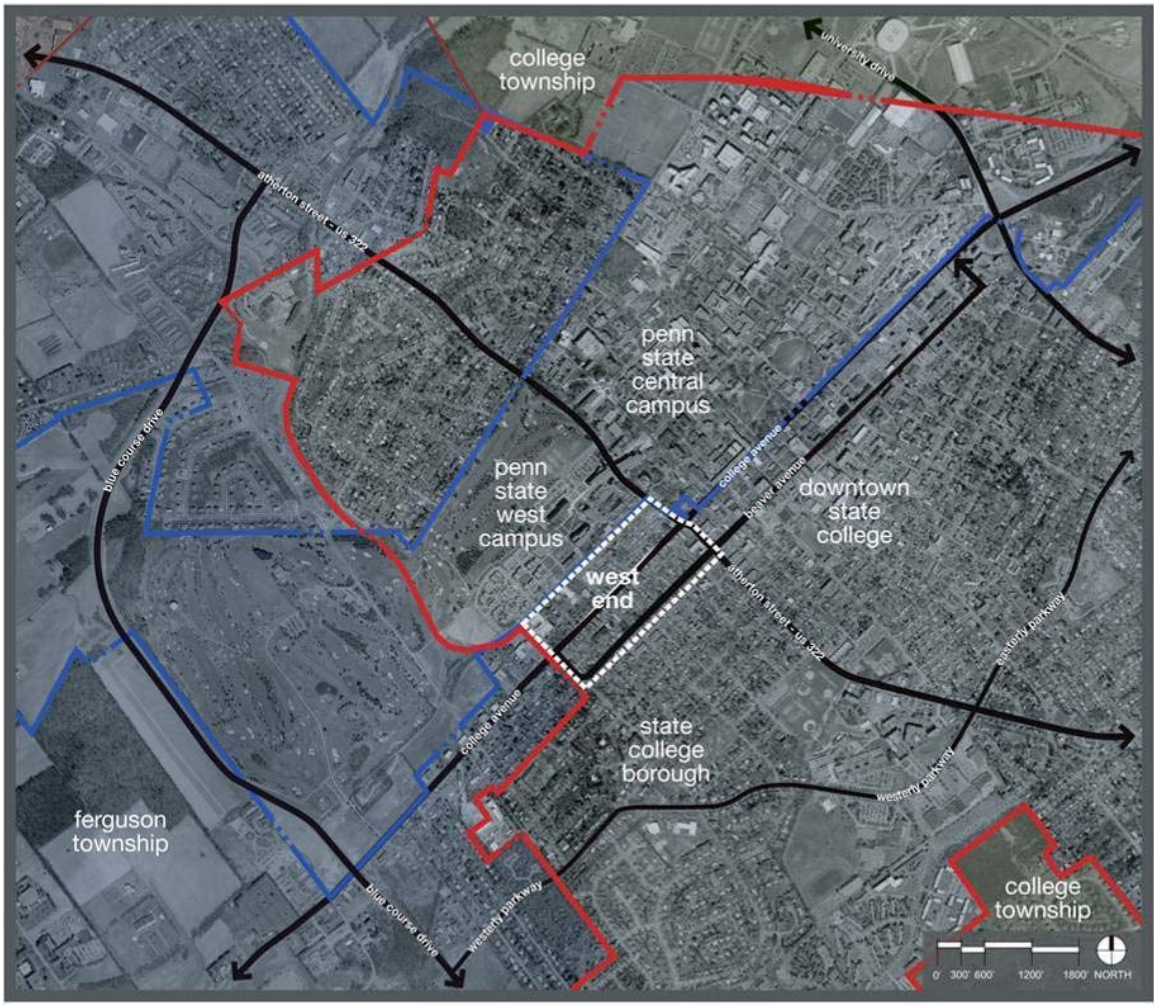
West End District Context

The West End district is centrally located within the Centre Region community and is surrounded by a variety of dynamic neighborhoods and campuses, all of which influence the character and function of the "urban village."

Figure 1
West End Study Area Regional Context



These surrounding communities include:

Downtown State College - Functioning as the hub of the Centre Region, downtown provides a vibrant mix of shopping and dining, cultural attractions, and student oriented uses.

Allen Street Grill

Downtown Shopping

College Avenue

Penn State Central Campus - This historic center of Penn State's main campus functions as the major activity center for students. A wide variety of campus buildings are located here, including numerous academic buildings, West Halls, Old Main, and Pattee Library.

Old Main

Pattee Library

West Halls

Penn State West Campus - Linked by a pedestrian bridge via the IST Building, the West Campus area is anticipated to absorb much of the university's expansion and growth. Several academic buildings and the university's graduate housing are now located here.

Leonhard Building

IST Building

Graduate Housing

Holmes Foster Neighborhood and Historic District - This neighborhood is composed of a wide variety of historic buildings, most of which are single-family homes. The community centers around the Holmes-Foster Park and is located on a rising hill south of the West End.

Single-Family Residence

Holmes-Foster Park

Historic Vernacular

Ferguson Township - There are a variety of uses located along College Avenue on the Southwestern edge of the West End, including a small residential neighborhood, small professional offices, small retail/service establishments, O.W. Houts and more.

O.W. Houts

Retail along College Avenue

Single-Family Residences

The West End is also strategically located along several of the Centre Region's primary transportation routes and is well-linked to the surrounding community. Primary transportation routes within the area and surrounding communities include:

U.S. Route 322- Atherton Street - As the major north/south transportation link running through State College, Atherton Street functions as the primary gateway into downtown. The roadway has a predominantly four-lane road section and currently caters more vehicles than pedestrians.

PA Route 26- College Avenue/Beaver Avenue - College Avenue and Beaver Avenue function as a pair of one-way roads that funnel traffic through downtown. Each roadway has two dedicated lanes of traffic, with some off-peak/on-street parking located along portions of Beaver Avenue. College Avenue traffic has no stops within the West End, which allows traffic to flow freely and sometimes at undesirable speeds. Beaver Avenue traffic is stopped at the signaled intersection with Sparks Street, but the wider road section still lends to traffic flowing at higher speeds as well.

Blue Course Drive - Blue Course Drive functions as a “bypass” between downtown State College and areas along North Atherton Street, which include several new retail complexes and student-oriented apartment communities.

U.S. 322/Atherton Street

PA Route 26/College Avenue

PA Route 26Beaver Avenue