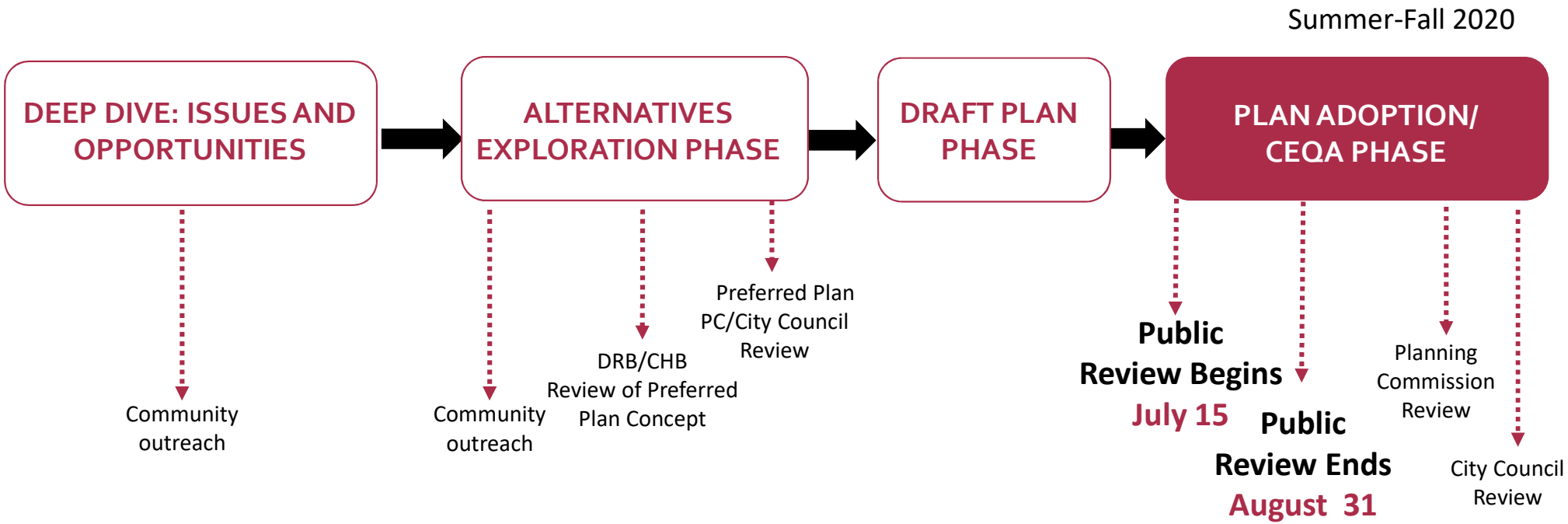
Santa Rosa Downtown Station Area Specific Plan Update

Design Review/Cultural Heritage Board

August 19, 2020

Process and Timeline



Objectives

- *Present Draft Specific Plan Update*
- *Receive feedback from Design Review Board/Cultural Heritage Board*

Participation

Public Comment Period (July 15-August 31):

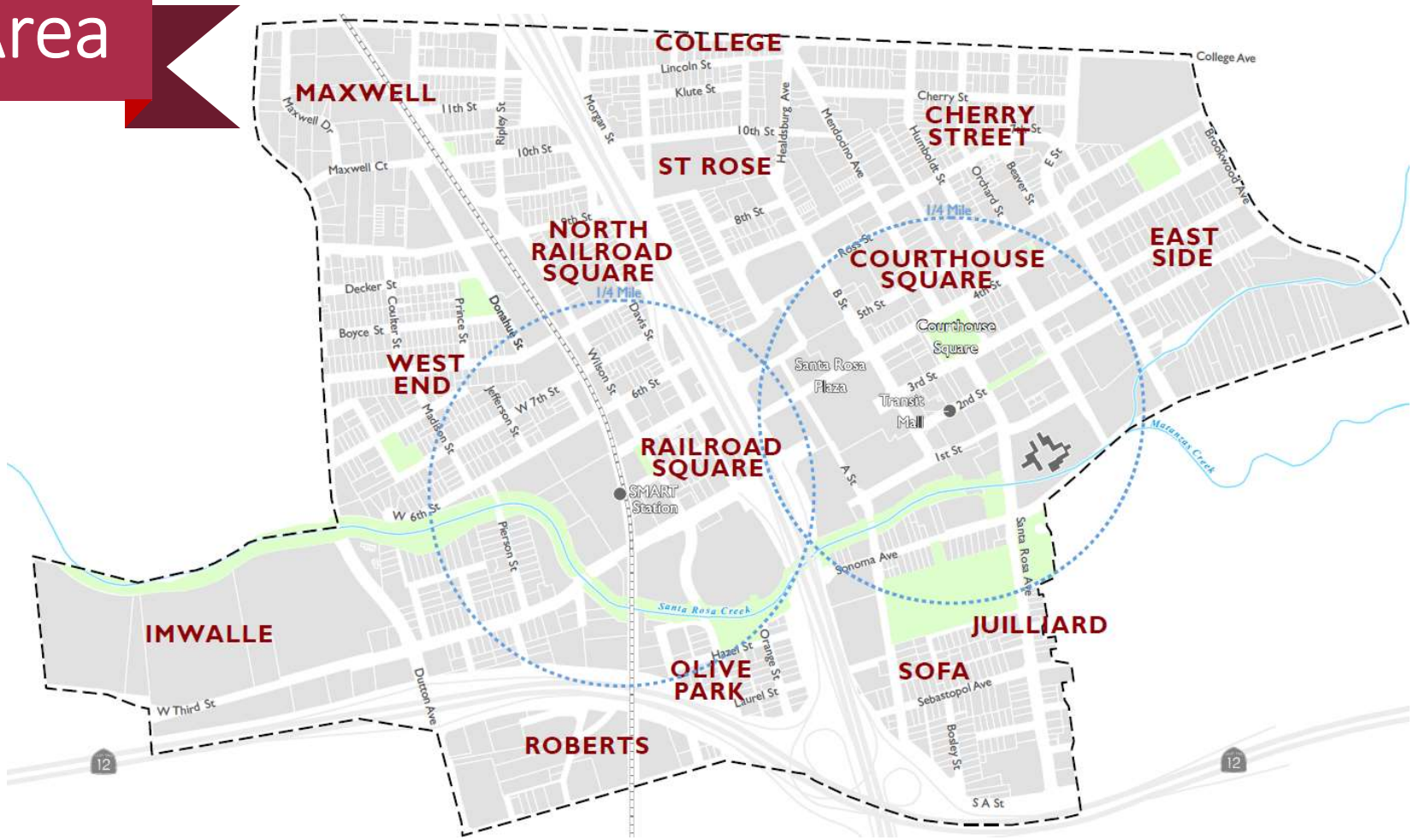
- Call and leave a voice message: 707-543-3410
- Read chapters and submit comments online at: wwww.plandowntownsr.com/draft-plan
- Email alyle@srcity.org

Public Hearings:

- Submit comments at Planning Commission Approval Hearing (September)
- Submit comments at City Council Approval Hearing (October)

