

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Downtown Regulating Plan

JULY, 2024



TONGANOXIE
KANSAS

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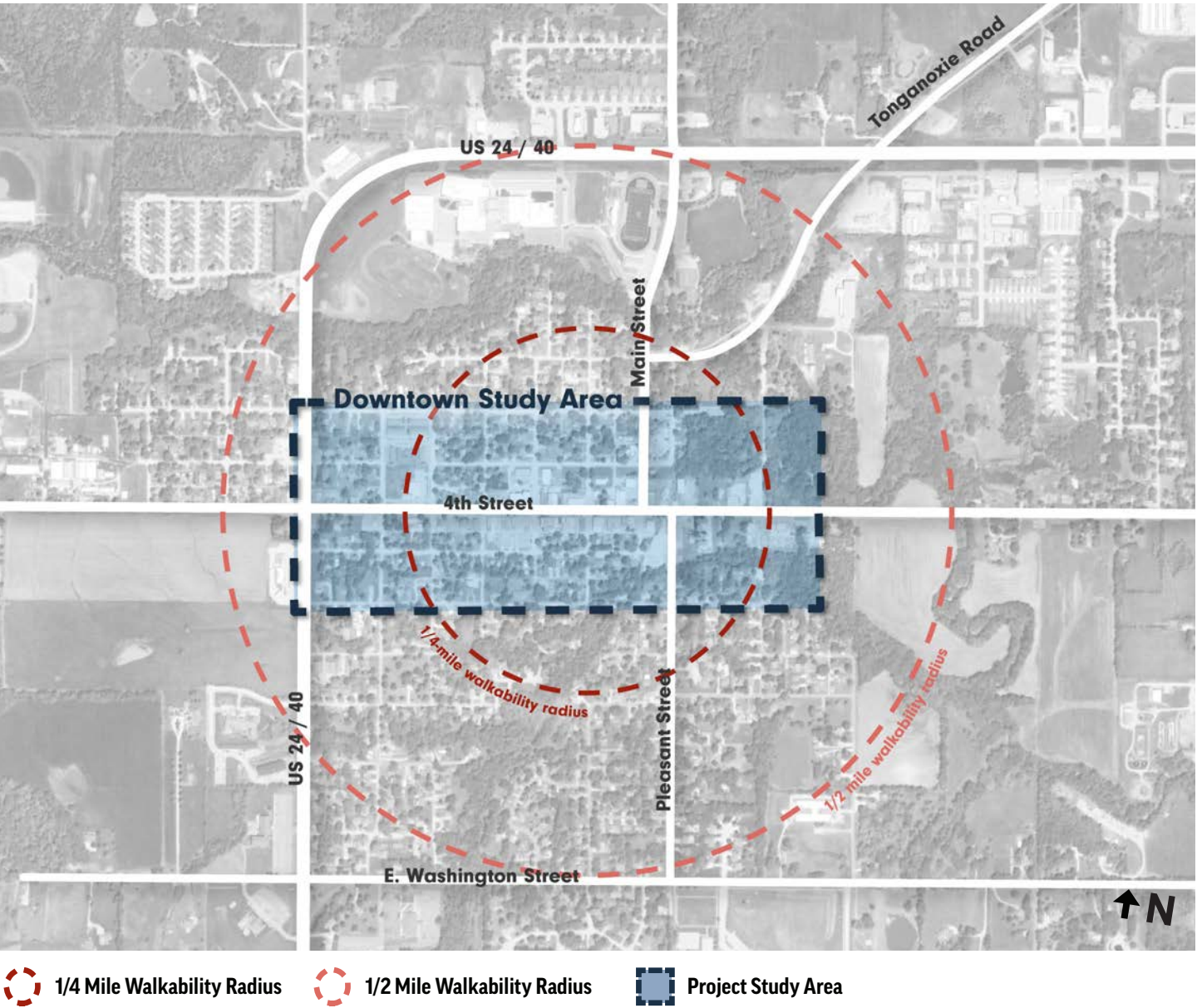
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Introduction

Project Overview

The City of Tonganoxie is undertaking a Regulating Plan for the City's Downtown, including the Historic Business District and neighborhoods adjacent to the Historic Business District. The Downtown Regulating Plan will combine policy, public realm design, a development plan, and regulations for the downtown area. It will consist of a Public Space Framework, Private Development Framework, and Capital Investment Strategy, accompanied by targeted regulation updates. A Public Space Framework will document the needed physical improvements, while the Capital Investment Strategy will address both small- and large-scale prioritization of investments, including practical strategies for achieving immediate and long-term needs. This strategy will align with the vision and goals established during this project's community engagement visioning, responding to best practices identified. Implementation strategies will provide an emphasis on budget-conscious strategies, potential sources of capital to support improvements, economic development strategies, and partnerships. The Development Framework will provide a block-specific plan, defining land use, development patterns, and relationships in order to establish a baseline for regulatory updates. A design-based regulatory approach will be implemented as strategic amendments to the existing code, updates to the Historic Business District Design Guidelines, and coordinated with public realm planning and land use policies established through this process. This regulating plan will provide a flexible approach to land use, emphasizing scale and impact rather than focusing on particular uses themselves to the extent they are generally compatible.

Project Context



Walkability

Downtown Tonganoxie is within a walkable proximity of other local draws like Tonganoxie High School, the new Hills Bark Park, VFW park, and Chieftain Park. These nearby destinations create the opportunity to attract visitors to the area with a variety of destinations and amenities, including Downtown. The walkable distances provide the opportunity to allow visitors to park once and visit a variety of destinations and businesses.

Project Study Area



Project Study Area

Historic Business District

The commercial center of Downtown Tonganoxie located at the heart of the historic central business district.

