

Implementation

The first section provides an overarching philosophy and focus for translating the master plan update into action, redesign, investment, governance and sustained maintenance.

POLICY AND REGULATORY CALIBRATION

Making Downtown a Place to Drive To, not Through

To create the environment a community desires for Downtown, it is critically important that people and walkability are prioritized over cars. Therefore, City Council should consider adopting a policy along with adoption of this Master Plan stating that maintaining a pedestrian-focused character in Downtown is more important than widening Main Street to accommodate pass-through vehicular traffic.

Encourage a “Master Developer” Context

Developing infill sites or redevelopment small parcels that are typical in historic downtowns can be difficult and costly if typical development requirements apply. Treating the Downtown as a cohesive development with common standards and a shared approach to parking, open space, utilities and in some cases, emergency access, helps bring development costs down for land owners and ensures continuity and consistency of the building form, mobility network and open spaces.

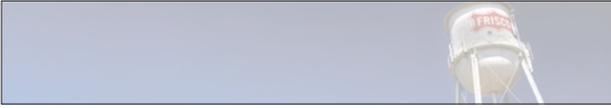
Calibrating the Character Areas

In addition to critical infrastructure improvements outlined above, the City can facilitate the implementation of this Master Plan through calibration of existing zoning tools and design guidelines. One of the most critical aspects of successful plan implementation is establishing adjacency predictability and smooth transitions to existing neighborhoods for redevelopment. This ensures that property values will increase consistently as redevelopment occurs. A carefully crafted zoning ordinance and development standards will help preserve existing assets while also focusing new investment in a manner that aligns with the vision for Downtown.

Most of the study area falls within the OTC and OTR (Old Town

Commercial/Residential) zoning districts. The current zoning already allows for the general form, building types and mix of uses that are envisioned for Downtown. The proposed character areas and associated recommendations in this Master Plan have been developed with careful consideration of existing conditions, market opportunities and current zoning criteria so that implementation can occur with minimal revisions to current zoning policy. However, the City should consider amending the current zoning and design guidelines for OTC and OTR to reflect the overall “master development plan” and the nuances of each character area. This alignment will provide market momentum for quality development, provide the market predictability and give staff a rational method for sustained implementation. Some of details to consider include:

- Ensure well-designed transitions to adjacent neighborhoods that preserve the existing residential character and provide walkable and bikeable connectivity to Main Street and other destinations.
- Establish high-quality design standards for the buildings, streets, streetscapes, open spaces and wayfinding that blends the nuances of each character area together with the overall Rail District theme.
- Encourage a mix of high quality urban living and live-work units by locating them within a design context that respects immediately adjacent single family neighborhoods. This will help to diversify the housing options in Downtown, a key aspect of downtown activation and long-term livability. This includes allowing home occupations or accessory dwelling units within some of the more historic neighborhoods north of Main Street where historic carriage houses located on several properties provide ample opportunity for better use among the neighborhoods and for the owners alike.
- Streamline the review process so that development projects consistent with the Master Plan are approved administratively, while also being mindful of state law development requirements. This will reduce the time taken



for development approval, which benefits both the City and Developer. Additionally, since all the standards will be clearly established up front, it will increase adjacency predictability and be less risky to a developer, thereby increasing resulting levels of reinvestment.

The focus of this master plan update is to facilitate a phased and sustained activation of Downtown, building on strong fundamentals already in place; to serve as a decision tool for prioritization; to provide nuanced city design inspiration; and to put some big ideas into play for generations to come.

