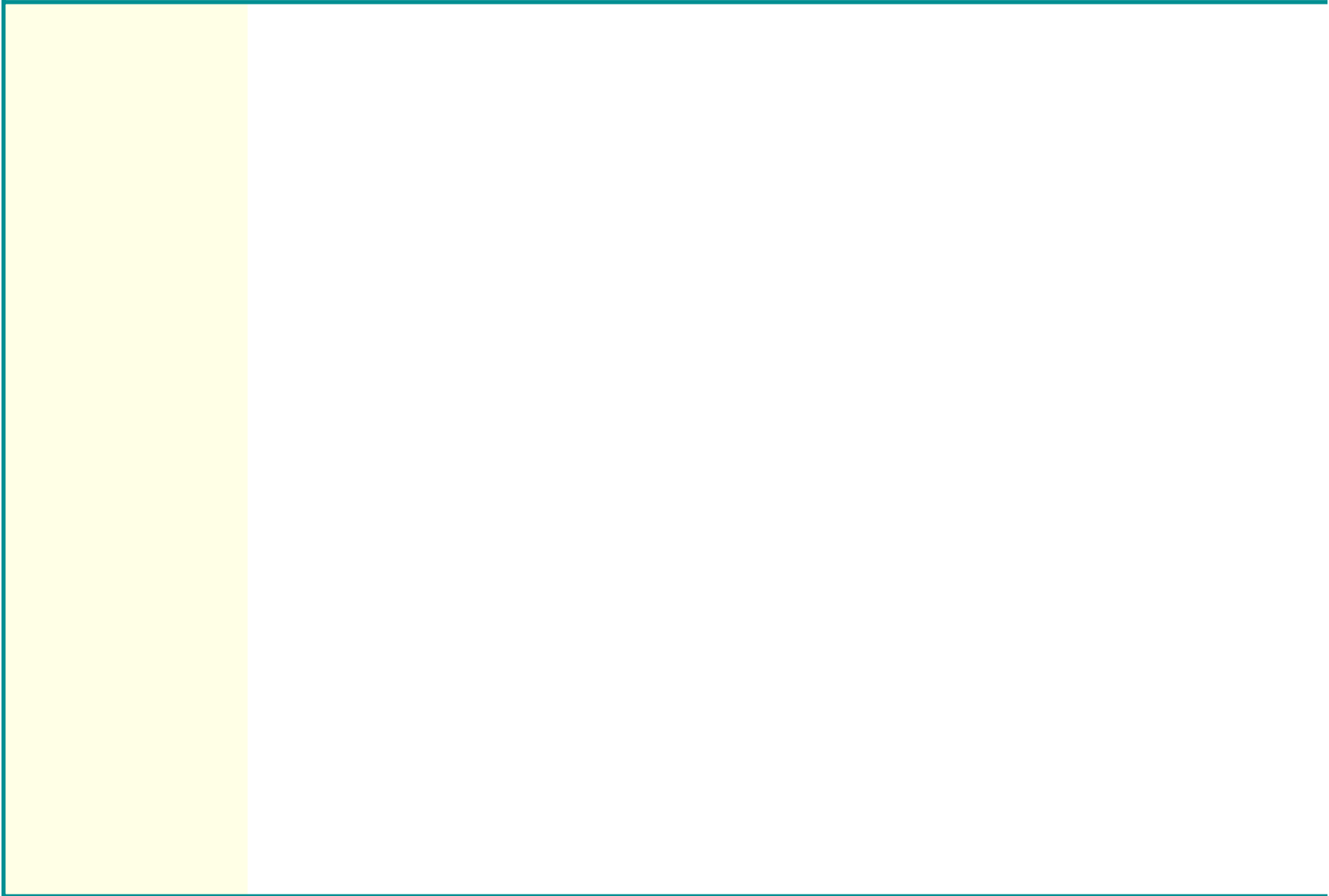


Downtown Asheville

Center City Plan





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Downtown Visions

Economic Development

Vision: Downtown Asheville will be the dominant economic, social, cultural, and symbolic center of the Western North Carolina region. The Center City will be the focal point of office and retail development and the center of banking, finance, government, and employment. Its many attractions and unique character will make Downtown an exciting and primary destination for visitors. A large and diverse residential population will support the various components of the Downtown economy and labor force, contributing towards a vibrant twenty-four hour neighborhood. Downtown will continue to provide high-paying jobs, an attractive environment, an efficient use of resources, and an increased tax base, making it a model of Smart Growth.

Housing

Vision: Downtown Asheville will be a clean, safe, and vibrant neighborhood, consisting of distinct districts where a diverse population lives among a rich variety of workplace, cultural, shopping, and entertainment options. Quality public spaces, pocket parks, and streetscape amenities will give identity and a sense of community to Downtown and serve as magnets to attract residents to a wide range of housing options.

Physical Environment

Vision: Downtown Asheville will build upon its spectacular physical environment, clearly establishing it as a showpiece of the region. Improved gateway entrances will herald the approach into a visually rewarding Center City. Downtown's compact development pattern, woven of exceptional architecture, intimate streetscapes, and quality open spaces, will set the stage for increased private investment and will provide visitors with an indelible image of a place to which they long to return.

Transportation & Accessibility

Vision: Downtown Asheville will be accessible from throughout the community via a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system. Once Downtown, wayfinding signage and attractive streetscapes will assist visitors as they travel easily from place to place.

Introduction

"The great cities, large and small, and the places in them that year after year attract and delight throngs of people are woven of many threads into a rich and varied tapestry. Central to all is the lively downtown."

From *Designing the Successful Downtown* -
The Urban Land Institute

Regional Importance of Downtown

As the economic, social, cultural and entertainment center of Western North Carolina, Downtown Asheville is the heart that pumps vitality throughout the

region. As such, Downtown's continued revitalization will play a critical role in strengthening the region's economy and improving the quality of life for area residents.

A vibrant and healthy Downtown is one of the strongest and most important engines that drives the regional economy. Not only is Downtown a major source of jobs and income for City and County residents, it is a major producer of tax revenue, which supports public investments to improve other neighborhoods and commercial districts throughout the City. Downtown has become a destination for tourists and area residents alike. These visitors support local businesses and contribute greatly to the regional economy. Additionally, a strong and vital Downtown serves to attract

new businesses into the area. Whether a business locates Downtown or in another area of the City or County, the vitality of Downtown Asheville and the amenities that Downtown offers (such as museums, theaters, restaurants and shops) are important quality of life assets that influence a company's decision to locate in the area.

The vitality of Downtown Asheville significantly improves the quality of life for area residents, providing a wonderful "living room" in which the community can gather, celebrate, shop, and be entertained. Continued Downtown development and revitalization will strengthen the City's already positive identity and leave visitors with a lasting impression.

Finally, emphasizing Downtown development and revitalization is the epitome of Smart Growth because it utilizes existing infrastructure, promotes density and mixed-use development, reduces reliance on automobiles, and acts to counter urban sprawl.

Why a Downtown Plan?

Downtown Asheville has experienced remarkable growth and revitalization in recent years,



contributing to its status as one of the most livable cities in the country. These positive changes have resulted in an increase in tourists, residents, and the many businesses that serve them. However, it is important to realize that downtowns are never “finished”. They are constantly-evolving, dynamic organisms that require constant attention. As much as Downtown has improved during the past twenty years, it has only “scratched the surface” of what it can become. In order for Downtown Asheville to realize its enormous potential as one of the greatest downtowns in America, we must have a shared vision and a plan to achieve it.

In the past, a number of plans have been developed that address various aspects of Downtown, including the Asheville Downtown Streetscape Plan (1991) and the Comprehensive Parking Study (1998). There is a strong need for an all-encompassing, comprehensive plan that addresses all aspects of the functionality of Downtown Asheville.

Recognizing this need, the City, in collaboration with the community, has developed the Center City Plan to address the full range of Downtown issues and to serve as a guide for

Smart Growth and Downtown Asheville

What is Smart Growth? Smart Growth essentially comes down to making an efficient use of resources while creating economically vibrant human scaled communities. In 1999, the Asheville City Council adopted the following definition of Smart Growth:

Smart Growth is a proposed City of Asheville development pattern that makes efficient use of our limited land, fully utilizes our urban services and infrastructure, promotes a wide variety of transportation and housing options, absorbs and effectively serves a significant portion of the future population growth of Buncombe County and Western North Carolina, protects the architectural and environmental character of the City through compatible, high quality, and environmentally-sensitive development practices, and recognizes the City's role as a regional hub of commerce and employment. Inherent to this definition is the need to implement Smart Growth through comprehensive, consistent, and effective policies, regulations, capital projects, and incentives.

Downtown Asheville is a model of Smart Growth for the City and region. The following Smart Growth principles strongly support a continued emphasis on Downtown development and revitalization:

- Provide compact building design and a wide mix of land uses
- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
- Create walkable communities
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
- Strengthen and direct development toward existing communities where investments in infrastructure have already been made
- Provide a variety of transportation options



the future growth and development of Downtown Asheville. The Center City Plan establishes a shared vision for what Downtown can become over the next twenty years. The essential mission of the plan is to strengthen Downtown as the social, cultural, and economic center of the region, while ensuring that the unique characteristics that attract residents and visitors to its streets, shops, and businesses, are well preserved. The Plan addresses the major issues facing downtown and identifies the goals and strategies that will function as stepping stones towards achieving long-term success.



The Center City Plan differs from many downtown plans in several important ways. First, the Plan was developed “in house” by people who have a working knowledge of the many issues facing Downtown, rather than by an outside consultant. Second, the Plan was developed with extensive community input and involvement. Because of the high level of citizen participation, the Plan reflects the community’s shared vision for the future of Downtown. Finally, the Plan has an implementation focus. The implementation matrix, beginning on page 91, lists each goal and strategy contained in the Plan and assigns

various groups and organizations with the responsibility for implementing them. This matrix will be used to monitor implementation efforts and success.

How to Use the Center City Plan

The Center City Plan was developed with all Downtown stakeholders in mind. Merchants, property owners, residents, downtown workers, developers, investors, Downtown Boards and Commissions, City staff, and elected officials have a shared interest in a healthy, vibrant Downtown. The Plan should be used by each of these groups as a guide for making and coordinating decisions, both large and small, regarding Downtown improvements and sustainability.

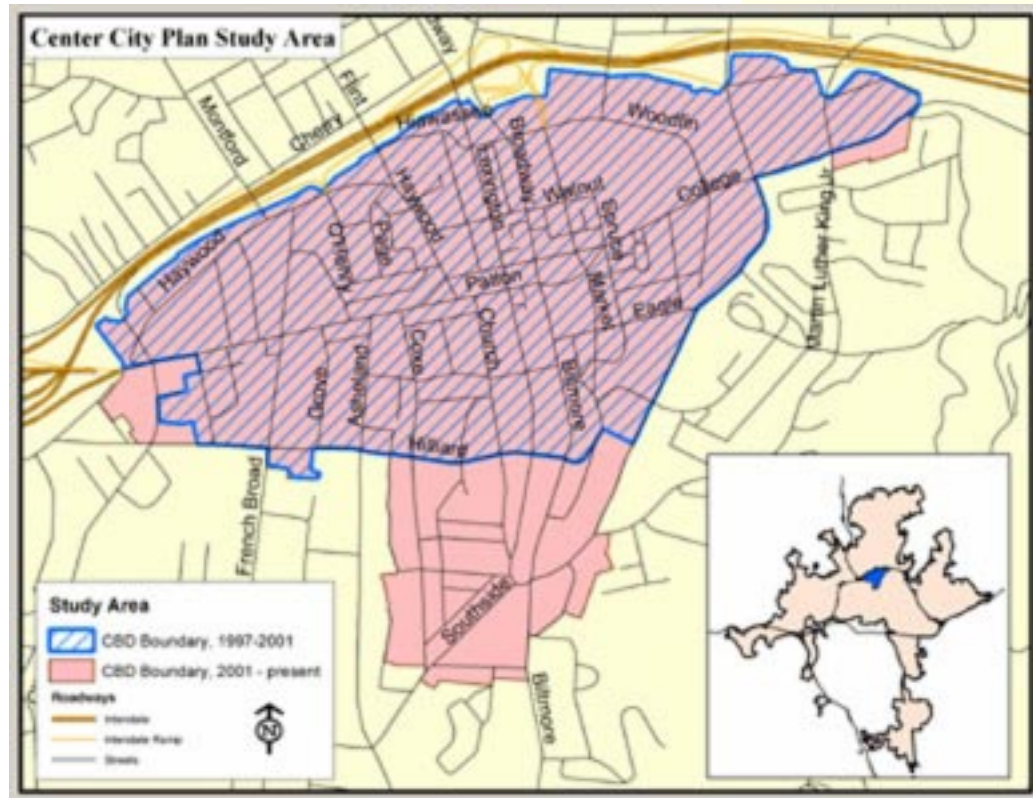
The Plan addresses four key topics that are of primary importance to the future of Downtown. These topics are economic development, housing, the physical environment, and transportation/ accessibility. Located at the end of each section is a list of goals and strategies. These goals and strategies are the backbone of the Plan. They give clear direction regarding how each of the issues should be addressed in order for Downtown to reach its full potential. Because of their importance, the reader should give high priority to reading and understanding the goals and strategies.

Study Area

The study area for the Center City Plan coincides with the area currently zoned Central Business District, which was recently expanded to accommodate anticipated Downtown growth. Downtown Asheville does not exist in a vacuum. It both influences and is influenced by its surrounding neighborhoods. Therefore, in some cases, the Center City Plan suggests strategies that involve areas outside of the Central Business District.

A Brief History of Downtown Asheville

Downtown Asheville has always been the center of the City. The intersection of Biltmore Avenue/Broadway with Patton Avenue is the original Cherokee crossroads that developed into the county seat in 1793. The Village of Asheville was incorporated in 1797. Asheville developed as a stopover for livestock drovers and other travelers on the Buncombe Turnpike. With the completion of the railroad in 1880, scenic beauty and mild summers quickly established Asheville as a destination for tourists, summer residents, and health seekers.



The Center City Plan Study Area covers the Central Business District (CBD). The CBD was expanded by the Asheville City Council in November, 2001 to accommodate and foster anticipated Downtown growth.

"The outburst of private and public projects completed here during the twenties makes building Rome in a day a proposition worth considering."

Roger McGuire, from his Pen and Plate club manuscript, "Happy New Year, Altamont!"

In the late 1880s George Vanderbilt decided to build his country estate in the Asheville area. As a result, he brought a large number of craftsmen from across

the country and even from overseas. Many of these craftsmen stayed on after the Biltmore Estate was completed and made important contributions to Asheville's architecture. Many African-Americans also came to the Asheville area as craftspeople and laborers.



YMI Durgstore, 1910; Photo courtesy of Heritage of Black Highlanders Collection, UNCA Ramsey Library

Asheville continued to grow, with investment reaching a fevered pitch during the Roaring Twenties. Land speculation was comparable to the speculation occurring in St. Petersburg, Florida, and Atlantic City during the same period. Today we see the evidence of that prosperous period in the magnificent buildings that remain.

Although Asheville was known as a haven of pure air and cooler temperatures, it was not idyllic for everyone. Prejudice against African-Americans forced segregation. Blacks were usually not allowed to rent or own property in the same areas as whites. Therefore, a separate business district developed in the area east of Biltmore Avenue and south of Pack Square. The Eagle/Market Street area was quite prosperous and quickly became the center of African-American commerce in Western North Carolina. As with the rest of Downtown, the prosperity did not last forever.

With the stock market crash in 1929, everything came tumbling down. The City and County together owed approximately fifty million dollars and were sued by creditors. A debt repayment plan was designed and pay-

ments started in 1936. It took the next forty years to repay the debt. The last bonds were burned in 1976. The legacy of the debt was two fold: the City was not able to take adequate care of its infrastructure of streets, water lines, and sidewalks—they were patched and repaired, but replacement or repaving was not feasible; second, more positively, the City could not afford to tear down many of the older buildings that may have been viewed as outdated. The result is a considerable stock of beautiful, historically significant buildings in the Downtown area.

Downtown Asheville continued to serve as the regional hub for shopping and commerce until the early 1970s. Department stores such as Sears, Ivey's, Woolworth's, J.C. Penney, and Bon Marche continued to do business Downtown and even expanded. When the Asheville Mall opened in 1972, businesses began leaving and by the second half of the decade, Downtown was considered by most people to be "dead."

In 1977 the Asheville Revitalization Commission was created with the goal of revitalizing Downtown. The Commission developed a plan called *A Revitalized Downtown*, which called for

making Downtown more livable and developing its strengths by enhancing Downtown neighborhoods with the character of villages.

During this period, investment was slowly occurring in Downtown. John Lantzius, a landscape architect, invested in buildings on Lexington Avenue and Broadway, creating Lexington Park, a mixed use area with apartments, offices, and pocket parks. Also, the Akzona Corporation built its headquarters on Pack Square, replacing a series of historic buildings with a modern office building designed by I.M. Pei.

In 1979, a proposal was made by the Strouse Greenberg Company to build a shopping mall that would demolish and replace eleven blocks of Downtown. The proposal was quite controversial and deeply divided the community. The project came to an end when a public referendum was held in November 1981, and defeated by a margin of two to one. The defeat of the Strouse Greenberg proposal served to galvanize the community and sparked renewed



Renovations to Wall Street in 1987.

interest in Downtown revitalization and historic preservation.

Since that landmark vote, the City, non-profit organizations, such as Asheville-Buncombe Discovery and the Asheville Downtown Association, and hundreds of volunteers have worked tirelessly on Downtown revitalization efforts. Both public and private investment has been key to attracting new businesses, investors, and residents.

Key Public-Private Downtown Investments include:

- Wall Street project, 1987 (Included streetscape improvements, building rehabilitation, and a parking structure)
- Pack Plaza, completed 1990
- Haywood Street Streetscape and Rankin Parking Deck (1989-91), built in conjunction with the Haywood Park Hotel and offices, and 21 Haywood Street residences (private sector)
- Pack Place, 1992
- YMI Cultural Center, 1992
- Thomas Wolfe Visitor Center, 1993
- Pritchard Park and adjacent sidewalk, 2001

- Streetscape and paving around Grove Arcade, 2002, done in conjunction with the rehabilitation of the Grove Arcade

In addition to the public-private projects that have been completed Downtown, a great deal of private investment has occurred. Both long-standing businesses and new businesses took risks in staying or locating in Downtown when many people still doubted that Downtown could ever come back. Their investment was critical to the success of Downtown. State and Federal tax credits have helped property owners restore buildings to their former glory. Asheville leads the state of North Carolina in use of historic tax credits.

Also key to Downtown's success has been the many organizations and volunteers who have made efforts to bring people to shop, work, and live Downtown. From festivals and events, to taskforces on streetscape and the Urban Trail, hundreds of individuals have worked to create today's vibrant, highly livable Center City.

Two people who made enormous contributions to Downtown's rebirth were Roger McGuire and Julian Price. McGuire, the founding editor

of Southern Living magazine, retired to Asheville and became involved in Downtown revitalization efforts. Most notably, he headed the Pack Place project, raising 6 million dollars in private funds for its construction. McGuire also started and funded Asheville-Buncombe Discovery, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the community's quality of life. In 1986, McGuire helped put together the Urban Design Action Forum, which brought together citizens, downtown stakeholders, and designers to discuss ideas for design in Downtown. McGuire was a tireless downtown booster, preaching the benefits of a vibrant, livable downtown.

Julian Price moved to Asheville in 1990 and immediately became interested in the health of his community. He became an advocate for urban livability, specifically pedestrian issues and improving City trees. Price supported new businesses such as Laughing Seed and the Greenline (now Mountain Xpress). Perhaps most importantly, he created Public Interest Projects, Inc. (PIP), a for-profit development company to "expand downtown-housing opportunities across the entire economic spectrum and to increase the number and

strength of downtown businesses whose presence makes Downtown a more attractive place to live, work and visit." At the latest count, PIP has rehabilitated eighteen buildings and created over seventy-five housing units.

Not only has PIP completed a number of significant projects such as the Carolina Apartments, the Asheville Hotel, and the Vanderbilt Apartment renovations, but the company has invested also in a number of notable downtown businesses such as Salsa, Zambra, and Malaprops. Julian Price left a great legacy of a more livable, enjoyable Downtown.

The Asheville Hotel, below, was boarded up and in poor shape before Public Interest Projects renovated it and turned it into a vibrant mixed use building including a bookstore, market rate apartments, and a restaurant.



In addition to his non-profit activities, Roger McGuire developed some of the first condos in downtown Asheville at 60 Haywood Street in the Haverty's Furniture Building, above.



Economic Development

"A healthy downtown today is going to be a mix of commercial and residential and the traditional institutional uses like government and churches. The broader the mix, the healthier the downtown."

*Rodney Swink, Executive Director,
NC Main Street Program*



draw people downtown and promote an extended cycle of activity that fosters economic vitality. Economically healthy downtowns contain a mixture of office, retail, entertainment, and residential uses. If each of these "engines" that drive the downtown economy is strong and healthy, a synergy is created by which each component reinforces the others to create a vital, dynamic twenty-four-hour downtown. It is important to understand the unique contributions each component makes to the overall economy. It is also important to realize that the success of each of these components depends, at least in part, upon the successful planning and management of downtown transportation, parking, infrastructure, and livability issues. Additionally, addressing challenges including graffiti, safety issues, and a perceived lack of parking is equally

Components of the Downtown Economy

The mixture of land uses, activities, and attractions defines a downtown's character as a place. These market components

significant towards creating an economically successful downtown.

Entertainment/Cultural: Downtown Asheville is blessed with a wealth of diverse entertainment and cultural options. The Civic Center, Pack Square and City County Plaza, McCormick Field, Pack Place, and the many restaurants, theaters, museums, and galleries contribute enormously to the Downtown economy by creating attractions for visitors, establishing vibrant activity nodes, and attracting additional private investment to the area. The arts are a particularly important asset. The Asheville Art Museum, Downtown's many galleries, performance theaters and the Urban Trail contribute greatly to the region's position as one of the top arts destinations in the country. It is important that entertainment and cultural uses not be isolated from the Downtown core. Rather, they should be integrated into the fabric of Downtown to encourage visitors to support adjacent retail and service businesses.

Offices: Downtown offices provide jobs, tax revenue, and a pool of downtown shoppers and residents. Office workers establish a

strong market for growth in downtown's other economic sectors. Office uses bring people downtown to conduct business, and many stay to shop, eat, and be entertained. Asheville's downtown office sector continues to be strong, housing an estimated 50 percent of all office uses within the City. Downtown's attractiveness as an office location can improve further as the range of Downtown uses expands. A diversity of uses, attractions, and amenities, creating a critical mass of Downtown activity, will make Downtown even more competitive as an office location.

Residential: Downtown housing is paramount to creating a truly vital, optimally healthy downtown environment. Because of its importance to the success of Downtown and the complexity of the issues surrounding it, housing is treated as a major component of the Center City Plan (see Housing on page 36).

Retail: Abundant and varied retail activity is critically important to Downtown's overall sense of vitality. Although Downtown Asheville has experienced a rebirth from a retailing perspective, it has enormous unrealized potential. Downtown has strong poten-

tial to offer a wider variety of service, convenience, and specialty shopping functions. A number of factors favor Downtown retail investment, including the high concentration of office employment in the area, a growing appreciation and desire for urban experiences, an increase in tourist traffic, an increased Downtown residential population, and Downtown's high-quality physical environment.

To capitalize on these favorable conditions, a number of issues must be dealt with effectively. These include increasingly high land costs, transportation issues, parking, and security issues (actual or perceived). Downtown retail investment will flourish as other uses, including office, entertainment, and residential, are more fully developed. There must be a complementary physical relationship between shopping and other active uses. This can be achieved by concentrating a variety of uses within a compact area and by providing strong, attractive pedestrian links (through improved sidewalks and streetscapes) throughout Downtown Asheville.

Tourism: The region's primary tourist destina-

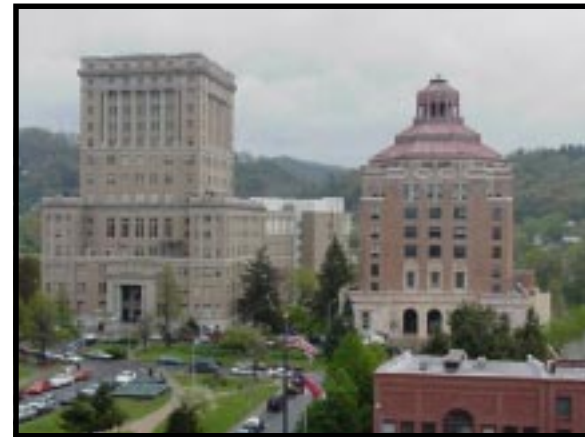


tions continue to be the Biltmore Estate and the various attractions in and around the surrounding mountains. Downtown Asheville, however, has become an additional attraction for many visitors to the region. Tourists are increasingly attracted to high-quality urban environments that offer a variety of shopping experiences, exciting nightlife, superior restaurants, and cultural and entertainment attractions. In order for Downtown Asheville to capitalize on this trend and improve and strengthen its position as a tourist destination, a concerted effort must be made to preserve and enhance existing attractions, develop new attractions, and continually strive to create an interesting and enjoyable visitor experience.

