

Downtown Raleigh

Element M: Downtown Raleigh

M.1 Overview

Downtown is the historic, functional and symbolic heart of Raleigh. It contains the largest concentration of government and commercial buildings in Raleigh, and lies at the nexus of the City's roadway and public transportation networks. It is the seat of government for the County and State as well as the municipality. More cultural venues, attractions and events are located in Downtown than any other area of the region. More recently, it has become a fast-growing residential neighborhood. The Downtown skyline is the signature image appearing on City and regional public information and marketing materials, as well as on the many articles written about Raleigh in national publications. A healthy, vital, and growing Downtown is therefore essential to Raleigh's sustainability, quality of life, and future economic competitiveness.

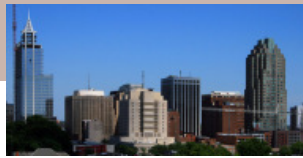


Raleigh's geographic limits were originally established by the William Christmas Plan of 1792 within North, East, South, and West Streets, which defined the extent of the walkable city at that time. Now, of course, the area regarded as downtown stretches beyond those original boundaries. The Christmas Plan also provided a simple urban design hierarchy containing a dominant street grid with 66' rights-of-way, a strong axis of four 99' wide streets emanating from the State Capitol, four public park-like squares, and a central six-acre square designed to serve as the Capitol grounds. Among the axial boulevards, Fayetteville Street, extending southward from the Capitol, was intended to be the

high street of the city. Fayetteville Street is home to Raleigh's most significant urban design feature, the terminated vistas that spotlight the Capitol and the Performing Arts Center. Although the City has grown and developed, Downtown still maintains many of the defining urban design features established by the Christmas Plan.

The area regarded as Downtown Raleigh today currently spans approximately 754 acres, or 1.18 square miles. The geographic area that encompasses Downtown constitutes less than one percent of Raleigh's incorporated area. However, as has occurred since the early part of the twentieth century, the area considered Downtown will continue to expand, and the close-in areas surrounding Downtown are the most likely geographic targets for such an expansion. **Map DT-1** outlines the Downtown boundaries.

Despite its relatively small size, Downtown is emerging as the center of the Triangle region. Regional growth patterns are shifting eastward, placing downtown closer to the center of the region's urbanized land mass as projected to 2030. Significant infrastructure investments such as the multi-modal transportation center will render Downtown the destination point for thousands of daily commuters originating from places near and far. As a major employment center within the region, an estimated 37,500 daytime employees fill approximately 5.1 million square feet of commercial office space and 5.2 million square feet of governmental office space. Approximately one-third of the employment base is governmental; as a capital city, the downtown area houses four layers of government: city, county, state, and federal government. The major nodes of office space are oriented between Wilmington and Salisbury Streets, with the State government occupying the majority of the northern half of Downtown while the private sector populates the southern half. As a complement to the office space, the Downtown has made significant strides in growing a residential base. Approximately 2,600 multifamily units are located within Downtown, and the housing typology ranges from college dorms to luxury condominiums, and many other housing types in-between. As a tax generator, Downtown



generates approximately 7.3 percent of the property tax base while occupying less than half a percent of all developable property within Raleigh.

The City has a significant number of new public and private development projects that will increase Downtown's vitality, provide new uses and services, and transform the skyline. By 2012, these new developments are projected to infuse approximately \$2.5 billion into Downtown and will support additional housing, retail, service, and entertainment uses in the future. The following summary highlights the recent development trends across Downtown Raleigh.

Recent development has concentrated around four areas, including: the Seaboard area adjacent to Peace College; around Glenwood Avenue between Peace and Hillsborough Streets; around Fayetteville Street between Morgan and Lenoir Streets; and the area just west of Nash Square. Most recently, land assembly and development proposals have revealed a future focus along Hillsborough Street between Dawson Street and Glenwood Avenue. Looking forward, additional significant development activity is expected in the Warehouse district surrounding the proposed multi-modal transportation center, and in the northeast corner of Downtown via the 21-acre Blount Street Commons project. Outside of historic preservation efforts, very few new developments have occurred within the City's historic core – the original squares of the Christmas plan.

The most common redevelopment activity in the historic core of Downtown comes in the form of one- and two-story buildings slated for historic preservation / adaptive reuse to accommodate more active ground-floor uses such as retailers, bars, and restaurants. More than two dozen such buildings are either being restored or have been within the last five years. These deals dictate a bullish confidence that Downtown Raleigh will continue to emerge as a destination, currently for dining and entertainment, but ultimately as retail.

The prevailing development model in Downtown Raleigh is mixed-use, with some combination of for-sale residential condominiums, office space, and ground-floor retail space. Year after year, each successive project allocates a greater portion of the

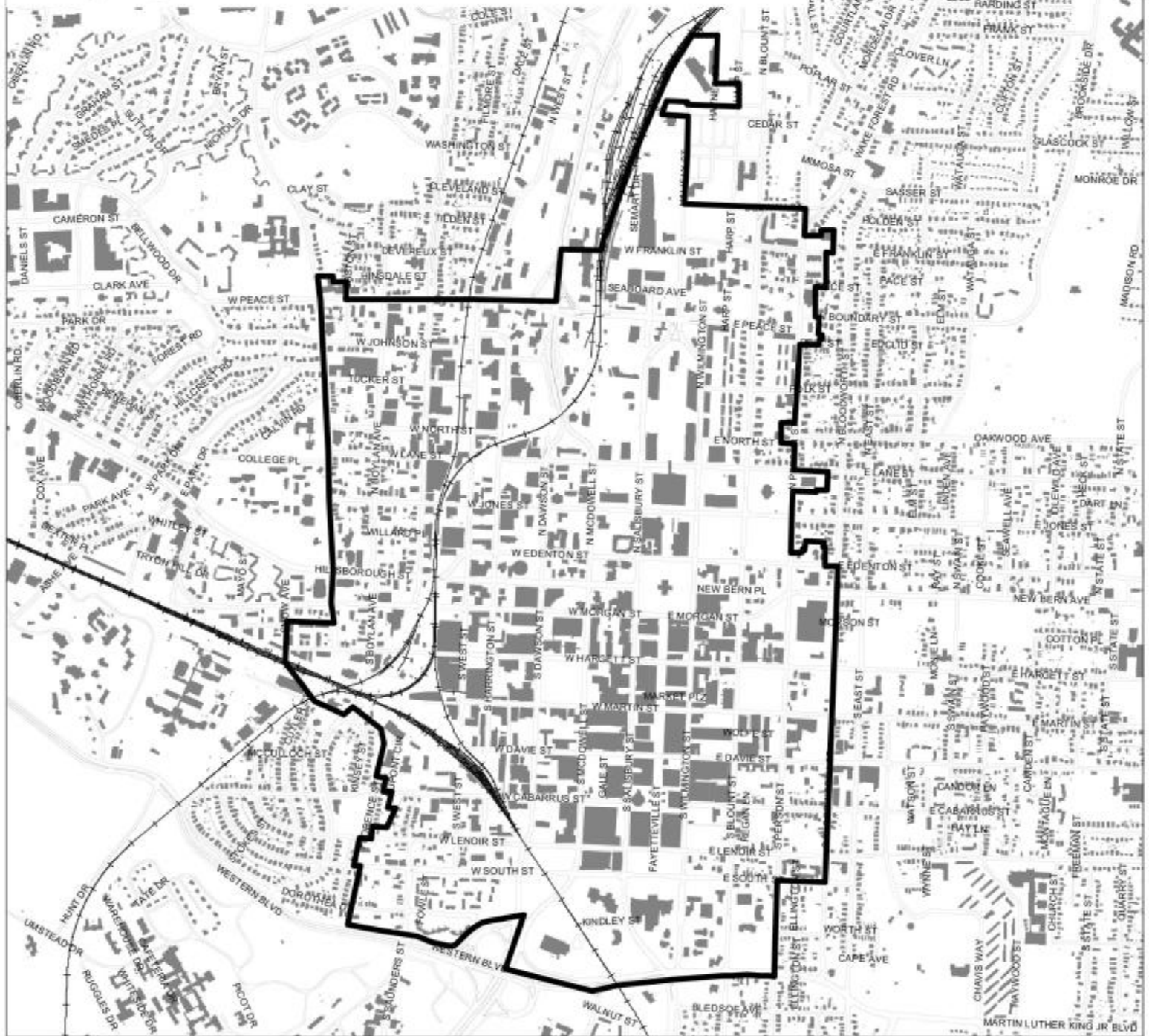
building's ground-floor to active users. That trend is indicative of an increasingly positive outlook regarding the market for retail in Downtown Raleigh. Additionally, newer residential projects have also increased in size; residential projects completed within the past three years averaged about 70 units per development, whereas the residential projects currently under construction average about 125 units per development. The trend towards mixed-use can be characterized as a significant departure from the development paradigm of the early 2000s.

The upward trend in Downtown Raleigh's revitalization has resulted in significant economic, fiscal, civic, and cultural gains for Raleigh. Strong job growth, commercial and residential development, and significant public projects have helped Downtown establish a competitive edge and become a net revenue generator for Raleigh. The remarkable growth and improved quality of Downtown between 2003 and 2008 is due in part to successful public-private partnerships, courageous private sector leadership, and a commitment by the City to invest in Downtown's future through strategic projects intended to leverage private sector investment.



CITY OF RALEIGH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Downtown

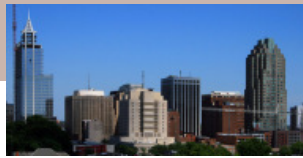


MAP DT-1

- Downtown Raleigh Study Area Boundary
- Buildings
- Streets
- Railroads



Map created 10/29/2008 by City of Raleigh
Department of City Planning & GIS Division



The confluence and complexities of uses, scale, activities, and physical spaces in the Downtown require a finer level of specificity than can be achieved using only the city-wide policies that appear elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan. The Downtown Element outlines a collection of development values and strategic initiatives that address vibrancy, walkability, place making, and other methods designed to create a prized urban center for Raleigh citizens, a commercial nucleus within the Triangle region, and model of sustainability for cities of the southeastern United States. While most of the city-wide policies are relevant and applicable to the Downtown, this element includes policies intended to address downtown-specific issues and ways to encourage downtown investment to ensure a healthy economic, cultural, and symbolic heart of the City. The following are the main issues addressed in the Downtown Element:

- The lack of transportation options to move people into, out of, and around Downtown
- The need to accommodate a significant and diverse share of the City's anticipated population and employment growth
- Inconsistent urban design decision making
- Inaccessibility to some of Raleigh's citizens
- A growing urgency regarding environmental stewardship
- Connectivity challenges between Downtown districts and activity generators
- Insufficient utilization of the ground floor of buildings for active use, particularly along key corridors
- The need to establish a unique urban identity
- Missed opportunities to grow visitation and tourism
- Jeopardizing our cultural identity, legacy, and assets
- Ensuring that Downtown is a place for all of Raleigh's citizens

As described in the Framework Chapter, Raleigh's Vision for 2030 is structured to address these issues through six vision themes or city-wide goals. By actively encouraging growth and development, both commercial and residential, within Downtown, Raleigh will advance towards its goal of *Economic Prosperity and Equity*. By exploring strategies to

provide a wide range of opportunities for people to live within Downtown, Raleigh make strides towards achieving its goal of *Expanding Housing Choices*. By focusing the city's highest intensity development within Downtown, Raleigh will meet its over-arching goal of *Managing Our Growth*. Through the encouragement of high-density transit-oriented development, expanding accessibility and transportation options, and improving connectivity between Downtown activity centers, Raleigh will make progress toward *Coordinating Land Use and Transportation*. Through sustainable building design, the promotion of publicly accessible open space, and connecting Downtown with the regional greenway network, Raleigh embraces its *Greenprint Raleigh* goal. Lastly, by growing a vibrant retail marketplace, furthering a unique sense of place, and advancing strategic planning and investments, Raleigh ensures its goal of *Growing Successful Neighborhoods and Communities*.

