

Central Downtown EL PASO

Area-Wide Planning &
Revitalization Strategies

EL PASO, TEXAS



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El Paso Downtown Management District

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Executive Summary



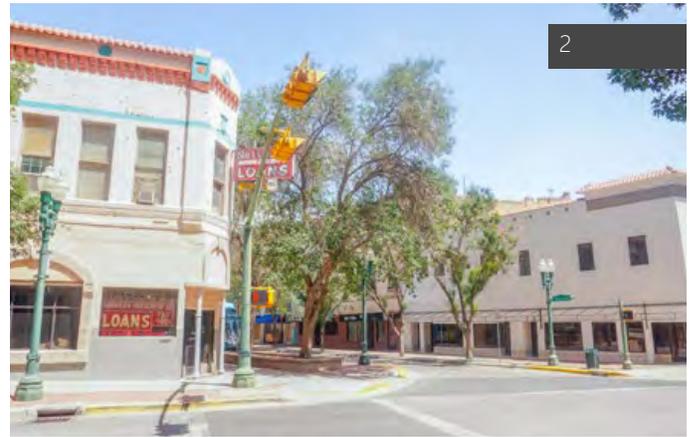
Project Introduction

In early 2021, the El Paso Downtown Management District (DMD) and its consultant partners (Stantec and Quantum Engineering) embarked on a year-long area-wide planning (AWP) process to explore the existing conditions, define a long-term vision, and establish a set of revitalization strategies for the 18-block Central Downtown area of El Paso (referred to as the “Target Area” herein). As a notable component, the process included a continual conversation with community stakeholders so that this AWP initiative reflected the public’s preferences, needs, and aspirations in terms of urban design, community services, and amenities.

The community’s vision is to *“Revitalize and shape Central Downtown into an inclusive, diverse, and authentic mixed-use urban neighborhood that celebrates El Paso’s history, culture, and creativity”*. This AWP document includes the existing conditions findings, community vision, and the revitalization strategies that will support future investment, create district vitality, and elevate quality of life in the Target Area for both current and future populations. This work aims to guide the community in realizing its vision.

ABOVE. View of the Target Area looking northwest from atop the public garage on El Paso Street - San Antonio Avenue in distance.

Contextual Background – Downtown El Paso is experiencing a resurgence of both public and private investment after decades of economic decline and a population shift from its urban core to suburban growth on the regional fringe. Recent wins include renovations to the Plaza Hotel and Hotel Paso Del Norte, the Stanton House boutique hotel, and a multitude of new locally-owned shops and eateries. The City and other government agencies have made substantial public investments including enhancements to San Jacinto Plaza and El Paso Street, and construction projects involving the El Paso Streetcar, Bus Rapid Transit services, museums, public housing, the Southwest University Park ballfield, and arts/convention spaces.



By contrast, the Target Area has lagged other Downtown districts in terms of economic development, amenities, and vibrancy. The Target Area exhibits large vacancies and lacks basic commercial services that are vital for both residents and downtown workers. Approximately 30% of the Target Area's buildings are vacant, making several corridors feel abandoned due to the lack of street-level commercial activity. Undeveloped lots proliferate the area as numerous buildings were razed to make way for surface parking lots. Through adaptive reuse of its historical buildings and urban infill projects on vacant parcels, the Target Area has tremendous revitalization potential and capacity to support the region's growing population.

The community is making some progress to address these conditions - the City of El Paso has performed streetscape enhancements and there are near-term plans to introduce bicycle infrastructure and open space enhancements. The area has sustained several of its legacy discount and specialty stores and there are some recent business startups, albeit the area has not achieved its full potential in terms of commercial activity, housing, and community services.

The Target Area is characterized as a series of primary mixed-use corridors with several distinctive side streets, each with their unique character and redevelopment potential. Mills Avenue and San Antonio Avenue are in the heart of Downtown's entertainment, hotel, and office district; these corridors include a multitude of building vacancies but are showing signs of reemergence with new business activity. El Paso Street is transitioning from a long-time discount retail corridor for international customers to a hospitality and entertainment district; the Plaza Theatre, the renovated hotels, and the convention center are on the north end of the corridor. Stanton Street is a legacy neighborhood commercial corridor though many of

its storefronts remain vacant. Paisano Drive represents the edge of the Downtown Core and separates it from the international district around the border crossings. Kansas Street defines the Target Area's eastern boundary and is the transition into the El Paso County government campus; the recently constructed El Paso Streetcar runs along this corridor. The other corridors include a diverse mix of land uses and function more like neighborhood side streets.

Brownfields – In concert with historical downtowns, the Target Area includes several legacy commercial or industrial uses and a multitude of historic structures. Due to past land use activities and building ages (which pre-dated state and federal safety standards), virtually all the properties in the Target Area are considered "brownfields". These sites could possess contaminated site conditions and/ or hazardous building materials (e.g., asbestos and/ or lead-based paint) that complicate site reuse and investment due to potential testing and abatement costs. The unknown environmental conditions create another level of complexity to revitalization efforts in the Target Area. For these reasons, the DMD applied for and was awarded a United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) Brownfield Assessment Grant and chose to use a portion of the funds to complete this AWP initiative. The EPA defines a brownfield as "a property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant".

1. View of El Paso Street and the recently completed streetscape elements. | 2. Existing vacant/underutilized buildings along San Antonio Avenue at Oregon Street.

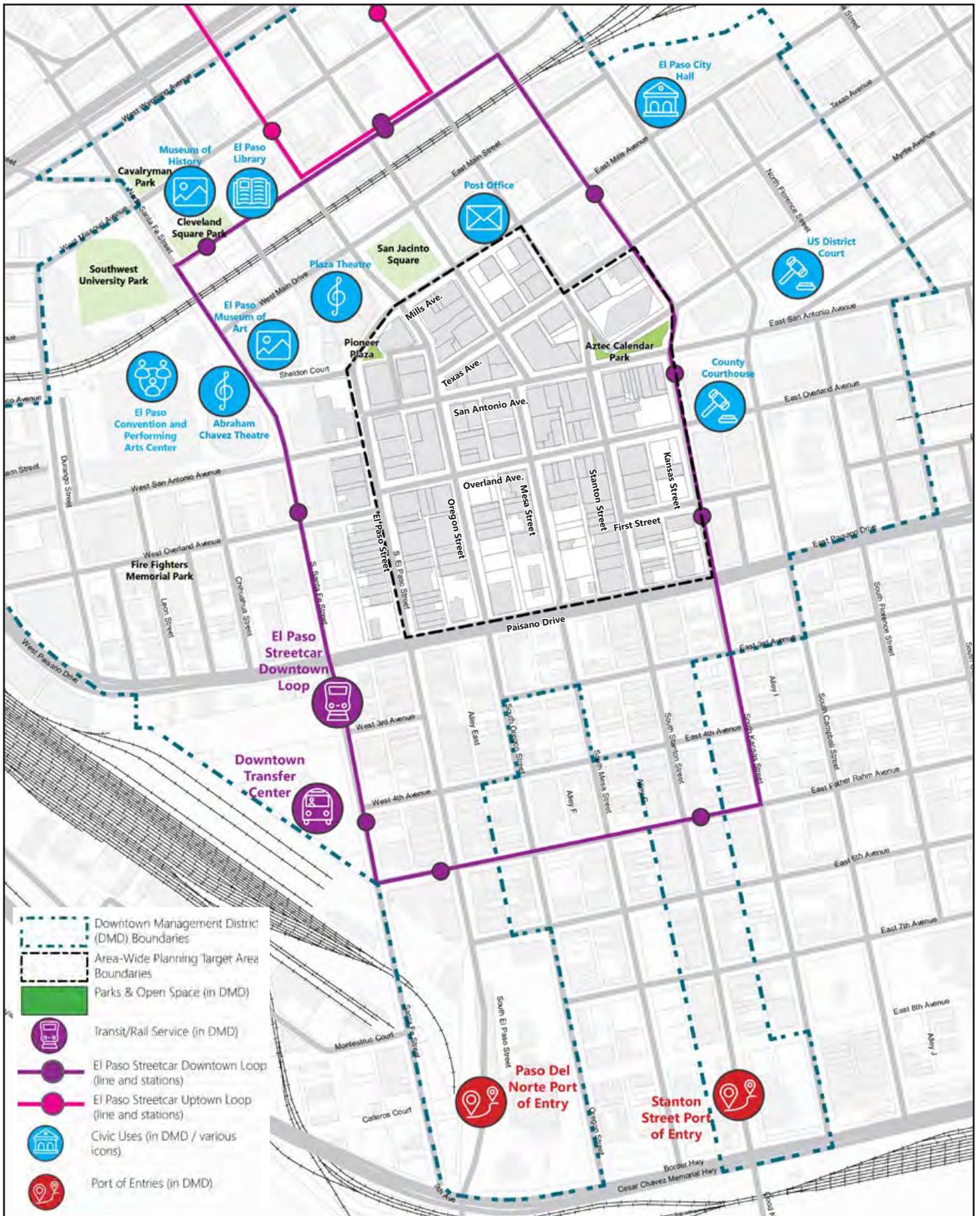
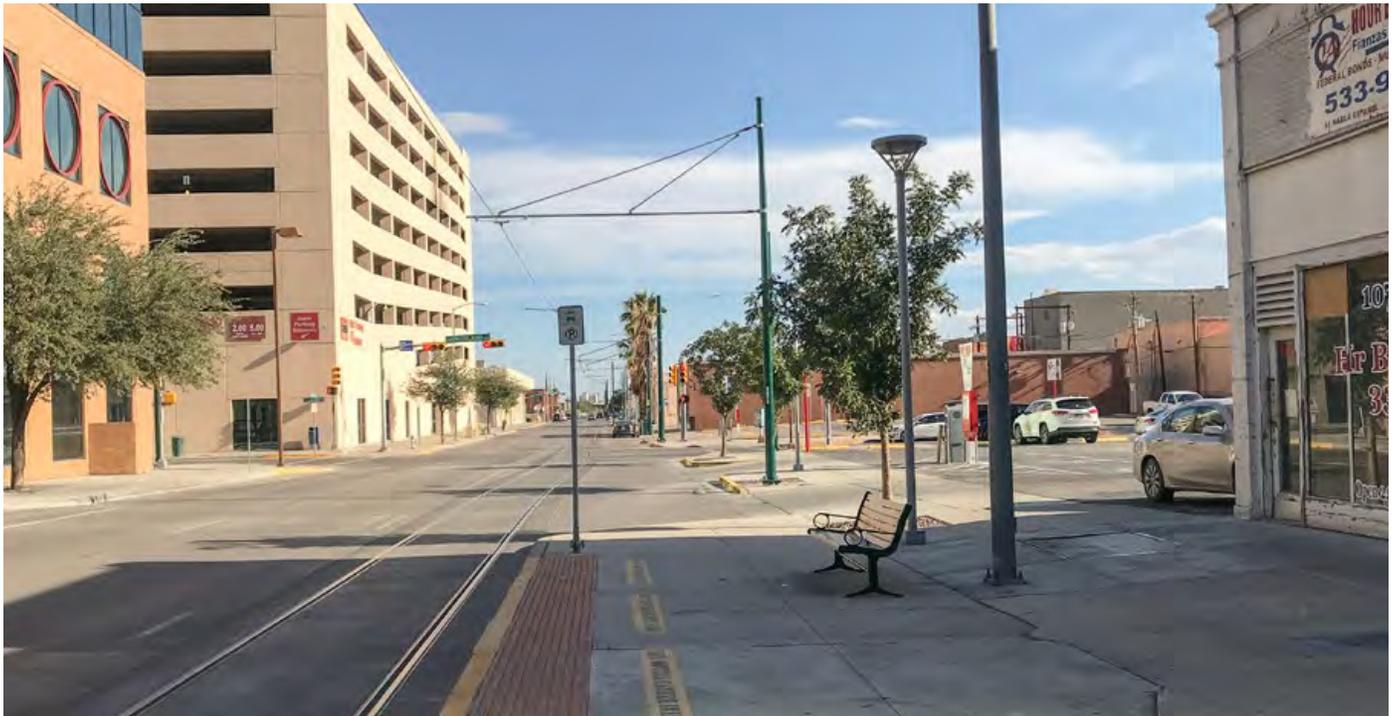


Figure ES.1 Community Context Map

AWP Components

This AWP document includes a technical analysis of the existing conditions, the definition of the community's vision, exploration of key community improvement projects, and implementation plan that is intended to entice reinvestment and elevate quality of life conditions in the Target Area. The following lists the main components of this AWP document.

- **Community Conditions** – a review and analysis of the existing community conditions relating to land use, current zoning, transportation, and community character. (See Chapter 2).
- **Property Inventory / Brownfield Sites** – a review of property characteristics that are associated with redevelopment potential (e.g., size, zoning, vacancy status) and conditions commonly associated with brownfield sites (e.g., state/federal environmental database listings, historical land uses with potential environmental hazards, etc.). (See Chapter 3 and Appendix B)
- **Market Analysis** – a demographics and market assessment to understand the local social-economic characteristics, housing/economic trends, and opportunities for various land uses. (See Chapter 4 and Appendix C)
- **Community Vision and Priorities** – the definition of the community's vision and their local priorities relating to services, amenities, land uses, and urban design. (See Chapter 5)
- **Urban Framework Plan and Planning Initiatives** – the creation of an Urban Framework Plan (UFP) and its associated Planning Initiatives to identify activities and projects that would transform the Target Area to align with the community's vision. (See Chapter 6)
- **Revitalization Strategies** – the establishment of Revitalization Strategies that group the AWP's planning ideas into identifiable categories pertaining to urban design/land use, mobility enhancements, marketing and management, and project incentives. (See Chapter 6)
- **Action Plan** – the creation of an Action Plan that will serve as a manual to guide the DMD, its government partners, and community stakeholders through implementation. (See Chapter 7)



ABOVE. View of the Kansas Street corridor - El Paso County offices on left, vacant and abandoned properties to the right.

Central Downtown Perspective Diagram

The perspective rendering diagram herein provides an artist's depiction of a potential redevelopment scenario for the Central Downtown Target Area based on community feedback and recommendations obtained through the AWP process. This illustration (in a bird's eye view) shows the proposed community enhancement projects as identified on the Urban Framework Plan and potential urban infill projects on the designated properties. The white buildings represent existing structures in and around the Target Area.



Figure ES.2 Existing Conditions Aerial
(Source: Google Earth Pro)

Key

- 
Park Enhancements
(Aztec Calendar Park)
- 
Art Passageways
- 
Urban Infill Projects
(Housing / Employment)
- 
Street Enhancements

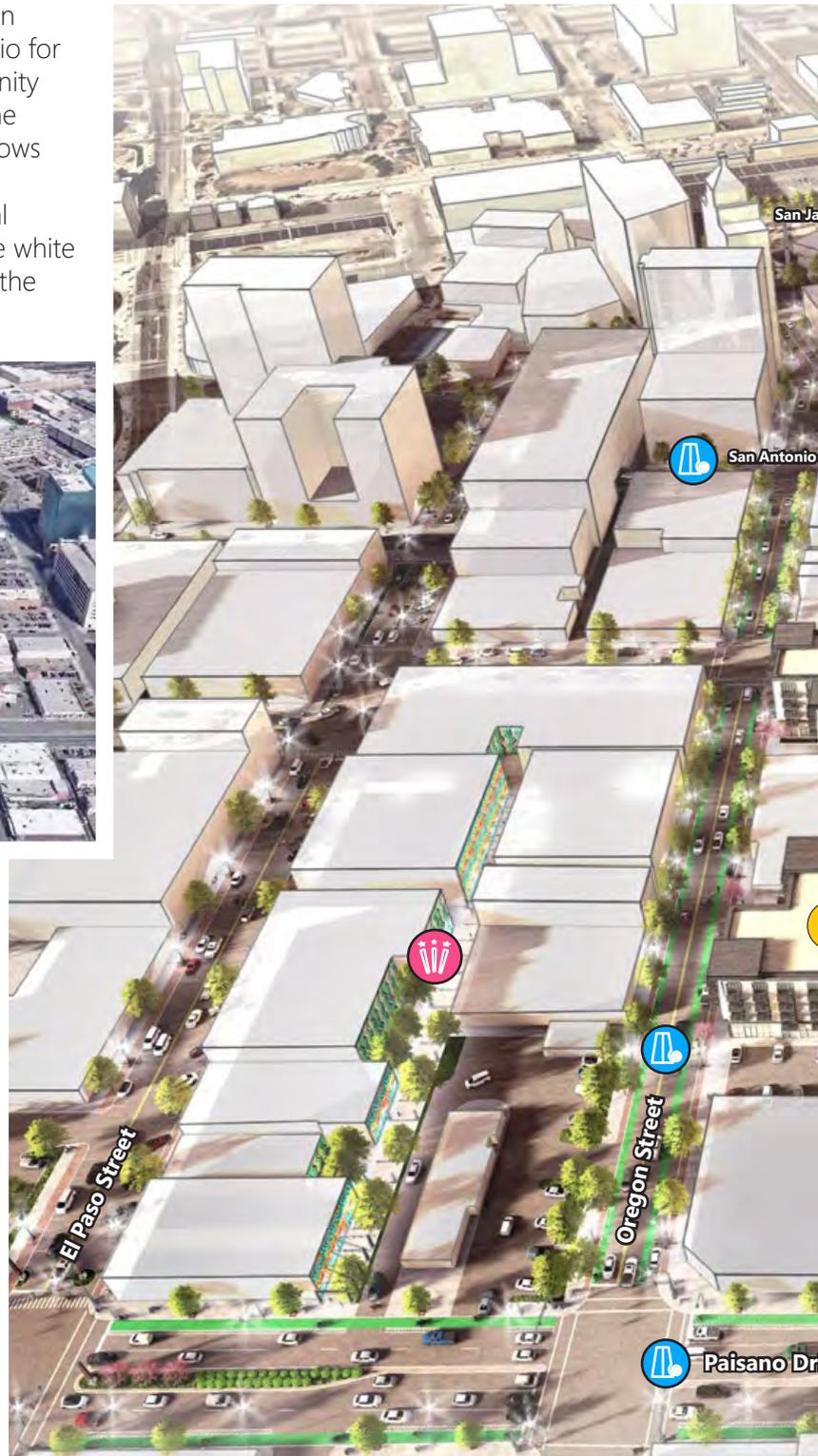


Figure ES.3 Central Downtown Perspective Diagram





Urban Framework Plan

The Urban Framework Plan (UFP) and its associated Planning Initiatives List establish near- and long- term enhancement projects and land use designations that are intended to work holistically to improve aesthetics, function, and market opportunity in the Target Area. These items identify neighborhood betterment initiatives that will enliven the Target Area, attract investment, and place brownfields and underutilized properties back into productive use. Figure ES.4 depicts the UFP which includes projects/initiatives organized according to the following categories:

- **Main Street Designations:** The UFP designates three Main Street corridors that will redevelop and revitalize with their own unique urban character and land use mix. These include the El Paso Street Entertainment Corridor, Stanton Street Creative Urban Neighborhood Corridor, and the San Antonio Avenue Mixed-use Urban Corridor.
- **Street and Mobility Projects:** The UFP identifies beautification and mobility enhancements on various street corridors in the Target Area all aimed to improve the urban environment, its functionality, and carry forward past planning commitments well into the future. The projects are aimed to transform the Target Area from an auto-centric zone to a multi-modal, transit-supportive urban neighborhood.
- **Park and Amenity Projects:** The UFP depicts parks and community gathering spaces that will add amenities to the Target Area and will provide open space relief from the highly urban environment. These projects are planned on the eastern edge of the Target Area to achieve equitable distribution of parks.
- **Opportunity Site Designations:** The UFP designates eight Opportunity Sites that should be prioritized for new urban infill projects with a focus on housing and employment. The designated catalyst sites are mostly vacant/abandoned properties large enough to support transformative infill projects and have the potential to fill gaps between existing buildings.



ABOVE. View of the recently completed Blue Flame housing project at Texas Avenue and Stanton Street - the adaptive reuse project converted a former office tower into rental apartments, community space, and ground level restaurant tenant space.

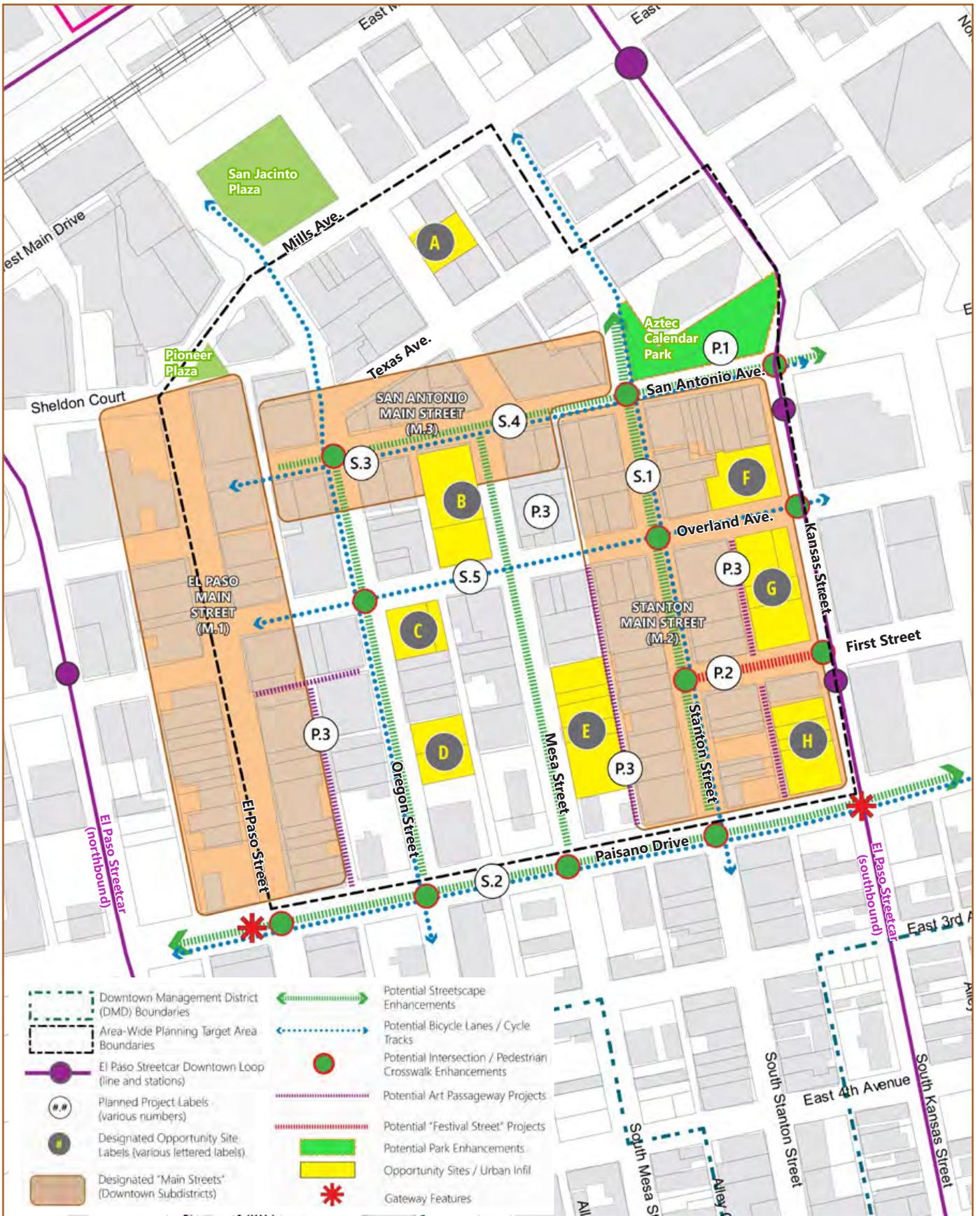


Figure ES.4 Central Downtown Urban Framework Plan

Table ES.a – Urban Framework Plan Planning Initiatives

UFP Plan Number	Planning Initiative	Description
Main Street Designations (M + #)		
M.1	El Paso Street Entertainment Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate the corridor as an entertainment main street with focus on restaurants, social venues, hospitality, and retail. • Create business and promotional strategies that build on other Downtown destinations (e.g., the ballpark, convention center, hotels, and the theaters). • Add minor streetscaping elements to strengthen the public realm (e.g., banners, planters, art elements).
M.2	Stanton Street Creative Urban Neighborhood Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate the corridor as a local main street with focus on specialty retail, artisan trades, local restaurants/cafes, life-style services (e.g., yoga studios, music venues), and employment. Develop a distinctive brand for the corridor. • Focus on adaptive reuse of existing buildings along Stanton Street over demolition. Promote/support housing and office uses on the upper floors of existing buildings. Recruit local businesses focusing on creative industries. • Plan for supportive mixed-use infill projects on immediately adjacent side streets with a priority on housing/employment. • Enhance the streetscape with additional trees (potentially in raised planter boxes), banners, string lights, and art installations.
M.3	San Antonio Avenue Mixed-use Urban Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate San Antonio Avenue, Texas Avenue, and Mills Avenue as a third local main street area with focus on specialty retail and restaurants that complement and interlink the El Paso and Stanton Main Streets. • Focus on adaptive reuse of existing buildings and promote/support housing and office uses on the upper floors of existing buildings. • Enhance the streetscape with additional trees and landscaping.
Parks and Amenities (P + #)		
P.1	Aztec Calendar Park Expansion/Enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacate the segments of Myrtle Avenue that line Aztec Calendar Park and expand the park to the right-of-way edges to the north. • Add trees, lawn areas, hardscape, and other park elements to the expanded space. Retain historical elements and markers. • Plan for pop-up/mobile commercial services (e.g., food trucks) and program events that bring vitality to the space (i.e., festivals).
P.2	First Street “Festival Street” Conversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convert the segments of First Street to a convertible “Festival Street” which can be closed periodically (or permanently) to motor vehicle traffic. • Install trees and landscaping to improve aesthetics and add shade for its users. Paint the asphalt areas with lively colors to define/enhance the space. • Program the space with regular events that bring vitality.
P.3	Art Passageway Conversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convert the alleys lining El Paso and Stanton Streets as pedestrian-oriented art corridors. Develop wayfinding and ambient lighting to promote the spaces for consumer activity and pedestrian use. • Partner with community organizations and residents to improve the spaces with art installations (e.g., murals, sculptures, historical monuments). • Partner with local businesses/property owners to maintain and utilize the alleyways for dining, retail operations, and small events.

Table ES.a – Urban Framework Plan Planning Initiatives

UFP Plan Number	Planning Initiative	Description
Streets and Mobility (S + #)		
S.1	Stanton Street Enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the streetscape with additional trees/vegetation (potentially in raised planter boxes), banners, and art installations. Enhance major intersections with decorative paving, landscaping, and wayfinding signage. Remove one southbound travel lane to add a two-way cycle track (pursuant to the El Paso Bike Plan).
S.2	Paisano Avenue Enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the streetscape with trees and landscaping in the central median and tree grates along the right-of-way edges. Remove one travel lane in each direction and add protected bicycle lanes (pursuant to the El Paso Bike Plan). Add gateway features and/or monumentation at Kansas Street.
S.3	Oregon Street Enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the streetscape with additional trees (or planter boxes) and decorative lighting to match other Downtown streets. Remove one southbound travel lane to add (1) bicycle lanes in each direction OR (2) a bicycle track on one side (pursuant to the El Paso Bike Plan).
S.4	San Antonio Avenue Enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the streetscape with additional trees and landscaping. Add bicycle lanes in each direction. Enhance major intersections with decorative paving and landscaping.
S.5	Overland Avenue Bicycle Route	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add bicycle lanes (or alternatively a cycle track) to Overland Avenue between El Paso and Kansas Streets. Add trees and landscaping.
Catalyst Projects and Infill Development (various letters)		
A-H (Various by site)	Catalyst Infill Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize and actively seek out developers to construct housing and/or mixed-use infill projects on designated “Catalyst Infill Sites”. Through the City’s zoning regulations, require urban site design, active ground floor tenant spaces, and urban-scaled development forms (e.g., 0-ft setbacks, architectural detail, generous window coverage). Partner with community organizations (and property owners) to create/host interim uses and activities that activate the properties in the near-term (e.g., skate parks, dog parks, event space, art installations, etc.) Promote environmental site assessments (ESAs) to help inform property owners/ developers of potentially hazardous site conditions and guide cleanup and redevelopment strategies.



Community Revitalization Strategies

The AWP process resulted in a series of Community Revitalization Strategies that aim to address various aspects of redevelopment, placemaking, and community stewardship. Overtime, the DMD, governmental partners, and community stakeholders can employ these strategies to support property reuse, improve quality of life and desirability, and elevate vitality in the Target Area. The Community Revitalization Strategies for the Central Downtown Target Area are summarized below – these individual strategies and their strategic actions are detailed in Chapter 6.



STRATEGY 1: Main Streets and Secondary Corridors

The first Revitalization Strategy is to plan for El Paso Street, Stanton Street, and San Antonio Avenue to revitalize as mixed-use “Main Streets” that will be the focus of commercial services and civic activity.

Strategic Actions

- **Corridor Designations:** Designate and plan for El Paso Street, Stanton Street, and San Antonio Avenue as “Main Streets” and the other streets as “Secondary Corridors”
- **Land Use Focus:** Identify the intended land use mix and preferred business types for the Main Streets and develop a business recruitment and retention strategy for each. Promote new housing, employment, and office operations on upper floors within each Main Street corridor and prioritize ground floor tenant spaces for retail, restaurant, and other active land uses to promote vitality at the street level.
- **Enhancements:** Identify streetscape and branding elements for each Main Street so each corridor revitalizes as distinct destinations within the Downtown El Paso context.
- **Urban Infill Projects:** Focus infill development projects on vacant/undeveloped properties to reestablish the urban pattern with a continuous line of buildings along downtown streets.



STRATEGY 2: Adaptive Reuse and Property Activation

The second Revitalization Strategy aims to prioritize adaptive reuse activities to support new commercial services, housing, and employment within the Target Area’s large collection of existing and underutilized buildings.

Strategic Actions

- **Building Inventory:** Maintain a property and storefront inventory to identify vacancies, prioritize aid and incentives to property owners, and promote lease/purchase opportunities to prospective tenants/ investors.
- **Tenant Recruitment:** Support and recruit new tenants and uses to fill otherwise empty storefronts; prioritize the designated “Main Streets” to achieve a critical mass of destinations and commercial services. Promote adaptive reuse activities that convert upper floors to housing and creative workspaces. Promote governmental and non-profit leasing of existing buildings (over new construction).
- **Toolkit:** Create a Tenant Improvement Toolkit that would build upon and promote the myriad of financial incentives and technical assistance offered by the City, DMD and other governmental partners.
- **Interim Uses:** Employ interim uses to activate otherwise empty storefronts.



(Source: El Paso County)



STRATEGY 3: Parks and Amenities

The third Revitalization Strategy involves adding new public gathering spaces and enhancing Aztec Calendar Park to become larger and much more functional for recreational purposes.

Strategic Actions

- **Aztec Calendar Park Enhancements:** Expand Aztec Calendar Park to occupy the Myrtle Street right-of-way and enhance the Park with additional trees/plantings, gathering areas, lawns, and amenities while protecting the historical markers/features.
- **Festival Street Creation:** Convert the First Street segment between Stanton and Kansas Streets to a “Festival Street” that could be closed periodically to vehicular traffic to host community events.
- **Art Passageways:** Transform key alleyways into pedestrian-oriented Art Passageways that include art installations, decorative lighting, and outdoor commercial activities.
- **Parklets:** Construct parklets within the Secondary Corridors to provide small-scale, and relatively low-cost public gathering spaces.



STRATEGY 4: Streets and Mobility

The fourth Revitalization Strategy includes a variety of street and mobility enhancements to make the Target Area much more pleasing and functional for pedestrians, bicyclist, and transit users.

Strategic Actions

- **Vegetation:** Add trees and landscaping to Kansas Street, Stanton Street, Mesa Street, Oregon Street, Paisano Drive to provide shade and beautification (and replace trees where missing).
- **Bicycle Infrastructure:** Add bicycle lanes/designations pursuant to the El Paso Bike Plan to Oregon Street, Overland Avenue, San Antonio Avenue, Stanton Street, and Paisano Drive. Add other bicycle-related amenities throughout the Target Areas (e.g., bicycle racks, fix-it stations, etc.)
- **Enhanced Intersections:** Enhance key intersections with artistic crosswalks and/or decorative paving elements.
- **Taxi/Rideshare Staging:** Create designated taxi and rideshare staging areas at key nodes.
- **Wayfinding Signage:** Expand the City’s wayfinding signage program along Stanton Street and at other key designations.
- **Parking Management:** Implement district-scale parking strategies within the Target Area and promote the recommencement of the larger Downtown parking study.



STRATEGY 5: Opportunity Sites and Urban Infill

The fifth Revitalization Strategy involves designating vacant/undeveloped properties for new urban infill projects that would add community-serving uses and create catalytic benefits to the larger Downtown vicinity.

Strategic Actions

- **Opportunity Sites:** Designate and promote undeveloped properties as Opportunities Sites that would support future urban-scaled infill projects for housing, employment, and ground-floor commercial services.
- **Redevelopment Needs/Desires:** Identify the types of development projects that are needed in Downtown in terms of land uses, scale, design, and amenities.
- **Site Promotion/Recruitment:** Work with property owners, economic development entities, and real estate professional to promote the Opportunity Sites to development companies/investors that would construct much needed services in Downtown.



STRATEGY 6: Land Use and Regulatory Framework

The sixth Revitalization Strategy involves creating a land use and regulatory framework that is supportive of urban infill and adaptive reuse activities while protecting and strengthening urban design.

Strategic Actions

- **Special Zoning/Overlay:** Evaluate whether to apply special zoning or overlays to the designated “Main Streets” to apply specific requirements and land use restrictions.
- **Design Standards:** Apply design standards to facade improvement and urban infill projects to achieve quality building appearances and active street-level tenant spaces.
- **Allowable Uses:** Re-evaluate and refine (as necessary) the list of allowable and prohibited uses in the Downtown vicinity.
- **Event and Mobile Vendor Policies:** Evaluate and refine the City’s policies, allowances, and permitting standards for community events and mobile vendors.

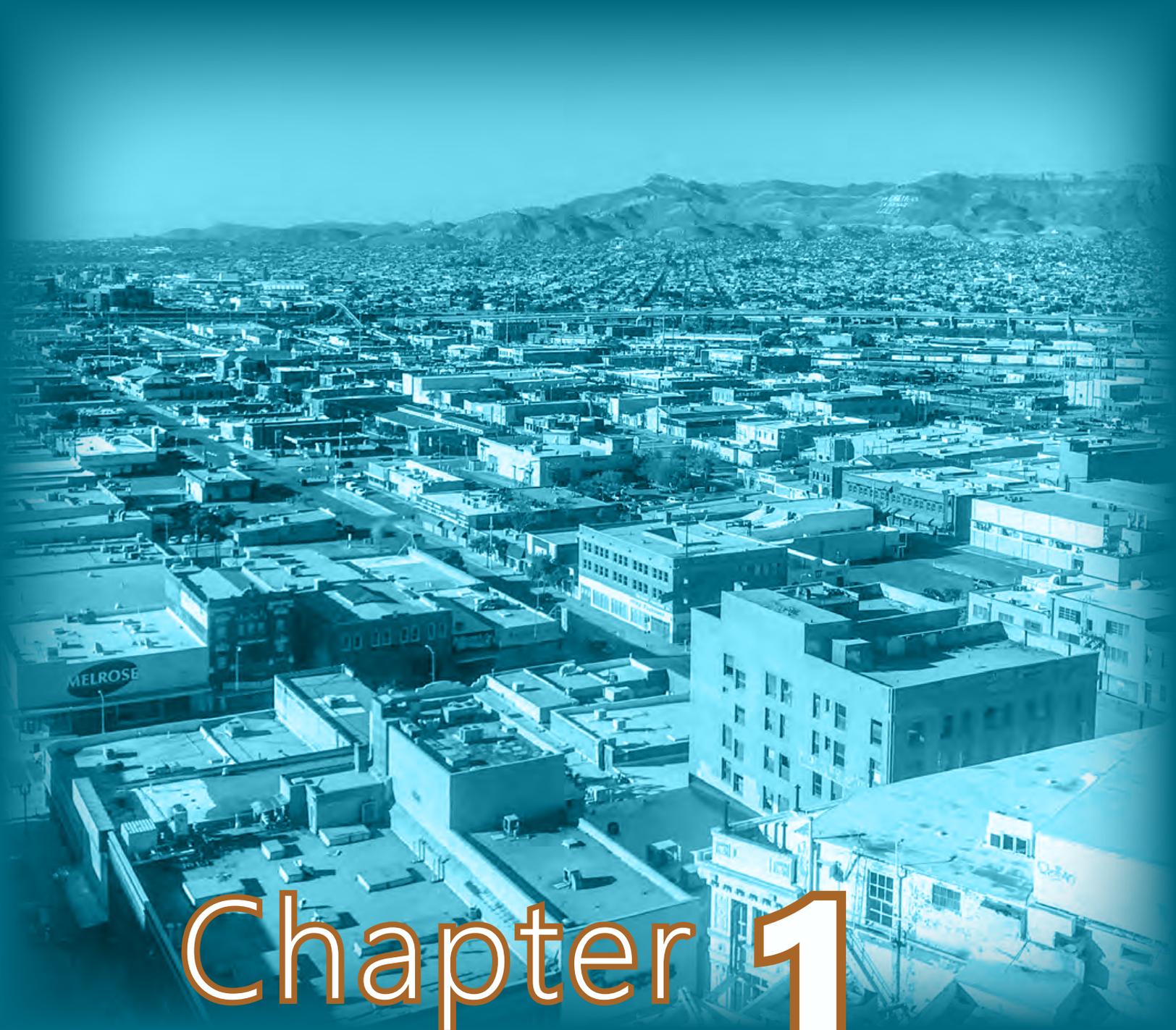


STRATEGY 7: Marketing, Promotion, and Incentives

The seventh Revitalization Strategy is to define a marketing and promotion plan and to review (and potentially expand) the list of incentives that are aimed to recruit new businesses, investment, and residents to the Target Area.

Strategic Actions

- **District Brand:** Develop and implement a brand for each designated “Main Street” corridor including a formal name, collection of businesses, and iconic imagery to promote the areas.
- **Events and Traditions:** Plan for and host a series of community events that bring civic activity to the Target Area.
- **Informational Kiosks and Signage:** Create information kiosks and business directories for each “Main Street” corridor that lists major destinations and area businesses.
- **Community Governance:** Form community-led neighborhood or business associations for each “Main Street” or the larger Central Downtown Target Area comprising local businesses, residents, and civic groups to plan for events, maintenance, capital improvement projects, and area promotion.
- **Recruitment:** Define a development, business, and resident recruitment plan to proactively welcome new tenants into the Target Area.
- **Financial Incentives/Support:** Continue to provide and promote a diverse set of financial incentives and technical assistance for new businesses, adaptive reuse, and infill projects.



Chapter 1

**Introduction and
Project Overview**



Section 1.1: Project Introduction and Objectives

The Central Downtown area is a distinct subarea in Downtown El Paso that has experienced decades of economic stagnation, yet its historical buildings and vacant properties present tremendous reuse and infill potential to bring housing, employment, and commercial services to the broader community. The community completed an area-wide planning initiative in late 2021, and this document presents the findings, vision, and action plan to bring economic prosperity and vitality to this unique urban neighborhood in El Paso.

Downtown El Paso is experiencing a renaissance with new public investments, private infill projects, locally owned shops/restaurants, and a renewed community interest to live and work in the City's central core. The El Paso Streetcar lines, renovated historic Plaza Hotel, San Jacinto Plaza reconstruction, El Paso Street enhancements, the Blue Flame housing project, the Museum of History, and the Stanton House boutique hotel project are recent wins that fuel Downtown's resurgence and appeal. Downtown is the regional center for government operations, sports and leisure, and convention activities. Downtown is a major border crossing and cultural infusion between El Paso and

Juárez, Mexico which form a combined international metropolitan region of 2.7 million inhabitants. Over the years, El Paso has been rated as one of the safest U.S. cities and the majority of its residents are of Mexican/Hispanic descent making it one of the most distinctive regions in terms of cultural identity. El Paso's core boasts a large collection of relatively well-preserved historic and heritage buildings dating back to the 1800s and including mid-century designs from the late 1950s.

Amid recent revitalization efforts, several areas

1. View of the Target Area looking southwest from atop the Blue Flame housing community.

of Downtown lack vibrancy and several buildings exhibit years (or decades) of disinvestment. Several downtown corridors are lined with vacant storefronts and many buildings have underoccupied upper floors. Surface parking lots have proliferated the downtown core which detract from the district’s urban design, pedestrian experience, and commercial activity. Some of downtown streets are over-sized with wide travel lanes and their designs are less conducive to a vibrant urban character. Many of the city blocks south of Mills Avenue and extending to Paisano Drive have the largest concentration of building vacancies and abandonment. Yet these blocks possess iconic structures that are ideal for potential tenants seeking unique and distinctive urban spaces. Through holistic planning and strategic support and investments, these otherwise negative conditions can be opportunities for new local shops, restaurants, housing, and creative office environments.

In 2021, the El Paso Downtown Management District (DMD) and its community partners embarked on an area-wide planning (AWP) initiative for an 18-block Target Area in Downtown El Paso – for this process, the Target Area is referred to as “Central Downtown”. The overarching goals are to define a vision and a set

of strategies that will attract new businesses, residents, and community activities while protecting the historical character and providing economic opportunity and commercial services for individuals that presently work and reside in the area. The project aims to promote adaptive reuse of vacant/underutilized buildings with new community-serving uses and entice context-sensitive urban infill projects to undeveloped properties and surface parking lots. The AWP initiative included a year-long series of community conversations and engagement events with residents and stakeholders to express their ideas, concerns, and aspirations for the Central Downtown Target Area. This feedback was used to define a vision and action plan to support revitalization in the Target Area with adaptive reuse of existing buildings as the primary focus. The AWP was funded through the DMD’s United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Grant which provides monetary and technical assistance for communities to address brownfields and underutilized properties. This planning document details the process, participants, vision, strategies, and action plan to support revitalization in the AWP Target Area.

