



DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER GROUP WORKSHOP #2  
July 21, 2025



# Project Objective

The objective of this project is to develop a complete **Comprehensive Plan Update** for the City of Rolla.

The Comprehensive Plan will cover the whole City of Rolla, as well as portions of Phelps County identified for future strategic annexation, and update the current Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in 2006.

The Comprehensive Plan Update will include a Vision; Goals; supporting Objectives; Future Land Use Plan; Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan; Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Plan; Streets and Roads Plan; ***Focus Area Plan for Downtown Rolla***; and Strategic Implementation Plan.





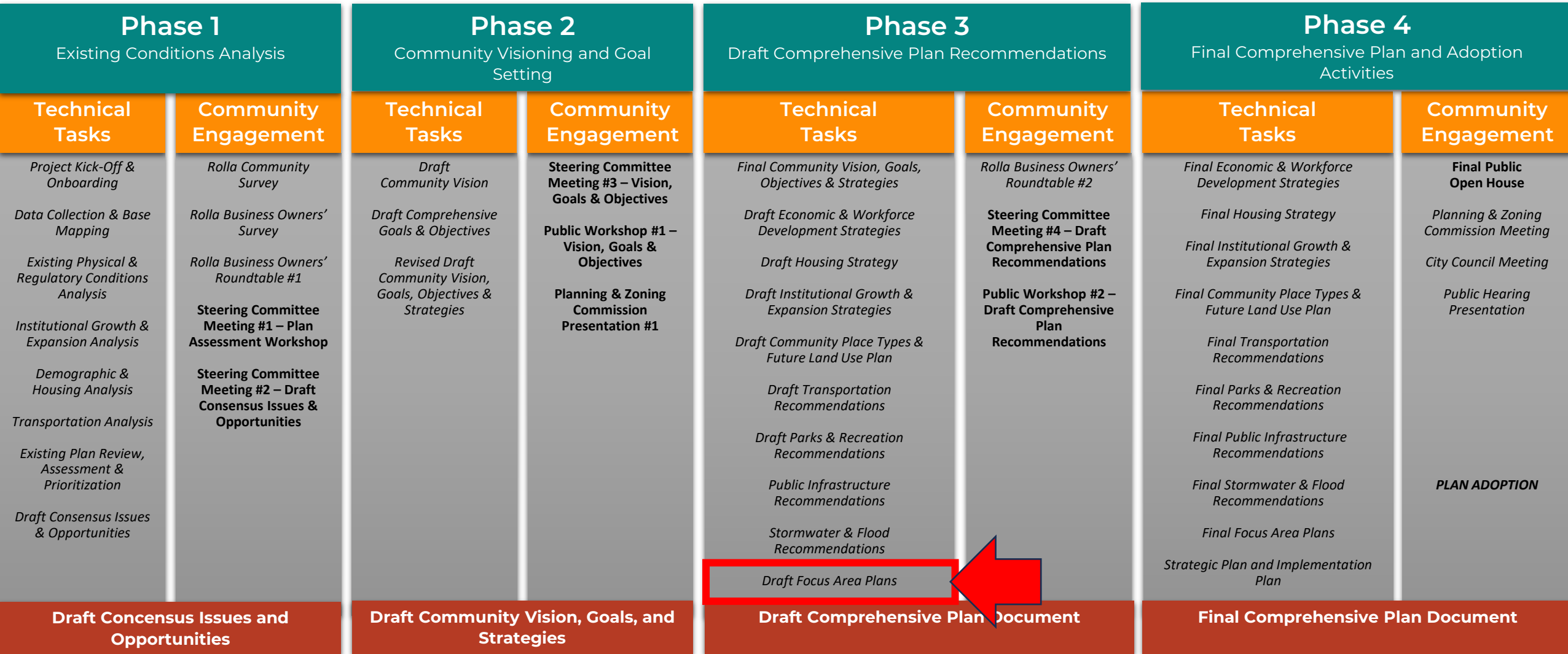
# Focus Area Process

1. **Meeting #1 – May 9, 2025:**  
Downtown stakeholder listening session, input, and generative discussion.
2. **Meeting #2 – Today, July 21, 2025:**  
Review of consensus issues, opportunities, and ideas (gathered from Meeting #1 and Downtown Rolla analysis) and prioritization of Downtown revitalization ideas (small-group workshop).
3. **Meeting #3 – Date to Be Determined:**  
Downtown Revitalization Principles, revitalization Framework Plan, and draft implementation strategies.
4. **Draft Comprehensive Plan Open House – Date to Be Determined:**  
Draft Downtown Focus Area Plan (as part of the Draft Comprehensive Plan).





# Project Timeline





# Consensus Issues

- These are the *summary of the existing conditions analysis*
- *Review, modify, and add to* the Consensus Issues as we present the existing conditions analysis



## CONSENSUS ISSUES

### *Downtown Identity & Placemaking*

☐

Downtown Rolla has no collective identity or sense of place to provide an authentic, old-town destination experience.

☐

Many Rolla residents have indicated that they don't visit Downtown regularly and that there is no reason to visit Downtown Rolla.

☐

New development in Downtown does not promote active, walkable streets nor contribute to Downtown's sense of place.

☐

Downtown Rolla lacks a clearly-defined center.

### *Downtown Edges & Adjacencies*

☐

Downtown does not have clear and well-defined edges.

☐

Adjacent institutions do not have a clear relationship or connection to Downtown.

☐

Adjacent neighborhoods are not well-connected to Downtown; in many cases, this is due to or complicated by the railroad.

### *Accessibility & Wayfinding*

☐

Downtown Rolla is not visible from major roads and is hard to find if one is not familiar with Rolla.

☐

There is no clearly-identified route to Downtown from I-44.

☐

The one-way couplet streets of Pine Street and Rolla Street complicate accessibility and limit drive-by traffic in Downtown; Pine Street, the logical entrance to Downtown from I-44 via U.S. 63, is one-way going north.

☐

There is a lack of clear wayfinding between concentrations of Downtown businesses and City-owned public parking lots on 9th Street.



## CONSENSUS ISSUES (continued)

### *Downtown Programming & Amenities*

☐

There are only three (3) sit-down restaurants, two (2) bars/pubs, and one (1) coffee shop in Downtown Rolla.

☐

Missouri S&T students no longer utilize Downtown as they have in the past; compared to 20 years ago, there are more S&T students, including approximately 800 living Downtown, but fewer Downtown businesses, restaurants, and bars.

### *Operations & Management*

☐

The Rolla Downtown Business Association (RDBA) doesn't have full-time professional staff or an operating budget.

☐

The former Rolla Arts District and its associated regulations and incentives have lapsed and are no longer in effect.

### *Others?*







STUDIO TEAM

## Downtown Rolla Focus Area

City of Rolla, Missouri

# ***ONE WORD!***

**To Describe Downtown Rolla Today...**

**To Describe Downtown Rolla in 2035...**





# **DOWNTOWN OPPORTUNITIES, GOALS & STRATEGIES**

City-Wide Comprehensive Plan

# Economic Development Opportunities

Rolla's future economic development opportunities will be driven by the presence of **Phelps Health** and, to a greater extent, **Missouri S&T**. These institutions can be leveraged for economic development in **three (3) primary ways**:

1. Attracting companies to Rolla that **want to hire Missouri S&T graduates** (engineering, advanced manufacturing, and computer science/information technology), or which **provide supportive services to a major healthcare system**.
2. Supporting the ability of **Missouri S&T staff and graduates to found companies** in Rolla, **"commercializing" the university's fields of study** (i.e. the Cortex Innovation District in St. Louis).
3. Supporting the development of **community amenities in vibrant, mixed-use districts** that provide the quality of life that companies, students, professionals, and physicians are **looking for when choosing a community in which to go to school, work, and live**.



## Goal 1: **Community Identity & Placemaking**

Rolla will celebrate its history, regionally- and nationally-significant institutions, and distinctive natural setting to establish a desirable, amenity-rich place with a high quality of life, supported by orderly, contiguous growth that is sustainable and maximizes efficient use of public resources.

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## Goal 2: **High-Quality Housing & Neighborhoods**

Rolla will actively facilitate construction, preservation, rehab, and renovation of a diversity of high-quality housing, including workforce and entry-level housing and executive housing, in safe, accessible neighborhoods to support the next generation of families, professionals, and workers, as well as future growth within the community.

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## Goal 3: **Economic Growth & Job Base Diversification**

Rolla will build upon its existing economic strengths in healthcare, educational services, retail, and manufacturing to support existing business to stay in Rolla, support existing residents employed in Rolla, and attract new industry sectors in coordination with county, state, and regional growth priorities, supported by community amenities to attract new workers and professionals.

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## Goal 4: **Downtown Revitalization**

Rolla will work with downtown businesses and community stakeholders through the Economic Partnership to revitalize Downtown Rolla as a vibrant destination for shopping, dining, entertainment, and special events for residents and visitors, becoming a distinctive and recognizable heart of the Rolla community.

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## Goal 5: **Supportive Institutional Growth**

Rolla will work with Missouri S&T, Phelps Health, Mercy Health, Four Rivers Community Health, the VA, East Central College, and Rolla Public Schools to facilitate mutually-supportive growth to leverage their programs for commercial economic expansion and diversification, including entrepreneurial growth and attracting or establishing new high-tech industry sectors.

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## Goal 6: **Mobility & Transportation**

Rolla will complete implementation of the transportation improvements under the MoveRolla TDD to ensure an efficient transportation system of both local and regional roads that is safe, supports future development, and accommodates the needs of all users and all modes of mobility.

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## Goal 7: **Parks, Recreation & Environment**

Rolla will enhance its significant parks and recreation system to expand park and recreation opportunities for users of all ages, improve and expand walkability and bikeability, and enhance the quality and health of Rolla's distinctive Ozark environment for habitat, visual beauty, and quality of life.

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## Goal 8: **Public Facilities & Services**

Rolla will continue to enhance the provision of electric, water, sewer, fire protection, emergency management, police, public schools, parks, and other utilities and facilitate future growth that provides for high-quality and cost-effective public infrastructure and facilities for community safety, resilience, and quality of life.

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## Goal 9: **Efficient & Effective Governance**

Rolla will work to facilitate improved citizen engagement, enhance responsiveness of City government to citizen input, and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of City operations.