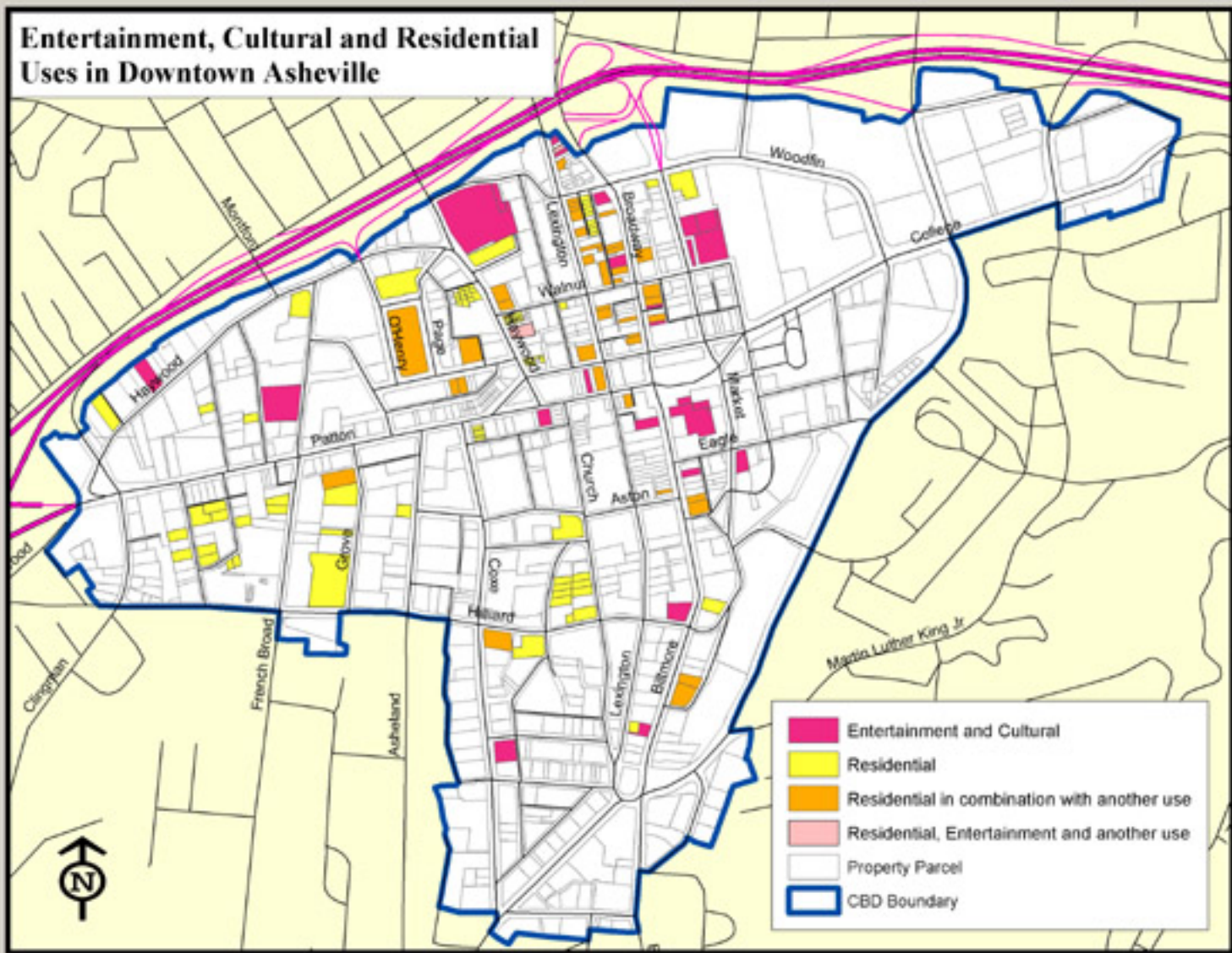
Others: A number of smaller components, or “mini economic engines”, combine to make major contributions to the overall Downtown economy. Among these are the government center, the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, Downtown churches, and the nearby medical and educational facilities. Each of these attracts additional people Downtown, many of whom remain to shop, dine, or otherwise support the Downtown economy. Because these components contribute greatly towards the Downtown economy, it is impor-



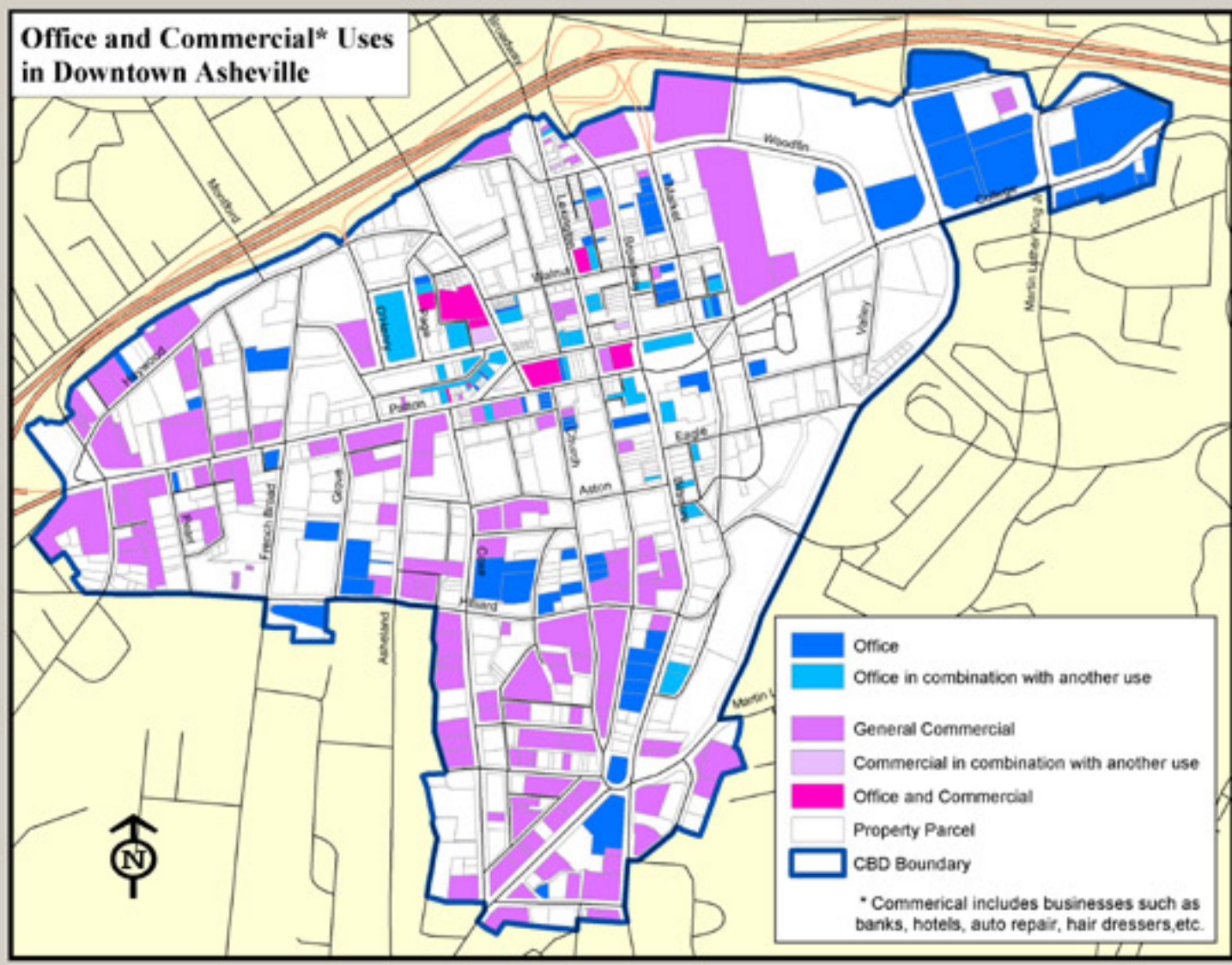
The Public Service Building contains offices of local non-profit agencies and small businesses.

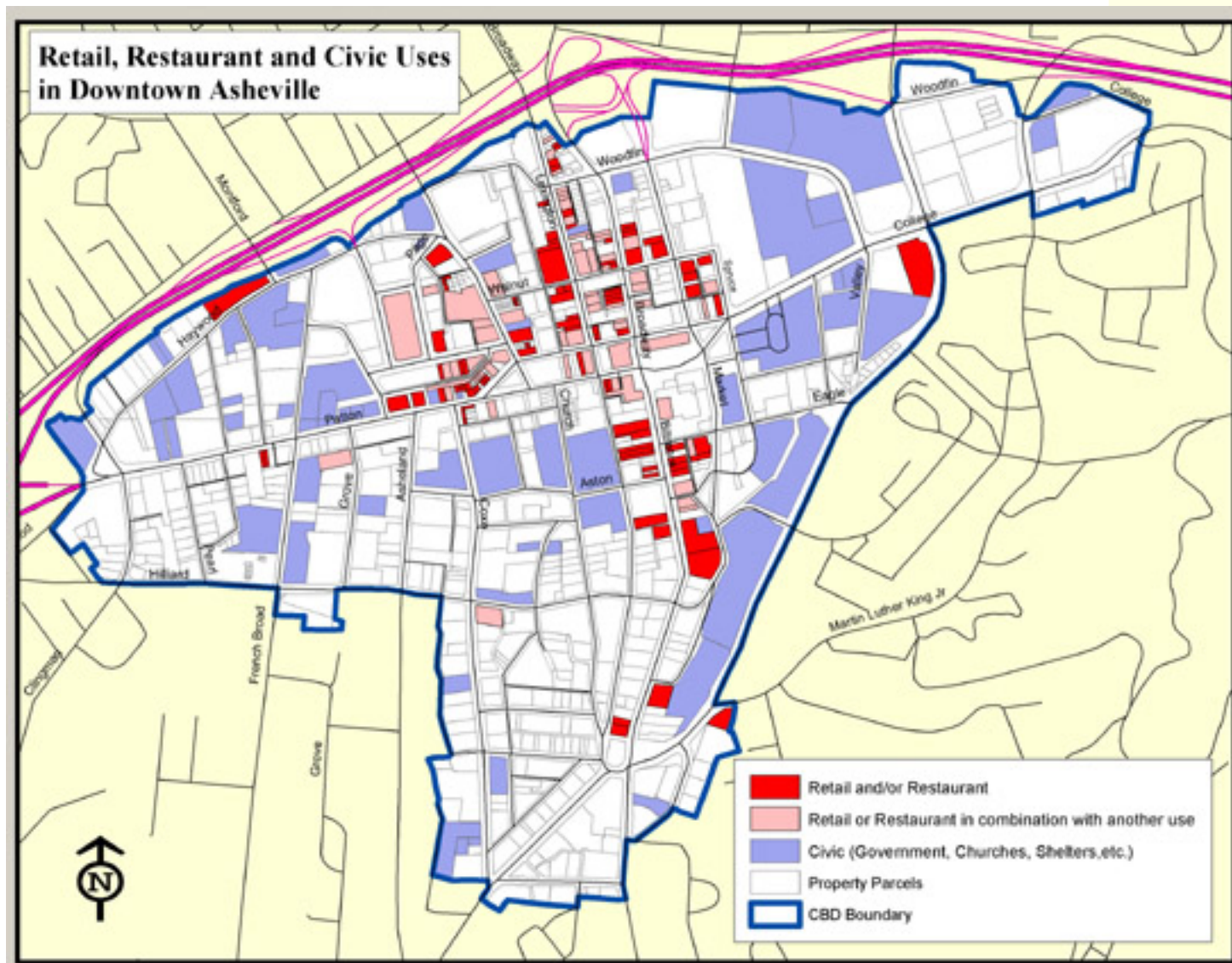


The Buncombe County Courthouse (left) and Asheville City Building (right) are main components of the government center.



Office and Commercial* Uses in Downtown Asheville





tant that they remain located in the Center City.

Missing Elements

The continued economic success of Downtown Asheville will depend on the continued development of a twenty-four-hour city. In order to achieve this vision, it is important to identify elements that are currently missing from the economic development equation. One of the most significant components of creating a vibrant downtown is a diverse mix of housing. Although the low, and to some degree, upper-income housing components are in place, there is a need to encourage and create greater opportunities for the development of moderately priced housing. Ensuring a diverse mix of Downtown housing will increase the presence of residents, thereby creating customers and employees for local businesses and strengthening the perception of Downtown as a safe and secure place to live.

With residents come the services that support them. While the Downtown area has experienced a marked increase in residents in recent years, there still remains a shortage of residen-

tial services. Some of these services include grocery, hardware, and drug stores, and day care services. The presence of these amenities is key to the retention of current residents and is vital to attracting future Downtown housing.

In addition, Asheville must strengthen its position as a destination by developing more entertainment and recreational uses Downtown. The redevelopment of Pack Square and Grove Arcade, along with the restoration of the Thomas Wolfe House, will significantly assist in accomplishing this goal. However, there is a need to provide additional year round quality attractions for residents and visitors. Some possibilities may include adding events that celebrate Asheville's heritage and providing more attractions geared towards families. New areas of open space must be designed and planned to provide gathering places and recreational opportunities for all.

By capitalizing on its quality of life assets and establishing Asheville as a premiere destination in Western North Carolina, Downtown can compete for new high-quality jobs. Asheville's reputation as a desirable community can serve

to attract information technology-related jobs and businesses, such as telecommunications, software development, corporate back offices, environmental technology, and research development. These businesses will benefit the Downtown community by increasing its economic diversity and providing higher paying jobs for its residents.

Importance of “Place” as Economic Catalyst

Creating a diverse range of land uses, activities, and attractions that draw people Downtown is essential to foster economic vitality. But Downtown Asheville’s physical character and sense of place also play key roles in its economic success. The quality of the physical environment, and the way Downtown looks and feels, help determine whether people will choose Downtown over other locations.

If Downtown’s physical environment is welcoming to visitors and promotes pedestrian activity and enjoyment, it will serve as a catalyst for private investment to occur. In a downtown setting, a high-quality physical environment is nearly as important to economic development as is the availability of



A view of College Street sidewalk by Pritchard Park as it was in 2002 and how it is today, with new awnings and outdoor dining.

water, sewer, and streets. Therefore, a pleasing physical environment can be considered to be infrastructure in that it is necessary for maximizing economic vitality. To stimulate maximum private investment, we must continually strive to improve every aspect of the physical environment. Streetscapes, parks and open space, lighting, signage, vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns, parking, preservation of our historic architectural heritage, and the design of architecturally compatible new structures all contribute to Downtown's unique sense of place.

Improvements in the physical character of Downtown can dramatically improve people's perceptions about and attitudes toward Downtown. In addition to influencing attitudes and perceptions, public investment in the quality of the public realm can leverage private investment. Indeed, recent history has shown that

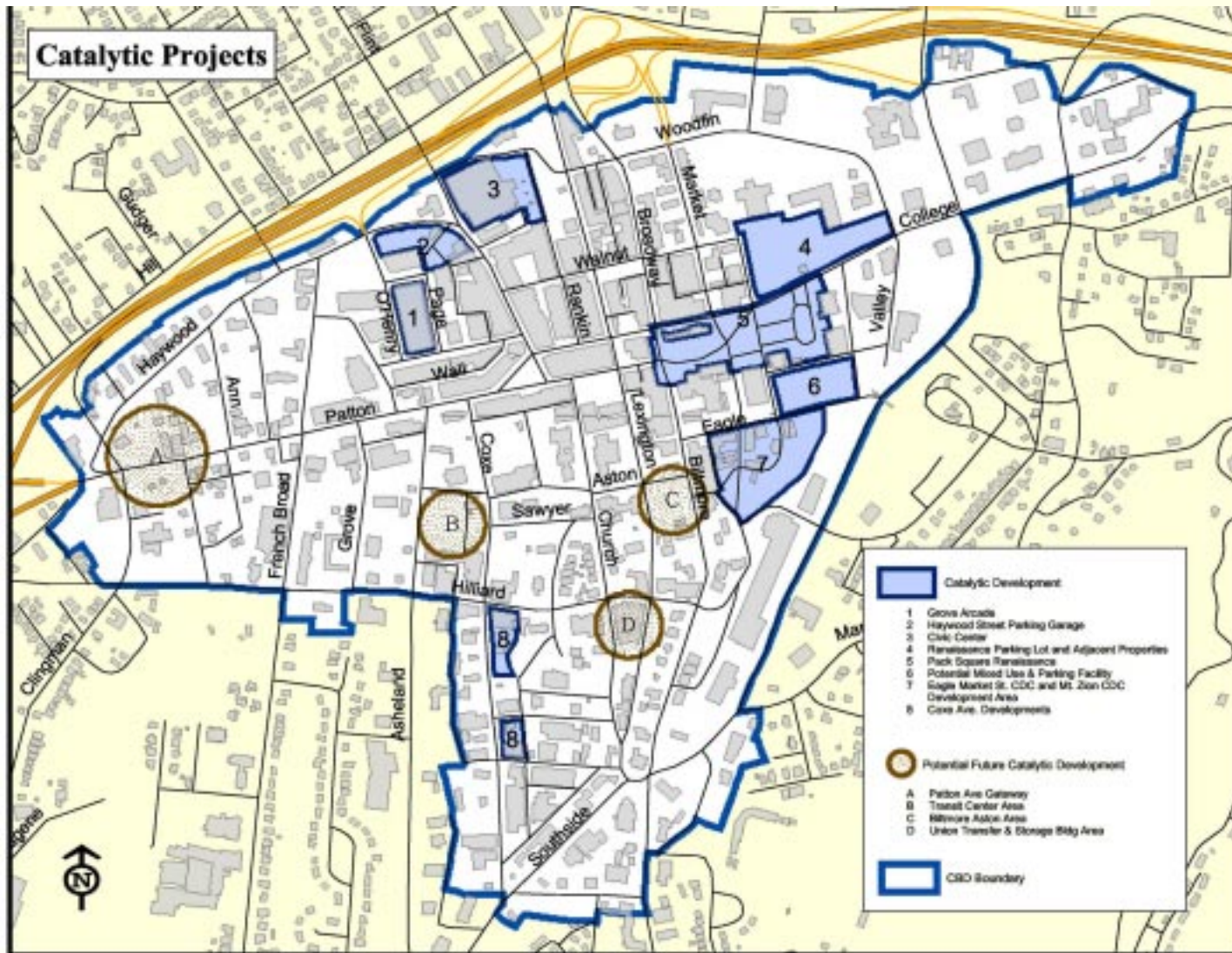
where public sector investments in streetscape, parks, or other urban amenities has occurred, private sector investment has been quick to follow.

Catalytic Projects

Some projects, because of their size, location, or programming, have the potential to stimulate additional investment or provide Downtown with missing uses that are critical to



Current catalytic projects include the renovation of (clockwise from top left) the Sawyer Motor Building, the Club Del Cardo, and the Grove Arcade.



maximizing economic vitality. These projects should receive special recognition and support and should be planned and managed to achieve maximum public benefit.

Catalytic projects currently in the planning and/or development stage include the following:

1) Grove Arcade

The Grove Arcade was built in 1926 to 1929 and housed one of the country's first indoor public markets. Following years of planning, the 269,000 square foot building opened in 2002 with approximately seventy shops and restaurants, 25,000 square feet of office space and forty-seven apartments. The Grove Arcade is the largest mixed-use project to be opened in Downtown Asheville in many years.

2) Battery Hill Parking Facility

The City of Asheville is in the process of developing a 650-space parking structure to serve the Grove Arcade and the surrounding

area. This public/private development project will also include retail, office, and residential uses. Construction is expected to begin in 2004.

3) Civic Center

The Asheville Civic Center is an aging facility that must be upgraded in order to compete with other cities in the region. One proposal for upgrading the facility involves enlarging the existing arena, renovating the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium, constructing a new performing arts center, and developing accessory retail uses.

4) Renaissance Hotel Property

This property, located on the south side of the Renaissance Asheville Hotel, is currently used for surface parking. A number of development opportunities are being considered for this prominent site.

5) Pack Square Renaissance

The Pack Square Conservancy, a private non-profit organization, is spearheading this effort to recreate Pack Square

42 S. Market Street, in the heart of the Eagle/Market Street area, was recently renovated and is now home to the Ritz Club.



and City-County Plaza into a world-class public space. In addition to providing a quality of life amenity for area residents, the redesign of this important public space is expected to stimulate significant private investment in the surrounding area.

- 6) Potential Mixed Use & Parking Facility
This lot, located south of City Hall, has tremendous potential for a large public/private mixed-use development. The property can support multiple levels of surface parking along with governmental, office, residential, and other uses.

- 7) Eagle Market St. CDC Development Area
The Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation is in the process of acquiring and rehabilitating several buildings in this historically significant area, in accordance with their vision of recapturing the liveliness and economic vitality that the area once enjoyed.

- 8) Coxe Avenue Developments
Several development projects are under-



View of Coxe Avenue as it exists today (above); conceptual drawing of how the corridor could be developed in the future with streetscape and infill improvements (below).

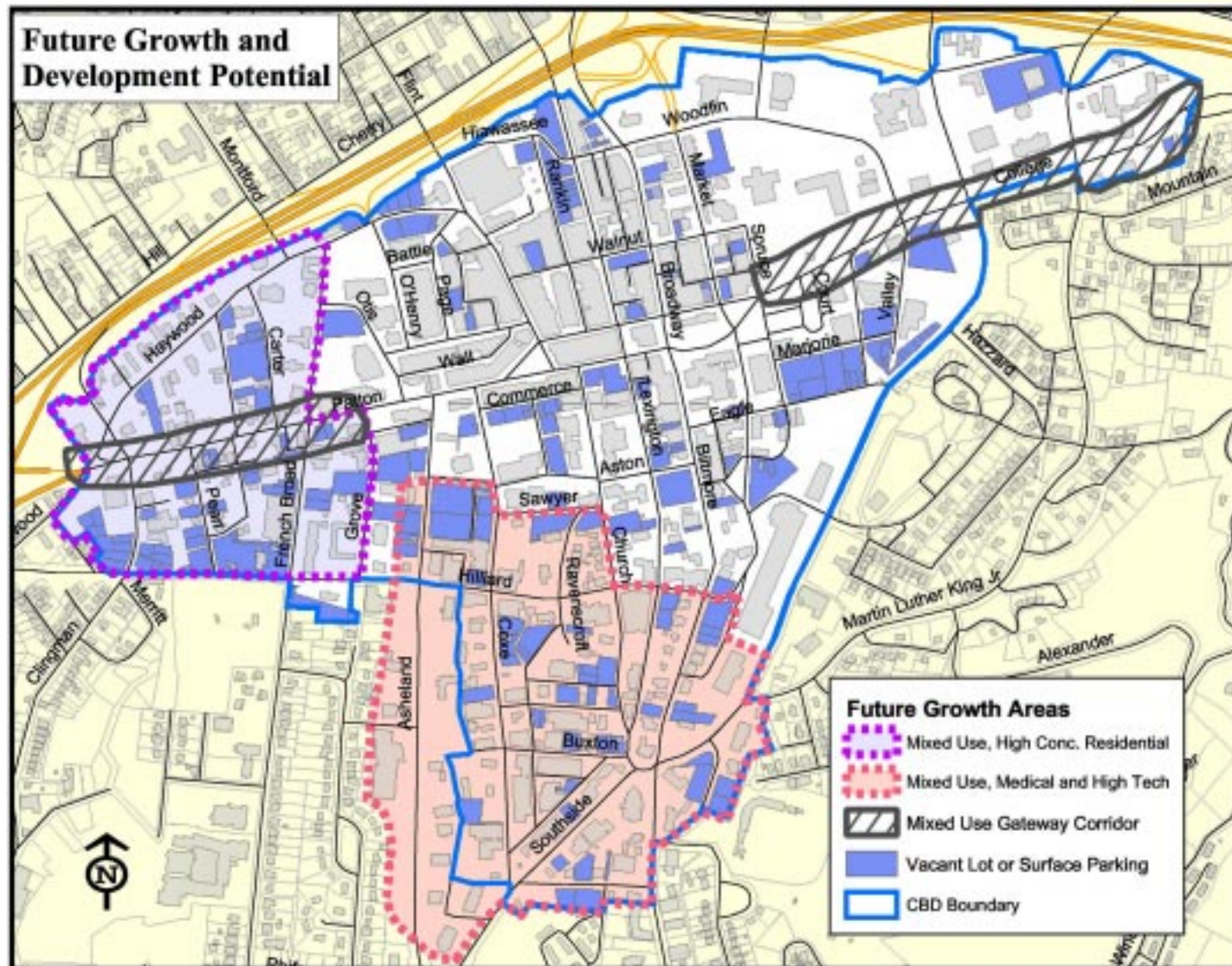
way or planned along Coxe Avenue, including the Sawyer Motor Building project, which will include residential and retail uses. These key development projects are expected to foster additional private investment along the corridor.

It is important to identify areas in which future catalytic projects can be developed. These areas include the western “gateway” of Patton Avenue, the area adjacent to the transit center, the Buncombe County-owned property currently used by Union Transfer & Storage Company, and the property at the corner of Biltmore Avenue and Aston.

Future Growth & Development Opportunities

Far from static, downtowns are dynamic, constantly evolving urban districts. Downtown Asheville must continue to grow and the intensity of use found at its core must expand into adjacent areas. It is important to identify locations where Downtown growth can and should occur and to develop strategies that ensure that this growth is consistent with and

contributes to the overall vision of the Center City. The first priority should be to fill the existing gaps in the fabric of the traditional Downtown core. Even relatively small gaps in the continuity of buildings edging the street can have a detrimental impact on pedestrian flow and the integration of uses. Opportunities still exist for the preservation and reuse of existing historic buildings and other structures within the core. Additionally, there are locations within the Downtown core where infill buildings are appropriate and desirable. Outside the Downtown core, opportunities abound for both new construction and the preservation and reuse of existing buildings. It is also important to recognize and support the growth opportunities in areas surrounding Downtown, including the riverfront and the West End/Clingman Avenue (WECAN) neighborhood. Redevelopment in these areas will have a strong, positive impact on Downtown, particularly if the linkages between them and Downtown are strengthened. As Downtown Asheville continues to prosper, it is critical that future growth occurs in a manner that is compatible with and complementary to the existing Downtown core. The sections in this



Plan dealing with land use and design/appearance provide guidance for ensuring this compatibility.

Public/Private Economic Development Model:

The public and private sectors have a shared interest in Downtown economic development. Therefore, public/private partnership and cooperation is essential for maximizing the success of economic development efforts. In the past, Downtown developers and business owners have responded quickly and positively to public sector projects that include: Pack Place, Pack Plaza, Pritchard Park, public parking facilities, and various streetscape efforts.

