



CONNECTING WILLIAM STREET PLAN Recommended Development Strategies

Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority

January 2013

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To help engage the community and steward the planning process, the DDA Partnerships Committee established a Leadership and Outreach Committee made up of residents, business owners, and downtown employees, as well as DDA, City Council, and Planning Commission representatives. The Leadership and Outreach Committee volunteered many dozens of hours and worked directly with DDA staff and project consultants to help shape the planning process, gather input, and make final recommendations.

We would like to acknowledge and thank all the members of the Leadership and Outreach Committee, listed below, for their time, energy, and commitment to this project.

CONNECTING WILLIAM STREET LEADERSHIP AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE

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CONSULTANT TEAM

During this planning process, the LOC and DDA were assisted by the following firms.

SmithGroupJJR, an architecture and engineering firm, facilitated Leadership and Outreach Committee meetings and created the cover graphic and the majority of the graphics that appear in this document.

4ward Planning, a land-use economics firm, performed a comprehensive market analysis that informed recommendations.

DDA Board: Newcombe Clark, Russ Collins, Leah Gunn, Robert Guenzel, Roger Hewitt, John Hieftje, Joan Lowenstein, John Mouat, Nader Nassif, Keith Orr, Sandi Smith, and John Splitt

DDA Staff: Susan Pollay, Joseph Morehouse, Amber Miller, Jada Hahlbrock, and Tom McCormack

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions were created in the Connecting William Street process and apply specifically to the planning area and city-owned sites.

Active Uses: An active use includes retail sales, restaurant or bar, personal services, theaters, and entertainment uses.

Cultural Uses: A non-profit cultural use includes theater, museum, performance venue, and gallery uses. Some community center or civic uses may also apply.

Large Floor Plate Office: A large floor plate office is defined as consisting of at least 15,000 square feet of office on a single floor.

Residential Uses: The only allowable residential uses for the City-owned sites included in this plan, are residential developments that consist of one and/or two bedroom units (rental or owner-occupied). The intent for this planning area is to meet the community's goal for increasing the number of downtown residents, with a particular emphasis on increasing the diversity of downtown residents and new housing options.

The following definitions existed in zoning, master plans, or policy prior to the Connecting William Street process and are applicable to the recommendations for the city-owned sites included in this plan.

Open Space, as defined in zoning: "The portion of a lot which is devoted to outdoor recreation space, greenery, and space for household activities. Open space area may include, but shall not be limited to, lawns, landscaping and gardens, wooded areas, sidewalks and walkways, active and passive recreational areas, unenclosed accessory structures used for recreational purposes, permanent or seasonal water surfaces and protected natural areas. It shall not include area covered by parking lots, driveways, refuse facilities, or enclosed accessory structures."

[Ann Arbor, Michigan, Code of Ordinances > Title V - Zoning and Planning > Chapter 55 - Zoning > Article I. - In General – Definition 41]

Open space is defined broadly and does not have to be City-owned.

Active Open Space, as defined in zoning: "Common or shared active open space may include, but shall not be limited to, lawns, sidewalks and pathways, playgrounds, fields (baseball, soccer, etc.), courts (basketball, tennis, etc.), and swimming pools. Private or individual active open space may include, but shall not be limited to, porches, decks, balconies, patios, and accessible portions of roofs. Active open space shall not include woodlands, storm water management basins, wetlands, natural features open space, conflicting land use buffers, vehicular use area interior landscape islands or screening."

[Ann Arbor, Michigan, Code of Ordinances > Title V - Zoning and Planning > Chapter 55 - Zoning > Article I. - In General – Definition 42]

Active open space is defined more specifically than open space, specifically excluding woodlands, storm water management basins, wetlands, natural features open space, conflicting land use buffers, vehicular use area, interior landscape islands or screening and including porches, decks, balconies, patios, and accessible portions of roofs. Active open space may be public or private and is viewed as appropriate for the Midtown character area in downtown Ann Arbor.

DEFINITIONS (continued)

Park, as defined in zoning: All parks, playgrounds, golf courses, cemeteries, swimming pools, ice rinks, and nature areas, whether developed or undeveloped which are owned or otherwise controlled by the City, together with public bodies of water within or adjacent to such lands and buildings and roads, parking areas, and bicycle paths and other facilities serving such property.

[Ann Arbor, Michigan, Code of Ordinances > Title III - Parks and Public Grounds > Chapter 39 - Parks—General Regulations > 3:1.- Definitions.]

Parks are defined specifically as a City-owned property.

Open space, as defined in the Downtown Design Guidelines: “Open spaces can include public and private courtyards, plazas, patios, terraces, alleys, and gardens. Throughout downtown, site features and elements that invite use should be provided. In commercial areas, open spaces should have an urban quality and character that enliven the street and enhance the pedestrian experience. Outside the commercial core and in civic areas, open spaces may be more park-like settings for human activity. Private property open spaces should be sized relative to the intended use and level of anticipated adjacent pedestrian activity.”

[Downtown Ann Arbor Design Guidelines, page 8]

The Downtown Design Guidelines speak to the urban qualities and sidewalk activation needed in a downtown open space.

Downtown Open Space, as discussed in the Parks and Recreation Open Space (PROS) Plan:

The following is not a definition, but reference from the PROS Plan.

“Urban parks and plazas provide open space and pedestrian-oriented amenities in the downtown area where the surrounding population includes high-density residential and commercial districts. These areas are defined by the presence of a significant infrastructure, a greater formality, and furniture to serve a greater density of people at peak times. The plazas are generally the smallest type of park in the system and are designed to integrate with the urban setting. Plazas are characterized by harder materials such as concrete, contained flower beds, and a lack of open grassy areas and play equipment. Residents and downtown employees utilize these areas as a gathering space for eating and work breaks and often serve as a location for public art and performances. They ideally function in concert with the surrounding businesses, especially restaurants and cafes, where a cooperative effort energizes the physical space. Examples of urban plazas include Liberty Plaza, Sculpture Plaza, and Forsythe Park.”

[City of Ann Arbor > Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan: 2011-2015, page 33]

“Parks and open spaces in downtown Ann Arbor are difficult to acquire because of high land cost and fewer available open spaces. Additionally, providing large open space areas in the downtown is not necessarily appropriate given that density is a goal of downtown planning efforts, as outlined in the City of Ann Arbor Master Plan, 2009 Downtown Plan. Traditionally, downtown parks have taken the shape of smaller plazas that serve employees and visitors and provide outdoor eating and resting spots. Streetscapes also serve as downtown passive recreational spaces, where both private and public entities provide sitting areas in the form of street furniture, planters, and café tables.”

[City of Ann Arbor > Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan: 2011-2015, pages 67-67]

Together these definitions and references indicate that downtown open space may take many forms (from courtyards to gardens), be publicly or privately owned, and are commonly small in size, intended to enhance the outdoor experience. For the purposes of these sites, we are using the phrase urban open space, reflecting the necessary urban considerations and active nature of downtown spaces. In addition, the term does not necessitate public ownership.

DEFINITIONS (continued)

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing calculations rely on two components:

- 1) The assumption that a family should not spend more than 30% of its income on housing.
- 2) Thresholds derived from a community's Area Median Income (AMI), which is published each year by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

There are two general types of affordable housing: market-rate affordable housing and income-restricted affordable housing.

Market-rate affordable housing is privately-owned housing that has cheaper rents due to factors such as location, age, condition, or size. Anyone can rent this housing, regardless of income. This housing can become unaffordable if an owner decides to charge higher rent, sometimes to cover the cost of building improvements or during periods with a shortage of available housing and increasing demand.

Income-restricted affordable housing can be owned privately or publicly and is different in that households need to income qualify before they can lease the unit. Privately owned and operated income-restricted affordable housing is usually funded by federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and is affordable to those earning 60% AMI; in 2013, this translates to rents around \$1,011/month for a family of two. For those who have lower incomes or require additional services, there are publicly-owned housing units or rental vouchers/subsidies. These programs serve households with incomes below 30% AMI.*

Many downtown employees, particularly service workers, need housing that is affordable to those earning at or below 60% AMI.** Moderate-income workers generally need housing that is affordable to those earning 60-100% AMI. Both types of housing are important for a strong economy.

Each type of housing is integral to a sustainable, vibrant, and equitable community and each type may require different program, policy, and funding approaches.

* According to HUD (www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il/il13/mi.pdf), the 2013 AMI for the Ann Arbor metropolitan area for a family of two is \$67,400. 30% of \$67,400 is \$20,220.

** The two-person family income at 60% of Ann Arbor AMI is \$40,440.

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INTRODUCTION

The Connecting William Street Framework Plan (CWS) recommends guidelines for the development of five sites in the core of downtown Ann Arbor—the Library Lane Lot, the Fifth & William Lot, the ground floor of the Fourth & William parking structure, the Main & William Lot, and the Ashley & William Lot—with the goal of increasing vibrancy in this section of downtown.

The Plan was created at the request of the Ann Arbor City Council; on April 4, 2011, Council passed Resolution R-11-129, “Authorizing that the Ann Arbor DDA Develop an Implementation Plan to Redevelop Downtown City-Owned Parcels.” The resolution cites the DDA as uniquely structured to develop an overarching strategy plan and facilitate the development process. In addition, the resolution directed the DDA to gather input from a variety of sources, including members of the public and business community, appointed leadership, staff, academia, and market experts.

The DDA’s CWS Plan builds on existing City plans and zoning and provides specific recommendations for the redevelopment of sites currently in use as public parking. These five sites dominate several blocks of the William Street corridor and thus create a tremendous opportunity for a guided transformation of what is now a fairly nondescript and relatively inactive section of the downtown core.

The planning process for the development of this Plan began in October 2011, with the creation of a ten-member Leadership and Outreach Committee (LOC) and the selection of SmithGroupJJR (urban design) and 4ward Planning (economic/land use) as consultants. Together with support from DDA staff, the project team created and implemented a process that included robust public outreach, a downtown market analysis, and potential community impacts of developing these sites. To guide the process they created two primary goals at the outset of the project:

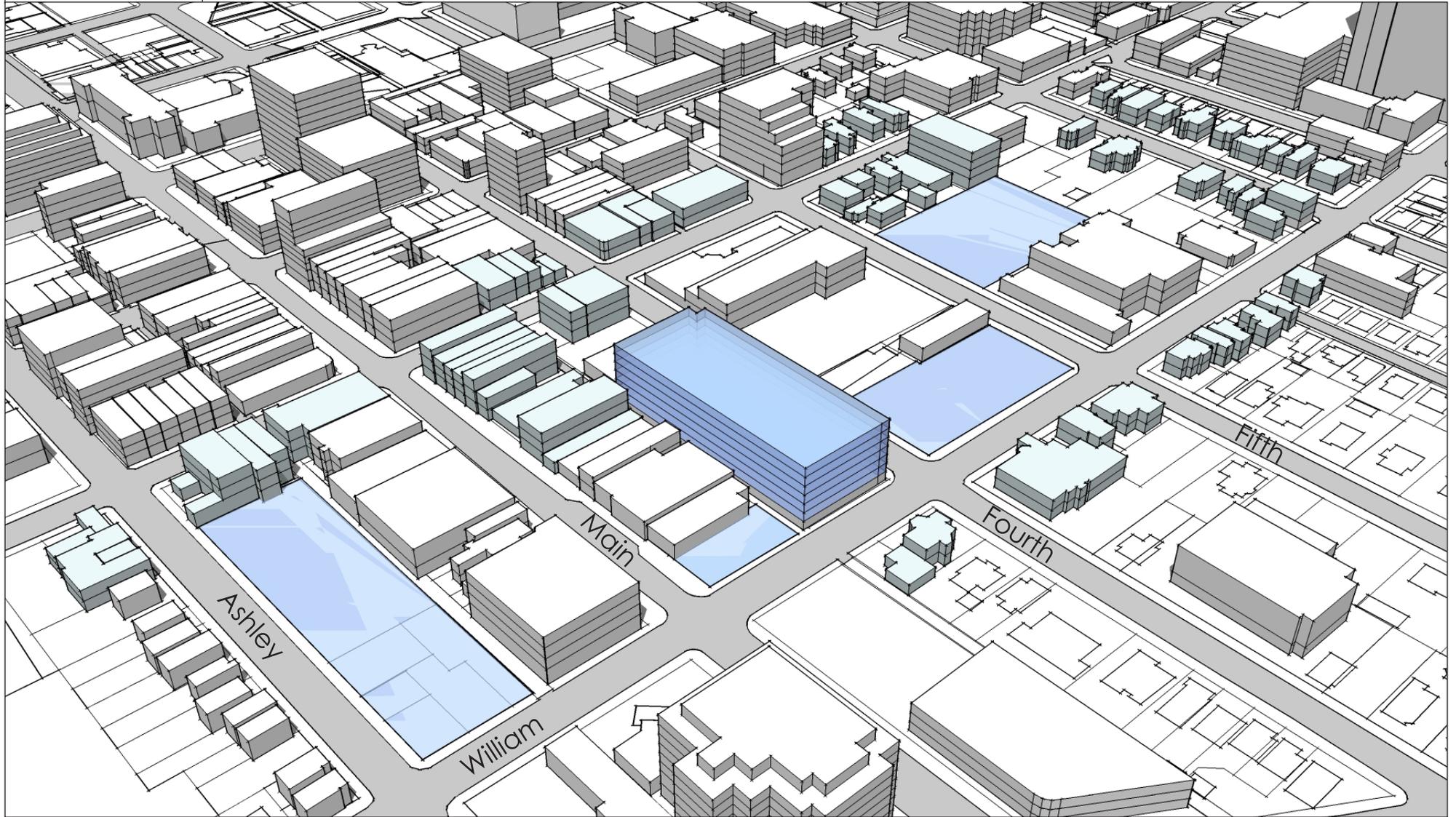
1. Create strategies for transforming five parking lots into uses that will better serve the community.
2. Improve the redevelopment approach for City-owned sites, providing clear expectations for the developer and community.

In all, more than 2,000 participants were involved in the course of developing this Plan, providing input at more than 30 community events, an online questionnaire, several webinars, and many emails. The LOC used this feedback to inform draft recommendations in November 2012 and submitted them to the DDA Partnerships committee for review and revision. The Partnerships Committee held several discussions before providing the final CWS plan to the DDA for approval at its January 9, 2013 meeting.

The CWS Plan sets forward a number of elements. It includes an overview of the planning area, an outline of the planning process, a distillation of overarching recommendations for the planning area, and specific recommendations for each site. It includes not only recommendations for the uses and design of buildings and open spaces that may eventually be constructed on the city properties, but also sets forward content for how William Street can be improved so the sites connect to nearby activity generators, and ultimately to the University campus and the Old West Side.