## Goal 4: **Downtown Revitalization**

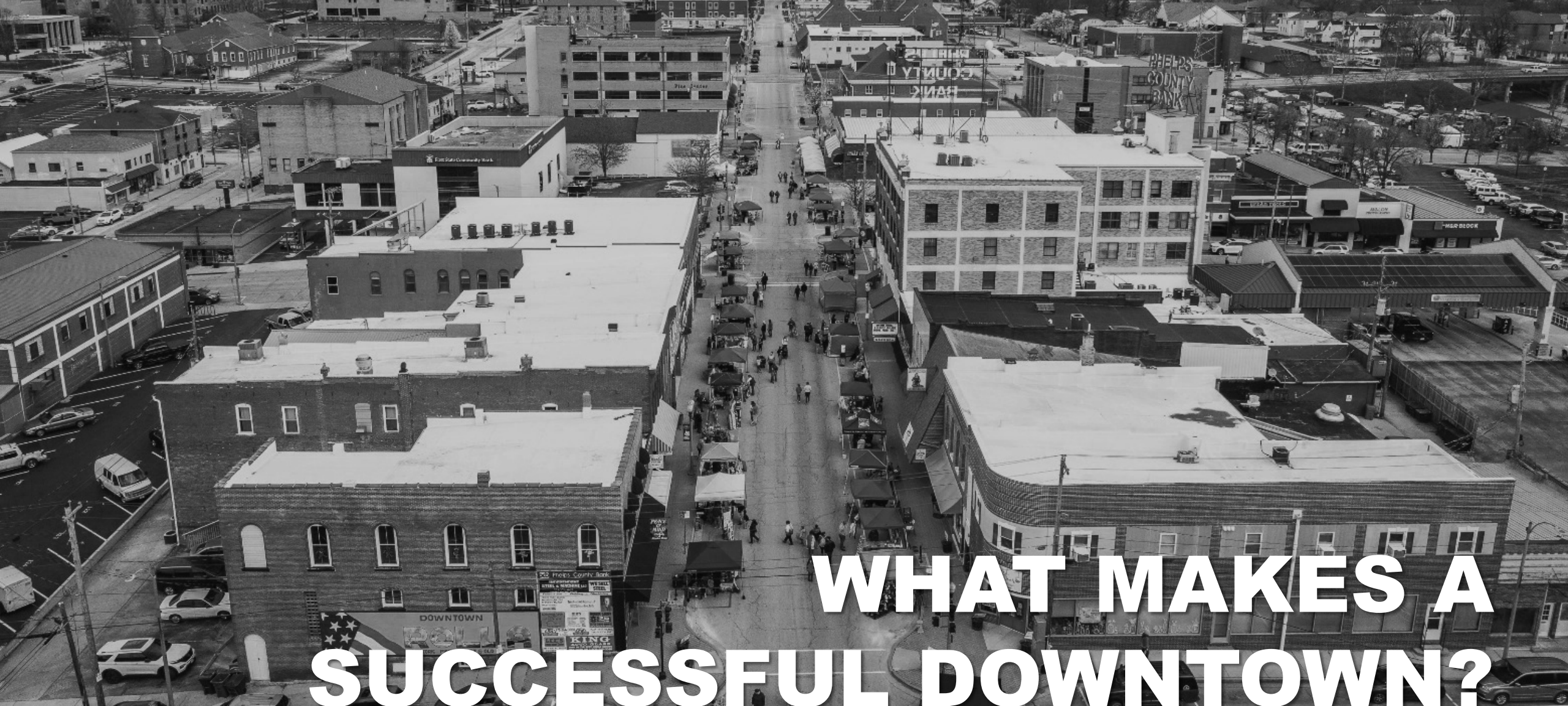
Rolla will work with downtown businesses and community stakeholders through the Economic Partnership to revitalize Downtown Rolla as a vibrant destination for shopping, dining, entertainment, and special events for residents and visitors, becoming a distinctive and recognizable heart of the Rolla community.



# Downtown Revitalization Draft Strategies

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- Strategy 4.1:* Establish a Community Improvement District (CID) or Special Business District (SBD) to raise funding for Downtown improvement projects. The organization Board of Directors should lead future planning, operations, and management initiatives in Downtown Rolla.
- Strategy 4.2:* Participate in Missouri Main Street Connection as an Aspiring Community; strive for Affiliate Community status.
- Strategy 4.3:* Work with the Rolla Downtown Business Association and Rolla Area Chamber of Commerce to adopt and implement a program to recruit and retain businesses in Downtown Rolla.
- Strategy 4.4:* Promote higher-density, mixed-use residential uses in Downtown— above stores and as infill development in adjacent neighborhoods within walking distance of Downtown.
- Strategy 4.5:* Develop an enhanced community gathering space and outdoor entertainment venue in Downtown. Create an organization or city department to program various events and to manage such spaces.
- Strategy 4.6:* Restore Rolla’s historic buildings by encouraging comprehensive preservation efforts.
- Strategy 4.7:* Expand and enhance Rolla’s farmers’ market.
- Strategy 4.8:* Continue to promote façade and urban design improvements. Seek funding from the State’s CDBG program, public/private partnerships, or other funding sources.
- Strategy 4.9:* Encourage the use of street furniture such as benches, waste containers, fountains, public art, information kiosks and seasonal banners to help create a unified visual theme.
- Strategy 4.10:* Develop a comprehensive plan to manage Downtown parking, including shared parking strategies, reduced or eliminated on-site parking requirements, and shared parking facilities.
- Strategy 4.11:* Develop and adopt Downtown Design Guidelines and a Downtown Form-Based Code to guide and facilitate rehab and new infill development.
- Strategy 4.12:* Increase police presence in Downtown with foot patrols and community policing strategies to visibly enhance public safety and community-police relations.



# WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWN?

Downtown Rolla Focus Area



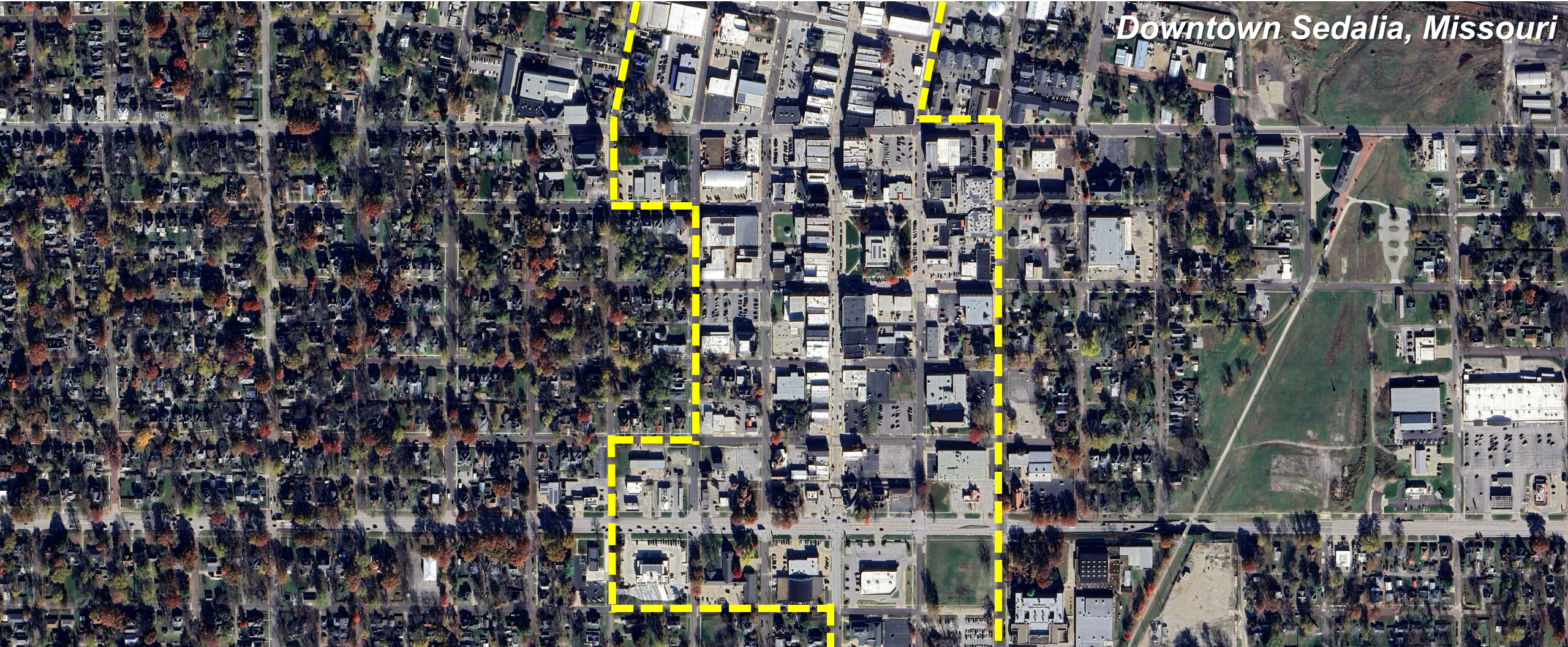
# Downtowns Work When They Have...

- **Well-defined edges** that connect to adjacent neighborhoods and institutions.
- **A well-defined center** that serves as a gathering place for community events.
- **A destination identity that is bigger than one or a few specific businesses**, supported by special events throughout the year.
- **A majority of businesses that support visitors staying for several hours** (retail boutiques, restaurants, bars, entertainment, etc.)
- **Businesses that are oriented to the sidewalk** and pedestrian traffic.
- **Sidewalks and public realm that support pedestrian activity and visitors hanging-out.**
- **Easy and clear accessibility and parking** for visitors.
- **A population of residents** that use Downtown on a regular basis.
- **Zoning regulations and design guidelines** to maintain coherent building siting, massing, and design.
- **A professional management organization** with an operating budget and the ability to raise revenue.



Downtowns Work When They Have...

**Well-defined edges that connect to adjacent neighborhoods and institutions.**





Downtowns Work When They Have...

**A well-defined center that serves as a gathering place for community events.**





Downtowns Work When They Have...

**A destination identity that is bigger than one or a few specific businesses, supported by special events throughout the year.**



*Freedom Parade; Rolla, Missouri*



Downtowns Work When They Have...

**A majority of businesses that support visitors staying for several hours** (retail boutiques, restaurants, bars, entertainment, etc.)



*Commercial Street;  
Springfield, Missouri*



Downtowns Work When They Have...

**Businesses that are oriented to the sidewalk  
and pedestrian traffic.**



*Main Street; Belleville, Illinois*



Downtowns Work When They Have...

