

City of Watsonville

Downtown Specific Plan + EIR

Advisory Meeting #3 | December 15, 2020

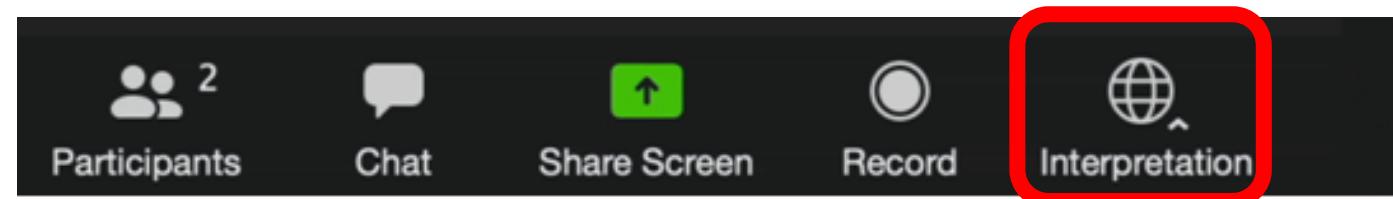
Zoom – What You Need To Know

- Interpretation

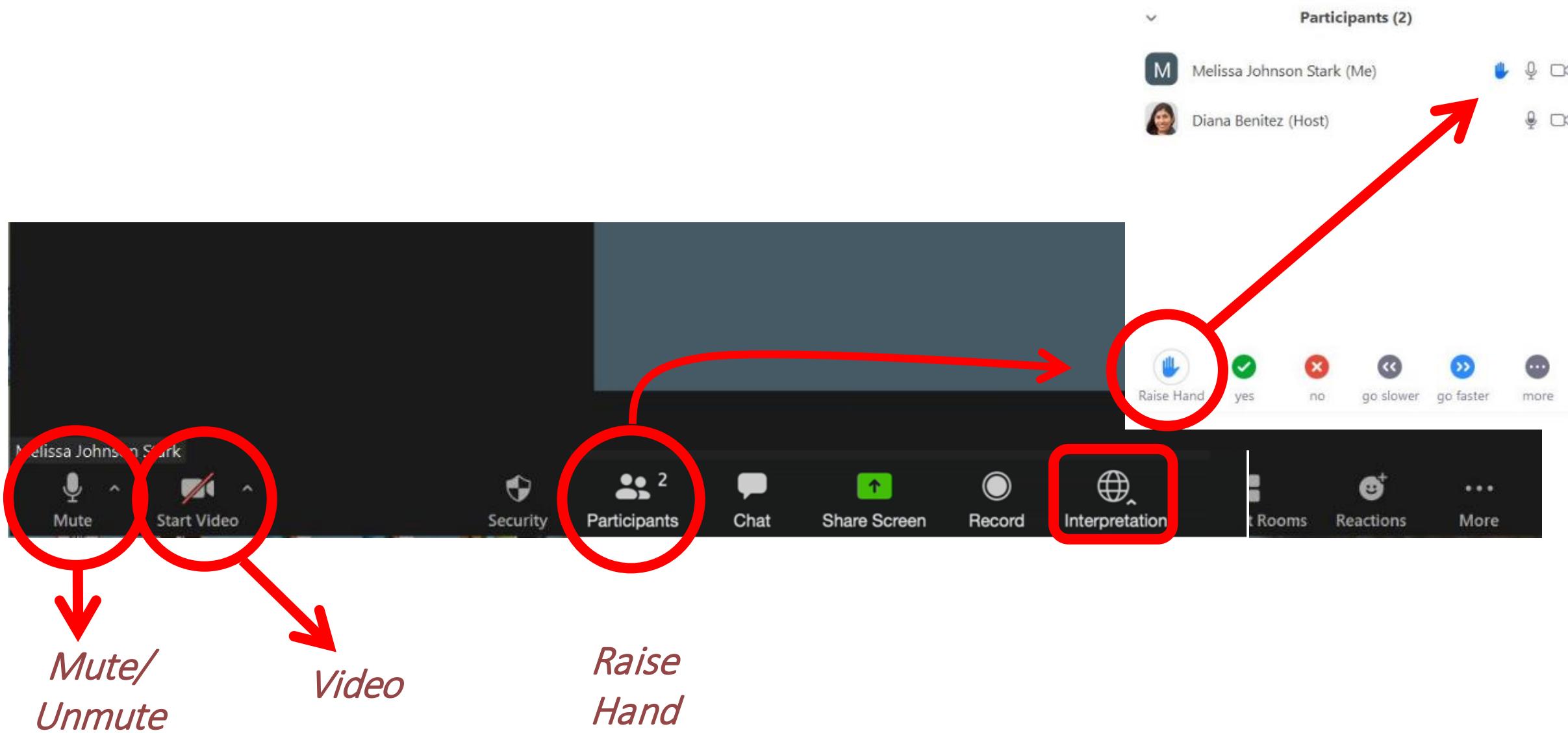
La interpretación en simultáneo para esta reunión se dará en los siguientes idiomas:

Español (Carlos) – bajo la opción Español

Por favor haz clic en el ícono INTERPRETATION en tu barra de herramientas para acceder al idioma deseado



Zoom – What You Need To Know



Zoom – What You Need To Know

**For any technical difficulties, please email Elena Ortiz at
elena.ortiz@cityofwatsonville.org**

**Para cualquier dificultad técnica, envíe un correo electrónico a
Elena Ortiz a elena.ortiz@cityofwatsonville.org**

Welcome and Introductions

Advisory Committee

- Jane Barr
- Eduardo Cervantes
- Gina Cole
- Maria Elena De la Garza
- Francisco Estrada, Councilmember
- Aurelio Gonzalez, Councilmember
- Neva Hansen
- Felipe Hernandez
- Sylvia Luna
- Carmen Herrera Mansur
- Sal Orozco
- Ben Ow
- William Ow
- Manuel Rodriguez
- Shaz Roth
- Tony Scurich
- Brian Spector
- Jenni Veitch-Olson

Agenda

Welcome! Tonight, we will...

- Review survey results
- Overview vision themes and guiding principles
- Discuss land use character areas
- Refine land uses, design character and public realm concepts in Breakout Rooms
- Report Back and Public Comments



Specific Plan Process Overview

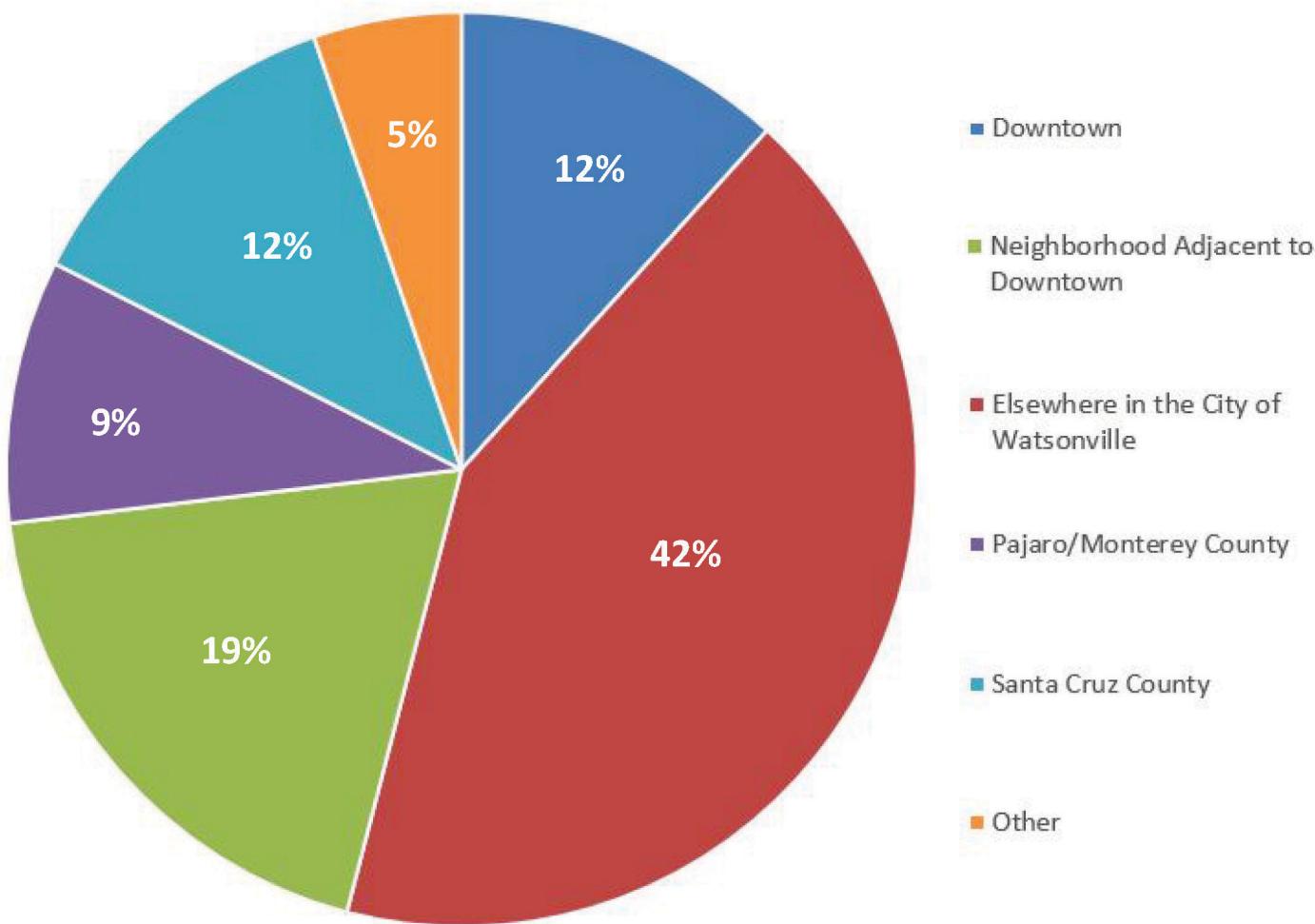
Specific Plan Process Overview



Community Survey Results

Survey Demographics

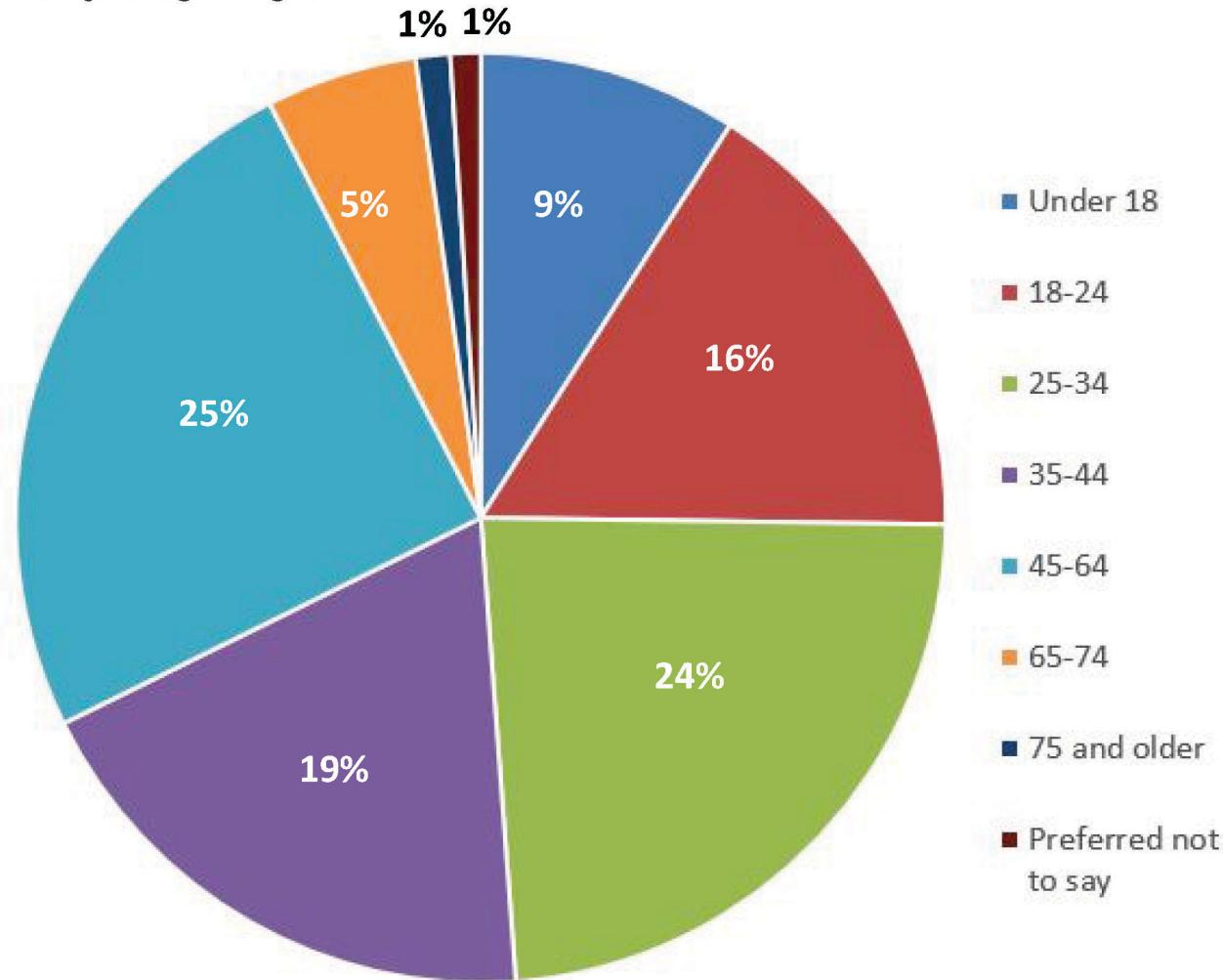
Where do you live?



31% of survey respondents live in or around the downtown while, 42% live elsewhere in Watsonville

Survey Demographics

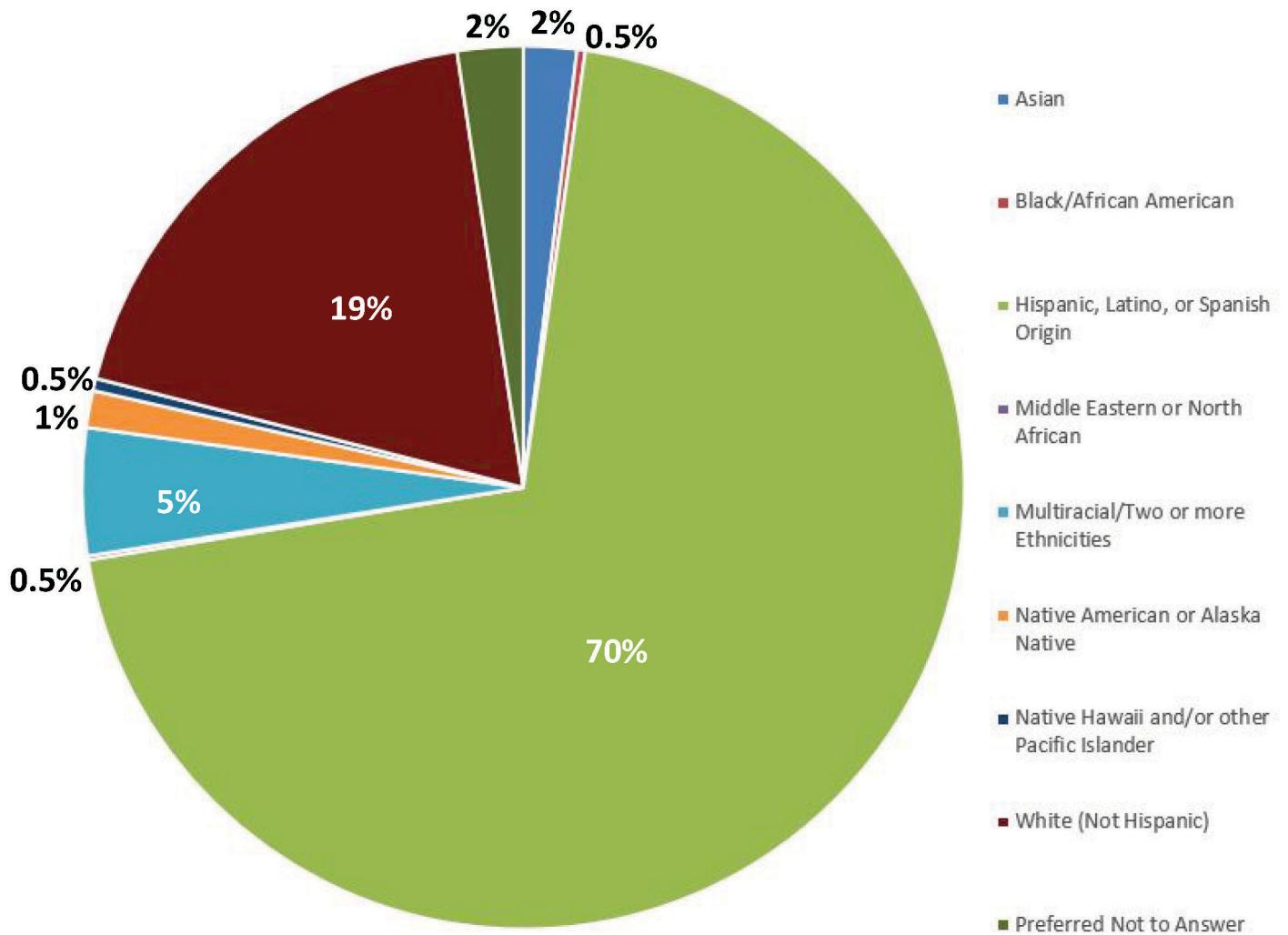
What is your age range?



