

GREATER HIGGINS AREA PLAN

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP SUMMARY Workshop #3: Plan Development and Concept Options

Date/Time of Meeting: Wednesday, May 4, 2022, 6:00-7:30 pm (ended at 8:00pm)
Format: Virtual (Zoom)

OVERVIEW

The third community workshop for the Greater Higgins Area Plan was attended by approximately 70 community members. It took place in an online format via Zoom.

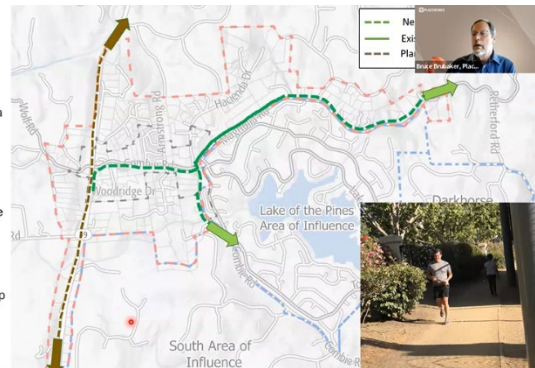
The meeting began with a welcome greeting from Chair of the South County Area Municipal Advisory Council (SCMAC) Erin Sullivan, followed by a PowerPoint presentation led by Bruce Brubaker of PlaceWorks (project consultant) that included: project/planning background and timeline, purpose and objectives of the Area Plan, Plan Area boundary, feedback received from previous workshops, development and circulation scenarios for the Plan Area, and examples of different types and densities of multifamily residential and mixed use development.

A series of Zoom polls were launched during the course of presentation. The first poll asked participants their relationship to the project – most people attending the meeting were residents of Lake of the Pines with the remaining mostly residents from the Greater Higgins area. The remaining polls asked participants their preferences for different options related to circulation, evacuation routes, and gateway features. The results of the polls are attached at the end of this summary. It should be noted that on average, about 45-50 meeting participants answered the polls.

Attendees participated in a “breakout room” focus group exercise in four

Circulation: Multi-Use Path Network Scenario B

- Continue existing 10'-wide multi-use path along Magnolia Rd
- New 10'-wide multi-use path on south side of Combie Rd along Ragsdale Creek
- Continue Combie Rd multi-use path into Holiday Center area
- New 10'-wide multi-use path on south Combie Road
- Create potential for future loop around Darkhorse
- Planned multi-use shoulder along Highway 49



Greater Higgins Area Plan

Gateway Features

Examples of Public Art



Examples of Gateway Signage



POLL
What types of gateway treatments would you like to see in the Greater Higgins area?

Greater Higgins Area Plan

Combie Rd/ Highway 49 Scenario B

- Enhanced street or “spine” through Holiday Center
 - Mixed Use-Residential along new spine
- 10'-wide multi-use path on south side of Combie Rd and to Holiday Center
- Hobby Condos and Office along Higgins Rd
- Larger extension of “Wetland Park”
- New office along Woodridge Dr
- New multi-family residential off Woodridge Dr



Greater Higgins Area Plan

randomized groups of 12-15 community members each. Each group reviewed concept scenarios in two areas: 1) Combie Road/Highway 49 and 2) Combie Road/Magnolia Road on the Google Jamboard platform. For each area, maps of Scenario A and Scenario B were shown side by side for comparison. The facilitator for each group walked through the key differences between the scenarios and took notes of community comments directly on the maps/Jamboard. Facilitators asked the following questions to guide the discussion:

- What components of each scenario do you like/prefer?
- Which multi-use path/park scenario do you prefer?
- What types of housing do you want to see in the blank orange highlighted parcels?
- What density would you like to see for the areas with mixed use?

The topics/guiding questions and some takeaways are described in the next section of this summary.

Following the focus group discussions, facilitators for each group reported back to the entire workshop, highlighting key items and themes from their group.

At the end of the meeting, PlaceWorks described the project's next steps/project timeline and shared a link to the project website www.GreaterHigginsAreaPlan.com and means to contact Nevada County staff with any follow-up questions: Kyle Smith, Associate Planner, at Kyle.Smith@co.nevada.ca.us.

FOCUS GROUPS – KEY TAKEAWAYS

This section summarizes key themes and takeaways from the focus group discussions. The Google Jamboards for all four focus groups are attached at the end of this summary.

COMBIE ROAD/HIGHWAY 49 AREA

Question 1: What components of each scenario do you like/prefer?

Key Takeaways

- Many prefer the tree-lined street through the commercial CVS and Holiday Market shopping centers (rather than along Higgins Rd) because they feel it creates a more intimate pedestrian environment, while Higgins Road would remain focused for vehicle travel. This street, however, should be more oriented for pedestrians and bicyclists rather than vehicle traffic to avoid congestion/bottlenecks.
- Walking trail along Highway 49 is not appealing.
- Pocket park should not be along Combie Rd because viewing Combie Rd traffic is not appealing. Instead, locate it with the existing wetland open space.
- Consider moving the existing bus stop at Higgins Corner to along Combie Rd (provides access to new Cameo Dr housing) rather than adding a new bus stop along Wolf Rd.
- Potential for new gateway signage at Highway 49 and Combie Rd.
- Consider whether a golf cart charging station could be put in the Holiday Center.
- SCMAC member noted that the park district does not currently receive parcel fees so there is no revenue available to manage or maintain parks.

Question 2: Which multi-use path/park scenario do you prefer?

Key Takeaways

- Multi-use path preferred on the north side of Combie Road.
- Multi-use path should provide access to Holiday Market.
- Many like the idea of allowing golf carts on the multi-use path but also have concerns about conflicts with pedestrians and bicyclists using the same pathway. Safety provisions would be needed or some other form of separation. Lake of the Pines allows golf carts and pedestrian travel on the shoulder.
- Consider whether the 14'-wide multiuse path could also be used for emergency access. Siting the multi-use path on the north side could help create a connection to Highway 49.

Question 3: What types of housing do you want to see in the blank orange highlighted parcels?

Key Takeaways

- Many people prefer townhomes as the multifamily housing type for the Greater Higgins area.
- Starter homes, rentals, and low income housing are important to provide homes for seniors and young families.
- For-sale townhomes would allow easier entry into the housing market for younger couples or families.
- Many people do not want to see tiny homes, although some liked the idea of homes arranged around a common space.
- Some expressed concerns about building too much housing because it would change the rural character of the Greater Higgins area, create congestion (especially along Combie Rd), and impact evacuation.
- Appropriate locations for multifamily housing include areas closer to Highway 49 and near Holiday Center.
- Attached sidecourt housing could be an option for multifamily residential since there are more units on a smaller footprint – “lower profile” but higher density.

Question 4: What density would you like to see for the areas with mixed use?

- Many people liked mixed use residential at the current County code requirement of 4 du/acre.
- Concern about potentially creating vacant retail spaces and would prefer to build more housing than ground-floor retail.

COMBIE ROAD/MAGNOLIA RD AREA

Question 1: What components of each scenario do you like/prefer?

Key Takeaways

- Several mentioned a new hotel would make more sense to be located along or closer to Highway 49. The need for a hotel in the Greater Higgins area should be evaluated.

- Larger park preferred over smaller pocket parks since a larger park could have more facilities and hold events, farmers markets, concerts, etc.
- Concern about roundabouts creating congestion since this segment of Combie Rd/Magnolia Rd has high traffic during peak periods, partially because of the nearby schools, and in the event of an evacuation. There should be a traffic study.
- Several people liked that the senior housing in Scenario B is separated from the commercial development.
- Pocket parks are attractive because they create green space setbacks between the road and commercial areas.
- Senior housing at Lake Center should have access to Lake of the Pines.
- Suggestion from Fire Chief Jerry Good to increase the capacity of Magnolia Road to the east to Dog Bar Bridge by smoothing out extreme curves and other measures to serve as an additional evacuation route.

Question 2: Which multi-use path/park scenario do you prefer?

Key Takeaways

- There should be golf cart access to the Lake Center and from Lake of the Pines entrance at Lakeshore.
- Multi-use path that is 14' wide is preferred but needs to mitigate conflicts with pedestrians, especially during school drop-off/pick-up.

Question 3: What types of housing do you want to see in the blank orange highlighted parcels?

Key Takeaways

- Support for senior housing but there should be adequate evacuation routes.
- Providing senior housing may free up housing in Lake of Pines to allow for more young families to move in.

Question 4: What density would you like to see for the areas with mixed use?

- Adding new multifamily residential and commercial development needs to be data driven to make sure the market can support it.
- New development should fit the scale of surrounding development.

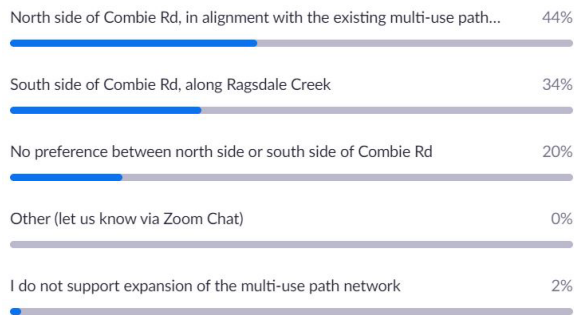
ZOOM POLLS

Note: About 70% of meeting participants answered the Zoom polls.