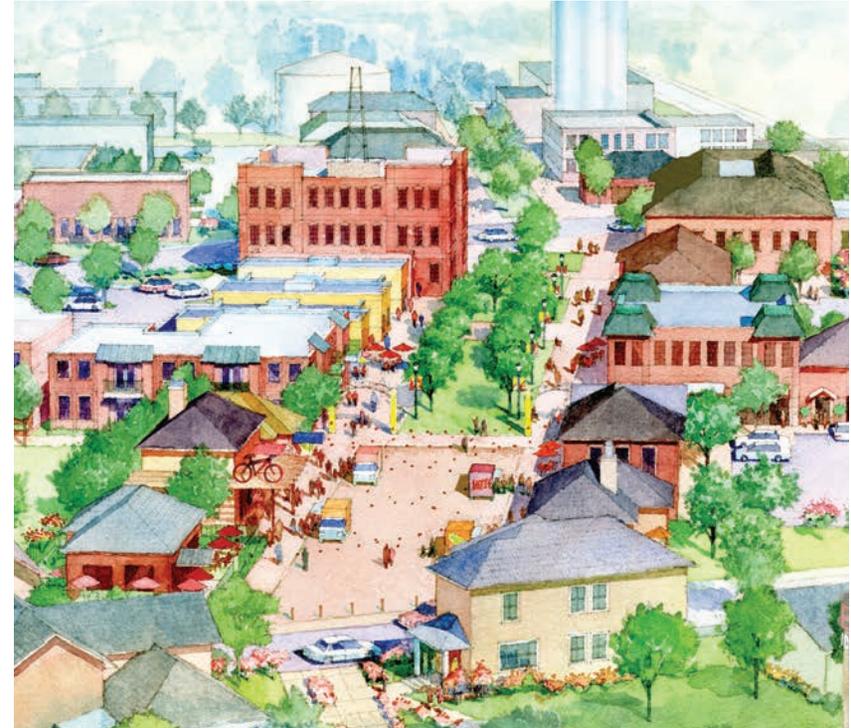
One of those big ideas is creation of a Design District as described above. The guidance below provides a set of protocols for success:

DESIGN DISTRICT AND CATALYTIC PROJECTS

The following ten steps outline the items the City of Frisco should undertake in the near-term to begin to activate the Design District.

- 1. Create a core focus for the design district's business mix.** Design districts work best when they have a core concentration of complementary businesses. For example, the business mix in Savannah, Georgia's Downtown Design District centers around home furnishings, while Miami's Design District focuses mostly on fashion. For Frisco, art for interior design, craft manufacturing for architectural elements and other related higher-end materials and finish-out components for the building trades could start a gravity for a focus.
- 2. Diversify the district's businesses.** In addition to a core business concentration, successful design districts' overall business mix also includes some shops and restaurants likely to appeal to the customers of the core businesses. For instance, Savannah's Design District includes a bookstore, a stationery store, and one of the city's most popular restaurants. Building on Babes at the southern end of the proposed design district, authentic Texas cuisine

Figure 28: Design District



focused restaurants and small entertainment venues could complement the storefronts and maker spaces.

- 3. Differentiate the design district from others:** The design district should complement, rather than compete against, other districts within the region with concentrations of design-related businesses. To the extent possible, it might also differentiate itself from other design districts in the nation, either through business mix, marketing identity, urban context, or other distinguishing characteristics.
- 4. Attract and develop unique, one-of-a-kind businesses.** The allure of design districts is that they offer unique products, services, and experiences that shoppers cannot

find anywhere else. Accordingly, they should be populated with unique, one-of-a-kind businesses, not retail chains. The best place to look for businesses like these? Look for regional artists, artisans, and crafts people currently working from small independent shops, home-based workshops and shared studios. Also, contact design schools, particularly those with majors relevant to the concentration targeted for the design district, to promote business opportunities to alumni/alumnae and soon-to-graduate design students.

5. **Cultivate and support development of design-related businesses.** Unique, independently owned design businesses often need capital support in order to launch, and a growing number of communities offer attractive packages of tools and incentives to successfully attract and support design-related businesses. For instance, Paducah, Kentucky offers free or inexpensive homes to artists who agree to locate and maintain studio space there for a certain number of years. Waterville, Maine offers forgivable loans of up to \$50,000 to targeted business types; selected businesses make interest-only payments for five years, with 20 percent of the loan principal forgiven each year.
6. **Serve the trade, or serve the public?** A few design districts focus primarily or even exclusively on serving design professionals, such as interior designers, architects, landscape architects, and home furnishings retailers. Don't be that kind of district! While some businesses – particularly those offering original designs and/or wholesale sales – might reserve certain hours or occasional days for people within the trade, all of the design district's shops should be open to the public during prime shopping hours.
7. **Integrate the Design District into the surrounding urban fabric:** Successful design districts are physically integrated into their surrounding districts, building on indigenous architectural and urban planning heritage. By continuing local design traditions, successful design

districts reinforce the importance of those traditions and use them as a springboard for a distinctive identity. Applying this philosophy to Frisco, the Heritage Center and the Silos bookend a people-scaled promenade with eclectic buildings anchored along the way.