68% of survey respondents identified between the ages of 25 – 64

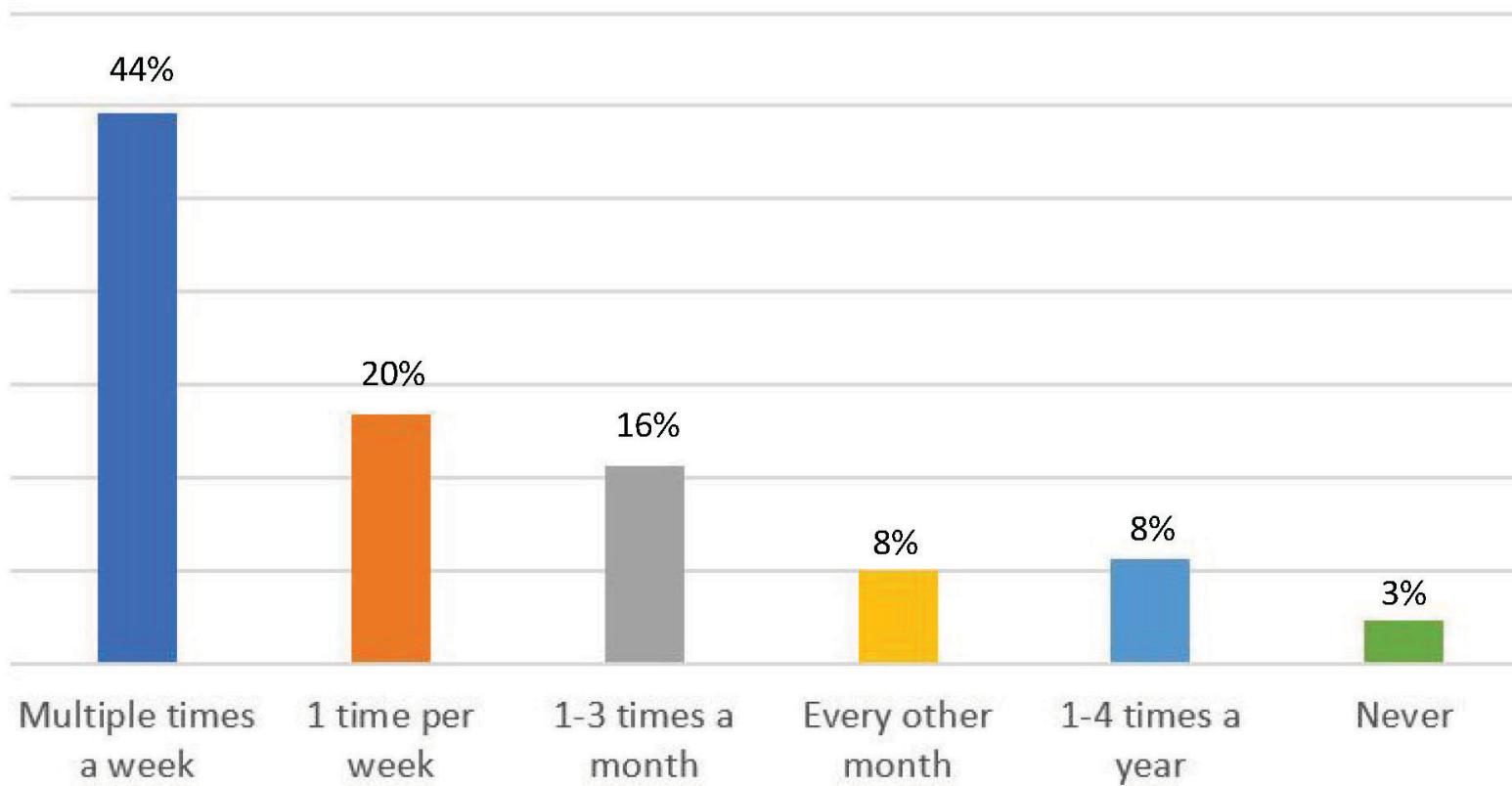
Survey Demographics

What is your background?



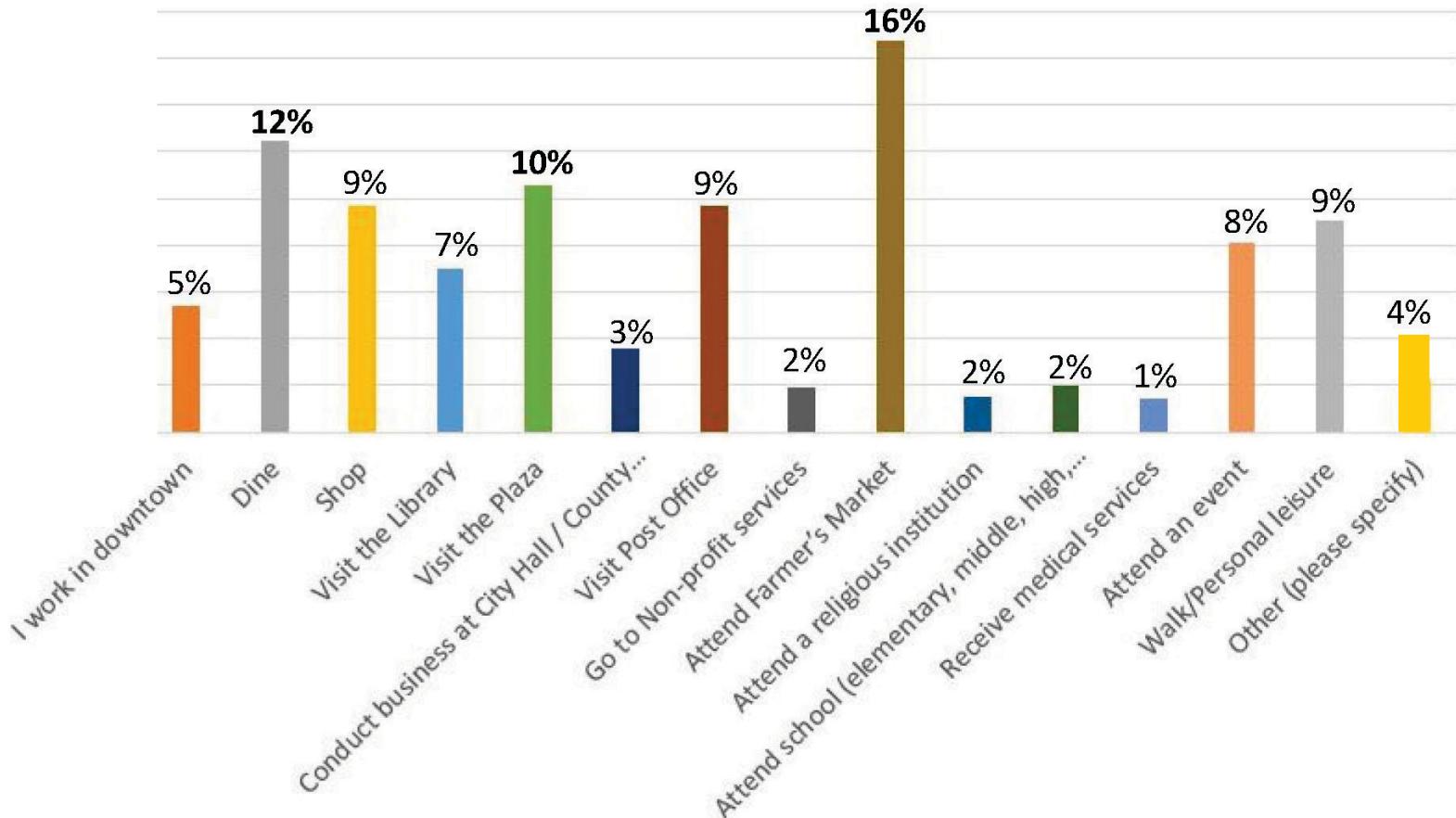
70% of survey respondents identified as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin

How often do you visit Downtown?



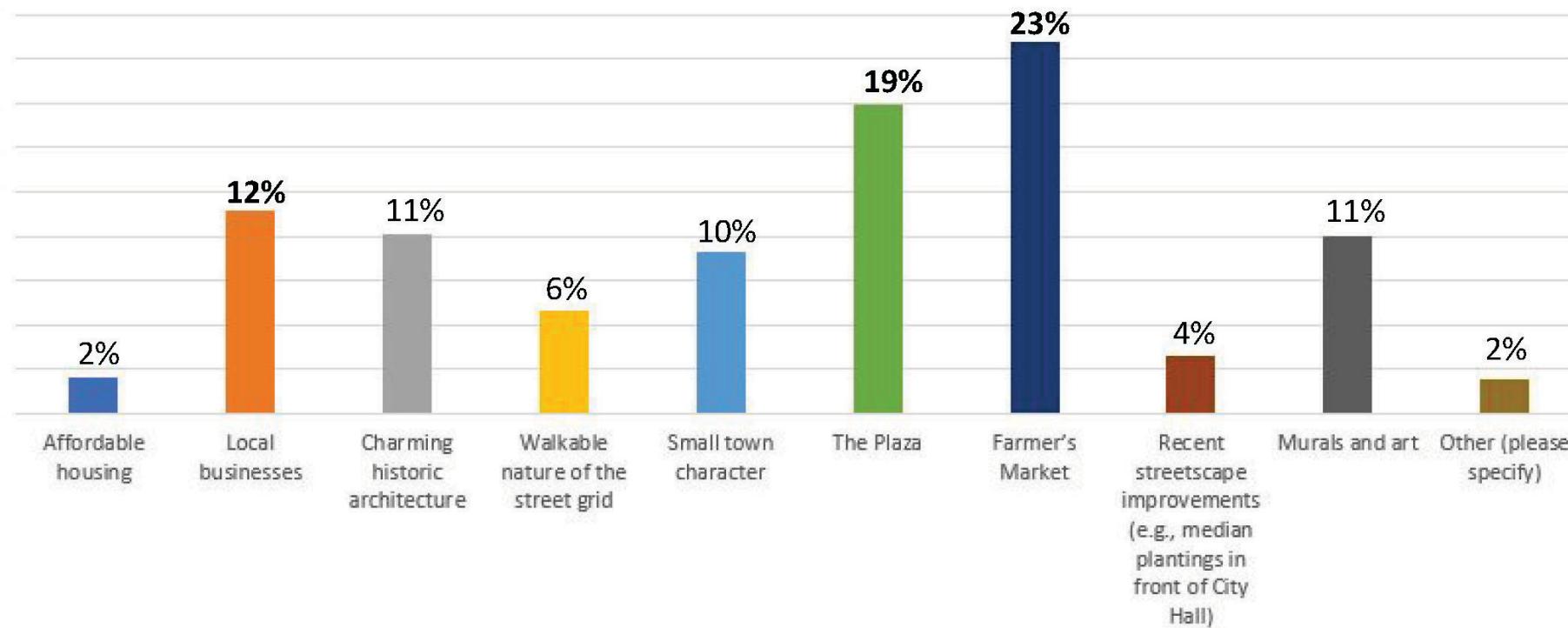
What are the reasons you come to Downtown?

Comprehensive Results



What do you like most about Downtown? Pick three strengths that are most important to you.

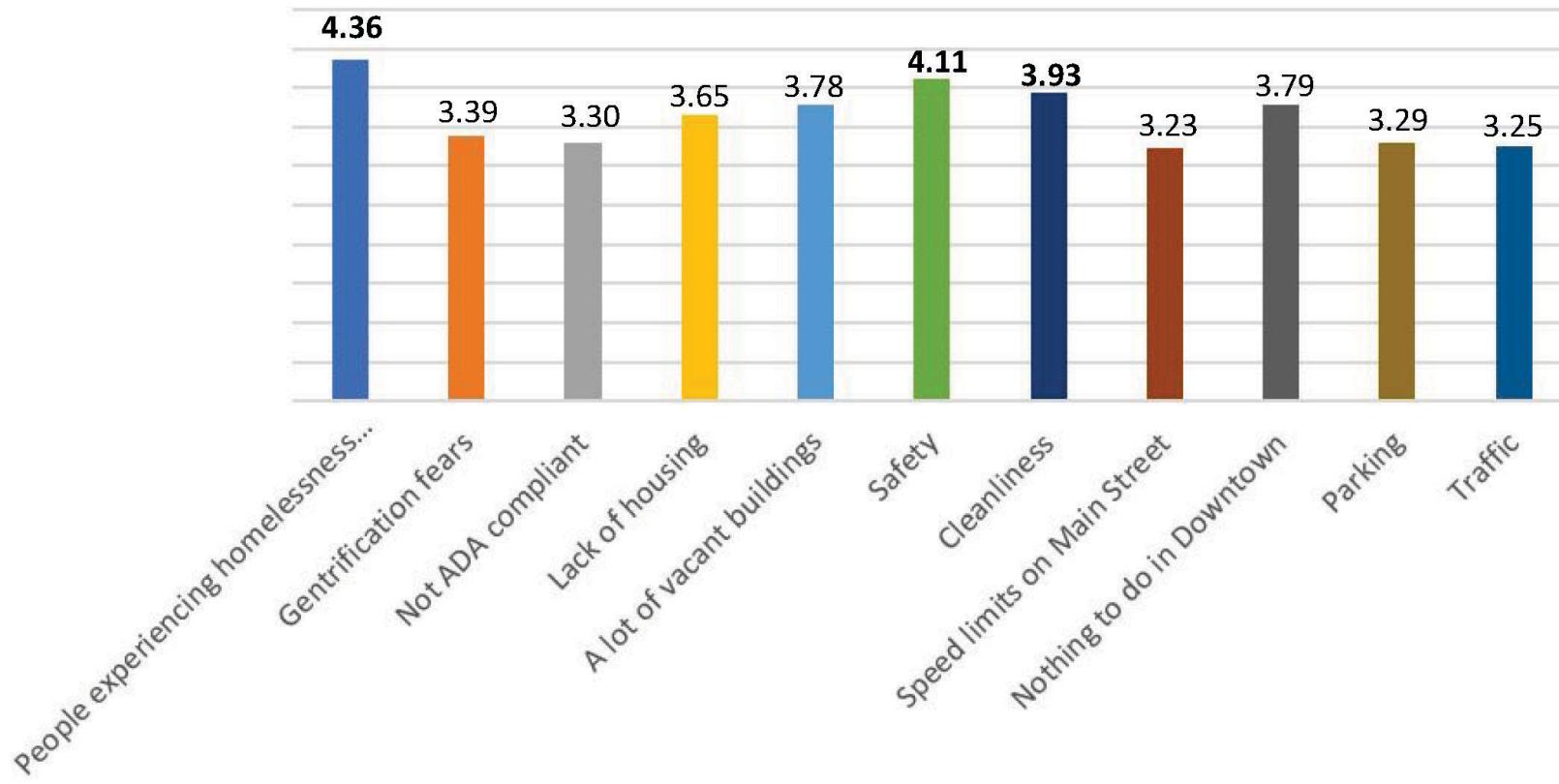
Comprehensive Results



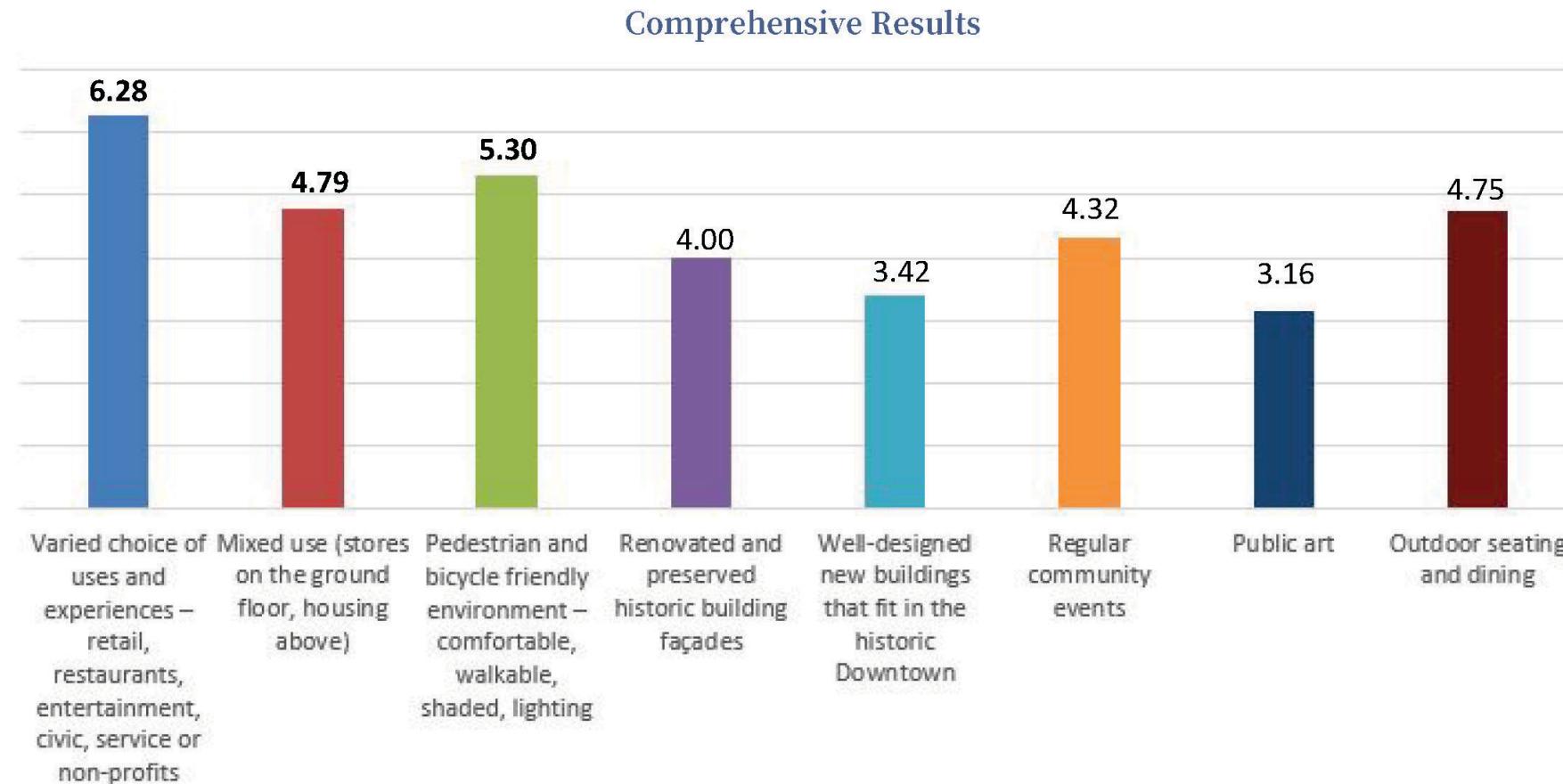
What are the key issues that Downtown is currently facing?

Please rate these issues from "Not Important At All" (1) to "Extremely Important" (5).

