



Planning Commission
May 29, 2024 - 6:00 PM
233 South Main Street, Monroe, Ohio

Call to Order

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes

- Meeting minutes from March 19, 2024 meeting

Old Business

New Business

- Downtown Master Plan

Administrative Reports

Adjournment



**Planning Commission Minutes
March 19, 2024
233 South Main Street, Monroe, Ohio**

Call to Order

Mr. Kirkpatrick, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Roll Call

Planning Commission members present: David Kirkpatrick, Christina McElfresh, Debbie Hagedorn and Andrew Hall.

Planning Commission members absent: Matt Frye

Staff members present: Tom Smith, Development Director; Kameryn Jones, Assistant Development Director; Jameson Cole, Planner; Michelle Layman, Planning and Zoning Specialist

Mrs. McElfresh moved to excuse Mr. Frye from tonight's meeting. Mrs. Hagedorn seconded. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes

None.

Old Business

None.

New Business

PC Chair introduces Case No. 2024-3-3- Consideration of a final Planned Unit Development (PUD) for Millan Farm (Stonybrook Subdivision).

Mr. Cole presented the background as follows:

- Grand Communities LLC has submitted an application for a Final Planned Unit Development (PUD) Plan regarding a proposed residential development on property located at the corner of Kyles Station Road and Butler Warren Road.
- The applicant proposes a 219-unit single-family development.
- The site is approximately 127 acres, currently zoned R-2 Single Family Residential PUD



Mr. Cole reviewed the aerial plat of the location and photos of the proposed PUD location.

Mr. Cole presented the review criteria as follows:

It shall be the duty of the Planning Commission and City Council to investigate and determine that the proposed PUD plan complies with the following conditions:

The PUD plan is consistent with the intent and purpose of the Comprehensive Plan;

The PUD Plan is consistent with the comprehensive plan goals with respect to housing types being provided, pedestrian connectivity, density, and growth. The proposed subdivision includes a 10-ft multiuse path running along the exterior of the site along Kyle Station Road and Butler Warren Road; stubs into the neighborhood along Stonybrook Way and Brookside Place, and connects to the interior sidewalk at Brookfield Lane.

The Future Land Use Map designates this site as a Large Lot Residential zone intended for single-family housing development of varying sizes with a maximum density of 2 units per acre. At the request of the Planning Commission at the April 18, 2023, Planning Commission meeting, the applicant revised the overall density of this project to meet the required base code of 2.0 units per acre with a density of lots at 3.848 units per acre.

The plan is in compliance with the standards of this chapter;

The plan complies with this chapter's standards. Staff would like to note that although no lots have been created or taken away, some of the lots frontage have changed slightly, and some lots are larger or smaller than those of the Preliminary PUD Plan.

The plans are in compliance with the other applicable standards of this code, including but not limited to, architectural standards, off-street parking, signage, and landscaping; and

The plans comply with all applicable standards of this code and those created by the R-2 Single Family Residential PUD. Staff will note that the landscape, as part of this plan, is related to the amenities plan, and the additional landscaping, including the street trees plan, will be approved during the plating.

The property adjacent to the area included in the plan will not be adversely affected.

Staff has no reason to believe that properties adjacent to this project will be adversely affected. Throughout this process, there have been talks and communication with the adjacent property owner to the north, identified by the Butler County Auditor as parcel ID: D7000011000001. This property is zoned L-1 Light Industrial and is currently undeveloped. It is noted that if, and when, this parcel does develop, and is of L-1 Light Industrial use or of a greater intensity, the use of this site will be required to create a 200-ft buffer yard between the Stonybrook subdivision

The property adjacent to the area included in the plan will not be adversely affected.

Staff has no reason to believe that properties adjacent to this project will be adversely affected. Throughout this process, there have been talks and communication with the adjacent property owner to the north, identified by the Butler County Auditor as parcel ID: D7000011000001. This property is zoned L-1 Light Industrial and is currently



undeveloped. It is noted that if, and when, this parcel does develop, and is of L-1 Light Industrial use or of a greater intensity, the use of this site will be required to create a 200-ft buffer yard between the Stonybrook subdivision

Mr. Cole reviewed staff comments as follows:

- The Zoning Map Amendment and Preliminary Planned Unit Development Plan for Stonybrook were approved by Planning Commission in April 2023.
- The Preliminary PUD Plan provided the design and layout for the Stonybrook subdivision. The approved Preliminary PUD Plan included the following:
 - 219 total single-family lots with the following housing types:
 - Designer – 65' lot width
 - Patio – 65' lot width
 - Masterpiece – 80' lot width
 - New public streets (proposed as Stonybrook Way, Streamside Drive, Clearview Court, Brookfield Lane, Rippling Way, Brookside Place, and Waterbend Court)
 - 48.8 acres of open space
 - 6.35 acres of formal open space
 - A neighborhood park
 - 10' walk path

Mr. Cole reviewed the department comments as follows:

- Fire Department:
 - There must be a secondary or emergency access point after the 30th lot is constructed.
- Police Department:
 - No Comments
- Public Works Department:
 - The pathway and all associated landscaping along Kyle Station Road from the entrance to Stonybrook Way to I-75 will need to be moved outside of the water main easement.

Engineering review is ongoing.

Mr. Cole stated the staff recommendation as follows:

- Staff recommends that Planning Commission approve the Final Planned Unit Development Plan with the following conditions:
 - There must be a secondary or emergency access point after the 30th lot is constructed.
 - The multi-use pathway and associated landscaping along Kyle Station Road from the entrance to Stonybrook Way to I-75 will need to be moved outside of the water main easement.
 - All engineering comments be addressed.
 - All other staff comments be addressed.



Digital files compatible with City GIS be submitted.

Mrs. McElfresh asked if the buffer standard given in the report is under the old code or new code. Mrs. Jones stated this is under the old code but that it hasn't changed in the new code.

Mr. Kirkpatrick brought up the fact that the street names Brookfield and Brookside are very similar names which could cause issues for police and fire. Mrs. Jones stated street naming is reviewed in the final platting process. No issues with the names have been brought to the city's attention.

Mrs. Hagedorn asked if there was an emergency exit plan. Mr. Cole stated there is not. He also stated in the first phase of construction there will be 103 homes constructed which will not reach the second access point.

Mr. Hall asked if there was a plan for the open space that is shown. Mr. Cole stated that there will be a park and walking path and that the remainder will maintain the existing creek and greenery in that area.

Mrs. Hagedorn moved to approve Case No. 2024-3-3- Consideration of a final Planned Unit Development plan for Millan Farm (Stonybrook Subdivision) with the following conditions:

1. There must be a secondary or emergency access point after the 30th lot is constructed.
2. The multi-use pathway and associated landscaping along Kyle Station Road from the entrance to Stonybrook way to I-75 will need to be moved outside of the water easement.
3. All engineering comments be addressed.
4. All other staff comments be addressed.
5. Digital files compatible with City GIS be submitted.

Seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Roll call vote. 4 ayes. Motion carried.

Adjournment

Mrs. McElfresh moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mrs. Hagedorn. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Planning Commission meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle Layman
Planning and Zoning Specialist

Planning Commission
May 29, 2024 - 6:00 PM
233 South Main Street, Monroe, Ohio

Within the Advance Monroe 2040 Comprehensive Plan there are three key focus areas. Two of the three focus areas are included within the Downtown Master Plan (DMP). They include: 1) the need for a Downtown Plan; and 2) a design strategy for the Duke Area Substation. On April 10, 2023, the City issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to prepare a DMP. Eleven land use planning and architecture firms responded with their qualifications and planned approach to public engagement, public amenities, and guidance for future development and redevelopment. From those eleven firms, five were selected for an interview. The interviewing panel consisting of staff and members of the Historic Preservation Commission interviewed the five firms and selected KZF Design to prepare and create the DMP.

In September 2023, a Downtown Steering Committee was formed to obtain citizen input and assist KZF Design with direction, planning, and guidance for the DMP. A major function of this planning process was public engagement and stakeholder involvement. The Steering Committee and KZF Design held four open house meetings to solicit public input, present status updates, and introduce proposals for the plan. The open house meetings were held on:

1. October 19, 2023, at City Hall;
2. October 30, 2023, at The Monroe Lending Library;
3. February 19, 2024, at Monroe High School; and
4. March 11, 2024, at City Hall.

On April 29, 2023, KZF Design presented the final version of the DMP to the Downtown Steering Committee. The Downtown Steering Committee, in a vote of 5-1 moved to recommend the DMP to City Council for adoption.

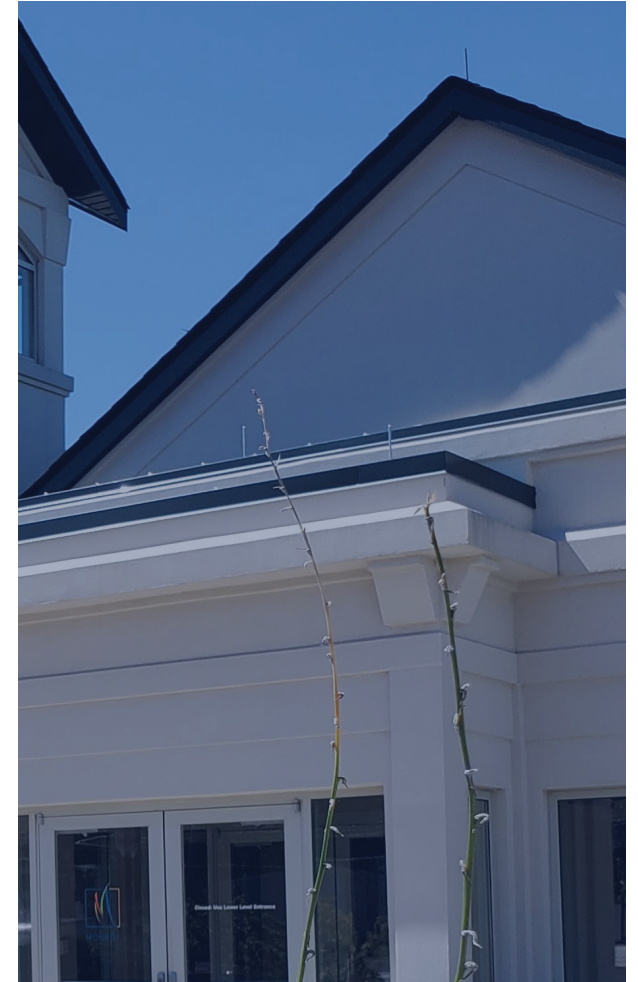
The Downtown District is mostly comprised of commercial and residential uses with larger parcels on the east and west sides owned by religious and educational institutions. The Downtown area is poised for opportunities in development and redevelopment, primarily in the areas of housing, retail, entertainment, and recreation sectors. With these types of development comes challenges including parking, pedestrian access, and traffic management. The DMP reviews methods to address those challenges and also discusses potential build out for future development opportunities. The DMP notes that the plan's guiding principles are to create an active family-friendly downtown that embraces Monroe's small-town character, encourages a diverse mix of uses to make it a destination for people and businesses, to provide safe and functional pedestrian access, and to promote economic vitality.

The DMP divides its recommendations for implementation into four categories:

1. Transportation. Improve multi-modal connectivity and safety.

2. Development. Expand dining, shopping, living, and entertainment.
3. Public Realm/Space. Provide Unique gathering spaces, amenities, public facilities, and programming events.
4. Identity/Form. Brand Downtown Monroe
5. Development Strategies. Identifies funding opportunities, such as commercial development incentives and recognize the responsibilities of both private and public sector involvement.
6. Zoning Code Recommendations. Create a Downtown Overlay District that will promote and sustain the goals and objectives of the DMP.

It is crucial that the Planning Commission become familiar with the plan, know what its goals are related to housing types and mixed-use development as well as connectivity, and recreation. As Monroe continues to grow, the next area anticipated for development and redevelopment will very likely be the Downtown area and those larger scale plans will be brought before the PC for review, recommendation, or approval.



WORKING DRAFT

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

CITY OF MONROE

SPRING 2024

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CITY OF MONROE, OHIO

Tom Smith, Director of Development

Kameryn Jones, Assistant Development Director

Jameson Cole, Planner

Jennifer Patterson, Assistant to the City Manager / Economic Development

Kacey Waggaman, Assistant City Manager

Gary Morton, Director of Public Works

Constance Kepner, Civil Engineer

Paul Goodhue, City Engineer

Brian Curtis, Police Captain

Matt Grubbs, Assistant Chief Operations

Kelly Wright, GIS Analyst

STEERING COMMITTEE

Historic Preservation Commission

Anna Hal, Vice Chair and Monroe Historical Society

Danielle Johnson, Chair

Patricia Lovell, Resident

Charles Schied, Resident

Tracy Mitchell, Downtown Business Owner

Candice Smith, Downtown Business Owner

Kathy Smith, Ad-Hoc Non-Voting Member

Scot Koenig, Ad-Hoc Non-Voting Member & Local Business Owner

Planning Commission

Matt Frye, Resident

City Council

Ben Wagner, Council Member & Downtown Resident

School Board

Tom Leeds, Resident

STEERING COMMITTEE (CONT.)

Other

Matt & Nick Rupel, Downtown Property Owners

CONSULTANT TEAM



Lynn Zuch, Project Manager

Abby Stainfield, Planner

Clete Benken, Landscape Architect



Libby Esterle, Project Manager

Erika Turan, Senior Account Executive

Mimi Rasor, President



Jon Martens, Senior Consultant

THANK YOU to the many residents and business owners of the City of Monroe who provided valuable feedback and insights throughout this project!

Your attendance and input provided at events and online greatly contributed to the development of your final Downtown Master Plan.



MONROE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

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SECTION 1: **INTRODUCTION**

ABOUT THIS PLAN

PLANNING APPROACH

PLANNING PROCESS & SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTION ABOUT THIS PLAN



Monroe is an economically diverse community with small town charm focused on quality growth and development, family centered amenities, and creating a vibrant quality of life for all.

BACKGROUND

The Advance Monroe 2040 Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2020. The City is in the process of implementing the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. A top priority of the plan was to reinvigorate the downtown area.

The Comprehensive Plan's goal for downtown is to create an environment for people to enjoy being downtown for living, shopping, dining, entertainment, recreation, and work opportunities that establishes Monroe as a complete community.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR DOWNTOWN:

1. **Revitalize Downtown:** Make it a vibrant city center, showcasing community identity and attracting investment.
2. **Economic Diversification:** Diversify the economy, to support local businesses, build resilience, and promote equity.
3. **Walkable & Cultural:** A walkable downtown attracts talent, new businesses, and offers cultural opportunities.
4. **Improved Accessibility:** Expand the street grid, sidewalks, and bike routes to improve accessibility.
5. **Streetscape Renovation:** Renovate streetscapes and buildings to enhance visual appeal and attract investments from locals and visitors.
6. **Career Education Hub:** Offer resources for career education and training to benefit the local talent pool.

INTRODUCTION ABOUT THIS PLAN (CONT.)

PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of the Downtown Master Plan is to create a vision for Downtown Monroe. The plan will serve as the guiding document for anticipated growth, development and revitalization of the Downtown area and will act as a framework for future ordinances and initiatives, including coordinated strategies to help reinvigorate the Downtown area.

WHY IS A DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN IMPORTANT?

The Butler and Warren County region is growing with significant development occurring along the I-75 corridor. Development will come to the downtown area. It is important to have a plan to ensure future development is done thoughtfully and will meet the community's needs.

A downtown master plan focuses on how the elements of the public realm can be built and arranged to create a positive experience for everyone. Planning decisions can affect economic resiliency, prosperity, quality of life, safety, social equity, accessibility and more. Everything from the heights and shapes of buildings to the placement of benches on sidewalks are important considerations for creating a downtown centered around public life for everyone to enjoy.

WHAT DOES A DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN DO?

- » **CREATES A VISION FOR DOWNTOWN**
- » **DEFINES THE COMMUNITY'S PREFERRED CHARACTER AND SCALE FOR AREAS WITHIN DOWNTOWN**
- » **IDENTIFIES PRIORITIES FOR PUBLIC SPACES AND AMENITIES**
- » **HELPS GUIDE DEVELOPMENT IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA**
- » **PROVIDES TOOLS TO HELP IMPLEMENT THE COMMUNITY'S VISION**
- » **CONSIDERS:**
 - Civic Improvement Projects
 - Zoning
 - Pedestrian And Vehicular Safety And Connectivity
 - Activating The Public Realm
 - Economic Development
 - Funding Opportunities
 - Partnerships



INTRODUCTION

PLANNING APPROACH

WHO WAS INVOLVED?

CORE PLANNING TEAM

A core planning team from the Development Department was involved throughout all stages of the project. This included weekly meetings with the consultant KZF Design, committee meetings, and community engagement meetings.

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

A technical committee was formed that included key city personnel from the City Managers Office, Development Department including planning, Public Works, Fire and EMS and Police. The technical committee participated in weekly meetings throughout the project and participated in working sessions at each stage of the project to provide input and confirm overall approach and direction of the master plan.

STEERING COMMITTEE

A steering committee was formed that included stakeholder representatives for residents, the school district, businesses, religious institutions, and the historical society. The steering committee and participated in working sessions at each stage of the project to provide input and confirm overall approach and direction of the master plan.

DOWNTOWN BUSINESS OWNERS

A working session with downtown business owners was held to review the findings from the first public open house, discuss their current situation and needs, and vision for downtown development.

RESIDENT FORUM

A working session with downtown residents was held to discuss the initial downtown master plan recommendations. The meeting resulted in adjusting the approach for use and density in the historic residential area of downtown.

LARGE PROPERTY OWNERS

Individual meetings were held with owners of the larger properties in downtown to discuss the master plan recommendations and to receive their input on what future development could look like on their property. The owners provided input and an overview of their future plans. The owners also gave consent to share test development concepts of their area(s) to show the potential of the master plan recommendations.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Two public open houses were held during the project. A website was also created to provide project information, share open house presentation materials and provide opportunities for comments through interactive online surveys and mapping tools. *Section 4 provides a summary of the public engagement process.*

PLANNING APPROACH

VISIONING SESSION

A visioning session was held early in the planning process with all core working groups to establish a shared vision, align expectations, and guide decision-making.

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

This preliminary public meeting was important to not only introduce the project to the community, but to hear what is important to them in the Downtown area and what they would like to see happen in the future.

NEIGHBORHOOD AUDIT AND ASSESSMENT

The team conducted a visual assessment of the neighborhood to look at infrastructure, roadways, streetscapes, and facilities to help inform the development of the Master Plan.

PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN CONCEPTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

After collecting and analyzing all existing data and public input, a preliminary master plan approach and recommendations was developed.

DRAFT MASTER PLAN

Working sessions were held together with the project committees to review the preliminary approach and recommendations to the Downtown Master Plan.

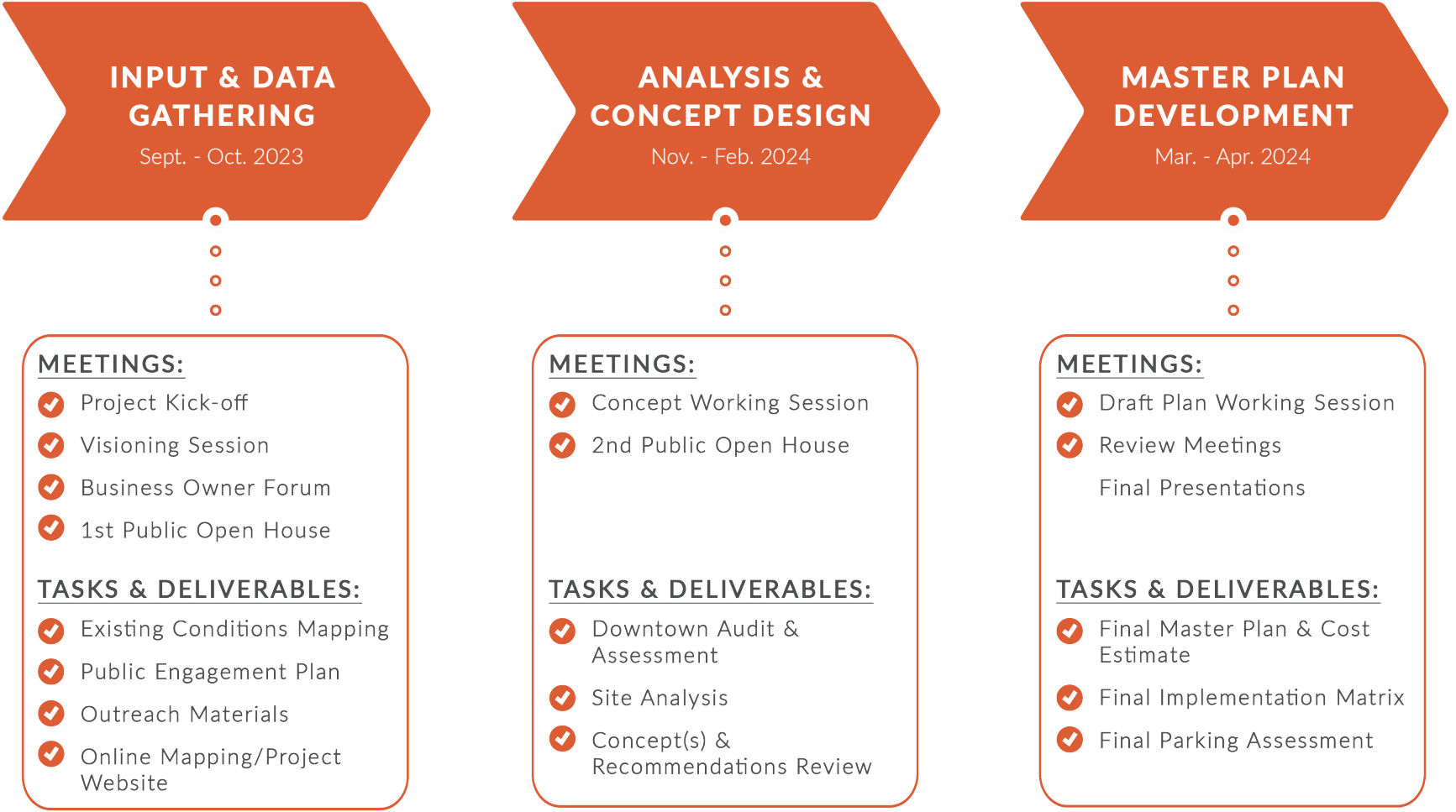
A second Public Open House was then held to provide the community with an update on project progress and give them a chance to review and provide feedback on the draft Downtown Master Plan approach and recommendations.

FINAL MASTER PLAN

Based on committee and stakeholder engagement input a final master plan was developed.

INTRODUCTION

PLANNING PROCESS & SCHEDULE





SECTION 2:
**UNDERSTANDING
DOWNTOWN**

HISTORY
RELEVANT PLANS

UNDERSTANDING DOWNTOWN HISTORY



*Monroe, Ohio
Circa 1910*



CITY OF MONROE

The City of Monroe, Ohio was founded in 1817 and is centrally located between Cincinnati, Ohio and Dayton, Ohio along Interstate 75. The City spans an eastern section of Butler County and a western portion of Warren County. Through the early 2000s, the city experienced dramatic growth, increasing its population by approximately 75% between 2000 and 2010. Monroe has continued to grow at a more moderate pace in recent years, with an estimated population of 14,200 with a median age of 36 and an annual household income of \$90,952 according to 2020 Census figures.

Monroe is home to industrial operations such as UGN, the Home Depot Rapid Deployment Center, Walmart Fulfillment Centers, Worthington Steel, Serta Simmons Bedding, and Deceuninck North America. Commercially, the City has an eclectic mix of retail options anchored by the Cincinnati Premium Outlets at the I-75 interchange and supported by primarily strip center development in the surrounding area.

In 1969, Monroe was hit by a tornado which went through the downtown damaging many structures that had been around for generations. Some buildings were rebuilt, but the downtown never returned to its original state. **The City would like to revitalize the downtown area to be the center of the community again.**

◀ ALL HISTORICAL PHOTOS SHOWN HAVE BEEN OBTAINED FROM THE MONROE HISTORICAL SOCIETY FACEBOOK PAGE.

UNDERSTANDING DOWNTOWN RELEVANT PLANS

The City of Monroe has engaged in various recent planning efforts to evaluate and improve diverse aspects of the city's services and areas. These initiatives play a prominent role in shaping the Monroe in the long-term. They each provide insight within their study area and recommended strategies to help the City realize it's full potential.

ADVANCE MONROE 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

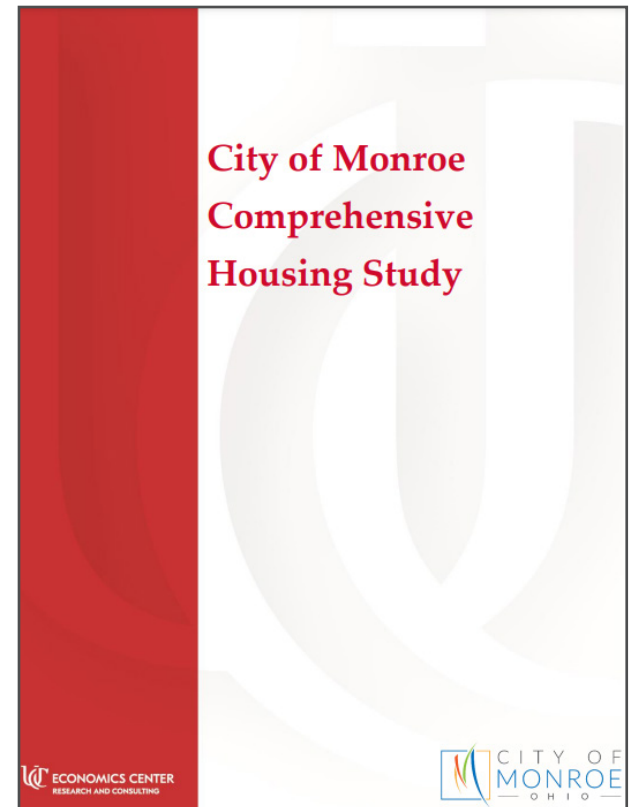
In 2021, the City of Monroe updated their Comprehensive Plan. Advance Monroe 2040 articulates the long-term vision of Monroe residents, businesses, and institutions. The Plan provides policies that reinforce this collective vision by directing future development to strengthen the City and create exceptional places for its people address land use management, economic growth, transportation and infrastructure, parks and recreation, and city facilities. The planning process relied on public input and regular guidance from city staff and the Steering Committee. The Monroe Downtown Master Plan is one of the next steps in implementing the recommendations called for in Comprehensive Plan.

