

raimi+
associates

City of Watsonville

Downtown Specific Plan + EIR

Advisory Meeting #5 | October 6, 2021

*This meeting is being recorded and livecast on
Facebook*



RAIMI + ASSOCIATES | SARGENT TOWN PLANNING | EPS | RINCON | NELSON/NYGAARD | KEITH HIGGINS | BKF

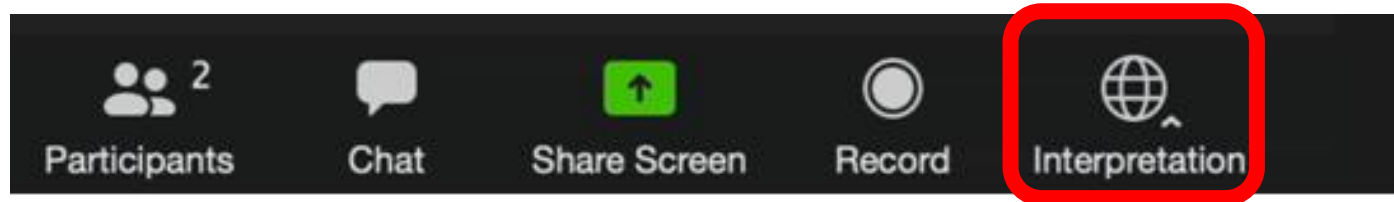
Zoom – What You Need To Know

- Interpretation

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

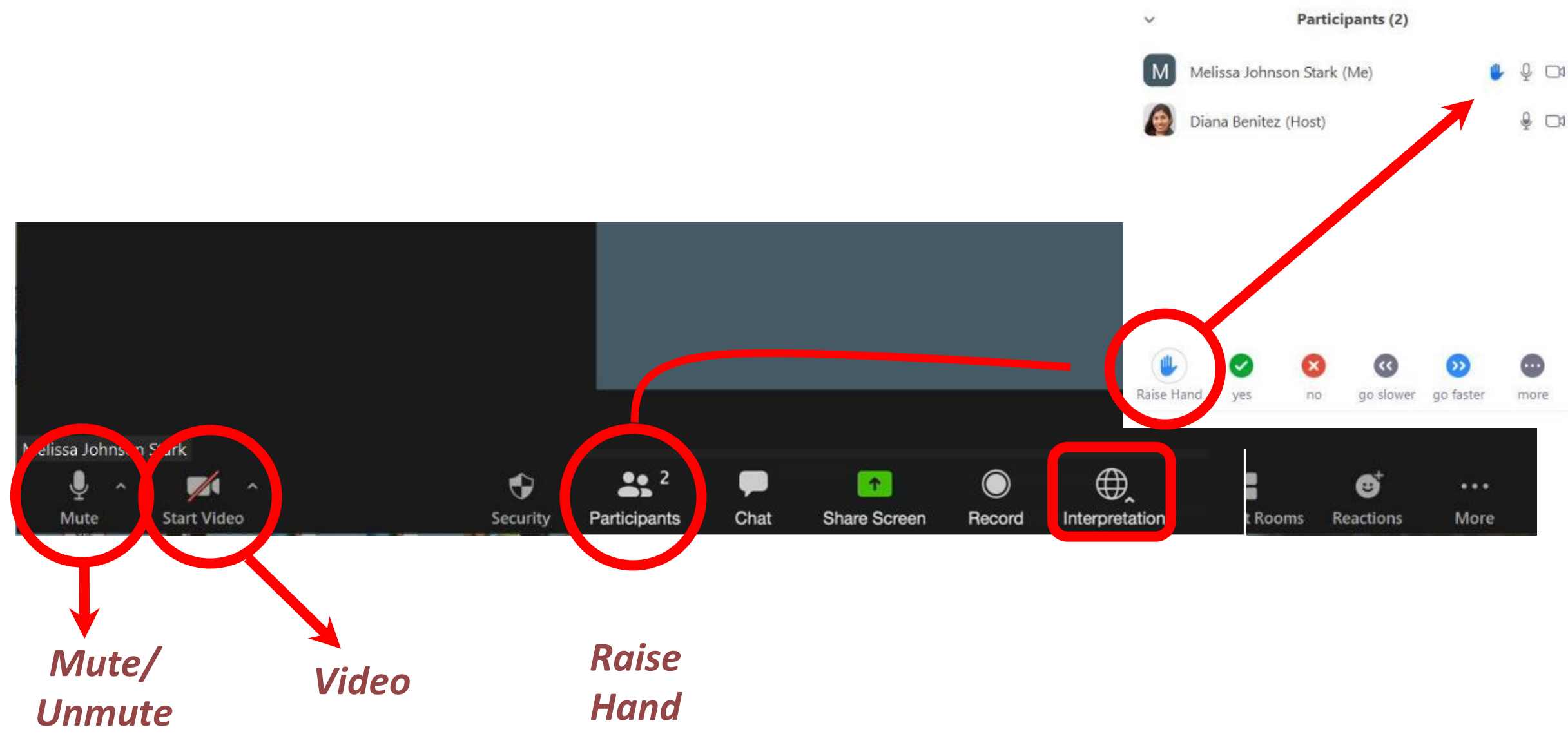
Español (*Carlos*) – bajo la opción Español

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



This meeting is being recorded and livecast on Facebook

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

Project Team Introductions

City Staff

- Suzi Merriam, Community Development Director
- Justin Meek, Principal Planner
- Carlos Landeberry, Housing Manager

Consultant Team

- Simran Malhotra, Principal, Raimi + Associates
- Jasmine Williams, Senior Planner, Raimi + Associates
- Peter VanderWal, Principal, Sargent Town Planning
- Andrew Krizman, Senior Associate, Sargent Town Planning

Advisory Committee

- Jane Barr
- Eduardo Cervantes
- Gina Cole
- Maria Elena De la Garza
- Francisco Estrada, Councilmember
- Aurelio Gonzalez
- 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

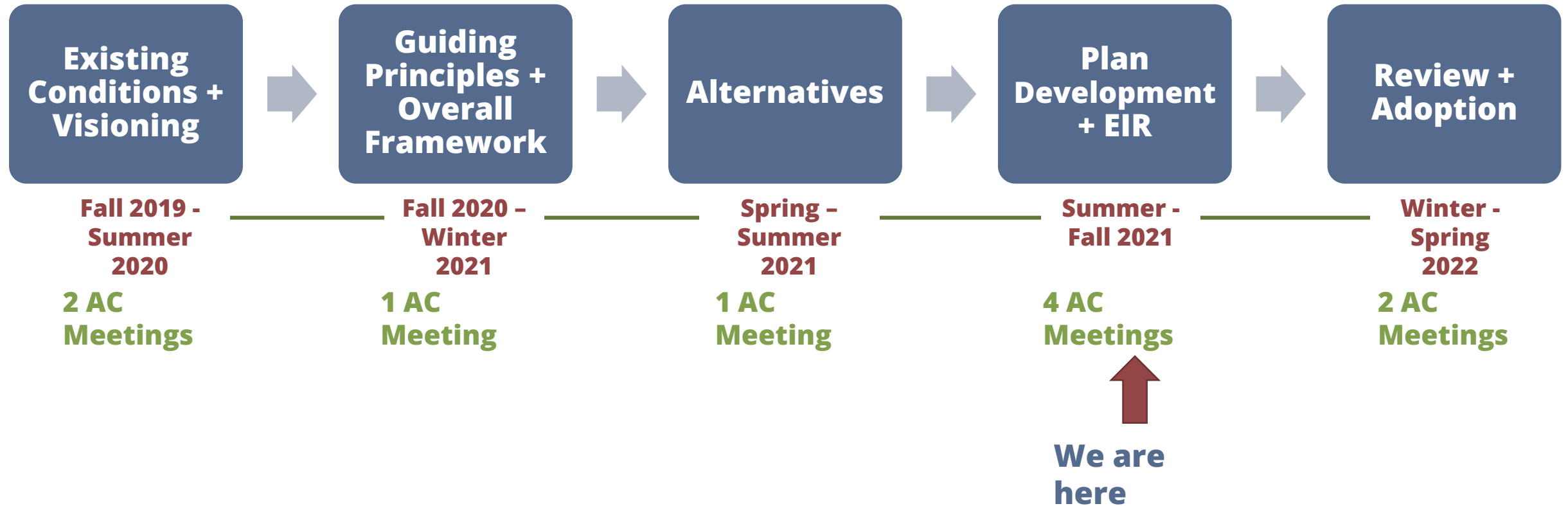
Welcome! Tonight, we will...

- Updates on progress to date
- What We've Heard So Far & Community Survey #2
- Educational on Zoning
- Review and receive feedback on the proposed Zoning Framework



Specific Plan Process Overview

Specific Plan Process Overview



What We've Heard So Far

Overall Engagement & Community Survey #2

Community Engagement Efforts to Date

- **Stakeholder Interviews & Focus Groups**
- **Advisory Committee Meetings (4) and Interviews**
- **Community-Wide Workshops (2)**
- **Online Engagement**
 - Draft Themes and Guiding Principles Feedback (100 comments)
- **Community-Wide Surveys (2)**
 - Strengths, Issues, and Opportunities Survey (666 respondents)
 - Public Spaces, Character Areas, Streetscape & Bike Network (257 respondents)

Community Survey #2 Results

Community Survey #2

Responses

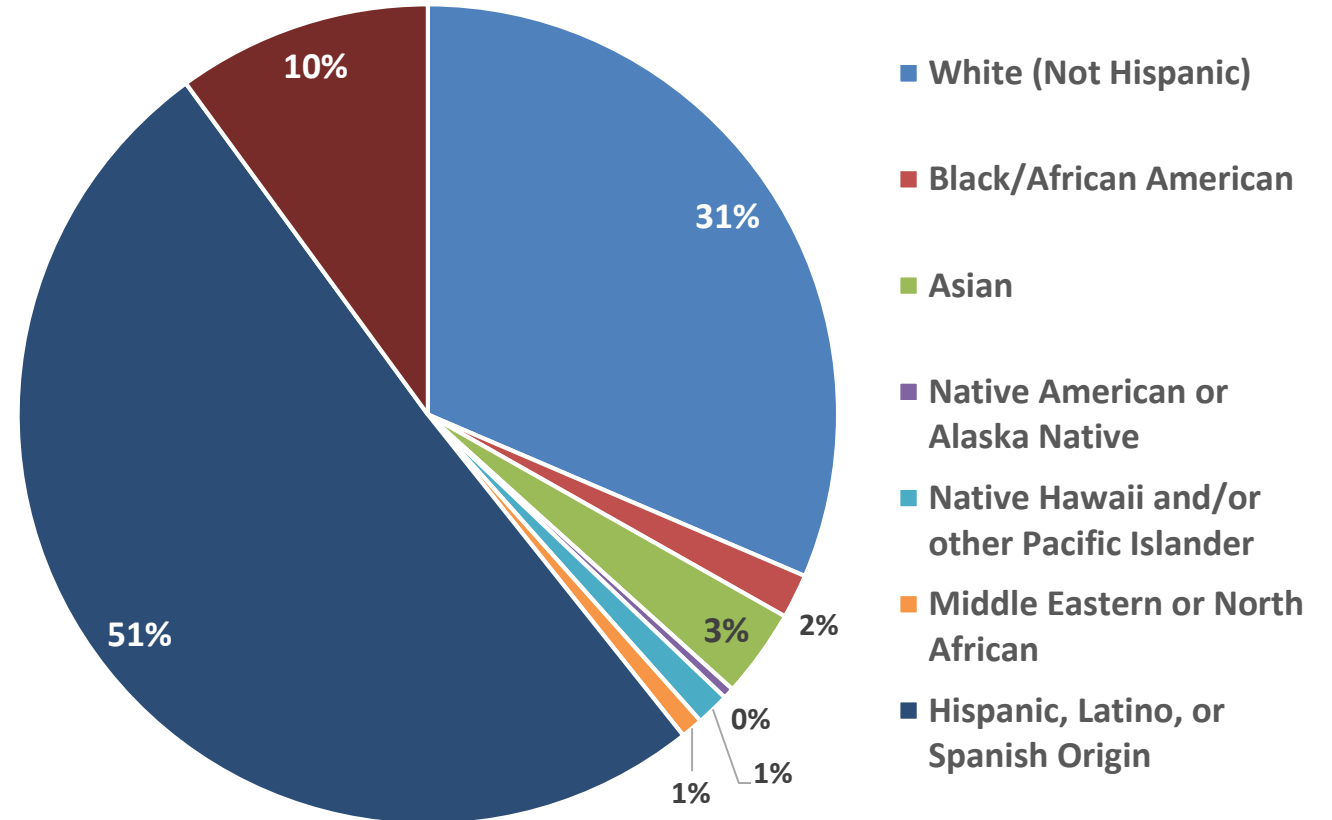
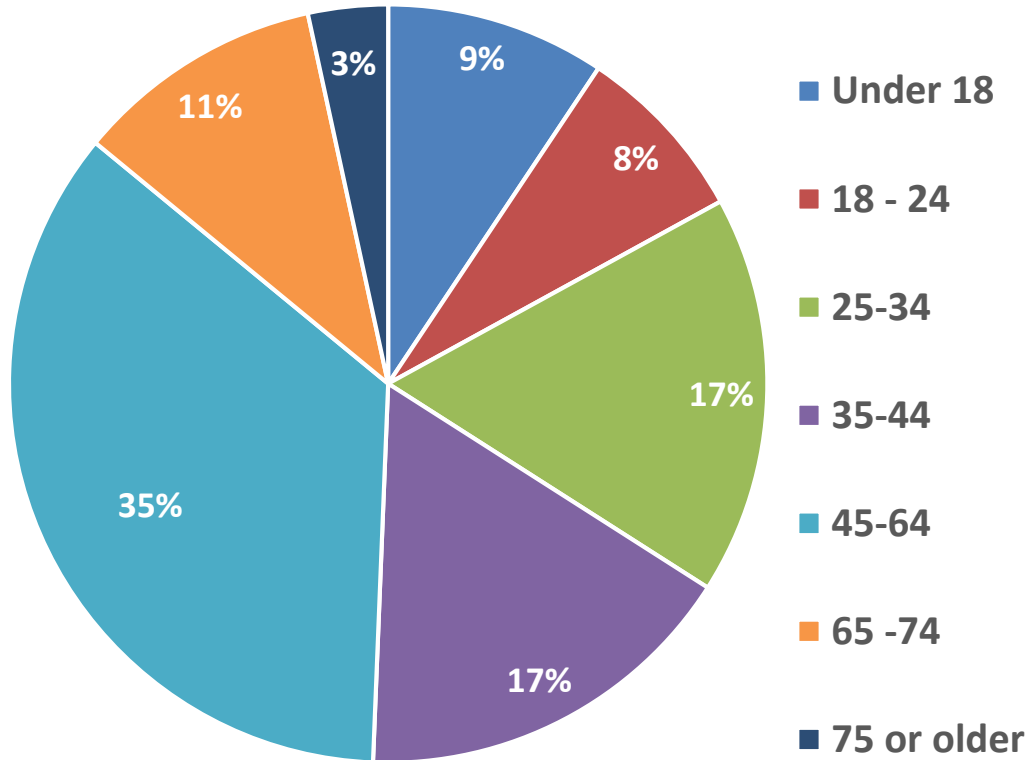
- Open May 6 – June 17, 2021
- 257 responses*, 23 in Spanish

