PROPELLING DOWNTOWN FORWARD

A DOWNTOWN INITIATIVE | FORT SMITH, ARKANSAS

July 2017

#PropelFS

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A LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

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#PROPELFS

THE VISION

Propelling Downtown Forward arose from the leadership efforts of 64.6 Downtown to coalesce real estate development, arts and culture, job creation, placemaking, as well as public and private investment decisions through unified planning efforts. 64.6 Downtown seeks a master plan and implementation mechanism that make these goals achievable. In addition to a comprehensive development framework, the goals of the PropelFS initiative are to create and sustain a multifaceted governance capacity.

With this direction, the Propelling Downtown Forward Initiative was undertaken. The master plan implementation tools and governance guidance are delineated herein.

This master plan document provides the quality of place, community vision, infrastructure, regulatory and governance guidance for the sustained investment and redevelopment of Downtown. Specifically, the master plan identifies character zones for Downtown's life and business. Those character areas build on Fort Smith's authentic history, today's commerce and tomorrow's potential.

The character areas act as a living "map" of how the community will build on the amazing promise of Downtown. The resulting growth of Downtown as a place of connected neighborhoods will support the community's vision for:

- Places and Corridors for Reinvestment;
- Sustainable connections between the Arkansas River and Downtown;
- An alignment of the marketplace and public policy;
- A connected system for people, bringing together walking, cycling, transit, driving, parking, and trucking; and
- Leveraging the U.S. Marshals Museum and other key destinations.

THE MASTER PLAN

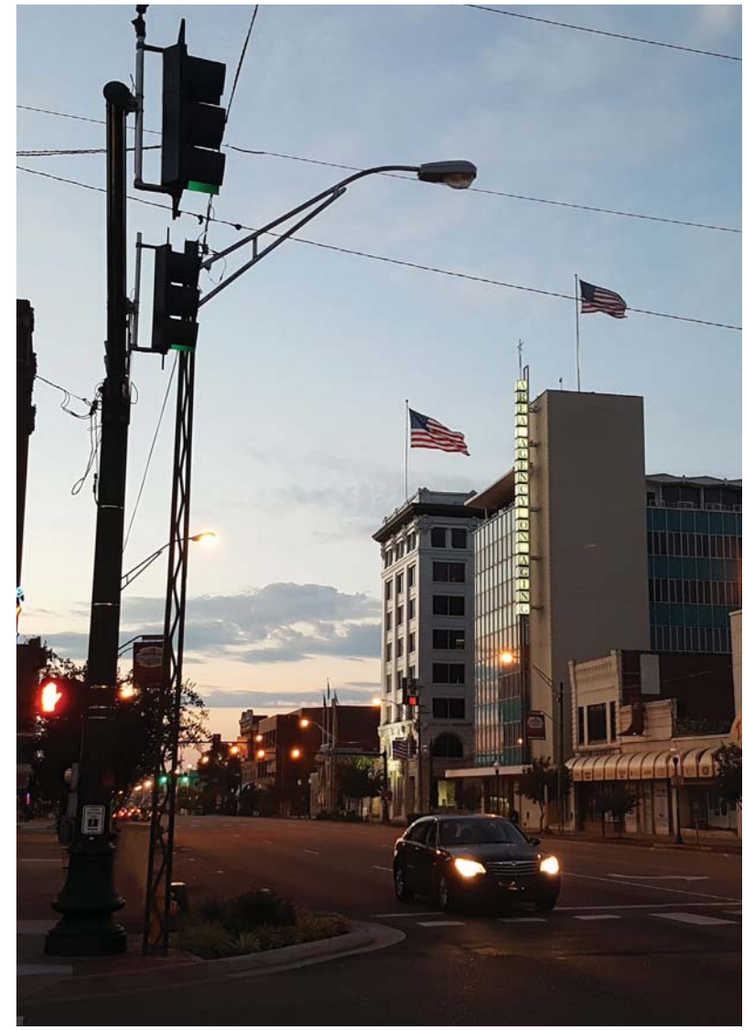
The master plan set up by the character areas sets forth the tools and implementation capacity to realize this vision.

This document starts by establishing the community's engagement and buy-in for the vision (detailed documentation of that community discussion is contained in the Appendices). With community buy-in, the master plan provides the following action items, including implementation detail and guidance:

- Building-scale catalytic plans within the character zone framework;
- A multi-modal transportation network for people;
- A reinvention of streets and gateways for sustaining neighborhood vitality;
- A strategy for continuing the journey to align greater Downtown as a place for people and trucking commerce;
- The reasons for refining the zoning and design regulations; and
- A multi-faceted governance structure for sustaining a relationship between business and government.

Globally, this master plan serves as the business plan for Downtown's future.

All discussions of truck routes and downtown truck traffic contained in this master plan are intended solely as a catalyst for discussion between City leadership and transportation and downtown stakeholders. It is not the intent of this master plan to endorse any particular solution to the trucking issues addressed in the master plan, including discussions contained under the headings "Context-Based Decisions" and "Truck Traffic Downtown" and such discussions are not to be interpreted as a mandate or otherwise be binding or precedent setting with respect to any future discussions or future regulation of commercial truck traffic in downtown Fort Smith.



Downtown Sunrise (Source: Gateway Planning)

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Summary + Process

Public engagement and collaboration was an integral part of the Propelling Downtown Forward Initiative. The intensive and transparent collaboration with the community and key leaders throughout Downtown helped set the stage for what is this project's vision. The stages for public feedback and input were integrated throughout the project with repeated opportunities for community members to provide their thoughts and opinions on the future of Downtown Fort Smith.

Stakeholder Interviews

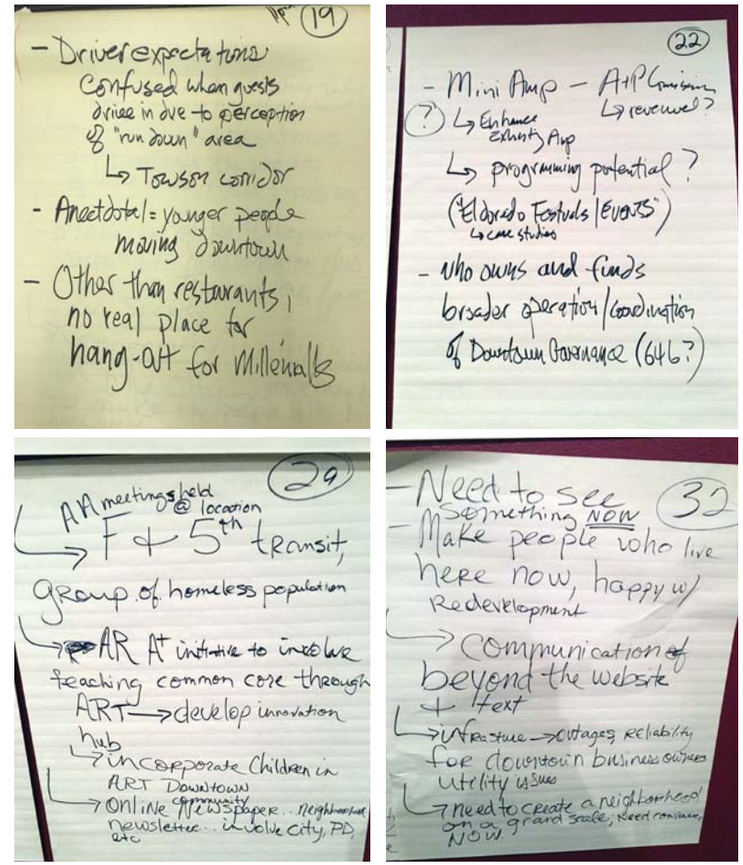
The initial engagement process began in July 2016 with stakeholder listening sessions that spanned a two-day window and included over 120 individuals. Each stakeholder session included 10 to 20 individuals who ranged from City staff and leadership to local residents and business owners. Significant industry leaders were also included in these interviews and helped provide insight on the major logistical and infrastructure conditions in Downtown and the region as well.

CBID Stakeholder Interview (Source: Gateway Planning)

The intent of these discussions was to provide a realm for open discussion on the strengths, opportunities and weaknesses in Downtown Fort Smith. This direct feedback and insight also helped catalyze future conversations on development opportunities and policy reformation in the City, which supports the need and direction for Propelling Downtown Forward.

A complete assessment of stakeholder feedback can be found in the Appendix of this report. The following summary highlights the key themes that arose throughout the conversations and over multiple sessions with community members.

1. **Downtown needs to be more vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, business-friendly** and resident-friendly. People are taking their dollars to other cities and Fort Smith needs to catch up to the regional expectation.
2. **The riverfront needs to be leveraged to make Downtown a unique destination within Western Arkansas.** It is one of the only remaining riverfronts in the region left undeveloped and it could be developed into a destination-driver for Downtown, especially with the development of the U.S. Marshals Museum.
3. There are very few options for people who want to live in Downtown. Access to housing choice is limited and the Historic District homes are often not what Millennials or Empty-Nesters are looking for when wanting to either downsize or live in an urban area. **Apartments, live/work units, townhomes, cottage homes, and other residential options should be developed throughout Downtown.**
4. **Downtown is not walkable.** The sidewalk infrastructure is disconnected and crossings at Garrison Avenue are often very dangerous and ill-timed. Sidewalks should extend beyond Downtown into the adjacent neighborhoods to allow for safe walking and bike conditions.



Stakeholder Group Notes (Source: Gateway Planning)

5. Daily amenities such as a small grocery, dry cleaners, convenience shop, gym and café need to come into Downtown if people are going to live there. **Residents in downtown are forced to be too dependent on vehicles to conduct their daily activities.**

6. **The trolley route should be expanded across Garrison Avenue** into the Belle Grove Historic District neighborhood to improve connectivity and serve as a people-mover for Downtown, not as something that is viewed as solely a tourist attraction.
7. **Truck traffic down Garrison Avenue and through Downtown is a problem due to safety and perception concerns.** It should be addressed through a detailed and cooperative process with the trucking companies in Downtown to find a solution.
8. **The development process with the City should be recalibrated and streamlined** to enable Downtown projects to be implemented in a more collaborative and success-driven manner. The regulatory policies in place today do not keep up with the type of development needed in Downtown.
9. The Unexpected, along with the murals, have done a lot for Downtown **but it is time for that investment to be taken to the next level**.
10. **Downtown needs more parks and open spaces** for family-friendly activities and events, especially since spaces like the splash pad are well utilized. Most downtowns have a traditional central plaza or park; Fort Smith needs to have a similar central plaza in addition to the open space along the riverfront.

These comments are not inclusive of all feedback received during the stakeholder meetings, but touch on the common themes that arose out of the conversations. These statements also reinforce the dedication of local citizens and the investments they are either ready to make or wish to see happen in Fort Smith.

Design Charrette

The design charrette and public presentation was held in September 2016 over a two-day period where the design team crafted catalytic plans for Downtown and then presented the findings to the community in a town hall meeting. The plans and renderings, included in this report reflect the input stakeholders had previously provided and which was then further refined from the feedback received during the town hall presentation.

Over 200 community members attended the presentation and gave positive feedback on the work done to date and the direction PropelFS was heading. Several comments reiterated the feeling that it was time to see development get done in the City and in Downtown and that they were ready for that change to happen. Other community members reinforced their frustration with the lack of sidewalks and connectivity between downtown and the neighborhoods and that they wanted to see family-friendly sidewalks and trails extended throughout Downtown. The presentation was broadcast live on Facebook and included the presence of multiple media outlets. The discussion continued online after the Team concluded the design workshop and provided additional opportunity for input.

Design Charrette Presentation and Open House (Source: Gateway Planning)

BRANDING AND SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIES

The complete integration and utilization of social media strategies in the Downtown Fort Smith public engagement strategy are integral to

the success of the project and the Downtown vision implementation. As with any successful branding and marketing initiative, creating a unique identity and online presence is significant. **64.6's strong online presence and market brand has helped distinguish Fort Smith from the rest of Northwest Arkansas and the region**, but it is important that the work resulting from this process be viewed as a separate brand marker for the community and mutually enhanced by 64.6's work with The Unexpected.

Early conversations in the project revolved around the issue of branding and the most appropriate ways to create a strategy that will help this plan and Downtown's revitalization stand out on its own, while also supporting the other work of the private organization. One takeaway from this process was the opportunity to utilize the current online branding and the momentum it has already generated. The Unexpected would be the most effective and efficient way to engage with the community.

Thus, #PropelFS was born.

The early creation of the hashtag and corresponding social media strategy helped reinforce Propelling Downtown Forward as a separate initiative from The Unexpected, but not as one that is competing. Prior to The Unexpected in September 2016 (and well before the design charrette presentation to the community) a social media strategy was crafted to help reinforce #PropelFS as a new brand for Downtown alongside The Unexpected.

The second installation of Fort Smith The Unexpected was a key opportunity to engage with the local public and key stakeholders on a larger scale than what had been already undertaken through the group interviews. The purpose of this collaboration is to **reinforce the investment being made in Downtown alongside this project and garner community support in an organic way**. 64.6's work in Downtown Fort Smith catalyzed much of the momentum in the community and will reinforce these investments being made. Propelling Downtown Forward is as much a byproduct and partner of 64.6 and The Unexpected and strong collaboration will be mutually beneficial to the community.

The project leadership for Propelling Downtown Forward had flyers and project information available to hand out during the event, and they were available to answer any questions community members had on the Initiative and why the project was so important for the community. It also provided residents and stakeholders with a way to get in touch with team members to make sure their voice was heard during this process. This opportunity increased the potential for public outreach and the reinforced the need for community support in Downtown – both entrepreneurial and visionary.

Additionally, during and after the design charrette project updates, a live stream of the presentation and media articles were posted to 64.6's Facebook account to generate community interest and support the #PropelFS brand. Community comments on the presentation provided more feedback for the Team as well as encouraged more involvement in this community-driven Initiative. This momentum was also picked up by the U.S. Marshals Museum and City-owned Facebook, Twitter and news pages. As of January 2017 the live stream design charrette presentation has been viewed over 650 times.

These results were all results of key social media strategies crafted in coordination with 64.6. The following strategies highlight the key steps followed for this process:

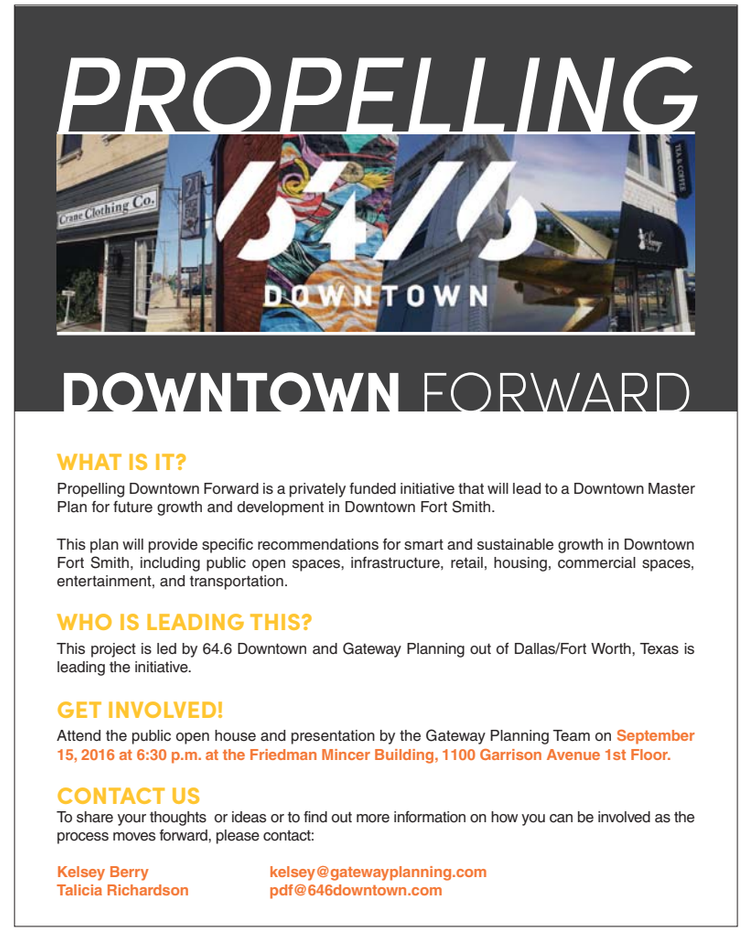
Social Media

- Utilize existing social media accounts (including 64.6, the City, media and other public media accounts identified) to post project updates and meeting notices.
- Post Facebook, Twitter and/or Instagram photos and updates throughout the process advertising significant project milestones or meeting dates. These could also be integrated with The Unexpected posts.
- Create project-specific hashtag that will not create confusion with other projects or programs in Downtown.

News

- Engage local media and publications to generate press for initiative, include building towards a feature article in the Arkansas Business Journal.
- Periodically check in with key media or news personnel throughout project to keep them updated or apprised of project development and opportunities for public involvement.
- At The Unexpected, the project team assists with event advertisement by showcasing the Initiative at the event and support the Downtown vision.

PUBLIC FLYER FOR #PROPELFS



THE OVERALL FRAMEWORK

BREWERY
BRICK TOWN
BRICKTOWN
Adelaide
TROLLEY
SQUARE
STREETCAR
STOP

THE FRAMEWORK

THE FRAMEWORK

Destinations Shape Downtown

The Propelling Downtown Forward framework was crafted after a detailed and extensive assessment of conditions in Downtown Fort Smith and the destinations that are shaping development. In order for this initiative to be successful it was necessary to understand existing conditions, current development trends and projections, key stakeholders and the underlying vision behind each of those factors. The resulting framework map, shown adjacent, is a reflection of that assessment and multiple rounds of feedback with community members.

The map identifies character areas that are either experiencing revitalization or have the potential to catalyze development with associated infrastructure improvement projects. These areas also have similar building character and type, which can translate into future zoning and land use categorization. The goal of these efforts is to also **reinforce character type and community vision for how downtown should (and can) be shaped by future development**.

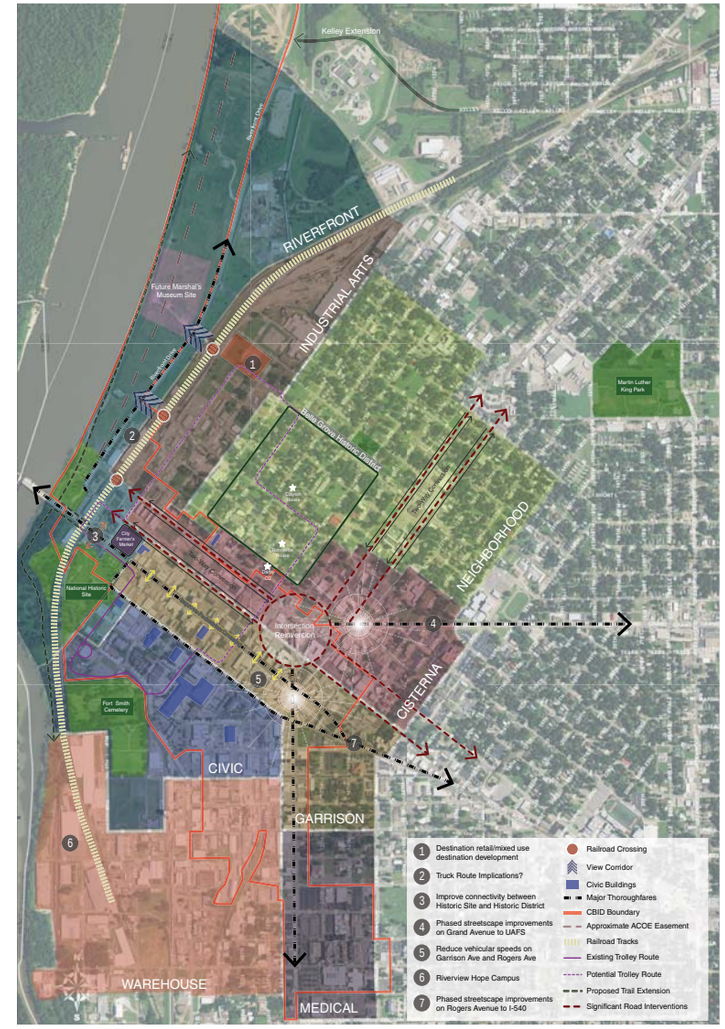
The resulting character areas help guide this master plan and provide a window into the unique attributes Downtown currently has that can be used to support the greater vision for Fort Smith and the community:

- **Garrison Avenue** - Fort Smith's historic Main Street area encompasses the historic building fabric and infrastructure in the heart of the community and is where the development investment has largely taken place. As the primary corridor destination, the need for pedestrian and cyclist connectivity is significant.
- **Cisterna** - The reimagined Cisterna Park and plaza extension acts as a new gateway into Downtown from Grand Avenue and along North A and B Streets. Integrated residential options, small mixed-use and multifamily developments continue the urban fabric into the Belle Grove Historic Neighborhood and towards the riverfront.
- **Neighborhood** - Encompassing the historic Belle Grove

1. Destination retail/mixed use destination development
2. Truck Route Implications?
3. Improve connectivity between Historic Site and Historic District
4. Phased streetscape improvements on Grand Avenue to UAFS
5. Reduce vehicular speeds on Garrison Ave and Rogers Ave
6. Riverview Hope Campus
7. Phased streetscape improvements on Rogers Avenue to I-540

- Railroad Crossing
- View Corridor
- Civic Buildings
- Major Thoroughfares
- CBID Boundary
- Approximate ACOE Easement
- Railroad Tracks
- Existing Trolley Route
- Potential Trolley Route
- Proposed Trail Extension
- Significant Road Interventions

DOWNTOWN FRAMEWORK MAP



neighborhood, this area supports the largely residential fabric north of Garrison and west of the Arkansas River. The preserved street grid network, historic homes, schools, parks and residential infill opportunities all lay the groundwork for continued preservation and connectivity into the community.

- **Industrial Arts** - Developed largely by industrial uses and buildings, this area can be redeveloped into an innovative neighborhood with entrepreneurial office spaces, loft apartments or homes, integrated retail and commercial development with destination restaurants, an expanded trolley route and higher density mixed-use infill.
- **Riverfront** - The largest undeveloped tract of land in Downtown, the riverfront stands to be defined by the future U.S. Marshals Museum and its prime water views. High-quality development complementary to the museum and an improved Riverfront Drive can enhance walkability, connectivity and open space integration for the neighborhoods.
- **Civic** - The civic building cluster south of Garrison Avenue includes the courthouse, convention center and hotels, the post office, juvenile detention center and historic trolley station. The National Park Historic Site is also in this area and should be integrated through improved trolley routes, trails and streets as a key destination alongside Garrison Avenue.
- **Warehouse** - The Wheeler Avenue corridor and east/west block structure hold the majority of the industrial and warehouse users in Downtown. The preservation and identification of this key corridor is important for business and traffic into the community.
- **Medical** - The streetscape enhancements to Towson Avenue south to Sparks Hospital make this a key redevelopment opportunity, especially due to the expansion of medical offices and ancillary users throughout the urban fabric. Infill development along Towson Avenue with sidewalks and bike lanes make the corridor more pedestrian-friendly, while continuing the extension of Downtown development potential.

These areas follow the defined CBID boundaries and perceived local definition of Downtown and serve as a broad definition for character and type in the community, but are not intended to be regulatory or limiting in any way.

Additionally, this framework identifies key Downtown issues, opportunities and strengths, whether through the historic neighborhood fabric and prime riverfront properties or the opportunity for enhanced crossings across Garrison Avenue and the extension of the trolley system into the neighborhood and into the Industrial Arts area. These factors all help lay the foundation for recommendations and plans in this report, as well as for moving the initiative forward to implementation. The combination of these factors into the framework assessment sets the stage for a unified vision moving forward.

The following destinations shape Downtown and can play a key role in its redevelopment either as a driver of tourism and economic development or as a key partner in development opportunities.

The U.S. Marshals Museum

An upcoming regional destination to Downtown Fort Smith, the U.S. Marshals Museum is poised to be a leading draw to Downtown and the riverfront. The museum will not only attract visitors to Downtown Fort Smith, but will reinvigorate the demand for ancillary development in the community, such as restaurants, office space, additional entertainment venues, open spaces and trails and multi-family/mixed-use projects.

This project will have a significant role in this plan, the catalytic concepts and the reshaping of Downtown. Leadership goals serve not only the legacy of the U.S. Marshals, but the reverberating history of relations with the Five Tribes and Native American culture. Fort Smith is **literally and figuratively "on the edge"** of what was the Western Frontier of the United States in the nineteenth century. Today Fort Smith is on the edge once again of shaping character and culture in this historically significant location.

U.S. MARSHALS MUSEUM

These factors and many more are why this project is essential to the future of Propelling Downtown Forward and this plan. The reinvestment along the Arkansas River, Riverfront Drive and what is being called the Industrial Arts area in this plan evolved from the integration of the U.S. Marshals Museum. The expanded trolley route and mixed-use development with enhanced street crossings and multi-modal,

Rendering of Potential Museum (Source: U.S. Marshals Museum)

pedestrian facilities support the desire for connectivity and ability for the Museum to bring in more visitors and keep them in Downtown.

In November 2016, the U.S. Marshals Museum leadership submitted a letter to the Arkansas Governor asking for a funding grant to support the financing and construction of the project this request was supported by this initiative and the need for the Museum to be a draw and supporter to Downtown businesses and its vision. The Museum is now slated to open September 24, 2019.

University of Arkansas Fort Smith (UAFS)

The University of Arkansas Fort Smith (UAFS), while not located directly in Downtown, plays an important role in its development. The cross-cultivation opportunities between the University, the U.S. Marshals Museum, the student population, the demand for incubator spaces and access to housing choices all correlate to the progress and momentum Downtown Fort Smith is currently experiencing. In addition, the expanding art movement through The Unexpected and 64.6 Downtown brings together chances for integration and expansion into Downtown as the demand for education continues to expand.

Additionally, the need for improved student housing and expanded residential options can drive the development and construction of mixed-use projects in Downtown where students can have improved access not only to the school campus, but daily amenities and entertainment. This could also be reinforced with the expansion of the trolley route from

Downtown to the UAFS campus, which would allow students to travel between Downtown and school without requiring a vehicle.

UAFS's role as a regional educational base and employment center also shapes Downtown and its future development. The enhancement of campus connectivity and facilities throughout Fort Smith will reinforce its draw in the region. School integration and support throughout Downtown strengthens the urban fabric and social core in the community to enhance the character and vision already set forth by the institution and community members.

Sparks Hospital

The Sparks Health System has been one of Downtown Fort Smith's leading institutions since the late nineteenth century. The health facility is the largest hospital in the eleven-county area and serves a population of more than 350,000 people. Given the facility's prominence along the Towson Corridor and within the Medical area, this plan recognizes the significant role Sparks Hospital holds in the future of downtown.

Within the Propelling Downtown Forward framework Sparks Hospital brings several thousand patients and employees through Downtown and the Towson Avenue corridor. **Expanded development of ancillary offices and outpatient facilities into the surrounding neighborhoods supports a strong tax base and presence in the community, while reinforcing the need for regulatory policies that encourage infill development and revitalization.**

Commuter traffic along Towson Avenue also significantly impacts the design and shape of Downtown development. The roadway's current configuration focuses on the automobile and limits multimodal options. As discussed in these recommendations, the integration of enhanced sidewalks and bicycle facilities will greatly improve these options and support the continued expansion of Sparks Hospital into the fabric of downtown.

The Belle Grove Historic District

The historic framework of Fort Smith's neighborhoods and the Belle Grove Historic District is essential to the future of the community. The diverse collection of nineteenth-and twentieth-century homes are remnants of the type of development fabric and potential that once existed throughout Downtown Fort Smith and in the residential neighborhoods. Currently, the Belle Grove district encompasses approximately 22 blocks north of Garrison Avenue. Although the community is seeing some revitalization with reinvestment in multiple homes, several properties remain dilapidated. Three historically designated homes serve as tourist attractions as well, and as shown on the framework map, the potential for the expanded trolley route to link these destinations and the neighborhood to the rest of Downtown is strong.

Additionally, conversations with local residents revealed frustration over the lack of pedestrian infrastructure and connectivity from the homes to the urban core or riverfront neighborhood. Instead of being able to walk to amenities such as a grocery store or local restaurants, they are forced to drive. Safety is also a concern for residents and visitors as there is a perception of homelessness in the community and throughout the historic district. Working with the City and downtown organizations can help combat this perception and provide appropriate services to individuals as needed, but with improved infrastructure and infill development this perception can be decreased.

Riverview Hope Campus

In response to the Downtown's homeless population and the social need for intervention, the Riverview Hope Campus is being developed to serve the community. The mission of this organization is to "...provide, through a network of regional partners, comprehensive services to impoverished individuals and families in the River Valley to help transform lives and to strengthen the community" (2016). This organization will not only work to help with medical care, mental health care, temporary housing, food and job placement services, but will help educate the community on the social impact these types of organizations can have on the social fabric. For Downtown, this organization reinforces the need for social integrity, preservation and unity as Downtown redevelops, especially as Downtown's perception within the community evolves. The Riverview Hope Campus is set to open its doors fall 2017.

Lastly, these authentic destinations formed the gravity in the establishment of the character areas and catalytic development opportunities described in the next chapter.

Belle Grove Historic District (Source: Arkansas.com)

CATALYTIC OPPORTUNITIES

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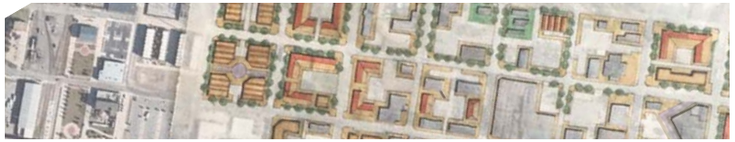


CATALYTIC OPPORTUNITIES

CHARACTER AREAS + CATALYTIC DEVELOPMENT

The following catalytic development opportunities look at select character areas from the Downtown framework to demonstrate potential and investment opportunities in the community.

Cisterna

The vision for this area is intended to focus on the parallel couplets of North A and B Streets to the north in order to maximize the infill development potential in the urban core. **This catalytic development area reimagines A and B Streets as pedestrian-oriented complete streets** (see Mobility section of this Plan) with widened sidewalks, on-street parking and a two-way conversion.

