

Southern Pines

Downtown Neighborhood Development Plan



Public Review Draft: March 28, 2013

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Overview

Purpose of the Downtown Neighborhood Development Plan

The Downtown Neighborhood Plan is a strategic plan to establish appropriate development and design standards for the public and private realms in and around Downtown Southern Pines, as mapped in **Exhibit 1**. This document is not intended to be a comprehensive area plan for the Downtown. Additional detail is needed to establish capital plans for public infrastructure and for local economic development initiatives.

This plan is intended to supplement the Town’s comprehensive plan, providing guidance for development and uses in the private realm and suggesting potential enhancements to the public realm (streets, sidewalks and other public areas). The private realm regulatory recommendations are intended to be incorporated into the unified development ordinance (UDO). The recommended enhancements to the public realm should be considered as the Town develops its capital improvements plans.

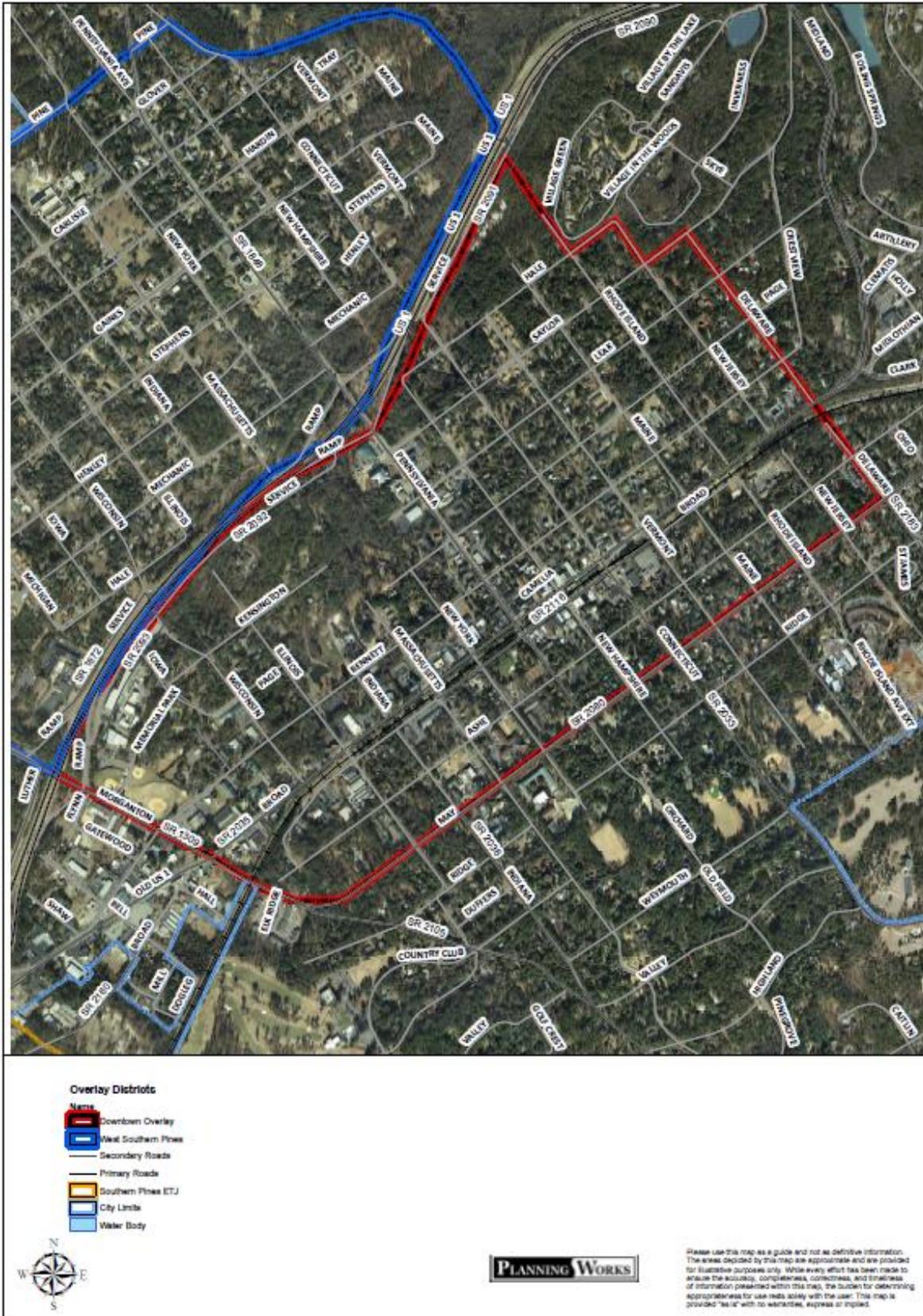


How the Plan was Developed

Southern Pines’ Comprehensive Long-Range Plan (Comp Plan) recognizes the Downtown area’s importance as the Town’s “commercial, cultural and civic hub”, and recommends the development of a Downtown Plan to address a broad range of issues, including: “a needs assessment, catalog of critical architectural, transportation, historic and public space characteristics, and retail and marketing strategies.” While an historic inventory and retail marketing strategies are beyond the scope of this document, the Comp Plan’s goals and other recommendations provide the policy framework for this document’s recommendations.

