



City Center 2050 Plan



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City Centers

They are referred to as downtowns and central business districts, city centers and urban cores. They are described as blighted and old, or revitalized and vibrant; but regardless of their condition, they are the heart and soul of their community. They are a living history of a city's successes and failures, and a benchmark of their economic and social health. Older cities strive to revitalize them, while younger cities take up the challenge to build them where they never before existed. Their appearance and function reflect an important image—a positive or negative perception of their host community as a place to live, work and visit.

The City of Medford is fortunate to have a city center that not only serves as the heart of our community, our historic birthplace, but also a place that plays a major role as the business and government center for the Rogue Valley. Medford's downtown has its strengths, but it also has its challenges. The challenges facing Medford's downtown are not unique when compared to other downtowns; in fact, they are common. How Medford addresses these challenges is what will make our community unique. Medford's strengths and opportunities provide a solid and enduring foundation on which to build a vibrant and sustainable downtown.

Medford's challenge is to see that our downtown once again becomes a vibrant and attractive place that adds to the aesthetic and economic value of the community. Other cities have accomplished this objective by defining their downtown's role

Cities die from the inside out. They are saved the same way.

Cities on the Rebound: A Vision for Urban America

William H. Hudnut



Medford Hotel, c. 1911



Pay'n Tak'it Groceria, c. 1927



Medford Carnegie Library,
c. 1912

in the social, physical, and economic fabric of their cities. They have realized that downtown revitalization is an on-going process, and that to be successful and sustainable it must be incorporated into the comprehensive planning process of the whole community, which is the objective of this *Plan*. Today's vibrant city centers are built on yesterday's visions in action.

Purpose of the City Center 2050 Plan

The purpose of the *City Center 2050 Plan* is to define a long-term vision and implementation program for the revitalization and redevelopment of Medford's city center. It is a program set within the context of the City's comprehensive planning process, and is intended to be a distinct, but integral, element of the City of Medford's *Comprehensive Plan*. The *City Center 2050 Plan* is a vision for the future, which establishes the City Center as a regional center of commerce and cultural activity; recognizes the unique high-density transit-oriented mixed-use urban setting and historic presence of the area; preserves integrity of its neighborhoods; and improves the area's livability.

The purpose of the *City Center 2050 Plan* is predicated on the understanding that:

The downtown is a critical component of the City, and its vitality and health is representative of the vitality and health of all of Medford;

The downtown is the basis on which the City's urban centered growth policies will be developed, as stated both in the *Comprehensive Plan* and in the City's vision, Medford in the 21st Century; and

Revitalization of the downtown is a never-ending process that must be acknowledged and incorporated into all aspects of the City's present and future planning efforts.

The purpose in adopting the *City Center 2050 Plan* is to create a great downtown within a great city. It is also the purpose in

adopting this Plan, to introduce a plan that is clear and understandable to the general public, to decision-makers, and to private investors of today and tomorrow. The visions, goals, policies, tools and initiatives contained in the *City Center 2050 Plan* focus on these larger goals.

It is expected that this *City Center 2050 Plan*, as with the downtown's revitalization, will be a work in progress, to be referenced on a continual basis, to be applied and updated as necessary to assure that the City's land use plans, policies, and regulations support revitalization of the City Center as a vibrant regional service center throughout many generations.

The Planning Process

Background

Over the course of the past 50 years there have been many studies addressing revitalization of Medford's City Center. Some of these studies were pro-active, others were prepared as a reaction to external threats to the economic health and vitality of the City Center. Many of the findings presented in these past studies have, for the most part, retained their applicability to this day, and have been incorporated into the *City Center 2050 Plan*.

It is important to acknowledge these past studies, not so much for their findings and recommendations, but for their continued declaration of concern for the health and vitality of the City Center. In chronological order, past major studies include:

1. Parking Survey, City of Medford, Oregon, 1954

This document was prepared in 1954 under the supervision of the Public Works Director, Vernon Thorpe. The purpose of the report was to "...show the actual conditions relative to parking as they exist in the Medford Central Business District." The survey concluded with seven recommendations, including the formation of a parking committee and a parking authority or assessment district committee (Figure 2-1).



Fig. 2-1. Parking Survey, City of Medford, 1954

2. Medford, Oregon—Planning for the Central Business District, 1961

In 1961 the City Council, through a matching grant with the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency, commissioned the preparation of a downtown study. The study was prepared by the Bureau of Municipal Research and Service, University of Oregon, and was the first planning study of Medford’s downtown. The study was prepared in response to the changing character of the downtown as it faced increasing competition from “modern shopping centers” and the general decentralization of the population as a result of urban growth (Figure 2-2).

The study evaluated downtown’s location as a regional service center, its traffic patterns, parking, property ownership, building conditions, and future growth projections. The study concluded that the downtown should:

Be compact, easily accessible, safe and convenient for shoppers;

Route traffic to circumvent the downtown, opening Main Street and Central Avenue only to pedestrians; and

Provide a grade separation at the railroad crossing on Jackson Street and Tenth Street.

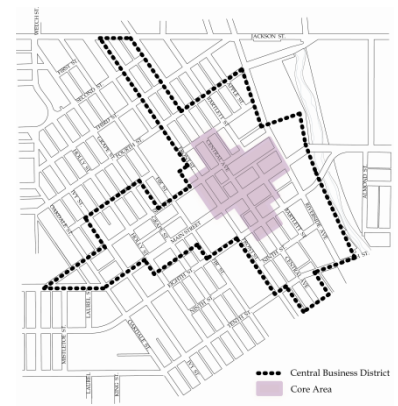


Fig. 2-2. Medford Central Business District, 1961

3. Medford City Center Plan, A Program for Revitalization, 1966



Fig. 2-3. Medford Central Business District, 1966

Prepared in 1966 by the consulting firm of Eisner-Stewart and Associates, this plan built on the findings of the 1961 plan, with emphasis on revitalization of the city center. During the preceding five years it became evident that the character of Medford was changing and that planning for the downtown could not be separated from planning for the city. The following questions raised during development of the 1966 plan are worth repeating, for most of them are as applicable today in determining the future of the City Center as they were 40 years ago (Figure 2-3):

Where will new businesses locate?

Is downtown Medford’s present economic position and prosperity secured?

Are conditions in the downtown such that first class merchandising organizations will locate and invest millions of dollars in the area?

Will the City’s Core Area be able to retain those nationally known businesses that are so important to the Area’s present existence?

Are the merchants and property owners willing to work with the County in attempting to establish sound countywide zoning to protect present and future investments?

In response to these questions, the following seven strategies for revitalization were proposed:

Street Improvements;

Off-Street Parking Improvements;

Pedestrian Mall Development;

Civic Center Development;

Commercial Development;
Convention Center Complex Development; and
Bear Creek Promenade Development.

It was recommended that these strategies be implemented in four stages, concluding with the convention center complex. The recommendations were very aggressive, including the conversion of Main Street and Central Avenue to a pedestrian mall and realignment of the railroad.

The *Medford City Center Plan, a Program for Revitalization* never gained sufficient public support to be implemented as a comprehensive downtown revitalization plan. However, over the years many of that plan's parking recommendations were implemented and other recommendations have been carried over to later plans.

4. Civic Center Plan, 1968

Prepared in 1968 by Edson & Patterson and Langford & Stewart, the *Civic Center Plan* expanded on the 1966 *Medford City Center Plan, a Program for Revitalization* by addressing specific development needs of the civic center area around the old County Courthouse (Main Street and Oakdale Avenue). Although the convention facility identified in this Plan was never constructed, it is worth noting that this Plan played a key roll in the location and construction of City Hall, the County Justice Center, and the Juvenile Facility.

... public actions to remove constraints and complement private improvements with appropriate policies would increase the probability that the downtown would avoid the option of stagnation and proceed on the path of achievable growth.

*Medford Downtown
Market Opportunities*

Gruen Gruen + Associates,
1982

5. Traffic Safety, Circulation and Parking—
Downtown Medford, 1978

This report was prepared in 1978 by Carl H. Buttke, Inc. to analyze current accident rates (vehicular and pedestrian), present and future traffic circulation, and parking conditions within the downtown. This report concluded with the following recommendations to (Figure 2-4):

Increase off-street parking. It was estimated that by 1990 an additional 650 off-street parking spaces would be required in the downtown.



Fig. 2-4. Downtown Medford
Traffic, Safety, Circulation &
Parking, 1978

Accommodate north-south traffic with a Riverside Avenue and Front Street one-way couplet supplemented by a new one-way couplet system on Grape and Holly Streets.

Construct a parking garage on the City owned property on Sixth Street between Bartlett Street and Riverside Avenue.

Expand the City parking lot on the north side of Sixth Street between Fir Street and the Southern Pacific Railroad.

Add two parking lots along the south side of Eighth Street between Holly Street and the Southern Pacific Railroad.

Improve public transit to attract more employees, including a carpool program with provisions for preferential parking and staggered work hours.

Many of the recommendations presented in this report were ultimately carried forward to the 1988 *City Center Revitalization Plan*, and have since been implement as part of that Plan.

6. Medford Downtown Revitalization Plan, 1981

Prepared in 1981 in an effort to “. . . make downtown a true town center, a place that meets the citizen’s needs.” Once again a plan was being prepared in response to an external threat, Medford’s first regional shopping mall, which was scheduled for completion by 1984 (Figure 2-5). As with the 1966 *Medford City Center Plan, a Program for Revitalization*, downtown’s purpose was again being challenged. The following revitalization objectives were set forth in this Plan:

Maintain the downtown area as a center for retail and office development and cultural activities.

Provide present and future parking for shoppers and employees in a manner that meets specific identified needs.

Improve ease and safety of pedestrian movement in the downtown, making it pleasant and attractive.

Modify as needed: zoning, building codes, and local administrative processes, consistent with a need for public safety, to encourage both new development and rehabilitation of existing commercial and residential structures.

Protect existing housing stock in adjacent neighborhoods through rehabilitation programs; and encourage conversion of suitable existing structures to housing units within the downtown.

Where needed throughout the downtown, provide public amenities such as: benches, weather shelters, restrooms, bike racks, telephones, and community bulletin boards.

Develop Bear Creek so that its natural open space potential is incorporated into new development, and public access is provided.



Pedestrian Alley, 1981



Fig. 2-5. Medford Downtown Revitalization Plan, 1981

Relieve traffic congestion and conflicts between through-traffic and downtown-destination traffic by development of arterial road systems, proper placement of parking facilities, and development of alternative transportation methods.

Provide creative and flexible design guidelines for building improvements, including signs, to upgrade the overall appearance of the downtown.

Provide an organizational matrix that defines the relationship and responsibilities between the Heart of Medford Association and the City of Medford relative to implement of the Plan.

Due to a lack of funding, this Plan attained only limited implementation. Some streetscape improvements along Main Street were completed, but the vitality of the downtown remained a concern as businesses continued to vacate the downtown. In retrospect, the most significant contribution of this Plan was the eventual formation of an urban renewal agency and adoption of an urban renewal plan in 1988. Many of the projects and activities described in this Plan were carried forward to the 1988 *City Center Revitalization Plan, An Urban Renewal Plan for the City of Medford*.

Downtowns work best when they are compact. It is remarkable indeed how many have a core no more than four blocks square.

Rediscovering the Center City,
William H. Whyte

7. Downtown Medford Market Opportunities Report, 1980

Prepared in 1980 by Gruen Gruen + Associates, the Report’s purpose was to identify market strategies to influence revitalization of the downtown. Once again, with the threat of the City’s first regional shopping mall, there was concern with regard to the mall’s economic impacts on the City Center. The report identified three downtown strengths:

Relative central location;

Core of financial institutions, and private and public sector offices; and

Relatively low land and property values.

The Report concluded with a series of suggested policy actions: improve physical numbers of parking spaces and management of that parking; convert Central Avenue to two-way; neither close streets nor convert the downtown into a mall; develop a self-help program to improve the aesthetic appearance of the downtown; recapture downtown as an office and service hub of the region; encourage specialty retail; and monitor economic changes as they apply to the downtown.

8. City Center Revitalization Plan, an Urban Renewal Plan for the City of Medford, 1988

Adopted in late 1988, this Plan was the result of continued citizen interest in the downtown's revitalization. As the economic impacts of the new regional mall and other shopping centers continued to weaken the economic critical mass of the downtown as a regional retail center, the citizens of Medford refused to let their downtown die. In response, the City Council appointed a Citizens' Advisory Committee to recommend on the appropriateness of creating an urban renewal district to facilitate revitalization of the City Center. It was the recommendation of the Committee that an urban renewal district be formed in accordance with Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 457. On October 20, 1988 the City Council adopted the *City Center Revitalization Plan, An Urban Renewal Plan for the City of Medford*. With this Plan, tax increment financing was introduced as a tool for funding the city center urban renewal plan. After more than 40 years, the City Center now had the economic tools necessary to take action (Figure 2-6).



Fig. 2-6. Medford Central Business District, 1988



Fig. 2-7. Downtown City Center Vision Plan, 1994

9. Medford Downtown/Bear Creek Vision Plan, 1989

This plan was prepared in 1989 by The Office of Robert Perron, Landscape Architects and Planners in response to a development proposal along Bear Creek. It was less a plan and more of a visioning process for Bear Creek and how it could integrate with the downtown. Through the visioning process the community clearly stated that:

- Bear Creek can be made into a civic asset;
- Business and public spaces should re-orient to Bear Creek;
- Recreational activities along Bear Creek should be maximized;
- Downtown and Bear Creek should be linked;
- A master plan/action plan and implementation schedule is needed;
- Financing methods and sources need identification; and
- Citizen participation and involvement is essential.

In 1998, to improve creek flow, the Jackson Street Dam was removed. In 2002 the City, in conjunction with the Medford Urban Renewal Agency, completed a *Bear Creek Master Plan/Action Plan*, which is to be included in the City's *Comprehensive Plan*.

