



CHAPTER 13

DOWNTOWN PLAN

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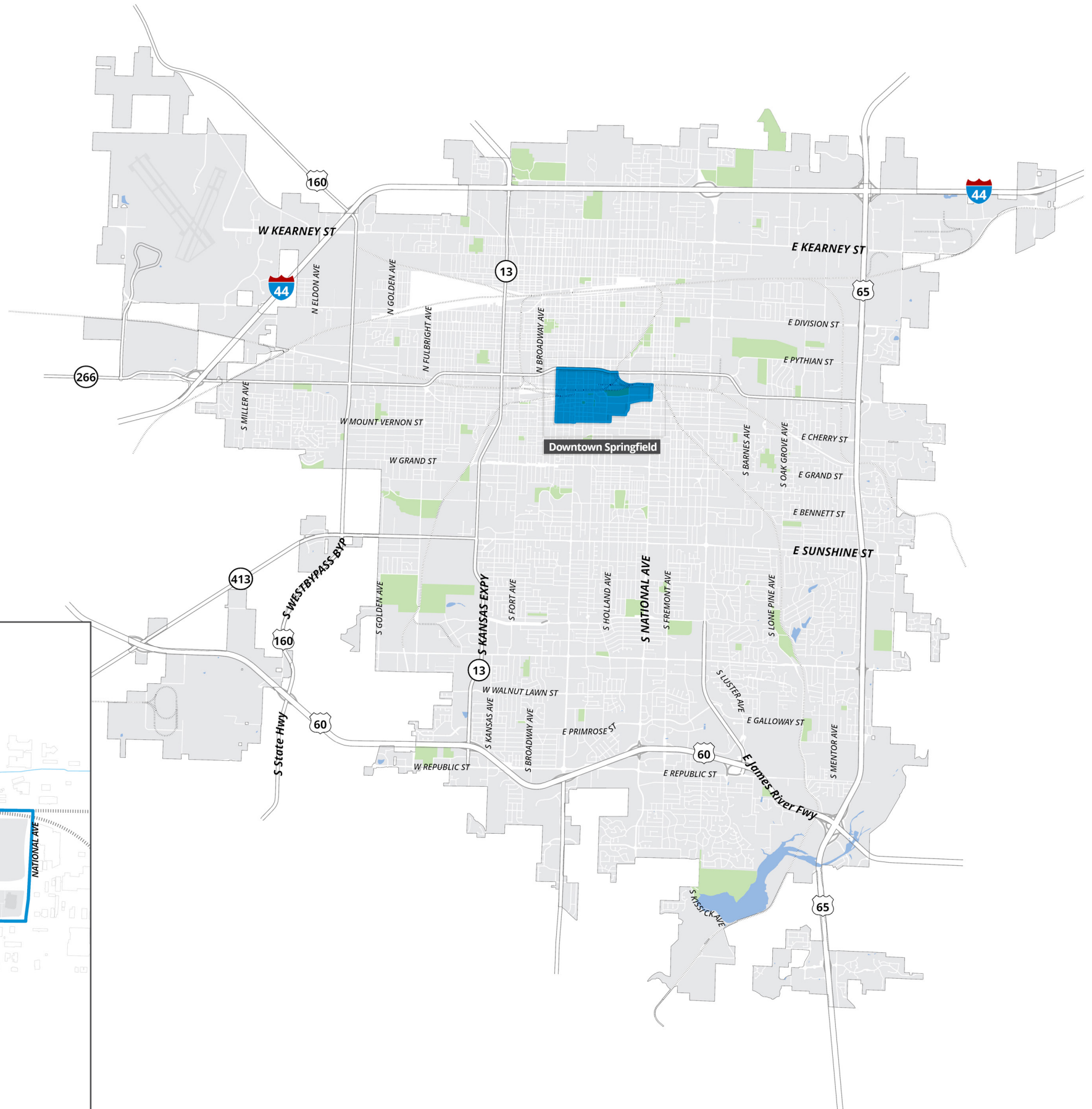
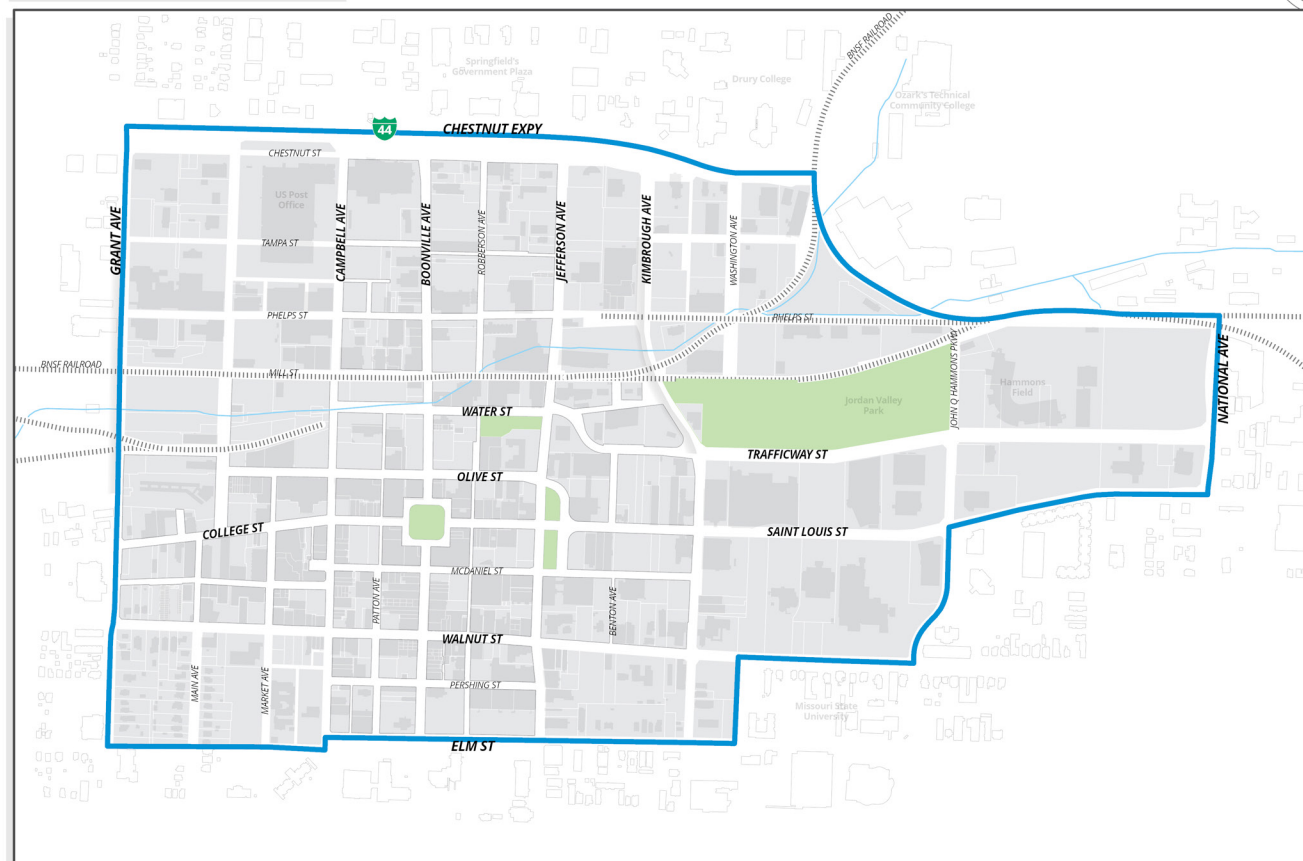
The Downtown Plan is a component of the *Forward SGF Comprehensive Plan* and serves as a guide for the revitalization of Downtown Springfield. The Plan presents a community vision for the future of the Downtown, outlining specific recommendations and actions to help achieve it. At its foundation, the Plan acts as a unifying effort to create a single direction for Downtown Springfield, based on community outreach, site reconnaissance, and extensive research. The Plan provides a decision-making framework for staff and elected and appointed officials. The Plan will guide public improvements while also clearly defining the community's expectations regarding private investment to property owners and the development community.

DOWNTOWN CONTEXT

Downtown Springfield is located in the heart of the City, bounded roughly by Chestnut Expressway to the north, National Avenue to the east, Elm Street to the south, and Grant Avenue to the west. Jordan Creek and the BNSF railroad run through the northern half of Downtown with Jordan Valley Park and Hammons Field anchoring its eastern end. Downtown is surrounded by major institutions like Springfield's Government Plaza, Missouri State University, Ozarks Technical Community College, and Drury University, which increases its potential to serve as a thriving restaurant, entertainment, and shopping district.

Downtown Springfield was historically built around a public space that was donated by John Polk Campbell in 1835 which has functioned as a marketplace, surface parking lot, and park over its lifetime. This public space is now called Park Central Square and functions as the central gathering space of Downtown Springfield. Today, Downtown is home to many of Springfield's small businesses; unique dining and entertainment venues; breweries and distilleries; tourist attractions; and community events and festivals. It also offers unique housing options in loft spaces, new apartment communities, and repurposed industrial buildings, as well as attractive outdoor spaces like Founders Park and Jordan Valley Park that offer recreational opportunities and public areas for socializing.

Downtown Springfield





WHY PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN?

Despite its many assets, Downtown also faces various challenges. Surface parking lots create gaps in streetlife and activity, certain areas feel uncomfortable or unsafe to walk, some buildings face disinvestment and exhibit vacant storefronts, and there is a need to draw more foot traffic to boost the local economy. While the City has been taking steps to enhance Downtown's sense of place, public gathering spaces, open space amenities, and economic vitality, there is still great opportunity to strengthen Downtown and continue to expand revitalization.

PURPOSE OF THE DOWNTOWN PLAN

The Downtown Plan is a component of the *Forward SGF Comprehensive Plan* and will serve as a guide for the revitalization of Downtown Springfield. The Plan presents a community vision for the future of the Downtown, outlining specific recommendations and actions to help achieve it. At its foundation, the Plan acts as a unifying effort to create a single direction for Downtown Springfield, based on community outreach, site reconnaissance, and extensive research. The Plan provides a decision-making framework for staff and elected and appointed officials. The Plan will guide public improvements while also clearly defining the community's expectations regarding private investment to property owners and the development community.

PLANNING PROCESS

The Downtown Plan is the product of a Downtown-specific planning process that supplemented the *Forward SGF Comprehensive Plan* process. It began in January 2021 and included additional research and community engagement targeted toward Downtown. The planning process was designed to collect input from a *Forward SGF* Downtown Advisory Team, community members, and other stakeholders to form the Downtown vision and goals. The process included the following components:

PROJECT KICK-OFF

In January 2021, the planning process began with a kick-off meeting with City staff.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Between January and May 2021, an assessment of existing conditions was conducted, including field reconnaissance, research into past and on-going planning efforts, and an overview of factors like land use, transportation, community facilities, and areas of influence.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Opportunities for community engagement were provided throughout the planning process (see the next section for more information).

OPPORTUNITY SITE VISUALIZATIONS

Site plans and development visualizations of four Key Opportunity Sites were developed that showcase preferred building mass and orientation, site access and circulation, site amenities, parking, and landscaping location and design.

PUBLIC REVIEW

The draft Downtown Plan was reviewed by City staff, the Downtown Advisory Team, and the community at the public Open House. The draft Plan was also available for public review and comment via the project website for over 30 days and was presented to the City's Planning and Zoning Commission, and City Council with opportunity for feedback. Amendments were made according to the feedback received.

PLAN INTEGRATION

The Downtown Plan is included as a chapter within the *Forward SGF Comprehensive Plan* document. Key recommendations from within the Downtown Plan are also incorporated into the larger implementation strategy of the Comprehensive Plan.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Opening discussion with and gaining input from the Springfield community was critical to creating the Downtown Plan. Outreach was at the core of the planning process, helping identify key issues and opportunities and establish community priorities that guided the development of the Vision and Guiding Principles. As the planning process occurred during the COVID-19 Pandemic, outreach was conducted virtually to adhere to social distancing requirements.

Public engagement was conducted throughout the planning process in a variety of ways, including the following:

ONLINE SURVEY

Beginning in February 2021, an online survey was available on the project website and received 671 responses (as of July 2022).

MAP.SOCIAL

An online map-based engagement platform, map.social was available to the public throughout the planning process on the project website and received 168 comments (as of July 2022).

DOWNTOWN ADVISORY TEAM MEETINGS

Three Downtown Advisory Team meetings were conducted to ensure the Downtown Plan is in line with the community's needs and desires. The Downtown Advisory Team consisted of business owners, Downtown representatives, interest groups, and partner organizations.

VISIONING WORKSHOP

A virtual Visioning Workshop open to the public was conducted on April 29, 2021 to gain input on the preferred approach to Downtown revitalization and investment, as well as issues and opportunities that should be addressed by the Downtown Plan.

OPEN HOUSE

A public open house was held to allow residents to "drop in" and review the draft Downtown Plan, ask questions, and provide their input.

OUTREACH KEY TAKEAWAYS

The community outreach process for the Downtown Plan collected input on a wide range of issues, opportunities, ideas, and concerns regarding Downtown, all of which were considered during the development of the Plan. The following is a list of key takeaways that were discussed extensively during the outreach process that helped establish priorities of the Plan and inform critical projects, policies, and recommendations:

Land Use

- Repurpose industrial and older buildings into art spaces and other uses to bring people Downtown
- Support a mix of uses with active storefronts
- Redevelop expansive parking lots and consolidate public parking in parking garages

Urban Design

- Focus density and streetscape improvements in the "urban core"
- Provide public gathering spaces for socializing, events, and festivals
- Increase and maintain outdoor dining spaces
- Rethink the Square and consider a design highly unique to Springfield
- Establish standards for unified branding, wayfinding, and signage Downtown

Transportation

- Slow traffic speed through traffic calming measures
- Provide wide, accommodating, and attractive sidewalks to promote walking and provide space for pedestrian amenities
- Establish no-car zones or shared streets that reinforce a walkable environment
- Expand bike and trail network to connect key Downtown destinations
- Support micromobility options like scooter or bike shares
- Strengthen transit connectivity and consider alternatives for public transit

ESTABLISHING THE DOWNTOWN VISION

The Downtown's vision is the product of the input received through the Downtown Plan's outreach process paired with the analysis of Downtown's existing conditions. It was formed based on feedback from the community on how Downtown should grow, what should be preserved, and what can be improved. It describes the desired future of Downtown; it is written to be forward-looking and illustrates accomplishments to be achieved in the next 20 years.



Virtual Visioning Workshop Board Sample

DOWNTOWN VISION

In 2040, Downtown Springfield will flourish as the thriving, bustling core of the City. Residents and visitors from across the region will be drawn to Downtown for its wide variety of shops, restaurants, night life, and entertainment options unique to Springfield. Aging buildings will be revitalized, historically significant structures will be preserved and celebrated, and vacant storefronts will be activated.

A mix of dining, entertainment, public gathering places, and local retailers will create the “Downtown Springfield” experience that cannot be replicated online. The City’s business-friendly attitude will welcome new businesses that build on existing popular attractions. University students, young professionals, older adults, and everyone in between will be able to find affordable housing options—from upper story apartments in the Downtown Core Area to unique lofts in repurposed industrial buildings.

Enhanced streetscapes will come to life through a combination of public improvements and high quality private development, targeted on key streets like Boonville Avenue, South Avenue, Park Central West, and Park Central East and gateways corridors like Trafficway. Large blank walls of windowless buildings will be beautified with vibrant murals that are representative of Springfield’s culture and character. Vacant lots or expansive parking lots will be redeveloped with uses that contribute to Downtown’s activity and expand the desired built form.

Patrons will be able to enjoy attractive outdoor spaces where they can gather, socialize, and relax. At its heart, the historic Park Central Square will serve as the main public gathering space and the center for community festivals and events, like the Birthplace of Route 66 Festival and Christmas Parade. Buildings surrounding the Square will add to its liveliness, housing successful businesses that provide opportunities for outdoor seating. The Square will be complemented by a variety of green spaces that provide anchors for community activity in each portion of Downtown including an expansion of the park system in Jordan Valley, a redesigned Founders Park, and a new park at Meek’s Lumber site.

Downtown will be highly accessible via driving, walking, biking, or bus, with calming measures effectively slowing down traffic to better prioritize the pedestrian. Parking will continue to be monitored to ensure people can easily park and walk to nearby businesses. The expanded bike and trail network will be safe, comfortable, and well connected, linking key destinations like Jordan Valley Park, Hammons Field, Grant Avenue Parkway, and Missouri State University. This will help reinforce Downtown as Springfield’s primary activity center within a “spoke and hub” system that is well connected to other supporting commercial centers within the City that together support the local economy.

PLANNING INFLUENCES

When considering Downtown's existing context, numerous factors influence the way the district functions, including the mix of land uses, approaches and gateway points, sense of place, and concentrations of activity. These key planning influences were taken into consideration during the development of the Downtown Plan.

Boonville Corridor

Boonville Corridor is the connection between Downtown and Commercial Street district to the north. The City has identified the need for streetscape enhancements to improve the connectivity and character of the corridor and reinforce the synergy between the two key activity nodes.

Grant Avenue Parkway

Grant Avenue Parkway will be redeveloped with an off-street pedestrian and bicycle pathway, funded by a \$21 million federal BUILD (Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development) grant. This project will provide key connectivity between Downtown and the Wonders of Wildlife National Museum and Aquarium (WOW), connecting parks, recreational amenities, neighborhoods, and schools along the way.

Renew Jordan Creek

Renew Jordan Creek (RJC) is an ongoing project that focuses on the redevelopment of three underutilized Downtown sites along Jordan Creek into high-quality community gathering places with improved flood control and water quality. Improvements to Founders Park is included in this project.

Trafficway Street Subarea Framework

Trafficway Street Subarea Framework was developed as part of the Forward SGF Comprehensive Plan, and reinforces the corridor as a key gateway into the Downtown. It sets guidelines for transforming the area into an active urban-innovation hub with a flexible mix of uses that generate street activity, including entertainment, art, design studio, makerspace, office, and co-working uses.

Missouri State University Campus Area

Missouri State University Campus Area is home to MSU's educational facilities and a student body of over 24,000 as of 2020, which adds to Downtown's customer base and economic vitality. Students also significantly impact demand for housing in the area.

Jordan Valley Park Concept Plan and Design Guidelines

Jordan Valley Park Concept Plan establishes a vision and strategies for revitalizing Jordan Valley. This area contains key outdoor, recreational, and sports assets including Jordan Valley Park, West meadows, Hammons Field, and Jordan Valley Ice Park, which add to the regional tourism draw of Downtown.

IDEA Commons

IDEA Commons was formed by MSU to create an urban innovation park near the Downtown. It contains former industrial buildings that have been repurposed into centers of innovation, design, entrepreneurship, and art (IDEA). The district draws students, teachers, professionals, and entrepreneurs and serves as a vital activity center north of the Jordan Valley Creek corridor.

Major Roadway Edges

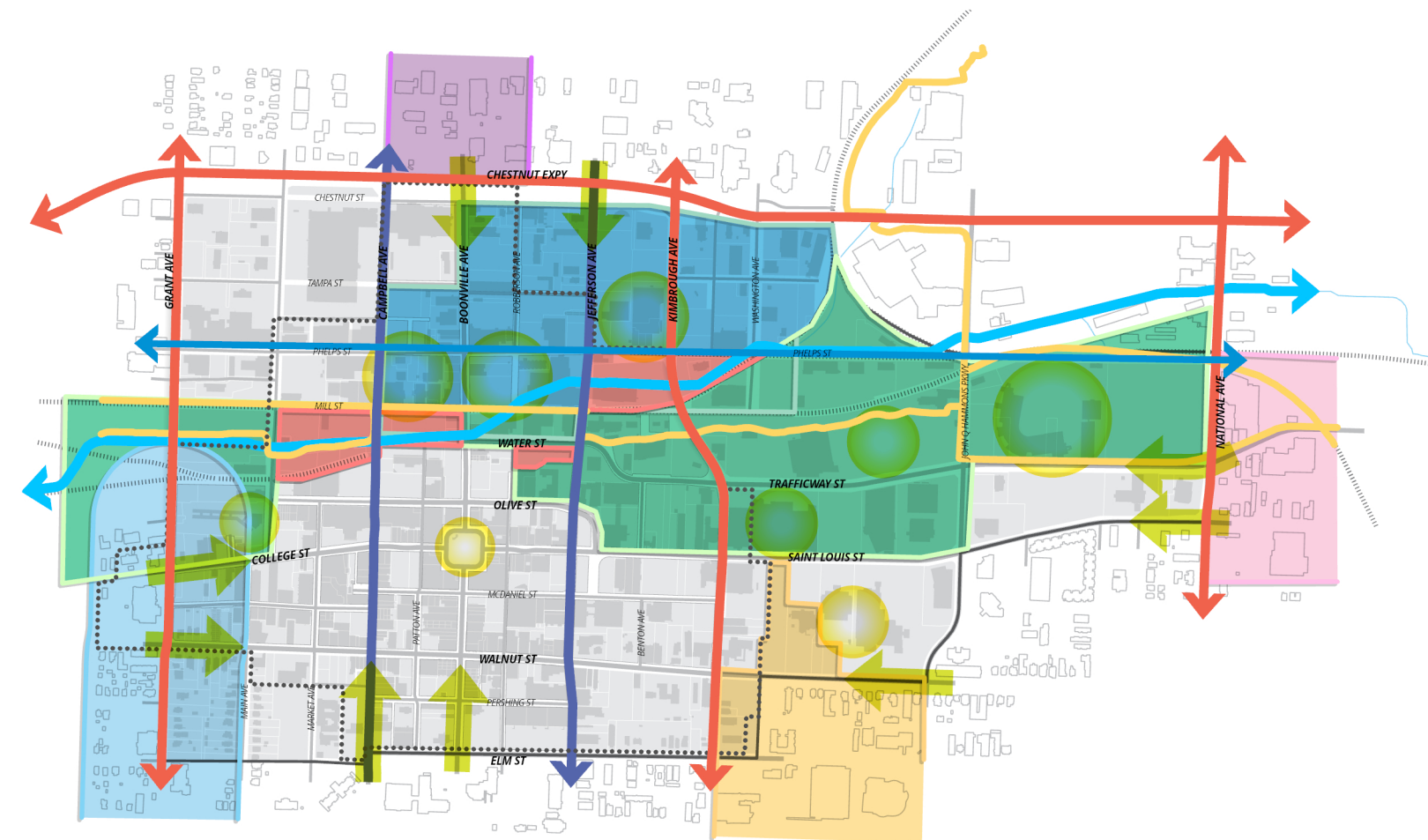
Major Roadway Edges are streets with high traffic that can act as barriers to pedestrian and bike connectivity. Opportunities for safer crossings, wider sidewalks, reinforced bike routes, and bridge crossing improvements exist along these major roadways.

Jordan Creek

Jordan Creek traverses the Downtown from east to west, with portions running underground and others through a channel. While currently underutilized and inaccessible for recreational use, the creek will be daylighted through the Renew Jordan Creek project to be enhanced as a natural amenity.