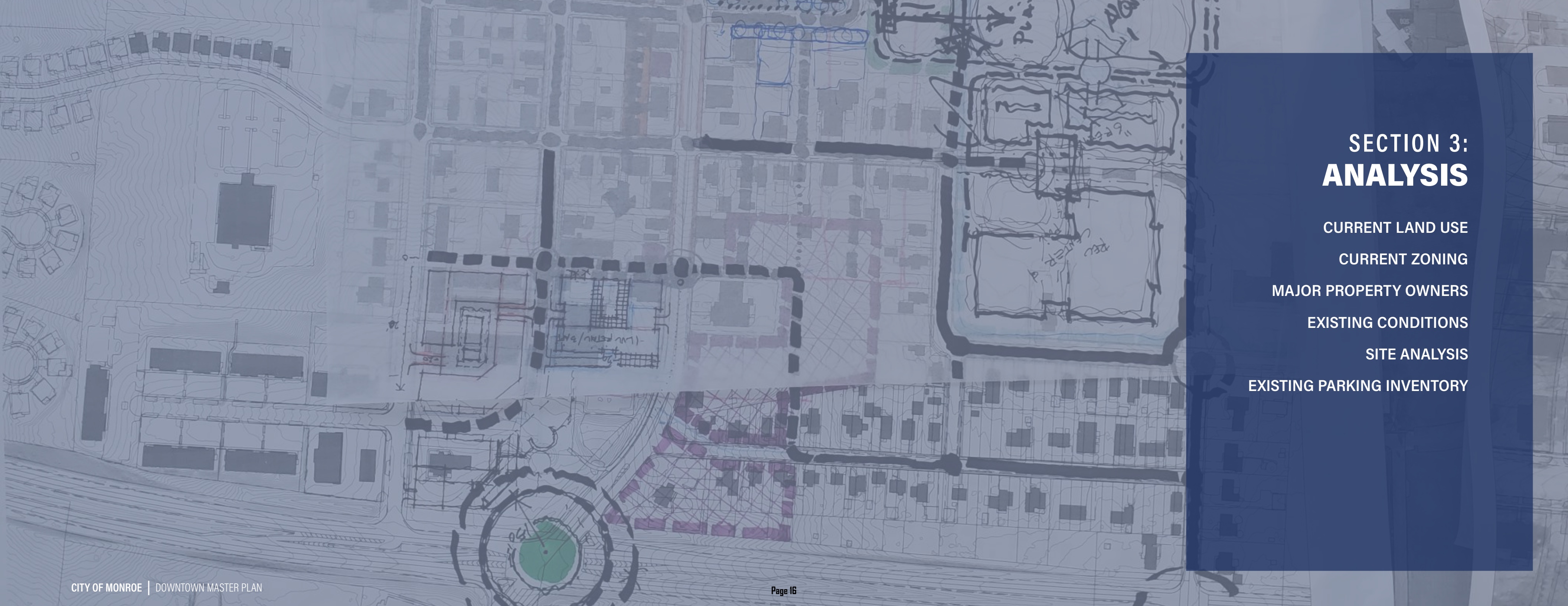
that will help guide the creation of inclusive and sustainable housing policies, promoting downtown revitalization, and fostering a vibrant and diverse community.

2023 ZONING CODE UPDATE

In 2023, the City began the process of updating the Monroe Planning and Zoning Code. As a next step to the Advance Monroe 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the objective of this code update will be to align with many of the goals and recommendations of the comprehensive plan while improving functionality, modernizing, and developing regulatory solutions specifically tailored to our community. Public participation and stakeholder engagement is also a critical part of this process.

A zoning code update is essential for aligning development regulations with the goals and vision outlined in the Downtown Master Plan. It ensures that zoning regulations are current, flexible, and supportive of desired land uses, density, and design standards, fostering coherent and sustainable development within the Downtown area. Additionally, a zoning code update streamlines the development process, encourages investment, and enhances predictability for developers, ultimately promoting economic growth and vitality in the downtown district.





SECTION 3: **ANALYSIS**

CURRENT LAND USE

CURRENT ZONING

MAJOR PROPERTY OWNERS

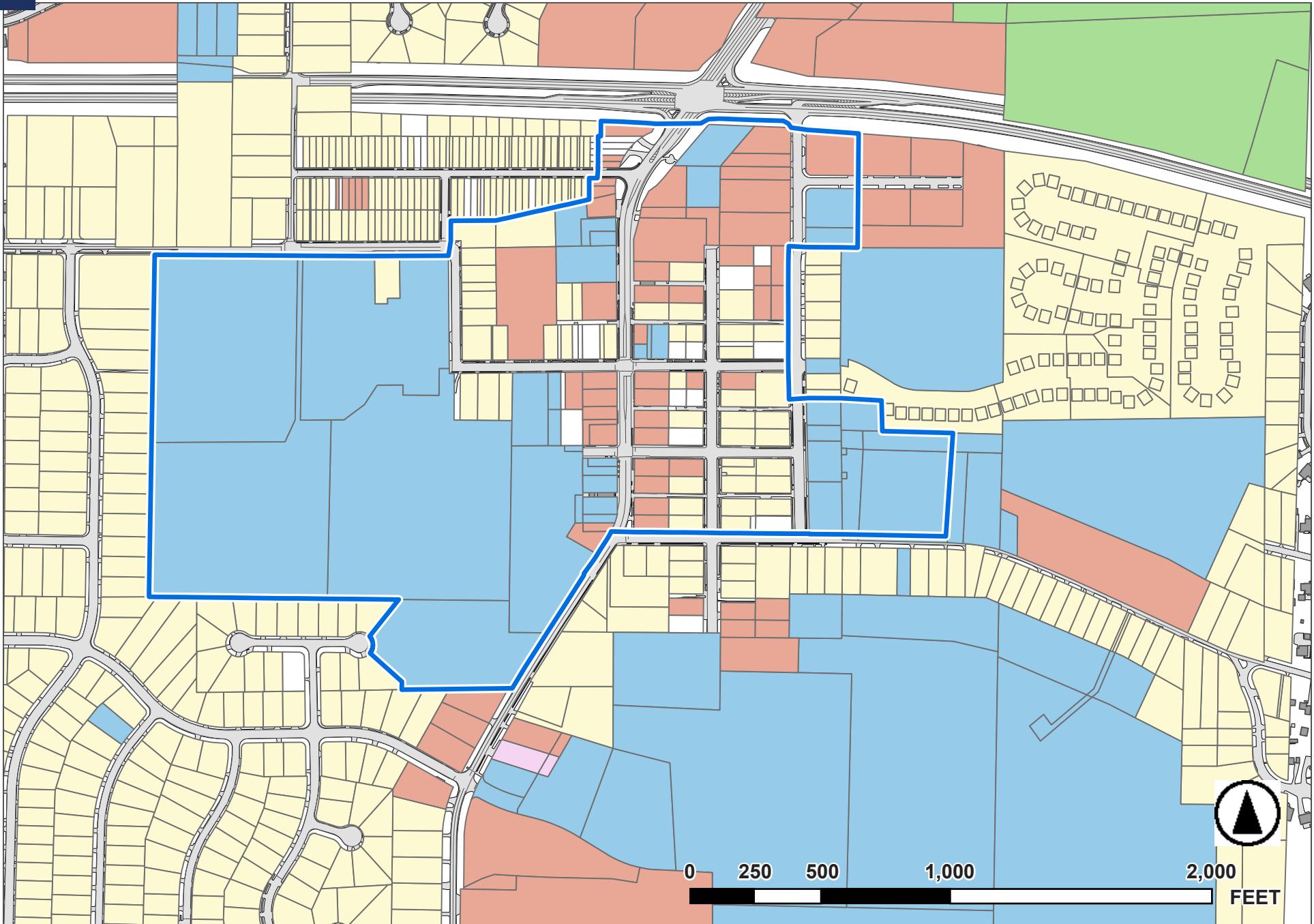
EXISTING CONDITIONS

SITE ANALYSIS

EXISTING PARKING INVENTORY

ANALYSIS

CURRENT LAND USE



LEGEND

- EXEMPT

Includes: city-owned property, school property, and churches.
57.3 Acres*
- COMMERCIAL

Includes: shopping centers, restaurants, banks, apartments, automotive services.
13.4 Acres*
- RESIDENTIAL

Includes: single-, two-, and three-family, condominiums, and mobile homes.
10.6 Acres*
- AGRICULTURE

Includes: farmland, nurseries, greenhouses, and forested land.
0 Acres*
- INDUSTRIAL

Includes: manufacturing, process, and assembly facilities and associated warehouses
2.4 Acres*
- N/A

No information was available in GIS.
- C-3 DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

93 ACRES*

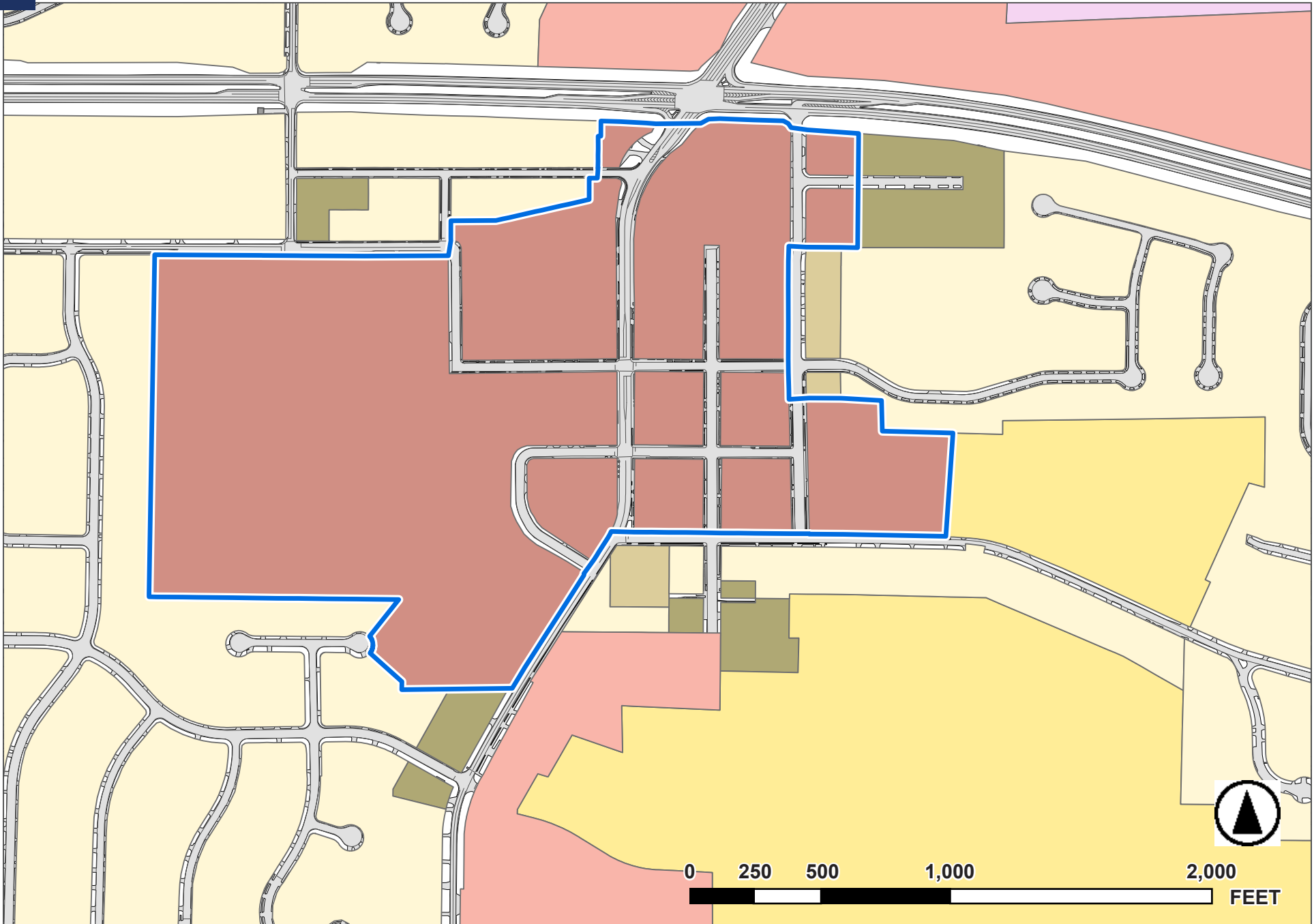
*APPROXIMATE ACREAGE WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT BOUNDARY

KEY POINTS

- Downtown Monroe is mostly comprised of commercial and residential uses with larger parcels on the east and west sides of downtown owned by institutions.
- The city-owned properties provide an opportunity to create public spaces and new development that enhances the downtown area.

ANALYSIS

CURRENT ZONING



LEGEND

C-3 DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

Provide an area that will contain high density and high intensity commercial, cultural, financial, mixed use, and civic uses serving the entire community that is centrally located in the downtown area of Monroe. Not to be encroached upon by other commercial, industrial, or residential uses that are not compatible in scale or character with other businesses and structure in this district.

C-2 GENERAL COMMERCIAL

Provide areas for business uses catering primarily to major roadway associated demands. Not to be encroached upon by residential, other commercial or industrial uses which are not compatible with the existing and future retail businesses located within this district.

R-1 SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL INFILL

Maintain and protect previously established areas of moderate density single-family residential development. Allow for infill development that retains the same general character and quality of housing in the surrounding neighborhood.

R-2 SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Create areas that are exclusively reserved for single-family residential developments. Intended to ensure future residential development of the same general character of the most recent quality of housing in the City.

R-3 TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Create areas where two family residential uses can be accommodated. May be developed at moderate densities but must be compatible with nearby single family development.

R-4 MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Create areas where attached residential uses can be accommodated. May be developed to accommodate moderate to high population concentrations but the type of development should be compatible with surrounding residential development.

L-1 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

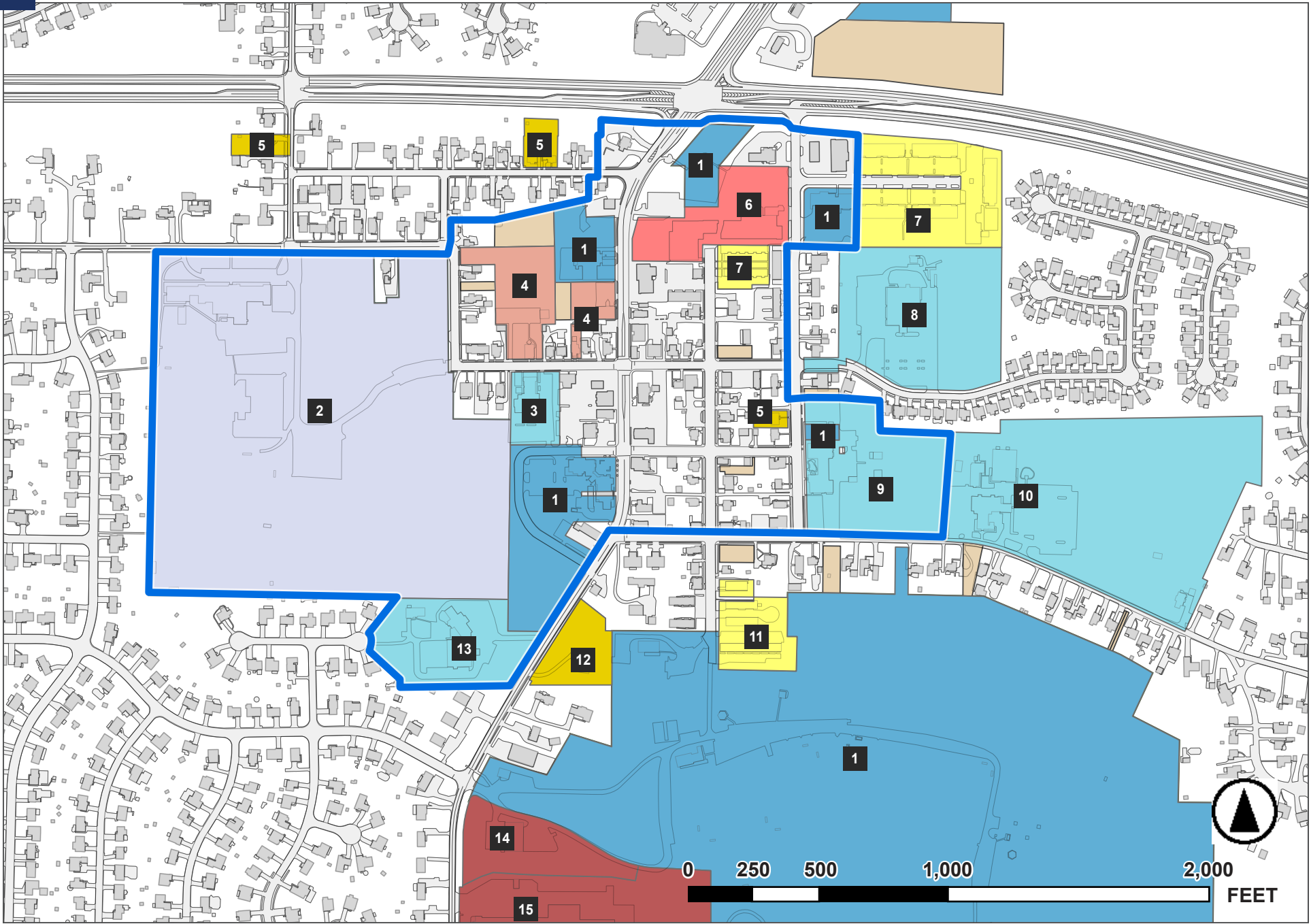
Provide areas for industry, wholesaling, manufacturing, processing and related operations that have a non-objectionable effect on the surrounding area and the community as a whole. Areas to be reserved exclusively for industrial and related purposes.

KEY POINTS

- Currently all of the Downtown Area is zoned as C-3 Downtown Commercial District.
- The current zoning allows for high density and high intensity commercial, cultural, financial, mixed use, and civic uses. Buildings can be 5 stories tall.
- The Downtown Master Plan provides an opportunity to re-visit the zoning code.
- It is important to identify areas within the downtown district that merit refinements for allowable uses, character and scale.
- This plan will provide recommendations for a downtown overlay district that outlines code requirements that reflect the community's vision and goals for the downtown area as outlined in this plan.

ANALYSIS

MAJOR PROPERTIES



LEGEND

- CITY-OWNED PROPERTY**
88.1 ACRES
- EDUCATION / MONROE LSD**
37.5 ACRES
- CHURCH**
34.3 ACRES
- OTHER COMMERCIAL HOUSING**
2.9 ACRES
- SHOPPING CENTER / STRIP MALL**
3.2 ACRES
- COMMERCIAL WAREHOUSES**
8.6 ACRES
- APARTMENTS**
7.5 ACRES
- SINGLE - FAMILY DWELLING**
2.7 ACRES
- VACANT LAND**
6.6 ACRES
- C3 - DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT**
93 ACRES

MAP NOTES

- 1** City of Monroe
- 2** Monroe LSD, Board of Education
- 3** United Presbyterian Church
- 4** Elm Street Properties
- 5** Private Residential Owner
- 6** Bevo Holdings, LLC
- 7** Monroe Terrace Apartments, LLC
- 8** First Church of God Monroe, INC
- 9** Monroe United Methodist Church
- 10** Our Lady of Sorrows Roman Catholic Church
- 11** DJ Witt Properties LLC
- 12** Private Residential Owner
- 13** Life Church Monroe
- 14** Private Commercial Owner
- 15** Eagle Materials, LLC

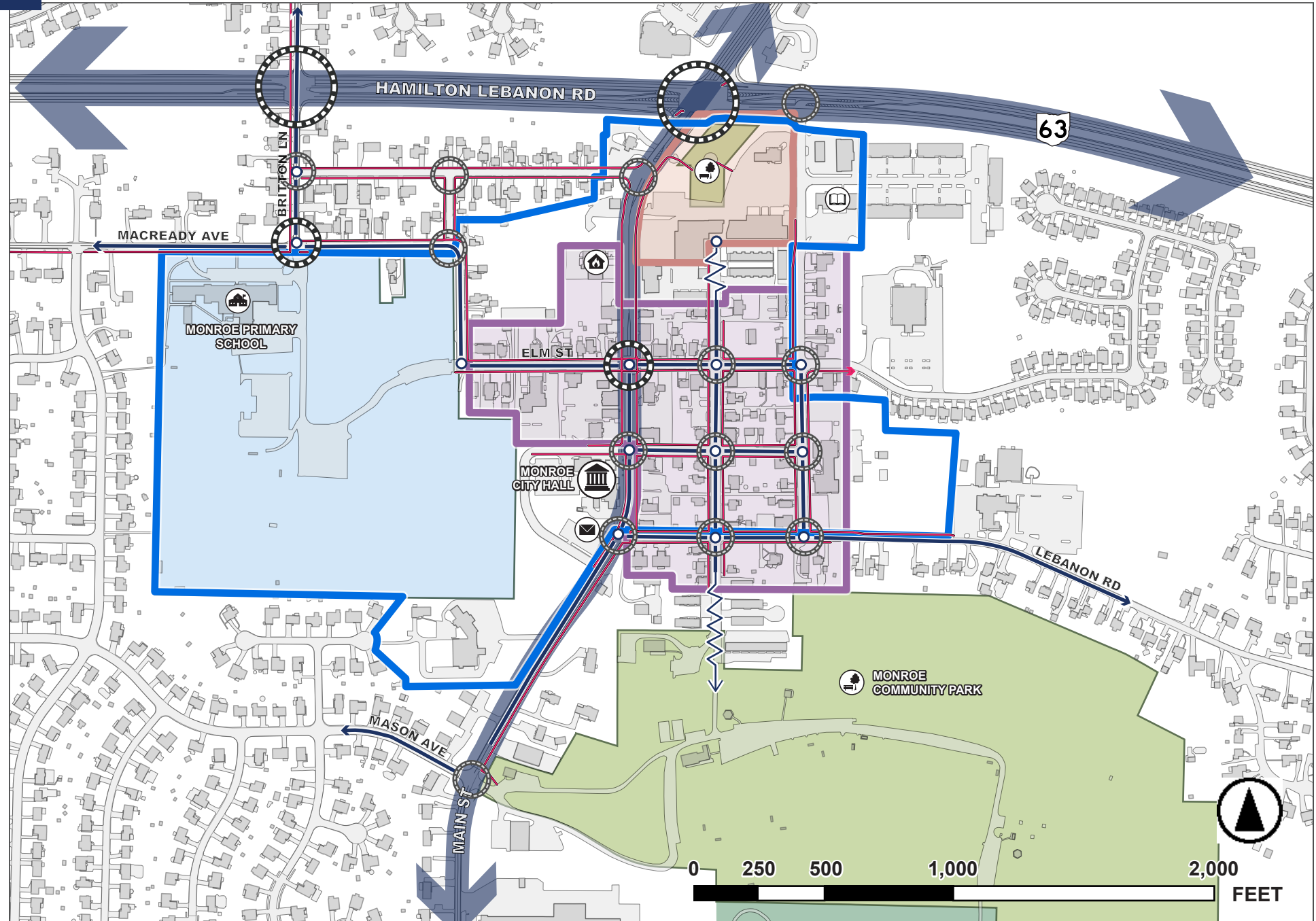
KEY POINTS

- How the larger properties are developed in the future will be a key factor in the success of the downtown area.
- The majority of the larger properties are on the perimeter of the more historical downtown area. This supports an approach for higher density development to occur at the perimeter while preserving the scale and character of the historic areas.
- New residential and mixed-use development on some of these larger properties would have the benefit of bringing more people to the downtown area to support local businesses.
- The large city-owned and school properties provide opportunities to create public gathering spaces and amenities.

ANALYSIS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

▼ FIGURE X - EXISTING CONDITIONS MAP



LEGEND

- MAJOR ROADWAYS**
SR 63 runs between SR 4 and Lebanon. It is the first SR east/west connection between 75 and 71 north of 275. Cincinnati Dayton Road (Main Street) is the primary north/south connector.
- DOWNTOWN STREET GRID**
Roadway system into and around the downtown area.
- STEEP SLOPE**
- EXISTING SIDEWALKS**
- SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS**
- STOP SIGN INTERSECTIONS**
- OLDER COMMERCIAL STRIP AREA**
Developed in the late 60's and early 70's this retail area is geared towards cars and does not provide the mix of uses and walkable environment the community seeks.
- HISTORICAL DOWNTOWN BOUNDARY**
Boundary of the historical downtown area with street grid as seen on maps from the early 1900s.
- CURRENT DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL BOUNDARY**
This is the current area classified as C-3 Downtown Commercial in the current zoning code.