10. Downtown City Center Vision Plan, 1994

As a result of public interest, and the success of the *City Center Revitalization Plan*, the Medford Urban Renewal Agency Board of Directors began asking some very abstract, but legitimate questions. Foremost in the Board's mind was:

- What type of downtown did the community want;
- What role would it play in the City's future; and

How would the *City Center Revitalization Plan* help achieve that objective?

In response to these questions, the Agency commissioned the firm of Hyatt/Palma to facilitate the preparation of a community based vision plan for the downtown (Figure 2-7). In 1994, after extensive public input, a vision for the downtown to recapture its regional position, protect its historic heritage, and to reintroduce residential uses, was presented to the public. On April 12, 1994 the Medford Urban Renewal Agency approved the *Downtown City Center Vision Plan* as its primary policy document for the revitalization of the City Center.

11. City of Medford Downtown Historic District, 1998

Earlier studies identified the historic assets of downtown and the benefits of building on these historic assets as both a revitalization strategy and implementing the City's Comprehensive Plan goal to preserve and protect historic resources. In 1996, George Kramer, representing the Heart of Medford Association, the Medford Urban Renewal Agency, and the City of Medford, completed a historic inventory of the downtown's core area. On April 20, 1998 the Medford Downtown Historic District nomination was approved by the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. Downtown's recognition as a Historic District formalized historic preservation as a key revitalization strategy for the City Center. Since formation of the Downtown Historic District the Medford Urban Renewal Agency has instituted a Historic Façade Program and Historic and Seismic Renovation Loan Program. Together these programs have resulted in the renovation of many of the downtown's commercial buildings.

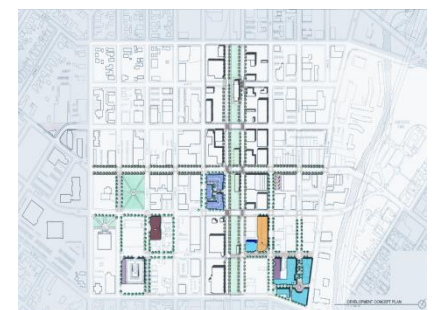
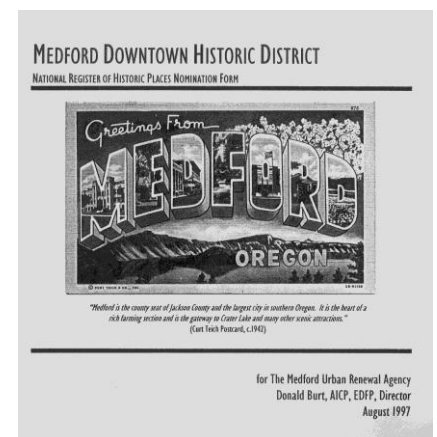


Fig. 2-8. Medford City Center Design Concept '99

12. Medford City Center Design Concept '99, 1999

In 1999 the downtown was presented with numerous commercial and public development challenges and opportunities, such as a new 78,000 sq. ft. headquarters library, a 100,000 sq. ft. mixed-use project, and expansion of Rogue Community College. In response to these opportunities and through a DLCD/ODOT Transportation Growth Management Program grant, the Medford Urban Renewal Agency prepared the *Medford City Center Design Concept '99* that refined prior planning efforts and illustrated how these projects could be accomplished within the context of the *City Center Vision Plan* and the *City Center Revitalization Plan*.

As a result of the *Medford City Center Design Concept '99*, a new 78,000 sq. ft. headquarters library was sited in the downtown and construction was completed in Fall 2003; Rogue Community College continues to grow and is currently preparing its own master plan for a downtown campus; and the Medford Urban Renewal Agency is pursuing opportunities for a mixed-use project and a second parking structure, to be located on Main Street between Fir Street and the railroad tracks.

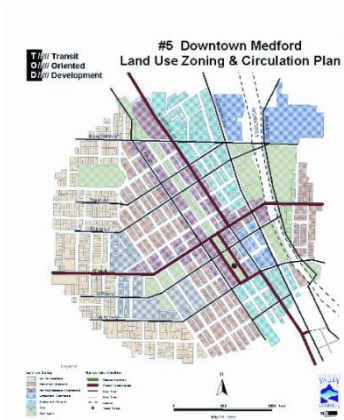


Fig. 2-9. RVTD Transit Study, 1999

13. Transit-Oriented Design (TOD) and Transit Corridor Development Strategies for the Rogue Valley Transportation District, 1999

This Report was completed in 1999 for the specific purpose of improving the efficiency of transit use within the Rogue Valley Transit District. A strong driving factor behind preparation of this Report was the Oregon Transportation Planning Rule and a need to encourage reduction of vehicular miles traveled. The Report identified ten transit activity centers and applicable land use policies and regulatory practices consistent with the needs of transit oriented development (TOD). Using a system of ten criteria (Development Opportunity, Multi-Modal Setting, Multiple Land Use Options, Citizen Support, Local

Jurisdiction Support, Developer/Interest Support, Suitable Infrastructure, Environmental Constraints, Duplicative Planning, and Accessibility/Street Grid Potential) the Report ranked each of the ten sites. Of the ten sites, Downtown Medford was ranked number two as a preferred location for designation as a transit oriented district and, but for the lack of developer interest, would have ranked number one.

The Downtown Transit Activity Center scored the maximum points in multiple land use options, multi-modal transportation setting, infrastructure, environmental and street grid criteria. Its historic identity and structures, combined with mixed-use environment, high density, multiple transportation options and existing infrastructure make it an excellent transit supportive development opportunity to serve all of Southern Oregon.

14. Medford in the 21st Century, 1999

In 1999 the City initiated a citywide visioning process, *Medford in the 21st Century*, which introduced a holistic approach to the City’s comprehensive planning and community development. The psychological and economic significance of a vibrant downtown, as a component of the City’s urban centered growth objectives, attained a renewed interest.

The first step in refinement of downtown revitalization as an urban centered growth tool is to define and firmly establish the downtown’s role and purpose, and to keep that purpose firmly represented throughout the City’s planning process. This is best achieved by including in the City’s *Comprehensive Plan* a special city center plan, with goals, policies, and implementation strategies that are coordinated with the planning of all of Medford.

Downtown Medford is a vibrant and enjoyable regional center that includes a mix of residential, commercial, educational, cultural, recreational and public uses that provide activities around the clock, seven days a week.

Medford in the 21st
Century
City of Medford

15. Evergreen/Front Couplet and In-Town Village Study, 2002

This Study was prepared with a *DLCD/ODOT Transportation Growth Management Program* grant. The study was prepared by RBF Consultants to address and identify opportunities within the In-Town Village area (Figure 2-10) to:

Further evaluate the possibilities of Evergreen Way as a more efficient north-south alternative to Front Street;

Develop design options for Evergreen Way; and

Address the residential redevelopment potential of the In-Town Village as a higher density neighborhood, consistent with its current land use designation.

The Study concluded with recommendations to support conservation of the primarily residential neighborhood west of Fir Street, but to allow for increases in density, provided that design standards exist to assure retention of the neighborhood's historic character. Opportunities for higher density mixed-use redevelopment were identified east of Fir Street.

With respect to the north-south connectivity issue, the Study evaluated five alternative routes, including the conversion of Front Street to one-way and Central Avenue to two-way, as described in the *City Center Revitalization Plan*, Project No. 10. It was concluded that from a traffic standpoint, the Front-Central conversion had limited benefits from either a transportation or land use perspective, and that Evergreen Way's function should be restricted to that of a minor local street serving as a major pedestrian link between the In-Town Village and the City Center core area. To improve north-south connectivity it was recommended that Fir Street be extended north to McAndrews Road and that Front Street be extended north to Central Avenue.



Fig. 2-10. Evergreen/Front and In-town Village Study, 2002

For the forecast 5-year period, the downtown capture rates are projected at 1.3% of the forecast family household growth and 4.5% of the forecast non-family household growth.

Housing Study Downtown
Medford
Bruce M. Ostly

16. Housing Study Downtown Medford, 2002

Over the years, housing as a revitalization strategy was casually discussed, but it was not until 2000 that serious consideration was given to affordable and market-rate housing as a viable tool to revitalization of the downtown. Experience in other communities indicates that downtown housing provides not only opportunities to live and work in a walkable environment, but it also provides support to downtown businesses and expands a downtown's operations from an 8-hour commercial center to a 24-hour urban center.

In May 2002 Medford Urban Renewal Agency completed *Housing Study, Downtown Medford*. The Study was prepared by Bruce M. Ostly, Real Estate Consulting, and took a market approach to the type and number of housing units that could be supported in the downtown. The Study concluded that there are strong demographic and socio-economic forces at work in today's market that favor downtown cores for residential living that didn't exist in the 1970's or 1980's. The Study identified two preconditions for successful market-rate housing in the downtown:

Downtown's physical environment must be of a character and quality that encourages people to want to live there; and

Downtown housing must offer prospective purchasers an investment motive for ownership.

The Study noted that downtown housing was a niche market and account for a small percentage of the overall Medford housing market. The Study concluded with strategies for achieving the above preconditions. These strategies have been incorporated into the *City Center 2050 Plan* under the Housing Goal (see Chapter 6, Goals, Policies and Implementation).

The area is ripe for a forward-thinking, cutting-edge, park space with reclaimed wetlands, bike paths, bold vegetative planting, and useable, sculptural art that ties in with the juxtaposition of being in between two working logging mills. Think 'Gas Works Park' in Seattle and bring it to Medford.

Bear Creek Master Plan,
Citizen comment

17. Office Study Downtown Medford, 2003

This report was completed June 2003 by Bruce M. Ostly, Real Estate Consulting, and evaluated the demand for office space throughout Jackson County, with a focus on the City Center office niche. The City Center remains the region’s largest office location, but that role has significantly declined over the past 50 years, from 80% of the office market to less than 30%. The Study concluded that to retain its current office market position, over the course of the next ten years the City Center should target approximately 250,000 sq. ft. of new office space. This finding was consistent with the 1980 Gruen + Gruen Associates’ *Downtown Medford Market Opportunities Report* and the 1994 Hyatt/Palma *Downtown City Center Vision Plan*, which supported the need for new office development in the City Center in order to maintain its “critical mass as a regional office center.”



18. Bear Creek Master Plan, 2003

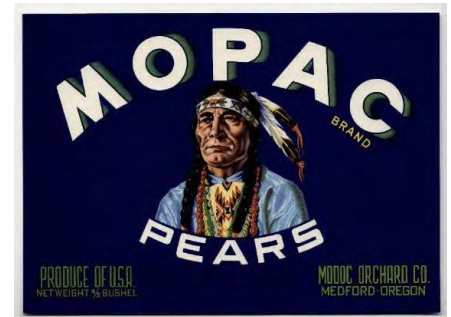
In late 2002 the City of Medford commissioned Design Studios West, Inc. to prepare a master plan for the development of the seven and one-half mile length of Bear Creek as it bisects the community. The purpose of the Plan is to document the community’s long-term goals and projects that improve, enhance, and protect the assets of Bear Creek while still allowing use of the Bear Creek corridor. The Plan was completed in January of 2003 and adopted that same year and by the City Council as part of the City’s *Comprehensive Plan*.

The *Bear Creek Master Plan* is divided into three zones; the North Zone, the Central Zone, and the South Zone. Within the Central Zone there is a further division that includes a Downtown Medford sub-zone, which is the most heavily used section of Bear Creek. The Downtown sub-zone included design and project concepts that addressed improvements to Bear Creek that are consistent with the urban context of the downtown. The *City Center 2050 Plan* references and supports the *Bear Creek Master Plan*.

Chapter 3

Assets and Challenges

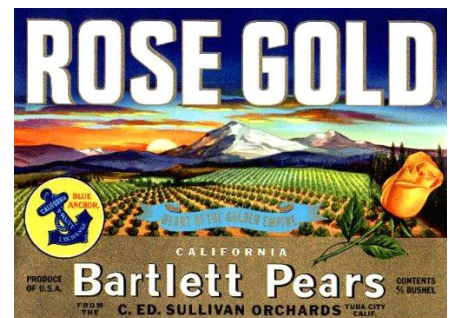
As noted, past planning studies have identified and discussed numerous assets and challenges confronting revitalization of the City Center. Over the years these assets and challenges have remained relatively constant from one plan to the other. Not until recently has it been realized that many of the challenges, under the proper circumstances, will ultimately be considered assets. The following is a list of assets and challenges applicable to the City Center’s revitalization.



ASSET – Urban Environment

Medford’s City Center possesses the basic elements of a strong urban environment, including an established pedestrian friendly grid street system, a pedestrian scale urban landscape, public transit, mixed-uses, urban density, and regional access. These elements are significant building blocks on which the City Center can continue to develop into a vibrant and strong urban environment.

The City Center’s central location, urban environment, existing infrastructure, and history are significant inducements to the continued revitalization of the City Center as the region’s primary transit oriented district. In order to sustain and enhance this urban environment it is necessary that the appropriate design and development standards be adopted. Otherwise, the current physical environment will change to reflect the most predominant development style, suburban.

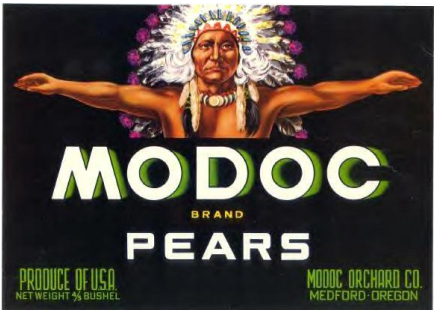


ASSET—History

The City Center’s historic context, both architecturally and culturally, is an irreplaceable asset that sets the City Center apart from any other neighborhood, and sets Medford apart from any other city.

ASSET—Demographics/Residential

Changing demographics offer significant potential and heightened interest for increasing residential uses in the City Center, particularly with mixed-use and live-work housing opportunities. A key component to the successful and sustainable revitalization of the City Center, development of the City’s largest transit oriented district, is high-density market-rate housing in a mixed-use environment. It is important to recognize that the demand for City Center housing represents a small niche in the overall housing market. The estimated demand for new housing in the City Center is conservatively 5% of the City’s annual new housing starts, with the largest demand by non-family households (Ostley, *Housing Study Downtown Medford*, May 2002).