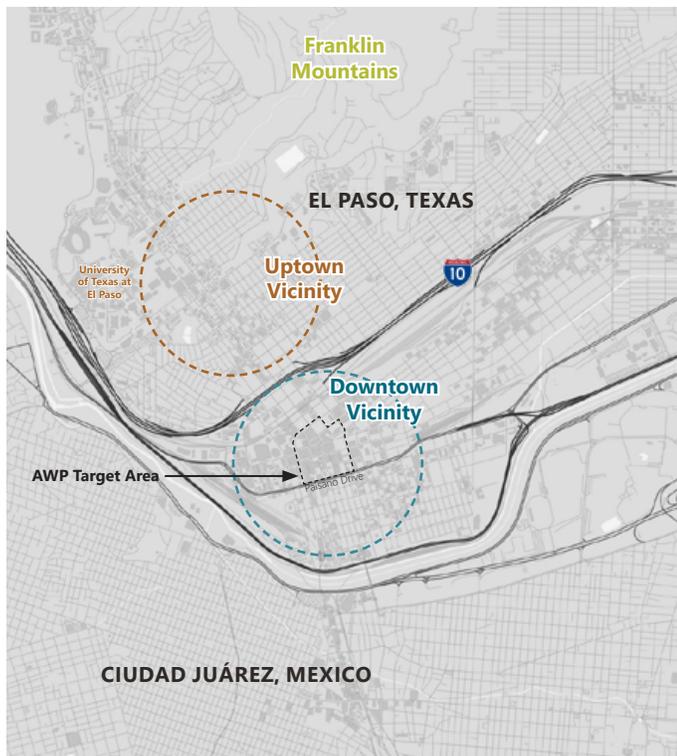
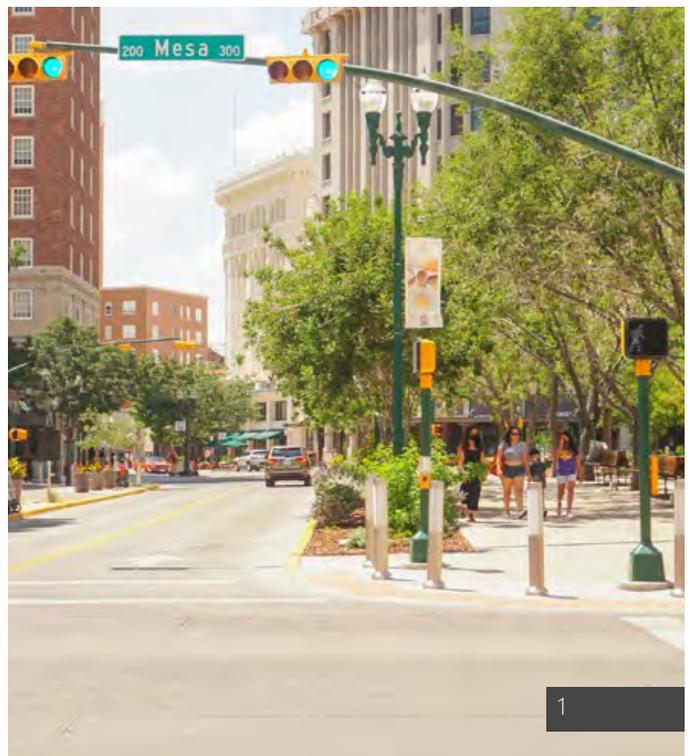


Figure 1.1.1. Regional Context Map
Map Image Source: AlvarCarto



1. Existing Mills Avenue streetscape at Mesa Street and San Jacinto Plaza.

Project Team and Target Area

The DMD established a core project team that included DMD staff, stakeholder advisors, and its planning consultants, Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. (Stantec) and Quantum Engineering Consultants (Quantum).

The project team established a formal Target Area that includes the 18-block area in the heart of Downtown El Paso generally bound by Mills Avenue to the north, Paisano Drive to the south, Kansas Street to the east, and El Paso Street to the west.

The team selected the Target Area based on its multitude of vacancies, its proximity to the border crossing, its location to other established or emerging Downtown subdistricts, and its potential to experience near- and long-term private investment. The Target Area includes numerous iconic buildings which the community treasures and aspires to preserve and reactivate with new, long-term tenants. The planning process focused on individual properties and the public realm (i.e., streets and parks) as they both need to work cohesively to achieve a dynamic urban environment that would attract (and retain) residents and businesses. Uniquely, the Target Area has existing buildings that could be adaptively reused for small businesses/housing and vacant properties that are ideal for new urban infill projects. There is opportunity to build community excitement for the Target Area and recruit “urban pioneers” to revitalize this underutilized section of Downtown El Paso.

The Target Area should not be described as one, homogeneous neighborhood; it is a collection of distinctive corridors that possess their own unique character and revitalization potential. Mills Avenue is in the heart of Downtown’s entertainment, hotel, and office area. San Antonio and Texas Avenues pass through the City’s historic shopping district. This area has several building vacancies but emerging with new business startups. The corridors include some of the best collection of mid-rise historic buildings. Kansas Street is the transitional area into the El Paso County Government campus and contains the El Paso Streetcar – a major parking structure and multiple parking lots line the street. Stanton Street is a legacy neighborhood commercial corridor but mostly vacant today- many of the buildings possess 1950s era design elements. El Paso Street is transitioning from a long-time discount retail corridor for international customers to a hospitality and entertainment district. Paisano

Drive represents the edge of the Downtown Core and separates it from the international district around the border crossings. The other corridors include a diverse mix of land uses and function more like neighborhood side streets. The AWP recognizes these unique differences and strives to establish revitalization strategies for each corridor that comprise the Target Area.

Like many downtown areas, the Target Area includes several legacy commercial or industrial uses and a multitude of historic structures. Due to past land use activities and building ages (which pre-dated state and federal safety standards), virtually all the properties in the Target Area are considered “brownfields”. These sites could possess contaminated site conditions and/or hazardous building materials (e.g., asbestos and/or lead-based paint) that complicate site reuse and investment due to potential testing and abatement costs. The unknown environmental conditions create another level of uncertainty and reason for caution to potential investors and tenants; thus, it is vital that the community define a vision and a set of strategies that would support and incentivize brownfield reuse in the Target Area (See Section 1.2 and Chapter 3 for more brownfield-specific background).



New restaurants, the Aloft Hotel, and the Blue Frame housing project along Stanton Street (on the edge of the AWP Target Area)



Community Planning Assets

Downtown El Paso has a multitude of community assets that will serve as the foundation for revitalization planning in the Target Area. There is value and opportunity to build upon these assets so that the results in the Target Area achieve an authentic community character and harness the catalytic benefits of these other elements, activity areas, and past public/private investments. The following summarizes these assets. part of their visit to Downtown.



FORMAL STREET GRID AND TRADITIONAL URBAN FORM:

An established formal street grid comprises the Target Area and the greater downtown core. The area has continuous, regularly-shaped city blocks, service alleys, and streets that feed into surrounding neighborhoods and downtown districts. This benefits redevelopment projects because the street system is in place and there are connections to established nodes of activity.



PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INVESTMENT:

Multiple government agencies (i.e., the City, El Paso County, Sun Metro Transit, and Texas Department of Transportation) have performed numerous capital improvement projects in and around Downtown that benefit residents, commuters, and visitors. These include the El Paso Streetcar, rapid bus transit service, several streetscape enhancements, San Jacinto Park renovation, and bicycle infrastructure to name a few. The private sector has invested in the Downtown with new restaurants/drinking establishments, hotel renovations, and housing projects. This benefits the revitalization as there is an emerging critical mass of destinations for residents/visitors to enjoy and infrastructure in place for transportation and leisure.



HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND CHARACTER:

Downtown El Paso is a mecca for historical buildings that are unique to the region and represent several decades of distinctive architectural styles. These buildings appeal to individuals that value and are drawn to creative working, shopping, and living environments that are not otherwise present (or available) in outlying suburban areas. The Target Area has numerous vacant historic structures that could support new shops, eateries, office spaces, or housing. While adaptive reuse of these structures will require substantial investment, building reuse is normally less costly than new construction. Historic structures could provide an emotional connection to the Target Area.

CIVIC USES:



Downtown is the government center of the region as City, County, State, and Federal agencies operate permanent (and long-term) offices with several thousand employees; the large multi-block County offices are located just east of the Target Area. Downtown also includes traditional civic destinations including the El Paso Public Library, the US Post Office, the El Paso Museum of Art, the Museum of History, the Children's Museum (in progress), the Convention Center, Performance Theaters, Southwest University Park, two transit centers, a train station, and San Jacinto Plaza to name a few. These civic uses create potential consumer activity for current and future businesses in the Target Area; patrons and visitors sometimes seek out dining and shopping options as part of their visit to Downtown.



ANNUAL EVENTS:

Downtown is the center of community events and traditions that bring visitors and activity to the area. The City and the DMD have programs in place that allow community groups to sponsor independent events within public rights-of-way and park spaces. Historically, the community has hosted these events in all corners of the Downtown core which allows area businesses to capitalize on the consumer activities and this also exposes outside visitors to the various cultural and commercial amenities which could potentially influence future visits to Downtown. A new Uptown/Downtown planning effort is set to begin in early 2022.



LONG-RANGE PLANNING:

The City of El Paso and other regional agencies have completed (and adopted) several long-range planning initiatives that benefit Downtown. This includes the Plan El Paso (the City's Comprehensive Plan), the El Paso Bike Plan, the El Paso Downtown 2015 Plan, and the Pedestrian Wayfinding Plan. Each document contains policies and identifies future capital projects that will benefit downtown vitality.



EMERGING BUSINESSES AND ENTREPRENEURS:

Downtown El Paso is experiencing entrepreneurial investment and small business startups that contribute to vitality. Many businesses are centered on specialty eating/drinking establishments, apparel, art, and the artisan trades – many entrepreneurs chose to locate in Downtown given the urban character, creative atmosphere, and abundance of tenant spaces. There is opportunity to build upon this cluster of creative, independent businesses by recruiting and supporting similar and complementary commercial startups to the Target Area. This should also include entrepreneurs focused on urban housing and office workspaces.



VACANT AND UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTIES:

The Target Area has a wide variety of vacant or underutilized sites that create opportunities for redevelopment projects that could provide jobs, commercial services, and housing. The variety of sites and locations provide opportunities for both large- and small-scale infill projects. Vacant buildings can be adaptively repurposed for tenant spaces ranging from retail to housing units. Undeveloped properties including surface parking lots could support urban infill projects for employment uses, commercial services, and/or much needed housing.

1. View of the El Paso Street Corridor looking southwest from the newly constructed parking garage.

Section 1.2: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Assessment Program

The United States EPA provides funding and technical assistance to local communities to address brownfield conditions and to advance redevelopment activities in neighborhoods, corridors, and districts that have a history of blight, abandonment, and disinvestment, as well as the potential presence of environmental hazards and liabilities linked to brownfield sites. A brownfield is defined by the EPA as “a property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.” Former industrial sites, abandoned properties, and structures with potentially hazardous building materials are included in the EPA definition of brownfields.

The EPA awarded a \$600,000 Brownfield Assessment Grant to the DMD (lead recipient) and its coalition partners (the City of El Paso and El Paso County) to inventory, prioritize, assess, and plan the cleanup/reuse of hazardous substances and petroleum brownfield sites throughout the community. The coalition is committed to transforming neglected, underutilized properties into vibrant new uses. Over time, brownfields sites have complicated the City’s revitalization goals as they present redevelopment barriers as a result of actual or perceived environmental cleanup and other liabilities.

Brownfield Challenges - Brownfield sites can present a multitude of challenges for local communities associated with their blighted condition, documented (and undocumented) environmental liabilities, underutilized status, and prolonged disinvestment. The environmental liabilities can include the presence of hazardous chemicals or petroleum products in soil, groundwater, and soil vapor. Other liabilities are associated with hazardous building materials such as asbestos, lead-based paint, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)—commonly used in the construction or maintenance of older buildings. Toxic mold is another health concern sometimes associated with existing buildings. These conditions can pose a hazard to both humans and the natural environment.

Many times, developers avoid brownfield sites and focus on the development of other properties, including “greenfield” sites located on the edges of cities – this contributes to urban sprawl. Many brownfield sites remain underutilized and hinder revitalization efforts in the larger community due to their blighted condition and documented (or feared)

environmental liabilities. In extreme cases, brownfield cleanup costs can far exceed a site’s market value. Thus, it is important to identify brownfield sites that are subject to environmental liabilities and other challenges, and to devise plans for assessment, cleanup, infrastructure improvements, and other actions that may be necessary to return these properties to productive use.

Area-wide Planning - An eligible activity under EPA brownfield grants is the performance of area-wide planning (AWP) in specific neighborhoods which have been heavily impacted and hindered by the presence of multiple brownfield sites. The resulting plans or studies can provide communities with a defined vision and action plan that will help bring positive change to these areas. Rather than a site-by-site approach, an AWP process considers several brownfields simultaneously in the context of other properties in a defined target area. An effective AWP process identifies a reuse strategy for brownfield sites and for a larger community context. It also considers other shared impediments to redevelopment (such as missing or inadequate public or private infrastructure components, regulatory barriers, and market challenges).

The AWP process allows government agencies and community partners to explore redevelopment/reuse options for brownfield sites and the surrounding area that align with their near- and long-term needs and aspirations while complementing their established urban character and cultural values. The AWP process presents a tremendous opportunity to create strategies that would bring vitality back to this targeted area in Downtown and potentially slow urban sprawl in the region.

Section 1.3: Central Downtown El Paso AWP Components

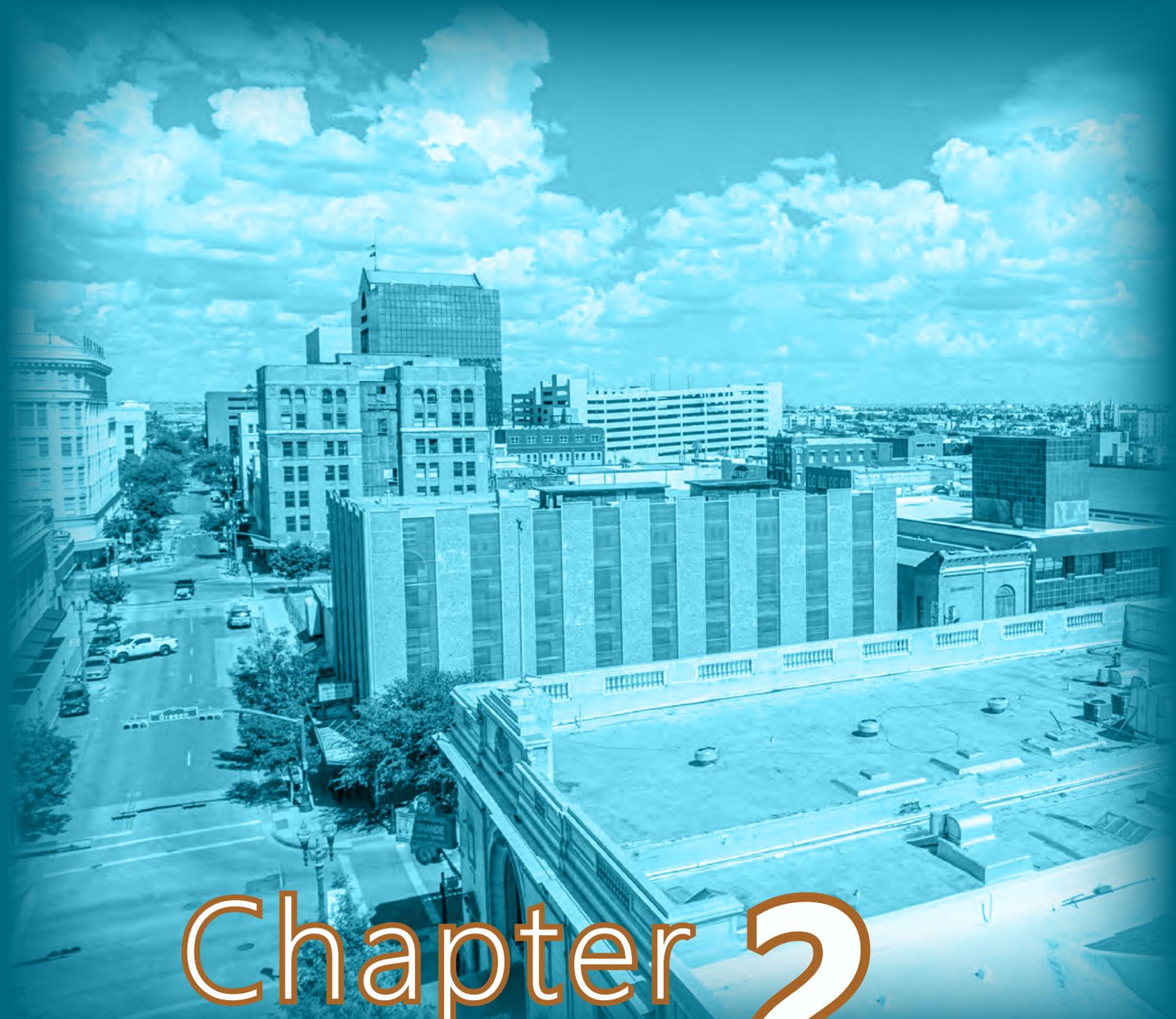
This AWP document includes a technical analysis of the existing conditions, the definition of the community's vision, the exploration of key community improvement projects, and the creation of an implementation plan all aimed to entice reinvestment to a unique enclave of Downtown El Paso. This AWP document includes seven key components that will aid in advancing the community's revitalization goals for the Target Area and the vicinity. The subsequent chapters describe the findings (or recommendations) for each component - for brevity some of the more detailed findings are presented in the Appendices of this document.

- **Community Conditions:** The project team reviewed and summarized the existing conditions in the Target Area and the larger Downtown vicinity. This analysis also included a review and assessment of past planning efforts affecting the Target Area. This information serves as a baseline for any potential recommendations and community enhancement projects for the Target Area. In most cases, the AWP process carried forward past planning recommendations to reaffirm their importance to revitalization and to recognize the time and effort the community already invested. This is discussed in Chapter 2 of this document.
- **Property Inventory / Brownfield Sites:** The AWP process included a property conditions inventory for the entire Target Area. The inventory identified property characteristics that are associated with redevelopment potential (e.g., size, zoning, vacancy status). The inventory also identified properties that possess conditions commonly associated with brownfield sites (e.g., state/federal environmental database listings, historical land uses with potential environmental hazards, etc.). This is discussed in Chapter 3 and Appendix B of this document.
- **Market Analysis:** The AWP process included a demographics and market assessment report to understand the local and regional social-economic characteristics, identify housing/economic trends, and to identify opportunities for housing, commercial services, and employment in and

around the Target Area. The analysis is essential to effectively plan for viable land uses that are both needed and could flourish in the Target Area. This is discussed in Chapter 4 and Appendix C of this document.

- **Community Vision and Priorities:** The AWP document articulates the community's vision and priorities for the future, which served to guide all projects and recommendations in the Action Plan. The project team derived the vision and priorities through public engagement, stakeholder interviews, and the community's adopted policy documents (e.g., "Plan El Paso"). This is discussed in Chapter 5 of this document.
- **Urban Framework Plan and Planning Initiatives:** This AWP document includes an Urban Framework Plan (UFP) and its associated Planning Initiatives that identify activities and projects that would transform the Target Area to align with the community's vision. The UFP is a diagrammatic map that shows individual projects, designated land use areas, and other enhancements for the Target Area. The Planning Initiatives provide written detail on individual projects/outcomes as depicted on the UFP. This is discussed in Chapter 6 of this document.
- **Revitalization Strategies:** The AWP includes Revitalization Strategies that group the AWP's planning ideas into identifiable categories pertaining to urban design/land use, streetscape and mobility enhancements, marketing and management, and project incentives. The strategies are aimed to support infill, adaptive reuse, and redevelopment projects in the Target Area with a priority on brownfield sites. This is discussed in Chapter 6 of this document.
- **Action Plan:** The AWP includes an Action Plan that will serve as a manual to guide the DMD, its government partners, and community stakeholders through implementation. The Action Plan organizes the planning strategies by sequencing, schedule, partners, and individual actions. This is discussed in Chapter 7 of this document.

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An aerial photograph of a city street, likely in a downtown area. The foreground shows a large, flat roof of a building with several air conditioning units and pipes. The street below is lined with various buildings, including a prominent one with a grid-like facade. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The entire image has a blue color cast.

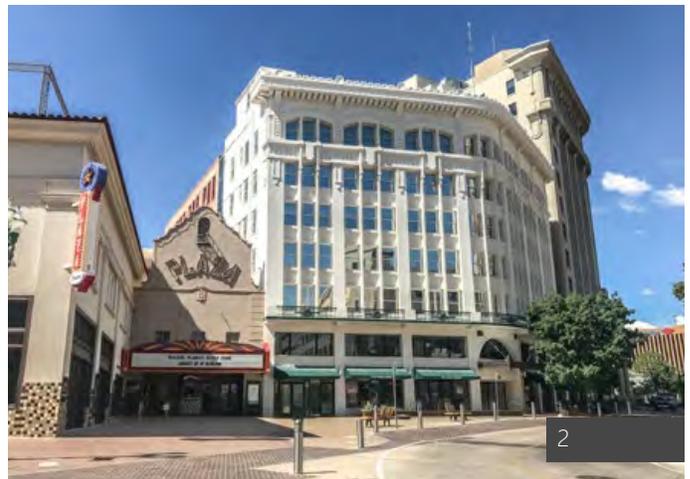
Chapter 2

Community Conditions and Context



Section 2.1: Community Context Introduction

The revitalization strategy for the Target Area should respond to, complement, and build upon the existing community context in terms of infrastructure, existing residents/businesses, transportation networks, land uses, and amenities. The DMD, City and community stakeholders have invested both time and money in past planning efforts that directly benefit the Target Area. It is important to recognize and evaluate past city planning efforts as part of the AWP process so as not to duplicate efforts or abandon key policy decisions. This chapter explains the physical conditions in and around the Target Area and includes a summary of the applicable regulatory/policy documents that affect land use, development, and infrastructure. This serves as a vital baseline to guide the resulting revitalization recommendations as discussed in Chapter 6 of this document. Notably, Chapter 3 provides additional detail on individual property conditions (e.g., brownfields and vacant properties).



1. Existing San Antonio Avenue streetscape as seen from Oregon Street. | 2. Existing Plaza Theater on the north end of El Paso Street.

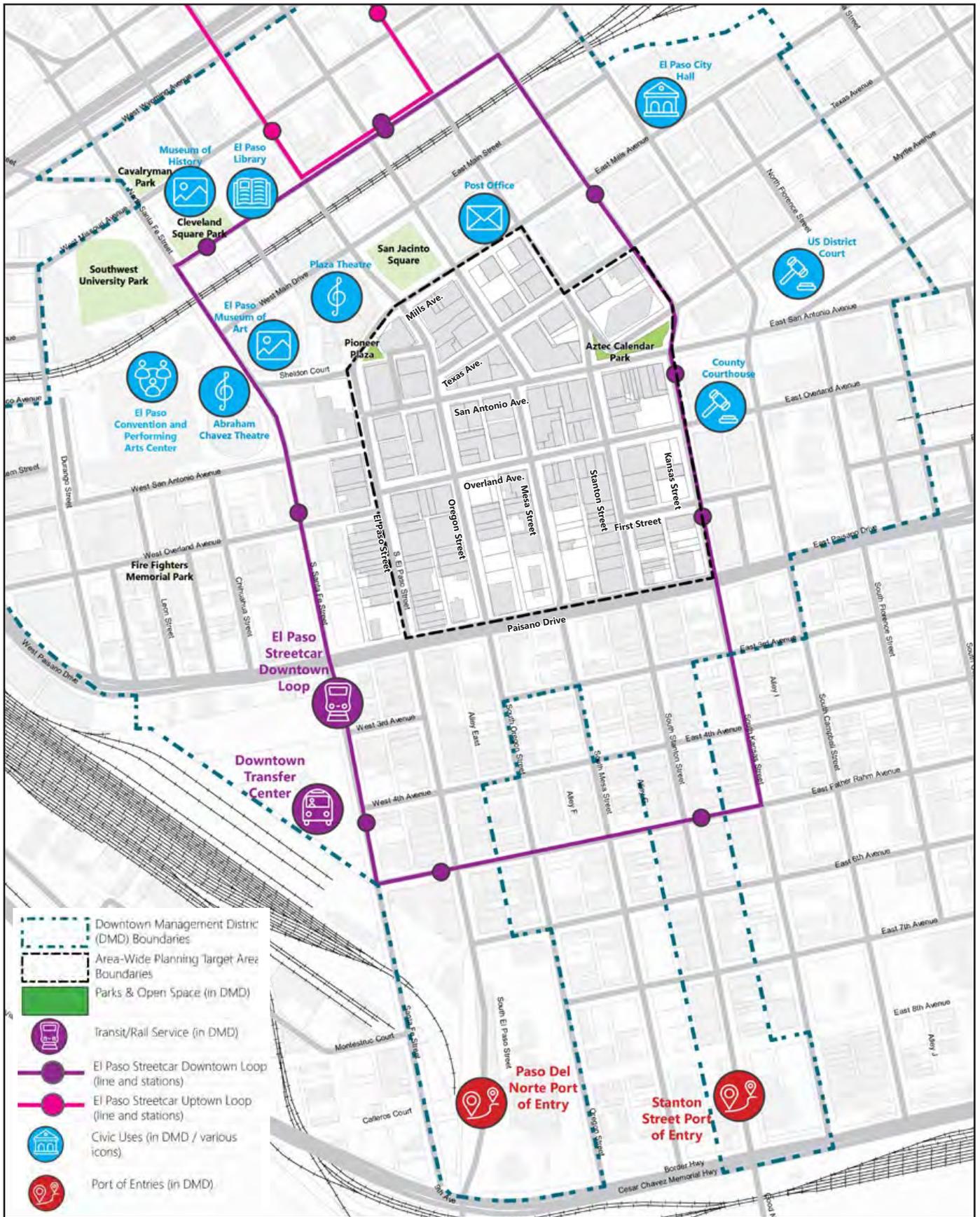


Figure 2.1.1. Community Context Map

Section 2.2: Development and Land Use Patterns

Downtown El Paso is the cultural and government center for the American side of the greater region. Over the years, Downtown has emerged as a series of districts that possess their own unique land use focus and urban character. The DMD characterizes and manages Downtown as five distinct districts – Las Plazas, Union Plaza, the Government District, the Office District, and El Centro. Collectively, these districts form a dynamic mixed use regional center. The Target Area covers all five districts with the majority being within El Centro. As the Target Area prospers and re-emerges with its own unique land use mix and urban character, it may form additional districts.



Figure 2.2.1. Downtown El Paso District Map

Source: Downtown Management District

Target Area Physical Descriptions

The Target Area is a collection of street corridors that possess their own unique character and land use mix. It is important to recognize these characteristics, so the resulting revitalization strategies build upon the existing assets to create authentic destinations and urban environments.

Activity Nodes – In summary, while the Target Area continues to transition and struggles with decades old vacancies, there are three notable activity nodes that would be a focus for revitalization. These include: (1) the El Paso Street Corridor, (2) the Plaza Theatre, Plaza Hotel, and San Jacinto Plaza vicinity, and (3) the Aztec Calendar Park vicinity. When devising a revitalization strategy, there is value to strengthen and grow established nodes of activity so that, overtime, residual investment will occur in the city blocks/properties in-between.

1. The newly renovated Plaza Hotel at the north end of El Paso is spurring other redevelopment and community investment at this signature activity node in the Target Area.

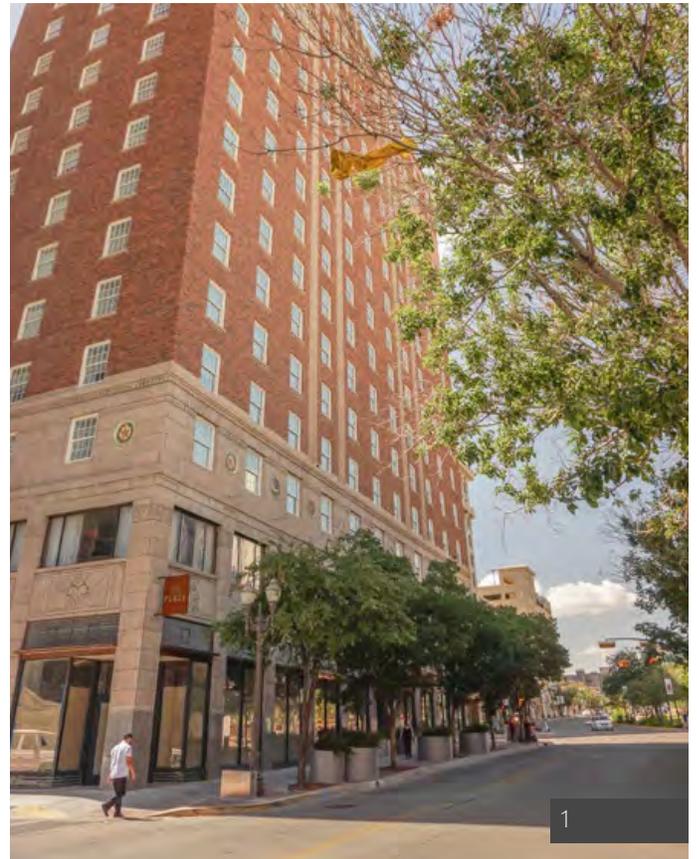


Figure 2.2.2. Target Area Map with Activity Nodes

El Paso Street

On the western edge of the Target Area, El Paso Street is transitioning from a discount retail corridor to a hospitality and entertainment destination for residents and international visitors. El Paso Street is reminiscent of traditional “Main Streets” with wide sidewalks, two-way travel lanes with street parking, and lined with shop spaces. The City completed substantial capital improvement projects including streetscape enhancements with iconic entry signage, and the “Bienvenido” (yellow door) sculpture. Renovations to the Hotel Paso Del Norte and Plaza Hotel are significant private investments on the north end of the corridor. A new multi-level public parking structure was developed as part of the Plaza Hotel investments. New shops, restaurants, and upper floor workspaces have emerged along with the associated tenant improvements to the buildings.

Most of the legacy discount shops along El Paso Street have metal roll up doors – by day consumer goods are displayed on the sidewalk and create vibrancy but by night the closed doors create an empty walled effect along the corridor. On the north end, the Arts Festival Plaza and Pioneer Plaza Park are quaint public gathering spaces and connect to the adjacent land uses. The El Paso Museum of Art, and the Plaza Theatre are significant anchor destinations on the north end of the corridor. Further to the northwest (and just outside the Target Area), the Abraham Chavez Theater, the Judson F. Williams Convention Center, and Southwest University Park are even larger destinations.

The northern segments of the corridor include high rise structures, whereas the southern end possess two and three-level buildings. The city blocks along El Paso Street are quite long when compared to other downtown districts exceeding 600 linear feet. Notably, there are west-east alley corridors that pass through the blocks which serve as unofficial pedestrian cut-through passageways. The El Paso Streetcar north-bound route is one block to the west along Santa Fe Street.



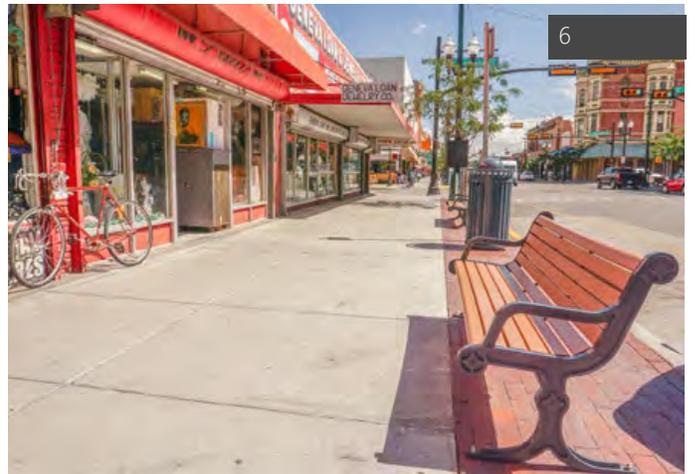
1. The newly renovated Plaza Hotel and Pioneer Plaza Park. | 2. The Plaza Theatre (in distance). | 3. The Hotel Paso Del Norte. | 4. El Paso Street with new gateway signage. | 5. Other gateway features at Paisano Drive. | 6. Existing shops along El Paso Street. | 7. Newly constructed parking garage with Bienvenido sculpture.



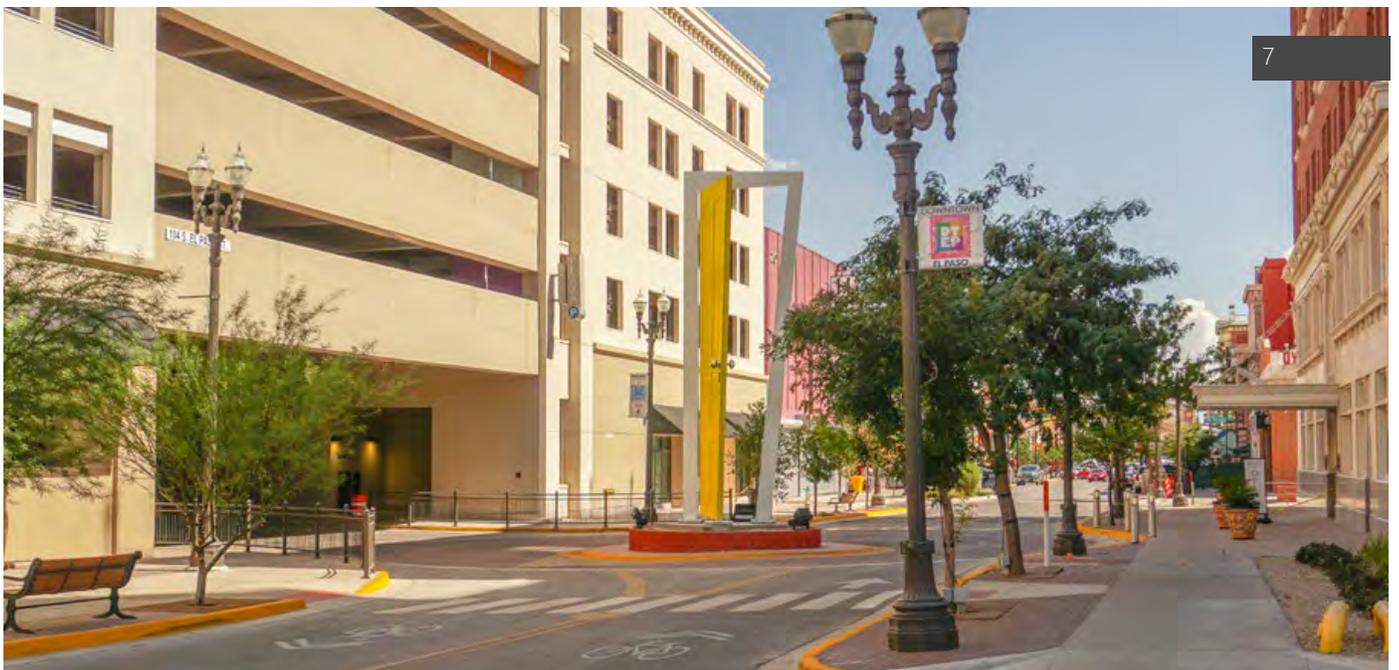
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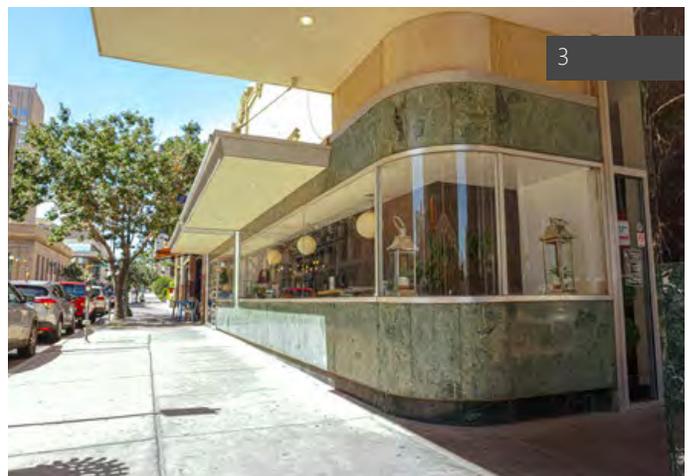
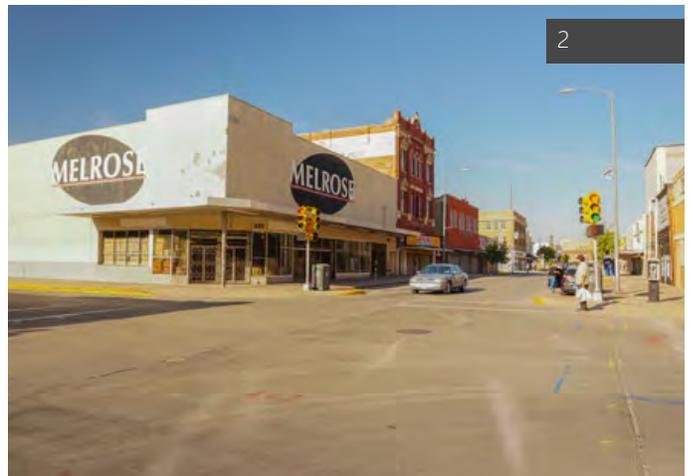
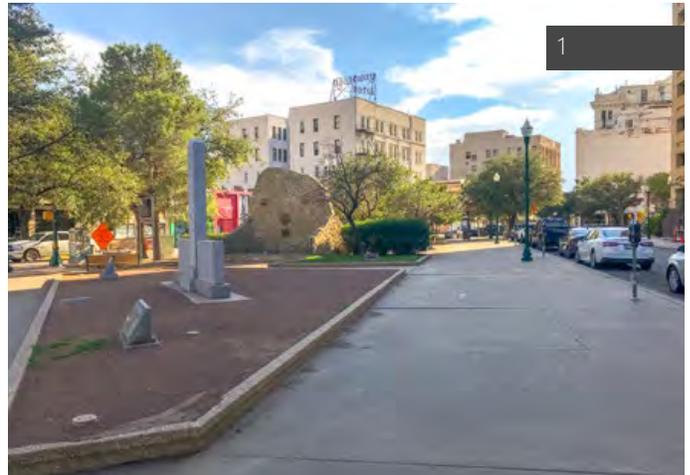
Stanton Street

On the eastern side of the Target Area, Stanton Street is a legacy retail corridor that extends from the border (Stanton Street Port of Entry) and passes through Downtown. The northern segments are within the Downtown core and possess high rise buildings with a wide variety of architectural styles including modernistic, art deco, and classic revival. The southern blocks (near Paisano Drive) comprise one and two-level structures, many contain mid-century designs reminiscent of the 1950s.

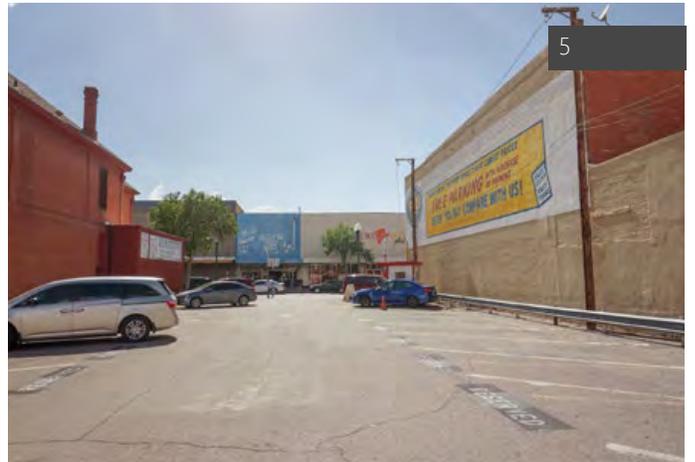
Over the decades, Stanton Street has struggled with vacancies – most of the storefronts are empty today but the corridor has experienced recent redevelopment activity. The Blue Flame, Stanton House, and the Aloft Hotel are recent adaptive reuse projects – these projects include housing/accommodations and ground-floor commercial tenant spaces. New locally owned cafes and restaurants have opened on the north end of the corridor. The southern blocks include a handful of legacy discount stores and like El Paso Street, most of the storefronts have opaque metal security doors that roll down at night. Most parcels on the east side of the blocks and fronting Kansas Street are surface parking lots making these segments devoid of commercial activity. The south bound El Paso Streetcar tracks run along Kansas Street with stations/stops at San Antonio Avenue and First Street.

Aztec Calendar Park is a wedged shaped public open space at Stanton Street and San Antonio Avenue with Myrtle Street stretching along its northern boundaries. The Park contains historical markers, plaza space, and some planting areas. The Park provides open space relief from the highly urban environment but has remained vastly underused potentially due to its narrow configuration and lack of recreational elements.

Today, Stanton Street is a three-lane section; the sections south of San Antonio Avenue include two south bound travel lanes and one north bound lane. The northern sections are in a one-way north bound configuration. Street parking is present on the west side of the corridor and intermittently on the east. The sidewalks are relatively narrow with some decorative brick work along the curbs and pedestrian-scaled lighting. Several of the grates are missing shade trees.