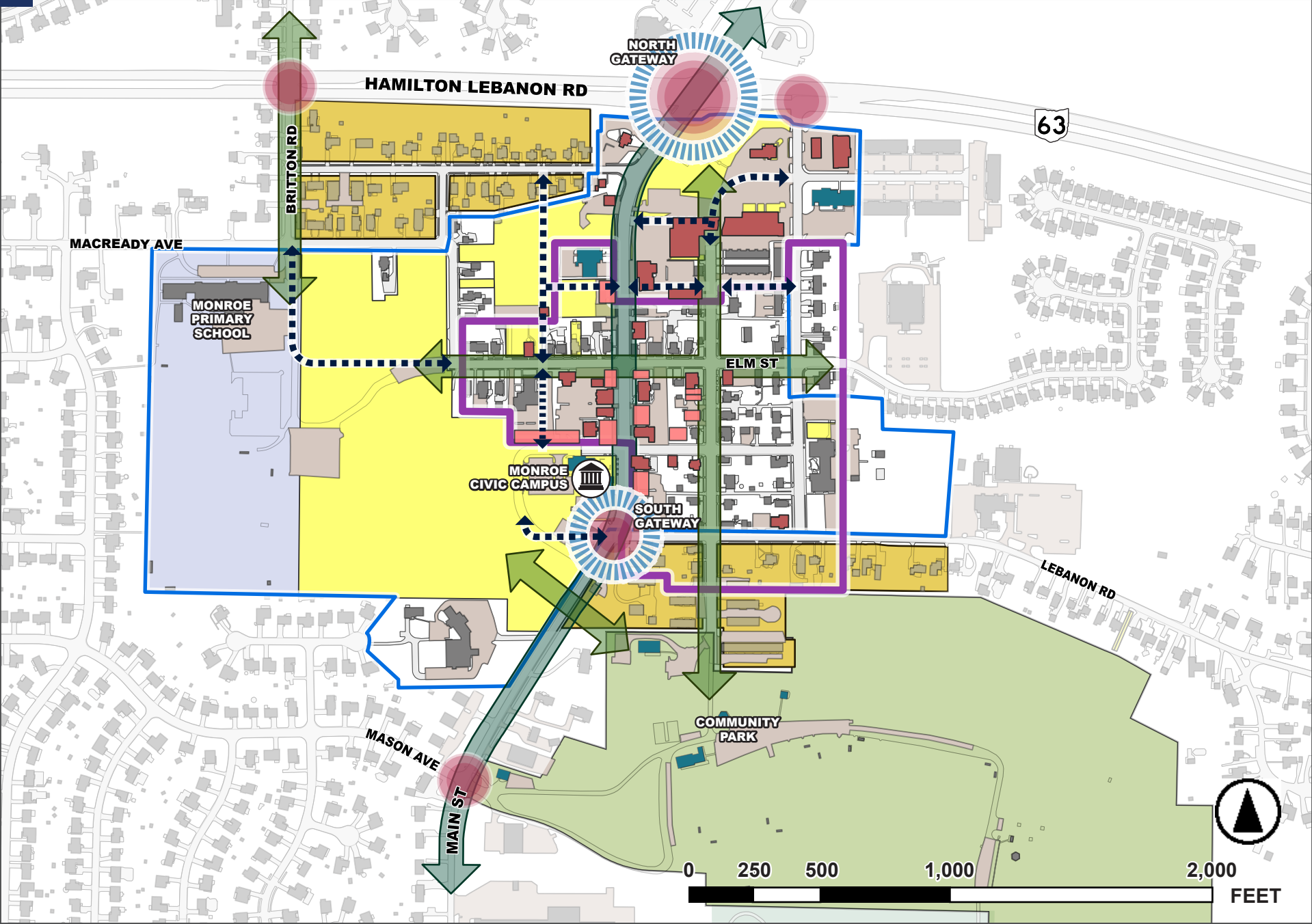
- PARKS**
The Monroe Community Park is a large park with athletic fields located on the southern border of downtown. Also the location of community events. The Veteran's Memorial park is located at the intersection of Main and SR 63.
- MONROE SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPERTY**
Location of the Monroe Primary School.
- CEMETERY**



ANALYSIS

DOWNTOWN SITE ANALYSIS

FIGURE X - SITE ANALYSIS MAP



LEGEND

NEEDED PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS
It is important to provide pedestrian connectivity within the downtown area and to surrounding neighborhoods to promote a safe, walkable, and connected environment.

STREET GRID IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES
There are opportunities to expand the current street grid system to better connect current and future development, as well as improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation.

GATEWAY OPPORTUNITIES
There are opportunities to create gateways into downtown at key intersections

INTERSECTION SAFETY CONCERNS
There are multiple intersections in the downtown area that have traffic and safety issues that need to be addressed.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREAS
Larger sites that have been identified as having the highest opportunity for development. Sites include: city-owned property, vacant land, open space, greenfields, property with current development interest, and areas identified as needing redevelopment to better fit the area's character.
40 ACRES*

INFILL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREAS
In the historic downtown area there are opportunities to build new buildings, of a similar scale and character, between existing buildings to increase density and promote walkability.

LONG TERM REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES - HIGHER DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
In the long term, surrounding the perimeter of the downtown area with higher density housing options will bring more in people to support businesses and increase activity.
19 ACRES

EXISTING COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

CITY-OWNED BUILDINGS

EXISTING BUILDINGS

EXISTING SURFACE PARKING LOTS
18 ACRES*

SCHOOL PROPERTY
17 ACRES*

EXISTING PARKS

DOWNTOWN HISTORIC AREA
It is important to maintain the scale and character of this area and preserve the historic buildings. New development needs to complement and enhance this area.

*APPROXIMATE ACREAGE WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT BOUNDARY

KEY POINTS

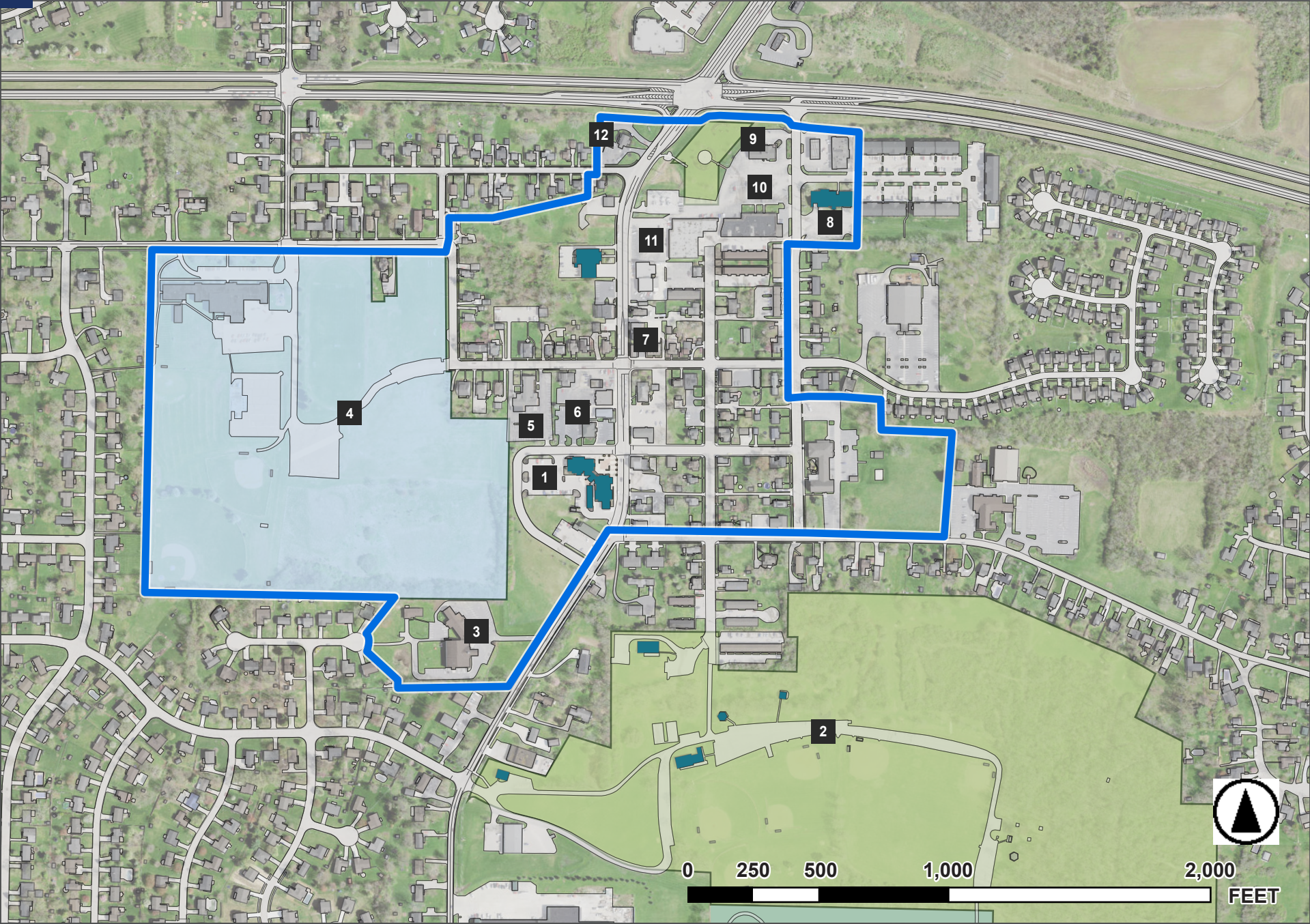
This map summarizes the major findings from the assessment of downtown which looked at the existing condition of infrastructure, roadways, streetscapes, buildings and land use.

During the assessment, the following key factors were also analyzed:

- Sense of place
- Walkability & Mobility
- Transportation Network
- Density and Mix of Uses
- Economic Vitality
- Development Opportunities

ANALYSIS

EXISTING PARKING LOT INVENTORY



LEGEND

- CITY-OWNED BUILDINGS

EDUCATION / MONROE LSD
- PARKS

C3 - DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

MAP NOTES

GENERAL NAME	TYPE	REGULAR	ADA	TOTAL SPACES
1 City of Monroe	Public	58	3	61
2 Monroe Community Park	Public	199	2	201
3 Life Church Monroe	Private	73	5	78
4 Monroe LSD	Private	149	-	149
5 One Community Church	Private	50	3	53
6 Monroe Chiropractic Center	Private	37	2	39
7 Historical Society	Private	8	-	8
8 Library/Community Center	Public	42	2	44
9 Chase Bank	Private	24	1	25
10 Monroe Retail Center/Strip Mall	Private	104	-	104
11 Family Dollar	Private	27	1	28
12 US Bank	Private	14	-	14
Sub Total of Public Spaces		299	7	306
Sub Total of Private Spaces		486	12	498
TOTAL SPACES		785	19	804

KEY POINTS

This map summarizes an inventory of surface parking within the Downtown area.

Off-street parking is generally designated for specific land uses and are privately owned. No surface lots within the Downtown boundary are specifically identified for public parking, which is not necessarily needed at this time. As the downtown takes shape, the need for public parking is more likely, especially during events.

Regarding on-street parking, there are minimal parking regulations posted. Where allowed, on-street spaces are generally not marked, with a few exceptions in front of the Monroe government, Historical Society, and Monroe First Church of God.

In residential areas, on-street parking is limited to one side of the street along Elm Street, Lee Price Avenue, Ohio Avenue, and portions of Lebanon Street. On-street parking is present along Old Street, Church Street, and East Avenue on both sides of the roadway.



SECTION 4: **ENGAGEMENT**

WAYS WE ENGAGED

PHASE I SUMMARY

PHASE II SUMMARY

MAJOR COMMUNITY TAKEAWAYS

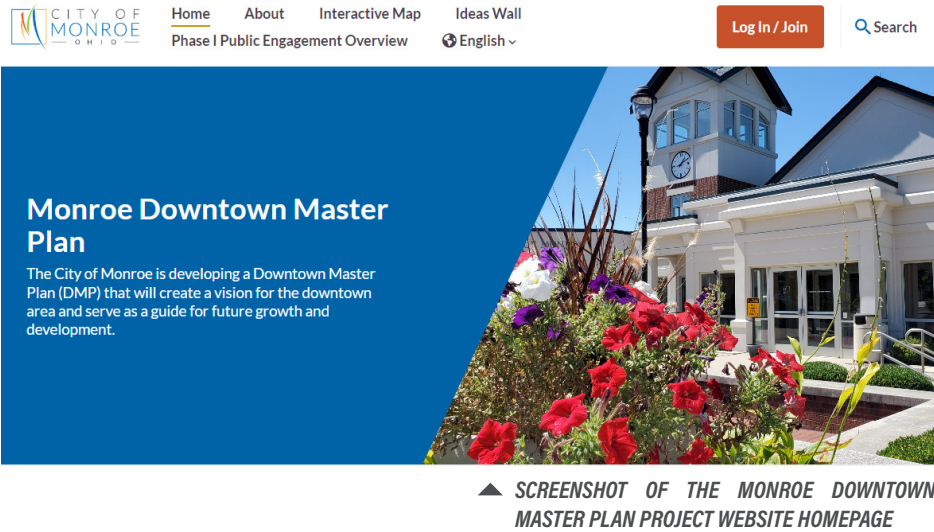
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

ENGAGEMENT
WAYS WE ENGAGED

ENGAGEMENT PROCESS OVERVIEW

Priority was placed on fostering community engagement throughout the development of the Downtown Master Plan. A comprehensive participation plan was crafted, inviting input from residents, business owners, a dedicated steering committee, city staff, and elected officials to ensure the final Plan authentically reflects the communities vision for Downtown Monroe, both now and in the future. Together, a downtown was created that everyone can take pride in.

In addition to regular meetings with city staff and their technical committee, **valuable insights were gathered from over 300 members of the community with a diverse range of voices through the following engagement activities:**



02

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

15 PARTICIPANTS

02

PUBLIC MEETINGS

80+ PARTICIPANTS

01

BUSINESS OWNER FORUM

12 PARTICIPANTS

01

PROJECT WEBSITE

239 PARTICIPANTS

INTERACTIVE MAP	196 PINS DROPPED
SURVEYS (2)	198 SURVEYS TAKEN
IDEAS WALL	55 IDEAS POSTED
FEEDBACK FORM	15 FORMS FILLED*

*TOTAL INCLUDES 4 FEEDBACK FORMS THAT WERE SUBMITTED AT THE PHASE II IN-PERSON PUBLIC MEETING

ENGAGEMENT
PHASE I SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

During Phase I of the Monroe Downtown Master Plan (DMP) Project, several committee meetings and a project website were used to collect public input on the current state of Downtown Monroe as well as their ideas about the future. This phase included the following events:

- [I-1] STEERING COMMITTEE VISIONING SESSION
- [I-2] BUSINESS OWNER FORUM
- [I-3] PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE
- [I-4] PROJECT WEBSITE (SOCIAL PINPOINT)

[I-1] STEERING COMMITTEE VISIONING SESSION
September 18, 2023 | 10 Participants

A dedicated Steering Committee of key community representatives was formed at the beginning of the project to provide strategic direction throughout the planning process and ensure the DMP aligns with the City's long-term goals as well as community needs.

The purpose of the Steering Committee Visioning Session was to establish a shared vision, clarify goals and guiding principles, and talk about ideas, opportunities, concerns, and priorities for the Monroe DMP.

During the meeting, City Staff and the Consultant Team gave an introductory presentation, followed by a breakout session in small groups to discuss:

- What is missing from Monroe and the Downtown Area?
- What are the must have assets, activities, and amenities?
- What are the nice to have assets, activities, and amenities?
- What would make you come and spend time in Downtown Monroe?
- What makes Monroe Unique?



[I-2] BUSINESS OWNER FORUM
October 19, 2023 | 12 Participants

The goal of this meeting was to provide a forum for business owners in the downtown area to communicate their priorities at the beginning of the DMP project.

During the meeting, City Staff and the Consultant Team gave an overview presentation of the DMP project and planning approach followed by a questions and answers session. The second portion of the meeting included a breakout session where small groups could discuss the topics below. At the end, the attendees were also asked to participate in the visual preference survey that would also be given at the Public Open House:

- What are the positives for a business located in the downtown area? What advantages does being in Monroe's Downtown Area offer for your business?
- What assets and amenities are needed for people to spend more time in the downtown area?
- What are the issues with being located in the downtown area? What challenges do you face operating in Monroe's Downtown Area?
- Which, if any, nearby communities have walkable downtown areas where you enjoy spending time?

ENGAGEMENT PHASE I SUMMARY (CONT.)

[I-3] PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

October 30, 2023 | 20+ Participants

The first Public Open House allowed community members to share ideas and priorities for Downtown Monroe, as well as ask questions and provide input in a variety of interactive ways. At the Open House, City Staff, and the Consultant Team from KZF Design met with community members to answer questions and discuss the project, overall goals, and next steps.

The following topics were covered in the form of interactive boards to provide information and allow residents to give their input:

- **Downtown Character Zones** - a brief overview and description of each zone was provided along with a visual preference survey of inspirational imagery for community members to vote on.
- **Downtown Public Realm** - similar to the Character Zones boards, a series of inspirational imagery of different public realm features and amenities was provided for community members to vote on their favorite images.
- **Existing Conditions Map** - a station was provided where community members could call attention to specific areas or places in downtown meant to mimic the Interactive Map available online.
- **Big Ideas Board** - community members were able to post their big ideas for the future of Downtown Monroe similar to the online Ideas Wall.

Several additional meeting materials were present and distributed to attendees that provided project-related material:

- **Introduction Board** – welcomed attendees to the event, displaying information about the projects purpose, process, goals, guiding principles, as well as the vision and recommendations for the Downtown area from the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Visioning Board** – provided a map of the different character zones identified in the Downtown area, as well as a brief statement about their purpose. The board also prompted attendees to visit and interact with each board dedicated to a different character zone.



- **Flyer** - A flyer containing the event time, date, location, key map, meeting overview, and QR code to the project website were printed and placed at City Hall and the local schools.
- **Social Media Posts** - The City's Facebook page published a series of social media posts, notifying residents about the Open House and reminding everyone to participate online via the project website.
- **Postcard** - A small postcard introducing the project and ways to engage with a QR code to the project website were printed and placed at City Hall and the local schools.

ENGAGEMENT PHASE I SUMMARY (CONT.)

[I-4] PROJECT WEBSITE (SOCIAL PINPOINT)

October 9, 2023 - December 4, 2023 | 228 Participants

A project website was created using Social Pinpoint to serve as a centralized online platform designed to engage the public and keep them up to date on the project.

In addition to providing a brief overview of the project, relevant links to completed plans, active projects, and other resources, a recap of stakeholder meetings, and information about upcoming public events, the following engagement tools were used to collect input over an 8-week period:

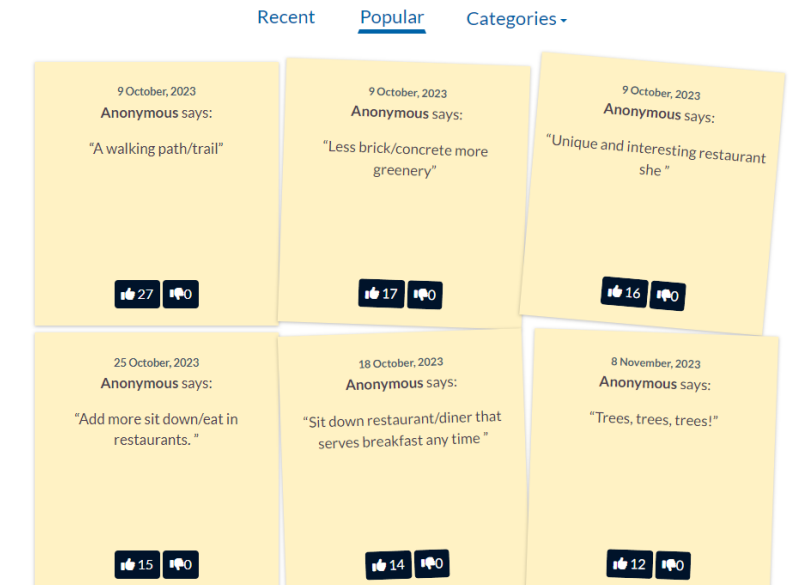
- **Online Survey** - a short survey asking participants more about their thoughts on Downtown Monroe, now and in the future.
- **Interactive Map** – a web map where participants could drop a pin in a specific location and leave a comment about what they like, dislike, places they go, where improvements are needed, and other ideas they have about Downtown Monroe by dropping a pin on the map.
- **Ideas Wall** – a space where participants could post general comments, suggestions, or ideas about Downtown Monroe and share your vision for the future.
- **Visual Preference Survey** – a short image survey asking participants to vote on which precedent images they feel should provide inspiration to different zones in Downtown Monroe.

SCREENSHOTS OF THE PHASE I ONLINE
ENGAGEMENT TOOLS : IDEAS WALL (TOP) &
INTERACTIVE MAP (BOTTOM)

Share Your Thoughts on the Future of Downtown Monroe!

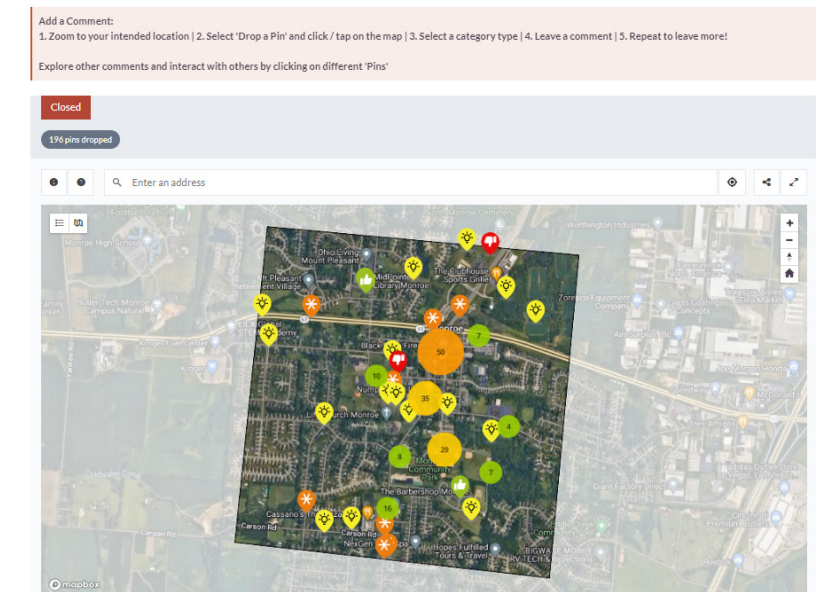
Use the Ideas Wall to post comments, suggestions, or ideas about Downtown Monroe and share your vision for the future.

If you haven't already, we also encourage you to share your input by taking our [Online Survey](#) and dropping a pin on the [Interactive Map](#)



Drop a Pin!

Tell us what you like, places you go, where improvements are needed, and other ideas about Downtown Monroe by dropping a pin on the interactive map! If you haven't already, we also encourage you to share your input by taking our [Online Survey](#) and posting on the [Ideas Wall](#)



ENGAGEMENT

PHASE I SUMMARY (CONT.)

WHAT WE HEARD DURING PHASE I

Throughout the Public Engagement portion of the Downtown Master Plan (DMP) over one-hundred (100) images were posted for residents to respond to that would set a precedent for each Character Zones and the overall Downtown Public Realm.

Each board, either in person or on the project website, allowed users to designate which image(s) they preferred by placing a sticker on each corresponding image. **The Visual Preference survey itself received 157 participants, 125 online and 32 in-person participants.** The DMP team logged over 2,500 unique responses that aided in providing tailored design recommendations, inspiration, and approaches for each Character Zone.

YOUR VISION OF HOW DOWNTOWN SHOULD LOOK AND FEEL



The images below recieved more than 50% of the votes and primarily reflect the following concepts:

- Streetscape that includes wide sidewalks, trees and plantings, benches and patron seating for businesses Downtown, as well as lighting and other design considerations.
- A large greenspace for non-sports related amenities that would become a central gathering space for the community. This could include splash pads, playscapes, multi-purpose lawns, stages or pavilion, and sidewalk connections.
- Infill development that matches the existing character of Downtown Monroe that can seamlessly integrate within the existing, historic architecture along Main Street.

ENGAGEMENT PHASE I SUMMARY (CONT.)

WHAT ARE SOME THINGS YOU LIKE ABOUT DOWNTOWN MONROE?

Multiple responses included how Downtown Monroe has existing character and a valuable asset, greenspace that residents find themselves spending lots of time at, bars and restaurants that have become community and regional draws, as well as pedestrian-friendly design, and the friendliness and hospitality of neighbors.



WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IS MISSING FROM DOWNTOWN MONROE?

Respondents mentioned a need for a variety of new, small businesses that would bring people into the Downtown. Additionally, a need for sidewalks and roadway improvements were desired to improve safety at intersections and along Main Street. Programming of the downtown is desired to allow for community events, speciality events, and more to bring visitors and residents into the area.



TOP COMMENTS

- That is has kept its small-town feel
- Blank slate with lots of potential
- I like the community feel, and the opportunity there is to foster that and enhance that. I also like the amount of small business
- Love the park! We spend most of our sitting and summer at the ball fields and doing other activities.
- Numprik Thai is our favorite restaurant Monroe and Swaffy's is our go to for dessert.
- Central location within City limits

- A Community Center with an indoor walking track. Most of the other surrounding communities have them.
- Bars and restaurants that draw in in to come down and sit and converse, DORA.
- Our community is severely lacking in a central location for businesses to thrive and residents to visit/take pride in
- A "third place" - something like a coffee shop or bookstore that encourages a sense of community.

Entertainment, restaurants, and activities to draw people to the area were mentioned. A DORA district with a local brewery or taphouse were also commented. Aesthetic improvements at and around the gateways into Downtown are desired. Unique, non-chain shops and businesses that will complement the scale of Downtown.

[illegible]

TOP COMMENTS

- I love how Monroe has a small-town feel. How do you grow without losing this?
- Please don't try to compare us to Mason or Liberty. Please keep the small-town feeling!
- I am excited for the future!
- It needs to seem more like a destination.
- Would like careful and thoughtful planning before acting upon suggestions

5

During Phase II of the Downtown Master Plan (DMP) Project, a second steering committee meeting, second public open house, and the project website were used to both update people on the current status of the DMP Project and collect public input on the proposed plan and updates the project team has made since the first public meeting on September 18, 2023.

- [II-1] STEERING COMMITTEE VISIONING SESSION**
January 29, 2024 | 5 Participants

A second visioning session was held with key community representatives to provide updates on the project, answers questions and concerns, and collect additional feedback. A form was provided to attendees to provide comments on the four Planning Zones, as seen on the Overall Framework Plan. The following areas were discussed:

- Town Center Mixed-Use
- Gateway Mixed-Use
- Parks & Recreation
- Downtown Multi-Family Residential

- [II-2] SECOND PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE**
Feburary 19, 2024 | 61 Sign-in's

The second Public Open House gave the community the chance to receive an update from the project team about the current status of the DMP project. At the Open House, City Staff and the KZF Design Consultant Team met with community members to answer questions and discuss the project, overall goals, and next steps.

The following meeting materials were present and/or distributed:

- **Fact Sheet** - a fact sheet containing the event time, date, location, meeting overview, and QR code to the project website were printed and distributed to area businesses.
- **Feedback Forms** - when signing in, attendees were handed a feedback form and encouraged to return it at the conclusion of the meeting. Participants were given a brief project description and prompted to provide their comments and feedback regarding the DMP, specifically about the four zones shown on the Overall Framework Plan. An interactive version of the feedback form was provided on the project website so those who could not attend in-person could still participate.
- **Poster Boards** - the following large poster boards were displayed at the Open House to be informational or interactive. The boards were provided on the project website after the event so those who could not attend in-person could still see the information.
 - **Phase I Engagement Overview** - this board provided a brief summary of the public engagement held throughout the first phase of the project. It included a summary of what the project team heard from the public.
 - **Analyzing Existing Conditions** - provided an overview of existing strengths to build on, issues that need to be addressed and opportunities to help achieve the community's Vision.
 - **Overall Framework Plan** - showed overall goals and recommendations that consider feedback from the public, stakeholders and City Staff, as well as information from the Comprehensive Plan and best practices.
 - **Multi-Modal Transportation** - portrayed proposed transportation and pedestrian connectivity suggestions on a map, including vehicular connections, road improvements, pedestrian connections.
- **Typical Street Sections** - depicted typical street sections on Main Street, a neighborhood connector, a pedestrian connector and improved residential.
 - **Town Center Mixed-Use** - showed suggestions for the town center, including

ENGAGEMENT
PHASE II SUMMARY (CONT.)

