

DOWNTOWN Allen

Dare to Dream!

Downtown Allen Revitalization Plan

JULY 2022

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A Letter from DSC

Honorable Mayor, Members of City Council, and Allen neighbors:

It is with honor that we submit our report, Downtown Allen Revitalization Plan. This report represents the culmination of our mission to develop a vision for the revitalization of the Heart of Allen.

For 12 months, alongside our wonderful city staff and Stantec team members, we conducted extensive research and analysis; actively sought input from, listened to, and provided updates to members of the Allen community; and transparently developed this plan. This unique effort spearheaded by a citizen committee, saved the City substantial amounts of resources that a consultant would have charged us for this work.

Without a doubt, the most rewarding part of this effort was meeting and talking with our Allen neighbors at multiple visioning workshops, pop-up events, civic meetings, community events, design weekend, and feedback sessions.

This visioning process, though, was only the first step in an exciting and challenging journey that will revitalize the Heart of Allen. Our hope is that Allen's strategic planning documents, land development code—and most importantly, the community's dream of something special in this historic part of our city—will serve as a call to action.

Our vision is that within five years we will be dining in locally-owned restaurants, shopping in locally-owned boutique stores, developing and enjoying nature and arts, walking and/or cycling on new trails, enjoying new recreation amenities, remembering Allen's history, celebrating community events on the new downtown plaza and/or Cottonwood Creek Central Park, creating additional opportunities for Allen as a result of the corporate property tax and sales tax revenues that will be generated as a result of a revitalized Downtown.

As we close this first chapter in revitalizing the Heart of Allen, we thank the Mayor and City Council members for trusting us (ordinary citizens) in leading the process of developing a community vision; the City staff for recognizing us as partners and providing critical support throughout the process; Stantec for understanding the City's commitment to making this a citizen-led effort and providing support since joining the team; the Allen community in daring to dream with us; and finally, to our family members who sacrificed time with us during the last 12 months allowing us to serve our community.

We are fortunate to live in the greatest city in the United States. And, as one community, we will revitalize the heart of our city.

Yours in service to Allen,

City of Allen Downtown Steering Committee and Ambassadors

Acknowledgements

The following individuals worked as “one team” and made significant contributions to the development of this Plan:

Downtown Steering Committee (and Ambassadors)

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Bob Acker | Ana Sutter |
| Tommy Baril, Chair | Mary Vail-Grube, Public Relations |
| Murry McKenzie, Co-Chair | Gregg Watling |
| Austin Bassil | Dave Cornette, Ex-Officio Member, Councilmember |
| Doug Galletti | Chris Schulmeister, Ex-Officio Member, Councilmember |
| Ted Gould | Kathy Litinas (Community Engagement Ambassador) |
| Stacey Greer | Jim Wauldbauer (Community Engagement Ambassador) |
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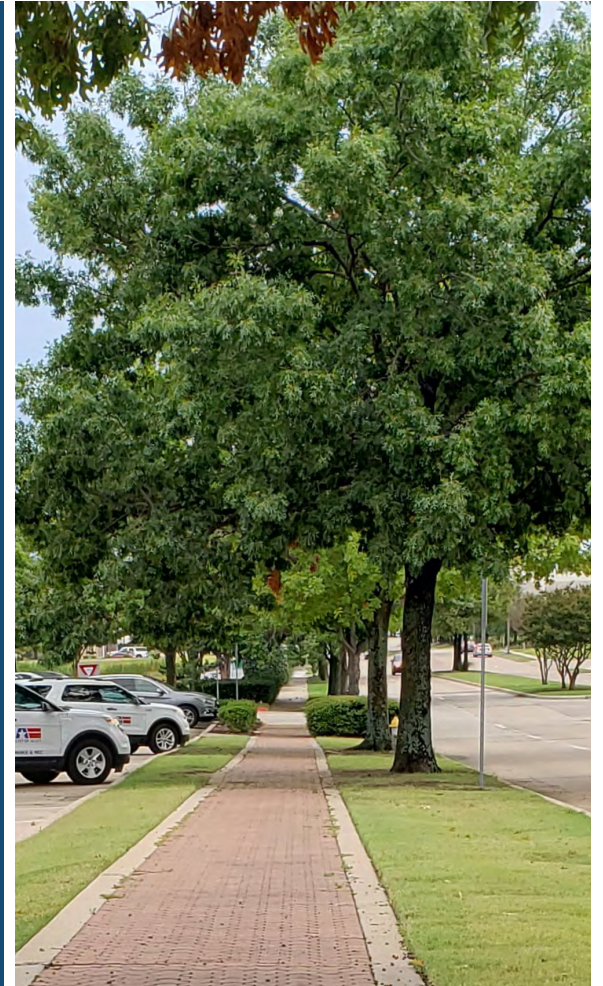
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Executive Summary





1.1. The ‘Why’

Downtown Allen is a unique, heritage center of the community. It is the Heart of Allen. However, it is also struggling. It lacks the vibrancy of people walking around shopping, dining, living, attending events, and relaxing in open spaces. It has gems like Heritage Village and the library, but nothing to connect them. The community, including residents, property and business owners, and the City want to see more activity in the heart of the city.

“

There is no heart of Allen right now. No true destination.

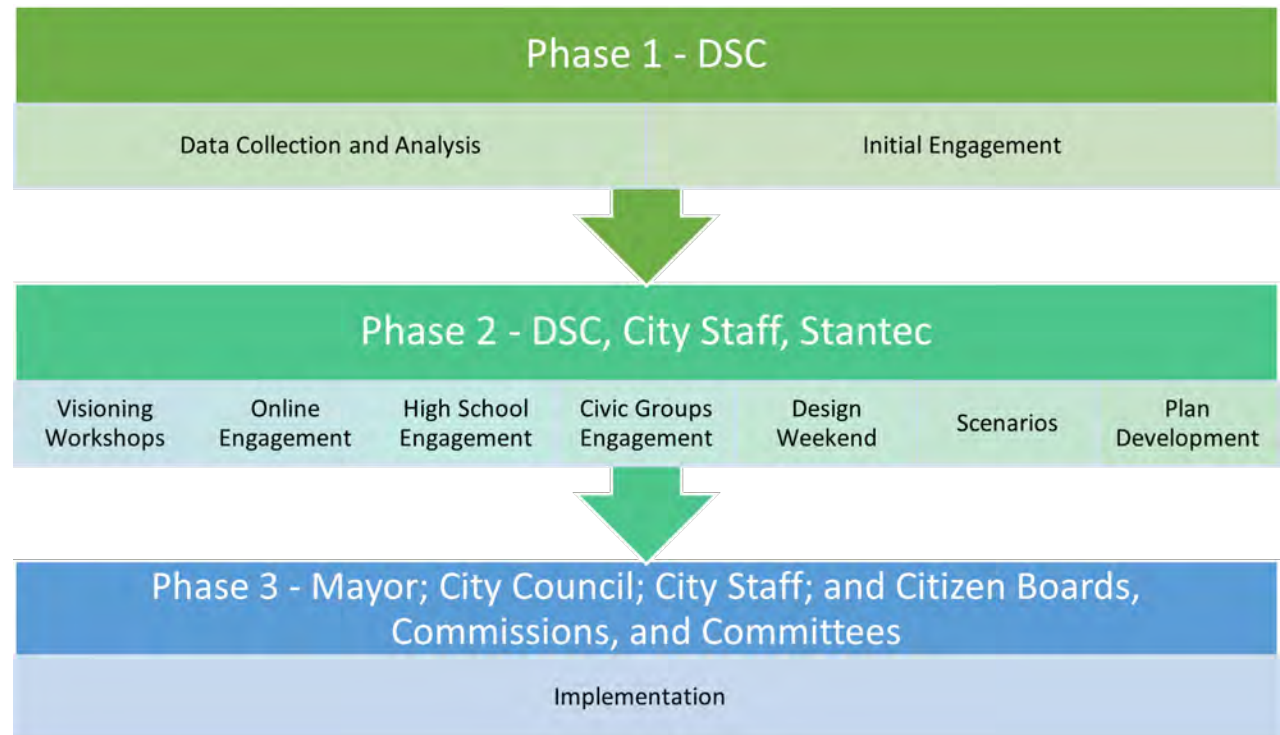
There is a unique opportunity to make this the heart of our community again.

The Downtown Allen Revitalization Plan provides a vision, goals, and an implementation plan; all of which work to revitalize the downtown and make it the vibrant Heart of Allen once again. While Downtown Allen has been the subject of past planning efforts, and is discussed in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, this document is different in that it pairs a community vision with specific actions that the City will take to bring that vision to reality.

1.2. The Process

This plan is the result of work led by the Downtown Steering Committee (DSC) which is a citizen committee appointed by the City Council. The DSC conducted extensive community engagement through multiple

channels to provide residents, property owners, and business owners the opportunity to provide input, stay informed, and see the results at each stage, as shown in the figure below.





1.3.

Key Components of the Revitalized Downtown

This report presents a plan for a revitalized downtown, in both form and function. That plan reflects the input from multiple engagement opportunities, where the community told us it wanted:

- A supportive environment that allows local businesses to thrive
- Increased opportunities for boutique retail, including a potential incubator space for small businesses
- Increased opportunities for dining, such as local restaurants, wine bar(s), brewery(ies), coffee shops and space for outdoor dining
- Increased number of downtown residents who will support small businesses
- Increased recreational opportunities (e.g., volleyball, basketball, and water sports)
- New trails that will allow existing and future residents to connect to Allen trail system
- New opportunities to explore arts (e.g., outdoor

public arts, an arts and cultural center, an art walk, and potential for a maker's space)

- A more walkable/bikeable downtown environment that is safe for people not traveling in a car
- Entertainment opportunities (e.g., arcade, outdoor theater, concert hall and gaming stations)
- Community programming and other events (e.g., outdoor musical performances, farmers' market, food trucks, and festivals)
- Preserved historic character (e.g., buildings on the south side of the 100 block of Main Street)
- Multi-modal transportation including a shuttle or trolley around the downtown
- Entertainment opportunities like an arcade, outdoor theater, concert hall and gaming stations
- Pop-up and other events including a farmers market, food trucks
- Preserved historic character (such as the fire station, Heritage Park, buildings on Main Street)
- Increased employment opportunities including professional offices and co-working spaces

- Increased commercial property and sales tax opportunities

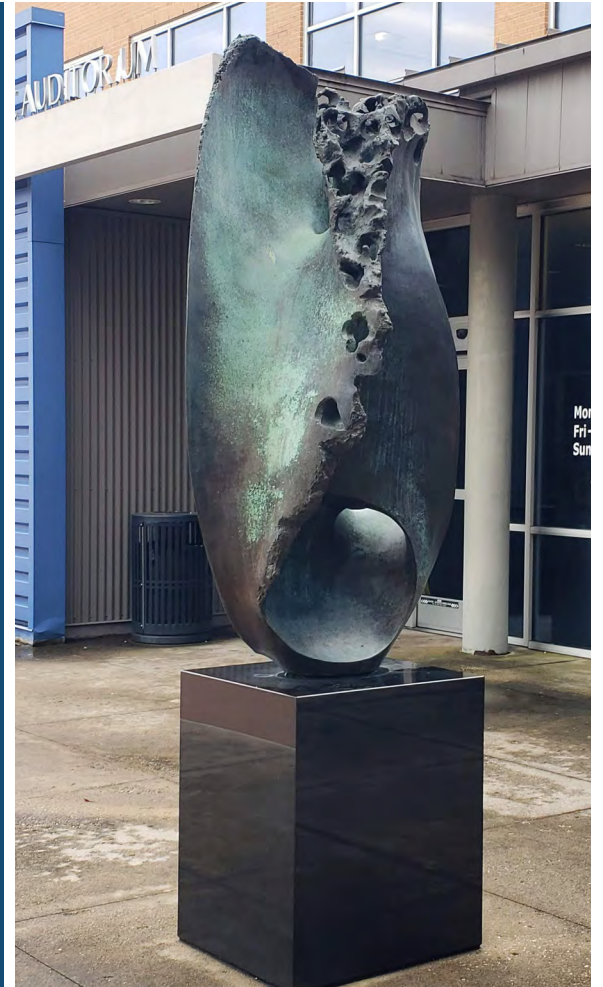
The vision includes:

- a downtown plaza that will allow community to come together for events such as festivals, concerts, markets and more;
- a linear park along Cottonwood Creek (for the purposes of this Plan, referred to as 'Cottonwood Creek Park') that will enable people to relax and enjoy nature and provide space for an art walk;
- locations for public art to be incorporated, including at the plaza and Cottonwood Creek Park;
- new development that could open doors to boutique stores, restaurants, creative uses like maker spaces; and
- housing opportunities that are consistent with existing property owner's rights.

This vision, once implemented, will revitalize the Heart of Allen by creating a place for community gatherings, rejuvenating an older part of Allen, increasing the number of small businesses, and bringing net economic growth to city.

02

Background





2.1.

History of Downtown Allen

We begin with a look at the history of Downtown Allen and direction from prior revitalization efforts and plans that provide direction.

For the purposes of the Downtown Revitalization Plan ("the Plan"), the study area includes the parcels within the Central Business District zoning district, shown in Figure 1.

The City of Allen has an interesting history. In 1874, the Houston & Texas Central Railway (H&TC) company laid the railroad track through Allen and constructed the Old Stone Dam on Cottonwood Creek (just north of Downtown Allen) to provide water for the steam locomotives stopping in Allen. In 1876, the original map of the "Town of Allen" was filed and the official name became "Allen", named for Ebenezer Allen, a former Attorney General of Texas and promoter of the H&TC railroad. Two years later (1878), Sam Bass and gang committed the first train robbery in Texas while the train stopped for water at the Old Stone Dam location. Much of the downtown area was originally owned by the railroad and ownership transferred or sold to local businesses as Allen began to grow.

Two of Allen's historical landmark properties arrived when the Odd Fellows Lodge established the Allen

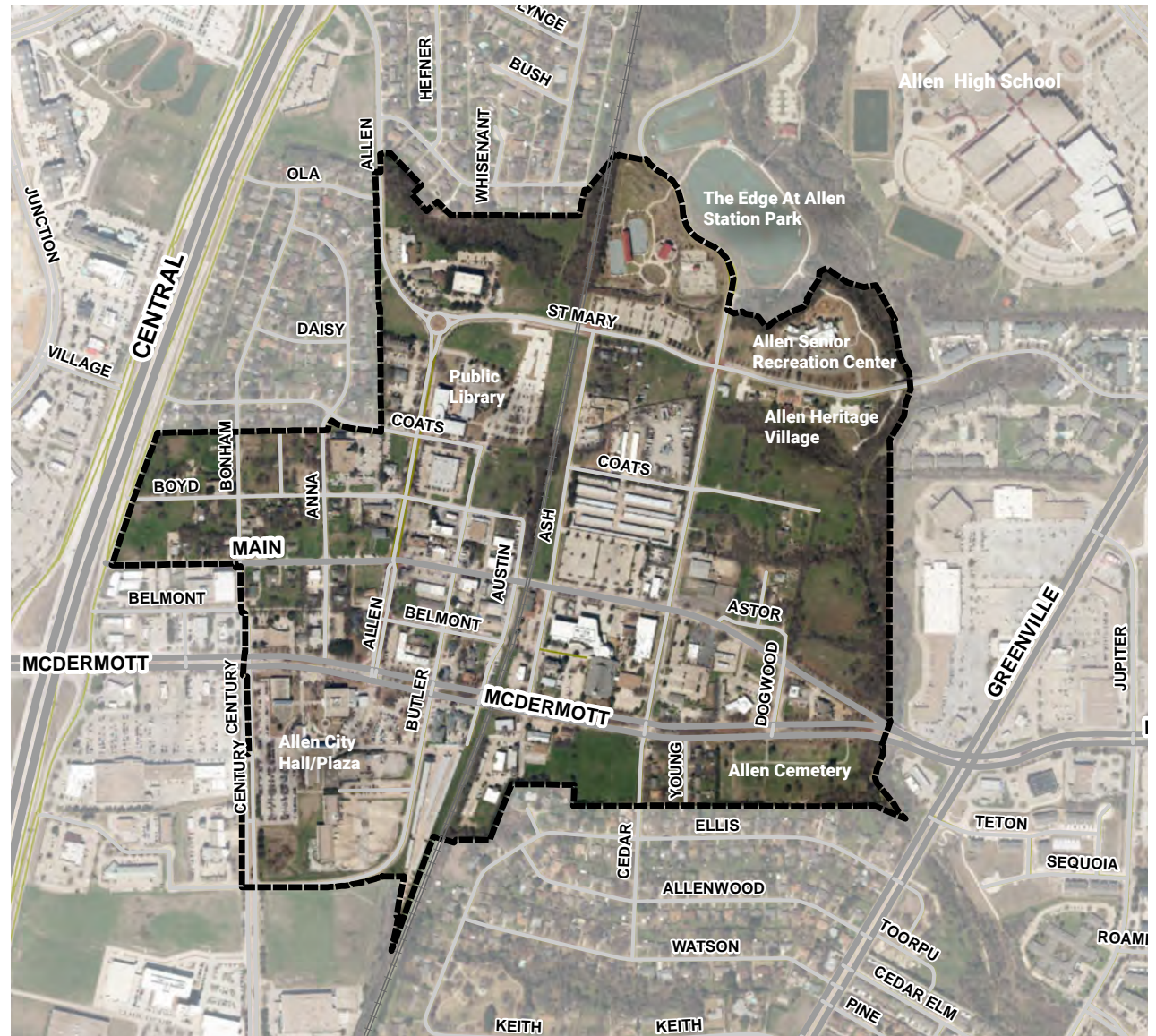


Figure 1: Downtown Revitalization Plan Study Area



Cemetery (1884) and the Northern Texas Traction Company built the "Interurban" electric railway from Denison to Dallas (1908). The original depot built in 1913 still exists as a historical building on south Butler Dr. in the downtown area. In 1910 a two-story red brick school building was built at the corner of Belmont and Cedar on land donated by the Houston & Texas Central railroad.

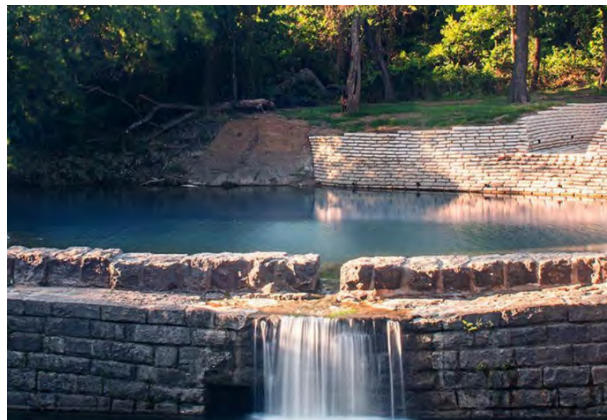


Tragedy struck in 1915 when a major fire destroyed much of Downtown Allen. While some rebuilding occurred, vacant areas remained until Allen began to grow when U.S. Highway 75 was built in the 1960s. Allen was incorporated in 1953 with a population totaling 400 citizens. With the exception of the demolition of the old



schoolhouse and adjoining wooden gymnasium, Downtown Allen has remained largely unchanged since the early 1970s. Ownership and occupancies have changed periodically, but the general face and feel of downtown has not.

It is hoped that the information provided in this report will be of assistance as a new vision for downtown Allen is formed!



2.2.

Calls to Action

The City has been thinking about revitalizing Downtown Allen for many years. There are several documents that point the way.

Central Business District (CBD) Zoning – Allen Land Development Code

The code that governs all development activities in the city specifically calls out the need to revitalize the downtown. The intent of the Central Business District zoning district states:

“

Purpose. The central business district is the oldest urban area within the city and has played an important role in serving the city as a unique neighborhood containing local businesses, churches or other religious facilities, and housing. Existing development in the central business district has aged, experienced some deterioration, and, as a result, needs revitalization and redevelopment. The central business zoning district has been designed to aid in revitalization and redevelopment that is compatible with and which will serve to preserve the character of the central business district and enhance the city.

City of Allen Strategic Plan 2036 (updated February 2022)

The City of Allen Strategic Plan 2036, issued in 2021, includes the following objective:

“Develop Allen Downtown as a major community and regional destination that has a “unique” draw that is distinctive from other regional downtowns.”

Creating this Revitalization Plan and the Library Expansion Project are identified as high priorities. The Plan also identifies successful community events and festivals celebrating diverse cultures as an objective.

Allen 2030 Comprehensive Plan (adopted 2014)

Allen 2030 Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2014, discusses the downtown in several places. Relevant ideas from the Plan include:

- *Promote the redevelopment of the CBD into an urban mixed-use area that preserves the historic character of the community.*
- *Street trees, street lights, signage, and public seating are located along the street.*
- *Residential uses can be located above the first floor commercial or office uses.*

- *Uses such as restaurants and cafes are encouraged to include outdoor space.*
- *Civic space, such as a plaza or park, provides community event space.*
- *Provide pedestrian-oriented design.*
- *Shared parking is encouraged.*

Primary uses of this zone are for commercial, entertainment, employment, public institutional, and high-density residential. Secondary uses of this zone are parks, civic plaza, and trails.

1998 Comprehensive Plan

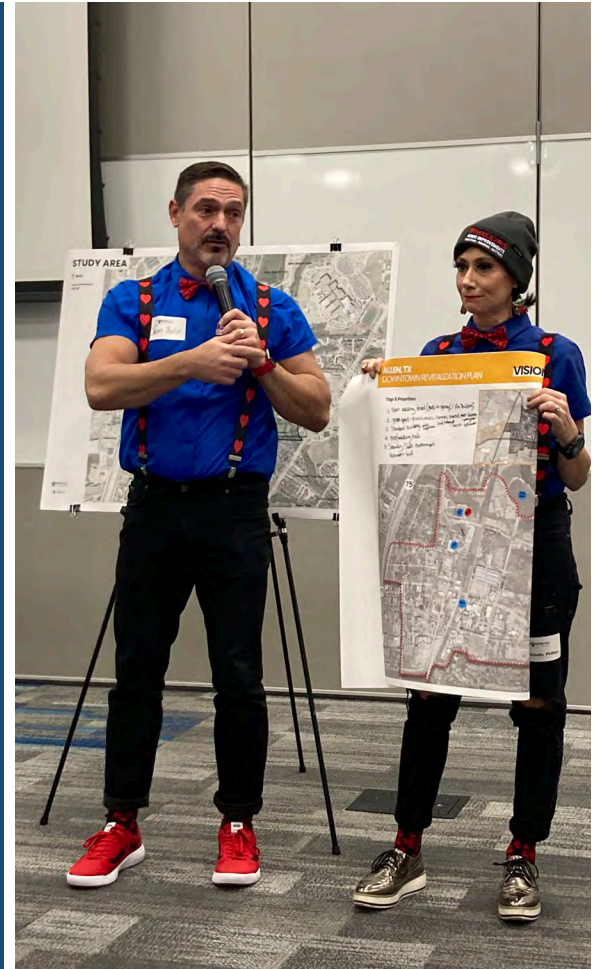
The 1998 Comprehensive Plan included several goals focused on redeveloping the CBD for low- and medium-density uses, including office, retail, restaurants, service and employment uses, and high-density residential uses. Class XI of Leadership Allen identified the redevelopment of the CBD as their class project. The project was undertaken as a volunteer project under the auspices of the Allen Chamber of Commerce. As a result of the Leadership Allen efforts, the City Council amended the City's 1998 Comprehensive Plan to incorporate the class' final product, The City of Allen CBD Redevelopment.

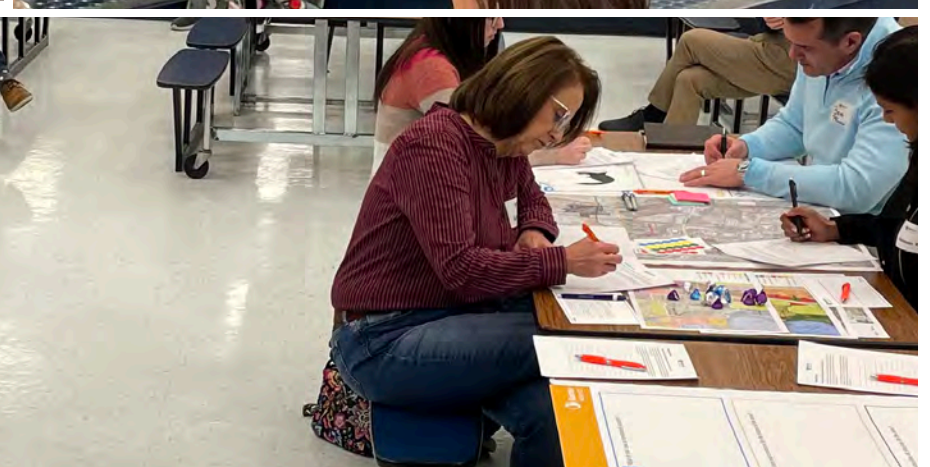
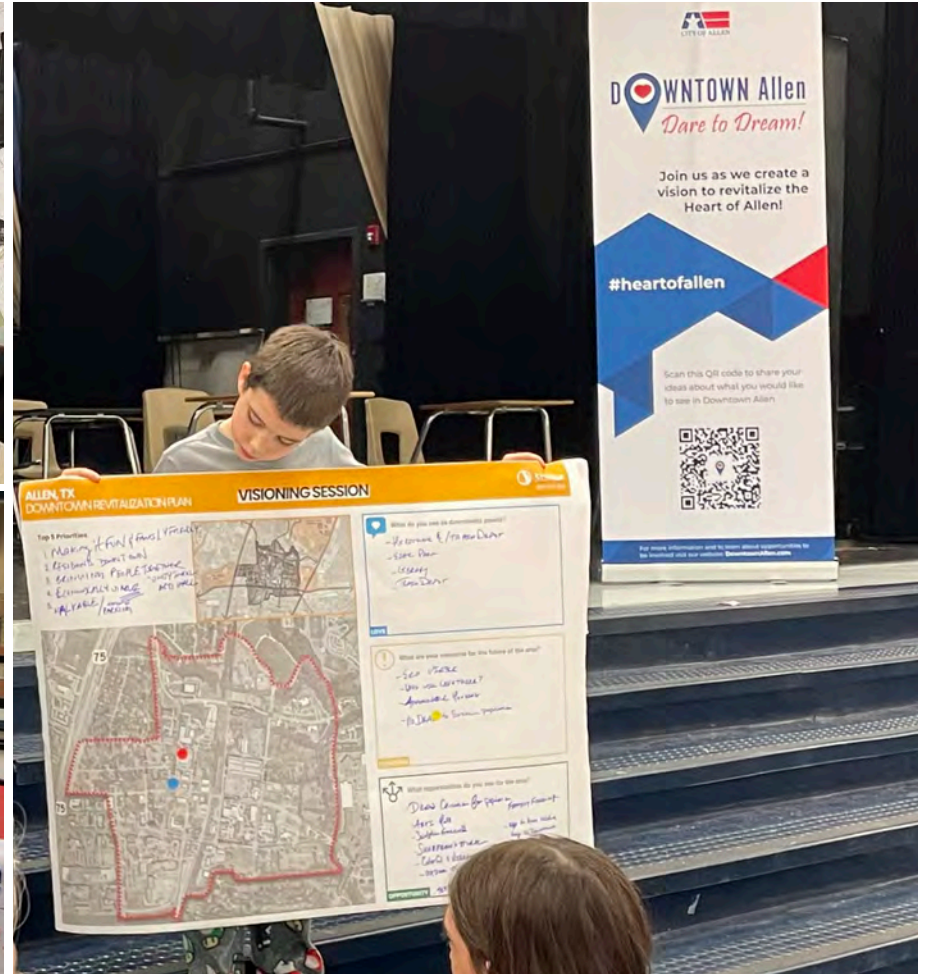


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03

Dare to Dream





03.

Dare to Dream Effort

The Downtown Allen Revitalization Plan is, above all else, a community-driven effort to create a unique vision and action plan for the downtown. This chapter provides an overview of that process and a summary of results that inform the rest of the plan. Complete community engagement results can be found in Appendix A.

3.1.

The Process

In June 2021, the Allen City Council approved the appointment of a citizen-led Downtown Steering Committee (DSC). The DSC was formed to develop a vision for the future development of Downtown Allen. The mission of the DSC is to seek to learn and understand the desires of the Allen community and collaborate as one team to develop a vision that will revitalize the Heart of Allen.

The consulting team (Stantec) and the DSC engaged the community in the three following areas of focus:

- 1 Held multiple community engagement workshops, downtown business workshops, and one-on-one meetings with key property owner and business owner stakeholders to receive input about their desires for the future of Downtown Allen. Additionally, Stantec used its community engagement software on the city's website, <https://www.downtownallen.com/>, to provide regular updates about the process and gather additional community input through an online survey and idea board.
- 2 Took the data gathered from the initial workshops and engaged with the community during the Design Weekend to have open dialogue about future development. This was followed by multiple in-person and online feedback sessions to review three potential scenarios created as a result of Design Weekend.
- 3 Combined the data gathered in the community engagements and created a final work product, including the preferred scenario and specific recommendations for implementation. The implementation plan includes public parking, roadways, pedestrian pathways, trails and park amenities, design standards, and suggested zoning changes.



The DSC and consulting team together undertook an ambitious community engagement effort to hear from as wide a cross-section of community members as possible. The engagement process included:

Website engagement

- 6,631 Unique visitors made 9,113 site visits
- There were 27,177 pageviews – an average of 2.97 pages per visit

DSC Community Engagement

- Info cards with QR codes distributed at three community events
- Presentations to over 80 people at Rotary Clubs, Kiwanis Club, Allen Heritage Guild and VFW as well as Rolling Hills Park Community Engagement (average of 2.97 pages per visit)

Interviews with individual business and property owners - 15

Online survey - 839 responses

- Idea Board – 133 ideas and comments
- Scenario Feedback – 115 responses

Visioning Sessions – 8 sessions with 170 total attendees

Lunchtime engagement of high school students - 350 participants

Design Weekend – 150 participants

Scenario Feedback Sessions – 3 sessions with 70 attendees

Downtown Business Workshops – 40 participants

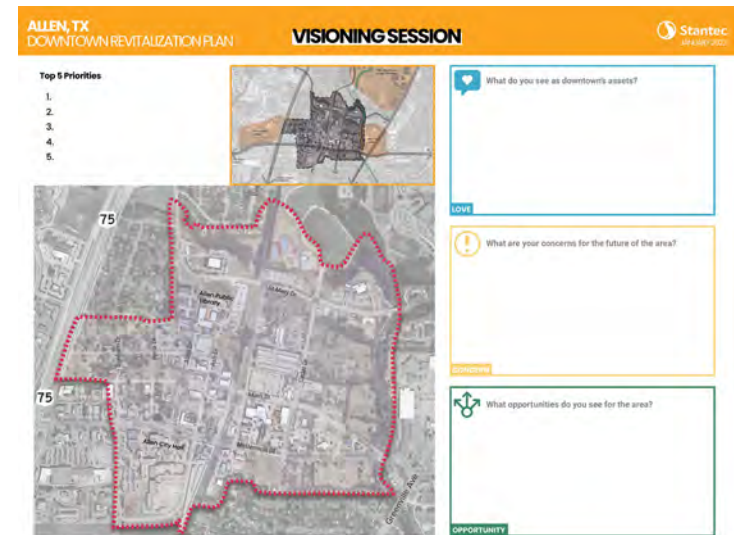


Figure 1: Map activity used at in-person visioning sessions and an online survey



Figure 2: Participants in the block exercise

As shown in the Visioning Session exercise above, community members participating in visioning sessions had the ability to identify Downtown Allen's assets, concerns they have for the future of the area, opportunities for the area, and Top 5 priorities. Comments, feedback, and ideas from these engagement events are summarized in subsequent sections.