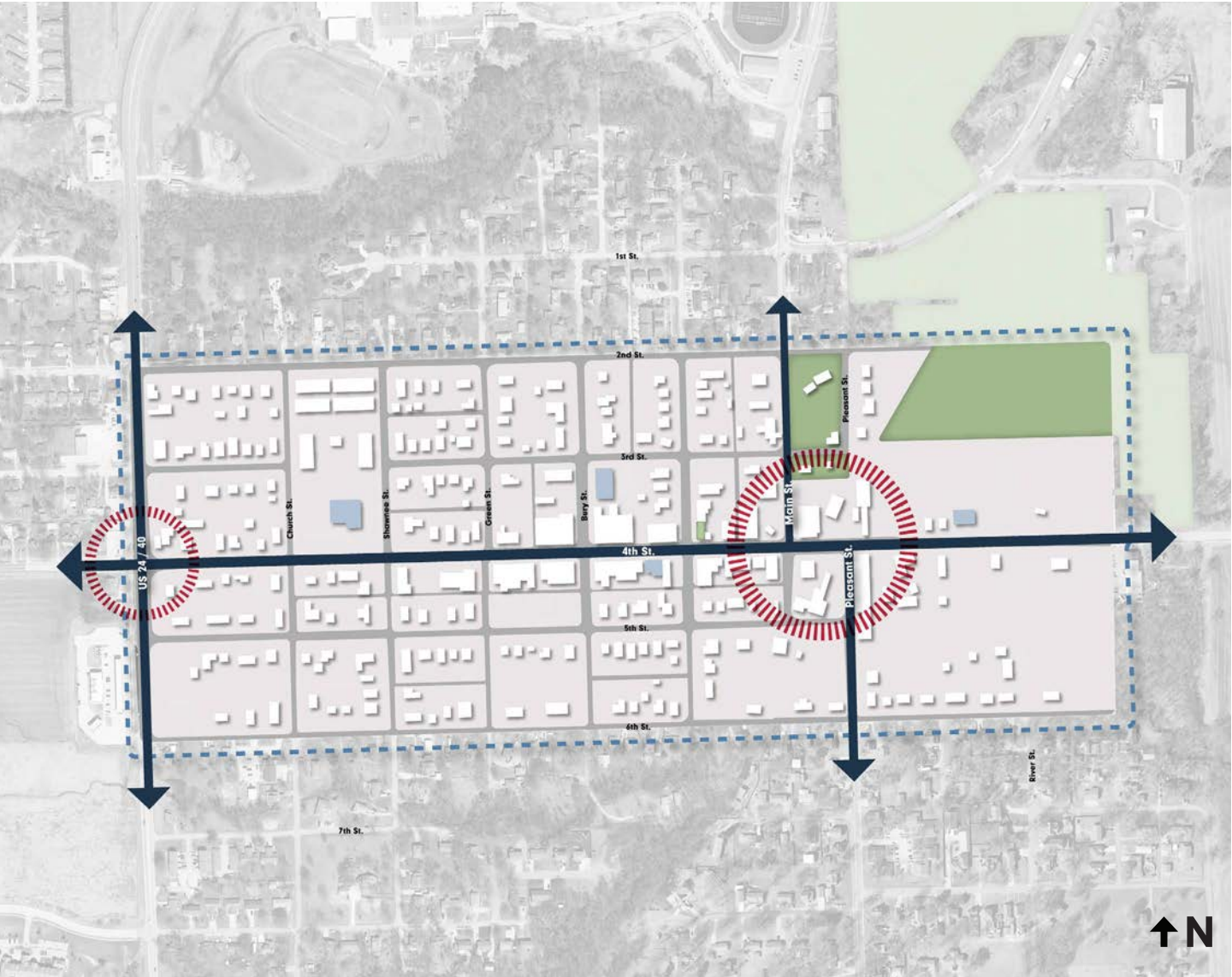
Transition Areas

Key areas along the 4th Street corridor outside of the Historic Business District that contribute to the character of downtown, form “gateways” into the Historic Business District, and contribute to Downtown’s civic, institutional, and commercial destinations.

Downtown Neighborhoods

The residential areas adjacent to the Historic Business District and the transitional areas that extend the Downtown’s historic development patterns and support Downtown businesses.

Reaching Downtown



Gateway into Downtown Primary Route into Downtown Civic Destinations Parks & Open Space

4th Street Corridor

The core of Tonganoxie’s Downtown, the Historic Business District, lies along either side of 4th Street between Green Street and Main Street / Pleasant Street. On either side of the Historic Business District, the 4th Street corridor forms “transition” areas: areas along the corridor that lead into the Historic Business District and contain urban design elements that signal a shift into a distinct place.

US 24 / 40, Main Street, & Pleasant Street

The area’s gridded street network facilitates many different routes into Downtown, particularly for residents of the Downtown Neighborhoods. However, for Tonganoxie locals and visitors approaching Downtown from parts of town, the primary routes into Downtown are via US 24 / 40, Main Street, and Pleasant Street. These three streets intersect 4th Street to the east and west of the Historic Business District, and at either end of the project study area. These intersections form gateways into the downtown area, and contribute to a visitor’s first impression of Downtown Tonganoxie.



1 PHYSICAL ASSESSMENT

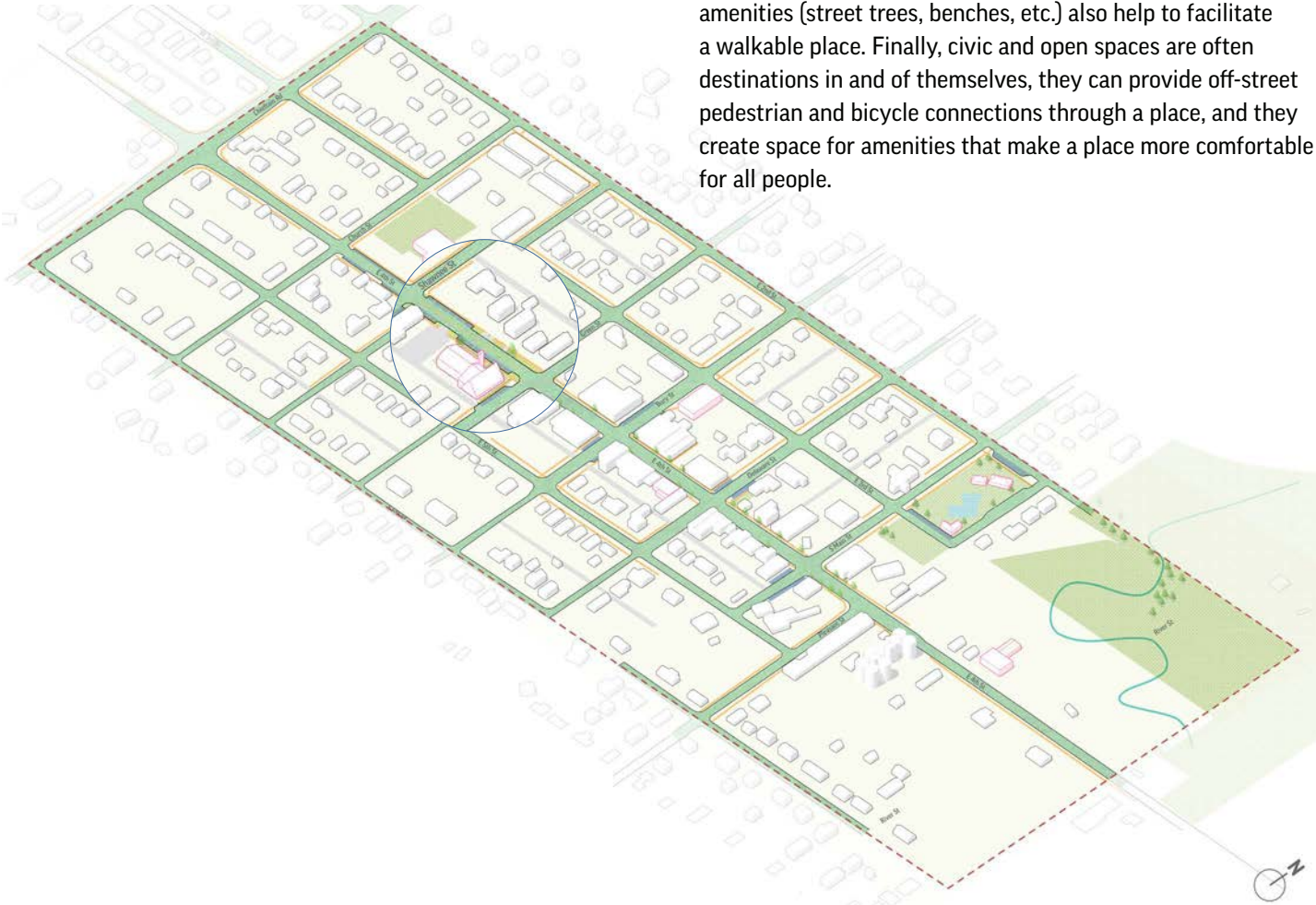
Introduction

The following assessment examines the existing physical conditions of the Downtown study area. Each sub-area (the Historic Business District, the Transition Areas, and the Downtown Neighborhoods) are analyzed individually to identify any patterns and conditions unique to these three distinct contexts. The analysis of each sub-area is broken into two sections: the Public Realm, and Private Development.

Public Realm

The physical assessment of the Public Realm examines several key elements that make up the Public Realm: the block pattern of each sub-area, streetscape elements and street zones, civic and open spaces, and public realm amenities.