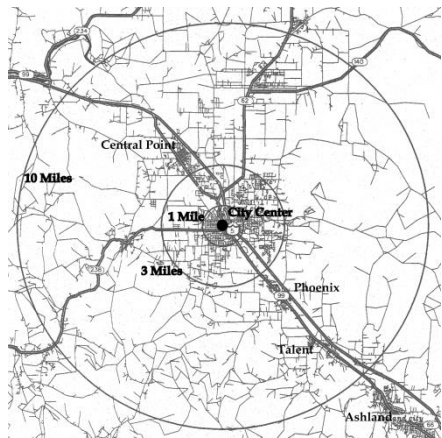


ASSET—Employment

Historically, the City Center has been the employment core of the community, with more employees per acre than any other location. Today, the City Center remains one of the region’s most significant employment centers, and is planned and zoned for high-density commercial and residential development.

ASSET—Location

The City Center retains its proximity to all areas of the Rogue Valley and is the central city to the Metropolitan Area. Over 25,000 households are located within a three-mile radius of the City Center. The City Center is conveniently located between two major I-5 interchanges, and is bordered on the east by



Bear Creek and the Bear Creek Greenway, which runs from Ashland to the Rogue River.

CHALLENGE—Image Perception

As with many older city centers, Medford’s city center is often perceived as old and worn out. The visual image of older, poorly maintained buildings has naturally led to a perception of a place that has passed its prime as a vibrant location for living, shopping and conducting business.

CHALLENGE—Investment Perception

An associated perception is the “investment avoidance” perception. As a result of the Image Perception and urban fringe development competition, there exists a strong surge of investment into the urban fringe, which has created its own momentum, and consequently absorbed the majority of the community’s growth investment, both public and private.

Because of the historic nature and high-density mixed-use environment of the City Center it is more costly to renovate downtown than to build in outlying fringe areas. New development in the City Center requires land acquisition, demolition, and environmental and historic remediation, at costs that are greater than in the fringe areas. Between the cost of new development and the cost of downtown renovation vs. new development in urban fringe, there is limited incentive to proceed with investing in City Center projects.

To replace these perceptions, the image of downtown as a tired old business center must change. Strategies for image change rest with the area’s historic assets, urban character and pedestrian environment, all of which make downtown unique among commercial areas. These changes will give the City Center some notice, but it is also necessary to further facilitate these perception changes with public policy to reverse the negative image and investment perception.

Long-time residents are often die-hard skeptics. They see things as they are without fresh vision of what can be. They remember what things were and think nothing as good can replace that. They long ago gave up on downtown, took their loyalties elsewhere, and view suspiciously anyone who refuses to give up on downtown. In big cities and small, this crippling phenomenon is widespread.

Cities Back from the Edge
Roberta Brandes Gratz

There are four strategies that need to be put into action to offset the investment perception:

The City of Medford, through efforts such as the *City Center Revitalization Plan*, should continue to encourage and support investment in the City Center; and

The intensity and quality of development in the City Center must be high enough to offset land acquisition costs, and to support transit, housing, urban centered growth, and other public objectives.

The City should use the development of strategically located public parking as an incentive to encourage redevelopment of the City Center.

The City Center should be perceived as a market niche to investors who are looking for high-density, transit oriented urban environments. All City Center goals, policies, and actions should recognize and support the City Center’s unique market niche. If properly aligned these goals, policies and actions, will protect the private investment in the City Center.

CHALLENGE—“Critical Mass”

Historically, the downtown had sufficient critical mass to attract and retain commercial investment. Between 1910 and 1924 the downtown accounted for 87% of all office space in Medford. However, since 1924 the downtown’s percentage of office space has declined to less than 30%. The downtown’s critical office mass has not only been eroded through the loss of major retail tenants and office uses, but it has also failed to attract equivalent replacement uses. Consequently, the City Center’s critical mass as a commercial and business center is in need of reinforcement (Gruen Gruen & Associates, *Downtown Market Opportunities*, 1981).

CHALLENGE—Unfilled Housing Demand

While great potential exists for residential uses in the City Center, there has not been any appreciable investment in market-rate City Center housing during the past 50 years. The citizens of Medford have repeatedly identified the need for City Center housing as a component of the downtown’s revitalization strategy. As a result of changing demographics, there is a growing demand for housing in the City Center. It needs to be noted that the market for City Center housing is small, estimated at 50 units per year over the next five years, and the housing type is specialized, characterized as high density, mixed-use or live-work developments, with support from nearby commercial uses. In conjunction with growth and transportation objectives the City Center offers a unique opportunity to improve the balance between live-work locations in an environment that has an underutilized infrastructure, is walkable, and has the highest probability to support transit.

CHALLENGE—Urban Character

In many ways the current City Center urban experience lacks qualities that establish a sense of place, such as cohesion and character. The City Center should incorporate planning and design practices that foster a more energetic pedestrian experience. Pedestrian-oriented (high density), rather than suburban scale and form (low density, auto-oriented design), should guide the development of buildings and streetscapes in the City Center.

CHALLENGE—Lack of Environmental Amenities

The community identified several environmental issues impacting the City Center, including air quality affects from transportation, the need for more urban parks, and improved linkages and utilization of Bear Creek, Alba Park, Vogel Plaza and Hawthorn Park as City Center recreational amenities.

The Plan Area

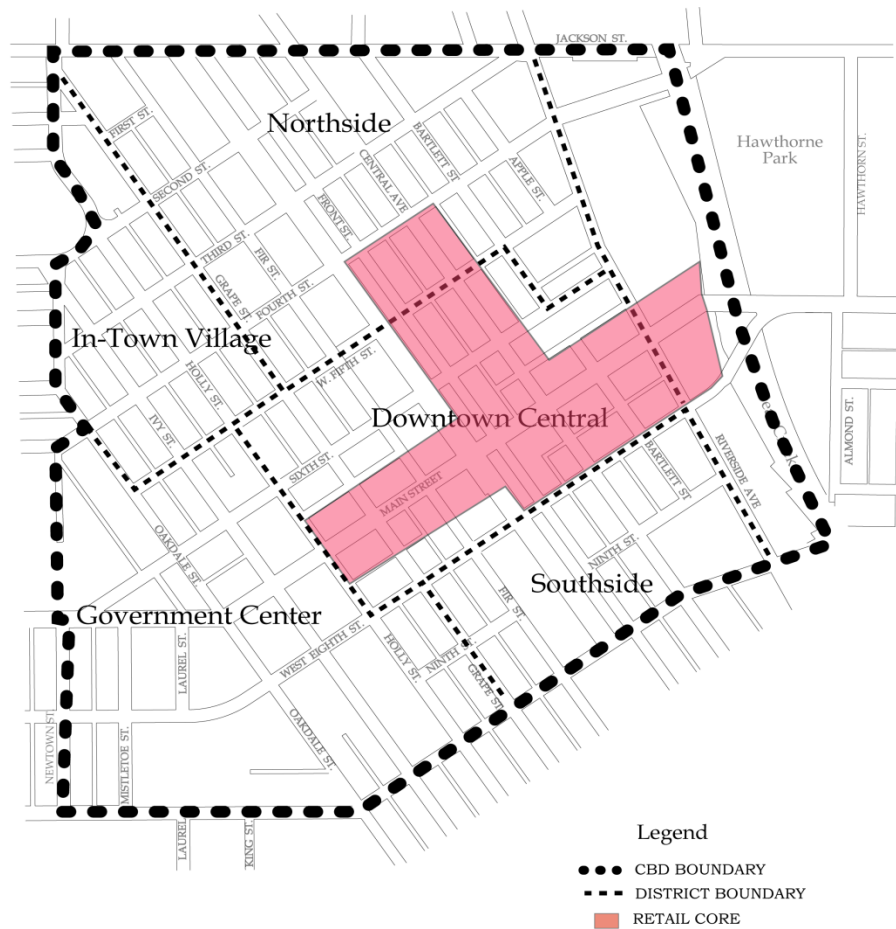


Fig. 4-1.
City Center and Neighborhood District Boundaries map

The City Center comprises approximately 220 acres of commercially and residentially zoned land, bordered by Jackson Street on the north, Tenth Street on the south, Hawthorne Avenue/Almond Street on the east, and Oakdale Avenue on the west. This area comprises most of the originally platted

City of Medford. Figure 4-1, *The City Center Neighborhood District Boundaries Map*, identifies the geographic boundaries of the City Center.

CITY CENTER SUB-DISTRICTS

For a city the size of Medford, the City Center comprises a large, but pedestrian friendly, geographic area. The size of the City Center is a reflection of the historic significance of Medford as a regional center for government and commerce. For the City Center to flourish economically and to serve the needs of its varied markets, it has been segmented into seven compatible and complimentary sub-districts. The purpose of using sub-districts is two-fold. First, to enhance the City Center’s pedestrian character by reinforcing visually unique environments, and second, to clustered use opportunities that encourages each use within a sub-district to benefit, and benefit from, the other uses in the sub-district. The seven sub-districts are as follows:

1. Downtown Central

This is the traditional retail and historic core of the City Center. Downtown Central should be developed as a mixed-use area with maximum emphasis placed on retention of the sub-district’s historic character and pedestrian access and amenities. Critical linkages should be made between Downtown Central, Bear Creek and the other downtown sub-districts, with Downtown Central serving as the City Center’s core area. A unique physical ambience should be cultivated in this sub-district. This ambience should be built on: preservation of the sub-district’s historic buildings, select and sensitive infill construction, and pedestrian-oriented streetscape improvements.

2. Government Center

This is the area of the City Center where government offices and facilities (municipal, county, state, and federal) are, and

should continue to be concentrated. Major emphasis in this sub-district should be placed on preservation of older structures, maintenance of large open spaces, appropriate infill construction, convenient traffic flow, and the provision of adequate off-street parking.

3. In-Town Village

This sub-district is currently a transitional single-family residential area, which is planned for future high-density multiple-family housing. Market-rate high-density residential redevelopment of an architectural style that complements the historic residential character of this sub-district should be encouraged and supported. The In-Town Village sub-district should be promoted as a City Center neighborhood that is within easy walking distance to all City Center neighborhoods.

4. Evergreen

The Evergreen sub-district is a transitional mixed-use area buffering the In-Town Village from the more intense uses of the Northside sub-district. The Evergreen sub-district is intended to provide redevelopment opportunities for mixed-use employment along the railroad right-of-way and transitioning to mixed-use housing adjacent to the In-Town Village sub-district.

5. Northside

This sub-district should be viewed as the northern gateway to the City Center. As such, it must project an attractive image and provide easy vehicular access to the City Center. Preferred uses in the Northside sub-district include high quality lodging facilities, a convention/conference facility, professional offices, mid-rise residential, and convenience retail to serve the sub-district’s employees, residents, and visitors.

6. Southside

This is the southern gateway to the City Center and should provide the same quality image and convenient traffic flow as provided in the Northside sub-district. This sub-district serves as the arts, cultural, and education area and is the transit hub for the region. Preferred uses in this sub-district include higher education, headquarters library, professional offices, mid-rise residential, arts and entertainment, and convenience retail to serve the sub-district's employee's students, residents, and visitors.

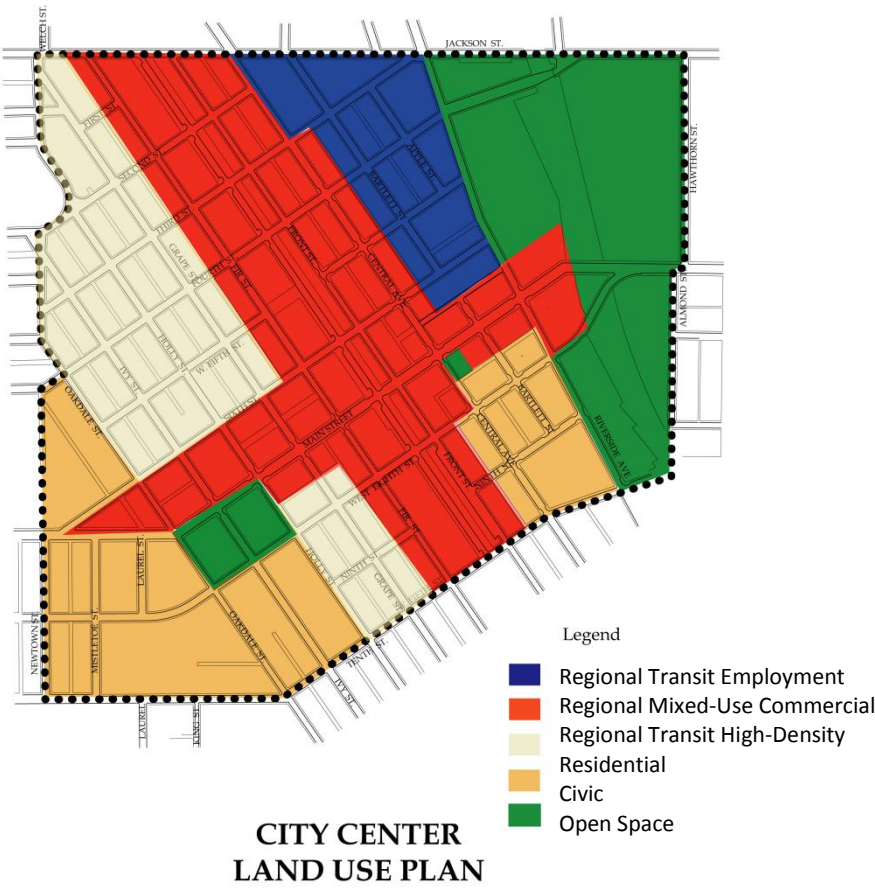
7. Creekside

This sub-district focuses on Bear Creek and the recreational and tourist opportunities offered by Bear Creek. The Creekside sub-district addresses the previously identified challenge of a lack of natural amenities in the City Center. The Creekside sub-district needs to be conveniently linked with all other City Center sub-districts to expand the natural amenities that Bear Creek and Hawthorne Park have to offer.



