



City of Los Altos  
**DOWNTOWN VISION**

DOWNTOWN  
VISION PLAN

ADOPTED AUGUST 28, 2018





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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1 INTRODUCTION ..... 1

2 CHANGING NATURE OF DOWNTOWNS AND ECONOMICS ..... 9

3 THE COMMUNITY’S VISION ..... 13

4 LAND USE ..... 17

5 BUILT ENVIRONMENT ..... 25

6 PUBLIC SPACES ..... 37

7 CIRCULATION AND PARKING ..... 47

8 SUSTAINABILITY ..... 59

9 IMPLEMENTATION ..... 61

10 VISION POSTER..... 65

11 APPENDIX ..... 69

    A. ECONOMIC AND FISCAL EVALUATION

    B. COMMUNITY OUTREACH SUMMARIES



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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# 1 - INTRODUCTION



## INTRODUCTION

The City of Los Altos initiated the preparation of a Downtown Vision Plan (Vision Plan) to help shape the future of Downtown Los Altos. The Vision Plan effort is a community based, visioning and guidance tool that was developed through a robust community engagement process.

The purpose of the Vision Plan is to provide the Los Altos community with a vision for the future of the Downtown triangle to guide growth and development over the next 20 years. This Vision Plan acts as the guiding document for future development of the Downtown, maintaining the community’s history, values, and desired intensity of development, while also allowing for incremental change intended to facilitate a unique, vibrant village that exemplifies the exceptional character and qualities of Los Altos.



*Main Street today, looking east.*

## DOWNTOWN VISION PLAN AREA

The Vision Plan Area, commonly known as the Downtown Triangle, encompasses nearly 70 acres and is bound on the north by Edith Avenue, to the east by San Antonio Road, to the west by the Foothill Expressway, and on the south where San Antonio Road and the Foothill Expressway meet. Figures 1 and 2 shows the location of the Vision Plan area and its location within the City of Los Altos in proximity to adjacent cities.



Figure 1: Vision Plan Area, Regional Location



Figure 2: Downtown Vision Plan Area



## HISTORY OF THE DOWNTOWN

The history of Downtown Los Altos is one that is closely tied to the extension of the Southern Pacific Railroad down the San Francisco Peninsula at the turn of the 20th Century. Located in close proximity to the City of San Jose and Stanford University and coupled with the area's natural beauty, the Downtown area soon became a desirable place to live and, by 1911, contained a number of homes and offices. The first business on Main Street was Eschenbruechers Hardware Store located at 316 Main Street, which later housed the town's Post office. In 1909, the two-story Shoup Building was completed at the corner of Main and Second Streets. One of the most significant buildings in Downtown is the Los Altos Railroad Station, located at 288 First Street. Built in 1913 for the Southern Pacific, the railroad was the driving force for development of the City of Los

Altos. By the 1950's through 1960's, Downtown Los Altos continued to evolve and became a full service Downtown, providing for the needs of the community and surrounding areas.

Many of these original buildings are still in existence today, some identified on the City's Historic Resources Inventory, and others eligible for the National Register. These buildings help to accentuate the unique character of Downtown Los Altos and should act as an inspiration to inform future development.



*The Los Altos Railroad Station built in 1913, a Designated City Landmark.*



## OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS

A number of other planning efforts and documents contribute to the ongoing evolution and development of Downtown Los Altos.

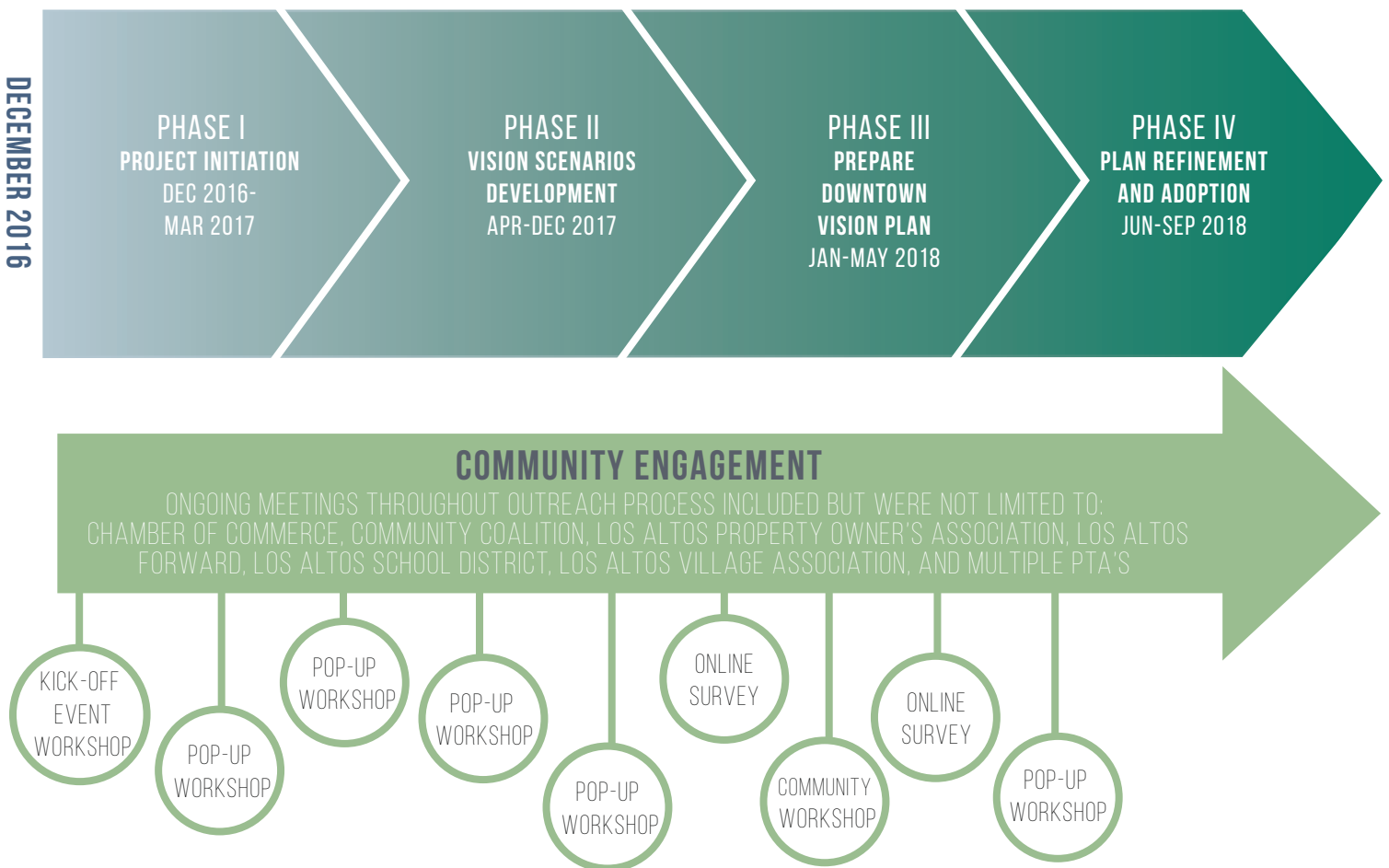
- General Plan (2002);
- Zoning Ordinance (as of 2018);
- Affordable Housing Ordinance (2017);
- Climate Action Plan (2013);
- Downtown Design Plan (1992, rev. 2009);
- Downtown Design Guidelines (2009);
- Downtown Land Use and Economic Revitalization Plans (2005);
- Downtown Opportunity Study (2009);
- Downtown Buildings Committee Report (2016); and
- Downtown Parking Management Plan (2013).



*Two-story Shoup Building completed in 1909, with the old Eschenbruecher Hardware Store building to the left (green awning).*

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

This Vision Plan reflects the community’s preferred vision for the future of Downtown Los Altos. The community’s preferred vision evolved after an extensive outreach process that included a broad spectrum of community engagement opportunities including stakeholder meetings, community group meetings, community workshops, pop-up workshops at community functions, committee meetings, and City Council meetings. In addition to in-person meetings, the community was contacted through mailed and emailed postcards, a project website was prepared and two online questionnaires were conducted at key stages of the community engagement process. The multiple platforms provided residents and stakeholders with alternative methods of providing input on their vision for the future of Downtown and ensured that all who wanted to engage in the process were given the opportunity. In total, approximately 30 events and two online questionnaires were undertaken during the community engagement process.



Timeline graphic displaying outreach process.

Many key themes were identified by the community that are represented in the preferred vision plan and the four alternative scenarios leading to the preferred plan. The following highlights the attributes that the community was collectively most supportive of:

*Supported Key Attributes:*

- Preserve the existing unique character of Downtown Los Altos;
- Increase the activity and vitality of Downtown during the day and evening hours;
- Encourage a variety of local dining opportunities including a greater variety of restaurants and outdoor dining;
- Include plazas that provide a central area for the community to congregate, places to provide activities for youth, and outdoor dining;
- Strengthen the pedestrian-friendly and walkability of Downtown with wider sidewalks, shared streets, activity nodes and paseos and encourages foot traffic that can support local business;
- Incorporate opportunities for a live theater, hotel, office, affordable housing, and mixed use with residential;
- Enhance bicycle safety and access to and through the Downtown area;
- Highlight entry features into the Downtown area with public art;
- Strengthen pedestrian connection to the Civic Center, and possibly to Lincoln Park, with a pedestrian overcrossing; and
- Increase parking access and efficiency in Downtown through signage and conveniently placed parking areas, above ground and below ground parking structures.



*Los Altos farmers market pop-up workshop.*



*Los Altos Community Center workshop.*



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## 2 - CHANGING NATURE OF DOWNTOWNS AND ECONOMICS



# CHANGING NATURE OF DOWNTOWNS AND ECONOMICS

Downtowns at their very essence are the heart of any community. In years past, downtowns have provided a centralized location for meeting a variety of community needs and services, such as working, shopping, dining, entertainment and, in some cases, living. Downtown Los Altos has served as the centralized location for meeting the needs of the Los Altos community and that of the nearby Town of Los Altos Hills since as early as the 1950s. However, in more recent years, the nature of downtowns across the state have been evolving due in part to ongoing macroeconomic challenges as well as development policy restrictions at the local level. Some of these challenges and restrictions include:

- Growing competition between municipalities to attract businesses;
- Rise of e-commerce sales reducing the need for brick and mortar stores;
- Lack of building flexibility in older building stock desired by contemporary retail tenants; and
- More prescriptive zoning and parking regulations inhibiting incremental change.

This Vision Plan seeks to address these evolving challenges and restrictions by:

- Enhancing sense of place to create a local destination that is attractive for both residents and businesses;
- Introducing alternative land uses and identifying opportunity sites to stimulate new activity;
- Recommending modifications to the built environment that allows for greater flexibility of tenants; and
- Providing more contemporary land use and parking recommendations that allows for incremental change.