Why analyze the public realm? An area's block pattern and street design establishes the overall connectivity of the place and helps to determine how people move around that place. Smaller blocks with frequent intersections help to create a walkable, connected pattern like that found in Downtown Tonganoxie. Streets with ample sidewalks and public realm amenities (street trees, benches, etc.) also help to facilitate a walkable place. Finally, civic and open spaces are often destinations in and of themselves, they can provide off-street pedestrian and bicycle connections through a place, and they create space for amenities that make a place more comfortable for all people.



Private Development

The physical assessment of private development examines lot patterns, land use patterns, common building types with their form and scale, frontage types, and parking and access patterns. These patterns of private development interact with the public realm to create the overall character of a place.



Sub-Area 1: Historic Business District

Public Realm

Location & Block Pattern

The Historic Business District forms the central commercial center of Tonganoxie's Downtown. The district primarily contains commercial uses and civic destinations.

The district's block pattern is formed by small, square-shaped, highly-connected, and walkable blocks. The street network forms a traditional grid pattern, and alleys provide access to the rear of lots and contribute to the pedestrian-oriented nature of this district.

The sidewalk network is highly connected along 4th Street, with no gaps in the Historic Business District and few breaks for driveways. However, the north-south cross streets have more gaps in the sidewalk network. Bury Street, Delaware Street, and Main Street preserve some sidewalk presence north of 4th Street. South of 4th Street, the sidewalks on these streets are less consistent. Green Street does not include sidewalks adjacent to the Historic Business District.



Streetscape Zones

The streets found in the Historic Business District vary widely between 4th Street, the area’s primary corridor, and the north-south crossing streets.

Along 4th Street, the vehicle zone includes two wide travel lanes, and two on-street parallel parking lanes. The pedestrian zone provides relatively narrow sidewalks. Within the Historic Business District, 4th Street includes two amenity zones along either side of the pedestrian zone. These two zones include a variety of pedestrian-oriented streetscape amenities: lighting, wayfinding, benches, street trees, trash receptacles, and planters.

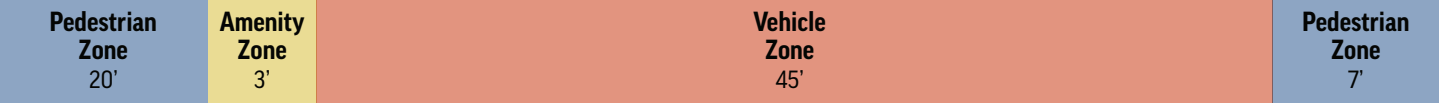
The north-south cross streets create a very different environment than 4th Street. While the vehicle zones are similar, with two travel lanes and two on-street parking lanes, the pedestrian zone is less consistent. The amenity zone, where present, typically does not provide anything more than lighting.

4th Street Existing Conditions



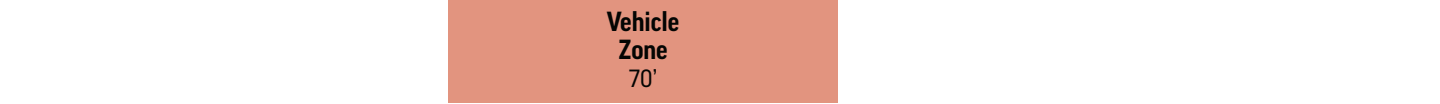
Pedestrian Zone Relatively narrow sidewalk space on both sides of street.	Vehicle Zone Two travel lanes, two on-street parking lanes.	Amenity Zones Shade trees, street lights, Downtown wayfinding & branded signage, benches, trash receptacles, and planters.
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Bury Street Existing Conditions



Pedestrian Zone Narrow sidewalk space. Sidewalk does not continue past this block.	Vehicle Zone Two travel lanes, angled on-street parking.	Amenity Zone Street lights and downtown banner.
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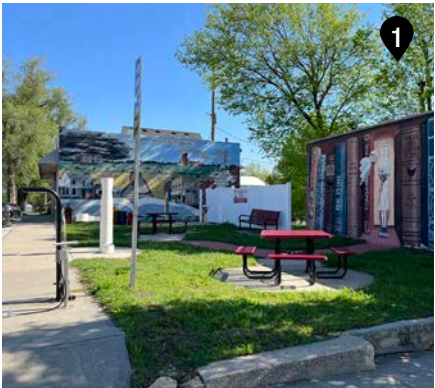
Alley Existing Conditions



Pedestrian Zone N/A.	Vehicle Zone Narrow alley for vehicle access.	Amenity Zone N/A.
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Civic Spaces & Open Spaces

The Historic Business District contains two civic destinations and a small park. City Hall, and the Council Chambers and Municipal Court, are located a block apart in the Historic Business District. Pocket Park is a small but highly-activated and amenity-rich park on a corner of a block within the Historic District.



Pocket Park



City Hall



Council Chambers & Municipal Court



Civic destinations, parks, and open spaces within the Historic Business District.

Public Realm Amenities

Public realm amenities in the Historic Business District are plentiful, diverse, and highlight downtown Tonganoxie’s creative spirit. The amenity zones on either side of the sidewalk include benches, trash receptacles, pedestrian-scale lighting, planters, some street trees, and wayfinding signage. Several buildings

feature murals, celebrating Tonganoxie’s culture and history with public art. There is a distinct “DIY” spirit on display throughout the downtown as business and property owners show care for the streetscape with creative solutions: lush planters, artistic benches, and empty tree wells filled with mini-

gardens. Public and open spaces also provide amenities: covered outdoor seating at the Public Library; seating, public art, drinking fountains, a bike repair station, and other amenities at public parks.



Signage for downtown destinations.



Street furniture.



Street furniture.



Seating, trash receptacles, and public art.



Bike repair station, public art.



Drinking fountains for people & pets.



Pedestrian-scale lighting.



Street trees.



Amenity zone planter.



Street furniture, street trees, lighting.



Crosswalk art.



Public art (mural).



DIY planter in tree well.

Private Development

Lot Patterns

The Historic Business District’s lot patterns show the area’s historic development patterns along the core 4th Street corridor, as well as more recent deviations from those historic patterns. Buildings located along 4th Street are oriented towards the street and are typically built to the street with no setback. Older buildings often have no side setback from adjacent buildings, though some more recently constructed buildings do have a small side setback. The Historic Business District preserves more of the area’s older, very narrow lots on the south side of 4th Street, while lots are frequently wider on the north side of 4th Street.

Buildings not located along 4th Street are typically oriented towards their cross-street, and may feature a small setback. These lots vary widely in width and scale, not forming a typical pattern.



Frontage Patterns

Frontage patterns in the Historic Business District preserve the kind of patterns that help to foster a lively pedestrian-oriented streetscape. The buildings feature human-scaled ground floors, frequent and highly transparent entries, and plentiful windows that serve to connect the streetscape to the commercial activities within. Some buildings feature additional elements like awnings, small signs, or inset entries that serve to vary and visually break down larger building expanses, preserving a sense of human-scaled development.



Build-to-street, high transparency, with transom door.



Build-to-street, high transparency.



Build-to-street frontage.



Fine-grained buildings built to the street.



Build-to-street, with awning.



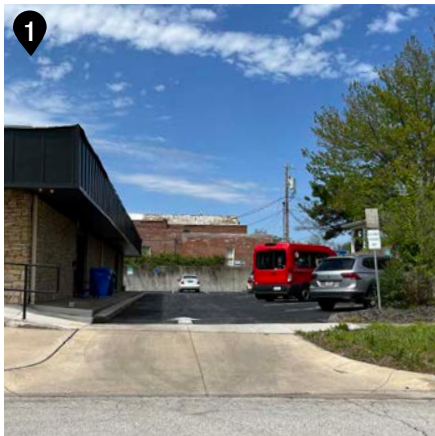
Large building footprint with frequent entrances, moderate transparency.