**not all respondents answered every question in the survey*

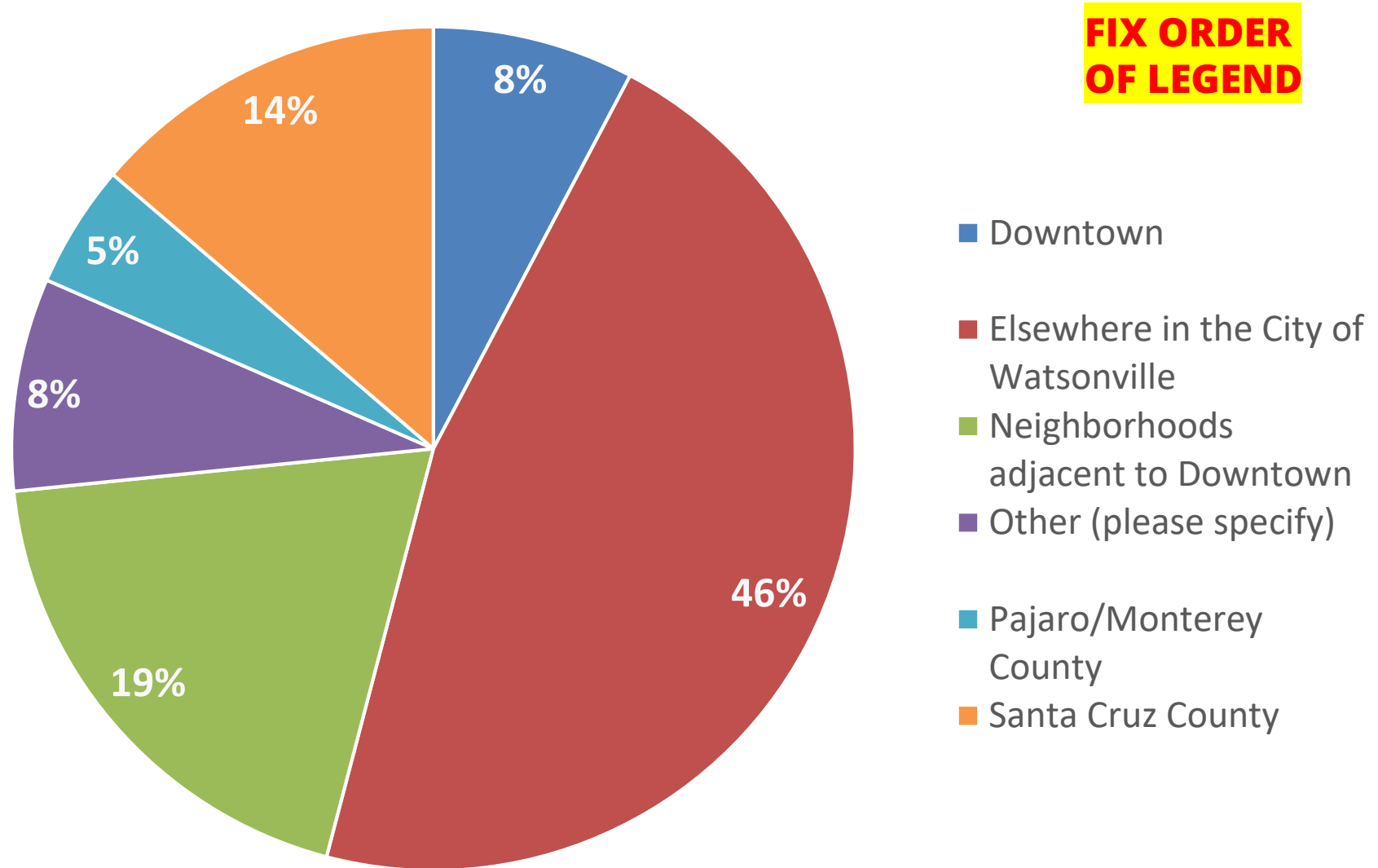
Survey Outreach

- Facebook
- City website
- Email database
- High School Students Zoom Meeting (Empower Watsonville/PVPSA)
- Chamber of Commerce email blast
- Farmers' Market Pop Ups (5)

Respondent Age & Race Breakdown



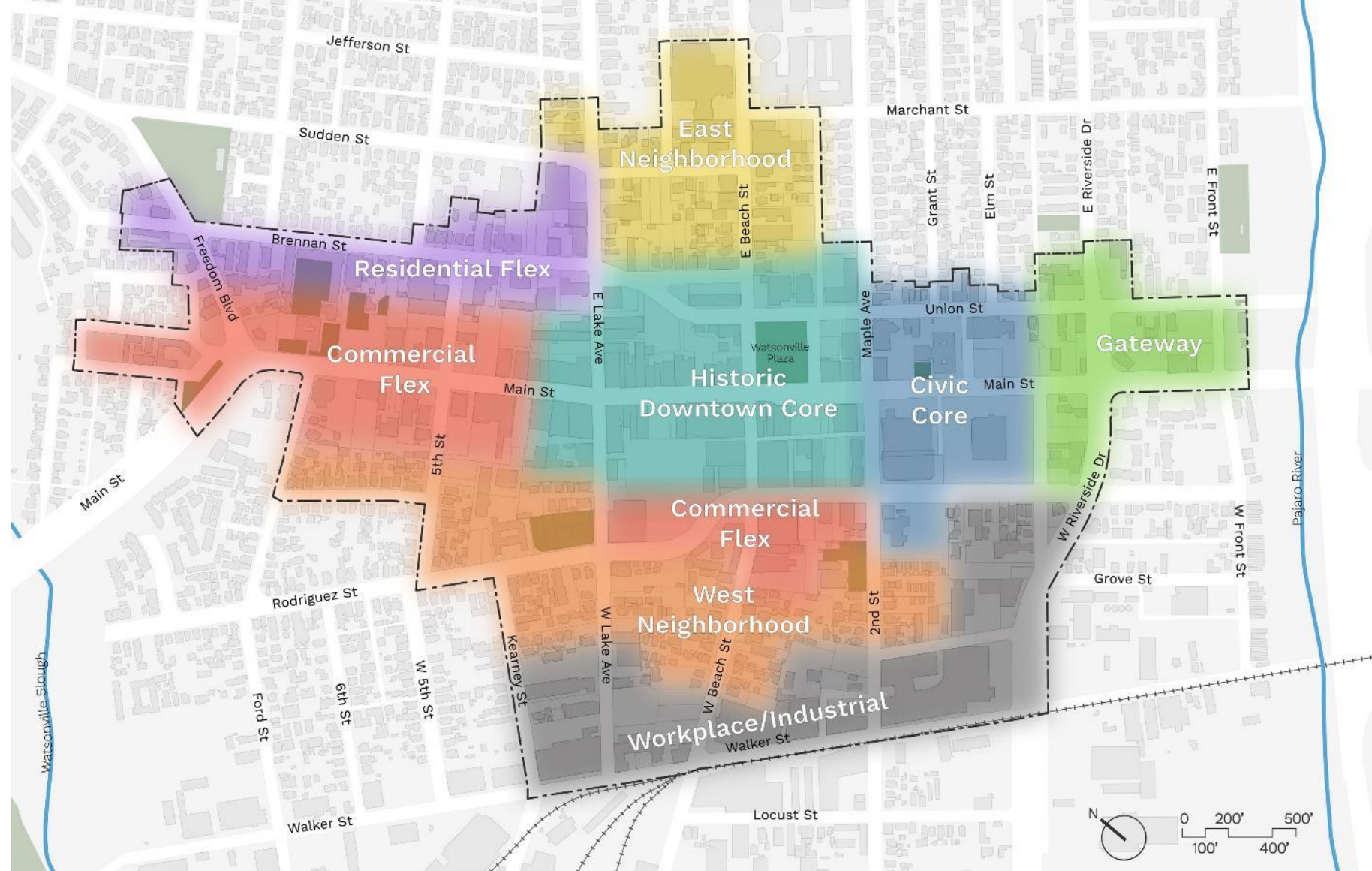
Respondent Location of Residence



Character Area Survey Responses

Revised Downtown Character Areas

- Downtown Core
- Civic Core
- Gateway
- Commercial Flex
- Residential Flex
- Workspace / Industrial
- East Neighborhood
- West Neighborhood