Poll 1: Multi-use Path Expansion

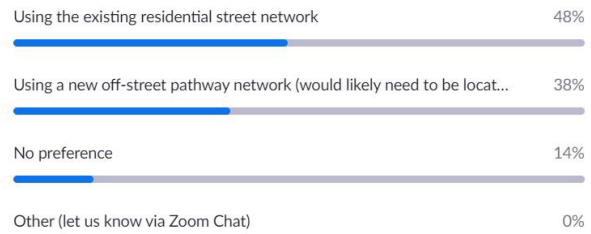
1. Do you prefer expansion of the multi-use path network along the north or south side of Combie Rd? (Single Choice)

100% answered



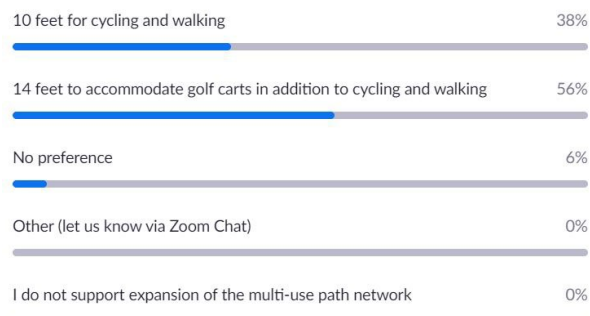
2. How would you prefer to access the multi-use path network from surrounding low-density residential areas? (Single Choice)

100% answered



3. How wide do you prefer a new multi-use path along Combie Rd to be? (Single Choice)

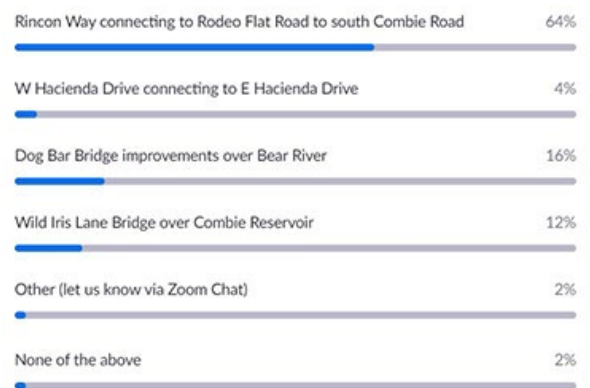
100% answered



Poll 2: Evacuation Routes

1. Which is your highest priority to serve as an evacuation route? (Single Choice)

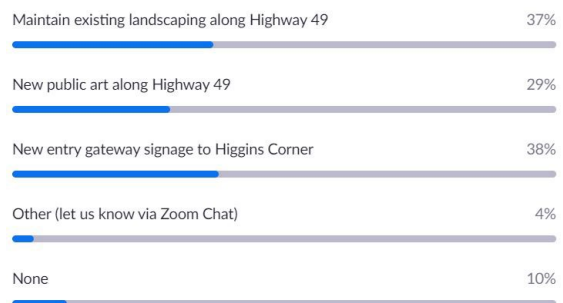
100% answered



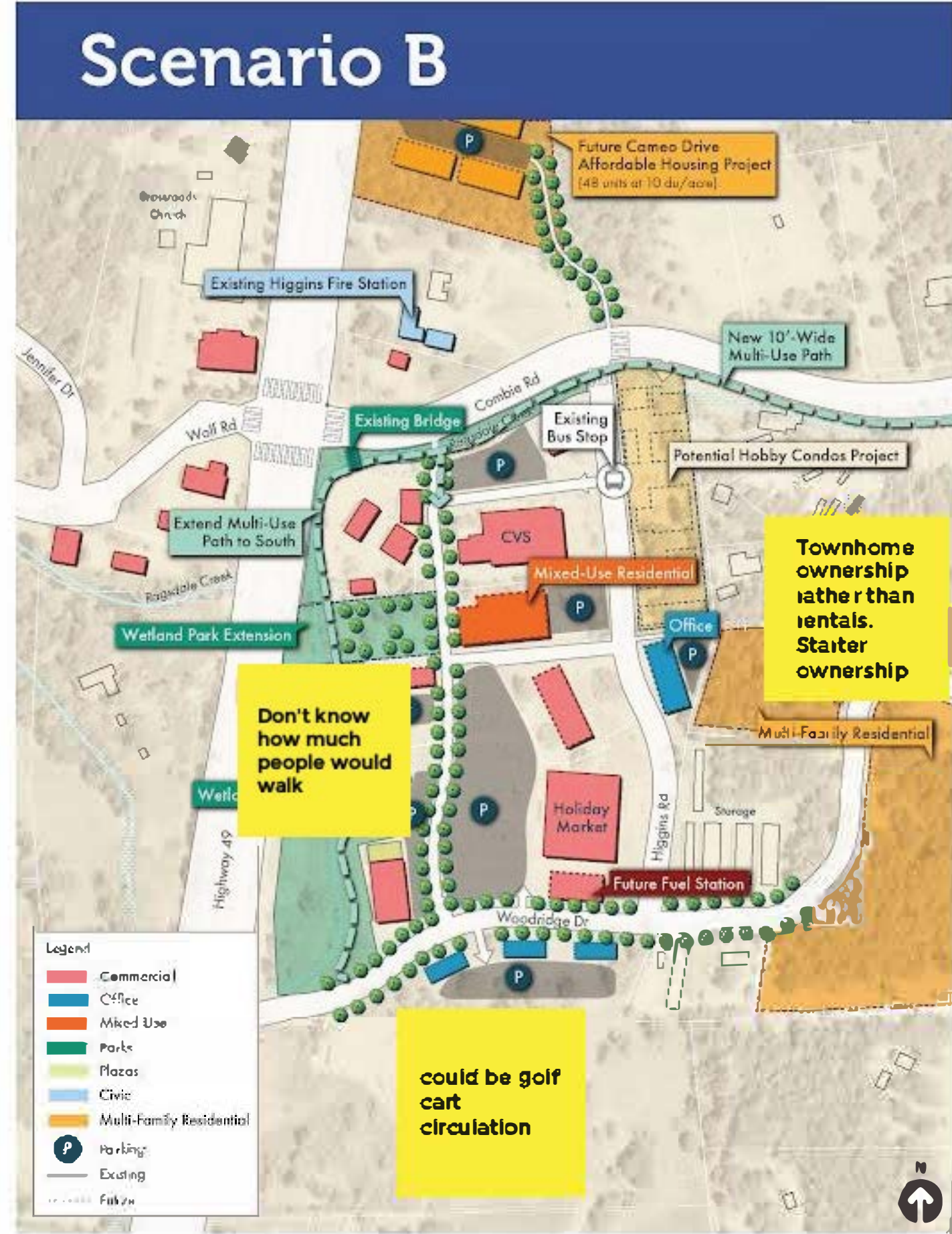
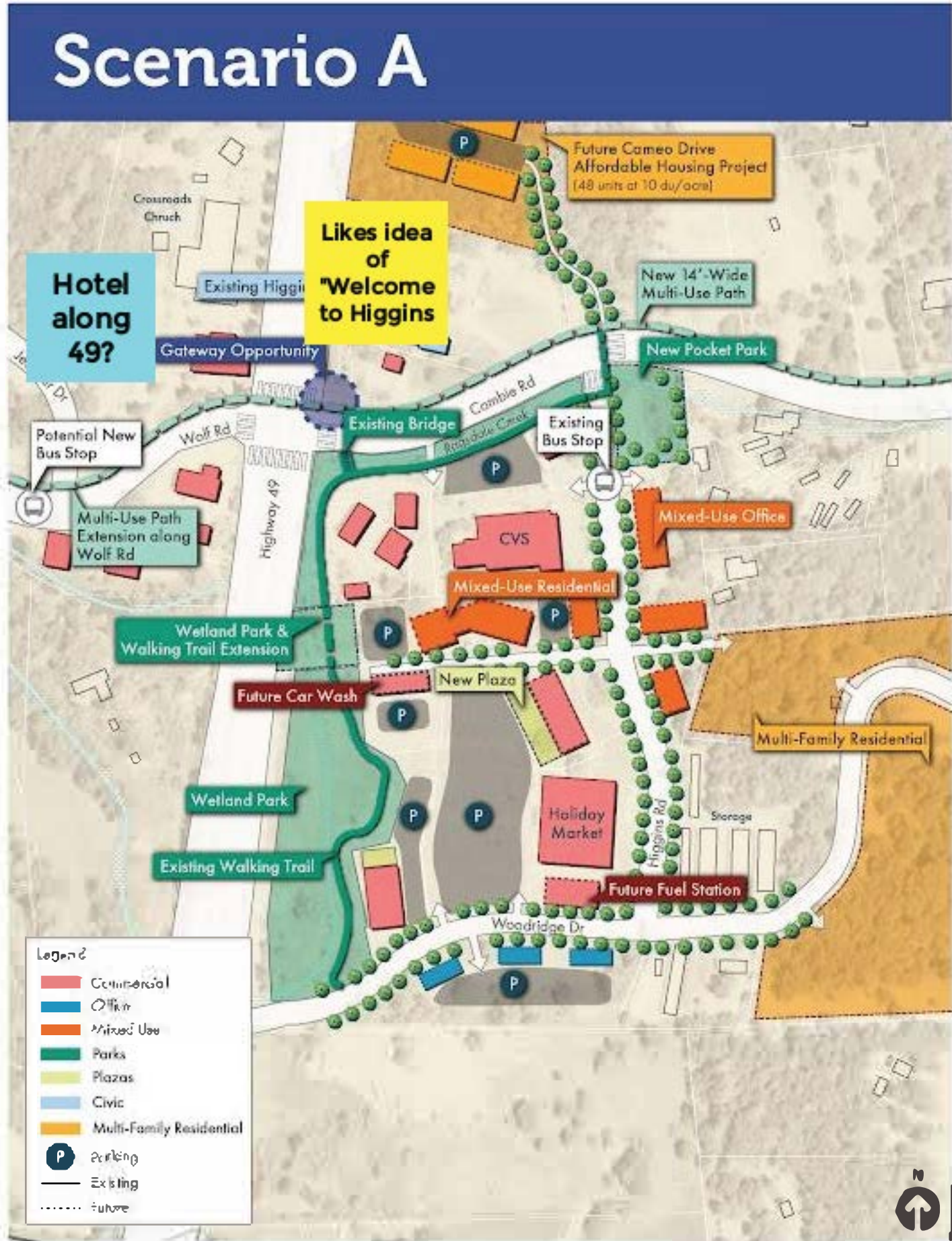
Poll 3: Gateway Treatments

