



REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

date mailed: 07/23/2025

Project Downtown Plan
File no. CP-25-223
Applicant City of Medford
Agent n/a

To Referral agencies and departments
From Carla Angeli Paladino, Principal Planner, Long Range
 tel. 541-774-2395 *eml.* carle.paladino@cityofmedford.org

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A legislative amendment to incorporate the Downtown Plan into the Neighborhood Element of the Medford Comprehensive Plan.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

Attached are documents for your review. Please investigate and submit a written report setting forth any necessary conditions as required of your department/agency for approval to the Planning Department within ten working days.

If no comments are received within the 10-day review period, the Planning Department will assume that your department or agency has no comments.

If you have any questions, please contact the planner listed above. Thank you.

ATTACHMENTS

A Downtown Plan

RECIPIENTS

This Request for Comments (file number CP-25-223) was sent to the following recipients:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building Department | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Avista Utilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Medford Irrigation District |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City Attorney – Garrett Ramsey | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Charter Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Rogue River Valley Irrigation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering – Doug Burroughs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hunter Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Talent Irrigation District |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering – Mike Casper | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LS Networks of So. Oregon | <input type="checkbox"/> Medford School Dist. 549C |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering – Karl MacNair | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lumen (Centurylink) | <input type="checkbox"/> Phoenix School District 4 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering – Jennifer Ingram | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pacific Power & Light | <input type="checkbox"/> R.V. International Airport |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fire Department | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rogue Disposal | <input type="checkbox"/> OR Dept. of Aviation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Rogue Valley Sewer Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Aviation Admin. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Police Department | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rogue Valley Transportation District | <input type="checkbox"/> Fire District #2 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Commission | <input type="checkbox"/> US Post Office | <input type="checkbox"/> Fire District #3 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> Jackson Co. Admin. Officer | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ODOT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Floodplain – Liz Hamblin | <input type="checkbox"/> Jackson Co. Health | <input type="checkbox"/> ODOT Rail |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban Renewal (MURA) | <input type="checkbox"/> Jackson Co. Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> OR Dept. Fish & Wildlife |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alt Trans Advis Comm (ATAC) | <input type="checkbox"/> Jackson Co. Roads & Parks | <input type="checkbox"/> Army Corps of Engineers |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DLCD – Josh LeBombard | <input type="checkbox"/> Jackson Co. Surveyor | <input type="checkbox"/> Bear Creek Watershed Council |
| | | Department of State Lands |

A Land Development Committee meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, August 6, 2025**, at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom webinar.

Topic: Land Development Meeting

Link to join the webinar: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83028661620>

Webinar ID: 830 2866 1620



CITY OF MEDFORD **DOWNTOWN PLAN**



PUBLIC DRAFT | JULY 2025



MEDFORD
PLANNING



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A special “thank you” to all who participated in the development of the Medford Downtown Plan. The time, effort, and support devoted to this planning process demonstrates the Medford community’s commitment to the long-term success of Downtown Medford.

CITY COUNCIL

Michael Zarosinski, Mayor of Medford
Jessica Ayres, Ward 1 Councilor
Mike Kerlinger, Ward 1 Councilor
John Quinn, Ward 2 Councilor
Zac Smith, Ward 2 Councilor
Kevin Stine, Ward 3 Councilor
Garrett West, Ward 3 Councilor
Nick Card, Ward 4 Councilor
Kevin Keating, Ward 4 Councilor
Sarah Spansail, Ward 1 Councilor (2024)
Tim D’Alessandro, Ward 2 Councilor (2024)
Chad Miller, Ward 3 Councilor (2024)
Eric Stark, Ward 4 Councilor (2024)

CITY STAFF

Michelle King, Planning Director
Carla Angeli Paladino, Principal Planner
Casandra Brown, Planner II
Chris Olivier, Planning GIS Coordinator
Sarah Sousa, Planner III
Liz Hamblin, Planner III

Karl MacNair, Transportation Manager
Harry Weiss, Medford Urban Renewal Agency Director

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Abigail Schilling, Medford CoWork
Amy Maukonen, The Copper Plank
Annie Jenkins, Downtown Medford Association
Dennis Clark, Jefferson Spirits
Edem Gomez, Rogue Valley Transportation District
Eric Strahl, Craterian Theater
Eric Werner, Rotary Club of Medford
Harry Weiss, Medford Urban Renewal Agency
Ian Horlacher, Oregon Department of Transportation
Jeff Bender, ORW Architects
Jennifer Boardman, Oregon Department of Transportation
Jessica Ayres, City Councilor

John Lazur, Oregon Department of Transportation
Jonah Liden, Rogue Community College
Josh Cole, Rogue Disposal
Garry Penning, Rogue Disposal
Josh LeBombard, Department of Land Conservation and Development
Josh Moffit, Verity Construction
Julie Rossi, AARP
Kari May, Jackson County Library Services
Karl MacNair, Medford Public Works
Kelly Madding, Medford City Manager’s Office
Kim Trimiew, Medford Parks, Recreation, and Facilities
Kristen Johnson, Oasis Center
Kristina Johnsen, Medford Communications
Kyle Wilkins, Lithia Motors
Lilia Caballero, Medford Police
Mark McKechnie, Medford Planning Commission
Rachel Bennett, Medford Planning Commission

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CONTINUED)

Riah Safady, Jackson Care Connect
Sharre Whitson, Salvation Army
Tiffany Maude, Holly Theatre
TJ Holmes, Travel Medford

CONSULTANT TEAM



www.migcom.com

In association with Architectural Resources Group (ARG) and
Kittelson & Associates, Inc

PROJECT FUNDING

The Medford Downtown Plan is funded primarily through a grant from the Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) program, which is a joint initiative of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development.





LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Indigenous tribes and bands have been with the lands that we inhabit today throughout Oregon and the Northwest since time immemorial and continue to be a vibrant part of the region today.

We would like to express our respect to the First Peoples of this land. It is important that we recognize and honor the ongoing legal and spiritual relationship between the land, plants, animals, and people indigenous to this place we now call Oregon/the Pacific Northwest.

The interconnectedness of the people, the land, and the natural environment cannot be overstated; the health of one is necessary for the health of all. We recognize the pre-existing and continued sovereignty of the federally recognized tribes who have ties to this region and thank them for continuing to share their traditional ecological knowledge and perspective on how we might care for one another and the land, so it can take care of us.

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- ATTACHMENT B:** VISION & GOALS
- ATTACHMENT C:** DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS
- ATTACHMENT D:** PARKING SCENARIOS, POLICIES, & STRATEGIES
- ATTACHMENT E:** URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK & STANDARDS
- ATTACHMENT F:** MULTIMODAL IMPROVEMENTS
- ATTACHMENT G:** DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY
- ATTACHMENT H:** DOWNTOWN PUBLIC EVENT SUMMARIES
- ATTACHMENT I:** DOWNTOWN MULTIMODAL CONCEPT PLAN



CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

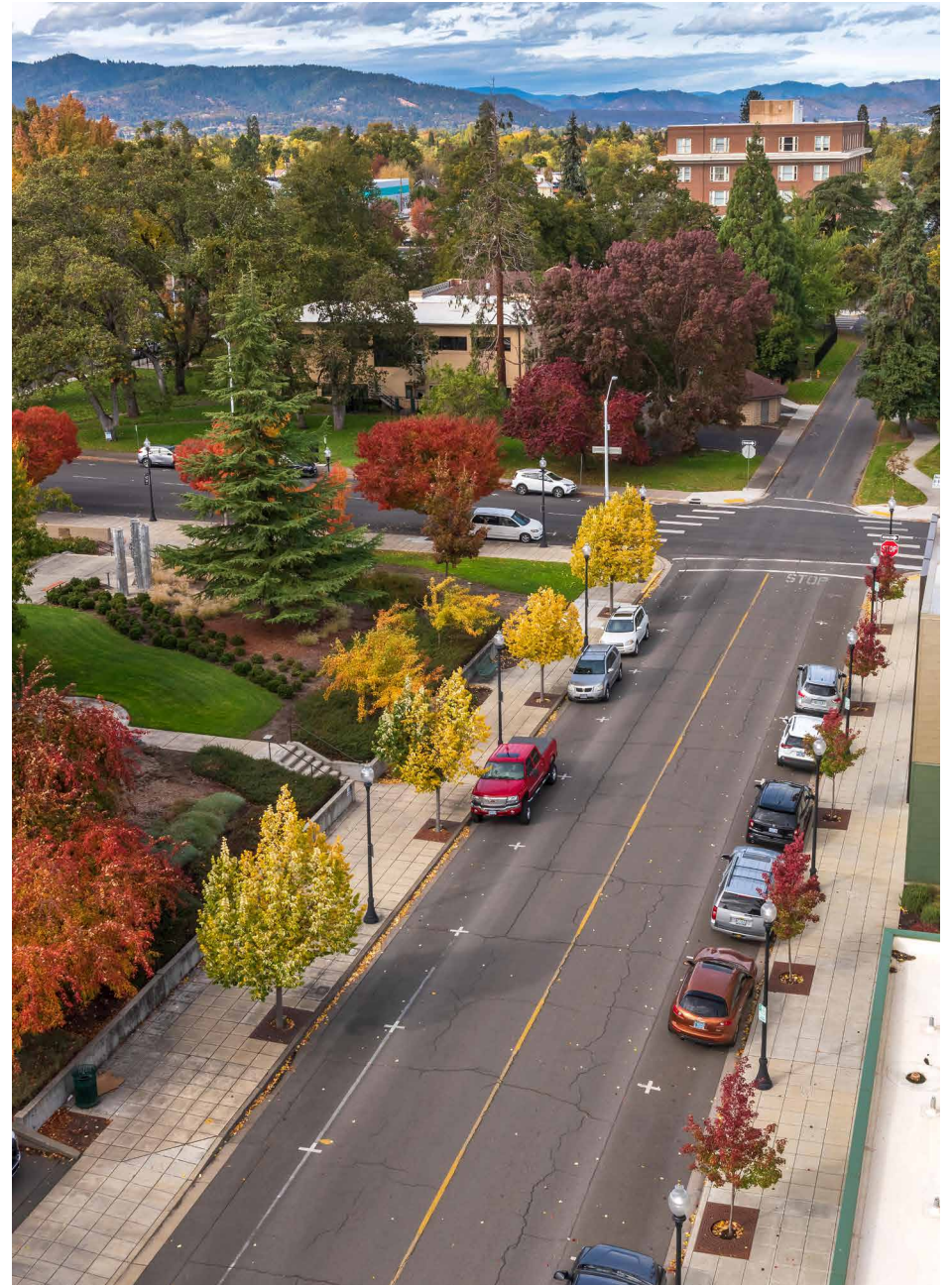
1 INTRODUCTION

Downtown Medford is the center of the community. Since its roots as a stop along the railroad, Downtown has always been the historical, cultural, and physical heart of the city.

The Medford community has a vision for Downtown Medford.

Downtown Medford is a **vibrant, active, and welcoming mixed-use urban center that uniquely represents our community as the Rogue Valley's regional destination, providing residential, business, and entertainment opportunities that are safe and accessible to everyone.**

Achieving this vision will require near term actions and a long-term commitment from businesses, residents, the City of Medford, and others to collaborate and support investment and activities that make Downtown Medford a true destination. This will require innovative solutions and dedicated resources. This Plan serves as a roadmap to bring that vision to reality.





AREA CONTEXT

Medford is the county seat for Jackson County and serves as the regional employment and service hub for Southern Oregon. Medford is the heart of Rogue Valley, well known as an outdoor playground and natural gateway to distinct natural areas. Multiple highways connect the city to the broader region, providing easy access to and through Medford, but those highways also serve as a physical barrier between neighborhoods and Downtown (Map 1-1). Medford's history is tied directly to the railroad, which both defines its urban form and limits access. The Central Oregon and Pacific Railroad (CORP) mainline bisects Downtown Medford, largely running parallel to Highway 99. Together, these corridors frame different types of development, from industrial, storage and shipping uses to traditional "Main Street" style development that has grown and evolved as the transportation system has also grown.

Bear Creek is an important natural feature adjacent to Downtown that is somewhat hidden due to the location of Interstate - 5 (I-5) and development that has turned away from the creek and natural areas. The Bear Creek trail network is an important pedestrian and bicycle connection that provides critical links to a broader multimodal system.

Medford was named in 1883 by David Loring, a civil engineer and right-of-way agent for the Oregon and California Railroad. He named it after Medford, Massachusetts, which was near his hometown of Concord, Massachusetts.

MAP 1-1: REGIONAL CONTEXT



SOURCE: City of Medford, Jackson County, MIG.



Images sourced from the City of Medford Historic Preservation website with individual images sourced from the Southern Oregon Historical Society and Vicki Bryden.



Postcard image looking east at Front and Main streets, 1908. (Vicki Bryden)

Downtown Medford's rich history plays an important role in the history of the city and Southern Oregon. Incorporated in 1885, Downtown Medford's story began as a small railroad town along the CORP that continues to bisect Downtown today. Following the arrival of the railroad and supported by a flourishing orchard industry, what is now the Downtown Historic District (Map 1-1) quickly grew from a small town into a modern, early 20th century city with water and sewer systems, electric streetlights, impressive buildings, and public services. Since then, Medford has developed outward from the Downtown Historic District with shopping malls and suburban living pulling day-to-day activity away from Downtown.

According to Portland State University Population Research Center 2022 estimates, Medford is the eighth largest city in the state with a population of approximately 88,585. Today, Downtown Medford is roughly centered on the Downtown Historic District, encompassing approximately 500 acres (or 0.8 square miles) with a population of approximately 3,513 according to 2017-2021 American Community Survey (ACS) data.

PLAN PURPOSE

Downtown Medford is at a unique point in time. Like many downtowns both small and large across Oregon and the broader United States, Downtown Medford is adapting to the challenges of a post-COVID world with losses in office employment, increasing commercial vacancies, and negative perceptions of safety due to rising homelessness and fewer people on the street.

Downtown Medford also has numerous opportunities that could act as a catalyst for positive change. These include a growing and diversifying citywide population, recent public and private investments Downtown and nearby, and momentum from numerous ongoing planning efforts that highlight the community's excitement for Downtown Medford evolution over the next several years. Specifically, the Downtown Plan (Plan) establishes a strategic vision that identifies opportunities to:

- Increase housing options for all;
- Support existing businesses and attract new businesses;
- Increase multimodal travel options; and
- Promote a vibrant sense of place that is uniquely Medford and welcoming to all.

The Plan includes new urban design and architectural standards, identifies new pedestrian and bicycle connections, meets the State of Oregon's Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities requirements described in OAR 660-012-0310, and is organized as an implementable action plan that includes near-term actions to activate the area.



The Concord in Downtown Medford which features affordable housing units. (Housing Authority of Jackson County).



New mural completed by local artist Ryan Moon on the north wall of the Rogue Gallery, June 2025. (City of Medford)

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Plan’s development process began in Spring 2024 and concluded in Summer 2025. The process was composed of seven key phases (Figure 1-1) covering diverse topics ranging from visioning, land use and parking, to multimodal improvements for Downtown. Each phase was informed by feedback from the Medford community. Central to this process was a Public Advisory

Committee (PAC) that met six times at key project milestones and included representation from Downtown businesses, community organizations, public agencies, landowners, and various City departments. Other engagement opportunities, including community surveys and Downtown open houses, were held throughout the planning process to understand the community’s vision and aspirations for the future of Downtown. See Figure 1-2 on the next page.

FIGURE 1-1: DOWNTOWN PLAN PROCESS



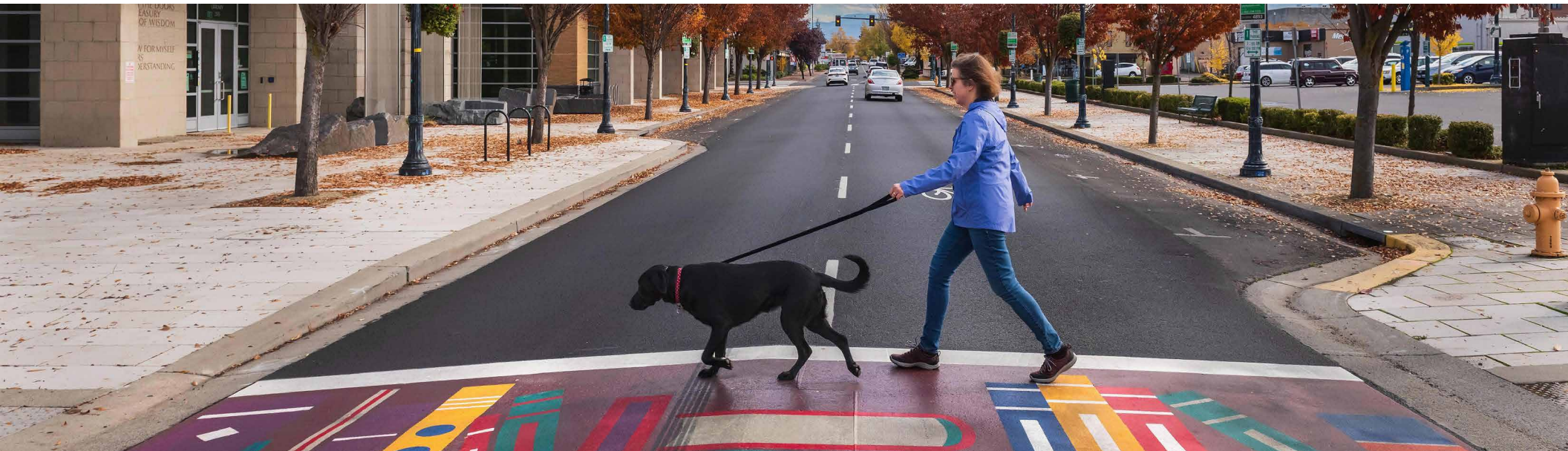
SPRING 2024	SUMMER 2024 - SPRING 2025	SPRING 2025	FALL 2025
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PAC MEETING #1
 COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS
 PROJECT TEAM DOWNTOWN TOUR

PAC MEETINGS #2, #3, #4
 COMMUNITY SURVEY
 COMMUNITY EVENTS #1, #2

PAC MEETINGS #5, #6
 COMMUNITY EVENT #3

FIGURE 1-2: ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT



PAST PLANS

The Downtown Plan is the first comprehensive plan for Downtown Medford in over twenty years. Many past plans and studies, though many years old, echo similar themes and vision elements that remain relevant today.

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 Downtown's first planning study. Prepared by the Bureau of Municipal Research and Service and the University of Oregon, the study responded to the changing character of Downtown as it faced increasing competition from modern shopping centers and the general decentralization of the city's population as a result of urban growth. The study concluded that Downtown should:

- Be compact, easily accessible, safe, and convenient for shoppers;
- Route traffic to circumvent 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.

MEDFORD CITY CENTER PLAN: A PROGRAM FOR REVITALIZATION, 1966

Prepared by the consulting firm of Eisner-Stewart and Associates, this Plan was built on the findings of the 1961 Plan, with an emphasis on the revitalization of Downtown. The Plan proposed seven ambitious strategies for revitalization, including:

- Street improvements;
- Off-street parking improvements;
- The conversion of Main Street and Central Avenue to a pedestrian mall;
- Civic center development;
- Commercial development;
- Convention center complex development; and
- Bear Creek promenade development.

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 the Plan's parking recommendations were implemented and other recommendations have been carried over to later plans.

CIVIC CENTER PLAN, 1968

Prepared in 1968 by Edson & Patterson and Langford & Stewart, the Civic Center Plan expanded on the 1966 Plan by addressing specific development needs of Downtown 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 role in the location and construction of City Hall, the County Justice Center, and the Juvenile Facility that still exists today.

CITY CENTER REVITALIZATION PLAN, 1988

Adopted in late 1988, this Plan responded to ongoing concerns about Downtown and the economic impacts of the new regional mall constructed in 1984. With this Plan, tax increment financing and the Downtown urban renewal district were established.

CITY OF MEDFORD DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT, 1998

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 Downtown. Since the 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 Downtown's commercial buildings.



Bear Creek Master Plan, 2003.

BEAR CREEK MASTER PLAN, 2003

In late 2002 the City of Medford commissioned Design Studios West, Inc. to improve, enhance, and protect the assets of Bear Creek – the crown jewel of Medford. The Bear Creek Master Plan divides implementation into three zones: the North Zone, the Central Zone, and the South Zone. The Central Zone is divided further to include the Downtown Medford sub-zone, which is the most heavily used section of Bear Creek. Proposed projects in the Downtown sub-zone included interpretive overlooks, community open spaces, and a continuous walkway along the creek with park and dining options centered on Main Street.

CITY CENTER 2050 PLAN, 2004

The last comprehensive plan for Downtown, the City Center 2050 Plan outlined opportunities to make Downtown a “vibrant and attractive place that adds to the aesthetic and economic value of the community.” The Plan defined a long-term vision and implementation program for Downtown including an innovative Downtown concept plan composed of five unique subdistricts, each of which has its own character and sense of place. Although the envisioned concept of the City Center 2050 Plan was never fully realized, the Plan's values and vision remain relevant today. This planning effort utilizes the recommendations from the City Center 2050 Plan as a starting point for reimagining the future of Downtown.

MEDFORD 2040 VISION & ACTION PLAN, 2022

The 2040 Vision Plan established a community-driven vision for Medford in 2040 along with a roadmap for achieving the vision through a series of strategies and actions. The vision is broken down into five focus areas, including: focusing economic growth and resiliency; enhancing hometown; connecting community; fostering safety and wellness; and promoting recreational opportunity. Relevant Downtown related actions include:

1. Investing in downtown revitalization and activities to enhance economic development efforts and quality of life
2. Adding infrastructure to make Downtown more walkable and accessible
3. Developing business incentives and initiatives to promote physical improvements in the Downtown core
4. Addressing homelessness
5. Establishing festivals and cultural events that highlight Medford's diverse community
6. Investing in public art
7. Fostering a vibrant Downtown through extended business hours, amended zoning to limit street level uses, and additional community events, street fairs and markets
8. Maintaining safe and clean public spaces
9. Expanding connections between downtown and the Bear Creek Greenway

DOWNTOWN MEDFORD MULTIMODAL CONCEPT PLAN, 2023

The 2023 Concept Plan identifies multimodal improvements to make it safer, easier, and less stressful for people to navigate to Downtown car-free, balancing the needs of people on foot, bikes, and mobility devices with people driving. The Plan developed preferred design concepts to improve multimodal connectivity on Main Street, Central Avenue, Riverside Avenue, Court Street, and South of Couplet. Enhanced pedestrian crossings are also proposed at various points on Riverside Avenue, Central Avenue, and Court Street. Many of the Concept Plan's multimodal improvements are carried over into this planning effort.



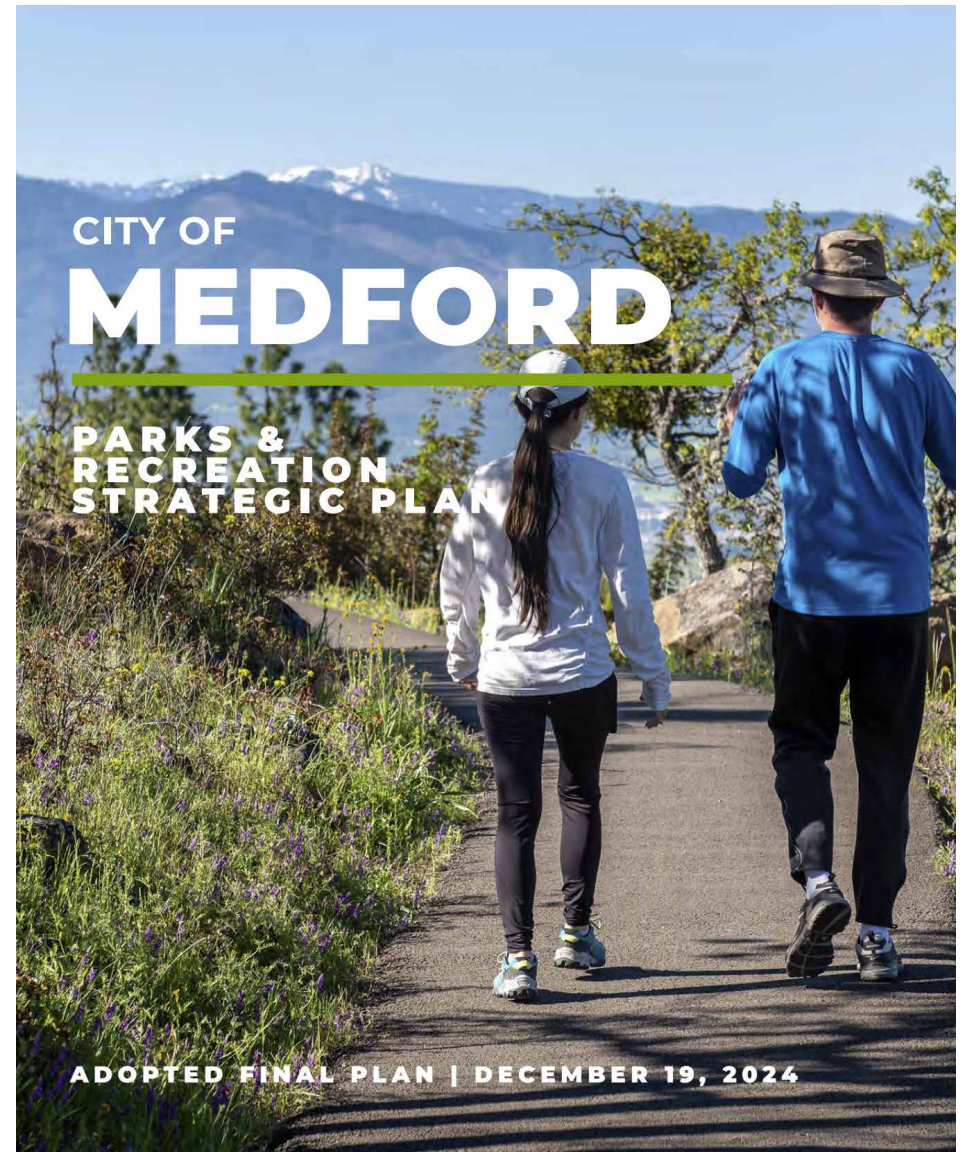
Riverside Avenue design in the 2023 Downtown Multimodal Concept Plan.

DOWNTOWN HOUSING AND RESIDENTIAL MARKET ANALYSIS, 2023

Prepared by Johnson Economics, the Downtown Housing and Residential Market Analysis provides a baseline of understanding for current residential and market conditions in Downtown. The Analysis revealed that Downtown has considerable redevelopment potential and capacity. The anticipated form of rental residential development without market intervention would likely be a three-story wood framed rental apartment project with surface level parking. Other urban housing forms are unlikely to be viewed as viable in Downtown without some type of intervention. These findings informed the development scenario analysis conducted as part of this planning effort.

MEDFORD PARKS AND RECREATION STRATEGIC PLAN, 2024

The 2024 Strategic Plan identifies a renewed vision and goals for the future of Medford's park and recreation system, paired with a community-driven investment strategy to add new parkland, develop existing undeveloped park properties, improve existing parks, and activate parks and facilities. The Strategic Plan includes numerous recommendations for Downtown parks and the Bear Creek Greenway that primarily focus on improving perceptions of safety and providing additional amenities to increase user comfort and further activate the sites. These recommendations align with the community feedback provided in this planning effort and are incorporated into this Plan's implementation strategies.



Medford Parks & Recreation Strategic Plan, 2024.

GREYHOUND





CHAPTER 2

DOWNTOWN TODAY

2 DOWNTOWN TODAY

Downtown Medford serves as the heart of the Medford community. It is visually linked to history, while simultaneously emblematic of Medford's future with countless opportunities for growth and change.

Downtown Medford is a district of opportunity but must also overcome challenges to achieve what the community desires for its central gathering space. There are many elements that shape how people live, work, play, and visit Downtown:

- **Urban Fabric** includes existing zoning and land uses and how people experience the built environment.
- **Parks and Green Spaces** includes parks and active spaces, landscaping and tree canopy, and green spaces where people rest and recreate.
- **Mobility and Connectivity** includes streets, trails, transit and other ways people get to and around Downtown.
- **Culture and Experience** includes Downtown's history, entertainment, and the community's perceptions of being Downtown.