Greenways

The Jordan Creek Greenway is the only existing trail in Downtown that runs east and west from Jefferson Avenue to Jordan Valley Park. It provides an attractive pedestrian and bike connection; however, it is fragmented and presents an opportunity to be expanded on. Proposed greenways exist to close gaps in the network.



Key Approaches

Key Approaches highlight entry points into Downtown that present opportunities for gateway and wayfinding improvements. These approaches were considered when developing streetscape and transportation improvement recommendations.

Activity Centers

Activity Centers are key community destinations that generate significant foot traffic, including Hammons Field, Brick City, Park Central Square, the Expo Center, and the University Plaza Convention Center.

Phelps Street

Phelps Street presents the opportunity to be extended to National Avenue and enhanced as a key multimodal corridor in Downtown, potentially extending as far west as Kansas Expressway.

One Ways

One-ways along Campbell Avenue and Jefferson Avenue have been identified as potential impediments to traffic flow within the Downtown as well as access to businesses located along the roadways. A 2006 feasibility study was conducted for two-way conversions, which determined high implementation cost and proposed either to restudy, partially convert, or keep as is.

Community Improvement District

The Downtown Springfield Community Improvement District (CID) plays a major role in providing clean, safe, and friendly services for Downtown over the past 20 years. Services include the cleaning and maintenance of sidewalks and public spaces, parking enforcement, marketing, and increased police presence and public safety.

Center City Plan Element

The Center City Plan Element is a component of previous Vision 20/20 Comprehensive Plan. It examines three primary districts in the City Center: the Greater Downtown District, the Commercial Street District, and the Governmental Plaza District, outlining strategies to strengthen the quality of urban design throughout the City Center. Recommendations of the Center City Plan Element for the Greater Downtown District were considered during the development of this Downtown Plan.

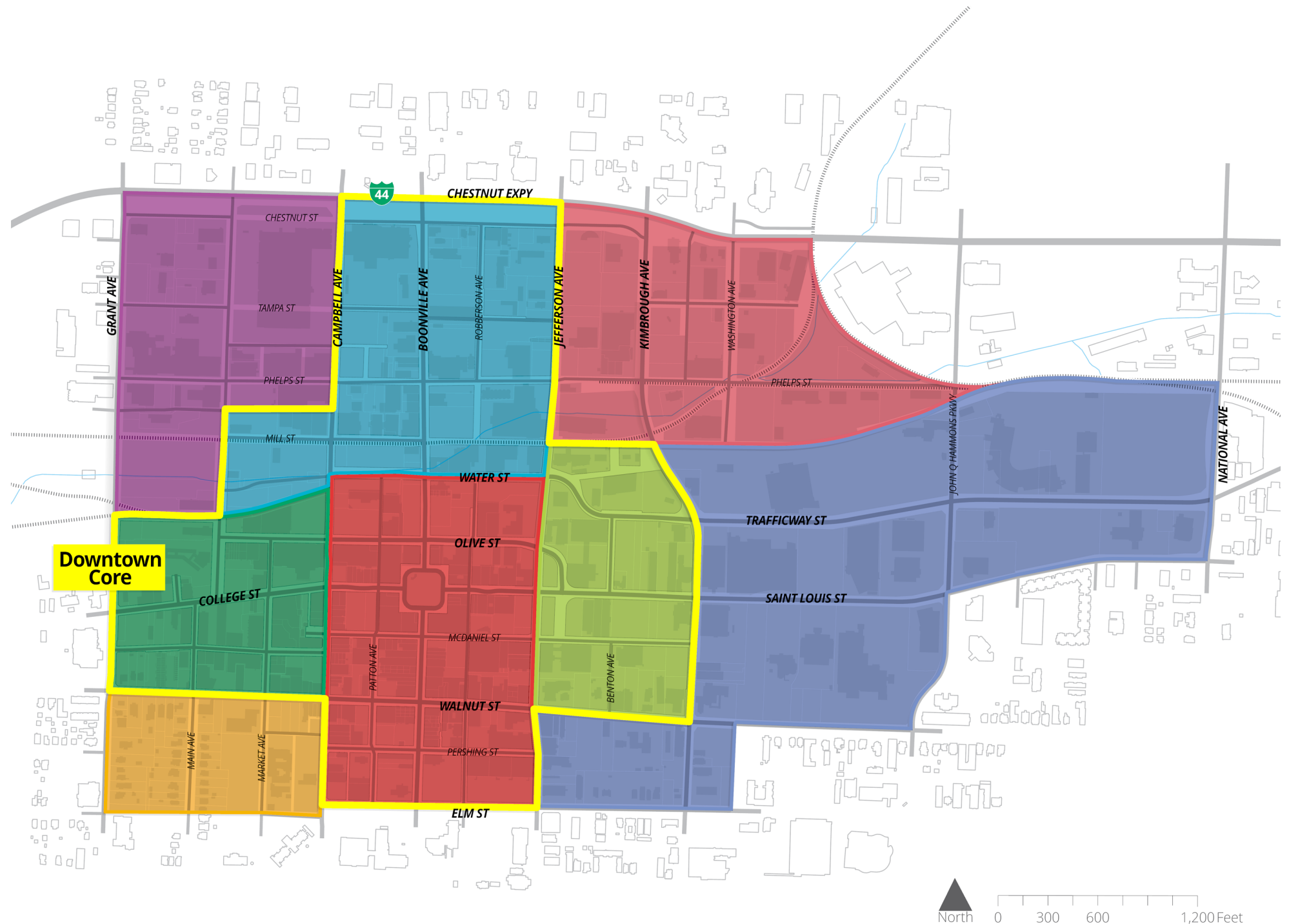
FUNCTIONAL SUBAREAS

Downtown Springfield has been separated into eight functional subareas based on existing land use, built form, physical boundaries, character, and other factors. While they are all considered part of Downtown, each subarea is unique and functions differently from one another. These subareas are intended to guide planning efforts within Downtown, allowing for recommendations that address their specific needs and tailored guidelines for future development and improvements.

By addressing Downtown Springfield as a collection of functional subareas, implementation efforts can be tailored to local context while ensuring that the different areas of Downtown work together to form a unified district anchored by a Downtown Core Area which has been given special consideration within the Plan.

DOWNTOWN CORE AREA

The Downtown Core Area is composed of the Innovation District, Urban Center, Brewery District, and Eastern Transition functional subareas, which are presented later within this section. Public and private investment should be prioritized within the Downtown Core Area to effectively revitalize the heart of Downtown as the vibrant, pedestrian-friendly center of activity. The area should serve as a hub of dining, shopping, entertainment, and community events, while also offering unique Downtown housing and office space.



Functional Subareas

- Urban Center
- Innovation District
- Brewery District
- Eastern Transition
- East Approach
- Northeast Healthcare
- Northwest Manufacturing
- Southwest Approach

COMPONENTS OF THE FUNCTIONAL SUBAREAS

The following section describes the character and role of each function subarea, providing area-specific recommendations on what should be improved or maintained. Each functional subarea takes into consideration the following factors:

BUILT FORM

For Downtown to be successful, attention must be given to the built form and design of future development and its relation to other structures and spaces. Desirable design elements, site layout, and building orientation are defined for each functional subarea.

TYPICAL BUILDING HEIGHT

The functional subareas provide guidance on recommended building heights to ensure new development fits within the context of the surrounding area. While building heights should remain flexible to welcome reinvestment and density, it is important that new development respects the scale of existing structures and historic properties.

PARKING

Providing parking to visitors, employees, and residents is crucial to the success of any downtown. Parking should be easy to access and provided in sufficient quantity, but designed in a manner that minimizes the visual impact on the downtown landscape. The functional subareas identify appropriate parking type and location.

RECOMMENDED USES

The Downtown Plan supports a diverse mix of uses within a walkable and well-designed environment. This section identifies recommended uses within each functional subarea, accounting for existing uses and context.

Single-Family Detached

This category includes single-family homes occupying individual lots. This use is prevalent within the Southwest Approach area adjacent to Grant Avenue Parkway and West Central Neighborhood.

Single-Family Attached

This category includes structures where dwelling units share an exterior wall with at least one adjacent unit and each dwelling unit has a dedicated entrance. Examples include townhomes or rowhomes.

Multifamily

This category includes structures containing multiple dwelling units stacked vertically with shared entrances and hallways, such as apartment buildings and condominiums. Examples include Frisco Lofts and Cresco.

Mixed-Use

This category includes multi-story buildings with ground floor commercial and upper floor office or residential units (either apartments or condominiums). Examples include structures on South Avenue or Park Central East.

Retail/Service

This category includes retail and service businesses like clothing stores, bookstores, salons, and banks. It should be noted that food and drink, office, medical, hotel, event venue, and entertainment uses have been categorized separately.

Office

This category includes small single-story office buildings or free-standing multi-story professional office spaces, such as the Holland Office Building.

Medical

This category includes medical uses like doctors' offices, hospitals, clinics, medical research centers, and community health centers like the Jordan Valley Community Health Center.

Hotel

This category includes hospitality establishments that provides lodging for travelers and visitors, such as Hotel Vandivort, University Plaza Hotel, and Tru by Hilton Springfield Downtown.

Event Venue

This category includes venues where events and conferences can be hosted, such as conferences, exhibitions, community events, and trade shows. Examples include the Springfield Expo Center and the University Plaza Convention Center.

Entertainment

This category includes "experience-driven" uses, such as museums, theaters, music venues, comedy shows, and art galleries. Examples include Hollywood Theaters, Craft Axe Throwing, and Blue Room Comedy Club.

Food and Drink

This category includes a variety of dining and drinking establishments, including restaurants, bars, cafes, breweries, and cocktail lounges. Examples include Lost Signal Brewing Company, 417 Taphouse, Mudhouse Coffee, and Black Sheep Burgers and Shakes.

Sport Facility

This category includes uses related to sports, such as stadiums, sport complexes, and skating rinks, like Hammons Field and the Jordan Valley Ice Park.

Institutional

This category includes local government uses, municipal facilities, educational facilities, and places of worship. Examples include Brick City, Hill City Church, and the Jordan Valley Innovation Center.

Light industrial

This category includes industrial uses related to manufacturing, warehousing, food processing, and distribution of goods and materials, that do not have significant noise or visual impact on surrounding properties. Light industrial uses should provide a public benefit in the form of employment and commerce. Light industrial uses such as self-storage should be discouraged.

Park and Open Space

This category includes public parks that provide active and passive recreational opportunities as well as preserved open space areas. Examples include Jordan Valley Park, Founders Park, and Jubilee Park.

ALIGNMENT WITH FORWARD SGF PLACETYPES

The *Forward SGF Comprehensive Plan* utilizes a placetype approach to land use and development planning. Rather than looking at individual parcels, the approach focuses on primary and supporting uses, transportation, and urban design at a neighborhood, district, and corridor scale. While the placetypes set general guidelines for land use and development character across the City, the functional subareas provide an added level of detail specific to Downtown. While the recommended uses overall align with the guidance provided in the **Land Use and Development** chapter, some exceptions of appropriate uses have been included in the Downtown Plan's functional subareas due to the unique context of Downtown. For example, this includes a desired transition away from heavy industrial uses historically located along Downtown's rail corridors and the expansion of institutional uses like the Jordan Valley Community Health Center. The City's **Land Development Code** should be updated following the adoption of this Plan to reflect the desirable types of Downtown uses and built environment outlined within this Plan.



NORTHWEST MANUFACTURING

A revitalized, historically industrial area that supports upgraded light industrial uses, creative industries, offices, and institutional uses

This functional subarea serves as the northwestern approach into the Downtown Core that is expected to remain industrial through the 20-year horizon of the Plan. It currently contains a variety of aging industrial structures, surface parking lots, and underutilized properties that present the opportunity to be redeveloped into higher quality manufacturing uses or spaces for creative industries.

The expansive United States Postal Office property is expected to remain, but improvements to loading area screening and parking lot landscaping are recommended. As development pressures from the Innovation District and Urban Center increase in the long term, opportunities for other uses like institutional, office, or residential may be appropriate along this functional subarea's eastern and southern boundaries.



Pedestrian and bike connectivity should be strengthened between this functional subarea, the Urban Center functional subarea, IDEA Commons, and community destinations along Trafficway Street like Hammons Fields and Jordan Valley Park. This should be done by expanding the bike and trail network, improving sidewalk conditions, and incorporating pedestrian scale lighting, wayfinding, and designated bike routes.

BUILT FORM

Aging industrial buildings and deteriorating surface parking lots should be redeveloped, locating the building to hold the corner or near the property line. New industrial buildings should feature high quality façades, including windows on ground floors facing public rights-of-way to improve the pedestrian experience and at-grade entrances in high visibility areas. Sidewalk conditions should be improved during redevelopment with curb and gutter. Perimeter landscaping should be provided to screen existing parking, utility, and loading areas from view, and future loading/service areas should be located to the rear or out of view from the right-of-way whenever possible. Future outdoor storage should be discouraged; in the interim, existing outdoor storage should be fully screened with high quality fencing and/or landscaping.

TYPICAL BUILDING HEIGHT

1 to 2 stories, 3 to 4 stories along the area's eastern boundary to complement Innovation District development.

PARKING

Parking should be relocated to the side or rear of buildings as redevelopment occurs.

RECOMMENDED USES

- Maker Space
- Art Studio
- Live-Work Space
- Light industrial
- Institutional
- Office
- Single-family Attached (limited)
- Multifamily (limited)



NORTHEAST HEALTHCARE

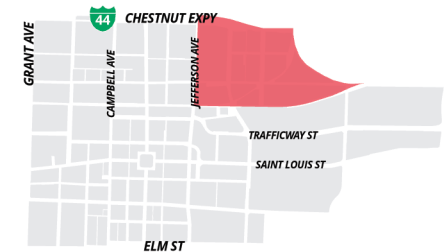
A healthcare, institutional, and office hub that attracts medical professionals and patients to the area, building off the expanding Jordan Valley Community Health Center.

This functional subarea serves as the northeastern approach into the Downtown core, anchored by the Jordan Valley Community Health Center (JVCHC). It provides key connection to Drury University and Ozarks Technical Community College to the north. JVCHC's expansion plans should be supported through close coordination. The area should continue to grow as a healthcare hub, complemented with other compatible uses like institutional and office spaces.

The Commercial Metals Corporation (CMC) and Meek's Lumber sites should be redeveloped to better connect with the Jordan Valley Master Plan and the Renew Jordan Creek project area, transitioning industrial uses into commercial, office, and mixed uses that connect to anchor institutions in the area. The transformation of the old Meek's Lumber site into an attractive public open space with a daylighted Jordan Creek should serve as a recreational amenity for area employees and visitors and foster pedestrian activity in this area. This should tie to the restoration of Jordan Creek as a Downtown amenity, and the enhancement and extension of Phelps Street to National Avenue as a multimodal corridor (see the CMC Catalyst Site section for more information).

BUILT FORM

As redevelopment occurs, buildings should be oriented to the street with ample windows and articulated façades to avoid large, monotonous exteriors. The streetscape should be enhanced through public-private investments, including building a continuous sidewalk network. Future outdoor storage should be discouraged; in the interim, existing outdoor storage should be fully screened with high quality fencing and/or landscaping.



TYPICAL BUILDING HEIGHT

1 to 4 stories.

PARKING

Parking should be located behind buildings where possible and away from main roadways that are highly trafficked and visible, supplemented with on-street parking. If existing or future parking lots are located to the side of the building, a combination of landscaping and decorative low-profile fencing or masonry knee wall should be used to screen parking stalls. Parking lots should be improved with perimeter and interior landscaping.

RECOMMENDED USES

- Medical
- Institutional
- Office
- Park and Open Space



EAST APPROACH

The eastern approach into Downtown containing a unique mix of sports, tourism, business, and office uses that draw in visitors to the Greater Downtown Area.

This functional subarea serves as the eastern approach into the Downtown core. It has a distinct character with predominantly larger-scale development and a unique mix of tourism- and business-focused uses. The East Approach contains a variety of recreational, sports, and hospitality uses, such as Hammons Field, Route 66 Springfield Visitor Center, Springfield Expo Center, and University Plaza Hotel and Convention Center.

Redevelopment of underutilized properties should be promoted. Opportunities for a new and expanded Expo Center, offices, and hotels should also be targeted in this area, along with supporting food and drink establishments for stadium attendees. Pedestrian and bike connectivity should be strengthened, particularly to the Urban Center, Trafficway Street subarea, and MSU's campus.



This includes improving the bike and trail network, sidewalk conditions, pedestrian-scale lighting, and wayfinding. If completed, connections to the redeveloped CMC site and extended Phelps Street corridor should be strengthened to support the area's transformation.

BUILT FORM

Considering this functional subarea's existing larger development scale and setbacks, future investments should focus on improving the pedestrian-friendliness of the area. Future redevelopment should be modern in design and locate buildings near the property line to create a desirable sense of enclosure that supports a walkable environment. At the corner of Trafficway Street and Sherman Parkway, future redevelopment should be guided to create a "ballpark village" type pedestrian node that provides food and drink venues, entertainment, and retail options that visitors can patron after a game. To connect the East Approach's destinations and support the significant foot traffic generated by the ballpark and Expo Center, the pedestrian realm should be reinforced with improvements like widened sidewalks, safe crossings, landscaped parking lots, pedestrian-scale lighting, and outlot development that frames public ways.

Consideration should be given to redeveloping the Commercial Metals Corporation site and enhancing and extending Phelps Street eastward to National Avenue to support the area's transformation.

TYPICAL BUILDING HEIGHT

This area should remain flexible in building height, with buildings typically ranging from 2 to 6 stories.

PARKING

Parking lots should be located behind buildings or to the side and a combination of landscaping and decorative low-profile fencing or masonry knee wall should be used to screen parking stalls. Parking garages are also appropriate in this subarea to accommodate large crowds for events. On-street parking should be provided for additional parking supply.

RECOMMENDED USES

- Sports Facility
- Entertainment
- Office
- Hotel
- Event Venue
- Park and Open Space



SOUTHWEST APPROACH

The southwestern approach from Grant Avenue Parkway that transitions from a preserved historic neighborhood into Downtown commercial.

This functional subarea serves as the southwestern approach into the Downtown core. It contains the revitalized Historic South Main residential district and transitions into more commercial-oriented uses to the east. Gateway features should be targeted along Walnut Street to welcome visitors from the future Grant Avenue Parkway into Downtown, paired with upgraded sidewalk conditions that enhance the pedestrian environment.

BUILT FORM

Existing historic single-family residential properties should continue to be preserved and maintained for their historic significance. New development adjacent to these properties should be context sensitive in terms of building scale and architectural design to avoid detracting from the area's existing historic character. Existing non-historically significant residential, industrial, auto-oriented uses along Walnut Street should be redeveloped into mixed-use, rowhomes, or apartment buildings along the property line that expand on the higher density Downtown character east of Campbell Avenue.

TYPICAL BUILDING HEIGHT

1 to 3 stories.

PARKING

Parking lots should be located to the rear or side, supplemented with on-street parking. Private parking for historic single-family homes should continue to be located behind the residential structure. Existing front-loaded parking lots such as at Crash Champions Collision Repair should be screened with perimeter landscaping to improve their appearance in the short term. Proactive code enforcement should be practiced to ensure properties are in alignment with the City's zoning code.

RECOMMENDED USES

- Office
- Retail/service
- Single-family detached
- Single-family attached
- Multifamily





BREWERY DISTRICT

A bustling district home to many of Springfield's breweries that offer unique dining, drink, and entertainment venues.

This functional subarea should serve as a hub of Springfield's burgeoning brewery and distillery community, complemented by other uses that support entertainment, dining, and socializing. Restaurants and cafes should build off the rich beer culture, with various establishments offering outdoor seating that activate the streets during the daytime. Branding specific to the Brewery District should be created to unify the businesses, such as providing wayfinding of businesses for visitors to venture out on a self-led brewery tour including breweries located elsewhere in the greater Downtown area.

Public art should be incorporated to add to the vibrancy and trendiness of the area. Small-scale offices, retail, and service uses are also appropriate for this district that add to the diversity of business and draw foot traffic. The Brewery District benefits from high access to public transit via the expanded City Utilities Transit Center.

This makes the area an attractive location for residential options as well as rowhomes, lofts, and apartments that help generate activity within Downtown's western periphery.

BUILT FORM

The historic industrial appeal should be preserved within this district. Future redevelopments should aim to maintain this character through the use of historic elements such as with brick façades and large windows like what exists on the west side of Market Avenue. Buildings should be situated along the property line and wide sidewalks should be provided to support pedestrian activity.



EASTERN TRANSITION

The eastern transition into the Urban Center that supports an eclectic mix of uses from offices to apartment buildings.

This functional subarea serves as the eastern transition into Downtown and offers a mix of multifamily housing and unique uses that support activity in the Urban Core. It currently contains a wide variety of uses, including the U.S. Bank, Jubilee Park, Cresco apartments, Frisco Lofts, and the Discovery Center. Moving forward, flexibility in the uses should continue to be encouraged, such as institutional, banks, office, and residential uses.

Development of the vacant lot at 735 East St. Louis Street is a key infill site for this transitional area. Development of this site should be cautiously weighed to ensure future use promotes street activity and has a strong functional relationship to the Expo and University Plaza, as well as providing a public benefit and the integration of employment or housing.



TYPICAL BUILDING HEIGHT

1 to 4 stories.

PARKING

Parking is primarily on-street. Any off-street parking should be located to the rear or side of the building.

RECOMMENDED USES

- Food and Drink
- Entertainment
- Single-family attached
- Multifamily
- Retail/service
- Office
- Mixed-use (ground floor commercial/office, upper story residential/office)
- Park and Open Space

Jubilee Park should be enhanced with improved programming and a potential expansion, acting as a gateway point into the Urban Center via Park Central East and a pedestrian activity center to complement Park Central Square (see the Jubilee Park Catalyst Site section for more information). Pedestrian and bike connectivity should be strengthened between this subarea and MSU's campus by incorporating pedestrian scale lighting, wayfinding, and designated bike routes.

BUILT FORM

Architecture should be more modern in character, with redeveloped buildings located near the property line to create a desirable sense of enclosure. Redevelopment along St. Louis Street should be located at the property line to maintain a consistent street wall transitioning from the Urban Center to the East Approach. Lot consolidation should be supported to accommodate larger scale developments like The 505 Springfield multifamily development.

TYPICAL BUILDING HEIGHT

1 to 3 stories.

PARKING

Parking lots should be located behind buildings and hidden from right-of-way view. In the interim, existing front-loaded parking lots should be enhanced with perimeter and internal landscaping as they make up a significant portion of the subarea's land area and detract from its character. This should be supplemented by on-street parking and public parking garages. Institutional and office uses should be encouraged to use shared parking lots/garages.

RECOMMENDED USES

- Institutional
- Office
- Multifamily
- Park and Open Space



INNOVATION DISTRICT

The northern approach into Downtown that functions as a center of education, research, and innovation, building on Missouri State University's IDEA Commons

This functional subarea serves as the northern gateway into the Urban Center primarily via Boonville Avenue. It is a growing urban innovation park revolving around IDEA Commons that contains key institutional facilities like Brick City, Jordan Valley Innovation Center, and efactory. Distinguished by the grade change at Water Street, this area is physically separated from the Urban Center and carries a different character with repurposed industrial buildings and a traversing railroad line.