This area is the convergence of the heart of the Garrison commercial corridor to the southwest, the historic Belle Grove neighborhood to the northeast, the Renaissance redevelopment area to the west and into the reinvented Cisterna Park with the addition of the Garrison Plaza. The namestake of the park, Cisterna, is the Italian Sister City to Fort Smith. Colonel William O. Darby led the liberation of Cisterna during World War II, so it is proposed that this emerging new urban neighborhood be named "Cisterna."

The closure of these unnecessary bisecting streets through two key gateway blocks opens up the opportunity for an expanded pedestrian plaza and park along Garrison Avenue and a new developable block along Grand Avenue. The new plaza space can integrate spaces for on-street parking, food trucks, picnic spaces and entertainment venues as necessary. The current hotel to the southeast of the block can be revitalized to help activate the space as well. The historic building north of the hotel could possibly be developed into a small grocery or retail anchor to provide daily services to the community.

This area also encompasses the small district known as the "Renaissance Area" between North 2nd Street and 5th Street by the Industrial Arts area and Riverfront. These blocks have the potential for residential infill such as small townhomes or live/work units, as well as entrepreneurial spaces or innovative centers that can help spur the "renaissance" of Downtown Fort Smith. Additionally, this transition can be translated into the zoning and regulatory framework for Downtown to provide appropriate transects into the adjoining historic neighborhoods and industrial spaces.

The Riverfront

The future location of the U.S. Marshals Museum and one of the only remaining undeveloped riverfronts in Arkansas, **Fort Smith's development opportunity along the Arkansas River is essential to the success of this plan and Downtown.** While significant development along Riverfront Drive and the river is limited due to the U.S. Army Core of Engineer (ACOE) easement from Downtown to the museum site, the site can still be developed into an extensive park space and outdoor destination for the community. Enhanced trails, sidewalks and trails enable people to walk along the river and into Downtown safely and quickly. Small retail nodes or restaurants also support economic goals for the riverfront as a regional destination. A dedicated chapel or wedding venue overlooking the Arkansas River reinforces the vision of the Westphal family and land ownership.

Belle Isle Park located at National Historic Site (Source: Gateway Planning)

U.S. Highway 64 Bridge (Source: Gateway Planning)

Additionally, enhanced trails and open space to the National Historic Site and Belle Isle Park are recommended to reinforce the connectivity between the U.S. Marshals Museum and Fort Smith's Historical Site. The pristine views and family-friendly opportunities along the river support the vision several stakeholders expressed a desire for and broadens awareness for the regional destination rich in local and regional history.

This area also recommends the transformation of Riverfront Drive

from a truck-oriented thoroughfare to a roadway designed to support efficient traffic flow and improved rail crossings into the Industrial Arts neighborhood. The proposed trolley route extension also allows for the opportunity to develop a retail node and mixed-use infill along H Street and as a vista terminus through the neighborhood. Downtown visitors could travel from Garrison Avenue through the Historic Belle Grove neighborhood to H Street where the improved crossings will enable them to walk to the U.S. Marshals Museum or riverfront park. The diagrams on the following pages depict potential visions for the riverfront and park design.

The Medical Area/Towson Corridor

Arising from the repeated theme of connectivity and walkability in downtown visioning, the Towson Avenue corridor and Medical Area focus on infill development and enhancements to the thoroughfare that enable people to walk or bike safely south towards Sparks Hospital and the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Infill development from Garrison Avenue to South D Street **preserves the existing character and allows for a smooth transition to the expanded thoroughfare past D Street.** The installation of bike lanes extends the pedestrian realm down to Sparks Hospital while simultaneously improving traffic flow. Redevelopment of structures and empty lots along Towson Avenue with appropriate facades and street frontages enhance the corridor experience and assist with traffic speeds.

Additionally, as development occurs the spaces behind the buildings could be activated as internal open spaces and woonerfs – Dutch for pedestrian-friendly streets – for future businesses or residents.

Warehouse Area

As discussed within the Framework, the Warehouse Area plays a significant role in neighborhood preservation and economic development. As one of the large commercial and industrial cores in Downtown it is important that the infrastructure improvements and subsequent development is done in a manner that supports the existing businesses and their ability to function as a large economic driver for the community. Wheeler Avenue enhancements should be undertaken to ensure continuous traffic flow and improved pedestrian safety, while encouraging access and transition into the Medical Area and Towson Corridor. Significant cross-access opportunities are possible with the reconnected grid and integration of small businesses and residential uses along Towson Avenue, North 10th Street and 11th Street south of Garrison.

Updates to zoning regulations should reinforce the intrinsic commercial base of this area and support policies that encourage appropriate transitions and thoroughfare improvements to the more nuanced development along Towson Avenue.

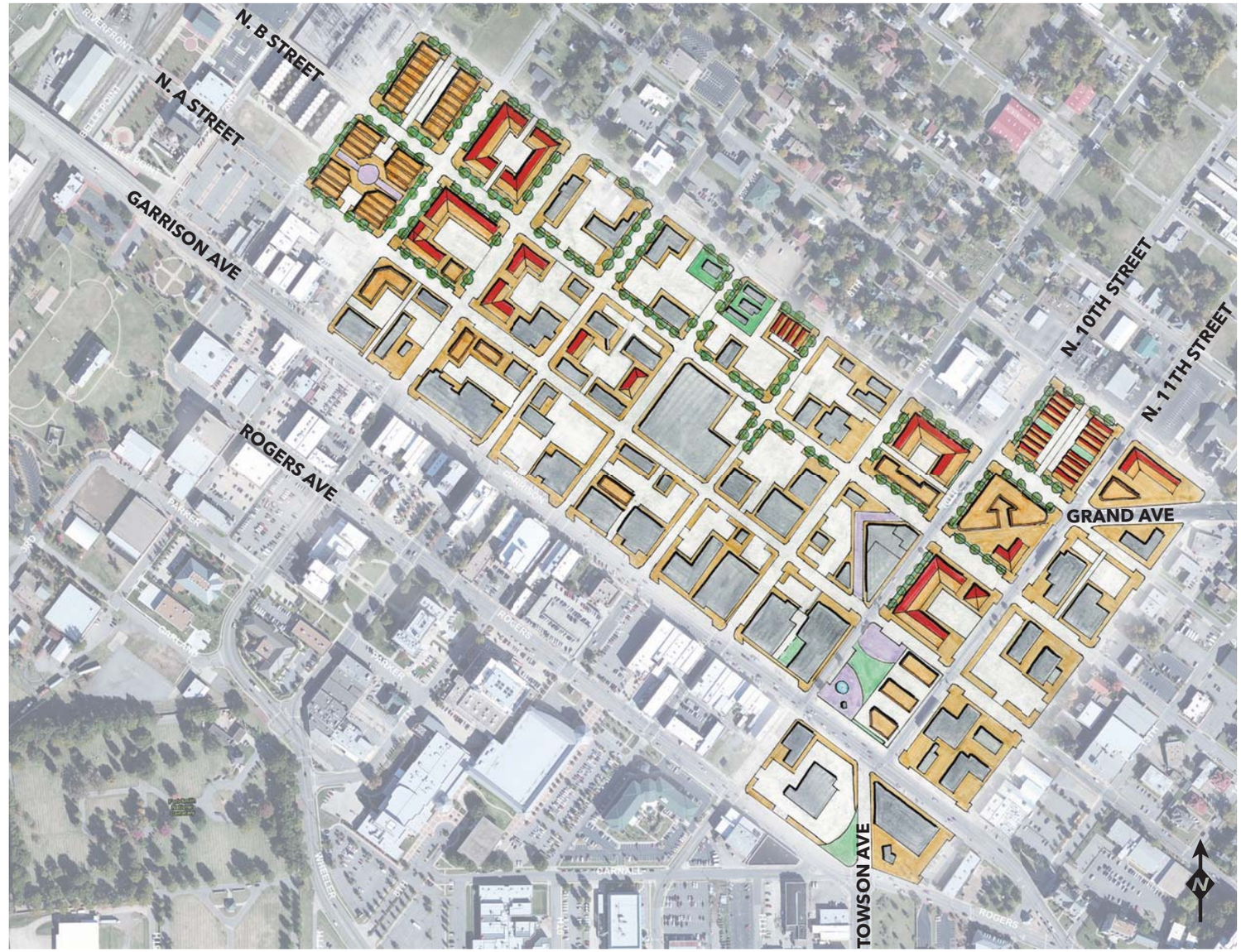
10th and 11th Streets

The second significant one-way couplet through Downtown, North 10th and 11th Streets play a strong role in neighborhood reconnection and revitalization. Through key infrastructure interventions and the conversion of the roadways into two-way thoroughfares, the central blocks could be redeveloped into **mixed-use or commercial uses that reconnect the east and west neighborhoods.** Current crossing conditions are dangerous and unmarked with traffic often moving at high speeds to get north to Midland Boulevard. With the conversion of these thoroughfares, traffic is given multiple options to access Downtown and businesses to the north or south, especially when paired with the conversion of North A and B Streets and the proposed Kelley Highway extension. This provides the opportunity for neighborhoods east of the corridor to reconnect to the momentum in Downtown.

CISTERNA PARK INITIAL SKETCH

CISTERNA

An approximate 27-block area that links Garrison Avenue, the Industrial Arts and the Belle Grove Historic Neighborhood. The reinvented Garrison Plaza and Grand Avenue "Gateway" from the east set the stage for a reconnected and activated neighborhood.



GARRISON
PLAZA

The Garrison Plaza extension into Cisterna Park with spaces for outdoor dining, concerts and entertainment, and food trucks. This new open space has the ability to be programmed throughout the year and integrates existing buildings with potential new structures, like the new potential small grocer or anchor adjacent to the hotel and the mixed-use urban residential building to the north of the plaza where residents can have access to amenities along with live in a Downtown urban environment.

GARRISON PLAZA EXISTING

Existing Cisterna Park along Garrison Avenue and the Towson Avenue extension adjacent to the Riverfront Inn

GATEWAY TO **DOWNTOWN**

Through an iterative design process and based on public feedback the following two alternatives were refined from the illustrative shown on the prior page to demonstrate how the Garrison Plaza and Grand Avenue intersection could be reimagined as a gateway to Downtown. The first alternative looks at how a new developable block between North 10th and 11th Streets could work and the second alternative looks at the development possibilities if Grand Avenue remains open and North C Street is closed between 10th and 11th Streets.

Alternative 1 - A Grand Gateway

Coupled with the improvements to Garrison Plaza, North 10th and 11th Streets, and A and B Street the Grand Avenue intersection can serve as the eastern gateway into Downtown. The closure of the segment between 10th and 11th Streets creates a block that can support future development and plaza space welcoming people to Downtown Fort Smith. The building could have architecturally significant details, and wayfinding could be placed around the block. This realignment would also improve traffic safety and congestion down A and B Streets as well as smooth traffic flow on 10th and 11th.

This design would also slow traffic down as it moves into Downtown and redirect traffic that is destined for Downtown into the neighborhoods north or south of the area. This would also support the community's vision for a more walkable and pedestrian-friendly environment as traffic speeds would be lower and visitors would now have the opportunity to park once and walk throughout the area. The recent arrow art installation completed in coordination with D*Face and the "War Paint" mural could be reintegrated into this concept as remaining open space or as a significant gateway art feature on the plaza welcoming people as they enter west into Downtown.

Alternative 2 - A Revitalized Gateway

An alternative to the gateway recommendations presented in this Plan and as a complement to the Garrison Plaza and Cisterna Park improvements is to keep Grand Avenue open to vehicular traffic between 10th and 11th Streets and close the segment of C Street. This option provides a more direct route to B Street, but limits the development opportunity at the intersection and requires more design intervention at the intersections with 10th and 11th Streets to maintain traffic and pedestrian safety.

This alternative also shows how the existing arrow art installation recently undertaken in complement to the D*Face "War Paint" mural can be preserved as one of the significant gateways as people head west into Downtown. Like the other concept, this alternative would require A and B Streets and 10th and 11th Streets be converted to two-way to allow for efficient traffic flow, which is further discussed in the Mobility section of this Plan.

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THE RIVERFRONT

The U.S. Marshals Museum and the associated development potential on the riverfront are key economic drivers to Downtown. Strong connections across the railway and along Riverfront Drive support the infill development potential to the east of the tracks, as well as the ability to activate the land along the river with small retail and restaurant nodes.

Density and construction is limited along the river due to the Army Core of Engineers (ACOE) easement line, but the land could serve as the open space link between Downtown and the U.S. Marshals Museum. The lower impact development along North H Street and Riverfront Drive can be mitigated in accordance with floodplain regulations and standards, as well as set the stage for more development and density to occur on the other side of the tracks in the Industrial Arts area. Trails, improved sidewalks, a small chapel and bike paths reinforce the natural appeal of the river, while also encouraging more investment in the Industrial Arts area due to its proximity.

Additionally, the development of a trolley destination with commercial, retail, restaurant and residential uses anchors the space attracting visitors and locals alike to this new entertainment destination.

AN ACTIVATED **RIVERFRONT**

A potential development scenario along the riverfront showing the complete integration of bike trails and sidewalks to Downtown and the U.S. Marshals Museum.

Improved crossings on Riverfront Drive and across the railroad to infill development destinations in the Industrial Arts area allow more pedestrians and visitors to come to experience the river. The small restaurant cluster can be ancillary to the U.S. Marshals Museum and encourage people to spend more time in Downtown rather than visit the museum and leave because they either have no place to walk to or there is nothing else to do.

A small chapel overlooking the Arkansas River and the enhanced open space can attract several different kinds of events and be another economic driver for this unique attraction in Downtown.

RIVERFRONT EXISTING

A Google Earth snapshot of the riverfront as it is today and reinforcing the opportunity for connectivity to Downtown

AN ACTIVATED **RIVERFRONT**

A detailed perspective of what landscape and open space improvements along the Arkansas River could look like. The preservation of open space and view corridors reinforces the uniqueness of the area, as well as the reasoning for establishing a high level of design standards for the area.

Special consideration should be taken to the existing floodplain that exists along North H Street and down North 3rd Street. **These areas would require additional study to understand the full development potential and what mitigation requirements** might be needed in order for development to occur. Additionally, the flood plain could be utilized for green space and plaza amenities for the neighborhood.

Additional Development Opportunities

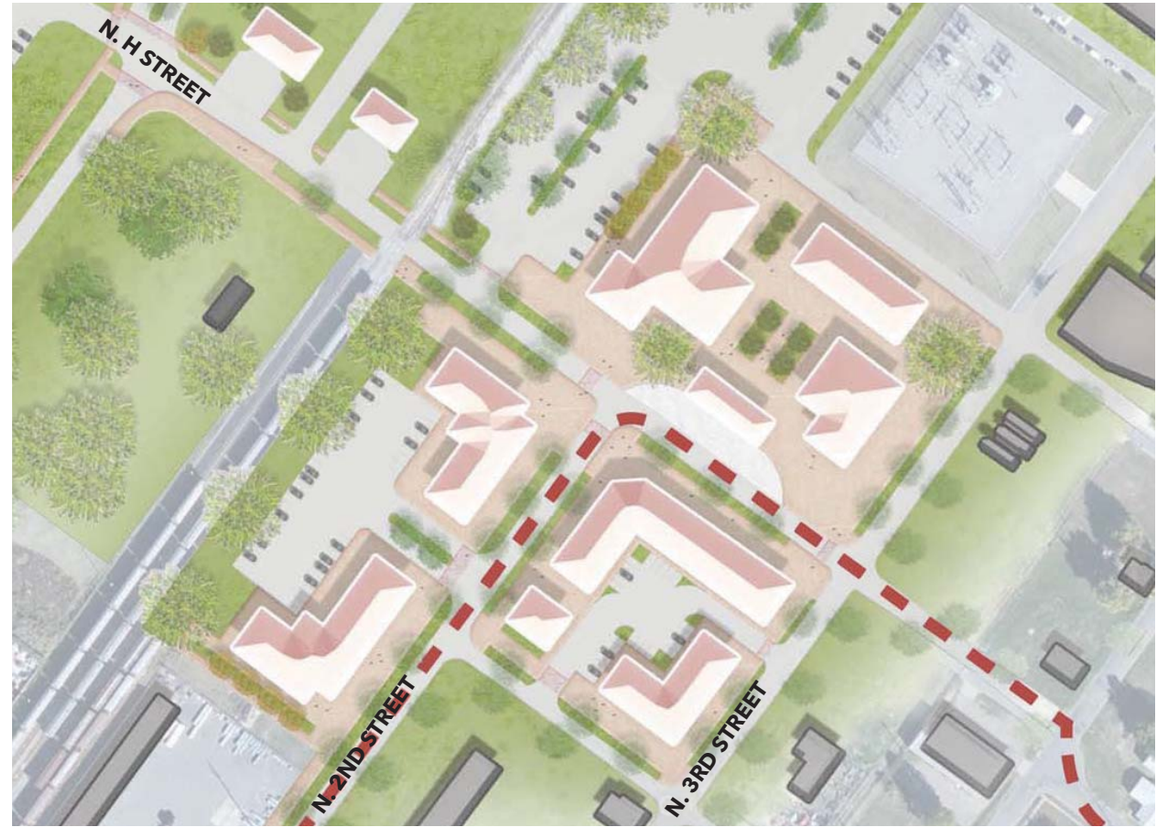
The development opportunities linking the Riverfront Area and the Industrial Arts area are numerous and, as discussed, should be based on infill development and neighborhood preservation. However, in the instance that a larger development opportunity could arise, the City and local development partners should be brought to the table to ensure the right project is put into place.

For example, the OGE substation and transformer block between North 2nd and 3rd Streets and North B and C Streets and the one between 2nd and 3rd and H Street and I Streets could be future redevelopment opportunities should the services be relocated outside of Downtown.

Additionally, the City should partner with the Arkansas Refrigerated Services and waste paper facilities in implementing this Plan and in future redevelopment scenarios to ensure their needs are also addressed in the community as a strong local partner and that their employee needs are also met.

RIVERFRONT DESTINATION

TROLLEY-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT



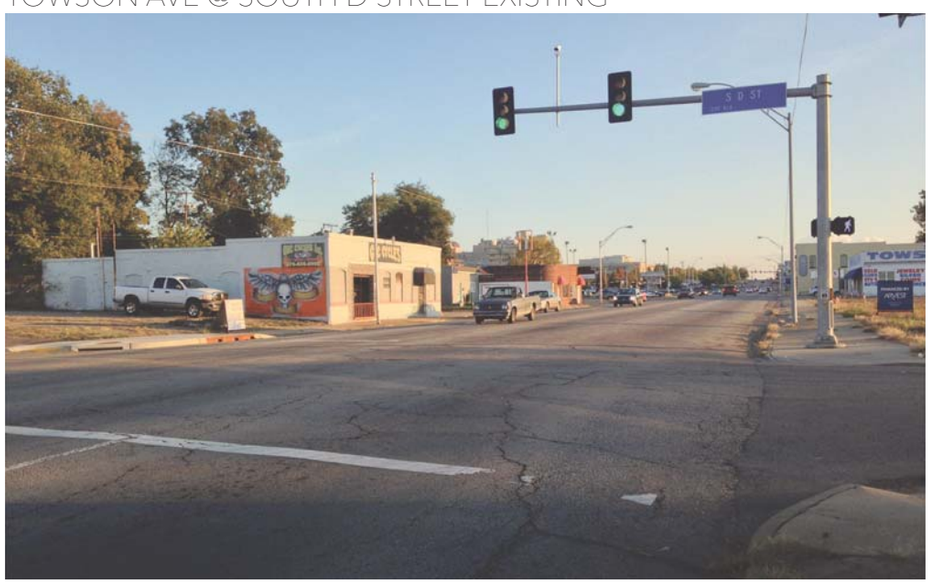
ABOVE: The trolley-oriented development destination provides a stopping point for trolley users and serves as a destination for visitors and locals.

LEFT: A close view of the potential for retail and restaurant development adjacent to the U.S. Marshals Museum with trails connecting to Garrison Avenue/Downtown and the National Historic Site on the other side of the bridge.

TOWSON **AVENUE**

The Towson Avenue streetscape improvements reinforce the need for a safe pedestrian environment. The significant number of businesses and neighborhoods along Towson Avenue could help transform this auto-oriented roadway into a lively thoroughfare with wide sidewalks and bike lanes connecting to Sparks Hospital. **The adjacent image looks south on Towson Avenue toward Sparks Hospital and shows the proposed streetscape enhancements for pedestrians and bicylists with infill commercial development.**

TOWSON AVE @ SOUTH D STREET EXISTING



View: Looking South toward Sparks Hospital

S D ST
Sparks
Health System

S. 10TH ST
S. 11TH ST
TOWSON AVE
S. A STREET
S. B STREET
S. C STREET
S. D STREET
CARNALL
ROGERS
N

TOWSON ALLEY
REINVENTION

In addition to the enhancements made to Towson Avenue, the extensive alley network behind the buildings could be transformed into a plaza and woonerf with small spaces for outdoor dining, improved lighting and additional small frontages. A Dutch term, woonerf refers to a street that is pedestrian-friendly and bicycist-friendly with very little or no vehicular traffic. Woonerfs encourage walkability and connectivity in spaces that would typically either be underutilized or disconnected from the urban fabric. In the Towson Avenue alley, these spaces could be utilized to support The Unexpected or future art installations in Downtown and provide an alternative gathering space along the more auto-oriented Towson Avenue corridor.

10TH + 11TH **STREETS**

Neighborhood connectivity and traffic improvement strategies along North 10th and 11th Street can reconnect the neighborhoods and improve pedestrian safety, especially if the one way couplets are converted into two-way thoroughfares with widened sidewalks and bike lanes. The central blocks that currently have several current vacant buildings or underutilized parcels could be redeveloped into mixed-use squares with urban residential, hospitality and commercial uses.

MOBILITY

Best Burgers In Town!
ONE WAY
THE PARK AT
Trolley Rides

MOBILITY

INTEGRATION + CHOICE

Downtown Fort Smith's mobility network is unique when compared to other traditional historic downtowns in the region. The robust, commercial corridor of Garrison Avenue serves as the Main Street, instead of a traditional, courthouse square or plaza with historic buildings around all sides. Fort Smith has several unique districts and neighborhoods that make up its downtown core, each accentuated and enhanced by pockets of historic architecture and buildings.

Fort Smith is also fortunate to have access to all modes of transportation including air, rail, road and water. However, due to its proximity to interstate highways and the Arkansas River, many of the roadways in the CBID radiate from Downtown providing a convenient cut-through for cars and trucks seeking a quicker alternative across the river.

This transportation-focused framework has also led to Downtown's fragmentation and perception of a lack of connectivity and safety as development became more auto-centric. What was once a bustling corridor with horses, carriages, trolleys and wide pedestrian realms has transformed into a significant regional transit corridor. This has also impacted the type of development that has come into the area and left many of the neighborhoods disconnected or less walkable.

An initial mobility analysis began by identifying key economic corridors in the CBID including Garrison Avenue, North A and B Streets, Grand Avenue, North 10th and 11th Streets and Towson Avenue. This analysis was done in coordination with the catalytic development opportunities identified in this plan and through the public feedback received during the early engagement process. This early evaluation also included looking at the existing corridor characteristics focusing on the following:

- Available street right-of-way
- Existing lane configurations
- Recent traffic volumes
- Condition of existing facilities
- Surrounding land uses

Historic Garrison Avenue (Source: 64.6 Downtown)

Garrison Avenue Present Day (Source: Gateway Planning)

- Presence of pedestrian sidewalks, bicycle facilities, transit routes
- Future planned capital improvements

The Downtown transportation system is now challenged with finding a balance between accommodating the current demand for regional commerce versus serving local trip-making for residents and merchants.

Context-Based Decisions

Some of the most complex transportation and land use comparability issues have been resolved using a Context Sensitive Solutions approach. Context Sensitive Solutions is a process founded on designing the corridor based on the needs of the surrounding social and environmental factors.

To realize the Vision discovered through this process, the decisions made when establishing the character areas should be the driving force for transportation decisions. By implementing a Complete Streets approach, corridors throughout the CBID can, over time, be redesigned to accommodate all people choosing to live, work and play within these corridors, providing more equitable access for various travel modes.

Transportation Guiding Thoughts

1. Destination retail/mixed-use destination development;
2. Truck Route Bypass options for remaining in Downtown and a regional bypass option;
3. Improve connectivity between Historic Site and Historic District;
4. Phased streetscape improvements on Grand Avenue to UAFS;
5. Reduce vehicular speeds on Garrison Ave and Rogers Avenue;
6. Phased streetscape improvements on Rogers Avenue to I-540.

The following corridors within the CBID as outlined in this Plan and the mobility section further describe how transportation improvements or adjustments can support the vision:

- Garrison Avenue
- North A and B Streets
- Grand Avenue
- North 10th and 11th Streets
- Towson Avenue

GARRISON **AVENUE**

Existing Conditions

Fort Smith's historic "Main Street," Garrison Avenue currently functions as a major arterial that serves as the City's primary commercial thoroughfare. Garrison Avenue spans 12 blocks through the CBID and has 120' (ROW) with two 11' travel lanes in each direction with a center turn lane at various intersections. Angled parking as well as parallel parking is available along the corridor. Garrison Avenue connects the City to Oklahoma across the Arkansas River (one of the only bridges in the area). Several of the businesses and buildings along Garrison Avenue are designated as historic and Fort Smith's Belle Grove Historic District is located just north of the corridor.

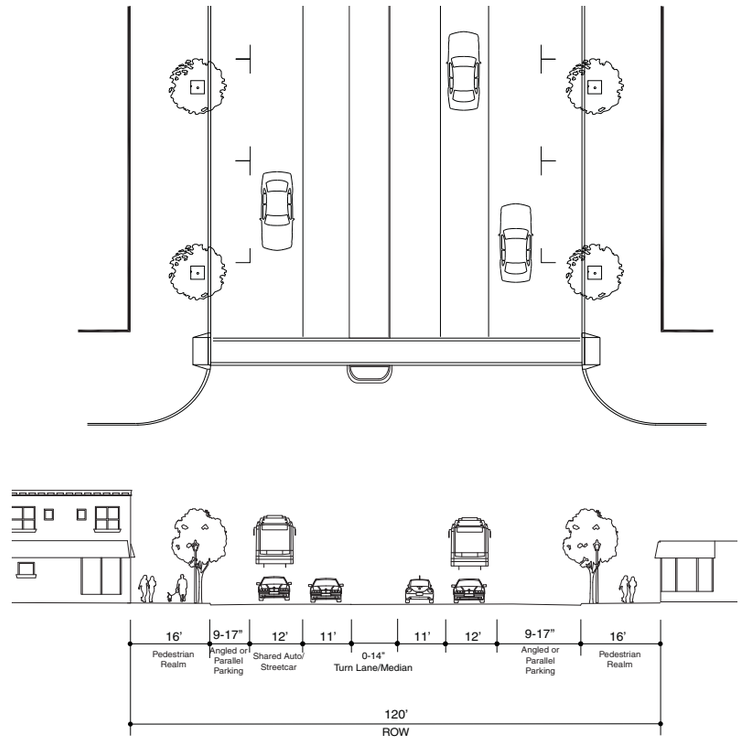
Garrison Avenue is a primary traffic artery handling over 20,000 vehicles a day, many of which are passing through the community. **A major challenge for this corridor relates to the truck traffic that passes through destined to industrial businesses and services within Downtown.**

Character Type

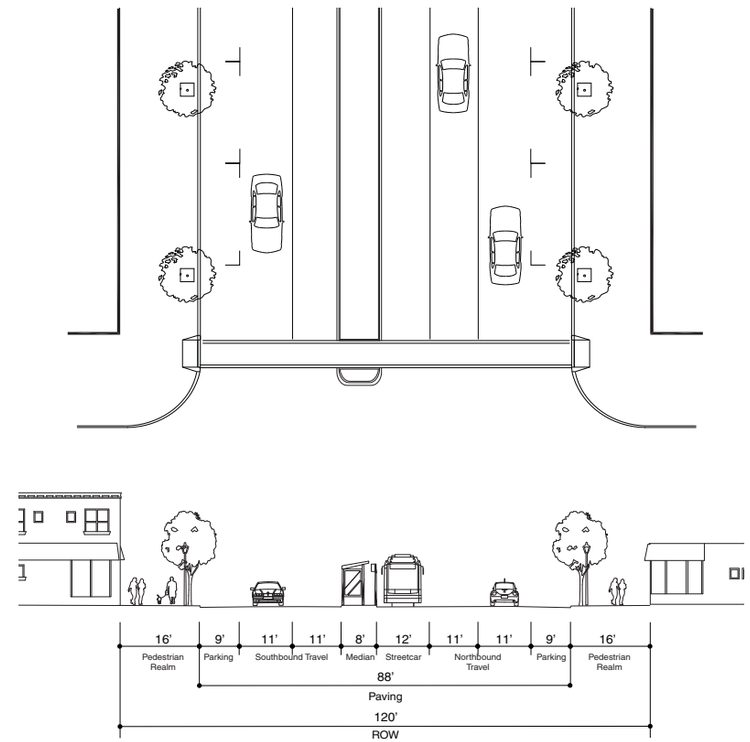
This historic corridor shapes the building fabric and infrastructure in the heart of the community and is where the development investment has largely taken place. As the primary corridor destination, the need for pedestrian and cyclist improvements should continue.

The recently built sidewalk bump-outs at many intersections have helped to shorten the crossing distance and time for pedestrians. Such crossings are still difficult when compared to other streets because of the volume and speed of traffic. As a result of this process, pedestrian crossing times and traffic signals have been improved to allow sufficient time for pedestrians to cross the street, including leading pedestrian intervals if needed to avoid conflicts with turning vehicles.

GARRISON AVE - OUTER LANE TRANSIT



GARRISON AVE - CENTER LANE TRANSIT



Future Conditions

The following items represent transportation improvements that will overtime fulfill this ultimate vision:

- **Maximize sidewalk, crosswalk, lighting and facade improvement opportunities** as redevelopment occurs and build off the City's recently completed streetscape improvement project to improve sidewalks, pavers, pedestrian lighting, landscaping, irrigation and street resurfacing.
- As development continues, **work with AHTD to evaluate Garrison Avenue as a commercial arterial to ensure connectivity and walkability are maintained.**
- **Preserve on-street parking along Garrison Avenue** and encourage the creation of additional spaces when possible.

Transit Integration Opportunities

Transit integration should be considered in future redevelopment of Garrison, especially as traffic patterns change with development and shifting truck traffic priorities. During public engagement several people indicated a desire to see Garrison Avenue transform to a boulevard or avenue with a median. However, Garrison's ability to function as a major corridor should be preserved. In the cross sections shown above a median would not be feasible, but a shared transit lane could be integrated in either the median or on-street adjacent to a parking lane.