Access Patterns

Parking and access in the Historic Business District includes on-street parking, off-street parking lots and access drives, and some alley access. On-street parallel parking is found on both sides of 4th Street. Off-street parking is primarily located at the of the blocks (behind the buildings that face onto 4th Street), and access to off-street parking lots is either via alleys, or from side street off of 4th Street, which contributes to preserving a pedestrian-oriented streetscape.



Parking & access patterns in the Historic Business District.



Off-street parking.



Alley access to rear off-street parking.



On-street parking on 4th Street.

Land Use & Typical Building Typologies

Land use in the Historic Business District is primarily non-residential: civic, commercial, office, and professional services. There is one vacant lot, and some buildings and lots that may be under-utilized. The small pocket of residential uses follows the typical patterns of the adjacent Downtown Neighborhoods.

Typical Building Types

Buildings within the Historic Business District are small to moderately scaled. The fine-grained buildings lining 4th St. establishe an inviting and pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. No buildings reach over two stories in height, and many are only one story. Buildings with a smaller footprint may reach two stories, while larger-footprint buildings only reach one story.



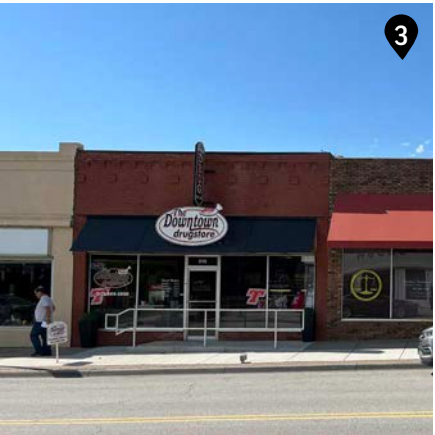
Existing land use.



Civic
Land Use: Civic / Institutional
Scale: Medium, 1-story



Retail
Land Use: Commercial
Scale: Small, 2-stories



Retail
Land Use: Commercial
Scale: Small, 1-story



Office
Land Use: Commercial
Scale: Small, 2-stories



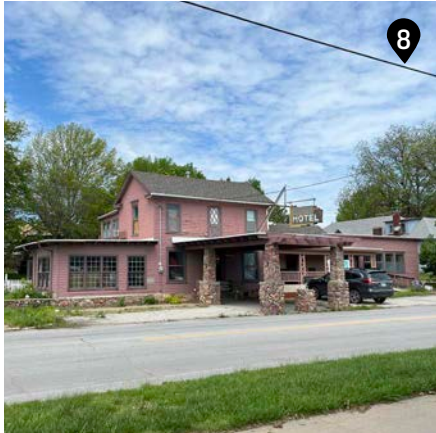
Vacant Office
Land Use: Commercial
Scale: Small, 1-story



Office
Land Use: Commercial
Scale: Small, 2-stories



Retail
Land Use: Commercial
Scale: Small, 2-stories



Hotel
Land Use: Commercial
Scale: Small, 1.5-stories



Single-Family House
Land Use: Residential
Scale: Small, 1-story

Building Types: Form & Scale



Existing building massing within the Historic Business District.

Sub-Area 2: Transition

Public Realm

Location & Block Pattern

The Transition areas run along 4th Street to the east and west of the Historic Business District and lead Tonganoxie residents and visitors into the heart of Downtown. Forming “gateways” into Downtown, these areas create the first impression of Downtown and contain a mix of commercial uses, civic destinations, and pockets of residential uses.

The Transition sub-area’s block pattern varies, though most blocks are small in size and many are well-connected by a traditional grid-pattern street network. Alley access is preserved in around half of the blocks, providing vehicle and service access to the rear of residential, civic, and commercial uses. Blocks closer to the Historic Business District follow a similar small, square pattern as that district, while the further blocks may be larger and may break away from the gridded street network.

The sidewalk network is somewhat well-connected along 4th Street, but there are some gaps in both the east and west transition areas. Along the north-south cross streets, the sidewalk network typically continues on at least on side of the streets. One block provides additional pedestrian access via a mid-block cut-through.



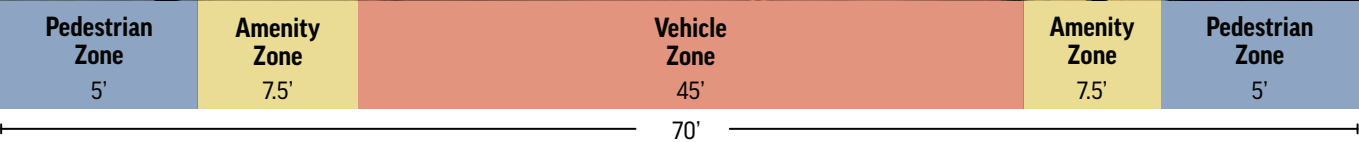
Streetscape Zones

Streets in the Transition areas provide the transitions between the Historic Business District and the adjacent Downtown Neighborhoods, as well as between Downtown and other areas of town (via the US 24/40, Main Street, and Pleasant Street connections). The vehicle zones of these streets typically include two travel lanes, and closer to the Historic Business District may also include on-street parking on either side of the street.

The amenity zones typically contain fewer amenities than in the Historic Business District, but still provide lighting at varying scales. Amenity zones may also contain wayfinding to nearby Downtown destinations, and a green buffer to separate pedestrian traffic from the adjacent vehicular traffic.

The pedestrian zone provides sidewalk space varying in width, and is typically an unobstructed, clear active transportation space.

4th Street Existing Conditions (East Transition Zone)



Pedestrian Zone
Sidewalk on north side of street ends, sidewalk continues on south side of street.

Vehicle Zone
Two travel lanes, two on-street parking lanes (parking lanes end at silos).

Amenity Zone
Green buffer & street lights.

Pleasant Street

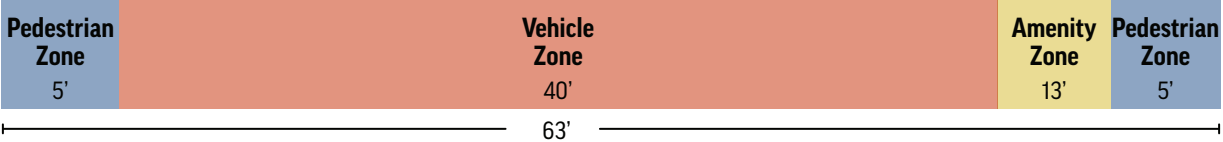


Pedestrian Zone
Sidewalks.

Vehicle Zone
Two travel lanes.

Amenity Zone
Green buffer & street lights.

4th Street Existing Conditions (West Transition Zone)



Pedestrian Zone
Sidewalks on both sides of street. Sidewalks are relatively narrow but are protected by on-street parking & landscape buffer.