Graphic symbols are utilized to link the intent of the policy language with the six themes of the Plan, which are enumerated as follows:

1. Economic Prosperity and Equity;
2. Expanding Housing Choices;
3. Managing Our Growth;
4. Coordinating Land Use and Transportation;
5. Greenprint Raleigh—Sustainable Development; and
6. Growing Successful Neighborhoods and Communities.

Downtown Element Organization and Use

The sections following this overview provides the recommended policies and actions for the Downtown Element and are organized by sub-element and topic.

The policies and actions contained in the Downtown Element are Downtown-specific, and they supplement rather than replace applicable citywide policies under the same headings. Taken together, they utilize the framework of the overall Comprehensive Plan and apply it at a more detailed level to Raleigh's urban core. In applying the policies in this element, the following guidance applies:

- Relevant policies in the Citywide elements also apply to Downtown unless otherwise noted.
- Policies contained within this element, where not echoed elsewhere in the Plan, apply to Downtown only.
- Where there is a conflict between a citywide policy and a Downtown policy, the Downtown policy shall control in Downtown.

M.2 Land Use

Land in Downtown Raleigh has the highest levels of density permitted within the City of Raleigh. This high level of development intensity influences downtown's physical form.

The greater Downtown area covers over two thousand square acres of land, and roughly includes the area between Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. to the south, Saint Mary's school to the West, the industrial area along Capital Blvd on the north, and St. Augustine's College on the east. In the center of this area is the city's historic urban grid, a 400-acre area planned by William Christmas, in 1792. Within the historic grid are more than ten million square feet of built space that contain a mix of uses, from government offices to single-family homes. This mix of uses contributes to the Downtown's vibrancy and economic well being. Approximately 88,600 people currently live within a three-mile radius of the Capitol. Based on recent development trends and assumptions that future densities will replicate maximum zoning allowances, the Downtown District area delineated on the Future land Use Map could potentially accommodate an additional 25,000 residents.

These policies and action items reduce conflict between incompatible uses, provide the opportunity for a variety of uses, and encourage the development of the uses needed for Downtown to become a stronger regional economic generator. The following land use and development issues are addressed in this element:

- The need for a Downtown future land use map to drive development decision making
- Coordinating land use and transportation

- A lack of transitions or buffers between non-compatible uses or development intensities
- Opportunities to improve vibrancy Downtown through increased residential and employment densities
- Determining the best development opportunities for land controlled by public entities

M.2.1 Future Land Uses

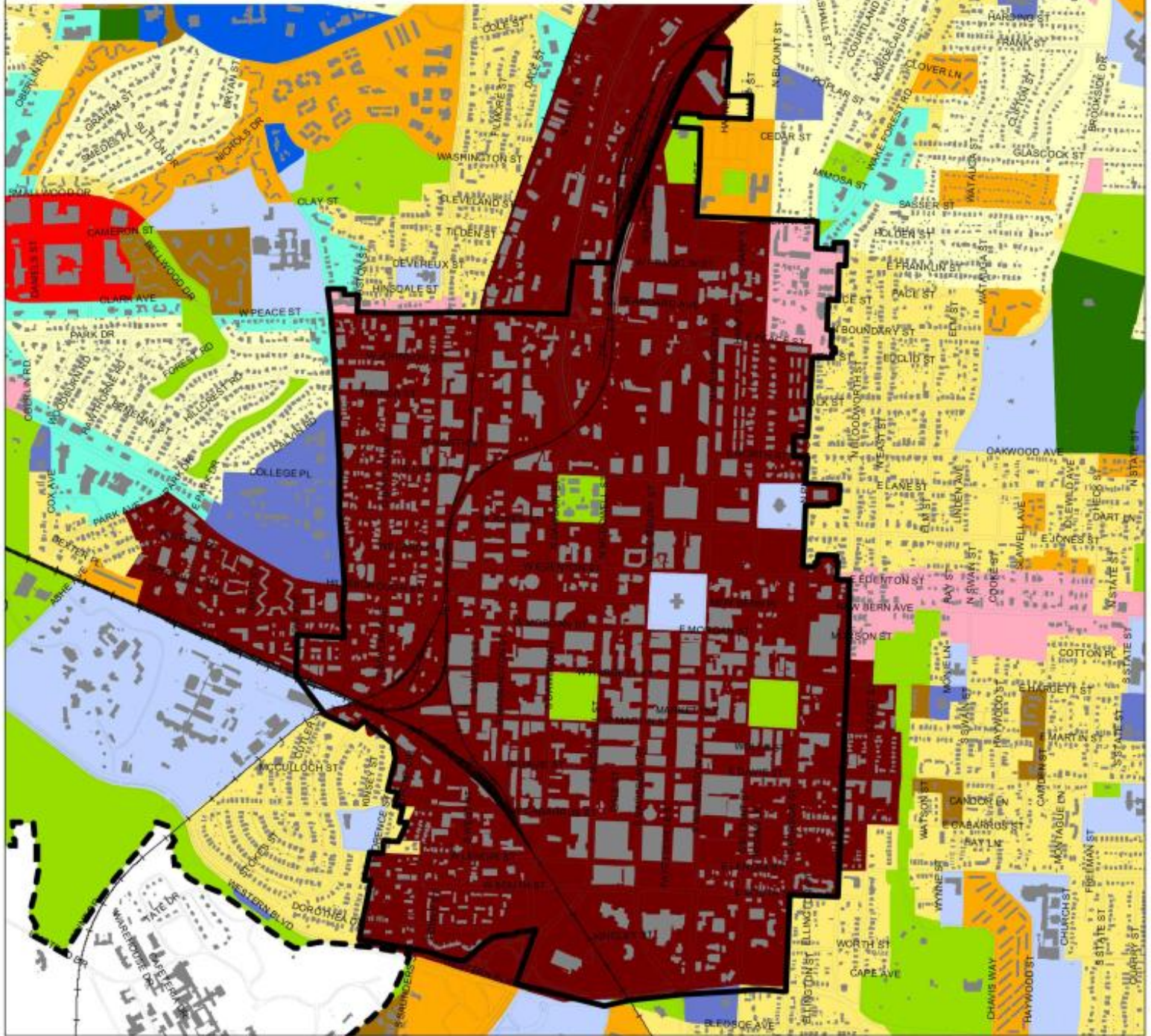
The Downtown Future Land Use Map builds upon Downtown's existing land use patterns while recognizing opportunities for the accommodation of significant residential and commercial development. The largest amount of land is planned for a future land use entitled "Downtown," a land use designation intended to enhance Downtown Raleigh as a vibrant mixed-use urban center. As the heart of Raleigh, Downtown should feature a mix of high-intensity office, retail, housing, government, institutional, visitor-serving, cultural, and entertainment uses. Surrounding most of Downtown are many of Raleigh's historic residential neighborhoods such as Oakwood, Boylan Heights, Southpark, and Cameron Park.

The process of building a successful downtown requires close coordination between private and public development interests. The sites selected for redevelopment are often a reflection of multiple factors, including context to prominent civic and commercial uses, accessibility to transportation infrastructure, entitlements, and real estate economics.

Downtown's future land use patterns are illustrated on Map DT-2.



Downtown Future Land Use



MAP DT-2



Downtown Raleigh Study Area Boundary

Special Study Area

Future Land Use Categories

Public Parks & Open Space

Private Open Space

Rural Conservation

Low Density Residential

Low-Medium Density Residential

Medium Density Residential

High Density Residential

Office & Residential Mixed Use

Office/Research & Development

Institutional

Public Facilities

Neighborhood Retail Mixed Use

Business & Commercial Services

Community Retail Mixed Use

Regional Retail Mixed Use

Central Business District

General Industrial

Buildings

Railroads

Streets



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Policy LU-DT 1

The Downtown Future Land Use Map should guide public and private land use development decisions to ensure the efficient and predictable use of land and effectively coordinate land use with infrastructure needs. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

Policy LU-DT 2

Encourage vertical mixed-use development throughout Downtown. (1, 3, 6)

Policy LU-DT 3

Encourage the preservation, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of older buildings in Downtown. (1, 2, 3, 5, 6)

Policy LU-DT 4

Encourage the redevelopment of underutilized sites in Downtown, included but not limited to vacant sites, surface parking lots, and brownfield sites. (1, 3, 4, 6)

Action LU-DT 1

As part of the City's update of its development regulations, amend the zoning ordinance to create a new "Downtown" zoning district to regulate mixed-use development in the downtown. This general use district would replace the current zoning scheme of different base districts plus a downtown overlay. Floor Area Ratio

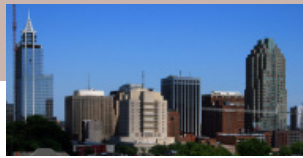
(FAR) should be the primary tool for regulating development intensity in the Downtown district.

Action LU-DT 2

Explore the use of form-based zoning to guide infill and mixed-use development downtown.

M.2.2 Transitions, Buffering and Compatibility

The juxtaposition of building types can be traced back to Raleigh's earliest history. Despite being a city founded to be a capital, very few sites were developed according to a prevailing development pattern. Small residential homes were often sited next to larger commercial and governmental buildings. For nearly a century before the streetcar system was launched in 1891, the predominant method of transportation around the city was on foot or horseback. Proximity was paramount. Over time, market conditions favored higher uses on increasingly expensive land, resulting in a building up of the City's core – today the heart of the area considered Downtown. At the edges of the built-up core are remnants of Raleigh's past, historic districts and neighborhoods, from grand second empire residences in Oakwood to the cobblestoned commercial area of City Market. The result can appear as jarring disconnects between building height, scale, or non-complementary land uses. Transition zones are used to reduce or blur a sharp delineation between areas of disparate development intensity, often through appropriate and accepted controls of use, height, scale, and building materials, to weave the Downtown and these historic areas into one continuous urban fabric.



Policy LU-DT 5

Appropriate transitions should be provided between Downtown District land uses and adjacent residential districts. (1, 6) [See A.2.5 'Land Use Compatibility' in Element A: 'Land Use' for more information on transitions.]

Policy LU-DT 6

Encourage a compatible mix of residential housing options, community-serving institutional uses, and neighborhood-serving retail within the neighborhoods surrounding Downtown. (1, 2, 3, 6)

Action LU-DT 3

Update the Zoning Code to define transitions between land uses of differing intensity.

Action LU-DT 4

Define the areas and methods appropriate for transitional form, use, and scale between Downtown and established residential neighborhoods.

M.2.3 Achieving Vibrancy through Density

To support initiatives such as a vibrant urban retail environment, high quality transit, and the development of new recreational venues, dense development Downtown is desirable. Like the city-wide growth policies that focus on infill development within centers and corridors,

high-density, mixed-use development will help to foster a more accessible, vibrant, and diverse Downtown.