**Sidewalks and public realm that support pedestrian activity and visitors hanging-out.**

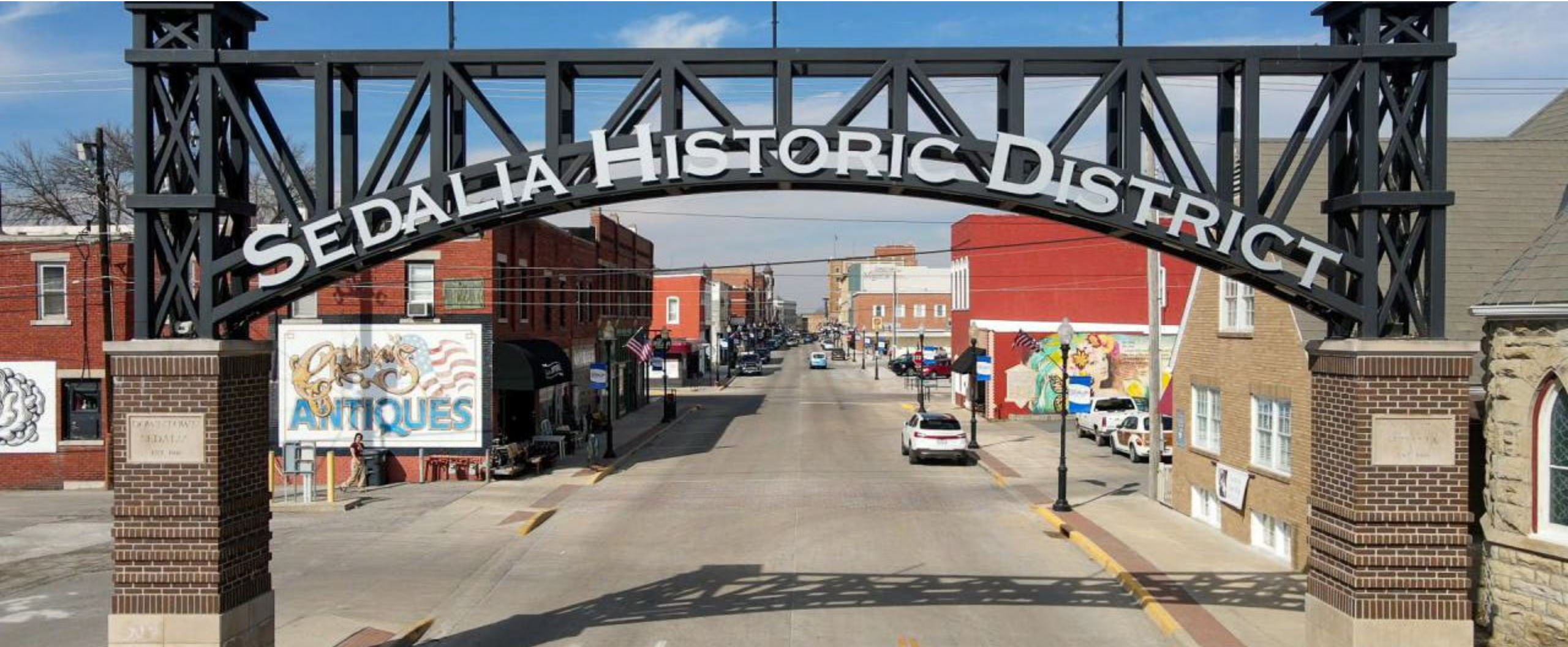


*McPherson Avenue;  
St. Louis, Missouri*



Downtowns Work When They Have...

**Easy and clear accessibility and parking for visitors.**





Downtowns Work When They Have...

**A population of residents that use Downtown on a regular basis.**

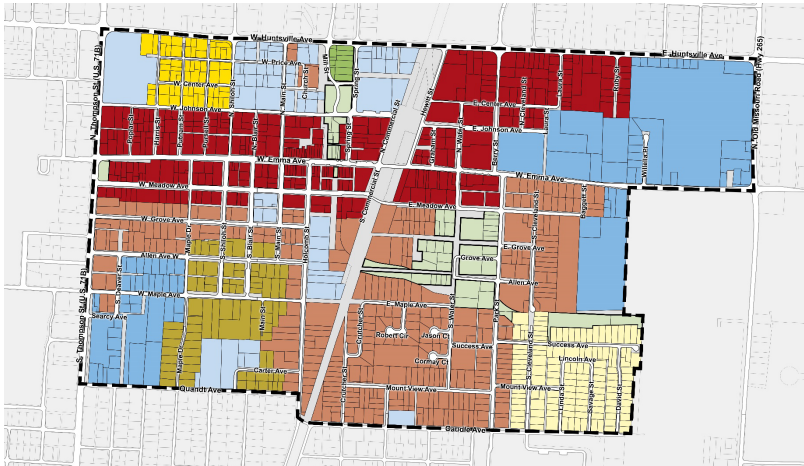


*Downtown Housing in  
Washington, Missouri*



Downtowns Work When They Have...

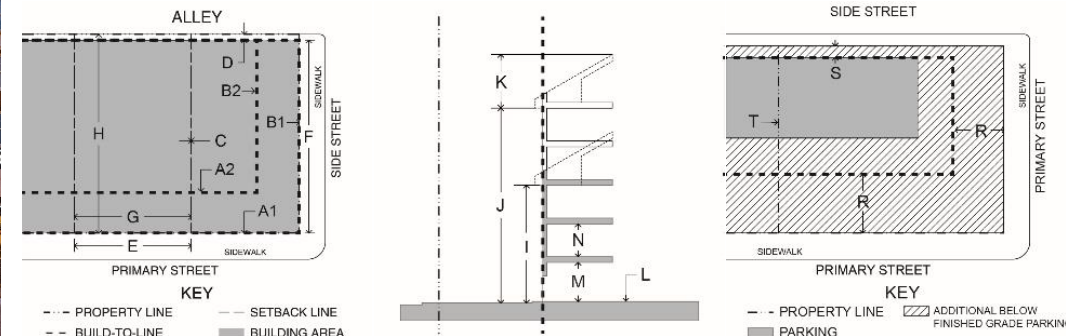
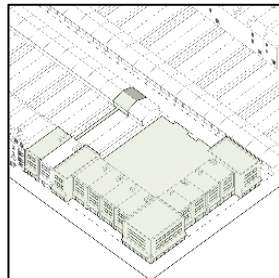
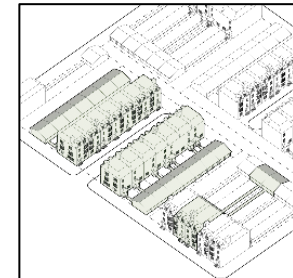
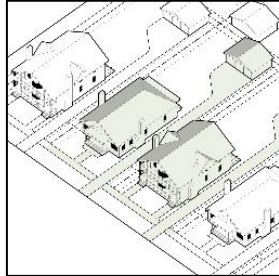
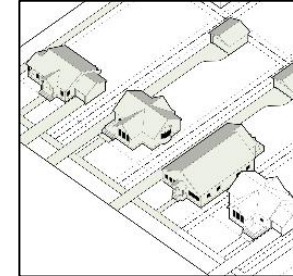
# Zoning regulations and design guidelines to maintain coherent building siting, massing, and design.



The City of Washington, Missouri

### Short-Term Implementation Action Items

Action Item / Sub-Title	Primary Implementor (City Department)	Implementation Partner / Partners	Implementation Timeline (From Date of Plan Adoption)
<b>Economic Development Department Priorities</b>			
1. Review Downtown's existing zoning, design, and building codes to ensure they are up-to-date and coherent.	Downtown Development	Downtown Development	Ongoing
2. Review Downtown's existing zoning, design, and building codes to ensure they are up-to-date and coherent.	Planning	Downtown Development	1 year
3. Review Downtown's existing zoning, design, and building codes to ensure they are up-to-date and coherent.	Planning	Downtown Development	18 months
4. Review Downtown's existing zoning, design, and building codes to ensure they are up-to-date and coherent.	Planning	Downtown Development	2 years
5. Review Downtown's existing zoning, design, and building codes to ensure they are up-to-date and coherent.	Downtown Development	Downtown Development	Ongoing
6. Review Downtown's existing zoning, design, and building codes to ensure they are up-to-date and coherent.	Downtown Development	Downtown Development	Ongoing
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19. Review Downtown's existing zoning, design, and building codes to ensure they are up-to-date and coherent.	Downtown Development	Downtown Development	Ongoing
20. Review Downtown's existing zoning, design, and building codes to ensure they are up-to-date and coherent.	Downtown Development	Downtown Development	Ongoing





Downtowns Work When They Have...