Understanding each of these elements and how they interrelate with each other establishes a foundation for where to target future growth and investment.



URBAN FABRIC

Multiple layers of regulation and land use policy have shaped the urban fabric of Downtown as it is experienced today.

CURRENT LAND USE

Downtown Medford is comprised of a mix of land uses scattered throughout the approximately 260-acre area, including commercial, industrial, parks, educational, civic, institutional, single-family residential and multifamily residential uses. These uses are distributed across Downtown, with most commercial uses centered around the Downtown Historic District and key arterials. Most residential uses are located along the edges of Downtown with many multi-family developments dispersed throughout the central commercial areas. Civic and institutional uses are largely located in the southwestern corner of Downtown where city, county, state, and federal government offices and facilities are concentrated. There are some industrial uses located on the northern and southern ends of Downtown; each of which includes multiple large vacant buildings and/or lots.

Overall, Downtown comprises approximately 975,663 square feet of office space, 1.6 million square feet of retail space (including restaurants and entertainment uses), 723,650 square feet of public administration or educational space, 236,027 square feet of industrial space, and 654,930 square feet of residential space. Over 60% of Downtown's 756 residential units are multifamily rental units.

FUTURE LAND USE

The General Land Use Plan (GLUP) of the City of Medford's Comprehensive Plan establishes general land use designations to guide growth and inform zoning decisions.

There are six GLUP designations and one general land use overlay within Downtown, although most land is within the City Center (CC) and Commercial (CM) designations.









The **City Center (CC)** designation is the largest GLUP designation in Downtown and is defined as the "Downtown core area" in Medford. The intent of the designation is to define a "City Center" and to encourage development to comply with the City Center Revitalization Plan and the Civic Center Plan. There is no specific zoning district associated with the CC designation; however, the Central Business (C-B) overlay zone covers most of the area in the designation, although they are not completely contiguous.

The **Commercial (CM)** designation is the second largest GLUP designation in the study area and permits offices, medical facilities, limited service-oriented businesses, and limited residential development. Multi-family dwellings meeting the density standards of the Multi-Family Residential-30 (MFR-30) zoning district are also allowed. The corresponding zoning districts permitted in the CM GLUP designation are Neighborhood Commercial (C-N), Community Commercial (C-C), Regional Commercial (C-R), and Heavy Commercial (C-H).




The **Greenway** designation applies to linear parklands, riparian corridors, and public or private open space, particularly those along stream corridors and waterways. In the study area, the greenway designation follows Bear Creek and the Bear Creek Greenway in the eastern portion of the study area. Greenway development must be designed to protect, preserve, and enhance natural resources and wildlife habitat, and to facilitate opportunities for outdoor recreation and multimodal circulation.

MAP 2-1: GENERAL LAND USE PLAN DESIGNATIONS



GLUP DESIGNATIONS

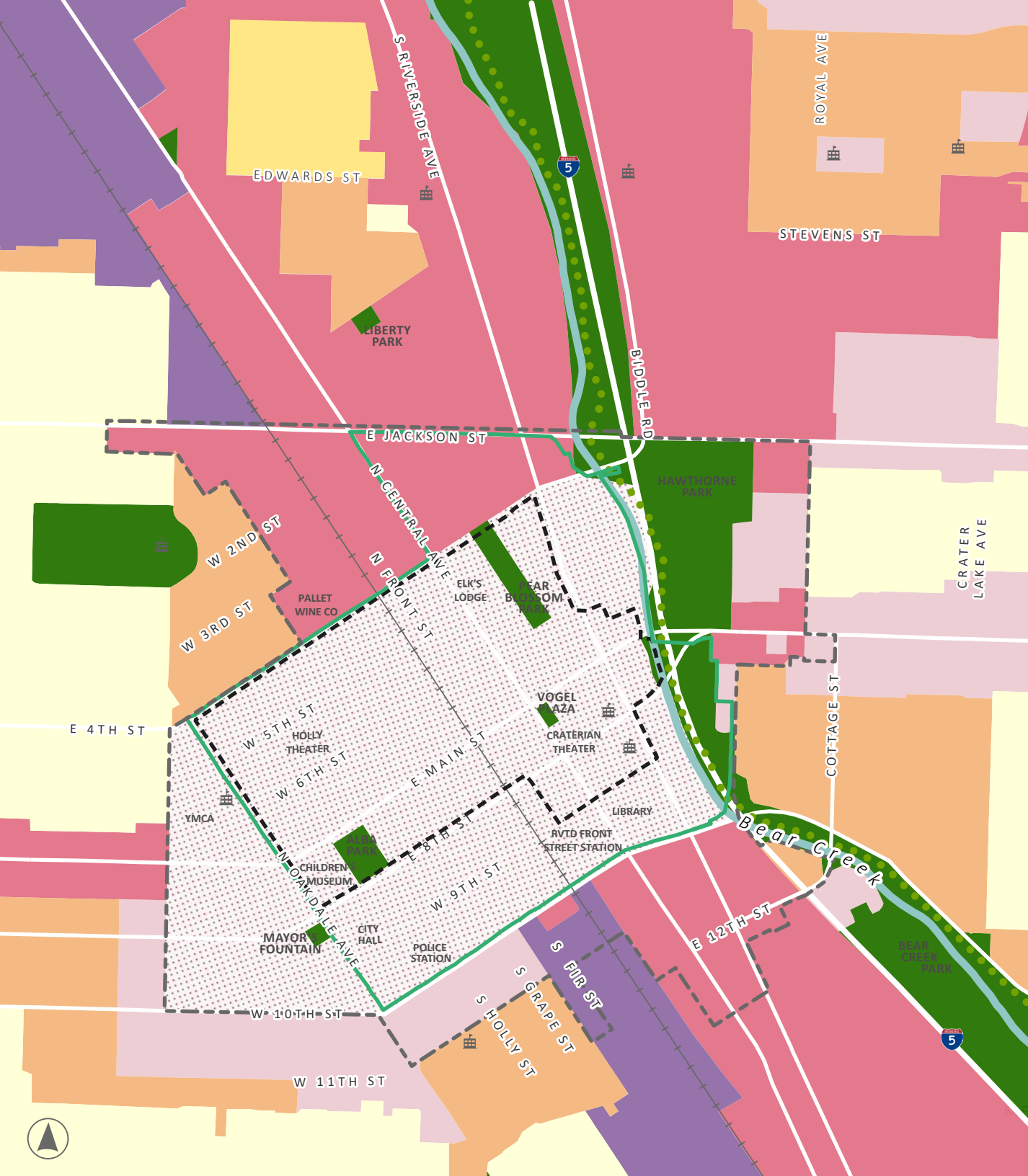
-  CC-CITY CENTER
-  CM-COMMERCIAL
-  SC-SERVICE COMMERCIAL
-  HI-HEAVY INDUSTRIAL
-  PS-PARKS & SCHOOLS
-  UR-URBAN RESIDENTIAL
-  UM-URBAN MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
-  UH-URBAN HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

OTHER DISTRICTS

-  Proposed Downtown Boundary
-  Existing Central Business District
-  Downtown Historic District

BASE MAP FEATURES

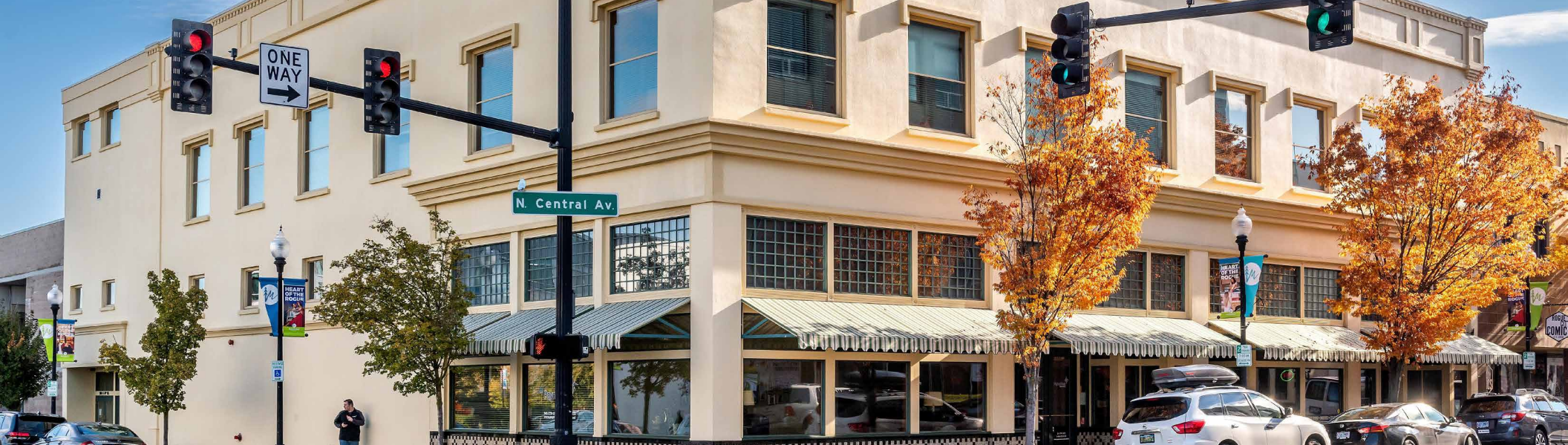
-  Bear Creek
-  Bear Creek Greenway



SOURCES

City of Medford, Jackson County, MIG, 2024-2025.





CURRENT ZONING

Zoning refines the desired future GLUP designations by identifying levels of density and development standards to different areas within Downtown. There are nine different zoning districts and two zoning overlays present within Downtown. Most land is designated as Community Commercial, Service Commercial and Professional Office, Heavy Commercial, Parks, and Multi-Family (20-units) zones. There are two overlays that provide additional direction for future development.

The **Central Business Overlay District (C-B)** applies to a substantial portion of Downtown and includes the entirety of the Downtown Historic District. The intent of the C-B Overlay District is “to recognize the unique and historic character of the Downtown area as an asset to the community and to provide standards and criteria necessary for its continued development and redevelopment as a vital part of this community.” Within the C-B Overlay District, all underlying commercial and industrial site development standards are waived in lieu of the standards outlined in Chapter 10.358 of the Medford

Development Code. Notably, the District allows sidewalk cafes in commercial zones, requires additional streetscape standards to promote a positive pedestrian experience, and does not require off-street parking requirements.

The **Historic Preservation Overlay District (H)** applies to public and private property with historical significance in the city. The intent of the H Overlay District is to “to protect, enhance, perpetuate, and improve those buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts that are of local, regional, statewide, or national historic significance.” The entirety of the Downtown Historic District is within the H Overlay District in addition to a few additional sites within the broader Downtown area.

Excluding single-family residential zones and commercial and industrial uses adjacent to residential zones, **building height** is waived in the C-B overlay (unless when adjacent to residential) and allowed up to 85’ across all other zones within most of the Downtown area with some exceptions for residentially zoned properties.

MAP 2-2: CURRENT LAND USE

ZONING

CITY RESIDENTIAL

- Park, P-1
- Multi-Family, 30 Units
- Multi-Family, 20 Units
- Multi-Family, 15 Units
- Single-Family, 10 Units
- Single-Family, 6 Units

CITY COMMERCIAL

- Heavy Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Service Commercial & Professional Office

CITY INDUSTRIAL

- Heavy Industrial
- General Industrial
- Light Industrial

OTHER DISTRICTS

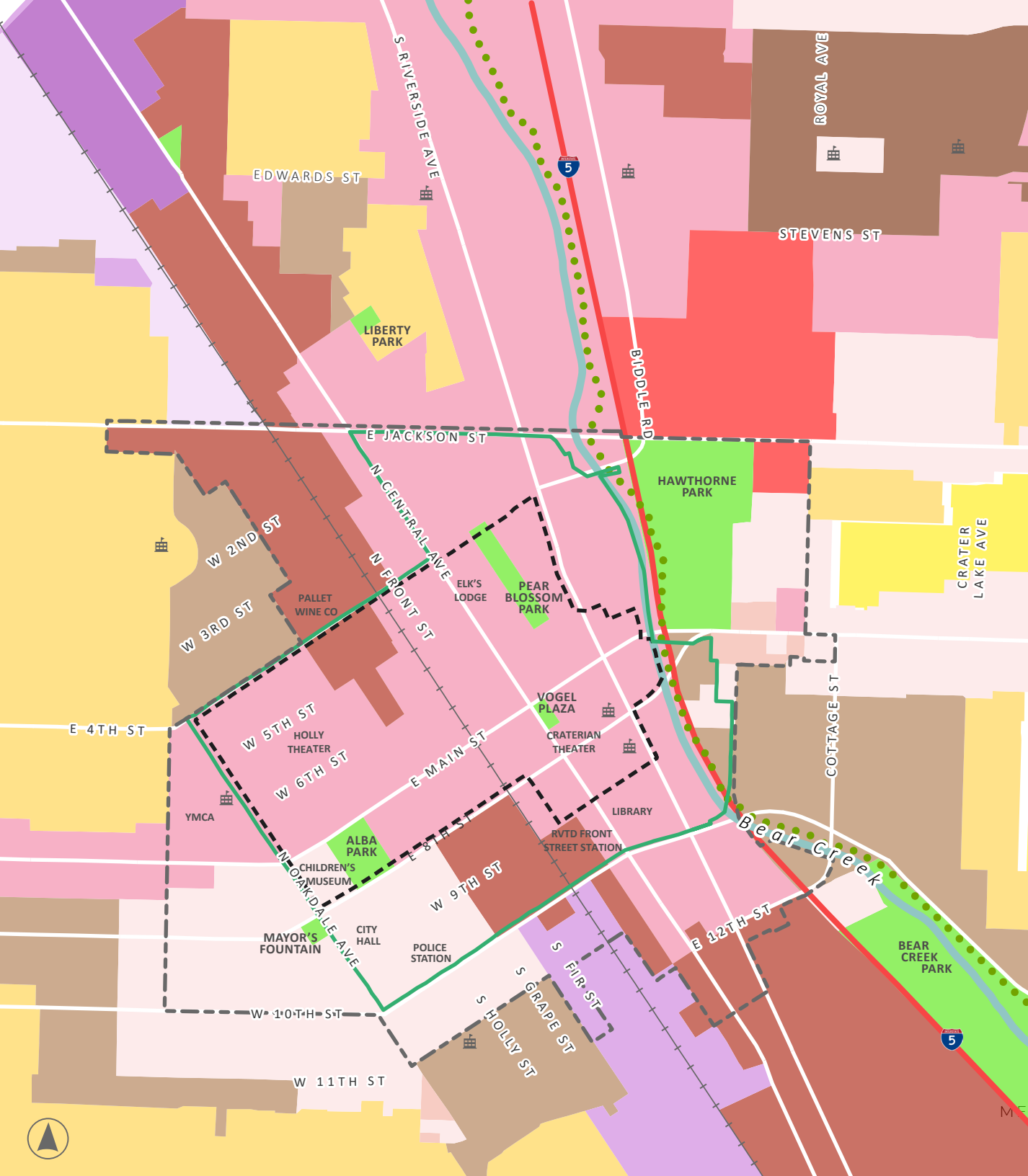
- Proposed Downtown Boundary
- Existing Central Business District
- Downtown Historic District

BASE MAP FEATURES

- Bear Creek
- Interstate 5
- Bear Creek Greenway

SOURCES

City of Medford, Jackson County, MIG, 2024-2025.



WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE COMMUNITY ABOUT LAND USE

DEVELOP VACANT AND UNDERDEVELOPED PROPERTIES

Although there are concentrations of higher density areas along major corridors, there are numerous vacant or underdeveloped properties throughout Downtown. In addition to these sites, there are many vacant buildings and storefronts throughout Downtown that community members see as a barrier to the creation of a vibrant and active urban center.

PROVIDE MORE HOUSING FOR ALL

The lack of residential development has resulted in a sleepy downtown that struggles to support Downtown businesses. Community members expressed a desire for more housing options at various price points as a priority for Downtown's future success.



“Shopping and good food options will bring people. We need to create a vibe that people want to be part of.”

—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)

PROVIDE MORE URBAN AMENITIES

Additional urban amenities such as more diverse dining and retail options, a grocery store, pharmacy, late night entertainment, and extended business hours are seen as a necessity to incentivize Downtown investment. It will be challenging to attract people to live, visit, and bring their businesses Downtown without these amenities.

CREATE A MORE COHESIVE DOWNTOWN ENVIRONMENT

Public discussions throughout the planning process raised concerns around Downtown as a fragmented collection of areas and places, rather than a cohesive and well-connected destination. Further defining the different areas of Downtown and promoting cohesive design elements will help create a stronger sense of place while embracing the diversity of uses present in Downtown.





“The Downtown is very fragmented and often hard to define.”
—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)

“[Downtown] needs high density housing options and walkable neighborhoods. Feels like a big parking lot sometimes.”
—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)

“Unique, affordable shops and revitalizing the greenway and revisiting vacant premises and holding onto the traditional buildings.”
—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)

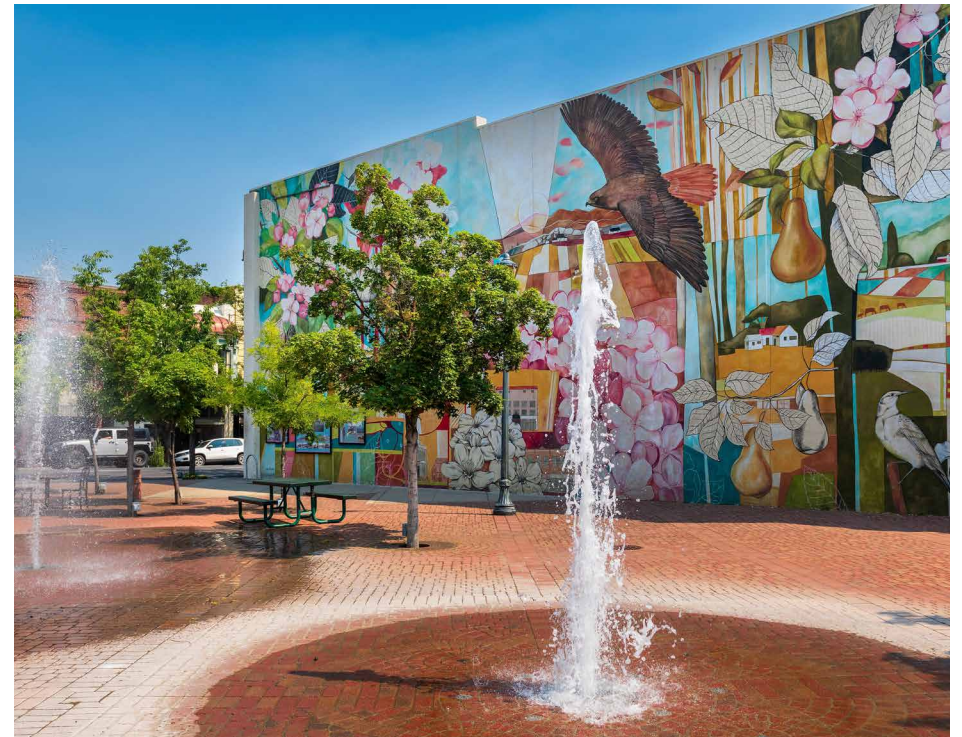
PARKS AND GREEN SPACES

Downtown Medford is bordered to the east by Bear Creek and the Bear Creek Greenway, one of Medford's most notable and unique natural features. The Bear Creek Greenway is a 20-mile-long paved shared-use path with 7.2 miles running through the Medford city limits parallel to Bear Creek and the I-5 corridor. The Greenway connects five adjacent communities from Ashland to Central Point, as well as numerous parks and Downtown within Medford. The Greenway is owned by local, county and state jurisdictions and managed by Jackson County. Enhancing connectivity and integrating Bear Creek as a unique and prominent feature of Downtown was repeatedly listed as a top priority by community members.

Downtown has four city parks and community gathering areas that are owned and managed by the Medford Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department, including:

- **Pear Blossom Park** is a 1.4-acre park that consists of two square blocks at The Commons in Downtown Medford. The site includes a play area, large grassy area, and covered stage that is programmed with community events throughout the year.
- **Virginia Vogel Plaza** is a community plaza located in the heart of Downtown at the intersection of East Main Street and Central Avenue. The plaza features a popular fountain, vibrant public mural, the much photographed "Chess Man" sculpture, shade trees, and public seating. Numerous community events are hosted at the plaza throughout the year.

- **Alba Park** is a 1.5-acre neighborhood park located Downtown across from City Hall. The park is named for Medford's Sister City, Alba Italy. The park features an Italian-carved Carrara marble statue along with a granite fountain.
- **Hawthorne Park** is a 14-acre community park located along Bear Creek and the Bear Creek Greenway. The park underwent a \$2 million renovation in 2015-16 and now includes a large play structure, a skatepark, Medford's largest seasonal splash pad, a futsal court, a basketball court, and a dog park. The Rogue Valley Growers and Crafter Market is hosted weekly between March and November.



Virginia Vogel Plaza

MAP 2-3: DOWNTOWN PARKS

DOWNTOWN PARKS



BASE MAP FEATURES

- Proposed Downtown Boundary
- Downtown Historic District
- Park
- Bear Creek
- Bear Creek Greenway
- Interstate 5
- Building
- Public Parking
- Tax Lot

SOURCES

City of Medford, Jackson County, MIG, 2024-2025.



WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE COMMUNITY ABOUT PARKS AND GREEN SPACES

IMPROVE SAFETY IN PARKS AND COMMUNITY SPACES THROUGH ACTIVATION

Downtown has great park access, but there is a community desire for improved safety and additional amenities to increase user comfort and further activate Downtown's parks and public spaces. Some people also expressed a desire for more community events and regular, family-friendly programming. Additional smaller green spaces throughout Downtown were also suggested.

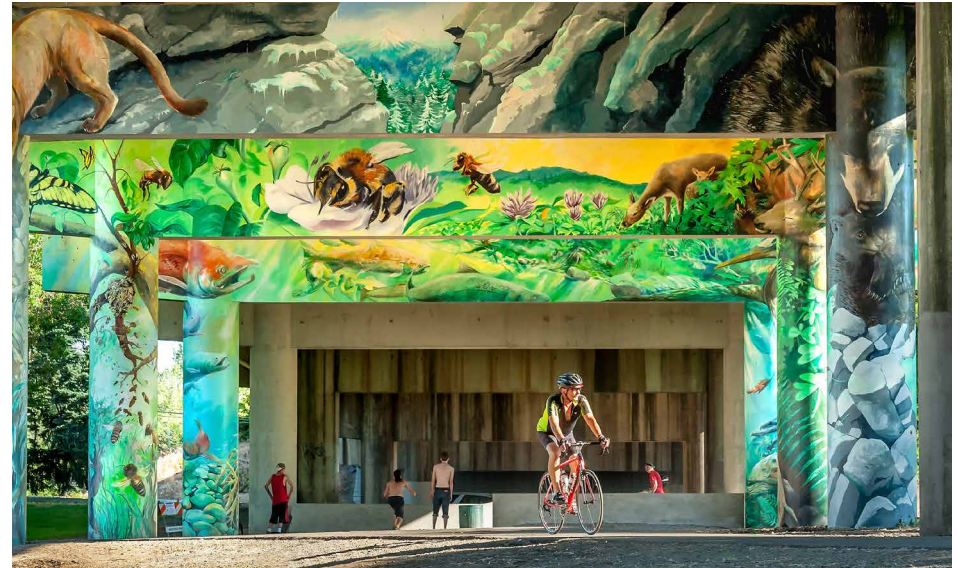
INTEGRATE BEAR CREEK INTO DOWNTOWN

Bear Creek and the Bear Creek Greenway are tremendous Downtown assets that are currently underutilized. Planning efforts since Downtown's first plan in the 1960s have highlighted the significant opportunity these resources provide for Downtown, suggesting a range of interventions such as development of a Bear Creek promenade, community open spaces, and creekside dining options. Reimagined adjacent land uses, better connections, and restoration of Bear Creek was a common theme across all outreach efforts.

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF STREET TREES AND LANDSCAPING

The presence of street trees and landscaping varies significantly throughout Downtown. Major corridors include more street trees, maintained landscaping, and stormwater infrastructure than secondary streets as you move outwards from Main Street. Enhanced tree canopy, landscaping improvements, and more shade were key themes mentioned across engagement efforts.

These improvements would strengthen placemaking, improve urban habitat, create refuge from the sun during Medford's hot summer months, reduce air pollution, and increase overall climate resilience.



Hawthorne Park



“Improving safety and comfort in public parks and greenspace.”

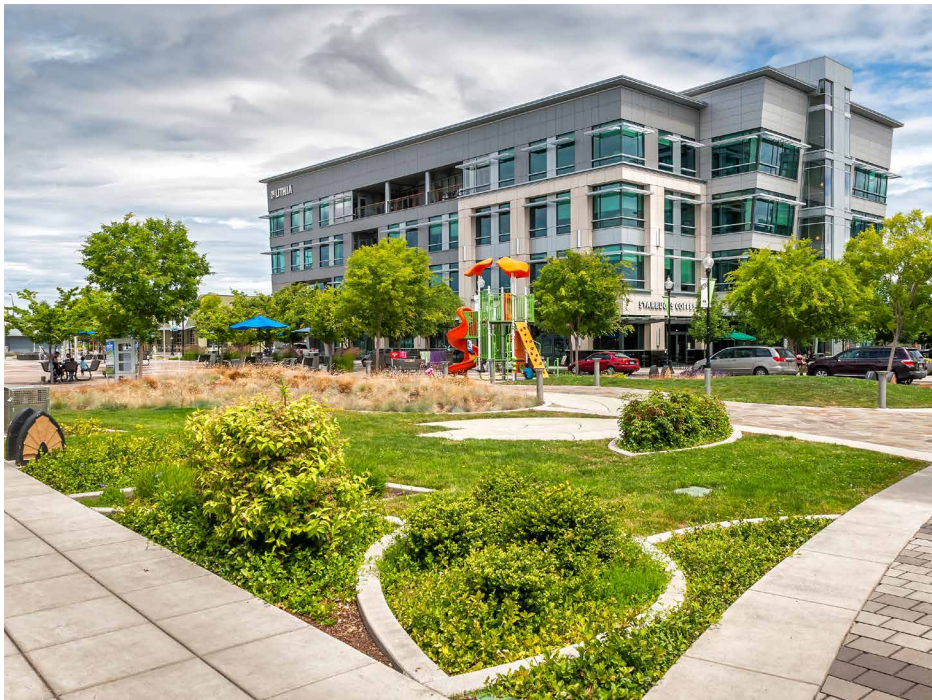
—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)

“Bear Creek being utilized, Hawthorne Park being more accessible and welcoming to downtown.”

—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)

“Bear Creek is a downtown treasure that is overlooked. Trails or walkways along it, restaurants that overlook it, and cleaning the trash out of it, should be a top priority.”

—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)



Pear Blossom Park

“We are in a beautiful valley surrounded by mountains. The downtown look could reflect that more. Shade will be more and more important as our world heats up. Provide shaded parking, gathering spaces, and “hang-out” spaces”

—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)



MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

Downtown provides many mobility options, including transit, highway access, multi-use trails, and bike lanes. There are two highways that run through Downtown including Interstate 5 (I-5) and Highway 99, as well as the CORP mainline railroad that runs parallel to Highway 99. Downtown is served by the Rogue Valley Transportation District (RVTD), including three major transit stops, an additional 20 minor transit stops, and the Front Street Transfer Station which connects Downtown to other areas of the city and the broader region. Downtown is connected by many bike facilities, including numerous neighborhood networks, the Bear Creek Greenway, and existing bike lanes along E Jackson Street, E 4th Street, E Main Street, and W 10th Street.

The Transportation System Plan (TSP) lists numerous bicycle facilities in the Downtown area as high stress routes, with a need for more low-stress connections. In response, the 2023 Downtown Medford Multimodal Concept Plan assessed multimodal connectivity in Downtown and identified numerous multimodal opportunities. The two-way bicycle facility on Main Street, between Bear Creek and Oakdale Avenue, was a project recently completed from the Multimodal Concept Plan and is the first-of-its-kind project in Medford. It is being re-evaluated by City Council. An additional 11 multimodal projects are proposed by the Concept Plan that will be considered over the coming years depending on available funding and community support.