The LOC and DDA strove to create a balanced and integrated plan that gives expression to community goals, best practice knowledge, current market data, and an understanding of project feasibility and impact. The recommendations are not meant to be mandates, but rather are suggested guidelines that can be used to craft future RFQ’s and RFP’s, evaluate subsequent developer proposals, and provide a foundation for decision making. The up-front vetting by the community, a land use economist, and City staff was intended to make for a more informed and transparent process moving forward and to help ensure that any future developments on the city properties are successful, attractive, and beneficial to the health and vitality of the downtown.

Project Sites



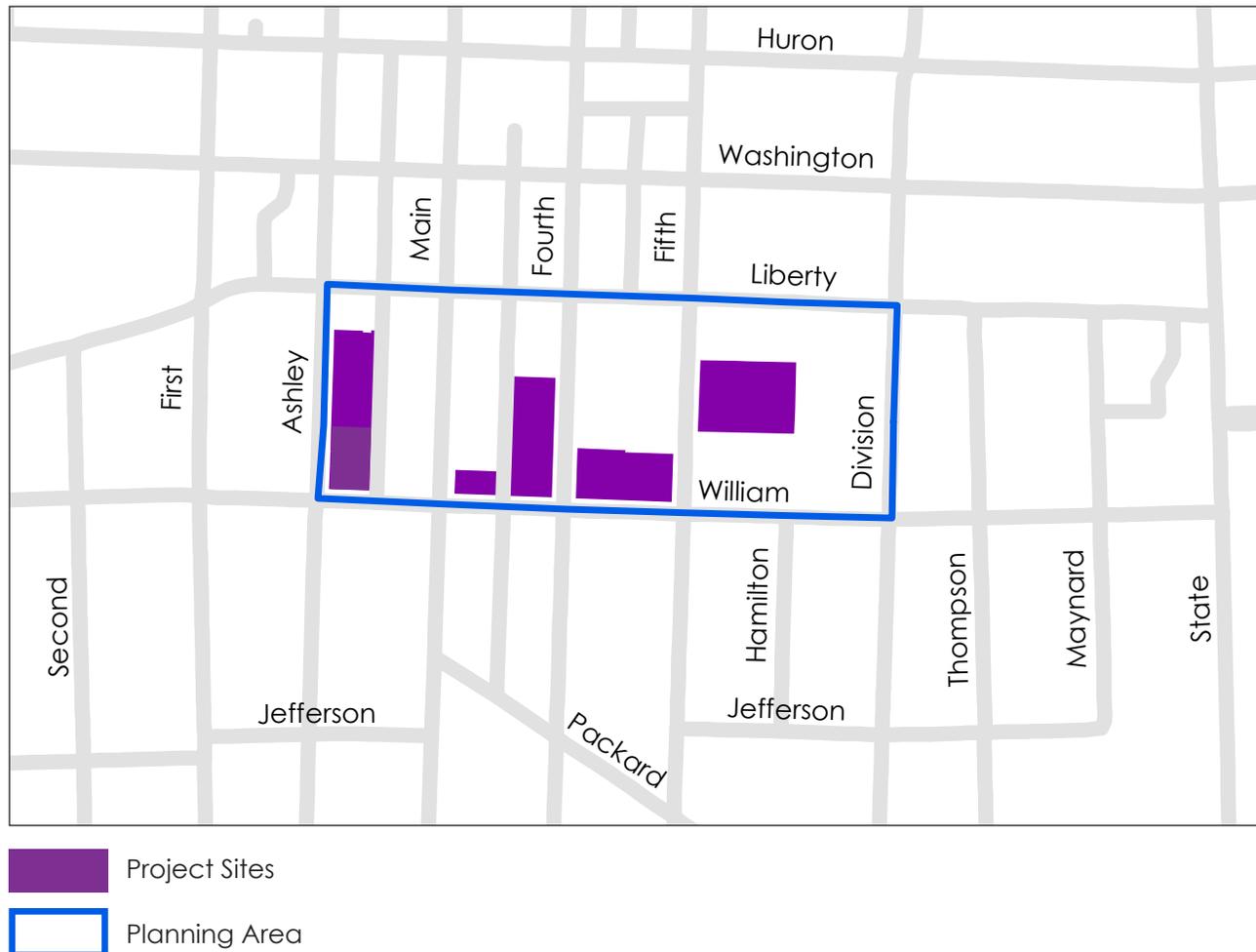
Graphic by SmithGroupJJR

 Project Sites

PLANNING AREA OVERVIEW

William Street, which runs along the southern edge of downtown Ann Arbor, is a vital corridor with enormous potential. From its western terminus in the Old West Side, the street runs by Main Street, the Blake Transit Center, the downtown public library, numerous businesses, and several large residential buildings before reaching its eastern terminus on S. State Street, at the University of Michigan Diag.

The CWS planning area (pictured below) is bounded by Liberty Street to the north, William Street to the south, S. Division Street to the east and S. Ashley Street to the west. This report includes recommendations for five sites on the north side of William between Ashley and Division. Four of the five sites are currently in use as surface public parking. A multi-story above-ground parking structure is located on the Fourth and William site and a multi-story below-ground parking structure is located beneath the Library Lane site.



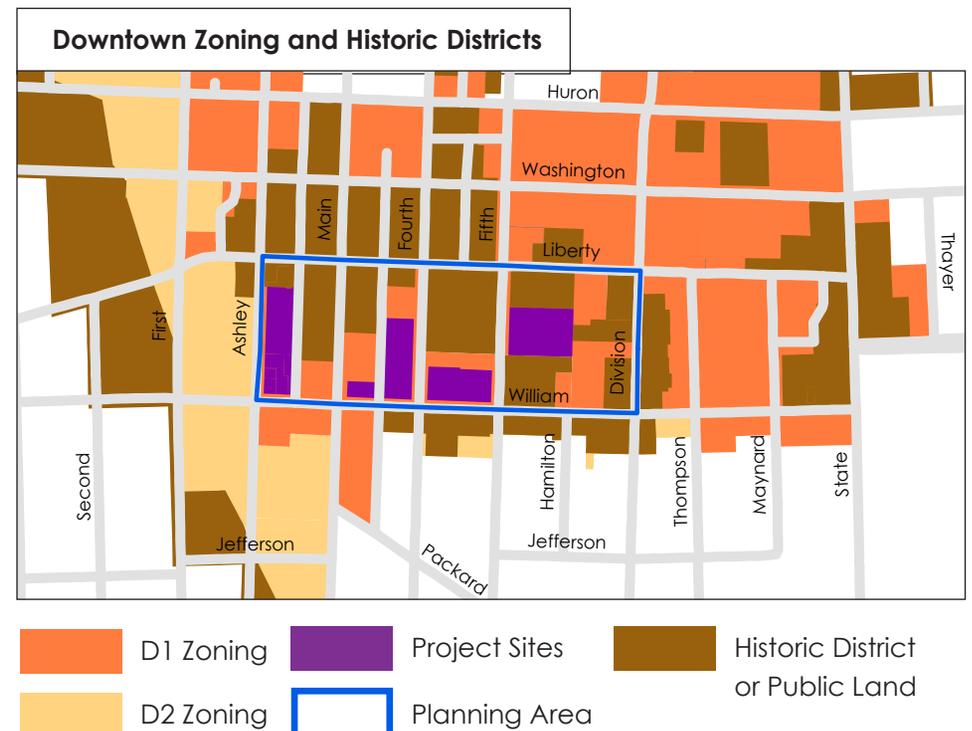
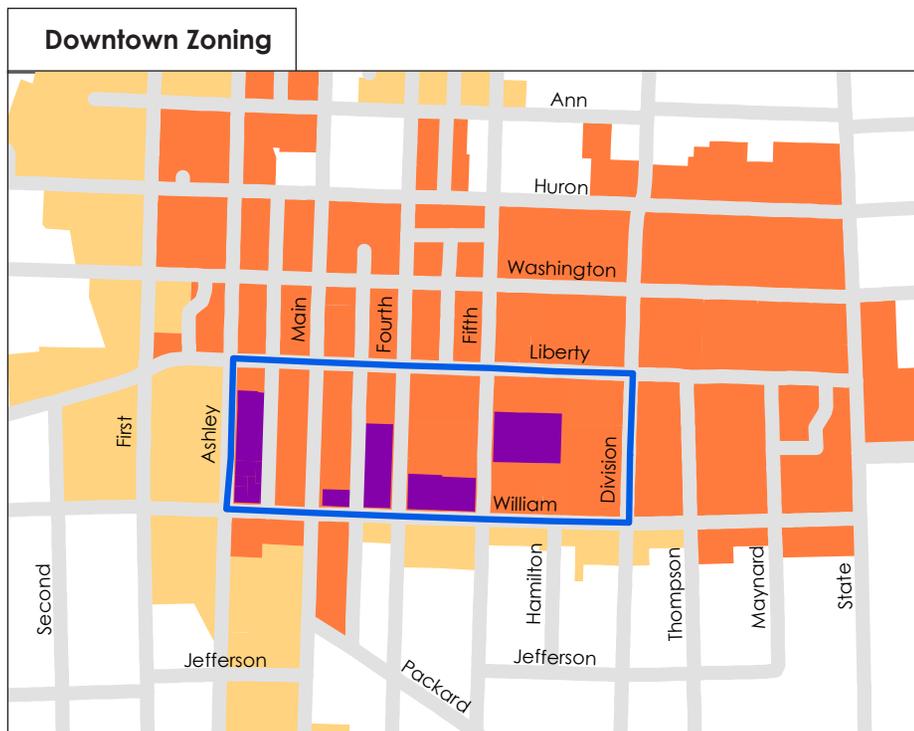
Land Use and Development

The planning area consists of four blocks and, according to the 2010 Census, is home to 147 residents. It is rich in historic districts and public buildings, which serve as strong assets, but also limit future development. As a result, these five parking sites represent a significant opportunity to meet the goals of the Downtown Plan and A2D2 planning efforts.

All of the sites in this report are designated “D1 – Downtown Core” by the City of Ann Arbor’s zoning code. According to the code, “[t]his district is intended to contain the downtown’s greatest concentration of development and serves as a focus for intensive pedestrian use. This district is appropriate for high-density mixed residential, office and commercial development.”

The planning area contains two distinct character districts: the Main Street Character District and the Midtown Character District. The Downtown Design Guidelines state that while the Main Street Character District contains “a range of building heights and architectural styles, most are of durable materials and high quality execution. This district has the strongest streetwall definition in the city, which is enhanced by the fine-grained texture of narrow storefronts that reflect traditional lot widths.” They also call attention to streetscape: “A large number of street trees and pedestrian-scaled lights complement the already pedestrian-oriented nature of the restaurant and retail destinations.”

The Downtown Design Guidelines point out that the Midtown Character District has “some 19th century wood-framed residential (mostly converted to office use), but stylistically, the district is dominated by an array of late 20th century mid-rise office and governmental facilities.” City zoning code states that “At present, this district lacks a strong sense of identity and is a place where creation of a new context should occur. The intent for this district is higher density development with a strongly defined street edge and active open spaces.”



Assets and Connections

As illustrated in the graphic below, the planning area possesses a variety of assets, including transportation options, businesses, cultural resources, and open space. It is essential that future development recognize the importance of these assets and create synergy with them.

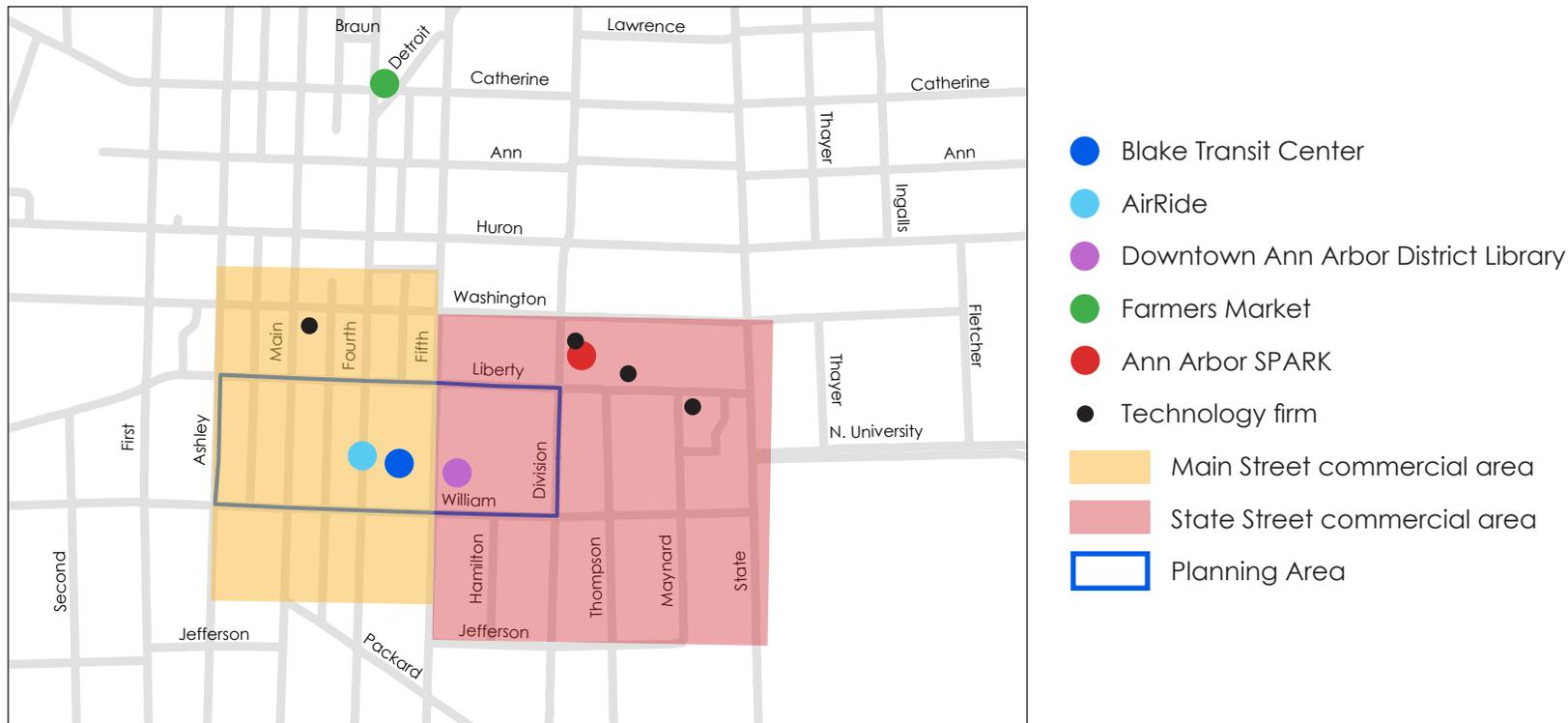
The Blake Transit Center is a major transportation hub. Each day, an average of 5,000 riders use the Transit Center to board or deboard AATA buses from 21 different routes. Across the street, AATA has its AirRide stop. Air Ride is a public bus shuttle, which currently offers 12 daily trips to/from Detroit Metro Airport.