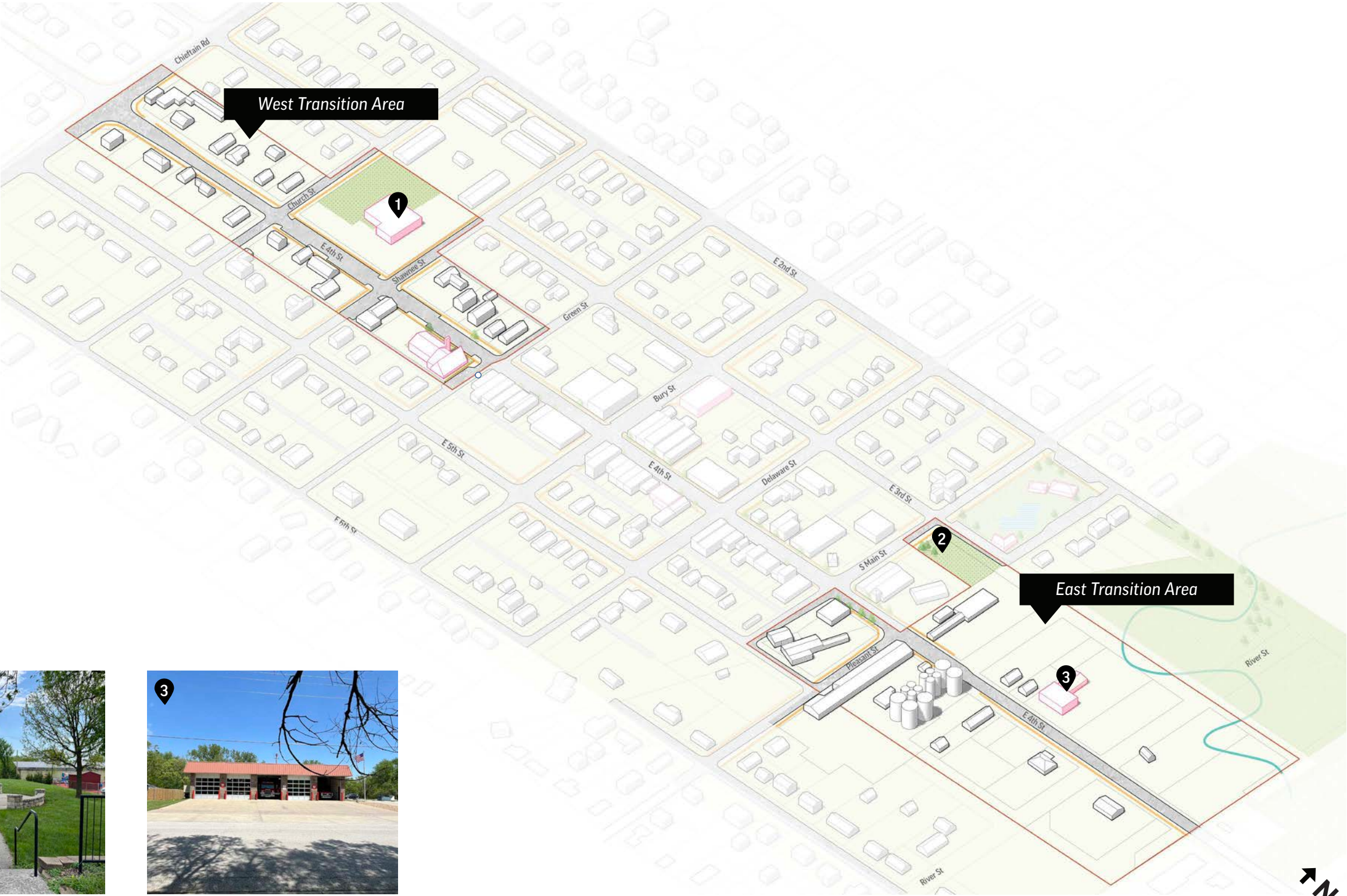
Vehicle Zone
Two travel lanes, two on-street parking lanes.

Amenity Zone
Green buffer, wayfinding signage, & street lights.

Civic Spaces & Open Spaces

The Transition areas contains two key civic destinations: the Tonganoxie Public Library, and the Tonganoxie City Fire Department. Gallagher Park is the sole park destination within this sub-area, although there is a significant amount of open green space on the site of the Public Library.

The scale and form of these civic and open spaces are uniquely suited to their locations within the Transition sub-area. The library is a larger-scale civic destination than those found within the Historic Business District, and the site's ample parking and large amount of open space could provide a place for larger community gatherings within a walkable distance from the center of Downtown. Gallagher Park provides fewer amenities than Pocket Park, and instead it's more formal design cues a transition from the nearby neighborhoods into the Historic Business District. The Tonganoxie Fire Department is a critical piece of civic infrastructure, and its need for more space is more easily met in the Transition area while still being easily accessible from the heart of Downtown.



Tonganoxie Public Library



Gallagher Park



Tonganoxie Fire Department

Civic destinations, parks, and open spaces within the Transition Areas.

Public Realm Amenities

The Transition zones includes some pedestrian amenities, including street lights at vehicular and pedestrian scales, street trees, and branded wayfinding signage. Public and open space amenities include covered outdoor seating at the Public Library, and a drinking fountain and cultural signage at Gallagher Park. Pedestrian elements are not found consistently throughout the Transition sub-area, but are located primarily

in recently-improved areas (like the Tonganoxie Public Library) or immediately adjacent to the Historic Business District. The quantity and variety of public realm amenities found within the Historic Business District (benches, trash receptacles, planters, and public art) are not found within the Transition sub-area. However, the visual consistency of elements like wayfinding signage and lighting between the Historic Business District and

the Transition sub-areas cues the gradual transition into the heart of Downtown and provides clues that one has entered a distinct place.



District banners, lighting.



Pedestrian-scale lighting.



Lighting.



Drinking fountain, cultural signage.



Street trees.



Wayfinding signage, pedestrian-scale lighting.



Covered outdoor seating at Public Library.

Private Development

Lot Patterns

Lot patterns in the Transition Zones vary significantly. These blocks include both residential and non-residential lots, as well as several vacant lots in the east Transition area.

In the west Transition area, non-residential and residential lots generally exhibit small to moderate setbacks, with the exception of the Tonganoxie Public Library, which features a deeper setback than other lots along 4th Street. Buildings are typically oriented to face 4th Street, but there are exceptions and some are oriented towards the nearest north-south cross street. Lot sizes vary widely: ranging from narrow residential lots to non-residential lots that may encompass an entire block's width.

There is more variation in the east Transition area. Here, there is no definite pattern of building orientation, lot size, or setbacks. Some lots are narrow with buildings built to the street, others contain more internally-oriented buildings, and some have buildings oriented to 4th Street with deeper setbacks. Some are small and in line with the patterns of the east Transition area and the Historic Business District, but others are much larger and irregularly shaped. Overall, the east Transition area exhibits signs that lots have been shaped and combined over time to serve more intense uses than in other parts of the Downtown study area.



Frontage Pattern

Frontage patterns in the Transition areas vary by use and by proximity to the Historic Business District. Buildings located closer to the Historic Business District do, in general, maintain frontage patterns consistent with historic patterns (no setbacks, more frequent entries and windows, and parking located to the side or rear of the lot).

Further from the Historic Business District, these patterns break down and non-residential lots typically have more prominent off-street surface parking, larger setbacks, and

buildings that may not be oriented towards the street. More recent developments provide more landscaping to soften the impact of surface parking.

The residential lots in the Transition areas, particularly the detached houses, typically maintain good private to public space connections through elements like front porches, front walks that connect the home to the sidewalk. Setbacks for multifamily and single-family lots remain small to moderate.



Street-front frontage with limited entries and no transparency.



Parking & access dominate this commercial site's relationship to the street.



This commercial site's frontage features more frequent entries and no setback.



Residential frontages still feature small to moderate setbacks and porches or entries that face the street.



Parking is prominent in this civic frontage, but street trees and a landscape buffer help to soften the impact.