Policy LU-DT 7

Increase the vibrancy and economic competitiveness of Downtown through the development or redevelopment of vacant and underutilized sites. (1, 3, 4, 6)

Policy LU-DT 8

Highest density development should occur along the axial streets (Hillsborough Street, Fayetteville Street and New Bern Avenue), major corridors (as identified by the thoroughfare plan), surrounding the squares, and within close proximity to planned transit stations. (1, 3, 4, 6)

Policy LU-DT 9

High-density developments Downtown should include public realm amenities, such as publicly accessible open space, public art, seating areas, and water features that complement the building and its nearby uses. (1, 6)

Policy LU-DT 10

Encourage new investments and developments that position Downtown as the center of the region for jobs, urban housing, entertainment and transit. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

Action LU-DT 5

Review the density bonus regulations and refine if necessary to ensure that the incentives offered foster the desired public benefits.

Action LU-DT 6

During the update of the City's development regulations, define ways to manage high-density development so that it is sited in appropriate areas and that new developments include public realm amenities.

Policy LU-DT 11

Redevelop City-owned sites such as Devereux Meadows to include a mix of uses that will advance the vision of Downtown as a vibrant employment, population, cultural, arts, and entertainment center. Where appropriate, integrate greenway trails. (1, 3, 4, 6)

Policy LU-DT 12

Encourage the sale or lease of the air rights over publicly owned transportation infrastructure such as city-owned parking garages and transit facilities. (1, 3, 4, 6)

M.2.4 Developing Land Controlled by Public Entities

Across Downtown, public entities such as the State of North Carolina, Wake County, and the City of Raleigh control large swaths of land. Many of these sites are currently underdeveloped, underutilized, or house services that will soon be relocated elsewhere. In some cases, these publicly-controlled sites are considered opportune for redevelopment through public-private partnerships. Key sites along the axial streets and at other locations Downtown where relatively large land assemblies are possible become suitable for major activity generators. Opportunities to restore elements of the Christmas Plan, both the northern squares and the street grid, are also possible. The redevelopment of these sites through public-private partnerships present opportunities to advance the City's goals and push the marketplace beyond what is feasible via private market activity.

Policy LU-DT 13

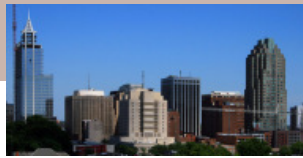
Support the integration of higher education institutions into the Downtown. (1, 6)

Action LU-DT 7

Develop criteria and a strategy for disposing of City-owned lands within the Downtown. Explore the formation of partnerships between multiple public entities to master develop and maximize the utility of publicly-controlled land.

Action LU-DT 8

Develop a physical master plan that provides a vision for Downtown's development.



M.3 Transportation

With over 38,000 jobs, 35,000 parking spaces, 3 million visitors annually and an increasingly dense residential neighborhood, Downtown Raleigh is the largest trip generator in the City and within the life of this plan may become the largest in the region. Great downtowns accommodate multiple modes of transportation through public realm improvements that promote and balance traffic, transit, walking and biking.

The key transportation issues in Downtown include:

- Making new mobility connections in a compact environment;
- Improving conditions for pedestrians and bicycles;
- Designating and designing streets for their main function;
- Expanding choice in public transportation and making successful links from proposed transit to the Downtown core;
- Designing and managing our parking resources more efficiently and;
- Minimizing conflicts created by freight and deliveries to businesses and residents.

M.3.1 Compact and Connected

As Downtown redevelops into a compact and mixed-use center, new transportation connections will need to be developed to complement existing connections. Downtown's compact and connected street grid has been and remains its greatest asset, as the grid disperses rather than concentrates traffic and provides multiple routes to the same destination. The grid permits downtown streets to function with a high level of service while serving the greatest intensity of land use. Street closings, superblocks, and an over-abundance of one-way streets erode the functionality of the grid and should be avoided. As transportation continues to evolve, the grid will help Downtown adapt and prosper.

Policy T-DT 1

Downtown should be served well by the broadest range of transportation options, including bikeways, sidewalks, greenway trails, roadways, streetcars, light rail and buses. (4, 5)

Policy T-DT 2

Preserve, protect, and extend the Downtown grid pattern of small blocks and interconnected streets. (4)

Policy T-DT 3

Improve the circulation of Downtown by converting one-way streets classified as minor thoroughfares and below to two-way traffic flow, where feasible. (4)

Policy T-DT 4

Maintain existing rights-of-way to the greatest extent possible. Explore the creation of new roadway connections within and adjacent to Downtown to improve connectivity and accommodate future traffic increases. (4)

Policy T-DT 5

Due to its often adverse effects on adjacent land uses, avoid new rail or roadway flyovers and bridges within Downtown if the opportunity exists to locate new facilities on existing grade separated crossings. (1, 4, 6)

Policy T-DT 6

Support the redevelopment of underutilized land adjacent to the proposed Multi-modal Transit Center (MTC) with uses that will contribute to the success of the the MTC and downtown. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

Action T-DT 1

Study and if feasible expand the downtown grid north along Capital Boulevard. Create new roadway connections throughout Downtown to better disperse and serve the growing traffic volumes. Specifically explore:

- S. West St. to W. Lenoir St. over the railroad tracks,
- W. Morgan St. to Western Boulevard west of Central Prison, and
- A new east west connection between N. Blount St. and N. Glenwood Ave., north of Peace St.

Action T-DT 2

Undertake a study of lane striping in Downtown to ensure that the number of lanes and lane widths are matched to traffic loads, minimizing conflicts between through traffic, parked vehicles, and the safety of pedestrians and bicycles; and maximizing opportunities for on-street parking.

M.3.2 Pedestrians and Bicycles

All business and most public life in Downtown is conducted by pedestrians. Downtown needs to become more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly to serve and attract new residents, visitors, and sustain ground level retail activity.

Policy T-DT 7

Improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility throughout Downtown. (4, 5)

Policy T-DT 8

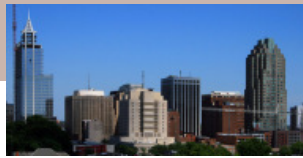
In new streetscape designs, provide expansive sidewalks and widen existing sidewalks to a 14-foot minimum where there is available right of way. (4, 5)

Policy T-DT 9

Promote safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian connections throughout downtown and to adjacent neighborhoods. (4, 5, 6)

Policy T-DT 10

Strongly discourage pedestrian overhead bridges or underground tunnel connections across the public right of way. (6)



Action T-DT 3

Fund and implement the recommendations of the Downtown Public Realm Study, including a comprehensive pedestrian improvement and streetscape strategy.

Policy T-DT 12

For all public / private sector design and traffic engineering / operations decisions made for the Green Streets shown on Map DT-3, pedestrians, bicyclists, and environmental benefits should be given equal priority to vehicular traffic flow and other street functions, including but not limited to parking and loading functions. (1, 4, 6)

M.3.3 Complete Streets: Hierarchy and Design

Downtown streets have a unique context within the city. They serve the highest density of land use and link many of Raleigh's most important cultural destinations. The existing grid system establishes a simple hierarchy of streets. A defined designation, hierarchy and design standards for each type of street will prepare Downtown to accommodate the large increases in vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle and transit volumes that will be demanded as Downtown grows and its density increases.

The City's greenway system plays a significant role in providing recreational opportunities for Downtown residents and visitors. The amount of greenway trails should be increased in Downtown. Because Downtown presents a more urban development pattern compared to other areas of the City, an urban greenway type should be incorporated on the major pedestrian thoroughfares identified as Green Streets on Map DT-3. An urban greenway is defined as a street meeting the requirements specified by Action T-DT-9.

Policy T-DT 11

Promote and balance vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit circulation. (1, 3, 4, 5, 6)

Policy T-DT 13

For all public / private sector design and traffic engineering / operations decisions made for Priority Pedestrian Streets shown on Map DT-3, the needs, safety, and comfort of pedestrians should be given priority. (1, 4, 6)

Policy T-DT 14

Preserve and expand the City's greenway system along Green Streets in Downtown, using it to help connect housing, employment, commercial, and recreational areas. (3, 4, 6)

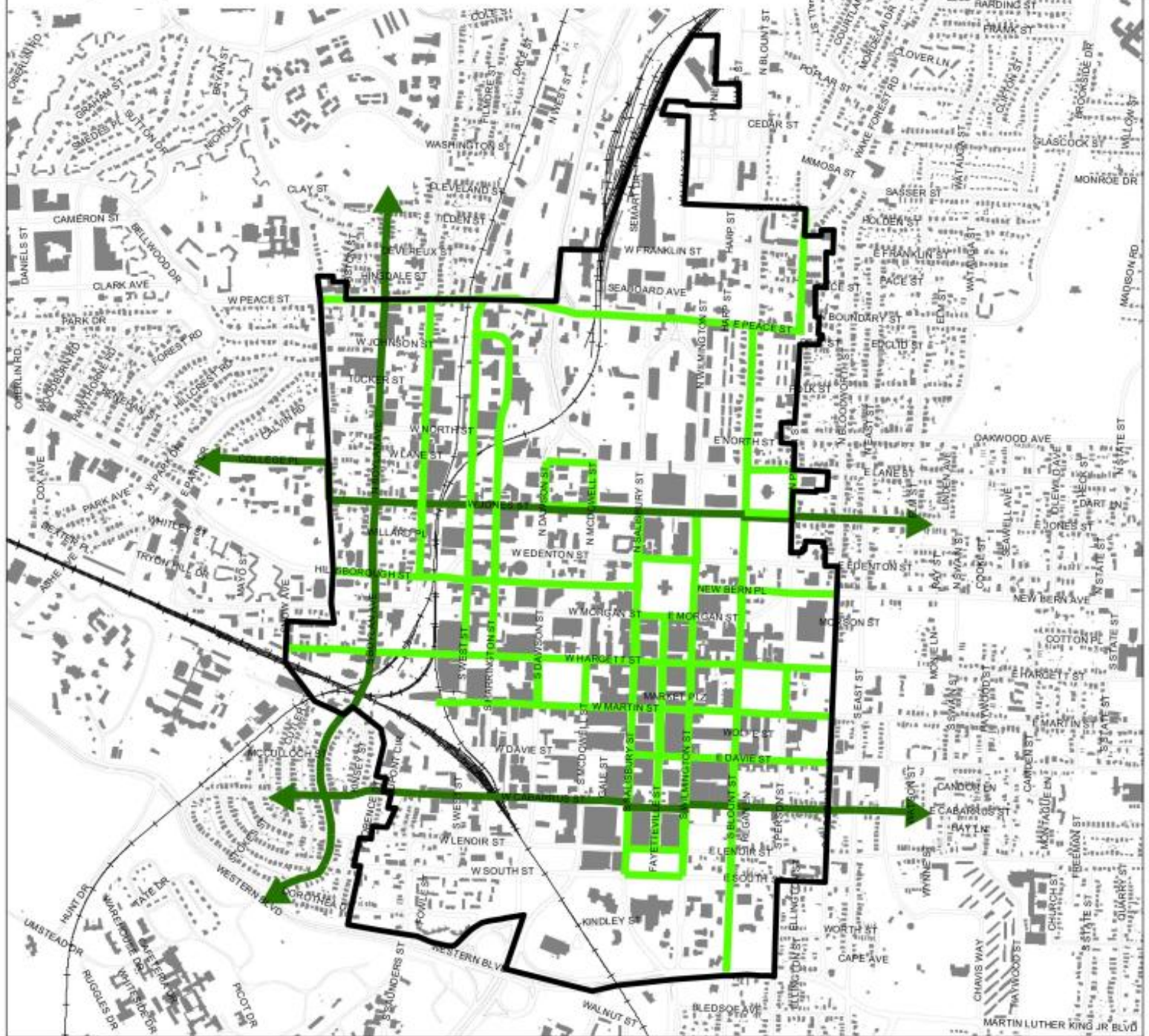
Policy T-DT 15

Encourage the development of greenway trails along existing rail corridors in Downtown. (3, 4, 6)



CITY OF RALEIGH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

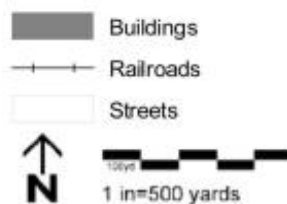
Priority Pedestrian & Green Streets



MAP DT-3

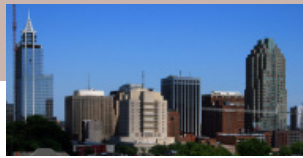
Public Realm Improvements

- Green Streets
- Priority Pedestrian Streets
- Downtown Raleigh Study Area Boundary



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Action T-DT 4

Develop Downtown-specific design standards for street, sidewalk, and bicycle networks for incorporation into the Streets, Sidewalks and Driveways Access Handbook (SSDAH). Specifically, conduct a study to define, designate and develop street sections and design standards for inclusion in the SSDAH for four key types of streets within Downtown.