- **Gateway Mixed-Use** - showed suggestions for the gateway area including development ideas, transportation recommendations, public space thoughts and urban identity suggestions.
- **Parks & Recreation** - provided ideas for parks and recreation development, as well as transportation suggestions, public space thoughts and urban identity recommendations.
- **Downtown Multi-Unit Residential** - showed ideas for downtown multi-unit residential development, in addition to transportation recommendations, public space ideas and urban identity suggestions.
- **Testing Our Recommendations** - provided renderings and information about potential test concepts.
- **Presentation** - during the open house, the project team held a 30-minute presentation that consisted of 26 slides that discussed the poster boards in more detail. The complete presentation can be found [in the appendix]. The presentation slides were provided on the project website after the meeting so those who could not attend in-person could still receive the information.
- **Social Media Posts** - the City's Facebook page published a series of eight social media posts, notifying residents about the Open House and reminding everyone to participate online via the project website.
- **Press Release** - the City distributed a press release in January 2024 to share information about the project, as well as to invite the public to attend the second public meeting. An article was published in the Hamilton Journal News on February 20, 2024 after the open house took place, covering the meeting and thoughts from the public.
- **Monroe Messenger** - information about the public open house was the front-page story on the January/February edition of the Monroe Messenger, a bi-monthly newsletter created and distributed by the City of Monroe.
- **Area Marquees** - promotions for the Open House were placed on three area marquees.



ENGAGEMENT
PHASE II SUMMARY (CONT.)

[2-3] PROJECT WEBSITE (SOCIAL PINPOINT)
February 19, 2024 - March 18, 2024 | 11 Participants

A project website was created at the beginning of the project to serve as a central hub to engage the community, gather input, and provide updates. The website featured an online survey, interactive map, ideas wall, and visual preference survey.

- **Online Feedback Form** - The online feedback form contained the same five prompts as the paper handout. A total of 11 respondents left comments in at least one of the five prompts. Respondents we asked to provide feedback on the preliminary goals and recommendations presented during Phase II based on the following categories:
 - **General Comments**
 - **Town Center Mixed-Use Zone**
 - **Gateway Mixed-Use Zone**
 - **Parks & Recreation Zone**
 - **Downtown Multi-Unit Mixed-Use Zone**

All comments are listed on the following page with the accompanying overall zoning diagram that was included on both the in-person and online feedback form.

SCREENSHOT OF THE
PHASE II ONLINE
ENGAGEMENT WEBPAGE

Participate in the Public Meeting Online:

If you weren't able to attend in-person, you can still be a part of the conversation!

After reviewing the meeting materials below, be sure to click the **FEEDBACK FORM** button to provide your thoughts on the draft recommendations and test concepts presented.

111 X 66 K 111 24M - 111 111 11

Introductory Presentation

The City of Monroe gave a presentation to community members during the 2024 Public Meeting to explore the project's history and present vision. Please provide input and feedback on the presentation.

View the presentation below:

Monroe Downtown Master Plan Public Meeting Phase II

1 of 26

Presentation Boards

Large presentation boards were displayed outside the AGO to allow community members to review and discuss the draft goals, recommendations, and test concepts with City staff and the Consultant team. Scroll through the different boards below:

PHASE I PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS
ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

WAYS WE ENGAGED

WHAT WE HEARD

YOUR VOICE: HOW YOUR OWN SCHEDULE LOOKS AND FEELS

WHAT WE HEARD DURING
PHASE II

General Comments:

- Concerns about affordability of replacing single-family homes with apartments in downtown due to household incomes in Monroe
- Potential removal of mature trees causing concern
- Debate over building a new school or park
- Worries about achieving walkability with limited traffic law enforcement
- Unclear financing and concerns about property tax increases
- Preference for landominiums over apartments and condos, opposition to low-income housing
- Suggestions for improvement include recreational center, more trees, sidewalks, shared-use paths, alleys, connected bike trail
- Some residents prefer maintaining small town, historic feel and question need for development
- Concerns about potential displacement caused by new roads and apartments

Excitement about proposed changes, suggestions for indoor play area and upgraded ball fields to boost local economy.

Town Center Mixed-Use Summary:

- Downtown demolition for new structures is controversial due to impacting historic character and displacing families
- Proposal suggests creating a charming place similar to Loveland, Montgomery, or Springboro, or drawing inspiration from places like Holland, Solvang, Helen, or Old Town Alexandria

- Mix of 1920s and 1980s architecture in current buildings is considered unappealing and not attracting business
- Improvements for Main Street Corridor include wider sidewalks, seating, lighting, landscaping, and outdoor dining options
- Vision is to create a unique, unconventional atmosphere resembling 1900s Americana, Colonial America, or a Key West theme
- Public input through a vote is crucial, as many residents prefer a small, historic town feel and oppose extensive development
- Disruption of established properties, such as the one at Main and Elm, should be avoided due to high cost for affected families
- Transformation is appreciated but should prioritize preserving the town's character and meeting community needs and wishes

Gateway Mixed-Use Summary:

- Monroe has nice features, but is in a less desirable area surrounded by other towns and trailer parks
- Most residents are not within walking distance of downtown
- Concerns about sustainability of proposed changes, like building apartments and a parking garage, due to lower household incomes in the area
- Need for improved safety measures, like reducing speed limits and screening the Duke Energy Substation
- Some residents advocate for updates to improve the area's impression on visitors, including planting more trees
- Voices calling for a vote and questioning the necessity of new developments

Parks & Recreation Summary:

- Monroe is a town undergoing aggressive downtown changes despite lower household incomes compared to neighboring towns
- Concerns about sustainability of developments and past failed examples in other communities
- Priority on finishing Bicentennial Commons Park and converting it into a community center with various amenities
- Goal to benefit citizens and students through enhanced recreational opportunities and community engagement
- Emphasis on connecting new park with existing one for larger events and citywide engagement

Downtown Multi-Family Mixed-Use:

- Building townhouses, garden style apartments, and patio homes in downtown area acceptable, but concerns about affordability and impact on displaced families
- Existing homes, typically owned outright, should not be removed from Monroe families due to increasing housing costs
- Townhouses should be priced at \$300k+, adhere to construction standards, and offer integrated parking
- Streets should maintain width, include trees, and have sidewalks
- Garden style apartments should target professionals with higher price points to avoid negative impacts on city's socio-economic progress and education quality
- Recommendation is against any development efforts in downtown area

Feedback Form

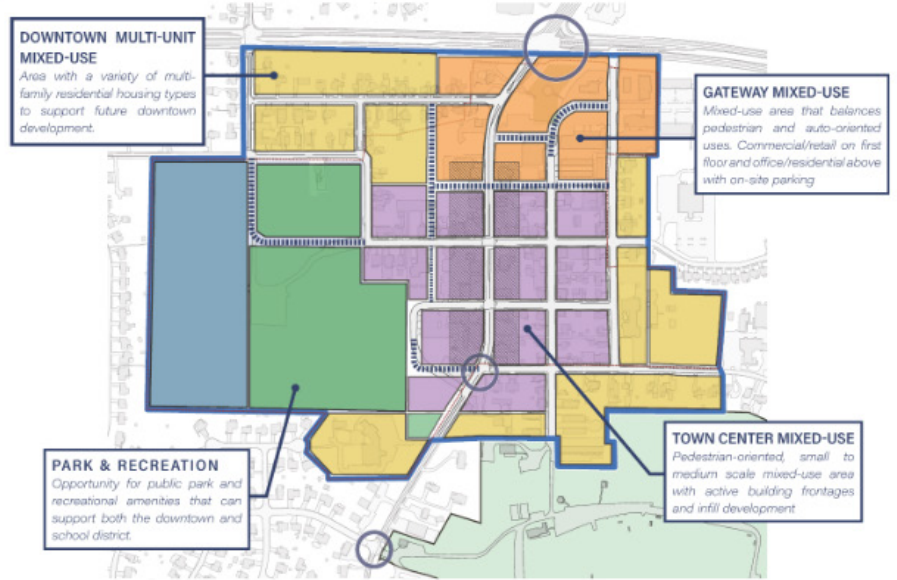
If you haven't already, be sure to review the draft recommendations presentation boards and introductory presentation [here](#).

As part of the recommendations, the downtown has been divided into different zones; each with their own defined character and approach for future development that considers what is important to Monroe, as well as what scale and mix of uses will work best.

Building on the guiding principles, the following **goals and recommendations** consider public and stakeholder feedback, input from City Staff, the Comprehensive Plan, and best practices. The result is a framework plan that provides direction on how to implement the vision for downtown.

As part of the recommendations, the downtown has been divided into different zones; **each with their own defined character and approach for future development** that considers what is important to Monroe, as well as what scale and mix of uses will work best.

DOWNTOWN ZONE DIAGRAM



- | | |
|---|--|
|  <p>PUBLIC REALM/SPACE
<i>Provide unique gathering spaces, amenities, public facilities, and programmed events</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generate year-round excitement with programmed unique events and activities• Develop public amenities that invite people to spend more time in downtown• Provide a central multi-use space for events, performances, farmers markets, etc. |  <p>IDENTITY/FORM
<i>Brand Downtown Monroe</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a sense of place with streetscapes, wayfinding signage, gateways and public art• Highlight Monroe's uniqueness• Blend the new with the existing character and history• Establish development guidelines and incentives that help implement the vision |
|  <p>DEVELOPMENT
<i>Expand dining, shopping, living, and entertainment options</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage a range of businesses & housing diversity• Encourage active storefronts with first floor retail and similar uses• Encourage infill development• Revitalize historic town center• Redevelop aging strip mall properties |  <p>TRANSPORTATION
<i>Improve multi-modal connectivity and safety</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve traffic and safety• Prioritize walkability on all downtown streets• Implement best practices for parking to support a vibrant town center• Develop multi-use trails connecting downtown to the surrounding community |

◀ SCREENSHOT OF
ONLINE FEEDBACK
FORM INTRODUCTORY
INFORMATION

ENGAGEMENT
MAJOR TAKEAWAYS

SUMMARY OF WHAT WE HEARD

The following major takeaways reflects the input collected through online engagement, in-person public meetings, steering committee discussions, and feedback from city staff:



MORE THINGS TO DO

Entertainment, activities, events, festivals, parades, farmers market, concerts, drive-in, arcade, bowling, putt-putt, pickleball



MORE PLACES TO EAT, DRINK, SHOP, & LIVE

cafes, bakeries, breweries, DORA, outdoor dining, boutiques, pharmacy, thrift store, bookstore, different types of housing options



PRESERVE THE SMALL TOWN FEEL

charm, quaintness, old town, local, unique, family-friendly, quiet, historic, reuse, non-chain, specialty



PROMOTE CONNECTIVITY & SAFETY

complete sidewalks, shared-use, trails, bike lane, keep traffic low, repair roads, left turns high-visibility crosswalks



IMPROVE VISUAL APPEAL

architectural updates, design guidelines, zoning, landscaping, street lights



PROVIDE COMMUNITY FACILITIES

community center, pool, indoor walking track, gym, splash pad



ESTABLISH AN IDENTITY

find an identity, more/better signage, wayfinding, gateway, need a true downtown



CREATE CENTRAL GATHERING SPACE

more greenspace, non-sports amenities, stage, pavilion, place to gather/meet, for all-ages

ENGAGEMENT
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

ALIGNING OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles are aspirations based on best practices and reflect the values expressed by the City and community through the public input process:



PLACEMAKING

Creating an active, family-friendly downtown that embraces monroe's small-town character & embodies it's past, present, & future.



MIX OF USES

Encouraging a diverse mix of uses & amenities make downtown a destination for people & businesses.



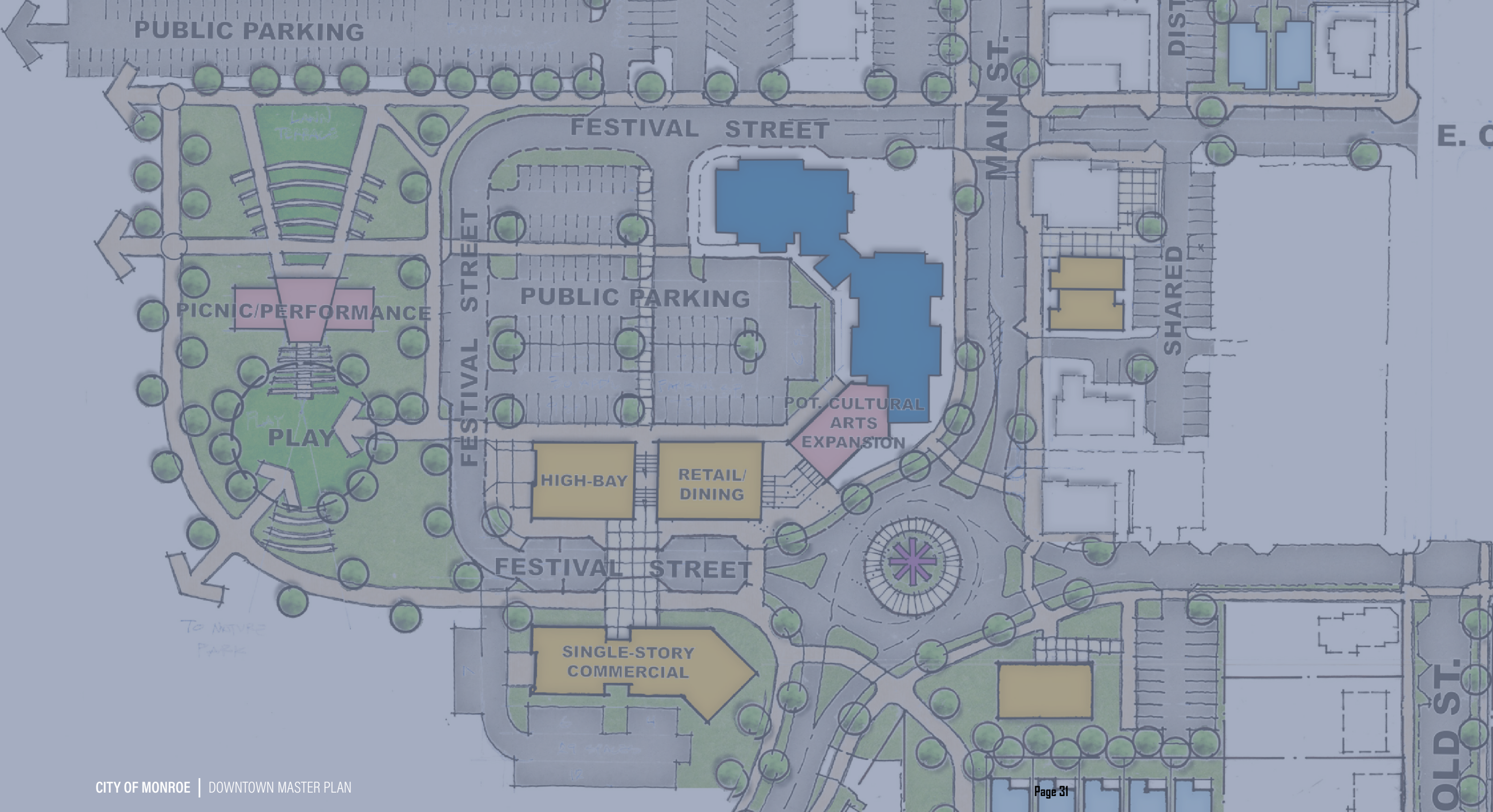
WALKABILITY/MOBILITY

Providing a safe, functional, and welcoming environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, & vehicles.



ECONOMIC VITALITY

Fostering a thriving, diverse economy that supports unique, local businesses, builds resiliency, & promotes equity.



SECTION 5: RECOMMENDATIONS

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN FRAMEWORK

DOWNTOWN CHARACTER DISTRICTS OVERVIEW

MAIN STREET DISTRICT

TOWN CENTER RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

GATEWAY DISTRICT

DOWNTOWN MULTI-UNIT DISTRICT

PARKS & RECREATION DISTRICT

TRANSPORTATION & CONNECTIVITY

STREETSCAPE

FUTURE DOWNTOWN VISION

RECOMMENDATIONS

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN FRAMEWORK

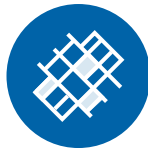
OVERALL GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Using the Downtown Master Plan's guiding principles as a foundation, the following goals and recommendations consider feedback collected during the public and stakeholder engagement process, input from City Staff, the Comprehensive Plan, and best practices.

The result is a framework plan from which the City can begin to execute the community's Vision for Downtown Monroe.

DOWNTOWN CHARACTER DISTRICTS

As part of the recommendations, the downtown has been divided into different districts (see diagram on following page); each with their own defined character and approach for future development that considers what is important to Monroe, as well as what scale and mix of uses will work best.



DEVELOPMENT

EXPAND DINING, SHOPPING, LIVING, & ENTERTAINMENT OPTIONS

- Encourage a range of businesses
- Encourage active storefronts with first floor retail and similar uses
- Encourage infill development
- Redevelop, and revitalize non-contributing or aging buildings



TRANSPORTATION

IMPROVE MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIVITY & SAFETY

- Improve traffic and safety
- Prioritize walkability on all downtown streets
- Implement best practices for parking to support a vibrant town center
- Develop multi-use trails connecting downtown to the surrounding community



PUBLIC REALM/ SPACE

PROVIDE UNIQUE GATHERING SPACES, AMENITIES, PUBLIC FACILITIES, & PROGRAMMED EVENTS

- Generate year-round excitement with programmed unique events and activities
- Develop public amenities that invite people to spend more time in downtown
- Provide a central multi-use space for events, performances, farmers markets, etc.



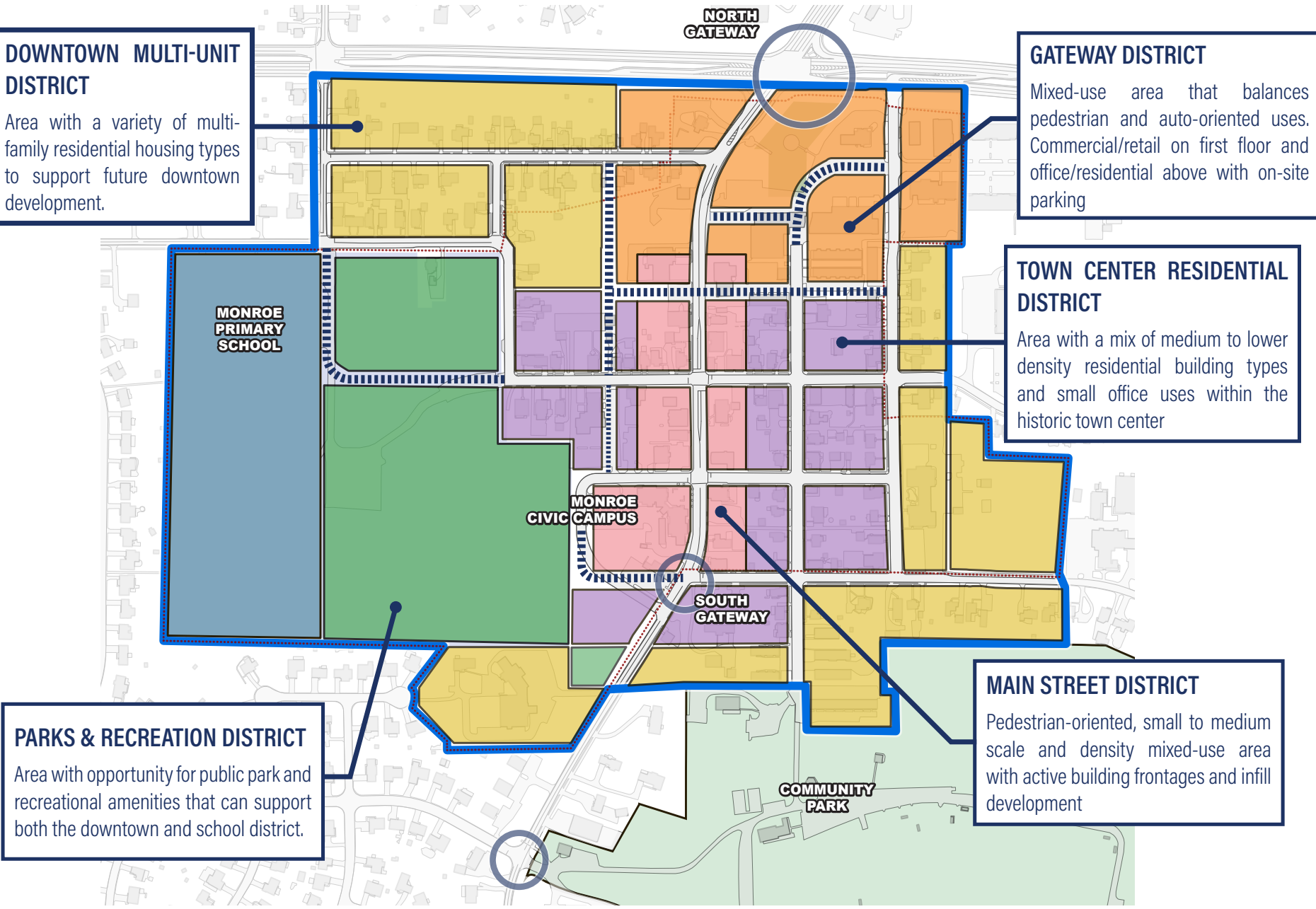
URBAN IDENTITY/ FORM

BRAND DOWNTOWN MONROE

- Create a sense of place with streetscapes, wayfinding signage, gateways and public art
- Highlight Monroe's uniqueness
- Blend the new with the existing character and history
- Establish development guidelines and incentives that help implement the vision

RECOMMENDATIONS

DOWNTOWN CHARACTER DISTRICTS OVERVIEW



RECOMMENDATIONS

MAIN STREET DISTRICT

RECOMMENDATIONS

A pedestrian-oriented, small to medium scale mixed-use district with commercial on the first floor and office/residential above. Buildings should create a continuous, active street frontage, generally built to the lot line, with limited breaks for driveways.



DEVELOPMENT

- Establish a Main Street District as a part of the zoning code update
- Encourage new development or redevelopment that complements existing character
- Encourage infill development between existing buildings
- Establish a DORA



PUBLIC REALM/SPACE

- Create a festival street
- Create a central, public gathering space
- Improve Main Street corridor streetscape
- Create a Civic Campus around the existing municipal building



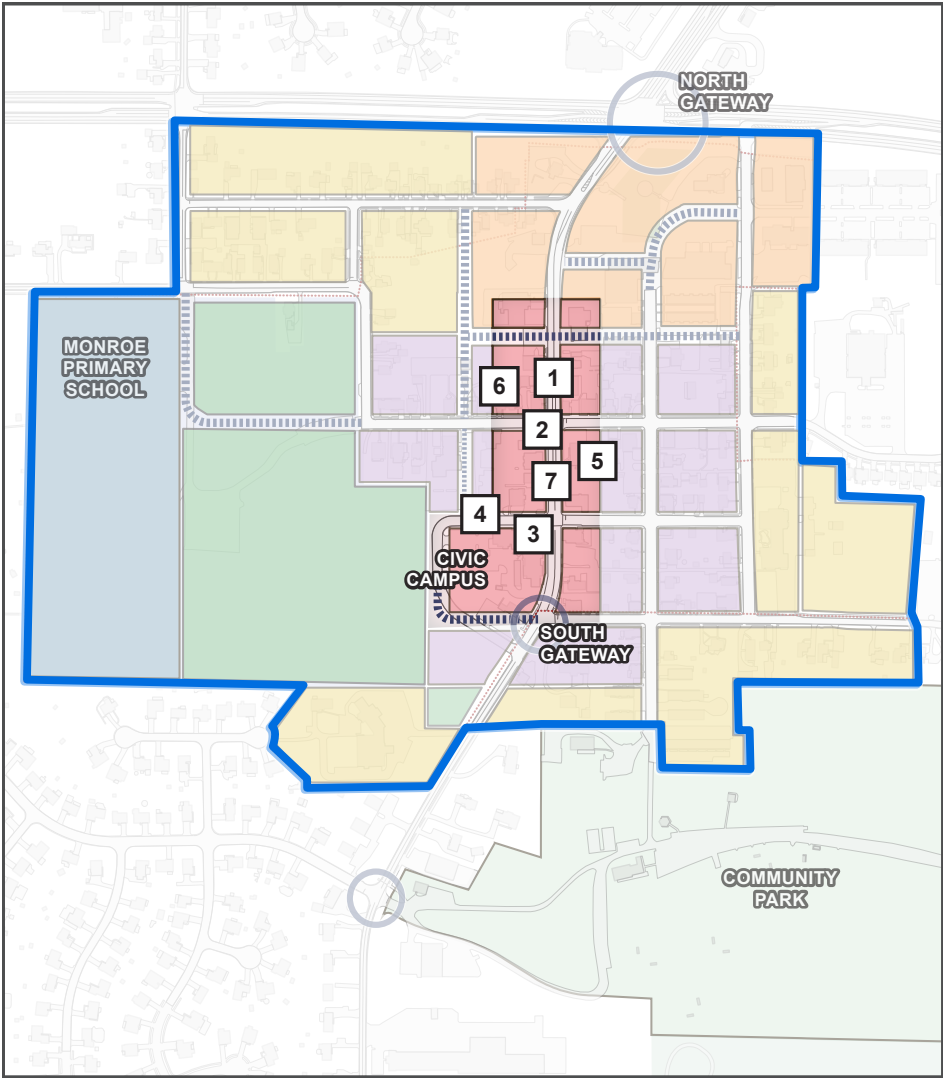
TRANSPORTATION

- Improve the intersection of Main & Lebanon Streets
- Develop an alley system with parking behind buildings
- Connect the Community Park to downtown and future public amenities
- Improve existing sidewalk network
- Provide space for public parking



IDENTITY/FORM

- Preserve historic buildings and character
- Create a gateway feature near Main & Lebanon Streets
- Establish development guidelines
- Implement wayfinding signage and update signage code requirements



▲ FIGURE X - MAIN STREET DISTRICT MAP

RECOMMENDATIONS

MAIN STREET DISTRICT (CONT.)