1. What types of gateway treatments would you like to see in the Greater Higgins area? (select all that apply) (Multiple Choice)

100% answered



Combie Road/Highway 49 Area - GROUP 1



KEY DIFFERENCES

Enhanced street through Holiday Center vs. Enhanced Higgins Road (i.e., uses along Higgins Road)

Gateway signage to identify Higgins Corner

Potential new bus stop on Wolf Road

Expansion of "Wetland Park" vs. New pocket park along Combie Rd

Multi-use path width and location

Walking trail vs. Multi-use path through commercial areas

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What components of each scenario do you like/prefer?

Which multi-use path/park scenario do you prefer?

What types of housing/densities do you want to see in the blank orange highlighted parcels?

What density would you like to see for the areas with mixed use?

Potential Multifamily Residential Housing Types and Densities

GROUP 1



Tiny Home Village (8-12 du/acre)



Detached Motorcourt (15 du/acre)



'Plexes (10-20 du/acre)



Attached Sidecourt (10-20 du/



Townhomes (Up to 20 du/acre)

Potential Mixed Use Densities - GROUP 1



Approximately 4 du/acre
(currently approved in Commercial-zoned
parcels)



Approximately 10-12 du/acre

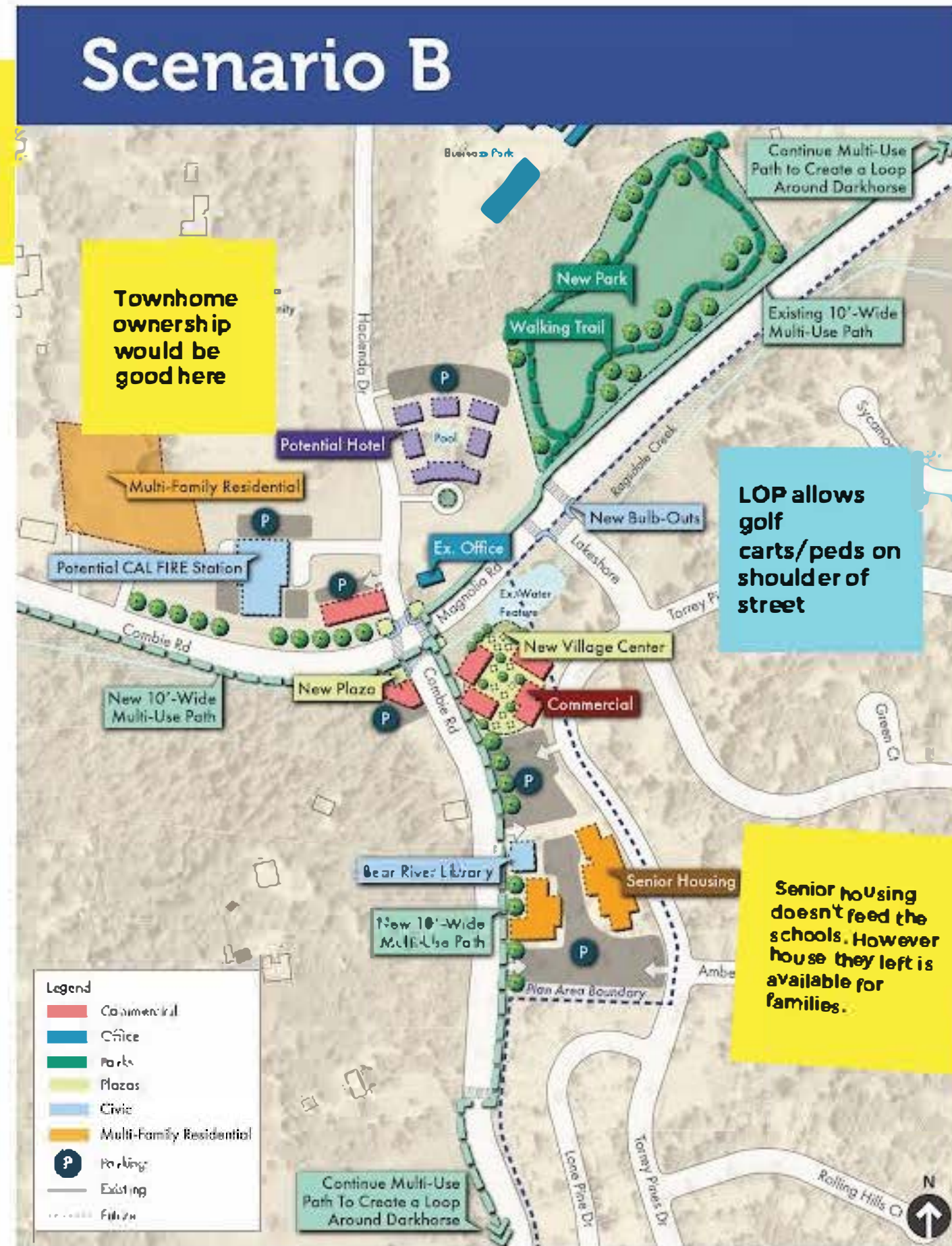
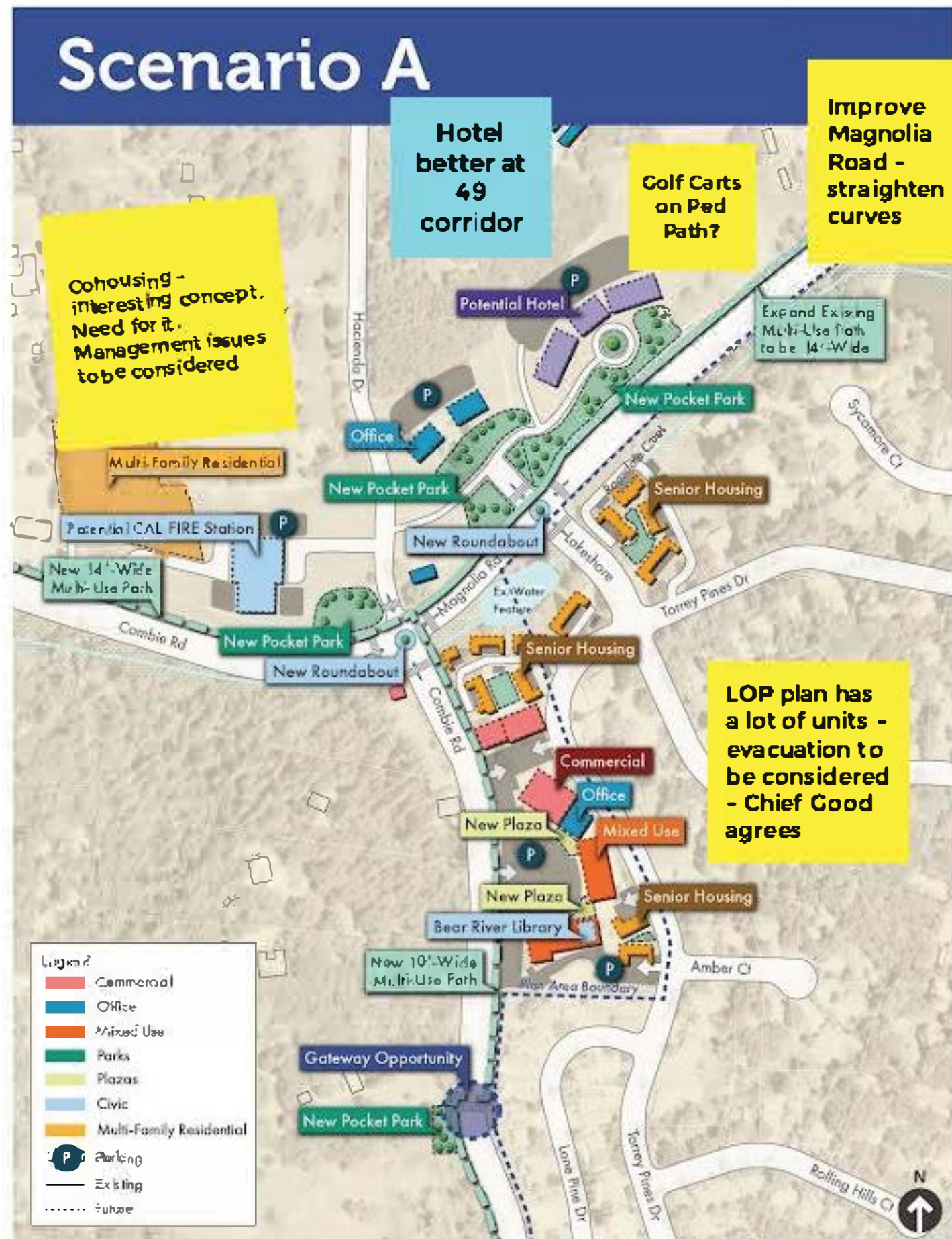