LAND USE / ZONING

The City’s *Comprehensive Plan* recognizes the City Center as a Regional Transit-Oriented District. Within that District there are five land use/zoning categories; Regional Transit High Density Residential, Regional Transit Mixed-Use Residential, Regional Transit Employment, Civic, and Open Space. These five categories were derived from the model zoning ordinance used in the *Transit-Oriented Development Report* prepared by the Rogue Valley Council of Governments. Figure 4-2 is the *City Center Land Use Plan*.



1. Regional Transit Employment. This land use designation permits retail, service, and office uses. Activities, which are oriented and complementary to pedestrian travel and transit are encouraged. Automobile oriented activities are generally not included in the list of permitted uses. Residential uses above ground floor commercial uses are consistent with the purposes of this land use designation.

2. Regional Mixed-Use Commercial. This designation permits high-density urban residential uses (50 to 80 units per gross acre), above ground floor commercial space.

3. Regional Transit High-Density Residential. This land use designation permits high-density residential (20 to 40 units per gross acre).

4. Civic. This land use designation permits government service and office support uses.

5. Open Space. This land use designation provides for public and private recreational opportunities within the City Center and along Bear Creek. In addition to opens space and recreational uses additional permitted uses include tourist services such as hotels/motels) and restaurants.

The City Center 2050 Plan

A vision is a beacon that guides the way for any change to be made Downtown. It is not a plan, but it is a step in the planning process. Your vision tells you where you want to go – the future you want to create – and it should be part of a plan that tells you how to get there.

*Creating the Future
Downtown
HyattPalma*

The Vision

The purpose of the City Center 2050 Plan is to validate a 50-year vision for the City Center as a vibrant urban center that uniquely represents our community and our heritage as the Rogue Valley's traditional transit oriented mixed-use regional center, and to incorporate that vision into the City's Comprehensive Plan.

The City Center vision has been organized in a series of seven related planning goals that address the downtown's regional position, growth, urban design, housing, historic preservation, transportation, and partnership objectives. These seven goals were developed through a series of public workshops and interviews conducted over a two-year period from 1999 through 2001. For each of these topics the citizens of Medford defined a guiding vision with supporting goals, policies, and implementation strategies. Together these seven goals form the policy framework on which the City Center 2050 Plan is built. The policy framework is intended to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate social and economic change throughout the 50-year planning horizon, while maintaining the integrity of the longer-term vision.

The Policy Framework

Throughout the public involvement process the discussion of the City Center's future revolved around numerous goals. Many of the public's concerns were noted in prior City Center

studies. A matrix was prepared to map these goals. The result of the matrix was the identification of seven primary goals as key focus areas critical to the revitalization and redevelopment of a vibrant and sustainable City Center. These seven goals now comprise the Policy Framework. Those goals and their policies are:

1. Regional Position

Downtown is the Rogue Valley's largest integrated mixed-use urban center—a vibrant, enjoyable, and highly regarded regional hub for residential, business, retail, finance, government, arts and entertainment, and education; and it is the Rogue Valley's largest transit oriented district with convenient multi-modal access to all areas of the region.

Over the course of the past 50 years the City Center has undergone a sequence of changes resulting in an uncertainty of the City Center's role in the community as a regional business and retail center. For the City Center to realize sustainable revitalization, it is necessary that its place in the community as a regional center be reaffirmed, and that the necessary actions be consciously taken to re-enforce that position.

Although the City Center's role as both an office and retail center has been significantly diminished over the years, it has been able to maintain its role as a major office center, with a primary emphasis on government services. Recently, the City Center has been able to strengthen its regional position through the addition of cultural and educational facilities, such as the Craterian Theater, Rogue Community College, and a new and expanded regional library. To secure its position as a regional center, the City Center must continue to strengthen its position in the following areas:

Culture and Entertainment;

Government;

If the downtown does not attract more office growth in the next few years so as to develop the critical mass of such services, and establish itself as a stronger location for offices than it is today, there is a danger that competing agglomerations of office space will develop in suburban locations with enough magnetism to cause the downtown office market to stagnate and fail to capture the indicated potential demand.

*Downtown Medford Market
Opportunities*

*Gruen, Gruen & Associates,
1980*

Education;

Office; and

Residential.

The retail strength of the City Center, in the near future, will be secondary to the above, and will primarily serve specialty retail needs, and the service support needs of the population that lives and works in the City Center.

The principal way to strengthen and sustain the City Center's regional position is through participation in the region's growth. It is important to recognize that the type of growth to be associated with the City Center will, out of spatial and economic reality, be vertical. This type of growth is exactly the type of growth needed to overcome redevelopment costs and to support a successful regional transit and pedestrian-oriented district.

2. Growth

Downtown's position as a vibrant and attractive integrated 24-hour urban center is firmly established as part of the City's urban centered growth management objective, with plans and programs to assure the sustained growth and development of the downtown as the Rogue Valley's largest urban service center. Downtown is not only the heart of Medford, but also the Rogue Valley, and is a unique irreplaceable component to the City's identity and sense of community.

For the City Center to realize and retain its regional position, it is imperative that it participates in the continued growth of the City. For the City Center to grow it is equally imperative that the market, regulatory, and political constraints to that growth be understood; and that revitalization and redevelopment strategies be set in place to provide the necessary public policy for the downtown to share in the City's growth. These strategies have a dual purpose; not only do they facilitate the physical improvement and the economic health of the City

Center, but they also relieve growth pressures to expand the UGB. In preparing these growth policies it is equally important to realize that growth in the City Center is specialized and serves a small niche of the population that is interested in an urban lifestyle.

The City Center’s future development opportunities are identified in Figure 5-1 and include office, retail, and residential redevelopment, each of which has a distinct role in the revitalization and redevelopment of the City Center.

Office. The 1980 Grueni Study encouraged the creation of a critical office mass sufficient to solidify the downtown as the office center of the Rogue Valley. The Study stated that if the downtown were unsuccessful in obtaining more office space it would stagnate and continue to fail to capture its market share of office uses. It was estimated that the downtown could absorb an average of 16,500 square feet of new office space per year.

The district has a sufficiently dense concentration of people, for whatever purpose they may be there. This includes people there because of residence

In 1994 the Hyatt/Palma Report supported the findings of the Gruen Study and set a target of 115,000 square feet of office space by 2000, or 23,000 square feet per year. This increase in office space could take the form of new construction or renovation of existing commercial space to office use.

The Death and Life of Great American Cities
Jane Jacobs

The most recently completed office study reaffirmed the Hyatt/Palma findings and established a figure of 250,000 square feet of new office space over the next ten years. Over the past ten years new office development in the City Center has averaged less than 40 square feet per year. Why hasn’t the forecast office development in the City Center occurred? The answer is a combination of the following:

The City Center appears old and worn out. Its not on the investment screen; and

The cost of redevelopment in the City Center cannot compete on an investment basis with the fringe areas.

To maintain its position as a regional office center the City Center should capture 30% of the City's new office development. If the City Center is to achieve this objective it must define and implement office market strategies that alter negative image perception and improve the City Center's competitive position.

Everyone is aware that tremendous numbers of people concentrate in city downtowns and that, if they did not, there would be no downtown to amount to anything—certainly not one with much downtown diversity.

The Death and Life of Great American Cities
Jane Jacobs

Retail. Over the years, the City Center's retail function has been decimated by the development of the Rogue Valley Mall and other outlying shopping centers. These retail centers have removed all of the major retail tenants from the downtown, which in-turn has encouraged many of the smaller retailers to follow. A countervailing force to the retail exodus has been the attraction of retail incubators, owner-occupied merchants, to the downtown. The cost of rehabilitated space in the downtown is often comparable to the cost of a one-year lease in a new shopping center. This situation has resulted in a small but perceptible trend of owner-occupant merchants moving to the downtown. Current market conditions preclude the likelihood of the downtown regaining its position as a regional shopping center in the near future.

For retail to improve it is necessary that in the short run the perception of the City Center as an old run down place be changed to a clean, quality oriented, unique place. In the long run it is necessary that office, residential, and service uses in the City Center continue to grow. Long-term retail growth in the City Center will follow growth in the office and residential sectors in the downtown.

Housing. Throughout the City Center visioning process downtown housing was considered to be a key to the long-term sustainability of the City Center's revitalization. Residential populations in successful downtowns provide places for residents to play and recreate in addition to direct access to a wide variety of food stores, specialty stores, and services. They bring a sense of vitality, activity, and interest, which in turn brings a sense of security to the downtown.

Since the early 1990's there have been strong demographic and socio-economic forces at work that favor downtown cores for residential living. There is an increasing niche of young professionals and "empty nesters" that are looking for the excitement and sense of community offered by well-designed downtown housing.

Every downtown should have some kind of preservation ordinance with teeth in it. In too many places, the undervaluing of existing buildings is permitting a nonstop erosion of downtown character, businesses, history, and sense of place.

Cities Back from the Edge

Roberta Brandes with
Norman Mintz



Figure 5-1
CITY CENTER
REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Based on the experience of other cities there are two threshold preconditions for successful market-rate housing in downtown cores:

Streets and public spaces can be designed to promote pedestrian use. Important pedestrian-friendly amenities include street trees, park strips, on-street parking, adequate unobstructed sidewalk width, pedestrian-scale lighting, and locating buildings near the street.

The physical environment must be of a character and quality that people will want to live there. The downtown must be perceived as a comfortable and safe place to live.

Downtown housing must offer prospective purchasers an investment motive. For downtown housing to take root and grow, people must be willing to purchase, not just rent. For this to happen the prospective purchaser will have to have confidence that their investment in downtown housing will be a good investment.

*2001–2023 Regional
Transportation Plan*
Rogue Valley Metropolitan
Planning Organization

3. Urban Design

Downtown is the region’s most recognizable and enjoyable integrated urban center with its traditional historic character, a comprehensive network of sidewalks, bike and pedestrian ways, attractive streetscapes, ground-level retail, a network of parks and plazas, and convenient transportation linkages to surrounding neighborhoods.

Considering the historic character of much of the City Center, its regional representation, pedestrian emphasis, and growth and housing objectives, the role of urban design becomes very critical in the continued enhancement and sustainability of the City Center as an attractive urban place and real estate investment. Design and development standards for the City Center should place emphasis on quality, both in design and materials, and development intensity that supports the City Center as the Rogue Valley’s regional center. These actions will not only assure the development and preservation of a quality environment, but also of an environment wherein investment objectives are well defined and protected by City Center policy.

4. Historic Preservation

Throughout the downtown it is visibly evident that Medford’s heritage is a major contributor to the community’s livability and identity. The historic architecture and traditional designs of the downtown have been preserved through renovation, and enhanced and complemented by new development, making downtown a truly unique and enjoyable urban place for both residents and visitors, while providing a competitive advantage over, and the setting apart of the downtown from, other commercial centers.

Throughout the preparation of the *City Center 2050 Plan* the public was very insistent on acknowledging and protecting the historic character of the downtown. This insistence was not unique to Medford. Virtually every example of sustained success in downtown revitalization has incorporated historic preservation as a central component to the revitalization process.

The reason for the interest in historic preservation rests with its role as a significant catalyst in the creation of a sense of place, and it is that sense of place that attracts people to downtowns. To maintain and enhance the City Center’s sense of place the Historic Preservation and Urban Design framework topics must work closely together to assure a quality transit-oriented district that allows for new development while protecting our historic heritage.

5. Housing

Downtown is a vibrant 24-hour urban center with a large residential community supported by convenient services within easy walking distance. Over time housing will prove to be a key element to the long-term sustainability of the City Center’s revitalization process. As national and local demographics change, and the City continues to mature, the demand for quality downtown housing will increase. However, it is important to recognize that the downtown housing

market is a small niche market representing less than 5% of the City’s total demand for housing, or approximately 125 new units per year. In addressing the need for downtown housing the challenge that faces Medford is to assure a household mix in the City Center, particularly with respect to tenure and income, that reflects the general housing characteristics of the community in general. Based on 2000 census figures the City Center is disproportionately represented by rental and below poverty level households.

Within the City Center residential projects should target a density range between 40 and 80 units per acre.

Experience in other cities indicates that there are two threshold preconditions necessary for the development of successful market-rate housing in downtown cores:

The physical environment must be of a character and quality that people will want to live there. The downtown must be perceived as a comfortable and safe place to live, with attractive amenities and an invigorating social environment.

Downtown housing must also offer prospective purchasers an investment motive. For downtown housing to take root and grow, people must be willing to purchase, not just rent. For this to happen the prospective purchaser will have to have confidence that their investment in downtown housing will be a good investment.

6. Transportation

Downtown is a balanced multi-modal urban center with easy access to all areas of the Rogue Valley. Within the downtown there is provided a full range of transportation opportunities with an emphasis on the quality of travel and preservation of a highly livable and pedestrian downtown environment.

The City Center, as a transit-oriented district, is primarily a place for pedestrians. However, the reality is that the City Center must serve other modes of transportation, including

the automobile. The *City Center 2050 Plan* recognizes this need and provides a balance between pedestrian, transit, and vehicular modes of transportation (figures 5-2 and 5-3).

It is also recognized that over the 50-year life of this *Plan* that the transportation needs of the City Center will change, and the change, by design, will be in the direction of increased emphasis on pedestrian and transit use.

