

PHASE 1

DRAFT

The master planning process for Downtown Green Cove Springs yielded numerous opportunities and capital improvement projects. One of the most common obstacles to implementation of these types of plans are the lack of a clear starting point.

This 20-Year Vision for the future of Downtown Green Cove Springs begins by implementing the projects and improvements outlined in Phase 1. These projects are listed by order of importance within the Phase 1 Table and are shown spatially on the following page. The key objectives for Phase 1 are to set the stage for current and future growth by capitalizing on Downtown’s **WATERFRONT** vistas via a destination restaurant, establish a Downtown brand which captures the **HISTORY** and **CHARM** of the Study Area, identify funding and regulatory mechanisms to support future **DEVELOPMENT** projects within the public and private realm, and seek to coordinate (and lead as necessary) roadway improvement projects which enhance **CONNECTIVITY** between existing and future Downtown assets.

WATERFRONT



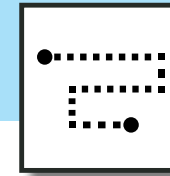
HISTORY



CHARM



CONNECTIVITY



DEVELOPMENT



Phase 1 (1-5 Years)		
1	Leverage City-owned Catalyst Site to attract a Destination Restaurant	\$\$\$
2	Establish a Downtown Community Redevelopment Agency	\$
3	Adopt Downtown Brand and Logo	\$
4	Establish & Adopt Form-Based Code	\$
5	Pursue grants for restoration of the Judge Rivers House	\$
6	Identify use for unfinished/unoccupied rooms in City Hall	\$\$
7	Increase Downtown Parking Supply (within Focus Area)	\$\$\$
8	US 17 and Walnut Street Intersection Enhancement	\$\$\$\$
9	Improve Walnut Street Corridor (From Palmetto Ave. to the River)	\$\$\$\$
10	Magnolia Avenue - Festival Street	\$\$\$
11	FDOT Improvements to US 17 Corridor (Oak Street to Governor’s Creek)	\$\$\$\$
12	Design and Construct City Hall Park	\$\$\$
EST. COST: \$ = <\$100,000 \$\$ = \$100,000-\$1 Million \$\$\$ = \$1-5 Million \$\$\$\$ = >\$5 Million		



PHASE 1 OVERVIEW

1. Leverage City-owned Catalyst Site to attract a Destination Restaurant

Walnut Street, between North Orange Avenue and the St. Johns River, is the original commercial Main Street of Green Cove Springs. Today, there are only two operating commercial uses along this segment: the Clay Theatre and Ronnie's Wings. Re-establishing the urban form and function of this corridor, in an architectural style and massing compatible with the community character, should be the fundamental first step in restoring the historic vitality of Downtown Green Cove Springs.

The City owns four contiguous parcels totaling approximately .92 acres along Walnut Street just north of Spring Park. This property is well-positioned for a destination restaurant that could offer convenient onsite parking and beautiful waterfront vistas.

The City was recently awarded a \$400,000 grant from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. This grant would help to fund Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater measures such as pervious parking spaces, tree boxes and bioswales on this property and along Walnut Street from the River to Magnolia Avenue.

Utilizing the state authorized redevelopment tools provided through the establishment of a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), the City should position the property as a 'pad-ready' site with parking and solicit proposals for development that would include a destination restaurant. Preparation of the property should include appropriate site civil, geotechnical and environmental analyses as well as a conceptual design for parking and stormwater.



Utilizing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ), instead of a Request for Proposals (RFP), would allow the City to select a development partner and work collaboratively towards establishing a commercially viable project that complements the rich character of Downtown Green Cove Springs.

Development of the site should be of traditional urban form and compatible with the existing architectural styles in Downtown Green Cove Springs. Consistent with an anticipated form-based code, the site provides the opportunity for the development of two or three buildings fronting Walnut Street. The buildings should be limited to no more than three stories with a maximum setback of ten feet, as measured from building face to the northern edge of sidewalk/right-of-way line. Parking should be behind the buildings. The City should also retain the right to approve the architecture of the building to ensure that the development complements the existing character of the community.

The revitalization of the entire Walnut Street corridor is an important long-term objective of this Downtown Master Plan. This segment (between North Orange Avenue and the River), with its proximity to the popular Spring Park, was prioritized in order to spur additional redevelopment within the Study Area.