The daylighted Jordan Creek will serve as a southern anchor of the subarea, offering attractive public open space and recreational opportunities. Small-scale retail and service options should be supported along Boonville Avenue that serve surrounding residents, employees, and students of IDEA Commons. Apartment and loft spaces should also be supported that increase housing options near Downtown's core.

Pedestrian and bike connectivity to Missouri State University, Drury University, and Ozarks Technical Community College should be enhanced to strengthen connections between these academic nodes.

BUILT FORM

The district's character should develop as a mix of modern and historic industrial. New state-of-the-art institutional buildings should juxtapose older, repurposed industrial buildings that may serve as unique office or lofts spaces. Buildings surrounding the daylighted Jordan Creek should be oriented towards the creek to benefit from the natural amenity and with high pedestrian connectivity walking paths leading to the open space.



TYPICAL BUILDING HEIGHT

2 to 5 stories.

PARKING

Where possible, parking garages should be integrated into new large-scale institutional or office development, designed to appear part of the building. Otherwise parking lots should be located to the rear or side. As IDEA Commons expands, the need for a standalone parking garage may be needed in the long term to accommodate the daytime population, a portion of which could be made available for the public. Other uses like the retail and service uses on Boonville Avenue should continue to utilize on-street parking.

RECOMMENDED USES

- Institutional
- Offices
- Retail/service
- Single-family attached
- Multifamily
- Food and Drink
- Mixed-use (ground floor commercial, upper story residential/office)
- Park and Open Space



URBAN CENTER

The heart of Downtown Springfield and the center of activity where residents work and live and visitors come explore, shop, dine, and socialize.

This functional subarea functions as the center of civic activity, filled with a wide range of small businesses offering shopping, dining, and entertainment options for all ages and interests. Mixed-use buildings should contain a variety of businesses at the ground-floor level that maintain active storefronts while supporting residential and office uses on the upper floors that help generate daytime foot traffic.

With the growth of e-commerce and associated decline in brick and mortar stores, attracting unique experience-based businesses and creating public spaces should be prioritized in the Urban Center.

Examples include sit-down restaurants, cafes, bars, thrift stores, and artisan shops, as well as entertainment options like jazz venues, bowling, indoor mini golf, comedy clubs, and cooking classes. Essential stores to support Downtown living, such as pharmacies, convenience stores, and grocery stores, should be incentivized to locate within Downtown.

The area should act as the vibrant core of Springfield and the focal point of public realm improvements, home to local festivals and events, cultural and historic assets, and key community destinations.

BUILT FORM

The Urban Center should support the most consistent street wall within Downtown with predominantly mixed-use buildings that highlight Springfield's historic character. Existing historic buildings and architectural elements should be preserved where appropriate. New development should use a mix of strategies to match the existing character such as the use of historically appropriate façade materials and cornice lines to complement adjacent buildings. Buildings should be located at the property line and first floor façades should feature large storefront windows to add visual interest, provide informal surveillance, and enhance the sense of security.

TYPICAL BUILDING HEIGHT

While anomalies currently exist that feature taller building heights, such as the Heer's building and the Springfield State Office Building, future development should be 2 to 6 stories to work towards a more uniform Urban Center building scale.

PARKING

Parking should be provided on-street or consolidated in public parking garages. Existing surface parking lots should be considered for higher intensity uses where possible to help reduce gaps in the street wall, offsetting parking capacity to garages as appropriate.

RECOMMENDED USES

- Retail/service
- Food and drink
- Entertainment
- Office
- Multifamily
- Mixed-use (ground floor commercial/ office, upper story residential/office)
- Park and Open Space





KEY OPPORTUNITY SITES

This section identifies key vacant, underutilized, or disinvested properties that should be targeted for redevelopment and enhancements in line with the vision of the Downtown Plan. These opportunity sites have the potential to act as a catalyst for additional quality development, setting the standards for attractive design and building layout. For Key Opportunity Sites that would progress community priorities, the City should consider engaging in an RFP/RFQ process to help market the site and attract development interest. The City can also evaluate specific development incentives and help facilitate coordination between the property owner and developer. It is important to note that at any time redevelopment may occur in areas not identified on the Opportunities Sites map or discussed in this section.

SITE IMPROVEMENTS/ ADAPTIVE REUSE

This category includes properties with buildings that are structurally sound, however are vacant, underutilized, or show signs of disinvestment. These properties can be enhanced through site and façade improvements and necessary interior rehabilitation to support their future use. Buildings with desirable historic characters should be salvaged whenever possible for adaptive reuse. This category also identifies certain industrial buildings that could be converted into interesting loft, dining, coworking, or retail spaces.

INFILL DEVELOPMENT

This category includes vacant properties without an existing structure that present potential for new development. It is crucial these developments are context sensitive to conform with surrounding character, building height, and massing.

REDEVELOPMENT

This category includes properties with existing buildings that do not showcase the desirable built form and should be redeveloped. It also contains existing surface parking lots that should be considered for higher intensity or more productive uses. Properties that are ripe for parcel consolidation (the consolidation of multiple parcels to increase development potential) are also highlighted.

CATALYST SITES

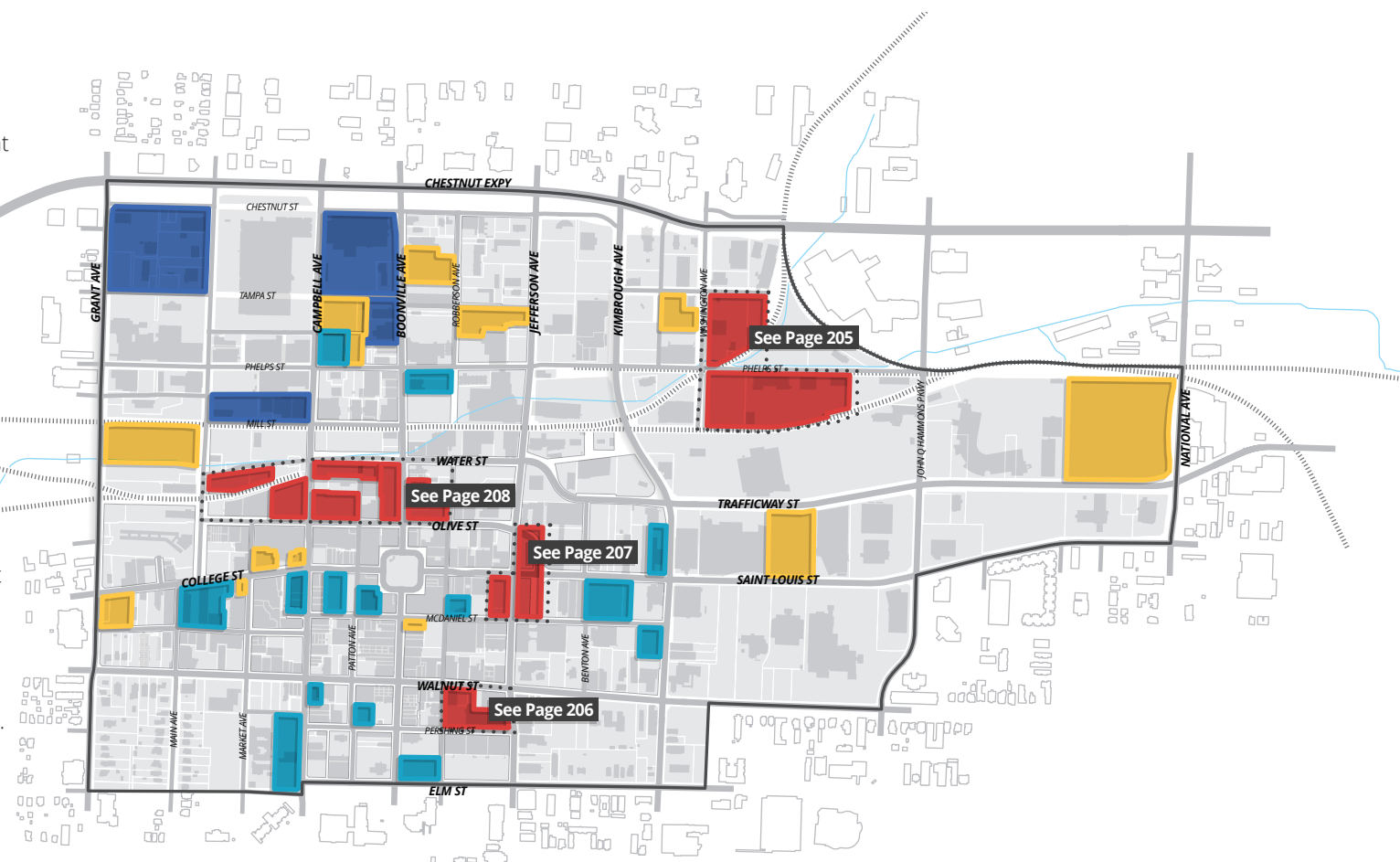
Catalyst sites are underutilized parcels or parcels with undesirable uses within the context of Downtown where redevelopment could have a significant positive effect on Downtown Springfield. The following section illustrates the redevelopment and repositioning of the following four sites:

- Commercial Metals Corporation
- YMCA Block
- Jubilee Park
- Olive Street

Currently, these catalyst sites do not substantially contribute to the pedestrian-oriented, activated Downtown environment envisioned by the community. They represent potential missed opportunities to accommodate a vibrant mix of uses that supports high quality of place, increased pedestrian activity, and desirable built form.

Concept as a Guideline

Each catalyst site could be redeveloped in a variety of ways, and the proposed catalyst site concepts are intended to serve only as a guideline and an illustration of a possible or likely redevelopment scenario. They illustrate development potential with a mix of uses that is supported by the community's vision. Future development proposals should be considered on their own merit.



Opportunity Sites by Type

- Site Improvement/Adaptive Reuse
- Infill Development
- Redevelopment
- Catalyst Site

CATALYST SITE COMMERCIAL METALS COMPANY

SETTING UP FOR A TRANSFORMATIVE OPPORTUNITY

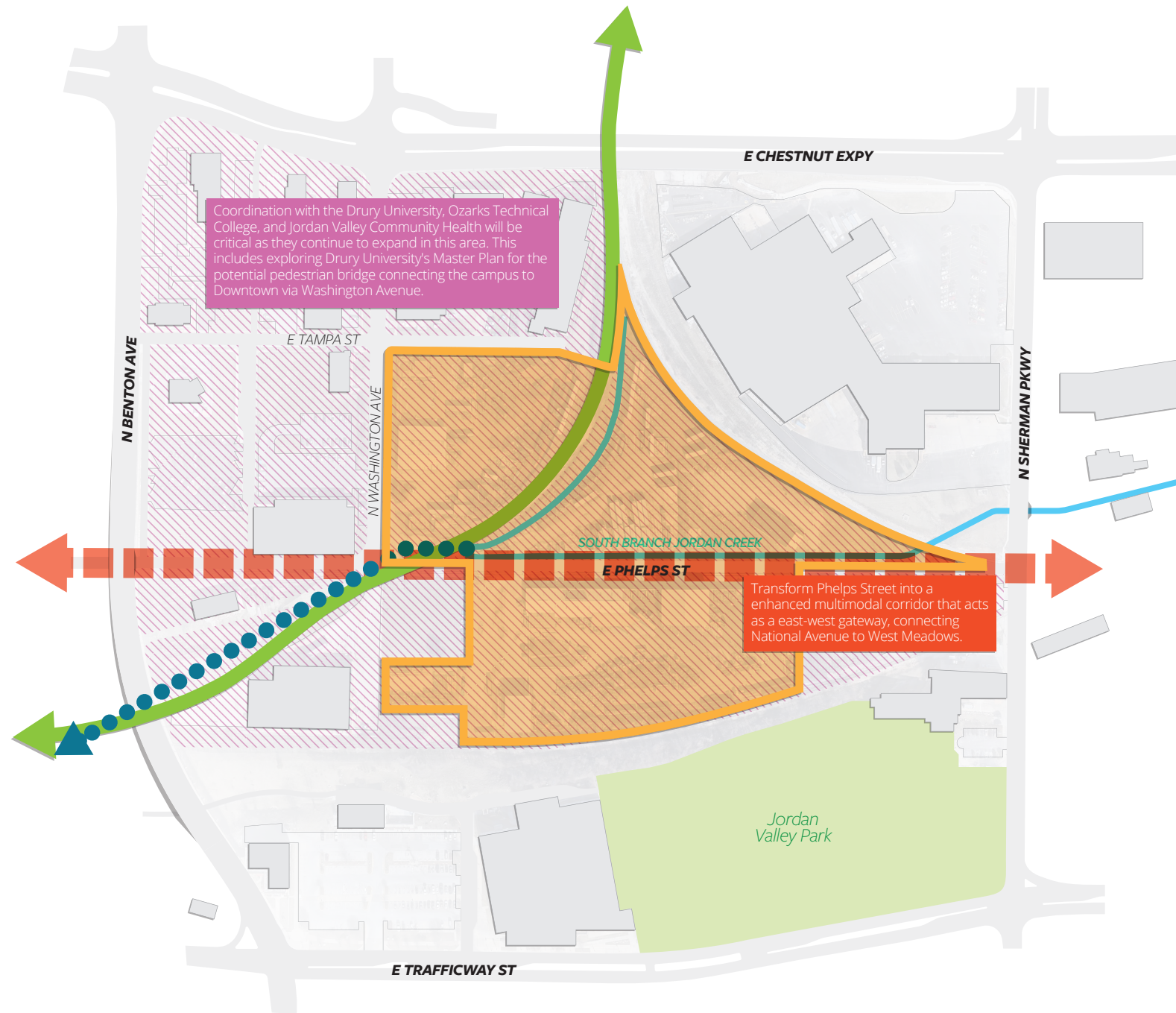
The Commercial Metals Corporation (CMC) site consists of existing industrial uses at the southeast corner of East Tampa Street and North Washington Avenue, in addition to the CMC Recycling Center between Jordan Valley Park and East Phelps Street. The site is also bounded by existing railroads, which pose as barriers to forming connections to the surrounding area. There is potential for the CMC site to transform this area's character and identity, acting as a catalyst for new quality development in the Northeast Healthcare functional subarea. Relocation of existing industrial uses would support stream restoration, a healthy urban riparian zone, and improved water quality, which is particularly important as this site is upstream from the Renew Jordan Creek project site. It could also eliminate or reduce rail traffic west of the site, allowing numerous projects to grow in the area. This framework identifies a series of actions, including the Renew Jordan Creek project and planned rails-to-trails, that need to be in place to realize that potential.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Transformation of the site to more environmentally appropriate uses would support water quality improvement efforts in the Jordan Creek watershed. The City has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources to address the impairment of Jordan Creek through Integrated Planning efforts. The Commercial Metals initiative is an important opportunity to address and improve urban and industrial stormwater runoff discharges to Jordan Creek, consistent with Integrated Planning analysis and the City's federally-mandated Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System permit.

RELATION TO THE RENEW JORDAN CREEK

The recommendations of the CMC site provides opportunities to form connections with the rest of the Jordan Valley Master Plan and Renew Jordan Creek's overall project area, extending the range of amenities Springfield residents can enjoy within and around Downtown.



Map Key

- Commercial Metals Company Opportunity Site
- Northeast Healthcare Functional Subarea
- Phelps Street Multimodal Connection
- Planned Rails-to-Trail
- Remove Railroad
- Remove Industrial Buildings & Uses
- Planned Renew Jordan Creek Project
- Potential Connection between Commercial Metals Company site and Jordan Valley Park

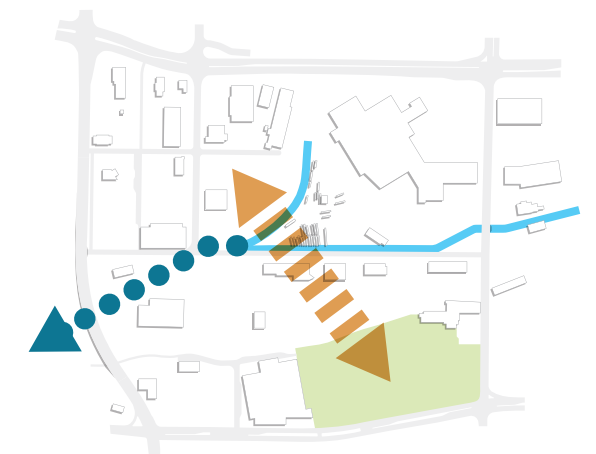
STEPS FOR SUCCESS



REMOVE RAILROADS. In coordination with the 2006 Railroad Reconfiguration Study and BNSF, eliminate the existing railroads surrounding the site. The planned Rails-to-Trails project will enhance connections between Commercial Metals and Downtown.



REMOVE INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS & USES. Realizing the site's potential for transformative opportunity will require repositioning the site's existing industrial uses.

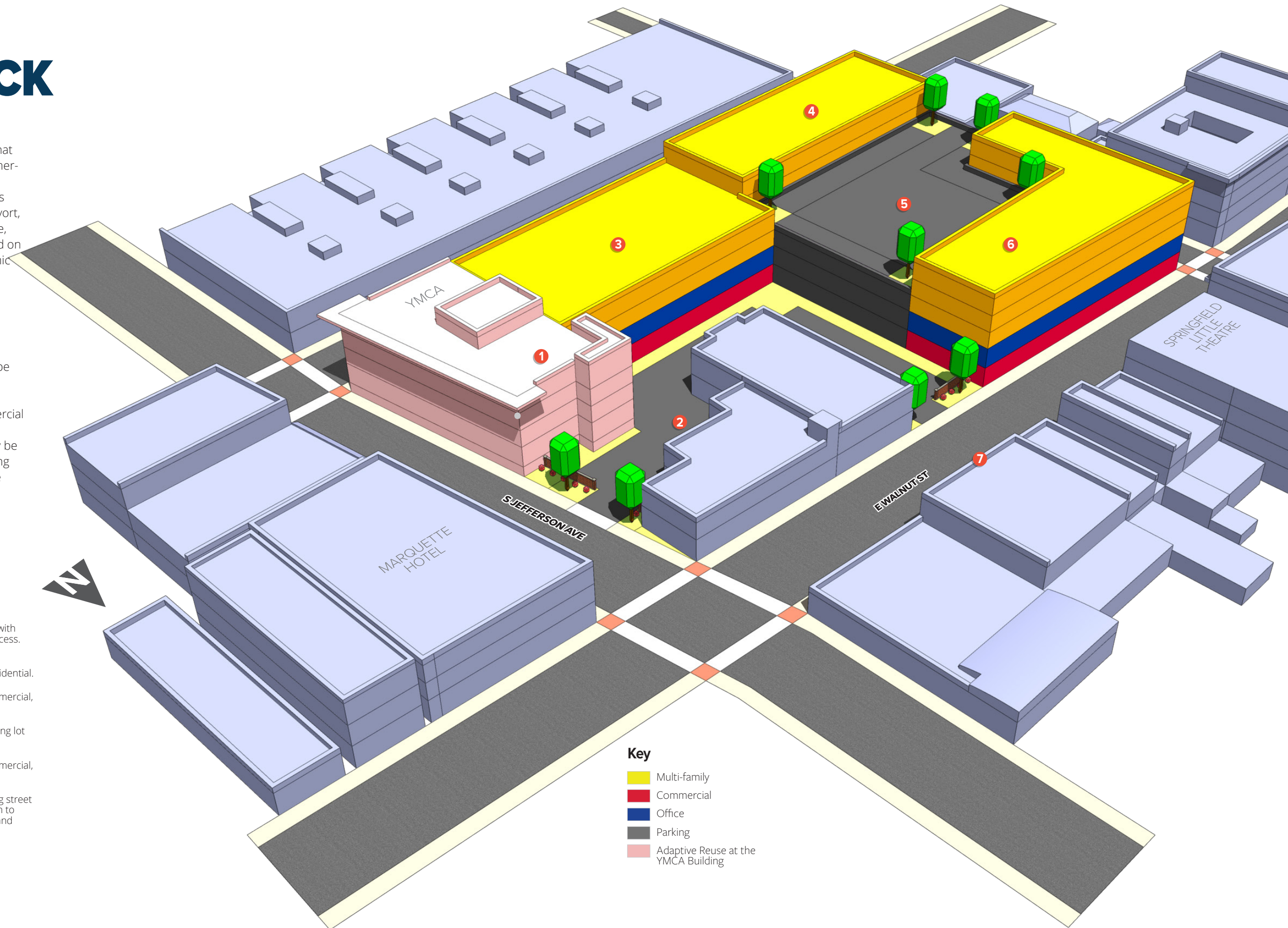


CONNECT TO WATER & OPEN SPACE. The removal of railroads and the planned Renew Jordan Creek project presents opportunities to enhance connection to the water and the Jordan Valley Park.

CATALYST SITE YMCA BLOCK

This site currently comprises multiple parcels that includes surface parking lots, single-story commercial buildings, and the Ozarks Regional YMCA. Successful businesses with desirable built forms exist surrounding this site, such as Hotel Vandivort, the historic Landers Theatre, and 417 Taphouse, creating major redevelopment potential to build on this desirable character and add to the economic vitality of the area.

While the historic YMCA building that holds the corner at Jefferson Avenue and Pershing Street should be preserved for adaptive reuse, the existing parking lots to the west and the dated commercial buildings to the northwest should be redeveloped. Mixed-use buildings should line Walnut Street and Pershing Street to create a consistent street wall, with ground floor commercial and upper floor residential or office. The Greek Belly and the Jefferson Avenue parking lots may be preserved, enhanced with perimeter landscaping and decorative masonry walls. A parking garage should be developed mid-block of Robberson Avenue to offset parking loss.



Legend

- 1 Historically significant corner building preserved for adaptive reuse.
- 2 Two surface parking lots maintained and enhanced with perimeter landscaping, decorative wall, and cross access.
- 3 Four-story mixed-use building with ground floor commercial, second story office, and upper floor residential.
- 4 Five-story mixed-use building with ground floor commercial, second story office, and upper floor residential.
- 5 Two-story parking garage that replaces surface parking lot spaces.
- 6 Five-story mixed-use building with ground floor commercial, second story office, and upper floor residential.
- 7 Future development should complement the existing street wall on the north side of Walnut Street with attention to building materials, windows, architectural detailing, and storefront design.

Key

- Multi-family
- Commercial
- Office
- Parking
- Adaptive Reuse at the YMCA Building

CATALYST SITE JUBILEE PARK

This site currently includes a surface parking lot on the southwest side, as well as Jubilee Park—an underutilized park located at a key gateway point into the Urban Center functional subarea. To activate this important gateway and provide an attractive public gathering space, Jubilee Park’s programming should be enhanced. This could include a new plaza, pavilion, play area, outdoor seating, and prominent landscaping along Park Central East. Existing public art pieces should remain while paths and lighting should be upgraded. The pedestrian realm should be reinforced with high-visibility crosswalks at all crossing points, widened sidewalks along Jefferson Avenue, and slowed car speeds along Park Central E between the two portions of Jubilee Park.