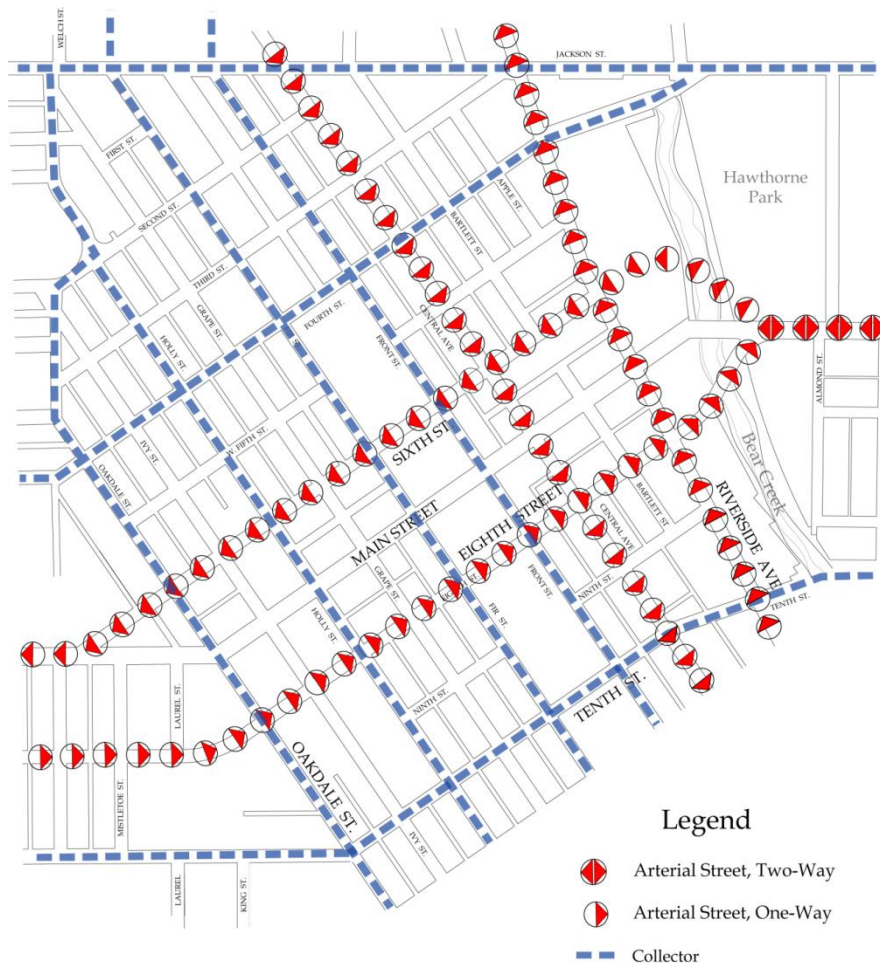


Figure 5-2
CITY CENTER
STREET CIRCULATION PLAN

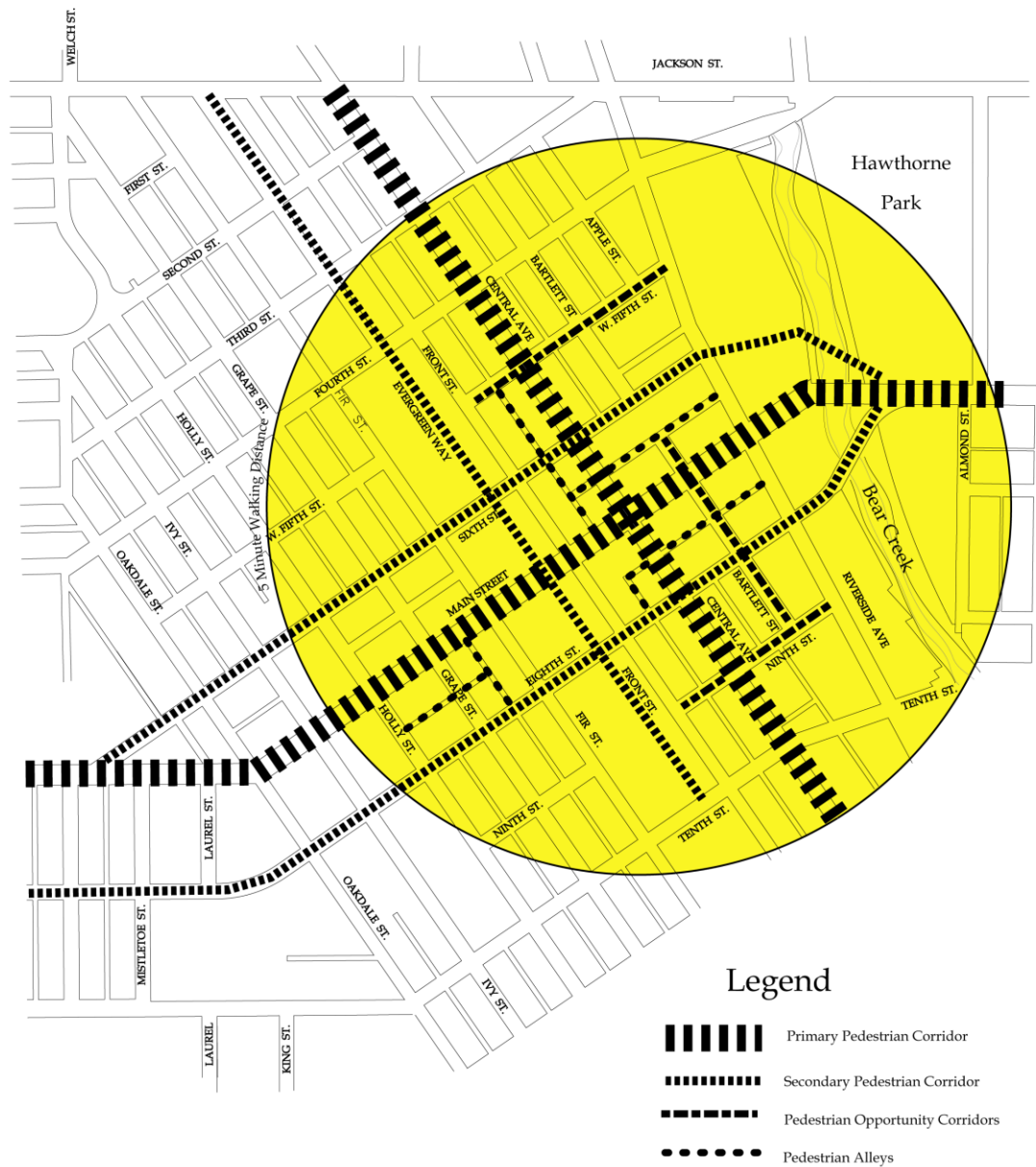


Figure 5-3
PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

7. Partnerships

The revitalization and redevelopment of the downtown is a long-term program supported by a unique public-private partnership that recognizes past investments and works to leverage public, institutional, commercial, and private investments, and to share the benefits and risks of future downtown investments to achieve a common objective, and a healthy and vibrant downtown.

As geographic places city centers are unique in many respects, their history, development characteristics, growth constraints, transportation needs, etc., but they are truly unique in their ownership. Unlike other competing places such as shopping centers or office parks, downtowns are comprised not of a single developer, owner, or operator, but a multitude of developers, owners, and operators. Included in this mix is government.

To remain competitive the multitude of developers / owners / operators within city centers must recognize the need for, and benefit of, partnerships to achieve common objectives. The *City Center 2050 Plan* is an attempt to identify those common objectives and to provide a forum for the development of partnerships to develop implementation strategies and pool resources.

Private investment decisions leading to the slow and economically successful evolution of the downtown into a strong center for non-medical office, financial, services and specialty retail uses should be encouraged by the public adoption of a policy that supports and complements such an evolution.

Cities Back from the Edge

Roberta Brandes
with Norman Mintz

The Concept Plan

The City Center 2050 Development Concept Plan is a futuristic description, an assemblage of words and images envisioned by the citizens of Medford and intended to challenge the imagination as plans and programs for revitalization of the City Center are discussed, refined, and eventually implemented. The Concept Plan is an imagineering reference point, a tool, for organizing projects and activities, for evaluating land use relationships, defining transportation and circulation patterns, and identifying linkages between the sub-districts of the City Center and the rest of the community.

City Center 2050

The City Center is a high intensity “urban” environment with a unique historic and pedestrian character that sets it apart from other areas of the city (Figure 6-1). City Center is home to over 4,000 residents and 8,000 employees who take advantage of the unique mixed-use pedestrian neighborhood environment that City Center offers. With its housing, employment, retail, dining, educational, entertainment and recreational opportunities, all in close proximity to one another and within easy walking distance, makes City Center a truly unique place.

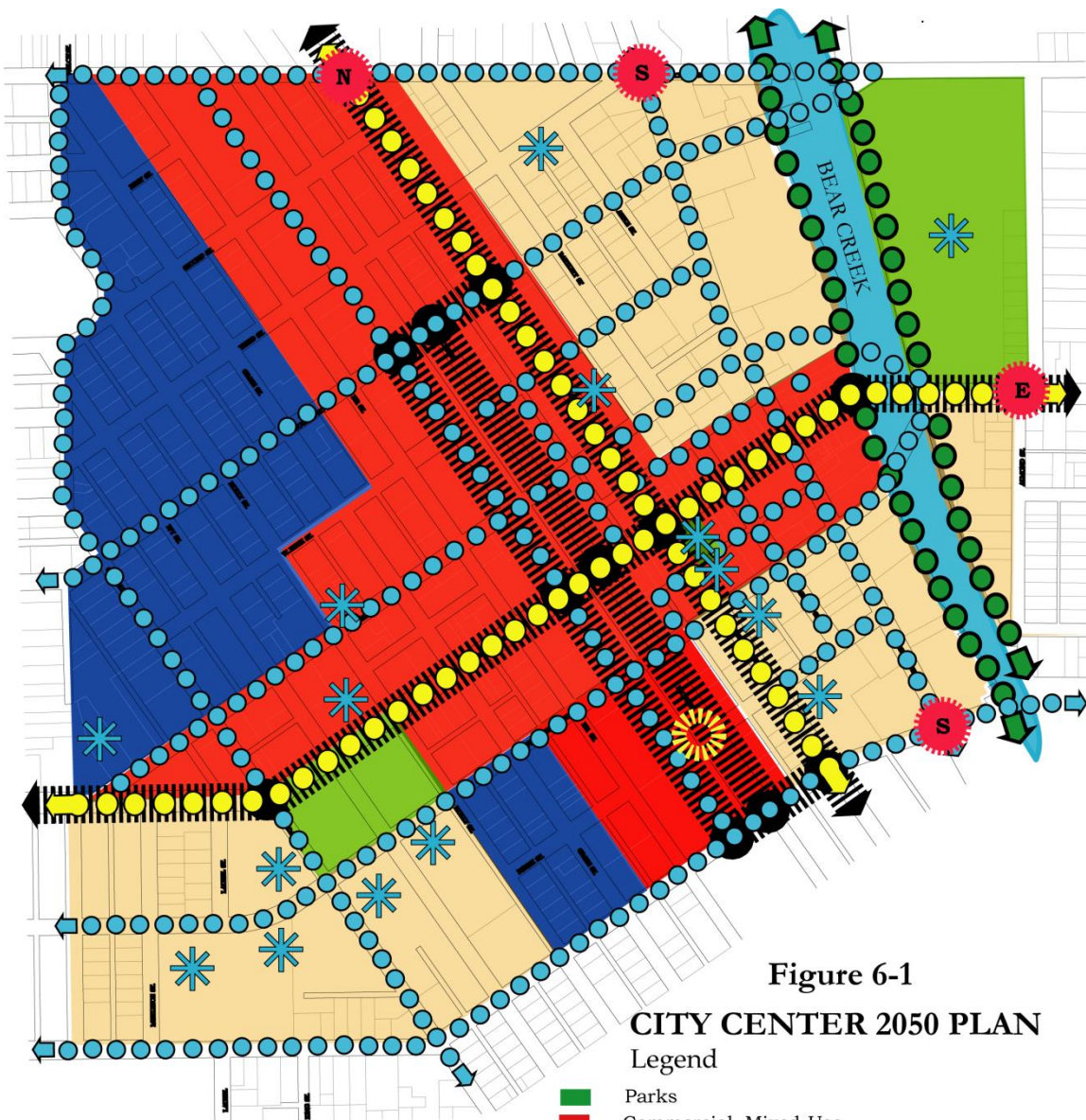


Figure 6-1
CITY CENTER 2050 PLAN
 Legend

- Parks
- Commercial, Mixed-Use
- Commercial, Employment
- High Density Residential
- ✱ Major Attraction
- Primary Pedestrian Corridor
- Secondary Pedestrian Corridor
- Bear Creek Greenway
- ||||| Primary Transit Corridor
- ✱ City Center Gateway
- ✱ Transit Station

Each day employees in the City Center take advantage of the easy accessibility to the many restaurants offering opportunities to gather during and after work to exchange ideas, conduct business, and socialize. Transit service in City Center is fast and convenient; and for those who choose to drive, parking is plentiful and conveniently located. Streets are tree lined with attractive storefronts and pedestrian amenities such as benches, flower boxes, banners and decorative light poles, making walking throughout the City Center an enjoyable and unique urban experience.

During the weekend, City Center is a popular destination for both residents and visitors as they enjoy the ambiance of City Center life. Quaint streets, specialty shops and outdoor markets, restaurants and entertainment complement the historic venue surrounding Bear Creek as it meanders through City Center. Bear Creek is a popular attraction for joggers, bicyclists, canoeists, and kayakers as it offers them an opportunity to relate to nature and to enjoy its creek side recreational amenities. For those less physically inclined, the west bank of Bear Creek offers park benches and creek overview areas where they can dine and watch children frolic in the pristine waters and observe salmon spawning upstream with the assistance of a state-of-the art fish ladder.

City Center’s unique urban character is the product of five uniquely integrated sub-districts, each of which has its own character and role in building that sense of place experienced by those who visit, live, and work in the City Center. The following is a description of each of the City Center sub-districts by the year 2050.

Downtown Central

Downtown Central is the historic and business core of the City. Since the late 1800’s Downtown Central has served as Southern Oregon’s regional center for business, government and entertainment (Figure 6-2). Over the years Downtown Central has built on its history through the continuous renova-

tion of its buildings and the construction of new buildings that enhance and complement Downtown Central’s architectural heritage, making it the Region’s largest concentrated assemblage of historic buildings.