After review of the Comp Plan recommendations, the Planning Works team conducted a series of workshops in January, March and April of 2012 to identify the Downtown area’s boundaries, the area’s needs and opportunities, potential regulatory strategies and public improvements to address current needs and capitalize on opportunities. The agendas and presentations for each of the planning forums are included in the appendix of this plan. At the initial three-day code building forum in January, Downtown area business owners and residents identified the challenges and opportunities they faced in a series of workshops, interviews and focus groups. The two-day March forum provided similar opportunities for public participation to refine initial observations and provide guidance on procedural challenges faced by Downtown residents and businesses. The workshops, interviews and focus groups during the three-day April forum focused on design issues along Broad Street and in the neighborhoods surrounding the Downtown’s business core. At each of these forums, the UDO Steering and Technical Committees helped provide policy direction and refine this plan’s recommendations.

Exhibit 1: Downtown Neighborhood Planning Area



Existing Conditions

Land Use

The Downtown area includes a diverse mix of commercial, residential and institutional uses. Surrounding the commercial core along Broad Street and Pennsylvania Avenue are residential neighborhoods that include a mix of detached single-family residences, moderate-density attached dwellings, public uses, and institutional uses. Residential and non-residential acreage is relatively evenly divided by area, as are institutional and commercial uses.

The housing stock in the Downtown area is generally in good condition, though there are a number of properties, particularly in the northwest quadrant of the area that would benefit from improved building and/or site maintenance. As discussed in more detailed below, existing zoning allows for a broad mix of housing types.

Commercial land uses include a mix of retail and services. The Historic District Overlay (HDO), which is mapped in **Exhibit 2** encompasses the area between Bennett, Vermont, Ashe and Massachusetts Streets and includes the most active portion of the Broad Street corridor. This stretch is dominated by ground floor shops and restaurants, which creates an enviably vibrant and walkable shopping district. The side streets in the HDO, as well as the extensions of Broad Street and Pennsylvania Avenue include a mix of retail, restaurant and service uses that tend to generate less pedestrian traffic.

Institutional uses (churches, schools and public uses) occupy a significant percentage of the Downtown's land area. One public and three private schools are located within or at the edges of the neighborhood. The recent expansions of three churches in the Downtown area have raised concerns about the potential impacts of large scale religious institutions and their accessory uses on the character of the neighborhood, particularly the displacement of residences for buildings and parking and increased traffic.

Planning and Zoning

Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

The Comp Plan's future land use map, which is a generalized guide for future land uses in the City, recommends commercial land uses in the areas corresponding with existing commercial zoning, residential land uses in the areas zoned for residential use and facilities/resources/recreation in existing park facilities. The Plan's land use policies recommend the introduction of more residences into the Downtown area. Specifically, the plan calls for the Town to:

- (P-D.02) Coordinate land use objectives with County and neighboring municipalities to protect and enhance downtown vitality.*
- (P-D.03) Accommodate residential development on upper floors in existing downtown buildings.*
- (P-D.04) Accommodate compatible mixed-use residential development on vacant or under-utilized sites downtown.*

Downtown Neighborhood Development Plan

(P-D.05) Designate and support transition zone development between abutting neighborhoods and downtown.

While there is relatively little vacant land along Broad Street, there is significant potential to increase residential development through conversion or redevelopment of existing residences, development of mixed-use buildings and the use of upper floors of existing commercial buildings. This last option will be the most challenging in the HDO along Broad Street, where a premium is placed on parking spaces and historic structures complicate access and other fire code requirements.

Zoning

Zoning Districts. Downtown zoning accommodates much more development potential than currently exists despite the Town's lot consolidation requirements. **Exhibit 2** maps existing zoning district boundaries. **Table 1** summarizes the authorized uses and shows the relative area within each district. **Table 2** summarizes key bulk standards (height, setbacks and minimum lot size). These standards are consistent with standards for relatively suburban zoning districts.

Table 1: Existing Downtown Area Zoning

District	Name/Primary Land Uses	Area (acres)	Percent of Neighborhood
RS-1	Residential Single Family. Medium density single-family residential land uses	21.0	5.59%
RM-1	Residential Single and Multi-Family. Single-family and multi-family residences at a medium-density in areas served by adequate public water and sewer systems.	50.4	13.6%
RM-2	Residential Single and Multi-Family. Single-family and multi-family residences at a moderate-density in areas served by adequate public water and sewer systems.	149.9	13.36%
CB	Central Business. A wide variety of commercial activities (particularly those that are pedestrian-oriented) in an intensive development pattern in the town's central business district. Also allows mixed use with residences.	103.8	24.91%
OS	Office and Service. Office and service uses as well as medium-density residential uses. Also allows multi-family residences.	31.9	18.43%
FRR	Facilities, Recreation and Resources. Publicly owned open space and facilities and privately owned and man-made resource areas.	30.1	7.99%

Design Standards. Outside of the general guidance provided by existing HDO design standards, the UDO provides relatively little design guidance for structures other than parking, signage and the bulk standards listed in **Table 3**. Landscaping standards apply in the commercial districts.

