

Holmes-Foster

Priority Goals

In the SWOT analysis, many residents shared comments about the neighborhood's high quality aesthetics and arboretum-like feel, its proximity to the University and downtown and the sense of community among neighbors. However, the neighborhood faces challenges with plans that have not been implemented for the West End area, and could be influenced by the growth of Penn State West Campus and Ferguson Township. Therefore, many of the recommendations associated with goals one, two, four, six and twelve have been indicated as high priorities for the Holmes-Foster neighborhood.



As part of the Holmes Foster-Highlands National Register Historic District, the maintenance and reuse of historic properties in the neighborhood is very important to residents. Goal 1 includes recommendations related to reuse of historic structures and to maintain a high-quality environment within the neighborhood. This includes the maintenance of quality vegetation and enhancements to public infrastructure, such as pedestrian lighting which are important to residents.

The neighborhood's roots trace back to the growth and development of the Penn State campus and downtown. Therefore, Goal 2 is important because it focuses on the importance of maintaining the community amenities such as school, parks and access to nearby commercial areas that are central to defining the neighborhood's character.

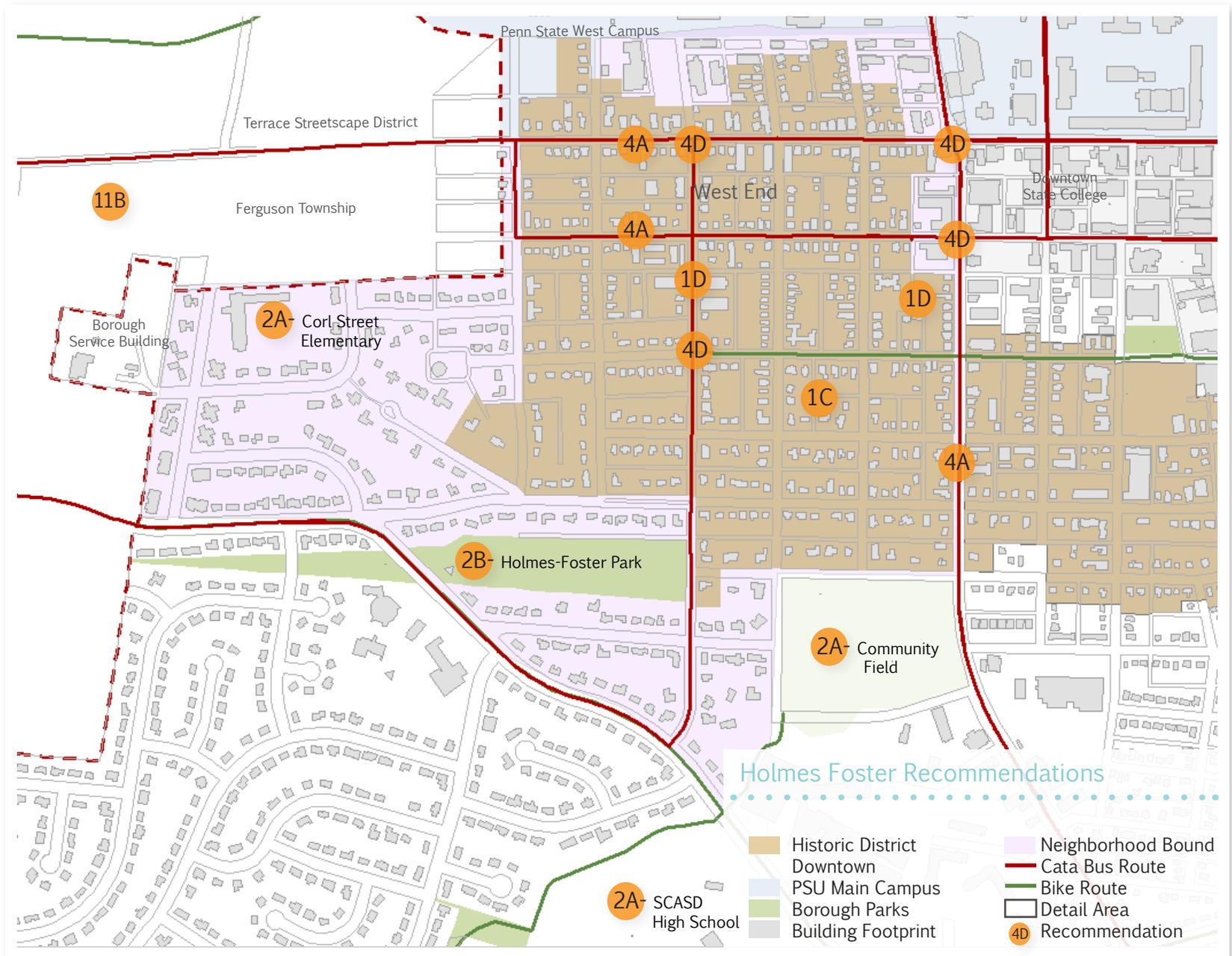
While walkability and bikeability within the neighborhood is

strong, the neighborhood is bounded by two major vehicular corridors: the Atherton Street corridor and the College and Beaver Avenue corridor. Management of the impacts of these roadways in terms of their impact on neighborhood traffic and pedestrian safety are key issues for residents in Holmes-Foster. Therefore, Goal 4 is a high priority for the neighborhood.