In addition to the city's multimodal facilities, there are numerous alleys within the Downtown area that provide opportunities for additional non-street connections and pedestrian improvements.

MAP 2-4: DOWNTOWN MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

STREET CLASSIFICATIONS

- Major Arterial
- Major Arterial (HWY)
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector

BIKE FACILITIES

- Existing Bike Lane
- - - Neighborhood Network
- Main Street Two-Way Bike Lane

TRANSIT FACILITIES

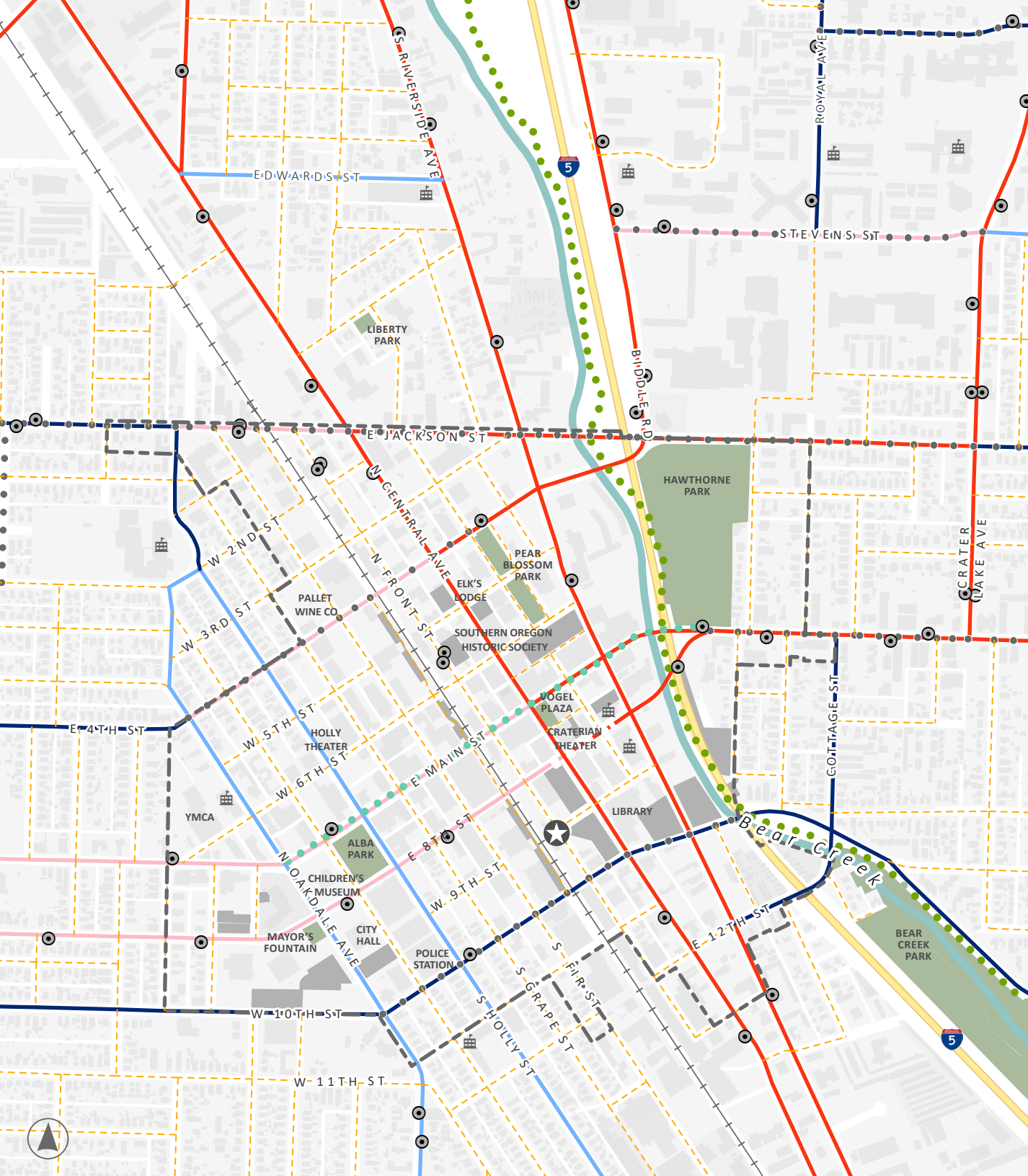
- ★ Rogue Valley Front Street Station
- Bus Stop

BASE MAP FEATURES

- - - Proposed Downtown Boundary
- Park
- Bear Creek
- Bear Creek Greenway
- Interstate 5
- Building
- Public Parking
- Tax Lot

SOURCES

City of Medford, Jackson County, MIG, 2024-2025.



WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE COMMUNITY ABOUT MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY AND AMENITIES

Enhanced multimodal connections between parks, the Bear Creek Greenway, and different areas of Downtown was a top request across engagement efforts. Outreach participants said that, from a pedestrian perspective, Downtown is fragmented and that navigating from place to place is difficult and unsafe. Providing additional safe and accessible pedestrian connections with streetscape amenities such as seating, street trees, lighting, and landscaping would improve Downtown's pedestrian experience and sense of place.

IMPROVE GATEWAYS, WAYFINDING, AND SIGNAGE

There are some wayfinding signs along the Downtown Historic District boundary; however, additional wayfinding and signage could be used to support a positive pedestrian experience, safe and clear connectivity, and a cohesive sense of place. Many engagement participants also communicated a desire for highly visible gateways that clearly communicates when bicyclists, pedestrians, and visitors have arrived Downtown.

CONSIDER BIKE LANES

Bike lanes have been a contentious topic for Downtown. Recent investments along Main Street have had mixed support, with staunch support and equally strong dislike for the street reconfiguration. However, providing more multimodal options Downtown in general was supported by most engagement participants. Providing safe, efficient, and connected multimodal options also provides access for more people to come to Downtown, which increases activity and supports local businesses. Visibility, access, and attractive and safe connections support many of the other goals of the project.



“Better connections to the greenway, more shade trees along paths and sidewalks, a bike lane for a north-south connection, improved lighting along designated bike routes, improved timing for bikes and less at crossings, more secure bicycle parking.”

—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)

“Pedestrian-Friendly Streets: Wide sidewalks, benches, streetlights, and landscaping to create a welcoming and walkable environment... Wayfinding Signs: Clear signage to guide visitors to key attractions and businesses within the two-block area.”

—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)

“Better bike lane connections to the Downtown area.”

—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)

“A multimodal plan is awesome and should be encouraged, But keep in mind this does not eliminate the need for parking. I know several people who stay away from the downtown area because parking can be challenging.”

—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)



Two-way bicycle facility on Main Street in Downtown Medford.



CULTURE AND EXPERIENCE

Downtown is the historic and cultural heart of Medford. When you walk the streets of Downtown, you are reminded of Medford's history by the many historic buildings centered around the rail line that inspired the City's founding. Important destinations include the Craterian (Collier) Theater that opened in 1924 and the Holly Theatre that opened in 1930. The Medford SPRR Passenger Depot, now a restaurant, is the last remaining southern Oregon masonry depot structure. In addition to Downtown's many historic destinations, Downtown is the Rogue Valley's civic hub as the home of city, county, state, and federal offices and facilities. Additional key Downtown destinations include the Children's Museum of Southern Oregon, the Medford Historical Society & Museum, and Downtown's many murals. These are all significant assets to highlight and celebrate as Medford continues to grow and evolve.

Downtown is home to numerous key destinations that contribute to Medford's culture and experience.





1. Historic Medford Train Depot (previously Porter's, now The Old Spaghetti Factory). (City of Medford)
2. Holly Theatre. (City of Medford)
3. Medford City Hall. (City of Medford)
4. Children's Museum of Southern Oregon. (Outlier Construction)
5. Collier Center for the Performing Arts. (City of Medford)

WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE COMMUNITY ABOUT CULTURE AND EXPERIENCE

TELL DOWNTOWN MEDFORD'S STORY

Many engagement participants were unsure how to define Downtown Medford. Clearly articulating a unified message and identity for Downtown is seen as an important first step to improving perceptions, attracting development, and establishing Downtown Medford as a regional destination. Community engagement efforts revealed that there are many opportunities to help tell Downtown's story, such as embracing Downtown's history, highlighting Medford's cultural diversity, activating Downtown's unique alley network, and increasing the amount of public art. Placemaking elements such as consistent signage, street furniture, and lighting (additional pedestrian or alley lighting) could also communicate a stronger sense of place and visualize the Downtown story.



“Public Art: Installations and murals by local artists to enhance the aesthetic appeal and reflect the community's culture.”


—*Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)*

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF EVENTS AND PROGRAMMING OPTIONS

Downtown Medford hosts some large events in its parks and public spaces such as concerts at Pear Blossom Park, the Winter Lights Festival, and the Medford Pear Blossom Parade and Festival. The Downtown Medford Association also promotes and hosts the popular “Third Friday Medford.” This monthly event spotlights participating Downtown business who host local arts and musicians and offer unique promotions exclusively for Downtown shoppers. These events are popular, and community members would like to see additional events and regular, family-friendly programming offered throughout Downtown. Potential ideas include additional concert series, a Downtown evening farmers market, and events highlighting local cultural diversity.


IMPROVE SAFETY

Throughout the Downtown Plan engagement process and other recent City planning efforts, it became clear that perceptions around safety and houselessness in Downtown's parks and public spaces are top concerns. Downtown Medford, like many downtowns across the state and country, is experiencing higher levels of houselessness due to concurrent mental health, substance abuse, and affordable housing crises. The City is actively working with partners to alleviate houselessness and increase access to affordable housing and supportive services. Additionally, while houselessness can reduce people's interest in being Downtown, active programming, events, housing and other strategies can increase the number of “eyes on the street,” which can sometimes improve the feeling of safety. Addressing houselessness and reducing undesirable activity on the street will require both public and private action to address.



“Community spaces that are attractive and have youthful, cohesive designs using healthy Oregon colors like blue and green, not dead-plant colors like yellow and orange (Vogal Plaza is so ugly it is uncomfortable to glance at.)”

—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)




“Medford has an interesting history. Keep it alive through visual arts and storytelling.”

—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)




“Clean and safe for everyone.”

—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)



“I want downtown to be a place to wander, explore, and participate in community events and services.”

—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)



“Safe family friendly activities and community activities.”

—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)



CHAPTER 3 VISION AND GOALS

3 VISION AND GOALS

The Medford community is the heart of the Medford Downtown Plan. Many community members contributed their ideas and feedback about the future of Downtown Medford, helping shape the future of Downtown for years to come.

The Medford community is the guiding force for the development of this Plan. The Downtown Plan engagement process provided numerous opportunities for community members to provide their ideas for the future of Downtown. Central to this process was a Public Advisory Committee (PAC) that met six times at key project milestones and included representation from Downtown businesses, community organizations, public agencies, landowners, and various City departments. Additional engagement opportunities included:

- A tour of Downtown with the Project Team;
- Three community events that supported both in-person and virtual participation;
- Informational pop-ups at other City events;
- Seven interviews with community partners and other interested parties; and
- A bilingual online community survey yielding nearly 1,300 responses (Figure 3-1 on the next page).

Postcards, flyers, email and text notifications, media kits released to 50+ community partner organizations, sidewalk QR code stickers posted around Downtown, and multiple social media channels were used to reach as many Medford community members as possible throughout the planning process. Materials for both the online community survey and the community events were translated into Spanish. Appendices H and I provide more detailed information about the community survey and public events.



FIGURE 3-1: ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

1,300 

Online Community Survey Responses

1 

Project Team Downtown Tour

7 

Interviews with Community Partners

3 

Community Events

 **317**

Prioritization Survey Responses

6 

Public Advisory Committee Meetings



COMMUNITY-INFORMED FOUNDATIONS FOR A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN

The community priorities highlighted by the Downtown Plan engagement process shaped the “building blocks” of Downtown. These foundations reflect what matters most to the community and represent the essential physical elements needed to create a vibrant, healthy, and complete Downtown. They include land use and urban form, placemaking and activation, and mobility and connectivity. These building blocks inform the various components outlined in Chapter 4: Downtown Tomorrow and Chapter 5: Implementation.

LAND USE AND URBAN FORM

Today, Downtown includes a variety of land uses with an abundance of surface parking and many vacant buildings. There is a mix of uses that include civic, educational, entertainment, both single-family and multi-family residential, retail, and other commercial uses. Throughout the planning process, community members expressed a desire for additional shopping, dining, and entertainment options to encourage a vibrant and active Downtown. Many people view additional housing options as an important component to supporting Downtown as a compelling destination with a distinct identity and sense of place. The creation of comfortable and inviting pedestrian spaces with wide sidewalks, seating areas, and other pedestrian amenities will also be important to creating this vision. Community members also want year-round opportunities for recreation, activities, and social gatherings. Finding opportunities to develop Downtown’s vacant buildings was also identified as a top priority for the future of Downtown.

PARKS AND GREEN SPACES

Across all engagement efforts the community prioritized parks, green spaces, Bear Creek, and the Bear Creek Greenway as important elements of Downtown Medford. Community members value Downtown’s existing parks and would like to see additional investment and programming to further activate these spaces and alleviate some concerns around safety and cleanliness. Restoration and further integration of Bear Creek and the Bear Creek Greenway was identified as especially important to the community and is seen as one of Downtown’s largest opportunities for the future. Engagement participants would also like to see additional landscaping and tree canopy throughout Downtown to create additional shade and a more inviting environment. Native and drought-tolerant plants should be prioritized to support climate resiliency and sustainability; two frequently mentioned topics by survey respondents.

KEY CONNECTIONS

Connectivity to, within, and around Downtown was also raised as a top priority for Downtown. While Downtown includes segments of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and transit service along major corridors, there is limited connectivity and lacking pedestrian amenities in many parts of Downtown and between multiple nodes of activity such as Pear Blossom Park and Main Street. Finding ways to create improved connections between the various areas of Downtown was repeatedly mentioned as a top priority, especially as Downtown continues to grow. Beyond pedestrian and bike connectivity, numerous participants also expressed concerns about auto-oriented connectivity. Specific concerns included parking availability and convenience, traffic, and safety concerns between vehicular traffic and bike/pedestrian infrastructure.



DOWNTOWN VISION

The Downtown vision builds upon the 2004 City Center 2050 Plan and synthesizes the community's values and priorities for the desired future of Downtown Medford. The vision outlines how the community expects Downtown to evolve, grow, and prosper by 2040.

Downtown Medford is a vibrant, active, and welcoming mixed-use urban center that uniquely represents our community as the Rogue Valley's regional destination, providing residential, business, and entertainment opportunities that are safe and accessible to everyone.

GOALS

The Downtown Vision is advanced through nine goals that reflect the community's priorities for the future of Downtown. The plan framework described in this chapter provides the foundation for later chapters. Chapter 4 includes recommendations for specific projects and areas of focus, while Chapter 5 focuses on implementation of the Downtown Plan, identifying specific strategies and actions, timing, and responsibility. Together, these chapters realize the following goals and move Medford closer to achieving the vision by translating broad aspirations into concrete steps that guide decision-making, investment, and coordination over time.

GOAL 1: BECOME A REGIONAL DESTINATION

Downtown Medford is a vibrant destination that attracts Medford residents and visitors from the region with retail and restaurants, regular programming, cultural events, entertainment, and recreation activities.

GOAL 2: GENERATE SUSTAINED GROWTH

Downtown Medford grows and develops as the Rogue Valley's largest urban service center with a diverse mix of land uses and housing types, multimodal options, and community amenities.

GOAL 3: BE EXPLORABLE AND SURPRISING

Downtown Medford highlights its historic buildings and active public spaces through cohesive design, well connected pedestrian environments, unique public art and amenities, and vibrant community gathering spaces.

GOAL 4: TELL DOWNTOWN'S STORY

Downtown Medford communicates and elevates its historic, cultural,

and creative elements through the unique and diverse stories of Downtown and the Medford community.

GOAL 5: BECOME A LIVABLE COMMUNITY

Downtown Medford is an inclusive, family-friendly, and livable community that is accessible to all ages, abilities, races, and socioeconomic levels.

GOAL 6: PROVIDE HOUSING AND SERVICES

Downtown Medford has a diverse blend of housing types at various price points with access to convenient services, employment and education opportunities, and community amenities within easy walking distance for people of all ages.

GOAL 7: IMPROVE MULTIMODAL CONNECTIVITY

Downtown Medford is easy and safe to get to and around by a full range of transportation options, including walking, biking, and transit.

GOAL 8: INCREASE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Downtown Medford is supported and strengthened by community partnerships that leverage public, institutional, commercial, and private investments and resources to support downtown revitalization, economic growth, and resiliency.

GOAL 9: INTEGRATE NATURE AND RESILIENT DESIGN

Downtown Medford integrates nature and green spaces wherever possible to create a more resilient and inviting environment that highlights Downtown's unique natural amenities of Bear Creek, the Bear Creek Greenway, and various City parks.

“I envision downtown as a destination where something is happening at all times... It’s essential to economic vitality of our region and it is the core and heart of our city.”

– Community Survey Respondent



DOWNTOWN SUBDISTRICT VISION STATEMENTS

In addition to the overarching community vision for Downtown Medford by 2040, the Downtown Plan creates a series of new Downtown subdistricts to provide additional guidance for the overall urban form, desired land uses, and experience of the different areas of Downtown. Public discussions about the size and diversity of uses throughout the larger downtown area, place-based opportunities and challenges, and the desire for a more cohesive Downtown are the foundations for the subdistrict vision statements.

The subdistricts are not regulated within the Medford Municipal Code but rather provide a desired vision for the different areas of Downtown. The Plan identifies six different Downtown subdistricts:

1. Town Center
2. Makers District
3. Creekside District
4. Urban Village
5. Civic Neighborhood
6. Rail District



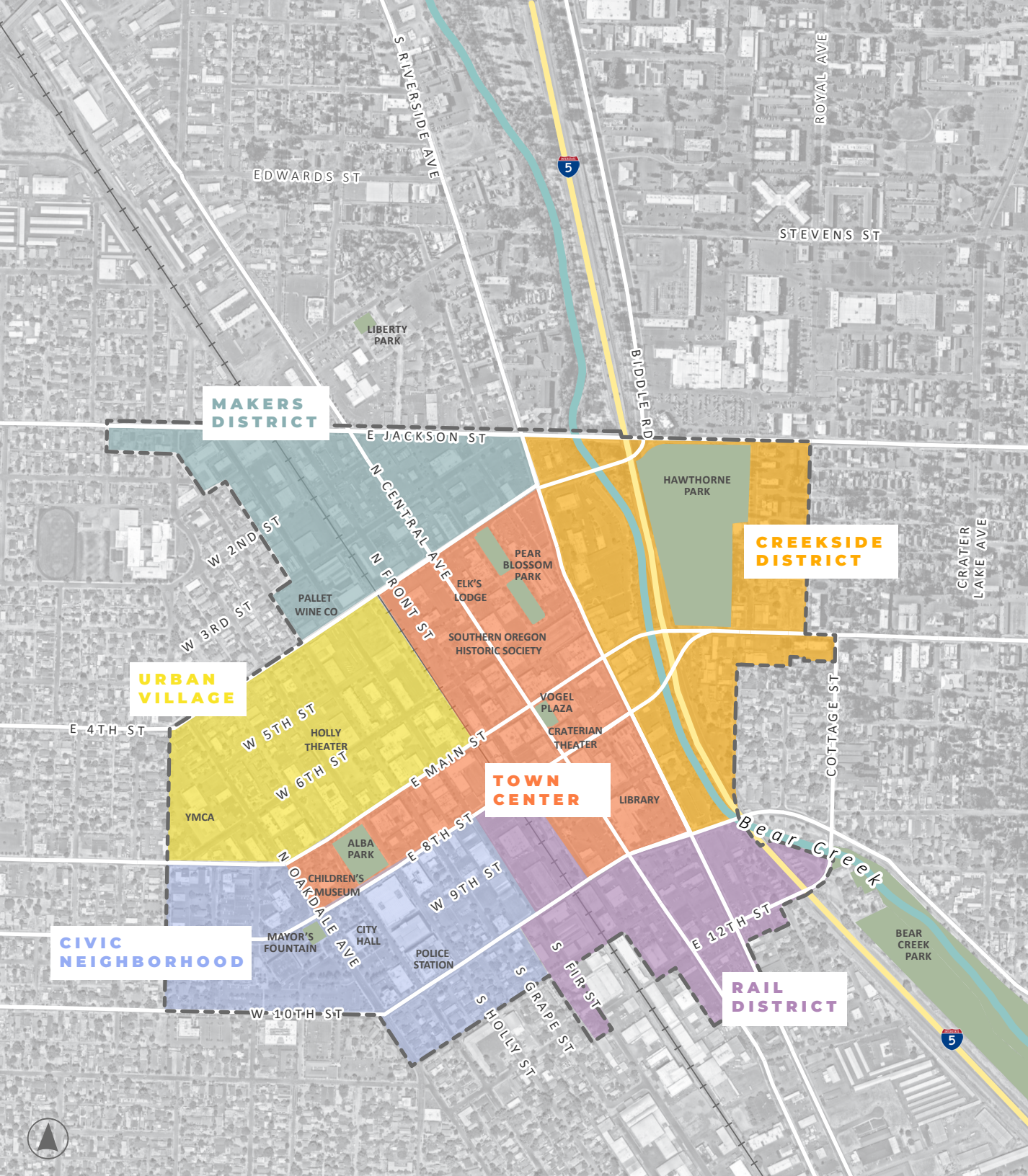
MAP 3-1: DOWNTOWN SUBDISTRICTS

DOWNTOWN SUBDISTRICTS

- Town Center
- Makers District
- Creekside District
- Urban Village
- Civic Neighborhood
- Rail District

BASE MAP FEATURES

- Proposed Downtown Boundary
- Park
- Bear Creek
- Interstate 5



SOURCES

City of Medford, Jackson County, MIG, 2024-2025.

TOWN CENTER

Today, Town Center includes many of Downtown's most prominent destinations, including Vogel Plaza, Alba Park, the Craterian Theater, the Children's Museum of Southern Oregon, the Library, Pear Blossom Park, and Downtown's central strip of restaurants and shops. Town Center is also emblematic of Medford's history and architectural heritage through its many historic buildings and features that help share the unique story of Downtown and the broader region.

VISION

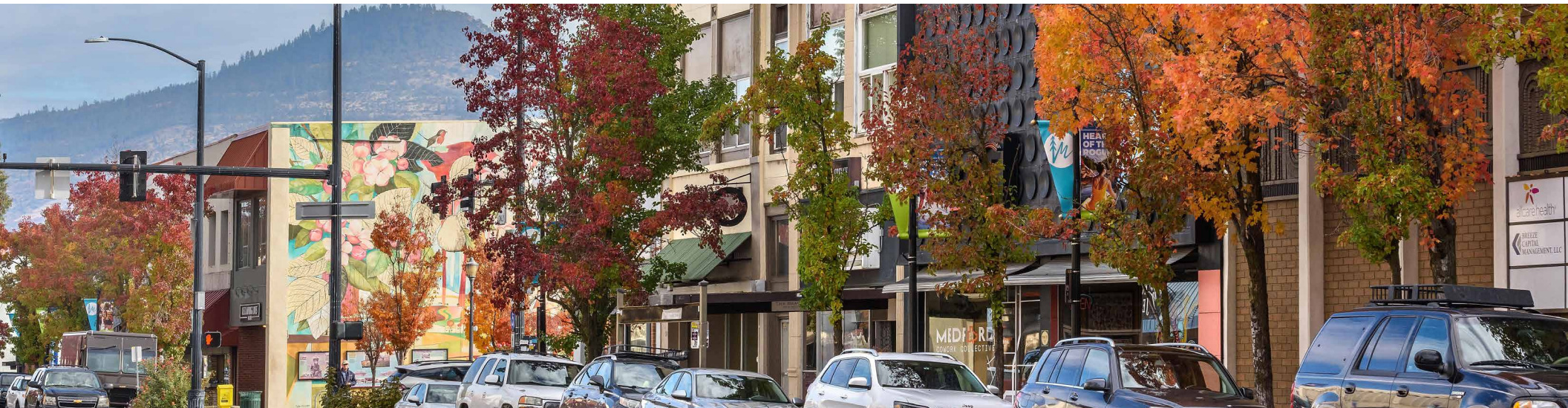
Twon Center is the heart of Downtown Medford. It is a vibrant hub activity with diverse opportunities to shop, eat, gather, and experience Downtown's history. Future redevelopment should emphasize preservation and enhancement of its historic buildings, selective and sensitive infill development, pedestrian-oriented streetscapes, specialty entertainment, dining and entertainment uses, along with a strong pedestrian connection to Bear Creek and other Downtown subdistricts.

MAKERS DISTRICT

Today, the Makers District is composed of active commercial and industrial uses that developed along the rail corridor and Central Avenue. Much of the district's urban form is features large warehouses, vacant lots, and surface parking lots. Existing business owners and community feedback highlighted a desire to build upon existing agritourism uses in the district.

VISION

Makers District is a vibrant, unique, and pedestrian friendly warehouse district that is a popular destination for locals and visitors alike. The district features repurposed industrial buildings that are home to a diverse mix of creative and entrepreneurial uses that highlight local talent and regional agritourism (e.g. local wineries, breweries, growers, artists, etc.).





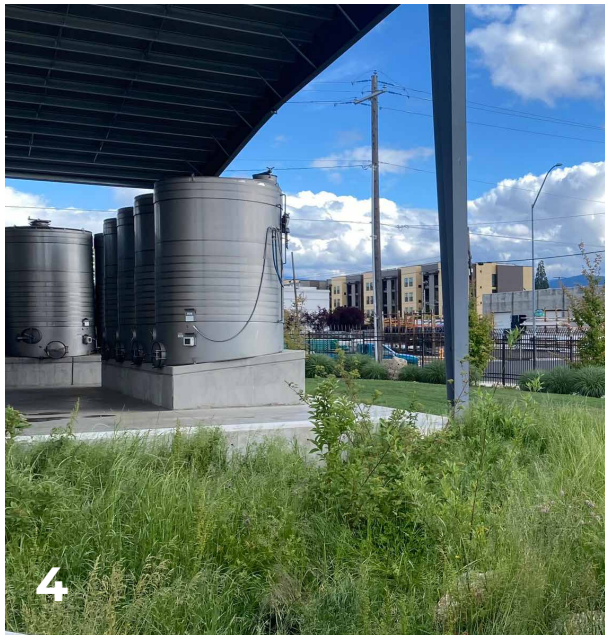
1



3



2



4



5

1. Carnegie Building, Medford, Oregon. (City of Medford)
2. Craterian Theater, Medford, Oregon. (City of Medford)
3. Tin City Industrial Makers Market, Paso Robles, California. (Toast Tours)
4. Pallet Wine Co, Medford, Oregon. (MIG)
5. Downtown Bend, Oregon. (Visit Bend)

CREEKSIDE DISTRICT

The Creekside District is one of Downtown's up and coming areas with its strong connectivity to other areas of Downtown and the city, and promising development opportunities along Bear Creek. Bear Creek, the Bear Creek Greenway, and Hawthorne Park are defining natural features of the district. Community feedback throughout the planning process demonstrated a desire to integrate these natural features as key elements of future development in the district.

VISION

As one of the key western gateways to Downtown, Creekside District is a vibrant, modern, and mixed-use urban center featuring regional entertainment opportunities, economic activity, and diverse opportunities to eat, drink, and play. Bear Creek, the Bear Creek Greenway, and Hawthorne Park are integral features of the Creekside District. Connectivity to and integration of these natural amenities and regional attractions are the focus of all development in the district.



Bear Creek

URBAN VILLAGE

Located to the north of Town Center, Urban Village has transitioned over time from an older single-family neighborhood to a higher density residential neighborhood with two- and three-story buildings and mixed-use development.

VISION

Urban Village is Downtown Medford's central urban neighborhood supported by a diverse range of housing types including historic single-family homes and modern multi-family, mixed use developments supported by community services and educational uses. The district features safe and comfortable pedestrian connections between the neighborhood and adjacent districts.