**A professional management organization  
with an operating budget**







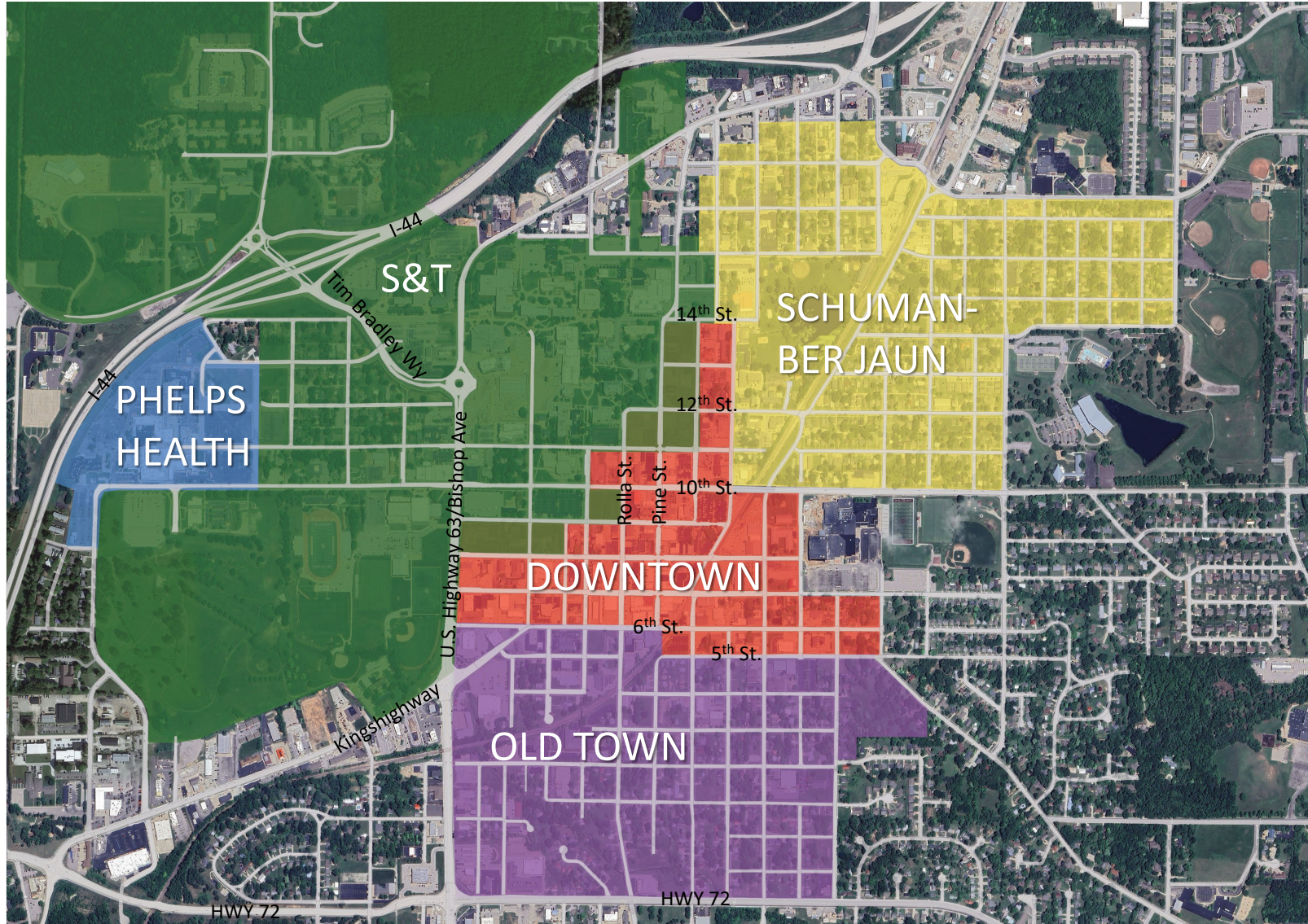
# EXISTING CONDITIONS SUMMARY

Downtown Rolla Focus Area



# Existing Conditions Summary

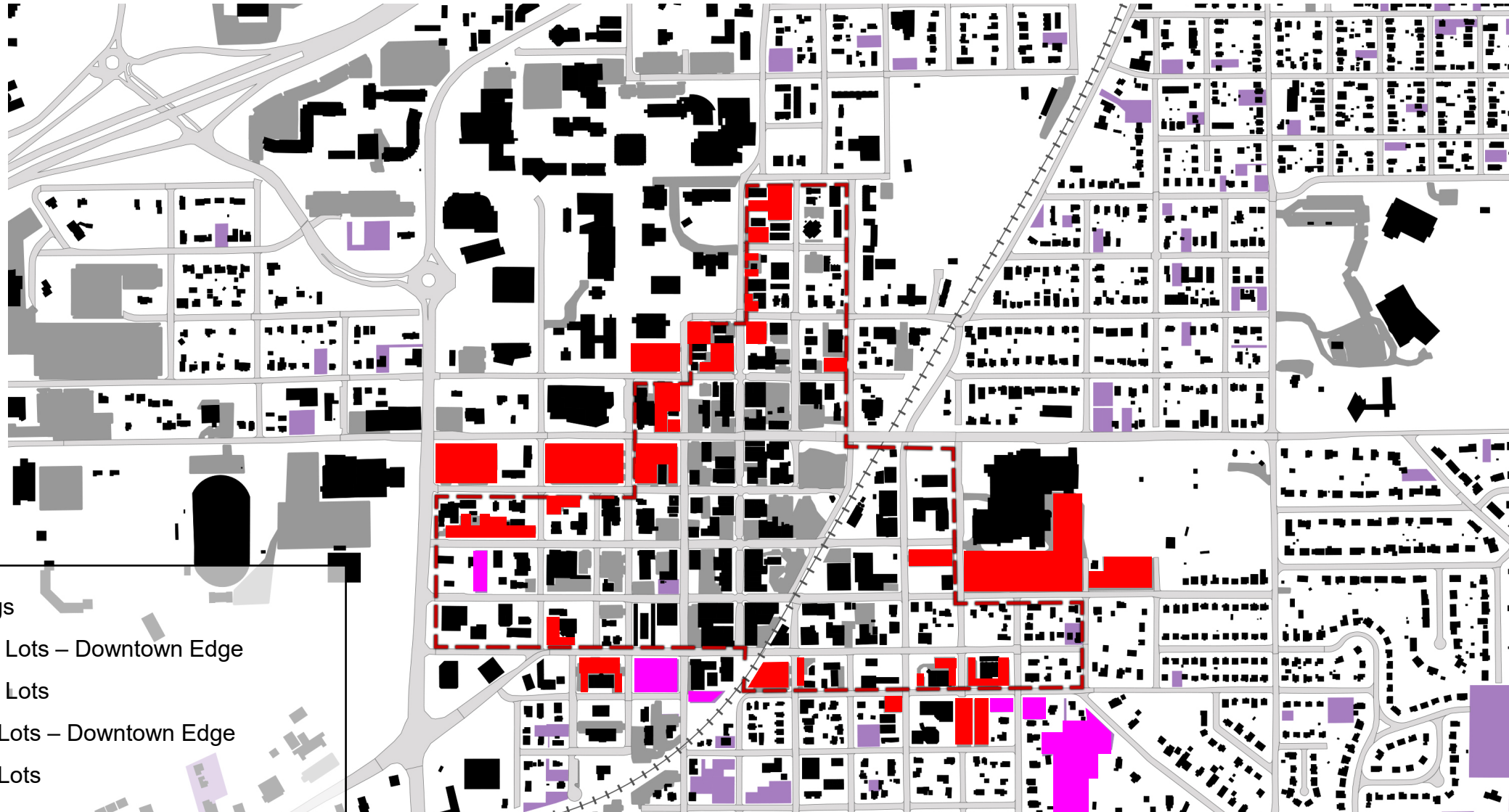
## Downtown Edges





# Existing Conditions Summary

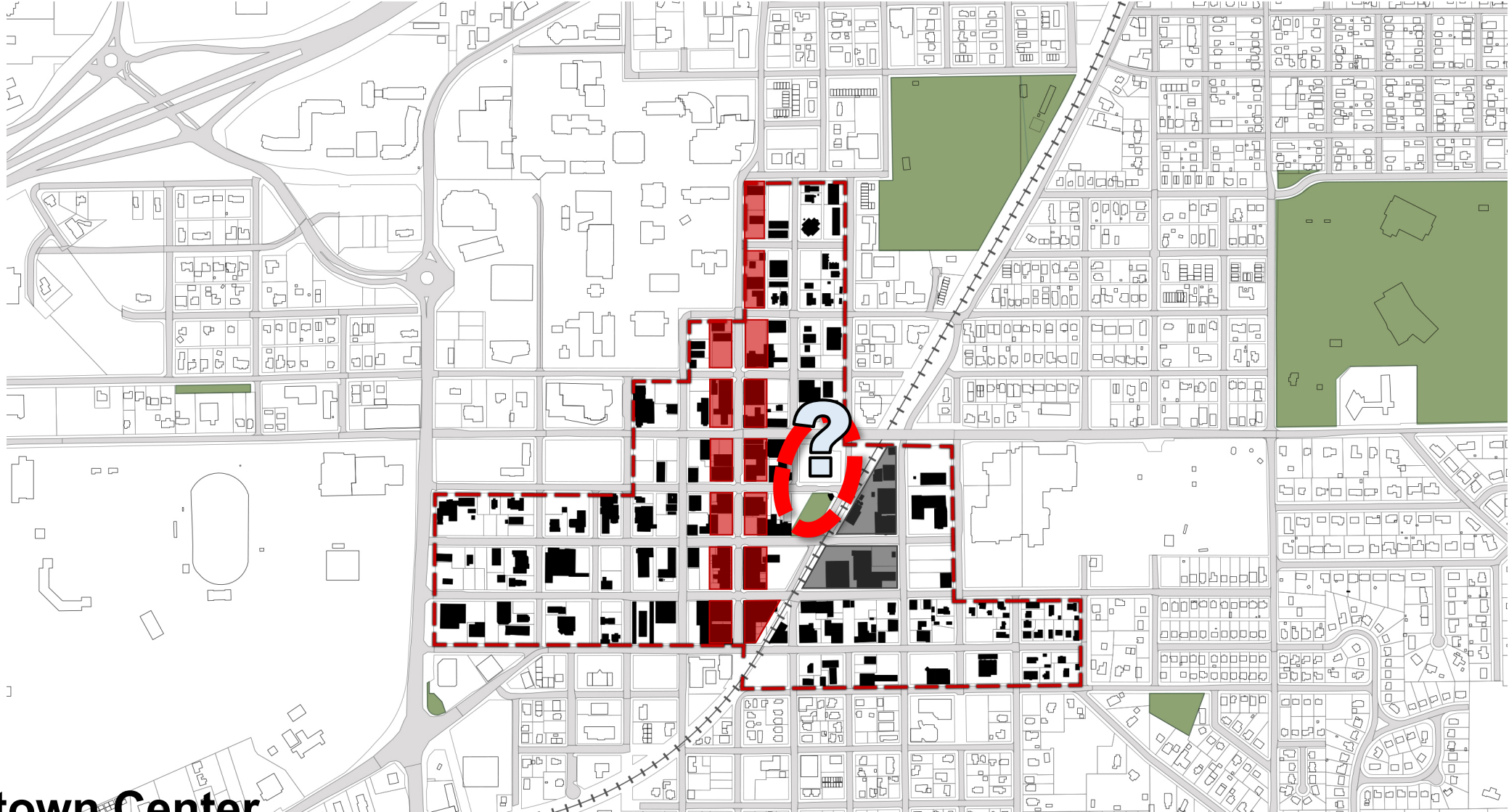
## Downtown Edges





# Existing Conditions Summary

## Downtown Center



**Downtown Center**



# Existing Conditions Summary

## Destination Identity

*Good Identity for Special Events...*



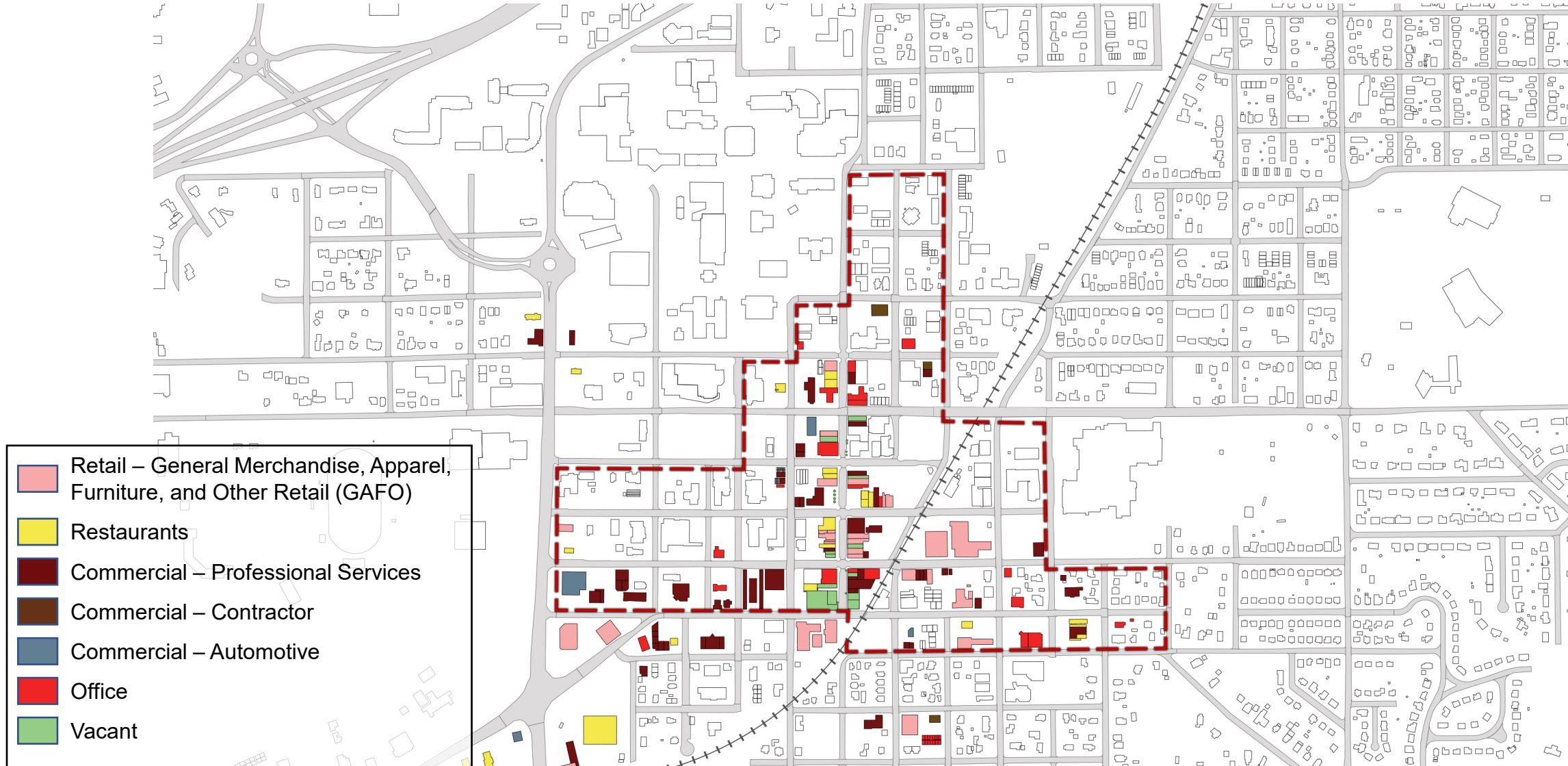
*Little Identity Outside of Special Events...*