Establish the Main Street District to encourage pedestrian-oriented design with active storefronts that are first floor retail or similar uses



Encourage Infill Development between existing buildings, that utilizes vacant land or existing parking to create a connected Main Street



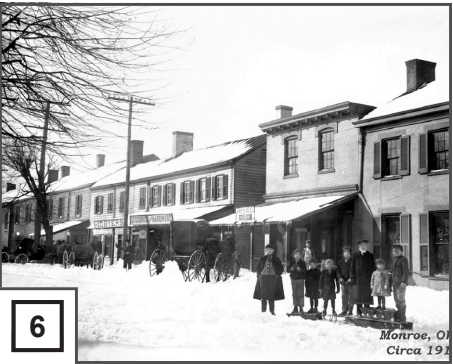
Create a Central Gathering Space to provide a central hub for community events that is connected to the festival street and new multi-use path



Create a Festival Street that can be closed off for pop-up events, supports food trucks, and connects Main Street to the new downtown open space



Develop an Alley System with shared parking behind businesses to increase business street frontage



Preserve Historic Character to revitalize the town center and re-establish the scale and character of early 1900s Monroe



Improve Main Street Corridor Streetscape with wider sidewalks, seating, lighting, landscaping, and opportunities for outdoor dining

RECOMMENDATIONS

TOWN CENTER RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

RECOMMENDATIONS

A mixed residential and office district intended to provide for a variety of residential buildings and small offices. The district can support 2 to 3 story multifamily buildings where parking facilities are screened from view below or behind mixed-use buildings when viewed from roadways.



DEVELOPMENT

- Establish a Town Center Residential District as a part of the zoning code update
- Encourage new development or redevelopment that complements existing character
- Encourage infill development between existing buildings



PUBLIC REALM/SPACE

- Improve neighborhood streetscape



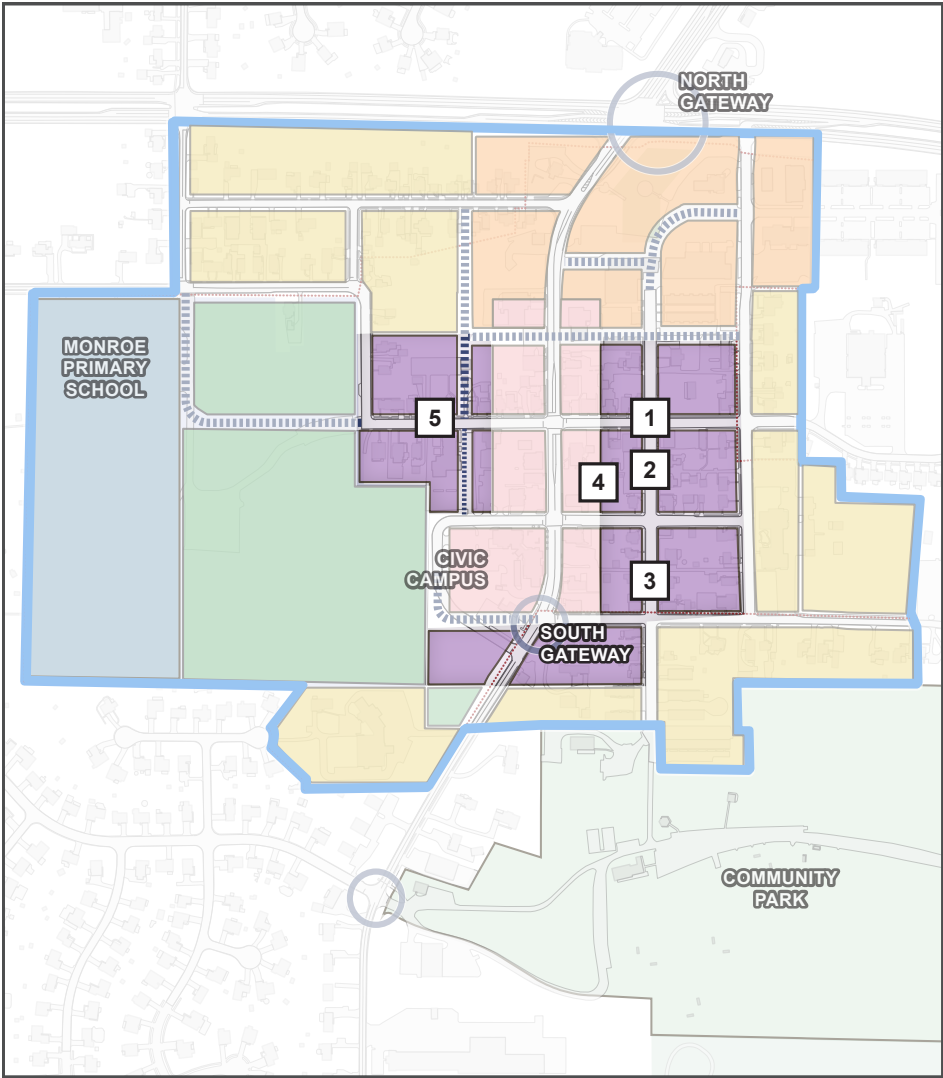
TRANSPORTATION

- Improve the intersection of Main & Lebanon Streets
- Develop an alley system with parking behind buildings
- Connect the Community Park to downtown and future public amenities
- Improve existing sidewalk network



IDENTITY/FORM

- Preserve historic buildings and character
- Establish development guidelines
- Implement wayfinding signage and update signage code requirements



▲ FIGURE X - TOWN CENTER RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT MAP

RECOMMENDATIONS

TOWN CENTER RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT (CONT.)



Preserve Historic Character revitalize the town center to re-establish the scale and character of early 1900s Monroe



Encourage Residential Infill Development that complements the surrounding character and supports a growing Downtown



Support Small Office Development that is outside of the Main Street corridor and fits in with the scale and character is the lower density of the Town Center Residential District



Develop an Alley System with shared parking behind and/or under residences and small businesses to promote accessibility, screen parking areas, and improve street frontages



Improve the Neighborhood Streetscape with wider sidewalks, seating, lighting, landscaping, and opportunities for outdoor dining

RECOMMENDATIONS

GATEWAY DISTRICT

RECOMMENDATIONS

A district with multi-story, mixed-use buildings up to 4-stories with primarily street-level retail and commercial spaces; upper story floors are either multi-family or office uses. 1 to 2 story commercial buildings shall be permitted where ground floor uses are primarily retail, dining, neighborhood grocery, or entertainment uses which contribute to the vitality of the public realm.



DEVELOPMENT

- Encourage higher density, mixed use redevelopment
- Provide different housing options to attract residents to downtown
- Encourage 'hidden' parking
- Relocate library to a more central location



PUBLIC REALM/SPACE

- Improve existing public space Veteran's Park to be more activated/functional/programmable
- Improve streetscape with a cohesive, consistent design



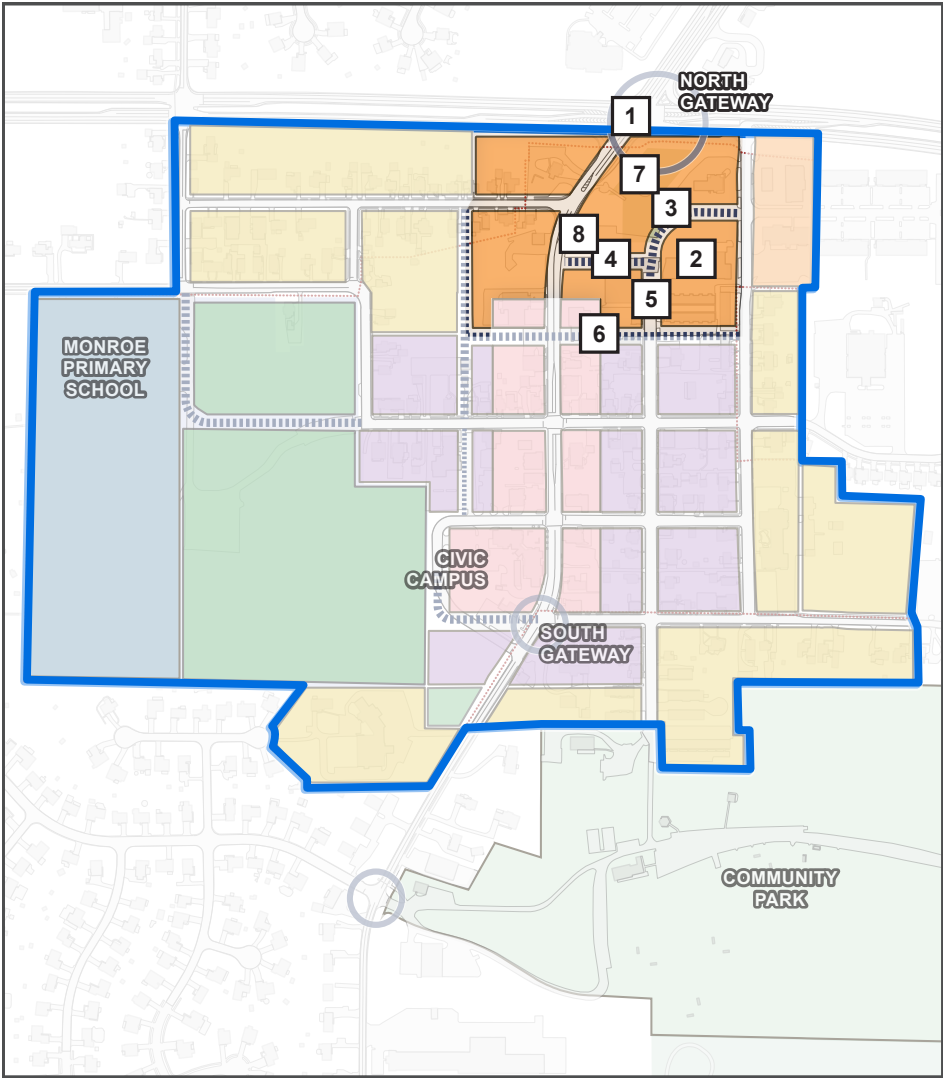
TRANSPORTATION

- Improve the intersection of SR 63 and Main St.
- Improve traffic flow through the area
- Provide sidewalk connections to surrounding areas
- Create new vehicular connections



IDENTITY/FORM

- Create a gateway at the Main and SR 63 intersection.
- Set development and architectural guidelines
- Screen Duke Energy Substation and relocate power lines when area is redeveloped



▲ FIGURE X - GATEWAY DISTRICT MAP

RECOMMENDATIONS

GATEWAY DISTRICT (CONT.)



Improve the SR 63 and Main St. Intersection to address safety and traffic flow issues while also creating a community gateway



Explore Strip Mall Redevelopment with higher density mixed-use development that will create a live, work and play environment to sustain a vibrant downtown



Encourage Shared Public Spaces to balance new development with shared public spaces for dining, events, and passive park spaces



Improve Existing Streetscape to connect the Gateway District to the Town Center with a cohesive design and pedestrian experience



Encourage Parking on Site by minimizing surface lots and using the topography of the area to build parking into the hill behind and under mixed-use developments



Improve the Street and Pedestrian Network to provide new street and pedestrian connections with surrounding areas



Honor Veterans Park by improving the park setting around and accessibility to the memorial to enhance the visitor experience



Screen the Duke Energy Substation by considering different ways of screening, including mesh graphic or decorative fencing with landscaping

RECOMMENDATIONS

DOWNTOWN MULTI-UNIT DISTRICT

RECOMMENDATIONS

A multi-unit residential district with 3 to 4 story multifamily buildings where parking facilities are screened from view below or behind and front doors are located along the primary street frontages



DEVELOPMENT

- Provide diversity of housing options that maintain small town feel and character of the Historic Downtown Core, including: garden style apartments, attached and detached Townhouses



TRANSPORTATION

- Improve the intersection of SR 63 and Britton Ln. to provide a safe pedestrian crossing and for the multi-use trail north to extend north across SR 63.
- Use alley systems for larger developments to hide parking.



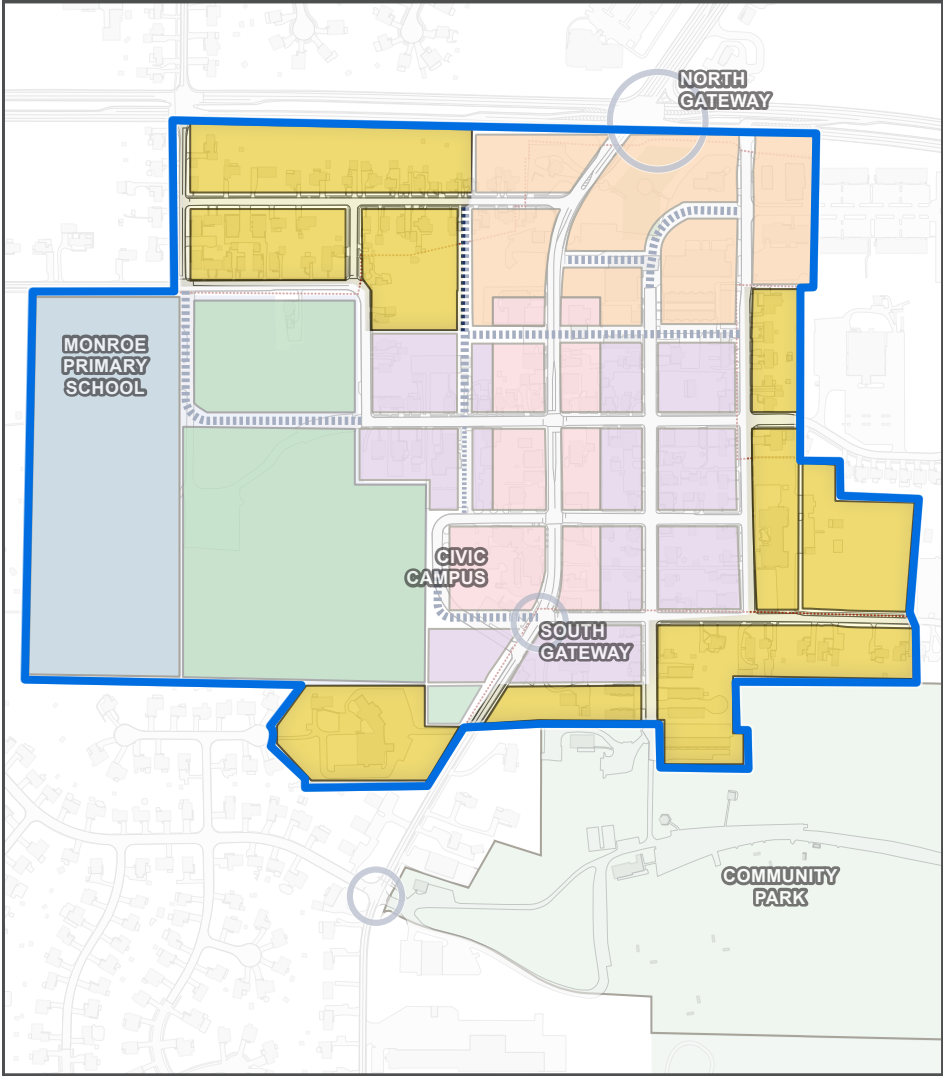
PUBLIC REALM/SPACE

- Improve streetscape to meet new recommendations
- Identify development requirements for open space and shared public spaces



IDENTITY/FORM

- Set development guidelines in consideration of setbacks, scale, parking requirements, units per acre and architecture.



▲ FIGURE X - DOWNTOWN MULTI-UNIT DISTRICT MAP

RECOMMENDATIONS

DOWNTOWN MULTI-UNIT DISTRICT (CONT.)



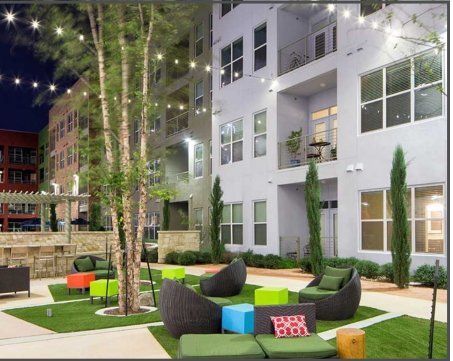
Garden Style Apartments



Attached Townhouses



Detached Townhouses



Identify Development Requirements for Open Space



Encourage an Alley System that can hide residential parking and provide a secondary access route for residents



Improve Streetscape in residential areas that helps calm traffic and promotes walkability

RECOMMENDATIONS
PARKS & RECREATION DISTRICT

PARKS & RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS

A district devoted to parks, open space, natural resource areas, recreation facilities, and other related compatible public uses owned by governmental, private or other nonprofit institutions.



DEVELOPMENT

- Develop Partnership with School
- Provide space for community facilities (e.g. community center, pool, sports fields)
- Provide amenities that support both the downtown and the school district
- Incorporate stormwater management best practices



PUBLIC REALM/SPACE

- Extend/Connect to the Town Center's central gathering space & festival Street
- Create a nature trail
- Provide a variety of play/recreational experiences for all ages
- Provide a public amphitheater



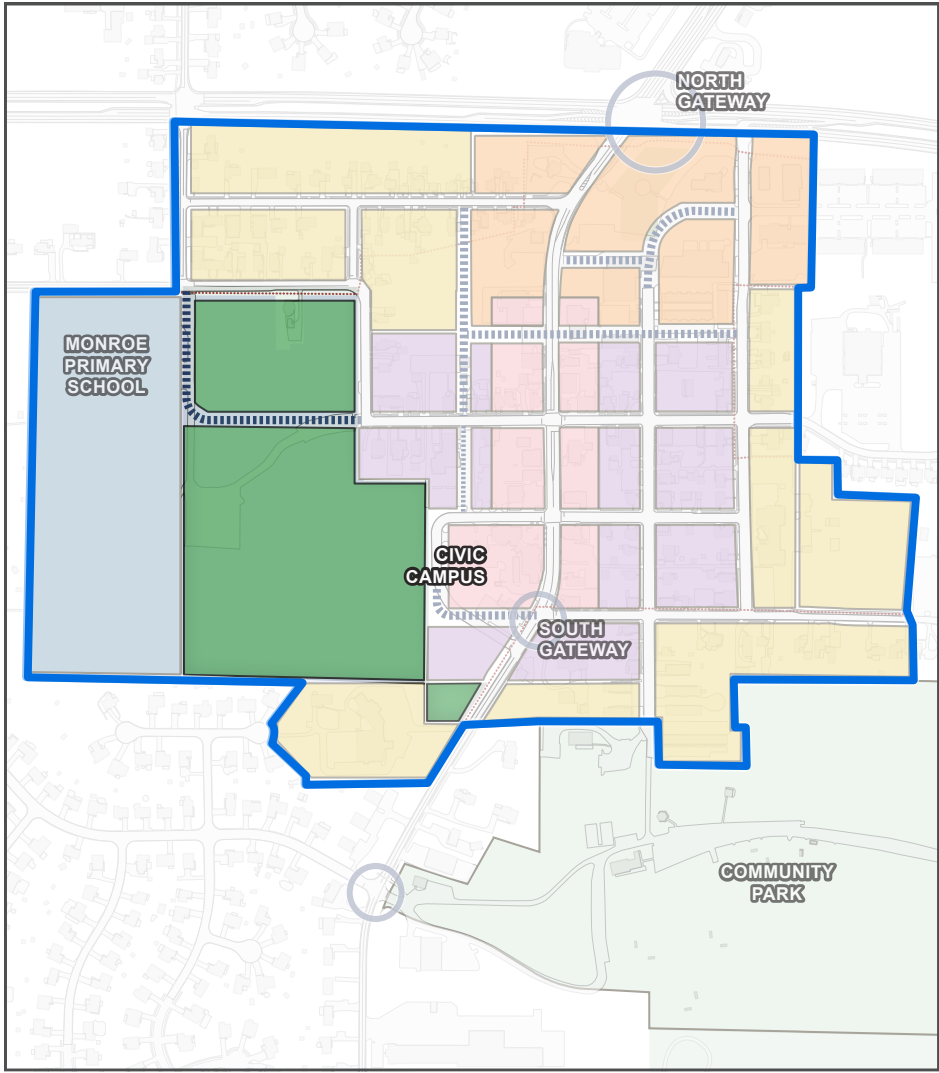
TRANSPORTATION

- Extend Elm Street to connect to Britton Ln.
- Provide space for public parking
- Create an off-road multi-use trail that connects from north to south



IDENTITY/FORM

- Define open space to be preserved
- Create a natural park setting
- Provide a space for large events and activities



▲ FIGURE X - MAIN STREET DISTRICT ZONE MAP

RECOMMENDATIONS
PARKS & RECREATION DISTRICT (CONT.)



Provide Space for Community Facilities to support the needs of residents and students



Create a Nature Trail by utilizing existing open space and potential stormwater retention area to create a unique amenity



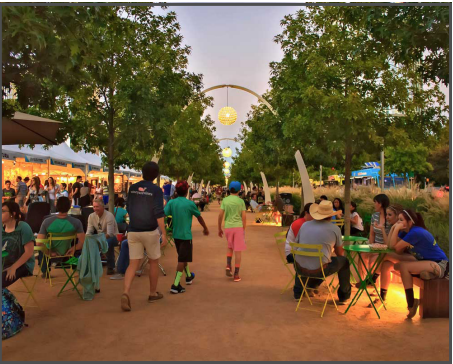
Provide a Public Amphitheater that can be used year-round for events



Provide Space for Public Parking that is central and easily walkable to support downtown development and events



Create an Off-Road Multi-Use Trail to provide a safe route connecting downtown, surrounding neighborhoods, and public space



Extend the Town Center's Festival Street to promote connectivity between the downtown core and new recreational amenities



Provide a Variety of Play Experiences that are unique, complement the other city parks, and cater to all ages to promote downtown as a destination

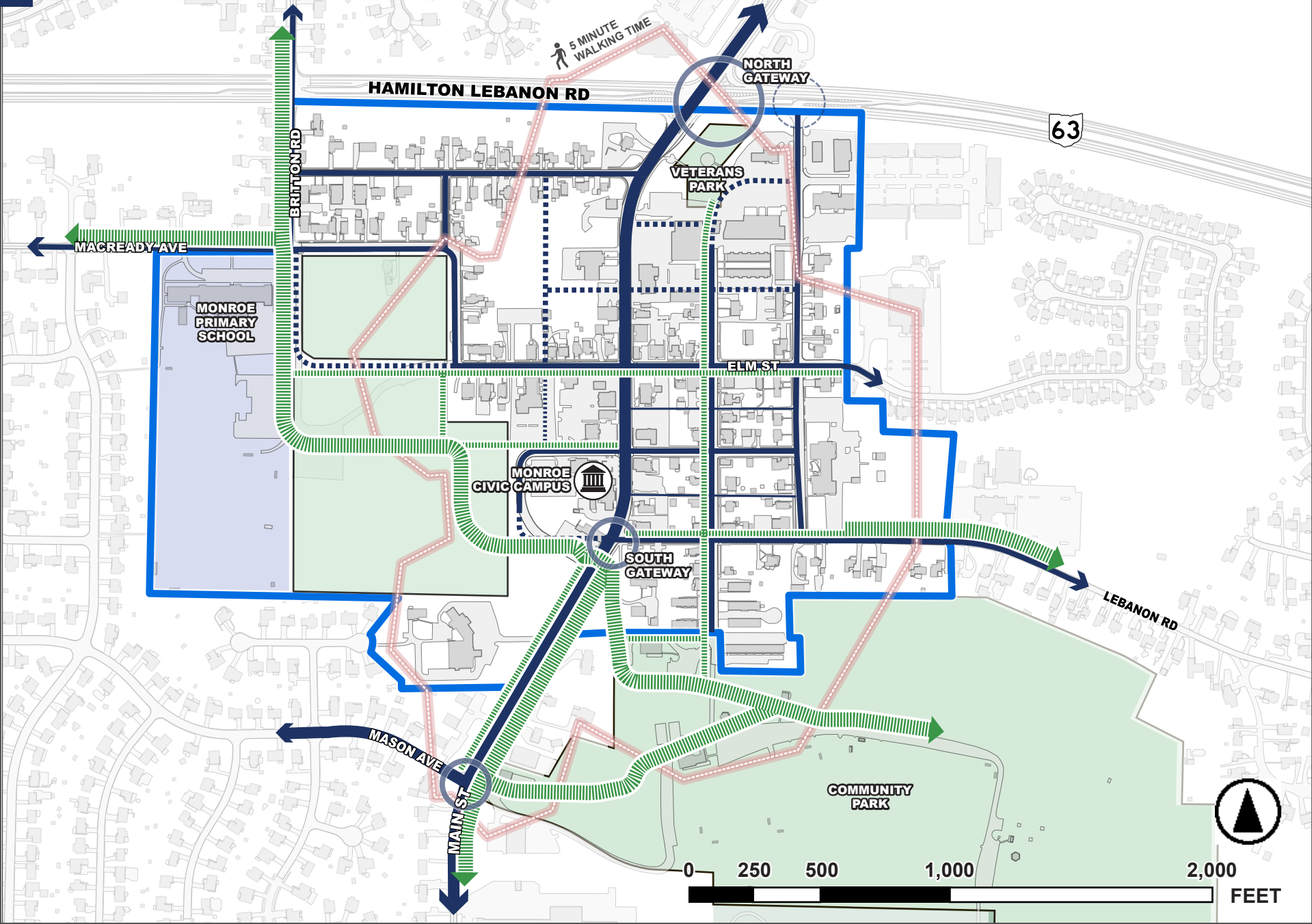


Provide a Space for Large Events and Activities by preserving some existing open space that can accommodate large crowds and pop-up vendors

RECOMMENDATIONS

TRANSPORTATION & CONNECTIVITY PLAN

FIGURE X - TRANSPORTATION & CONNECTIVITY MAP



LEGEND



NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTOR

- Minimum 12' wide off-road path or sidewalk on one side of the street to be used as a multi-use trail
- Amenity strip or landscape buffer with street trees, pedestrian-scale lighting, signage, and seating
- No on-street parking



PEDESTRIAN CONNECTOR

- Minimum 8' sidewalk on one side of the street
- Amenity strip or landscape buffer with street trees, pedestrian-scale lighting, signage, and seating
- Curb bump-outs at intersections
- Maintain on-street parking wherever possible



MAIN STREET CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS

- Minimum 10'-12' wide sidewalks with paving pattern
- Curb bump-outs
- Minimal on-street parking
- High-visibility crosswalks
- Outdoor dining areas
- Street trees
- Pedestrian-scale lighting
- Seatings areas
- Landscaping



IMPROVED RESIDENTIAL STREETS

- Minimum 6' wide sidewalk
- Curb bump-outs at intersections
- On-street parking where possible
- Landscape strip with street trees, pedestrian-scale lighting, signage, and seating



POTENTIAL VEHICULAR CONNECTIONS

There are opportunities to expand the current street grid system to better connect current and future development, and improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation.



