



<https://www.fwb.org/550/Downtown-Design-Guidelines-Project>



June 10, 2025
City Council Workshop

Fort Walton Beach Downtown Design Guidelines



AGENDA

- Project Overview
- Design Guidelines
- Next Steps



DESIGN GUIDELINES

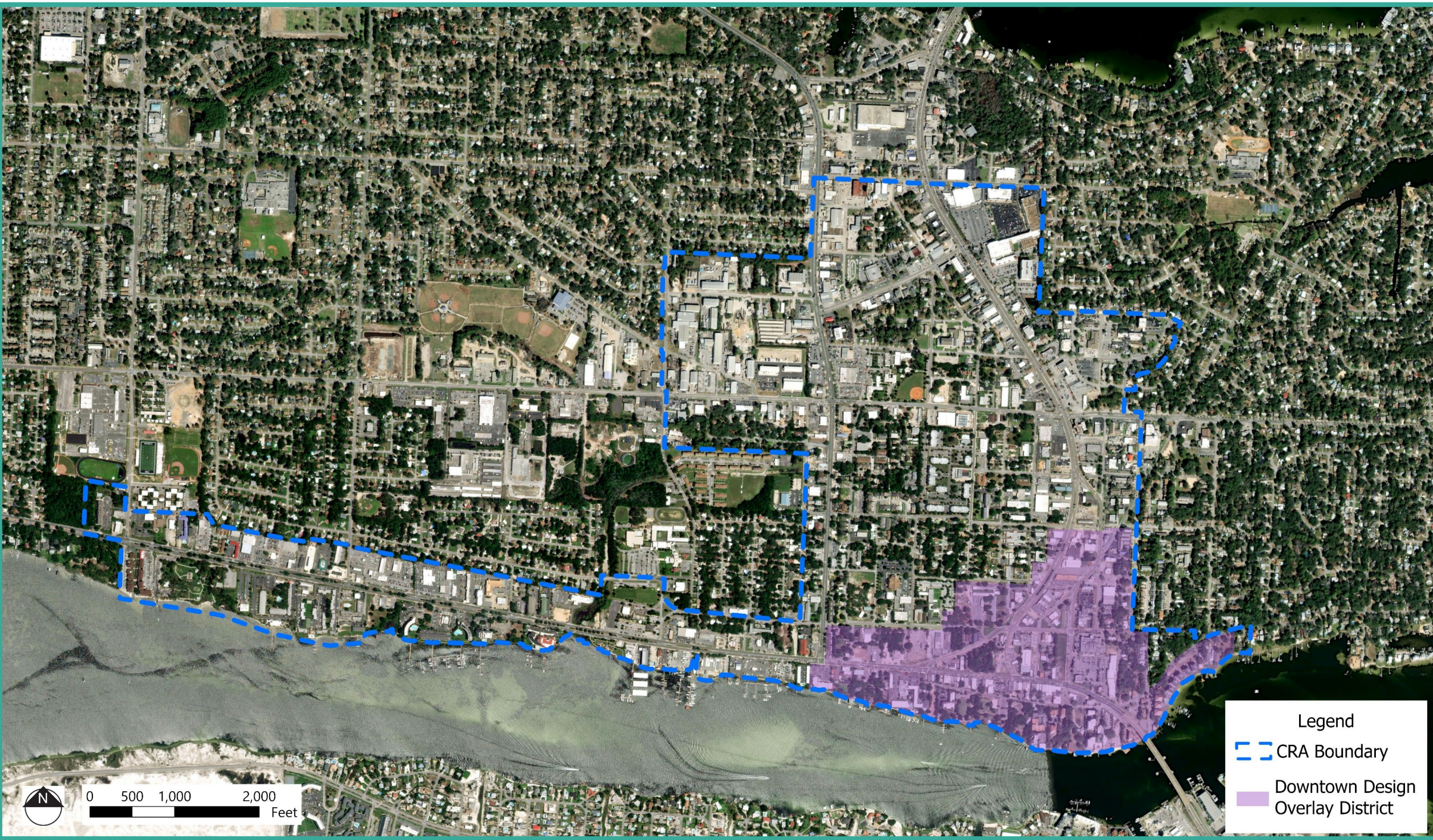
Principles that create a distinct identity and **sense of place** for a defined area to proactively support current property owners and future development.

- Improve the visitor experience
- Maintain existing successful businesses
- Attract new businesses and sectors
- Better connect residents to Downtown
- Emphasize and preserve the history of FWB



