

# Downtown Master Plan

February 2020



# Acknowledgments

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# To the Committed Citizens of Pullman

This Master Plan for Downtown Pullman celebrates months of work by scores of Pullman residents and a major investment by the city of Pullman. The plan represents the top priority of the Pullman City Council and Mayor following our goal-setting retreats. It also represents an outstanding example of growing partnerships among important community organizations.

The city of Pullman signed a Memorandum of Understanding on February 5, 2020, with Washington State University, the Downtown Pullman Association, and the Pullman Chamber of Commerce to highlight our commitment to the resurgence of our downtown. We are grateful for the work of the Association, the Town-Gown Collaborative, the envisioning process provided by Pullman 2040, the Pullman Civic Trust, service clubs, and the many volunteers who have been involved with this process.

This plan builds on our existing “gems” to create an accessible and vibrant downtown. Our goal is to enhance and activate downtown Pullman’s existing public spaces and magnify the downtown’s role as the heart of the Palouse region. Our hope is that this plan will encourage our existing businesses and property owners to continue to invest in Pullman and inspire new investors to be part of our exciting future. To foster this process, we will also be working together to provide leadership through the Main Street approach of organization, promotion, design, and economic vitality.

This document is our map for a better downtown. Now the journey starts and the real work begins.

Mayor Glenn Johnson



# Executive Summary

Downtown Pullman is alive with enthusiasm. New leadership, new investments, and many civic initiatives inspire a sense that “this is our time.” Washington State University and the City of Pullman are aligned in making downtown a top priority. The Pullman Civic Trust and Chamber of Commerce have sponsored downtown initiatives. Downtown business and property owners, as well as community volunteers, have reinvented the Downtown Pullman Association into a flurry of activity that is organized around the tenets of the National Main Street Program. People are impatient for action. They want focus, commitment and leadership. The status quo is not enough. Those driving this new momentum expect the City and the University to match their civic enthusiasm and investments with forward-thinking public policies and infrastructure investments. Together, they can make downtown Pullman the embodiment of civic pride in a delightful and vibrant college town with an enviable sense of place.

The City of Pullman hired a team of consultants to work with the community to develop a Downtown Master Plan. Beginning in the spring of 2019, the planning process evolved through three phases: Assessment, Planning, and Refinement. This Downtown Master Plan is intended to provide a vision, with specific priorities and key actions to stimulate and guide investment in downtown Pullman.

The historic core of a thriving community of 34,000 residents, downtown Pullman is the heart of a community that is home to Washington State University and Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories. Nevertheless, downtown Pullman has a mixed reputation, with as much focus on vacant storefronts, traffic, and deferred maintenance as there is on downtown’s successful businesses, convenient access, and recent investments. Pullman’s reputation also suffers in the minds of many residents as they compare it to nearby downtown Moscow, Idaho with its bustling streets and vital businesses. At the same time, Downtown is enjoying renewed enthusiasm with new leadership and energy in many public, private, and civic organizations. And in fact, downtown Pullman has many successful retail, restaurant, and service businesses, as well as quite a collection of high quality residences within and adjacent to the downtown core.

The key to this plan’s success will be leadership. Leadership to promote belief in downtown’s existing strengths and to build confidence for new investments. The City of Pullman, Washington State University, Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, and downtown’s property and business owners have every reason to provide this leadership as they have a direct stake in downtown’s success as the embodiment of the community’s vitality and livability.

As such, the next phase of investment in downtown Pullman should focus on building on its existing strengths. This master plan is organized into six major priorities:

## Master Plan Priorities

1. Enhance the “Gems”
2. Build People-Centric
3. Activate Public Spaces
4. Magnify the Core
5. Encourage Entrepreneurship
6. Catalyze Leadership



# Downtown Pullman Action Plan

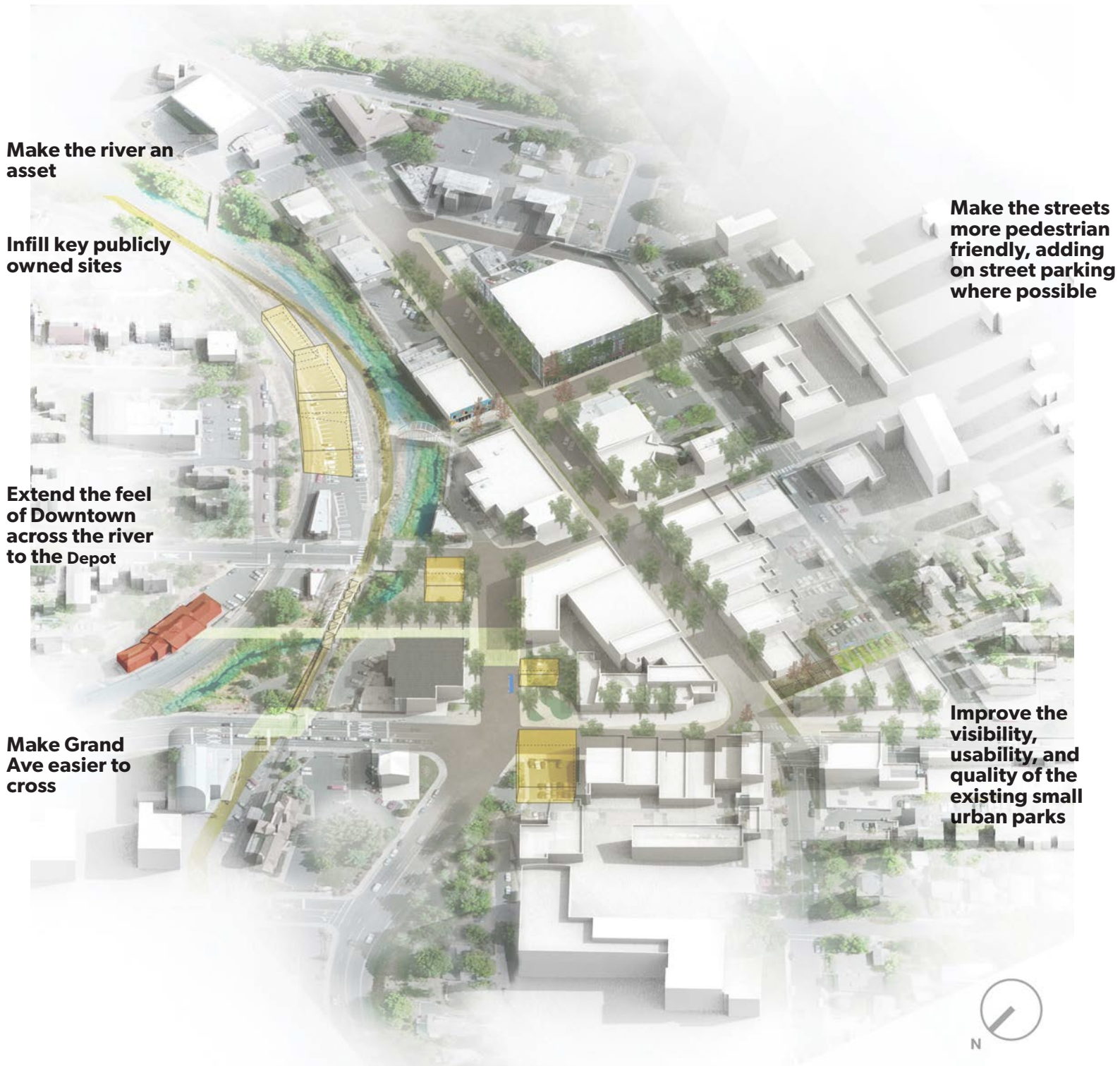


Figure 1. Downtown Pullman Action Plan Axonometric View, Framework, 2019

# Project Background

Pullman is a thriving community of about 34,000 residents in the heart of Eastern Washington's Palouse region. It is home to Washington State University and Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories. Built on booming railroad and agriculture industries, Pullman has remained an educational and economic hub for the region. Moscow, Idaho is nearby, with 25,000 residents, the University of Idaho, and its own meaningful downtown.

Downtown Pullman is a beautiful and well preserved American west town center with a distinct topography. It has a low-point-in-the-bowl setting at the juncture of waterways. The middle of a town in a valley with a campus on a golden hill. With this attractive setting, the downtown has a handsome collection of historic buildings and an engaged business community. This planning effort builds on recent efforts by the mayor and WSU president to call attention to the downtown and its potential.

With meaningful engagement of residents and stakeholders, this plan is expected to address parking; street configurations; circulation; walkability; bicycle access; sidewalks; public art; open space; a river walk; the train trestle; children's play areas; business mix; a liquid arts district; design standards; connectivity; implementation; streetscape design; and ongoing downtown management.

Downtown Pullman has a great potential, with the advantages of a traditional, walkable Main Street commercial area, historic buildings, and cultural uses that are regional destinations. Though downtown is located between two state highways, there are opportunities for a more coherent and comfortable public realm. Despite various downtown vacancies, there is potential for an active streetscape utilizing off-street parking lots. With protections, downtown's character and its historic buildings may be preserved, though demand for more housing may create pressure to replace existing building stock with new larger buildings. With thoughtful direction, downtown Pullman can accommodate new growth while also maintaining its valuable character.

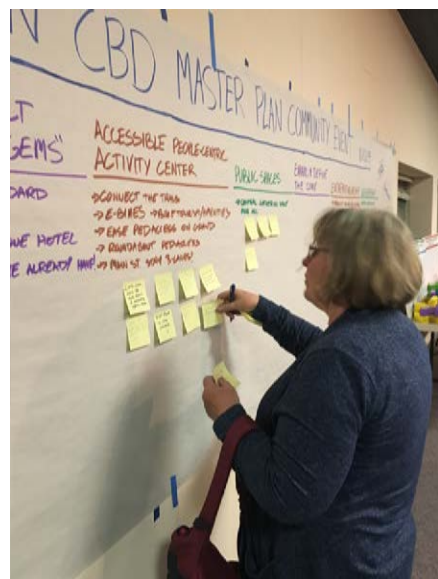


Figure 2. Downtown Study Area





# Master Planning Process

Downtown Pullman's major stakeholders, many civic organizations, and the broader community were engaged throughout the process. Scores of community members offered their ideas through an interactive exhibit at the Lentil Festival in August. Dozens of downtown stakeholders participated in a steering committee and/or one-on-one interviews to better understand the past and present conditions in downtown and to offer feedback on emerging concepts and recommendations. The downtown master planning process included three phases: Assessment, Planning, and Refinement.

## ASSESSMENT

The assessment phase included analyses of the social/political, economic, physical, and placemaking conditions, and a summary of downtown Pullman's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

## PLANNING

The planning phase focused on an interactive two-day Master Plan Charrette to shape the Key Actions of the Master Plan.

## REFINEMENT

The refinement phase honed specific recommendations and implementation timelines into this document.



The Planning phase of the process focused on a two-day downtown Master Plan Charrette in October at the Gladish Community & Cultural Center. This included two steering committee meetings and two community presentations with engagement by more than 80 community members at each of the community meetings, as well as City Council members and staff. The purpose of these events was to share findings, develop and refine planning concepts, and gather community feedback on the emerging plan. During these planning sessions, the consultant team and community reviewed the existing situation in downtown Pullman and shaped the Master Plan recommendations.



During the Refinement phase, the Steering Committee and many key stakeholders also offered feedback on Master Plan drafts.



# BACKGROUND

# History

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The City of Pullman historically was a stopping place for the Upper Palouse and Nimiipuu people, federally recognized as the Nez Perce Tribe after a French pseudonym. The resource rich area is located at the confluence of the Missouri Flat Creek, Dry Fork Creek and the south fork of the Palouse River, ideal for seasonal hunting, fishing, and gathering for the tribes. In 1855, the Stevens Treaty created reservations for the Nez Perce and Upper Palouse until the discovery of gold flooded Nez Perce land with prospectors, who came into conflict with and pushed the tribe from their lands. A second treaty was signed by a portion of the Nez Perce, removing the tribes from southeast Washington and opening the land up for white settlers.

Settlers found that the area was optimal for grazing and established a cattle industry in the 1860s. Agriculture quickly became an economic driver for the city when newcomers discovered the fertile Loessal soil. When the first railroad line was built in 1885, Pullman became a site for growth and continued westward expansion. The City of Pullman was incorporated in 1888 with a population of 200.

Success from agricultural and railroad industries combined with the 1889 discovery of artesian wells solidified Pullman as a hub along the transcontinental railway line. Need for a new state college site in the southeast part of the state brought Washington Agricultural College and School of Science, later renamed Washington State College, to the area in 1892. Though Pullman was only accessible by train until the 1950's the college brought even more growth to the City with students, staff and faculty. Today, Pullman is a thriving community of more than 34,000 residents.

The City of Pullman has a social and cultural ecosystem that is spread between Downtown, Washington State University, and the surrounding neighborhoods. Downtown hosts an array of spaces that contribute to social and cultural life of the City. The ecosystem features a mix of public and private spaces, with retail, community centers, parks and plazas, as well as civic and performance spaces represented.



*Main Street, Downtown Pullman, 1909,  
Washington State University*

# Past Research, Plans, Documents

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There have been a number of recent efforts to engage the larger Pullman community in reviving and planning for the future of downtown and the City of Pullman at large.

The consultant team reviewed documents from various City and community initiatives, downtown research studies, and plans to understand previous efforts, current conditions, and sentiments in downtown and across the region. The following key takeaways are from the Pullman Comprehensive Plan (1999), Pullman 2040 (2017), Pullman Civic Trust (2019), WSU Carson College of Business research (2018), and WSU Landscape Architecture 470 Course (2018).



WASHINGTON STATE  
UNIVERSITY





# Key Takeaways

- Downtown could be the social and cultural heart of the city and serve as a **gathering space for the surrounding neighborhoods**.
- Pullman is a college town with a unique economic dynamic that has impacts on downtown businesses, buildings, and users (residents, employees, visitors).
- The **river** is a defining feature of the City and downtown.
- Downtown Pullman is at the top of the list of places that community members avoid taking visitors.<sup>1</sup>
- **Comfort and accessibility** in Downtown streets and public spaces are challenges, i.e., high noise level<sup>2</sup>, limited bike racks and infrastructure, inadequate public seating, poorly maintained facades and buildings<sup>3</sup>, and limited street trees.
- **Downtown amenities and options are limited** for residents and students. Residents want more affordable and diverse dining options; more boutique/novelty stores; and family-friendly areas. Students also want more diverse dining options; more “fun” reasons to be downtown; good deals; and a more festive downtown.<sup>4</sup>
- The automobile dominates Downtown Pullman; high speeds<sup>5</sup> and parking are issues.
- Aquifer recharge, river water quality and heat island affect are **current environmental challenges**.

<sup>1</sup> Pullman 2040 community survey (2017)

<sup>2</sup> WSU Landscape Architecture 470 research (2018)

<sup>3</sup> WSU Carson College of Business (2018)

<sup>4</sup> WSU Carson College of Business (2018)

<sup>5</sup> WSU Landscape Architecture 470 research (2018)

Photo by: Rob Larsen



# Pullman Comprehensive Plan (1999)

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Located in Whitman County, Pullman is not required to implement all the requirements of the Washington State Growth management Act (GMA), but must include the three mandatory elements under the GMA—Land Use, Transportation, and Critical Resource Areas—in its Comprehensive Plan. In addition to the required elements, the City chose to include the following elements: Capital Facilities and Utilities, Housing, and Parks and Open Space. As part of the current Comprehensive Plan update, the City is in the process of creating a new Community Design element. A full outline of the proposed goals pertaining to Downtown are found in Appendix A.

## **Land Use**

The Land Use element of Pullman’s Comprehensive Plan envisions future development that strengthens Pullman’s position as an economic, social and cultural focal point for the region. Development regulations and plans for flood prone along the river should plan for consistent flooding and mitigate risk to life and property. Local ecosystems and critical habitat are to be protected and natural resources that contribute to the history of Pullman are to be preserved.

## **Transportation**

The City’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan, adopted in 1996, encourages the use of non-motorized vehicles by promoting bike and pedestrian safety, accessibility, and interconnectivity. Most bicycle use is observed around the downtown core, and on the Bill Chipman Trail that connects University of Idaho and WSU. The City has encouraged, but not required, that all new roadways include enough space for bike lanes or separated paths. There is a need for increased multimodal and non-motorized transportation, improvements to trail networks, and expansion of regional trail connectivity.

## **Housing**

Pullman has a wide variety of housing needs for its diverse range of residents, including but not limited to those affiliated with the University. Apartment buildings and single-family homes occupied by students make up the bulk of the housing supply in Pullman. The housing goal addresses the need to provide housing for a variety of prices and types accessible to a variety of economic levels in the City. It also looks at the need to include housing in Downtown, and address changing needs, such as live work spaces and micro housing.

## **Parks and Open Space**

This section prioritizes public recreation facilities in conjunction with pedestrian and bike trails and transit lines. There is significant focus on riparian corridors along the Palouse River South Fork as recreational opportunities. Guidelines encourage the use of green corridors to connect existing and future parks with bike and pedestrian trails.

## **Capital Facilities and Utilities**

Capital Facilities address the long-term availability and management of public resources and utilities for the City. Much of the focus is on the conservation and management of water resources within the local watershed. With impervious surface from parking lots and streets in the Downtown area, a significant amount of stormwater ends up in the South Fork of the Palouse River. The stormwater system for the Downtown area is unable to adequately treat stormwater, affecting the water quality of the South Fork Palouse river. Taking into consideration the environmental regulation around water quality, new approaches to stormwater treatment need to be explored. The City needs to address existing and anticipated storm water quantity and quality issues.

# Pullman 2040

Beginning in 2016, a group of community members met to form Pullman 2040, a community visioning process to develop a roadmap that defines a direction for Pullman that is complementary to the City's Comprehensive Plan. The organization developed as a broad-based partnership between Washington State University, Pullman Chamber of Commerce, City of Pullman, Pullman Civic Trust, Pullman Regional Hospital and the Pullman School District.

Having completed the initial public engagement process in 2018, 60 projects (see Appendix B) emerged across five themes: community & identity, health and safety, education, growth and development, and recreation & environment. Pullman 2040 is creating a more fine-grained plan for the City's future. The following goals from Community & Identity and Recreation and the Environment pertain to downtown:

## Community & Identity

- CI-4 Wayfinding: Improve wayfinding signs for visitors, navigation, information centers, event locations and trails
- CI-5 Art: Increase art in public spaces
- CI-7 Downtown: Work toward a vibrant, livable and walkable downtown
- Develop and implement a downtown identity
  - Explore a downtown association
  - Improve downtown parking and traffic flow
  - Improve and increase public use of High Street Plaza
  - Develop community spaces: for example, Pine Street Plaza to Pullman Depot Heritage Center
  - Reduce and make more appealing unoccupied business spaces

## Recreation & Environment

- RE-3 Trails: Improve and expand existing trails and open spaces
  - Improve bike and pedestrian safety
- RE-4 CAP Trail: Develop the Pullman to Colfax (CAP) Trail



*Pullman 2040 Charrette*



# SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

# Social/Political Analysis

Like in most American communities, downtown Pullman declined in the 1970s and 80s in response to competition from shopping centers and big box retail. Pullman was an early participant in the Washington and national Main Street programs, forming a downtown organization and hiring a Main Street Manager, but these efforts faltered after a few years and downtown saw only scattered improvements for many years.

There were some notable individual and collective efforts. A number of community groups came together to create the “Walk of Fame” sidewalk tiles honoring distinguished Pullman figures. The Pullman Civic Trust led a public/private community effort to complete several trails, importantly including the Downtown River Walk along the South Fork of the Palouse River. Three small public parks (Pine Street Plaza, Cougar Plaza, and High Street Plaza) offer gathering space downtown and are symbols of community pride. Impressive building improvements include the Armory, Lumberyard, Market Square Lofts, Combine Mall, Belltower, the old Post Office. Major new buildings include the Washington State University Foundation building and Evolve apartments.

Despite these investments and downtown’s solid collection of venerable businesses and new enterprises, a general sense of malaise seems to surround downtown Pullman’s sense of place in the community. Many people talk about preferring to shop, eat, and play in Moscow. People mention a disconnect between the campus and downtown despite their close proximity. A few derelict buildings seem to get more attention than the many vibrant establishments.

Happily, the political winds appear to be blowing in downtown’s direction in 2019. A new WSU President brought a town-gown collaborative spirit to town and forged an alliance with Pullman’s mayor to strengthen university-community relationships. The City Council and new City Administrator are solidly behind a downtown effort and have a number of ideas. A newly (re)formed Downtown Pullman Association has enthusiastic support that is well supported by a coordinator position that is housed within the WSU President’s office. Several downtown association committees are organizing around the tenets of the National Main Street Program®. Pullman 2040 hosted a “charrette” focused on downtown in 2018 that produced many great concepts for downtown improvements.

Pullman has a number of prominent organizations and institutions, many of which have a direct and joint influence on downtown. These include, but are not limited to, the Downtown Pullman Association, Pullman Chamber of Commerce, Washington State University, City of Pullman, Pullman Civic Trust, and the Town Gown Collaborative.



*East main Street & Grand Ave.*

# Economic Analysis

The following is a summary of key findings from the market and economic analysis of downtown Pullman. For a complete analysis, see Appendix C.

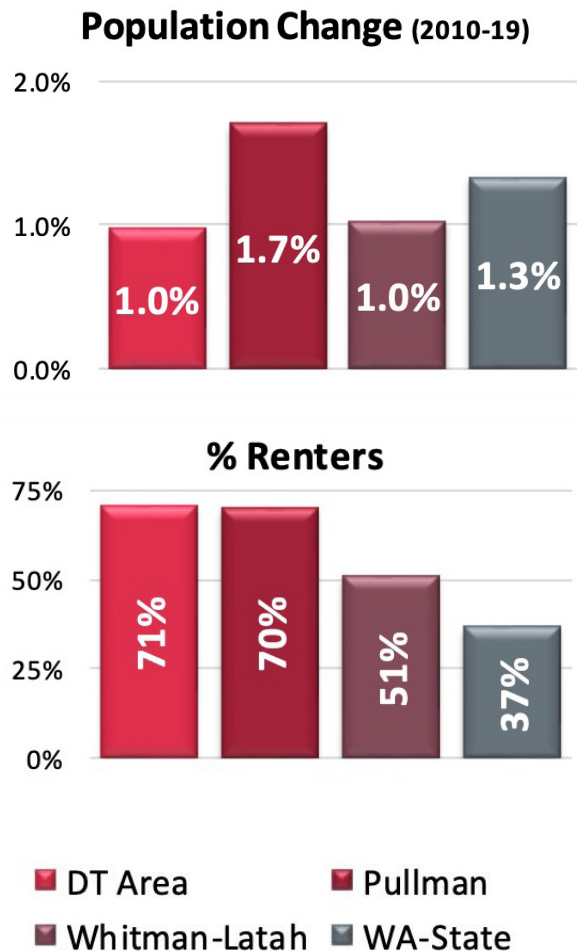
## Demographic & Economic Overview

Shown in figure 3 below, the market geographies identified for purposes of this analysis include a ½ mile walkable radius from the downtown core, with 4,700 residents as of 2019, which is 14% of the City of Pullman, population of 34,560. The two-county Pullman-Moscow region has close to 90,000 residents. Population is likely understated as not all college students are included with generally recognized public data sources. While strongly oriented to student rental housing, there appears to be a broader robust market for new housing construction.

The population of Pullman has increased at a more rapid rate than for the two-county region and state since 2010 – up by an average of 1.7% per year (figure 4). By comparison, population of the downtown (1/2-mile area) has increased more slowly – by about 1% per year. Both in downtown and city-wide, a 70%+ share of occupied housing units is occupied by renters (figure 5). This is close to double the statewide proportion – where renters account for 37% of occupied housing units.



Figure 3. Downtown Pullman (1/2 Mile) Market Area. EnviroNics/Claritas, Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM), and E.D. Hovee



Top and Bottom

Figure 4. Pullman % Population Change

Figure 5. % Renters

Source: US Census and EnviroNics/Claritas



As of 2015, the ½ mile radius around downtown served as place of employment for 1,630 jobs, compared to employment of 15,000 city-wide and 31,700 for the two-county region. The two- county market appears to be underserved across a wide range of retail and dining activities.

While Pullman has 38% of the region’s population, it accounts for only 26% of retail sales. Sales leakage is most pronounced for health-personal care (this category includes pharmacies, drug stores, cosmetic/beauty supply stores, optical goods, health supplement stores, health and personal care stores), dining and apparel; automotive sales also experience high sales leakage. Building/garden and grocery stores are currently experiencing high sales volumes exceeding two-county resident demand. Surveys conducted in conjunction with Pullman 2040 indicate a disconnect between the interests of WSU students and other Pullman residents – but with both dissatisfied about what downtown has to offer.

Focusing more specifically on the downtown, as of 2019, downtown area stores appear to be capturing about 9% of total retail including restaurant sales occurring in the two-county region encompassed by Whitman and Latah Counties. The greater downtown area achieves the highest rate of regional market capture for sporting, hobby and bookstores at about 35% of Pullman-Moscow metro area sales, followed by home furnishings at 26% (figure 6).

*Note: WSU had an undergraduate plus graduate student Pullman headcount of over 20,000 as of Fall Term 2017. Yet current census-based estimates indicate less than 15,000 Pullman residents age 18-24. This has the likely effect of under-estimating retail potential important to draw new stores into town.*

**Greater CBD Market Share of Metro Sales (2018)**

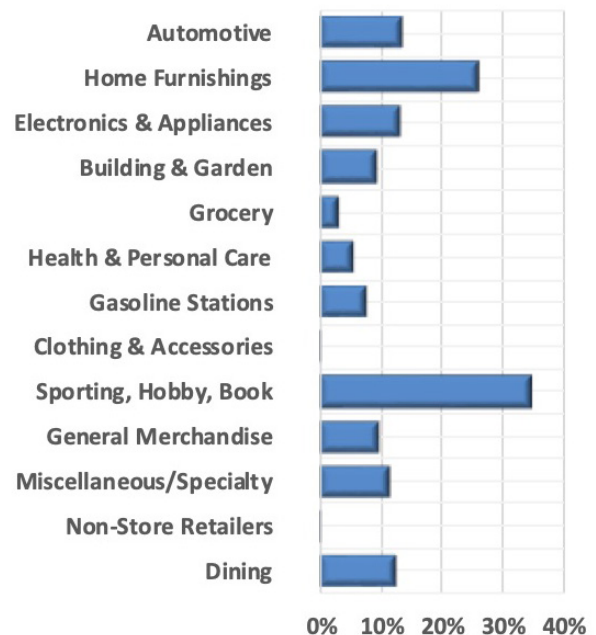
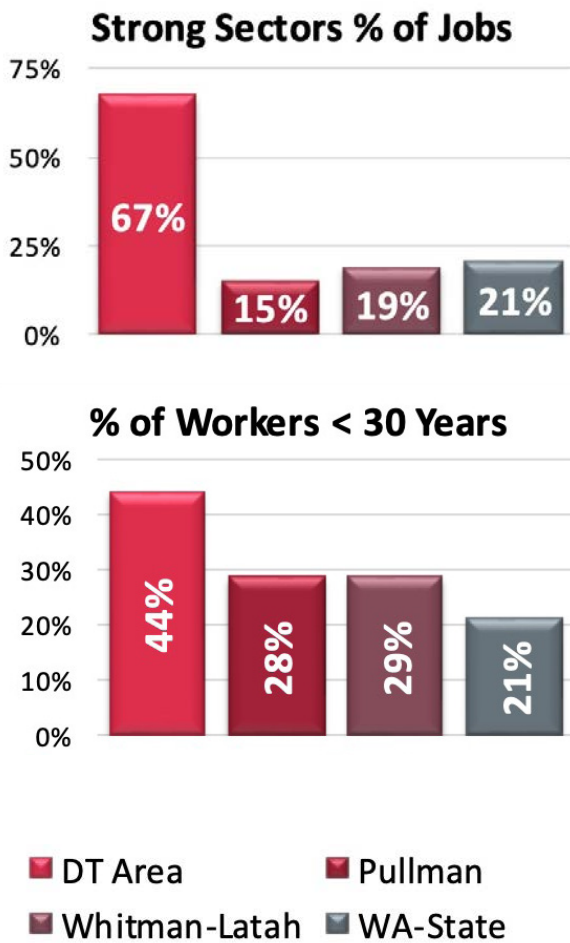


Figure 6. Greater CBD Market Share of Metro Sales (2018)

Source: Environics/Claritas , as of 2019

Downtown's job base is clustered around a handful of strong sectors. Those include hospitality, public administration, real estate, professional service sectors for two-thirds (67%) of downtown employment, as compared with about 20% or less of all jobs for comparison geographies (Figure 7). Retail adds another 10%.

The age of workers is considerably younger in downtown Pullman. About 44% of downtown-area workers are less than 30 years of age, which is well above the 20-30% range experienced elsewhere locally, regionally, and statewide (Figure 8).



#### Top and Bottom

Figure 7. Strong Sector % of Jobs

Figure 8. % of Workers < 30

Source: US Census On-the-Map

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### **Entrepreneurial & Strategic Opportunities**

Property owners and developers are the link between resident interests and putting building space on the ground. A diverse set of developers is working to meet the range of student to resident to visitor demands – both with adaptive reuse and new construction. With a physically constrained downtown and increased development costs, adding new multi-level structures will be accompanied by increasing rents.