Action T-DT 5

As part of the Public Realm Strategy, identify pedestrian enhancements for Priority Pedestrian Streets indicated on Map DT-3, and schedule implementation as part of the Capital Improvement Program.

Action T-DT 6

Study the locations and designs for key types of streets, such as traffic and transit streets. Schedule and budget for roadway improvements that will be needed.

Action T-DT 7

Conduct a study of pedestrian counts on pedestrian and retail streets, and update the counts on a regular basis. Such a study is useful both for transportation planning as well as retail recruitment.

Action T-DT 8

Study, schedule, design, and fund new facilities that integrate sustainable streetscape technologies for the Green Streets identified on Map DT-3. Green Streets should include:

- Pedestrian Amenities
- Landscaped planting strips where space permits
- Wider sidewalks, bike lanes, and mid-block crossings;
- Recommended speed limit maximums of 25 mph;
- Signage and wayfinding embedded into the concrete that clearly denotes the street as a “green street” and provides information about greenway connections;
- Pedestrian-scaled, energy-saving “light-emitting diode” (LED) street lighting
- Innovative stormwater management facilities such as porous pavers, tree boxes and rain gardens
- Use initial implementation of Green Streets to refine concept and identify additional streets where implementation is appropriate.

Action T-DT 9

Partner with railroad entities to locate additional greenway trails along existing rail lines.

Action T-DT 10

Expand and modify the Downtown pedestrian wayfinding system to include the Downtown greenway trails and other ties to the city-wide greenway network.

M.3.4 Public Transportation

The anticipated growth of Downtown will add significant built space over the coming decades that will increase trip generation commensurately. Elevated demand coupled with the insufficient ability to widen roadways will render Downtown the most transit-accessible area within the region. As the future hub of long- and short-distance rail and bus service, the multi-modal transportation center will contribute to the transformation of the built environment of the west side of Downtown by linking land use intensity with transportation infrastructure. The inclusion of light rail and streetcar networks will eventually connect the transportation hub with other activity generators within and close to Downtown. Complementing the provision of viable transportation alternatives, transportation demand management strategies are utilized to reduce vehicle dependency and mitigate automotive pollution. The area is scaled in such way that the operation of an automobile is not a requisite for short trips within and around the Downtown. Particularly within a radius of one-quarter mile surrounding proposed transit stations, walking will become a dominant method of personal transportation.

Policy T-DT 16

Promote non-automotive circulation between Downtown activity and employment centers through enhanced transit service including circulators, which may be bus or streetcar. (1, 3, 4, 5, 6)

Policy T-DT 17

Integrate recreation, retail, and service uses within public transportation facilities, including the Moore Square transit station and proposed Multi-Modal Transportation Center. (1, 4, 6)

Policy T-DT 18

Promote car and bicycle sharing services within the Downtown. (1, 5)

Policy T-DT 19

Minimize and mitigate the impacts of fixed-rail transit on Downtown neighborhoods. (1, 5, 6)

Policy T-DT 20

Preserve existing rail rights-of-way for future expansion for freight and passenger rail service in the Downtown. (1, 3, 4)

Policy T-DT 21

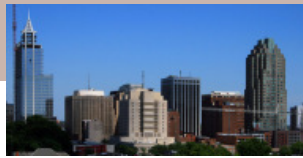
Future land uses should reflect the increasing use of and opportunities for mass transit over time. (4, 5)

Action T-DT 11

Implement a Downtown circulator service.

Action T-DT 12

Conduct a study that will determine the appropriate course of action for fixed-rail transportation service in and around Downtown, including the identification of future streetcar



corridors. Determine how to connect the system to the new Multi-modal Transportation Center.

Action T-DT 13

Explore contracting with an established car sharing company to replace a portion of the City's existing vehicular fleet, as a way of establishing a guaranteed market for car sharing in Downtown.

Action T-DT 14

Develop regulatory mechanisms necessary to accommodate new privately-funded transportation modes and services.

Action T-DT 15

Redesign and upgrade the Moore Square transit station to provide enhanced capacity, better passenger amenities and improved aesthetics. Explore the development of the air rights over the station and its access points.

Action T-DT 16

Explore measures to mitigate negative impacts such as noise and vibration that arise from fixed-rail transit service Downtown.

M.3.5 Design and Management of Vehicle Parking and Access

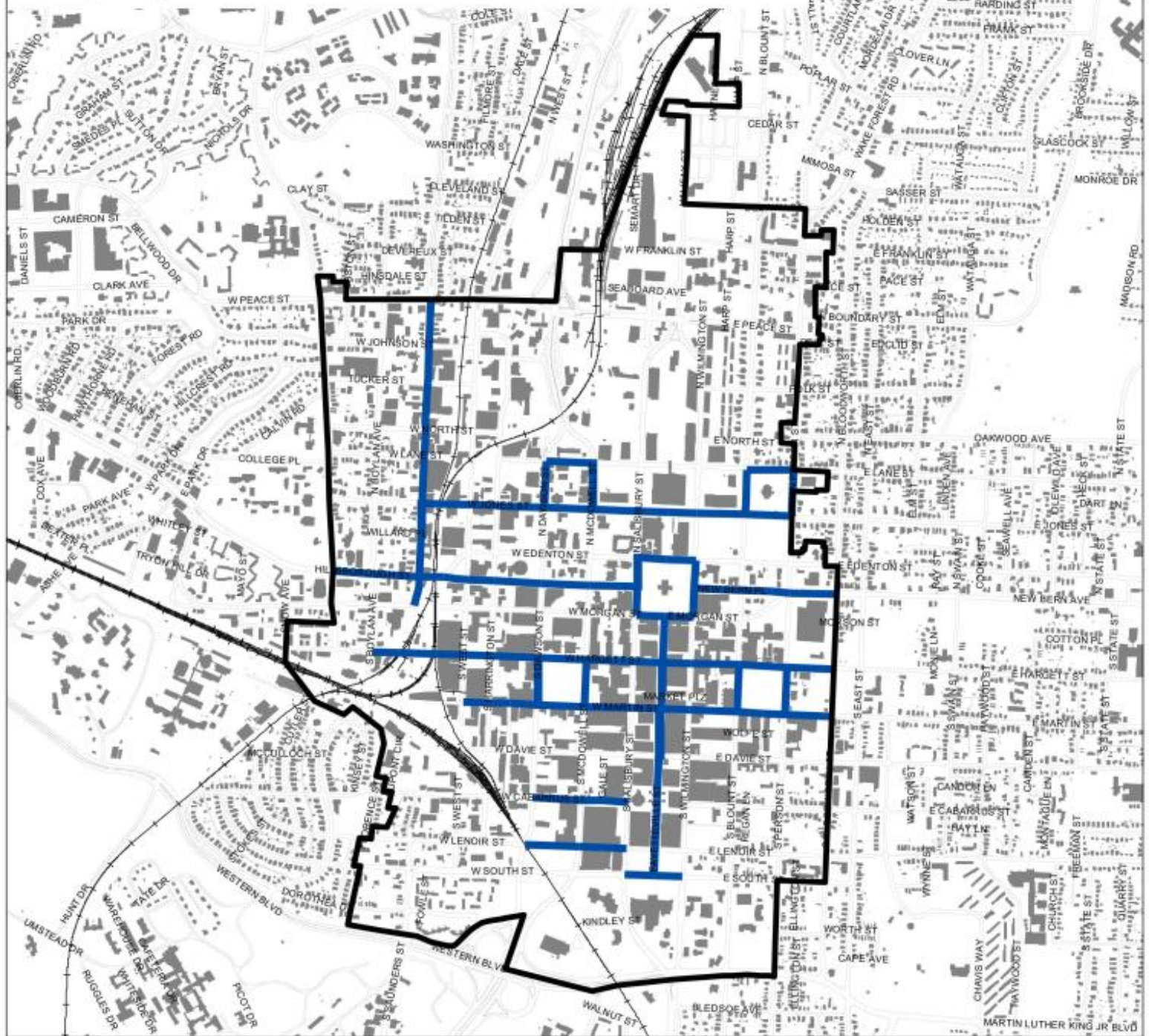
In Downtown Raleigh, where parking development costs are high and land for parking is scarce, parking design and management strategies must be oriented to maximizing the efficient use of both public and private parking supply. Downtown Raleigh at present is primarily accessed by people in automobiles. Yet, Downtown has abundant documented capacity in its existing parking facilities even though the overall ratio of parking spaces to development is about half of what would typically be found in suburban development. In the future, it is anticipated that public transportation and other modes will make up a larger share of the travel market into and out of Downtown. As the percentage of commuters arriving to Downtown in cars decreases, the ratio of spaces to the built environment should decrease as well. Parking policies and development strategies will need to be flexible to make better use of the existing, underutilized parking supply and to increase development intensity. Such strategies will therefore emphasize managed public facilities and shared parking wherever feasible.

Most of Downtown's off-street supply will continue to be provided in parking decks. Because decks are major pieces of infrastructure and are not active uses, they can have significant negative urban design impacts if not properly mitigated. Strategies such as retail bases, screening, and liner buildings can mitigate or eliminate these impacts.

On-street parking is an important part of the total parking supply. On-street spaces should be managed such that they are available for their highest-use: short-term parking for visitors, errand-runners and shoppers. Free and unregulated curb parking ensures high occupancy with little turnover, leading to a widespread perception of inadequate parking even as hundreds of off-street spaces go unused. Pricing and management strategies can free up the on-street supply.