Mixed Use Office



Approximately 16 du/acre

Combie Road/Magnolia Road Area - GROUP 1



KEY DIFFERENCES

Lake Center design and uses (i.e., New Village Center vs. Senior Housing at SE corner of Combie Rd/Hacienda Dr)

Small pocket parks vs. One large park

Commercial vs. pocket park at the NW corner of Combie Rd/Hacienda Dr

Standard Crossings vs. Roundabouts

Potential hotel location

Multi-use path location and width

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

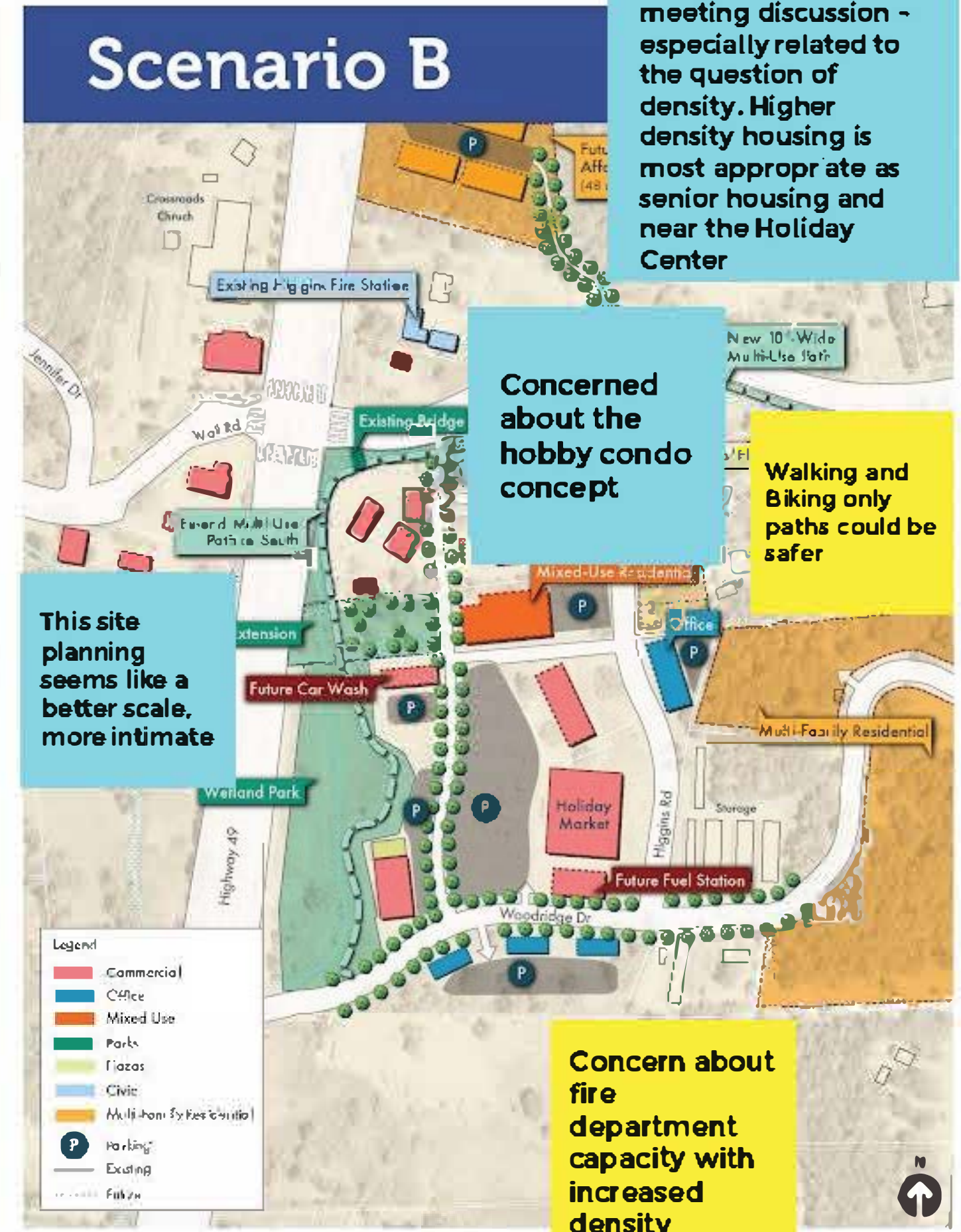
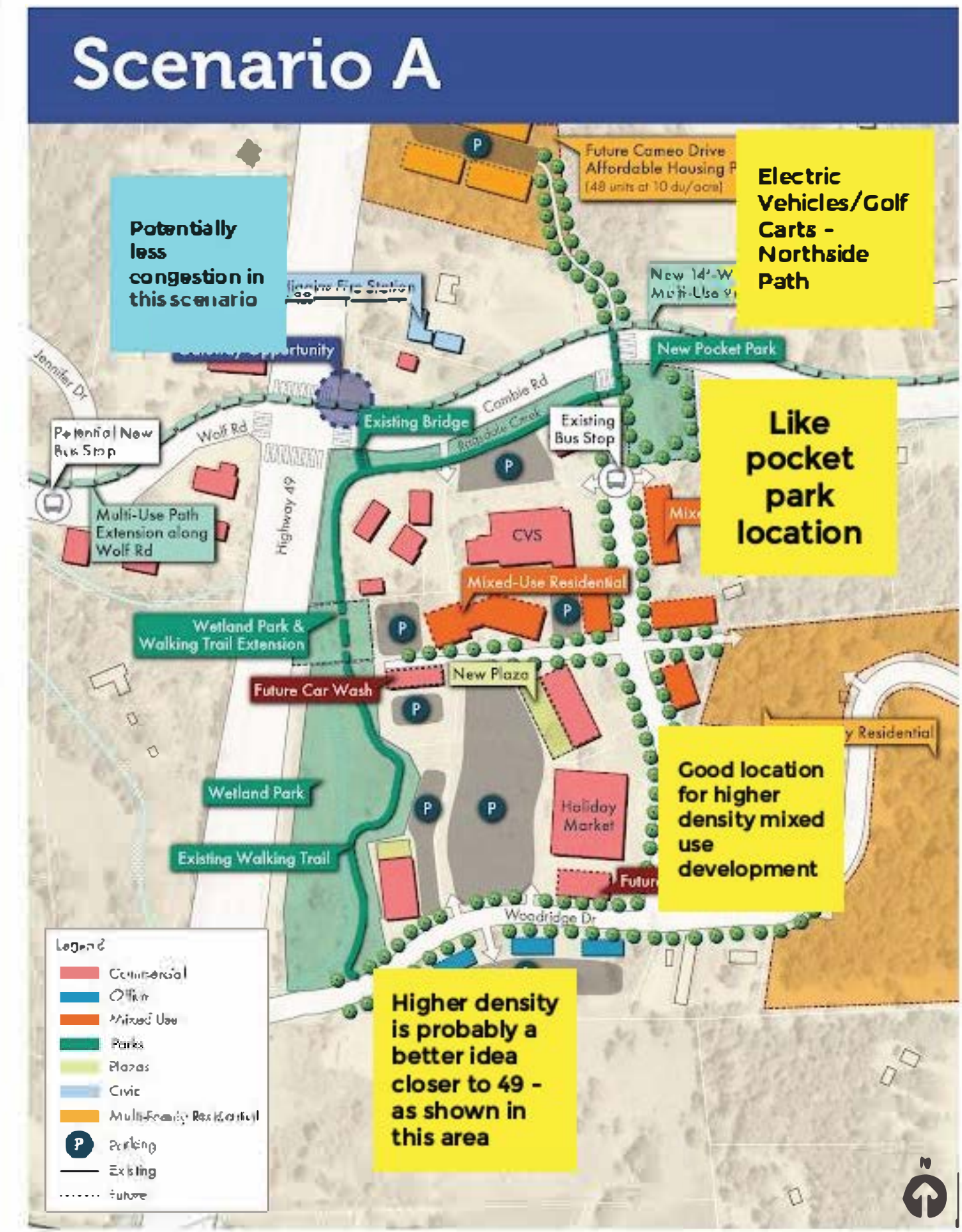
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Combie Road/Highway 49 Area - GROUP 2



KEY DIFFERENCES

- Enhanced street through Holiday Center vs. Enhanced Higgins Road (i.e., uses along Higgins Road)
- Gateway signage to identify Higgins Corner
- Potential new bus stop on Wolf Road
- Expansion of "Wetland Park" vs. New pocket park along Combie Rd
- Multi-use path width and location
- Walking trail vs. Multi-use path through commercial areas

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What components of each scenario do you like/prefer?
- Which multi-use path/park scenario do you prefer?
- What types of housing/densities do you want to see in the blank orange highlighted parcels?
- What density would you like to see for the areas with mixed use?