Redevelopment of the existing “tuning fork” right-of-way should be considered into an expansion of Jubilee Park with additional green space. If street parking is to remain, the disorganized parking arrangement on the south side should be improved. The City should also remain open to the redevelopment of Jubilee Park if a desirable proposal is brought forward for a higher and better use of the site. Improved parking for the Discovery Center should also be coordinated with the organization.

The southwest parking lot presents an opportunity to be redeveloped into a mixed-use building with ground floor commercial, second floor parking, and upper floor residential with roof deck amenities that overlook the park, potentially integrating green roofs. This development will also help improve desirable sense of enclosure surrounding the park by filling in the streetwall.



Legend

- 1** Six-story mixed-use building with ground floor commercial, second floor parking garage, and upper floor residential with roof deck amenity overlooking park.
- 2** Small plaza that holds the corner and provides a supplementary public gathering space.
- 3** Existing public art pieces maintained with upgraded lighting and pathways.
- 4** Prominent landscaping along St Louis Street that expands complete landscaping past Park Central East.
- 5** Pedestrian safety increased with high-visibility crosswalks and slowed car speeds.
- 6** Enhanced programming at Jubilee Park with new plaza, pavilion, play area, and outdoor seating.
- 7** Potential redevelopment of existing “tuning fork” right-of-way into an expansion of Jubilee Park.
- 8** Integration of the Park with the Discovery Center, with a new partnership for programming and space utilization.
- 9** Install special pavers and temporary bollards to close off the street for festivals along Jefferson Avenue between Olive Street and McDaniel Street, and along St. Louis Street adjacent to the park.

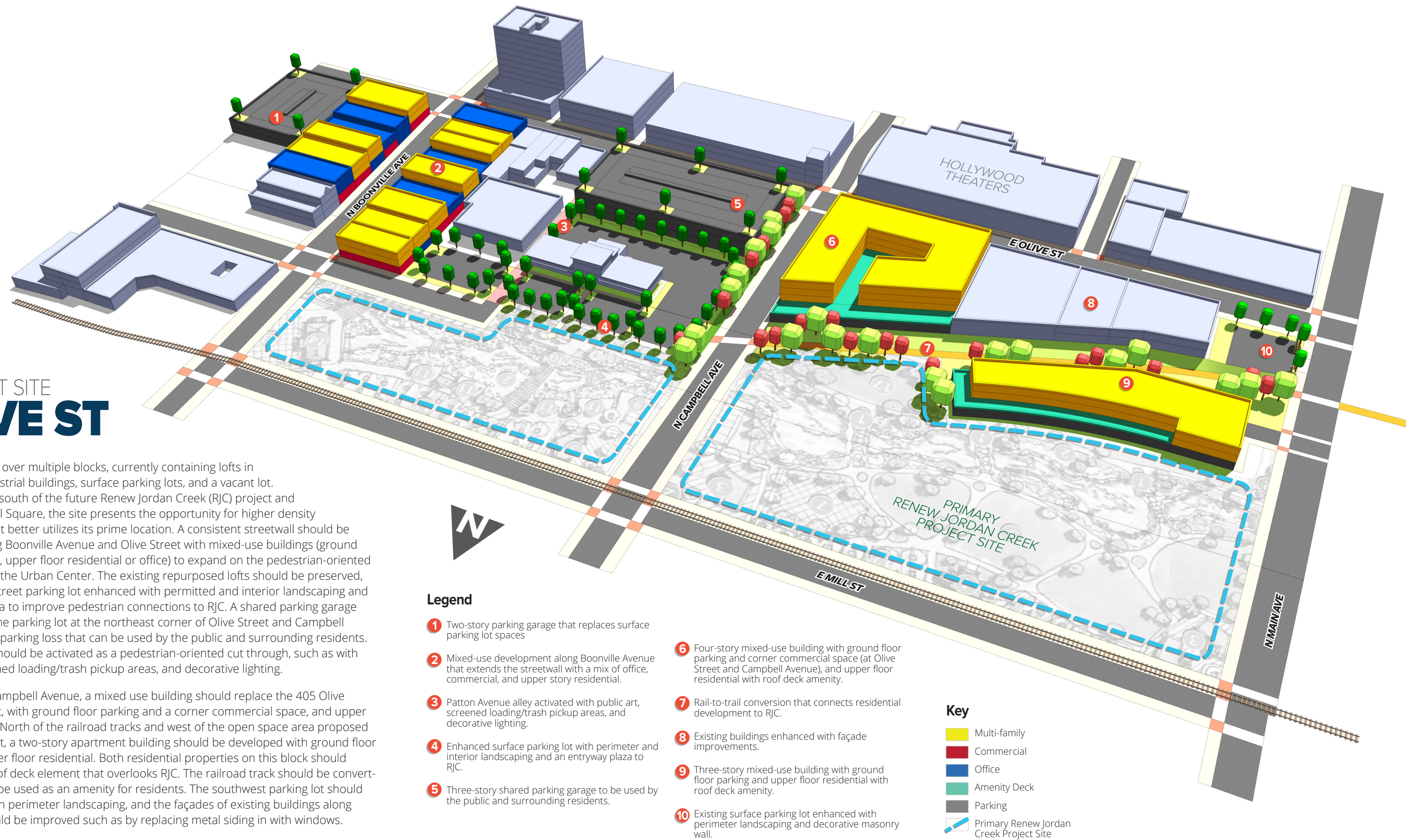
Key

- Multi-family
- Commercial
- Amenity Deck
- Parking
- Potential Jubilee Park Expansion
- Potential Festival Street

CATALYST SITE OLIVE ST

This site extends over multiple blocks, currently containing lofts in repurposed industrial buildings, surface parking lots, and a vacant lot. Situated directly south of the future Renew Jordan Creek (RJC) project and near Park Central Square, the site presents the opportunity for higher density development that better utilizes its prime location. A consistent streetwall should be maintained along Boonville Avenue and Olive Street with mixed-use buildings (ground floor commercial, upper floor residential or office) to expand on the pedestrian-oriented built form within the Urban Center. The existing repurposed lofts should be preserved, with the Water Street parking lot enhanced with permitted and interior landscaping and an entryway plaza to improve pedestrian connections to RJC. A shared parking garage should replace the parking lot at the northeast corner of Olive Street and Campbell Avenue to offset parking loss that can be used by the public and surrounding residents. Patton Avenue should be activated as a pedestrian-oriented cut through, such as with public art, screened loading/trash pickup areas, and decorative lighting.

To the west of Campbell Avenue, a mixed use building should replace the 405 Olive Street parking lot, with ground floor parking and a corner commercial space, and upper floor residential. North of the railroad tracks and west of the open space area proposed by the RJC project, a two-story apartment building should be developed with ground floor parking and upper floor residential. Both residential properties on this block should incorporate a roof deck element that overlooks RJC. The railroad track should be converted into a trail to be used as an amenity for residents. The southwest parking lot should be enhanced with perimeter landscaping, and the façades of existing buildings along Olive Street should be improved such as by replacing metal siding in with windows.



Legend

- 1 Two-story parking garage that replaces surface parking lot spaces
- 2 Mixed-use development along Boonville Avenue that extends the streetwall with a mix of office, commercial, and upper story residential.
- 3 Patton Avenue alley activated with public art, screened loading/trash pickup areas, and decorative lighting.
- 4 Enhanced surface parking lot with perimeter and interior landscaping and an entryway plaza to RJC.
- 5 Three-story shared parking garage to be used by the public and surrounding residents.
- 6 Four-story mixed-use building with ground floor parking and corner commercial space (at Olive Street and Campbell Avenue), and upper floor residential with roof deck amenity.
- 7 Rail-to-trail conversion that connects residential development to RJC.
- 8 Existing buildings enhanced with façade improvements.
- 9 Three-story mixed-use building with ground floor parking and upper floor residential with roof deck amenity.
- 10 Existing surface parking lot enhanced with perimeter landscaping and decorative masonry wall.

Key

- Multi-family
- Commercial
- Office
- Amenity Deck
- Parking
- Primary Renew Jordan Creek Project Site

GOAL 1: Grow Downtown as a place for the people, full of memorable experiences to live, work, and play.

RIGHT-OF-WAY MANAGEMENT

The Downtown Core Area features narrow right-of-way widths in some areas that can pose limitations to the installation of desirable streetscape improvements and pedestrian amenities. Strategic right-of-way-management will be key in ensuring safe and efficient circulation of pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles, while accommodating amenities like outdoor seating, trees, and public art. The following sections present strategies for how the City can incorporate pedestrian amenities with consideration to right-of-way space restrictions.

ADA ACCESSIBILITY

The public right-of-way and private properties should be designed to appeal to all users and provide the same means of use by incorporating Universal Design and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards wherever possible. All sidewalks, curb-ramps, and crosswalks in the greater Downtown area should continue to be upgraded to meet the current ADA/PROWAG (Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines) for accessibility.

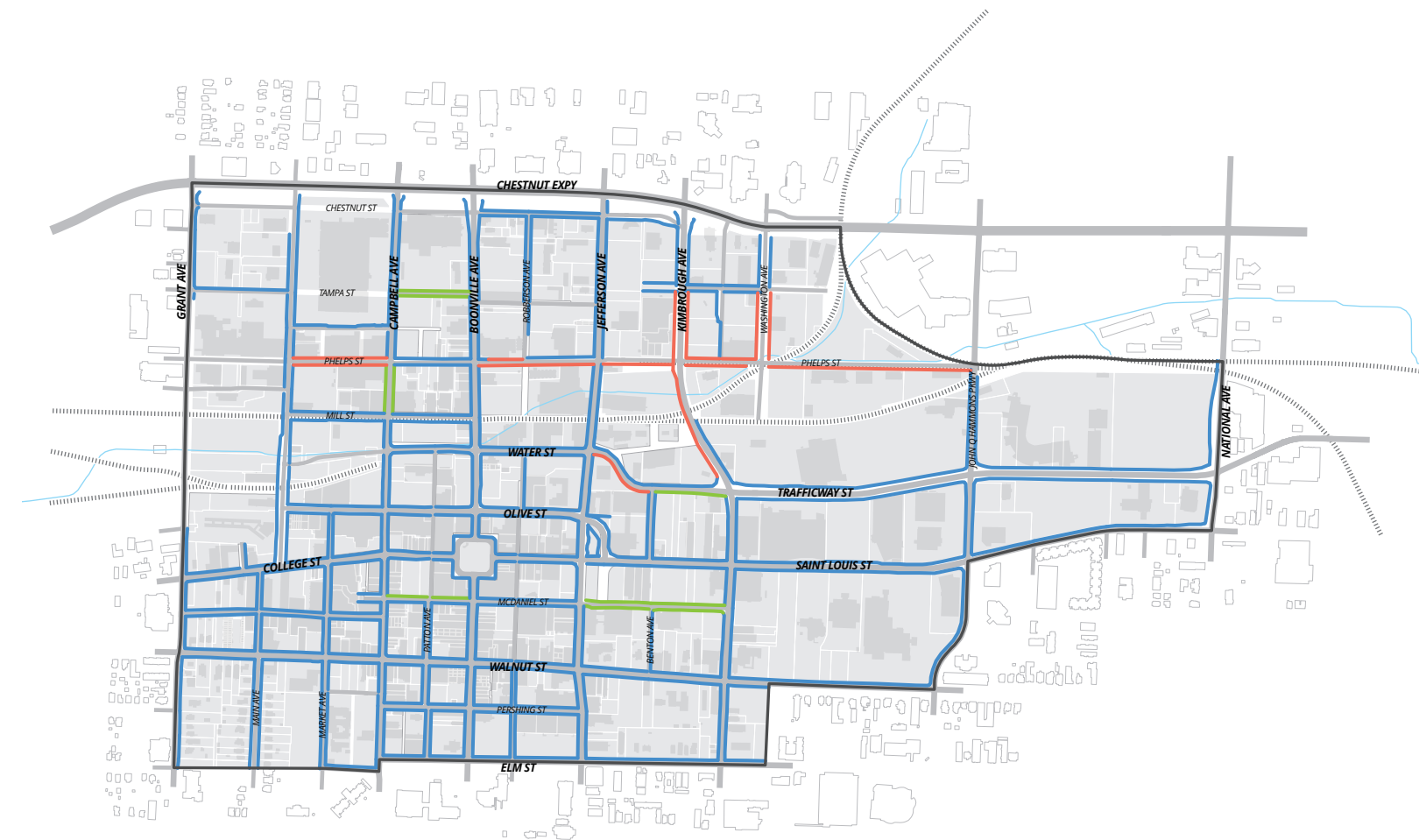
SIDEWALK

Sidewalks are the foundation of the public realm and should be accessible, appealing, and well-maintained. The condition and design of sidewalks have a significant impact on the walkability of an area and how willing pedestrians are to walk, rather than drive, to a destination. Wide sidewalks should also be provided within Downtown to foster a pedestrian-friendly environment and accommodate streetscaping elements like pedestrian lighting, trees, benches, trash cans, and public art. In line with the Street Typology standards in *Forward SGF Chapter 9: Transportation and Mobility*, Downtown sidewalks should range from 11 to 20 feet to allow for high foot traffic and sidewalk amenities, the wider of which would allow for outdoor dining areas. To further prioritize pedestrians, off-street parking should be reduced in line with the parking study that was being conducted by Public Works at the time of adoption of this plan to minimize gaps in the streetwall and foster a more visually engaging, walkable environment.

NARROW SIDEWALKS

While Downtown overall has a connected sidewalk system, most sidewalks in the Downtown core are much narrower than the recommended width. Outside of the Downtown core, there are several remaining instances of sidewalk gaps and segments in deteriorating condition sidewalks. The adjacent Sidewalks map identifies areas in Downtown where sidewalks should be improved.

While pedestrian and amenities zones can be widened and incorporated into new development, narrow sidewalk width is a limiting factor in areas where the historic streetwall should be maintained. In these areas, portions of parking and travel lanes should be repurposed to provide sufficient space to accommodate streetscape elements and outdoor dining in a very strategic and targeted manner. South Patton Avenue provides a good example where on-street parking has been replaced by a wider sidewalk and amenity area to better serve the adjacent businesses. Parklets also provide an interim solution to address narrow sidewalks (see the Parklets section for more information).



Sidewalks

- Sidewalk in Good Condition
- Sidewalk Needs Improvement
- Sidewalk Gap



TIER 1 STREETScape TYPOLOGY EXAMPLE



TIER 2 STREETScape TYPOLOGY EXAMPLE



TIER 3 STREETScape TYPOLOGY EXAMPLE



TIER 4 STREETScape TYPOLOGY EXAMPLE

STREETScape FRAMEWORK

The following streetscape framework strategy designates all roadways within Downtown into four streetscape tiers based upon traffic and activity, the built form, and existing street configurations. These should guide the level of effort for streetscaping Downtown and inform the projects and improvements that should be considered for each roadway.

TIER 1 PEDESTRIAN-FOCUSED

Tier 1 Streetscapes should receive the greatest level of effort to create inviting, pedestrian-oriented environments. These streets should be fully improved with amenities that make them comfortable for pedestrians and create exciting, active public spaces. This should include street furniture, parklets, pedestrian-scale lighting, street trees, flower beds and planters, public art and interactive installations, awnings and banners, and other amenities that foster an engaging pedestrian experience. Tier 1 Streetscapes should ensure safe and efficient mobility for all modes of transportation while prioritizing the pedestrian realm. Bike infrastructure including bike routes/shared lanes and bike parking stations should be prioritized within Tier 1.

TIER 2 URBAN

Tier 2 Streetscapes must ensure the efficient movements of vehicles while providing a safe and attractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists. These streets do not have as much activity as Tier 1 Streetscapes but should still be a focus for efforts to enhance their character and appearance. This should include street furniture, public art, landscaping and street trees, flower beds and planters, pedestrian-scale lighting, and other amenities that contribute to the pedestrian experience. Design elements from Tier 1 Streetscapes should be incorporated where appropriate to create a consistent brand in Downtown.

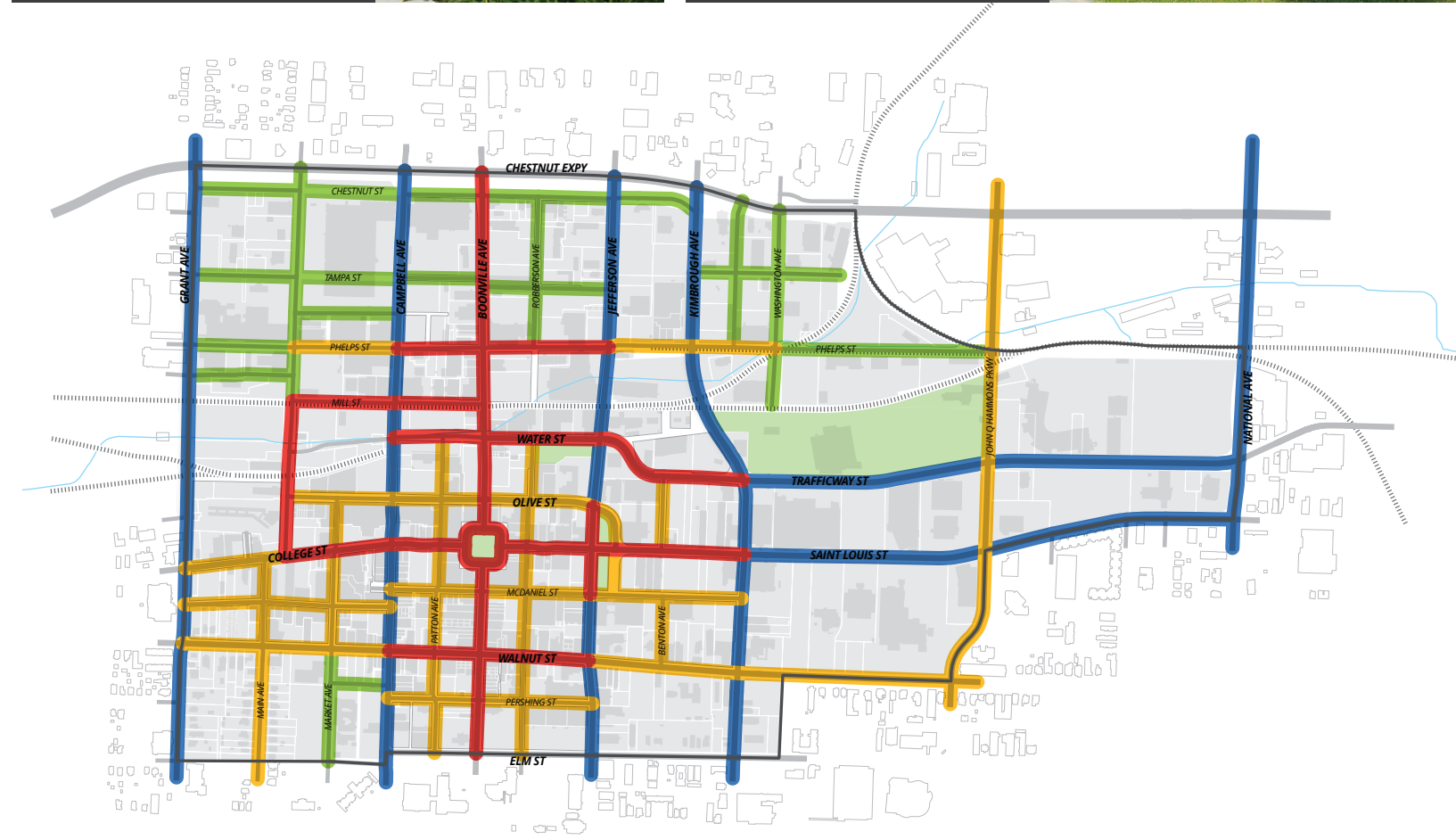
TIER 3 GATEWAY

Designed to carry larger volumes of vehicles through Downtown, these streetscapes should remain optimized for car movement while incorporating streetscape elements to improve their character. Gateway features should be incorporated where these roadways intersect with the Downtown boundary to announce entry into the area. Potential streetscape elements include banner signs, pedestrian-scaled lighting, street trees, landscaping, and flower beds and planters.

Wide, continuous sidewalks should be provided with high-visibility crossings to create safe pedestrian environments along the highly trafficked roadways. Bike connectivity should also be supported with designated bike routes or shared lanes depending on available right-of-way, and bike box waiting areas at major intersections.

TIER 4 ACCESS ROADWAYS

Tier 4 Streetscapes include low-volume roadways that provide access to specific properties. These streets have the lowest level of activity within Downtown and should not be a target for major streetscape projects. The City should prioritize maintenance and upkeep and consider improvements to provide a comfortable and attractive environment for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians. This includes filling in gaps in the sidewalk network, upgrading deteriorating sidewalk conditions, installing pedestrian-scale lighting, and providing ADA accessible curb cuts.



Streetscape

- Tier 1 Pedestrian Focused
- Tier 2 Urban
- Tier 3 Gateway
- Tier 4 Access Roadways



STREETSCAPE ELEMENTS

PEDESTRIAN-SCALE LIGHTING

Pedestrian-scale lighting contributes to the character of streetscapes and is important for increasing safety and comfort at night and in early morning hours. They also offer points to install wayfinding or banner signage. Pedestrian-scale lighting should be provided along all streets within Downtown in the long term, first prioritizing areas with the highest foot traffic, such as the Urban Center, Brewery District, and the Innovation District. It should also be installed to highlight areas with historic significance to draw attention to its unique features and other focal points, such as public gathering spaces, landmarks, major entrances, crosswalks, and transit stops.

Light posts should be placed close enough to sufficiently illuminate the street (roughly 2.5 to 3 times the height of the pole). LED light bulbs should be used to improve energy efficiency and reduce maintenance and power costs, as well as shielded and cut-off fixtures to direct light downwards, reducing light pollution towards surrounding uses.

SEATING

Seating includes standalone benches, seat walls, and raised landscape planters that act as informal seating. Supplying pedestrians with places to sit along the sidewalk is an additional step the City can take to enrich Downtown's pedestrian realm and activate the streetscape. In addition to public seating, where sidewalk widths allow, the City should encourage drink and food establishments to provide outdoor seating for customers (see the Outdoor Dining and Parklet sections for more information).

STREET FURNITURE

The City should continue to maintain existing pedestrian amenities including seating, bike racks, trash and recycling receptacles, street lighting, banner signs, and informational kiosks. To reinforce new public gathering spaces and promote outdoor seating areas, locations for additional street furnishings should be explored. They should be used to highlight key destinations or public spaces within Downtown and have the highest concentration within the Tier 1 Streetscape.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Smaller more frequent green infrastructure controls are well suited to the downtown urban setting and include practices such as streetside stormwater planters, rain gardens, or permeable pavers. Regardless of scale, green infrastructure design mimics nature and uses vegetation, soils and roots to slow, filter and treat stormwater runoff.

Utilizing green infrastructure techniques in the downtown will assist in the goals for the Renew Jordan Creek project by mitigating flooding impacts to buildings in Downtown Springfield, enhancing quality of place, and providing water quality benefits to the urban watershed.