Parking Garage Constraints



MAP DT-4

Parking Garage Constraints

- Parking Garage Constraints
- Downtown Raleigh Study Area Boundary

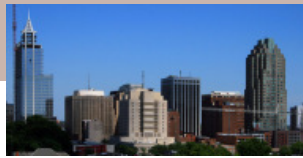
Buildings

Railroads

Streets

1 in = 500 yards

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Policy T-DT 22

Maximize the provision of on-street parking within Downtown by providing for curb parking wherever and whenever possible and practical. (1, 6)

Policy T-DT 27

Support and encourage Transportation Demand Management strategies, including parking cash-out, as a part of the development agreement for any public-private partnered parking deck. (1, 5, 6)

Policy T-DT 23

Use pricing and management strategies to balance on- and off-street parking demand. (1, 6)

Policy T-DT 28

Promote economic development through partnerships between private developers and the City of Raleigh's parking program. (1, 3, 6)

Policy T-DT 24

Ensure that off-street parking regulations do not require more off-street parking than needed by periodically reevaluating the requirements against observed demand. (4, 6)

Policy T-DT 29

Expand the role of the municipally administered parking enterprise in supporting and promoting economic development, including using parking arrangements as an incentive to attract development. (1, 4, 6)

Policy T-DT 25

Complementary building materials should be used for structured parking garages of all new developments not located on a Pedestrian Priority streets (see Map DT-3). (6)

Policy T-DT 30

Operate the City's parking program as a self-sustaining enterprise fund, with any revenues above capital, operating costs, and maintenance reserves made available for investments and activities which further its mission.⁽¹⁾ (1, 3, 6)

Policy T-DT 26

To minimize pedestrian and vehicle conflicts, parking garage entrances should not be located on Pedestrian Priority Streets (see Map DT-3). (4, 6)

1 This may require a change in the State statute authorizing municipal parking meter programs.

Policy T-DT 31

Expand the parking program with new facilities when and if needed, utilizing public-private partnerships where possible. Consult the parking model developed as part of the 2008 Downtown Parking Master Plan to determine the need for new facilities. (1, 6)

proposed buildings, but without active uses above the ground level. Parking garages should not be visibly distinct from the buildings they serve. To achieve this, parking garages should be screened by using the same materials, fenestration, and other design elements of the buildings. In some cases, the internal venting of garages will be necessary. (6)

Policy T-DT 32

Strongly discourage the delivery of goods and services requiring on-street loading during the peak a.m. and p.m. travel times. (4, 6)

Policy T-DT 36

For all other streets not designated on Map DT-4 but within Downtown, parking garages should be architecturally screened so that stored vehicles are not visible from the adjacent right-of-way. (6)

Policy T-DT 33

When feasible, encourage underground or entirely below-grade parking as the preferred solution for the provision of parking Downtown. (1, 4, 6)

Policy T-DT 37

The widths of all curb cuts at parking deck entrances should be minimized, and design techniques such as lane splits should be utilized within the deck to encourage consolidated single exit or entrance lanes at the street side and / or columns between lanes to reduce the perceived size of the openings while maintaining adequate ingress and egress capacity to provide efficient operations and meeting air quality conformity. (6)

Policy T-DT 34

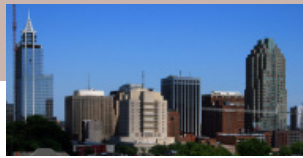
Where underground or below-grade parking is not feasible, parking garages should be "wrapped" with active uses along the entire vertical frontage of buildings along the public right-of-way and discourage vehicle entrances on the streets identified on Map DT-4. (1, 4, 6)

Policy T-DT 38

Ground floor uses should be provided in all parking garages on all Pedestrian Priority and active ground floor uses in all parking garages on Retail Streets (see M.5.2). (1, 4, 6)

Policy T-DT 35

Where underground or wrapped parking is not feasible on the streets identified on Map DT-4, parking garages should be screened using materials consistent with adjacent and/or



Policy T-DT 39

Encourage the preservation and protection of existing internal alleyways in Downtown. (6)

Action T-DT 17

Implement the recommendations of the 2008 Downtown Parking Master Plan.

Action T-DT 18

Undertake a comprehensive inventory and study of curb parking in Downtown, and identify locations and hours where additional curb parking can be provided. Update the inventory whenever changes to curb parking locations and regulations are made.

Action T-DT 19

Adopt a set of criteria for evaluating changes to the on-street parking regulations such as requests for no-parking and loading zones.

Action T-DT 20

Revise the zoning ordinance to provide a "fee-in-lieu" option for downtown whereby developers can buy out of their minimum parking requirements by contributing towards the provision of City-provided parking.

Action T-DT 21

During the update of the City's development regulations, review the sufficiency of regulations in the Zoning Code for off-street loading and service areas Downtown.

Action T-DT 22

Study the impacts of placing future parking garages along "workhorse" streets such as Wilmington, Blount, and Salisbury Streets.

Action T-DT 23

Undertake a study to determine the feasibility, location, design, and funding / dedication of an expanded public alleyway system in Downtown..

M.4 Economic Development

A strong and diversified Downtown economy is critical to the prosperity of the residents of Raleigh and the region. Downtown's unique character and geography – including close access to universities, its status as the hub of government, and a compact, pedestrian-oriented urban character have provided Downtown with a competitive economics advantages. Both now and in the future, Downtown's ability to attract a talented and diverse workforce, foster ideas and innovation, and make strategic infrastructure investments will be key components to its continued economic growth and success.

The Downtown Economic Development sub-element of the Comprehensive Plan provides policy guidance and action items for the provision of economic

development activities provided by the City or its partners. The critical economic development issues facing Downtown Raleigh that are addressed in this sub-element include:

- Improving the foundation for economic development
- Activating streets through the provision of retail and active uses
- Bolstering the economic climate through the recruitment and retention of businesses
- Expanding Hospitality and Tourism

M.4.1 Laying the Foundation for Economic Development

As redevelopment occurs across Downtown, the increasing workforce and residential density will result in increased demand on existing infrastructure. Key investments in infrastructure, facilities, and open space have the ability to catalyze new private development that will help grow Downtown as a regional employment center, vibrant urban neighborhood, and entertainment destination.

Policy ED-DT 1

Leverage public investments through public-private partnerships. (1, 3, 6)

Policy ED-DT 2

Encourage the scale and intensity of development needed to strengthen Downtown's capacity to support a vibrant retail environment. (1, 3, 4, 6)

Policy ED-DT 3

Ensure a pipeline of suitable development sites through regulatory measures, infrastructure investments, and assistance with site assembly. (1, 3, 6)

Action ED-DT 1

Study and determine the locations and existing capacity of the transportation, water, sewer, and stormwater networks to ensure their capability of accommodating forecasted demand.

Action ED-DT 2

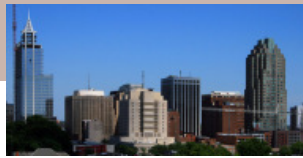
Develop a strategic plan update for Downtown that identifies potential catalytic public investments and align these with the Capital Improvement Program.

Action ED-DT 3

Conduct a study on the costs and benefits to using Tax Increment Financing to help fund the cost of infrastructure needed to support development in Downtown.

Action ED-DT 4

Create and maintain a database of available and underutilized Downtown sites suitable for development and



redevelopment. Create a marketing strategy to make these sites attractive development opportunities.

M.4.2 Expanding Retail for Active Streets

No matter how tall their skylines, downtowns succeed or fail at the street level—compare Los Angeles, with towering skyscrapers but empty sidewalks, largely perceived as a failure; with Alexandria, VA, which has no tall buildings but is a lively and active destination. The convenience and vibrancy offered by successful street-level retailing is a downtown’s key competitive advantage, and the selling point that justifies downtown rents and prices. The land use aspect of creating retail space is included here within the context of economic development. The policies below address how to promote the use of that space by businesses that will add to the vitality of the downtown experience.

Space designed and constructed for active-use at the ground-level plays a very important role in shaping a pedestrian-oriented built environment and in creating value for the upper floor uses. As the retail development market matures, the City needs to proactively guide the placement of active-uses on Downtown’s most important streets to promote a lively downtown destination built on a strong retail core. Retail streets prosper when complementary uses are in close proximity. By guiding where retail uses are located, Raleigh will grow its economic capacity, strengthen existing public spaces, and enliven the downtown experience by clustering these active uses between and surrounding activity generators.



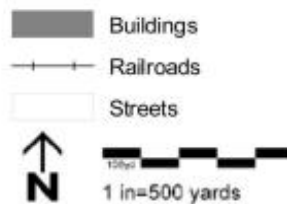
Ground Floor Retail Streets



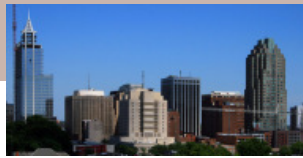
MAP DT-5

Ground Floor Retail Streets

- Primary Retail Street
- Secondary Retail Streets
- Existing Retail Frontage
- Downtown Raleigh Study Area Boundary



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Policy ED-DT 4

New development should dedicate at least 60 percent of its linear frontage along the public right-of-way of Primary Retail Streets as identified on Map DT-5 for ground-floor space designed and constructed to accommodate one or more retail uses including consumer-goods shops, dining and eating establishments, convenience goods, museums, galleries, arts and entertainment uses, and hotel lobbies. (1, 6)

Policy ED-DT 5

New development should dedicate at least 50 percent of its linear frontage along the public right-of-way of Secondary Retail Streets as identified on Map DT-5 for ground-floor space designed and constructed for the uses encouraged on primary streets or service retail and professional services including but not limited to: fitness centers, dry cleaners, shoe repair, and medical offices. (1, 6)

Policy ED-DT 6

All new development within the Downtown District but not on either a Primary or Secondary Retail Street should integrate architectural elements that connect to the public right-of-way. Examples of such architectural elements include but are not limited to: inclusion of windows at the sidewalk level, multiple building entrances adjacent to public right of way, pedestrian scale building materials with a high level of detail, lighting along the sidewalks, and awnings. (1, 6)

Policy ED-DT 7

When leasing city-owned retail spaces, seek to fill identified gaps in the marketplace rather than focusing solely on achieving the highest rent. (1, 6)

Policy ED-DT 8

Where feasible, add retail space to existing City facilities including offices and parking garages. (1, 6)

Policy ED-DT 9

Prioritize retail streets for two-way traffic and curb parking on both sides of the street. (1, 6)

Policy ED-DT 10

Encourage retail signage downtown which is eclectic, lively, and pedestrian-oriented. (1, 6)

Policy ED-DT 11

Ensure that on- and off-street parking policies support retail uses Downtown. (1, 4, 6)

Action ED-DT 5

Explore the creation of a loan pool, grant provisions, or revolving fund to provide gap financing to entrepreneurs interested in starting viable retail businesses Downtown.

Action ED-DT 6

Incentivize improvements to building and storefront facades.

Action ED-DT 7

Partner in implementing the Downtown Raleigh Alliance retail study and strategy.

Action ED-DT 8

As part of the update to the City's development regulations, amend the Zoning Code to address the Comp Plan's recommendations to expand Downtown retail uses and permit low-impact retail uses in structures originally intended for residential use within the neighborhoods surrounding Downtown.

Action ED-DT 9

Assist the Downtown Raleigh Alliance in creating and maintaining an inventory of available Downtown retail spaces.

M.4.3 Business Recruitment and Retention

As a regional employment and cultural center that has more than 200 acres of underdeveloped land, the Downtown presents significant opportunities to house new space constructed to accommodate commercial tenants. For Downtown to prosper and mature into a vibrant, mixed-use center, the retention and expansion of the commercial base will require concerted, coordinated efforts. Efforts to grow Downtown business opportunities should target companies large and small, from Fortune 500 companies to independently-owned retailers. A coordinated business recruitment and retention effort will combine the efforts of multiple agencies currently operating with limited municipal oversight. The lack in coordination results in significant gaps in recruitment and retention efforts.