*A centralized location in Downtown Los Altos, at the Main and Second Street intersection.*



### ECONOMICS

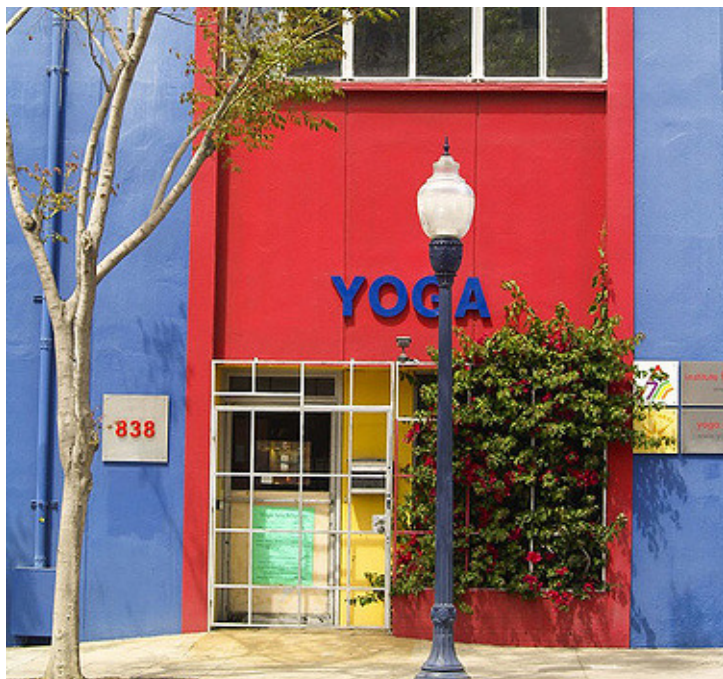
As part of the Vision Plan effort, an economic and fiscal evaluation was conducted to determine an Economic Vitality Strategy appropriate for Downtown Los Altos into the future. This strategy provided the underlying foundation for the Vision Scenario Alternatives that were developed, shared with the community, and ultimately resulted in this Vision Plan.

The following summarized policy recommendations were utilized as part of the Vision Plan process and carried forward within this document based on feedback received from the community. These recommendations are intended to encourage smaller scale incremental change that allows Downtown Los Altos to modernize while keeping the essence of its village character as it continues to evolve.

These include:

- Allowing contemporary service uses (e.g., fitness studios and day spas, yoga and tai chi studios, martial arts and kinder gyms, wine bars, and beer gardens) in the Downtown core;
- Updating parking requirements;
- Incentivizing Specific Uses with reduced parking requirements;
- Establishing an in-lieu parking fee;
- Enhancing parking management; and
- Modifying building heights.

These policy recommendations are further detailed and explained within Chapter 5, Land Use, and Chapter 6, Circulation and Parking. The full version of the Economic and Fiscal Evaluation can be found within the Appendix of this document.



*Studios and gyms are favorable for downtowns and contribute to an active, healthy community.*



*The Funk Zone in Santa Barbara, CA allows more contemporary uses, like the wine bar shown above, and beer gardens.*

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### 3 - THE COMMUNITY'S VISION



## THE COMMUNITY'S VISION

### DOWNTOWN VISION STATEMENT

Looking into the future, Downtown Los Altos continues to embody the village character long enjoyed by the community while the economic vitality of its businesses has flourished. As the center of the City, Downtown has evolved into a greater focal point of activity, providing new living, working, and entertainment options for all age and income segments of the community. The centrally-located public plaza between Main and State Streets is the new anchor of Downtown, providing a venue for accommodating events, outdoor dining, and other community activities. Whether traveling to Downtown by walking, bicycling, or a range of future vehicles, visibility and access has been improved through enhanced signage, wider sidewalks, landscape improvements, and bicycle connectivity on 2nd and 3rd Streets. In essence, Downtown Los Altos has become a community destination, while maintaining its roots as a nostalgic village nestled at the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains.

### VISION ELEMENTS

The City of Los Altos is committed to a community-focused, economically viable, and village-scaled Downtown through:

- **Maintaining the village character** unique to Los Altos while also allowing small, incremental change through implementation of complementary land use and parking policies
- **Enhancing economic vitality** through expanded dining, shopping, service, office, hospitality, and residential uses accessible to the entire community
- **Developing adequate parking facilities** and implementing parking strategies that continue to meet the current and future parking needs of businesses, residents, and visitors
- **Utilizing existing parking plazas** in a manner that enhances the village character while also meeting the working, living, entertainment, and hospitality desires of the community
- **Enhancing safety and connectivity** to the adjacent Civic Center, Lincoln Park, and surrounding neighborhoods through targeted multi-modal transportation forms for pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobiles
- **Enlivening the streetscape character** by providing new opportunities for wider sidewalks, outdoor dining, seating, landscaping, public art, paseos, and activity nodes
- **Creating a new, centrally-located public plaza(s)** to enhance the sense of place and create a hub of activity for community events, informal activities, and outdoor dining
- **Expanding the variety of residential housing types** to meet the current and future needs of all residents of Los Altos



Figure 3: Downtown Vision Plan



Figure 3 demonstrates the intent of the Downtown Vision Statement and illustrates key concepts, such as the Downtown Plaza, shared streets, streetscape enhancements, and an improved multimodal circulation network. Refer to Chapter 10 for the complete Vision Poster.

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# CHICO'S



4 - LAND USE

## LAND USE

### DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS

This Vision Plan views the Downtown area as a unified whole. However, during the due diligence and community outreach process, a number of separate areas within the Downtown area began to emerge based on similar land use characteristics and the feedback received. These separate areas, or districts, include Main and State Streets, First Street, San Antonio Road, and Edith Avenue. Figure 4 identifies the location of the districts within the Vision Plan Area.



Figure 4: Vision Plan Area





Main Street looking northwest.

### MAIN AND STATE STREET DISTRICT

The Main and State Street District continues to be the focal point of Downtown activity with a balanced mix of service, office, retail, restaurant, and boutique hotel uses.

*Envisioned attributes include:*

- Primary retail, restaurant, and entertainment destination;
- Opportunity for residential and office above retail;
- New Downtown Plaza(s) act as a focal point;
- Enhanced pedestrian-oriented streetscapes with street trees, landscaping, benches, streetlights, bicycle racks, and activity nodes;
- Outdoor dining opportunities within “Downtown Dining Hub”, Downtown Plaza(s), and paseos; and
- Parking provided on-street or in lots or structures directly adjacent to District.



First Street looking north.

### FIRST STREET DISTRICT

The First Street District acts as an extension of the Main and State Street District, integrating a variety and mix of uses more focused on service, office, and residential. Additional building setbacks and streetscape improvements along First Street help balance the narrower street section of First Street.

*Envisioned attributes include:*

- Variety of uses – service, office, and residential-focused with a few retail shops and restaurants;
- Enhanced intersections with accent paving, crosswalks, and landscaping;
- Signage that welcomes visitors to Downtown Los Altos and directs people to Downtown plazas and parking areas;
- Parking provided on-street or in lots or structures;
- Tree-lined streets; and
- Enhanced gateway entry elements.



3rd Street looking south.



Existing three-story, standalone residential on 2nd Street.

## SAN ANTONIO ROAD DISTRICT

The San Antonio Road District is focused on office uses with some mixed-uses and restaurants that both support and act as transitional areas to the Main and State Street District.

### *Envisioned attributes include:*

- Primary focus on office uses, with new opportunities for small tech start-up spaces with sufficient off-street parking;
- Restaurant and neighborhood-supporting uses enhance the District and act as transitional areas to Main and State Street;
- Performing arts theater, a central entertainment venue for the community;
- Additional small, boutique hotel serving local businesses and visitors;
- Plaza spaces anchor new uses and support the Main and State Street District;
- Tree-lined streets; and
- Gateway entry element.

## EDITH AVENUE DISTRICT

The Edith Avenue District continues to be focused on residential uses with some small office uses transitioning elements from the adjacent Main and State Street District.

### *Envisioned attributes include:*

- Both market-rate and affordable residential uses that support Downtown vitality;
- Neighborhood-serving uses as transitional areas to Main and State Street; and
- Tree-lined streets.

## COMMERCIAL LAND USES IN A DOWNTOWN – MAINTAINING MARKET FLEXIBILITY

As Downtown Los Altos continues to evolve, the City should be mindful of the construction and land use flexibility needed to address ongoing market trends and evolution of commercial land uses. Ensuring greater flexibility will allow for the adaptability of existing buildings, allowing new uses or tenants to occupy spaces, and will ultimately allow for the continued, long-term success of Downtown. Below are some more recent examples of building characteristics that contemporary commercial land uses demand:

- Building widths of 25 to 50 feet;
- Building depths of 40 to 50 feet; and
- Ground level plate heights of 16 to 18 feet.

The current retail storefront needs of shorter building depths create an opportunity and a challenge for some of the older buildings in Downtown that are closer to 100 feet deep. In some locations, this provides the opportunity to have two business in one building with one business fronting on Main or State Street and one business fronting a plaza. These existing longer buildings can also be divided to provide multiple business along paseos. The extra depth can also be used to access residential or office uses located above the commercial building.

Older buildings in downtown typically have lower ground-level plate heights or ceiling heights. This is a deterrent to attracting retail and restaurants to these buildings. As older buildings redevelop and remodel, raising these ceiling heights will give the downtown more flexibility to adapt to the changing market demands.



*Building design should ensure flexibility to be able to adapt to changing market demands.*



## HOUSING – MARKET RATE AND AFFORDABLE

The inclusion of additional market rate, workforce, and affordable housing units within the Downtown was supported by the broader community in order to provide a wider variety of housing options, enhance vitality, and add day and nighttime activity. Workforce housing, while not recognized by the State Affordability Law requirements, is generally targeted at those households making 160% of median area income. Parking Plaza 8 is identified as a potential affordable housing site. While there are additional housing opportunities above retail in the Main and State Street District, emphasis on new housing is likely to be focused on on private properties within the First Street District. It should be acknowledged that in certain portions of the Downtown area, particularly the Main and State Street District, the construction of affordable housing units is unlikely due to the fragmented ownership pattern, small lots, and lack of ability to provide on-site parking for a project. If housing units were developed within the First Street District, it is likely they would be market rate units due to the high cost of construction and would be built to conform with the Zoning Ordinance requirements in place at that time. To encourage construction of a greater variety of housing options within the Downtown, the City should consider encouraging alternative design strategies, such as workforce housing (affordable by design) and/or minimum unit sizing.



*Example of affordable housing in a Downtown setting in Santa Barbara, CA.*

## OPPORTUNITY SITES

Early on in the visioning process, the existing parking plazas were identified as opportunity sites that could accommodate new development within Downtown. These opportunity sites have the potential to be the catalysts for enhancing the overall economic vitality and vibrancy of Downtown. The City is well-positioned to help spur reinvestment and attract key uses to the Downtown by utilizing these city owned parking plazas. Figure 5 identifies those parking plazas envisioned as opportunity sites.