Background

Planning Area



DSASP History

- Santa Rosa Downtown Station Area Specific Plan (DSASP) was originally adopted in 2007, with a vision of increasing number of residents and employees around future SMART station
- 10 years into planning period, development is below projections, and other goals remain unmet

Projected 3,400 new residential units

Projected 493,500 square feet of new office, retail and institutional uses

1. More residents, businesses and jobs near transit
2. More housing at all levels of affordability
3. Diverse mix of uses
4. Enhanced historic character
5. Improved connections
6. New arts and cultural facilities

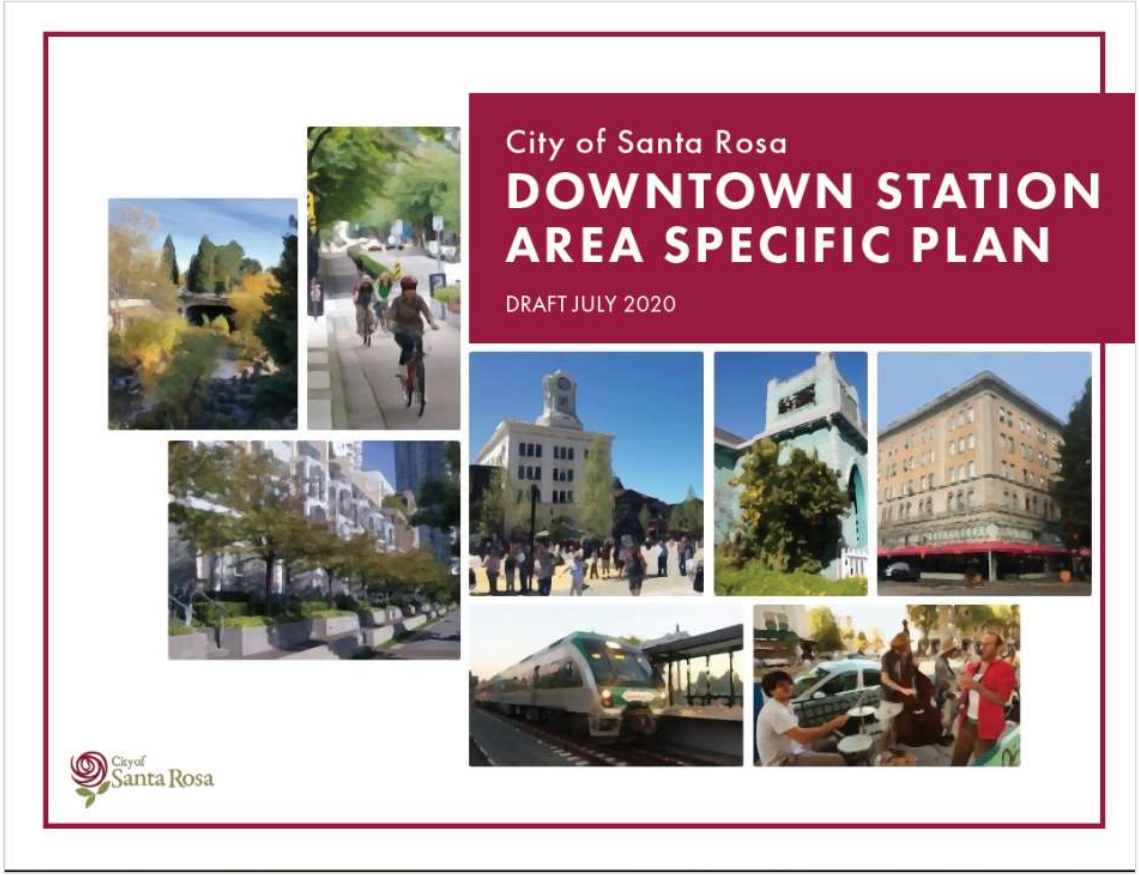
Community Engagement

- Over **1,100** participants have shared ideas that contributed to the Draft DSASP
  - ~210 participants at 3 workshops
  - >850 responses to online surveys
  - 6 focused community meetings
  - Pop-up outreach at citywide events
  - Community Advisory Committee outreach Technical Advisory Committee input

Draft DSASP

Draft DSASP

- Introduction
- Land Use
- Mobility
- Urban Design and Civic Spaces
- Public Services and Sustainability
- Financing and Implementation



Vision Statement

"Downtown Santa Rosa is a vibrant, sustainable, and important community gathering place where we celebrate our diversity, our heritage, and our local culture;

we live, work, and share with one another;

and everyone plays a part in shaping Downtown's future."

LAND USE

Land Use

CONTENTS

- Existing land uses
- Development potential
- Land use map
- Permitted uses and intensities
- Vitality, walkability, art/culture

GOALS

- Energetic regional commercial and cultural center
- Walkable development pattern
- Significant new development
- Long-term economic viability
- Housing opportunities for all (including the unhoused)

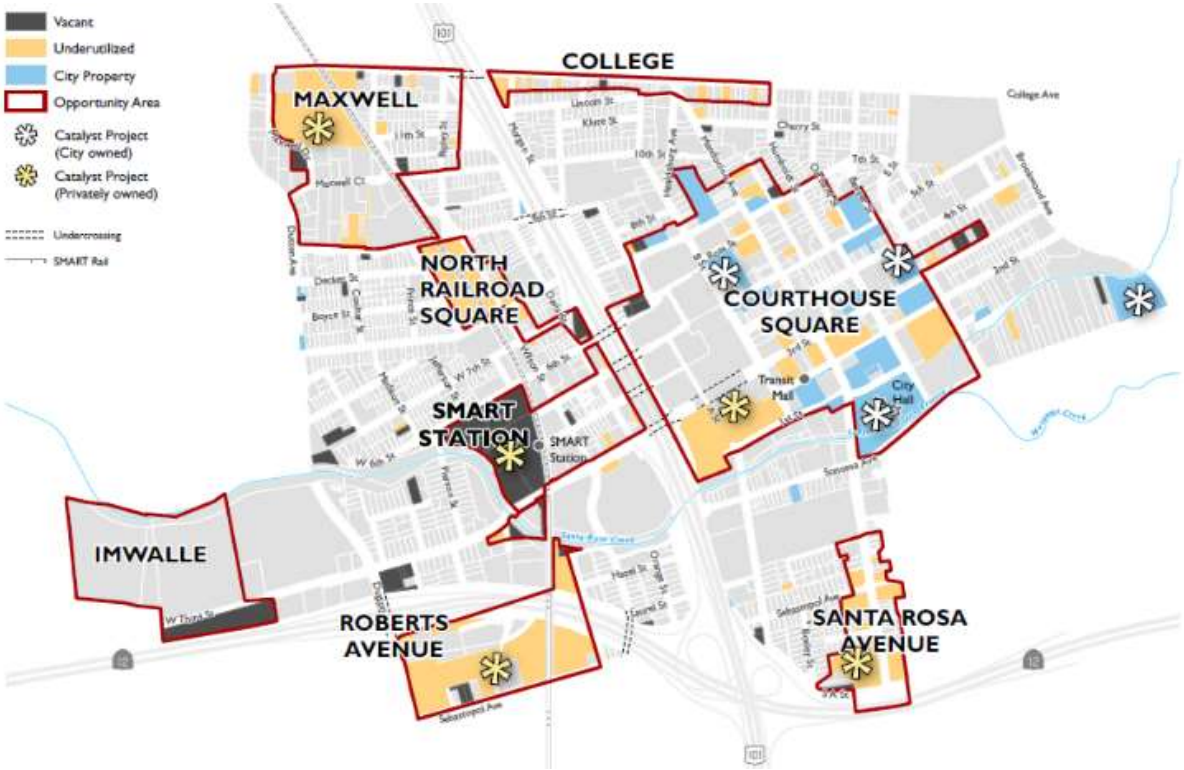
KEY MOVES

- New Land Use designations:
  - Core Mixed Use
  - Station Mixed Use
  - Maker Mixed Use
  - Neighborhood Mixed Use
- Regulate height and density with Floor Area Ratio (FAR)
- Activate ground floors for key streets