## Existing Conditions Summary

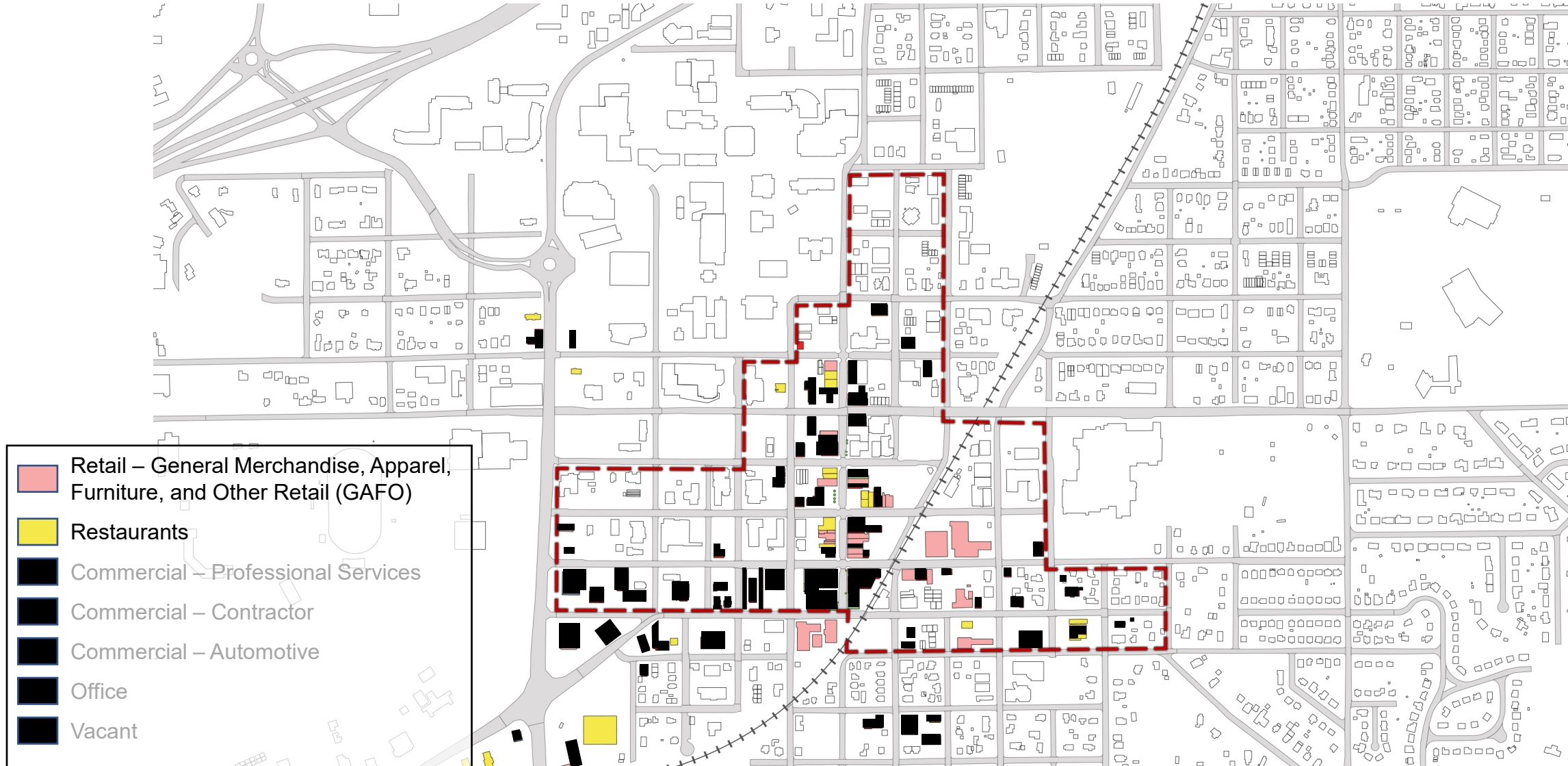
# Visitor-Supportive Businesses





# Existing Conditions Summary

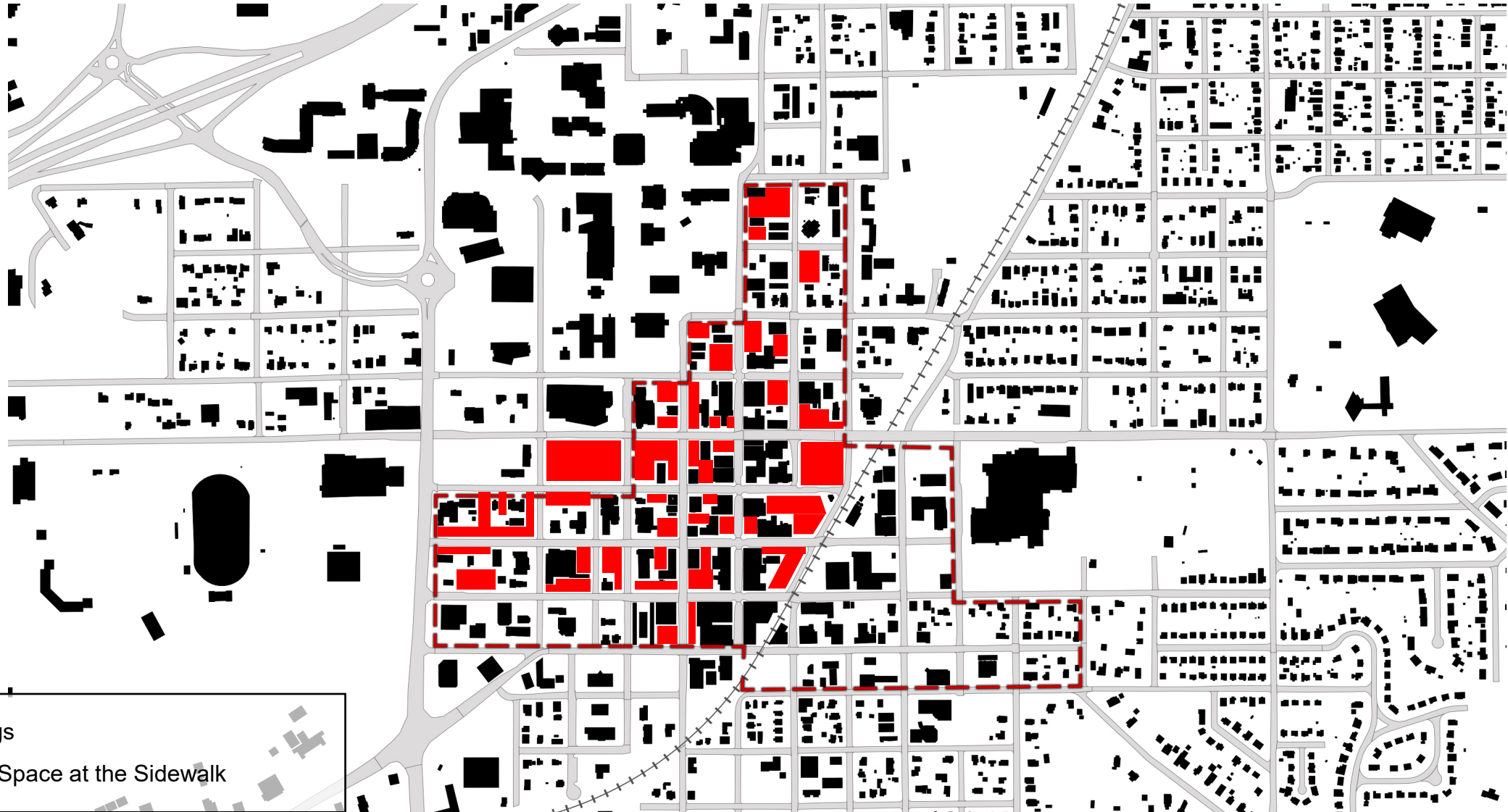
## Visitor-Supportive Businesses





## Existing Conditions Summary

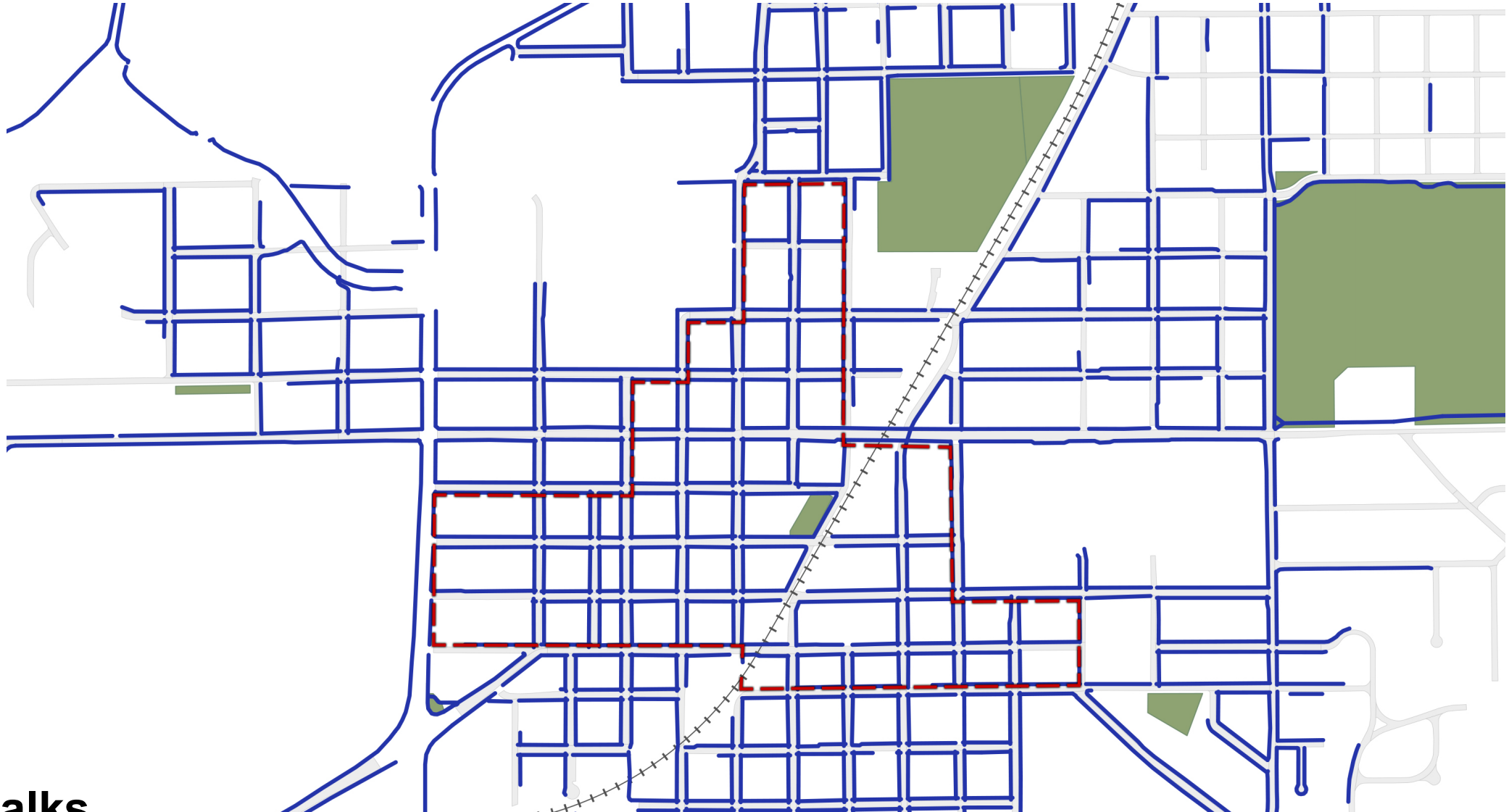
# Businesses Oriented to the Sidewalk





## Existing Conditions Summary

# Sidewalks and Public Realm



**Sidewalks**



# Existing Conditions Summary

## Sidewalks and Public Realm

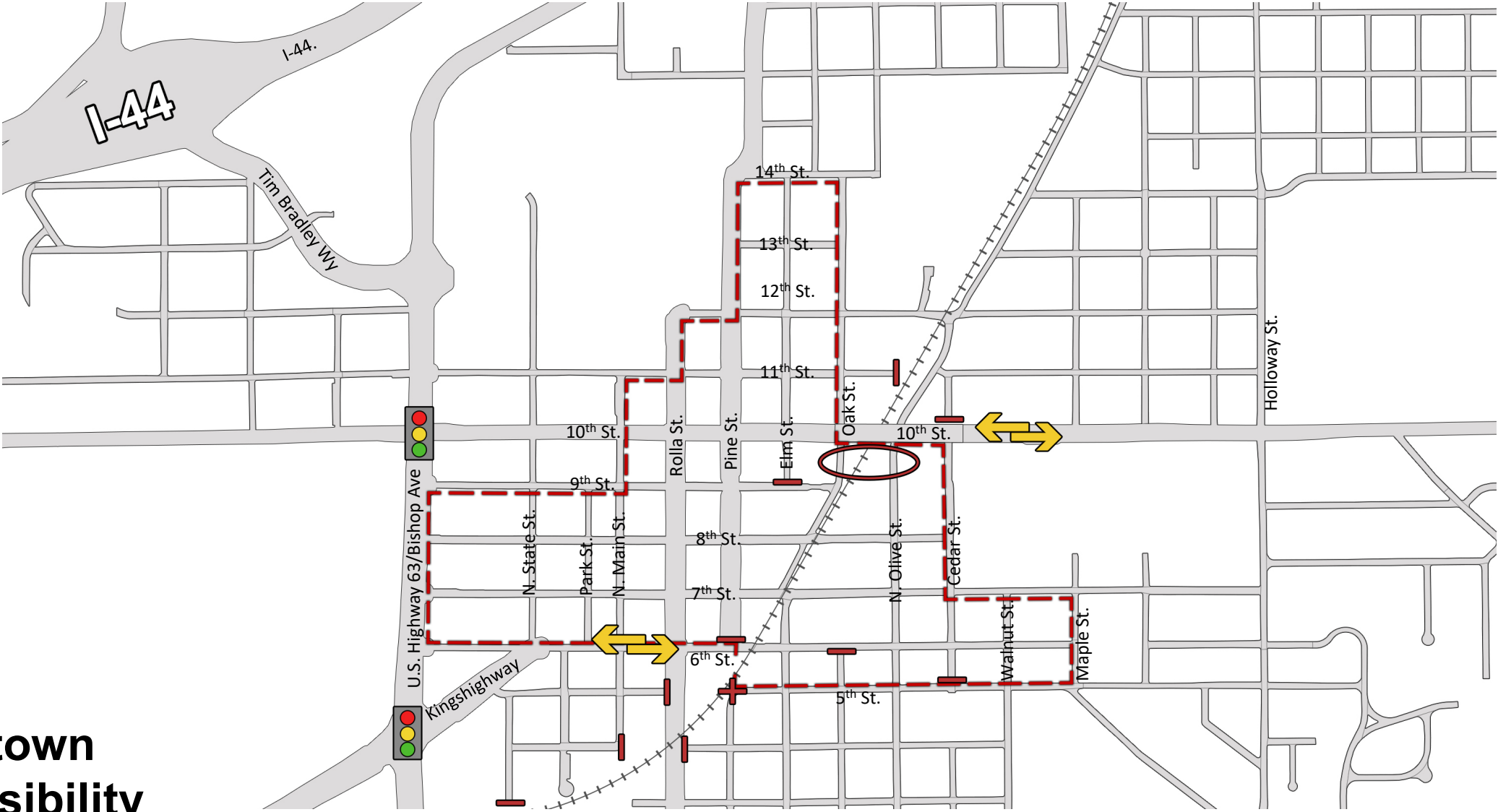




# Existing Conditions Summary

## Accessibility and Parking

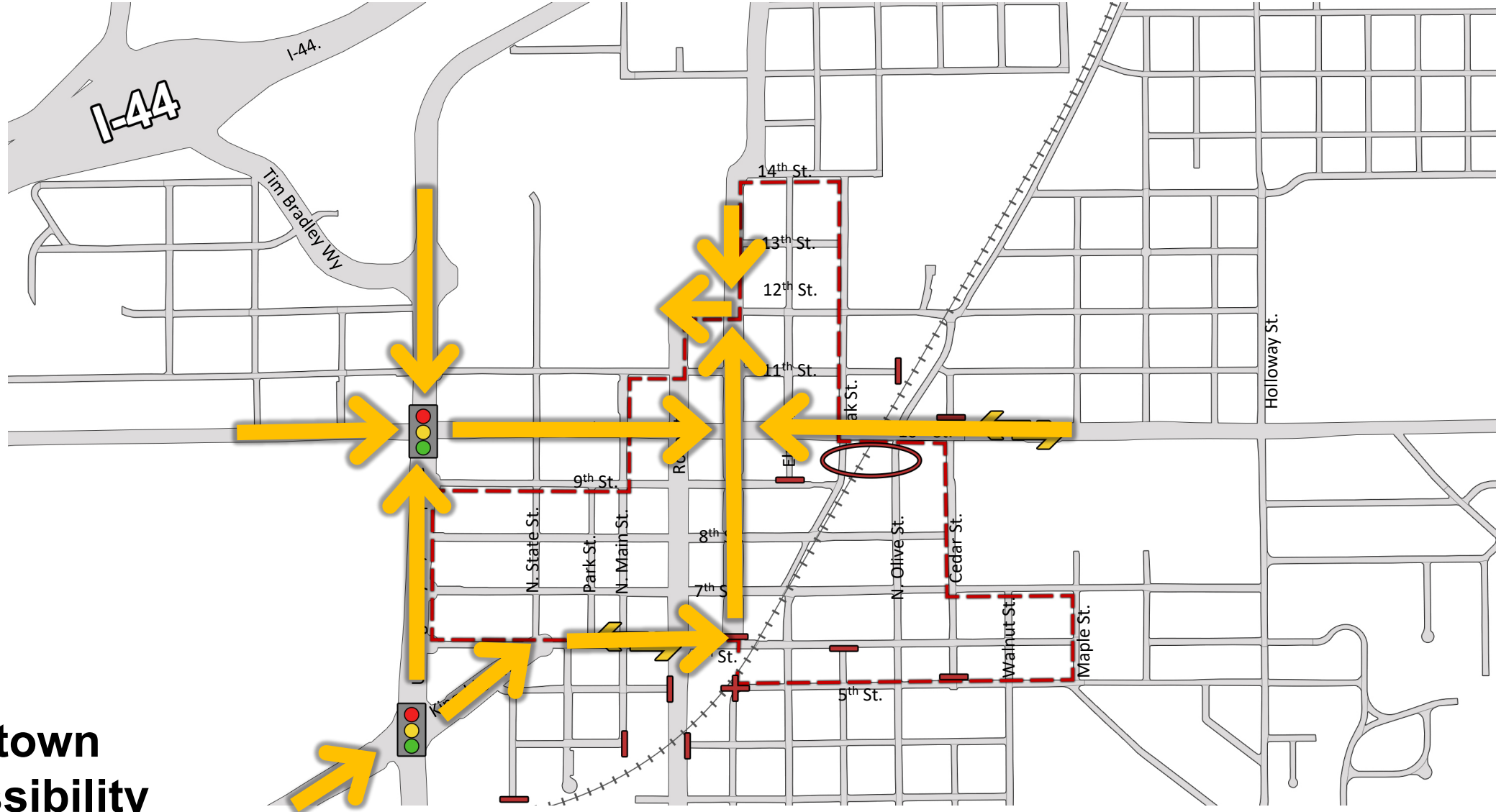