PLANTERS

Landscape planters can feature a mix of landscape elements, including canopy trees, understory trees, shrubs, native grasses, perennials, and annuals. The mix creates layers of vegetation that enhance the pedestrian environment from all viewpoints. Both raised planters and in-ground planters can be found in Downtown Springfield, such as at Park Central Square. Planters should continue to be incorporated throughout greater Downtown area, including at key pedestrian points like block intersections, mid-block crossings, and pedestrian cut throughs, and the ends of parking spaces. They should be used to beautify public spaces as well as act to buffer the pedestrian and vehicular realms where right-of-way-width allows. Additionally, private developers should be encouraged to incorporate planters into the frontage of their properties.

Native plants should be prioritized in planters due to stormwater and maintenance benefits. When possible, planters should be designed to collect and treat stormwater. A below-grade automatic irrigation system should be considered for all planters and street tree planting areas.

STREET TREES

Street trees significantly add to the quality of place of a downtown and provide environmental benefits like improved air quality, shaded areas that reduce the heat island effect, and stormwater capture and treatment. While street trees have been planted in concentrations, such as along Trafficway Street, Water Street, and Park Central East/West, and Park Central Square, there is a major opportunity to grow the urban canopy throughout Downtown. Street trees should continue to be incorporated, first prioritizing the Urban Center functional subarea followed by Tier 1 and Tier 2 Streetscapes within Downtown. It is important to note that sidewalk widenings and right-of-way reconfigurations may be necessary to accommodate street trees—sidewalks should be at least 10 feet wide to ensure at a minimum a five foot unobstructed pedestrian zone.

Street Tree Base

To protect the base of street trees from soil compaction caused by foot traffic, and to add a decorative streetscape element, tree pits, grates, or tree boxes should be used where sidewalk width allows. While a higher cost alternative, silva cells should also be used when possible. This system uses a post and beam structure that supports the pavement, ensuring uncompacted soil that improves the rate, quality, and volume of stormwater management and long term tree growth. CU Structural Soil has previously been used in the downtown and can be considered as an alternative.

TARGETED IMPROVEMENTS

While future streetscape improvements should generally follow the Streetscape Improvements, additional emphasis is needed for the following streetscape segments.

MCDANIEL STREET IMPROVEMENTS

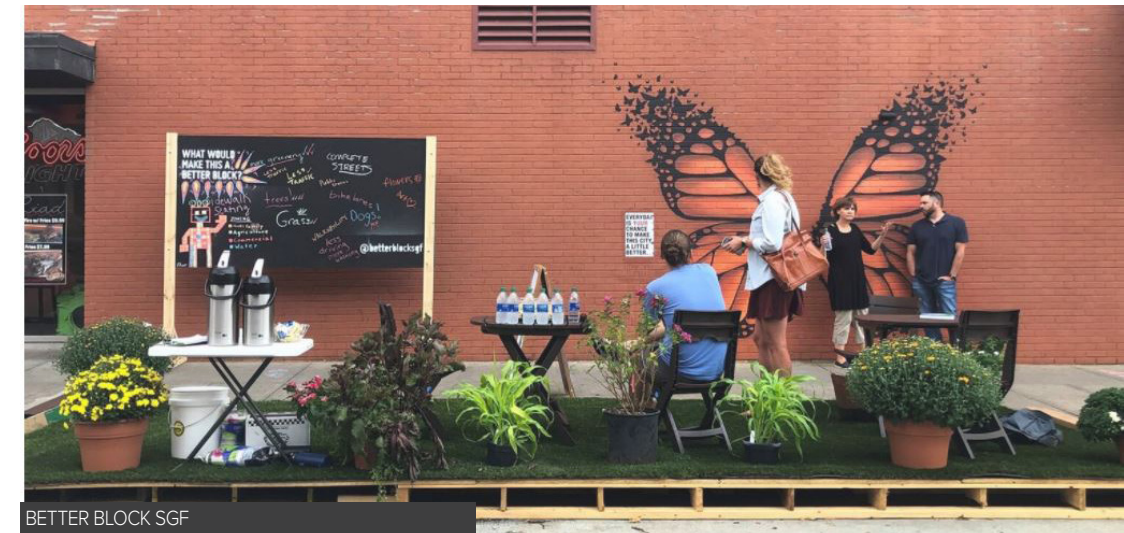
Consideration was given to McDaniel Street between South Avenue and Campbell Avenue to potentially widen sidewalks to better accommodate pedestrian amenities. On-street parking would need to be eliminated completely to accommodate wider sidewalks on both sides. Alternatively select on-street parking stalls would need to be removed on the southern side to install bump outs while maintaining the northern sidewalk width. As these parking spaces serve McDaniel Street businesses, eliminating stalls may not be favorable. The pedestrian realm can instead be enhanced with murals on existing blank walls and perimeter landscaping along the surface parking lots.

TRAFFICWAY STREET IMPROVEMENTS

Trafficway Street is an important gateway corridor that carries a large amount of traffic into Downtown and provides access to key community assets like Jordan Valley Ice Park, Jordan Valley Park, and Hammons Field. The City has implemented substantial positive improvements between National Avenue and Kimbrough Avenue, such as wide sidewalks, pedestrian-scale lighting, banner signs, and street trees, that should continue to be replicated west of Benton Avenue to similarly improve the streetscape.

SHARED STREET ON PHELPS

Phelps Street between Boonville Avenue and Washington Avenue should be considered for multimodal improvements that enhance bike and pedestrian access along this key east-west spine, streetscape enhancements, and possible extensions east to National Avenue and west towards Kansas Expressway. Phelps currently has deteriorating pavement conditions, large gaps in the sidewalk network, and some intersections without crosswalks. This would help improve connectivity to future key destinations throughout the northern portion of Downtown and could potentially become a major Downtown crossroad as it is the only street that crosses below Benton Avenue and Grant Avenue.



SHARED STREETS, SHARED SPACE

Shared streets are a proposed street typology and alternative for urban streets where there is a high priority given to pedestrian use over vehicular use. Transformation of select sections of City streets that align with the characteristics outlined in **Chapter 9: Transportation and Mobility** make great opportunities to expand public use. The most prominent use of shared streets is for outdoor dining or casual seating in concert with the daily operation of existing restaurants, planned events, or street festivals. Outdoor dining adds seating capacity for businesses, creates attractive settings for dining while enjoying the outdoors, and can significantly improve sense of liveliness along the street. These characteristics all work to strengthen the local economy, increase quality of place, and attract more visitors to Downtown. The City should continue to work with property owners and advocacy groups, like the Downtown CID and Better Block SGF to develop cooperative agreements that promote more efficient and diverse use of public streets that activate the streetscape and support socializing. Revisions to City codes may also be required to allow flexible gathering and outdoor dining space in the public right of way.

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES

The City of Springfield allowed parklets within City right-of-way during the pandemic as a supportive measure for Downtown businesses to continue to operate while social distancing limited normal business operations. Parklets were constructed by Better Block SGF as a temporary use and acted as an extension of the sidewalk into on-street parking spaces, offering a place to sit, relax, and enjoy street life on South Street. They were utilized by restaurants to create extra outdoor seating, but they were also used freely by the public as communal seating areas. While used during the pandemic, the use of parklets is also a common strategy to expand operations and activate city streets during normal operating conditions.

Best Practices for Parklets and Shared Spaces

To help address the issue of determining which businesses can use shared spaces and parklets, all parklets should be made public. That means each are free and open to all members of the public to use, whether they patronize the primary business or not. The City of San Francisco uses this model, prohibiting table service at parklets so customers instead order at the counter inside. Businesses are still allowed to buss parklet tables to ensure they remain clean. This approach opens parklets up as an asset to all businesses on a block rather than to only a specific business.

APPROVAL PROCESS

To ensure new parklets are constructed in appropriate locations that are in line with the City's goals for economic development and placemaking, and to establish an organized process for selecting proposed parklets, the City should establish a competitive application process for parklet approval. Business and property owners may submit a detailed plan complete with precise measurements, choice of materials, and any additional amenities like seating, tables, or lighting. The City should review this plan to ensure they align with best practices, or any formal parklet design standards created by the City.

Neighboring businesses and property owners should be notified and invited to provide design input or voice their support or opposition to the parklet. If any revisions are made, a finalized design should be resubmitted before City approval and the payment of any fees. The installation process should culminate with a final site inspection to ensure adherence to the approved plan.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Shared spaces and parklets benefit from having good flexibility in their design, but certain safety and accessibility standards should be adhered to. The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) outlines design best practices that the City should consider, such as:

- Parklets should have vertical elements that make them visible to traffic, such as flexible posts or bollards.
- Parklets should be a minimum of six feet or the entire width of the parking space(s).
- Parklets should allow for rainwater drainage, such as by including small channels between the base and platform.
- Parklets should be flush with the sidewalk and curb to allow for easy access, avoid tripping hazards, and be wheelchair accessible.
- Parklets should maintain sightlines, with any walls or wide vertical elements limited to a maximum of 42 inches tall.
- Parklets should be fabricated to match the natural curve of the roadway or use adjustable pedestal supports like Bison deck pedestals to level the base.
- Parklets should exhibit some creative design and offer unique characteristics.
- Parklets should incorporate and feature decorative elements like planters, diverse seating, art, and lighting with a variety of different textures, colors, and styles.

PARKLET BROCHURE

The City should create a graphic-oriented, easy to read brochure that outlines the parklet approval process and showcases an example of a detailed plan. It can also include photo examples of desirable parklet designs, who to contact for additional information, and key design guidelines. The City should work with organizations like the Downtown CID and Better Block SGF in the development of tools and resources. Communities, like San Francisco Public Works, can also offer inspiration on how to develop the brochure.

PARKLET MAINTENANCE

The City department administering the parklet program should create a clear set of expectations for the safe use and maintenance of parklets by either public services or the business(es) the parklets serve. This should include trash removal, operating hours, greenery maintenance, and the locking or indoor storage of furniture, lighting, and any other easily removed items.

PARKLET

Better Block SGF Springfield, Missouri

Better Block SGF is a community-based organization in Springfield that aims to reimagine the built environment through community engagement, urban installations, and advocacy. It has designed and installed parklets within Downtown, including in front of Mudhouse Coffee and Druff's. The City should support Better Block SGF's parklet initiatives; however, a strategy for determining parklet locations should be established that maximizes business owner consensus and equitable distribution.



FESTIVAL OR SHARED STREET

A **festival street** is a specific portion of a street that is intended to host frequent community events and can be closed to vehicular traffic on a regular basis. These areas are improved with placemaking elements such as overhead lighting, unique planters and signage, seating areas, and parklets and can be used by adjacent businesses. Moveable bollards and planters can also be used to temporarily close off the street to traffic during designated events such as weekly market days or nights out, providing a unique venue where people can gather and socialize. A festival street should be considered for South Avenue between Park Central Square and Walnut Street to take advantage of its direct connection to the Square, attractive historic character, and numerous small business lining the street.

A **shared street** can take the festival street concept further with permanent improvements and elimination of dedicated travel lanes for vehicles. A shared street is a curbless roadway or plaza with limited on-street parking that prioritizes pedestrians and bicyclists while allowing cars to travel through at low speeds. A shared street typology has been proposed in **Chapter 9: Transportation and Mobility**, that outlines characteristics that should be incorporated into the design.

A shared street could form the focal point of new development along a roadway and serve to attract businesses and new residents to the area. The shared street concept has been successfully implemented along Bell Street Park in the City of Seattle as well as Argyle Street in the City of Chicago's Uptown neighborhood. It is recommended that a shared street concept be considered for South Avenue after successfully piloting a less resource intensive festival street concept.

CHICANES

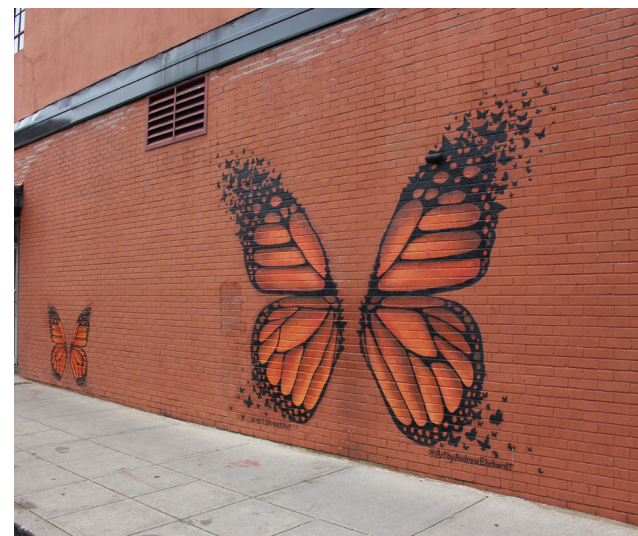
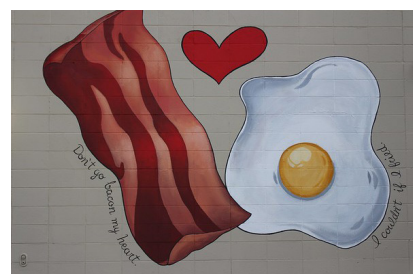
Chicanes are curved roads created by design to slow traffic and increase safety. They also increase the amount of public space available for the pedestrian amenities that can be used for bike parking, outdoor seating, trees, and other streetscaping elements. Park Central East and West are successful examples of where chicanes have been implemented in Downtown Springfield and should continue to be maintained.

If the pilot festival street design along South Avenue between Park Central Square and Walnut Street is a success, this key segment should also be considered for a chicane. This would provide permanent public space for outdoor seating, replacing existing temporary parklets (see the Parklets section for more information). Similarly, if there is a specific road segment that is routinely targeted parklet locations, the City should consider installing a chicane to provide a permanent amenity. This sidewalk extension should be publicly owned for which private businesses may request a permit to utilize for outdoor seating. A central pinch point in the chicane between McDaniel and Walnut streets may also be considered for a midblock crossing.



Source: nacto.org/case-study/bell-street-park-seattle/





PUBLIC ART

Public art plays an invaluable role in beautifying a Downtown and enhancing sense of place. It helps create interesting public spaces, improving the area's character through engaging streetscapes. It has also proven to increase visitors acting as attractions, which contributes to the economic vitality of the area. The City should guide public art in Downtown and establish plans and policies to ensure the following:

- Develop an intentional plan for adding art downtown, so that each experience has the potential to build or connect upon one another.
- Ensure that the public art collection is committed to inclusivity, diversity in artists and artwork, and accessibility in ways to access and engage with the work, and incorporate accountability measures.
- Connect public art with the community through community involvement in the process and by connecting works to Springfield's unique history, physical environment, and cultural elements. Examples include site specific pieces to honor the Trail of Tears, veterans, Route 66, or other significant pieces of Springfield's story.

- Encourage sculpture, mural, and other art advocacy groups to work with community partners on Commercial Street and Downtown to establish a sustainable, long-term financing and funding source to support the management and preservation of existing and future public art installations.

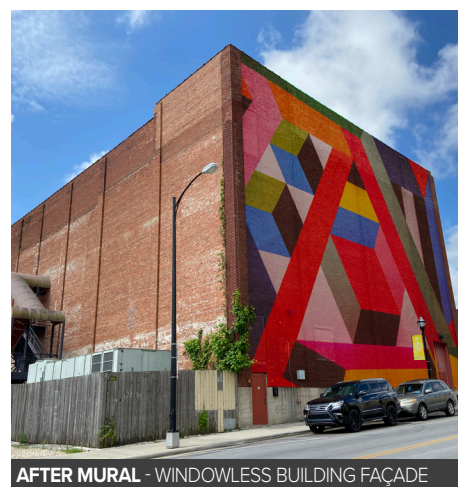
Several opportunities exist to expand public art throughout Downtown as outlined in the following section.

MURALS

Several large-scale windowless buildings exist within Downtown that exhibit sizable blank exteriors, such as the rear of Fox Theater and Gillioz Theater, and the façade and rear of Hollywood Theaters. While currently an eyesore, these large blank walls create excellent opportunities to serve as canvases for murals. Murals can transform otherwise bland façades into cultural destinations, activating streetscapes through vibrant splashes of color and visual interest. They should aim to be community-related and representative of Springfield's culture, utilizing local talent when possible. The City should work with the organizers of the MIDXMIDWST mural festival to showcase and celebrate such murals and their artists across Downtown. Public-private partnerships should be created to coordinate murals on private property.



BEFORE MURAL - WINDOWLESS BUILDING FAÇADE



AFTER MURAL - WINDOWLESS BUILDING FAÇADE

SCULPTURE WALK SPRINGFIELD

Sculpture Walk Springfield (SWS) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization in Springfield that started as a grass-roots effort in 2015 with the vision to "create a museum without walls with access to all." SWS is over 90% privately funded by community members, local businesses, and educational partners. A collection of over 35 sculptures is currently installed within Downtown Springfield, which is on an annually rotating schedule. Each sculpture collection is showcased from May to March of the next year. The City should continue to grow their support for this art initiative as it adds to Downtown's heritage, culture, sense of place and diversity, and economic vitality—all while adding to the pride of place and local identity. Clear wayfinding is provided of sculpture locations, both online and in-person, ensuring the location of the sculpture is accurate and offers a recommended routes for self-guided tours.

Ways to make the Sculpture Walk more engaging should be considered, such as providing direct lighting for more viewership experiences, activities such as tour challenges with a reward for visiting a number of sculptures, as well as educational cross-promotion of Sculpture Walk through school and community outreach events to promote awareness of the program and the city's collaboration.

The education, awareness, and cultural diversity that Sculpture Walk Springfield aims to provide to the community free of charge allows the City an opportunity to collaborate on a positive asset to the overall success of Springfield. Sculpture Walk should continue to be supported by the City through in-kind contributions, such as assistance with installations and budget allocation to ensure its continuation. The Downtown CID has contributed and should continue to collaborate on this placemaking initiative.

SILOS

The former MFA grain silos at 310 Phelps Street and 524 Boonville Avenue are iconic structures that act as a symbol of the City's agricultural heritage. A unique component of Downtown Springfield's cityscape that has been vacant since 2000, these towering, eye-catching structures should be preserved and enhanced as a Downtown destination. Large grain silos can be repurposed into a wide array of facilities, such as wall climbing activity centers, immersive art installations, or vertical farming operations (as was attempted in 2016). The exterior of these large structures can also be enhanced with murals or used as projector screens to host outdoor events. Similar transformations of abandoned silos have been a success across the world, from Fort Dodge, Iowa and Omaha, Nebraska to Australia's renown Silo Art Trail. Such an activity center in Downtown Springfield would have a regional draw, helping attract foot traffic to the area and new customers to patronize local businesses.

SILOS

Grain Elevator Artwork Omaha, Nebraska

From 2010 to 2014, vacant grain elevators in Omaha were used as the backdrop for public art. 26 canvas banners were hung from the grain elevators, located directly adjacent to Interstate 80, transforming an underutilized but highly prominent industrial site into a public art display. The City of Springfield should work with the local manufacturing businesses and property owners to develop similar art installations and improve the appearance of both active and inactive industrial sites.





ALLEY MAINTENANCE AND ACTIVATION

Alleys are narrow passageways between buildings that are typically used as service roads for deliveries, trash collection, and utility easements. They are also used as mid-block cut-throughs for pedestrians. While typically uninviting pathways to walk, alleys can be beautified as activated public spaces through public art, lighting, and other landscaping elements. A local great example is the Commercial Street Parking Lot and Pedestrian Alleyway Improvement Project completed in the Commercial Street Historic District for the Footbridge Alleyway and Dr. Tickle Alleyway, which was financed through TIF funding.

Similar activation efforts should be replicated at other unappealing alleys in Downtown, such as Patton Avenue between Water Street and McDaniel Street. Additional improvements should be implemented along the Robberson Avenue alley as well to further improve it as an attraction, such as vibrant murals, string lights, hanging canopies, planters, seating, and green infrastructure. Alley maintenance and regular street cleanings will be key in providing a welcoming environment, which should be done in coordination with the Downtown CID, Public Works and adjacent property owners and businesses. Location of trash cans should be standardized, and screening should be required where appropriate.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Safety throughout Downtown, particularly at the Square, was frequently cited as a concern by *Forward SGF Downtown* survey respondents as a deterrent for people to live in or bring their families to Downtown. Typically, unsafe places root from underlit, inactive areas that lack foot traffic. By creating activated, well-lit streetscapes, providing well maintained public spaces, and attracting more people to the area, Downtown's sense of safety can be significantly improved. This relates to the concept of "eyes on the street" where more people act as potential witnesses, discouraging anyone to commit a crime. Buildings that are oriented to the street, feature large, active storefront windows, and provide outdoor dining areas can help add to this informal yet effective public safety strategy. Other strategies the City can pursue is working with the Police Department to monitor Downtown and its public spaces more, particularly during evening hours, and installing blue light emergency phone stations as are often used in college campuses.

HOMELESS POPULATION

One of the community's top concerns that came to light during the community engagement process was the prominent homeless population both in the downtown area and citywide. As the Lead Agency of the Ozarks Alliance to End Homelessness (OAEH), the City of Springfield is an active part of a dynamic, community-wide initiative, along with over 30 community partners that represent local government, non-profit organizations, people with lived experience, advocacy groups, and others. The OAEH has three primary goals: to make homelessness rare, to make homelessness brief and one time, and to increase community education and engagement around the issue of homelessness.

The Ozarks Alliance to End Homelessness (OAEH) is the Continuum of Care for Springfield, Greene, Christian, and Webster Counties. The federal Continuum of Care Program was established in 2009 through an amendment to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and the OAEH was created soon thereafter. The OAEH brings over \$1 million in U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) funding to our community on an annual basis for housing and supportive services. A Continuum of Care is designed to:

- Promote the community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness
- Quickly rehouse individuals and families experiencing homelessness
- Promote access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs
- Optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness

The Springfield Affordable Housing Center, now known as the O'Reilly Center for Hope, serves as a one-stop resource center for all housing and homelessness needs within our community.

The O'Reilly Center for Hope, located within the former Pepperdine School facility at 1518 E. Dale Street, Springfield serves as the home to the OAEH HUD-mandated Coordinated Entry System and "front door" (One Door program) for coordinated intake, assessment, prioritization, and referral to supportive housing programs, along with 20 partner agencies including: the AIDS Project of the Ozarks, Burrell Behavioral Health, Catholic Charities of Southern Missouri, Habitat for Humanity, Isabel's House – The Crisis Nursery of the Ozarks, Legal Services of Southern Missouri, MSU Care: Medical services and Medicaid application assistance, Missouri Career Center, Missouri State University School of Nursing, the Ozarks Area Community Action Corporation (OACAC), the Springfield Community Land Trust, Springfield Public Schools, the Springfield Police Department, the Veterans Administration, and more.

The OAEH is currently in the process of developing and adopting an updated, comprehensive Strategic Plan, with specific recommendations allowing for the implementation of its primary goals to address system gaps and ensure that episodes of homelessness are rare, brief, and one time.