Developing a clear plan of action that is supported by both the public and private sectors is critical. The public sector can foster private investment by providing infrastructure and amenities, managing traffic, parking and public safety, marketing Downtown as an attractive location, and ensuring that public policies and regulations are streamlined, user friendly and geared toward encouraging Downtown development. Increasingly, the

public sector role has expanded to that of co-developer in key economic development projects. Local examples of this model include the Grove Arcade, the parking deck adjacent to the arcade (which will include private development opportunities) and the Civic Center. Public sector entrepreneurship is often necessary in developing large catalytic projects or in providing desirable uses that are missing from the Downtown economy. Public sector participation in these projects can help overcome the financial disincentives that limit private sector profitability.

Vision, Goals, and Strategies

Vision: Downtown Asheville will be the dominant economic, social, cultural, and symbolic center of the Western North Carolina region. The Center City will be the focal point of office and retail development and the center of banking, finance, government, and employment. Its many attractions and unique character will make Downtown an exciting and primary destination for visitors. A large and diverse residential population will support the various components of the Downtown economy and labor force, contributing towards a vibrant twenty-four-hour community. Downtown will provide high-paying jobs, an attractive environment, an efficient use of resources, and an increased tax base, making it a model of Smart Growth.

Goal I: Attract a diverse range of new businesses and uses to ensure a balanced and lively Downtown marketplace.

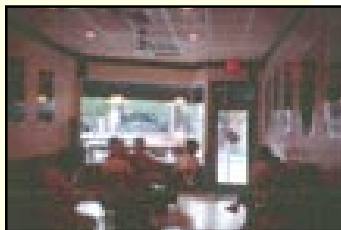
Strategies:

1. Analyze the use of Downtown space to identify all missing or under-served func-

tions (these may include services for local residents, high-tech/knowledge-based businesses, and family-oriented activities and attractions).

2. Develop partnerships and strategies aimed at recruiting targeted uses that fill niches in the Downtown economy and job base.
 - a. Actively pursue the creation of new incentives and other economic development “tools” available for business recruitment.
 - b. Assist the private sector in land assemblage and/or use publicly-owned property suitable for targeted uses and make them available at favorable rates.
 - c. Provide targeted uses as a component of public/private catalytic development projects.
 - d. Develop marketing products specifically aimed at attracting targeted uses.
3. Identify, encourage and support opportunities for new development in Downtown.
 - a. Identify under-utilized parcels of land and facilitate or encourage their development. These tend to be vacant lots, surface parking lots or properties where





- the value of the land is higher than the value of any buildings or other improvements.
 - b. Develop a long-range plan for City- and County-owned properties and when appropriate, use them for economic development or public/private catalytic projects.
 - c. Explore the creation of a City Land Bank Program to assemble properties for development (land assemblage is often a barrier to downtown development).
 - i. Land Bank program should be a logical extension of long range plan for publicly owned land.
 - ii. Bring together a public-private team to examine other Land Bank models from around the country and develop a local model.
 - d. Ensure adequate infrastructure for future development.
 - e. Continue to encourage/promote mixed-use development in order to maximize development opportunities.
 - f. Develop strategic plans for areas with particularly strong development potential.
 - g. Support ongoing and future catalytic projects.
 - i. Educate the public as to how these projects benefit all city residents by stimulating additional development and create tax revenue for the City.
 - ii. Provide streetscape and infrastructure improvements where needed for development.
 - iii. Land bank/assemble properties to secure future development opportunities.
4. Provide an improved level of services for Downtown developers, investors, and business owners.
 - a. Provide an enhanced one-stop information center in the City Development office, with information concerning incentives, demographics, the downtown economy, and real estate.
 - b. Provide a listing of available property.
 - c. Serve as a link between the public and realtors, providing appropriate information.
 - d. Track Downtown data including business creation, jobs, development.

- e. Educate and assist property owners, developers, and architects regarding City policies, regulations, permitting processes, and design guidelines.
 - f. Continue to streamline the permitting process.
 - g. Improve coordination and communication regarding public infrastructure projects.
5. Encourage the development of a comprehensive marketing program highlighting Downtown's unique assets and strengths as a business location and a tourist, shopping, and entertainment destination.
6. Increase and diversify Downtown's residential population to expand the market for Downtown businesses (See Housing on page 36).

Goal II: Actively work to retain existing Downtown businesses and foster their continued success and growth.

Strategies:

1. Develop/provide new methods to retain

existing businesses and to support their expansion.

- a. Storefront improvement grants/loans.
 - b. Expansion loans.
 - c. Use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds where appropriate for job creation.
 - d. Provide an improved level of services for Downtown developers, investors and business owners (see strategy 3 under goal # 1).
 - e. Investigate and lobby for the passage of state enabling legislation, including tax abatement programs and tax increment financing.
2. Improve relations between the City and Downtown merchants and property owners.
- a. Analyze City policies, regulations, fees, and permitting processes to identify potential changes, which would result in increased business friendliness.
 - b. Coordinate public construction projects to minimize business disruption and public inconvenience.
 - c. Create an improved mechanism to notify businesses about City services, infrastructure improvements, and large





construction projects.

- d. Hold periodic Downtown neighborhood meetings to identify and partner in resolving Downtown issues.
3. Develop a long range parking plan and policies for the Downtown area.
 - a. Address future parking needs.
 - b. Reduce the demand for parking by promoting other transportation options.
 - c. Address loading issues, and pursue shared parking options.
 - d. Accelerate the development of strategically located parking decks.
 - e. Continue public relations about parking decks and rates.
 - f. Utilize public parking to carry out overall Downtown policy rather than simply as a revenue source.
 4. Maintain and improve overall Downtown livability to encourage business retention (see Goal IV).
 5. Business and property owners should seek creative opportunities to fund downtown improvements (beyond what the City would

ordinarily provide), which will enhance business viability.

Goal III: Ensure adequate infrastructure for current and future development.

Strategies:

1. Work with infrastructure providers to develop comprehensive Infrastructure Improvements Plan for Downtown.
 - a. Assess existing and future infrastructure needs.
 - b. Identify necessary infrastructure upgrades and prioritize improvements.
 - c. Seek opportunities for public/private partnerships to fund improvements.
2. Improve coordination and communication between City departments and utility providers regarding infrastructure requirements and planned improvements.

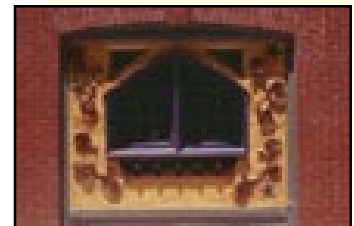
Goal IV: Reinforce Downtown's status as a premier destination on par with other local attractions.

Strategies:

1. Encourage the development of a comprehensive marketing campaign, promoting Downtown as a destination for tourists and area residents.
 - a. Develop partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, the Asheville Downtown Association, the City, and others to create and sustain marketing efforts.
 - b. Ensure that Downtown is prominently featured in state and regional marketing efforts.
 - c. Emphasize the wide variety and diversity of Downtown attractions, thereby encouraging single destination shoppers and visitors to become multi-destination shoppers and visitors.
2. Actively work to retain and strengthen existing Downtown attractions such as the Civic Center, Thomas Wolfe Auditorium, and Pack Place.
3. Renovate and upgrade the Asheville Civic Center in its present location and pursue the development of an adjacent performing arts center.
4. Encourage the development of new tourism

products, including attractions that are geared toward families.

- a. Assemble key partners including the Asheville Downtown Association, Tourism Development Authority (TDA), the City, and the County to identify opportunities for new Downtown attractions.
 - b. Attract tour company to provide tours of “Historic Downtown Asheville” by trolley, van, or other.
 - c. Include kid friendly designs at Pack Square and other parks and public spaces.
5. Develop a Park Once and Wayfinding program, which enables visitors to quickly identify a parking facility and, using a system of color-coded directional signage, easily walk to any Downtown destination (see Transportation on page 72).
 - a. Coordinate with marketing campaign and brochures.
 - b. Integrate program with subdistricts (See subdistricts on page 61).
 6. Improve connections and accessibility within Downtown and to surrounding





neighborhoods and destinations.

- a. Create a Downtown shuttle that circulates around Downtown, providing easy access to parking areas, offices, shopping, and dining destinations and government buildings.
- b. Increase transit frequency to and from Downtown.
- c. Improve multi-modal connections to the River and Biltmore Village.
- d. Accelerate the development of strategically located parking decks.

7. Promote and strengthen Downtown as an “arts and entertainment district,” showcasing the rich variety of cultural and entertainment amenities.

- a. Include arts emphasis in marketing campaigns and brochures.
- b. Encourage coordination of efforts between the Arts Council, the Public Art Board, and other related organizations.
- c. Continue ongoing programs that support the arts and garner corporate support.

8. Strengthen and continue to create a strong,

positive identity and sense of place that will naturally draw visitors and local residents alike (see Physical Environment on page 46).

Goal V: Preserve and enhance the quality and character of Downtown’s physical and social environment.

Strategies:

1. Preserve and protect Downtown’s wealth of historic buildings (see Design & Appearance: Historic Preservation on page 49).
2. Encourage high quality compatible design in new construction projects (see Design & Appearance: New Construction on page 50).
3. Strengthen the pedestrian experience.
 - a. Continue to develop quality streetscape amenities.
 - b. Repair or construct new sidewalks where needed.
 - c. Promote pedestrian right-of-way education by designating Downtown as a Pedestrian Friendly Zone and accompanying signage.
 - d. Improve pedestrian circulation patterns,

particularly with respect to street crossings.

4. Business and property owners should seek creative opportunities to fund Downtown improvements (beyond what the City would ordinarily provide) that will enhance appearance, cleanliness, and safety.
5. Create public-private partnerships and support existing efforts to manage ongoing Downtown social issues, including graffiti, vandalism, loitering, and panhandling.
6. Continue to develop quality open space and parks (see Public Spaces: Parks on page 55).

Goal VI: Increase cooperation and communication between organizations involved in Downtown economic development.

Strategies:

1. Form a committee comprised of representatives from various agencies and organizations to focus on Downtown economic development efforts.
 - a. Identify areas of responsibility to elimi-

nate duplication of efforts.

- b. Implement Economic Development section of the Center City Plan.
2. Analyze all publicly owned property for appropriate use to maximize benefits to both the public and private sectors.
 - a. Locate public sector facilities in existing City-County complex area to minimize impact and maximize efficiency.
 - b. Look for “joint use” opportunities for public sector facilities.
 - c. Transfer public sector properties that are better suited for private development into private ownership and under appropriate development.
3. Encourage the State and Federal governments to adopt and implement policies to locate State and Federal offices Downtown.

Housing & Residential Development

"You can get in your car and drive home, but if you live downtown, you *are* home."

*Pat Whalen
President, Public Interest Projects, Inc.*

Importance of Housing to Downtown

Housing is a cornerstone of downtown development and a key ingredient of a strong downtown economy. Downtown housing extends the cycle of activity beyond the workday, creating a "twenty-four-hour" urban neighborhood that is vibrant and active around the clock. The vitality created by a "24-hour" downtown generates a positive image, draws increased numbers of visitors, and improves safety by providing "eyes on the street." Downtown residents create and expand the market for downtown businesses by demanding a diverse mix of products and services including retail, restaurant and entertainment facilities. Additionally, downtown residents create a constituency to take an active role in downtown growth and improvement issues.

Other benefits of downtown housing include more efficient use of the city's infrastructure, expanded housing and lifestyle choices for area residents, and reduced reliance on the automobile. The benefits of housing to downtown

are magnified when a diversity of housing options are available for people of all incomes.

Ideally, Downtown workers should be able to find housing that is affordable at their income, either to rent or purchase. This would allow those people who want to live downtown to do so.

Housing will play a key role in supporting the continued revitalization of Downtown Asheville. Downtown's ability to reach its enormous potential will be strongly linked to the continued and accelerated development of a diverse range of housing options.

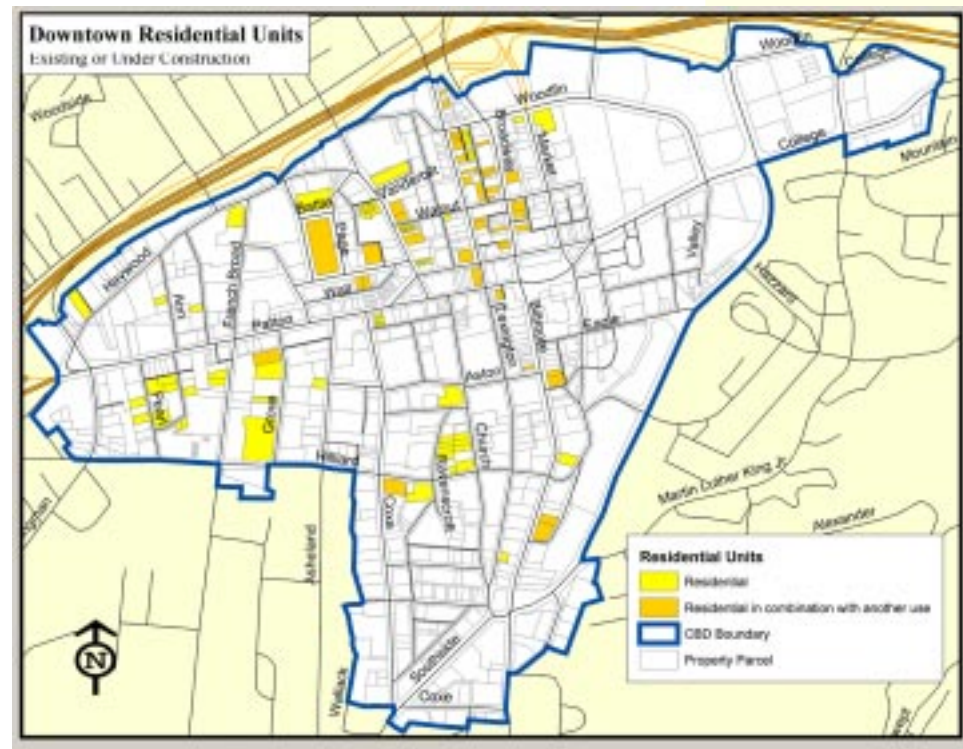
Recent History and Present Downtown Housing

With the Downtown revitalization efforts of the late 1980s and early 1990s, several residential developments were completed, including condominiums at 21 and 60 Haywood Street. The immediate success of these projects, which totaled twenty-two units, demonstrated a strong market for Downtown housing. Public Interest Projects, a private development company, added substantially to the number of

residential units Downtown by redeveloping the Carolina Apartments on North French Broad, the Turnbilt Apartments on Biltmore, and the Asheville Hotel and the old Penney's building, both at Haywood and Walnut Streets.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2000 there were 1351 people living in Downtown Asheville, an increase of 532 people from 1990. Although much of the increase is due to an increase in people living in group quarters (institutions, dorms, etc.), the number of people living in households increased by twenty-eight percent. Downtown's current residential population is roughly equal to that of Biltmore Forest.

At the end of 2001, there were approximately ninety-five condominium units and forty-eight rental units under development. Approximately fifty of the condos and all forty-eight apartments are expected to be occupied by the end of 2002. Available units are predominantly high-end units with sales prices ranging from \$140,000 to \$600,000, and costs per square foot ranging from \$200 to \$350. Rental prices for the new Grove Arcade apartments are approximately \$1.20/square foot per month.





Downtown housing comes in all shapes and forms: (clockwise from top left) Kress Condominiums; Asheville Hotel Apartments; Merritt Park Condominiums; an alley apartment.

Virtually all of the existing Downtown housing units and those under development are located on the upper floors of renovated historic buildings. Although residences are scattered throughout the Downtown area, the highest residential concentration is found in the Battery Hill district, especially on Haywood Street.

Challenges to Downtown Housing

Although residential development in Downtown Asheville has proven to be highly successful, there are a number of challenges that must be overcome in order for Downtown's housing market to truly thrive.

Costs of Conversion: Most buildings that are converted to residential uses were constructed in the 1920s or 1930s and originally housed offices or hotels on the upper floors. Therefore, they typically require major upgrades. A chief factor in the cost to convert historic buildings to residential uses is compliance with building and fire code provisions, including Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Building regulations have changed significantly over the years and when older

buildings are refurbished, they must be brought into conformance with today's standards. This can add significant costs. It is hoped that the rehabilitation code pilot program, available for use in spring 2002, will serve to reduce rehabilitation costs.

Affordability: Because of the costs associated with converting historic buildings to residential use, coupled with a strong demand for high-end units, virtually all housing construction in the last two years has been unaffordable to the vast majority of City residents. While these new units make up only a share of the total number of existing units downtown, it is important that future units be made available at a range of prices.

Obstacles to New Construction: Although new construction avoids many of the costs associated with building conversions, it has its own set of challenges. Among these are the high costs of Downtown property, high construction costs in an in-fill setting, and difficulty in property assemblage.

Perception of Downtown: Although the perception of Downtown has improved dra-

matically in recent years, there continues to be a large segment of the community who view Downtown as unsafe or otherwise undesirable as a place to live. This perception exists despite extensive statistics that indicate a relatively low incidence of crime, particularly crimes against persons, in the Downtown area.

Services/Livability: While not necessarily a challenge to the development of Downtown housing, the lack of residential services, including a grocery store, hardware store, and general discount store, may deter some potential residents from moving Downtown. The provision of these services, along with improvements in the quality and maintenance of the public realm would improve Downtown livability and serve to attract additional Downtown residents.

Despite these challenges, Downtown Asheville has tremendous potential as an attractive, vibrant urban neighborhood. Its character, derived from its unique architecture, public spaces and eclectic population, will continue to draw new residents. As opportunities to develop housing within existing buildings diminish, new construction is likely to occur.

The public and private sectors must work together to achieve the vision of Downtown as a vital, diverse, and desirable neighborhood. In order to ensure the continued revitalization of Downtown to the benefit of the entire region, further action to stimulate more housing—and a wider diversity of housing products—is needed.



Downtown living in different stages: the Battery Park Apartments (top); the Aston Condos under construction (bottom left); and the Rice White Building, future site of apartments (bottom right).

Vision, Goals, and Strategies

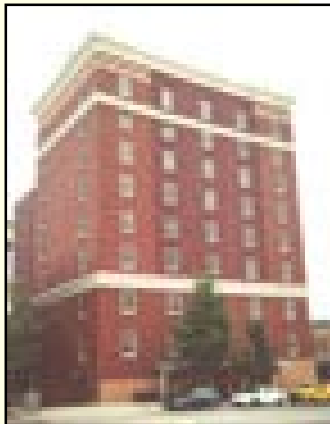
Vision: Downtown Asheville will be a clean, safe, and vibrant neighborhood consisting of distinct districts where a diverse population lives among a rich variety of workplace, cultural, shopping, and entertainment options. Quality public spaces, pocket parks, and streetscape amenities will give identity and a sense of community to Downtown and serve as magnets to attract residents to a wide range of housing options.

Goal I. Substantially increase the number of people living Downtown and in nearby neighborhoods.

Strategies:

1. Continue to improve the physical environment of Downtown, making it an increasingly desirable place to live.
 - a. Support the Pack Square Renaissance Project.
 - b. Provide pocket parks and improved landscaping in each Downtown district.
 - c. Explore the development of a new park or large public space at the western end of Patton Avenue.
 - d. Connect parks and public spaces with attractive, functional streetscapes.
 - e. Provide a high level of maintenance in the public realm, including streets, sidewalks, and parks.
 - f. Improve the design review process to help ensure a quality built environment for both existing and new construction.
 - g. Address the parking needs of Downtown residents. Seek opportunities for the shared use of parking facilities—serving business needs during the day and residential needs at night.
2. Encourage the continued development of residential units on upper floors of existing buildings.
 3. Encourage new construction of housing in Downtown and adjacent areas.
 - a. New construction in the Downtown core and gateway areas should incorporate retail or other active uses at ground level.
 - b. New high-density single-use residential construction is appropriate in the area south of Hilliard Avenue and at the





- western end of Downtown.
- c. Provide residential uses as a component of public/private catalytic development projects.
- d. Assist in the assembly of land for residential projects.
- e. Encourage a wider mix of housing types and products in the Downtown area.
- f. Investigate economic incentives for targeted types of housing.
- g. Support efforts to redevelop the West-End/Clingman Avenue neighborhood as described in the WECAN Plan.

- 4. Review existing zoning and building code provisions in areas surrounding Downtown and remove regulatory hurdles to residential development.
- 5. Develop incentives to increase residential densities in surrounding areas, particularly along gateway corridors.
- 6. Improve public awareness that Downtown is a safe, vibrant, viable neighborhood.
 - a. Develop marketing programs to improve the public perception of Down-

town and to attract new Downtown residents.

- b. Form a Downtown neighborhood association as a member of the Coalition of Asheville Neighborhoods to represent the interests of Downtown residents.

Goal II: Provide a range of housing options to attract an economically and socially diverse population.

Strategies:

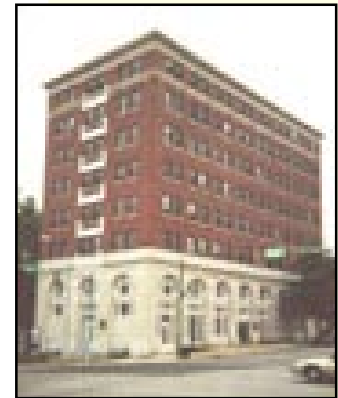
- 1. Pursue changes in the State Building Code that may reduce the costs of developing Downtown housing.
- 2. Encourage the development of “affordable” or middle-range housing in the Downtown area.
 - a. Identify the market that is currently under-served in the Downtown area.
 - b. Acquire properties and/or use existing City-owned properties suitable for housing and make them available at favorable rates for the development of housing for targeted market.

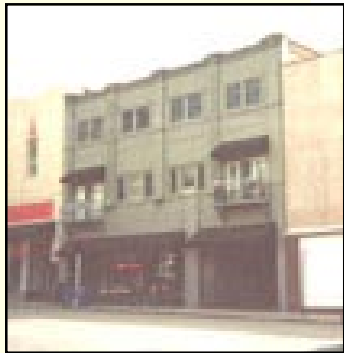
- c. Provide “affordable” or mid-range residential units as a component of public/private catalytic development projects.
 - d. Educate developers about programs, grants, and credits available for building affordable housing.
 - e. Make information about vacant or under-utilized land readily available to housing developers.
 - f. Explore new models for home ownership, e.g., co-ops, co-housing, etc.
 - g. Explore the creation of incentives and/or creative financing mechanisms for the development of affordable and mid-range housing.
 - h. Utilize Housing Trust Fund monies for the development of affordable housing in the Downtown area.
3. Use local, State, and Federal subsidies to preserve and improve housing units Downtown that are affordable to very low income people, including those with special needs.

Goal III: Improve the Overall Livability of Downtown Asheville.

Strategies:

1. Encourage the development of a complete range of goods and services to meet the needs of Downtown residents. A grocery store and a hardware store have been identified as primary needs.
 - a. Assemble statistical, demographic, and marketing materials, which demonstrate a market for needed businesses.
 - b. Identify those businesses needed to support a growing and diverse residential population
 - c. Explore the creation of incentives for the private sector to provide needed businesses.
 - d. Acquire properties and/or use existing City-owned properties suitable for needed businesses and make them available at favorable rates for these uses.
 - e. Provide needed businesses as a component of public/private catalytic development projects.





2. Continue to improve the physical environment of Downtown, making the Center City an increasingly desirable place to live.
 - a. Support the Pack Square Renaissance Project.
 - b. Provide pocket parks, improved landscaping in each Downtown district.
 - c. Explore the development of a new park or large public space at the western end of Patton Avenue.
 - d. Connect parks and public spaces with attractive, functional streetscapes.
 - e. Provide a high level of maintenance in the public realm, including streets, sidewalks and parks.
 - f. Improve the design review process to help ensure a quality built environment.
 - g. Address the parking needs of Downtown residents. Seek opportunities for the shared use of parking facilities - serving business needs during the day and residential needs at night.
3. Improve the safety and cleanliness of the Downtown environment.
 - a. Implement Quality Forward's "adopt a street" program to supplement City efforts at litter removal.
 - b. Create public-private partnerships and support existing efforts to manage ongoing Downtown social issues including graffiti, vandalism, loitering and panhandling.
 - c. Business and property owners should seek creative opportunities to fund enhanced maintenance and beautification (beyond what the City would ordinarily provide).
 - d. Provide additional kiosks Downtown for posting handbills.
 - e. Increase police presence as feasible.
 - f. Consider the development of new ordinances to ensure that a high standard of livability is maintained (i.e. panhandling ordinance).
4. Improve and strengthen pedestrian connections and transit opportunities both within Downtown and between Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.
 - a. Extend streetscape elements along streets that link Downtown with surrounding neighborhoods (Montford, West End/Clingman, East End) as a method of enhancing the pedestrian experience.

- b. Create new pedestrian connections where needed.

- 5. Improve relations between the City and Downtown residents by making City policies more resident friendly where feasible.

Interior shots of Downtown Asheville residences



Physical Environment

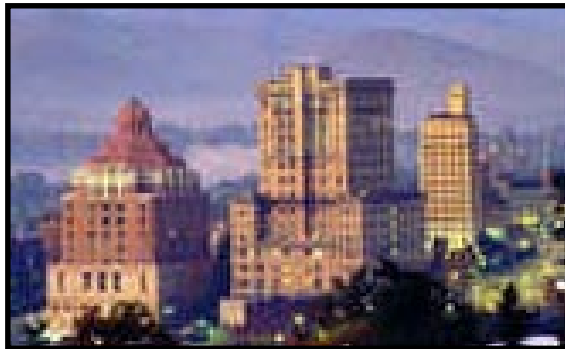
"Asheville is oft times illustrated and promoted in beautiful photographs from the outside looking in-with the Downtown nestled in a basin of lush mountain scenery. By developing the garden city concept in Asheville, our city would be just as beautiful from the inside looking out."