1. Aztec Calendar Park. | 2. Shops at Stanton and Overland. | 3. New bistro along Stanton and attached to the Aloft Hotel | 4. Aerial view of Stanton Street looking south. | 5. Existing parking lot between buildings. | 6. Vacant storefront along Stanton. | 7. Stanton streetscape at First Street.



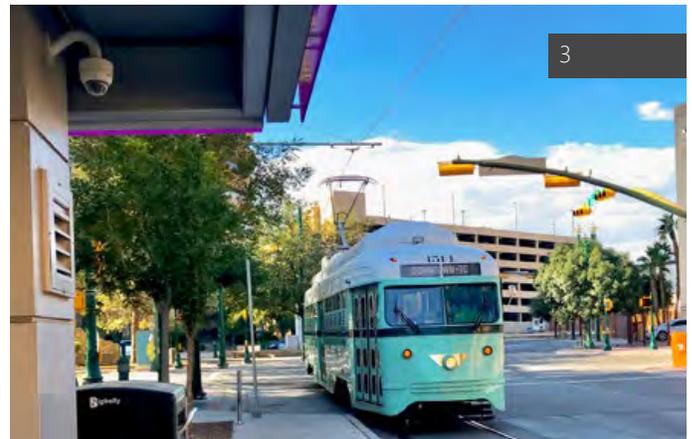
San Antonio, Texas, and Mills Avenues

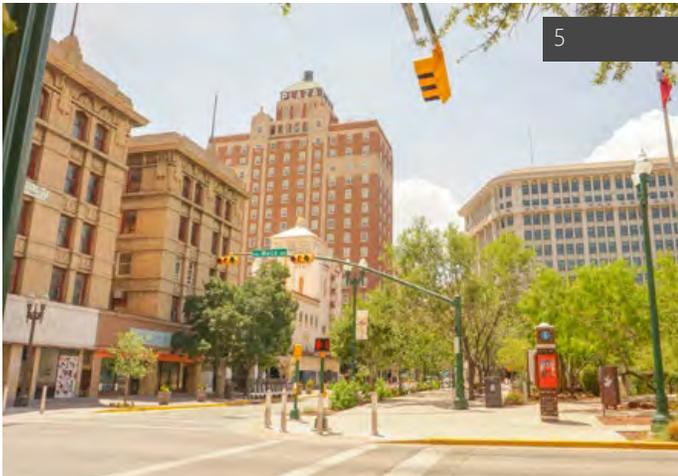
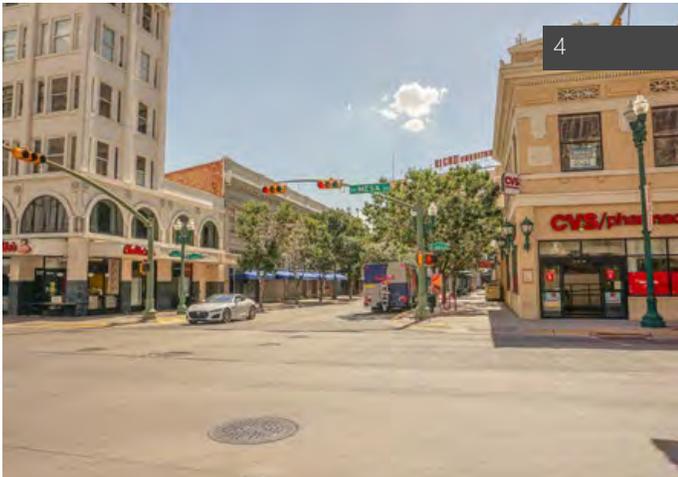
At the northern boundaries of the focus area, San Antonio, Texas, and Mills Avenues are characterized as being a part of Downtown's historic urban core which once flourished as a major shopping destination. Mills Avenue stems from the Plaza Theatre and is a continuation of El Paso Street as it curves to the east. Mills Avenue passes by San Jacinto Plaza, the newly renovated Plaza Hotel, the US Post Office, the Electric City building, and several beloved Downtown restaurants/lounges. Texas Avenue is a quaint urban corridor that terminates at Oregon Street. Most segments in the Target Area have bricked sidewalks, decorative lighting, and street trees. Several legacy department store buildings line Texas Avenue though most are vacant today. The CVS store at Mesa Street is one of two full-service pharmacies in Downtown and provides limited grocery and home essentials. Locally owned cafes and restaurants have recently opened in the corridor but it remains mostly vacant.

San Antonio Avenue serves as a main connector between El Paso Street and Stanton Street and serves as the physical and psychological transition from Downtown's core to the mixed-use neighborhoods/districts to the south. Several beautiful multi-story historic buildings line the corridor. On the west end, San Antonio intersects with El Paso Street and the newly constructed parking garage spans its right-of-way. Its east end (within the Target Area) serves as a small activity node where a line of legacy restaurants and lounges overlook Aztec Calendar Park, a vintage clothing store recently opened, and the El Paso Streetcar has a station.



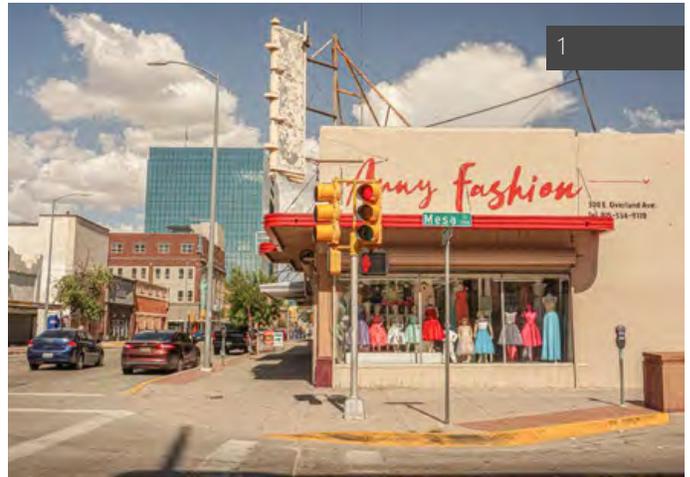
1. San Antonio Avenue streetscape looking east. | 2. Existing row of legacy bars/diners by Aztec Calendar Park. | 3. El Paso Streetcar line at Kansas Street. | 4. Existing CVS store and other shops along Texas Avenue. | 5. Existing Mills Avenue streetscape around San Jacinto Plaza. | 6. Legacy Fallas Discount Store on San Antonio Avenue. | 7. Historic buildings at San Antonio, Oregon and Texas intersection.





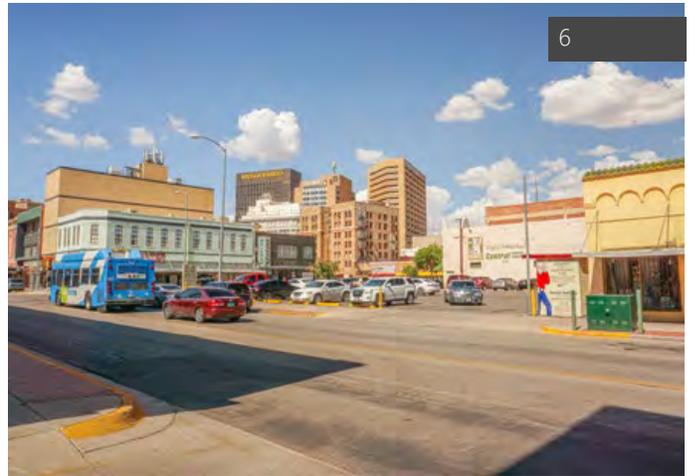
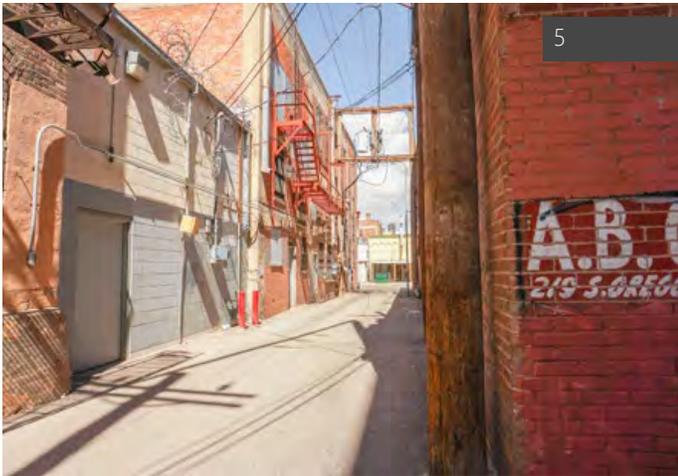
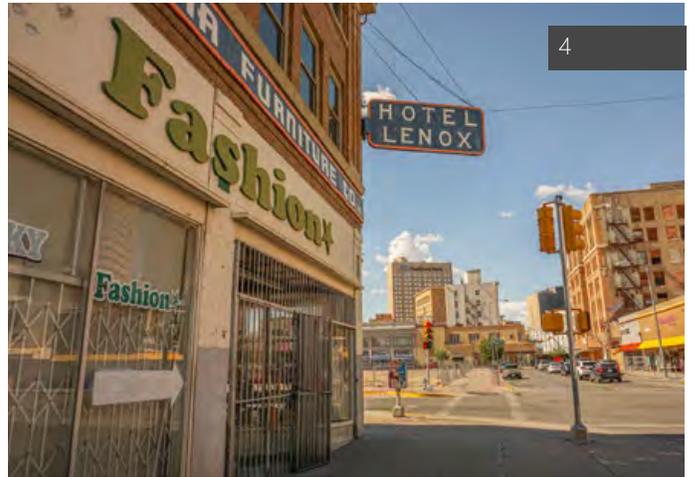
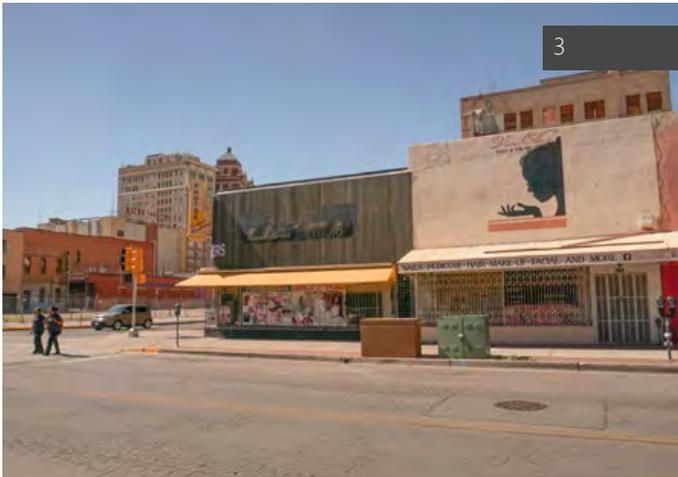
Secondary Corridors

Oregon Street, Mesa Street, and Overland Avenue are secondary corridors within the Target Area. Overland Avenue has discount and specialty retail stores that benefit from consumer activity from El Paso Street. These secondary corridors are also characterized as mixed-use areas though continue to struggle with vacancies. These corridors have lost much of their original urban character as the continuous line of storefronts have been interrupted with surface parking lots. Several of the parcels along Paisano Drive (on the south end of the Target Area) have been redeveloped with suburban-style and auto-oriented land uses including drive-thru fast-food restaurants and a pharmacy. These secondary corridors have received some streetscape enhancements in the past though there are signs of wear – there is decorative streetlighting and brick detail along the curb. These secondary corridors are almost entirely devoid of trees and vegetation.



1. Existing shop along Mesa Street. | 2. Aerial view of Oregon and Overland from atop the public garage. | 3 & 4. Existing buildings along Overland Ave. at Mesa St. | 5. Existing mid-block alley that serves as an unofficial pedestrian cut through between El Paso Street and Oregon Street. | 6. Large surface parking lot at Oregon/Overland. | 7. Overland Avenue streetscape looking towards its terminus at El Paso Street.





Section 2.3: Transportation Systems

The AWP Target Area benefits from an established urban street grid that is built to a pedestrian scale – albeit some corridors have more streetscape elements than others (e.g., decorative lighting, street trees, and wayfinding features). The City has long-range plans to introduce bicycle infrastructure which includes bike lanes and cycle tracks in certain corridors – namely Paisano Drive, Stanton Street, and Oregon Street (also see Section 2.4 pertaining to the El Paso Bike Plan). Finally, the Target Area benefits from an array of transit services including bus rapid transit lines, local bus service lines, and the El Paso Streetcar. This section summarizes the existing transportation systems in and around the AWP Target Area.

Primary Streets and Roadways in the Target Area

The Target Area benefits from a variety of street classifications, designs, and connections – the primary streets are generally urban in character with curbs, sidewalks, and in many cases, street parking. The City has long range plans to provide bicycle lanes on select streets, whereas, today bicyclists share travel lanes with motor vehicles on most streets. Table 2.3.a. lists the existing street conditions for the primary roadways in the Target Area. This study did not include a traffic analysis or explore levels of service standards.

Target Area Street	Travel Lanes	Sidewalks	Bicycle Lanes (or similar features)	Street Parking	Street Trees/ Landscaping	Transit Service
Mills Avenue	1 each direction	Y	N	Y	Int	N
Texas Avenue	1 each direction	Y	N	Y	Int	Y – Bus
San Antonio Avenue	1 each direction	Y	N	Y	Int	Y – Bus
Overland Avenue	1 each direction	Y	N	Y	Int	N
First Avenue	1 each direction	Y	N	Y	Int	N
Paisano Drive	3 each direction plus turn lanes	Y	N	N	N	Y – Bus
El Paso Street	1 each direction	Y	Y – Bicycle may use full lane	Y	Int	Y – Bus
Oregon Street	1 northbound 2 southbound	Y	N	Int	Int	Y- Bus
Mesa Street	1 each direction	Y	N	Y	Int	N
Stanton Street	1 north bound 2 south bound	Y (averaging 12-ft)	N	Int (1 side south of Overland Avenue)	I (missing in some blocks)	N
Kansas Street	2-3 lanes southbound, one-way	Y	N	Int	Int	Y – El Paso Streetcar and Bus



Figure 2.3.1. Existing Roadway Map

Transit Services Near Target Area

Downtown and the AWP Target Area benefit from a variety of transit services – ranging from local bus service, bus rapid transit, the El Paso Streetcar, and Amtrak train service (at nearby Union Depot). The Union Plaza Transit Terminal and the Bert Williams Downtown Santa Fe Transfer Center are just west of the AWP Target Area. The El Paso Streetcar has stops along Kansas Street at San Antonio Avenue and First Street, and along Santa Fe Street (just outside the Target Area). At the time of this AWP initiative, the streetcar operates during evening hours and its stations do not include real-time train arrival digital signage. Table 2.3.b. lists the existing transit service lines in the Target Area – listed by lines and streets served.

Line or Service	Streets Served (AWP Target Area)	Frequency
El Paso Streetcar	Kansas (Stations at San Antonio and Overland)	Planned: 7 days/week, including holidays <i>**As of early 2022, the streetcar is operating on a reduced schedule.</i>
Route 2 – Five Points Express	Sante Fe, Paisano	Monday-Saturday every 50 minutes
Route 4 – Union Plaza Circulator	Stanton, San Antonio, El Paso, Sante Fe, Paisano	Monday-Friday every 30 minutes
Route 24 – Delta Via Second Ward	Sante Fe, El Paso	Monday-Saturday every 20 minutes
Route 65 - Hacienda Via Carolina	Paisano	Monday-Saturday every 45 minutes
Route 42 - Northeast Connector	Paisano	Monday-Friday every 30 minutes
Route 59 - Eastside Connector	Kansas, Stanton, Paisano	Monday-Saturday every 19 minutes



Figure 2.3.2. Sun Metro Transit Route Map
Source: Sun Metro Transit Website 2021

Section 2.4: City Plans

When conducting area-wide planning, it is vital to understand the adopted long-range plans and committed public investments that affect the Target Area. This information can be used to carry forward adopted city-wide policies and ensure the resulting recommendations coincide with the City's future capital improvement projects. The following subsections identify past and current planning efforts applicable to the AWP Target Area.

Plan El Paso (Current City-wide Comprehensive Plan – 2012)

The "Plan El Paso" document ("Plan" in this subsection) is the City's current comprehensive planning document which guides land use, transportation, urban design, capital projects, and economic development in El Paso. Plan El Paso establishes priorities for public action and direction for land use and development form within the city. Plan El Paso is, perhaps, the most important policy document that would support revitalization, investment, and actions in the AWP Target Area.

The Plan includes specific goals and policies that directly apply to Downtown and the AWP Target Area – the AWP process recognizes and builds upon this larger policy document. While the Plan El Paso document has several goals, policies, and recommendations that support Downtown (and the Target Area) the following subsections summarize the Plan El Paso elements that are most directly related to this AWP project (the applicable Goals and Policies are located in Appendix A).

Regional Land Use Patterns / Future Land Use Map

The Regional Land Use Element includes several goals and policies that guide how the City will grow. The Element captures the community's concerns relating to growth and development (that were identified at the time of the document creation, circa 2012) – these include (i) Revitalize downtown, (ii) Live and work closer together, (iii) Protect historic neighborhoods (iv), Add new land uses into our community, (v) Restore close connections with Juárez, (vi) Grow up not out, and (vi), Stop sprawling. These are all relevant to Downtown revitalization and the AWP Target Area.

The Element includes the City's Future Land Use Map which guides how particular parts of the city can be used/developed and which zoning districts would be assigned to individual parcels. For the AWP Target

Area, most of the properties are designated as G-1 - Downtown, whereas the legacy public open space/parks are designated as O-1. The G-1 designation is particularly supportive of urban-scaled development and land uses. The following lists the Plan's descriptions of these designations.

- **G-1 – Downtown:** This sector includes the historic core of Downtown plus the larger Downtown area from Paisano Drive north to I-10, including the arts and convention center, Union Depot, City Hall, County Courthouse, United States courthouse, and Mexican Consulate. El Paso's "Invest First in Downtown" policies apply in this sector. G-1 covers most of the parcels in the AWP Target Area.
- **O-1 – Preserve:** Publicly owned land such as the Franklin Mountains and Hueco Tanks State Parks, all City and County parks and public drainage areas, and cemeteries (even if private). These lands will not be developed due to their ownership and current use. O-1 is designated on San Jacinto Plaza, Pioneer Plaza, and Aztec Calendar Park in the AWP Target Area.



1. Perspective Rendering of the future built environmental around San Jacinto Plaza pursuant to the Plan El Paso narratives pertaining to Downtown Revitalization goals. (Source: Plan El Paso - City of El Paso)

Downtown Element

The Downtown Element includes several goals, policies, and planning strategies (or local projects) that are intended to support revitalization, economic development, housing, community services, and overall vitality in El Paso's central business district. The Element captures the community's concerns including (i) Nurture Downtown, (ii) Restore and reuse Downtown's historic buildings, (iii) Civic spaces – the living rooms of the community, (iv), Civic building opportunities, (v) Diversify and add missing uses, and (vi), Locate parking on-street and behind buildings. Notably, The Element envisions areas around San Jacinto Plaza to revitalize in the dynamic center to Downtown (just north of the Target Area).

Economic Development Element

The Economic Development Element includes several goals, policies, and planning recommendations aimed to bring economic opportunity and reinvestment to the City at large and the Target Area. The Element acknowledges and aims to address three specific community concerns as they relate to Downtown: (i) Downtown and neighborhood revitalization, (ii) Increased tourism in El Paso (particularly downtown), (iii) A better life, every generation (creating an inclusive, multi-generational city), and (iv) Three states, two countries, one culture (acknowledging the City's unique physical location and diverse population).

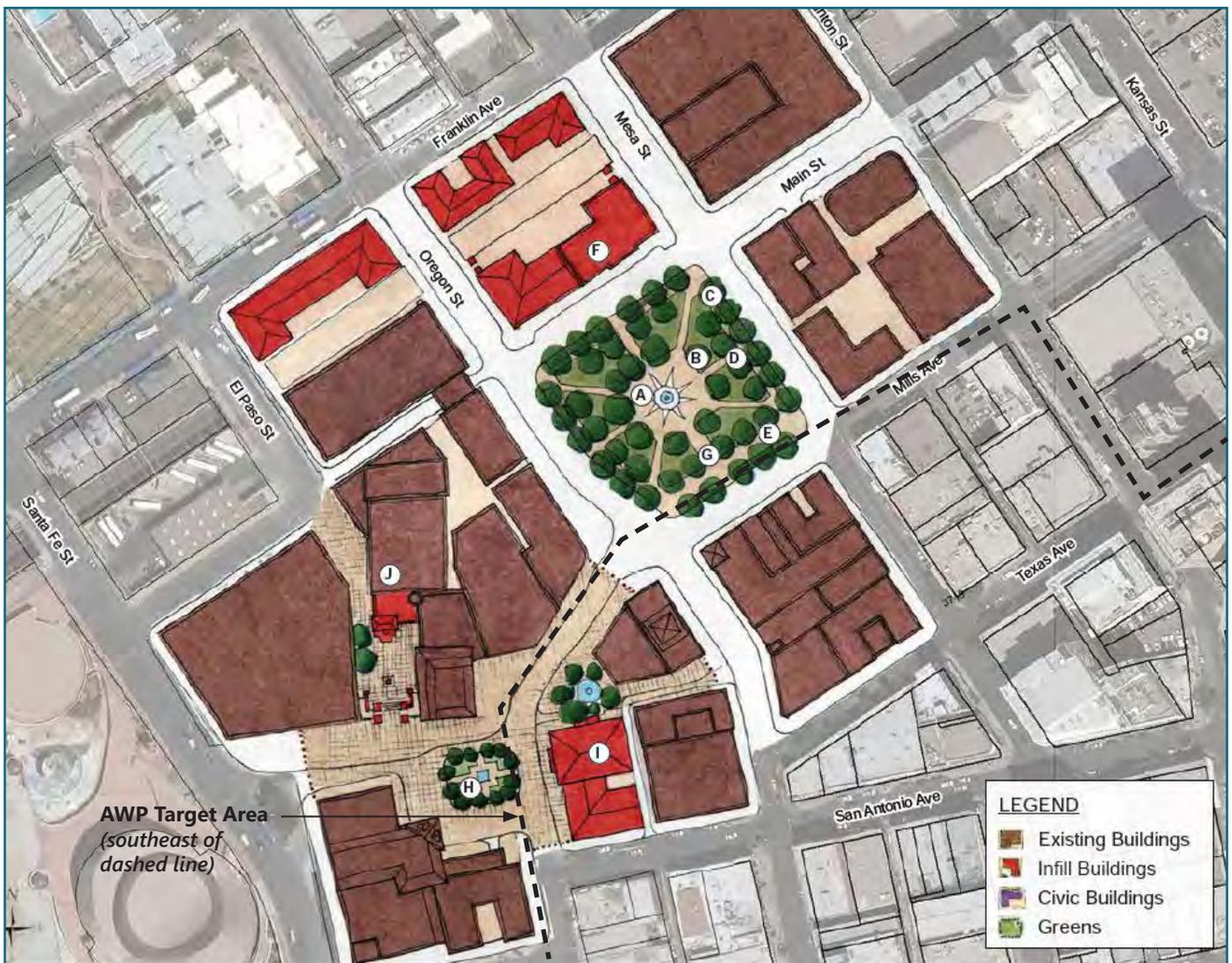


Figure 2.4.1. Plan El Paso – San Jacinto Plaza Strategies Illustration
Source: City of El Paso - Plan El Paso Document

Historic Preservation Element

The Historic Preservation Element includes several goals, policies, and programs to protect and revive the City's historical properties, buildings, and neighborhoods. Downtown (including the Target Area) is specifically identified in the Element. The Element acknowledges and aims to address three specific community concerns as they relate to historic preservation in Downtown – these include (i) Revitalize Downtown, (ii) Restore historic buildings, (iii) Learn from the Past, (iv) Make El Paso's history accessible, and (v) Bring back the trolleys. See Figure 2.4.3 for the Historic Properties in Downtown pursuant to Plan El Paso.

Community Design Manual – Appendix D of the Plan El Paso

Plan El Paso includes a Community Design Manual (the "Manual") as an appendix to the overall document. The Manual provides site planning, building design, and

open space guidance that would result in quality, long-lasting urban/neighborhood environments throughout the City. Many of the standards are rooted in "New Urbanism" design philosophies where built elements mimic traditional towns and neighborhoods in terms of building appearance, pedestrian-orientation, and transit-supportive elements. If applied to all new development (and adaptive reuse activities), the Manual could be instrumental to achieve quality infill and renovation projects that align with Downtown's historical and urban character.

Supportive Plan El Paso Goals and Policies,

Plan El Paso lists several goals and policies that would directly support property reuse, redevelopment, and public investments in the AWP Target Area – for brevity, the applicable goals and policies are listed in Appendix A of this document.

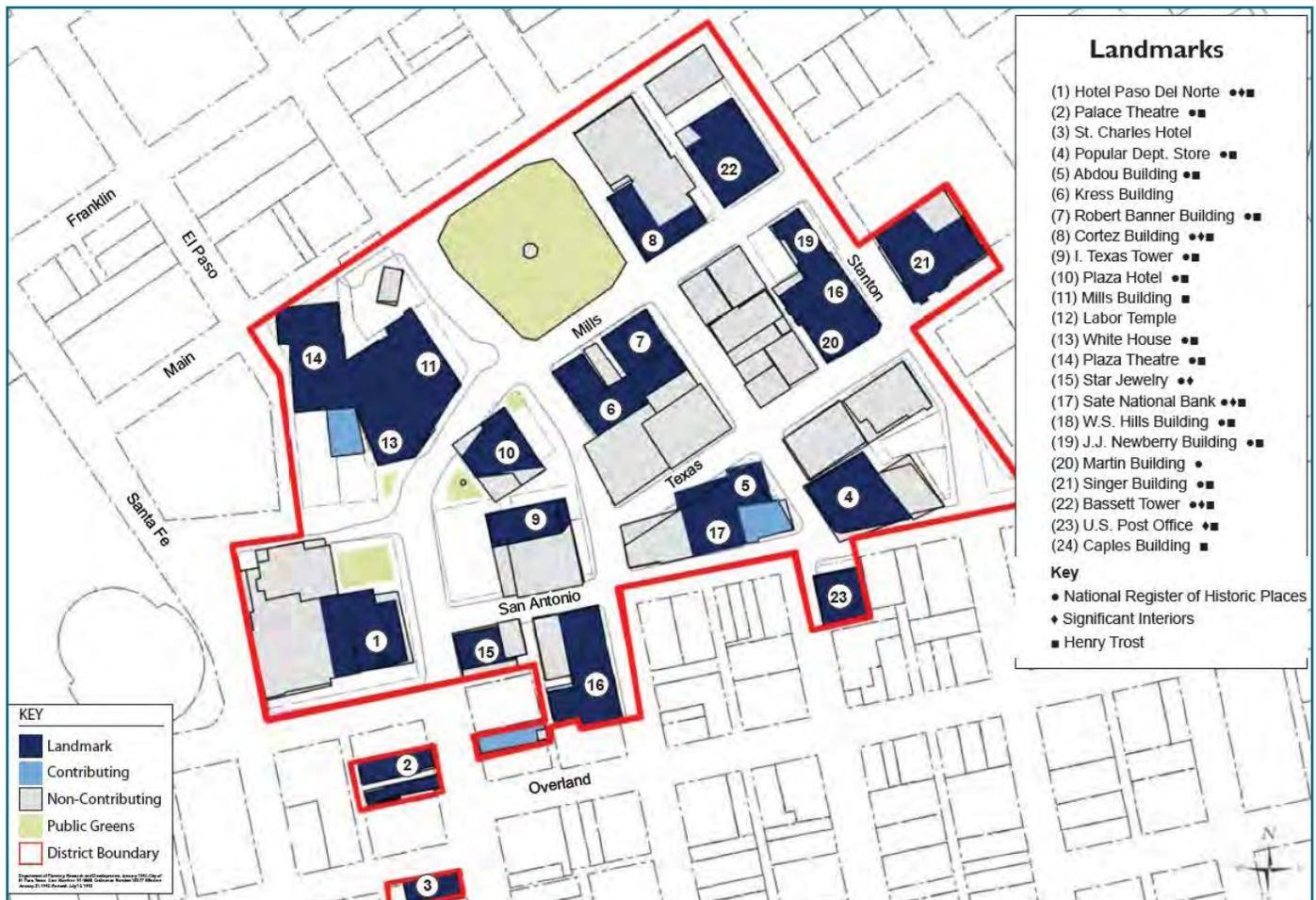


Figure 2.4.2. Plan El Paso – Downtown Historic District

Source: City of El Paso - Plan El Paso Document

El Paso Downtown 2015 Plan

The El Paso Downtown 2015 Plan (referred to as “Downtown Plan” in this subsection) was completed in November 2006 to examine Downtown’s existing conditions/assets and to identify strategic initiatives and investments to bring positive change by 2015. The Downtown Plan identifies eight (8) concept groups that would support revitalization: (i) Diverse Retail Districts, (ii) Catalyst Projects, (iii) Mixed-Use Imperative, (iv) Open Space/Public Improvements, (v) Bi-National Arts Walk/Pedestrian Focus, (vi) Transportation/Parking Strategy, (vii) Historic/Adaptive Reuse Potential, and (viii) Infill Development. These concept groups could be carried forward (and modified) through this AWP process to support revitalization in the Target Area.

Key Planning Initiatives – The Downtown Plan includes several planning initiatives that are directly applicable to the AWP Target Area – these are summarized below. The DMD and community stakeholders can build upon and/or refine these previous planning initiatives; many of these initiatives may have merit, whereas others may need refinements to recognize current conditions, recent investments, and changes in Downtown since 2006.

- Golden Horseshoe (El Paso and Stanton Streets)** – Located adjacent to the downtown core, the major shopping streets of El Paso and Stanton stretch from the border north into Downtown, and link to the San Jacinto Plaza/San Antonio Avenue vicinity to create the “Golden Horseshoe.” The Downtown Plan calls for creating additional structure and land uses that link El Paso and Stanton resulting in increased foot traffic and urban life. The new retail street, as a new extension of First Street, would have a retail anchor on the east end and entertainment venue on the west end. It would form the basis for transforming underutilized buildings and creating new development opportunities.
- Open Space Concept** – Pursuant to the Downtown Plan, the public realm should be expanded with the goals of creating a connected system that unifies downtown, bridging its historic elements with its future identity. Based on that Plan, improvements should include public parks

and plazas that are linked with wide sidewalks, street trees and seating, providing an inviting and comfortable pedestrian experience.

- Urban Design Guidelines and Development Standards:** The Downtown Plan includes a set of urban design guidelines and development standards for new urban infill, adaptive reuse, and other capital projects. The standards support development forms that are conducive and associated with quality and vibrant Downtowns – it is unclear whether the City of El Paso applies these standards to new projects today.

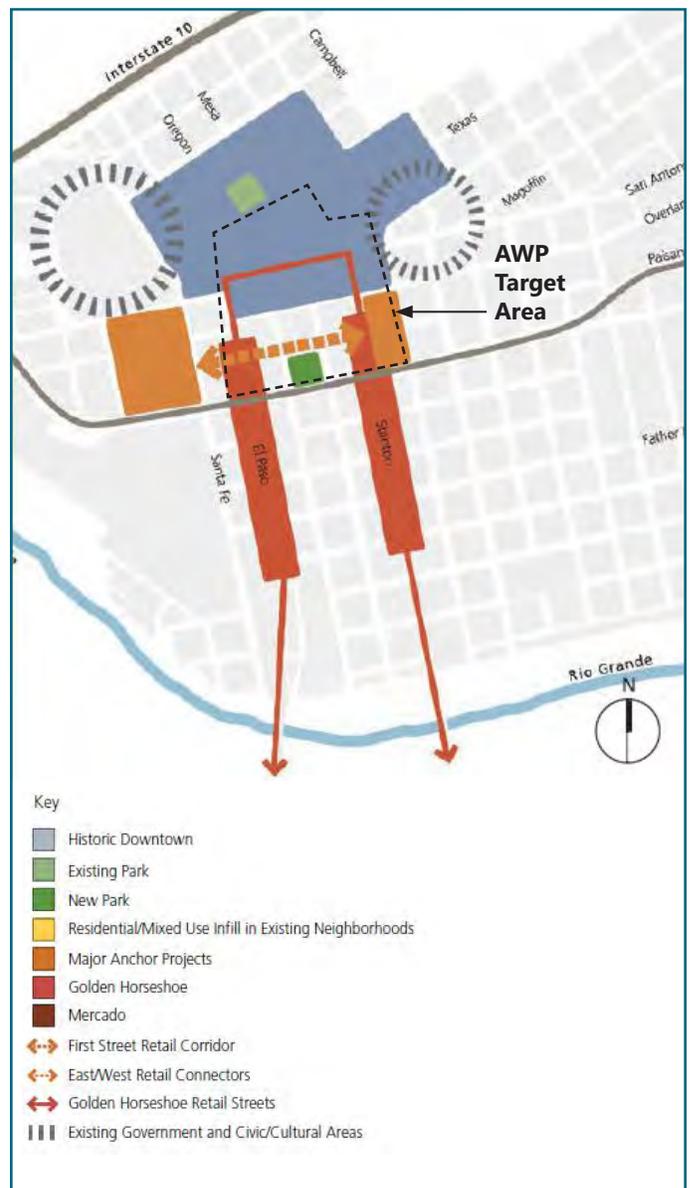


Figure 2.4.3. Downtown Plan 2015 - District 1 Concept Diagram
Source: City of El Paso - El Paso Downtown 2015 Plan

The City of El Paso Pedestrian Wayfinding

The El Paso Pedestrian Wayfinding plan (“Wayfinding Plan” in this subsection) identifies types of signage and their locations to both brand the area and direct pedestrians to amenities and attractions in Downtown. The document includes design details for wayfinding elements and designates specific roadway corridors

for implementation. The Wayfinding Plan was divided into three phases (see Figure 2.4.5). In May 2019, the City used \$800,000 in TxDOT monies with city match to implement the final phase of the Wayfinding Plan. Notably, the Wayfinding Plan does not include the AWP Target Area streets south of San Antonio Avenue and east of El Paso Street.

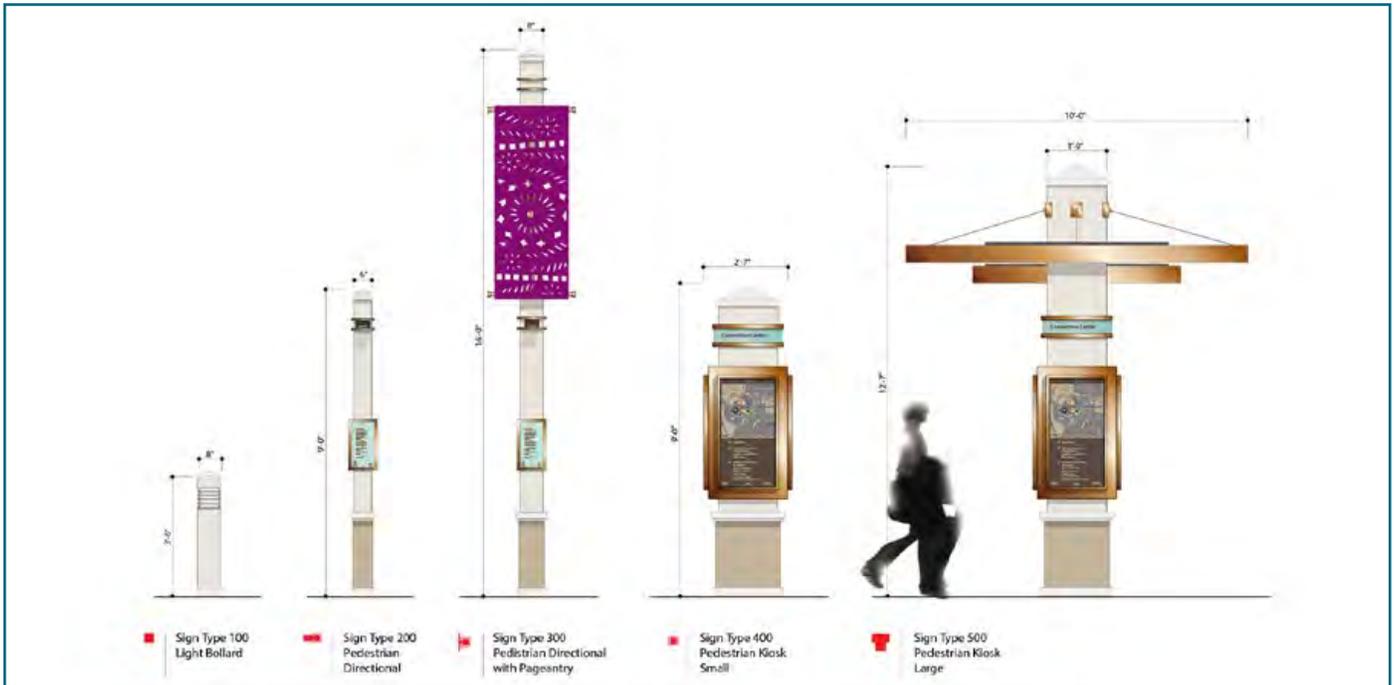


Figure 2.4.4. El Paso Wayfinding Plan – Signage Family / Typical Designs

Source: City of El Paso/FD2S Inc. - Wayfinding Plan



Figure 2.4.5. El Paso Wayfinding Plan – Pathway Overview Site Plan

Source: City of El Paso/FD2S Inc. - Wayfinding Plan

El Paso Bike Plan

The El Paso Bike Plan (referred to as “Bike Plan” in this subsection) was completed in August 2016 to assess existing conditions, identify needs and opportunity, capture community preferences/desires, and to identify future bicycle facilities across the City. The Bike Plan identifies several bicycle-related capital projects in Downtown. The Bike Plan also includes construction guidance for new facility types such as bicycle boulevards, bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, and cycle tracks. The Plan recommends the following bicycle-related projects for the AWP Target Area – See Figure 2.4.9 for the planned bicycle projects in and around the Target Area:

- **Bike Lane:** Bicycle lanes designate an exclusive space for bicyclists with pavement markings and signage. The bicycle lane is located adjacent to motor vehicle travel lanes and bicyclists ride in the same direction as motor vehicle traffic. Bicycle lanes

are typically on the right side of the street (on a two-way street). The plan recommends these on Mills Ave. and San Antonio Ave.

- **Shared Lane Markings:** These are shared lane marking or sharrows incorporated on roadways to indicate a shared environment for bicycles and automobiles. The Bike Plan recommends these facilities on El Paso Street (between Paisano Drive and Mills Avenue) and Oregon Street (north of San Antonio Avenue).
- **Protected Bike Lane/Cycle Track:** Protected bike lanes are physically separated from motor vehicle traffic and typically provide bicycle travel in the same direction as motor vehicle traffic. They may be at street level, or distinct from the sidewalk, as a raised cycle track. The Bike Plan recommends protected bike lanes on Oregon Street (south of San Antonio Avenue) and Paisano Drive. The Bike Plan recommends two-way cycle track on Stanton Street.

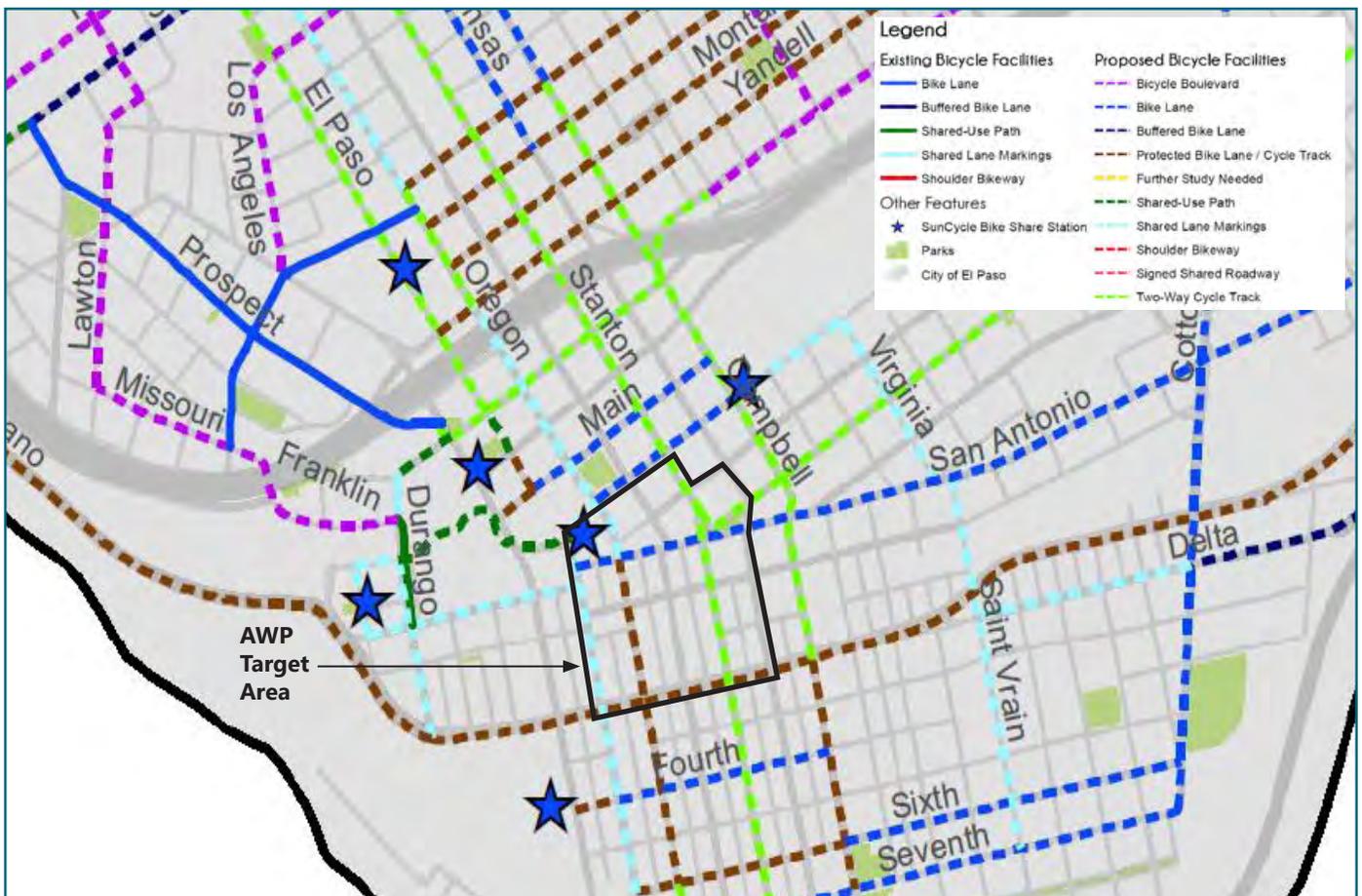


Figure 2.4.6. El Paso Bike Plan – Recommended Bikeway Network
Source: City of El Paso - El Paso Bike Plan



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Section 2.5: Zoning and Development Standards

The properties in the AWP Target Area are subject to Title 20 - Zoning of the City of El Paso Municipal Code (the “Code” throughout this document). The Code establishes the land use standards and development requirements that are applicable to potential new construction and adaptive reuse projects in the City. The list of allowable uses, size and bulk limitations, and parking standards sometimes pose the greatest challenges to revitalization areas given the small property sizes and existing buildings (which were constructed prior to zoning laws). The following subsections summarize the applicable zoning and development standards for the Target Area.