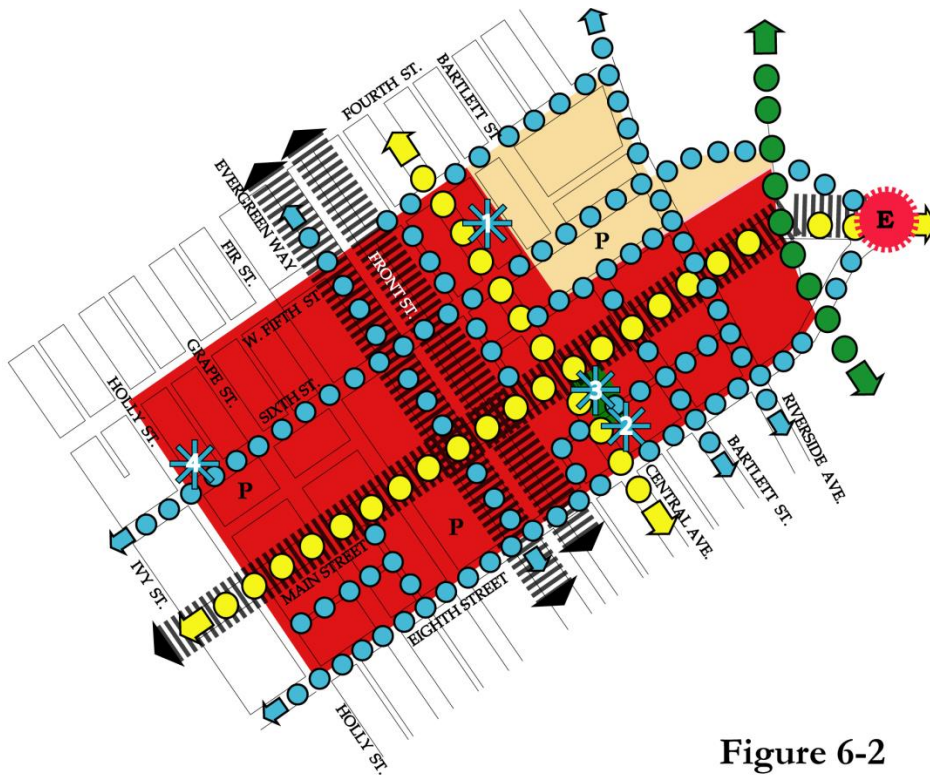


Figure 6-2
DOWNTOWN CENTRAL

Legend

- Parks
- Commercial, Mixed-Use
- Commercial, Employment
- ✱ Major Attraction
- Primary Pedestrian Corridor
- Secondary Pedestrian Corridor
- Bear Creek Greenway
- ||||| Primary Transit Corridor
- ✱ City Center Gateway
- P** Public Parking Facility

The historic context of Downtown Central’s physical environment provides a strong foundation for the creation of a very unique pedestrian environment. At street level the scale and pattern of building materials engage the pedestrians’ interest as they walk from one destination to another along tree-lined sidewalks and attractive pedestrian alleyways. Downtown Central’s small city blocks, quality architecture, and attractive streetscapes make for a memorable pedestrian experience.

Residents and tourists are drawn to Downtown Central by its many entertainment opportunities. A variety of performing arts are experienced at the Craterian Ginger Rogers Theater (3) and the Holly Theater (4). Visitors continue their entertainment pleasure by shopping at Downtown Central’s many specialty retail stores, dining at any of its fine restaurants, or resting under tree shaded Vogel Plaza (2). Vogel Plaza, with its refreshing water fountain, is a popular place to meet friends, enjoy lunch, or just people watch. Within an easy walk from Vogel Plaza, located within the old J.C. Penny building is the Southern Oregon History Museum (1), a popular source for local history buffs and tourists.

Pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems link Downtown Central with all other sub-districts of the City Center and the outlying community. The heart of the pedestrian system is Main Street and Central Avenue with their wide tree lined sidewalks and historic storefronts. Evergreen Way provides an attractive pedestrian corridor reaching from the In-Town Village and Southside to Downtown Central. Sixth Street and Eighth Street, along with numerous pedestrian alleyways, offers attractive and convenient access to Creekside and the other downtown sub-districts.

Because of the historic nature of Downtown Central, redevelopment opportunities concentrate on the conversion of existing surface parking lots to mixed-use facilities. Whether it is redevelopment or historic renovation, the Downtown Central

design emphasis has been on enhancement of its pedestrian and historic character.

Over the years Downtown Central has nurtured a unique physical ambience built on preservation of its historic buildings, selective and sensitive infill development, pedestrian-oriented streetscape, specialty retail and entertainment uses, along with a strong pedestrian connection to Bear Creek and other sub-districts. Downtown Central has always been, and continues to be, the heart of Medford.

Government Center

At the western edge of City Center and adjacent to Downtown Central is Government Center, a concentrated assemblage of city, county, state, and federal government offices and facilities, as well as private sector businesses and housing (Figure 6-3). Government Center’s urban landscape is a dichotomy of old and new. South of Main Street the landscape is more campus-like, with buildings set back from streets that are buffered by lawns and landscaping. North of Main Street the landscape has a more historic character similar to Downtown Central with buildings abutting the sidewalk.

Located within Government Center is Library/Alba Park (7), a two block historic public park created in 1888 as part of the original plat for the Town of Medford. Library Park is home to the historic Carnegie Library (8), which is now a popular special events facility, used for lectures, weddings, art exhibits, etc. Surrounding Library Park are City Hall (10), the historic County Administration Building (11), County Justice Building (12), U.S. Post Office (9), and the historic Federal Court House (6).

Government Center’s residential population is a significant contributor to the vitality of this sub-district. Many of the residences take advantage of the urban style living, which offers pedestrian proximity to a multitude of opportunities from entertainment, recreation, education, and employment to shopping, including the YMCA (5), which is a popular recreational and neighborhood resource. Housing opportunities in Government Center include owner- and renter-occupied units



Figure 6-3
GOVERNMENT CENTER
Legend

- Parks
- Commercial, Mixed-Use
- Commercial, Employment
- High Density Residential
- Major Attraction
- Primary Pedestrian Corridor
- Secondary Pedestrian Corridor
- Bear Creek Greenway
- Primary Transit Corridor
- City Center Gateway
- P Public Parking Facility

typically located above the first floor. The housing supply in Government Center supports a diverse range of households.

Government Center is conveniently serviced by bus and light rail, making it easily accessible as an employment center. The City Center trolley system conveniently links Government Center with the other sub-districts of City Center, and numerous public parking facilities that service Government Center. As a result of concentration of government agencies, progressive multi-modal transportation programs have been successfully implemented.

As with Downtown Central, redevelopment opportunities in Government Center concentrate on the conversion of surface parking lots to mixed-use facilities. New construction is typically four to six stories in height, enhancing the City Center's urban scale.

In-Town Village

Town Village has transitioned from an older single-family neighborhood to a high-density residential neighborhood dominated by two and three story buildings (Figure 6-4). The unique character of In-Town Village is the result of the design guidelines and standards that have effectively managed redevelopment at higher densities, while preserving the historic single-family characteristics of the original neighborhood. The streetscape is very pedestrian in scale with landscaped park strips between the sidewalks and curb, pedestrian lighting, and the ever present canopy provided by the street trees.

In the northwest quadrant of City Center is In-Town Village, a unique area that is predominantly residential. Over the years In-

Along the easterly border of In-Town Village is Evergreen Way, an attractive pedestrian street that links In-Town Village with Downtown Central, Northside, and Southside. Evergreen Way, with its many shops, eateries, and attractive streetscape

is a popular pedestrian route. Evergreen Way is known for its pedestrian amenities, most particularly the incorporation of unique lighting and art.

The easterly border of In-Town Village, adjacent to the rail-road, is an area of mixed-use development. Through the years this area has been the target of significant redevelopment activity, as older industrial uses have been redeveloped to retail, office and residential uses. Along Evergreen Way retail, personal services, and eateries are the predominant theme at street level, with office and residential uses on the upper floors.

In-Town Village is conveniently served by transit to outlying areas and via the City Center trolley to other sub-districts. Parking for the mixed-use commercial area is plentiful and easily accessible by visitor and employee.

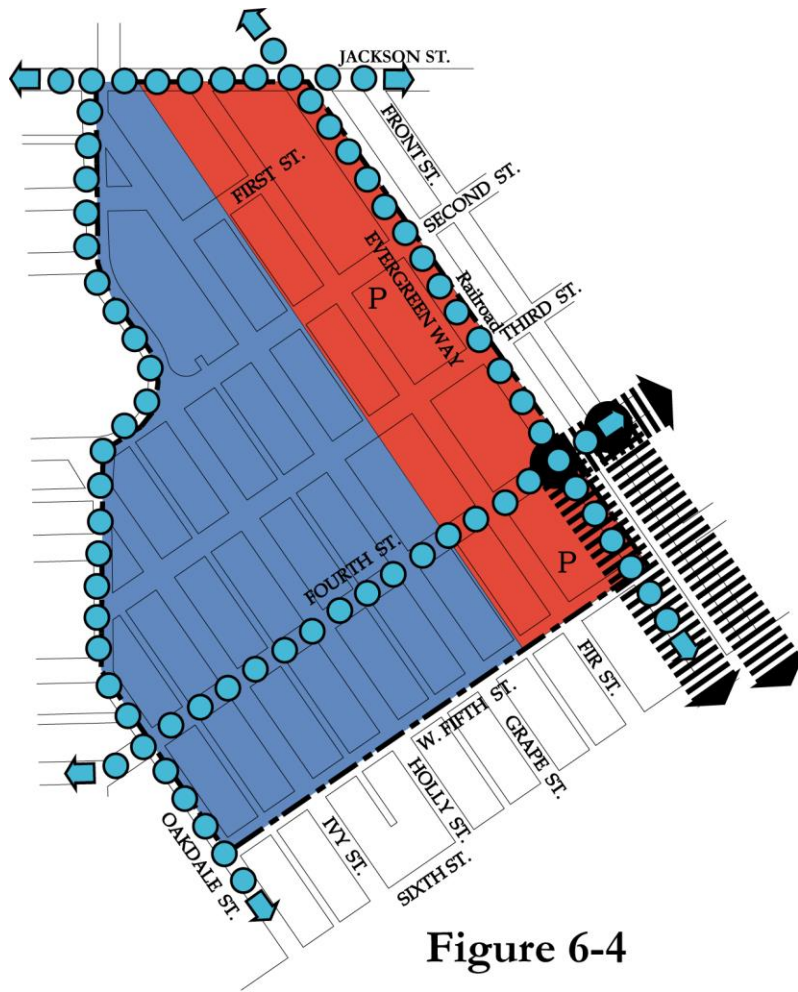


Figure 6-4
IN-TOWN VILLAGE
 Legend

- Parks
- Commercial, Mixed-Use
- Commercial, Employment
- High Density Residential
- Major Attraction
- Primary Pedestrian Corridor
- Secondary Pedestrian Corridor
- Bear Creek Greenway
- Primary Transit Corridor
- City Center Gateway
- Public Parking Facility

Northside

As the northerly gateway to City Center, Northside is noted for fostering a business environment that emphasizes innovation and entrepreneurship (Figure 6-5). The car dealerships have been replaced with high-rise (4-6 story) office buildings. At the corner of Riverside Avenue and Jackson Street is a state of the art convention center (13) with adjoining world class hotel facilities. Not far from the convention center is the historic Elks Lodge (14), which is a popular conference and special events facility, catering to the area's business needs.

Redevelopment in the Northside has placed top priority on quality in both architectural and streetscape design and construction. The architecture provides a timeless image of quality, which when complemented by the streetscape, provides an exciting urban environment. At the ground floor level retail, personal services, and eateries further appeal to the pedestrian's curiosity as they move from one destination to another.

Northside is most notably known for the quality of its businesses. The City Center environment attracts and stimulates employees that have an interest in innovation and an opportunity to inter-face with other to discuss and share ideas.

As a major employment center Northside is easily accessed by transit, automobile, and the City Center trolley. Although housing opportunities in the Northside are limited, other sub-districts provide adequate housing opportunities within easy walking distance. A large percentage of Northside employees choose to take advantage of City Center housing and the many amenities offered in City Center.

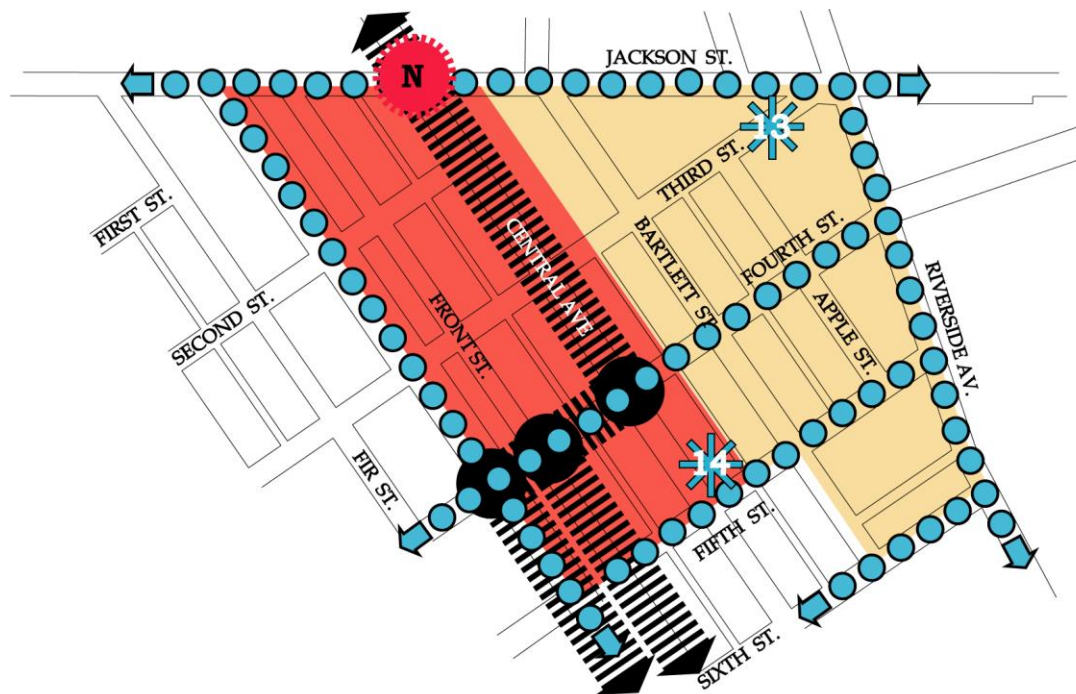


Figure 6-5
NORTHSIDE
 Legend

- Parks
- Commercial, Mixed-Use
- Commercial, Employment
- High Density Residential
- Major Attraction
- Primary Pedestrian Corridor
- Secondary Pedestrian Corridor
- Bear Creek Greenway
- Primary Transit Corridor
- City Center Gateway
- Public Parking Facility

Southside

As the southern gateway to the City Center, Southside effectively portrays its function as the City’s arts, entertainment, cultural, and educational center (Figure 6-6). Immediately upon entering Southside there is Jackson County’s Regional Headquarters Library (16) and Rogue Community College’s urban campus (15).