DESIGN GUIDELINES INCLUDE

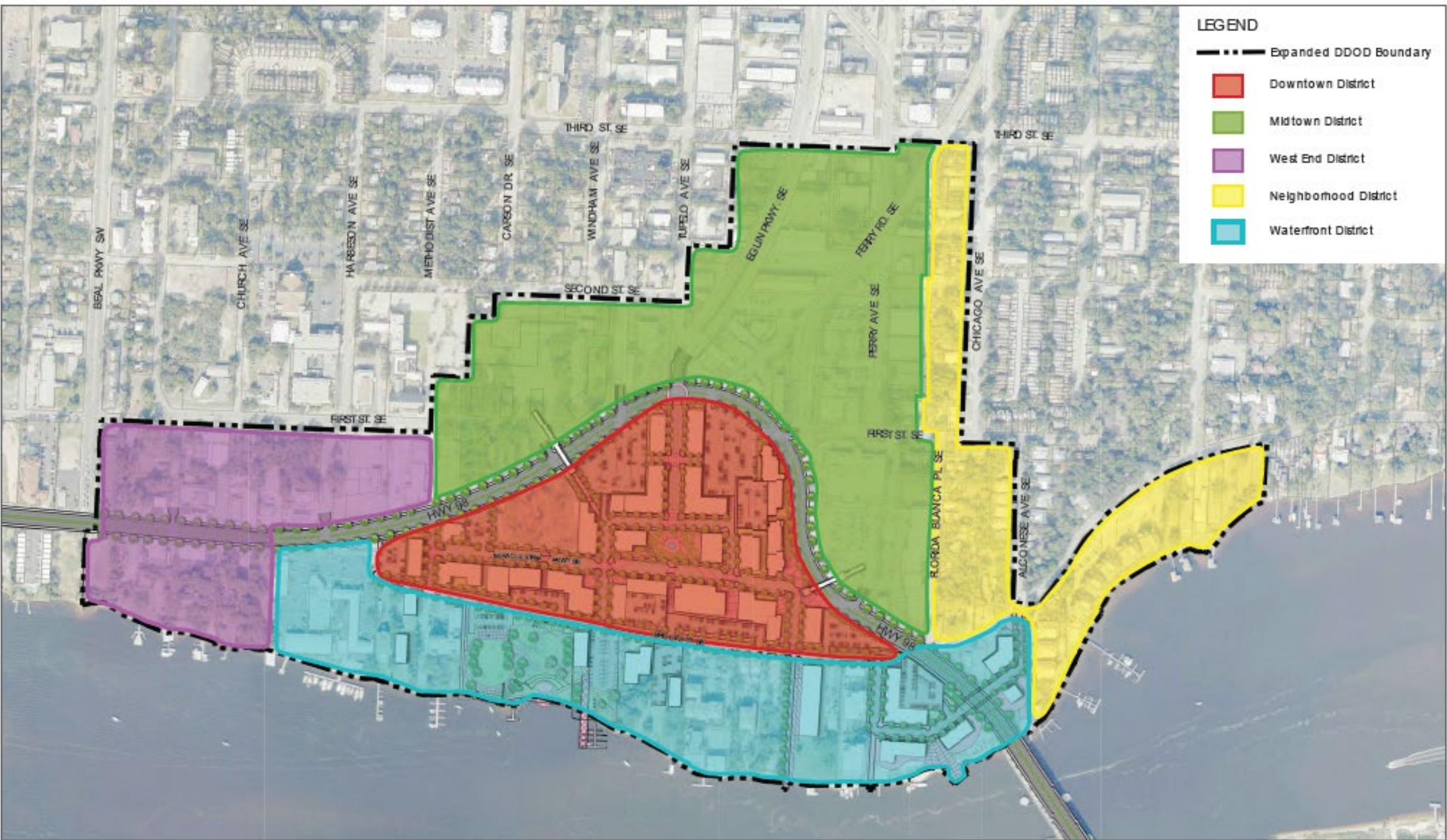
- Street cross-sections and materials
- Streetscape and public space amenities
- Open space and Public Art
- Pedestrian and non-vehicle connectivity
- Architectural style options and inspiration
- Building orientation, massing and scale
- Location of parking
- Active use designations



Legend

 CRA Boundary

 Downtown Design Overlay District



FINDINGS AND DISCOVERY: EXISTING CONDITIONS

1. Multiple small parcels under different ownership
2. Historic assets
3. Built form addresses the street
4. High volumes of traffic
5. Existing grid network
6. Secondary main street
7. Pedestrian connectivity
8. Waterfront access
9. Eclectic architectural style
10. Diverse collection of retail and service operators





PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY CHARETTE

June 20th, 2024, at 5:30pm

- 70+ attendees
- Community Values Survey
- Charette Station
- Visioning



- IVE overpass
- Improve landing
 - Water features
 - Landscaping
 - Splash pad
 - Palm trees
 - Improve gazebo
 - ↳ Amphitheater
 - ~~Native Plants~~
- Interpretive signage + displays to share area's history/culture/character
- Keep historic character
- Develop vacant lots, don't tear down existing buildings
- Slow down traffic
- Acquire Red Lobster, make part of L.I. Park
- Don't become 30A or Destin
- Not matchy or fancy
- Keep charm and funkiness
- No "Stucco"



IF AROUND THE MOUND
IS NOT ELEVATED
THIS PROJECT WILL NOT
WORK!

BRUCE BLACKWELL

Andrew Jones 853-263-1111
3-28-16/17
→ Please spend time Downtown
at night when the most business
takes place
→ Include Brooke Street &
Schuyler Lane to Bayview Avenue
in the design

- Plan to close main street to go over bridge is the Best idea!
- Half Round the mound will help!

CRA STAKEHOLDER MEETING

July 16th, 2024, at 4:30pm

- 25+ attendees



Parks and Open Space

- Native Planting
- Places to rest
- Connect with water

Street and Roadways

- Shade
- Lighting
- Temporary activation

Main Street

- Local character
- Outdoor space for businesses

Buildings and Architecture

- Preserve historic buildings
- Encourage active uses on ground floor

ONLINE SURVEY

Open June 14th – August 9th

80+ respondents



Parks and Open Space

- Connect to existing trails, greenways, and waterways
- Desire for green space and places to enjoy nature
- Preservation of “small town charm” and community character

Street and Roadways

- Buildings close to the street
- Comfortable places to walk
- Wide sidewalks, shade (trees and awnings), and street furniture
- Nearly 50% of respondents would like to see structured parking