- Affordable Housing:* Parking Plaza 8 is identified as an ideal site to introduce new affordable housing within Downtown. Through a public-private partnership, this new housing would infuse the Downtown with additional residents to add to and enhance vitality and day/nighttime activity.
- Hospitality:* A new hotel use is identified for Parking Plaza 2. In addition to the existing hotel Downtown, this new hotel could provide a wide range of benefits to the community including enhanced vitality, increased nighttime activity, and provide additional revenue to the City.
- Entertainment:* A live theater is identified on Parking Plaza 2. This use would be both a daytime and evening draw from the community and elsewhere that would support complementary businesses, such as pre-event dining.
- Office:* New office uses are identified for Parking Plazas 1, 3, and 7. Offices would enhance and increase local jobs, enhance the daytime activity downtown, and further support other local businesses in the area. Office could also help to fund fair share portions of new parking facilities.
- Parking Consolidation:* New parking facilities were are identified on Parking Plaza 1-3 and 7-8. Consolidating surface parking into above and below ground structures is a key component to balancing the current and future parking needs of Downtown.
- Parking Plaza 9:* Partial City ownership of Parking Plaza 9 could provide an opportunity for a public-private partnership for new development in support of this Vision Plan.

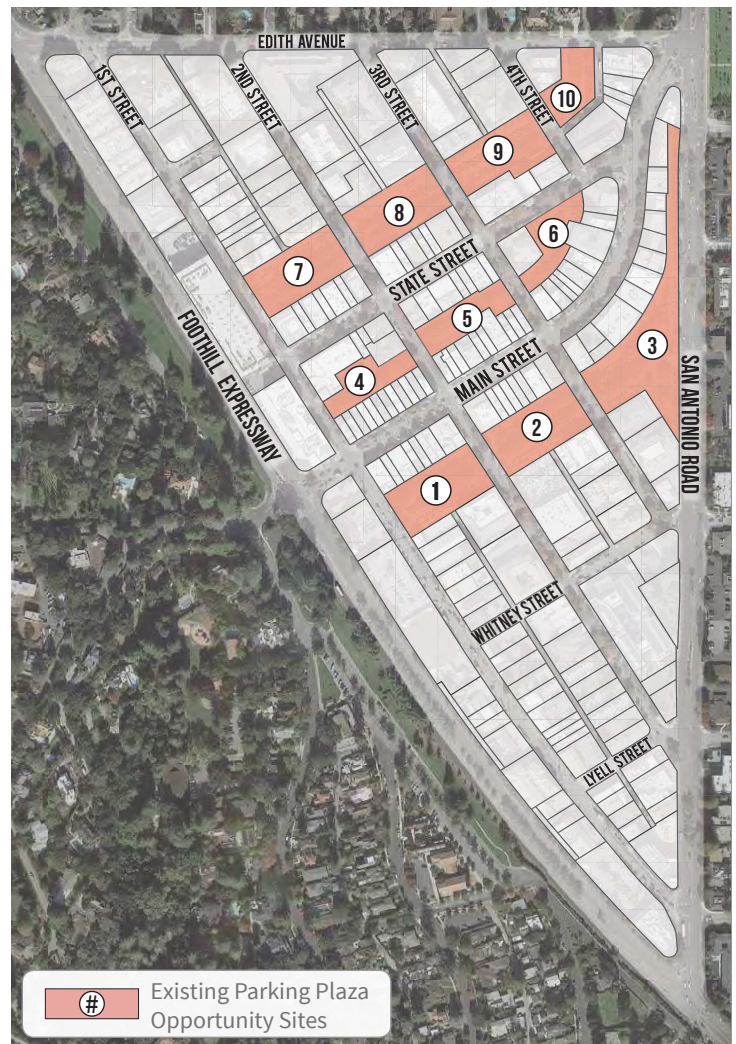


Figure 5: Existing Parking Plaza Opportunity Sites

## LAND USE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following Land Use Policy Recommendations support the enhancement of vitality within the Downtown area. Amendments to the City’s existing Zoning Ordinance and the General Plan, or the creation of a detailed plan, like a Comprehensive or Specific Plan, would be required to implement these Land Use Policy Recommendations.

1. Allowing Contemporary Service Uses on Main and State Streets such as:
  - Fitness studios and day spas;
  - Yoga and Tai Chi studios;
  - Martial arts and kinder gyms;
  - Wine bars and beer gardens;
  - Allow office and/or residential lobby space on the ground floor with the exception of the first 40 feet in depth for the current retail/restaurant spaces with frontage on Main and State Streets; and
  - Prohibit office uses for frontage on the Downtown Central Plaza(s).
2. Modify/Maintain Building Height Allowances
  - Allow up to three (3) stories, or 40- to 45-feet, with setback at 3rd Floor along San Antonio Road and First Street Districts (see Chapter 5); and
  - Maintain current height allowances within the Main and State Streets and Edith Avenue Districts.





## 5 - BUILT ENVIRONMENT

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Downtown's built environment exudes an eclectic village character and unique massing and form that contributes to the timelessness and charm of the area. Preserving this distinctive identity is critical to ensure the continual attraction of residents, visitors, and businesses. Similar to the Downtown Buildings Committee Report findings, a combination of factors contribute to the distinctive massing and form of Downtown. For example, some of the downtown features unique building forms and lot sizes attributed to small parcels laid out prior to World War I. These older building forms and lot sizes provide unique attributes to the overall Downtown village character. Examples of methods for new development to embrace the existing, eclectic, and unique massing and form of Downtown include:

- Celebrating existing architectural history through incorporation of cohesive yet varying architectural styles with appropriate detailing;
- Reflecting similar variety, patterns, and arrangements of existing buildings;
- Breaking up larger buildings into smaller segments or forms;
- Relating upper stories to the street front;
- Varying roof parapet heights and detailing;
- Creating storefronts that are scaled to the pedestrian; and
- Diversifying entries through vestibules, recesses, signage, and landscaping.



*Figure 6: Example of existing, eclectic, and unique massing and form of Downtown.*

**DESIGN**

The community of Los Altos values clearly-defined and individual architectural styles for new development within the Downtown area. Boxy architecture, blank walls, minimal articulation, lack of color, and low-quality materials are all elements of concern heard from the community. The City should ensure that, as new development or remodels are proposed within the Downtown area, a mix of architectural styles with quality detailing and articulation are provided, as noted in the Downtown Buildings Committee Report. The existing, robust Design Review process based on the City’s Downtown Design Guidelines, provides guidance and direction to projects, focusing on architectural integrity, pedestrian scale, high-quality materials, and generous landscaping. To ensure new development and remodels are consistent with the desired level of design quality, the City should continue to utilize the existing Design Review process, but should ensure that both the existing Downtown Design Guidelines and Design Review process are adequately capturing the quality of development desired by the community. In instances where larger projects or projects on prominent sites are proposed, the City could consider utilizing a design firm tasked specifically to make recommendations on a development proposal in support of the Design Review process.



*Downtown building facades, with windows and architectural details create pedestrian scale.*



*Existing residential development incorporates setbacks, articulation, and features that enhance the overall design.*



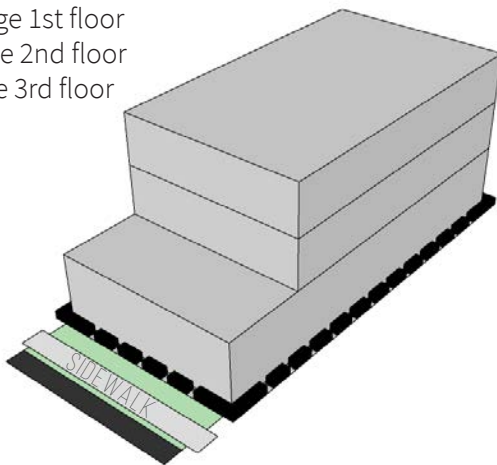
## SCALE

Future development within Downtown should respect its existing character and scale. As new development occurs within Downtown, the ground level of a building should provide a strong pedestrian scale, utilizing quality materials, fenestration, color, and other elements of a clearly-defined architectural style. Moreover, massing of buildings needs to be articulated horizontally to maintain the pattern of 25 to 50-foot building widths historically found Downtown. Where new development occurs on wider lots, the street facing façade should be articulated and massed to reflect this historical pattern. In instances where a multi-story building is proposed, buildings should be designed and massed to minimize the appearance of upper stories. This can be accomplished with building articulation or setbacks/massing, balconies, architectural elements, and use of materials and colors. The existing Downtown Design Guidelines and design findings require these elements to approve any project proposed within the Downtown.

## FLOOR AREA RATIO

In areas of Downtown, such as the First Street or San Antonio Road Districts, use of a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in conjunction with height limitations, setbacks/massing, and articulation, may be an additional tool to ensure appropriate new development. Requiring a certain FAR in these Districts would limit the ultimate square footage of any new development. However, the City could allow for additional FAR coverage as an incentive if the development provided certain public benefits. Examples of public benefits could include publicly accessible open space or off-site public realm improvements, among others.

100% coverage 1st floor  
75% coverage 2nd floor  
75% coverage 3rd floor



100% coverage 1st floor  
100% coverage 2nd floor  
50% coverage 3rd floor

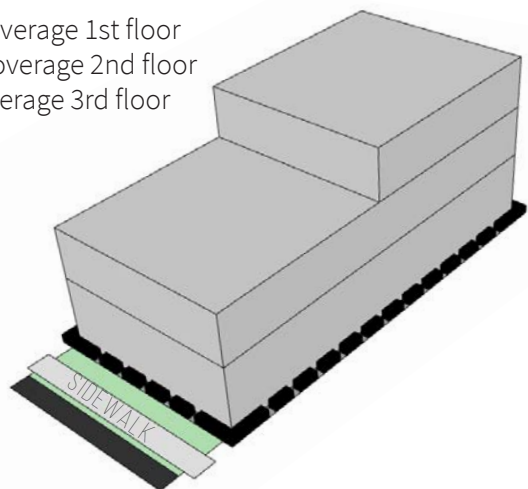


Figure 7: Examples of conceptual 2.5 FAR configurations.



*(Before) Existing development at Main Street and Second Street.*



*(After) Conceptual development that could occur on Main Street, maintaining Downtown character and scale.*

## HEIGHT

The community was most divided on the topic of building heights along Main and State Street. There was however, ample support to limit the building height in the First Street District, Edith District, and San Antonio District to a maximum of three stories. In both the First Street and San Antonio Districts, the third story would be required to step back from the second story. The Vision Plan recommends adjusting the height requirements in these districts to reflect current industry height standards for office, hotel, residential, and mixed-use buildings for a three-story structure:

### *First Street District and San Antonio District*

- Standalone Residential: Maximum of 40 feet
- Standalone Office or Hotel: Maximum of 45 feet
- Mixed-Use: Maximum of 45 feet

### *Edith District*

- Standalone Residential: Maximum of 40 feet

On Main and State Streets the community preferences were split primarily between 2-story and 3-story building height maximums. There were also a few community members wanting to allow higher 4-story buildings. The Vision Plan recommends limiting the building height on Main and State Street to a maximum of two stories and that height requirements be adjusted to reflect the current industry standards for two story buildings:

### *Main and State Street District*

- Mixed-Use: Maximum of 35 feet

The City may want to consider allowing for increased building height within the Main and State Street District in the future in instances where a property owner chooses to consolidate multiple parcels.

