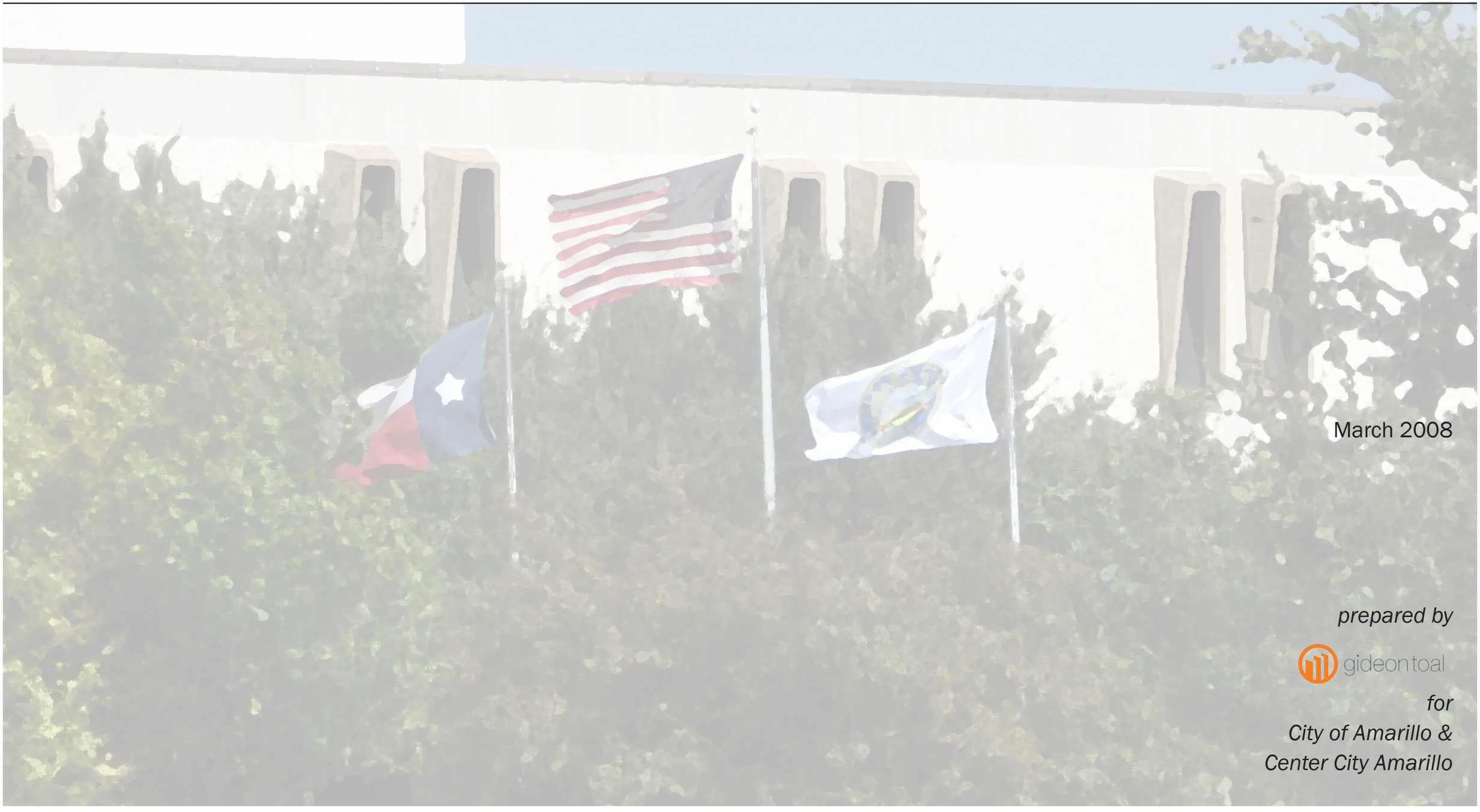
Downtown Amarillo Strategic Action Plan

Downtown Amarillo
Strategic Action Plan



March 2008

prepared by

gideon toal

for
City of Amarillo &
Center City Amarillo

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What is happening in downtown needs to signify out intent and meaning. Communities who assure that their city center is prepared for economic globalization, mitigates cultural globalization, and utilizes its diversity will be laying the groundwork to be economically competitive places in the 21st century.

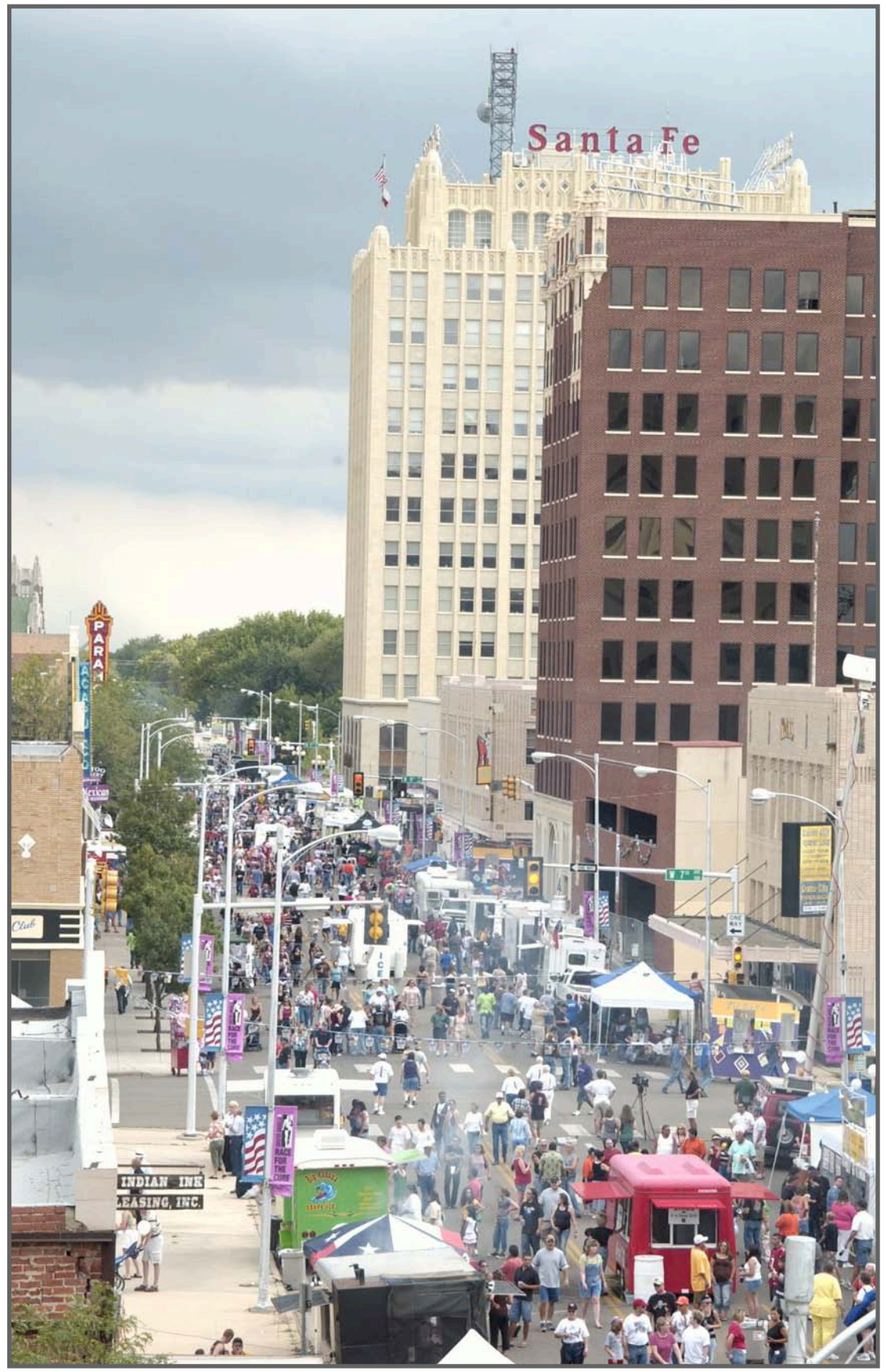
- Donovan Rypkema

Over the next few years Downtown Amarillo, and the immediate surrounding neighborhoods have an enormous opportunity to attract major new investment and redevelopment. Downtown Amarillo can become a vibrant urban area where people live, work, play, and learn.

In a global and "knowledge age" society, it is very important that Amarillo offer a diverse array of urban and suburban lifestyles, cultural opportunities, business opportunities, and a high quality of life for all types of families and individuals. A vibrant Downtown is paramount to attain that goal.

<u>Key focus areas of the plan are:</u>

- Maintain Downtown Amarillo as the financial, government, and civic center of Amarillo and the Panhandle. Amarillo City Hall, Potter County, and various federal offices have reinforced this initiative.
- Attract development of urban lifestyle living within Downtown and the adjacent area
  - This urban population will create a 24-7 lifestyle that will also attract new retail and entertainment.
  - Urban mixed-use development has proven to be a successful trend all across the nation in both large and smaller communities.
  - Attracting people to live Downtown creates sustainable communities, and a strong tax base.
- Reinforce Downtown Amarillo as a key entertainment and retail center of the City to include cultural amenities, restaurants, night clubs, cinema theatres, civic events, festivals, and retail. The Globe News Center for the Performing Arts, Amarillo Civic Center, Library, and other venues have contributed to this goal.
- Support the Civic Center area with the development of one or more quality hotels. This assures that visitors and tourists will experience the true heart of Amarillo. It will also help attract a wider array of conventions and conferences to Amarillo.
- Implement urban design and open space design standards to assure that Downtown is a beautiful and comfortable area for all the residents and visitors of Downtown.
- Attract more educational opportunities to Downtown including specialized curricula such as performing arts, medical, legal, and business. This could include the Amarillo ISD, Amarillo College, West Texas A&M, Texas Tech, and other colleges wishing to have a presence in Amarillo. Consider the possibility of Amarillo College creating an Educational Center.
- Attract family oriented venues, events and programs that bring groups to Downtown. Subject to financial feasibility, consider a Downtown minor league ball park associated with mixed use developments.



Ten Factors Responsible for Urban Resurgence

1. Changing Demographics, Baby Boomers, Generation Y, and Smaller Households

- *Baby boomers born between 1946 and 1964. This 43-year-old to 61-year-old cohort currently numbers 78 million. The older of these boomer households have adult children who are not living at home; many of these couples are choosing to downsize and return to more urban places either to buy or rent dwellings that offer the glamour and activities of the city or simply the convenience of urban living.*

2. Consumer Trends and Lifestyle Preferences

- *People moving into urban communities are looking for meaning in their environments, from religion to entertainment to shopping to art and culture. Americans also are beginning to value their own history. This trend is happening in both the suburbs and the cities. A growing snowball of adaptive use projects is finally changing the blandness of suburbia as the suburbs look to their own unique buildings and neighborhoods with history to explore.*

3. Payoff from 20 Years of Public Investment and Planning

- *Municipalities adopted urban renewal in the 1960s with a series of policies that razed whole downtown districts and destroyed much of the historic fabric of cities in deference to explosive development of the suburbs. The thinking was basically "newer is better" and little thought was given to renovation, adaptive use, or historic preservation. By the 1980s when many American downtowns had been decimated by these policies, the philosophy was seriously rethought and cities began reworking their master plans to promote incremental growth and sustainable development. Mixed use and vertical high-density development, which had always been the backbone of American downtowns, was in vogue again.*

4. Immigration—Resettling of Undesirable Urban Areas by Industrious Hardworking New Arrivals

- *Immigrants help to stabilize big city centers, while people moving around the country continue to push out the metropolitan fringes. Big counties depend increasingly on immigration to supplant emigrating native-born populations. Between 2000 and 2004, the total U.S. population grew 4.3 percent to about 294 million. While the African American population increased 5.7 percent, the Asian population increased 16.2 percent and the Hispanic population rose 17 percent. Most of this growth is concentrated in urban areas.*

5. Smart Growth Initiatives, Sustainable Development Movement

- *Smart growth in the United States is defined as environmentally sensitive land development whose goals are to minimize dependence on automobile transportation, reduce air pollution, and make infrastructure investment more efficient. Recently the National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education at the University of Maryland published the ten principles of smart growth, all of which support the development and resurgence of American cities. The principles endorse mixed-land uses, compact building design with vertical configuration, housing opportunities and choices, walkable communities, a strong sense of place, a variety of transportation choices, preservation of open space, preservation of existing buildings and communities, cost effectiveness, and collaboration with stakeholders and the community.*

6. Innovative Financing (TIFs, BIDs, GO Bonds, and Market-Based Financing Solutions)

- *A range of innovative public/private financing tools has evolved in recent years that were unavailable in previous waves of urban revitalization. These tools have resulted in higher-quality, more sustainable development solutions that often have district wide effects. Most downtowns have taken advantage of tax increment financing (TIF), which is one of the most widely used forms of development finance in reviving downtowns. Forty-nine states now have enabling legislation for TIF, a mechanism to capture the future tax benefits of real estate improvements to pay the present cost of those improvements.*

7. Lack of Investment in Infrastructure (Transportation, Power, Oil and Gas, Education, Utilities) Congestion

- From 1950 through 1970, the United States invested heavily in public infrastructure in response to its strong population surge. The nation experienced an economic boom in the 1950s as soldiers returned from war and industry growth continued over the first half century. After the 1970s, this commitment to infrastructure funding slowed. Capital investment dried up as skepticism toward public spending grew. The United States faces a daunting infrastructure challenge with inadequate highway, water, electrical, oil and gas, and educational systems and resources.

8. Regulations/Approvals at the Fringe (NIMBYs)

- Smart growth regulations and development policies that reflect the real costs of new development at the fringe are leveling the playing field and leading many developers back to urban areas where governments are encouraging development. Market demand indicates that a large segment of the population prefers to live near a thriving urban center in which residents can enjoy vibrant job markets, short commutes, good pay, and a wide variety of leisure-oriented diversions.

9. Changing Economics of Residential versus Office Development

- In many American urban centers, the economics of housing values compared with office values have led to a shift in development to residential uses rather than office uses. All over American downtowns, historic office and industrial buildings that have lain uncultivated for years in undesirable districts are being adaptively used and turned into stylish upscale lofts.

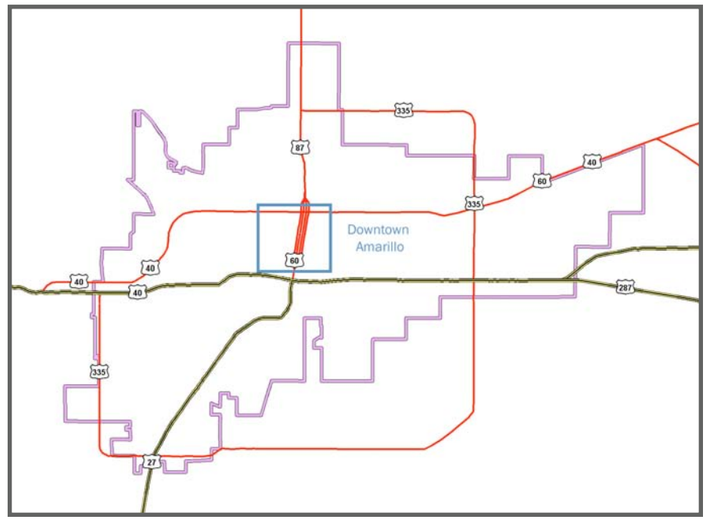
10. The Urbanization Trend Worldwide

- A century ago, about 10 percent of the world's population lived in cities. That figure has risen to 50 percent and is expected to rise to 75 percent by 2050. Most of the development problems facing American cities are universal, and the inefficiency of traditional suburban development patterns is becoming more apparent in the face of increasing energy costs, decreasing energy availability, accumulating infrastructure needs, traffic congestion, environmental degradation, and global warming.

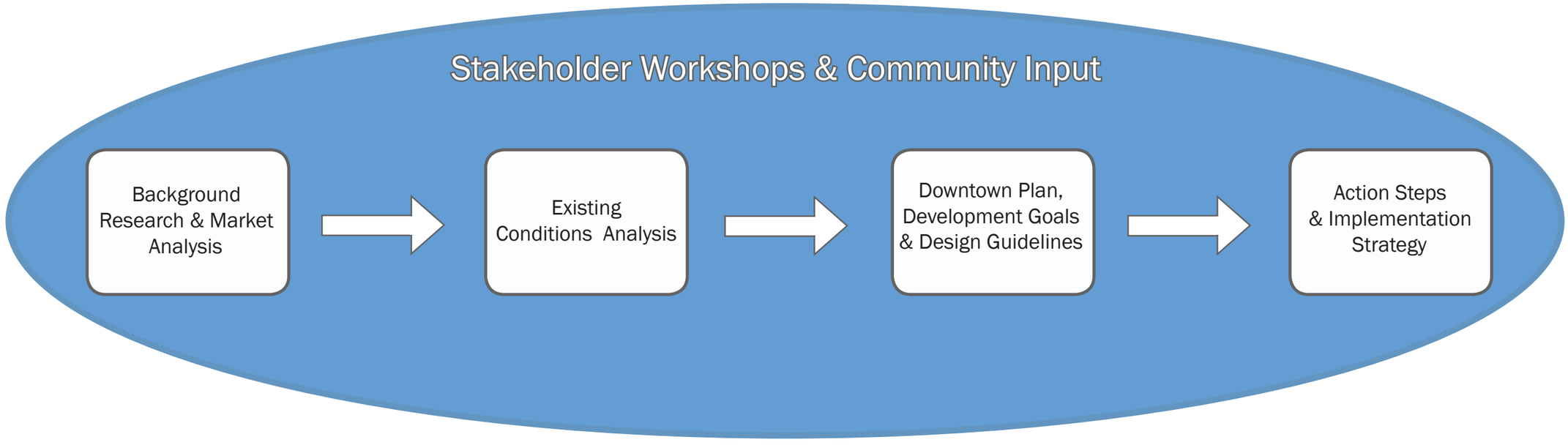
Jill Bensley and Michael Beyard
Revival of the American City
Urban Land: April 2007

The Downtown Plan recommendations embody the "Ten Factors Responsible for Urban Resurgence" as outlined above.

Downtown Amarillo Planning Area



Downtown Amarillo is the business, financial, cultural, civic, and government center for the entire Panhandle Region of Texas. Located at the intersection of Interstate 40 and Interstate 27, Downtown Amarillo offers excellent access to a multi-state area.



Stakeholder Workshop

The diagram above depicts the four major steps behind the Amarillo Downtown Strategic Action Plan, with input from community workshops and stakeholder groups influencing each step. This process was used to ensure recommendations met community expectations and were attendant to the community's vision and goals for Downtown Amarillo. The Strategic Action Plan mirrors this process.

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Only good analysis enables a community to test its aspirations against the constraints of reality. A good strategy is realistic. It places high priority on those objectives and actions that are feasible and can make a positive difference in the community's well-being. Analysis should be thorough enough to help a community create an action program rather than a wish list.

- Robert Bosscher and Kenneth Voytek

Over the past 50 years, downtowns across the country have experienced decline and in extreme cases abandonment. Despite this growing problem the full extent of the decline is often hard to pinpoint outside of vacant buildings or falling rental rates. One important measure of the lack of investment in downtown is a review of the taxable value of properties within downtown. This helps to quantify the extent of decline that the urban core of the city has experienced.

Illustrated on the page 15 is a historical taxable value review for the City of Amarillo. While the property values for the City have more than doubled since 1985, Downtown has remained almost stagnant with a less than 2% growth rate. This slow growth has led officials to implement the City's first Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone in an effort to reverse the slow growth of Downtown.

Original Amarillo Hotel

Amarillo Hotel following 1927 renovation

3rd and Polk Today

City of Amarillo
Taxable Value Analysis

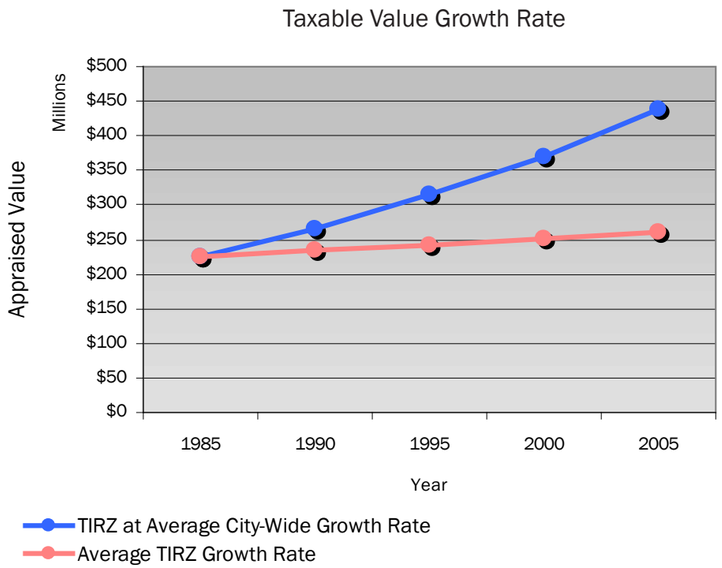
Year	1985	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total	$2,983,920,430	$3,868,833,154	$3,986,258,523	$5,079,266,313	$5,221,261,379	$5,448,997,866	$5,622,565,614	$5,704,310,410	$5,877,460,259	$6,046,148,295
Increment		$884,912,724	$117,425,369	$1,093,007,790	$141,995,066	$227,736,487	$173,567,748	$81,744,796	$173,149,849	$168,688,036
% Change		29.66%	3.04%	27.42%	2.80%	4.36%	3.19%	1.45%	3.04%	2.87%
									11.80%	

2000-2006 Avg. Annual Growth	1985-2006 Growth
2.95%	102.6%

TIRZ
Taxable Value Analysis

Year	1985	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total	$225,713,271	$259,986,636	$224,692,627	$228,551,390	$242,020,468	$246,674,949	$253,031,396	$254,641,073	$254,408,980	$258,839,881
Increment		$34,273,365	-$35,294,009	$3,858,763	$13,469,078	$4,654,481	$6,356,447	$1,609,677	-$232,093	$4,430,901
% Change		15.18%	-13.58%	1.72%	5.89%	1.92%	2.58%	0.64%	-0.09%	1.74%
									10.94%	

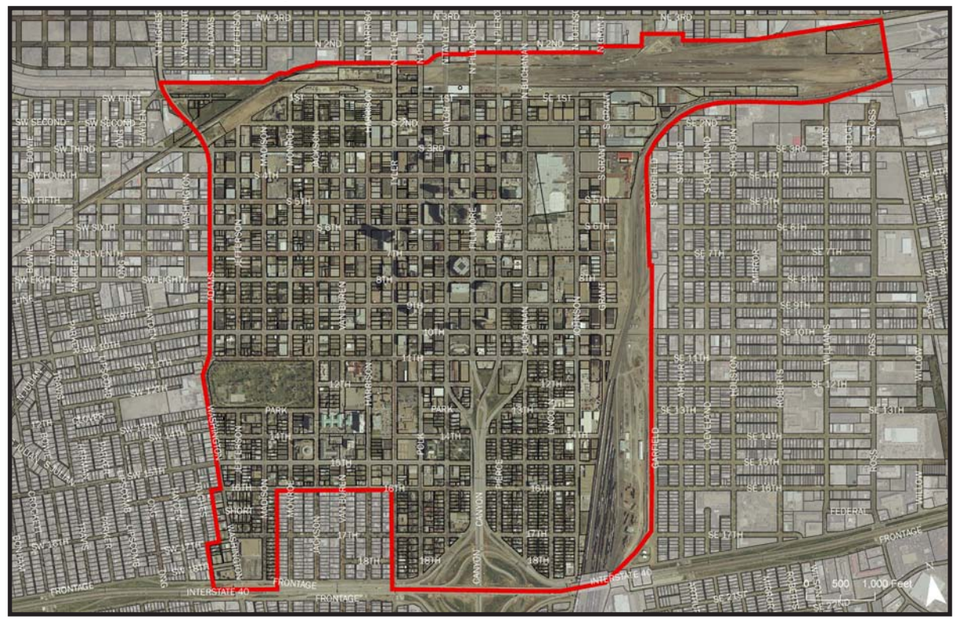
2000-2006 Avg. Annual Growth	1985-2006 Growth
2.11%	14.7%



Historical Taxable Value Review

- The Historical Taxable Value Review provides information on growth trends over a 20 year period for selected regions.
- This information is valuable in identifying growth patterns, developing projections and forming comparisons against the TIRZ property.
- The analysis tracks accounts that exist from 1985 to 2006. Exempt, new and expired accounts are not included.