### **Economic & Community Impacts**

Economic multiplier effects of downtown business activity for the full two-county metro economy can be best enhanced by activities that encourage recaptured retail sales, higher wage employment, sourcing local when possible, and serving destination as well as local clientele. From a community perspective, a vibrant downtown can also benefit WSU student recruitment and retention, appeal for metro-wide job creating business investment, and improved tax base.

Counterbalancing the challenges and leveraging the opportunities, is pivotal for improved and sustained economic vitality in Pullman’s downtown.

#### **CHALLENGES**

- Downtown’s constrained “bowl” topography;
- Population base of less than critical mass for full urban services;
- Demographic segments that fragment the market; and
- Nuisance properties and an over-traveled highway across the small physical space of the downtown area.

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Understand and cater to each of downtown’s market segments;
- Continue the path toward mixed use;
- Cultivate both local business entrepreneurs and recognized retailers; and
- Capitalize on the diverse talent and experience of Pullman’s real estate community



# Physical Analysis

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The following is a summary of transportation, land use, zoning and public space characteristics of downtown Pullman.

## **Transportation, Parking, and Mobility**

### *State Highways*

Downtown Pullman is framed by two state highways: State Route 270 and Highway 27. State Route 270 splits into a one-way arterial couplet when it reaches the city of Pullman and running westbound along E Main Street and eastbound along SE Paradise Street. Highway 27 begins at Grand Avenue, running north to Spokane as part of the Palouse Scenic Byway. Traffic and related noise in the downtown core have a negative effect on the City's ability to cultivate an inviting downtown for pedestrians, both visitors and residents.

### *Parking*

The City of Pullman manages a significant amount of on and off-street parking in Downtown. There are a total of 681 publicly managed parking spaces in the Downtown area, with 396 off-street spaces and 285 on-street spaces. The core of Downtown on and off-street parking is 2-hour time limit.

Privately managed off-street parking Downtown is associated primarily with commercial and retail properties. Some mixed-use residential and commercial buildings have dedicated off-street parking, with some surface lots underutilized due to vacancies. Some private off-street parking is undefined, with open lots behind businesses and little or no parking striping. A number of tenants in the area have highlighted parking as a major issue, and a deterrent to a successful business.

## **Water and Flooding**

Portions of downtown lie within 100-year floodplain, and while the floodplain may not significantly impact road and sidewalk construction, it does have an impact on building construction. Buildings constructed within the floodplain will need to be elevated one-foot above the base flood level or "flood proofed" which adds to the building cost.



*Photo by: Rob Larsen*

## **Land Use and Zoning**

Pullman has an urban growth area to efficiently use available space and ensure protection of surrounding farmland. Within this growth area, the City has established 6 land use categories; low density residential, high density residential, commercial, industrial, public facility and Washington State University.

### *Zoning*

Downtown is covered by the City's Central District zoning designation, flanked on the North and south by high density multifamily zoning and low-density multifamily zoning. Regulations for the Central District in the Municipal Code prioritize the development of pedestrian oriented ground uses with retail, amusement, office and services for the Downtown core.

The code prioritizes dense, vertical development with no required landscaping or off-street parking. With a maximum height limit of 60 feet, new construction will have a different scale from the existing historic structures that line the Downtown core. Zoning could put pressure on existing historic structures to be demolished.

### *Street-Level Uses*

The Downtown area has a mix of street level uses, some of which are in line with the desire to support pedestrian oriented ground uses from the Comprehensive Plan, while others have uses that do not generate significant pedestrian traffic or entice visitors to stay. Retail is challenging in any market, but with the fluctuation in population throughout the year, many business experience drastic decreases in revenue during the summer months. There are issues of short-term and long-term commercial and retail vacancies Downtown due to flood damage.

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## Public Realm

The sidewalks and public spaces frame the experience of the pedestrian. The current design of Downtown Pullman provides a number of different experiences that encourage both lively social interaction in public space, but elements such as noise, lack of seating and physical comfort make portions of downtown less inviting for residents and visitors to stay.

## Streets and Pedestrian Experience

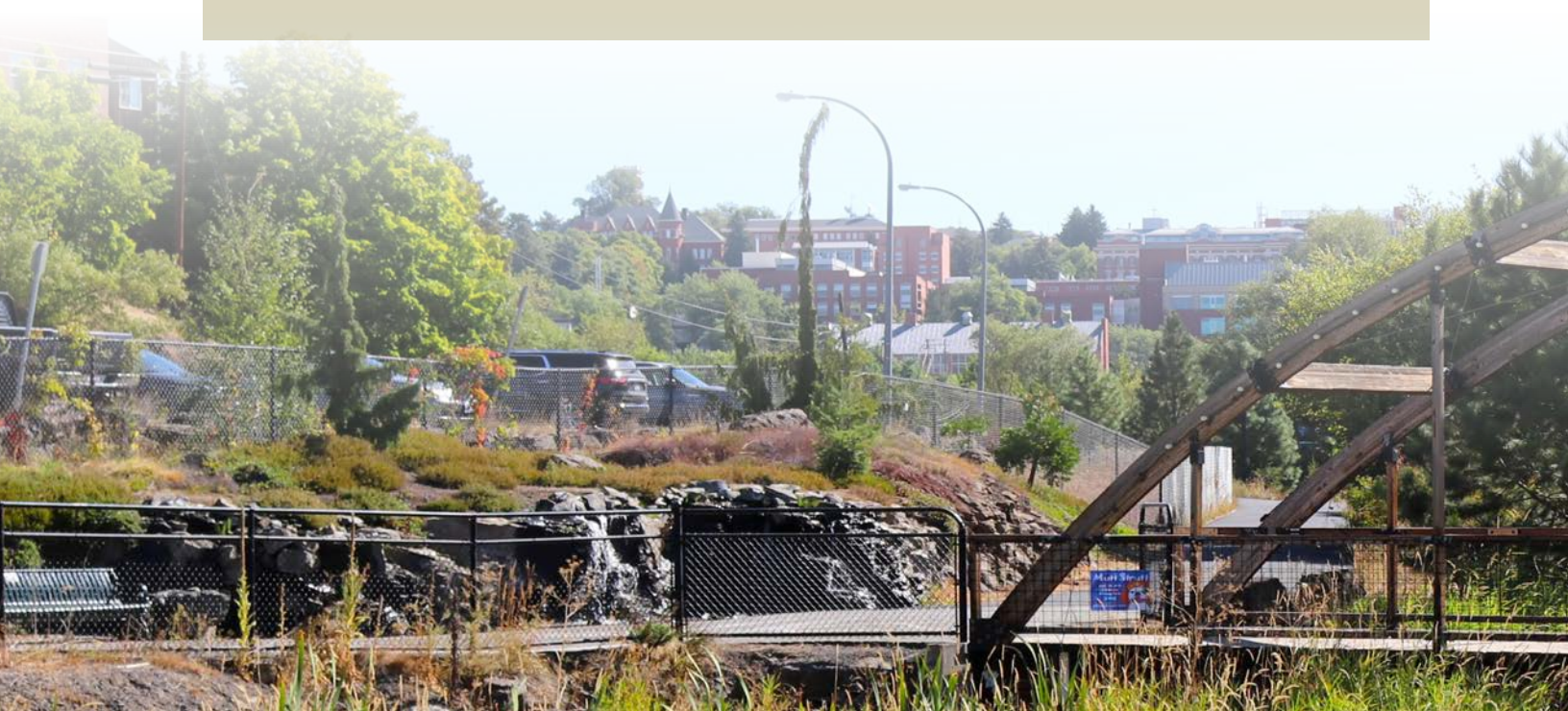
The Downtown core is comprised of four streets that house the bulk of retail and commercial activity. Sandwiched between the river and the hills, downtown is designed with a slightly irregular grid layout. This irregular street network makes variable block lengths, from 200 to 400 feet in length.

**East Main St:** From Grand Ave to Pine St, the mature street trees and continuous storefronts create a human scale pedestrian experience. These blocks are flanked by High St Plaza and Pine St Plaza, a connecting point to the pedestrian bridge over the South Fork of the Palouse River. The street is lined with bars, restaurants, retail and banks, many of which are small businesses in early-to-mid 20th century buildings.

**Grand Ave:** Grand Ave is a heavily traveled vehicular corridor, with street parking on both sides of the street to provide a pedestrian buffer, but few street trees. There is a clear division of uses north and south of Main St along Grand Ave.

**South East Paradise St:** Paradise St lacks the elements in the right-of-way that contribute to a comfortable and engaging pedestrian experience. Street trees and on-street parking are sparse. There is little enclosure created by buildings, with much of the street lined with surface parking lots.

**North East Olson St:** Olson St, on the northern edge of downtown, terminates at Pine St Plaza and houses a significant amount of public off-street parking. There are a few pedestrian-oriented storefronts between Grand and Kamiaken, with the remaining space dedicated to free two-hour parking. There is the public library, a music store, and a pizza shop with café seating along the street.





# Placemaking Analysis

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Elements that bring energy and life to a downtown area are often interdependent. Successful downtowns traditionally have dynamic mix of active public and private spaces, as well as a robust collection of cultural and historic places.

## **Public and Private Spaces**

Currently downtown Pullman sees the highest rates of activation in spaces that have outdoor seating and support multiple uses. Successful indoor and outdoor public spaces embody several traits, including access and connectivity, comfort, activity and social gathering. Cafes and retail, especially those with outdoor seating, bring life to the streets. Civic spaces, such as the public library, bring a community-based gathering space to Downtown. Outdoor spaces such as plazas can also serve as gathering spaces, event spaces, and connections between places. Pine St Plaza is well utilized due to its proximity to cafes, restaurants, and the trail, while High St Plaza is underutilized due to its proximity to heavy traffic on the two arterial streets nearby and a lack of pedestrian-oriented businesses.

## **Public Space Management**

Public spaces, as the foundation of healthy places, often require a level of management for their development and sustainability. Support and vision from leadership in the City, community organizations and the public are fundamental to managing public spaces.

## **Cultural and Historic Places**

Pullman has a modest mix of cultural spaces around the downtown area, including the Pullman Depot Heritage Center, which tells the story of Pullman and the larger Palouse region; the Regional Theatre of the Palouse, with movie screenings and live performances; and the Gladish Community & Cultural Center, housed in the former Pullman High school building.

Downtown Pullman is based in the Native histories of the Upper Palouse and Nez Perce tribes. As the City grew, there are elements that remain, in a visible and tangible sense. A 2004 study conducted an inventory of properties in the downtown area for eligibility for the National Historic Register, as well as contributing to a Downtown Historic district. Currently there are four properties on the National Historic Register that are within the Downtown area, which have been adapted for new uses.

*Photo by: Rob Larsen*



# Downtown Pullman

## Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

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### STRENGTHS

Major university and the proximity to campus

Sense of place

Pedestrian scale

Historic small-town main street character

Strong WSU alumni community with bonds to Pullman

Enthusiasm and growing momentum

Active support from City, WSU, Chamber, Civic Trust, and others

Reinvigorated downtown association

Significant new investments

Solid legacy and new businesses

Adjacency of river

A few iconic structures

### WEAKNESSES

Vacancies

Visible deferred maintenance to both public and private property

Traffic and transportation challenges

Limited resources to keep up with current opportunities and think big about the future

Small market

Competition from Moscow

Accessibility challenges related to parking, public ways, and businesses

Lack of groceries or other amenities to support downtown residential

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## OPPORTUNITIES

Momentum

Enthusiastic investors

Downtown housing for  
many markets

Incentives for investment

Downtown Pullman  
Association

Building leadership and  
collaboration among the  
City, WSU, Downtown  
Association, Chamber,  
Civic Trust and others

Campus connections

Wayfinding

Parking configuration and  
management

River as amenity

Streetscape and façade  
improvements

Programming and  
activation

## THREATS

Flooding risk

Retail and mixed-use  
development away from  
downtown

Loss of City Hall downtown

Loss of current momentum  
and collaborative spirit



# THE HEART OF THE PALOUSE

# DOWNTOWN PULLMAN NEEDS MORE...



Cool art and  
supply store

Interesting  
Clubs

BRANDS

# Key Actions

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Six areas of action are top priorities for the next phase of downtown Pullman's development. These were developed from consultant research, stakeholder input, community feedback, and direction from the steering committee. These priorities are organized into six key actions:

## 1. Enhance the "Gems"

## 2. Build People-Centric

## 3. Activate Public Spaces

## 4. Magnify the Core

## 5. Encourage Entrepreneurship

## 6. Catalyze Leadership

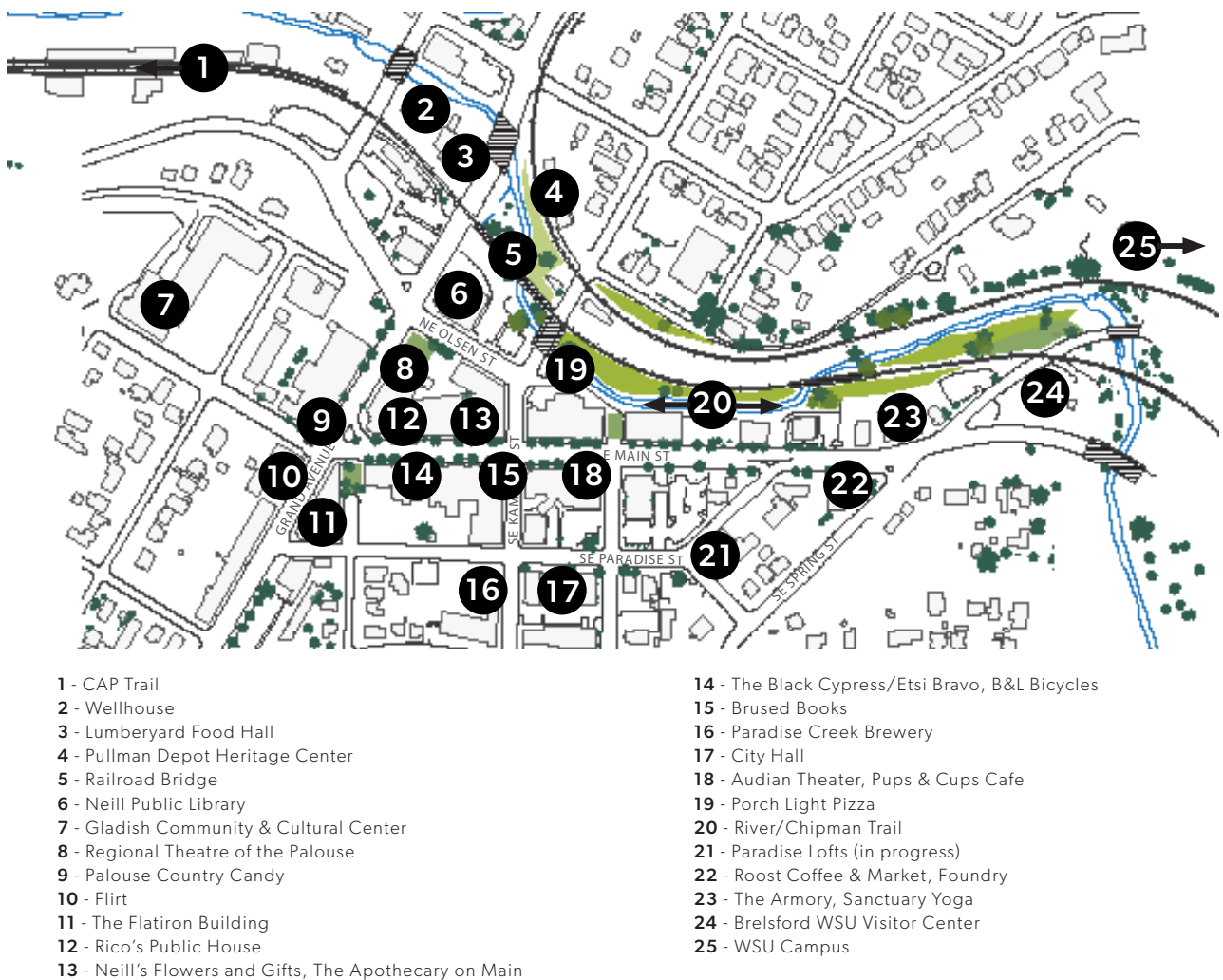




Figure 1. Framework, 2019

# 1. ENHANCE THE “GEMS”

Downtown has an abundance of places with cultural and historic significance worth preserving. These buildings represent Pullman’s history and identity and contribute to the positive experience along streets and in public spaces. These “gems” make downtown special and unique, and they should be widely promoted. Figure 9 shows a partial inventory of gems in downtown Pullman, demonstrating the density of special places in downtown Pullman.



*Figure 9. Mapping the “Gems” of Downtown Pullman*



# A. Strengthen Historic Preservation

The community values the historic character and pedestrian scale of downtown.

Community members want investors to help protect and build upon the existing fabric. For example, there are opportunities to re-use City Hall, an important civic resource. There are also opportunities to enhance Main Street, which has a collection of historic assets and buildings. Adjustments to the zoning code may protect and allow for incentives for preserving these assets. Zoning should reflect the importance of protecting downtown's character, and recommendations are further described in the Entrepreneurship section of the Plan.

## Historic Preservation

The City has an active historic preservation program including a historic preservation commission and a local register of historic places. Several Downtown buildings are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places including the Cordova Theater and the Williams Swain house. However, the National Register is an incentive-based program and does not protect historic buildings from alteration or demolition.

The local historic preservation program is essentially voluntary as acceptance on the local register of historic places requires the property owner consent. The historic preservation commission is charged with reviewing and approving nominations to the local register as well as reviewing modifications or proposed demolition of structures on the local register. The City should consider integrating the recommended design review program with historic preservation efforts including standards for any building listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.



*Pullman Flatiron Building*

## Actions

1. Develop design standards and guidelines for buildings or sites listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and integrating the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Rehabilitation.
2. Adopt demolition standards for any building listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, addressing economic feasibility, structural integrity and life safety, and community benefit.



## B. Create a Design Review Program

Design standards and guidelines should be developed to reinforce the existing character of downtown.

This would protect the character of Downtown and support the creation of “new gems.” Design guidelines or standards describe how building frontages and configurations fit within the streets and uses. The Evolve on Main building is an example of a development that could have benefitted from specific design standards, which would have influenced the building’s contribution to the pedestrian experience along SE Paradise Street and SE Pine Street.

### Design Review Program

The creation of a Design Review Program can help preserve downtown Pullman’s historic character. While preserving Pullman’s historic character is important for Downtown’s future it does not preclude or even deter new development in Downtown. Rather new development must be designed to contribute to the character and experience in Downtown through compatible human-scaled development at the higher densities allowed under current zoning. Cities have a limited number of tools to manage and regulate development and the use of design review is one tool to enhance the quality of new development.

Design review programs can take many forms from voluntary to mandatory including the use of a design review board either in an advisory or quasi-judicial capacity. Many successful programs require design review above certain thresholds and use a design review board to support the public process and advise the City on the review of applications. This role in partnership with staff ensures that professional planners and hearings examiners make the final legal determination on an application but that there is also a public process for the City, the community, and the applicant to have the right conversation regarding how the project meets City design standards and guidelines.

Design review boards often have requirements for members to represent specific areas of expertise in design and development such as architecture, landscape architecture, planning, civil engineering, the arts, and other disciplines. Given the professional qualifications required design review boards can serve as an excellent resource for staff and final decision makers during the review process. See appendix D for examples of Design Review programs from Bainbridge Island and Spokane, WA.

### Actions

1. Develop and implement a design review program for Downtown. Adopting an ordinance and codify the parameters for a design review program focused on Downtown.
2. Create new design standards and guidelines through a community-based process.
3. Establish a Design Review Board to serve in advisory capacity to review downtown development and public projects. Board should also be trained and charged with advising the City on developing the design standards and guidelines.
4. Produce a design review manual to guide applicants on how to successfully navigate the design review process.
5. Ensure adequate staff expertise and training for design review. Consider third-party review of applications as necessary to ensure compliance and high-quality design.

## C. Make Targeted Revisions to the Zoning Code

Revisions to the zoning code should encourage growth in the downtown while ensuring that existing gems remain protected.

### Greater Downtown Zoning Code Revisions

This section summarizes the existing challenges and proposed solutions to the zoning code. For specific language regarding existing code conditions and applicable code-specific proposals as organized by the Title 17 Zoning Code portion of the Pullman City Code, please refer to Appendix E.

#### C-2 CBD Zone (Near Term Priority)

Proposed recommendations for properties within the Commercial “C-2 CBD zone”, include:

##### 1. Highlight Opportunities for WSU-affiliated and artisanal or maker space uses

Across the U.S. there is an increasing amount of ambiguity over the distinction of uses considered as manufacturing, trades, and services. As it is currently written, the zoning code does not permit university facilities in the C-2 district. Through two specific code revisions (as found in appendix E), the city should highlight mixed WSU-affiliated artisanal or maker space uses that otherwise might be supportive of a mixed use CBD location.

##### 2. Refine the height limit to encourage well-designed 5-story residential above ground floor high-ceiling retail

The zoning code currently limits building heights in the C2 zone to no more than 60 feet above grade. To achieve efficiency for project feasibility, the code should include language (as found in appendix E) that amends the maximum height allowed from 60 feet to 65 feet.

##### 3. Set residential parking minimum requirements

As residential development continues to grow in the urban core, it is important to lessen future residential-employee-customer conflicts over parking. A minimal code requirement should help Pullman balance the competing implications of having too little or too much parking.

For example, 0.5 spaces/unit or 0.25 spaces/bedroom; studio apartment equivalent to one-bedroom unit.

### Actions

For the C-2 CBD Zone:

1. Highlight opportunities for WSU-affiliated and artisanal or maker space uses.
2. Refine the height limit to encourage well-designed 5-story residential above ground floor high-ceiling retail.
3. Set residential parking minimum requirements.

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## R4 High Density Residential (near- or long-term)

Zoning revisions for the R4 high density residential area adjoining much of the C2-CBD district are likely of lesser priority than the C2-related recommendations. However, it is worth beginning to think about how R4 development character may change in the future with continued Pullman population growth and redevelopment investment in the adjoining area to the CBD. Three proposed recommendations include:

### 1. **Allow limited retail mixed-use with residential above**

The zoning code does not currently permit trade uses (including retail) within the R-4 zone. Specific code revisions should seek to accommodate uses such as convenience stores, retail food, eating establishments, sidewalk cafes, and taverns/bars (limited in size) in the R-4 zone as conditional uses.

### 2. **Evaluate means to remove the current disincentive to smaller units**

Development in the R4 zone should meet possible market demands of smaller and/or affordable units.

### 3. **Adjust the building height maximum**

In order to prepare and respond to future market demands, adjusting maximum building heights in the R4 zone can help the city transition the R4 to more of a mixed-use zone.

## Actions

For the R4 High Density Residential Zone:

1. Allow limited retail mixed-used with residential above.
2. Evaluate means to remove the current disincentive to smaller units.
3. Adjust the building height maximum.

## D. Expand the Successful Trail System

Pullman has an excellent trail system of nearly 8 miles that includes the Downtown Riverwalk and ties Downtown to the WSU campus, residential areas and nearby towns.

The trail system is one of Pullman's "gems" and should be strengthened as a signature, well integrated feature of Downtown. It should serve both part of the pedestrian and bicycle system that brings people to Downtown, and a place for people to enjoy spending time in both urban and natural settings.

Trails include the Colfax-Albion-Pullman railroad corridor, informal routes along the river, and stronger connections between Downtown and the trail system.

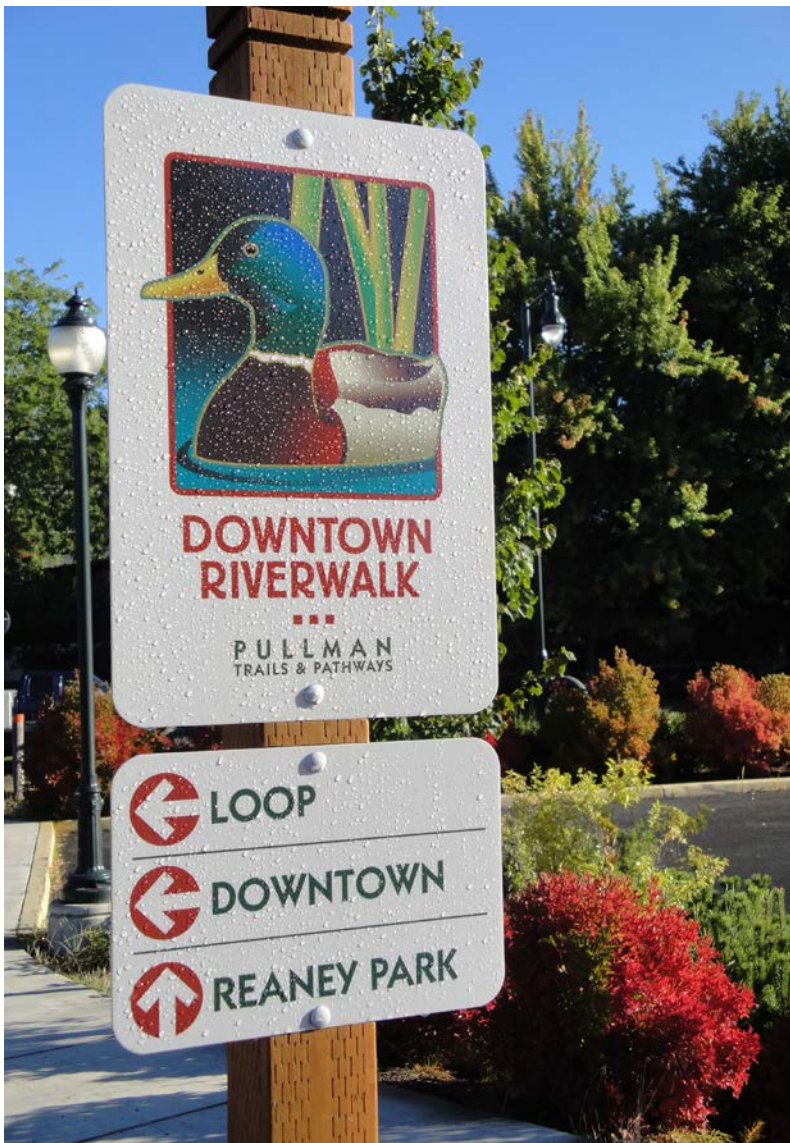


Photo by Rod Schwartz, PalousePics.com.

### Actions

1. Gain control of the trestle from WSDOT and integrate it into the trail system.
2. Increase options for crossing the river.
3. Increase options for crossing Grand Avenue.
4. Create an at-grade crossing at the railroad signal on Grand Avenue.
5. Pursue the below-grade crossing near the river.





Photos by Rod Schwartz, PalousePics.com.

## 2. BUILD PEOPLE-CENTRIC



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Downtown is often described as a loud and automobile-dominated place. Ideally, it should be a place that is comfortable, attractive, and people-focused. There are many strategies that can achieve this, including making complete streets for pedestrians, bicycles, wheelchairs, scooters, and more.



Photo by: Rod Schwartz, PalousePics.com

## A. Improve East Main Street in the Near Term

Main Street is both the heart of Pullman's downtown and a state highway. Community input stressed that Main Street is too wide, too dominated by cars and trucks, and traffic moves too fast. Reworking Main Street into a more pedestrian-dominated, pleasant and active place is essential.

Priorities for Main Street include both near-term actions and longer-term improvements, recognizing that negotiating with WSDOT, securing funding, design and permitting for major upgrades will take time and persistence.

Both near-term and long-term actions are needed. Near-term actions will address immediate improvements to Downtown, with some actions taken on an interim basis, and longer term actions will require time-consuming efforts to secure funding, design and permit a major project. In the short term, it is recommended to reduce the number of lanes from three to two and creating additional on-street parking on the south side with restriping and temporary separators. Improve the lighting in the street trees per Section 3.A.2. These near-term actions can inform the long-term redesign and rebuild of the street.



*E Main St, photo by: Rod Schwartz, PalousePics.com*

### Actions

1. With WSDOT approval, reduce Main St from three to two traffic lanes.
2. Reconfigure the 56' curb-to-curb area with painted lane changes including:
  - Two 11' traffic lanes
  - A 10' wide bicycle lane replacing the third traffic lane, using temporary separators to protect bikes from moving traffic
  - 6' deep back-in angle parking on the south side
  - 8' wide parallel parking on the north side
3. Pedestrian space
  - Improve the south side sidewalk, leaving the dimensions at 12.5' with 0.5' curb (See Section 3.A.1).
4. Add bicycle parking facilities in a bike corral in an angled space.
5. Accessibility
  - Add ADA-accessible parking spaces in the diagonal parking.