Bob Carr, Downtown Commission, 1986-1990

Land Use/Pattern of Development

Two qualities that distinguish Asheville's Downtown from other areas of the City are its diversity of use and its com-

compact form. A broad range of uses and attractions draw people Downtown for a variety of purposes, creating a rich social environment and a profitable business setting. The compactness with which Downtown has developed promotes pedestrian movement and creates a critical mass of activity. As the Center City grows, it is important that new development reinforces and strengthens these fundamental qualities.



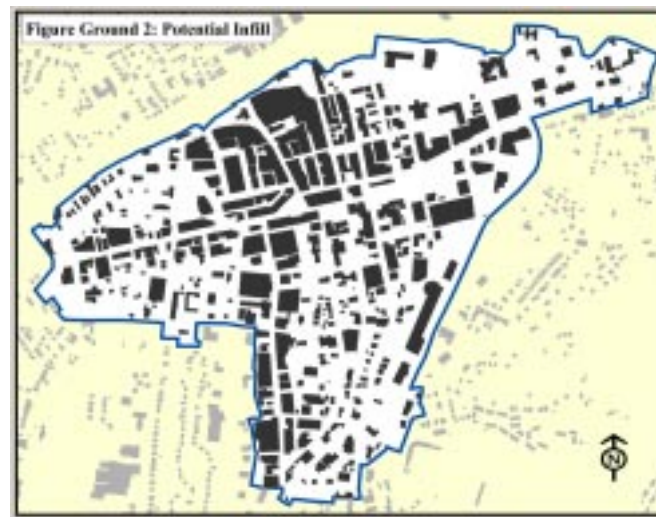
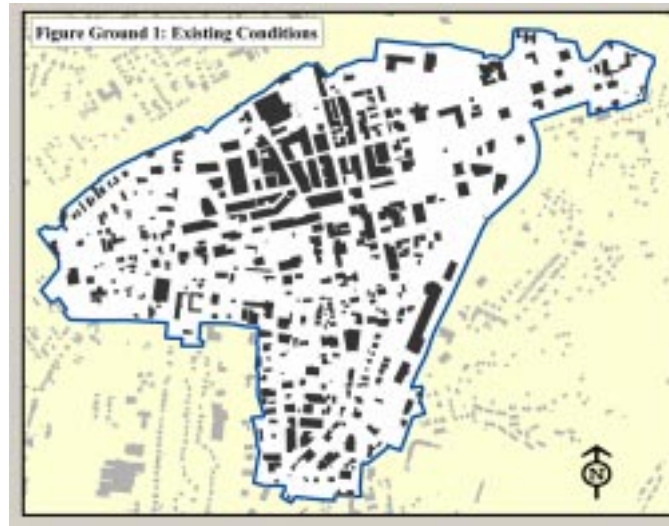
Downtown Asheville

Diversity of Use: Downtown as a whole should be a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood, housing a wide array of office, retail, residential, entertainment, cultural, and civic uses. The Downtown core should provide the widest range of uses, clearly establishing it as the community's central place. Although the objective is to provide as broad a range of uses as possible, even within individual buildings, the street level spaces throughout the Downtown core should emphasize retail or similar uses that stimulate and complement pedestrian activity. This emphasis on the street-level pedestrian experience is also important within the key corridors that lead into the core.

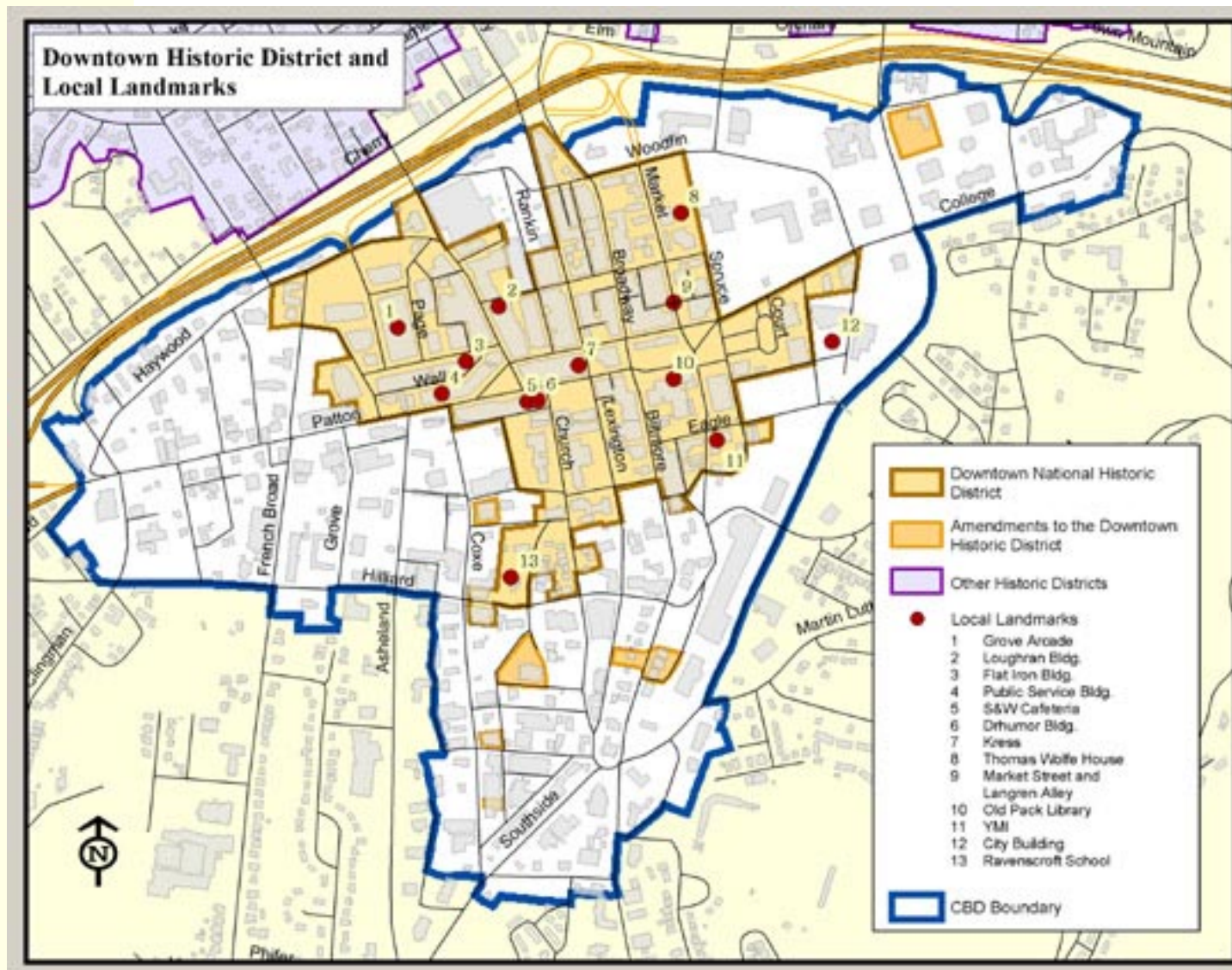
Outside the Downtown core and key entrance corridors, a narrower range of uses can occur. In fact, individual uses should even dominate in certain areas such as the civic district at the eastern end of Downtown and the area west of French Broad Avenue, which should have a high residential concentration. However, even these areas should contain multiple, complementary uses and should be strongly linked to the core. The area south of Hilliard Avenue is expected to develop rapidly over the next decade. A high concentration of high-tech,

medical and residential uses should be encouraged in this area.

Compactness of Form: The development pattern in the Downtown area should be compact and walkable, with a tight physical structure that concentrates uses rather than spreading activity thinly over a larger area. Downtown's spatial arrangement of buildings, streets and public spaces should provide a legible framework that helps visitors understand how Downtown is organized. The continuity of buildings framing the street helps to create a coherent urban fabric and should not be interrupted by surface parking lots, vacant properties, or large building setbacks. The density of development should be highest in the Downtown core. Therefore, a first priority should be to develop infill buildings that fill gaps and reinforce the existing urban fabric. While the core is a good example of compact form, it breaks down very quickly outside of the core. The corridors leading into the Downtown core should be developed with a similar density of development and uses that are complimentary to adjacent residential neighborhoods. Redevelopment in these areas should also receive high priority.



These figure-ground maps illustrate Downtown's existing development pattern, with a compact and walkable core but less organized peripheral and gateway areas (top), and Downtown's future development pattern with new buildings that expand the vibrant downtown core (bottom).



Design & Appearance

Historic Preservation: Downtown Asheville is one of the largest and best-preserved examples of an early twentieth century American city. The National Register of Historic Places has designated most of the Downtown core as a National Register Historic District. This designation is an honor and a tribute to both the quantity and the quality of Downtown Asheville's historic architecture. A number of downtown buildings, including the City Building, the Kress building, and the Grove Arcade, have received special status as Local and/or National Register Historic Landmarks. (see Map on preceding page).

Downtown's wealth of architecturally significant historic buildings has played a key role in its revitalization. Unlike many cities, which demolished most of their historic buildings, Asheville's historic fabric has remained largely intact. Although many of the businesses and much of the vitality left Downtown by the 1980s, the historic buildings that give Downtown its wonderful character and strong identity remained in place. These buildings, and their collective contribution to the special

character of Downtown, set the stage for revitalization and presented opportunities for visionary entrepreneurs.

Preserving historic structures can be a challenge for investors and developers due to the high costs associated with rehabilitation. While Federal and State historic tax credits aid in the rehabilitation of historic structures, there is a need to provide additional financial incentives and technical assistance as well. The City of Asheville has participated in a rehabilitation code pilot program, based on the New Jersey rehabilitation code. The code is



Historic Preservation of structures such as the Thomas Wolfe House has contributed to the revitalization of Downtown Asheville.



likely to benefit developers by making it easier to make changes to existing buildings, perhaps also reducing costs associated with rehabilitating older structures.



Historic preservation will continue to play a major role in making Downtown a distinctive and vital place for its citizens, businesses, and visitors. Ongoing preservation of Downtown's cultural and architectural heritage not only promotes community pride, but makes economic sense as well. In addition to bolstering tourism and business attraction to the area, preservation helps to increase the City and County tax base by encouraging property re-investment over demolition. Restoration of historic buildings is particularly significant in Downtown Asheville due to geographical constraints, limited availability of developable land, and its status as a tourist destination. If the Center City is to reach its full potential, we must continue to safeguard the architectural legacy of Downtown Asheville.



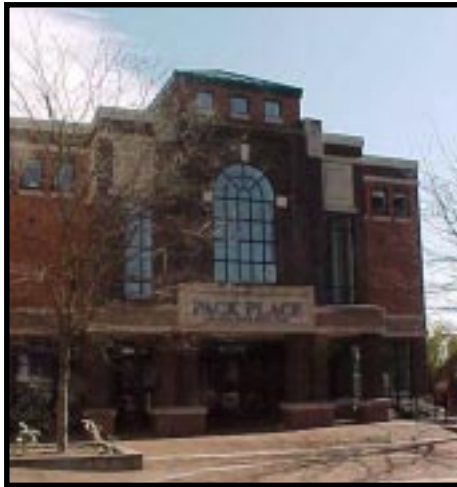
New Construction: The majority of Downtown's historic buildings have been renovated to house new uses. Continued Downtown growth therefore will require the construction of new buildings. The majority of new construction in the Downtown core will be infill development. Infill buildings are desirable in that they fill gaps in the urban fabric and provide opportunities for continued economic development. Infill buildings must be sensitively designed, however, to reinforce and build upon the architectural and historic character of Downtown. The objective is not for new buildings to mimic historic designs or to apply a period architectural style to a new building. Rather, new infill buildings should respect the existing historic context by incorporating certain basic design elements into a contemporary architectural expression. The following principles should be used as guidelines in the design of infill buildings:

1. New buildings should follow established building setbacks within the block, usually at the sidewalk edge, to reinforce the street edge and enhance pedestrian continuity.
2. The scale and massing of infill buildings should be compatible with existing build-

ings within the block. The building mass should be broken into increments that correspond to the scale and massing of existing buildings within the block.

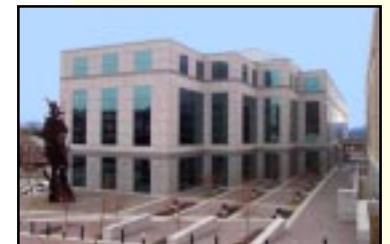
3. The building's street level façade and primary entrance should be oriented toward the street and should be designed to add interest and variety to the pedestrian experience.
4. Building fenestration, including the location of doors and windows, should be consistent with the context of surrounding buildings and the function of the street on which the building is located.

The Pack Place Building illustrates how new construction can complement the existing architectural and historic character of Downtown.



Not all new Downtown construction has to incorporate contextual design. Certain buildings, because of their location, context, or use will be considered “monumental” buildings. Monumental buildings require less attention to context and therefore can be designed to establish a baseline for a new context. Monumental buildings are often appropriate at gateway entrances to Downtown. It is important that monumental buildings be designed to contribute to the existing urban fabric and that the quality of their architecture is commensurate with their prominence in location or use.

Public Realm: The careful, deliberate design of the various elements that make up the public realm is just as important as the design and preservation of buildings. In fact, the measure of Downtown's success as a place (and as a market) is the quality of the pedestrian experience and the likelihood that people will linger Downtown, walking from place to place. Therefore, providing a pleasant, diverse and interesting pedestrian environment should be the highest urban design priority.





Streetscape: Streetscaping details, including streetlights, sidewalk materials, tree grates, street furniture, and signage, enhance the pedestrian experience and give Downtown a strong sense of place. Over the past fifteen years, the City has made vast improvements in the quality of Downtown streetscapes. The City has installed benches, trash receptacles, Old Asheville-style streetlights, tree grates, and bike racks. Numerous sidewalk improvements have also been made.

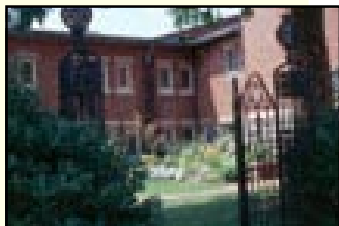


*Examples of
Downtown
streetscape elements.*

The continued installation of streetscape elements is vital to Downtown's ongoing development and revitalization. With limited funding, the completion of Downtown streetscape enhancements must be accomplished incrementally. It is important, therefore, that priorities are developed to guide the phasing of streetscape projects. The first priority should be to fill gaps within the Downtown core that sever pedestrian linkages. Streetscape extensions made in conjunction with private development projects or where extensions are likely to stimulate desirable private investment should also be a high priority. Another high priority location is along gateway corridors, where the addition of streetscape elements can establish a strong identity and sense of place for Downtown.

The consistent and repeated use of streetscape elements establishes a Downtown "vocabulary" that reinforces Downtown's organizing structure and helps to orient visitors. One of Downtown Asheville's many charms is its eclectic nature and distinct sub-districts that have developed—each with its





own flavor and special character. It is important that these sub-districts project a distinctive identity. This can be achieved through variations in streetscape details, thereby establishing a “sub-vocabulary” that is unique to each district. At the same time, it is important that the primary elements that comprise Downtown’s overall “vocabulary” (consistent design and placement of streetlights and furnishings for example) be extended into each sub-district so that they are clearly recognized as part of the larger Downtown neighborhood.



Urban Trail Station 21, “On The Move”.

Landscaping: Downtown landscaping serves to soften and humanize the urban environment and can provide areas of refuge from the summer heat. Street trees provide an additional unifying element to the streetscape and should be extended wherever possible. Additionally, plantings can beautify pockets of underutilized Downtown space.

Public Art: Downtown Asheville is blessed with an abundance of public art. The Asheville Urban Trail, for example, offers 30 “stations” that describe the rich history of the City. New public art can help to reinforce

Downtown’s unique identity and humanize the environment. The design of even the most utilitarian components of the public realm, such as tree grates, manhole covers, and bus shelters should be designed as artistic pieces that contribute to Asheville’s rich arts heritage.

Signage: Public signage also plays a key role in establishing visual continuity Downtown. All Downtown signage should be carefully coordinated and integrated into a comprehensive “wayfinding” program (see Park Once and



Urban Trail Station 13, “Appalachian Stage”.

Wayfinding on page 84).

Public Spaces/Facilities

Parks & Open Space: Parks and other public spaces are essential ingredients to a livable Downtown. These spaces provide opportunities for social interaction and invite participation and enjoyment in the vitality and life of the city. Well-placed and designed open spaces contribute greatly to the identity of Downtown and can serve as powerful catalysts for private investment and residential development.

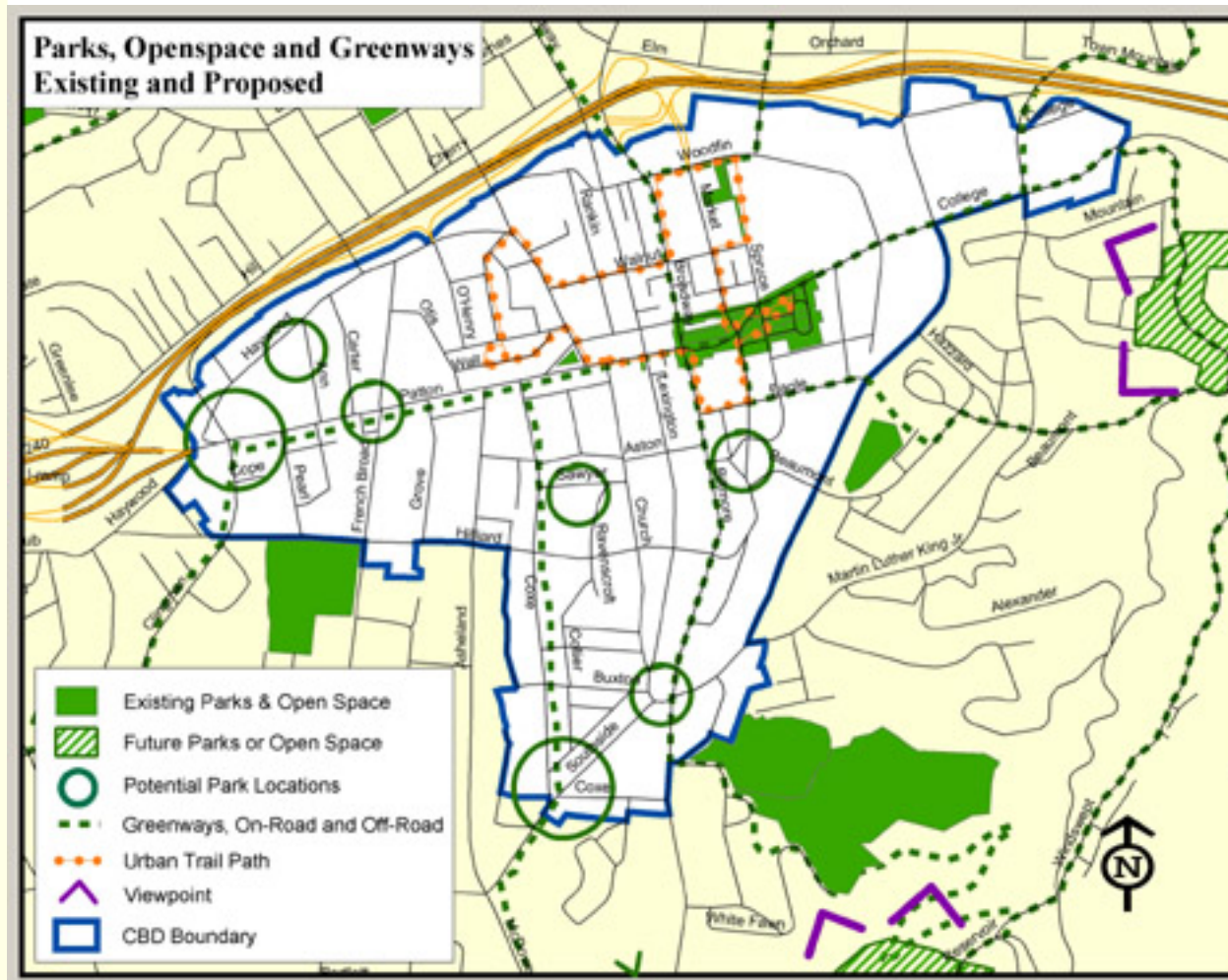
Currently, Downtown Asheville is very limited in the amount and quality of parks and open space. Fortunately, that is beginning to change. Pritchard Park, which was renovated and reopened in the summer of 2001, has proven to be a tremendous asset that is widely used for a variety of activities—including a highly successful series of outdoor movies. The redesign of Pritchard Park has contributed to a flurry of redevelopment on adjacent College Street, confirming the value of quality public spaces as economic catalysts.

The Pack Square Renaissance project, which

involves the redesign of both Pack Square and City-County Plaza, is an exciting project with enormous potential to provide a world class public space in the traditional heart of Downtown Asheville. In addition to serving as a wonderful gathering space and the “living room” of the community, the redesign of this prominent public space is expected to stimulate a great deal of private investment in the Downtown area. The realization of the Pack Square Renaissance project should be an extremely high priority for City and County



Conceptual drawing of the Pack Square Renaissance project. The redesign will be a great amenity for Downtown residents and visitors alike.



government and the community at large. As Downtown continues to develop, it is critical that new parks and other public spaces are planned and constructed as integral components of the downtown development fabric. The following principles should be used in locating new parks and public spaces:

- The series of open spaces along the Patton Avenue spine, which includes (from east to west) City-County Plaza, Pack Square, and Pritchard Park, should be extended westward to include at least two new major public spaces. A large public space should be planned and developed at the western entrance to Downtown to provide a prominent, identity-building gateway into Down-



Residents and visitors enjoy an outdoor event at the recently renovated Pritchard Park.

town. This public space should be designed to complement and stimulate a large private development project at this key gateway location.

- The Sister Cities Park and other properties owned by the City on Beaucatcher Mountain should be developed as called for in the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan. These parks, with their extraordinary views of Downtown and the surrounding mountains, can be extremely valuable recreational and cultural amenities. Few cities are blessed with Asheville's combination of topography and scenic beauty that present the opportunity to locate mountaintop parks within walking distance of a vibrant, culturally rich Downtown.
- Smaller parks and public spaces should be provided in each sub-district of Downtown. These spaces can strengthen the unique sense of place found in individual districts and improve overall Downtown



Pocket park across from the Kress Building.

"Both downtown businesses and city governments are ultimately concerned with public space - the streets, sidewalks, parks and plazas - for it is here that the quality of life in a city is often measured. This is the stage where both public and private investments are set."

*From Managing Downtown Public Spaces
Project for Public Spaces, Inc.*

livability.

- Parks and open spaces should be well linked with each other and with Downtown's overall pedestrian network.

- Opportunities also exist throughout

Downtown for the creation of small "pocket parks" in under-utilized areas. Pocket parks, which can be located on public or private property, are small outdoor spaces ranging in size from a large street corner to a small courtyard. Pocket parks provide similar benefits as larger parks, but can be easily integrated into the existing Downtown fabric. These spaces provide interest to pedestrians, offer areas for passive enjoyment, and serve to soften and beautify the urban landscape. These spaces, whether located on public or private property, should be open to the public and well maintained.

Finally, there is an opportunity to improve the quality of a number of existing Downtown parks and open spaces. Examples include the

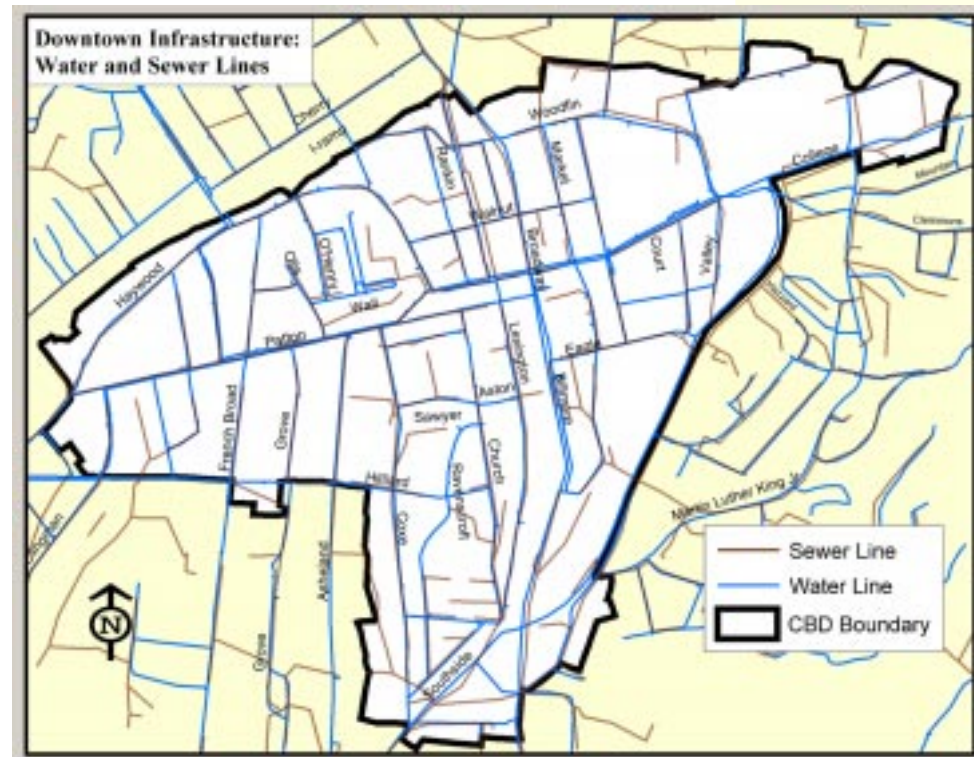


Courtyard along Lexington Avenue (above); New York City Pocket Park (below).

already mentioned Pack Square/City-County Plaza, Aston Park, Martin Luther King Park, Stephens Lee Recreation Center, and the Triangle Park in the Eagle-Market Streets area.