Downtown Neighborhood Development Plan

Exhibit 2: Existing Zoning

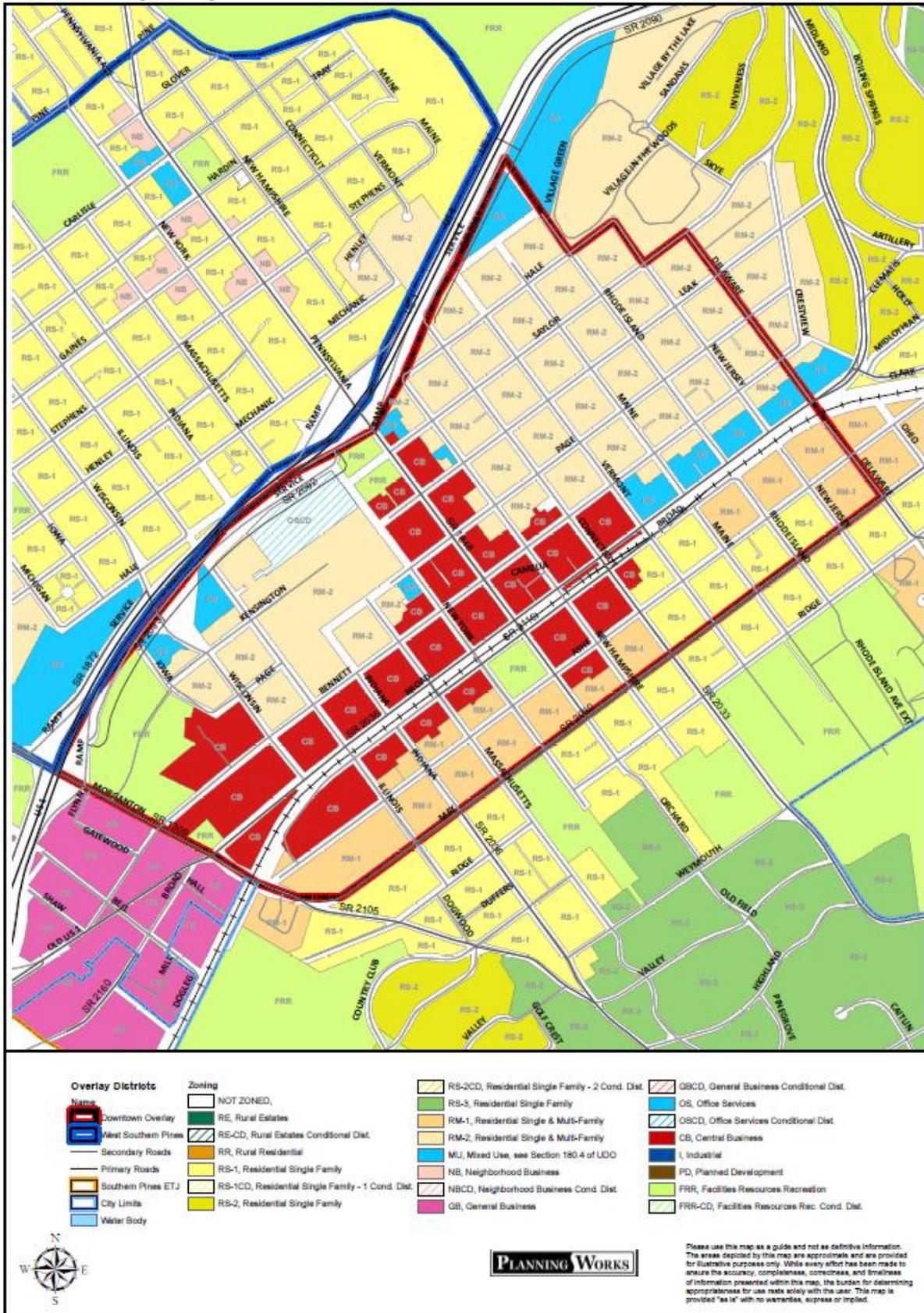


Table 2: Existing Downtown Area Land Use ⁽¹⁾

District	Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	Max. Density	Min. Street Setback ⁽²⁾ (from ROW)	Min. Side Setback	Min. Rear Setback	Min. Lot Width	Maximum Height ⁽³⁾
RS-1	10,000	4.3 dwellings per acre	30 ft.	10 ft.	30 ft.	45 ft.	35 ft.
RM-1	10,000 + 3,600 per dwelling	10-12 dwellings per acre	25 ft.	10 ft.	30 ft.	45 ft.	35 ft.
RM-2	10,000 + 6,000 per dwelling	5-7 dwellings per acre	25 ft.	10 ft.	30 ft.	45 ft.	35 ft.
CB	No minimum	10,000 sq.ft. per lot plus 3,600 sq.ft. per additional dwelling	0 ft.	0 ft.	0 ft.	--	45 ft.
OS	10,000 + 3,600 per dwelling	--	35 ft.	15 ft.	15 ft.	--	45 ft.
FRR	No minimum	--	0 ft.	0 ft.	0 ft.	--	--

Notes:

- Standards in table are general; many are qualified by additional provisions for specific uses or situations.
- Where the right-of-way lines are not identifiable, greater setbacks are established based on distance from the street centerline.
- Institutional structures are allowed maximum heights of 55 feet if sprinkler systems are provided.

Lot Consolidation. The original plat for the Town created lots that do not meet the current minimum standards for lot width and area. Many of these lots were developed for small cottages that are a part of the Town’s historic character. Section 123(e) of the UDO requires the consolidation of non-conforming lots (lots that don’t meet the minimum size requirements) under common ownership, which eliminates the potential for infill cottages and other smaller homes on sites that are 10,000 square feet or smaller. This provision can make it more difficult to achieve the Comp Plan’s recommendations for increased dwellings in downtown neighborhoods.