The award-winning downtown Library offers a wide variety of programs and services, including extensive print collections, digital resources, and community meeting and gathering spaces. The Library serves nearly 600,000 yearly visitors and is open seven days a week.

The Main Street and State Street commercial areas feature hundreds of retail shops, restaurants, service businesses, and more. They are popular year-round regional destinations for shopping, dining, and entertainment.

The Ann Arbor Farmers Market, located 4 blocks north of the planning area, operates on Saturdays year-round and on Wednesdays during spring, summer, and fall.

Many of the prominent technology firms in Ann Arbor are located near the planning area. These include Google, Barracuda Networks, LLamasoft, and Menlo Innovations. The Ann Arbor Spark office is located just north of the planning area.



Parks and Open Space

The planning area contains existing and proposed parks and open spaces. The University of Michigan Diag is located three blocks east of the planning area. Hanover Square Park lies a few blocks south. The City of Ann Arbor has determined that one of the Allen Creek Greenway Parks will be created on the First & William lot, just one block west of the planning area. The Allen Creek Greenway system is envisioned to eventually connect to the countywide Border-to-Border Trail along the Huron River. The City's Liberty Plaza Park is situated in the northeast corner of the planning area. Discussion is underway by the Parks Advisory Council for a redesign of this Park, with the goal of making it more attractive. Additionally, a portion of the Library Lane site has been set aside for the creation of a public open space as the underground parking structure was designed with a substantial "no build" area.

All totaled, more than 30 acres of public open space are planned or exist within walking distance to the planning area. (See the Open Space Analysis section of the Supplemental Appendix for more open space details).

Cultural Resources

The planning area is a short walk from numerous world-class cultural institutions that make downtown Ann Arbor a regional hotspot for arts and entertainment. Each year, hundreds of thousands flock to downtown to visit The Ark, the Ann Arbor Art Center, the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum, the Kempf House Museum, Hill Auditorium, Rackham Auditorium, the Performance Network Theatre, the Michigan Theater, State Theater, and more. The Ann Arbor Art Fair is in its fiftieth year, and it draws crowds of about 500,000 to the planning area each summer. There are a number of other annual downtown festivals and events that take place in the planning area, including Taste of Ann Arbor, Rolling Sculpture Car Show, Festifools, and more.

Public Infrastructure Improvements

The recent Library Lane parking structure project included a number of elements in addition to the construction of 711 underground parking spaces. As part of the DDA's effort to prepare the Midtown section of downtown for potential future development, the project included the installation of three new 12" water mains, a new mid-block fire hydrant, electric and communication lines buried underground, a new downtown mid-block alley with transformers and an area for trash containment, and extensive streetscape improvements along Fifth and Division and Library Lane, a new two-way vehicle and pedestrian connection between Division and Fifth. The parking structure itself includes elements that could provide the platform for a future building up to approximately 20 stories tall and a future public plaza, including a heavily-engineered foundation and footings.

As part of the work developing this plan City staff investigated the water and sanitary sewer capacity in this area. It was determined that nearly all systems are sufficiently sized to accommodate additional development. The only exception is approximately 125 feet of sanitary sewer under William Street that will need to be upsized to support private and public development projects in the William Street corridor. The DDA is already considering this project as part of its work plan in the coming year.

Market Realities and Opportunities

As part of the planning process, the DDA commissioned a market study to better understand local economic and social factors that are likely to drive development demand along William Street. The study yielded several notable findings; most importantly, the data suggested that there is significant demand for development of new residential, retail, and office space in this area.

For instance, of the 20,000 employees in the greater downtown area, only about 7% live downtown, which suggests a latent demand for additional downtown residential units. Through 2015, apartment demand is expected to exceed supply, and an estimated 1,300 additional downtown residential units could be captured by 2016. Young professionals and empty nesters were identified as primary drivers in the downtown apartment market. This suggests a demand for smaller one- and two-bedroom units. Residential development along William Street would not only improve retail performance in the area; the added foot traffic would also contribute to a vibrant sidewalk atmosphere.

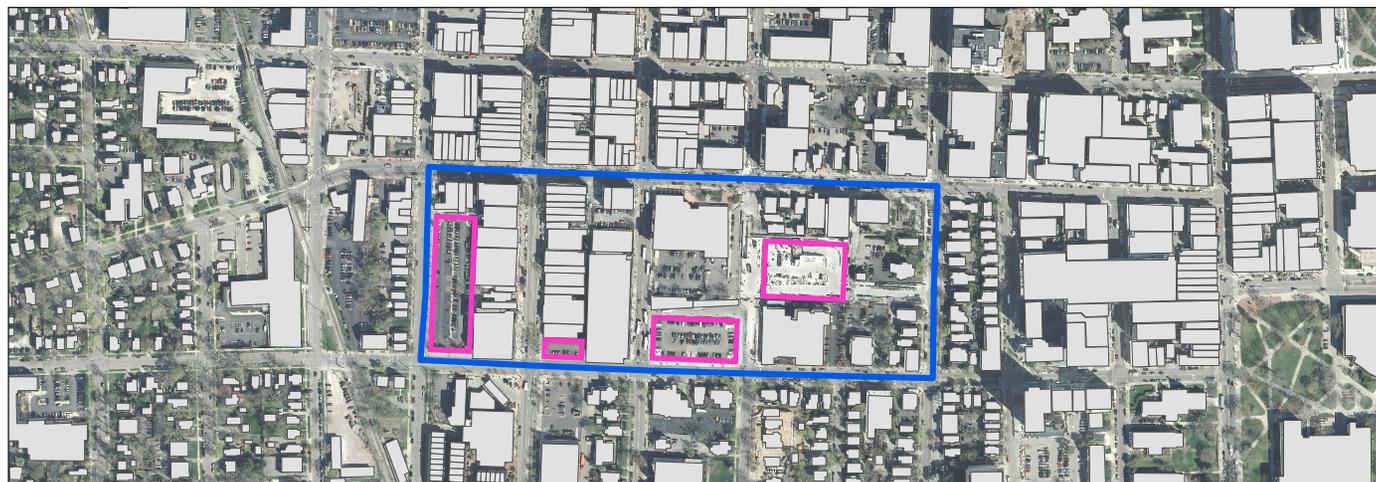
The vacancy rate for downtown office space has been declining since 2009 and is now below 10%. The study noted that downtown could support an estimated additional 500,000 square feet of large floor plate office space, which is currently in short supply and was identified as especially desirable to growing technology firms. The development of new large floor plate office space could help attract more technology firms to downtown Ann Arbor and also allow existing firms to expand and remain downtown. Employers and employees of these firms have shown that they prefer central office locations that provide easy access to existing downtown amenities. Office development is not as location flexible as residential development, and is most successful in the commercial core. Currently, office rental rates go as high as \$27/square foot, but these rates are not yet high enough to compensate for the cost of new construction. However, if the office market continues to tighten and rents continue to escalate about 2.5%/year, new office construction can be expected to become feasible in the next few years.

Demand for hotel rooms is also high, and expected to remain strong. The Ann Arbor Convention and Visitors Bureau recently reported that Washtenaw County currently is enjoying its highest hotel occupancy rate in 25 years. In fact, the occupancy rate in Washtenaw County is the highest rate in the Midwest, including Chicago. This suggests that downtown tourism could increase and that additional downtown lodging could be supported.

Strong income and spending trends in Ann Arbor highlight the potential for additional retail and dining establishments. The report notes that spending on dining and entertainment in Ann Arbor is 60% higher than the national average, and the downtown accounted for approximately \$449 million in total sales for retail and food and drinking establishments in 2010. The development of small-scale retail stores (1,200 - 2,500 sq. ft.) is recommended in order to maintain the character and appeal of the planning area, and to distinguish it from other shopping districts outside the downtown. The exception to this recommendation would be the addition of a prominent, high-end retailer such as Apple, which would generate a tremendous amount of visibility and customer traffic. The development of new small-scale retail and restaurants in the William Street area could enhance downtown Ann Arbor's reputation as a regional mecca for foodies and shoppers who enjoy unique local businesses.

Development Potential

The planning area is located squarely in the core of downtown Ann Arbor, where the City's zoning code permits the highest level of density and where residents believe that higher density is appropriate. Currently density is relatively low and four of the five sites under consideration are functioning as surface parking lots. As illustrated in the graphic depicting building footprints below, the undeveloped sites in the planning area represent "holes" in the center of the downtown. These "holes" are opportunities to transform the William Street corridor into an attractive, and vibrant section of downtown.



-  Planning Area
-  Building Footprint
-  Undeveloped City-owned site

PLANNING PROCESS

Many previous City efforts to have private development take place on publicly-owned sites were not successful because the proposed projects showed that the developer and the community were not in alignment. The DDA asked for and received City Council authorization to direct the sale and redevelopment process for the City-properties in the planning area. With the goal of creating a more successful redevelopment process, the DDA sought a new approach.

As a first step, the DDA researched successful processes used by other communities and engaged in conversations with community members, real estate professionals and business leaders to find out how the process could be made more successful. This research revealed two overarching elements that needed to be overcome: 1) The community conversation about what it felt a desirable development would look like was happening too late in the process after a development proposal was on the table; and 2) Earlier processes focused on one site at a time, which led the community to seek to meet a variety of community goals onto the single site.

The CWS process developed by the DDA aimed to distill clear direction for the future developer about community expectations for each of the sites, as well as an overarching plan for how William Street as a whole would be redesigned and strengthened. To accomplish its goals of creating a more successful redevelopment process the DDA concluded that it was critical to: 1) Have the community conversation about what the community desired up front, and attempt to find the areas of consensus so that clear expectations could be given to developers; and 2) Examine multiple sites at once in order to understand how the sites can work together to meet community goals. This depth of understanding would allow the LOC and DDA to frame an overarching set of plan elements that include not only what should go on the parcels, but how the spaces between the buildings could be redesigned to make the area more accessible, interesting, and attractive, and thus help activate the area along William Street between campus and Main Street.

The following recommendations are the result of a very robust and multi-dimensional effort to find the areas of community consensus about our expectations for the sites. Over the course of fifteen months more than 2,000 community members provided input, through a variety of mechanisms, including feedback questionnaires, speaker events, community meetings, focus group meetings, and webinars.

The DDA began its work by building on a number of City approved plans. With help from City staff, many hundreds of goal statements found in the Downtown Plan, A2D2, Design Guidelines, and more were collected and distilled into the over-arching goals for the CWS planning process. City goals for downtown and for the CWS project include:

- Diversity of uses & center of activity
- Center of commerce & jobs
- Diversity of residential opportunities
- Dense land use & development
- Development that respects context & character area intent
- Adequate infrastructure to support development
- Emphasis on street-level pedestrian scale, and open-space & non-motorized connectivity
- Emphasis on green building & high quality materials

Communications and Outreach

Once authorized to take on this project, the DDA asked its Partnerships Committee to oversee the development of the CWS plan. In addition to DDA members, the Partnerships Committee includes two City Council members, a member of the Planning Commission, and regular participation by representatives of AATA and the Library.

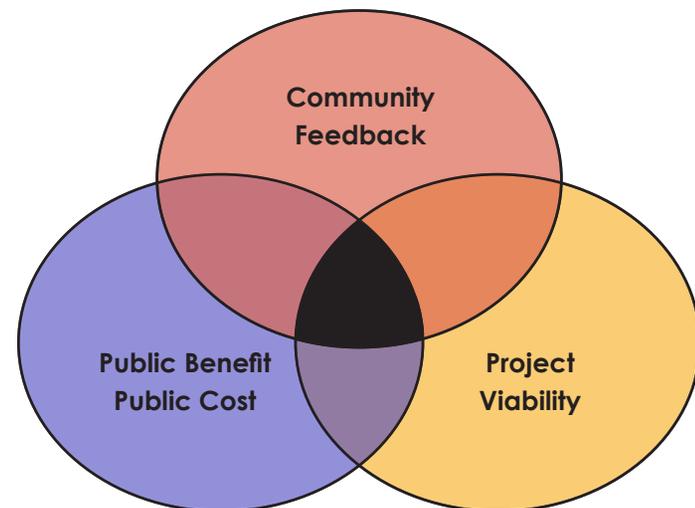
As one of its first tasks, the Partnerships Committee appointed as the CWS steering committee, the Leadership and Outreach Committee (LOC), a diverse ten-member group made up of residents, business owners, and downtown employees, as well as DDA, City Council, and Planning Commission representatives. The LOC created a communications and outreach plan with the **overarching goal of carrying out an inclusive process with a broad diversity of voices and participation.** To accomplish this, the LOC began with an email list of over 100 citizen and advocacy organizations, including downtown and near downtown residents groups, parks advocacy groups, neighborhood groups from around the city, civic and business groups, housing and human services groups, and many others. The LOC was committed to an approach that reached out to a wide variety of groups and individuals, with a keen interest in getting feedback from people of all ages, races, genders, and professions, as they felt that only with this diversity of interests and perspectives would the plan outcomes be successful.

The outreach process was designed to be iterative, beginning with the established community goals and working toward site level recommendations. The first round of outreach included an online questionnaire and small group meetings to help prioritize goals for the sites, understand what is possible under zoning, and inform development scenarios for community reaction. The second round included seeking specific input on the density, uses, and public amenities using three scenario options as a way of eliciting community comments. Through many meetings and webinars this effort helped shape a recommended development scenario and this plan. The last round of outreach was focused on sharing those recommendations for public feedback before presenting the plan to City Council.

The LOC outreach process took over a year. Outreach outcomes included 2,000 responses to an online questionnaire; email or meeting contacts with over 200 non-profit, citizen, business, and advocacy organizations, the creation of a 700-person email list, and public events attended by hundreds of area residents. The process also included regular updates at City Council and DDA Partnership meetings, updates at City Council work sessions, and several meetings with City Planning Commission, Parks Advisory Commission, Commission on Disability, Downtown Area Citizens Advisory Council, and the Housing and Human Services Advisory Board. (For more details, please see the Communications and Outreach summaries beginning on page 16 of the Appendix.)

Creating Recommendations

With each step toward a framework plan the project team refined recommendations to reflect key areas of overlap—where community goals, market findings, and the balance of public benefit and public cost were in alignment. Best practice approaches indicate that overlap of these three elements must be met in order to create successful development strategies.



Community Feedback

Throughout CWS outreach efforts, participants continually confirmed alignment with adopted City plans:

- Density belongs in the core
- **The overarching priority for our downtown is vibrancy and an active sidewalk experience**

Through questionnaires, public meetings, and webinar feedback, community feedback also underscored the following priorities:

- Architecture and construction: stressing that future buildings must be of high quality & design
- Economic development: focusing on job creation and support for independent and retail business
- Housing: encouraging a range of housing options, including affordable housing
- Open space/plazas: including connectivity to current and future downtown open spaces, upgrading Liberty Plaza Park, and increasing the amount of downtown open space
- Economic impact: emphasizing the value of long-term benefits over short-term

Project Viability

Another important component to creating successful redevelopment strategies was to examine what kinds of future development is possible within zoning and meets market demand. As a part of this, the CWS process also examined what public benefit elements were being requested by our community, and how a developer could be incentivized to provide these sorts of elements which would otherwise not be market-driven. The CWS's land use economist was instrumental in providing a great deal of data for this plan, including a market study and development feasibility assessments.