Land Use

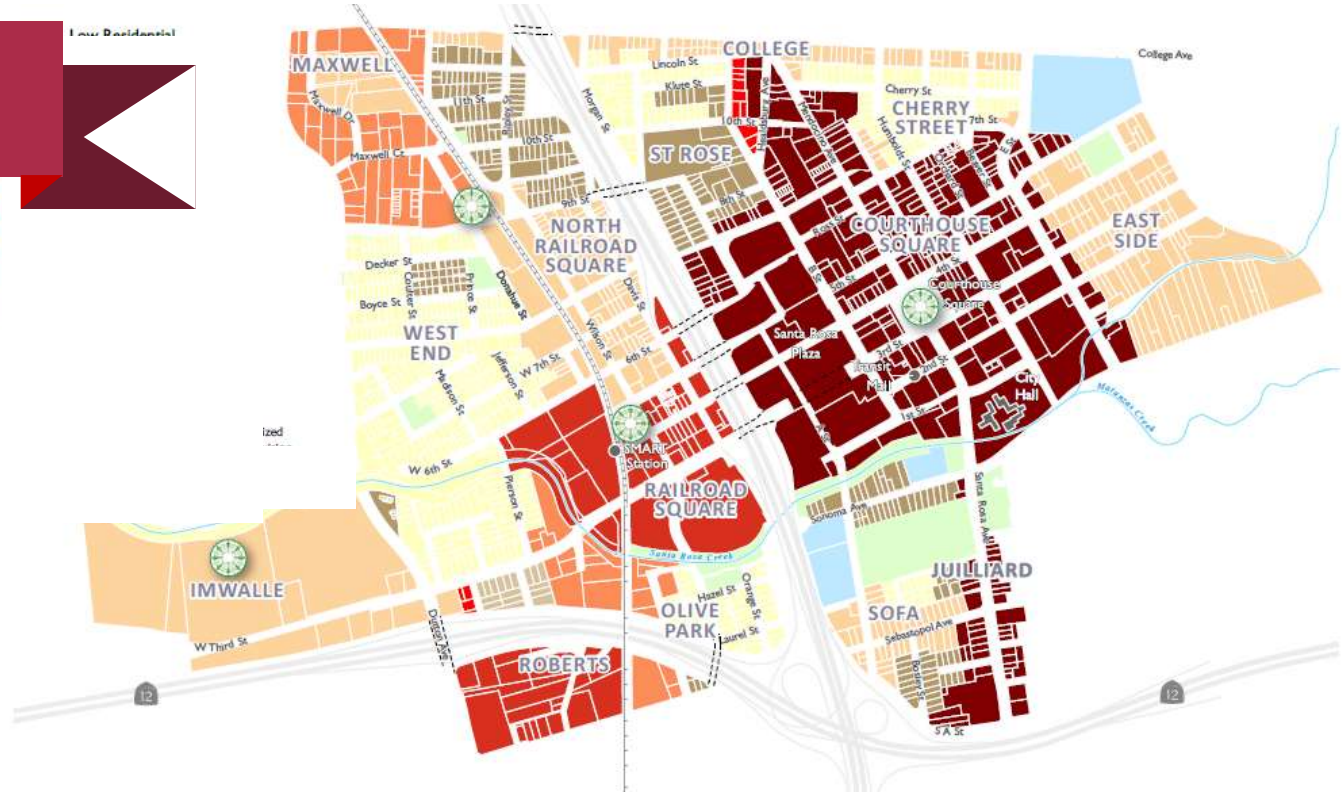
- DSASP is projected to add 7,000 new housing units and ~828,500 square feet of office, retail, services, and industrial uses
- Most development expected to occur in "Opportunity Areas"

Opportunity Area	Housing Units	Non-Residential Square Feet
Courthouse Square	2,930	525,900
Santa Rosa Ave	660	104,300
Roberts	690	84,100
SMART	790	17,120
Imwalle/3rd	250	6,300
North Railroad Square	360	26,560
Maxwell Ct	1,080	62,410
Other (rest of Planning Area)	250	19,200
TOTAL	**7,000**	**828,490**



Land Use Categories

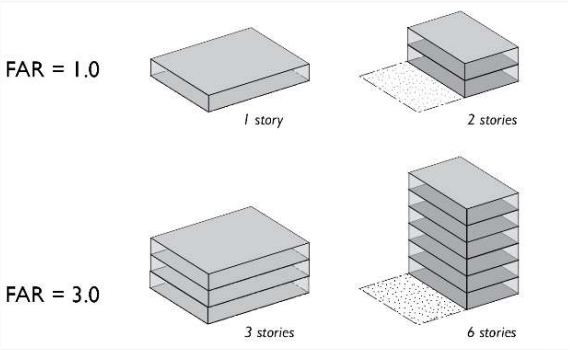
- New Categories:
  - Core Mixed Use
  - Station Mixed Use
  - Maker Mixed Use
  - Neighborhood Mixed Use
  - Urban Park/Civic Space