CIVIC NEIGHBORHOOD

Encompassing a large portion of the southern half of Downtown and situated in between Town Center to the north and the Rail District to the east, Civic Neighborhood is composed of a concentrated assemblage of city, county, state, and federal government offices and facilities, as well as private sector businesses and housing.

VISION

Civic Neighborhood is the civic hub of Medford and Southern Oregon with its concentration of municipal, county, state, and federal offices and community services. Supporting these uses, the district is home to comfortable gathering spaces and safe connections to adjacent residential areas and Historic Main Street.



RAIL DISTRICT

The Rail District encompasses active industrial and heavy commercial uses. This district visualizes Medford's agricultural and industrial roots that developed along the rail corridor and remain active to this day.

VISION

A hub of industrial and commercial activity, Rail District acts as the southern gateway to Downtown and highlights Medford's industrial heritage.

WHY SUBDISTRICTS MATTER

The subdistricts are vision-driven tools that help shape how different areas of Downtown Medford evolve over time. They:

- **Shape Future Development.** Guide the look, feel, and mix of uses in each area.
- **Reflect Community Identity.** Highlight the unique character and priorities of each place.
- **Promote Cohesive Growth.** Encourage connections between districts and support a unified Downtown.



CHAPTER 4

DOWNTOWN TOMORROW

4 DOWNTOWN TOMORROW

Safe, walkable streets, abundant street trees and active green spaces, engaging storefronts, and community gathering spaces with many activities will be the defining features of Downtown Medford in 2040. This bold vision will be realized through new approaches to land use, streetscape design, and activation strategies that create a vibrant, active, and welcoming Downtown for all.

The Medford community developed an updated vision for Downtown as a safe, vibrant, active and welcoming hub of activity that serves as both a regional destination and the heart of Medford. This chapter outlines the big moves and overarching strategies necessary to achieve the community's vision for Downtown Medford. Chapter 5 describes the specific actions that will implement these approaches.

BIG MOVES

Big Moves are transformational actions and strategies that implement the Downtown Vision and Goals, catalyze new development, and activate Downtown. There are six Big Moves for Downtown, which were developed through community feedback and emerging opportunities identified through the Plan development process. Each of these big moves outline aspirational strategies for achieving the community's vision and goals for Downtown.

INTEGRATE BEAR CREEK INTO DOWNTOWN

ACTIVATE THE EVERGREEN CORRIDOR

IMPROVE DOWNTOWN GATEWAYS

CREATE ENERGY AROUND THE HOLLY THEATRE

CREATE A COMMUNITY FOOD HUB

ACTIVATE THE ALLEY NETWORK

BIG MOVE #1: INTEGRATE BEAR CREEK INTO DOWNTOWN

Bear Creek is a defining natural feature running through the heart of Medford and is immediately adjacent to Downtown. The creek and trail corridor has been the subject of numerous studies and community planning efforts, consistently identified as a priority for enhancing livability, recreation, and ecological value. Bear Creek is a unique natural asset and an opportunity for a linear park space ideal for walking, jogging, biking, and gathering. Despite this past work and immense opportunity, much of the current creek frontage through the Downtown core remains underutilized. Many buildings turn their backs to Bear Creek, creating an environment that feels isolated without “eyes on the corridor.” Safety considerations due to lack of visibility and active management currently discourage activity and limit the area’s potential as a vibrant public space.

Bear Creek represents a transformative opportunity for Downtown Medford. Big Move 1 would create a parallel trail between Riverside and Bear Creek that would create more inviting trail corridor through potentially redevelopable areas. By activating the corridor through thoughtful redevelopment that incorporates Bear Creek, potentially through public-private partnerships, the City can reframe this underutilized space as an essential urban greenway and bring Bear Creek into Downtown. This would include reorienting development to embrace Bear Creek, enhancing trail connectivity and public access at major intersections, integrating outdoor seating and gathering areas, and restoring natural habitats. A revitalized Bear Creek corridor will not only serve as a recreational and social amenity but will also strengthen Downtown’s identity, support economic development, and reflect the community’s longstanding vision for an accessible and celebrated natural space.



“Create a corridor along Bear Creek with restaurants, bars, stores, and gathering places.”

—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)



FIGURE 4-1: BEAR CREEK ACTIVATION



EXISTING CONDITIONS

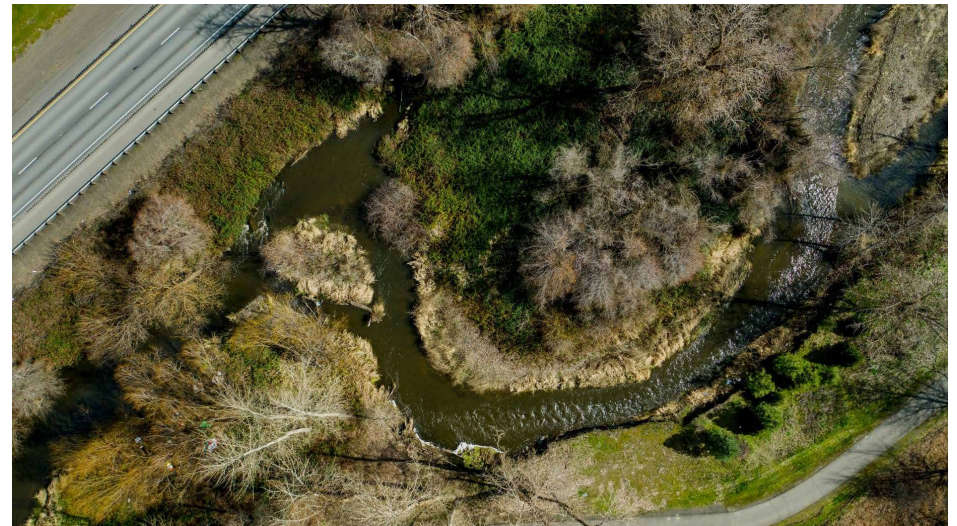
Bear Creek Activation concept looking south from an aerial view north of Jackson Street. (Created by MIG, Inc.)

POLICY AND REGULATIONS

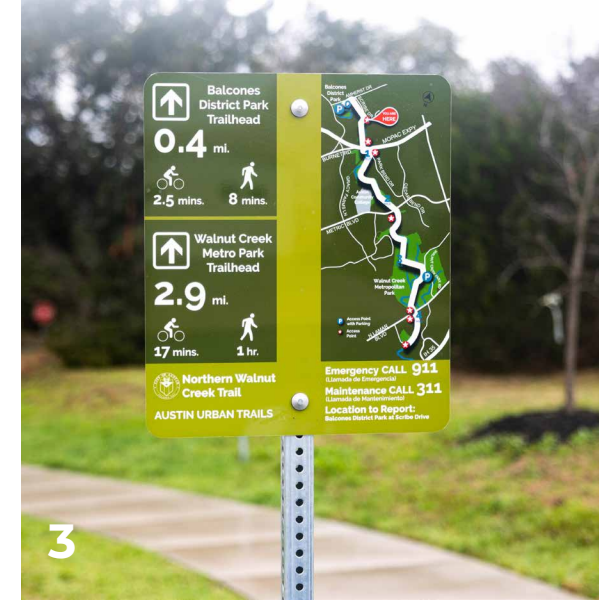
- **Develop and adopt Bear Creek-specific design guidelines** to reinforce zoning updates, ensuring that new development or renovations address public access, encourage orientation to the creek, and incorporate ecological integration.
- **Align City departmental plans and standards** (e.g., transportation, stormwater, parks) with Bear Creek vision and goals to ensure cross-agency coordination in implementation.
- **Increase safety patrols along Bear Creek** to increase visibility and maintain a safe environment for users.
- **Consider using a program, such as Downtown Clean and Safe**, to maintain the Downtown portion of the Trail by removing garbage and graffiti.
- **Codify maintenance responsibilities and access agreements** for public pathways, seating, and landscaping along privately owned creek-adjacent areas.
- **Integrate Bear Creek revitalization objectives into capital improvement planning** to support long-term budgeting and infrastructure prioritization.
- **Update environmental and stormwater regulations** to further support habitat restoration, native vegetation buffers, and low-impact development along the creek corridor.
- **Monitor and evaluate development activity** along the corridor to ensure alignment with the updated zoning and vision.

PUBLIC INVESTMENTS AND COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

- **Enhance and expand the Bear Creek Greenway** with lighting, landscaping, seating, interpretive signage, and improved trail surfacing.
- **Invest in safe creek crossings and trail connectivity** to link Downtown, neighborhoods, and regional destinations.
- **Undertake habitat restoration projects** to improve water quality and biodiversity.
- **Support stewardship programs** that empower Downtown businesses, property owners, and volunteer organizations in cleanup, planting, and monitoring efforts.



Aerial view of a section of Bear Creek. (Bear Creek Restoration Initiative)



1. Creekside dining in Cascade, CO. (HILDAO368 / Trip Advisor)
2. Public mural at a creekside trail underpass. (Hancock County Trails)
3. Wayfinding signage provides key information to trail users. (Patricia Lim / KUT)

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

- **Facilitate public-private partnerships** to co-develop outdoor plazas, cafes, and mixed-use spaces adjacent to the creek.
- **Promote creek-facing retail and dining** with outdoor seating and connections to the greenway.
- **Work with developers to integrate public amenities** such as trail extensions, stormwater gardens, or art installations into new projects.
- **Engage local institutions and businesses** as sponsors or partners for specific projects (e.g., benches, art, programming).

PROGRAMMING AND PROMOTION

- **Host seasonal events and festivals** along the creek (e.g., outdoor movie nights, art walks, nature education days).
- **Establish a Bear Creek Arts & Culture Trail** with murals, sculptures, and interactive exhibits showcasing local artists.



BIG MOVE #2: ACTIVATE THE EVERGREEN HISTORY AND CULTURE CORRIDOR

The Evergreen Corridor runs parallel to the rail line through a portion of Downtown Medford and currently functions as a street primarily used for surface parking and service access. With its central location, the corridor presents an opportunity to transform a currently overlooked segment of Downtown into a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly zone that supports local businesses, encourages walking and biking, and celebrates Medford's industrial and rail history through tactical investments and regular pop-ups using parking areas. This Big Move focuses on coordinated building frontage improvements, intentional streetscape design, and engaging public programming to create a rotating destination for food and small scale gathering and events.

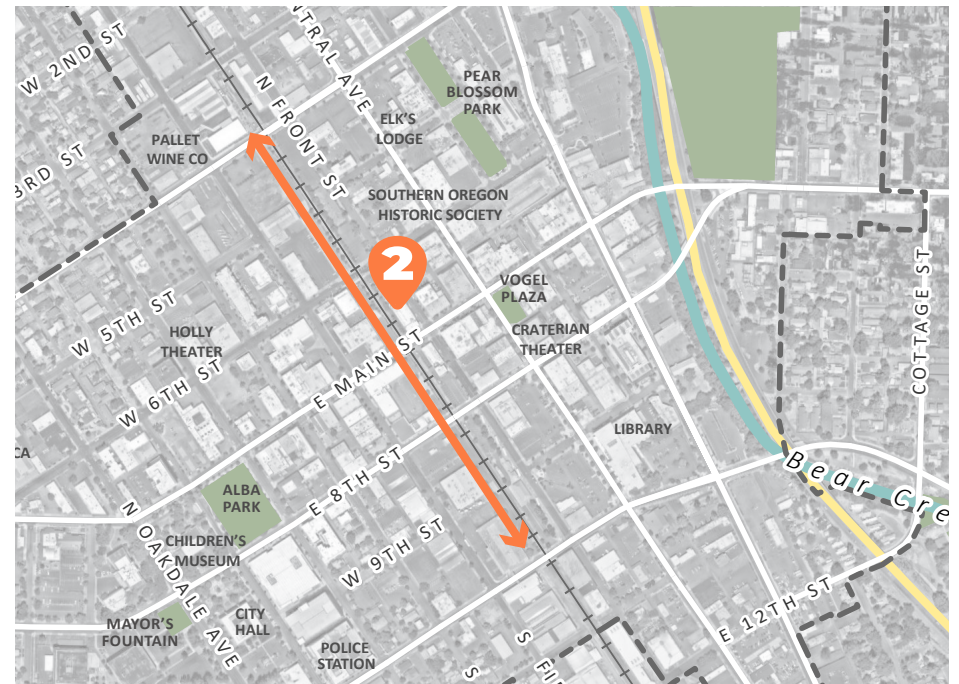


FIGURE 4-2: EVERGREEN HISTORY AND CULTURE CORRIDOR ACTIVATION



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Evergreen History and Culture Corridor concept. Looking north towards Evergreen Street from Main Street. (Created by MIG, Inc.)

POLICY AND REGULATIONS

- **Consider implementing a façade improvement grant or incentive program** to encourage active, engaging frontages along the corridor.
- **Incorporate the Evergreen Corridor into public space and mobility plans**, recognizing it as a priority pedestrian and cultural spine.

PUBLIC INVESTMENTS AND COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

- **Convert portions of surface parking into shared public spaces**, including parklets, small plazas, or pop-up activity zones.
- **Install wayfinding and interpretive signage** highlighting the rail corridor’s historical context and linking destinations across Downtown.
- **Integrate public art** into the corridor through murals on blank facades and sculpture installations that reflect the city’s heritage.

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

- **Work with property owners to “turn buildings around”** by adding secondary entries, windows, patios, or storefronts facing the corridor.
- **Encourage pop-up retail, food trucks, or micro-business kiosks** along the corridor to animate underused space and build foot traffic.
- **Partner with rail-adjacent property owners** to identify long-term redevelopment opportunities that align with Downtown revitalization goals.

PROGRAMMING AND PROMOTION

- **Support a seasonal “Evergreen Market” or street fair**, celebrating local vendors, makers, and food trucks.
- **Host public art events, mural festivals, or performance series** in collaboration with local artists and arts organizations.
- **Launch a “Corridor Activation Series”** with rotating exhibitions, projections, or temporary installations on building walls.
- **Create a Downtown Art Walk** with art installations along the corridor and throughout Downtown. The Art Walk can be marketed through local businesses, with QR codes that describe each installation and artist.



1. Temporary parklet in Louisville, CO. (Design Concepts)
2. Seating murals, and landscaping create a more inviting streetscape in Vancouver. (The Dirt)
3. Chalk art at the Downtown Lancaster, OH Art Walk. (Destination Downtown Lancaster)
4. Festival booths in Corpus Christi, TX (Allie Leepson and Jesse McClary / Texas Monthly)

BIG MOVE #3: IMPROVE DOWNTOWN GATEWAYS

While Downtown has strong assets and destinations, it lacks clearly defined gateways and entry points; places where visitors and residents feel an immediate sense of arrival, identity, and welcome. Key corridors like Riverside Avenue, Central Avenue, Main Street, and 8th Street offer major access routes, but aside from Main Street, often lack visual cues, pedestrian-scale elements, or consistent character that signal you've arrived in the heart of the city. Well-designed gateways can change that by combining landscaping, signage, lighting, public art, and architectural framing to create memorable moments and a sense of civic pride.

Establishing prominent and engaging gateways into Downtown will not only improve wayfinding, but also reinforce Downtown's identity as Medford's cultural, commercial, and civic core.

POLICY AND REGULATIONS

- **Incorporate gateway design guidelines** into public realm and streetscape standards to ensure consistency in future improvements.
- **Coordinate with ODOT and other transportation agencies** on corridor-specific enhancements that support Downtown character and multimodal access.

PUBLIC INVESTMENTS AND COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

- **Develop and implement a gateway and wayfinding masterplan** that identifies a consistent design approach for gateways, district identities, wayfinding, and interpretive signage.
- **Design and construct signature gateway features**—such as monument signs, lighting installations, or artistic elements—at key entry points like Riverside Ave at Bear Creek, Main & Central, and 8th Street west of the viaduct.
- **Integrate landscaping, pedestrian-scale lighting, and public art** into gateway treatments to enhance the visitor experience and reflect local identity.

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

- **Partner with adjacent property owners and developers** to incorporate gateway elements into site plans at key corners and corridors.
- **Encourage businesses near gateway zones to participate in façade improvement** or coordinated signage programs to support a unified Downtown image.

PROGRAMMING AND PROMOTION

- **Use gateway areas as staging points for seasonal banners, temporary art, or lighting installations** that rotate throughout the year.
- **Launch a digital and physical “Welcome to Downtown” campaign** to build awareness of new gateways and reinforce civic identity.

GREYHOUND



GATEWAY FEATURES

Monument Signage

- Custom-designed signs with “Welcome to Downtown Medford” or a district-specific name.
- Materials could reflect regional identity (e.g., timber, basalt stone, metal).
- Integrated lighting for nighttime visibility.

Public Art Installations

- Sculptural landmarks that reflect Medford’s history, culture, or natural surroundings.
- Rotating or seasonal pieces curated in collaboration with local artists or the Southern Oregon Historical Society.
- Art could also incorporate functional elements like seating or shade.

Decorative Lighting and Light Poles

- Signature light fixtures with a cohesive design theme.

- Colored or programmable LED lighting to create visual excitement and allow for seasonal displays or event-themed lighting.
- Illuminated archways or banners spanning key intersections.

Archways or Gateway Structures

- Overhead archways at key intersections like Main & Central or 8th Street west of the viaduct.
- Structures could incorporate historic design motifs or modern interpretations of local architecture.

Enhanced Landscaping and Streetscape Treatments

- Native and drought-tolerant planting beds with seasonal color.
- Ornamental trees and accent planters framing the approach into downtown.
- Integrated signage or low walls with the downtown name or logo.

Paving and Crosswalk Enhancements

- Decorative crosswalks using brick, colored concrete, or painted murals.
- Branded sidewalk inlays or medallions indicating “Downtown Medford” underfoot.
- Curb extensions (bulb-outs) that provide safer pedestrian access and space for street furnishings.

Wayfinding Elements

- Map kiosks, pedestrian signage, and directional markers to nearby attractions like the Holly Theatre, Pear Blossom Park, and Bear Creek.
- QR codes linking to a digital downtown guide or event calendar.

Banners and Poles

- Custom-designed banners along major corridors with consistent branding.
- Easily updated to promote seasonal events or new attractions.



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1. Monument signage surrounded by landscaping. (Dougherty Landscape Architects)
2. Lighting display in a Detroit park. (Downtown Detroit Partnership)
3. A sculpture inspired by the City of Ridgeway, Colorado's rail history. (DHM Design)
4. Mural art in Downtown Grants Pass. (Visit Grants Pass)
5. Wayfinding signage in a downtown displaying directions to popular destinations, distances, and a map. (Town of Estes Park)

BIG MOVE #4: CREATE ENERGY AROUND THE HOLLY THEATRE

The historic Holly Theatre, a recently restored cultural and historic landmark, will become a transformative anchor for Downtown's culture and entertainment scene. Located near the north end of the Downtown core, the theatre's revival offers a unique opportunity to activate its surrounding area and reestablish it as a lively, walkable destination for residents and visitors alike.

Directly across from the Holly Theatre sits a gravel parking lot, currently underutilized but highly visible, which offers short-term activation potential through public programming and events, and long-term redevelopment potential as a catalytic mixed-use site. Nearby, new residential development is introducing more residents into the Downtown ecosystem, providing a growing customer base for retail, restaurants, and entertainment offerings. Just a few blocks away, the Southern Oregon Historical Society (SOHS) operates a museum collection and hosts regular events. There is significant potential to create synergistic programming between the SOHS and the Holly Theatre, enhancing the cultural draw of the entire area and weaving together Downtown's arts and history assets.

Together, these assets set the stage for the Holly Theatre Area to become a vibrant cultural and neighborhood district—one that supports live performances, public life, and private investment.



“A park [or gathering space] adjacent to the new Holly Theatre would be great. It could serve as “greenroom” space before performances.”

—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)

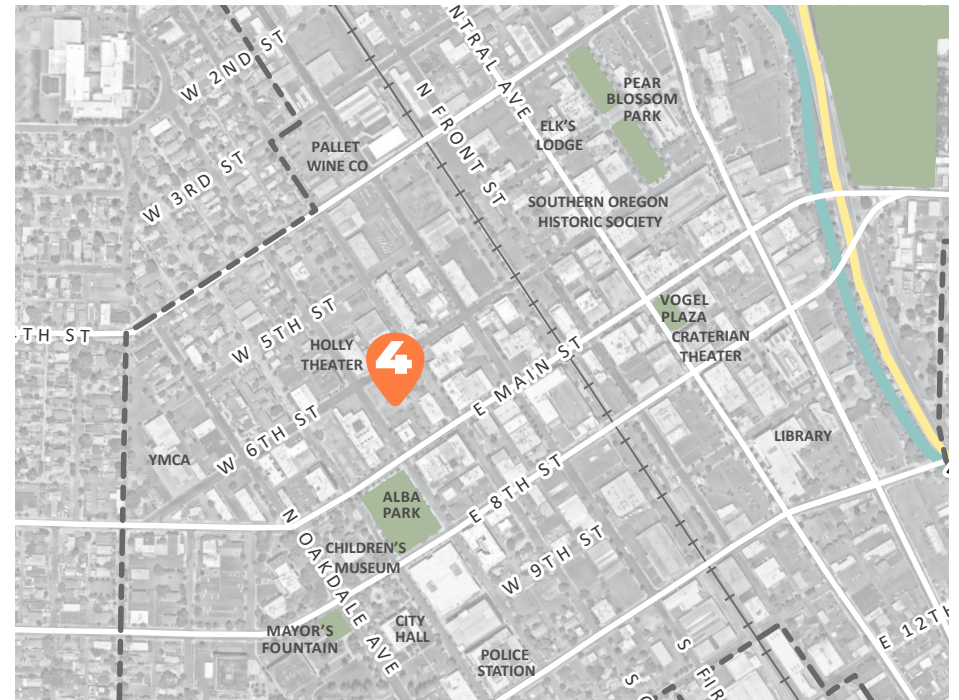
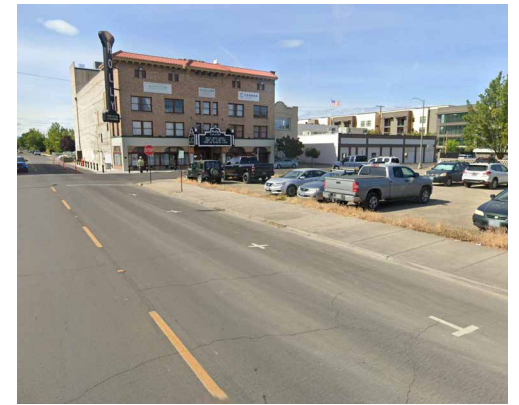
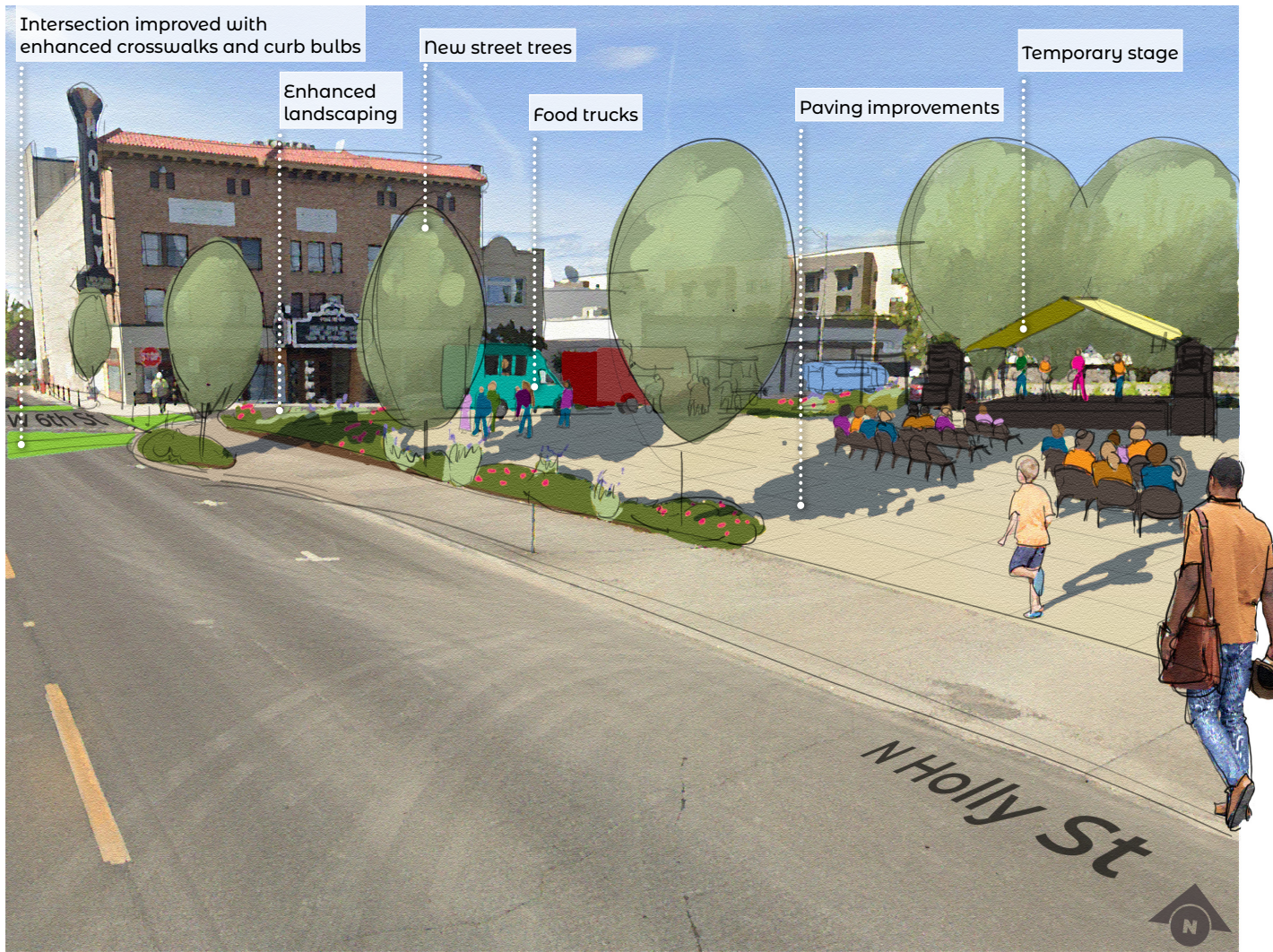


FIGURE 4-3: HOLLY THEATRE ACTIVATION



EXISTING CONDITIONS

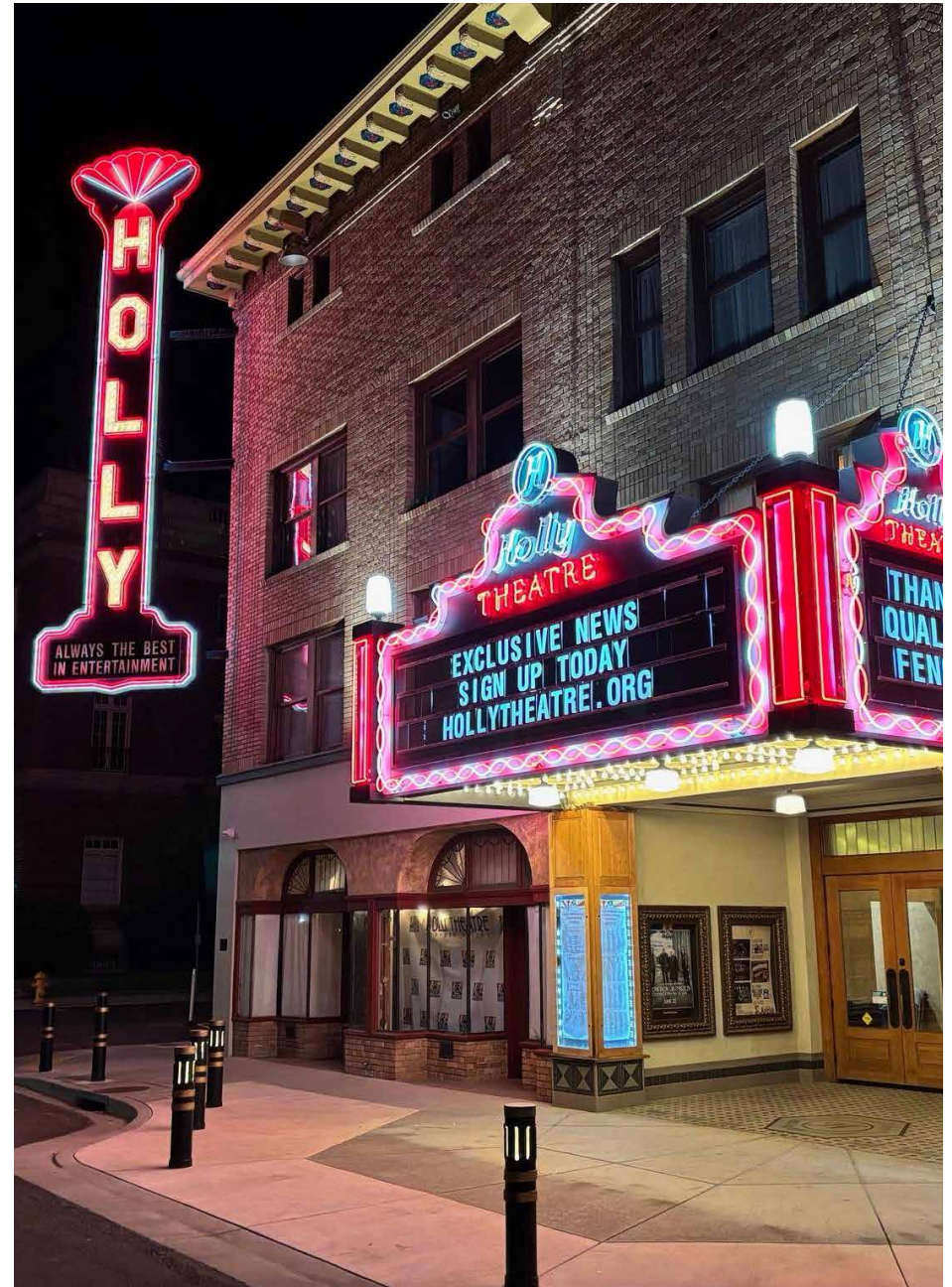
Holly Theatre Activation concept. Looking north from Holly Street towards the Holly Theatre.
(Created by MIG, Inc.)