3.2.

Downtown Today

During the visioning process, several common themes emerged from the public as they described assets, challenges and opportunities in Downtown Allen:

- The charming, historic character is a distinguishing factor
- Assets include the Allen Public Library, Heritage Village, train depot, Allen Senior Recreation Center, and nearby green spaces. However, these assets are not connected. The downtown is not seen as walkable.
- Right now, most people visit the library as the primary reason to go downtown.
- People love and support the existing small businesses in the downtown. However, most existing downtown businesses offer services as opposed to dining or retail, which are top priorities to the community.

Smaller meetings were with city staff. Their thoughts around downtown as it exists today were:

- Lack of vehicular traffic downtown is a benefit in that it is easy to close streets for events.
- Events right now work well in terms of streets and parking.
- Downtown Allen should capitalize on the



Figure 3: Downtown Allen's Assets

authenticity of its historic downtown.







- One of the reasons Downtown Allen is attractive right now is that it's quiet.
- Downtown Allen is safe, from a police standpoint, right now because there is not much there.
- Downtown Allen is a blank slate.
- Prior investments in Allen Dr. and St. Mary Dr. should be repeated to create harmony across Downtown Allen.



3.3.

Visioning Process

The vision and goals for Downtown Allen are based on over 1,000 pieces of community input. In summary, the community told us:

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| Improve mobility  | Create safe linkages for pedestrians and bicycles into and around Downtown and off-street trail to support an active, healthy life style for residents. | Build a supportive environment for local businesses to thrive  | Support the growth of local businesses to grow the tax base, promote job creation, and increase residents' access to a diverse range of desirable goods and services. |
| Develop entertaining activities and places for all group ages  | Create an inviting vibrant place with variety of destinations and activities including, shopping, dining, bars, coffee shops, art galleries, community gardens, maker spaces, outdoor gathering spaces, venues, and dog parks. | Encourage mixed-use development  | Transform Downtown into a place that brings residents, tenants and visitors to live, work, shop and play |
| Preserve and expansion of historic character  | Uncover, celebrate and preserve Downtown's heritage to maintain its unique identity and ensure that new growth does not ignore history (i.e., Dare to Remember) | Increase parks, open spaces, and trail network  | Increase recreational amenities and gathering opportunities by adding parks, open space, and greenways that will improve air and water quality, promote connectivity, create shade, and add beauty Downtown |

One theme that we heard throughout the various opportunities for public engagement (from visioning to scenario feedback) is that most of the community supports housing in Downtown Allen. However, several community members expressed significant concern about high-density development adjacent to existing single-family neighborhoods. The fact that the current Allen Land Development Code does not include setbacks for high-density development exacerbated that concern. This plan includes a recommendation that, if implemented, would address this issue.

6-Word Story Exercise

A group of students are gathered around a table covered with a red cloth. The table has a banner that reads "All in" and "City of Wrexham". There are various items on the table, including water bottles, a box, and some papers. The students are looking at the items on the table. The background shows a large glass window and a brick wall.



3.3.2.

Online Survey

During the visioning phase, over 800 stakeholders responded to an online survey asking about likes, dislikes, reasons for visiting, challenges, and opportunities. A summary of the results is included in Figure 6.

3.3.3.

Landowner and Developer Meetings

Smaller meetings and interviews were held with key property owners and businesses downtown. Their thoughts around downtown as it exists today were:

- Preserving the historic integrity of the downtown is important.
- Infrastructure, including sidewalks, need to be improved.
- Existing regulations, like parking minimums, inhibit new businesses.
- The fact that there is little traffic downtown means there are opportunities for creating more walkability and space for events.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funds should be used in part for small projects that can support the whole of downtown.

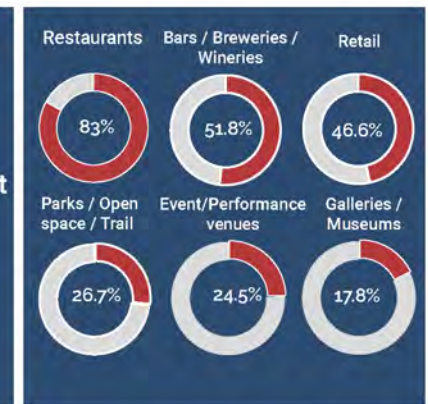
Top three reasons for visiting Downtown:



I love Downtown because:



Amenities that I would add:



I dislike Downtown because:



Top challenges facing Downtown:



Top opportunities:



Figure 6: Online Survey Results

These stakeholders also provided thoughts and ideas for the **future** of downtown. The following is a summary of those comments:

- Need to create a "personality" for downtown, and a clear definition of where and what it is
- Connect the bits and pieces that are assets together, such as the Library, Senior Center, Skate Park, Train Station, Heritage Village
- Main street is the heart of downtown

- Vacant, undeveloped land and large parking lots take away from the feel of downtown
- Parking requirements are a big issue for businesses looking to locate downtown. Right now the ordinance requires one space per 200 sf. of commercial area. Small businesses cannot meet those requirements.
- The City needs to take better care of downtown infrastructure
- Speed on Main Street is a problem; strategies to reduce speed to create a welcoming environment for gathering are needed.
- Needs a cool open space and better public realm with attractive features, better streetscape
- Significant community pushback on development creates the perception that the city does not want redevelopment

3.3.4.

Map Exercise

Both online and in-person at a series of visioning sessions, participants were asked to identify assets, concerns, and opportunities for the downtown. They were also asked about their Top 5 priorities. Figure 7 depicts a summary of those results.

TOP 5 PRIORITIES:

- 1** Improve safe mobility-walk/ bike/public transit
- 2** Develop entertaining activities and places for all group ages where people want to GO
- 3** Preserve and expansion of historic character
- 4** Build a supportive environment for local businesses to thrive
- 5** Encourage mixed-use development but no high-rises



What do you see as downtown's assets?

- + **Library**
- + **Green Spaces like Skate Park**
- + **Train Depot**
- + **Street Structure+Character of one block of Main st.**
- + **Church**
- + **Heritage Village**
- + **Existing Historic Character+Spaces**
- + **Senior Center**
- + **Easy Access (Proximity to 75)**
- + **Public Buildings (Police and Fire Dept, City hall)**
- + **Trails**
- + **Individually owned restaurants/ small businesses**
- + **Birthing Center**
- + **Existing Businesses**
- + **Allen Café**
- + **Professional offices (Medical/Dental, banks), Local Arts, Christmas Parade/Event, Rodenbaugh, Room to Grow, Proximity to all education facilities, Advantage of international/ cultural composition of population, Public art, Family-oriented community, Small-town feel, Scenic creeks**

LOVE

Figure 7: Visioning Exercise Results



What are your concerns for the future of the area?

- + **Parking**
- + **Having the right mix** (Downtown Residential, Affordable housing? Who will live there? How current residents and businesses will be respected? Balance between residential and commercial, A lot of apartments are too close to single-family, Don't want another massive shopping center)
- + **Accessibility (pedestrians, cars, bikes)**
- + **Noise (ex: Impact of nightlife on the surrounding areas)**
- + **Traffic**
- + **A homogeneous whole/Look, Cohesiveness of area**
- + **Safety**
- + **Quality of businesses (Not too many bars)**
- + **Small businesses affordability**
- + **No draw to sustain the population**
- + **Overgrown rundown properties**
- + **Economic viability**
- + **Historical Preservation**
- + **Getting Started- defining a smaller area**
- + **Assets are not connected, Loss of revenue and growth, Space/building setbacks, So many different landowners, Church as a large landowner, Current developer owned properties, Pedestrian amenities, Older home that need some love, Citizen resistance to multi-family, Design standards to maintain character, Downtown closes at 5 pm, Zoning challenges, Car repair businesses**

CONCERN



What opportunities do you see for the area?

- + **Open/Outdoor Spaces** (Town Square, Plaza)
- + **Art hall/Art cultural center**
- + **Improved walkability/Bikeability**
- + **Connect all the trails/Access to trails**
- + **Have residents living in downtown** (high-end residential/Housing above businesses/2,3 story rooftop access for restaurants & bars, Mixed-use east of Allen)
- + **Multimodal transit** (Put old train track to use, Central trolley around DT, Free shuttle bus, Transit opportunities like Rubber-tired)
- + **More small local businesses**
- + **Community gardens**
- + **More unique dining not chain**
- + **Family-Friendly destination spot for day and night/for everyone**
- + **Improve accessibility/mobility**
- + **History preservation** (Build on historic properties (reconfigure old fire station as an art-makers space), Expansion of historic part, History center)
- + **Add variety to existing athletic facilities for all ages, splash pad, climbing structure**
- + **Creating a central green space or outdoor event area (possibly on site of the old post office or / by the train depot)**
- + **Farmers Market**
- + **Colorful/vibrant, Texas live vibe downtown, Fun architecture, Use of alleyways for pedestrian/businesses, Reflect newer areas, Uniformity of look, Bed & Breakfast (including heritage village), Food trucks, Single family housing, Affordable rent for local businesses, Events, Moody gardens, Grant money HUD for home improvement, Tax credit volunteerism, Train as an attraction for kids or for general transportation, Museum, Connecting assets, Variety in housing, Shared parking, Sculpture Garden, Art walk, Change zoning to support food trucks, Partner with churches, International festivals, Trolley, Common Space (we work)**

OPPORTUNITY

3.4.

Design Weekend

During Design Weekend, the community provided more specific input on what the principles and ideas expressed during visioning should look like on the ground.

During the three-day Design Weekend, in-person events were centered around what people would like to see in the downtown. The first activity involved using Lego bricks and a large aerial map of the downtown to show where different types of development, trails, and open space should go.

The results of this exercise varied widely in terms of the amount of development and redevelopment in the study area. Common themes included:

- All maps included community spaces and buildings, mainly along Allen Dr. and Main St.
- Parks and trails were a priority along Cottonwood Creek
- Many ideas expressed for pedestrian areas and connections throughout the downtown
- New commercial or mixed-use development along Main St. near Allen Dr.
- New residential development, if shown, was favored to be located on the east side of Downtown Allen
- Interest in potential redevelopment of the Cottonwood Creek Village site (outside of the Downtown Allen study area)

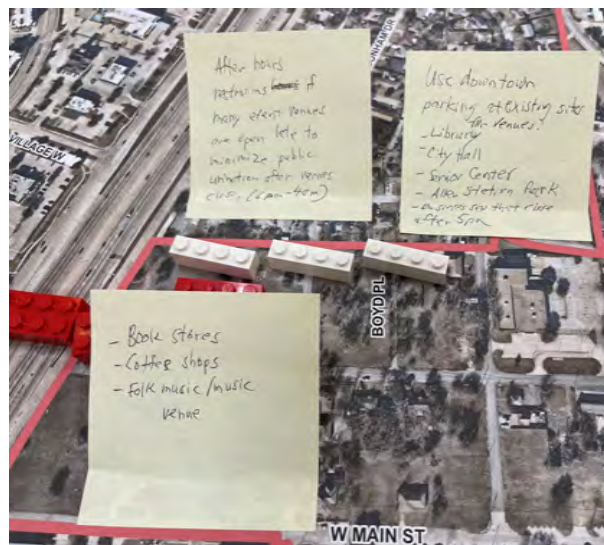


Figure 8: Sample results from Design Weekend table map exercise

Community members also provided feedback on how different elements of the downtown should look and feel as well as things they would like to see in a gathering space downtown via a visual preference exercise. Ideas that garnered significant support included:

- Pedestrian countdown signs and refuge islands in the middle of the street to help with safe crossings.
- Bike lanes and bike racks
- Plazas with outdoor seating
- Greenways
- 2-3-story mixed use development with an historic feel
- Outdoor dining opportunities



Figure 9: Participants in the visual preference exercise



3.5.

Scenario Feedback

3.5.1.

Community Feedback

Based on the Design Weekend Results, three potential future scenarios were developed to show how the downtown could change. These three scenarios are shown in their entirety in Appendix B. The scenarios differed in the intensity of development (both mixed-use and residential), location of the central gathering space, height of buildings, and design of parks space.

One hundred and sixteen surveys about the scenarios were returned. Complete results are located in Appendix A.

Generally, they showed:



Likes (plurality of responses were positive)

- Creation of a “central park” and linear trail along Cottonwood Creek
- Community gathering space on Allen Dr. between Main St. and McDermott Dr.
- Shared parking garage near the center of downtown
- Infill mixed-use spaces for small businesses

- Living opportunities above businesses
- 2-story development within the downtown core area
- Realignment of Main Street so that there is an ingress and egress to downtown from Greenville Ave.
- Infill development north along Allen Drive



Dislikes (plurality of responses were negative)

- Large residential developments, especially adjacent to existing single-family neighborhoods
- 3-4 story Main Street development
- Residential development south of McDermott Dr.

3.5.2.

City Council Feedback

A work session with City Council was also held to gain feedback on the development scenarios in much the same way the public was asked for feedback. Their feedback on various elements of the scenarios is summarized below.

Community Plaza

- Want a large space for the plaza
- Need to be careful about having an active gathering space near residential neighborhoods
- The downtown needs a community arts center, but unsure as to whether it needs to be in the plaza or in another central location.
- Utilizes spaces that the city and/or Economic Development Corporation (EDC) already own

Height

- General consensus that a core area centered on the Main/Allen intersection should be two stories in height.
- Taller buildings would be potentially acceptable in other areas of the downtown
- With anything taller than two stories, transition requirements are needed to make sure there are appropriate buffers, landscaping, and height transitions to residential neighborhoods

Residential

- Concern expressed about the density/ intensity of residential development in Downtown Allen, even with the densities currently allowed by zoning.

Parking

- Support for redeveloping some parking lots for shared public parking
- Utilize existing public parking at City Hall, Library and Senior Recreation Center
- Support for the idea of shuttle service to/from downtown events

Open space

- Support for a large, linear park along Cottonwood Creek
- Desire for mixed use buildings that include

Other

- Include guidance on how buildings should be designed
- Want a look and feel that builds on historic assets; consistent design of the buildings and the streetscape
- Ensure that road capacity can handle the additional traffic of all the proposed new development
- Support for emphasis on programming of the public spaces
- Support for redevelopment in general, as long as the timing of that redevelopment is up to the land owners.
- Support for extending Main St. across Cottonwood Creek through to Greenville Ave.



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04

Allen Community's Vision





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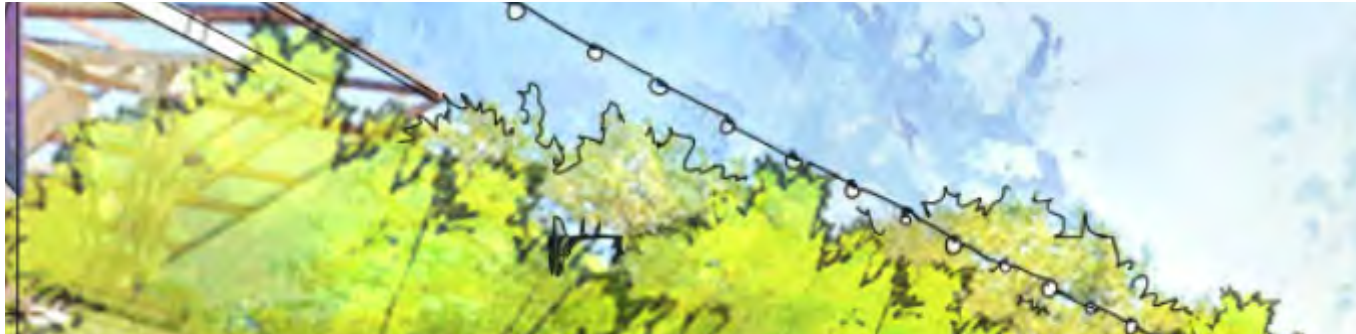
Allen's Community Vision

Here, we present the vision for the future of Downtown Allen. It begins with a unique community-based vision statement and specific goals to back up that vision. Moving from general to more specific, we present an overall land use framework, a development concept, recommendations on specific elements of the concept, phasing and fiscal analysis.

4.1.

Vision Statement

The vision statement at right was developed by Stantec based on the results of community visioning sessions and surveys. The community had an opportunity to review and provide more input on the vision and goals during Design Weekend in March, 2022.



Downtown Allen is the heart of the city. It is the cultural and recreational hub, with a unique identity built on historic heritage and community assets like the library. Downtown provides unique destinations for eating, shopping, events, entertainment and living. It is accessible for people of all ages and abilities.





1. Downtown residents and the community as a whole support small, unique businesses that make Downtown Allen a special place to eat and shop.

2. Downtown Allen is safe, walkable, bikeable, and accessible by transit. Residents and visitors can visit destinations and open spaces via a connected network of sidewalks and trails.

- a. Create a network of sidewalks and trails that connect downtown business and event spaces with nearby trails and open spaces.
- b. Design streets and streetscapes with both the car and the pedestrian in mind. School lots.

3. Downtown Allen is a hub for events and entertainment that brings the diverse community together. Activated streets and places to gather create a place to visit and stay.

- a. Create indoor and outdoor venues for arts and entertainment.
- b. Increase number of community-based programming opportunities.
- c. Provide effective parking for larger events or transit to remote nearby parking such as City Hall or High School lots

4. The historic character is preserved, forming the basis of a unique identity for Downtown Allen.

- a. Develop design standards that complement the historic core of the downtown.

5. Opportunities for a wide variety of housing options in the Downtown are designed and located sensitively to surrounding neighborhoods.

- a. Develop design standards to ensure that require appropriate transitions between new development and existing neighborhoods.

GOALS
4.2.

The land use and development concepts for future revitalization of the downtown area build upon these vision and goals, as well as community input on three draft scenarios (included in Appendix B). The land use framework depicts the general areas most appropriate for various land uses. The development concept includes a high-level overview of the entire Downtown Allen (which includes the initial CBD study area and a few adjacent parcels that the community identified as being a part of a revitalized downtown) and ground-level sketches to show what key areas would look and feel like.

4.3.

Land Use Framework

Listening to the input from community members (including business and property owners), the basic land use plan shown in Figure 2 was created. The land use framework represents desired future uses. It goes one step deeper than the city's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning maps to provide recommendations on the location of specific uses based on the existing context and community input. It also serves as a basis for a conversation about future policy or zoning changes that the City may wish to contemplate.

Downtown Subdistricts

Throughout this chapter we will refer to three areas of the downtown:

- 1. Downtown Core: shown in Figure 2, this is the core area where existing historic storefronts exist*
- 2. West Downtown: the area bounded by Main St., Anna Dr., the southern boundary of the Whisenant Estates neighborhood, and US 75.*
- 3. East Downtown: the area bounded by Main St., Cedar Dr., St. Mary's Dr. and Greenville Ave.*

Uses shown in some cases reflect what exists today (i.e., many of the community uses), uses for specific redevelopment areas (e.g., residential, commercial and mixed use) and areas where no specific future use is

recommended, other than what is permitted in the current CBD zoning district (i.e., potential future redevelopment). Note that any use that is permitted in the CBD district at the time a developer or property owner files an application can occur on any site.

- **Core Mixed Use:** Core Mixed Use is a unique 4-block area that forms the heart of the downtown. It will include mixed use, with active street levels and living opportunities above businesses. A new zoning sub-district may be created here.
- **Mixed Use:** Mixed Use is located at the northwest corner of Allen and Main, along Cottonwood Creek and in other potential future redevelopment areas. Mixed Use areas include:
 - active street level uses (such as restaurants, cafes, bars, outdoor seating)
 - possible living space, offices or innovative spaces on upper floors
 - on sites off of Main St. and Allen Dr., possible redevelopment as commercial and/or office space
- **Community spaces:**
 - Civic and institutional uses (library, City Hall, Old Post Office site¹)
 - Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces (Senior Recreation Center, The Edge Skate Park, Hydrous Wake Park, Downtown Allen

In response to very positive community feedback, a large "Cottonwood Creek Park" is included on both the Land use Framework and the Development Concept. It is described in more detail throughout this chapter.

Community Plaza, Cottonwood Creek Park)

- **Commercial:** along US-75, Allen Drive between Boyd and Coats, along Greenville Road. Spaces best suited for pure commercial/non-residential development
- **Bike/pedestrian connections:** Allen Drive, Main Street, St. Mary Drive, Cottonwood Creek and Ash. St. High priority areas for well-designed, safe bike and pedestrian connections, especially to the existing city trail system. Refer to chapter 5 for more details.



Figure 1: Example of Downtown uses

¹The Old Post Office site was acquired by the Allen Economic Development Corporation. It is identified as a potential cultural arts center in case the proposed community plaza is not large enough for a cultural arts center or the City/EDC do not acquire additional property for that purpose.

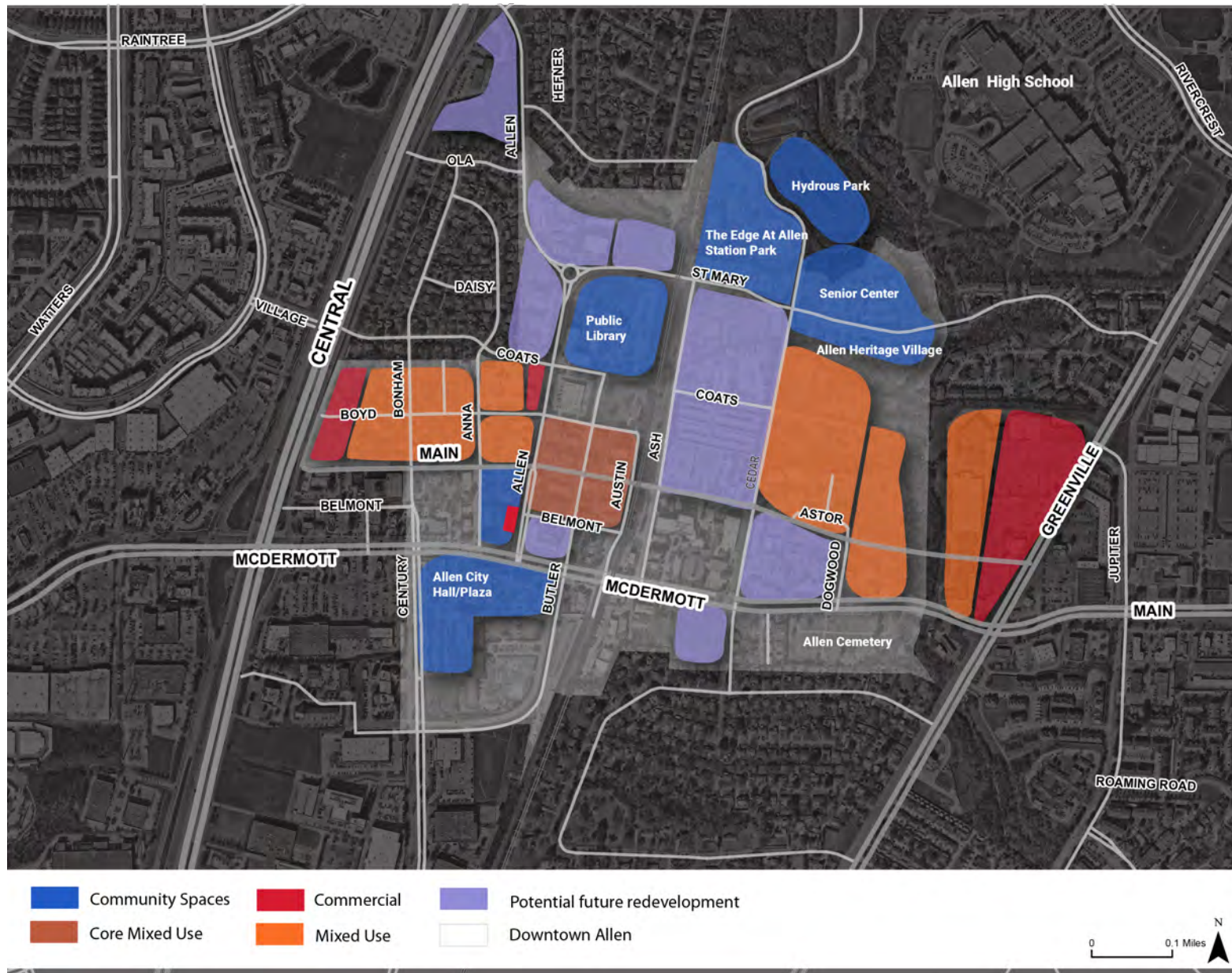


Figure 2: Downtown Land Use Framework

4.4.

Future Development Concept

The future development concept presented here is a hybrid of the three scenarios that were developed following the input from Design Weekend. Responding to the scenario feedback we received, this concept reflects what we heard, balanced with economic realities and private development rights.

A few important notes:

- Any redevelopment of private property is dependent upon the property owners wanting to redevelop. The DSC is not recommending the use of eminent domain authorities to achieve the community's vision.
- The market will dictate the timing of any new development or redevelopment.
- The concept generally follows the following four decision rules:
 - There are no modifications reflected for any property owner who explicitly requested that we not depict changes to their property.
 - There are no public spaces depicted for what is now on existing private property. However, a property owner(s) and the City could enter into an agreement whereby the City acquires the land for subsequent public use.
- Houses with historic and/or Allen heritage value on private property were retained (see 'Historic and Heritage Design Features' section below for additional discussion on these houses).
- All other depictions balanced property owners' existing rights with ideas and suggestions from the community.
- In some instances, in an effort to depict a broader concept, we were unable to depict that a smaller adjacent property(ies) as separately owned. However, we acknowledge the property rights of individual owners.
- Many of the recommendations (in both the land use framework and development concept) require changes to the Allen Land Development Code (ALDC) to implement. Unless and until the ALDC is amended, any development may occur in the downtown that is consistent with the current ALDC.
- Buildings on the figure are conceptual only and do not reflect any specific site plans that may be proposed based on ALDC regulations in effect at the time of the proposal.
- Unless specified otherwise, all sites are assumed to include on-site parking sufficient to serve the uses planned there. More specifics on parking are provided in the Mobility Chapter.
- The DSC recognizes that while this plan presents a good-faith representation of future development based upon information collected and community engagement, specifics for each parcel of land and/or development may change during the Implementation Phase. It is assumed that redevelopment will not take place unless the property owner is willing to undertake this effort.



Figure3: Downtown Allen Future Development Concept

4.4.1.

Historic and Allen Heritage Design Features

The concept builds on important historic features in the downtown to create a consistent look and feel for the downtown. The concept specifically includes 2-story mixed use redevelopment and infill in the downtown core area (bounded by Allen Dr., Boyd Dr., Austin Dr. and Belmont Dr.), consistent with the form and massing of existing buildings along Main between Butler and Austin. Some on-street parking is also assumed. We recommend creating a Downtown Core subdistrict (shown in figure 5) that restricts heights to 2-stories.

We continue to transition from the historic main street by stepping-up to 3-story mixed use buildings on the west side of Allen Dr. between Boyd Dr. and Main St. Currently, the zoning code allows for 4-story buildings throughout the downtown (via a floor-area-ratio maximum of 4.0).

There are several structures that are either historic or reflect Allen's heritage that are in the middle of some key redevelopment sites. Given the community's overall appreciation for its heritage and structures that reflect the City's history, the City should decide whether there is value in the long-term preservation of these structures. If so, the City should work with the property owners on developing a strategy to achieve this goal. Options include, but are not limited to:

- Designating them as historic structures and designing redevelopment around them
- Incorporating them into redevelopment plans
- Discussing options for improvements to these

properties identified as having historic value to the community

- Providing funding for moving the structures to another area of downtown.

One goal of the revitalized downtown is to create a Downtown Core with consistent design standards and height restrictions to maintain a historic feel and create inviting space. Recent development proposals and feedback received during the planning process have demonstrated a need to revise the design standards within the ALDC that are used by the Design Review Committee when evaluating new downtown developments. Recommendations include:

- Create clearer design requirements for new buildings, including:
 - o Generally, include discrete requirements, rather than relying on similar structures or the surroundings. Existing structures or surrounding properties may not reflect the desired character of the new development.
 - o Define "traditional design elements" (rooflines, architectural features (e.g., parapets, cornices, lintels), transom windows, color)
 - o Create clear, quantifiable requirements for the placement of off-street parking (i.e. maximum 50% of a site's off-street parking can be located along the street frontage).
 - o Include requirements for how often a façade must be broken up (e.g. every 100 ft.).
 - o Articulate requirements for texture, pattern and scale in terms that do not rely on

predominant existing materials.

- o Provide reference images or illustrations to further clarify requirements.
- Create a map of sites designated as "historic" by the Design Review Committee. These sites could be used as examples of the character desired in new developments. Standards for re-use or preservation of these buildings could also be adopted.

In addition to design standards for new buildings, the City should consider creating a façade or building improvement grant fund so that owners of existing buildings can make improvements to their buildings, storefronts and sidewalk spaces that coincide with infill and redevelopment on other properties.

More detailed recommendations related to the design of the public realm (streets, sidewalks and public spaces) as well as new private developments are included in the Urban Design chapter of this plan.



Figure 4 Existing buildings along Main Street in Downtown Core

4.4.2.

Community Plaza and Civic Space

The piece of the development concept that will get people most excited about downtown is the Community Plaza – the gathering place for events, recreating and relaxing. The proposed Community Plaza is located on the west side of Allen Dr. between Main St. and McDermott Dr². It will serve as the heart of the downtown, a place for the community to celebrate all that is unique to Allen.

- Space for public investment and programming to provide a spark for revitalizing downtown
- Approximately 2.6 acres³
- Area for outdoor play (may include water activities, play structure, lawn space)
- Performance and event space
- Seating areas
- Requires public and/or shared parking off-site

The property is currently owned by the City and EDC and is located right in the heart of Downtown Allen. The community provided significant support for this space (and were the catalyst for the idea) throughout the process. During the visual preference survey, all the ideas for the space received more votes than any other question asked.

One of the parcels of land on that site includes the



Figure 5: Rendering of Allen Dr./Main St. intersection with view into new Community Plaza

historic fire station that is owned by the EDC. The EDC may explore opportunities to leverage part of that structure (e.g., fire station bays) to partner with a private entity that could add a food, beverage, and programming component to the plaza. A couple of ideas for how the space might look are shown in Figures 6 and 7. This area could incorporate multiple elements requested by the community, including elements that embrace Allen's heritage, a cultural center, outdoor

gathering spaces, and outdoor performance venues.

If the City Council wants to move forward with this location for the Community Plaza, the City and EDC, in consultation with the Parks and Recreation Board and Community Development Corporation, should begin the process of designing this space while the regulatory changes are being made to support private development.

2-This site was one of three locations identified for a community gathering space during Design Weekend. However, we recognize that the City may ultimately chose another location to accommodate the community's request for a large community plaza if the city or the EDC acquires additional land.

3- The proposed site of the plaza includes one building that is currently the location of the Allen Arts Alliance. This building could be included in the design for the plaza, or it could be moved to another vacant property in the downtown.



dept by: Doug Galletti (2/22/22)

Figure 6: Rendering of potential redevelopment of the fire engine house site as a community gathering and cultural center



Of course, the size of the Community Plaza will be a significant, if not the primary, factor in how many elements requested by the community can be incorporated into a single location.

The development concept also includes re-use of the Old Post Office building for a potential partnership. The public engagement reflected a desire to have an indoor

civic space that could be used for indoor performances, gallery(ies), meetings, classes, art activities, etc.