A and B
STREETS

Existing Conditions

North A and B Streets function as one-way east/west parallel couplets to Garrison Avenue. North A Street is an eastbound minor arterial roadway with two travel lanes from Riverfront Drive to Rogers Avenue. North B Street is a westbound minor arterial roadway with two travel lanes from Rogers Avenue to Riverfront Drive.

Land uses along A and B Streets transition from commercial and retail uses to historic neighborhood fabric and civic uses. Transforming these streets into two-way thoroughfares would help ease traffic flow through Downtown and into the surrounding neighborhoods.

Both streets have 50' ROW and are adjacent to commercial and retail buildings. The Blue Lion Bikeway, a Class III Bikeway, was recently completed along both A and B Streets to provide a connection from Downtown Fort Smith to the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith (UAFS). A Class III Bikeway is defined as "Bike Route" by signs in neighborhoods and secondary streets to mark the routes designed to take riders to schools, parks, libraries and other destinations.

The thoroughfares have minimal on-street parking opportunities and an abundance of ingress and egress driveways. Traffic flows through the corridors rather quickly, and at some intersections with perpendicular two-way thoroughfares cars will travel the wrong way down A or B Street. These conditions present not only a dangerous environment for other vehicular users, but also for the pedestrian or bicyclist.

This plan takes into consideration the options for converting those pairs back to two-way thoroughfares and streamlining intersection designs at key intersections to allow for efficient traffic flow and better connections into the neighborhoods and Downtown.

A + B STREET FRAMEWORK ("CISTERNA")

Character Type

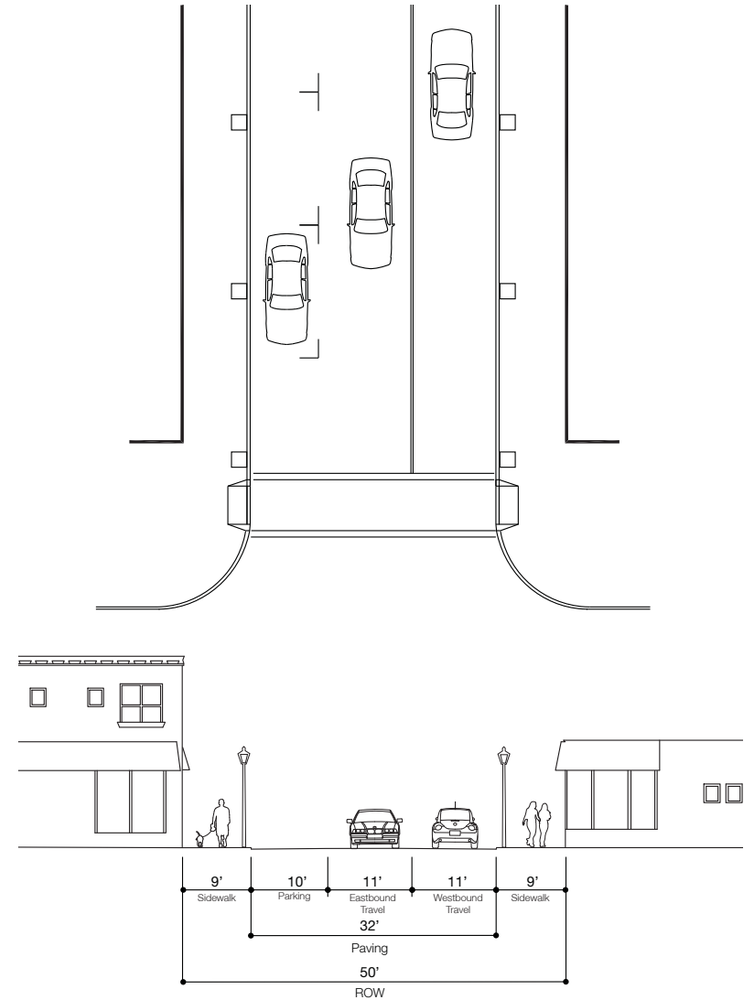
North A and B Streets frame an approximate 27-block area in Downtown that link Garrison Avenue, the Industrial Arts Area, the Riverfront and the Belle Grove Historic Neighborhood. The reinvented Garrison Plaza and Grand Avenue "Gateway" from the east set the stage for a reconnected and activated neighborhood with the conversion and enhancement of these two significant corridors.

Future Conditions

The following bullets represent transportation improvements that will overtime fulfill this ultimate vision.

- A and B Streets include the **conversion to a two-way local street with one travel lane in each direction and on-street parking.**
- On A Street, a 9' pedestrian realm along both the north and south side of the roadway with pedestrian level street lighting, furniture and street trees.

A STREET CROSS SECTION



- **The Blue Lion Bikeway is preserved along A Street with these improvements and converted into a two-way cycle track** with one travel lane in each direction and no on-street parking.

- The pedestrian realm would still be preserved, but the option provides an extended bikeway. **If on-street parking is preferred, sharrows could be integrated into the travel lanes to demarcate shared bikeways.**
- B Street's conversion includes one 12' travel lane in each direction with a 13' pedestrian realm **allowing the necessary truck and vehicular traffic to travel through the corridor without impeding pedestrian or bicyclist safety.**
- As development occurs, **more infill commercial and residential development should be encouraged as connectivity options are provided and access to and from the Belle Grove neighborhood is continuous.**

The cross-sections on the previous page and adjacent illustrate just a few options for re-purposing North A and B Streets to a two-way operation. Conceptually, these concepts can work; however, **a detailed traffic engineering study is highly recommended.**

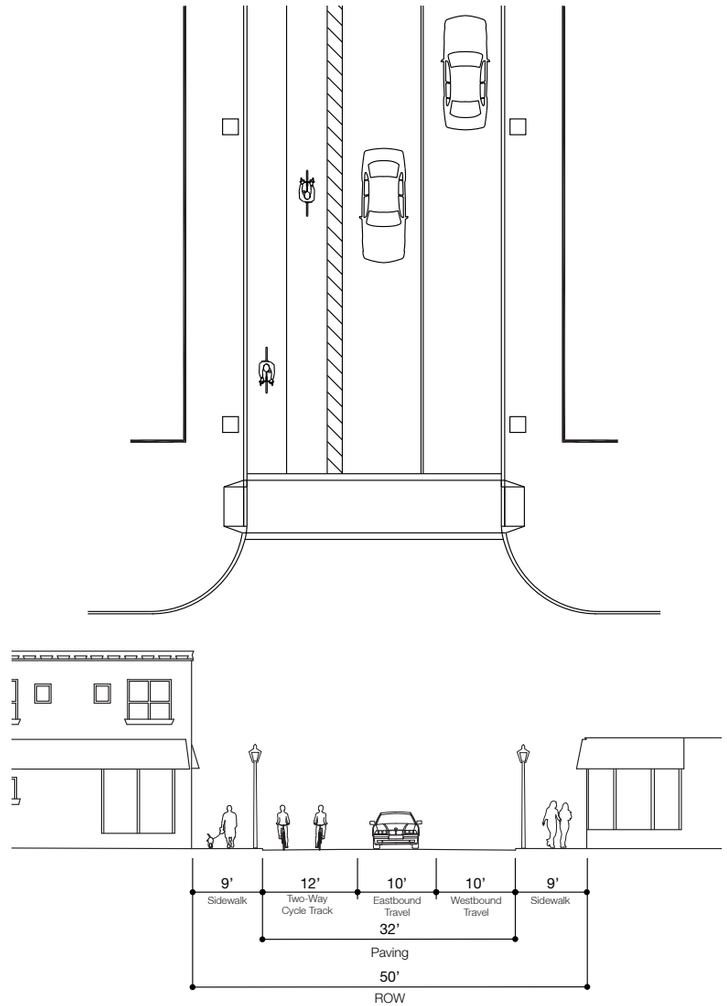
Downtown Gateways

Gateways (or grand entrances) into communities or downtowns are significant to development and redevelopment in many ways. Not only are these moments the first impression for a visitor, but they signify an arrival, whether an arrival into a new district or neighborhood or to a new destination. Downtown Fort Smith has several of these arrival points, and each should be treated in a way that is reflective of its character and of Downtown as a whole.

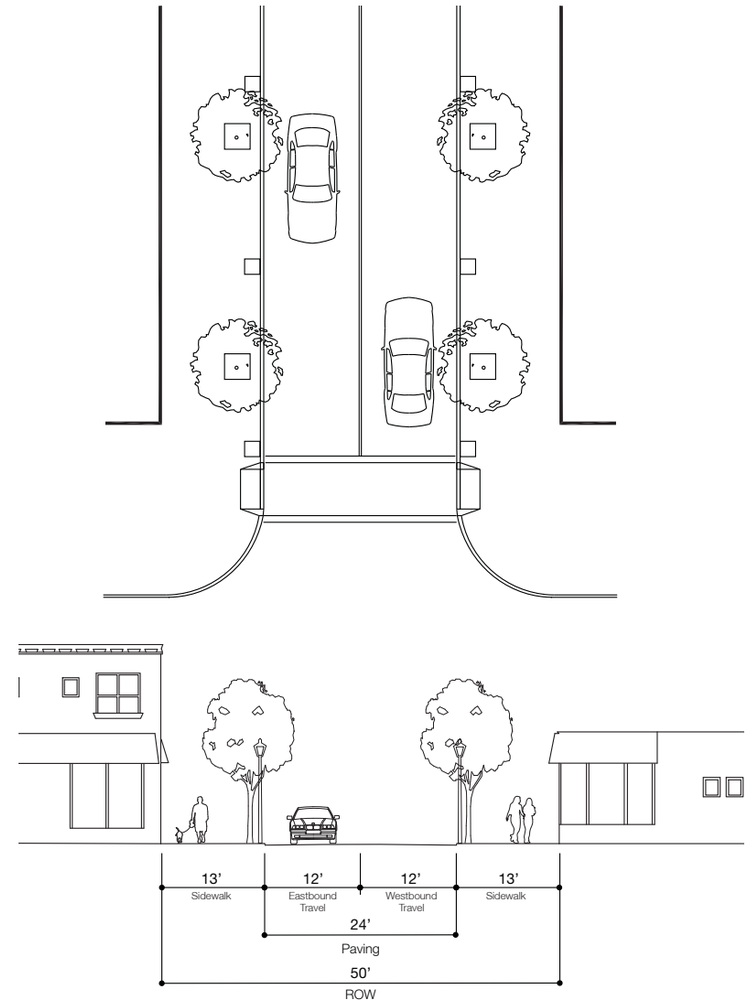
In that context, special consideration should be given to North A and B Streets' intersection with Rogers Avenue. **For the two-way conversions to work additional study would need to be undertaken to ensure traffic flow is optimized at these intersections.** A Street's conversion could begin at the signalized intersection with Rogers Avenue and would require some redesign of the street for vehicular movements. North B Street's conversion would not occur until west of the high school at 21st Street. However, it is recommended that additional study be undertaken to identify the optimum intersection for conversion.

These improvements would also have minimal impact on the Garrison Avenue and Rogers Avenue intersection where the thoroughfares split heading west into Downtown.

A STREET CROSS SECTION (ALTERNATIVE)



B STREET CROSS SECTION



GRAND **AVENUE**

Existing Conditions

The intersection of Grand Avenue with North C, 10th, 11th and B Streets presents several challenges including complex turning movements, signal coordination challenges and pedestrian access limitations. Currently, traffic delays along Grand Avenue will continue to decline as growth in the region continues.

Surrounded by multiple one-way couplets, vacant buildings, disconnected sidewalks and varying traffic speeds, the Grand Avenue intersection into Downtown has been viewed as less a gateway into the community and more as a dangerous point-of-entry. However, throughout early public engagement it was reinforced that this intersection is still a key gateway to the downtown community and to the Arkansas River.

Most recently, the Choctaw Nation's participation in the installation of large arrows at the park as part of the "War Paint" D*Face mural has sparked a renewed interest in development opportunities and improvements to the area.

The adjacent image shows the intersections' current configuration and surrounding building pattern.

Character Type

A literal and figurative "grand" gateway to Downtown, this intersection sits on the cusp of the Cisterna area and Garrison Avenue. One of the early opportunities to establish a first impression on Downtown visitors, this intersection will play a key role in establishing the context in which people view and interact with Downtown. As such, it is important that development around this intersection reinforce the high quality development and character present throughout Downtown Fort Smith. Whether it is through the impressive arrow installation or in an architecturally significant building, the stage is set with the character here.

EXISTING GRAND AVENUE INTERSECTION

Strong urban fabric and development also already exists around this intersection with the ability to bring in additional neighborhood-oriented development and residential options for the community. Encouraging walkability, safe streets and pedestrian-friendly development will ensure that the local character is preserved.

Future Conditions

In coordination with the reconfigured North A and B Streets, the reimagination of the Grand Avenue intersection comes into play as a significant open space opportunity in Downtown and better connected street grid as the short section of Towson Avenue adjacent to Cisterna Park has limited utility and accessibility due to the angled intersections. Two alternative reconfigurations were studied during this process to create scenarios that help the community see a range of development and mobility options for this significant downtown gateway.

The diagrams on the following page show each of these alternatives and the potential development context around the intersection. **These potential future conditions also enable a better understanding of traffic implications and appropriate ingress and egress in and out of Downtown as more development begins to happen.** It is important to remember that for each of these alternatives there are

several other significant transportation and mobility improvements that must occur before these scenarios become possible.

Alternative 1 - A New Block

- Grand Avenue is closed between North 10th and 11th Streets to divert traffic north or south on 11th Street either towards A and B Streets or onto Garrison Avenue.
- Newly created developable block serves as an architectural gateway to Downtown and encourages people to park their cars and walk through the community, not just drive through it.
- New block should include pedestrian realm enhancements such as street trees, pedestrian scaled lighting and wide sidewalks.
- This option could also preserve the D*Face arrow installation and park south of North C Street. The Grand Avenue segment closure would open up development opportunity along the park's southern frontage and remain as a gateway into Downtown.
- The segment closure would eliminate the sharp turns at 10th Street at Garrison Avenue.
- Lost parking spaces can be found on 10th Street , Garrison Avenue, and both A and B Streets.
- In order for this to occur 10th and 11th Streets must be made two-way along with both A and B Streets with enhancements made to the ROW and pedestrian realm.

Alternative 2 - A Continuous Thoroughfare

- Grand Avenue remains open between North 10th and 11th Streets to connect to the B Street intersection.
- The Grand Avenue segment between North 10th and 11th Streets is also made two-way.
- Pedestrian realm improvements should be installed along the preserved ROW with appropriately scaled lighting, street trees and sidewalks.
- Current open space/park is preserved.
- C Street is closed between 10th and 11th Streets to extend potential development space to block north of intersection.
- Intersection at Grand Avenue, 11th Street and C Street would require signalization improvements.
- The curb radius on the NE corner of the intersection must be increased to accommodate westbound to northbound traffic.
- No right turn allowed from Grand Avenue to North 11th Street (eastbound to southbound). Since the intersecting streets aren't perpendicular, this particular movement would create an unsafe turning maneuver for autos (especially SUVs and trucks). In order to avoid hitting the curb during the turn, the autos would have to swing out into the northbound lane of North 11th Street.
- Signage included on C Street indicating traffic must turn left or right onto 11th Street.
- Grand Avenue and 10th Street intersection would require increased curb radius to accommodate westbound to northbound traffic.
- Signage on C Street approaching 10th Street installed indicating traffic must turn left or right at 10th Street.

In addition, the closure of North B Street between 10th and 11th Streets was also considered in order to study the full development extent of this new gateway into Downtown with enhanced roadway possibilities. However, upon further study, it was discovered that **the closure of this segment would have negative implications on connectivity and traffic in Downtown as North B Street is one of the longest continuous local streets in Downtown. In that context, the closure of North B Street between 10th and 11th would not be recommended.**

The reconfigured intersection also allows for increased multimodal connectivity through Downtown down to the reimagined Cisterna Park and Garrison Plaza. The plaza and open space area could be activated with live entertainment, food trucks, picnic areas and other small festivals and events without hindering vehicular movement in and out of Downtown.

GRAND AVENUE INTERSECTION - ALTERNATIVE 1

GRAND AVENUE INTERSECTION - ALTERNATIVE 2

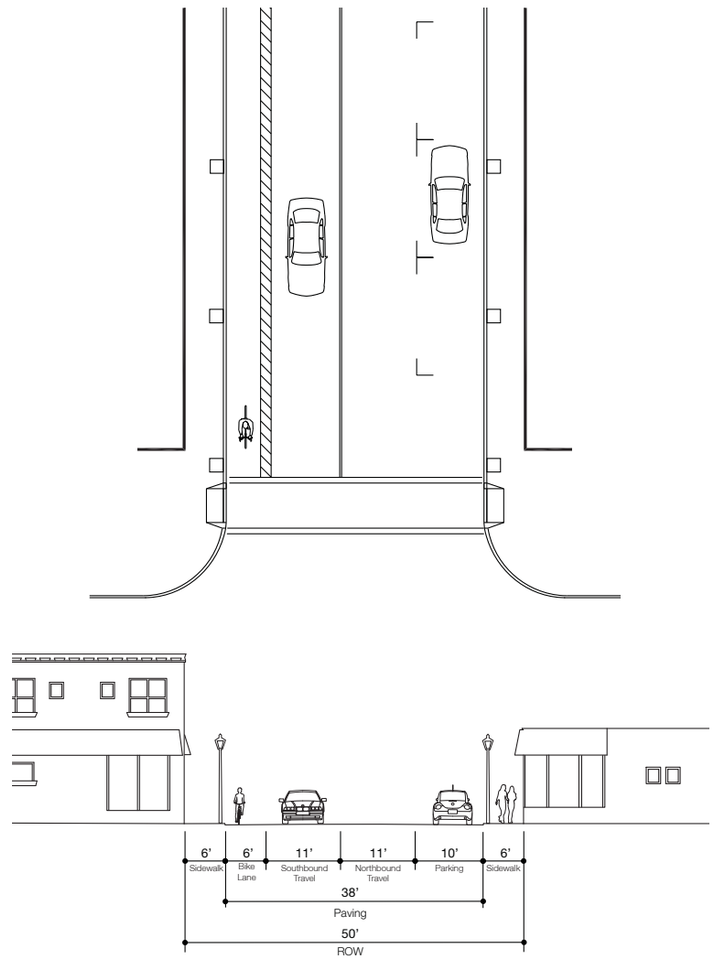
10TH and 11TH **STREETS**

Existing Conditions

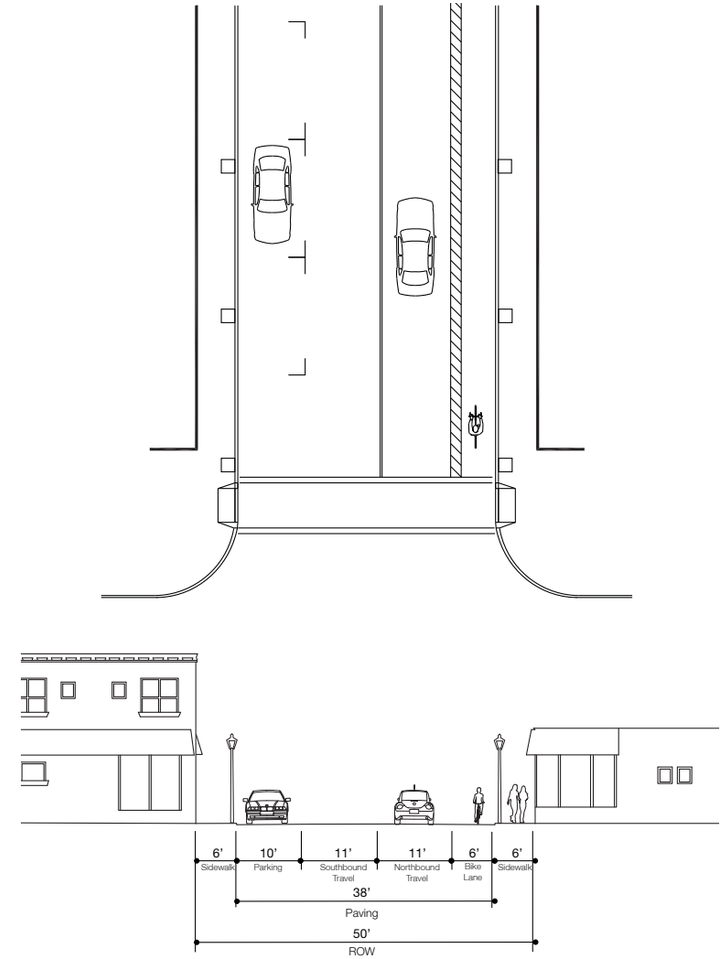
North 10th and 11th Streets function as one-way north/south parallel corridors that connect the industrial and medical uses south of Downtown to the north and Midland Boulevard. 10th Street is a southbound major arterial with two travel lanes from N. P Street to Garrison Avenue. 2015 average annual daily traffic (AADT) along 10th Street was 5,300 with four percent truck traffic. 11th Street is a northbound major arterial with two travel lanes from Garrison Avenue to P Street. 2015 AADT along 11th Street was 5,700 with two percent truck traffic. Both streets have 50' ROW and are adjacent to commercial and retail land uses, as well as bisect well-established and historic residential neighborhoods. The streets are currently classified as AHTD thoroughfares and serve as key north-south connectors in the community.

10th and 11th Streets also provide access north to Midland Boulevard and south to Towson Avenue on the western edge of Garrison Plaza and Cisterna Park. Land uses along these corridors varies from more residential at the north to commercial and retail-oriented through Downtown. Once 11th Street intersects with Garrison Avenue and turns into Towson Avenue the corridor becomes more auto-centric with heavy commercial and employment center uses. 11th Street's intersection with Towson Avenue also significantly impacts future recommendations and considerations for investment on the corridor and will require additional study.

10TH STREET CROSS SECTION



11TH STREET CROSS SECTION



Character Type

The two corridors serve as significant north-south connectors for traffic on the eastern side of Downtown. The roadways act as an eastern boundary for the Cisterna and Garrison Avenue areas with the opportunity to reconnect the historic Belle Grove neighborhood to the established neighborhoods to the east. The reinvention of these corridors serves to transform the neighborhood character as more walkable and connected, as well as provide significant improvements to bikeability and multi-modal options in Downtown.

Future Conditions

The proposed conversion of 10th Street and 11th Street to two-way corridors will help to slow vehicular traffic, making the corridors more

NORTH 10TH AND 11TH STREET FRAMEWORK

Existing 10th Street at A Street looking south (Source: Google)

conducive to pedestrians and cyclists, reducing the barrier currently presented by these corridors. In addition, the proposed design changes would enable easier crossing of both 10th Street and 11th Street, working to help re-stitch the neighborhood fabric of the existing neighborhoods to the east and west of these corridors back to their original form. These changes will also result in better accessibility to the existing and future businesses along these important corridors.

It should be reinforced that these proposed design changes will need to be closely coordinated with AHTD. There will also be design changes required at the northern end of North 10th Street to force northbound traffic to turn right on North L Street, as northbound traffic will not be able to continue on Midland Boulevard from 10th Street. Conversely, similar improvements will be necessary at the southern end of 11th Street to force southbound traffic onto A Street (assuming A Street is a two-way corridor) in order to continue southbound on Business 71.

The proposed improvements along 10th and 11th Streets include:

- **Both North 10th and 11th Street converted to two-way with one 11' travel lane north and south**; however, 10th Street serves local traffic while 11th Street serves as the major connector to Midland Boulevard and Towson Avenue.
- ROW includes a 6' bicycle lane with a buffer adjacent to the southbound travel lane on 10th Street and adjacent to the northbound travel lane on 11th Street.
- 10' on-street parking lane included in ROW adjacent to the northbound travel lane on 10th Street and adjacent to the southbound travel lane on 11th Street.
- **Signed and painted bikeway provided on both streets.**
- Bikeway classified as a Class II Bikeway in the City's network.
- Pedestrian-realm improvements include street lighting, buffering where appropriate and wider, continuous sidewalks.
- **Conduct traffic impact and design analysis on the 11th Street intersection with Towson Avenue** to understand traffic flow impacts and potential design solutions.
- **In order for this to occur a better understanding of design requirements and impacts to the Midland Boulevard and Towson Avenue intersection must be thoroughly vetted and appropriate engineering studies conducted.**

TOWSON **AVENUE**

Existing Conditions

A major connector between Garrison Avenue and Sparks Hospital, the Towson Avenue corridor serves multiple purposes for Downtown. Remnants of historic architecture and businesses line the thoroughfare just south of Garrison Avenue down to S. D Avenue to continue the look and feel of Fort Smith's historic core. However, once through the D Street intersection the street transitions to a more auto-oriented facility with minimal building frontages and decreased pedestrian facilities.

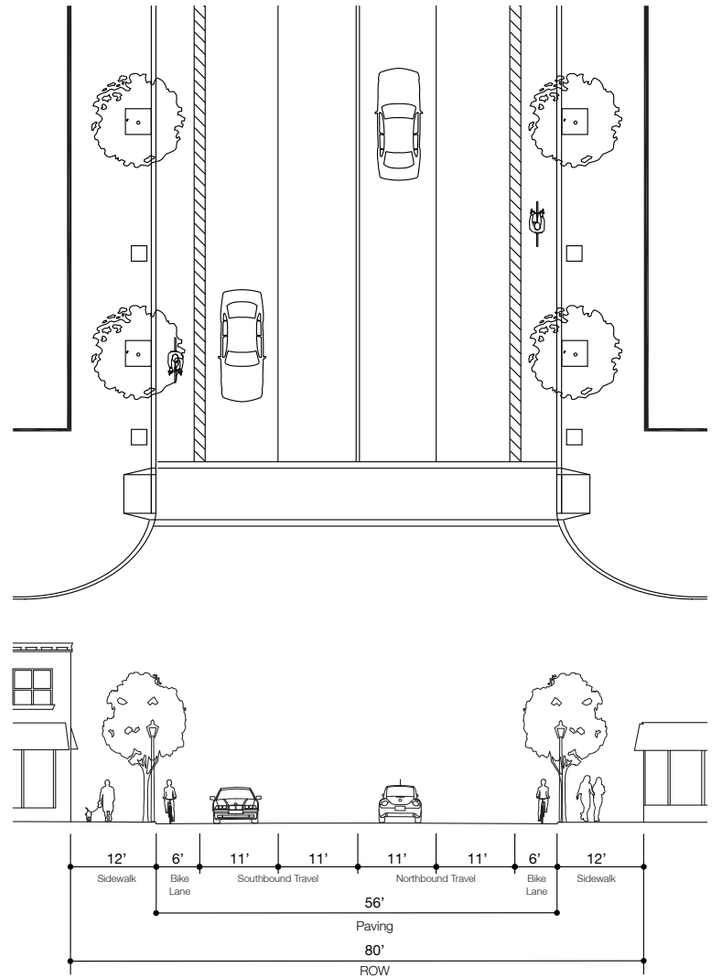
Towson Avenue functions as a major arterial that serves as one of the City's primary commercial thoroughfares. Being that it is designated as U.S. Highway 71, it has become a primary traffic artery handling over 25,000 vehicles a day, many of which are just passing through the area. The Towson Avenue commercial corridor from the Rogers Avenue intersection south to the Dodson Avenue intersection contains a mix of suburban strip retail, big box stores, car dealerships and industrial office parks. The most significant user (and destination) within this Downtown framework is Sparks Hospital.

Towson Avenue has an 80' ROW with two 12' travel lanes in each direction. From Rogers Avenue to South A Street, the City recently completed streetscape improvements for sidewalks, pavers, pedestrian lighting, irrigation and street resurfacing.

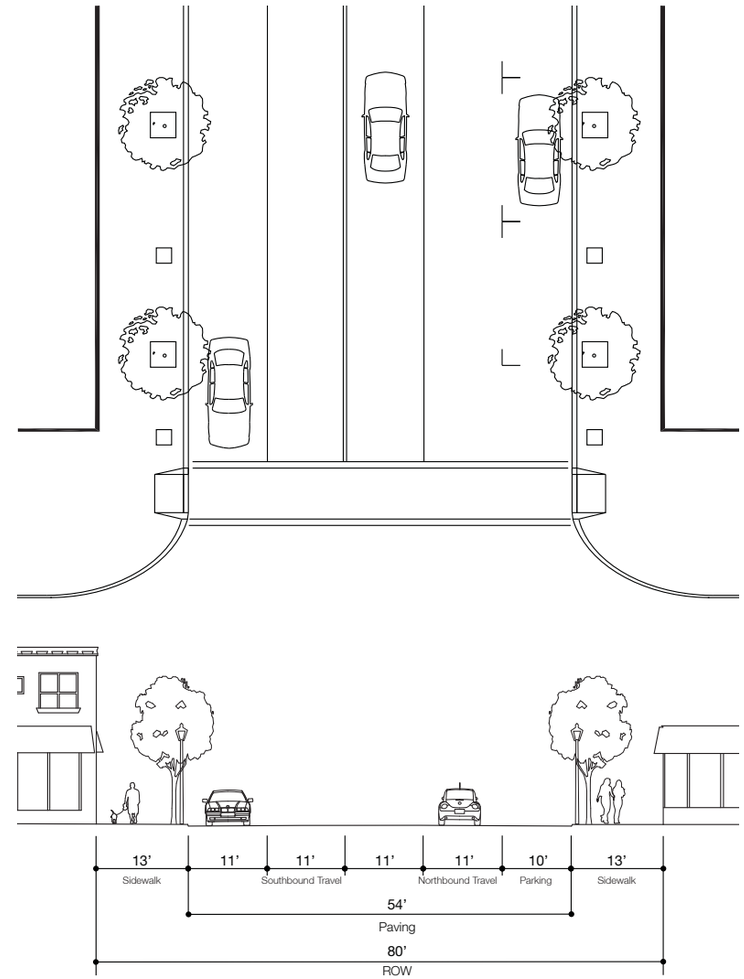
Character Type

An approximate 10-block corridor, Towson Avenue bisects the Medical and Warehouse Areas in Downtown. This important corridor also functions as the southern gateway into and as primary access for Sparks Hospital employees and visitors. The enhanced corridor sets the stage for reinvestment into the existing commercial businesses and structures along the corridor, as well as into the surrounding infrastructure spaces, such as the alleyways connecting Towson to the industrial sector along Wheeler Avenue. This in turn allows the character of the neighborhood and corridor to evolve from an auto-

TOWSON AVE - D ST TO DODSON AVE CROSS SECTION



TOWSON AVE - GARRISON TO D ST CROSS SECTION



Towson Avenue looking South from Rogers Avenue towards Sparks Hospital (Source: Gateway Planning)

oriented, pass through corridor to a true neighborhood corridor that serves the existing uses and residential urban fabric to create a walkable and bikeable corridor.