ALLEY ACTIVATION

The Belt Detroit, Michigan

The Belt is an alley in a former downtown garment district in Detroit that was transformed into a public art space. It was activated with a stained-glass gateway, murals, art installations, decorative lighting, public seating, and live performances. Once an alley that residents would purposely avoid due to poor conditions, it is now promoted as a tourist destination by the City. The Belt is a transformative project that could feasibly be emulated in Downtown Springfield.

HOMELESS POPULATION

Connections Housing San Diego, California

A successful example is Connections Housing in Downtown San Diego, which underwent extensive renovations to become a state-of-the-art multi-use facility. The center aims to help those experiencing homelessness move into permanent housing and to receive the supportive services they need. Connections Housing offers permanent housing, interim beds, medical service facilities, a depot featuring multiple personal services, and an industrial size kitchen to serve residents.

GOAL 2: Strengthen connectivity and circulation within Downtown, tying to surrounding neighborhoods and activity centers.

SAFE INTERSECTIONS AND TRAFFIC CALMING

The safe and easy crossing of Downtown streets is integral to fostering a pedestrian-oriented environment. Common tools utilized to aid safe crossing includes signage, striping, countdown timers, and bump outs. The type and intensity of tools used should vary based on the functional classification of the intersecting roadways, surrounding land uses, and types of pedestrian routes.

During the outreach process, community members also voiced the desire to reduce the speed of cars and enhance the sense of comfort and safety for pedestrians and drivers. There are a variety of measures the City can use to implement traffic calming and support safe intersections within Downtown, such as the following.

HIGH-VISIBILITY CROSSWALKS

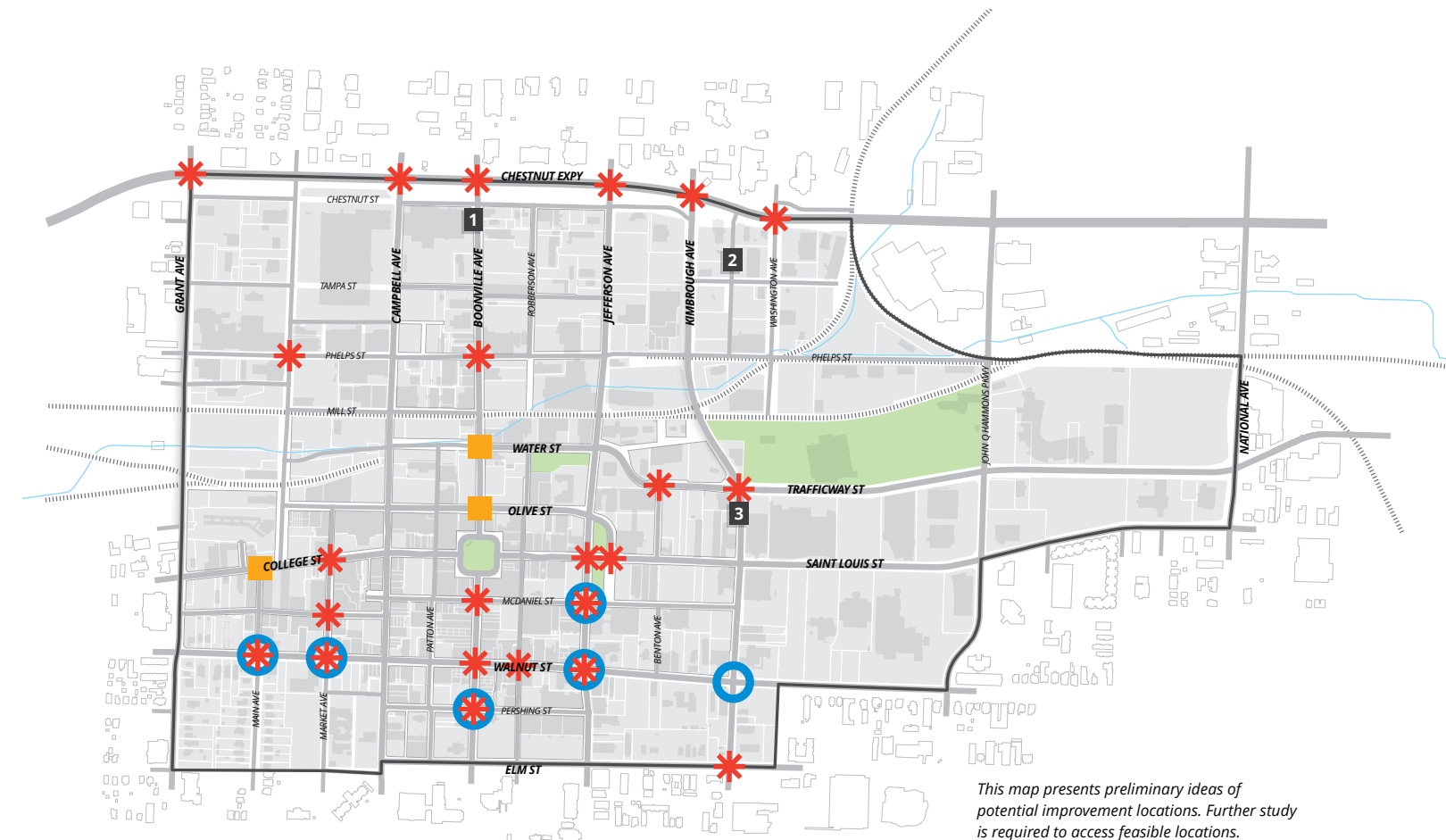
The primary purpose of crosswalks is to notify drivers of the presence, or possible presence, of pedestrians. "High-visibility" crosswalks serve this purpose, which use pavers or custom treatments that enhance the visibility of a crossing. Such crosswalks have been implemented in key locations in Downtown Springfield, such as surrounding Park Central Square, Boonville Avenue and Water Street, and Boonville Avenue and Tampa. As many intersections still have standard line pavement crosswalks, many of which are faded, the City should continue to implement high visibility crosswalks throughout Downtown, prioritizing the most highly trafficked intersections in the Downtown Core Area first.

RAISED INTERSECTIONS

Raised intersections span the full width of the roadway to encourage drivers to slow down as they proceed through the elevated intersection and yield to pedestrians at the crosswalk. They should be considered for major intersections within the Downtown Core Area, as identified in the adjacent Safe Intersections and Traffic Calming map. Ramps should be provided on all approaches with clear indication of a raised surface through striping or pavement markings on the slope.

BUMP OUTS

Bump outs are curb extensions that extend into the right-of-way to reduce the distance that pedestrians must cross. They also increase visibility for both vehicles and pedestrian, frame parking lanes, and slow vehicular traffic. Bump outs currently exist at some intersections within Downtown, such as the northwest and southwest corners of Park Central East and Jefferson Avenue. The City should continue to implement bump outs, prioritizing the Tier 1 and 2 Streetscapes (see Streetscapes section for more information), where right-of-way widths and traffic patterns allow.



This map presents preliminary ideas of potential improvement locations. Further study is required to access feasible locations.

Safe Intersections & Traffic Calming

- * Highly Visible Crosswalk
 - Raised Intersection
 - Bump Outs
1. Increase safety at this intersection by adding a four-way stop sign.
 2. Enhance existing crossing and add new pedestrian refuge island. Use continental crosswalk at a minimum.
 3. Ensure safe crossing along key routes to MSU campus, such as Kimbrough Avenue and Walnut Street.



COMPLETE STREETS AND STREET TYPOLOGIES

To support a pedestrian- and bike- friendly environment, the City should revisit and update its Complete streets Policy to better prioritize the pedestrian over cars and determine how street designs should reflect this. This should build on the *Forward SGF Street Typologies*, which provide high level guidelines for Downtown street configurations (see **Chapter 9: Transportation and Mobility** for more information).

VACATING RIGHTS-OF-WAY

Maintaining sufficient roadway connections is critical for high Downtown accessibility and circulation. The City has the ability to vacate rights-of-way, or give up the public right to use a street, which can negatively impact circulation. Requests to vacate rights-of-way should be reviewed to determine whether the necessary transportation, service, and utility needs can be sufficiently met without the public roadway access. In the case that it does not, the request should be denied, or an alternative route should be provided if the site configuration allows.

ONE-WAYS

Two one-way streets exist within Downtown Springfield: Campbell Avenue and Jefferson Avenue. During community outreach, these two streets were identified as highly trafficked during AM/PM hours with higher traffic speeds that detracted from pedestrian comfort. Feedback also highlighted that one-ways negatively impacted circulation and made it difficult to navigate Downtown, opening discussion of potential conversion to two-ways to improve traffic flow. When considering two-way conversions, the following advantages and disadvantages should be taken into account:

ADVANTAGES

- Traffic flow on both sides of the street increases access to businesses located on either side and reduces the need for vehicles to circulate the block.
- Traffic speed decreases, which increases pedestrian and bicyclist safety, comfort, and activity.
- With reduced traffic speeds, storefront exposure and business activity is increased.
- Increases in foot traffic can lead to greater business success, property values, attractive walkable environments, and further redevelopment and façade improvements.

DISADVANTAGES

- Potential reduction in roadway capacity, particularly if left turn lanes are constructed.
- Reduced traffic speeds may lead to increased travel times for vehicles and gas emissions.
- High cost of roadway reconfiguration and traffic concessions.
- Potential need for separate turn lanes can cause a reduction in on-street parking stalls.

In 2006, the City conducted a study to determine the feasibility of a conversion and identify costs and an implementation plan. The study concluded that conversion of these streets to two-way traffic is feasible, but with high cost and significant traffic concessions. Notably there was no public consensus, with split views in support of and against the conversion. As the study was conducted 15 years ago and the Downtown environment and community has changed substantially since that time, the City should restudy the need and desire for a two-way conversion. Current public input should be collected via an online survey or polling with a special effort to engage Downtown business owners, property owners, and residents. The City can also look to case study examples in other communities of two-way conversions, such as Charleston, SC; Des Moines, IA; Minneapolis, MN; and Louisville, KY.



One-Ways

→ One Ways





CHESTNUT EXPRESSWAY

Chestnut Expressway marks the northern boundary of the greater Downtown area and is one of its primary gateways. It is composed of four travel lanes and three turning lanes which can feel intimidating and unsafe for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross. As an important gateway into Downtown, the City should work with MoDOT to consider the following improvements along Chestnut Expressway:

GATEWAY FEATURES

Gateway features, such as archway signs or creative large-scale entrance signs should be placed at key gateway points, including intersections with Grant Avenue, Campbell Avenue, Jefferson Avenue, and Benton Avenue. This will create a welcoming visual cue of entrance into Downtown and help draw visitors to the area.

PEDESTRIAN REFUGE ISLANDS

Pedestrian refuge islands are medians intended to increase pedestrian and bicyclist safety when crossing major roadways by providing a mid-way landing point. A pedestrian refuge island currently exists on the eastern side of the Campbell Avenue intersection. They should be provided on both sides of all intersections to effectively strengthen pedestrian connectivity.

PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

The City should coordinate with Drury University regarding the Washington Avenue pedestrian bridge proposed in its campus Master Plan. The construction of the bridge would provide a safe crossing option for pedestrians and bicyclists across the highly trafficked Chestnut Expressway, given that space is available for ADA accessible ramps.

HIGH-VISIBILITY CROSSWALKS

While the Chestnut Expressway's traffic volume is too significant for maintaining crosswalk treatments with decorative materials, existing standard line crosswalks should be upgraded with continental crosswalks with thick vertical striping on all sides to increase visibility and create safer crossing environments for pedestrians. (See the High-Visibility Crosswalk section for more information).

CONTINUOUS SIDEWALKS

The existing sidewalk network along Chestnut Expressway contains numerous gaps which significantly hinders pedestrian connectivity. Examples include on the southwestern sides of Grant Avenue and Main Avenue. Sidewalks should be provided on all sides of the street, including running east-west along the southern side of Chestnut Expressway with a buffer zone from the traffic lane.

CONNECT TO PHELPS STREET CORRIDOR

Multimodal improvements should be implemented along north-south streets that connect Chestnut Expressway to the Phelps Street Corridor, such as Jefferson Avenue, Boonville Avenue, Campbell Avenue, and Main Avenue. This would create key pedestrian and bicycle connections within the northern portion of Downtown.



Chestnut Expressway

- Primary Gateways
- Secondary Gateway
- Potential Drury University Pedestrian Bridge
- Pedestrian Refuge
- Highly Visible Crosswalk



PARKING

Parking in any successful downtown must be conveniently located, easy to access and identify, and provided in sufficient quantity. It also should be designed and located in manner that does not visually dominate the streetscape. Parking in Downtown should consist of a balanced mix of on-street spaces prioritized for customers and short-term visits, off-street public and private surface lots, and where appropriate, parking garages.

PARKING LOTS

Numerous public and private surface parking lots exist within Downtown Springfield that create undesirable gaps in the built form and diminish the appearance of the streetscape. Particularly within the Downtown Core Area, surface parking lots should be minimized and redeveloped as higher intensity uses or public park space to make better use of properties in prime locations. This would help establish a consistent street wall and support uses that generate Downtown activity.

In the short term, the appearance of existing parking lots should be improved with decorative masonry walls and/or perimeter and internal landscaping. See the Key Opportunity Sites section for information on parking lot development opportunities.

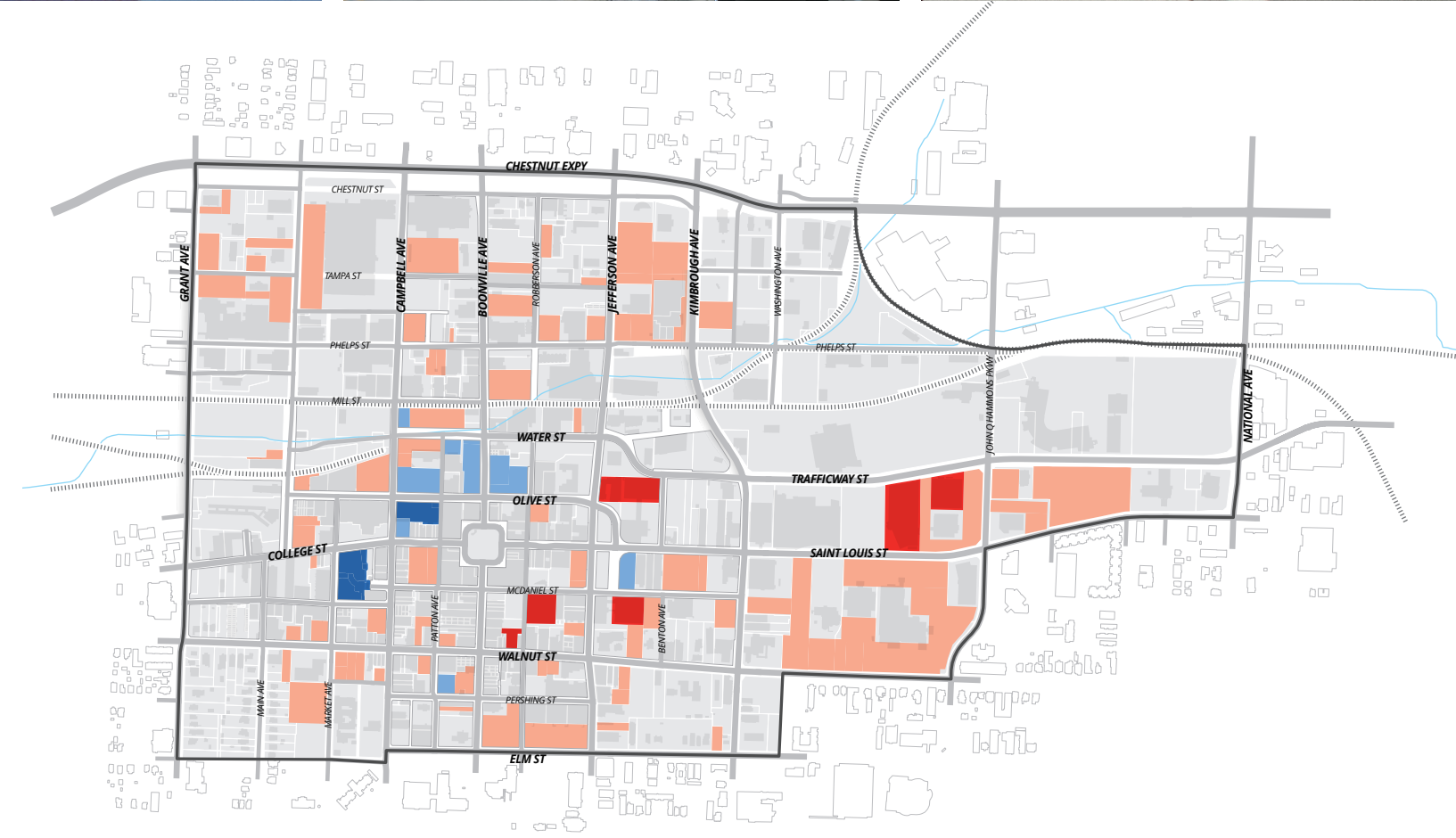
PARKING GARAGES

Parking garages are intended to consolidate parking spaces and serve the needs of multiple hour or all-day visits. Eight parking garages exist in Downtown Springfield, two of which are public, as shown in the Parking Map.

Moving forward, new parking garage locations should avoid key development sites within the Downtown Core Area, but be located close enough to the center to encourage visitors to park and walk. Parking garages should be designed to appear like other buildings within Downtown and comply with the proposed Downtown Design Guidelines. The City should also encourage creative façade designs that screen garage structures and add visual interest as an artistic component of the streetscape. Where possible, enhanced alleys and pedestrian cut-throughs should be provided to maximize use of parking garages by visitors to businesses located on surrounding street frontages.

SHARED PARKING

Shared parking allows multiple uses to share the same parking facility. This decreases the overall amount of parking in an area by optimizing facilities for multiple properties as opposed to reserving them for individual businesses. The City should promote shared parking agreements to balance parking demand in Downtown Springfield. During the peak demand periods, the City should explore lease agreements with the owners of certain key parking facilities to make them publicly available or increase the time period they allow public parking. Cost of this could be offset by implementing a paid parking model.



Existing Off-Street Parking

- Public Surface Parking Lot
- Private Surface Parking Lot
- Public Parking Garage
- Private Parking Garage



TRANSIT

Transit access plays a major role in increasing multimodal connectivity to Downtown, particularly for those who do not own a car. City Utilities (CU) operates bus services in Springfield with eight routes circulating in Downtown. The new CU Transit Center opened in 2016, located at 211 Main Avenue, which features sawtooth-style bus bays and an extended platform to accommodate future growth of the system. It also includes a large customer lobby with public Wi-Fi and real-time bus arrival information, and additional convenient locations for customers to purchase bus passes at a ticket window or a ticket vending machine. The MSU Bear Line also provides free bus services for students that connects the university campus to Downtown.

The City should continue to work closely with CU and MSU to improve transit services within Downtown and the community as a whole. This includes prioritizing and ensuring all bus stops have accessible, paved waiting areas along a connected sidewalk network.

Bus stops should also be upgraded with a bench or in key locations, a bus shelter with live timetable. Priority bus areas at stations with pavement treatments may also be considered where right-of-way widths allow to create designated spaces for passenger pick up out of traffic's way. An open dialogue should be maintained with CU for the need of increased service frequency, additional bus stops, or new bus lines in the future.

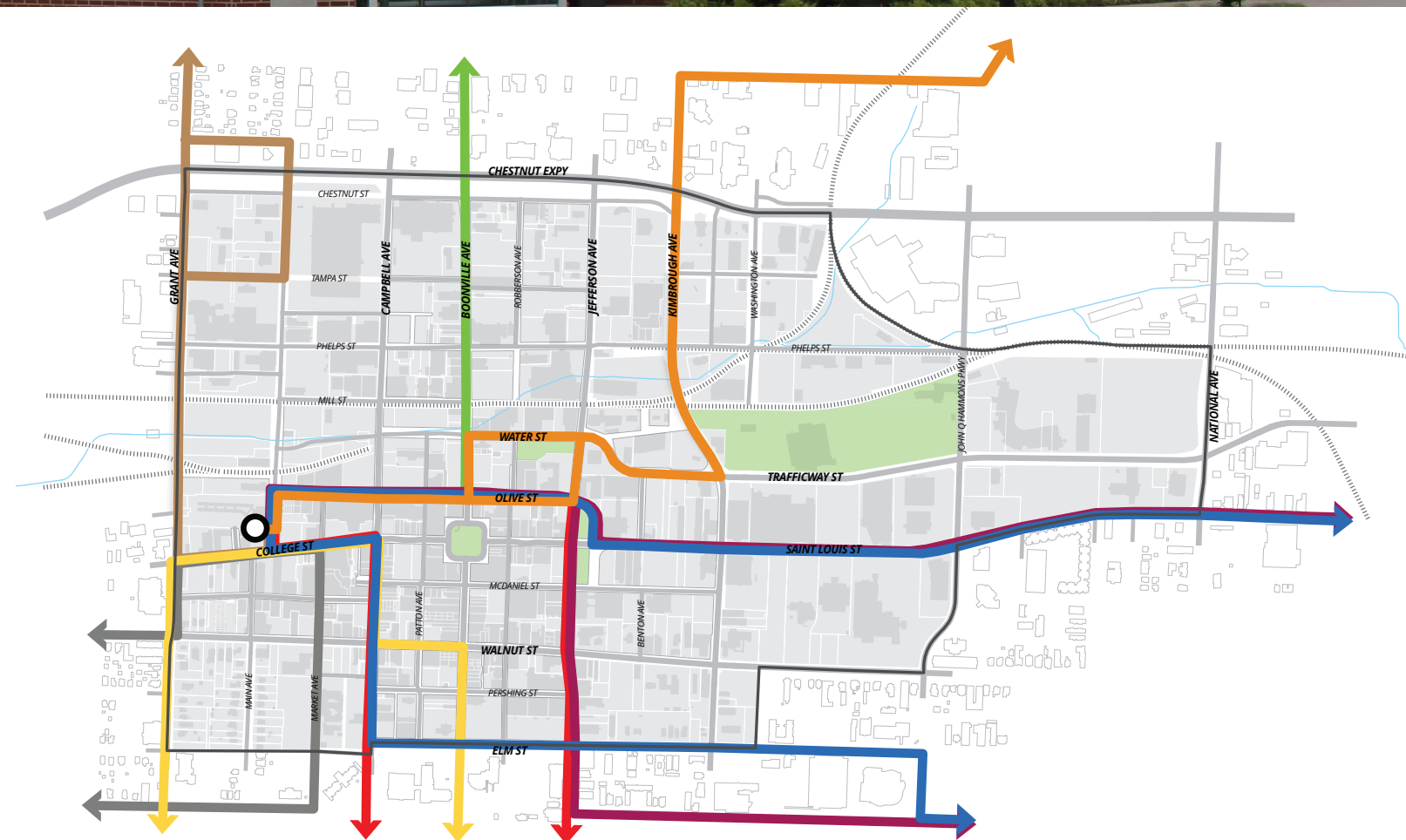
TROLLEY SYSTEM

During the outreach process for the *Forward SGF Comprehensive Plan*, community members voiced the desire for alternative modes of transportation, one being a trolley system. Downtown was highlighted by the community as one of the key destinations for the trolley route to better connect it with other activity nodes. A trolley bus system should be considered that supplements the CU bus system and connects Downtown with other key community destinations. A north-south or east-west route should be considered, possibly as a Phelps Street/Walnut Street loop and a Jefferson Avenue/Campbell Avenue loop or a Boonville Avenue route connecting Downtown to Commercial Street. The trolley buses could have a historically designed exterior to appeal as a tourist attraction and/or use zero emission buses to set a precedent for energy-efficient vehicles in Springfield. Successful examples include in the City of Walla Walla, WA or the Port City Trolley in Wilmington, NC.