At the same time, recognizing that the EDC invested its resources in this property and that there it could provide economic benefits to the City, the City and EDC may want to explore opportunities where they could partner with private entity(ies) (such as a restaurant, wine bar, brewery) that would want to take advantage of the

location and foot traffic associated with those wanting to enjoy arts in Downtown Allen. Otherwise, the City may need to address the need desire for a community arts center elsewhere.

4.4.3.

Streetscape

One of the most important items the community identified in their vision for the downtown is a consistent design look and feel. Design standards for private developments contribute to this, but it is equally important to create a consistent design in the public realm.

The City should prioritize investments in lighting and street furniture to create more inviting spaces for people to gather and stroll. These types of public investments catalyze property owners to invest in their own facades and outdoor spaces. The DSC (or another subcommittee) can build upon the research and photo catalogues already completed on 18 comparable downtowns (Appendix C) to create standards for:

- Benches
- Lighting
- Signage / wayfinding
- Trash and recycling receptacles
- Landscaping

A visual preference survey utilizing the photos gathered by the DSC can give the community a chance to weigh in on the detailed look of the public realm in downtown.



Figure 7: Examples of an active streetscape with both public and private space



Figure 8: Example of Large park space and trail along Cottonwood Creek;

4.4.4.

Parks and Recreation

The community is very excited about more recreational and park opportunities in downtown and connecting to surrounding areas. To reflect that desire, and in addition to the Community Plaza, the development concept includes:

- Large park space and trail along Cottonwood Creek. This “central park” can provide opportunities for connecting with nature and the trail can serve a venue for art-walk events or other public art installations.
- Expansion of recreational opportunities such as pickleball, volleyball or soccer, water recreation, etc. at publicly-owned properties (e.g., the Edge Skate Park, Senior Recreation Center, and Hydrous Wake Park).

4.4.5. Housing

The concept includes mixed use and residential buildings throughout the downtown, with the idea that a vibrant downtown requires residents to support it. As mentioned in the Dare to Dream Chapter, there has been significant support for more housing downtown, but also significant concern about the impacts to adjacent single-family neighborhoods.

The approach to housing includes:

- Residential developments in the west and east parts of downtown at the currently allowable density of 32 units per acre
- Requiring mixed use development (rather than 100% residential) in more places to create less density/fewer multi-family residential units downtown than is currently allowed by zoning. This includes the requiring active, commercial ground floor uses along Allen Drive and Main Street, as well as adjacent to the park at Cottonwood Creek.
- Conduct a city-wide housing gap analysis to determine what types of housing are needed in the City and which types would be appropriate for downtown. Analysis should include, but not limited to, extent to which there is a shortage, demand, or both of privately-owned residences (even if in multi-family units). Create incentives for the types of housing needed.

4.4.6. Retail, Commercial, Employment

To create a balanced downtown that provides space for unique, local business and entrepreneurs, the development concept includes:

- 4-story mixed-use buildings on both sides of the park at Cottonwood Creek, with active uses such as restaurants, bars and shops facing the park.
- Future creation of shared parking and office space as a public-private partnership
- Long-term potential future development sites

throughout the downtown area, with specific uses to be determined by what is permitted by the ALDC.

In addition to the regulatory changes recommended in the Housing section above, we also recommend the following changes to the ALDC that will support a vibrant commercial environment:

- Require “ready” (i.e., built with 14-foot clear, but not immediately occupied) ground-level spaces that can accommodate active commercial or institutional uses (not including offices) for buildings fronting Main



Figure 9: Rendering of Cottonwood Creek Park and Mixed-Use buildings on either side of the creek.

4.4.7.

Northern Gateway

Street and Allen Drive

- Create easy-to-use standards and permit process for outdoor seating and sales display.
- Increase minimum sidewalk width in the Downtown
- Reduce parking requirements so that small businesses looking to move to small lots downtown (or into existing buildings) can meet the standards. Due to the availability of on-street parking, small parcels, increased walkability and bikeway connections, and mixture of residential and commercial uses, reduce parking standards in the CBD by one or more of the following:
 - o Reduce parking requirements to Institute for Transportation Engineers (ITE) Parking Generation or Urban Land Institute Shared Parking observed ratios
 - o Adopt a blanket percentage reduction in parking required for uses in the CBD (e.g., 20% fewer spaces required compared to uses in other parts of the city)

The development concept recognizes the northern entry into the downtown and should present a welcoming face to travelers. Allen Drive has the most traffic flow in Downtown. This gateway will be important to capturing that traffic and enticing folks to explore the downtown.

In addition to new commercial development on the parcel at the southeast corner of the intersection, “welcome” signage and wayfinding should be designed and included here.



Figure 10: Figure 8: Sample downtown gateway featuring a commercial building and public place, Beacon Park, Detroit (Source: Congress for New Urbanism)



Figure 11: Downtown Welcome Signage, Crestview, FL

4.4.8.

Mobility

Key components of the development concepts relate to how people and vehicles move in, around, and from the downtown. Details on mobility can be found in the Mobility chapter, but key features related to the development concept are summarized below. A walkable, connected downtown can greatly reduce the overall vehicle travel and trip-generation rates, especially outside of peak commuting travel patterns; as such it will be important for Allen to augment its walking and biking network.

Realignment of Main Street near McDermott

A major recommendation of this plan is to realign Main Street generally along its existing east-west alignment, across Cottonwood Creek and connecting to Greenville Avenue. This realignment would have to happen in conjunction with the future redevelopment of the shopping center. This would allow traffic (and also cyclists and pedestrians, vulnerable users facing more significant safety concerns on major streets such as Greenville Avenue) another way of distributing through downtown and to the west, allowing it to avoid using Greenville Avenue and adding pressure to the Greenville Avenue/McDermott Drive intersection.

Pedestrians and Biking

The Revitalization Plan recommends a series of modifications to streets to allow a greater range of walking and biking trips to connect downtown destinations.

Figure 12 below illustrates a series of potential street



Figure 12: Recommended Street Enhancements for Walking and Biking Connections

expansion projects recommended for improving walking and biking connectivity. This involves both an expansion of the right-of-way on Main Street west of Allen Drive to accommodate increased sidewalks, as well as a repurposing of wide street rights-of-way to accommodate protected bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

These include the following:

- **Ash Drive:** install a protected bicycle facility in the existing street carriageway space connecting St. Mary Drive to Main Street
- **Cedar Drive:** install a protected bicycle facility in the existing street carriageway and wide sidewalks along both sides of the street connecting Allen Station Park and Main Street
- **Main Street from the H&TC Railroad to McDermott Drive:** repurpose the existing four-lane cross-section to feature additional on-street parking and protected bicycle facilities. This will still allow two directions of travel and may also include auxiliary capacity (such as left turn lanes) at key



Figure 13: Example Safety Improvements at Key Intersections

- Use of high-visibility crosswalks that alert motorists to pedestrian activity

Traffic

Transportation and access will be integral parts of a successful revitalization of Allen's downtown, and ensuring that new development works within existing infrastructure and that new travel demand can adequately be served are the key transportation pillars of this plan.

Based on the findings of the analysis within the Mobility chapter, we can conclude that the City is likely to have ample street capacity for vehicles even after the buildout of the development concept for downtown's redevelopment. However, its primary connecting thoroughfares of McDermott Drive and Greenville Avenue are likely to sustain the largest impact, and they have the most significant constraints on their capacity today.

Parking

This plan views parking not as a separated means to an end, but as a key part of downtown's overall mobility system. It should be closely coordinated with new growth and development, reuse of existing structures, repurposing of streets, and the addition of new special events or other activities that draw more people to downtown.

Allen's human-scale downtown and compact, connected grid of streets makes it a strong candidate for a shared, centrally managed parking system that allows parking customers a series of choices and preserves availability of

intersections as needed, but reuses the wide existing cross-section to better serve a balance of travel users.

- **Coats Drive trail extension:** multi-use path east from current end of Coats Drive to connect to the Cottonwood Creek trail.

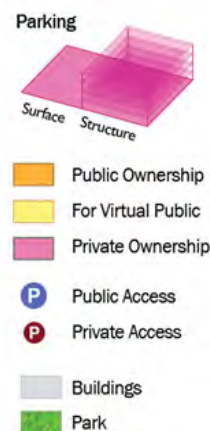
These enhancements should be accompanied by safety improvements at intersections. For example, intersection of Allen Drive and McDermott Drive offers opportunities

to redesign key intersections and improve overall pedestrian safety. Specific ideas as noted on figure 13 include:

- Elimination of wide channelized right turns ('slip lanes') that encourage high speeds and free-flowing movement
- Reduction of curb radii to dimensions that accommodate important vehicles, such as trucks and emergency response vehicles, but nonetheless shorten pedestrian crossings

parking for all choice levels. This Revitalization Plan recommends a series of additions to parking to ensure that there is ample available parking to meet demand, and that sufficient amounts of this parking be available to the broader public. This comes through a series of City-led efforts to increase supply from current assets as well as partnership with redevelopment to add new parking. Here, we present several options for handling public parking in the downtown.

1. Virtual Public Parking: providing more public parking from leasing existing parking assets, entering into an agreement with a property owner to make the land available for public parking use. This is a useful system in that it takes advantage of existing parking supply and does not require costly construction, though the City will need to reserve funds for the program and set goals for how much parking to achieve.



2. Add to publicly available supply: This concept recognizes that redevelopment opportunities in downtown are likely to be the most appropriate ways to add new parking. Parking garages would be limited in their height and massing, would require special treatments to bring them into conformity with the general look and feel of downtown, and would likely require acquisition of new properties in downtown to be dedicated solely to parking. This kind of parking addition is a longer-term strategy involving a much greater degree of planning, coordination with developers and property owners, and potentially even City-led positioning of sites for development.

Figure 14: Recommended Parking Options



4.4.9.

Programming

The DSC produced a Community Use report during Phase 1 of the planning process that provides a detailed inventory of events in Allen, and in the downtown specifically. Currently the Library and Senior Recreation Center serve as hubs for many events.

Increased programming and events in the downtown's community spaces are a key for bringing the community together to celebrate and support downtown businesses.

Downtown Programming Plan

The Allen community clearly communicated through multiple community engagement initiatives (including but not limited to this Downtown Revitalization effort) an interest in coming together for special events and festivals. The community gathers for events such as the Holy Jolly 5K and Fun Run sponsored by the City's Parks and Recreation Department, Sam Bass Day sponsored by the Allen Heritage Guild, Christmas Parade hosted by the Allen Rotary clubs, and a multitude of events hosted at the Allen Public Library.

During this effort, the DSC identified a multitude of new events, festivals, or activities that could occur in Downtown Allen. The City has a number of non-profit or civic organizations, such as Chamber of Commerce, Allen Arts Alliance, Convention and Visitors Bureau, and/or a future Downtown Merchants Association that could host these events. In addition, the City (or one of the organizations listed above) could partner with a private business that has expertise in programming

entertainment and booking live music.

While the majority of this Plan focuses on making infrastructure improvements and economic investments, the DSC recognizes that community programming is a critical element in revitalizing Downtown Allen. Community programming creates and fosters opportunities to bring the community together in a recreational or fun setting. It also brings foot traffic into Downtown Allen, which can provide economic benefits to Downtown Allen business owners.

Consequently, we recommend a regular schedule of ongoing activities, events, festivals, and other happenings that creates opportunities for Allen's diverse population to visit and celebrate in Downtown Allen. We recommend the City Council appoint a city department or citizen group to facilitate the planning and coordinating of programming in Downtown Allen.



Figure 15: Events that bring people downtown to support local businesses

Potential Events

The DSC identified the following ideas for downtown programming (and their timing):

Annual

- Allen Days/Sam Bass/Cowboy Cook Off – end of February
- Texas Independence Day/Birthday Bash – March 2
- Halloween Fest/Ghost Tour of Cemetery - October 31
- Sweetest Day - A celebration of everything sweet – October 15
- Music on Main Festival (coordinate with library Jazz Fest) - TBD
- Art and Wine Festival (partner with Arts Alliance) TBD
- Bark and Brew Fest – Dogs and Craft Beer TBD
- Butterfly's and Bluebonnets Festival – Spring when wildflowers bloom
- Film Festival – themed – (independent/emerging filmmakers or genre: Comedy or Horror etc..) TBD
- Laugh Fest – Family Friendly Comedy/Improv Festival TBD

Quarterly

- Networking Night Out - Chamber/EDC/Business Community/Downtown Businesses/Merchants

- Spring - Plant Sale/Earth Day
- Summer - Ice Cream Social
- Fall - TBD
- Winter-TBD

Monthly

- First Friday or Third Thursday – intimate concert with local bands – bring chairs/blankets/picnic, food/drink vendors available – could have different monthly themes - green space at Allen/Main

Weekly

- Farmers Market
- Weekly themed events with food trucks in the summer (pair with music, chalk art, artisan market, etc.)

Throughout the Year

- Regular programming of third-party pop-up events

In addition to the outdoor activities listed above, a multitude of indoor programming activities could also bring the Allen community together and provide economic benefits if a community arts center where performances and receptions can be hosted is opened.

4.4.10.

Business Development

A key ingredient in making downtown Allen a vibrant destination is the presence of a diverse and attractive mix of businesses. This mix is more likely to emerge if intentional actions are taken to encourage and foster it. The following implementation steps are recommended.

1. The City Council should make downtown business attraction an explicit responsibility of a city department or entity(ies) such as the EDC, Convention and Visitors Bureau, and/or Chamber of Commerce.
2. Utilize various incentive mechanisms to attract and support new business establishments, with a focus on locally owned businesses that would fill out the mix of stores, service providers, or food and beverage businesses
3. Increase the EDC's organizational focus on downtown Allen, and make that increased focus evident on its website, taking actions such as adding a "Downtown Allen section"

4.5.

Phasing

The first steps in achieving this vision will be focused on city investments on property it already owns (either the EDC or the City itself). Creation of the Community Plaza will provide a space for programming that will bring people into the downtown, a key catalyst for reinvestment and redevelopment of private property in the downtown core. The city will also discuss options with the EDC about potential partnership opportunities to re-use the former post office building for space that provides some of the artistic and creative opportunities that the community desires. Public investments in safe pedestrian and bike connections (prioritizing Allen Dr. and Main St.) will also entice more people to come downtown.

These public investments and programming to bring people downtown will serve as a catalyst for private investment. The owners of significant areas in West Downtown and East Downtown plan to incorporate a residential component on their properties. We also believe that the public gathering spaces created downtown will spur infill and redevelopment in the core area (near Main and Allen).

In the longer term, more sites will be redeveloped as property owners see opportunities. For example, the Future Development Concept shows possible redevelopment of the self-storage and truck storage sites. However, these sites are not shown with any specific redevelopment concepts because the future of those sites depends on the desired uses and timing of redevelopment by those property owners.



There are no specific years/time periods designated for Phases 1-4 because much of the timing depends on the desires of individual property owners. However, the sequence indicates an orderly pattern for redevelopment that is expected given current circumstances.



Figure 16: Development Plan Phasing

4.6.

Fiscal Impacts

The changes that are envisioned in this plan would enhance the identity of Downtown Allen and provide an enormous quality of life benefit for Allen residents. But what resources are required to bring it to fruition? And, is it costly for the City in the long run, or does it benefit the City from a fiscal perspective?

To help answer these questions, this plan includes an analysis of the long-term fiscal (City budget) impacts of the development concept, including revenues and the cost of services to support the new development.

The revenue analysis recognizes that the City of Allen receives revenues from development in three forms—from property taxes, from sales taxes, and from hotel occupancy taxes (HOT). In each case, the analysis estimated the net revenue increase by estimating the amount of property, sales and HOT that would be generated by the new development and subtracting the taxes that are currently received from the redevelopment blocks.

The cost calculations require quantifying the City's total existing service burden—that is, the residential population and business space that the City currently supports with services—and the degree to which the redevelopment would add to that service burden. After consultation with City staff, City budget categories are scaled up at a level that reflect the marginal cost of

meeting the needs of the additional population and business space.

Building on the revenue calculation and the cost calculation, the net fiscal impact to the City is the estimated amount of net new revenues minus the estimated new costs.

The chief finding of this analysis is that the future development concept would have a positive fiscal impact because the new tax revenues generated outweigh the additional costs related to providing City services to the new development. That's typical in a redevelopment situation because intensifying the development in already developed areas makes more efficient use of the preexisting City infrastructure. It benefits from:

- Preexisting physical infrastructure such as streets and utilities;
- Preexisting City facilities such as libraries, fire stations and City offices; and
- Preexisting organizational infrastructure, since City leadership and back-office staff may not need to grow in direct proportion to the increased service burden, even when more frontline staff are needed.

Tables 1-3 show key information relative to the fiscal analysis.

Revenues. Increased revenues come to the City of Allen through increases in:

- **Property Taxes.** New commercial space (retail, office, and hotel); townhomes; and condos/apartments, all generate additional property taxes.
- **Increased Sales Taxes.** New sales taxes are generated directly due to the additional retail business space that is proposed. They are generated indirectly due to the spending of the increased number of households in City of Allen businesses.
- **Increased Hotel Occupancy Tax.** New hotel taxes would come from the new hotel that is proposed in the future development concept.

Costs. Three models are utilized to estimate the cost to the City of providing services to the new development. In Table 2, those models are labeled "Conservative," "Likely," and "Optimistic" to convey a range of possible outcomes.

Net Fiscal impact. Taken together, the estimated new revenues minus the estimated new costs represent the net fiscal impact to the City of Allen (Table 3). Note that the net fiscal impact is offered as a range of outcomes, reflecting the different approaches to estimate costs, and



the level of approximation in this analysis. It is clear, however, that in every scenario the future development concept would provide fiscal benefits to the City of Allen. (i.e. it would generate more municipal revenues than costs).

| TABLE 1 New Revenues | |
|---|-------------|
| Property Tax | \$8,320,000 |
| Sales Tax (from additional retail development) | \$290,000 |
| Sales Tax (from additional household spending) | \$150,000 |
| Hotel Occupancy Tax | \$250,000 |
| Total New Revenues | \$9,010,000 |

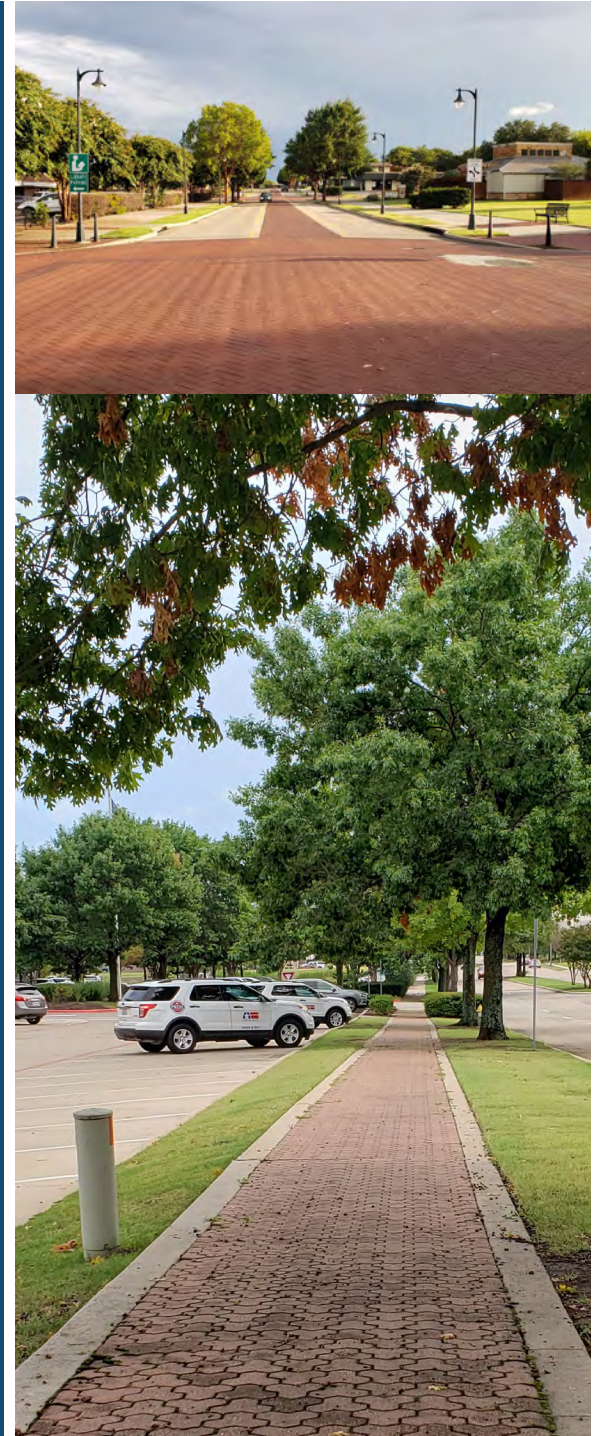
| TABLE 2 New Costs | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Conservative Cost Model | \$3,570,000 |
| Likely Cost Model | \$1,688,729 |
| Optimistic Cost Model | \$1,125,819 |

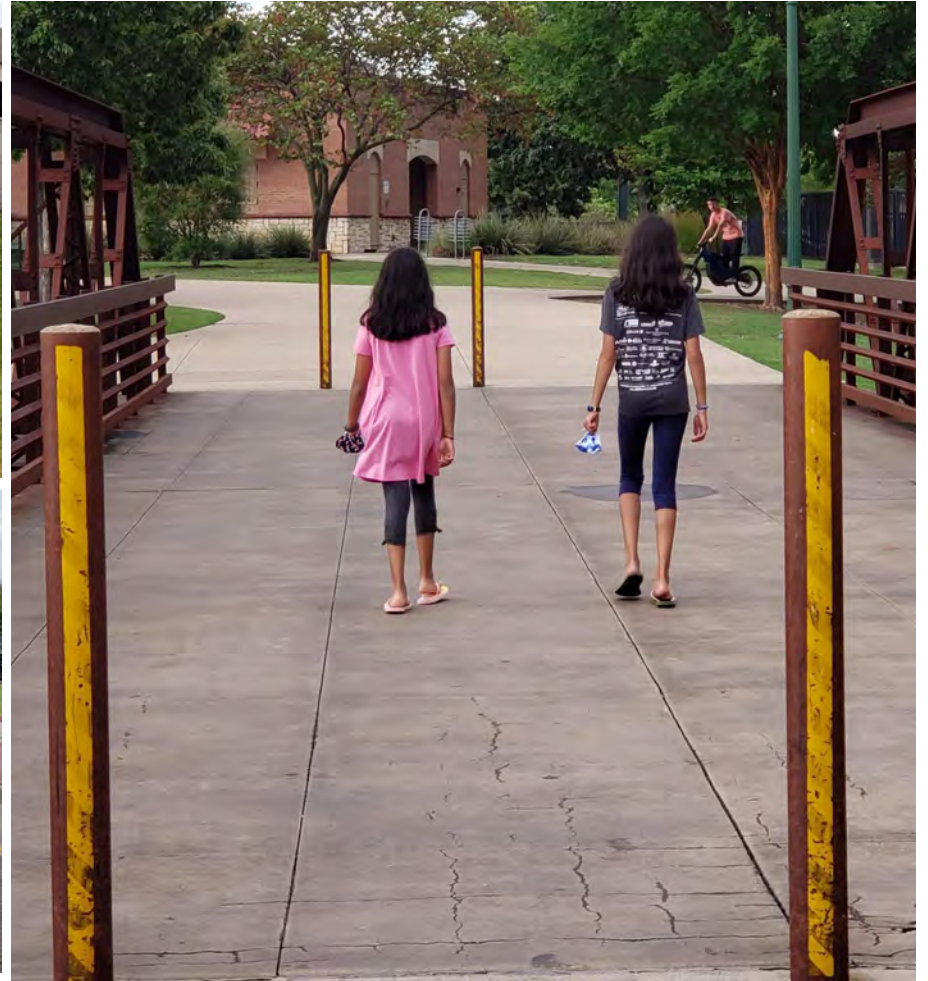
Additional detail on the methodology and results of this fiscal impact analysis can be found in Appendix D.

| TABLE 3 Net Fiscal Impact | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Per Year | Positive Net Impact of \$5.4 million to \$7.9 million |
| 5 Years | Positive Net Impact of \$27 million to \$39.5 million |
| 10 Years | Positive Net Impact of \$54 million to \$79 million |

05

Mobility





05.

Mobility Recommendation

Transportation and access will be integral parts of a successful revitalization of Allen's downtown. Ensuring that new development works within existing infrastructure and that new travel demand can adequately be served are the key transportation pillars of this plan. The Revitalization Plan recommends a series of enhancements to streets that improve overall walkability and connection for short trips not made in a vehicle, an important element of successful downtowns with a strong sense of place. Allen has opportunities to make these enhancements without substantial additions to public right-of-way, an advantage that will allow it to realize important public contributions to revitalization with limited monetary or opportunity cost.

In addition, this plan views parking not as a separated means to an end, but as a key part of downtown's overall mobility system. It should be closely coordinated with new growth and development, reuse of existing structures, repurposing of streets, and the addition of new special events or other activities that draw more people to downtown.

Allen's human-scale downtown and compact, connected grid of streets makes it a strong candidate for a shared, centrally managed parking system that allows parking customers a series of choices and preserves availability of parking for all choice levels. This Revitalization Plan

recommends a series of additions to parking to ensure that there is ample available parking to meet demand, and that sufficient amounts of this parking be available to the broader public. This comes through a series of City-led efforts to increase supply from current assets as well as partnership with redevelopment to add new parking.

5.1. Traffic Management

The proposed development in the preferred scenario will substantially increase downtown's overall residential and visitor population, and although most of this development is focused on Main Street and other network links currently using little of their capacity, it will add a level of traffic and parking demand that will need to be balanced within the overall network. This recommended scenario outlines a series of traffic and travel patterns, and related capital projects, that help to balance this overall demand.

While this revitalization plan does not provide a detailed traffic analysis, it is intended to offer broad suggestions of mitigation approaches to future traffic impact. The phasing as identified in the scenario descriptions in Chapter 4 broadly outline areas of development based on current understanding of potential for change, but this analysis groups them more closely around geographic areas to apply a more logical distribution of

traffic to the street network. because site-by-site timing of redevelopment would be determined by market dynamics, it is not practical to outline a detailed program of transportation improvements, although this analysis does include high-level recommendations for how to mitigate any impacts.

In keeping with the plan's overall vision, however, this analysis also focuses on opportunities to serve at least some downtown travel demand with walking, biking, and other non-driving trips, and each stage of development uses a series of multimodal reductions of trips outside of peak travel hours. This generalized traffic impact and its multimodal adjustments are presented here in two scenarios: one based on afternoon peak-period travel, the other on overall daily travel. While conventional traffic analysis methodology using more detailed approaches considers both morning and afternoon peak period travel, it is often the case that any development containing retail and commercial land uses does not see those uses open for business during morning peak travel periods. The analysis presented here considered only the afternoon period. The generalized levels of travel demand, as measured through vehicle trips and trips made on other travel modes, is compared to an overall relationship of existing traffic volume and roadway capacity for existing streets. Where there are expected deficiencies between future travel demand and capacity, the Revitalization Plan recommends potential paths to overcome them.



5.1.1.

Travel Analysis Areas

Because of the linear nature of Allen's downtown, this analysis has divided a preferred scenario into four districts:

- West Downtown, generally around the intersection of Main Street and Bonham Drive,
- Historic Core, generally around the intersection of Main Street and Allen Drive,
- East Downtown, generally along Main Street between Ash Drive and Cedar Drive, and
- Greenville, along the Greenville Avenue corridor east of Cottonwood Creek.

This analysis considers the degree to which development from each of the four districts would impact current capacity on existing roadways. Tables 1 through 4 provide an overview of expected development and amounts of trips expected to be generated. Each provides a detailed calculation of trip generation for the major land uses expected for redevelopment, and each assumes a share of reduction to come from internal capture of trips and other walking and bicycling access. These are assumed to vary based on the mix of land uses but generally increase as the degree of residential development in each of the four districts increases.

Each table also provides detail on how much traffic generated in the daily trips is assumed to be distributed onto primary streets in the downtown network. These are planning-level assumptions that the study has taken based on general directions of travel around downtown Allen today, and these assumptions are based on all vehicle trips generated leaving the study area in some

way (any trips not leaving are included in the internal capture reductions in each district). For that reason, the percentages assumed for distribution do not add up to 100%-- for instance, traffic assumed to be added to Allen Drive to the north will also be added to either Allen Drive to US 75 or to St. Mary Drive.

This method allows a simple comparison of traffic existing volume plus the new development-related traffic generated in each district to remaining roadway capacity and forms the basis for recommended mitigation strategies around each major corridor. This analysis considers both afternoon peak-hour trips (the vehicle trips that happen during the busiest hour of afternoon travel, typically at or around 5 PM) and trips made throughout the entire day.

Table 5 provides an overall summary of how the aggregate impacts of each district's development-related traffic are expected to affect the overall street network.

The cumulative impact of these traffic additions is summarized in Table 5. In interpreting it, it is important to understand that comparing daily traffic impacts is a planning-level summary that would require additional study and detailed analysis to understand finer nuances of traffic and intersection operations. However, this underscores that many of downtown's internal streets have additional vehicle-carrying capacity and can support additional growth. The City should use this overall framework as a basis for reviewing individual downtown developments and understand more detailed implications of traffic impact.

As the table shows, the McDermott Drive and Greenville Avenue corridors are the likely locations where targeted mitigation strategies are most important. Greenville Avenue in particular would require mitigation based on the potential redevelopment of the Cottonwood Creek site, although its traffic impacts have been distributed to the larger network on the basis of existing streets. One potential mitigation strategy, discussed in the next subsection, is the extension of Main Street east to Greenville Avenue, which could help to reduce the overall traffic impacts to both Greenville and McDermott Drive.

5.1.2. Overall Recommendations For Traffic Management

Based on the findings of this analysis, the City is likely to have ample street capacity even after the buildout of the preferred scenario for downtown's redevelopment. However, its primary connecting thoroughfares of McDermott Drive and Greenville Avenue are likely to sustain the largest impact, and they have the most significant constraints on their capacity today.

The Revitalization Plan recommends the following next steps to prepare these streets for added traffic growth:

1. Perform a detailed traffic study of changes to Main Street (as discussed in Section 5.2) and the addition

of a traffic signal at Dogwood Drive, if warranted by future development.

2. Develop more detailed traffic calming policies to use traffic calming devices, such as speed tables, raised intersections, and chicanes, on a proactive basis to manage increases to traffic on internal downtown streets (such as St. Mary Drive and Allen Drive) at points where these streets transition into residential areas.
3. Work with TxDOT on access management policies for Greenville Avenue to allow any redevelopment of Cottonwood Creek. This should be based on using streets (connecting to Greenville) as the primary means of access into the Cottonwood Creek shopping center site.

| TABLE 1 Summary of Traffic Impacts on Downtown Streets | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Street | Current Daily Traffic Capacity | Current Daily Traffic Volume (TxDOT TCDS) | New Volume added from Development Scenario | Remaining Capacity or Deficiency (Daily) | Potential Mitigation Strategies |
| McDermott - between US 75 and Allen Dr | 30,000 | 25,600 | 8,110 | -3,710 | Intersection and Corridor Capacity Additions (planned) |
| McDermott - Allen to Greenville | 35,000 | 27,700 | 7,330 | -30 | Operational improvements |
| Main - US 75 to Allen | 12,000 | 2,000 | 4,810 | 5,190 | None needed |
| Main - Allen to McDermott | 18,000 | 3,000 | 1,050 | 13,950 | None needed |
| Allen Drive - McDermott to St. Mary | 15,000 | 4,200 | 4,330 | 6,470 | None needed |
| Allen Drive - St. Mary to US 75 | 15,000 | 4,800 | 5,120 | 5,080 | None needed |
| St. Mary Drive | 15,000 | 1,000 | 4,430 | 9,570 | None needed |
| Greenville Avenue | 30,000 | 20,500 | 11,590 | -2,090 | Intersection and Corridor Capacity Additions, or extension of Main Street across Cottonwood Creek, allowing traffic a way to distribute without further use of Greenville Avenue and Main Street |



5.2.