Amarillo TIRZ #1 Boundary



What Are Psychographics?

The term psychographics is defined by Merriam-Webster's dictionary as "market research or statistics classifying groups according to psychological variables." This type of market research becomes extremely powerful at predicting consumer likes and dislikes when coupled with behavioral data and spending patterns. Claritas's PRIZM NE segmentation system does exactly that, by grouping the population into 66 separate categories based on spending habits, demographic traits and a litany of other statistics. The following is a brief description of the Claritas PRIZM NE system.

PRIZM NE distills an ocean of demographic and behavioral data into an easy way to identify, understand and target your customers and prospects. By defining every household in terms of 66 demographically and behaviorally distinct types or "segments," PRIZM NE helps you learn about their likes, dislikes, lifestyles and purchase behavior. This revolutionary marketing tool provides a sound basis for effective decision making across every aspect of consumer marketing.

While there are many powerful applications in direct mail, true segmentation is not a list-scoring model. Its purpose is much broader and more strategic than any one application. Segmentation should provide your organization with a "lingua franca" for understanding your customers, those of your competitors, as well as the marketplace in general.

With the 2000 census data, Claritas statisticians completely rebuilt the previous version of PRIZM by aggressively analyzing new data sources and utilizing advanced statistical techniques to develop an entirely new system. This new version of PRIZM breaks with traditional clustering algorithms to embrace a new technology that yields better segmentation results; that's why we dubbed it PRIZM—The New Evolution.

Why are they important?

Psychographics allow market research to move beyond simple demographics by helping to predict the depth of specific market niches such as the urban retail and residential markets. This segmentation system provides a sound basis for key development goals and their feasibility.

Some Examples of Claritas Prizm NE Market Segments

04 Young Digerati

Young Digerati are the nation's tech-savvy singles and couples living in fashionable neighborhoods on the urban fringe. Affluent, highly educated and ethnically mixed, Young Digerati communities are typically filled with trendy apartments and condos, fitness clubs and clothing boutiques, casual restaurants and all types of bars-from juice to coffee to microbrew.

07 Money & Brains

The residents of Money & Brains seem to have it all: high incomes, advanced degrees and sophisticated tastes to match their credentials. Many of these city dwellers, predominantly white with a high concentration of Asian Americans, are married couples with few children who live in fashionable homes on small, manicured lots.

16 Bohemian Mix

A collection of young, mobile urbanites, Bohemian Mix represents the nation's most liberal lifestyles. Its residents are a progressive mix of young singles and couples, students and professionals, Hispanics, Asians, African-Americans and whites. In their funky row houses and apartments, Bohemian Mixers are the early adopters who are quick to check out the latest movie, nightclub, laptop and microbrew.

26 The Cosmopolitans

Educated, midscale and multi-ethnic, The Cosmopolitans are urbane couples in America's fast-growing cities. Concentrated in a handful of metros-such as Las Vegas, Miami and Albuquerque-these households feature older home-owners, empty-nesters and college graduates. A vibrant social scene surrounds their older homes and apartments, and residents love the nightlife and enjoy leisure-intensive lifestyles.

29 American Dreams

American Dreams is a living example of how ethnically diverse the nation has become: more than half the residents are Hispanic, Asian or African-American. In these multilingual neighborhoods-one in ten speaks a language other than English-middle-aged immigrants and their children live in middle-class comfort.

36 Blue-Chip Blues

Blue-Chip Blues is known as a comfortable lifestyle for young, sprawling families with well-paying blue-collar jobs. Ethnically diverse-with a significant presence of Hispanics and African-Americans-the segment's aging neighborhoods feature compact, modestly priced homes surrounded by commercial centers that cater to child-filled households.

In order to understand the urban retail market and its impact on revitalization efforts, it is important to look back and identify some historic trends. There are essentially four themes that have been used to jump start retail in downtowns across America.

- *The first was established as a direct response to the shopping mall, and is known as the pedestrian mall.**
  (i.e. 16th Street Mall, Denver, CO)
- *The second theme is the festival marketplace.**
  (i.e. Pike Place Market, Seattle, WA and Fanueil Hall, Boston MA)
- *The third style, downtown indoor shopping malls are simply suburban malls in an urban setting.**
  (i.e. Gaviidae Commons, Minneapolis, MN)
- ***The final, and the most popular over the last 20 years is the mixed-use center. This form of redevelopment tends to represent a return to a "Live/Work/Play" atmosphere, which made urban centers of the past successful.****
  (i.e. Rose District, Portland, OR)

Pedestrian malls, festival marketplaces & downtown shopping malls have all had limited success with only a handful of recognizable developments still in existence today, while mixed-use retail has been a focal point of many successful revitalization efforts.

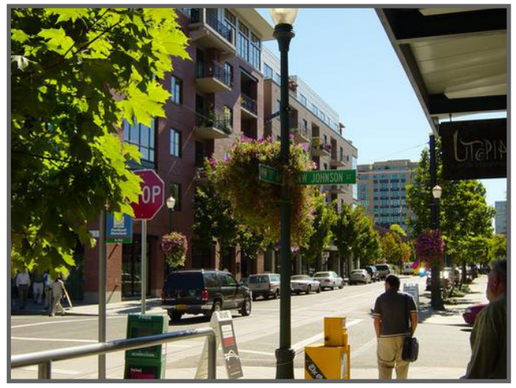
* Robertson, Kent, *Downtown retail reviatalization: a review of American development strategies,* Planning Perspectives, 12 (1997) 383-401

Gaviidae Commons, Minneapolis, MN

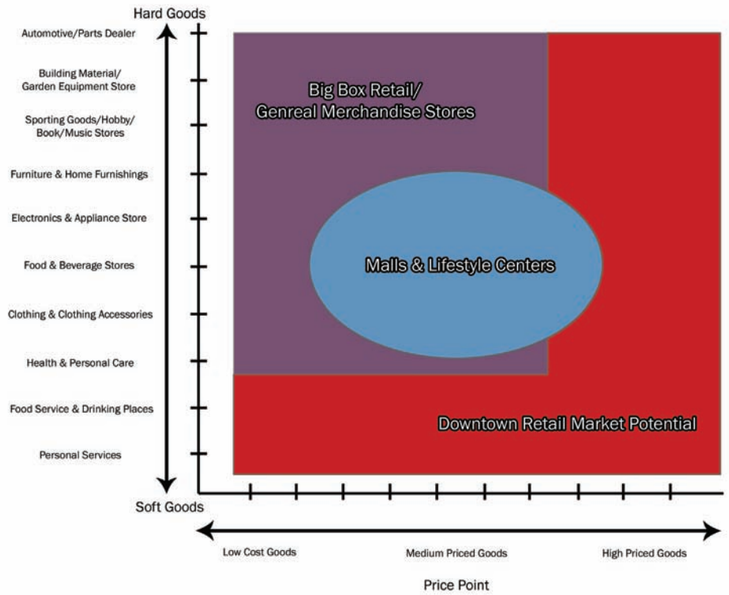
Pike Place Market, Seattle, WA

16th Street Mall, Denver, CO

Fanueil Hill, Boston, MA


Rose District, Portland, OR

Downtown Retail Market Niche*



* While malls and “big box” retail have absorbed a large portion of the US retail market there are still a number of businesses that operate successfully within downtown. The chart above illustrates the market potential for downtown.

Typical Downtown Retail Categories

- Fast food/fast-casual (e.g. Rosa’s)
- Take-away coffee (e.g. Starbucks)
- Convenience-service (e.g. CVS)
- “Temp” agencies (e.g. Kelley Services)
- Copy shop (e.g. FedEx Kinko’s)
- Branded cell phone stores (e.g. AT&T)

In larger downtowns…

- “Fat-Cat” restaurants (e.g. Ruth Chris)
- Business apparel (e.g. Jos A. Bank)
- Office supply (e.g. Office Depot)

The Claritas PRIZM NE segmentation system breaks down individuals into segments, but it also classifies them into 11 lifestage groups. The following three lifestage groups tend to be consumers of urban retail products.

PRIZM NE’s Lifestage classifications are based on the age of each segment’s residents and the presence of children, two powerful predictors of consumer behavior. They also capture a combination of three variables—affluence, householder age and whether there are children living at home—to help paint a more vivid picture of each segment’s likely lifestyle. All of the 66 PRIZM NE segments are grouped into 11 broad Lifestage Groups, that predict consumer spending, and lifestyle patterns. Listed below are three lifestage groups that tend to be consumers of downtown retail market niche.

Y1 - Midlife Success

The eight segments in Midlife Success typically are filled with childless singles and couples in their thirties and forties. The wealthiest of the Younger Years class, this group is home to many white, college-educated residents who make six-figure incomes at executive and professional jobs but also extends to more middle class segments. Most of these segments are found in suburban and exurban communities, and consumers here are big fans of the latest technology, financial products, aerobic exercise and travel.

Y2 - Young Achievers

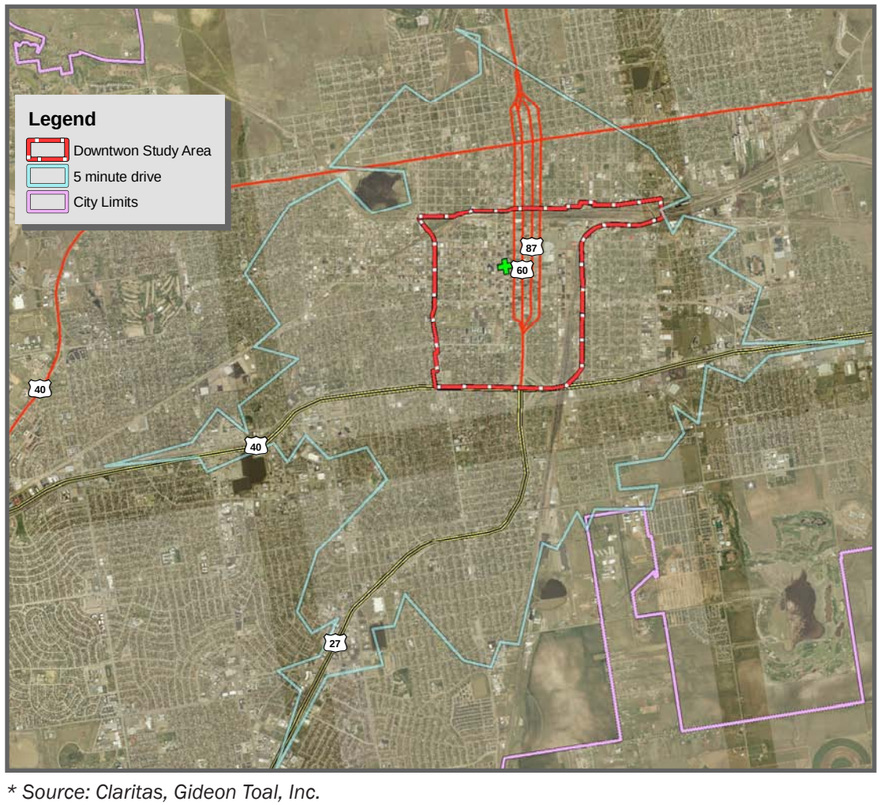
Young, hip singles are the prime residents of Mainstream Singles, a lifestage group of twentysomethings who’ve recently settled in metro neighborhoods. Their incomes range from working-class to well-to-do, but most residents are still renting apartments in cities or close-in suburbs. These seven segments contain a high percentage of Asian singles, and there’s a decidedly progressive sensibility in their tastes as reflected in the group’s liberal politics, alternative music and lively nightlife. Mainstream Singles segments are twice as likely as the general population to include college students living in group quarters.

M1 - Affluent Empty Nests

While those on the “MTV side” of fifty may debate their inclusion in this group, Americans in the Mature Years tend to be over 45 years old and living in houses that have empty-nested. The four wealthiest segments in this group are classified Affluent Empty Nests, and they feature upscale couples who are college educated, hold executive and professional positions and are over 45. While their neighborhoods are found across a variety of landscapes—from urban to small-town areas—they all share a propensity for living in large, older homes. With their children out of the house, these consumers have plenty of disposable cash to finance active lifestyles rich in travel, cultural events, exercise equipment and business media. These folks are also community activists who write politicians, volunteer for environmental groups and vote heavily in elections.

To better understand the Amarillo market, the planning team conducted an analysis on retail sales in Downtown, which focused on food and beverage sales. While very few people live within the study area, almost 20,000 people work within a 5 minute drive (over 16% of Amarillo's workforce) which should provide Downtown with enough foot traffic to support a number of restaurants and bars. Despite this daytime surge in population Downtown food and beverage sales totaled only $9.6 million over the past year, while food and beverage sales within a five minute drive were over $76 million. This means that on average workers in downtown spent $1.94 per work day, while workers within a five minute drive spent on average $6.48 per work day. This discrepancy illustrates the need for restaurants in Downtown, while also providing evidence of the strength of the market.

5 Minute Drive Time



** Source: Claritas, Gideon Toal, Inc.*

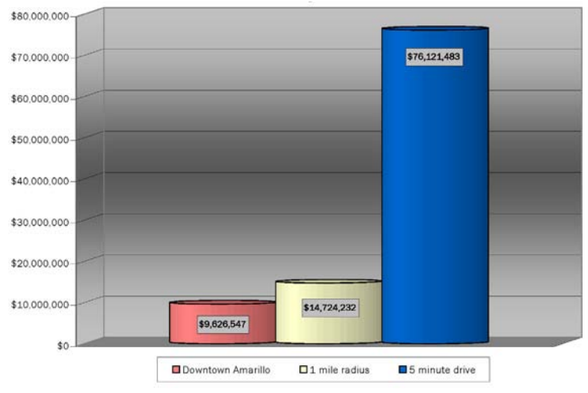
Downtown

Workers in Downtown	19,810
Weeks in work year	50
Days in work years	250
Workers in Downtown per year	4,952,500
2006 Food & beverage retail sales	$9,626,547
Expenditures Per Worker/Per Day	**$1.94**

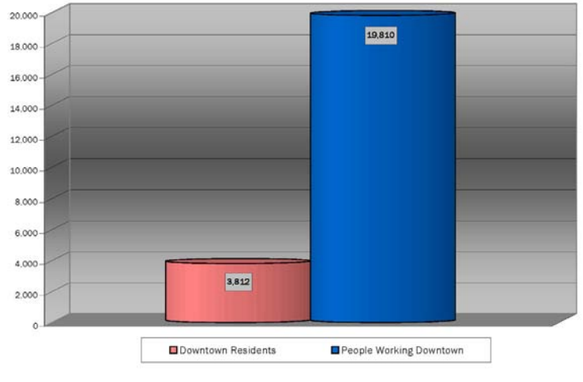
5 Minute Drive

Workers in Area	47,018
Weeks in work year	50
Days in work years	250
Workers in area per year	11,754,500
2006 Food & beverage retail sales	$76,121,483
Expenditures Per Worker/Per Day	**$6.48**

Food & Beverage Retail Sales



Population Movement



Retail Habits of Office Workers

International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) analyzed how the habits of office workers have changed between 1987 and 2003. The study examined changing consumer preferences among office workers, along with the impact of retail availability on employee shopping habits. Specific findings include:

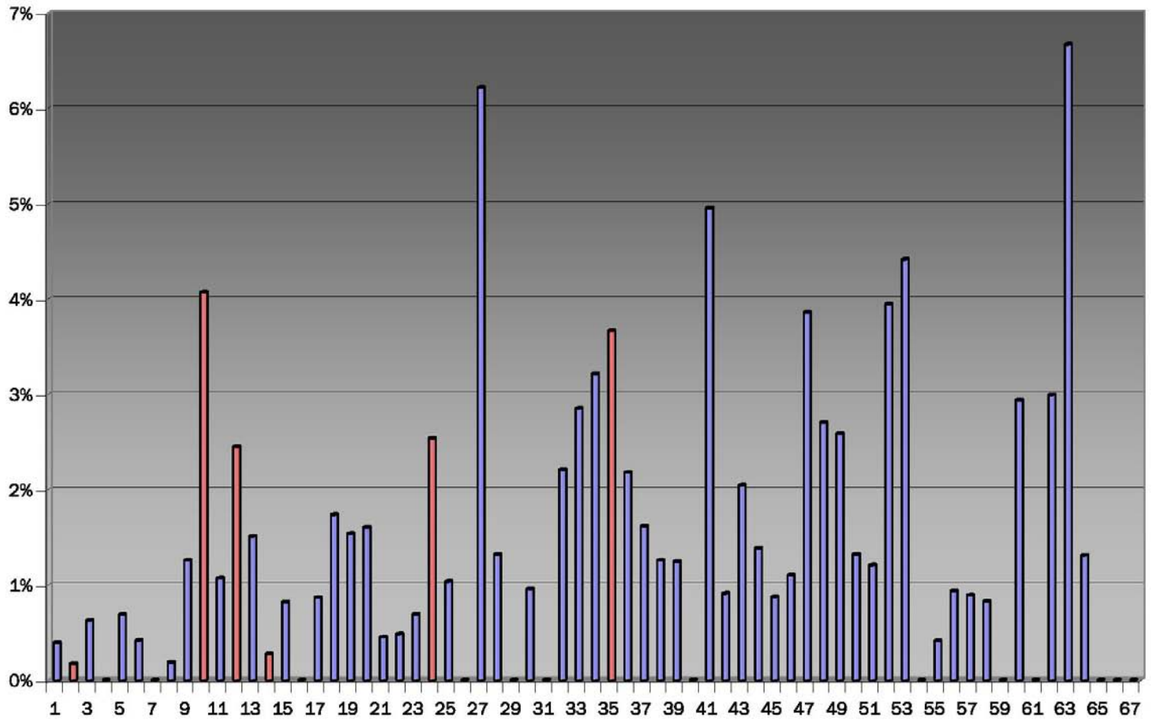
- *In 2003, weekly lunch expenditures among downtown office workers were 20% higher than those reported by suburban office workers ($26.80 versus $22.50).*
- *The lunch frequency has remained stable between 1987 and 2003, averaging 4.4 days per week (the average number of days purchased lunch is 2.9).*
- *Office workers spend an average of $7.10 on lunch when dining out.*
- *When compared to their suburban counterparts, downtown office workers are more likely to eat out (85% versus 76%), and also eat out more frequently.*
- *Fifty percent (50%) of downtown office workers eat out at least 4 out of 5 days, versus 38% of suburban office workers.*
- *The deli/grocery/carry-out business has surpassed sit-down and fast food restaurants in market share. Almost twice as many lunches were purchased at these types of convenience food shops in 2003 than in 1987 (up from 15% to 27%).*
- *The share of office workers shopping during their lunch hour (32%) has remained stable since 1987.*
- *The market share of lunches purchased at fast-food restaurants has remained at 16% since 1987, while the share from sit-down restaurants has decreased from 22% to 16%.*
- *The share of office workers who stop after work for dinner or drinks closer to their office has doubled since 1987 (an increase of 12% to 25%). The average weekly expenditure for all office workers who stop after work for dinner or drinks was $44 per patron in 2003.*
- *Downtown, after-work entertainment activities have increased from 29% in 1987 to 35% in 2003.*
- *Use of public transportation has increased dramatically (43% in 1987 to 63% in 2003), among office workers in downtown areas with above average retail density.*

Matt Kures, Serving Downtown Office Workers, Downtown Economics: Ideas for Increasing Economic Vitality in Community Business Districts (January 2007)

Utilizing the Claritas Prizm NE segmentation system the planning team was able to identify six segments within the Amarillo MSA that tend to be buyers and renters of urban residential properties. These segments total approximately 12,000 residents providing a sufficient base to absorb a number of new developments. Page 22 details the lifestyles and spending habits for each these segments.

** Examples of urban residential property & civic spaces*

Amarillo MSA Psychographic Profile



** Source: Claritas, Gideon Toal, Inc.*

Amarillo Urban Residential Market			
10	Second City Elite	3,717	4.07%
12	Brite Lites, Li'l City	2,237	2.45%
14	New Empty Nests	252	0.28%
22	Young Influentials	444	0.49%
24	Up-and-Comers	2,317	2.54%
35	Boomtown Singles	3,347	3.67%
	Total	**12,314**	**13%**

Urban Residential Potential

With 78.2 million baby boomers poised to retire, the market for retirement homes in the coming years will be at an all time high. A growing number of retirees and empty nesters are making the choice to live downtown. Some retirees are trading in their golf clubs for season theatre tickets and their golf cart for a bus pass. There is an emerging market for active seniors living downtown. Communities should evaluate opportunities for this emerging class of urban dwellers and match their services, promote business opportunities and growth relative to the needs of this new niche market in the downtown area.