INTERSECTION SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Consider different options to improve these key intersections to encourage pedestrian connectivity, increase safety, and establish gateways into downtown.



5 MINUTE WALKING TIME

Downtown Monroe is very walkable as most areas are accessible by foot within 5 minutes from City Hall. Making centralized public parking an asset in this area.

KEY POINTS

- Modifying the SR 63 intersection to address the safety and traffic issues is a key project with long term benefits to Monroe and the region.
- A redesign of the SR 63 intersection is also an opportunity to create a gateway into the downtown area.
- Streetscape improvements to the Main Street corridor will create a sense of place for residents and visitors. The streetscape improvements should be done in conjunction with other corridor improvements that look at traffic flow, turn lanes and traffic light signals and timing.
- Improving the Main Street intersections at Lebanon and at the Community Park are an opportunity for introducing gateways into downtown while also improving traffic flow through downtown.
- A neighborhood connector trail from the Community Park through the City Hall Campus and crossing the school property to Britton Road, with links to secondary paths would create a very pedestrian friendly downtown. This connector also looks to make the Britton Road and SR 63 intersection as the SR 63 pedestrian crossing. This intersection is better suited for creating a safe crossing versus the Main Street Intersection.
- New development should consider how to expand the street grid.

RECOMMENDATIONS

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE ELEMENTS

RECOMMENDATIONS

WIDE SIDEWALKS

Wide sidewalks are essential components of a pedestrian-friendly urban environment. They provide ample space for pedestrians to walk comfortably, accommodate outdoor seating for cafes and shops, and encourage pedestrian activity and social interaction. Additionally, wide sidewalks can enhance safety by reducing conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. Incorporating a paving pattern can help enhance the sense of place of the Downtown Area.



HIGH VISIBILITY CROSSWALKS

High visibility crosswalks are marked pedestrian crossings designed to increase visibility and awareness among motorists and pedestrians. They typically feature bold markings, contrasting colors, and enhanced signage to alert drivers to the presence of pedestrians and encourage yielding. High visibility crosswalks improve pedestrian safety by reducing the risk of collisions and enhancing the predictability of pedestrian movements.



CURB BUMP OUTS

Curb bump outs, also known as curb extensions or bulb-outs, are sidewalk extensions that protrude into the roadway at intersections or mid-block crossings. They serve to shorten pedestrian crossing distances, improve visibility between pedestrians and motorists, and slow vehicular traffic. Curb bump outs enhance pedestrian safety by reducing the risk of conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles and create opportunities for additional landscaping or amenities.



AMENITY OR LANDSCAPED BUFFER

Buffers that are landscaped or paved that include street trees, signage, and lighting along sidewalks enhance the visual appeal of the area while providing a natural barrier between pedestrians and vehicular traffic, improving safety. Moreover, landscaped buffers can contribute to environmental sustainability by absorbing stormwater runoff, reducing heat island effects, and providing habitats for wildlife.



PEDESTRIAN SCALE LIGHTS

Pedestrian scale lights illuminate sidewalks and pedestrian areas, enhancing safety and visibility for pedestrians. They create a welcoming atmosphere, encouraging pedestrian activity into the evening by providing a sense of security in urban environments. Their lower height and softer light also minimize light pollution and glare.

RECOMMENDATIONS

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE ELEMENTS (CONT.)

OUTDOOR ON-STREET DINING

Outdoor on-street dining areas, typically located along sidewalks or in designated parking spaces, provide opportunities for restaurants and cafes to expand their seating capacity and attract customers. These spaces contribute to the vitality and vibrancy of the streetscape, fostering a lively and social atmosphere. Outdoor dining also activates the sidewalk, increasing foot traffic and supporting local businesses.



PARKLETS

Parklets are small, temporary or permanent outdoor spaces created by converting curbside parking spaces into mini-parks or seating areas. They offer opportunities for relaxation, socializing, and enjoying the outdoors in urban environments where green space may be limited. Parklets contribute to placemaking efforts, beautify the streetscape, and provide valuable public amenities.



SEATING AREAS

Seating areas, such as benches, seating walls, or movable chairs, provide opportunities for pedestrians to rest, socialize, and observe their surroundings. They enhance the functionality and comfort of the streetscape, encourage people to linger longer, and support a sense of community and belonging. Seating areas also contribute to the inclusivity and accessibility of public spaces by accommodating individuals of all ages and abilities.



WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE

Wayfinding signage helps pedestrians navigate the urban environment by providing directional information, points of interest, and distance markers. Clear and well-designed wayfinding signage enhances the pedestrian experience, reduces confusion, and promotes walkability. It also contributes to the identity and character of the streetscape and supports economic development by guiding visitors to local businesses and attractions.



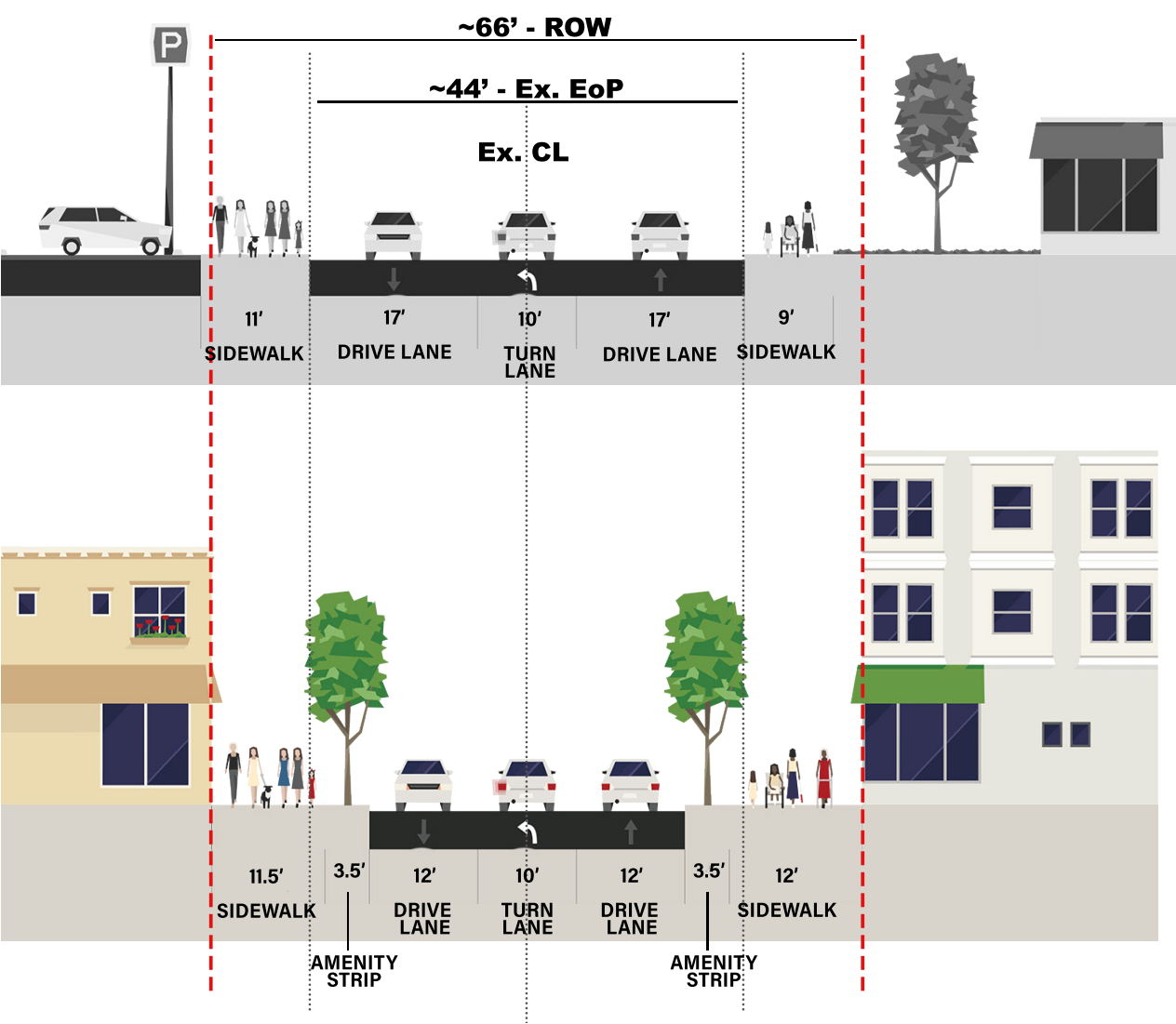
RECOMMENDATIONS

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

MAIN STREET CORRIDOR

PROPOSED WITH A TURN LANE

- 11'-12' minimum sidewalks with paving pattern
- 4.5' Amenity Strip with street trees, landscaping, lighting, and site furnishings
- 11' drive lane with a 10' turn lane; no on-street parking
- Bump-outs at intersections where possible



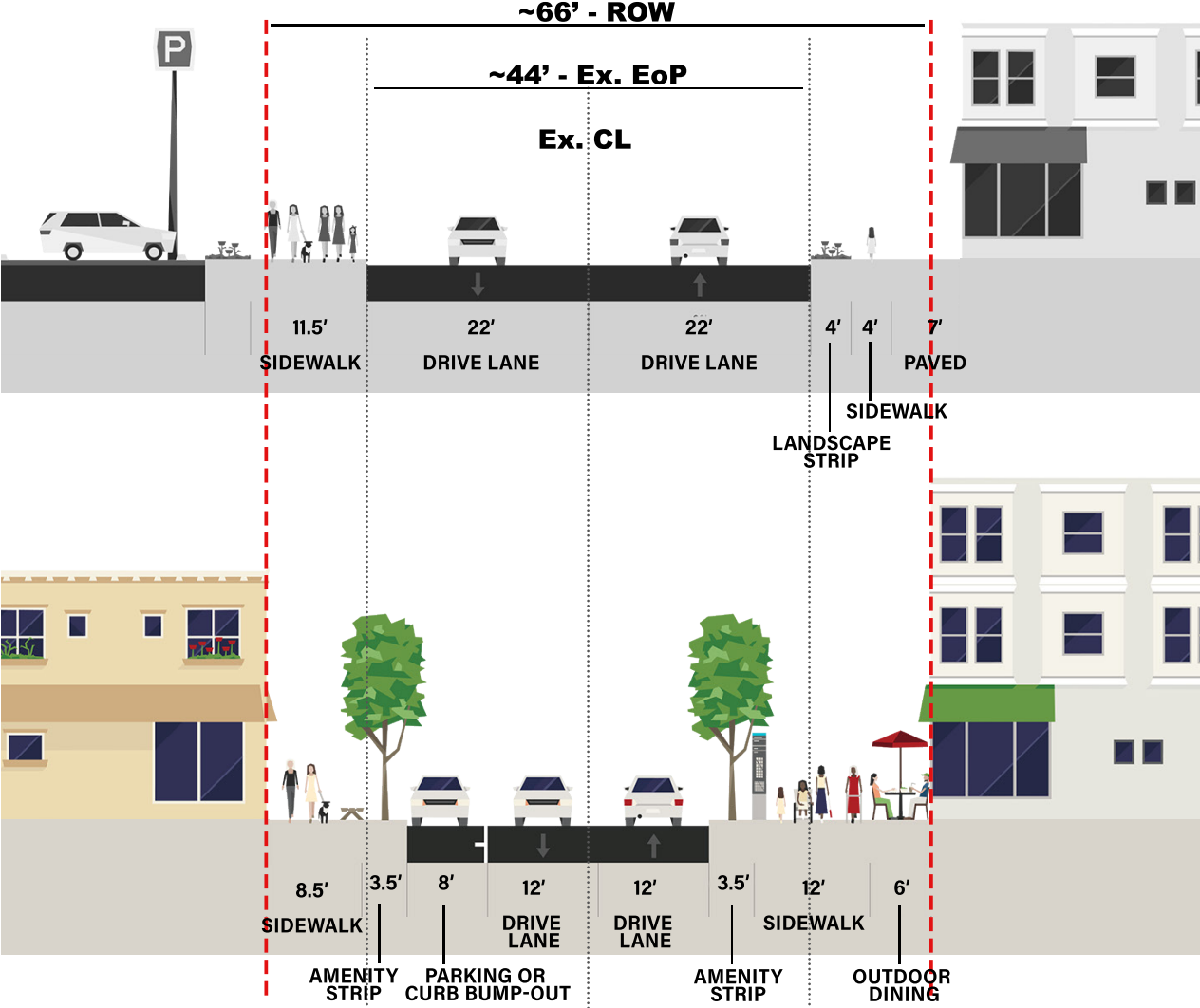
RECOMMENDATIONS

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS (CONT.)

MAIN STREET CORRIDOR

PROPOSED WITHOUT A TURN LANE

- 8.5' - 12' minimum sidewalks with paving pattern
- Opportunity to include a 6' outdoor dining area within the right-of-way
- 4.5' Amenity Strip with street trees, landscaping, lighting, signage, and site furnishings
- 11' drive lane with a 10' turn lane
- 8' bump-outs for parklets/outdoor dining areas or on-street parking is possible where no turn lane is needed
- Bump-outs at intersections where possible



RECOMMENDATIONS

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS (CONT.)

NIEGHBORHOOD CONNECTOR

MACREADY ST., BRITTON LN., MAIN ST.,
LEBANON RD.

- 12' wide multi-use trail on one side of street with a 6' minimum sidewalk on the other
- 4' minimum landscape/amenity strip buffer with lawn, street trees, signage, lighting, and site furnishings
- 10' - 11' drive lanes; no on-street parking
- Bump-outs at intersections where they do not interfere with emergency vehicle turning movements



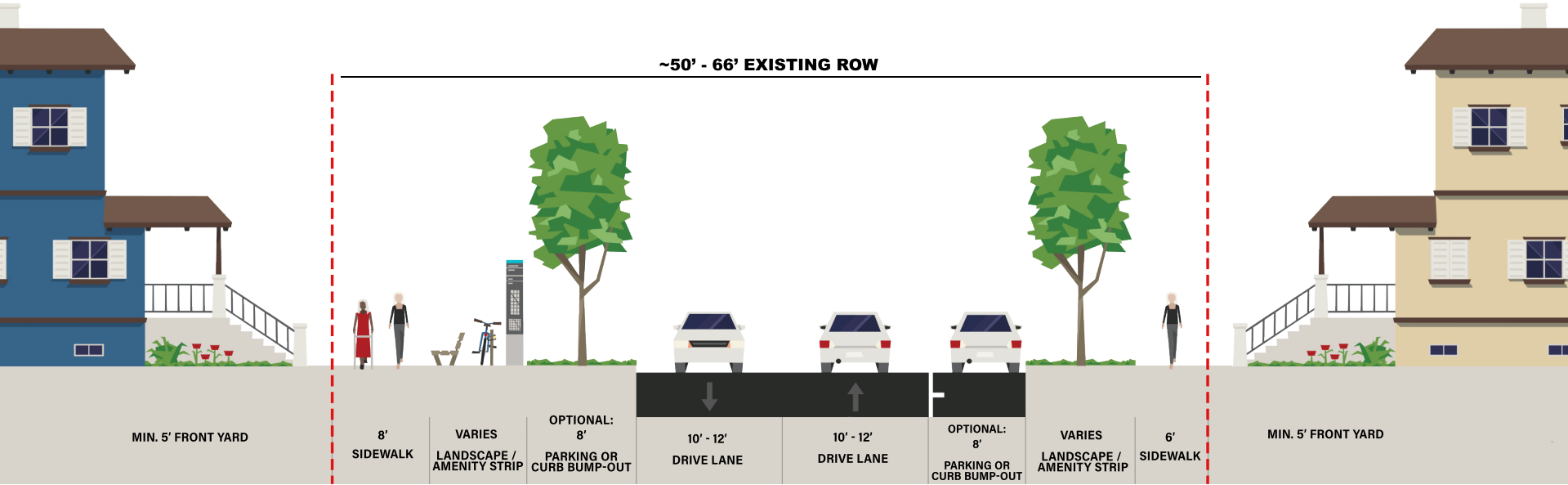
RECOMMENDATIONS

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS (CONT.)

PEDESTRIAN CONNECTOR

ELM ST., OLD ST., A. SETH JOHNSTON WY.,
LEBANON RD.

- 6' - 8' wide sidewalks
- 4' minimum landscape/amenity strip buffer with lawn, street trees, signage, lighting, and site furnishings.
- 10' - 12' drive lanes
- 8' bump-outs for parklets/expanded landscape buffer or on-street parking on either side of the street
- Bump-outs at intersections where they do not interfere with emergency vehicle turning movements

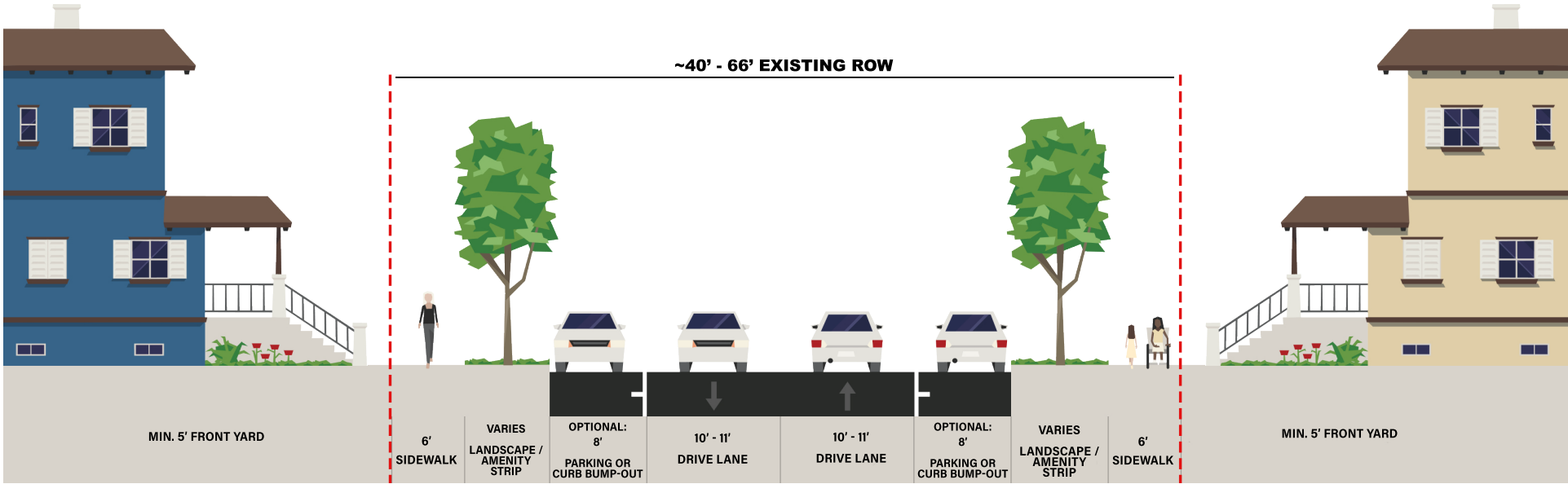


RECOMMENDATIONS
DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE (CONT.)

IMPROVED RESIDENTIAL

OHIO AVE., EAST AVE., CHURCH ST.

- 6' minimum wide sidewalks
- Varied width landscape/amenity strip buffer with lawn, street trees, signage, lighting, and site furnishings.
- 10' - 11' drive lanes
- 8' bump-outs for parklets/expanded landscape buffer or on-street parking on either side of the street where space allows
- Bump-outs at intersections where they do not interfere with emergency vehicle turning movements



RECOMMENDATIONS
FUTURE DOWNTOWN VISION

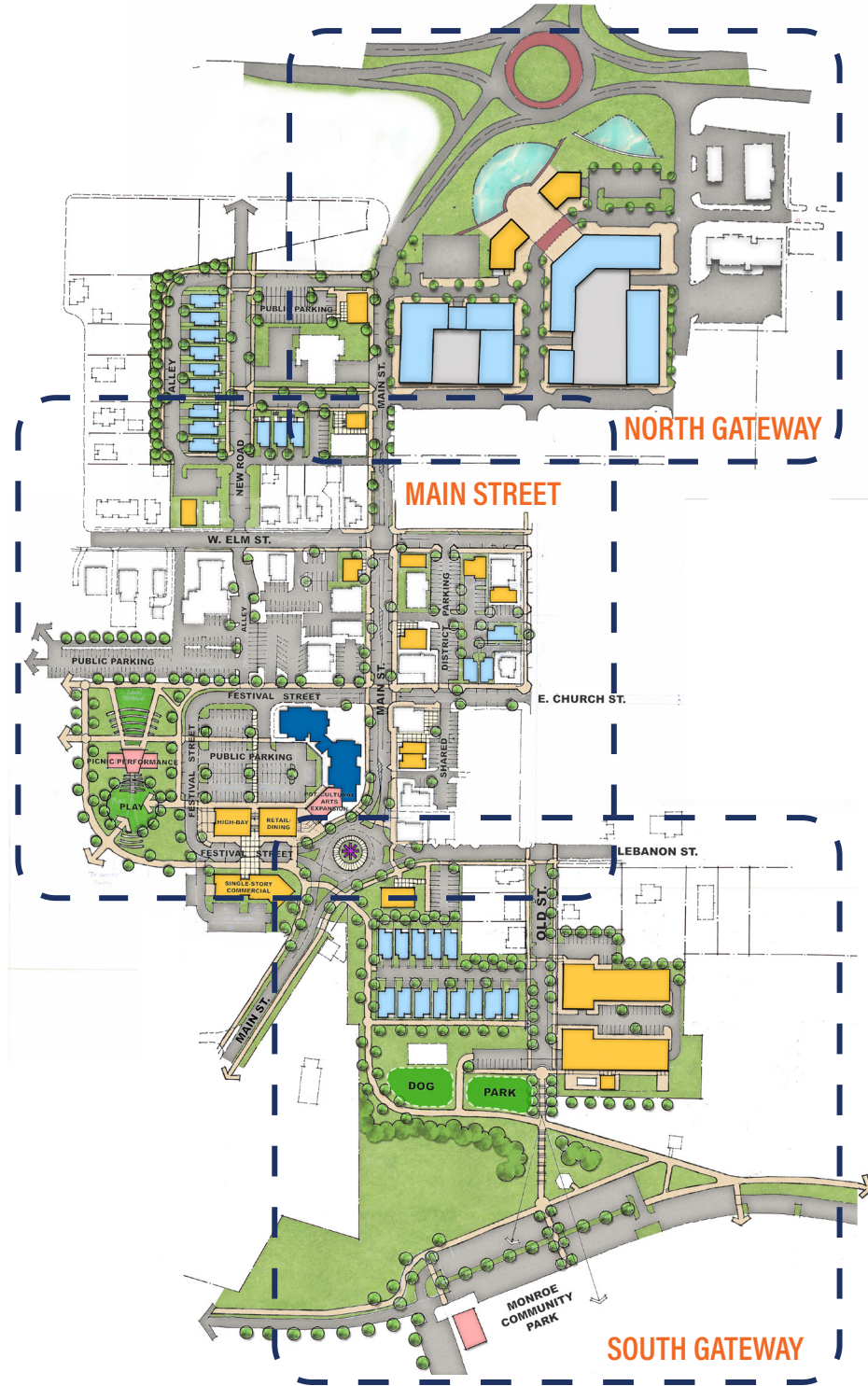
DESIGN CONCEPTS

WHAT THEY ARE

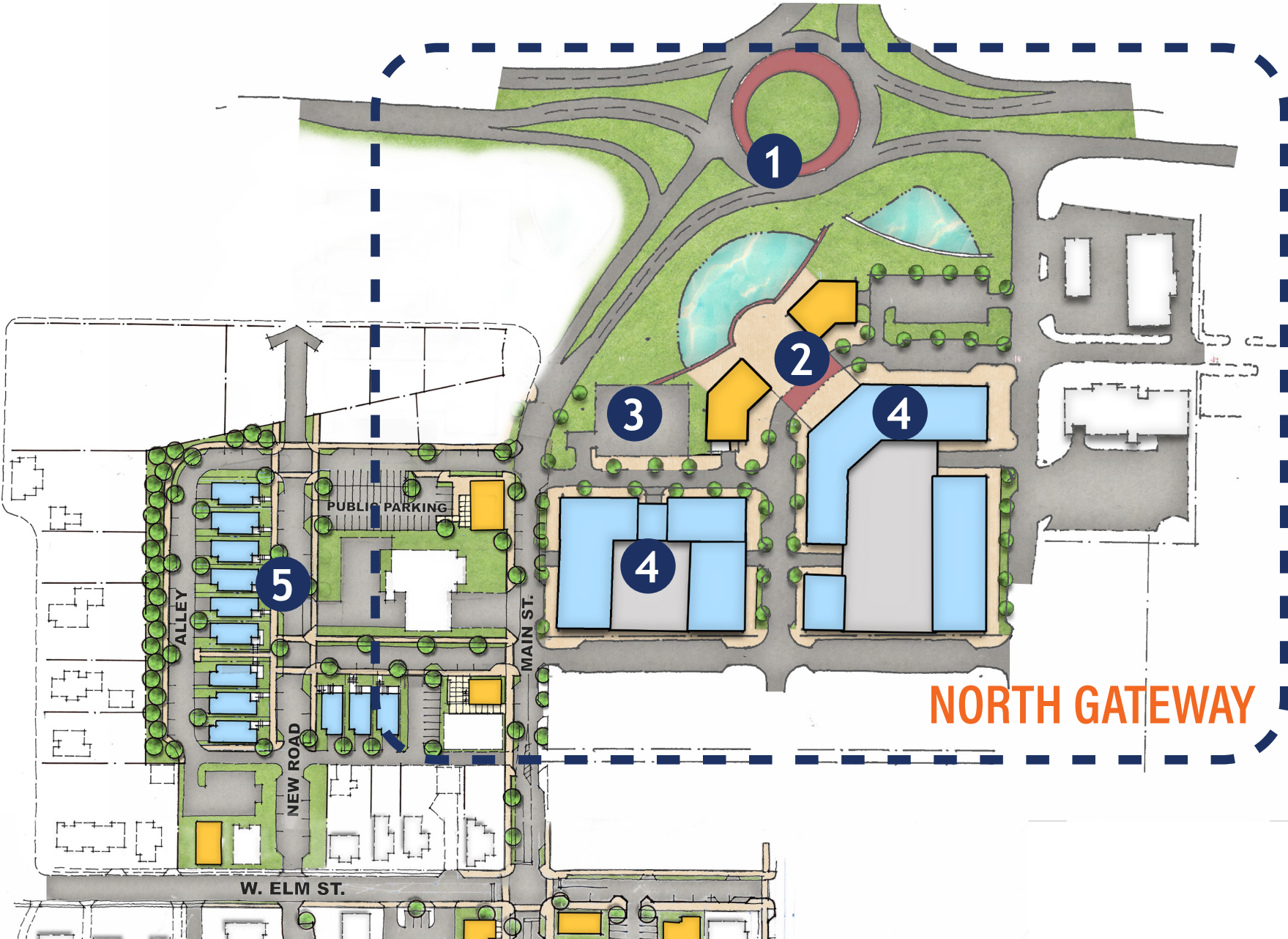
- » DESIGN CONCEPTS ARE A WAY OF TRYING OUT THE MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS AND DETERMINING IF ANY ADJUSTMENTS ARE NEEDED.
- » THEY PROVIDE A WAY TO VISUALIZE THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MASTER PLAN AND SHOWCASE WHAT LONG TERM FUTURE DEVELOPMENT COULD LOOK LIKE IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA.