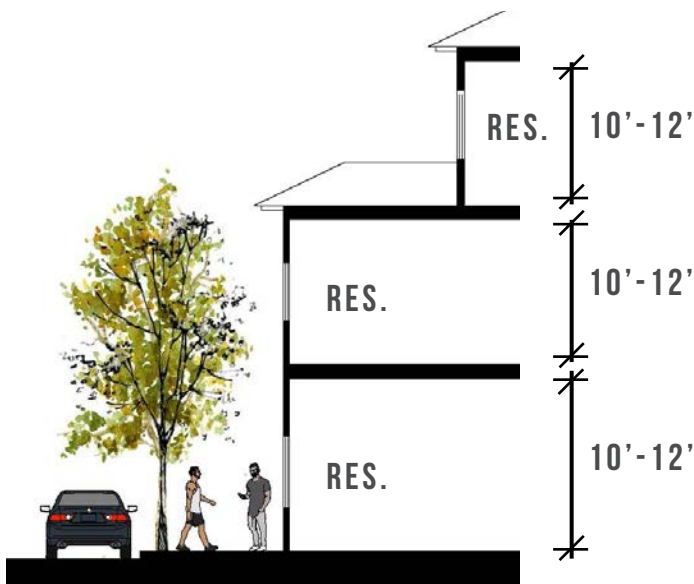


Figure 8: Example of standalone residential building that could occur on First Street or San Antonio Road Districts.

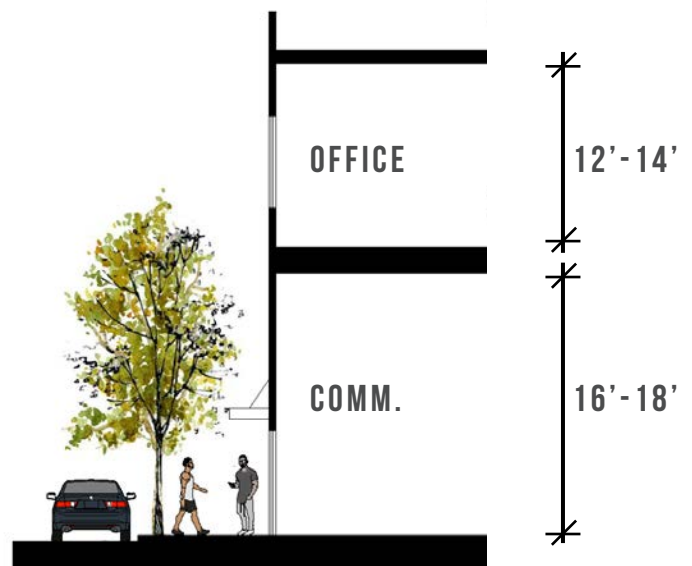


Figure 9: Example of mixed-use building that could occur on State or Main Street.



## SETBACKS

The City currently regulates and will continue to regulate building setbacks through the Zoning Ordinance. Current Zoning regulations along Main and State Streets promote buildings being located at the back of the sidewalk, or the start of the public realm. This is a typical application of front yard setbacks within a downtown environment, creating a continuous rhythm and cadence to the street, and should be continued forward by the City.

The First Street right-of-way is relatively narrow and varies significantly from Edith Avenue in the north, to San Antonio Road in the south. Moreover, the First Street corridor is currently split across two zoning districts, one of which allows buildings to be built with no setback. This variation in right-of-way and the division between zoning districts has created a lack of cohesion along this thoroughfare, with many members of the community commenting on the feeling of being in a ‘canyon’ for a portion of the street north of Main Street. Going forward, it is recommended the City consider modifying the Zoning Ordinance to create a uniform 10-foot setback requirement along First Street that will allow for enhanced landscaping and outdoor dining opportunities and will ultimately create a greater feeling of openness along First Street.

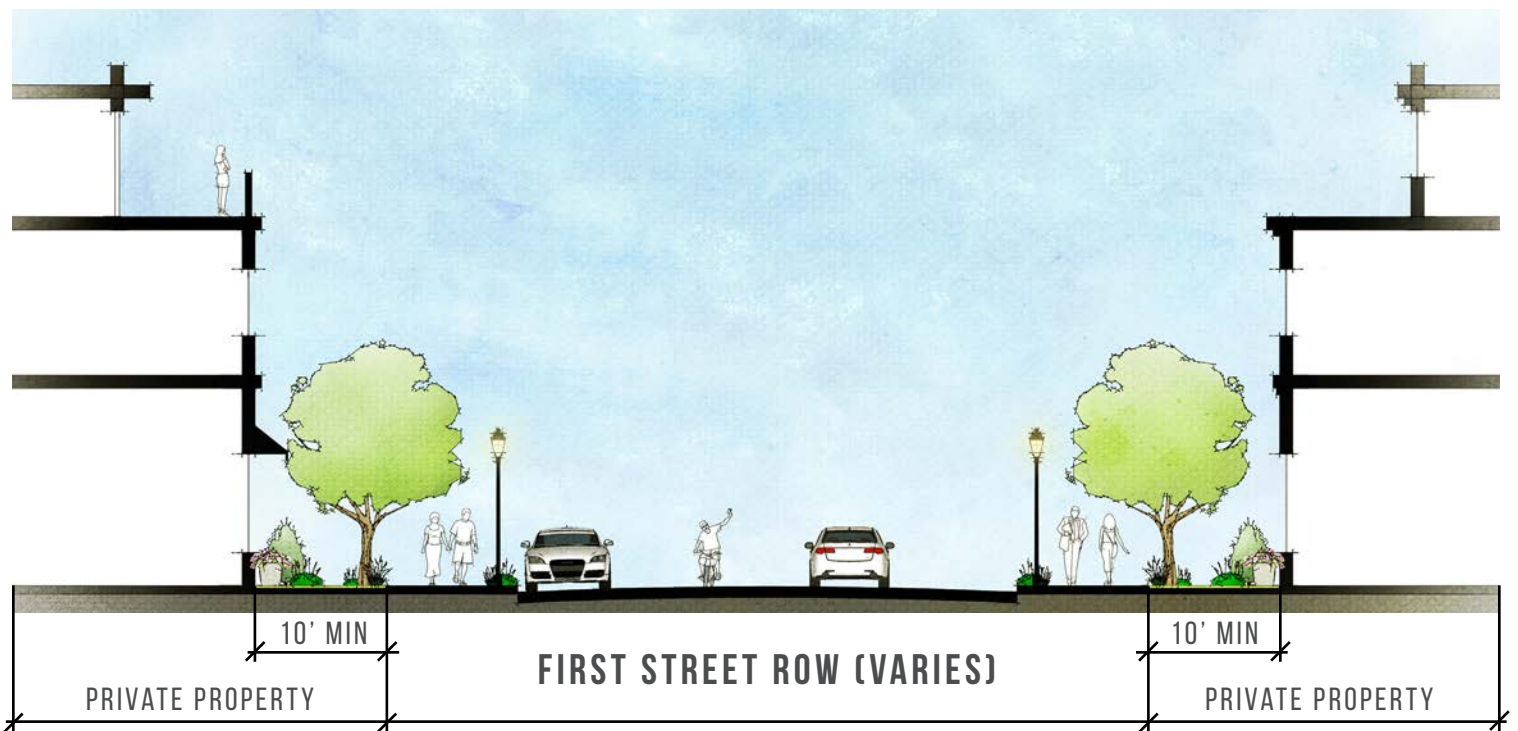


Figure 10: Conceptual Setbacks Along First Street

## QUALITY PLACEMAKING

Placemaking is vital to how today’s downtowns function. Attracting people to Downtown Los Altos needs to include opportunities to interact and socialize with neighbors, to recreate and dine, as well as shop. The following elements will help create a sense of place and community destination in Downtown.

### ENTRY FEATURES

Primary and secondary entries were confirmed and continued forward from previous planning documents at the following intersections within Downtown:

#### *Primary Entries*

- Main Street - between Foothill Expressway and First Street
- Main Street/San Antonio Road

#### *Secondary Entries*

- First Street/Edith Avenue
- First Street/San Antonio Road
- Parking Plaza 3/San Antonio Road

Both primary and secondary entries should be enhanced through the use of intersection treatments, such as paving materials and signage, as well as unique accent landscaping to denote these entry points into the Downtown. For the primary entries, use of public art should also be integrated to clearly define and identify these prominent Downtown entries.



*Existing Primary Entry to Downtown at Main Street, San Antonio Road, and Edith Avenue intersection.*



*Existing Primary Entry to Downtown at Main Street and the Foothill Expressway intersection, looking towards First Street.*

**“DOWNTOWN DINING HUB”**

The “Downtown Dining Hub” was envisioned as a central activity and dining hub within the Downtown located between 2nd and 3rd Streets and on Main and State Streets as seen in Figure 8. This would include properties facing the streets and facing the central plaza space. To this end, the City should work with interested local businesses to integrate outdoor dining parklets along the street frontage of a business within these areas. In select locations, parklets would expand the sidewalk into the adjacent parking spaces. Outdoor dining could also be provided on the adjacent central plaza. Restaurants and cafés could provide outdoor seating and dining in the parklets or on the plaza without having to provide additional parking. This would incentivize restaurants to locate in this area of town and help attract the additional dining options that are desired by the community.

To ensure ongoing delivery and service to these businesses, the City should consider providing rideshare (Uber/Lyft) drop-off points and identify key areas within the “Downtown Dining Hub” that would continue to allow for these vehicular functions to occur, as discussed further in Chapter 7.

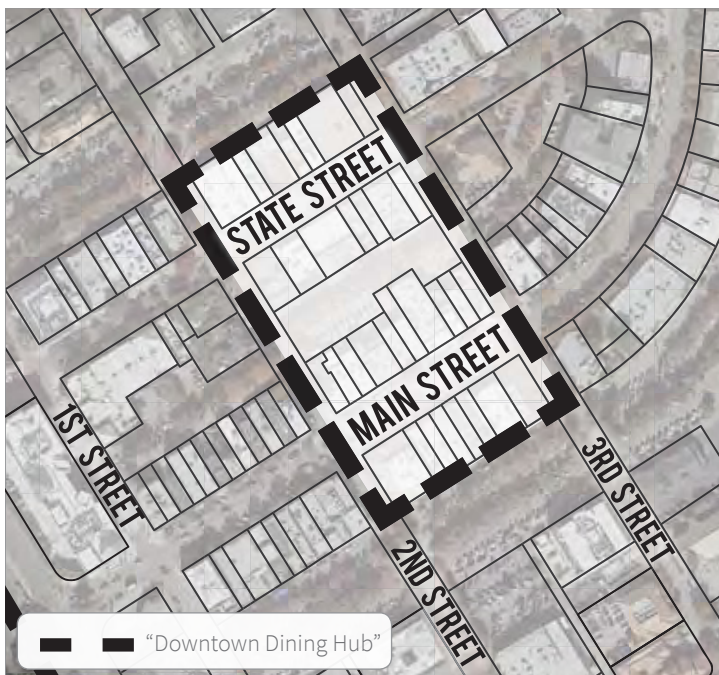


Figure 11: “Downtown Dining Hub” Area



Outdoor dining and seating areas create a vibrant street character.



### FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS AND RENOVATION

Existing buildings located on the south/southeast side of Main Street, currently backing onto San Antonio Road, were identified as having the potential to be enhanced through facade improvements to the existing buildings fronting San Antonio Road. This concept was supported to provide a greater Downtown presence along San Antonio Road in conjunction with the public plaza and pedestrian overcrossing connecting to the Civic Center area. Where feasible, the City should support the ongoing enhancement of these existing buildings facing San Antonio Road, allowing for current businesses to have two-sided building entries, or allow for the creation of two separate business spaces that would be more in keeping with contemporary tenant demands.

### PASEO NETWORK

Carried forward from past planning efforts, a centralized network of paseos is intended to foster an integrated pedestrian network through the Main and State Street District while also helping to create a greater sense of place. Paseos could include unique paving, landscaping, lighting, and public art to enhance the Downtown character. The locations of these paseos are generally indicated on the vision plan, but could be located anywhere along the block where there are interested property owners. Paseos would give properties the opportunity to have business frontage along the paseo, as well as street frontage and would strengthen connections between parking facilities and activity areas, to Main and State Streets.



*Existing facades along San Antonio Road should be improved to enhance Downtown's visibility.*



*Pedestrian paseo with business frontage, outdoor dining, and accent paving.*

### ACTIVITY NODES

Activity nodes are included to support unique day and night-time activities within the Downtown area and enhance vibrancy and sense of place. Rather than be located throughout Downtown, placement of activity nodes should be focused on the Main and State Street area. Activity nodes could include small event spaces for live music, art exhibition, fire pits, or other spaces for interactive activities.

### PUBLIC ART

Public art located at primary downtown entries and throughout Downtown was supported by the community. As consideration of public art occurs in the future, the City should consider art that is representative of the history and character of the community. Public art within Downtown could be expressed in the form of mosaics, sculptures, bicycle racks, interactive pieces, murals, or other art forms.

Interactive public art is a great way to provide playful opportunities for children and adults alike to engage in a downtown experience. Whether subtle or overt, interactive art can enhance the social realm of built environments and create impromptu landmarks. Examples of interactive, whimsical art installations could include those that exude sound, light, water, or other interactive, sensory opportunities. The City should explore incorporating interactive public art throughout the Main and State Streets area of Downtown to enhance the overall public realm experience and provide another feature for all ages to enjoy.



*Activity node with fire pit and event space.*



*Downtown bicycle racks as forms of public art.*



*An example of an interactive musical art installation complementing a shared public space.*

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# 6 - PUBLIC SPACES



# PUBLIC SPACES

## DOWNTOWN CENTRAL PLAZA SHORT-TERM VISION

The Downtown Central Plaza Short-Term Vision recognizes the Long-Term Plaza Vision as a multi-part undertaking and seeks to address the community’s more immediate vision for a centrally-located, public outdoor space in Downtown Los Altos. As shown in Figure 12, the Short-Term Vision maintains Parking Plazas 4 and 6 for public parking while focusing initial plaza enhancement efforts on Parking Plaza 5. Enhancements for Parking Plaza 5 would create a “community living room” type environment that would include outdoor dining, public seating, pockets of landscaping, play structure(s), and event space(s) that would be flexible to allow for both informal and formal events to occur on an ongoing basis. In conjunction with the Downtown Central Plaza Short-Term Vision, additional parking opportunities would need to be provided elsewhere in the immediate vicinity to offset the loss of parking, such as a parking structure on Parking Plaza 2 or 3, between San Antonio Road and 2nd Street, and/or parking restriping in existing lots. This is further discussed in Chapter 7, Circulation and Parking.

**LEGEND**

- ① PLAZA ENTRY WITH FOOD TRUCK PULL-IN
- ② PLAZA PROMENADE
- ③ IMPROVED STOREFRONTS ON PLAZA
- ④ CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA
- ⑤ OUTDOOR DINING
- ⑥ ENHANCED PAVING AND LANDSCAPING
- ⑦ INFORMAL EVENT SPACE AREA
- ⑧ PERFORMANCE STAGE WITH SEATING AREA
- ⑨ PUBLIC ART

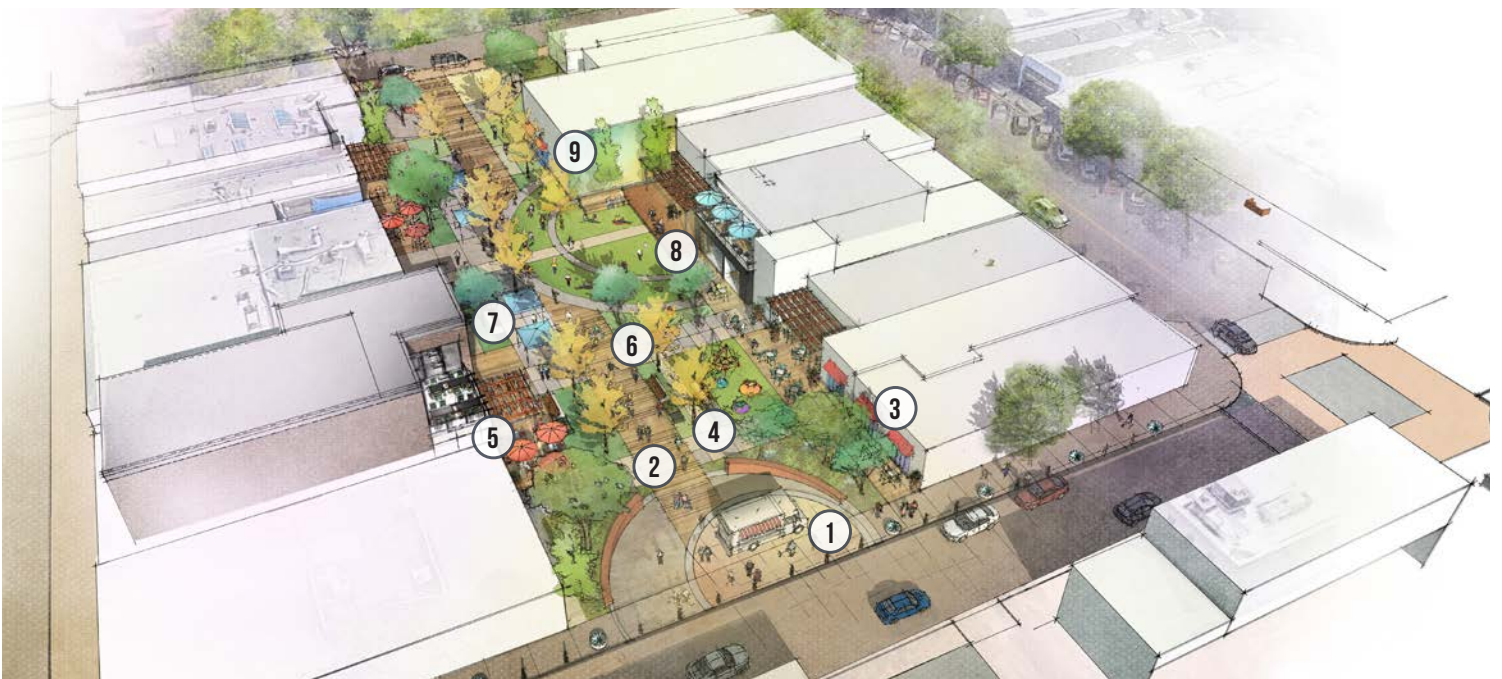


Figure 12: Birdseye Rendering of Downtown Central Plaza Short-Term Vision - Between 2nd and 3rd Street on Parking Plaza 5



*(Before) Existing Parking Plaza 5, looking northeast toward 3rd Street.*



*(After) Conceptual Downtown Central Plaza Short-Term Vision at ground level.*



## DOWNTOWN PLAZA LONG-TERM VISION

The long-term vision for the Downtown Plaza is to extend the “community living room” to also include existing Parking Plazas 4 and 6. The central public outdoor space would extend from First Street to State Street creating a spine of open space and activity areas through the Downtown, as shown in Figure 13.

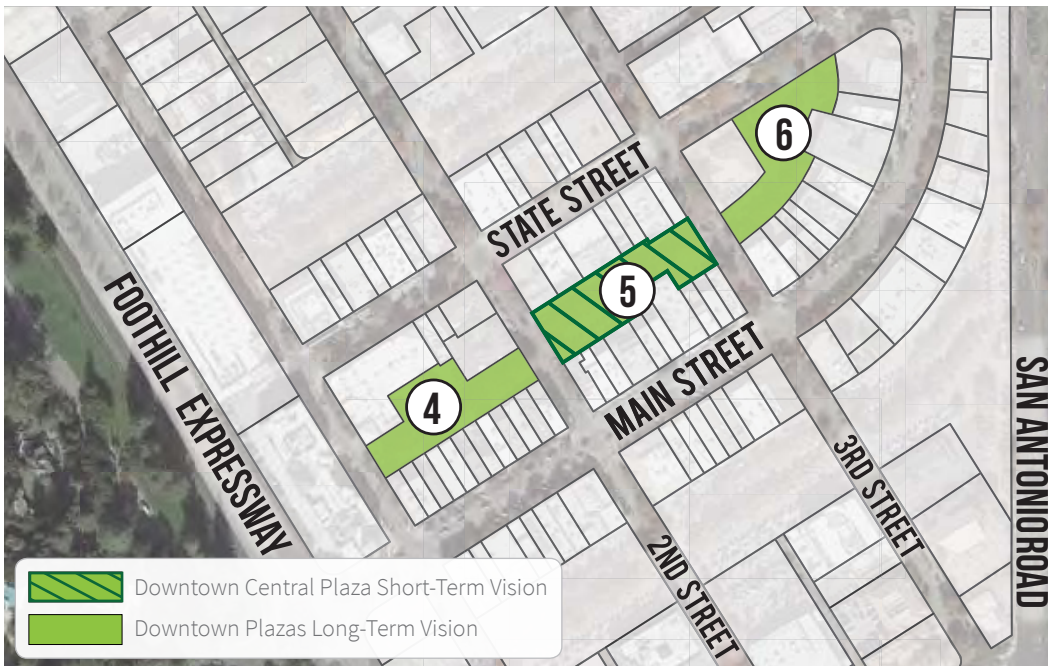


Figure 13: Downtown Plaza Locations for Long-Term Vision

## PLAZA FEATURES

Many members of the community expressed interest in specific features they would like to see integrated into the Downtown Plaza(s). These are expressed below as key elements that should be incorporated into the Downtown Plaza Short-Term Vision and/or the Downtown Plaza Long-Term Vision.

### PROGRAMMED PLAZAS

As the Downtown plazas are developed over the long-term, individual programs or themes are envisioned for each public plaza that would provide elements for all age groups. For example, Parking Plaza 5 could be programmed to focus on families and outdoor dining, a playground, and a flexible event space; Parking Plaza 4 could be programmed for adults with a beer garden, bocce ball courts, and fire pits; and Parking Plaza 6 could be programmed for teens with ample seating and benches, concrete ping pong tables, and phone-charging stations. Programming for the plazas should also include flexible space to accommodate seasonal and holiday events, such as a concerts or movies in the plaza, farmer’s markets, or more specialized events such as holiday-related events.