POLICY AND REGULATIONS

- **Develop a public realm improvement plan** for the surrounding blocks, prioritizing pedestrian access, lighting, wayfinding, and streetscape enhancements around the theatre and connecting corridors.
- **Support streamlined permitting** for temporary uses and pop-up events on the gravel lot and nearby underutilized spaces.

PUBLIC INVESTMENTS AND COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

- **Fund interim site improvements** for the gravel lot to allow for temporary activations such as food truck courts, outdoor performances, and makers markets (e.g., paving, lighting, electrical hookups).
- **Invest in streetscape and infrastructure upgrades** (curbs, sidewalks, bike parking) that enhance the pedestrian environment between the Holly Theatre and key destinations such as Main Street, new residential developments, and the Southern Oregon Historical Society Building.
- **Use tactical urbanism** to create arts and entertainment energy, including revolving arts displays and intersection and crosswalk painting.





1. Block Party music hosted on a temporary stage in Downtown Brainerd, MN. (Brainerd Dispatch)
2. Temporary public seating and furnishings in Metcalfe Park, Sydney. (ASPECT Studios)

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

- **Pursue public-private partnerships** for the long-term redevelopment of the gravel lot into a mixed-use project, incorporating ground-floor activation, and upper-story housing or hospitality.
- **Consider adjacent buildings** previously used by the newspaper for maker spaces and creative arts uses.
- **Engage with property owners and developers** in the area to align future projects with the vision for a vibrant cultural corridor.
- **Leverage the Holly Theatre as an amenity** that enhances the value proposition for adjacent development projects to create more arts, culture and entertainment options within the district.

PROGRAMMING AND PROMOTION

- **Coordinate with the Holly Theatre and SOHS** to create a joint cultural programming calendar and explore cross-promotion of events.
- **Pilot seasonal or recurring events** on the gravel lot such as pre-show gatherings, street performances, film nights, or arts markets that complement theatre programming.
- **Launch a branded activation series** (e.g., “Holly Nights” or “Historic First Fridays”) to draw residents and visitors to the area and build momentum for long-term revitalization.
- **Partner with local schools, arts groups, and businesses** to expand programming, volunteer involvement, and sponsorships.

BIG MOVE #5: CREATE A COMMUNITY FOOD HUB

Downtown Medford has a growing need for diverse and casual dining options, particularly in the evenings and on weekends, when foot traffic drops and many businesses close. Inspired by the popular Phoodery in Phoenix, Oregon, community members have expressed strong interest in creating a curated food cart pod that provides a flexible, low-barrier, and community-focused dining destination and adds life, flavor, and evening activity to Downtown.

This concept could help establish a vibrant social gathering space, expand culinary options, support local entrepreneurs, and reinforce Downtown as a destination. Potential locations could include the Evergreen Corridor, locations near Riverside Avenue or Pear Blossom Park, and the site of the future conference and event center.

POLICY AND REGULATIONS

- **Streamline permitting for semi-permanent food cart sites and mobile vendors**, including flexible utility and sanitation requirements.
- **Identify clear guidelines for food cart pod design, signage, and operating hours** to ensure consistency and to achieve desired function.

PUBLIC INVESTMENTS AND COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

- **Identify and prepare a city-owned or publicly accessible site** for short- or long-term use as a food cart pod.
- **Provide modest site infrastructure such as power, lighting, water access, and communal seating** to lower development barriers and ensure functionality.

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

- **Explore partnerships with local entrepreneurs or businesses to manage and program** the food cart site, including vendor recruitment, site maintenance, and events.
- **Coordinate with developers near the future event center to integrate food carts** as a complementary use in early activation or permanent site plans.

PROGRAMMING AND PROMOTION

- **Launch an evening or weekend “Downtown Cart Nights” series** with music, art, and themed nights to draw people Downtown after 5pm.
- **Collaborate with local breweries, artists, and cultural groups** to activate the space with pop-up performances, live music, or night markets.



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1. The Grove Market Hall, Bend, Oregon. (The Grove Bend)
2. The Phoodery, Phoenix, Oregon. (The Phoodery)
3. The Grove Market Hall, Bend, Oregon. (The Grove Bend)
4. Midtown Beer Garden, Portland, Oregon. (Melvin Mark)
5. The Bite, Tumalo, Oregon. (Visit Bend)



1. Tin Pan Alley, Bend, Oregon. (Travel Bend)
2. Canton Alley, Seattle, Washington. (Nakano Associates)
3. Freak Alley, Boise, Idaho. (Freak Alley)

BIG MOVE #6: ACTIVATE THE ALLEY NETWORK

Downtown has a uniquely well-connected alley network, a legacy of its early urban development pattern. Today, this network is largely underutilized and overlooked, serving primarily as back-of-house access for deliveries, garbage collection, and parking. However, these alleys also represent one of Downtown’s untapped public realm assets.

With thoughtful improvements, Downtown’s alleys can evolve into vibrant pedestrian corridors, creative gathering spaces, and safe circulation routes that complement the street network. Across the country, cities have transformed similar alleyways into destinations for art, dining, events, and pop-up retail—turning utilitarian spaces into memorable places.

At the same time, alleys serve important functional and multimodal roles, offering low-traffic routes for service vehicles, loading access, and pedestrian shortcuts that relieve pressure from busier streets. The Downtown Plan recognizes this dual role and incorporates circulation and access strategies for alleys in the Multimodal and Connectivity section of this chapter.

FIGURE 4-4: ALLEY ACTIVATION



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Alley Activation concept showing Theatre Alley near the Criterion Theater and Vogel Plaza. (Created by MIG, Inc., referencing mural by Dina Saadi, POW WOW Long Beach)

POLICY AND REGULATIONS

- **Develop design guidelines for alley improvements** that address paving, lighting, stormwater, access management, and safety.
- **Encourage adjacent property owners to consider secondary entrances or storefronts** along alleys, especially in key activation zones.

PUBLIC INVESTMENTS AND COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

- **Identify and prioritize alleys with high activation potential** (e.g., those connecting major pedestrian nodes, event spaces, or civic uses).
- **Invest in pilot alley upgrades** that demonstrate new paving, lighting, murals, or public seating—creating models for future improvement.

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

- **Work with businesses and developers to incorporate alley-facing access, signage, and uses**, especially in redevelopment projects near the Holly Theatre, Pear Blossom Park, and new mixed-use areas.
- **Provide incentives or technical assistance for businesses to activate alley frontages** through patios, art, or vendor stalls.

PROGRAMMING AND PROMOTION

- **Launch a seasonal or rotating “Alley Activation”** program featuring art installations, pop-up markets, or performances.
- **Create an “alley art program”** that curates alley spaces and connects with artists to create murals in Downtown alleys.
- **Use alleys for event spillover zones, food truck setups, or temporary exhibitions** that draw visitors off the main streets and into unexpected spaces.



Alley in Pasadena, California. (credit unknown)

LAND USE AND URBAN FORM

The Downtown Plan significantly reshapes how land use and urban form are approached in Downtown Medford, responding directly to what community and city leaders identified as barriers to achieving a more vibrant, walkable, and welcoming Downtown. This change is driven by the creation of a new Downtown Zone in the Medford Municipal Code. The intent of the new Downtown Zone is to address long-standing issues with existing development standards in the existing Central Business District (CBD) Overlay, which staff and stakeholders consistently described as unclear, outdated, and ineffective at achieving the community's vision for a lively and people-oriented Downtown. The need for a clearer, more functional tool to drive Downtown's built environment and human experience was evident and identified as key priority for this planning process.

The updated Medford Municipal Code, particularly the new Downtown Zone chapter, is the primary tool for implementing the urban form and land use goals of this plan. The new Downtown Zone translates the community's vision for development within Downtown into enforceable standards that guide private development and public investment. The new Downtown Zone simplifies and modernizes the City's regulatory approach by replacing previous zoning overlays with a clear, consistent framework. The new Downtown Zone is also fully compliant with Oregon's Climate-Friendly Areas (CFA) rules, meeting state requirements for higher-density, mixed-use, and walkable development with reduced reliance on private vehicles.

Key features of the new Downtown Zone include:

- Objective design guidelines for development that supports housing, retail, offices, and entertainment in walkable formats.

- Active street frontages along key corridors such as Main Street, Riverside Avenue, and Central Avenue.
- Form-based standards that focus on building placement, frontage quality, and the pedestrian experience, rather than rigid use separations.
- A regulatory environment that encourages redevelopment and infill while supporting quality design and compatibility with surrounding areas.

This approach supports a more predictable, place-focused development process that aligns with both community expectations and the realities of urban redevelopment.

CLIMATE FRIENDLY AREAS

As part of Oregon's effort to address climate change and housing needs, the state adopted new rules requiring cities to identify Climate-Friendly Areas (CFAs) or compact, walkable neighborhoods where people can live, work, and access services without relying on a car. CFAs must allow higher-density housing, mixed-use development, and reduced parking requirements, while supporting walking, biking, and transit. Downtown Medford is a natural fit for CFA designation, and the updates in the Downtown Plan, including the new Downtown Zone and walkable design standards, are key tools in meeting these state mandates while creating a livelier, more sustainable urban core.

DOWNTOWN URBAN DESIGN CORRIDORS

The Downtown Plan introduces a system of Urban Design Corridor classifications. These classifications are directly incorporated into the proposed Downtown Zone chapter of the Medford Municipal Code and serve as a foundation for regulating building design, frontage conditions, and streetscape expectations.

The classification system groups Downtown streets into three categories: A, B, and C Corridors, each with a different level of design emphasis and intended public experience. This framework allows the City to tailor urban design expectations based on location, context, and desired intensity, while ensuring that all streets contribute to a cohesive and walkable urban environment.

- **A Corridors** represent the highest level of urban design emphasis and are intended to create a highly active, pedestrian-oriented environment that supports ground-floor retail, cultural destinations, and major civic or commercial buildings. These corridors are located in the most prominent areas of Downtown and are key to shaping its identity and experience.
- **B Corridors** serve as connectors and transitions between higher-intensity A Corridors and surrounding mixed-use or residential areas. These corridors are designed to support a balanced mix of uses, with moderate urban design requirements that still emphasize walkability, visual quality, and access.
- **C Corridors** are the most flexible classification and are intended to support access, service functions, and transitions to lower-intensity areas. While still expected to contribute to a cohesive public realm and positive pedestrian environment, C Corridors place less emphasis on high-intensity pedestrian activity or design features.



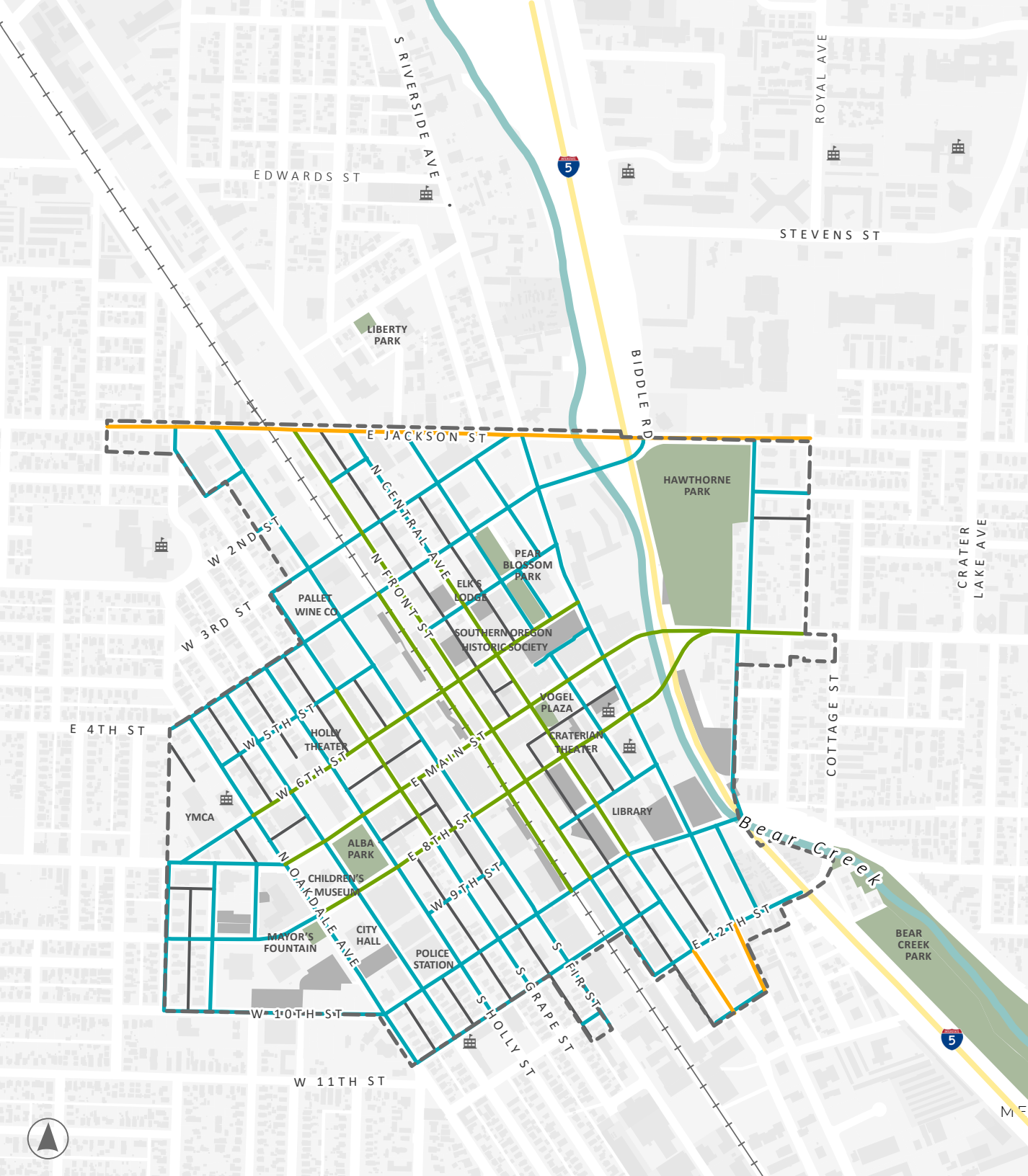
MAP 4-1: DOWNTOWN URBAN DESIGN CORRIDORS

URBAN DESIGN CORRIDOR

- A Corridor
- B Corridor
- C Corridor
- Alley

BASE MAP FEATURES

- Proposed Downtown Boundary
- Park
- Bear Creek
- Bear Creek Greenway
- Interstate 5
- Building
- Public Parking
- Tax Lot



SOURCES

City of Medford, Jackson County, MIG, 2024-2025.



FIGURE 4-5: URBAN DESIGN CORRIDOR A DESIGN ELEMENTS

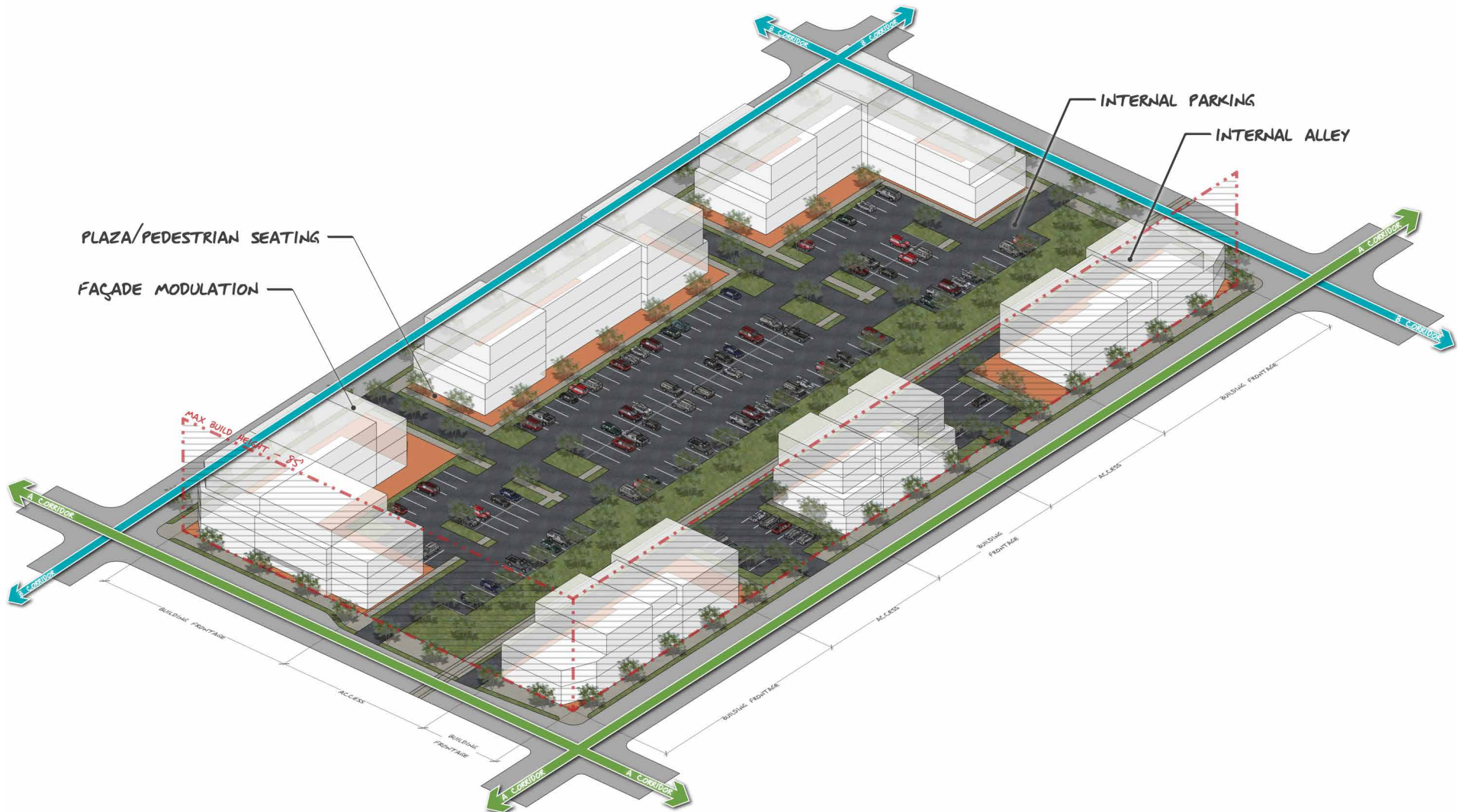


FIGURE 4-6: URBAN DESIGN CORRIDOR B DESIGN ELEMENTS

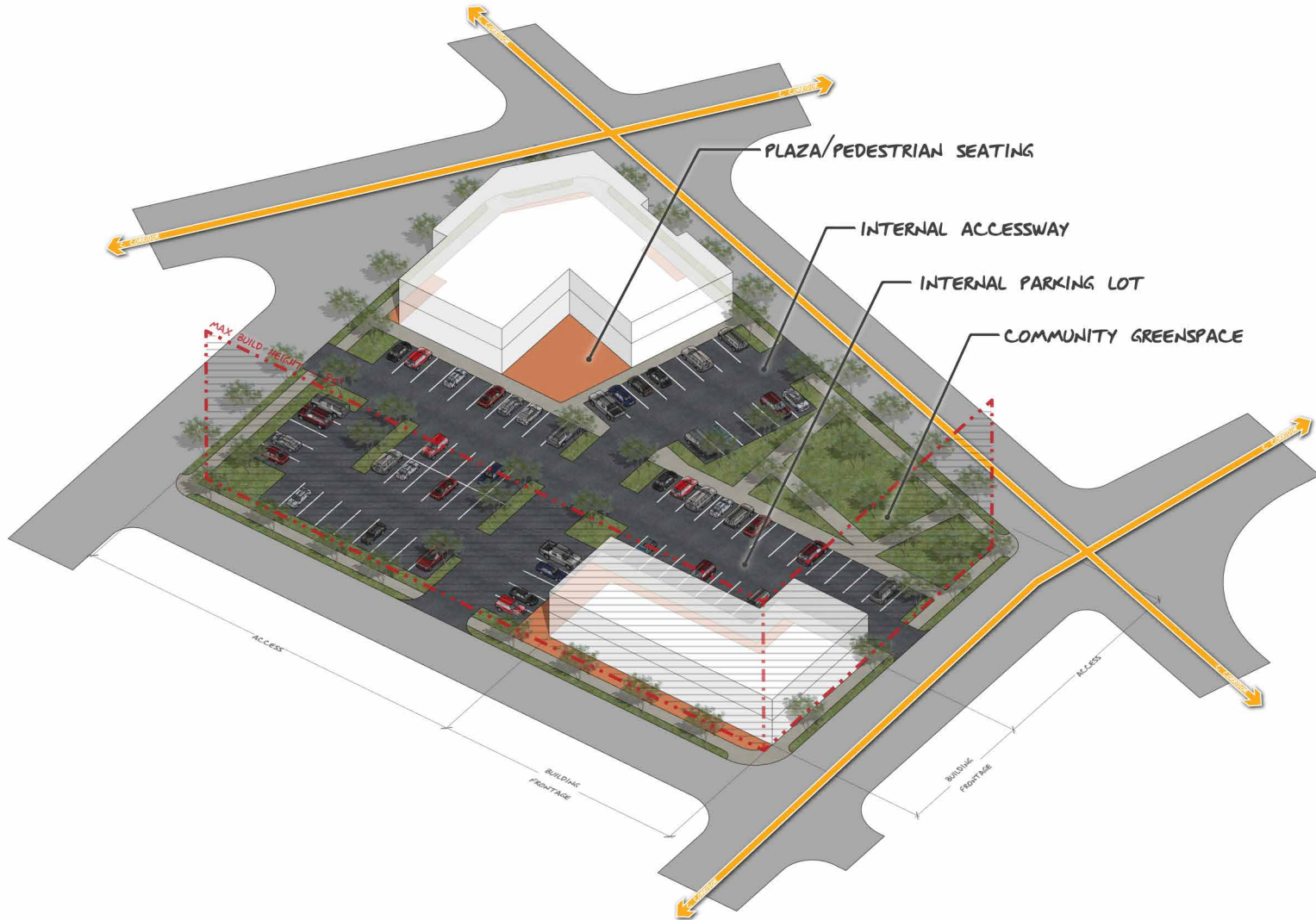


FIGURE 4-7: URBAN DESIGN CORRIDOR C DESIGN ELEMENTS





PLACEMAKING AND ACTIVATION

The vision for Downtown as the heart of Medford and a vibrant, active, and welcoming hub of year-round activity was one of the top discussions among community members during the Downtown Plan process. While Downtown is an active place during the summer and in conjunction with community events such as summer concerts in Pear Blossom Park and Third Fridays, it can be quiet and underutilized at other times. Creating spaces in Downtown that are active year-round, both during the day and into the evening, will require programs that engage people and bring them together as well as adding buildings, public spaces, and design elements like outdoor seating and interactive art.

Placemaking is a way to reimagine and activate public spaces, whether it is a street, plaza, or park, to strengthen the connection between people and place. Effective placemaking requires attention to the form and management of a space, as well as active community participation. Placemaking can be permanent, such as well-designed streetscapes, or more tactical elements that appear briefly as temporary installations, such as temporary art. Regardless of scale, placemaking should be a community-focused initiative that involves residents and businesses in Downtown to determine the extent, timing, and implementation of a placemaking activity. For Downtown, there are several guidelines to consider when designing and activating public spaces.

PLACEMAKING GUIDELINES

INTEGRATE STREET TREES AND CREATIVE LANDSCAPING

Street trees and landscaping softens the built environment, improves the pedestrian experience, and provides visual interest and environmental benefits. Well-designed landscapes in highly visible locations like gateways, street corners, entrances, and landmarks, can help attract visitors to an area. Plantings can also demarcate public art to be more noticeable and dramatic. Along streets and in plazas, tree cover can reduce temperatures during the summer months to create a more pleasant pedestrian experience and a place people will want to stop and spend time. Landscaping also provides habitat for birds and other wildlife.

Street trees and unique landscaping can also act as wayfinding. For Downtown, connecting park and gathering spaces through the use of specific tree species, flowerpots and landscaping along street corridors can provide visual queues for pedestrians. These types of corridors can also be branded as part of a broader wayfinding strategy.



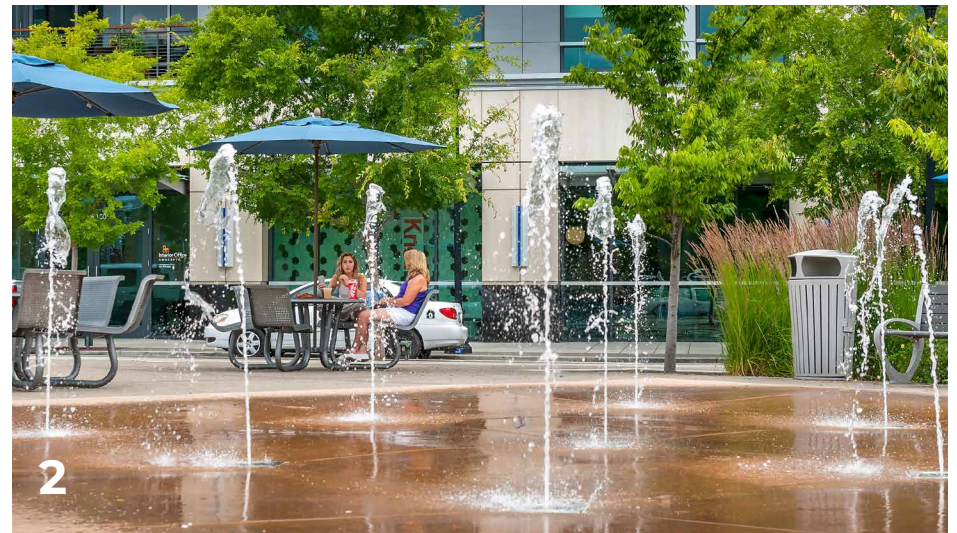
Street trees and landscaping in Downtown Medford.