WHAT THEY ARE NOT

- » THE DESIGN CONCEPTS ARE NOT CURRENT PROJECTS THAT WILL BE EXECUTED NOW. MOREOVER, DEVELOPMENT IN DOWNTOWN MONROE WILL HAPPEN SLOWLY OVER TIME.



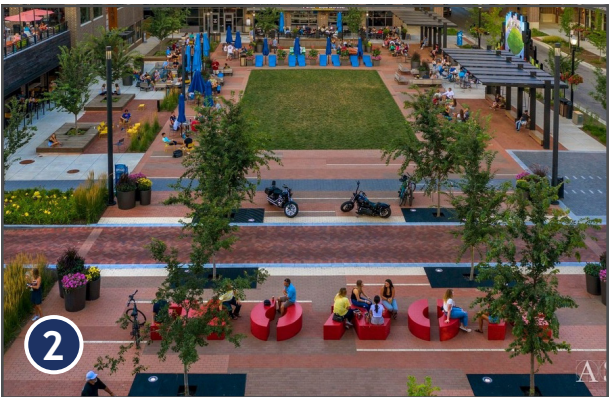
RECOMMENDATIONS
FUTURE DOWNTOWN VISION (CONT.)



RECOMMENDATIONS
FUTURE DOWNTOWN VISION (CONT.)

NORTH GATEWAY TEST
CONCEPT POTENTIALS:

- SR 63 intersection improvements could be integrated with the redevelopment of a "Monroe Center" area north of Elm Street to create a northern gateway.
- An improved Veteran's Memorial can be integrated into a new public plaza that connects to an extended Old Street.
- Screening the Duke Substation with natural landscaping can help improve the overall aesthetic of the streetscape and northern gateway into the Town Center. Finding a way to incorporate some sort of public art installation can also help increase the sense of place and contribute to the identity of Downtown Monroe.
- 4 to 5-story mixed-use buildings at the base of Old Street could include ground floor retail & dining spaces with multi-family housing options above and underground parking below and behind street-level commercial storefronts.



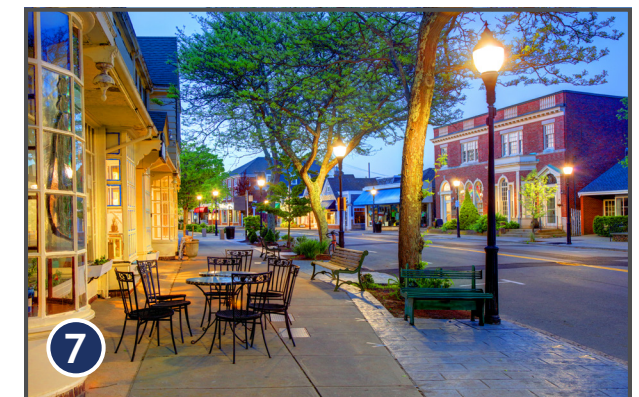
RECOMMENDATIONS



RECOMMENDATIONS

MAIN STREET TEST CONCEPT POTENTIALS:

- Cultural and recreational amenities such as a multi-use pavilion, playground, and outdoor festival and event space could be developed as part of an expanded **Civic Center Campus** which would serve as an every-day anchor for families seeking greater walkability and convenience. This could connect to a new park space to the west with walking trails and stormwater retention areas.
- Expanded parking at the Civic Center Campus and behind existing commercial buildings would allow for the development of surface parking lots along South Main. This infill development would create a more connected and vibrant Main Street and provide opportunities for additional retail and dining venues.
- Intersection improvements at Main Street and Lebanon Street could create a true gateway into the downtown while improving traffic flow and pedestrian safety.



CIVIC CAMPUS AREA
CONCEPT RENDERINGS



▲ BIRDS EYE VIEW OF
POTENTIAL CIVIC CAMPUS



VIEW OF POTENTIAL INFILL AND
STREETSCAPE ALONG MAIN STREET ▶



◀ VIEW OF POTENTIAL
FESTIVAL STREET

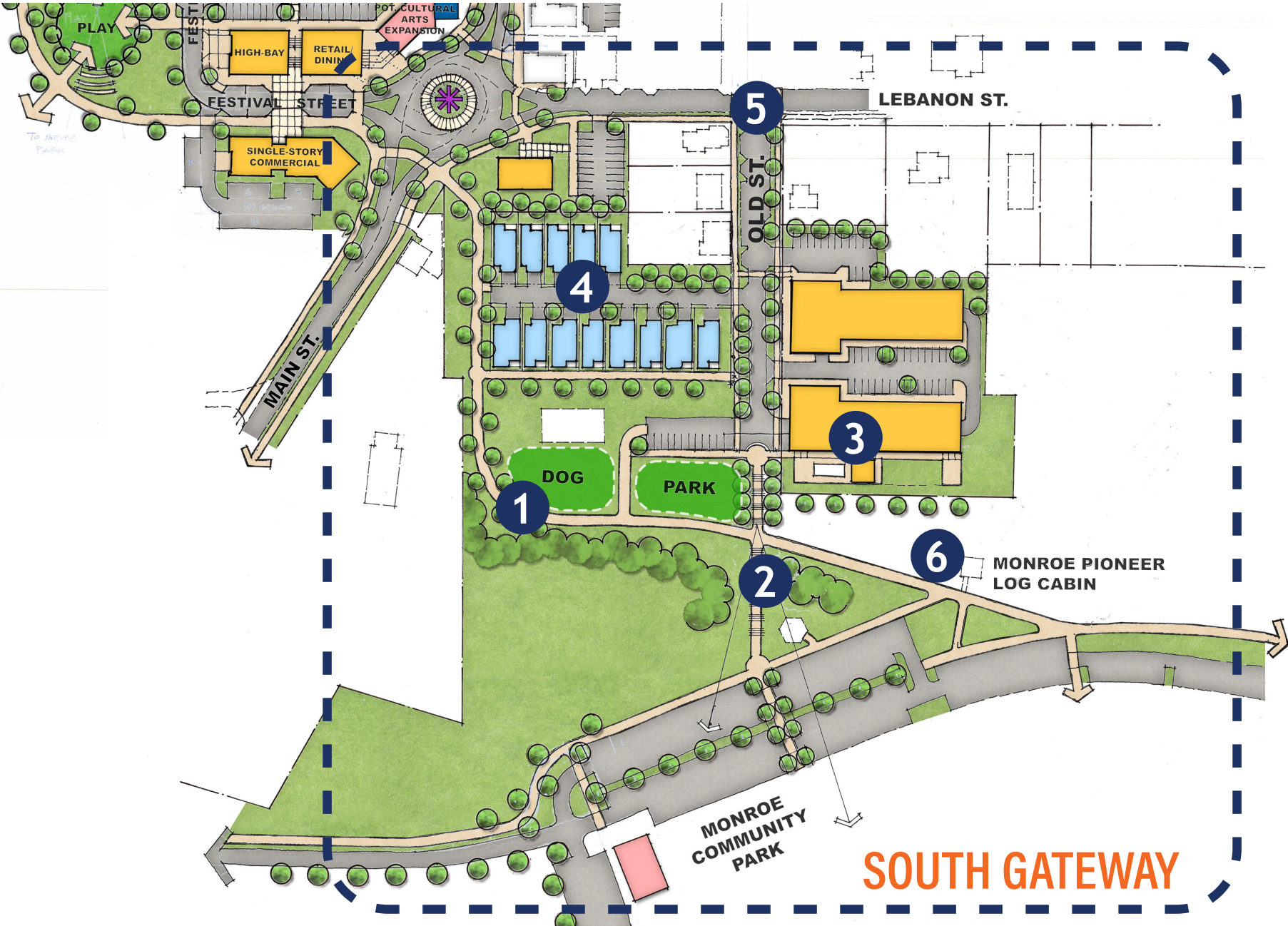


▲ VIEW OF POTENTIAL LEBANON STREET ROUNDABOUT



▲ VIEW OF POTENTIAL AMPHITHEATER & PLAYGROUND AREA

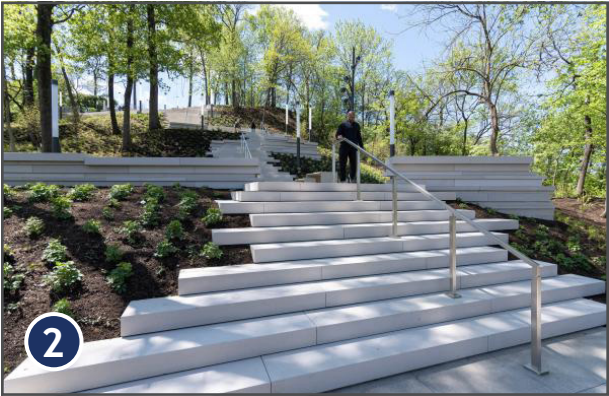
RECOMMENDATIONS
FUTURE DOWNTOWN VISION (CONT.)



RECOMMENDATIONS
FUTURE DOWNTOWN VISION (CONT.)

SOUTH GATEWAY TEST
CONCEPT POTENTIALS:

- Redevelopment along the southeast corner and old street enable the extension of an accessible multi-purpose path that connects the community park, Civic Center, & school property to adjoining neighborhoods.
- Improving the connection between the Community Park and Old Street will help increase walkability.
- Expanded parking at the Community Park serves as peak hour and event parking for the Town Center area.
- Residential In-fill along Lebanon & Old Streets increases Town Center business patronage and enables the extension of sidewalks from the Community Park to the North Gateway area.
- Garden-style apartments and attached or detached townhouses could provide a wider variety of Downtown housing options that maintain the small town feel and character of the Historic Downtown Core.





SECTION 6: **IMPLEMENTATION**

OVERVIEW

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

The implementation plan functions as the blueprint for executing the goals and objectives outlined in the master plan.

THE PURPOSE OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN IS TO PROVIDE THE CITY WITH A FRAMEWORK TO DEFINE THE WHO, WHAT, WHEN, HOW AND WHY OF A PROJECT OR INITIATIVE BEFORE MOVING INTO THE EXECUTION PHASE.

ORGANIZATIONAL STEPS

- Identify a core group to lead implementation
- Develop an annual strategy identifying the specific tasks and goals to be completed that year.
- Meet on a regular basis to check on progress, re-assess action steps and resource allocation.
- Identify champions within and outside of city government who can promote and lobby for downtown and specific projects.
- Provide the City Council and CIC with bi-annual updates and coordinate with them on action steps and efforts.

MATRIX

The following pages provide a matrix that outlines the action plan to turn strategy into specific tasks.

RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTION STEPS	TIMEFRAME	CURRENT PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(S)	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, INCENTIVES & TOOLS
TRANSPORTATION - Improve multi-modal connectivity and safety						
Improve access into the Downtown District along the SR 63 and North Main Street Corridors Study, design, and construct intersection improvements to improve vehicular and pedestrian safety, improve connectivity and transform the visual quality of the north gateways into the Downtown area	Conduct a Study SR 63 / Main Street corridor to identify existing deficiencies and safety issues, necessary improvements, and identify recommendations and design alternatives which improve vehicular and pedestrian safety while transforming the visual quality of North Gateway to the Downtown District between SR 63 and Elm Street.	1-3 years	High	Public Works and Engineering	ODOT, OKI, Butler County	ODOT's Highway Safety Improvement Program / County Highway Safety Program
	Develop detailed design plans and funding strategies for intersection improvements based on the previously conducted study	3-5 years	High	Development and Engineering	ODOT, OKI, Butler County	Ohio Department of Development's Community Development Critical Infrastructure program
	Construct intersection improvements	5-10 years	High	Public Works	ODOT, OKI, Butler County	
Improve access into the Downtown District along the South Main Street Corridor with emphasis on the Community Park and South District Gateway at Lebanon Street Study, design, and construct roadway improvements which improve traffic flow, increase vehicular and pedestrian safety, and establish a more inviting southern gateway into the Downtown area	Conduct a South Main Street Corridor Study to assess the Lebanon Street and Community Park Entrance intersections and identify recommendations and design alternatives which improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, consolidate curb cuts, maximize on-street parking and improve vehicular flow between the Community Park and Elm Street. Can be done in conjunction with a Downtown Transportation Study.	3-5 years	Low	Development, Public Works, Engineering	Butler County, OKI	Transportation Improvement District, ODOT Highway Safety Improvement Program
	Develop design plans and funding strategies for improvements based on recommendations outlined in the previously conducted Intersection Study	5-10 years	Low	Development and Engineering	Butler County	
	Construct intersection improvements	10-15 years	Low	Public Works	Butler County	
Improve Pedestrian Safety and Traffic Flow in the Downtown Area Prioritizing Safety as a Culture	Conduct a Downtown Transportation Study - look for opportunities to do with other transportation planning projects.	1-3 years	High	Development, Public Works, and Engineering	ODOT, OKI, Butler County, ODSA, Ohio Public Works Commission	Safe Streets for all, Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program, Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), CMAQ, Local Transportation Improvements Program, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Roadwork Development Grant Program
	"Develop a Multi-Modal Transportation, Connectivity, and Safety Plan with a phased implementation approach that considers: - Existing and projected traffic patterns - Future development impacts, -On and Off-Street Parking Availability - Potential New streets/alleys - Prioritizing walkability and pedestrian safety - Improving connections between Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods"	1-3 years	High	Development, Public Works, and Engineering		
	Develop design plans for roadway improvements in conjunction with streetscape improvements. Also look to do in conjunction with other utility projects.	3-5 years	High	Development, Public Works, and Engineering		
	Implement in phases/as funding opportunities become available	5-10 years	High	Development, Public Works, and Engineering		



IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (CONT.)

RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTION STEPS	TIMEFRAME	CURRENT PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(S)	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, INCENTIVES & TOOLS
TRANSPORTATION - Improve multi-modal connectivity and safety						
Develop a Multi-Use Trail System Improve connectivity by providing a multi-use trail that connects Downtown to the surrounding community, schools, and recreation areas.	Conduct a Feasibility Study to determine trail routes and identify preferred alignments	1-3 years	High	Development, Public Works, and Engineering	School District, ODOT, OKI, Butler County, ODNR	Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program, Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), CMAQ, Nature Works, Clean Ohio Trial Funds, Recreational Trial Program
	Develop design plans based on the preferred alignment	3-5 years	High	Development, Public Works, and Engineering		
	Implement in phases/as funding opportunities become available	3-10 years	High	Development, Public Works, and Engineering		
Provide Public Parking to Support a Growing Downtown	Formalize solutions for downtown parking for community events. Look at potentials for the following: Identification or Expansion of Publicly available lots at the Government Center, Community Park, Monroe Primary School Property and other sites in the SR 63 Gateway area and along alleys north of Elm Street; Enhanced / Expanded on-street Parking; Shared parking agreements (coordinate available shared parking times with local property owners); Parking Directory / Signage solutions; Peak hour and Event Day Shuttles from remote lots.	1-3 years	High	Development, Public Works, Engineering, Police, and Fire Department	School District, Local Property Owners with larger lots.	TIF, Special Improvement District
	Develop a Public Parking and Management Plan to address types of parking and locations for new facilities, such as surface lots.	1-3 years	High	Development	Local Businesses, MACIC	
	Implement plan and construct new facilities as needed, along with the development of new public spaces/amenities, or with roadway/streetscape improvements	3-10 years	As development progresses	Development, Economic Development, and Engineering	MACIC	



IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (CONT.)

RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTION STEPS	TIMEFRAME	CURRENT PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(S)	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, INCENTIVES & TOOLS
DEVELOPMENT - Expand dining, shopping, living, and entertainment options						
Create a Main Street Overlay District Adopt new Zoning Code regulations to ensure new and redevelopment projects align with recommendations and vision established in the Monroe Downtown Master Plan	Develop recommendations for a Downtown Overlay Zone that aligns with the Downtown Master Plan	1 year	High	Development		
	Amend Zoning Code to include the Downtown Overlay Zone	1 year	High	Development		
Encourage and Attract Development that Meets the Downtown Plan's Vision Develop and implement a plan to promote new development, redevelopment, and revitalization projects in order to create a vibrant Downtown with a wider a range of businesses	Develop a CIC Strategic Plan that includes funding strategy, budget, top priorities, and an implementation plan.	1 year	High	Economic Development, MACIC	City Council, School District	Create a New Community Authority (NCA)
	Develop available City properties and Private Properties that meet the vision for downtown. Can include mixed use development and public recreation/event spaces.	1-3 years	High	City Council, Development, Economic Development	Local Businesses, Private Developers (via RFP or recruitment), MACIC, School District	Tax Increment Financing, State & Local Development Assistance Grants, In-kind services and support
	Develop an economic and development incentive policy that supports new and existing programs for new, small, and local businesses such as tax incentives, low-interest loans, and grant programs for property improvements.	1-3 years	High	City Council, Economic Development	MACIC	
	Continue engagement with existing Downtown property owners and businesses	Ongoing	High	Economic Development, MACIC	Local Businesses	
	Consider participation in the Ohio Main Street Program	1 year	High	Development	MACIC, Heritage Ohio	Ohio Main Street Program
	Identify a list of development opportunities, including an action plan. This includes opportunities to solicit requests for proposals (RFP) for development.	Ongoing	High	Development, Economic Development	MACIC, Developers	Developers (Requests for Proposals)
Encourage Infill Development on Main Street	Identify vacant and underutilized lots for development. Work with MACIC and developers to develop properties.	Ongoing	Medium	Development, Economic Development	MACIC, Developers	
	Streamline permitting processes for infill projects	1 year	High	Development		
	Create incentives for highly desired projects; offer density bonuses or expedited approvals for mixed-use developments	1 year	High	Development, Economic Development	Existing property Owners & Developers	



IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (CONT.)

RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTION STEPS	TIMEFRAME	CURRENT PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(S)	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, INCENTIVES & TOOLS
DEVELOPMENT - Expand dining, shopping, living, and entertainment options						
Develop Downtown Design Guidelines (Architectural & Site) Adopt standards that ensures new development fits in with the desired character of each zone and recalls the history of Downtown	Separate standards on top of Overlay District (Are either a priority of the City if they are such a low priority?)	3-5 years	Medium	Development	Architectural and Design firms	Ohio Historic Connection
Create a Special Improvement District (SID)	Create inappropriate long-term financing structure, such as a SID, with dedicated funding mechanisms that support the improvement of downtown infrastructure and civic spaces.	7-10 years	Low	Economic Development, Development	City Council, MACIC	



IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (CONT.)

RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTION STEPS	TIMEFRAME	CURRENT PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(S)	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, INCENTIVES & TOOLS
PUBLIC REALM/SPACE - Provide unique gathering spaces, amenities, public facilities, and programmed events						
Create Central Gathering Spaces	Partner with Monroe Local School District and identify an approach for the development of the school property adjacent to the downtown area that would benefit and support both the School District and the City. (amphitheater, park areas, phased plan)	2-4 years	Medium	Development, Economic Development, Public Work and Engineering	School District	Nature Works, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Clean Ohio, Recreational Trails Program
	Develop conceptual plans for a park space that provides facilities, amenities, and programming opportunities that support both the Downtown and School District. Can be phased.	3-5 years	Medium	Development, Economic Development, Public Work and Engineering	School District, ODNR, OPRA, Businesses	
	Design and construct new park space	7-10 years	Medium	Development and Public Works	School District, ODNR, OPRA, Businesses	
Establish a DORA	Research and identify boundary for the DORA working with downtown business owners, property owners, and City Departments	1-3 years	Medium	Economic Development	Businesses	
	Draft and pass a City resolution or ordinance outlining rules and regulations	1-3 years	Medium	City Council, Economic Development		
	Submit an application through the Ohio Division of Liquor Control to gain State approval	1-3 years	Medium	Economic Development, Police Department	Businesses	
	Create and install signage for the new district	1-3 years	Medium	Economic Developmen, Development	Businesses	
Preserve and Protect Key Historic Buildings and Landmarks and Develop Design Guidelines	Establish the goals and action plan for the Historical Preservation Commission. Identify best practices used in other cities.	2-4 year	Medium	Historical Preservation Commission	Monroe Historical Society	Ohio Historic Connection
	Become a Certified Local Government	1-3 years	Medium	Historical Preservation Commission	Monroe Historical Society	
	Develop Historic Preservation Regulations and Design Review Guidelines	7-10 years	Medium	Historical Preservation Commission	Monroe Historical Society	
Expand Downtown Programming Provide and increase frequency of community events like festivals, farmers markets, concerts, etc. that showcase the downtown area.	Develop a calendar of potential events and locations	1-3 years	Medium/High	Development, Economic Development	Businesses	Fundraiser events, dedicated fund from city, grants, etc.
	Create a Public Events Committee that focuses on community events.	1-3 years	Medium/High	City Council	Businesses	
	Identify semi-permanent locations and provide necessary infrastructure for regular events like a farmers market or food truck park	1-3 Years	Medium/High	Development, Economic Development	Businesses, Churches	



IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (CONT.)

RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTION STEPS	TIMEFRAME	CURRENT PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(S)	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, INCENTIVES & TOOLS
PUBLIC REALM/SPACE - Provide unique gathering spaces, amenities, public facilities, and programmed events						
Create an Expanded Civic Campus Enhances cultural and recreational opportunities for residents, expand local business patronage and serve as a catalyst for new development and business expansion	Conduct a feasibility study that considers the potential for the relocation of the post office building, potential infill commercial and cultural lease spaces, expanded parking, recreational amenities, and/or a relocated public library, and festival / event spaces	1-3 years	Medium	Development, Economic Development	MACIC, School District, USPS, Library	Public & Private Sector Partnerships
	Develop design plans and programming for a new Civic Campus	3-5 years	Medium	Development, Economic Development	MACIC, School District, Private Delelopers, USPS, Library	
	Seek and secure funding for construction	5-10 years	Medium	Development, Economic Development		
Create Downtown Gateways Design and construct new gateways at Main/63 and Main/Lebanon to create a sense of place and brand for Downtown Monroe that is welcoming for residents and visitors.	Create Gateway Concept Designs. Consider aligning phases with Multi-Modal Transportation, Connectivity, and Safety Plan.	1-3 years	Medium	Development, Economic Development, Public Works, Engineering		SID, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
	Design and construct gateways. Can be designed and executed independently or in conjunction with roadway improvements called for in the Multi-Modal Transportation, Connectivity, and Safety Plan.	3-5 years	Medium	Development, Public Works, Engineering		
Upgrade Downtown Streetscapes	Create a Downtown Streetscape Plan that considers a phased approach by corridor. Consider aligning phases with Multi-Modal Transportation, Connectivity, and Safety Plan.	1-3 years	High	Development, Public Works, Engineering		Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program, Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), CMAQ, Local Transportation Improvements Program, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Roadwork Development Grant Program
	Design and construct streetscape improvements. Can be designed and executed independently or in conjunction with roadway improvements called for in the Multi-Modal Transportation, Connectivity, and Safety Plan.	3-5 years	Medium	Development, Public Works, Engineering	ODOT, OKI, Butler County, ODSA, Ohio Public Works Commission	
	Require new development to follow the Streetscape Plan	ongoing	High	Development	Developers, property owners	
	Develop a Streetscape Maintenance Plan that considers annual department funds	1-3 years	Medium	Public Works		
Improve Duke Energy Substation Area	Explore design alternatives to screen the Duke Energy Substation and move overhead transmission lines going east underground to support new development	1-3 years	Medium	City	Monroe Center Owners, Duke	Ohio Main Street Program Developers (Requests for Proposals)
	Coordinate with Duke Energy	1-3 years	Medium	City	Monroe Center Owners, Duke	
	Design and construct improvements	3-5 years	Medium	City	Duke	



IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (CONT.)

RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTION STEPS	TIMEFRAME	CURRENT PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY(S)	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, INCENTIVES & TOOLS
IDENTITY/FORM - Brand Downtown Monroe						
Provide Downtown Wayfinding Design and implement wayfinding signage that brands Downtown Monroe, that helps visitors navigate, and encourages people to explore	Develop a Wayfinding Plan that considers the Downtown brand and the different character zones ; including downtown placemaking. Placemaking can include banners, planters/beautification, public art. Could also organize tactical urbanism such as parklets and other ways to transform public spaces in a low cost way.	3-5 years	Medium	Development, Economic Development, Public Works, Engineering		
	Implement wayfinding signage throughout the Downtown	5+ years	Medium	Development and Public Works	Businesses, Duke	
Promote Downtown Monroe as a Destination	Conduct a branding and placemaking study for the Downtown Area.	1-3 years	Medium	Development, Economic Development		Fundraiser events, dedicated fund from city, grants, etc. Create a SID, WiFi network
	Create a Downtown Committee as mentioned in Expand Downtown Programming	1-3 years	Medium	Development, City Council	Businesses	
	Develop an independent website or webpage showcasing Downtown, provide information about businesses, events, and other helpful details about Downtown, including interactive maps and links to relevant resources such as parking, parks, and trail access.	3-5 years	Low	Development, City Manager's Office		
	Inspire businesses and property owners to embrace the Downtown brand	Ongoing	Low	Economic Development	Businesses	

ORGANIZATION & FUNDING

The evolution and growth of Monroe's Downtown District must be guided by an overarching set of goals and principles that provide a strategic direction and allows the flexibility to react to changing economic conditions and development opportunities. This Downtown Master Plan identifies a strategic approach to accomplishing the goals and objectives that have been developed through the community engagement and visioning process.

The following listing identifies the stewardship roles and responsibilities that quasi-public and public entities can play in Downtown Development Initiatives.