Potential Multifamily Residential Housing Types and Densities

GROUP 2

The Housing is difficult - especially at an affordable rate.

Especially low income senior housing

Concerns about whether residents would be invested in their community



Tiny Home Village (8-12 du/acre)



Detached Motorcourt (15 du/acre)

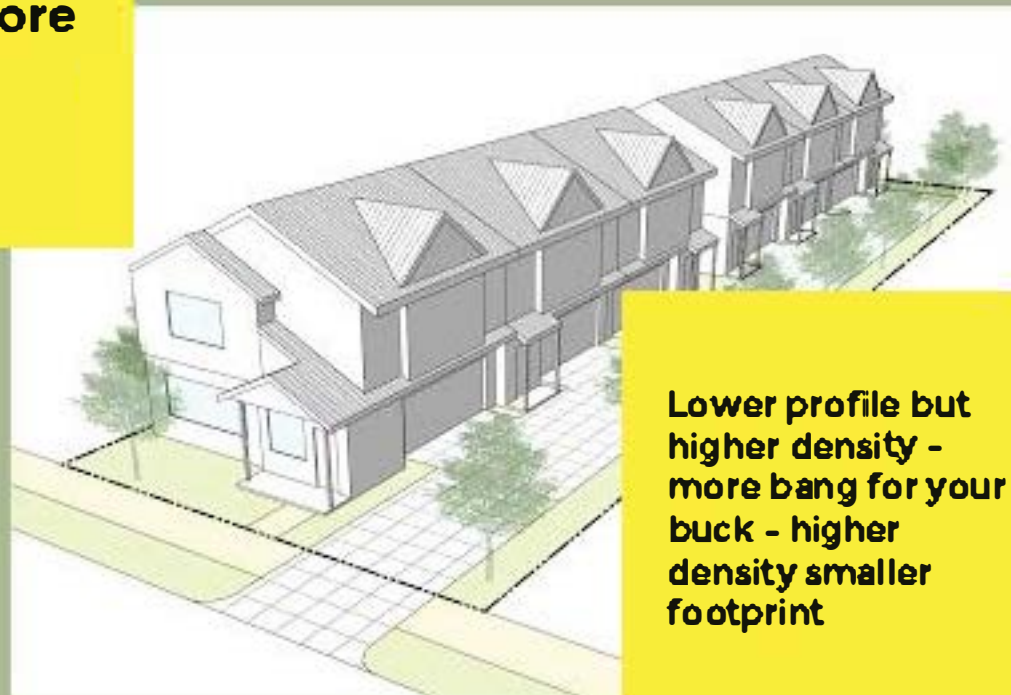
Concerns about fundamental changes to the rural character of the community

Concern about scale of house, especially regarding fire evacuation

How can we attract more young families?



Plexes (10-20 du/acre)



Attached Sidecourt (10-20 du/

Lower profile but higher density - more bang for your buck - higher density smaller footprint



Townhomes (Up to 20 du/acre)

Potential Mixed Use Densities - GROUP 2



Approximately 4 du/acre
(currently approved in Commercial-zoned parcels)

Vacant retail feels really empty - would rather just have more housing if there is no retail demand



Approximately 10-12 du/acre



Approximately 16 du/acre

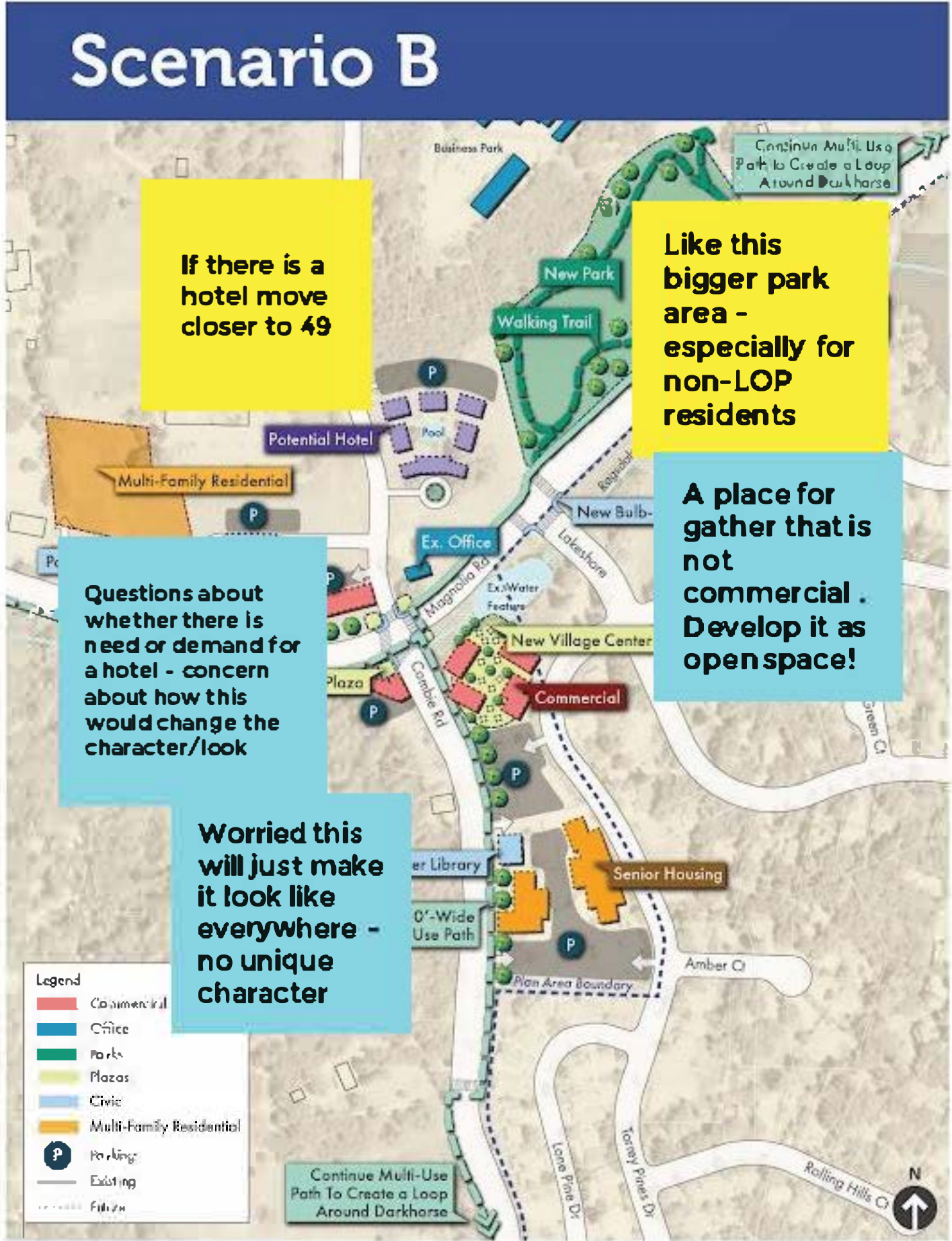
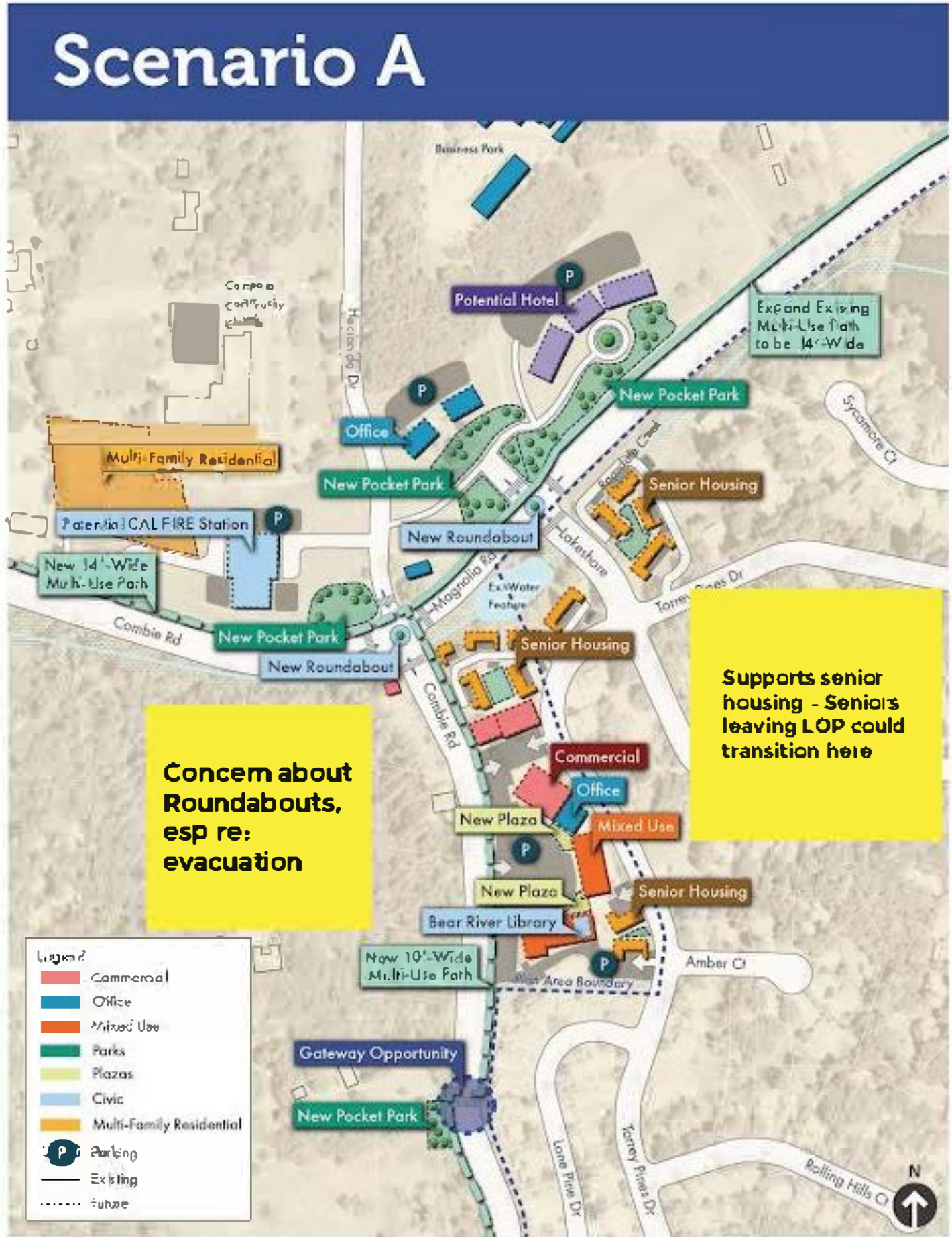