Stephanie Lind, Retire Downtown A Market Emerges for Active Living Downtown, Downtown Economics: Ideas for Increasing Economic Vitality in Community Business Districts (July 2007)

<u>What are urban buyers looking for?</u>

- Unique Products – Stay away from "sameness"
  1. Retail – Talbots, Chico, Roots etc…
  2. Restaurants – diverse local cuisine, few if any chains
- Distinct residential districts with unique housing choices
- Walkability – the "Live/Work/Play" experience
- Space – units don't have to be very large but must "live big", large windows, open floor plans etc…
- Soundproofing
- Downtown Amenities
  1. Public Plazas
  2. Dog Parks
  3. Cultural Institutions
- Creative conversion of existing structures
- Day care and children's activities (urbanbaby.com)

International Downtown Association 2006

Urban Residential Typology

<u>High-Rise (over 8 stories):</u>

- Type 1 construction
- Concrete or steel
- Above 75 feet
- May include street level retail or live-work units
- Typical unit size: 600 to 3,000 + sf
- Common areas and recreational areas typical
- Density: 200 + per acre
- Typical buyers: Young singles & couples, Baby boomers and Empty nesters
- Claritas Psychographics
  - 4 - Young Digerati
  - 7 - Money and Brains
  - 16 - Bohemian Mix

<u>Mid-Rise (4 to 8 stories):</u>

- Below grade or structured parking
- Wood, Concrete or steel
- Common parking (some units may have direct access garages
- May include street level retail or live-work units
- Typical unit size: 600 to 2,000 + sf
- Common areas
- Density: 80 to 100 + per acre
- Typical buyers: Young singles & couples,
- Claritas Psychographics
  - 4 - Young Digerati
  - 16 - Bohemian Mix
  - 26 - The Cosmopolitans
  - 29 - American Dreams

<u>Low-Rise (2-4 stories):</u>

- More traditional attached project
- Wood frame construction
- Townhomes, flats or row homes (walk-up)
- May include street level retail or live-work units
- Typical unit size: 1,200 to 1,800 + sf
- Private parking (garages)
- Density: up to 30 units per acre
- Typical buyers: First time buyers, singles and couples with young children
- Claritas Psychographics
  - 12 - Brite Lites
  - 29 - American Dreams
  - 36 - Blue Chip Blues

10 Second City Elite

There's money to be found in the nation's smaller cities, and you're most likely to find it in Second City Elite. The residents of these satellite cities tend to be prosperous executives who decorate their $200,000 homes with multiple computers, large-screen TV sets and an impressive collection of wines. With more than half holding college degrees, Second City Elite residents enjoy cultural activities-from reading books to attending theater to dance productions.

2006 Statistics
Median HH Income: $74,375

Demographics Traits
Ethnic Diversity: Mostly White
Presence of Kids: No kids
Age Ranges: 55+
Education Levels: College Graduate
Employment Levels: Management
Homeownership: Mostly own
Urbanicity: Second City
Income: UpperMid
Income Producing Assets: High

14 New Empty Nests

With their grown-up children recently out of the house, New Empty Nests is composed of upscale older Americans who pursue active-and activist-lifestyles. Nearly three-quarters of residents are over 65 years old, but they show no interest in a rest-home retirement. This is the top-ranked segment for all-inclusive travel packages; the favorite destination is Italy.

2006 Statistics
Median HH Income: $65,595

Demographics Traits
Ethnic Diversity: White, High Asian
Presence of Kids: No kids
Age Ranges: 35-54
Education Levels: College Graduate
Employment Levels: Professional
Homeownership: Mix
Urbanicity: Second City
Income: UpperMid
Income Producing Assets: Above-average

24 Up-and-Comers

Up-and-Comers is a stopover for young, midscale singles before they marry, have families and establish more deskbound lifestyles. Found in second-tier cities, these mobile, twentysomethings include a disproportionate number of recent college graduates who are into athletic activities, the latest technology and nightlife entertainment.

2006 Statistics
Median HH Income: $48,620

Demographics Traits
Ethnic Diversity: White, High Asian, 2+ races
Presence of Kids: No kids
Age Ranges: <45
Education Levels: Some College/ College Grad
Employment Levels: Sales Tech
Homeownership: Mix
Urbanicity: Second City
Income: LowerMid
Income Producing Assets: Moderate

12 Brite Lites, Li'l City

Not all of the America's chic sophisticates live in major metros. Brite Lights, Li'l City is a group of well-off, middle-aged couples settled in the nation's satellite cities. Residents of these typical DINK (double income, no kids) households have college educations, well-paying business and professional careers and swank homes filled with the latest technology.

2006 Statistics
Median HH Income: $69,380

Demographics Traits
Ethnic Diversity: White, High Asian
Presence of Kids: No kids
Age Ranges: 35-54
Education Levels: College Graduate
Employment Levels: Professional
Homeownership: Mix
Urbanicity: Second City
Income: UpperMid
Income Producing Assets: Above-average

22 Young Influentials

Once known as the home of the nation's yuppies, Young Influentials reflects the fading glow of acquisitive yuppiedom. Today, the segment is a common address for young, middle-class singles and couples who are more preoccupied with balancing work and leisure pursuits. Having recently left college dorms, they now live in apartment complexes surrounded by ball fields, health clubs and casual-dining restaurants.

2006 Statistics
Median HH Income: $47,717

Demographics Traits
Ethnic Diversity: White, High Asian
Presence of Kids: No kids
Age Ranges: <45
Education Levels: Some College/College Grad
Employment Levels: Sales Tech
Homeownership: Renter
Urbanicity: Suburban
Income: Midscale
Income Producing Assets: Low

35 Boomtown Singles

Affordable housing, abundant entry-level jobs and a thriving singles scene-all have given rise to the Boomtown Singles segment in fast-growing satellite cities. Young, single and working-class, these residents pursue active lifestyles amid sprawling apartment complexes, bars, convenience stores and laundromats.

2006 Statistics
Median HH Income: $38,616

Demographics Traits
Ethnic Diversity: White, High Black
Presence of Kids: No kids
Age Ranges: <45
Education Levels: Some College
Employment Levels: Other
Homeownership: Mostly rent
Urbanicity: Second City
Income: Downscale
Income Producing Assets: Low

** Source: Claritas*

Convention Hotel Economics

Nearly 65 percent of U.S. convention centers are owned by cities, counties, states or other types of government authorities. Major convention cities, such as New York or Las Vegas, generally have had sufficient hotel supply in appropriate locations to support the needs generated by meeting and trade show participants. For many other municipalities, however, new hotel development can be critical to competing for the middle- to upper-tier convention market. Convention facilities in these cities may be located in areas peripheral to hotel concentrations. In addition, existing hotel operators are often reluctant to commit the room inventory required to serve convention delegates -- typically offered in package deals at lower room rates -- while simultaneously reducing rooms available to serve guests that make up their core business.

The basic economics in hotel development and operations pose additional challenges. Convention-oriented hotels are typically 10 to 20 percent more expensive to develop than a comparable size, group-oriented hotel. At the same time, room rates for a convention hotel's core market segment may run 20 to 30 percent below comparable business hotels due to discount package deals negotiated for delegates as part of convention attendance.

By Michael A. Stein and J. Kevin Lawler - Miami, Fall 1995

Arthur Andersen: Ideas and Trends

Public Sector Financing of Hotel Development:

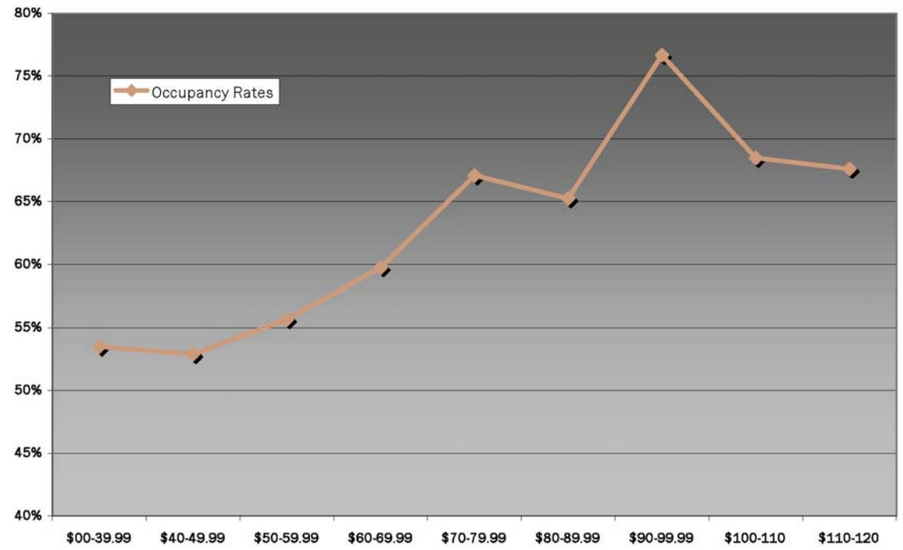
The Prognosis for Public/Private Partnerships

2006 Amarillo Quarterly Hotel Occupancy Report

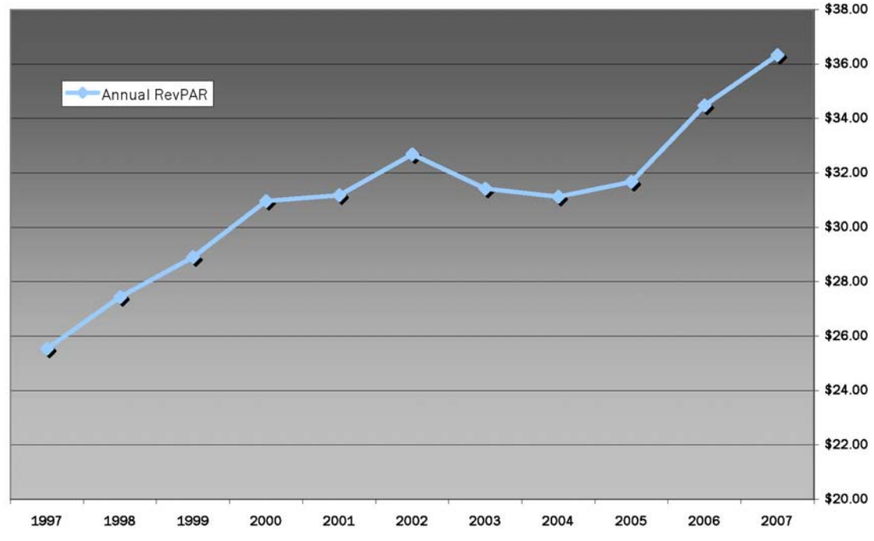
Qtr	Rate	# of Hotels	Room Night Available (000)	Revenue($000)	% Occupancy	Room Nights Sold (000)	RevPAR
1	$00-39.99	17	168.7	2519	44.4	74.8	14.93
	$00-39.99	2	6.4	98	57.9	3.7	15.31
	$40-49.99	6	50	1266	57.6	28.8	25.32
	$40-49.99	1	5.7	126	45.7	2.6	22.11
	$50-59.99	10	77.6	2258	52	40.3	29.10
	$60-69.99	3	39.2	1485	59.9	23.5	37.88
	$70-79.99	3	24.7	1187	67	16.5	48.06
	$80-89.99	4	46.6	2478	64.2	29.9	53.18
	$90-99.99	3	20.8	1493	74.9	15.6	71.78
	$100-110	1	0.8	40	49.8	0.4	50.00
		50	**440.5**	**12950**	**53.6**	**236.1**	**29.40**
2	$00-39.99	13	115.9	2180	55	63.7	18.81
	$00-39.99	2	6.5	99	57.4	3.7	15.23
	$40-49.99	6	70.2	1655	53.2	37.3	23.58
	$50-59.99	8	71.9	2447	61.2	44	34.03
	$50-59.99	1	5.7	164	55	3.2	28.77
	$60-69.99	8	76.7	3048	62.3	47.8	39.74
	$70-79.99	4	29.5	1676	74.5	22	56.81
	$80-89.99	3	38.9	2160	66.4	25.8	55.53
	$90-99.99	1	8.2	667	82.7	6.8	81.34
	$100-110	4	21.8	1777	79.2	17.3	81.51
		50	**445.3**	**15873**	**61**	**271.6**	**35.65**
3	$00-39.99	2	6.5	110	61.6	4	16.92
	$00-39.99	9	71.9	1149	48.3	34.8	15.98
	$100-110	2	14.4	1186	77.9	11.2	82.36
	$110-120	4	24.5	2105	76.4	18.7	85.92
	$40-49.99	9	103.5	2597	57.6	59.6	25.09
	$50-59.99	4	34.7	1211	62.9	21.8	34.90
	$50-59.99	1	5.8	183	55.3	3.2	31.55
	$60-69.99	10	98.8	4157	63.5	62.7	42.07
	$70-79.99	3	18.8	859	64.7	12.1	45.69
	$80-89.99	6	66.9	3899	68.5	45.8	58.28
	$90-99.99	1	6.5	457	72.4	4.7	70.31
		51	**452.3**	**17913**	**61.6**	**278.6**	**39.60**
4	$00-39.99	2	6.5	104	56.8	3.7	16.00
	$00-39.99	13	116.8	1880	46.4	54.2	16.10
	$40-49.99	6	67.8	1520	50.3	34.1	22.42
	$50-59.99	1	5.8	150	47.9	2.8	25.86
	$50-59.99	7	61.3	1912	55.3	33.9	31.19
	$60-69.99	9	81.8	2840	53.3	43.6	34.72
	$70-79.99	2	17.3	821	62.1	10.7	47.46
	$80-89.99	5	56.1	2951	61.9	34.7	52.60
	$100-110	3	23.9	1695	67	16	70.92
	$110-120	3	14.9	1113	67.6	10.1	74.70
		51	**452.2**	**14986**	**53.9**	**243.8**	**33.14**
Total			**1790.3**	**61722**	**57.5**	**1030.1**	**34.48**

© 2007 Office of the Governor, Economic Development and Tourism

2006 Occupancy by Room Rate

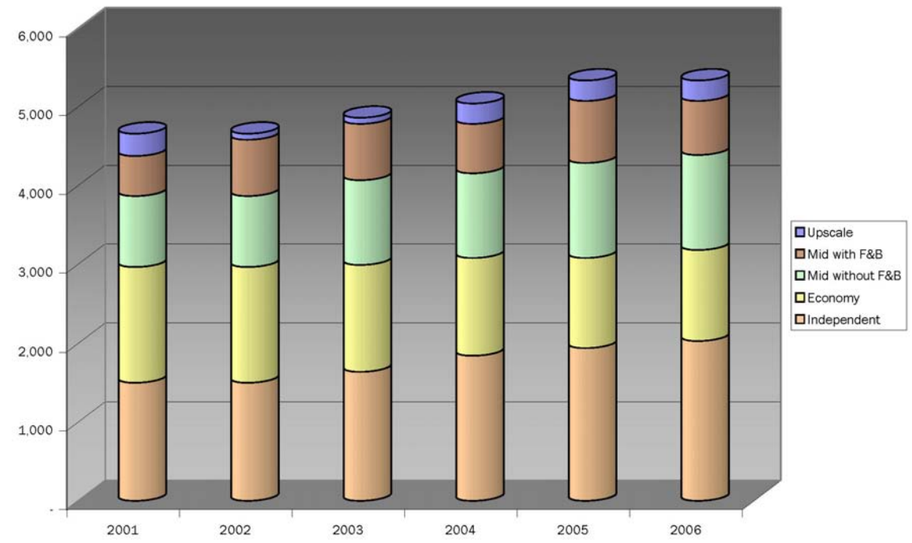


Annual Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR)



The graphs on the left illustrate a number of interesting facts about Amarillo's hospitality industry. With almost 75% of the hotel rooms in Amarillo under $70 a night, the market appears to be filled which is illustrated by their occupancy rates and revenue per available room (RevPAR). Meanwhile, rooms in the $90 - $100 range were over 75% occupied in 2006. The large discrepancies between occupancy rates highlight the breadth of the market for high end hotels in Amarillo.

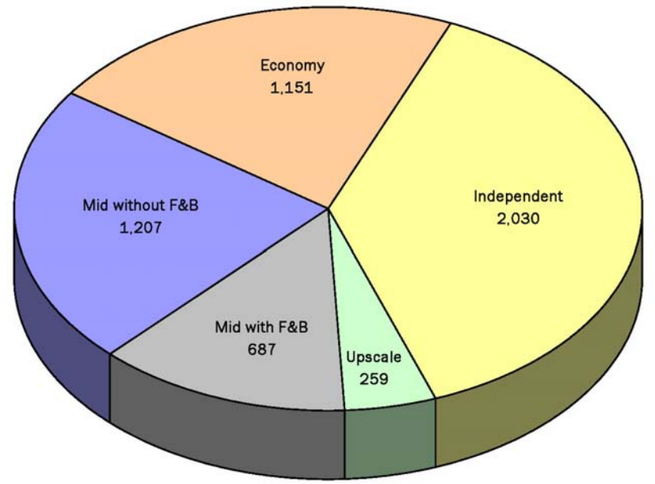
Total # of Hotel Rooms by Year



** Source: Smith Travel research, Gideon Toal, Inc.*

Urban Hotel Character

Hotel Rooms by Type



F&B - Food and Beverage

** Source: Smith Travel research, Gideon Toal, Inc.*

Physical Conditions & Land Use
Existing Infrastructure 28
Transportation & Circulation 29
Land Use 30
Zoning 31

Context-sensitive design modifies design features of arterial streets to adapt for each environment. Specific features include both elements of the roadway and those contributing to its context, as follows:

- *Right-of-way width;*
- *Road width;*
- *Cross-section;*
- *Transit provisions;*
- *Pedestrian-way widths;*
- *Bicycle provisions;*
- *Design speeds;*
- *Alignments (vertical and horizontal);*
- *Materials;*
- *Landscaping and other aesthetic amenities;*
- *Street furniture;*
- *Lighting;*
- *Traffic control strategies;*
- *Access management;*
- *Development setbacks; and*
- *Building entrance orientation.*

ITE Smart Growth Task Force. Smart Growth Transportation Guidelines: An ITE Proposed, Recommended Practice. Institute of Transportation Engineers, Washington D.C., 2003.

Downtown Amarillo currently has an extensive water and sewer network capable of providing services to a dense urban population with minimal improvements. Utilizing existing infrastructure can save the City time and money along with ensuring that the city wide network does not become over burdened.

By directing growth back into Downtown, Amarillo can continue to provide its citizens with high quality infrastructure.

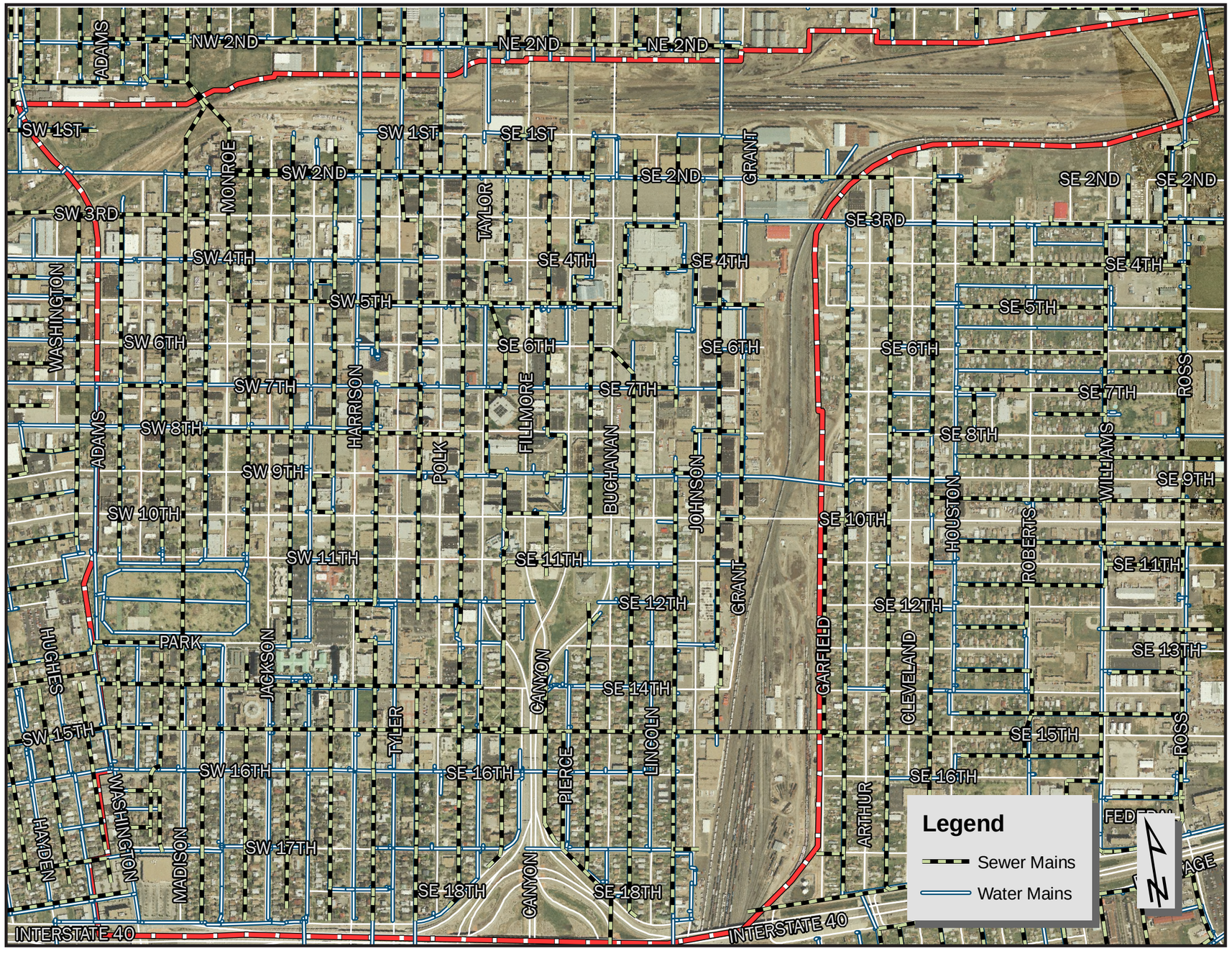
Effect of Distance on Cost of Infrastructure

Cost changes by change in distance	Set 1 Low tract dispersion, small lot	Set 2 Low tract dispersion, large lot	Set 3 High tract dispersion, small lot	Set 4 High tract dispersion, large lot
0.25 to 0.5 mile				
Absolute	$12,407	$13,859	$27,877	$30,600
Per household	$4.14	$2.61	$9.29	$10.20
Percentage	2%	1%	4%	3%
0.5 to 1 mile				
Absolute	$24,814	$27,718	$55,754	$61,201
Per household	$8.27	$9.24	$18.58	$20.40
Percentage	4%	2%	8%	5%
1 to 2 miles				
Absolute	$49,628	$55,437	$111,509	$122,401
Per household	$16.54	$18.48	$37.17	$40.80
Percentage	8%	5%	15%	9%
2 to 3 miles				
Absolute	$49,628	$60,070	$111,508	$122,401
Per household	$16.54	$20.02	$37.17	$40.80
Percentage	7%	5%	13%	9%
3 to 4 miles				
Absolute	$49,628	$56,981	$111,508	$122,401
Per household	$16.54	$18.99	$37.17	$40.80
Percentage	7%	4%	12%	8%
4 to 5 miles				
Absolute	$78,669	$56,981	$111,508	$122,401
Per household	$26.22	$18.99	$37.17	$40.80
Percentage	10%	4%	10%	7%

*All costs are annualized over 30 years using a 7% discount rate.