TROLLEY SYSTEM

Port City Trolley Wilmington, North Carolina

A leisure- and tourism-focused trolley system that uses historically-styled buses could help connect key destinations in Downtown Springfield and the wider community. The Port City Trolley in Wilmington, NC is a successful example that began in 2018. It connects several districts in the City's downtown, including the Central Business District, Brooklyn Arts District, and North Waterfront District. In Springfield, a similar trolley system could connect destinations in Downtown, like different breweries within the Brewery District, Historic Route 66, Park Central Square, and Hammons Field, with other city-wide destinations like Commercial Street, the Springfield Art Museum, and university campuses. It would serve as a driver of economic development while providing fun, safe, convenient transportation to events and nightlife. Providing ample evening and weekend services could also help make it a local success.



Transit Routes

- 12 National/Glenstone - Maroon
- 14 Atlantic - Brown
- 2 Dale - Lime
- 3 Division - Orange
- 5 Glenstone/National - Blue
- 7 S Campbell - Red
- 9 Fort - Yellow
- 6 College - Black
- City Utilities Transit Center



TRAILS

Trails play an important role in providing a connected pedestrian/bicycle network as their separation from roadways gives users high levels of safety and comfort. When key destinations are linked together in Downtown with trails, it provides several benefits, such as:

- Stimulating the economy by increasing foot traffic
- Reducing the need to drive and vehicular congestion
- Increasing transportation choices
- Promoting active and healthy lifestyles
- Improving connectivity to larger regional trail system
- Create desirable places to live, work, and play (Quality of Place)

In the Downtown questionnaire, about 69 percent of respondents identified trails in Downtown as “Fair” or “Poor.” Currently, the Jordan Creek Greenway Trail is the only trail that currently runs through Downtown, linking Jefferson Avenue to Jordan Valley Park and local on-street bike lanes. It is a cherished asset by the community that should continue to be maintained and expanded on. The future Grant Avenue Parkway will establish a major trail connection to Downtown that will provide key connection to community assets along Grant Avenue. The trail network should continue to be expanded, together with transit, to create an alternative transportation hub that radiates from Downtown to areas across the City.

FUTURE TRAILS

The Ozarks Transportation Organization (OTO) proposes multiple trails for Downtown in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail Investment Study, including:

- Fort Scott Line Rail Trail
- North Jordan Creek Greenway (Jordan Valley Connector)
- South Jordan Creek Greenway
- Lower Jordan Creek Greenway

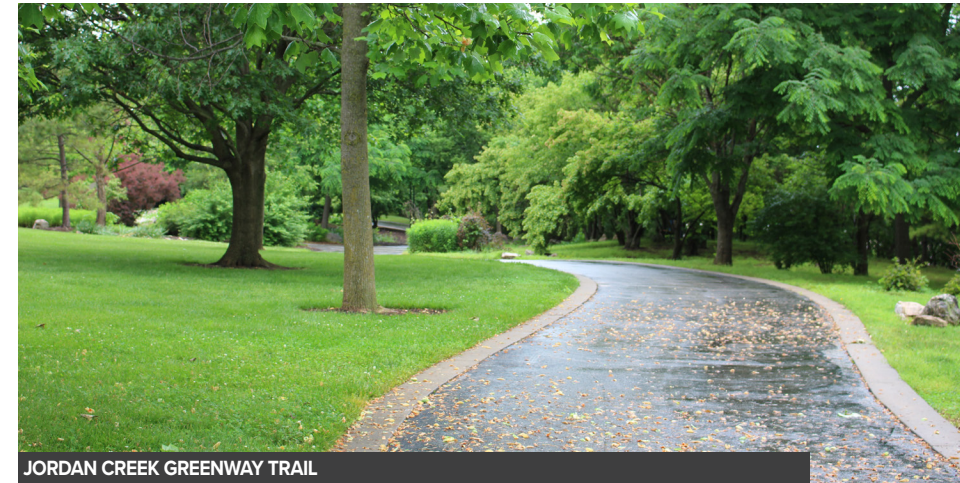
These proposed trails would significantly improve Downtown’s bike/pedestrian connectivity both internally and to the regional network. They would create connections to key community assets like Grant Avenue Parkway, Lake Springfield, local universities, public parks, commercial areas, and neighborhoods. The City should continue to work closely with OTO in pursuing the development of these trails as well as seek opportunities to provide connections to neighborhoods northwest of Downtown that currently lack proposed trail routes.

RAIL-TO-TRAIL

There is potential for a rail-to-trail conversion if Commercial Metals Company Recycling (634 East Phelps Street) were to relocate and the BNSF railroad was decommissioned in the long term. OTO’s proposed Fort Scott Line Rail Trail, North Jordan Creek Greenway, South Jordan Creek Greenway, and Lower Jordan Creek Greenway would all leverage this right-of-way, significantly improving Downtown trail connectivity and creating a natural amenity that would draw both residents and visitors. The City should maintain close communication with CMC Recycling on potential plans for future relocation.

TRAILHEADS

Trailheads mark the start/endpoints of trails and should be placed at key locations within Downtown. Clearly marking them and identifying nearby destinations with wayfinding signage or a gateway feature helps establish placemaking and increases ease of use. Locating convenient bike storage facilities near these areas is also important to ensure high levels of ridership.



JORDAN CREEK GREENWAY TRAIL



JORDAN CREEK GREENWAY TRAIL TERMINUS AT JEFFERSON AVENUE & WATER STREET

RAIL TO TRAIL

Capital Crescent Trail Washington, DC

The Capital Crescent Trail is an 11-mile rail-to-trail conversion that connects Georgetown near central Washington DC to downtown Bethesda in Maryland. Funded largely by bonds, it provides residents a mix of secluded, scenic routes with key urban connections. In Bethesda, it has helped spur economic development in a mixed-use setting that includes a variety of restaurants and shopping options. The trail also provides connections to many open space recreation areas and other area trails.



BIKE NETWORK

In the Downtown questionnaire conducted during community outreach, about 61 percent of participants responded that Downtown's bike infrastructure is "Fair" or "Poor." The City should continue to proactively expand its bike network to connect Downtown with City-wide destinations and nearby residential neighborhoods. The Link, for example, provides safer pedestrian and bike connectivity along streets with low traffic volume, connecting to neighborhoods, different modes of travel, and activity centers.

There are currently a mix of shared lanes and bike lanes within Downtown (see the Bike and Trail Network map), however, there is opportunity to fill in gaps in the network and increase safety. The City should consider visually reinforcing bike lanes with green paint treatments and incorporate bike boxes at major intersections for safer turning conditions for cyclists. Bike lanes should be targeted along secondary arterial roads (Campbell Avenue, Jefferson Avenue, Kimbrough Avenue, Trafficway Street, and Saint Louis Street) and shared lanes along preferred routes that may be too narrow to support designated bike lanes with on-street parking. Connections to Grant Avenue Parkway will also be key in leveraging the major public investment and improving city-wide bikability.

MICROMOBILITY

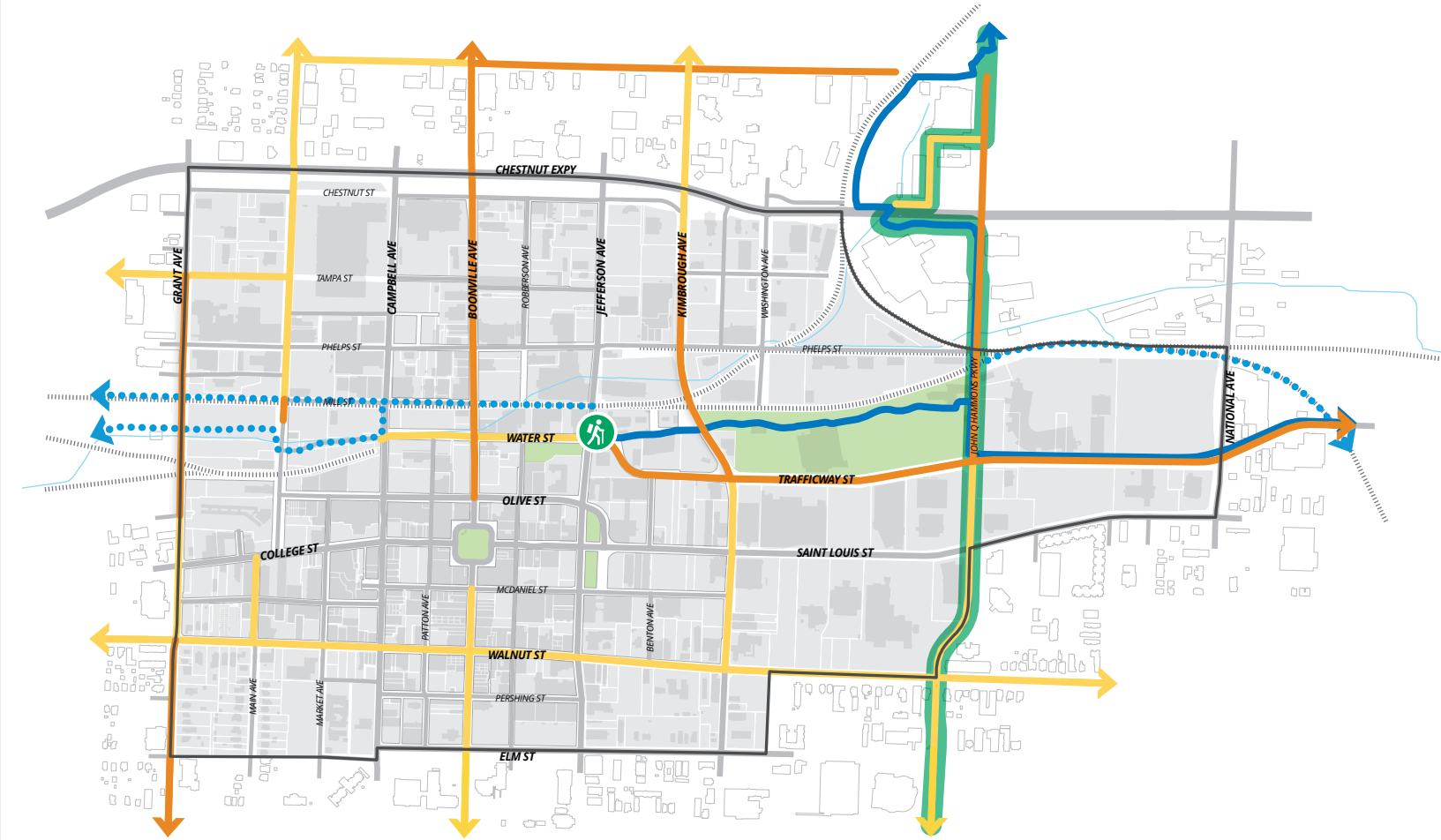
Micromobility has gained popularity in cities across the nation as a strategy to increase alternative transportation options through small-scale, environmentally friendly modes. According to National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), 84 million trips were taken via a shared micromobility mode in the U.S. in 2018, which was twice as many trips as the year before. Examples include human-powered or electric scooters and bicycles shared using docking stations or a dockless system. These modes have a minimal physical footprint, and can be effective in moving people over short distances, dual-function as a tourist attraction, and leverage existing bike infrastructure or trails within a Downtown.

Micromobility solutions have also proven to help smooth daily traffic flow and shift traffic demand to hours traditionally considered off-peak. Growing traction in micromobility is in part due to increased access to information via smart phones and digital platforms, as well as increased demands for short, convenient trips to city centers. The City should work towards actively integrating micromobility options into Downtown, connecting to other major activity nodes like Commercial Street or MSU's campus. A micromobility plan should first be developed to identify infrastructure and funding needs and guide strategies for implementation.

MICROMOBILITY

Divvy Bike Share Chicago, Illinois

One successful bikeshare program is Divvy in Chicago, IL. It is currently North America's largest bikeshare system by geographic area, with over 570 stations and a combination of over 6,000 traditional and electric-assisted bicycles. The service functions as a partnership between the Chicago Department of Transportation—who owns the bikes and stations—and Divvy—who acts as the service operator and is owned by rideshare company Lyft. It was originally funded by federal grants for reducing congestion, improving air quality, and promoting economic recovery.



Bike and Trail Network

-  Trailhead
-  Bike Lane
-  Shared Lane Marking
-  Existing Greenway Trail
-  Future Greenway Trail
-  The Link



BRIDGES

Two major bridges exist in Downtown Springfield—the Grant Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. bridges—which provide key connections through Downtown, such as to the future Grant Avenue Parkway and Hammons Field. A smaller-scale bridge exists over Jordan Creek at Main Avenue, which is planned for replacement and will be expanded and lengthened.

The Grant Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. bridges each feature a five-foot wide pedestrian pathway that is lined with a concrete jersey divider and unprotected bike lanes (for the Grant Avenue bridge, only a northbound bike lane is provided). While it provides basic connectivity, these bridge configurations can be improved to significantly increase crossing safety and comfort for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The following bridge enhancements should be considered:

- Provide a 10-foot shared pathway to allow for two-way pedestrian/bicycle traffic. Sense of separation and comfort can be enhanced by adding decorative fencing on top of a more sturdy, permanent concrete dividing wall.
- Alternatively, extend the pedestrian pathway to eight feet and provide two-way four to six feet wide bike lanes on the eastern side of each bridge. Bike lanes should be located within the concrete divider's protected area, separated from the pedestrian pathway with bollards.
- Enhance the bridges' appearance and wayfinding with "Welcome to Downtown" signage, banners, lighting, and decoration.
- Provide pedestrian access to the parks below with either ramps or staircases.



GOOD EXAMPLE - BRIDGE WITH PROTECTED PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY

BRIDGE UNDERPASSES

The Grant Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. bridges create prominent edges within the greater Downtown area that can appear unattractive when passing underneath. Underpasses should be enhanced with decorative elements, such as creative lighting or murals, as is done where the Jordan Creek Greenway Trail passes under the Benton Avenue bridge. Underpasses should be safe, comfortable, clean, and well lit to ensure they are inviting to pedestrians and bicyclists.



POOR EXAMPLE - GRANT AVENUE UNDERPASS ALONG WALL STREET

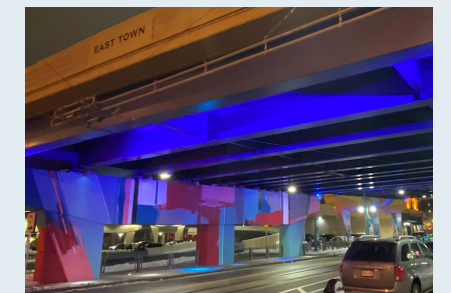


GOOD EXAMPLE - BENTON AVE UNDERPASS ALONG JORDAN CREEK GREENWAY

BRIDGE UNDERPASSES

"Brighten the Passage" Underpass Activation in Milwaukee, WI

The City of Milwaukee's 2010 Downtown Comprehensive Plan had identified opportunities for gateway enhancements to improve neighborhood connectivity and remove perceived barriers. To address this goal, the City installed murals, streetscaping, and dynamic lighting under the I-794 elevated freeway, successfully strengthening the connection between the central business district and its Historic Third Ward neighborhoods. This project, named "Brighten the Passage," was done through a unique public-private partnership between the State of Wisconsin's Department of Transportation, the City of Milwaukee, Historic Third Ward Association, Milwaukee Public Market, BID #2, Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21, and the private sector.



Source: www.milwaukeedowntown.com



Source: Arrow Sign Company

GATEWAYS

The areas where visitors enter a downtown are called “gateways.” The character and appearance of these areas are important factors in determining the overall image and perception of Downtown Springfield as a whole. They also help visually delineate what part of the community “is Downtown” and what part “isn’t Downtown.” The City should work to install attractive gateway features at key locations to announce entry into Downtown, such as along Chestnut Expressway, or at primary entry points into Downtown’s functional subareas.

Potential locations for gateway features are identified in the adjacent map at two scales, which can be defined as follows:

- **Primary gateways** - archway signs or large-scale, creative entrance signs with special landscaping, lighting, decorative paving, and wayfinding.
- **Secondary gateways** - smaller scale creative entrance signs with landscaping and lighting.

The City should continue to maintain its banner signs to reinforce the spaces between the gateways and showcase special events or the City’s identity.

WAYFINDING

Springfield currently has a wayfinding system in Downtown that was designed in 2005 in partnership with MoDOT, Public Works, Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau, Bass Pro, and Battlefield Mall. The City should continue to update and improve the system, taking the following into consideration:

- Increase wayfinding within Downtown by constructing new informational kiosks and pedestrian and vehicular directional signs that direct visitors to community assets like Hammons Field, Park Central Square, Jordan Valley Park, and the Brewery District. Potential locations are identified in the adjacent map.
- Target wayfinding to and from the CU Transit station to help transit riders navigate Downtown.
- Provide directional signage to public parking to improve circulation and access to existing parking options.
- Work with MoDOT to identify new wayfinding locations on roadways under its jurisdiction that direct motorists to and from Downtown from the surrounding community and the regional highway system.
- Ensure wayfinding signs are easily readable with highly visible colors, font sizes, and placement.



Gateways and Wayfinding

- Primary Gateways
- Secondary Gateways
- Wayfinding

GOAL 3: Renew Downtown's identity by creating quality public places for events, programming, and marketing.

JORDAN VALLEY

Jordan Valley in Downtown Springfield currently sits underutilized, with Jordan Creek flowing underground, inaccessible to the public, and disinvested or underutilized properties lining the area. Realizing the major potential to transform the area into a state-of-the-art public gathering space that hand-in-hand improves stormwater drainage and water quality, the City initiated the Jordan Valley Concept Plan project. The Jordan Valley Concept Plan envisions a "string of pearls" concept along Jordan Creek that links a variety of Jordan Valley parks to create a cohesive and well-connected system of outdoor gathering spaces, right in the heart of Springfield. Design Guidelines were also adopted in 2010 to help realize the vision of the Concept Plan, providing guidance for future growth in Jordan Valley that incorporates creative designs and high quality developments. As the document was created over a decade ago, the City should update the Design Guidelines, incorporating the Commercial Metals Corporation catalyst site and updates from the Renew Jordan Creek project.



RENEW JORDAN CREEK

Funded by the 2017 Level Property Tax renewal, Renew Jordan Creek (RJC) is an ongoing project that focuses on the redevelopment of three underutilized Downtown sites along Jordan Creek into high-quality community gathering places with improved flood control and water quality. The project came about following a detailed feasibility study in partnership with the City of Springfield and Army Corps of Engineers to determine ways to reduce flooding in Downtown along Jordan Creek. The creek was confined to its concrete box culvert as a Works Project Administration project in the 1930s. In recent decades, flooding has increased in Downtown, and the community has expressed its desire to daylight the creek and return it to a natural state to improve water quality and public outdoor recreational space.

GOALS OF RJC

The primary objective of the RJC project is to mitigate flooding impacts to buildings in Downtown Springfield and provide water quality benefits to the urban watershed. The vision for the RJC project is the creation of an urban amenity that will achieve the primary project goals of flood reduction and water quality improvement while serving as an economic catalyst and quality of place enhancement. By providing green spaces in this urban environment, the overall project will remove and disconnect impervious surfaces and associated pollution risks to surface water and groundwater from this sensitive, karst-influenced riparian corridor and floodplain.

The project will construct a new open, naturalized channel along 1,100 linear feet of Jordan Creek and restore adjacent land as green space with riparian plantings. The City has acquired several miles of riparian buffer downstream of this property. The RJC project will represent another significant step in a healthy, connected riparian corridor along Jordan Creek. It is also key to fulfilling the overall vision for Jordan Valley, providing connectivity for the Jordan Creek and Wilsons Creek greenway trail system, and enhancing the West Central neighborhood, Historic Route 66 revitalization, and Grant Avenue Parkway efforts.

Based on a planning and design process that focused heavily on stakeholder and public engagement, the project proposes the following improvements.

PRIMARY RJC PROJECT SITE

Replacing parking lots, a vacant lot and a three-story structure, the project envisions a natural meandering channel, high quality park and plaza spaces, activation on Mill Street, open greenspace, a dog park, and markers and gateways for placemaking. It will also feature native landscaping, sidewalks and bike trails, a new bridge at Campbell Avenue, greenspace and parklets, lighting, shade for picnicking, and other placemaking features.

FOUNDER'S PARK

The project plans to revitalize this existing park, which currently features a 250-seat amphitheater and large limestone steps intended to resemble the historic Phoenix Quarry. The park holds cultural significance through the 120-foot historic mural illustrating the first 100 years of Springfield's history, native prairie grasses that existed in the nearby Kickapoo Prairie, and a historical timeline that describes the growth of Springfield in its first century. Proposed improvements include a new covered amphitheater and flat lawn, native plantings, concessions and restrooms, a pondless water feature, civic plaza, esplanade, adventure play area, flex lawn, and the preserved mural and history walk.

404 JEFFERSON AVENUE

A former Meek's Lumber facility that was recently acquired by the City, the project seeks to redevelop the vacant light industrial use into an activated open space with the daylighted Jordan Creek, water overlook areas, a connected trail system, iconic art, and a recreation/entertainment/incubator space development.

RELATION TO COMMERCIAL METALS COMPANY CATALYST SITE

The recommendations of the CMC site provides opportunities to form connections with the rest of the Jordan Valley Master Plan and Renew Jordan Creek's overall project area, extending the range of amenities Springfield residents can enjoy within and around Downtown.



PRIMARY RJC PROJECT SITE
EXISTING CONDITIONS



PRIMARY RJC PROJECT SITE
PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS



FOUNDER'S PARK
EXISTING CONDITIONS



FOUNDER'S PARK
PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS



404 JEFFERSON AVENUE
EXISTING CONDITIONS



404 JEFFERSON AVENUE
PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

Planned Improvement images were produced by the Olson Studio, Renew Jordan Creek project team.



PUBLIC GATHERING SPACES

Public gathering spaces or “third places” (spaces where people spend time away from home [“first place”] and work [“second place”]) are an increasingly valued amenity across the nation, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic. They provide opportunities for people to gather, eat, interact, or simply enjoy Downtown’s urban setting outside. Public gathering spaces have various forms, including programmed parks, public squares, passive greenspace, pedestrian cut-throughs, plazas on private properties used by the public, or seating areas along the sidewalk. They help activate the streetscape and support social interaction, which in turn facilitates economic development and business growth.

Downtown is currently home to several key public gathering spaces like Park Central Square, Jordan Valley Park, and Jubilee Park. Community members expressed during community outreach the desire to enhance existing public gathering spaces and expand placemaking efforts.