Needs and Opportunities

This section summarizes comments about the downtown area provided during a series of six downtown area workshops, six community workshops, three Steering Committee meetings and numerous interviews. Six of the workshops were focused exclusively on downtown issues, the other workshops and discussions focused on the Town as a whole.

The Town’s Downtown neighborhood is a diverse area that encompasses the Town’s historic downtown and diverse surrounding neighborhoods. This area justifiably is a source of great pride for local residents, but presents many unresolved regulatory challenges. While historic design standards,

creative streetscape design and civic involvement have helped make the Broad Street historic district a model for vital main streets, workshop participants identified several opportunities for improvement. Beyond the boundaries of the HDO the regulatory challenges are as diverse as the mix of land uses.

The Downtown area is bounded by from May Street on the southeast, Delaware Street on the northeast, US 1 on the northwest and Morganton Road on the southwest (see Exhibit 1). The HDO is bounded by Vermont, Bennett, Massachusetts and Ashe Streets, with Broad Street serving as the primary focus.

Assets

- **Broad Street** – Overall comments on Broad Street were positive, lauding the character and function of the area, which are anchored by an active mix of uses in the HDO that is scaled and designed to create an active pedestrian corridor. Specific assets highlighted by the community include:
 - Landscaping improvements along the railroad;
 - Walkable block sizes that provided great access to surrounding areas;
 - Second floor opportunities for office or residential uses;
 - A mix of ground floor restaurant and retail uses that keeps the Broad Street corridor active throughout the day and evening (note: this was contrasted with a nearby downtown where too many office uses reduced pedestrian activity);
 - The location of less active professional office and service uses along side streets;
 - Good sign and building design management;
 - Good sidewalk maintenance with well defined furniture and pedestrian zones;
 - The Downtown Park that attracts families to the area and serves as an open area for frequent downtown events;
 - Adequate parking along the streets and in back lots;
 - Traffic pattern using one-way pairs on each side of the railroad right-of-way; and
 - Small scale of businesses that have resulted in local property and business ownership, which have contributed to the unique mix of local businesses.
- **Surrounding Neighborhoods** – The abutting neighborhoods got more mixed grades, but participants were generally positive about the abundance of residential opportunities in close proximity to the downtown core and the following assets:
 - The great access and mobility created by the gridded street pattern;
 - The proximity of professional offices and other low intensity service uses to the Broad Street corridor; and
 - Opportunities for residences in the CB and OS zoning districts to change uses in response to market fluctuations.

Problems/Opportunities/Challenges

- **Broad Street** – Despite its many strengths, participants in the code forums cited the following challenges that should be considered during the UDO update process:
 - **Use Mix.** The mix of uses is purely market based and vulnerable to economic peaks and valleys. There is an emerging consensus that the Town should limit the concentration of less

- active service and professional office uses in the HDO. Stores with limited hours already create dead zones along the sidewalk at certain times of the week.
- **Limited Right-of-Way.** The tight right-of-way has resulted in relatively narrow sidewalks in some areas that are too narrow to support extensive private uses in the furniture zone and the pedestrians. Wider sidewalks were suggested by several participants, but will be difficult to achieve within available right-of-way without reducing the on-street parking supply.
 - **Bicycle Safety.** Bicyclist safety concerns were cited, particularly for the blocks with head-in parking. The implementation of the Town's bike plan could address some of these concerns.
 - **Bicycle Parking.** Lack of bicycle parking facilities was cited as deficiency.
 - **Active Block Corners.** While most of the corners along Broad Street are currently active, the lack of limitations on their use for parking was a concern.
 - **Increasing Residents.** Additional residential development in close proximity to business corridor would help the vitality of Downtown businesses. However, parking for the additional residents should be configured so that it doesn't compete with existing demands for existing on-street parking spaces.
 - **Business Scale.** While building, block and business scale have generally been appropriate, to create active street fronts, the lack of limitations on the maximum frontage devoted to a single business is a concern. The goal to maintain a corridor dominated by local businesses rather than national chain stores would be reinforced by such a limitation.
 - **Taller Buildings.** The opportunity to increase building heights to three stories was cited by two participants as a possibility. While it's unlikely that the combination of limited parking supplies, existing lot patterns and market demand would justify such an investment along the north side of the Broad Street corridor, there is some potential for taller buildings on the south side of the road that could capitalize on the elevation changes between Broad and Bennett Streets to make such an investment viable.
 - **Deliveries.** As with most downtown areas that lack alleys, deliveries were cited as a challenge, particularly given the relatively narrow right-of-way. Current lane widths minimize the extent of the problem today, but better management of delivery times may become necessary.
 - **Parking Supply.** Parking was generally viewed as adequate, but several participants pointed out that better parking management could resolve most of the existing challenges. One element of parking management is a greater emphasis on having business owners and their employees parking in rear lots or other remote locations. A second suggestion was to improve wayfinding signs to direct visitors to available parking.
 - **On-Street Parking.** Despite the availability of adequate parking in the Downtown, the perception that patrons will not stop unless there is a space in front of the business generates significant resistance to any streetscape changes that significantly reduce on-street parking supplies. This suggests that any modifications to the streets and sidewalks should avoid parking space reductions.