Market Study Findings

With an emphasis on community goals for economic development, job creation, a diversity of housing downtown, and an active sidewalk/open space experience the following office and residential market findings were central to creating development recommendations. Such uses are the drivers for any development scenario, because they bring the people who will fill the sidewalk and open space, and who will support retail and entertainment uses.

- **Community Goal: Long-term economic development & job creation**
 - Market support for office: 500,000 square feet of large-floor plate office could be supported in downtown
- **Community Goal: A diversity of housing**
 - Market support for residential: 1,300 new apartments could be captured in downtown by 2016
 - Emphasis on workforce, one and two bedroom units

Interest & Entertainment

The market study also aligned with what the DDA heard from the community about their interest in more restaurants, entertainment, and independent retail.

- **Community Goal: Vibrancy, activity, and a unique sidewalk experience**

- Market support for more food and entertainment: The Ann Arbor community spends 160% of the national spending average on dining and entertainment.
- Market support for retail: Appropriate retail for downtown should generally be small in scale to distinguish it from other shopping areas. However, provisions for an anchor retailer could be made.
- Market support for lodging: Lodging is supportable, currently Washtenaw County has the highest hotel occupancy in the past 25 years and in the Midwest (including Chicago)

Non-market Driven Uses

There were several uses/project elements brought forward by the community that are not necessarily market driven, but that the LOC felt were important to include as part of the plan. For instance, through the outreach process, the community expressed an interest in seeing more cultural amenities in the planning area, affordable housing, and urban open space, as they all provide important public benefit. Recommendations for each of these elements are included in the CWS plan.

Potential Outcomes

As part of its outreach efforts, the LOC presented various development scenarios that included estimated data about what the scenarios might generate in terms of estimated new jobs, downtown residents, and new employee spending. This data was generated by 4ward Planning using a range of potential building densities and land uses. Included in these estimates are numbers for potential new jobs, residents, and economic impacts to local businesses. The final plan works to find a balance between adding new jobs, residences, open space, and other uses, with the goal of much new activity at the sidewalk level. The recommendations included in the following section are a culmination of the informed process detailed above.

Potential Development Impacts			
<i>Scenario Focus</i>	Scenario A 3-5 stories Some residential Focus on office space Some ground floor retail	Scenario B 3-8 stories Focus on office space Some residential and lodging use	Scenario C 10-14 stories Large amount of residential & office Lodging & performance uses Urban format anchor retail
<i>Estimated Impacts</i>	Residents: 100 - 150 Annual new household dollars in local economy: \$2.5 - \$3 million Jobs: 500 - 600 Annual employee spending in local economy: \$3.4 - \$4 mill Approx. total sales*: \$6 million	Residents: 50 - 100 Annual new household dollars in local economy: \$1.5-\$2 million Jobs: 900 - 1,000 Annual employee spending in local economy: \$6 - \$6.7 mill Approx. total sales: \$12 million	Residents: 350 - 400 Annual new household dollars in local economy: \$7.5 - \$8 million Jobs: 800 - 900 Annual employee spending in local economy: \$5.4 - \$6 mill Approx. total sales: \$33 million

*Approximate total sales takes into account the dollars spent from regional dollars—those who come to visit downtown but don't live or work here.

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OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are an overlap of community feedback, project viability, and public benefit. They focus on bringing people and activities to these core downtown sites to achieve the common goal expressed by the community: creating the interesting and engaging sidewalk atmosphere currently lacking along William Street. To achieve this the recommendations seek to encourage uses that generate foot traffic, provide a human scale at the ground floor, create visual appeal, and provide an interesting and pleasant overall experience. The overarching recommendations apply to all 5 sites in the planning area.



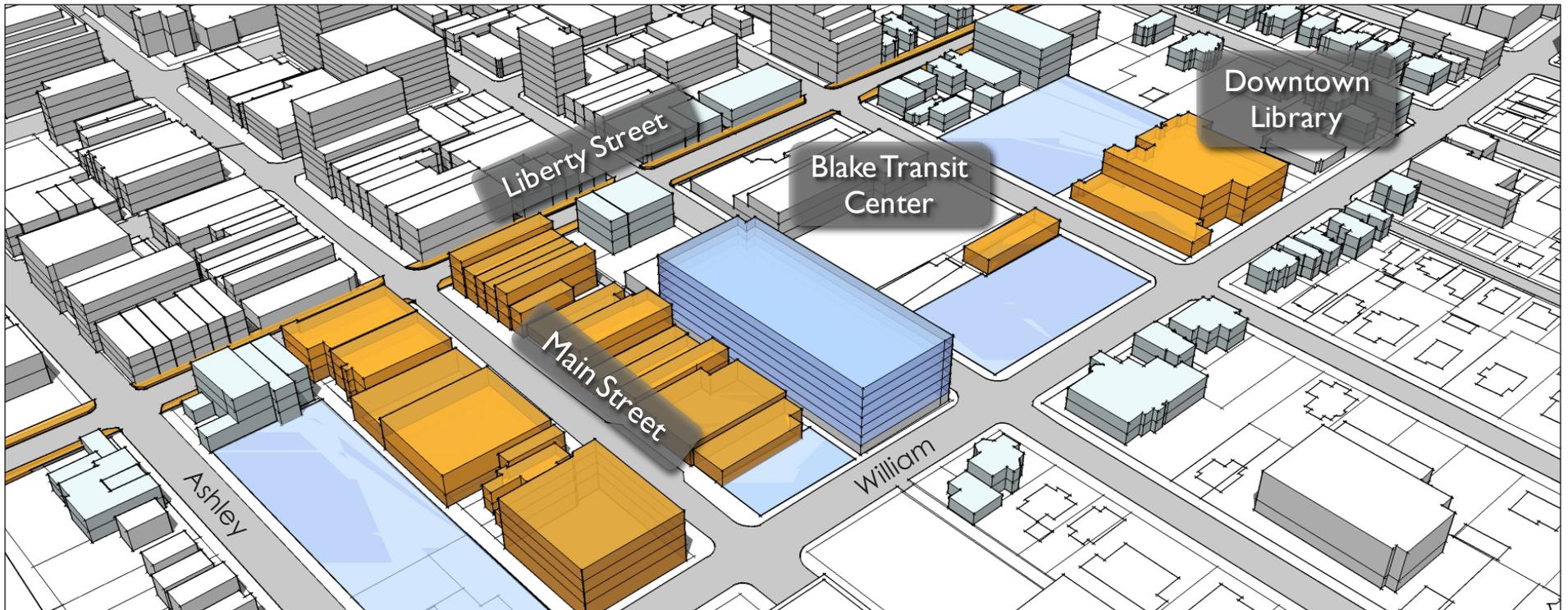
A. ADJACENCIES

A priority for Connecting William Street is improving the pedestrian environment and the spaces in between buildings. A key piece of this is providing physical and programmatic connections among the buildings and uses in the planning area.

Recommendations

Development of the four sites:

A-1	Should create synergies and aim to complement the assets that exist near these sites, particularly Main Street, Liberty Street, the Downtown Library, and the Blake Transit Center (pictured below)
A-2	Should enhance on-site connectivity to the sidewalk, adjacent assets, and open space and is strongly encouraged to emphasize Downtown Design Guidelines' strategies for pedestrian connections <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide engaging spatial opportunities for window shopping while also maintaining a zone for efficient circulation (<i>Downtown Design Guideline A.5.3</i>)• Enrich and enliven pedestrian walkways (<i>Downtown Design Guideline A.5.4</i>)



Graphic by SmithGroupJJR

 Project Sites

B. STREETScape & TRANSPORTATION

Improvements helping to create comfort for pedestrians, cyclists, and others are critical to enhancing the feel of this area and to connecting William Street from campus to First Street. Participant feedback highlighted Blake Transit Center as a tremendous asset and that access to multiple travel options is critical to improving the experience and identity of this planning area.

Recommendations

DDA:

B-1	Develop a streetscape plan for the William Street corridor <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This would include sidewalk enhancements, exploring bike facilities along William, and roadway enhancements• Encourage developer implementation through a grant based on TIF capture
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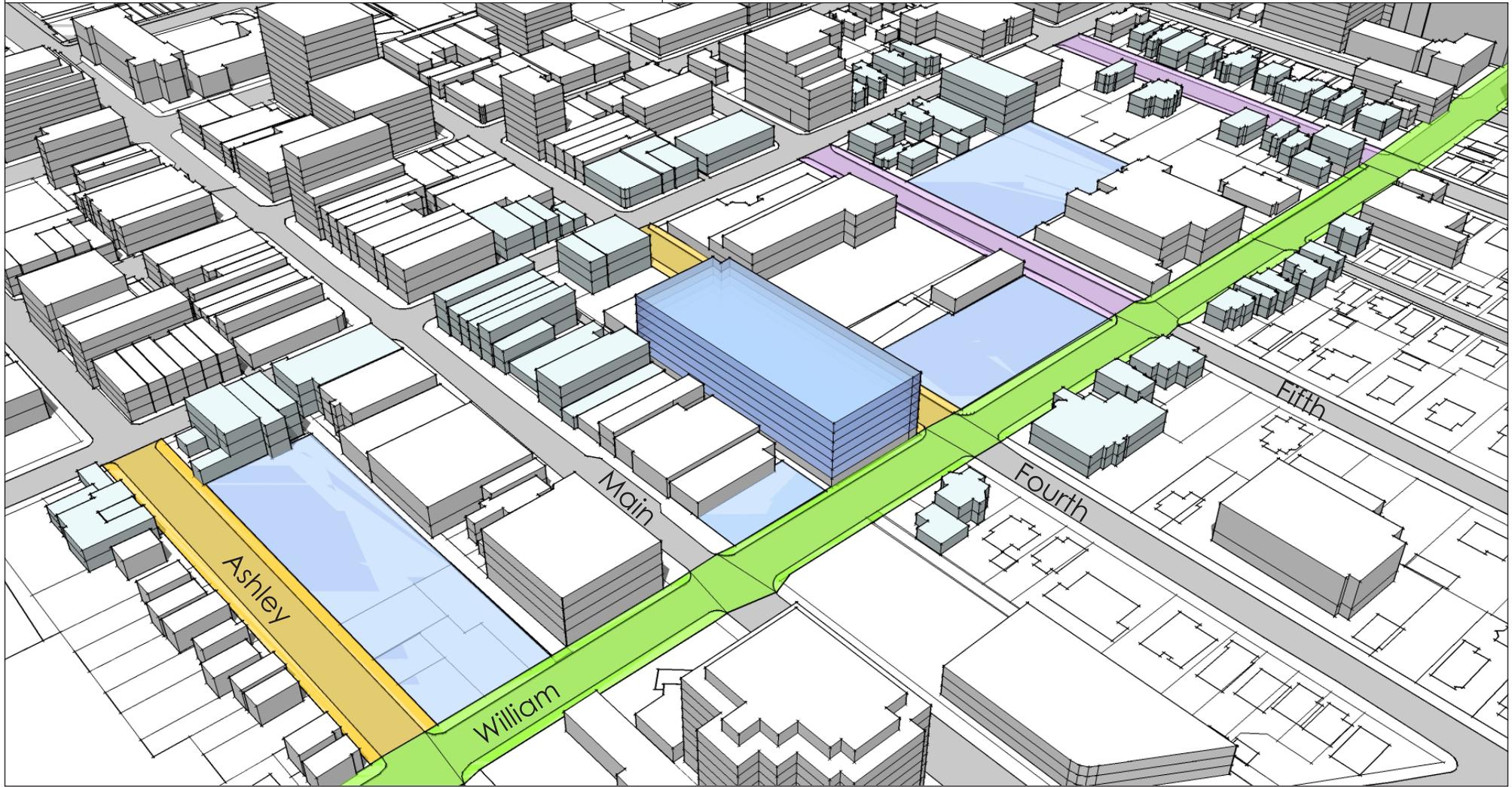
City & DDA:

B-2	Should explore implementation of improvements highlighted in the 2007 Non-motorized Transportation Plan, with a particular focus on bike lanes and roadway improvements along William Street
B-3	Should create standards for streetscape improvements & explore increased DDA involvement in the site plan review process to improve streetscape design consistency and coordination

Development of the four sites:

B-4	Should strengthen the planning area as a transportation hub, continuing to provide and accommodate multiple modes of transportation
B-5	Must adhere to the DDA's streetscape design for William Street and to the streetscape standards for north-south streets <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Should approach the DDA for grant opportunities
B-6	Should explore the opportunity to accommodate bike parking (including covered and protected) and facilities beyond what is required by zoning code (See Zoning Code: Title V, Chapter 59, 5:167. Required parking)

Recent and Proposed Streetscape Improvements



Graphic by SmithGroupJJR

-  Project Sites
-  Priority Improvements
-  Secondary Improvements
-  Recent Improvements

C. PARKING

Participants acknowledged that parking is a valuable downtown asset and one that must be accessible to visitors and employees but made it very clear that maintaining an appealing pedestrian experience, in conjunction with parking, is essential.