Moving forward, the City must continue to shift its attitude towards taking bold chances to elevate Downtown’s quality of place, creating unique, innovative, and memorable places. The City should seek to improve programming at existing facilities with amenities that foster activity and add visual interest, such as public art, outdoor string lights, play areas, and water features. (See the Key Opportunity Sites section for more information on enhancing Jubilee Park.)

The City should also pursue opportunities for new public spaces, such as the ongoing Renew Jordan Creek project. Public-private partnerships and private investments should be encouraged to create publicly-accessible plazas on private property, as well as to install additional landscaping, pedestrian amenities, and site furniture along the sidewalk and create informal gathering spaces within the streetscape.

ACTIVATING THE SQUARE

Park Central Square has taken many forms throughout its long history, from containing a courthouse, a bell tower, the Gottfried Tower during the 1800s, parking for carriages and later vehicles, to becoming a reconstructed pedestrian plaza in the 1970s after experiencing multiple fires and years of disinvestment. Most recently, a \$1.78 million renovation was completed in 2011 that added trees, improved lighting and streetscaping, renovation of the fountain, and replacement of worn pavers.

The Square acts as Downtown’s heart and central gathering space but community members have voiced its lack of draw and the need to better activate it. Improvements to the Square will be needed to increase its usage and attraction, with respect to historically significant elements.

To build on the City’s previous investment and further improve the Square as an actively used public space that people seek to visit, the following activation strategies should be considered.

PAVILLION

The pavilion, which currently appears dated, should be renovated to provide a well-designed, flexible public facility for community gatherings, performances, and events. The upgraded pavilion may be creative in design, but should complement the surrounding historic character of the Square.

VACANT OR INACTIVE STOREFRONTS

Filling vacant or inactive storefronts surrounding the Square should be incentivized by implementing a vacancy tax (see the Vacant Storefronts section for more information). The zoning code should be revised to only allow for ground floor uses that help activate the streetscape, such as drink and food, retail and service, and entertainment uses. Existing office buildings should be redeveloped or rehabilitated in the long term to support these desirable ground floor uses while permitting upper story office space.

OUTDOOR SEATING

Outdoor seating should be encouraged for businesses surrounding the Square to help generate street activity and sense of “eyes on the street” for improved safety.

GRASS AREAS

Grass areas, which currently prohibits sitting, should be made available to the public to relax and lounge on while enjoying the Square.

CREATIVE SEATING

Creative, movable seating could be provided to fill the empty center of the Square and make it more flexible in use and engaging. Seating should be durable, easy to store during community events or winter seasons, and attractive to add quality visual interest to the Square. Examples of outdoor furniture types include LED chairs, colorful Adirondack chairs, metal bistro tables with folding chairs, plastic lounge or rocking chairs, and wooden or vinyl picnic tables.

INTERACTIVE GAMES

Interactive games, such as life-sized Connect-Four, Jenga, and Chess games could be temporarily installed in the Square as a fun and engaging attraction for visitors of all ages.

WEEKLY COMMUNITY EVENTS

Weekly community events should continue to be organized at the Square to give a reason for community members to go while helping strengthen sense of community. Examples include free yoga, Zumba classes, farmers markets, guided history walks, docent-led Sculpture Walk tours, music concerts, and movie nights.

PLAY AREA

A play area should be considered for the southwest corner within the Square to draw families to the Square and provide a cutting-edge recreational space for children. The play area could include creative elements like musical swings or LED lit seesaws. Consideration should be given to making sure the play area is protected from circulating traffic.



EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Events and activities are fun and engaging ways of developing a tight-knit community and drawing outside visitors. They can boost local tourism and bring greater visibility to local vendors and artisans. They can also encourage socializing and cultural development. Springfield has a variety of annual events with a regional draw, like the Birthplace of Route 66 Festival and Car Show, St. Patrick's Day Parade, Festival of Lights, Mayors Tree Lighting, and First Friday Art Walk, as well as local activities like trivia, movies at Founders Park, and art gallery shows.

The City should continue to provide events and support the creation of new ones, with consideration to the following:

- Continue to work with key partners like the Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Downtown Springfield Association to provide and improve community events and activities. A regular review of events should be conducted after they are held to identify and address issues that impacted their operation as well as explore opportunities for new events. Community outreach notably highlighted the community's desire for flea/artisan markets, farmers markets, outdoor concerts, and the return of First Night.
- Conduct regular surveys, with both residents and event attendees, to identify which events are most successful and potential improvements that could be implemented at future events. An emphasis should be placed on measuring attendance in terms of City residents and regional visitors to establish a consistent understanding of who is frequenting these events.

- Coordinate with the Public Works Department and the Police Department to review traffic patterns during events, particularly changes as a result of street closures, and consider new configurations or improvements that will ensure pedestrian safety (see the Festival or Shared Street section).
- Develop materials available online and within Downtown that inform visitors and residents about traffic pattern changes, parking, public restrooms, amenities, scheduled activities, and other information regarding upcoming events and festivals.
- Work towards structuring events to include participation by Downtown businesses, helping grow support from the local business community and provide opportunities for businesses to gain revenue.

OPEN CONTAINER POLICY

Community outreach highlighted the potential to create an open container policy to foster economic development by drawing visitors, supporting outdoor socializing, and encouraging the patronage of multiple establishments. This would increase the amount of time and money patrons spend in Downtown while allowing businesses without outdoor seating areas to capitalize on good weather, granting them the ability to sell beverages "to-go."

As outlined in Chapter 10: Alcoholic Beverages in the City's Code of Ordinances, open container policies are permitted for 12 select Downtown events per year. The City should consider implementing an open container policy within an established district, such as the Brewery District functional subarea.

This would require a state law change to allow patrons to carry and consume alcohol in the street in open containers, as was successfully done in the Power and Light District in Kansas City which is now a major entertainment district. If it is successful in the pilot district in Springfield, a Downtown open container zone could be put in place for a broader area or expanded to other times of the year.

Neighborhood safety, noise, public intoxication, and trash are concerns for any policies regarding outdoor alcohol consumption. To mitigate this, the policy should be developed in coordination with event organizers, business owners, law enforcement, and public refuse services to address concerns and create a feasible framework. Signage should also be placed at the boundary of the open container district to notify pedestrians they are leaving the premise and must throw away any open containers.

GOAL 4: Attract high quality investments into Downtown that enhances quality of place and economic vitality.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

As redevelopment occurs within Downtown, the City should encourage developers and property owners to elevate the quality of architectural design. Creating an urban environment with high-quality architecture is essential to the enhancement of Downtown's "sense of place." A building's scale, siting, quality, and maintenance are also critical factors to consider when assessing a development's contribution to Downtown. While architectural styles do not need to be the same, buildings should complement one another with similar building height, proportion, and rhythm (the regular spacing of doorways, windows, and other architectural features).

The City should consider developing Downtown Design Guidelines to provide specific recommendations for the public and private realm to help streamline the redevelopment process and minimize the amount of administrative time needed for the review process. Guidelines should encompass elements such as height, proportions, materials, window placement, and signage.

Undesirable designs, such as steel truss, metal-sided buildings, should clearly be identified in the guidelines. The Guidelines should also take the unique character of each functional subarea into consideration and allocate design standards appropriately with their given context.

ADAPTIVE REUSE

Adaptive Reuse is the rehabilitation and conversion of an existing building to accommodate a new use. It allows the desirable character of an older building to remain while repurposing its structure to support a use that better meets the current day context and helps regenerate activity. "Repurposing existing buildings for new uses" was notably ranked the number one priority in the community questionnaire during Downtown Springfield Plan's outreach process.

Downtown Springfield developed as a major rail, manufacturing, and industrial center of southwest Missouri in the early 20th century, which was largely spurred by the completion of the Missouri Pacific Railroad in 1907.

This industrial heritage can clearly be seen in Downtown today, with a variety of industrial buildings remaining, particularly in the Northwest Manufacturing functional subarea. These buildings, which were once used for light and heavy manufacturing, meat packing, printing and publishing, auto repair, and warehousing, present the opportunity for creative adaptive reuse to help further Downtown revitalization. Existing examples of successful adaptive reuse include the Heer's Building, Brick City, and the Springfield Grocer Company Warehouse lofts. The City should continue to encourage adaptive reuse of structurally sound buildings that are generally well-maintained and reflect desirable character, including those identified in the Key Opportunity Sites section.

THE HEER'S BUILDING

The Heer's Building, is a successful local example of adaptive reuse. Located at 138 Park Central Square in Downtown, the building is a former seven-story department store constructed in 1915. It once contained different departments on each floor as well as a rooftop restaurant, radio station and observation deck for shoppers before closing in the late 1990s. After nearly 20 years of vacancy, the iconic Heer's Building was reactivated through adaptive reuse as a luxury apartment building. Today, the building features 80 residential units and 18,000 square feet of commercial space on the ground floor, and was financed, in-part, by Federal and State Historic Tax Credits.

DOWNTOWN HOUSING

During community outreach, the need to provide a greater mix of housing choices in Downtown was identified. Supporting residential uses in Downtown adds to the economic vitality of the area by increasing daytime foot traffic and activity and creates living options for residents who would like to live in a walkable environment near day-to-day amenities. A mix of housing types, densities, and tenures should be supported, such as residential units above ground-floor commercial in mixed use buildings, townhomes, and apartment buildings that match the character of the surrounding context. In the Downtown questionnaire conducted during the outreach process, lofts and townhomes received the highest votes for housing types desired by the community in Downtown (44 percent and 40 percent respectively). The Functional Subareas section of this chapter identifies appropriate locations for such housing types. The Downtown Housing Study should also be updated to provide more detailed direction for Downtown housing options. Adaptive reuse of old industrial buildings should be encouraged to create unique and attractive loft spaces. Older neighborhoods surrounding Downtown like West Central should support housing types attractive to families who wish to live within easy reach of Downtown amenities.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Architecturally significant structures are a defining component of Downtown's charm, fostering a unique sense of character and place. As development occurs, new developments should be context sensitive, seeking to improve Downtown while respecting the character of existing structures, particularly in the Urban Center functional subarea.

The façades of new infill development should feature appropriate architectural detailing with articulations that create a consistent structural rhythm compatible with adjacent historic buildings. Historic assets, like the Historic Gillioz Theatre, Landers Theatre, Park Central Square, and Historic Route 66 should continue to be preserved and highlighted with informational signage that celebrate their cultural significance.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

City of Highland Park, Illinois

The City of Highland Park, IL created Design Guidelines for its Downtown area to help guide future development in a manner that supports its long term vision of vitality, sustainability, and economic success. The document provides guidelines for site treatment, building designs, lighting, awning, fences, and street frontages, identifying preferred materials, dimensions, site configurations, and more. The document is highly illustrative with photo examples and diagrams to ensure it is easily understandable by City staff, developers, and community members.

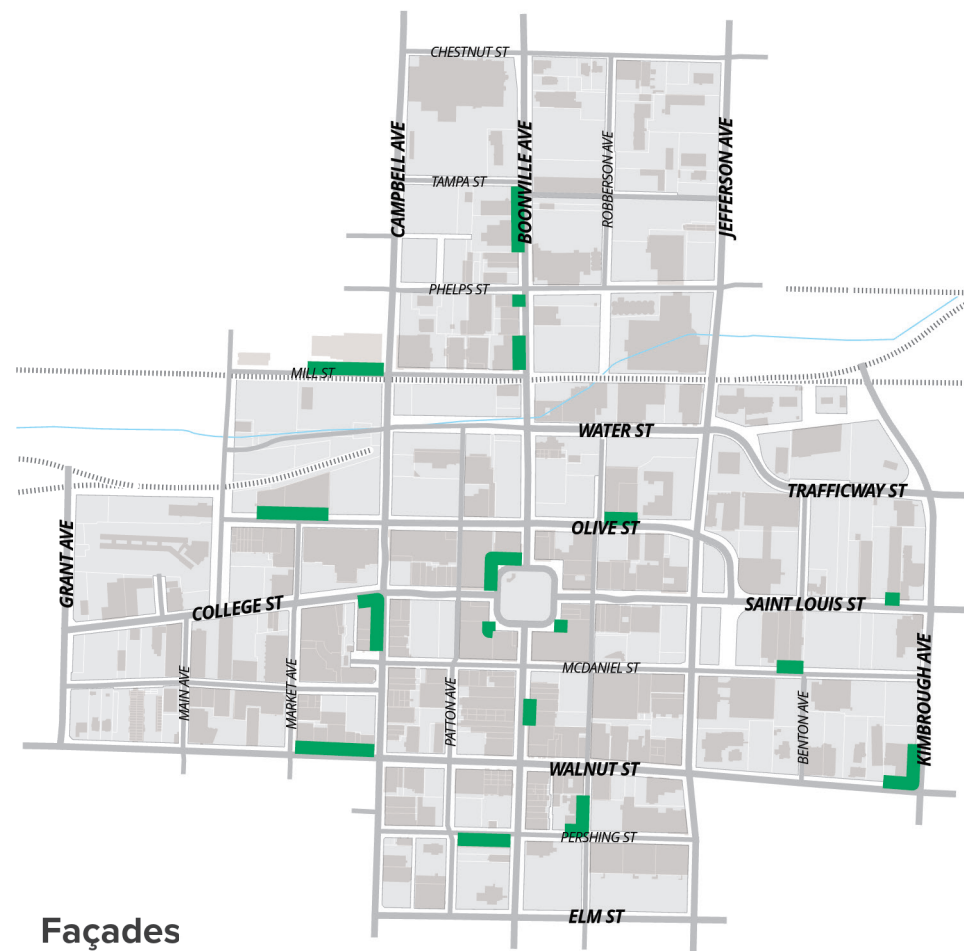
FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS AND RESTORATION

Several buildings that exhibit ideal built form suffer from deteriorating or altered façades that detract from the appearance of Downtown, as identified in the adjacent Façades map. The City currently operates the Business Development Loan Program that includes building rehabilitation and historic preservation as eligible activities; however, existing prevailing wage requirements have largely led this program to be underutilized for façade improvement purposes due to the costs of contractors being higher than the funding benefit received from the loan.

The primary funding source for the loan program is the Federal Community Development Block Grant program. If an alternative funding source can be identified for the loan program, or the façade improvement component of the loan program, the City could provide more flexible terms that eliminate the prevailing wage requirement. For example, the Façade Loan Program along Commercial Street is funded through the Commercial Street TIF.

In addition, the City should proactively target and coordinate with property owners and private developers to use the program to perform façade enhancements. Façade restorations should also be required when substantial rehabilitation is planned for a building.

The proposed Downtown Design Guidelines should provide guidance on the level of façade restoration or enhancement that should be required based on the level of reinvestment planned for the building, the existing state of the façade, and the historic status of the building. The Guidelines should offer detailed examples of the types of improvements that should be made, such as repairing or replacing façade tile, brick, and woodwork; scraping, priming, and painting of window frames, cornices, and doors; or the repair or replacement of awnings, canopies, signs, or sign mounting hardware.



Façades

■ Façade Improvement and/or Restoration

COMMERCIAL LOAN PROGRAM

Since 1984, the City has administered a Commercial Loan Program, which was capitalized by the federal Community Development Block Grant program through a revolving loan program. There are two loan programs under the Commercial Loan Program:

Business Development Loan Program.

Available city-wide, this program is designed to provide financial assistance for small business concerns and nonprofit organizations to expand employment opportunities, stimulate private investment and eliminate slum and blight conditions. Eligible activities include acquisition of property and buildings, clearance and removal, historic preservation, machinery/equipment, mixed-use development, new construction, rehabilitation, and relocation.

Business Incentive/Micro Enterprise Loan Program.

This program is intended to facilitate economic development through the establishment, stabilization, and expansion of micro-enterprises and small businesses. Eligible activities include equipment, furniture and fixtures, infill improvements, start-up costs, merchandise inventory, and working capital.

The Commercial Loan Program and other economic development tools should continue to be supported to attract new investment. Examples include historic tax credits, tax abatements, Opportunity Zones, Springfield Finance and Development Corporation, and Community Improvement Districts.



VACANT STOREFRONTS

Downtown Springfield is currently experiencing vacancies in certain areas, such as along Campbell Avenue, largely due to the lack of foot traffic that would support business activity. Like many downtowns across the country, vacancy rates have also increased during the challenging economic conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic. The City could explore the following strategies to help offset vacancies in Downtown.

VACANT PROPERTY REGISTRATION ORDINANCES (VPRO)

A VPRO is an ordinance that requires owners of vacant commercial properties to provide information and pay a fee for each year their property remains vacant. This allows the city administering the program to enter into a dialogue with property owners and develop strategies for attracting tenants or finding temporary solutions that activate the space. This improved level of communication can help the City to efficiently identify trends and centralize efforts to reduce vacancies. As the specifics of VPROs vary significantly between cities—such as fee structures and options for waivers—the City should work with property owners and economic development officials to create a VPRO that is tailor-made for local needs.

TEMPORARY ACTIVATION

Vacant buildings should not sit dormant without any hint of future reinvestment. Instead, property owners should be encouraged to increase the vitality of their vacant buildings by temporarily filling their storefront windows. Possibilities include public art or the posting of signs that say “Coming Soon” or “What Should Go Here?”. Activating vacant storefronts is particularly important in the Urban Center functional subarea to maintain a streetscape that showcases signs of activity. This can be done in partnership with the local art community, CID Downtown, Sculpture Walk Springfield, Springfield Art Museum, Downtown Springfield Association, and the Community Foundation of the Ozarks.

VACANCY TAX

While the lack of foot traffic is a major cause of vacancies existing in Downtown, there has been some cases of speculative investment in properties where investors leave buildings vacant for an extended amount of time in the hopes of making a profit selling in the future. Many of these buildings notably would benefit from façade improvements and rehabilitation, but instead remain unimproved and empty.

The City may consider establishing a vacancy fee or vacancy tax program to address such chronic vacancies in Downtown.

After a property remains vacant for a set amount of time (such as two years or however deemed reasonable to market and lease a property), the owner would be required to pay a fee each year until the vacancy is filled (such as a straight fee based on linear frontage or retail area). All vacancy fees should be paid in full prior to the issuance of any zoning permits. Certain exemptions could be applied, such as permitted renovations and pending legal, zoning, or historic preservation cases. Consideration should be given to ensuring the Vacancy Tax avoids penalizing businesses making active efforts to find an appropriate tenant and does not inadvertently prompt businesses to fill vacancies with unideal tenants to avoid the fee.

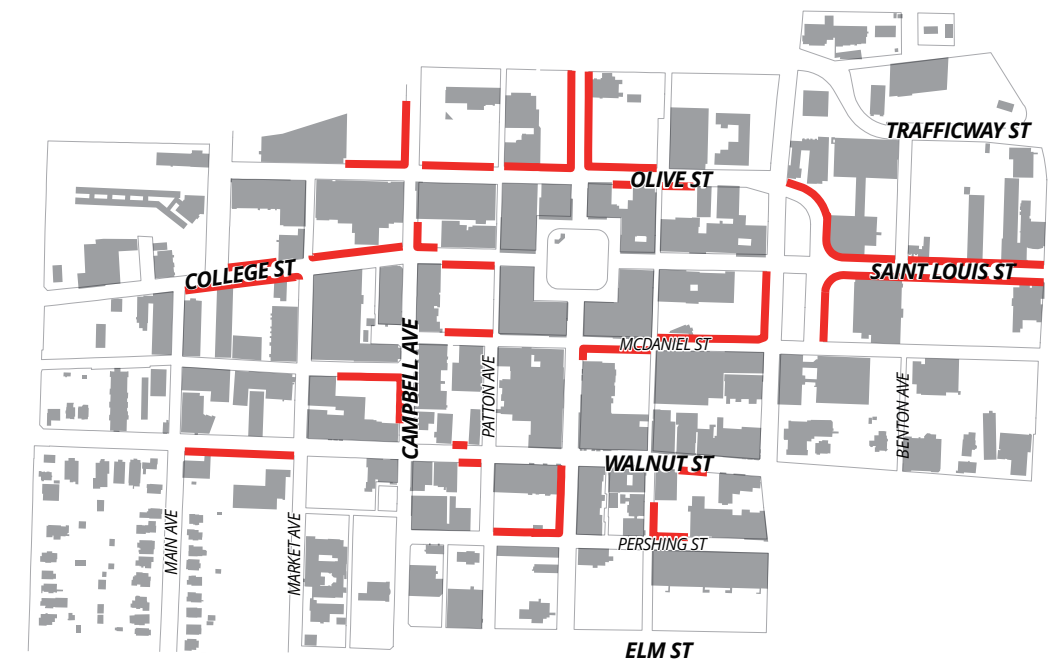
IMPACTS OF ONE-WAYS

Studies have shown that one-way streets can have a negative impact on Downtown businesses by making it less convenient to access a particular location. Vehicles can often speed by businesses without stopping to see what exists and drivers frequently must drive around the block to reach their destination. Two-ways typically result in slower traffic speeds, making the street more pedestrian-friendly and increasing foot traffic for surrounding businesses. Taking this into consideration, the City may consider converting Campbell Avenue and Jefferson Avenue into two-ways to help increase pedestrian activity that supports local businesses (see the One-Ways section for further discussion).

STREETWALL

A streetwall forms when a continuous row of buildings, side-by-side, that are located at or near the sidewalk with little or no side yards. A continuous streetwall creates a sense of enclosure that is comfortable and walkable for pedestrians. South Avenue between Park Central Square and Walnut Street is an example of an exemplary streetwall. In other areas of Downtown, the streetwall is inconsistent with large gaps between buildings created by surface parking lots or vacant lots.

As a component of development and reinvestment, the City should establish a continuous streetwall throughout the Urban Center and along targeted streets within the Downtown Core Area as identified in the adjacent Streetwall map. This includes prioritizing infill development that will reduce streetwall gaps at these locations. In the interim, landscaping and public art should be installed to fill extensive gaps in the streetwall and create a sense of activity along the corridor.



Streetwalls

— Streetwall Prioritization

GOAL 5: Cultivate an environment of cooperative public and private partnerships.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

The initiatives and recommendations outlined in the Downtown Plan cannot be implemented without proactive and strong collaboration among the many influential stakeholders in Downtown Springfield. This includes business owners, private developers, property owners, regional entities, and local organizations. Potential or existing partners include, but is not limited to:

- BNSF Railway
- City Utilities
- Community Improvement District
- Downtown Springfield Association
- Drury University
- efactory
- Jordan Valley Innovation Center
- Missouri Department of Economic Development
- Missouri State University
- Ozark Greenways
- Ozarks Technical Community College
- Ozarks Transportation Organization
- Small Business Development Center
- Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce
- Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

The Downtown Springfield Community Improvement District (CID) has played a critical role in providing clean, safe, and friendly services for Downtown over the past 20 years. It is a political division of the State of Missouri that works to make Downtown a competitive, vibrant, and inviting place. Services include safety and security, image enhancement, maintenance, and parking management. It is funded by a one-half percent sales tax in the District, which was supported and renewed by residents in 2016 for another 15 years. The City should continue to support the CID and educate residents on the benefits of the CID when it is considered for renewal again in 2031.



Convention & Visitors Bureau



OZARKS TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION
A METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION



Missouri Department of Economic Development



Springfield
Area Chamber of Commerce