The northern part of the Holmes-Foster neighborhood and the West End have evolved as rental housing areas, partly due to their proximity to campus and downtown. However, as rental housing has become more predominant in this area, it has generated concerns for residents that would like to maintain the owner-occupied characteristics of the neighborhood. Additionally, it has presented issues with rental housing maintenance and tenant behavior that at times present lifestyle conflicts with residents. The recommendations of Goal 6 provide many recommendations for addressing these concerns.

Finally, Goal 12 is important to the neighborhood because it is an historic neighborhood in the Borough that can benefit from the continued maintenance and investment as an owner-occupied area. Marketing the neighborhood to prospective residents that are interested in maintaining these characteristics are important to residents.

The map at right highlights areas of the neighborhood for which particular goals and recommendations are relevant. Many of these recommendations apply to the neighborhood as a whole. Additionally, many residents suggested specific ideas that apply to many of these recommendations, which are listed on the following pages.



This map identifies locations in which the Plan's recommendations could be applied. These locations were identified through SWOT analysis exercises with residents as well as Planning Commission and staff analysis.

Application of Goals

The following are recommendations from each of the following goals that are of high priority for the Holmes-Foster neighborhood. These have been matched with SWOT analysis input of residents. Items marked with an * are items that neighborhood residents identified as the most important. Items in italics can be found on the map.



Goal 1: Maintain neighborhood aesthetics, high quality housing stock and cultural and historic resources.

Recommendations: 1.B., 1.C., 1.D., 1.F., 1.G., 1.H.

New residential or mixed-use construction should reflect the historic character and scale of the neighborhood. Historic District regulations should have more authority. Maintain arboretum feel and improve public services, such as pedestrian scale lighting.



Goal 2: Protect existing neighborhood activity, social and commercial centers and enhance these facilities in order to serve residents' needs.

Recommendations: 2.A., 2.B., 2.C.

Maintain SCASD High School and Corl Street Elementary. Improve pedestrian and bus connections to Corl Street, particularly from the West End, to encourage more family residents. Maintain access to downtown and make transition between downtown, West End and Holmes-Foster more appropriately scaled. Bring more neighborhood-oriented commercial to West College. Consider community uses such as a farm market.



Goal 3: Explore opportunities for increasing the environmental sustainability of the Borough's neighborhoods.

Recommendation: 3.C.

Explore opportunities for using solar and wind powered fixtures such as street lights. Increase tree canopy in the norther section.



Goal 4: Address neighborhood-scale transportation safety and multi-modal transit opportunities.

Recommendations: 4.A., 4.B., 4.D.

Traffic, speeding and pedestrian crossing issues on College and Beaver Avenues as well as Atherton Street. Some speeding and pedestrian crossing issues on Sparks and Gill Streets. Improve signage at intersections. Improve pedestrian connections to downtown and provide a bike and pedestrian connection to West Campus. Maintain bike paths.



Goal 5: Maintain a high level of service for enforcement of Borough Ordinances and policies related to property management, behavior and occupancy.

Recommendations: 5.A., 5.B., 5.C., 5.D.

Uniform enforcement of zoning and ordinances. Identification and management of football homes.



Goal 6: Create programs and partnerships for improving the management of rental housing.

Recommendation: 6.A., 6.B., 6.C., 6.D., 6.E., 6.F.

Accurate inventory of rental housing conditions and enforcement of rental permits. Improve rental housing maintenance.



Goal 7: Expand programs, incentives and other strategies for increasing homeownership in the Borough's neighborhoods.

Recommendations: 7.A., 7.B., 7.D., 7.E., 7.F.

Maintain and attract additional households with families, long-term residents. Encourage more diversity among residents in West End.



Goal 8: Consider impacts on neighborhood sustainability as growth occurs in the Centre Region.

Recommendation: 8.A.



Goal 9: Maintain and expand diversity of Borough residents and improve relations among student, non-student and regional neighbors.

Recommendations: 9.A., 9.C., 9.D., 9.G., 9.H.



Goal 10: Improve communications among residents and community leaders, elected and appointed officials, and Borough staff.

Recommendations: 10.A., 10.C.

Make information about neighborhood conditions more easily accessible and provide regular updates.



Goal 11: Improve communications with neighboring municipalities in order to discuss impacts of new development and decision-making.

Recommendation: 11.B.

Monitor potential impacts from development on West College Avenue in Terraced Streetscape District and West Campus.



Goal 12: Market the positive benefits of living in the Borough's neighborhoods.

Recommendation: 12.A., 12.D.

Market neighborhood for its historic character and walkability. Make sure demographics and housing trends don't skew the perspective of potential buyers.