# NEAR TERM IMPROVEMENT PLAN

E MAIN STREET FACING WEST

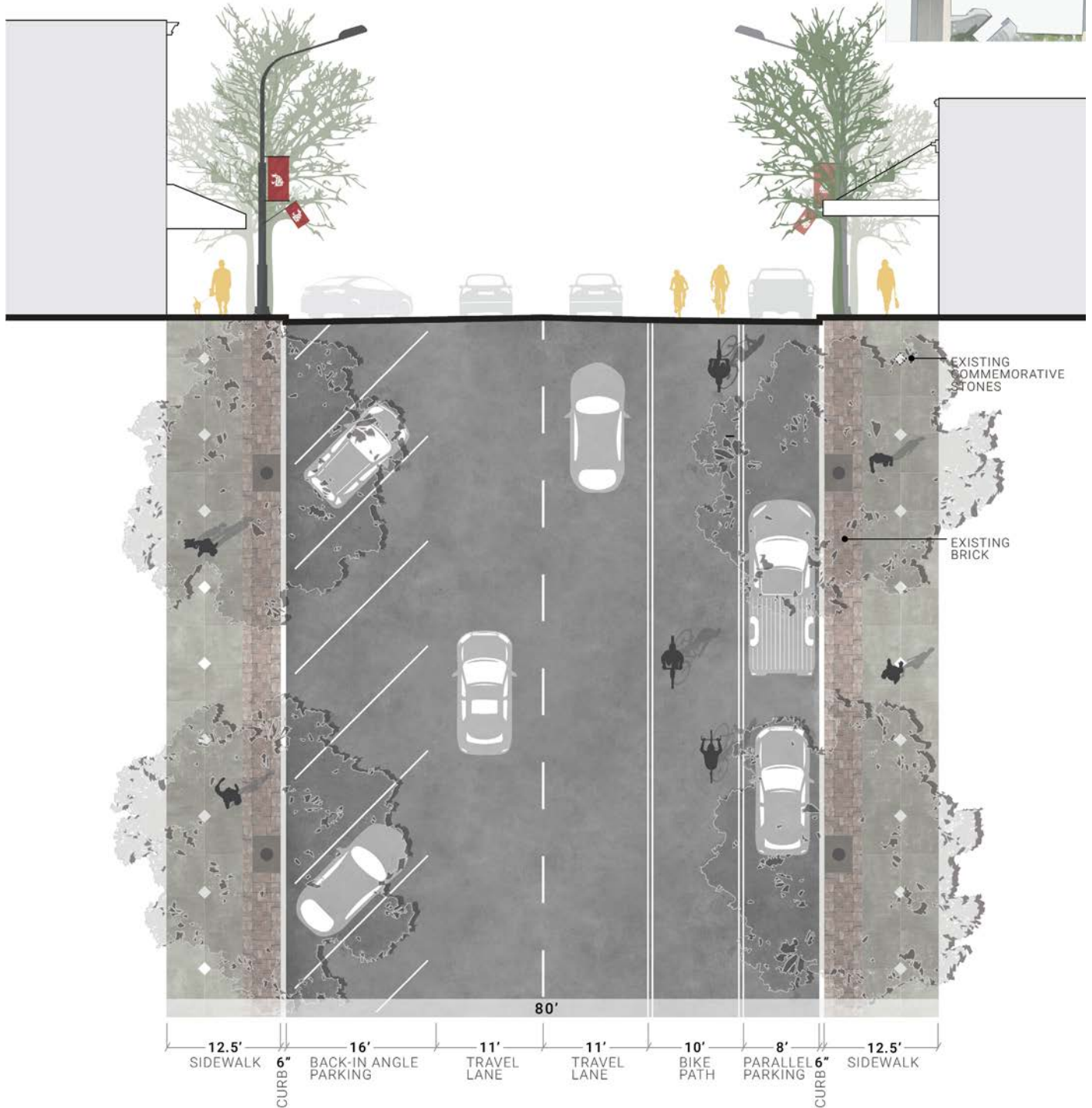


Figure 10. E Main St, Near Term Section Framework, 2019

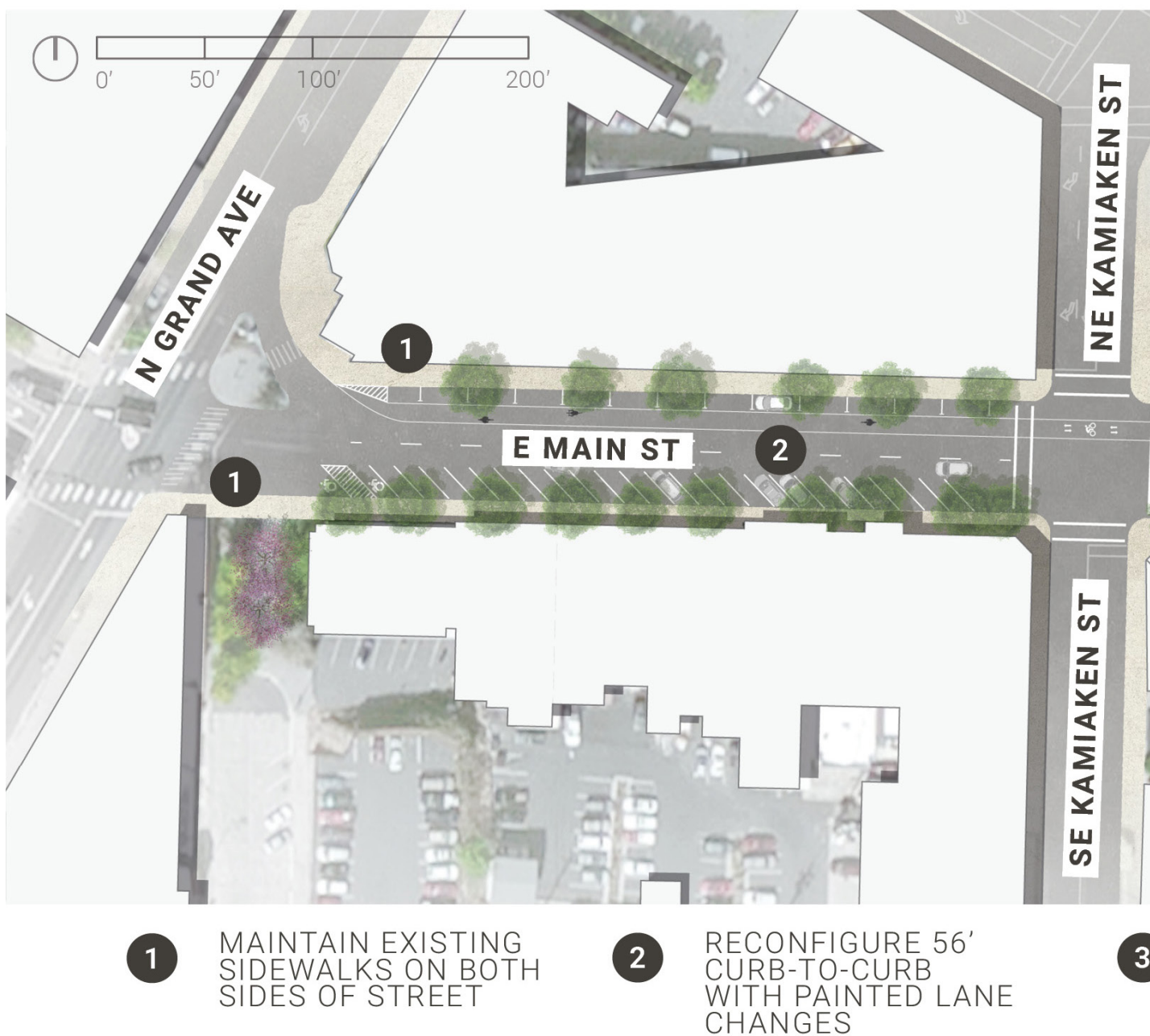
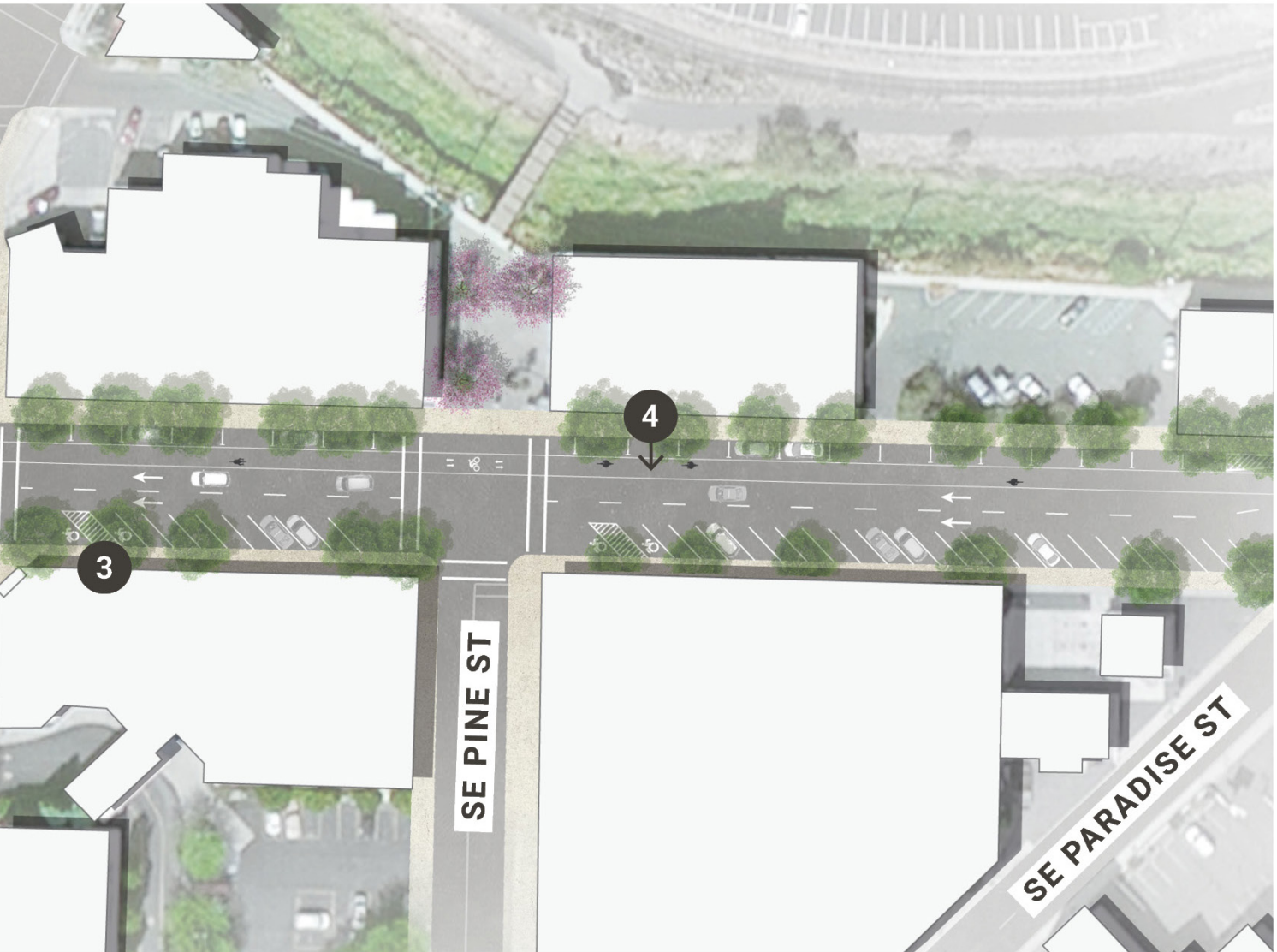


Figure 11. E Main St, Near Term Plan Framework, 2019

# NEAR TERM EAST MAIN STREET

FOR ONE-WAY TRAFFIC



3 ADA STALLS  
INCORPORATED  
INTO BACK-IN ANGLE  
PARKING

4 TWO-WAY CYCLE TRACK AT  
STREET LEVEL WITH TEMPORARY  
PROTECTION  
(E.G. CANDLESTICKS, PLANTERS)



## B. Improve East Main Street in the Long Term

In the long term, we heard the desire to rebuild East Main Street with better streetscape and better use of the space available. The concept design shown in figure 12 converts Main Street to a two-way condition, which would slow traffic and make it possible to access businesses for people arriving via Grand Street. New signals and changes to Paradise would also be required to create a two-way condition. Note that the long-term improvements to Main Street could have a similar design for continued one-way traffic if two-way conversion is not possible.

Streetscape improvements would include rebuilding the north side of the street with a raised bicycle lane flush with the sidewalk. The sidewalk on the south side can also be done at this time if was not already improved.



*National Lentil Festival, 2019*

### Actions

1. Rebuild the street section, converting the street to two-way traffic if possible. Include:

- New signalization if converted to two-way.
- New sidewalks with high quality materials (See Section 3.A. 1).
- Green stormwater infrastructure (may benefit from coordination with improvements to prevent river flooding).
- New street trees planted further away from the building facades. Continuing with Ash trees would be a good choice for consistency.

2. Install a prominent art piece to further the visibility of the park.

3. Give careful consideration to loading needs for businesses.



**LONG TERM**  
**E MAIN ST LOOKING WEST**  
 FOR ONE- OR TWO-WAY TRAFFIC

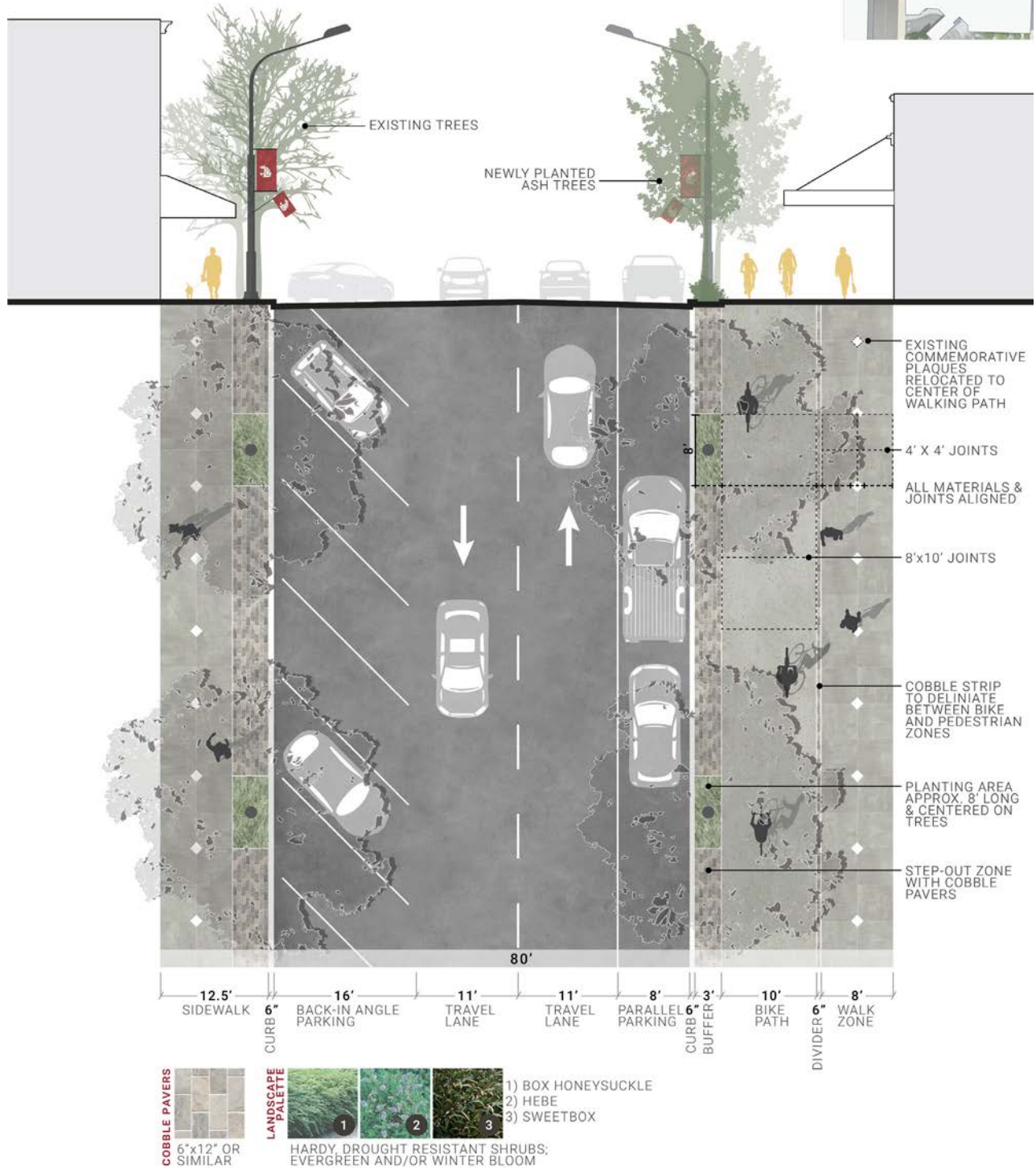


Figure 12. E Main St, Long Term Section  
 Framework, 2019



**1** RECLAIMED SPACE NEAR  
HIGH STREET PLAZA FOR  
IMPROVED PARK VISIBILITY  
WITH LANDSCAPE AND  
PUBLIC ART

**2** NEWLY PLANTED  
ASH TREES

**3** MAXIMIZE  
CURB BULBS AT  
INTERSECTIONS

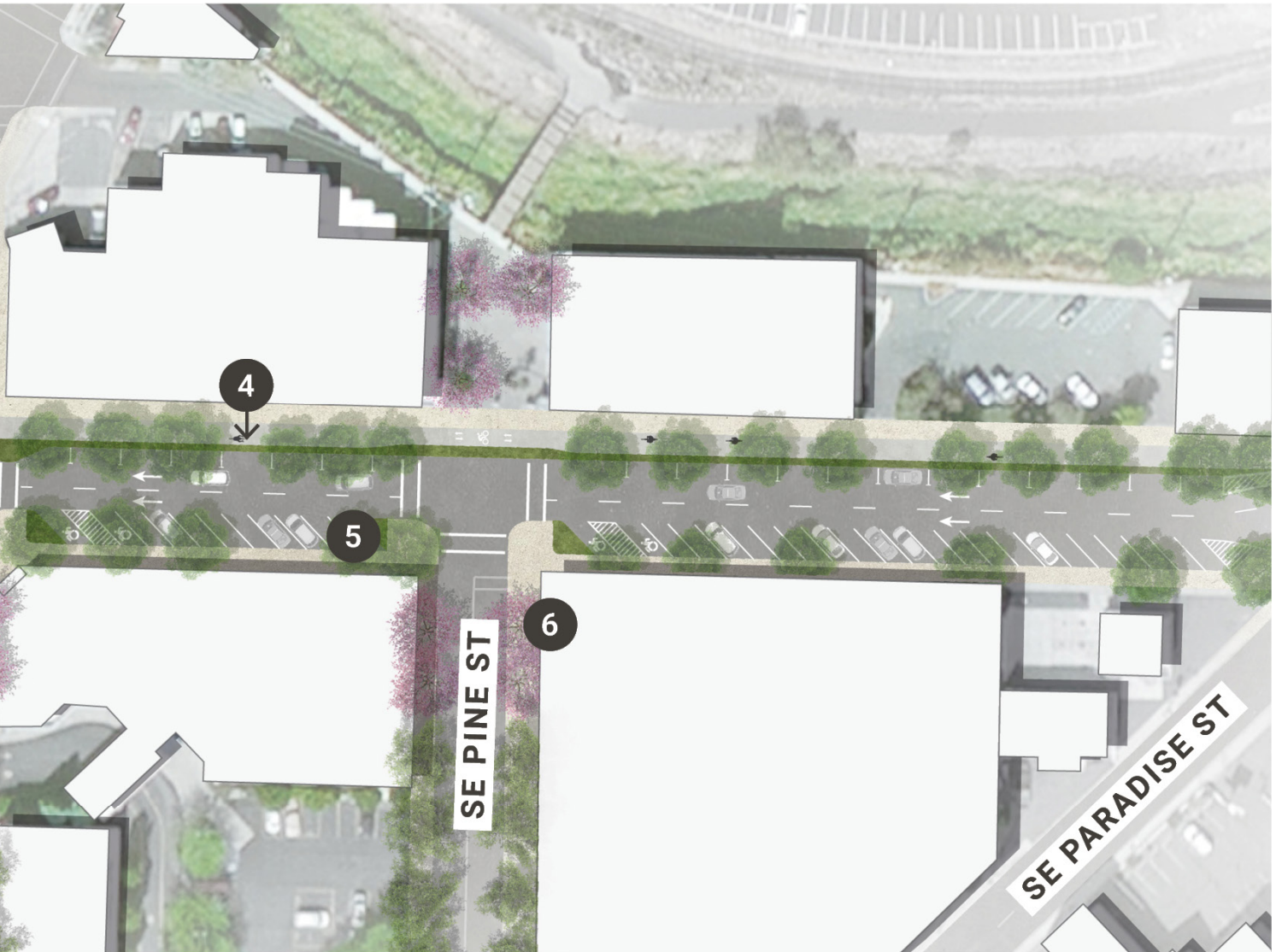
Figure 13. E Main St, Long Term Plan  
Framework, 2019



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# LONG TERM EAST MAIN STREET

FOR ONE- OR TWO-WAY TRAFFIC



4 TWO-WAY  
BICYCLE LANE

5 CONVERT SOUTH  
LANE TO ANGLED  
PARKING

6 ACCENT TREES WITH  
CONTRASTING COLOR  
AT NORTH-SOUTH  
INTERSECTIONS

## C. Make Pedestrian Crossings Easier

Part of making Downtown more walkable and pleasant is to make crossing the street more comfortable. This is especially true for Grand Avenue, with its high traffic volumes. Pedestrian improvements could include the addition of curb bulbs, lane narrowing, and signal changes to prioritize pedestrians. This Plan recommends all three of these approaches.

Pedestrian priority signal phasing should be considered for off-peak hours. Pedestrian priority signal phasing changes the operation of signals related to pedestrian pushbuttons. Instead of actuating the pushbuttons only causing the 'walk' symbol to come on, the pushbuttons would change the duration of upcoming phases to minimum green until the phase with that pedestrian movement. While this adjustment would be unlikely to maintain acceptable levels of service during peak hours, it would likely be acceptable during off-peak hours. Pedestrian traffic counts and/or a more in-depth traffic study would help clarify the effects of this adjustment.



*Intersection of Grand Ave and Main St*

### Actions

1. Study pedestrian priority signal phasing during off-peak hours through pedestrian traffic counts and/or a more in-depth traffic study.
2. Implement geometric changes to shorten crosswalks by adding curb bulbs and narrowing lanes. Main Street and Grand Avenue are the high priority for curb bulbs, but all intersections in Downtown should be considered.
3. Adjust signal timing, adding a leading pedestrian interval (LPI) to provide an increase in pedestrian safety. LPIs allow pedestrians a few seconds to enter the crosswalk.



Curb bulbs should be considered for all intersections in Downtown. Main Street and Grand Avenue is a particular example of an area where curb bulbs could improve the pedestrian experience. Curb bulbs there would shorten the crosswalk lengths by half on average while still allowing truck turning movements.

Signal timing is another way to make pedestrians more comfortable crossing streets, especially on high volume streets such as Grand Avenue. Signal timing should be adjusted to add a leading pedestrian interval (LPI) to provide an increase in pedestrian safety. LPIs allow pedestrians a few seconds to enter the crosswalk and increase their visibility to turning traffic, reducing crashes involving pedestrians.

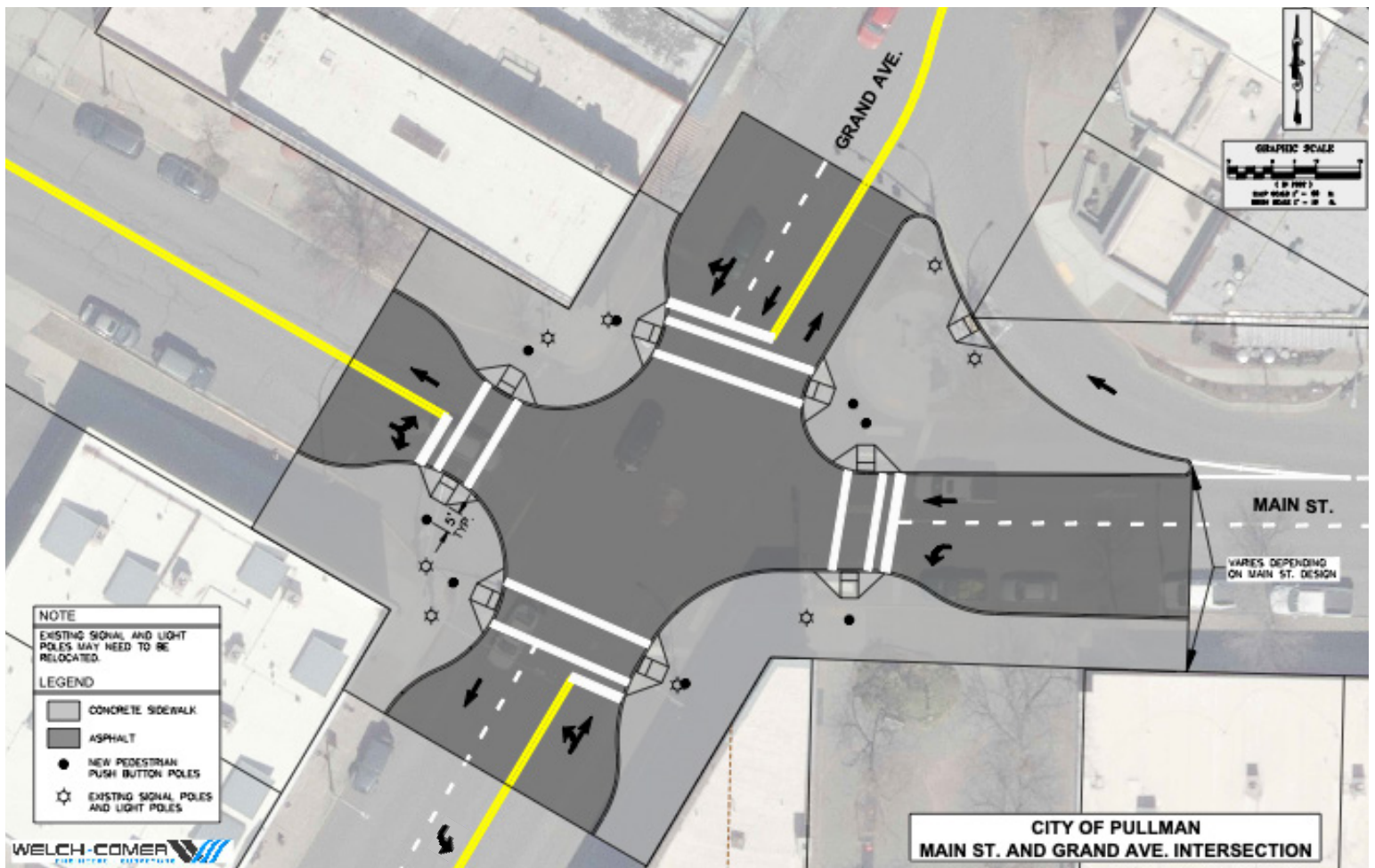


Figure 14. City of Pullman, Main Street and Grand Ave Intersection, Welch-Comer, 2019

## D. Manage Downtown Parking More Effectively

The City owns and manages a significant portion of the Downtown parking supply in both on- and off-street facilities.

The Downtown parking system is primarily free or low cost and management of public parking, including enforcement, does not pay for itself and is subsidized by general fund revenue. This resource and land ownership can be leveraged to enhance access to Downtown and economic development goals through improved parking management and supporting more active uses Downtown. The City should focus in the near term on building capacity to manage parking such as dedicating staff to at least part time parking management, routinely collecting and analyzing parking data, reviewing enforcement practices, and developing policies and strategies to manage parking as conditions change. For all action items, make sure that accessible parking spaces are convenient to all areas of Downtown. These will be easiest to provide in off-street parking areas and angled parking.

### Actions

1. Consider new management strategies when occupancy of any off-street facility or on-street block face has routine peak occupancy above 85%.

- Modify time limits
- Reduce or modify permit sales
- Implement paid parking

2. Right-size streets based on traffic volumes and pursue opportunities to add on-street parking such as additional parallel parking or converting to angled parking.

3. Prioritize on-street parking for customer and visitor access.

- Eliminate 12-hour on-street parking and convert to 2 or 3-hour parking

4. Pursue opportunities for shared parking in partnership with community and business organizations to increase the efficiency of existing parking facilities.

- Develop a shared parking brand for Downtown
- Develop a marketing program to increase awareness of parking options in Downtown

5. Encourage long-term parkers such as employees and residents to park off-street through policies and programs.

6. Develop an updated parking wayfinding system to direct people to public parking.

7. Pursue public/private partnerships for the redevelopment of existing surface lots to support new development of active downtown uses and the consolidation of parking in structures.

8. Maintain an event parking management plan for Downtown.

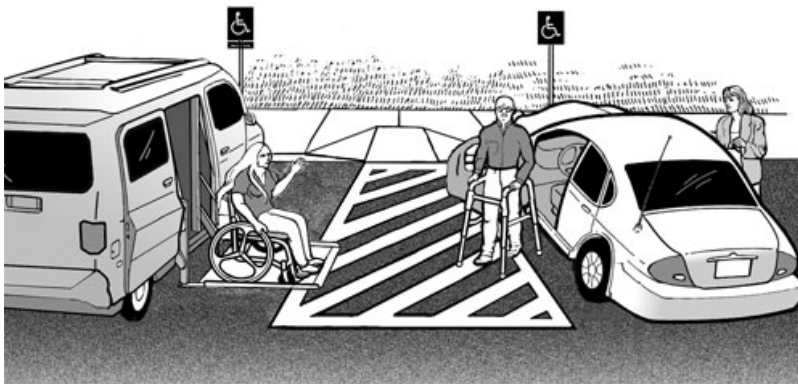
9. Consider the Downtown Master Plan Parking Considerations” from the Chief of Police dated January 23, 2020, provided in Appendix F.