### OUTDOOR DINING

Under existing conditions, outdoor dining is generally limited to a few restaurants and cafés along Main and State Streets. The overall vision for the Downtown plazas provides opportunities to expand outdoor dining into these new public spaces. Outdoor dining is envisioned to be provided by private business or property owners whose buildings back onto the parking plazas. The concept of outdoor dining opening onto the Downtown plazas would allow for families to enjoy a meal at adjacent restaurants while maintaining eyes on children playing nearby within the plaza.



*Flexible spaces within a plaza allow for formal and informal events, such as concerts to occur.*



*Outdoor dining opening onto a plaza.*



*Example of an activity node in the form of a fire pit, providing a central gathering space within the public realm.*



*Play structures can attract a wide range of age groups while bringing additional activity to the Downtown.*

## PLAZA ACTIVITY NODES

A minimum of one activity node should be integrated into the design of the Downtown Central Plazas (Parking Plazas 4-6)h. The vision imagines flexible spaces that can serve a variety of purposes, such as a small event space for live music, art exhibitions, a fire pit, or other interactive activities.

## PLAY STRUCTURE

To facilitate accessibility of the Downtown Central Plaza Short-Term Vision by all ages, a play structure should be integrated into the design of the Downtown Plaza. Selection and siting of the play structure should consider ease of accessibility, visibility from nearby restaurants, and accommodating of a range of children’s ages and abilities.

## SEATING

Ample seating should be provided for public use throughout the plazas. Frequently placed and easily accessible seating is envisioned as separate from outdoor dining seating discussed above.

## RESTROOMS

Public restrooms should be provided for the comfort and convenience of Downtown visitors. While no specific location has been identified within this plan, the public restrooms should be conveniently located while not obstructing activities, views, or circulation patterns within the plazas. Public restrooms can also be provided through a public private partnership with adjacent businesses.



### TRASH AND RECYCLING

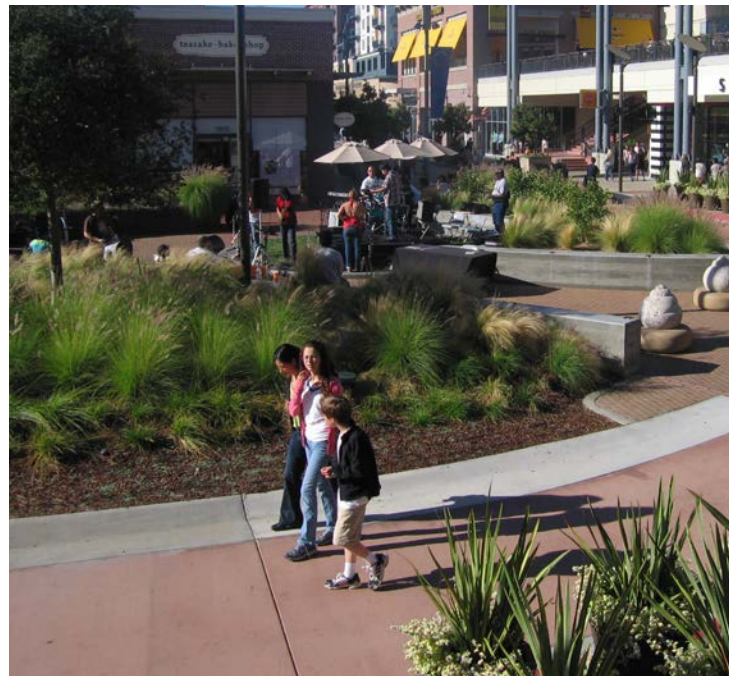
Trash and recycling for businesses backing onto the current parking plazas are currently located throughout the parking plazas. As each Downtown plaza is developed, centralized locations for accommodating the trash and recycling needs of the adjacent businesses should be identified and developed to minimize visual clutter and provide for ease of servicing.

### TREES AND LANDSCAPING

Trees and landscaping are located throughout the existing parking plazas. Where feasible, trees and landscaping should be integrated with the design of each Downtown Plaza. In instances where new trees and landscaping are to be incorporated, their selection should focus on native, low-water using, and low-maintenance plantings that aid in accentuating the sense of place within Downtown and that of each of the plazas. Small areas of landscaping allowing for informal activities to occur should also be considered when developing the plazas. Plazas should include a balance of green space and paved plaza space.



*Use of materials and colors helps minimize appearance of a centralized trash enclosure.*



*Pockets of native, low-water using landscaping help inform and frame areas of a plaza.*

## OTHER PUBLIC PLAZAS

In addition to the central Downtown plaza(s), the integration of two additional public plazas within Downtown were supported by the community. These include a public plaza associated with the future construction of a live theater fronting onto 3rd Street, as well as a linear public plaza connecting the proposed pedestrian overcrossing on San Antonio Road to 2nd Street (see Figure 14). As these plazas are designed and installed, they should include a variety of public amenities such as outdoor dining, seating, landscaping, activity nodes, interactive structures, public art, and/or other amenities that enliven the public realm of Downtown.



Figure 14: Locations of Other Downtown Public Plazas

## OTHER DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENTS

In conjunction with public improvements discussed within this Vision Plan, such as the Downtown Plaza(s), other Downtown improvements are outlined below to support the community’s vision.

### LIGHTING

Portions of Downtown contain existing street lights that are scaled to the pedestrian. As the Downtown Plaza(s) and other public improvements are implemented, integrating appropriately-scaled lighting will be necessary to ensure safe and well-lit pedestrian spaces. Lighting could include a continuation of the existing street lights, bollard lights, overhead string lights and/or lights wrapped around street trees.

### BOLLARDS

Bollards, whether temporary or permanent, may be needed to ensure public safety from vehicular traffic within the Downtown Plaza(s), shared streets, and other public spaces. The need for vehicular access will likely continue to be needed to allow for trash collection, building maintenance, or community events. The installation of temporary bollard infrastructure could also be extended beyond the Downtown Plaza(s) to allow for the closing a greater portion of the Downtown for larger community events.



*String lights help frame space and enliven night time events.*



*Bollards and planters provide a sense of safety and security along Main Street.*



## 6 PUBLIC SPACES

### PUBLIC WI-FI

Public Wi-Fi networks have become increasingly popular in recent years, particularly in public spaces such as parks and plazas. The City could consider implementing a public Wi-Fi network within the Downtown Plaza(s) to further support the desired community vision and potentially increase the desirability and frequency of visits to Downtown.

### ELECTRICITY

Access to electrical outlets continues to be a desirable feature in our daily lives, whether at an airport or local community coffee shop. The City could consider integrating electrical outlets within the Downtown Plaza(s) and/or activity nodes to allow for live music and other events to occur or to potentially increase the desirability and frequency of visits to Downtown.

### UTILITIES

Overhead powerlines are currently located throughout the existing parking plazas and other areas of Downtown. It is anticipated that the existing overhead powerlines be relocated or placed underground in certain areas where they may conflict with public improvements or other enhancements outlined within this Vision Plan.



*Public Wi-Fi availability is an attractor of people to public spaces.*



*Recent under grounding of utilities along First Street has improved the visual aesthetic of this portion of Downtown.*





## 7 - CIRCULATION AND PARKING



## CIRCULATION AND PARKING

### CIRCULATION CONCEPTS

A number of refinements to the existing circulation within and directly adjacent to Downtown have been included as part of this Vision Plan. These include a roundabout and shared streets as discussed further below.

#### ROUNDAABOUT

A roundabout at the Edith Avenue, Main Street, and San Antonio Road intersection has been previously discussed by the community as part of previous planning efforts. This concept continues to be supported by the community and has been carried forward. Future design and configuration of the roundabout should ensure efficient access for automobiles while also providing clearly defined, safe, and accessible crossing areas for pedestrians and bicyclists. This asymmetrical, 4-leg intersection is an appropriate candidate for a roundabout. Also, this intersection should be augmented and treated as a primary entrance into Downtown.



*Example of a roundabout with native landscaping and accent paving at center.*



## SHARED STREETS

Shared streets (“woonerfs”) are prominent in Europe and have become increasingly popular within the United States in recent years. A shared street is a pedestrian-focused street that is flexible, allowing for vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation. The street design appears more like a plaza, with pavers on drive lanes and sidewalks, and sidewalk delineated with bollards, colored pavers, and street furniture instead of traditional curbs. These streets are flexible in nature, as they can easily be converted to car-free streets for events.

To provide a greater multimodal balance within Downtown and to provide flexible space for community events to occur, shared streets have been included on 2nd Street and 3rd Street (see Figure 15). On 2nd Street, the shared street concept would connect the proposed parking structure and affordable housing on Parking Plaza 7 and 8 to Main Street. On 3rd Street, the shared street concept would connect the live theater on Parking Plaza 2 to State Street. Shared streets should include features such as bollards, benches, planters, unique paving, landscaping, lighting, and/or other features to delineate pedestrian areas, ensure safe and efficient multimodal access for automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrians.

Once shared streets are implemented as described above, the City should consider expanding the shared streets concept onto Main and State Streets or other streets in Downtown to further create a pedestrian-focused core, while still allowing for slowed vehicular and bicycle access. Due to the recent investments on the Main and State, along with the cost of shared streets, this is categorized as a long-term implementation improvement.



Figure 15: Shared Street Locations



Example of a Shared Street.

# 7 CIRCULATION AND PARKING

## PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLES

The current configurations and alignments of many Downtown streets enable a comfortable and inviting pedestrian environment. Short block lengths, wide sidewalks, and pedestrian scale encourage walking within the Main and State Street District. As other areas of Downtown are redeveloped or remodeled, extension of wide sidewalks and continuation of pedestrian amenities should be continued to encourage pedestrian circulation.

The community expressed concerns with the bicycle friendliness of Downtown, particularly among the traffic along First Street. To this end, 2nd and 3rd Streets provide more intimate, less auto-traveled streets than First Street. Bicycle-focused enhancements should be made to 2nd Street and/or 3rd Street, such as signage, pavement markings (sharrows), or, if space allows, separated bicycle lane(s) to facilitate bicycle use to and through Downtown.



*Wide, pedestrian-friendly sidewalks on Main Street should be continued elsewhere in Downtown.*



*Bicycle enhancements should be pursued along 2nd and 3rd Streets to enhance bicycle safety through Downtown.*



## TROLLEY

While current public transit routes do not travel directly through Downtown the introduction of a limited or seasonal trolley, or other rideshare service, could provide enhanced local mobility options for the community. Trolleys have been successfully integrated in communities across California and serve as a character-enhancing asset that provides alternative transportation options for broad segments of the local population while also alleviating parking issues. Many members of the community expressed concern with the lack of options, other than driving, to travel directly to Downtown, particularly from South Los Altos and El Camino Real areas of the City. Providing a trolley at consistent intervals to and from Downtown would provide both residents, employees, and visitors alike the option to use an alternative form of transit while riding a classic form of transportation. If remote parking for employees is located outside of Downtown, the trolley could also provide alternative options for employees traveling to work. Figure 16 below demonstrates a conceptual route the trolley could follow to connect different areas of the City to Downtown. If pursued by the City, a formal study should be conducted to determine feasibility, schedule, routes, and other aspects of cost and operation.



Cable car-style trolleys add to the charm and character of Downtowns while enhancing mobility options.