Future Condition

The recommended improvements for Towson Avenue are broken into two segments. This was done in respect to the existing urban fabric and pedestrian/vehicular experience. The first segment, from Garrison Avenue to South D Street respects the existing streetscape improvements that have already been undertaken and looks to build off that investment to reinforce the pedestrian realm. The second segment looks at Towson Avenue from South D Street to Dodson Avenue past Sparks Hospital. These recommendations look at improvements that enhance the pedestrian realm while preserving the ROW for commuter traffic and continuous automotive flow.

During the initial planning and engagement process, the public indicated that this roadway should more accurately reflect the quality of development and commercial opportunity within the City. A reduction in travel lane width, on-street parking and bicycle facility installation will help reduce vehicular speeds along the corridor and improve access for pedestrians from surrounding neighborhoods to businesses on Towson Avenue.

The proposed improvements along Towson Avenue from Garrison Avenue to South D Street include:

- Two 11′ travel lanes in each direction.
- Parallel on-street parking provided along the northbound lanes.
- 13′ pedestrian realm with streetscape improvements such as street trees, pavers, lighting and widened sidewalks.

The improvements along Towson Avenue from South D Street to Dodson Avenue past Sparks Hospital include:

- Two 11′ travel lanes in each direction.
- 6′ Class II bicycle facility on both sides of the roadway.
- 12′ pedestrian realm with pedestrian level street lighting, paving, street trees and landscaping.
- A signed and painted bikeway would be provided and as redevelopment occurs, these improvements encourage the multimodal user to travel beyond the Garrison Avenue corridor and allow for safe and efficient bicycle travel in an area that does not currently have bicycle facilities designated.

The cross-sections on the prior page illustrate these recommended improvements to the Towson Avenue corridor.

RIVERFRONT **DRIVE**

Existing Conditions

Riverfront Drive has the opportunity to transform the western edge of Fort Smith into a premiere scenic corridor with nearly unobstructed views of the Arkansas River, proposed open spaces and entertainment destinations and the U.S. Marshals Museum. Riverfront Drive is paralleled by the railroad tracks heading north towards the several industrial facilities just outside of the Industrial Arts area discussed in this Plan. These unique existing conditions lend an opportunity unlike any other in the Western Arkansas region and the transformation of Riverfront Drive can significantly impact development and transit in Fort Smith.

Currently, Riverfront Drive functions as a major arterial that also serves as part of the City's truck bypass route. Its designation as Arkansas Highway 255 has led to the roadway becoming a primary traffic artery that handles over 20,000 vehicles a day. The Riverfront Drive corridor is primarily characterized by large undeveloped parcels with a few scattered farms and residences. The majority of the land within this area falls within a flood hazard area. Riverfront Drive has between 64' – 100' ROW from the proposed Kelley Highway extension to North A Street with one 12' travel lane in each direction and a 10' shoulder buffer area. Recent improvements along this corridor include water and sewer service enhancements.

Riverfront Drive also serves as a significant corridor from Downtown to north Fort Smith and serves multiple industrial uses along it. Appropriate truck and business traffic considerations were utilized in this Plan's process and in crafting the recommendations, however, a more detailed study of the traffic implications will need to be done.

Character Type

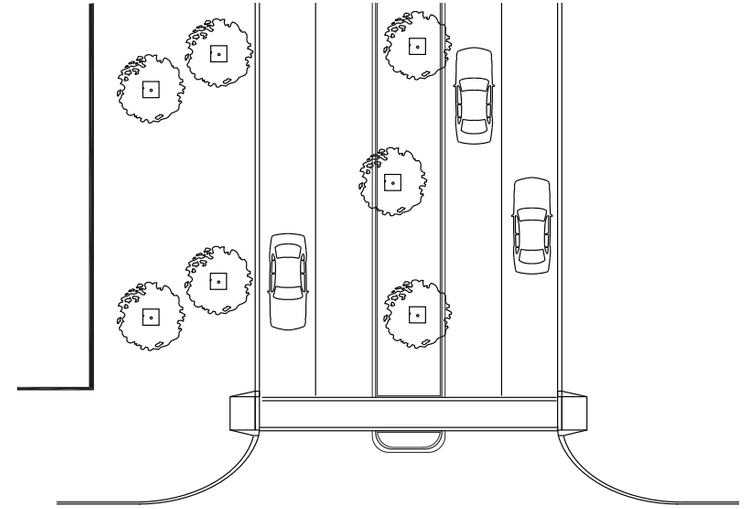
Riverfront Drive improvements paired with appropriate infill and

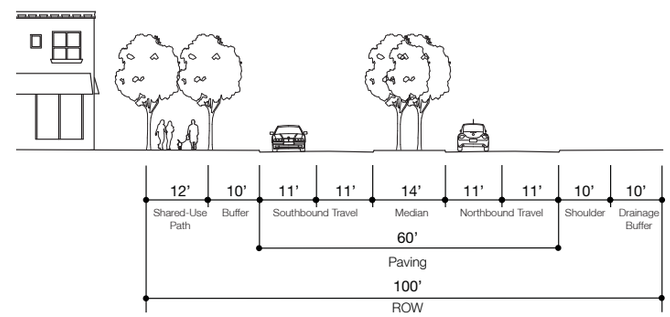
RIVERFRONT FRAMEWORK + EXISTING CONDITIONS

open space development along the Arkansas River will create a significant pedestrian and multimodal facility capable of connecting Downtown, the Belle Grove Historic District and the Industrial Arts area. Enhanced crosswalks and intersections will enable pedestrians to cross Riverfront Drive safely and quickly, while the added sidewalk and trail enhancements ensure that connectivity between Downtown and the U.S. Marshals Museum is safe and free-flowing. Additionally, the ROW improvements will support better traffic safety and congestion as high speeds are discouraged through design and alternative routes that made more readily accessible to vehicles. However, if access is needed to the services and facilities along Riverfront Drive, that access is not restricted.

Additionally, this design takes into consideration the ability to improve

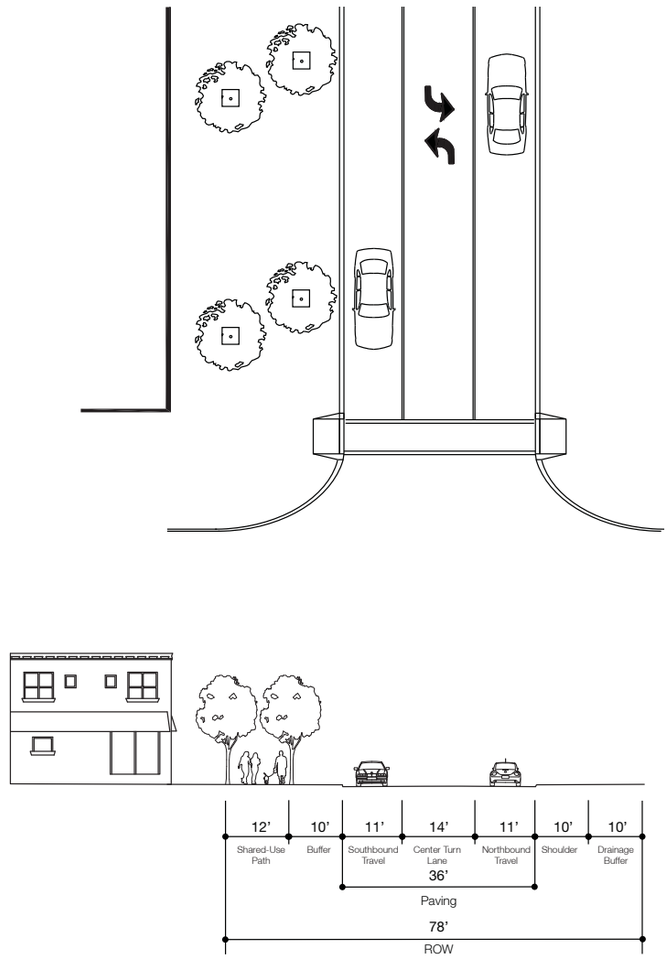
RIVERFRONT DRIVE - PROP. KELLEY HWY TO U.S. MM



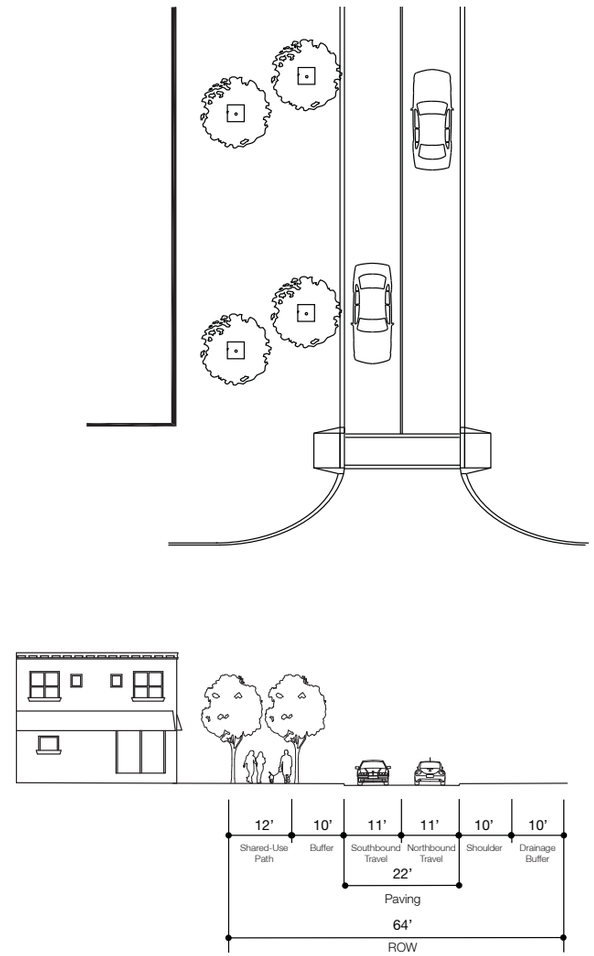


enhancements at all the rail crossings through appropriate shoulder widths and turn lanes by utilizing existing ROW and the shoulder easements located the length of the corridor. This will prevent traffic from backing up onto Riverfront and allow for optimal rail crossings into the neighborhoods and businesses across it.

RIVERFRONT DRIVE - U.S. MM TO N. H STREET



RIVERFRONT DRIVE - N. H STREET TO N. A STREET



Future Condition

The proposed improvements along Riverfront Drive are divided into three sections and should be paired with appropriate infill and open space development. Combined, these improvements will create a premiere pedestrian and multimodal facility capable of connecting Downtown, the historic Belle Grove neighborhood and the Industrial Arts area. Additionally, these ROW enhancements will enable to continuation of the Class I Bike Route Rice Carden Levee Trail and support slower vehicular traffic.

- **Proposed Kelley Highway extension to the U.S. Marshals Museum:** 100' ROW with two 11' travel lanes in each direction and a 14' median. A 12' shared-use path will be located along the southbound travel side to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians.
- **U.S. Marshals Museum:** 78' ROW with one 11' travel in each direction and a 14' center turn lane. A 12' shared-use path will be located along the southbound travel side to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians.
- **North H Street to North A Street:** 64' ROW with two 11' travel lanes in each direction and a 12' shared-use path along the southbound travel lane side.
- Additional studies should be undertaken on North H Street around the existing flood plain to understand development and infrastructure implications for future improvements.

The adjacent cross-sections and the cross-section on the previous page illustrate these recommended improvements to Riverfront Drive.

An Expanded **TROLLEY**

Transit - An Expanded Trolley

The opportunity for integrated transit choices and multimodal facilities throughout the Downtown area is emphasized through this plan. The ability to connect neighborhoods, businesses, destinations and corridors is reinforced through these recommended transportation improvements. In addition to the recommended sidewalk facilities and bike lanes or tracks throughout Downtown, there is also the option to expand and integrate a people mover.

The Fort Smith Trolley Museum currently operates a fixed-route trolley service in the Downtown area. The route operates on a seasonal schedule Monday through Friday and on the weekends. The route operates from Ross Pendergraft Park along Garrison Avenue, south along a dedicated right-of-way to the Fort Smith Trolley Museum before heading east adjacent to the Fort Smith National Cemetery and Wheeler Avenue then north along South 7th Street to Rogers Avenue.

In addition to the trolley service, Fort Smith Transit operates bus service on six fixed routes, from Monday to Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Five of these six routes begin and end Downtown, allowing for transfers. In order to make transit (both the buses and the trolley) more attractive, the City should provide a greater level of amenities at busier transit stops, including trash cans, benches and/or shelters.

Future Conditions

The proposed expanded trolley route would continue east on Rogers Avenue, north along 8th Street, west on E Street, north on 5th Street and west on H Street, south on 2nd Street before heading west on A Street to the railroad right-of-way alignment and back to the Garrison alignment.

The proposed trolley route would not only serve as an attraction for

PROPOSED FUTURE TROLLEY EXPANSION

tourists but would also serve residents, as the route passes by several civic building and commercial/retail establishments and goes through historic neighborhoods. This expansion would help walkability districts as well as provide an alternative means of transportation for residents and visitors.

Additionally, there is an opportunity for expansion to Sparks Hospital and the UAFS campus to connect the major civic uses that bring residents and visitors into Downtown (who currently do not have the means to do so). This would be a long-term implementation strategy for the City and trolley operators to consider as demand for connectivity and transit options increases.

Although the level of service may be adequate for current ridership, one-way loops on public transit routes can become problematic with higher patronage, as inevitably, a return trip takes considerable longer than an outbound, or vice versa. It is recommended that if the City moves forward on the trolley route expansion and partners with local trolley operators to implement the program, the City should consider developing plans for how and when to transition to two-way service. This could involve increasing the vehicle count and/or modifying the route.

Rail versus Rubber

Currently, Fort Smith has a fixed rail trolley route and a rubber wheel trolley, which is available via phone call request. The fixed rail trolley is managed by volunteers, and the rubber wheel is operated by the City. Both options are viable to continue in the future, but their schedules and routes should be aligned to ensure efficient service is provided.

Other considerations include:

- Garrison Avenue might be better serviced by the rubber wheel trolley, and studies should be done to identify how that route could be integrated;
- A track-served trolley route would be more appropriate for local destinations and to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses;
- A rubber wheel trolley route could be more fiscally feasible and have more cost benefit in the long run as it is able to serve a wider spectrum of the community; and
- Both options provide opportunities for partnerships and funding sources in Downtown.

BIKEWAY **NETWORK**

In 2004, the City of Fort Smith developed a bikeway, trails, and greenway master plan as part of a complete transportation system and a healthy environment. Currently the Fort Smith Bikeway Network connects users to parks, libraries, schools and universities, and to transit system bus stops along signed roadways. The bikeway plan has been developed to ensure that long-term objectives are met. The proposed bikeway network will provide connections to the greenway system and off-road multi-use trails and serve a greater number of users with a diverse range of skills.

The new bikeway network in Fort Smith will provide residents and visitors an alternative mode of transportation that enhances the quality of life. Downtown visitors will be able to utilize the bikeway network as well as the extensive trail system to travel to businesses and activity centers. There are four bikeway classification types identified in the bikeway plan. The implementation of each of these classification types will depend on the safety and compatibility of the city street.

Bikeway Classification Types

- **Class I:** A bike path separate from the road.
- **Class II:** A bike path marked by painted lines on the road and signs.
- **Class III:** "Bike Route" signs in neighborhoods and secondary streets mark the routes designed to take riders to schools, parks, libraries and other destinations. Some bike routes provide access to the Fort Smith Transit System.
- **Class IV:** All other public streets.

The adjacent map represents the existing and proposed bikeway network in Fort Smith.

The Class I Bikeway classification is proposed along Riverfront Drive on the west side of the roadway. This would be a 12' shared-use path for both pedestrians and cyclists. The Class II Bikeway classification is proposed along the following roadways to provide connection through Downtown.

- **Towson Avenue (north to South D Street):** 6' wide bicycle lane on both sides of the roadway with a striped buffer.
- **10th Street (N. A Street to N. L Street):** 6' wide bicycle lane on the southbound travel side of the roadway with a striped buffer; this facility would act parallel to 11th Street.
- **11th Street (N. A Street to N. L Street):** 6' wide bicycle lane on the northbound travel side of the roadway with a striped buffer; this facility would act parallel to 10th Street.
- **Rogers Avenue (N. 10th Street to N. 3rd Street):** buffered bicycle lane on both sides of the roadway.
- **N. A Street (Riverfront Drive to Rogers Avenue):** 12' two way cycle track located on the south side of the roadway with a striped buffer.

The Class III Bikeway classification is proposed along the following roadways to complete the bikeway network:

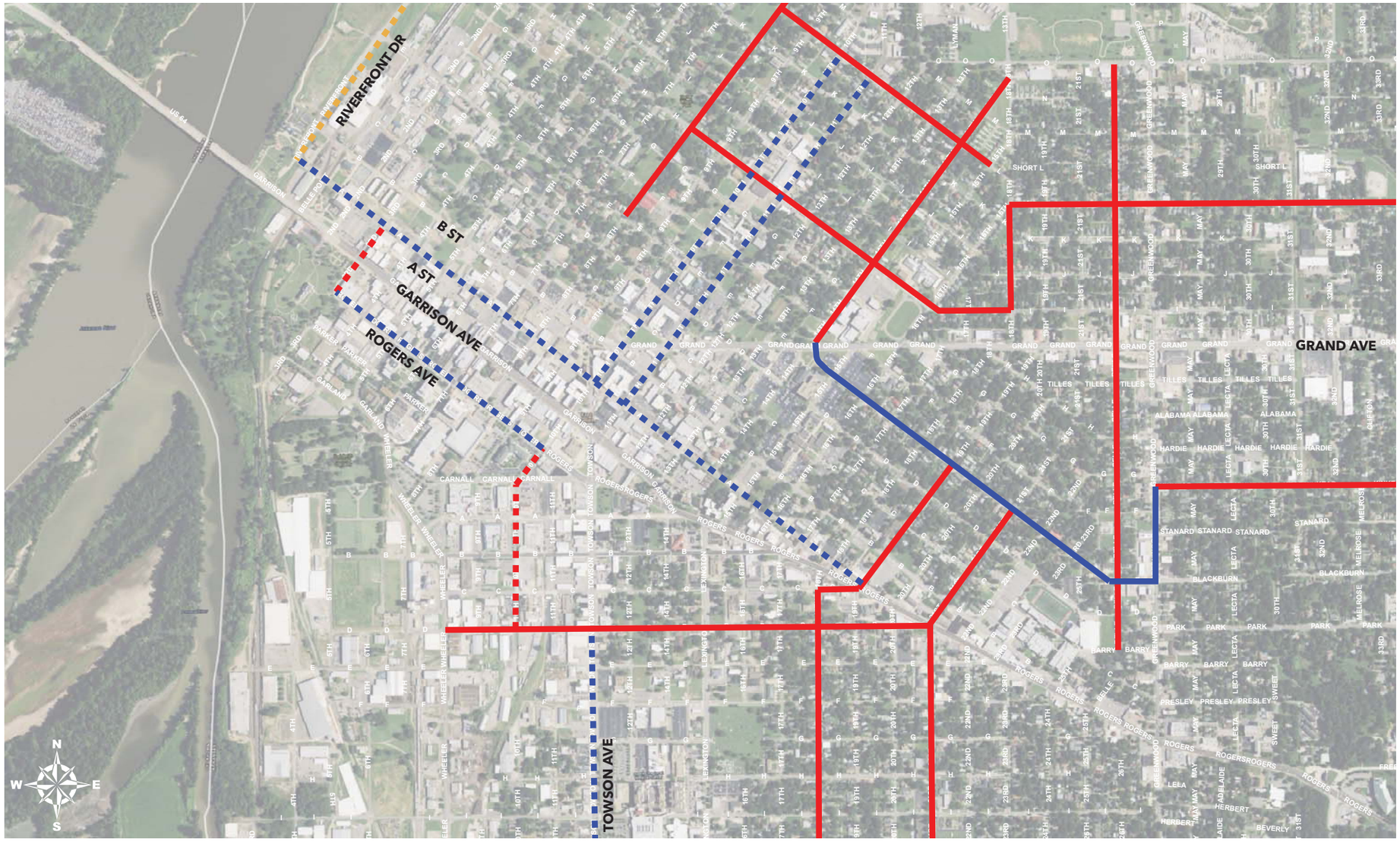
- **10th Street (D Street to Rogers Avenue):** Sharrow bicycle facility with "bike route" signs.
- **3rd Street (Rogers Avenue to A Street):** Sharrow bicycle facility with "bike route" signs.

Benefits of an Enhanced Multimodal Network

The potential to apply context sensitive designs and a Complete Streets approach throughout Downtown is important to its future growth and sustainability. This approach allows corridors to be redesigned for all people choosing to live, work, and recreate in it as well as provides equitable access for various travel modes. This shifts the traditional transportation approach to one that lays the foundation to complete neighborhoods that are business-friendly and promote active living within walkable areas.

Improving mobility and access for non-motorized and motorized transportation can facilitate greater usage of both modes, particularly for short travel in and around Downtown. A focus on increased usage of non-motorized modes of travel has been proven to provide health benefits from increased physical activity. A reduction of vehicle traffic from short-distance trips can reduce emissions (often worse when vehicle engines are first started, as well as overall parking demand.

DOWNTOWN BIKEWAY NETWORK



Class I Bike Route
Class II Bike Route
Class III Bike Route
Proposed Bikeway Facility

TRUCK TRAFFIC **DOWNTOWN**

In addition to the mix of restaurants, shops and offices lining Garrison Avenue, there are multiple industrial businesses located in Downtown Fort Smith. Many of these industrial businesses require frequent heavy truck traffic for pick-ups and deliveries to keep their businesses running efficiently. These industrial businesses are not only vital to the health of Fort Smith's growing economy, but are important to providing jobs for local residents. The City benefits from the property taxes generated by these businesses, as well as the boost in restaurant and retail businesses. However, the heavy truck traffic generated by many of these businesses presents several challenges to making Downtown an active, walkable and inviting environment, including the following issues:

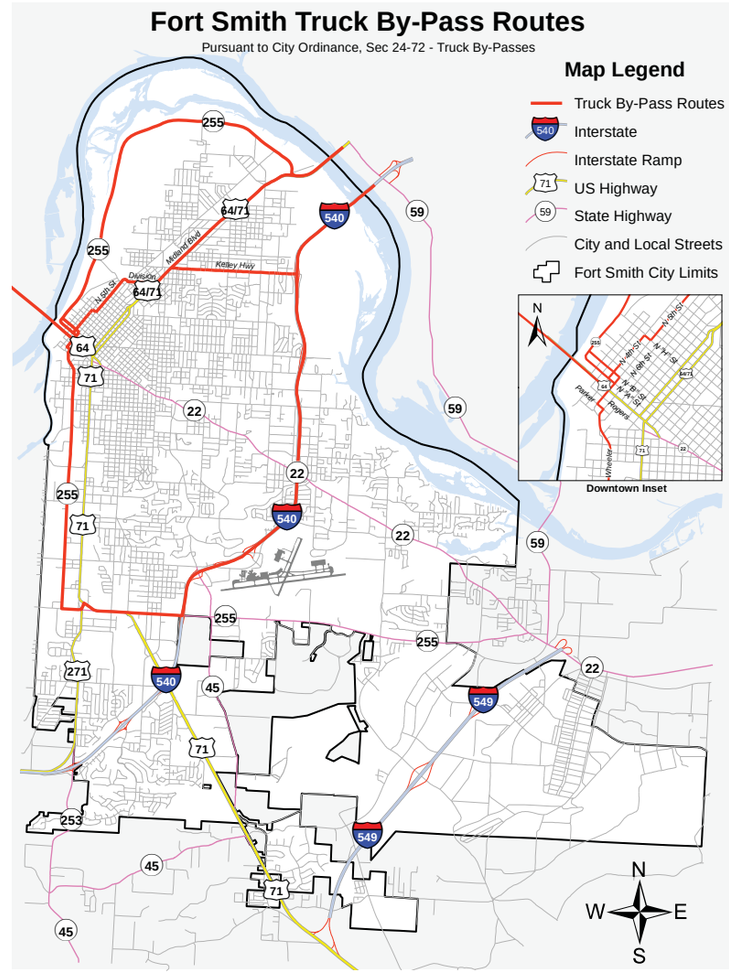
- Safety for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Noise pollution;
- Air pollution.

As efforts continue towards revitalizing Downtown and grow the local economy, it will be critical for property owners, business owners and stakeholders to work together to **identify a balanced solution that allows for continued growth and prosperity of nearby industrial businesses, while not compromising the desire to enhance the safety, aesthetic appeal and charming environment envisioned for Downtown.**

It is also important to note that the Frontier Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has placed in the July 01, 2017 - June 30, 2018 budget a traffic impact study utilizing an organization that specializes in planning and engineering. The recommendations under this section for additional study could fall under that request.

This Plan looks at the broad and direct implications for truck traffic Downtown and makes a series of recommendations in order to provide a platform for City officials and business leaders to make decisions on truck traffic in Downtown Fort Smith. Throughout the public engagement process community stakeholders expressed a desire to see the complete removal of truck traffic in Downtown and the only way to fully achieve that is by removing the truck bypass route through Downtown altogether and moving traffic to I-40 and I-540. However, the implications on local businesses and stakeholders must be fully understood and analyzed. The City must be at the table with key transportation leadership to guide decisions moving forward. The following assessment lays the groundwork for these decisions, and the subsequent recommendations reinforce the need for a new look at truck traffic in Downtown.

EXISTING TRUCK ROUTE DESIGNATIONS



Existing Conditions

Downtown is connected to the region by the bridge crossing over the Arkansas River via U.S. Highway 64 and through major arterials including Towson Avenue (U.S. Highway 71), Rogers Avenue (State Highway 22), Garrison Avenue (U.S. Highway 64), and Grand Avenue. The limited crossings of the Arkansas River have driven policy makers in the past to designate trucking routes throughout the CBID area (see adjacent image for the existing truck bypass route through Downtown). Truck traffic on Downtown streets for local delivery is a very normal situation at present; however, these designations have encouraged long-distance carriers to cut through Fort Smith's historic district.

Stakeholders have already made substantial efforts toward managing truck traffic and congestion including:

- Adopting a designated truck route through Downtown;
- Gathering data on existing truck traffic patterns;
- Working with local industrial businesses to limit heavy truck traffic during large events in Downtown Fort Smith;
- Maintaining an active dialogue between stakeholders and industrial business representatives on the issue of heavy truck traffic.

Additionally, current ROW geometries and configurations in Downtown, along with traffic patterns and signals, impact the routes and access for trucks to business in Downtown. Direct access north or south in Downtown is limited to select corridors.

Truck Traffic Strategy

Building on these current efforts of the downtown stakeholder groups, it is critical to have a clear path forward to deal with regional truck traffic through Downtown. It is important to note that in order

for progress to move forward, **a working group of City leadership and transportation stakeholders and downtown business and property owners must come together to craft a plan moving forward that either enables one or the other to move forward in the most effective way possible.** Considerations for this group should include a balance of current trucking versus future trucking patterns, as well as impacts on the neighborhoods and the catalytic projects in this plan. One major significant consideration is the ability of the emerging entertainment district on Garrison Avenue to serve as the anchor for the renaissance of Downtown.

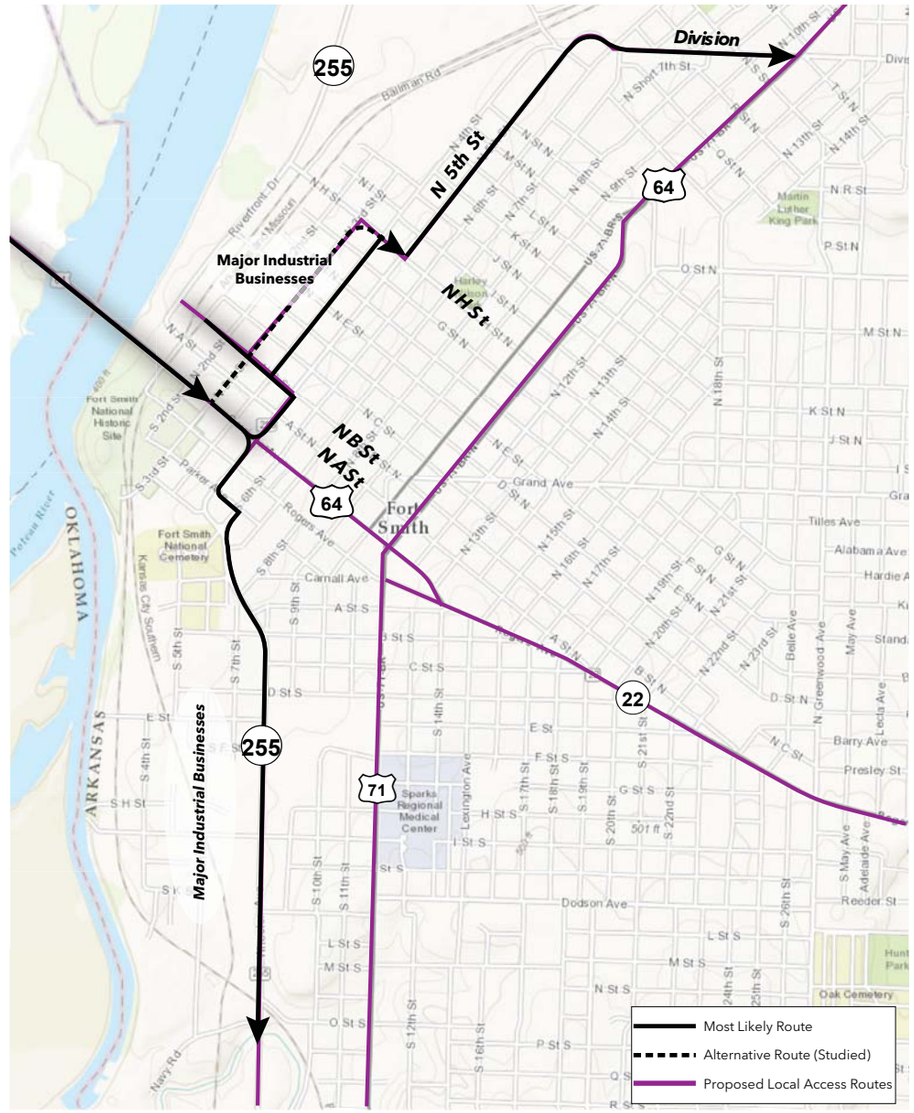
Truck Route Recommendations

- **Preserve the North 5th Street truck bypass route but force trucks to go either north or south at 5th Street.** This prevents truck traffic from continuing on Garrison Avenue and utilizes current street geometries to redirect truck traffic flow.