## E. Ensure Accessibility

Community input throughout the process pointed to the need to be fully welcoming and accessible to all people.

One component of this is providing well-located accessible parking. With the recommended addition of angled parking on East Main Street, Olsen Street, and Paradise Street, there is an opportunity to ensure easy access to Downtown with ADA compliant parking. Downtown Pullman should have several accessible parking places, both on-street and in City-owned parking lots. These should be distributed throughout the downtown so that the accessible parking spaces are not too far from a variety of destinations.

Additionally, downtown's sidewalks need to be maintained so that they are navigable by those with mobility challenges. This includes appropriately designed and maintained curb ramps, as well as tactile strips for those who are visually impaired.



*example of ADA accessible parking*

### Actions

1. Add new ADA accessible parking spaces with newly created angled parking.
2. Consider adding ADA parking spaces in existing City surface lots as an interim condition or where needed for convenient accessibility.

# 3. ACTIVATE PUBLIC SPACES



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Downtown Pullman's streetscapes and public open spaces should support a more pedestrian-friendly, green, high quality and comfortable experience for downtown's users. In this vision, traffic is calmer and public areas form a stronger network of attractive gathering spaces that draw people into downtown to shop, eat and enjoy cultural activities. The river is also a stronger presence and identifying feature for downtown, while the reinforced historic fabric embodies Downtown's unique place in the community's consciousness.



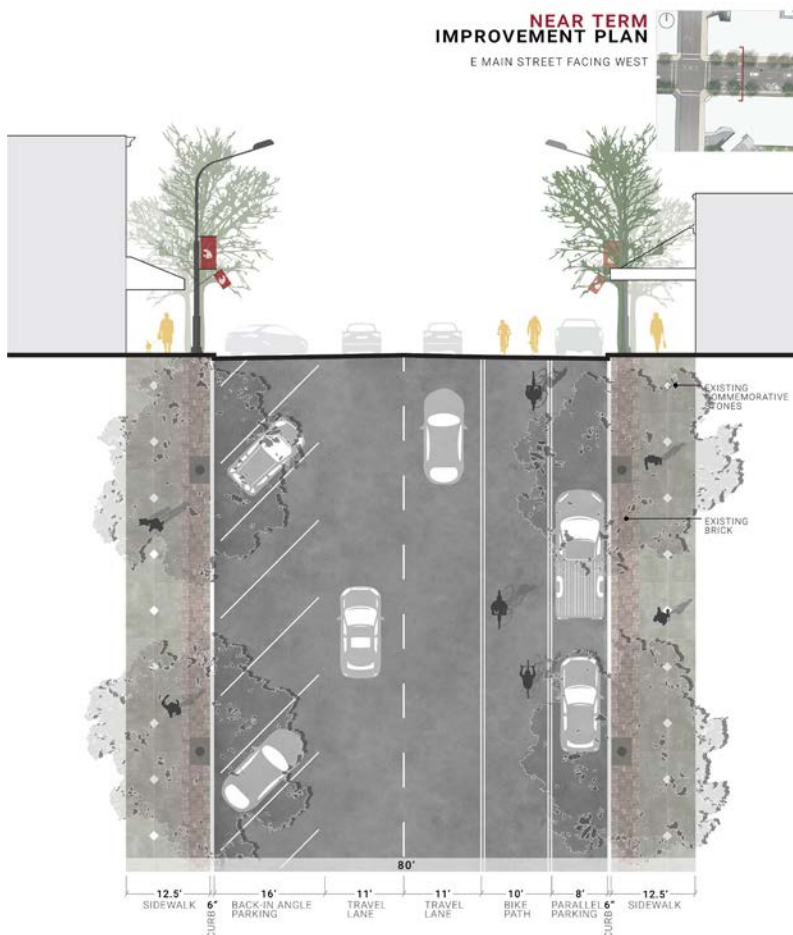
*Pine Street Plaza*

# A. Improve Streetscape

Streetscape is a key part of Downtown’s character and image. Good streetscape supports Downtown businesses and offers places for people to enjoy spending time. Five of Downtown’s streets are considered individually for opportunities and actions.

## East Main Street

Street changes to Main Street are described in Section 2, A and B (page 40-47). In terms of streetscape, there are several current variations of materials and much of the sidewalk area is in poor condition. Our recommendation for the sidewalk design includes a concrete walk zone with scoring as shown in figure 10, with a cobble separation between the pedestrian zone and the bicycle zone. A “furnishing zone” near the curb will have a mix of trees and landscape and hardscape zones that will accommodate movement between parked cars and the walk zone, and elements such as lights, utilities, etc. We recommend clustering the bicycle parking in a “bike corral” with the angled parking, as illustrated in the plan.



## Actions

1. Improve sidewalks and street furnishings, working with local businesses and Downtown interests on design details.
2. In the near term, work with artists to reinstall lighting in Main Street trees for better effect.

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## Pine Street

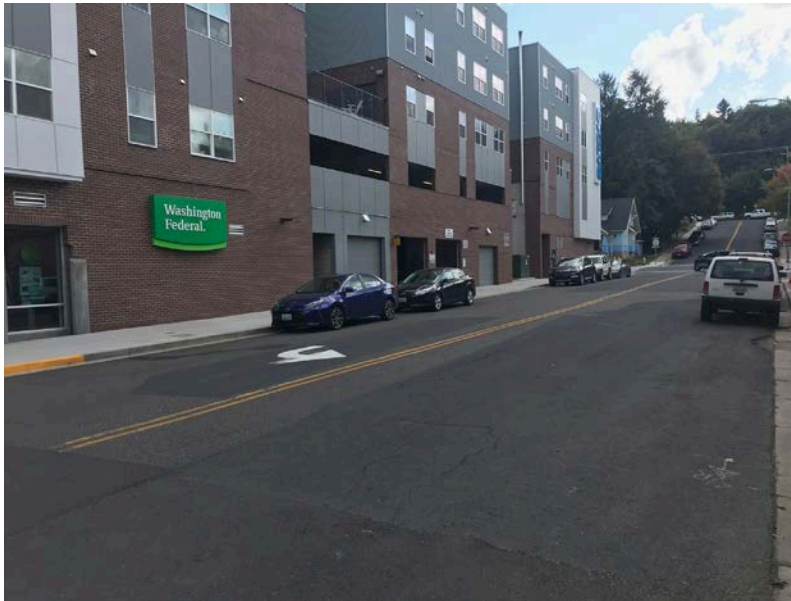
Pine Street can serve as an extension of Pine Street Plaza and the connection to the trestle and trail system. Pine Street has one lane in each direction, fairly wide sidewalks and no street trees or landscape, as shown in the existing conditions photo (figure 15).

The recently built Evolve building on the east side of the street has windows that turn the corner from Main Street, but no pedestrian entries on Pine, but several service/garage entries. The west side has the historic True's Palace Hotel (Audian Theater); this building also faces Main Street and has few openings on Pine Street. Any events, street closures, or enhancements on Pine St between Main and Paradise should consider the parking/service entries into Evolve. Because the buildings do not have active facades on either side, any activity will need to be in the right-of-way and part of a managed effort. Should the vacant property on the west side of the street develop, the design should take into account the desired use of Pine Street as an active pedestrian-oriented street and connection to Pine Street Plaza.

## Actions

1. Treat Pine Street like an extension of the Pine Street Plaza, increasing the quality for pedestrians.
2. Plant street trees and install landscaped areas where possible; avoid blockage of service entries.
3. Maximize curb bulbs at the intersection of Pine and Main St.
4. Trees on Pine Street and the intersection of Main Street should contrast with the trees along Main Street by a different form and seasonal color adjacent to Main Street. (This is true for the other north-south streets that intersect with Main Street.) Taller trees with a more columnar shape away from Main Street would have a strong presence along Evolve and the currently vacant lot.





**Left to Right**

*Figure 15. Pine St looking south existing conditions; wide sidewalks and no street trees or landscaping.*

*Figure 16. Pine St looking south; with street improvements, Framework, 2019*





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# **PINE STREET MAIN + PARADISE**

LONG TERM IMPROVEMENTS





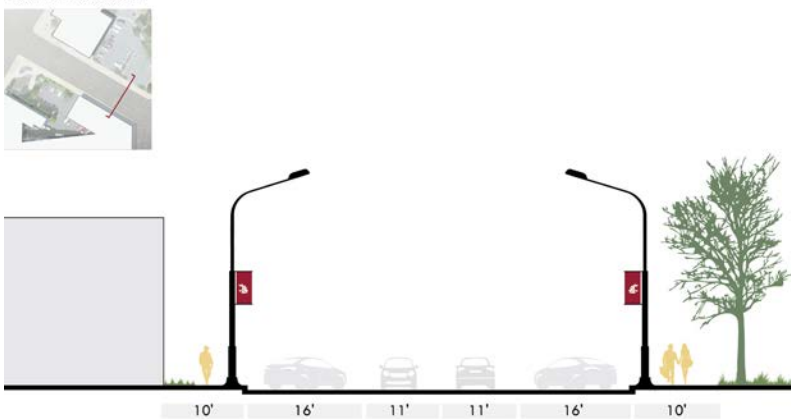
## NE Olsen Street

NE Olsen Street is home to a number of civic uses, including Cougar Plaza, the Library, and the replica of Pullman's original artesian well. In addition, there is a small publicly owned parking lot adjacent to Cougar Plaza. The City-owned parking lots along Olsen result in a lack of street frontage and activities. Olsen Street is wider than typical streets, with four lanes and parallel parking on either side, as shown in Figure 17.

Olsen Street is also part of the recommended Cultural Connector. The pedestrian crossing at that location should be strongly visible, using similar materials to those used on Main Street.



OLSEN STREET LOOKING WEST



### Top and bottom

Figure 17. NE Olsen St looking west existing conditions; wide street with four lanes and parallel parking on both sides.

Figure 18. NE Olsen St with angled parking on one side, Framework, 2019

## Actions

1. Add angled parking on both sides with one traffic lane in each direction.
2. Consider Pullman Transit's signature downtown bus stop near Cougar Plaza. This would bring activity to Cougar Plaza and provide a shelter with site-specific design, contributing to the area's character and identity.
3. Create a mid-block crossing using pedestrian-scale material.



## NEAR TERM NE OLSEN AVE



## LONG TERM NE OLSEN AVE

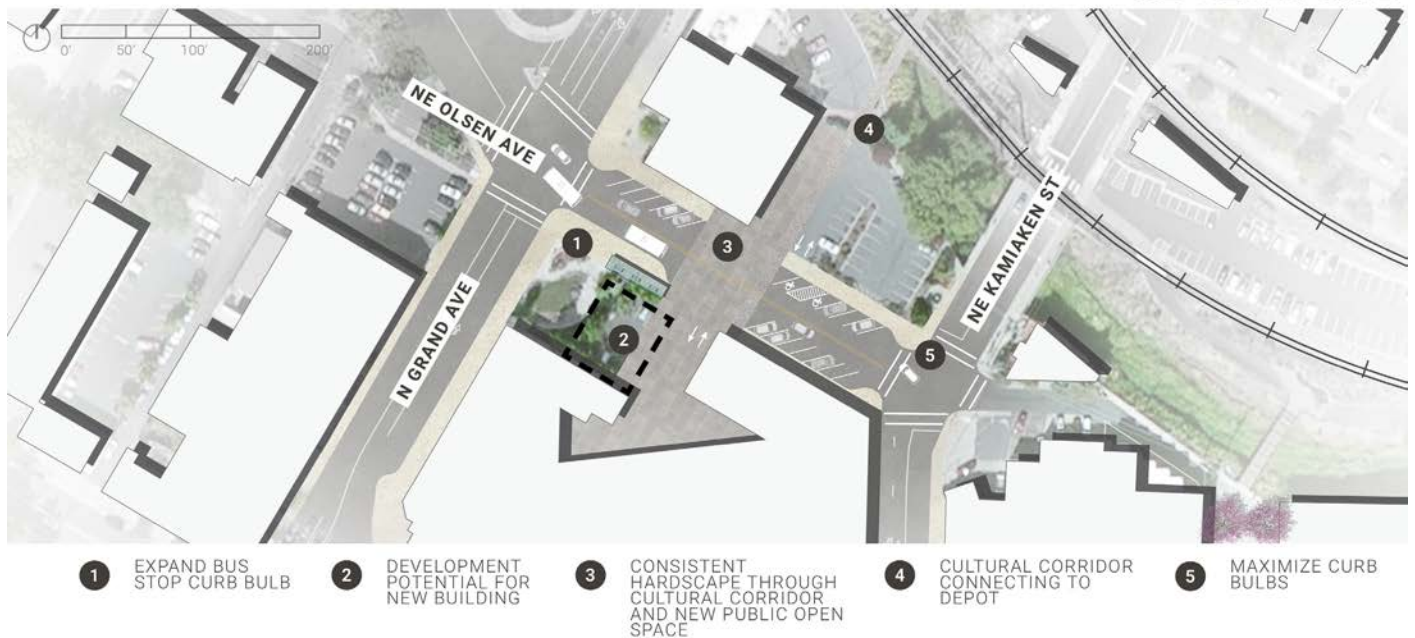


Figure 19. NE Olsen St after improvements,  
Framework, 2019

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## SE Paradise Street

Paradise Street is the entry point into Downtown for drivers entering from Grand Street. It is currently a one-way, two lane couplet with Main Street, with parallel parking on both sides. The street has few trees and a great deal of overhead wires. Paradise Street has one of Downtown Pullman's finest buildings—the old Post Office, now Paradise Creek Brewery. The City Hall building, soon to be vacated, is on Paradise Street. The street also serves a number of adjacent surface parking lots.

Near-term improvements to Paradise Street should be done so that they are compatible with a later two-way scenario. This should be able to be accomplished through near-term restriping, with the ability to change the angled parking back to parallel parking and one lane of traffic in each direction.

The street reconfiguration should accommodate adjacent businesses with the ability to load and unload, so businesses using Paradise for service access should be consulted as part of the restriping. It is also understood that there may be challenging soils conditions that need to be taken into account in terms of adding street trees.

### Actions

1. Reduce two-lane section to one lane, allowing for angled parking and significantly adding to the amount of on-street parking. Include ADA accessible parking.
2. Add street trees where possible.
3. Consider undergrounding power lines either as a City project or as part of new development.
4. Give careful consideration to loading needs for businesses. This could be accommodated through load zones or time-of-day parking restrictions.
5. Consider the intersection of Grand and Paradise like a Downtown gateway.

**OPTION 1**  
**SE PARADISE STREET**  
ONE TRAFFIC LANE CONFIGURATION



**OPTION 2**  
**SE PARADISE STREET**  
FUTURE POTENTIAL TWO-WAY CONFIGURATION



Figure 20. SE Paradise St after improvements,  
Framework, 2019



## Grand Ave

Grand Avenue is a heavily used, State-owned arterial, but there is an active street edge of pedestrian-oriented uses, as shown in the photo below. Improvements should make Grand feel like less of a barrier for pedestrians from one side to the other, so that the west side feels more like part of downtown.



*Grand Ave looking north; heavily used state-owned arterial with active street edge of pedestrian-oriented uses.*

## Actions

1. Selectively add street trees on South Grand Ave, improving pedestrian crossings and promoting quality infill on City-owned surface parking across Grand from Cougar Plaza. New trees should be of the same species as those already along Grand Ave.
2. Adjust the intersection geometry and signal changes at Grand and Main to support a pedestrian-friendly downtown.



*Downtown Pullman, Framework, 2019.*



## B. Improve Downtown Open Space

---

The vision for open space in the Downtown is a connected “fabric” of quality pedestrian space with a variety of function and character that will attract people to come to Downtown and to enjoy time there. The streetscape and retail edge will connect the improved existing plazas, and the river will become a unifying feature rather than dividing Downtown.

### Public Art Program

A public art program is recommended, likely in partnership with WSU and the Pullman Arts Commission. Such a program would identify key locations for art that will reinforce identity and wayfinding in Downtown, and support a positive, memorable character. Interactive art pieces should also be considered.

Open spaces in Downtown should have memorable signature elements. Well-known examples of an iconic attraction include Chicago’s “bean” sculpture. Smaller examples include Joseph’s “Attitude Adjustment” sculpture, Olympia’s kissing couple, and the sculpture of the garbage-eating goat in Spokane. Such distinctive pieces and potentially interactive elements would strengthen Downtown’s image and attractiveness.





## High Street Plaza

High Street Plaza currently is on the north portion of the High Street right-of-way between Paradise and Main Streets. It is a small, pleasant oasis with the historic Flatiron building as a backdrop, as shown below. Music on Main concerts are held in the plaza weekly during the summer.

This block of High Street is still used for vehicular access off of Paradise Street and parking both in the right-of-way and on private property. Vehicles will also need to be able to exit in emergency situations on to Main Street. It is assumed that this access will need to remain for the foreseeable future. The plaza should take advantage of the reconfiguration of Main Street to increase plaza space and increase visibility of the plaza for people walking along the sidewalk on Main Street.



*High St Plaza, looking south, adjacent to the Flatiron Building.*

## Opposite Page: Left to Right

*Cloud Gate Sculpture, Chicago IL*

*"Attitude Adjustment", Joseph OR*

*Garbage-eating Goat Sculpture, Spokane WA*

*Kissing Couple Sculpture, Olympia WA*

## Actions

1. Leave a 12-foot wide access lane on the west side, and 34-foot wide terraced grassy areas on the east side along the mural.
2. Incorporate lighting into the steps at the terraces.
3. Install a small raised platform for a stage or for informal seating along the edge.
4. Redo trees and paving in the plaza, with the new trees sited on the east side so that the historic façade is highlighted.
5. Plant trees near Main Street with a distinctive seasonal color such as Redbud; this should contrast with the trees along Main.
6. Direct stormwater to a runnel adjacent to the terraces and captured in a linear trench drain at the base of the terraces.

---

This proposed design includes grassy terraces leading up the slope, with space retained for vehicular access to the parking and building entries. The grassy area would be the only place of its kind in Downtown, and each terrace could hold seating, an interactive play piece, or other feature that would draw people to the park. The grade change between the terraces can be used for casual seating and allows for audiences to watch events. A larger grassy area in the flat zone near Main Street would also include a performance platform that could double as informal seating.

The slope creates an opportunity for a water feature/runnel that would carry rainwater and/or be a permanent water feature. (there is a page of images that goes along with this)

Trees are recommended on the terraces to help create a green edge to the park. Redbuds are suggested near Main Street as the contrast to the Ash trees along Main. Removing the trees on the west side will allow more of the Flatiron façade to be visible.

Suggested lighting would be LED strips emphasizing the level changes and the performance platform. Lighting could also highlight trees and the architectural façade of the historic Flatiron Building.

Removing a lane from Main Street will allow additional space in the right-of-way adjacent to High Street Plaza. This additional area is an excellent location for a significant piece of public art that would strengthen the visibility of the plaza, especially for people walking along the sidewalk.

Master Plan Concepts Only:  
Details require design development and community process

## HIGH STREET PLAZA

OPEN SPACE CONCEPT PLAN

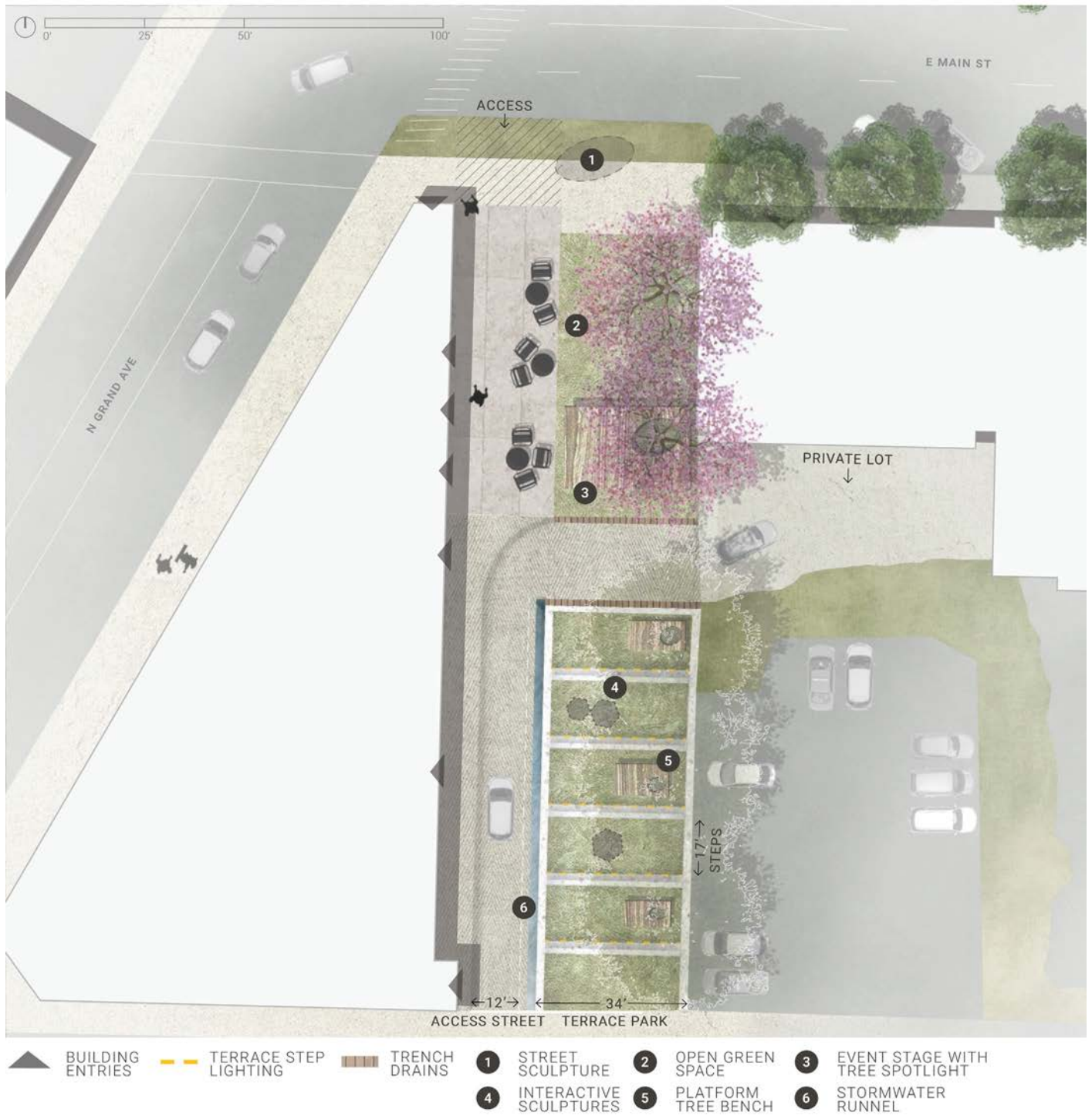
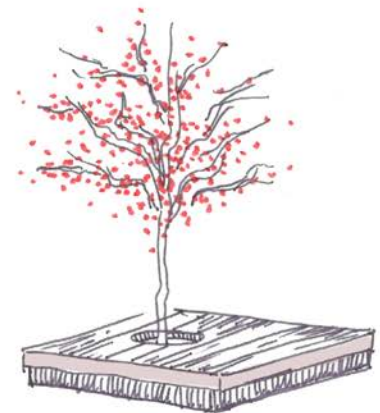


Figure 21. Plan view of High St Plaza with sculptures, green space, benches, lighting, and stage, Framework, 2019



# HIGH STREET PLAZA

DESIGN INSPIRATIONS



STEEL EDGE PLANTER BENCH 1



BENCH PLATFORM / BARNES FOUNDATION, PA 1



RUNNEL / BELLEVUE BOTANIC GARDEN 3



BENCH SWINGS / THE DISTRICT WHARF, DC 4



PLAY SCULPTURES / JAIME HAYON, GA 5



TRENCH GRATE / URBAN ACCESSORIES 2

- Expand park with landscape buffer along Main Street and signature public art piece to increase park's visibility
- Retain vehicle access to building and parking as shared use path
- Build terraces on the hillside with grassy areas and seating steps
- Create runnel/water feature along edge of terraces with decorative trench drain
- Path paving similar to Pine Street Plaza

- Movable tables & chairs seasonally on paved area
- Replace existing trees to open up facade of historic building
- Plant trees such as Western Redbud that create contrast with those along Main Street
- Lighting along edge of platforms that highlights architectural facade, trees, and art
- Add memorable pieces that will be attractors such as the swings or play sculptures--these could be designed by local artists and suitable for all ages

Master Plan Concepts Only:  
Details require design development and community process

Left to Right

Figure 22. High St Plaza Plan and Design Inspirations Framework, 2019

Figure 23. Section views of High St Plaza looking south and west, Framework, 2019

HIGH STREET PARK LOOKING SOUTH



HIGH STREET PARK LOOKING WEST



## Pine Street Plaza

Pine Street Plaza connects Downtown to the trail system via the trestle across the river. With a café and restaurant on either side, Pine Street Plaza is one of the most active outdoor spaces in Downtown. Pine Street Plaza is used for community events such as the Christmas tree lighting. The mural by Pullman artist Patrick Siler has added color and interest. It could play an even stronger role with some redesign and distinctive elements to encourage visitors to Downtown.



*Pine St Plaza, looking south, with outdoor seating and pedestrian-oriented uses.*

## Actions

1. Maintain the decorative paving and add benches and landscape that reinforce the curved cobbles. Moveable seating and associated landscape would accommodate patrons of the café and restaurant and other visitors. During warmer weather, moveable seating and umbrellas can be added.
  - Similar paving is recommended to continue across the intersection of Main Street.
  - Remove the existing fencing on the west side so that the plaza is usable by all.
2. Install a signature feature, such as a moveable fire pit, to draw visitors during cold weather and evenings. It should be attractive when not in use.
3. Activate the plaza for seasonal celebrations in addition to those already taking place such as the Downtown Christmas tree. Include Pine Street and/or Main Street for larger festivals. Note that closing Main Street for major events will be easier if Main and Paradise are two-way streets.
4. Install character lighting that highlights the mural and makes the route to the trestle feel inviting and safe. New lighting should be different than the lighting on the trestle so that the trestle lighting stands out.