Comprehensive Results

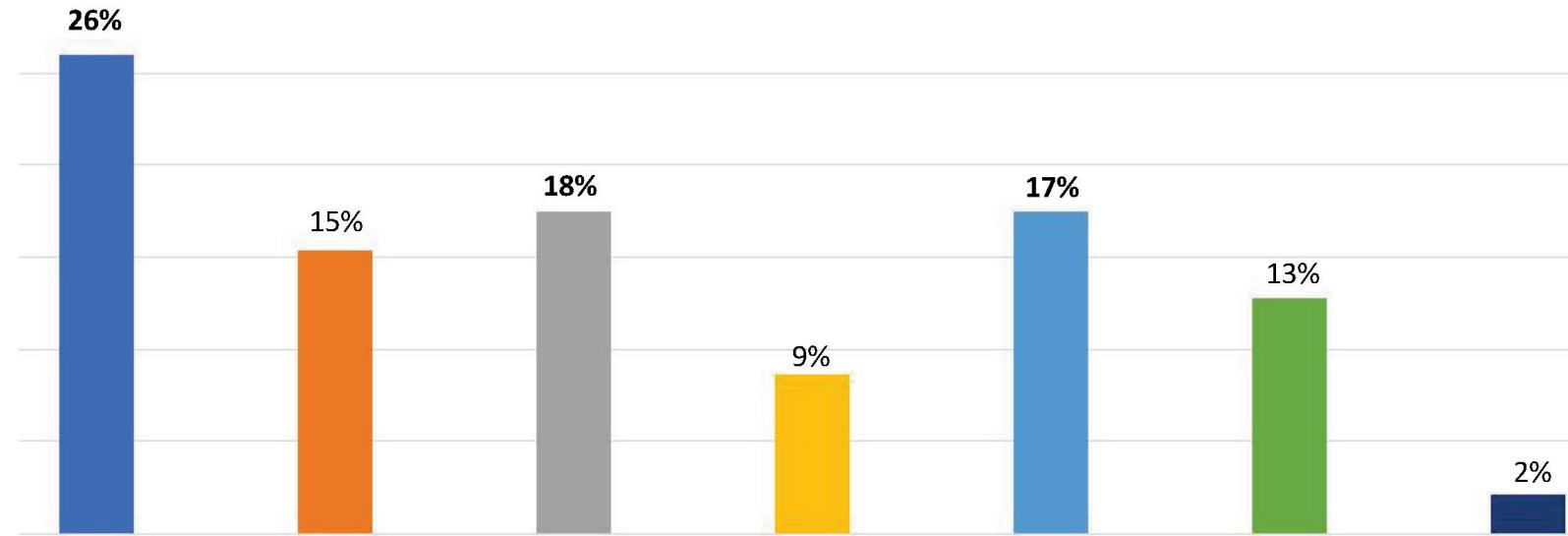


Please rank the elements in order that you think would help make Downtown Watsonville successful (most (8) to least effective (1))



Which opportunities are most exciting to you to build on in the downtown? (pick three)

Comprehensive Results



Re-use of vacant/historic buildings (e.g., Fox Theater and Mansion House) for new uses

Construction of more housing (both market rate and affordable), which will bring more people to the Downtown

New uses bringing more users and momentum into Downtown (e.g. Cabrillo College, Digital Nest, art galleries and museums, entertainment uses)

Strong non-profit presence providing services to residents

Available space and desire for new businesses to come in and provide essential missing services/needs/us es/experiences

Opportunity to redesign Main Street (current roadway is very wide - widen sidewalks, add bike lane or parklets, etc.)

Other (please specify)

What do the results tell us?

- The Farmer's Market and the Plaza are undoubtedly two of the greatest strengths that currently exist downtown. They were both identified as top strengths of the downtown and main reasons why people visit the downtown.
- The community is concerned about homelessness/mental health issues in downtown as well as safety in the downtown. A connection between the homelessness/mental health issue and safety concerns can be drawn as these two issues are interrelated.
- Respondents would like to see more varied choice of uses and experiences within the downtown. While “nothing to do downtown” only ranked in the top 5 for two of the cohorts in terms of key issues, varied choice of uses and experiences came in as the #1 element throughout all cohorts that respondents believe would help make downtown more successful.
- Respondents would like an enhanced pedestrian and bicycle friendly environment in the downtown. Safety ranked as the #2 key issue throughout all cohorts, identifying lack of safety in the downtown as something felt regardless of respondent age and where they live.
- While gentrification fears ranked as the 7th key issue facing downtown throughout all cohorts, gentrification was called out in many open responses. It is clear respondents would like to keep Watsonville unique and local - maintaining historic and cultural connections is important to the community.

What we've heard so far...

Community Workshop #1 and Survey #1, Advisory Committee Meetings, Advisory Committee Member Interviews, and Stakeholder Interviews

What we have heard so far...

STRENGTHS OF DOWNTOWN

- Watsonville is a **unique community** with agriculture, wine, art, education, and nature themes
- The Plaza is the **Crown Jewel** of the downtown
- Farmer's Market has a distinct character and draws people to the downtown
- Other draws – Library, city and social services, banks, Digital Nest
- Murals and art!
- Charming **historic** architecture and character
- Recent **streetscape improvements**, beautifying the streets
- **Scale** of downtown **very walkable**
- The neighborhoods in and surrounding Downtown provide **affordable housing** for residents

What we have heard so far...

KEY ISSUES FACING DOWNTOWN

Identity and functionality

- Lack of variety in retail and restaurant uses
- Lack of density downtown, not enough people live there to activate it
- Little opportunity to be social at night
- Cleanliness and safety
- Lot of vacant buildings
- Lack of wayfinding signage
- Not ADA compliant

Social Issues

- People experiencing homelessness and mental health issues
- Resetar and clientele

Demographic changes

- Small local business preservation
- Fear of gentrification
- Concerns about displacement
- Concern with migration from the Bay area

Traffic and Safety

- Main Street is too auto-centric, people driving too fast
- Pedestrian and cyclist safety
- Main Street congestion/traffic

What we have heard so far...

OPPORTUNITIES IN THE DOWNTOWN

- Desire to see **more diverse uses** – retail, restaurants, entertainment, civic, mixed use, etc.
- Improvements to **pedestrian and bicycle friendly environment** – outdoor seating and dining, shade, lighting
- **More housing** is needed (both market rate and affordable)
- **Cabrillo College** brings young people to the downtown, but need a place to go or something to do
- Build fresh momentum off of **Digital Nest**, and **kitchen and retail incubators**
- **Strong non-profit presence** providing services to residents
- Fox Theater and Mansion House both hold **great potential**
- Space for new businesses to come in and **provide essential missing services/needs**
- Main Street roadway very wide - **opportunity to widen sidewalks, add bike lane or parklets**
- Recently approved alcohol ordinance allows new uses within the downtown

Vision and Guiding Principles

Vision Themes



Vitality



Dignity



Equity



Preservation



Safety



Innovation

Guiding Principles

- Preserve key elements that make Downtown unique
- Establish a varied choice of uses and experiences for the diverse community
- Create housing opportunities for all
- Promote local economic prosperity
- Create a vibrant, active Downtown environment
- Foster a healthy, inclusive, and culturally connected community where all members can thrive
- Re-imagine mobility options and connections

Guiding Principles

- **Preserve key elements that make Downtown unique**
 - Celebrate the Plaza as an authentic gathering place and central node for the community and foster its energy to elevate community connections.
- **Establish a varied choice of uses and experiences for the diverse community**
 - Identify and recruit key missing uses that would help diversify the options of experiences in downtown.
- **Create housing opportunities for all**
 - Encourage housing (market rate and affordable) that supports the varied socioeconomic interests and needs of the community.
- **Promote local economic prosperity**
 - Maintain and strengthen Downtown's diverse business presence supporting economic prosperity for all.

Guiding Principles

- **Create a vibrant, active Downtown environment**
 - Encourage mixed use with ground floor commercial uses and housing above.
- **Foster a healthy, inclusive, and culturally connected community where all members can thrive**
 - Promote livability regardless of age, ethnicity, income by focusing on community connection, needs, and sense of belonging.
- **Re-imagine mobility options and connections**
 - Design safe pedestrian and bicyclist facilities that invite all users regardless of age and ability to use and enjoy.

Vision Themes and Guiding Principles

Provide additional comments on the Vision Themes and Guiding Principles here:

www.raimi.konveio.com/dwsp_visionandguidingprinciples

Open for feedback through January 8, 2021

Elements of a Successful Downtown

Elements of a Successful Downtown

- Diversity of uses –
 - Retail, restaurants, entertainment, civic, office, service non-profits
 - **Infill housing** – stand-alone, or as a part of mixed-use
- Community events and gathering spaces
- Adaptive reuse and new construction
- **Pedestrian-oriented frontages** - comfortable, shaded, walkable streetscapes & public realm

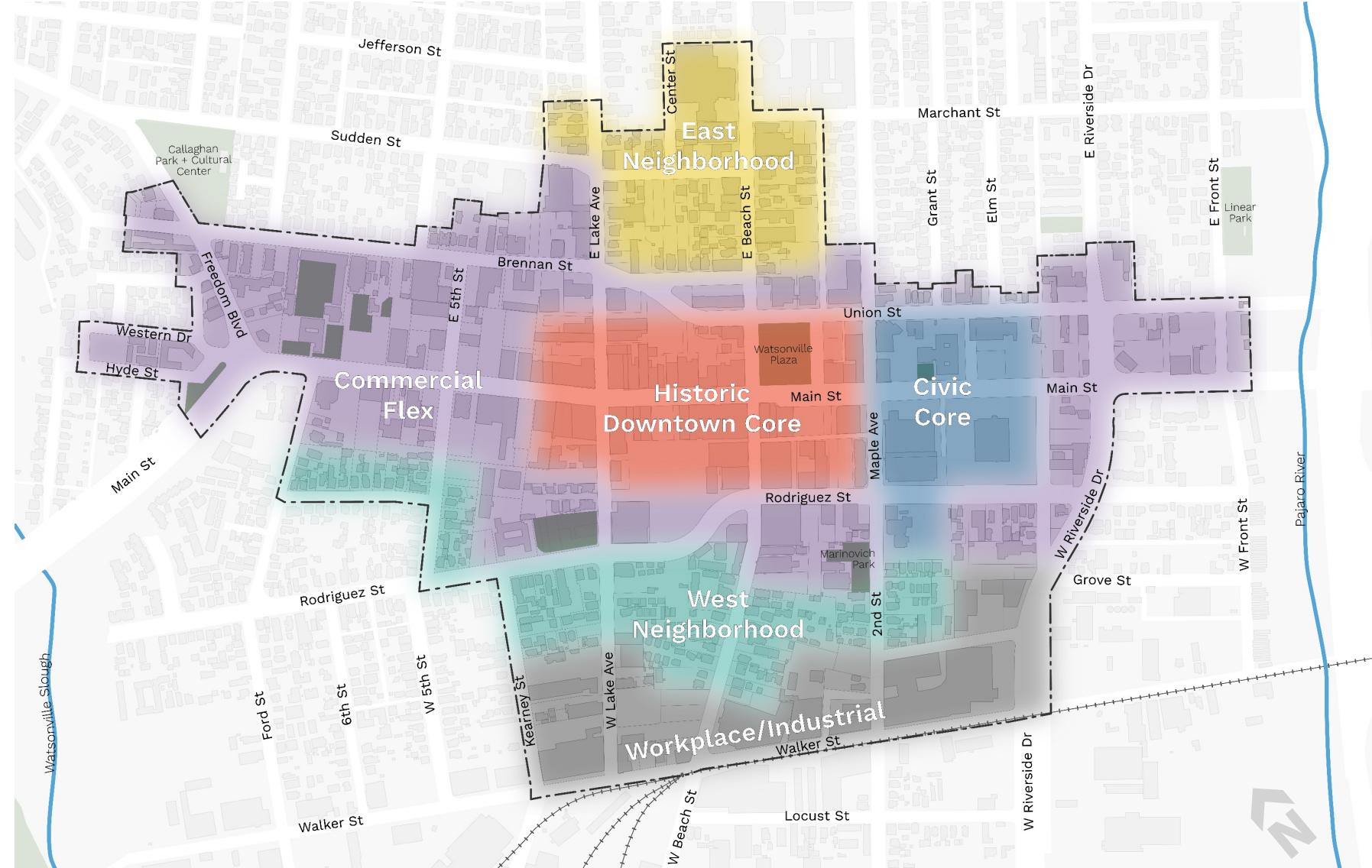


Downtown Framework + Character Areas

Downtown Character Areas

POTENTIAL AREAS

- Downtown Core
- Civic Core
- Commercial “Flex”
- Workspace / Industrial
- “Flex” Neighborhoods – (East & West)



Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan Area

For each of the Character Areas:

- Key land use characteristics – area and buildings
- Public and private frontages
- Opportunity sites
- Proposed land uses and urban design character

Discussion Items:

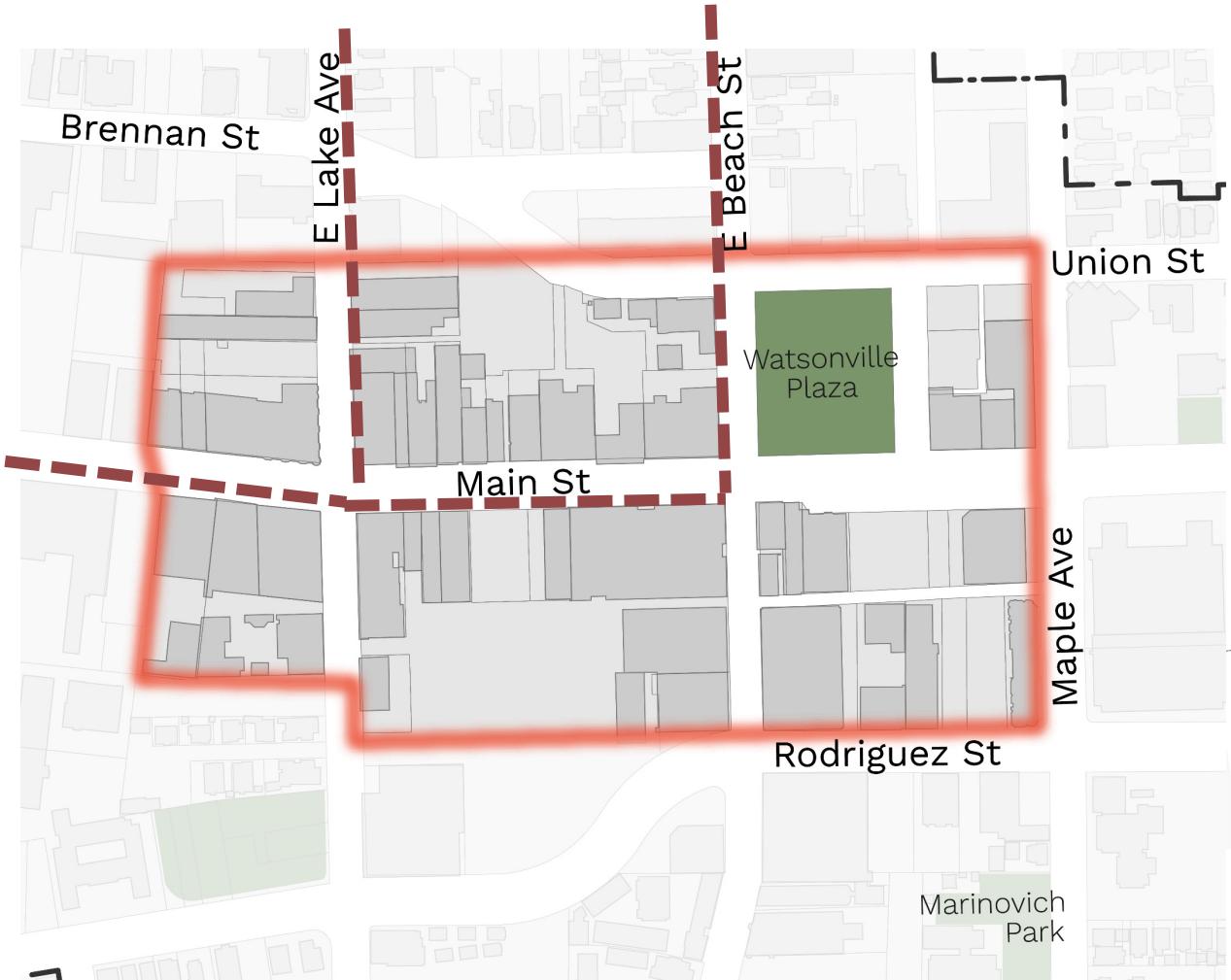
- Proposed land uses
- Opportunity sites
- Streetscape and public realm considerations
- Other thoughts

Downtown Core

Downtown Core

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

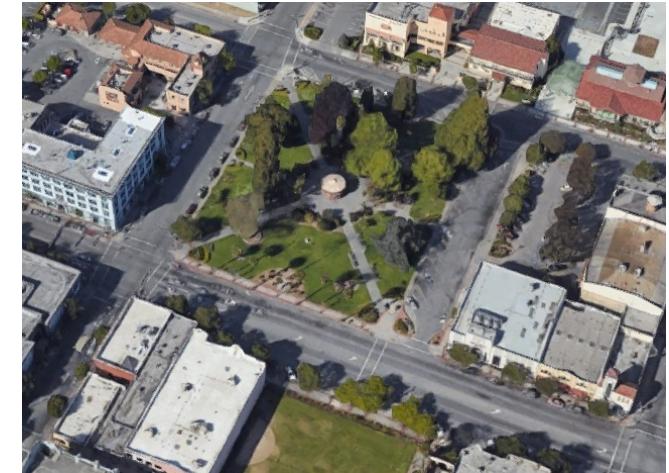
- Historic Main Street
- Watsonville Plaza: Anchors the Downtown Core and Civic Districts
- Strong existing street network
- CALTRANS RTE 152 poses a significant challenge to the intended urban environment envisioned for downtown
- Lack of substantial housing in the Downtown Core; not yet a mixed-use district



Downtown Core

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

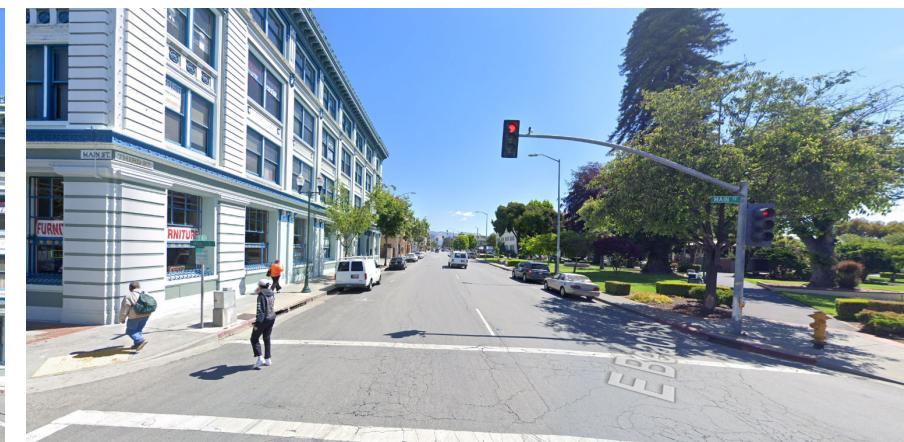
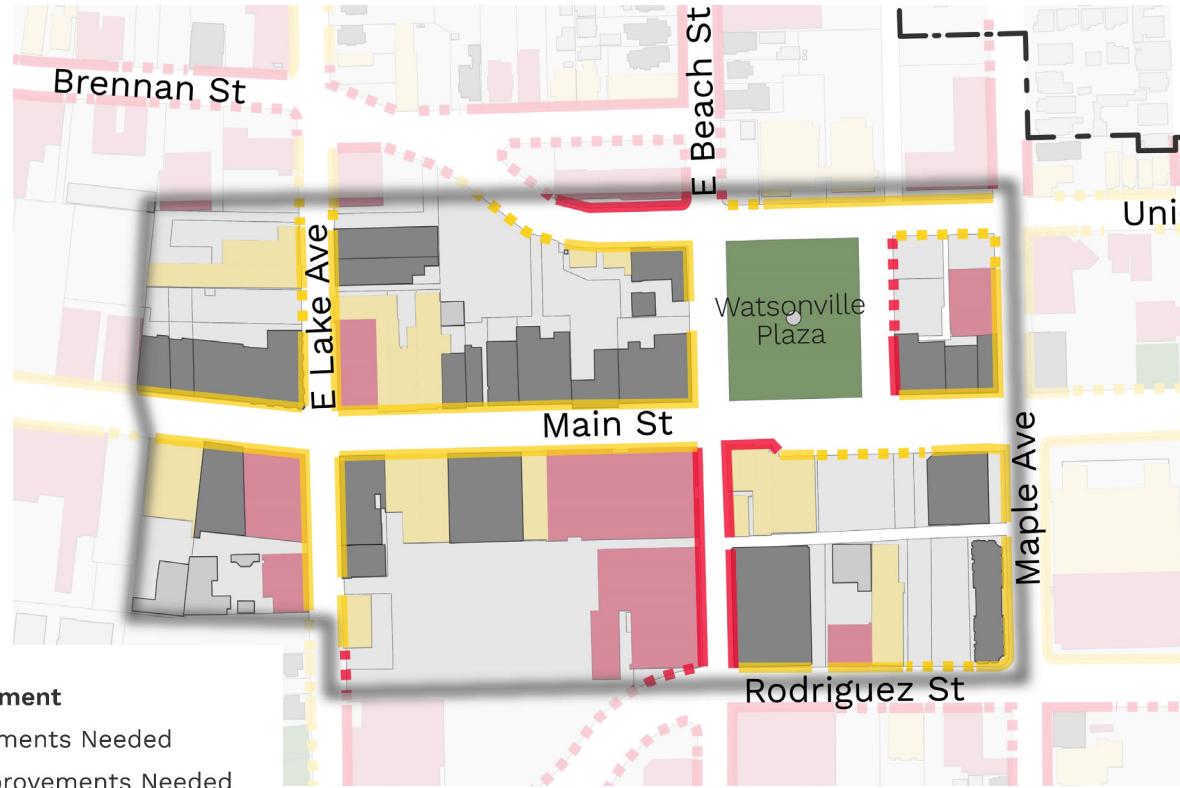
- Several historic landmarks in the Downtown Core; built in the 1880s-1920s
- Anchored by the Plaza - Major landmark of the city, well programmed with many special events (Strawberry Festival, Farmers Markets, Outdoor Concerts, etc.)
- Opportunities for adaptive reuse of historic buildings