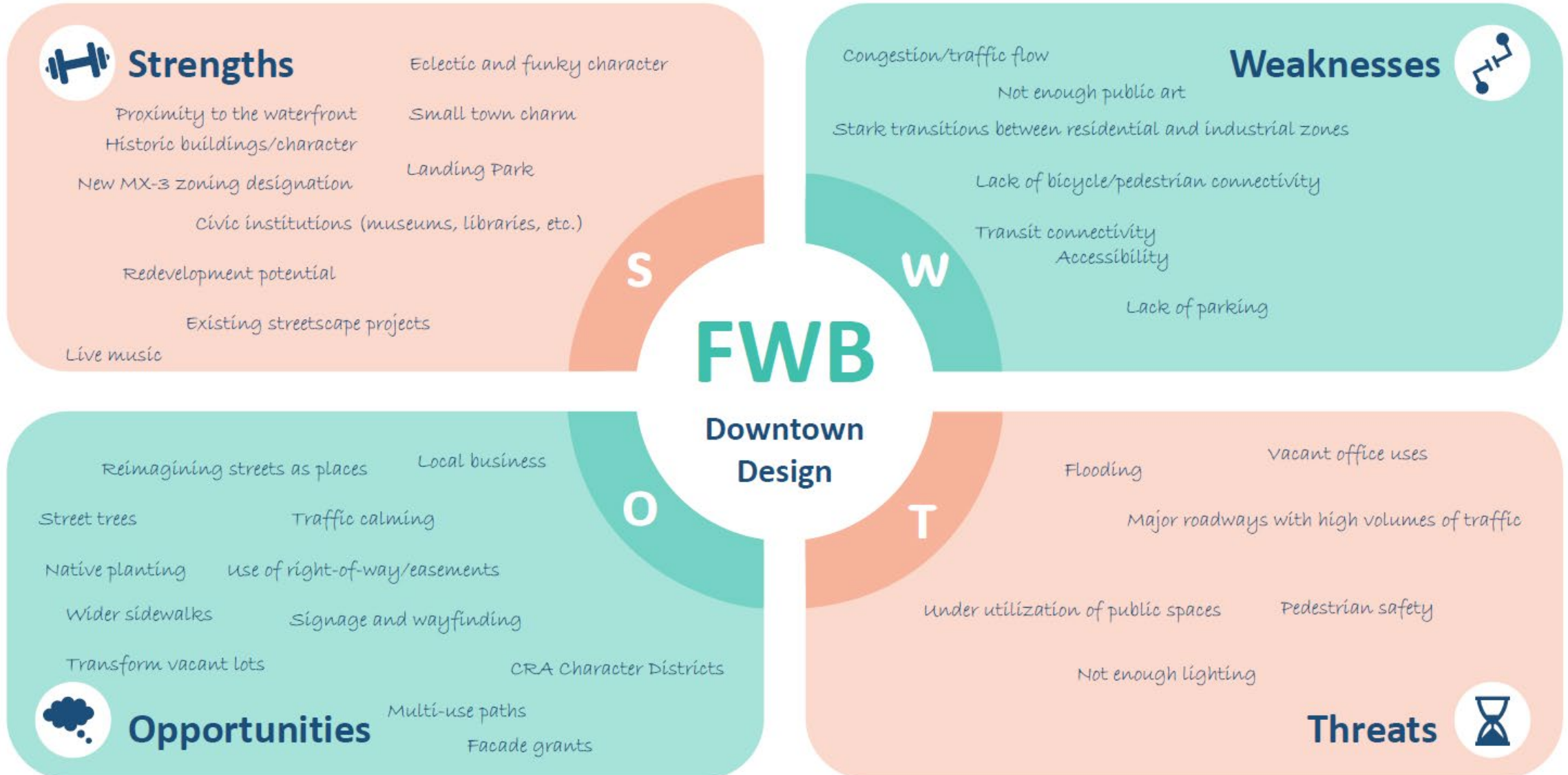
Main Street

- Most respondents recognize the potential of Downtown
- Support for preserving unique character
- Outdoor activation and vibrancy are valued

Buildings and Architecture

- Nearly 80% of respondents believe historic buildings are a valuable feature
- Strong support for preservation
- Encourage active uses that maintain the feel of Downtown

WHAT WE HEARD



DATA → PUBLIC INPUT → GOALS



DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES GOALS:

- Develop a modern and vibrant urban atmosphere to attract residents and tourists alike to the Downtown area.
- Emphasize the historical charm of Downtown through preservation of historic structures and complementary architectural designs.
- Promote character-rich placemaking with new developments that are human-scaled and context-sensitive.
- Cultivate a network of distinct public spaces to provide for a sense of welcome and belonging.
- Create a distinct identity and unique sense of place downtown.
- Foster a pleasant, engaging, and diverse pedestrian experience.
- Maintain and promote effective multi-modal circulation.

FORT WALTON BEACH DOWNTOWN

DESIGN GUIDELINES

PREPARED FOR:

City of Fort Walton Beach

April 2025

DRAFT



HOW TO USE THE GUIDELINES



PUBLIC REALM

- Covers the design of shared spaces within the public right-of-way like sidewalks, streets, and parks.

Public Realm

- Block Configuration
- Pedestrian Realm
 - Sidewalk Zone
 - Street Furnishings & Outdoor Furniture
 - Planting Zone
 - Building Transition Zone
 - Shade Structures
- Street Cross-Sections
- Accessibility
- On-Street Parking & Parklets
- Active Uses & Flexible Spaces
- Landscape & Hardscape
- Lighting
- Wayfinding & Signage
 - Gateway
- Utilities

PRIVATE REALM

- Details standards for buildings and privately owned outdoor spaces, including architectural styles, materials, and landscaping.