Figure 24. Plan view of Pine St Plaza with recommended enhancements including moveable seating, fire pit, and tree spotlight, Framework, 2019

# PINE STREET PLAZA

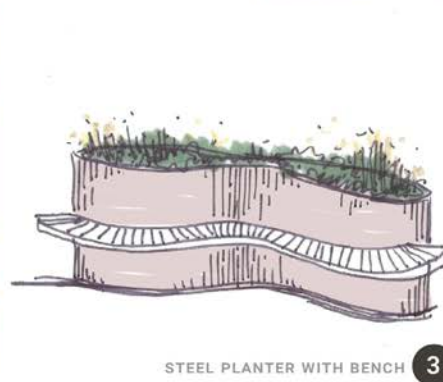
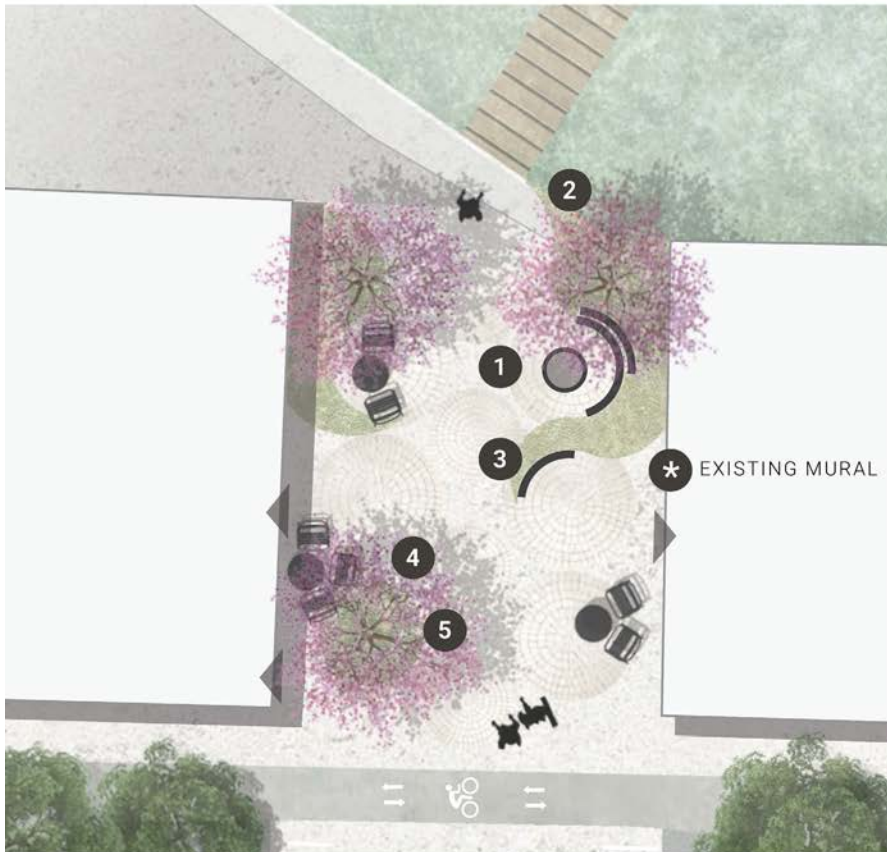
OPEN SPACE CONCEPT PLAN



Master Plan Concepts Only:  
Details require design development and community process

## PINE STREET PLAZA

### DESIGN INSPIRATIONS



- Maintain existing paving
- Remove existing fence at restaurant
- New seating with same materials as High Street but responding to curvilinear motif in ground paving
- Accent tree (redbud) with contrasting color at plaza entry to match other Main Street intersections

- Added vegetation near river with shoreline specific species
- Lighting highlights trestle and adds character (e.g. firefly lights)
- Add memorable pieces that will be attractors such as a fire pit and public art
- Consider evergreen tree to decorate for holidays



Master Plan Concepts Only:  
Details require design development and community process

**PINE STREET  
PLAZA**  
OPEN SPACE CONCEPT PLAN



**Left to Right**

*Figure 25. Pine Street Plaza Plan and Design Inspirations, Framework, 2019*

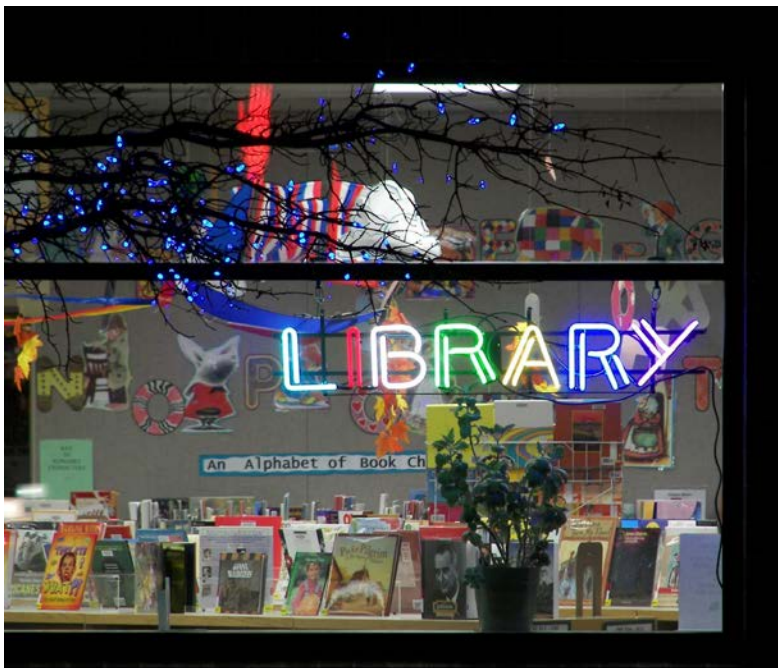
*Figure 26. Pine Street Plaza with improvements, Framework, 2019*



## Cultural Corridor

There is an opportunity to develop a “Cultural Corridor”, shown in figure 237 on the following page, which takes existing unrecognized open space and transforms them into a unique pedestrian connection from Main St to the historic train depot. The Cultural Corridor would be a unique and interesting addition to the identity of downtown and strengthen the presence of the Depot and connections across the river.

The area behind Theater of the Palouse and several Main Street businesses has the opportunity to be a useful, quirky space, with a connection through an existing passage to Main Street. Theatre of the Palouse staff have thought about how the portion of the space behind the theater could be improved for their use. The service function of the back area would remain but would co-exist with “people places.”



## Actions

1. Develop a mid-block plaza/street crossing on Olsen St, connecting to a new pedestrian path along the Library.
2. Improve the public library's façade, including the south east corner, to increase the glass and visibility of the community room along the new pedestrian route.
3. Consider an arts-related building site in the small City-owned parking area near the access road off of Olsen.
4. Install short bridge sections for the pedestrian access to reach the depot, connecting to the trestle as part of the crossing.
5. Give careful consideration to loading needs for businesses.

## CULTURAL CORRIDOR DOWNTOWN PULLMAN

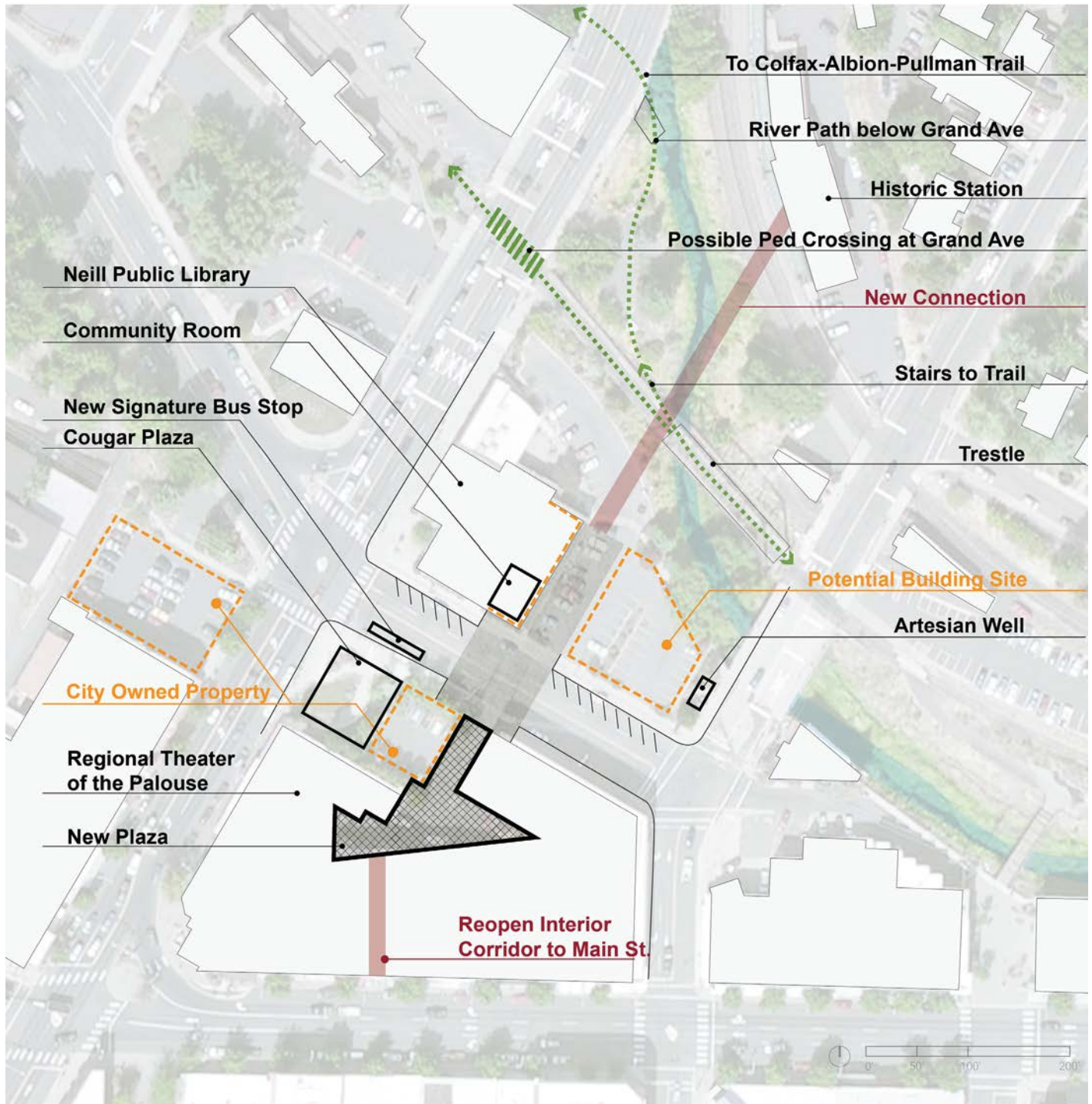


Figure 27. Cultural Corridor from RTOP Theatre to the train depot.  
Framework, 2019

## 4. MAGNIFY THE CORE





Photo by: Rod Schwartz, PalousePics.com

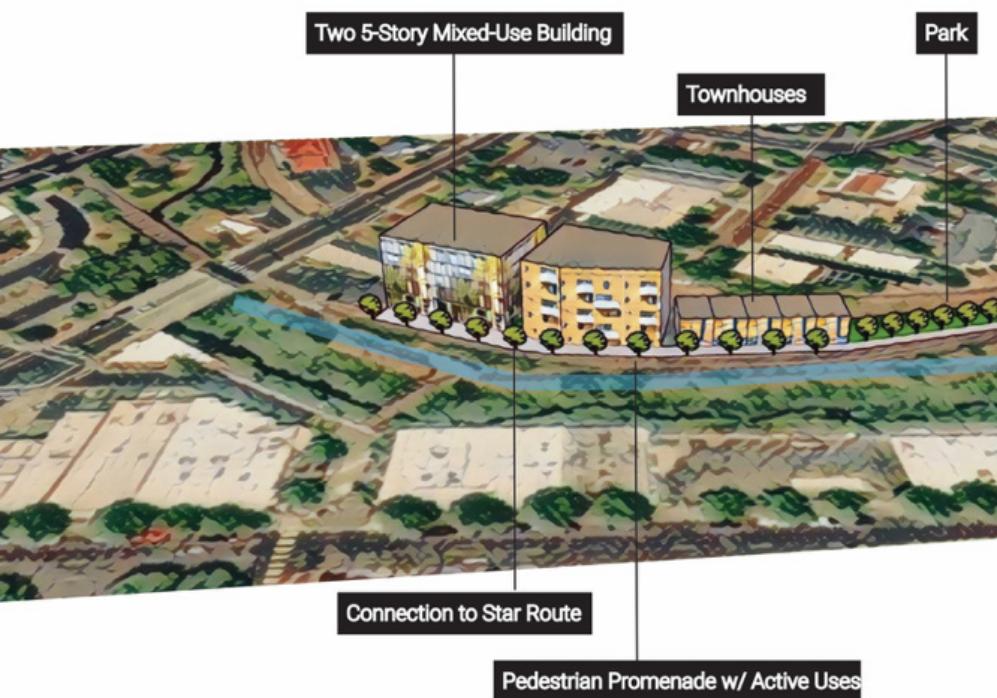


## A. Reconsider Downtown's Boundaries

The community's perception of Pullman's downtown core is generally limited to Main Street from Pine St to Grand Ave. However, downtown offers development and investment opportunities beyond this two-block strip.

Figure 28 on page 80 shows opportunities to magnify the core in orange. A more expansive definition of the downtown core is more inclusive of the "gems" that are already at the edges of the city center, but also allow room for new development opportunities to build on downtown's critical mass of jobs, housing, shopping, and entertainment. The broader definition of downtown should include official designation in City plans and ordinances, as well as a more symbolic formation of the community's "mental map" of what constitutes downtown.

The image below provides an example of a development opportunity on City-owned land north of the river; this development could offer mixed use buildings, townhomes, connection to the Star Route, and access to a park. There could be a pedestrian promenade along the riverfront with businesses and storefronts oriented toward the river on both sides.



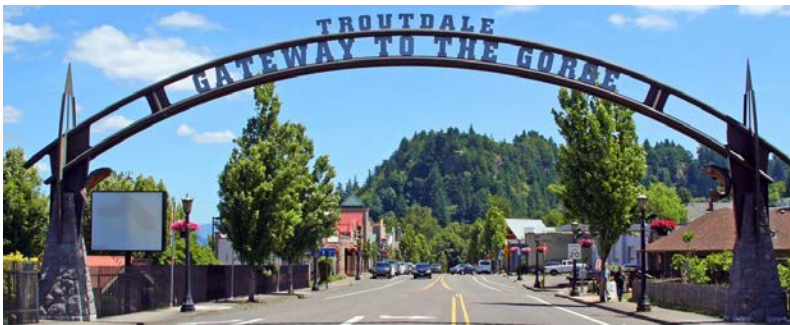
### Actions

1. Review and update the City's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning maps to include a broader definition of the City Center.
2. Develop a broader public-facing base map of the downtown core for use by the Downtown Association, Chamber of Commerce, WSU, the City, and others in highlighting downtown's many existing "gems," current events, development proposals, and so forth.

## B. Branding & Wayfinding

There is considerable ambiguity about downtown Pullman's boundaries and about connections between downtown and adjacent activity centers, especially Washington State University.

Pullman should invest in developing and implementing a comprehensive branding and wayfinding strategy for downtown. Elements should include a downtown logo and visual vocabulary, welcome signs at key downtown entries, seasonal and event banners, as well as wayfinding signs for key pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile routes between downtown and WSU and other activity centers. In particular, the entries into downtown from US-195 highway and from WSU should have impressive welcome signs, which might initially be road signs but eventually should be substantial gateway signs.



*Welcome to Downtown, Troutdale OR*

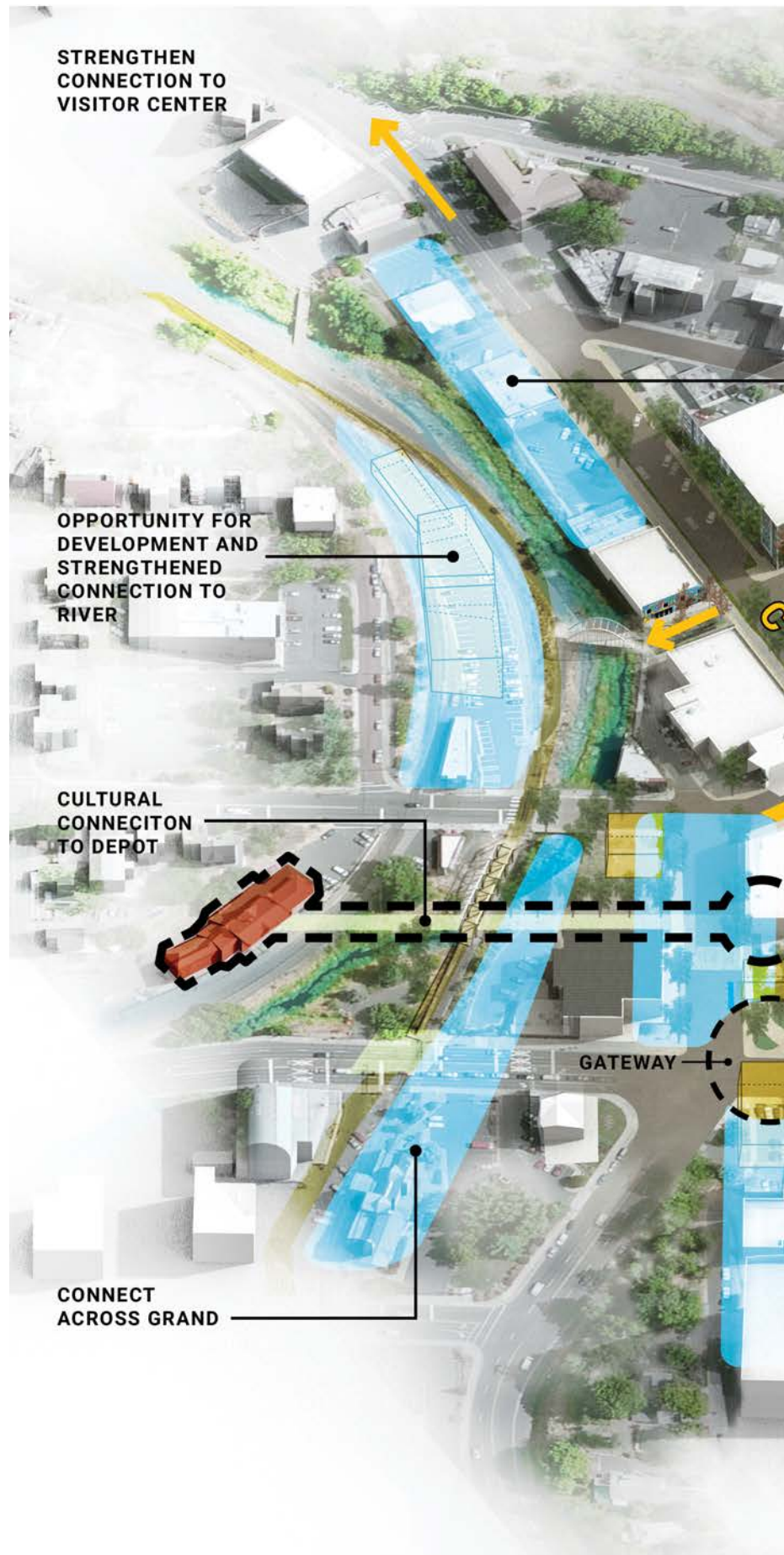
*Pioneer Square Banner, Seattle WA*

*Downtown Association Logo, McMinnville, OR*

### Actions

1. Invest in developing and implementing a comprehensive branding and wayfinding strategy for downtown.





**STRENGTHEN  
CONNECTION TO  
VISITOR CENTER**

**OPPORTUNITY FOR  
DEVELOPMENT AND  
STRENGTHENED  
CONNECTION TO  
RIVER**

**CULTURAL  
CONNECTION  
TO DEPOT**

**GATEWAY**

**CONNECT  
ACROSS GRAND**

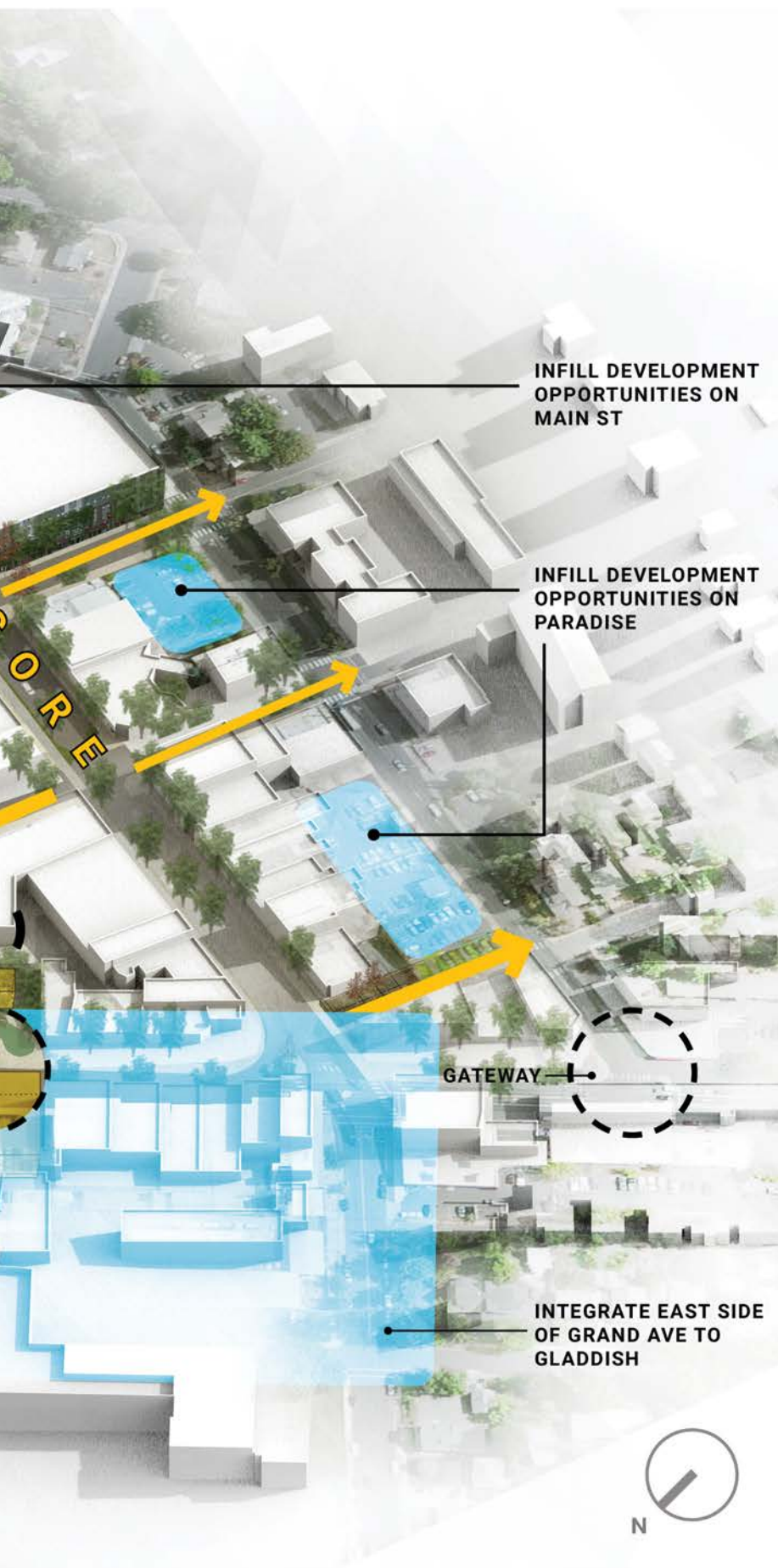


Figure 24. Opportunities to Magnify the Core, Framework, 2019

## **5. ENCOURAGE ENTREPRENEURSHIP**



---

A successful downtown relies on thoughtful public-private investments. There are many opportunities to build upon the social and economic fabric of downtown, including refilling vacant storefronts, exploring a multi-family housing tax exemption, redeveloping public parking lots, and revising the downtown zoning codes.



*Photo by: Rod Schwartz, PalousePics.com*

## A. Refilling Vacant Storefronts

---

Currently, there is often a gap between what a tenant can afford to pay in rent and what a property owner needs receive long-term to keep the property viable. Incentives for occupied space come in many forms, with subsidies for physical improvements among the most common. Such subsidies are usually in the form of grants and/or low-interest loans. Funding for such program often comes from local public or private sources, such as city governments, major employers, or real estate developers. The Pullman Downtown Association should work with the City, University, and other relevant partners to develop a fund to help property owners and tenants implement visible façade improvements and to overcome physical barriers to storefront occupancy (such as flood protection or structural issues).

Storefront re-leasing could happen through direct underwriting of lease rates, but it can also be through a deliberate business development program in which the downtown association plays an active role in curating the business mix by conducting a market study, developing a leasing concept, building relationships with property owners, identifying prospective businesses, and making connections between potential tenants and landlords.

## B. Multi-Family Housing Tax Exemption

---

Property owners are still taxed on the current value of their property but are not taxed on new value from new construction or rehabilitation for a period of 8-12 years, depending on if the development is market rate or affordable. In other cities, the multi-family housing tax exemption has made a difference in project feasibility by offsetting the high costs of new construction.

## C. Desired Daytime & Nighttime Uses

---

Pullman's regulations, policies, incentives, and activities should be aligned so that the easiest thing to do in downtown Pullman is exactly what Pullman wants in its downtown. Desired uses should build on existing strengths, such as offices, residences, cafes and restaurants, as well as retail establishments that draw people into downtown and enliven pedestrian activity. Especially important daytime uses include shops with active storefronts and a lot of foot traffic, cafes and restaurants, and offices that bring employees downtown for the day. Additionally, active uses should be on the ground floors and facing the main streets. More passible office space is better located on upper floors and side streets. Priorities for nighttime activity are bars and restaurants, coffee and dessert shops, boardgame bars, and other activities that encourage a vital nightlife. Like office space, residential uses are also great for providing a built-in clientele for downtown but are best located on upper floors or side streets so that the ground floors of main streets are highly active.

### A. Actions

1. Near term: Partner with WSU, building owners, and artists to implement an art program to fill vacant storefront windows with temporary art installations.
2. Longer-term: Provide incentives to keep storefronts occupied.
3. Support storefront re-leasing to help bridge gaps between landlords and tenants.
4. Implement downtown design guidelines or standards with a design review process to encourage storefronts to better fit the character and business mix for downtown, and to identify priority storefronts for improvements.

### B. Actions

1. Consider a multi-family housing tax exemption to exempt the valuation of new construction.

## D. Phased Public Parking Lot Redevelopment

The City of Pullman has 12 public parking lots which are possible sites for mixed-used development.

Some of the best development opportunities in downtown Pullman comprise public parking lots. Uses for possible consideration are listed, for sites as identified below.

1. Office/co-work space with retail at corner
2. Boutique hotel, residential over retail
3. Art space/plaza/hotel
4. Residential including condo units above civic use, retail facing Olsen
5. Mid-rise residential with possible extended-stay hotel and ground floor convenience retail on Kamiaken frontage
6. Innovation lab or residential above non-profit/arts space
7. Retail/entertainment with office or student housing above
8. Mid-rise residential or office above retail/arts/dining use on plaza plus below-grade parking
9. Infill office or residential above retail/entertainment
10. Adaptive City Hall reuse for major office tenant and/or co-work/incubator with ground floor retail facing the plaza and parking structure retention \*
11. Infill walk-up apartments
12. Mid-rise residential or build-to-suit office

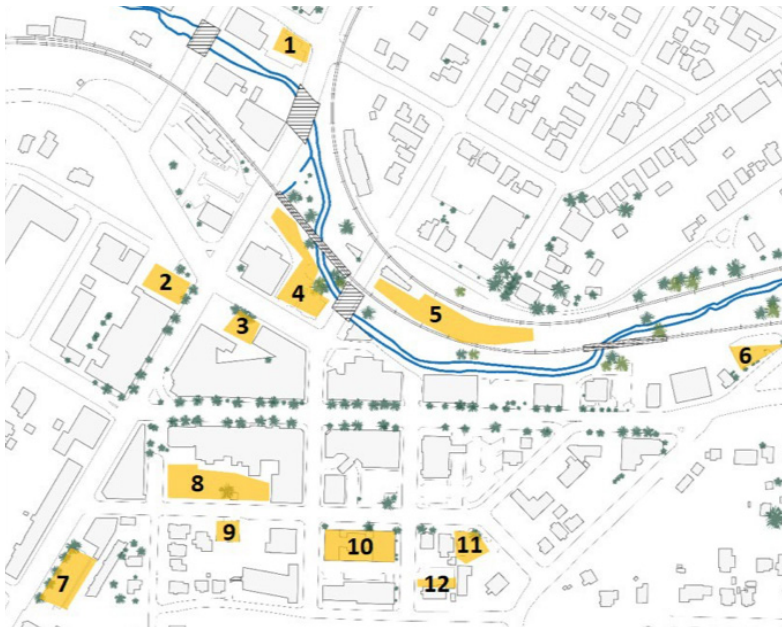


Figure 29. Possible parking lots for mixed-used development, E.Hovee, 2019

### Actions

1. Develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the City to obtain a proposal from a qualified firm or entity with the capacity and interest to build on specific parking lot site(s) owned by the City. (See appendix G for example).

\* Note: The City of Pullman will soon be vacating its current City Hall building. This important downtown site will present a critical reuse opportunity. The City should actively seek proposals from potential tenants and/or redevelopers. Criteria for selecting a tenant or developer should focus mostly on the site's potential as an activity hub for downtown. Active offices and/or residences on upper floors with active retail and/or restaurants on the ground floor would be ideal. The City should resist the temptation to let the vacated building sit partially idle as temporary storage or office space for overflow or transitional government functions that do not activate the downtown.



## 6. CATALYZE LEADERSHIP

Motivated, organized, and sustained leadership is critical to the success of downtown. Successful downtowns have a leadership organization that is responsible for coordinating and implementing diverse strategies toward community transformation. The National Main Street Center's four-point Main Street Approach® to community transformation of organization, promotion, design, and economic vitality is a nationally proven strategy for dependably successful downtown revitalization and management.



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## A. Organization

---

The most important element of a successful downtown is an effective organization that is the keeper of a vision for downtown, a catalyst for change, and coordinator of the many downtown stakeholders.

Effective downtown organizations have a mix of property owners, businesses, public agencies, and community groups working together led by a volunteer board of directors, several active committees, and a full-time paid manager. The downtown association manager is in the middle of everything; the person who wakes up every morning worrying about downtown, generating ideas, and keeping everyone moving in a common direction.

This staff person should coordinate a well-structured and active set of volunteer committees to implement the recommendations within this Master Plan. This should be a well-paid position that attracts and retains an experienced individual to lead downtown. Funding for this position should come from those with the most to gain: Pullman's local property, business, and public interests. Initially, the downtown manager could be paid for through a partnership between the City, WSU, and others with a vested stake in Pullman's character, vitality and livability, and who can move quickly to get this program underway.

Ultimately, the long-term funding for the Downtown Pullman Association should be a three-way partnership between the City of Pullman, major economic anchors (like WSU), and downtown property and business owners.

## B. Promotions

---

Downtown promotions can be thought of as threefold: image promotions, special events, and retail sales. Each should have a distinct role and set of measurable objectives.

Image promotions seek to change people's perceptions about downtown. Special events invite people to experience and bond with the downtown while enjoying community activities. Retail sales should move products, whether they are hard goods, food and beverage, or experiences.

Downtown Pullman has many things that are already happening and should promote the gems and activities that already exist. Downtown should not only promote WSU activities like orientation, homecoming, graduation, moms' and dads' weekends, and alumni events but seek to bring lots of these activities downtown.