Infrastructure: Adequate infrastructure is fundamental to sustaining a high level of livability Downtown and to supporting the success of Downtown businesses. The City must continually ensure that public infrastructure capacities, including water, sewer, stormwater and fiber optic lines, are available and capable of absorbing future Downtown growth. Early planning and timely investments in Downtown infrastructure improvements are key to retaining jobs and residents and in attracting new industry, including information technology-related businesses.

The Downtown area is fortunate to have plentiful high-speed Internet connections in place, which support information technology-related businesses, in keeping with Downtown economic goals. According to the *Asheville Citizen Times* (April 28, 2002), “wireless technology is turning one of the oldest buildings into one of the most technologically advanced.” The owners of the Flat Iron building

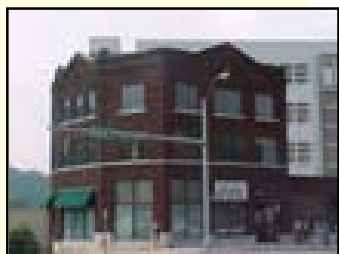




are providing a wireless fidelity zone throughout the historic structure, allowing Internet subscribers access without having to be being plugged into a wall.



It cannot be over emphasized that infrastructure is the nuts and bolts of successful Downtown development. In order to achieve the community's overall vision for Downtown Asheville, adequate infrastructure must be in place to provide for the needs of current users and to accommodate future Downtown growth. The development of a comprehensive Infrastructure Improvements Plan, which identifies necessary upgrades and prioritizes improvements, will help to ensure that Downtown infrastructure supports continued economic growth. (see Map on page 59).



Government Complex: City and County governmental services play a major role in the way Downtown functions. The presence of these services draws people Downtown, provides jobs, and reinforces Downtown's status as the center of the region. Most local governmental functions are



housed within or immediately adjacent to the City Building and the County Courthouse. However, an increasing number of these functions have been scattered throughout the Downtown area in recent years. It is important to consolidate as many governmental services as possible in the existing City-County “campus” area. Centralizing these functions will have a number of benefits including:

- Increasing the efficiency with which local government operates.
- Increasing the quality of customer service.
- Placing public sector properties that are better suited for private development into private ownership and under appropriate private development.

Sub-Districts

Downtown Asheville is comprised of a number of informal sub-districts, each with their own flavor and unique sense of place. These Downtown neighborhoods embody special qualities of place, architecture, history, culture, use, and location. The Battery Hill District, Lexington Park, Biltmore Avenue, and the Eagle/Market Streets area are examples of existing Down-

town sub-districts. Together, these diverse and visually rich neighborhoods provide variety and interest to the Downtown landscape and help to distinguish Downtown as a unique location within the region.

The presence of sub-districts within the larger Downtown neighborhood is a major strength of Downtown Asheville. The tangible qualities and distinguishing characteristics of sub-districts can be identified, quantified, planned, marketed, and capitalized upon to the overall benefit of Downtown. The uniqueness of Downtown’s sub-districts can be strengthened and accentuated by incorporating variations in streetscape details, utilizing special signage, and encouraging specific land uses and complementary design in new buildings. Additionally, the strong identity and sense of place that sub-districts provide can serve to attract visitors and help orient them in the Downtown landscape.

The Wayfinding Program recommended in this Plan will play a key role in defining, marketing, and accentuating the character of Downtown sub-districts. Working with the Downtown community to identify existing



Existing conditions of gateway corridor in Chattanooga leading into downtown (above). Example of how gateway corridor improvements announce one's arrival into Downtown (below).



and proposed sub-districts, define their character, and delineate their boundaries should be a major step in the process of developing a Wayfinding Program for Downtown Asheville (see Wayfinding on page 84).

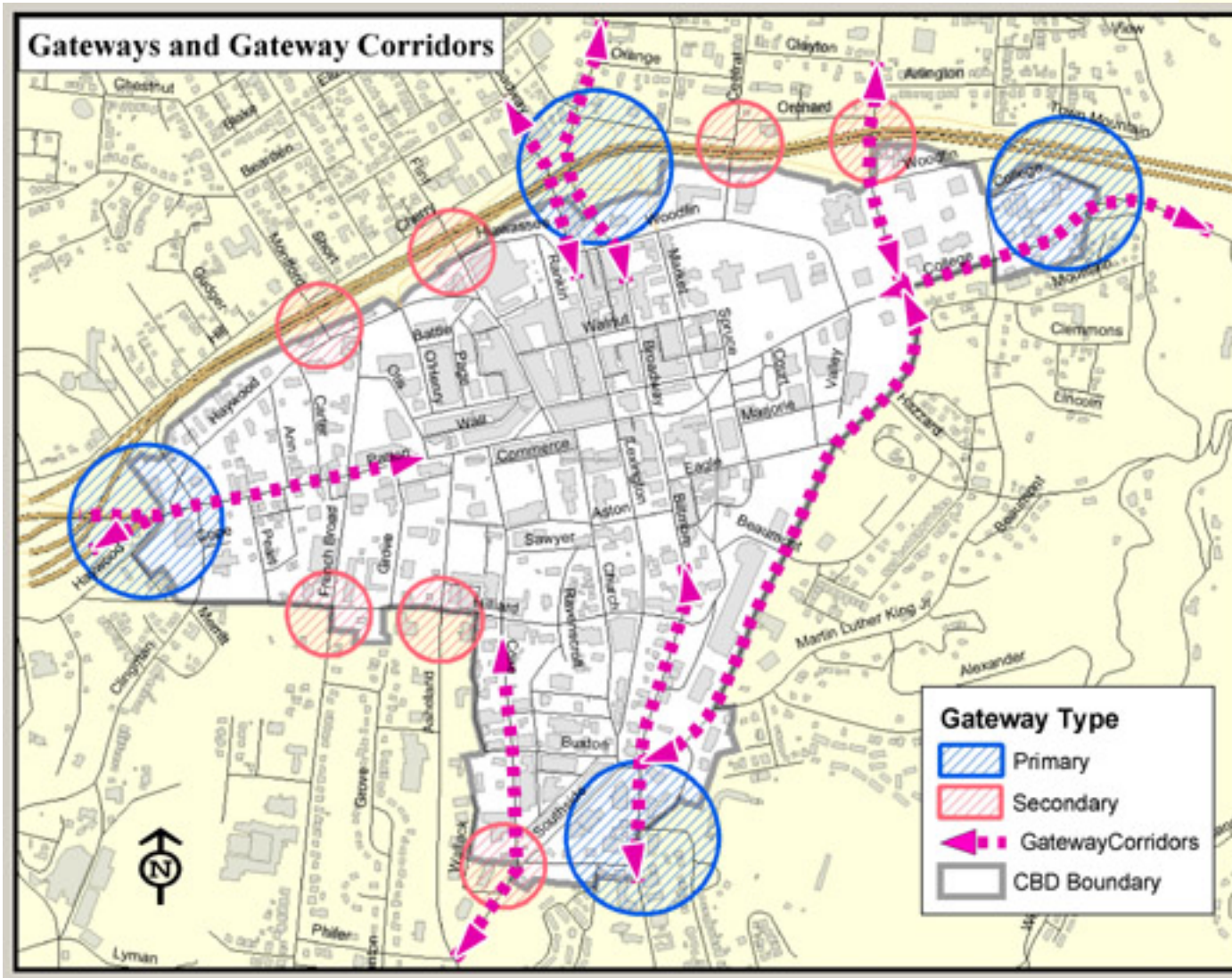
Gateways

The sequence of views leading into Downtown determines a visitor's first impressions of the Center City. Gateway corridors, the streets that lead into Downtown, establish an indelible image, either positive or negative, in the mind of a visitor. Therefore, the visual quality of our gateway corridors is as important as the visual quality of the Downtown core. Gateway corridors should be designed and developed in such a way that they reward visitors with a sense of arrival and act as a positive, welcoming introduction into Downtown.

Because of its topography and the beauty of its Downtown architecture, Asheville has unique potential for the development of spectacular gateway entrances into Downtown. Entering the City from the west involves crossing over the potentially scenic French Broad River. As one enters the City from the east, the elevated vantage point provides stunning views into Downtown and the mountains beyond. The approaches from the north and south provide views of Downtown perched atop a hill.



Potential redesign of Patton/Clingman gateway intersection.



That said, much needs to be done to improve all of the gateway corridors leading into Downtown. In general, the development patterns in the major gateway corridors must change as properties are redeveloped. An urban pattern, with multi-story mixed use buildings edging the street should be encouraged over the existing suburban pattern typified by single-story buildings set far back from the street with large areas of parking in front. Attention should be paid to streetscape and appearance issues in all gateway corridors as a means to strengthen their connection to the Downtown core.

In addition to improving the gateway corridors that lead into Downtown, opportunities exist to mark the primary points of entry into Downtown with public art, landscaping, or signage to clearly announce one's arrival into the Center City.

Vision, Goals, and Strategies

Vision: Downtown Asheville will build upon its spectacular physical environment, clearly establishing it as a showpiece of the region. Improved gateway entrances will herald the approach into a visually rewarding Center City. Downtown's compact development pattern, woven of exceptional architecture, intimate streetscapes, and quality open spaces, will set the stage for increased private investment and will provide visitors with an indelible image of a place to which they long to return.

Goal I: Reinforce Downtown's mixed-use and compact pattern of development.

Strategies:

1. Encourage and promote infill development to fill existing gaps in the Downtown core.
2. Identify under-utilized parcels of land along key entrance corridors and encourage their development/redevelopment.
3. Foster retail or other uses at street level to stimulate pedestrian activity.

- a. Educate property owners, managers, and realtors on the benefits of active street level uses.
- b. Require active uses on the first floor of any development that receives public funding.

Goal II: Continue to preserve and enhance Downtown's wealth of historic buildings.

Strategies:

1. Pursue the creation of additional financial incentives for property owners to rehabilitate historic buildings, such as low interest loans and/or façade improvement programs.
2. Promote greater awareness of technical assistance available regarding preservation techniques.
3. Educate the community and developers regarding the social and economic benefits of preserving historic structures.
4. Identify key historic properties not yet designated as local historic landmarks and encourage their designation as such.





5. Protect the historic fabric through infill development that is sensitive to the character of older buildings.

Goal III: Ensure a high level of architectural quality in new buildings (new buildings should respect the historic context of Downtown and contribute to its unique sense of place but should be designed to reflect the period in which they are built).

Strategies:

1. Educate property owners and developers about the importance of high quality, compatible design.
2. Establish a dialogue with architects/developers early in the design process to foster greater public/private collaboration in new development projects.
3. Amend the Central Business District (CBD) zoning to include additional development standards that address siting, scale, massing, materials, and other elements that are



fundamental to compatible new construction. A height limit should be established to prevent new construction that is out of scale with the existing pattern of development.

4. Revise the Downtown Design Review Guidelines, especially with respect to new construction, to reflect the goal of encouraging contextual yet contemporary design of new structures.
5. Expand the Downtown Design Review boundaries to incorporate the expanded Central Business District boundaries with the adjacent gateway corridors.
6. Investigate the creation of economic and development incentives to ensure better quality design in Downtown.

Goal IV: Provide a pedestrian environment that is pleasant, visually interesting, and welcoming to visitors.

Strategies:

1. Establish a committee to assist the City in

addressing streetscape and other public realm design issues.

- a. Establish an overall policy for Downtown streetscapes.
 - b. Update the Streetscape Plan. The plan should include an overall Downtown “vocabulary” of streetscape elements while encouraging variations in sub-districts to reinforce their unique qualities and sense of place.
 - c. Establish a streamlined process for the review of streetscape projects.
2. In accordance with the revised Streetscape Plan and consistent with the streetscape policies, improve existing streetscapes and extend streetscape elements throughout Downtown.
 3. Seek opportunities to improve existing Downtown landscaping and to provide new landscaping where appropriate.
 4. Seek opportunities to integrate public art into streetscaping elements such as bus shelters, kiosks, and tree grates.
 5. Create a consistent, attractive, and user-

friendly downtown signage program (see Wayfinding on page 84).

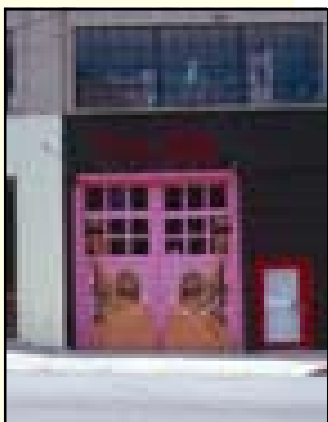
6. Assure strong communication and coordination between the various groups having an interest in the appearance of the public realm.
7. Provide and maintain strategically located public restrooms.

Goal V: Create a network of well-designed parks and open spaces to serve the recreational and urban amenity needs of an increasingly vibrant Downtown.

Strategies:

1. Improve and redevelop existing parks and public open spaces and continue a high level of maintenance.
2. Complete the Pack Square Renaissance Project.
 - a. Continue to educate the public regarding its historical and symbolic significance and the enormous benefits its redesign will offer the community.





- b. Facilitate fundraising necessary to achieve project construction.
 - c. Continue the strong partnership and effective cooperation between the Pack Square Conservancy, City and County governments, and stakeholder groups.
 - d. Ensure that infrastructure changes necessary to project completion are made.
- 3. Develop new parks and other public spaces in and adjacent to Downtown. Opportunities that should be actively pursued include:
 - Locations along the Patton Avenue spine, including a large “gateway” park or plaza at the western end of the corridor. This public space should be designed to complement and stimulate a large private development project at this key gateway location
 - The Sister Cities Park and other properties owned by the City on Beaucatcher Mountain. While these locations are outside Downtown, their development will provide a valuable amenity to Downtown residents and visitors, particularly if connected to Downtown by greenway trails.
 - Strategic locations within each Downtown subdistrict.
 - a. Assemble property suitable for the future development of parks and open spaces.
 - b. Encourage open space as a component of large catalytic development projects.
 - c. Utilize a public/private model such as exists in the Pack Square Renaissance Project to aid and accelerate the development of new parks and open spaces.
- 4. In keeping with a Streetscape Plan, encourage the development of “pocket parks” in under-utilized portions of public and private property.
- 5. Link the network of parks and open spaces through attractive tree-lined pedestrian streets.

Goal VI: Maintain existing public art and provide additional pieces at key locations as a means to reinforce Downtown’s unique identity, humanize the environment, and celebrate Asheville’s rich artistic heritage.

Strategies:

- 1. Continue to maintain and promote the

Urban Trail and other existing Downtown public art.

2. Provide new public art at key locations, including gateway entrances into Downtown.
3. Ensure that the placement of public art is well coordinated and consistent with the Streetscape Plan and overall Downtown planning efforts.

Goal VII: Ensure adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of current users and to accommodate future Downtown growth and development.

Strategies:

1. Work with infrastructure providers to develop a comprehensive Infrastructure Improvements Plan for Downtown.
 - a. Assess existing and future infrastructure needs.
 - b. Identify necessary infrastructure upgrades and prioritize improvements.
 - c. Seek opportunities for public/private partnerships to fund improvements.

2. Improve coordination and communication between City departments and utility providers regarding infrastructure requirements and planned improvements.

Goal VIII: Consolidate City and County government facilities and services in the existing government complex.

Strategies:

1. Develop a master plan for the government complex area to include the construction of new buildings to house current and future government facilities.
2. Seek opportunities to relocate “satellite” City and County facilities into the government complex area and get public sector properties that are better suited for private development into private ownership and under appropriate development.
3. Maintain the City Development office in a central Downtown location, as it continues to be an integral part of Downtown development and revitalization.





Goal IX: Capitalize upon the special qualities and unique identity of Downtown “neighborhoods” by establishing formalized Downtown sub-districts.

Strategies:

1. Work with the Downtown community to identify existing and proposed sub-districts, define their character, and delineate their boundaries.
2. Strengthen and accentuate the unique flavor and special qualities of Downtown sub-districts.
 - a. Incorporate variations in streetscape details that reflect the character of each sub-district.
 - b. Encourage appropriate and complimentary land uses and building design in Downtown sub-districts.
3. Incorporate sub-district development and enhancement as a major goal in the development of a Downtown Wayfinding Program.
4. Actively market the strong sense of place that distinct sub-districts provide to Downtown Asheville.

Goal X: Transform gateways leading into Downtown to provide a positive, welcoming introduction to the Center City.

Strategies:

1. Improve the visual quality of gateway corridors.
 - a. Develop new zoning districts and other tools to ensure that gateway corridors redevelop with an urban pattern of development consisting of well designed, multi-story buildings located close to the street.
 - b. Improve landscaping and extend streetscape elements to provide a strengthened physical and visual connection between gateway corridors and the Downtown core.
 - c. Work toward moving overhead utilities underground.
 - d. Work towards removing inappropriate signage and structures.
2. Accentuate the primary points of entry into Downtown as a means to “announce” one’s arrival into the Center City.
 - a. Utilize public art, landscaping, and/or

signage to mark the primary points of entry into Downtown.

- b. Integrate gateway signage into a comprehensive “Park Once and Wayfinding” program (see Park Once and Wayfinding on page 84).
- c. Seek opportunities to construct new buildings at key entry locations that are designed to architecturally reinforce one’s sense of arrival in the Center City.

Transportation & Accessibility

"The prosperity of a city does not depend on private car traffic, but on accessibility in general, on the amenity of its streets and open spaces."

Hartmut Topp at the 1st International Making Cities Livable Conference, Venice, Italy, 1985

Importance of Linkages

Downtown Asheville is the one place in the community, to which virtually every citizen

travels at least occasionally. Downtown is also a destination for tourists and regional visitors. For Downtown to serve its function as the center of the community and a viable attraction for tourists, it must be accessible. And, it must be accessible to the entire population, not just to motorists. Accessibility requires the creation and maintenance of highly functional transportation linkages. These linkages must create a strong connection between the Center City and other areas of town, providing clear vehicular and pedestrian routes that enable area residents and visitors to connect with the businesses, shopping, and attractions in Downtown. Downtown's transportation systems must enable people to access Downtown for a wide variety of purposes and in a wide variety of ways.

In addition to providing accessibility to Downtown, linkages play a vital role in the livability

of surrounding neighborhoods. Linkages create and promote connectivity and establish a framework upon which a neighborhood is developed and defined. Unfortunately, significant transportation impediments were created in the 1960s with the construction of I-240, severing many connections between Downtown and the Historic Montford and Chestnut Hill Districts. An additional barrier was produced during the creation of South Charlotte Street, which also severely impaired the neighborhood connections between the East End/Martin Luther King community and Downtown. The creation of new and improved linkages that integrate, rather than isolate, will foster a sense of community and contribute to the revitalization of Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.

Within the Center City, transportation linkages are crucial in developing market synergy among Downtown functions. Visitors must be able to travel easily to multiple destinations within the Center City. Downtown Asheville should be a part of a complete system of safe city streets, sidewalks, greenways, and bicycle friendly routes that extend throughout the city. Pedestrian linkages (functional, attractive

sidewalks) are of primary importance within Downtown. Any changes to Downtown's transportation systems should be made with the pedestrian and bicyclist in mind.

The emergence of Downtown Asheville as a residential neighborhood and destination for cultural events, shopping, and entertainment creates a need for improved linkages throughout the Center City. It is essential to maintain existing linkages, identify problem areas, and implement improvements to enhance the quality of all modes of Downtown transportation. Preserving and improving linkages within Downtown will enable residents and visitors to move safely and comfortably within the area and contribute to the success of retail and other local businesses.

Vehicular Circulation

Efficient vehicular circulation is necessary to support the continued development and revitalization of Downtown Asheville. It is critical that strategies for improving vehicular circulation reinforce, rather than compromise, the pedestrian environment. Vehicular circulation should serve three primary functions with respect to the Center City.



Existing conditions of Market Street (above) and how streetscape improvements can greatly strengthen and enhance pedestrian connectivity (below).



Patton Avenue and College Street as Two-Way Streets

In the 1950s, Downtown Asheville was a vibrant center for shopping, government, and offices and College Street and Patton Avenue were both two-way streets. Because the “cut” through Beaucatcher Mountain had not yet been made the only way to get to the other side of the Mountain from Downtown, was through the tunnel, which opened in 1928. As a result, there were many vehicles using College and Patton, not only to get to and from Downtown, but also to get through it.

At the time, planners and traffic engineers were interested in moving traffic quickly and efficiently through Downtown. The creation of one-way streets was considered the best way to meet this objective. As a result, College Street and Patton Avenue were changed to a one-way pair in 1954. At that time, there were predictions of a very high number of vehicles using the two streets. The I-240 expressway was built in 1958, and then continued through Beaucatcher Mountain in the early 1970s. People driving from one side of town to another now had a more efficient route, reducing the number of vehicles traveling through Downtown.

Today, the prevailing thought among transportation planners is that one-way streets are inferior to two-way streets in central business districts because they make businesses less accessible, can be confusing to visitors, and can encourage speeding in an area where there are many pedestrians. Additionally, two-way streets, by “calming” traffic, creating a better pedestrian environment and improving business vitality, are consistent with the view of downtown as a destination and a neighborhood instead of a place to get through.

In a national survey done in 2000, twenty-two cities and towns had converted major downtown streets back to two-way traffic flow. A majority of the communities that converted downtown streets from one-way to two-way reported positive results including better business access, more pedestrian friendly environment, better traffic distribution, and increased investment.

Sources: Reed, Doug. “Business District Now Largely a Network of One-Way Streets” Asheville Citizen Times, May 2, 1954.
“Converting Downtown Streets from One-Way to Two-Way Yields Positive Results” Urban Transportation Monitor, May 12, 2000.

The first function is to provide access to Downtown from surrounding areas. The capacity of streets leading into Downtown must be sufficient to support existing Downtown businesses and attractions and meet the needs of projected new development. Vehicular access to Downtown is currently very good. However, improvements are necessary to ensure continued vehicular accessibility as Downtown is further developed. Opportunities should be sought to improve the safety, efficiency and appearance of each primary vehicular entrance to Downtown. Freeway interchanges, especially the Merrimon Avenue interchange, should receive high priority. The I-26 Connector project presents a potential opportunity to provide a dedicated route for Patton Avenue that is separate from I-240. This would be highly beneficial in that it would separate local and interstate traffic, reclaim land for community use, and provide an enhanced gateway into Downtown.

The vehicular circulation system should also allow through traffic to travel around Downtown’s intensely developed core, thereby reducing congestion in the heart of Down-

"There's more to life than increasing its speed."

Gandhi

town. I-240 and S. Charlotte Street currently serve this function well. Hilliard Avenue, Woodfin Street, and Asheland Avenue also serve this function. An informal Downtown loop, utilizing these existing streets and improving connections where possible, should be developed. I-240 presents a number of challenges and opportunities for Downtown. It is critical that any NCDOT project on this freeway be carefully designed with the following objectives in mind:

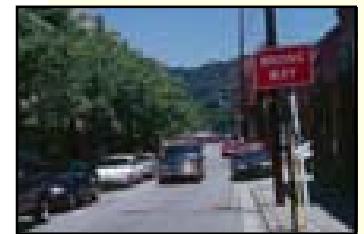
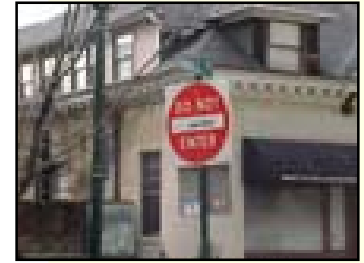
- Improve safety and access to Downtown;
- Keep the right-of-way width at a minimum to reduce negative impacts on adjacent properties.
- Restore and improve vehicular and pedestrian connections between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.

Downtown's vehicular circulation pattern should provide convenient access for local traffic within the core. The objective is not to move vehicles as quickly as possible, but rather

to move traffic efficiently as part of a balanced transportation system that contributes to the overall vision of the Center City as a vibrant, economically healthy, and livable Downtown.

Patton Avenue, College Street, and Battery Park Avenue should be returned to their original two-way configuration. Other streets, including S. Spruce Street, should also be considered for potential conversion. Studies have shown that two-way streets have a number of benefits over one-way streets in Downtown locations. Two-way streets accomplish the following:

- Positively effect circulation by slowing speeds, improving safety, and providing more options for getting around.
- Reduce confusion for drivers and pedestrians including tourists.
- Provide a safer and more pleasant environment for pedestrians.
- Positively impact local businesses by increasing access, improving business visibility, and fostering a pedestrian atmosphere.



Conversion of some one-way streets into two-way can improve accessibility to Downtown shops and businesses (above).

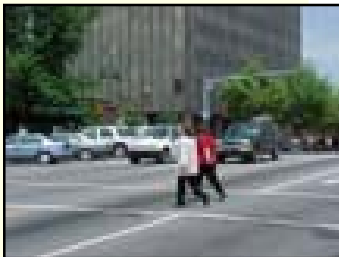


Montford bridge links historic neighborhood to the Center City.

Pedestrian Circulation



One of the highest priorities in continuing Downtown's revitalization should be to improve every aspect of the pedestrian environment. To be successful, Downtown must be a place that is welcoming and enjoyable to pedestrians. In fact, pedestrian movement should take priority over other modes of transportation within the Downtown core. Overall, Downtown Asheville is one of the most walkable cities in the state, with plentiful sidewalks, an improving streetscape, and an attractive and interesting built environment. That said, the pedestrian environment tends to break down quickly outside of the immediate Downtown core.