Recommendations

DDA:

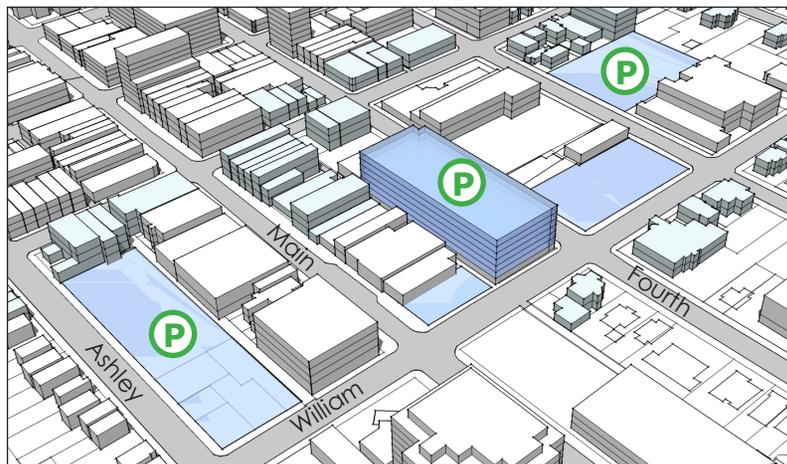
C-1	Should create a plan for continuing to accommodate convenient and accessible public parking as development occurs on the sites
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Development of the four sites:

C-2	Must include parking spaces as required to achieve premiums or as desired by developer
C-3	Must not include surface parking
C-4	Below-grade parking is encouraged
C-5	<p>If above-grade, structured parking is added, must minimize visibility from the street by incorporating into the building design (elevated or wrapped)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate a parking structure...behind or to the side of a building, minimizing the visual presence of parking on adjacent public right-of-way (Downtown Design Guideline A.4.3)
C-6	Service areas must be located in alleys where available, and no service areas should be located on William Street or Fifth Avenue
C-7	Should approach the DDA to discuss parking solutions



Photo by Ann Arbor DDA



Graphic by SmithGroupJJR

- Project Sites
- P Existing or potential public parking

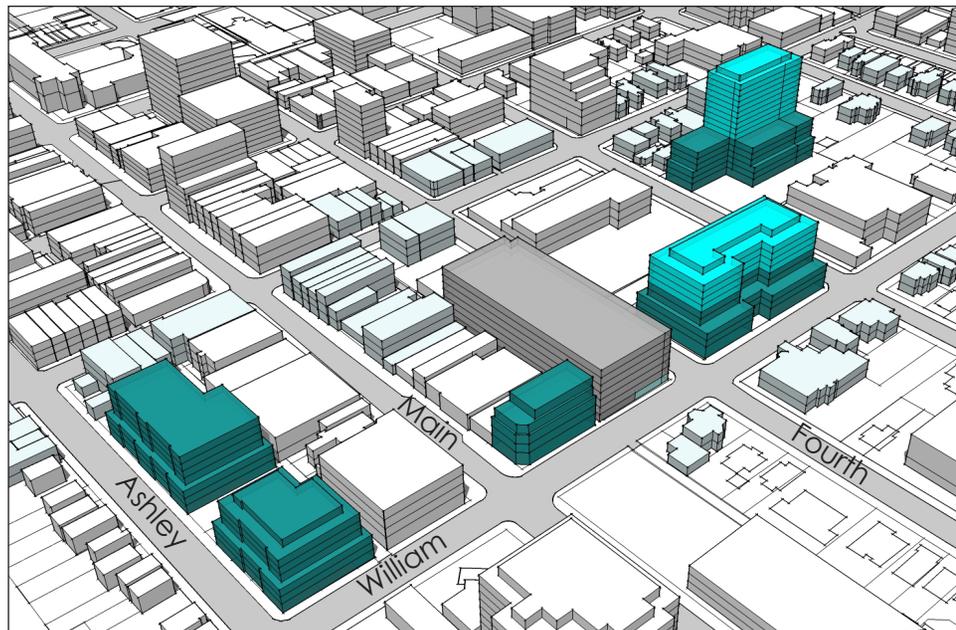
D. DENSITY AND MASSING

Community feedback generally supported taller buildings in the downtown core but made it clear that surrounding context should be considered and buildings designed to step back from lower-scale neighbors.

Recommendations

Development for the four sites:

D-1	Must include building(s) on each site
D-2	Must meet zoning standards (See Ann Arbor Code of Ordinances, Title V, available at www.municode.com/Library/MI/Ann_Arbor) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Site-Level Recommendations for clarity; All sites can go up to 900% FAR with the inclusion of affordable housing
D-3	Must follow Downtown Design Guidelines that encourage a sense of scale from the street. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design a building to minimize its impact on adjacent lower-scale areas (Downtown Design Guideline B.1.1) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Step taller building elements away from adjacent-lower scale neighborhood on the west side of Ashley and south side of Liberty Provide variation in building massing to reflect the underlying pattern of established lot widths When a new building will be larger than surrounding structures, visually divide it into smaller building modules that provide a sense of scale (Downtown Design Guideline B.1.2) Provide a clear definition between the base and upper floors to maintain a sense of scale at the street level (Downtown Design Guideline B.1.3)



Graphic by SmithGroupJJR

- Up to 400% floor area ratio (FAR)
- Up to 700% floor area ratio (FAR)

D-3

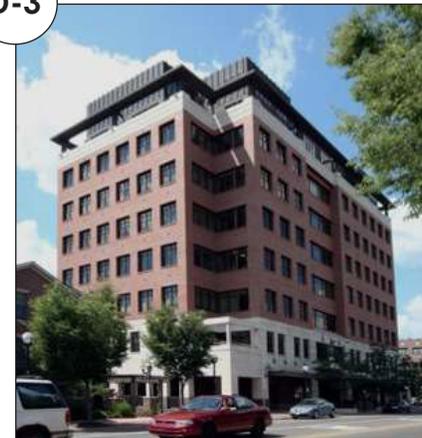


Photo from Downtown Design Guidelines

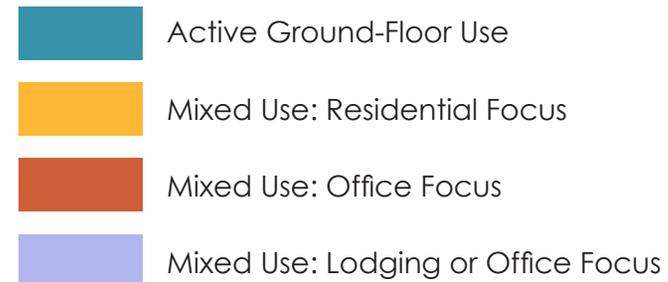
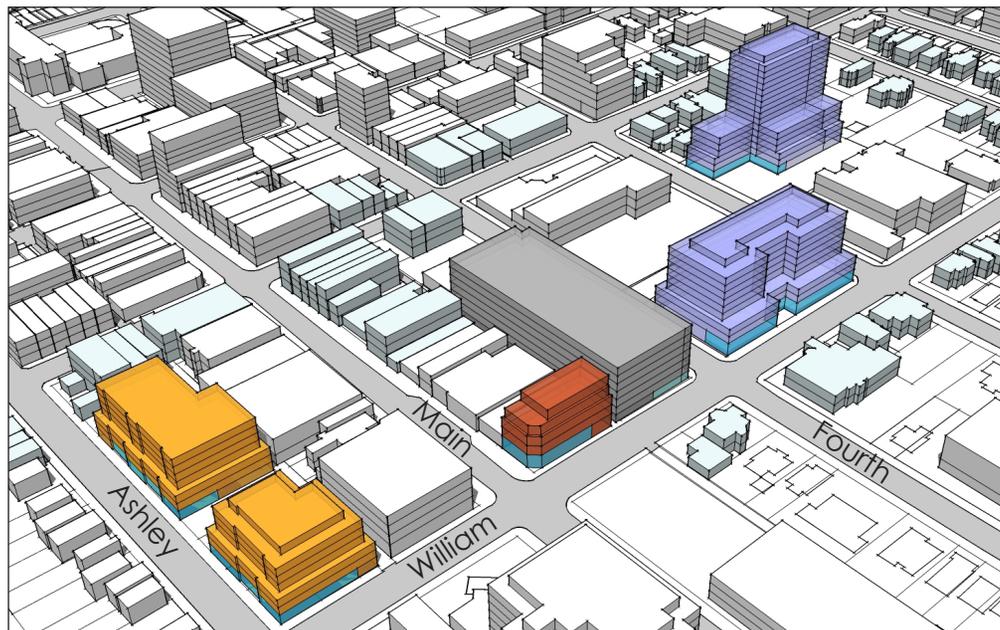
E. LAND USES

Participants indicated a strong desire for an active and interesting downtown, with more people, activities, and things to look at (particularly at the ground floor). Office and residential land uses are critical to bring more people downtown and support retail and cultural amenities. The intent for this planning area is to add to the diversity of offerings downtown, including entertainment, retail, residential, and office options. In particular, downtown was viewed as lacking housing for its workforce and large floor plate office space for growing and established companies. (See the “Residential Uses” and “Large floor plate office” definitions on page 3.) Workforce housing and new office construction are priority elements in this plan, and they work together to support future economic development. In particular, office construction was seen as more difficult to accomplish, and much effort was made to focus planning around this element.

Recommendations

Development of the four sites:

E-1	Should include a mix of uses
E-2	Must include an active ground floor use, with the exception of the Ashley & William site (See Site-Level Recommendations for the Ashley & William site on pages 36-37)
E-3	<p>Must adhere to premium guidelines if constructed over 400% FAR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developments will likely seek the residential premium and a combination of affordable housing, green building, and/or pedestrian amenities. If residential is included, the development should consist of one and two bedroom units as defined on page 3, with a particular emphasis on diversifying the new housing stock downtown For premium guidelines, see Zoning Code, Title V, Article IV, 5:65 Floor Area Premium Options in Appendix, page 11. • See the Site-Level Recommendations beginning on page 33 for more specific land use recommendations



Graphic by SmithGroupJJR

Cultural Use

Community feedback identified cultural uses as valuable, indicating that inclusion of the use is as important as maximizing land value. However, it may not be appropriate for all sites.

Development for the four sites:

E-4	Is encouraged to explore a cultural use on the sites identified as appropriate (See Site-Level Recommendations)
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Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is an important community value, but there was not agreement to prioritize it on these four sites. Community feedback strongly indicated that additional workforce affordable housing for downtown employees is essential. In addition, feedback supported additional opportunities to develop funds for income restricted affordable housing – sustaining existing units and services as well as creating the opportunity for new units. As a result, affordable housing is not specifically required on any of the sites, but supporting housing for a range of incomes remains an important community goal and is encouraged in the downtown.

City:

E-5	City Council is encouraged to dedicate a significant percentage of the land sale proceeds for each site into its Affordable Housing Trust Fund <ul style="list-style-type: none">• City Council passed resolution R-12-472 allocating proceeds from the sale of the Fifth and William parcel to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund
E-6	City Planning Commission is encouraged to examine an amendment to the zoning premium available for providing affordable housing on site (See Zoning Code: Title V, Article IV, 5:65 Floor Area Premium Options, (b) in Appendix, page 11) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide greater flexibility in on-site uses and affordable housing resources, strongly consider providing the premium for developments that choose to make an in-lieu payment for affordable housing; This provides resources to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and can be spent on additional units, services, and maintenance as needed• To ensure consistency, clearly define how the in-lieu payment will be calculated

Development for the four sites:

E-7	Is encouraged to explore development premiums available with the inclusion of affordable housing (See Zoning Code: Title V, Article IV, 5:65 Floor Area Premium Options, (b) in Appendix, page 11)
E-8	Should approach the DDA to discuss grant opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If affordable and/or workforce housing is included in a development, DDA grant dollars may be available

Open Space

Community feedback identified that inclusion of publicly-accessible open space was desired as part of the CWS plan. It was also recognized that successful open spaces are well connected to adjacent active uses, in close proximity to a density of people, and easily accessible and visible. The intent for the planning area is development on all sites, along with the addition of new public open space, and, if possible, a reliance on private partnerships to manage new open spaces utilized by the public.

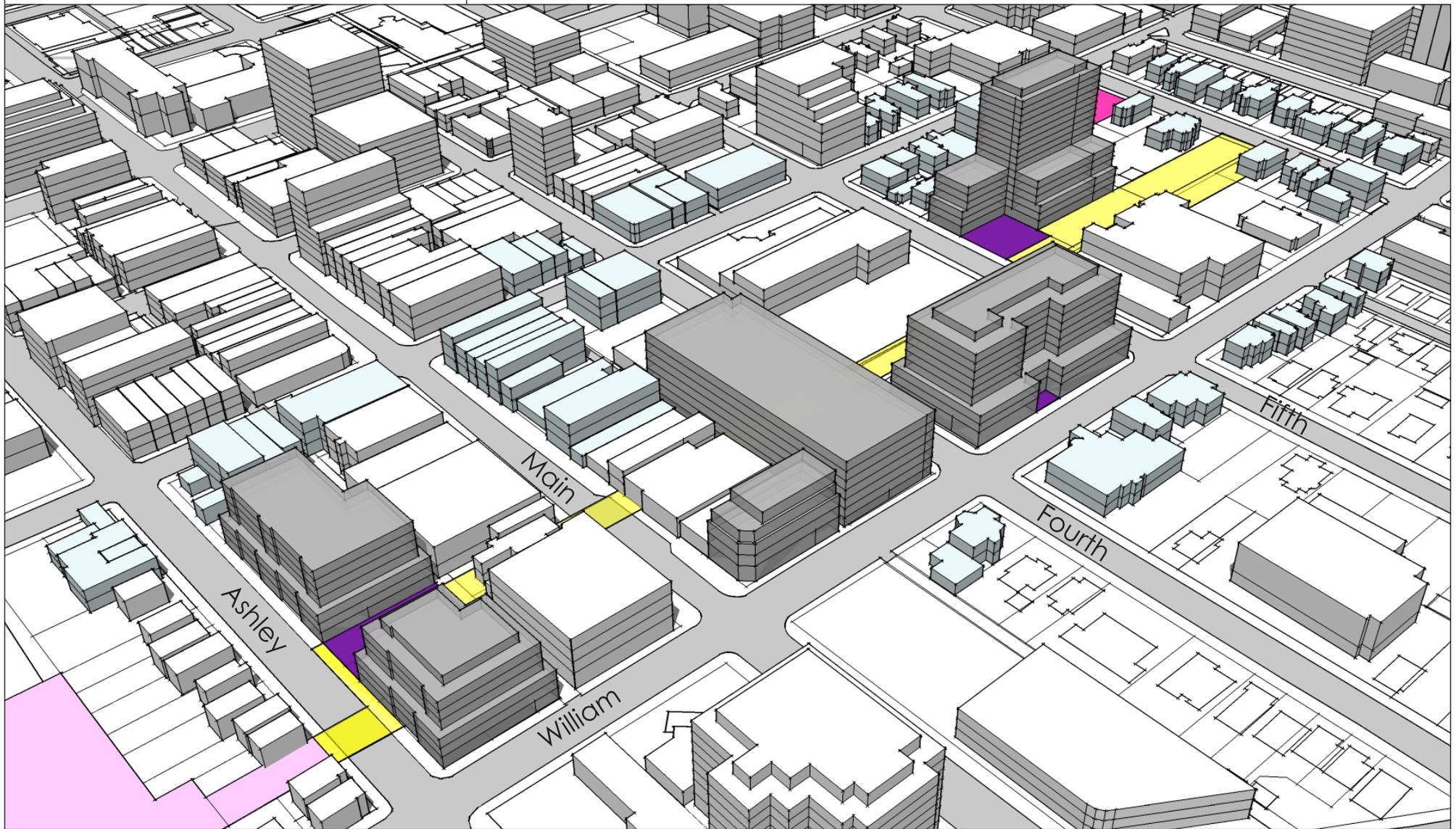
City & DDA:

E-9	Explore pursuing an analysis of the open space needs for the downtown; the DDA should work in coordination with the Parks Advisory Commission and supporting staff <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work on a recommendation for redesign and renewal of Liberty Plaza• Encourage the development of a downtown open space plan that includes an assessment of existing and planned open spaces, ideas for ways to link these open spaces together, and strategies to find ongoing funding to ensure ongoing place management and programming• Ensure connectivity and synergy between sidewalks, non-motorized paths, and open space
E-10	Further support the community's interest in urban open space and green design by incorporating green recommendations into other elements (See Streetscape and Architecture recommendations)

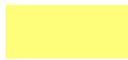
Development for the four sites:

E-11	Must adhere to the following guidelines, if publicly-accessible open space is included. Development of open space on site: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Should occur in coordination with building(s) development to encourage synergy• Must be privately developed, owned, maintained, and programmed (Developer may seek partnerships)• Must be open to the public<ul style="list-style-type: none">- All open space should always be open to the public during daylight hours and should not include locked gates or restricted passages; The exception to this would be an open space feature interior to a building (such as atriums, greenhouses, and gallerias) which can be restricted to normal business hours• Must be directly adjacent to an active ground floor use, windows, and doors• Should adhere to the Downtown Design Guidelines that highlight open space, particularly:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Locate an urban open space where there is a high level of existing or potential pedestrian activity (Downtown Design Guideline A.3.2)</i>- <i>Provide dining opportunities, moveable tables and chairs, public art, lighting, interpretive materials, historic markers, water features, and architectural details such windows and storefront walls (Downtown Design Guideline A.3.6)</i>
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Existing and Potential Open Space



Graphic by SmithGroupJJR

-  Existing Open Space
-  Potential Open Space
-  Potential Mid-Block Connection
-  Future Greenway

F. ARCHITECTURE

Participants viewed architectural quality as a key component for maintaining an interesting, attractive downtown and making a successful project. Architecture should complement well-established parts of downtown (such as Main Street) and create a distinct identity where it is currently lacking (such as Fifth Avenue).