  This option does still have some impact to the adjacent neighborhoods, but with improved enforcement, street infrastructure and regulatory policies the impacts should be less than they are today. This route also preserves access to existing industrial and commercial buildings north and south of Garrison.
- **Active enforcement of existing designated truck route.**
  - Residents of the Belle Grove District have expressed frustration that unauthorized heavy trucks often travel through the historic neighborhood to avoid congestion or traffic lights on Garrison Avenue, increased enforcement and regulation of the truck route could help alleviate this problem.
- **Explore future removal of Riverfront Drive and North A Street from the truck route as ROW improvements get implemented.**
  - Riverfront Drive – As the planned transformation of Riverfront Drive moves forward, there is potential to work with AHTD to facilitate an agreement to take a portion of Riverfront Drive (from the planned extension of proposed Kelley Highway to A Street) off the state roadway network and under local control of the City of Fort Smith. If this occurs, then Fort Smith can consider removal of this segment from the designated truck route.

    This route recommendation is not dependent on the proposed Kelley Highway expansion moving forward. The option to

DOWNTOWN TRUCK ROUTE



Most Likely Route

Alternative Route (Studied)

Proposed Local Access Routes

extend Spradling Avenue to Riverfront Drive as an extension to the north is another consideration that the City should look into with AHTD to improve traffic flow and access north of Downtown and along the riverfront. Some concerns about the impact the proposed Kelley Highway extension could have on existing neighborhoods also make the Spradling Avenue extension a feasible option for consideration.

The Spradling Avenue extension is also a viable option to consider if Riverfront Drive is removed from the AHTD system as the direct access to Kelley Highway north is not needed. This option could also make more fiscal sense to the City in terms of funding and financing strategies, but a more detailed study should be undertaken to understand this corridor's full potential and impact.

- North A Street – Currently, A Street and B Street function as a one-way pair. However, as each corridor becomes a two-way street, B Street's design for wider lanes and no bicycle facilities will better accommodate heavy truck traffic. This would allow A Street to function as a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly corridor that is free of truck traffic.

- **Alternatively, a truck route option was considered where trucks would turn on North 3rd Street** to make the route more efficient and to potentially lessen the impact on the Belle Grove Historic Neighborhood. With appropriate design regulations and policies in place, this alternative should also have minimal impact on future development opportunities along North 3rd Street, especially as the market forces shift and redevelopment in infill parcels along the corridor become more viable.

  Current roadway geometries on N. 3rd Street would limit truck turns north, however, with design improvements the intersection could be made feasible for truck traffic. On-street parking from Garrison Avenue to N. B Street would need to be removed. To test this scenario an AutoTurn analysis was successfully run for a WB-50 truck.

The map on the previous page illustrates the preferred truck route bypass options through Downtown.

Overall Considerations

The options presented in this plan are preliminary and subject to testing block-by-block for each route. The City and transportation leadership or businesses should partner to run test scenarios on select routes through Downtown at different times throughout the week.

The following recommendations should be considered within the context of a regional and downtown truck route as further refinement and testing is completed. These recommendations require inter-agency coordination and should be undertaken in a phased approach so as the public and private sectors experience as minimal disruption as possible.

- Under either scenario, the truck traffic on 3rd Street or 5th Street will increase and should be taken into consideration.
- There is concern that the removal of Riverfront Drive from the truck bypass route would increase truck traffic on North 3rd Street as it is not currently designed to handle that heavy of traffic movement. In addition to design options, it is recommended additional study be undertaken and updates to truck bypass routes done in a way that does not immediately disrupt traffic flow.
- **Continue to work with and expand the mutual agreement with existing industrial businesses** to limit deliveries during large-scale events and peak activity times in Downtown, such as Monday through Thursday truck traffic times and a limit on traffic Friday through Sunday.
- **Develop a new truck bypass route map** clearly outlining the required truck route.
- **Increase bypass route enforcement in partnership with the City and local businesses** to ensure the transition to a new bypass route is done effectively.
- **Update signage in Downtown and on regional routes** to reflect local service deliveries only.

These recommendations provide a framework to facilitate local dialogue among the City, transportation stakeholders, and downtown business and property owners. This collaborative, solution-focused working group should discuss short and long-term outcomes that create a dynamic quality of place that continues to embrace downtown trucking commerce.

BREWERY
BRICK TOWN
BRICKTOWN
Adelaide
GipsonCrane
FT. SMITH, AR

IMPLEMENTATION

ARVEST
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IMPLEMENTATION

ACTIVATION

Successful implementation for this initiative requires the activation of key opportunities identified throughout this process and in the coordination and alignment with Downtown governance organization. The following activation items, whether alone or in conjunction with development in the catalytic areas, supports the vision crafted throughout the Initiative and can serve as "quick wins" for the community.

Downtown activation revolves around three broad categories that are each reinforced through the catalytic development opportunities and policy recommendations. Media and public relations efforts discussed under this category emphasize near-term opportunities the community can take advantage of to bring more awareness to Propelling Downtown Forward, as well as ways to help implement some of the other larger-scale projects. Stakeholder feedback centered largely on the ability to get more destinations in Downtown to bolster economic development, urban residential choices and entertainment options. Additionally, transportation throughout Downtown needs to be improved to support better connectivity and walkability, as well as the option to travel around without a vehicle. Transportation also reiterates the importance of the Arkansas River as not just a natural amenity or tourist attraction, but as a mode of transit.

The following recommendations are not all inclusive of the parallel "quick wins" and activation opportunities in Downtown, but are key opportunities uncovered during this Initiative and possibly catalytic to other activation events in the community.

Media + Public Relations

The momentum and public interest garnered from the Propelling Downtown Fort Smith Initiative, as well as with the U.S. Marshals Museum investment in Downtown and continued success of The Unexpected, has created a string of key opportunities and efforts for implementation in Downtown. For example, The Unexpected's social media outreach campaign reached over 5.3 million people with almost 1,300 downloads of the app and 45,000 page views. Propelling Downtown Forward's ability to coordinate and integrate with this already successful Downtown activation strategy catalyzed reinvestment and re-interest in Downtown.

Additionally, since the design charrette presentation in September 2016, the public space at the Grand Avenue intersection (identified as a development opportunity in the Cisterna area) has been transformed into a cultural art destination thanks to D*Face and the "War Paint" companion piece arrows. This installation was due in part to the participation of the Choctaw Nation and reinforces the need for community space and multi-organizational alignment in Downtown.

Continued implementation for this effort can be undertaken with the 64.6 Downtown's website and continued media presence. Future events, implementation efforts, presentations, business openings, construction projects, etc., could all be advertised and housed here to show the progress Downtown is making in coordination with Propelling Downtown Forward. Additionally, this plan could be housed there for the public to download and reference as they make their own investments in the community.

Some other opportunities in the near future for media engagement and parallel "quick wins" in the community include:

- Fort Smith's Bi-Centennial Celebration in December 2017;
- Temple Live's opening in 2017;
- The newly formed Downtown Business Association and updated website;
- Gateway entry at Rogers and Garrison Avenue intersection;
- The Fort Smith Convention and Visitor's Bureau website; and
- The updated City of Fort Smith's website.

Each of these events and online engagement opportunities are places where "quick wins" for Downtown can take foothold and help generate interest in moving the larger development opportunities forward.

Destinations

The following destination activation opportunities reinforce investment and development in the character areas, as well as show how continued integration into the urban fabric of Downtown can reinforce public and private investment and connectivity to the neighborhoods.

FARMER'S MARKET SQUARE

N. 2nd Street shown as a plaza extension with the Farmer's Market Square

Farmer's Market Square

One of the existing Downtown destinations, the Farmer's Market has a strong local and regional presence that could be enhanced and made into a larger community destination as a whole. The role of the Farmer's Market came into consideration during the initial stakeholder feedback sessions as an opportunity for public space expansion due to its proximity to the Park at West End, the splash pad, Ferris Wheel and Patrick's Burger.

Examples of temporary plazas or complete street designs.

This location currently sits on a city-owned parking lot that is fairly underutilized outside of key Downtown events. With the new Farmer's Market Square this parking lot could be envisioned as an extensive public open space extension central to character areas in Downtown. Urban design improvements could be integrated into the space, like screening through the construction of a historical façade (similar to the historically-significant façade across Garrison Avenue) along the street and sidewalk not only to protect the space from Garrison Avenue traffic but to continue the pedestrian experience from Garrison into the Riverfront. The remaining space would be an open space pavilion with amenities for vendors and possible shade structures for visitors to encourage families and individuals to stay in Downtown.

Alongside these improvements, two additional expansions or enhancement options for the Farmer's Market Square were discussed and should be considered. The first potential expansion is the possible extension of North 2nd Street between the Park at West End and the Farmer's Market. The second A Street from Belle Point Place to North 2nd Street to create a better connection between Compass Park and the Pavilion, without sacrificing vehicular movement. The image on page 67 is an example of how these projects could be implemented.

The first project, the extension of the Farmer's Market Square across 2nd Street, could extend the park and the market to support pedestrian safety between the two locations. The City could install movable bollards at the end of each street to allow for temporary closures. **City leadership and property owners would need to have strategic discussions about activating the Farmer's Market space and ensure the managing structure has the resources to manage the programming and activation of the area.**

The second project, the potential enhancement of North A Street between Belle Point Place and 2nd Street, requires additional coordination between land owners, the City and local businesses, but does open the opportunity for reconnection of the park and pavilion behind the Park at West End. The adjacent diagram shows how this complete street design could be undertaken while still maintaining traffic flow and business services on North A, B and 2nd Streets.

Additionally, special paving with sidewalk enhancements could be installed from the Farmer's Market Square to the park to provide a safe pedestrian realm and encourage walkability between the two locations. This project also allows more efficient and programmable space at the pavilion and park, allowing more events and festivities to occur Downtown and in concert with the Riverfront. The utilization of this extra open space also bookends Downtown with usable community spaces, both along the river and at Garrison Plaza with Cisterna Park.

In order for the North A Street conversion to occur, several coordination items need to be undertaken on the public and private side. **The conversion on A Street should not extend past Belle Point Place or the railroad tracks to maintain access to the riverfront and the business services located along that thoroughfare.** Additionally, once a railroad crossing has been removed it cannot be reopened, and the City of Fort Smith should not pursue that removal. Additionally, the businesses located along 2nd Street require the alley to provide service and deliveries. This alleyway should be maintained and proper access granted to vehicles during certain hours of the day for deliveries and as needed for special events. The City should work with local land and business owners, as well as park operators, to ensure that appropriate access is maintained and managed.

Garrison Plaza @ Cisterna Park

One of the most significant statements made by stakeholders during the feedback sessions was the need for more public plazas and open space in Downtown, especially since Downtown's core is not a historic courthouse square like most typical historic downtown communities. The spaces that do exist in Downtown are disconnected and do not have continuous programming or adequate space for programming. The reinvented Cisterna Park into Garrison Plaza not only supports better traffic flow through Downtown, but provides a public square that can also serve as a gateway into the community.

In order for Garrison Plaza to happen several pieces of this master plan must be in place, including the North A and B Street conversion, the Grand Avenue intersection reinvention, as well as the closure of the short Towson Avenue segment east of the current Cisterna Park.

Additionally, a management and programming strategy must also be undertaken in order to fully utilize the plaza's full programming potential and its ability to best serve the community. This management structure could also be coordinated with the Farmer's Market Square strategy to align uses and events in the spaces.

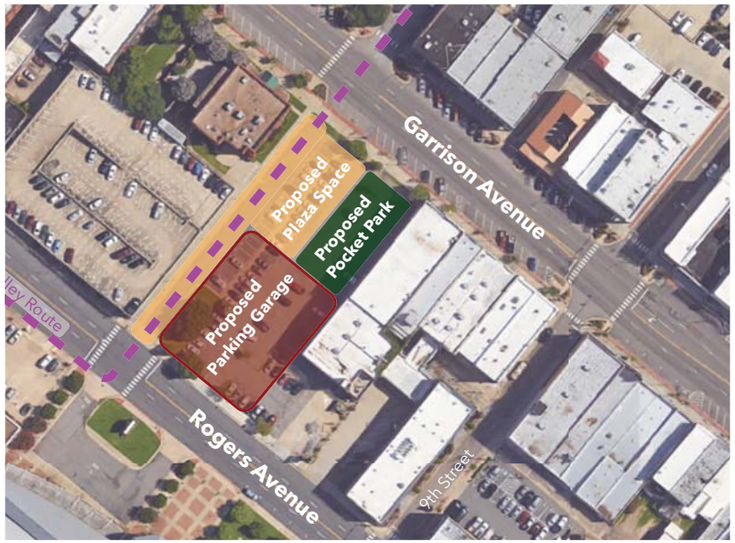
Other Opportunities for Parklets + Plazas

Additional "quick wins" in Downtown revolve around the installation of parklets and plazas throughout the community that provide respite for pedestrians and bicyclists as they walk store-to-store, or as small venues for outdoor dining at the businesses. Similar spaces to this already exist in Fort Smith, like Garrison Commons, and can be quickly and easily implemented through coordination with the City, building and business owners, and the future downtown management organization.

Convention Center Plaza + City-Owned Parking Garage

The Convention Center is a key economic driver opportunity

CONVENTION CENTER PLAZA



in Downtown that could be integrated and reconnected to the momentum along Garrison Avenue. This project extends South 8th Street from Garrison Avenue to Rogers Avenue and makes it for pedestrian and trolley traffic only. The current surface parking lot could be converted into an opportunity for a mixed-use development and extended public parking to create a safer and more visually aesthetic connection from the Convention Center to Downtown.

Additionally, the city-owned parking garage could be expanded to increase available parking and to better connect Convention Center visitors to the rest of the community. Adjacent to the parking garage a small plaza could be integrated to transition the sidewalk and garage façade to the civic corridor that highlights the painted wall "Catira." Another key connectivity and respite opportunity, the proposed trolley route could stop at this parking garage, allowing people to park once as they visit Downtown.

Industrial Arts

The extensive infill opportunity throughout the Industrial Arts area along with the existing industrial and warehouse presence means that the integration of parklets and plazas is incredibly important. These opportunities should be undertaken in context of the flood plain designation currently in the area as well, which could also provide stormwater and water management solutions as a public amenity.

The installation of these plazas should also go along the trolley route at key stops and at the terminus by the U.S. Marshals Museum will not only provide additional safety for riders and pedestrians, but will encourage more people to utilize the transit system throughout Downtown because investment has been made at key sites throughout the community. Small kiosks, cafes, restaurants or art installations could be installed throughout this area, and these products could reinforce the investment already made through The Unexpected and the extensive talent and time invested throughout the Downtown neighborhood, not just along Garrison Avenue.

In that context, it is also important in the Industrial Arts area that parklets and plazas reinforce the connectivity opportunities to the Belle Grove Neighborhood and the Riverfront. A large park or plaza is not necessary in this area because of how close each activation area is to the existing large open spaces along the Riverfront or the proposed plazas along Garrison Avenue. These spaces need to be about the neighborhood just as much as about visitors or the people passing through.

Towson Avenue Alley Woonerf ("Complete Street")

The Towson Avenue corridor's integration into Downtown's urban fabric is reinforced through the streetscape and roadway improvements that encourage pedestrian activity and safety. Alongside these improvements, this master plan proposes the utilization of the alleyways between Rogers Avenue and South D Street to create a unique experience that is not found anywhere else in Fort Smith. The catalytic opportunity illustrated in this plan focuses on these improvements through the use of a woonerf (see page 40). A woonerf is a Dutch term that means "living street" with complete integration of pedestrian-friendly spaces, slower vehicular speeds, if any, and street trees, furniture, lighting, etc.

Building on the existing buildings and character already established in the community, the conversion of the oft-neglected alleyway into an urban oasis with lighting, outdoor dining, art installations, small business frontages, paving and landscaping supports the opportunity for Downtown to extend into the Towson neighborhood.

In order for this type of project to be realized, coordination among several entities is necessary. This includes the land owners, business owners, the downtown governing body and City staff. Implementation of this project is intended only to support or enhance the businesses already in existence and to provide opportunity for additional businesses to locate in the area. Private and public funding options would need to be explored, and potential public events advertising the alleyway expansion through unique festivals and exhibits could be undertaken to help garner community support.

Mobility

The following mobility initiatives support activation through Downtown outside the ROW and in conjunction with the recommended street improvements discussed in the Mobility chapter. These recommendations are intended to support enhanced transit means and methods through Downtown as well as reinforce the need for a connected network as Downtown continues to grow.

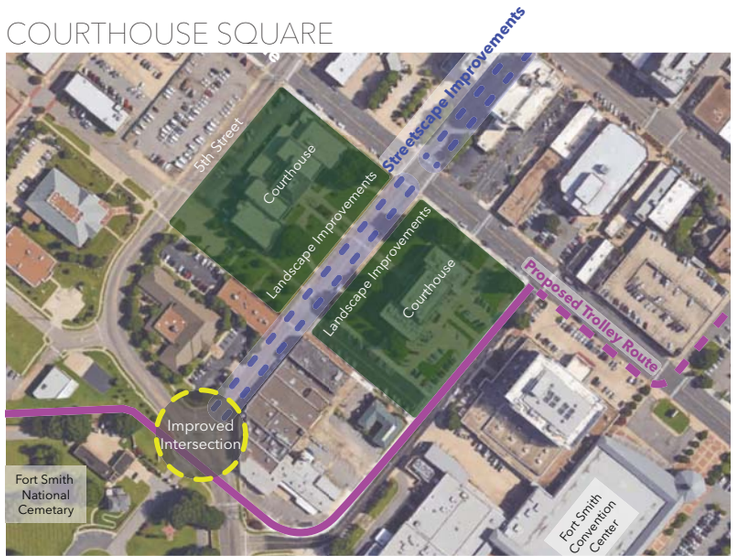
Linking Expanded Trolley Destinations

As previously discussed in this plan, the trolley route already in existence in Downtown has the potential to become more than just a tourist destination and historic emblem. The trolley can function as a people mover and transit option for visitors and locals, reducing the need to drive between destinations or absolving the perceived lack of safety for pedestrians. An expanded trolley route (see map on page 57) needs to be coordinated among the Trolley Museum leadership, Fort Smith Transit, CBID, City staff and the Belle Grove Neighborhood Historic Commission to ensure potential stops, installation, schedules and funding is aligned.

Courthouse Square + Streetscaping

The connections between the Civic area and Garrison Avenue are incredibly important for pedestrian transitions and activation. The opportunities for infill and reintegration from the Convention Center down Rogers Avenue to the small cluster of infill housing and multifamily to the National Historic Site are all happening in real time and development is taking place in these often glanced over pockets of Downtown. However, the reinforcement of connectivity through the perpendicular streets

COURTHOUSE SQUARE

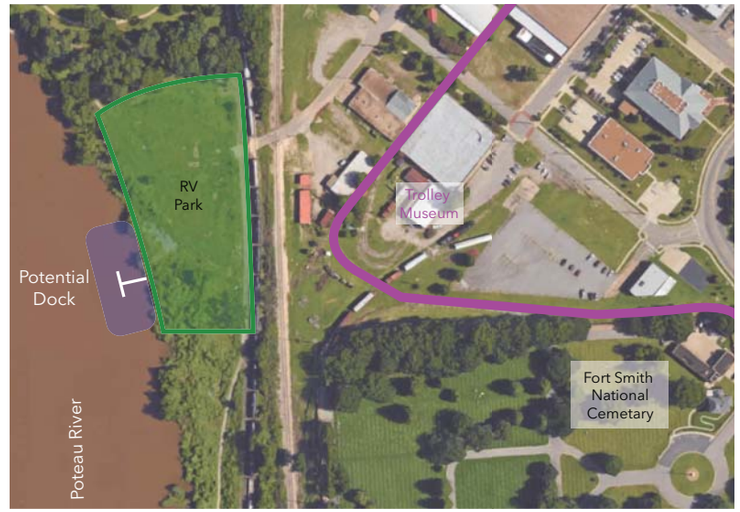


provides the opportunity for improved streetscaping, small plazas, art spaces and trolley connections. The plaza and open space in front of the Courthouse on South 6th Street are a prime example of this opportunity. Intersection improvements could be undertaken to facilitate pedestrian movement and encourage people to walk to restaurants on Garrison Avenue. The landscape improvements would also help activate the open space for employees and day visitors to the Courthouse.

Key coordination between City staff, Courthouse and County leadership and 64.6 Downtown would be required to engage the improvements and efforts to activate the spaces. After these initial coordination efforts, architectural and engineering plans should be crafted alongside a funding plan to generate a timeline for implementation.

Another potential opportunity is the closure of the South 6th Street intersection at Garland Avenue not only to allow for safer traffic flow along Garland Avenue, but to provide a more conducive environment for pedestrians and open space or parklet integration. It is important that should the City opt to implement this project that parking access for Hanna Oil & Gas employees be maintained through appropriate ingress and egress design. This project would require coordination among the

TRANSIENT DOCK + RV PARK



City, the Courthouse, landowners and business owners to understand traffic implications, design utilization and overall management.

Marina + Transient Dock

The Arkansas River Connection Organization is a nonprofit organization that seeks to analyze and connect tourist, recreational and entertainment attractions along the Arkansas River using multimodal forms of transportation for the purposes of expanding economic development and improving quality of life. Through initial site visits and the design charrette it was discovered that there are two possible locations in Downtown ideal for a full-service marina and a transient dock. These locations would provide opportunities to accommodate recreational boat and RV users as well as add to the trail and transportation options that already exist throughout Downtown.

The potential full-service marina could be located on a small tributary and surrounding land on a privately-owned site on Riverfront Drive near the North P Street intersection. This location is on the River West Trail, which also links to the future U.S. Marshals Museum and the heart of Downtown. The fueling dock could be located on the river side of

ARKANSAS RIVER MARINA

the River West Trail Bridge with the individual slips accommodating various size boats located on both sides of the tributary. The main marina facility would ideally have services that would not only support the operation of the marina itself but also the users of the trail system, which could include a restaurant, bar and retail uses.

The potential transient dock could be located on the Poteau River adjacent to a tract of land that could accommodate an RV park as well. This site is between the Fort Smith Historic Site, the Fort Smith Trolley Museum and the Fort Smith National Cemetery. The dock would be about 150' to 200' in length and would be linear to the river bank. Ancillary buildings by the dock could include restrooms, offices, event space, outdoor pavilions and other amenities.

These facilities could reinforce riverfront investment in Downtown and serve as additional entertainment destinations for businesses and economic development in the community. The implementation of these efforts would require significant coordination between property owners, facility management, the City of Fort Smith and Arkansas River organizations. A subsequent step would be to undertake a feasibility study to understand the cost estimates and revenue potential.

Capital Improvement Budget for Catalytic Investment

Cost estimates were completed to provide an understanding for capital improvements for several projects discussed in this Plan and through the conceptual design phase. These costs are intended to assist stakeholders and agency champions with an order of magnitude assessment for future Capital Improvement Planning (CIP) purposes. The costs were developed based on the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department Program Management Division Weighted Average Unit Prices. In instances where there were no applicable unit costs available, costs were based on similar project experience. All costs include contingency to accommodate project design costs and cost overruns. Costs estimates are priced in today's dollars; no inflation has been applied for year of expenditure. These costs are subject to change based on local market conditions.

The projects detailed in these estimates include the recommended improvements to 10th and 11th Streets, A and B Streets, Riverfront Drive, Garrison Plaza and the two alternatives for the Grand Avenue intersection and gateway into Downtown. The adjacent table shows the approximate estimated construction cost, design cost (at 8%), contingency (at 30%) and the total cost for each project. A more detailed line item breakdown of the projects is included as an Appendix to this plan.

These cost estimates should be used to establish next steps and action items for moving forward with the PropelFS vision. The City and private sector partners should coordinate within the CIP and redevelopment framework to best understand what projects not only make sense to implement sooner rather than later. **These improvements would also require the City to come to the table and actively participate in discussions to move these plans or designs forward.**

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE FIVE TRIBES

History is replete with the details of the role of Fort Smith in disputes between the Osage Tribe and the Cherokees, the Trail of Tears and Judge Parker's jurisdiction over Indian Territories. Today, the Cherokees and tribal members of the other Five Civilized Tribes play an important role in the community and economy of the greater Fort Smith region.

With a preeminent position in the entertainment business in Eastern Oklahoma across the Arkansas River, the Cherokees' casinos attract a substantial amount of tourism and commerce to the region. That substantial commerce provides an opportunity for affiliated partnerships for non-gambling entertainment venues in Downtown Fort Smith in order to leverage mutually the economic gravity of the Tribe's business.

Culturally, the Tribes, Fort Smith, the U.S. Marshals and the National Park Service have collaborated over the years on many projects. Most recently as part of The Unexpected, artist D*Face in collaboration with the Choctaw Tribe designed and installed The Arrows at North 11th Street and Grand Avenue. This plan provides a platform for continued project-level cooperation such as The Arrows.

CATALYTIC PROJECT COST ESTIMATES

PROJECT	CONSTRUCTION COST	DESIGN COST (8%)	CONTINGENCY (30%)	TOTAL
North 10th Street Conversion	$94,110.75	$7,528.86	$30,491.88	$132,131.49
North 11th Street Conversion	$94,161.95	$7,532.96	$30,508.47	$132,203.38
North A Street with Sharrow/Bike Lane	$1,040,799.74	$83,263.98	$337,219.12	$1,461,282.83
North A Street with Two-Way Cycle Track	$1,267,502.10	$101,400.17	$410,670.68	$1,779,572.95
North B Street Conversion	$1,428,145.24	$114,251.62	$462,719.06	$2,005,115.92
Riverfront Drive (Kelley Hwy to N. H Street)	$2,118,953.28	$169,516.26	$686,540.86	$2,975,010.41
Riverfront Drive (U.S. Marshals Museum)	$504,312.46	$40,345.00	$163,397.24	$708,054.24
Riverfront Drive (H Street to A Street)	$1,063,700.50	$85,096.04	$344,638.96	$1,493,435.50
Garrison Plaza	$845,143.40	$67,611.47	$253,543.02	$1,166,297.89
Grand Avenue Intersection (Alternative 1)	$729,274.60	$58,341.97	$236,284.97	$1,023,901.54
Grand Avenue Intersection (Alternative 2)	$721,704.40	$57,736.35	$233,832.23	$1,013,272.98
			TOTAL (Approximate)	**$11,415,723.76**

PUBLIC POLICY

Zoning + Design Standards

The successful implementation of this Plan requires the proper zoning tools to be in place to enable the building types and mix of uses imagined. Both the content of this plan and the *Future Fort Smith Comprehensive Plan* cast a strong vision for what the community desires to see as it continues to grow and evolve into a regional destination and driver.

The extensive planning work completed in both this Downtown Plan and the 2014 Future Fort Smith Comprehensive Plan highlights the gap between much of the existing building form and what is desired by the community. The good news is there is a strong historic foundation to build on, but the right tools need to be in place so that future investments are built in a cohesive manner. Therefore, a Downtown specific form-based code that is responsive to the block and building scale is needed in order for Downtown Fort Smith to be activated to the next level. When the next steps are taken for creation of a Downtown Form-Based Code, the following recommendations should be considered.

Creation of a New Zoning Framework

The existing zoning and land use should be used as a reference and starting point, but it is evident that the existing Euclidean zoning is not

*The D*Face and Choctaw arrow installation as part of The Unexpected (Source: Gateway Planning)*

the right tool for a complex downtown with an eclectic mix of uses and historic building context that desires infill development in a walkable form. The use base districts need to be replaced with "Character Zones" that are part of a Form-Based Code that in some ways will reflect similar uses as the base district but will allow building form and location on the lot be the primary driver. In many ways a Form-Based Code hearkens back to more simplistic building codes that may have existed when the original downtown was built. These regulations are more concerned with the form of a building and providing predictability in the built environment building to building and block to block rather than regulating primarily on a list of uses. In some cases the boundaries of the Character Zones may be similar to the existing use base districts, but a more nuanced evaluation can be made on the logical locations where existing and anticipated transitions can be made between Character Zones. Finally, the existing use table should be replaced with one that is more fitting with the existing and anticipated range of uses in Downtown and be organized to correspond with the new Character Zones. This new table will facilitate the administration of the code in a complex area of the city.

Integrate and Bolster Existing Design Guidelines in New Code

Both the 2010 CBID and Belle Grove Historic Design Guidelines can be referenced and integrated into the new Form-Based Code. A historic downtown needs to be flexible in land use, allowing evolution with market demands, while maintaining a higher degree of design attention. Well-executed design guidelines will provide for clear administration, encourage new construction that is compatible with the historic buildings and encourage preservation of the historic buildings.

Facilitate the Evolution to a Walkable Downtown

The case was made in several of the stakeholder groups that Downtown has "good bones," but the challenge is building on that skeleton to making it a vibrant downtown. This is done by changing the priority of movement in a through Downtown to reorient the speed and scale from a primacy of vehicle throughput to a pedestrian walking scale. This is accomplished by pairing the recommended transportation network improvements with the new code so that there is a symbiotic relationship between what happens within the ROW and the adjacent building typologies. The streetscape frontages of buildings are a key area of focus in a form-based code because they act as the portal that connects the public realm and the private realm, and a well-executed building frontage is key for success in both those realms.

Encourage "Missing Middle" and Transitional Building Types

Commercial Corridors - The aging commercial corridors, such as Garrison Avenue, Towson Avenue, N. A and B Streets, and 10th and 11th Streets, are opportunities to absorb future growth and mid-scale mixed use development. However, existing commercial zoning is not nuanced enough to facilitate a mixing of uses, a variety of building types and walkable parking considerations for a hybrid urban environment.