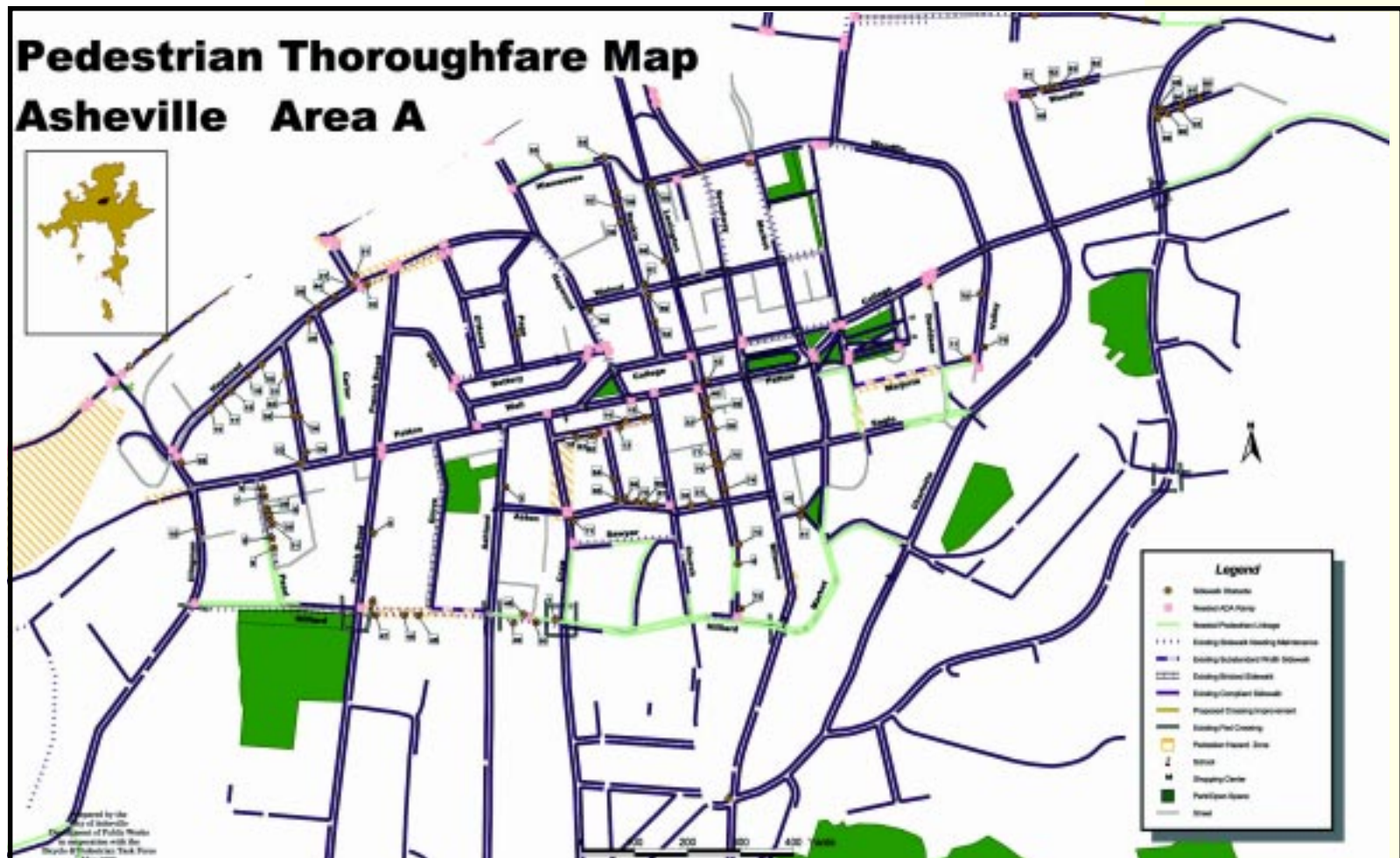


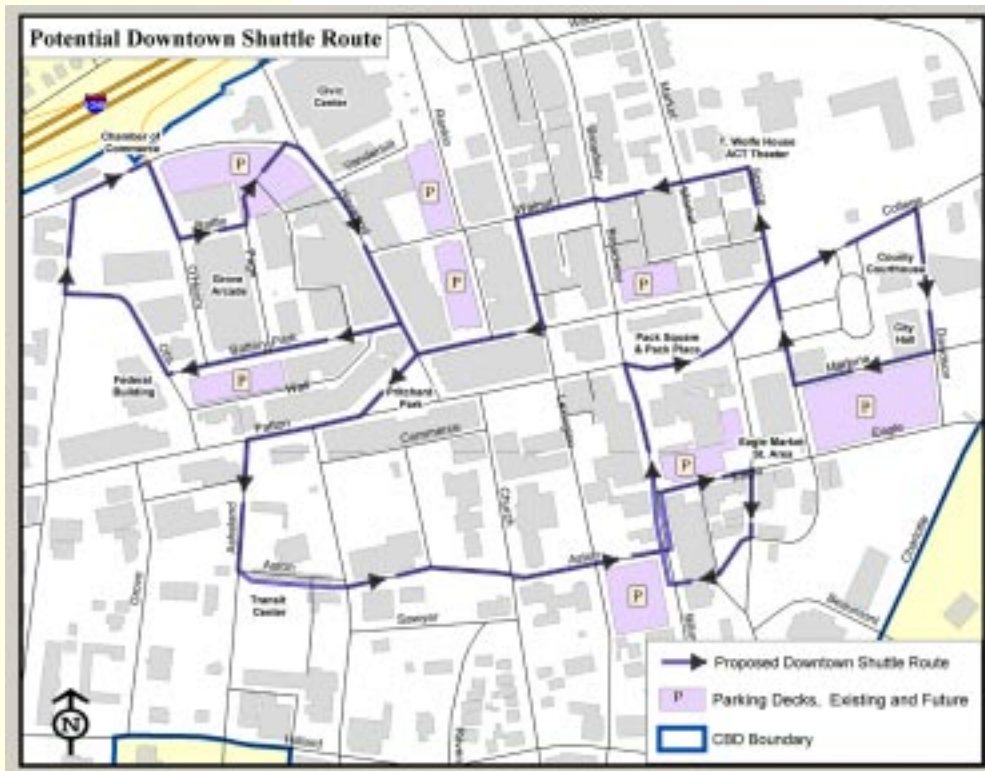
There are a number of opportunities to improve the quality of Downtown's pedestrian environment. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Thoroughfare Plan, completed in 1999, identifies necessary improvements to Downtown sidewalks. These include removing obstructions such as utility poles, fixing sidewalks in need of repair, and bringing crossings and ramps into compliance with Americans With Disabilities Act standards. These improve-

ments should be prioritized and completed as soon as possible. Sidewalks should be added wherever possible to develop a complete pedestrian network. Additionally, Downtown crosswalks should be examined for opportunities to improve pedestrian movement through intersections. Streetscape elements contribute greatly to the quality of the pedestrian realm and should be added wherever possible (see Public Realm on page 51).



Pedestrian bridge over South Charlotte Street connects the Martin Luther King neighborhood to Downtown.





Public Transit

Public transit is an integral part of the Downtown transportation system. Transit radically increases Downtown accessibility by allowing the entire community, not just those with cars, to access jobs, shopping, and other Downtown amenities. Increased transit usage will benefit Downtown by reducing reliance upon the automobile, thus relieving vehicular congestion, reducing demand for Downtown parking and contributing to improved air quality.

Within Downtown, transit serves to strengthen linkages between activity centers, allowing visitors greater ability to combine multiple destinations into a single Downtown trip. A Downtown shuttle system should be created to circulate between parking facilities and major activity nodes. The use of a rubber-wheeled trolley should be explored to allow the shuttle to serve a transportation function as well as to make a contribution towards enhancing Downtown's character.

Citywide, transit ridership has increased by five percent over the last two years. If transit usage is to continue to rise, every aspect of the

system, including routes, the buses themselves, and the design quality of transit-related facilities such as shelters must be thoughtfully designed. Transit stops, maps, and schedules should be integrated into a comprehensive Downtown wayfinding program.



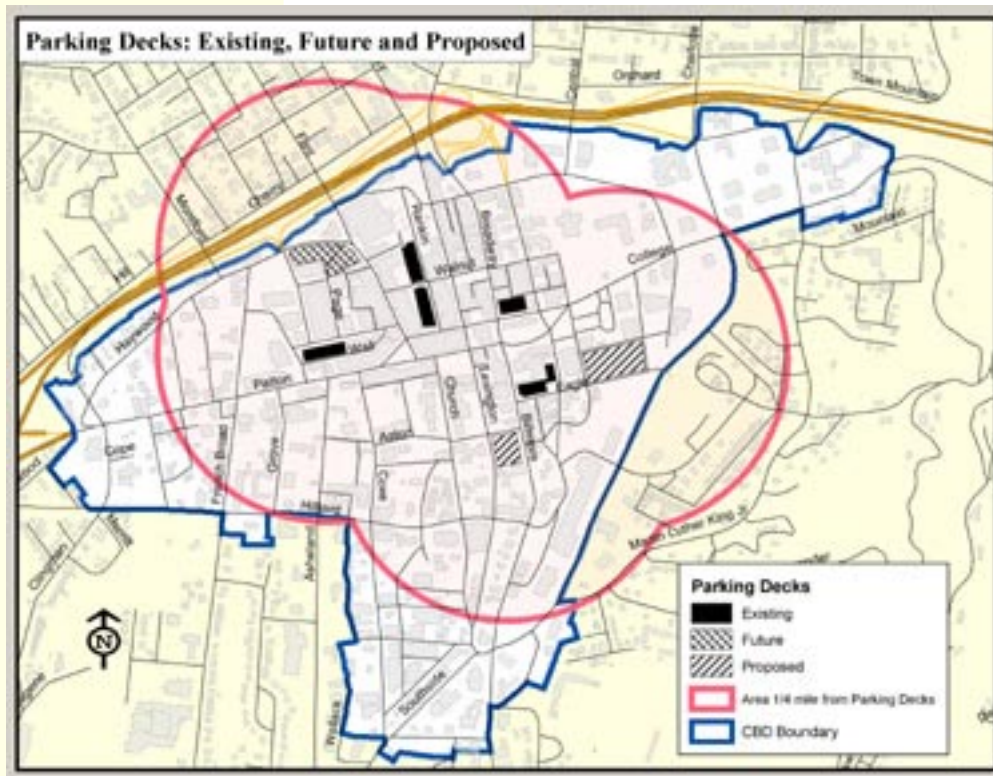
City buses equipped with bike racks provide transportation options for commuters.

Parking

According to the Downtown Research & Development Center, parking was ranked as the second most crucial issue affecting downtowns across America. Downtown Asheville is no exception. Merchants, visitors and residents in Downtown Asheville often cite parking as one of the most pressing and persistent problems in the Center City. The problem is not simply a lack of sufficient parking to serve the community. The problem is also one of public perception. For many potential shoppers and visitors, there is a perceived shortage of available parking Downtown, especially when compared to suburban locations where visitors have grown accustomed to parking directly in front of their destination. That said, there is a need for additional Downtown parking, especially in the Biltmore Avenue area, the City-County Plaza/Pack Square area, and in the vicinity of the Grove Arcade.

Downtown parking is a complex issue that requires a multi-tiered solution. The way parking is handled will be a key in ensuring that Downtown Asheville becomes an increasingly desirable place for people. The solution is





not to simply provide more parking at all costs. There is an inherent conflict between the need to provide sufficient parking for automobiles and the need to create an attractive and pedestrian-friendly environment. Focusing on parking separate from the overall vision of Downtown can undermine Downtown's unique character and walkability—qualities that make Downtown attractive as a destination in the first place.

On-Street Parking: Plentiful on-street parking is critically important to Downtown's overall success. In addition to the obvious benefit of providing convenient parking to support business development, on-street parking enhances the pedestrian experience by providing a buffer between the sidewalk and the street. On-street parking should primarily cater to the short-term needs of retail and business customers. Longer term parking for employees and visitors should be accommodated in parking decks and perimeter lots. Opportunities should be explored for creating additional on-street parking Downtown, especially in developing areas such as Coxe Avenue, Hilliard Avenue, and the section of Biltmore Avenue south of Hilliard. Often,

travel lanes can be narrowed or removed altogether to accommodate on-street parking. In general, parallel parking is preferable to angled parking because it reduces safety hazards and improves appearance. On-street parking must be designed on a block-by-block basis in order to balance parking, pedestrian, and streetscaping needs.

Surface Lots: In general, surface parking lots should be minimized Downtown, especially within the core and along major entrance corridors. Surface parking causes a number of negative impacts on the Downtown environment. Expanses of pavement create gaps in the urban fabric and disrupt the continuity of buildings and activity that make the street

attractive and interesting for pedestrians. Additionally, surface parking tends to create a harsh visual environment that adversely affects Downtown's

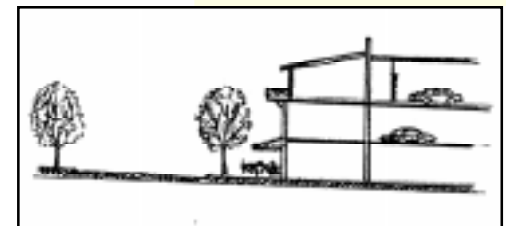
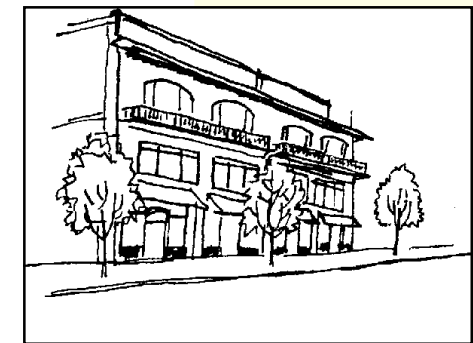
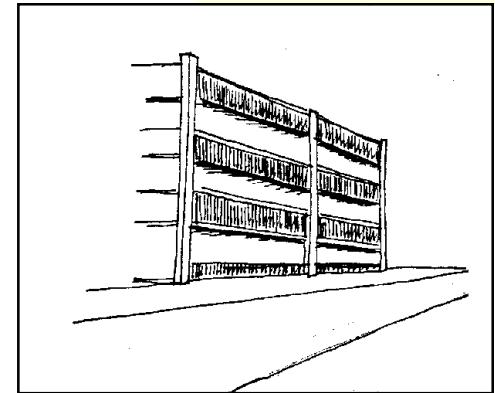


Downtown surface parking is an inefficient use of land.

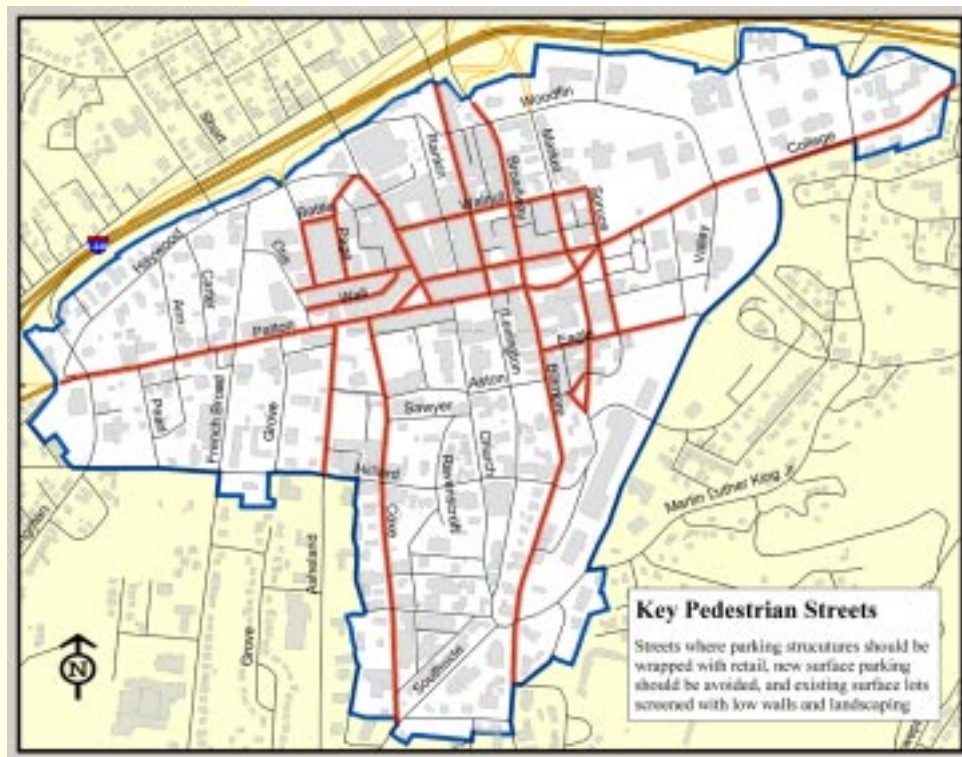
image. Where surface lots are necessary, they should be screened from the street by low walls and landscaping. This screening will soften the visual environment and create an edge to the street that helps to maintain continuity in the Downtown development pattern.

Parking Structures: Parking structures offer many benefits in a Downtown location. They use land much more efficiently than surface parking lots, accommodating a large number of vehicles in a given area. Additionally, parking structures are far less disruptive to Downtown's pedestrian environment, especially if they are "wrapped" with retail or similar uses at the street level.

Currently, the City maintains three parking decks—the Wall Street deck, the Rankin Street deck, and the Civic Center deck. Together, these structures contain 1,050 spaces. Another parking structure, located in the vicinity of the Grove



Example of traditional parking deck (above), deck wrapped with retail (center) and in section (below).



Arcade, is expected to open in 2004 with approximately 600 additional spaces. Two additional parking decks have been identified as priorities by the 1998 Asheville Comprehensive Parking Study. These decks would serve the Biltmore Avenue area and the City-County Plaza/Pack Square area. These additional parking structures are critical to the continued economic development of Downtown Asheville. The City should continue to pursue development partnerships with the private sector and explore creative financing mechanisms as a means to accelerate their development. Additionally, the public sector and private developers should seek opportunities to provide structured parking in conjunction with future catalytic development projects.

The location, scale and design of parking structures are critical considerations. The following principles should be used when planning for future



Example of parking deck wrapped with retail (Charleston, SC).

parking structures:

- Parking decks should not be given street-level frontage on streets that serve as key pedestrian connectors. Where frontage on these streets is necessary, retail or other pedestrian generating uses should be required at street level.
- The scale of parking structures should not overwhelm other buildings within the block and the length of the structure's street frontage should be minimized.
- The architectural design, quality, and finish materials of parking structures should equal or surpass those of surrounding buildings.

Particular care is needed in the design of structured parking that is a component of large private development projects. The least desirable solution is to construct a building on top of a podium of structured parking. Underground parking, while costly, minimizes negative impacts and should be encouraged.

Loading Issues: The timely delivery of goods and merchandise is necessary to the success of individual merchants and to the Downtown

economy in general. It is critical, however, to minimize the negative effects that deliveries have on Downtown transportation and parking systems. Timely deliveries of merchandise will not allow businesses to prosper if their customers have difficulty reaching them. Often, delivery vehicles block travel lanes as goods are delivered or received. The loading and unloading of goods presents particular problems with traffic congestion during peak periods. It is critical to manage loading issues together with traffic and parking to reach the appropriate balance between these important and often competing needs. Loading zones of various sizes, and for various types of deliveries, should be planned and provided on a block-by-block basis, taking into account the specific needs associated with various businesses. Strict enforcement of loading zones is key to their effectiveness. Additionally, restricting the hours during which deliveries are allowed should be explored to address acute problems during peak hours.





Park Once & Wayfinding

Wayfinding can be defined as how people understand and find their way through an environment. In order to be successful as a place for people, Downtown Asheville's pattern of buildings, streets, parking, attractions, and amenities must be clearly understood by visitors. A wayfinding program is a system of color-coded signage that orients visitors and helps them navigate throughout the city. Developed in conjunction with a parking strategy, wayfinding enables visitors to quickly identify a parking facility, park one time, and easily walk to any Downtown destination. Designed correctly, a consistent and uniform wayfinding program will benefit Downtown Asheville in the following ways:



- Accentuate the uniqueness of Downtown sub-districts

Wayfinding signage should be geared toward both drivers and pedestrians. The program should be designed as an integral component of Downtown's streetscape and should reflect and strengthen Downtown's heritage and unique character.

- Help visitors to quickly identify parking facilities
- Direct visitors to Downtown attractions and amenities
- Improve perceptions of Downtown.
- Reinforce downtown's strong identity and sense of place

Vision, Goals, and Strategies

Vision: Downtown Asheville will be accessible from throughout the community via a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system. Once Downtown, wayfinding signage and attractive streetscapes will assist visitors as they travel easily from place to place.

Goal I: Improve and strengthen connections between Downtown and surrounding areas.

Strategies:

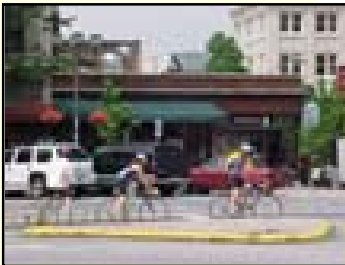
1. Improve and maintain existing pedestrian linkages between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods and develop additional connections where necessary.
 - a. Improve existing sidewalks leading into Downtown.
 - b. Ensure that any North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) projects on I-240 or its interchanges include improved pedestrian and bicycle connections between Downtown and neighborhoods.
 - c. Extend and improve streetscape and

landscape elements along entry routes to facilitate pedestrian safety and movement.

- d. Improve the pedestrian bridge across S. Charlotte Street and identify locations for additional connections between Downtown and the East End/Martin Luther King neighborhood.
 - e. Strengthen the pedestrian connection between Downtown and the West End Clingman Avenue (WECAN) neighborhood and other areas along the French Broad River through sidewalk improvements and the construction of a multi-use greenway trail.
2. Improve and maintain vehicular connections into Downtown.
 - a. Ensure that any North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) projects on I-240 or its interchanges positively effect vehicular access to Downtown.
 - b. Separate Patton Avenue and the Smokey park bridge from interstate traffic to reclaim land for community use and allow Patton Avenue to serve as an enhanced gateway into Downtown.



- c. Extend streetscape and landscape elements along Biltmore Avenue between Downtown, Mission-St. Joseph's Hospital, and Biltmore Village to strengthen this important connection.



- 3. Increase transit use and frequency through corridors into and out of Downtown.

Goal II: Increase and improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

Strategies:

- 1. Improve the quality of the pedestrian realm to promote walking as the primary mode of transportation within Downtown (see Pedestrian Circulation on page 76).
- 2. Prioritize and implement sidewalk improvement projects throughout Downtown.
 - a. Remove sidewalk obstructions such as utility poles.
 - b. Repair sidewalks where needed.
 - c. Bring intersection crossings and ramps into compliance with Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.
 - d. Add sidewalks wherever possible to



- develop a complete pedestrian network.
- e. Examine Downtown crosswalks for opportunities to improve pedestrian movement through intersections.
- f. Address confusing traffic/pedestrian crossing at Pack Square/Biltmore.

- 3. Improve street and sidewalk cleanliness.

- 4. Promote Downtown as a pedestrian friendly zone, including signs at gateways (i.e. "you are entering Downtown Asheville, a pedestrian friendly zone; pedestrians have the right of way at intersections").

- 5. Install appropriate traffic calming measures.
 - a. Install brick/raised crosswalks at intersections.
 - b. Install bulbouts where appropriate.
 - c. Plant additional street trees to serve as buffer between pedestrians and traffic.
 - d. Enforce downtown speed limits.

- 6. Improve the bicycle-friendliness of Downtown.
 - a. Educate the public (drivers and bicyclists) regarding bike laws.

- b. Provide additional bike racks Downtown.
- c. Encourage enforcement of traffic laws that promote bicycle safety.
- d. Use cable access channel as educational/promotional tool.

Goal III: Increase public transit usage, especially by daily commuters, to reduce reliance on automobiles and to lower parking demand.

Strategies:

- 1. Increase transit frequency and hours of operation.
- 2. Create a Downtown shuttle to facilitate internal circulation.
 - a. Link with parking facilities, major activity centers, and City transit system.
 - b. Consider using a rubber-wheeled trolley to contribute to Downtown's unique character.
- 3. Improve transit stops and facilities.
 - a. Improve bus shelters and consider

integrating public art into the design of new shelters.

- b. Provide benches and bus schedules at all stops.
 - c. Integrate shelters, routes, and signage into wayfinding program.
 - d. Encourage appropriate development surrounding the Transit Center, thereby supporting commuter needs.
- 4. Develop incentives to encourage ridership.
 - a. Promote existing "free zone."
 - b. Work with employers to provide incentives for employees to use transit, such as a free pass. The City should set the example with the creation of its own program.
 - 5. Implement Intelligent Transportation System to allow transit easy passage through intersections and to coordinate traffic signals.

Goal IV: Improve vehicular circulation.

Strategies:

- 1. Return Patton Avenue and College Street to



their original two-way configuration. This will benefit Downtown by:

- Slowing speeds, improving safety, and providing more options for getting around Downtown.
 - Positively impacting local businesses by increasing access, improving business visibility, and fostering a pedestrian atmosphere.
 - Providing a less confusing street network that is friendlier to tourists.
 - Providing a safer and more pleasant environment for pedestrians.
2. Explore other opportunities to eliminate one-way streets. Battery Park and Spruce Street are candidates for conversion.
 3. Consider the use of roundabouts in selected areas of Downtown to facilitate movement and to create place-making opportunities.
 4. Examine circulation pattern in the Eagle/Market Streets area to strengthen connections and foster revitalization of this important area.
 5. Prioritize and implement necessary street improvement projects.

- a. Improve advance warning of turns, all turning lanes must be well marked.
- b. Provide timely pothole repair.
- c. Provide coordinated and advance warning of construction.

Goal V: Ensure an adequate supply of convenient parking to support and foster the continued development of Downtown Asheville.

Strategies:

1. Accelerate the development of strategically located parking structures.
 - a. Complete the Grove Arcade Parking Deck by December, 2004.
 - b. Develop structured parking at the corner of Biltmore Avenue and Aston Street as part of a public/private mixed use project. The structure should contain sufficient parking to serve Biltmore Avenue, the Eagle/Market Streets area, and the eastern end of the developing the area south of Hilliard Avenue.
 - c. Develop structured parking adjacent to City Hall to as part of a public/private

mixed use project. The structure should contain sufficient parking to serve the City and County governmental complex as well as the Pack Square area.

- d. Acquire properties in long-term growth areas and “land bank” them for future structured parking.
 - e. Seek opportunities to provide structured parking as a component of future public or private catalytic projects.
2. Seek opportunities to develop surface parking outside the Downtown core to serve the needs of Downtown employees and other long-term parkers.
 3. Seek opportunities to provide additional on-street parking Downtown, especially in developing areas such as Coxe Avenue, Hilliard Avenue, and Biltmore Avenue south of Hilliard.
 4. Utilize demand base rate structure to encourage the use of parking structures.