FOCUS ON STREET AND BUILDING FRONTAGES

Active street and building frontages are essential for creating a place that fosters social interaction, supports retail, and provides visual interest. Window transparency is important, but storefronts should also include detailed entrances that draw people along the street. Building facade details can include attractive door handles, paved steps, inlays along walls, as well as built-in ledges and alcoves that provide shade and seating. Also, because Downtown is rainy many months of the year, weather protection such as awnings or roof projections is important over busy sidewalks to encourage people to walk all months of the year. In appropriate locations, vendors and food trucks can help further activate the space and create multi-use areas.

INCORPORATE WATER AND PLAY ELEMENTS

Like art and landscaping, water elements are most successful when clustered with other design elements to create sensorial and rich environments where people want to spend time. The water feature in Vogel Plaza is an excellent example of a water and play feature. The desire to play is universal and ageless. Play does not need to be limited to designated playgrounds and parks. Natural play elements should be incorporated whenever possible, including climbable trees or rocks and water elements, among other interactive features. Small sculptural elements that are climbable are appropriate along retail streets. Along the Evergreen Corridor and other key corridors, consider incorporating playful sculptural features and details into storefronts and building fronts within reach of young children.



1. Examples of various weather coverings and awnings that create attractive frontages in Downtown Medford.
2. Water feature at Pear Blossom Park.

ACTIVATE PLAZAS AND ALLEYS

Urban plazas should be strategically located to provide an amenity for nearby residents as well as passersby. Plazas need nearby amenities such as retail that attracts people and makes them want to stay. Focused programming and entertainment can be provided on smaller footprint spaces, while larger plazas, such as Vogel Plaza and Pear Blossom Park, can accommodate larger temporary events such as farmers' markets and festivals. In addition to plazas, alleys provide a unique opportunity for additional placemaking and activation as outlined in the Reimagined Alley Network Big Move at the start of this chapter.

USE MOVABLE FURNITURE WHEREVER POSSIBLE

Furniture in the public realm is a key component to activating spaces and providing comfort for a variety of different user groups. Furniture should be placed in highly desirable areas that offer multiple amenities to attract people. Seating and other furniture should not be isolated or hidden. Wherever possible, furniture should be movable to provide flexibility and an opportunity for users of the space to make it their own provided the furniture still provides enough space for pedestrians. Movable seating and benches should be included in plazas and in front of businesses. Retail streets like Main Street can offer a variety of seating types, including benches, clusters of movable chairs at key locations, steps and ledges to sit on, and even bollards that double as chairs. Fixed benches should be oriented towards the most pleasant view of a space and should encourage people-watching and views of community activities. Along retail streets, benches should be oriented towards the sidewalk, either facing inwards from the curb, or with the back of the benches against the buildings.

INCORPORATE PUBLIC ART

Public art that highlights Downtown's story and local culture was a top request throughout engagement efforts. Downtown Medford already has a vibrant mix of public art, including many murals such as "Oregon Mural" in Vogel Plaza. Artwork, ranging from sculptures to murals to structural elements, can have dramatic effects on the public realm. Art can serve as landmarks that create a sense of place and interactive features that enhance the experience of public spaces.

Ideally, sculptural works should be used in places where they can be touched, played on, climbed, and easily photographed. Sculptural public art can be located in high-use gathering areas or along streetscapes as tactile elements. These types of art features also pair well with seating areas, accent plantings, shade, water, transit stops, and busy retail spaces. Functional streetscape elements such as bollards can also be designed as sculptural elements, especially at high traffic locations.

Described under Big Moves for the Evergreen Corridor, creating explorable options for Downtown visitors through Art Walks, where visitors can explore Downtown while finding the next piece of art, provides opportunities to support local artists with commissions and adjacent business owners with increased foot traffic.

PROVIDE ADEQUATE LIGHTING

Lighting features are critical to creating spaces that feel welcoming and safe and can also be attractive design elements that create warmth and depth of experience. Currently, many areas of Downtown are not well lit, and many community members shared that they feel uncomfortable walking, particularly in the winter months when the days are short.



1. Moveable seating and planters can be rearranged in a public plaza. (Gustafson Guthrie Nichol)
2. Murals can help break up long, blank facades. (Visit Central Florida)
3. Well-lit streets and street furnishings and amenities create active, welcoming experiences for pedestrians. (Thomson Hay Landscape Architects)

Lighting should be carefully chosen to create an atmosphere that suits the aesthetic and functional needs of the specific location within Downtown. In general, light fixtures should be low to the ground (9 feet to 15 feet) to emphasize the pedestrian experience and should be closely spaced to provide a continuous stream of light, particularly along paths. As much as possible, light bulbs should emit a warm light that minimizes glare for pedestrians. As a district, a consistent lighting style is important for branding Downtown as a unique location with a strong sense of place.

Landscaping can also incorporate lighting elements, such as integrated sidewalk lights and small white “bee” lights in trees (even outside the holiday season) bringing a twinkling sensation to a plaza or streetscape. Buildings should have lighting around entrances, and interior retail displays can be lighted, adding vibrancy to commercial streets in the evening. Outdoor eating areas, such as patios, plazas, curbside seating, and food cart pods, can incorporate stringed lights overhead to create a warm and intimate environment. Alleys should also provide lighting to increase feelings of safety and aesthetic appeal.

DOWNTOWN PLACEMAKING AND ACTIVATION PROJECTS

There are specific interventions identified within the Downtown Plan that will help create a place people want to congregate, visit, work and live throughout the year. Placemaking is an important part for making Downtown a compelling destination for visitors and residents alike. Throughout the planning process, community members emphasized their desire for placemaking and activation strategies, elements, and programs. They voiced the experiences they want to have in Downtown and ideas for what they think will bring the area to life. The placemaking strategies summarized below in addition to the Big Moves identified at the beginning of this chapter originated directly from community feedback.

Placemaking happens at a variety of scales. Many of the elements of the Downtown Plan will take time to implement. In the interim, local businesses and landowners can implement low-cost programs to create temporary installations or activities that generate interest in Downtown. Effective placemaking often uses a “ground up” approach, with the City providing support or just allowing it to happen. Often, a local business association leads these types of placemaking interventions although cities can lead placemaking activities when and where appropriate. They can also be led by any active community member or business. Short-term and long-term interventions could include but are not limited to the following strategies. The majority can be implemented by community partners. The following placemaking strategies incorporate the best practice guidelines described above.



Placemaking strategies can include physical improvements or temporary programming, like this street market in Grand Junction, CO. (Visit Grand Junction)

POLICY AND REGULATIONS

- **Develop District branding for light posts.** Branding should align with the broader Downtown brand but should also highlight local features within the district that makes the area unique, potentially through highlighting local building histories or current active uses.
- **Continue to implement the Downtown Wayfinding Plan,** including gateways and other Downtown entry features.
- **Develop an updated street tree inventory** to understand existing shade deficiencies and to inform future street tree investments.
- **Develop a Streetscape Design Plan** including a palette of streetscape design features for Downtown, including benches and planters, paving materials, lighting, transit shelters, communications vaults, landscaping, and street trees.

PUBLIC INVESTMENTS AND COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

- **Provide food trucks near Historic Main Street and City Hall** to provide more diverse food options Downtown.
- **Sponsor a parklet design competition hosted by local businesses** where they commit to constructing a parklet for a set amount of time.

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

- **Develop Downtown Transit Shelter Adoption Program** that allows local businesses and organizations to sponsor Downtown bus stops or shelters.
- **Encourage and support public private partnerships** for maintenance of public spaces, such as alleys, sidewalks, parks, and plazas.

PROGRAMMING AND PROMOTION

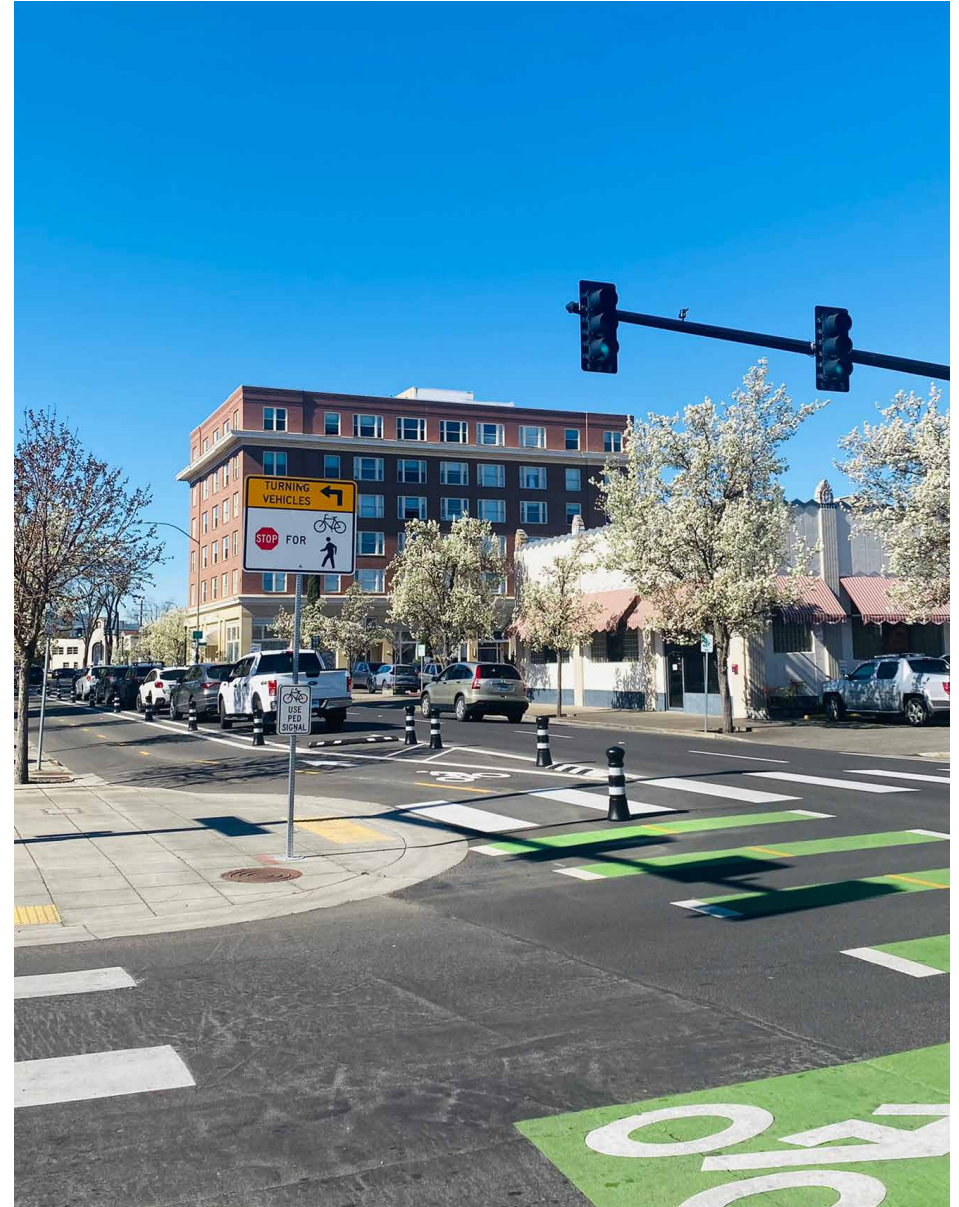
- **Create a Downtown Programming Plan** to expand year-round offerings within Downtown, engaging business owners and community members on the specific events and activities they would like to see.

MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

Central to the Downtown Plan is the community's desire for a safe, connected, accessible, and engaging pedestrian experience. Medford residents want options to move around safely and conveniently, whether they are parking and walking to a store, riding a bike, or taking transit. Building off the Downtown Medford Multimodal Concept Plan completed in 2023, the Downtown Plan outlines a series of multimodal improvements to encourage a safe multimodal transportation network that is accessible to all ages and abilities, and where cars are only one of several transportation options to get to, through, and around Downtown. These improvements are summarized below. The complete list of multimodal recommendations is outlined in Appendix F: Memorandum #6: Multimodal Improvements.

“Multimodal and active transportation choices allow widely accessible mobility within the region and promote a cohesive community. Our robust public transit and wayfinding systems support businesses, schools, and tourism.”

— *Medford 2040 Vision and Action Plan*



Recent improvements completed on Downtown Medford's Main Street.



ONE WAY
←

E. 8th St.

SPEED LIMIT 20

SPEED LIMIT 20

G

STREETSCAPE ZONES AND FUNCTIONAL RIGHT-OF-WAY ELEMENTS

A well-organized right-of-way is essential for supporting a safe, accessible, and multimodal downtown. This section outlines how the public right-of-way is divided into distinct functional realms, the pedestrian realm and the travel realm—along with the different ‘zones’ that comprise these realms. It describes specific design elements, materials, and guidelines recommended for each. These zones are tailored to balance the needs of pedestrians, transit riders, cyclists, and adjacent businesses, while also providing space for landscaping, stormwater management, and placemaking features. By clearly defining and enhancing each zone, the downtown streetscape can be more cohesive, user-friendly, and adaptable to various street types and levels of activity.

PEDESTRIAN REALM

Sidewalks can be thought of as having three different “zones” (Figure 4-1): the area immediately adjacent to buildings or other fronting land uses (frontage zone), the area for people moving along the sidewalk (through zone), and the buffer area between the pedestrian through zone and the street (amenity zone).

Frontage Zone

It acts as the business’s gateway to the community, engaging passersby through sidewalk seating or outdoor displays. Common features include overhangs, signs, and restaurant seating. Additionally, it offers the necessary space between buildings, walls, and other structures to ensure a pleasant walking environment. This zone overlaps with the proposed updates to Medford’s Municipal Code for a Downtown zoning district.

The frontage zone serves as the critical interface between buildings and the public realm, and should be designed to support pedestrian comfort, ground-level activity, and seamless connections to adjacent land uses:

- Encourage pedestrian-oriented building design with active ground floor uses such as retail, dining, or transparent office/ lobby spaces.
- Ensure frequent and visible building entries facing the sidewalk to support accessibility and walkability.
- Require pedestrian coverings such as awnings, canopies, or overhangs to provide weather protection.
- Maintain a clear and level transition between the building edge and pedestrian through zone, with minimal obstructions.
- Coordinate frontage zone design with adjacent landscaping, signage, and lighting to create a cohesive streetscape character.

FIGURE 4-8: PEDESTRIAN REALM ZONES



Through Zone

It should be accessible and comfortable for all users, providing enough space to accommodate the expected number of pedestrians. In high-traffic areas, a wider through zone is necessary. **The pedestrian through zone is the primary walking area and should remain clear, accessible, and comfortable for people of all ages and abilities:**

- Maintain a minimum clear width free of obstructions to meet ADA accessibility standards and accommodate high pedestrian volumes. The through zone should allow two people to move side by side, typically 6-to 9-feet of space. To meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards, a minimum of 5-foot wheelchair passing space at intervals of no more than 200 feet is required.
- Use durable, non-slip paving materials that are consistent and easy to maintain.
- Avoid placing fixed objects such as signs, poles, or street furniture within this zone.
- Ensure a consistent grade and smooth surface for safe navigation by wheelchairs, strollers, and people with limited mobility.
- Provide adequate nighttime lighting and visibility for safety and comfort (see amenity or flex zone recommendations).

Amenity or Flex Zone

This area is typically at the same level as the sidewalk, though sometimes elements in the flex zone, like parking, can act as the buffer. **The space may feature items such as street trees, stormwater facilities, seating, transit stops, bike-share stations, utilities, public art installations, garbage and recycling receptacles, and lighting.** It also helps create separation between different users. Elements in this zone should not encroach into the pedestrian through zone and maintain clear sightlines for visibility and safety.

- Incorporate vegetation and street trees in the buffer to enhance the pedestrian realm. Street trees and landscaping need at least 4 feet of space.
- Provide a variety of seating options, including benches with backs and armrests, to accommodate people of all ages and abilities. Consideration should be given to ensure there is space for passenger pickups and drop-offs when locating street furniture.
- Green features like bioretention swales, rain gardens, tree filters, and pervious pavements can be included where space allows.
- Lighting should be added to improve visibility for both pedestrians and motorists, particularly at intersections and locations to help further define pedestrian areas from vehicle travel areas.
- Curbside areas can be converted where appropriate to support seasonal parklets, café seating, or temporary programming to activate the street.
- Consider incorporating public art or locally inspired designs into elements placed in this zone.



1. Pedestrian corner crossing with a stormwater swale in the bulb-out. (Environmental Services, City of Portland)
2. A mid-block crosswalk in Sacramento designed by MIG, Inc. includes safety bollards and a high-contrast design to draw attention to pedestrians. (Billy Hustace)
3. Landscaping and seating in the amenity / flex zone. (Billy Hustace)

While not part of any one particular zone, **street corners** are critical nodes in the pedestrian realm where people pause, cross, connect, and orient themselves. **As key transition points between sidewalks and crosswalks, corners must be designed for safety, visibility, accessibility, and comfort for all users, including children, older adults, and people with disabilities.** Street corners should be designed based on the street type and urban design corridor classification, but in general:

- Design corners with tight curb radii to slow turning vehicles and shorten pedestrian crossing distances.
- Install ADA-compliant curb ramps with tactile warning strips at every crosswalk, oriented in the direction of travel.
- Consider curb extensions (bulb-outs) to increase pedestrian space (and shorten crossing distance), improve sightlines, and reduce exposure to traffic.
- Ensure adequate pedestrian waiting space at corners, especially near high-volume crossings or transit stops.
- Provide high-visibility crosswalk markings and, where appropriate, pedestrian signal infrastructure including countdown timers.
- Explore “daylighting” of certain intersections (i.e., the removal of parking near the intersection) to increase visibility of pedestrians to vehicles and improve safety
- Use street furniture, signage, and landscaping to define the corner without obstructing views or pedestrian flow.
- Integrate wayfinding elements or small-scale public art to enhance corners as welcoming and functional urban spaces.

TRAVEL REALM

The travel realm accommodates the movement of vehicles and bicycles and should be designed to safely integrate multiple modes while minimizing conflicts with pedestrians and curbside activity. The travel realm encompasses all areas of the right-of-way dedicated to movement and circulation, including the curb zone, bicycle zone, and vehicle zone. Together, these zones support a range of multimodal functions—from transit operations and personal vehicle travel to cycling, goods delivery, and pick-up/drop-off activity. A well-balanced travel realm improves traffic flow, supports multimodal goals, and contributes to an efficient and livable downtown.

FIGURE 4-9: TRAVEL REALM ZONES

(shown with shared bike lane)



Curb Zone

The area immediately adjacent to the sidewalk and serves as a highly flexible space that can accommodate a wide range of functions based on street context, land use, and transportation needs. When designed thoughtfully, this zone supports multimodal access, public space activation, and operational efficiency, helping to balance the

needs of pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and businesses. **Curb zone uses should support the priority functions of the street, based on the design classifications and land use context.**

- Use a data-driven and adaptive approach to allocate curb space, referencing tools such as the Institute for Transportation Engineers' curbside management framework.
- Allow curb zone uses to vary by time of day or demand, especially in high-activity areas, to support deliveries, dining, pickup/drop-off, and special events.
- In high-demand locations, manage and price curb access, including paid vehicle parking, to encourage turnover and efficient use.
- Activate the curb zone with seasonal or permanent parklets, outdoor dining, or public seating areas.
- Locate loading and unloading zones as close as possible to their service destinations to reduce conflicts and improve efficiency.
- Ensure access for essential services such as mail delivery, garbage, and recycling collection, based on operational needs of service providers.
- Design pickup and drop-off areas to minimize conflicts and ensure they do not obstruct or endanger pedestrians, cyclists, or transit operations. Allocate curb space for pickup/drop-off zones, particularly near hotels, restaurants, or high-foot-traffic destinations.



1. Bike lanes can be separated from the street by curbs and transit stops. (Green Lane Project)

2. Other bike lane designs can be accommodated on the street with high-contrast markings and paint to distinguish them. (credit unknown)

Bicycle Zone

This area can be designed in a variety of ways, but is the area dedicated to bicycle travel. There are several different types of bicycle lanes including shared lanes, conventional bicycle lanes, buffered bicycle lanes, and separated bicycle lanes. **The type of bicycle lane in Downtown depends on the street type and land use context.**

- Design the bicycle facility to serve anticipated future bicyclist volumes and other potential users. Provide protected or buffered bike lanes where space allows, especially along high-traffic corridors.
- Low-volume, low-speed streets are suitable for shared street bicycle infrastructure. Bicycle movement should be prioritized on these streets.
- Consider two-way, separated bicycle facilities when destinations are on one side of the street, to connect off-street trail segments, on streets with extra right-of-way, or in constrained rights-of-way.
- Ensure bike lanes are clearly marked and either buffered or physically separated from both moving vehicles and parked cars where feasible.
- Use colored pavement or striping at conflict points (e.g., intersections, driveways) to increase visibility.
- Incorporate bike signals and signage that are intuitive and consistent across the network.
- Coordinate with end-of-trip facilities, such as bike racks or bike share stations, in high-activity areas.

Vehicle Zone

Includes general-purpose travel lanes, turn lanes, and transit-only lanes. This area often makes up a significant portion of the overall width of the street realm, and the number of lanes and their widths have a broad impact on all travel. **Vehicular lanes should be designed to support appropriate travel speeds, ensure safety for all users, and complement the surrounding urban context.** The vehicle zone is a key focus of several ongoing city transportation planning efforts, including the Transportation System Plan and Downtown Multimodal Concept Plan . While those documents provide detailed analysis and design guidance, general recommendations are included below to support coordination with the broader streetscape and multimodal context. Design the bicycle facility to serve anticipated future bicyclist volumes and other potential users. Provide protected or buffered bike lanes where space allows, especially along high-traffic corridors.

- Maintain narrower lane widths to encourage slower speeds and improve pedestrian safety in the Downtown setting.
- Minimize the number of travel lanes where feasible to allow for expanded pedestrian, bicycle, or curbside space.
- Integrate traffic calming elements, such as raised crosswalks or textured paving at intersections.
- Use clear pavement markings and signage to support safe vehicle operations and reduce driver confusion.
- Ensure intersections are designed with tight curb radii to reduce turning speeds and improve pedestrian crossings.



Street design next to Rogue Community College.

PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS

Pedestrian activity is an increasingly important element of economic vitality, Downtown livability, and personal health. Building on the foundation of the streetscape zones and functional right-of-way design, this section identifies targeted pedestrian connections and improvements that enhance safety, accessibility, and continuity throughout Downtown. These improvements are intended to fill critical gaps, strengthen access to key destinations, and elevate the overall pedestrian experience. By focusing on strategic intersections, mid-block crossings, connections to parks, transit, and active frontages, these enhancements support a more connected, walkable, and vibrant urban core. Each recommended improvement is guided by principles of universal design, placemaking, and alignment with the City's broader multimodal and urban design goals.

CROSSWALKS AND INTERSECTIONS

Crosswalks and intersections play a vital role in connecting people walking, biking, and rolling to key destinations such as transit stops, housing, schools, human services, and recreational areas like the Bear Creek Greenway. The 2023 Multimodal Concept Plan conducted a gap analysis of the pedestrian network to identify priority crossing improvements based on proximity to essential destinations and transit, as well as appropriate spacing along major corridors. These findings informed recommendations for enhanced pedestrian crossings at key locations including Riverside Avenue, Central Avenue, and Court Street. The Downtown Plan builds on and expands these recommendations, incorporating additional priority crossings identified through community engagement and further analysis.

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES FOR A CONNECTED DOWNTOWN

In addition to an enhanced alley network, Downtown Plan engagement efforts revealed a need for improved pedestrian connectivity between parks, the Bear Creek Greenway, key destinations, and different areas of Downtown. Community members currently feel like Downtown is fragmented from a pedestrian perspective and that navigating from place to place is difficult and unsafe. Providing additional safe and accessible pedestrian connections would improve Downtown's pedestrian experience and sense of place.



“It would be great to have more pedestrian-only paths, connections to the greenway, [and] improved and wider sidewalks along Riverside.”

—Downtown Community Survey Respondent (2024)

Recommended Enhancements

Based on previous analysis, field observations, as well as national guidance for improving pedestrian safety at uncontrolled crossing locations, the following pedestrian crash countermeasures (crossing treatments) are recommended at the crossing locations noted above:

- High-visibility crosswalk markings (e.g., ladder or continental style) to clearly define pedestrian paths and increase driver awareness.
- Parking restrictions near crosswalk approaches to improve sightlines between drivers and pedestrians waiting to cross.
- Adequate nighttime lighting focused on crosswalks and curb ramps to enhance visibility and safety during low-light conditions.
- Pedestrian crossing warning signs placed in advance of and at the crossing to alert drivers to pedestrian activity.
- Advance stop lines and “Stop Here for Pedestrians” signs to reduce the likelihood of vehicles encroaching into the crosswalk and reduce the potential for multiple threat crashes.
- Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) at uncontrolled crossings to provide an active warning system and increase driver yield rates.

MIDBLOCK CROSSINGS

Mid-block crossings can help reduce the scale of Downtown “superblocks” to be more manageable for pedestrians. Similar to the treatment at an intersection, the design components of a mid-block crossing must work together to provide for a clearly visible and comfortable street crossing and also enhance the streetscape. Further, the location of a mid-block crossing must be logical for all users and must meet engineering standards and warrants.

Recommended Enhancements

- To distinguish the crosswalk from the travel lane and to provide a more interesting and pleasant environment for the pedestrian, special paving can be installed in the crosswalk. For added safety the special paving could be bracketed by wide and highly visible white lines. For crossings with pavement design, the longevity can be extended by embedding the decorative pattern into the asphalt so that it is not worn off by vehicle tires
- At all designated mid-block crossing locations, some type of signalization and signage alerts drivers to the presence of a person who wants to cross the street. Standard practice for signalization depends on the roadway width and traffic volume.
- To provide a refuge for pedestrians and to calm traffic, landscaped medians are installed where there are no conflicts with driveways or turn lanes. In the Downtown environment, every bit of greenery is important for environmental purposes (cleaner air, reduced urban heat island, improved stormwater runoff) and for livability (enhanced streetscape aesthetics, calmer traffic, pedestrian refuge).



1. Through-block connection providing seating and shade as well as a connection for pedestrians and cyclists. (Holst Architecture)
2. Infill development creates the opportunity to add pedestrian connections. (Mithūn / Kevin Scott)

THROUGH-BLOCK CONNECTIONS

To comply with new state legislation requiring pedestrian connectivity through blocks longer than 350 feet, commonly referred to as “super blocks”, this section outlines strategies for establishing through-block connections that promote walkability, access, and permeability in the downtown street grid. These mid-block pathways not only satisfy regulatory requirements but also serve as critical links between destinations, improve circulation, and enhance the overall pedestrian experience.

Recommendations for Through-Block Connections

- Identify and prioritize long blocks (over 350 feet) for new mid-block pedestrian access based on land use, pedestrian demand, and connectivity gaps.
- Design through-block connections to be safe, well-lit, and inviting, with clear sightlines and ADA-compliant surfaces.
- Incorporate wayfinding signage, landscaping, and lighting to improve visibility and encourage use, especially in lower-traffic areas.
- Where feasible, activate connections with adjacent ground-floor uses such as retail entrances, public art, or seating to enhance security and vibrancy.
- Ensure pathways are at least 6 to 10 feet wide, depending on expected use, and remain open and accessible to the public throughout the day.
- Coordinate with property owners and development review processes to integrate connections into site design during redevelopment or infill projects.
- Use easements or public access agreements where necessary to secure long-term public access across private property.

INTERNAL PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

The recommended updates to the Medford Municipal Code for the new Downtown zoning district includes new requirements for pedestrian circulation within individual sites, ensuring safe, direct, and convenient routes between building entrances, sidewalks, parking areas, and other on-site destinations. These updated standards are intended to complement the public realm by extending walkability onto private property and reinforcing a cohesive, pedestrian-friendly environment throughout Downtown.