Character Areas



- Specific Plan Boundary
- Building Footprint
- Parcel
- Rail Line

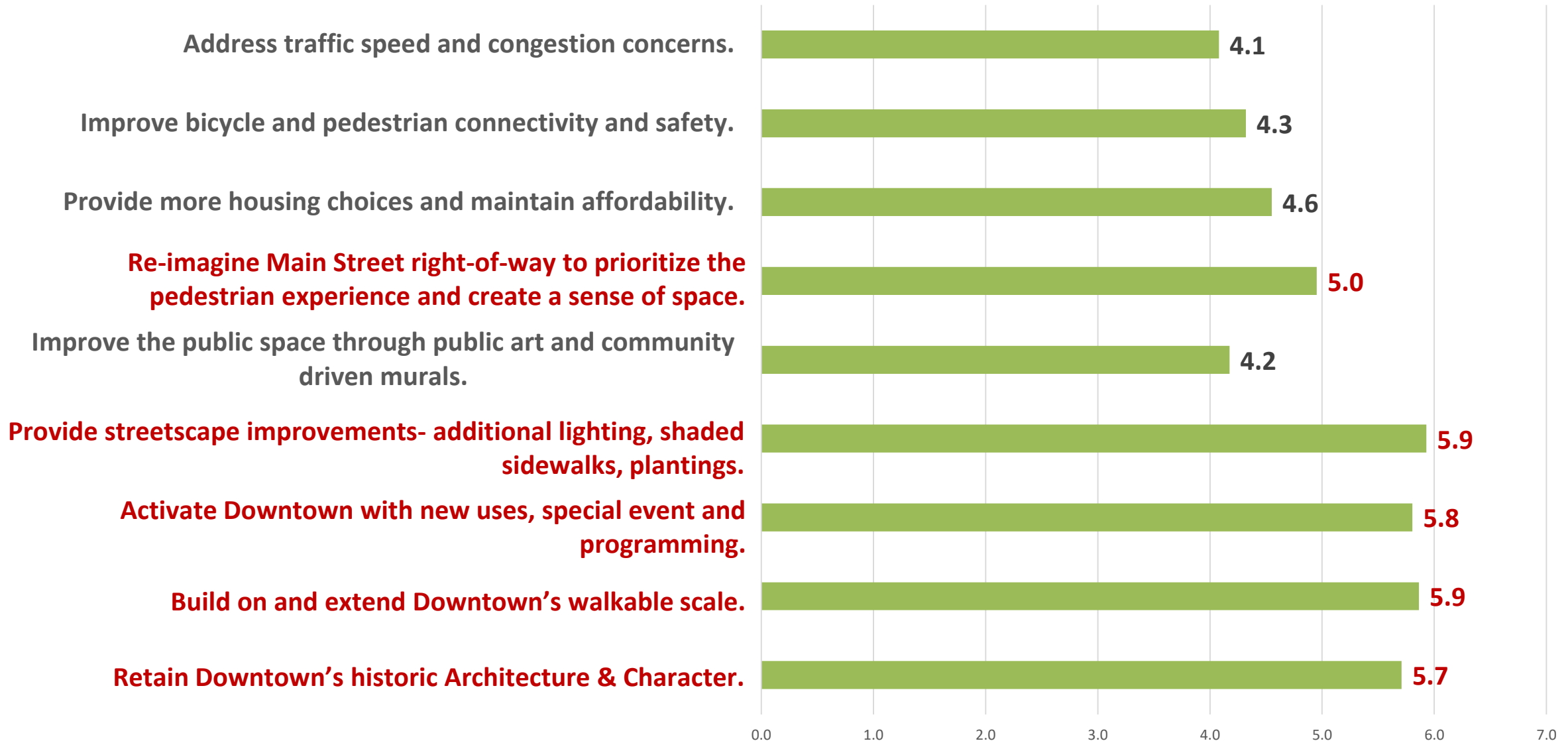
- Park/Open Space
- Waterway

- Historic Downtown Core
- Civic Core
- Gateway

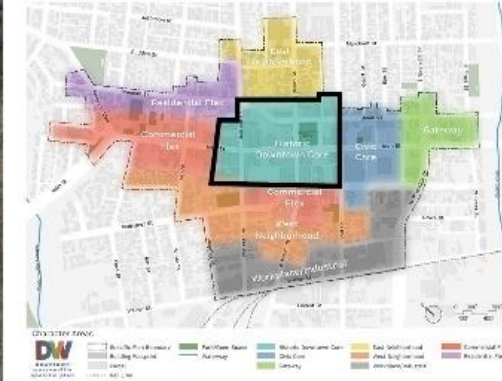
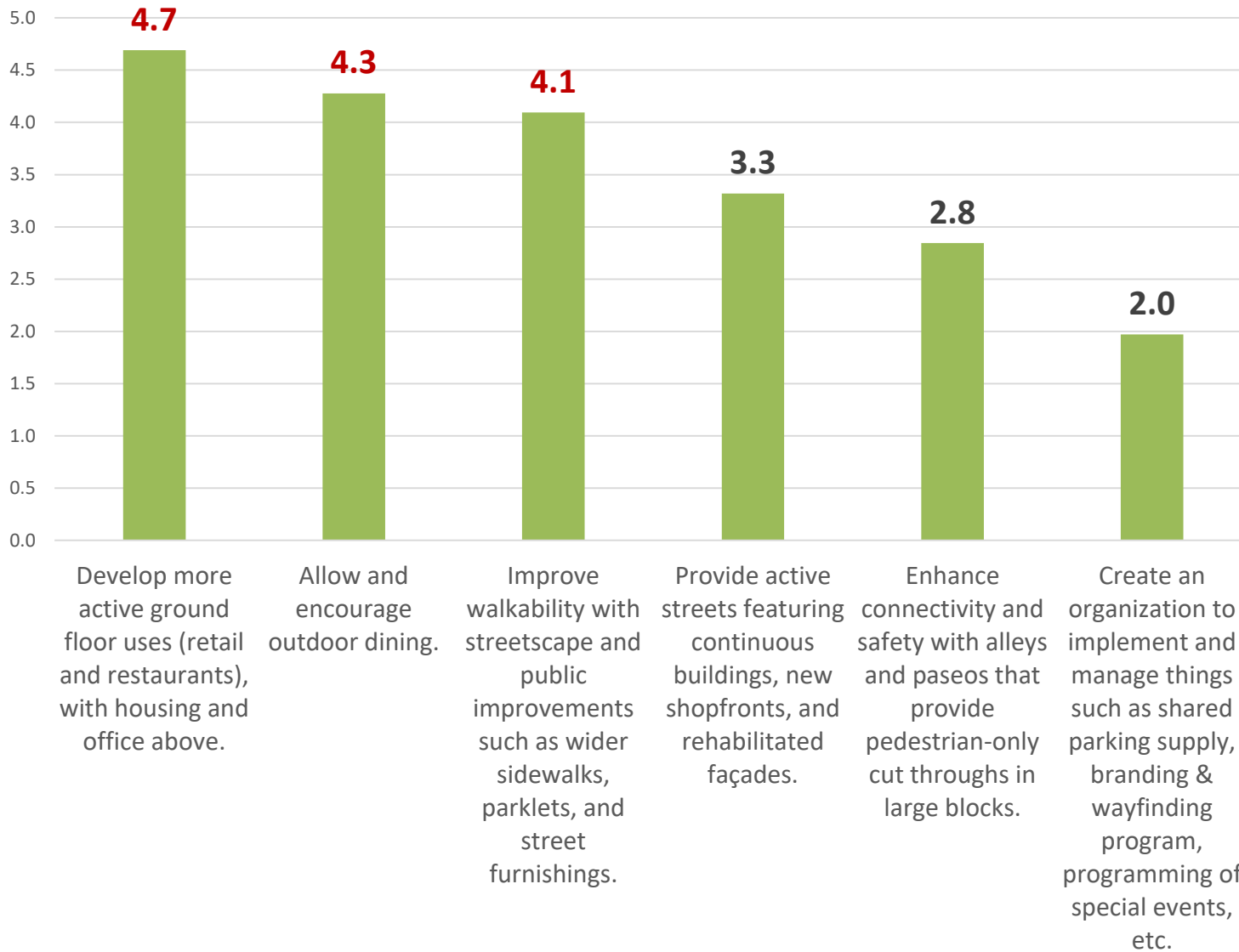
- East Neighborhood
- West Neighborhood
- Workplace/Industrial

- Commercial Flex
- Residential Flex

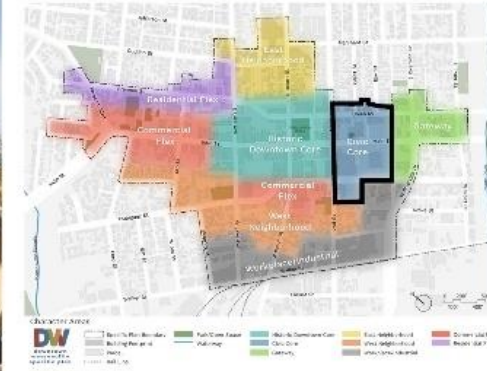
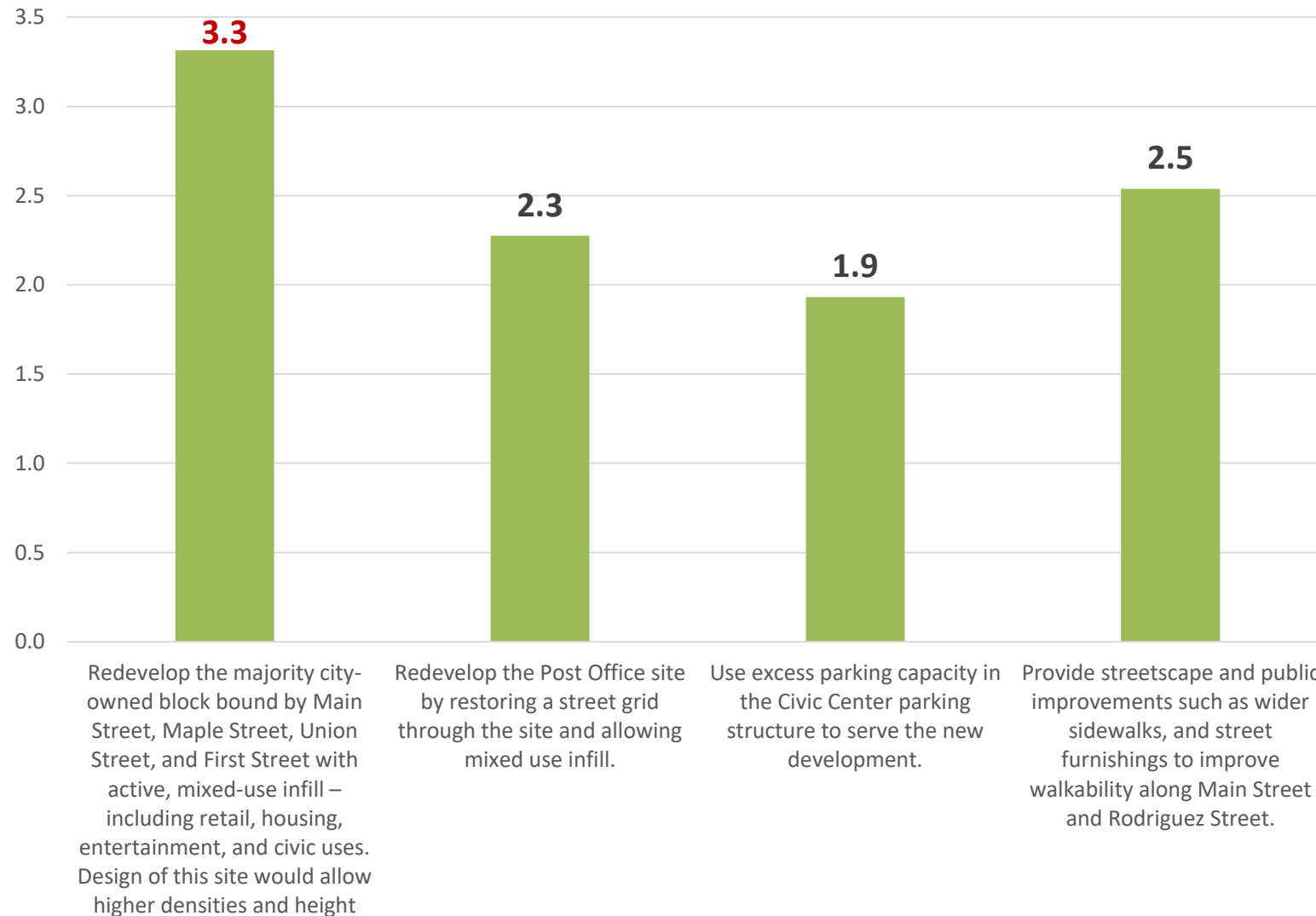
Big Ideas For The Future of Downtown – Top 5 Priorities



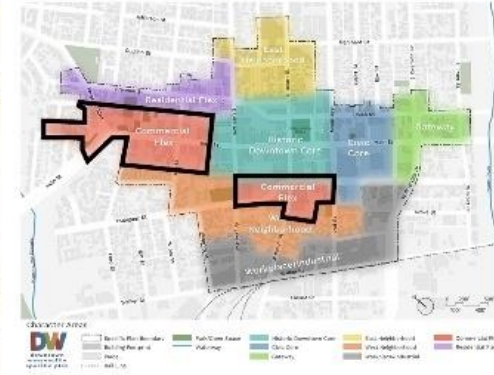
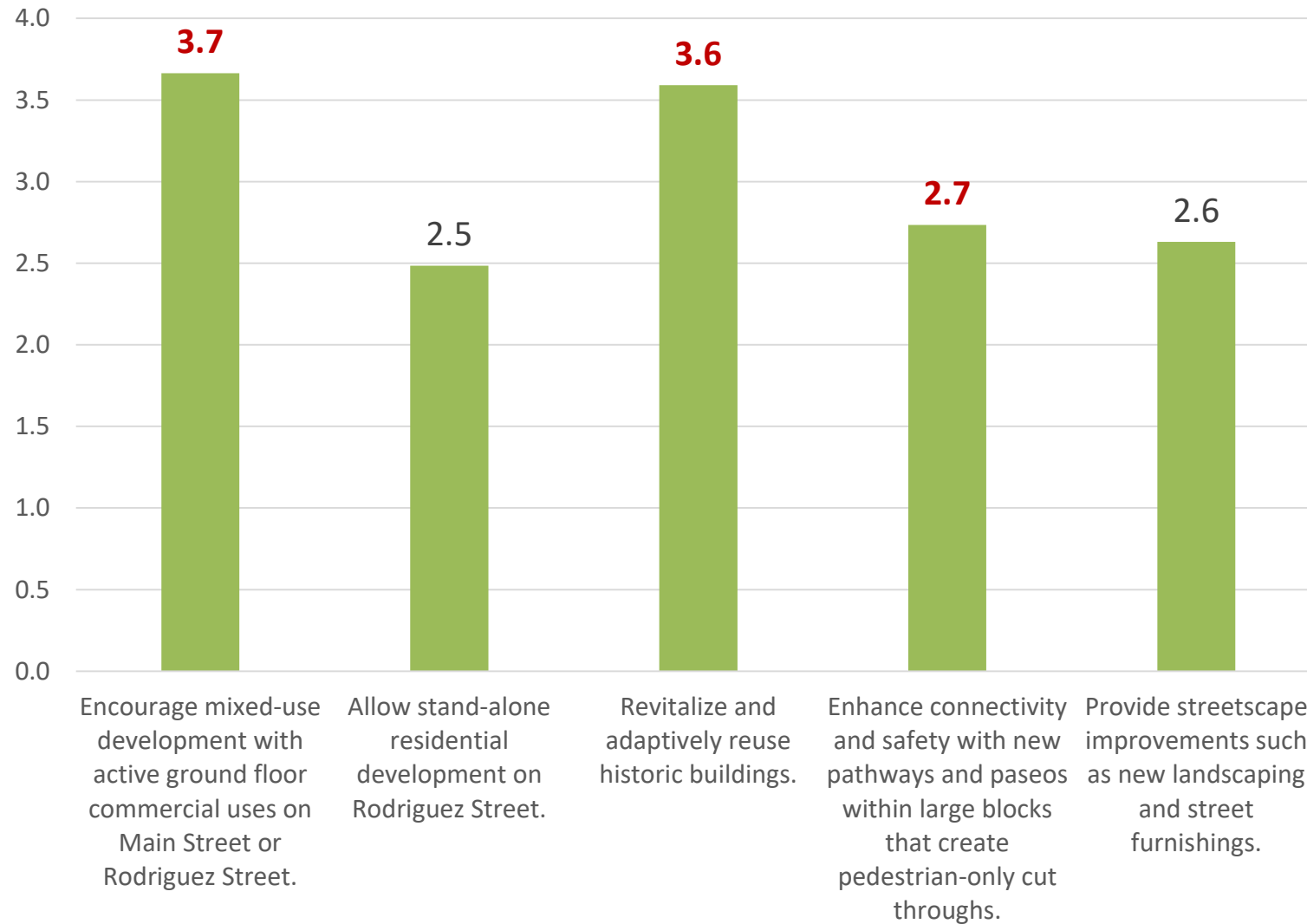
Historic Downtown Core – Top Three Priorities