Zoning Districts

Properties in the AWP Target Area are zoned C-5 – Central Business District which is a mixed-use zone that allows for a broad range of land uses. See Figure 2.5.1. for the current zoning map. The following describes the Code’s description of Regional Commercial Districts (of which the C-5 zone is a part):

- **Regional Commercial Districts:** The purpose of these districts is to provide for locations for the most intensive commercial uses intended to serve the entire city. It is intended that the district regulations permit heavy commercial uses characterized by automotive and light warehousing. The regulations of the districts are intended to provide a transition from general business areas to industrial and manufacturing uses, and to accommodate major locations of commerce, service and employment activities. Within the central business district, more intensive commercial uses are allowed, the predominant of which are retail trade and service uses, providing less restrictive height and area regulations.

Other Zoning Designations - In addition to standard zoning, some properties within the Target Area are also regulated by overlay district regulations. The overlay designation “H” is for Historic overlays and those properties are subject to the regulations in Section 20.20 of the Code.

The overlay designation “SP” stands for Special Permit; any parcel with an SP overlay has an attached ordinance on the City of El Paso zoning map. Special Permits are usually to allow something more permissive than the base zoning district (e.g., parking/setback reductions for a specific use).

1. Recently completed urban renovation projects along Mills Avenue near El Paso Street - Hotel Paso Del Norte in the distance, the Plaza Hotel on the left, and the shops along the Plaza Theatre on right.

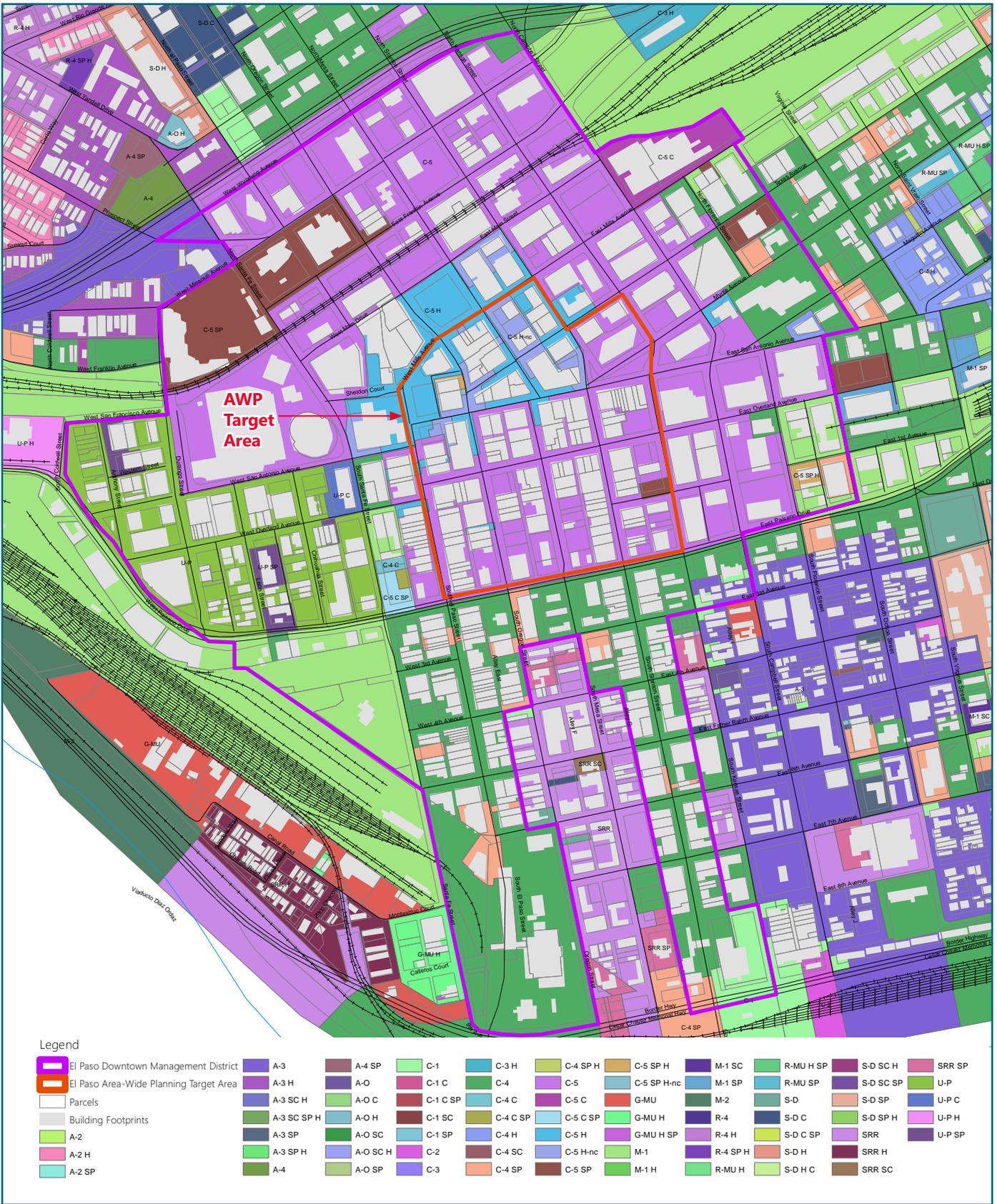


Figure 2.5.1. Zoning Map

Source: City of El Paso

Zoning Development and Land Use Standards

Dimensional Standards – The dimensional standards for the C-5 zone are supportive of urban-scaled development by allowing full use of individual parcels. Specifically, there are no height limitations or minimum setback requirements and the C-5 zone allows buildings to be constructed up to the property lines (like historic downtown buildings). However, there are no zoning provisions that *require* buildings to be constructed with a 0-ft setback from the public sidewalk, meaning projects could be constructed to be more suburban in character (e.g., large front setbacks with surface parking lots).

Land Use Allowances / Permissible Uses – The C-5 District allows for a broad range of uses including commercial services, office, multi-family residential (apartments), and other uses normally associated with downtowns. The City’s list of permissible uses is quite lengthy – for brevity, Table 2.5.a. summarizes the general land use categories and their associated allowances in the C-5 District (this is not an exhaustive list).

Pursuant to the Code, individual uses may be allowed as a permitted use “P”, a special exception “E”, a special permit “S” or through other specific review process. Permitted uses are normally considered allowed in the zone and subject to the City’s site plan review or building permitting processes. Special permits require City Council approval and special exceptions require Zoning Board of Adjustment approval.

<i>Proposed Land Use</i>	<i>Allowances</i>
Retail / Commercial Services	P
Personal Services (i.e., barber shop)	P
Office	P
Grocery	P
Restaurants	P
Drinking Establishments	P
Brewery	S
Medical Office / Clinics	P
Multi-family Residential	P
Artist Studios (i.e., dance, photography)	P
Parks and Open Space	P
Hotel and Lodging	P
Short term Rentals (e.g., AirBNB)	Unspecified
Music and Entertainment Venues	P
<i>TEMPORARY USES</i>	
Temporary events on public rights-of-way	A
Tents (Special Events)	P
Sales stands (ranch and farm products)	P
Neighborhood fair, carnival	P
<i>P = Permitted use. / A = Permitted accessory use. / S = Special permit required.</i>	

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Chapter 3

Brownfield and Property Inventory



Section 3.1: Brownfields Overview

Brownfields are an important component when planning for revitalization in the Central Downtown Target Area as they pose both challenges and opportunity for redevelopment. The EPA defines a brownfield as, ***“real property, the expansion, redevelopment or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.”*** This is a broad definition, meaning that many developed or previously used properties, especially in an urban setting and in downtown areas, could be classified as a brownfield. Identifying and gaining an understanding of brownfields and their associated redevelopment and adaptive reuse challenges can be a key step for the community and property owners to develop strategies to address potential and known hazards and liabilities associated with these properties and return them to productive use.

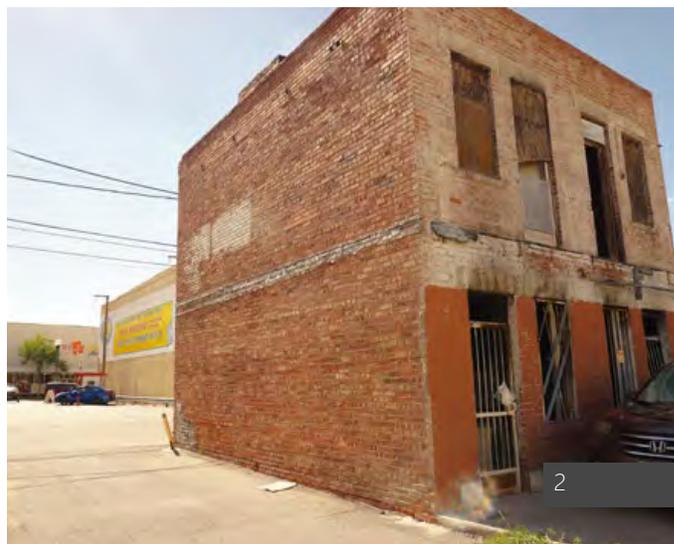
In extreme situations, past industrial and commercial activities at brownfield sites can result in the presence of petroleum products and other hazardous constituents within soil, groundwater, and soil vapor underlying the sites. These conditions may have occurred due to past manufacturing operations and/or property maintenance practices that involved hazardous chemicals. Older buildings that remain on many brownfield sites may contain hazardous building materials such as asbestos, lead-based paint, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) that were commonly used in the construction and maintenance

of buildings prior to 1980¹. For the Target Area, most of the existing buildings are old and a third of these structures are vacant today. Furthermore, the Target Area has several undeveloped sites that could be ideal for new infill projects for much needed housing and/or employment uses. While there are opportunities to attract new tenants to fill empty storefronts and investors to redevelop abandoned/underperforming sites, additional studies and potential abatement/cleanup activities may be necessary before they can be effectively (and safely) reused.

¹ | Lead-based paint was widely used in the United States (US), because of its enhanced durability, but banned from use in household paints in the US in 1978 due to health concerns. Asbestos was historically used in a wide range of building materials, because of its fiber strength and heat resistance, but was banned from select building products in a series of regulatory decisions beginning in 1973 and continuing through 1989 (although asbestos remains in use in numerous building products). PCBs were used in caulk, paint and coating, fluorescent light ballasts, and other building materials during about 1950 through 1979, but were banned from use in the US in 1979.

For the Target Area, it is anticipated that the AWP process will provide a strategy for property owners to redevelop/adaptively reuse brownfield sites with new uses that fit into a larger vision for the community. By demonstrating that projects have community support, and government agencies have strategies for addressing potential infrastructure and other needs, the AWP will serve as a tool for attracting increased interest from developers who will purchase, cleanup, and redevelop the sites. Brownfield redevelopment will capitalize on existing infrastructure, benefit from nearby amenities, build upon established business enterprises, and help complete the community's vision for the area.

1. Existing vacant/undeveloped lot along San Antonio Avenue at Mesa Street. | 2. Abandoned building along Kansas Street, and surface parking lot along Stanton Street in the distance. Both sites have urban infill potential.



Section 3.2: Brownfield Inventory

As an initial step in developing a revitalization strategy for the Central Downtown Target Area, Stantec (the DMD's prime consultant) completed an inventory and analysis for all 154 tax lots within the AWP Target Area. The inventory is aimed to analyze individual properties to determine their existing site conditions and identify potential brownfields within the larger Target Area. This information was used to identify and prioritize properties with near- and mid-term redevelopment potential.

Inventory Objectives - The inventory task has two main objectives:

- 1. Property Conditions:** Build a property database that identifies their existing characteristics and conditions in the Target Area (e.g., address, size, ownership, building age/conditions, occupancy, historic/current land use, presence in state/federal environmental databases, and presence of recognized or potential environmental concerns – such as chemical storage and spills).
- 2. Brownfields with Redevelopment Potential:** Identify which properties are potential brownfields, as well as those which have the greatest potential for near- to mid-term redevelopment opportunities.

The inventory process identified 73 potential priority brownfields sites – properties that should be prioritized for reuse/redevelopment and future study based on their potential for environmental liabilities caused by past uses as well as size, location, or other characteristics that support meaningful reuse projects. Collectively, these sites possess conditions that necessitate environmental site assessment (ESA) studies to further determine the specific property/building conditions and potential cleanup activities. The following subsections summarize the methodology and findings from the property inventory. [The full findings and detailed property information is displayed in Appendix B.](#)

Inventory Methodology and Data Sources

In mid-2021, Stantec developed the brownfield inventory using geographic information systems (GIS) and tax lot data obtained from the El Paso Central Appraisal District (CAD). Stantec also included select information from environmental databases and historical records to identify property conditions and past land use activities. To supplement this information, Stantec conducted field observations to verify existing conditions, determine occupancy/utilization status, observe building conditions, and identify recognized or potential environmental concerns (e.g., presence of chemical storage, spills, etc.). Stantec developed a property inventory spreadsheet and associated maps to display the property inventory data and results. Table 3.2.a lists the data sources that were used to create the inventory.

Inventory Data Source	Components
<p>Data Source A: Parcel/Tax Lot Database</p> <p>Stantec created a parcel/tax lot database that included property characteristics obtained from El Paso County for all parcels in the target area. This information was imported into a spreadsheet and used to develop a base map. Stantec assigned an inventory map identification (Map ID) number to each property.</p>	<p>Property characteristics including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address / property identification number • Owner / business name • Zoning • Size • Structures (and age) • Land and improvement values • Improvement to Land Value Ratio (ILVR)¹
<p>Data Source B: Information from Environmental Databases and Historical Resources</p> <p>Stantec reviewed select state/federal environmental databases and historical resources to identify properties with recognized or potential environmental concerns related to historic/current land use.</p>	<p>Select information contained in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) databases • U.S. EPA Facility Registration System (FRS) database • Sanborn® Fire Insurance Maps • City Directories • Aerial photography
<p>Data Source C: Field Observations</p> <p>Stantec conducted field observations for all properties in the target area to verify the information collected in Data Sources A and B, and to confirm current land use/occupancy and site conditions.</p>	<p>Select observations concerning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current land use • Occupancy • Recognized or potential environmental concerns (e.g., chemical storage, stained soils) • Blight indicators (e.g., poorly maintained pavement or vegetation, cracked or damaged building exteriors, or damaged roofs)
<p><i>Notes: (1) ILVR is calculated by dividing the assessed value for improvements (e.g., buildings and structures) by the assessed value of the land. Properties with high land values when compared to structure values indicate the property may be underutilized and could support future development. For example, an ILVR <1 indicates that the land is more valuable than the improvements, and therefore may be underutilized in terms of development potential. An ILVR of 0 typically means a tax lot is either vacant, a park, wooded area, agricultural land or open space.</i></p>	

Scoring Evaluation

Stantec developed and applied a scoring evaluation system to all parcels/tax lots in the Target Area to help identify potential brownfields and properties with significant redevelopment opportunities. The scoring criteria included site characteristics such as building age/condition, occupancy, improvement to land value ratio (ILVR), presence or absence of environmental database records, and/or historical/current land uses of potential environmental concern. Table 3.2.b lists the scoring criteria, describes the potential points allotted for each, and the rationale for including it in the evaluation.

Criterion	Points	Description	Rationale
A. Site Nomination <i>Method: Site Nomination received by DMD.</i>	2	Site was nominated by the DMD, the Brownfields Revitalization Advisory Committee (BRAC), and/or a community stakeholder	Nominated sites generally have a higher potential for near-term redevelopment opportunities and property/business/developer interest and/or participation.
	0	Site was not nominated	
B: Property Size <i>Method: Central Appraisal District (CAD) data.</i>	1.0	1.0 acre or greater property size	Sites that are one acre or greater have higher potential to accommodate significant redevelopment projects, whereas urban sites that are less than 0.25 acres can generally accommodate less redevelopment activity.
	0.5	0.25 acres or greater AND less than 1.0 acre	
	0	Less than 0.25 acres	
C: Improvement to Land Value Ratio (ILVR) <i>Method: Calculation based on CAD data.</i>	1.0	ILVR < 0.5	A property having an ILVR less than 1.0 means the property is more valuable than its buildings and suggests the property has the potential to support additional development. In contrast, lots with an ILVR greater than 1.0 suggests the property may be well utilized and less likely to be razed and redeveloped.
	0.5	ILVR > 0.5 AND ≤ 1.0	
	0	ILVR >1.0	
D: Environmental Databases <i>Method: Examining environmental databases.</i>	2	Site identified in a database that indicates there has been a documented release	Properties identified in state/federal databases may require/benefit from assessment and cleanup planning activities as part of redevelopment activities.
	1	Site is identified in other type of environmental database	
	0	Site is NOT identified in an environmental database	
E. Current/ Historical Use <i>Method: Examining Sanborn Maps / City Directories</i>	1	Site has supported a land use of potential concern.	Properties with current/historical land use of potential environmental concern may require/benefit from assessment and cleanup planning activities as part of redevelopment activities.
	0	Site has NOT supported a land use of potential concern.	
<i>**Table continues on the next page**</i>			

Table 3.2.b. Scoring Criteria			
Criterion	Points	Description	Rationale
F. Building Age (pre-1980) <i>Method: CAD data.</i>	1	Building was constructed prior to 1980	Buildings that were constructed prior to 1980 have a higher potential for containing asbestos, lead-based paint and/or and other hazardous/regulated building materials.
	0	Building was constructed in 1980 or after	
G: Undeveloped Property <i>Method: CAD data / Field Observations</i>	2	Site does not have a building	Properties which are undeveloped and/or do not have a building may be prime for redevelopment opportunities.
	0	Site has a building	
H: Vacant/ Underutilized Buildings <i>Method: Field Observation</i>	2	Building is vacant	Properties with vacant/underutilized buildings may be prime for improvements and/or adaptive reuse.
	1	Building is partially occupied	
	0	Building is fully occupied	
I. Blight Indicator <i>Method: Field Observation</i>	1	Site or building is in disrepair.	Properties that have various signs of deterioration, blight, and deferred maintenance may have potential for improvements to support revitalization/redevelopment.
	0.5	Site or building shows signs of minor deferred maintenance (e.g., peeling paint, overgrown vegetation)	
	0	Site is in good condition	



1. Existing underutilized buildings along Oregon Street (near San Antonio Avenue) - adaptive reuse investments would create additional tenant capacity. Future environmental studies may be warranted to identify whether hazardous building materials exist.

Inventory Results and Findings

Stantec completed the inventory activities described above during March-August 2021 and Table 3.2.c lists the scoring criteria and the number of parcels that possess the associated site/property characteristics (some parcels meet multiple criteria). The inventory results identified property conditions relating to three important categories as it relates to revitalization: (1) Potential Brownfields, (2) Vacant or Underutilized Buildings, and (3) Undeveloped Properties – future detail is discussed in the subsequent subsections.

Scoring Criteria	Number of Parcels (in Target Area)	Scoring Detail for Parcels (in Target Area)
A. Site Nomination	0 parcels	N/A
B: Property Size	5 parcels	1 point = 1 parcels (1-acre or more) 0.5 points = 4 parcels (greater than 0.25-acres but less than 1-acre)
C: Improvement to Land Value Ratio (ILVR)	95 parcels	1 point = 63 parcels (ILVR < 0.5) 0.5 points = 32 parcels (ILVR > 0.5 AND ≤ 1.0)
D: Identified in an Environmental Database	40 parcels	2 points = 3 parcels (on database with a confirmed release) 1 point = 37 parcels (on database without a confirmed release)
E. Current/Historical Use of Concern	39 parcels	1 point = 39 parcels
F. Building Age (pre- 1980)	104 parcels	1 point = 104 parcels
G: Undeveloped Property (no buildings and excluding surface parking lots)	18 parcels	2 points = 18 parcels
H: Vacant Buildings (partial or fully vacant)	48 parcels	2 points = 22 parcels (fully vacant building) 1 point = 26 parcels (partially vacant building)
I. Blight Indicator	24 parcels	1 point = 24 parcels

Brownfield Mapping

Figure 3.2.1. - AWP Brownfield Inventory Overview Map graphically depicts the property conditions and scoring results for the tax lots within the AWP Target Area. The map illustrates sites with scores 3 and above – these sites could be considered brownfields and should be prioritized for reuse.

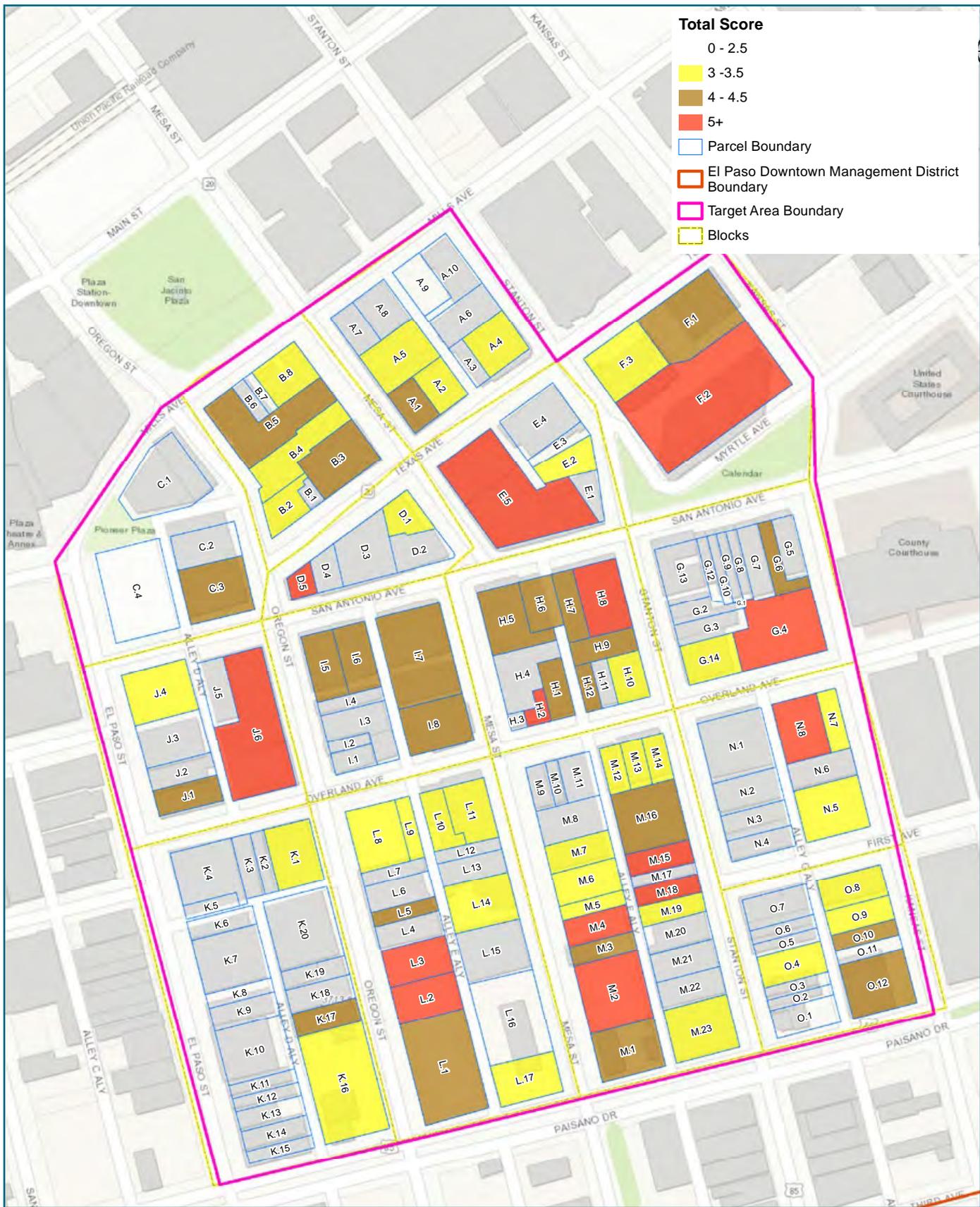


Figure 3.2.1. AWP Brownfield Inventory Overview Map



1. The city block between San Antonio Avenue and Overland Avenue at Mesa Street includes several vacant buildings that could be adaptively reused for new community-serving tenant spaces.

Potential Brownfields

The parcels meeting multiple criteria could be considered potential brownfields and may benefit from further assessment (e.g., Phase I/II ESAs and/or Cleanup Planning activities). Based on the inventory findings for the 154 sites, 73 parcels (totaling 15.48-acres) scored between 3.0 – 7.5 – meaning these properties meet multiple scoring criteria. If reuse or redevelopment activities are to occur on these potential brownfields, the activities may benefit from further study due to their combination of vacant/ underutilized status, potential environmental concerns, and/or their potential to accommodate new community-serving uses.

Vacant or Underutilized Buildings

The inventory identified 44 existing buildings (totaling 7.18-acres) that were vacant or were not fully occupied – several of these underutilized buildings are also potential brownfields. Figure 3.2.2 depicts properties with vacant/underutilized buildings as a red outline/hatch. These buildings have the potential to be improved or adaptively reused to support new uses which may include new housing units, commercial spaces, entertainment venues, and/or offices. Existing

buildings sometimes represent a lower cost to potential tenants when compared to new construction – thus adaptive reuse of existing buildings is a vital strategy to support small business startups and retain/provide affordable housing options in urban environments. Additionally, many existing buildings have architectural elements that are uniquely El Paso and their preservation and reuse will retain the City's history and character.

Undeveloped Properties

The inventory identified 18 parcels (totaling 3.73-acres) that were undeveloped (including properties that do not contain a permanent structure and/or only contain a surface parking lot or minimal improvements). Figure 3.2.2 depicts undeveloped land as a thick green outline. These properties could be prioritized for new urban infill projects that could add new community-serving uses – including housing, commercial services, and office space. Alternatively, these undeveloped properties could be prioritized for new public amenities including parks, community gathering spaces, and civic uses. There is near-term opportunity to activate these undeveloped properties with interim uses such as pop-up markets, art installations, and passive open spaces.

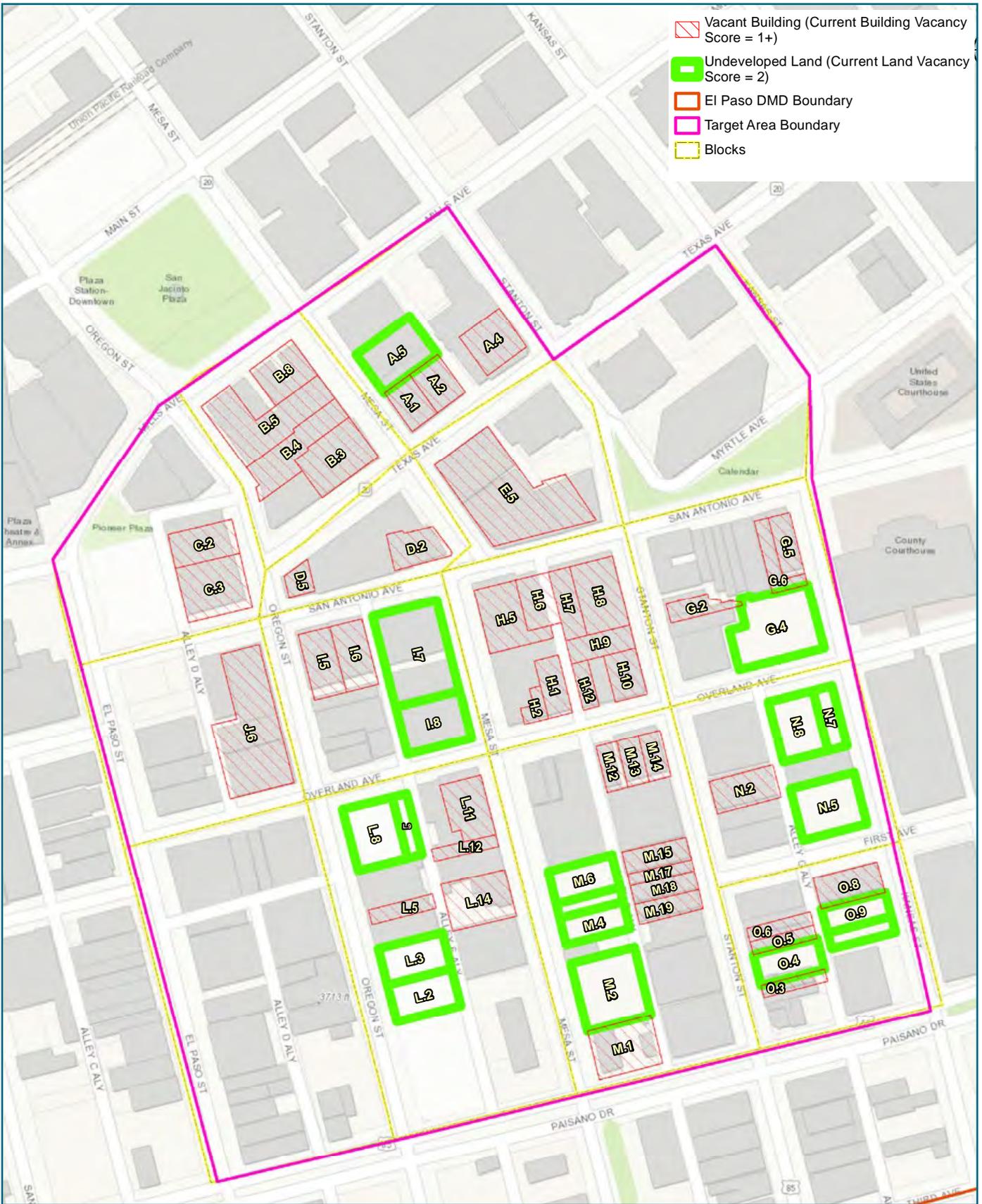


Figure 3.2.2. Brownfield Inventory Underdeveloped and Vacant Buildings Map

Section 3.3: Reuse Priority and Environmental Studies

The tax lots meeting multiple criteria should be prioritized for reuse/redevelopment and/or further study since those activities would address negative property conditions. Additionally, brownfields that are abandoned and/or underutilized while being large enough to support redevelopment (at least 0.25 acres) should also be prioritized so they can be put back to productive use for the community.

A critical future step for identifying and assessing environmental and other potential liabilities associated with brownfields is to conduct Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) and Regulated Building Materials Testing (RBM) on tax lots identified as brownfields during the inventory. These technical studies will review past property use and/or include site testing to inform property owners and prospective tenants of potential environmental conditions that must be addressed before the sites are redeveloped/repurposed for new uses. The following describes these studies and the DMD's EPA grant provides financial assistance (with stipulations) to property owners to complete these investigations.

Phase I ESA - The initial step in evaluating potential environmental liabilities associated with a property is the performance of a Phase I ESA. Phase I ESAs are nearly always completed in accordance with a detailed standard process established by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) – “Standard Practice for Environmental Site Assessments: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Process,” Designation E1527-13. The scope of work for a Phase I ESA includes a visual reconnaissance of the property, interviews with key individuals, and review of reasonably ascertainable documents (typically including federal, state, and other environmental databases; historical maps, city directories, and aerial photographs; and any existing environmental reports). The Phase I ESA is designed to identify “recognized environmental conditions” (RECs) which, as defined by ASTM, means: “the presence or likely presence of any hazardous substances or petroleum products in, on, or at a property: 1) due to any release to the environment; 2) under conditions indicative of a release to the environment; or 3) under conditions that pose a material threat of a future release to the environment.” Phase I ESAs also identify several other categories of

environmental concerns as defined by ASTM, including Historical Recognized Environmental Conditions (“HRECs”), Controlled Recognized Environmental Conditions (“CRECs”), and Business Environmental Risks (“BERs”).

Phase I ESA reports provide a summary of known or confirmed environmental liabilities associated with a property (and adjoining properties), as well as findings and conclusions related to potential or probable additional environmental liabilities. Phase I ESAs will typically include information on the types of contaminants that are either confirmed to be present or potentially present based on past land uses, and may also include information on the specific locations where contaminants are known or potentially present. The Phase I ESA does not include actual testing of building materials, soil, groundwater, soil vapor, or other environmental media, but the information developed is useful for developing a scope of work for a Phase II ESA (described below).

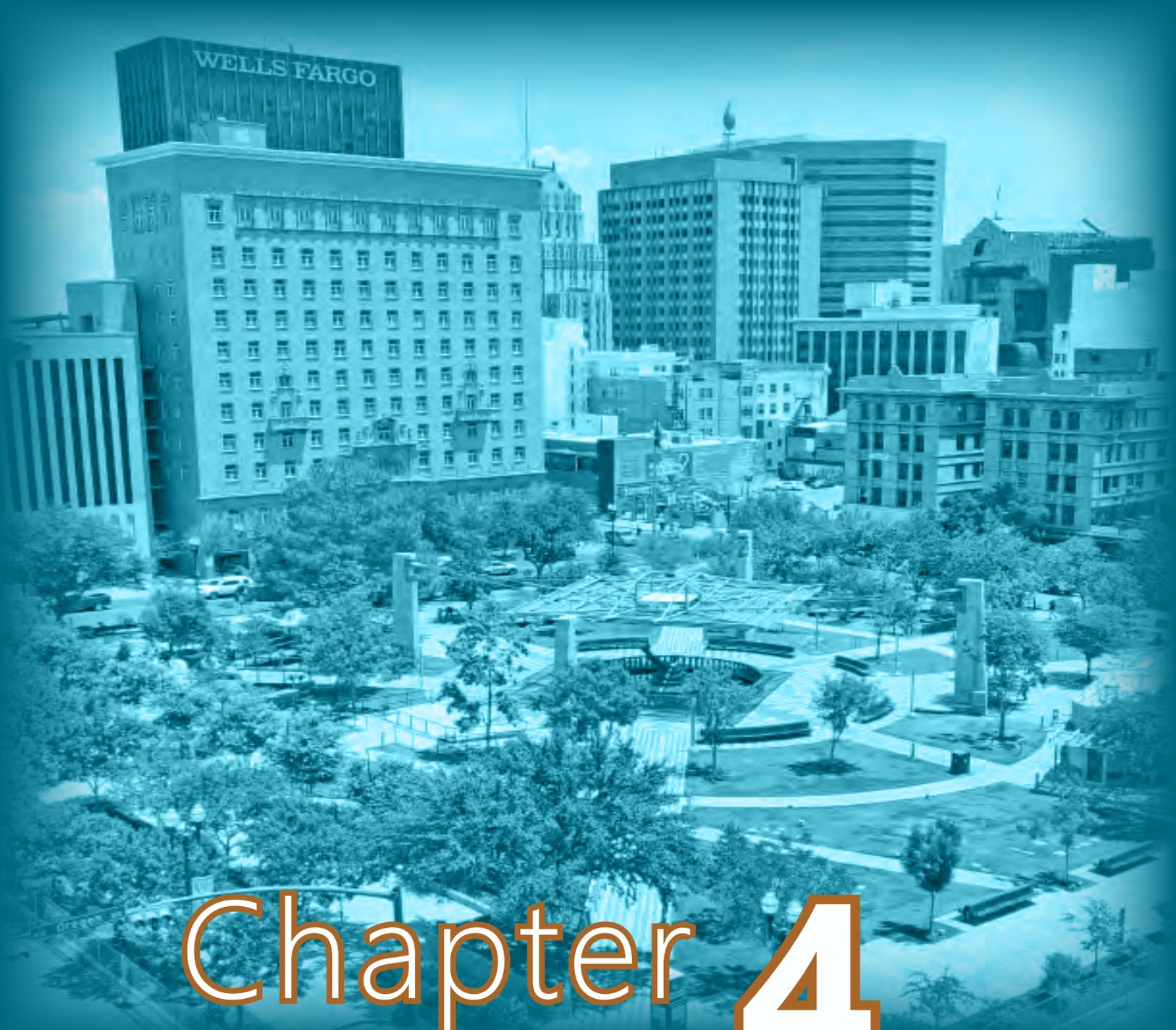
In situations where a Phase I ESA is completed and identifies no RECs or other types of significant potential environmental concerns, completion of the Phase I ESA alone may be sufficient to address previous concerns by developers over unknown or perceived environmental liabilities, and serve to enhance developer interest and redevelopment prospects. However, if a Phase I ESA identifies significant known or potential environmental liabilities, then a Phase II ESA (described below) will likely be needed to further evaluate these known or perceived liabilities.

Phase II ESA - A Phase II ESA generally includes collection of samples of various types of environmental media (i.e., soil, groundwater, surface water, sediment, and/or building materials) and analysis of the samples for known or suspected “contaminants of concern.” The purpose is to confirm or refute the presence of contaminants in the sampled media. The scope of work for the Phase II ESA is typically based on the findings a Phase I ESA as well as information relevant to the types of chemicals or petroleum products used or stored on a site (or neighboring properties) and the locations for this use or storage (including features such as underground storage tanks).

A Phase II ESA will often confirm the presence or absence of key contaminants of concern, as well as whether measured concentrations exceed applicable cleanup or other regulatory threshold values. If only low-level (or zero) concentrations of contaminants are detected, then the Phase II ESA may be sufficient to address concerns related to potential contamination. However, if significant or widespread contamination is documented during a Phase II ESA, then additional follow-up testing may be required to fully assess the magnitude, nature, and extent of key contaminants in various environmental media, and/or to satisfy state or federal requirements associated with the discovery of contamination at a site above cleanup standards or other applicable regulatory limits.

Regulated Building Material (RBM) Survey – The purpose of the RBM survey is to identify the presence and quantity of RBMs. Building materials can contain a number of hazardous components that, if disturbed, can pose a health risk to workers and occupants. RBMs may pose little health risk when left alone and intact; however, during maintenance, renovation or demolition, materials that may pose health risks must be managed, abated and disposed of appropriately according to regulations. Data obtained during the building survey can be used to assess exposure for renovation workers and in the case of demolition, identify the areas of abatement needed and their costs to support redevelopment of the property. RBMs include but are not limited to:

- Asbestos-containing materials (ACMs);
- Lead-based paint (LBP), paint containing lead, or construction use of other heavy metals;
- Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) present in electric ballasts and other equipment, as well as some caulks and other building materials;
- Mercury-containing fluorescent lamps;
- Mercury-containing thermostats/switches;
- Chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) refrigerants; and
- Silica dust from disturbed concrete, stucco, stone products, ceramic tile, drywall and plaster.



Chapter 4

**Market Conditions
and Opportunities**



1

Section 4.1: Market Analysis Introduction

When planning for downtown districts, it is imperative to examine and understand the population and economic conditions so that the resulting action plan and public investments are rooted in market reality and are tailored to serve all community members. It is important to plan for both current and future populations so that Downtown grows with housing, employment, urban amenities, and public services that serve a variety of households and individual preferences – we need to plan for the people of today while also creating an urban environment that would attract other community members to choose to locate in El Paso’s city center. At the same time, it is vital to identify near- and long-term land uses that are in demand and missing in the Downtown vicinity so that the Target Area revitalizes as a complete community. Furthermore, it is important to notate real estate and economic challenges so that government agencies and community partners can devise strategies (and potential incentives) to address impediments to economic opportunity for residents, entrepreneurs, and investors.

As part of and parallel to this area-wide planning process, the project team (led by Quantum) prepared a market study (*Downtown El Paso Market Assessment* – under a separate cover) for the Target Area. This chapter summarizes the key findings from the market study to help guide the revitalization planning initiatives for the Target Area, whereas the full market study is presented in Appendix C of this AWP document. The market study provides a review of current and future demographics and socio-economic conditions and a review of market conditions for housing, commercial and employment.



2

1. Example of a locally-owned bistro that creates an environment for community members to gather while providing economic opportunity for its owners. | 2. The El Paso Streetcar represents a significant public investment serving both current and future residents and interlinks the border crossings with the various Downtown Districts and the Uptown vicinity.

Section 4.2: Key Market and Demographic Findings

The following lists key population, housing and employment trends that the market study identified for the Target Area and the El Paso region. In short, the City will experience continuous population growth and the Target Area has capacity to accommodate some of the associated housing, commercial, and employment demand. Near-term, adaptive reuse projects seem to be the most viable – overtime, the Target Area could experience larger redevelopment and infill projects. These findings will help guide the community to make policy and investment decisions in the upcoming years.



Finding #1 – Regional Growth.