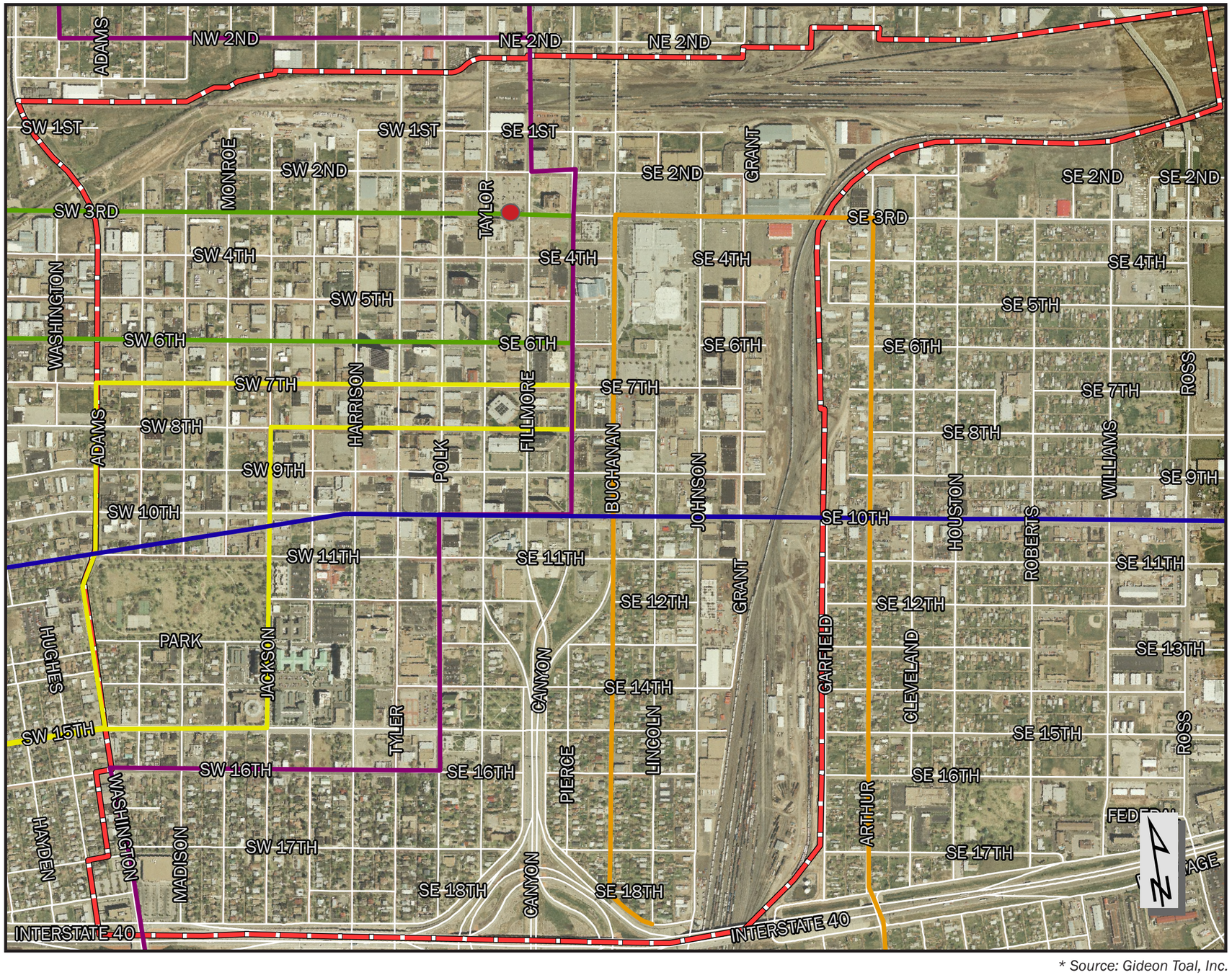
Speir, C., & Stephenson, K., *Does Sprawl Cost Us All?* Journal of the American Planning Association, Vol 68, No 1, Winter 2002

Downtown Water & Sewer Infrastructure



* *Source: City of Amarillo and Gideon Toal, Inc.*

Public Transportation Routes



** Source: Gideon Toal, Inc.*

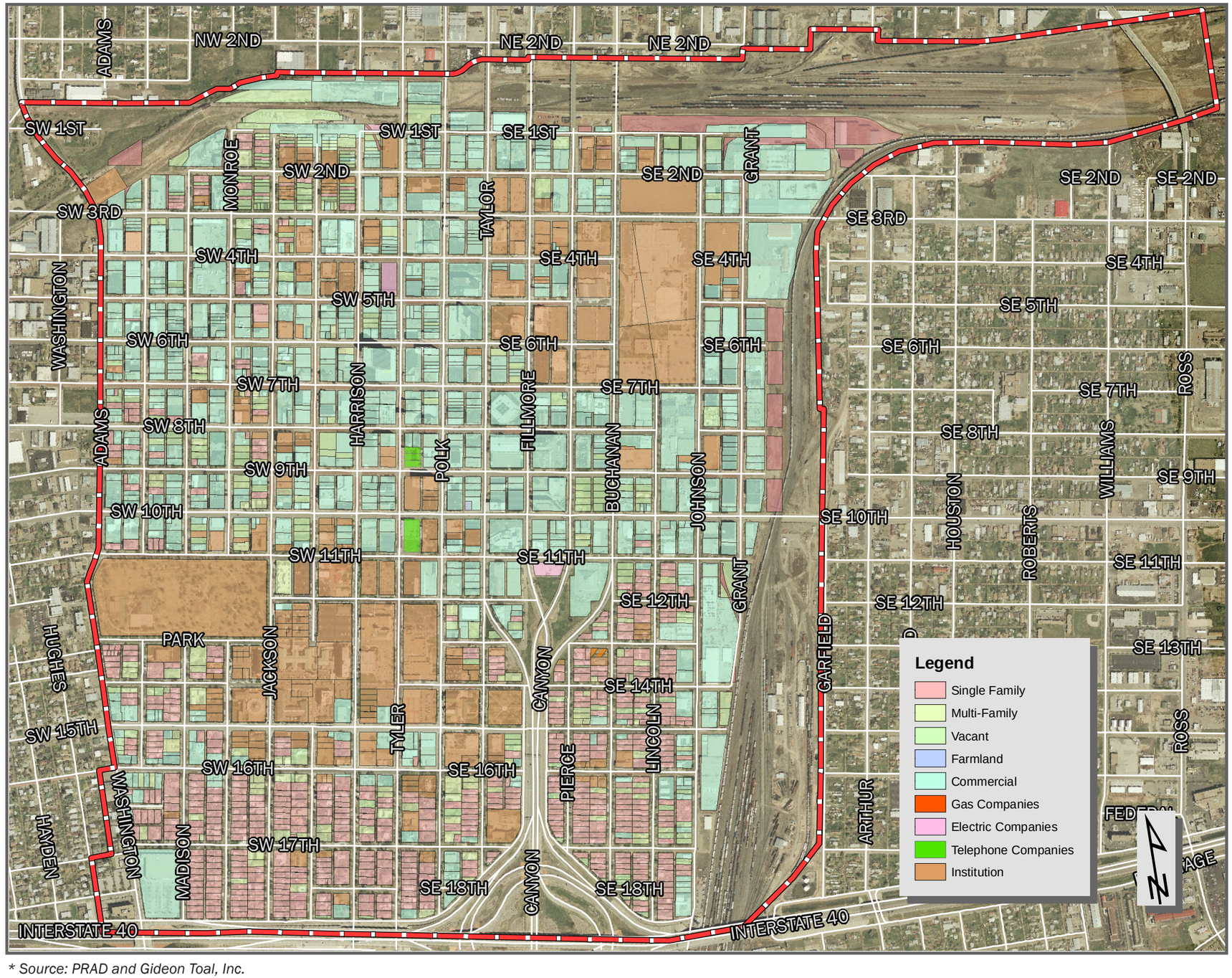
The major method of transportation Downtown is the automobile, but there are a number of bus routes that cross through Downtown providing access to downtown for a large portion of the city.

The current urban street grid has substantial capacity that can accommodate increased mixed use densities as suggested in this plan. On-street parking should also be encouraged wherever possible.

● - Main bus transfer point

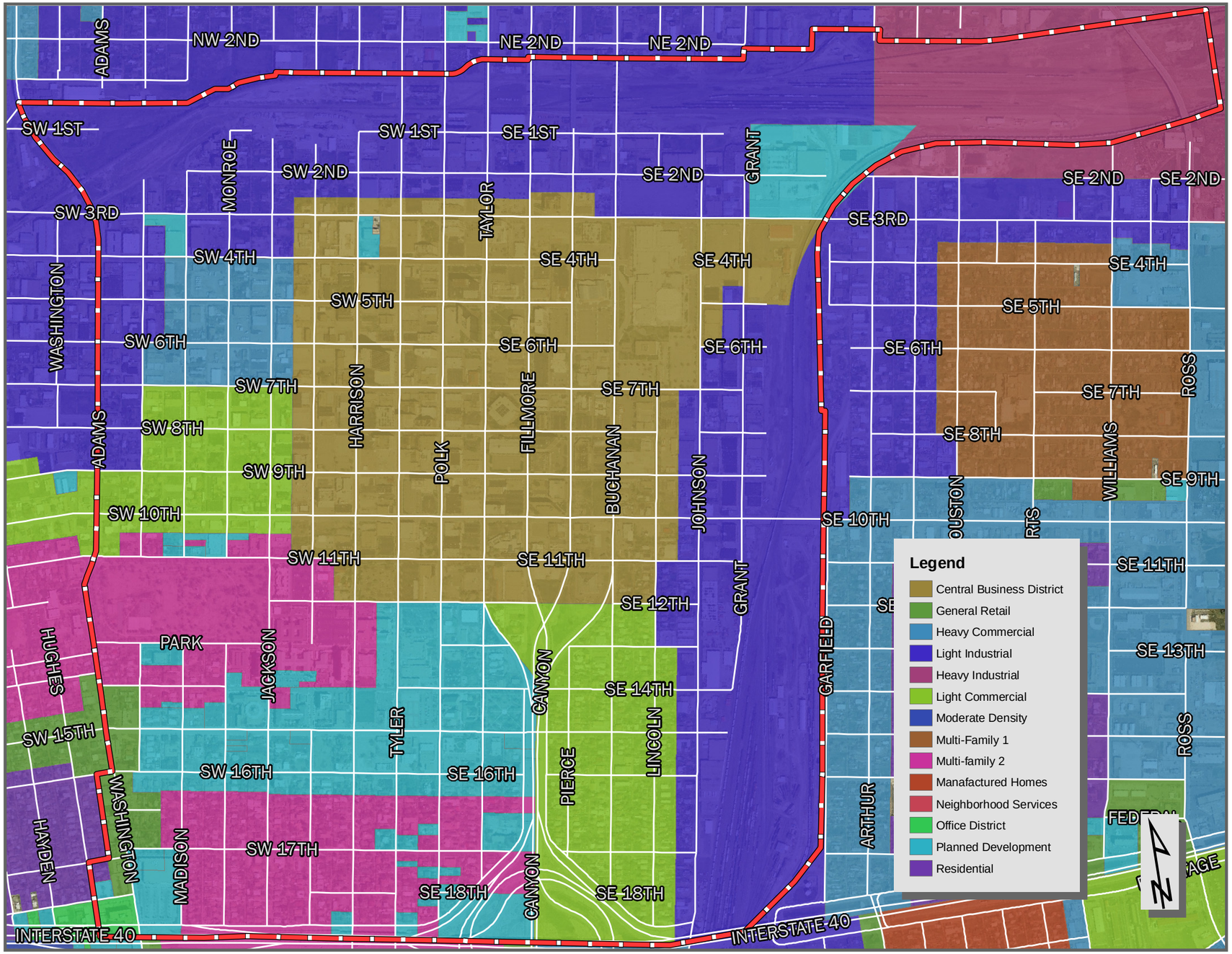
The northern half of Downtown is predominantly commercial use with a number of institutional uses in the northeast corner, while the southern half of downtown is mostly residential and institutional.

Land Use



** Source: PRAD and Gideon Toal, Inc.*

Downtown Zoning



** Source: City of Amarillo and Gideon Toal, Inc.*

Current Downtown zoning is generally based on historical growth patterns, with industrial uses near the railroad and commercial zones at the center. Urban design standards are recommended (see page 69). Also, the city may need to implement a “mixed-use zoning district” to encourage development around downtown.

The essence of the city is the communion of citizens at every level and under every circumstance. The variety and multitude of opinions, talents, drives, and culture that such diversity implies: it is this marvelous mixture – fusion of diversities into a whole… which is the unique aspect of the city.

- Arthur Erickson

Community Meetings & Stakeholder Workshops

An integral element of the planning process was feedback from Amarillo citizens and community stakeholders. Since September of 2006, Gideon Toal, Center City and the Downtown Development Committee conducted five public meetings to discover citizens' perception of downtown and their vision for downtown's future. Between 45 and 70 people attended each meeting. Meetings were held in the evening to allow full participation for working people.

Meetings were held in each quadrant of Amarillo:
Northeast – Bishop DeFalco Conference Center
Northwest – Black Historical Cultural Center
Southeast – Kids Inc. Warehouse
Southwest – Southwest Branch Amarillo Public Library

These meeting locations, as well as a fifth public meeting downtown, encouraged maximum outreach to Amarillo's diverse neighborhoods and populations. Groups represented at the meetings included:

Amarillo Chamber of Commerce
Amarillo College
Amarillo Convention and Visitor Council
Amarillo Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Amarillo Historical Preservation Foundation
Amarillo Independent School District
Amarillo United Citizens Forum
Caprock High School
Los Barrios de Amarillo
NAACP
Panhandle Regional Planning Commission
Plemons-Eakle Historical District
West Texas A&M University

In addition, Gideon Toal met with specific stakeholder groups
Amarillo Coalition for the Homeless
Amarillo Globe-News
Amarillo Police Department
Bankers
Center City of Amarillo
City of Amarillo
City Church
Developers
Downtown Development Committee
Downtown business owners
Downtown property owners
Downtown Women's Center
Faith City Ministries
Potter County
Salvation Army
Tyler Street Resource Center

The ideas and feedback received during these meetings laid much of the groundwork for the Strategic Action Plan. Throughout the meetings, citizens from all neighborhoods expressed overwhelming support for the action plan and the vision for a stronger downtown Amarillo. At different milestones in the planning process, Gideon Toal and the Downtown Development Committee held meetings. The meetings at the Civic Center drew between 70 and 300 people who came to hear the latest information and to ask questions.

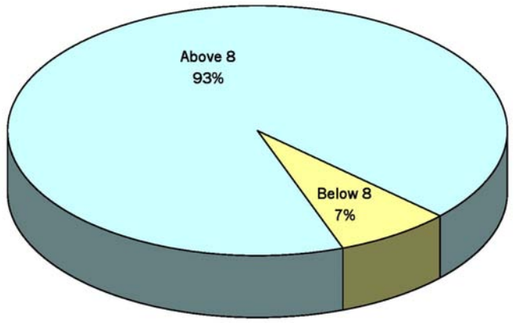
Community Meeting

Downtown Amarillo Strengths
Easy Access to Services - City Government
Globe News Center for the Performing Arts
Amarillo Civic Center
Safety especially during the day
Live Entertainment
Parking
Clean
Beauty
Cosmo feel
Skyline - Historic buildings
Brick streets
High Rise Dining

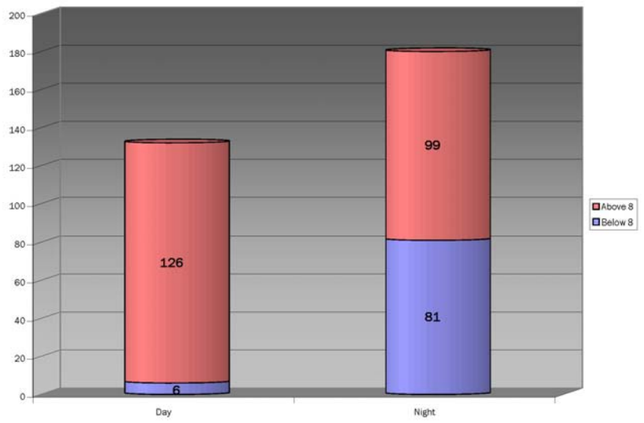
Downtown Amarillo Weaknesses
No hotels
Lack of public restrooms
Want more restaurants and coffee shops
Too many vacant buildings and neglected parking lots
Public transportation
No athletic complexes
No retail or support retail
Lack of streetscape, parks - overall beautification
Lack of affordable houses
Overhead power lines
Perception of safety at night
Deteriorating sidewalks

Downtown Amarillo Opportunities
More parks, lighting and landscaping
More hotels
Athletic Facility - Baseball
Outdoor Venues
More Restaurants - Affordable
Retail
Affordable housing
Available restaurants and parking
Trail connections
Eliminate overhead powerlines
Bring back sign lights on Polk

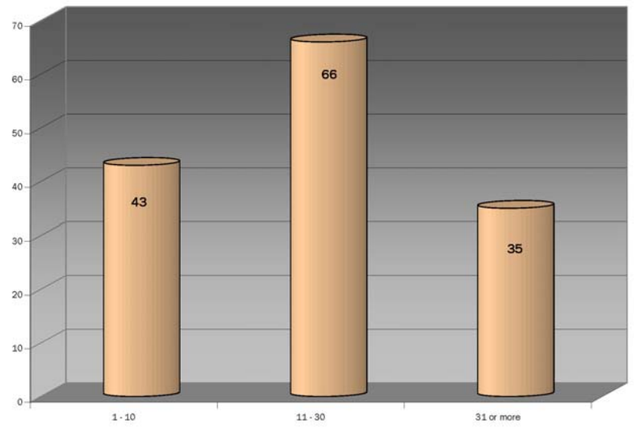
On a scale of 1-10 how important is the Downtown effort?



On a scale of 1-10 how safe do you feel Downtown?



How many times a month do you travel Downtown?



In addition to the meetings a number of surveys were distributed in order to gather unfiltered opinions of the project itself and the current state of Downtown Amarillo. The survey's are discussed in more detail below.

Throughout August 2006 surveys about downtown were distributed to a number of Amarillo citizens. These surveys provided the planning team with detailed information regarding the current state of downtown. Key findings from the public input survey reinforced much of the market research and the overall perception of downtown Amarillo.

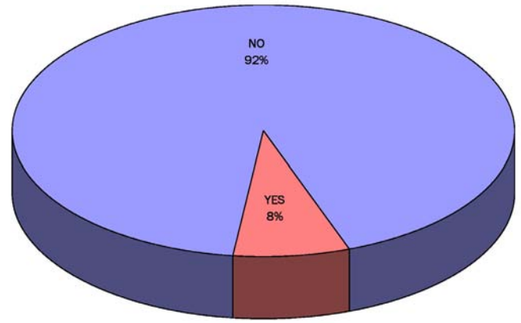
The first questions asked, "Do you live in downtown? and if not how far do you live from downtown? (1-3 miles, 5-10 miles, 11 or more miles." These questions help to identify the spatial patterns of residential households and their relationship to downtown. While very few people live in downtown, a majority of people surveyed live within 5 miles.

The second set of questions looked at travel patterns to and from downtown asking, "Do you work downtown? And How many times a month do you visit Downtown?" Almost 50% of the respondents work downtown and a large majority visit downtown more than 11 times a month.

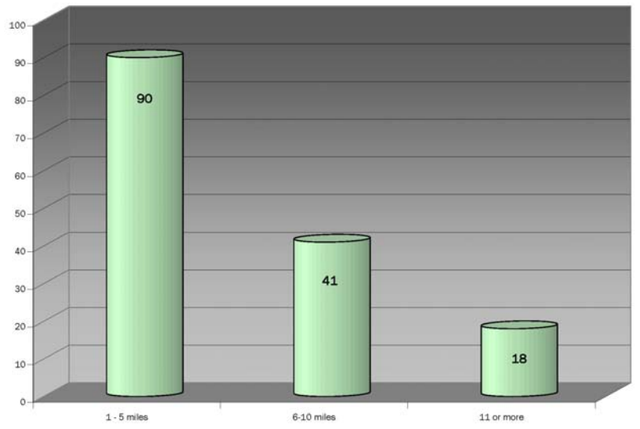
The third questions asked, "On a scale of 1-10 how safe do you feel in downtown during the day and during the night?" While a vast majority of people surveyed responded that they feel safe downtown during the day, almost half of the respondents felt less safe downtown at night than they did during the day.

Finally, the fourth question asked simply, "How important is the downtown revitalization effort on a scale of 1-10?" People responded to this question in an overwhelmingly positive fashion with 93% saying that the effort was very important.

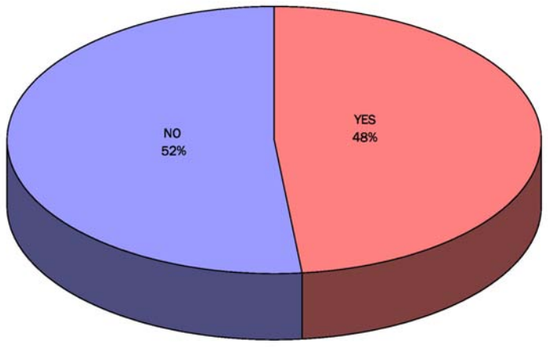
Do you live Downtown?



How far do you live from Downtown?



Do you work Downtown?



Redevelopment Plan
Vision & Key Goals 38
Overview of Zones 39
5 - to 10 - Minute Walk 40
Green Space Plan 41
Historic Preservation 42

Planning is a process of choosing among those many options. If we do not choose to plan, then we choose to have others plan for us.

- Richard Winwood

Downtown Amarillo must reinforce its prominence as the business and cultural heart of the City and Panhandle region. This is vital for the health of the entire City. Over the last decade, most of the investment in Amarillo has been focused along the Interstate Freeway and suburban areas. During this time the Downtown tax base has remained stagnant.