Evolution of the Street Network

5.2.1.

Streetscape and Active Transportation Projects

As suggested in the previous section, the preferred scenario for revitalization could add a significant amount of new development to downtown, and with that demand for travel. Even if increased proximity of housing, retail, and employment helps to promote walking or other non-driving travel between these daily functions, the previous analysis of traffic shows that downtown will continue to be served primarily by automobile transportation. Some of downtown's streets are currently designed for higher volumes of traffic, but are also the only ways in and out of downtown and increased vehicle traffic points to a need to manage these corridors with an eye for efficient movement of all users, especially vehicle traffic. However, most streets within downtown's primary street grid (north of McDermott Drive and between US 75 and Cottonwood Creek) carry traffic volumes well below their vehicle capacity. These are the streets where enhancements to make a more walkable street network can be accommodated along with ability to serve greater amounts of vehicle traffic. This revitalization plan recommends that such enhancements are key to the success of a revitalized downtown Allen, as all travelers—even those primarily traveling by vehicle—are pedestrians at some point in their trip.

5.2.2.

Rethinking the Street Grid

Achieving a higher share of walking and bicycling trips and encouraging a downtown of safer streets overall will depend on enhancements within existing street rights-of-way. Allen has significant opportunity in the ample rights-of-way allocated to its downtown streets. Today, many of these streets lack consistent sidewalks, but feature wide carriageways (i.e. pavement areas generally used for travel lanes and street parking, if any parking exists) that carry relatively low volumes of traffic. Many of these street spaces are recommended for being repurposed to allow wider sidewalks, expanded bicycle infrastructure, or added (or reconfigured) on-street parking.

Refer to Section 5.4 for a more detailed description of the specific project opportunities where better walking or bicycling infrastructure is recommended for downtown.

Main Street

Main Street is another key opportunity for changing driver expectations and managing vehicle speeds through downtown Allen to allow a safer walking and biking environment. In its present design, the eastern end of Main Street is a direct thoroughfare into downtown from the east, with a one-way street separating from McDermott Drive over the Cottonwood Creek bridge. This converts to two-way traffic west of Dogwood Drive, but the street is a four-lane section that carries only around 3,000 to 4,000 vehicles on an average weekday. Main Street is only two travel lanes west of Ash Drive, but continues to have a wide carriageway as far west as Allen Drive.



Figure 1: Main Street

The Revitalization Plan recommends three key modifications to Main Street, shown in Figure 1 below:

1. Addition of sidewalks and street parking between Allen Drive and US 75;
2. A new design through the historic business district that extends sidewalks and streetscape (generally from a combined width of 8 to 18 feet per side of the street);
3. Addition of a multi-use path on the north side of Main Street between the Houston and Texas Central rail right-of-way and Cedar Drive, which would remove one westbound travel lane in this section; and

A fourth recommendation, realignment of Main Street at Dogwood Drive (shown as Item 4 in Figure 1), would remove the one-way section of Main Street between Dogwood and the McDermott Drive bridge over Cottonwood Creek and realign Main Street to Dogwood Drive and its intersection with McDermott. This recommendation would function as a short-term measure to control traffic speeds for vehicles entering downtown from McDermott Drive, though if the extension of Main Street (as noted in Figure) is implemented with the redevelopment of the Cottonwood Creek shopping center, this recommendation is less critical—Dogwood Drive remains as a local connecting street, and the westbound Main Street from the creek bridge to Dogwood would still be closed and its right-of-way repurposed.

Traffic volume on Main Street today does not suggest a



Figure 2: illustrates the current configuration of parking along Main Street, angled at 60 degrees to increase overall yield, along with the proposed conversion of Main Street in the historic business core, with a basic configuration of parking along the street adjacent to an expanded sidewalk.

need for the vehicle-carrying capacity the street currently has, and as redevelopment occurs, the City may wish to evaluate if this four-lane section continues to be useful. Repurposing the outer (curb) lane in each direction,

either for the cycle track as proposed in Item 3 above, or for parallel on-street parking could happen without significant cost or effort.

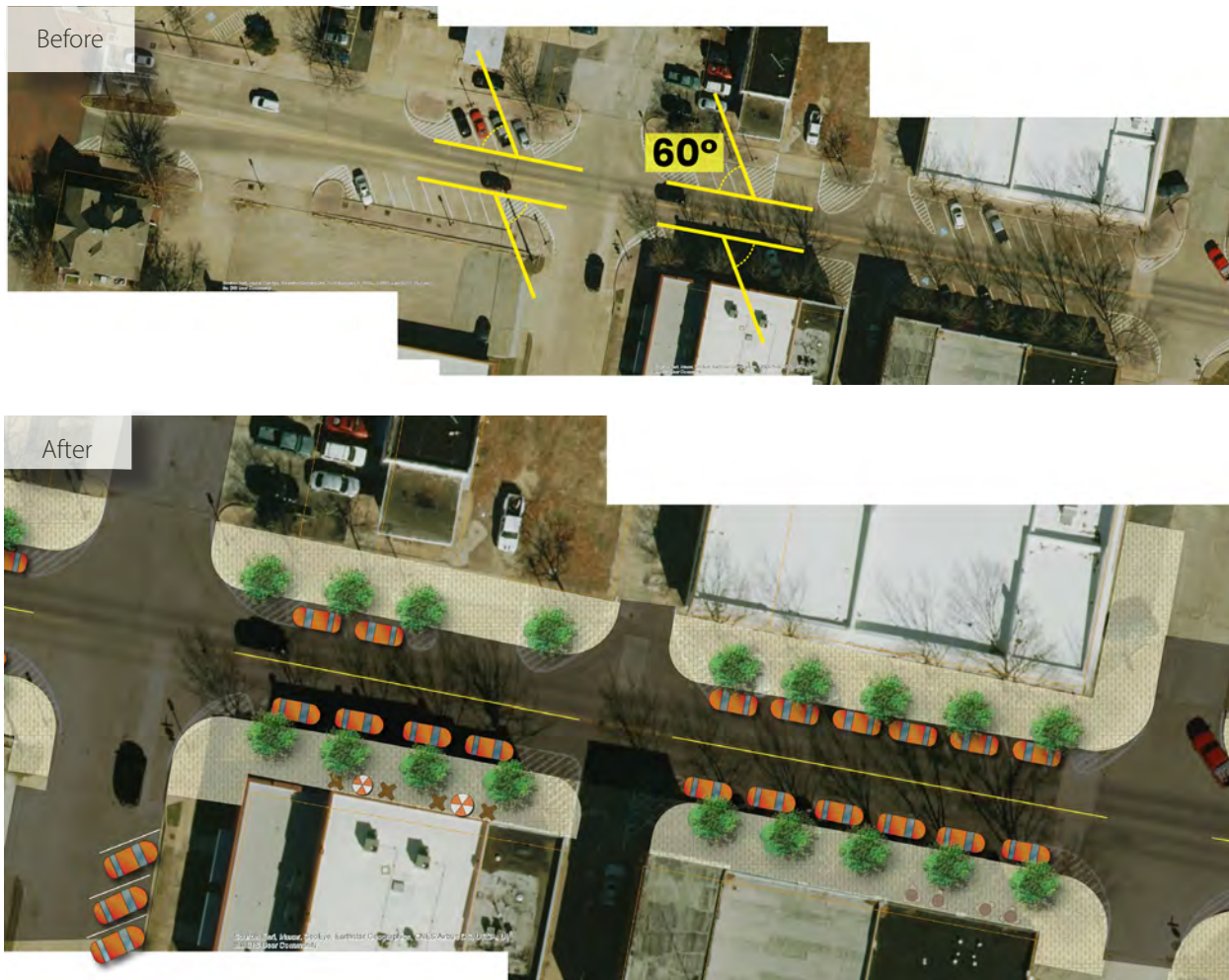


Figure 3: Main Street Parking Configuration, Before and After

Main Street Reconfiguration in the Historic Core

Item 2 in the key Main Street recommendations proposes a comprehensive redesign to Main Street between Allen Drive and Austin Drive, expanding sidewalk and streetscape dimensions from a combined 8 feet to 18 feet (and in turn allowing a more generous passable sidewalk width with a planting and street furniture space that could allow the street to function better as public space). However, doing this requires reconfiguring street parking on this section of Main Street, converting the angle parking to parallel spaces.

While this change results in a loss of on-street parking, the Revitalization Plan recommends a broader district-based approach to parking that would offset this loss on adjacent streets with more formal designation of parking spaces and make additional public parking available. The concepts as shown in Figure 3 to the left would result in an approximate reduction of 20 spaces, although would create four new blocks of expanded streetscape in the historic core of downtown.

Extension of Main Street

The modifications proposed to Main Street would be part of efforts to revitalize downtown Allen regardless of individual redevelopment projects that may happen through downtown. However, as discussed in Section 5.1, the redevelopment of the Cottonwood Creek shopping center could potentially add substantial residential and retail uses and, especially due to increased retail space, a significant transportation impact that would place burdens on Greenville Avenue and McDermott Drive. One mitigation strategy proposed for the redevelopment of this subarea of downtown is an extension of Main Street, generally along its existing east-west alignment, across Cottonwood Creek and connecting to Greenville Avenue. This would allow traffic (and also cyclists and pedestrians, vulnerable users facing more significant safety concerns on major streets such as Greenville Avenue) another way of distributing through downtown and to the west, allowing it to avoid using Greenville Avenue and adding pressure to the Greenville Avenue/McDermott Drive intersection.

Figure 4 provides a basic illustration of this extension. Although the illustration is not intended to specify an exact alignment, it is intended to show a balance between different factors in designing such a street extension within the existing built environment:

- The street should use existing Main Street right-of-way to the extent possible, reducing overall right-of-way needs.
- The alignment should allow developable parcels and blocks, especially on the Cottonwood Creek side of the extension.
- The alignment should seek to space intersections along Greenville Avenue as closely as possible in the footprint of existing intersections, such as Jupiter Road, and not create many closely-spaced three-leg intersections ('T' intersections) along Greenville Avenue.

Although not yet determined, the City of Allen should also approach the

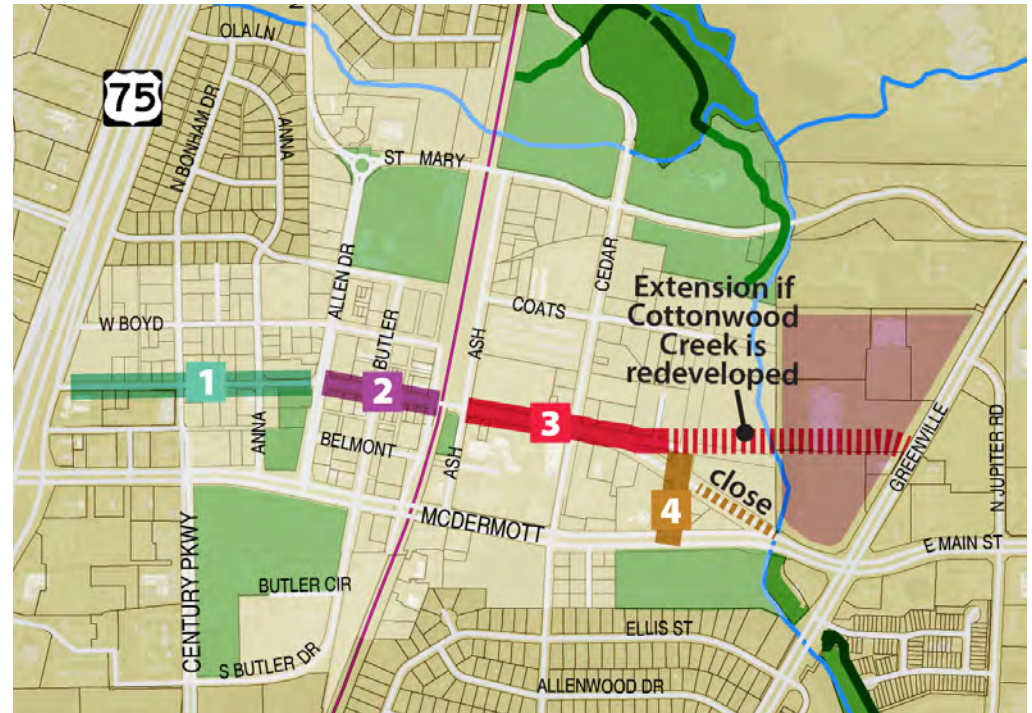


FIGURE 4: Main Street Extension

extension as a joint development opportunity wherein grant or City funding and construction of the bridge might help to catalyze redevelopment of the Cottonwood Creek shopping center site. Whether this is undertaken as a catalyst action or in partnership with a development entity that has proactively approached the City, it may be a necessary public contribution to allow a financially feasible development project on the shopping center site.

5.3. Parking

5.3.1. Major Challenges to Downtown's Parking

As suggested in the discussion of existing conditions, parking is currently spread among publicly-used supply and parking supporting private businesses and establishments. The ways that it continues to support new development will be based largely on individual development projects providing parking to meet the City's requirements under the Unified Development Code, but it will also involve a series of strategic coordination steps to ensure that a larger and more vibrant down-town attracting visitors has a parking system that is intuitive and easy to use.

PARKING IS FRAGMENTED

Allen's greater downtown area, as explored in this study, features over 1,000 spaces over 30 parking lots and street blocks, with fewer than ten spaces in some lots and nearly 300 in others. This is a large number of individual parking facilities, and downtown does not have a unified, coordinated system of parking organization that let users know (with signage and way-finding) where parking is available. At present, the parking demand does not appear to surpass supply on a regular basis, and relatively few downtown locations do not have on-site parking that would require use of publicly available parking. However, the lack of information may be confusing to some users, and if added growth and revitalization of downtown generate more parking demand, this may lead to perceptions of parking shortage.



FIGURE 5: Parking spaces in the greater Downtown area (public or private)

NO PRICING OR REGULATIONS

In addition to physical separation of downtown's parking into many small lots and facilities, there is currently no system of regulations to manage demand. All parking is free to users and not limited by time (the duration of a customer's stay in a parking space). This has worked well for Allen up to now, but added draw to Downtown may test capacity and create conditions of scarcity in high-demand locations.

5.3.2.

How to Move Forward

The Revitalization Plan recommends an approach wherein Allen add parking that is publicly available in tandem with redevelopment. This is different from investing early in a large addition to public parking supply, and does not necessarily create a large surplus in the short term. However, it also understands the visionary nature of this Revitalization Plan and that specific sites or locations of redevelopment—and the timing in which they change—are not presently known. In addition, Downtown Allen's geography and relative length east to west suggest that a single shared parking facility may not be convenient to all of downtown. Taking a step-by-step, ongoing approach to adding to public supply may yield lower-cost parking to Downtown and allow the City to spread the public parking inventory more evenly around the district.

Recommended Approach 1: Virtual Public Parking

The first potential approach that this Plan recommends is that the City take on providing more public parking from leasing existing parking assets, entering into an agreement with a property owner to make the land available for public parking use. This is a useful system in that it takes advantage of existing parking supply and does not require costly construction, though the City will need to reserve funds for the program and set goals for how much parking to achieve. These specific costs are not presently included in the Revitalization Plan's overall financial analysis.

Presently, Allen does not have any such formal agreements in place, and creating these kinds of agreements will require developing a standard set of terms by which the City assumes certain responsibilities of property owners who make their parking available. Taking this approach would also entail entering into longer-term leases that allow more certainty in the parking system that these spaces will be available. The City should prioritize searching out new candidate facilities that will allow longer-term options, although in the absence of these candidates should engage in a more regular discussion with property owners to understand potential changes to leases.

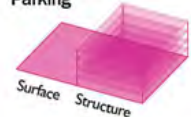
Although the virtual public parking-based approach may represent a lower cost to the City from year to year when compared to building new parking, its trade-off is that parking supply in the City may move around, creating challenges to building long-term user familiarity and requiring more regular updates to parking inventory information.

This study recommends that in addition to the parking, the City develop a more formal classification system for parking facilities that helps users to understand what is available and when. A concept as simple as a color-coding with accompanying signage could be used and would allow the City to make updates as needed. This recommendation is closely related to signage, wayfinding, and information as recommended in later parts of this section. With more public parking spread over a larger number of parking facilities, having a standard system of classifying parking and letting customers know what parking they may use will be critically important.

It is also important to reiterate that the City will need to devote staff resources to this position not only to administer it, but also to proactively promote it. This may be achievable with current staff resources, thus needing no expansion to staff or commitment of additional budget. However, the degree to which the virtual public parking approach is used will determine what staff resources are needed to support and administer it.



Parking



- Public Ownership
- For Virtual Public
- Private Ownership

- Public Access
- Private Access
- Buildings
- Park

Why Would the City Choose This Approach?

- It is relatively low-cost and allows the City to add parking supply more 'nimble' throughout Downtown in relatively small increments.
- It takes advantage of existing parking and allows the City to use a relatively short-term approach to adding parking as needed.
- It can be more easily tailored to take advantage of 'down periods' where parking demand at a given facility declines along with its associated land use's activity ending for the day (as opposed to a development-based approach where new parking must be built and is always present).
- It is set up on a limited-term lease basis where parking is most needed, and the City may choose to end or not to renew leases should spot concentrations of demand in that area ebb over time.

Roles/Actions for the City with this Strategic Approach

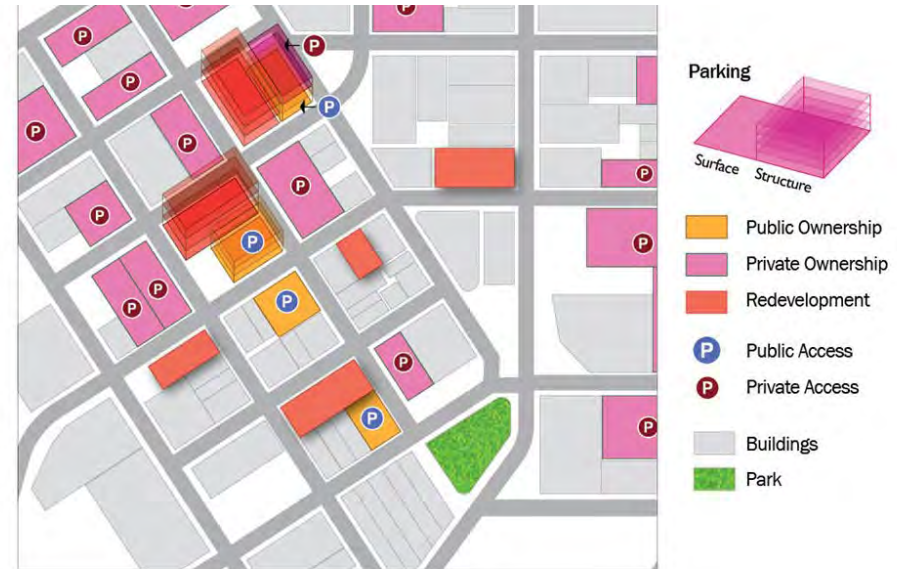
- Determine a fixed price to offer to potential lease partners. Existing virtual public leases have covered a broad range of payment terms, perhaps depending on tax-exempt status of property (such as First Baptist Church) or proximity to high demand locations (the Allen Public Library property near a potential Town Square). The City should set a price schedule so that fair and consistent offers can be made.
- Establish an annual budget for the leasing and maintenance based on a target of at least 100 new spaces brought into virtual public parking per year.
- At a minimum these should allow parking after 6pm, Wednesday through Sunday.
- Set a goal of preserving at least 200 virtual-public spaces over a five-year period.
- Dedicate staff resources to administer this program.
- Set a goal for an ultimate total of 800 virtual public spaces to be available during peak periods.

Recommended Approach 2: Add to Publicly-Available Supply

The second approach to adding more parking is to construct it, though this is not as simple as building new dedicated parking facilities—especially free-standing ones. This concept draws on the development scenarios discussed in the preceding section on future parking demand and recognizes that redevelopment opportunities in downtown are likely to be the most appropriate ways to add new parking. Downtown Allen's historic, small-town character is a key part of its appeal as a destination, and the City's Unified Development Ordinance and other similar regulations have long protected this with development and building design standards. Parking garages would be limited in their height and massing, would require special treatments to bring them into conformity with the general look and feel of downtown, and would likely require acquisition of new properties in downtown to be dedicated solely to parking.

This approach to adding parking is tied more to the idea that privately-constructed parking provided to support development projects could be made available, at least in part, to support downtown's greater supply of uses, functioning as virtual public parking or even true public parking (should the City want to lease, purchase, or reserve a portion of the new parking supply). As the preferred development scenario in Section 4 illustrates, this becomes easier when development projects are adding parking primarily tied to weekday daytime uses, as the demand from these uses declines into the evening when visitor-based land uses (such as restaurants and entertainment, or retail uses on weekends) are at their highest.

However, achieving this kind of parking addition is a longer-term strategy involving a much greater degree of planning, co-ordination with developers and property owners, and potentially even City-led positioning of sites for development.



Why Would the City Choose This Approach?

- Development adds parking based on zoning requirements; City may have options to partner with developers to provide additional parking at the time of construction.
- This approach is likely to add larger increments of parking to downtown's supply, and at focused 'hub' locations.
- It is easier to manage parking between land uses in larger facilities.
- A structured approach to selecting, acquiring, and positioning sites for development allows the City more influence in how development (and parking supporting it) fits into downtown's built environment.
- More development in downtown helps to balance City tax base burden overall and bring relief to residential property owners

Roles/Actions for the City with this Strategic Approach

- Identify a minimum of three sites to position for future development (completed with Master Plan)
- Establish funding, through bonds, TIRZ, or other potential public finance mechanism, to acquire sites and/or allow City to acquire sites to position for joint development
- Assemble properties as necessary
- Engage developers to understand interest and willingness to partner
- Perform a basic feasibility study on sites to determine suitability for parking facilities
- Perform a real estate market study/assessment to identify potential development projects
- Amend UDO site development standards as needed to allow additional parking to be added to support public use



5.3.3.

Best-Practice Parking Approaches for Downtown Allen

Regardless of the direction the City chooses to take in making more public supply available, there are also best-practice approaches it can take to make the overall parking system more intuitive and user-friendly. These alone will not provide a long-term path to an adequately-supplied parking system if downtown continues to grow and develop. However, these are sound policy principles that should be used regardless of any larger approach to adding parking supply. They would help to promote availability and streamline use today and prepare the City for the more vibrant future it expects from this Revitalization Plan.

Management Principles

The City of Allen should adopt and implement a performance-based parking program. Performance-based management adjusts rates and regulations to make it as easy as possible to find a parking space, but critically, to provide availability in high-demand locations by a system of incentives and choices. The two primary stages of regulation—time limits and price—should each take effect when downtown facilities reach an appropriate level of use, as described in Table 3 below. Consistent availability, not additional revenue, is the central goal.

The parking industry generally uses 85 percent occupancy as a benchmark for optimum utilization:

parking is not largely underused at that rate, but there is also parking available (generally one space in eight) such that an arriving parking customer should always be able to find something.

Tables 6 and 7 below illustrate two recommended frameworks for the City to use in managing its public parking. These follow a regular, systematic approach to applying price and regulations based on regularly-observed utilization patterns. When utilization reaches and consistently performs at high levels, it is time to apply management controls (regulations or price) that introduce trade-offs for users who may wish to stay in a space longer, pay less, or both. Parking that is highly

utilized tends to reflect high levels of demand in the immediate areas where that parking is located, although it is as important for that high-demand parking to have availability as less desirable parking. Parking customers should not perceive that the convenience they desire is not an option in a downtown's parking system.

TABLE 2 Thresholds for Applying Time Limits and Pricing

| Facility Type | Proposed Time Limit Threshold | Proposed Pricing Threshold |
|---|---|---|
| On-Street Parking | Utilization on an entire block surpasses 75% for at least 6 hours per day | Utilization on an entire block surpasses 85% for at least 6 hours per day |
| Off-Street Parking Lots | Utilization on an entire block surpasses 75% for at least 8 hours per day | Utilization on an entire block surpasses 85% for at least 8 hours per day |
| Off-Street Parking Garages (if constructed in the future) | No threshold: time limits not used | Utilization in public spaces surpasses 85% for at least 8 hours per day |

TABLE 3 Thresholds for Applying Time Limits and Pricing

| Facility Type | Collect New Utilization Counts | Revisit Regulations |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| On-Street Parking | Every 6 months | Every 12 months |
| Off-Street Parking Lots | Every 6 months | Every 12 months |
| Off-Street Parking Garages (if constructed in the future) | Every 12 months | Every 24 months |

It is important to note that the recommendations for applying time limits and price are not imminent, and in fact are not likely to be relevant to Allen's downtown in the near term. Parking is simply not yet used at these levels, though when successful revitalization introduces new travel and parking demand to downtown, parking activity is likely to increase. It is nearly always the case that parking users prefer to park as closely as possible to their destinations—regardless of specific factors in Allen, this is true everywhere in the US when all parking spaces are equal in the cost users have for them. However, scarcity often creates parking problems, or at least the perceptions of them, which lead business districts and other high-demand parking areas to take reactive steps to parking problems.

If and when Allen's downtown reaches a stage of economic vitality when time limits and even pricing may be needed, it will be because of a consistent and sustained demand for using parking there. However, the criteria presented in Table 6 are sufficiently fine-grained

that some parking will likely remain that has no regulation or restrictions, giving users a choice of parking options. When coupled with the walking and bicycling recommendations of Section 5.4, a range of parking options will be available to users within an easy reach.

Regular Monitoring and Reporting

Likewise, the City should commit to a regular monitoring of utilization to ensure these management approaches can work. The City will need to update its data to understand when proposed management thresholds are met and when to apply them. The parking study recommends a regular review of utilization along with ongoing parking enforcement responsibilities to be able to periodically adjust its management schedule. This is detailed in Table 7.

This study recommends that the City collect utilization every three months for on-street and off-street lot parking facilities. This is relatively frequent, but important to allow understanding of seasonal differences and—

especially in response to COVID-19's economic impacts, to follow trends in economic performance and recovery. The City should use the utilization counts as a way of seeing whether high utilization is an occasional occurrence or an established pattern; it should implement the right management accordingly.

Setting Price for Parking

Allen's downtown has not yet passed the 'price barrier' in how it manages user demand, with no regulations or pricing currently in place. Implementing pricing is politically difficult and should be implemented in careful conversations with down-town businesses and establishments worried about its effects. However, successful parking management in many of Allen's peer downtowns demonstrates that parking customers are often more motivated by convenience and proximity than cost, especially if payment methods are made simple and clear.

Where prices should be set is also a part of regulation. The 'right' price is always the lowest price that will achieve an availability target, and when parking remains in consistently high use after a particular price level is set, it is often time to raise that price to reflect the high demand and achieve availability. Adjusting rates over time—up where demand is higher and down where demand is lower—will allow Allen to better distribute parking demand across its downtown and make more efficient use of existing spaces. In general, the City should treat its on-street spaces as its most valuable, as these provide critical customer access to retail businesses in a manner that is convenient and desirable; off-street parking should provide a cheaper, long-term option for visitors who still want convenience but wish to stay for longer periods.



5.3.4.

Supporting Approaches

In any case, the City can and should take additional supporting steps to facilitate easier parking in downtown and make the overall system better integrated and more user-friendly. These are detailed as follows, with potential example ideas for the City to use to address these ideas.

Classification And Signage

Visitors to downtown Allen have numerous parking options today, though unless they are familiar with the parking system and the options they might have within it, may not understand where they are allowed to park. To this end, the City should work closely with property owners to implement a standard system of signage around parking in the city, with sufficient supporting signage explaining the system.

This assessment recommends that a simple, streamlined parking system be put in place, and this should feature no more than three classes of parking. Public parking should always be available any time of the week. Part-time public parking should be signposted to reflect the variable status and prompt users to check signage to understand whether they can park there and until what times. And reserved parking should be set separately to let visitors know that parking is only for users of a particular business or establishment. It may be used during the time of a visitor's stay, but not to allow park-once visits to other destinations throughout downtown.

The study recommends a simple system of color-coded signage to guide users to facilities they can use. This allows them to understand options and choose other locations with certainty that they are parking where allowed for their purposes.

Electronic Information Resources

In addition, it will be important for the City to enhance its current electronic resources providing information to potential parking users. At present, the City operates a website that illustrates locations of select parking facilities intended for public use, along with printed or static materials. However, these are not immediately apparent to many users and not amenable to real-time decision making when visitors are looking for parking locations. This includes two primary approaches:

Mobile app. With ParkMobile and other established mobile parking payment apps operating in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, users have already grown accustomed to electronic payment and information based on their location. The City may consider a contract with these vendors when it begins introducing pricing for parking.

Updates to website. The City should mirror updates to the app on its website and make more regular updates to its GIS inventory of parking data. This study collected and updated inventory and utilization information using GIS, which will now be available for this purpose. Future updates to inventory and utilization can help the City share information on general trends with parking (such as a particular facility's tendencies to be full, lightly used, or full at certain times). This can allow a visitor to

downtown to plan a trip based on parking and have the real-time experience support this.

The City may also wish to elevate the prominence of its website placement, making it more accessible (potentially with a front-page link).



FIGURE 6: Electronic Information Resources

5.4.

Pedestrians and Walking/Biking Trails

5.4.1.

Connections Within And Outside Of Downtown

The Revitalization Plan recommends a series of modifications to streets to allow a greater range of walking and biking trips to connect downtown destinations. The traffic and mobility analysis presented in Section 5.1 takes an assumption that a walkable, connected downtown can greatly reduce the overall vehicle travel and trip-generation rates, especially outside of peak commuting travel patterns, and as such it will be important for Allen to augment its walking and biking network.