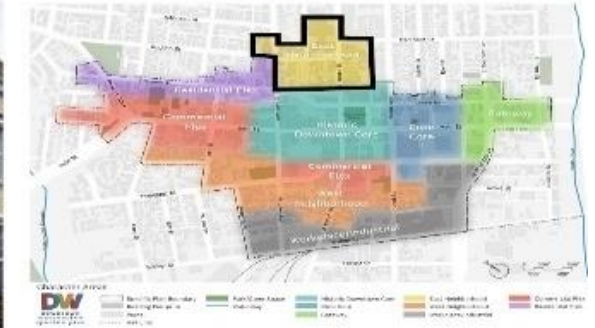
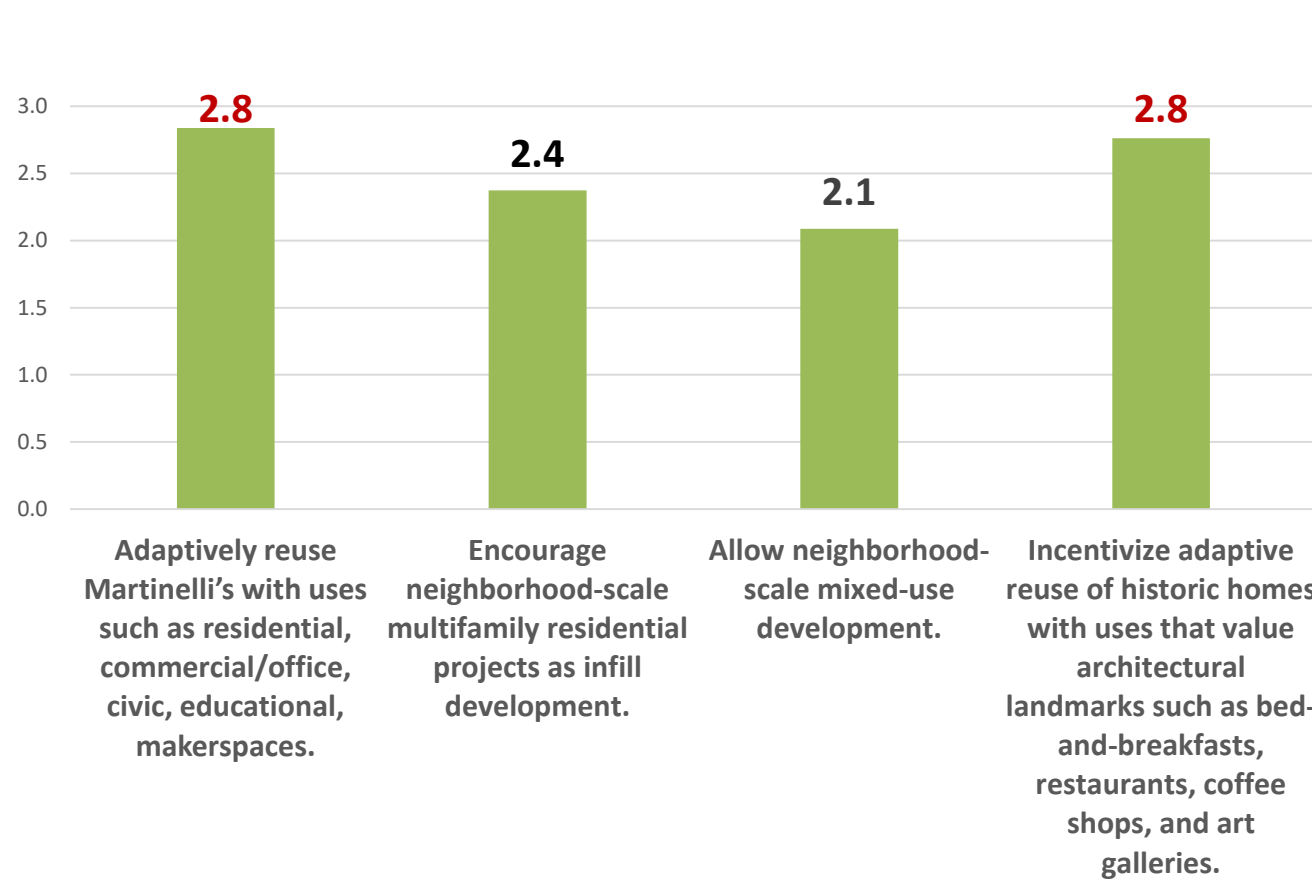
Civic Core – Top Two Priorities



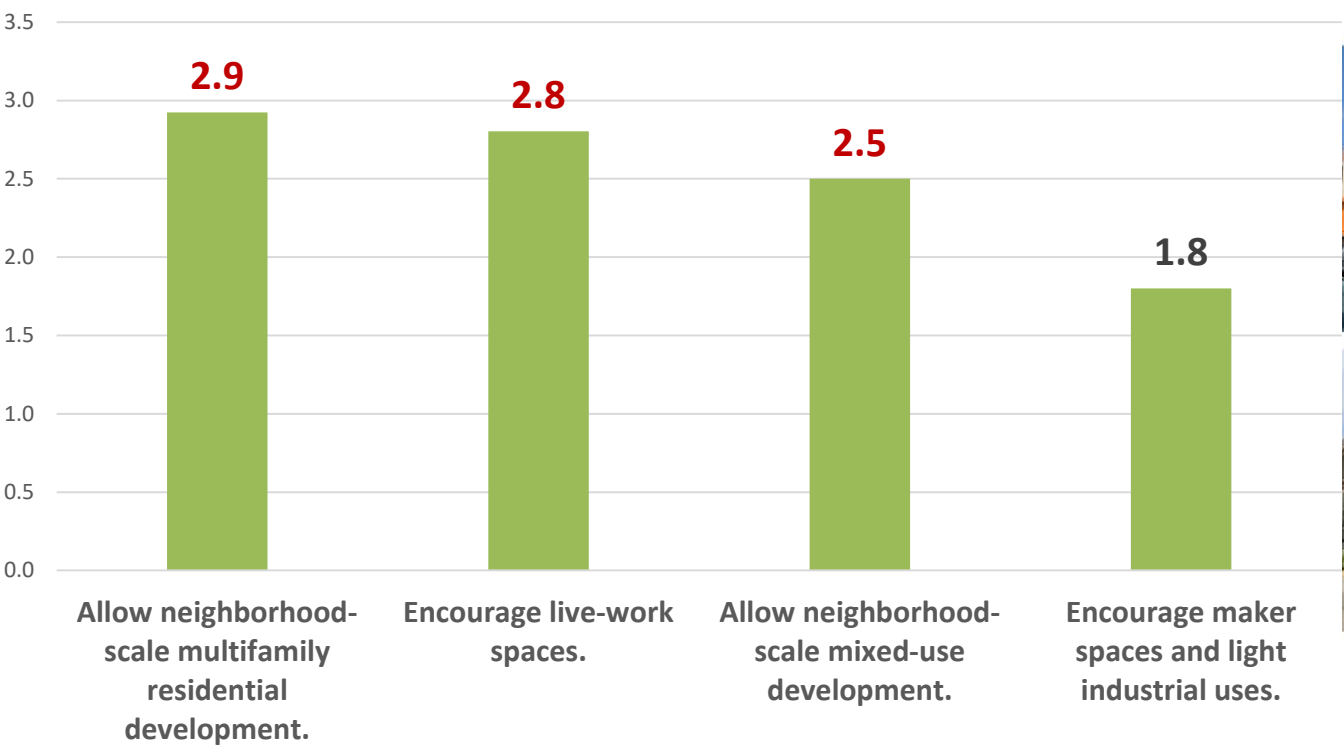
Commercial “Flex” – Top Three Priorities



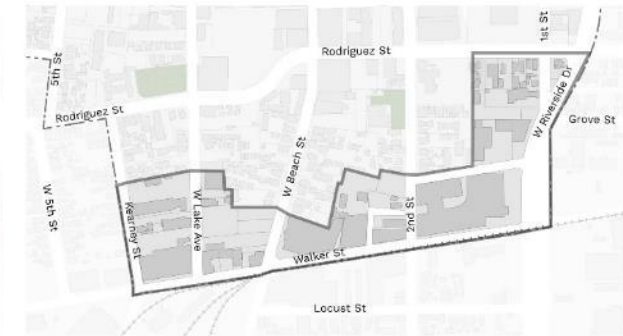
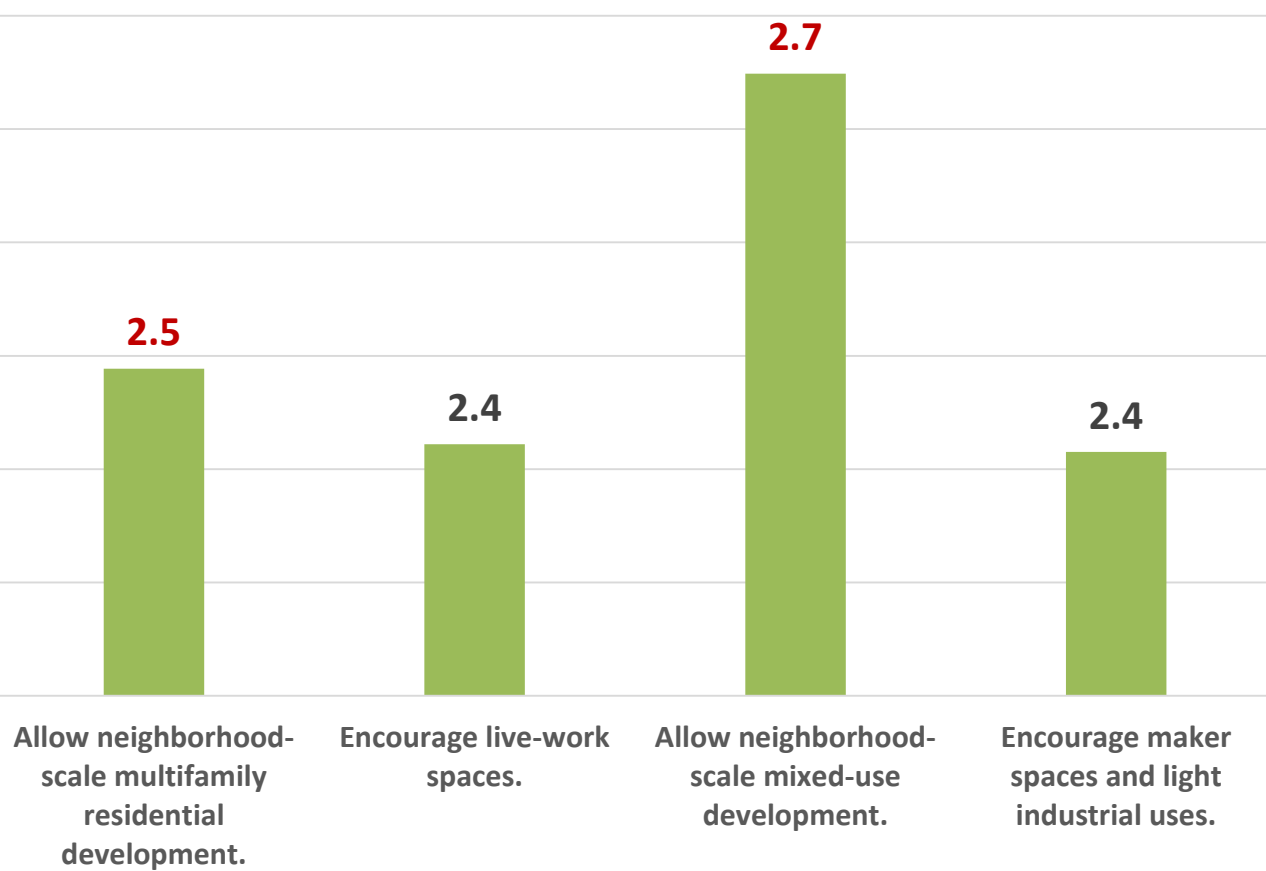
East Neighborhood – Top Two Priorities



West Neighborhood – Top Three Priorities



Workplace/ Industrial District Neighborhood– Top Two Priorities



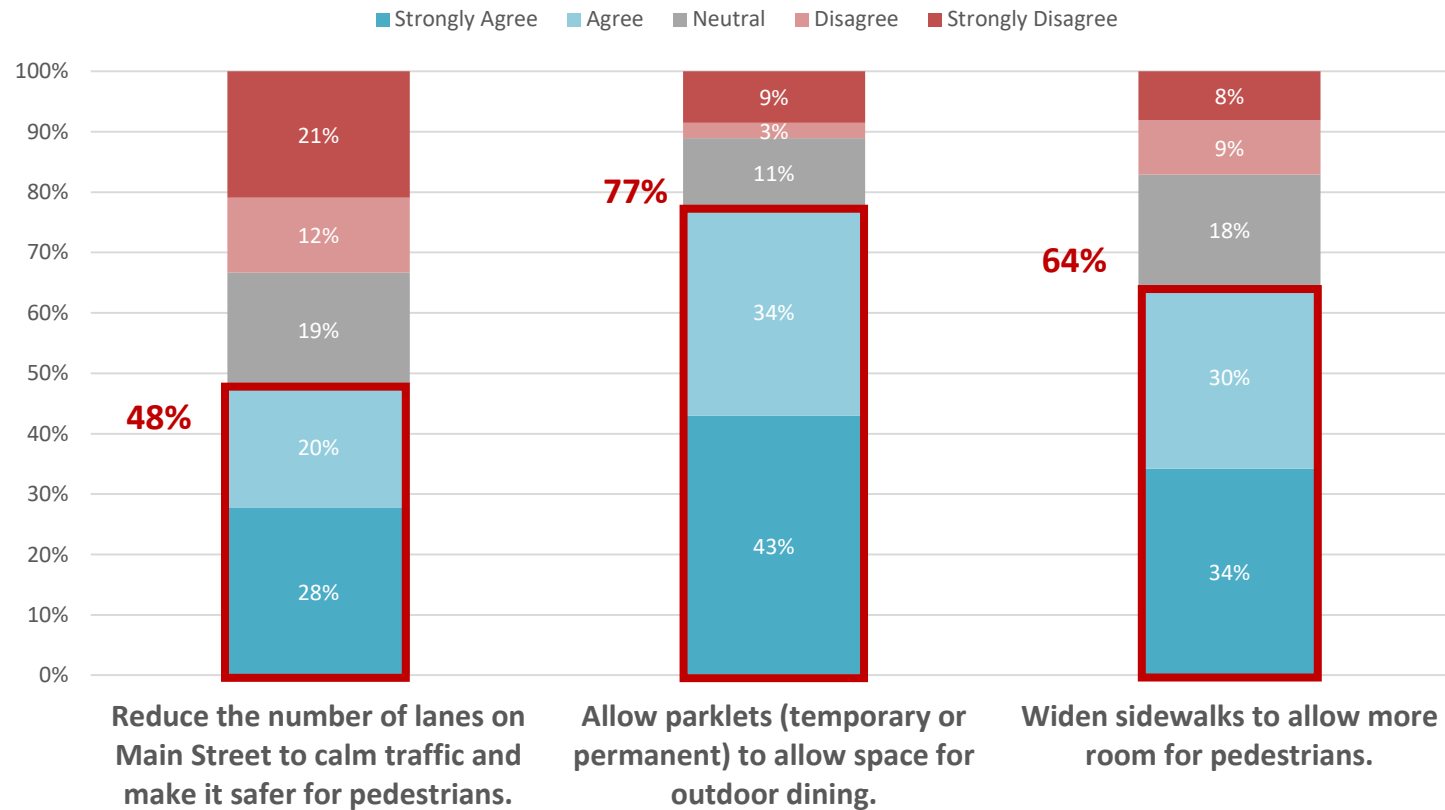
Open-Ended Responses

- Strong desire to **preserve the historic look and feel** of downtown. Newer buildings should complement the historic character of downtown.
- Concern about **homelessness/mental health issues** as well as **safety**. Incorporate clean up strategies and lighting to increase safety while also supporting pedestrians and cyclists.
- Create a **vibrant and navigable downtown** by incorporating more gateways, streetscape amenities, usable outdoor spaces, wayfinding, and signage.
- Create a **mixture of uses and experiences**. Incorporate more anchor retail, grocery stores, restaurants, coffee shops (small businesses), and youth specific establishments.
- **Housing is a priority**. Housing should aim to be specifically affordable and geared toward diverse groups of middle- or low-income residents.
- **Gentrification and displacement** concerns are an issue. Preserve Watsonville's historic and cultural identities which includes its architecture and people.