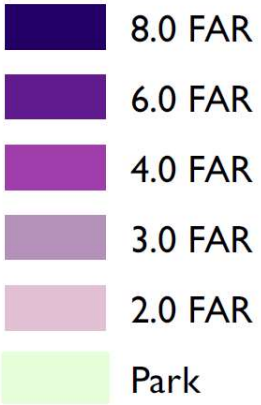


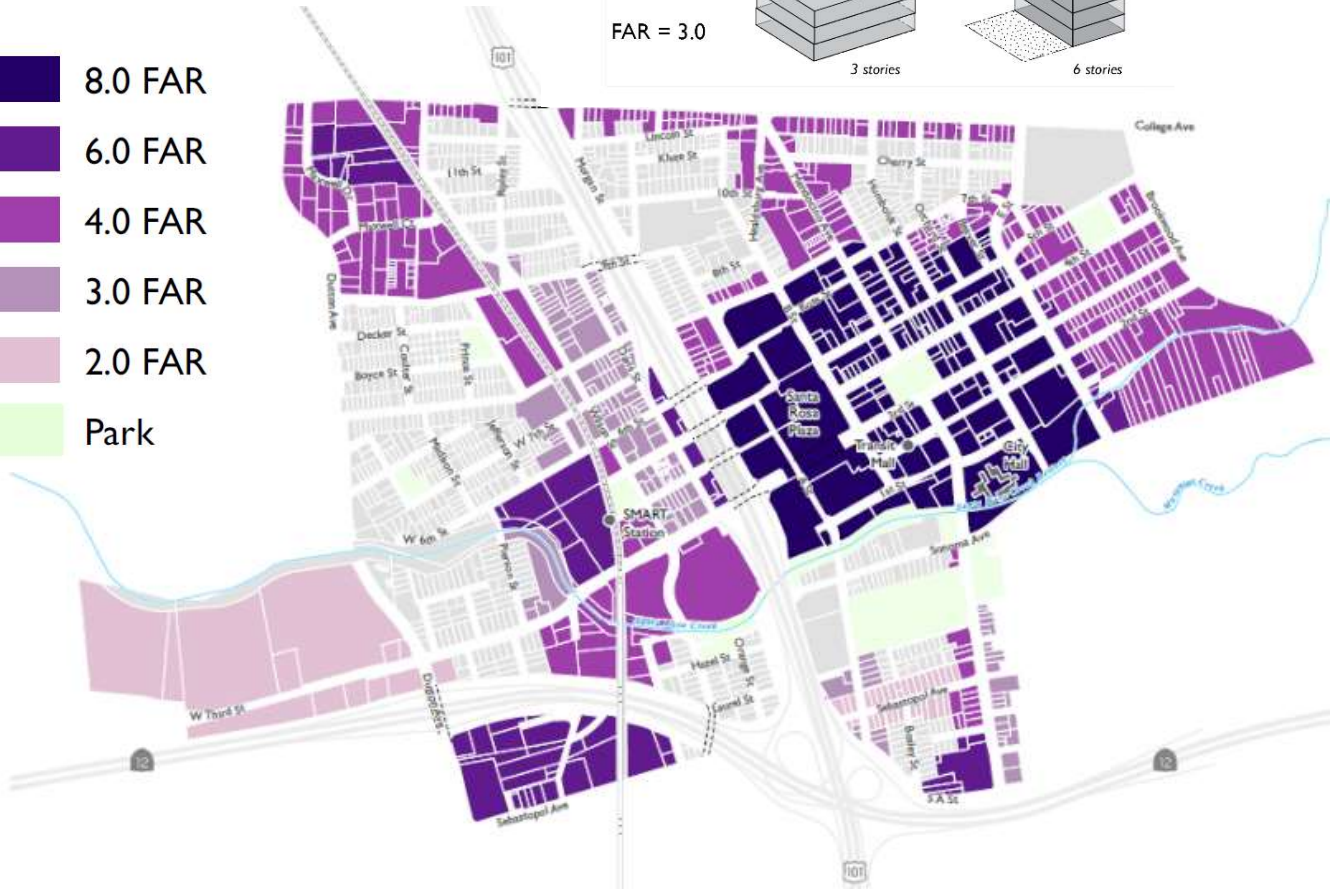
- Low Residential
- Medium-Low Residential
- Medium Residential
- Retail and Business Service
- Public/Institutional
- Core Mixed Use
- Station Mixed Use
- Maker Mixed Use
- Neighborhood Mixed Use
- Park
- Urban Park/Civic Space
- Undercrossing
- SMART Rail

Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

- FAR = Ratio of total building space to lot size
- FAR-based system replaces existing height and density regulations in key change areas. Outside of the change areas, existing height and density regulations remain
- Provides flexibility to developers

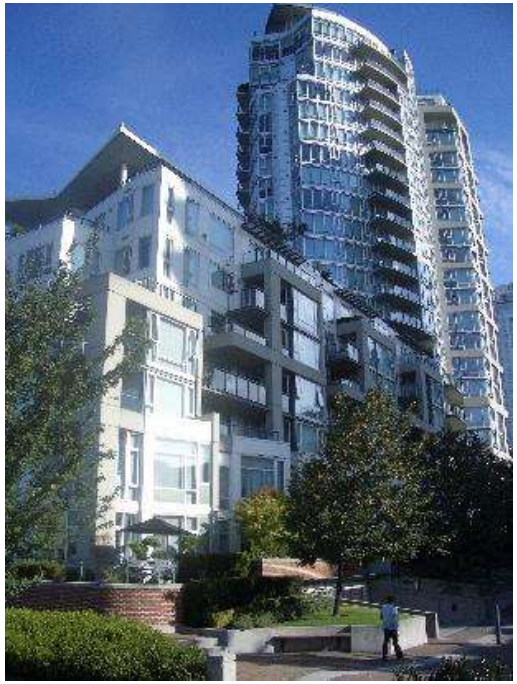






Affordability/ Homelessness

- Removes regulatory hurdles to support feasibility of multifamily development
- Promotes creation of a mix of housing unit types, sizes, and price points, including:
  - smaller units that are affordable by design
  - live/work units for creatives and home-based business operators
  - larger units for families
- Supports development of projects and partnerships that serve the homeless and special needs populations