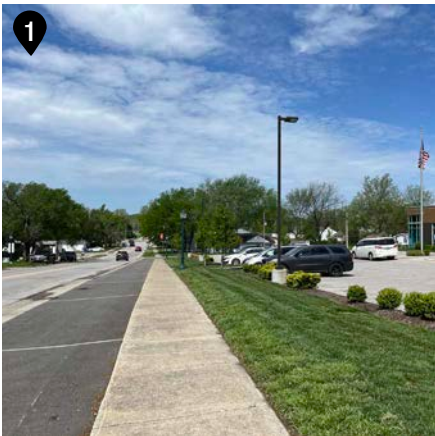
Access Patterns

Parking and access in the Transition sub-area varies by site. Off-street parking is present on both sides of 4th Street closer to the Historic Business District, but ends further from the Historic Business District in both directions. Off-street parking is more prominent on sites in the Transition sub-area, and is more frequently located at the front of sites facing 4th Street. Alleys are infrequently present to provide access to the rear of sites in this area, although a few blocks do retain alley access.

On-Street Parking Alley Access Off-Street Parking & Access



Parking & access patterns in the Transition zones.



On- & off-street parking along 4th Street.



Off-street parking along Main Street.



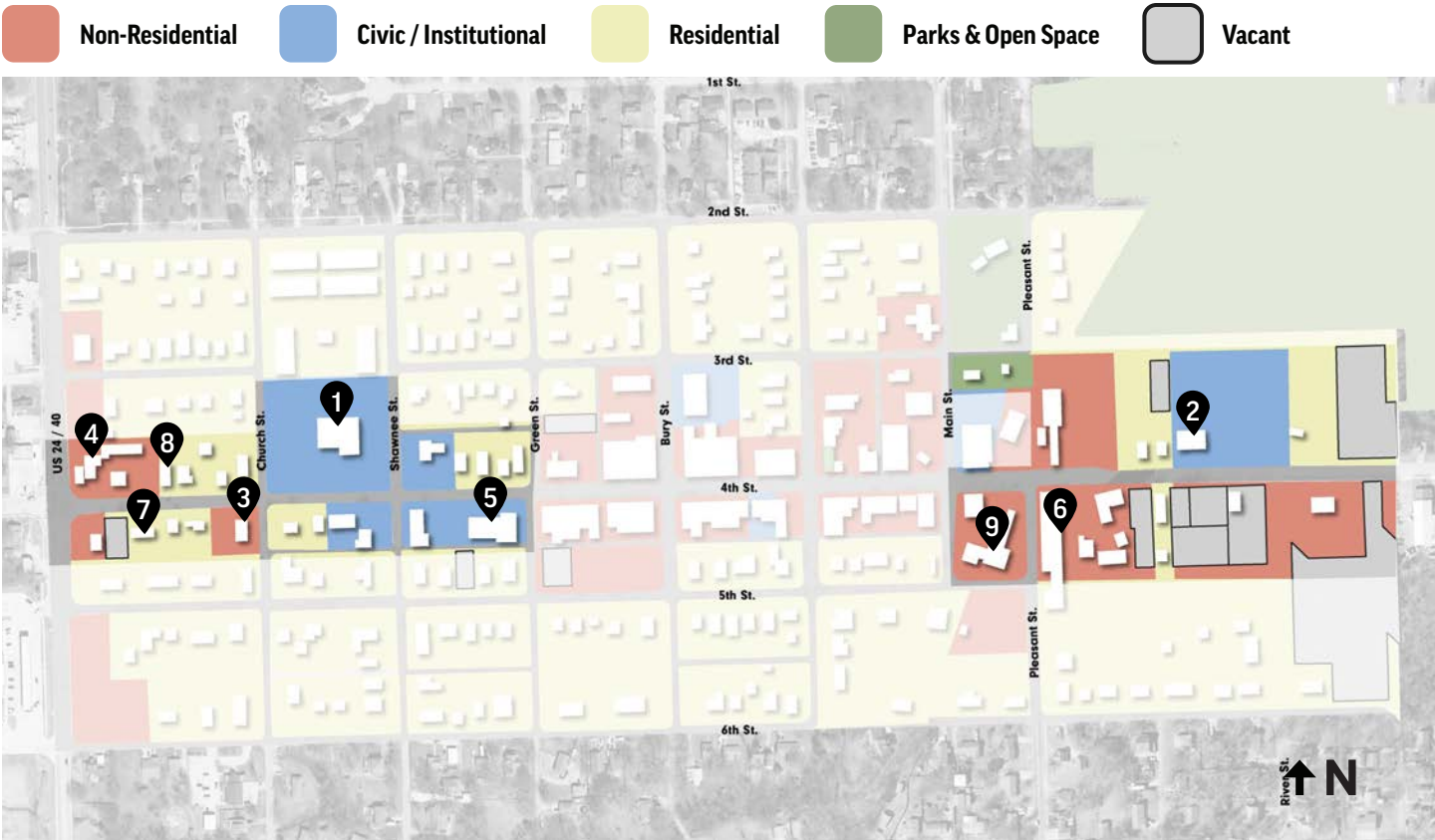
Off-street parking along 4th Street.

Land Use

Land use in the Historic Business District is split between non-residential (commercial, office, and services), residential, and civic and institutional. The west Transition area contains a noticeably high concentration of civic and institutional uses, while the east Transition area is marked by a high amount of vacant lots. These areas contain some residential uses (both single-family and multi-family) generally contained within the middle of blocks. Commercial uses (smaller-scale in the west Transition area and larger in the east Transition area) are found on the corners of blocks and bookending the residential uses.

Typical Building Typologies

The Transition areas contain a variety of building types for the mix of land uses present. However, the scale of these buildings is typically small to medium, and heights do not reach over two stories. Building types with larger footprints typically only reach one story in height, while small-footprint residential buildings may reach two stories. This has the effect of ensuring that the scale of development remains compatible with adjacent neighborhoods.



Existing land use.