Southside is also home to Rogue Valley Transit District’s regional transit hub (17), which provides convenient regional bus and light rail service to City Center.

East of Riverside is Bear Creek and the Bear Creek Greenway. On both sides of Bear Creek there are convenient pedestrian and bicycle paths that attract residents, employees, students, and visitors to the Southside. The west bank has been redeveloped with an emphasis on uses that complement the recreational and natural amenities of Bear Creek and the Greenway. Conveniently located pedestrian bridges facilitate pedestrian movement between east and west bank uses.

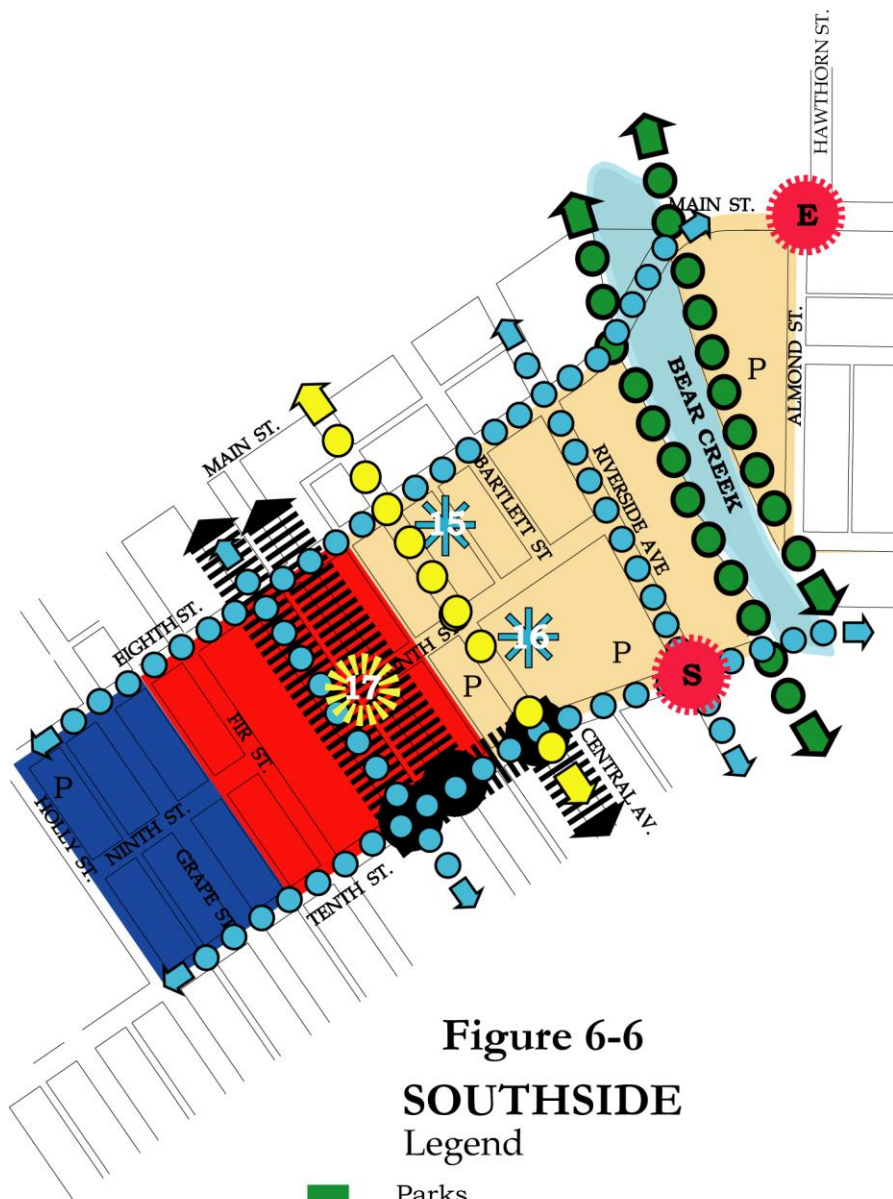


Figure 6-6
SOUTHSIDE
 Legend

- Parks
- Commercial, Mixed-Use
- Commercial, Employment
- High Density Residential
- Major Attraction
- Primary Pedestrian Corridor
- Secondary Pedestrian Corridor
- Bear Creek Greenway
- Primary Transit Corridor
- City Center Gateway
- Transit Station
- P Public Parking Facility

Creekside

Along the easterly edge of City Center is Creekside, with its focus on the natural amenities of Bear Creek and the regional recreation attraction of the nationally acclaimed Bear Creek Greenway, as it meanders from Ashland to the Rogue River (Figure 6-7). Throughout City Center pedestrian corridors conveniently connect the Bear Creek Greenway with all sub-districts of City Center. During the weekday, jogging and walking paths along Bear Creek are enjoyed by downtown employees and students as they take advantage of the recreational opportunities along Bear Creek. On weekends Creekside draws residents and tourists to City Center for bicycling, kayaking, dining, sporting events at Hawthorne Park, and to enjoy nature at the observation overlooks along Bear Creek.

Through the center of Creekside is the I-5 via duct, which was at onetime considered a nuisance. Today the I-5 via duct is a major attraction. Through a unique adaptation of form, sound, lighting, and color the I-5 via duct has become an exciting art form commemorating the natural and recreational amenities of Bear Creek and the Bear Creek Greenway. Along the west bank of Bear Creek special emphasis, and incentives, have been given to encourage development of tourist, entertainment, and recreational uses with an orientation to Bear Creek. The success of the City's Creekside incentive program is evident in the many tourist and recreational businesses that take advantage of their proximity to Bear Creek. The regional and tourist popularity of the Bear Creek Greenway and the west bank pedestrian and bicycle promenade, with its special lighting and other pedestrian amenities including patios, pedestrian bridges, and pedestrian overlooks, assures the success of Creekside's businesses .

On the eastside of Bear Creek is Hawthorne Park, which is a very popular sports park, and includes an aquatic facility complete with a wave pool, water park and merry-go-round, that further enhance Creekside's recreational and entertain-

ment theme. Centrally located with easy access to all neighborhoods of Medford, Hawthorne Park is a very popular weekend destination, and a major attraction for City Center.

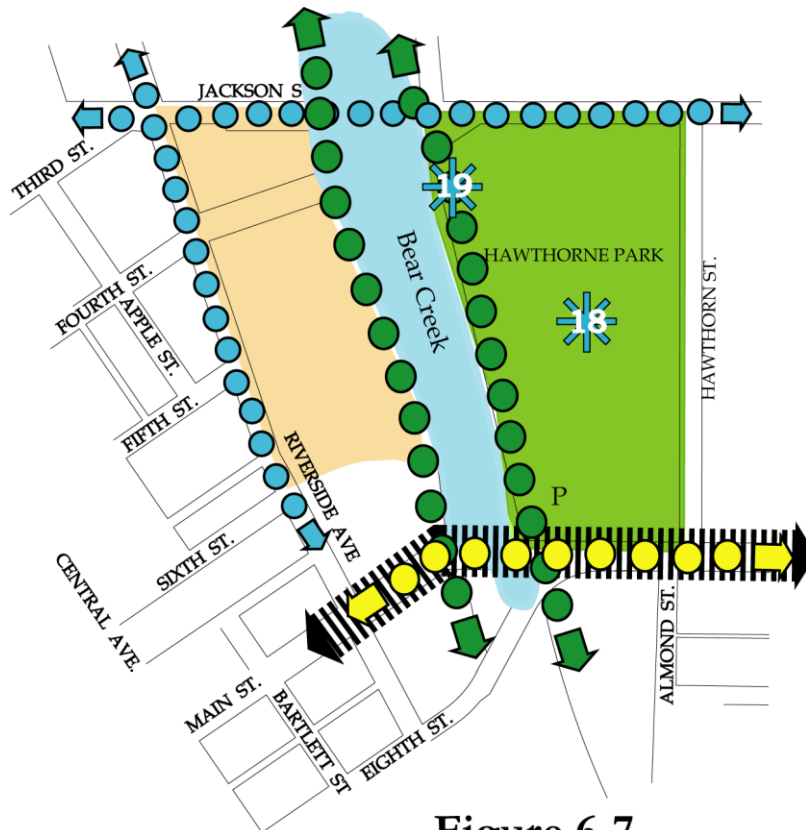


Figure 6-7
CREEKSIDE
Legend

- Parks
- Commercial, Mixed-Use
- Commercial, Employment
- High Density Residential
- Major Attraction
- Primary Pedestrian Corridor
- Secondary Pedestrian Corridor
- Bear Creek Greenway
- Primary Transit Corridor
- City Center Gateway
- Public Parking Facility

Goals, Policies & Implementation

In today's world, real estate professionals, financial institutions, local planners, and government officials increasingly realize that a broad understanding of the economic forces affecting cities and urban development is crucial to making wise decisions.

Urban Economics and Real Estate Markets

Denise DiPasquale &
William C. Wheaton, 1996

The *City Center 2050 Plan's* primary goal is to:

Encourage and support the continued public and private investment within the City Center as necessary to achieve a 50-year vision of the City Center as an attractive and highly desirable mixed-use regional urban center that is representative of our community's heritage and its future.

The Plan's primary goal is supported by a series of secondary goals representing each of the seven planning topics previously discussed in the Policy Framework. Each secondary goal is accompanied by a series of related policies and implementation strategies.

1. Regional Position

Regional Goal

The City Center is the Rogue Valley's largest integrated mixed-use urban center, a vibrant, enjoyable, and highly regarded regional hub for residential, business, retail, finance, government, arts and entertainment, and education.

Regional Policies

Assure that existing and future City land use and transportation plans, policies and regulations take into consideration and support the revitalization and redevelopment of the City Center as the region's primary high-density mixed-use, regional service center.

Maintain in the City's Comprehensive Plan the City Center 2050 Plan as a special plan defining the City Center's position as the City's and the region's primary high-density mixed-use, regional service center.

Support the development of a coordinated and comprehensive marketing program that promotes the City Center as a vibrant and enjoyable regional service center for residential, business, retail, finance, government, arts and entertainment, and education.

Bear Creek is a regional recreation and environmental asset and shall be integrated into the planning, revitalization, and redevelopment of the City Center.

Regional Implementation

Include as a condition of the City's participation in downtown events such as Pear Blossom Festival, Art 'n Bloom, Jazz Jubilee, and Holiday Lighting, the marketing of the City Center as a vibrant and enjoyable regional service center.

Prepare a plan for the City Center that addresses, in the context of an urban centered growth policy, strategies for the retention and recruitment of such uses as conference, hotel, and convention facilities , arts, entertainment and education facilities, and other uses that reinforce the critical mass of the City Center as the region's primary high-density mixed-use, regional service center.

Modify the Land Development Code to include standards and criteria that defines the City Center as the region's primary high-density mixed-use, regional service center.

Research the need and timing of conference/convention facilities in the City Center.

Coordinate with Rogue Community College in the preparation and implementation of a master plan for a Rogue Community College downtown campus consistent with the goals and objectives of the City Center 2050 Plan.

2. Growth

Growth Goal

The City Center’s position as a vibrant and attractive integrated 24-hour urban center is firmly established as a key element of the City’s urban centered growth management objective, with plans and programs to assure the sustained growth and development of the City Center as the Rogue Valley’s largest urban service center

Growth Policies

Growth management policies, land use and development standards shall support the continued and sustained growth of the City Center as the region's primary high-density mixed-use, regional service center.

Support the retention and development of hotels and hotel related services, such as conference and convention facilities, as necessary to strengthen the City Center’s role as a regional service center.

Encourage and support the retention and expansion of education, arts and cultural facilities in the City Center, and ensure that education, arts and entertainment uses become significant long-term components of the City Center’s land use mix.

As the primary regional transit oriented district, the City Center shall promote and provide appropriate development and renovation incentives to encourage higher density residential, office and retail development to strengthen the critical mass of those uses in the City Center.

Growth Implementation

Develop a comprehensive, urban centered growth management program for the City of Medford that identifies the City Center as a preferred development district and encourages, through the use of appropriate incentives, an overall mix of land uses appropriate for an active mixed-use transit oriented City Center, placing special emphasis on achieving a critical mass of key uses in terms of density and geographical placement.

Encourage and support the continued use of the State Vertical Housing Zone program as a City Center residential development incentive.

The following benchmarks should be used in determining the success of growth management policies and incentive programs:

Office—New office construction and/or renovation activity, as measured in square footage within the City Center, should account for 30% of total new office construction throughout the city.

Residential—New residential construction and renovation activity, as measured in dwelling units within the City Center, should target 5% of total new residential construction throughout the City.

Retail—New retail construction and/or renovation activity should be concentrated in the Downtown Central sub-district.

Respectful rehabilitation of the architectural fabric of the City Center should be encouraged. Downtown Medford possesses great built resources which reflect several economic booms, several stylistic periods, and represents the work of significant local architects.

