



PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

To: Planning Commission Members

From: Liz Fields, AICP, Planner

Meeting Date: March 8, 2023

PC 23-06 Downtown Franklin Master Plan

Project Update: The Planning Commission was introduced to the proposed Downtown Franklin Master Plan at the February meeting. This item was tabled at that time to provide Planning Commission additional time to review and comment on the plan.

Project Overview: In 2021, the City of Franklin retained McBride Dale Clarion (MDC) to assist with the creation of a Downtown Master Plan. The Master Plan is a policy document that presents a unified vision for the future of Downtown.

Comments: The Downtown Franklin Master Plan is organized into four main chapters. The **Plan Context** chapter provides an overview of what a Master Plan is and how the plan will serve the community. It also includes an overview of the planning process, concurrent planning efforts, and the plan's priorities.

The **Understanding Downtown** chapter provides a more in-depth analysis of the City's history and the current context of Downtown. This includes the existing land use distribution, identification of potential redevelopment sites, and Downtown's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities.

The **Approach** chapter sets forth the vision for Downtown. It includes the plan's aspirational goals that set the framework for the vision along with an overview of the plan's three part approach to the vision – *Place, Connections, and Experience*.

The *Place* section provides the vision for the physical form and environment of Downtown. This includes breaking Downtown into five planning areas and

providing unique recommendations for each area's appropriate style, character, and use.

The *Connections* section addresses mobility and the ease of access within the district and identifies ways to improve and expand upon vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle connections both within Downtown and from the region to Downtown.

The *Experience* section is centered around the visual cues and efforts that contribute to a safe and pleasing experience in Downtown Franklin, which adds significant value to the enjoyment of Downtown.

The final chapter is **Take Action**. This chapter establishes a list of actions the city and the community can follow to best achieve the recommendations outlined in the plan. The action items are categorized by which of the five downtown planning areas the item applies to: Downtown Core, Mixed Use, Riverfront Mixed Use, Civic, or Transition; or if it applies to the entire Downtown District. Each action item also includes a recommended timeline for completion and a priority level. This will help the city prioritize and plan for how these recommendations can fit into yearly work plans, budgets, and planning efforts.

The Downtown Franklin Master Plan is based on data, research, existing conditions, public input, staff input, and city leadership input. It is a comprehensive approach and vision for Downtown that will serve the city well for many years to come!

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval of the Downtown Franklin Master Plan to City Council.