Downtown Core

PUBLIC FRONTAGES

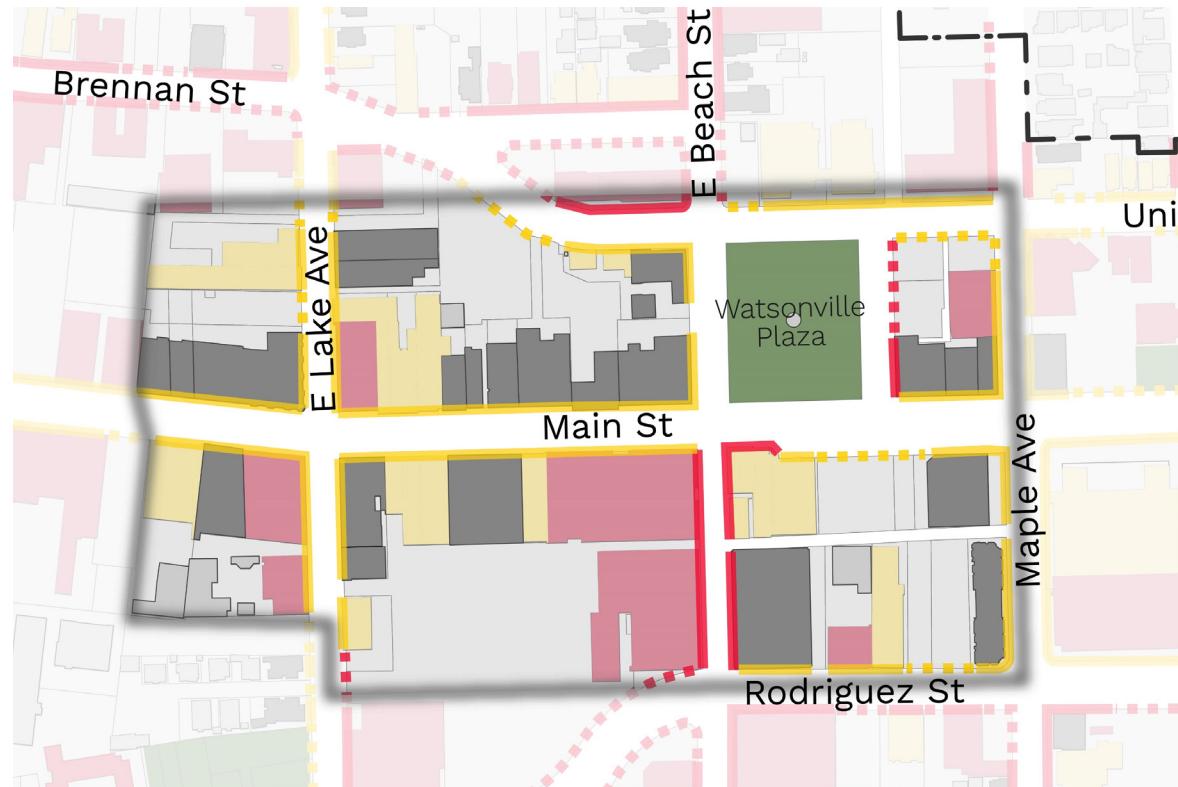
- Buildings built at property line create consistent street walls along Main Street, E. Lake and E. Beach Street
- Narrow sidewalks
- Constrained by Caltrans control on portion of Main, E. Beach and E. Lake Streets



Downtown Core

PRIVATE FRONTAGES

- Many building frontages in the Downtown Core are “non-contributing”; either **lacking storefront windows and openings altogether or underutilizing those that exist.**
- Disrupt historic Downtown patterns
- Many **vacant/underutilized storefronts**



Private Frontage Assessment

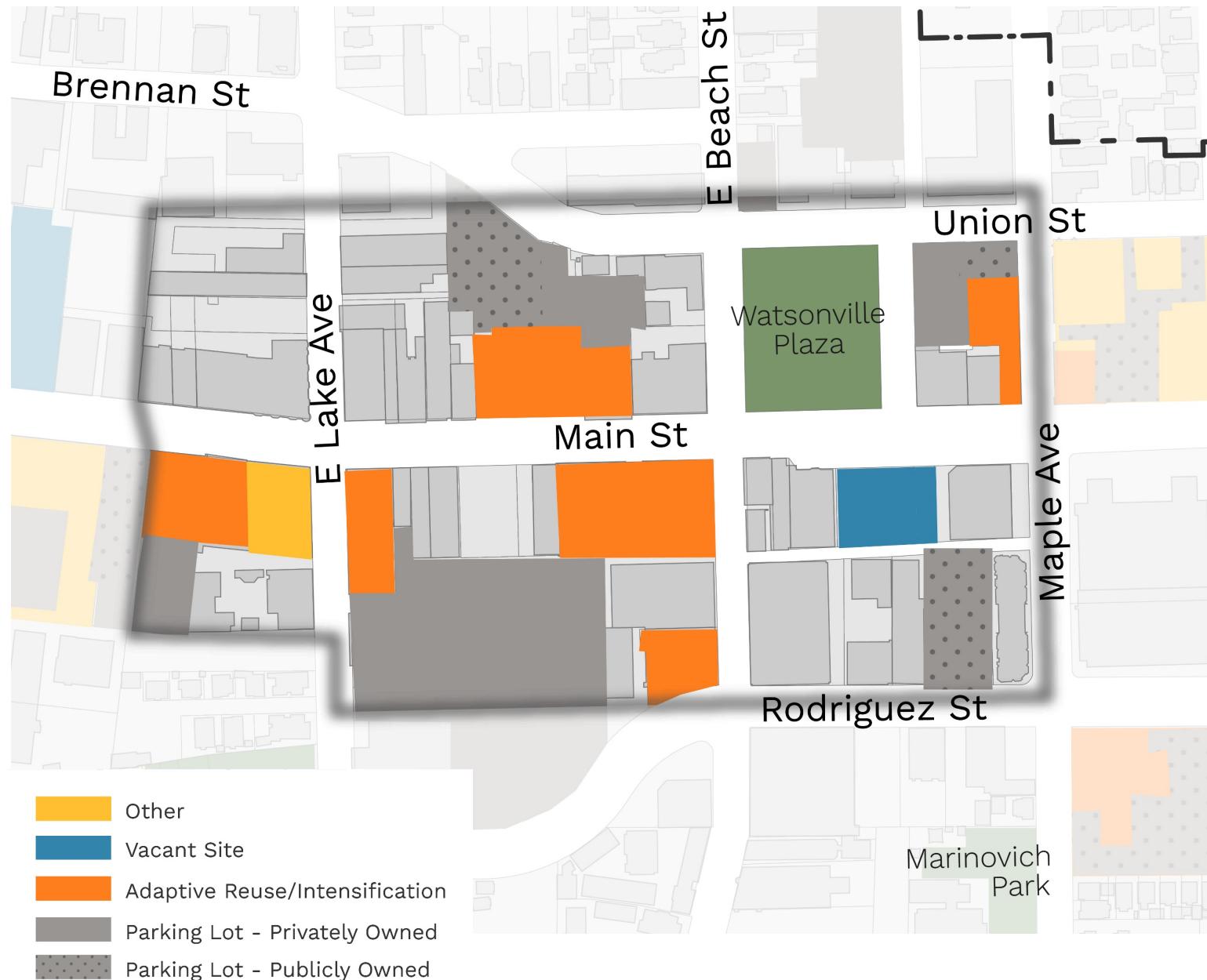
Strong (Contributing) Frontage
Minor Improvements Needed
Significant Improvements Needed



Downtown Core

OPPORTUNITY SITES

- Several opportunity sites in the Downtown Core
- **Adaptive reuse and intensification** of underutilized buildings
- Several parking lots also present an opportunity for infill development



Downtown Core

PROPOSED LAND USE AND URBAN CHARACTER

- Maintain/create **continuous street wall**
- Active retail and restaurant uses on the ground floor; housing or office above
- Require transparent street fronts
- **Façade rehabilitation** to restore buildings to desired frontage character
- Encourage and allow **outdoor seating and dining** – wider sidewalks, parklets, etc.
- Consistent streetscapes along major streets

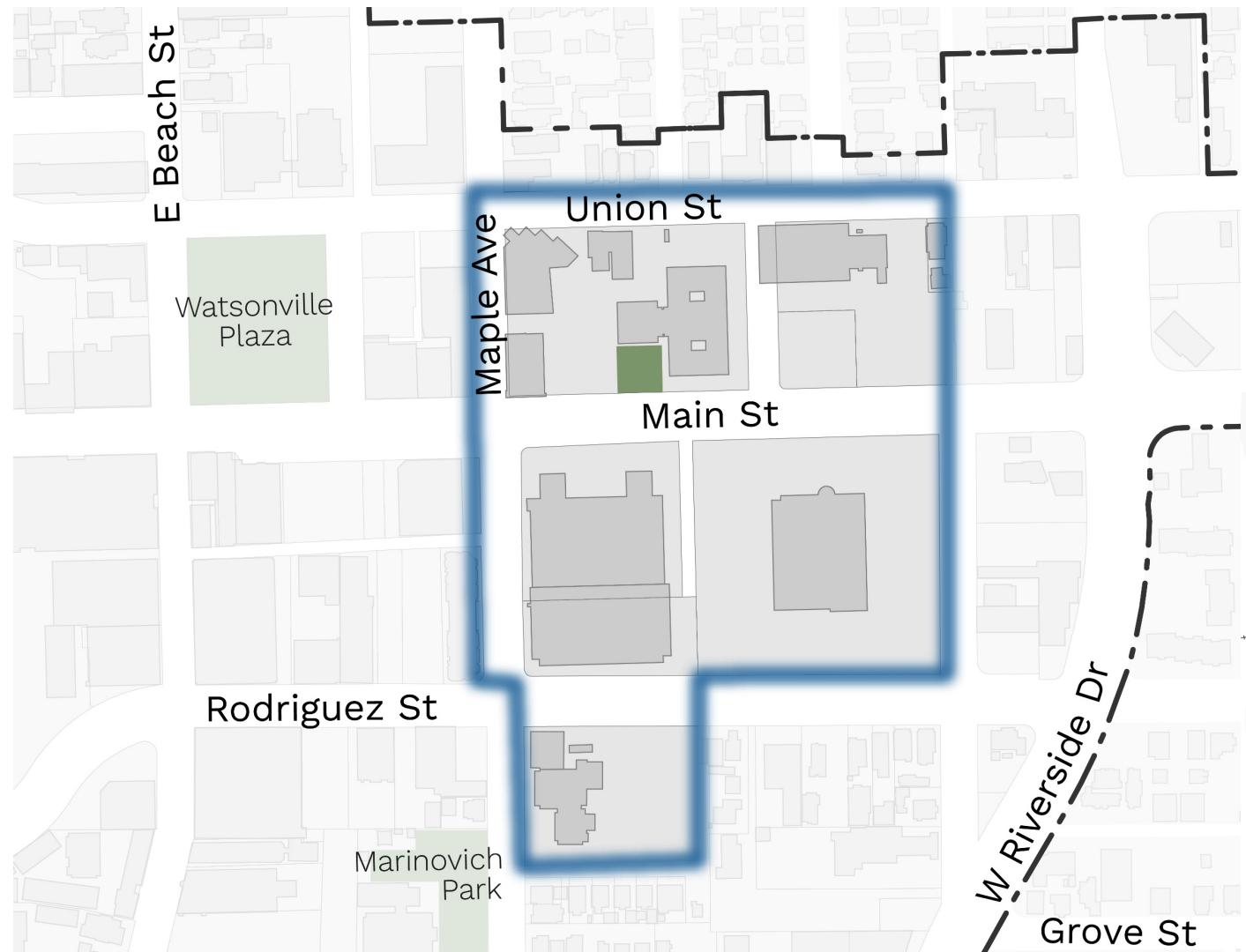


Civic Core

Civic Core

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

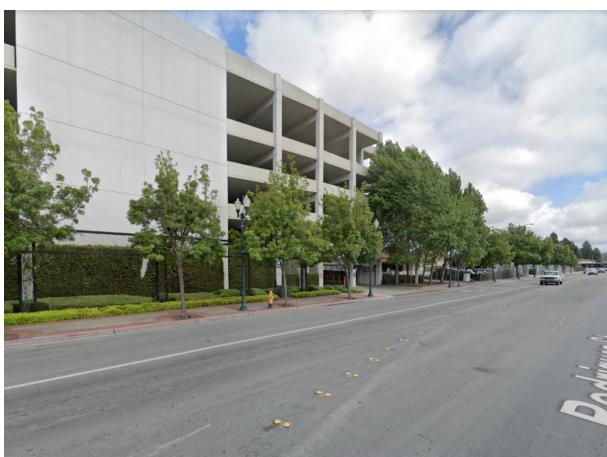
- Anchored by City Hall and new/joint-use Library, Police Station, and Post Office
- Multiple properties with **public ownership**
- Gateway district from the south



Civic Core

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

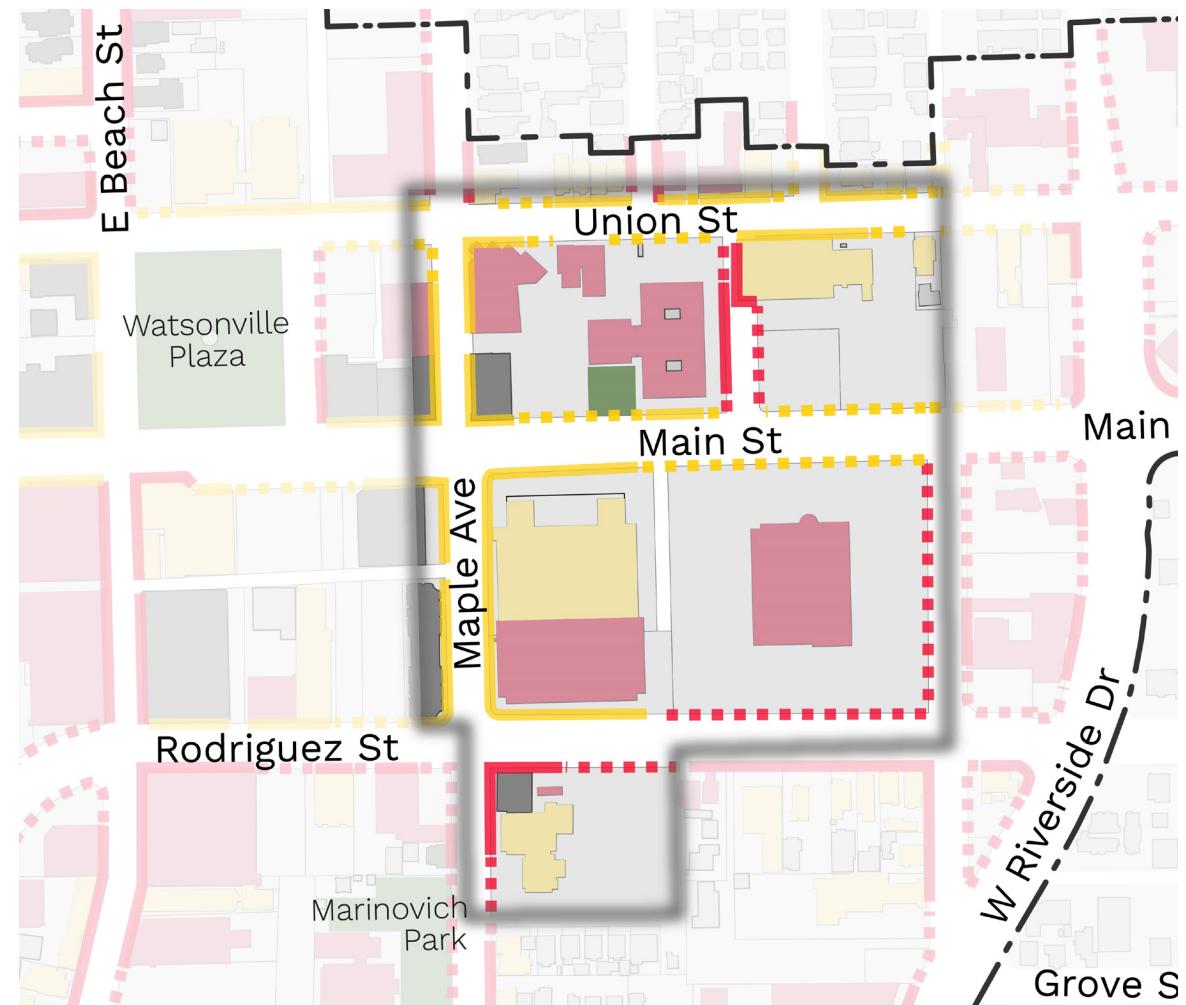
- New joint-use Civic Plaza is a prominent building anchoring the district & fronting the street
- New Shared Parking Structure (2nd St & Rodriguez St) adds to the shared parking supply of the core on nights and weekends
- Post Office site is a large non-contributory element