Policy ED-DT 12

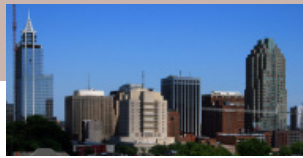
Promote Downtown as a priority site for future headquarters and large-scale corporate relocations. (1, 3, 4, 6)

Policy ED-DT 13

Promote downtown as part of a coordinated business recruitment / retention program that effectively engages economic development agencies. (1, 3, 6)

Policy ED-DT 14

Target incentives, including grants, loans, and zoning bonuses, to jump start lagging business sectors that have been identified as important to Downtown's success. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)



Policy ED-DT 15

Encourage the administrative headquarters for all departments of the State of North Carolina to be located within Downtown. (1, 6)

Action ED-DT 10

Conduct an economic development study to identify the representation of business sectors essential to Downtown's economic success.

Action ED-DT 11

Identify and publicize programs that will provide Downtown businesses with access to operating and capital assistance programs.

Action ED-DT 12

Coordinate and consolidate, as needed, the business recruitment and retention initiatives for Downtown.

M.4.4 Arts, Culture, Entertainment and Hospitality

With recent investments in the new Convention Center, Fayetteville Street, the Contemporary Art Museum, Marbles Museum, and the Green Square Project, Downtown is emerging as a regional and state-wide destination. More than 2.4 million visitors came to Downtown in 2007, a figure that is expected to grow considerably in the coming years following the completion of projects currently under construction.

Downtown's many cultural and entertainment resources offer valuable opportunities to enhance tourism and expand not only the downtown economy, but the City's economy as a whole. A key benefit of having regional and super-regional destinations is the opportunity to capture the ancillary retail, food and drink spending of out-of-town visitors. However, this spending potential cannot be fully captured if there are no restaurants and shops conveniently located near the destination. Downtown, with its growing number of shopping and dining options and walkable streets, is uniquely positioned to capture the ancillary spending of tourists, visitors, and arts patrons.

Policy ED-DT 16

Downtown should be the priority location for major cultural, arts, entertainment, government, and educational institutions. (3, 6)

Policy ED-DT 17

Encourage the development of additional tourist attractions, activity generators, and events Downtown. (1, 3, 4, 6)

Policy ED-DT 18

Promote Downtown as a regional destination for arts, shopping, and entertainment. (1, 6)

Policy ED-DT 19

Promote the historic assets of Downtown. (1, 6)

Policy ED-DT 20

Support and strengthen the Downtown creative and heritage business communities. (1, 6)

Policy ED-DT 21

Provide for public restrooms at strategic locations in Downtown, such as public facilities and major transportation centers. (3, 4)

Policy ED-DT 22

Support and facilitate live performances and programming in Downtown's public spaces. (1, 6)

Action ED-DT 13

Develop historic tours, trails, and signage designed to promote the historic assets of downtown.

Action ED-DT 14

Explore opportunities to attract a professional sports facility and franchise Downtown, based on the findings of a financial and economic impact study. (1, 4, 6)

Action ED-DT 15

Coordinate efforts between the appropriate City departments and the State to determine the viability of permanent food / drink concessions within the Downtown squares.

Action ED-DT 16

Coordinate efforts between the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission, the Raleigh City Museum, the NC History Museum, and other entities to maximize the potential for Downtown's historic assets to drive tourism.

Action ED-DT 17

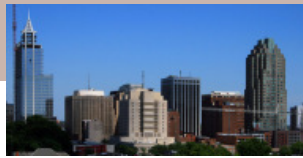
Develop a program for supporting the creative and heritage business communities.

Action ED-DT 18

Create a City-sponsored institution that provides support, space, training, education, and opportunities for emerging creative talent in the Downtown.

Action ED-DT 19

Work with economic development agencies such as the Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce and the



Downtown Raleigh Alliance to recruit new hospitality-sector uses to Downtown.

M.5 Housing

To be an asset for the entire City, Downtown needs a strong and diverse residential base to complement its employment and visitation sectors. And as the City's population continues to grow, Downtown should be able to provide its share of housing options for the growing population.

It is important for Downtown to accommodate new and existing residents. Across the nation, people are choosing to locate to more urban environments that offer amenities within a close distance. Downtown Raleigh is the City's primary candidate for this type of environment.

Yet, Downtown should not be a place for a narrow set of demographics or housing types. For it to be a strong residential center, Downtown needs to have diversity in both housing choices and residents. Market-rate, workforce, mixed-income, and affordable housing are crucial elements for a successful, diverse residential environment.

The challenges mentioned above can best be addressed by focusing this sub-element on the following issues:

- Accommodating a sizable share of the City's growing population
- Creating a larger supply of workforce and affordable housing



M.5.1 Supporting a Growing Population

Downtown needs to be able to support a desired increase in population. Downtown provides the optimal location for the highest residential densities in the City. It also presents unique opportunities to reuse existing buildings that were originally built for non-residential uses, but could be converted for residential use.

Policy H-DT 1

Encourage high density residential development within Downtown, consistent with the target of accommodating another 25,000 residents Downtown by 2030. (1, 2, 3, 6)

Policy H-DT 2

Encourage the adaptive reuse of existing buildings for housing. (2, 3, 6)

Policy H-DT 3

During the update of the City's development regulations, encourage residential infill in the neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown. (2, 3, 6)

Action H-DT 3

Work with the Downtown Raleigh Alliance to promote Downtown as a residential neighborhood.

Policy H-DT 4

Preserve and expand upon the existing supply of affordable housing in and near Downtown. (2, 3, 4, 6)

Action H-DT 4

Develop a residential strategy in partnership with the Parks and Recreation and Community Development departments for City-owned properties located along the greenway trails.

Policy H-DT 5

Promote residential development opportunities on properties located along greenways trails in or near Downtown. Encourage strong links between such developments and the greenway system (2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

M.5.2 Encouraging Housing Choices

Like the City as a whole, Downtown should reflect the racial, age, and income diversity of its population and provide housing choices that satisfy all types of choices and users. As the price of land continues to rise and the supply of available land diminishes, policies and actions should be considered to help incorporate more affordable housing into the stock of new development within Downtown.

Action H-DT 1

During the update to the City's development regulations, revise the Zoning Code to reflect the future land use plan for Downtown, including mixed-use and higher-density residential.

Policy H-DT 6

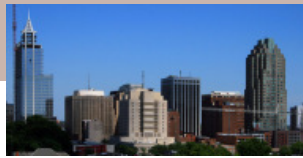
Encourage mixed-income housing Downtown. (1, 2, 3, 6)

Action H-DT 2

During the update to the City's development regulations, review and reduce regulatory impediments that inhibit the reuse of older buildings for housing.

Policy H-DT 7

Support the development of Downtown housing units for the elderly and those with special needs. (1, 2, 3, 6)



Policy H-DT 8

Promote policies and incentives that will help increase affordable housing within Downtown. (1, 2, 6)

Action H-DT 5

Develop and implement financial and development tools and regulations (i.e. increased density bonuses) that will incentivize the inclusion of affordable housing in and around Downtown.

Additional information regarding affordable housing on publicly-owned sites can be found in E.2.2 'Affordable and Workforce Housing' in Element E: 'Housing'.

M.6 Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Downtown has a need for parks and open spaces that provide recreational opportunities for residents, workers, and visitors.

Downtown is a planned capital with a system of five park-like squares laid out as part of its original development pattern. This provides recreational opportunities for residents and visitors that are unique to Downtown Raleigh, yet two of these squares have been re-appropriated for state government uses. Working to take advantage of the five-square plan for its original and expanded purposes is a priority.

The supply, quality, and usability of parks and recreational spaces within Downtown needs to be increased. There is also a need to ensure that new development provides its fair share of open space and existing parks and recreational facilities to better serve the growing population. Additionally, a focus should be placed on extending the City's greenway

system within Downtown while incorporating greenway treatments that are unique to its urban environment.

In order to address these concerns, the Downtown sub-element for Parks, recreation, and open space concentrates on the following issues:

- Maintaining and improving a healthy open space to resident ratio
- Expanding an insufficient Downtown parks and recreational presence

M.6.1 Open Space in New Development

As the population continues to grow and new development comes on-line, additional open space will be required to maintain a healthy ratio of open space to population.

Policy PR-DT 1

New developments Downtown should provide quality, usable, publicly accessible, privately-developed open space to supplement and complement public parks. (1, 2, 6)

Policy PR-DT 2

Encourage the use of roof gardens, green roofs and other environmentally sustainable options for use as private open space in new Downtown developments. (4, 5, 6)

Action PR-DT 1

During the update to the City's development regulations, identify ways to provide visible open space within new residential, non-residential, and mixed-use developments. Include methods to incentivize the provision of

publicly-accessible open space, such as a restructuring of the density bonus system.

Action PR-DT 2

Create a fund supported by development fees and fee-in-lieu of open space and public art provisions to bank open space and pay for public realm amenities in Downtown.

M.6.2 Parks and Recreational Facilities

As the population of Downtown increases, the amount of open space and recreational facilities must keep pace. The public sector has the opportunity to create new parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces and refurbish existing facilities for use by residents, workers, and visitors in Downtown.

Policy PR-DT 3

Increase the public parkland, recreation, and open spaces for Downtown residents, workers, and visitors. Seek non-traditional means for providing these amenities. (3, 6)

Policy PR-DT 4

Provide child-friendly downtown parks and open spaces. (3, 6)

Policy PR-DT 5

Encourage the creation of a regional open space and recreational amenities on the Dorothea Dix property. Provide for green connectivity between Dorothea Dix and Downtown. (3, 6)

Policy PR-DT 6

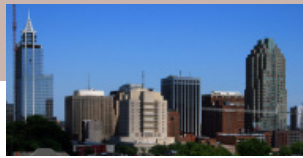
Encourage partnership opportunities that will result in upgraded parks in and around Downtown to satisfy a growing population. (3, 6)

Action PR-DT 3

Fund and develop a Downtown-specific Parks and Recreation Plan that identifies needs and opportunities to develop Downtown parks, open spaces, and recreational activities. The plan should include a study of current and future open space needs and a strategy for open space acquisition.

Action PR-DT 4

Expand the public purposes of the Downtown Business Improvement District to include contributions towards Downtown public space improvements.



Action PR-DT 5

Investigate adapting Halifax Mall into a recreational resource. Encourage the State Government to allow recreational uses at appropriate times.

Action PR-DT 6

Revitalize Chavis Park and strengthen its connection to Downtown.

Action PR-DT 7

Coordinate with colleges in Downtown for the mutual use and development of shared athletic fields and facilities.

Action PR-DT 8

Explore the addition and creation of non-traditional or temporary recreational activities in appropriate Downtown locations, including but not limited to climbing walls, video arcades, beer gardens, “beaches”, interactive public art, and skate parks.

M.7 Community Facilities and Services

Downtown’s vitality depends on many attributes of good planning, among them: the siting, acquisition, co-location, programming, design, maintenance, and construction of high-performance, sustainable community facilities. This sub-element

focuses on the policies and actions that will drive future decisions related to community facilities and services development in Downtown.

Raleigh’s capacity to accommodate growth, build economic competitiveness, and attract residents, businesses, and visitors in the future involves aligning the planning process, collaborating among municipal departments and with public and private partners, effectively strategizing land use and facilities siting, and the public sector’s adherence to publicly-approved policies, including but not limited to urban design guidelines. In addition to those already outlined in the city-wide Community Services and Facilities element, the following downtown-specific policies and actions create conditions for downtown’s continuing success.

Policy CF-DT 1

Promote the use of design competitions for all major new Downtown public facilities. (3, 6)

Policy CF-DT 2

Consolidate Downtown municipal services on the block bounded by Hargett, McDowell, Dawson, and Morgan Streets. (3)

Policy CF-DT 3

Include space designed and constructed to accommodate ground-floor active-uses in new community facilities built Downtown. (3, 6)

Action CF-DT 1

Collaborate with Wake County to locate and construct a Downtown library.