BIG MOVES FOR A MORE CONNECTED DOWNTOWN

The Evergreen History and Culture Corridor and the Bear Creek Promenade are two Big Moves in the Downtown Plan that significantly enhance multimodal connections and public spaces. Both projects transform underused corridors into vibrant, walkable destinations that celebrate Medford's culture, history, and natural environment. The Evergreen Corridor reimagines a key rail-adjacent street as a community-oriented pedestrian spine, while the Bear Creek Promenade strengthens links to nature with a scenic loop trail that connects Downtown to the Bear Creek Greenway. Together, these initiatives support walking, biking, gathering, and placemaking throughout the heart of Medford.

FIGURE 4-10: EXISTING 5TH STREET DIVIDING PEAR BLOSSOM PARK



PEAR BLOSSOM PARK STREET ACTIVATION

To enhance pedestrian safety and support flexible programming, the Pear Blossom Park 5th Street Activation concept involves temporarily or permanently closing 5th Street (Figure 4-3) to vehicular traffic converting it into a pedestrian-first space that can accommodate seasonal markets, live music, food truck events, and recreation programming. This transformation would not only improve safety and walkability but also activate the park as a vibrant, multi-use urban destination that supports both temporary events and everyday public use.

TRAVEL REALM IMPROVEMENTS

Travel realm improvements are focused on creating safer, more comfortable streets for everyone traveling through Downtown Medford whether by foot, bike, bus, or car. These improvements reflect different roadway conditions and surrounding land uses, which guide the appropriate design for each corridor. Throughout the Downtown Plan engagement process, community members emphasized concerns about safety and the difficulty of navigating certain streets, reinforcing the need for better multimodal infrastructure. The Downtown Plan builds on prior planning efforts by refining and expanding street design concepts to address these challenges.

IMPROVING MAIN STREET

Travel realm improvements recommended on Main Street under previous planning efforts are already underway. Key recommendations included two-way, parking-protected bike lanes, two travel lanes, and on-street parking on both sides, as well as high-visibility crosswalks and bike signals. These improvements have already been implemented on portions of the corridor, and the City continues to study further multimodal enhancements.

IMPROVING RIVERSIDE AVENUE

Riverside Avenue serves as a major gateway to Downtown, but community feedback consistently raised concerns about safety and pedestrian comfort. The Multimodal Concept Plan divided the corridor into three segments based on land use and roadway conditions and recommended improvements such as widened sidewalks, protected bike lanes, floating bus islands, and driveway access management. In response to community input and further City Council direction, a modified cross section was approved

in 2023, including restriping to provide bike lanes and on-street parking in a slightly revised layout.

IMPROVING CENTRAL AVENUE

Central Avenue is another key Downtown corridor where community members identified safety and comfort issues for people biking and walking. The Multimodal Concept Plan proposed one-way separated bike lanes and segment-specific designs that reflect existing conditions and land use patterns. Recommendations include reducing vehicle travel lanes from three to two in some segments, adding curb- or buffer-separated bike lanes, and addressing driveway conflicts to support safer multimodal travel.

ACCESS MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENTS

Informed by the Medford TSP, the Multimodal Concept Plan identifies numerous access management strategies to improve safety and reduce the number of conflict points between motorists and people walking and biking. The Concept Plan identifies locations where driveway spacing and number of access points can be consolidated to improve multimodal operations and safety.

WHAT IS ACCESS MANAGEMENT?

Access management is managing the spacing, design, and operation of the places where cars and trucks enter and exit the road.

FLOATING BUS ISLANDS

Many of the multimodal improvements summarized above propose the addition of bike lanes along Riverside Avenue, Central Avenue, and Court Street. Some of these corridors also host transit stops. Today, transit vehicles board and alight at the curb. To reduce conflict between people biking and transit vehicles while providing a continuous and low-stress facility for people biking, floating bus islands are included in the Multimodal Concept Plan's preferred concept design..

WHAT IS A FLOATING BUS ISLAND?

A floating bus island or “modular bus platform” is a relatively low-cost, quick strategy to address bicycle facilities at transit stops. Floating bus islands remove conflicts between people biking and transit vehicles by eliminating the need for the bus to cross over the bike lane when it stops.

Floating bus island, Portland, Oregon. (Bike Portland)



ALLEY IMPROVEMENTS

Throughout the Downtown planning process, community members highlighted their desire for more activated and pedestrian-oriented alleys. Downtown is home to a large network of alleys that highlight the area's historic roots. Today, most of Downtown's alleys are used for service uses (e.g. deliveries and waste disposal) and vehicular access, although a handful of alleys are more pedestrian oriented. Middleford Alley is one example of a more activated alley in Downtown, featuring murals and pedestrian scale lighting.



Alley mural in Downtown Medford.

Recommended Alley Improvements

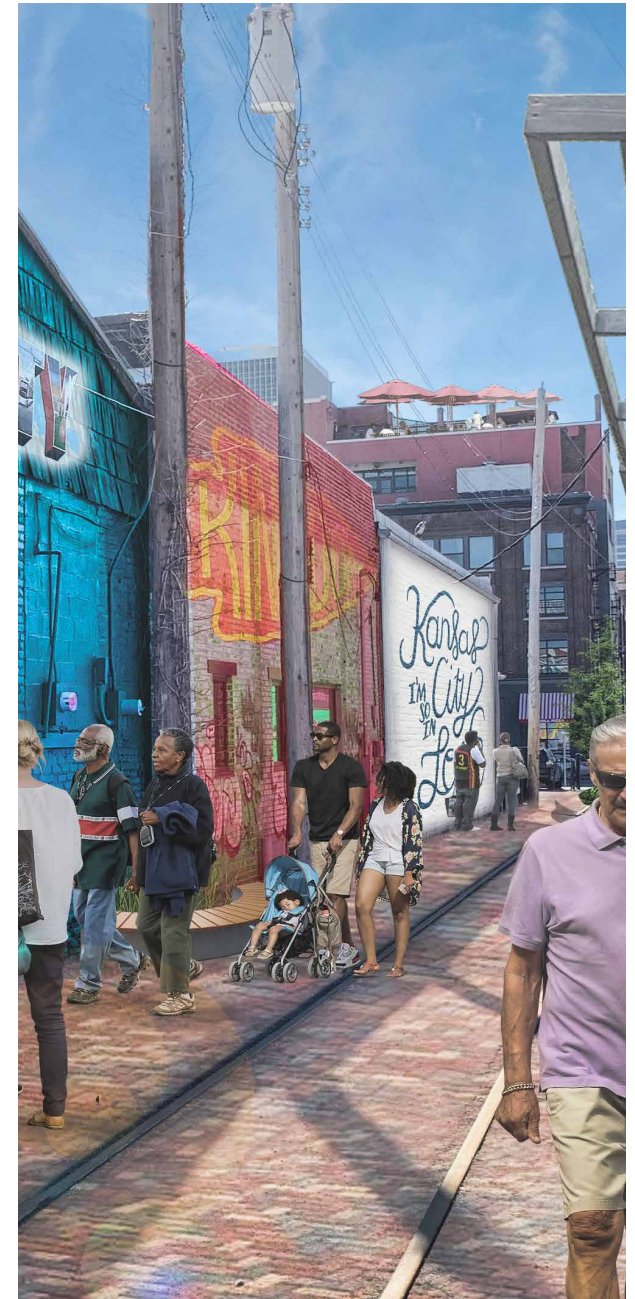
Conversations with Downtown business owners, community members, and service providers revealed that there are numerous opportunities to improve alley functionality and the many community benefits that alleys can provide. Potential improvements to improve overall functionality, and the pedestrian experience of Downtown's alley network include:

- Explore solutions to address overhead powerlines to improve service truck access and visual appearance.
- Implement efficient, secure, and visually appealing waste management solutions such as consolidated and secured waste enclosures.
- Add pedestrian-scale lighting to enhance perceptions of safety and to create a more welcoming environment.
- Provide streetscape amenities such as trash receptacles, bike racks, and benches where practical and feasible.
- Encourage public art installations and murals that highlight local culture and diversity.
- Incorporate landscaping and green spaces to improve aesthetics, stormwater management, and sustainability.
- Provide signage and wayfinding to help people navigate the alley network and locate key Downtown destinations.
- Ensure alleys are accessible to people of all abilities with ramps, smooth surfaces, and clear pedestrian pathways.
- Integrate multimodal crossings to ensure a safe pedestrian environment.

WHY ALLEYS ARE IMPORTANT FOR DOWNTOWN

Alleys serve many important purposes for the overall functionality and experience of downtowns. Downtown Medford utilizes its alley network to fulfill many of these functional benefits, although there is large opportunity to capitalize on the many social and placemaking benefits that alleys can provide.

- **Service Access.** Alleys are often used as service lanes, providing access for deliveries, waste disposal, and utility access. This allows for these functions to be kept separate from Downtown's streets and sidewalks.
- **Alternative Pedestrian Routes.** Alleys can provide alternative routes for pedestrians, creating shortcuts and providing a unique way to experience Downtown.
- **Fire Break.** Alleys provide a fire break between buildings.
- **Rear Parking and Access.** Alleys can provide options for rear parking, garages, and access – reducing the need for driveways that break up the sidewalk.
- **Community Spaces.** Alleys can be transformed from forgotten urban spaces into vibrant community spaces for outdoor dining, gathering, art installations, and programming spaces.
- **Placemaking and storytelling.** Alleys can help tell the story of Downtowns by establishing a unique sense of place and highlighting historic elements.
- **Economic Development.** A unique alley network that supports community spaces and placemaking can help attract visitors, boost local businesses, and support the overall economy. Alleys can provide additional space for local businesses, create high value retail space, and provide unique destinations for visitors and locals alike.





CHAPTER 5

IMPLEMENTATION

5 IMPLEMENTATION

The community’s vision for Downtown Medford will not be realized overnight or through a single development, project, or program. Rather, a combination of many strategic programs, public and private investments, and community partnerships will be needed to make the Downtown Plan vision a reality.

This chapter provides specific and implementable actions to realize the Medford community’s vision and goals for Downtown. Strategies range from major infrastructure investments and development projects that will take time to plan and design to “quick wins” that can be implemented relatively quickly.

Strategies and actions guide near, mid, and long-term changes with the goal of creating a safe, vibrant, and welcoming Downtown. Implementation will be dependent on available funding, ongoing community support, public-private partnerships, City of Medford inter-departmental coordination, and property owner buy-in for future development and redevelopment.

This plan is a living document and a framework for decision-making and collaboration. All partners are encouraged to use the plan to:

- Guide development and investment decisions.
- Prioritize projects in alignment with shared goals.
- Foster partnerships and build momentum for implementation.
- Track progress and adjust course when necessary.

Through shared ownership and active collaboration, the plan will evolve and remain relevant, ensuring that Downtown Medford continues to grow as a vibrant, inclusive, and thriving urban core. Many of the implementation strategies cannot be implemented by the City of Medford alone. Continued engagement with partners and the public will be needed to tackle shared challenges through 2025 and beyond.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The successful implementation of the Downtown Plan depends on a collaborative, coordinated effort between public agencies, private sector partners, community organizations, and residents. While the City of Medford will adopt the plan and lead many of its components, true success will be driven by the combined energy and resources of a broad set of stakeholders. This section outlines the roles and responsibilities of key partners in bringing the plan to life and how each should use the plan as a guiding tool.



CITY OF MEDFORD (LEAD AGENCY)

As the adopting body, the City of Medford has primary responsibility for overseeing the overall implementation of the plan. This includes:

- Policy leadership through the adoption of zoning changes, comprehensive plan amendments, and public investments.
- Project coordination to ensure alignment across departments such as Planning, Finance, Public Works, Parks, Recreation, and Facilities, and the City Manager's Office.
- Budgeting and capital improvement planning to prioritize and allocate city resources toward Downtown infrastructure, streetscape, and public realm improvements.
- Monitoring progress by tracking implementation metrics, reviewing the plan periodically, and updating stakeholders.
- Community engagement to maintain transparency and gather feedback throughout the implementation process.

Use of the Plan

The City should use the plan as a strategic guide for budgeting, capital planning, development review, and inter-departmental coordination.

MEDFORD URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY (MURA)

MURA plays a critical role in funding and facilitating transformative projects. Responsibilities include:

- Allocating urban renewal funds to leverage private investment in catalytic development projects.
- Property acquisition and redevelopment to remove barriers to revitalization.
- Public-private partnerships to support mixed-use development, housing, and infrastructure improvements.
- Strategic planning and alignment with the broader goals of the Downtown Plan.

Use of the Plan

MURA should use the plan as a guiding framework for project prioritization, funding decisions, and evaluation of development proposals.

DOWNTOWN MEDFORD ASSOCIATION (DMA)

As a key nonprofit stakeholder and champion for Downtown vitality, the DMA will play a central role in:

- Advocating for Downtown businesses and property owners, ensuring that their voices are represented in ongoing decision-making.
- Marketing and placemaking, including organizing events, public art, and campaigns that enhance Downtown's identity.
- Coordinating with property and business owners to encourage investment and façade improvements.
- Partnering on implementation by helping deliver short-term pilot projects and supporting city-led initiatives with outreach and communications.

Use of the Plan

The DMA should use the plan to guide programming, strengthen business support strategies, and foster partnerships that align with the plan's vision and priorities.



PRIVATE DEVELOPERS AND PROPERTY OWNERS

The private sector will be essential in realizing the vision through:

- Investing in redevelopment and infill projects that align with the plan's land use and design principles.
- Collaborating with public agencies on infrastructure improvements and shared goals.
- Maintaining and improving properties to support the vibrancy and visual quality of Downtown.

Use of the Plan

Developers and property owners should use the plan to understand zoning and development expectations, identify opportunity sites, and align projects with community-supported priorities.

OTHER COMMUNITY PARTNERS

A variety of institutions and organizations—including arts groups, nonprofits, educational institutions, and business associations—should:

- Collaborate on initiatives that support cultural programming, public space activation, and workforce development.
- Help secure grants, sponsorships, or donations to fund aligned initiatives.
- Serve as ambassadors for the plan's goals within their networks.

Use of the Plan

Community partners should use the plan to identify areas for collaboration and build coalitions to advance shared goals.

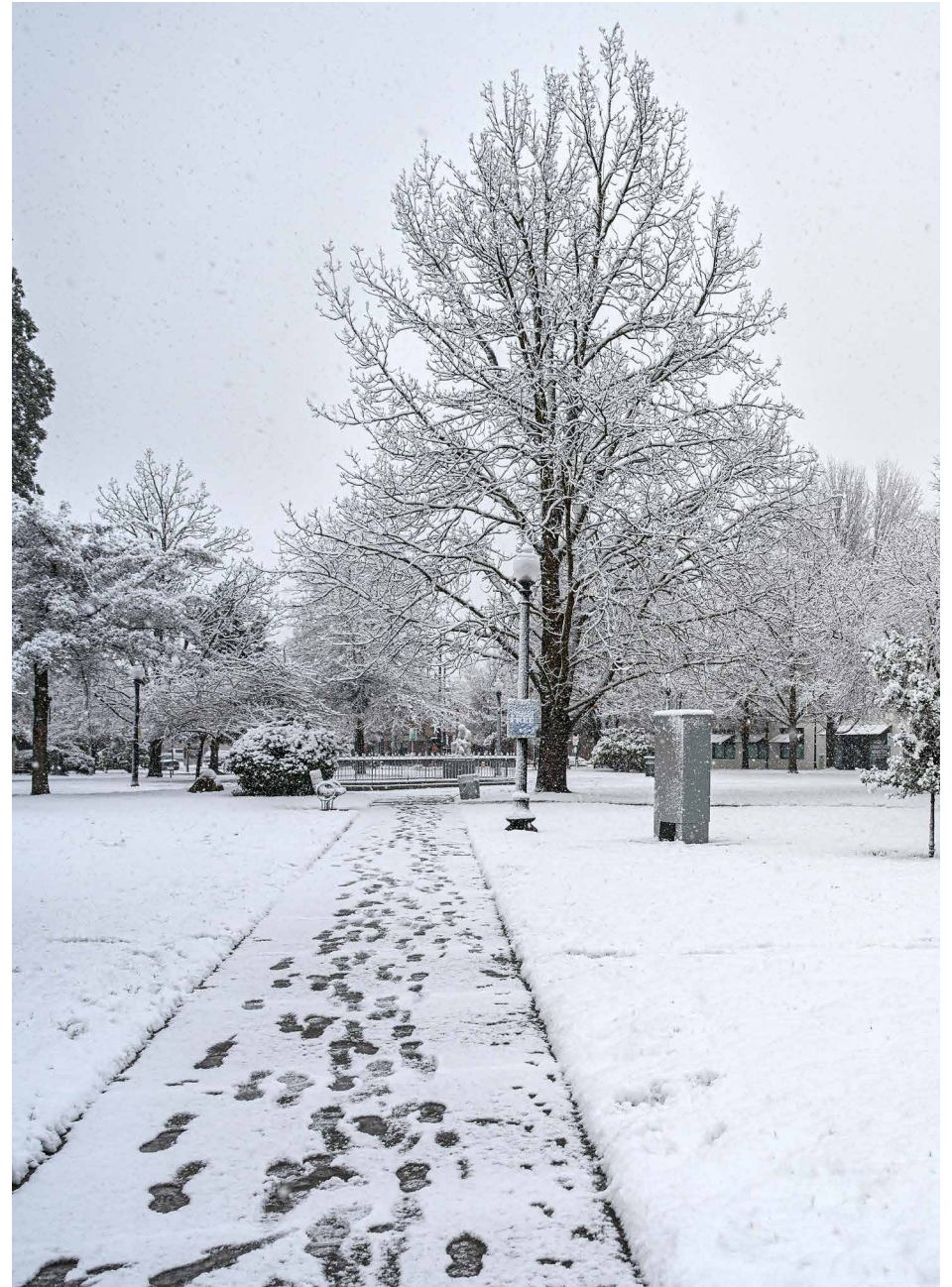
THE MEDFORD COMMUNITY

Residents, businesses, and visitors are key stakeholders and beneficiaries of the plan. Their role includes:

- Participating in public meetings, surveys, and ongoing outreach to help shape the direction of specific projects.
- Supporting local businesses and events that bring energy to Downtown.
- Holding public agencies accountable by staying informed and engaged as the plan is implemented.

Use of the Plan

The public should use the plan to understand the long-term vision for Downtown, get involved in projects, and advocate for improvements.



IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

The Implementation Matrix provides a detailed overview of each strategy outlined in the Downtown Plan. For every strategy, the matrix identifies the associated actions, the lead implementer responsible for coordination, key supporting organizations and potential partners, the anticipated timing for execution, and measurable indicators of success. This structured approach ensures clarity and accountability, facilitating coordinated efforts to achieve the vision for a vibrant, inclusive, and thriving Downtown Medford. The matrix serves as a practical tool to guide ongoing progress, monitor outcomes, and adapt as needed to meet community goals effectively.

Strategies are grouped under the following categories:

- Collaboration and Administration
- Downtown Economy
- Downtown Design and Infill
- Experience Downtown
- History, Art, and Culture
- Downtown Living
- Future-Ready Infrastructure
- Multimodal Connectivity and Parking

IMPLEMENTATION TIMING

Strategies in the implementation matrix are categorized into three different timeframes:

- **Short-Term (0-5 years).** Actions that are immediately feasible with existing resources or partnerships, or that are foundational to the success of future strategies. These may include quick wins, policy updates, pilot projects, and early-phase infrastructure improvements.
- **Mid-Term (6-10 years).** Strategies requiring moderate preparation, such as additional funding, stakeholder coordination, or design work. These may involve multi-year initiatives or expansion of successful short-term projects.
- **Long-Term (11-15 years).** Larger-scale or more complex strategies that require significant planning, investment, or dependencies on prior actions. These are typically transformative efforts aligned with broader development timelines.

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
Collaboration and Administration					
A.1	Develop an annual work plan with measurable goals based on the Downtown Medford Plan.	City of Medford Planning Department City Manager's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Medford Public Works Medford Urban Renewal Agency Downtown Medford Association Chamber of Commerce 	Short-term (<1 Year, then ongoing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual work plan created 80% of the priority strategies in the annual workplan or implementation matrix are completed or near completion at the end of the year
Actions					
A.1.a	Set annual priorities in coordination with decision-makers, stakeholders, and city staff.				
A.1.b	Use collected data points to communicate impact and advocate for continued support.				
A.1.c	Set up regular coordination meetings with agencies and organizations working towards the same Downtown goals to coordinate efforts.				
A.1.d	Explore the creation of working groups for certain Downtown project categories where implementation can be advanced by a coalition of groups and not solely dependent on City action.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
A.2	Act as a liaison and resource between Downtown interest organizations, businesses, and the community.	City of Medford Planning Department, City Manager's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medford Chamber of Commerce • Downtown Medford Association • Travel Medford • City of Medford City Manager's Office • Medford Economic Development staff 	Short-term (<1 year, then ongoing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of stakeholder meetings held annually • Community satisfaction with communication (via surveys) • Improved interdepartmental coordination • Reduction in permitting-related inquiries or delays

Actions

A.2.a	Collaborate internally with various city departments to ensure alignment in visioning, planning, and implementation of projects.
A.2.b	Facilitate regular stakeholder meetings and public forums to gather feedback and share updates.
A.2.c	Serve as a centralized resource for questions on development and permitting.



#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
A.3	Build community ownership of the Downtown Plan and its implementation.	City of Medford Planning Department and Communications Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Medford Association Travel Medford Medford Arts Commission Local nonprofits and cultural organizations 	Short-term (initiate within 1-2 years, the ongoing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of public engagement events and participants Online project tracker launch and traffic/interaction metrics Volume and diversity of grassroots projects supported Community satisfaction with opportunities to engage (via surveys) Visibility of Downtown Plan in local media
Actions					
A.3.a	Launch a “Downtown Plan in Action” program that could include: walking tours, pop-up events, and open houses to showcase completed projects and preview upcoming initiatives; creating an online project tracker and interactive map for community members to follow progress and provide input; using local media and social platforms to highlight community champions and businesses involved in revitalization.				
A.3.b	Support grassroots and partner-led projects that align with the Plan through micro-grants or partnership opportunities on small-scale projects, toolkits and technical support for residents and business associations, and integrate community-initiated efforts into the broader implementation timeline.				
A.3.c	Use community feedback to adapt priorities, funding strategies, specific project concepts, and implementation timelines as needed.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
Downtown Economy					
B.1	Regularly measure Downtown business and user experience and perception.	City of Medford Planning Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Medford Association Chamber of Commerce Southern Oregon University (for survey support and analysis) Travel Medford Medford School District (for youth engagement/ input) 	Short-term (initiate within 1 year); Surveys and reports updated annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Perceptions Survey completion rate (target: 500+ responses/year) Business satisfaction survey response rate (target: 60% of businesses surveyed annually) Annual progress report completed and published each year Benchmark indicators tracked year-over-year, such as: Number of businesses operating, Downtown employment count, Revenue generation by sector, Downtown residential population
Actions					
B.1.a	Conduct a regular Downtown Perceptions survey of people who work, live, and visit Downtown.				
B.1.b	Survey Downtown business executives or appropriate representatives annually to further engage with Downtown and to assess satisfaction with their Downtown location. Use the information to identify potential or emerging barriers to retaining them or to their employee recruitment efforts.				
B.1.c	Develop an annual Downtown progress report that identifies business activity, revenue, and project development. Use information to determine annual benchmarks (e.g. number of employees, businesses, revenue generation by business types, number of residents etc.)				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
B.2	Support business attraction and retention strategies to help strengthen employers, local restaurants, and retail, reduce vacancies, and provide space and opportunities for emerging entrepreneurs.	City of Medford Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medford Urban Renewal Agency (MURA) • Downtown Medford Association • Chamber of Commerce • Travel Medford • Rogue Business Accelerator • Local property owners and brokers 	Short-term (initiate within 1–3 years); Some actions (e.g., social media promotion, property owner meetings) ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of business attraction and retention plan (target: within 18 months) • Vacancy rate in Downtown commercial spaces (target: decrease by 10% within 3 years) • Number of new business openings in Downtown annually (target: 10+ per year) • Engagement metrics from social media outreach (e.g., impressions, shares, comments) • Survey of small businesses on with support services
Actions					
B.2.a	Create a local/regional outreach strategy that focuses on the arts and culture elements of Downtown. In addition, regularly post on social media upcoming activities and events, new openings, and other attractions to create energy around Downtown.				
B.2.b	Work with the Medford Urban Renewal Agency, Downtown Medford Association, and other local partners to convene meetings with Downtown property owners to understand current barriers in attracting businesses and tenants.				
B.2.c	Create a business attraction and retention plan for Downtown that is focused on Main Street retail and restaurants.				
B.2.d	Assess whether current technical assistance, support networks, and marketing and promotion for small businesses throughout Downtown are effective in meeting desired goals.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
B.3	Create a Community Food Hub. (BIG Move #5)	City of Medford Planning Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medford Urban Renewal Agency (MURA) • Downtown Medford Association • Local entrepreneurs and food vendors • Rogue Valley Food System Network • Medford Public Works Department (for infrastructure support) 	Short- to Mid-term (site selection and initial permitting within 3–6 years; programming and vendor operations ongoing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permitting process revised and published • Food cart pod site selected and infrastructure installed • Number of active food vendors at the hub • Frequency of public events hosted at the site • Annual site foot traffic or visitor count • Business satisfaction surveys from vendors • Social media/event engagement metrics for hub-related programming
Actions					
B.3.a	Simplify the approval process for food cart operations by creating clear, flexible regulations for site design, utilities, sanitation, signage, and operating hours.				
B.3.b	Select a City-owned or accessible site for near-term use and invest in basic infrastructure such as power, lighting, water, and shared seating to support vendor operations and enhance user experience.				
B.3.c	Collaborate with local entrepreneurs or organizations to manage the pod, oversee vendor coordination, and ensure cleanliness, safety, and ongoing programming.				
B.3.d	Encourage developers, particularly near the planned event center, to include food carts as part of early activation efforts or permanent mixed-use site plans.				
B.3.e	Host recurring evening or weekend events featuring food vendors, live music, and arts programming, potentially along the Evergreen Corridor near Main Street, to attract visitors and extend Downtown activity beyond business hours.				
B.3.f	Partner with local breweries, artists, and cultural groups to animate the food cart site with pop-up performances, night markets, and themed gatherings.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
Downtown Design and Infill					
C.1	Establish Urban Design Corridors and updated design guidelines for Downtown.	City of Medford Planning Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medford Urban Renewal Agency (MURA) Downtown Medford Association 	Short-term (initiate within a year); with ongoing periodic reviews tied to DLCDC rulemaking updates and internal plan monitoring cycles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Downtown Zone Chapter adopted into the Medford Municipal Code (target: within 24 months) Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map amended to reflect new zone and CFA alignment (target: within 24 months) Urban Design Corridor framework mapped and published (target: with zoning update adoption) Design standards review completed every 3 years (target: documented revisions based on evaluation criteria) Compliance with DLCDC CFA regulations (due December 2025)
Actions					
C.1.a	Update and amend Medford Municipal Code to include the new Downtown Zone Chapter in place of the Central Business District (CBD) Overlay, including the new Downtown Zoning District with new Site and Building Design Standards and Urban Design Corridor framework.				
C.1.b	Amend the Medford Comprehensive Plan General Land Use Plan Map City Center (CC) designation to align with the new Downtown Zone, and to align with the City's Climate Friendly Area.				
C.1.c	Periodically revisit design standards for Downtown and refine as needed, ensuring Downtown land use requirements and design guidelines support ground-floor activity and transparency.				
C.1.d	Track and review Climate Friendly Area rulemaking and technical assistance materials from DLCDC, amending Downtown regulations as needed as CFA standards are further finalized and refined.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
C.2	Facilitate the development of Opportunity Sites (see Appendix C).	Medford Urban Renewal Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Medford Planning Department Chamber of Commerce Downtown Medford Association Rogue Valley Council of Governments 	Short- to Long-term (initiate feasibility work within 18-24 months; site acquisition and RFPs ongoing as funding permits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated market study and site feasibility assessments completed Number of revised or expanded incentive programs adopted Urban renewal funds allocated to strategic site acquisition Number of competitive RFPs issued and proposals received Marketing tools and feasibility packages created for opportunity sites
Actions					
C.2.a	Develop a thorough understanding of on-site conditions and update market demand studies around opportunity sites.				
C.2.b	Evaluate effectiveness of existing development incentives and funding Medford currently employs like the Housing Opportunity Fund, Multiple Unit Property Tax Exemption, and Medford City Council Community Initiative Fund and look for opportunities to align and expand (e.g., offering transferable “density credits”, better promoting the vertical housing development zone tax abatement, etc.) these programs and incentives.				
C.2.c	Use urban renewal funding to acquire vacant opportunity sites. Once acquired, leverage land ownership to attract housing and/or mixed-use development through a competitive development proposal process.				
C.2.d	Create an economic development program that provides marketing and development feasibility analysis for opportunity sites.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
C.3	Mobilize underutilized or absentee-owned properties.	City of Medford Planning Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medford Urban Renewal Agency • Downtown Medford Association • City of Medford Building Department • Chamber of Commerce 	Short-term (begin database and toolkit in year 1; incentive/enforcement exploration and implementation in years 2-3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown vacancy database created and maintained • Toolkit for property owners published and distributed • Incentive framework developed and adopted • Outreach conducted to owners of long-term vacant properties • Vacancy rate for Downtown commercial properties • Number of buildings brought back into active use
Actions					
C.3.a	Maintain a property database that tracks vacancies in Downtown.				
C.3.b	Explore creating an incentive framework for reducing vacancies including offering grants or loans for code, façade, or tenant improvements to bring vacant buildings back into active use, property tax reductions or deferrals for a set number of years if the property is rehabilitated and re-occupied, or temporary use permits to allow short-term business uses or community programming in vacant spaces.				
C.3.c	Explore creating a vacancy reduction enforcement program for buildings with long-term vacancy. As part of the program, conduct targeted outreach to owners with technical assistance and incentives opportunities.				
C.3.d	Facilitate connections between property owners and prospective developers or tenants.				
C.3.e	Develop a toolkit for property owners outlining code requirements, design standards, funding opportunities, and successful redevelopment case studies that highlight opportunities for investment and redevelopment.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
Experience Downtown					
D.1	Create safe, welcoming, and active streetscapes.	City of Medford Public Works Department and Planning Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medford Urban Renewal Agency Downtown Medford Association Local Utility Providers (for lighting upgrades) Property owners and developers 	Short-term (planting and lighting projects phased over 1-5 years; tree plan developed in year 1; property gap treatments ongoing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban tree canopy inventory and planting plan completed Number of new street trees planted Percentage increase in canopy coverage in priority Downtown corridors Linear feet of improved pedestrian-scale lighting installed Number of street-level gaps treated
Actions					
D.1.a	Increase street tree canopy along Downtown corridors by encouraging property owners to plant trees in front of their buildings.				
D.1.b	Develop an urban tree canopy inventory and planting plan that determines the species, health and progression plan for replacement. The planting plan should also include locations for new street trees and recommendations for diversifying the types of trees to reduce disease.				
D.1.c	Improve the street lighting system Downtown, filling gaps and replacing aging fixtures with pedestrian-scale and roadway lighting that create a safer nighttime environment.				
D.1.d	Work with building and property owners to eliminate or mitigate gaps, including screening for surface parking lots and vacant parcels. This could include infill development, landscaping, and /or programming.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
D.2	Program and activate public spaces Downtown.	City of Medford Parks, Recreation, and Facilities and Planning Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medford Urban Renewal Agency • Downtown Medford Association • Chamber of Commerce • Farmers Market and event producers, local artists and performers, venue operators, small business owners 	Short- to Mid-term (initiate planning in the short-term and implement projects in mid-term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown Arts and Culture Plan adopted • Art walk and history map launched • Number of community-led events hosted annually in Downtown public spaces • Linear feet of sidewalk and plaza space activated by businesses • Temporary use program launched for parking lots