Civic Core

PUBLIC FRONTAGES

- Streetscape improvements (landscape median + crosswalks) on Main Street are a positive start
- Incomplete streetscape improvements
- Rodriguez Street is “the back” and does not provide a pedestrian-friendly environment
- High-speed traffic; additional calming measures needed



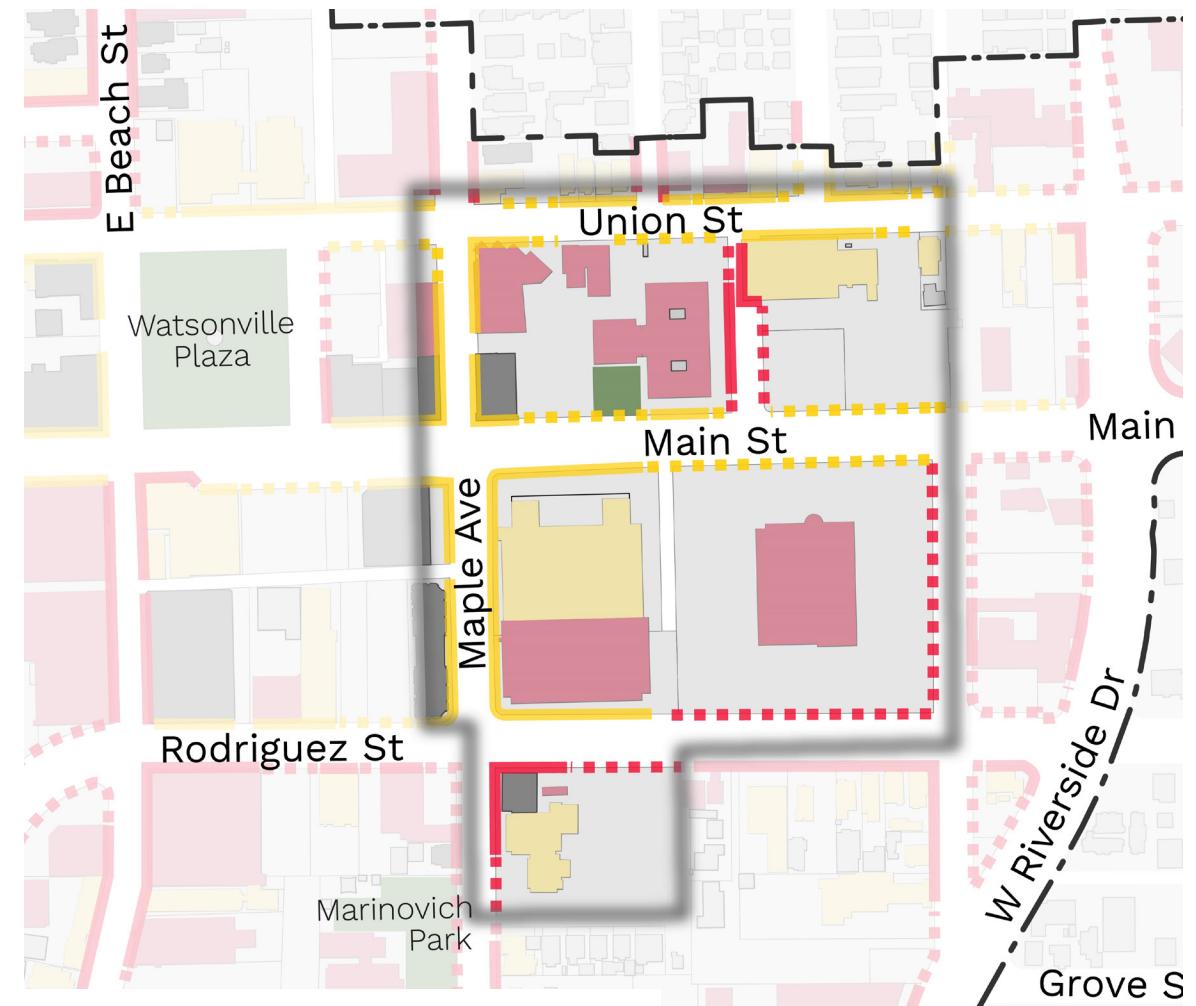
Public Frontage Assessment

- Minor Improvements Needed (Yellow)
- Significant Improvements Needed (Red)
- Indicates lack of building at street (incomplete street wall) (Dashed)

Civic Core

PRIVATE FRONTAGES

- Predominantly “suburban” development patterns - Buildings set back behind parking and large landscape setbacks
- “Inward-oriented” buildings do not engage the street



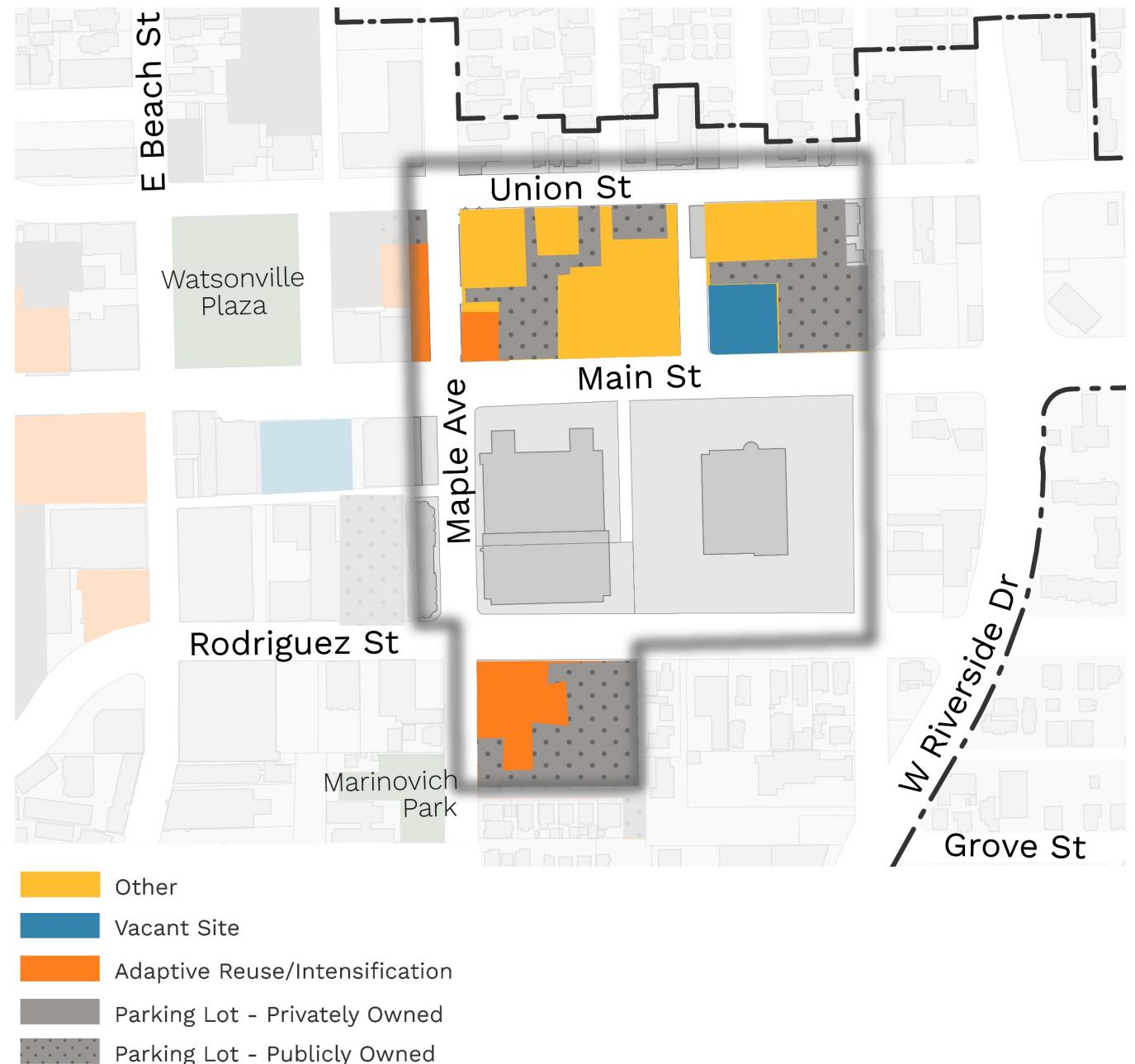
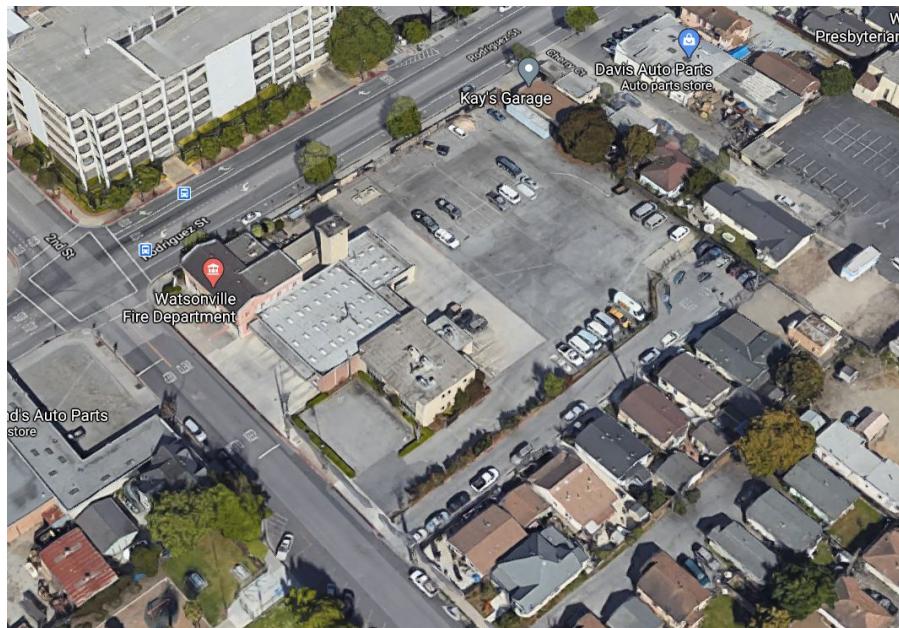
Private Frontage Assessment

- Strong (Contributing) Frontage
- Minor Improvements Needed
- Significant Improvements Needed

Civic Core

OPPORTUNITY SITES

- The city owns/controls several key parcels along the historic Main Street between Main Street and E. Riverside Drive
- Fire Station site and associated parking lot is also a **key opportunity site** for significant infill development

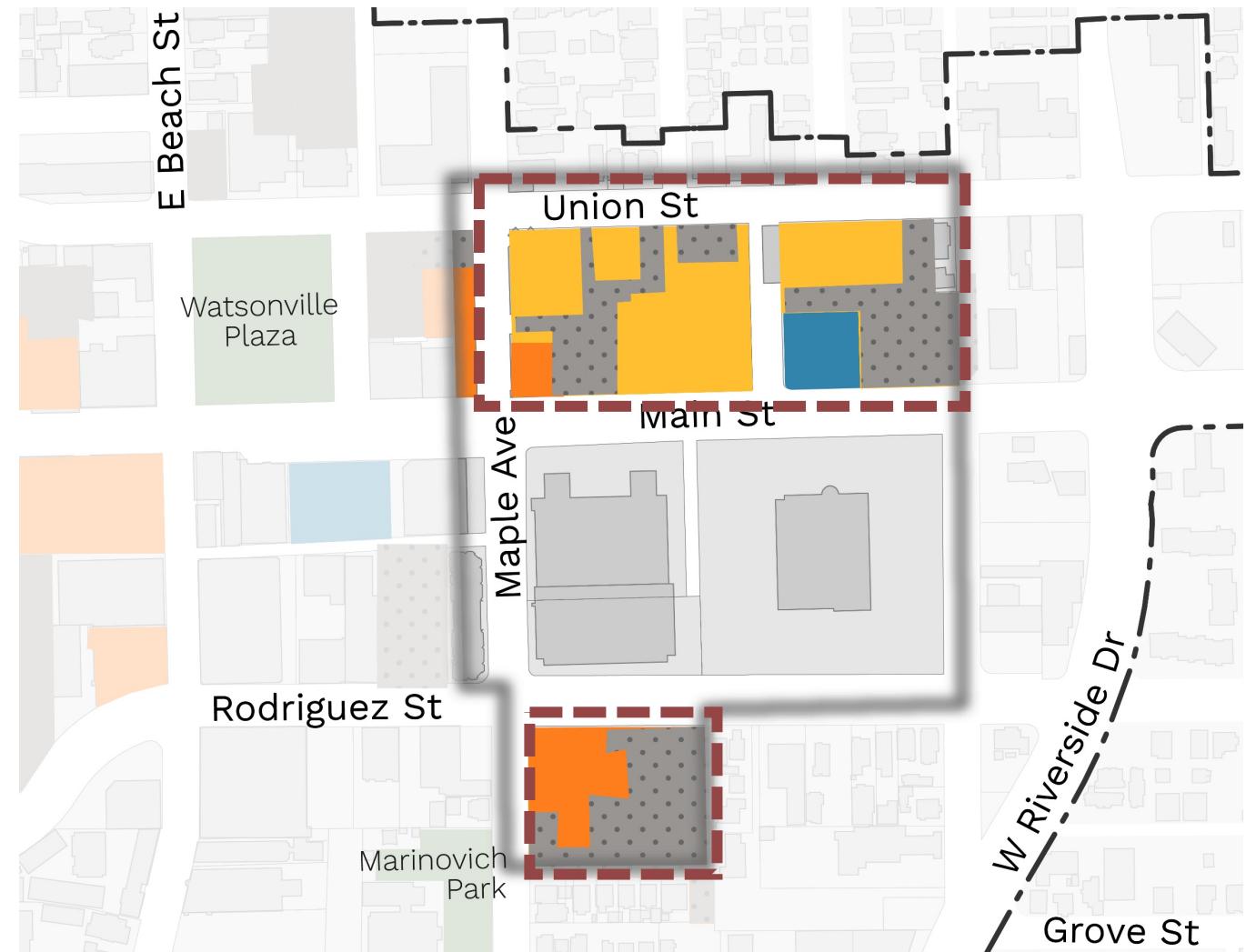


- Other
- Vacant Site
- Adaptive Reuse/Intensification
- Parking Lot - Privately Owned
- Parking Lot - Publicly Owned

Civic Core

LAND USE AND URBAN CHARACTER

- Redevelop majority city-owned block along Main Street between Main Street and E. Riverside Drive with a **mixed-use** project – retail, housing, civic and entertainment
- Accommodate higher densities and massing to match Civic Plaza
- Consolidate **City services** on the Fire Station site and associated parking lot; leverage parking structure
- **Streetscape upgrades to provide connectivity** to pedestrian realm and improve walkability along Main Street and Rodriguez



Commercial “Flex”

Commercial “Flex”

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Directly adjacent to historic neighborhoods just east of Downtown (strong customer base)
- Widely varied development patterns ranging from urban to very suburban
- “Mix of uses”: Housing and commercial; less coherent organization than Core
- Basic street network is already strong
- Very large block sizes limit walkability



Commercial “Flex”

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

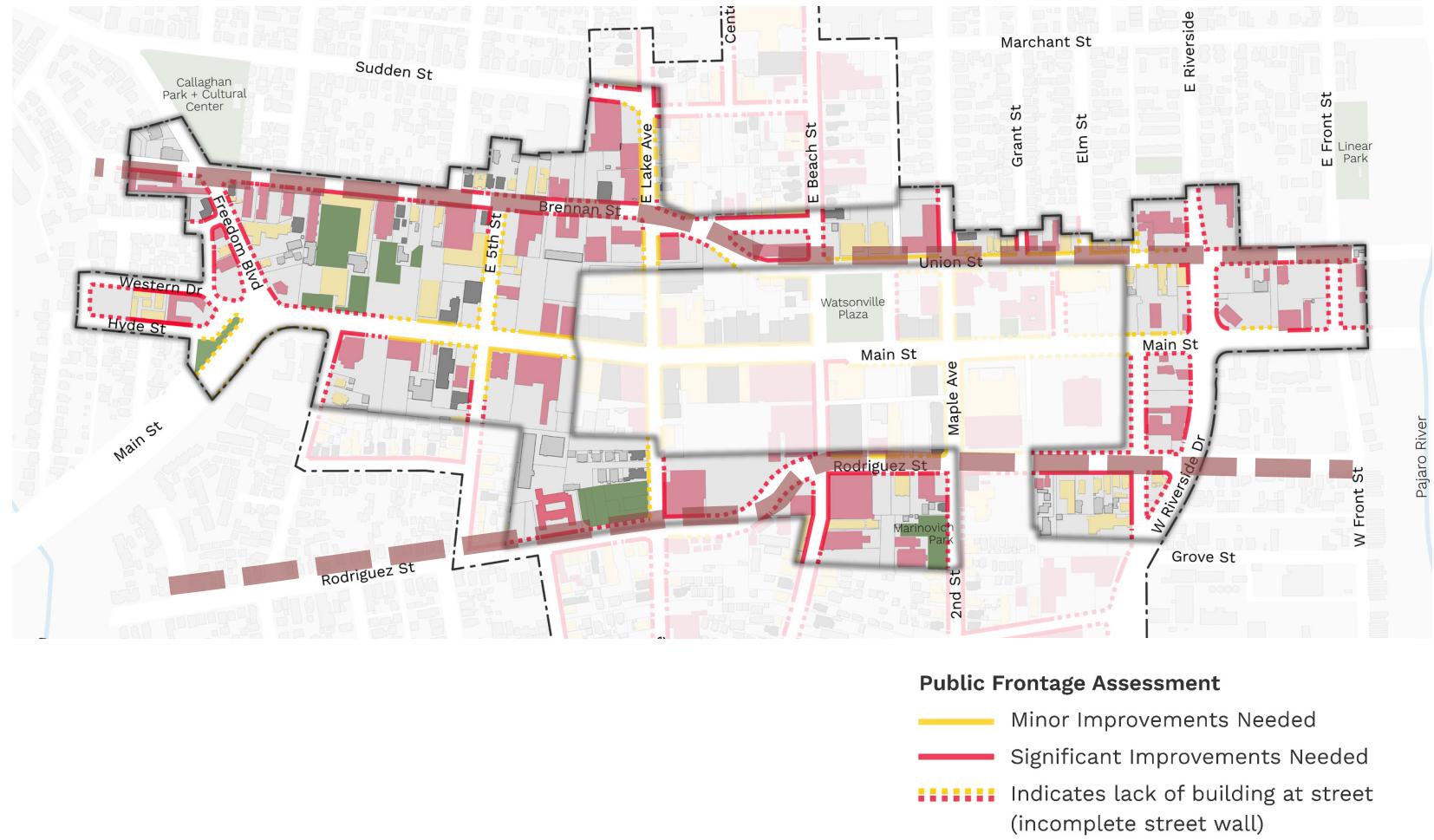
- Much of the original/authentic building stock still in place: could be revitalized with relatively minor improvements
- Numerous existing **single-family homes**; many of which have been **converted to commercial /office**
- Many buildings with **large floorplates** makes rent unaffordable for prospective business owners