### Actions

1. Recruit and hire a paid downtown manager who plays an active role in coordinating all of the efforts and activities happening in downtown.
2. Grow the partnership to include downtown's property and business owners who have the most immediate stake in its success but will be more time consuming to get on board.

### Actions

1. Downtown Pullman should promote itself much more deliberately and broadly.
2. Embrace and encourage underrealized WSU activities to happen downtown.
3. Create an annual calendar of varied promotions, which can profoundly change downtown Pullman's role in the region.



## C. Design

---

Pullman is already passionate about its physical environment and many volunteers are leading various design improvements in and around downtown.

As has been encouraged throughout this plan, there are many physical design opportunities that are meant to promote street life that is welcoming, vibrant, and characteristic of Pullman.

Leadership should seek to coordinate impassioned stakeholders around focused design improvements that speak to the vision and goals of this downtown master plan.

## D. Economic Vitality

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The City of Pullman's new Economic Development manager should prioritize and assist in implementing the recommendations within the Entrepreneurship section of this plan in support of building owners, who should be leading.

This includes refilling of vacant storefronts; utilizing the multi-family housing tax exemption; redeveloping public parking lots; developing partnerships for storefront art; and encouraging zoning amendments to attract appropriate developments and businesses. The downtown manager should work closely with the City's Economic Development manager on all downtown efforts.

Stable and consistent long-term funding should include participation from property and business owners, as well as the major entities noted in action 1. Moreover, the City should consider a Business Improvement Area (assessment district) as a mechanism for this long-term funding.

### Actions

1. The downtown manager should help coordinate and synchronize the many individuals and groups working on design to ensure they are aligned and in service to downtown's overall vision, character, and functions.

### Actions

1. Work with the City, WSU, and others to secure initial (3 years) funding for a full-time paid manager for the Pullman Downtown Association.
2. Hire a full-time paid manager, and launch a highly visible schedule of promotions, economic vitality, and design activities organized by the manager with support from an active board of directors and volunteer committees.
3. Beginning in year-2, develop a long-term funding structure for the Downtown Association.



# **DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN APPENDICES**

**February 2020**

## Appendix B: Comprehensive Plan Goals pertaining to downtown

Comprehensive plan goals pertaining to the Downtown area are identified. Although the current update process of the comprehensive plan is not complete, the new direction is important to take into consideration. All additions to the goals through the community visioning process have been added in *italics*. These Comprehensive Plan goals and policies are proposed statements that have been excerpted from documentation produced for the current Comprehensive Plan update.

GOAL LU1: Establish an attractive urban community, clearly distinguished from surrounding farms, and discourage inefficient sprawling development from consuming valuable agricultural land.

*Policy LU1.8: Emphasize the downtown as the focal point for community events to facilitate interaction between WSU students and long-term residents and promote the community's existing "small town" feel.*

GOAL LU4: Preserve opportunities for high quality, diversified life styles within the community's residential neighborhoods.

*Policy LU4.1: Promote mixed residential/commercial use in appropriate parts of the city (e.g., downtown, Colorado Street).*

GOAL LU8: Protect, enhance, and wisely utilize Pullman's natural resources.

*Policy LU8.14: Employ Low Impact Development practices in public and private land use to more efficiently use storm water resources.*

### Transportation

GOAL T1: Provide facilities, access and circulation for all land uses to ensure free and safe movement of people and goods.

*Policy T1.18: Improve motorized and non-motorized access routes into the downtown area, particularly from the WSU campus.*

*Policy T1.20: Implement "complete streets" principles to the extent possible when construction projects are proposed for new or existing roadways.*

GOAL T2: Maintain and enhance the nonmotorized transportation system consistent with the city's approved pedestrian/bicycle circulation plan.

*Policy T2.2: Complete a comprehensive network of pedestrian/bicycle facilities that connect Pullman's four hills with the downtown district and outlying areas.*



Policy T2.3: Enhance and expand the existing nonmotorized transportation system to link major activity centers, provide sufficient access within neighborhoods, and separate pedestrian from vehicular traffic.

*Policy T2.9: Explore the opportunities for a trail along the railroad right-of-way between Pullman and Colfax.*

GOAL T4: Provide adequate, attractively landscaped parking for all developments within the city.

Policy T4.4: Establish on-street parking permit programs where appropriate, based on the characteristics of the particular neighborhood or district.

*Policy T4.5: Provide enhanced education and signage related to parking opportunities in the downtown district.*

## Housing

GOAL H2: Encourage housing in a range of types and prices suitable for all social and economic segments of Pullman.

H2.10 Encourage housing in upper stories downtown or in new commercial development

*Policy H2.9: In the city's development regulations, account for changing residential needs, such as live/work spaces and micro housing.*

## Parks and open space

GOAL P1: Maximize the quality of life in Pullman by providing open space, trails, parks, and recreational opportunities and facilities throughout the community.

GOAL P2: Assure the preservation and conservation of unique, fragile, scenic, and non-renewable natural resources.

*Policy P2.4: Work cooperatively with property owners and land developers to protect privately owned land with significant environmental features through the use of easements, zoning conditions, land trust agreements, or other appropriate means.*

*Policy P2.5: Require buildings to be set back from stream channels to provide open space for riparian areas.*

Develop the river park area from City Playfield to Grand Avenue to preserve the shoreline and provide recreational opportunities

GOAL P4: Complete and protect a system of green belts, centered on streams and wildlife corridors, to protect natural resources and provide passive recreation.

Policy P4.1: Attempt to restore the South Fork of the Palouse River to a more natural appearance and function.

Policy P4.2: Protect riparian corridors along perennial streams from the adverse effects of development. Maintain a buffer of vegetation (preferably native vegetation) along all streams.

Policy P4.3: Whenever possible, establish greenways to link open space areas located in close proximity to one another.

### **Capital facilities and Utilities**

Policy CF 1.5 of the comprehensive plan, stating the city needs to address existing and anticipated storm water quantity and quality issues throughout the community.

### **Community Design**

GOAL CD1: Provide opportunities that contribute to the economic well-being of Pullman.

Policy CD1.1: Expand the size and prominence of the farmer's market in the downtown area.

Policy CD1.2: Emphasize improvements to infrastructure and building maintenance in the downtown district

GOAL CD2: Promote and enhance the aesthetic appearance of the city.

Policy CD2.1: Coordinate with the Grand Avenue Greenway Committee and other local organizations to improve the appearance of arterial streets, commercial districts, and residential neighborhoods.

Policy CD2.2: Support efforts to beautify the entryways into the city with appropriate signage and landscaping.

Policy CD2.3: Work with the city's Arts Commission and other appropriate groups to provide more prominent displays of public art in the community.

Policy CD2.4: Consider implementing a street tree inventory, management, and replacement system.

GOAL CD3: Protect and preserve resources that contribute to the history of Pullman and the surrounding area.

Policy CD3.4: Retain the historic appearance of the downtown area and encourage residents and business owners to take pride in their own and the city's history.

Policy CD3.5: Allow for flexibility in city standards (such as off-street parking requirements) when designated historic places are being redeveloped.

# Appendix B: Pullman 2040 - 60 Projects

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## Pullman 2040

**Vision:** Pullman 2040 is a process which engages all community members to develop a collective vision for the Pullman community and the strategies to accomplish that vision.

**Values:** In 2040 Pullman is to be described as safe, vibrant, valuing education, friendly, having small town feel, welcoming, family friendly, community, diverse, clean, and helpful.

## Initial Project List

### Community & Identity

**CI-1 Community Identity:** Develop and implement a community identity marketing and communications plan

- Increase and improved social media and web presence
- Implement a central, digitally searchable, community calendar that includes all local events

**CI-2 Community Connectedness:** Increase personal connectedness in and care of the Pullman community

**CI-3 Entrances:** Improve the city's main entrances to make a thoughtful and welcoming first impression

**CI-4 Wayfinding:** Improve wayfinding signs for visitors, navigation, information centers, event locations and trails

**CI-5 Art:** Increase art in public spaces

**CI-6 Events:** Increase the number and participation levels of community events

**CI-7 Downtown:** Work toward a vibrant, livable and walkable downtown

- Develop and implement a downtown identity
- Explore a downtown association
- Improve downtown parking and traffic flow
- Improve and increase public use of High Street Plaza
- Develop community spaces: for example, Pine Street Plaza to Pullman Depot Heritage Center
- Continue partnering with City of Pullman, Chamber of Commerce, Washington State University and the business community; making Pullman an *Exceptional College Town*
- Reduce and make more appealing unoccupied business spaces

**BDS**

C-1



Education & Learning

**EL-1 Career & Technical Training:** Increase career/technical training opportunities on the Palouse

**EL-2a Young Professionals:** Develop and implement a young professionals program

**EL-2b Leadership Training:** Develop and implement a leadership training program

Growth & Development

**GD-1 Business Portal:** Establish a business development portal

**GD-2 Business Recruitment:** Recruit business and workforce relocation to Pullman

**GD-3 Airport:** Complete airport runway and terminal upgrade

**GD-4 Bypass:** Develop the south bypass

**GD-5 Broadband:** Work to improve broadband coverage and access

Health & Safety

**HS-1a Food:** Provide across generations adequate food security

**HS-1b Housing:** Provide across generations adequate housing security

**HS-2 Youth Health Intervention:** Improve youth early health intervention

**HS-3 Wellness Space:** Identify and develop a community wellness and training space

**HS-4 Physician Residency:** Develop a physician residency program

Recreation & Environment

**RE-1 Community & Youth Center:** Support the City's effort to develop a community and youth center for sports, indoor recreation, and community activities, to make physical activity accessible to residents regardless of their income or the weather.

**RE-2 Parks Inventory:** Inventory for renewal/replacements of parks

**RE-3 Trails:** Improve and expand existing trails and open spaces

- Improve bike and pedestrian safety

**RE-4 CAP Trail:** Develop the Pullman to Colfax (CAP) Trail

Future Projects

Future: Community & Identity

**FCI-1 Community Communications:** Install community communication's board in a central location

**FCI-2 Welcoming:** Develop community happiness/welcoming measures

**FCI-3 Community Pride:** Promote ways to recognize excellence and community pride

**FCI-4 Community Appearance:** Maintain a welcoming, clean and fresh community appearance

**FCI-5 Community Engagement:** Provide opportunities for community engagement

**FCI-6 Historic Areas:** Promote Pullman's historic areas

Future: Education & Learning

**FEL-1 Education Support:** Improve community education support

**FEL-2 Community of Education Experts:** Develop a Community of Education Experts (CoEE) Program

**FEL-3 Hospitality Training:** Implement business hospitality training program

Future: Growth & Development

**FGD-1 Economic Development Plan:** Develop community economic development plan

**FGD-2 Expand Air Service:** Recruit additional Air Service

**FGD-3 Winter Transportation Management:** Improve city and community winter multi-modal transportation management

**FGD-4 College Hill:** Develop plan to address College Hill: code enforcement, parking, infrastructure

**FGD-5 Connectivity and Flow:** Improve multi-modal connectivity and flow between campus and the community

**FGD-6 City Owned Property – Design Standards:** Develop and implement design standards and maintenance schedule for city owned property

**FGD-7 Multi-Use Developments:** Promote flexible multi-use developments

Future: Health & Safety

**FHS-1 Housing Affordability:** Advance an affordable and sufficient housing plan to provide for needed growth

**FHS-2 Emergency Social Services:** Provide adequate emergency social services

**FHS-3 Safety:** Ensure a safe environment with high quality community engaged emergency services

**FHS-4 Regional Wellness:** Improve knowledge of regional wellness resources

## **BDS**

C-3

**FHS-5 Care Coordination:** Improve health care coordination

**FHS-6 Behavioral Health:** Remove barriers to affordable and effective behavioral health services

**FHS-7 Whitman County Health Network:** Support the Whitman County Health Network to become the lead in care coordination

Future: Recreation & Environment

**FRE-1 Public Spaces:** Expand public spaces for gathering and family fun

**FRE-2 River:** Enhance river experiences

**FRE-3 Water Supply:** Advance long-term water supply solutions

**FRE-4 Riparian Stewardship:** Promote riparian stewardship

**FRE-5 Environmental Stewardship:** Promote environmental stewardship



## E. D. Hovee & Company, LLC

Economic and Development Services



## MEMORANDUM

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To: Brian Scott  
BDS Planning & Urban Design

From: Eric Hovee

Subject: Pullman CBD Market & Economic Situation Analysis

Date: August 12, 2019

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On behalf of the City of Pullman, BDS Planning & Urban Design is preparing a Pullman Central Business District Master Plan. A key component of the master planning process involves preparation of a market and economic situation analysis by the economic and development consulting firm E. D. Hovee & Company, LLC – as the subject of this memo report.

The memorandum report is organized to cover the following topics:

At-A-Glance Summary  
Demographic & Economic Overview  
Entrepreneurial & Strategic Opportunities  
Economic & Community Impacts  
Challenges & Opportunities

*Please consider this as a draft report subject to review by BDS and the City of Pullman. Revisions will be made with report finalization to address questions and comments received.<sup>1</sup>*

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E-mail: ehovee@edhovee.com

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## AT-A-GLANCE SUMMARY

As background information for the Pullman CBD master plan process, E.D. Hovee has conducted this market and economic situation analysis for the City of Pullman. Provided below is an *at-a-glance summary* of major observations and findings.

**Demographic & Economic Overview.** Market geographies identified for purposes of this analysis include a ½ mile walkable radius from the downtown core (with 4,700 residents as of 2019), the City of Pullman (population 34,560) and the two-county Pullman-Moscow region (with close to 90,000 residents). Population is likely understated as not all college students are included with generally recognized public data sources. While strongly oriented to student rental housing, there appears to be a broader robust market for new housing construction.

As of 2015, the ½ mile radius around downtown served as place of employment for 1,630 jobs, compared to employment of 15,000 city-wide and 31,700 for the two-county region. The two-county market appears to be underserved across a wide range of retail and dining activities.

While Pullman has 38% of the region’s population, it accounts for only 26% of retail sales. Sales leakage is most pronounced for health-personal care, dining and apparel. Surveys conducted in conjunction with Pullman 2040 indicate a disconnect between the interests of WSU students and other Pullman residents – but with both dissatisfied about what downtown has to offer.

**Entrepreneurial & Strategic Opportunities.** Property owners and developers are the link between resident interests and putting building space on the ground. A diverse set of developers is working to meet the range of student to resident to visitor demands – both with adaptive reuse and new construction. With a physically constrained downtown and increased development costs, adding new multi-level structures will be accompanied by increasing rents.

**Economic & Community Impacts.** Economic multiplier effects of downtown business activity for the full 2-county metro economy can be best enhanced by activities that encourage recaptured retail sales, higher wage employment, sourcing local when possible, and serving destination as well as local clientele. From a community perspective, a vibrant downtown can also benefit WSU student recruitment and retention, appeal for metro-wide job creating business investment, and improved tax base.

**Challenge & Opportunities.** To summarize, four challenges are noted for the master plan process: the CBD’s constrained “bowl” topography, population base of less than critical mass for full urban services, demographic segments that fragment the market, and nuisance properties and an over-traveled highway across the small physical space of the downtown area.

Counterbalancing the challenge, opportunities pivotal for improved and sustained economic vitality are to understand and cater to each of the CBD’s market segments, continue the path toward mixed use, cultivate both local business entrepreneurs and recognized retailers, and capitalize on the diverse talent and experience of Pullman’s real estate community.

## DEMOGRAPHIC & ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

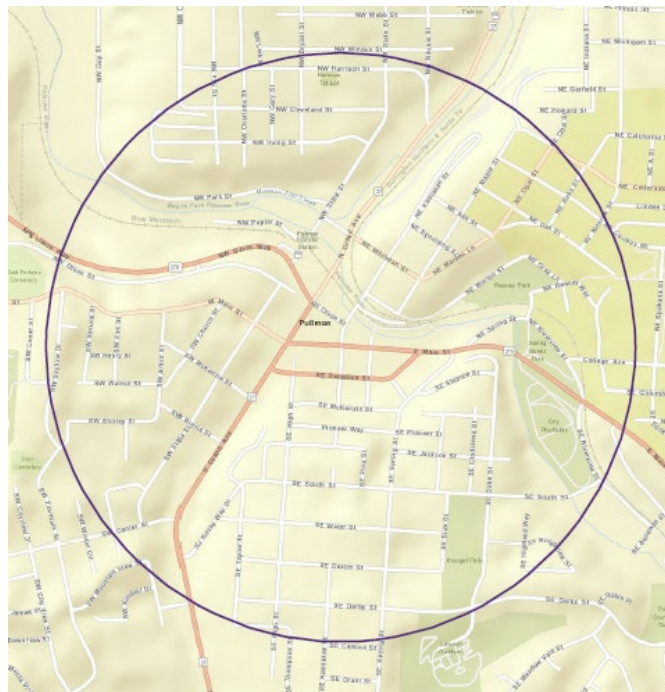
This market report and situation analysis begins with a demographic and economic review of the immediate downtown and greater Pullman-Moscow market region. Included is discussion of market geographies, comparative demographics, housing, employment, and retail sales.

### Market Geographies

For purposes of this market report and situation analysis, three geographies are of greatest interest for comparative and analytic purposes:

- The **downtown Pullman** market area (shown by the map to the right), defined as an approximate ½ mile radius most readily walkable to and from the downtown core centered at E Main Street and NE Kamiaken Street (with about 4,700 residents).
- The **City of Pullman** (with 2019 population of approximately 34,560).
- The greater Pullman-Moscow metro region comprising **Whitman and Latah Counties** on both sides of the Washington-Idaho state line (with a combined population approaching 90,000).
- The entire **state of Washington** (with 2019 population of 7.5+ million).

**Downtown Pullman (1/2 Mile) Market Area**



Source: Environics/Claritas, Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) and E. D. Hovee

### Comparative Demographics

For this analysis, considerable reliance is given to proprietary data of Environics/Claritas with estimates as of 2019. Environics data is customized to the geographies indicated and benchmarked to U.S. decennial and more frequent American Community Survey (ACS) data.

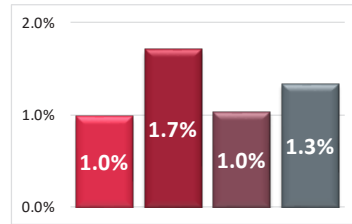


As illustrated by the charts to the right:

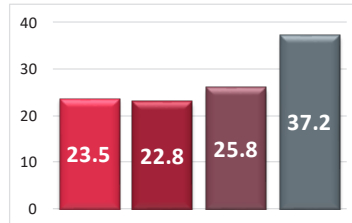
- **Population** of Pullman has increased at a more rapid rate than for the two-county region and state since 2010 – up by an average of 1.7% per year. By comparison, population of the downtown (1/2 mile area) has increased more slowly – by about 1% per year.
- As might be expected for two college communities on both sides of the state line, the **median age** of Pullman and two-county population is well below the Washington state median of just over 37 years. Despite a major college age component, median age has increased across all four geographies this past decade (since 2010).
- Somewhat surprisingly, 85% of the net addition of nearly 400 new CBD residents since 2010 has been comprised of **young adults age 25-44** – not younger college students. By comparison, only about half of Pullman and regional growth and only 28% of statewide growth has involved this age cohort.
- Downtown and city-wide **education levels** for adults age 25+ are relatively high – with clear majorities having a bachelor’s degree or better – well above region- and state-wide averages. Nearly 35% of Pullman adults have a master’s degree or better – as compared with 13% statewide.
- However, at only \$32,000, **median estimated household incomes** of Pullman households (including one-person households) is well below the two-county median figure of \$43,200 and the statewide figure of \$73,800. Lower incomes are a reflection more of high student populations than poverty-level conditions. There is some question as to whether actual buying power of students (with parents support) is greater than indicated by conventional metrics.

## Area Demographics (2019)

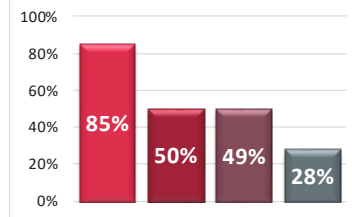
### % Population Growth/Yr (2010-19)



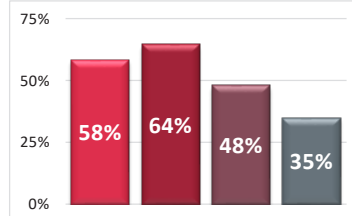
### Median Age of Population



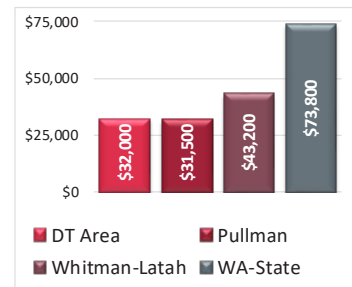
### 25-44 % of Population Growth



### % Bachelor's Degree (age 25+)



### Median Household Income



Source: U.S. Census and EnviroNics.

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Both downtown and city-wide, a 13-15% poverty rate is estimated for all families – well above the statewide rate of 8%. However, for families with children, the local poverty rate is 6-8%, comparable to the statewide rate of 6%.

Other demographic characteristics of note for this market study report include the following:

- From the standpoint of race and ethnicity, the population of downtown and Pullman residents is **less diverse** than the state of Washington – including for black/African-American, and Hispanic/Latino residents.
- From the standpoint of **ancestry**, most notable is a relatively high proportion of persons of German heritage (particularly within the downtown area).
- Downtown and City-wide, only one-quarter (25%) of all residents age 15+ are **married with spouse present** – as compared with less than 38% of residents age 15+ throughout the two-county region and 48% statewide.
- Despite a high student count, less than 10% of Pullman (and CBD) households do not have an **automobile** – a figure not much above the statewide average of 7% without their own vehicle. However, less than half of downtown area residents who work drive alone to their place of employment – as compared with 62% of all persons who live and commute to work in Whitman/Latah Counties. Of downtown residents who work, nearly one-third walk to work – more than double the walk rate for the two-county region.
- More than half of those who live downtown are **employed** – compared to less than half of those living in the other geographies considered. About one-quarter (25%) of downtown workers are employed in service-related occupations – a figure well above the statewide average of 19%. Lesser proportions work in blue collar occupations.
- Certain **occupations** are more highly associated with downtown area residents – including education, food preparation/serving, architecture and arts-related, community/social service, and scientific-related positions. Taken together, these occupations account for over 45% of the employment for persons living downtown – as compared with only 18-19% of employed persons state-wide.

Most significantly, it would appear that – as in other college towns – the student population is undercounted. WSU had an undergraduate plus graduate student Pullman headcount of over 20,000 as of Fall Term 2017. Yet current census-based estimates indicate less than 15,000 Pullman residents age 18-24. This has the likely effect of under-estimating retail potential important to draw new stores into town.

## Housing

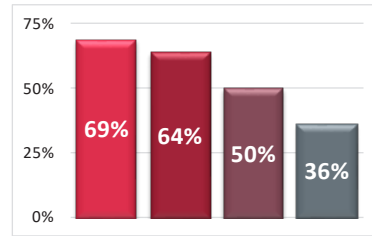
As might be expected, characteristics of the housing stock for the immediate downtown area and Pullman also are not typical of what occurs elsewhere throughout much of Washington state. As with area demographics, key housing characteristics can be compared for the four geographic areas considered – the downtown ½ mile radius, entire city of Pullman, the two-county metro region of Whitman and Latah Counties, and state of Washington.

As illustrated by the graphs to the right:

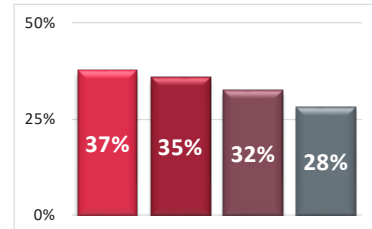
- Due to a substantial student population, **non-family households** represent about two-thirds of all households in both the downtown area and for the entire city of Pullman – nearly double the statewide proportion.
- Not surprisingly, the proportion of housing units comprised of **1-person households** is above average – though by not as great a margin as for non-family households. This suggests that a large portion of non-family households are doubling up, as with room-mates or other shared living options.
- Both in downtown and city-wide, a 70%+ share of occupied housing units are occupied by **renters**. This is close to double the statewide proportion – where renters account for 37% of occupied housing units.
- **Multi-family units** account for close to two-thirds all housing both in the downtown area and throughout the city – more than double the statewide proportion of 27%. City-wide, over half of the multi-family inventory consists of smaller apartments of 5-19 units each. Downtown has a broader mix of multi-family types – with higher proportions of smaller plexes as well as complexes of 20+ units. Average duration of rental tenancy is four years in Pullman as compared with nearly six years state-wide.
- While less than 30% of the in-use inventory is owner-occupied, housing prices are relatively modest as compared with statewide figures. At around \$260,000, the **median value of owner-occupied housing** in downtown and city-wide is only about three-quarters of the statewide median. Housing is even less expensive when considered for the entire 2-county region.

## Comparative Housing (2019)

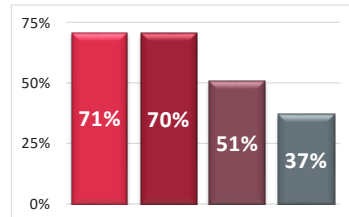
### % Non-Family Households



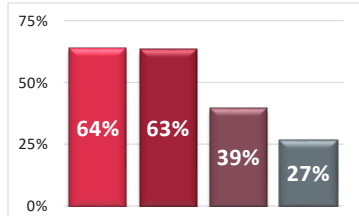
### % of 1-Person Households



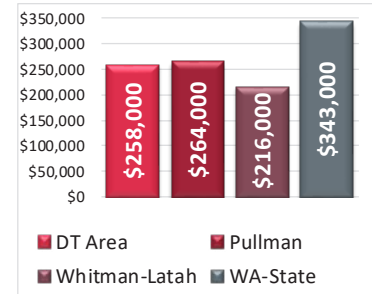
### % Renters



### % Multi-Family Units (2+ Units)



### Median Value Owner Housing



Source: U.S. Census and Envrionics.



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Other factors of note include the following:

- While less than 2% of Washington state’s population lives in **group quarters**, the comparable figure for Pullman is 17-18% (with university dormitories playing a substantial role). Within the downtown ½ mile radius, less than 10% of residents reside in dorm or other group quarters.
- While **families** account for less than one-third of households in Pullman versus almost two-thirds statewide, the composition of those family households is similar to that of the rest of the state. Slightly higher proportions of Pullman area families are married – with or without children – than is the case for all of Washington state.
- Of final note is the relatively **greater age** of downtown’s housing inventory. Over 18% of housing units in the downtown area were constructed before 1940 – as compared with only 6% city- and 9% state-wide. Conversely, a remarkable 15% of Pullman’s housing has been built from 2014 to present – well above the statewide figure of 9%.

The housing data provides mixed messages. While Pullman is strongly oriented to student rental housing, there appears to be a robust market for new, non-student housing construction, as well. Even with high demand and a small inventory of owner-occupied housing, prices seem to remain relatively affordable. New housing is being built at a rapid pace – but with downtown not yet matching the pace of new construction across the rest of the city or statewide.

There are two – maybe three – distinctly separate markets for future development to consider, each on its own merits. First is student housing – driven largely by WSU enrollment trends. Second is a relatively traditional single-family owner market.

Third, is the possibility of an ever-larger market for downtown non-student as well as student living. A more urban, professional housing product could cater to preferences both of those who work at WSU or other businesses regionally and to high income alumni and others who interact regularly with the university – whether as patrons of athletic events or serving on university-related boards and committees.

## Employment

While employment information is generally most readily available at a county-level, the U. S. Census Bureau now provides an interactive mapping tool called *On-the-Map*, making sub-county data for customized geographies available. For this analysis, the most recent available jobs data is compared for the greater downtown area and city vis-à-vis the two-county metro region. Employment data from this source is by *place of work*, rather than place of residence.

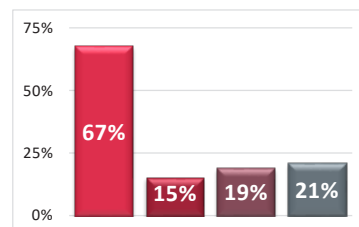
As of 2015 (the most recent year for which Census data is available), the greater downtown (or ½ mile radius) area accounted for an estimated 1,630 jobs. This represents about 11% of the more than 15,000 jobs in Pullman and 5% the 31,700 persons employed across the combined Whitman-Latah County market area.