Recommendations

Development for the four sites:

F-1	Must follow standard review procedures with the Design Review Board Design Review Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Should respond to developers as a single body, with a formal written recommendation Developer: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must meet twice with the Design Review Board• Must show responsiveness to the Design Review Board recommendations.<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The Design Review Board evaluates the effectiveness of developer response at the second meeting
F-2	If desired architectural elements (overarching and site-level) are part of the proposal, project may be eligible for a DDA grant <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Should approach the DDA to discuss grant opportunities

G. STREET EDGE

Building design that showcases active ground floor uses and invites pedestrian traffic is critical for these core downtown sites, encouraging pedestrians to turn a corner and continue exploring downtown in areas currently lacking interest.

Recommendations

Development for the four sites:

G-1	Must include pedestrian entrances, a strong presence, and windows on all streets, sidewalks, and plazas with public access
G-2	Is strongly encouraged to emphasize Downtown Design Guidelines that invite pedestrian activity and interest at the street edge <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use building elements to create a street edge that invites pedestrian activity (Downtown Design Guideline C.1.1)• A high level of ground floor transparency is encouraged (Downtown Design Guideline C.3.1)• The 411 Lofts building, at the corner of Washington and Division, is a good example of transparency at the ground floor
G-3	Must provide a strong presence and windows on William Street

H. SUSTAINABILITY

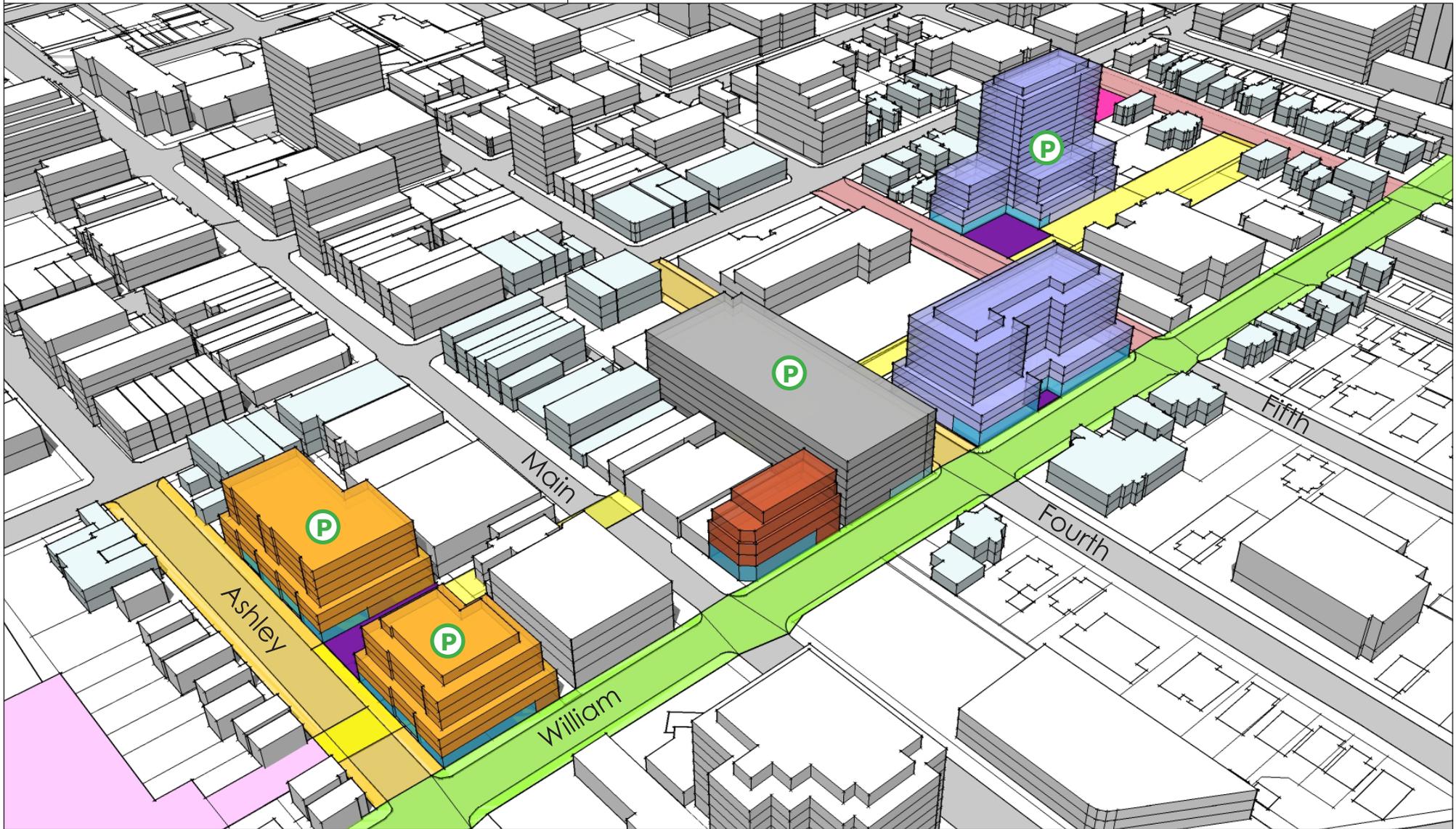
Community feedback reaffirmed the importance of sustainability to our community identity and the desire to see these four sites integrate green building and site design practices.

Recommendations

Development for the four sites:

H-1	Is encouraged to pursue sustainable solutions and fulfill LEED if part of a premium
H-2	Should emphasize innovative approaches to accommodate stormwater infiltration, native plantings, and solar access (Downtown Design Guideline A.2)
H-3	Should incorporate "urban nature" and sensory garden elements when possible <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Encourage new development to incorporate urban nature whenever possible, including window boxes, roof gardens..." (2009 Downtown Plan, p. 36)• Sensory gardens are planting areas designed to appeal to all downtown users, incorporating plantings that appeal to site, touch, and smell

Combined Overarching Recommendations



Graphic by SmithGroupJJR

- | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
|  | Existing or Potential Parking |  | Active Ground-Floor Use |  | Existing Open Space |
|  | Priority Improvements |  | Mixed Use: Residential Focus |  | Potential Open Space |
|  | Secondary Improvements |  | Mixed Use: Office Focus |  | Potential Mid-Block Connection |
|  | Recent Improvements |  | Mixed Use: Lodging or Office Focus |  | Future Greenway |

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SITE-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations that appear in this section must be applied in addition to the Overarching Recommendations.



MAIN STREET CHARACTER DISTRICT INTENT

"The Main Street Character District [which contains the Kline lot and the Palio lot], once the traditional heart of downtown, has evolved into a regional entertainment, business, and retail destination. The center of the district contains the Main Street Historic District. The 1929 First National Building (at Main and Washington) is a prominent landmark and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

First and second floor heights are similar among traditional buildings, which helps establish a continuity of scale. Architectural details also provide interest and convey a sense of scale in Main Street. While there is a range of building heights and architectural styles, most are of durable materials and high quality execution. This district has the strongest streetwall definition in the city, which is enhanced by the fine-grained texture of narrow storefronts that reflect traditional lot widths.

Being a regional dining attraction, this district is one of the more heavily trafficked visitor areas at night. Curb extensions have encouraged outdoor dining areas, which flourish seasonally. A large number of street trees and pedestrian-scaled lights complement the already pedestrian-oriented nature of the restaurant and retail destinations."

[Downtown Ann Arbor Design Guidelines, page 34]

"Preservation of [the Main Street Historic District] resources is a high priority. The intent for this district is design that maintains the traditional rhythm of existing storefronts along the street edge and varying parapet lines."

[Zoning Code: Title V, Chapter 55, Article II, 5:10.20 - Downtown Character Overlay Districts]



Photo by Ann Arbor DDA

ASHLEY and WILLIAM - KLINE LOT

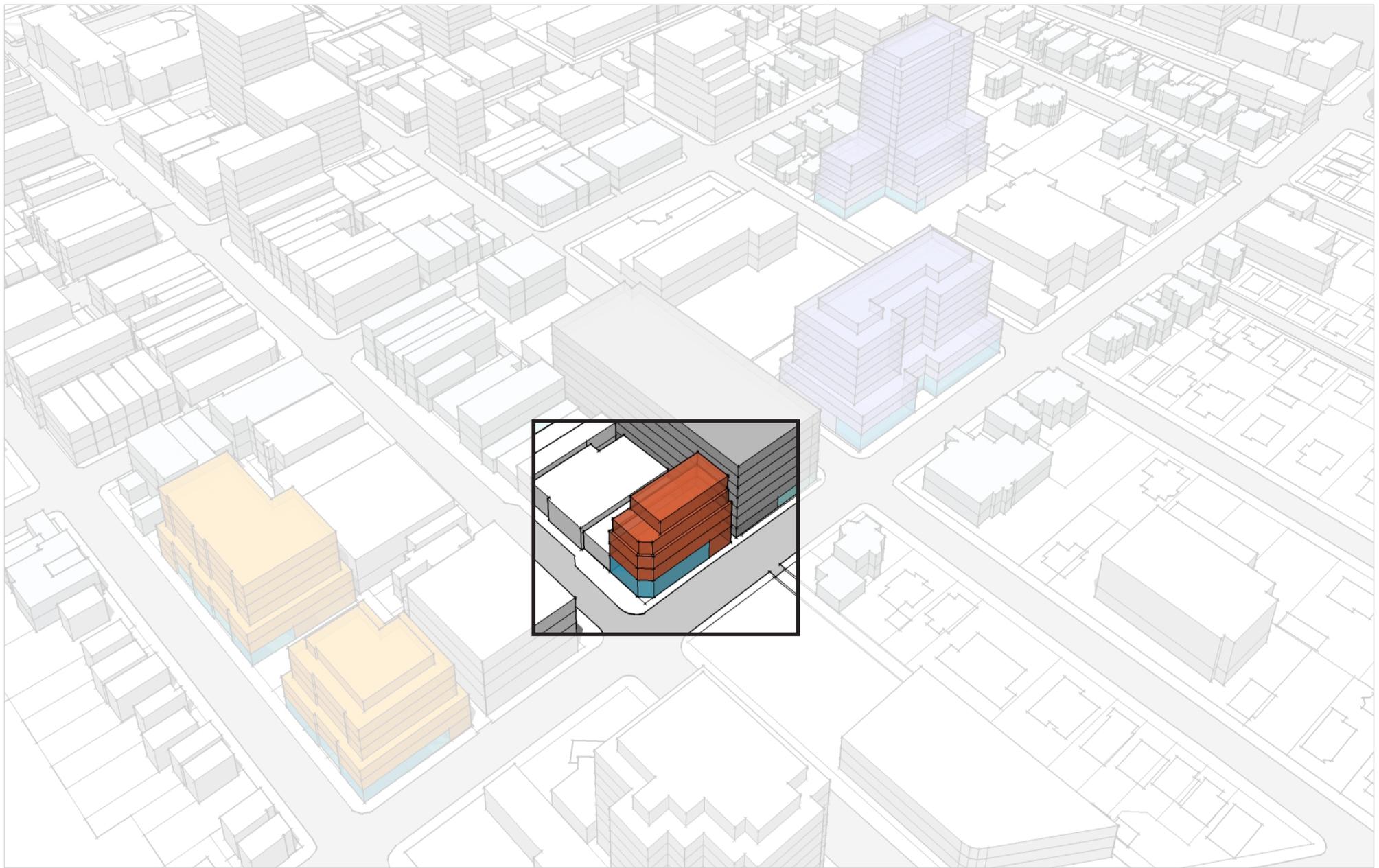
The intent for the Ashley and William site is a development that enhances Main Street as a regional entertainment, retail, and business destination. Future development should seek to increase foot traffic on William and Ashley streets, and create pedestrian connections from the Old West Side to downtown and Main Street. Of the five sites, this site was viewed as most appropriate for a residential focus and multiple buildings.