This initiative is critical because many regions and cities are developing dynamic Downtown areas. To many investors, the relative health of a City's Downtown represents the overall health of the economy and the City's quality of life. Businesses and investors looking to invest anywhere in Amarillo will look at Downtown as an indicator of overall market strength. A healthy Downtown is also crucial to attracting people to live and work in Amarillo. As envisioned, a vibrant Downtown will help attract the best and the brightest to move to Amarillo.

Based on market trends, development potential, input from business, government, investment, and community groups the following development goals have been recommended for Downtown Amarillo over the next 5 to 10 years.

Development Goals

- Develop 400 to 600 new housing units in Downtown
- Develop one or more hotels - 300+ rooms
- Absorb and develop 400,000 to 600,000 SF of office / commercial
- Attract 6 to 10 new restaurants / night club venues
- Retain and grow Downtown as financial, business and government center
- Attract family friendly venue(s), example cinema complex or minor league ball park
- Attract a major presence from higher education (Amarillo Independent School District, West Texas A&M, Amarillo College, Texas Tech, and others). Consider the establishment of an Education Center, possibly hosted by Amarillo College
- Adopt urban design standards to ensure quality landscaping, parks, public art and proper orientation of buildings to the street.
- Develop a coordinated police and security program to ensure that Downtown is safe day and night. This is critical to attract night life, restaurants and Downtown neighborhoods
- Implement parking support including joint private/public use of parking lots and structures
- Rehabilitation selected historic buildings
- Consider Downtown for a minor league ballpark and associated mixed use entertainment venue

Characteristics of Successful Downtowns

What characteristics or attributes are shared by outstanding small and mid-sized downtowns? Research by Gary Ferguson of the Ithaca (NY) Downtown Partnership addressed this question in a recent study of successful downtowns.

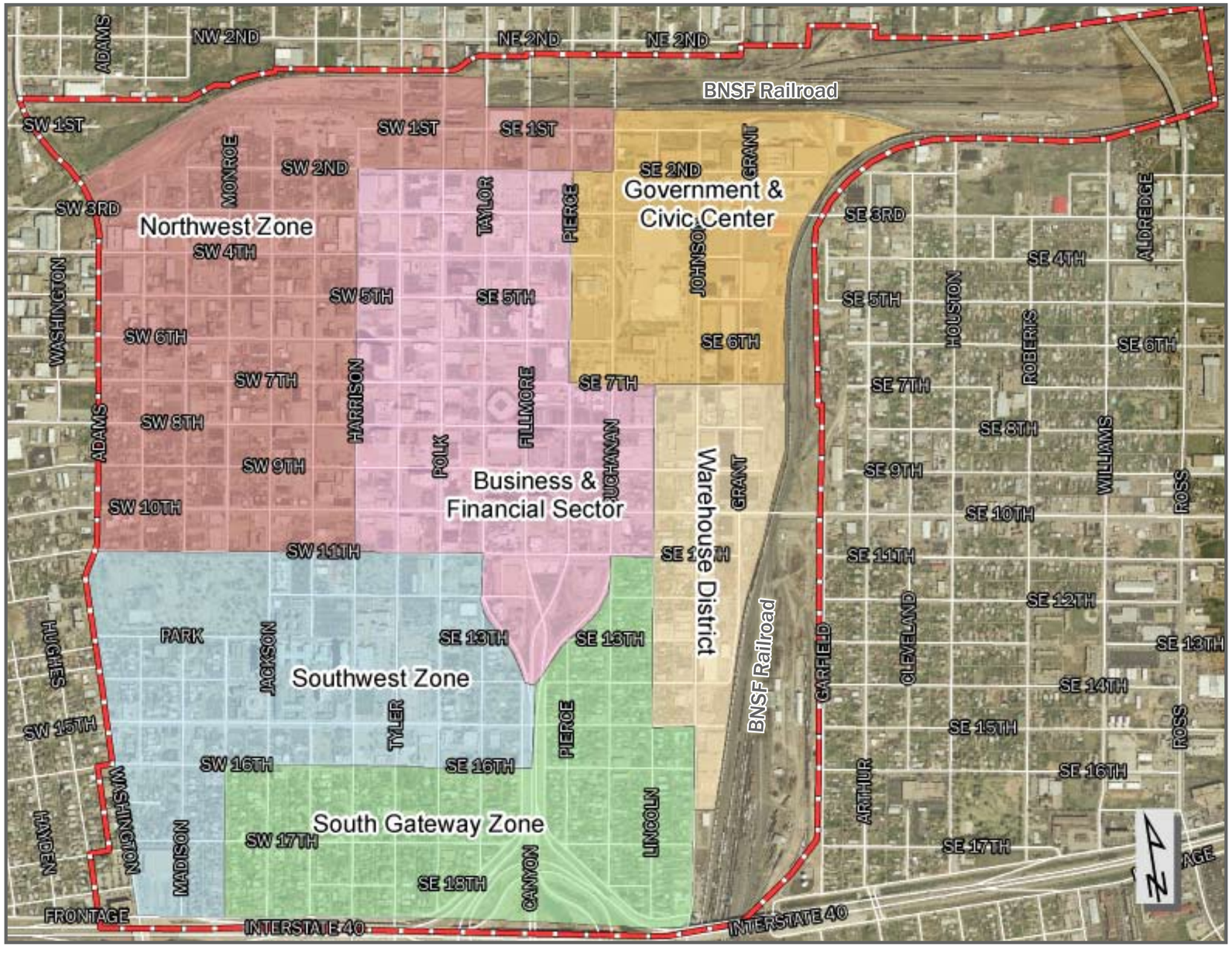
1. No Single Organizational Model Exists.
2. Successful downtowns tend to have multiple traffic generators that supplemented the presence of a larger institution(s), all within short walking distance.
3. Successful downtowns are beloved by citizenry.
4. Successful downtown have been and are continuing to overcome challenges and obstacles.
5. Successful downtowns are walkable.
6. Successful downtowns, by and large, had a commitment to mixed use development.
7. There is broad public/private investment in the future of downtown.
8. The nature of downtown retail appears to be in flux.
9. Entertainment is a driving market segment.
10. There was a prevalence of strong, adjacent residential neighborhoods that are within walking distance of downtown.
11. Downtown (CBD) housing was either prevalent or underway. The market for housing in downtown was strong and growing.
12. Universities help but are not the sole answer.

Conclusion

Based on this study of eleven cities with reputations for downtown excellence, it appears that there is no single factor that is responsible for the success of great downtowns. Instead, this research supports findings from previous studies that identify a variety of attributes that converge together. If enough of these positive attributes can cluster together, a downtown will be successful.

Gary Ferguson, Characteristics of Successful Downtowns: Attributes of Outstanding Small and Mid-Sized Downtowns, Downtown Economics: Ideas for Increasing Economic Vitality in Community Business Districts (December 2005) Issue 112

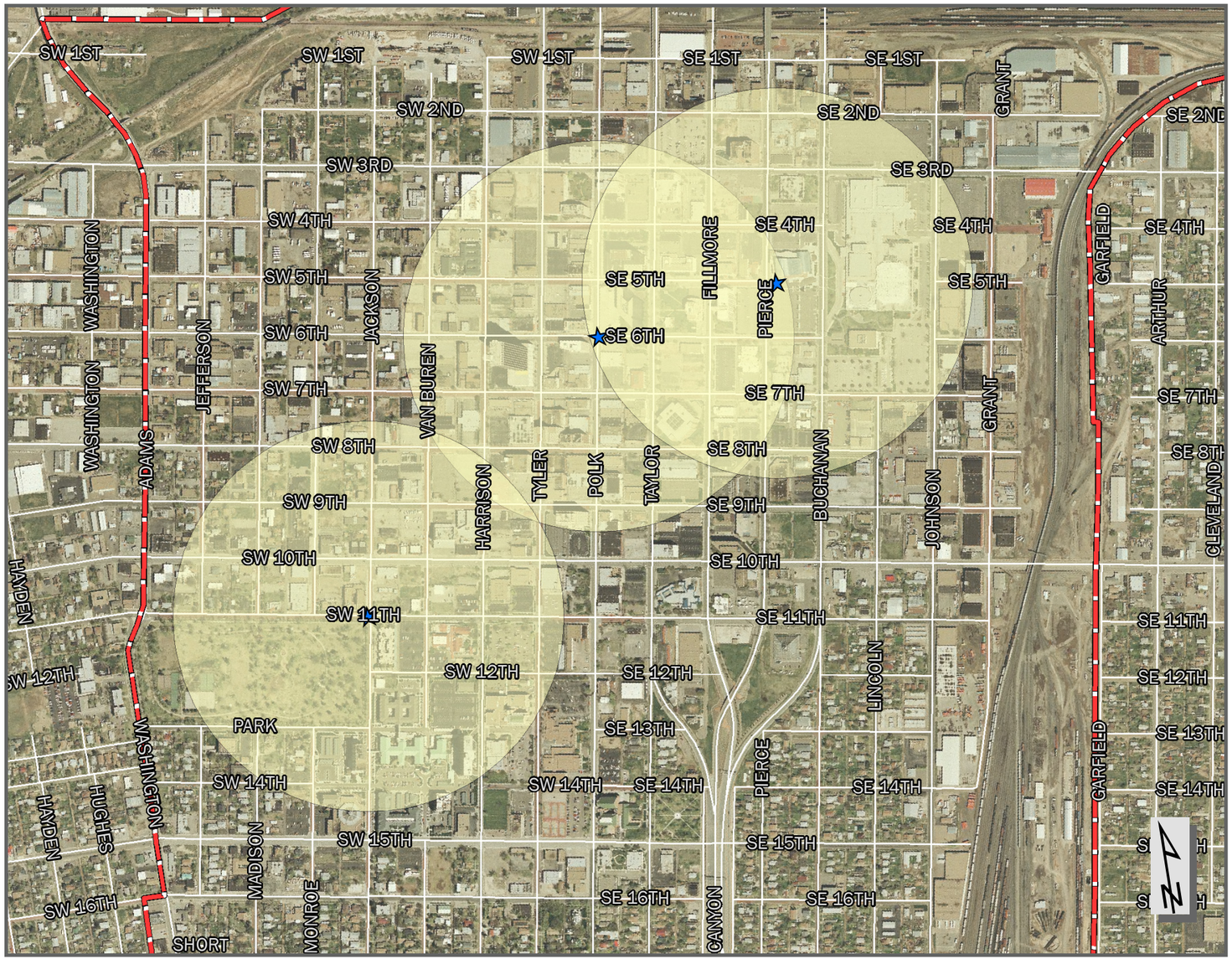
Downtown Zones



The study area has been divided into six zones including:

1. Government & Civic Center
2. Warehouse District
3. Business & Financial Sector
4. South Gateway Zone
5. Southwest Zone
6. Northwest Zone

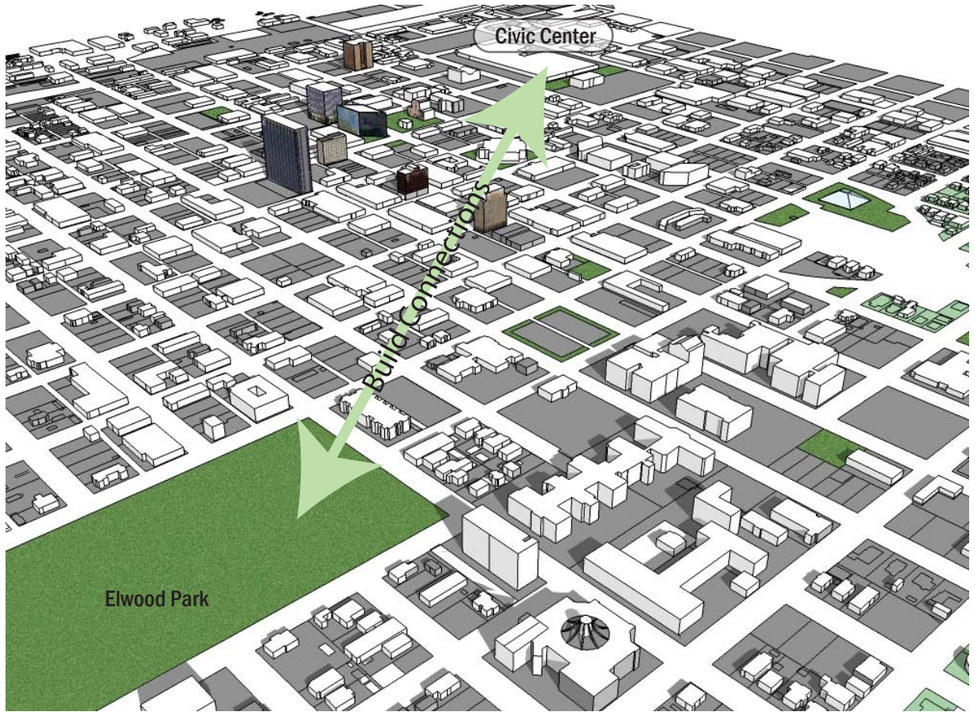
5 Minute Walk



Revitalizing a downtown, developing a new urbanist project, or building a mixed-use lifestyle center requires creating a walkable urbane place where most or possibly all of life's daily needs (shopping, recreation, school, restaurants, employment, etc.) are reachable on foot or by mass transit. The preconditions for a walkable urbane place include:

- *Significant residential uses within walking distance of local-serving retail and a park;*
- *A continuously pedestrian-friendly and safe walk;*
- *An average net residential density of at least eight dwelling units per acre (20 per ha) to support local-serving retail and transit (planned or currently available); and*
- *Being within walking distance of work for at least one household member or within walking distance of transit that links the household to employment. Walkable urbanity is in contrast to conventional suburban development, which is exclusively based upon car transportation, separation of uses, and low density*

Christopher B. Leinberger, Urban Land: January 2007



Existing Greenspace

Priority Greenway Streets

Pocket Park

Street Trees

Suggested Improvements

- Pocket Parks
- Street Furniture
- Street Trees planted 20'-25' O.C.
- Bike Lanes
- Allow Parallel Parking

Historic Preservation

Downtown Amarillo has a significant number of historic structures as identified in the Historic Resources Survey of Amarillo Texas prepared by Hardy, Heck and Moore in July of 1990. Whenever economically feasible, these buildings should be adapted and incorporated into the various redevelopment areas. Historic buildings are important due to their beauty, unique character, and human scale. They help link the great history of downtown with the future redevelopment goals.

It is important moving forward for the City of Amarillo and the Downtown leadership groups to enhance the feasibility of adaptive reuse or historic preservation through the use of TIF funds, historic tax credits, façade easements, Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) and related incentives as feasible.

Use of Preservation Guidelines for Recognized Historic Buildings

A number of organizations publish guidelines on historic preservation and design of new buildings that are in close proximity to historic resources. Developers working on and around historic buildings should follow these guidelines.

1. The National Trust for Historic Preservation
2. The U.S. Department of the Interior - National Park Service
3. The City of Amarillo Downtown Design Standards & Guidelines

A Sample of Amarillo Historic Structures

Santa Fe building

Fisk Building

Barfield Building
(Prior to Renovation)

Potter County Courthouse

Kress Building

Master Plan

Government & Civic Center 46
Warehouse District 49
Business & Financial Sector 52
South Gateway Zone 55
Southwest Zone 58
Northwest Zone 61

With infill, start by providing for those who are not risk-averse (singles, Bohemians, etc.). These people are the urban pioneers

- Andres Duany

Amarillo local governments and civic leaders have had a dedicated commitment to assuring that civic functions, local government functions, and more recently the Globe News Center for the Performing Arts are convenient and centrally located for all residents of Amarillo and Potter County.

Key Landmarks in or adjacent to this Zone:

- Amarillo Civic Center
- The Globe News Center for the Performing Arts (Performing Arts Hall and support facilities)
- Amarillo City Hall
- The Central Library
- Potter County Courthouse
- Potter County Courthouse Square
- Potter County Sheriff's Office
- The Federal Building

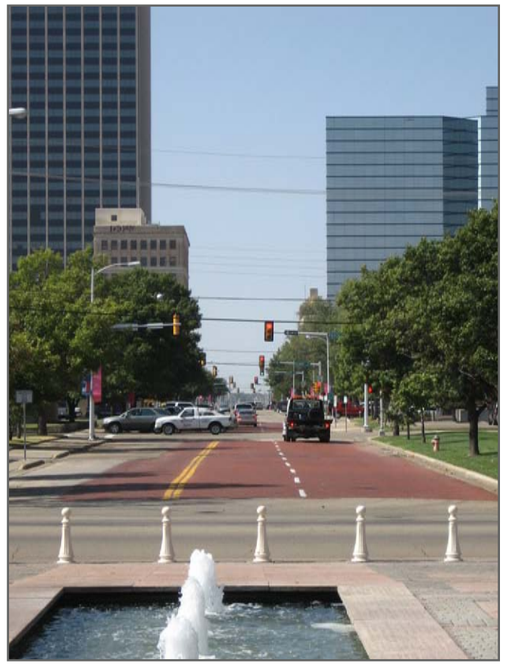
The Civic Center and Government Zone blend very well with the Business and Financial Zone to the immediate west. The two zones flow seamlessly together along key streets such as 5th, 6th, and 7th Ave.

Key initiatives recommended in or adjacent to this Zone include:

- Assure that all local and federal governments maintain a strong presence in Downtown. The convenience and synergy created by this government and civic center is enormously important in attracting residents from the entire region to Downtown. Amarillo citizens take pride in their local government and civic attractions.
- The opportunities to share parking, meeting facilities, and special event facilities are extremely important to build upon.
- Develop a major "business and convention center hotel" (300+ rooms) should be built in or adjacent to this zone (to the west of the civic center)
  - Thereby linking this zone to the Business and Financial Zone. In this manner the hotel can use shared parking and support the civic / convention activities, the business community, and Downtown restaurants and entertainment venues. Successful "convention center" hotels should be adjacent to and connected to civic center facilities within walking distance of retail and entertainment.
- A major emphasis should be to develop 6th Ave as a key pedestrian link to the Business / Financial Zone and to the Polk street entertainment area.
- Further to the east along Johnson and Grant streets, the warehouse district with its brick streets and unique warehouse buildings offers some interesting opportunities for loft residential units and Live / Work spaces to infill among viable industrial uses.
- The area northeast of the Civic Center and bordered by the railroads could be considered for a minor league ball park / mixed use development.

Rick Husband Memorial

Looking down 6th Ave



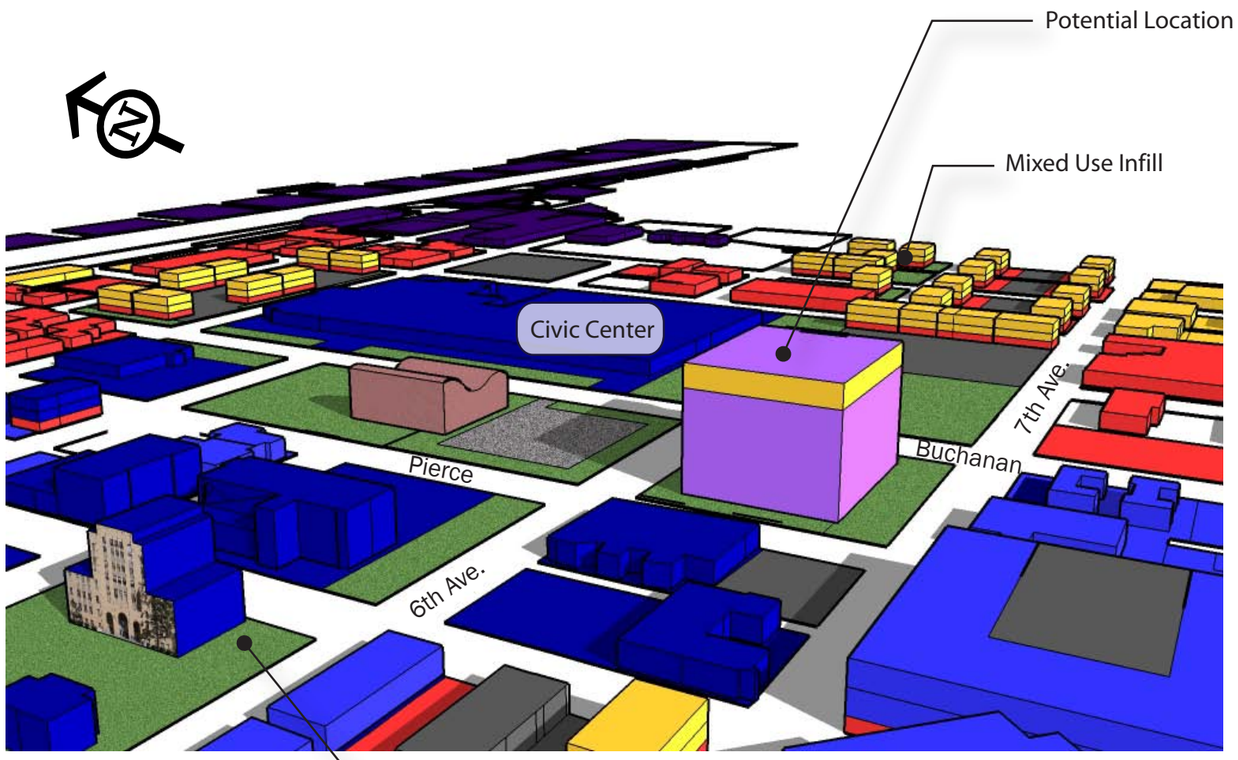
Civic Center

Globe News Center for the Performing Arts

Potential Land Use

Urban Character

Urban Character


Potential Location for Civic Center Hotel
Mixed Use Infill
Civic Center
Pierce
7th Ave.
Buchanan
6th Ave.
Greenway Connects Zones

Parking Hidden From Street
Civic Center
3rd Ave.
Buchanan
Pierce
4th Ave.
Mixed Use
Commercial
Single Family
Multi-Family
Institution
Hotel
Parking
Industrial

The Warehouse District is an area about 2 to 3 blocks wide and adjacent to the railroad corridor. Totaling approximately 12 blocks, the zone contains some important Amarillo businesses, including Amarillo Hardware, Coca Cola, and the U.S. Post Office, which provide several hundred jobs. Intermingled with these businesses are smaller businesses, attractive brick streets, and interesting warehouse architecture. This zone could attract unique live / work housing for artists, and smaller entrepreneurs. It could be a unique mixed use area where clean industry, residential, and smaller businesses can coexist together. There are many good examples of such compatible redevelopment around the nation and in Texas, including Fort Worth, Houston, Austin, and Dallas.