- **Downtown Transition Zone.** Transitions between Downtown commercial businesses and residences raised several concerns.
 - **Historic District Guidelines.** The HDO currently ends at the edges of blocks, which means that lots on one side of Bennett and Ashe Streets meet HDO standards and the facing lots do not. While there were several suggestions that the HDO be expanded. Whether the Town expands the district or not, zoning should reduce the abrupt edges by applying the historic guidelines for buildings, signs and other site development criteria to the blocks facing the HDO along Ashe and Bennett Streets.
 - **Zoning Boundaries.** While it is common practice for zoning changes to occur along rear property lines, there are several locations (particularly along Bennett Street) where zoning changes occur along streets, so commercial and residential property are facing. This increases pressures for conversion of residences to business uses, as recently happened along Bennett Street.
 - **Flex Space in Residential Structures.** While there is support for allowing some residential structures to flex between residential and low-intensity non-residential uses, expanding the commercial area raised the concern that expanding the commercial area around Broad Street to allow offices could create a zone with no activity in the evenings that would make residents less secure when walking from residential areas to Broad Street.
- **Surrounding neighborhoods** – Forum participants expressed varied concerns about the neighborhoods surrounding the Broad Street Corridor, including:
 - **Scale of Institutional Uses.** The unlimited scale of institutional uses, such as churches and schools was a concern for several participants. Specific concerns included parking demands and traffic, particularly from primary or accessory uses conducted during business hours, loss of residential development potential that is encouraged by the plan and changes in neighborhood character resulting from large scale buildings.
 - **Off-Site Parking.** The potential for encroachment of overflow parking, particularly from large scale institutional uses is a concern because of its potential to destabilize and displace residences, which the Comprehensive Plan cites as essential to ongoing Downtown vitality.
 - **Off-site Parking.** Parking and stormwater management in fringe areas will become an increasing concern as the density and intensity of development increases.
 - **Sidewalks.** Better sidewalk maintenance outside the Broad Street corridor was a need cited by several forum participants.
- **Gateways to the Broad Street Corridor** – There was broad consensus that the area south of the HDO along Broad Street and Old U.S. 1 needed additional attention. Additional concerns were expressed regarding the entry corridors along West Pennsylvania Avenue and North Broad Street/Midland Road. Suggestions included:
 - **West Pennsylvania Avenue.** Streetscape and building design standards along Pennsylvania should result in a more attractive gateway to Downtown.
 - **HDO Expansion.** Expanding the area applicable to historic district design standards to Morganton Road was suggested by several participants. This plan presents an alternative or supplement to the extension of the HDO – administratively applying some of the HDO guidelines in a Downtown Transition overlay zone.

- **Old U.S. 1/South Broad Street.** Several participants suggested that zoning standards should be used in the Old U.S. 1 corridor to create a more attractive gateway into the HDO. A combination of streetscaping and sign standards would have the greatest impact over the short term.
- **Midland Road.** There is general agreement that the building materials, designs and signage in this northern gateway to the Broad Street corridor should be more consistent with the historic character of the HDO

Regulatory Strategies

Southern Pines' Downtown works very well and does not need many regulatory changes. The recommended regulatory changes listed in this section are intended to reinforce the Town's past successes. Generally, the recommended regulatory strategies adjust the CB district requirements so that it better achieves its intended purpose of creating a walkable "Main Street" environment, and create a new overlay district surrounding the Main Street areas along Pennsylvania Avenue and Broad Street to provide for compatible land use transitions. More specifically, the proposed changes address land uses, building scale, building location, various parking issues and building height. These regulatory strategies are described from the inside out, starting with the HDO before discussing changes to the CB district and the surrounding areas.

Broad Street Historic Overlay District

The Historic Overlay District is bounded by Ash, Massachusetts, Bennett and Vermont Streets. This area is subject to the CB zoning standards as well as review for compliance with the HDO Guidelines, which will soon be updated. Table 4 identifies the standards currently addressed by the Town's HDO Guidelines, as well as the standards that should be addressed in the UDO and the soon to be updated guidelines.

- The first column identifies assorted design factors.
- The second column identifies subject matter factors addressed in the existing HDO Guidelines (many of which should be updated in the new guidelines).
- The third column identifies additional guidelines that should be addressed in the HDO Guideline update. This is not intended to be an exclusive list; there likely will be additional factors that should be included.
- The fourth column identifies which of the 'existing' and 'additional' factors which should be addressed within the framework of the planned UDO as part of the revised design standards for the HDO. Many of the listed design factors also will have potential applicability in the Downtown Transition Zone, CB district standard and other districts where commercial and mixed use developments are allowed.
- The fifth column includes comments on how the provisions should be addressed in the UDO.

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Table 4: Updates to Historic Design Guidelines

Design Factor	Addressed in Current HDO Guidelines	Additional Factors to be Addressed in HDO Guidelines Update	Should be Addressed in UDO	Recommended UDO Provisions
Mechanical systems	✓		✓	Require screening of roof-top and ground mounted systems
New construction	✓			
Off-street parking	✓		✓	Require parking for residential units. See additional parking provisions for CB district below.
Roofs, parapets	✓		✓	Parapets required for flat roofs changes in pitch required for larger buildings
Security systems	✓			
Siding	✓		✓	Standards should be compatible with the character of the Historic District
Signs	✓		✓	Standards should be compatible with the character of the Historic District
Awnings	✓			
Color	✓		✓	A palette should be established that is compatible with the character of the Historic District
Demolition	✓			
Doors, windows	✓		✓	Standards should be compatible with the character of the Historic District
Fences	✓		✓	Standards should be compatible with the character of the Historic District
Landscaping and screening	✓		✓	Screening required for mechanical equipment parking, loading and dumpsters
Lighting	✓		✓	Lighting standards to address minimum brightness, avoidance of spillover and dark skies
Sidewalls, corners		✓		
Storefronts		✓		
Stormwater		✓	✓	Urban level stormwater management systems required in the Historic District, CB and mixed use districts