Element	Recommendations
A. Adjacencies	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building design should be sensitive to existing building scale and character across Ashley and the change in elevation due to the Allen Creek floodplain • Building use(s) and design should enhance the Main Street area as a regional dining, retail, and entertainment attraction
B. Streetscape & Transportation	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must include Ashley streetscape improvements DDA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should explore this site as an opportunity for additional transportation modes and a key connection to the Old West Side <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore improved non-motorized connectivity between the neighborhoods and downtown, particularly to the proposed Allen Creek Greenway - Explore locating a Zipcar on this site to serve future development and the adjacent neighborhood
C. Parking	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should explore with the DDA the possibility of incorporating public parking into a development plan; this site is viewed as a potential opportunity to maintain or expand the public parking system
D. Density and Massing	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is encouraged at around 400% FAR

ASHLEY and WILLIAM - KLINE LOT (continued)

Element	Recommendations
E. Land Uses	<p>Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be constructed to accommodate active ground floor uses (See Street Edge and Architecture sections in Overarching Recommendations for design elements) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design must accommodate active uses on 60% of the Ashley & William Street frontages • Should explore office and residential uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If large floor plate office is included in the development plan, DDA grant dollars may be available - If residential uses are included in the development plan, follow the definition on page 3 - If workforce housing is included in the development plan, DDA grant dollars may be available <p>Cultural Use</p> <p>Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is encouraged to consider a cultural venue; this site was discussed as a possible location, but not required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If a cultural venue is pursued, DDA grant dollars may be available - Explore coordination and partnership with local organizations <p>Open Space</p> <p>Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is encouraged to create a mid-block pedestrian connection to the alley, and prepare for a future connection through to Main Street and/or the proposed Allen Creek Greenway; As a result, site development should seek to accommodate trash collection within the building and not in the public alley <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Take advantage of the alley as an open space from which to see and access the new/proposed site and buildings, improve alley experience (Emphasize Downtown Design Guideline A.1.7)</i> - <i>Enhance Pedestrian connections, particularly those that provide connections between spaces (Downtown Design Guidelines A.5.1 and A.5.5) and those that enliven (Downtown Design Guideline A.5.4)</i> <p>DDA & City:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should maintain the use and improve public connections provided by alley way to William Street (DDA/City), particularly the Liberty Street end to encourage pedestrian travel to William Street
F. Architecture	<p>Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should align with the design character of Main Street, particularly a focus on durable materials and high quality construction (See Main Street Character District descriptions on page 34)
G. Street Edge	<p>Refer to Overarching Recommendations</p>
H. Sustainability	<p>Refer to Overarching Recommendations</p>

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MAIN and WILLIAM - PALIO LOT

MAIN and WILLIAM - PALIO LOT

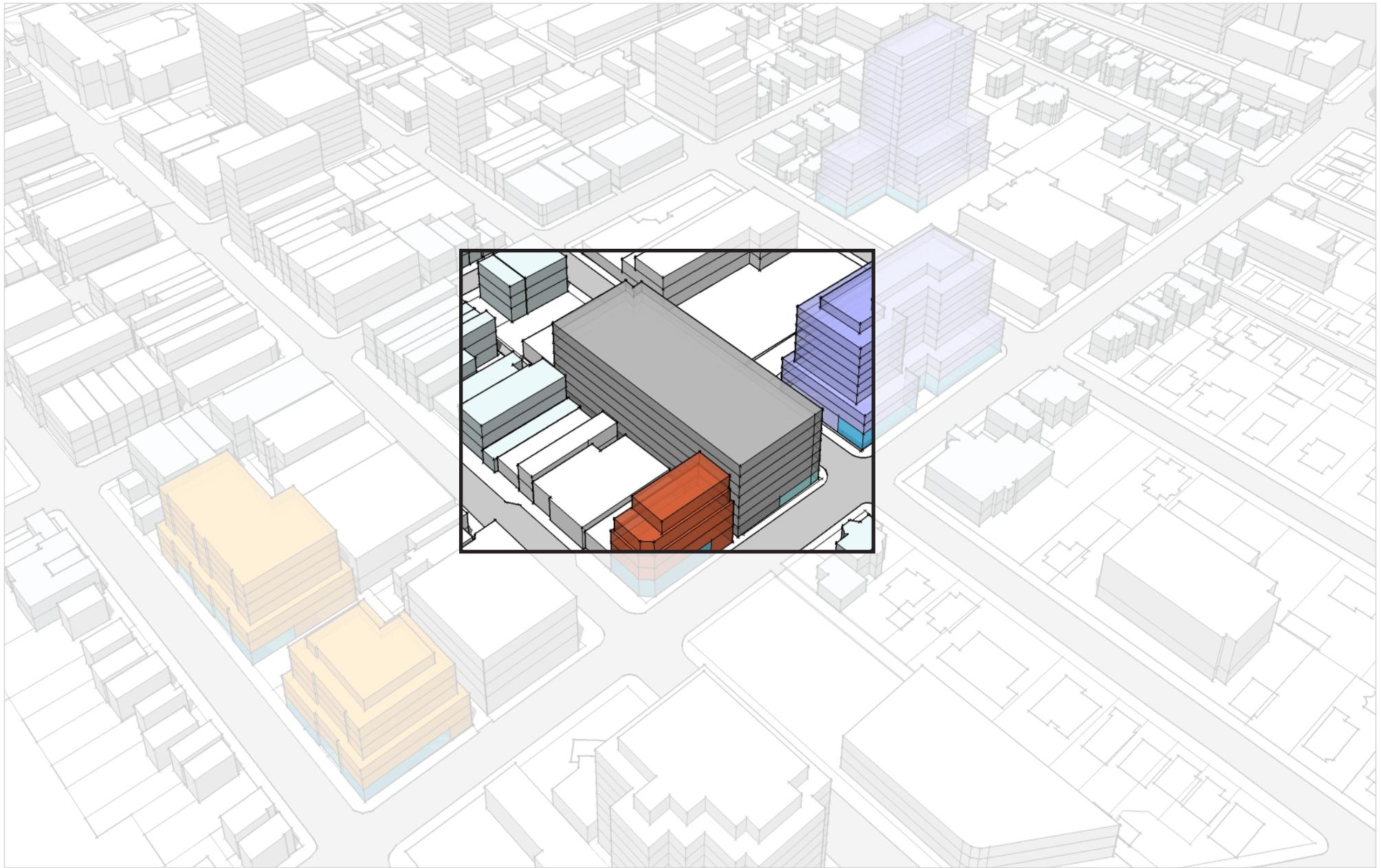
The intent for the Main and William site is a development that enhances Main Street as a regional entertainment, retail, and business destination. Future development should seek to complement existing businesses on Main Street and encourage exploration of William Street, emphasizing a ground floor use that creates pedestrian activity. The corner location of this building makes it ideal for an iconic building in form and function.

Element	Recommendations
A. Adjacencies	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building design and use should fit within the character and function of the Main Street District, enhancing the Main Street area as a regional dining, retail, and entertainment attraction
B. Streetscape & Transportation	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must restore Main Street to current design standard
C. Parking	Space constraints of this site make adding parking infeasible Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should view adjacent 4th & William parking structure as a possibility for serving parking demand
D. Density and Massing	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is encouraged at around 400% FAR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community feedback was supportive of density ranging from 400% to 700% FAR - Provides number of stories consistent with the surrounding development, helping to screen 4th & William parking structure and providing flexibility for redevelopment potential to the north
E. Land Uses	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must include active use on 80% of the Main and William Street frontages • If residential uses are included in the development plan, follow the guidelines on page 3 <p>Open Space Refer to Overarching Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed density on this site does not require an open space premium; space constraints of the site make adding a building and an open space component infeasible

MAIN and WILLIAM - PALIO LOT (continued)

Element	Recommendations
F. Architecture	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should align with the design character of Main Street, particularly a focus on durable materials and high quality construction (See Main Street Character District description on page 34) • Is encouraged to create a gateway/iconic entry into downtown, placing strong emphasis on Downtown Design Guidelines that speak to a gateway feature <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Corner sites are an opportunity to express an architectural gateway or focal point and a dominant architectural feature (Downtown Design Guidelines A.1.3)</i>
G. Street Edge	Refer to Overarching Recommendations
H. Sustainability	Refer to Overarching Recommendations

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FOURTH and WILLIAM PARKING DECK

FOURTH and WILLIAM PARKING DECK

The intent for the Fourth and William parking deck is to serve as an opportunity for activation between Main Street and campus; converting existing offices and some ground floor parking into storefronts and more interesting ground floor uses. Improving the look and feel of this site is critical to enhancing the experience along William and increasing pedestrian activity in the planning area.

Element	Recommendations
A. Adjacencies	DDA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore façade improvements to enhance experience on nearby streets • As part of façade improvements, explore signage and real-time information to serve transit patrons • Provide additional transportation choices to complement the Blake Transit Center
B. Streetscape & Transportation	<p>Streetscape DDA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of streetscape enhancements, this block could benefit from wider sidewalks and street tree buffer from street traffic <p>Transportation DDA and partners should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize these blocks as a transportation hub, strengthening the connection to the Blake Transit Center • Explore constructing bike cage(s) at either end of the parking structure to serve adjacent buildings • Continue partnering with transit providers, encouraging AATA, UM Blue Bus, Greyhound, and others to explore stops at this location • Explore additional moped and motorcycle parking within the parking structure
C. Parking	Not applicable
D. Density and Massing	Not applicable

FOURTH and WILLIAM PARKING DECK (continued)

Element	Recommendations
<p>E. Land Uses</p>	<p>DDA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain as a parking deck • Explore opportunities for commercial use in most of the existing Republic Parking office space on Fourth Avenue • Explore a build-out of the William Street side, adding additional commercial uses along William Street <p>Open Space</p> <p>DDA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore mid-block crossing to Blake Transit Center
<p>F. Architecture</p>	<p>DDA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should implement facade improvements to enhance character • Emphasize Downtown Plan "urban nature" as well as sensory garden elements: "Encourage new development to incorporate urban nature whenever possible, including window boxes, roof gardens..."
<p>G. Street Edge</p>	<p>DDA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunity to provide an entry and presence on William Street • Explore opportunity to provide a presence and windows, if not additional entry, on Fourth Avenue
<p>H. Sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore sustainable renovations and enhancements

MIDTOWN CHARACTER AREA INTENT

Architectural styles in Midtown [which contains the “Y” lot and the Library Lane lot] include some 19th century wood-framed residential (mostly converted to office use), but stylistically, the district is dominated by an array of late 20th century mid-rise office and governmental facilities.

The primary north-to-south street in Midtown is Fifth Avenue. It can be considered Ann Arbor’s “civic corridor,” anchored to the south by the Ann Arbor District Library’s Main Branch, the Blake Transit Center and the Federal Building. To the north, directly across E. Huron Street from Midtown, are the Ann Arbor Municipal Center and the old and new fire stations and Hands-On Museum.

With the exception of the Library, the buildings in Midtown have limited hours and are used primarily during the business day. Since Midtown is surrounded by character districts with evening-use venues, it often serves as a passage, in particular the west-to-east blocks between Main Street and State Street. Pedestrians seem to be focused on getting from point A to point B and would benefit from more opportunities to linger.

Future development should find opportunities to establish an identity for Midtown, increasing its vitality and expanding its offerings. Primary pedestrian access to buildings along the civic corridor should be from the corridor street.

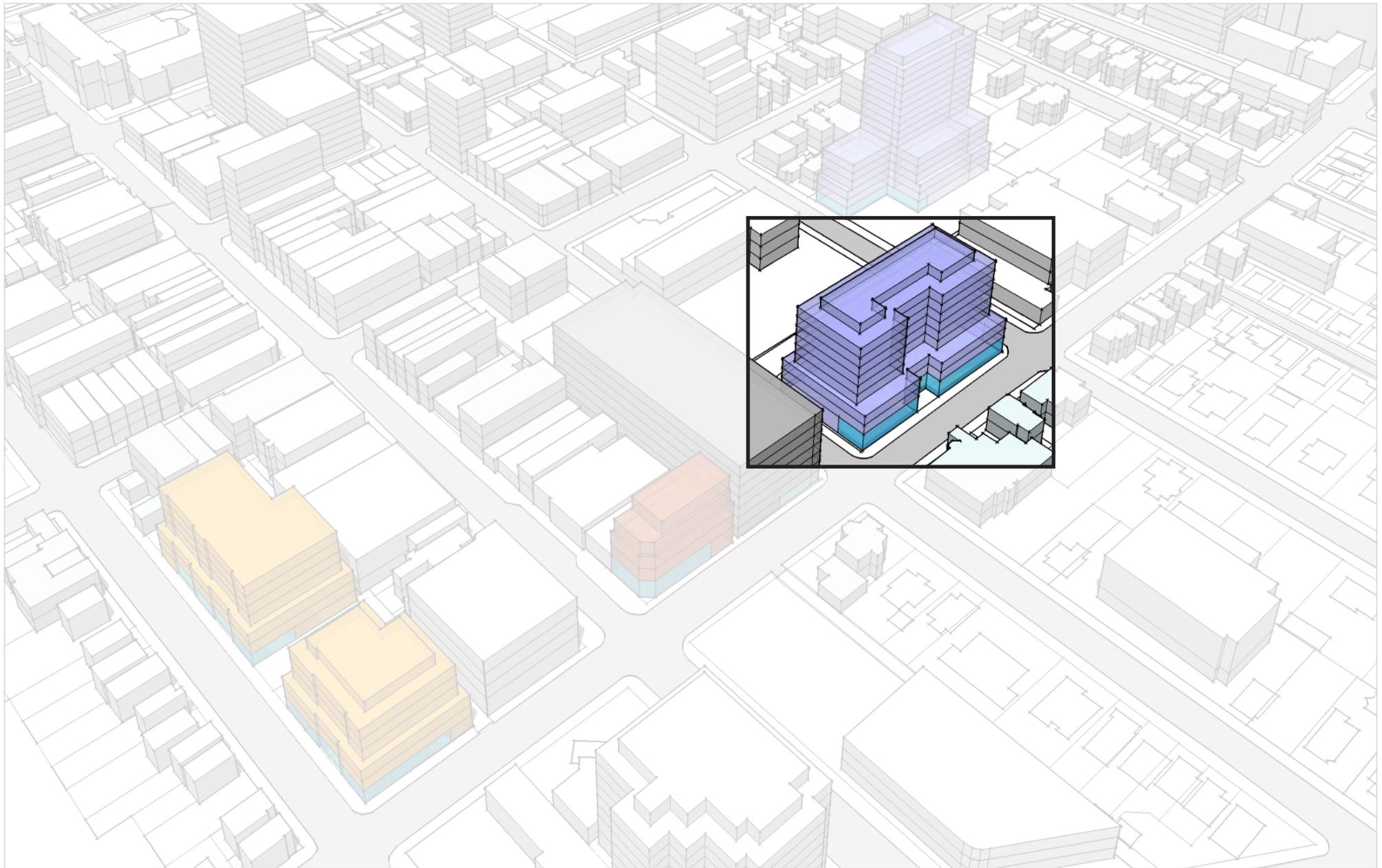
[Downtown Ann Arbor Design Guidelines, page 31]

At present, this district lacks a strong sense of identity and is a place where creation of a new context should occur. The intent for this district is higher density development with a strongly defined street edge and active open spaces.