Mixed Use Office

Vacant retail can lead to disinvestment in community

Is there enough retail demand?

Combie Road/Magnolia Road Area - GROUP 2



KEY DIFFERENCES

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Small pocket parks vs. One large park

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Standard Crossings vs. Roundabouts

Potential hotel location

Multi-use path location and width

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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Potential Multifamily Residential Housing Types and Densities GROUP 3

Housing Types
and densities
needs to be
data driven.

+ Agree
with data
driven
comment



Tiny Home Village (8-12 du/acre)



Detached Motorcourt (15 du/acre)



'Plexes (10-20 du/acre)



Attached Sidecourt (10-20 du/



Townhomes (Up to 20 du/acre)

Potential Mixed Use Densities - GROUP 3



Approximately 4 du/acre
(currently approved in Commercial-zoned
parcels)

Type of
housing -
should be
appropriate to
the area for
each location.



Approximately 10-12 du/acre

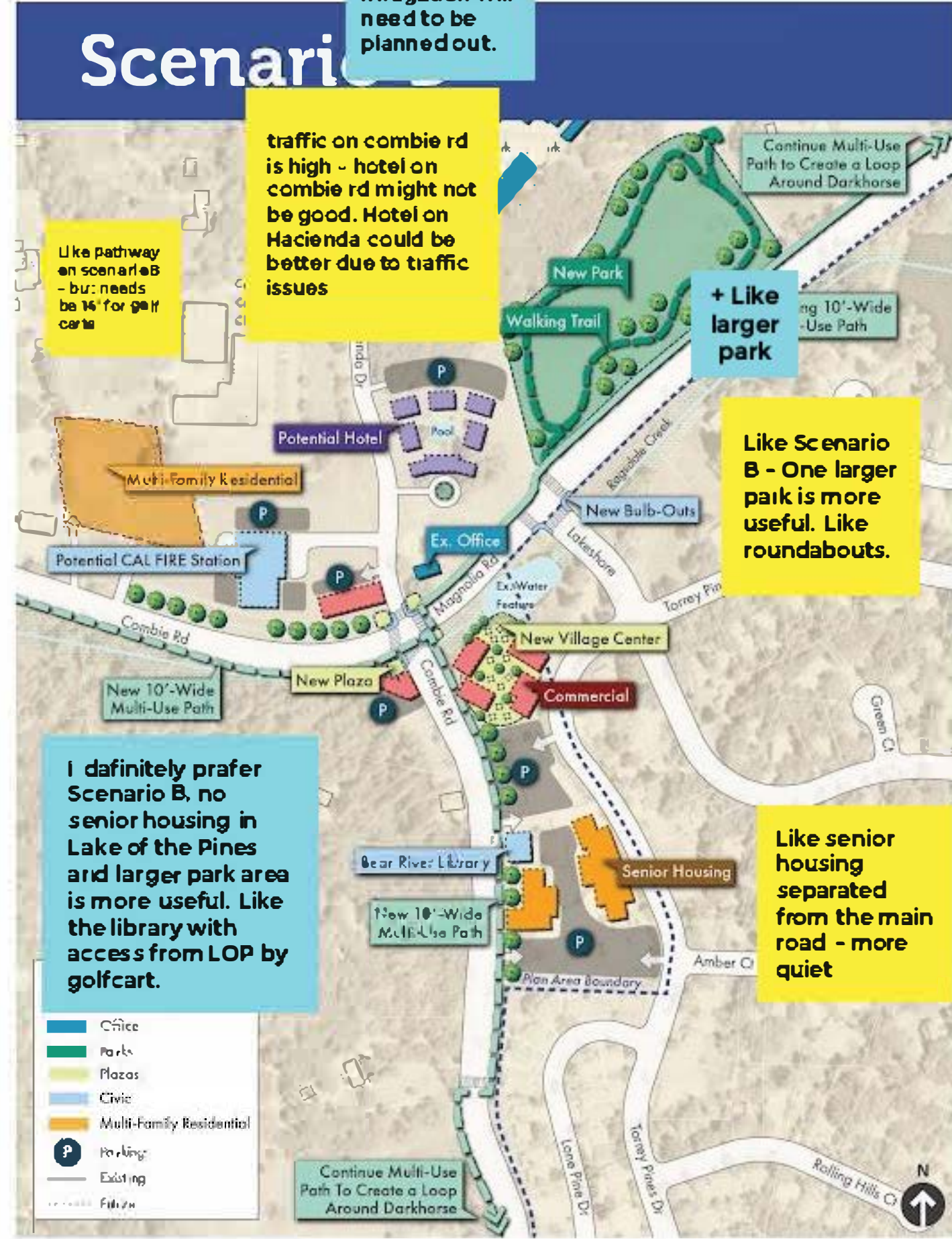
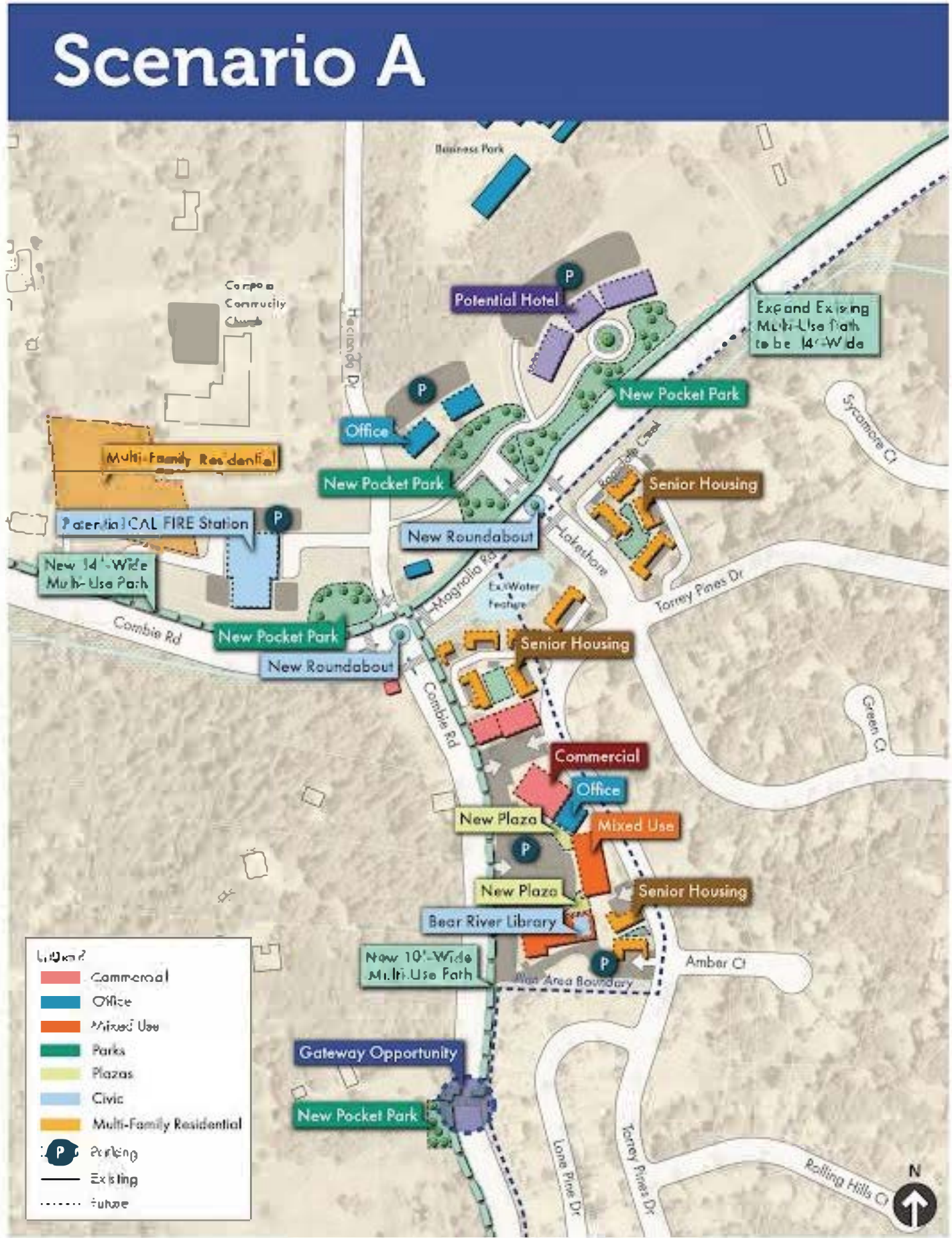