*City Center Vision Plan
HyattPalma, 1994*

3. Urban Design

Urban Design Goal

There are strong demographic and socio-economic forces at work today that favor residential development in the downtown cores of our nation's cities. These forces, which just began to surface in the early 1990s and did not exist in the 1970s or 1980s, are projected to continue well into the intermediate term, say for the next 20 to 30 years.

*Housing Study Downtown
Medford
Bruce M. Ostley, 2002*

The City Center is the region's most recognizable and enjoyable integrated urban center with its traditional historic character, a comprehensive network of sidewalks, bike and pedestrian ways, attractive streetscapes, ground-level retail, a network of parks and plazas, and convenient transportation linkages to surrounding neighborhoods.

Urban Design Policies

Through urban design standards and guidelines the City shall reinforce the specific physical qualities that constitute the unique urban character of the City Center, including the grid street system, the variety of building forms and density, the pedestrian scale along the streetscape, handicapped accessibility, and the sensitive mix of historic and new buildings.

Promote the formation City Center sub-districts with individual identities based on the scale of buildings, intensity of activity, and predominant uses, thereby providing a varied and diverse character within the City Center.

Assure that all elements of downtown planning exemplify the best of urban design. It is important that all development activity, whether new or renovation, should be of high architectural quality while addressing handicapped accessibility.

Enhance the public perception of safety through design standards, including handicapped pedestrian accessibility, and crime prevention programs.

Enhance Bear Creek and the Bear Creek Greenway as a regional environmental asset and focal point for public activities and development, with pedestrian connectivity to other parts of the City Center.

Encourage and support public/private programs for the maintenance of public spaces, such as pedestrian alleys, sidewalks, parks and plazas.

Locate the highest densities in the Downtown Central sub-district and along existing and proposed transit corridors.

Encourage and support the preparation of a joint public/private security plan for the City Center.

Urban Design Implementation

Prepare and implement plans and criteria for City Center street improvements that reinforce the identity of downtown, provide orientation, identify special streets and districts, and encourage pedestrian movement and use of public transit consistent with the City Center 2050 Plan. These streetscape plans and criteria should reflect the individual role, character, and importance of the various streets of the downtown.

Enhance the pedestrian environment of the City Center through development standards that requires new development to present its primary orientation to the sidewalk, streets, and where appropriate Bear Creek.

With assistance from the Arts Commission design and develop a system of landmarks, including gateways, special signage, public art, public fixtures and ornaments to strengthen the identity of the City Center and its districts.

Incorporate relevant sections of the Bear Creek Masterplan as part of the City Center 2050 Plan.

Modify the Land Development Code to include development standards and criteria specific to the City Center and that addresses the following standards and criteria:

Parking. Develop shared parking formulas

Floor Area Ratios. Floor area ratios in the City Center should not be less than 2 or more than 6.

Communities need to prepare pedestrian friendly design standards for downtown and neighborhood streets. Design standards should specify and illustrate sidewalk and crosswalk configurations, materials and detailing, landscaping placement, lighting, and street furniture.

Pedestrian Friendly Streets
Crandall Arambula, 2003

Public and Private Streetscape Standards.

Assist the Heart of Medford Association in the formation of a Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) that addresses parking, maintenance, marketing and security.

Develop and maintain an integrated pedestrian network throughout the City Center that is attractive, safe, handicapped accessible, and promotes a sense of place and orientation unique to the City Center.

4. Historic Preservation

Historic Preservation Goal

Throughout the City Center it is visibly evident that Medford's heritage is a major contributor to the community's livability. The historic architecture and traditional designs of the City Center have been preserved through renovation, and enhanced and complemented by new development, making downtown a truly unique and enjoyable urban place for both residents and visitors, while providing a competitive advantage over, and setting apart the downtown from, other commercial centers.

Historic Preservation Policies

Development policies and activities shall place a high priority on retaining and restoring the City's historic, aesthetic, and cultural heritage, while encouraging sensitive and compatible new development.

Design criteria and standards expressing the appropriate relationship between historic buildings and new development shall be established in order to protect individual historic buildings and maintain the historic integrity of the City Center's historic core.

Develop appropriate incentives, requirements, and assistance to encourage preservation, adaptive re-use, and complimentary new development.

Within the City Center’s historic core reuse and rehabilitation priority shall be placed on historic architectural elements, giving the City Center a unique visual appeal.

The City shall resolve design conflicts between new development and preservation on a case-by-case basis consistent with adopted design criteria and standards.

Historic Preservation Implementation

Prepare an effective and expedient preservation review process by the Site Plan and Architecture Commission, Historic Commission, and established administrative process procedures that encourages both historic preservation and new development within the Downtown Historic District.

Prepare design standards and criteria that protect and enhance the unique historic character and traditional design of the City Center’s historic core. The design criteria and review standards shall be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties.

Historic buildings with exceptional architectural character and history should be clearly identified and preserved.

The City shall use the Uniform Conservation Building Code in conjunction with the Interim Seismic Design Requirements for Existing Buildings as alternative regulatory resources for the renovation of historic buildings in the downtown.

5. Housing

Housing Goal

Downtown is a vibrant 24-hour urban center with a large residential community supported by convenient services within easy walking distance.

Work with local government on how to include public transit thoughtfully into community planning and development, and continue current efforts to demonstrate by plan – and deed – how new development can be made transit-friendly.

*Ten-Year Community Transportation Plan for the Rogue Valley
Rogue Valley Transit District, 1996*

Housing Policies

Plan, encourage and support the construction and renovation of quality downtown housing, over a wide range of types, prices and rents, making City Center housing available to all economic groups.

To establish an annual target of new, and renovated, residential units to be constructed in the downtown.

Encourage and support residential in-fill and new residential development that is consistent with the urban design objectives of the City Center 2050 Plan.

Encourage development of upper-story residential units through renovation of space in older buildings above ground floor commercial space, where appropriate and feasible.

Encourage greater regional and local participation in addressing the housing needs of the homeless, low-income and other special needs population.

Housing Implementation

Undertake a variety of public and private programs to achieve increases in residential units in the City Center.

Develop strategies to take full advantage of the Vertical Housing Zone program.

6. Transportation

Transportation Goal

Downtown is a balanced multi-modal urban center with easy access to all areas of the Rogue Valley. Within the downtown there is provided a full range of transportation opportunities with an emphasis on the quality of travel and preservation of a pedestrian and handicapped friendly and highly livable downtown environment.

Transportation Policies, General

The City Center is a transit-oriented development district, which functions as a mixed-use, pedestrian friendly regional transportation hub that promotes a balance between the City Center street network, public transit, and bicycle and pedestrian space.

Manage vehicular access to the City Center by improving north-south and east-west connectivity through the City Center.

Integrate the Bear Creek Greenway into the bicycle and pedestrian transportation systems of the City Center.

Support transportation improvements that improve transportation services to, within, and through the City Center without adversely impacting the urban design goals and policies of this Plan.

Transportation Policies, Vehicular

Provide for safe and convenient vehicular access to and from the City Center, while emphasizing increased transit access, encouraging pedestrian movement, and protecting the quality of the downtown's historic and pedestrian character.

Improve the visual appearance of arterial streets within the downtown that carry the major share of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Traffic calming strategies shall be used along pedestrian and transit corridors in the City Center to encourage reductions in vehicular speeds.

Transportation Policies, Pedestrian

Identify the City Center as a pedestrian district, including a comprehensive and attractive pedestrian system that:

Offers appropriate accommodations and street furniture and amenities (i.e. public restrooms) to facilitate pedestrian traffic downtown;

Is supported by a pedestrian oriented mixed-use environment;

Includes linkages to all downtown districts and the surrounding residential neighborhoods; and

Provides a safe, well lit, and secure pedestrian environment.

Transportation Policies, Transit

Support, cooperate and coordinate with the Rogue Valley Transit District in its effort to improve transit services to, and within, the downtown, thereby facilitating the City Center’s function as a regional transportation hub.

Encourage excellence in the design of public transit facilities in downtown that complements the City Center’s historic architecture.

Transportation Policies, Parking

Parking is an important element to retaining and attracting new business in the City Center and to ensure that City Center has an adequate amount of appropriately located and afforda-

ble off-street parking, including a plan and program to effectively finance, manage and maintain all publicly owned parking.

Maximize the use of parking through the development and adoption of shared parking standards within the City Center.

Parking structures developed by the City shall be strategically located to serve future development and designed to include uses other than parking (i.e. office, retail, residential).

Transportation Implementation, General

The City Center Transportation Classification Map is the basis for the street and streetscape hierarchy plan for the City Center.

Transportation Implementation, Vehicular

Establish and facilitate a safe, comprehensive, compatible, and convenient bicycle system, including secure bicycle storage, within the downtown that connects to the Bear Creek Bikeway system and other adjacent bikeway systems.

Transportation Implementation, Pedestrian

A system of pedestrian ways shall be developed to link all areas of downtown and surrounding areas. The pedestrian system shall:

Provide sufficient and attractive pedestrian space for standing and movement and to regulate the location, type, and use of structures within the sidewalk area to assure adequate pedestrian space;

Provide sufficient sidewalk space at corners, transit stops, and streets that are designated to carry high volumes of pedestrian traffic;

Encourage private development to supplement street rights-of-ways, where needed, with widened sidewalks, and pedestrian resting and congregating areas; and

Provide pedestrian services and information systems, including information/directional kiosks, telephones, restrooms, and newspaper vendors.

Transportation Implementation, Transit

The City Center shall be designated and developed as a transit-oriented development district. The City shall coordinate with Rogue Valley Transit District in the preparation of specific transit-oriented development plans and regulations for the City Center.

As part of the Transportation System Plan, develop and support a trolley service to link the north and south I-5 interchange areas.

Modify the Land Development Code to assure transit-supportive and pedestrian oriented development along regional and local transit corridors in the City Center.

Transportation Implementation, Parking

Expand the Downtown Parking District to be consistent with the boundaries of the Central Business District.

Develop special zoning standards for City Center Parking that addresses:

Parking standards for surface and structured parking facilities;

Shared parking standards;

Parking access;

7. Partnership

Partnership Goal

The revitalization and redevelopment of the City Center is a long-term program supported by a unique public-private partnership that recognizes past investments and works to leverage public, institutional, commercial, and private investments, and to share the benefits and risks to achieve a common objective, and a healthy and vibrant City Center consistent with the City Center 2050 Plan.

Partnerships Policies

Develop, enact and promote a variety of market based incentive programs that reinforce the adopted goals and objectives of the City Center 2050 Plan, and that specifically addresses:

Historic Preservation and Renovation;

Seismic Improvements;

Streetscape Improvements; and

Retention and Recruitment.

Promote an efficient and flexible administrative process that acknowledges the market based challenges to City Center revitalization and encourages and expedites investment in the City Center.

Leverage financial resources with other private and public funding to the greatest extent possible to achieve the objectives of the City Center 2050 Plan.

Partnerships Implementation

Encourage and support the Heart of Medford's formation of a Business Improvement District (BID) to provide supplemental City Center services such as:

Promotional activities;

Maintenance and security programs;

Parking management; and

Business retention and recruitment.

Modify the Land Development Code to improve the efficiency and flexibility of the development review process for City Center project.

Any planning process is only as valid as the ability to translate a plan's ideas, policies, goals and objectives into actions.

Without action, a plan, whether it is the City Center 2050 Plan or any other plan, is simply an exercise in fictitious literature.

To give a plan life requires action verbs, implementation programs, action agendas, or strategic action plans, whatever you choose to call them. If the City Center 2050 Plan is to fulfill its potential as a guiding tool for the continued revitalization of the City Center, then the next step involves the preparation and maintenance of an implementation program.

As a conclusion to the City Center 2050 Plan, five key elements of a successful implementation strategy to further guide the City Center toward realizing its vision for the future are necessary.

Identify a lead organization to spearhead implementation, and identify supporting partners. The continued revitalization of the City Center requires a "champion" to capitalize on the efforts to date and to ensure that the steps toward implementing the City Center 2050 Plan are executed.

Identify key actions and develop a realistic timeframe for implementation of those key actions. Not all of the goals and policies contained in the City Center 2050 Plan can and should happen immediately. A strategic action plan should be prepared to serve as a guide for staging the City Center initiatives in a manner that catalyzes and leverages future actions. Some priority actions should be undertaken quickly to demonstrate public and private commitment to improving the City Center.

Create a set of benchmarks by which to measure progress and success. Measuring progress toward the goals set forth in a strategic action plan is an important tool for continued implementation of the Plan. Periodic assessments help to

People can only be empowered by a vision they understand. Understanding is enhanced by participation. Participation produces empowerment. So before you begin, check to be certain that your vision can be understood.

Teaching the Elephant to Dance

James A. Belasco, Ph.D.

identify barriers and determine whether mid-course changes are needed. In addition, demonstrated/quantifiable success helps to sustain or increase enthusiasm, awareness and commitment to the City Center 2050 Plan.

Create a process for ongoing review and update. The City Center will certainly grow and change over the course of 50 years. Market conditions shift, public opinion and policies change, and unforeseen technological advances will alter the priorities of the City Center. To ensure successful implementation of the Plan, an organized, efficient process for review and update is essential. Based on the benchmark evaluations, a five-year review and update process should be in place for the community to re-assess the overall vision, re-prioritize strategies and action, and add new goals and strategies as needed for the continued revitalization of the City Center.

Develop funding sources for priority projects and programs. The implementation process will be most successful if there are sufficient resources to develop projects and execute programs. The City Center must establish and maintain funding from a variety of sources, including private investment, donations, tax increment funds, Federal and State grants, corporate investment and donations, bonds, impact fees and the City’s general fund.

First and foremost, the City Center 2050 Plan is a reference document, a map to a defined future. The greater the revitalization activity in the City Center, the greater the need to refer to the City Center 2050 Plan to assure that the visions, goals and objectives are being met, and that the journey will be exciting, productive and memorable.

*This is the moment of embarking.
All auspicious signs are in place.*

Deng Ming-Dao