Civic
Land Use: Civic / Institutional
Scale: Medium, 1-story



Civic
Land Use: Civic / Institutional
Scale: Small, 1-story



Automotive
Land Use: Commercial
Scale: Small, 1-story



Automotive
Land Use: Commercial
Scale: Small, 1-story



Civic
Land Use: Civic / Institutional
Scale: Medium, 1-story



Retail
Land Use: Commercial
Scale: Medium, 1-story



Multi-family Residential
Land Use: Residential
Scale: Small, 2-stories

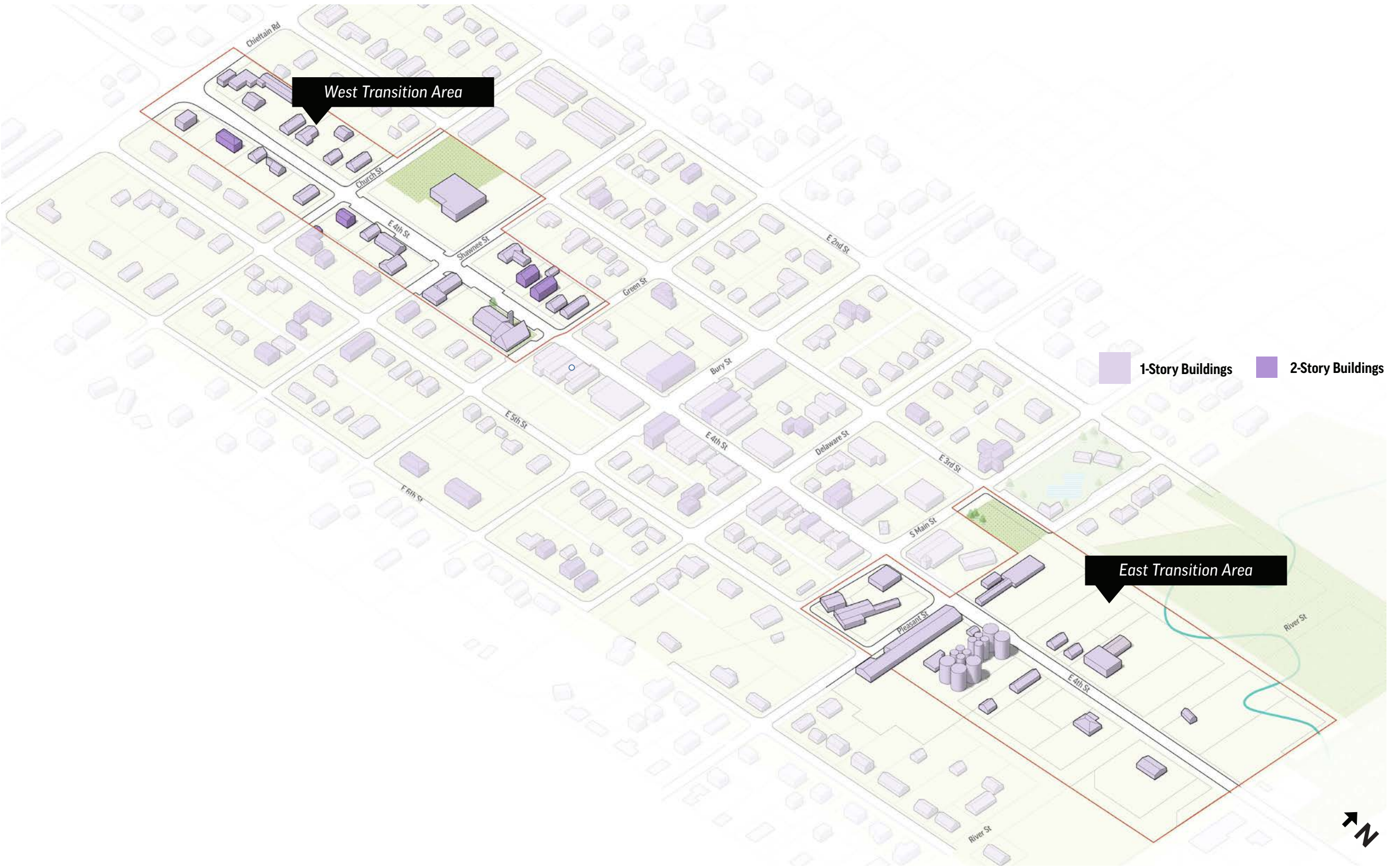


Detached Residential
Land Use: Residential
Scale: Small, 1-story



Retail / Services
Land Use: Commercial
Scale: Small, 1-story

Typical Building Typologies: Form & Scale



Existing building massing within the Transition Zones.

Sub-Area 3: Downtown Neighborhoods

Public Realm

Location & Block Pattern

The Downtown Neighborhoods are comprised of the residential areas surrounding the Historic Business District and the Transition areas. These neighborhoods benefit from a walkable proximity to Tonganoxie's Downtown and share a similar pattern of small blocks and well-connected gridded street network. Around half of the neighborhood blocks are bisected by an alley providing access to the rear of each lot, while the other half does not include an alley and lots are accessed via driveways. The size of blocks is small, and consistent with the somewhat square shape of the Historic Business District blocks. Like the Transition area blocks, the Downtown Neighborhood blocks grow in size as the area moves away from the Historic Business District.

The sidewalk network is reasonably well-connected along the east-west streets, but less consistent along the north-south streets in the Downtown Neighborhoods. Running east to west, 2nd Street and 3rd Street maintain connected sidewalk presences, while 5th Street has few sidewalks, and 6th Street does not have a sidewalk. Several of the north-south cross streets continue the sidewalk network from 2nd Street and 3rd Street, but the sidewalk becomes less frequent on these cross streets as they move south towards 6th Street.



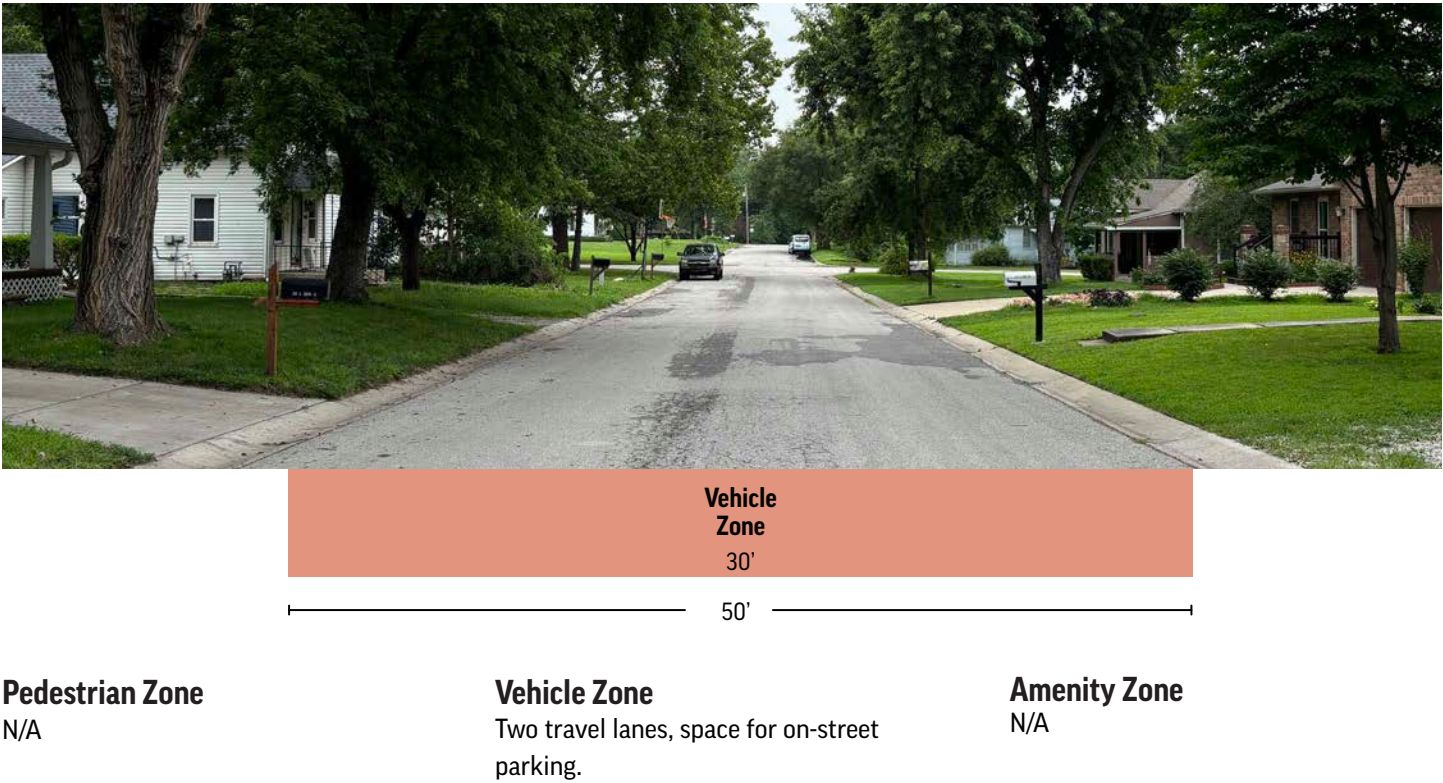
Streetscape Zones

The streetscape zones found within the Downtown Neighborhoods are more limited than in the other sub-areas. Many streets do not include a pedestrian zone or an amenity zone. Where a pedestrian zone is present, the sidewalks are typically narrow. The vehicle zones of the Downtown Neighborhood streets include space for two travel lanes and on-street parking on both sides of the street. Where present, the amenity zone may contain some street trees, lighting, and a green buffer between the street and sidewalk, but this is not typical of most streets in the Downtown Neighborhoods.