Downtown Neighborhood Development Plan

Design Factor	Addressed in Current HDO Guidelines	Additional Factors to be Addressed in HDO Guidelines Update	Should be Addressed in UDO	Recommended UDO Provisions
Streets		✓	✓	Urban street standards including sidewalks, curbs and gutters required in historic, CB and mixed use districts
Types of buildings		✓		
Upper Floors		✓		
Uses		✓	✓	Exclude or limit percentage of block face that may be used for professional offices, banking, and other uses that are not pedestrian-oriented
Architectural details		✓		
Building Materials		✓	✓	Standards should be compatible with the character of the Historic District
Entries, porches		✓	✓	Standards should be compatible with the character of the Historic District
Facades, width		✓		
Height		✓	✓	Continue measuring height in the CB district based on the frontage along Broad Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. Evaluate allowing for greater heights on the backs of lots.
Lots, location of buildings		✓		

Central Business District

Section 136 (b) of the Town's UDO says that the CB district is:

"... designed to accommodate a wide variety of commercial activities (particularly those that are pedestrian oriented) in an intensive development pattern in the town's central business district. The regulations of this district are intended to (1) preserve the general character and integrity of the current development in the central business district; (2) encourage land uses which provide for a multi-purpose central business district including retail, offices, services, entertainment and living space; (3) encourage land uses which do not require large amounts of outdoor use areas; an (4) encourage common or shared off-street parking."

Much of the CB district is a very walkable "Main Street" character with a high degree of connectivity, easy access to parking and buildings abutting the sidewalks. This pattern could readily be extended to the southwest along Broad Street (to Illinois Street) and northwest along Pennsylvania Avenue to Page Street. In this central portion of the CB district, the Town should consider establishing the following requirements:

- **Maximum setbacks** or "build-to" lines for front and side yards, so that buildings will line the sidewalk. The default standard for this zone should be no setback on the front, and maximum of five feet on the sides. Additional building setbacks could be allowed for a dining space, courtyards and similar public spaces. These provide variety along the street, but need to be limited to maintain an active street wall.
- **Maximum lot widths** of fifty feet should be established to prevent larger footprint buildings from overwhelming the current scale. A special review process could be used to ensure that buildings constructed on multiple lots or exceed this width are designed to maintain an active street front that is in scale with current development patterns.
- **Use limitations** should be established to keep an active street front. Specifically, the CB district should limit the locations and spacing of professional offices, banks and similar passive or automobile-oriented uses that do not generate sufficient pedestrian traffic. Schools and religious uses should not be allowed in this district due to their limited hours of operation.
- **Minimum area standards for residential units** should be eliminated.
- **Parking requirements** should be modified to encourage shared parking, as well as parking for scooters and bicycles. Other than on-street parking, spaces should be required to be located in the center of blocks and prohibited between buildings and streets facing West Pennsylvania Avenue or Broad Street. Residential units should be required to provide at least one space per unit throughout the CB district.
- **HDO guidelines** for the following factors should be followed: signs, lighting, mechanical units, screening of parking, doors and windows, landscaping and fences and roofing.
- **Building height standards** should be clarified to address development that extends the full depth of lots. While the current standards are clear and function well on most sites, the difference in grade between Broad and Bennett Streets from Massachusetts to Indiana Streets is significant enough to

allow for significant building heights along Bennett if heights are based on the Broad Street frontage.

Downtown Transition Overlay Zone

Just as a significant portion of the CB district falls outside of the HDO, there are portions of the CB district that are not as well suited to the main street character discussed in the previous section. Similarly, there are areas in the RM-1 and RM-2 districts surrounding the CB district that face the commercial district and would benefit from modified standards to provide a more graceful transition between business and residential districts. For this reason, this plan recommends the creation of a Downtown Transition Overlay (DTO) district, which is mapped in **Exhibit 3**. This overlay district would modify the underlying zoning district standards to achieve the following objectives:

- Create a transition zone around the historic overlay district so that properties facing the HDO reinforce the HDO standards (see Exhibit 2).
- Create ensure compatibility between development in the CB zone and abutting or facing residentially zoned properties.
- Reinforce the pedestrian orientation of the Downtown by ensuring that parking, lighting, streetscape, loading and land uses are consistent with safe bicycling and walking.

The key features of this overlay district should include:

Development pattern: While the CB district is comprised primarily of buildings that are attached or located in close proximity to one another, buildings in the overlay zone should be detached

Land use flexibility: In portions of the overlay with residential base zoning, uses permitted within the OS district should be allowed by right subject to conditions of the OS district and the lighting and streetscape standards of the overlay. In the portions of the overlay with CB base zoning, the full range of uses currently allowed in the CB district should be allowed, without limitations on banks and professional offices.

Modified setbacks: Throughout the DTO, setbacks should be uniform, with minimums of 10 feet for the fronts, 5 feet for the sides and 10 feet for the rear of lots.

Lot dimensions: Properties in the overlay zone should not be subject to the maximum lot width provisions of the CB district. While some density limits are appropriate in this district, the minimum lot area should be reduced to 7,500 square feet and the minimum area per dwelling unit should be reduced from 3,600 to 1,800 square feet. This will allow the additional density in the downtown promoted by the comprehensive plan.