Catalyst Site Development Process

1. Identify potential development partners to invite to respond
2. Prepare and issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a development partner that clearly states the City's vision for the property
3. Review, short-list, and interview the top three respondents; make selection
4. Negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (City/Developer) to establish a process and schedule for the creation of a development plan
5. Advance the following site planning efforts:
 - a. Developer performs their due diligence and commences planning efforts
 - b. City performs environmental and geotechnical investigations of the site
 - c. City identifies relevant City investments affecting the project site (e.g., streetscapes, park enhancements and other capital improvements)
 - d. City identifies potential assistance that may be available to the Developer (e.g., design assistance, grants, TIF rebates, fee waivers and/or discounts)
 - e. Developer proposes a development plan and requests incentives
 - f. City and Developer negotiate terms of a Development Agreement
6. Prepare and execute Development Agreement
7. Commence Construction



7. Increase Downtown Parking Supply (within Focus Area)

THA Consulting completed a parking study in 2022 which examined existing and projected parking conditions within the greater Downtown area of Green Cove Springs. During their analysis, THA Consulting found that the City currently possesses a parking surplus within the overall Parking Study Area on both weekdays and weekends. However, when the firm examined conditions within the Core Sub-Area (loosely defined as the area west of US 17 between Palmer and Ferris St.), it found that although the weekday parking supply was sufficient, the Core Sub-Area experienced a shortage of 41 spaces during the weekend. Furthermore, projected parking demand for the overall Parking Study Area (based upon 2031 population projections) was not expected to exceed the Area's current supply by 2031, but the existing weekend parking deficiency within the Core Sub-Area is expected to marginally increase throughout the next nine years.

The City should begin the process of incrementally increasing the parking supply Downtown. Five potential parking improvements (three on-street and two off-street) are proposed for Phase 1, which are identified in the following Table and illustrated on the Phase 1 Parking Map. These potential parking improvements were selected based on their potential to increase the area's total supply for parking, their location to major parking generators (e.g., Spring Park, the Walnut Street business corridor), and their estimated feasibility based upon the properties' current ownership status (*note: Projects A and C will require the acquisition of private property*).

As Downtown Green Cove Springs further develops and the projects identified within Phases 1, 2, and 3 of this Master Plan continue to be implemented, the City should remain vigilant of the Study Area's changing parking demands before moving forward with additional parking improvements (particularly if they would hinder walkability within the Study Area or fail to consider alternative modes of travel, such as bikes, scooters, transit, ride-sharing apps, etc.). However, if the demand for vehicular parking clearly escalates within the Study Area to such a degree that it effectively discourages further private sector investment, two potential locations for structured parking have been identified in Phase 3.

Phase 1 Proposed Parking Improvements (Est.)

Parking Type & Location		EXISTING Spaces	PROPOSED Spaces	Net Change
A	<i>Mid-Block Palmer Street Parking Lot (Between Magnolia & St. Johns Ave.)</i>	18 spaces (60°)	48 spaces (90°)	30 spaces
B	<i>Walnut Street On-Street Parking (East of Magnolia Ave.)</i>	22 spaces (30° & 60°)	41 spaces (30° & 90°)	19 spaces
C	<i>Palmetto Ave. & Spring St. Intersection Parking Lot (Northeast Quadrant)</i>	22 spaces (90°)	60 spaces (90°)	38 spaces
D	<i>Magnolia Ave. Festival Street Parking (Between Walnut & Spring Street)</i>	0 spaces	29 spaces (90° & Parallel)	29 spaces
E	<i>Magnolia Ave. On-Street Parking (Between Spring & Ferris St.)</i>	0 spaces	21 spaces (Parallel)	21 spaces
F	<i>City Hall Off-Street Parking (See City Hall Park Project)</i>	26 spaces (45° & 90°)	12 spaces (45°)	-14 spaces
G	<i>Walnut Street On-Street Parking (Between Orange Ave. and Palmetto Ave.)</i>	20 spaces (Parallel)	10 spaces (Parallel)	-10 spaces
			Total Increase	113 spaces