MOBILITY

Mobility

CONTENTS

- Roadway network
- Bicycle and pedestrian network
- Transit network
- Parking

GOALS

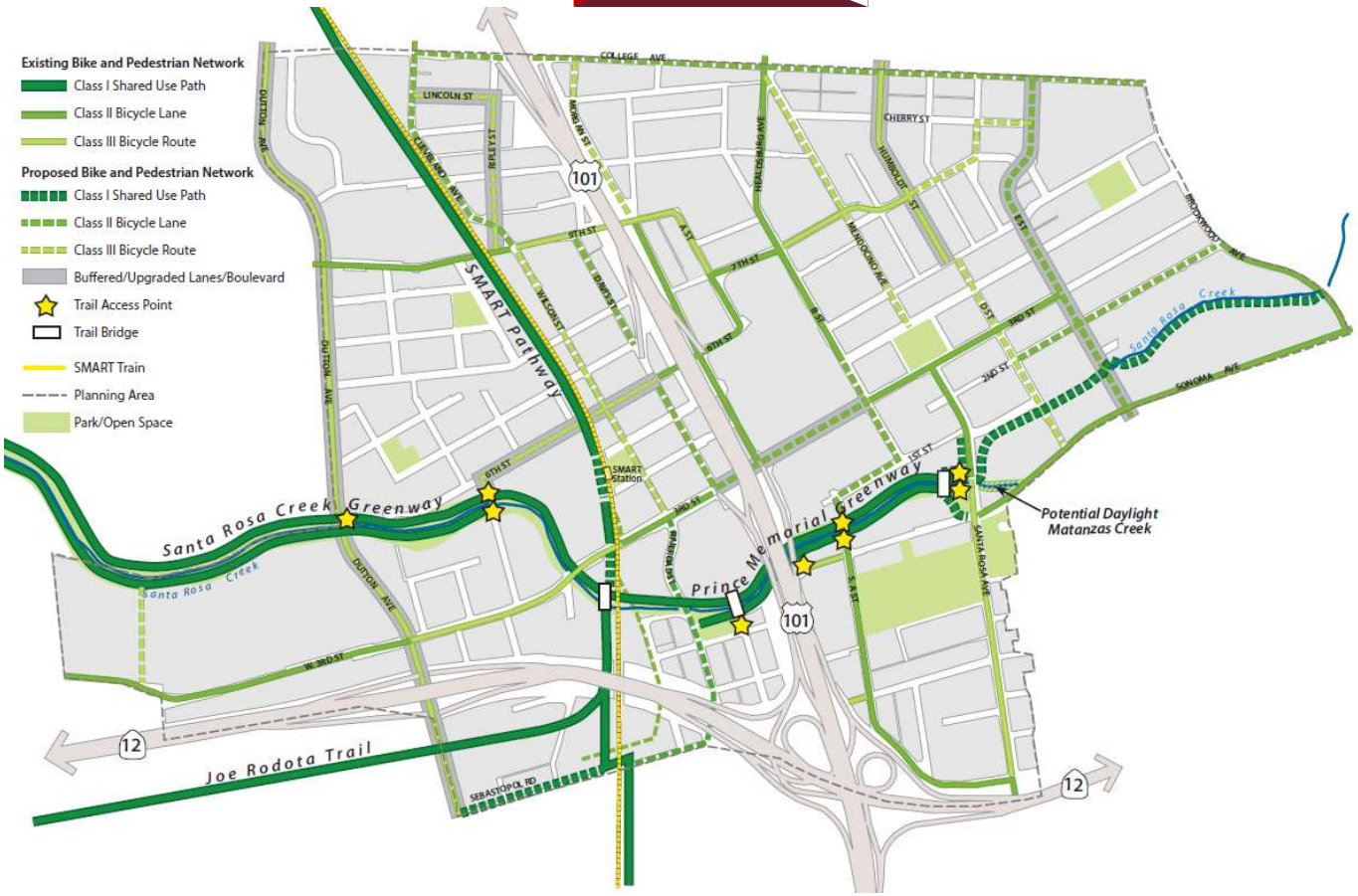
- Multi-modal street grid
- Complete bicycle and pedestrian network
- Enhanced east-west connections
- Safe, well-connected transit hub
- Balanced parking supply

KEY MOVES

- Fourth street connection through Mall
- Downtown loop/trackless trolley connector
- Eliminate minimum parking requirements and exclude parking space from FAR calculations
- Use surplus parking supply to incentivize development

Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements

- Improvements for a comfortable and safe bicycle and pedestrian network
- Pedestrian improvements
- Links to Santa Rosa Creek and Prince Memorial Greenway

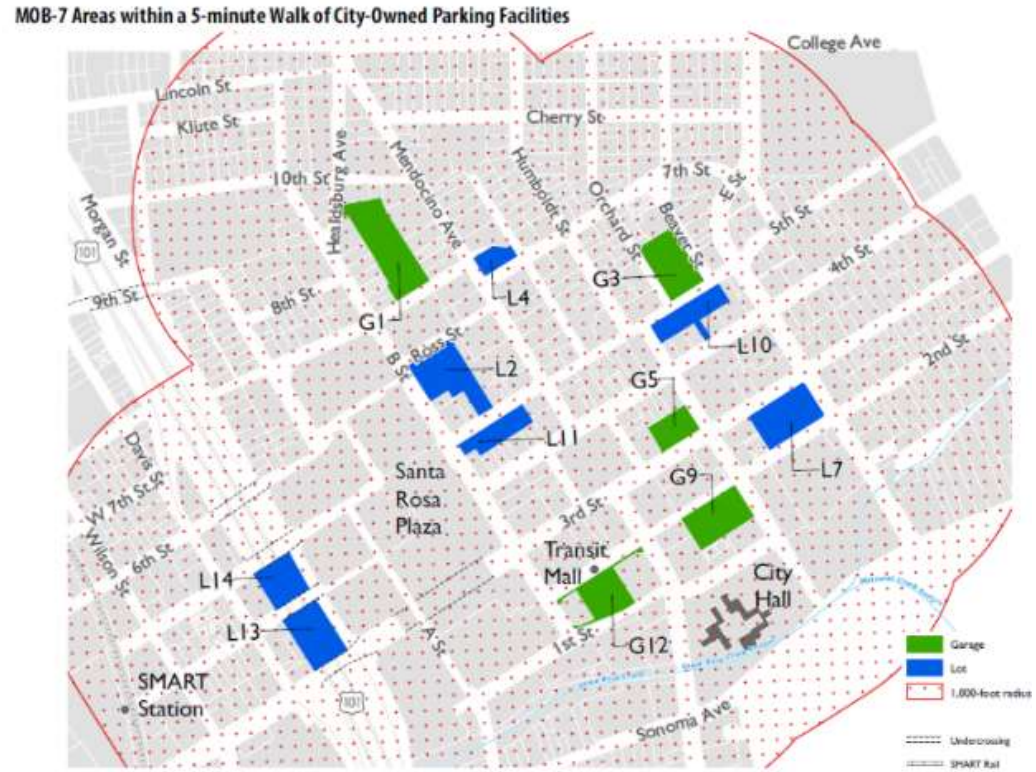


East-West Connections

- Downtown Loop connecting Railroad and Courthouse Squares
- Programmatic Fourth Street connection through Santa Rosa Plaza Mall
- Streetscape enhancements such as striping, parklets, wayfinding, and lighting

Parking

- Eliminates minimum parking requirements and allows for "unbundled" parking
- Continues to implement progressive parking management strategy will continue (demand-responsive pricing, meter time limits, etc.)
- Leverages surplus parking supply to catalyze development



URBAN DESIGN

Urban Design and Civic Spaces

CONTENTS

- Urban design principles
- The public realm
- Public spaces
- Site and building design
- Historic resources

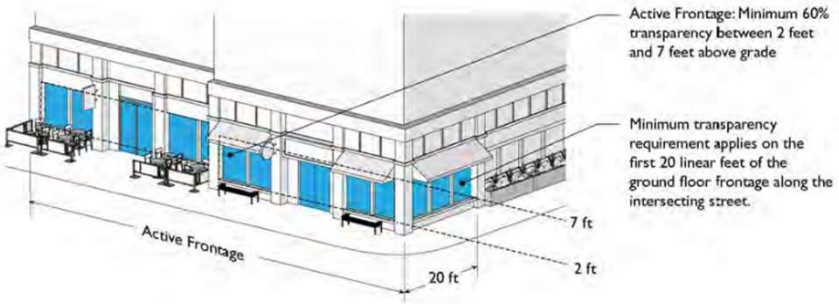
GOALS

- New development standards and guidelines
- Network of green and open spaces
- Well-preserved historic resources

KEY MOVES

- Create urban parks/civic spaces
- Design standards and guidelines for active ground floors, transition areas that border residential neighborhoods, and wayfinding
- Historic resource assessment of age-eligible properties

Active Ground Floors



- Requirements for new development along certain streets to contribute to the pedestrian experience, including:
  - Awnings or overhangs
  - Street furniture
  - Public art
  - Green/living walls
  - Other innovations

- Other features to improve:
  - Wayfinding and access
  - Pedestrian safety and comfort