The El Paso region is projected to experience continual population growth adding ~32,781 people by 2026. Historically, Downtown and the Target Area experienced population decline between 2010 and 2020, whereas new population projections estimate a modest increase of around 142 new residents (this is due potentially to recently completed residential projects in the urban core).

There is opportunity for the Target Area to absorb a larger proportion of the projected regional population growth. Providing more (and diverse) housing, jobs, and amenities may create additional interest and opportunity for new residents, employers, and community-serving uses to locate to Downtown El Paso. Creating a captivating urban environment will also be key to enticing future populations.

Finding #2 – Household Characteristics.



The average El Paso regional household size is 3.04 people per dwelling unit, whereas the Target Area household averages one individual. The regional median age is 32.9 (younger than Texas median age) while the Target Area average is 38.8 (but is getting younger compared to 2010). The regional average annual household income is \$22,730 (lower than Texas average) and the Target Area is half that of the region at \$10,230.

There is opportunity to plan the Target Area for all population segments as this is both equitable public policy and in line with diverse downtown environments. There is opportunity to provide housing and commercial services to entice households living in the outlying areas to relocate to Downtown. At the same time, there is a need to provide affordable housing, essential consumer goods, and public services (e.g., transit, education, and subsidized healthcare) for individuals that presently reside in the Target Area and to avoid displacement. For Downtown to compete with outlying suburban areas, its available housing units must accommodate with household sizes, and price points for housing and consumer goods must align with typical household incomes.



Finding #3 – Housing Needs and Opportunities.

Downtown El Paso has 858 housing units and has maintained a 14% vacancy rate. Most of these units (96%) are studio and one-bedroom units. Downtown rental rates average \$499 per month (with older units potentially skewing the average). Notably, average rents in newly constructed Downtown projects hover around \$832 (or \$1.18 per square feet). Most Downtown housing projects lack accommodations for pets and outdoor amenities for residents. The relatively high housing vacancy may be attributed to the lack of multi-bedroom units, amenities, and perceived costs.

There is opportunity to provide more well-priced housing options in the Target Area that would cater to a variety of households in terms of income, size, and living preferences. At the same time, there is a need to preserve (yet improve) existing low-cost housing units in the Downtown core to accommodate households with limited incomes. If Downtown/Target Area could absorb 10% of the region's projected growth, the area could support at least ~1,050 additional housing units (based on 3,200 new residents and an average household size of 3.04).



Finding #4 – Employment Growth and Opportunities.

The El Paso region is projected to add over 34,800 new jobs by 2029 (which is larger than its projected population growth). All employment sectors are projected to increase with the following expecting to provide the highest growth percentages: Accommodation/Food Services (27.4%), Administrative/Support/Waste (21.6%), Management of Companies and Enterprises (18.9%), Health Care/Social Assistance (17.7%), Management Services Utilities (17%), and Mining/Oil & Gas Extraction (15.4%).

There is opportunity for Downtown and the Target Area to absorb a portion of this employment growth through new construction, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse of existing, vacant buildings. Professional office, wholesale trade, healthcare and social assistance, and accommodation/food service are most notable opportunities. Many of these sector employees will seek out urban housing, shopping/dining, and entertainment options which creates key market opportunities in the Target Area and greater Downtown. As industries recruit much needed talent from other high-performing regions, prospective employees will demand urban amenities to justify their relocation.



Finding #5 – Commercial Growth and Opportunities.

Downtown El Paso retail depends on a regional/international market since its current population is far too small to support commercial services themselves. Currently, discount and specialty apparel comprise 76.6% of total sales. Downtown is lacking in several service items which requires residents to travel outside the core to obtain commercial goods such as: fresh food/groceries, quality electronics, appliances, building materials, books/periodicals, and most used merchandise items.

There is opportunity to provide additional and diverse shopping options in Downtown and the Target Area specifically focusing on the goods and services that are currently only available outside the central core. Specialty items like electronics, appliances, home décor, and luxury goods are key to attracting outside consumers into Downtown. Daily essentials like grocery stores, gyms/yoga studios, childcare centers, health services, and even laundry will be vital to attracting new households to reside in Downtown.



Finding #6 – Adaptive Reuse Opportunities.

The Target Area has several vacant or underutilized buildings (~28% of the existing structures are vacant or under-leased). Upgrades to existing buildings to meet modern tenant needs are generally less expensive than new construction. There is opportunity to target and incentivize adaptive reuse activities to reposition existing buildings to accommodate current and future demand for housing, commercial services, and employment uses. These activities would add vitality to the Target Area, create economic opportunity for building owners, provide lower-cost tenant spaces (when compared to new construction), and increase Downtown’s real estate capacity for future populations.

Finding #7 – Urban Infill Opportunities.

The Target Area has several undeveloped properties and surface parking lots that possess substantial infill potential for new community-serving uses. Furthermore, the Downtown vicinity lacks multi-bedroom residential units with amenities, Class A office spaces, and specialty retail spaces (e.g., full-service grocer), which are in high demand today and well into the future. Many of the older buildings in the Target Area may have limitations to accommodate certain tenants due to their size, interior/structural configuration, and location within the larger Downtown context.



There is opportunity to proactively market and recruit infill development projects to undeveloped properties in the Target Area to address current/future market demand. There is opportunity to produce housing projects with two and three-bedroom units for households with children, outdoor amenities, pet accommodations, and modern internet/telecommunication services. There is opportunity to construct additional specialty commercial spaces to accommodate retail services that are only available outside Downtown. There is opportunity for creative working spaces and quality office environments for potential employers. For infill projects to be feasible, Downtown vacancies need to lower AND the expected rental rates must exceed the cost for construction.

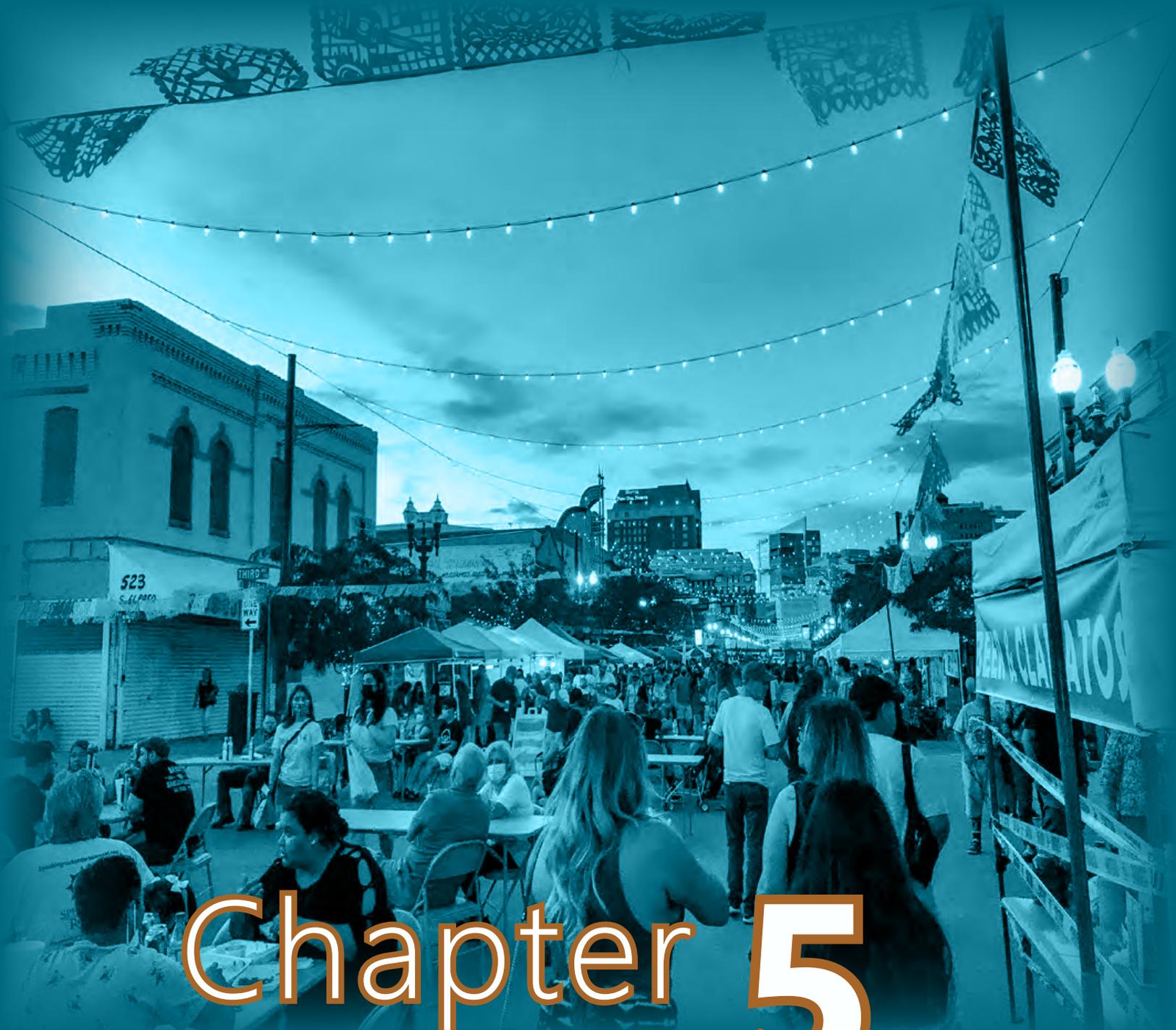
Finding #8 – Supportive Infrastructure and Amenities.

Downtown El Paso has a variety of cultural amenities but remains underserved with both active and passive parks and open spaces. Furthermore, there is a lack of bicycle infrastructure (an amenity that is normally associated with high-performing city centers across North America).

There is opportunity to provide supportive infrastructure and additional amenities in the Target Area that would create nodes of activity and achieve a much-desired urban character. These amenities would help position Downtown (and the Target Area) to absorb a larger portion of the region’s population growth resulting in more residents, activities, and economic prosperity in El Paso’s urban core.



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Chapter 5

Community Feedback and Priorities



Section 5.1: Community Priorities

Starting in early 2021, the project team conducted an array of community engagement activities to obtain stakeholder feedback on local needs, desires, and aspirations for the Central Downtown Target Area. The engagement plan sought feedback from community representatives including residents, business owners, government partners, economic development organizations, and community activists. During these conversations, participants were asked to provide recommendations on how the Target Area should grow and revitalize in terms of land uses, urban character, preservation, and amenities. The conversations also identified opportunities to add value to the Target Area that would benefit the area itself, the greater Downtown El Paso vicinity, and the community at large. This Chapter summarizes the engagement process and main community themes; a [more detailed public community engagement summary is provided in Appendix D.](#)

DMD Staff and community representatives communicated several ideas, concerns, and aspirations for the AWP Target Area; this feedback was categorized into a series of “Community Priorities”. These priorities could serve as the foundation by which the AWP project will aim to address and enhance the Target Area. This information will be integrated into the AWP and the recommended revitalization strategies will address these main community priorities. The following lists the Community Priorities and each have equal importance.



1. Existing shops and street activity along El Paso Street just south of the Target Area and close to the border crossings - there is opportunity to attract vibrancy back into Central Downtown. | 2. community stakeholders want to see more locally-produced art and murals like this one on the northeast edge of the Target Area.

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES



Priority A – Retain Culture, History, and Populations:

Downtown El Paso has culture and history that should be protected and celebrated as part of the revitalization strategies. Revitalization activities and capital investments should be inclusive of the area's existing population in terms of residents, business owners, and visitors. Discourage demolition of historical and iconic buildings through incentive and regulatory controls.



Priority B – Provide Greenspace and Shade:

Downtown El Paso could benefit from more greenspace and sun protection features to provide physical relief from the natural elements. Revitalization strategies should introduce additional/enhanced greenspace with trees and shade structures.



Priority C – Protect Housing and Business Affordability:

Downtown El Paso benefits from relatively affordable rents for households and business operations. The revitalization strategy should be mindful to protect residents and business owners from inflation, soaring costs, and the negative impacts associated with gentrification. Discourage the demolition of existing buildings that otherwise have the capacity to support relatively low-cost tenant spaces for residents/businesses.



Priority D – Create Amenities and Destinations:

The Target Area would benefit from more amenities and beloved community destinations (as a reason to visit, invest, and live in the area). Add commercial services that meet everyday needs for current and future residents (e.g., grocery store, childcare, fitness, convenience store). Provide/promote specialty shopping, restaurants, and cafes. Promote/recruit destination entertainment venues (e.g., movie theaters, open air mercados). Assist with parking options/solutions by analyzing turnover at meters, integrating technology/mobile aps, allowing use of government facility parking areas, additional wayfinding, etc.



Priority E – Activate Underutilized and Abandoned Spaces:

Promote adaptive reuse of existing buildings. Promote interim uses, events, and art installations on vacant properties and parking lots. Recruit developers and provide incentives to construct context-sensitive infill projects on vacant/underutilized properties and surface parking lots.



Priority F – Create a Positive Image and Perception:

Implement revitalization strategies that create a positive image for the Target Area in terms of vitality, interest, and safety. Engage with community members to implement enhancement projects and promote the Target Area to potential consumers, visitors, business owners, and residents. Address negative perceptions that the Target Area has a lack of nightlife, limited parking, and safety challenges.



Priority G – Create Opportunity:

Create opportunities for residents and business owners to occupy and thrive in the Target Area. Provide incentives and/or assistance to reduce the costs associated with leasing, tenant improvements, and construction in the Target Area. Create opportunities for small businesses and start up enterprises to open and operate in the Target Area.



Priority H - Heritage Tourism:

Promote tourism and visitor activities around El Paso's unique history and cultural heritage. Preserve existing buildings and historical structures through adaptive reuse activities to strengthen this priority.



Section 5.2: Community Engagement Summary

The AWP initiative followed a community engagement plan aimed to solicit feedback and guidance from community stakeholders. The resulting feedback shaped the Community Priorities (as discussed above) and the resulting revitalization strategies for the Target Area (See Chapter 6). The engagement plan includes two primary methods for community stakeholder feedback: (1) Stakeholder Group Interviews, and (2) Public Meetings. These methods allowed for various means of community participation. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most engagement platforms included a web-based virtual component where community members could participate remotely. These community conversations happened through the course of the AWP projects with public meetings occurring at major milestones.

Focus Groups

The project team identified a series of focus groups to engage through the planning process. These groups were identified to ensure the process included a diverse set of perspectives pertaining to need, opportunities, and priorities for the Target Area. The project team then identified individuals, agencies, and organizations to represent each group. The table below lists the targeted representatives for each focus group.

1. Streets life at the Downtown Fiesta de Las Luces event on El Paso Street in August 2021 - the DMD hosted an engagement table to solicit community ideas and sentiments pertaining to Downtown revitalization opportunities and challenges.

Group	Stakeholder Representative Targets
Group 1	City/County/Local Government Staff and Leadership
Group 2	Elected Officials & Boards
Group 3	Economic Development Partners
Group 4	Property Owners
Group 5	Developers
Group 6	Real Estate Professionals / Banking Groups / Brokers
Group 7	Community Groups, Local Foundations, and Residents
Group 8	Educational Institutions
Group 9	Environmental Groups
Group 10	State Government, Federal Entities, and Regional Government Organizations

Stakeholder Interviews

The project team hosted a series of interviews with each of the focus groups to have open and candid conversations relating to need, challenges and opportunities for the Target Area and the greater Downtown vicinity. The project team proactively reached out to individuals, agencies, and organizations and scheduled formal interviews to obtain their unique perspectives.

Feedback Themes - The four most prominent feedback themes are summarized below.

- **Untapped Potential:** There are perceptions that the Target Area has several empty buildings that could support new tenants and the multitude of vacant lots/surface parking lots could be developed with new housing, commercial, and employment enterprises.
- **Entertainment and Amenities:** The Target Area needs additional amenities to serve its existing residents and to attract new households and businesses. The Target Area needs new and diverse open space, art installations, and streetscape enhancements, and Downtown needs more entertainment venues. Notably, Aztec Calendar Park is the only sizable park in the Target Area and remains vastly underused.
- **Maintenance and Building Conditions:** Parts of the Target Area are showing signs of deferred maintenance in terms of building conditions and litter/debris in streets and alleys. Many of the buildings are perceived as having hazardous environmental conditions that would require abatement/remediation investments.
- **Quality of Life Needs:** All stakeholders agree that there is a need for projects that provide increased access to vital services including transit, education, and parks, which improve quality-of-life. There is a need to address missing services and industries such as childcare and grocery stores so that residents can complete more daily tasks within Downtown.

Public Meetings

The project team hosted two public meeting series to provide formal presentations and to obtain community feedback.

First Public Meeting Series - The first public meetings occurred at the project inception in early 2021 to communicate the project objectives, and to identify the existing conditions and socio-economic characteristics for the Target Area. To establish the project's direction, the facilitators posed open-ended questions to identify the participant's sentiments relating to immediate community needs, urban design and preservation goals, and preliminary ideas for revitalization.

Feedback Themes - The prominent feedback themes are summarized below.

- **Equity:** Several community members requested policy and operational changes that would make Downtown and the Target Area feel more welcoming to all population segments. Participants suggested that revitalization efforts be mindful of the needs and desires for all population groups and not focused on recruiting and catering to high-end households.
- **Access to Multimodal Transportation / Pedestrian Priority:** Most participants voiced concerns that Downtown's physical environment feels somewhat hostile to pedestrians and bicyclists due to the lack of infrastructure and/or existing street designs. Participants recommended that the revitalization strategies promote multimodal transportation so that the Target Area no longer remains so auto-centric.
- **Affordable Housing:** Several participants expressed the need for affordable housing so that Downtown re-emerges as a diverse urban neighborhood. There was concern for displacement of existing residents as new investment occurs and rents have the potential to rise. The revitalization strategies should promote and retain affordable housing that is clean, safe, and dignified for their residents.

- **Employment Opportunities:** Both Downtown and the Target Area need additional and diverse employment opportunities for all segments of the population including those working in the skilled trades. There should be opportunities to introduce non-traditional (yet compatible) industries to Downtown.
- **Public Investment:** There is a long-term perception that there has been inadequate public investment in the Target Area and governmental agencies need to commit to near- and long-term capital improvement projects that elevates the area and its residents.

Second Public Meeting Series – The second public meeting series occurred in the Summer of 2021 to obtain participants’ reactions to the preliminary revitalization ideas for the Target Area. The series included a virtual presentation of the past findings and revitalization strategies, and a question-and-answer portion to obtain initial feedback and to offer clarification on various plan components. The series included three pop-up events at key Downtown destinations including the Blue Flame residential building, District Coffee, and the Aloft Hotel courtyard. The pop-up events were casual settings where participants would learn about the AWP project and have conversations with the project team. The participant feedback was used to finalize the Revitalization Strategies listed in Chapter 6.

Community Event

In addition to the formal public meetings, the project team hosted an engagement table in August 2021 at the two-day Downtown Fiesta de Las Luces event on El Paso Street. The objective was to build additional awareness of the revitalization initiative for the Target Area and to understand what types of uses and amenities would entice additional visits to Downtown.

Feedback Themes - The prominent feedback themes obtained from the community event (i.e., the street fair) are summarized below.

- **Family-Friendly Events:** Most participants said they would visit Downtown more often if the community would host regular family-friendly events that would be especially conducive to households with children. The events should be well advertised, safely located, and not occurring in the late night-time hours.
- **Shopping Options:** All participants want to see additional and more diverse shopping options in Downtown and were sensitive to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. There were preferences for unique, locally owned businesses that offered services/projects that are not readily available in the outlying areas of the city. Chains were less desired.
- **Public Art:** People appreciate El Paso’s culture and Downtown’s art installations (whether publicly or privately initiated). Participants want to see more art displayed around Downtown.



Chapter 6

Central Downtown Community Revitalization Strategies



1

Section 6.1: Community Vision

The project team engaged community stakeholders to define their vision for the Central Downtown Target Area which will serve as a foundation for future revitalization efforts and planning policy. The community's vision is to ***“Revitalize and shape Central Downtown into an inclusive, diverse, and authentic mixed-use urban neighborhood that celebrates El Paso’s history, culture, and creativity”***.

This vision centers around Downtown’s collection of historical buildings, the community’s entrepreneurial spirit, the value of diversity, and the growing group of businesses, services, and amenities in El Paso’s central core. The vision aims to grow Central Downtown into a distinct urban neighborhood that includes diverse housing options, entertainment destinations, and employment opportunities. Amenities, beautification, and infrastructure investments will be key to elevate both its appearance and perceptions so that future residents and businesses will choose to locate in

this special area of the community. Importantly, the community values inclusivity and the neighborhood should be planned for a variety of socio-economic backgrounds and household types to result in a welcoming, diverse destination.

1. The recently installed gateway signage and streetscape enhancements along El Paso Street area examples of community investments that will support neighborhood vitality and business growth in the Target Area.

Section 6.2: Revitalization Targets

Based on the community's desires, Central Downtown's revitalization will focus on two main targets: (A) adaptively reuse existing buildings for new community-serving uses, and (B) promote urban infill projects on undeveloped properties with a priority on new, diverse housing. Near-term, the community can focus their efforts on adaptively reusing existing buildings for new tenants. As population and urban activity grows, there will be need (and market desire) for new urban infill projects to expand the area's capacity for housing and employment spaces. Public policy, capital investments, and marketing activities should support these targets.

Adaptive Reuse



This describes activities that preserve and enhance existing buildings for new and expanded land uses. Adaptive reuse of existing structures is usually less expensive than new construction and could be more cost effective for its future tenants. Additionally, adaptive reuse activities will preserve historic buildings that make El Paso unique and retain its cultural identity. However, there are sometimes challenges to retrofit existing buildings to meet modern tenant demands in terms of spatial layouts, telecommunication services, amenities, and access.

Urban Infill Projects



This revitalization target describes activities to construct new buildings or amenities on vacant/undeveloped properties within an urban context. While new construction is usually more expensive than repurposing existing buildings, urban infill projects can provide additional capacity for housing/employment, fill voids in the urban fabric, and meet the specific tenant needs for space and services. Urban Infill projects must overcome financing challenges since the prospective rents must cover the construction costs but priced so that they are affordable (and competitive) in the El Paso region. Since the Target Area is a built urban environment, many of the off-site infrastructure is in place and would not need to be constructed as part of the project (which is a positive component for project financing).

Example of a potential adaptive reuse scenario for the City-owned building on Stanton Street: 1. shows the existing building and 2. shows potential facade and street enhancements. (Sources: 1. Google Streetview & 2. Quantum Engineering)





Section 6.3: Revitalization Overview

To address the Community's Priorities (identified in Chapter 5) and to move the Target Area towards the Community's Vision (discussed in Section 6.1), the project team defined a series of revitalization plans and strategies that will entice private investment, add activity to vacant and underutilized properties, and achieve an exciting urban neighborhood that has a place for all population segments. The Target Area has amazing infill, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse potential but needs a path forward for positive change and to provide economic opportunity for all community members. Through the AWP process, the project team created an Urban Framework Plan and a series of Revitalization Strategies that can serve

as the blueprint for the community to proactively influence a reemergence of the Central Downtown Target Area. The following describes the overarching components that comprise the revitalization approach, the subsequent sections provide detail on individual projects and supportive actions.

Urban Framework Plan - The Urban Framework Plan (UFP) graphically illustrates the planned physical improvements and district designations for the Target Area. The UFP includes an associated Planning Initiatives list that describes the plan's components. Key components include multiple streetscape and mobility enhancements, public open spaces, and designated "Main Streets" in the Target Area.

1. View of the Central Downtown Target Area from atop the public parking garage - the City's underutilized buildings are envisioned to revitalize with new housing, employment, and commercial services.

Community Revitalization Strategies – This document recommends a series of Community Revitalization Strategies that aim to address various aspects of redevelopment, placemaking, and community stewardship. These are actions that the DMD, governmental partners, and community stakeholders can complete in the near and long-term horizons that would support property reuse, improve quality of life and desirability, and elevate vitality in the Target Area. The following Community Revitalization Strategies are designed to implement the UFP and support overall revitalization: (1) *Main Street and Secondary Corridors Designations* (2) *Adaptive Reuse and Property Activation*, (3) *Parks and Amenities*, (4) *Streets and Mobility*, (5) *Opportunity Sites and Urban Infill*, (6) *Land Use and Regulatory Framework*, and (7) *Marketing, Promotion, and Incentives*.

Progress Actions - The Target Area's transformation will be a continual process and based on demographic trends, community preferences, and market conditions. The revitalization approach should recognize and implement both near- and long-term activities. As an example, the community may choose an art installation to fill an empty storefront until such time a new, long-term tenant occupies the space. Under each Revitalization Strategy, there are both interim activities

and long-term investments that would implement each component.

- **Interim Activities:** this describes near-term actions and relatively small investments that would improve community/visitor perceptions, add immediate positive changes, and incrementally improve the Target Area. Interim activities may include low-cost building enhancements (e.g., painting, cleaning), pop-up events on vacant lots, art installations, landscaping, and/or seasonal shops. Community groups and/or property owners can sponsor interim activities themselves.
- **Long-Term Investments:** this describes capital improvement projects and urban infill development that provides permanent buildings and infrastructure. Due to their costs, planning requirements, and financing structure, these investments will normally occur further in the future. For private investments, the Target Area may need to experience smaller-scale improvements before there is a market demand for new large-scale projects. For public investments, the various agencies will need time to identify projects, complete design/construction documents, and obtain budget allocations.



Figure 6.2.1. Urban Framework Plan and Revitalization Strategies Interrelation Diagram

Section 6.4: Urban Framework Plan and Planning Initiatives

Central Downtown’s revitalization will entail a series of urban elements and community partnerships that will create an urban neighborhood environment that is captivating, welcoming (for all individuals); it will entice new businesses, residents and private investment to vacant buildings and undeveloped properties. Through the AWP process, both the project team and community participants identified and supported a series of neighborhood enhancements that will improve quality of life and address negative perceptions of the Target Area.

The Urban Framework Plan (UFP) and its associated Planning Initiatives List identify near- and long-term district enhancement projects and land use designations that are intended to work holistically to improve aesthetics, function, and market opportunity in the Target Area. These include access and streetscape enhancements, recreation/open space additions, catalyst site designation, and the land use focus in primary corridors (e.g., designated Main Streets). The UFP and its associated planning initiatives list are intended to identify neighborhood betterment initiatives that will enliven the Target Area, attract investment, and place brownfields and underutilized properties back into productive use.

Urban Framework Plan

The UFP visually describes the various district enhancement initiatives on a diagrammatic map so the DMD and stakeholder partners can proactively plan for their future in a clear and coordinated manner. Figure 6.4.1. depicts the UFP which includes projects/initiatives organized according to the following categories:

Main Street Designations – The UFP designates three Main Street corridors that will redevelop and revitalize with their own unique urban character and land use mix: El Paso Street Entertainment Corridor, Stanton Street Creative Urban Neighborhood Corridor, and the San Antonio Avenue Mixed-use Urban Corridor.

Street and Mobility Projects – The UFP identifies beautification and mobility enhancements on various street corridors in the Target Area all aimed to improve the urban environment, its functionality, and carry forward past planning commitments. The projects are aimed to transform the Target Area from an auto-centric zone to a multi-modal, transit-supportive urban neighborhood.

Park and Amenity Projects – The UFP depicts parks and community gathering spaces that will add amenities to the Target Area and will provide open space relief from the highly urban environment. These projects are planned on the eastern edge of the Target Area to achieve equitable distribution of parks.

Opportunity Site Designations – The UFP designates eight Opportunity Sites that should be prioritized for new urban infill projects with a focus on housing and employment. The designated catalyst sites are mostly vacant and abandoned properties large enough to support transformative infill projects and have the potential to fill gaps between active buildings.

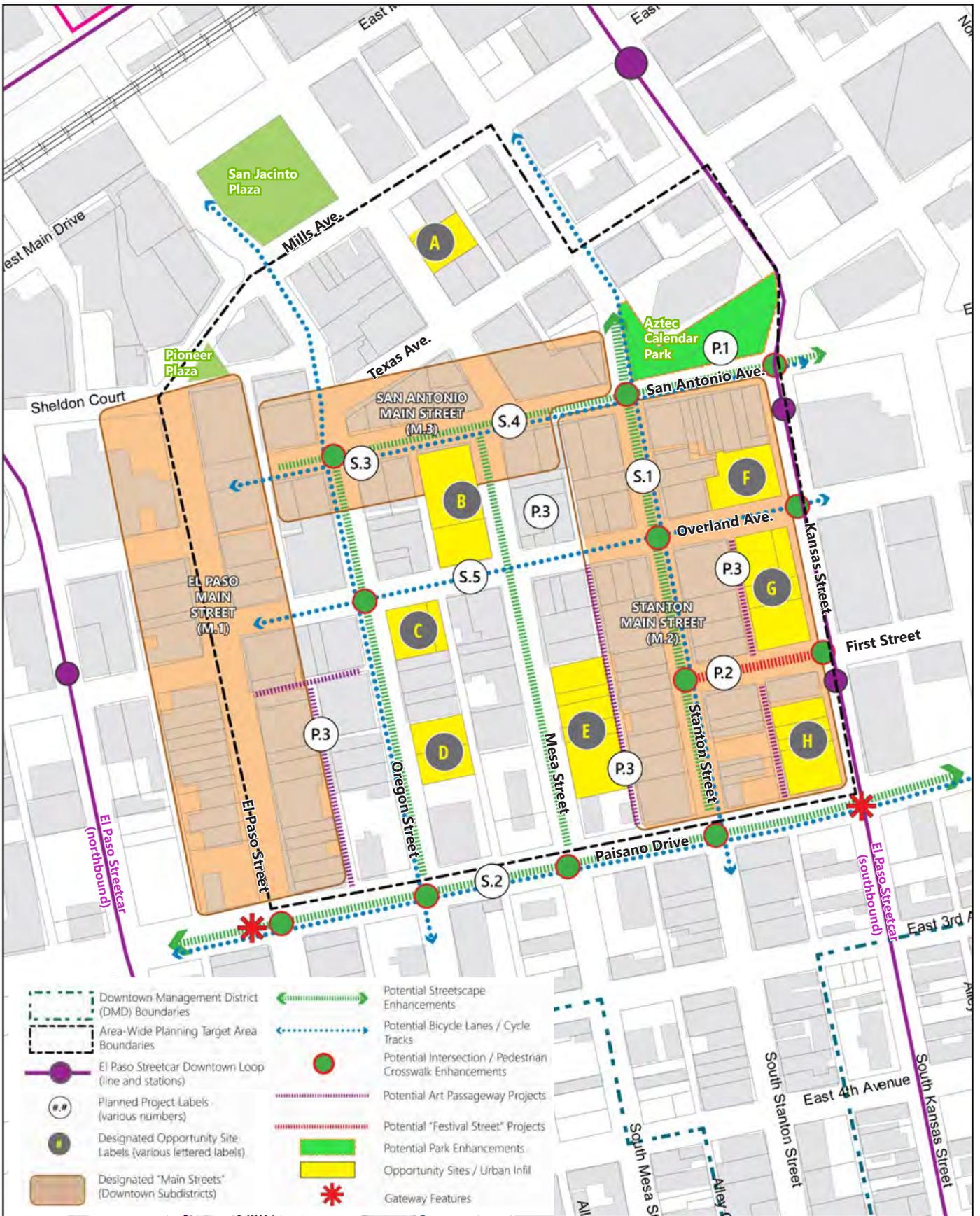


Figure 6.4.1. Central Downtown Urban Framework Plan

Planning Initiatives List

The Planning Initiatives List corresponds to the UFP and organizes the various community revitalization projects/initiatives by common groups. The subsequent sections of this chapter describe each component in more detail under the appropriate Revitalization Strategy.

UFP Plan Number	Planning Initiative	Description
Main Street Designations (M + #)		
M.1	El Paso Street Entertainment Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate the corridor as an entertainment main street with focus on restaurants, social venues, hospitality, and retail. • Create business and promotional strategies that build on other Downtown destinations (e.g., the ballpark, convention center, hotels, and the theaters). • Add minor streetscaping elements to strengthen the public realm (e.g., banners, planters, art elements).
M.2	Stanton Street Creative Urban Neighborhood Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate the corridor as a local main street with focus on specialty retail, artisan trades, local restaurants/cafes, life-style services (e.g., yoga studios, music venues), and employment. Develop a distinctive brand for the corridor. • Focus on adaptive reuse of existing buildings along Stanton Street over demolition. Promote/support housing and office uses on the upper floors of existing buildings. Recruit local businesses focusing on creative industries. • Plan for supportive mixed-use infill projects on immediately adjacent side streets with a priority on housing/employment. • Enhance the streetscape with additional trees (potentially in raised planter boxes), banners, string lights, and art installations.
M.3	San Antonio Avenue Mixed-use Urban Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate San Antonio Avenue, Texas Avenue, and Mills Avenue as a third local main street area with focus on specialty retail and restaurants that complement and interlink the El Paso and Stanton Main Streets. • Focus on adaptive reuse of existing buildings and promote/support housing and office uses on the upper floors of existing buildings. • Enhance the streetscape with additional trees and landscaping.
Parks and Amenities (P + #)		
P.1	Aztec Calendar Park Expansion/Enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacate the segments of Myrtle Avenue that line Aztec Calendar Park and expand the park to the right-of-way edges to the north. • Add trees, lawn areas, hardscape, and other park elements to the expanded space. Retain historical elements and markers. • Plan for pop-up/mobile commercial services (e.g., food trucks) and program events that bring vitality to the space (i.e., festivals).
P.2	First Street “Festival Street” Conversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convert the segments of First Street to a convertible “Festival Street” which can be closed periodically (or permanently) to motor vehicle traffic. • Install trees and landscaping to improve aesthetics and add shade for its users. Paint the asphalt areas with lively colors to define/enhance the space. • Program the space with regular events that bring vitality.

Table 6.4.a – Urban Framework Plan Planning Initiatives

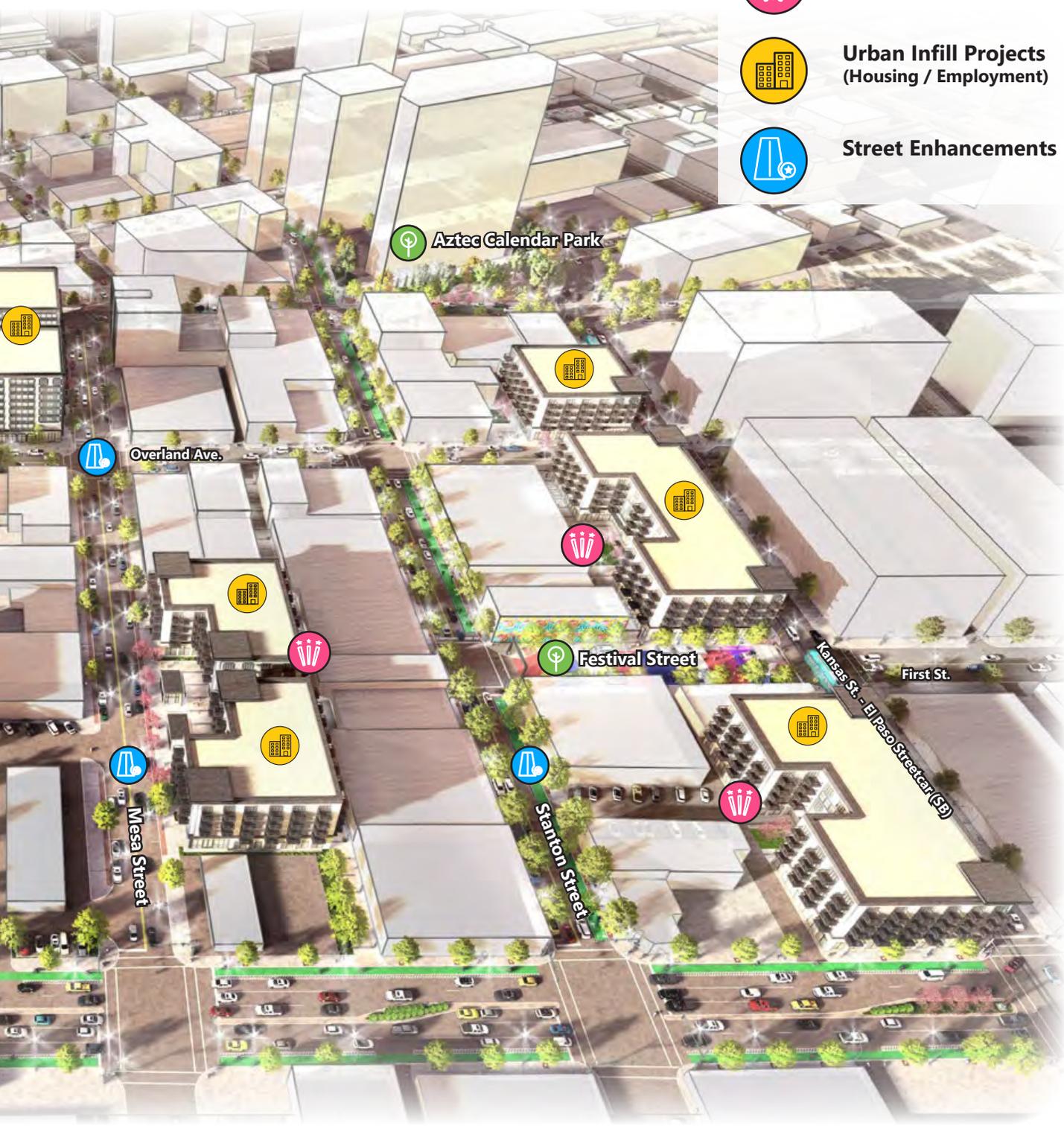
UFP Plan Number	Planning Initiative	Description
P.3	Art Passageway Conversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convert the alleys lining El Paso and Stanton Streets as pedestrian-oriented art corridors. Develop wayfinding and ambient lighting to promote the spaces for consumer activity and pedestrian use. Partner with community organizations and residents to improve the spaces with art installations (e.g., murals, sculptures, historical monuments). Partner with local businesses/property owners to maintain and utilize the alleyways for dining, retail operations, and small events.
Streets and Mobility (S + #)		
S.1	Stanton Street Enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the streetscape with additional trees/vegetation (potentially in raised planter boxes), banners, and art installations. Enhance major intersections with decorative paving, landscaping, and wayfinding signage. Remove one southbound travel lane to add a two-way cycle track (pursuant to the El Paso Bike Plan).
S.2	Paisano Avenue Enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the streetscape with trees and landscaping in the central median and tree grates along the right-of-way edges. Remove one travel lane in each direction and add protected bicycle lanes (pursuant to the El Paso Bike Plan). Add gateway features and/or monumentation at Kansas Street.
S.3	Oregon Street Enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the streetscape with additional trees (or planter boxes) and decorative lighting to match other Downtown streets. Remove one southbound travel lane to add (1) bicycle lanes in each direction OR (2) a bicycle track on one side (pursuant to the El Paso Bike Plan).
S.4	San Antonio Avenue Enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the streetscape with additional trees and landscaping. Add bicycle lanes in each direction. Enhance major intersections with decorative paving and landscaping.
S.5	Overland Avenue Bicycle Route	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add bicycle lanes (or alternatively a cycle track) to Overland Avenue between El Paso and Kansas Streets. Add trees and landscaping.
Catalyst Projects and Infill Development (various letters)		
A-H (Various by site)	Catalyst Infill Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize and actively seek out developers to construct housing and/or mixed-use infill projects on designated “Catalyst Infill Sites”. Through the City’s zoning regulations, require urban site design, active ground floor tenant spaces, and urban-scaled development forms (e.g., 0-ft setbacks, architectural detail, generous window coverage). Partner with community organizations (and property owners) to create/host interim uses and activities that activate the properties in the near-term (e.g., skate parks, dog parks, event space, art installations, etc.) Promote environmental site assessments (ESAs) to help inform property owners/ developers of potentially hazardous site conditions and guide cleanup and redevelopment strategies.

UFP Perspective Diagram

The perspective rendering diagram below provides an artist's depiction of a potential redevelopment scenario for the Central Downtown Target Area. This illustration (in a bird's eye view) shows the proposed community enhancement projects as identified on the UFP and potential urban infill projects on the designated Opportunity Sites. The white buildings represent existing structures in and around the Target Area.



Figure 6.4.2. Central Downtown UFP Perspective Diagram



Park Enhancements
Aztec Calendar Park



Art Passageways



Urban Infill Projects
(Housing / Employment)



Street Enhancements



Aztec Calendar Park



Festival Street



Overland Ave.



Stanton Street



Mesa Street



Kansas St. - El Paso Streetcar (SB)

First St.

Section 6.5: Strategy 1 - Main Streets and Secondary Corridors

The first Revitalization Strategy for the Central Downtown Target Area is to refer to El Paso Street, Stanton Street, and San Antonio Avenue as “Main Streets” that will be the focus of commercial services and civic activity. Today, the Target Area comprises several corridors that each possess their own land use mix and urban character. As the community plans for revitalization, there is an opportunity to formally recognize and designate these individual enclaves as specific Main Streets and Secondary Corridors and tailor capital projects, marketing efforts, and tenant recruitment activities to achieve distinctive destinations that work cohesively to create a diverse, mixed use urban neighborhood. Historically, American cities grew as a collection of “Main Streets” where commercial services and community destinations were centered on primary corridors and supportive land uses, such as housing and office operations, occurred on side streets and within upper floors of mixed-use buildings. Though Downtown has lost much of its historical retail vibrancy, its original urban design stayed intact.

As new businesses have relocated to Downtown El Paso, restaurant and retail venues are broadly distributed around the urban core and there lacks a large collection of commercial destinations in close proximity to one another (making it difficult to patronize one venue and then visit other businesses during the same trip). There is opportunity to create a critical mass of destinations clustered together along designated corridors to form vibrant community destinations.