Mixed Use Office



Approximately 16 du/acre

Combie Road/Magnolia Road Area - GROUP 3



KEY DIFFERENCES

Lake Center design and uses (i.e., New Village Center vs. Senior Housing at SE corner of Combie Rd/Hacienda Dr)

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Standard Crossings vs. Roundabouts

Potential hotel location

Multi-use path location and width

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

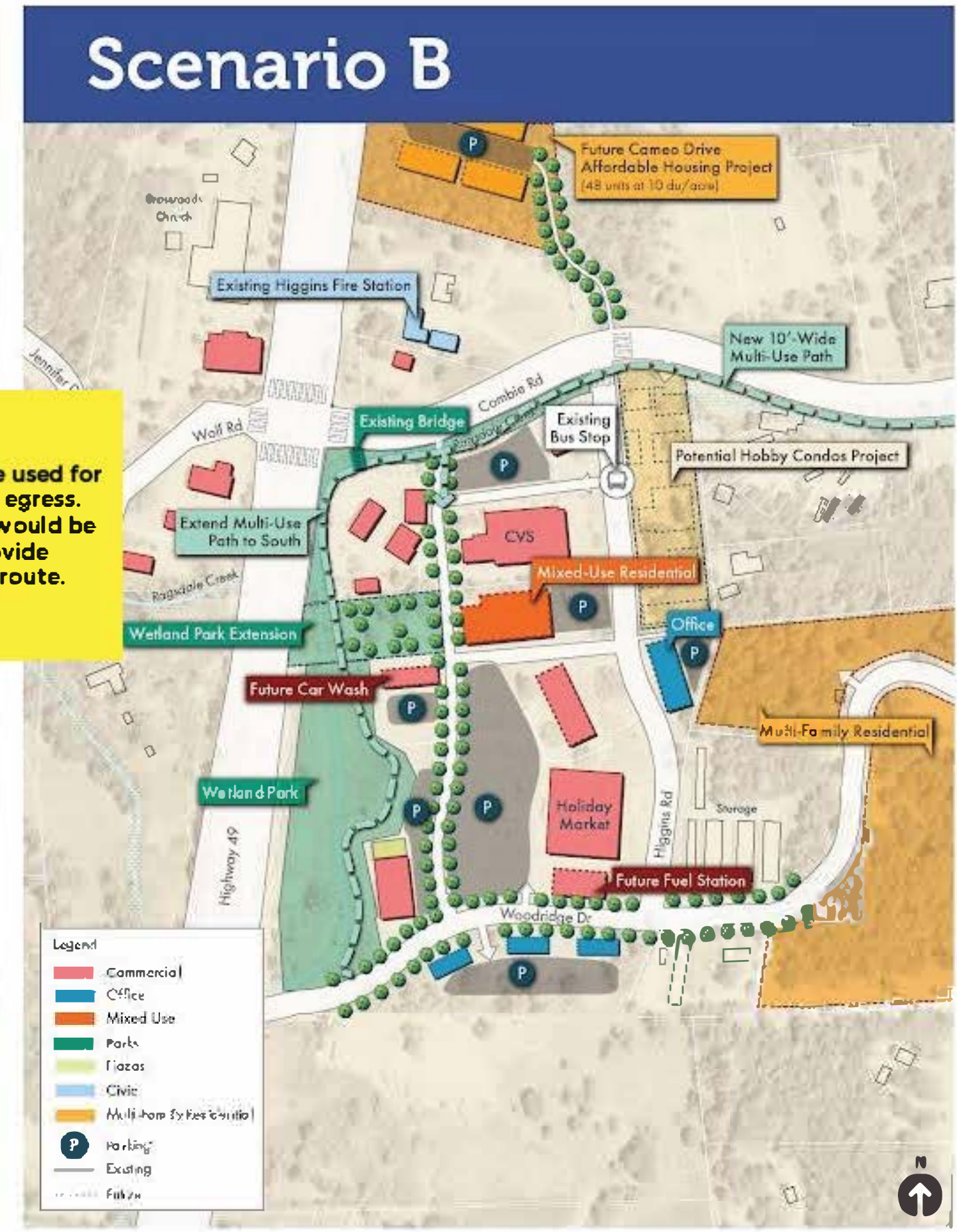
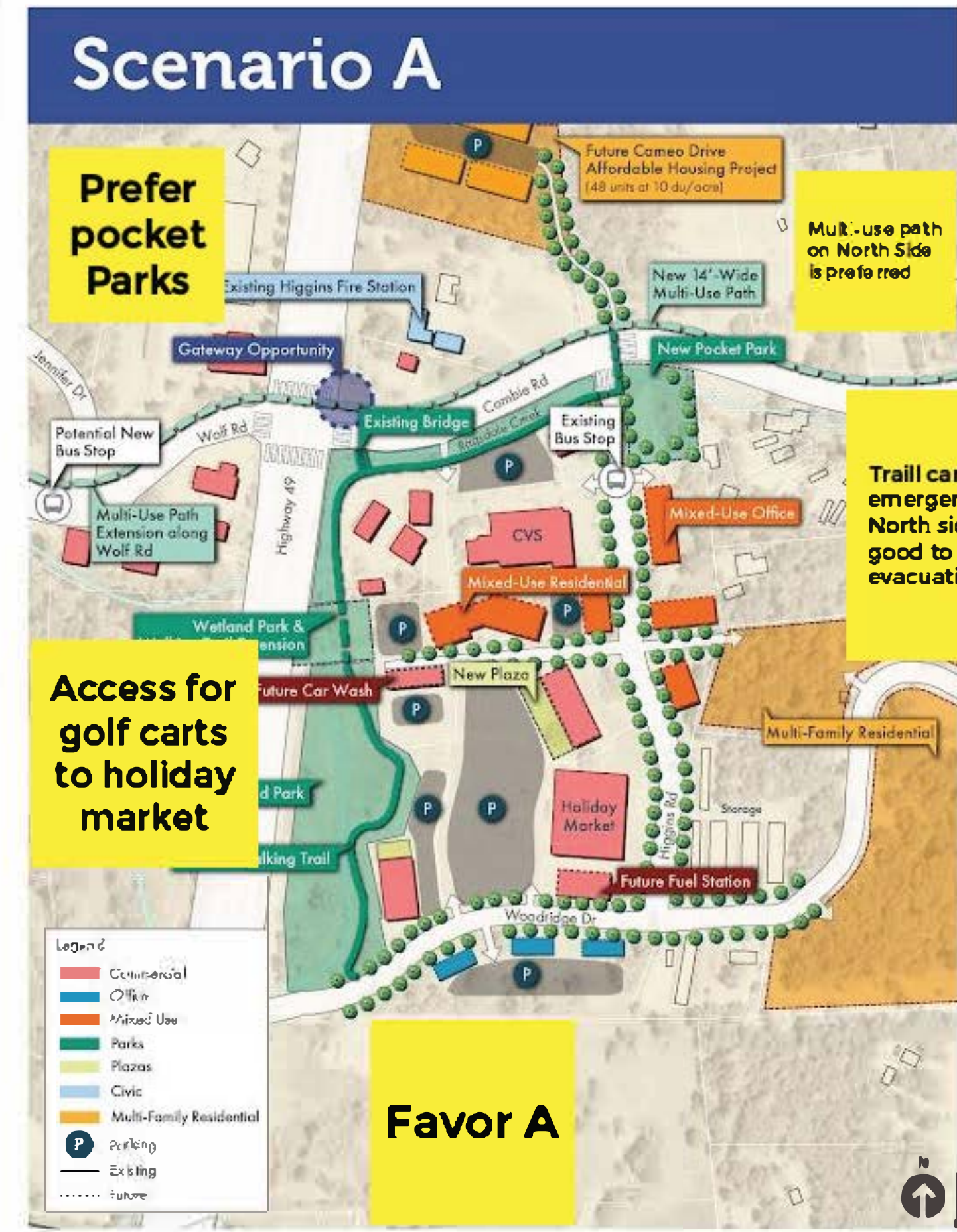
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Combie Road/Highway 49 Area - GROUP 4



