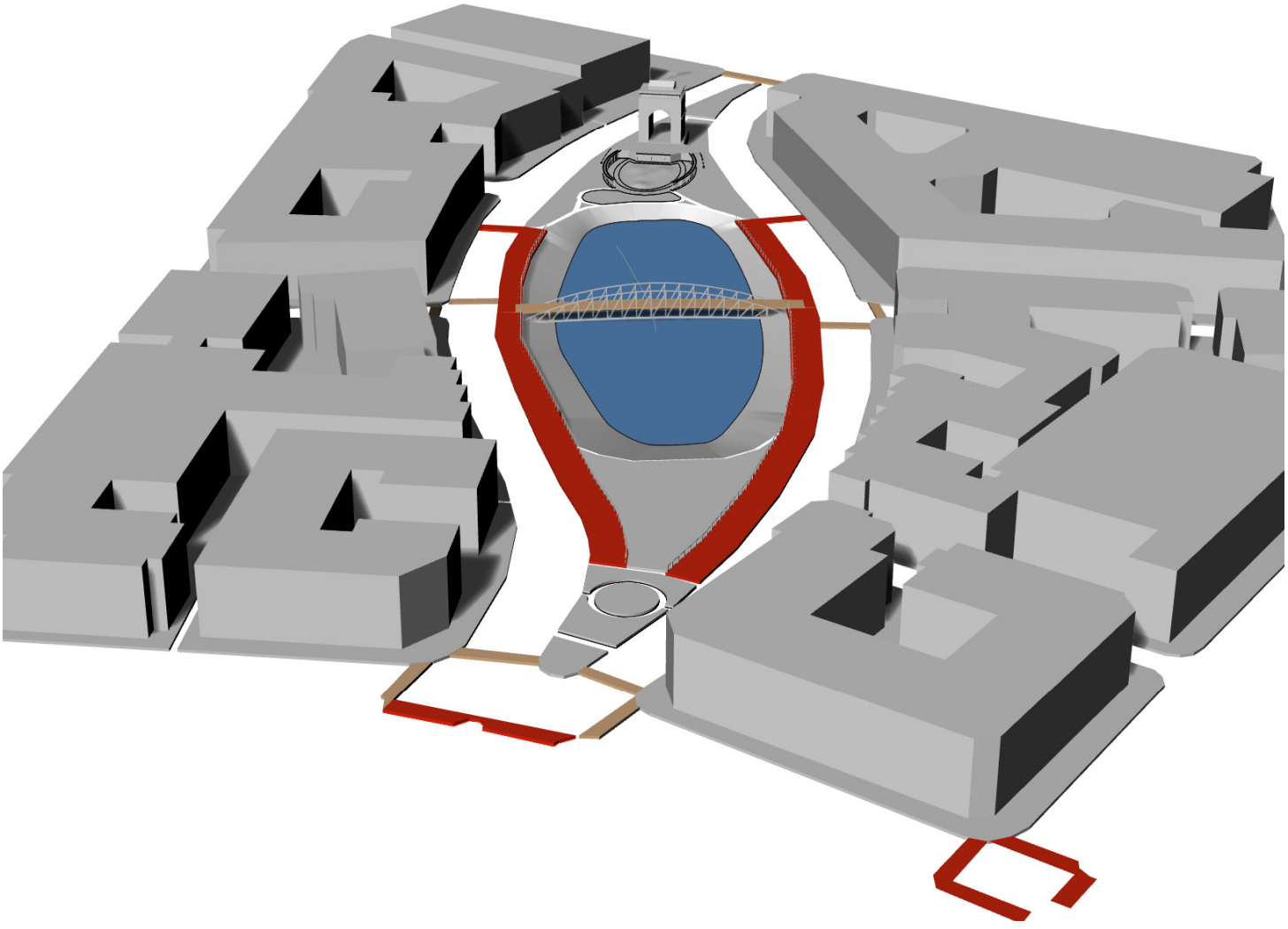
1. Converting liminal pedestrian spaces into active-use zones (mini plazas, seating areas, or interactive installations).

2. Enhancing wayfinding systems for both pedestrians and bikers.

3. Increasing green pedestrian areas to promote walkability.

4. Integration of improved MARTA shuttle stops with visible signage.





Impact of Proposed Interventions

Intervention	Impact on Pedestrians	Impact on Cyclists	Impact on Transit Access
New Crosswalks	Safer and more direct street crossings	Reduced conflicts at intersections	Improved accessibility to bus stops
Dedicated Bike Lane	Clear separation from pedestrian paths	Enhanced safety and continuity	Encourages active mobility
Public Realm Improvements	Increased public space usage Improved last-mile connectivity through transit connectivity	Better spatial clarity Supports multi-modal travel	Promotes place-making and reduces car dependency

Conclusion

The Atlantic Station case exemplifies the paradox of contemporary urban redevelopment projects - while internally vibrant and walkable, their connectivity to surrounding contexts often remains poor due to legacy infrastructure and auto-oriented design. This project's spatial analysis and design interventions aim to overcome these challenges, positioning Atlantic Station as a case study in pedestrian-first urban design.