Downtown  
Accessibility





# Existing Conditions Summary

## Accessibility and Parking



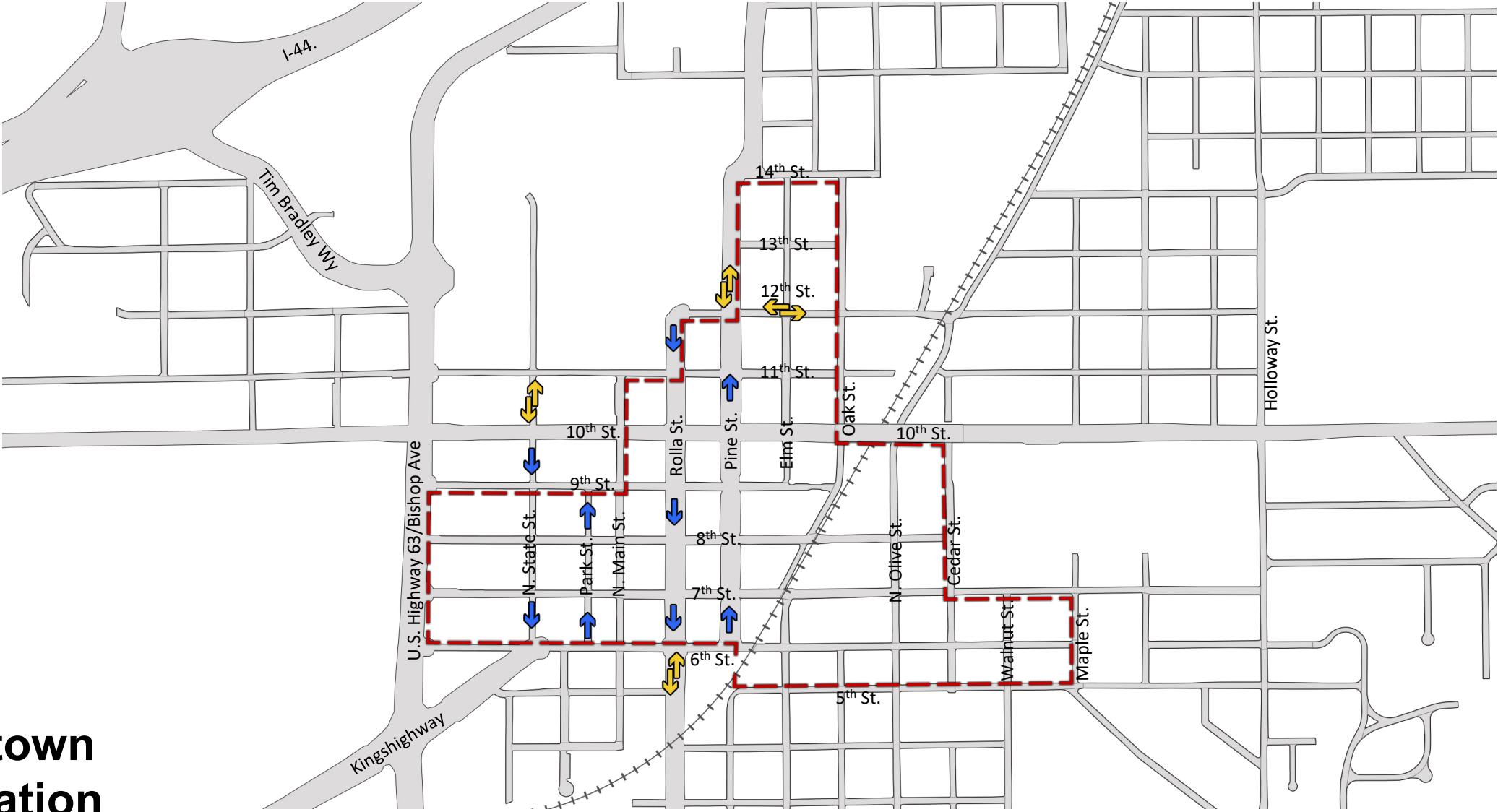
**Downtown  
Accessibility**



# Existing Conditions Summary

## Accessibility and Parking

Downtown  
Circulation

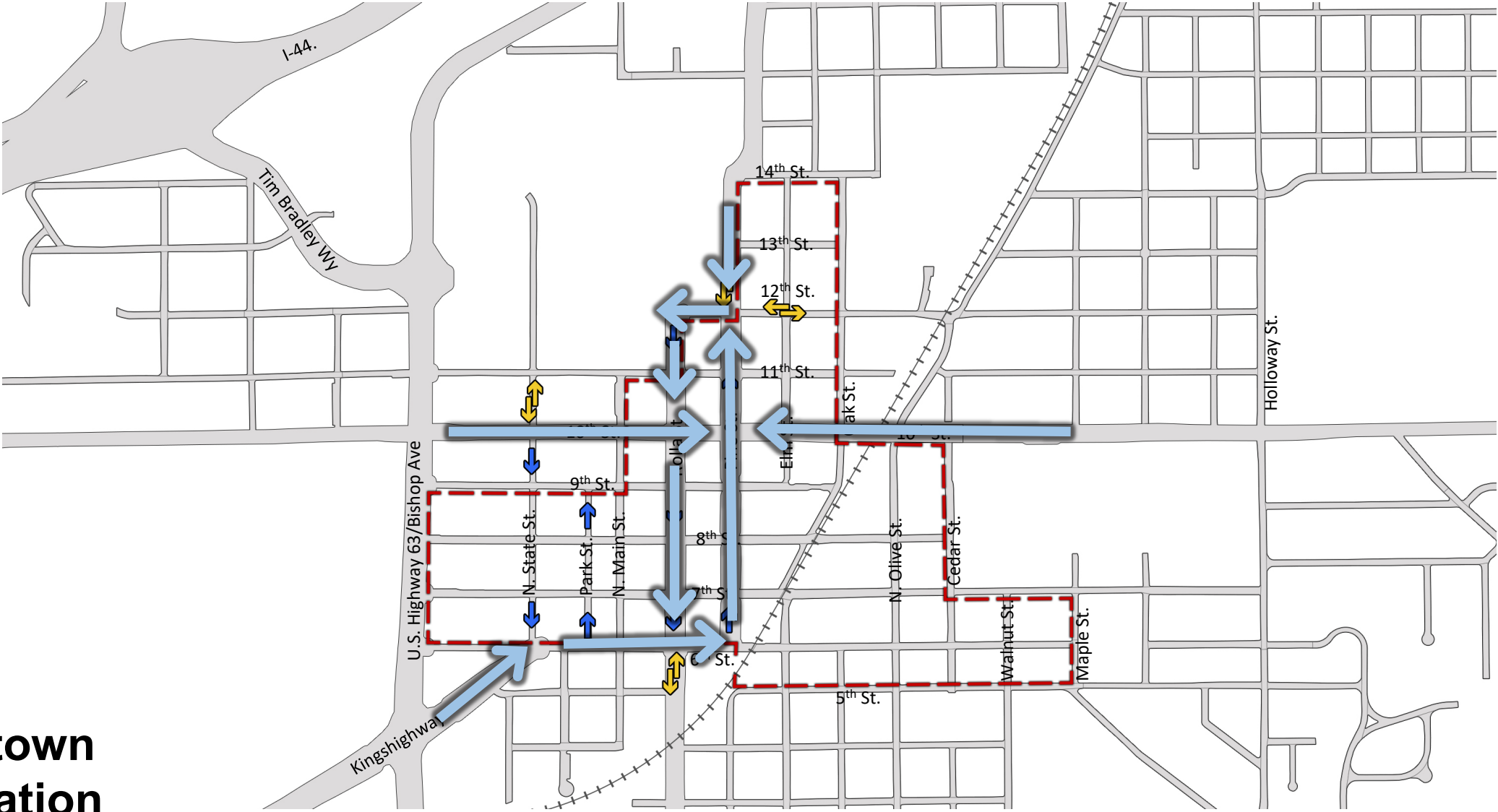




# Existing Conditions Summary

## Accessibility and Parking

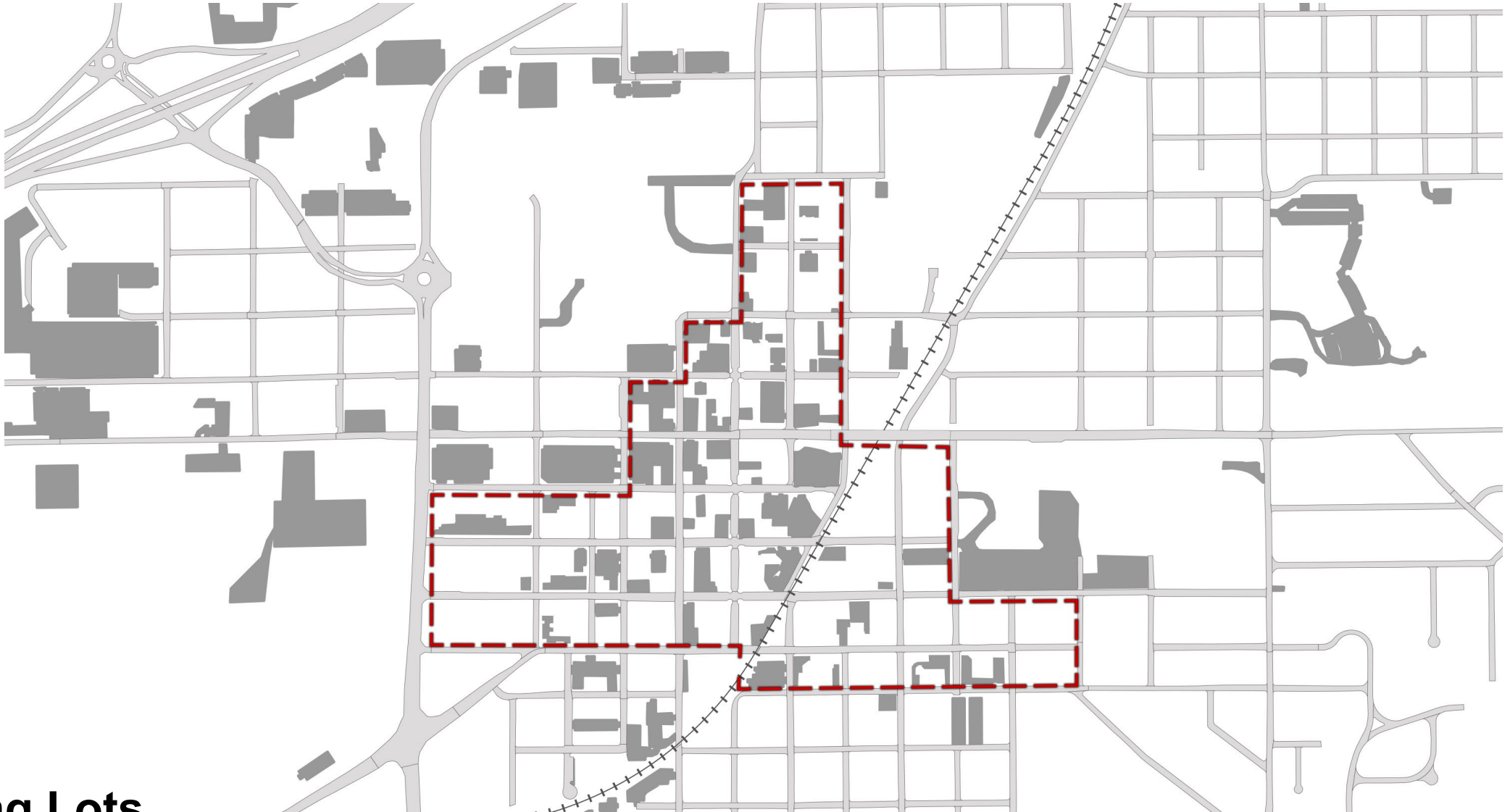
Downtown  
Circulation





## Existing Conditions Summary

# Accessibility and Parking



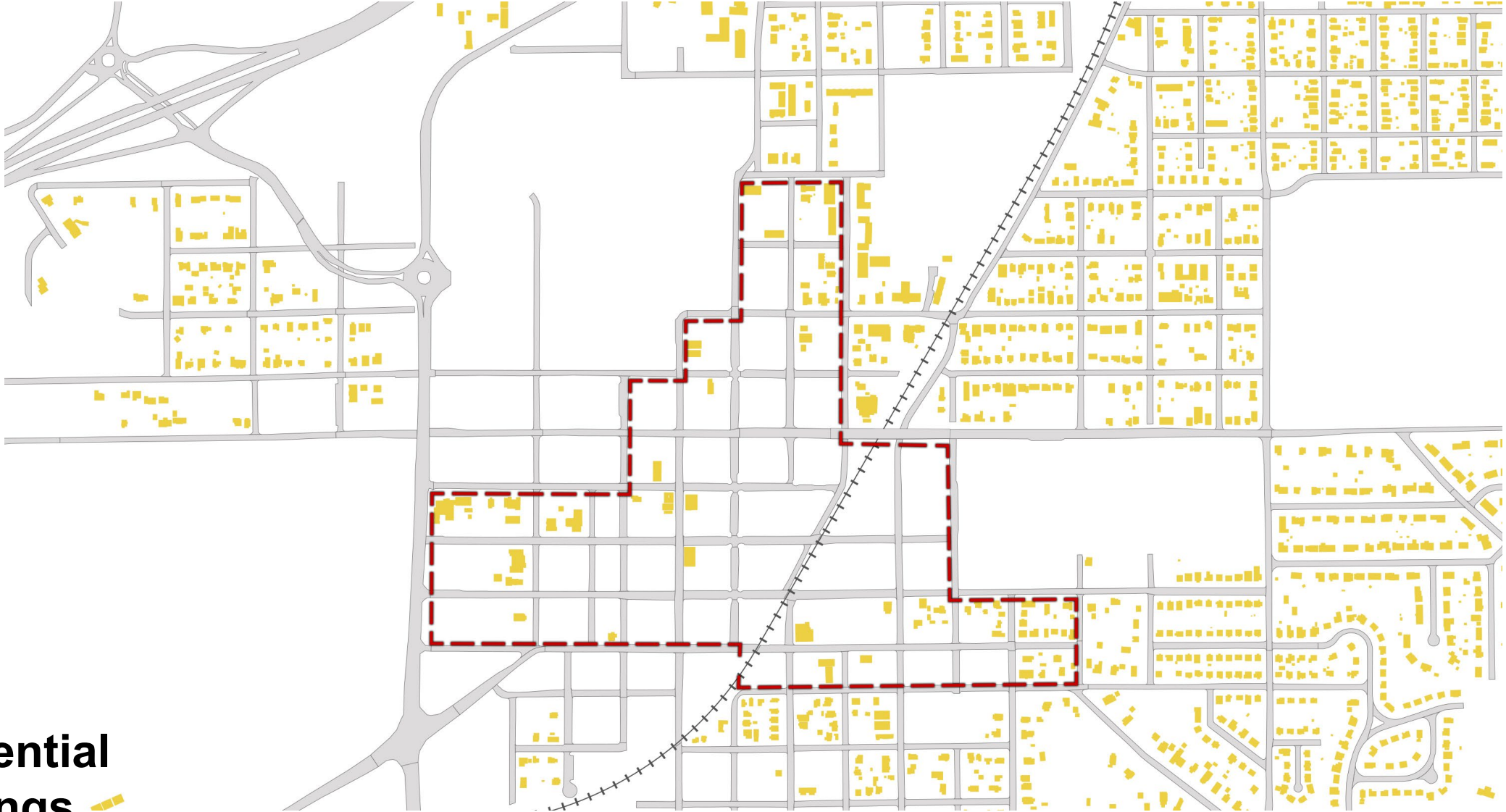
Parking Lots