Commercial “Flex”

PUBLIC FRONTAGES

- Brennan/Union & Rodriguez are very important corridors: the “seams” that stitch the Core to the surrounding neighborhoods
- Brennan St / Union St Corridor: The “seam” between the Downtown/Civic Core and the Historic Neighborhoods to the east
- Rodriguez St Corridor: The “seam” between the Downtown/Civic Core and the “Industrial / Flex Neighborhoods” to the west



Commercial “Flex”

PRIVATE FRONTAGES

- Many original buildings are street fronting with strong urban frontages
- Minor façade and/or “public frontage” improvements /maintenance is all that is needed in many cases



Commercial “Flex”

PRIVATE FRONTAGES

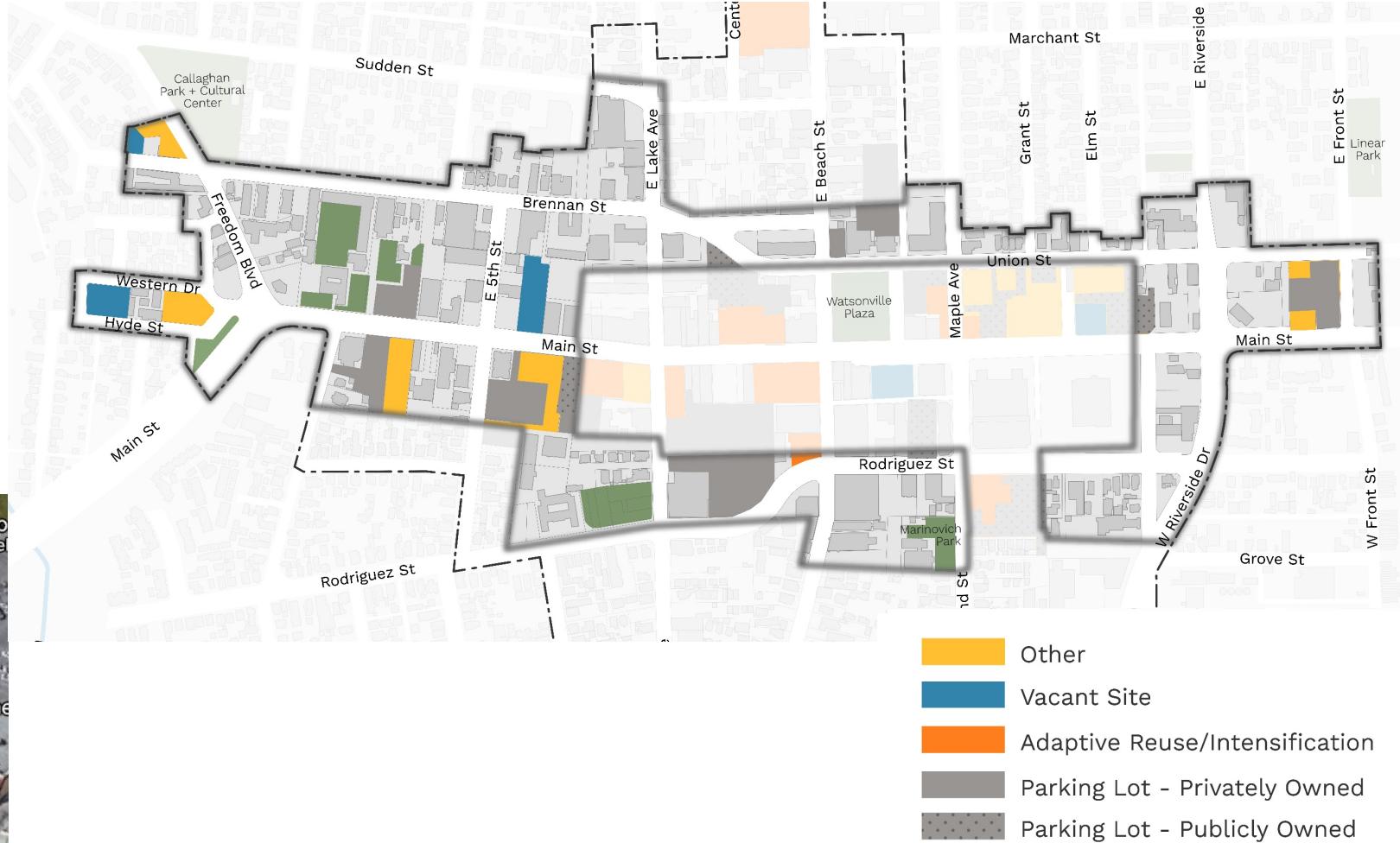
- Large setbacks from street
- Entries poorly defined, often oriented to parking areas rather than street
- Large amount of site devoted to parking
- Buildings “buffered” from street by parking and landscape areas
- Building/façade maintenance issues



Commercial “Flex”

OPPORTUNITY SITES

- Numerous opportunity sites
 - parking lots, vacant parcels, underutilized sites
- Land values / barrier to entry for new development is relatively low



Commercial “Flex”

PROPOSED LAND USE AND URBAN CHARACTER

- Basic street network is already strong, and additional/improved connectivity can be added relatively simply as infill occurs
- Major opportunity for providing additional housing in Downtown, either as vertical mixed use on Main Street or as stand-alone projects on Union/Brennan/Rodriguez Streets

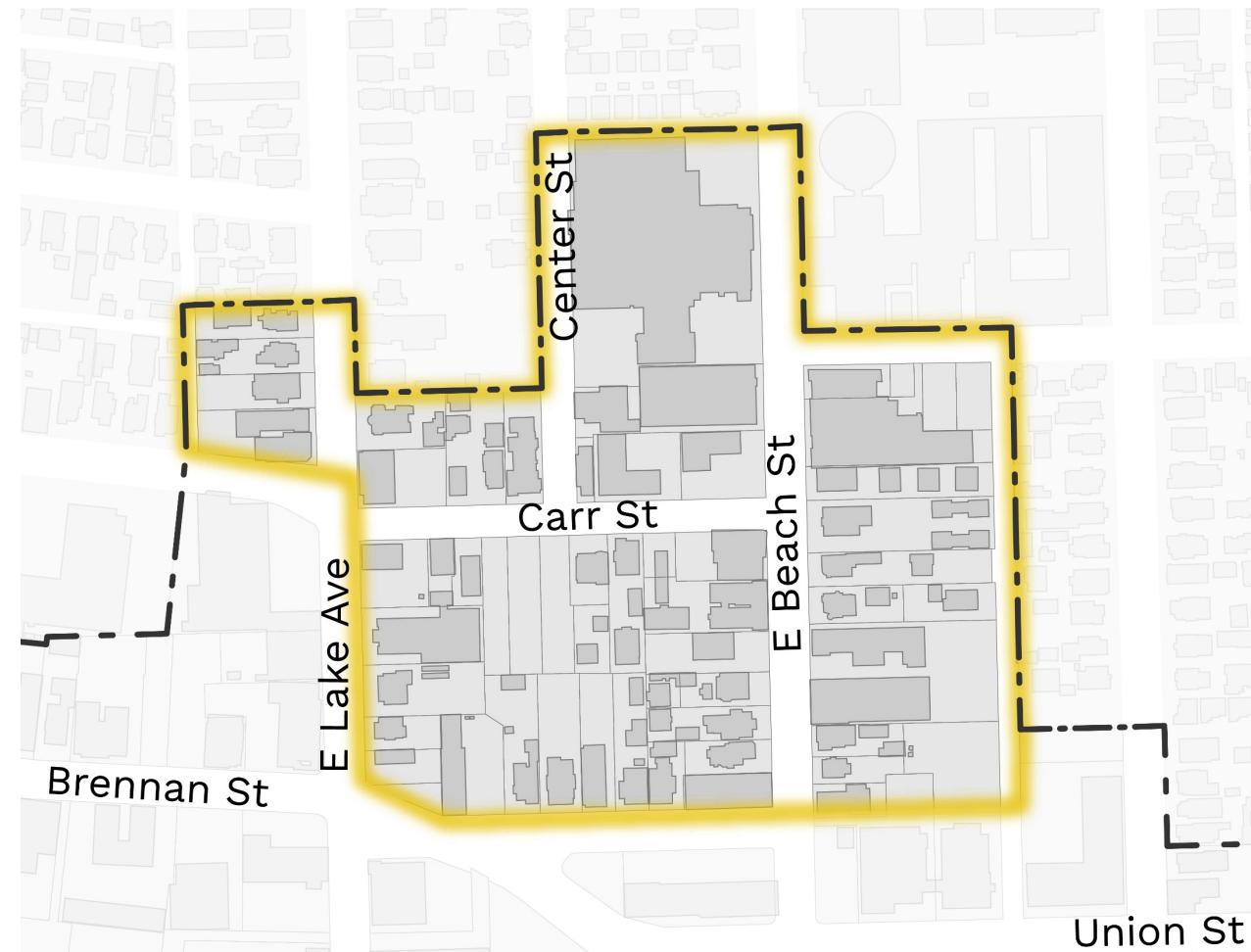


Downtown “Flex” Neighborhood East

Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (East)

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **East Neighborhood:** Mix of traditional single-family homes (most of which have been converted to office), commercial, public, and industrial in traditional urban patterns
- **Transition area** where Downtown extends into the historic neighborhoods



Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (East)

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

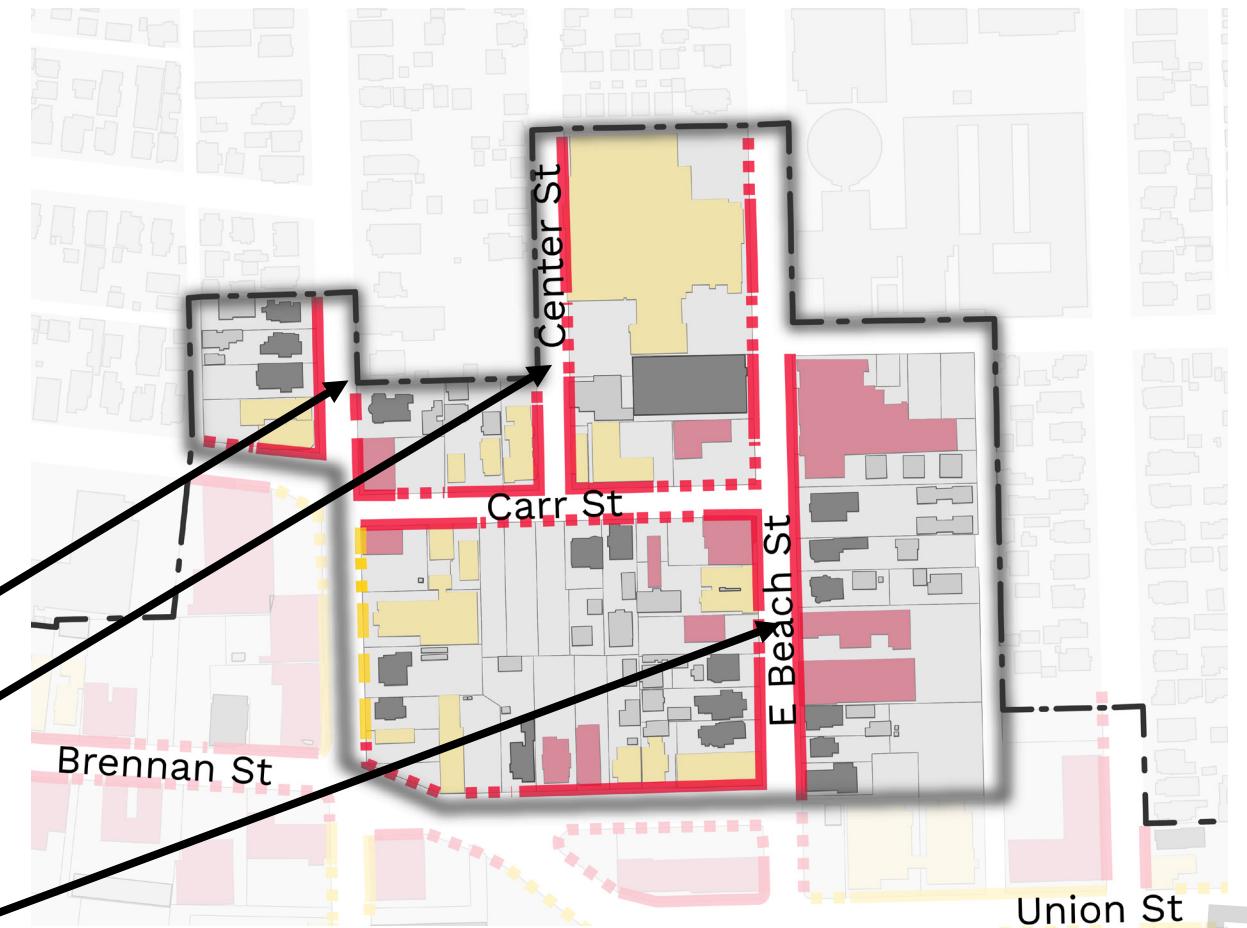
- Significant amount of the original building stock in place creates authentic character
- Landmark Civic and Industrial Buildings add unique character to this neighborhood; (Martinelli & Co., Veteran's Memorial Building, School, Church, etc.)



Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (East)

PUBLIC FRONTAGES

- Flanked by CALTRANS Route 152: “Couplet” (Lake Ave & Beach St) traffic volumes and speeds exacerbated by one-way
- E. Lake Avenue and E. Beach Street - Major improvements needed
- Center, Alexander and Carr Streets – Complete street wall, streetscape improvements



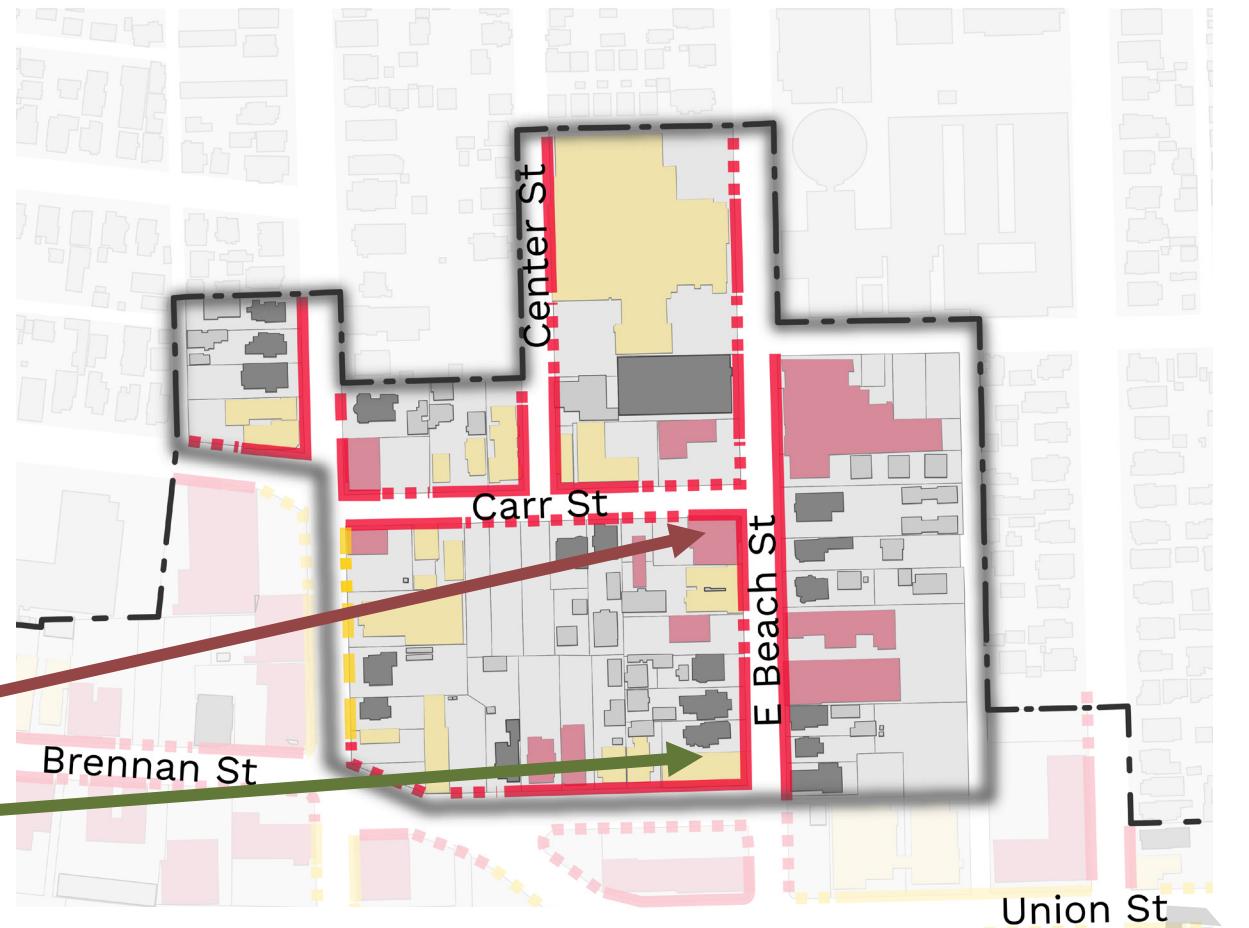
Public Frontage Assessment

- Minor Improvements Needed (Yellow)
- Significant Improvements Needed (Red)
- Indicates lack of building at street (incomplete street wall) (Dotted Yellow/Red)

Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (East)

PRIVATE FRONTAGES

- Strong private frontages, that can contribute to an active, walkable public realm
- Some frontage improvements needed: some buildings need maintenance