Actions

D.2.a	Increase the organizational capacity and strength of partnerships by creating a Downtown Activation Team composed of event sponsors Downtown theater and events organizations, and other interested parties, to create a Downtown Activation Strategy.
D.2.b	Develop and implement a Downtown Arts and Culture Plan.
D.2.c	Create an art walk and downtown history map that also takes participants by existing businesses. Artwalk stops should include artist information and links to nearby businesses
D.2.d	Provide support for pop-up markets, block parties, and other community-driven events in public spaces.
D.2.e	Continue to encourage businesses to “spill out” into sidewalks, parklets, plazas and adjacent open spaces, provided an accessible walkway is maintained at all times.
D.2.f	Implement recommended improvements identified in the Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan for parks, paths, and trails Downtown.
D.2.g	Develop a program to use surface parking lots for active uses, programming, and events such as food trucks, vendors, and farmers markets.

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
D.3	Address public safety and cleanliness Downtown.	City of Medford City Manager's Office, Planning Department, Public Works, and Police Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rogue Valley Street Outreach Teams Medford Clean Sweep Program Medford Urban Renewal Agency Local nonprofits serving homelessness and mental health needs populations 	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and adoption of a Downtown cleanliness and safety response strategy Enhancement of Clean and Safe team or partnership with Clean Sweep Increased street outreach service capacity and frequency Improved communication channels and documented community engagement related to homelessness Downtown

Actions

D.3.a	Work interdepartmentally and with police and human services organizations to create a rapid response plan.
D.3.b	Support the expansion of street outreach services to provide consistent and compassionate engagement with people experiencing homelessness and mental health challenges.
D.3.c	Enhance communication strategies to foster community engagement and transparency in addressing homelessness Downtown.



#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
D.4	Integrate Bear Creek into Downtown. (BIG Move #1)	City of Medford Parks, Recreation and Facilities, Planning, and Public Works departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medford Urban Renewal Agency • Downtown Medford Association • Chamber of Commerce • Local environmental nonprofits • Developers and property owners along the creek corridor 	Mid-term to long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Bear Creek Master Plan and amend/update as needed • Development standards updated to require creek-facing orientation and public access • Investments completed in lighting, landscaping, seating, and signage along Bear Creek Greenway through Downtown • Clean and Safe-style maintenance program established and operating • Stormwater and environmental regulations updated • Number of creekfront activation projects developed with public access and amenities • Community participation levels in cleanup and stewardship programs

Actions

D.4.a	Develop a Downtown Bear Creek Master Plan that identifies a parallel route for the trail between Bear Creek and Riverside Avenue, identifies reconnection points to cross Bear Creek, recreation and open space features, and locations for future “water-oriented development.”
D.4.b	Establish development standards that require creek-facing orientation, public access features, and ecological design integration to guide new construction and renovations along the corridor.
D.4.c	Invest in lighting, landscaping, trail surfacing, seating, and interpretive signage to improve Bear Creek Greenway’s safety, usability, and character within the Downtown area.

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
D.4.d	Increase patrol visibility and implement a Downtown Clean and Safe-style program for ongoing maintenance, including trash removal, graffiti cleanup, and vegetation management.				
D.4.e	Align citywide plans (e.g., transportation, stormwater, parks) and integrate Bear Creek goals into the City's capital improvement planning to ensure sustained investment and interagency collaboration.				
D.4.f	Update stormwater and environmental regulations to enable native vegetation buffers, habitat enhancements, and sustainable infrastructure along the creek edge.				
D.4.g	Partner with developers and landowners to create outdoor plazas, cafes, and mixed-use projects that activate the creekfront while integrating trail extensions, stormwater features, and public art.				
D.4.h	Support programs that involve local businesses, volunteers, and nonprofits in planting, cleanup, and trail monitoring efforts to foster shared ownership and ecological care.				
D.4.i	Host events like art walks, nature days, and performances, and establish a Bear Creek Arts & Culture Trail to draw residents and visitors while celebrating the area's natural and creative identity.				



#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
D.5	Improve Downtown Gateways. (BIG MOVE #3)	City of Medford Planning and Public Works departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medford Urban Renewal Agency • Downtown Medford Association • Local arts organizations • Chamber of Commerce • Travel Medford • Local developers and property owners near gateway areas • Artists and public art programs 	Short- to Mid-term (Code updates and design guidelines within 1-3 years; phased installation and activation over 4-6 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated development code includes gateway design standards • Gateway locations and wayfinding elements identified and mapped within Downtown Plan boundary • Monument signs, public art, and lighting installations completed at major gateways • Number of gateway-adjacent projects incorporating coordinated design features

Actions

D.5.a	Incorporate consistent gateway and streetscape design elements, including materials, signage, lighting, and landscaping into the city's development code.
D.5.b	Further the City of Medford Wayfinding Plan by identifying gateway locations, district markers, wayfinding routes, and interpretive signage in the new Downtown Plan boundary to create a unified visual identity throughout Downtown.
D.5.c	Design and build monument signs, public art, or lighting installations at major access points (e.g., Riverside Ave at Bear Creek, Main and Central, and 8th Street west of the viaduct).
D.5.d	Incorporate landscaping, pedestrian-scale lighting, and integrated public art to create welcoming, walkable, and visually distinct entry points.
D.5.e	Encourage developers and businesses near gateway corridors to include design-aligned features, such as coordinated signage or enhanced façades, in their projects. Use these locations as platforms for seasonal banners, art installations, or a “Welcome to Downtown” campaign that highlights community pride and encourages exploration.

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
History, Art, and Culture					
E.1	Preserve the historic buildings and elements of Downtown.	City of Medford Planning Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medford Landmarks & Historic Preservation Commission Southern Oregon Historical Society State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Downtown Medford Association 	Short-term (incentives and inventory updates within 3-5 years; ongoing collaboration and project-specific support)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of historic buildings adaptively reused Number of streamlined permits issued for seismic and accessibility upgrades and seek funding opportunities for upgrades Expand recently updated Historic Resource Inventory based on new boundary Number of new buildings constructed that align with Downtown's historic scale and character
Actions					
E.1.a	Incentivize adaptive reuse of older structures that contribute to Downtown's historic character.				
E.1.b	Streamline permitting and review processes for seismic retrofits and modifications for accessibility to historic buildings.				
E.1.c	Collaborate with preservation organizations to provide technical support to property owners.				
E.1.d	Expand the Historic Resource Inventory to reflect current conditions and new downtown boundary.				
E.1.e	Encourage new buildings to reflect the scale, materials, and character of historic Downtown architecture without mimicking it.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
E.2	Foster placemaking and public art integration.	City of Medford Planning and Parks, Recreation and Facilities departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medford Arts Commission • Downtown Medford Association • Local arts and cultural organizations • Travel Medford • Chamber of Commerce 	Short- to Mid-term (branding/signage and tactical projects in 3-5 years; public art program and regulatory updates phased over 6-10 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of tactical urbanism projects completed • Number and geographic spread of new public art installations • Completion of Downtown Public Art Plan • Amendments to development code supporting public art and cultural spaces • Completion and visibility of Downtown branding and signage elements (e.g., gateway markers, interpretive signs, district names)
Actions					
E.2.a	Support tactical urbanism projects like parklets, pop-up plazas, and community-designed crosswalks throughout Downtown.				
E.2.b	Coordinate a Downtown public art program that commissions murals, sculptures, and installations by local and regional artists. This action also aligns with Art Walk recommendations and developing a Public Art Plan.				
E.2.c	Evaluate how the City's development regulations and permitting process can support cultural space and public art.				
E.2.d	Launch a branding and signage initiative that includes cohesive Downtown gateway elements, interpretive signage, and district identifiers.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
E.3	Activate the Evergreen History and Culture Corridor. (BIG Move #2)	City of Medford Planning Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Medford Association Local artists and cultural institutions Travel Medford Chamber of Commerce Medford Urban Renewal Agency Property owners and developers along Evergreen Rail corridor stakeholders (e.g., Rogue Valley Terminal Railroad) 	Short-term (pilot events and temporary uses in 1-2 years, conduct longer-term redevelopment planning and incentives in 3-5 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of façade/entrance improvements completed through the incentive program Square footage of parking converted to public use - Number of murals and interpretive signage installations completed Frequency and attendance of corridor-focused events Agreements or MOUs with rail-adjacent landowners for interim or long-term site use
Actions					
E.3.a	Launch an incentive program to support façade improvements, secondary entrances, and pop-up retail elements that create an active, pedestrian-friendly edge along the corridor.				
E.3.b	Convert select surface parking areas into flexible public spaces such as parklets, small plazas, or pop-up activity zones to increase community use and vibrancy.				
E.3.c	Install murals, sculptures, and interpretive signage that celebrate the corridor’s history and local identity, creating a visually engaging and culturally meaningful environment.				
E.3.d	Host regular events such as seasonal markets, street fairs, public art festivals, and a “Corridor Activation Series” to build awareness and increase foot traffic.				
E.3.e	Collaborate with rail-adjacent landowners to support interim uses (like food trucks or micro-kiosks) and plan for long-term redevelopment that aligns with Downtown revitalization goals.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
E.4	Create energy around the Holly Theatre. (BIG Move #4)	City of Medford Planning Department and Medford Urban Renewal Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holly Theatre Southern Oregon Historical Society Downtown Medford Association Local artists, vendors, and cultural organizations 	Short-term (pilot events and activation in 0-5 years) and mid-term (conduct longer-term redevelopment planning in 6-10 years or whenever development opportunity arises)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of events and temporary activations near the theatre Completion of streetscape and pedestrian improvements Number of community-led projects approved through simplified process Progress toward redevelopment or reuse of gravel lot Increase in foot traffic or visitor activity near the theatre
Actions					
E.4.a	Make short-term investments (e.g., paving, lighting, utilities) to support temporary uses such as food trucks, outdoor performances, and makers' markets that draw people to the area.				
E.4.b	Upgrade streetscapes around the Holly Theatre with enhanced lighting, sidewalks, wayfinding, and pedestrian connections to nearby attractions, improving safety and walkability.				
E.4.c	Simplify approvals for community-driven activations, such as art installations, events, or vendor markets, on underused sites near the theatre.				
E.4.d	Engage in public-private partnerships to transform the gravel lot into a mixed-use development with ground-floor activity and upper-story housing or hospitality aligned with the district's arts and culture identity.				
E.4.e	Partner with the Holly Theatre, Southern Oregon Historical Society, and local arts organizations to create a joint events calendar and branded activation series (e.g., "Holly Nights") that builds ongoing community engagement.				
E.4.f	Use the Holly Theatre as a cultural anchor to promote redevelopment nearby and encourage projects that contribute to a vibrant arts and entertainment corridor.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
Downtown Living					
F.1	Promote a mix of housing types, tenures, and affordability levels in Downtown Medford to support a vibrant, inclusive, and 18-hour downtown environment that meets the needs of residents at all life stages and income levels.	City of Medford Planning Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medford Urban Renewal Agency Affordable housing developers Private developers Jackson County Housing Authority 	Short- to Mid-term (1–10 years depending on land availability, regulatory updates, and partnerships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of new housing units built in Downtown, disaggregated by type and affordability level Number of city-owned sites activated for housing Use of SDC reductions or other incentives in qualifying projects Number of homeownership assistance recipients or new homeowners in Downtown Adoption of regulatory updates promoting and incentivizing housing diversity
Actions					
F.1.a	Encourage a diverse range of housing types, styles, and price points through a combination of land use regulation changes to ensure Downtown reflects the community.				
F.1.b	Activate publicly owned land for housing by identifying surplus or underutilized city-owned parcels in the Downtown area, issuing RFPs for housing developments aligned with city goals (e.g., affordability, sustainability), and prioritizing development on sites near services, jobs, and transit.				
F.1.c	Consider a reduction in system development charges (SDC) for affordable and lower-cost housing.				
F.1.d	Promote and support home ownership by establishing programs and an incentive framework working with community partners and other developers. Incentives could include a Homebuyer Opportunity Limited Tax Exemption while programs include down payment assistance or mortgage credit certificate programs.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
Future-Ready Infrastructure					
G.1	Conduct necessary public realm maintenance, enhancements, and infrastructure improvements so that Downtown is the premier example of a clean, safe, and welcoming experience.	City of Medford Public Works Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Medford Planning Department Medford Urban Renewal Agency Downtown Medford Association Local utility providers 	Ongoing, with specific projects phased in over the short-, mid-, and long-term (depending on scope and funding availability)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of maintenance projects completed annually (sidewalks, lighting, electrical boxes, tree wells) Adoption and enforcement of public realm maintenance standards Amount of capital funding allocated to Downtown infrastructure in annual budget Number of public infrastructure upgrades using energy-efficient or renewable systems Linear feet or square footage of green stormwater infrastructure installed Downtown
Actions					
G.1.a	Identify and inventory areas in need of maintenance and enhancement in the public realm, such as curbs, electrical boxes, lamp posts, lighting, electrical box covers, sidewalks and tree wells.				
G.1.b	Define maintenance and beautification standards.				
G.1.c	Advocate for regular infrastructure maintenance in the Downtown core and along Bear Creek during the City's annual budgeting process to implement bicycle and pedestrian-related projects.				
G.1.d	Explore undergrounding of overhead utilities in key corridors (e.g., high-priority pedestrian zones).				
G.1.e	Encourage the use of energy-efficient lighting and renewable energy sources for public facilities and infrastructure nodes to increase resiliency.				
G.1.f	Manage stormwater by using green stormwater infrastructure to treat water from impervious surfaces.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
G.2	Implement infrastructure improvements that support infill development and increased Downtown residency.	City of Medford Public Works Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Medford Planning Department Medford Urban Renewal Agency Local utility providers Private developers and landowners 	Short- to mid-term for infrastructure analysis and prioritization; implementation aligned with redevelopment timelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of infrastructure capacity analysis for infill sites Number of CIP projects aligned with redevelopment priorities Number of utility upgrade coordination meetings held annually Square footage or number of buildings receiving energy retrofit support Amount of TIF revenue allocated to infrastructure projects that enable new housing
Actions					
G.2.a	Conduct a comprehensive infrastructure capacity analysis focused on infill and redevelopment opportunity sites.				
G.2.b	Program necessary upgrades into the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to align with planned growth.				
G.2.c	Coordinate with private utility providers to align service upgrades with redevelopment timelines.				
G.2.d	Promote energy-efficient building retrofits in older structures through partnership programs and incentives.				
G.2.e	Use urban renewal to support infrastructure, including developing a set-aside share of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) revenue to support infrastructure development necessary for new housing.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
Multimodal Connectivity and Parking					
H.1	Plan multimodal connectivity improvements across the expanded Downtown boundary in coordination with transportation partners.	City of Medford Public Works Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Medford Planning Department • Medford Urban Renewal Agency • Rogue Valley Transportation District • ODOT • Property owners and developers 	Short-term (initiate planning in coordination with TSP update), mid- to long-term for implementation of connectivity improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of Downtown connectivity and access study • Number of multimodal gaps/barriers identified and prioritized for improvement • Updated transit route/service plan for Downtown in partnership with RVTD • Miles of sidewalk, bike lanes, or transit-supportive infrastructure improved or added Downtown
Actions					
H.1.a	Study Downtown connectivity and access, evaluating existing conditions and identifying gaps, barriers, and opportunities within the expanded Downtown boundary. This could be in conjunction with the Medford TSP update.				
H.1.b	Coordinate and time public investments and improvements with private development.				
H.1.c	Work with transit agencies and other transportation organizations to explore new or expanded transit routes connecting Downtown to other destinations.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
H.2	Enhance the efficiency, safety, and design of Downtown streets to support smooth vehicle circulation, reduce congestion, and create a balanced street environment that serves all users.	City of Medford Public Works Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Medford Planning Department • Medford Urban Renewal Agency • Rogue Valley Transportation District • ODOT • Property owners and developers 	Mid- to long-term (street transformations and major corridor projects will require additional design, funding, and community outreach)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miles of street reallocated to protected bike lanes, wider sidewalks, or other multimodal infrastructure • Number of driveways consolidated or redesigned • Completion of Riverside and Central Avenue improvements • Reduction in multimodal conflicts (bike/transit/vehicle)
Actions					
H.2.a	Transform streets by converting vehicle travel lanes to other uses in targeted locations such as high-quality bike facilities, expanded public spaces, and on-street parking.				
H.2.b	Explore opportunities for consolidation of driveway access in coordination with other access management improvements such as construction of raised medians to control for right-in/right-out driveways and left turn lanes for access onto cross streets where warranted and appropriate.				
H.2.c	Execute improvements on Riverside Avenue following further refinement, this could include widened sidewalks in the Downtown core, reduction to two vehicle travel lanes, one-way parking with a protected or buffered bike lane), and maintaining on-street parking.				
H.2.d	Execute Central Avenue improvements following further refinement, this could include a reduction to two vehicle travel lanes, construction of a one-way, separated bike lane, and driveway access management strategies.				
H.2.e	Construct floating bus islands to reduce conflict between people biking and transit vehicles where transit routes and bike lanes exist.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
H.3	Implement parking management strategies.	City of Medford Public Works Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Medford Planning Department Medford Urban Renewal Agency Downtown Medford Association Rogue Valley Transportation District 	Short- to mid-term (shared-use agreements can begin soon; full strategy follows staff refinement and City Council approval)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a parking management plan for Downtown. Number of shared parking agreements executed % utilization of existing parking inventory during peak times Reduction in perceived parking shortages (via user surveys) Number of Downtown visitors arriving via non-single occupancy vehicles (SOV) Decrease in parking violations and increase in voluntary compliance
Actions					
H.3a	Identify funding for major investments or expenditures related to developing, improving, or expanding parking infrastructure. This includes creating new parking facilities, renovating or expanding existing parking facilities, making technology upgrades, conducting infrastructure maintenance, making sustainability improvements, or enhancing accessibility.				
H.3b	Update the Medford Municipal Code to require developers to estimate parking demand and show how it will be accommodated on-site, or by applying a variety of other potential strategies, such as transportation demand management (TDM), shared parking, public-private partnerships, contributions to a public parking facility, or other similar measure.				
H.3.c	Maximize the efficiency of existing parking resources by encouraging shared use agreements between property owners, particularly those with lots where evening or event use would not conflict with normal hours like churches or offices, to support Downtown activity without requiring new construction. Consider monitoring shared parking agreements among various users to ensure a more efficient use of parking resources and long-term viability of the parking supply.				
H.3.d	Consider allowing parking to be shared among multiple users (i.e., a parking collaborative). This approach creates a unified parking network, allowing users to park in any facility within the collaborative area regardless of their specific destination.				
H.3.e	Consider focusing on developing public parking facilities rather than requiring private developers to construct private parking facilities. Allow developers to pay a fee-in-lieu to help fund public parking facilities and/or apply a special parking assessment or tax to businesses in an area to fund parking facilities.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
H.3.f	Add signage to communicate parking rules and make public parking easier to find. Install and/or upgrade existing parking information signs that clearly communicate regulatory information to the public, such enforcement days, hours, and the block face rule. Install wayfinding signs that direct motorists to City parking facilities. Include "Public Parking" signs at facility entrances to ensure accessibility and visibility.				
H.3.g	Provide a payment system that is easy to understand, convenient, quick to use, accepts a variety of payment methods, and allows users to pay for just the amount of parking they use.				
H.3.h	Modify time limits in areas with restaurants, shopping, or nightlife activities where longer time stays enhance the visitor experience.				
H.3.i	Restrict large vehicles, such as RVs, freight trucks, or trailers, from parking in areas where they may obstruct sightlines or create hazards for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. Restrictions may be concentrated near intersections to ensure clear sight distances and enhance safety for all road users.				
H.3.j	Explore restricting parking near crosswalks, intersections, and transit stops to improve visibility and safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.				
H.3.k	Establish a consistent, routine system for monitoring and evaluating parking management performance to help the City and local stakeholders make informed decisions, track success, and adapt policies over time.				
H.4	Make Downtown Medford safe and convenient for getting around on foot.	City of Medford Public Works Department and Planning Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medford Urban Renewal Agency • ODOT • Downtown Medford Association • Property owners and developers 	Short- to long-term (studies and initial improvements can start soon; larger infrastructure projects may follow over multiple years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved public perception of pedestrian safety and comfort • Reduced pedestrian crashes and injuries at key locations • Installation of new or improved crossings and sidewalks • New mid-block crossings, refuge islands, and signalized intersections • Increased placemaking features (e.g., lighting, art, greenery) along walking routes
Actions					
H.4.a	Identify major pedestrian barriers Downtown through further study (gaps in sidewalk access, unsafe streets, inactive or unimproved alleys).				
H.4.b	Make pedestrian street crossing improvements, determining the appropriate level of enhancements and placemaking based on location, street capacity, urban design corridor classification, and needed pedestrian crash countermeasures.				
H.4.c	Address connectivity barriers created by larger blocks or highway infrastructure through pedestrian enhancements (mid-block crossings, refuge islands, signalized intersection), identification of opportunities for new street or pathway connections in areas with large block sizes or disconnected grids, and collaboration with ODOT along state highway corridors through Downtown.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
H.5	Create a connected, safe, and user-friendly bicycle network in Downtown.	City of Medford Public Works Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Medford Planning Department ODOT Downtown Medford Association 	Short- to long-term (studies and initial improvements can start soon; larger infrastructure projects may follow over multiple years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in pedestrian-related crashes and injuries Downtown Increased pedestrian counts on improved corridors Closure of identified sidewalk and alley gaps
Actions					
H.5.a	Identify and fill key gaps in the Downtown bike network, prioritizing connections to major destinations like parks, transit hubs, and commercial corridors.				
H.5.b	Implement protected bike lanes on high-traffic corridors where feasible.				
H.5.c	Improve bike parking and end-of-trip facilities by installing secure, visible bike racks and exploring opportunities for covered bike shelters with lockers, tools, and charging for e-bikes at key destinations including public buildings, event venues, and retail areas.				
H.5.d	Enhance intersection safety for cyclists by adding bike boxes and high-visibility crossings at busy intersections and using green bike lanes, buffered zones, and signal timing adjustments to reduce conflicts between bikes and vehicles.				
H.5.e	Add bikes to Downtown wayfinding systems, including signage indicating distances and routes to key destinations.				
H.5.g	Require secure bike parking and access facilities in new Downtown developments and encourage integration of bike access into site plans, particularly for mixed-use and residential projects.				

#	Strategy Category & Actions	Lead	Support & Potential Partners	Timing	Measures of Success
H.6	Activate the Alley network. (BIG Move #6)	City of Medford Planning and Public Works departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Medford Association Adjacent property owners and businesses Local arts organizations and artists 	Short- to mid-term with phased pilot and demonstrations projects followed by broader alley improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of alleys upgraded and activated Increased pedestrian activity in improved alleys Number and diversity of alley-based events held annually
Actions					
H.6.a	Create standards for paving, lighting, stormwater management, and safety that support safe, attractive, and functional alley environments across Downtown.				
H.6.b	Generally, protect use of alleys for service access and improve certain alleys as pedestrian spaces, where improvements add to connections and active spaces Downtown.				
H.6.c	Invest in demonstration projects that feature upgrades like decorative paving, artistic lighting, murals, and public seating to showcase alley transformation potential Consider Theater Alley next to the Collier Theater and alleys west of Pear Blossom Park as priority locations.				
H.6.d	Partner with adjacent property owners to add secondary entrances, patios, vendor stalls, or signage that turn alleys into active frontages, especially near high-traffic areas.				
H.6.e	Evaluate and promote rear-loading access for residential lots with alley frontage, prioritizing locations where alley upgrades support both vehicle access and enhanced pedestrian use.				
H.6.f	Work with local artists and arts organizations to curate murals and installations in select alleys, turning them into walkable outdoor galleries that reflect Medford's creative culture.				
H.6.g	Host seasonal or rotating events in alleys such as pop-up markets, food trucks, performances, or temporary exhibitions to attract foot traffic and create unique experiences.				

MOVING FORWARD

This Plan reflects a collective vision shaped through extensive collaboration among the Project Advisory Committee, City staff, and a broad spectrum of community members whose insights and dedication have been invaluable throughout the planning process.

Recognizing the evolving nature of Downtown and the broader context in which it exists, the Downtown Plan is designed as a living document. It provides a flexible yet focused framework to guide Medford's downtown transformation while remaining adaptable to new challenges, emerging trends, and community priorities. As implementation unfolds, continued engagement, evaluation, and refinement will be essential to realizing the Plan's goals of expanding housing choices, supporting business vitality, enhancing multimodal connectivity, and fostering a vibrant, welcoming sense of place uniquely Medford's own.

This shared roadmap positions Downtown Medford to evolve thoughtfully and resiliently over the coming decades, ensuring it remains a vibrant heart of the city for residents, businesses, and visitors alike.