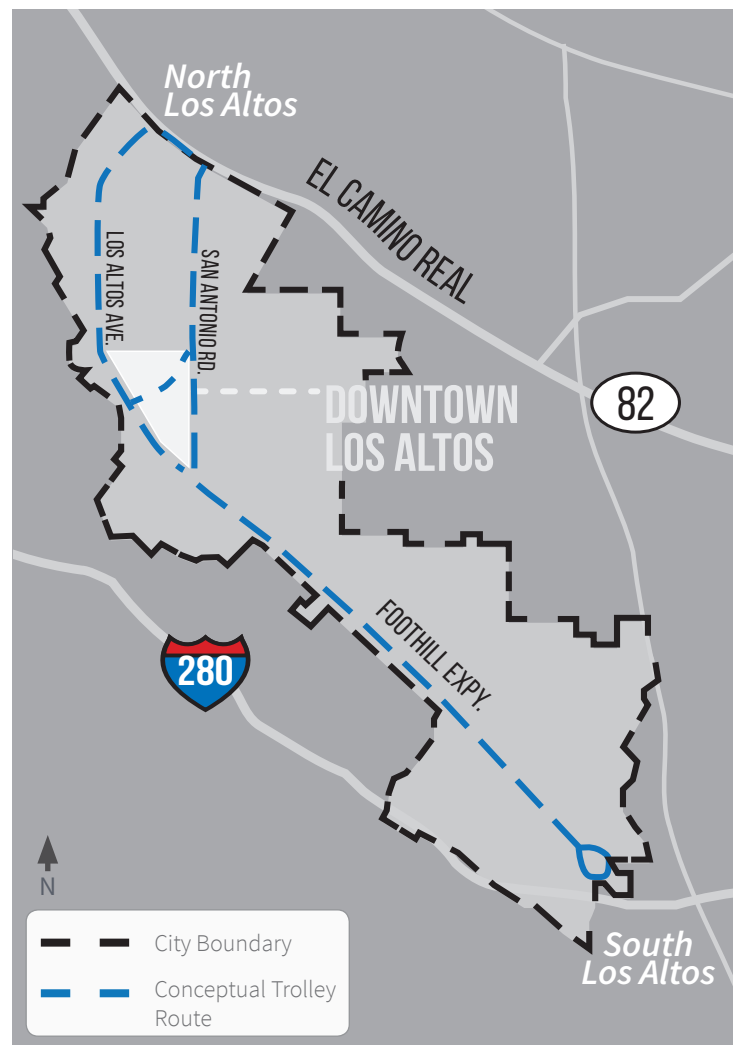
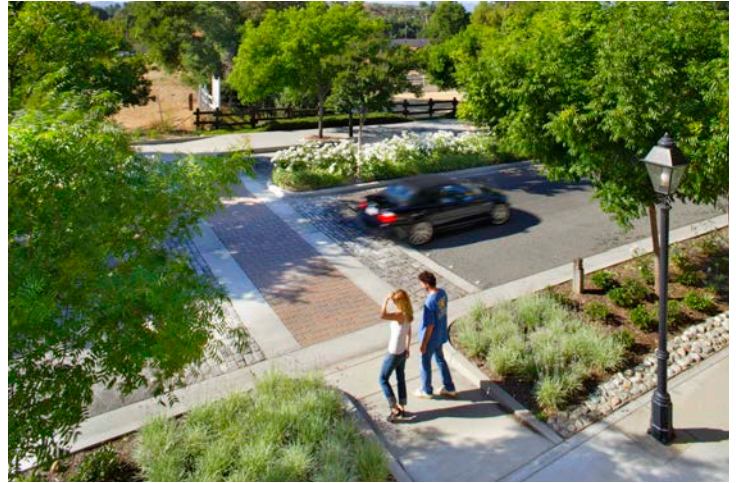


Figure 16: Conceptual trolley routes connecting south and north Los Altos with stops within Downtown.

## CIVIC CENTER/NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

Many community members expressed ongoing concerns with easily and safely accessing Downtown from the Civic Center, Lincoln Park, and surrounding neighborhood areas. Community members felt that enhanced pedestrian connections would incentivize them to patronize Downtown more often without needing to get in their car and drive. While the City has begun to implement pedestrian connection improvements from Downtown, such as those across San Antonio Road, additional enhancements should be incorporated at primary pedestrian routes. Improvements could include a pedestrian bridge, flashing pedestrian crossing signs, priority pedestrian signal timing, in-road flashing lights, and colored or otherwise enhanced crosswalks, among others.



*Enhanced paving provides clear definition of pedestrian crossings.*



*Enhanced bicycle and pedestrian safety crossing.*



## PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

Pedestrian bridges can create iconic landmarks representative of the character of a community while simultaneously providing enhanced connections to key areas of a city. Feedback from the community highlighted the lack of safe connections from the Civic Center to Downtown. The community was in support of incorporating a pedestrian bridge to connect these two important areas of the City. Figure 17 portrays the conceptual location of the pedestrian bridge. Given the current street right-of-way and private property locations, the City will need to determine the most appropriate location for placing the pedestrian bridge. Future design should be in keeping with the Downtown village character in terms of design, scale, and colors/materials. The bridge should also be designed to accommodate bicyclists, strollers, and provide ADA access, whether via a ramp, elevator, or a combination of both.



Figure 17: Conceptual location of proposed pedestrian bridge.



Figure 18: Rendering of conceptual pedestrian bridge across San Antonio Road.

# 7 CIRCULATION AND PARKING

## STREETSCAPE

The Downtown streetscapes are a great opportunity to unify the Downtown character with benches, light fixtures, landscaping, paving and wall materials and public art. They also add to creating a desirable and walkable Downtown district.

Main and State Streets were recently improved to include corner bulb-outs at intersections, accent paving, stacked stone walls, increased area for outdoor dining, benches, and public art. The Vision Plan suggests a “Dining Hub” with additional parklets between 2nd and 3rd Streets and incorporating drop off/loading areas for deliveries and car share (Lyft and Uber) access. Activity nodes are also to be introduced in areas where the sidewalk can be expanded like the intersection bulb out areas.

First Street is narrower than Main and State Streets and would benefit from buildings setting back from the sidewalk and introducing planting between buildings and the sidewalk where there is not an active storefront presence. Wider sidewalks and street furniture should be introduced where feasible. While the City has begun implementing streetscape improvements on the southern portion of First Street, the City should build off of this existing effort and pursue completion of a unified streetscape plan for all of First Street, given its varying right-of-way widths and inconsistent sidewalk treatments.

### LEGEND

- ① RECENT IMPROVEMENTS
- ② SHARED STREET
- ③ FLUSH CURB WITH SAFETY BOLLARDS
- ④ ENLARGED PLANTER WITH SEATWALL
- ⑤ OUTDOOR SEATING
- ⑥ CONTAINER PLANTS
- ⑦ FIRETABLE WITH BAR SEATING
- ⑧ BICYCLE RACKS
- ⑨ PARKLET WITH OUTDOOR DINING & SEATWALL
- ⑩ DROP OFF/LOADING AREA

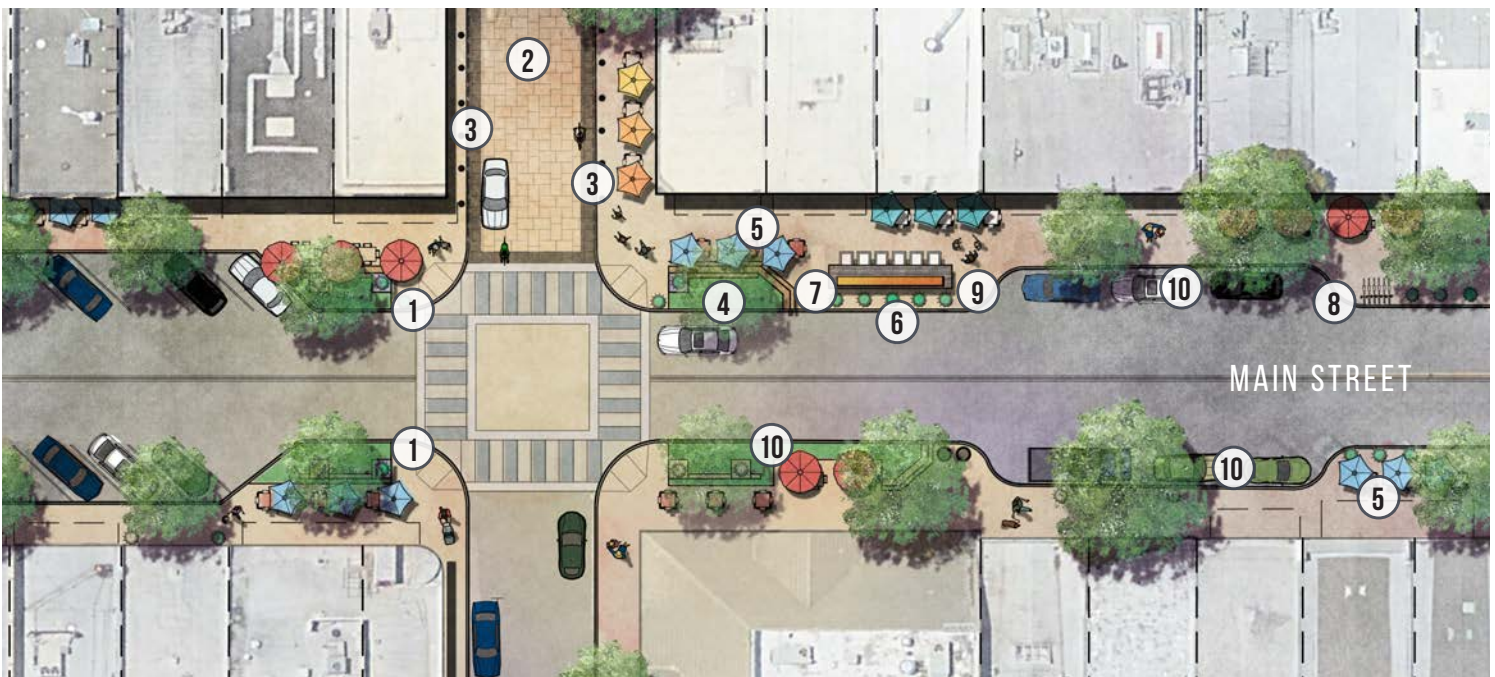


Figure 19: Downtown streetscape character with shared streets, activity nodes, drop off area, furnishings, and accent paving.



## PARKING FACILITIES

The proximity and availability of centralized public parking serving the Downtown area has been advantageous to past growth and development. However, given the small lot sizes, older buildings, and high and inflexible parking requirements, newer development in Downtown has been limited. The City's currently high parking requirements and high land costs forces any new development to be of a size and bulk that many residents feel erode the Downtown's village character. In addition, larger macro trends of decreasing private automobile use, indicating less need for parking, coupled with rideshare services such as Lyft and Uber, and ongoing development of autonomous vehicles all share in the need for modified parking requirements. While automobile use and parking demands continue to evolve, the City should ensure the ongoing availability of parking Downtown in the interim in a manner more consistent with other comparable cities. In addition to this Vision Plan, the Downtown Parking Management Plan identified several priorities for parking management in Downtown. These priorities align with this Vision Plan and should continue to be implemented going forward.