PHASE 1 PARKING

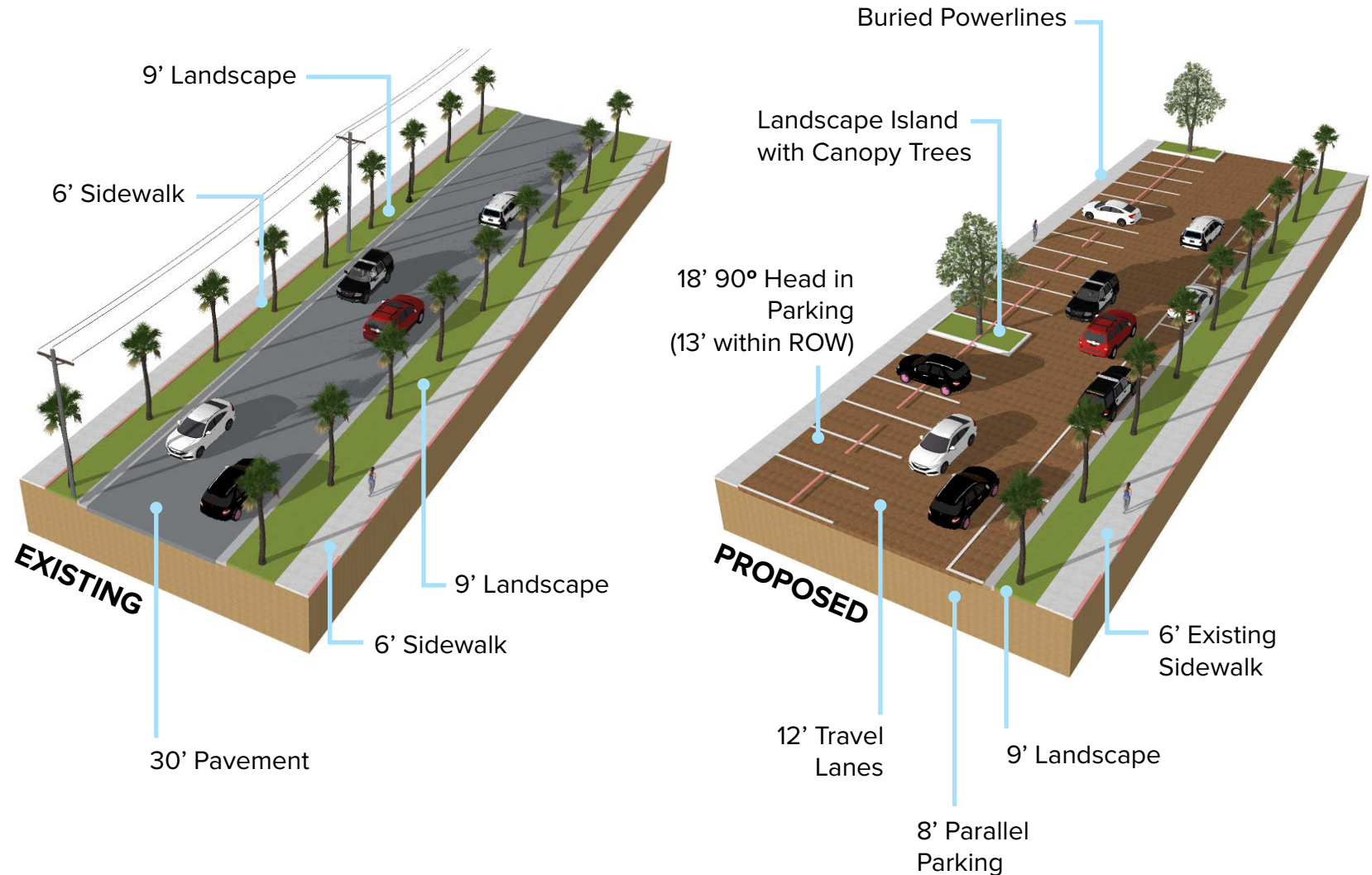
10. Magnolia Avenue - Festival Street

Magnolia Avenue is a north-south local collector which acts as Springs Park's western-most boundary. Today, this 52-foot right-of-way features two lanes of travel with no opportunities for on-street parking—indicating to drivers that the corridor (and the buildings and amenities which line the roadway) is something to travel through rather than a destination in of itself.

As such, this Plan proposes to transition a critical portion of Magnolia Avenue located between Walnut and Spring Street into a 'festival street', which are roadway segments designed to allow for frequent and temporary closures of vehicular traffic for pedestrian-oriented events and activities. By implementing this project, the City could effectively expand the size of Spring Park and thus, increase the capacity and programming for Downtown events such as Food Truck Friday and 3rd Saturday Market in the Park.

As shown on the PROPOSED typical street section, the conversion of Magnolia Avenue into a festival street would render the sidewalk flush with the street, install landscape treatments, equip the roadway with removable bollards, underground utilities (as part of the City's CIP), and provide both angled and parallel parking to increase the supply of parking within the Study Area.

MAGNOLIA AVENUE - Festival Street (Looking North) 60' R.O.W. with 90° & Parallel Parking





ENHANCED FOOD TRUCK PARK



FLOWER BEDS



ADDITIONAL PARKING



REMOVABLE BOLLARDS

12. Design and Construct City Hall Park

City Hall, with its architectural integrity and prominent location, serves as an important and compelling structure within Downtown Green Cove Springs. Unfortunately, the surface parking spaces along the front of the building undermine the property's full potential as a welcoming civic gateway.

The proposed design seeks to relocate parking spaces to the rear of the building and redevelop the front of City Hall as a small park/ plaza. This design would seek to reinforce the improvements to the US 17/Walnut Street intersection; improving the pedestrian experience and accentuating a sense of arrival into Downtown Green Cove Springs.