This revitalization strategy can be applied to Central Downtown to revive its historical Main Streets. To build a critical mass of unique shops, restaurants, and commercial destinations, these services should be prioritized on three primary corridors within the Target Area: El Paso Street, Stanton Street, and San Antonio Avenue. Each would have their own unique collection of businesses, urban character, land use focus, and supportive infrastructure. The side streets will also reemerge with residential, employment, and smaller scale commercial services – activities on side streets would support and feed market viability along the designated “Main Street” corridors. These corridor designations should be the basis for other supportive strategies including streetscape enhancements, amenities, and branding/marketing.

Strategic Actions

- **Corridor Designations:** Designate and plan for El Paso Street, Stanton Street, and San Antonio Avenue as “Main Streets” and the other streets as “Secondary Corridors”
- **Land Use Focus:** Identify the intended land use mix and preferred business types for each Main Street and develop a business recruitment and retention strategy for each (e.g., restaurant/entertainment core, retail/shopping core, and urban employment core). Promote new housing, employment, and office operations on upper floors within each Main Street corridor and prioritize ground floor tenant spaces for retail, restaurant, and other active land uses to promote vitality at the street level.
- **Enhancements:** Identify streetscape and branding elements for each Main Street so each corridor revitalizes as distinct destinations within the Downtown El Paso context.
- **Urban Infill Projects:** Focus infill development projects on vacant/undeveloped properties to reestablish the urban pattern with a continuous line of buildings along downtown streets.

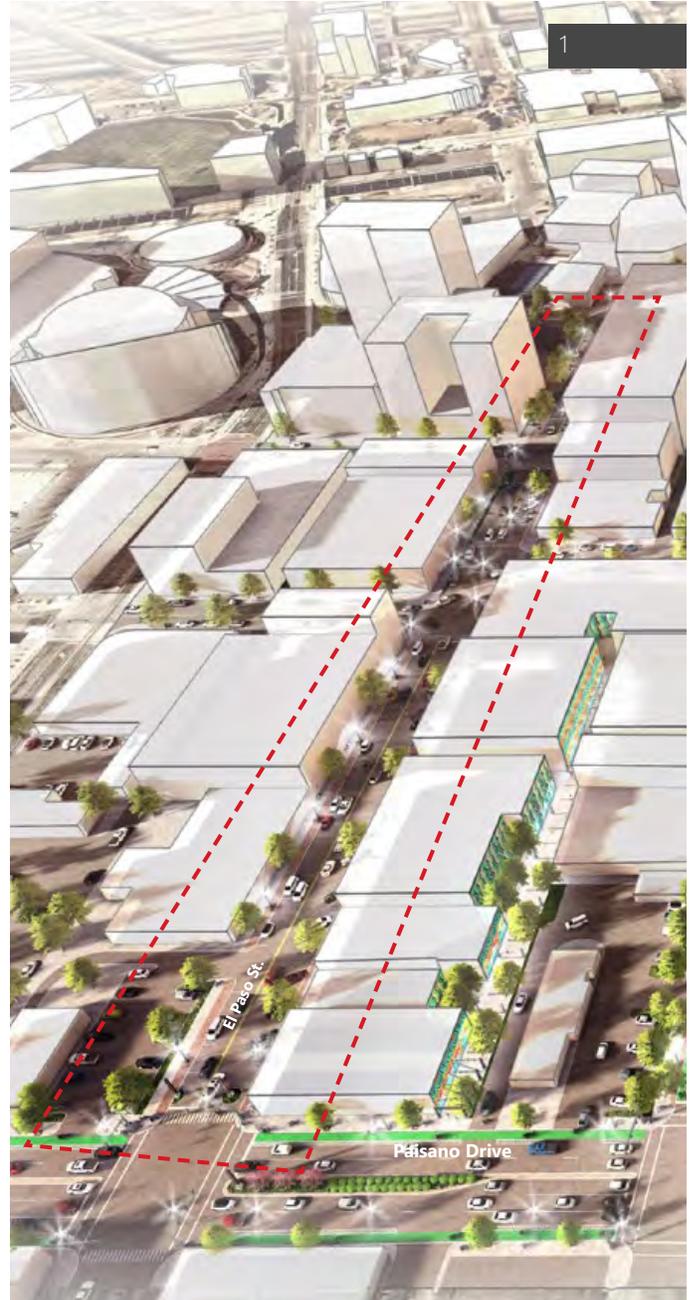


Figure 6.5.1. Main Streets Designation Map

El Paso Street Entertainment Corridor

El Paso Street is transitioning from a discount retail corridor into an entertainment and hospitality destination for local, state, and international visitors. The recently renovated Hotel Paso Del Norte and Plaza Hotel provide quality and unique accommodations, and the El Paso Museum of Art, Plaza Theater, Abraham Chavez Theatre, and El Paso Convention and Performing Art Center are major community and tourist destinations. The City (and its government partners) completed streetscape enhancements, and operates the El Paso Streetcar. New dining and drinking establishments have recently opened and the corridor supports several annual events. A new public parking structure was constructed as part of the Plaza Hotel project which increased parking options in Downtown. These investments represent substantial change and revitalization of this edge of the Target Area.

There is opportunity to designate this subarea as the El Paso Street Entertainment Corridor (or other locally preferred name), so that it continues to grow with a collection of quality and diverse commercial enterprises that cater to individuals visiting other nearby major destinations. When people attend sporting events, conventions, museums, and stay at hotels, they will seek out unique dining, drinking, and shopping experiences. They will seek businesses that are in walking proximity to their original destination and will want to explore other businesses along the route. El Paso Street has tremendous opportunity to serve as one of Downtown's main dining and shopping streets with a focus on regional and international visitors. The street level tenant spaces should continue to serve retail and restaurant operations whereas the upper floors have opportunity to become additional housing, boutique-style accommodations, and creative office spaces.



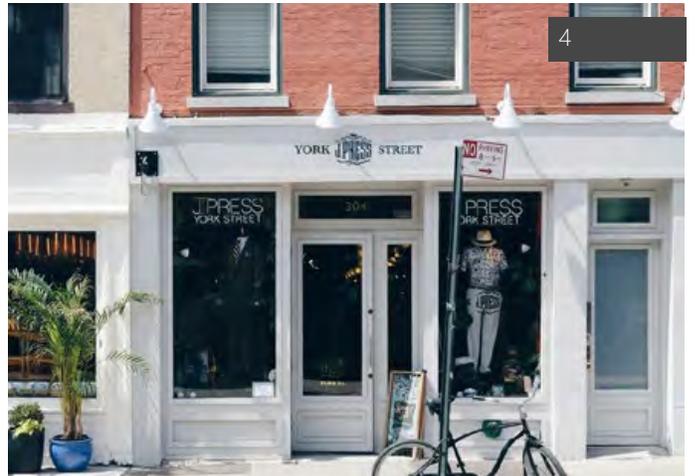
1. Artist rendering of the El Paso Street corridor. | 2. Example of a specialty dining venue (Source: [simon-karemann | unsplash.com](#)). | 3. Example of sidewalk dining in Tucson, AZ. | 4. Example of specialty retail (Source: [unsplash.com](#)). | 4. Active streetlife with (Source: [nataniel-susantoputra | unsplash.com](#)).



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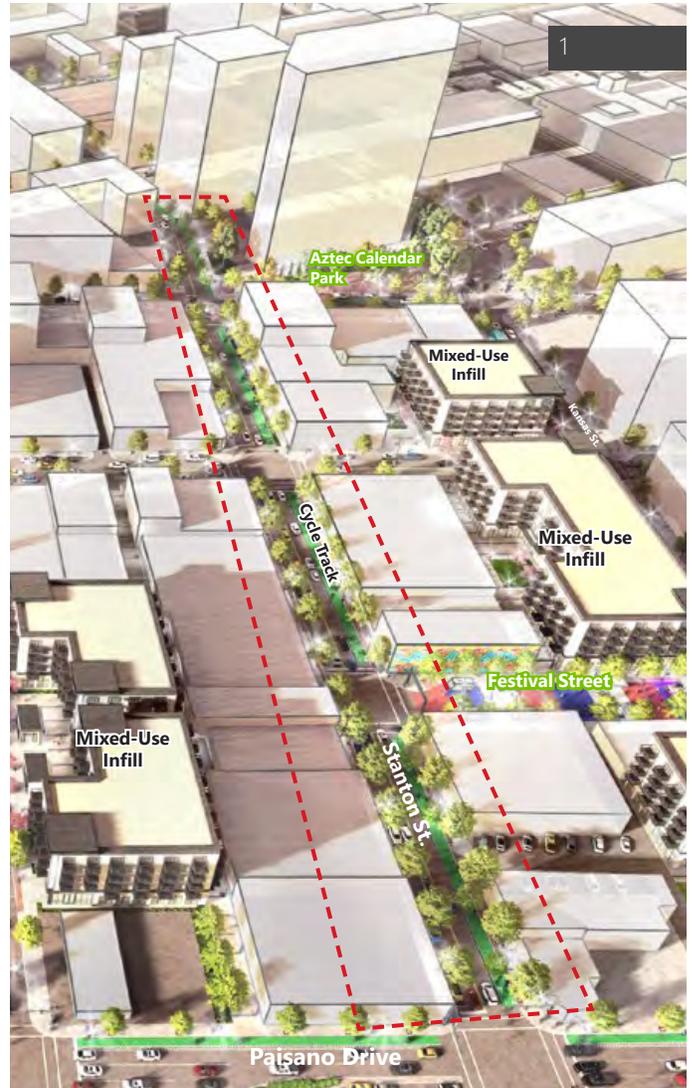
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Stanton Street Creative Urban Neighborhood Corridor

On the other end of the Target Area, the Stanton Street corridor has a small collection of drinking/eating establishments (i.e., The Tap Bar and Mona Bar) that serve as a late afternoon/evening entertainment node. The newly established Blue Flame housing project, the Aloft Hotel, and new restaurants create a housing/accommodations node at Texas Avenue. Stanton Street has a few long-time discount retail establishments and is seeing recent business activity focused on art, health, and consulting services. The Gateway Hotel provides housing for low-income individuals and there are independently owned apartment units in the upper floors of buildings scattered throughout the vicinity. At the same time, Stanton Street comprises a multitude of vacancies. Stanton Street has a large collection of historic buildings that possess iconic 1950s-era midcentury design elements.

Given the current business make up, existing tenants, and location within the broader downtown context, there is opportunity to plan Stanton Street as a creative urban neighborhood corridor comprising specialty retail, unique restaurants/drinking establishments, fresh food, employment services, and urban-scaled housing. The Stanton Corridor has the foundation to become an urban neighborhood “where the locals go” while being welcoming to outside visitors – like Dallas’ Deep Ellum neighborhood, Portland’s NW 21st Avenue corridor, and Tucson’s N 6th Avenue district (all are urban neighborhoods on the edge of downtown cores and served by fixed rail transit). The retail focus could be on the arts, music, specialty and vintage apparel, food/groceries, and home furnishings/decor. The employment focus could be centered on consulting, health services, and the artisan trades where employees seek creative working environments nestled amongst urban amenities.

Stanton would be ideal as a creative urban living environment for working class households and seniors given its proximity to nearby employment, civic destinations, and transit services. As supported by the market study findings, there is opportunity for Downtown El Paso (and specifically Stanton Street) to absorb a portion of the region’s population growth. These residents will be vital to creating a



population mass that would patronize and sustain future businesses in the Corridor. To achieve a resident population, the community should plan for new transit-oriented residential infill projects to the vacant and undeveloped properties on the side streets – namely Kansas and Mesa Streets. Additionally, there is opportunity to support adaptive reuse projects that convert the upper floors of existing buildings to new housing units. Future housing should include a variety of unit sizes and price points to cater to a wide range of households including low and middle incomes, individuals with children, and different physical abilities. New and existing residents demand basic commercial services such as fresh food markets, childcare, health services, athletic/exercise gyms, and an assortment of open space areas for passive recreation and pet exercising.



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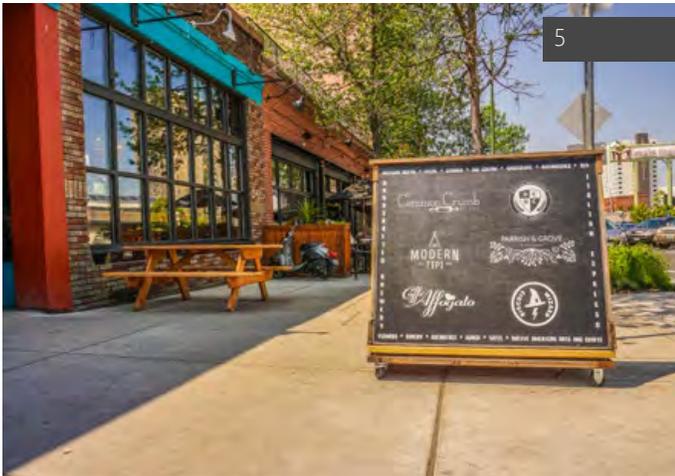


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1. Artist rendering of the Stanton Street Corridor. | 2. Example of local home decor shop (Source: artem-gavrysh | unsplash.com). | 3. Local photography studio in Salt Lake City | 4. Example of a cycle track in Montreal. | 5. Example of artisan stores in Spokane, WA. | 6. Example of a record/music shop (Source: sean-benesh | unsplash.com). | 7. Example of a mixed-use urban neighborhood in Flagstaff, AZ.



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San Antonio Avenue Mixed-use Urban Corridor

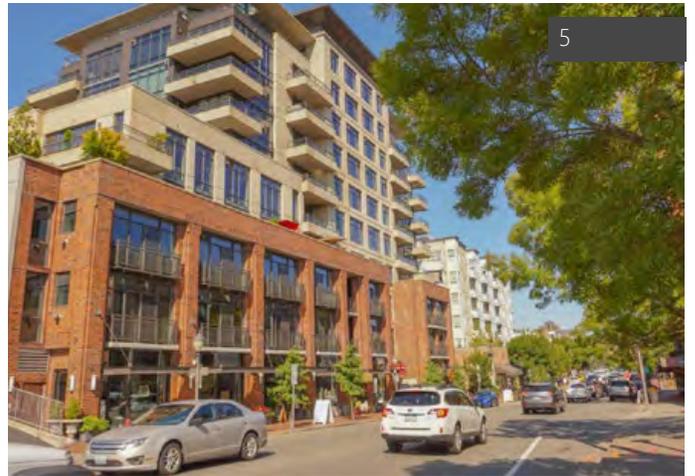
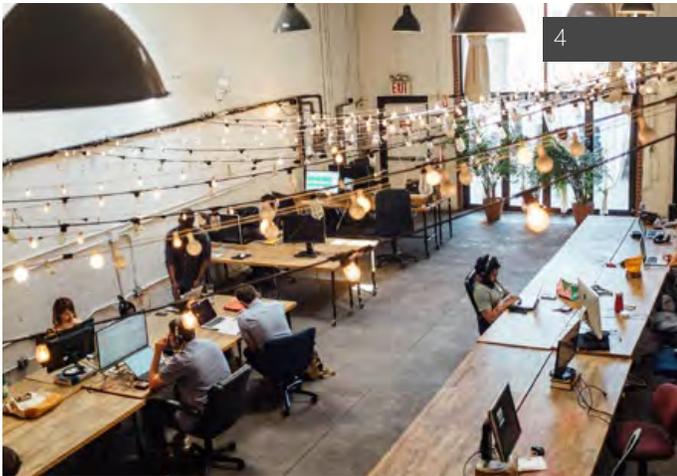
The City blocks along San Antonio Avenue and extending to Mills Avenue are located in the historic central core to Downtown El Paso and provide the link between El Paso and Stanton Streets. Historically, the vicinity was the shopping core of Downtown and its ornate buildings once supported department stores, housing, and office. Over the years, vacancies have proliferated this enclave of Downtown. Luckily this area has some of the best collection of heritage buildings and enhanced street sections. Additionally, this area includes (or is adjacent to) several primary destinations including the Plaza Hotel, San Jacinto Plaza, and Aztec Calendar Park. San Antonio Avenue connects El Paso Street, Stanton Street, and the El Paso County government office campus.

There is opportunity to designate and plan for San Antonio Avenue to revitalize into a traditional mixed-use corridor that links El Paso and Stanton Streets and serves as the transition between the highly-urban Downtown core and the neighborhoods/districts to the south. The land use focus could be professional office, accommodations, and housing. To attract pedestrian traffic between El Paso and Stanton Street, the corridor should include ground level retail and restaurant uses to create vibrancy. Notably, recruiting a major retailer to this corridor would serve as an important anchor that would draw regional visitors and provide sought after essentials for downtown residents. The undeveloped infill site, mid-way along the corridor, would be ideal for new urban housing with ground level retail.





1. Artist rendering of the San Antonio Avenue Mixed-use Urban Corridor. | 2. Example of a fresh food market (Source: unsplash.com). | 3. Branding examples. | 4. Example of a shared workspace as adaptive reuse (Source: unsplash.com). | 5. Example of a mixed-use infill with ground level retail in Bellevue, WA. | 6. An entertainment/shopping district in Downtown Tucson (Source: unsplash.com).



Secondary Corridors

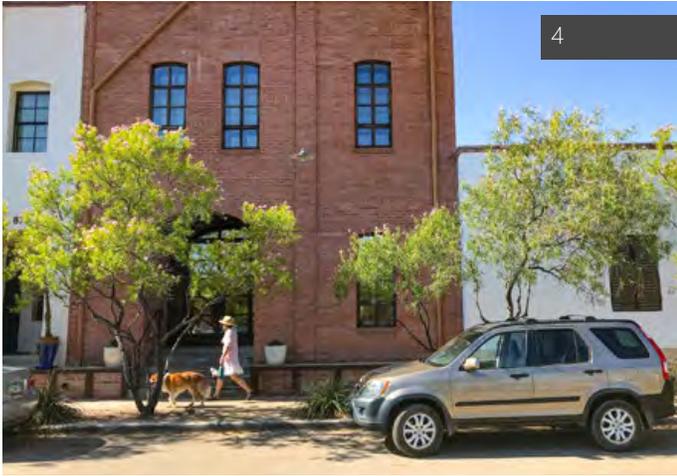
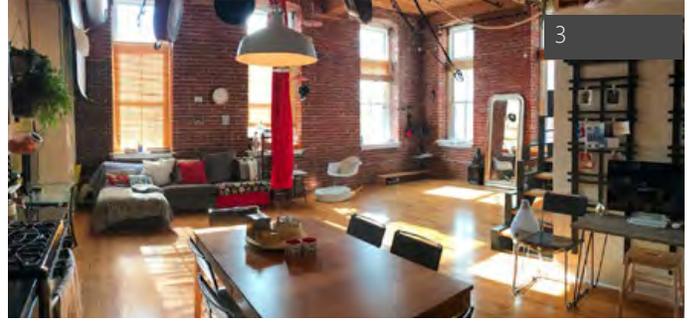
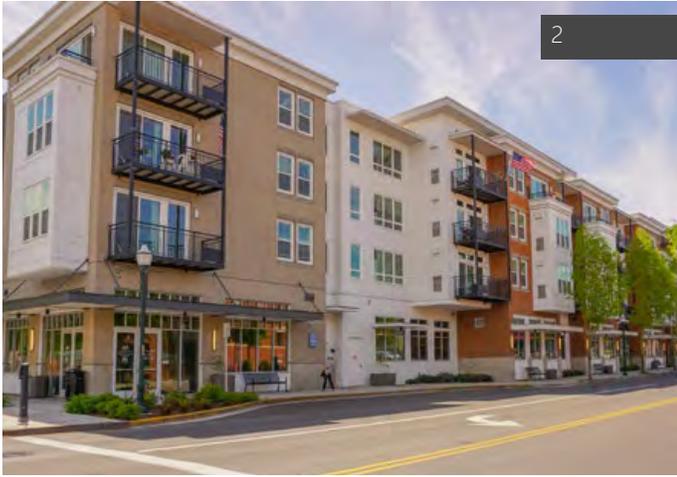
The other streets within the Target Area also support existing retail services and housing that contribute to Downtown's character. Today, these secondary corridors exhibit more building vacancies than the primary corridors and have several undeveloped parcels/surface parking lots scattered around the Target Area. These vacant sites create gaps in the streetscape yet possess infill potential for new housing and employment space.

While the revitalization strategies aim to create distinctive Main Streets, the secondary corridors should contain supportive land uses. While the

Main Streets will be "where all the action is" the side streets should include housing, neighborhood-scaled commercial, and employment spaces. Light manufacturing, artist studios, and the artisan trades are other complementary land uses – including relatively low impact activities like furniture making, art creation, and specialty food products. While the Main Streets are planned for destination retail/restaurant venues,

1. Artist rendering of the Secondary Corridors. | 2. Example of mid-rise mixed-use infill project. | 3. Example of upper floor conversion to loft apartments (Source: unsplash.com). | 4. Example of a urban residential neighborhood in Tucson. | 5. Example of an innovation center and creative workspace. | 6. Urban co-op grocery store in Spokane, WA. | 7. Urban neighborhood bistro (Source: shawn-ang | unsplash.com).





Section 6.6: Strategy 2 - Adaptive Reuse and Property Activation

The second Revitalization Strategy aims to prioritize adaptive reuse activities to support new commercial services, housing, and employment within the Target Area's large collection of existing and underutilized buildings. Downtown El Paso and the Target Area possess a large collection of historic buildings, many of which have retained their original architectural elements. El Paso's original buildings reinforce its sense of place, its unique cultural heritage, and set the city apart from other US metropolitan regions. Many of the existing buildings are showing signs of disrepair and there are a multitude of vacancies in the street level storefronts and in the upper floors. Adaptive reuse of Central Downtown's existing buildings for new community-serving uses is a crucial revitalization strategy for the Target Area and Downtown as a whole.

Adaptive reuse will achieve three main community priorities; (1) protect and retain El Paso's history and identity, (2) provide cost-effective tenant spaces, and (3) return vitality to Downtown. The DMD, the City, and community stakeholders should support adaptive reuse activities to position existing buildings to receive new, long-term tenants (both commercial and residential in nature). In the near-term, the community should work with property owners to improve exterior appearances, downplay their vacancy status to visitors, add interest to storefront windows, and create interim uses to occupy otherwise empty buildings.

Strategic Actions

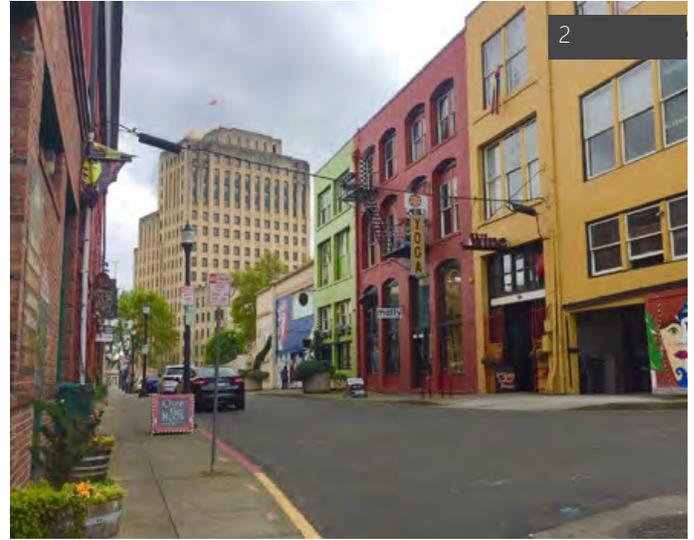
- **Building Inventory:** Maintain a property and storefront inventory to identify vacancies, prioritize aid and incentives to property owners, and to promote lease/purchase opportunities to prospective tenants/investors.
- **Tenant Recruitment:** Support and recruit new tenants and uses to fill otherwise empty storefronts; prioritize the designated "Main Streets" to achieve a critical mass of destinations and commercial services. Promote adaptive reuse activities that convert upper floors to housing and creative workspaces. Promote governmental and non-profit leasing of existing buildings (over new construction).
- **Toolkit:** Create a Tenant Improvement Toolkit that would build upon and promote the myriad of financial incentives and technical assistance offered by the City, DMD and other governmental partners.
- **Interim Uses:** Employ interim uses to activate otherwise empty storefronts.

Property and Storefront Inventory

Many times, prospective tenants want to locate to Downtown but available space and leasing contacts are unavailable. The DMD or other economic development entity, should maintain a web-based inventory (or database) of available storefronts and properties in the Target Area in terms of location, size, owner/broker contact, and asking rents. The entity should provide access to the property inventory to area brokers/realtors, Chambers of Commerce, and other economic development agencies to promote spaces to prospective tenants. This program should include a process by which property owners, and real estate professionals can provide real time updates on property status and availability so that the inventory stays current and useful.



Example of an adaptive reuse of a former factory to new retail, residential, and open space.



1. Example of a new bistro to occupy an existing tenant space (Source: toa-heftiba | unsplash.com). | 2. A mix of retail, eateries, and work spaces occupying historic buildings in Tacoma, WA.

Tenant Recruitment and Adaptive Reuse Focus

The Target Area has a large collection of underutilized building spaces that could be adaptively reused for new uses. Many of these spaces require rehabilitation, modernization, and aesthetic improvements before they can support and retain additional tenants.

The Target Area needs a variety of tenant spaces tailored to the end user and the type of land uses that are envisioned for Downtown. In typical real estate practices, commercial and office users will perform tenant improvements to transition interior spaces to meet their operational needs. For housing units, residents expect a finished living space. In both scenarios, adaptive reuse activities may require upgrades to electrical, plumbing, fire protection, and security. To attract new tenants, spaces need to have a functional layout. Adaptive reuse strategies must involve those entities that would perform building improvements and the final tenants/uses that will occupy the spaces. The following lists potential tenants and land uses that could be accommodated through adaptive reuse projects.

Ground Floor Active Uses – The Target Area strives for a vibrant street life, and it is vital that the majority of ground floor tenant spaces possess active land uses. Restaurants, cafés, retail, salons, artist studios,

health and wellness, and professional services are ideal tenants for ground floor tenant spaces.

Office and Working Spaces – The Target Area has opportunities for creative office and workspace environments that embrace the urban character, historical building materials, and collaboration with similar businesses. Additionally, there is a need for shared workspace for small and emerging companies that need a formal office but are not large enough to justify long-term leases or large areas.

Residential Units – Downtown and the El Paso region need additional and diverse housing options for a variety of household types. There is opportunity to convert upper floors of existing buildings into apartment units. Units with two and three-bedrooms are scarce in Downtown and would be essential for attracting households with children, roommate situations, and individuals that work from home.

Government and Non-Profit Leasing – As government agencies and non-profit organizations grow and/or locate to Downtown, there is a tremendous opportunity for these entities to lease existing building spaces within the Target Area in lieu of constructing new buildings. This would help create vibrancy, focus reinvestment on existing structures, and accommodate their fluctuating office needs (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-2021 reduced office occupancy rates).

Tenant Improvement Toolkit

Building and interior improvement projects will require substantial investments either by the property owner or the commercial/office tenant. The DMD, the City of El Paso, service providers, and other economic development agencies provide a series of loans and incentives to support building improvement projects (e.g., energy efficiency improvements, façade enhancements, etc.). There is opportunity to create a Tenant Improvement Toolkit that lists the incentive programs, agency contacts, the eligibility criteria, and outlines the general permitting requirements/processes. The Toolkit should be promoted to property owners, real estate professionals, and prospective tenants to inform these individuals of the various project assistance programs and permitting pathway.

Interim Uses/Activities

The Target Area has a multitude of empty storefronts that project a negative perception to area residents, tenants, and visitors. It will take some time to fill these spaces with permanent occupants. In the near-term, there is immense opportunity to downplay their vacancy status and add activity to these otherwise empty spaces with interim uses and/or activities. The following lists potential interim activities that would be appropriate for empty storefronts in the Target Area.

Window Displays/Arts Network – There is opportunity to downplay the visual effect and negative perceptions of vacant storefronts by installing window displays and/or temporary art installations that could remain in place until permanent tenants occupy the spaces. To start, the DMD should utilize the property/storefront inventory to identify eligible properties and

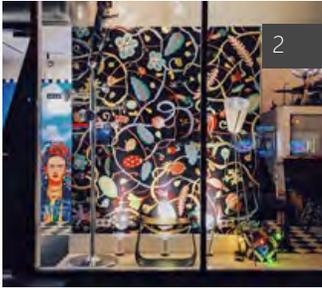
obtain property owner buy-in/approval for interim activities. Next, the DMD should identify a management and marketing entity for a window display program and define content for specific locations. Content may include art installations, historical photographs, and advertising for other Downtown destinations. Ideal partners may include the University, El Paso Arts Association, El Paso Art Committee, Creative Kids, and community groups to manage a formal interim window display within the Target Area.

Pop-up Shops and Entertainment Venues –

There is also opportunity to utilize otherwise empty storefronts for seasonal retail, pop-up shops, and event/entertainment venues to bring near-term activity to vacant properties. Many times, entrepreneurs and event promoters need temporary spaces to conduct their business but want to avoid long lease agreements (which are normally required to occupy a space). Using the property/storefront inventory as a guide, the DMD, economic development partners, and real estate professionals should match prospective tenants with area property owners.

Indoor Summer Parks – Another interim activity that would bring positive change would be for the City (or community group) to transform a storefront into an indoor park and play area that would enliven the Target Area with public activities and provide an escape from the summer heat. This program could entail indoor play structures, educational/art programs, and/or leisure clubs. This would be a relatively low-cost program to bring near-term recreational activities to this underserved area of Downtown. Furthermore, there is opportunity for the indoor park use to benefit area businesses, as users and families will seek out food and dining options before and after park use.





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1. An interactive art installation in Salt Lake City. | 2 & 3. Examples of temporary window displays to fill vacant facades (Source: andrew-solok | unsplash.com). | 4. Example of a seasonal pop-up shop (Source: unsplash.com). | 5. Example of an indoor children's play area (Source: gautam-arora | unsplash.com). | 6. Example of pop-up indoor marketplace (Source: edward-howell | unsplash.com).



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Section 6.7: Strategy 3 – Parks and Amenities

The third Revitalization Strategy involves adding new public gathering spaces and enhancing Aztec Calendar Park to become larger and much more functional for recreational purposes. A quality network of parks, amenities, and gathering spaces is a vital revitalization strategy as visitors, workers, and residents need relief from the highly urban environment. The northwest edge of the Target Area is rich in amenities, cultural destinations, and public park space, whereas other Central Downtown quadrants lack open space amenities. As the community plans for new businesses and residents, there is a need to enhance existing parks and create additional gathering spaces. As workers and residents choose to relocate from suburban settings to Downtown, they may trade private yards for the variety of urban cultural experiences. To mitigate this loss of private open space, parks and public spaces should be introduced to the Target Area concurrent with new construction and population growth. At the same time, it is important to recognize that long-time downtown residents and workers also deserve additional or enhanced park spaces to improve

quality of life, public health, and interaction with other Downtown amenities.

Strategic Actions

- **Aztec Calendar Park Enhancements:** Expand Aztec Calendar Park to occupy the Myrtle Street right-of-way and enhance the Park with additional trees/plantings, gathering areas, lawns, and amenities while protecting the historical markers/features.
- **Festival Street Creation:** Convert the First Street segment between Stanton and Kansas Streets to a “Festival Street” that could be closed periodically to vehicular traffic to host community events.
- **Art Passageways:** Transform key alleyways into pedestrian-oriented Art Passageways that include art installations, decorative lighting, and outdoor commercial activities.
- **Parklets:** Construct parklets within the Secondary Corridors to provide small-scale, and relatively low-cost public gathering spaces.

Aztec Calendar Park Enhancements

Aztec Calendar Park is a signature open space feature on the eastern boundaries, but due to its size and triangular configuration, it is not used to its full potential. The Park is at the crossroads of Stanton Street and San Antonio Avenue and would be an important amenity for visitors and residents. There is opportunity to vacate the Myrtle Street right-of-way that runs along the north to extend the park boundaries and double its size. The Park design could be re-imagined and include additional hardscape, landscaping, and lawn areas – all important features to serve current and future residents. Ambient lighting would increase surveillance/safety and evoke an emotional connection to the space.

The DMD, the City, and community partners could host regular events to bring vitality to the area (e.g., festivals, outdoor markets, concerts, live performances, and other vendor activities). The DMD should facilitate

a master planning/visioning process, and partner with the City to obtain funding and implement the improvements. Figure 6.7.1 depicts a potential enhancement plan for the Park.

Interim Option – In the near-term, there is opportunity to expand the park’s recreational function by closing Myrtle Street to vehicular traffic and installing large planter boxes at each end of the right-of-way (utilizing materials from the City’s tree farm). The DMD can work with community groups and/or the university to create interim art installations and sponsor community events. Additionally, the DMD could work with the City to allow and recruit mobile vendors to utilize the closed portion of the right-of-way for interim retail/food uses. This would add activity to the space, entice area workers into the Target Area during lunch hours, and provide economic opportunity for locally-owned vendors.



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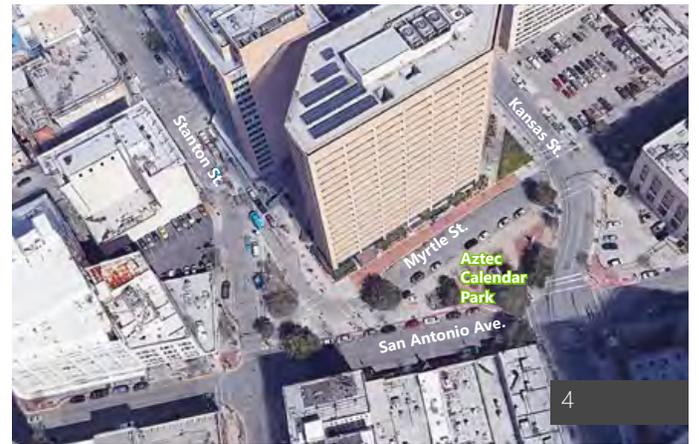
1 & 2. Examples of an urban plazas with hardscape, shade elements and lawn areas. | 3. Example of vendors in urban park space. | 4. Existing site conditions in and around Aztec Calendar Park (Source: Google Earth Pro).



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Figure 6.7.1. Aztec Calendar Park Conceptual Design Option

First Street “Festival Street”

There is opportunity to convert the First Street segment between Stanton and Kansas Streets into a convertible “Festival Street” that could be closed (permanently or periodically) to motor vehicle traffic. The converted street could function as a community event space and could support periodic recreational elements (e.g., skate park or dog park). This project would add a public gathering space midblock along the Stanton Street corridor where none exist today. Area businesses would benefit from the additional foot traffic as visitors would seek out dining options and want to explore the area before/after events. The project’s design elements would include gateway signage, creative installations from local artists, street trees, shade elements, string lights and ambient lighting, and painted asphalt. Large planters could be placed at each end of the right-of-way to physically close the space to vehicular traffic during events and protect attendees.

The DMD, and community partners could host festivals, outdoor markets, live performances, and other vendor activities to promote community gathering in the Stanton Street corridor. The DMD should facilitate a master planning/visioning process, and partner with the City to obtain funding and implement the improvements. Figure 6.7.2 depicts a potential concept plan for the Festival Street.

Interim Option – In the near-term and with little capital, there is opportunity to add minor enhancements to the corridor so it could be converted for community use in the immediate future. The DMD should facilitate a process to close First Street to vehicular traffic for at least one year and install large planter boxes along the right-of-way and at each end to define the community use space. The DMD should work with the City and community groups to program events and to install a temporary recreational feature (e.g., skate park) to grow public excitement and use for the space.



Figure 6.7.2. Festival Street Conceptual Design Option



1. Existing First Street. | 2. Example of ambient lighting on a convertible pedestrian street. | 3 & 4. Various examples of "Festival Streets" across North America. (Montreal and Tacoma, WA).

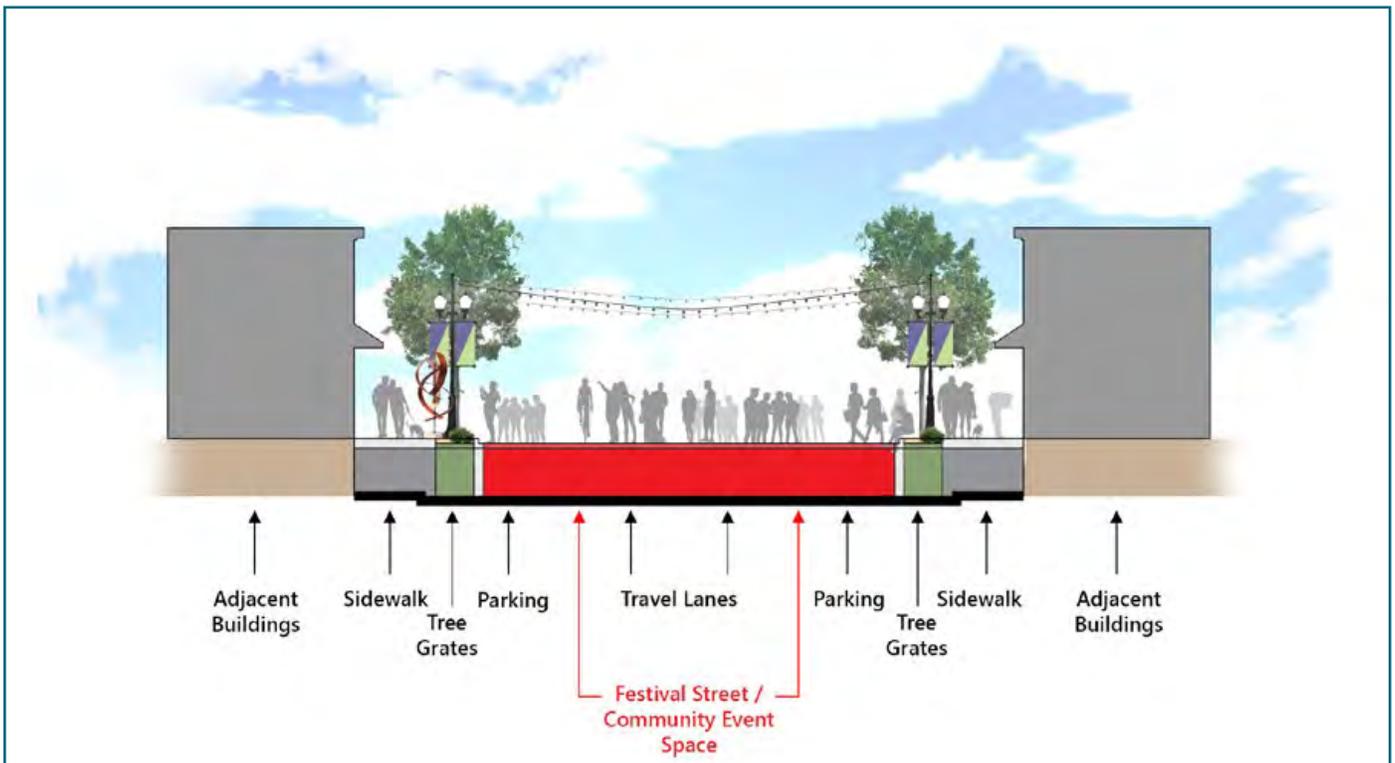


Figure 6.7.3. Festival Street Typical Design (Cross Section)

Art Passageways

There is opportunity to transform three public alley corridors into intimate pedestrian-oriented Art Passageways with community art, dining spaces, and vendor spaces. The alleys can be converted from merely service corridors into secondary public spaces. Notably, the T-shaped alley corridor east of El Paso Street, and south of Overland Avenue could become a pedestrian corridor to provide short cuts through the large block. The alley corridors east of Stanton Street could become an extension of the planned Festival Street, creating a space for community events and vendor activities. The alley corridor between Mesa and Stanton Streets could connect to new infill projects with rear-courtyards, creating an enhanced pedestrian access way.

To create and formally establish the Art Passageways, the design elements could include entry and wayfinding signage, string lights over the corridor, textured or painted paving, murals, and art attached

to exterior walls. Customer entrances could be added to adjacent buildings and patio areas could be installed to rear lots to promote secondary commercial activity along the alleyways and provide for additional surveillance.

The DMD, City, and service providers, will need to define a strategy to address delivery and waste collection services for the properties that line the planned Art Passageways. Additionally, the project will need signage and physical barriers at each end of the corridors to protect pedestrians.

Interim Option – In the near-term, the DMD should work with business/property owners and community groups to paint murals on building exteriors that line the alleys with priority on walls that are readily visible from adjacent streets. Murals will improve the physical appearance of the Target Area, highlight the community's artistic culture, and build community excitement for alleyway conversion.



Figure 6.7.4. Art Passageways Location Map



1

1. Rear dining off an alleyway (Source: jeremy-harris | unsplash.com) | 2. Shops and vendors in an alleyway between buildings (Source: stanislav-rabunski | unsplash.com). 3. Dining and shopping corridor in converted alley (Source: unsplash.com). | 4. Examples of dining corridor and pedestrian cut-through via alleys in Flagstaff, AZ.



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Stanton Street Vicinity Park Enhancements Concept Diagram

The perspective rendering diagram below is an artist illustration that shows potential park and streetscape enhancements planned along the Stanton Street corridor. The Diagram also depicts potential infill development that is planned along the back side of the blocks and aligning Kansas Street with El Paso Streetcar transit service. The subsequent sections in this Chapter provide more detail on the recommended streetscape/mobility projects and urban infill sites (i.e., designated “Opportunity Sites”).