Public Environment Responses

Main Street (SR 152 between Lake & Beach)

What is your level of agreement or disagreement with the following strategies suggested to support enhancing the pedestrian environment and safety on Main Street?

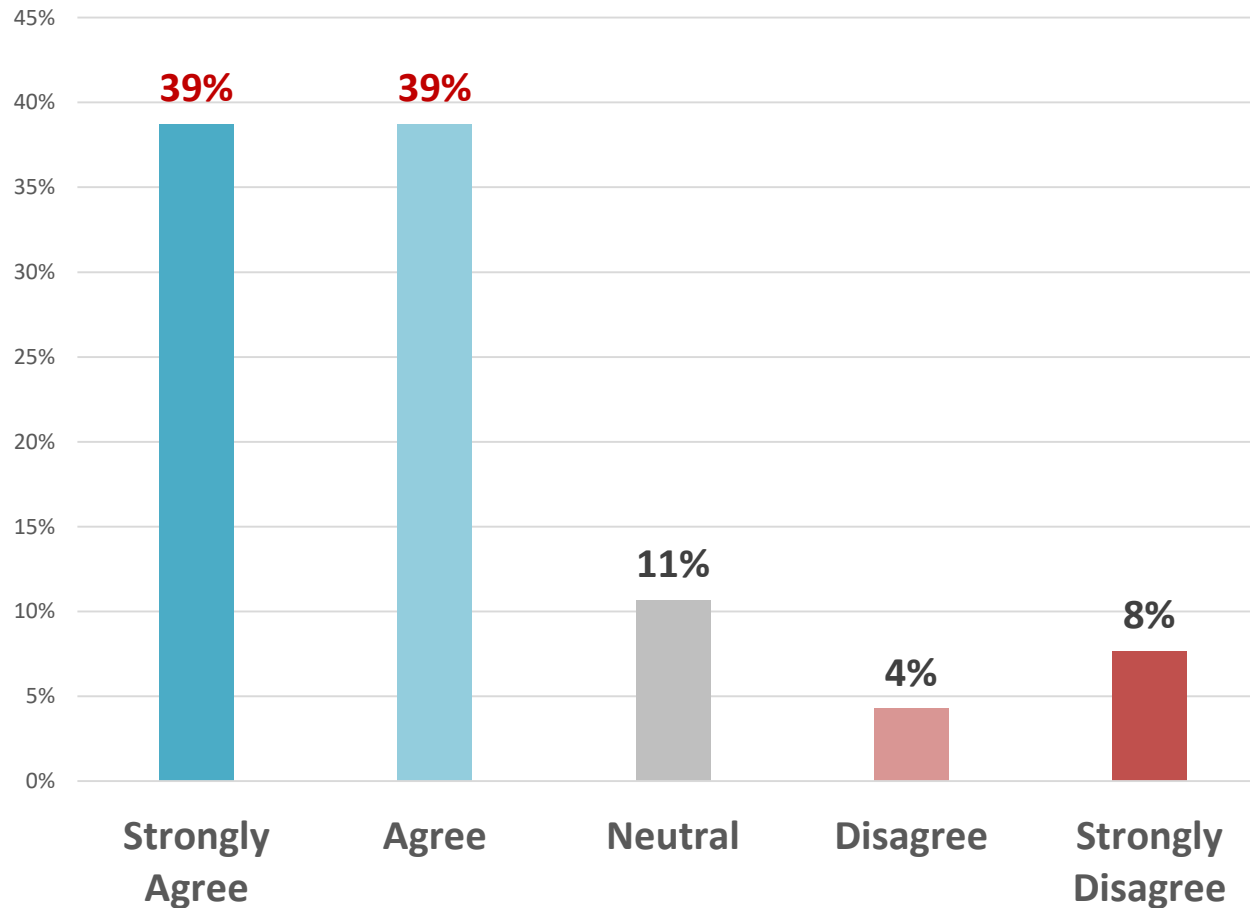


60 ft Curb-to-Curb

2 travel lanes + left turn + parking both sides + parklets

E Beach Street (SR 152)

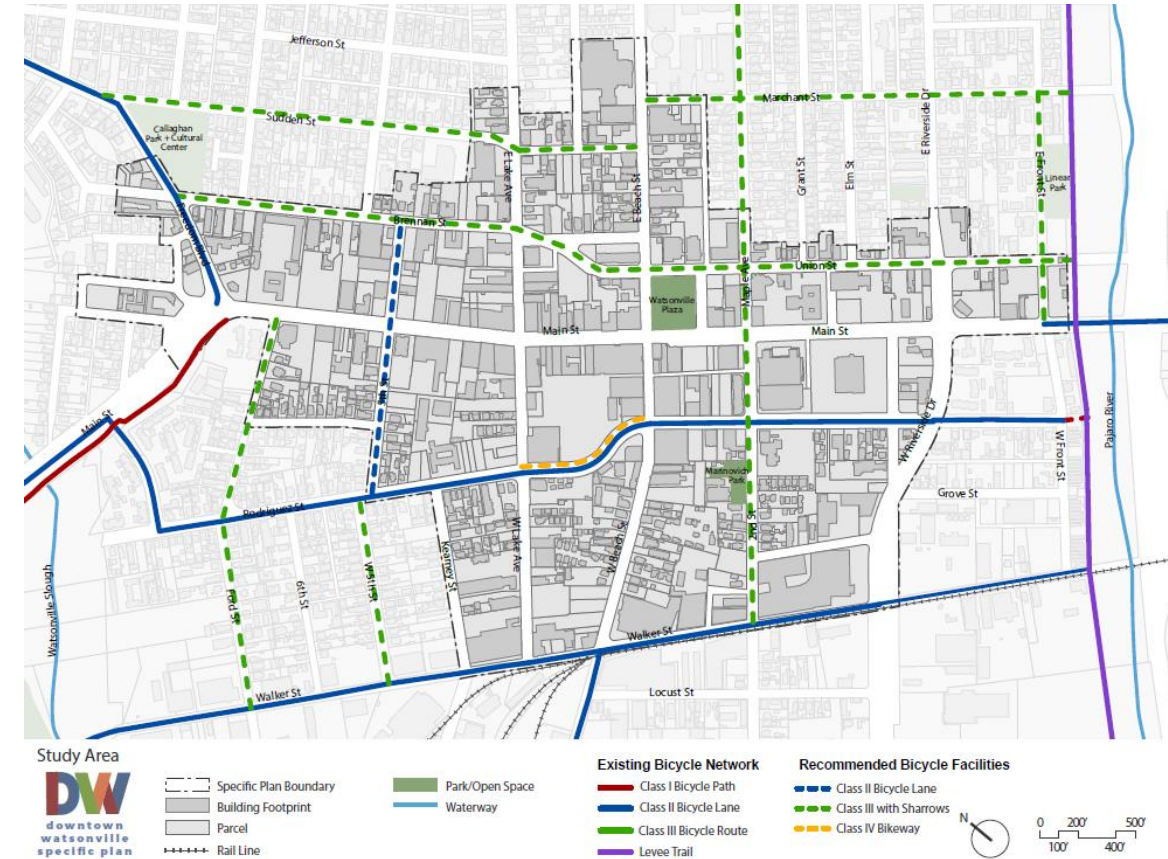
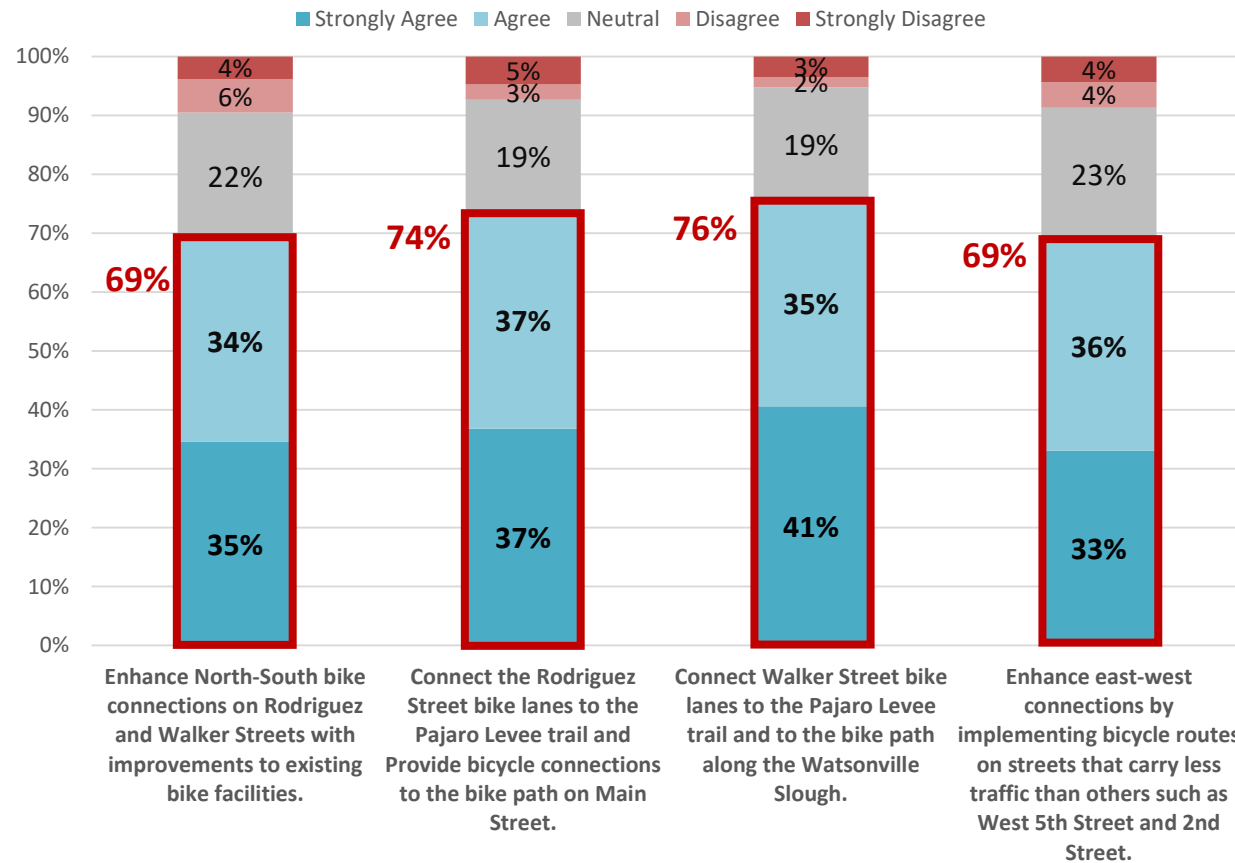
What is your level of agreement or disagreement with potentially converting East Beach Street & East Lake Avenue into two-way streets?



50 ft Curb-to-Curb
2 travel lanes + parking both sides + sidewalk/parklet zone

Regional Bike Connections

What is your level of agreement or disagreement with the strategies proposed to support the enhancement of local and regional bike connections?



Open-Ended Responses

- Overwhelming desire to **incorporate parklets and widened sidewalks** into the downtown yet there is less agreement with reductions in parking and travel lanes. Continue discussions re. **trade-offs** of related to wider sidewalks and/or parklets. There will undoubtedly be the need to take space from travel lanes or parking to accommodate these enhancements.
- Desire for a **pedestrian and bicycle friendly environment** in Watsonville. Create an environment that is more friendly for active mode travelers.
- Traffic concerns are linked to **reduced bicycle and pedestrian safety**.
- Concerned about the need to reduce traffic and fear that traffic could become worse on streets such as Riverside Drive and Lake Street.

Questions?