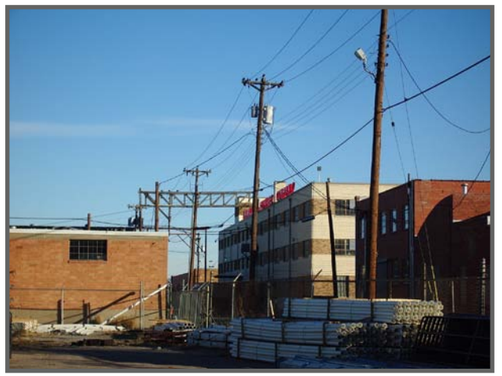
If, in the future, some of the larger warehouse businesses need to move to more modern facilities within Amarillo, then the City working with the Amarillo Economic Development Corporation could help facilitate a transition for the industrial businesses and help with conversion of the urban warehouse area to include residential, smaller businesses, live / work spaces and possibly Downtown educational facilities.

Small business creation should remain a critical element of the Amarillo strategic economic plan. The Warehouse District is a good place to attract such businesses.

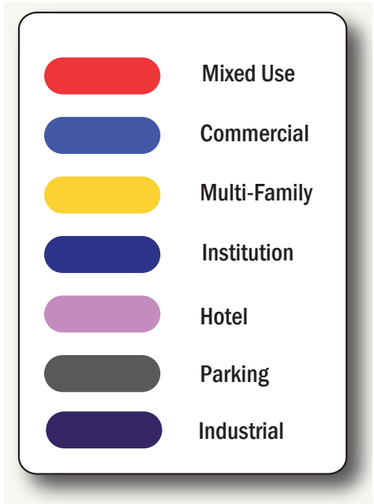
Key initiatives recommended in or adjacent to this Zone Include:

- Encourage a compatible set of mixed use within the warehouse district to include existing businesses, live/ work spaces. Many cities have had success in helping old warehouse areas to become an eclectic mix of uses that add to the vitality and interest of the Downtown area.
- As the area redevelops, assure that urban design standards are considered and that key linkages, such as 6th Ave and 9th Ave become attractive pedestrian linkages into the Downtown Core.
- Consider the south portion of this zone (arround 9th Ave) as an alternative location for a minor league ball park / mixed use development.
- Eventually, mid and long term, this area could attract several hundred unique residential units compatibly mixed with businesses, education facilities, and arts.

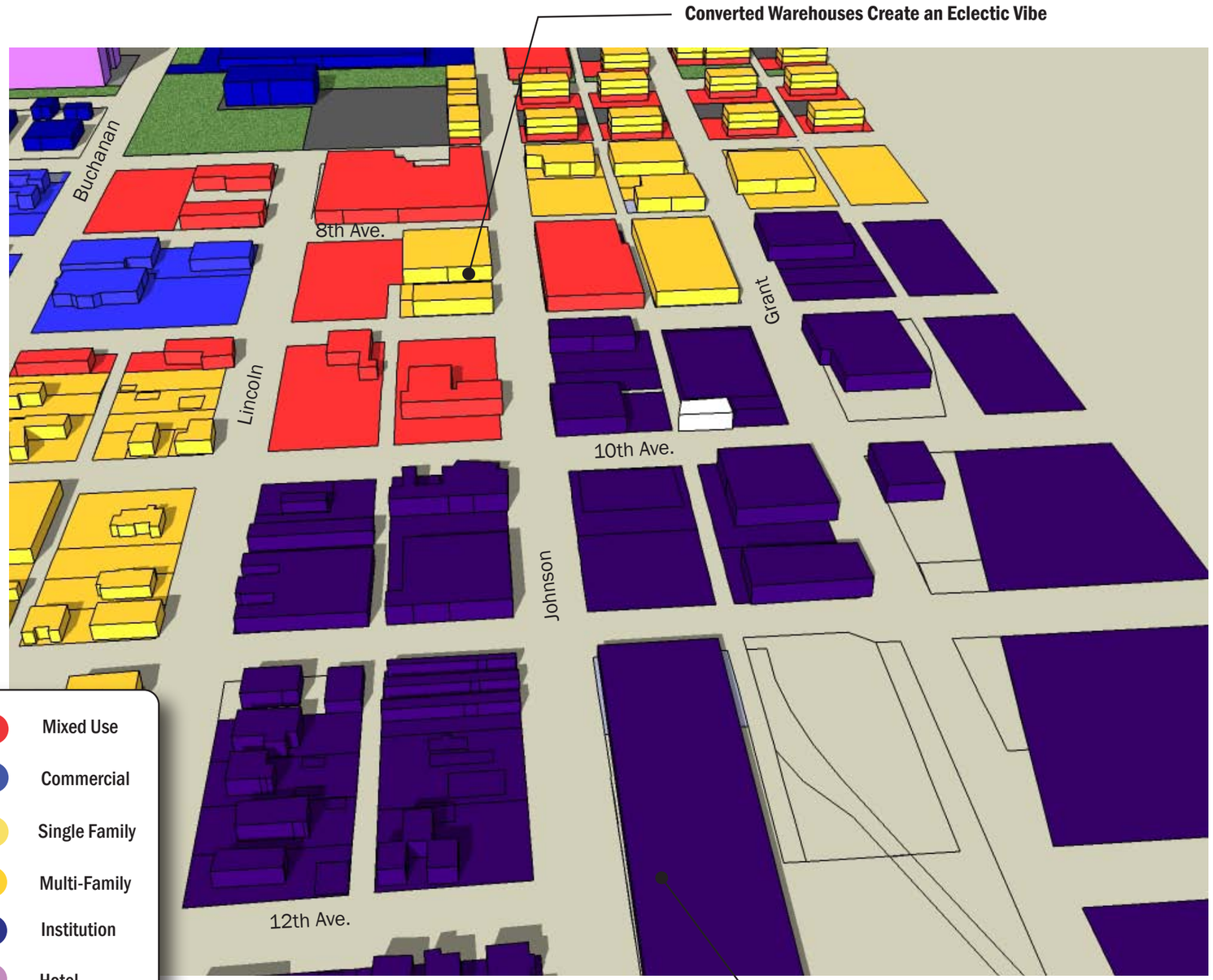
Current Conditions



Potential Land Use



Urban Character Suggested for Warehouse District



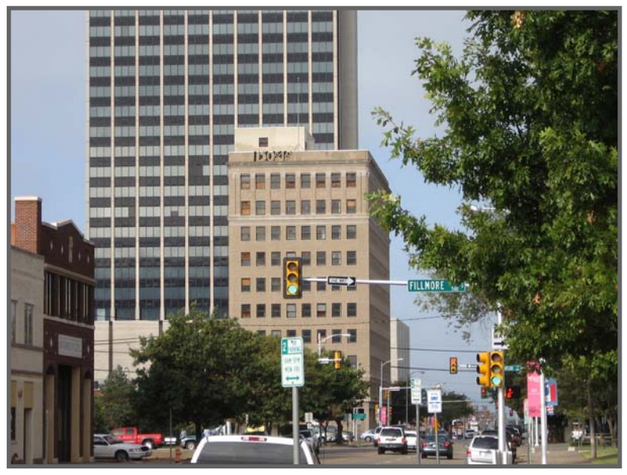
Urban Character

Urban Character

Through the years, Amarillo's key business and financial leaders have committed to maintaining a strong presence in Downtown. This 40+ block area is home to most of the banks, office buildings, professional corporations, and businesses. Keeping these major employers in a "walkable business zone" of Downtown is absolutely crucial to the future success of Downtown and the entire City. Several of the buildings in this zone are in need of reinvestment and redevelopment. They can be converted to residential spaces on the upper levels with retail / commercial spaces at the ground level. The Business and Financial Zone blends and overlaps with the Government and Civic Center to the east. This integration of key businesses with the government center makes for a walkable and convenient Downtown. The Polk Street corridor and certain adjoining blocks has become an increasingly popular corridor for restaurants, entertainment, and related mixed uses. There are approximately eight restaurants or nightclub venues that have greatly increased night life in this corridor. Also, in this corridor several residential units have been successfully developed above the ground level. There are other residential / mixed use redevelopments in the planning stage.

Key businesses in this Zone include:

The Maxor Building and Complex
Amarillo National Bank Campus
Citi Bank
The Amarillo building
The Federal Building
Chase Bank Building
Bank of America
The Paramount Building
Wells Fargo Bank
The Santa Fe Building (Potter County)
Place One
Atmos Energy
Barfield Building



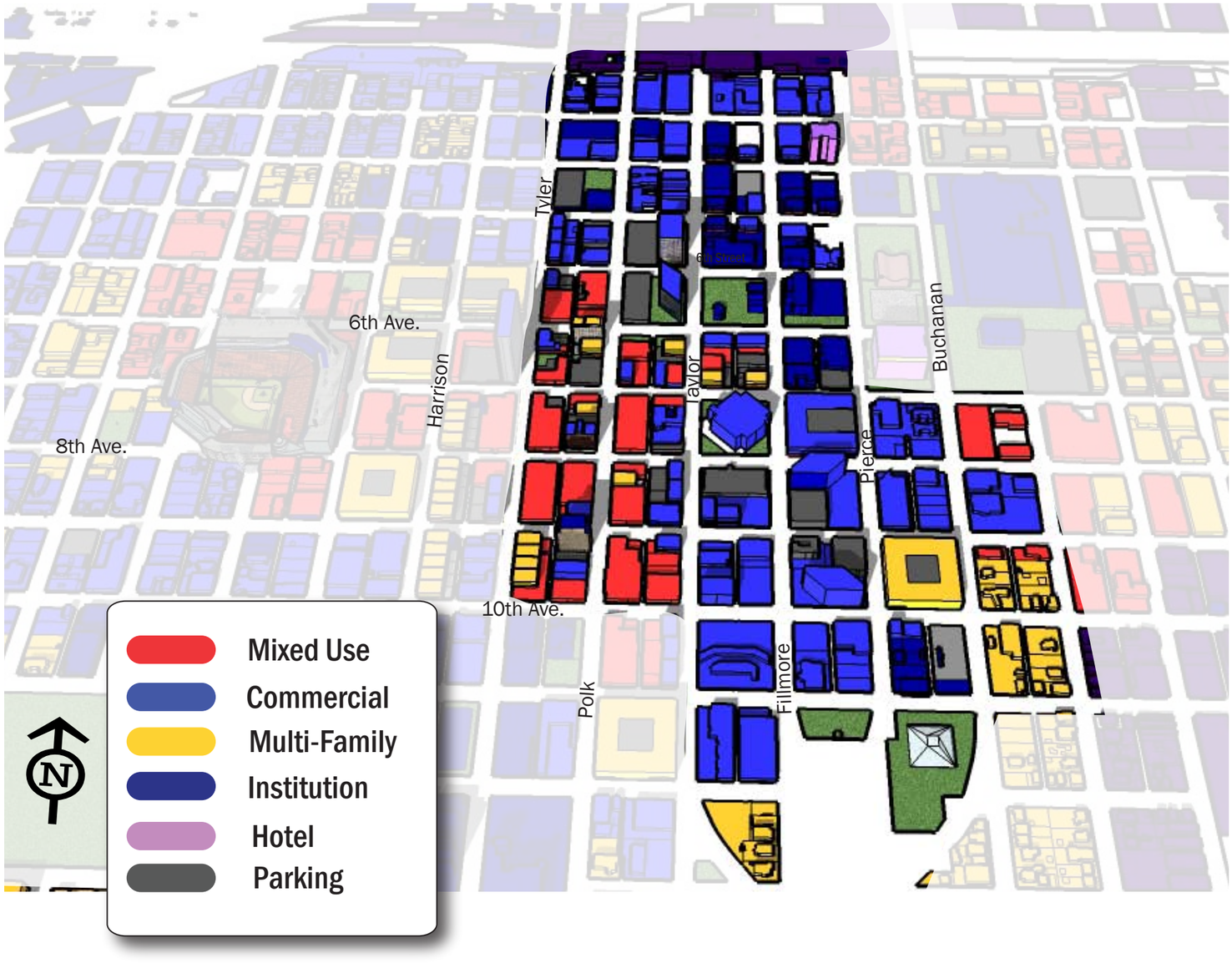
Key initiatives recommended in the Business and Financial Zone Include:

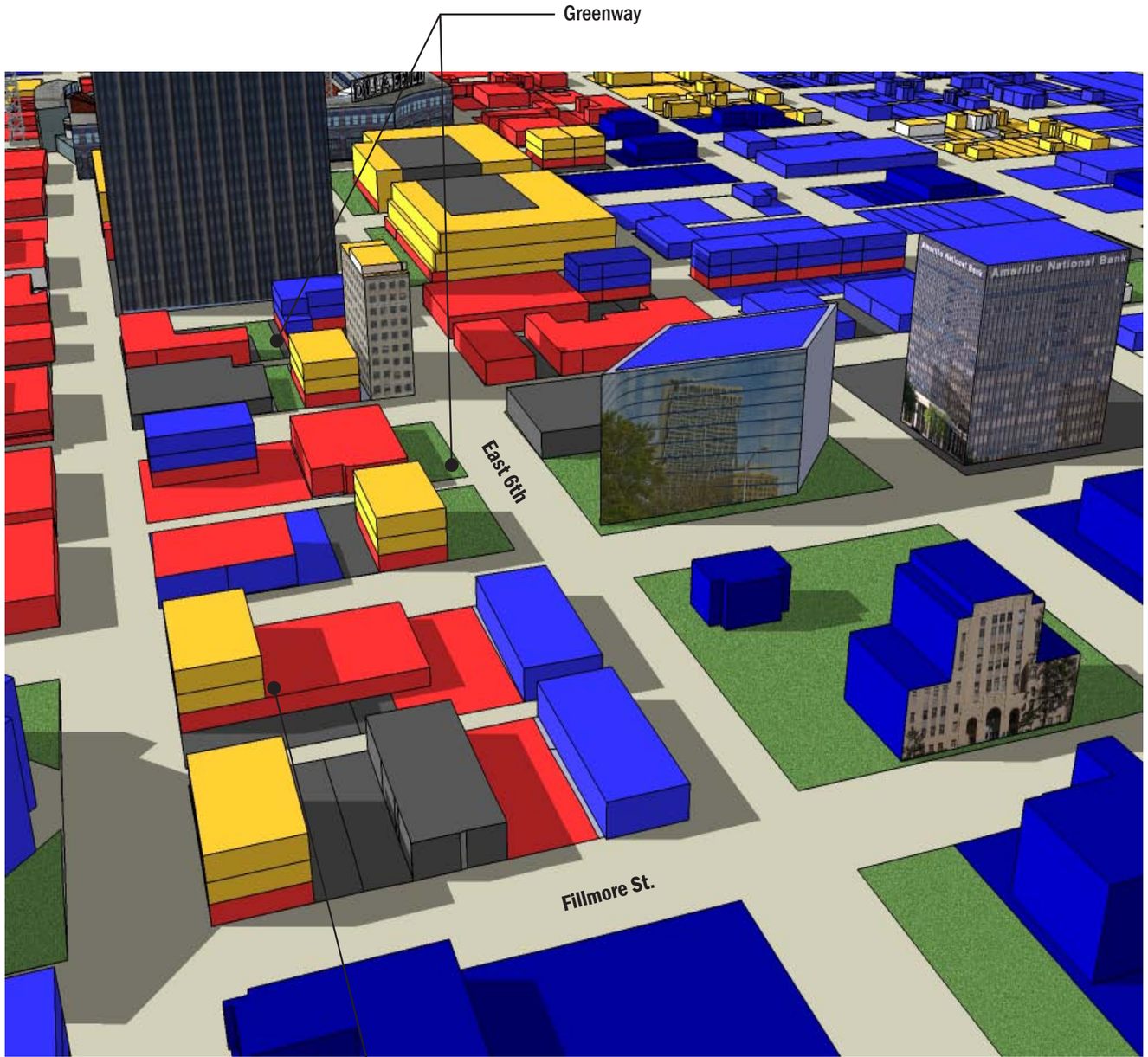
- Assure that all of the existing businesses and financial institutions maintain their main offices and grow in the Downtown area. The convenience and synergy created by this business and government center is enormously important. It has become the anchor from which the other Downtown redevelopment initiatives can occur.
- Work to redevelop some of the key vacant and under-utilized buildings. Good recent examples are the renovation of the Santa Fe Building by Potter County, redevelopment of the Paramount Building, and the proposed residential and retail conversion of the Barfield Building. Buildings like the Herring Plaza will take equally creative ideas and financing.
- Market Downtown as a prime high quality area for business growth and business relocations. Up to 700,000 SF of existing and new space could be absorbed in approximately 10 years.
- Vertical integration of commercial and residential uses is very possible in this zone. This Zone could absorb approximately 100 to 200 residential units in mixed use buildings in the next ten years. For example, the Chase Building with more than 30 floors could easily mix residential floors with office / commercial uses. This would absorb vacant space, increase the day time and night time population of Downtown, and greatly support the Polk Street corridor.
- Continue to focus on Polk Street as a retail, restaurant, and mixed use corridor. Developing a critical mass of restaurants and entertainment venues will assure the success of all businesses and create a sustainable Downtown economy. Above the ground level, encourage residential and possible hotel. An additional six to eight restaurant, retail, or entertainment venues should be attracted to continue to build the critical mass. Consider attraction of a cinema theater complex that would attract more families and people of all ages.
- Another hotel could be considered for Polk Street which would attract visitors, travelers, business travel, and augment support for the civic center hotel which is recommended closer to the Amarillo Civic Center.
- Amarillo has excellent access on multiple streets from all directions. Other than maintenance, upgrades, and utilities, no new major street routes are needed.
- This whole zone should be a priority for urban design standards and improvements. This should include the burial of overhead power lines, reconstruction of sidewalks in conjunction with landscaping and streetscapes recommended in the urban design section. Key pedestrian corridors that should have a priority for landscape and pedestrian upgrade should include the Sixth Ave (east / west), Ninth Ave (east / west), and Polk Street (north / south).
- Work with the Traffic Engineering and Planning Departments to maintain as much on-street parking as possible. On-street parking is often the preferred type of parking for people visiting Downtown. Additionally, develop partnerships between new developments and current parking resources so that parking in Downtown remains safe and convenient in the day and night. This will need to be coordinated with the City and the Center City organization.
- Some concerns have been expressed about the frequency of "street people" wandering into this zone from the bus terminal area and the Salvation Army area to the Northwest. At minimum, this can create a perception of safety and security concerns. Increased cooperation with the police, private security forces, and social service agencies will need to be implemented in order to alleviate safety concerts and continue to attract night life and residential interest to the area.

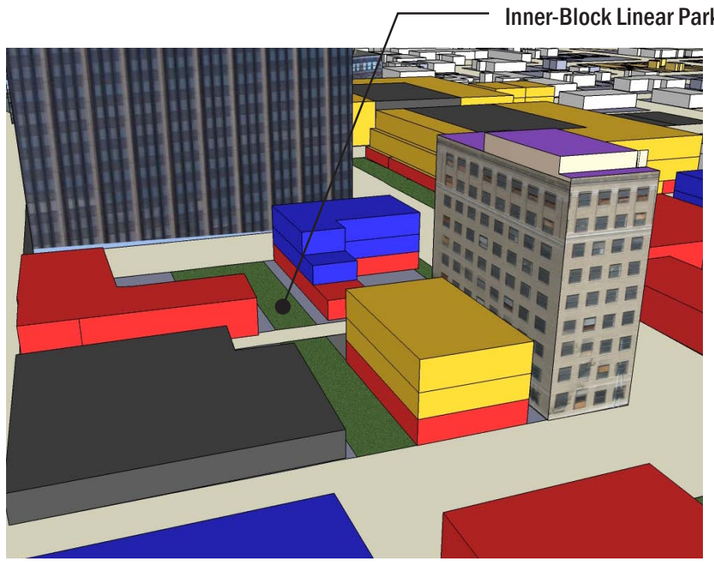
Urban Character

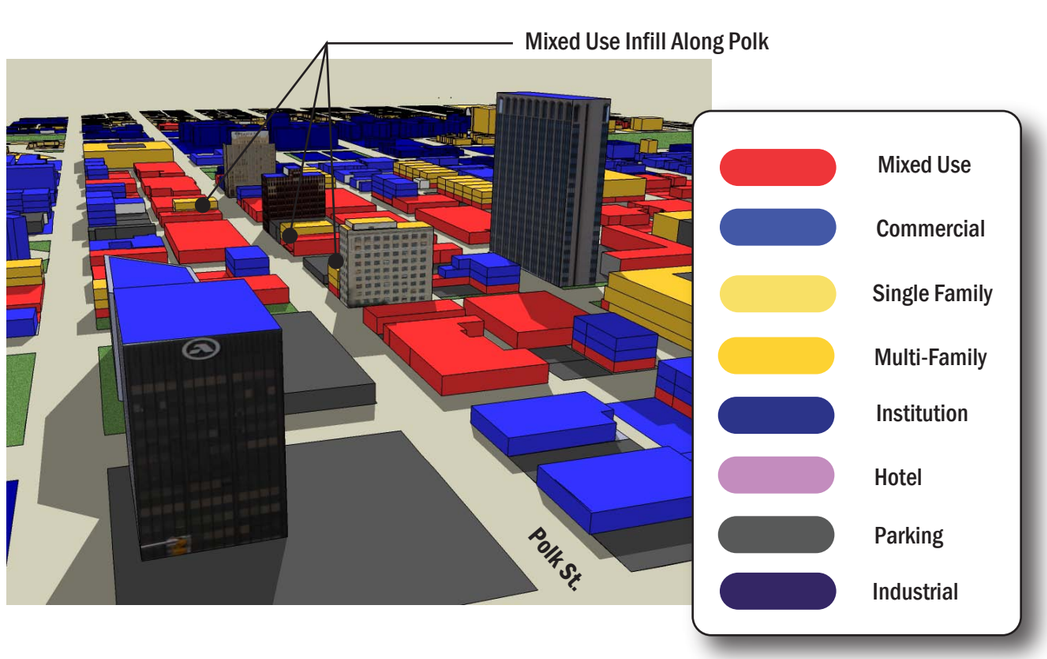
Urban Character

Potential Land Use




Greenway
Amarillo National Bank
East 6th
Fillmore St.
Mixed Use Development - Residences Above Retail


Inner-Block Linear Park


Mixed Use Infill Along Polk
Polk St.
Mixed Use
Commercial
Single Family
Multi-Family
Institution
Hotel
Parking
Industrial

This approximately 16 block area is bisected by the interchange between I-40 and I-27. I-27 splits into 4 dispersal streets Taylor, Fillmore, Pierce, and Buchanan. These major streets go through the heart of Downtown where they convert to major urban streets. This area serves as the functional gateway from the south into the core of Downtown. East of this gateway is predominantly residential, with a commercial and industrial corridor adjacent to the railroad. West of this gateway is predominantly residential south of 16th Ave. North of 16th, the area transitions to a mix of commercial and residential.