## Existing Conditions Summary

# Downtown Residential Development

Residential  
Buildings





# Existing Conditions Summary

## Zoning Regulations and Design Guidelines



ca. Late 1940s



ca. 1950s



ca. 1960s



ca. 1980s



2022

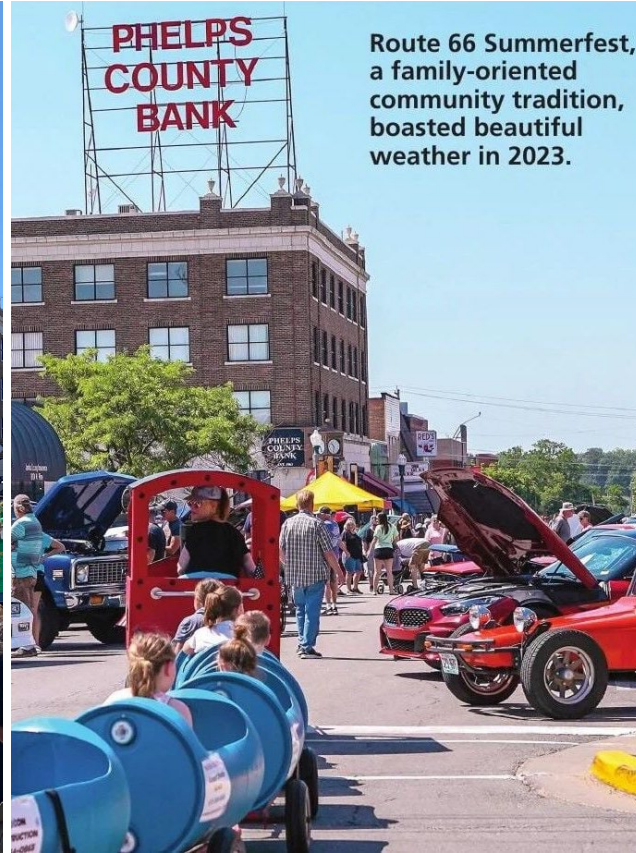


# Existing Conditions Summary

## Management and Operations



**SPRING**



**SUMMER**



**FALL**



**WINTER**





# SMALL GROUP WORKSHOP

Downtown Rolla Focus Area



# Workshop Information

Twenty-eight (28) opportunities and ideas have been identified through the generative discussion at Meeting #1, and the analysis of Downtown Rolla.

These opportunities and ideas are organized according to ten themes:

- **Downtown Identity & Placemaking**
- **Downtown Edges & Adjacencies**
- **Accessibility & Wayfinding**
- **Streetscape & Public Realm**
- **Downtown Buildings**
- **Parking**
- **Perceptions of Safety**
- **Downtown Programming & Amenities**
- **Operations & Management**





- ***Review, modify, and add to*** the list of consensus ideas and opportunities and the themes for Downtown success!

# ROLLA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

## CITY OF ROLLA, MISSOURI