8. **Make the district a living workshop:** Encourage design-related businesses to offer robust calendars of workshops and hands-on demonstrations. Storefront window displays should be lively and engaging, showcasing each business's unique offerings.
9. **Create energetic public spaces:** As with storefront display windows, the Design District's signs, street furniture, paving, and all other aspects of the district's public spaces should be lively and engaging, reflecting the energy of its creative businesses.
10. **Establish a strong market identity for the Design District:** The graphic design image, market position, and activities and events taking place within the Design District should reinforce and solidify the design district's overall market identity, in sync with the needs and preferences of the district's customers.

CIP RECOMMENDATIONS

The other big idea that was already being considered when the planning process started is the 4th Street Plaza. That project along with a comprehensive reinvention of the downtown street network, including Main and Elm Streets, serve as a fundamental aspect to the master plan update.

Those strategic capital investments will need to be prioritized, budgeted, programed and designed. This section provides guidance for those efforts. Many of these projects will fundamentally transform the public realm in key locations, initiate a shift in mobility patterns in and around Downtown, and provide a connected walkable public space environment—a key for the attraction of meaningful private investment.

Based on the vision of Downtown as a connected series of great



streets and public space anchors, the following projects are suggested to create a logical progression of phasing, constructability,

Figure 29: Estimated CIP Costs

PROJECT	CONSTRUCTION COST	DESIGN COST (10%)	CONTINGENCY (30%)	TOTAL
4th Street Plaza	\$1,980,240	\$198,024	\$594,072	\$2,772,336
Elm Street Option A	\$2,754,783	\$275,478	\$826,435	\$3,856,697
Parking Garage	\$9,225,000	\$922,500	\$2,767,500	\$12,915,000
Main Street Option B	\$4,281,050	\$428,105	\$1,284,315	\$5,993,471
1st Street Reroute	\$1,385,306	\$138,531	\$415,592	\$1,939,428
Franchise Utility Burial	<i>Detailed Utility Study Required</i>			

and catalytic momentum for private sector activation

4th Street Plaza

The 4th Street Plaza is the anchor for the envisioned Downtown transformation, and therefore should be the first project completed. The cost estimate for this project includes the areas to the north and south of Main Street, and assumes 4th Street is reconstructed with decorative stamped concrete. The layout of the plaza is dependent on the configuration of the parking garage, so preliminary design of the garage should be completed simultaneously with the plaza design.

Elm Street (Option A) and Stop Sign Reorientation (Signs from East-West to North-South)

The redesign of Elm Street to clearly delineate travel lanes, provide a cycle track and incorporate on street parking is the second highest priority. This project assumes full reconstruction of Elm Street between 1st and South County Road, and modifications to Frisco Square

Boulevard to incorporate a separated cycle track. This will provide a more convenient alternative for east-west traffic to Main Street and a dedicated corridor for cyclists. Having Elm Street redone prior to Main Street will also provide some additional parking capacity while Main Street is under construction.

Parking Garage (Subject to Parking Demand*)

The parking garage adjacent to the 4th Street Plaza should also be a high priority. It could be completed with the plaza or phased in later. The cost estimate assumes 369 spaces at a cost of \$25,000 per space.

Additionally, the Downtown Master Plan Committee recommended that it be considered to locate the garage on the east side of 4th Street to keep parking available during the reconstruction of Main Street, while also incorporating the open space at 4th Street. Although, it is important to note that all concepts and imagery in this plan shows the garage on the west side of 4th Street. As the potential garage moves into design and construction the actual placement of the building would need to be studied in more detail for traffic and access considerations.