Residential - Infill housing opportunities as transitions from corridors and interspersed in some existing neighborhoods need to be accommodated in a nuanced way, such as in the Cisterna Area or in the Industrial Arts. There are zoning categories in the existing zoning code that allow for some "missing middle" housing types, townhouses, duplexes, small multifamily, etc., that may have some elements applicable to the goal of encouraging infill housing, however, there are some Euclidian zoning elements, like setbacks and lot sizes, that would not necessarily encourage infill development and reinvestment in the neighborhoods surrounding Downtown. A variety of housing types is necessary to provide a nighttime population in and around Downtown that bolster retail and restaurant uses. In addition, a variety of housing types will meet the needs across life stages and provide housing that will attract and retain a vibrant workforce.

Industrial – The Industrial areas need to remain in some capacity, but a closer look needs to be taken on how transition considerations can be applied to the edges so uses and building types can accommodate the contrast from more intense industrial uses to an urban mixed-use neighborhood or commercial corridor.

Address Parking in a Context Sensitive Manner

Downtowns are places where parking is necessary but does not need to be overbearing. The parking recommendations in this plan highlight that parking is more often than not a management and coordination issue rather than a supply issue. If parking is not provided in a sufficient amount Downtown will perish; if it is over emphasized the Downtown will lose is character. Therefore, the Form-Based Code will need to accommodate parking but in a context where the building form is given primacy and creative management is encouraged. Parking requirements for Downtown should be reduced to reflect the walkable context, and tools like cross-access agreements, shared parking agreements and on-street parking allowances can be used to address parking requirements.

Streamline Entitlement and Preservation Process

The Downtown Form-Based Code needs to make it easy to build in an appropriate manner for Downtown that reflects the collective vision of the numerous stakeholders in Downtown Fort Smith. A clear and

well-defined zoning code will encourage private sector reinvestment by reducing entitlement risk and providing a sense of predictability for investments by knowing what future development will look and act like around a given parcel.

The Relationship of the CBID + the Belle Grove Historic District to the Anticipated Form-Based Code

The Central Business Improvement District (CBID) and the Belle Grove Historic District act as anchors to preserve and enhance the historic and commercial building assets of Downtown. One of the implementation efforts for this plan will be the development and activation of a form-based code to encourage additional development and redevelopment consistent with the plan. The CBID and Historic District will be considered carefully and woven into the proposed form-based code - a land development regulation that focuses on a high quality public realm via building form - and vice versa.

The Fort Smith Historic Preservation Ordinance states that "[n]o building or structure, including stone walls, fences, light fixtures, steps and paving or other appurtenant fixtures shall be erected, altered, restored, moved or demolished within the historic district until after an application for a certificate of appropriateness as to exterior architectural features has been submitted to and approved by the historic district commission pursuant to the requirements and procedures set forth in the Historic Districts Act." This important requirement for how structures in the Belle Grove Neighborhood are maintained and enhanced pose challenges and opportunities. The challenge is that there are substantial costs to maintain historic buildings; the opportunity is that as more demand for downtown living and resulting investment generally builds in Downtown, rents and values will increase providing more economic capacity for preservation. In this context, the form-based code will be calibrated to complement the design guidelines and goals of the Historic District.

The CBID provides support for the rehabilitation of structures, buildings and infrastructure within the improvement district. The form-based code will be calibrated under the vision of this plan, providing guidance on which projects should be supported by the CBID for catalytic potential. Moreover, the opportunity by the CBID to complement City investments in redesigned and reconstructed streets and sidewalks should be guided by the decisions as to which catalytic investments should be undertaken and when. In this regard, the governance structure recommended herein provides a process in which these decisions and priorities can be made.

Business Associations

In addition to the creation of a governance strategy and structure to guide the vision for Downtown is the alignment of the key business interests and establishments. The recently created Downtown Business Association is a prime example of the ways businesses and stakeholders can be leveraged to implement the vision. This type of organization is a quick-win not only for the local residents of Downtown, but for the City and partnering organizations as well. Business associations can help keep leadership accountable and ensure that the branding and marketing for Downtown is in line with the goals and policies set forth through PropelFS, the CBID, 64.6 Downtown and the City.

The business association should also take advantage of programs such as Main Street Arkansas and the Arkansas Downtown Network to support local revitalization efforts as well as identify potential funding sources for future projects.

Parking Management Strategy

Downtown Fort Smith has an abundance of parking located adjacent to commercial and retail activity on-street and off-street through public and private lots located adjacent to various public institutions and public parks. There are also two City-owned off-street parking facilities in Downtown - a parking lot located off of Garrison Avenue and North 3rd Street and a parking garage structure located off Rogers Avenue and South 8th Street.

The PropelFS public engagement process revealed a perceived parking issue in Downtown's current network, whether it is through lack of accessible or open parking lots to underutilized on-street parking opportunities. The following recommendations look at the City's current parking options and opportunities to craft a strategy moving forward that will help align public and private interests in parking, as well as identify a mechanism to harness that parking demand into a fiscally-sound option for the City.

Key Recommendations

A parking management plan is recommended to look at the relationship of existing parking locations and determine if there is an opportunity for partnerships between Downtown property and business owners to share parking for different uses. For example, a bank building will need employee parking during the work day/business hours, but may not need employee parking on nights and weekends, opening up an opportunity to share parking with nearby restaurants and bars that need parking on nights and weekends. This will lead to an efficient level of total parking spaces to serve all uses Downtown.

Currently, there is an abundance of parking lots located in Downtown, but these locations are primarily private parking for business employees. As Downtown develops and traffic increases, a parking management plan is critical in identifying underutilized parcels or lots and making these locations more efficient for Downtown business and stakeholders. The map on the following page identifies these on-street and off-street parking opportunities and locations in Downtown, where metered and non-metered spaces are currently located, and significant private parking locations around Garrison Avenue.

The core elements of a parking management plan should take into consideration the following items in order to fully understand the opportunities and limitations of parking in Downtown.

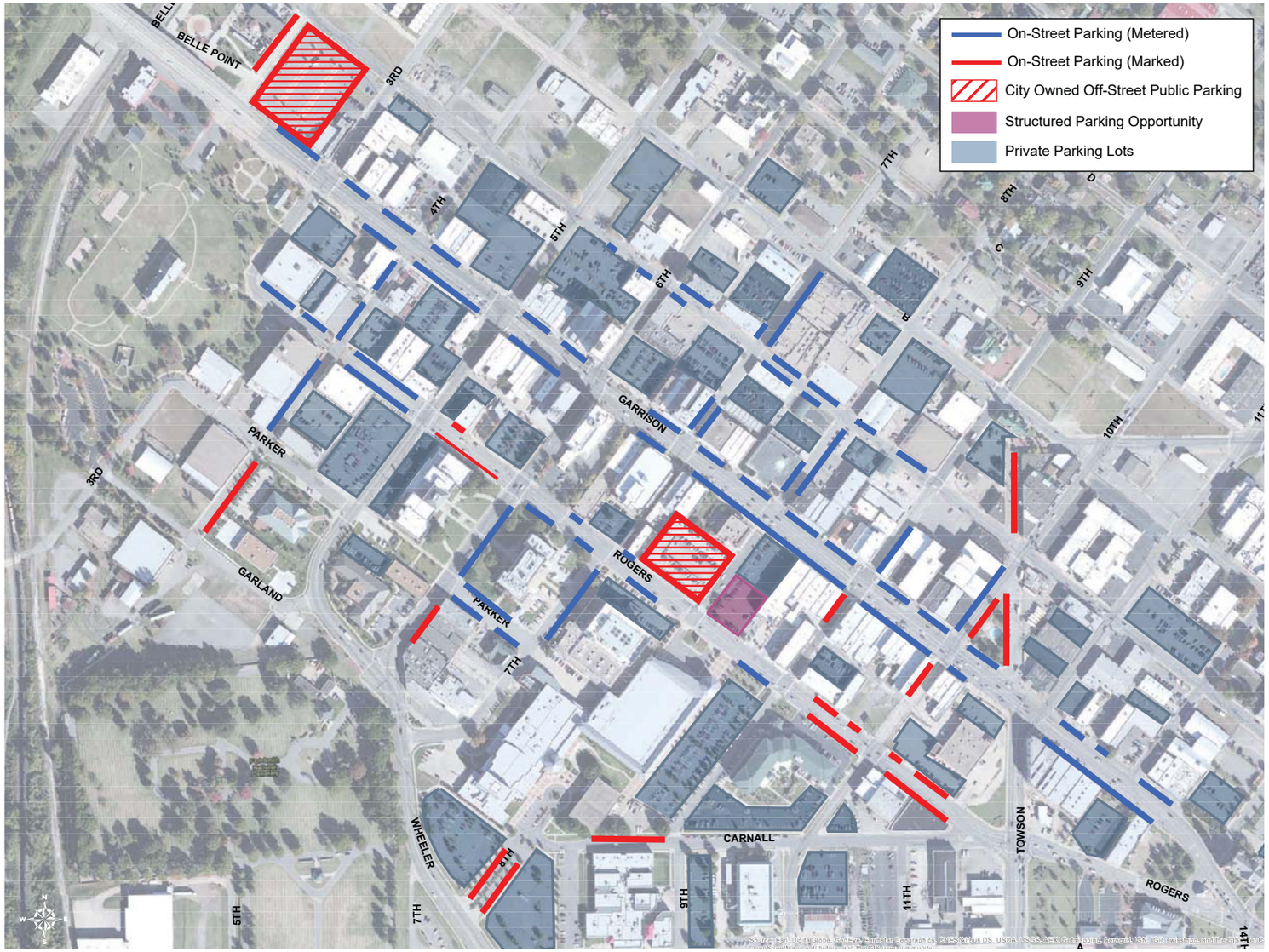
Existing Conditions

- An updated parking inventory for both on-street and off-street parking locations, as well as what parking is private and public;
- Location and utilization of parking meters (including time of day and day of week);
- Technology Assessment – what types of meters/pay systems are currently being utilized;
- Financial proforma identifying state of existing parking operations.

Parking Demand Analysis

- Evaluate parking needs for different user groups, based on the existing parking supply and demand, including:
  - Customers/visitors;
  - Residents;
  - Employer/employee parking.

DOWNTOWN FORT SMITH PARKING



Parking Needs Update

- Studies based on future growth estimates for Downtown;
- Identify opportunities for property owners to share parking and reduce overall parking space demand.

Develop Capital Needs Program

- Study how many on-street spaces are needed versus what is currently provided or not provided;
- Identify best-suited meter and pay system technologies;
- Identify additional opportunities for off-street parking.

Establish Short-Term and Daily Parking Rates

- Fort Smith's existing parking rates are well below market rates for comparable cities, and to remain financially feasible the City must increase meter rates to meet market standards;
- Existing parking fines are also too low, violators are not motivated to pay parking fees when cost of violation is viewed as more convenient to pay than the actual parking rate;
- Identify the appropriate rate levels and fine levels for Downtown Fort Smith in relation to a specific strategy for parking in the CBID;
- Do not remove any existing on-street parking meters, but look at ways to transition to new system where meters are either upgraded or rates increased.

Develop Operations Plan

- Once the parking technology is updated, there is no need for personnel hired solely for money collection. Money collected digitally or through meter system can go straight to City;
- Updated parking strategy will also reduce number of enforcement officers and personnel required;
- Parking on a maintenance schedule for capital equipment.

Develop and Adopt Parking Policies with City

- Adopt a Parking Enforcement Strategy that follows recommendations from this plan and that reinforces a consistent message that parking supply in Downtown will be monitored;
- Adopt an Employee Parking Strategy;
- Work with local businesses and event coordinators to adopt a Special Event Management protocol and strategy that best utilizes existing parking needs.

- Coordinate with expanded trolley route to move people through Downtown from shared parking facilities.

The parking management plan should also identify the creation of a Downtown Parking District, including the Riverfront. As Downtown continues to improve and serves not only as an attractor for visitors but also a place of employment, a parking district would help support the quality of life as well as provide fiscal benefits. Increased pedestrian connectivity and safety will allow people to traverse further distances from their parked car to their destination. The CBID may be the best option to create and manage the proposed parking district.

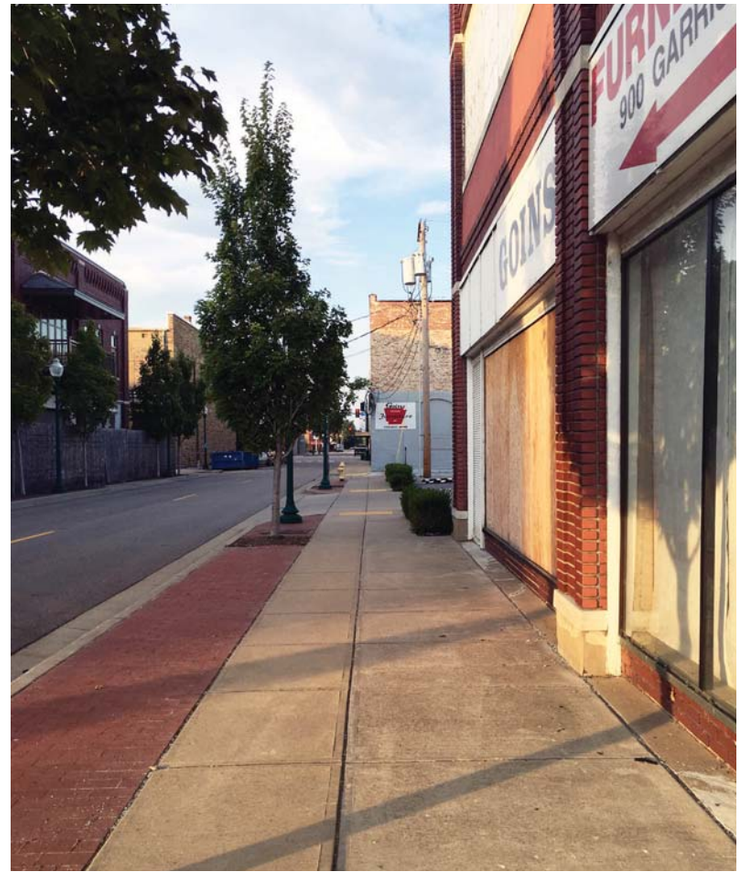
Investing in Sidewalks

Fort Smith Ordinance No. 72-85, which levies a local gross receipts sales and use tax, was re-affirmed by the voters in 2015. That ordinance allows those funds to be spent on "streets, bridges and associated drainage."

The plain definition of "streets" (*Dictionary.com*) is "a public thoroughfare, usually paved, in a village, town or city, including the sidewalks." Best practices for planning and sustainable development build on that definition by focusing on complete streets. Smart Growth America defines "complete streets" as "[those] designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians…. to walk to shops."

With those definitions in mind, common sense underscores that streets in urban areas must safely accommodate people walking in addition to driving. Hence, the plain language of the City's ordinance captures sidewalks in its definition of "streets," thus indicating that the construction and maintenance of sidewalks along City streets is an appropriate and legitimate investment of City street sales tax funds, regardless of whether the street accompanying the sidewalk undergoes improvement.

Many streets in Downtown Fort Smith will provide critical connections to the key current and future destinations and revitalized neighborhoods envisioned in the plan. Walkability of those streets can make the difference in the success and failure of restaurants and small businesses that continue to seek opportunities to harness the growing interest in urban living in Downtown. Therefore, the 1% gross receipts revenue should be considered for significant investment in the reconstruction of existing streets with a focus on those corridors highlighted in this plan.



Downtown Sidewalk and Streetscape Improvements (Source: Gateway)

GOVERNANCE

Downtown Management Structure

The following recommendations are made with the assumption that the lead organization for Downtown will not be 64.6 Downtown as it is today, but will be a combination of stakeholders and other downtown organizations leading the implementation for Propelling Downtown Forward. These recommendations do, however, take into account the amended bylaws of 64.6 Downtown dated September 23, 2016, the existing 64.6 Board and the existing 64.6 Downtown Structure.

Proposed Board Members

It is recommended that the following business categories and organizations have representation on the new Downtown Board due to their mission in the community and their status as partners in the implementation of the master plan. **The goal is to have a board that represents the private, non-profit and public sectors across Fort Smith and those also play key roles in the process of achieving the goals of the redevelopment of Downtown Fort Smith.** Some of the current 64.6 Board members should be included on this new Downtown Board, but other organizations and entities will need to be added. **It is also important to note that although there are several organizations and businesses listed, not all need to be represented on the leading Downtown Board. Committees or focus groups for particular elements of Propelling Downtown Forward could be formed to serve on an advisory basis to the Downtown Board.**

Private Sector

- 64.6 Downtown
- Corporate – Sparks Regional Medical Center, ArcBest, OK Foods, First National Bank – four to five people at CEO level
- Utilities – OGE, Arkansas Oklahoma Gas – Highest level employee in Fort Smith region
- Downtown Fort Smith CBID - Chairman of the Commissioners
- Downtown Fort Smith Business Association - Chairman
- Arkansas Missouri Railroad – General Manager

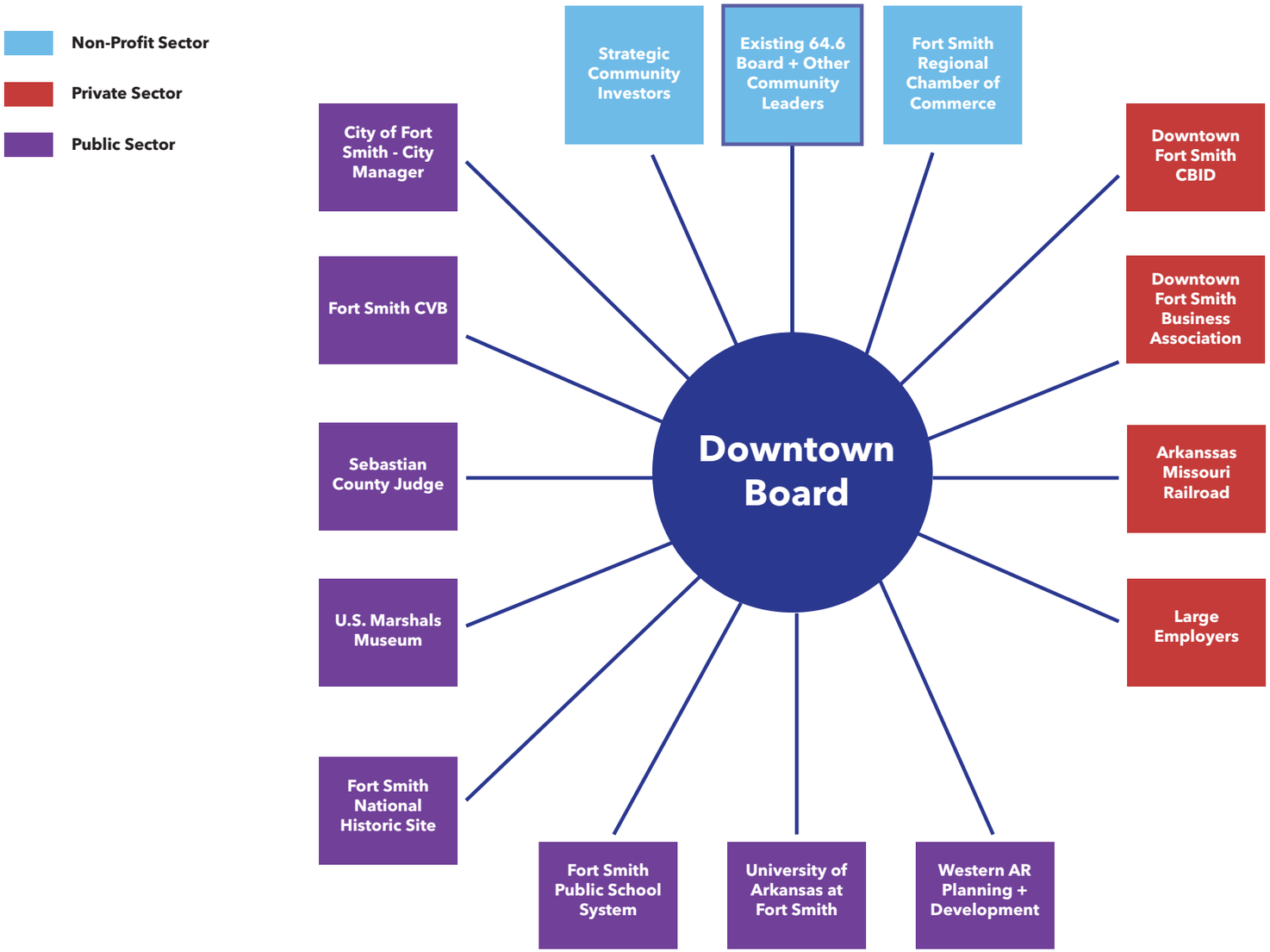
Non-Profit Sector

- Fort Smith Regional Chamber of Commerce – Executive Director
- Strategic Community Investments – Executive Director
- Fort Smith Trolley Museum

Public Sector

- City of Fort Smith – City Manager
- Fort Smith Convention & Visitors Bureau – Executive Director
- Sebastian County – County Judge

POTENTIAL BOARD + ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS



- U.S. Marshals Museum – Executive Director
- Fort Smith National Historic Site – Superintendent
- Fort Smith Public School System – Superintendent
- University of Arkansas at Fort Smith – Chancellor
- Western Arkansas Planning & Development

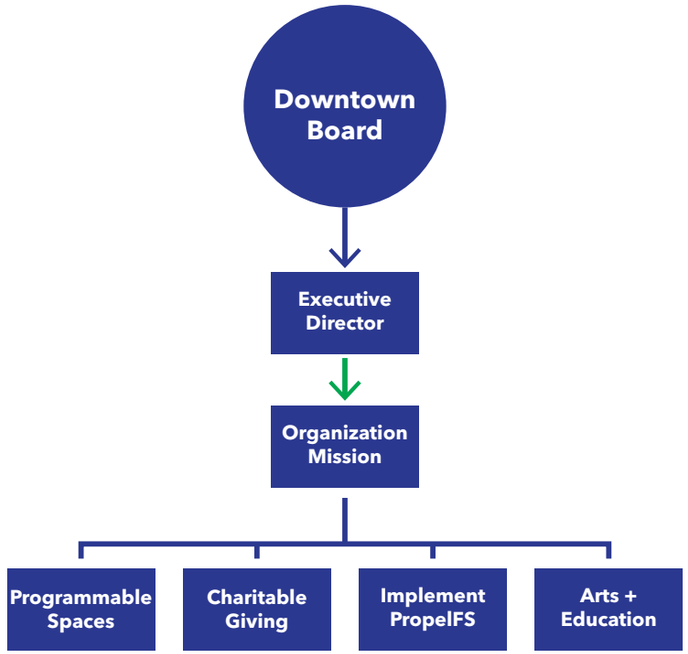
Board positions represented by these business categories would represent 24 to 28 positions, but one person could represent more than one organization. **Additionally, some of these individuals or organizations might be better utilized on an advisory committee rather than as a Board Member.** Factors influencing final board size will be a final determination by the Downtown Board. It is important that the current 64.6 Downtown board be involved as it is already comprised of members who represent the above mentioned organizations.

Proposed Executive Director

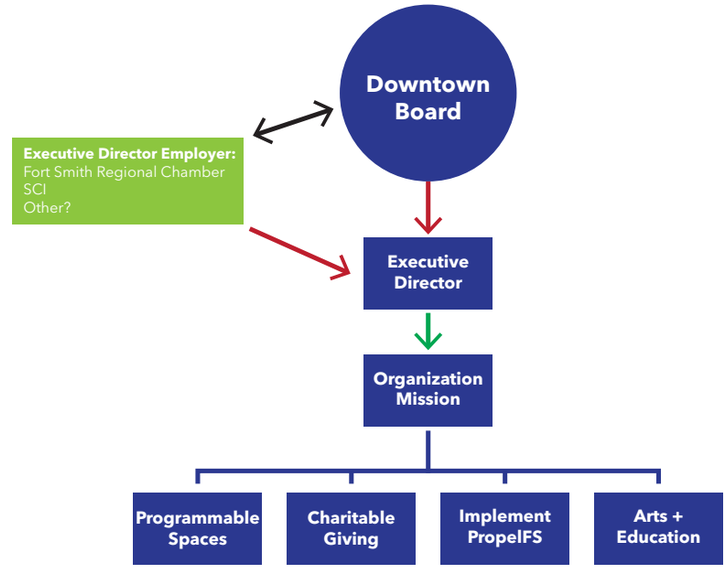
In order to carry out the mission of the 64.6 organization, which includes implementing Propelling Downtown Forward, an Executive Director for the Downtown Board must be identified and office space secured. Based on availability of resources, this position may be a direct employee or may be an employee of another partner organization that can more efficiently manage the administrative costs for that employee.

A good example of the latter is the structure the Conway Downtown Partnership's (CDP) uses in which the Executive Director is employed by the Conway Area Chamber of Commerce (CACC) but is accountable to the Downtown Partnership's board of directors. Since the CDP's inception in 2001, this role has been housed in the CACC building along with the CACC, the Conway Development Corporation and the Conway CVB. The donation of this office space, access to the CACC board room, bookkeeping and some administrative support were the CACC's membership contribution to the CDP, whose primary source of income was membership dues. Because of the fact that membership dues were also a major source of revenue for the CACC, there was a conflict created where some businesses were choosing either to join the CDP or the CACC, or they joined one thinking that it was the same organization. So in 2011, a solution was found via the new contractual agreement between the CDP and the CACC where the Executive Director was made a Chamber employee but the job description remained the same and is accountable to the board.

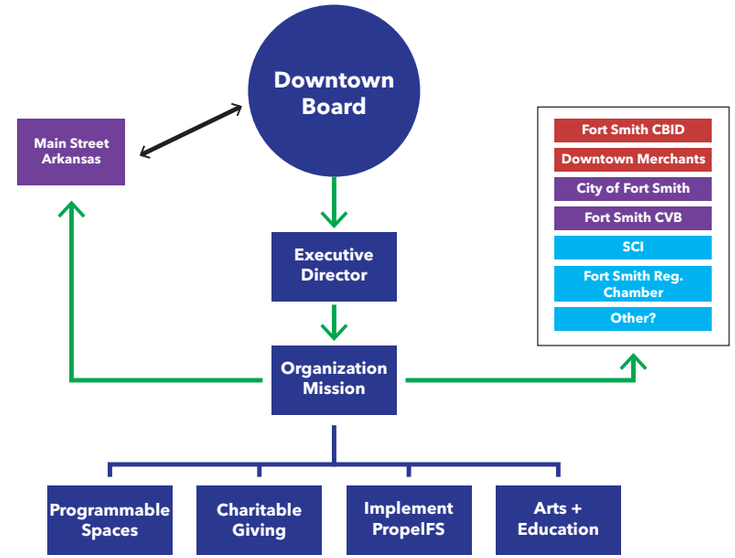
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR STRUCTURE



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR STRUCTURE (ALTERNATIVE)



POTENTIAL CONTRACTUAL RELATIONSHIPS



The CDP is responsible for funding the Executive Director's position through revenues it generates; however, the funding of the CDP through membership dues is a part of the CACC's menu of investment options in a coordinated sales effort of which the entire CACC staff including the CDP Executive reach out to the business community annually. This collective effort raises more than enough funds to pay for the CDP Executive Director, and it clearly defines the roles of each organization to the business community through this annual campaign. The organizational structure for these options is identified to the left.

Potential Contractual Relationships

Potential funding sources for the Downtown Board can come through a combination of membership dues, grants, event revenue and service contracts with other organizations. Potential contractual relationships can come from a variety of organizations where the mission of the Downtown Board and these organizations have overlap and where efficiencies and/or benefits can be realized by the Board receiving revenue in exchange for delivering a specific service. Some potential organizations where this type of contractual relationship are identified below:

- **Fort Smith CBID** – Funding for administrative support and oversight of CBID projects.
- **Downtown Fort Smith Business Association** - Funding for administrative and marketing promotion campaigns.
- **City of Fort Smith** – Funding for Downtown-specific economic development and/or support for infrastructure projects.
- **Fort Smith CVB (A&P Commission)** – Funding for events, Downtown-specific marketing and promotion campaigns.
- **Fort Smith Regional Chamber of Commerce** – Funding for Downtown-specific economic development projects.

In addition to the above examples of contractual relationships, the Downtown Board should consider affiliating with the Main Street Arkansas program, which provides a variety of services to its affiliates and the communities they serve. An affiliation with Main Street Arkansas would not require a name change, and affiliate requirements are quarterly training meetings and some reporting requirements.

Four examples of downtown organizations in larger Arkansas cities that have affiliated with Main Street Arkansas include Downtown Little Rock Partnership, Main Street Jonesboro, Conway Downtown Partnership and Main Street Rogers.

Implementing #PropelFS

Implementing Propelling Downtown Forward is one of the primary missions of the Downtown Board. This will take the coordination of many federal, state and local organizations from the private, public

and non-profit sector. It will be a complex process that will need to be broken down into specific action plan groups.