[Zoning Code: Title V, Chapter 55, Article II, 5:10.20 - Downtown Character Overlay Districts]



Photo by Ann Arbor DDA



FIFTH and WILLIAM - "Y" LOT

FIFTH and WILLIAM - “Y” LOT

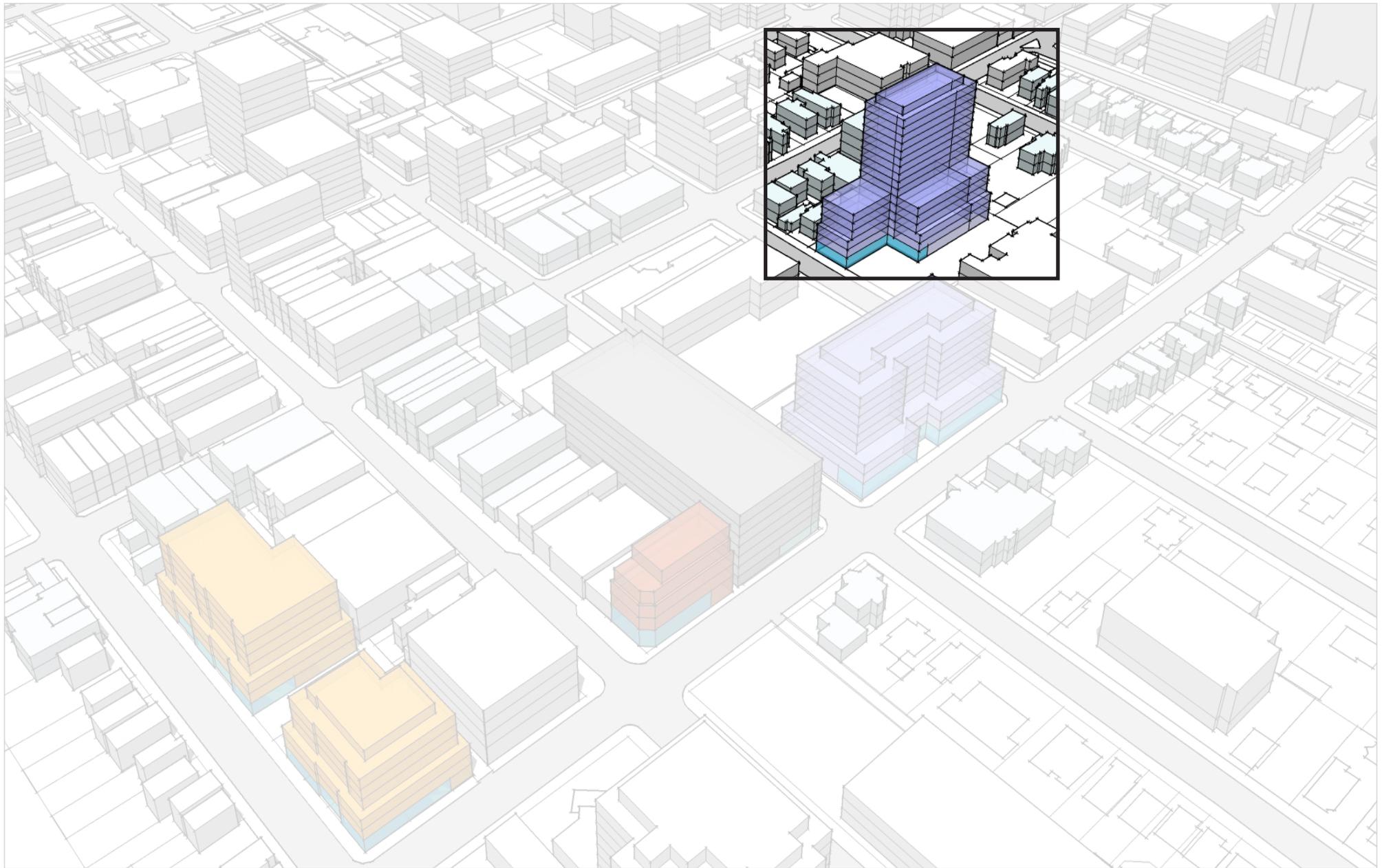
The intent for the Fifth and William site is a development that helps to create an identity and activity generator in this portion of Midtown. Future development should seek to bring more people downtown and create synergy with the Blake Transit Center and Downtown Library. Any future building on this site, facing three streets, will have a significant impact on the pedestrian environment and should be designed to create a vibrant sidewalk experience. This site and the Library Lane site were viewed as most appropriate for large floor plate office or lodging due to location and site size.

Element	Recommendations
A. Adjacencies	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is encouraged to provide a pedestrian connection to the Blake Transit Center at the ground floor • Is encouraged to explore building over the Blake Transit Center and expanding the development footprint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developers are encouraged to meet with AATA officials to discuss this potential
B. Streetscape & Transportation	Streetscape Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must make streetscape improvements to 4th Avenue frontage and restore 5th to current design standards Transportation DDA and partners should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize these blocks as a transportation hub, strengthening the connection to the Blake Transit Center • Explore how this site could enhance transportation modes provided at the Blake Transit Center and 4th & William parking structure
C. Parking	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is encouraged to discuss with the DDA the potential for parking at the 4th & William parking structure, at the Library Lane parking structure, and the possibility to expand the Library Lane structure beneath the 5th & William site
D. Density and Massing	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Density is encouraged at around 700% FAR

FIFTH and WILLIAM - “Y” LOT (continued)

Element	Recommendations
E. Land Uses	<p>Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimally, must front active uses on 60% of the William Street frontage and 100% at the corners of 4th and 5th Avenue • Should include large floor plate office or lodging; the site size and core location make these uses attractive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If large floor plate office is included in development plan, DDA grant dollars may be available • Should include residential as a secondary use as a way to achieve development premiums (See page 3 for residential guidelines) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Premiums require a combination of LEED certification, residential, affordable housing, and pedestrian amenities/plaza space (See Appendix page 12 for guidelines) - If workforce housing is included in the development plan, DDA grant dollars may be available • Is encouraged to explore evening uses and an opportunity to linger (Midtown Character District Downtown Design Guideline) <p>Affordable Housing City Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passed resolution R-12-472 allocating proceeds from the sale of this site to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund • Should seek to maximize the purchase price for this site, so that the greatest amount of net proceeds can go to affordable housing <p>Open Space Refer to Overarching Recommendations</p>
F. Architecture	<p>Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should pursue high quality construction, stressing a design that helps improve the pedestrian experience and create an identity for Midtown, taking into account the Midtown Character District described on page 46 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This site is highly visible from Main Street and should stress high quality architecture, providing a visual connection and iconic presence - <i>Corner sites are an opportunity to express an architectural gateway or focal point and a dominant architectural feature (Downtown Design Guidelines A.1.3)</i> - <i>Where adjacent properties are underdeveloped and/or the block lacks inviting and interesting characteristics, consider a building, site, and streetscape design that helps to create a vibrant pedestrian setting (Downtown Design Guideline A.1.6)</i>
G. Street Edge	Refer to Overarching Recommendations
H. Sustainability	Refer to Overarching Recommendations

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LIBRARY LANE and FIFTH - LIBRARY LOT

LIBRARY LANE and FIFTH - LIBRARY LOT

The intent for the Library Lane and Fifth Ave site is a development that helps to create an identity and activity generator in this portion of Midtown. Future development should seek to bring more people downtown and create synergy with the Blake Transit Center and Downtown Library. Any future building on this site should help activate the plaza space, draw pedestrians down Fifth Avenue, and create an iconic addition to the skyline. This site and the Fifth and William site were viewed as most appropriate for large floor plate office or lodging due to location and site size.

Element	Recommendations
A. Adjacencies	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be complementary to the adjacent Library use • Should explore possible programming of the open space or building that complement Library programming and function
B. Streetscape & Transportation	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must repair 5th Avenue and Library Lane to current design standard DDA and transportation partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should continue to accommodate Zipcar in the system, finalize Library Lane as a Zipcar location • Should explore using Library Lane as a bike share location
C. Parking	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should discuss parking opportunities with the DDA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approximately up to 218 spaces in the Library Lane underground structure can be put under contract and not violate interest-free bond requirements
D. Density and Massing	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Density is encouraged at around 700% FAR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take advantage of the investment in footings and the mid-block location to create an iconic addition to the skyline - If needed, site can accommodate up to a 20-story development (This would require a planned project and must be able to show greater community benefit)

LIBRARY LANE and FIFTH - LIBRARY LOT (continued)

Element	Recommendations
<p>E. Land Use</p>	<p>Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must include a building and plaza/open space • Must front active uses on the plaza space and 60% of the Library Lane and Fifth Avenue frontages • Should include large floor plate office or lodging; the site size and core location make this use ideal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If large floor plate office is included in development plan, DDA grant dollars may be available • Should include residential as a secondary use as a way to achieve development premiums (See page 3 for residential guidelines) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Premiums require a combination of LEED certification, residential, affordable housing, and pedestrian amenities/plaza space (See Appendix, page 12 for guidelines) - If workforce housing is included in the development plan, DDA grant dollars may be available • Is encouraged to explore evening uses and an opportunity to linger (Midtown Character District Downtown Design Guideline) <p>Cultural Use</p> <p>Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is encouraged to explore the inclusion of a cultural venue; this site was discussed as a possible location, but not a required use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If a cultural venue is pursued, DDA grant funding may be available - Explore coordination and partnership with local organizations <p>Open Space</p> <p>Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have a plaza/open space on site (Minimally, develop the 5,000-square-foot intended plaza/park space) Could expand plaza space north along Fifth Ave (up to 12,000 sq. ft.) at the developer's/City's discretion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The goal is to create synergy between the building design/function and the urban open space on site; The developer should respond in a way that meets the community's goals of an active ground floor use and active urban open space, while ensuring a successful link between the two - Surrounding development opportunities are limited near this site due to historic districts, so density to support and activate the open space is essential

LIBRARY LANE and FIFTH - LIBRARY LOT (continued)

Element	Recommendations
<p>F. Architecture</p>	<p>Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should pursue high quality construction, stressing a design that helps improve the pedestrian experience and create an identity for Midtown, taking into account the Midtown Character District described on page 46 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Where adjacent properties are underdeveloped and/or the block lacks inviting and interesting characteristics, consider a building, site, and streetscape design that helps to create a vibrant pedestrian setting (Downtown Design Guideline A.1.6)</i> • This site is visible from all four sides and should seek an iconic design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>If the street geometries are such that the mid-block is the termination of a perpendicular street view, consider a design with enough presence and detail to make that view noteworthy (Downtown Design Guideline A.1.5)</i>
<p>G. Street Edge</p>	<p>Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building design must include entries facing the plaza/open space and Library Lane, with a high level of transparency to help activate and manage the space
<p>H. Sustainability</p>	<p>Refer to Overarching Recommendations</p>

IMPLEMENTATION – PHASE IV OF THE CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION

The CWS plan recommendations interconnect, and work together to shape a strategic framework for future development on these sites and redesign of the public right of way in this area. With the completion of this plan, the Phase I, II, and III elements in the City Council authorization resolution to the DDA are accomplished. Now begins Phase IV of the resolution, which is DDA implementation of the Parcel-by-Parcel Plan. Under the City Council resolution, this Phase sets forward that the DDA is to work with its real estate professional and City Staff to write RFPs for City Council approval, assemble an Advisory Committee to assist it with its selection recommendations, and provide City Council with the information it needs to make its decisions regarding a proposed developer and project.

DDA Recommendations for Next Steps

The DDA's consultants have made a very compelling case that rather than releasing a single site for sale, the City should consider packaging together two sites when it is ready to move forward. Packaging sites creates a greater likelihood that a developer can meet the expectations outlined in the plan, for a couple reasons. First, soliciting interest in two sites and its accompanying larger land assembly typically will attract a higher caliber developer – one who is much more likely to be well-capitalized and have access to high-quality tenants. Additionally, packaging adjacent sites reduces risk for the developer of an adjacent competitor, and allows them to provide a better balance in mix of uses. As a result, there is a greater potential of accomplishing community goals while meeting the developers financial return needs for a viable project.

As the first project, the DDA recommends that the City consider releasing the Fifth/William and Library Lane sites as a package. Current development indicates that demand for residential, retail, and commercial space demand is very strong near the University of Michigan central campus. The sites are well situated only a few blocks from campus, and one block from Main Street, and they both provide sufficient floor area to accommodate plan elements such as large floor plate office, high density residential, open space, and lodging. Together, development of these sites can serve as a catalyst for the rest of the sites along the corridor.

To solicit developer interest, the DDA anticipates that it will follow a two phase process, first releasing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ), and then releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to a selected subgroup of RFQ respondents. In its RFQ and RFP the DDA will make clear that as part of any final development agreement, the DDA and City will insist on performance requirements to ensure that each site is developed to the City's standards. The DDA will bring its RFQ and RFP to the City for approval before distributing them to ensure their completeness and alignment with City goals.

Even as the RFQ/RFP process unfolds, the DDA will simultaneously develop a streetscape plan for William Street (Plan recommendations B-1 through B-3, page 21). This streetscape plan will incorporate elements of the City's NonMotorized Plan, and will include sidewalk and roadway enhancements, including bike lanes, pedestrian scale LED lights, seating, and more. The DDA will then work to implement plan elements, setting aside the sidewalk portions where development may be imminent lest they be damaged by construction.

The very robust community conversation that took place as part of the CWS process made clear that there are two policy areas that need further consideration and input by City Commissions.

IMPLEMENTATION – PHASE IV OF THE CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION (continued)

The City Planning Commission and Housing & Human Services Board are encouraged to take a fresh look at the zoning premium available for providing affordable housing on-site (Plan recommendation E-6, page 26). Currently under zoning a developer is allowed to build to 900% of FAR if the required affordable housing units are constructed on site. As part of the community discussion about affordable housing it was regularly noted that rebuilding the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund would provide much-needed funds to sustain existing affordable housing units and to gain new units, because these funds would provide a measure of flexibility and immediacy of response as opportunities or challenges became known. Although there is a keen interest in increasing the number of affordable units in the downtown, there is also recognition that there may be other areas of the community where affordable units are needed as well. To this end, the DDA is recommending that the City Planning Commission and Housing & Human Services Board consider revisiting the current zoning incentive, to see if there is merit in modifying this incentive to allow increased density to 900% in the downtown in exchange for a considerable contribution-in-lieu payment to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. And if there is merit, what the details of this contribution-in-lieu arrangement might look like.

There was also a great deal of public comment throughout the CWS process about the desire for additional downtown open space, and there were many ideas about whether it should feature a large lawn or be made of durable hardscape materials, whether it should be a publically owned park or a privately owned area open to the public, and where new open space should be located. There was also robust discussion about how plazas and parks in the downtown bring with them concerns about safety and nuisance concerns, and how they require very strategic planning including active uses such as coffee shops and restaurants immediately abutting their edges, clear sightlines, and programming. There were concerns that the existing parks and plazas in and near the downtown are underutilized, and that park dollars should be prioritized to ensure that existing parks are made successful before creating more. And finally, there were concerns raised that in addition to Library Lane as the site for a future open space, that several new parks are simultaneously being proposed by community members for a number of other sites, including the former MichCon property, the City's 721 N. Main Street property, the City's 415 W. Washington Street property, and the 1st & William parking lot. Certainly no element of the CWS process engendered more discussion than open space and how best to address this. For all these reasons, the DDA is recommending that the City's Parks Advisory Commission formulate an open space plan for downtown that addresses these issues (Plan recommendation E-9, page 27).



APPENDIX

This appendix contains selected materials. The Supplemental Appendix, a separate document, contains additional materials.