**Note: the City monitors parking demand to determine the time for building a garage.*

Main Street Redesign (Option B), Roundabout & Streetscape (includes Frisco Square Boulevard One-Way)

The Consultant Team recommends the implementation of Option B for Main Street. The Main Street reconstruction project will have less impact on business and traffic if it is completed after the Elm Street Improvements. In addition to reconstruction of Main Street between 1st Street and N County Road, this project should also incorporate the construction of the roundabout at 2nd Street, conversion of Frisco Square Blvd to one-way between 1st Street and the roundabout, and streetscape enhancements.

12” Water Line Loop Connections

The majority of the downtown street grid has 12” water lines, but there are a few sections missing. These gaps should be filled in to provide a continuous loop system around the perimeter of all blocks in the

Downtown. Fire hydrants and valves should also be added, where needed, to enable fire service to all properties in the Downtown from the public streets.

1st Street Reroute/2nd Street

Rerouting 1st Street to tie into 2nd Street north of the roundabout will improve traffic flow in the roundabout and access to the area to the north. This project has a lower priority than those listed above, but should be considered when development is being proposed for the area adjacent to the railroad tracks and Maple.

Franchise Utility Relocations

Where possible, the City should work to bury or relocate overhead utility lines within the Downtown area to improve public realm aesthetics and walkability – especially in the 4th Street Plaza area. Costs for franchise utility burial can vary significantly based on site specific conditions, easement needs, and current market costs. It involves working closely with the utility owner’s on an area wide basis instead of on a small area. It also involves working with property owners since this type of work requires reconnecting to their private connections at their buildings and it normally requires easements. We recommend the City complete a comprehensive franchise utility study in order to collect more detailed information from franchise utilities about what they are able and willing to do so that a more accurate costs and relocation schedule can be determined before making a decision.

Local Street Curb and Gutter Improvements

Some of the local streets in the area have been reconstructed recently. The remaining local streets should be considered for replacement as infrastructure conditions dictate and funding allows. Improving the local streets throughout Downtown to match the sections proposed in this Plan will improve connectivity and walkability in neighborhoods, enhance drainage, and provide additional parking.

Conceptual level cost estimates were completed for each of these projects using the proposed street sections and illustratives included in this Plan. Figure 29 on the prior page shows the estimated costs for each project. More detailed line item estimates for the projects are

included in the Appendix.

These estimates are intended to assist city officials and stakeholders with an order of magnitude assessment for future Capital Improvement Planning (CIP) purposes, and should be reviewed and adjusted as market conditions change. Costs were developed using primary bid items and conservative unit prices from similar projects (in 2018 dollars). A 30% contingency has been included to account for additional costs that may be required as the designs are refined, as well as a 10% allocation for survey and detailed design.

Finally, the grand promenade anchoring the potential Design District is not recommended for near term funding as it will require significant focus, market analysis, programing, and a coalescing of partners before it will be viable for implementation. Nevertheless, the Grand Promenade anchoring the proposed district will be a critical open space element for downtown, and it should not be treated as just an after thought. Its design, functionality and resiliency over time will be the key to an enduring and reinventable district as it evolves and matures.

FUNDING STRATEGIES

The implementation of the master plan update will require a layered approach to funding.

1. The first layer is provided in the section above: a recommended prioritization of catalytic projects and how they should be phased in order to relate and leverage investments by the City and correspondingly the private sector for specific projects. Downtowns are no different than larger companies. They both have different facets that must be related to be effective over time. This master plan update has developed an aggressive reinvention of the infrastructure and public space context as a fundamental building block. The detailed description of the projects throughout and then the prioritized order and estimates of cost above provide the starting point for the funding process.
2. The next layer is an in-depth conversation between



the Mayor and City Council on the one hand and the City Manager's Office, the EDC and the City's various departments about the level of funding that should be committed to the projects proposed. Using the CIP analysis above and the overarching programmatic and contextual role of each of the proposed projects, City Staff should develop several bundle scenarios to determine what is the minimum effective investment for next year, the following, etc. For example, the consultant team believes that the first capital project should be a combination of Elm Street/the parking garage/4th Street Plaza. Let's assume that makes sense for many reasons including the plaza is the glue for many catalytic private projects and all three of those projects should be bundled together for constructability purposes. Now the question is do you also layer in Main Street. We would observe that it might make sense to do Main Street at the same time for catalytic reasons; but if both Elm Street and Main Street are under construction, the negative impacts on the rest of downtown and Frisco Square may be too onerous in terms of limiting east-west capacity too much for too long. Regardless, the bundling process will enable the City Manager's team to ultimately make recommendations to the Mayor and Council on CIP Bond budgets the next several years and similarly general fund budgets.