Additional *place of work*-related jobs data are as illustrated by the graphs to the right:

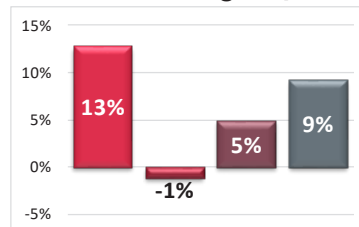
- Downtown’s job base is clustered around a handful of **strong sectors**. Accommodation/food services, public administration, real estate and professional services sectors for two-thirds (67%) of downtown employment – as compared with about 20% or less of all jobs for comparison geographies. Retail adds another 10%.
- Somewhat surprisingly, downtown appears to have experienced a net loss of about 330 jobs from 2010-15 – all associated with educational services. But **job growth** of 13% is noted for the strong sectors as described above – well above rates of job change experienced for these sectors elsewhere regionally or statewide.
- The **wage profile** of CBD area workers is very different than for the City, region or state. Only 27% of downtown workers receive earnings of more the \$3,333 per month (or \$40,000 per year). About 42% of downtown workers receive earnings of \$1,250 per month or less – a higher proportion than elsewhere.
- **Age of workers** tilts considerably younger in downtown Pullman. An estimated 44% of downtown area workers are less than 30 years of age – well above the 20-30% range experience elsewhere locally, regionally, and statewide.
- For the portion of workers that are 30 and over, Census data provides a breakdown of **educational levels**. A strong 39% of age 30+ workers in Pullman have a bachelor’s degree or better – reflecting workforce educational levels above those of the two-county region or state. However, the educational profile of age 30+ workers employed in the downtown area is below that of these comparison geographies. This is a reflection of the relatively high (42%) proportion of downtown workers employed in lower wage and part-time retail and dining jobs.

## Comparative Job Mix (2015)

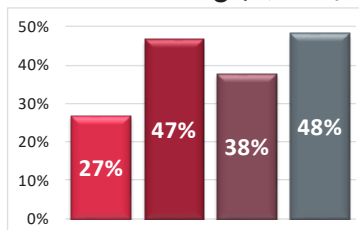
### % All Jobs – Strong DT Sectors



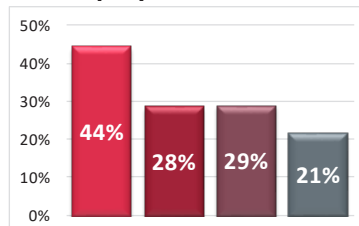
### % Growth – Strong DT (2010-15)



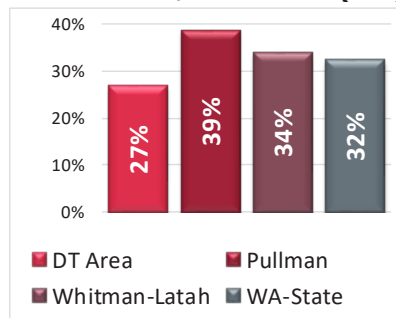
### % Workers Earning \$3,333+/Mo



### % Employees < 30 Yrs Old



### % Workers w/Bachelors+ (30+)



Source: U.S. Census *On-The-Map*.

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Stepping outside of the CBD area, two added notes are of importance in understanding the employment mix of Pullman and the greater market region as compared with the job profile for the state of Washington:

- First and most obviously, Pullman and the two-county region have an unusually **high proportion of education related employment**. With the WSU campus directly adjacent to downtown, about 6,900 workers (representing 46% of Pullman’s job base were comprised of educational service workers as of 2015 – including those at K-12 as well as higher education levels). With the inclusion of the University of Idaho in Moscow, there are a combined total of nearly 11,300 education service employees, accounting for 36% of all jobs in the two-county region.
- Second, Pullman also has an unusually high proportion of its job base classified as **manufacturing**. Over 18% of in-town employment is comprised of manufacturing jobs – double the 9% manufacturing share of all employment statewide.

## Retail Sales

Because the retail and dining have proven instrumental to downtown Pullman’s business prosperity historically, a pivotal question going forward is: *To what extent and in what ways might retail be expected to contribute to downtown Pullman’s future economic vitality?*

This question is addressed by a more focused evaluation of retail demand (or spending power) versus supply (measured as actual local retail sales).

**Current & Future Retail Demand.** Shoppers are drawn to greater downtown Pullman not just from in-town but from a wider trade area – whether for the convenience or destination appeal of the downtown area. This retail analysis is based on household expenditure potential for the greater bi-state metro trade area population of approximately 90,000 residents – together with non-local spending as from WSU sports events, alumni and guest events.

Potential sales demand for added retail goods and services can be distinguished between:

- **Current unmet demand** – often termed as retail sales “leakage” or as an opportunity gap. Retail sales leakage occurs when resident generated retail demand exceeds actual sales, meaning that local residents are traveling outside their immediate (home) trade area to purchase retail goods and services. Conversely, there may be surplus demand in situations where retail sales on-the-ground exceed locally generated demand, indicating demand coming from those living outside the two-county area as well as local residents.



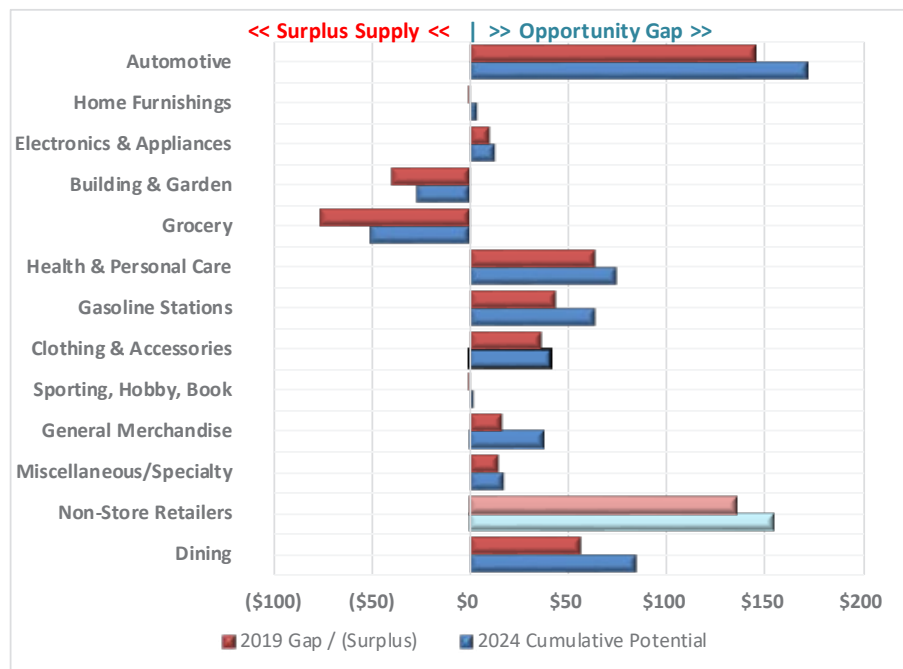
- **Demand from future population and/or income growth** – a forward-looking projection of retail needs driven by continued growth of greater Pullman trade area over the next five years of 2019-24.

**Current Unmet Demand.** Analysis of the regional trade area indicates that the residents of Whitman and Latah Counties are underserved across a broad spectrum of retail uses:

- **As of 2019**, trade area population supports close to \$1.5 billion in resident generated expenditures. Actual sales at retail establishments in Whitman and Latah Counties are estimated at \$1.1 billion, \$400 million (27%) below what region’s resident population alone would support. With 28% of the region’s population, Moscow accounts for 37% of two-county retail sales. In contrast Pullman, has 38% of the region’s population but captures only 26% of two-county retail sales.<sup>2</sup>
- **Looking forward** over the next 5 years to 2023, population and income growth is projected to support another \$180 million annually by area residents – for a combined two-county 5-year retail sales potential of about \$1.6-\$1.7 billion per year.

Despite this overall picture, there is considerable variation between retail sectors in terms of relative retail market capture. The graph on the next page shows the current (2019) opportunity gap (or surplus supply) in **red** and the total potential in the years immediately ahead (with added demand growth to 2023) in **blue**.

#### Pullman-Moscow Trade Area Retail Sales Opportunity Gap / (Surplus) - \$ Millions



Source: Environics as compiled by E. D. Hovee

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**Retail Well-Served.** As depicted by the graph, there are some retail store types that experience greater local sales than the metro region’s population alone generally would be expected to support. The two retail store types that appear to be performing well above what two-county resident demand supports are building/garden and grocery stores.

For three added sectors, two-county retail store sales appear to be in relatively close balance with resident demand – home furnishings, electronics/appliances, and sporting, hobby and book stores.

**Opportunity Gaps.** For eight key retail sectors, local retail sales appear to be substantially underperforming what the local residents should be purchasing somewhere – whether near to home or by traveling outside the two-county area to shop. This sales leakage is greatest for automotive sales – with sales leakage of about \$145 million per year. The second greatest amount of sales leakage of about \$135 million is noted for non-store retailers – including mail order and internet sales (considered separately below).

Other retail categories for which more lesser but yet significant levels of sales leakage are noted are health-personal care (including pharmacy), gas service, apparel, general merchandise, miscellaneous/specialty retail and dining. Health-personal care and dining each experience leakage in the range of \$55-\$63 million annually, apparel is at \$36 million and miscellaneous/specialty and general merchandise (department and discount store) come in at \$14-\$16 million below par.

**Non-Store Retailers.** As indicated by the lighter color shading on the foregoing graph, the category of non-store retailers is indicated as showing the second largest volume of net sales leakage. This is a category that warrants some added explanation.

Non-store retailers comprise businesses that rely primarily on internet or catalogue sales for delivery to customers outside the local community. A Pullman resident that purchases over the internet represents one form of sales leakage – as the non-local purchase likely comes at the expense of a local *bricks and mortar* retailer.

Conversely, a local business that sells via catalog or over the internet is bringing net new consumer dollars into the community. Some businesses find that profitability may depend on a mix of in-store and non-store retail sales.

Overall, this non-store category is of growing significance – as sales from retailers without a bricks and mortar presence account for a growing share of retail sales. Environics/Claritas estimates that just over 11% of Pullman-Mosco metro residential retail demand is currently being met via catalog and/or the internet.

**Retail Market Growth.** While the regional analysis to this point has focused on current conditions, it is also useful to consider added demand that might be reasonably expected as a result of continued population and income growth. The **blue** bars of the graph on the prior page show the effect of adding estimated demand growth over the five years from 2019-24.

For the Pullman-Moscow regional market area, overall retail demand is projected to increase by just over 12% over the next five years, with demand growth averaging about 2.3% per year.

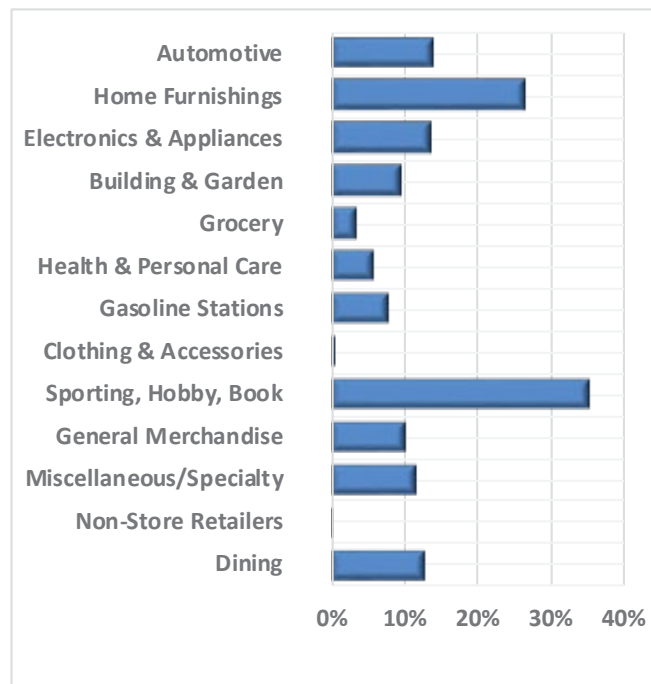
For store types currently experiencing sales leakage, the size of the opportunity gap increases with projected regional growth. This yields further opportunity for existing and new businesses to locally fulfill as yet un-met regional demand. This is especially the case for automotive and gas service retail (not expected as a major downtown activity) – as well as for dining, general merchandise and health/personal care (for which downtown could be more competitive)

For retailers currently experiencing high sales volumes exceeding two-county resident demand (as with building/garden and grocery stores), population growth should support some added sales potential. This assumes that non-resident as well as resident demand continues to be attracted to the two-county market area.

**Downtown Market Share.** Focusing more specifically on the downtown, as of 2019 downtown area stores appear to be capturing about 9% of total retail including restaurant sales occurring in the two-county region encompassed by Whitman and Latah Counties.

As illustrated by the graph to the right, the greater CBD area achieves the **highest rate of regional market capture** for sporting, hobby and book stores at about 35% of Pullman-Moscow metro area sales, followed by home furnishings at 26%.

**Greater CBD Market Share of Metro Sales (2018)**



Source: Environics/Claritas and E. D. Hovee

Other categories of retail for which capture is above the overall downtown figure of 9% are noted as including automotive, electronics/appliance, dining, miscellaneous/specialty, and general merchandise stores. Conversely, **lower levels of market penetration** (at 9% or less of two-county sales) are noted for building/ garden, gas station, health-personal care, grocery, and apparel retailers.



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**Downtown Pullman Survey.** In conjunction with the Pullman 2040 initiative, a *Survey of Downtown Pullman, Washington* was conducted by the WSU Carson School of Business– under the direction of Joan Giese, Clinical Associate Professor. Ten student teams interviewed about 1,400 WSU undergraduate students in Fall 2017. Sixteen teams surveyed about 740 Pullman residents in Spring 2018. Key findings pertinent to the market and economic analysis are summarized as follows:

*Pullman 2040 Survey – Visioning Questions:*

- When asked what places “do you like to take out of town visitors,” WSU came in with the highest ranking at 62%; downtown was 4<sup>th</sup> highest with 36%.
- When asked what places “do you avoid” taking out-of-town visitors, the #1 response was “downtown.”

*Perceptions of WSU Undergraduate Students:*

- Just under 29% of respondents were somewhat or very satisfied with downtown Pullman; a somewhat higher 32% were somewhat or very dissatisfied.
- Nearly half (49%) disagreed with the statement “I look forward to shopping downtown.”
- Over half (56%) somewhat or strongly disagreed that “downtown Pullman is a fun place to go.”
- The factors that most significantly affect undergraduate students to go to downtown were: 1) friends desire to go to downtown Pullman *tied with* “good deals” at stores, 2) festive lights are displayed in downtown Pullman, and 3) more restaurant choices.
- Undergraduates were ambivalent about such factors as more places to hang out, downtown theme, locally owned stores, and bakery.
- What does not appear to affect student decisions to go downtown are more parking, frequent transportation, outdoor hangout spots and vibrant atmosphere.

*Pullman Residents:*

- Families with children are the most dissatisfied with downtown Pullman and with dining and aesthetics, more specifically.
- Female residents are significantly more dissatisfied than males when it comes to shopping and dining.
- Long-term residents are more dissatisfied than short-term residents.
- Parking and transportation are big issues!

In short, it appears that while student and long-term resident interests are quite different, Pullman’s CBD is not doing a good job of catering to either of these vital demographics.

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**Factors Affecting Future Commercial Retail Opportunity.** For purposes of discussion, the following factors are identified as affecting commercial retail opportunity for the Pullman metro region and greater downtown Pullman, respectively:

*Regional Factors:*

- **Demographics** – population and income growth generally works to increase retail demand, although potentially offset by an aging population; however this is less of a factor for Pullman-Moscow with a built-in young demographic than for other many other regions of the Northwest.
- **WSU Student Population** – when population statistics do not fully reflect student counts (as residents), potential buying power is underestimated. Further missing from typical retail data sources is the added buying power associated with parent and alumni visits – including to major events on campus. Customized survey research to better document this unrecognized market could prove useful to draw retail and service businesses who otherwise might pass on a Pullman presence.
- **County-wide Opportunity Gaps** – with fewer readily apparent opportunities in relatively saturated local markets as for grocery and building/garden *offset by* greater opportunities involving store types still substantially underserved regionally and of suitable scale for a downtown location – most notably for dining, health-personal care, apparel, and (possibly) general merchandise.
- **Internet Retail Competition** – best exemplified by the continued penetration of Amazon and other internet-focused firms into traditional retail strongholds ranging from books to grocery, as well as continued consolidation of other retailer businesses in categories as diverse as apparel and pharmacy/health care.
- **Critical Mass** – a challenge in smaller metro markets of under 100,000 people (as with Pullman-Moscow) that may not have the critical mass of population to support the business model of some national or regional retail chains – although this may change as chains downsize some of their traditional large format floorplate expectations.

*Greater Downtown Factors:*

- **Building on Existing Strengths** – most notably home furnishings and sporting/hobby and book stores for which downtown currently has high market share, dependent in part on appeal to a mix of national/regional as well as independent local retailers.
- **Complementary Destination Retail** – as may be possible with smaller scale dining, home furnishings, specialty including retail, and specialty grocery retail.
- **Downtown Employment, Housing & Students** – as a built-in greater downtown source of customer support serving as the base level of market support to which metro-wide and visitor appeal may be added.
- **Town & Gown Collaboration** – the best opportunities will be those that appeal to both customer demographics rather than doing a weak job of addressing either.

- **Making Downtown Fun Again** – an increasingly important factor that can work to the advantage of locally owned *plus* chain stores, ever more dependent on locations in walkable, street-oriented, multi-shop, and entertaining mixed-use settings.
- **Suitable Sites** – including availability of reasonably priced existing/upgraded building space and vacant infill sites with supportive zoning, parking and transportation.

As is evident from this listing, some retail factors are mutually reinforcing while others may be working at cross-purposes. After some post-recession commercial retail catch-up, retail development opportunities may be more limited over the next 5-10 years than has historically been the case – due to continuing inroads of internet retail and continued store closures with consolidation both regionally and nationally.

Some older retail centers will find it increasingly difficult to retain existing tenants and will be repurposed for uses ranging from offices to churches to bowling alleys. This may work to the disadvantage of older strip centers and to the advantage of a downtown's return as the *go to* place for students, working professionals, and visitors.

## ENTREPRENEURIAL & STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES

Where are the opportunities for Pullman's CBD? In a built environment, entrepreneurial and strategic opportunities are defined by property owners, developers and investors who commit dollars to build, maintain and enhance the downtown space – collaboratively with business and residential occupants of the space. And with the residents and visitors coming from outside the CBD who will pass through, spending time and money downtown rather than elsewhere.

### Interview Process

An integral component of this market and economic analysis has involved interviews with property owners, investors, developers and employers active in Pullman and its CBD. Based on input from the City and project team, persons interviewed by phone as part of this background research process were:

- Duane Brelsford – Corporate Pointe Developers
- Kevin Kirkman – KIP Development
- Greg Petry – Crimson Capital
- Justin Rasmussen – Palouse Commercial Real Estate / Evolve
- Mike Yates – VCS Development Company

Based on our experience with non-metro and smaller markets, the development community appears to be both knowledgeable and highly invested in the Pullman community. Key topics



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discussed in these conversations included the scope of the firm’s interest in Pullman and the CBD, current real state market (especially rental rates), strategic opportunities, and how the CBD master plan might be best positioned to make a difference for a more economically vibrant downtown. What follows is a synopsis of information and comments received.

## Rental Rates & Tenant Mix

The manner in which property owners and developers quote rental rates can vary from one community to the next. In Pullman, there is also considerable diversity in how individual owners quote rates – especially for commercial space.

**Commercial Space.** Rental rates for commercial space are typically quoted on the basis of **annual** rent per square foot of building square footage. Some owners quote rents on a full-service basis (where the owner covers all common area charges (CAM) and other building expenses as part of the rental rate). At least one active owner/developer quotes rates on a modified gross basis or not quite full-service basis (where the owner is typically covering property costs as for property taxes, utilities, insurance and maintenance).

Some owners quote rents on a triple net basis (where the tenant pays all CAM and other expenses on a pass-through basis) – a practice that is common in many communities, especially for retail space. At least one owner in Pullman prefers to price space not necessarily on the basis of per square foot standards, but on the needs of the potential tenants and unique characteristics of the space to be leased (including common areas).

Older class C/D properties go for as little as \$6-\$9 per square foot per year (full service), which started as retail space and some of which has changed to office-commercial space over time. There is steady turnover in this older space, much of which may suffer from deferred maintenance. Some owners see little motivation to invest – as there is still a parking challenge and no guarantee of higher rates if improvements are made.

Whether downtown or elsewhere, more recently constructed Class B space is quoted to be in the range of \$12-\$16 (generally triple net). Even for this better space, at least one owner views retail as no longer viable, asking: “Who shops at a store anymore?”.

New Class A space can range up to \$20-\$25 (triple net). One developer is hoping to achieve \$25 for new office space (provided on a full-service basis). In the words of another developer, construction cost drives the rental rate for new development. Vacancy is reportedly higher for at least some of the newer space, due to what an investor cites as “sticker shock,” especially for local businesses.

Another party cited office rents at \$16-\$20 plus common area maintenance (CAM) charges of \$3.50-\$5.00. And a third indicates retail rates are about \$20-\$21 on a modified gross basis.

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Part of the sticker shock for local tenants is associated with the cost of tenant improvements. At least one property owner/developer has addressed this by building as much of the cost of TIs into the rent – to be amortized over time – with higher rents but reduced tenant front-end cost.

**Commercial Demand & Tenant Mix.** One property owner indicates that tenant mix has shifted from 90% retail 15+ years ago to nearly all service today. The only retail-related space supported is for what one has termed “specialty uses” – as with more restaurants, cafes, real estate offices, accountants, etc.

A business executive notes that downtown has “no shopping,” echoed by another party stating that residents travel to Moscow, Lewiston and Spokane for retail purchases and entertainment. Yet another interviewee does not see strong demand for office space or large format retail in downtown. What works instead is “fun retail,” catering to a more active lifestyle.

New construction that involves retail space is often oriented to superregional and national trends, as they are more likely to consider the higher rents required. However, due to the small population of the combined Pullman-Moscow market, costs are viewed as higher and profit margins thinner so that “it is much harder to land the tenant.” However, the same developer suggests that when the location choice is between Pullman and Moscow, chain and franchise retailers often prefer Pullman because of the greater growth occurring locally. The *flip side* is that Moscow may be doing a better job as an incubator of independent small businesses.

Rehabilitation and adaptive reuse has been successfully applied in Pullman. An example widely cited is the Lumberyard – a multi-cuisine food hall renovated from a 1950s Quonset previously used as a lumberyard and building supply business.

There may be some opportunity for more incubator or co-working space as for graduating students seeking to stay in Pullman. It’s just that the “opportunity is not huge yet.” Hotels experience wide swings in occupancy – dependent on major weekend events at WSU.

Several comment that the market for commercial space – from retail to hospitality – is not as good in Pullman as in other Pacific Northwest college towns. One comment is that Washington’s higher minimum wage now puts Pullman retail and dining operators at a competitive disadvantage with Moscow. The demand is there but customers see Pullman as “overpriced.” Another developer sizes up the market a bit differently: “Rents are competitive, there is just not much demand so landlords need to be more aggressive.”

**Residential Rents.** Unlike commercial, rental rates for residential space are generally quoted on a **monthly** per square foot basis. The current range indicated for most multifamily rental properties is about \$0.90-\$1.00 per square foot per month, with \$1.25-\$1.35 currently being about top of market. With increased land, construction and associated soft costs of development, rents for new development may need to be in the \$1.50-\$2.00 range – depending in part on how parking is provided. With student housing, an alternative metric of pricing by the bed is also often used.

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**Residential Demand & Unit Mix.** Owners and developers who are active with new and renovated housing including mixed use development appear to gravitate to specialty niches. The focus may be student, young professional worker, or higher end alumni/patron housing occupied seasonally – with different owners favoring different project types that fit their pro formal financial model and interests of their investment partners.

The recently developed Evolve housing project is clearly oriented to a student population – virtually 100% occupied in less than a year. While student housing represents continued opportunity, other parties indicates other preferences – as for young working professionals including graduate students, stating that “we rent to people who don’t want to be on the hill.”

## CBD Master Planning Opportunities

The business and real estate interests interviewed were also asked what opportunities they envisioned with the CBD master planning process. No single theme dominated the responses; rather a multi-prong approach may be suggested – including suggestions to:

- Get traffic through downtown Pullman, taking truck traffic off the main thoroughfare as via a new bypass. As one interviewee noted, “I can’t tell you how important that is.”
- Build a public parking structure.
- Address zoning issues – starting by increasing allowable building heights above the current 60-65 foot allowable limit. One owner notes that more floors “offer better views,” another indicates that increased height makes more projects financially feasibility by spreading land and other site costs across more units.
- As a second zoning issue, remove or modify a maximum density allowance of no more than one unit per 1,000 square feet of lot size (which is an especially onerous financial disincentive for smaller studio and 1-bedroom units).
- As a third zoning issue, consider making mixed-use zoning more flexible – both downtown and city-wide – recognizing the need for both horizontal and vertical mixed use to the extent supported by the market (with vertical mixed use often costing more).
- Provide tax, grant or other financial incentives to reinvest (as through a Local Improvement District); help match property owners with businesses.
- Consider allowing use of public parking lots for overnight residential use – reducing the need to build expensive and land-consumptive new lot or structured parking.
- Get rid of dead store fronts, other nuisances and eyesores, especially in the vicinity of the river and trestle bridge.
- Work with owners to address issues associated with Pullman’s hill/valley topography, including high water tables at the valley floor and need for large sites (2+/- acres) to make major projects pencil out financially.
- Make downtown pedestrian friendly, create a lifestyle atmosphere, use and extend Pullman’s trail system. Create the amenities and a lifestyle that will incentivize

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professional talent with WSU and other employers to make longer-term commitments to the Pullman community.

- And go authentic – as with gift stores offering “regional artifacts” for sale to visiting parents, alumni, scholars and traveling business professionals.

From the perspective of owners, investors and developers, the City is viewed as neither overly supportive nor negative toward development. As one commented, “the City is ok to work with, but not as much a partner – could do more to encourage business than just be neutral.” Another suggests that “the City does a good job but needs to do more.”

Of final note are the words of an interviewee who suggests the following path forward for the master planning process:

Determine – what do we want when we are done?  
Then, how to do it.  
And where to do it.

## ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY IMPACTS

Of interest to many communities is an understanding of the economic multiplier effects of Pullman CBD retail and other business activity to the greater regional economy. Multipliers are often calculated for such economic metrics as business revenue, employment and payroll (or wages).

### Economic Impacts

An economic multiplier may measure the relationship between the direct/on-site effect of an economic investment plus on-going operations vis-à-vis the sum of the direct plus indirect and induced effects. Indirect benefits occur, for example, as a downtown business purchases goods and services from other businesses in the greater Pullman area. Induced effects occur as new workers at a downtown business make personal consumption expenditures throughout the metro region.

Economic multipliers tend to be highest for economic sectors providing higher wage jobs, sourcing local materials, and selling to a market external to the local community. Historically, this has led economic development programs to favor manufacturing and industrial uses over commercial retail and service activities.

However, this traditional paradigm is changing in the face of non-industrial activities that also pay well, buy local, and serve national or international clientele. Examples range from software to finance to business management to destination medical, educational and high-end tourism activities.



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From a practical, programmatic standpoint for Pullman’s CBD, the economic multiplier effects of downtown business activity on the remainder of the 2-county metro economy can be best enhanced by activities that encourage:

- **Recaptured retail sales** – working with local independent and national/regional firms to make Pullman the preferred walkable, fun, affordable destination for the Pullman-Moscow metro area.
- **Higher wage employment** – by attracting and growing professional and tech-savvy firms drawing from WSU talent, particularly for buildings with above street level space.
- **Sourcing local whenever possible** – for example, with a restaurant that buys from local agricultural and food manufacturing firms.
- **Serving destination as well as local clientele** – drawing outside dollars into the community whether from parents of students, alumni, visiting faculty or support business.

## Community Impacts

Looking beyond measurable economic multiplier impacts, it is also important to understand and assess the broader community-wide benefits of a healthy, vibrant downtown. These impacts include:

- **WSU student recruitment and retention** – uniquely offering an oasis of urban amenities in an otherwise undeveloped rural setting – the best of both worlds.
- **Improved community appeal for metro-wide job-creating business investment** – of importance to better retention of WSU workforce, employees of major firms, and growing local ag-tech friendly businesses – all predicated on living, working and recreating in a place people are proud to call home
- **Improved tax base** – not just from a revitalized downtown but from a more prosperous, confident and self-sustaining community – not only now, but for the next generation.

## CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

To summarize, from a market and economic perspective, Pullman presents both opportunities and challenges. The opportunities represent potential pathways to a more vital and livable community; the challenges are issues to be creatively addressed – enabling Pullman to jump to the next level of sustainable economic success.

### Challenges

From this analysis, four distinct challenges are of importance to address with the Pullman CBD master planning process:

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- Pullman’s topography of a CBD in a bowl physically limits options for downtown expansion – so that improved market capture depends on a very urban approach to build up rather than out.
  - A two-county market of less than 100,000 population lacks critical mass for the full depth of retail and service needs typically expected in an urban setting – further diluted as retail/service opportunities are split between Pullman and Moscow and by under-estimating the total demand package represented by today’s college students.
  - Market demographics are not easily matched – as students, young professionals, parents/alumni and employees of large firms have different interests and needs – which may further fragment the retail/service market.
  - Nuisance properties and an over-trucked state road stand out in a physically small space – deterring investment more than would be the case in a geographically larger CBD.