The key trail recommendation of the Revitalization Plan is to continue the Cottonwood Creek Trail from its current terminus just south of St. Mary Drive, extending it to cross under the McDermott Drive Bridge and to the south. In addition, Figure 7 illustrates a series of potential street enhancement projects recommended for improving walking and biking connectivity. This involves both an expansion of the right-of-way on Main Street west of Allen Drive to accommodate increased sidewalks, as well as a repurposing of wide street rights-of-way to accommodate protected bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

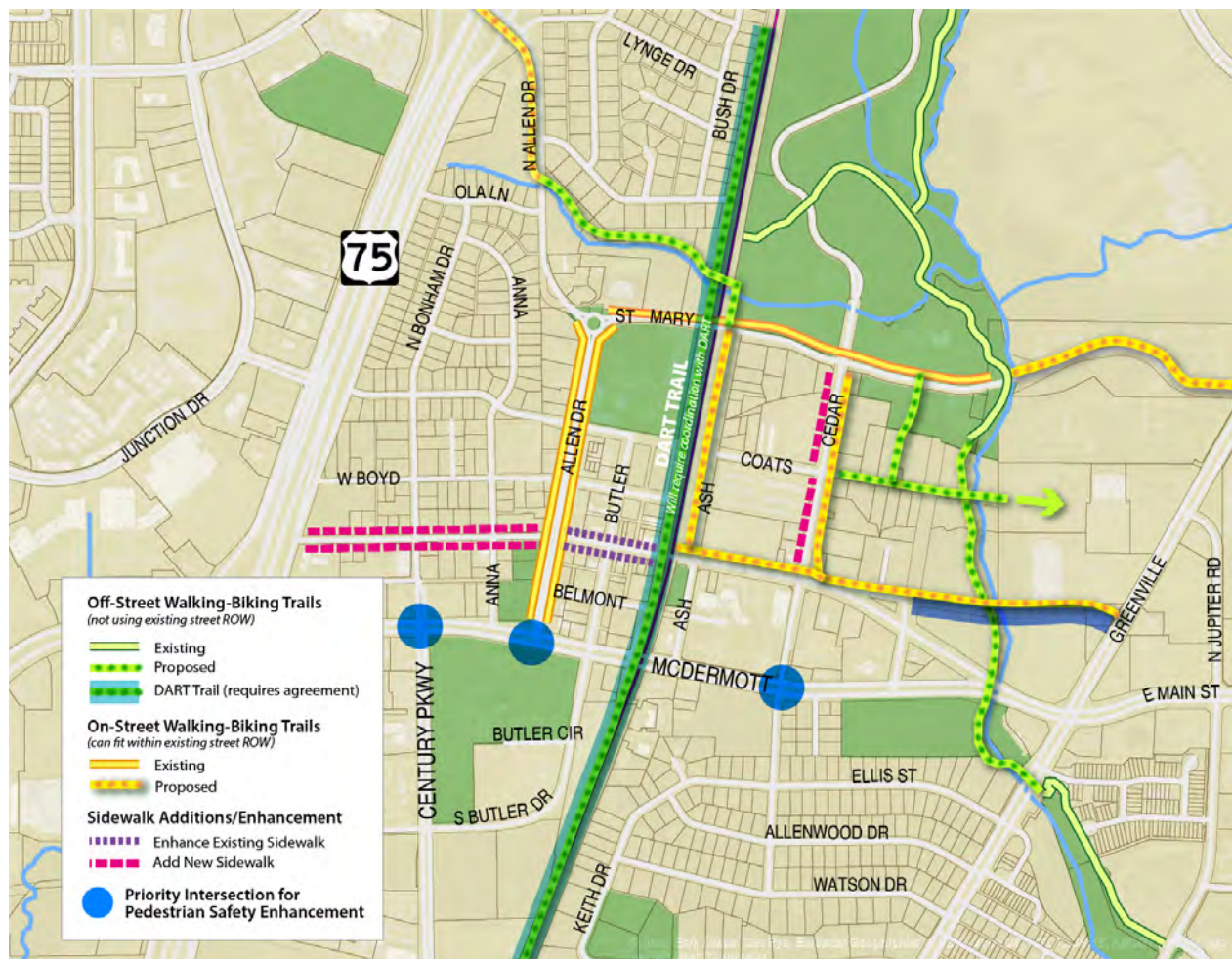


FIGURE 7: Recommended Trail Projects

These include the following:

- Ash Drive: install a protected bicycle facility in the existing street carriageway space connecting St. Mary Drive to Main Street
- Cedar Drive: install a protected bicycle facility in the existing street carriageway and wide sidewalks along both sides of the street connecting Allen Station Park and Main Street

- Main Street from the H&TC Railroad to McDermott Drive: repurpose the existing four-lane cross-section to feature protected bicycle facilities (along the north side) and, as needed, additional on-street parking. This will still allow two directions of travel and may also include auxiliary capacity (such as left turn lanes) at key intersections as needed, but reuses the wide existing cross-section to better serve a balance of travel users. If Main Street is extended, as discussed in Section 5.2, this trail connection should be constructed along the new Main Street to continue this path.
- Coats Drive trail extension, building a multi-use path east from the current end of Coats Drive to connect to the Cottonwood Creek Trail (and potentially feature a bridge to the Cottonwood Creek shopping center site if that side is re-developed).

In addition, a key recommendation is to reconfigure the Main Street streetscape in the Historic Core district, moving existing curb lines to increase space available for streetscape and sidewalk width. Today's sidewalks are

5.4.2.

Safety Throughout the Downtown

These recommendations on extending the walking and biking network are complemented by a series of strategic safety improvements intended to address major concerns.

The reconfiguration of Main Street will extend curbs, convert angled parking to parallel parking, and generally reduce the footprint of the street's traveled way and



FIGURE 8: Example Safety Improvements at Key Intersections

provide cues to motorists to use slower speeds in an urban setting like downtown. However, other design interventions may help with this, particularly to make crossings of major streets (such as McDermott Drive) safer and more comfortable.

As shown in Figure 8, the intersection of Allen Drive and McDermott Drive offers opportunities to redesign key intersections and improve overall pedestrian safety. Specific ideas as noted on the diagram include:

- Elimination of wide channelized right turns ('slip lanes') that encourage high speeds and free-flowing movement
- Reduction of curb radii to dimensions that accommodate important vehicles, such as trucks and emergency response vehicles, but nonetheless shorten pedestrian crossings
- Use of high-visibility crosswalks that alert motorists to pedestrian activity

5.5.

Transit and Future Transportation Options

5.5.1.

Public Transit in Allen

Although Allen provides a variety of specialized transit options for eligible users (especially senior citizens and persons with disabilities), the city is not served by typical scheduled transit service such as that provided by DART or the Denton County Transit Authority (DCTA). A key reason for this is the City's decision not to join the DART system through commitment of a share of local sales tax; consequently, DART has not planned for providing service within Allen's City limits.

Nonetheless, a revitalized downtown and the new travel demand it will bring point to a potential role for specialized forms of transit to serve downtown and its surrounding districts, as it could provide multiple functions in better connecting a variety of destinations beyond a walking distance that many Allen residents and visitors may be willing to tolerate. Critically, transit could also be a key strategic tool in realizing parking opportunities as discussed in Section 5.2, especially to connect to parking for special events that could use a broader supply of existing parking than what is available solely in the Downtown revitalization plan area.

The Revitalization Plan does not recommend a definitive transit service or scenario for downtown, as the planned potential redevelopment of the Preferred Scenario would create a travel demand impact that may be absorbed with existing infrastructure and recommended street enhancements. However, continued growth and success of downtown, especially around special events and other outcomes of implementing placemaking and recreation strategies, may bring different patterns of travel where users would benefit from a greater number of options. To this end, the revitalization plan recommends two key policy approaches to transit:

1. Begin exploring transit services, from either public-agency or private-sector operators, that would serve the broader goals of the Revitalization Plan and meet the specific needs for streets to move greater numbers of people than solely by private vehicles; and
2. Continue to monitor the development of technology-based transportation solutions that may bring new types of equipment or service operating models to Allen.

5.5.2.

Potential Private-Sector Transit Models

Many communities throughout the United States, whether or not they have transit service from an agency provider such as DART, engage private-sector transit service providers for specialized services tailored to community needs. These operators use similar business models to private shuttle programs (such as those offered by some employers and hotels) and are accustomed to working with communities to develop the type and scale of service needed.

The Revitalization Plan explored use of a shuttle service to link downtown destinations outside of a typical walking distance. While this was primarily tied to connecting remote parking to the core of downtown for purposes of making more public parking available during high-demand times, it could also serve other purposes. What is important for such a service is to define desired service times, assess the overall potential need for people to be moved (whether this is due to parking or otherwise), and a desired frequency of service. While it may not need to be the City's responsibility to provide frequent, highly convenient services, transportation industry research has demonstrated a relationship between quality of service (especially the frequency with which vehicles run) and how willing riders are to use it, especially those with a choice of travel modes.

This plan has not recommended a specific shuttle or circulator alignment, or even that such a service is needed in the near term given the apparent supply of



available parking and a limited number of destinations. However, the planning process has explored potential options and provided overall planning-level costs of operating each. More detail on these options can be found in the appendix to this report.

5.5.3.

Emerging Technology And Transit

The rapid pace of technology-driven change in transportation has also brought new potential service models for transit, including mobile-phone-based ride-on-demand services already in widespread use throughout the United States. The same basic user-driven technology platforms that are the foundation of popular ride-hail services such as Uber and Lyft are also being applied to shared-vehicle transportation, functioning as a localized form of transit that is based more on real-time user needs than on fixed routes and schedules (indeed, the transportation industry refers to these services as microtransit).

In the Dallas-Fort Worth area, Arlington offers a successful and well supported example of this, launching an on-demand microtransit service through the provider Via in 2014. In this service, a small district is defined as a service area, with users able to interact with the service and place requests through a software app that uses a mobile phone's location positioning to direct a vehicle driver to that user (and in some cases to direct the user to a nearby pickup point that is easier for the transit vehicle to reach). The software platform that operates the

system attempts to streamline service requests to minimize waiting and make the most of a shared vehicle—like conventional transit service—but does this in a way that allows routing to change based on service requests.

In Allen, there are several factors that point to microtransit as a potentially helpful part of a larger mobility mix. Specifically:

- Downtown's density is uneven, even if the preferred scenario of the Revitalization Plan is fully realized. However, there are destinations throughout downtown, as well as surrounding communities with no direct transit service, such as Allen High School or the Watters Creek mixed-use development.
- More conventional transit operators, such as DART, would likely attempt to designate service around the entire city based on potential ridership, which may not provide the kind of downtown-focused circulation that could add mobility options specific to that district. Linking from other parts of the city to downtown could also require transfers, which may add considerable time to a trip.
- Despite downtown's relatively complete grid of streets, challenges remain to making last-mile connections on foot, especially uneven quality of existing sidewalks and the sometimes hot and humid north Texas climate. The Revitalization Plan has recommended several approaches for addressing this, but a microtransit service might help in the short term to improve overall short-trip community access, especially allowing users to park in a single location.

Allen should also explore the emergence of other types of mobility, especially autonomous vehicles currently in development and testing phases in several communities around the United States. The ways these services operate may combine aspects of a more traditional fixed-route service with the dynamic routing of microtransit, but they introduce a considerably different model of service where costs are primarily focused on capital (the vehicles themselves) and do not require financial resources to cover labor costs and make service viable (in conventional transit service, labor costs for operators typically represent the majority of overall costs of the service).

Because of this potential for technology to improve service options, transportation agencies have already begun to develop their understanding of autonomous technology and to implement pilot applications that allow both users and operators to understand its opportunities and challenges. The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) has launched such a program, Automated Vehicles 2.0, with early steps to work with local governments to identify potential needs and future scenarios where autonomy could help to serve mobility needs and later steps to pilot deployments and integration of autonomy into regional transportation initiatives. As a member of NCTCOG, Allen has an opportunity to engage in processes such as these and offer perspective on how they can fit into the community. The continued evolution of this technology will likely bring other programs and opportunities in which Allen can enhance its understanding of needed next steps for this kind of technology to serve the community.

06

Urban Design





06.

Urban Design

The quality of the physical environment and private buildings and storefronts plays an important role in the overall experience of a downtown or commercial district. Visually appealing, well-maintained, and comfortable streetscapes together with inviting storefronts and clear signage impact the vitality of a commercial district. It is helpful to separate the physical environment into the public realm and the private realm to acknowledge the fundamentally different nature of the tactics and funding mechanisms available for each due primarily to ownership.

Following is a set of best practices recommendations for both the public and private realm. It is understood that in future public initiatives and private developments not every recommendation may be achieved or may not be applicable. However, the City of Allen and future developers should be required to address how they have incorporated key elements from the following list into their development plans. For private development, the Design Review Board can incorporate these urban design recommendations into their review process of future Downtown projects. Specific recommendations for changes to the design review criteria in the ALDC are included in the Implementation Chapter.

6.1.

Public Realm

A well-designed public realm attracts people and makes them want to linger. Great sidewalks don't just move pedestrians, they promote strolling, dining, people-watching, and spontaneous social gatherings. They also knit together an integrated system of public spaces. Within this system are places for people who want to walk a dog, ride a bike, sit and talk with friends, or enjoy public space in just about any way imaginable. Good design also accounts for human comfort in every season, with an emphasis on shade in the summer and even heat in the colder months to extend the outdoor environment. The following recommendations can greatly aid in attracting and encouraging both Allen residents and visitors to visit Downtown frequently—and extend their stays from just a one-stop-visit to several hours as they enjoy both the retail establishments, new Community Plaza, and cultural and other new additions to Downtown:

- Public squares and green spaces should be high quality and designed with the flexibility to support multiple uses ranging from small cultural gatherings to farmer/flea markets to larger programmed events.
- Temporary and programmed uses such as bazaars, festivals, carnivals, produce stands, food trucks, and seasonal outdoor sales are another excellent strategy for activating the public realm. These should be encouraged both in the proposed green spaces as well as within existing parking lots. Appropriate regulations may need to be created to safely and effectively manage these events. Any regulations should be flexible and more permissive to encourage creative and lively environments.
- Sidewalks should facilitate a variety of activities, including resting, people-watching and socializing. Street trees and benches are key amenities that support such activities and should be made available without disrupting the flow of pedestrians.



Figure 1: Food Trucks and other temporary programming greatly enhances the vibrancy of a Downtown and is easy and affordable to implement.



Figure 2: Awnings, consistent façade elements, and enough sidewalk space to allow a store to ‘spill out’ add to a high quality public realm

Based on the analysis of ROW and parking strategy recommendations (see Mobility Chapter), Main Street has the capacity to increase sidewalks on either side of the street by up to 10 feet. Similar increases in sidewalk widths can occur on other Downtown streets depending on what the future developments call for

- Sidewalks should be wide enough to accommodate both the flow of customers and spillover retail/dining activity. In addition, sidewalks should be

clean and well-maintained to ensure the safety and comfort of pedestrians.

- Sidewalks can also be used for outdoor sales. People tend to favor busy sidewalk areas with a complex visual environment; allowing retailers to “bring the store out into the street” is one effective way to create this environment.
- Street lighting should improve pedestrian visibility and personal safety, as well as aids in geographic

orientation.

- Improve quality and increase pedestrian amenities within the streetscape. Benches, trash and recycling receptacles, and other street amenities are important components of complete street design, but they also require routine maintenance in order to provide a high-quality environment.
- Wayfinding should support overall accessibility of a commercial district. It should benefit pedestrians and bicyclists and direct motorists to park and walk. Without clear visual cues, customers may find it difficult to park or may be less aware of local offerings.



Figure 3: Pedestrian-level lighting attracts evening visits, improves the perception of safety, and increases overall vibrancy

- Promote public art. Public art creates visual excitement and will help to draw visitors—and activity—to the public realm. The City should consider including temporary and permanent art installations as part of any redevelopment, events or marketing initiatives.
- Focus on Gateways. Gateways create a sense of arrival and play an important role in the overall branding of Downtown. They can incorporate historic elements that celebrate Downtown's past, or they can be more modern and reflective of the exciting future to come. Engaging the community and developing a shared consensus on the overall design elements will be an important step for successful implementation. Important Gateway locations for Downtown include North Allen and Interstate 75; West McDermott and Central Expressway South; the bridge over Cottonwood Creek at East Mary Drive, and East Main Street and North Greenville Avenue.
- Roads should be well-maintained to ensure safety of drivers and pedestrians. Crosswalks that are unsafe or inconvenient to customers may undermine accessibility between stores and overall shopper experience.
- Encourage and Support Improved Landscaping. The overall landscaping in Downtown Allen is not of high quality. For example, existing oak trees along Main Street have been problematic and should be replaced. The City should adopt specific landscape guidelines or even standards for Downtown. The City should require all new developments to adhere to new standards. Encourage current owners to

upgrade existing landscaping.

- Green and Screen Parking Lots. Parking lots and any potential new garage structures should be shielded as much as possible from sidewalks and streets through various landscaping and screening options.
- Enhance Gateways. Install branding elements, landscaping, and other aesthetic improvements at key gateways throughout the study area. New and visible investment in these gateways will immediately signal that positive change is taking place within Downtown.

6.2. Private Realm

Just as a high quality public realm attracts people to spend time in Downtown, the characteristics of the private side of the lot line should support economic activity as well as contribute to the overall vibrance of Downtown. Recommendations to create a high quality private realm include:

- Storefronts that maintain a minimum of 70% transparency ensure clear lines of sight between the business and the sidewalk to enhance attractiveness of storefront, as well as improve safety for the business, customers, and pedestrians.
- Landscape enhancement in the form of planters, hanging plant baskets, and other small contributions to the overall landscape environment within



Figure 4: Clear and attractive wayfinding increases and enhances visitor experiences



Figure 5: Public Art can greatly enhance the public realm and increase visits and activity.

Downtown (a public/private initiative to support this effort could be developed)

- Attractive window displays and spillover retail/restaurant activity on sidewalks or adjacent parking spaces can help contribute to overall district vibrancy.
- Signage that can help customers identify the location of storefronts and businesses from a distance. Signage should also reflect the visual brand and identity of tenants to help attract new customers.
- Awnings can provide shade during warmer months, enabling comfortable outdoor dining arrangements for customers. However, they must be well-maintained and designed in coordination with other elements of the storefront.
- Storefronts that use high-quality and durable building materials, as well as paint and color to differentiate from other businesses, can dramatically improve the appearance of the commercial district to potential customers.
- Storefront interior lighting after business hours helps to enliven the corridor and boost security on the street.



Figure 6: Seasonal planters and hanging baskets improve both the private and public realm. Developing a public/private partnerships to incent private businesses to invest in colorful planters (possibly with seasonal themes) can be a low-cost investment that demonstrates investment and pride for Downtown

07

Implementation





07.

Implementation

The most important piece of the Downtown Revitalization Plan is how to get it done. This chapter provides a clear, concise, and accountable roadmap for implementation focusing on Year 1 following the completion of this plan. Also included are including funding options that can be used in addition to the city's general fund and staff time resources.

7.1.

Regulatory Actions

To realize the vision and future development concept articulated in this Plan, several changes will need to be made to the Allen Land Development Code (ALDC) for the Central Business District. These are changes that can be proposed by staff or citizens for City Council consideration with possible help by consultants, to require redevelopment to happen that matches the vision. In some cases, this means relaxing development requirements and in other cases making them more stringent. In all cases, the intent of these recommendations is to help create a downtown that meets the collective vision of the community and resolve issues that were raised during community engagement. At the same time, they attempt to recognize the rights of property owners to encourage redevelopment.

7.1.1

Zoning Changes

| Goal | Recommendation |
|--|---|
| Avoid multi-family development causing negative impacts on adjacent single-family neighborhoods | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopt transition requirements for multi-family residential uses that abut single-family neighborhoods<ul style="list-style-type: none">o Established setbackso Requirements for open space and/or landscape bufferso Height step-backs for buildings (start at 2-stories closest to the neighborhood then move up as the setback gets larger) |
| Create a Downtown Core with consistent design standards and height restrictions to maintain a historic feel and create inviting space. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a Downtown Core (CBD – C) subdistrict and restrict heights there to 2-stories(Main Street from Allen Dr. to N. Austin Dr. and on Allen Dr. between Belmont Dr. to Boyd Dr.) |
| Reduce parking requirements so that small businesses looking to move to small lots downtown (or into existing buildings) can meet the standards. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Due to the availability of on-street parking, small parcels, increased walkability and bikeway connections, and mixture of residential and commercial uses, reduce parking standards in the CBD by one or more of the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">o Reduce parking requirements to Institute for Transportation Engineers (ITE) standards or Urban Land Institute (ULI) parking modelo Adopt a blanket percentage reduction in parking required for uses in the CBD (i.e.-20% fewer spaces required compared to uses in other parts of the city) |



Zoning Changes

| Goal | Recommendation |
|---|--|
| Require mixed use development to create less density/fewer multi-family residential units downtown. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change allowable uses in the CBD to only permit residential uses as part of a mixed-use development (in the same building or on the same site)• Conduct a city-wide housing gap analysis to determine what types of housing are needed in the City and which types would be appropriate for downtown. Analysis should include, but not limited to, extent to which there is a shortage, demand, or both of privately-owned residences (even if in multi-family units). Create incentives for the types of housing needed. |
| Provide an active, vibrant street level environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Require active ground-level commercial or institutional uses (not including offices) for buildings fronting Main Street and Allen Drive• Create easy-to-use standards and permit process for outdoor seating and sales displays• Increase minimum sidewalk width in the CBD – need specific width |
| Primary action office: Community Development, Planning & Zoning Commission | |
| Estimated Completion Date: March 2023 | |

7.1.2

Revised Design Guidance

Recent development proposals and feedback received during the planning process have demonstrated a need to revise the design standards within the ALDC that are used by the Design Review Committee when evaluating new downtown developments. A Design Standards Committee should be established to work with staff to complete this work.

- Create clearer design requirements for new buildings (private realm), including:
 - o Generally, include discrete requirements, rather than relying on similar structures or the surroundings. Existing structures or surrounding properties may not reflect the desired character of the new development.
 - o Define “traditional design elements” (rooflines, architectural features (such as parapets, cornices, lintels,) transom windows, color)
 - o Create clear, quantifiable requirements for the placement of off-street parking (e.g. – maximum 50% of a site’s off-street parking can be located along the street frontage).
 - o Include requirements for how often a façade must be broken up (e.g. every 100 ft.).
 - o Articulate requirements for texture, pattern and scale in terms that do not rely on predominant existing materials.
 - o Provide reference images or illustrations to further clarify requirements.

- Create a map of sites designated as “historic” by the Design Review Committee. These sites could be used as examples of the character desired in new developments. Standards for re-use or preservation of these buildings could also be adopted.
- Develop a set of Public Realm standards to guide the implementation of new street, streetscape, and public space projects that will ensure consistency and a common theme.

Primary action office: Community Development, Design Review Committee

Estimated Completion Date: March 2023¹

7.2. Downtown Rebranding

To generate excitement about the downtown revitalization effort, the DSC and city staff will work to create a new name/slogan and rebranding for the downtown area. The brand will build on the success of the Downtown Allen: Dare to Dream effort that carried through this revitalization plan.

Primary action office: Public & Media Relations (in coordination with Convention and Visitors Bureau)

Estimated Completion Date: March 2023

7.3. Public Improvements

The City can take a significant step towards revitalizing the downtown by making public investments in downtown spaces and infrastructure. Some of these steps can be done concurrently with the regulatory changes.

7.3.1 Community Plaza

The piece of the development concept that will get people most excited about downtown is the Community Plaza – the gathering place for events, recreating and relaxing. The property is currently owned by the City and EDC and is located right in the heart of downtown, at the southwest corner of Main St. and Allen Dr. One of the parcels of land on that site includes the historic fire station that is owned by the EDC. The EDC may explore opportunities to leverage part of that structure (e.g., fire station bays) to partner with a private entity that could add a food, beverage, and programming component to the plaza

The City and EDC, in consultation with the Parks and Recreation Board and Community Development Corporation, should begin the process of designing this space while the regulatory changes are being made to support private development.

Primary action office: Community Development, EDC, CDC and Parks and Recreation Board

Estimated time frame: begin October 2022

7.3.2 Pedestrian and Bike Connections

Improving pedestrian and bike connections and safety were a high priority for the Allen community. The Mobility Chapter presents many recommendations for these improvements, and several involve significant investments in reconfiguring Main Street. Some of the implementation measures that could be completed in the next year include:

- Add sidewalks to Main Street between Allen Drive and U.S. 75
- Reconfigure the Main Street streetscape in the Historic Core district, moving existing curb lines to increase space available for streetscape and sidewalk width.

Primary action office: Public Works, Community Development

Estimated Completion Date: July 2023

¹Since these private realm design standards should be incorporated into zoning changes identified in the prior section, it is expected that the Revised Design Guidance process will be concurrent with zoning changes. Public realm standards may be completed concurrently or slightly later.



7.4. Other Recommendations/ Items for Study

Throughout the Plan several recommendations for future study are included. The City can begin this work within the year after this Plan is adopted:

- Consider creating a façade or building improvement grant fund so that owners of existing buildings can make improvements to their buildings, storefronts and sidewalk spaces that coincide with infill and redevelopment on other properties.
- Prioritize investments in lighting and street furniture to create more inviting spaces for people to gather and stroll. These types of public investments catalyze property owners to invest in their own facades and outdoor spaces.
- Decide whether there is value in the long-term preservation of privately-owned historical structures and/or structures that depict Allen's heritage. If so, the City should work with the property owners on developing a strategy to achieve this goal.
- The City Council appoint a city department or citizen group to facilitate the planning and coordinating of community programming in Downtown Allen.

- To facilitate business development in Downtown Allen,
 - o The city manager should make downtown business attraction an explicit responsibility of a city department or entity(ies) (such as the EDC, Convention and Visitors Bureau, and/or Chamber of Commerce).
 - o The City should utilize various incentive mechanisms to attract and support new business establishments, with a focus on locally-owned businesses that would fill out the mix of stores, service providers, or food and beverage businesses
 - o Increase the EDC's organizational focus on downtown Allen, and make that increased focus evident on its website, taking actions such as adding a "Downtown Allen section."

7.5. Monitoring and Reporting

To ensure that implementation of the plan is moving forward, staff should provide a monthly status report to the Deputy City Manager and quarterly status reports to the Mayor and City Council. If authorizations and/or funding decisions need to be made, those decision points should be called out in the status reports.

7.6. Funding Matrix

Implementing the plan for downtown Allen will require financial investments in the plan elements that will not occur by private investment alone. The source of those resources, and the lead party in constructing different plan elements, will vary. In considering the availability of funding, it can be helpful to think of plan elements in three broad categories.

For **public realm** elements such as streets, sidewalks and parks, the City of Allen is likely to play the lead role in their funding and construction. Having said that, the resources to make those improvements can come from a broad range of sources. And other parties can play important roles, including the Allen EDC, business associations, and even public-minded corporations or individuals.

Real estate development such as apartments, stores and restaurants, and hotels are funded primarily by developers and property owners, but where there are site conditions that present impediments to desired development, or development types that are not strongly supported by the market, additional financial support may be needed to attract development. For example, public incentives may be needed to attract small-scale local business development in the downtown core.

Programmatic activities in downtown Allen also need to be paid for, and funding for these may come from the broadest set of contributors. The City of Allen, the Allen Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Chamber of Commerce, the downtown business community, civic

organizations—all can play a role in putting on downtown events, promoting shopping and dining, sprucing up storefronts and signage, rehabilitating older buildings, etc.

Table 1 offers a selected set of funding sources that are well suited to support public realm improvements, new development and programmatic activities in downtown Allen. Some of the funding sources have already been established and are being utilized in Allen. For those, the opportunity is to understand the ways they can be focused on supporting the development and activation of downtown Allen. Other funding sources in Table XX would be new resources that can play an important role in implementing the vision for downtown Allen.

Note that implementation success also hinges on organizational capacity to pursue implementation efforts, including seeking out and applying for grants to support revitalization efforts. Dedicating a City employee or contractor to this effort over the near to medium term is recommended.

Table 1: Candidate Funding Sources for Downtown Revitalization Plan Implementation

| Source | Description | Eligible plan elements | Sponsors |
|---|--|---|----------------------------|
| Grants | Grant funding is available at the state and federal level for a wide variety of municipal projects. Some of the difficulty is matching the program or need to available grants at the time, as well as matching the funder's goals. Grants should always be researched as an option prior to any implementation action. Sometimes local planning assistance funding is available at the state or regional level. | Infrastructure improvements, historic preservation, planning | Multitude of grant sources |
| Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Zone | The City of Allen has an existing TIF Zone (TIF Zone #2) that encompasses its downtown area. The TIF Fund is capitalized from the growth in property taxes and sales taxes that come from property in the TIF Zone. The specific purpose of the TIF Zone is to "attract new investment and encourage revitalization of the Central Business District." | Roads, sidewalks and other public infrastructure, demolition, facade preservation, environmental remediation, public buildings, etc | City of Allen |
| Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT Tax) | The City of Allen has established a HOT Tax. Hotels in the City levy a 7% HOT tax on top of other room charges. Those revenues are forwarded to the City of Allen, which utilizes the funds to support its Convention and Allen Event Center, and for other tourism related activities. Funds from HOT Taxes can also be utilized to support improvements and activities in downtown Allen. | Advertising and promoting downtown tourism, arts programming, historic restoration or preservation, wayfinding signage | City of Allen |



| Source | Description | Eligible plan elements | Sponsors |
|---|---|--|-------------------------|
| Economic Development Sales Tax (Type A and Type B) | The City of Allen has established a Type A and a Type B Economic Development Sales Tax. The Economic Development Corporation (EDC) collects and oversees a half-cent sales tax for Type A projects that generally support business development within the city. The Community Development Corporation (CDC) also collects and oversees a half-cent sales tax. The CDC oversees Type B projects that generally fund land, buildings, equipment, and improvements that are suitable for professional and amateur athletics, entertainment and tourism, parks, and trails and public spaces. | Infrastructure improvements associated with new businesses, park facilities and events, entertainment and tourist facilities | Allen EDC and Allen CDC |
| Chapter 380 Agreements | The City of Allen has established a program for utilizing Chapter 380 Agreements to offer incentives to new businesses. The City has traditionally used this mechanism to rebate a percentage of a business' sales and/or property taxes over time. This program can play a role in fostering local business development in Downtown Allen. | New local business development | City of Allen |
| Venue Taxes | A venue project tax could be adopted in Allen to fund a designated new "venue". The venue tax receipts can come from a sales tax, a hotel occupancy tax, a short-term motor vehicle rental tax, an event parking tax, an event admissions tax, and/or a venue facility use tax. The designated purpose of the venue tax could be the creation of a downtown signature park or public space. | A signature downtown park or public space | City of Allen |

08

Appendices



APPENDICES

A: Community Input

B: Scenarios

C: DSC Phase 1

D: Fiscal Analysis

E: Background

A

Community Input



WHAT WE HEARD– Personal Vision Statements (VISIONING WORKSHOPS–FEB 2022)



Common Community-Identified Themes:

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Improve mobility | walk/bike: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have easy access for bicycles • Have well-maintained brick sidewalks with walking-friendly street crossing • Have a walkable connection to the trail network • I would like a much better way to bike through the area and be able to shop to get a sandwich or coffee • Be accessible to walk or bike to outside, support walking, hiking, biking to be connected to other communities <p>including Collin County trails</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have some streets as pedestrian-only, clean, tree-shaded with enough lighting • Increase safely walkable areas • Sidewalks connecting to other recreational locations • Be pedestrian-friendly • A well-maintained biking path through downtown, linking with the trail system <p>Public Transit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to DART or shuttle to dart stations • Public transport hub | Build a supportive environment for local businesses to thrive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mix of family-friendly, unique, destination-type core businesses that will bring in and from residents of neighboring cities and provide the foundation for other businesses to follow suit. • Protect current businesses • Incentivize local business growth • I want to see locally owned shops that appeal to a wide range of people • Local businesses that can afford the rent to stay • Incubator for mom-and-pop shops |
| Develop entertaining activities and places for all group ages | <p>Places:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A central gathering place with restaurants and retail • Concert halls for music+theatre • More dining and some entertainment options like an arcade, an art exhibition space, or a small movie theatre • Variety of destinations, shopping, arts, performance, fun areas • Outdoor music/performance venues • Have dining/bar with outdoor <p>seating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maker space • Art galleries • Community garden • Coffee shops • Co-working space • Beer garden • Gaming stations • Dog park <p>Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor theatre • Food trucks on weekends • Festivals • Farmers markets • Group Yoga | Encourage mixed-use development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have 3-story or less mixed-use buildings with living spaces, residential, retail, dining, etc. • Mixed-use space, as residents in walking distance of businesses, will provide a convenient steady customer base • Have live/work/play areas • Maximum 2-story buildings with housing on top and businesses on the bottom • Provide business, cultural and dining opportunities that would draw people both day and night • Diverse businesses: brewery to bookstore/coffee shop |
| Preserve and expansion of historic character | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain historical look and feel • Maintain and expand heritage areas • Showcase heritage • More blue houses • Old-time look | Increase parks, open spaces, and trail network <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on environmental sustainability, a unique tropical ecosystem model, a living attraction that can promote research & awareness, while making it fun to explore • Open park areas that are pleasant to walk around with coffee shops, sidewalk cafes and grassy treed areas. • Have green spaces with farmers market • Open green spaces similar to klyde warren park |

Samples: "For me, a revitalized Downtown Allen would..."