Transition Areas

- Applies where development immediately abuts uses designated as Preservation Districts or residential neighborhoods.
- Ensure that new development fits into existing neighborhoods with a cohesive urban form and provides transition between higher-density and lower-density neighborhoods
- Includes setback, stepback, and street frontage standards

Downtown Transitions

Objective:

Preserve the smaller-scale, walkable charm of Fourth Street and promote a similar character on Fifth Street

Strategy:

- *Require buildings in the Downtown Transition zone to step back a minimum of 10 feet above the third floor along the frontage of Fourth and Fifth Streets*
- *Avoids massing and bulk that could create a cavernous feeling*
- *Smaller parcel size in combination with FAR effectively limits height*

Downtown Transition
Active Ground Floor Overlay

Station Transition

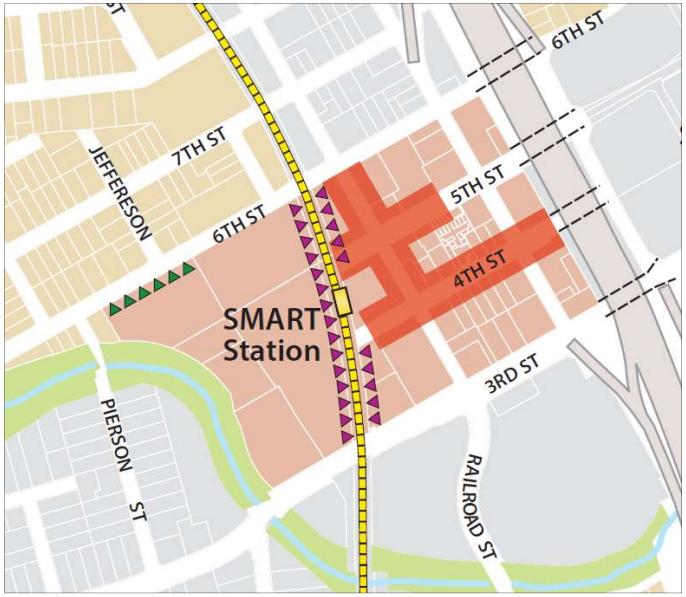
Objective:

Manage aesthetic, visual, and shade/shadow impacts on the Square in Railroad Square and surrounding historic-age buildings

Strategy:

Require the new development be set back:

- A minimum of 6 feet from the SMART rail right-of-way
- A minimum 10 feet above 3rd floor along the SMART rail right-of-way
- A minimum 20 feet above 6th floor along the SMART rail right-of-way



Station Transition

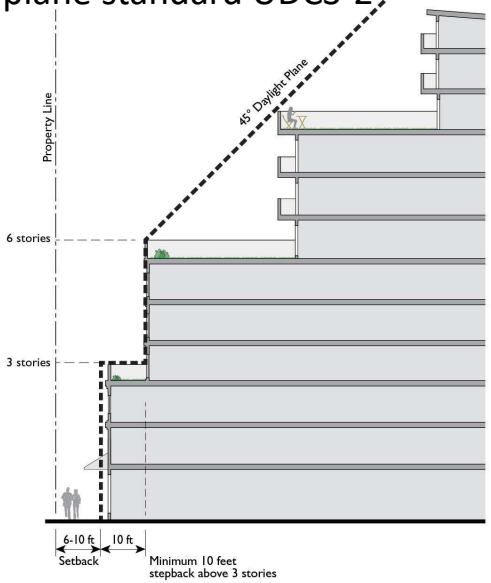
Active Ground Floor Overlay

Neighborhood Transitions

Objective: *Manage transitions between new development and established neighborhoods*

	Seventh, Ninth, Riley Streets	Santa Rosa Avenue and E Street
Front Setback	**6-10 feet** (min/max) with trees, shrubs, and groundcovers per requirements of Zoning Code Chapter 20-34	-
Stepback	Buildings must **step back** from the street frontage a minimum of **10 feet above the third floor**. Above 6 stories, buildings must maintain a **daylight plane of 45 degrees** as shown in Figure UDCS-2.	Buildings must **step back** from the rear a minimum of **10 feet above the third floor** and a minimum of **20 feet above the sixth floor**. Above 6 stories, buildings must maintain a **daylight plane of 45 degrees** as shown in Figure UDCS-2.
Ground Floors	Residential and mixed-use projects located across the street from single-family neighborhoods shall **orient the buildings to the street** with individual entries, patio areas and landscaping facing the single-family homes.	-
Surface Parking	Surface parking areas are not permitted between the sidewalk and the building façade.	

Daylight plane standard UDCS-2



Parks and Civic Space

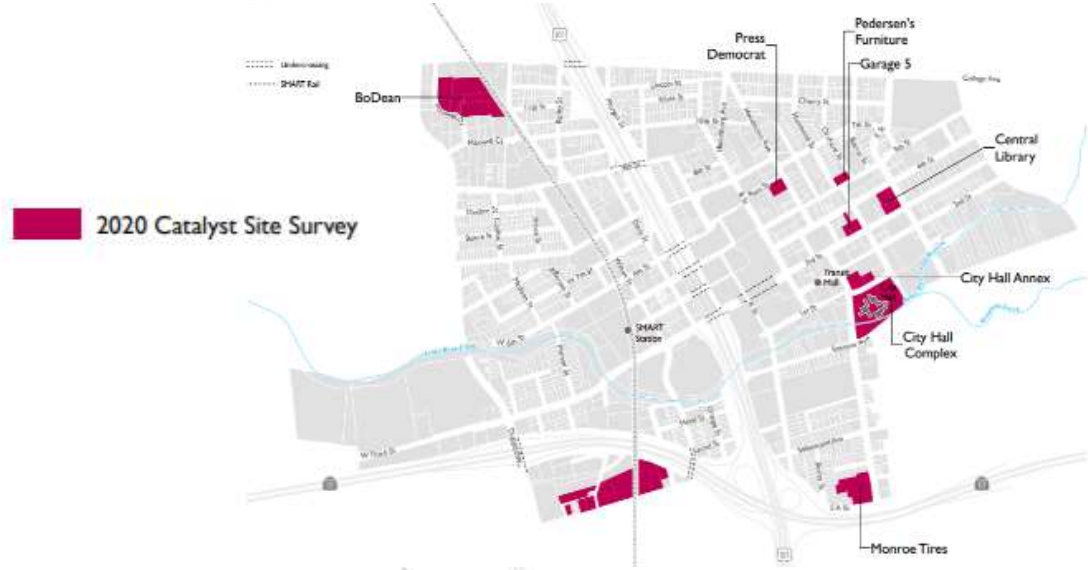
- Creates a diverse range of public spaces at different scales and sizes
- Large urban parks called Civic Spaces provide flexible, publicly accessible space for a range of entertainment and activities