Goal VI: Locate, design and manage Downtown parking so as to maximize efficiency, minimize negative impacts, and promote a positive image.

Strategies:

1. Discourage surface parking in the Downtown core and primary entrance corridors.
2. Revise development regulations to require surface parking lots to be screened from the street by landscaping and low walls constructed of urban materials.
3. Revise development regulations to address the design and programming of downtown parking structures.
 - a. Ensure quality and compatible architectural design for all parking structures
 - b. Require parking structures in the downtown core and primary entrance corridors to be “wrapped” with retail or other pedestrian generating use at street level.
4. Address loading and delivery issues to minimize negative effects on traffic congestion

and parking availability.

- a. Plan and provide loading zones within each block, taking into account the specific needs associated with various businesses.
 - b. Provide strict enforcement of loading zones to improve their effectiveness.
 - c. Explore the possibility of restricting the hours during which deliveries are allowed and the size of delivery vehicles.
 - d. Provide passenger unloading zones where appropriate.
5. Develop incentive programs that encourage Downtown employees to utilize parking decks or use public transit, thereby reducing parking demand.
6. Market the availability of Downtown parking to overcome negative perceptions.



Goal VII: Develop a Park Once and Wayfinding program, enabling visitors to quickly identify a parking facility and, aided by a system of color-coded directional signage, easily walk to any Downtown destination.

Strategies:

1. Form a steering committee that brings together local property owners, business owners, residents and other Downtown stakeholders.
 - a. Facilitate a public design process.
 - b. Develop a plan for signage design and location.
2. Identify and pursue creative fundraising opportunities to finance design assistance and implementation of signage.
 - a. Seek public/private partnerships.
 - b. Investigate transportation enhancement funds.

Plan Management & Implementation

The successful implementation of the Center City Plan will require the buy-in, commitment, and participation of a large number of groups and individuals. The City alone can not be expected to implement the many goals and strategies contained in the Plan. The public and private sectors must share in the responsibility of ensuring that Downtown Asheville reaches its considerable potential. The City of Asheville, Buncombe County, the Asheville Downtown Commission, and the Asheville Downtown Association should all play key roles in implementation efforts. Additionally, Downtown property and business owners, private developers, Downtown residents, various non-profit organizations, and other entities must all be active participants.

Establishing consensus and community awareness regarding the vision, goals, and strategies contained in the Plan is a necessary first step. The commitment of the public and private sectors is critical to ensuring that future public and private development, infrastructure improvements, policy decisions, and other actions are consistent with the Plan. The City Development Office, with guidance from the Asheville Downtown Commission, should serve as the central agency charged with coordinat-

ing implementation efforts.

The vision described in the Plan is ambitious. It is essential, therefore, to pursue creative financing mechanisms, new incentives, public/private partnerships, and other tools to facilitate implementation efforts. Business and property owners are encouraged to explore creative opportunities as a means to fund Downtown improvements that are of particularly high-priority to the Downtown community.

The following implementation matrix outlines the Plan's goals and strategies, identifies the primary parties responsible for implementing each strategy, and assigns priorities (and in some cases time frames) for carrying out each strategy.

Periodic Review and Monitoring

The City Development Office, with input and guidance from the Asheville Downtown Commission, will monitor Plan implementation efforts and will periodically review the Plan's goals and strategies to ensure that the Center City Plan responds to changing conditions, addresses new challenges and opportunities, and continues to reflect the community's vision for Downtown.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Goal I: Attract a diverse range of new businesses and uses to ensure a balanced and lively Downtown marketplace.	City Development Downtown Commission Economic Development Downtown Association Chamber of Commerce Community Development Buncombe County	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Analyze the use of Downtown space to identify all missing or under-served functions (these may include services for local residents, high-tech/knowledge based businesses, and family oriented activities and attractions) .	City Development Economic Development Downtown Association Downtown Commission Chamber of Commerce	2003-2004	Administrative
Strategy 2. Develop partnerships and strategies aimed at recruiting targeted uses that fill niches in the Downtown economy and job base.	City Development Economic Development Chamber of Commerce	2003, Ongoing	Various
a. Actively pursue the creation of new incentives and other economic development “tools” available for business recruitment.			
b. Assist the private sector in land assemblage and/or use publicly-owned property suitable for targeted uses and make them available at favorable rates.			
c. Provide targeted uses as a component of public/private catalytic development projects.			
d. Develop marketing products specifically aimed at attracting targeted uses.			
Strategy 3. Identify, encourage and support opportunities for new development in the Downtown.	City Development Downtown Commission Economic Development Buncombe County Chamber of Commerce	2003, Ongoing	Various
a. Identify under-utilized parcels of land and facilitate or encourage their development. These tend to be vacant lots, surface parking lots, or properties where the value of the land is higher than the value of any buildings or other improvements.	City Development Downtown Commission Economic Development Buncombe County Chamber of Commerce	2003, Ongoing	Various

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
b. Develop a long-range plan for City- and County-owned properties and when appropriate, use them for economic development or public/private catalytic projects.	City Development Downtown Commission Economic Development Buncombe County Chamber of Commerce	2004, Ongoing	Various
c. Explore the creation of a City Land Bank Program to assemble properties for development (land assemblage is often a barrier to Downtown development).			
d. Ensure adequate infrastructure for future development.			
e. Continue to encourage/promote mixed-use development in order to maximize development opportunities.			
f. Develop strategic plans for areas with particularly strong development potential.			
g. Support ongoing and future catalytic projects.			
Strategy 4. Provide an improved level of services for Downtown developers, investors, and business owners.	City Development	2004, Ongoing	Administrative
a. Provide an enhanced one-stop information center in the City Development office, with information concerning incentives, demographics, economics, and real estate.			
b. Provide a listing of available property.			
c. Serve as a link between the public and realtors, providing appropriate information.			
d. Track Downtown data including business creation, jobs, and development.			
e. Educate and assist property owners, developers, and architects regarding City policies, regulations, permitting processes, and design guidelines.			
f. Improve coordination and communication regarding public infrastructure projects.			
Strategy 5. Encourage the development of a comprehensive marketing program highlighting Downtown's unique assets and strengths as a business location, tourist, shopping, and entertainment destination, including livability, convenience, and abundance of high-tech infrastructure.	Downtown Association Chamber of Commerce Downtown Commission City Development	2004-2005	Focus Groups
Strategy 6. Increase and diversify Downtown's residential population to expand the market for Downtown business.	City Development Community Development	2004, Ongoing	Administrative

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Goal II. Actively work to retain existing Downtown businesses and foster their continued success and growth.	Downtown Association City Development Downtown Commission Engineering Parking Services Community Development Economic Development Public Works Building Safety Parks & Recreation Transit Graffiti Taskforce	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Develop/provide new methods to retain existing businesses and to support their expansion.	Downtown Association City Development Community Development Economic Development	2004, Ongoing	Various
a. Storefront improvement grants/loans.			
b. Expansion loans.			
c. Use of Community Development Block Grant funds where appropriate for job creation.			
d. Provide an improved level of service for Downtown developers, investors, and business owners.			
e. Investigate and lobby for the passage of state enabling legislation, including tax abatement programs and tax increment financing.			
Strategy 2. Improve relations between the City and Downtown merchants and property owners.	City Development Downtown Commission Downtown Association Engineering Public Works Building Safety Parks & Recreation	2003, Ongoing	Administrative; Public Forums
a. Analyze City policies, regulations, fees, and permitting processes to identify potential changes, which would result in increased business friendliness.			
b. Coordinate public construction projects to minimize business disruption and public inconvenience.			
c. Create a mechanism to notify businesses about City services, infrastructure improvements, and large construction projects.			
d. Hold periodic Downtown neighborhood meetings to identify and resolve Downtown issues.			

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 3. Develop a long-range parking plan for the Downtown area	Engineering Parking Services City Development Downtown Commission Downtown Association Transit	2004-2006	Focus Groups; Public Forums; Public Hearings
a. Address future parking needs.			
b. Reduce the demand for parking by incenting other transportation options.			
c. Address loading issues, and pursue shared parking options.			
d. Accelerate development of strategically located parking decks.			
e. Continue public relations about parking decks and rates.			
f. Use parking rates and policies to carry out overall policy rather than revenue service.			
Strategy 4. Maintain and improve overall Downtown livability to encourage business retention (see Goal V, below).	City Development Downtown Commission Historic Resources Commission Public Works Downtown Association Parks & Recreation Police Department Pedestrian & Bike Taskforce Grafitti Taskforce	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 5. Property and business owners are encouraged to look for creative opportunities to fund Downtown improvements that are over and above what the City can provide, which will enhance businesses viability.	Downtown Association	2004-2006	Various
Goal III. Ensure adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of current users and accommodate future downtown growth and development	Public Works Engineering	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Work with infrastrucutre providers to develop a comprehensive Infrastructure Improvements Plan for Downtown.	Public Works Engineering	2004-2006	Various
a. Assess existing and future infrastructure needs.			
b. Identify necessary infrastructure upgrades and prioritize improvements.			
c. Seek opportunities for public/private partnerships to fund improvements.			
Strategy 2. Improve coordination and communication between City departments and utility providers regarding infrastructure requirements and planned improvements.	Public Works	Ongoing	Administrative

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Goal IV. Reinforce Downtown's status as a premier destination on par with other local attractions	City Development Downtown Association Downtown Commission Chamber of Commerce Tourism Development Authority City Council Arts Council Engineering Transit Buncombe County Pack Square Conservancy Economic Development Pedestrian & Bike Taskforce Greenway Commission	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Encourage the development of a comprehensive marketing campaign, promoting Downtown as a destination for tourists and area residents.	Downtown Association Chamber of Commerce City Development Tourism Development Authority	2004-2006	Focus Groups
a. Develop partnership with Chamber of Commerce, Asheville Downtown Association (Downtown Association), the City and others to create and sustain marketing efforts.	Downtown Association Chamber of Commerce City Development Tourism Development Authority		
b. Ensure that Downtown is prominently featured in state and regional marketing efforts.			
c. Emphasize the wide variety and diversity of Downtown attractions, thereby encouraging single destination shoppers and visitors to become multi-destination shoppers and visitors.			
Strategy 2. Actively work to retain and strengthen existing Downtown attractions such as the Civic Center, Thomas Wolfe Auditorium, Pack Place, etc.	Downtown Commission City Council	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 3. Renovate and upgrade the Asheville Civic Center in its present location.	City Council	2003-2010	Various

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 4. Encourage the development of new tourism products, including attractions that are geared toward families	Tourism Development Authority Downtown Association City Development Buncombe County Pack Square Conservancy Parks & Recreation	2004, Ongoing	Various
a. Assemble key partners including the Asheville Downtown Association, Tourism Development Authority, the City, and County to identify opportunities for new Downtown attractions.			
b. Attract tour company to provide tours of “Historic Downtown Asheville” by trolley, van or other.			
c. Include kid friendly designs at Pack Square and other parks and public spaces.			
Strategy 5. Develop a Park Once and Wayfinding program, which enables visitors to quickly identify a parking facility and, using a system of color-coded directional signage, easily walk to any Downtown destination (see Transportation on page 72).	City Development Downtown Association Downtown Commission Engineering Public Art Board Arts Council Transit Parking Services	2004-2006	Focus Groups; Public Forums; Charrettes
a. Coordinate with marketing campaign and brochures.			
b. Integrate program with subdistricts (see Subdistricts on page 70).			
Strategy 6. Improve connections and accessibility within Downtown and to surrounding neighborhoods and destinations.	Engineering Transit City Development Economic Development Pedestrian & Bike Taskforce Parking Services Greenway Commission Parks & Recreation Public Works	2004, Ongoing	Various
a. Create a Downtown shuttle that circulates around Downtown, providing easy access to parking areas, offices, shopping, and dining destinations and government buildings.			
b. Increase transit frequency to and from Downtown.			
c. Improve multi-modal connections to the River and Biltmore Village.			
d. Accelerate the development of strategically located parking decks.			
Strategy 7. Promote and strengthen Downtown as an “arts and entertainment district,” showcasing the rich variety of cultural and entertainment amenities.	Downtown Association Arts Council City Development Public Art Board Convention and Visitors' Bureau Parks & Recreation	2004, Ongoing	Various
a. Include arts emphasis in marketing campaigns and brochures.			
b. Encourage coordination of efforts between Arts Council, Public Art Board and other related organizations.			
c. Continue ongoing programs that support the arts and garner corporate support.			

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 8. Strengthen and continue to create a strong, positive identity and sense of place that will naturally draw visitors and local residents alike (see Physical Environment on page 46).	City Development Downtown Commission Downtown Association Engineering Public Works Tourism Development Authority Public Art Board Chamber of Commerce Parks & Recreation Quality Forward	Ongoing	Various
Goal V. Preserve and enhance the quality and character of Downtown's physical and social environment.	City Development Downtown Commission Historic Resources Commission Public Works Engineering Downtown Association Parks & Recreation Police Department Pedestrian and Bike Taskforce Grafitti Taskforce City Council Pack Square Conservancy	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Preserve and protect Downtown's wealth of historic buildings (see Design and Appearance: Historic Preservation on page 49).	Historic Resources Commission City Development Planning Services	Ongoing	Administrative; Public Meetings
Strategy 2. Encourage high quality compatible design in new construction projects (see Design and Appearance: New Construction on page 50).	Downtown Commission City Development	Ongoing	Administrative; Public Meetings

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 3. Strengthen the pedestrian experience.	Public Works City Development Engineering Economic Development Pedestrian & Bike Taskforce Fire and Rescue Department	2003-2008	Administrative; Public Meetings
a. Continue to develop quality streetscape amenities.			
b. Repair or construct new sidewalks where needed.			
c. Promote pedestrian right of way education by designating Downtown as a Pedestrian Friendly Zone and accompanying signage.			
d. Improve pedestrian circulation patterns, particularly with respect to street crossings.			
Strategy 4. Property and business owners should look for creative opportunities to fund Downtown improvements over and above what the City can provide that will enhance appearance, cleanliness, and safety.	Downtown Association	2004-2006	Various
Strategy 5. Create public-private partnerships to manage ongoing downtown social issues, including graffiti, vandalism, loitering and panhandling.	Downtown Association Police Department City Development Graffiti Taskforce	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 6. Continue to develop quality open space and parks (see Public Spaces: Parks on page 55).	Parks & Recreation City Development Public Works City Council Pack Square Conservancy Engineering Downtown Commission	Ongoing	Various
Goal VI. Increase cooperation and communication between organizations involved in Downtown economic development.	Economic Development Downtown Commission City Development Buncombe County Division of Community Assistance City Council Planning Services Federal Government	Ongoing	Various

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 1. Form a committee comprised of representatives from various agencies and organizations to focus on Downtown economic development efforts.	Economic Development Downtown Commission City Development Sustainable Economic Development Taskforce City Council Downtown Association	2003-2004	Various
a. Identify areas of responsibility to eliminate duplication of efforts.			
b. Implement Economic Development section of the Center City Plan.			
Strategy 2. Analyze all publicly owned property for appropriate use to maximize benefits to both the public and private sectors.	City Development Buncombe County Planning Services	2003-2008	Administrative; Public Meetings
a. Locate public sector facilities in existing City-County complex area to minimize impact and maximize efficiency.			
b. Look for "joint use" opportunities for public sector facilities.			
c. Transfer public sector properties that are better suited for private development into private ownership and under appropriate development.			
Strategy 3. Encourage the State and Federal governments to adopt and implement policies to locate State and Federal offices in the Downtown.	Division of Community Assistance Federal Government Downtown Commission	2003-2006	Administrative; Various

HOUSING & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Goal I. Substantially increase the number of people living Downtown and in nearby neighborhoods	City Development Downtown Association Planning & Development Economic Development Parks & Recreation Community Development Public Works Downtown Commission Parking Services Fire and Rescue Department	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Continue to improve the physical, social and cultural environment of Downtown, making it the Center City an increasingly desirable place to live.	City Development Parks & Recreation Public Works Downtown Commission Parking Services	2003, Ongoing	Various
a. Support the Pack Square Renaissance Project.			
b. Provide pocket parks and improved landscaping in each Downtown district.			
c. Explore the development of a new park or large public space at the western end of Patton Avenue.			
d. Connect parks and public spaces with attractive, functional streetscapes.			
e. Provide a high level of maintenance in the public realm, including streets, sidewalks, and parks.			
f. Improve the design review process to help ensure a quality built environment for both existing and new construction.			
g. Address the parking needs of Downtown residents. Seek opportunities for the shared use of parking facilities—serving business needs during the day and residential needs at night.			
Strategy 2. Encourage the continued development of residential units on upper floors of existing buildings.	City Development Economic Development Fire and Rescue Department	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 3. Encourage new construction of housing in Downtown and adjacent areas	City Development Economic Development Community Development Planning & Development	Ongoing	Administrative
a. New construction in the Downtown core and gateway areas should incorporate retail or other active uses at ground level.			

HOUSING & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
b. New high-density single-use residential construction is appropriate in the area south of Hilliard and at the western end of Downtown.	City Development Economic Development Community Development Planning & Development	Ongoing	Administrative
c. Provide residential uses as a component of public/private catalytic development projects.			
d. Assist in the assembly of land for residential projects.			
e. Encourage a wider mix of housing types and products in the Downtown area.			
f. Investigate economic incentives for targeted types of housing.			
g. Support efforts to redevelop the West-End/Clingman Avenue neighborhood as described in the WECAN Plan.			
Strategy 4. Review existing zoning and building code provisions in areas surrounding Downtown and remove regulatory hurdles to residential development.	City Development Planning & Development Downtown Commission	2003-2004	Administrative; Public Meetings
Strategy 5. Develop incentives to increase residential densities in surrounding areas, particularly along gateway corridors.	City Development Planning & Development	2003-2005	Administrative; Public Meetings
Strategy 6. Improve public awareness that Downtown is a safe, vibrant, viable neighborhood.	Downtown Association Downtown Commission	2003, Ongoing	Administrative; Focus Groups
a. Develop marketing programs to improve the public perception of Downtown and to attract new Downtown residents.			
b. Form a Downtown neighborhood association as a member of the Coalition of Asheville Neighborhoods to represent the interests of Downtown residents.			
Goal II. Provide a range of housing options to attract an economically and socially diverse population.	City Development Community Development Building Safety Fire and Rescue Department		
Strategy 1. Pursue changes in the State Building Code that may reduce the costs of developing Downtown housing.	Building Safety	2004-2006	Administrative

HOUSING & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 2. Encourage the development of “affordable” or middle-range housing in the Downtown area.	City Development Community Development	2004, Ongoing	Various
a. Identify the market that is currently under-served in the Downtown area.			
b. Acquire properties and/or use existing City-owned properties suitable for housing and make them available at favorable rates for the development of housing for targeted market.			
c. Provide “affordable” or mid-range residential units as a component of public/private catalytic development projects.			
d. Educate developers about programs, grants, and credits available for building affordable housing.			
e. Make information about vacant or under-utilized land readily available to housing developers.			
f. Explore new models for home ownership, e.g., co-ops, co-housing, etc.			
g. Explore the creation of incentives and/or creative financing mechanisms for the development of affordable and mid-range housing.			
h. Utilize Housing Trust Fund monies for the development of affordable housing in the Downtown area.			
Strategy 3. Use local, state and federal subsidies to preserve and improve housing units Downtown that are affordable to very low-income people, including those with special needs.	Community Development	2003, Ongoing	Administrative
Goal III. Improve the Overall Livability of Downtown Asheville	City Development Public Works Economic Development Community Development Parks & Recreation Downtown Commission Downtown Association Parking Services Quality Forward Engineering	Ongoing	Various

HOUSING & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
<p>Strategy 1. Encourage the development of a complete range of goods and services to meet the needs of Downtown residents. A grocery store and a hardware store have been identified as primary needs.</p> <p>a. Assemble statistical, demographic, and marketing materials, which demonstrate a market for needed businesses.</p> <p>b. Identify those businesses needed to support a growing and diverse residential population.</p> <p>c. Explore the creation of incentives for the private sector to provide needed businesses.</p> <p>d. Acquire properties and/or use existing City-owned properties suitable for needed businesses and make them available at favorable rates for these uses.</p> <p>e. Provide needed businesses as a component of public/private catalytic development projects.</p>	<p>City Development Economic Development Community Development</p>	2004-2006	Administrative; Focus Groups; Public Meetings; Public Hearings
<p>Strategy 2. Continue to improve the physical environment of Downtown, making the Center City an increasingly desirable place to live.</p> <p>a. Support the Pack Square Renaissance Project.</p> <p>b. Provide pocket parks, improved landscaping in each Downtown district.</p> <p>c. Explore the development of a new park or large public space at the western end of Patton Avenue.</p> <p>d. Connect parks and public spaces with attractive, functional streetscapes.</p> <p>e. Provide a high level of maintenance in the public realm, including streets, sidewalks, and parks.</p> <p>f. Improve the design review process to help ensure a quality built environment.</p> <p>g. Address the parking needs of Downtown residents. Seek opportunities for the shared use of parking facilities—serving business needs during the day and residential needs at night.</p>	<p>City Development Parks & Recreation Public Works Downtown Commission Parking Services</p>	2003, Ongoing	Various

HOUSING & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 3. Improve the safety and cleanliness of the Downtown environment.	Public Works City Development Quality Forward Downtown Association Downtown Commission	2003, Ongoing	Public Meetings; Administrative
a. Implement Quality Forward's "adopt a street" program to supplement City efforts at litter removal.			
b. Create public-private partnerships and support existing efforts to manage ongoing Downtown social issues including graffiti, vandalism, loitering, and panhandling.			
c. Property and business owners should look for creative opportunities to fund enhanced maintenance and beautification beyond what the City would ordinarily provide.			
d. Provide additional kiosks Downtown for posting handbills.			
Strategy 4. Improve and strengthen pedestrian connections and transit opportunities both within Downtown and between Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.	Public Works Engineering City Development Transit	2004, Ongoing	Administrative; Public Meetings
a. Extend streetscape elements along streets that link Downtown with surrounding neighborhoods (Montford, West End/Clingman, East End) as a method of enhancing the pedestrian experience.			
b. Create new pedestrian connections where needed.			
Strategy 5. Improve relations between the City and Downtown residents by making City policies more resident friendly where feasible.	City Development Downtown Association	2004, Ongoing	Various

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Goal I. Reinforce Downtown's mixed-use and compact pattern of development.	City Development Economic Development Planning Services Downtown Commission City Council	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Encourage and promote infill development to fill existing gaps in the Downtown core.	City Development Economic Development Planning Services Downtown Commission	2003, Ongoing	Various
Strategy 2. Identify under-utilized parcels of land along key entrance corridors and encourage their development/redevelopment.	City Development Planning Services Economic Development	2003, Ongoing	Various
Strategy 3. Foster retail or other active uses at street level to stimulate pedestrian activity.	City Development Planning Services Downtown Commission City Council	2004, Ongoing	Administrative; Public Meetings; Public Hearings
a. Educate property owners, managers, and realtors on the benefits of active street level uses			
b. Require active uses on the first floor of any development that receives public funding.			
Goal II. Continue to preserve and enhance Downtown's wealth of historic buildings.	City Development Economic Development Historic Resources Commission Downtown Association Preservation Society	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Pursue the creation of additional financial incentives for property owners to rehabilitate historic buildings, such as low interest loans and/or façade improvement programs.	Economic Development Historic Resources Commission City Development Downtown Association Preservation Society	2004-2006	Administrative; Public Meetings; Public Hearings
Strategy 2. Promote greater awareness of technical assistance available regarding preservation techniques.	Historic Resources Commission City Development Preservation Society	Ongoing	Administrative

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 3. Educate the community and developers regarding the social and economic benefits of preserving historic structures.	Historic Resources Commission Preservation Society	Ongoing	Administrative; Focus Groups
Strategy 4. Identify key historic properties not yet designated as local historic landmarks and encourage their designation as such.	Historic Resources Commission City Development Preservation Society Downtown Commission	2004-2007	Administrative; Public Hearings
Strategy 5. Protect the historic fabric through infill development that is sensitive to the character of older buildings.	City Development Preservation Society	Ongoing	Various
Goal III. Ensure a high level of architectural quality in new buildings (new buildings should respect the historic context of Downtown and contribute to its unique sense of place but should be designed to reflect the period in which they are built).	City Development Economic Development Downtown Commission Planning Services	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Educate owners and developers about the importance of high quality, compatible design.	City Development Downtown Commission	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 2. Establish a dialogue with architects/developers early in the design process to foster greater public/private collaboration in new development areas.	City Development Downtown Commission Planning Services	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 3. Amend the Central Business District (CBD) zoning district to include additional development standards that address siting, scale, massing, materials, and other elements that are fundamental to compatible new construction. A height limit should be established to prevent new construction that is out of scale with the existing pattern of development.	City Development Downtown Commission Planning Services	2003-2005	Administrative; Focus Groups; Public Meetings; Public Hearings

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 4. Revise the Downtown Design Review Guidelines, especially with respect to new construction, to reflect the goal of encouraging contextual yet contemporary design of new structures.	City Development Downtown Commission Planning Services	2004-2005	Administrative; Focus Groups; Public Meetings; Public Hearings
Strategy 5. Expand the Downtown Design Review boundaries to incorporate the expanded Central Business District boundaries with the adjacent gateway corridors.	City Development Downtown Commission Planning Services	2004-2005	Administrative; Focus Groups; Public Meetings; Public Hearings
Strategy 6. Investigate the creation of economic and development incentives to ensure better quality design in Downtown.	Economic Development City Development Planning Services	2004-2006	Various
Goal IV. Provide a pedestrian environment that is pleasant, visually interesting, and welcoming to visitors.	City Development Public Works Downtown Commission Parks & Recreation Downtown Association Engineering Tourism Development Authority Public Art Board Chamber of Commerce Quality Forward Fire and Rescue Department	Ongoing	Various

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 1. Establish a committee to assist the City in addressing streetscape and other public realm design issues.	Downtown Commission City Development Public Works	2004-2005	Various
a. Establish an overall policy for Downtown streetscapes.			
b. Update the Streetscape Plan. The plan should include an overall Downtown “vocabulary” of streetscape elements while encouraging variations in sub-districts to reinforce their unique qualities and sense of place.			
c. Establish a streamlined process for the review of streetscape projects.			
Strategy 2. In accordance with the revised Streetscape Plan and consistent with the streetscape policies, improve existing streetscapes and extend streetscape elements throughout Downtown.	Public Works City Development Planning Services Engineering	2005-2010	Administrative; Public Meetings; Focus Groups
Strategy 3. Seek opportunities to improve existing Downtown landscaping and to provide new landscaping where appropriate.	Public Works City Development Quality Forward Parks & Recreation	2005-2010	Focus Groups; Administrative
Strategy 4. Seek opportunities to integrate public art into streetscaping elements such as bus shelters, kiosks, and tree grates.	City Development Public Works Downtown Commission Public Art Board	2004, Ongoing	Focus Groups; Administrative
Strategy 5. Create a consistent, attractive and user-friendly Downtown signage program (see Wayfinding on page).	City Development Downtown Commission Downtown Association Engineering Public Works Tourism Development Authority Public Art Board Chamber of Commerce	2004-2006	Various
Strategy 6. Assure strong communication and coordination between the various groups having an interest in the appearance of the public realm.	City Development Public Works Downtown Commission	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 7. Provide and maintain strategically located public restrooms.	Parks & Recreation City Development Fire and Rescue Department	2006-2010	Focus Groups

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Goal V. Create a network of well-designed parks and open spaces to serve the recreational and urban amenity needs of an increasingly vibrant Downtown.	Parks & Recreation Pack Square Conservancy Public Works City Development City Council Engineering Downtown Commission	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Improve and redevelop existing parks and public open spaces and continue a high level of maintenance.	Parks & Recreation Pack Square Conservancy City Development	2003, Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 2. Complete the Pack Square Renaissance Project.	Pack Square Conservancy City Development Parks & Recreation City Council Public Works Engineering	2004-2007	Various
a. Continue to educate the public regarding its historical and symbolic significance and the enormous benefits its redesign will offer the community.			
b. Facilitate fundraising necessary to achieve project construction.			
c. Continue the strong partnership and effective cooperation between the Pack Square Conservancy, City and County governments, and stakeholder groups.			
d. Ensure that infrastructure changes necessary to project completion are made.			
Strategy 3. Develop new parks and other public spaces in and adjacent to Downtown. Opportunities that should be actively pursued:	Parks & Recreation City Development Downtown Commission	2005-2025	Various
** Locations along the Patton Avenue spine, including a large "gateway" park or plaza at the western end of the corridor. This public space should be designed to complement and stimulate a large private development project at this key gateway location.			
** The Sister Cities Park and other properties owned by the City on Beaucatcher Mountain. While these locations are outside Downtown, their development will provide a valuable amenity to Downtown residents and visitors, particularly if connected to Downtown by greenway trails.			
** Strategic locations within each Downtown subdistrict			
a. Assemble property suitable for the future development of parks and open spaces.			