Key initiatives recommended for this South Gateway Area:

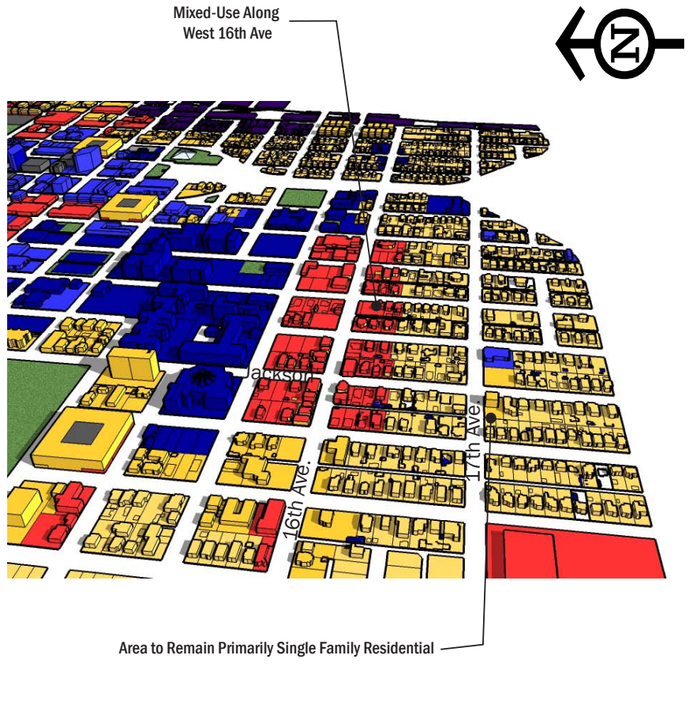
- As Downtown experiences continued investment and renewal, it is very possible that these older neighborhood areas could be attractive for infill residential and mixed use developments. The proximity to I-40 could be a positive factor in attracting certain types of mixed use investments. It is important that such reinvestments be accomplished in an orderly manner that enhances this gateway area to Downtown, while maintaining the integrity of residential blocks that remain.
- Work to further encourage the quality of development between 11th Ave and 14th Ave which is the transition from I-40 to the Downtown proper.

Current Conditions

Proposed Land Use

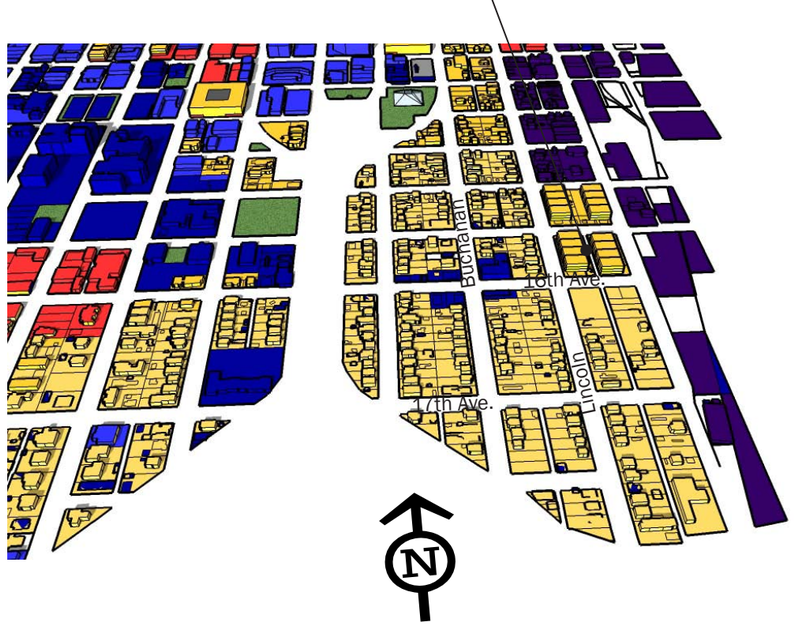
Urban Character

Potential single family infill



Urban Character

Possible attached single family residential developments.



Urban Character

The approximately 20-block area to the southwest of the Downtown core contains some of the City's most prominent and historic churches. These include the First Baptist Church, the Central Church of Christ, the Polk Street United Methodist Church, and the First Presbyterian Church. All of these churches have had a long standing commitment to maintaining a central location. These churches attract families from all over the greater Amarillo area and thereby contribute greatly to the health and vitality of Downtown. The churches seem to be strongly committed to staying in these Downtown locations. For example, the First Baptist Church and the Polk Street United Methodist Church are making multi-million dollar investments to expand and improve their facilities, and other churches have made similar commitments through the years.

The Park Central Retirement Community provides more than 600 residential units, and is owned by the Baptist Community Services, a Texas non-profit corporation. Park Central is located in downtown Amarillo, just minutes from the area's award-winning hospital system and medical facilities and surrounded by a variety of cultural and entertainment options, fine dining, and a large senior center. Within walking distance of the campus are five different denominations of churches.

Just west of Park Central Retirement Center bordering on SW 11th Ave is Ellwood Park, a beautiful open space that covers eight square blocks with mature trees, playgrounds, play courts, picnic areas, walking and running paths.

Key initiatives recommended for the Southwest Zone:

- Encourage the Churches to stay and grow close to the Downtown area. These churches attract people from the throughout Amarillo and are an important part of the City's lifestyle. The churches and the Downtown population can continue to develop partnerships and programs for the benefit of all residents of Amarillo. The presence of these diverse religious opportunities will be a major attraction for families, couples and individuals thinking of moving to Amarillo and Downtown.
- The Park Central Retirement Community is a huge resource for all of Amarillo. The beautiful campus should be encouraged to grow and attract more residential units. Many of the residents are and can increasingly become patrons and supporters of Downtown.
- The Park Central staff and administration also are important to the future of the Downtown area.
- As Downtown experiences continued investment and renewal, it is possible that the Washington Street Gateway could attract a major reinvestment. This could be a retail development, hotel, or ideally a mixed use development with retail and residential.
- The hotel and residential in this area should not be a priority for public / private agreements in the next 5 to 10 years. It would need to be feasible without public / private economic agreements. The focus of such agreements should be directed towards the core zones for the next 10 years.

Park Central Retirement Community

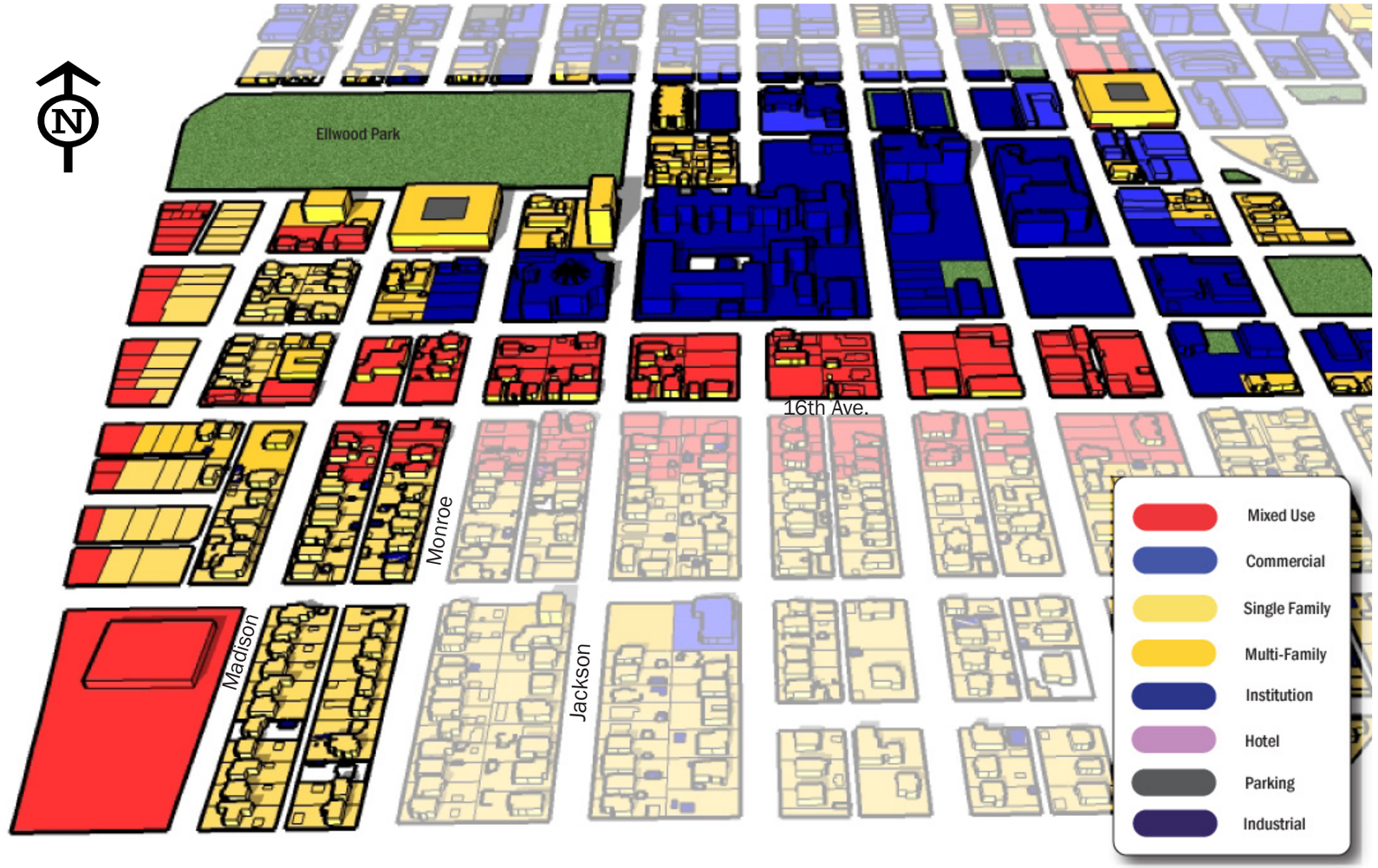
Polk Street united Methodist Church

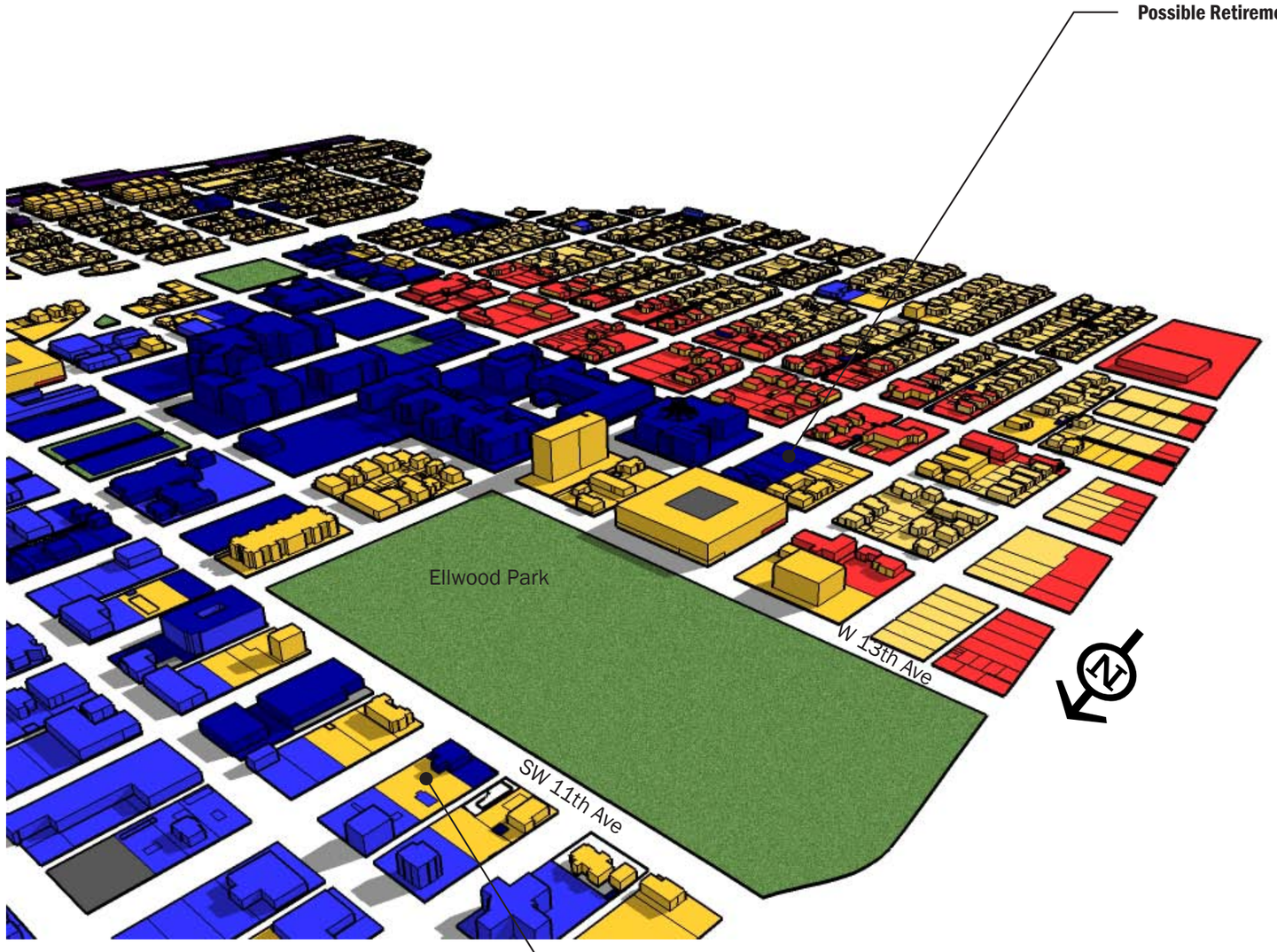
First Baptist Church of Amarillo

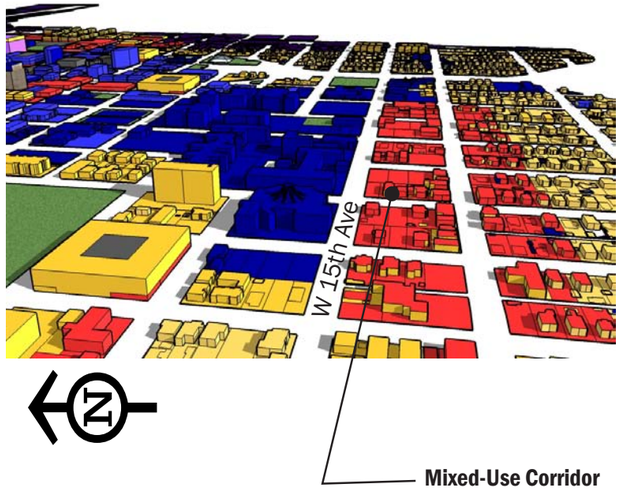
Potential Land Use

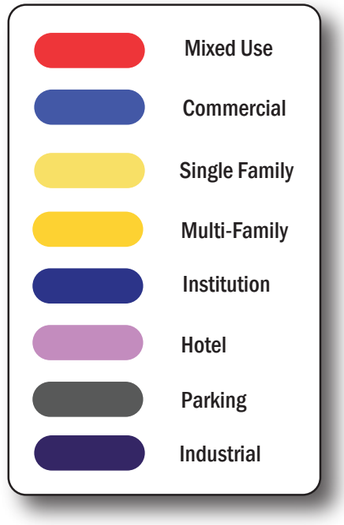
Urban Character

Urban Character




Possible Retirement Community Expansion
Ellwood Park
W 13th Ave
SW 11th Ave
Increased Residential Density Surrounding Park


W 15th Ave
Mixed-Use Corridor


Mixed Use
Commercial
Single Family
Multi-Family
Institution
Hotel
Parking
Industrial

This is probably the largest and most under-utilized zone in the Downtown area, composed of more than 70-city blocks. There are some very notable buildings and businesses on the eastern edge of this zone, and there are some successful commercial service enterprises interspersed throughout the area. Much of the zone is characterized by one and two story buildings, parking areas, and vacant lots. Historically, the area has served as a commercial service and industrial area. In recent years, it has experienced significant disinvestment and increasing vacancies as some businesses consolidated, or moved out to suburban areas. Interestingly, the area has excellent potential for redevelopment because of its convenience to Downtown and the entire City. To the south, it provides an important link to the southwest zone and to Ellwood Park

Some notable landmarks on the eastern edge include:

Chase Bank Building
Commerce Building
Petroleum Building
The Amarillo Globe News
The Salvation Army
Herring Bank

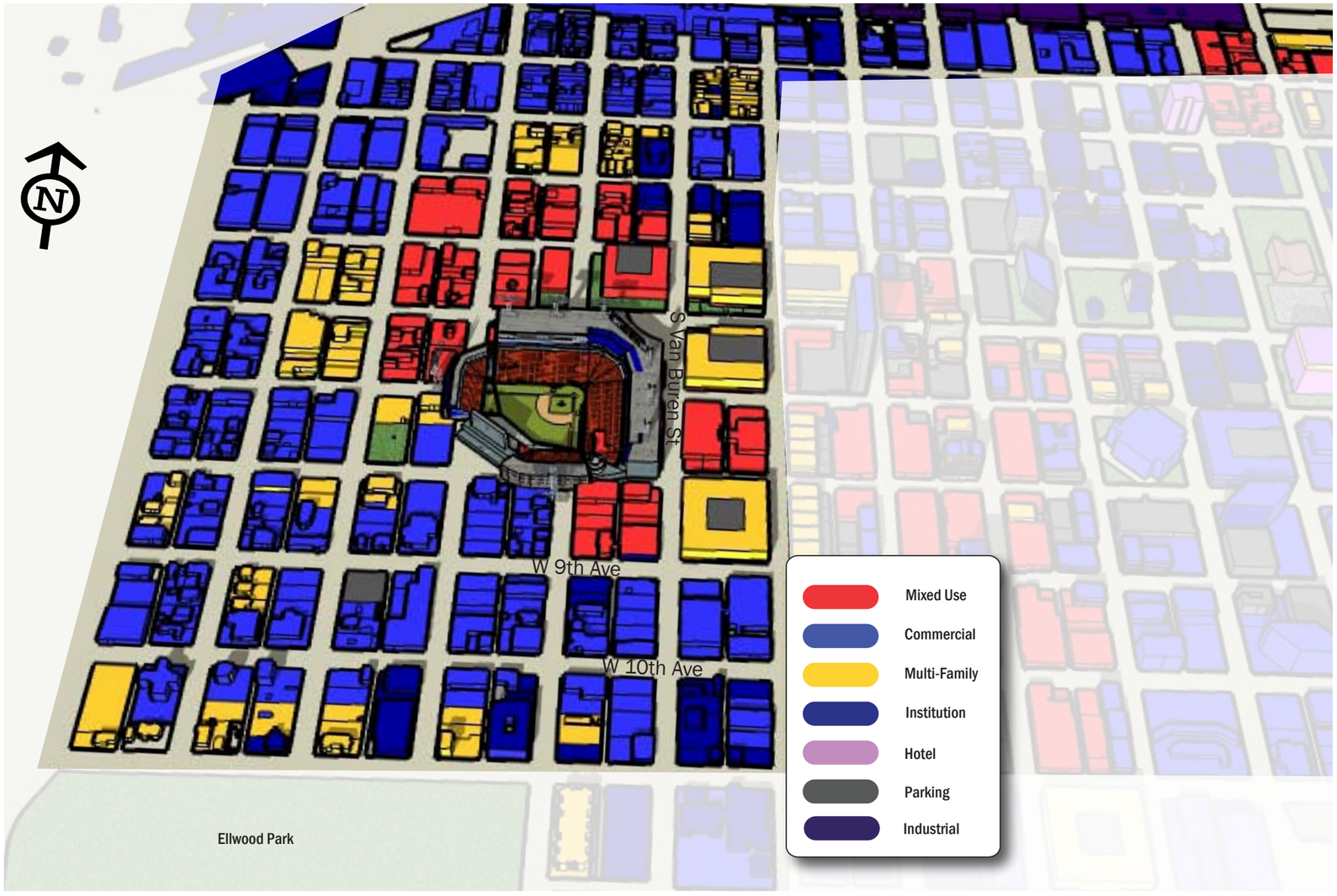
Key initiatives recommended in the Northwest Zone

- This zone, especially the eastern area adjacent to the business core and Polk Street is walkable to the Downtown core.
- For example, the area bounded to the north by 5th Ave, to the east by Tyler Street, to the south by 10th Ave, and to the west by Jackson Street contains 15 blocks of land, much of which could be redeveloped into mixed use developments with a main emphasis on urban lifestyle housing. Key existing buildings such as the Chase Bank Building and the Globe News Building would remain and would benefit from the adjoining redevelopment and urban vitality.
- This area would have a capacity of 400 to 500 units of urban lifestyle housing. This could be phased in as the market permits. Phase One would ideally include at least 150 residential units. People living in this area, would add to the vibrancy of Downtown and especially support the Polk Street retail / entertainment corridor.
- The redevelopment emphasis would be on residential development; however, some neighborhood retail support would also be incorporated, such as an urban grocery, deli, and other neighborhood services. These same businesses would serve employees of Downtown.
- This trend for urban residential development could continue to the west as the market permits.
- This Northwest Zone is also a potential site for the minor league ball park combined with a mixed use development. Such a ball park would need at least four to six blocks of land, subject to parking availability
- Commercial services in the rest of the area could continue and probably become more successful with some infill of key businesses.
- The successful Church and retirement housing areas to the south of 12th Ave help to reinforce the residential and redevelopment potential of this Northwest Downtown Zone.