Example

- Infrastructure – Public Spaces, Transportation (Streets and Streetscape, Public Transit, Trails and Marinas), Utilities
- Economic Development – Tourism, Talent Attraction, Business Attraction and Retention, Arts and Entertainment
- Housing

Committees formed around specific action plan group can be headed by lead partners from the Downtown Board, for example:

Infrastructure

- City of Fort Smith
- Fort Smith CBID
- Sebastian County
- Western Arkansas Planning & Development
- Arkansas Missouri Railroad
- Fort Smith Trolley Museum

Economic Development

- Fort Smith Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Fort Smith CVB
- Fort Smith Downtown Business Association
- Fort Smith National Historic Site
- U.S. Marshals Museum
- Strategic Community Investments

Housing

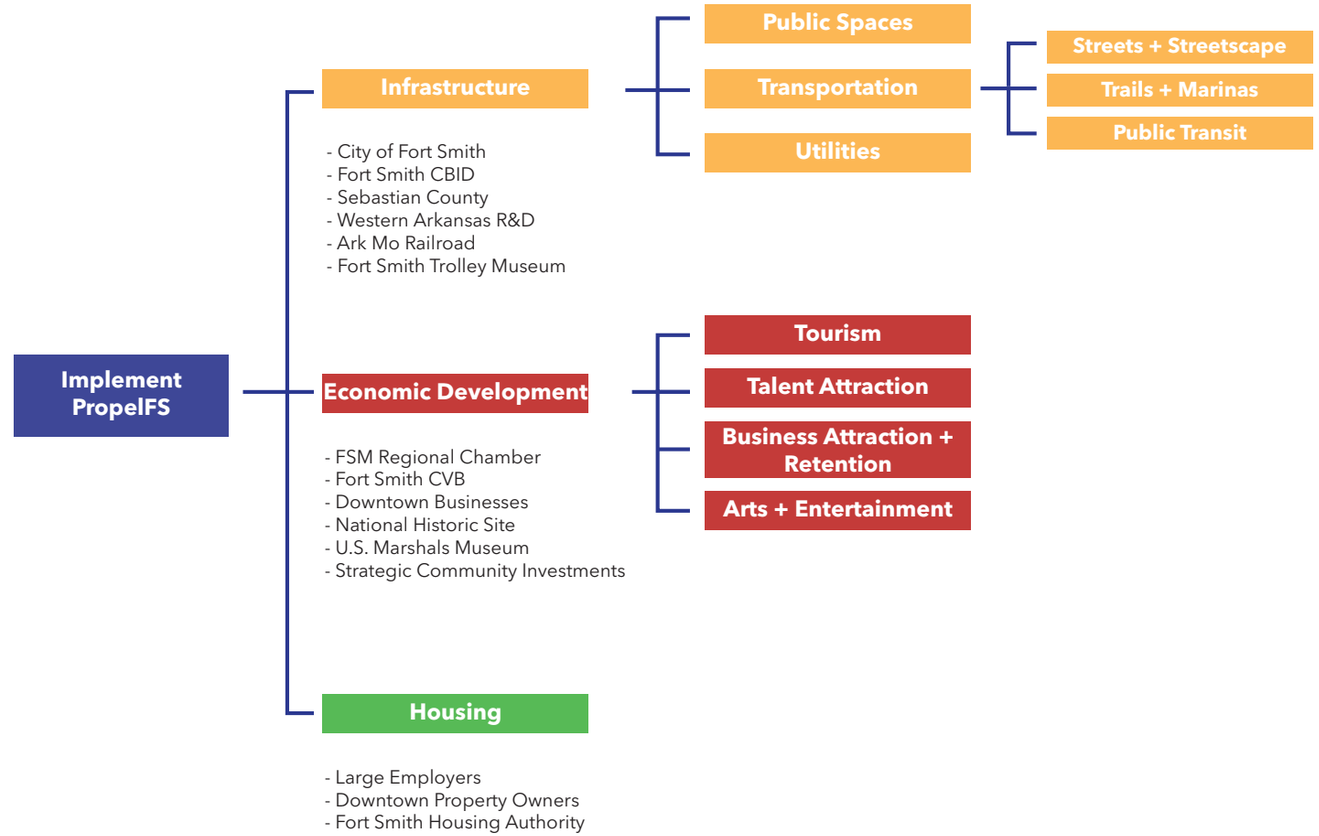
- Large Employers
- Downtown Property Owners
- Fort Smith Housing Authority
- Private Housing Developers

These lead partners would coordinate with other partners who would then have a role in individual projects within each action plan category.

Potential Structural Model – Collective Impact

A Collective Impact occurs when a group of actors from different

IMPLEMENTING #PROPELFS



sectors commit to a common agenda for solving complex social or environmental problems. It is a structured approach to problem-solving that includes five core conditions:

- **Common Agenda:** All participating organizations (private, public and non-profit sector, etc.) have a shared vision that includes a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving the problem through agreed-upon actions.
- **Shared Measurement System:** Agreement on the ways success will be measured and reported with a short list of key indicators across all participating organizations. Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable.
- **Mutually Reinforcing Activities:** Engagement of a diverse set of stakeholders, typically across sectors, coordinating a set of differentiated activities through a mutually reinforcing plan of action. Participant activities must be differentiated while still

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

Infrastructure Partners

- City of Fort Smith - Development Services - Building Safety
- City of Fort Smith - Development Services - Community Development
- City of Fort Smith - Development Services - Neighborhood Services
- City of Fort Smith - Development Services - Planning + Zoning
- City of Fort Smith - Planning Commission
- City of Fort Smith - Historic District Commission
- Western Arkansas Planning + Development
- City of Fort Smith - Arkansas Fair + Exhibition Facilities Board
- City of Fort Smith - Parks + Recreation Department
- Fort Smith Public School System
- University of Arkansas at Fort Smith
- Sparks Regional Medical Center
- Frontier Metropolitan Planning Organization
- City of Fort Smith - Port Authority
- City of Fort Smith - Parking Authority
- City of Fort Smith - Street + Traffic Control Department
- Sebastian County - Road Department
- Arkansas Highway Department
- City of Fort Smith - Transportation Department
- Fort Smith Trolley Museum
- City of Fort Smith - Airport Commission
- Fort Smith Regional Airport
- City of Fort Smith - Fire Department
- Arkansas Oklahoma Gas
- AT&T
- City of Fort Smith - Engineering Department
- City of Fort Smith - Sanitation Department
- City of Fort Smith - Water + Utility Department
- Cox Communications
- Oklahoma Gas + Electric

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Economic Development Partners

- Fort Smith Regional Alliance
- Sparks Regional Medical Center
- Fort Smith Public School System
- University of Arkansas Fort Smith
- Arkansas Oklahoma Gas
- Oklahoma Gas + Electric
- City of Fort Smith - Advertising + Promotion Commission
- City of Fort Smith - Convention + Visitors Bureau
- City of Fort Smith - Convention Center
- City of Fort Smith - Development Services - Community Development
- City of Fort Smith - Arkansas Fair + Exhibition Facilities Board
- City of Fort Smith - Parks + Recreation Department
- Fort Smith's Farmer's Market
- Fort Smith Little Theater
- Fort Smith Museum of History
- Fort Smith Regional Art Museum
- Fort Smith Symphony Orchestra
- Fort Smith Trolley Museum
- The Blue Lion at UAFS Downtown
- Western Arkansas Ballet

Housing Partners

- City of Fort Smith - Development Services - Building Safety
- City of Fort Smith - Development Services - Community Development
- City of Fort Smith - Development Services - Neighborhood Services
- City of Fort Smith - Development Services - Planning + Zoning
- City of Fort Smith - Historic District Commission
- City of Fort Smith - Housing Authority
- City of Fort Smith - Planning Commission
- Western Arkansas Planning + Development
- City of Fort Smith - Fire Department
- City of Fort Smith - Police Department
- City of Fort Smith - Sanitation Department
- City of Fort Smith - Water + Utility Department
- AT&T
- Arkansas Oklahoma Gas
- Cox Communications
- Oklahoma Gas + Electric
- Frontier Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Greater Fort Smith Association of Home Builders
- Strategic Community Investments
- Sparks Regional Medical Center
- University of Arkansas - Fort Smith

being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.

- **Continuous Communication:** Frequent communications among key players within and across organizations, to build trust and inform ongoing learning and adaptation of strategy, assure mutual objectives and create common motivation.
- **Backbone Organization:** Ongoing support provided by an independent staff dedicated to the initiative. The backbone staff tends to play six roles to move the initiative forward:

1. Guide Vision and Strategy
2. Support Aligned Activity
3. Establish Shared Measurement Practices
4. Build Public Will
5. Advance Policy
6. Mobilize Funding

The Collective Impact work is typically structured around an Oversight Group, working groups and the backbone function:

Oversight Group – often called a Steering Committee or Executive Committee which consists of cross-sector CEO-level individuals from key organizations engaged with the issue as well as representatives of individuals touched by the issue. This group meets regularly to oversee the progress of the entire initiative. For PropelFS, this would be the Downtown Board.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX I: STAKEHOLDER INPUT

STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Summary and Process

Initial stakeholder meetings were held July 18 and 19, 2016 at the Five Star Productions facility in Downtown Fort Smith. Each stakeholder group had approximately 10 to 20 individual participants and the sessions typically lasted about an hour. Stakeholders were invited to discuss Downtown's strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats in an effort to help the Gateway Planning Team to understand the vision for Downtown. This key stakeholder feedback will be utilized during the design charrette process to create the potential catalytic scenarios that will set the foundation for Downtown's future.

Stakeholders were not grouped into specific categories for these discussions, but each group brought a diverse collection of individuals from the community. This was intended to open discussion among the citizens and potentially help catalyze future conversations that will help support this initiative moving forward.

Group 1

This stakeholder group honed in on Downtown's perception and its ability or inability to bring in more visitors or residents. Stakeholders reinforced the excitement around the murals in Downtown and how they brought in people from all around the world, but that once those individuals were in the neighborhood they had seldom reason to remain. As one stakeholder put it, Fort Smith is "…just at the beginning of something great" and that it will just take a few more projects or events to push Downtown past the tipping point. These stakeholders want to see a more vibrant Downtown with something to do for people and families of all ages, including more housing, businesses, restaurants and convenient parking.

The conversation then shifted to the delicate issue of homelessness and migrant populations in Downtown Fort Smith and how those perceived issues contribute to Downtown's current state. The upcoming Riverview Hope Campus, although seemingly controversial, will bring medical clinics, job services and shelter to much of Fort Smith's homeless population. Stakeholders emphasized the need for a unified front to bring help and services to the homeless community and improve mental health services. Increased community support will come from the perceived successes and from the perception that there is a true investment being made into the neighborhood.

City Staff Stakeholder Sessions (Source: Gateway Planning)

Community Tour (Source: Gateway Planning)

Key Takeaways:

- Downtown needs to be more vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, business-friendly and resident-friendly. People are taking their dollars to other cities.
- Murals helped bring Downtown to life, but it is now time to take it a step further and work to engage those visitors on the next level.
- Parking and parking strategies need to be more clearly defined or improved. Current perception is that Downtown lacks parking and people are discouraged from walking.
- The river front needs to be leveraged to make Downtown Fort Smith special and unique to Northwest Arkansas. No other community in the region has a waterfront like Fort Smith.
- If people are going to live Downtown, there needs to be a better public transportation system in place so they will have access to their jobs or school.
- Social media should be used to show Downtown and to help combat its negative and dangerous perception.

Comprehensive Plan Team

The Propelling Downtown Forward initiative needs to work in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan process that is currently in its final stages. This select group of stakeholders, which was also open to the public to attend, consisted of people who participated in the Comprehensive Plan process and are a part of its implementation and continuation. These stakeholders emphasized that is hard to be overly specific when writing a comprehensive plan and that funding and cash is one of the biggest concerns with reinvestment into Downtown.

Additionally, Downtown needs to have a purposeful focus on

transportation and connectivity, especially along Garrison Avenue and with the trolley. The current truck route along Garrison Avenue generates a lot of noise and can deter people from walking along the storefronts or businesses that locate there. This connectivity opportunity also needs to take into consideration the entire community, not just Downtown, because the type of community the rest of the City develops into will help shed light on what Downtown will be in the future.

Housing also comes into focus with these discussions, and the lack of quality and affordable housing in Downtown is a huge issue for future development. Future housing cannot just attract millennials and young professionals but should cater to empty nesters, retirees and families. Housing should also be multi-generational and multi-use to allow for reinvention and transition as Downtown evolves over time. Developers should be incentivized to build amenities within the community, such as trails and parks, to attract a larger number of people.

Stakeholders also emphasized the complexity and confusion that surround current Downtown design regulations. The current regulations do not allow for flexibility and the unique character in Downtown along with the call for mixed uses requires a flexible regulatory structure that enables vibrancy and longevity in uses. Any implementation elements arising from this process need to align with City governance and structural efforts so they can be integrated and successfully adopted.

Key Takeaways:

- Trolley should be extended into the neighborhoods to improve access and connectivity to Downtown's amenities.
- Downtown should support development that encourages student retention and leverages the existing education community already in Downtown.
- Housing is a major issue for Downtown, and there needs to be a concerted effort to bring more types and quality, affordable options to the community.
- The Comprehensive Plan is a living document and needs to be revisited frequently to align with community interests and visions.
- Downtown is not walkable. Safer sidewalks, trails, street crossings and roadways are needed to bring more pedestrians into Downtown and to get out of their vehicles.

Group 2

Stakeholders in this session reflected sentiments heard in the previous two groups – that Downtown is on an upward moving trend and that it needs to become more walkable, vibrant. These stakeholders, however, also focused on the visitors and traffic that came through Downtown from across the river in Oklahoma. Traffic from Oklahoma only has the option to go through Downtown, but those individuals are not enticed to stop and spend time in Downtown. There should be more destinations, e.g., restaurants, retailers, etc., to attract that demographic.

Stakeholders also discussed the need for more entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial programming in Downtown, similar to the Innovation Centers popping up around the country. These facilities are ideal for adaptive reuse structures and Downtown has several structures ideal for those purposes, especially if developers were incentivized to create such programs. Additionally, the Arkansas State Historic Tax Credit needs to be better utilized and implemented. This would encourage developers to invest in more historic structures and adaptive reuse.

The other area of opportunity in Downtown that needs to not only be taken advantage of in terms of development and tourism, but also in active living and transportation is the river front. There have been several proposed plans for large scale entertainment districts, but the lack of subsidies and community support hindered progress. The Arkansas River is a major natural amenity that is not being utilized, and if development does not occur along the river, people will remain wary of it and the opportunity untouched.

Key Takeaways:

- Downtown is close to being a regional destination but is not there yet.
- Infrastructure improvements need to look beyond Garrison Avenue, including the Kelly Highway connector project. These improvements will help connectivity and walkability.
- Downtown needs to be divided into districts to reinforce their unique character and identity.
- City needs to do more code enforcement to encourage property owners to make the necessary improvements to their homes or buildings.

Group 3

These stakeholders focused on the diversity and cultural characters in place in Downtown, which is often unrecognized or realized in the community at present. The multitude of cultures and diversity that exists in Fort Smith is not reflected very well in Downtown, and this process is an opportunity to build on that diversity. These opportunities could include additional green spaces or parks for families, continuing The Unexpected festival and mural project and bringing in food trucks or cultural venues that support more local businesses.

Additionally, there is no current way for people to live, shop and socialize in Downtown like it is in other prominent Arkansas communities, like Little Rock or Bentonville. There are several quick wins or smaller projects that could easily be implemented to help improve Downtown's livability, but no one has undertaken that effort yet. If Downtown is truly going to be successful, according to the stakeholders, then it needs to embrace diversity and have everyone at the table, including children.

Some stakeholders mentioned that when trying to "sell" Downtown to prospective residents, they often hear that Downtown has "good bones," but that it is not quite developed enough for their tastes. These stakeholders expressed that Fort Smith was "born out of the spirit of entrepreneurship" and the community should return to those ideals again. Fort Smith is literally and figuratively living on the edge – both in spirit of entrepreneurism and physically along the river and state line.

Key Takeaways:

- Downtown needs to embrace diversity and use its multiculturalism to enhance its character.
- There is no Class A office space for businesses or entrepreneurs
- Incentives need to be put in place to encourage people and businesses to locate in Downtown.
- Fort Smith does not have enough regional emphasis even though it is within a five-county area, and the City needs to realize other outlying communities also have an interest in seeing Downtown revitalized.
- Downtown needs to become "younger and cooler" in respect

to the old Western theme it currently characterizes.

- People who live downtown need to have better access to daily amenities and retailers, like grocery stores, open spaces, businesses, etc., with improved walkability.

Group 4

The riverfront and parking were the two major focuses of this stakeholder group. Current parking locations and availability are often sources of frustration for visitors, and some people will often forego visiting Downtown altogether due to the perceived lack of parking spaces. A better strategy or management program needs to be put into place so that as Downtown grows and the number of visitors increases, the parking issue does not become a larger problem.

The river front, in coordination with the U.S. Marshals Museum, should be better utilized and taken advantage of as a unique amenity to Downtown. Stakeholders expressed the desire for a boat dock or marina along the riverfront as well as developments with restaurants and entertainment uses along the water. In this context, Garrison Avenue should be viewed as the gateway to the river and to a future entertainment district. This effort should be supported by the Regional Economic Council.

However, stakeholders emphasized the need for a closer consideration to truck traffic along Garrison Avenue. OK Foods has recently taken 225 weekly trucks outside of Downtown to help with traffic, but more will need to be done at a community-wide level. These transportation issues are directly affecting walkability and perceived safety in Downtown. Any future development or infrastructure improvements in Downtown need to address truck traffic and routes.

Lastly, stakeholders reinforced the need for more quality housing and amenities in order to attract young professionals and workforce talent and keep those individuals in Fort Smith. For example, OK Foods has to recruit against larger cities that have more amenities, so they have to pay a premium in salary and advocate the low cost of living in order to attract and maintain those prospective recruits. However, Northwest Arkansas is beginning to become tapped out and people are looking for places to go, so why could that place not be Fort Smith?

Key Takeaways:

- The riverfront should become an amenity for Downtown as a destination and entertainment district that attracts people from all over the region.
- Fort Smith needs to be able to compete with other cities that are drawing young professionals and workforce talent. The talent is being upgraded in cities and communities across the region, and Fort Smith needs to upgrade their talent as well.
- Downtown residents lack daily amenities that enhance quality of life.
- Truck traffic through Downtown should be addressed through a detailed and cooperative process with truck companies and industries in Fort Smith.
- Revitalization efforts in Downtown need to be better branded and communicated to the public and city at large.

CBID

The CBID session was open to the general public and press and included more than 30 individuals in attendance. Heavy emphasis was placed on Downtown amenities and truck traffic throughout the entire discussion. Several CBID members indicated that they had long held ideas or projects that they would like to see happen in Downtown but were unsure of the appropriate timing or implementation measures that needed to be undertaken to achieve their project.

Stakeholders expressed eagerness to see the tools and recommendations from this process move into implementation and want to see problems that have plagued Downtown for years find a solution and the difficult conversations that need to be had had, including the role Garrison Avenue plays for Downtown as it is a state highway. Some solutions involved converting Garrison Avenue into a boulevard and redoing the signal sequencing. The wide streets in Downtown hurt walkability and discourage people from visiting the community. However, the wide thoroughfares also allow for the expansion of the trolley to key areas in Downtown. The trolley needs to be viewed as a people mover for Downtown, not just a tourist attraction that does not serve the wider vision of Fort Smith.

Finally, stakeholders emphasized the significance of the riverfront and the U.S. Marshals Museum for Downtown's future. The community and board want to see the museum happen and everything that can be done to make sure that happens should happen. The museum is a key driver of economic dollars coming into the community and the City and community needs to make sure they are supportive of policies and programs that help.

Key Takeaways:

- Walkability is a huge factor for Downtown that needs to be improved. Parking would not be such a significant issue for people if there were the ability to walk or bike more throughout the community.
- Programs and businesses that bring traffic and dollars to downtown need to be supported and incentivized through this initiative.
- This plan needs to reinforce community visions and provide alignment for what needs to be done in the community so that other opportunities can be reinforced as well.

Group 5

Stakeholders focused on the City's ability to bring in convention and events to the Downtown core and underutilized convention center facility. Encouraging more development and businesses in Downtown will bring more conventions and opportunities to attract events that support the local economy. These will also provide incentive for infrastructure improvements and enhancements throughout Downtown. Stakeholders expressed that several complaints received at the hotel revolve around the lack of transit options in the community.

However, stakeholders also reinforced that the events and programs that do take place in Downtown are often uncoordinated and uncommunicated. Downtown Fort Smith has several things going on, but the collaboration is often lacking. Aligning the organizations and events in Downtown would greatly assist in communicating the community's vision and events.

Additionally, stakeholders stated the greenspaces that exist in downtown are underutilized and disconnected (minus the splash pad). There needs to be a public-private partnership created for the open spaces in the community and for future spaces that will open up in the future. This will also ensure revenue sources are used most efficiently to bring in higher quality events and amenities. Stakeholders agreed

64.6 was in a position to lead this dialogue with the City and other organizations and was already doing so through the multiple events they have coordinated in the last few years.

Key Takeaways:

- Downtown needs to be viewed as more event and conference friendly to attract more revenue generating events and improve Downtown organization coordination.
- The word needs to get out that investment is being made into Downtown. A network of social inputs should be crafted to engage the community across multiple generations and professions who might otherwise not realize how much is actually occurring in Downtown.
- Policies and regulations need to reinforce quality design standards for development to prevent hodgepodge construction and encourage the preservation of historic buildings.

Group 6

Active transportation and healthy lifestyles were reinforced by stakeholders during this session. For the people who do live in Downtown there are very limited options for fitness and healthy living as the trail system is still under construction and sidewalks are disconnected throughout the neighborhoods. Existing conditions for pedestrians are perceived as very dangerous. Additionally, very few businesses remain open past 5:30 p.m. and are closed by the time people return from work so their options for going out are limited.

Stakeholders agreed that Garrison Avenue and the intersecting roads need to be made more pedestrian friendly and walkable, including looking at how to improve the crosswalks and signals to ensure adequate time to cross the street. Additionally, the City should look at how other communities in Northwest Arkansas have improved their downtowns and infrastructure to attract visitors and create a robust economy without becoming a major MSA, like Eureka Springs or Bella Vista. Fort Smith is just as unique and artistic as those communities but the message is not being delivered or coordinated.

Key Takeaways:

- Downtown should embrace more active transportation amenities and lifestyles to provide facilities and amenities for residents and fitness aficionados who currently have no options in the community.
- A more concerted effort needs to be made to communicate momentum and policies in Downtown. There are too many organizations trying to do the same thing.
- Property owners and businesses need to be compelled to reinvest in their properties and expand their businesses into the community or improve their buildings, but right now those incentives do not exist.

Group 7

The final group of stakeholders reiterated several of the themes already discussed during the previous stakeholder sessions. The initial discussion focused on the perception of the homeless problem in Downtown and the need for the Riverview Hope Campus to do well as it prepares to open and address some of the issues the homes in Fort Smith face. The stakeholders then shifted to discussion on the need for more education facilities and opportunities in Downtown through establishments such as the Innovation Hub and creative-thinking programs, such as those provided at the Future School.

Stakeholders then expressed the need and desire for a town square and public plaza in Downtown to create a focal point in the community and a place for people to gather for small events or festivals that is also easy to get to from all points of the community. Downtown needs places where people can get into close contact with each other and where neighbors can get to know each other, which is currently not done in Downtown or is difficult to do.

Finally, stakeholders expressed the need for quality of place and livability as priority issues in policy decisions and development projects. Some stakeholders believe there is a lack of inertia for projects, like the trail system in Downtown, and the issues often get swallowed up by the City before actually getting implemented. Maintaining project inertia and efficiency through the City system would help clear up several of those issues and encourage more developments to go into Downtown.

Key Takeaways:

- Fort Smith is still stuck too much in the past and on auto-oriented development. More projects need to be undertaken that improve the connectivity and walkability of Downtown and between the neighborhoods.
- Garrison Avenue should be the main entertainment district for Downtown and then more ancillary, creative and innovative development as transitions to the historic neighborhoods surrounding Garrison Avenue.
- The amenities and policies supporting amenity creation should be connected and reinforced through private enterprises to ensure continuous and successful use.

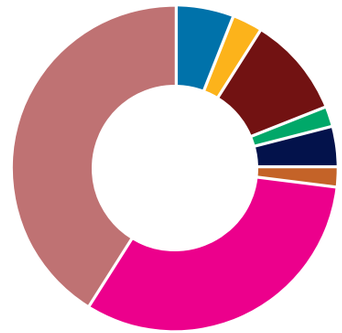
APPENDIX II: POLICY ASSESSMENT

The successful implementation of this Plan requires the proper zoning tools to be in place to enable the building types and mix of uses imagined. Both the content of this plan and the Future Fort Smith Comprehensive Plan cast a strong vision for what the community desires to see as it continues to grow and evolve into a regional destination and driver. This section provides an overview of the existing land use conditions and then highlights the elements of the Comprehensive Plan that, when implemented in combination with this Plan, depict the desired future vision for Fort Smith. These recommendations will also provide an overview of the zoning categories and design regulations specific to Downtown and their attributes to present a series of considerations on how to move forward with changes to the zoning code that ensure they are the right tools to enable the crafting of that desired vision for Downtown.

Existing Land Use Context

The greater Downtown Fort Smith area is a cross section of almost every use category in a relatively eclectic mix reflecting the growth and evolution of the city starting in the Downtown and riverfront areas and radiating outwards. This mix of distinct zoning categories in a relatively small area can lead to conflicts or areas of disinvestment because areas of transitions and compatibility are not embedded into the zoning itself.

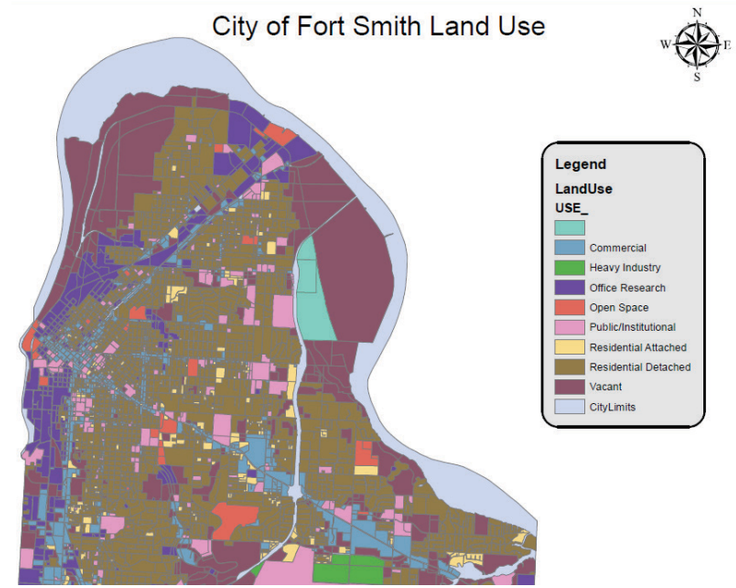
The following table and graph from the City of Fort Smith Data Book, prepared in 2013 by the Western Arkansas Planning and Development District (WAPDD), depicts the land use by acre and percentage city wide. Specifically of note is the large percentage of vacant property- much of which is in the floodplain but also a significant amount of formally industrial or commercial parcels that are underutilized. The Comprehensive Plan calls out these vacant and underutilized industrial zoned areas in older parts of town that have seen cycles of disinvestment and neglect as "Existing and Potential Redevelopment Opportunities" and states the active efforts of the CBID, Chamber of Commerce and the City should be to "...market the riverfront adjacent to downtown as an opportunity for private development." Additionally investment along "...Garrison Avenue and Towson Avenue, the traditional commercial corridors, holds the potential to move the revitalization of the city's obsolescent commercial corridors forward."



EXISTING LAND USE AS OF 2012		
	ACRES	PERCENT
Commercial	2,935.78	5.64%
Heavy Industry	1,478.37	2.84%
Office Research	5,415.22	10.40%
Open Space	939.02	1.80%
Public/Institutional	1,859.10	3.57%
Residential Attached	860.75	1.65%
Residential Detached	17,036.34	32.72%
Vacant	21,535.58	41.37%
Total	**52,060.15**	**100.00%**

Comprehensive Plan Vision

The Future Fort Smith Comprehensive Plan, completed in 2014, provides a high level vision for the City as a whole. This section highlights the issues, provides a vision and gives land use recommendations relevant to Downtown and the need for changes to the existing zoning code.



In an overview of City concerns a reoccurring theme emerges - the City in its current build form is not able to provide for a robust economy and meet the needs of a wide citizen demographic, especially in Downtown. There is a concern that macro level changes in the economy have led to cycles of industrial and commercial disinvestment. As the Comprehensive Plan notes, this cycle of disinvestment has left "…obsolete buildings underutilized or vacant as new centers emerge. In residential neighborhoods, zoning inconsistencies have resulted in incompatible adjacent uses, and multi-family developments in predominantly single family areas." The zoning code, especially as it applies to Downtown, is not the correct tool for building a vibrant mixed-use downtown that encourages the private sector to reinvest in the area and accommodates finer-grained development and transitions between uses.

Preferred Scenario Summary

Community participants in the Comprehensive Planning process crafted

alternative futures scenarios by applying the desired vision to a Trend Scenario. The participants allocated various land uses in a preferred pattern. The resulting Preferred Scenario "…focused on developing strong livable neighborhoods by directing the majority of future growth among 3 or 4 larger mixed-use centers, including Downtown and Chaffee Crossing, and 2 or 3 smaller mixed-use clusters."

This Preferred Scenario includes several community desires relevant to Downtown land use:

- Supporting development of Downtown and riverfront investment
- Counter-balances the trend of dispersed development by focusing on Fort Smith's historic resources and existing infrastructure
- Catalyzes existing economic development, tourism investments and redevelopment efforts in Downtown and along the riverfront
- Allows for infill and stabilization of existing residential areas as well as current commercial/job centers
- Enhances the character and quality of several of Fort Smith's existing neighborhoods by creating more livable environments
- Creates more opportunities for residents to live within close proximity of a variety of jobs

Future Fort Smith includes a detailed list of goals, policies and actions in various categories. The Land Use, Economic Development and Housing and Neighborhoods categories include relevant items for consideration in review of Downtown zoning.

Land Use

Goal 1: Achieve a successful and market-driven balance of future land uses consistent with the Preferred Future.

Policy 1.1 Promote commercial development and future economic growth in centers and corridors designated in the Preferred Future in close proximity to existing infrastructure, schools, parks and jobs.

Action 1.1.1 Attract anchors in all Preferred Future centers to encourage complementary development, particularly for the Downtown riverfront.

Action 1.1.2 Update and implement the UDO (Unified Development Ordinance) and Master Land Use Map based on the Preferred Future.

Action 1.1.3 Review and adjust zoning classifications for consistency with the Preferred Future.

Policy 1.5 Provide opportunities for mixed-use development to occur in Downtown Fort Smith and identify emerging centers in order to provide access to a variety of uses; promote walkable, pedestrian friendly development; and encourage physical activity.

Policy 1.6 Create opportunities for the mixing of land uses to occur within single buildings and within emerging centers identified in the Preferred Future.

Action 1.6.1 Develop corridor and area plans that address access management, land use, design, internal parking and circulation.

Goal 2 Activate Fort Smith's scenic riverfront

Policy 2.1 Encourage a mix of housing, retail and entertainment attractions along the City's waterfront that support day and nighttime activity and a vibrant urban lifestyle.

Policy 2.2 Comprehensively plan access and development along Riverfront Drive to reflect passive and active recreation, pedestrian, bicycle and tourist activities.

Goal 3 Revitalize downtown into a multipurpose activity center

Policy 3.1 Increase the number and type of residential opportunities in and around downtown.

Action 3.1.1 Support rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of buildings for housing and promote infill development of vacant land downtown.

Policy 3.2 Improve the accessibility of downtown.

Action 3.2.1 Increase public transit access and frequency between Downtown and key destinations and throughout the city.