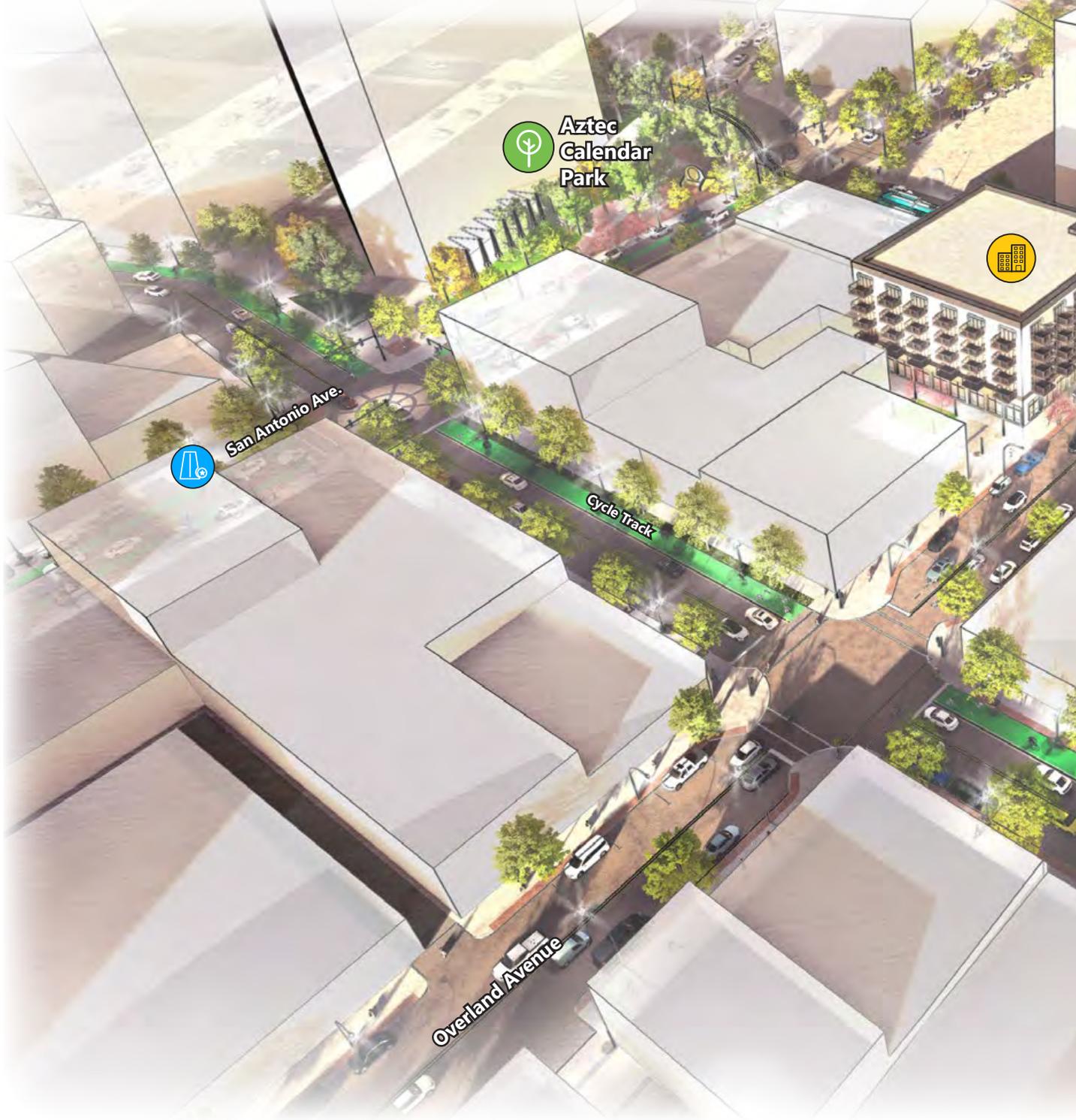


Figure 6.7.5. Stanton Street Vicinity Park Enhancements Concept Diagram



Park Enhancements
Aztec Calendar Park



Art Passageways



Urban Infill Projects
(Housing / Employment)



Street Enhancements



Alley / Art Passageway



Festival Street



Stanton Street

First St



1. Example of a permanent all-ages skate park in Henderson, NV. | 2. Example of an temporary skate park (Source: Quantum Engineering). | 3. Example of an interim dog park (Source: Quantum Engineering). | 4. Example of a semi-permanent dining parklet in Wenatchee, WA.

Dog Park and Skate Park

Pursuant to engagement feedback, the community would like to introduce a permanent location of a Dog Park and Skate Park in or around the Target Area. There is opportunity to explore the feasibility to add these elements to the planned “Festival Street” or Aztec Calendar Park as either temporary or permanent elements, so these amenities are close to the designated Stanton Street “Main Street” and future residents. Alternatively, these elements could be introduced as interim uses on vacant parcels until such time they are redeveloped with permanent infill projects – this would require property-owner approval and a local community group to sponsor the installation and maintenance.

Mid-Block Parklets

There is opportunity to introduce small public gathering spaces in the form of parklets along street corridors where no other parks exist. Parklets are small sidewalk extensions that provide for outdoor gathering spaces – these facilities are normally semi-temporary in nature and occupy former street parking stalls. While the City has created a program for adjacent businesses to construct these elements as formal outdoor spaces, there is opportunity for the DMD, and other public entities to install these features as a means to introduce open space amenities to select corridors. The DMD should facilitate the construction of these features along the Secondary Corridors to provide community gathering spaces for visitors and residents.

Section 6.8: Strategy 4 – Streets and Mobility

The fourth Revitalization Strategy includes a variety of street and mobility enhancements to make the Target Area much more pleasing and functional for pedestrians, bicyclist, and transit users. While most of the Target Area streets have received streetscape enhancements in the past, several corridors are showing signs of age and missing landscaping (i.e. some tree grates are empty). Furthermore, the El Paso Bike Plan identifies future bicycle facilities along select streets in the Target Areas that would connect to the larger regional system. The Bike Plan calls for bicycle lanes on Mills Avenue, San Antonio Avenue, Oregon Street, Stanton Street, and Paisano Drive although most of these projects have yet to be constructed. The DMD/City have adapted a wayfinding plan for the Downtown Core. Much of the project has been implemented but the program could be applied to the Target Area to direct visitors to major destinations and transit services.

There is opportunity to improve the Target Area's appearance and functionality through a myriad of street and mobility enhancements that would result in a highly pedestrian environment, improved aesthetics, and promote bicycle and transit use. The community should increase the vegetative coverage in the Target Area by replacing dead/dying trees and adding new landscaping to the Oregon Street, Mesa Street, Overland Avenue, and First Street corridors; this would improve their appearance and provide shade relief from the Texas sun. There is opportunity to enhance key intersections with artistic crosswalks and/or decorative paving to highlight key destinations and

reinforce pedestrian activity in the Target Area. The community should carry forward the projects identified in the Bike Plan and seek strategies to advance these projects in the near-term to increase bicycle traffic and entice private investment. Finally, there are opportunities to address the public's perception of parking.

Strategic Actions

- **Vegetation:** Add trees and landscaping to Kansas Street, Stanton Street, Mesa Street, Oregon Street, Paisano Drive to provide shade and beautification (and replace trees where missing).
- **Bicycle Infrastructure:** Add bicycle lanes/designations pursuant to the El Paso Bike Plan to Oregon Street, Overland Avenue, San Antonio Avenue, Stanton Street, and Paisano Drive. Add other bicycle-related amenities throughout the Target Areas (e.g., bicycle racks, fix-it stations, etc.)
- **Enhanced Intersections:** Enhance key intersections with artistic crosswalks and/or decorative paving elements.
- **Taxi/Rideshare Staging:** Create designated taxi and rideshare staging areas at key nodes.
- **Wayfinding Signage:** Expand the City's wayfinding signage program along Stanton Street and at other key designations.
- **Parking Management:** Implement district-scale parking strategies within the Target Area and promote the recommencement of the larger Downtown parking study.

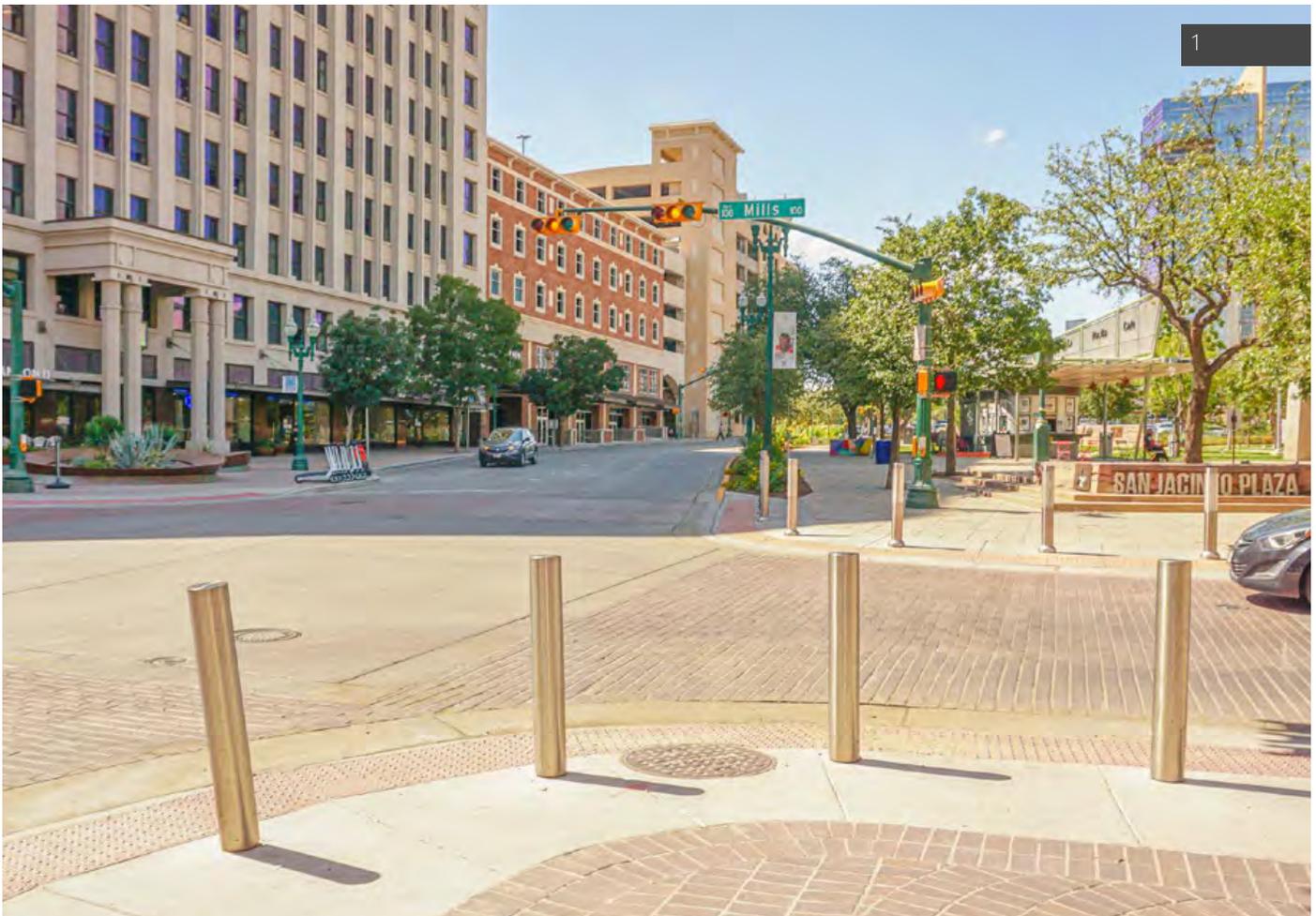


Streetscape Projects

There is opportunity to perform streetscape enhancements to select Target Area roadways such as trees, furniture, hardscape elements, art, lighting, and bicycle infrastructure. These projects should build upon and enhance past streetscape investments and planting plans must respond to existing basements and other site impediments. The DMD and the City should conduct an inventory of each corridor to (1) document grates with missing trees, (2) identify areas to introduce new landscaping, and (3) assess damaged features (e.g., broken brickwork). Next, the DMD/City should produce streetscape enhancement plans for each corridor that address deferred maintenance, introduce new elements, and incorporate bicycle infrastructure pursuant to the El Paso Bike Plan. The entities should also devise a maintenance plan for each corridor and potentially partner with adjacent property owners/

businesses to assist with minor routine cleanup and maintenance requests. Further below summarizes the potential streetscape enhancements for select corridors in the Target Area.

Interim Options – In the near-term and as a way to introduce immediate low-cost enhancements, there is opportunity to install raised tree/planter boxes along the designated “Main Streets” in locations where no permanent street trees exist. The project could utilize landscaping material from the City’s tree farm. The DMD could seek agreements with adjacent businesses/property owners to maintain the tree/planter boxes (e.g., remove litter and weeds) and partner with the City to regularly irrigate the boxes with municipal water trucks. Additionally, there is opportunity to convene a volunteer group to paint art installations at key street intersections (prioritizing the designated “Main Streets”).



1. Streetscape enhancements along Mills Avenue - these capital projects contribute to a multi-modal urban character.



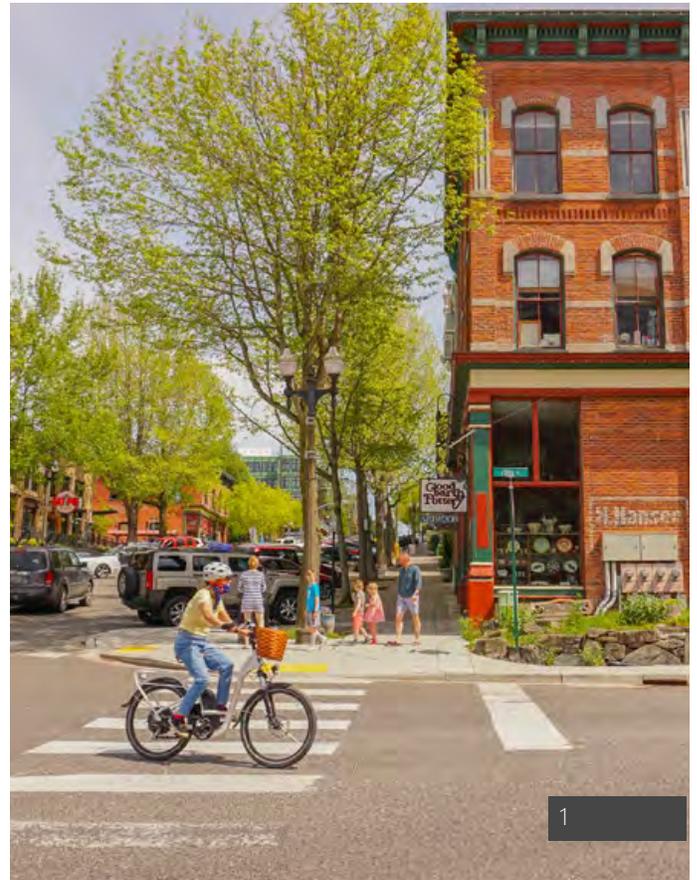
Figure 6.8.1. Streetscape Projects Map

Stanton Street

Stanton Street is planned to reemerge as a distinct mixed-use neighborhood and its streetscape should be enhanced to complement this intended character. The streets enhancements would transform the corridor from three-lanes to two (removing one south bound lane). A new two-way cycle track would be introduced pursuant to the El Paso Bike Plan, creating a designated bicycle thoroughfare from the south end of Downtown and connecting into the neighborhoods/districts north of I-10. This element will support the growing bike culture in El Paso and create a unique corridor for cyclists and supporting businesses. The enhancement plan would include additional street trees (prioritizing grates with missing plant material) and community banners affixed to the existing light poles. To define the planned “Main Streets”, its intersection with San Antonio Avenue should be enhanced with decorative paving (either artistically painted or with decorative pavers).

Key Design Elements

- Lane reductions (from three to two lanes)
- Two-way cycle track
- Trees and landscaping
- Banner Attachments
- Benches and Seating



1. Example of a multi-modal streetscape in Bellingham, WA. 2. Artist rendering depicting the planned Stanton Street corridor with street implements including a new cycle track pursuant to the El Paso Bike Plan.

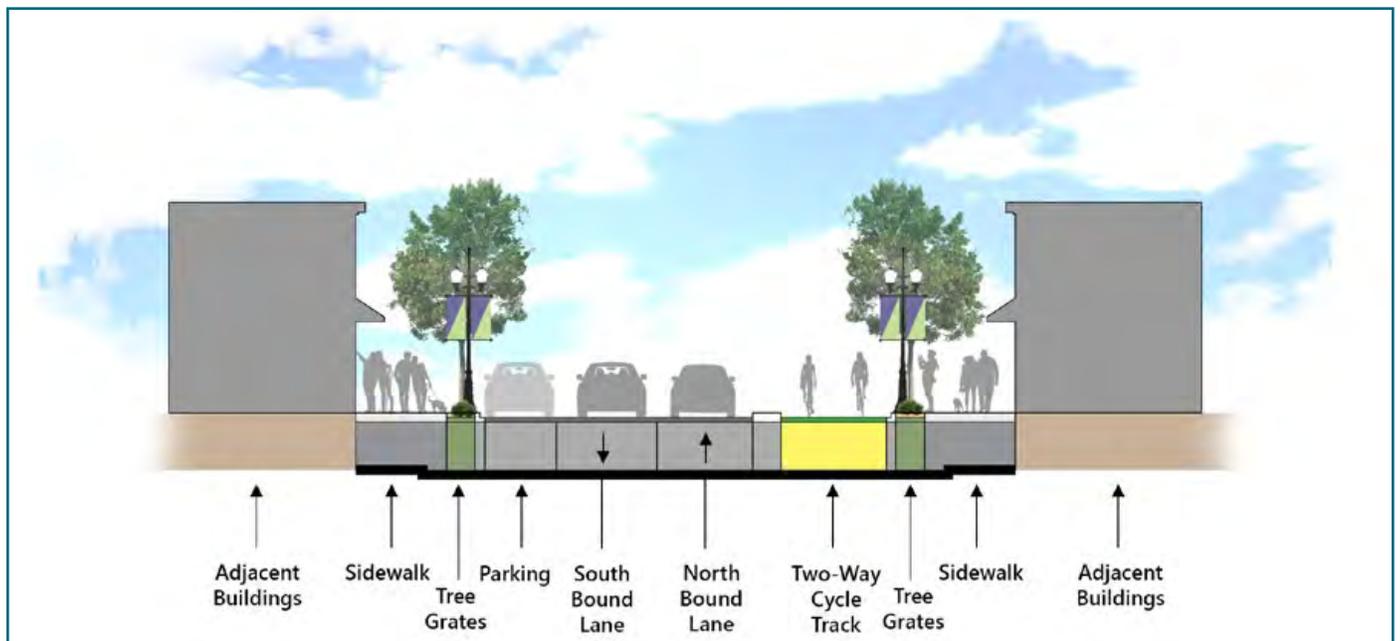


Figure 6.8.2. Stanton Street Potential Cross Section Design



San Antonio Avenue

The San Antonio Avenue corridor is another designated “Main Street” that will revive as a lively mixed-use destination and will serve as the vital east-west connection between El Paso Street (to the west) and Stanton Street and the El Paso streetcar (to the east). This plan recommends adding more trees and landscaping (matching the existing varieties) to achieve a thick urban canopy. Additionally, minor repairs are needed to cracked pavers and street furniture.

The street improvements will include the addition of designated bicycle lanes in each direction pursuant to the El Paso Bike Plan.

Key Design Elements

- Designated bicycle lanes
- Trees and landscaping
- Banner Attachments
- Pavement/furniture repairs



1. Artist rendering of the planned San Antonio Avenue corridor with new bicycle lanes and additional street trees (along with other surrounding streetscape projects in the Target Area).

Oregon Street

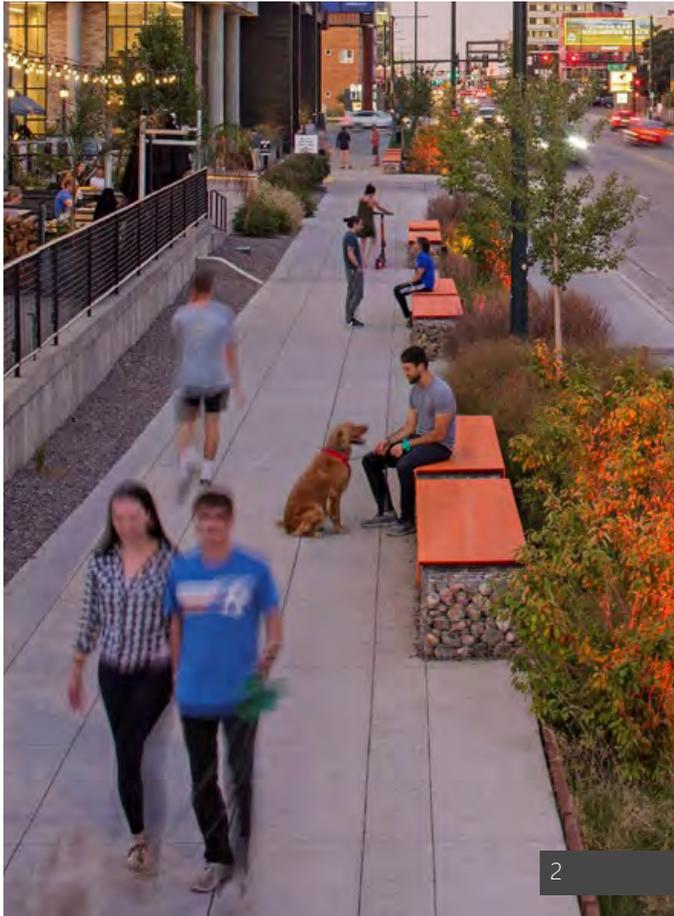
Oregon Street is planned as an important Secondary Corridor which provides linkages to the border crossings and the downtown core. There is opportunity to improve Oregon Street's appearance and multi-modal functionality with new street trees, furniture, and bicycle lanes. Oregon's enhancement would involve lane reductions from a three-lane section to two (removing one of the two south bound lanes). This plan recommends adding new bicycle lanes in each direction or, alternatively, as a two-way cycle track. Other enhancements would include decorative lighting (and posts) to match other downtown streets and benches/seating.

Key Design Elements

- Designated bicycle lanes
- Trees and landscaping
- New Lighting with banner attachments



1. Artist rendering of the planned Oregon Street corridor with new bicycle lanes and additional street trees. | 2. Example of an urban neighborhood corridor that provides for vibrant street life. | 3. Creative seating and landscaping along Mills Ave. at El Paso St.

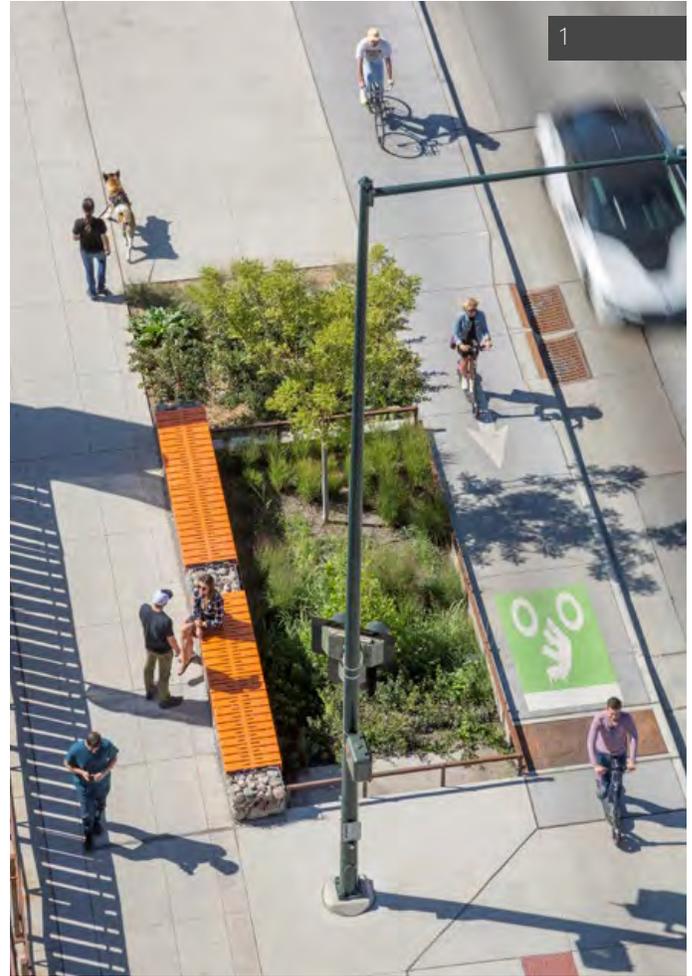


Paisano Drive

Paisano serves as a vital east-west thoroughfare and transit route through Downtown and serves as a major transitional area between the international neighborhoods to the south and urban core to the north. Today, the corridor is devoid of quality urban streetscape elements, trees/vegetation, and pedestrian amenities. The corridor is extremely auto oriented and its heavy (and fast) traffic volumes create a significant physical and psychological barrier between the Target Area and the southern neighborhoods. While the roadway is under TxDOT jurisdiction, there is opportunity to plan for streetscape and multimodal enhancements to achieve a pleasing and functional corridor while still accommodating commuters and transit services. The envisioned enhancements include shade trees along the right-of-way edges, palms or shrubs in the medians, and street furniture. The El Paso Bike Plan identifies investments to add protected bicycle lanes in each direction, potentially reducing the number of vehicular travel lanes. To create a sense of arrival into the Target Area, potential streetscape enhancements could include gateway signage.

Key Design Elements

- Protected bicycle lanes
- Trees, landscaping, and street furniture
- Gateway signage/monumentation



1. Example of a multi-modal arterial with wide sidewalks, landscaping, seating, lighting and separated bicycle lanes.



Overland Avenue and Mesa Streets

Overland Avenue and Mesa Street are other secondary corridors within the Target Area that will eventually evolve into vibrant urban neighborhoods. Today, there are several active shops peppered along Overland and Mesa, but these streetscapes are mostly devoid of trees, shade features, and seating. Future district enhancements should introduce street trees, landscaping, and benches to these corridors to improve their aesthetics and function.



Taxi and Rideshare Staging Areas

As the Target Area revitalizes with new housing, employment, and commercial destinations, there may be increased use of taxi and rideshare services (e.g., Uber, Lyft). To mitigate congestion and improve access to these services, there is opportunity to formally designate some of the on-street parking stalls within the planned “Main Streets” to serve as taxi and ride share staging locations. These would be reserved stalls at each end of the corridors where taxi and rideshare companies know to wait to access passengers (rather than circling the block or waiting in travel lanes). This program would involve outreach and education to the taxi/rideshare companies and local businesses of the staging area opportunities and rules.

Interim Option – In the near-term and with low-cost investment, there is opportunity to provide an A-frame style sign that reads “Rideshare/Taxi Staging Area” to one active business on each of the designated “Main Streets” to post and manage the sign – this action will create a local culture for ride sharing at designated locations.



1. Example an urban side street with wide sidewalks, landscaping, and outdoor cafe seating in Tacoma's Proctor District. | 2. Example of a ride-share staging area (Source: Quantum Engineering).

Parking Strategy

There is a local perception that Downtown has a scarcity of parking, and at the same time, there is a community goal to transform the area into a pedestrian and bicycle-oriented destination. Furthermore, future urban infill projects may be challenging to finance and on-site parking (i.e., garages) are expensive components. There is opportunity to create a comprehensive parking strategy for the Downtown Core (and benefiting the Target Area) that provides a reasonable amount of parking for visitors while creating an exciting urban environment with high pedestrian activity. The DMD should work with the City, other government agencies, economic development entities and property owners to conduct and implement a district-wide parking strategy for the Target Area to accommodate the long-term parking demands/capacity for tourists, residents, and local visitors. This

should define a balance of on-site, street parking, and district lots. This initiative should build upon past parking studies and a continued partnership with the City's Parking Committee.

Furthermore, there is opportunity to formalize agreements with El Paso County and the City of El Paso to allow visitor use of parking lots/garages during evening and weekend hours to maximize existing facilities and potentially eliminate the need for new parking construction. There are opportunities to integrate technology where possible to help visitors clearly navigate to available parking areas. This may include signage at garage entrances that identify the number of available stalls and utilizing parking-related mobile apps to help visitors find and navigate to parking areas. Importantly, the parking strategy should recognize that surface parking lots take away Downtown vibrancy by creating voids in the urban fabric.



1. The recently constructed public garage on El Paso Street provides district-scale parking for area destinations and businesses.

Section 6.9: Strategy 5 – Opportunity Sites and Urban Infill

The fifth Revitalization Strategy involves designating vacant/undeveloped properties for new urban infill projects that would add community serving uses and create catalytic benefits to the larger Downtown vicinity. The Central Downtown Target Area has several large surface parking lots and vacant parcels could be redeveloped for much needed housing and employment uses. Furthermore, these undeveloped properties create voids in the urban fabric and interrupt the line of storefronts within select corridors. Based on site observations and the findings from the Brownfield/Property Inventory (discussed in Chapter 3), the project team identified a series of Opportunity Sites that would be most conducive for urban infill projects due to their underutilized status, size, and location within the larger Downtown Context. This strategy would prioritize new construction to underutilized sites over demolition of historic buildings while reconnecting the urban fabric with continuous facades along area streets.

Strategic Actions

- **Opportunity Sites:** Designate and promote undeveloped properties as Opportunity Sites that would support future urban-scaled infill projects for housing, employment, and ground-floor commercial services.
- **Redevelopment Needs/Desires:** Identify the types of development projects that are needed in Downtown in terms of land uses, scale, design, and amenities.
- **Site Promotion/Recruitment:** Work with property owners, economic development entities, and real estate professional to promote the Opportunity Sites to development companies/investors that would construct much needed services in Downtown.

Opportunity Sites

Through the AWP process, the project team identified eight Opportunity Sites that could support strategic redevelopment projects and activities that could catalyze other investment in the Downtown El Paso Target Area. These Opportunity Sites are depicted on the Urban Framework Plan (Section 6.4) and coincide with the priority conditions identified in the brownfield inventory for the Target Area (refer to Chapter 3 for the inventory findings).

The Opportunity Sites are either vacant or underutilized and are large enough to support meaningful urban infill projects. For some sites, vacant properties (or surface parking lots) flank small existing structures; in those situations, the tax lots were combined to form a single Opportunity Site. Infill development would involve multi-level transit-oriented housing and/or employment projects. Ideally, portions of the ground floors would include active uses such as retail and dining establishments that would contribute to district vitality.

Notably, three Opportunity Sites are designated along Kansas Street where several large surface parking lots exist today, creating voids in the streetscape and Downtown activity. This location acts as the transitional area between the planned Stanton Street Creative Urban Neighborhood Corridor and El Paso County's courts and offices to the east. There is opportunity to focus transit-oriented housing at this location and capitalize on the existing El Paso Streetcar service (and its two stations). Another key Opportunity Site occupies one half block along San Antonio Avenue at Mesa Street. There is opportunity to construct a mid-rise mixed use project involving housing, retail, and professional office. The other Opportunity Sites are located along the Secondary Corridors; these sites are ideal for new urban-scaled housing and/or employment uses including office, artist studios, food production, and other artisan trades.

Opportunity sites are designated to help the DMD and its economic development partners to prioritize new urban-scaled projects to these vacant or underdeveloped sites over demolition. The community

can target its developer recruitment and economic development efforts on these sites. It also provides more certainty to developers that their associated projects will have a basic level of community support at these locations.

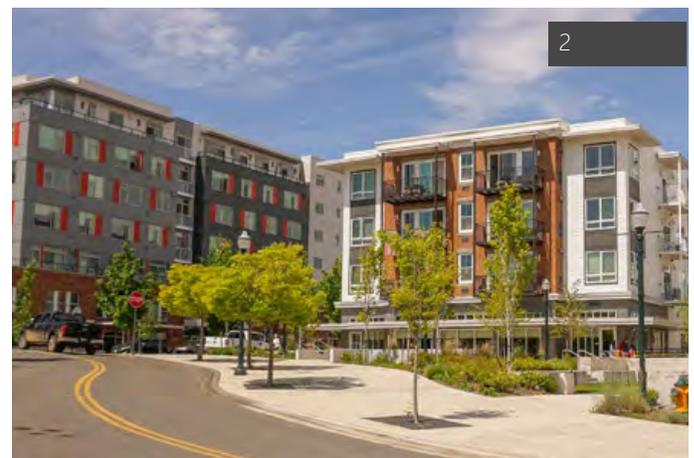
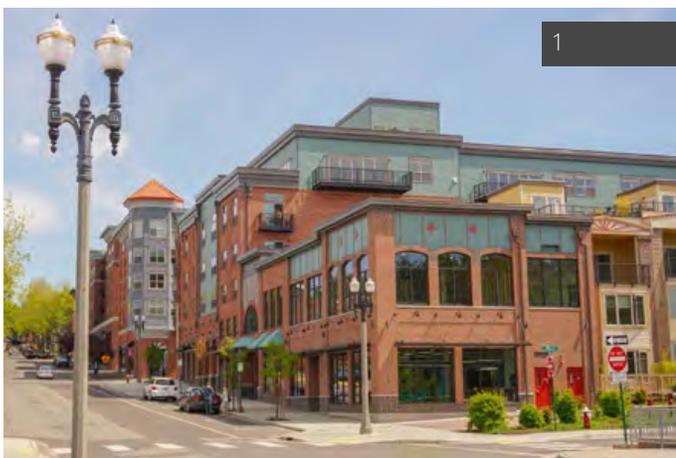
Near-term, the DMD should partner with the City, governmental agencies, economic development entities, and local brokers/realtors to promote the Opportunity Sites to prospective developers to bring

community-serving uses to the Target Area. The DMD could also support environmental site assessments (ESA) and other studies to identify potential development impediments and help property owners define potential cleanup and abatement strategies.

Table 6.9.a lists the Opportunity Sites and includes information on their location, size, zoning and development status.; the UFP designates these sites in yellow.

Site Number	Inventory Map ID(s)	Parcel Identification Number(s) (PINs)	Size (acres)	Zoning	Development Status (Undeveloped or Partial)
A	A5, A7	355410, 298606	0.34	C-5 / NC H	Partial (1 existing commercial patio)
B	I7, I8	332527, 339235	0.72	C-5	Undeveloped
C	L8, L9	151581, 58921	0.31	C-5	Undeveloped
D	L2, L3	89878, 396289	0.39	C-5	Undeveloped
E	M2, M3, M4	278007, 165846, 101520	0.59	C-5	Partial (1 existing building)
F	G4	256386	0.41	C-5	Undeveloped
G	N5, N6, N7, N8	384543, 359643, 207080, 84189	0.72	C-5	Partial (1 existing building)
H	O9, O10, O11, O12	41513, 52216, 81355, 32699	0.57	C-5	Partial (1 existing building and 1 damaged accessory structure)

***Note: "Undeveloped" includes surface parking lots.*



1. Example of mixed-use infill project in Bellingham, WA - the project incorporates exterior materials to match historical structures in the vicinity. | 2. Example of a residential infill project in Burien, WA with ground level retail and commercial services. Both projects were built on previously abandoned properties.



Figure 6.9.1. Target Area Opportunity Sites

Interim Uses

In the near-term, there is opportunity to implement interim uses/activities on the designated Opportunities Sites to create activity and improve their appearance until they are redeveloped with permanent urban-scaled buildings. This could involve a formal program where community groups partner with property owners to implement interim activities. Ideal activities may include open air markets, outdoor performance spaces, temporary active recreation, or food truck courts. Alternatively, the interim uses could be more passive in nature including art installations and raised community gardens.



1. Example of temporary event space on a vacant infill lot in Tucson, AZ. | 2. Mail order locker boxes allow residents to have fresh food and consumer goods delivered - this is a potential commercial strategy for Central Downtown until a permanent grocery store comes to the neighborhood. | 3. Example of a mobile food court in a vacant downtown lot (Source: isaac-benheshed | unsplash.com).

Section 6.10: Strategy 6 - Land Use and Regulatory Framework

The sixth Revitalization Strategy involves creating a land use and regulatory framework that is supportive of urban infill and adaptive reuse activities while protecting and strengthening urban design. As the Target Area revitalizes, it will be important to protect the historical integrity of its iconic buildings. New infill projects should be urban in character and be designed with quality architectural elements that create a captivating built environment. The City should evaluate its zoning and land use standards and make necessary refinements to support the uses and development activity that support Downtown vitality while discouraging activities/features that detract from its intended character. Quite simply, the City's zoning standards should support the uses and development it wants to see, and prohibit activities that detract from Downtown's character.

Strategic Actions

- **Special Zoning/Overlay:** Evaluate whether to apply special zoning or overlays to the designated "Main Streets" to apply specific requirements and land use restrictions.
- **Design Standards:** Apply design standards to facade improvement and urban infill projects to achieve quality building appearances and active street-level tenant spaces.
- **Allowable Uses:** Re-evaluate and refine (as necessary) the list of allowable and prohibited uses in the Downtown vicinity.
- **Event and Mobile Vendor Policies:** Evaluate and refine the City's policies, allowances, and permitting standards for community events and mobile vendors.

Special Zoning and Overlays

The designated "Main Streets" (discussed in Section 6.5) strive to create distinctive and vibrant mixed-use corridors with a unique cluster of businesses and urban character. To achieve this goal, there is opportunity to create a zoning overlay (or equivalent thereof) around these Main Street areas to establish specific land use allowances (and prohibitions) and to establish specific design standards that are best suited for these corridors. For these areas to thrive, ground floor areas should contain active uses (e.g., commercial services) and buildings should project a welcoming character. There are opportunities to create additional allowances for commercial vending, entertainment, and dining to occur within the public right-of-way to create vibrancy and support business operation.

Design Standards

Downtowns thrive and evoke an emotional connection in residents and visitors when they maintain a collection of well-designed buildings with quality architectural elements. In the past, several existing facades have been stripped of their historical elements, and windows/doors have been covered with opaque features and rollup gates. Several suburban-style, auto-oriented projects were constructed along Paisano Drive. These activities detract from Downtown El Paso's history and character. There is opportunity to apply design standards to adaptive reuse and urban infill projects to protect Downtown's character, achieve a quality urban environment, and return buildings back to their former glory. The following lists key design elements that should be applied to the Target Area projects. Notably, the Plan El Paso and the 2015 Downtown El Paso plans contain design standards that could be applied to Downtown projects.

Building Orientation – New projects should be sited and oriented next to the adjacent public sidewalk to respond to the historic development patterns in Downtown. Exceptions should be allowed to accommodate pedestrian plazas and other community gathering elements.

Facade Design – New urban Infill and adaptive reuse projects should be subject to reasonable design standards to ensure new (and modified) street-facing facades have (a) ample window coverage, (b) quality materials, and (c) architectural elements that respond to Downtown’s historical characteristics. Design standards should prohibit large blank walls along street and alley frontages.

Parking and Automobile Elements – Projects should downplay the visual impact of parking lots and automobile use elements such as drive-thru service windows. Those elements should be placed behind building facades or within garage structures.

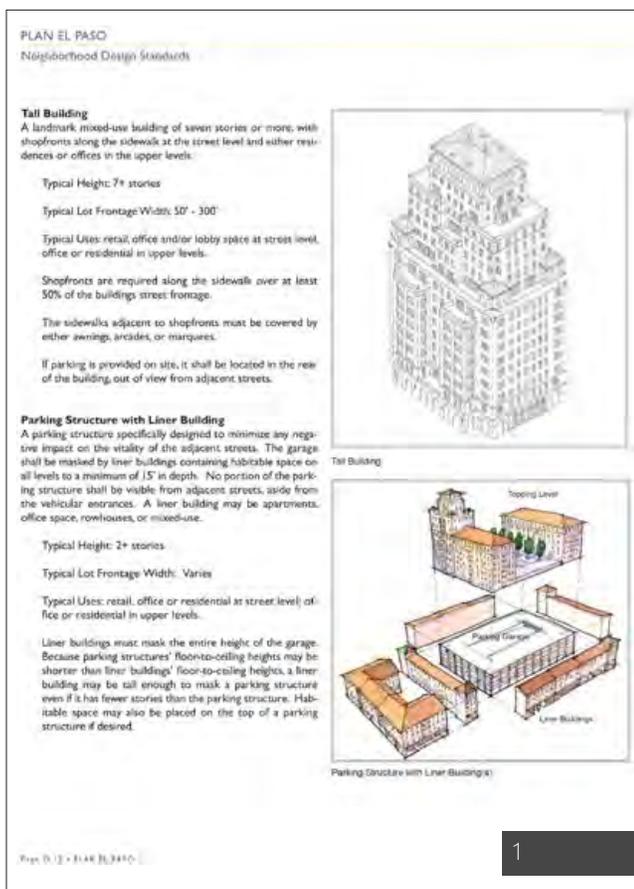
Allowable Uses

There is a need to refine the allowable uses in the AWP Target Area to permit the desired tenants/businesses/uses while discouraging activities that do not align with the community’s vision (e.g., allow artisan-trades, prohibit drive-thru facilities). This City should update the permitted uses to discourage auto-oriented uses and development types (e.g., drive-thru facilities, wholesale/retail gasoline).

Support Interim Uses – There is also opportunity to evaluate and make refinements (as necessary) to the City’s existing zoning standards, so rules and procedures support interim uses. These would include pop-up retail shops, temporary entertainment venues, and similar activities.

Events and Mobile Sales Policy

There is opportunity for the City to reevaluate its rules and policies relating to community events and mobile sales activities. This process should designate areas within the Target Area that would allow said activities and devise a program to streamline the permitting/fee requirements. The community should continue to coordinate with the Police Department to support street closures, traffic management, and community safety for said events. This process is vital to supporting interim uses that add community activity throughout Downtown.



1. Excerpt from the "Plan El Paso" Design Standards. | 2. Existing auto-oriented development (drive-thru fast food) along Paisano Drive at El Paso Street - this development pattern detracts from El Paso's historical urban design.