Current Conditions

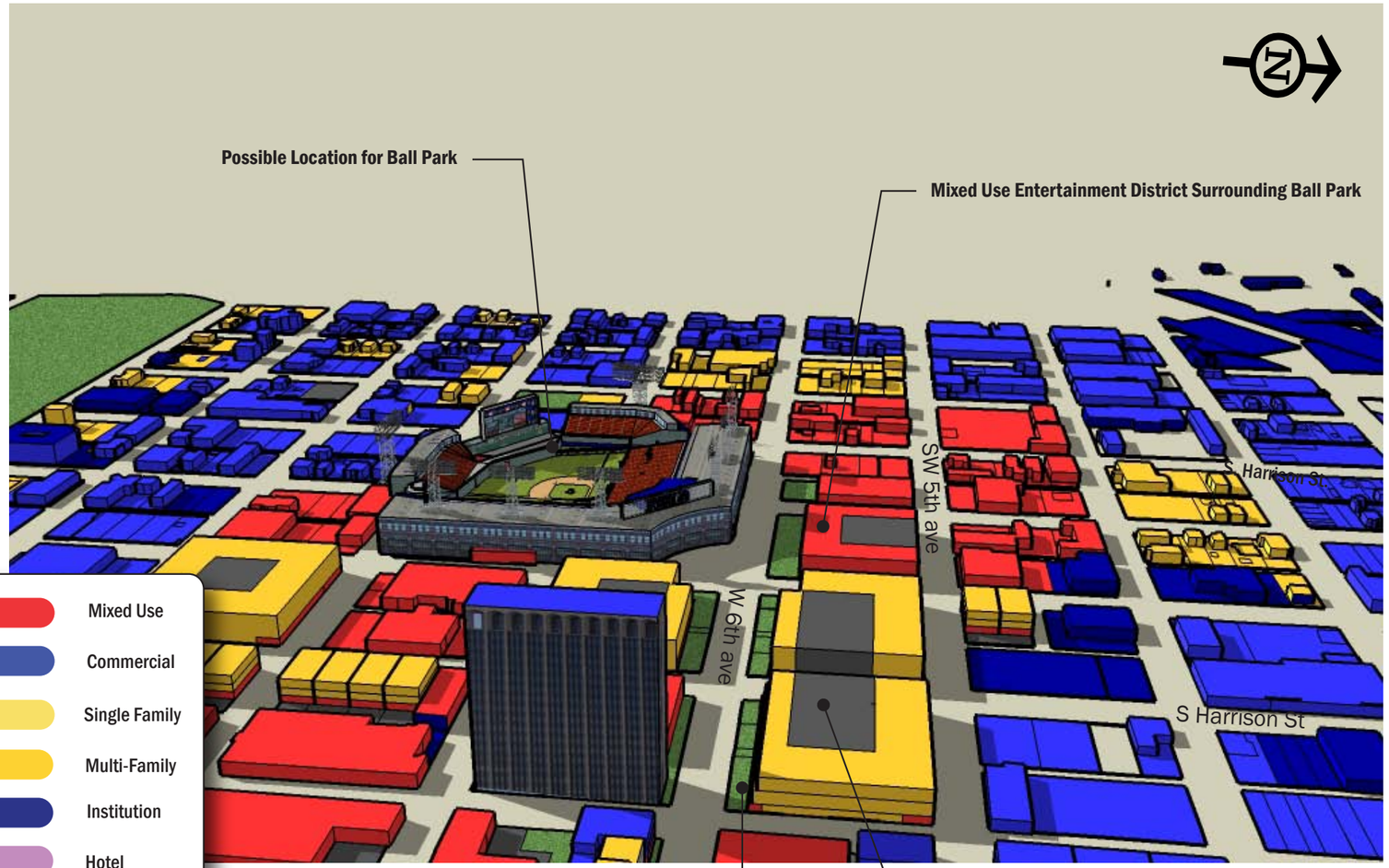
Current Conditions

Proposed Land Use



Urban Character

Urban Character



Characteristic Ball Park

Characteristic Ball Park

Implementation Plan

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Plans are only good intentions unless they immediately degenerate into hard work.

- Peter Drucker

Economic Development Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan was developed to provide strategies that help facilitate redevelopment, as proposed in the Downtown Strategic Action Plan. It considers historic trends, land use patterns, local market research and recommends catalyst projects to jump start revitalization. The Plan focuses on strategic initiatives that:

- Encourage new private investment
- Facilitate infrastructure improvements
- Utilize new and existing economic development tools
- Structure mechanism to prioritize and facilitate new public/ private partnerships.

The Five M's
The Five Key Resources for Economic Development

Materials
- *Land*
- *Buildings*
- *Location*
- *Infrastructure/natural resources*

(Hu)manpower/Labor
- *Skilled personnel*
- *Available workforce*
- *Education and training capacity*

Markets Analysis
- *Competition*
- *Penetration*
- *Marketing strategy*

Management
- *Organizational structure*
- *Manager/operators*
- *Research and development (R&D)*
- *Marketing and sales*
- *Legal*

Money
- *Equity/ownership capital*
- *Debt/borrowed funds*
- *Capitalizing institutions*
- Subsidy and substitutes for direct capital

Blakely, Edward J., (1994), Planning Local Economic Development: Theory and Practice, Second Edition, p. 147

Public/Private Partnerships

- A Public/Private Partnership (PPP) is a contractual agreement between a public agency (federal, state or local) and a private sector entity.
- Through this agreement, the skills and assets of each sector (public and private) are shared in delivering a service or facility.
- In addition to the sharing of resources, each party shares in the risks and rewards potential in the delivery of the service and/or facility.

KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- There are six critical components of any successful Public/Private Partnership (PPP).
- While there is not a set formula or an absolute foolproof technique in crafting a successful PPP, each of these keys is involved in varying degrees.

1. POLITICAL LEADERSHIP - A successful partnership can result only if there is commitment from "the top".
2. PUBLIC SECTOR INVOLVEMENT - Once a partnership has been established, the public-sector must remain actively involved in the project or program.
3. A WELL THOUGHT-OUT PLAN - You must know what you expect of the partnership beforehand.
4. A DEDICATED INCOME STREAM - While the private partner may provide the initial funding for capital improvements, there must be a means of repayment of this investment over the long term of the partnership.
5. COMMUNICATIONS WITH STAKEHOLDERS - More people will be affected by a partnership than just the public officials and the private-sector partner.
6. SELECTING THE RIGHT PARTNER - The "lowest bid" is not always the best choice for selecting a partner. The "best value" in a partner is critical in a long-term relationship that is central to a successful partnership. A candidate's experience in the specific area of partnerships being considered is an important factor in identifying the right partner. *

*The National Council for Public Private Partnerships

Three primary ways to fund the "gap"

- Reduce Costs

  Public infrastructure improvements, waiver of impact fees, conveyance of land at nominal or no-cost, parking garage construction.

- Reduce Expense

  Reduction in taxes paid

- Increase Revenue

  Rebate of tax increment paid

Typically, gap financing comes from public sector revenue which includes ad valorem tax, sales tax and hotel occupancy tax. Below is a break out of Amarillo tax rates.

Sales Tax - 8.25%

- State tax - 6.25%
- Local Tax - 2.0%
  - City - 1.5%
  - AEDC - .5%

Ad Valorem Tax Rate

1. City of Amarillo - .28371 per $100
2. Potter County - .59674 per $100
3. Amarillo Junior College - .16043 per $100
4. Panhandle Groundwater District - .01 per $100
5. Amarillo ISD - 1.172 per $100

Hotel Occupancy Tax - 15%

- State Tax - 6%
- Local Tax - 9%

Action Step

Objective:

- Hire a full-time person to assist with all high priority development and implementation initiatives
- This individual would focus on implementation of the key initiatives adopted in the plan

Notes:

- A key to a successful implementation is identifying a single individual to “live and breathe” the Plan implementation on a daily basis
- Job responsibilities would include oversight and administration of the newly established TIRZ
- Additional responsibilities could be program management, including RFP/RFQ solicitation and necessary marketing
- The person could also assist the Center City organization with some of their implementation committees Ideal candidate would be a motivated individual that can navigate the necessary activities for getting things done with a background in economic development, planning, and local government
- This individual would need to work seamlessly as possible with the Center City organization and all local governments
- The person would also coordinate with all local governments, AEDC, Amarillo Chamber of Commerce, the Convention and Visitors Bureau and others

Action Steps:

- The leadership of the City of Amarillo, Potter County, the Downtown Development Committee, the TIRZ Board, and Center City should define a job description
- The group should quickly identify shared funding options for the position
- Select and employ full time person to direct implementation

Experience and Skills of Staff Implementation Personal

Experience:

- Public infrastructure and private development, urban planning, and economic issues affecting private, and public-private development and community development
- Principles and practices of city planning, zoning, historic preservation, housing, and parking management
- Financial and legal aspects relating to bond issue, sales, and land acquisition;
- Marketing techniques relating to real estate
- Practical knowledge of commercial real estate, business law, finance and accounting principles;
- Strong knowledge of negotiation strategy and techniques
- Strong analytical and communication skills
- Advanced computer literacy
- Active in a position directly responsible for negotiating and developing retail/commercial real estate.

Skills:

- Develop conceptual plans, proformas, and contract administration for private sector development projects
- Communicate ideas clearly and concisely verbally and in writing
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with officials from governmental and private organizations and the general public
- Initiate and monitor several projects at the same time.

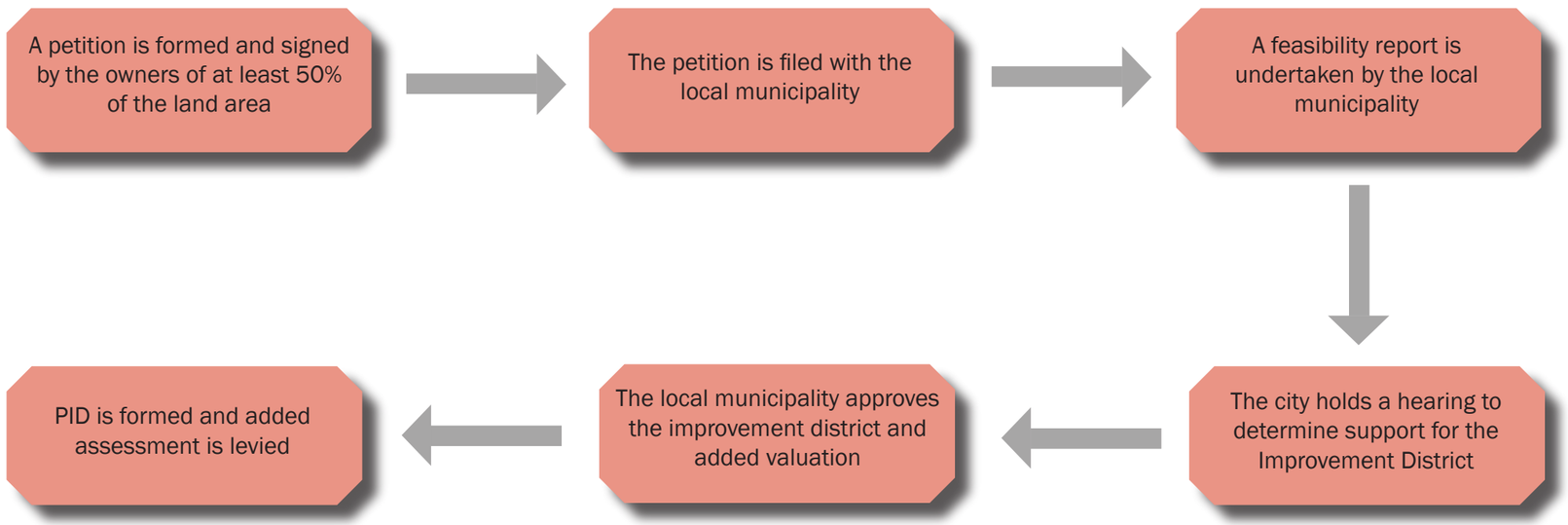
Key Responsibilities:

- Identify and encourage new downtown developments that create tax increment and provide services to this end by assisting owners, consultants, and governmental entities throughout the process
- Support and guide the project development team from preliminary approval to grand opening;
- Initiate site negotiation and deal-making activity when necessary
- Facilitate governmental approvals
- Perform duties in a team-oriented work environment while remaining dedicated to the common goal of promoting and assisting quality development
- Maintain extensive cross-organizational relationships with key personnel including local, state, and federal elected officials and corporate executives

Benefits of Public Improvement Districts (PID)

PIDs represent an entrepreneurial approach on behalf of downtown leaders or participating businesses to solve their own problems. By bypassing the sometimes slow movement and cumbersome processes of local government by creating their own organizations, PIDs are able to quickly try and discard or continue different strategies which enhance the district's environment. Some specific benefits of PIDs include:

- Finding innovative solutions to problems, such as helping to coordinate and facilitate the movement of homeless citizens into long-term rehabilitation environments;
- Protecting and enhancing public spaces through the deployment of "security teams" or "ambassadors";
- Initiating services not provided by public agencies such as sidewalk cleaning and snow removal, marketing, promotions, business retention and recruitment;
- Advocating on behalf of downtown business allowing them to communicate a unified vision/message that presses local government on issues that would aid the district's revitalization;
- Creating cooperation among competitive businesses which allows them to engage in activities that they would not be able to do on their own;
- Generating financing for capital improvements for more attractive streetscapes
- Researching and planning services such as collecting and analyzing economic and demographic data, monitoring progress, setting and revising strategic goals and developing multiyear redevelopment programs.



Action Step

Objective:

- Establish a Public Improvement District (PID)
- Generate sufficient revenue to supplement the existing services in Downtown
- Enhance the landscaping, maintenance, and security for all Downtown properties

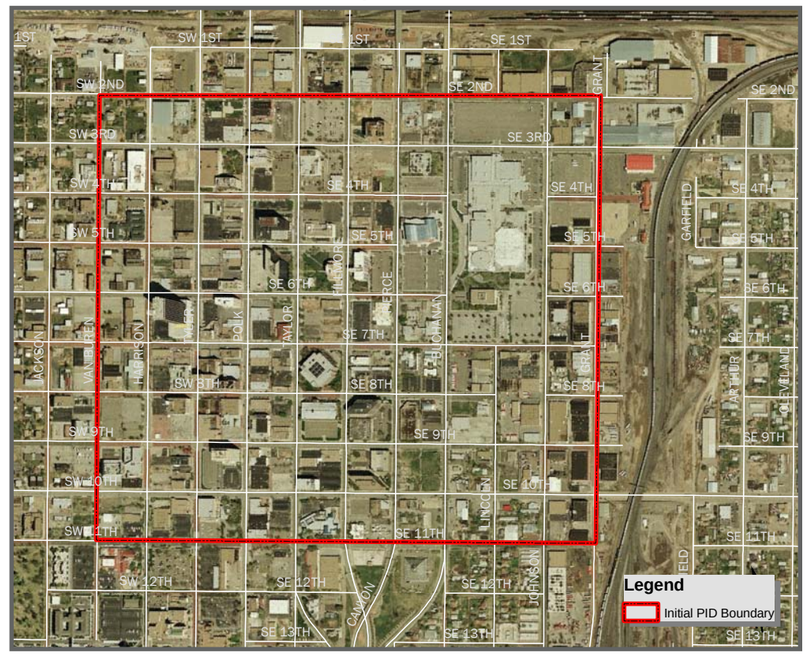
Notes:

- PIDs are a well established in the State of Texas and the City of Amarillo
- Essential tool for enhancing the appeal of the Downtown
- Most successful downtowns create PIDs to add value for the owners and provide needed services above and beyond that which currently exists
- PIDs are established through petition of the property owners to the City
- Assessment rates are set to cover proposed expenses

Action Steps:

- Center City should identify the key items that need immediate attention (maintenance, landscaping, security, etc)
- A proposed scope and budget should be developed
- Assessment rate should be set to cover the proposed expenses
- Property owners should petition the City for creation of the PID

Potential Downtown PID Boundary



Action Step

Objective:

- Continue the momentum generated by the planning process
- Maintain a strong group of Center City stakeholders participating in implementation of the plan

Notes:

- The progress to date is due to combined efforts of Center City Amarillo, the Downtown Development Committee, downtown stakeholders and local government leadership

Action Steps:

- Combine the current Center City and Downtown Development Committee into one seamless stronger Center City organization
- The membership should also include emerging leadership that has evolved during the planning process
- A committee structure with strong committee chairmen should be set up to champion the various action steps

Redevelopment Leadership

- The Downtown Development Committee and Center City of Amarillo, Inc. have been the driving force in fostering the redevelopment of Downtown.
- The Downtown Development Committee is scheduled to sunset in March 2008.
- Center City of Amarillo, Inc. represents the many interests throughout Downtown including property and business owners.
- The TIRZ#1 Board of Directors has been created, has approved the first project within the TIRZ and should continue to focus on TIRZ specific projects.
- However, the need will continue for a strong redevelopment advocacy group to accomplish the goals and objectives of the Action Plan.
- Projects such as the development of a convention headquarters hotel will require support from a broad spectrum of interests.
- As mentioned earlier, there is no one magical organization model for ensuring redevelopment success.
- Research indicates that the organization must be consistent with the practices of the community.
- The Action Plan recommendation is for the Downtown Development Committee and the leadership of Center City Amarillo, Inc. to work together and create a strong organization to support the goals and objectives of the Action Plan.

DOWNTOWN DESIGN STANDARDS & GUIDELINES
AMARILLO, TEXAS

STANDARDS

Purpose and Introduction
Walkways
Building Edge
Sign Standards
Landscape
Signs and Banners

GUIDELINES

Purpose and Introduction
Downtown Planning Zones
Historic Preservation
Parks, Plazas, and Public Art
Gateway Streets and Corridors

PRELIMINARY DRAFT

Amarillo Chapter

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
Celebrating the Past, Designing the Future

Action Step

Objective:

- Adopt urban design standards for Downtown that assure that new developments and redevelopments adhere to high standards of urban design
- Such standards are designed to create a much more livable and walkable Downtown

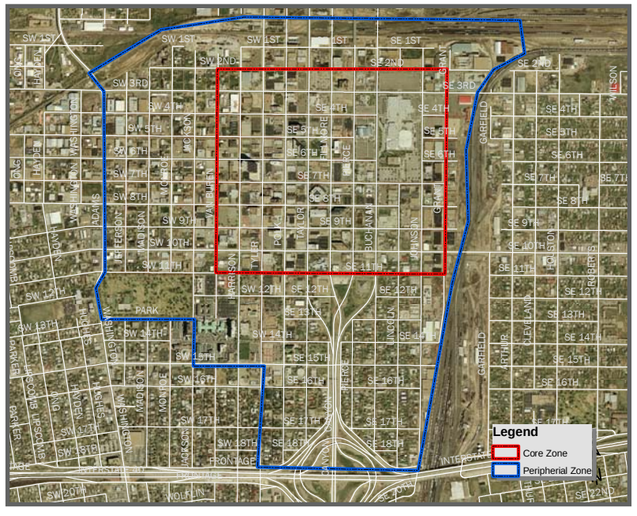
Notes:

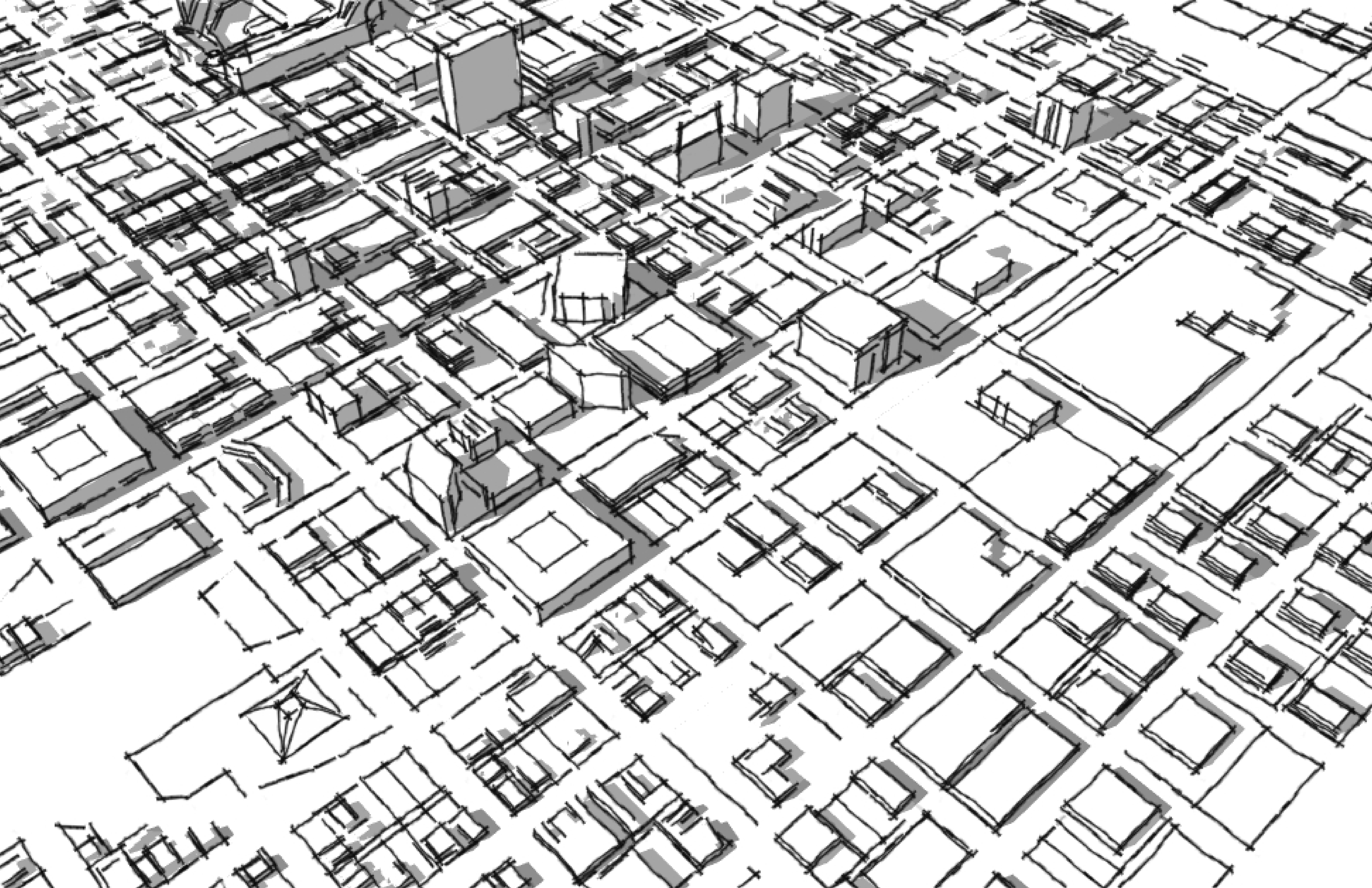
- Urban Design Standards will incorporate landscaping, sidewalk treatment, proper ground level uses and design, urban furniture (benches, lighting, pocket park areas, etc.) into all new and significant redevelopment.
- This gives investors confidence that their quality developments will be protected and carried out by future investors

Action Steps:

- Continue work with the AIA, Center City, and the City to determine the appropriate standards for Downtown Amarillo
- Put in place an overlay zoning district in the Downtown area that assures that all investors conform to such standards
- The Urban Design Standards will include recommendations for expanded open space
- Incorporate a percent for public art into public and private developments
- Preliminarily, it appears that two tiers of design standards are needed : core area, and a peripheral zone

Potential Urban Design Guidelines Zones





“When you look at a city, it’s like reading the hopes, aspirations and pride of everyone who built it.”

- Hugh Newell Jacobsen

gideon toal

CITY OF AMARILLO TEXAS

CENTER C·I·T·Y Amarillo, Texas