Private Realm

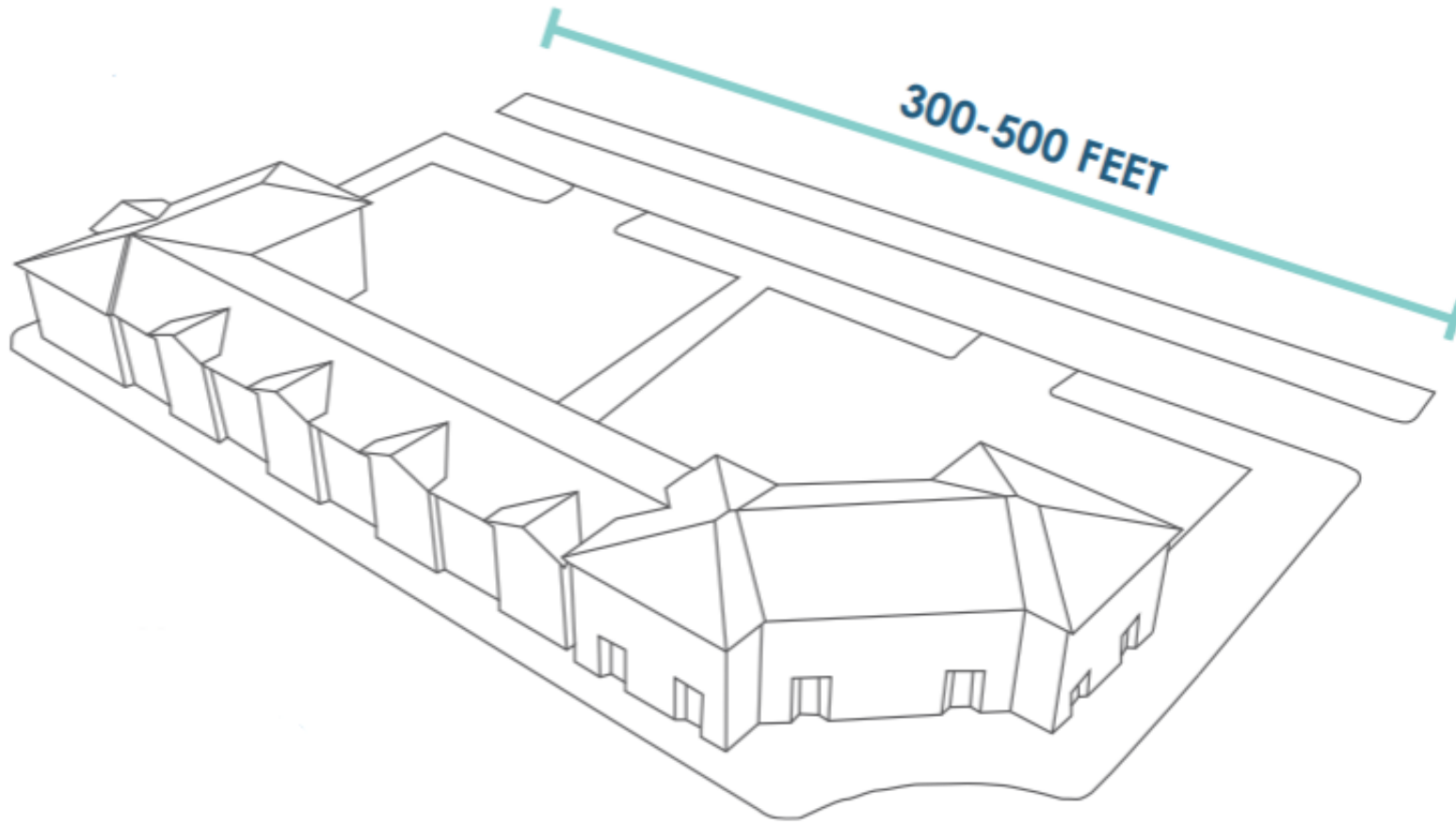
- Building Placement
- Architectural Styles for New Development
 - Massing
 - Articulation
 - Design Materials
- Activated Ground Floor
 - Entryway Typologies
 - Storefront Facades
- Private Outdoor Spaces
 - Site Furnishings
- Landscape & Hardscape
- Accessory Structures
- Parking Structures and Parking Lots
- Infill & Reuse





PUBLIC REALM

PUBLIC. 1 BLOCK CONFIGURATION



- Walkable blocks
- Interior pedestrian cut-throughs
- Mid-block service drives
- Minimize curb cuts

PUBLIC 2. PEDESTRIAN REALM



2A. Sidewalk Zone



2B. Street Furnishings & Outdoor Furniture Zone



2C. Planting Zone



2D. Building Transition Zone

PUBLIC 2A. SIDEWALK ZONE

- **Paved, linear space** where pedestrians travel and gather
- Must provide **clear, continuous circulation** for pedestrians
- Designed to accommodate people of all ages and abilities
 - Free of obstructions
 - Protect pedestrians from vehicle traffic
- Materials should reflect areas character



PUBLIC 2B. STREET FURNISHINGS AND OUTDOOR FURNITURE ZONE



Library of:

- Benches and seating
- Trash receptacles
- Bike racks
- Lighting (CPTED)
- Wayfinding and Signage

PUBLIC 2C. PLANTING ZONE



Components:

- Tree wells
- Garden beds
- Planter pots

Resulting in:

- Buffering
- Aesthetics
- Water quality
- Habitat

PUBLIC 2D. BUILDING TRANSITION ZONE



Components:

- Buffer and refuge
- Active edge
- Connection

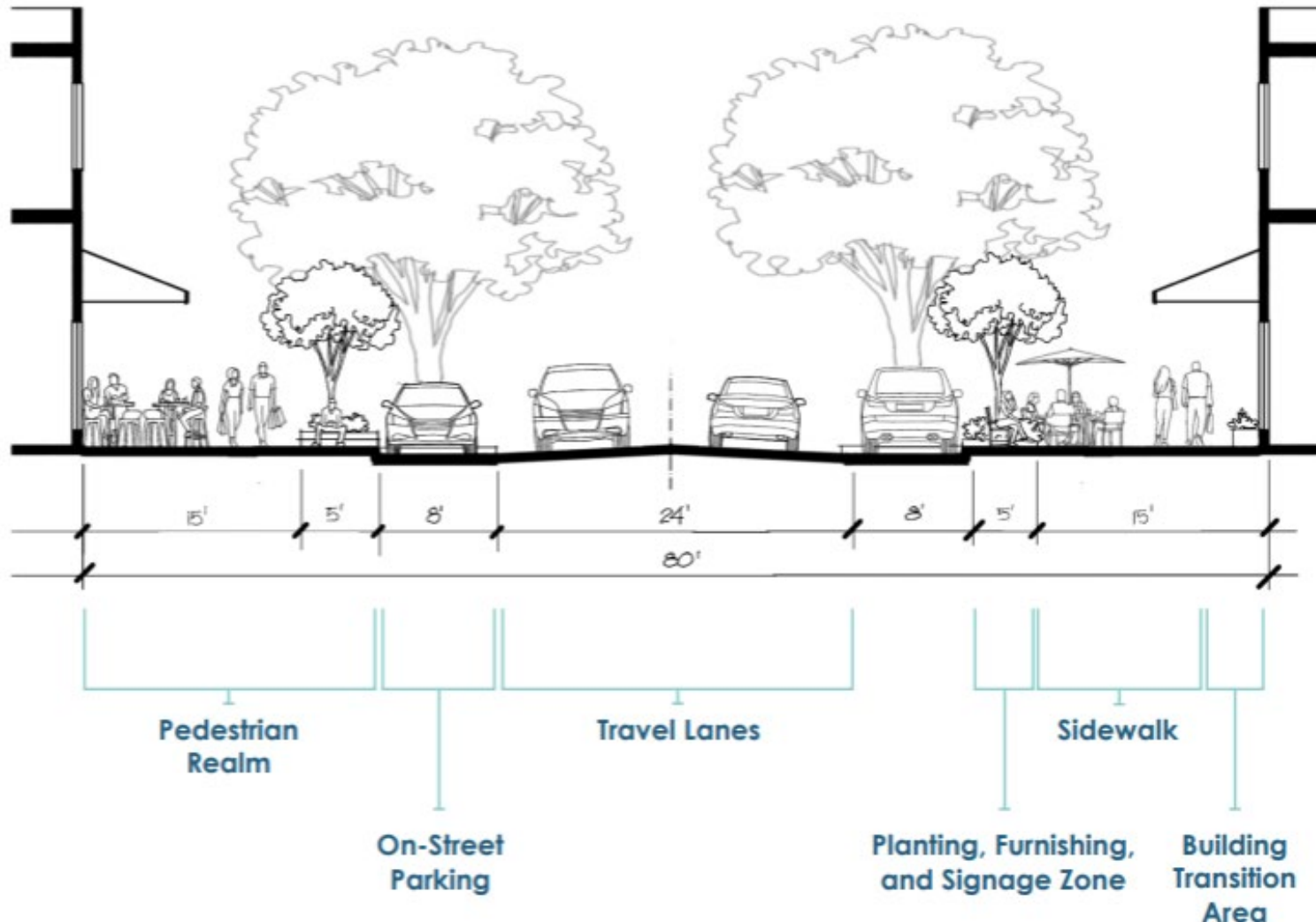
Resulting in:

- Outdoor dining
- Retail displays
- Planter pots
- Shade structures

PUBLIC 3. STREET CROSS-SECTIONS



Main Street (Miracle Strip Parkway) Cross-Section



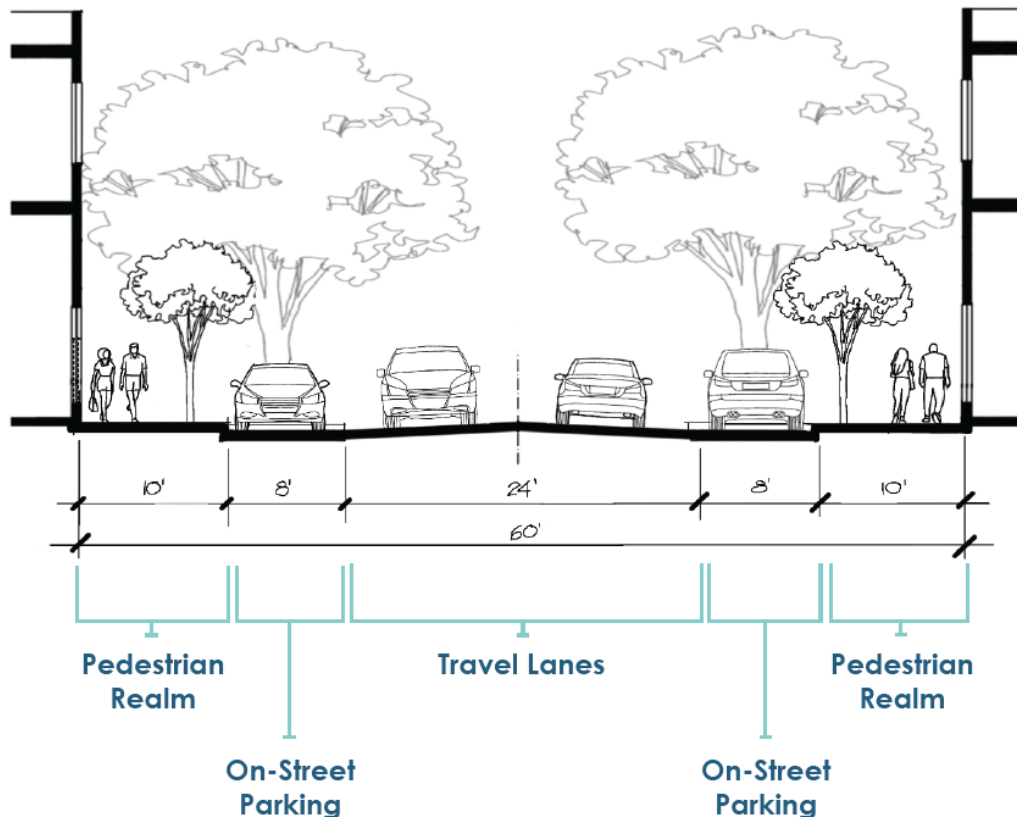
Components:

- 80 Foot Right-of-Way
 - Gateways
 - Crosswalks
- 12 ft travel lanes
 - Pavers
- 8 ft parallel parking
 - Parklets
 - Shade trees
- 20 ft pedestrian realm

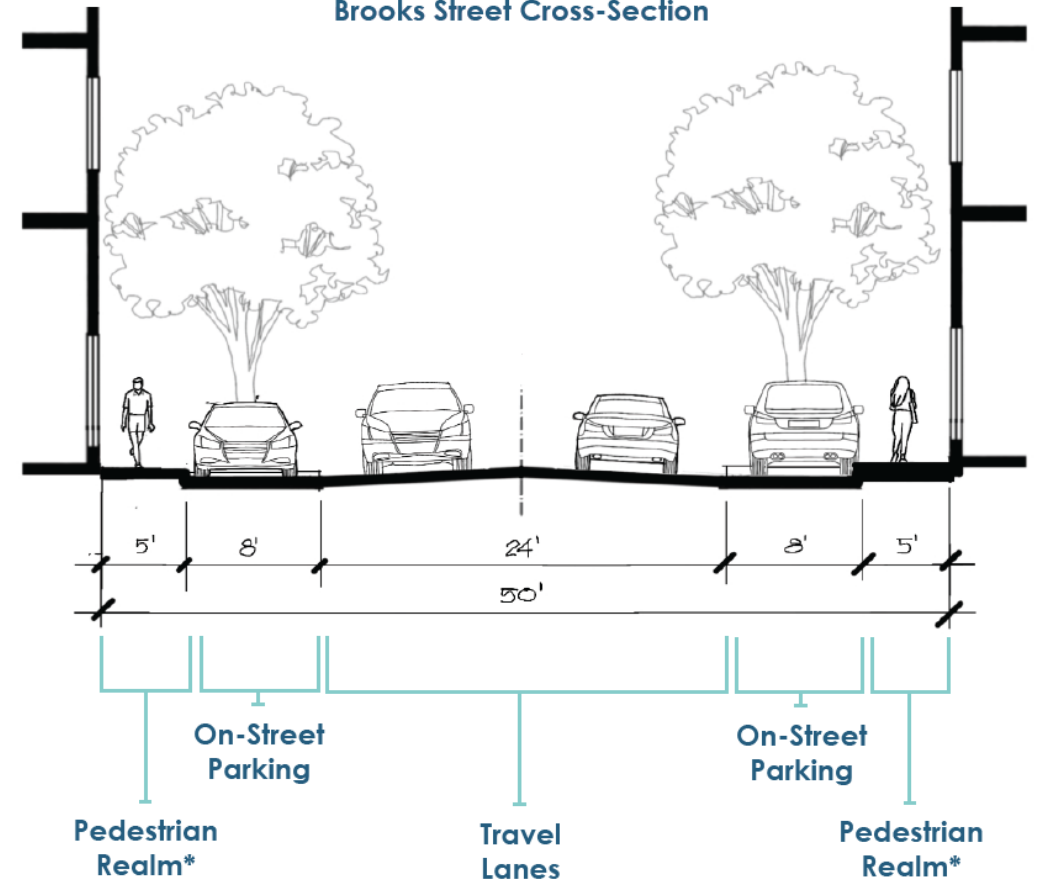
PUBLIC 3. STREET CROSS-SECTIONS



Prototypical Neighborhood Street Cross-Section



Brooks Street Cross-Section





PUBLIC 4. UTILITIES

- Aim to **minimize visual impact** of utilities in public realm
- Utility infrastructure, like overhead powerlines, should be moved underground
- Avoid placing electrical transformers, mechanical equipment, etc. along visible areas along the ground floor
 - **Placed discreetly in locations that do not interfere with pedestrian movement or visual quality of streetscape**



Trash and Recycling
Enclosures



Landscaped
Water Features



Utility Box
Wrap Art



Alleyway Decor

PUBLIC 5. ACTIVE USES AND FLEXIBLE SPACES



- Public parks, plazas and open spaces
- Public art
- Vending opportunities,
- Interactive features and water displays
- Lighting and seating