“ My dream would be to see Allen Dr. closed between Coats and Main St. with a plaza and 3-4 story buildings fronting the plaza with a small retail restaurant with living above ”

“ Be Attractive, Be a place for learning, Be a place for kids to play, Be a place for special eating experiences ”

“ The feel of downtown McKinney with a “square” that would attract occasional farmers’ markets or holiday events ”

“ Create something that Allen residents can point to as our “identity”, a landmark that is appealing both architecturally and functionally ”

“ I would like Allen to be known for something so special that it attracts people to our area from out of state. Maybe a museum of special interest, theatre or musical venue, some theme that is similar to “Allen home of the 60-million-dollar stadium” ”

“ Welcoming, inviting, easy to access ”

“ Be a gathering place for a morning coffee, a quick lunch, dinner with friends, a quick cocktail for any occasion ”

“ Experience what is the newest/latest in cooking/baking, plants/gardens, fashion, music/art ”

“ Be extremely walkable with outdoor space, lighting, and art. I could shop and grab a coffee or beer or wine to drink while listening to outdoor music ”

“ A revitalized downtown Allen would be a destination for residents and visitors. I would love to see the historic village and depot museum go open more ”

“ A great place to hang out and meet up with friends on the weekend ”

“ Allen’s downtown area is someplace I can go during the day or evening, walk to restaurants, and galleries or attend a concert. People will live downtown or come in for the day from neighboring communities ”

WHAT WE HEARD – Table Map Exercise (VISIONING WORKSHOPS–FEB 2022)



What do you see as downtown's assets?

- + Library
- + Green Spaces like Skate Park
- + Train Depot
- + Street Structure+Character of one block of Main st.
- + Church
- + Heritage Village
- + Existing Historic Character+Spaces
- + Senior Center
- + Easy Access (Proximity to 75)
- + Public Buildings (Police and Fire Dept, City hall)
- + Trails
- + Individually owned restaurants/ small businesses
- + Birthing Center
- + Existing Businesses
- + Allen Café
- + Professional offices (Medical/Dental, banks), Local Arts, Christmas Parade/Event, Rodenbaugh, Room to Grow, Proximity to all education facilities, Advantage of international/ cultural composition of population, Public art, Family-oriented community, Small-town feel, Scenic creeks

LOVE

What are your concerns for the future of the area?

- + Parking
- + Having the right mix (Downtown Residential, Affordable housing? Who will live there? How current residents and businesses will be respected? Balance between residential and commercial, A lot of apartments are too close to single-family, Don't want another massive shopping center)
- + Accessibility (pedestrians, cars, bikes)
- + Noise (ex: Impact of nightlife on the surrounding areas)
- + Traffic
- + A homogeneous whole/Look, Cohesiveness of area
- + Safety
- + Quality of businesses (Not too many bars)
- + Small businesses affordability
- + No draw to sustain the population
- + Overgrown rundown properties
- + Economic viability
- + Historical Preservation
- + Getting Started- defining a smaller area
- + Assets are not connected, Loss of revenue and growth, Space/building setbacks, So many different landowners, Church as a large landowner, Current developer owned properties, Pedestrian amenities, Older home that need some love, Citizen resistance to multi-family, Design standards to maintain character, Downtown closes at 5 pm, Zoning challenges, Car repair businesses

CONCERN

What opportunities do you see for the area?

- + Open/Outdoor Spaces (Town Square, Plaza)
- + Art hall/Art cultural center
- + Improved walkability/Bikeability
- + Connect all the trails/Access to trails
- + Have residents living in downtown (High-end residential/Housing above businesses/2-3 story rooftop access for restaurants & bars, Mixed-use east of Allen)
- + Multimodal transit (Put old train track to use, Central trolley around DT, Free shuttle bus, Transit opportunities like Rubber-tired)
- + More small local businesses
- + Community gardens
- + More unique dining not chain
- + Family-Friendly destination spot for day and night/for everyone
- + Improve accessibility/mobility
- + History preservation (Build on historic properties (reconfigure old fire station as an art-makers space), Expansion of historic part, History center)
- + Add variety to existing athletic facilities for all ages, splash pad, climbing structure
- + Creating a central green space or outdoor event area (possibly on site of the old post office or / by the train depot)
- + Farmers Market
- + Colorful/vibrant, Texas live vibe downtown, Fun architecture, Use of alleyways for pedestrian/businesses, Reflect newer areas, Uniformity of look, Bed & Breakfast (including heritage village), Food trucks, Single family housing, Affordable rent for local businesses, Events, Moody gardens, Grand money HUD for home improvement, Tax credit volunteerism, Train as an attraction for kids or for general transportation, Museums, Connecting assets, Variety in housing, Shared parking, Sculpture Garden, Art walk, Change zoning to support food trucks, Partner with churches, International festivals, Trolley, Common Space (we work)

OPPORTUNITY

TOP 5 PRIORITIES:

- 1 Improve Safe mobility-walk/bike/public transit
- 2 Develop entertaining activities and places for all group ages where people want to GO
- 3 Preserve and expansion of historic character
- 4 Build a supportive environment for local businesses to thrive
- 5 Encourage mixed-use development but no high-rises

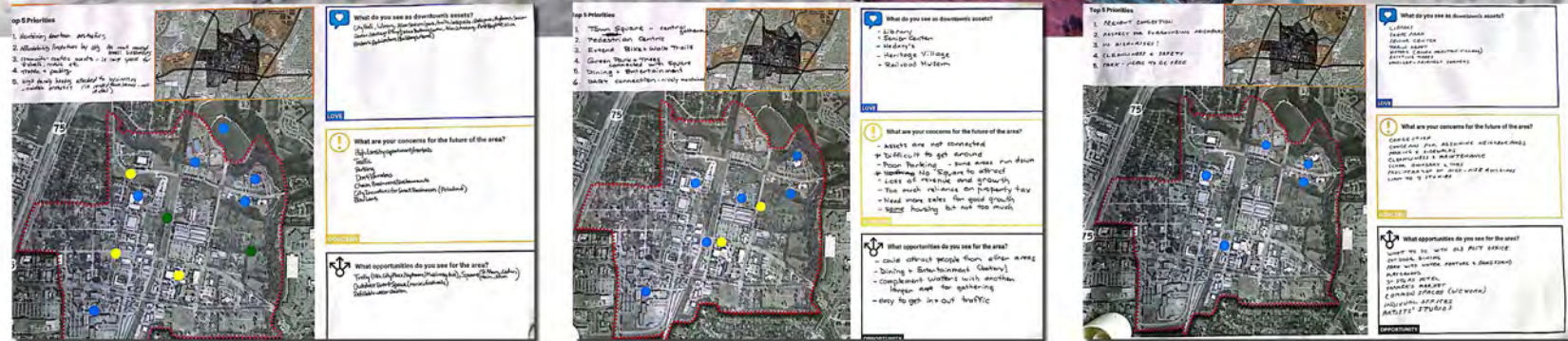
MORE DETAILS:

- + Desirable Destinations (More experiences "hands-on", Ensuring something for everyone/all ages, Family-friendly activities, Versatility of mixed-use spaces)
- + Safety
- + Preserve and expansion of historic character (Architectural standards for continuity and preservation of historic character)
- + Downtown housing (No Apartments, Cottages would be better, Create housing above shops not too tall and huge apartment buildings, more like townhomes like McKinney, Efficiently planned multi-use housing)
- + Art/Cultural center (museum, Art classes, Cooking Classes, Music classes) Cultural Venues (Food, entertainment, arts, maker space)
- + Parking (Keep parking outside- Not as much street parking)
- + Quality, smaller local businesses (Restaurants/Outdoor entertainment/Retail Shops)
- + Green Space/trail connection
- + Gym/workout/fitness facilities
- + Repurposing unused buildings
- + Activate through pop-ups and other events
- + Be unique, differentiate from Plano and McKinney

WHAT WE HEARD – Table Map Exercise (VISIONING WORKSHOPS–FEB 2022)



Samples:



6-Word Story Summary – Allen High School

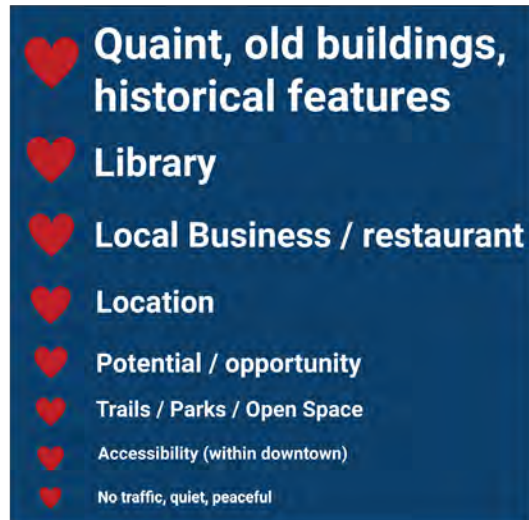


WHAT WE HEARD- Online Survey (DEC 2021 to MAR 2022) -834 Responses

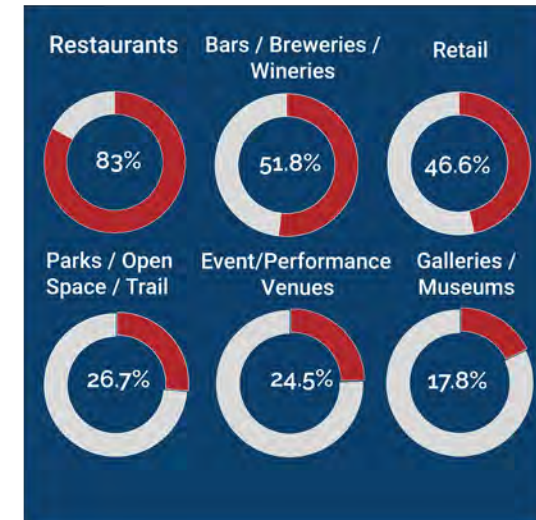
Top three reasons for visiting Downtown:



I love Downtown because:



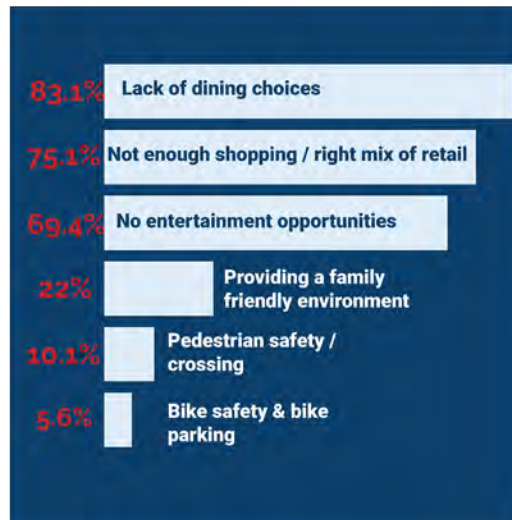
Amenities that I would add:



I dislike Downtown because:



Top challenges facing Downtown:

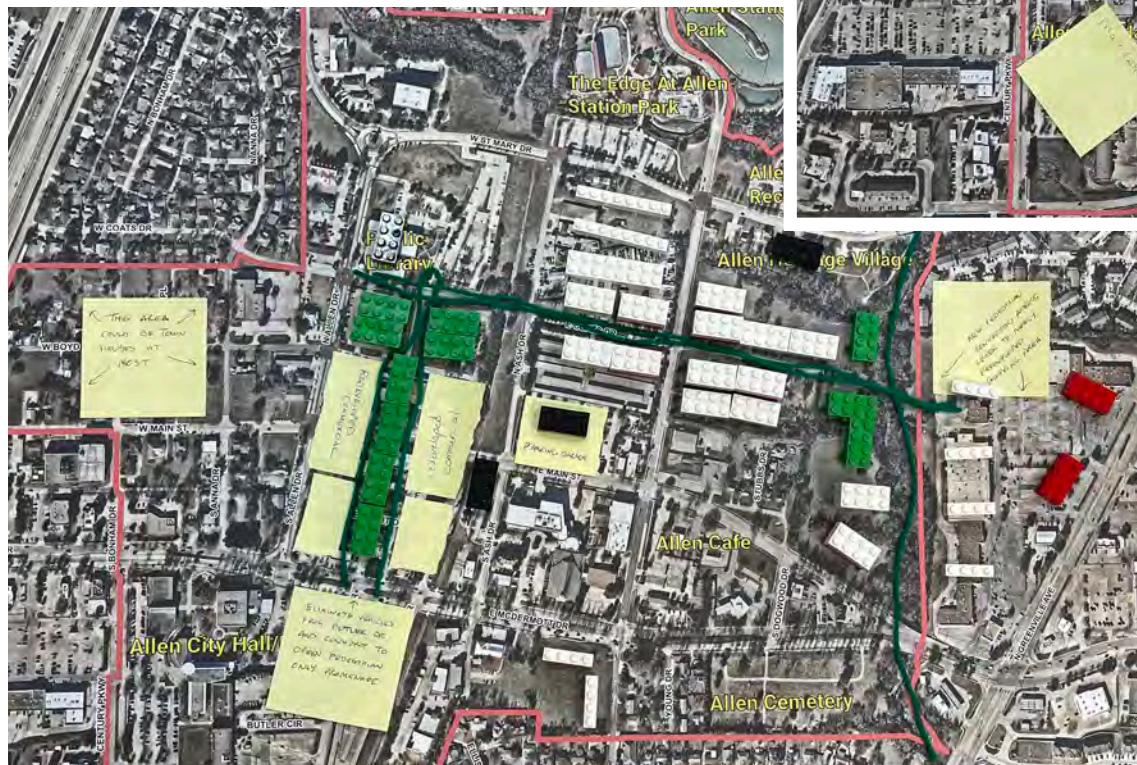
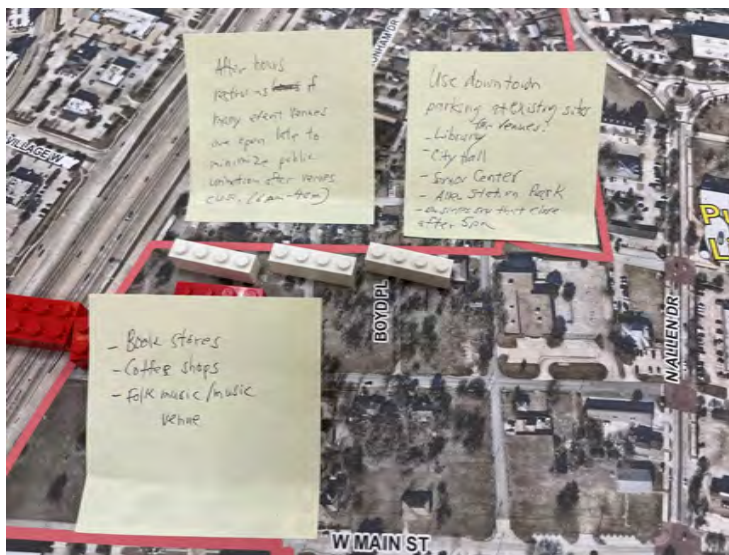


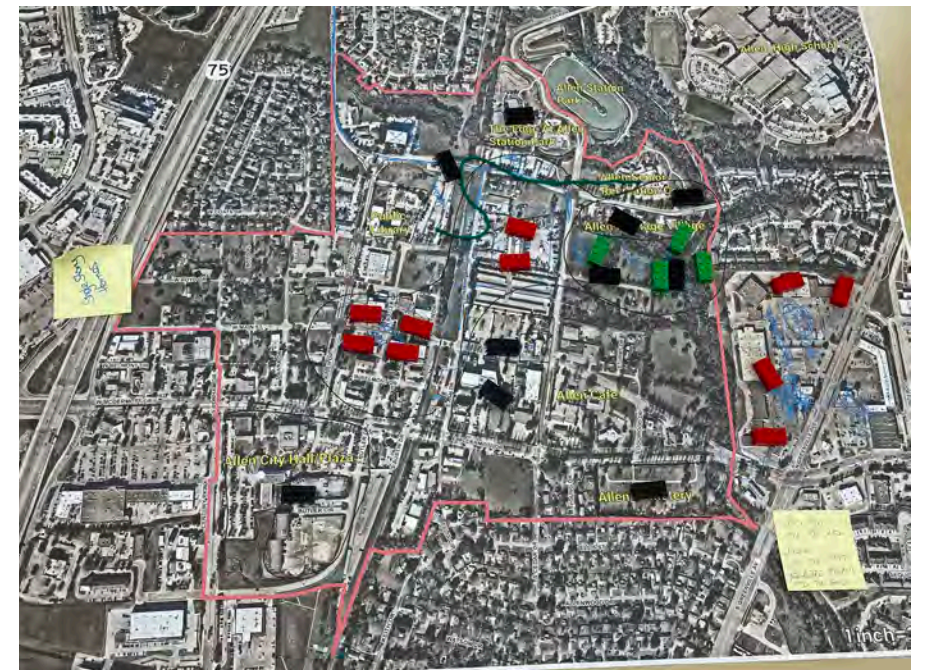
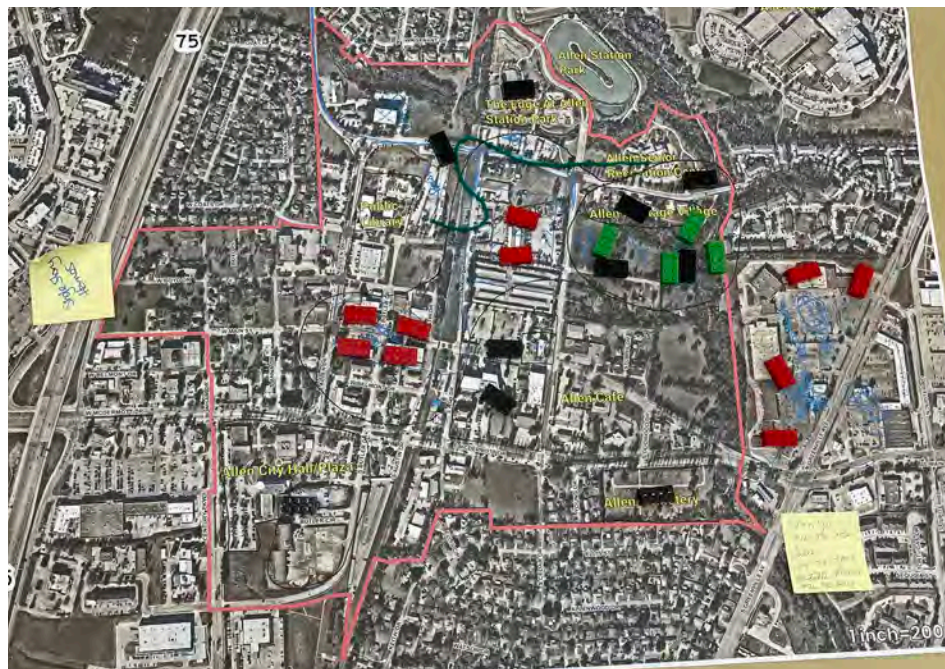
Top opportunities:











Charrette Visual Preference Survey



Visual Preference Survey

Tell us what you think!

Land Use & Development

Attached Residential: What's your favorite?



Visual Preference Survey

Tell us what you think!

Land Use & Development

Mixed-Use Development: What is your favorite?



Visual Preference Survey

Tell us what you think!

Land Use & Development

Detached Residential and Townhome: What's your favorite?



2-6 Story Townhome



2- to 3-Story Townhomes



Tiny



3-Story Townhome



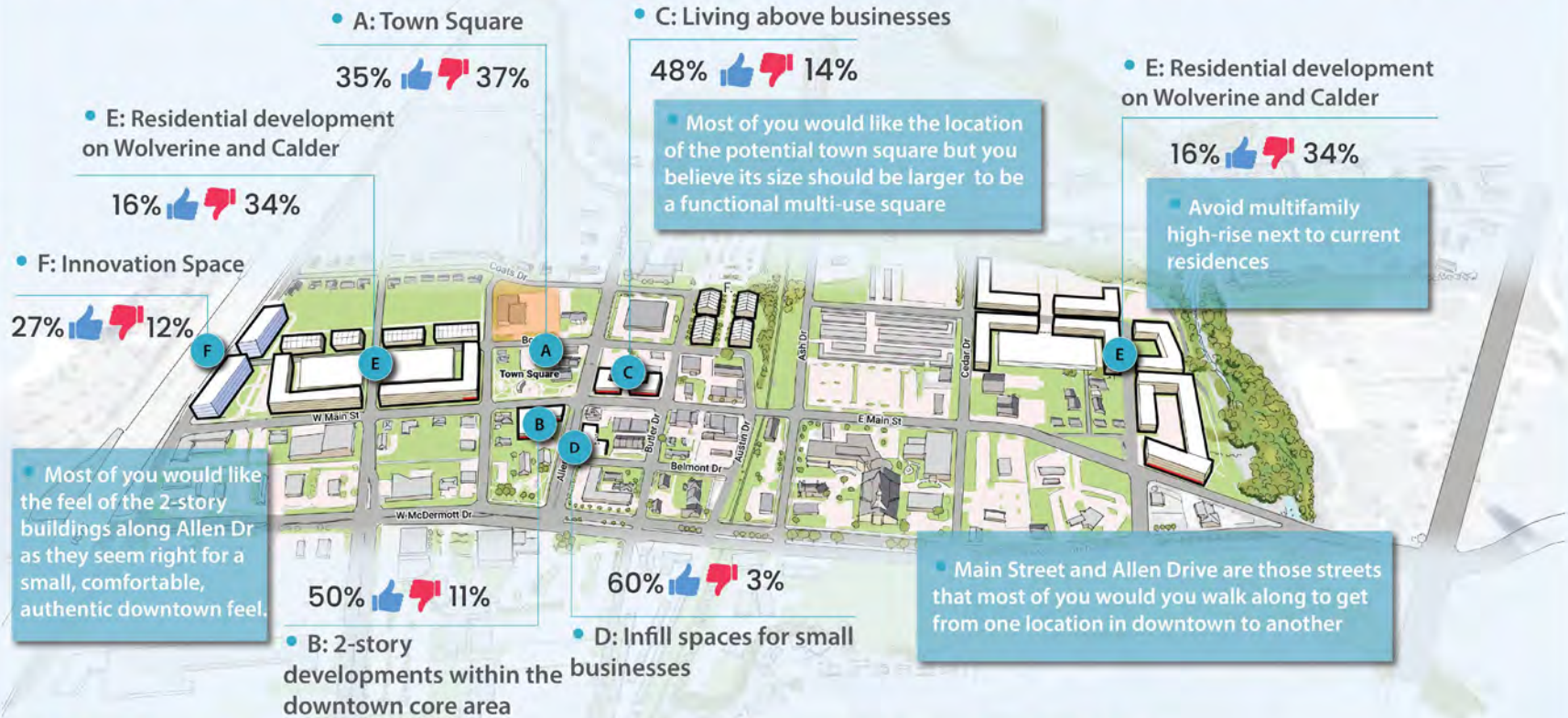
Small Lots



Live-Work

Scenario Feedback

YOUR FEEDBACK ON DOWNTOWN ALLEN SCENARIO I



The top 4 programming you'd like to see on the Town Square:



Market/Farmer's Market



Concerts/music



Festivals/holiday events

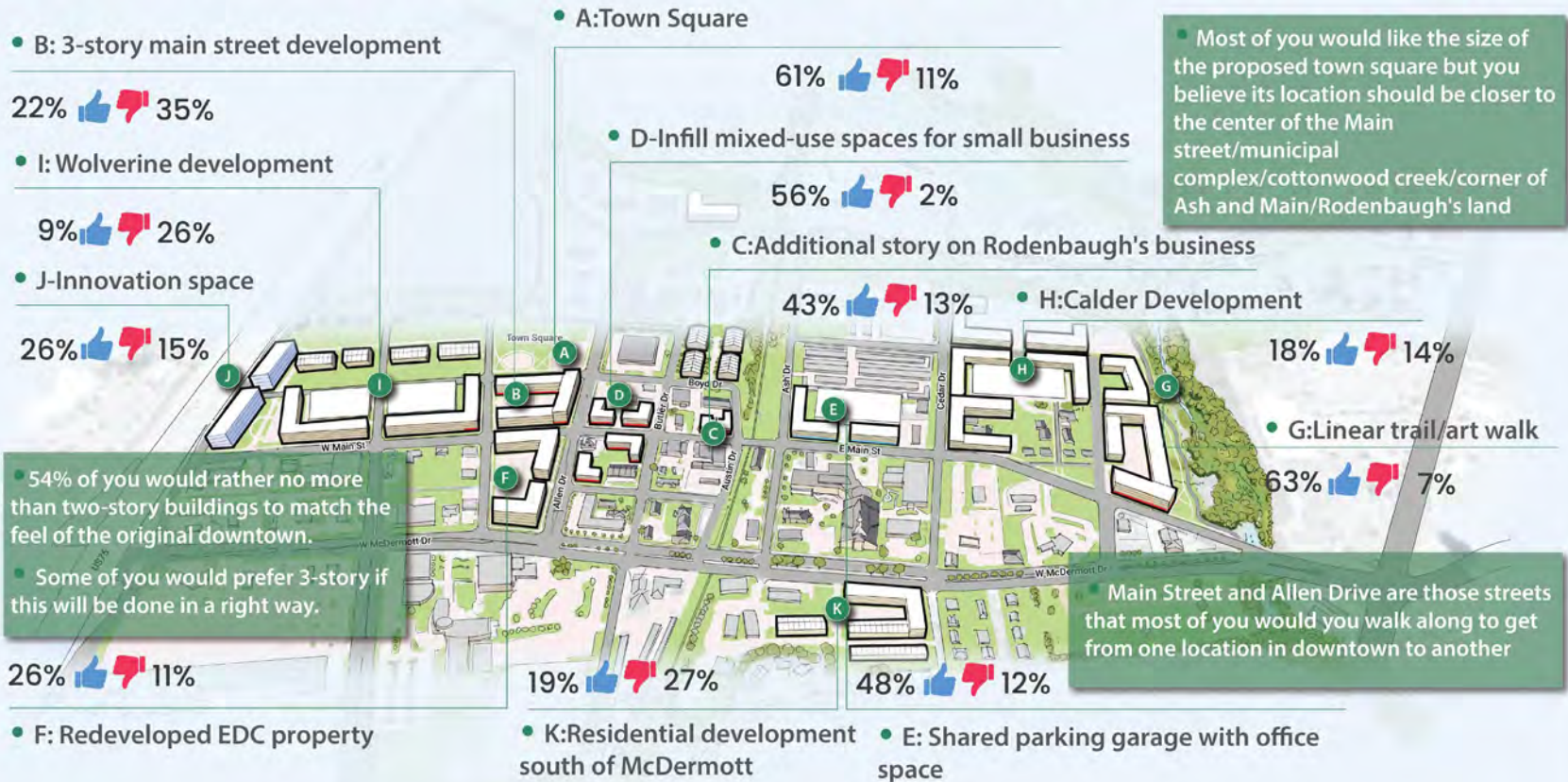


Outdoor dining

The main changes you'd like to make in this scenario:

- Larger downtown core with 2 story shops/residential
- The historical district boundaries should be clearly identified and development standards identified
- Connect all bike/walking trails through CBD
- Don't want major residential development on Wolverine Calder parcels, no large Residential development near existing homeowner communities
- Ensure adequate parking for shopping/dining and special events
- More support and opportunities for small, unique small businesses and restaurants.

YOUR FEEDBACK ON DOWNTOWN ALLEN SCENARIO II



The top 4 programming you'd like to see on the Town Square:



Market/Farmer's Market



Concerts/music



Festivals/holiday events



Food Trucks

The main changes you'd like to make in this scenario:

- Make this a large park/play/dine/walk/engage/entertain/gather/shop area. People are so tired of the live-work-play thing.
- No more apartment building
- Make it unique
- No large Residential developments near existing homeowner communities
- increase the amount of intentionally designed and incorporated green spaces.

YOUR FEEDBACK ON DOWNTOWN ALLEN SCENARIO III



- J: Infill development north along Allen Dr.

23% 16%

- L: Gateway commercial building

16% 21%

- N: Redevelopment of former post office

38% 14%

- G: Wolverine Residential Development

8% 40%

- K: Innovation space

23% 15%

- A: Town Square/Civic Building

46% 18%

25% 18%

- C: Mixed use development on City property

- B: 4-story redevelopment at Allen/Main

11% 46%

Most of you would rather no more than 2-3 story buildings to match the feel of the original downtown.

You would love the Central Park idea.

More than 70% of you like the idea of redevelopment of the Cottonwood Creek Shopping Center

- E: Shared parking structure and office space

34% 7%

- F: Redevelopment of storage and truck parking space

32% 14%

- H: Residential development on Calder property parking space

15% 25%

- O: Central Park

58% 9%

- M: Redevelopment of Cottonwood Creek Shopping Center

37% 16%

- P: Realignment of Main St.

31% 17%

18% 25%

- D: Residential development south of McDermott

27% 15%

- I: Redevelopment of sites with existing businesses

The top 4 programming you'd like to see on the Town Square:



Market/Farmer's Market



Concerts/music



Festivals/holiday events



Outdoor Dining

The main changes you'd like to make in this scenario:

- We need to add dedicated bike/walking trails around downtown
- Remove the invasive large apartments
- Too intense, too much! too many people, traffic, in a small space
- No development taller than 2-3 stories
- No more residential

B

Scenarios



DOWNTOWN ALLEN SCENARIO I

BLUE is what we heard from you!



Scenario one includes strategic infill on vacant or publicly owned parcels near a **small, focused core downtown area** (Allen and Main). The focus here is on programming of events in new public spaces to increase visitors and support more retail. In this scenario, we do not propose any changes to properties currently developed and owned privately.



• Residential development on the Wolverine and Caldor parcels

• Smaller town square located at Allen Dr. and Main St. (south of the Masonic Lodge) suitable for events such as: **farmers or artists markets, pop-up events, food trucks**



• 2-story developments within the downtown core area, creating a **compact destination** that is highly walkable.

• Opportunities for **living above businesses** (vertical mixed-use buildings)

• Small spaces for **small, unique, local shops and restaurants** surrounding the town square

• **Infill and redevelopment** on EDC-owned property along Allen Dr.



Scan this QR code to share your feedback on Downtown Allen Scenarios!

| SCENARIO 1 | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|
| | Commercial (sqft) | Office (sqft) | Residential (units) | Public (sqft) |
| Total | 65,000 | 130,000 | 971 | 40 |
| Fiscal Impact | | | | |
| New Non-Property Taxes | \$4,302,024 | | | |
| New Sales Tax Revenue | (\$48,000) | | | |
| Net Sales Tax Revenue | (\$48,000) | | | |
| Net Sales Tax Revenue | (\$48,000) | | | |
| Additional Cost of City Services | (\$395,000) | | | |
| Net Fiscal Impact | \$3,759,024 | | | |

DOWNTOWN ALLEN SCENARIO II

GREEN is what we heard from you!