## Opportunities

Counterbalancing the challenges, four primary opportunities are suggested as pivotal to improved and sustained economic vitality:

- Understand and cater to each of the market segments important for CBD vitality – where possible packaging the Pullman destination to appeal to student, young professional, parent/alumni and major employer clientele.
- Continue the path toward more mixed use with ground floor retail/service and upper level housing, office and incubator space.
- Cultivate local business entrepreneurs and attract recognized retailers – whoever can fill a clearly defined market niche that complements the Pullman mix.
- Capitalize on the diverse talents and capabilities of Pullman’s real estate development community – offering creative solutions to surmount challenges posed by the very real economic and physical constraints of the CBD and regional market.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Information for this market and economic impact report has been obtained from sources generally deemed to be reliable. However, E. D. Hovee does not guarantee the accuracy of information from third party sources and information is subject to change without notice. Observations and findings contained in this report are those of the author and should not be construed as representing the opinion of any other party prior to their express approval, whether in whole or part.

<sup>2</sup> While Pullman underperforms Moscow overall for retail sales, there are some categories for which Pullman retailers outsell Moscow. Pullman high performers include automotive, sporting/hobby/book, and general merchandise retailers. However, while Pullman is outsold overall with food and beverage stores, Pullman experiences higher sales in specialty food as well as beer/wine/liquor stores than Moscow. Similarly, Pullman lags Moscow for food services and drinking places overall but outperforms Moscow for snack and non-alcoholic beverage bars.

# Appendix D: Examples of Design Review Programs

## DESIGN FOR BAINBRIDGE – BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WA

The City of Bainbridge Island maintains a design review program including a design review board (DRB) to review projects and make recommendations to final decision makers such as the planning director and hearing examiner depending on the type of application. The design review board reviews applications for non-residential development, multi-family development, and recently added subdivisions to the program review. The City recently adopted a new set of design standards and guidelines, called Design for Bainbridge, that implements the goals of the comprehensive planning for sustainability and focused growth in designated centers. Design for Bainbridge includes a vision statement, guiding principles, a statement on sustainability, and a detailed context analysis early on the design review process.

### Values + Principles

The Bainbridge Island community values authenticity and design that is specific to Bainbridge. Generic approaches to design for sites, streets, buildings, and other elements are inconsistent with the island character and values.



### DESIGN FOR BAINBRIDGE

Bainbridge Island's architecture is diverse, spanning a range of eras and architectural styles, but its urban fabric maintains a defining character and continuity within its varied buildings, streets and neighborhoods. Good design is the thoughtful composition of buildings, landscape and public spaces that creates a meaningful relationship to a building's surroundings and contributes to the public realm and neighborhood fabric. These guidelines define the responsibility of new development as respecting neighborhood context, responding sensitively to the surrounding built and natural environment, and contributing to the community.

### DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Bainbridge residents cherish the Island's natural environment and are committed to protecting and restoring the ecological and hydrological functions of its natural lands and water bodies. Sustainable design and green building practices help reduce the burden of development on natural systems, and help ensure Bainbridge Island is climate resilient. Concentrating growth in the Island's urban center through the zoning code and around shared infrastructure conserves natural habitat, ecological functions, open space and areas designed for recreational use. Specific elements of site design, building design, construction, and operation, such as efficient use of energy and water, integration of renewable energy, and use of sustainable and ethical materials can mitigate the environmental toll of new development and address local climate vulnerabilities.





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## **SITE DESIGN STANDARDS**

- S1** Natural Systems
- S2** Wildlife Habitat
- S3** Unique Features
- S4** Built Environment
- S5** Systems of Movement

## **PUBLIC REALM STANDARDS**

- P1** Walking & Cycling
- P2** Vehicles in the Public Realm
- P3** Hierarchy of Public Spaces
- P4** Connections to Public Spaces
- P5** Block & Frontage Patterns
- P6** Activity on Commercial Streets

## **BUILDING DESIGN STANDARDS**

- B1** Clear Organizing Concept
- B2** Appropriate Architectural Language
- B3** Facade Composition & Scale
- B4** Sustainable Design
- B5** Materials & Detailing

## **LANDSCAPE STANDARDS**

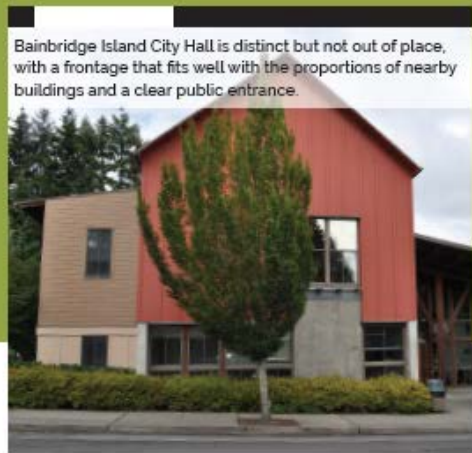
- L1** Landscape & Architecture
- L2** Public Realm
- L3** Sustainable Features

## S4

# COMPLEMENT AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND LOCAL IDENTITY

## Intent

Buildings and open spaces should be designed to create a sense of place and contribute to neighborhood identity. Projects should be built to feel like they “belong” to their site and context, becoming part of the fabric of beloved places on Bainbridge Island.



Bainbridge Island City Hall is distinct but not out of place, with a frontage that fits well with the proportions of nearby buildings and a clear public entrance.

## GUIDELINES

- a. Site access and new structures to complement patterns in the built environment with attention to setbacks, spaces between buildings, scale, and entries along the street.
- b. Create or reinforce a well-defined rhythm of intervals of built and open spaces, designed for the human scale.
- c. Develop frontages with quality, interest, and variety, using multiple smaller scale buildings if needed for to fit with neighborhood character.
- d. Avoid visually impermeable fencing, high fencing or other monolithic features along publicly visible edges of the site.



The San Juan Building on Ferncliff Avenue in Bainbridge Island keeps the rhythm and scale of its surroundings with a primary facade broken into smaller sections.

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## DESIGN REVIEW PROGRAM – SPOKANE, WA

The City of Spokane established a design review program in 1999 and has reviewed over 400 applications under the program. A substantial update to the program was completed in 2010 including updates to the design review process and new design guidelines for Downtown. Also at that time the City elevated the role of the Design Review Committee to an official city board (now designed the Design Review Board (DRB)). The DRB reviews applications and provides recommendations to the final decision-makers. The DRB is staffed by designated urban design staff and public review by the DRB allows for public input and comments on applications. The City is currently conducting a review of the program as part of the Downtown Plan update and plans to update the Design Guidelines in 2020.

### A1

#### A-1 Respond to the Physical Environment

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*Each building site lies within a larger physical context having a variety of distinct features and characteristics to which the site planning and building design should respond. Develop a site and building design concept that responds to Spokane's regional character; a city located at the intersection of the Rockies and the Palouse.*



*Views of noteworthy structures and natural features should be considered.*



*Saranac Building: Consider how a project can take advantage of green technology effective in Spokane's climate.*



*View from I-90: Consider how the skyline is seen from the regional transportation network.*

Develop an architectural concept that responds to Spokane's attributes, including:

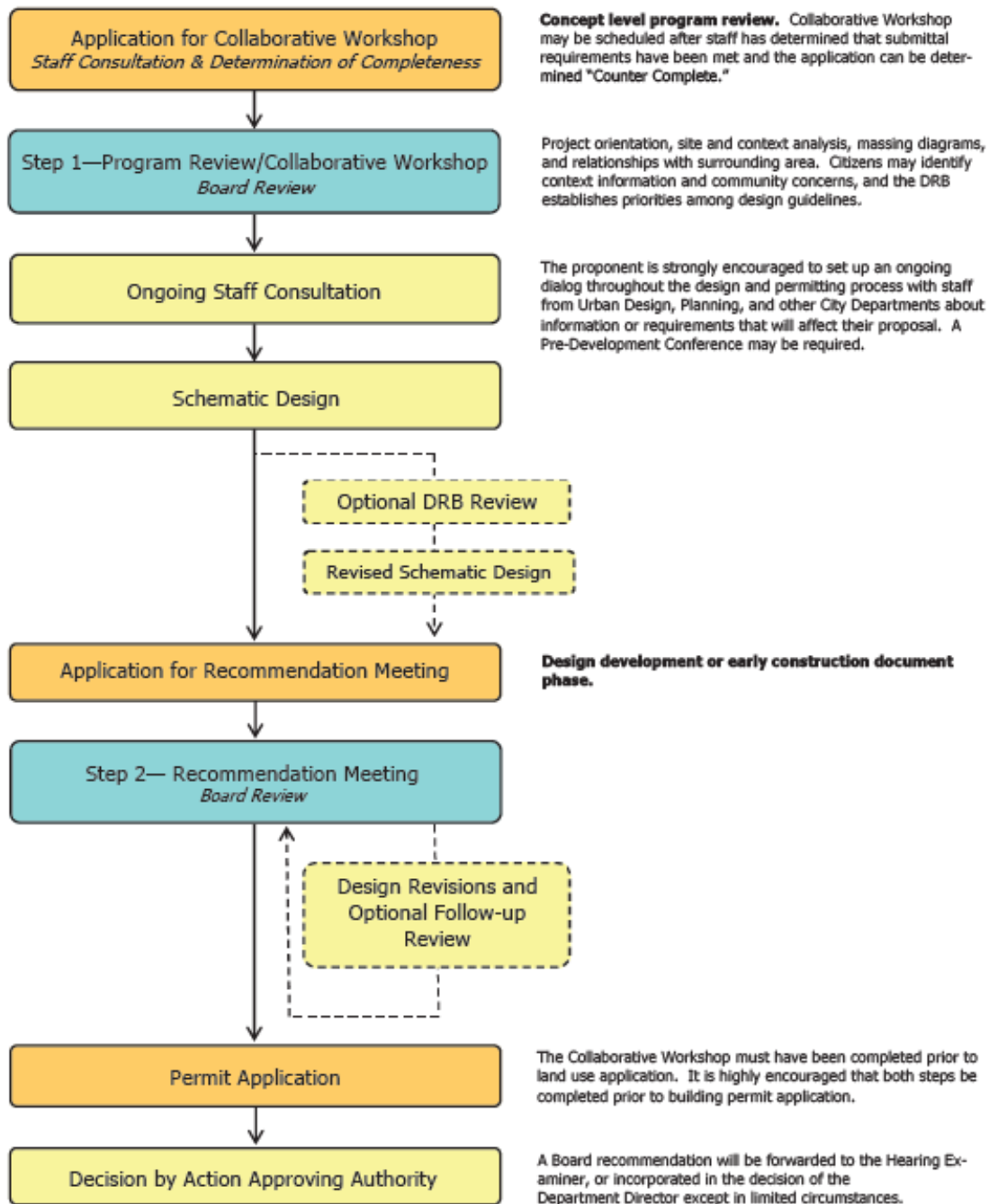
1. Climate (sun, temperature, wind, precipitation);
2. Geography (water, topography, vegetation); and
3. Patterns of urban form found beyond the immediate context of the building site.

#### Key Points

Arrange the site features and building mass in response to one or more of the following, if present:

- a. A change in street grid alignment that results in a site with a nonstandard shape;
- b. A site having dramatic topography or contrasting edge conditions;
- c. Unique patterns of urban form such as distinctive and effective massing compositions on nearby buildings;
- d. Access to direct sunlight—for interior spaces and public streets;
- e. Views of geography beyond Downtown such as South Hill, North Hill, Mount Spokane, the western river gorge and gorge ridges and the mountains to the east;
- f. Views to noteworthy structures or natural features, such as: County Courthouse Tower, St. Aloysius, Monroe Street Bridge, Riverfront Park Clock Tower, U.S. Pavilion, Our Lady of Lourdes Cathedral, Spokesman Review Tower, Paulsen Building, Davenport Hotel, Steamplant Building, St. John's Cathedral, West Riverside Avenue, the railroad corridor, Spokane River, and Riverfront Park;
- g. Views of the site from other parts of the City;
- h. Proximity to existing and future regional multi-modal transportation opportunities: Interstate 90, IIS Highway 2 and 395, future mass







## C-2 CBD Zone (Near Term Priority)

### 1. Highlight opportunity for WSU-affiliated & artisanal/maker space uses that support commercial use

#### Current Situation:

Across the U.S. traditional distinctions between uses such as manufacturing, trade and service uses are becoming increasingly blurred. This may make it more difficult to interpret whether and how to approve business activities that involve, for example, a manufacturing and a trade use – such as a microbrewery that may be part manufacturing and part retail trade or dining. Or in the case of a potential WSU incubator a small start-up company that researches, designs and manufactures a product like micro-pump valves with 3-D printing equipment (but with no on-site sales may be part manufacturing and part service).

Section 17.70.030 of Pullman's zoning code provides separate uses tables for seven different categories of uses. The only manufacturing industries indicated as outright permitted in C2 are bakery/confectionary, apparel related and printing-publishing. For example, bottled/canned and distilled beverages are not included as outright permitted uses. According to the service use chart table university facilities are indicated as a permitted use only in the WSU district but not in C-2. These are two of many possible examples of situations where the use tables when considered on their own might appear to preclude mixed operations that otherwise might be conducive to or supportive of a mixed-use CBD location.

Section 17.70.020 of Pullman's zoning code does offer a means to address these situations with provisions for "interpretation of chart and appeal."

- Subsection (1) states that "In the case of a question as to the inclusion or exclusion of a particular proposed use in a particular use category, the city planner shall have the authority to make the final determination. The city planner shall make the determination according to the characteristics of the operation of the proposed use." "Examples: A large sales office where business is conducted by telephone on the premises and where no goods other than samples come onto or go off of the premises, is an office rather than a retail or wholesale use. A shop selling items which are manufactured on the premises and the manufacturing process is not detectable

from outside the building where the manufacturing occurs and the process requires no heavy trucking, is a retail use, not a manufacturing use." This is identified as a means of resolving use determination of a business with mixed business use activities.

- Subsection (3) stipulates that "Any aggrieved person may appeal a determination made by the city planner regarding Use Chart 17.70.030 to the board of adjustment as provided in Chapter 17.185." However, it is not entirely clear whether this right of appeal would apply to a Subsection (1) staff final determination.

#### Proposed Code Revisions:

Create criteria to be applied in the determination of projects involving mixed uses as a guide to code interpretation. Develop a short list of applicable criteria in order to implement master plan.

In the near-term two code revisions are suggested for consideration:

- Add a footnote to each of the 17.70.30 use charts indicating that determination of whether a use which involves combinations of activities applicable to more than one chart may be subject to city planner interpretation as provided by 17.70.020.
- Add a phrase to the end of the first sentence as Subsection (1) of 17.70.020 to read: "'In the case of a question as to the inclusion or exclusion of a particular proposed use in a particular use category, the city planner shall have the authority to make the final determination, subject to the right to appeal a City Planner determination to the board of adjustment. (proposed added provision underlined).

Longer term, the City might consider establishing an approval process for combined uses subject to identified performance standards. An approach such as this might be more useful if the current trend toward artisanal uses and small-scale specialty manufacturing in more of an office/flex setting continue with additional interest in Pullman CBD-related rehabilitation and new construction projects.

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## 2. Refine height to encourage well-designed 5-story residential above ground floor high ceiling retail

### Current Situation:

Section 17.80.060 of the Zoning Code limits building heights in the C2 zone to no more than 60 feet above grade. Mid-rise mixed-use projects in urban settings often involve wood frame residential structures of five stories (with about 10 feet floor to ceiling height) built over a ground floor retail/active use podium that might be about 15 feet in height. More than 10 feet height for ground floor use is desired both from an urban design and marketability perspectives. To achieve this ideal efficiency important for project feasibility, a building height of just over 60 feet may be required.

### Proposed Code Revision:

Consider amending 17.80.060 development standards from 60 feet to a maximum of 65 feet allowed outright, possibly with added conditional use review to go to 70 feet under specified conditions (as for loft style residential units but with no more than 6 stories total above grade).

## 3. Set residential parking minimum (e.g., 0.5 spaces/unit or 0.25 spaces/bedroom; studio apartment equivalent to one-bedroom unit)

### Current Situation:

Section 17.70.030 use charts require no off-street parking for any use in the C2 district. In many communities, this provision serves to reinforce downtown development opportunities and also encourage alternative modes to auto use in an urban environment. For employment (including retail), building tenants and their employees will generally react if parking demand proves substantially inadequate to meet demand – in which case the private market will seek out options for added parking.

With added residential development in the urban core, a different dynamic is set in motion. If apartment owners do not provide some residential parking, new residents will begin to compete for spaces long used by CBD employees and customers – especially if residents come in during the evening when other use activity is reduced but don't leave by early morning.

For apartments built in residential zones of Pullman, there is a minimum requirement of one space per bedroom or one space per unit (with studio apartments). These standards would appear to be overly stringent in the CBD where less

than one-half of downtown residents who work drive to their place of employment (and almost one-third walk to work). Providing too much parking would negatively affect a development project's financial feasibility and would run counter to the goal of continuing to encourage non-auto options for the CBD.

### Proposed Code Revision:

A minimal code requirement is recommended to lessen future residential-employee-customer conflicts over parking. Recommended for consideration is amendment of the 17.70.030 use chart for new residential apartment units to require 0.5 spaces per unit or 0.25 spaces/bedroom, with a studio apartments equivalent to a one-bedroom unit.

## **R4 High Density Residential (near- or long-term)**

Zoning revisions for the R4 high density residential area adjoining much of the C2-CBD district are likely of lesser priority than the C2-related recommendations. However, it is worth beginning to think about how R4 development character may change in the future with continued Pullman population growth and CBD with adjoining area redevelopment investment. Three recommendations were made as part of the October 2 charrette. These are considered, in turn.

### **1.Allow limited retail/mixed use w/residential**

#### **Current Situation:**

The Section 17.70.030 use charts indicate that no trade uses (including retail) are permitted or conditional within the R-4 zone. Some professional and physician/dental as well as governmental, educational childcare, church and cemetery service uses are allowed on a conditional basis with family day care home uses allowed as outright permitted.

#### **Proposed Code Revision:**

Consider extending conditional use provisions to 17.70.030 trade use chart for uses such as convenience store, retail food, eating establishments, sidewalk café, taverns/bars if limited in size (to no more than 2,500 square feet). Perhaps allow as permitted these same uses if size limited, part of a multi-family development and oriented to the street.

### **2. Evaluate means to remove the current disincentive to smaller units**

#### **Current Situation:**

Section 17.75.080 Development Standards requires a minimum lot area of 1,000 square feet per unit for developments (including apartments in the R4 zone district. For this district, there is also a provision that the board of adjustment for reduction to 500 square feet of land area per unit with issuance of a conditional use permit.

The same section of the code provides a basic maximum density for R4 is 44 units per acre with a PRD bonus density of 52 units per acre.

Based on input received from developers with stakeholder contacts prior to the charrettes, this current provision of 1,000 square feet of land area (outright permitted) may lead developers to build overly large units (as with 2+ bedrooms) to achieve compliance minimum lot area coverage. Larger units are built whether or not this fits with market demand. Absence of smaller units may therefore miss an important part of the market – including for more affordable units.

#### **Proposed Code Revision:**

Consolidate the two provisions of Subsections 17.75.080(2) and (3) into a single subsection standard, and evaluate means to remove the current disincentive to smaller units.

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### 3. Adjust building height max (now @ 125% of abutting zone)

#### **Current Situation:**

An observation made at the October 2 charrette was that building heights in the R4 zone (for infill development) are limited to 125% of the greatest building height “for a building or structure on any of the abutting occupied residentially zoned lots that adjoin the same street as the lot on which the infill development is established.” This is per Section

17.75.080 (11) Development Standards – infill development – in residential districts. A concern expressed at the charrette is that this provision could prove to constrain achievement of other density provisions of the code – especially if market

demand for close-in housing increases in the years ahead.

Subsequent correspondence indicates that the City may consider transitioning the R4 to more of a mixed-use zone with Pullman’s Comprehensive Plan update.

#### **Proposed Code Revision:**

None suggested at this time, pending other revisions for added mixed use and density flexibility as might be considered for the R4 district with the Comprehensive Plan update.



# Appendix F. Downtown Parking Recommendations

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260 SE Kamiaken St., Pullman, WA 99163-2664

**CITY OF  
PULLMAN**  
WASHINGTON

## **Police Department**

*Gary Jenkins, Chief of Police*  
Police Business (509) 334-0802  
Police Fax (509) 332-0829  
police@pullman-wa.gov  
www.pullman-wa.gov/police

### **MEMORANDUM**

To: Kevin Gardes, Public Works Director

From: Gary Jenkins, Chief of Police

Subject: Downtown Master Plan Parking Considerations

Date: January 23, 2020

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Last year City Council adopted a revised downtown parking fine schedule. This prompted Council and staff discussion of the overall downtown parking plan. I subsequently asked our Code Enforcement staff, who are responsible for downtown parking enforcement, to consider and provide recommended changes to downtown parking to better address the parking needs in the Downtown Free Parking Zone (DTFPZ). Below are the recommendations provided by Code Enforcement staff.

### **Downtown Parking Recommendations**

The following five recommendations are intended to solve two problems. First, to provide more on-street parking for downtown visitors. Secondly, to provide long term parking solutions for downtown employees by opening more permit parking areas in the DTFPZ where it currently appears to be available.

#### **1. Residential Parking Downtown**

As residential occupancy increases in the DTFPZ, residential parking, both legal and illegal, will impact available parking for downtown business customers. The volume of DTFPZ parking spaces is limited, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to accommodate the parking needs of downtown residents. Without the creation of additional residential parking spaces commensurate with residential occupancy increases, and while still maintaining adequate available parking for business customers, DTFPZ parking enforcement will become more challenging and more necessary.

#### **2. Riverwalk (70 x 3-hour stalls except by permit and 6 x 3-hour stalls)**

- a. Increase amount of available permits to 75 from 60. Observations from summer of 2018 showed that approximately 15 spaces are not utilized on any given day. Observations from October 2019 show anywhere from 34-46 spaces are not utilized, and anywhere from 8-14 of those utilized spaces were vehicles parked without permits and subject to the 3 hour restriction. We could increase permit sales by 15 to begin with and continue to watch if there is capacity to sell more. Keep existing 3-hour parking only spaces at parking lot entrance. Permits will likely not all be in use at the same time.
- b. Increase permit price (to be determined with more discussion later).

Provide three residential overnight permits for this lot similar to the Chamber and Armory permits (with input from Parks Dpt. regarding effect on ploughing).

**3. Thai Ginger (36 x 12-hour stalls, 1 8x 2-hour stalls)**

- a. Sell permits for Thai Ginger Lot similar to those sold for Riverwalk. This lot is regularly underutilized. Current observations in October 2019 show anywhere from 8 to 17 stalls open throughout the day, mostly in the 2-hour stalls. This is consistent with observations from the summer of 2018. I recommend we change the entire lot to 2-hour parking except by permit and sell 50 permits to start. We would continue to watch if there is capacity to sell more. Charge same price as Riverwalk permits. Those who have used this area for free will not appreciate the change but there are still several free 12-hour resources throughout the DTFPZ.
- b. Provide three residential overnight permits for this lot similar to the Chamber and Armory permits (with input from Parks Dpt. regarding effect on ploughing).

**4. Restructure Riverwalk and Thai Ginger permits**

Permits could be restructured to be sold to any individual providing proof of employment ties within the DTFPZ on a first come first serve basis. Limiting sales to the individual as opposed to the employer will hopefully allow for greater competition and distribution of permits.

**5. Lower lot**

Change the four 1-hour stalls to 30 minute loading zones (permit not valid). If possible move these spots closer to Paradise St. entrance for ease of frequent enforcement and greater separation of use within the lot. This parking restriction was requested by the Downtown Gown Committee and was altered some by Code Enforcement to make enforcement more achievable.

**Supplemental Recommendations**

The following four suggestions are intended to supplement the immediate recommendations. Ideally all DTFPZ lots should be managed cohesively in support of downtown business. Making sure these lots are available to those associated with downtown businesses will further ensure parking is available to downtown visitors.

**6. City hall**

- a. Restrict parking between 3-6 am except government vehicles. This will create turn over in the lot by preventing Evolve residents from occupying the lot between approximately 3pm and 10am daily.
- b. Offer three residential overnight permits for this lot similar to the Chamber and Armory permits.

**7. Pine St, H&R Block & Daniel St Lot**

Manage similar to Riverwalk lot. Restrict to 2-hour parking except by permit.

**8. Upper lot (Pub lot)**

Change the six 12-hour spaces on the west side of lot to 2-hour except by permit to allow more parking options for Upper/Lower lot permit holders. Retain east side as permit only Mon-Sat 8-6.

**9. Permit prices**

Increase all permit prices. Further study on this will be required.

**Other Considerations**

**Library lot**

Provide a few longer term parking stalls for library users? We haven't had any negative feedback that indicate library users are frustrated with time limits, but there are many who say they go to the library for longer periods of time for events or with kids, etc.

**Signage**

Refine parking signage so it is easy to locate, predictable, and so restrictions are understood.

**Residential overnight permits**

1. Currently Evolve residents are eligible to purchase these. Do we want to exclude them or keep them eligible?
2. Obtain input from Parks Dpt. regarding which three spaces in each lot should be used to support ploughing efforts.

**Removing restrictions**

Increasing 12 hour parking in the Riverwalk and Thai Ginger lots and other areas have been discussed, but other problems emerge with this change, such as using the 12 hour parking areas for park-and-ride type activities or by residents of the DTFPZ. A permit restriction prevents these types of stall occupancy.

**Senior center permits**

Pullman Police Department Code Enforcement will take over management of senior center parking permits. They are currently distributed in-house by the Senior Center Director.

**WSU Foundation concerns**

Permits for special events are allowed by city code to be administered by Chief of Police.

**Gravel lot at NE corner of N. Grand and Whitman**

Offer limited permit and/or overnight parking (appx. 10 spaces).

**Enforcement**

Explore alternative resources and technologies for parking enforcement that save time and allow for more frequent and/or less labor intensive enforcement.

# Appendix G: Sample Request for Proposal

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**RFP Elements.** Items that ideally would be included with the RFP solicitation include:

- 1-2 page flyer or overview summary of what is being requested (see one-page sample below)
- 1-page cover letter from the mayor or City official describing the site, redevelopment objectives, response highlights, schedule, and contact for added information.
- Description of the site available, current uses, zoning, infrastructure and pivotal development requirements and/or other site limitations potentially associated with project permitting and development.
- City objectives with respect to uses desired, design features, provision of replacement and/or net new parking spaces on- or off-site (including shared parking opportunities).
- Background Pullman area economic/demographic profile including added information specifically addressing the market(s) to be served by preferred site uses and key user/product/service niches to be addressed.
- City incentives directly or potentially available (as with technical assistance, expedited permitting, utility provision, tax abatement, grant and and/or other funding incentives).
- Asking price and terms of sale, lease or co-development (or bid terms) – including minimum transaction expectations of city (as applicable).
- Requested submittal information, typically covering such requested items as developer experience, capacity and references together with proposal for uses and scale of project, parking, financial and legal arrangements, anticipated development schedule, and conditions or contingencies affecting development delivery.
- Contact information for designated City staff and deadlines for submitting information requests and then the development proposal – also including protocols for contact of City representatives other than the designated point person.
- Description of evaluation criteria and process that the City will be using to review proposals and select a preferred development – together with outline of subsequent steps as for negotiation of development agreement, City Council review and anticipated timeline to contract finalization.



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## City of Pullman - Development Request for Proposal (RFP) for Grand/Olson Proposed Boutique Hotel (Sample RFP Summary)

The City of Pullman is soliciting proposals from investors, developers and/or property owners interested in developing a boutique hotel just in from the SW corner of Grand N Grand Avenue and NE Olsen Street/NW Davis Way – at the intersection of State highways SR 27 and SR 270.

**Property Features.** The property is owned and currently made available comprises a 21-space no-charge public parking lot by the City of Pullman. Immediately adjoining to the south is the Pullman Foursquare Church. The east side of NE Grand at NE Olson is the site of Cougar Plaza (SE corner), the Neill Public Library (NE), and Chase Bank (NW).

**Zoning.** C-2 CBD which provides for hotels and motels as an outright permitted use. There is no minimum on-site parking requirement in this zone.

**Pullman Market.** Pullman is home to Washington State University (WSU) – with over 31,600 students on multiple campuses including 21,600 in Pullman. Pullman is also the largest city in a 2- county, bi-state metro area of 90,000 including Moscow – home to the University of Idaho. The Grand/Olson site is ideally positioned to serve as lodging within a walk distance of the WSU campus – for prospective students and families, visiting scholars and alumni – as well as serving other business and general tourism travel to the Palouse.

**City Objectives for Property Disposition.** The City of Pullman will entertain proposals for sale of the property subject to: a) construction of a minimum 3-story hotel with approved design including active street frontage, and b) providing a minimum of 21 on-site parking spaces available to public during daytime hours with half of spaces reserved for hotel guests 6 pm – 7 am. Please include proposed purchase price and terms with proposal submittal.

**For Detailed RFP Package.** Contact ~~xxxx~~, City of Pullman, phone (509) ~~xxx-xxxx~~.

Email: [xxx@Pullman-WA.gov](mailto:xxx@Pullman-WA.gov). Deadline for inquiries is ~~xxxxxx~~ xx, 2020. Deadline for receipt of proposal submittals is ~~xxxxxx~~ xx, 2020.

### Grand/Olson Hotel Boutique Concept Illustrated



Source: BDS. Shown as design complementing existing downtown character. For illustrative purposes only.