Zoning Code Framework Plan

Zoning 101, Regulating Plan, Regulating Topics,
Typologies

Coding The Downtown Vision

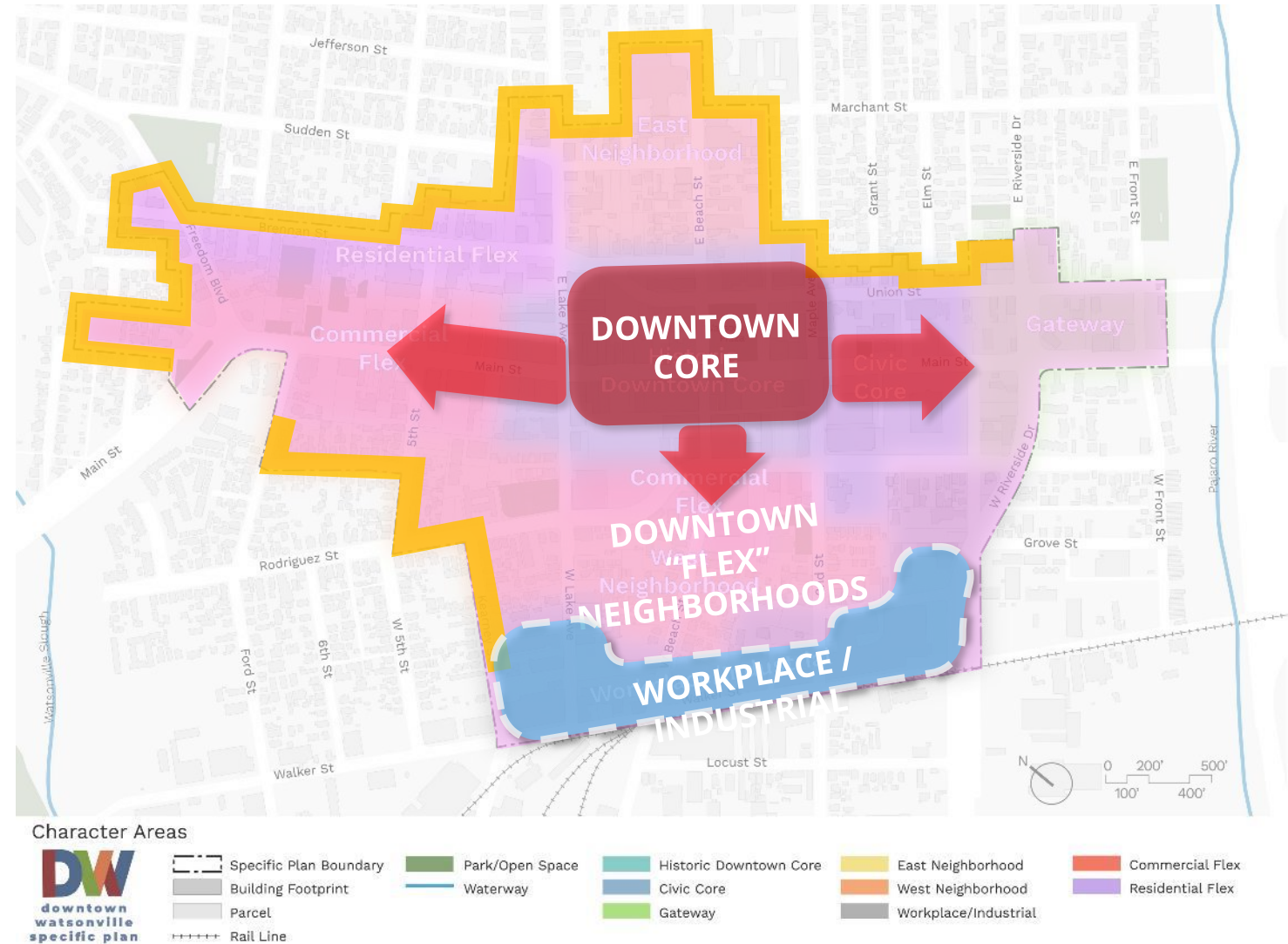
Implementing the Vision of the Character Areas

THE ROLE OF THE CODE

The Code is a **tool for regulating and implementing** the vision for downtown that has been expressed through **character areas**.

Environments to Implement:

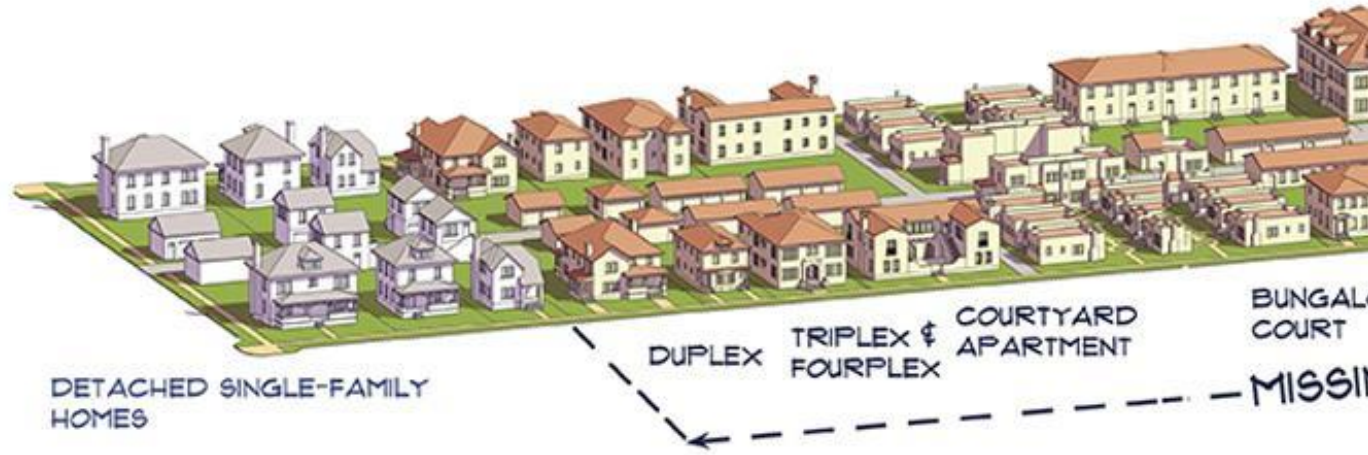
- Active core of Downtown
- Extensions of the core
- Workplace industrial environment
- Flex Downtown neighborhoods
- The neighborhood-adjacent edges of downtown



Conventional vs. “Form-Based” Zoning

Conventional Zoning Features /

HOUSING TRANSECT



provides very little control/predictability over building form;

- Provides limited housing variety and choice;
- **Disconnect between public and private realm;** (Standards typically stop at property line – often causing dead/blank frontages):



Conventional vs. “Form-Based” Zoning

Form-Based (+ “Context Aware”) Zoning Features / Advantages:

Core idea is **creating and shaping public space with buildings** – a.k.a “*Placemaking*”

- Emphasizes **Built Form**, with standards for building form and mass consciously **based on context and/or desired character**
- Strong attention to streetscape and public realm design - and the **role of public and private frontages in shaping and activating the public realm**
- Provides **flexibility** with regard to land use, **emphasizing active, mixed-use places** that can evolve and adapt to the needs of a place over time



Active Public Realm Environment

(Public & Private Frontages)

Active Public Realm Environment

Downtown's Active Public Realm

- A network of **streets and public spaces** connect and unify the great variety of uses and building forms Downtown.
- The Code prioritizes the relationship between the ground floors of buildings and the public realm – a.k.a. **“Frontages”**



Active Public Realm Environment

Creating “Active Frontages”

- To facilitate an active public realm environment, **Frontages must be designed and calibrated** (to ground floor use and urban context) to **provide a mutually beneficial relationship between the public and private realms.**

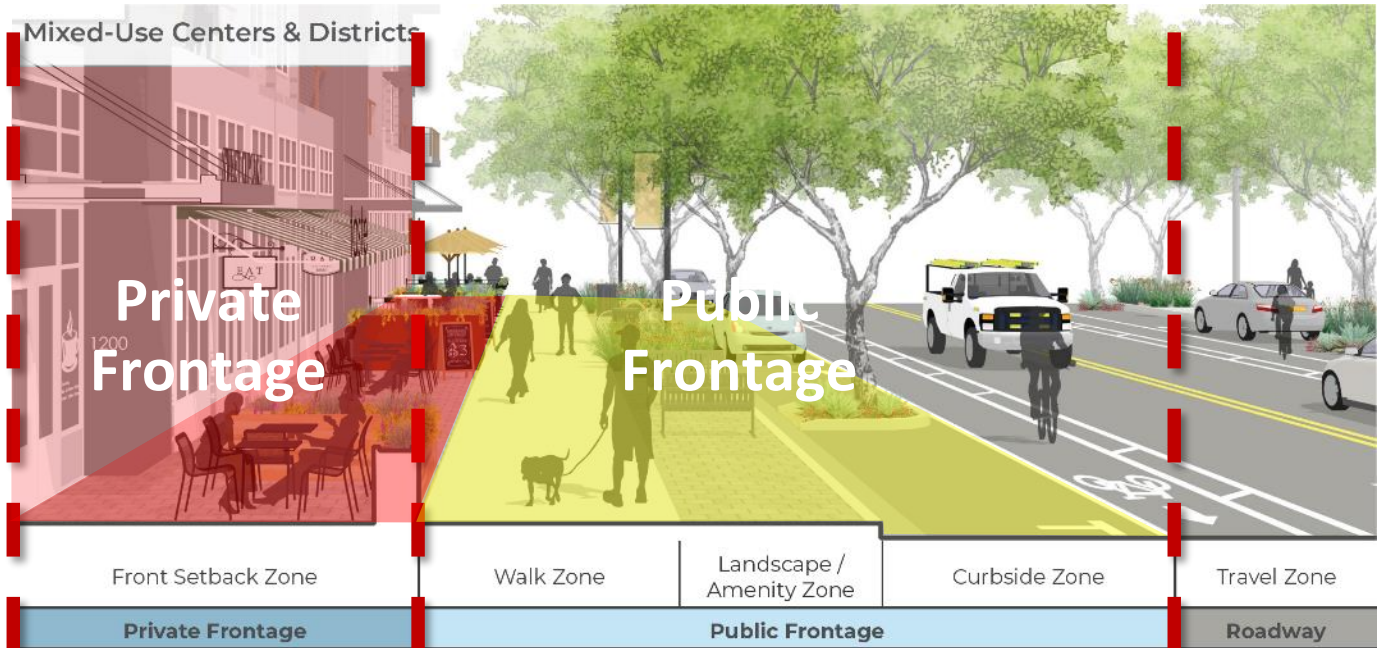


Active Public Realm Environment

Frontage Design & Calibration

- **“Public Frontage”** refers to the space between travel lanes and the private property, and must accommodate a variety of needs and functions;
- **“Private Frontage”** refers to the space between the property line and a building’s entry / façade;
- Careful design and calibration of both ensure an **“activatable” public realm** (*“just add people...”*)

RETAIL & COMMERCIAL FRONTAGES

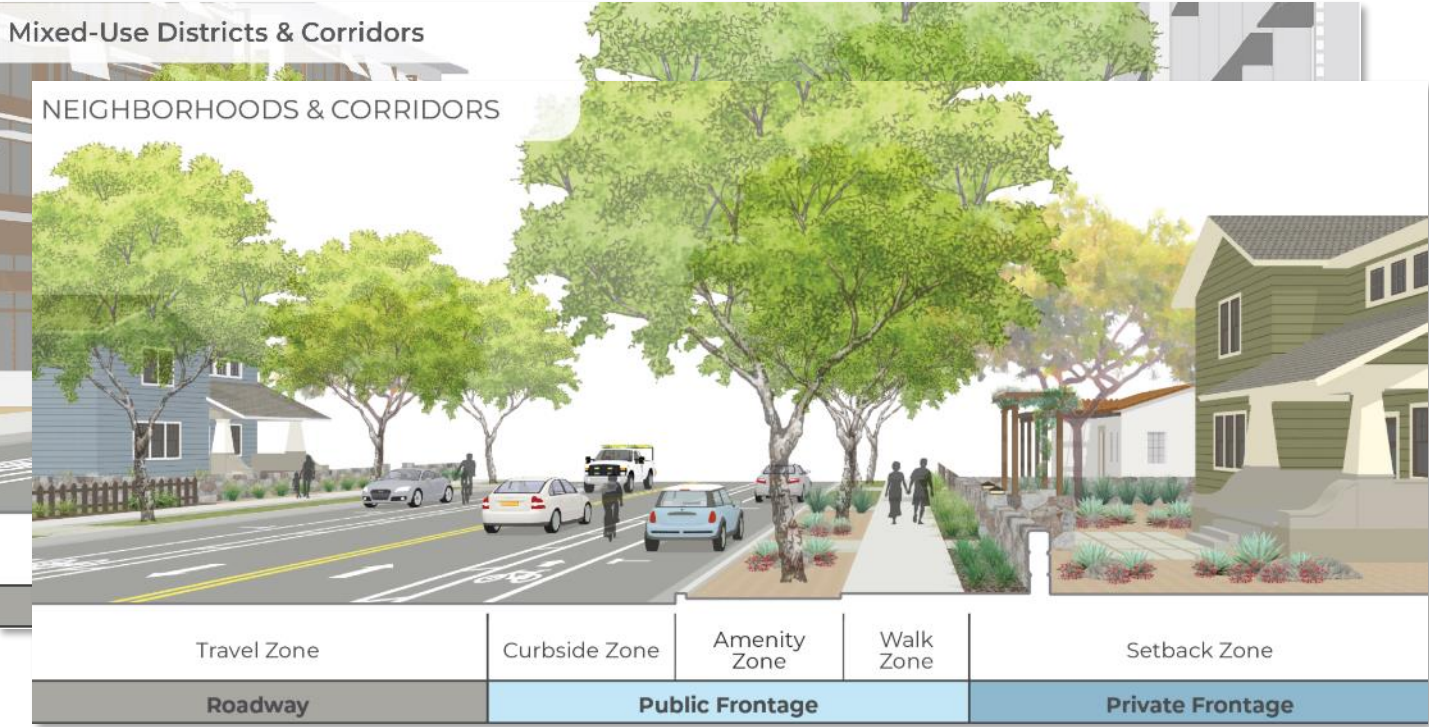


Active Public Realm Environment

Frontage Design & Calibration

- Frontages must be calibrated to the needs of their “urban context” or “Character Area” (i.e., very urban vs. less urban environment)
- ... As well as to the needs of the ground floor use (i.e., Commercial prioritizes openness & exposure, whereas residential prioritizes comfort & privacy)

RESIDENTIAL FRONTAGES



Active Public Realm Environment

Frontage Design & CalibrationPUBLIC FRONTAGE DESIGN & CALIBRATION: STRATEGIES FOR NARROW SIDEWALKS

- As well as to existing physical context (i.e., roadway & sidewalk width, roadway capacity, etc.)