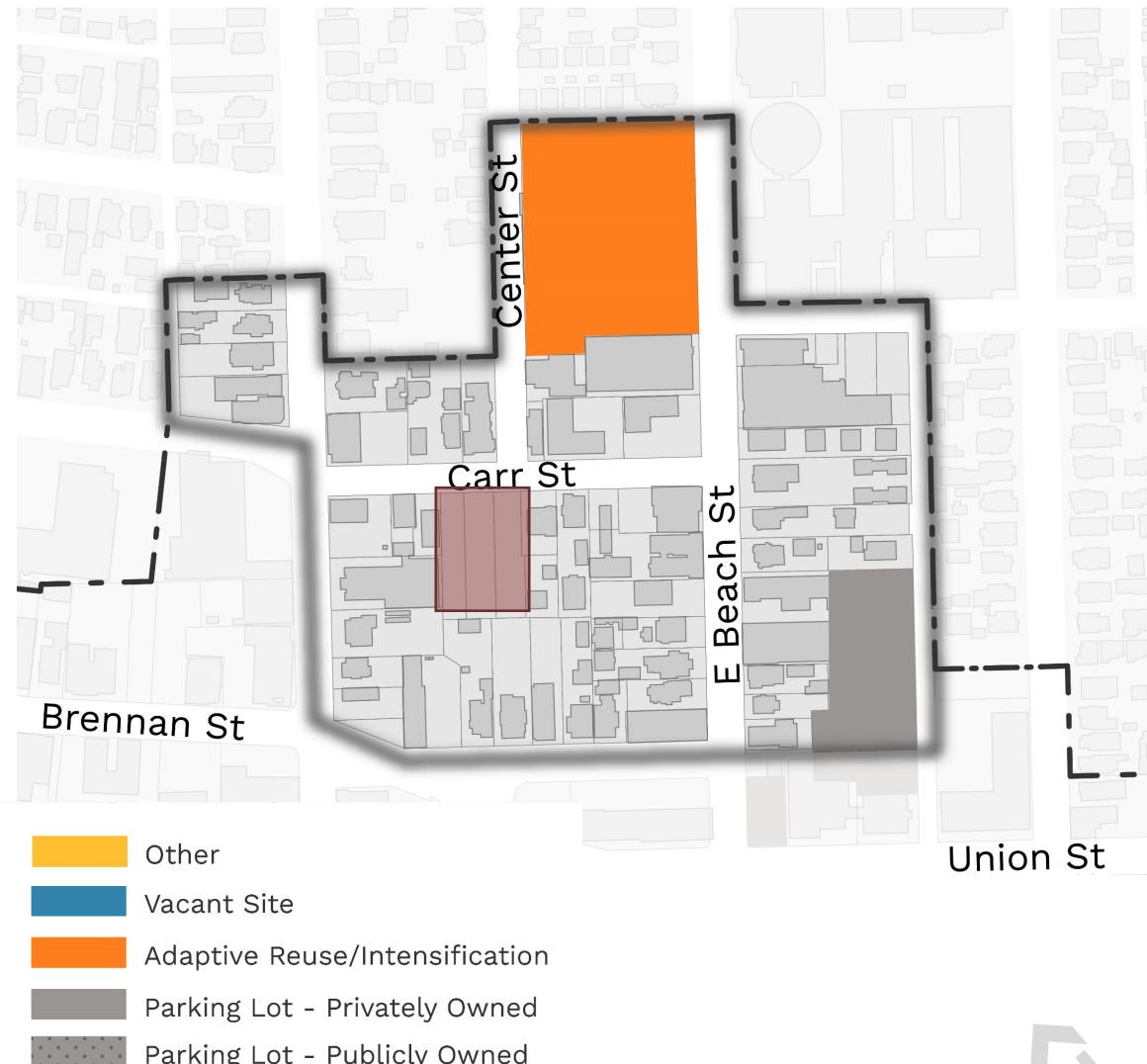
Private Frontage Assessment

- Strong (Contributing) Frontage
- Minor Improvements Needed
- Significant Improvements Needed

Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (East)

OPPORTUNITY SITES

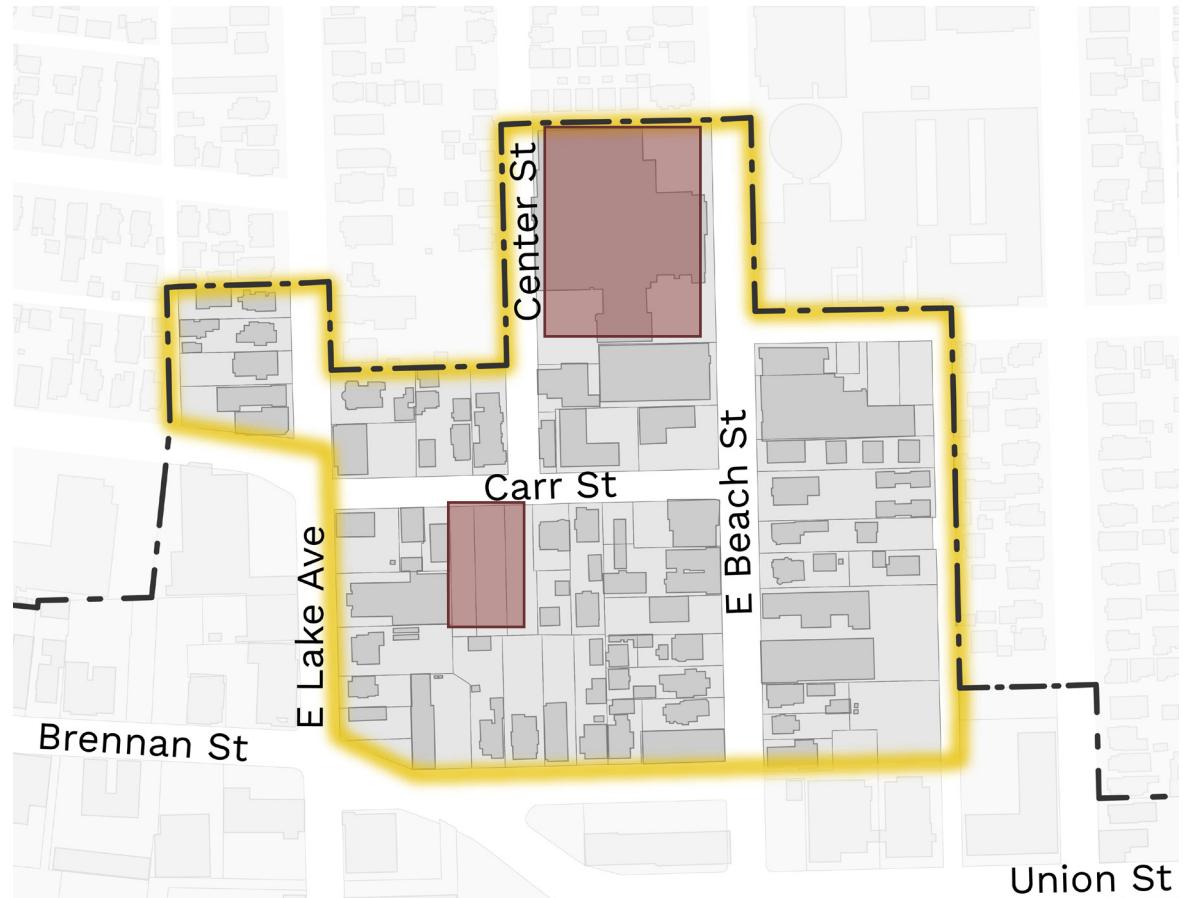
- Martinelli Site – Potential for intensification and/or adaptive reuse; zoned Industrial
- Bethel parking lot – vacant?
- Rest of the subarea is currently zoned “Central Commercial” with residential allowed by CUP only. (even though many historic homes exist)



Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (East)

PROPOSED LAND USES AND URBAN CHARACTER

- Martinelli Site – Allow other uses – residential, commercial/office
- Rest of the subarea - allow stand-alone multifamily or mixed use (vertical or horizontal) infill by right
- Consider 4-5 story heights with appropriate transitions (step backs) to maintain compatibility

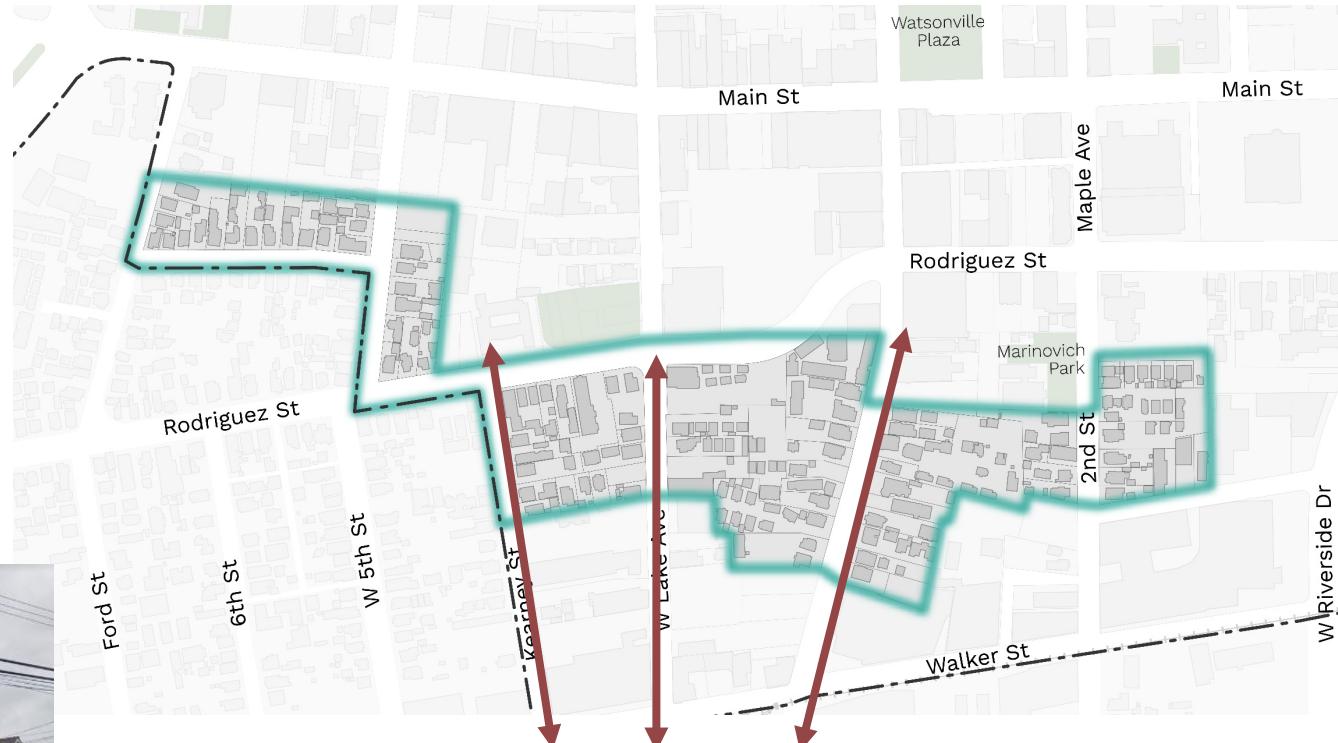


Downtown “Flex” Neighborhood West

Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (West)

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Neighborhood already has a **strong mix of uses** - multi-family, commercial, and industrial - in suburban patterns
- **Incompatible uses** (multi-family residential directly adjacent industrial, storage, etc.)
- **Very large block sizes** (up to 1000 ft long) deter walkability in some areas
- Short walk to Downtown Core and Civic Core



Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (West)

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

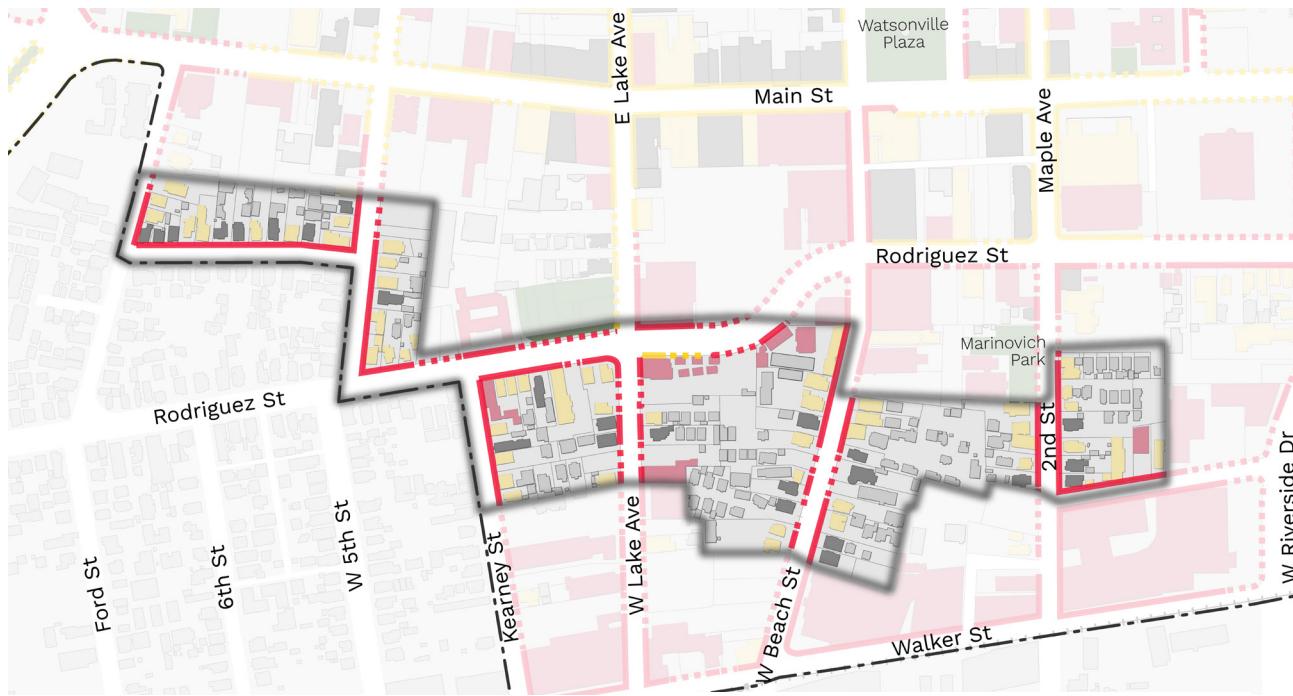
- Numerous historic houses with strong architectural character
- Many properties have been improved and/or well-maintained
- Small businesses struggling due to difficulty attracting patrons into this area
- Marinovich Park and Radcliff Elementary School



Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (West)

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FRONTAGES

- Car-dominant frontages: Many frontages are devoted to large driveways for parking
- Predominantly suburban development patterns in some character areas; auto-oriented frontages; pedestrian realm constantly interrupted by driveways; no street tree canopy or landscape buffers
- Inconsistent frontage quality: many properties have fallen into disrepair



Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (West)

OPPORTUNITY SITES

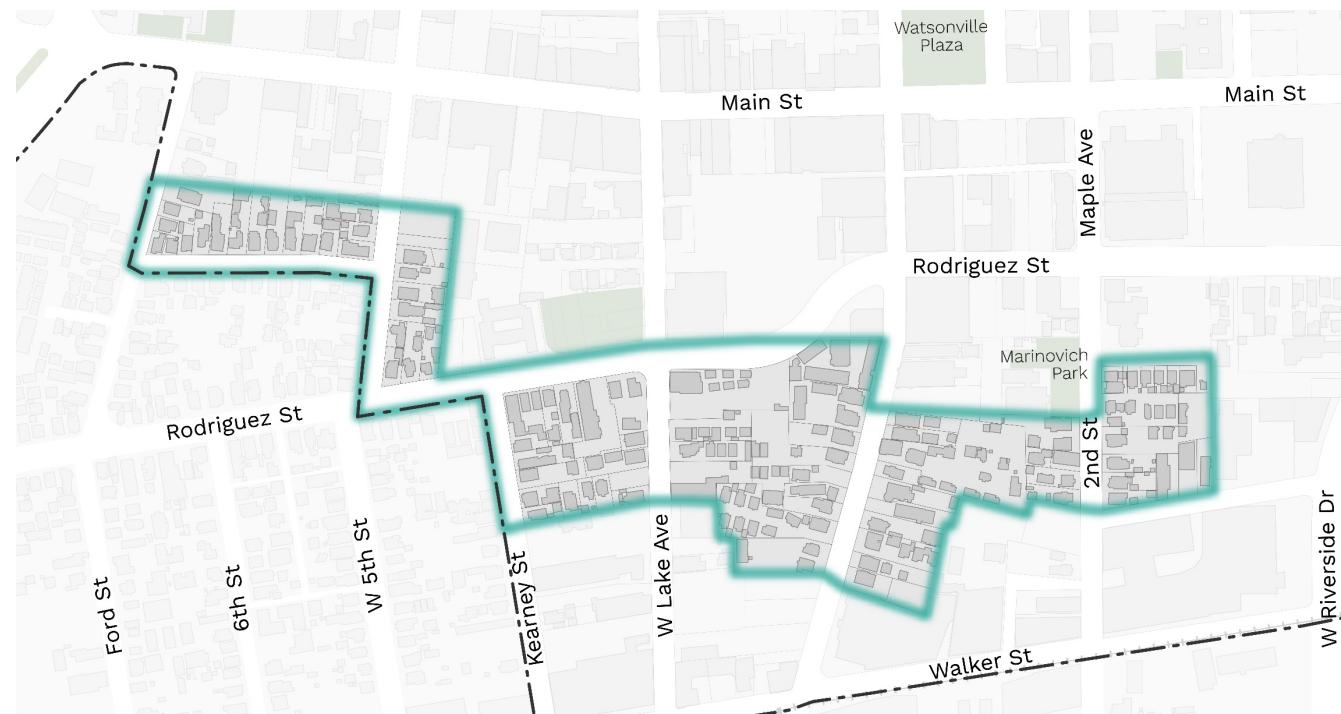
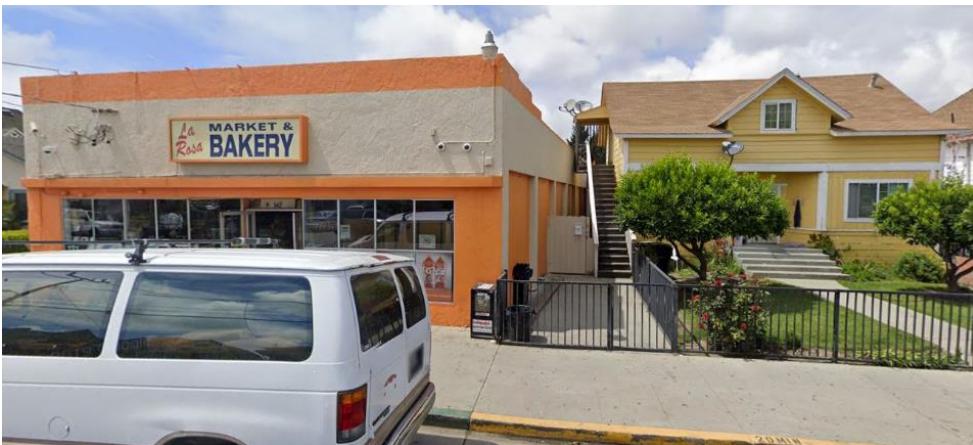
- Limited vacant sites available within this neighborhood
- Several underutilized, blighted properties (*also opportunities for reinvestment*)



Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (West)

PROPOSED LAND USE AND URBAN CHARACTER

- Continue to build on residential uses within proximity to jobs; preserve and enhance
- **Adaptive re-use** of underutilized sites for live-work
- **Transition district:** ranging from housing to commercial, to light industrial/maker space



Workplace/Industrial

Workplace / Industrial Flex

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Characterized by factory and light-industrial businesses originally serviced by rail; adjacent to Westside Industrial Area
- Strong jobs base and good opportunity for new businesses to locate downtown
- Very large block sizes limit walkability