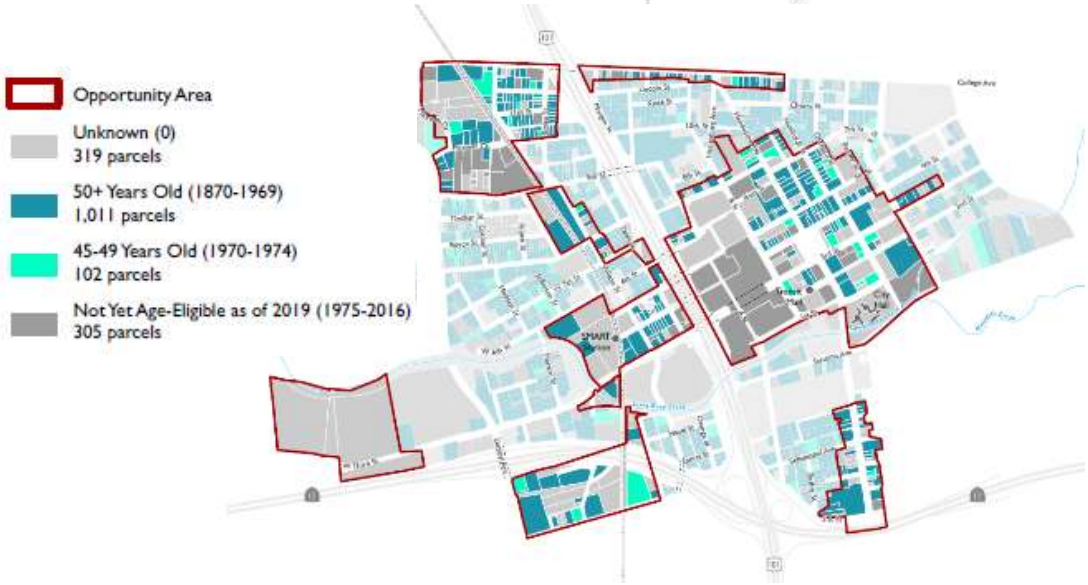
Table UDCS-1: Public Space Size and Programming Guidelines

	Civic Spaces	*Public Plazas*	*Rooftop/Pocket Parks*	*Paseos*
Recommended Size	Min 25,000 sf	Min 15,000-20,000 sf	Min 2,000 sf	Min 16 feet wide, with min 10-foot travel path
Recommended Elements				
Pop up retail/concession stands	X	X		
Public art installations	X	X	X	X
Children's play facilities	X	X		
Seating (benches and mobile chairs)	X	X	X	X
Family picnic area	X	X		
Canopiess	X	X		
Plug and play for music performance	X	X		X
Bandstand/stage	X	X		
Removable bollards	X	X	X	X
Power outlets	X	X	X	X
Water features	X			
Interactive elements (pianos, chess boards, etc.)	X	X	X	
Trees and landscaping	X	X	X	X
Edible gardens			X	
Public washrooms	X			

Historic Resources

- Measures to protect and enhance the historic and cultural resources that contribute to downtown character
- Historic resource analysis of key “catalyst sites”, selected based on certain characteristics, is a first step in understanding historical significance and potential community sensitivities
- Further study of age-eligible properties





PUBLIC SERVICES AND SUSTAINABILITY

Public Services and Sustainability

CONTENTS

- Public services (schools, libraries, police/community safety, fire, utilities)
- Noise and hazardous materials
- Environmental hazards and emergency response
- Clean air, water, and natural environment

GOALS

- Responsive fire and police services
- Accessible school and library facilities
- Adequate infrastructure
- Pleasant noise environment
- Healthy air and water quality
- Protection from natural hazards
- Preserved/enhanced biological and cultural resources

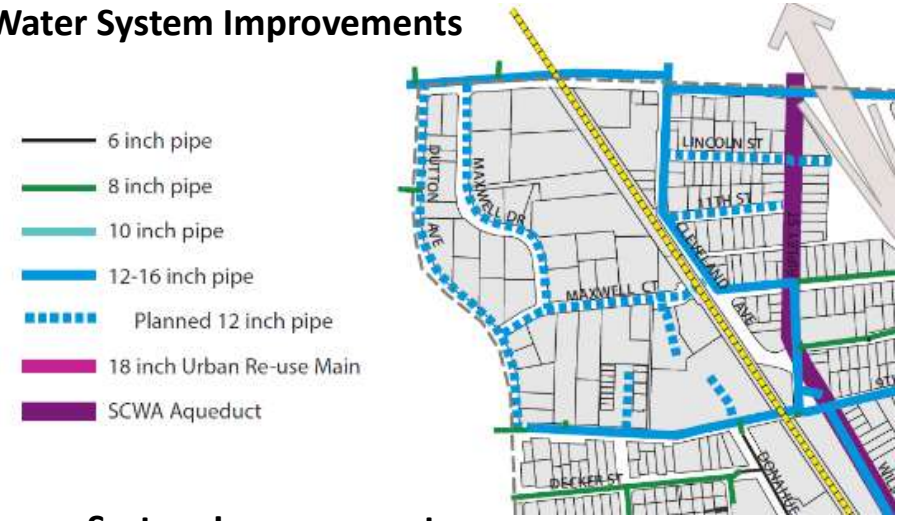
KEY MOVES

- Identify infrastructure improvements needed
- Minimize exposure air and noise pollution
- Take action for effective emergency response/preparedness

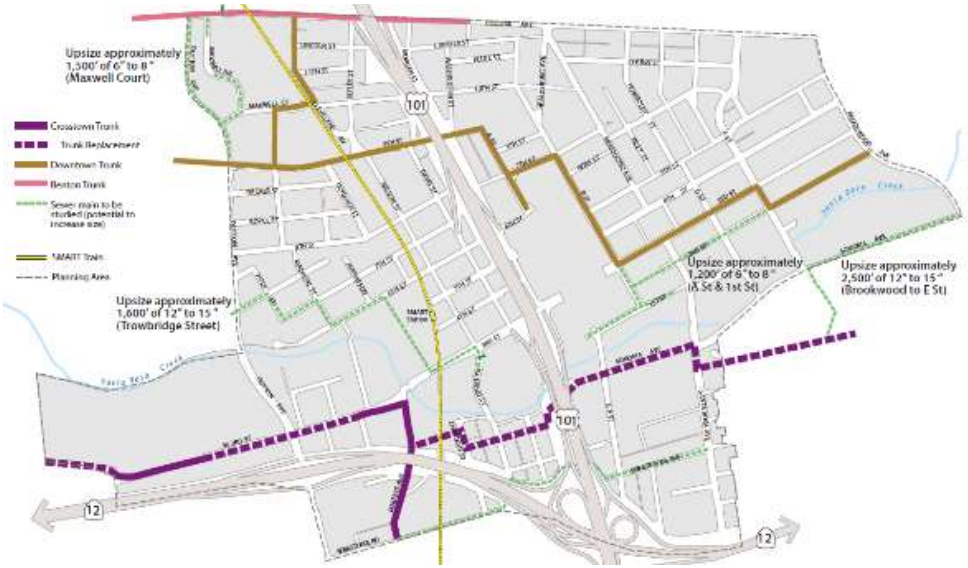
Utilities Improvements

- Utilities replacements to accommodate new development:
  - Pipe upgrades in Maxwell Court to accommodate new residential development
  - Replacement of portions of the Crosstown Trunk
  - Various areas of study for other potential improvements