HDO guidelines: For portions of the DTO that face the HDO, the guidelines signs, lighting, mechanical units, screening of parking, doors and windows, landscaping and fences and roofing should be followed.

Lighting: Non-residential and multi-family uses in the DTO should be required to keep sites and sidewalks adequately lit during evening business hours to provide a greater sense of security for pedestrians.

Surrounding Neighborhoods

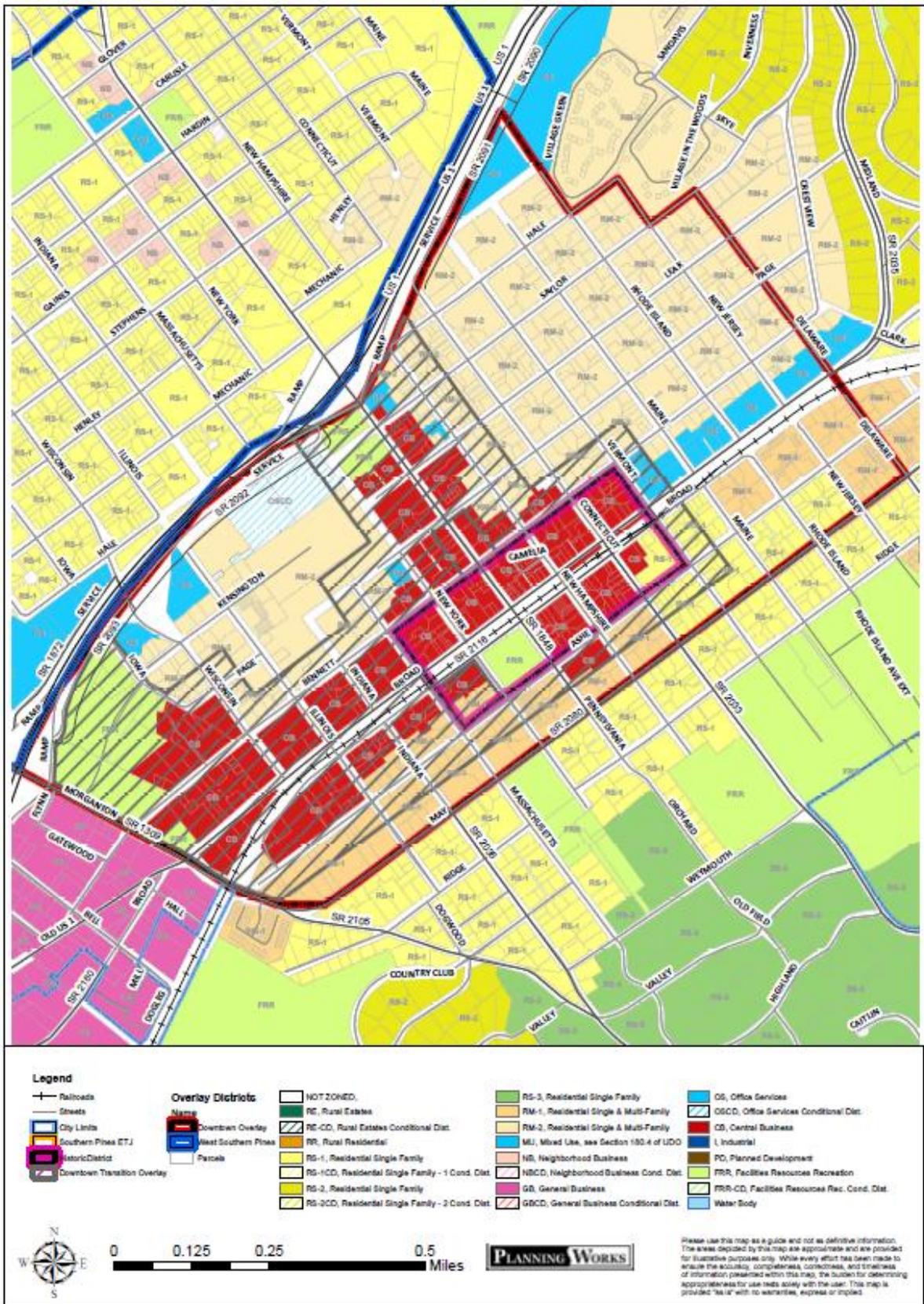
Streetscape and Stormwater. Most of this area currently does not have curbs and gutters. The UDO should include street cross-sections that include sidewalks on at least one side of streets, but should only require curb and gutter within the DTO.

Maximum Intensity of Religious Uses. Religious uses provide a variety of benefits to the community as a whole and the neighborhoods in which they are located. As with other uses, however, they do have the ability to outgrow the sites on which they are located. Within residential neighborhoods, religious uses can destabilize neighborhoods due to traffic generation, parking demands and ongoing activities associated with the religious use or accessory activities (schools, classes, social services, fellowship meetings, etc.). Near the downtown, religious uses can have the added negative impact of displacing existing potential residents on whom local businesses rely. This is in direct conflict with the comprehensive plan's directive to increase residential densities in the downtown neighborhoods. The UDO should be modified to address the scale of religious uses throughout the Town.

Compatibility depends on the neighborhood and access to the site. Small institutions (up to 250 seats) may be compatible in outlying areas of the Central Business and Neighborhood Business districts, but larger religious institutions and accessory uses, such as schools should be directed to General Business Districts or Rural Residential Districts where existing infrastructure and land use patterns are better suited to the intensity and range of accessory uses associated with large institutions. The range of allowable accessory uses should depend on the size and location of the site and its ability to accommodate traffic and needed parking.