Action 3.2.2 Implement an efficient parking plan that accommodates visitors while not detracting from the character of downtown.

Action 3.2.3 Create safe and attractive pedestrian and bicycle connections within Downtown and riverfront and between adjacent neighborhoods (bike lanes, trails and complete sidewalks).

Action 3.2.4 Reduce the impact of "dead zones" caused by vacant properties by installing pedestrian-level lighting, filling empty storefronts, improving empty facades and strategically positioning kiosks and vendors to guide pedestrian flow, increasing "eyes on the street."

Economic Development

Goal 7 Ensure that a broad range of housing alternatives are available for employers and employees

Policy 7.1 Promote a comprehensive incentive program that fosters investment and reinvestment in Fort Smith's housing stock.

Policy 7.2 Encourage the development of housing product types which help to diversify Fort Smith's existing housing stock.

Housing and Neighborhood

Goal 2 Encourage a diverse range of housing options

Policy 2.3 Promote the development of a mix of housing types, including single family detached, single family attached accessory apartments, and multi-family units.

Action 2.3.1 Review and revise regulations that create unintended impediments to new or innovative types of desirable housing.

The Comprehensive Plan included specific Community Character

and Design goals that should be applied to future zoning changes for Downtown and the adjacent commercial corridors:

Downtown / Riverfront Center: The Design Guidelines in place for rehabilitation and new construction in the city's Central Business Improvement District outline many character and design considerations, but no Downtown Master Plan has been developed for this area to address the issues of access, open space, redevelopment and infrastructure comprehensively together with the riverfront. In order to implement many of the policies and actions identified through the Future Fort Smith plan update, a more focused planning effort for the Downtown and riverfront should be initiated and build on the existing momentum of the comprehensive planning process.

Core Retail / Commercial Corridor: Although the future land uses identified for this corridor will continue to focus on serving the retail and commercial needs of the City, there are opportunities to improve the public realm by adding more human-scale design elements, particularly in areas more frequently traveled by residents outside of their cars, such as bus stops, sidewalks and shopping center internal circulation areas. This corridor should be a primary focus of a street tree-planting program and beautification efforts that bury electric lines, minimize the negative visual impacts of too much signage and examine opportunities to relocate parking to behind buildings that face the Corridor.

Existing Zoning Analysis

Downtown includes a wide variety of Residential, Commercial and Industrial zoning types. Below are the existing zoning classifications and a short description of the use and intent for each category. Note that these are conventional use based zoning have very distinct uses that do not allow for flexibility or mixing within a given building. This lack of flexibility or built in compatibility standards do not provide for evolution over time or encourage a vibrant downtown environment.

Residential Single Family High Density (RS-4)

Provide very dense single family detached housing as either new or infill development. The RS-4 Zoning District is appropriate in higher density residential areas near the downtown, in mixed use/density areas and as a transitional buffer zone between lower density residential development and multifamily or commercial uses. The RS-4 Zoning District corresponds to the Residential Detached, Mixed Use Residential, and Mixed Use Employment classification of the Master Land Use Plan.

Residential Multifamily High Density (RM-4)

Provide high-density attached homes, including multi-story residential buildings in those areas where such building types already exist or where such building types already exist or where such buildings would be consistent with an area's established development pattern and character. RM-4 zoning is appropriate in urban areas in the Residential Attached, Mixed Use Residential, Mixed Use Employment, Commercial Neighborhood, and General Commercial categories of the Master Land Use Plan.

Residential Historic (RH)

Preserve and promote the educational, cultural and general welfare of the public through the preservation, protection and restoration of the traditional architectural character and historic significance of structures located in the RH District. The RH Zoning District is appropriate in the Residential Attached, Residential Detached, General Commercial, Mixed Use Residential, and Mixed Use Employment of the Master Land Use Plan.

Transitional (T)

Provide small-scale areas for limited office, professional service and medical services designed in scale with surrounding residential uses. The transitional zoning district applies to the Residential Attached, Institutional, Commercial Neighborhood, and General Commercial categories of the Master Land Use Plan.

Commercial Light (C-2)

Provide office, service and retail activities that are located within buffer areas near the edge of residential areas but which serve an area larger than adjacent neighborhoods. The C-2 zoning district is intended to accommodate well designed development sites and shall provide excellent transportation access, make the most efficient use of existing infrastructure and provide for orderly buffers and transitions between Commercial and Residential land uses. C-2 zoning is appropriate in the Commercial Neighborhood, General Commercial, Mixed Use Residential, and Mixed Use Employment classification of the Master Land Use Plan.

Commercial Regional (C-4)

Provide for the development of large shopping centers, mixed-use developments, entertainment venues and other appropriate land uses that serve the broad retail, commercial and entertainment needs of the metropolitan area. The C-4 zoning district is appropriate in the Regional Center, General Commercial, Mixed Use Residential, and Mixed Use Employment classification of the Master Land Use Plan.

Commercial Downtown (C-6)

Provide for the orderly development of the original Downtown area of Fort Smith and the areas immediately adjacent to it. The Commercial Downtown (C-6) Zoning District establishes guidelines and controls that allow for retail and residential development which is compatible with existing and expanding governmental, financial, professional, cultural, historic and entertainment facilities. Commercial, governmental and professional uses that serve the metropolitan area are allowed in this zone.

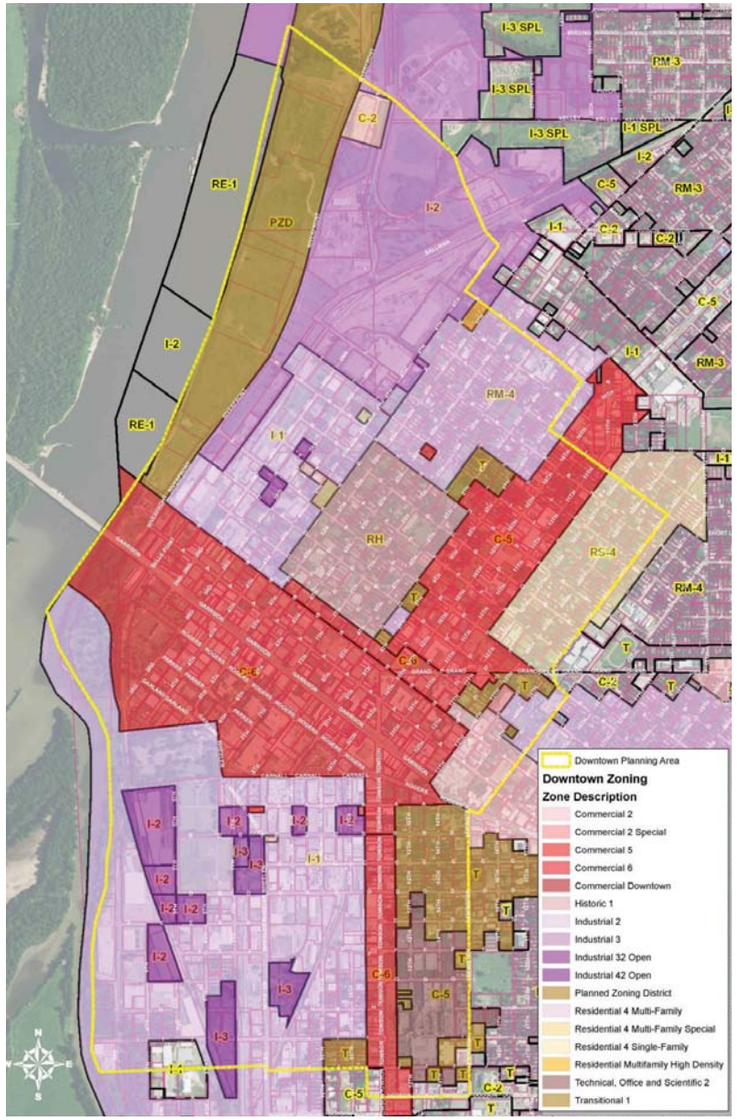
Industrial Light (I-1)

Provide for a mixture of light manufacturing, office park, research and development and limited retail/service retail land uses in an attractive, business park setting. The Industrial Light District may be used as a zoning buffer between mixed uses, commercial uses and heavier industrial uses. The I-1 Zoning District is appropriate with the Office, Research, and Light Industrial (ORLI) and Industry classifications of the Master Land Use Plan.

Industrial Moderate (I-2)

Provide for industrial land uses which can be operated in a clean and quiet manner that shall not be obnoxious to adjacent land uses,

EXISTING ZONING



and shall have relatively limited environmental impacts. The land uses within an Industrial Moderate (I-2) zoning district are primarily contained indoors and have heavier traffic generation than the I-1 uses. I-2 zoning is appropriate within the Industry classification of the Master Land Use Plan.

Industrial Heavy (I-3)

Accommodate a wide variety and intensity of industrial uses, some of which may have significant external impacts. This may include areas of heavy and concentrated fabrication, manufacturing and industry. The Industrial Heavy (I-3) zoning district requires readily available and adequate public facilities and services, including access to major transportation hubs (rail, river or highway-interstate). The I-3 Zone must be located so as to minimize conflicts with other land uses. Industrial Heavy Zoning is appropriate in the Industry classification of the Master Land Use Plan.

All of the uses included in the Zoning categories above should remain in the Downtown area; however, a code that allows a wider range of uses in each character area and accommodates transitions between character areas will allow for a more robust redevelopment environment and resilient economy.

The Euclidian standards included in the lot standards table below should be incorporated to some degree in a rezoning to the extent that they are congruous with the existing building form. However, other standards that are not included in this type of zoning, such as build to lines and the primacy of building frontage to parking frontage, should also be considered.

Design Standards

The Central Business Improvement District is governed by a set of Design Guidelines created in 2010 that provide guidance for new construction and renovation of existing structures. The Design Standards for new construction in the Garrison Avenue area generally guide height, size, wall materials, windows and doors, roofline and storefront. "In general, new buildings should be harmonious in form, material, siting and scale with the established district character." This approach to infill development would be harmonious with an updated zoning code that can further formalize the intent of the design standards in building location on a lot and orientation to the street while allowing the design standards to still guide the architectural details. Similarly in the Riverfront Area building form standards can be ensured to compliment but not recreate the historic form. Detailed guidelines for preservation of historic buildings are well conveyed in the design guidelines and would need to be respected and referenced in a zoning update.

Considerations

The extensive planning work completed in both this Downtown Plan and the 2014 Future Fort Smith Comprehensive Plan highlights the gap between much of the existing building form and what is desired by the community. There is a strong historic foundation to build from therefore, there is much that can be pulled from the intent of the existing zoning code, but a Downtown specific form-based code that is responsive to the block and building scale is needed.

In this review of the existing zoning in order to implement the Downtown Plan, through the creation of a Form-Based Code, several items need to be considered:

- The historic core needs to be flexible in land use while maintaining a more rigid building form with new construction compatible with the historic buildings and encourage preservation of the historic built form by allowing the buildings to be used with a variety of uses through evolving market conditions. In many ways this is a step back to more simplistic building codes that may have existed when the original downtown was built. These regulations are more concerned with the form of a building and providing predictability in the built environment building to building and block to block rather than regulating primarily on a list of uses.
- The aging commercial corridors are opportunities to absorb future growth and mid-scale mixed-use development. However, existing commercial zoning is not nuanced enough to facilitate a mixing of uses, a variety of building types and walkable parking considerations for a hybrid urban environment.
- The industrial zoned areas need to remain in some capacity,

but a closer look needs to be taken on how transition considerations can be applied to the edges so uses and building types can accommodate the contrast from more intense industrial uses to an urban mixed-use neighborhood or commercial corridor.

- Infill housing opportunities as transitions from corridors and interspersed in some existing neighborhoods need to be accommodated in a nuanced way. There are zoning categories in the existing zoning code that allow for some "missing middle" housing types, townhouses, duplexes, small multifamily, etc., that may have some elements applicable to the goal of encouraging infill housing. However, there are some Euclidian zoning elements, like setbacks and lot sizes that would not necessarily encourage infill development and reinvestment in the neighborhoods surrounding downtown. This variety of housing types is necessary for providing a nighttime population in and around downtown that can help bolster the retail. In addition, a variety of housing types will meet the needs of a variety of ages and life stages and provide housing that will attract and retain a vibrant workforce.

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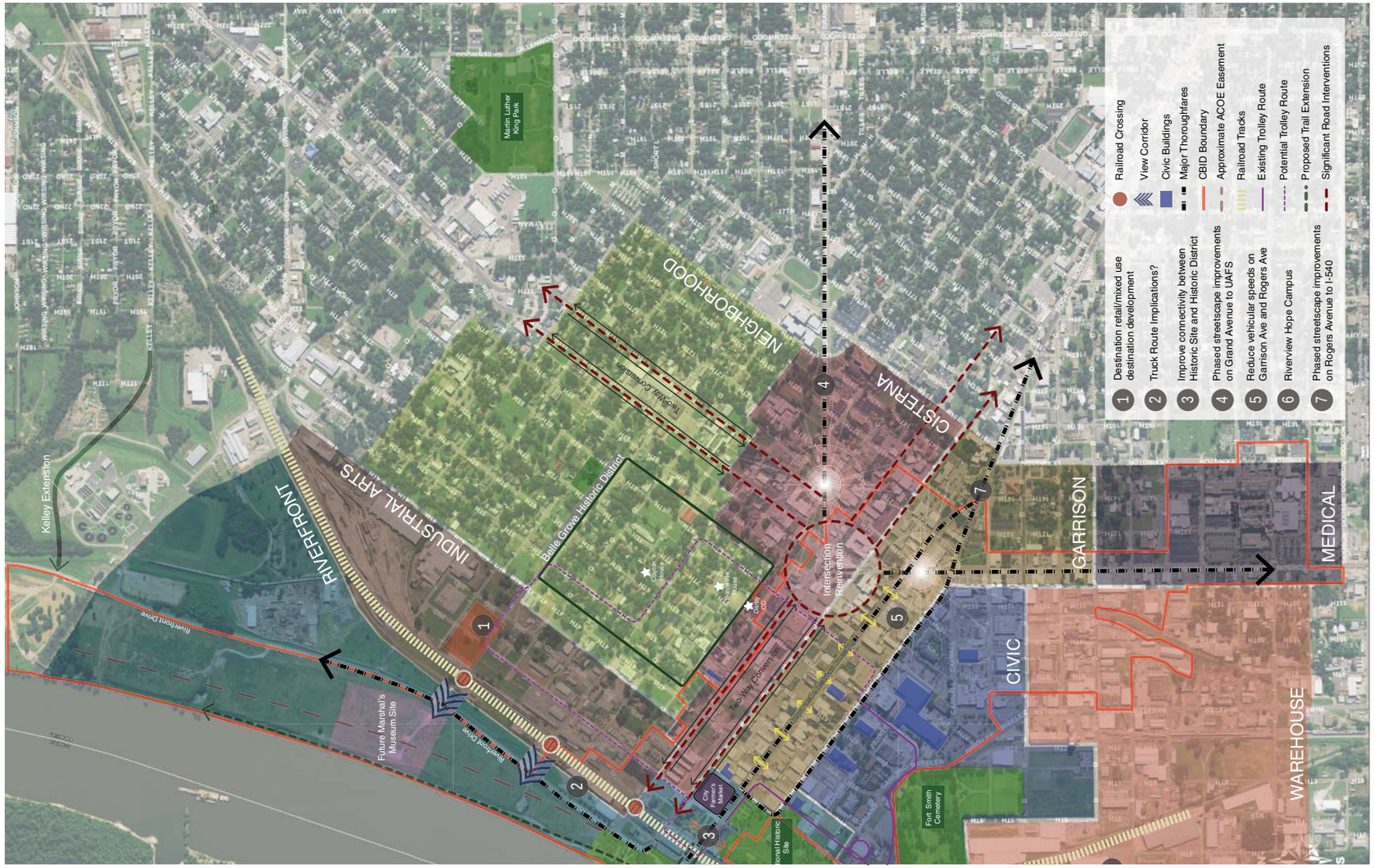
APPENDIX III: FRAMEWORK PLAN

DOWNTOWN FRAMEWORK PLAN

The adjacent image is a larger version of the Downtown Framework Plan created during the PropelFS process and described in this Plan. It is provided for reference to this document.



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APPENDIX IV: COST ESTIMATES

PROJECT	ITEM	UNIT	UNIT COST	LENGTH	COST
North A Street (Option 1) - Conversion to a two-way local street with one 11' sharrow travel lane in each direction and 10' on-street parking lane and 9' pedestrian realm on both sides of street with lighting.	Removal of Perm. Pvmt. Mark	LF	$1.23	6,600	$8,118.00
	Removal of Perm. Pvmt. Mark (Word)	Each	$261.88	2	$523.76
	Removal of Perm. Pvmt. Mark (Arrow)	Each	$198.86	30	$5,965.80
	R & D of Curb and Gutter	LF	$7.08	13,200	$93,456.00
	R & D of Sidewalks	Sq Yd	$5.01	6,000	$30,060.00
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark. Yellow Line 4"	LF	$0.48	13,200	$6,336.00
	Thermo. Pvmt Mark. White 4"	LF	$0.47	900	$423.00
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark. (Word)	Each	$312.96	4	$1,251.84
	CC Curb & Gutter - A (1'6")	LF	$15.66	13,200	$206,712.00
	Concrete Walks	SqYd	$39.57	13,200	$522,324.00
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark (Arrow)	Each	$258.49	30	$7,754.70
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark. White 8"	LF	$2.93	6,600	$19,338.00
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark. (Bike Emb.)	Each	$384.16	4	$1,536.64
	Bikeway Sign and Post	Each	$500.00	4	$2,000.00
	New Sign and Post	Each	$500.00	30	$15,000.00
	Landscaping	LS	$120,000.00	1	$120,000.00
	Construction Total				*$1,040,799.74*
	Design Cost (8%)				*$83,263.98*
	Contingency (30%)				*$337,219.12*
	TOTAL COST				**$1,461,282.83**
North A Street (Option 2) - Conversion to a two-way local street with one 10' travel lane in each direction and 12' two-way cycle track on the eastbound travel side; 9' pedestrian realm on both sides of street with lighting.	Removal of Perm. Pvmt. Mark	LF	$1.23	6,600	$8,118.00
	Removal of Perm. Pvmt. Mark (Word)	Each	$261.88	2	$523.76
	Removal of Perm. Pvmt. Mark (Arrow)	Each	$198.86	30	$5,965.80
	R & D of Curb and Gutter	LF	$7.08	13,200	$93,456.00
	R & D of Sidewalks	Sq Yd	$5.01	6,000	$30,060.00

PROJECT	ITEM	UNIT	UNIT COST	LENGTH	COST
North A Street (Option 2) - Continued	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark. Yellow Line 4"	LF	$0.48	13,200	$6,336.00
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark. (Word)	Each	$312.96	4	$1,251.84
	CC Curb & Gutter - A (1'6")	LF	$15.66	13,200	$206,712.00
	Concrete Walks	Sq Yd	$39.57	13,200	$522,324.00
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark (Arrow)	Each	$258.49	30	$7,754.70
	12' Two-Way Cycle Track	LS	$250,000.00	1	$250,000.00
	(price for cycle track includes 2' buffer line, delineator and center strip)				
	New Sign and Post	Each	$500.00	30	$15,000.00
	Landscaping	LS	$120,000.00	1	$120,000.00
	Total				*$1,267,502.10*
	Design Cost (8%)				*$101,400.17*
	Contingency (30%)				*$410,670.68*
	TOTAL COST				**$1,779,572.95**
North B Street - Conversion to a two-way local street with 12' travel lane in each direction and 13' pedestrian realm on both sides of street with lighting.	Removal of Perm. Pvmt. Mark	LF	$1.23	7,730	$9,507.90
	Removal of Perm. Pvmt. Mark (Word)	Each	$261.88	3	$785.64
	Removal of Perm. Pvmt. Mark (Arrow)	Each	$198.86	50	$9,943.00
	R & D of Curb and Gutter	LF	$7.08	15,460	$109,456.80
	R & D of Sidewalks	Sq Yd	$5.01	6,800	$34,068.00
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark. Yellow Line 4"	LF	$0.48	15,460	$7,420.80
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark. (Word)	Each	$312.96	5	$1,564.80
	CC Curb & Gutter - A (1'6")	LF	$15.66	15460	$242,103.60
	Concrete Walks	SqYd	$39.57	22000	$870,540.00
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark (Arrow)	Each	$258.49	30	$7,754.70
	New Sign and Post	Each	$500.00	30	$15,000.00
	Landscaping	LS	$120,000.00	1	$120,000.00
	Total				*$1,428,145.24*
	Design Cost (8%)				*$114,251.62*
	Contingency (30%)				*$462,719.06*
	TOTAL COST				**$2,005,115.92**

PROJECT	ITEM	UNIT	UNIT COST	LENGTH	COST
Garrison Plaza (Cisterna Park)	Removal of Existing PCC Pavement (Towson)	Sq Yd	$9.08	1,700	$15,436.00
	Topsoil Furnished and Placed	Cu Yd	$11.88	130	$1,544.40
	Solid Sodding	Sq Yd	$3.85	1,700	$6,545.00
	Concrete Walks	Sq Yd	$39.57	1,700	$67,269.00
	CC Curb & Gutter - A (1'6")	LF	$15.66	150	$2,349.00
	New Sign and Post	Each	$500.00	4	$2,000.00
	Landscaping	LS	$500,000.00	1	$500,000.00
	Utility Allowance	LS	$250,000.00	1	$250,000.00
	Total				*$845,143.40*
	Design Cost (8%)				*$67,611.47*
	Contingency (30%)				*$253,543.02*
	TOTAL COST				**$1,166,297.89**
10th Street - Conversion to two-way street with one 11' travel lane in each direction; 6' buffered bicycle lane adjacent to southbound travel lane and 10' parking lane adjacent to northbound travel lane.	Removal of Perm. Pvmt. Mark	LF	$1.23	3,850	$4,735.50
	Removal of Perm. Pvmt. Mark (Word)	Each	$261.88	3	$785.64
	Removal of Perm. Pvmt. Mark (Arrow)	Each	$198.86	5	$994.30
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark Yellow Line 4"	LF	$0.48	7700	$3,696.00
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark White 8"	LF	$2.93	3850	$11,280.50
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark White 4"	LF	$0.47	500	$235.00
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark (Word)	Each	$312.96	3	$938.88
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark (Arrow)	Each	$258.49	5	$1,292.45
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark (Bike Emb.)	Each	$384.16	3	$1,152.48
	Bikeway Sign and Post	Each	$500.00	3	$1,500.00
	New Sign and Post	Each	$500.00	15	$7,500.00
	Landscaping	LS	$60,000.00	1	$60,000.00
	Construction Total				*$94,110.75*
	Design Cost (8%)				*$7,528.86*
	Contingency (30%)				*$30,491.88*
	TOTAL COST				**$132,131.49**

PROJECT	ITEM	UNIT	UNIT COST	LENGTH	COST
11th Street - Conversion to a two-way street with one 11' travel lane in each direction; 6' buffered bicycle lane adjacent to northbound lane and 10' parking lane adjacent to southbound travel lane.	Removal of Perm. Pvmt. Mark	LF	$1.23	3,860	$4,747.80
	Removal of Perm. Pvmt. Mark (Word)	Each	$261.88	3	$785.64
	Removal of Perm. Pvmt. Mark (Arrow)	Each	$198.86	5	$994.30
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark. Yellow Line 4"	LF	$0.48	7720	$3,705.60
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark. White 8"	LF	$2.93	3860	$11,309.80
	Thermo. Pvmt Mark. White 4"	LF	$0.47	500	$235.00
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark. (Word)	Each	$312.96	3	$938.88
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark (Arrow)	Each	$258.49	5	$1,292.45
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark. (Bike Emb.)	Each	$384.16	3	$1,152.48
	Bikeway Sign and Post	Each	$500.00	3	$1,500.00
	New Sign and Post	Each	$500.00	15	$7,500.00
	Landscaping	LS	$60,000.00	1	$60,000.00
	Construction Total				*$94,161.95*
	Design Cost (8%)				*$7,532.96*
	Contingency (30%)				*$30,508.47*
	TOTAL COST				**$132,203.38**
Grand Avenue Intersection - Alternative 1	Removal of Existing PCC Pvmt. (Grand Avenue)	Sq Yd	$9.08	1,400	$12,712.00
	Topsoil Furnished and Placed	Cu Yd	$11.88	120	$1,425.60
	Solid Sodding	Sq Yd	$3.85	1,400	$5,390.00
	Concrete Walks	Sq Yd	$39.57	1,400	$55,398.00
	CC Curb & Gutter - A (1'6")	LF	$15.66	150	$2,349.00
	New Sign and Post	Each	$500.00	4	$2,000.00
	Landscaping	LS	$50,000.00	1	$50,000.00
	Traffic Signals/Utilities Allowance	LS	$300,000.00	2	$600,000.00
	Total				*$729,274.60*
	Design Cost (8%)				*$58,341.97*
	Contingency (30%)				*$236,284.97*
	TOTAL COST				**$1,023,901.54**

PROJECT	ITEM	UNIT	UNIT COST	LENGTH	COST
Grand Avenue Intersection - Alternative 2	Removal of Existing PCC Pavement (C Street)	Sq Yd	$9.08	800	$7,264.00
	Topsoil Furnished and Placed	Cu Yd	$11.88	60	$712.80
	Solid Sodding	Sq Yd	$3.85	1,400	$5,390.00
	Concrete Walks	Sq Yd	$39.57	1,400	$55,398.00
	CC Curb & Gutter - A (1'6")	LF	$15.66	60	$939.60
	New Sign and Post	Each	$500.00	4	$2,000.00
	Landscaping	LS	$50,000.00	1	$50,000.00
	Traffic Signals/Utilities Allowance	LS	$300,000.00	2	$600,000.00
	Total				*$721,704.40*
	Design Cost (8%)				*$57,736.35*
	Contingency (30%)				*$233,832.23*
	TOTAL COST				**$1,013,272.98**
Riverfront Drive (North H Street to North A Street) - 64' ROW with one 11' travel lane in each direction; 12' shared-use path along southbound travel lane	Clearing	STA	$818.02	24	$19,632.48
	Grubbing	STA	$719.39	24	$17,265.36
	Removal of Existing PCC Pavement	Sq Yd	$9.08	11,700	$106,236.00
	Shaping Roadway Section	STA	$1,077.46	24	$25,859.04
	Trench and Shoulder Preparation	STA	$543.27	24	$13,038.48
	PCC Pavement 6"	Sq Yd	$78.17	5,800	$453,386.00
	Rumble Strips in PCC Shoulders	LF	$0.48	4,800	$2,304.00
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark. Yellow Line 4"	LF	$0.48	4,800	$2,304.00
	CC Curb & Gutter - A (1'6")	LF	$15.66	4,800	$81,432.00
	Concrete Walks	Sq Yd	$39.57	3,200	$126,624.00
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark (Arrow)	Each	$258.49	2	$516.98
	New Sign and Post	Each	$500.00	4	$2,000.00
	Landscaping	LS	$250,000.00	1	$250,000.00
	Total				*$1,063,700.50*
	Design Cost (8%)				*$85,096.04*
	Contingency (30%)				*$344,638.96*
	TOTAL COST				**$1,493,435.50**

PROJECT	ITEM	UNIT	UNIT COST	LENGTH	COST
Riverfront Drive (U.S. Marshals Museum) - 78' ROW with one 11' travel lane in each direction and 14' center turn lane; 12' shared-use path along southbound travel lane.	Clearing	STA	$818.02	7.5	$6,135.15
	Grubbing	STA	$719.39	7.5	$5,395.43
	Removal of Existing PCC Pavement	Sq Yd	$9.08	3,600	$32,688.00
	Shaping Roadway Section	STA	$1,077.46	7.5	$8,080.95
	Trench and Shoulder Preparation	STA	$543.27	7.5	$4,074.53
	PCC Pavement 6"	Sq Yd	$78.17	3,000	$234,510.00
	Rumble strips in PCC Shoulders	LF	$0.48	1,500	$720.00
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark. Yellow Line 4"	LF	$0.48	1,500	$720.00
	CC Curb & Gutter - A (1'6")	LF	$15.66	1,500	$81,432.00
	Concrete Walks	Sq Yd	$39.57	1,000	$39,570.00
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark (Arrow)	Each	$258.49	2	$516.98
	New Sign and Post	Each	$500.00	4	$2,000.00
	Landscaping	LS	$100,000.00	1	$100,000.00
	Total				*$504,312.46*
	Design Cost (8%)				*$40,345.00*
	Contingency (30%)				*$163,397.24*
	TOTAL COST				**$708,054.69**
Riverfront Drive (Potential Kelley Highway to U.S. Marshals Museum) - 100' ROW with two 11' travel lanes in each direction and 14' median; 12' shared-use path along southbound travel lane.	Clearing	STA	$818.02	26	$21,268.52
	Grubbing	STA	$719.39	26	$18,704.14
	Removal of Existing PCC Pavement	Sq Yd	$9.08	14,000	$127,120.00
	Shaping Roadway Section	STA	$1,077.46	26	$28,013.96
	Trench and Shoulder Preparation	STA	$543.27	26	$14,125.02
	PCC Pavement 6"	Sq Yd	$78.17	16,000	$1,250,720.00
	Rumble strips in PCC Shoulders	LF	$0.48	5,200	$2,496.00
	Concrete Island	Sq Yd	$55.49	4,000	$221,960.00
	Thermo. Pvmt Mark. White 4"	LF	$0.47	650	$305.50
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark. (Word)	Each	$312.96	4	$1,251.84

Source: Cost estimates based on 2015 Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department Unit Price Sheet (if unit costs were not available, costs based on similar project experience)

PROJECT	ITEM	UNIT	UNIT COST	LENGTH	COST
Riverfront Drive (Potential Kelley Highway to U.S. Marshals Museum) - Continued	CC Curb & Gutter - A (1'6")	LF	$15.66	5,200	$81,432.00
	Concrete Walks	Sq Yd	$39.57	3,500	$138,495.00
	Thermo. Pvmt. Mark (Arrow)	Each	$258.49	4	$1,033.96
	New Sign and Post	Each	$500.00	4	$2,000.00
	Landscaping	LS	$250,000.00	1	$250,000.00
	Total				$2,118,953.28
	Design Cost (8%)				$169,516.26
	Contingency (30%)				$686,540.86
	TOTAL COST				**$2,975,010.41**

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