▼ Amenities in the Curb Zone



▼ Amenities in the Access Zone



Active Public Realm Environment

Flexible Frontages

Flexible Frontage design can **accommodate a variety of active ground floor uses** (residential, live-work, or commercial), with only minor adjustments needed to adapt to the needs of the time. This is **especially useful where retail frontage is desired in the future, but near-term demand will not yet support it.**



Questions?

The Active Downtown Core

*(Built Form and Urban
Character)*

The Active Downtown Core

Activated Public Realm

Main Street and the area around Watsonville Plaza are intended to be **the most active environment downtown.**

- Buildings **shape and activate the public realm** with continuous streetwall;
- Ground floor facades in the form of **shopfronts with most active uses;**
- Sidewalks are **comfortable and well furnished**, allow for sidewalk dining and other activities



The Active Downtown Core

Shopfront Transparency

Shopfronts provide **visual interest** to the street while benefiting from **exposure to customers**.



The Active Downtown Core

Seamless Indoor/Outdoor Spaces

Openable shopfronts blur the line between public and private realms, enhancing the experience of both.



The Active Downtown Core

Active Residential Frontages

Ground floor residential uses with **sufficient privacy** while enabling residents to overlook the streets to foster a safe, comfortable 18-hour environment.



The Active Downtown Core

Frequency of Entries

Building entries – including shopfronts and common entries – occur frequently – typically every 25-100 ft



The Active Downtown Core

Generous Ground Floor Height

Prominent, tall ground floors create spaces full of natural light and air, and create a strong base for buildings.

Ground floors will be required to be **taller in the Downtown Core (and extensions)** to accommodate ground floor commercial uses.



The Active Downtown Core

Building Heights

Buildings Heights will be tallest in the Downtown Core in order to activate and define the public realm.

- Building Heights of up to 4-6 stories;
- New buildings must be compatible with and transition elegantly to existing buildings.



The Active Downtown Core

Massing & Façade Composition

Projects of all sizes – whether a building on a small lot, or a project encompassing an entire block – are composed of **masses and façade increments reflective of the historic downtown;**

- Horizontal increments of the original downtown plat; typically 25'- 50' (and occasionally wider);
- Typically accomplished via change of architectural composition, or vertical change (stories or parapet height)



The Active Downtown Core

Massing & Façade Composition

Building architecture need not employ any historic architectural styles, but should employ certain basic façade composition and organizational principles characteristic of California downtowns.

In general, this includes large ground floor shopfront openings, with upper floor windows generally “stacked” above.

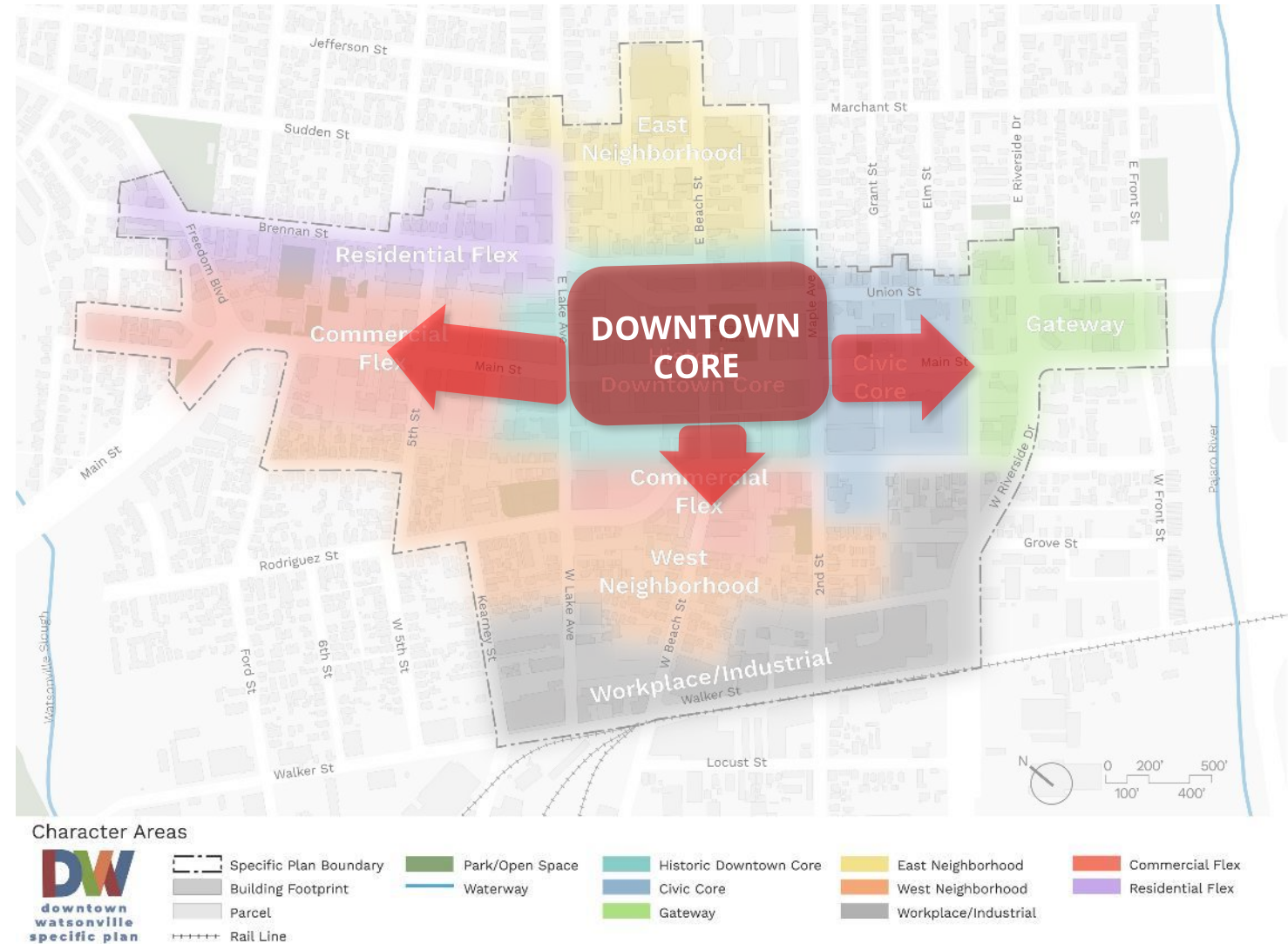


The Active Downtown Core

Downtown Corridors

Extensions outward of the Core environment along the primary streets.

- Buildings shape and activate the public realm
- Active ground floor frontages – **greater flexibility with regard to use (including residential and office)**
- Sidewalks are comfortable and well furnished



The Active Downtown Core

Flexible Frontages

Flexible Frontage design can **accommodate a variety of active ground floor uses** (residential, live-work, or commercial), with only minor adjustments needed to adapt to the needs of the time. This is **especially useful where retail frontage is desired in the future, but near-term demand will not yet support it.**



POLL

Questions?

Flex Downtown Neighborhoods

*(Built Form & Urban
Character)*

Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods

Flexible Mixed-Use Neighborhood

The neighborhoods surrounding the Downtown Core can include wide range of (compatible) uses in coherent neighborhood patterns:

- Active, comfortable, public realm environment, with a **distinct neighborhood character**;
- Flexible mix of uses in generally “**neighborhood-scale**” buildings;
- Building scale typically 2-4 stories; “**Context-aware**” / **compatibility standards critical**. Particularly along neighborhood edges.



Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods

Neighborhood-Scale Building Types

Code may define specific “Neighborhood-Scale” building types allowed in this Zone:



Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods

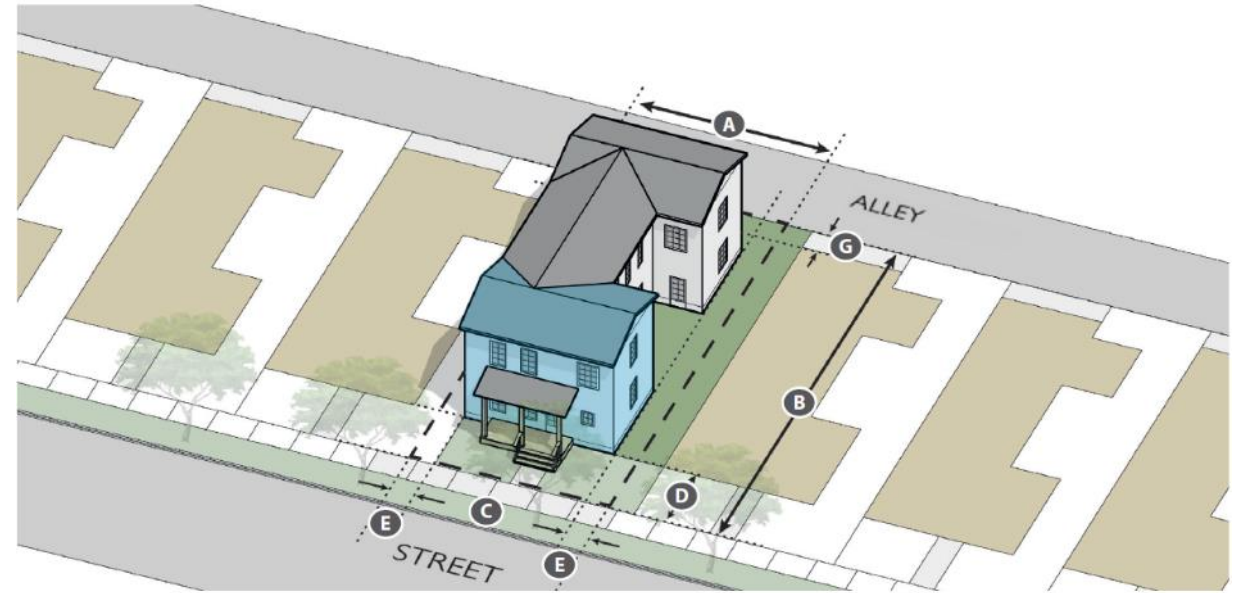
Neighborhood-Scale Building Types



2.6.4 Side Yard House

A. Description & Intent

Side yard houses are detached single-family houses which contain ample side yard space in lieu of a rear yard. They are an excellent way to develop efficiently on narrow lots without sacrificing the quality of the on-site open space and still relating well to the public realm.



Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods

Neighborhood-Scale Building Types

MULTIPLEX 4-8 UNITS (15-25 DUA)



Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods

Neighborhood-Scale Building Types



2.6.5 Rowhouse

A. Description & Intent

Rowhouses are side-by-side attached dwelling units that are vertically-occupied. While more affordable than detached single family homes, they each occupy a stretch of street frontage and are accessed directly off the sidewalk. They typically contain stoops, and are differentiated from the next by color or vertical elements.



Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods

Neighborhood-Scale Building Types

**COURTYARD HOUSING (SURFACE-PARKED)
(20-25 DUA)**



Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods

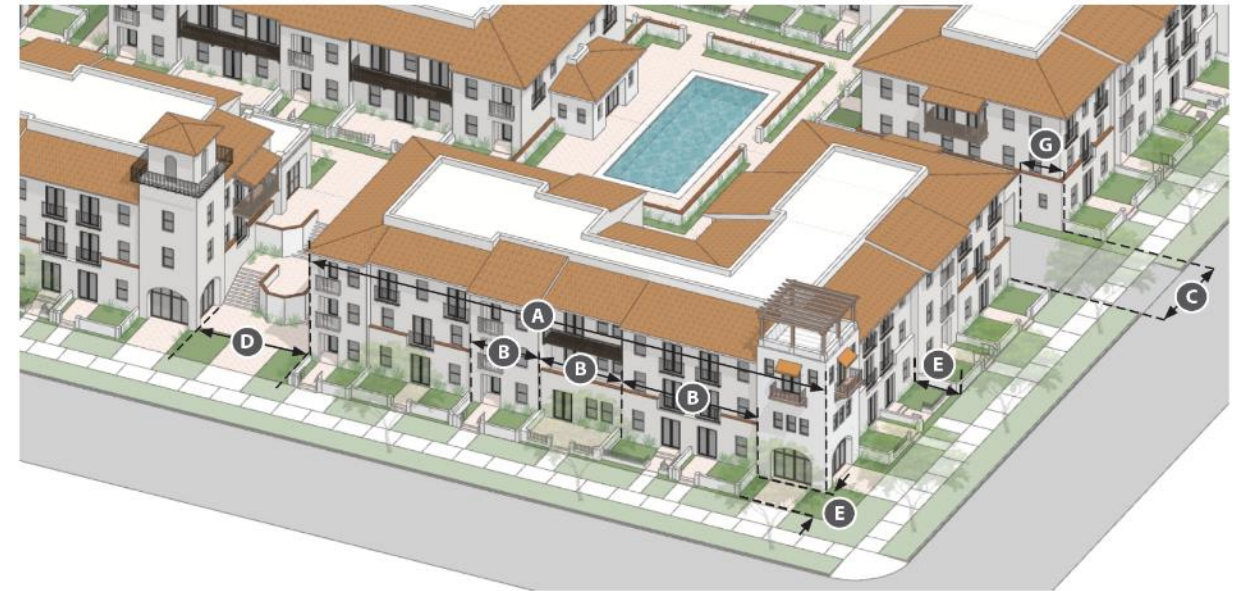
Neighborhood-Scale Building Types



2.6.6 Walk-ups

A. Description & Intent

Podiums are large-footprint, multi-unit residential buildings that sit atop a concrete parking level. This parking is lined with residential or commercial uses and frontages. On-site open space is provided on the parking lid in the form of courts, pedestrian ways, and other amenities like pools or playgrounds.



POLL

Questions?