Note that the issue of scale of religious institutions applies throughout the Town and the standards in the UDO should not be unique to Downtown area districts.

Exhibit 3: Recommended Downtown Overlay District



Non-Regulatory Strategies

Broad Street Streetscape Improvements

Broad Street currently functions very well as a Main Street, making remarkably efficient use of the limited right-of-way for the sidewalks, parking and through traffic. The parking layout varies, with blocks on the north side of the corridor having head in parking on storefront side and parallel parking abutting the landscaped railway as shown in the drawings below. This arrangement is reversed on the south side of Broad Street, which provides a safer environment for pedestrians and bicyclists. While the Town has discussed a variety of changes to the corridor to improve bicycle safety, the limited right-of-way, limited on-street parking supply and reservations about reverse-angle parking suggest that very little can be changed in the corridor other than mirroring the parking arrangement on the south side of the railway on the north side and establishing bike parking facilities. These could be located on pedestrian bulb-outs at street intersections or in mid-block locations (see drawings below).



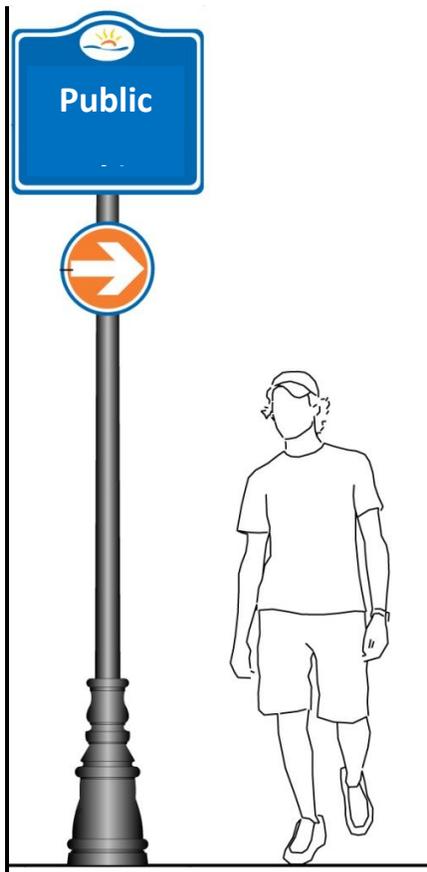
Bulb-outs at intersections improve pedestrian safety and provide opportunities for planters and other amenities such as street furniture and bicycle parking.



Mid-block bulb-outs provide good locations for amenities such as street furniture and bicycle parking.

Wayfinding Signage

Parking



There is a relatively abundant supply of public parking within the Downtown area. Much of it is on-street, but there are three public parking lots and several private lots for customer parking. While parking supplies appear to be adequate except during some special events, limited on-street parking in front of shops can create the perception that there is a parking shortage. While there are diverging opinions about the supplies and design of parking, there is general agreement that better parking management would address most of the problems. Currently, management efforts are limited to voluntary participation in a program to direct employees to use off-street parking. Those efforts should continue.

Improved wayfinding signage is a relatively inexpensive means to enable visitors to easily locate additional spaces.



Business Directories

Within the business core of the Downtown, business directory signs could provide a valuable reference for visitors seeking particular businesses or types of businesses.

Bike Routes and Parking

Broad Street is relatively hazardous for bicyclists, particularly in areas where cars back into the traffic lanes. To improve safety for bicyclists, the Town should focus on improving safe routes along Bennett, Ashe and the streets intersecting Broad Street. The establishment of bicycle parking on bulb-outs at the intersections of side streets and Broad Street would improve both the safety and convenience for neighborhood residents and others traveling to Downtown on bicycles. More convenient bike parking also has the potential to reduce demand for limited on-street parking spaces for cars.



Next Steps

UDO Text Amendments

1. Establish more stringent use limitations for banks, ground floor offices, and other passive uses that do not generate traffic for the specialty retail, restaurant and service industries in the CB district.
2. Apply more stringent building and site design standards in core areas that face the HDO. These standards should be administered through the normal site plan review process and not require additional hearings. In core areas of the CB district (including the HDO), the Town should establish maximum setbacks to keep uses close to the street.
3. Create a Downtown Transition Overlay (DTO) district outside the core area that will:
 - a. Reflect the HDO building and site design standards of the core and HDO;
 - b. Provide greater use flexibility than in core areas of the CB district;
 - c. Allow for office/service uses in residential districts facing the CB district subject to more stringent buffering standards;
 - d. Allow for limited drive-through uses, though not for food service;
 - e. Allow credit for on-street parking abutting uses in the district; and
 - f. Require greater setbacks than within the CB district.
4. Apply building and sign design standards in the OS district along that are more compatible with the suburban character of this area. Additionally, the district should allow for residential use of structures that are designed for residential purposes.

Zoning Map Amendments

1. Create the Downtown Transition Overlay zone as mapped in this Plan.

Capital Planning

The Town Council, Public Works, the business community and neighborhood residents should continue to coordinate on efforts to improve the safety of streets for motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists. Along Broad Street, these improvements should continue recent efforts to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, while minimizing reductions in the number of on-street parking spaces. Along other streets, the Town should continue efforts to improve sidewalks, particularly along streets within the HDO, the DTO and leading to downtown business areas.