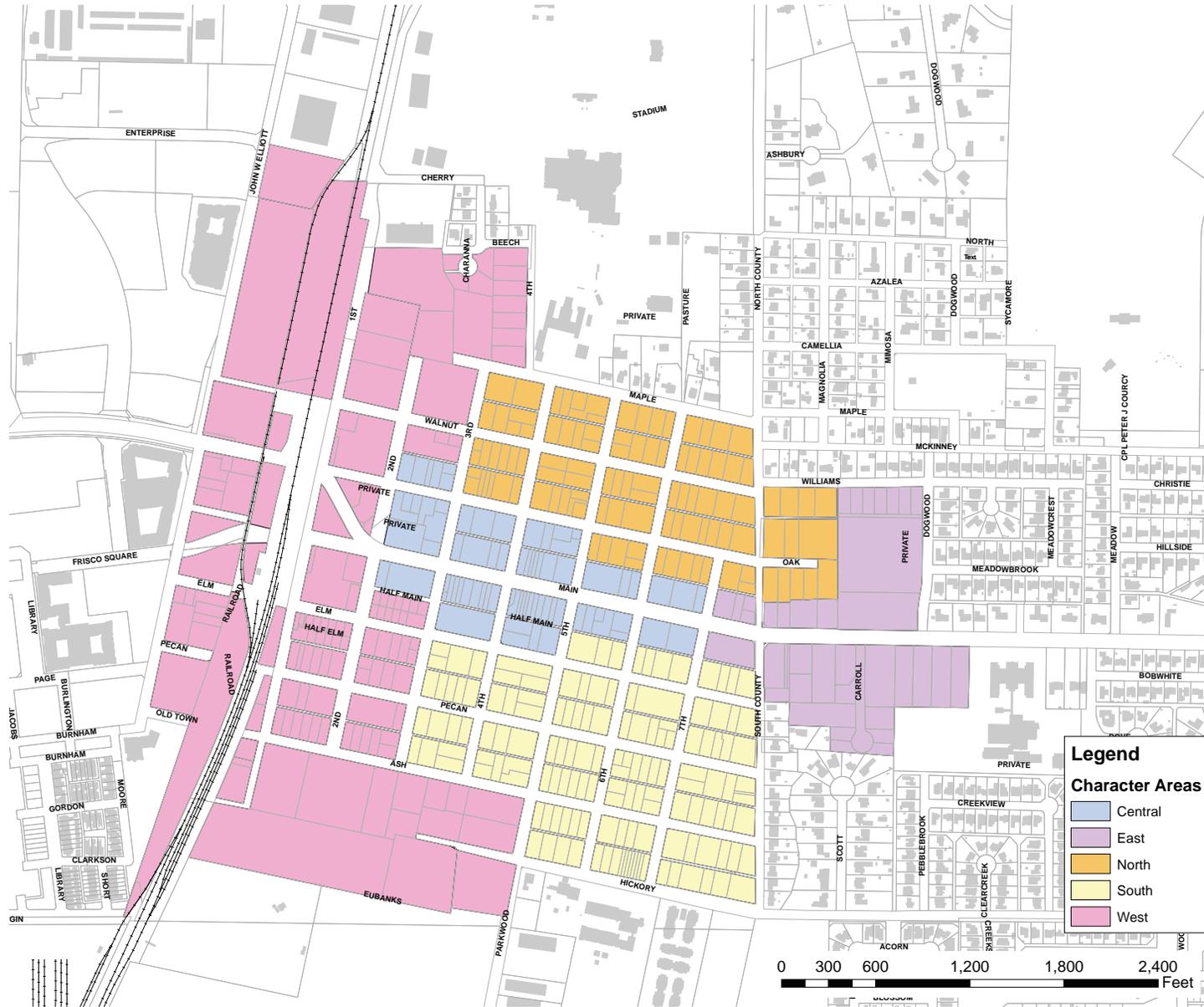
3. The next consideration is developing a meaningful operations and maintenance program based on the phasing, build out and lifecycle impacts on the existing and new infrastructure investments. In addition, the governance considerations above should be brought into play in terms of the role of non-governmental organizations in the downtown management function to determine what additional resources might be brought to bear to complement the City's obligations.
4. With those three layers, the creation of both a Public Improvement District (PID) and a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District is recommended. The PID should be created to provide a very modest level of assessment for new