PRIVATE REALM

PRIVATE 1. INFILL & REUSE



- Preserve historic and cultural significance
- Celebrate existing style
- Maintain scale and visibility
- Avoid damaging key features
- Remain subordinate
- Provide setbacks for additions
- Harmonious integration

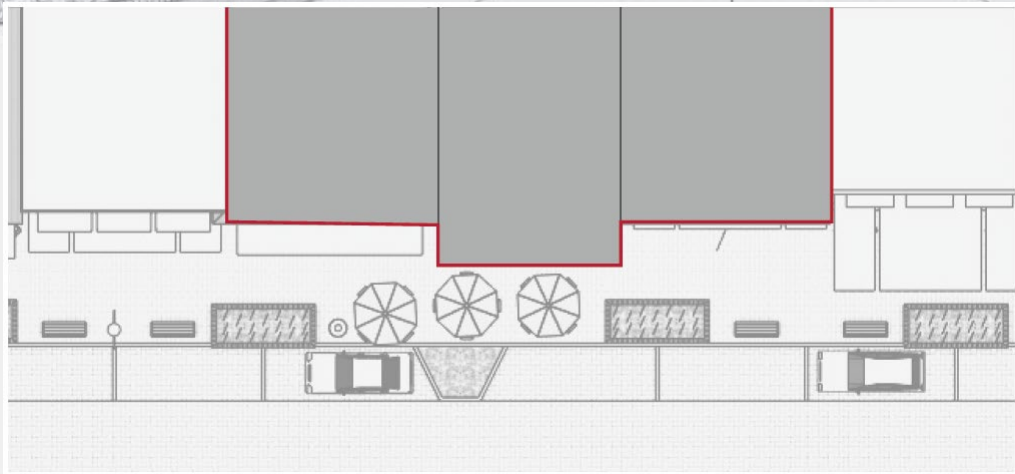
PRIVATE 2. ARCHITECTURE FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT



Unique character:

- Integrate local vernacular
- Informal coastal style
 - Massing
 - Articulation
 - Materials

PRIVATE 2A. BUILDING PLACEMENT



- Building height - 2 to 3 stories
- Stepback - 10 feet at 3rd story
- Minimum frontage - 70%

PRIVATE 2B. MASSING



2 Stories with Roof Articulation

2 Stories

3 Stories at Corner



Elements of Massing:

- Overall Composition
- Main volume
- Main entrance

PRIVATE 2C. DESIGN MATERIALS



PRIVATE 2D. ARTICULATION



PRIVATE 3. ACTIVATED GROUND FLOOR



Easy to Read
Signage

Wide Expanses of
Transparent Glazing

Vertically Emphasized
Entryway

Facade Articulation to
Designate Retail Footprint

PRIVATE 4. ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

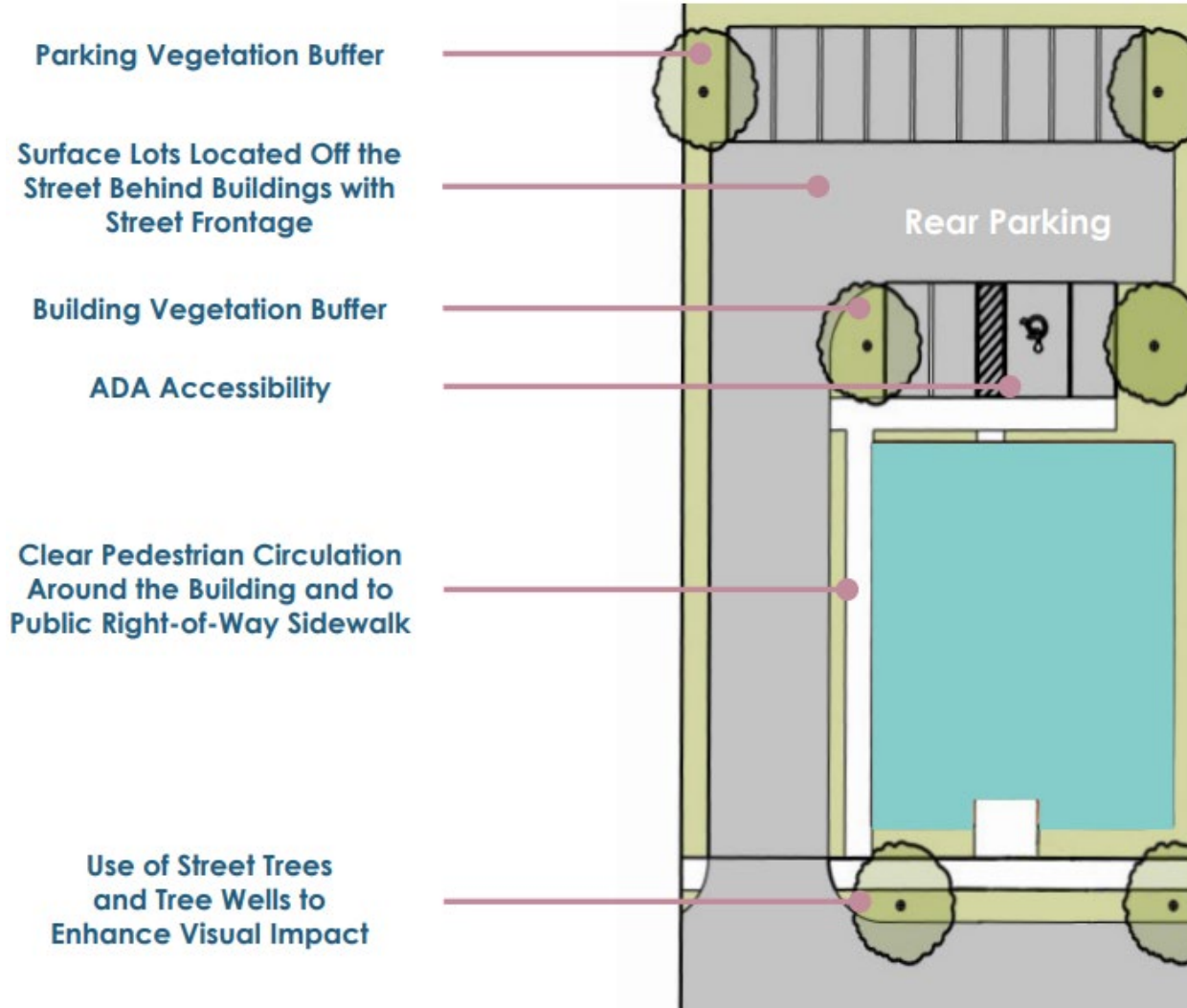


PRIVATE 5. PRIVATE OUTDOOR SPACES

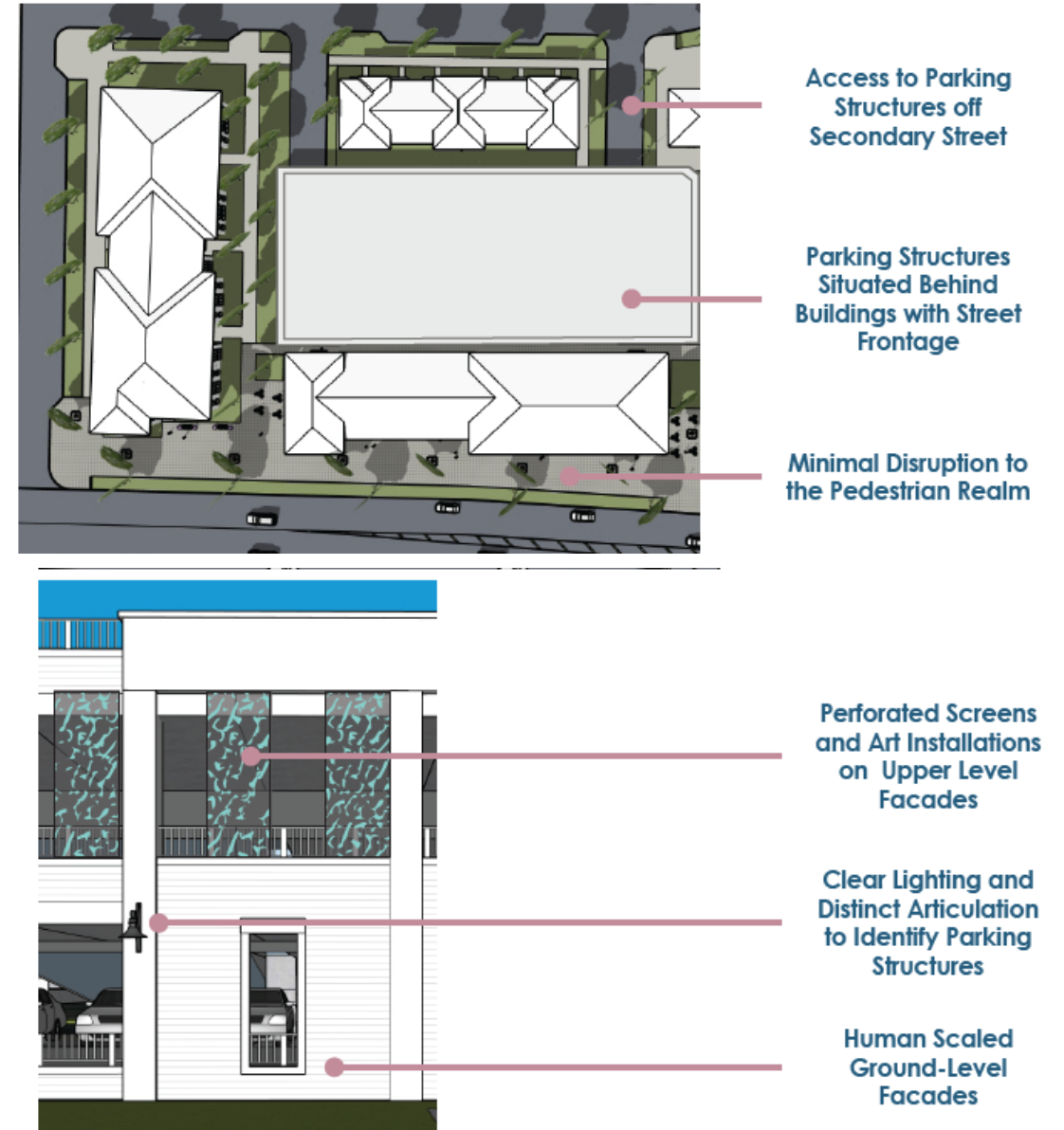


PRIVATE 6. PARKING

SURFACE



STRUCTURED



Help Shape the Future of Downtown



We Want to Hear From You!

- What resonates with you?
- What concerns or suggestions do you have?
- Are there elements you'd like to see added or revised?

Next Steps

- Adoption of guidelines
- Identify projects based on public realm

Ladies Fashions
LADIES SWIM & SPORT

the
cowhead

THANK YOU