Action CF-DT 2

Update the Space Needs Plan to require ground floor active uses in new City-owned buildings Downtown.

M.8 Urban Design

The space between buildings is important; it is where and how most users experience Downtown. This affords the opportunity to experience the details of a space: the interaction of planes, the materials and details of spaces, the environment formed by the interaction of nature and the manmade. Because experiencing places as a pedestrian is more common Downtown and because the types of buildings and structure of spaces Downtown is unique within Raleigh, urban design plays an important role in determining the shape and experience of the City. Considerable attention should be paid to:

- The scale, form and placement of buildings
- The ground level experience
- Public spaces
- Streets and sidewalks
- Vistas and gateways
- Wayfinding
- Design excellence and district identity

M.8.1 The Scale, Form and Placement of Buildings

Building height and form contribute to the sense of order and image of Downtown. In addition to establishing the organizational hierarchy of Downtown, the Christmas plan utilized the topography of the land to site the Capitol and four axial streets. Fayetteville Street is sited along the ridgeline, while the Capitol is located at the highest elevation within Downtown. To reinforce and build upon that design, tall, high intensity uses are encouraged in areas that will accentuate the Christmas Plan, such as surrounding the Squares or the radial boulevards. All buildings should respond to and respect the character of the built environment, including the scaling of the ground

floor, the form of the building, and the relationship between buildings. In some cases, the incorporation of similar architectural treatments will help to blend new buildings with the historic building stock. Policies and Actions within this sub-element intend to foster a harmonious relationship between buildings, as well as an organized and predictable urban form for Downtown.

Policy UD-DT 1

Reinforce the William Christmas Plan by encouraging prominent buildings and uses to be developed around axial streets and the squares. (1, 3, 4, 6)

Policy UD-DT 2

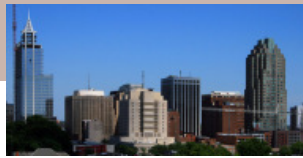
New parking structures should be located and designed so as to minimize adverse effects on surrounding districts, views, and pedestrian experience. (4, 6)

Policy UD-DT 3

New buildings should respond to the existing built character by using similar setbacks and stepbacks to provide a continuous cornice line and consistent street-level pedestrian experience. (6)

Policy UD-DT 4

Development and building types with an exclusive automobile orientation, such as drive-throughs, should not be developed in Downtown or in pedestrian-oriented business districts. (4, 6)



Policy UD-DT 5

Along the principal north-south vehicular street pair, Dawson and McDowell Streets, buildings should be set back to provide an approximately 20' wide pedestrian area between the street curb line and the building face. (6)

especially towers, on adjacent public and private property related to the height/width ratio of streets, wind and shadow, privacy, setbacks, stepbacks and adequate spacing of towers.

Policy UD-DT 6

The placement of buildings along the right-of-way should create a continuous streetwall that defines and accentuates the streets and squares. (6)

Action UD-DT 3

Amend the Zoning Code to prohibit drive-throughs and other auto-centric development forms and uses in Downtown and pedestrian-oriented business districts.

Policy UD-DT 7

The main entrance of new buildings shall front onto a public street. Where buildings abut multiple streets and one of which is an axial street, the main entrance of the building shall front onto the axial street. (6)

M.8.2 The Ground Level Experience

The ground floor of buildings and the quality of the public realm play a significant role in shaping the success of Downtown. Well designed urban buildings respect the pedestrian and enliven the ground-level experience through the use of architectural treatments such as multiple entrances, the use of transparent materials, pedestrian-scaled lighting, awnings, as well as the type of use that occurs on the ground floor. Service entrances, loading bays, and parking garage entrances often result in conflicts between the pedestrian and vehicles and should be avoided whenever feasible.

Action UD-DT 1

During the update of the City's development regulations, review and revise the regulations regarding the placement and design of parking structures.

Policy UD-DT 8

The ground level of every building should engage the pedestrian with multiple entrances, large transparent windows at the pedestrian level, creative signage, and a high level of articulation and pedestrian scale building materials on all elevations. Also, the ground level of every building should provide pedestrian amenities such as adequate lighting levels and protection from the elements. This

Action UD-DT 2

During the update of the City's development regulations, consider ways to address the impacts of new buildings,

can be accomplished through the use of façade mounted lighting elements, canopies and awnings, and arcades. (6)

Policy UD-DT 9

Service entrances and functions should be located internal to the building- in alleys or in parking decks. Their presence on the public right of way should be minimized. (4, 6)

Policy UD-DT 10

Signage should be human scale and serve both pedestrians and automobiles. (6)

M.8.3 Public Spaces: Parks, Plazas and Squares

According the William Christmas Plan of 1792, Downtown was laid out with five squares to provide green spaces for residents. Over the years, some of these squares were developed for governmental use by the State of North Carolina, decreasing the amount of open space available for residents, workers, and visitors. Opportunities exist for reincorporating one of the Squares developed by the State and to further expand upon the William Christmas Plan by incorporating new open space squares further out from the Downtown core.

Policy UD-DT 11

All public spaces shall be designed to support a variety of users and activities. Flexibility shall be a key design principle. (3, 5, 6)

Policy UD-DT 12

Include public and private facilities such as: museums, underground parking, centers, markets, restaurants, services, retail pavilions, and vending opportunities in new and existing public spaces, where appropriate. (3, 5, 6)

Policy UD-DT 13

Pursue opportunities to expand upon the William Christmas Plan by adding new squares and open spaces. (6)

Policy UD-DT 14

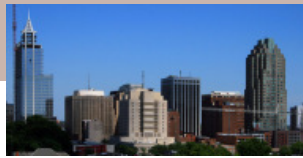
Downtown plazas, parks and squares should be ringed by activity. Require ground floor active use surrounding publicly accessible open spaces and encourage upper level balconies, terraces, and gathering spaces. (1, 6)

Policy UD-DT 15

As financially feasible, construct underground parking facilities beneath new squares as part of an expanded square plan.

Action UD-DT 4

Schedule, design, plan, and budget for improvements to Nash and Moore Square that will enhance each square as a distinct destination.



Action UD-DT 5

Work with the State of North Carolina to reclaim Caswell Square in accordance with State Government Complex Master Plan.

Action UD-DT 6

Develop an agreement with the State of North Carolina to transfer the control of Moore and Nash Squares back to the City.

Action UD-DT 7

Conduct a study and develop a policy related to the allowed degree of shade from the built environment on major public spaces such as Moore and Nash Squares.

to continue as employment, residential, and visitation figures increase and dependency upon automobiles diminishes though the provision of alternate means of travel. Future roadway design should contemplate growth in alternate means of travel, including but not limited to bicycles and streetcars. Eventually, everyone experiences Downtown as pedestrian. This experience can be improved through the design of comfortable pedestrian spaces outfitted with opportunities for commerce, adequate public amenities, complementary plantings, and places to unwind.

Policy UD-DT 16

The public realm of streets and sidewalks shall be designed and maintained to balance the needs and safety of pedestrians and vehicles. Complete streets shall be the governing principle of all design decisions. (4, 6)

Policy UD-DT 17

To add vitality to Downtown streets, the private uses of public sidewalks for cafes, vending, performance and sales is encouraged (see Private Use of Public Space Handbook). (6)

Policy UD-DT 18

Parking decks and service bays should be designed with pedestrian safety in mind. At no time should service vehicles be allowed to block the sidewalk, and any vehicular entrances should be designed to provide pedestrian visibility. (4, 6)

M.8.4 Streets and Sidewalks

A prominent feature of the William Christmas plan was the inclusion of a street grid to facilitate the movement of people in, out, and around the city. That plan called for right-of-way widths of 99 feet for the four axial streets, and a width of 66 feet for the balance of public rights-of-way. Today, the majority of the rights-of-way in Downtown are utilized by some combination of streets and sidewalks; while some streets, such as Fayetteville Street, dedicate nearly half of the right-of-way to the pedestrian realm, others devote considerably less. The array of sidewalk to roadway proportions in Downtown underscores decades of change in the way Americans navigate through cities. Most recently, streetscape projects in Downtown have sought to encourage pedestrian traffic to a higher degree than in decades past. This trend is expected

Policy UD-DT 19

When feasible, above-ground utility structures should be buried, including but not limited to: electrical boxes, signal boxes, meter boxes, etc. in underground vaults to preserve the movement of pedestrians and the aesthetic quality of the public realm. Where not feasible, screen with artwork or plants. (3, 6)

Policy UD-DT 20

The intersections of Hillsborough and New Bern with Dawson - McDowell and Person - Blount Streets respectively, should receive special treatment to emphasize the intersection of axis streets (ceremonial corridors) with major traffic arteries. (6)

Action UD-DT 8

Assess the feasibility of reopening the 100 and 200 blocks of New Bern Avenue as a connected and trafficked public street for pedestrians and vehicles.

Action UD-DT 9

Develop tree planting standards for all Downtown streets.

Action UD-DT 10

Develop a new public realm master plan for Downtown that expands the existing plan's boundaries to correspond with the Downtown District land use designation and addresses:

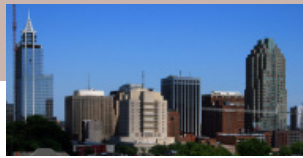
- The undergrounding of utilities
- The inclusion of pedestrian amenities
- Plantings plans for all street levels
- Lighting specifications
- Sidewalk widths
- Presence and dimensions of curb cuts
- Corner treatments, including bulbouts and building setbacks
- Maintenance standards
- Other elements as determined in scoping of study

M.8.5 Vistas and Gateways

There are several opportunities to view all or parts of Downtown from a distance. Generally, these views are of the upper portions of buildings, thus making the skyline and important aspect of Raleigh's image. Distinctive crown features, building placement, the accentuation of architectural features through lighting, and the screening of mechanical equipment all factor in creating a distinctive skyline. In addition to the skyline, other vistas and ceremonial entrance points into Downtown provide an experiential sense of arrival and a highlighted appreciation of significant buildings that contribute to a unique sense of place. The reinforcement and emphasis of these features are essential steps toward creating a cherished civic identity.

Policy UD-DT 21

Preserve and restore the William Christmas Plan. Reopen key streets and vistas such as New Bern Place. (6)



Policy UD-DT 22

Preserve important cultural landmarks, viewsheds, and terminated vistas. (6)

Policy UD-DT 23

The tops of tall buildings should be designed to positively contribute to a skyline that helps define the City's image. (6)

Policy UD-DT 24

Prominent gateways into Downtown shall be enhanced to create a sense of arrival and define the geographic boundaries of Downtown. (6)

Action UD-DT 11

During the update to the City's development regulations, investigate changes to the regulations that address crown features for tall buildings and buildings on prominent sites that have high visibility from key gateways.

Action UD-DT 12

Develop urban design policies and supporting map(s) regarding the appropriate approach to protecting and enhancing key terminated vistas in Downtown.

M.8.6 Wayfinding

As Downtown continues to grow in population, employment, and visitation, a more comprehensive system of visual communication is needed. This system will help guide users to Downtown destinations, transportation facilities, and should utilize existing and developing technologies for its development and maintenance.

Policy UD-DT 25

Promote and maintain a high-quality wayfinding system Downtown, including a consistent and effective system for both public and private parking decks. (1, 3, 4)

Action UD-DT 13

Fund and develop a wayfinding system for Downtown, working with other public agencies and private entities to identify points of interest. Explore the use of new technology solutions that provide information to visitors.