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
b. Encourage open space as a component of large catalytic development projects.	Parks & Recreation City Development Downtown Commission	2005-2025	Various
c. Utilize a public/private model such as exists in the Pack Square Renaissance Project to aid and accelerate the development of new parks and open spaces.			
Strategy 4. In keeping with a Streetscape Plan, encourage the development of "pocket parks" in under-utilized portions of public and private property.	Parks & Recreation Public Works City Development	2005, Ongoing	Focus Groups; Administrative
Strategy 5. Link the network of parks and open spaces through attractive tree-lined pedestrian streets.	Public Works Parks & Recreation City Development	2005, Ongoing	Administrative
Goal VI. Maintain existing public art and provide additional pieces at key locations as a means to reinforce Downtown's unique identity, humanize the environment, and celebrate Asheville's rich artistic heritage.	Public Art Board City Development Arts Council Public Works Public Art Board Parks & Recreation	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Continue to maintain and promote the Urban Trail and other existing Downtown public art.	Parks & Recreation Arts Council Public Art Board	Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 2. Provide new public art at key locations, including gateway entrances into Downtown.	Public Art Board Downtown Commission City Development	2005, Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 3. Ensure that the placement of public art is well coordinated and consistent with the Streetscape Plan and overall Downtown planning efforts.	Public Works City Development Public Art Board Downtown Commission	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal VII. Ensure adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of current users and to accommodate future downtown growth and development.	Public Works Engineering Water Authority	Ongoing	Various

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 1. Work with infrastructure providers to develop a comprehensive Infrastructure Improvements Plan for Downtown.	Public Works Engineering	2004-2006	Various
a. Assess existing and future infrastructure needs.			
b. Identify necessary infrastructure upgrades and prioritize improvements.			
c. Seek opportunities for public/private partnerships to fund improvements.			
Strategy 2. Improve coordination and communication between City departments and utility providers regarding infrastructure requirements and planned improvements.	Public Works	Ongoing	Administrative
Goal VIII. Consolidate City and County government facilities and services in the existing government complex.	City Development Planning Services Buncombe County City Council	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Develop a master plan for the government complex area to include the construction of new buildings to house current and future government facilities.	City Development Planning Services Buncombe County	2003-2005	Various
Strategy 2. Seek opportunities to relocate "satellite" City and County facilities into the government complex area and get public sector properties that are better suited for private development into private ownership and under appropriate development.	City Development Planning Services Buncombe County	2003, Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 3. Maintain the City Development office in a central Downtown location, as it continues to be an integral part of Downtown development and revitalization.	City Council	Ongoing	Budget Process
Goal IX. Capitalize upon the special qualities and unique identity of Downtown "neighborhoods" by establishing formalized Downtown sub-districts.	Downtown Commission City Development Downtown Association Arts Council Public Works Planning Services Engineering	Ongoing	Various

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 1. Work with the Downtown community to identify existing and proposed subdistricts, define their character, and delineate their boundaries.	Downtown Commission City Development Downtown Association Public Works	2004, 2005	Various
Strategy 2. Strengthen and accentuate the unique flavor and special qualities of Downtown sub-districts.	City Development Public Works Downtown Commission Downtown Association Planning Services	2004, Ongoing	Administrative
a. Incorporate variations in streetscape details that reflect the character of each sub-district.			
b. Encourage appropriate and complimentary land uses and building design in Downtown sub-districts.			
Strategy 3. Incorporate sub-district development and enhancement as a major goal in the development of a Downtown Wayfinding Program.	Downtown Commission City Development Downtown Association Public Works Engineering	2004-2006	Various
Strategy 4. Actively market the strong sense of place that distinct sub-districts provide to Downtown Asheville.	Downtown Association Chamber of Commerce City Development	2005, Ongoing	Various
Goal X. Transform gateways leading into Downtown to provide a positive, welcoming introduction to the Center City.	City Development Planning Services Public Works Public Art Board Downtown Commission Quality Forward CP&L	Ongoing	Various

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 1. Improve the visual quality of gateway corridors.	Planning Services City Development Public Works Downtown Commission Quality Forward CP&L	2004, Ongoing	Various
a. Develop new zoning districts and other tools to ensure that gateway corridors redevelop with an urban pattern of development consisting of well designed, multi-story buildings located close to the street.			
b. Improve landscaping and extend streetscape elements to provide a strengthened physical and visual connection between gateway corridors and the Downtown core.			
c. Work toward moving overhead utilities underground.			
d. Work towards removing inappropriate signage and structures.			
Strategy 2. Accentuate the primary points of entry into Downtown as a means to “announce” one’s arrival into the Center City.	City Development Public Art Board Downtown Commission Quality Forward Public Works Planning Services	2004, Ongoing	Various
a. Utilize public art, landscaping, and/or signage to mark the primary points of entry into Downtown.			
b. Integrate gateway signage into a comprehensive “Park Once and Wayfinding” program (See Park Once and Wayfinding on Page _).			
c. Seek opportunities to construct new buildings at key entry locations that are designed to architecturally reinforce one’s sense of arrival in the Center City.			

TRANSPORATION & ACCESSIBILITY			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Goal I. Improve and strengthen connections between Downtown and surrounding areas.	Public Works Engineering Transit City Development Planning Services	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Improve and maintain existing pedestrian linkages between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods and develop additional connections where necessary.	Public Works Engineering City Development	2004, Ongoing	Various
a. Improve existing sidewalks leading into Downtown.			
b. Ensure that any North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) project on I-240 or its interchanges include improved pedestrian and bicycle connections between Downtown and neighborhoods.			
c. Extend and improve streetscape and landscape elements along entry routes to facilitate pedestrian safety and movement.			
d. Improve the pedestrian bridge across S. Charlotte Street and identify locations for additional connections between Downtown and the East End/Martin Luther King neighborhood.			
e. Strengthen the pedestrian connection between Downtown and the West End/Clingman Avenue (WECAN) neighborhood and other areas along the French Broad River through sidewalk improvements and the construction of a multi-use greenway trail.			
Strategy 2. Improve and maintain vehicular connections into Downtown.	Engineering Planning Services Public Works	2004-2010	Various
a. Ensure that any North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) project on I-240 or its interchanges positively effect vehicular access to Downtown.			

TRANSPORATION & ACCESSIBILITY			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
b. Separate Patton Avenue and the Smokey Park Bridge from interstate traffic to reclaim land for community use and allow Patton Avenue to serve as an enhanced gateway into Downtown.			
c. Extend streetscape and landscape elements along Biltmore Avenue between Downtown, Mission-St. Joseph's Hospital and Biltmore Village to strengthen this important connection.			
Strategy 3. Increase transit use and frequency through corridors into and out of Downtown.	Engineering Transit City Development	2003-2005	Focus Groups; Administrative
Goal II. Increase and improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation.	Public Works Engineering Pedestrian & Bike Taskforce City Development Downtown Commission Downtown Association Police Department Fire and Rescue Department	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Improve the quality of the pedestrian realm to promote walking as the primary mode of transportation within Downtown (see Pedestrian Realm on page).	City Development Public Works Downtown Commission Downtown Association Engineering Tourism Development Authority Public Art Board Chamber of Commerce Parks & Recreation Quality Forward	Ongoing	Various

TRANSPORTATION & ACCESSIBILITY			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 2. Prioritize and implement sidewalk improvement projects throughout Downtown.	Public Works Pedestrian & Bike Taskforce Engineering City Development	2003, Ongoing	Administrative; Focus Groups
a. Remove sidewalk obstructions such as utility poles.			
b. Repair sidewalks where needed.			
c. Bring intersection crossings and ramps into compliance with Americans With Disabilities Act standards.			
d. Add sidewalks wherever possible to develop a complete pedestrian network.			
e. Examine Downtown crosswalks for opportunities to improve pedestrian safety and movement through intersections.			
f. Address confusing traffic/pedestrian crossing at Pack Square/Biltmore.			
Strategy 3. Improve street and sidewalk cleanliness.	Public Works Downtown Association	2003, Ongoing	Administrative
Strategy 4. Promote Downtown as a pedestrian friendly zone, including signs at gateways (i.e. "You are entering Downtown Asheville, a pedestrian friendly zone; Pedestrians have the right of way at intersections").	Pedestrian & Bike Taskforce Downtown Commission Engineering	2003-2006	Administrative; Public Forums
Strategy 5. Install appropriate traffic calming measures.	Engineering Public Works City Development Pedestrian & Bike Taskforce Police Department	2003-2006	Administrative; Public Forums
a. Install brick/raised crosswalks at busy intersections.			
b. Install bulbouts where appropriate.			
c. Plant additional street trees to serve as buffer between pedestrians and traffic.			
d. Enforce Downtown speed limits.			
Strategy 6. Improve the bicycle-friendliness of Downtown.	Pedestrian & Bike Taskforce Engineering	2004-2006	Media; Focus Groups; Public Forums; Administrative
a. Educate the public (drivers and bicyclists) regarding bike laws.			
b. Provide additional bike racks Downtown.			
c. Encourage enforcement of traffic laws that promote bicycle safety.			
d. Use cable access channel as educational/promotional tool.			

TRANSPORATION & ACCESSIBILITY			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Goal III. Increase public transit usage, especially by daily commuters, to reduce reliance on automobiles and to lower parking demand.	Transit Engineering City Manager Public Art Board	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Increase transit frequency and hours of operation.	Transit	2004-2010	Various
Strategy 2. Create a Downtown shuttle to facilitate internal circulation.	Transit City Development Engineering	2004-2007	Focus Groups
a. Link with parking facilities, major activity centers, and City transit system.			
b. Consider using a rubber-wheeled trolley to contribute to Downtown's unique character.			
Strategy 3. Improve transit stops and facilities.	Transit Public Art Board City Development	2004-2010	Administrative
a. Improve bus shelters and consider integrating public art into the design of new shelters.			
b. Provide benches and bus schedules at all stops.			
c. Integrate shelters, routes, and signage into wayfinding program.			
d. Encourage appropriate development surrounding the Transit Center, thereby supporting commuter needs.	Transit Public Art Board City Development	2004-2010	Administrative
Strategy 4. Develop incentives to encourage ridership.	Transit City Manager	2003-2005	Various
a. Promote existing "free zone".			
b. Work with employers to provide incentives for employees to use transit, such as a free pass. The City should set the example with the creation of its own program.			
Strategy 5. Implement Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) to allow transit easy passage through intersections and to coordinate traffic signals.	Engineering		
Goal IV. Improve vehicle circulation.	Engineering Public Works City Development Planning Services Fire and Rescue Department	Ongoing	Various

TRANSPORTATION & ACCESSIBILITY			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 1. Return Patton Avenue and College Street to their original two-way configuration.	Engineering City Development Planning Services	2004-2006	Public Meetings; Public Hearings
Strategy 2. Explore other opportunities to eliminate one-way streets. Battery Park and Spruce Street are candidates for conversion.	Engineering City Development Planning Services Fire and Rescue Department	2004-2006	Public Meetings; Public Hearings
Strategy 3. Consider the use of roundabouts in selected areas of Downtown to facilitate movement and to create place-making opportunities.	Engineering City Development Planning Services Fire and Rescue Department	2004-2010	Various
Strategy 4. Examine circulation pattern in the Eagle/Market Streets area to strengthen connections and foster revitalization of this important area.	Engineering Public Works City Development	2003, 2004	Public Meetings
Strategy 5. Prioritize and implement necessary street improvement projects.	Public Works Engineering City Development	2003, Ongoing	Administrative
a. Improve advance warning of turns, all turning lanes must be well marked.			
b. Provide timely pothole repair.			
c. Provide coordinated and advance warning of construction.			
Goal V. Ensure an adequate supply of convenient parking to support and foster the continued development of Downtown Asheville.	City Development Engineering Parking Services Transit Downtown Commission Public Works	Ongoing	Various

TRANSPORATION & ACCESSIBILITY			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 1. Accelerate the development of strategically located parking structures.	Engineering Parking Services City Development Economic Development	2003-2013	Administrative; Public Forums; Public Hearings
a. Complete the Grove Arcade Parking Deck by April, 2006.			
b. Develop structured parking at the corner of Biltmore Avenue and Aston Street as part of a public/private mixed use project. The structure should contain sufficient parking to serve Biltmore Avenue, the Eagle/Market Streets area, and the eastern end of the developing area south of Hilliard Avenue.			
c. Develop structured parking adjacent to City Hall to as part of a public/private mixed use project. The structure should contain sufficient parking to serve the City and County governmental complex as well as the Pack Square area.			
d. Acquire properties in long-term growth areas and "land bank" them for future structured parking.			
e. Seek opportunities to provide structured parking as a component of future public or private catalytic projects.			
Strategy 2. Seek opportunities to develop surface parking outside the Downtown core to serve the needs of Downtown employees and other long-term parkers.	City Development Engineering Transit Downtown Commission	2004-2006	Administrative; Focus Groups; Media; Public Forums
Strategy 3. Seek opportunities to provide additional on-street parking Downtown, especially in developing areas such as Coxe Avenue, Hilliard Avenue, and Biltmore Avenue south of Hilliard.	Engineering City Development Parking Services Public Works	2003, Ongoing	Administrative; "Neighborhood"/Public Meetings
Strategy 4. Utilize demand base rate structure to encourage the use of parking structures.	Parking Services	Ongoing	Administrative

TRANSPORTATION & ACCESSIBILITY			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Goal VI. Locate, design and manage Downtown parking so as to maximize efficiency, minimize negative impacts, and promote a positive image.	City Development Planning Services Downtown Commission Parking Services Transit Engineering Planning & Zoning Commission Downtown Employers Fire and Rescue Department	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Discourage surface parking in the Downtown core and primary entrance corridors.	Planning Services City Development Downtown Commission	2004, Ongoing	Administrative; Focus Groups
Strategy 2. Revise development regulations to require surface parking lots to be screened from the street by landscaping and low walls constructed of urban materials.	Planning Services City Development Downtown Commission	2004-2005	Administrative; Public Forums; Public Hearing
Strategy 3. Revise development regulations to address the design and programming of Downtown parking structures.	Planning Services City Development Downtown Commission Planning & Zoning Commission	2004-2005	Administrative; Public Meetings; Public Hearings
a. Ensure quality architectural design for all parking structures.			
b. Require parking structures in the Downtown core and primary entrance corridors to be “wrapped” with retail or other pedestrian generating use at street level.			
Strategy 4. Address loading and delivery issues to minimize negative effects on traffic congestion and parking availability.	Downtown Commission City Development Engineering Parking Services Fire and Rescue Department	2003-2004	Administrative; Public Meetings; Public Hearings
a. Plan and provide loading zones within each block, taking into account the specific needs associated with various businesses.			
b. Provide strict enforcement of loading zones to improve their effectiveness.			
c. Explore the possibility of restricting the hours during which deliveries are allowed and the size of delivery vehicles.			
d. Provide passenger unloading zones where appropriate.			

TRANSPORATION & ACCESSIBILITY			
GOAL/STRATEGY	LEAD PARTY/ PARTIES	TIMELINE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
Strategy 5. Develop incentive programs that encourage Downtown employees to utilize parking decks or use public transit, thereby reducing parking demand.	Transit Parking Services City Development Downtown Employers	2004-2007	Administrative; Media
Strategy 6. Market the availability of Downtown parking to overcome negative perceptions.	Parking Services City Development Downtown Association Downtown Commission	2004, Ongoing	Focus Groups; Media
Goal VII. Develop a Park Once and Wayfinding program, enabling visitors to quickly identify a parking facility and, aided by a system of color-coded directional signage, easily walk to any Downtown destination.	City Development Convention & Visitors Bureau Downtown Commission Downtown Association Public Art Board Public Works Engineering	Ongoing	Various
Strategy 1. Form a steering committee that brings together local property owners, business owners, residents and other Downtown stakeholders.	City Development Convention & Visitors Bureau Downtown Commission Downtown Association Public Art Board	2003-2005	Public Meetings; Focus Groups; Media
a. Facilitate a public design process.			
b. Develop a plan for signage design and location.			
Strategy 2. Identify and pursue creative fundraising opportunities to finance design assistance and implementation of signage.	City Development Convention and Visitors Bureau Downtown Commission Downtown Association Public Art Board	2005-2006	Administrative
a. Seek public/private partnerships.			
b. Investigate transportation enhancement funds.			

Further Reading

Downtown and surrounding area plans

Copies of plans may be obtained through the Planning and Development Department.

Action Plan: Asheville Urban Design. 1986.
Hayes Seay Mattern, Mattern/Centerbrook/
Lester Collins.

A Revitalized Downtown: Citizens Summary
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Asheville Revitalization Commission.

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for a Livable City. 1999. Public Works
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Asheville City Plan. 1922. John Nolen.

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1989. City of Asheville.

Asheville Greenways Master Plan. 1998.
Trust for Public Land/Greenways Inc.

Asheville Streetscape Plan Brochure. 1994.
Downtown Development/Parks & Recreation
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Parks and Recreation Dept.

Biltmore Village Development Plan. 1992.
Robert Griffin.

Broadway Corridor Plan. 2000. Planning and
Development.

Charlotte St. Corridor Plan. 1999. Planning
and Development.

City of Asheville Pedestrian Thoroughfare
Plan. 1999. Public Works.

Downtown Asheville Design Guidelines. 199 .
Downtown Design Review Steering Commit-
tee.

The Eagle/Market Façade Design Guidebook.
1993. Historic Resources Commission of
Asheville and Buncombe County.

EastEnd/Valley Street Community Improvement Plan. 1978. Asheville Housing Authority/Butler Associates.

Haywood Road Corridor Plan. 1999. Planning and Development.

Head of Montford Plan.

Hendersonville Road Corridor Plan. 1993. Planning and Development.

Pack Square Redesign Charette & Concept. 2000. UDA/La Quatra Bonci.

The Riverfront Plan. 1989. French Broad Riverfront Planning Committee.

South Pack Square Redevelopment Plan. 1996-1993.

The Streetscape Plan: Downtown Asheville, NC. 1991. Streetscape Taskforce and City of Asheville.

The Block: A Redesign of the Eagle Market Street Area. 1995. F.A. Johnson Consulting Group, Inc. and SPACEPLAN.

Transportation Improvement Plan. 2000.

West End Clingman Avenue Neighborhood Plan. 1996. Planning and Development.

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Other Sources

Asheville Revitalization Commission. 1978. A revitalized downtown: citizens' summary of the Asheville Revitalization Plan.

Alternatives for Asheville Committee. 1987. Asheville 2010 Plan.

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Clark, Paul. "Flat Iron goes wireless." Asheville Citizen Times 14 April 2002, D1+.

Gratz, Robert Brandes and Norman Mintz. 1998. Cities back from the edge: new life for downtown. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Gratz, Roberta Brandes. 1989. The living city: how America's cities are being revitalized by thinking small in a big way. New York: Simon & Schuster Inc.

Hiss, Tony. 1990. The experience of place. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

Jacobs, Jane. The death and life of great american cities.

Ready, Milton. 1986. Asheville, land of the sky: an illustrated history. Northridge, California: Windsor Publications.

Rybczynski, Witold. 1995. City life. New York: Simon & Schuster Inc.

Swaim, Douglas. Cabins and Castles. 1981. Historic Resource Commission of Asheville and Buncombe County.

Tessier, Mitzi Schaden. 1982. Asheville, a pictorial history. Virginia Beach, Virginia: The Donning Company.

Downtown Planning Websites *

National MainStreet Program, a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation
<http://www.mainst.org>

International Downtown Association
<http://www.ida-downtown.org>

North Carolina Downtown Development Association
<http://www.ncdda.org>

American Planning Association
<http://www.planning.org>

Project for Public Spaces
<http://pps.org>

North Carolina Chapter, American Planning Association
<http://www.nc-apa.org>

Pack Square Conservancy
<http://www.packsquare.com>

New Urbanism

<http://www.newurbanism.org/>

Pack Square Conservancy

<http://www.packsquare.com>

This list is for informational purposes only and does not indicate an endorsement of the content of these websites.

Glossary

Central Business District—The City of Asheville zoning district that is applied to Downtown Asheville and defines its boundaries.

City—With a capital “C” refers to the City of Asheville, when used with a lower case “c” it refers to any city.

Center City—A term used interchangeably with “Downtown” or “Downtown Asheville”.

Downtown—With a capital “D” refers to Downtown Asheville, when used with a lower case “d” it refers to any downtown.

Fenestration—The arrangement and sizing of the windows and exterior doors of a building.

Gateway—A physical threshold that marks one’s arrival or departure.

Gateway Corridors—The streets that lead to and from Downtown.

Infill—The development or redevelopment of underutilized parcels that are located within

the existing Downtown fabric and are already served by municipal infrastructure.

Infrastructure—Services and facilities, such as roads, water and sewer lines, other utilities, and communications systems needed to support the functions and activities of the community.

Linkages—Passages of travel that connect two places, including streets, sidewalks, bicycle paths and transit routes.

Mixed-use—Characterized by two or more distinct land uses, such as residential, commercial and retail, occupying a single site or building.

Multi-modal—Means of transport by multiple methods including public transit, walking, bicycling, automobile and ridesharing within a single transportation corridor.

Node—A center of activity or development.

Open Space—Predominantly undeveloped public land reserved for active and passive recreational uses, as well as public health and safety (quality of life). Includes parks,

greenways, and pedestrian plazas.

Park Once & Wayfinding—A signage and directional system that enables visitors to quickly identify a parking facility and travel by foot or via public transit to a variety of destinations.

Pedestrian Linkage—A sidewalk or path that provides a pedestrian connection between two points.

Public Realm—Aspects of a community that are fully accessible and open to the general public.

Smart Growth—Development pattern that makes efficient use of Asheville's limited land, fully utilizes our urban services and infrastructure, promotes a wide variety of transportation and housing options, absorbs and effectively serves a significant portion of the future population growth of Buncombe County and Western North Carolina, protects the architectural and environmental character of the City through compatible, high quality, and environmentally-sensitive development practices, and recognizes the City's role as a regional hub of

commerce and employment.

Streetscape—All elements that constitute the design, appearance and character of a street, including sidewalks, street furniture, landscaping, signs and lighting.

Traffic Calming—Physical improvements to a street that slow traffic speeds and modify driving behavior. Examples include on-street parking, narrower travel lanes, bulbouts, speed bumps, signage and landscaping.

Acronyms

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)—Federal law which ensures accessibility of physical structures, setting the minimum standard to accommodate the physically challenged.

Asheville Area Arts Council (AAAC)

Asheville Downtown Association (ADA) — abbreviated only in the implementation matrix

Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce (AACC)

Asheville Downtown Commission (DTC)

Eagle Market Streets Community Development Corporation (EMSCDC)

North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)

Pack Square Conservancy (PSC)

Public Art Board (PAB)

Tourism Development Authority (TDA)

West End/Clingman Avenue Neighborhood (WECAN)