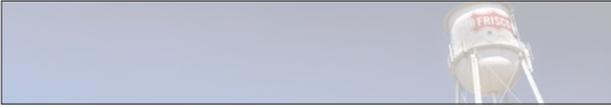
revenue for light maintenance and management of the common public areas, especially with the enhanced streets with pedestrian amenities and the 4th Street Plaza. The TIF District should be created to capture a significant level of ad valorem tax revenue in the Downtown as a mechanism to make a long term fiscal commitment. It will not be a magic bullet as it is not new money, but it provides a predictable level of revenue for some contribution to key capital projects. Recently, the Consultant team used the downtown TIF in Irving to provide a mechanism to pay back NCTCOG for a loan of \$12 Million to redesign and reconstruct Irving Boulevard as a complete street and a better linkage to the TRE station in downtown. That TIF mechanism came into play seven years after the TIF was created and was a ready vehicle to secure non-recourse funds from NCTCOG.

Options for the parking garage funding at the 4th Street Plaza depend on several factors:

1. If the garage is viewed as part of the catalytic nature of the plaza at the time of construction of the plaza, consideration to include the garage as part of the City's revised CIP Program is recommended. The City could recapture some of this cost in later years by implementing a parking garage fee once the demand reaches market levels to justify the fee from the activation of restaurants and other entertainment around the plaza. Those fees could be used to pay for maintenance and operations for downtown such as security, amenity space maintenance, etc. instead of those costs being paid for out of the general fund.
2. Another approach to the early public funding of the garage would be to activate a tax increment reinvestment zone for downtown (TIRZ) to capture general fund revenue, and submit an application to NCTCOG for funding to be paid back over time by the TIRZ. This will require demonstrating a multimodal connection to the 4th Street Plaza, including regional trails, the reinvention of Main Street by maintaining

Figure 30: Character Areas





it as an improved complete street, as well as the benefit from the garage to the activation of the 4th Street Plaza in terms of downtown economic development.

3. If a major comprehensive activation strategy around the new plaza is envisioned via a master developer selected by the City, then a strategy for cost sharing for construction of a hotel might be feasible within the pro forma of the master developer's proposed project. This will necessarily entail a substantial amount of residential density and commercial gross leasable area (GLA) for any cost sharing to make sense to a private master developer partner.

The proposed garage near the future rail station and TOD for the west side of Downtown and the future Design District should be driven either by sufficient market momentum of development there or the implementation of rail transit. It is not recommended that early public funding of that second garage be utilized, rather focusing public fiscal capacity around the 4th Street Plaza

HOUSING POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The illustrative master plan for downtown envisions a distributed amount of new residential in locations that make sense relative to adjacent existing context.

The housing proposed is a combination of smaller-scale urban residential primarily in vertical mixed use buildings, townhomes and detached small lot single family.

The Character Areas shown in Figure 31 are identified by the five zones listed in the matrix: North, West, Central, East and South.

The primary proposed density is in the West Zone associated with the future TOD, proposed design district and infill around the industrial area southwest of downtown. The potential redevelopment of the old strip shopping center to the east on Main Street is a good candidate for infill townhomes. Finally, there is virtually no proposed new residential proposed for the North and South Areas adjacent to the existing single family neighborhoods.

Figure 31: Potential Residential Units in Downtown

CHARACTER ZONE	MULTIFAMILY	MIXED-USE	TOWNHOME	SINGLE FAMILY
North	0	0	0	0
West	982	262	30	53
Central	0	45	0	0
East	0	0	88	8
South	0	0	0	0
Totals	982	307	118	61