Water System Improvements

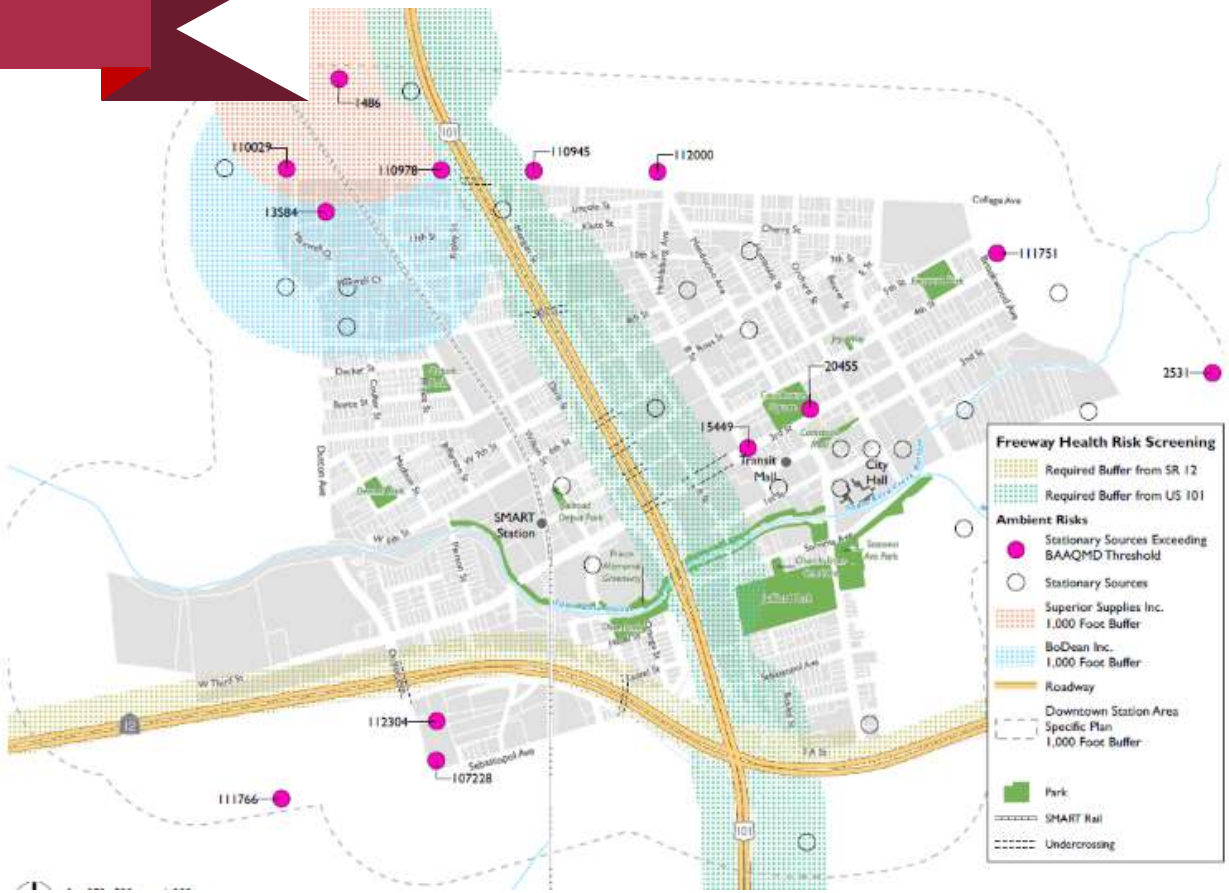


Sewer System Improvements



Air Quality

- Requires projects that locate sensitive receptors (such as residences, schools, daycare, or nursing and retirement homes) to include indoor air filtration and other techniques to improve air quality
- Ensures development projects reduce construction-related emissions



Hazards and Emergency Response

- Addresses effective emergency response and protection from hazards:
  - Fires
  - Earthquakes
  - Flooding
  - Heat days
  - Public Safety Power Shutoffs and power alternatives

FINANCING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Financing and Implementation

CONTENTS

- Regulatory implementation
- Implementation and phasing
- Infrastructure financing strategies
- Periodic plan review

GOALS

- Adequately financed and implementable improvements

KEY MOVES

- Phased approach to implementation (short term and intermediate/long term)
- Identification of a range of funding tools and mechanisms

Phasing

Near term efforts (to occur in the next 5 years):

- Public-private partnership for one of the City-owned catalyst sites
- Roadway reconfigurations
- Shared parking agreements
- Prioritize access and wayfinding improvements between Courthouse and Railroad squares
- More programming of events and public spaces

Intermediate/Longer term efforts (5-15 years):

- Redevelopment of privately-owned catalyst sites
- Civic Spaces construction
- Infrastructure and streetscape improvements tied to new development
- Monitor progress

Financing

- The DSASP identifies a range of funding and financing strategies the City and developers can draw on:
  - EIFDs, state grants, and development impact fees to fund infrastructure
  - CBDs and special assessment districts to finance parks and civic spaces, streetscape improvements, public realm programming
  - Federal Opportunity Zone tax breaks for private development
  - Renewal Enterprise District

Table FI-4: DSASP Potential Funding Sources and Uses Matrix

	Improvement Cost Category					
	Infrastructure Funding Type	*Utilities*	*Circulation*	*Civic Spaces*	*Operations & Maintenance*	*Implementation Considerations*
Developer-Based Funding	Impact Fees (e.g., updated water and wastewater connection fees)	X	X	X		Must correspond to the "nexus" findings, consistent with the Mitigation Fee Act (i.e., the fee must be reasonably related to the cost of the improvement and the impact created by new development). Can be linked to the state's SCIP program.
	Dedications and Exactions	X	X	X		Typically required as project-specific mitigations, or may be based on policy.
	Development Agreements	X	X	X	X	Requires a market strong enough to incentivize developer investment beyond fair share. DA's are legally binding contracts between developers and public agencies.
Land-Secured Tax Revenue	Special Tax or Assessment District (e.g., CFD, CBD, BID, Special Assessment Districts)	X	X	X	X	Requires voter approval and sufficient scale/participation to achieve yield and implementation efficiency.
City-Based Funding	Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District - SB 628 Tax Increment Financing	X	X	X		Diverts incremental increases in tax revenue from the General Fund, creating a trade-off between General Fund reveue and funding for project or area wide purposes.
	General Obligation Bond	X	X	X		Limited to funding capital improvements and must be secured by legally available resources like property tax revenues. If for non-education purposes, requires a two-thirds voter approval.
	Revenue Bond	X				Limited to enterprise-related expenditures and requires a stable source of revenue. Does not require voter approval.
	Other City Funding (Other Special Tax Measures, etc.)	X	X	X	X	Requires voter approval to increase local taxes.
	City's General Fund	X	X	X	X	Creates trade off between projects and programs that are currently funded by General Fund revenues and new initiatives.
	Regional, State or Federal Grant Funding	X	X			Can require significant Staff time to apply for and administer qualifying projects.

What's Next…

- Draft Plan released (public comment period: 45 days) — July 15th
  - Small group meetings — July/August
- Plan Adoption
  - Planning Commission Hearing — September
  - City Council Hearing — October