PUBLIC SECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Strong public leadership and a unified commitment to the vision for the Downtown Business District are essential to instilling confidence in the minds of prospective businesses, investors, and residents. Monroe City Council, Planning Commission, the Board of Zoning Appeals, and designated economic development agencies such as the Monroe Area Community Improvement Corporation must serve as champions for key initiatives and build collective enthusiasm for action-oriented implementation. Further, the City Council must exercise its legislative powers in a proactive manner that specifically encourages significant private investment through public investment, operational efficiencies, direct business and project support, and similar tools.

In recognition of the community's support of this plan and desire to move forward, this plan should be actively used across all relevant City departments when evaluating projects and programs. Additionally, this plan is an important part of the recruitment of potential business operators, private developers, and investors. It is staff's responsibility to help these potential development partners to understand the overall vision of this community and the opportunities for public/private partnership.

Public-Sector Site Ownership

While public sector site ownership is not always recommended with commercial and industrial projects, the nature of a downtown redevelopment typically requires that the public sector acquire strategic parcels for future infrastructure needs and commercial development. The City and its development agencies are uniquely positioned to acquire smaller pieces of property as they become available with the vision of assembling those smaller pieces into a meaningful project. Additionally, the City's development agency may hold properties for development as a means to reduce the costs of the project, which should further enhance the quality of the project.

PRIVATE SECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Just as the public sector and its related entities have a responsibility to create an environment that is welcoming and nurturing to private investment, the private sector also has a responsibility to amplify those efforts in a manner that creates a successful downtown. When considering

large scale investments, a developer's previous history in community development, downtown development, or project development should be seriously considered when considering any elective or additional opportunities.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

The tools necessary to create a strong, fiscally responsible project vary by the nature of the project, the economic climate, the history of projects in the area, and other factors that may or may not be within the City's control. Economic development tools should be used conservatively and creatively to meet the goals of the community and facilitate viability of downtown Monroe. Staff should regularly work with legal counsel and bond counsel to identify appropriate special revenue districts, short-term and long-term financing structures, density bonuses and similar performance-based support, grants, and similar opportunities that will provide flexibility and future resources for the downtown area.

The City's economic development agency, the Monroe Area Community Improvement Corporation (MACIC), is one of the tools for economic development in this region. This plan recognizes that the MACIC may evolve into a port authority or similar structure over time. Regardless of the formal structure of the organization, the City Council and the MACIC have a responsibility to partner with each other as needed to implement the downtown development initiatives. This partnership may be in the form of financial support, programming, incentive development and similar opportunities.

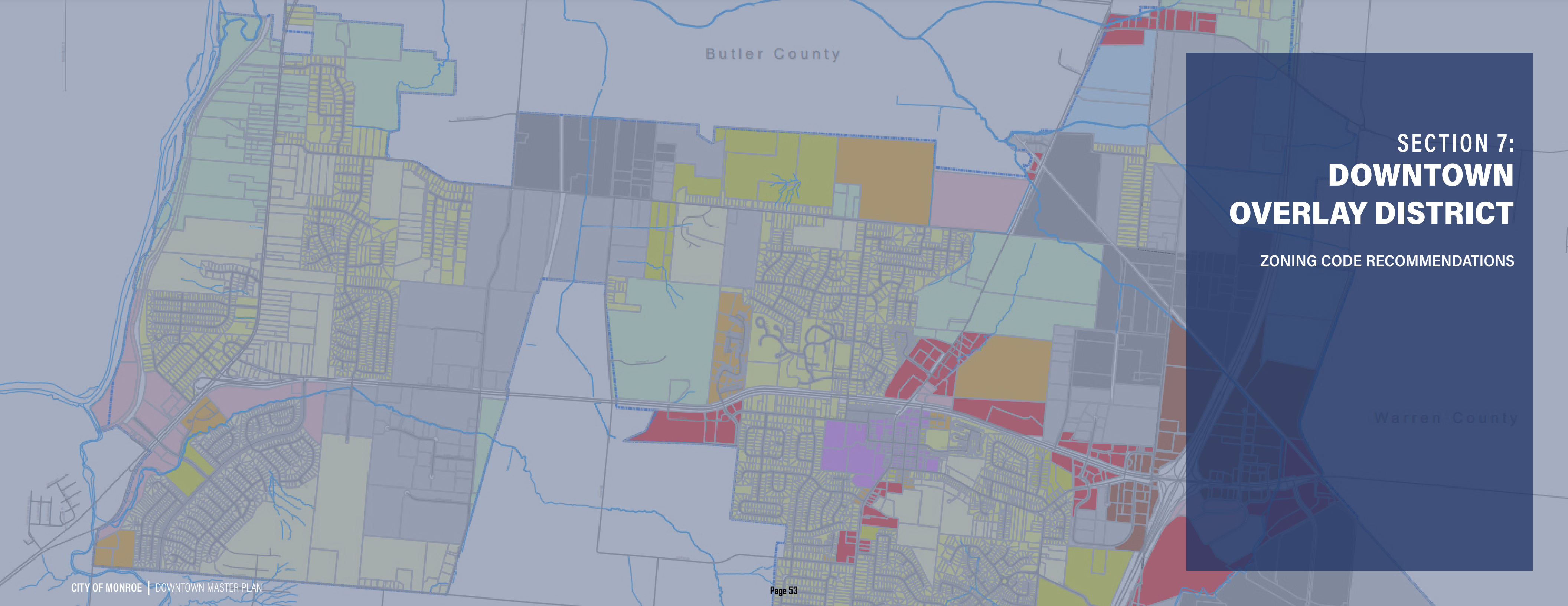
Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Tax Increment Financing is an economic development mechanism available to local governments in Ohio. It serves as a means to finance public infrastructure improvements and, under specific circumstances, residential rehabilitation.

- Purpose: TIFs are implemented at the local level and can be created by townships, municipalities, or counties.
- Benefits: The increased assessed value of property improvements beyond a certain threshold is redirected toward a separate fund. This fund is then used to finance the construction of public infrastructure defined within the TIF legislation.
- Establishment: To establish a TIF project, local jurisdictions must:
 - » Designate the parcels to be exempted from taxation.
 - » Declare that improvements to private property within the specified area serve a public purpose.
 - » Specify the public infrastructure improvements directly benefiting the parcel.
 - » Create equivalent funds for the redirected monies.
- Eligibility: Only public infrastructure improvements directly serving the increased demand arising from real property improvements or an Incentive District are eligible for TIF financing.

Special Improvement Districts (SIDs)

Note on SIDS: SID's are special assessment districts designed to direct revenues to a variety of supportive services which benefit business within a designated geographic boundary. Funds are collected from each business and used for agreed-upon support services including security, maintenance, marketing, economic development, parking, and special events.



Butler County

Warren County

SECTION 7:
**DOWNTOWN
OVERLAY DISTRICT**

ZONING CODE RECOMMENDATIONS

DOWNTON MONROE OVERLAY DISTRICT REGULATION RECOMMENDATIONS

THE FOLLOWING PROVIDES RECOMMENDATIONS OF ITEMS TO CONSIDER INCLUDING IN THE DOWNTOWN MONROE OVERLAY DISTRICT ZONING CODE.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Downtown Overlay District is to promote and sustain:

- A. Vibrant downtown: Strengthen downtown as a vibrant, commercial, civic, residential, and cultural art center with its own unique identity.
- B. Downtown appearance: Improve and enhance the appearance of the built environment and natural features throughout downtown, especially along primary corridors.
- C. Unique character: Establish design standards unique to our downtown district.
- D. Pedestrian environment: Improve and enhance the pedestrian environment throughout downtown, as well as the pedestrian connections to surrounding neighborhoods and civic resources.

INTENT

The intent of the Downtown Monroe Overlay District is to:

- A. Encourage a vibrant mix of pedestrian-oriented uses, including shopping, civic, arts, residential, and entertainment uses.
- B. Establish height, bulk, and lot coverage regulations that balance existing urban fabric with a desired character for downtown.

- C. Promote mixed-use, multi-tenant buildings with active ground floor tenant space by regulating the quantity and location of doors and windows.
- D. Establish standards for development that encourage and promote a strong pedestrian environment.
- E. Establish parking and access standards that support pedestrian activity.
- F. Encourage preservation of existing buildings.
- G. Ensure that new development in Downtown Monroe shall conform to the city's general plans for the physical development of this district as embodied in the city's Downtown Master Plan.
- H. Guide development and redevelopment in the Downtown Monroe Overlay District to protect and enhance the city's image.

DOWNTOWN MONROE OVERLAY DISTRICT – SUB DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS

All properties designated within the Downtown Monroe Overlay District on the official zoning map of the City of Monroe will be subject to the regulations of the special overlay zoning district.

Within the District there are four sub-districts with specific use and building requirements. These Districts include: Gateway District, Downtown Multi-Unit District, Main Street District, Town Center Residential District, Park & Recreation.

Gateway District

- A. Use: Multi-story, mixed-use buildings up to 4 stories where the ground floor level is primarily comprised of street-level retail and commercial spaces and upper story floors are either multi-family or office uses. One to two story commercial buildings shall be permitted where ground floor uses are primarily retail, dining, neighborhood grocery, or entertainment uses which contribute to the vitality of the public realm.
 - a. Maximum Building Height: 60’/4 Stories
 - i. A waiver can be requested for a fifth floor if the proposed building design, scale and location is compatible with the adjacent Main Street Mixed-Use District and Town Center Residential Mixed-Use District.
 - b. Parking to be below or at the rear of the property.
 - i. Due to significant topography changes in the Gateway District, it may be necessary for below-grade parking structures which

are incorporated into a building's foundation to extend above finished grade. For the purposes of this section, the top of the garage podium shall be considered the final-grade for the purposes of measuring a building's height.

- ii. Below grade parking structures, which are part of a building's foundation, may be permitted to project above-grade. Whenever a below-grade parking structure is constructed such that a portion of the garage extends above finished grade, no more than 50% of the footprint shall extend more than five feet above grade. For purposes of this section, above-grade garage walls which are shielded from view by a building shall be considered as less than five feet in height.

Downtown Multi-Unit District

- A. Use: Multi-Unit Residential
 - a. 3 to 4 story multifamily buildings where parking facilities are screened from view below or behind mixed-use buildings when viewed from roadways.
 - b. Attached Townhomes where parking is accessed at the rear of units and completely screened from view and front doors are located along the primary street frontages.

- B. Maximum Building Height: 48’/4 Stories
 - a. A waiver can be requested for a fifth floor if the proposed building design, scale and location is compatible with the adjacent Main Street Mixed-Use District and Town Center Residential Mixed-Use District.

Main Street District

- A. Use: Pedestrian-oriented, small to medium scale mixed-use, with commercial on first floor and office/residential above. Buildings create continuous street frontage with some breaks for driveways and are generally built to lot line.
 - a. Maximum Building Height: 36’/3 Stories
 - b. Individual tenant footprint 5,000 SF maximum
 - i. Up to 15,000 SF permitted with conditional use approval.
- B. The layout of principal buildings, accessory structures and parking areas along Main Street are to be a primary identifying feature of the Main Street District. Creating a defined street wall creates an attractive, pedestrian street environment. The street wall is defined by buildings which are set close to the street. A strongly defined street wall on Main Street will improve the visual appearance and distinguish the Main Street District from the more suburban areas surrounding the Downtown Area.
 - a. The following regulations apply to front yard setbacks:

- i. The front yard setback shall be established between a minimum of zero and a maximum of ten feet from the right-of-way.
- ii. Exception for multiple buildings. An adequate number of buildings and front façades on each site must meet the required setback from the right-of-way to create a consistent street wall along the frontage of the site. However, if the frontage of the site is designed with buildings at the setback line, the Zoning Commission may allow additional buildings on the site to exceed this setback if they find that the development meets the other standards of the zoning code and accomplishes the purpose of this district.

Town Center Residential District

- A. Use: Mixed residential and office district intended to provide for a variety of residential buildings and small offices. Can have 2 to 3 story multifamily buildings where parking facilities are screened from view below or behind mixed-use buildings when viewed from roadways.
 - a. Maximum Building Height: 36’/3 Stories

Parks & Recreation

- A. Use: Area devoted to parks, open space, natural resource areas, recreation facilities and other related compatible public uses owned by governmental, private or other nonprofit institutions.

EXISTING BUILDINGS

- A. Preservation: The preservation and rehabilitation of existing buildings, in order to maintain the unique fabric of the Main Street and Town Center Residential Districts, is encouraged and recommended. This is especially applicable to buildings eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places and buildings designated as City of Monroe Landmarks.
- B. Rehabilitation Standards: Rehabilitation acknowledges the need to alter or add to a building in response to changing uses and contemporary needs while preserving its overall historic character. The rehabilitation, alteration and additions to existing historic buildings are encouraged to be completed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- C. Rehabilitation objectives: Restore historic building facades to the fullest extent feasible. If it is determined that original materials cannot be restored, synthetic materials can be used to replicate traditional materials. Where the historic original features of a building are not known, develop compatible designs in keeping with proportion, rhythm, geometry, scale, materials and colors of the original facade.
- D. Facade materials. Facade materials shall be restored to the extent possible. Brick, stone and other masonry materials should be repainted, cleaned and restored rather than painted or re-clad. If painting is necessary, colors should be chosen that approximate the original color of the masonry. Similarly, wood,

metal, glass and other existing building materials shall be restored.

- E. Windows and storefronts: Windows shall be restored if they exist, or if they are to be replaced, done so using windows that match in style and detail. True divided lites shall be used to the extent possible. Existing storefronts, including bulkheads and transoms shall also be restored.

MULTIPLE BUILDING DEVELOPMENT

Building coverage for multiple building development in the Monroe Downtown Overlay District shall be regulated as follows:

- A. Single building developments. A single building fronting Main Street shall not have a footprint that exceeds 15,000 square feet.
- B. Panhandle lots. Any building on a panhandle lot with less than 25 feet of frontage along Main Street shall be treated as a rear building for coverage purposes.
- C. Multiple building development. When included in a multiple building development on a site in excess of two acres a single building may have a building footprint of up to 17,500 square feet. A building with a footprint in excess of 17,500 square feet shall be permitted under the following conditions:
- D. When a building is located in the Gateway District and within 200 feet of Main Street, the building footprint shall not exceed 20,000 square feet.
- E. When the majority of the building footprint is located more than 200 feet from Main Street with no building frontage on Main Street, the building

may be permitted to have a footprint of up to 30,000 square feet.

- F. When a building located within 200 feet of Main Street has a lineal frontage along Main Street of 100 feet or less, the building may be permitted to have a footprint of up to 19,000 square feet.
- G. Under no circumstances may a building's footprint exceed 30,000 square feet;

SITES OF TWO ACRES OR MORE

- A. Cohesive, multi-structure developments are desirable and are strongly encouraged in the Downtown Monroe Overlay District to enhance the existing features of Downtown Monroe. Any site within the Downtown Monroe Overlay District which is equal to or greater than two acres shall be required to be developed with multiple structures, and a mix of uses. Lots of two or more acres recorded as of the date of adoption of this chapter may not be subdivided into smaller lots to avoid this regulation.
- B. After a final site plan has been approved, an applicant may subdivide the total development into separate parcels for tax billing purposes. The subdivided parcels shall remain subject to the approved development plan and shall not be considered as nonconforming lots or uses when developed under the approved plan. Any subsequent redevelopment of the subdivided lots must be consistent with the approved site plan and shall be considered as a modification to the approved plan subject to the review and approval process, unless such modification is exempted as provided therein.

- C. When feasible, multiple smaller lots (less than two acres) are encouraged to be consolidated and redeveloped under a single plan in a manner that is consistent with the standards of the Monroe Downtown Master Plan for multiple building developments.

PARKING

Parking in an urban setting is often difficult and in order to promote an urban setting, surface parking and structured parking shall be designed in a way to reduce its visual impact.

- A. To promote an urban density parking should be provided as follows in multi-building developments:
- B. Structured parking is encouraged for 50% of the required parking on sites with multi-building developments.
- C. Surface parking shall be limited to no more than 35% of the site area. Parking on public streets shall not be included in the 35% surface parking limitation.
- D. Adequate screening and interior landscaping shall be provided for surface-parking.

PUBLIC OUTDOOR SPACE

- A. New construction or building expansion shall provide public outdoor space at a rate of 0.5% of the lot area or 150 square feet, whichever is greater.
- B. Public outdoor space may include seating areas, plazas, retail alcove and inner courtyard spaces. Entry alcoves and small outdoor pedestrian spaces

may be located between the building and the street, subject to City code and provided such outdoor spaces do not obstruct pedestrian traffic.

- C. Public outdoor space shall be visible and accessible to the public and include the following:
 - a. City standard decorative lighting.
 - b. City standard bench(es) or low seating walls and trash receptacle(s).
 - c. Special paving consisting of colored/stained concrete, brick, or other unit pavers.
- D. The required public outdoor space shall be located to maximize public use based on the location of public transit stops, pedestrian access aisles, public sidewalks, and downtown attractions.
- E. Landscaping for the site shall be designed to enhance the public outdoor space.

PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Safe, efficient, and convenient circulation and access to and between developments should be provided for both pedestrians and vehicular traffic. By creating a safe continuous network of pedestrian walkways within the Downtown Monroe District, pedestrians will feel more inclined to safely walk (rather than drive) between stores. A pedestrian network that offers clear circulation paths from the parking areas to building entries creates a friendlier, more inviting image.

Pedestrian facilities shall be designed to meet the following standards:

- A. Sites that are more than two acres shall emphasize pedestrian orientation by creating attractive pedestrian spaces that are landscaped and include other appropriate elements to facilitate pedestrian activity. Efforts should be made to incorporate public open spaces into the design of the development.
- B. All commercial developments shall provide attractive well marked pedestrian links between parking and buildings. The connections shall be clearly marked to provide safe access across traffic lanes and landscaped areas. Such walkways shall utilize decorative paving at key locations.
- C. All commercial buildings shall be public accessible via a path or walkway from a public sidewalk.
- D. Any sidewalk or walkway shall be designed to connect to adjacent walkways of either existing or future development.
- E. Streetscape design elements and materials used to construct new public walkways, connecting sidewalks and streetscape enhancements may vary from the City of Monroe's standards provided that such variations are complementary to their standards.
- F. Parking area design shall include provisions for pedestrian access from parking areas to building entrances.

Vehicular access and circulation. Vehicular access and circulation shall be designed to meet the following standards:

- A. The specific locations of primary vehicle entrances are subject to review by the City Engineer and the approval of the Zoning Commission and will be based on the following factors to promote good traffic management practices:
- a. The development shall minimize the number of curb cuts with shared access being preferred.

b. Where possible, access points should align with previously-approved or constructed access points on the opposite side of the street to reduce conflict points.

c. Safe and efficient internal circulation shall be provided. Where possible internal vehicle circulation should be designed as follows:

i. Streets internal to the development should be designed with a hierarchy of circulation.

ii. Internal driveways or aisles that are intersected by crossing traffic should either have their centerlines aligned or be offset by at least 60 feet.

ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

To create a more interesting and inviting environment, all buildings shall include architectural details, including but not limited to cornices and window and door trim. Buildings shall be designed with an architectural style that respects the character of the historic buildings within

the downtown area but adequately accommodates the intended modern uses.

- A. Roof type: The roof types of buildings shall be designed in conformance with the following regulations:
- a. For approximately every front 60 feet of building façade, a variation of roof type is encouraged to reduce visual monotony and assist in development of a human scale environment.

b. Gabled roofs are encouraged; however, other roof types may be approved by the Zoning Commission on a case-by-case basis.

c. When gabled roofs are used, the design of the roof pitch may vary, but should not be less than one-fourth of the building height as measured from the grade line to the gutter.

d. When flat roofs are used, decorative cornices and parapet roof lines shall be incorporated.
- B. Building Entrances: The building entrances in the Downtown Monroe Overlay District shall be designed in conformance with the following regulations:
- a. When a commercial building has frontage on Main Street, the building entrances should be encouraged to face onto Main Street when feasible.

b. When a residential building has frontage on Main Street, the first floor entrances should be located facing onto Main Street when feasible. Access to upper stories from Main Street is strongly encouraged.

- c. When a new road is proposed for interior circulation, buildings may be oriented to face on to these streets and the entrance may also be oriented to these streets.
- d. In all cases the main entrance of the building shall be easily identifiable, and should provide an introductory statement for a building using architectural articulation or landscaping or a combination of both.
- e. Entrances should be designed to allow individual business to present a clear image without compromising the sense of unity of the façade or development.
- C. Windows: Windows in the Downtown Monroe Overlay District shall be designed in conformance with the following regulations:
- a. Windows in all structures shall exhibit symmetry and proportion to the building. Individual window proportions shall be more vertical than horizontal, with the height being approximately one and a half times the width of the window. Display windows on the first floor of commercial structures may be larger and have more of an emphasis on the horizontal dimension.

b. Windows that are visible from a public right-of-way shall be divided into vertically proportioned components, through multi-part windows or other divided lights. Other than first-floor display windows and bay windows in residential structures, windows should be detailed with

architectural elements, such as projecting sills, molded surrounds, lintels, transoms and/or mullions. Grilles in airspace and snap-on grille style windows are prohibited.

- c. Window and door openings on the ground floor of a commercial building should occupy no less than 50% of the building’s façade length on any façade facing Main Street or another public street.
- d. Windows shall be constructed of clear glazing and tinted glazing shall not be used.
- e. All-vinyl windows are prohibited. Extruded aluminum-clad or vinyl-clad wood windows may be permitted, if appropriate. Composite wood/PVC/fiberglass windows are permitted (i.e. Fibrex).

EXTERIOR CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

The character of the Downtown Monroe Overlay District is enhanced by the use of quality building materials that reflect the desired image of the City of Monroe. The following standards apply to the exterior of all buildings in the Downtown Monroe Overlay District.

- A. Permitted materials. The use of exterior building and finishing materials in the Downtown Monroe Overlay District shall be in conformance with the following regulations:
- a. Primary materials: Buildings shall have a primary exterior covering of brick, stone, natural wood clapboard, wood board and batten, wood

shingles or modern manufactured materials that create the appearance of the materials listed above except as prohibited herein.

- B. Accent materials. Buildings in the Downtown Monroe Overlay District may incorporate any of the above permitted primary materials as an accent. Exterior insulated finish systems, and decorative concrete masonry units may be used on a building as an accent that comprises no more than 15% per side of the building’s exterior wall surface.
- C. Other materials that are not listed as prohibited may be approved by the Zoning Commission on a case-by-case basis as a primary or accent building material.
- D. Prohibited materials. Exterior covering materials that are prohibited include vinyl, aluminum or steel siding, standard concrete masonry units or tilt-up concrete.

COLORS

- A. Permitted colors: The base colors used on buildings in the Downtown Monroe Overlay District should be the natural color of the material in the case of brick or stone or of a neutral, muted palette. Brighter, more vivid colors should be reserved for limited use as trim or accent.
- B. Prohibited colors: No fluorescent, reflective, metallic or neon colors shall be used in the construction of a building in the Downtown Monroe Overlay District.

VARIATION OF MATERIALS AND COLORS ON FACADES

Variation of materials and colors on façades is permissible, provided the variation enhances the human scale of the buildings and is used to define specific elements of the building. General guidelines for variations in materials are:

- A. A maximum of three colors, excluding the natural color of brick or stone, may be used on a single structure, except in the case where the building’s façade is designed to appear as more than one building. In such case, each element may use a combination of colors as approved by the Landmarks Commission but the overall color scheme of the building should be coordinated.
- B. Changes in materials should occur at inside corners of buildings or transition with an appropriate trim detail.
- C. The use of a coordinating trim material is encouraged on all façades of a building, and should be used to break larger wall planes into smaller more human scale elements.
- D. The number of materials on the exterior of a building should be limited to a few complementary materials.
- E. A palette of proposed materials and colors should be submitted by the applicant for approval by the Zoning Commission.

SIGNAGE

- A. Signs should respect the overall architectural composition of the building and its scale while not overwhelming the façade.
- B. Sign colors shall relate to the style and period of the building. In general sign colors shall be muted rather than vivid. Paint shall be flat, satin or semi-gloss.
- C. Corporate identity colors or logos may be permitted and shall be used with restraint.
- D. Sign materials may be wood, composite wood, metal, polycarbonate or high density urethane (HDU) with painted or vinyl letters. Other materials may be permitted, if appropriate.
- E. Wall signs should be affixed on a continuous, flat, vertical, opaque surface and cannot project more than six inches from the building surface. Signs may not cover architectural features.
- F. Wall and projecting signs should have a simple design and shall not have more than three lines of letters.
- G. Illuminated signs are permitted. The illumination source for a sign should be compatible with the sign and the building.
- H. Neon signage is prohibited, with the exception of internally illuminated “Open” signs in the window, not to exceed three square feet in size.
- I. Window signs are permitted.

LIGHTING

- A. Lighting shall be appropriate to the district in type, design, location and quantity.
- B. Lighting shall be used in a limited manner, and only to highlight architectural details on a building, illuminate a sign, or to illuminate walkways and/or parking areas.

PLANNED DEVELOPMENT: PLAN REVIEW STANDARDS

In determining whether to recommend approval or denial of an application for a planned development, the Zoning Commission shall consider whether the proposed development meets all applicable requirements and qualifying conditions as well as the following standards:

- A. Purpose: The planned development shall be consistent with the stated purposes of this Zoning Code.
- B. Downtown Master Plan: Except as otherwise approved in the preliminary and final development plans, the planned development shall comply with and contribute to the implementation of the applicable goals and specific objectives set forth in the current City of Downtown Monroe Master Plan and other adopted plans of the City.
- C. Surrounding uses: The planned development shall be compatible with the uses permitted on properties surrounding the subject property and/or shall provide such features as feasible to reasonably mitigate the impact of proposed uses upon surrounding properties.

- D. Natural environment: The layout and features of the planned development shall, to the extent deemed reasonable, be designed and constructed in a manner which minimizes impacts upon major natural features of the site and surrounding area and shall employ best management practices to promote their conservation.
- E. Public facilities and services: The planned development shall not place an undue burden on the capacity of public facilities and services such as, but not limited to, roads, fire and police protection, water, sanitary sewer service, and drainage.
- F. Protects health, safety, and welfare: The planned development shall not contain uses or conditions of use that may be injurious to the public health, safety or welfare.
- G. Consistent with all applicable standards and requirements: The planned development shall conform to all applicable requirements of this Zoning Code.
- H. Final development plan: The final development plan shall be substantially consistent with the representations made and plans approved during the preliminary development plan stage of approval.
- I. Recognizable and substantial benefits: Approval of the planned unit development shall result in a recognizable and substantial benefit to the users of the project and to the community which would not otherwise be feasible or achievable under conventional zoning districts.

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