Section 6.11: Strategy 7 - Marketing, Promotion, and Incentives

The seventh Revitalization Strategy is to define a marketing and promotion plan and to review (and potentially expand) the list of incentives that are aimed to recruit new businesses, investment, and residents to the Target Area. There is also opportunity to develop a formal brand for each of the designated “Main Street” districts so visitors will be attracted to these corridors based on the expected urban experience and business makeup. Relevant marketing and management activities include community stewardship, neighborhood governance activities, branding, wayfinding, event planning, and efforts to activate sites or improve their near-term appearance.

Strategic Actions

- **District Brand:** Develop and implement a brand for each designated “Main Street” corridor including a formal name, collection of businesses, and iconic imagery to promote the areas.
- **Events and Traditions:** Plan for and host a series of community events that bring civic activity to the Target Area.

- **Informational Kiosks and Signage:** Create information kiosks and business directories for each “Main Street” corridor that lists major destinations and area businesses.
- **Community Governance:** Form community-led neighborhood or business associations for each “Main Street” or the larger Central Downtown Target Area comprising local businesses, residents, and civic groups to plan for events, maintenance, capital improvement projects, and area promotion.
- **Recruitment:** Define a development, business, and resident recruitment plan to proactively welcome new tenants into the Target Area.
- **Financial Incentives/Support:** Continue to provide and promote a diverse set of financial incentives and technical assistance for new businesses, adaptive reuse, and infill projects.

District Name and Brand

Central Downtown can benefit from the creation and promotion of a formal district “brand” that builds upon the community’s vision to create distinct Main Street corridors. Their individual branding will help tell the outside world what each Main Street has to offer in terms of businesses, urban character, amenities, and lifestyle. In successful business districts, outsiders can get a sense of what the area is about by its name, logo, and business collaboration. There is opportunity for the future business/neighborhood association to develop a unique brand that is expressed and promoted through a logo, area banners, promotional items, and community events. There is opportunity for stakeholder participants to apply a formal name to the Target Area (or the individual “Main Streets”) as a distinct subset of Downtown.



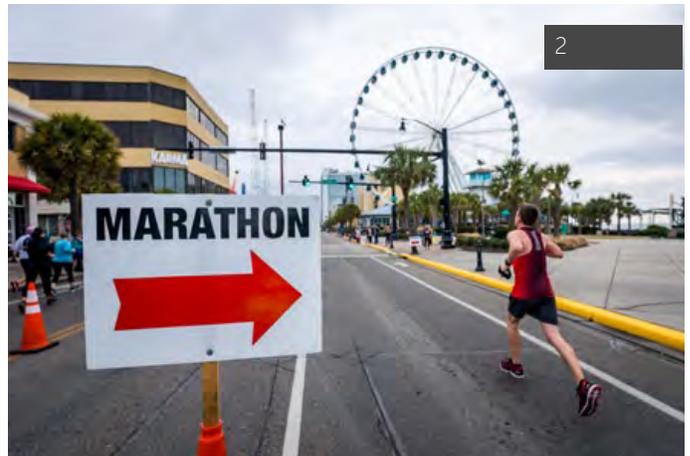
Example of Dallas' Deep Ellum Neighborhood website and branding (Source: deepellumtexas.com / t-q | unsplash.com)

Community Association/Subcommittee of Established Group

Communities thrive when residents, neighbors, and businesses become active stewards of maintenance, programs, and district promotion. There is tremendous opportunity to create a community/business association comprising local businesses, owners, residents and community organizations to plan for Central Downtown events, oversee maintenance programs, and to plan for community enhancement initiatives for the Target Area.

Annual Events and Traditions

The various community stakeholders can plan and host annual events and traditions throughout the Target Areas to promote the area to outsiders, support local businesses, increase activity (and the reason to visit the area) and to create opportunities for residents to come together through leisure. Annual events could include street fairs, pop-up markets, concert events, cultural celebrations, art tours, or charity benefits. The objective is to welcome outsiders and other area residents into Central Downtown for a specific purpose and create additional opportunities for local businesses to market themselves to a critical mass of new and repeat customers. For inclusion and diversity of themes, community organizations, government agencies, arts and cultural organizations, visitors/tourism agencies, and residents should be encouraged (and welcomed) to sponsor annual events and traditions. Government agencies should review their permitting requirements and procedures to streamline the approval process for event sponsors.



1. Example of a culture celebration and street fair (Source: carminamuntean | unsplash.com). | 2. Example of an athletic event in an urban neighborhood to bring vitality (Source: capstone-events | unsplash.com). | 3. Example of a food and culinary festival (Source: praveen-gupta | unsplash.com).

Developer/Business Recruitment

The DMD, economic development partners, and/or a future Community/Business association could create and implement annual recruitment plans to attract private and philanthropic investment in the Central Downtown Target Area. This AWP document can help guide the recruitment plans. There is opportunity to develop a formal developer/business recruitment plan so that marketing efforts are well coordinated amongst the participants. It will be imperative to proactively recruit new businesses into the Target Area that complement other enterprises and fill an identified commercial need (e.g., fresh food store, health services, apparel). The resulting business recruitment activities should be mindful not to saturate the Downtown market with any one service but there is opportunity to bring additional businesses that would broaden the consumer base and serve the daily needs of residents.

For infill development, the recruitment entity should clearly identify the local needs and expectations in terms of services, building design, and targeted locations – these desires should be matched with development companies that have project experience that aligns with the community's values. Through this initiative, there should be a strategy to streamline grants, incentive packages, and permitting processes to reduce as many barriers as possible for investors and developers interested in the Target Area.

Incentive Programs

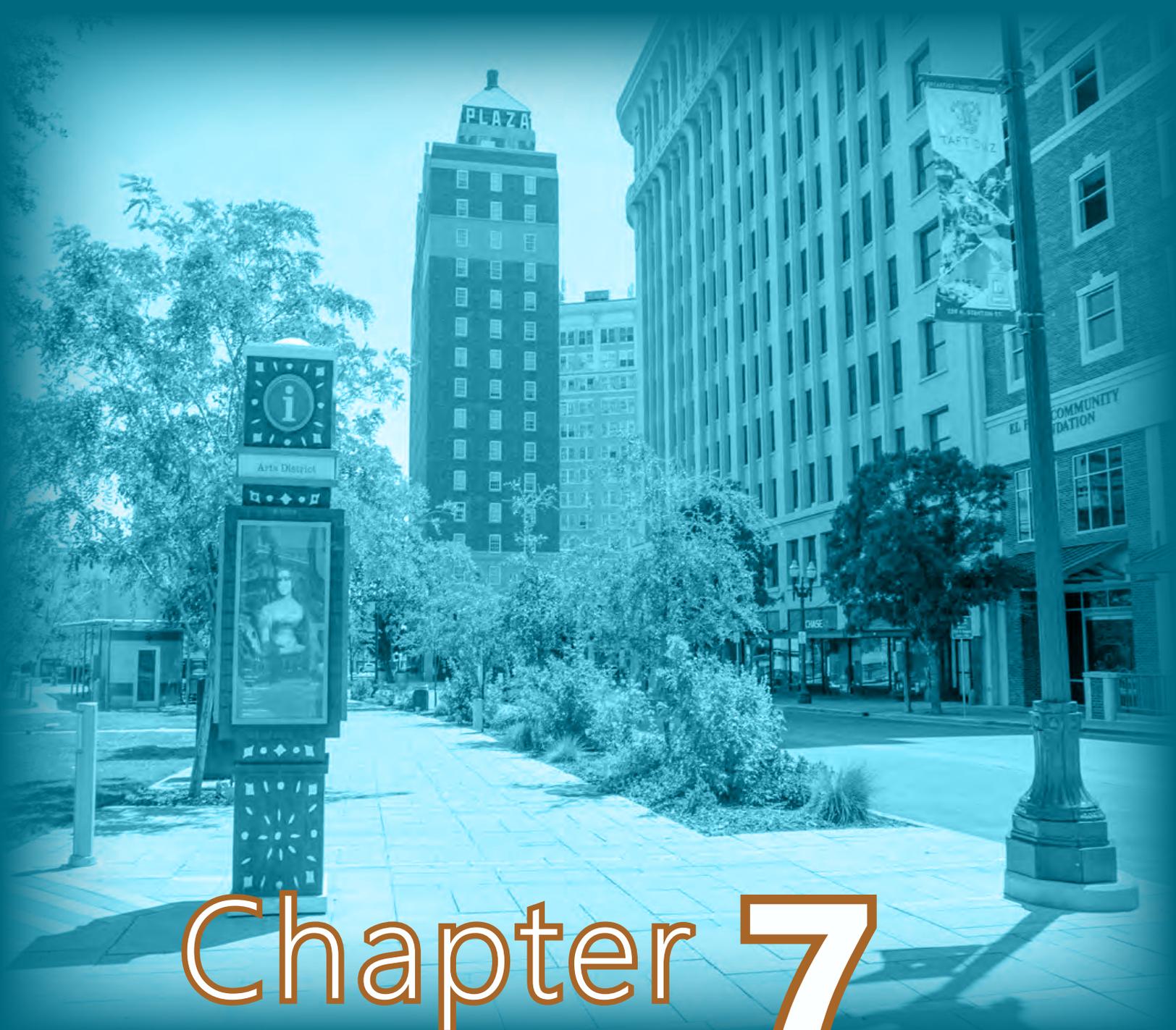
Businesses and construction projects could benefit from financial and technical incentive projects to close potential funding and feasibility gaps. Many times, entrepreneurs lack the capital, credit, or collateral to perform building improvements. In other situations, individuals need assistance funding environmental studies that are a prerequisite for obtaining loans from banks that would otherwise finance construction projects. The DMD and its government partners should continue to provide (and potentially expand)

their list of incentives. Most importantly, the City/DMD should provide technical assistance to potential investors/businesses on the permitting and land use requirements for new projects. The following lists notable incentives that should be continually supported in the Target Area.

Facade Improvement Program – The DMD oversees the Downtown Commercial Facade Program in partnership with the City of El Paso to grant funds to existing businesses and/or property owners to improve or rehabilitate the exterior of privately owned buildings within the DMD boundaries. Grants are administered on a first-come, first-serve basis and grant amounts are vary depending on funding availability. Typical grants range from \$2,500 to \$25,000 depending on the investment on behalf of the business and/or property owner. The DMD and its government partners should build on the success of the facade improvement program and identify additional ways to encourage more developers and building owners to take advantage of the available funding.

Business Loan Programs – New business startup and smaller emerging businesses need access to loans and capital to growth their enterprises (especially in the early days of their inception). There is need to develop loan programs for business owners interested in investing in downtown buildings and operations. The DMD and its government partners should review options to provide financial support to new enterprises and implement a formal application, review, and administrative process.

Grants – There are several state, federal, and philanthropic grants aimed to add economic opportunity to historically underserved neighborhoods. There is opportunity to actively identify and apply for grant funding to support capital improvement projects, private development projects, community events, and other community-supportive activities in the downtown core. Notably, the US EPA Brownfield grant provide funds and technical assistance for brownfields (such as the one that funded this AWP study).



Chapter 7

Implementation and Action Plan

Section 7.1: Action Plan Introduction

For Central Downtown to thrive and to advance the community's vision, the DMD and its stakeholder partners must have an action plan in place to guide future work plans, budget allocations, and community participation. The project team created a formal Action Plan that responds to the individual projects and programs identified through the AWP process.

Section 7.2: Action Plan Matrix

The project team created an Action Plan to support the community's vision, conceptual plan, and corresponding project list. The Action Plan is organized to follow the overarching implementation strategies followed by corresponding actions. These are high level recommendations to ensure the AWP projects move forward; the DMD (and its governmental partners) should develop internal work plans for each action. For each implementation strategy, the Action Plan lists actions, the target year(s), entity and partners, resources, and detail/components. This Action Plan can guide DMD's and other agencies' work plans and budget allocations so that staff takes incremental steps to support redevelopment in the AWP Target Area. This will also help guide stakeholder participation.

Implementation Strategies and Actions	Short-Term (within 2 years)	Medium-Term (within 2 - 5 years)	Long-Term (5+ years)	Lead Entity & Partners	Resources Required	Detail / Components
Strategy 1 – Main Streets and Secondary Corridors						
Action 1.a. – Formally plan for specific mixed-use Main Street Corridors in Central Downtown.	X			DMD City of El Paso Community Organizations Property Owners/ Businesses	Staff Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designate the planned Main Street corridors pursuant to the AWP document. Identify the primary land uses and tenant targets for each Main Street corridor. Develop a list of enhancement projects for each Main Street corridor. Develop a marketing and branding plan for each Main Street corridor in terms of name, logo, and intended character. Collaborate with community stakeholders, the City, and economic development agencies to promote each Main Street corridor to the community and potential investors/tenants.

Table 7.2.a – Action Plan Matrix for Central Downtown

Implementation Strategies and Actions	Short-Term (within 2 years)	Medium-Term (within 2 - 5 years)	Long-Term (5+ years)	Lead Entity & Partners	Resources Required	Detail / Components
Strategy 2 – Adaptive Reuse and Property Activation						
2.a – Develop and promote a Building Inventory for the Target Area (and other adjacent corridors).	X			DMD City of El Paso	Staff Resources Budget Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect property data for the Target Area including address, property/building sizes, tenant spaces, vacancy status, and owner/realtor contact. • Create a web-based property inventory including interactive maps and parcel data. • Share the Building Inventory with other governmental agencies and real estate professionals to connect potential tenants with property owners.
2.b. – Develop and promote a Tenant Improvement Toolkit to property owners and potential tenants.	X			DMD City of El Paso	Staff Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Toolkit that includes the incentive programs and technical assistance offered by the various governmental agencies. • Include the eligibility criteria and terms for each incentive program. • Summarize the typical permitting standards/processes for tenant improvement projects. • Promote the Toolkit to realtors, property owners, and potential tenants.
2.c – Develop a formal program to introduce interim uses/activities to vacant storefronts.	X			DMD City of El Paso Property Owners Community Organizations	Staff Resources Budget Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the Building Inventory, identify vacant storefronts that would be ideal candidates for interim uses. Obtain property owner approval. • Partner with community stakeholders to identify potential interim uses/activities to occupy storefronts. • Develop a formal program to match potential tenants/sponsors with property owners to implement interim uses/activities. • Explore and secure potential funding sources to assist with interim activities (e.g., grants). • Work with governmental agencies, realtors, and community organizations to promote the interim use / activities program.

Table 7.2.a – Action Plan Matrix for Central Downtown

Implementation Strategies and Actions	Short-Term (within 2 years)	Medium-Term (within 2 - 5 years)	Long-Term (5+ years)	Lead Entity & Partners	Resources Required	Detail / Components
Strategy 3 – Parks and Amenities						
3.a – Develop a comprehensive enhancement strategy for Aztec Calendar Park.		X		City of El Paso DMD Housing Authority Community Organizations Sun Metro Transit	Staff Resources Budget Allocations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a project steering committee to guide the park enhancement design and implementation elements. • Vacate Myrtle Street aligning the park. • Develop a master plan for the park in terms of amenities, spatial arrangement, landscaping, use areas, and cost estimates. • Add the project to the City’s Capital Improvement Plan. • Obtain funding and public budget allocations. • Develop construction drawings for the park enhancements. • Perform enhancements to the park. • Develop and implement an annual events program for the park.
3.b – Develop a construction strategy to transform First Street into a “Festival Street”.		X		City of El Paso DMD Community Organizations	Staff Resources Budget Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a steering committee to guide project design and implementation elements. • Develop a master plan for the Festival Street in terms of spatial arrangement, trees/shade, streetscape elements, utilities, and cost estimates. • Add the project to the City’s Capital Improvement Plan. • Secure funding and public budget allocations. • Develop construction drawings for the right-of-way enhancements. • Perform project construction. • Develop and implement an annual events program for the “Festival Street”.

Table 7.2.a – Action Plan Matrix for Central Downtown

Implementation Strategies and Actions	Short-Term (within 2 years)	Medium-Term (within 2 - 5 years)	Long-Term (5+ years)	Lead Entity & Partners	Resources Required	Detail / Components
3.c – Develop a construction and marketing strategy to transform select alleyways into Art Passageways.		X		City of El Paso DMD Property Owners/ Tenants Community Organizations Service Providers (waste collection)	Staff Resources Budget Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a steering committee to guide project design, service planning, and implementation elements. • Develop a master plan for each alleyway corridor in terms of construction elements, service locations, utilities, art installation areas, property access, and cost estimates. • Add the project to the City’s Capital Improvement Plan. • Secure funding and public budget allocations • Develop construction drawings for the alley enhancements. • Perform project construction. • Develop event programming and a commercial use permit process for each Art Passageway.
Strategy 4 – Streets and Mobility						
4.a – Develop comprehensive enhancement and construction strategies for primary corridors in the Target Area, including: Oregon Street, Mesa Street, Stanton Street, San Antonio Ave., Paisano Drive, and Overland Ave.			X	City of El Paso DMD Property Owners/ Tenants Community Organizations TxDOT (for state-owned facilities)	Staff Resources Budget Allocations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory each corridor and identify pavement damage, missing landscaping, and opportunities for enhancement. • Develop a master plan for each corridor in terms of streetscape elements, mobility enhancements, and cost estimates. • Add the projects to the City’s Capital Improvement Plan. • Secure funding and public budget allocations. • Coordinate with property owners/businesses on the project phasing and develop a strategy to mitigate construction impacts to businesses. • Develop construction drawings for each street/ corridor project. • Perform project construction. • Develop and implement a maintenance plan for each corridor (focusing on landscaping and trash removal).

Table 7.2.a – Action Plan Matrix for Central Downtown

Implementation Strategies and Actions	Short-Term (within 2 years)	Medium-Term (within 2 - 5 years)	Long-Term (5+ years)	Lead Entity & Partners	Resources Required	Detail / Components
4.b – Implement a Taxi/Rideshare staging program for each Main Street corridor.	X			DMD City of El Paso Property Owners/ Businesses Service Providers	Staff Resources Budget Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designate formal Taxi/Rideshare pickup/ staging locations for each Main Street corridor – focusing on street parking stalls. Coordinate with Taxi/Rideshare companies on the project intent, staging locations, and implementation components. Add signage to designate staging locations. Implement a public education plan for the program.
4.c – Expand Downtown's wayfinding program.		X		DMD City of El Paso Property Owners/ Businesses Service Providers	Staff Resources Budget Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review (and amend if necessary) the City's wayfinding plan and develop an implementation strategy for the Main Street corridors. Secure budget allocation for project implementation. Add wayfinding signage.
4.d – Implement a parking management plan for Downtown.		X		DMD City of El Paso El Paso County Property Owners/ Businesses Community Organizations	Staff Resources Budget Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommence the parking study for Downtown. Reconvene the group of stakeholders to guide the study process. Develop a comprehensive Downtown parking strategy that includes: current/projected demand, potential shared use strategies for existing facilities, programs to increase transit/ bicycle use, and regulatory flexibility for new uses and development projects.
Strategy 5 – Opportunity Sites and Urban Infill						
5.a – Promote urban infill development on designated Opportunity Sites.	X	X	X	DMD City of El Paso Property Owners/ Businesses Community Organizations	Staff Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build consensus, interest, and partnerships amongst property owners, realtors/brokers, government agencies, and economic development entities to direct infill projects to the designated Opportunity Sites. Identify the ideal land uses, and design for potential projects on each Opportunity Site. Develop a developer recruitment strategy and participant responsibilities/contributions. Conduct an infrastructure assessment around each site and develop strategies to address substandard conditions. Support environmental site assessments (ESAs) for each Opportunity Site.

Table 7.2.a – Action Plan Matrix for Central Downtown

Implementation Strategies and Actions	Short-Term (within 2 years)	Medium-Term (within 2 - 5 years)	Long-Term (5+ years)	Lead Entity & Partners	Resources Required	Detail / Components
Strategy 6 – Land Use and Regulatory Framework						
6.a – Refine the City’s zoning regulations to align with the Community’s Vision for Central Downtown.		X		City of El Paso DMD Property Owners/ Businesses	Staff Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a project steering committee that will guide potential zoning refinements. • Explore the feasibility of applying Special Zoning or an Overlay District to each of the Main Streets. • Refine the list of allowable uses for Central Downtown. Expand the list of allowable uses, and limit (or prohibit) development elements/activities that are auto-centric in nature (e.g., drive-thru facilities). • Amend the zoning standards to require buildings to be sited/constructed along the public sidewalks (with flexibility pertaining to pedestrian use areas). • Explore the feasibility of reducing or eliminating parking requirements for transit-oriented urban infill projects. • Develop design guidelines for street-facing facades, signage, and building massing. Alternatively, apply the design guidelines from “Plan El Paso”.
6.b – Refine the City’s policies and procedures for events and mobile vendors.	X			City of El Paso DMD Community Organizations Mobile Vendors	Staff Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit the City’s policies and procedures relating to community events and mobile vending. Identify options for refinement. • Interview community organizations and mobile vendors to obtain ideas to create more allowances, and to streamline the permitting process. • Amend the City’s policies and procedures relating to community events and mobile vending. • Promote the changes to community stakeholders, government agencies, economic development entities, and the business community.

Table 7.2.a – Action Plan Matrix for Central Downtown

Implementation Strategies and Actions	Short-Term (within 2 years)	Medium-Term (within 2 - 5 years)	Long-Term (5+ years)	Lead Entity & Partners	Resources Required	Detail / Components
Strategy 7 –Marketing, Promotion, and Incentives						
7.a. – Develop and promote a district brand for each Main Street Corridor.	X			DMD City of El Paso Property Owners/ Businesses Residents Economic Development Entities	Staff Resources Budget Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a formal working group comprising governmental agencies, property owners, businesses, and community representatives. • Develop a name and formal brand for each Main Street corridor in terms of a logo, intended character, and land use mix. • Develop strategies to promote and implement the brand. Identify ways businesses and property owners can contribute to the effort. • Incorporate the branding into the DMD’s overall management and marketing strategies. • Partner with realtors, economic development entities, and community organizations to promote the brand.
7.b. – Facilitate the creation of a formal neighborhood or business association for each Main Street.	X			DMD City of El Paso Property Owners/ Businesses Residents Economic Development Entities	Staff Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene property owners, businesses, residents, and stakeholders to explore the feasibility and structure of a potential neighborhood/business association. • Support the creation of officers, by-laws, and 501.c.3 tax status for each association. • Adopt policies/procedures for the City/DMD to formally recognized each association. • Partner with the association for marketing efforts, capital improvement projects, and event planning.
7.c. – Update and promote an incentives package that can be offered to new businesses, tenant improvements, and new infill projects.			X	DMD City of El Paso El Paso County Utility Service Providers (e.g., electricity, water, and natural gas) Economic Development Entities	Staff Resources Budget Allocations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit the community’s existing list of business, housing, and development incentives. Identify past program participation and success. • Interview property owners, developers, realtors/brokers, and businesses to identify the types of incentives would be helpful in Downtown. • Identify additional incentives including eligibility criteria, funding limits, and application process. • Work with the applicable agencies to create and formalize the incentives. • Promote the revised incentive package/options to property owners, realtors, government partners, and potential tenants.



Appendices

- A. Plan El Paso Supportive Goals and Policies**
- B. Brownfield Inventory**
- C. Downtown El Paso Market Assessment**
- D. Public Engagement Summary**

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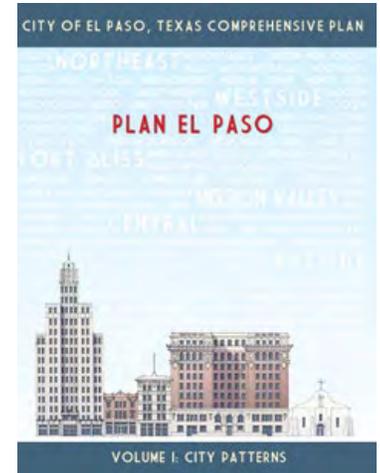
Appendix **A**

**Plan El Paso
Supportive Goals and
Policies**

Appendix A - Plan El Paso Supportive Goals and Policies

Supportive Plan El Paso Goals and Policies,

The Plan El Paso lists several goals and policies that would directly support property reuse, redevelopment, and revitalization activities in the AWP Target Area. Table A.1.a. lists the applicable goals and policies from the Regional Land Use Patterns, Downtown, Economic Development, and Historic Preservation Elements of the Plan El Paso document – the DMD and community stakeholders can look to these policies to support revitalization initiatives and capital investments in the AWP Target Area.



<i>Goal</i>	<i>Policies</i>
REGIONAL LAND USE PATTERNS	
<p>Goal 1.1: The City of El Paso places the highest priority on the reinvigoration of Downtown, whose strategic location, walkable blocks, and historic buildings will once again make Downtown a vibrant destination and center of culture, shopping, government, and the arts. These policies, and policies in the Downtown Element of Plan El Paso, apply to land in the G-1 “Downtown” growth sector on the Future Land Use Map (see Goal 1.10).</p>	<p>Policy 1.1.1: City policies and programs should encourage the rehabilitation of upper stories of existing Downtown buildings as office, retail, entertainment, and residential space. Financial incentives should be considered to encourage investment from the private sector.</p>
	<p>Policy 1.1.2: The City encourages new multi-story mixed-use buildings with windows and doors facing all sidewalks to be constructed on vacant lots. The City should not require any on-site parking for buildings Downtown.</p>
	<p>Policy 1.1.3: Downtown redevelopment strategies will include new and improved civic buildings and civic spaces, plus shared parking for residents, employees, and visitors.</p>
	<p>Policy 1.1.4: As civic buildings are added, updated, or replaced, they should be integrated into El Paso’s original street network and other land uses rather than being isolated in large complexes of civic buildings.</p>
	<p>Policy 1.1.5: The City’s historic landmark design regulations should be expanded to highlight Downtown’s architectural heritage, to avoid unnecessary damage to this valuable resource, and to ensure that new buildings maintain and improve this historic character.</p>
<p>Goal 1.2: The City of El Paso highly values the traditional neighborhoods that were laid out in all directions from Downtown and will maintain and improve their highly walkable character, transit accessibility, diverse mix of land uses, and historic building stock. These policies apply to land in the G-2 “Traditional Neighborhood” growth sector on the Future Land Use Map. Also see goals and policies in the Urban Design Element.</p>	<p>Policy 1.2.3: Vacant and underutilized parcels in and around the City’s traditional neighborhoods can be excellent locations for redevelopment that adds housing, shopping, employment, entertainment, and recreational options for nearby residents and transit patrons. Redevelopment of such sites should mesh with the scale and character of these existing neighborhoods rather than imposing a suburban or high-rise model on traditional neighborhoods. The City’s zoning and development regulations should be modified accordingly. Additional infill incentives should be considered by the City.</p>

Table A.1.a – Comprehensive Plan Applicable Goals and Policies

<i>Goal</i>	<i>Policies</i>
DOWNTOWN	
<p>Goal 3.1: Improve Downtown’s streets until they become El Paso’s premiere public spaces.</p>	<p>Policy 3.1.1: The City should encourage the use of the illustrative plans and renderings in this Downtown Element as examples to encourage best practices in improving Downtown streets particularly for City projects.</p> <p>Policy 3.1.2: Evaluate proposed Downtown street projects and development proposals according to the street design principles of policies 3.1.3 and 3.1.4.</p> <p>Policy 3.1.3: Maintain and improve the Downtown street network by providing multiple routes and pathways for vehicular and pedestrian movement.</p> <p>Policy 3.1.4: Improve Downtown streets to become more multimodal and appealing to pedestrians, with ample shaded sidewalks and on-street parking.</p>
<p>Goal 3.2: Strive for the widest variety of activities Downtown to create a healthy mix of housing, working, shopping, cultural, and civic uses. This concentration of diverse activities will re- duce traffic impacts and infrastructure costs and re-use Downtown’s existing buildings to their maximum potential.</p>	<p>Policy 3.2.2: Additional expectations for Downtown buildings include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearly all Downtown buildings should be re-used or re-purposed instead of being replaced by a new building. • Building façades that face sidewalks should not have more than 30% of their length or 30 feet, whichever is less, as blank walls (without doors and windows). • Sidewalk-level retail, office, and service uses that face a public space should be designed to have clear glass on at least 60% of their façades between 3 and 8 feet above grade. • Sidewalk-level retail, office, and service windows should be kept visible (unshuttered) at night. • Sidewalk-level retail, office, service, and live-work spaces should comprise at least 60% of the street- level façade. • Sidewalk-level dwelling units should be elevated at least 24 inches above the sidewalk. • Design new Downtown buildings to have at least 70% of the total linear frontages of mixed-use and non-residential building façades within one foot of the sidewalk. • Design new Downtown buildings which have ground floor dwelling units such that at least 50% of those units have an elevated finished floor no less than 24 inches above the sidewalk grade. • All businesses and/or other community services on the ground floor should be accessible directly from sidewalks along a public space, such as a street, square, paseo, or plaza. <p>Policy 3.2.3: City policies and programs will encourage the rehabilitation of upper stories of existing Downtown buildings as office, retail, entertainment, and residential space. Financial incentives will be considered to encourage investment from the private sector.</p> <p>Policy 3.2.4: Encourage a wide mix of residential housing types Downtown to encourage a diversity of ages and incomes and allow residents to trade up, downsize, or create multi-generational households without being forced to leave Downtown. Housing should include arrangements such as: studio units, 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom units, town- houses, penthouses, and live-work spaces; and should include both rental apartments and units that can be owned by their occupants.</p>

Table A.1.a – Comprehensive Plan Applicable Goals and Policies

Goal	Policies
<p>Goal 3.3: Accommodate private cars through careful placement of public and private parking facilities to supplement Downtown’s status as the best transit-served area and the most convenient location in the region.</p>	<p>Policy 3.3.1: Create a downtown parking strategy plan that continues to utilize and improve upon the provision of on-street parking, public parking lots and garages, and shared private parking spaces, with clear signage to inform the public of all transportation options.</p>
	<p>Policy 3.3.2: The City should not require any on-site parking for buildings Downtown and will encourage the sharing of private parking spaces between various uses to reduce the total number of parking spaces.</p>
	<p>Policy 3.3.3: Locate parking lots and garages out of sight at the interior of blocks wherever practical. Parking garages should be lined with habitable or storefront space to provide a safe, interesting environment for pedestrians and to screen parking from the view from public spaces such as streets, squares, and plazas.</p>
<p>Goal 3.4: As civic buildings are added, updated, or replaced, they will be integrated into El Paso’s original street network and other land uses rather than being isolated in large complexes of civic buildings.</p>	<p>Policy 3.4.1: Civic buildings should be acts of civic art, embedded within the urban fabric of Downtown and sited memorably, when possible on high ground and at the terminal axis of streets to increase their visibility.</p>
	<p>Policy 3.4.2: Important public facilities such as court-houses, post offices, museums, and administration buildings should not be moved from Downtown to outlying locations.</p>
	<p>Policy 3.4.3: The illustrative plans in the Downtown Element demonstrate key community design and planning strategies for five areas within Downtown El Paso: City Hall; Union Plaza District; Downtown Pathway; Convention Center; and San Jacinto Plaza.</p>
ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK	
<p>Goal 7.1: Increase economic development opportunities in El Paso to support a diverse and robust local economy that benefits from federal support and international economic trends but does not rely on them as a sole means of support.</p>	<p>Policy 7.1.1: Increase the number of college educated people by 20% by 2030.</p>
	<p>Policy 7.1.2: Use land use policy to create places and neighborhoods that are attractive to young college educated people.</p>
	<p>Policy 7.1.3: Develop a public/private El Paso venture capital funding pool; explore the creation of a Community Development Funding Institution (CDFI) to act as a conduit for public/private investment.</p>
	<p>Policy 7.1.4: Establish a Small Business Investment Company (SBIC) to leverage venture capital through federal assistance.</p>
	<p>Policy 7.1.5: Encourage greater coordination between Planning, Engineering, and Parks Departments to find cross-departmental solutions to accomplish the multi-faceted objective of improving the quality of life for all residents.</p>
<p>Goal 7.3: Make El Paso a city of dynamic walkable neighborhoods attractive to the coming Millennial population.</p>	<p>Policy 7.3.1: Reinforce transit and develop innovative zoning for job-based transit-oriented development.</p>
	<p>Policy 7.3.2: Investigate the potential of a dedicated community funds for new development that can take advantage of tax credits and funding consortiums.</p>
	<p>Policy 7.3.3: Develop new areas to be self-sustaining units that balance housing opportunities, retail, services, and employment in walkable communities. Make El Paso once again a city of neighborhoods.</p>

Table A.1.a – Comprehensive Plan Applicable Goals and Policies	
Goal	Policies
Goal 7.4: Use retail demand to support innovative sustainable neighborhood development rather than auto-oriented destinations.	Policy 7.4.1: Develop district-wide parking strategies to allow more intense development on individual sites.
	Policy 7.4.2: Use district stormwater strategies that utilize existing drainage ways to lower costs for individual developments.
	Policy 7.4.3: Encourage retail to cluster in community centers or near transit rather than along strips so that each neighborhood has multimodal access to a core area of services.
Goal 7.5: Enhance the market for Downtown office space.	Policy 7.5.1: Development policies should require that all buildings address the street with main entrances, doors and windows, and shopfronts where appropriate. Parking should be located behind buildings.
	Policy 7.5.2: To support Downtown revitalization and investment, the City should be prepared to continue to develop public parking. Removing parking costs will reduce the rent required to make investment sense. However, parking garages should be lined with commercial or office space at least along the bottom floor to keep streets safe and interesting for pedestrians.
	Policy 7.5.3: The City should prepare capital incentive programs to make the renovation of older buildings financially feasible. In exchange for the subsidy, the City can influence the quality of the renovation.
Goal 7.6: Protect and fortify the market for Downtown retail, particularly in the historic Golden Horseshoe district.	Policy 7.6.1: Market the Golden Horseshoe District to prospective shoppers as well as to prospective tenants and entrepreneurs. An updated information source regarding store mix, square footage, and sales data from Golden Horseshoe merchants would be valuable in this marketing effort. Over time, this information can become an important source of data by which the character and performance of the Golden Horseshoe District can be measured.
	Policy 7.6.2: The City of El Paso should recruit unique, high-quality retailers and/or eating and drinking establishments which currently operate in Juárez. El Paso offers a safe environment that is relatively convenient to the Juárez market.
	Policy 7.6.3: The Golden Horseshoe District and Downtown contribute significantly to the City's economy but its market is vulnerable to border security policies and other unforeseen forces. These resources must be marketed to tourists and other groups of potential shoppers with similar tastes and preferences. Marketing this resource is of interest to the City, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Management District, and the Central Business Association. The Downtown should seek to provide creative weekend packages that include shopping and entertainment as a way to draw markets to the Downtown.
	Policy 7.6.4: Marketing has to be followed-up by human and physical infrastructure designed to serve visitors. High amenity streetscape, wayfinding signs, well-designed walking maps, and a visible and convenient Visitors Center are needed. Those persons serving the visitor market (hotel employees, bus drivers) should be knowledgeable about Downtown resources.
	Policy 7.6.5: The City and the Central Business Association must continue to advocate for smooth and efficient border crossing operations. The Downtown's retail economy is negatively impacted each time the pedestrian crossing process becomes more burdensome.

Table A.1.a – Comprehensive Plan Applicable Goals and Policies

Goal	Policies
Goal 7.7: Create locations attractive to new industrial/tech employers in amenity rich environments.	Policy 7.7.1: Allow industrial as a special exception or special permit use in walkable destination areas with services and retail, contingent on the use category having no conflicts because of hazards or large-scale transportation needs. This will require a finer grained definition of industrial use to identify appropriate uses such as specialized software and programming, industrial design, and small-scale manufacturing.
Goal 7.8: Develop a specialty shopping destination for the region and tourists.	Policy 7.8.1: Art dealers, artist studios and galleries, home accessories stores, and specialty stores that sell unique apparel, jewelry, and gifts are store-types which should be targeted for the Downtown. These stores should target the middle- to upper-income household and younger households.
	Policy 7.8.2: Because specialty stores often require lower overhead to survive, Target Areas in the Downtown such as Texas Avenue, where rents are lower.
	Policy 7.8.3: Develop a cluster of at least three specialty stores within a geographic area. Some Downtown management corporations control a series of storefronts that could be used to facilitate tenant clustering.
Goal 7.9: Develop an eating and drinking destination known throughout the region.	Policy 7.9.1: Encourage a cluster of eating and drinking establishments in the Central Business District around San Jacinto Plaza, Texas Avenue, and in the Union Plaza District. In addition to refreshing San Jacinto Plaza itself, it is imperative that early eating and drinking establishment recruitment efforts target vacant storefronts surrounding this central plaza. Three to four new, destination restaurants on San Jacinto Plaza could effectively transform it into a dynamic urban destination.
	Policy 7.9.2: Develop Texas Avenue between Oregon Street and Stanton Street as an arts and entertainment district. The east end of Texas Avenue can be anchored by the re-use of Bassett Tower as residential and the Blue Flame Building as office space. The west end can be anchored by the re-use of the American Furniture building.
Goal 7.10: Ensure that the SmartCode allows flexibility to respond to market conditions.	Policy 7.10.1: Expedite the approvals of SmartCode development by assigning City Staff to help developers prepare SmartCode applications.
	Policy 7.10.2: Continue to reward SmartCode development with tax incentives, rebates, and infrastructure assistance.
HISTORIC PRESERVATION	
Goal 8.1: Preserve the City of El Paso's valuable historic resources.	Policy 8.1.1: Support the preservation of El Paso's historic resources through public information, advocacy, and leadership within the community and through the use of regulatory tools.
	Policy 8.1.2: Provide widespread cultural and education- al resources and information programs on historic preservation techniques and benefits.
	Policy 8.1.3: Continue to encourage adaptive reuse of historic buildings.
	Policy 8.1.4: Continue to collaborate with various entities to promote historic preservation landmarks and historic events as tourist attractions.

Table A.1.a – Comprehensive Plan Applicable Goals and Policies

Goal	Policies
<p>Goal 8.1: Preserve the City of El Paso’s valuable historic resources. (continued)</p>	<p>Policy 8.1.5: Encourage development planning and design to sensitively incorporate preservation of historic structures and artifacts.</p>
	<p>Policy 8.1.6: Encourage the development of attractive and unique characteristics which help each neighborhood in developing its individual historic value and identity.</p>
	<p>Policy 8.1.7: Inform the public of tax benefits and funding sources available for restoration.</p>
	<p>Policy 8.1.8: Continue to collaborate with various entities to promote historic commemorative events marking significant landmarks in El Paso’s development.</p>
<p>Goal 8.2: Reposition the role of Historic Preservation as an economic development and community-building tool.</p>	<p>Policy 8.2.1: Implement the recently adopted Historic Preservation Action Plan as a living guide for the Historic Preservation Division. Create a timeframe for achieving its goals and pursuing its policies.</p>
	<p>Policy 8.2.2: Continue to work with Historic Preservation partners and the local community to implement the Action Plan.</p>
	<p>Policy 8.2.3: Maintain a regular schedule of meetings with Action Plan task force members to track the progress of the plan and implement its recommendations.</p>
	<p>Policy 8.2.4: Promote Mission Trail with increased and expanded initiatives as a destination of national and international historic and cultural significance. Educate El Pasoans on the region’s importance in local and regional history.</p>
<p>Goal 8.3: Revitalize Downtown first.</p>	<p>Policy 8.3.1: The City should provide financial incentives, regulatory guidance, and technical support for the adaptive reuse of Downtown buildings for use as housing.</p>
	<p>Policy 8.3.2: Promote Downtown El Paso as a living classroom for historic preservation and architecture education, and encourage partnerships with universities on research, documentation, and restoration projects. The Historic Preservation Division and the Department of Planning and Economic Development should work to attract a professional arts school to Downtown El Paso, for instance an art or architecture school with a historic preservation program.</p>
	<p>Policy 8.3.3: Lobby State officials to reform the tax structure for vacant Downtown buildings, which is currently based on a property’s net income rather than its assessed value, thereby encouraging property owners to only lease the ground floor of their buildings and allow the upper floors to remain vacant. Work with City leaders and the County Tax Assessor-Collector. If necessary, also work with El Paso’s State representatives and senator to address the issue at the State level.</p>
	<p>Policy 8.3.4: Monitor the performance of the City’s recently adopted Vacant Building Ordinance to ensure that the intended goals are being achieved. If it is found that the ordinance results in degradation or insensitive changes to historic buildings, take measures to address them, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate historic buildings that are not currently protected and could be insensitively altered as a result of the Vacant Building Ordinance. • Work with the Building Department to adjust the terms of the Vacant Building Ordinance to require the sensitive repair and maintenance of buildings older than 50 years of age.

Table A.1.a – Comprehensive Plan Applicable Goals and Policies

<i>Goal</i>	<i>Policies</i>
<p>Goal 8.4: Historic Preservation should be embraced as an effective economic development and revitalization tool for the City of El Paso.</p>	<p>Policy 8.4.3: Preserve architecturally or culturally significant structures which are not historically designated and lie outside of the historic districts.</p>
<p>Goal 8.7: Promote historic preservation as part of a holistic strategy to promote walkable, livable, and humane place making.</p>	<p>Policy 8.7.1: Promote training programs for architects, designers, and builders to work with traditional buildings and learn traditional building techniques. As these professionals gain experience in rehabilitating historic buildings, they will learn how to transfer these lessons into a new generation of high-quality buildings and places throughout the City.</p> <p>Policy 8.7.2: Promote educational programs for the financial sector to learn the benefits of investing in historic properties, particularly irregular, small, or mixed-use properties that may not have market comparables according to conventional financing practices. As financing for these types of properties becomes more mainstream, it will become easier for developers to obtain financing for new walkable communities with small units and mixed-use products.</p>

Appendix **B**

Brownfield Inventory

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Appendix C

Downtown El Paso Market Assessment

Prepared by: Quantum Engineering

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Appendix **D**

Public Engagement Summary

Prepared by: Quantum Engineering