Scenario 2 begins to buildout the downtown core in an east-west direction along Main Street. Increased housing along Allen Drive and development on the Calder property helps to expand the Main Street environment by two blocks. There is also a greenway along Cottonwood Creek.



- Larger Town Square located on the former post-office property suitable for: a **sport court/active recreation space**, **concerts**, **outdoor movies**, **water features**, **community gardens** and **lounging spaces**, **large festivals**.



- Cottonwood Creek Greenway which may contain an **art walk** to supplement passive recreation and **nature** space.
- **Shared parking garage** wrapped with office/commercial uses on the current site of the First Baptist Church parking lot.



- **3-story mixed use buildings** along Allen Dr. and Main St.



- An additional story for residential or office use on Rodenbaugh's

- More infill and redevelopment, providing flexible spaces for **entrepreneurs**, **maker spaces**, and **other small businesses**.

| SCENARIO 2 | | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| | commercial (sqft) | innovation / office (sqft) | apartment (units) | townhome (units) |
| Total | 98,000 | 157,000 | 1,768 | 90 |
| Fiscal Impact | | | | |
| Net New Property Taxes | \$7,680,898 | | | |
| Net Sales Tax Revenues (From Retail Development) | \$428,000 | | | |
| Net Sales Tax Revenues (From New Household Spending) | \$289,612 | | | |
| Additional Cost of City Services | (\$1,684,316) | | | |
| Net Fiscal Impact | \$6,714,201 | | | |



Scan this QR code to share your feedback on Downtown Allen Scenarios!

DOWNTOWN ALLEN SCENARIO III

YELLOW is what we heard from you!



Scenario 3 further builds out the downtown with more development in a north-south direction along Allen Dr. This includes straightening main street to connect to what is currently the Cottonwood Creek Village shopping center. Coats Drive is extended in a similar manner. A medium-sized Town Square along with a multi-cultural activity center is located on the property along Allen Dr. owned by the EDC. The greenway along Cottonwood Creek is expanded to a larger Central Park.



• More opportunities for **living downtown**, above businesses with 4-story infill and redevelopment largely focused along Allen Drive (mixed-use)



• Town Square and multi-cultural center on EDC-owner property along Allen Dr., suitable for **small play space (playground), festivals, outdoor markets, arts/cooking/music classes, maker space**

• Redevelopment of some sites with existing businesses, with businesses relocated to ground levels of new buildings



• Two additional stories added above Rodenbaugh's

• Large **"central park"** along Cottonwood Creek (connections to **open space, trails and parks**)

Higher density development on the Calder property, supporting an additional 3 blocks of mixed-use downtown development

Future mixed-use redevelopment of the Cottonwood Creek shopping center

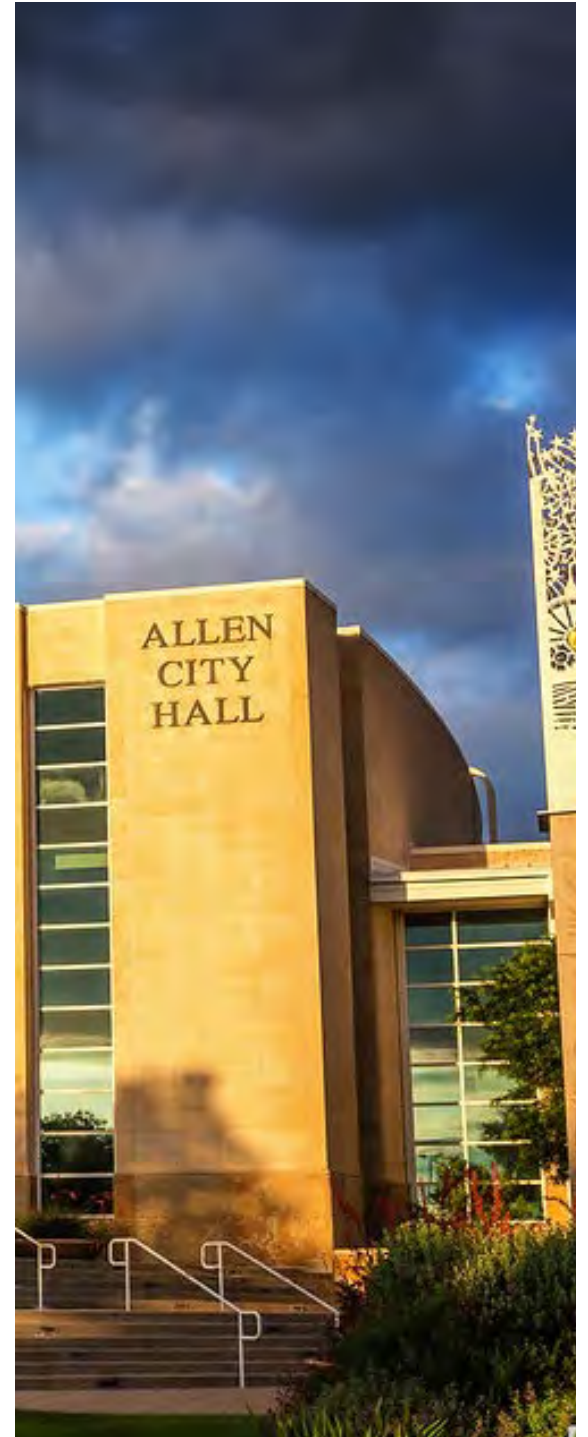


Scan this QR code to share your feedback on Downtown Allen Scenarios!

| SCENARIO 3 | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Commercial (sqft) | Residential Office (sqft) | Apartment (units) | Marketplace (units) | |
| 222,000 | 157,000 | 5,891 | 90 | |
| Fiscal Impact | | | | |
| Net New Property Taxes | | | | \$17,348,795 |
| Net Sales Tax Revenue (From Retail Development) | | | | (\$104,000) |
| Net Sales Tax Revenue (From Non-Retail Development) | | | | \$604,192 |
| Additional Cost of City Services | | | | (\$2,684,140) |
| Net Fiscal Impact | | | | \$15,164,799 |

C

DSC Phase 1 Report



Downtown Steering Committee

Learning from Other
Communities



LINE OF EFFORT: GOAL

- Identify and visit nearby redeveloped downtown areas of similar size to help identify examples of what may be possible and what might be desired for our downtown area.
- Consider seeking information, data, pictures, etc. of similar redeveloped downtowns in comparably sized communities elsewhere in the State of Texas which are located too far away to reasonably visit.
- Identify community activities that occur in those downtown areas.

RESEARCH METHOD

- Identify **Targeted Cities** within the surrounding area to review through site visits or internet searches
- Create **Research Criteria** standards that would be used to collect, review and compare other communities with
- **Data Collection** through photos, first-person accounts and internet searches
- **Data Analysis** to identify and document “best-cases” for each criteria point
- Create **Summary** to present recommendations on details, elements and designs that should be considered as the Downtown Steering Committee moves into Phase 2 – The VISIONING PROCESS

TARGETED CITIES

Addison

Denton

Georgetown (*internet*)

McKinney

Round Rock (*internet*)

The Woodlands (*internet*)

Celina

Flower Mound

Grapevine

Plano

Southlake

Weatherford (*internet*)

Coppell

Frisco

Gruene (*internet*)

Rockwall

Sugarland (*internet*)

Lewisville

RESEARCH CRITERIA

Downtown Type

Area Feel

Streetscape

Sidewalk

Seating

Restrooms

Bike Friendly

Water Features

Parking Lots

Street Parking

Wayfinding / Signage

Event Spaces / Events

Public Art

Gathering Places

Multi-Family Housing

Single-Family Housing

Historic Buildings

Public Buildings / Spaces

Offices / Restaurant / Retail

Lodging

Playgrounds

Iconic Features

DATA COLLECTION

Downtown Type – There were several downtown styles observed which include a central square, a central traffic island with surrounding quadrants, a “T” intersection or a main street strip.

Center Square:

- McKinney
- Celina
- Rockwall
- Denton
- Southlake



McKinney

DATA COLLECTION

Downtown Type – There were several downtown styles observed which include a central square, a central traffic island with surrounding quadrants, a “T” intersection or a main street strip.

Strip:

- Plano
- Grapevine
- Lewisville
- Coppell
- Frisco



Plano

DATA COLLECTION

Downtown Type – There were several downtown styles observed which include a central square, a central traffic island with surrounding quadrants, a “T” intersection or a main street strip.

Traffic Island / Quadrants:

- Weatherford



Weatherford

DATA COLLECTION

Downtown Type – There were several downtown styles observed which include a central square, a central traffic island with surrounding quadrants, a “T” intersection or a main street strip.

Circle:

- Addison



Addison

DATA COLLECTION

Streetscape / Sidewalks – How do different communities enhance the visitor's experience using environmental elements like landscaping, shade trees, creating pedestrian friendly walking patterns with hardscape elements, lighting, seating, trash / recycling and others.



DATA COLLECTION

Streetscape / Sidewalks

Streetscape:



McKinney



Celina



Addison



Coppell



Grapevine



Lewisville



Plano



Rockwall



Southlake

DATA COLLECTION

Streetscape / Sidewalks

Sidewalks:



Rockwall



Grapevine



Lewisville



Plano



Rockwall



McKinney



Celina



McKinney

DATA COLLECTION

Seating – How do the different communities utilize different types of seating areas within the downtown area to provide an inviting environment to encourage visitors to stop and rest or visit with friends..



McKinney



McKinney



Rockwall



Coppell



Rockwall



Grapevine



Lewisville



Addison

DATA COLLECTION

Restrooms – Only a few communities offered stand-alone public restrooms. Grapevine, Coppell and Rockwall. Retail and restaurants typically usually only allow patrons to use their facilities.



Rockwall



Coppell

DATA COLLECTION

Bike Friendly – Only a few communities provided areas to park and lock-up bicycles.



Grapevine



McKinney

DATA COLLECTION

Water Features: Water in a public space is not just a decorative element. It can be an ideal meeting and relaxation point in a downtown. You will often find people gathered by fountains in squares, or along a restored waterfront or watching children play in a sprayground.

Fountains and Streams:



Lewisville



Addison



Southlake

DATA COLLECTION

Parking – Review of parking options within the downtown area as well as surrounding areas, which includes street, lot and garage parking, plus a review of how easy it is to move from parking locations to the downtown center. Most cities provided free on street and parking lots. Several cities also had public parking garages.



DATA COLLECTION

Parking

Street:



Celina



Denton



McKinney



Rockwall



Plano



McKinney



Weatherford

DATA COLLECTION

Parking

Lot:



McKinney



McKinney



Rockwall



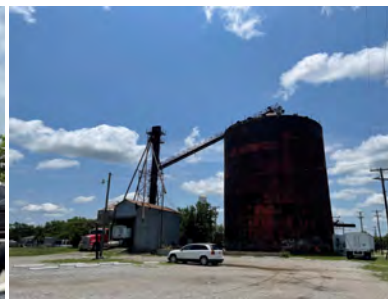
Weatherford



Rockwall



Rockwall



Celina

DATA COLLECTION

Wayfinding / Signage – Usage of visual wayfinding and signage is helpful in defining a place as well as for informing visitors of the location of public buildings, points of interest and attractions, retail and entertainment districts, parking and traffic patterns, and information about events.



DATA COLLECTION

Wayfinding / Signage

Wayfinding:



Grapevine



Celina



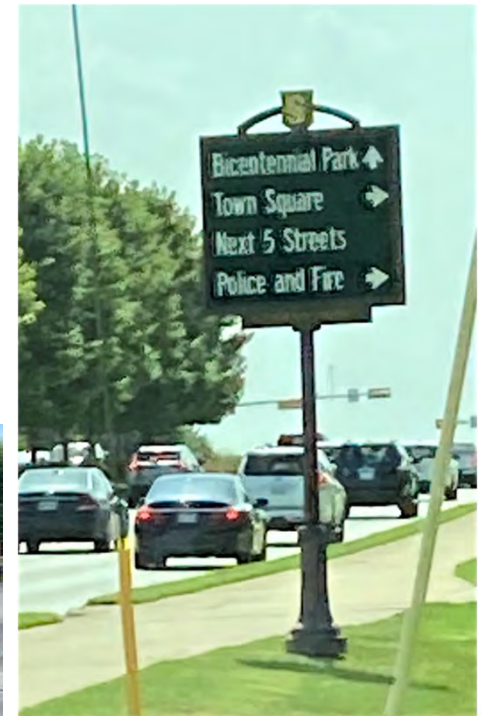
Coppell



McKinney



Lewisville



Grapevine



Lewisville



McKinney



Rockwall



Coppell



McKinney

DATA COLLECTION

Wayfinding / Signage

Signage:



McKinney



Lewisville



Plano

DATA COLLECTION

Event Spaces / Gathering Spaces / Events –

Public Spaces, both outdoor and indoor, that provide opportunities for large public gatherings or smaller intimate spaces that invite visitors in for rest, conversation, to hear music or an impromptu poetry reading, all lend a sense of community and belonging in downtowns with the opportunity to share experiences with friends and neighbors. All of the downtowns had these types of spaces and regular events.



DATA COLLECTION

Event Spaces / Gathering Spaces / Events

Event Spaces/Gathering Spaces



Rockwall



Grapevine



Coppell



Southlake

DATA COLLECTION

Event Spaces / Gathering Spaces / Events

Gathering Spaces:



McKinney



Rockwall



Lewisville



Southlake



Celina

DATA COLLECTION

Event Spaces / Gathering Spaces / Events

Events:



McKinney



McKinney



Lewisville



Rockwall



McKinney (Example)

DATA COLLECTION

Public Art – Art installations enrich spaces by adding a sense of whimsy or evoking deeper thought. Placement can be central and bold or subtle, requiring the public to discover it each time. Public art can also cover the gambit of avant-garde to rustic. These downtowns included a wide variety of public art.



Coppel



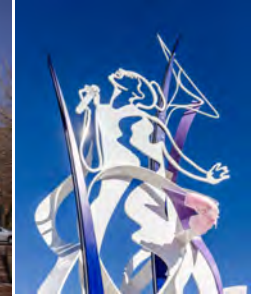
Plano



Celina



Addison



Plano



Grapevine



Lewisville



McKinney



Celina



Plano

DATA COLLECTION

Housing - A variety of housing is found in all these communities in the downtowns and surrounding neighborhoods. Including, historic single-family homes, both large and small newer and renovated single family homes, townhouses, duplexes, small apartment buildings and larger apartment complexes. The opportunity for many different types of residents of a city to find housing in or near the downtown provides for a rich and varied community and culture, as well as the ability for younger and older residents to find housing that will allow them to stay in the community.



DATA COLLECTION

Housing

Multi-Family:



McKinney



Southlake



Southlake



Lewisville

DATA COLLECTION

Housing

Single Family:



McKinney



Coppell



Grapevine

DATA COLLECTION

Historic Buildings – Although not a necessity to a successful downtown area, historic buildings add a sense of permanence and history. These buildings range from grand courthouses to humble store fronts to pioneer structures. Each of the downtowns we visited included historic structures that helped the community connect with a shared history.



DATA COLLECTION

Historic Buildings



McKinney



Denton



Grapevine



Grapevine



Plano



McKinney



Rockwall



Weatherford



Coppell

DATA COLLECTION

Offices / Restaurants / Retail – A mix of uses is important to the success of a downtown. Destinations that provide interest both during the day and evening create a vibrant environment. Professional services, personal services, retail shops, restaurants, entertainment, and other business endeavors are key players in a thriving downtown and were found in the downtowns that we visited.



DATA COLLECTION

Office / Restaurants / Retail

Office:



McKinney



McKinney



Rockwall



Celina



Rockwall

DATA COLLECTION

Office / Restaurants / Retail

Restaurants:



McKinney



Rockwall



Coppell



Celina



Grapevine



Coppell

DATA COLLECTION

Office / Restaurants / Retail

Retail:



Grapevine



Coppell



Rockwall



Rockwall



McKinney



McKinney



McKinney

DATA COLLECTION

Lodging: Several of the downtowns we visited have Bed and Breakfasts operating within or immediately adjacent to the downtown area. McKinney, Southlake, and Grapevine, all have hotels within downtown which provides increased opportunities for locals and visitors to attend concerts, festivals and evening events and then shop and dine the next day.



Grand Hotel McKinney



Boutique Hilton - Southlake



Boutique Marriott - Grapevine

DATA COLLECTION

Iconic Features – Review of large iconic features, landmarks or structures that help define the feel of the downtown. These old and in some cases new features add to the story of the city and is a good connection to the past or a look to the future. A variety of these were evident in the downtowns we visited.



DATA COLLECTION

Iconic Features

Elements:



McKinney



McKinney



Addison



Southlake



Frisco



Coppell



Grapevine



Lewisville



Rockwall



Celina

DATA ANALYSIS

To help manage all the information we collected; an EXCEL spreadsheet was created to document specific descriptions for each RESEARCH STANDARD. Additional information like city websites for events were also included for future reference.

Examples:

[illegible]

SUMMARY

Recommendations:

As a result of this research, we identified six cities with successful downtowns that incorporate vibrant character, a wide diversity of uses, and engaging design elements. We recommend them as resources as we create a vision for Downtown Allen.

| | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Addison | Denton |
| Grapevine | Lewisville |
| McKinney | Rockwall |

SUMMARY

Addison:

- Multi types of elements (seating, art, water, plants, trees, etc.) presence in the area focuses on providing services and attractive visual elements.
- Open but contained spaces exist throughout providing medium size gathering/ playground.
- Distinct architecture for multi-family buildings in the downtown area adds warm touch to the public space.

SUMMARY

Addison:



SUMMARY

Denton:

- Mix of classic and rustic architectural elements make the space warm and attract pedestrians to the center of the strip.
- Consistent theme throughout retail focuses on special/inviting feeling to the public.
- Contrast of modern multi-family creates vibrant environment throughout the area.

SUMMARY

Denton:



SUMMARY

Grapevine:

- Established an identity and theme that attracts lots of visitors – created a brand that is appealing and fun and attracts adults and families to wineries, restaurants, shops, arts and culture opportunities, and many events throughout the year
- Vibrant mix of shops, restaurants, wineries, historic and new buildings, city facilities such as an event center, rec center, art center, library, and city hall that maintain the historic feel of the community while creating a vibrant present.
- Public/Private partnership to create iconic Grapevine Main development downtown that incorporates a food hall and other restaurants, a boutique hotel, shops, offices, large outdoor concert area and public plaza, and public art that will serve as anchor at center of downtown connecting both sides of commuter train tracks/station.

SUMMARY

Grapevine



SUMMARY

Lewisville:

- Walkability – connections throughout “Old Town” to allow parking in one spot and walking whenever you want to go
- Great mix of uses that promote daytime and nighttime activity – shopping, business services, restaurants, theater, concert spaces, art galleries, bars.
- Human scale residential incorporated on perimeter – mix of townhouses and small condo buildings with historic single family home district surrounding downtown.

SUMMARY

Lewisville:



SUMMARY

McKinney:

- Exciting vibrant feeling with family / pet friendly stores and restaurants that makes you want to spend time to explore and discover.
- Great mix of uses that promote daytime and nighttime activity – shopping, business services, restaurants, specialty stores and art galleries.
- Older multi-story buildings surround a central historic courthouse with new apartment buildings and historic single family home district surrounding downtown.

SUMMARY

McKinney:



SUMMARY

Rockwall:

- Great mix of traditional and trendy stores and restaurants offer something for everyone.
- Great downtown public space with a full seating, trees, a central walkway and a full calendar of events makes a great gathering space.
- Seating around the central historic courthouse and throughout the surrounding area encourages you to stop and soak in the feeling.
- Slight rise to downtown gives it a sense of prominence and allows the city streets to use streetscapes to enhance the overall look.

THANK YOU



SUMMARY

Rockwall:



D

Fiscal Analysis



Fiscal Impact Analysis

Fiscal Impact Analysis considers the budgetary impact of an action. Fiscal impact analysis was employed in the Downtown Allen Plan to evaluate the impact of the Future Development Concept on the budget of the City of Allen.

The analysis evaluated the net increase in revenues that would result from the development concept from additional property tax, sales tax, and hotel tax revenues. It also evaluated the increase in spending that would be required to provide services to the new development. The increase in revenues minus the increase in spending is the fiscal impact on the City of Allen.

This Appendix provides methodological detail behind the fiscal impact analysis.

Municipal Revenues

The Future Development Concept envisions new housing units and new commercial floor area as noted in Line 1 of **Table 1**. Line 2 shows the per-unit or per-square-foot property taxes that are levied on new development of each development type, as observed in similar recent developments. Line 3 (the product of Lines 1 and 2) shows the total property taxes estimated to result from the Future Development Concept by development type. Line 4 shows the existing property tax that is currently paid from property on the redevelopment blocks. Line 4 must be subtracted from Line 3 to determine the increase in property taxes from the Future Development Concept (Line 5).

Table 1. Annual Property Tax Revenue from Future Development Concept

| | Apartments (units) | Townhomes (units) | Retail Floor Area (s.f.) | Office, Innovation Floor Area (s.f.) | Hotel Floor Area (s.f.) | Total Annual Property Taxes |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. New Development | 1,871 | 72 | 327,700 | 122,000 | 72,000 | |
| 2. Property Taxes (Based on Comparable Properties) | \$3,150 | \$5,775 | \$5.59 | \$5.59 | \$2.63 | |
| 3. Property Taxes from New Development | \$5,893,650 | \$415,800 | \$1,830,532 | \$681,492 | \$189,360 | \$9,010,834 |
| 4. Existing Property Taxes on Redevelopment Blocks | | | | | | -\$688,062 |
| 5. Increased Property Taxes on Redevelopment Blocks | | | | | | \$8,322,772 |

New sales tax revenues come from two sources.

1. New retail floor area in downtown Allen will directly generate retail sales and associated sales tax.
2. New households induce additional retail sales and retail sales taxes because they will spend a portion of their household income in local stores, and pay local sales taxes on those purchases.

Increased sales tax revenues were estimated as illustrated in **Tables 2 and 3**.

Lines 1 through 3 of Table 2 show the net increase in retail floor area associated with the Future Development Concept. Given a typical amount of annual sales per square foot (Line 4), the increased retail floor area generates the total sales indicated in Line 5. The City's 1% tax on retail sales results in sales tax revenues indicated on Line 7. Note that the EDA and CDA split the revenues that come from an additional 1% sales tax on retail goods and services.

Table 2. Annual Sales Tax Revenue from Increase in Retail Floor Area

| | | | |
|---|--------------|---|-----------|
| 1. New Retail Floor Area (s.f.) | 327,700 | | |
| 2. Existing Retail Floor Area (s.f.) | 229,912 | | |
| 3. Net Increase in Retail Floor Area (s.f.) | 97,788 | | |
| 4. Retail Sales per Square Foot | \$300 | | |
| 5. Net Increase in Retail Sales | \$29,336,400 | | |
| 6. City Sales Tax Rate | 1% | | |
| 7. City Sales Tax Revenues | \$293,364 | (Additional Sales Tax Revenues to EDA, CDA) | \$293,364 |

Lines 1 and 2 of **Table 3** quantify the new households by number and as a percentage of the number of existing households. Line 3 is an estimate of current spending by Allen residents at local businesses, according to data from ESRI Business Analyst. Given that, the new households would be estimated to spend around \$15.3 million at local businesses (Line 4). That generates around \$152,000 in sales tax revenues for the City of Allen (Line 6).

Table 3. Annual Sales Tax Revenue from Household Growth

| | | | |
|--|---------------|---|-----------|
| 1. Total New Households | 1,865 | | |
| 2. Total New Households (% Increase of Population) | 5.09% | | |
| 3. Local Spending by Existing Households | \$300,000,000 | | |
| 4. Local Spending by New Households | \$15,270,000 | | |
| 5. City Sales Tax Rate | 1% | | |
| 6. City Sales Tax Revenues | \$152,700 | (Additional Sales Tax Revenues to EDA, CDA) | \$152,700 |

The Future Development Concept envisions a new hotel. Based on the building footprint and proposed height it would have around 123 rooms, as noted in Line 1 of **Table 4**. Using a local comparable (Hyatt Place), the estimated revenues per room would be around \$78 (Line 2). That yields annual revenues of around \$3.5 million (Line 3). With a hotel tax rate in Allen of 7% (Line 4), the annual tax revenues to the City of Allen would be around \$245,000 (Line 5).

Table 4. Annual Sales Tax Revenue from Household Growth

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Number of Rooms | 123 |
| 2. Revenues per Available Room | \$78 |
| 3. Annual Revenues | \$3,501,810 |
| 4. Hotel Tax Rate | 7% |
| 5. Hotel Tax Revenues | \$245,127 |

Per the analysis above, the Future Development Concept is estimated to generate total additional revenues equal to the sum of the bottom line figures from Tables 1, 2, 3, and 4—or around \$9 million—as indicated in **Table 5**.

Table 4. Annual Sales Tax Revenue from Household Growth

| | |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Property Tax Revenues | \$8,322,772 |
| 2. Annual Sales Tax Revenue from Increase in Retail Floor Area | \$293,364 |
| 3. Annual Sales Tax Revenue from Household Growth | \$152,700 |
| 4. Annual Hotel Tax Revenue from New Hotel | \$245,127 |
| 5. Total New Revenues | \$9,013,963 |

Municipal Spending

Although the City of Allen utilizes service specific fees and external revenue sources to cover a portion of its expenses, around 70.8% of its General Fund expenses are supported by its tax revenues. Moreover, 99.5% of its Debt Service expenses are funded by tax revenues. Using the top line expense categories in the City's budget, the City's expenses that are funded by tax revenues are around \$95.7 million, as detailed in **Table 6**.

Utilizing a methodology for equating the service burdens of all development types to a common unit, the mix of new housing, retail, office and hotel development in the Future Development Concept was determined to be equivalent to a 3.7% increase in the City's service burden.

If City expenditures are scaled up in a manner that is directly proportionate to the increased service burden, the new development requires an increase in City spending as indicated in **Table 7**.

Table 6. City Budget Expenditures

| City Budget Expenditures | Budget | % of General Fund/ Debt Service Expenditures Funded by Tax Revenues | Expenses Funded by Tax Revenues |
|---|----------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| General Government | \$22,598,579 | 70.8% | \$15,992,325 |
| Public Safety | \$49,708,787 | 70.8% | \$35,177,393 |
| Public Works | \$6,863,481 | 70.8% | \$4,857,076 |
| Culture & Recreation | \$27,514,154 | 70.8% | \$19,470,928 |
| Community Development | \$4,128,976 | 70.8% | \$2,921,950 |
| Transfers Out | \$1,366,693 | 70.8% | \$967,167 |
| Debt Service | \$16,375,182 | 99.5% | \$16,288,571 |
| Total General Fund and Debt Service Expenditures | \$128,555,852 | | \$95,675,410 |

Table 7. Increased City Spending Requirement – Average Cost of Service Model

| | |
|--|--------------|
| 1. Total Tax-Funded City Expenditures | \$95,675,410 |
| 2. Increase in Service Burden | 3.733% |
| 3. Increased City Spending Requirement | \$3,571,356 |

However, spending requirements don't tend to scale up in a linear fashion when redevelopment occurs, since:

- There is preexisting physical infrastructure (streets, utilities) in areas of redevelopment.
- The physical structures associated with City operations (e.g. libraries, police stations, fire stations, public works facilities) and their associated operations and maintenance costs may be sufficient to support additional population.
- While direct public-serving departmental staff may increase proportionate to population increase, the administrative staff may not need to increase proportionate to the increased population.

In financial terms, for each expense category a portion of the expense is a fixed cost that doesn't need to rise with an increase in service burden. And a portion of the expense is a variable cost, which would need to rise proportionately to the increased service burden. A marginal cost analysis of City budget lines found that the ratio of fixed to variable expense varied by expense category, but when calculated for the budget as a whole, it was estimated that around 47% of City expenditures are variable, and would need to increase proportional to the increased service burden. Taking that into consideration yields the increased City spending estimate in **Table 8**.

Table 8. Increased City Spending Requirement – Marginal Cost of Service Model

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. Total Tax-Funded City Expenditures | \$95,675,410 |
| 2. Increase in Service Burden | 3.733% |
| 3. Variable Portion of City Expenditures | 47.3% |
| 4. Increased City Spending Requirement | \$1,688,729 |

Table 9 summarizes these approaches. The average cost of service model in **Table 7** is termed the "Conservative Cost Model" in **Table 9**. The marginal cost of service model in **Table 8** is termed the "Likely Cost Model" in Table 9. And an Optimistic Cost Model is created in Table 9 which envisions even greater cost efficiencies associated with development growth.

Table 9. City Cost Scenarios

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Conservative Cost Model | \$3,570,000 |
| Likely Cost Model | \$1,688,729 |
| Optimistic Cost Model | \$1,125,819 |

Net Fiscal Impact

Table 10 brings together the revenue (Line 1) and spending (Lines 2 through 4) elements of the fiscal impact analysis. Estimated increased spending is subtracted from estimated increased revenues to yield net fiscal impact. With different spending scenarios, the net fiscal impact is provided in a plausible range of outcomes—all of which yield a positive return to the City of Allen. As indicated in Line 5, the estimated net fiscal impact of the Future Development Concept would be annual additional net revenues of \$5.4 million to \$7.9 million.

Table 10. Net Fiscal Impact (Per Year)

| | |
|---|--|
| 1. Total New Revenues | \$9,013,963 |
| 2. Total New Costs (Conservative Cost Model) | \$3,570,000 |
| 3. Total New Costs (Likely Cost Model) | \$1,688,729 |
| 4. Total New Costs (Optimistic Cost Model) | \$1,125,819 |
| 5. Net Fiscal Impact | \$5.4 million to \$7.9 million in increased net revenues |

E

Background





E.1. Demographics

Demographics of the downtown area were examined using a ¼ mile (5-minute walk) buffer around the Central Business District.

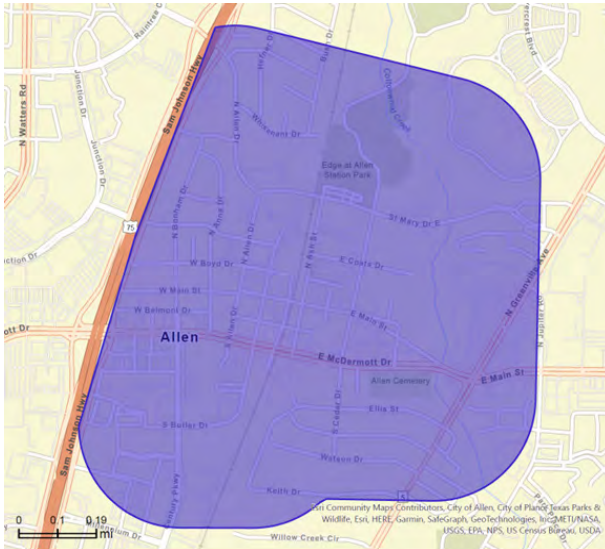


Figure 1: Demographic Area, 1/4 mile buffer around study area. Source: ESRI Business Analyst

| | Downtown Area | City of Allen |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Population | 2,500 | 104,627 |
| Daytime population | | |
| Workers | 4,257 | 50,338 |
| Residents | 1,330 | 57,156 |
| Households | 1,001 | 36,615 |
| Average HH size | 2.44 | 3.0 |
| Median HH Income | 51,480 | 113,719 |
| Owner Occupied Housing Rate | 38.3% | 73.4% |

Key Takeaways:

- Households in the downtown area have a median income less than half the median income for the city as a whole.
- There is much more rental housing in the downtown area
- Household sizes are smaller
- There is nearly double the rate of people over 65 living in or near the downtown
- Downtown has a much higher percentage of workers during the daytime (76%) compared to the city (47%). Many City of Allen facilities are located in the downtown area, which likely accounts for the vast majority of daytime workers here.