Workplace / Industrial Flex

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

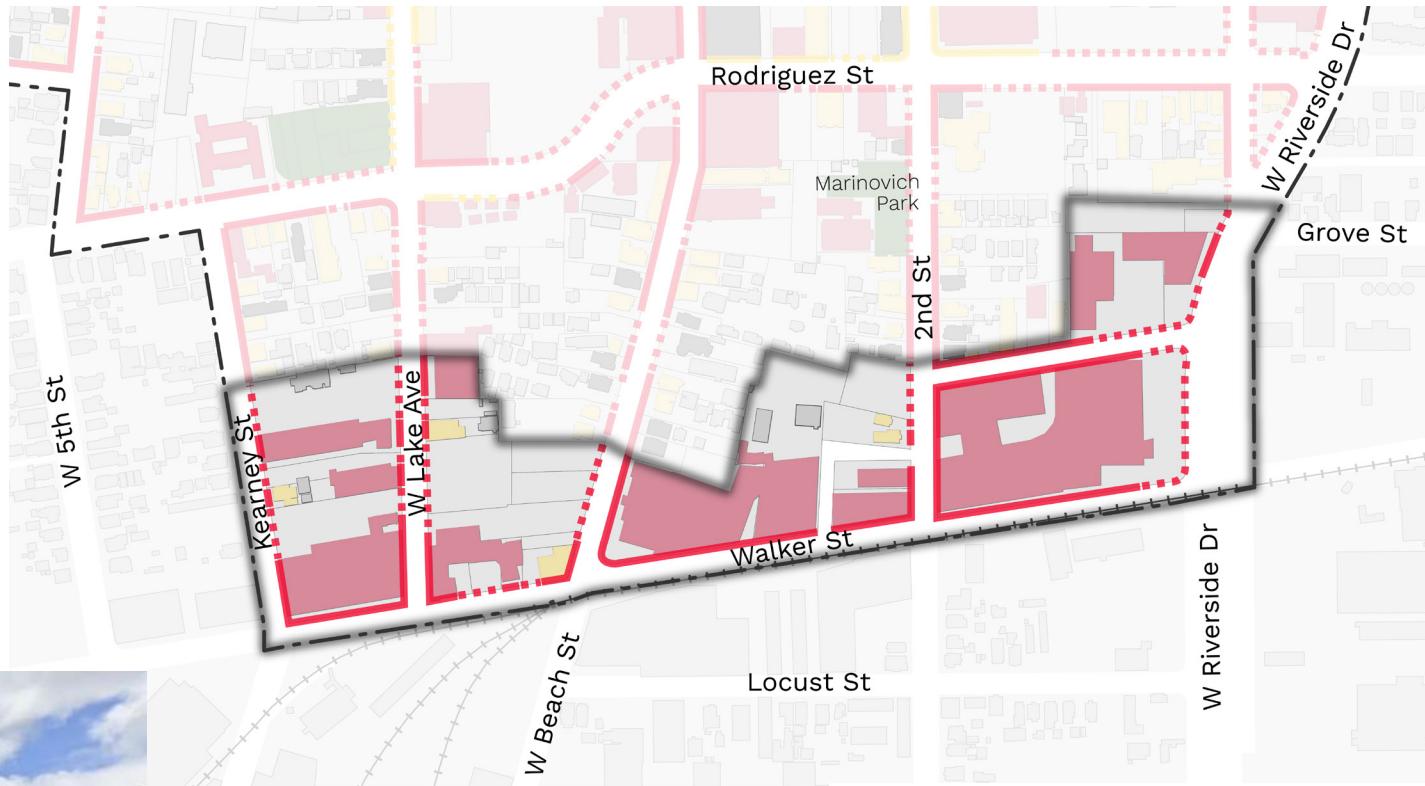
- **Historic Depot:** could provide future passenger rail access to Watsonville, making this area a new Downtown Gateway
- Many vacant and underutilized buildings; in general, area looks aged / blighted.



Workplace / Industrial Flex

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FRONTAGES

- Very large blocks, and incomplete pedestrian infrastructure deters walkability
- Auto (truck)-oriented public realm; complete lack of streetscape, disrupted by multiple, large driveways / parking access
- Incompatibility; Large industrial uses across from or next to single-family houses need transitional frontages



Private Frontage Assessment

- Strong (Contributing) Frontage
- Minor Improvements Needed
- Significant Improvements Needed

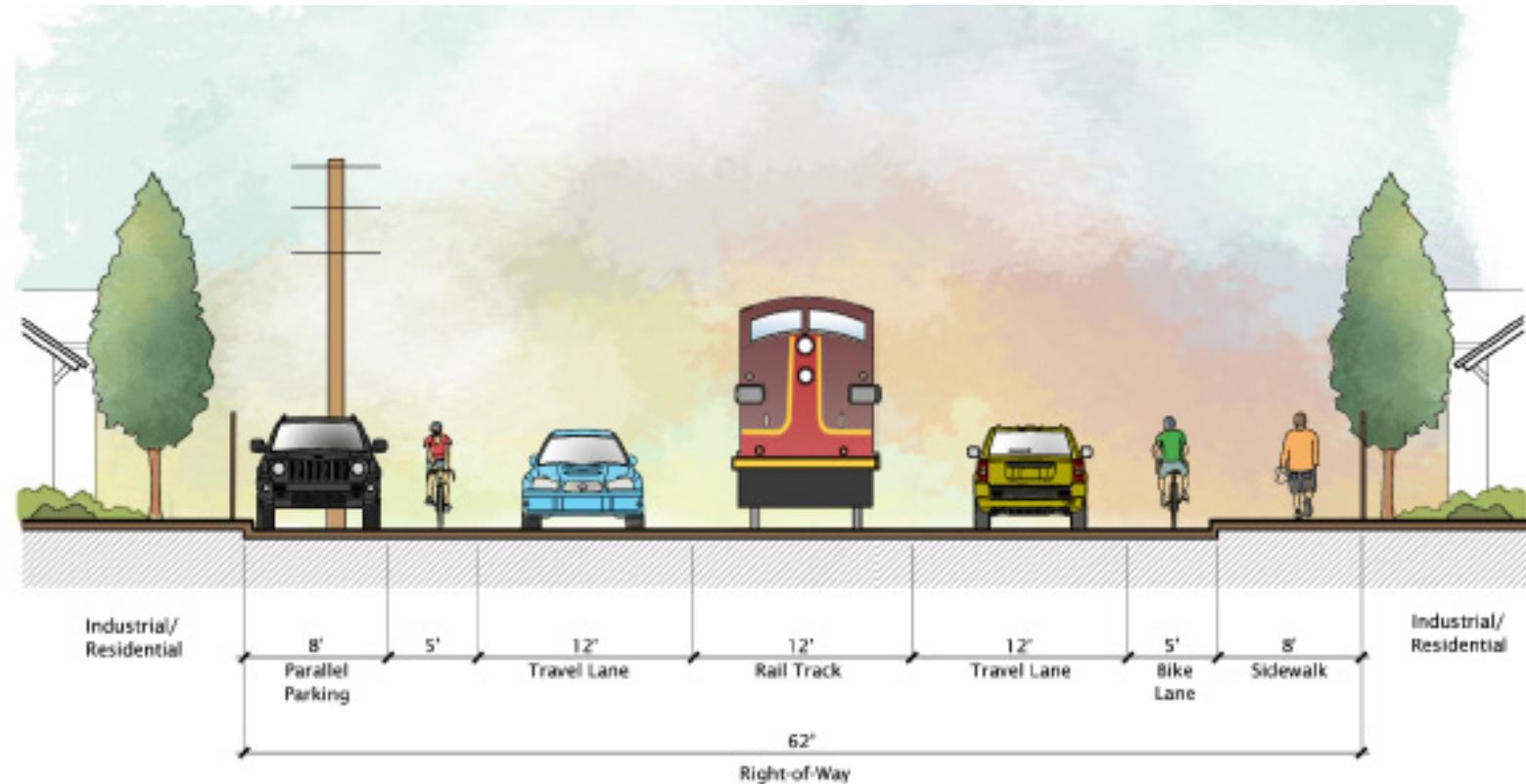
Public Frontage Assessment

- Minor Improvements Needed
- Significant Improvements Needed
- Indicates lack of building at street (incomplete street wall)

Workplace / Industrial Flex

PUBLIC FRONTAGES

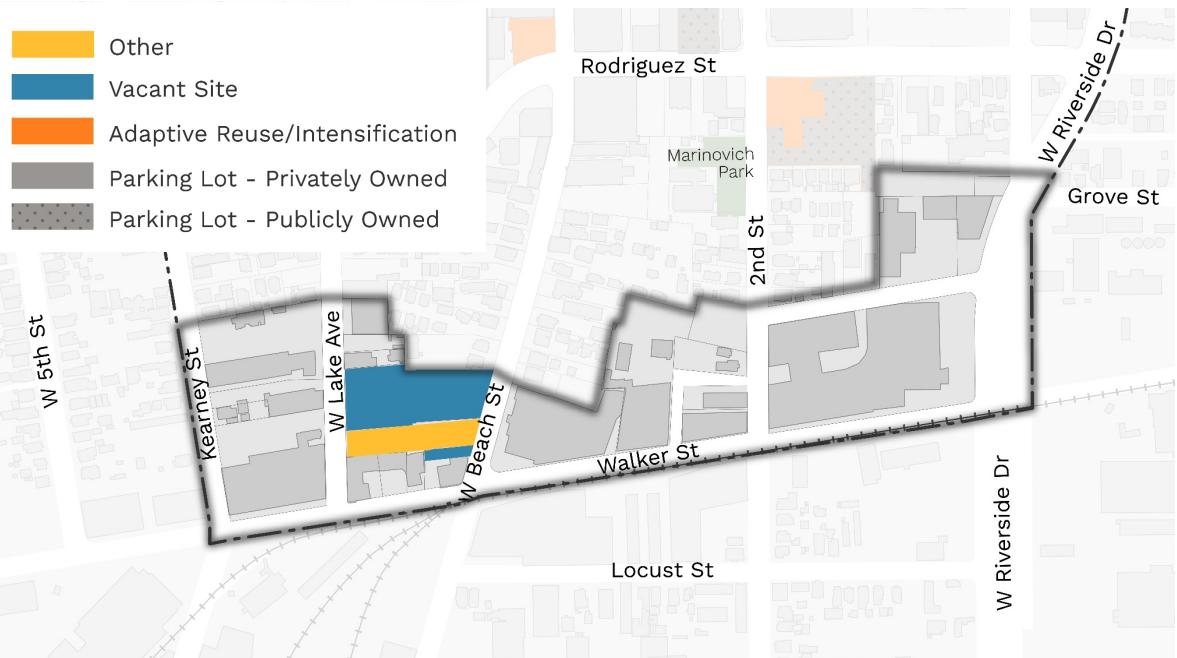
- Walker Street contains the planned Segment 19 of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail - both a multi-use path and an on-street facility



Workplace / Industrial Flex

OPPORTUNITY SITES

- Many vacant/underutilized parcels: significant mixed-use infill opportunities
- Large underutilized industrial buildings that can be adaptively re-used
- Inexpensive land in this area could incentivize new investment



Workplace / Industrial Flex

PROPOSED LAND USE AND URBAN CHARACTER

- Adaptive reuse - business incubator for tech, maker-spaces, creative offices, breweries, coffee roasters, etc...
- Large, vacant sites - a vibrant mixed-use / live-work projects, providing a concentration of new jobs and residents within a short walk of the Core



Discussion Break-out Rooms

Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan Area

- For each of the Character Areas:
 - Key land use characteristics – area and buildings
 - Public and private frontages
 - Opportunity sites
 - Proposed land uses and urban design character

Discussion Items

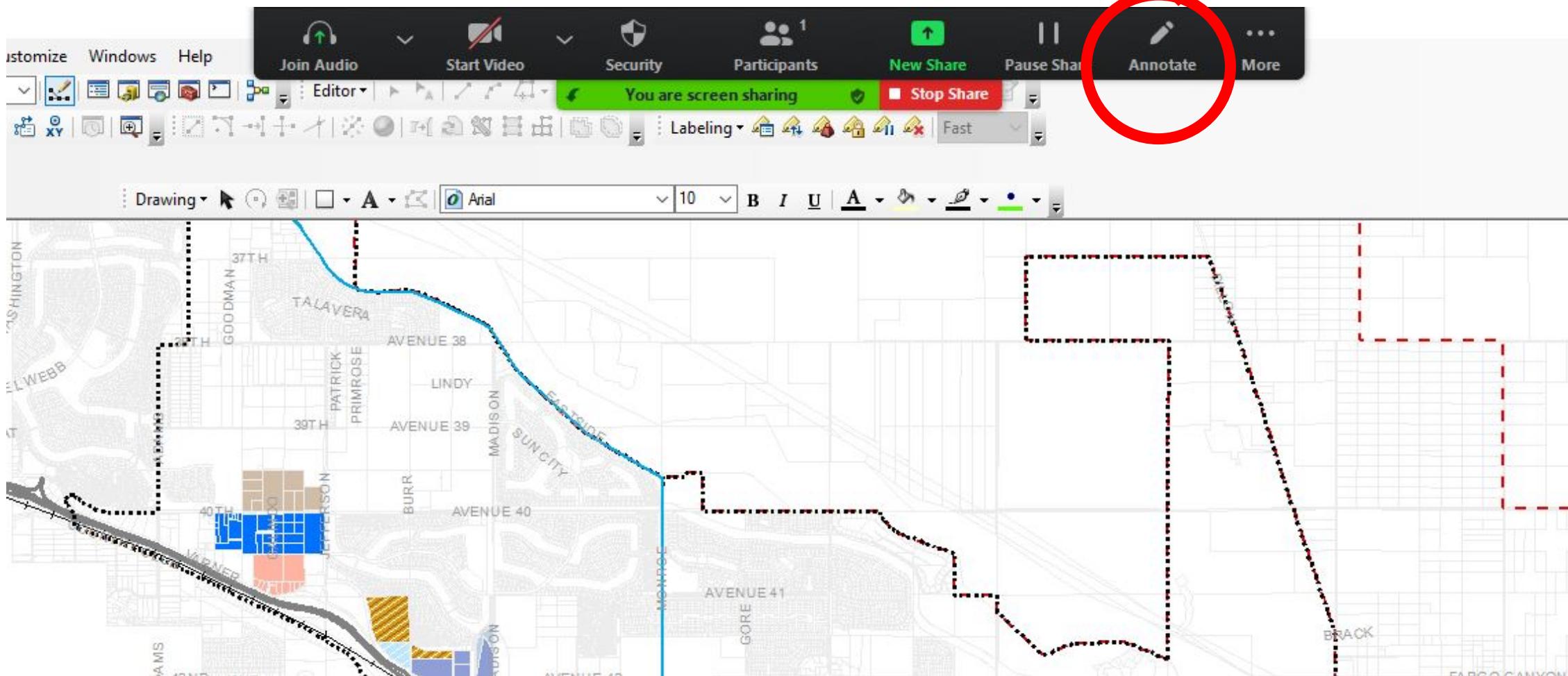
- Proposed land uses
- Opportunity sites
- Streetscape and public realm considerations
- Other thoughts

Discussion Questions

- AC GROUP 1
 - Downtown Core
 - Civic Core
- AC GROUP 2
 - Commercial “Flex”
 - “Flex” Neighborhoods East
- AC GROUP 3
 - Workspace / Industrial
 - “Flex” Neighborhoods West
- COMMUNITY GROUP
 - All subareas

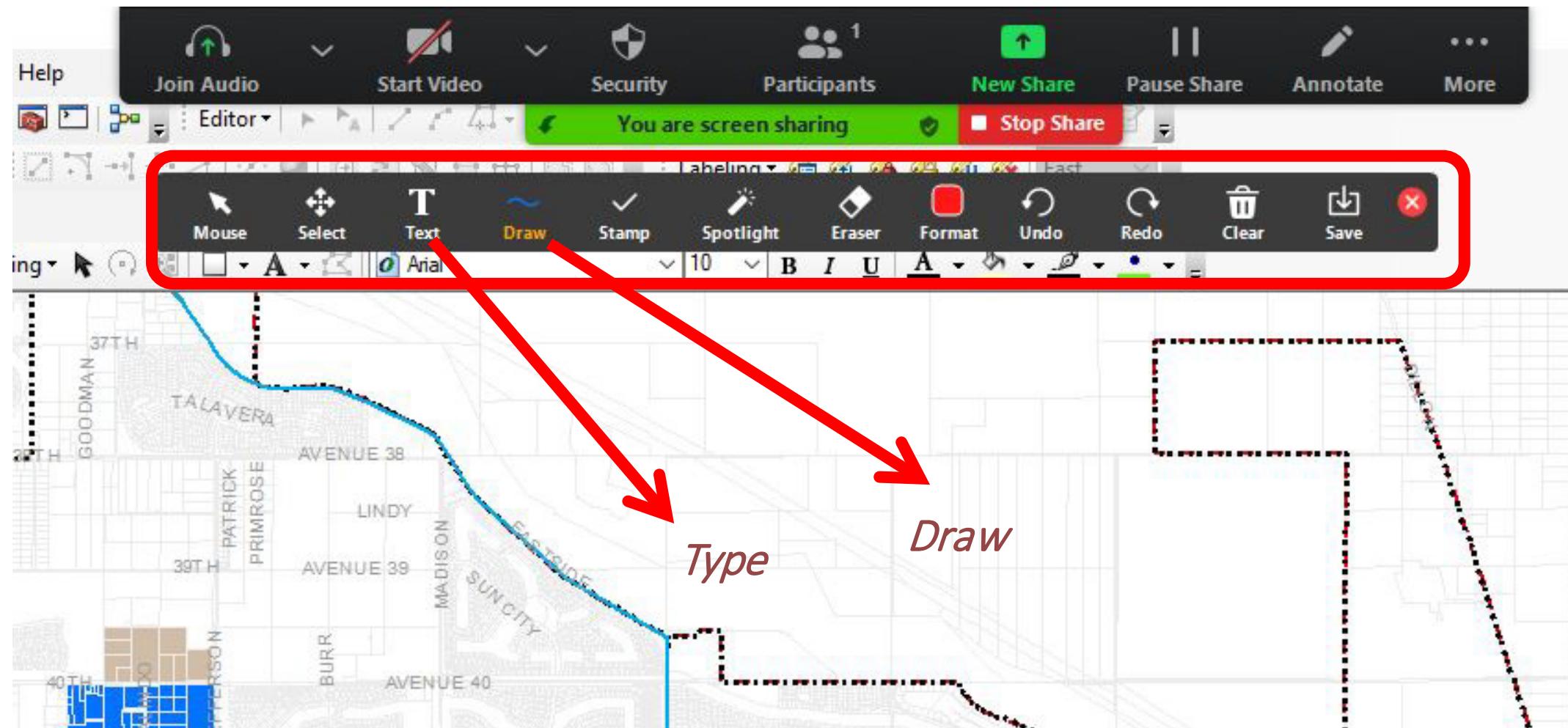
Zoom – What You Need To Know

■ Annotation



Zoom – What You Need To Know

■ Annotation



Report Back by Group

Public Comments

Wrap-Up and Next Steps

City of Watsonville

Downtown Specific Plan + EIR

Advisory Meeting #3 | December 15, 2020