*Existing Parking Plaza 7, looking east.*

# 7 CIRCULATION AND PARKING

As shown in Figure 20, the existing parking plazas are the focal point of integrating new structured parking within Downtown, with a few existing at-grade parking lots also maintained. As above ground parking structures are developed, they should be designed with flexibility in mind to allow for adaptive reuse in the future if parking demands change. Additionally, electric vehicle charging stations should be integrated into parking facilities. They should also be designed with commercial or office on the ground floor to minimize the aesthetic impacts of the structure and continue to activate the adjacent sidewalks with retail and office activity.

The Vision Plan has strategically located the parking facilities to be conveniently accessed from San Antonio Road and First Street, minimizing traffic through Downtown. In total, the City should anticipate the need to construct a total of 1,620 new above ground and underground parking spaces to accommodate existing development and future growth as envisioned as part of this Vision Plan. In addition to parking within the Downtown area, the City should consider the Civic Center as an option to develop employee designated parking that would free up additional parking spaces for business customers.



Example of parking structure designed to minimize aesthetic impacts of structure.

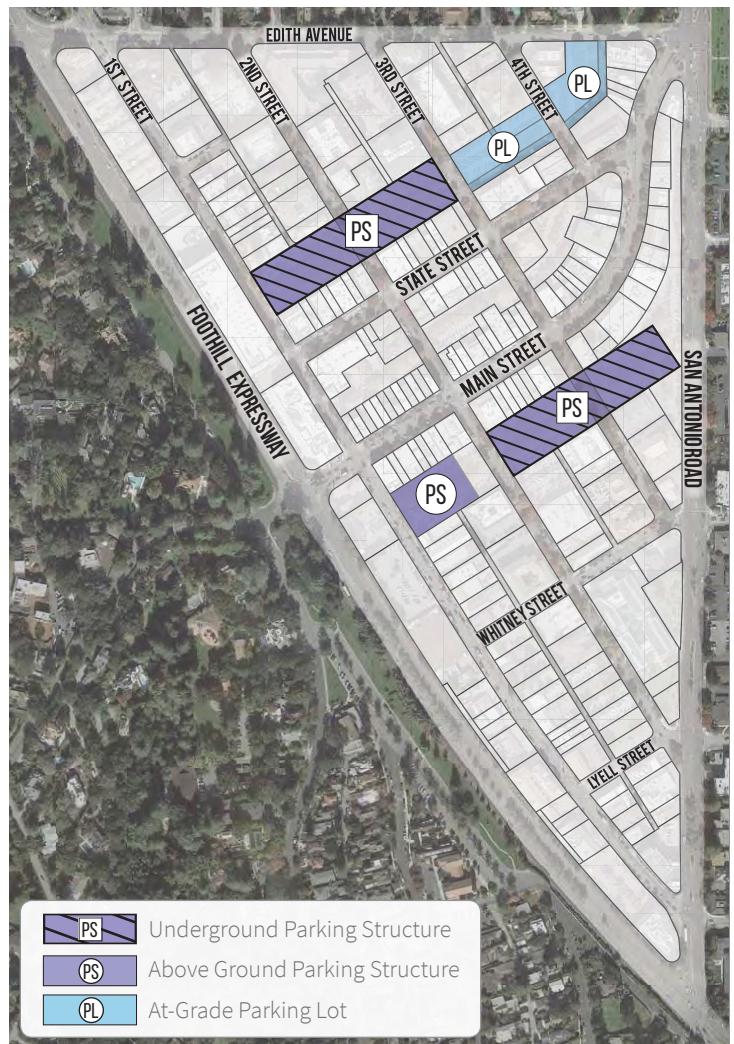


Figure 20: Location of Future Parking Facilities



## PARKING MANAGEMENT

To better manage the existing and future parking facilities within Downtown, the City should continue to implement the recommendations of the Downtown Parking Management Plan. This Vision Plan strives to manage and direct employee parking to free up parking spaces for customers, create revenue for future facilities, and reduce one of the primary barriers to attract redevelopment in Downtown. Recommendations include:

- Incrementally increase “white dot” permits from \$36 per year to \$72 per month in two or three steps;
- Adopt an in-lieu fee option of \$25,000 per required space;
- Incorporate short-term, drop off spaces for rideshare services (Uber/Lyft); and
- Implement multimodal policies that discourage single-use automobile trips.

Fees collected as part of parking management should be used to fund the construction of new above and below ground parking structures as well as other parking facilities within the Downtown area.

While this Vision Plan does not address expanding the existing Parking District, the City should consider proposals to add properties to the Parking District, whereby adding a property would be of benefit to both the City and a property owner in support of the larger Downtown Vision.

## PARKING POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following parking policy recommendations support the enhancement of vitality within the Downtown. Amendments to the City's existing Zoning Ordinance would be required to implement these parking policy recommendations. Action items related to these Parking Policy Recommendations can be found within the Implementation Chapter of this document.

1) Update Parking Requirements for Downtown Uses (retail, office, and service uses).

*Inside Existing Parking District*

- Up to FAR 1.0: No parking requirement (no change)
- In excess of FAR 1.0: Two (2) spaces per 1,000 sf for all commercial and office uses
- Consider reduction of parking requirements for the residential portion of mixed-use projects, particularly those constructing workforce housing units

*Outside Existing Parking District*

- 2.5 spaces per 1,000 sf for all commercial and office uses
- Consider reduction of parking requirements for the workforce residential portion of mixed-use project or for standalone workforce housing projects

2) Exempt new restaurants within "Downtown Dining Hub" from all parking requirements to attract more dining and outdoor dining Downtown.

3) Consider reduction in parking requirement for outdoor dining located elsewhere in the Downtown Core.

4) Reduce required parking for hotel uses to 0.8 per guest room. Hotel location is suggested on top of the underground parking structure. Hotel parking demand will be higher in the evening, complementing the daytime parking use of nearby commercial and office.

5) Exempt live theater from all parking requirements. The location of the live theater is adjacent to and over a proposed parking structure. The theater parking demand will be higher in the evening, complementing the daytime parking use of the commercial and office.





## 8 - SUSTAINABILITY



## SUSTAINABILITY

Los Altos adopted a Climate Action Plan in December 2013 that outlines strategies to reduce citywide emissions for both new and existing development to ensure the long-term sustainability of the City. This Vision Plan document includes and intends to further the implementation of many of these strategies to align with the City’s overarching goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Some of the Climate Action Plan and sustainable strategies integrated within the Vision Plan include:

- Providing safe and convenient alternatives to driving;
- Maximizing energy efficiency and leveraging opportunities to generate energy from renewable resources;
- Eliminating unnecessary resource consumption; and
- Valuing and supporting community projects that conserve natural resources and contribute to increased quality of life in Los Altos.



*Alternative forms of transportation, such as bicycling, reduce the need for single trip automobile use.*





# 9 - IMPLEMENTATION

## IMPLEMENTATION

The Downtown Vision Plan will be implemented over a 20-year time frame as feasible. The plan will be implemented through both public and private investment. Many components could be grant funded due to their pedestrian and bicycle friendly nature. The plan components have been categorized into three phases in response to community priorities, costs, and the goal of adding vitality to Downtown. If Phase 2: Mid-Term or Phase 3: Long-Term items can be funded and parking provided, they could be moved to an earlier implementation phase.

### ACTION PLAN/PHASING

The following action items discussed elsewhere in this Vision Plan document have been organized below in three phases to allow for the short, mid, and long-term implementation of the Downtown Vision.

#### PHASE 1: SHORT-TERM (1-5 YEARS)

- Implement land use and parking policy recommendations;
- Implement height recommendations;
- Prepare First Street streetscape plan;
- Design/plan for primary entry features and elements;
- Implement “Downtown Dining Hub”;
- Design/install bicycle enhancements;
- Implement parking management recommendations;
- Install neighborhood connections – *Lower cost improvements such as signage and crossing enhancements;* and
- Study expansion of parking district and feasibility of public parking at the Civic Center.

#### PHASE 2: MID-TERM (5-10 YEARS)

- Construct parking facilities (*above or below ground facilities*);
- Install Downtown Central Plaza Short-Term Vision (*Parking Plaza 5*);
- Design/install façade improvements and renovations along San Antonio Road;
- Design/plan for activity nodes;
- Implement First Street streetscape plan;
- Install shared streets (*2nd and 3rd Street*);
- Construct affordable housing; and
- Design and install pedestrian bridge connection to Civic Center.



### PHASE 3: LONG-TERM (10+ YEARS)

- Construct parking facilities;
- Install Downtown Plaza Long-Term Vision (*Parking Plazas 4 and 6*);
- Construct roundabout (*this will require a circulation study*);
- Design/plan for paseos;
- Construct live theater (*Parking Plaza 2*);
- Construct hotel (*Parking Plaza 2*); and
- Construct office (*Parking Plaza 3*).

### RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS

It is recommended that the City create a comprehensive or specific plan for Downtown to more precisely capture the Vision Plan recommendations and fine tune land uses, standards, and guidelines for the Downtown. Implementation of the short-term action can be accomplished through Zoning Ordinance amendments. This Vision Plan becomes the primary guidance document to guide change in Downtown, replacing the Downtown Design Plan.

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10 - VISION POSTER



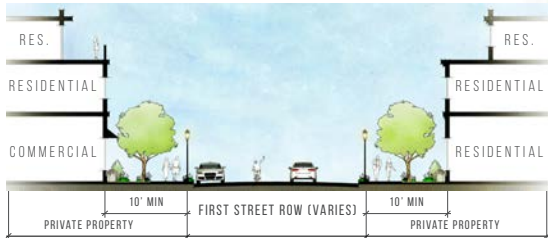


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**A** FIRST STREET SECTION | STREETScape ENHANCEMENTS & BUILDING SETBACKS

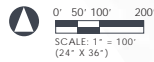


**B** ACTIVITY NODE EXAMPLE | FIREPIT, OUTDOOR DINING, DROP OFF SPACES, & ENTERTAINMENT NODE



**DISTRICT LEGEND**

- FIRST STREET
- EDITH AVENUE
- MAIN AND STATE STREET (DOWNTOWN CORE)
- SAN ANTONIO ROAD (LOWER TRIANGLE)



**C** DOWNTOWN CENTRAL PLAZA SHORT-TERM VISION | OUTDOOR DINING, EVENT SPACE, & PLAY STRUCTURES



**SITE PLAN LEGEND**

- 1** AFFORDABLE HOUSING
- 2** UNDERGROUND PARKING STRUCTURE
- 3** DOWNTOWN CENTRAL PLAZA (SHORT-TERM)
- 4** DOWNTOWN CENTRAL PLAZA (LONG-TERM)
- 5** PRIMARY ENTRY FEATURES
- 6** ABOVE GROUND PARKING STRUCTURE WRAPPED WITH OFFICE OR COMMERCIAL ON GROUND FLOOR
- 7** OFFICE AND COMMERCIAL USES
- 8** ROUNDABOUT
- 9** FACADE IMPROVEMENTS & PEDESTRIAN CONNECTION
- 10** PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- 11** SHARED STREETS
- 12** LIVE THEATER
- 13** BOUTIQUE HOTEL



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