E.2. Land Use

E.2.1 Existing Land Use

The predominant land uses in the downtown area today are institutional (public and quasi-public uses), commercial / retail, and office. There is also quite a bit of vacant land in the downtown, shown in white on Figure 1. Except a few scattered parcels, single-family detached residential uses are confined to the area of Boyd Dr. between Allen Dr. and Main St.

E.2.2 Zoning

The entire study area is zoned CBD Central Business District. As noted in the Allen Land Development Code, the central business district is the oldest urban area within the city and has played an important role in serving the city as a unique neighborhood containing local businesses, churches or other religious facilities, and housing. Existing development in the central business district has aged, experienced some deterioration, and, as a result, needs revitalization and redevelopment. The central business zoning district has been designed to aid in revitalization and redevelopment that is compatible with and which will serve to preserve the character of the central business district and enhance the city. The purpose of the central business district is to:

- Provide for a diversity of pedestrian-oriented retail office, residential and mixed uses indicative of an urban center. Housing should be considered a desirable activity in the district.
- Provide a venue for artists, musicians and other entertainment businesses and serve as a community center and gathering place.
- Create a lively day and night urban environment for residents, workers and visitors through the integration of a range of uses, building types and open space.
- Produce a quality environment by combining inviting streetscapes and excellence in building design.
- Increase property values and stimulate development with strategically placed civic features such as parks, medians, street trees, and public art.

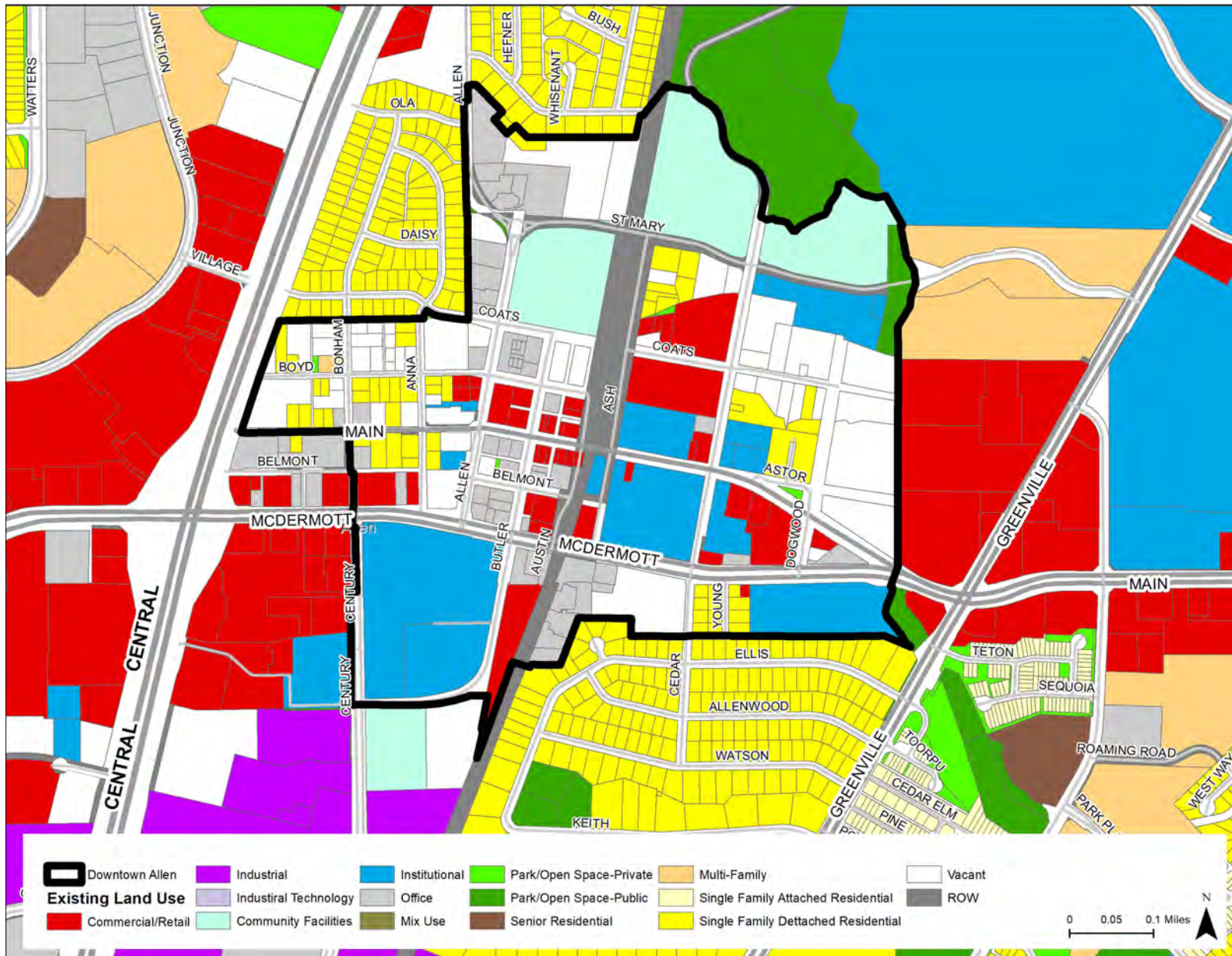


Figure 2: Existing Land Use

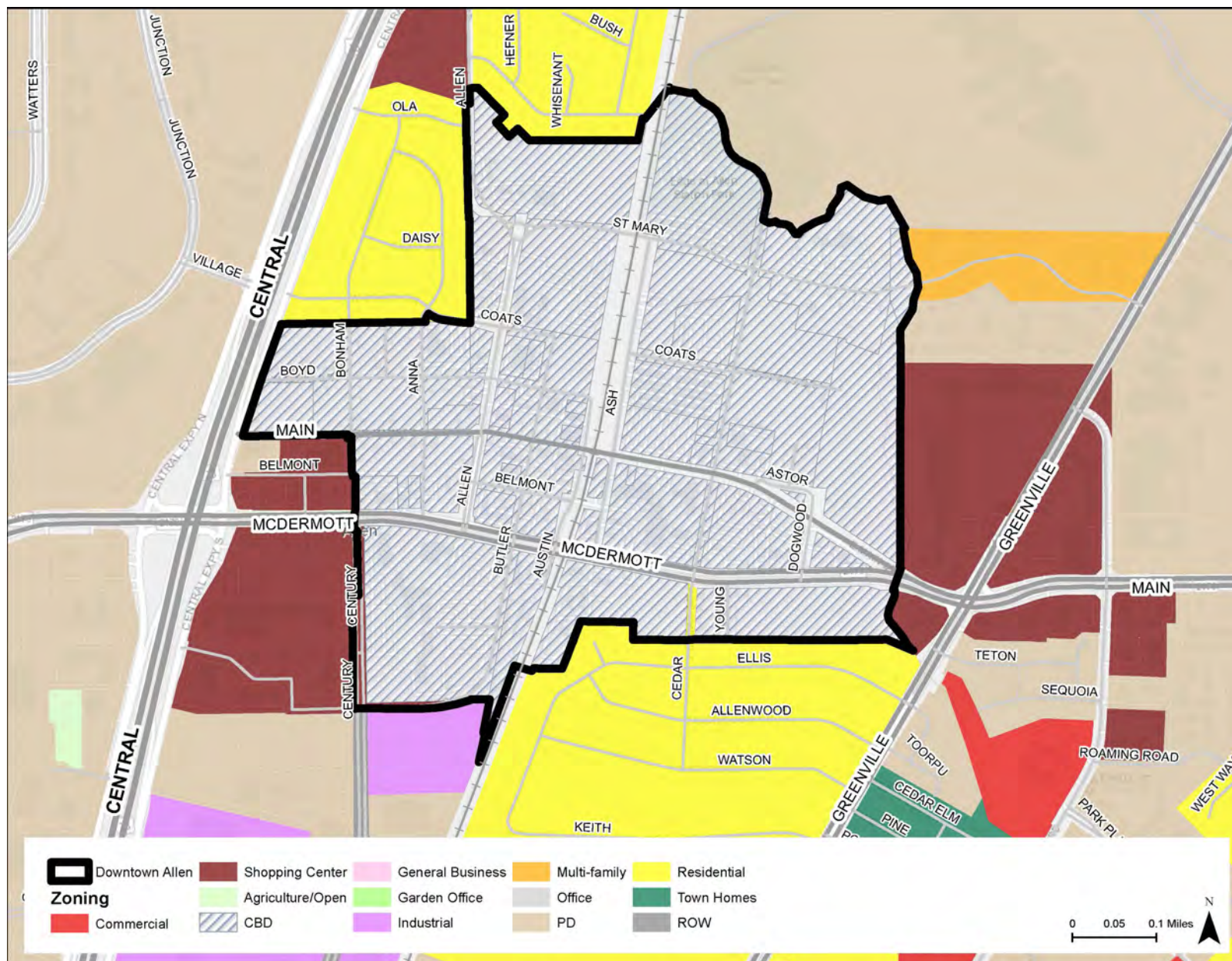


Figure 3: Existing Zoning

There are no setback or lot area requirements in the CBD, and height is capped at 4-stories. Uses allowed by-right in the CBD include (but are not limited to): shops, offices, studios, live theaters, and urban residential dwellings (attached high-density structures with units for sale or rent).

E.2.3

Housing

There are limited number of housing units in the CBD and they include both single-family and multi-family housing units. However, there are several single-family neighborhoods adjacent to the CBD—including Whis-Lynge Hill #1, Whisenant Estates #1-#5, and Allenwood Estates #3. There are no setback or lot area requirements in the CBD, the height is capped at 4-stories, and there are no standards to address the transitions between single-family and multi-family, mixed-use or commercial development. Uses allowed by-right in the CBD include (but are not limited to): shops, offices, studios, live theaters, and urban residential dwellings (attached high-density structures with units for sale or rent). At the time of this plan, the Wolverine and Calder properties are being considered for multi-family residential development.

Parking requirements in the CBD are the same as the rest of the city. The DSC is empowered to make changes to parking requirements based on availability of on-street parking, shared parking, or payment of cash in lieu of parking (into the central business district parking fund). Business and property owner stakeholders have expressed anecdotal evidence that parking requirements have inhibited small business development in the

downtown in recent years.

Applications for new buildings, reconstructions, additions or alternations within the CBD are reviewed by the Design Review Committee – a committee consisting of city staff and two citizen appointees. Some recent cases have shown that the Design Review Committee is making subjective judgements about architectural styles with a lack of clear guidance in the ordinance.

E.2.4

Major landowners

Most parcels in the Downtown are owned by people or companies that have few other properties, and most property owners own small land areas as well. The largest landowners (by area) are the City of Allen, MCTT LLC (Wolverine), JBJ Calder and the First Baptist Church.

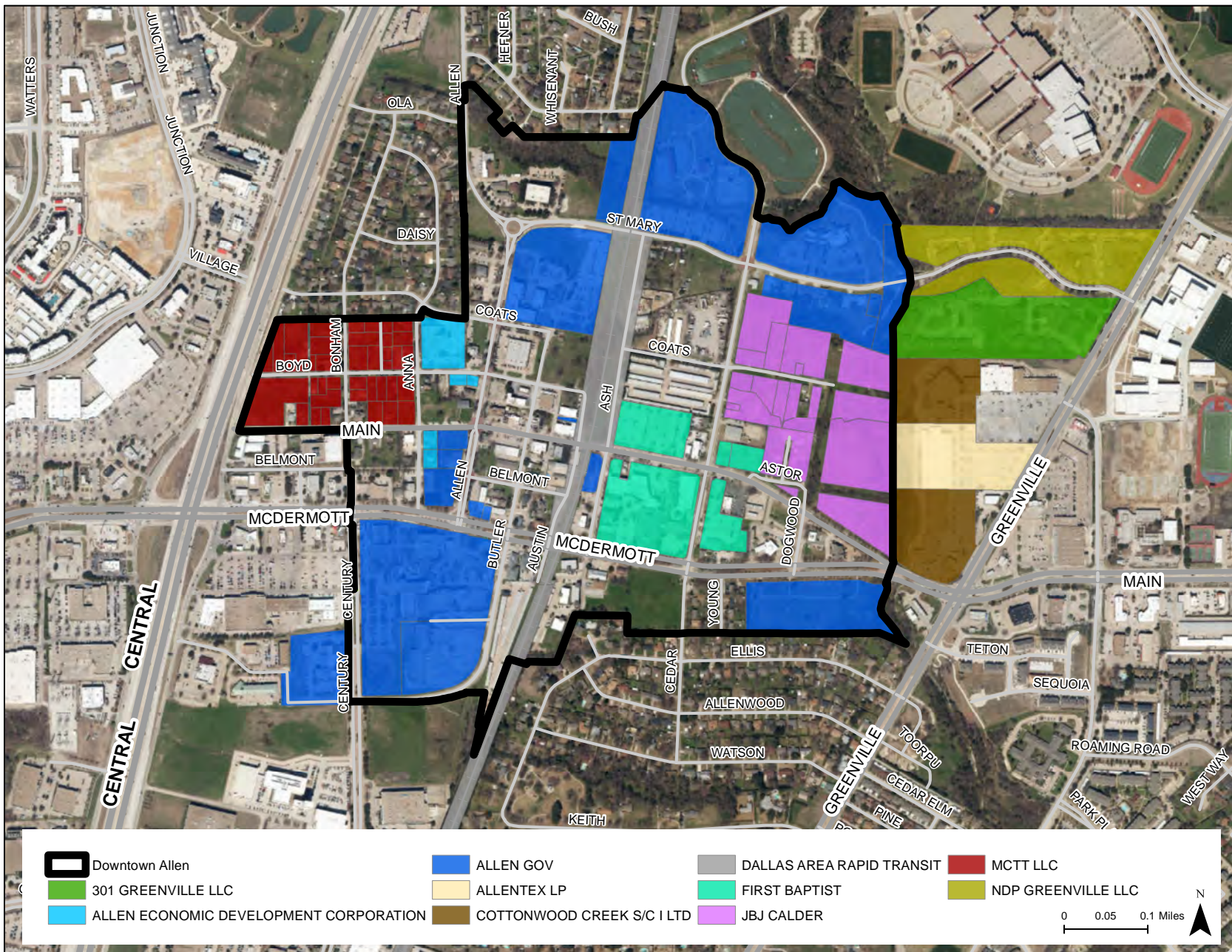


Figure4: Large Landowners

E.3.

Mobility

Allen's historic center along the Houston and Texas Central Railroad corridor is well connected to other parts of the city and to the Dallas-Fort Worth region. However, as downtown revitalizes, it has numerous opportunities to be a more walkable, connected district that relies less on private vehicle-based transportation than Allen does as a whole today. This section outlines current conditions, trends and challenges that the City should address in encouraging downtown's continued maturity into a desirable, vibrant place.

E.3.1

Transportation Network and Travel Patterns

Allen's central business district features a small grid of streets in a traditional block pattern, with historic Main Street and intersecting Allen Drive serving as primary connections. However, downtown's larger street and road network has been modified greatly by larger thoroughfares that have been constructed as the larger city has grown. The most significant examples of this are McDermott Drive, a major east-west thoroughfare, and the US 75 North Central Expressway connecting Allen to downtown Dallas. Both McDermott and US 75 carry the primary traffic volumes in and out of the downtown area, and, especially in the case of US 75, limit its overall connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and districts. Although outside of the core focus area of the revitalization plan, Greenville Avenue, immediately to the

east of Cottonwood Creek, is another major arterial connecting to McKinney and other adjacent communities, and a primary means of access to Allen High School.

Figure 5 illustrates daily traffic volumes on selected streets in downtown and underscores this primary role of McDermott and US 75. It also shows that, by comparison, downtown's other streets carry relatively little traffic and do not exhaust their vehicle capacity, pointing to opportunity for this larger street network to manage travel

demand into the future. Refer also to Table X1, which provides a detailed comparison of estimated roadway vehicle-carrying capacity and recently-measured traffic volumes.

Figure 6 shows how this larger network compares to points of access into and out of downtown, and reiterates the major role that McDermott and US 75 play for larger access. Cottonwood Creek, just to the east of the business district, is another major physical factor limiting access to downtown, but has three bridge crossings: at McDermott Drive (and where Main Street separates from

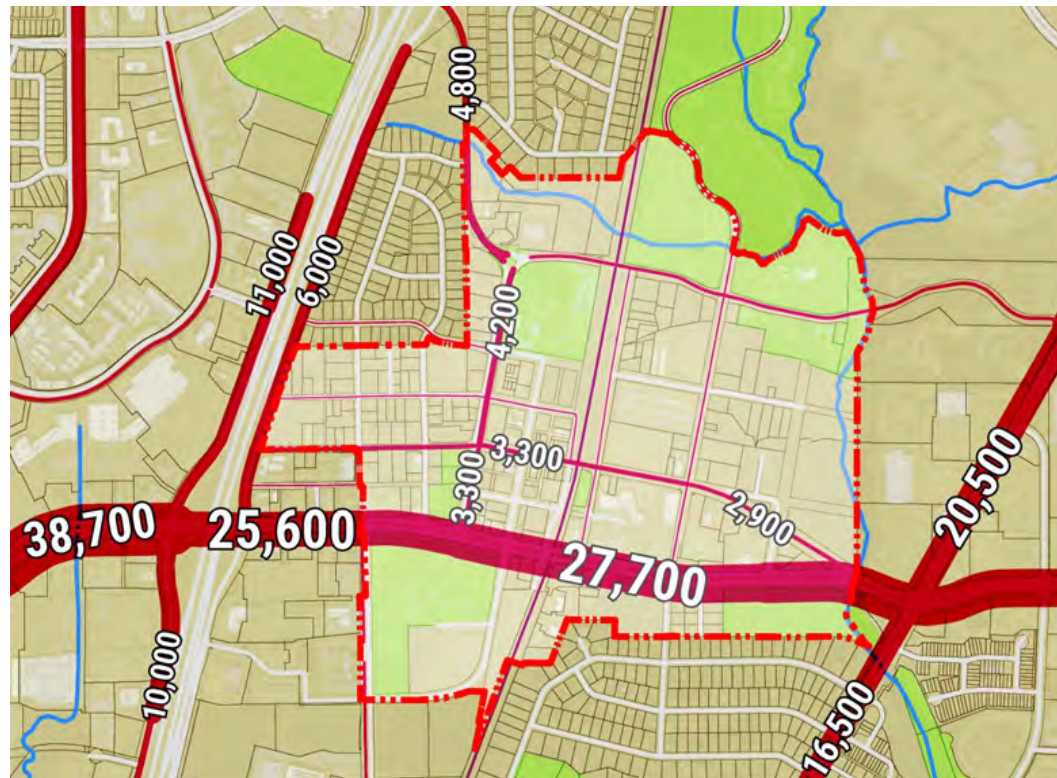


Figure 5: Daily Traffic Volumes on Selected Allen Streets

it moving west), St. Mary's Drive, and Allen Drive.

Although the current street network defines the potential paths in and out of downtown, the overall patterns of travel—measured in terms of trip lengths and overall patterns of origin and destination—reveal notable opportunities for managing overall transportation demand in and around downtown. According to mobile-device data

capturing travel patterns within the larger Allen region, nearly a quarter (24 percent) of trips to downtown Allen (defined as the series of Census block groups comprising the Revitalization Plan study area) are less than one mile in length, and a further 17 percent are within three miles. This suggests that as many as 40 percent of trips are of a length that, with amenable travel conditions and for the right purposes, might be substituted for non-driving travel.



Figure 6. Major Access Points into and out of Downtown Allen

E.3.2

Transportation Safety

As is often the case with street networks featuring major arterial streets carrying a dominant amount of traffic, McDermott Drive and Greenville Avenue feature the highest numbers of crashes (accidents) in downtown. However, when these crashes are normalized by the amount of traffic the streets carry, other streets—notably Main Street—have higher rates of crash occurrence, suggesting these are actually less safe on average than their more heavily traveled counterparts. Both Main Street and Boyd Street featured crashes with a significant, potentially life-threatening injury, which points to several factors of these streets' design—such as high speeds or limited visibility—that may allow such severe crashes to occur on relatively low-traffic streets.

E.3.3

Pedestrian Network and other forms of travel

Downtown Allen's grid of streets does not feature a completely connected network of sidewalks and other pedestrian paths, though it is connected in part to adjacent parks and recreational facilities by a series of walking trails. Figure X4 shows this overall inventory of current pedestrian paths, including the off-street trails connecting along Cottonwood Creek and through Allen Station Park.

Generally, sidewalks feature basic widths (typically five to six feet) and many are attached to curbs, allowing no separation between pedestrians and the roadway width. However, some downtown streets feature streetscape enhancements with trees, furniture, and other amenities. Nonetheless, the walking environment in downtown Allen faces the challenges of an incomplete walking network, a series of intersections and high-crash locations that compromise safety for pedestrians, and gaps in the downtown built environment that create considerable lengths between key attractions.

Other potential modes of travel are limited as well. Allen has no dedicated street-based facilities for bicycles, such as bicycle lanes or protected paths within right-of-way, although streetscape enhancements on Allen Drive and other downtown locations feature wide sidewalks intended to function as multi-use paths for bicyclists and pedestrians. And while the partially-complete trail network connecting downtown to nearby destinations (such as Allen Station Park and Allen High School) allows bicycle travel, there is no transition allowing buffered, protected paths for bicyclists onto the downtown street network.

Although Allen has not opted into the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) service area and consequently does not have scheduled transit service, DART owns the historic Houston and Texas Central Railroad corridor on which the original town of Allen was founded and has reserved this for long-term potential expansion of its light rail transit network. There are no current plans for extension of this service north of its current terminus at the Parker Road station in Plano, or for it to provide direct access to Allen.

E.3.4

Parking in Downtown

Downtown Allen features a mix of public parking that is broadly available to any visitors and users and private parking focused on serving the businesses and establishments adjacent to it. Public parking is located primarily within streets and downtown does not have any entirely purpose-dedicated parking available solely

for public use, although key City-owned facilities, such as the City Hall and Public Library, allow public parking for general use.

Other major parking facilities serve key downtown destinations, such as the Allen First Baptist Church and Senior Center. Just beyond the study area, Allen High School and other destinations such as Cottonwood Creek Village also feature substantial parking supply.

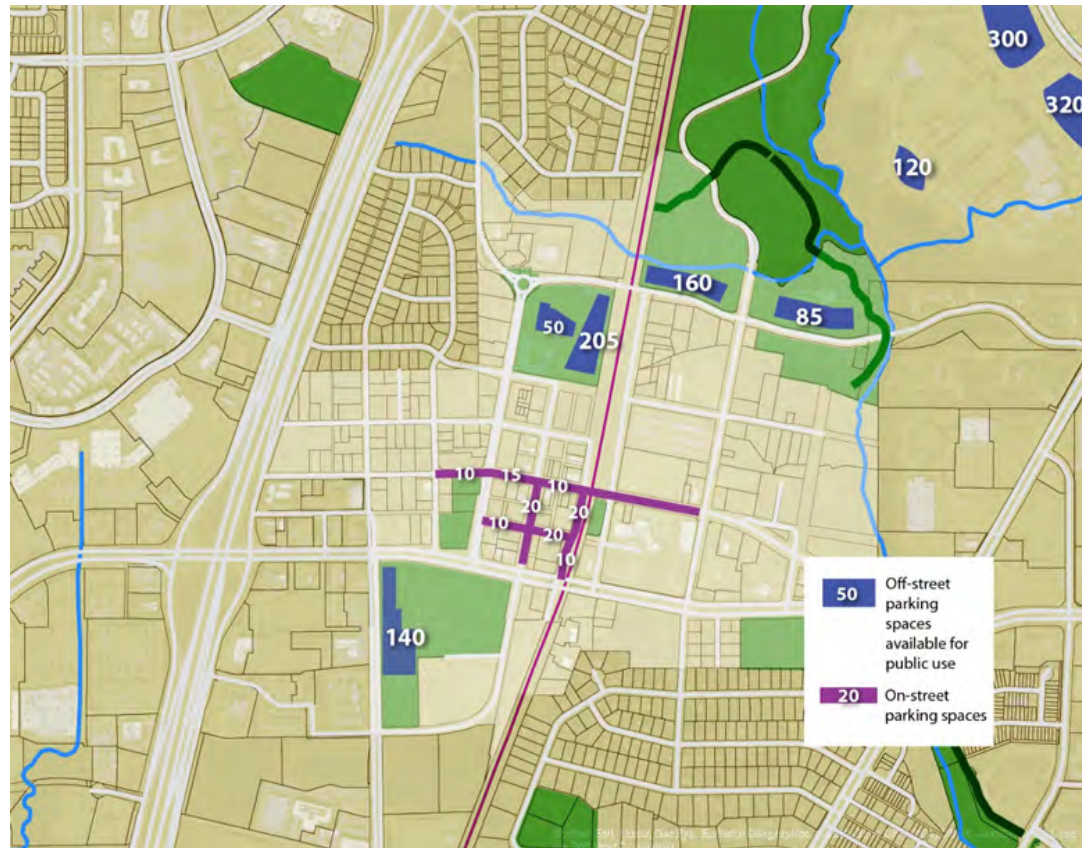


Figure7: current selected parking supply in Downtown Allen

E.4. Previous Planning Efforts

E.4.1 Comprehensive Plan

Allen's Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2014, discusses the downtown in several places. Relevant ideas from the Plan include:

- Promote the redevelopment of the CBD into an urban mixed-use area that preserves the historic character of the community.
- Buildings in the CBD should be located close to the street.
- Architecture of the buildings should have a traditional downtown feel.
- Uses such as restaurants and cafes are encouraged to include outdoor space.
- Civic space, such as a plaza or park, provides community event space.
- Provide pedestrian-oriented design.
- Shared parking is encouraged.
- Remaining residential development should add diversity to the housing stock and create a variety of housing opportunities

- Provide limited high-density residential integrated within a mixed-use environment
- Support mixed-use developments that are focused on commercial and entertainment uses integrated with housing.
- Improved pedestrian circulation is considered extremely important in the redevelopment of the CBD

E.4.2 Future Land Use

Similar to the zoning districts, the entire downtown study area is classified as Central Business District (CBD) in the city's 2030 Comprehensive Plan. This future land use district focuses on accommodating a variety of land uses while preserve the historic character of the community. Design principles laid out in the comprehensive plan include:

- Buildings close to the street
- Residential above first floor commercial or office
- Architecture that has a "traditional downtown feel"
- Uses encouraged to include outdoor spaces or patios
- Civic space for events and activities
- Pedestrian-oriented design

E.4.3 Trails and Bikeways Master Plan and Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan

In the CBD, the Trails and Bikeways Plan shows existing trails along Allen Dr. (12' wide) and St. Mary Dr. (8' wide). Proposed on-street connections are shown along Allen Dr. north of St. Mary and east on St. Mary outside of the CBD. An off-street trail is proposed along Cottonwood Creek in the CBD, connecting to existing trails to the north. The Plan also includes proposed bikeways within the CBD, along Main St., Allen Dr., St. Mary and through the Allen City Hall Plaza

The 2015 update of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan recommends acquisition and preservation of natural areas along Cottonwood Creek. This plan also identifies a future trail along Cottonwood Creek.

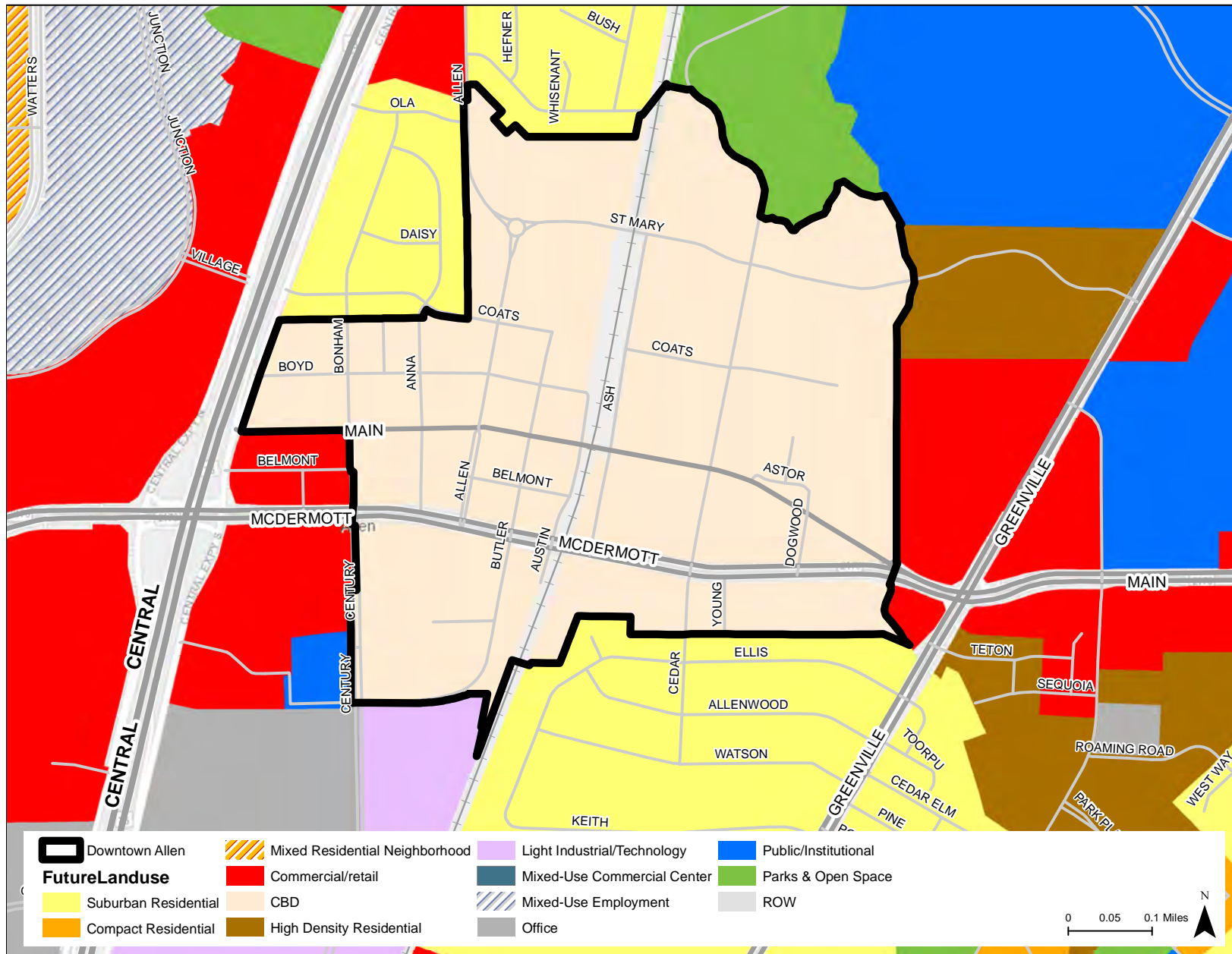


Figure 8: Future Land Use