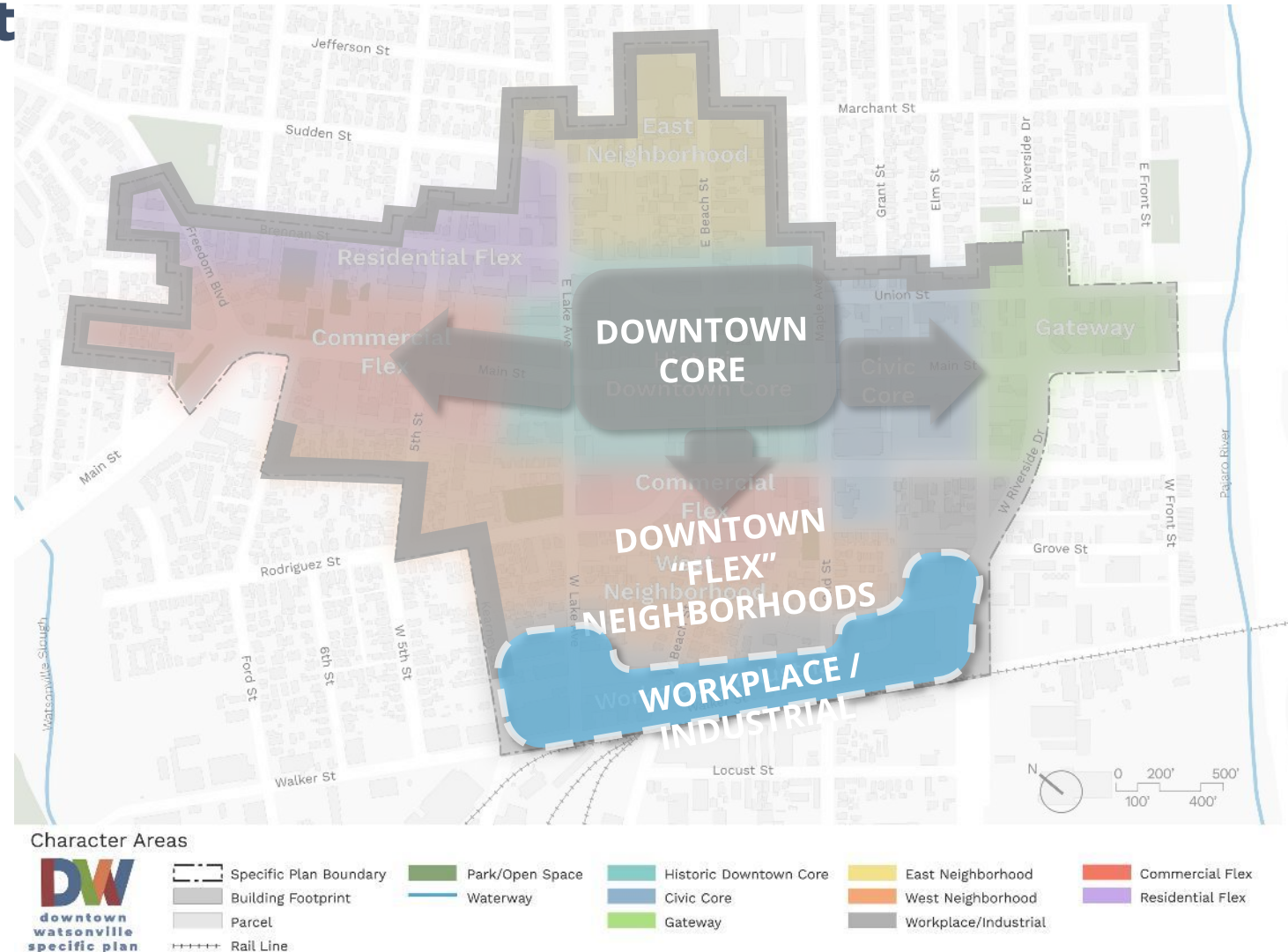
Workplace / Industrial

Downtown Workplace District

The existing industrial district along Walker street may be preserved and evolved over time to support the changing needs of downtown.

Priorities to confirm:

- Supporting the needs of existing businesses / **preserving existing industrial uses?**
- Providing guidelines **for adaptive reuse** of industrial buildings?
- Enabling **infill development** of new uses? Where?
- Tactical **public realm improvements** that unify the



Workplace Industrial Environment

Support / Preserve Existing Uses

New industrial or residential uses could be subject to discretionary review in order to **prevent the unintended displacement of businesses.**



Workplace Industrial Environment

Adaptive Re-use of Buildings

A variety of uses can creatively fill structures which are no longer needed for industrial uses.



Workplace Industrial Environment

Infill Development & Tactical Public Realm Improvements

Vacant or underutilized sites may be redeveloped, especially near existing and potential multi-modal connections.



POLL




Questions?

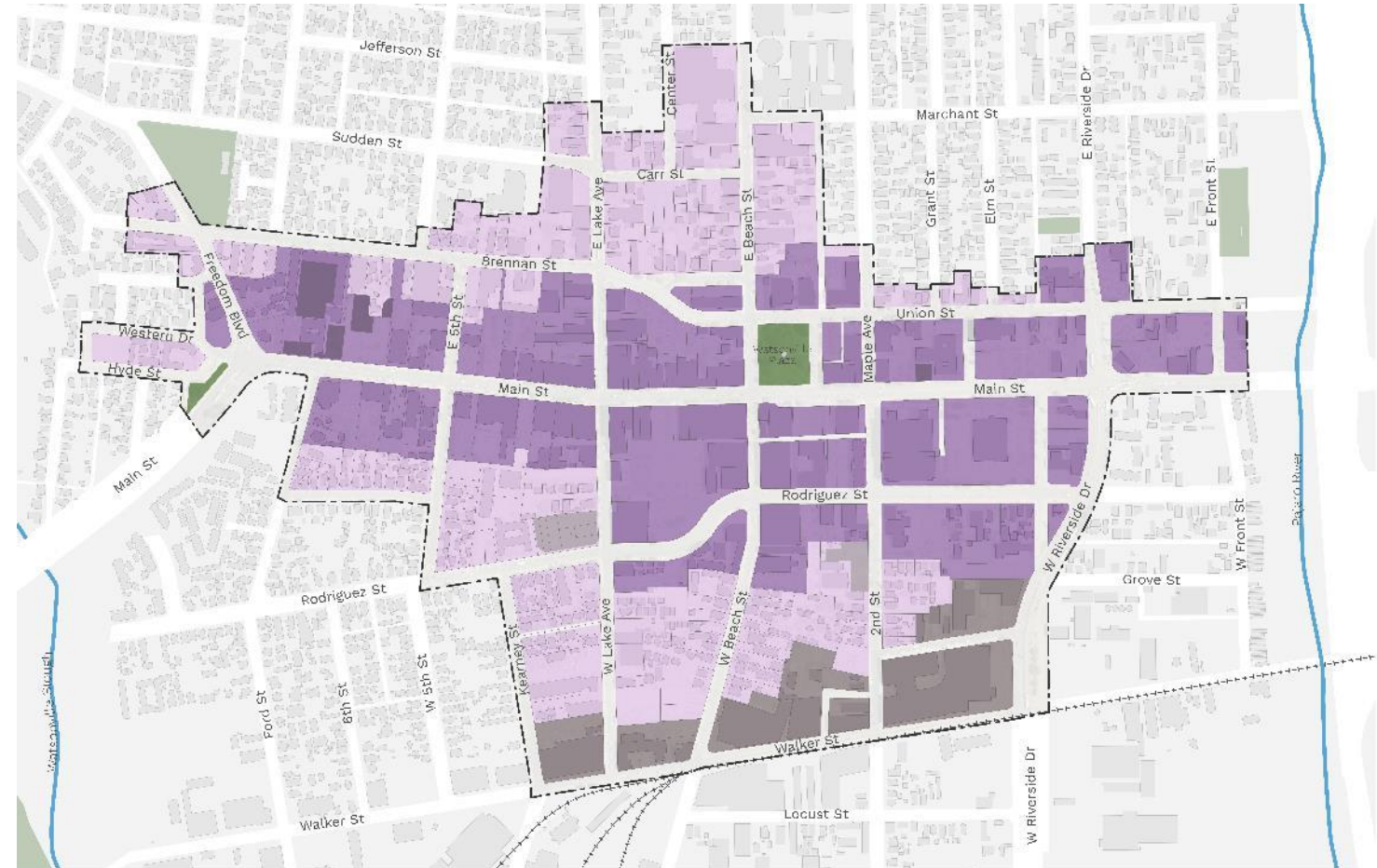
Example Regulating Plan

Example Regulating Plan

Zones and Overlays

ZONES

-  Downtown Core
-  Downtown Neighborhood
-  Downtown Industrial



Study Area
DW
downtown
watsonville
specific plan



ZONES

-  Downtown Core
-  Downtown Neighborhood
-  Downtown Industrial

OVERLAYS

-  Main Street Core
-  Corridor Flex
-  Neighborhood Transition




-  Specific Plan Boundary
-  Building Footprints
-  Parcels
-  Rail Line

-  Park/Open Space
-  Waterway




Example Regulating Plan

Zones and Overlays

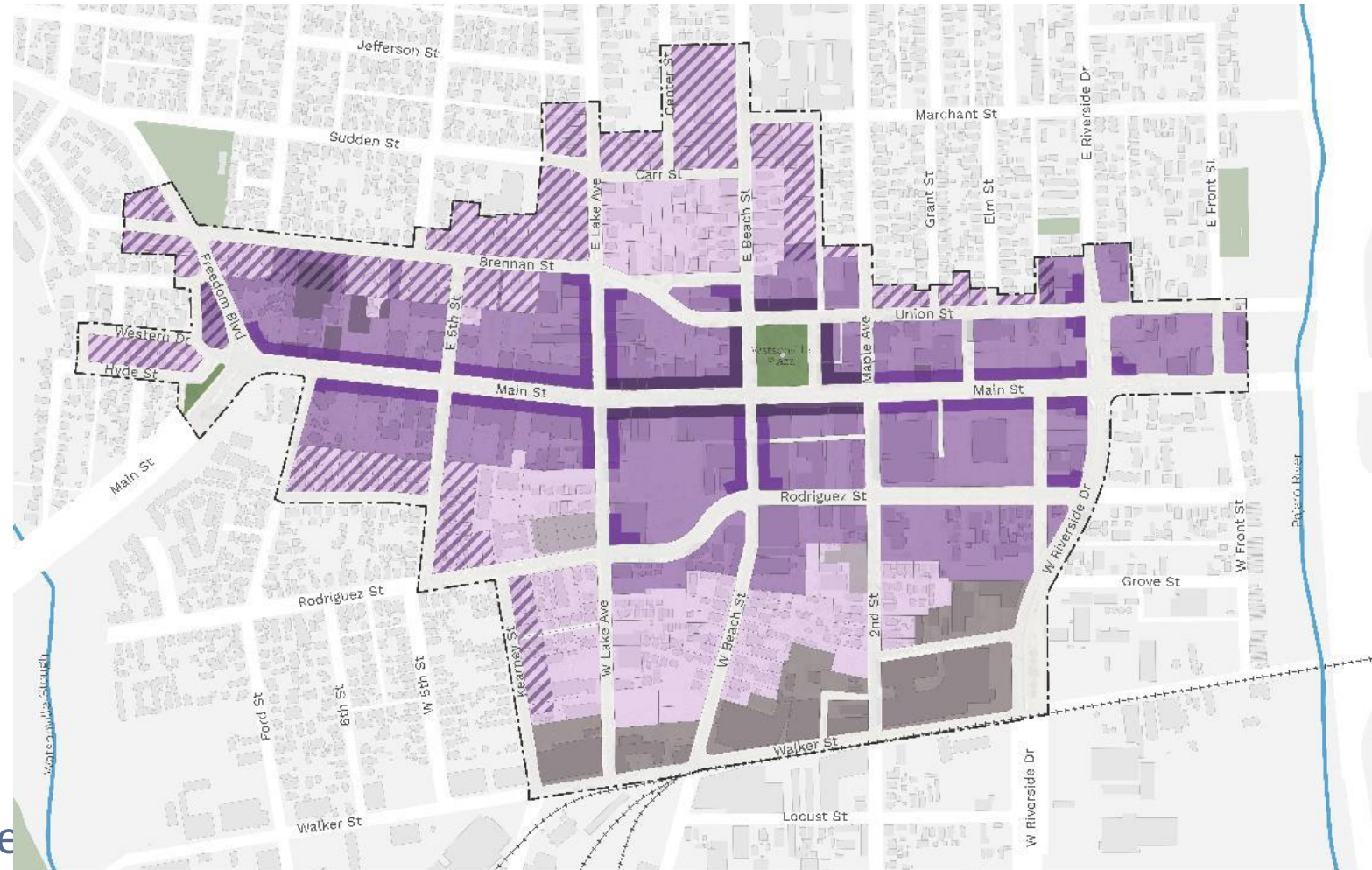
ZONES

-  Downtown Core
-  Downtown General
-  Downtown Industrial



OVERLAYS

-  Main Street Core
-  Corridor Flex
-  Neighborhood Transition

This is a **flexible tool** we will calibrate throughout the planning process.



Study Area
DW
downtown
watsonville
specific plan

- ZONES**
-  Downtown Core
 -  Downtown General
 -  Downtown Industrial

- OVERLAYS**
-  Main Street Core
 -  Corridor Flex
 -  Neighborhood Transition

-  Specific Plan Boundary
-  Building Footprints
-  Parcels
-  Rail Line
-  Park/Open Space
-  Waterway

Discussion

Questions for Discussion

- Are these the right topics for the Code to address? Are we missing anything?
- Affordable housing is incentivized by some of the new State laws. Are there other key community benefits that the Code should incentivize?

Public Comments

(2 minutes per speaker)

Wrap-up & Next Steps

Next Steps

- **Drafting The Plan**

- Refined Code
- Streetscape Design
- Traffic and Parking

- **Plan Review**

- Winter 2021/ Spring 2022

City of Watsonville

Downtown Specific Plan + EIR

Advisory Meeting #5 | October 6, 2021