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Potential Multifamily Residential Housing Types and Densities

GROUP 4

No Tiny homes



Tiny Home Village (8-12 du/acre)



Detached Motorcourt (15 du/acre)

More Preferred



'Plexes (10-20 du/acre)



Attached Sidecourt (10-20 du/



Townhomes (Up to 20 du/acre)

Potential Mixed Use Densities - GROUP 4



Approximately 4 du/acre
(currently approved in Commercial-zoned
parcels)



Approximately 10-12 du/acre

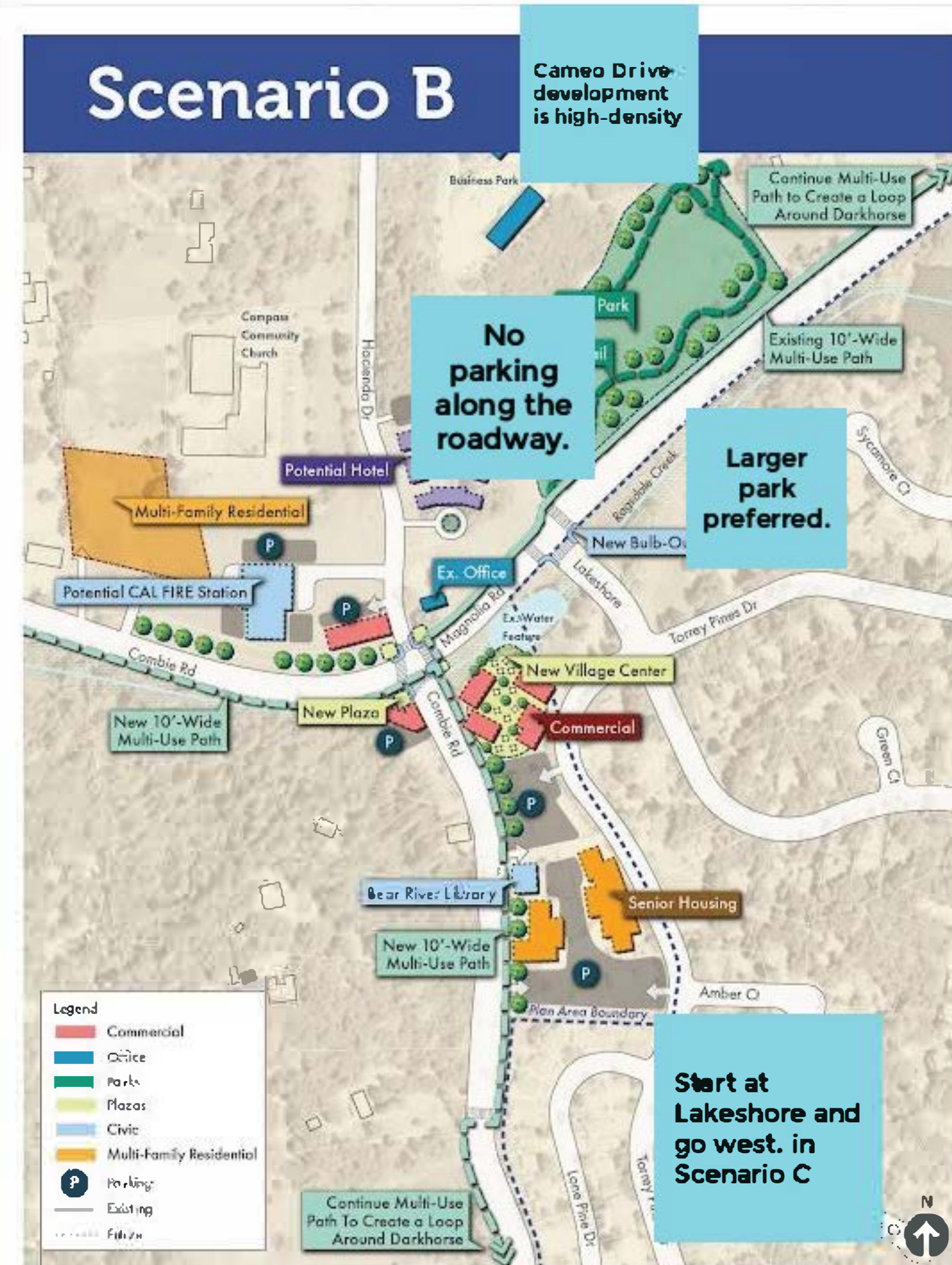
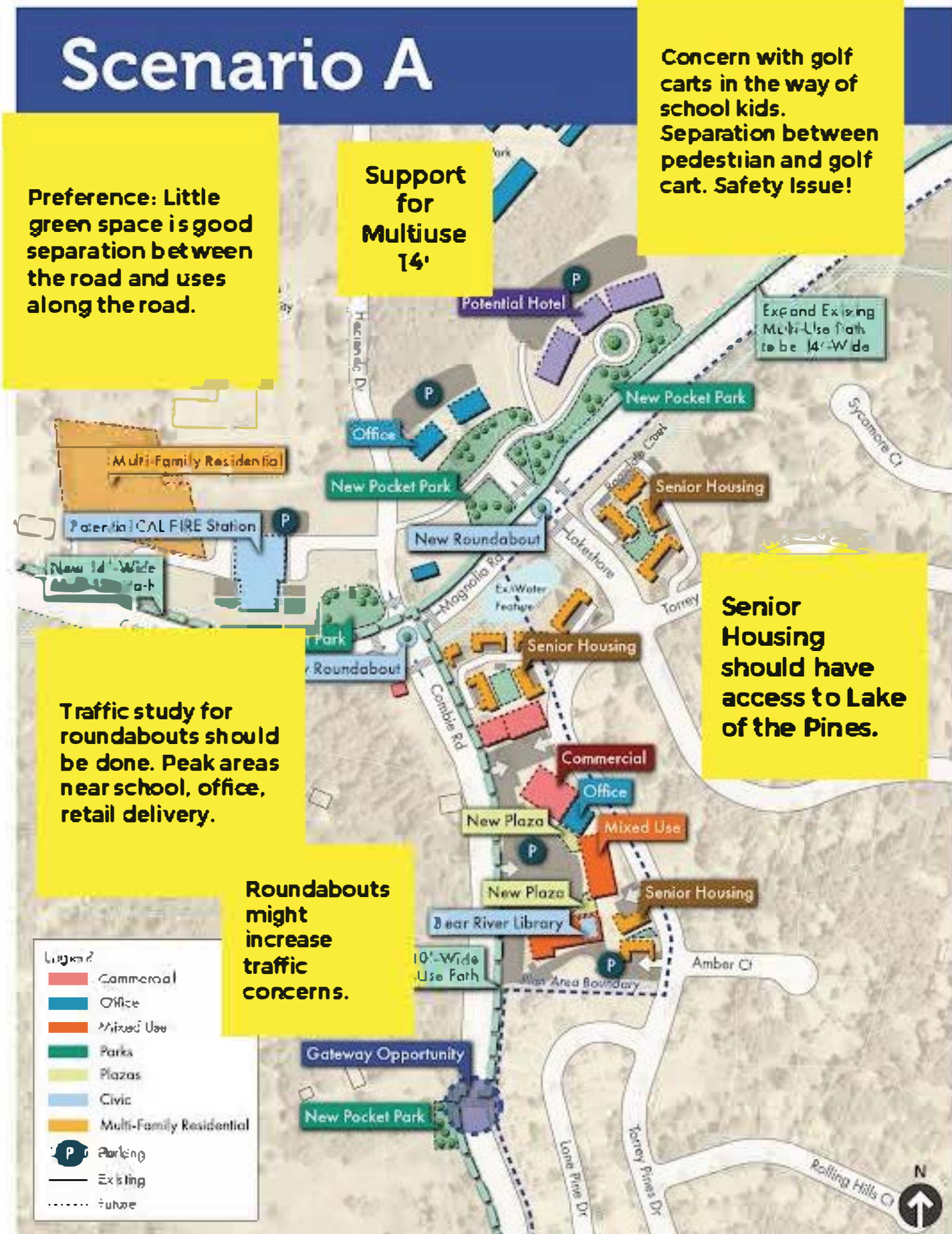


Mixed Use Office



Approximately 16 du/acre

Combie Road/Magnolia Road Area - GROUP 4



KEY DIFFERENCES

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