Action UD-DT 14

Design and implement an effective signage system for public parking decks. Encourage new developments containing parking decks to adopt the same system.

M.8.7 Design Excellence and District Identity

Within Downtown, historic districts, public spaces, contemporary developments, plus governmental and institutional campuses results in a patchwork of building and architectural typologies. The

inclusion of unifying architectural elements, particularly for development occurring along the edges of historic districts, will aid in reinforcing the character of Downtown. Through design oversight, new development should be carefully knit into the fabric of its surroundings to enhance connectivity and the continuity of experience. The spaces between buildings, or the public realm, should be designed to accommodate all citizens and be subject to a transparent public process.



The built up urban core and presence of tall buildings Downtown creates microclimates that are unique. These microclimates can present challenges that are not commonly found in other parts of the city. The heat island, wind, and shade impacts of tall buildings need to be controlled to preserve the safety and comfort of the public realm.

Policy UD-DT 26

Promote the uniqueness of districts in Downtown by encouraging the use of unifying elements in all new development. (6)

Policy UD-DT 27

All design decisions governing the public realm shall be evaluated in a public process that balances the needs of users. (3, 6)

Policy UD-DT 28

The design process for all public spaces shall be governed by Universal Design Principles. (6)

Policy UD-DT 29

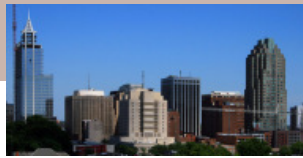
Promote a stronger partnership with the State of North Carolina for reviewing capital projects downtown and updates to the State Master Plan. Encourage the State of NC to update its master plan every five years and advocate for stronger connections between state buildings, the public realm, and the surrounding districts. (6)

Policy UD-DT 30

Evaluate the impact of all new buildings on the shade, wind, and heat on the site and the surrounding public realm. (5, 6)

Policy UD-DT 31

Encourage the incorporation of public art as an integral part of all building plans. (6)



Action UD-DT 15

Update, expand and strengthen the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines that include codified, enforceable regulatory language that also enables design flexibility.

Action UD-DT 19

Develop and codify the requirements for site plan submittals related to the study of the microclimate.

Action UD-DT 16

As part of the Downtown Physical Master Plan, study Downtown districts to identify unifying elements of the built form, and propose methods of preserving and enhancing district identity through new private and public capital projects.

Action UD-DT 17

Fund and develop a shade, wind, and temperature analysis for Downtown that individual projects can augment for site specific studies as part of the site plan review process.

Action UD-DT 18

During the update to the City's development regulations, explore mandating the inclusion of green roofs, reflective roofs, and other efforts to reduce energy use and the heat island effect Downtown.

M.8.8 Design Guidelines

The downtown urban design guidelines constitute a set of principles that guide the review of private development in the downtown district. The general purpose of the guidelines is to create a high quality, engaging and dynamic, pedestrian friendly built environment. They give direction regarding building form, ground floor design, location and screening of parking, service and mechanical functions, and the design and location of signage. Those guidelines marked "FG" serve as the principles for reviewing and approving façade grant applications.

Policy UD-DT 32

The City shall use the design guidelines in Table DT-1 to review development applications, including site plan applications, in the downtown. (6)

Policy UD-DT 33

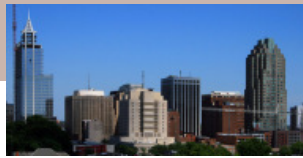
Development projects in the downtown should implement and be consistent with the design guidelines in Table DT-1 to the maximum extent practicable. (6)

Policy UD-DT 34

All successful applications for funding under the City's Facade Grant Program shall be consistent with the highlighted design guidelines in Table DT-1. (6)

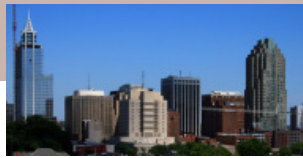
Table DT-1 Downtown Urban Design and Facade Grant Guidelines

#	Guideline	Also applies as a Facade Grant policy
PARKING, LOADING, SERVICE AND MECHANICAL		
1	Fayetteville Street should be free of service elements including loading docks, mechanical equipment and driveways.	
2	Loading or service entrances should be embedded within the block where possible. If embedding the loading dock is not possible, the loading dock should be located to the side or rear of a building. The width should be minimized and doors or gates should shield the loading docks from view. Roll down gates should be decorative if facing the public realm.	
3	Surface and structured parking should be landscaped, emphasizing interior tree canopies in surface lots, formal borders and street trees to reinforce the streetwall.	
4	Mechanical equipment, satellite or microwave dishes, elevator penthouses, and other utilitarian equipment should be screened from view by a structure that complements the design of the building through the use of similar materials, colors, finishes, and architectural details. Views from buildings above should also be considered when designing rooftop mechanical equipment.	FG
GROUND FLOOR, BUILDING BASE AND PEDESTRIAN ZONE		
5	Building entries should be emphasized with architectural features, changes in roofline, different massing, or unique materials.	FG
6	The primary pedestrian building entrances should be located along the store front. For buildings that front on 3 streets, the primary pedestrian entrances should be located on the axial street or the corner if the building is located at an intersection.	FG
7	Building entries should be at grade.	FG
8	The level of architectural detail should be most intense at street level, within view of pedestrians on the sidewalk.	FG
9	The use of solid roll-down security gates is discouraged.	FG
10	Facades should be broken into distinct 20-30 foot modules or bays from side to side to prevent a monolithic edge to the street.	FG
11	Large unarticulated walls are discouraged, and should have a window or functional public access at least every 10 feet.	FG
12	The articulation of the façade should be designed to appear more vertical than horizontal.	FG
13	Entries that provide access to a building's upper floors should be located along a street to promote street life. They should be designed as separate entries, and	FG



#	Guideline	Also applies as a Facade Grant policy
	distinguished from ground level spaces with different architectural details, materials, colors, lighting, signage, and / or paving so that it is clear which entries are public and which are private.	
14	Recessed entries are encouraged. They should be no wider than one-third of the width of the storefront or 20 feet, whichever is less. Recessed entries should be a minimum of 4 feet deep, except where necessary to meet fire code.	FG
15	A minimum of 2/3 of of the first story facade should be windows. Of the total amount of glass on the first floor façade, a minimum of 85% must be transparent. Tinted or reflective glass is discouraged. First story windows should be located a maximum of three (3) feet above the adjacent sidewalk	FG
16	Windows should be used to display products and services and maximize visibility into storefronts. Windows should not be obscured with elements that prevent pedestrians from seeing inside.	FG
17	The first story floor-to-floor height of any new building on Fayetteville Street should be a minimum of twenty (20) feet.	
18	If ceilings must be lowered below the height of ground level windows, provide an interior, full-height, three (3) foot minimum deep space immediately adjacent to the window before the drop in the ceiling.	FG
19	The use of deep awnings and canopies on the first story is recommended to help mitigate wind, reduce glare, and shade ground level spaces.	FG
20	Arcades, colonnades, and galleries are discouraged within the public right of way.	FG
21	Stairs and stoops in the public right-of-way are discouraged along Fayetteville St in order to make entries more accessible.	FG
22	Outdoor ground plane that abuts or is adjacent to the public right-of-way should be paved with terrazzo, concrete pavers, concrete, stone, brick, tile, or another high quality hardscape material. Asphalt and loose paving materials such as gravel are discouraged. The paving design and materials should complement the building ore storefront architecture.	FG
23	In larger courtyard style spaces, visible from the public right of way, use groundcovers, shrubs, and flowers to accent and fill blank areas with interest. Minimize the use of bare mulch and rocks. Areas of bare earth are discouraged.	
BUILDING FORM		
24	Walls of buildings should parallel the orientation of the grid.	FG

#	Guideline	Also applies as a Facade Grant policy
25	Towers or high rise buildings should have three zones: a streetwall or base zone, a tower transition zone and a tower top zone. Cornices should be considered to separate base zone from tower transition zone.	FG
26	Distance between towers on different blocks should be a minimum of 100 feet to ensure access to light and air.	
27	Public art and/or civic monuments should be an integral part of any building plan.	
28	Fences, railings, and walls are discouraged except to screen surface parking lots and unimproved lots, to protect pedestrians from grade changes, and to delineate a private courtyard. Fences are preferred over walls except where designed to hold grade.	
29	Fences and railings should be a minimum of 36 inches and a maximum of 42 inches tall and a minimum of 70 percent open. Solid walls should be a minimum of 18 inches and a maximum of 32 inches tall.	
30	Fences, railings, and walls should be designed to complement the adjacent architecture through the use of similar materials, colors, finishes, and architectural details.	
31	Designs should be contextual to adjacent buildings, including their cornice lines and horizontal banding.	FG
32	Innovative design and unusual lighting of the exterior of the building is important to emphasize the monumentality of government buildings.	
33	Building design should be formal and classically inspired; the principal entrance should be easily identified by building features and landscape elements; additional public entrances should be provided at every street face	FG
34	No structure or building should be developed near the State Capitol Building that detracts from it, nor should the design of the top of the building compete with the dome of the Capitol.	
35	Building materials should be of stone, brick, or similar compatible materials. Building form, articulation and materials should respect and be sympathetic to the major governmental and institutional buildings in the area.	FG
36	Preferred materials (other than glass) include metal, brick, stone, concrete, plaster, and wood trim and discouraged materials include vinyl siding, pressed wood siding, and exterior insulated finishing systems (EIFS).	FG
37	Materials covering original architectural features of historic or architecturally significant buildings are discouraged.	FG



#	Guideline	Also applies as a Facade Grant policy
38	A minimum of 35 percent of each upper story should be windows.	FG
39	Building corners that face an intersection should strive for a distinctive form and high level or articulation.	FG
40	Buildings may step back further at intersections in order to articulate the corners.	FG
41	Buildings downtown and in Pedestrian Business Overlays should have stepbacks and articulated facades to mitigate wind effects and increase light and air. Buildings should step back 10 to 15 feet at the 60-foot point above the ground on a wide street and 15 feet on a narrow street . A wide street is 75 feet in width or more, and a narrow street is less than 75 feet in width.	
42	Flat roof buildings should have decorative parapets with elements such as detailed cornices, corbeling, applied medallions or other similar architectural treatments.	FG
SIGNAGE		
43	Signage should be compatible in scale, style, and composition with the building or storefront design as a whole.	FG
44	Diverse graphic solutions are encouraged to help create the sense of uniqueness and discovery found in an urban, mixed-use environment.	FG
45	All mechanical and electrical mechanisms should be concealed.	FG
46	Signs should not obscure a building's important architectural features, particularly in the case of historic buildings	FG
47	Signs should be constructed with durable materials and quality manufacturing	FG
48	Sign bands above transom and on awnings are preferred signage locations.	FG
49	Only the business name, street address, building name and logo should be on an awning or canopy. The lettering should not exceed 40% of the awning area.	FG
50	Illuminated signs should avoid the colors red, yellow, and green when adjacent to a light controlled vehicular intersection.	FG
51	Allowed sign types: channel letter signs, silhouette signs (reverse channel), individualized letter signs, projecting signs, canopy / marquee signs, logo signs, awning signs, interior window signs.	FG
52	Discouraged sign types: signs constructed of paper, cardboard, styrofoam type materials, formed plastic, injected molded plastic, or other such materials that do not provide a sense of permanence or quality; signs attached with suction cups or tape; signs constructed of luminous vacuum formed plastic letters; signs with smoke emitting components. LED changeable copy signs are prohibited.	FG