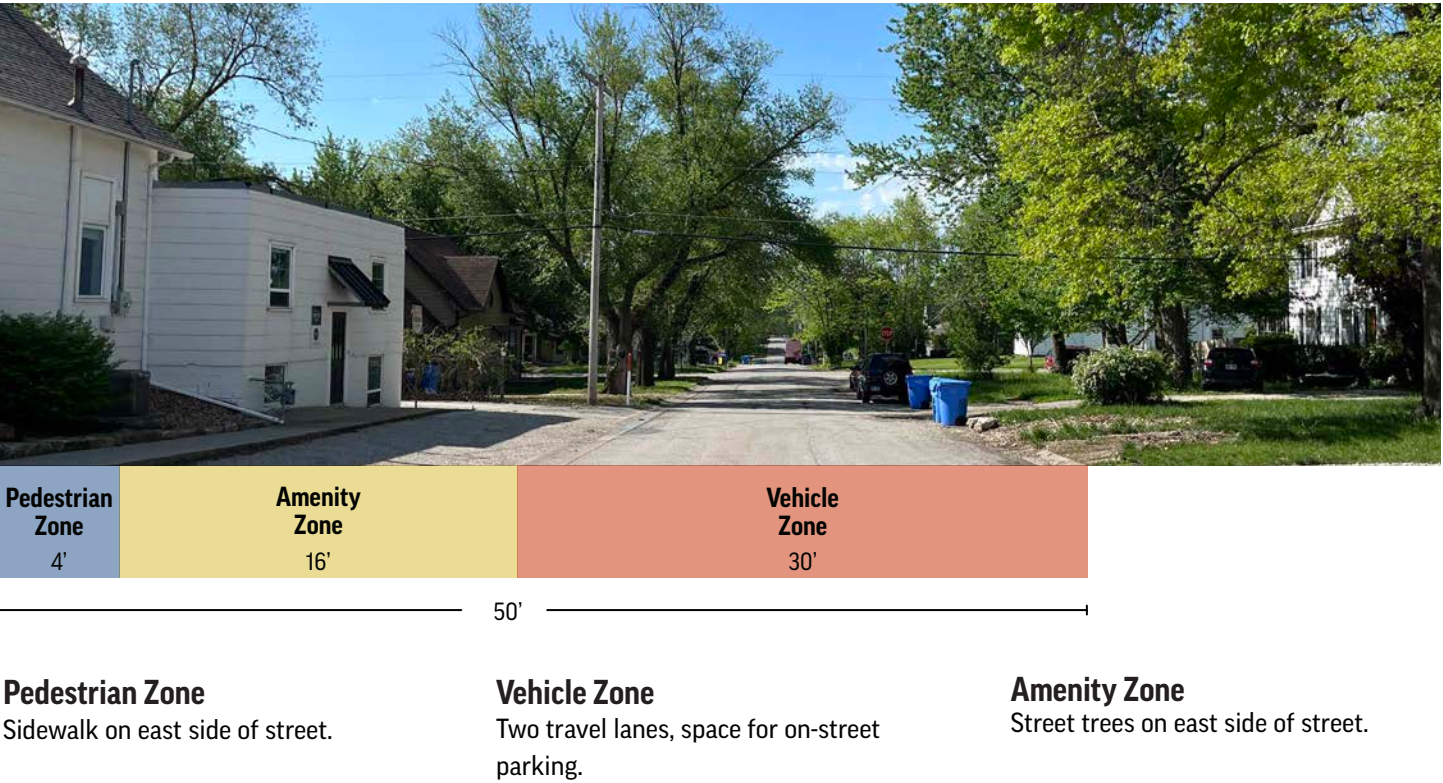
Bury Street Existing Conditions



Green Street Existing Conditions



Shawnee Street Existing Conditions



Civic Spaces & Open Spaces

Civic and park destinations within the Downtown Neighborhoods sub-area are limited to the Tonganoxie Water Park. The Tonganoxie Water Park occupies an entire block, and provides both green space and a pool for recreational use. However, many of the other civic and open space destinations within the Downtown Study Area are located within an easily-accessible and walkable distance from the majority of the Downtown Neighborhoods.



Tonganoxie Water Park

Public Realm Amenities

The Downtown Neighborhoods do not provide many of the streetscape and pedestrian amenities of the other two sub-areas. Street trees and street lighting are rare, and public space amenities are only found at the Tonganoxie Water Park.



Street lighting.



Street tree.



Tonganoxie Water Park.
Image Source: Tonganoxie Mirror



Private Development

Lot Patterns

Lot patterns in the Downtown Neighborhoods vary significantly, often block-by-block. The general pattern of residential lots exhibits small to moderate setbacks from the public right-of-way. Residences are typically oriented to face the street on the longer side of the block, but there are exceptions and some blocks include residences facing the street on the shorter side of the block (often called end-grain lots). Around half of all neighborhood blocks preserve alley access.

In the north neighborhoods, lot sizes are generally smaller and the houses are built closer together. In the south neighborhoods, lot sizes are far more varied.



Frontage Patterns

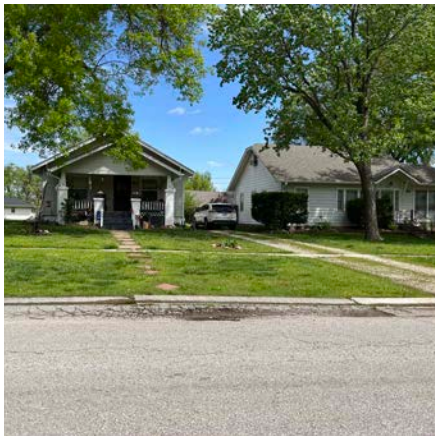
Frontage patterns in the Downtown Neighborhoods typically maintain good private to public space connections. In general, front porches face the street, front walks often connect porches and entries to the sidewalk (where the sidewalk exists) or the street, and setbacks are small to moderate. Some homes may not incorporate a front walk, but setbacks remain small and a stoop or porch signals the home’s entry. Parking and access (driveways) are not prominent features of most frontages.



Most houses have front porches facing the street, and many include a front walk.



Houses have a small to moderate setbacks.



A detached house with full porch connected to the sidewalk via a front walk.



A corner house with wrapped porch connected to the sidewalk via a front walk.



A detached house with a full porch and front walk connected to the sidewalk.

Access Patterns

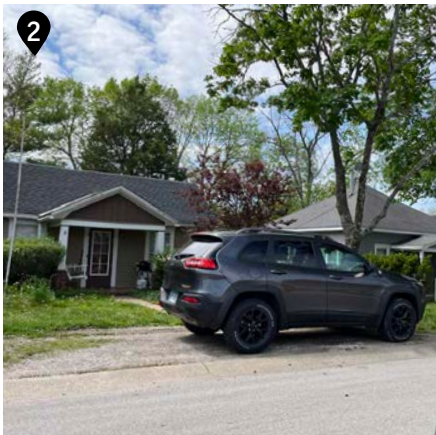
Parking and access in the Downtown Neighborhoods includes on-street parking, off-street parking in front of residences, and parking located at the sides and / or rear of lots. In general, the Downtown Neighborhoods have connected alley-access, which provides access to parking located towards the rear of lots. Alley access is occasionally combined with driveways that extend from the street to the alley along the side of a lot. When present, garages are typically detached and located to the side or rear of lots, but may occasionally be found attached to the residence and located to the front or side of lots.



Parking & access patterns in the Downtown Neighborhoods Sub-Area.



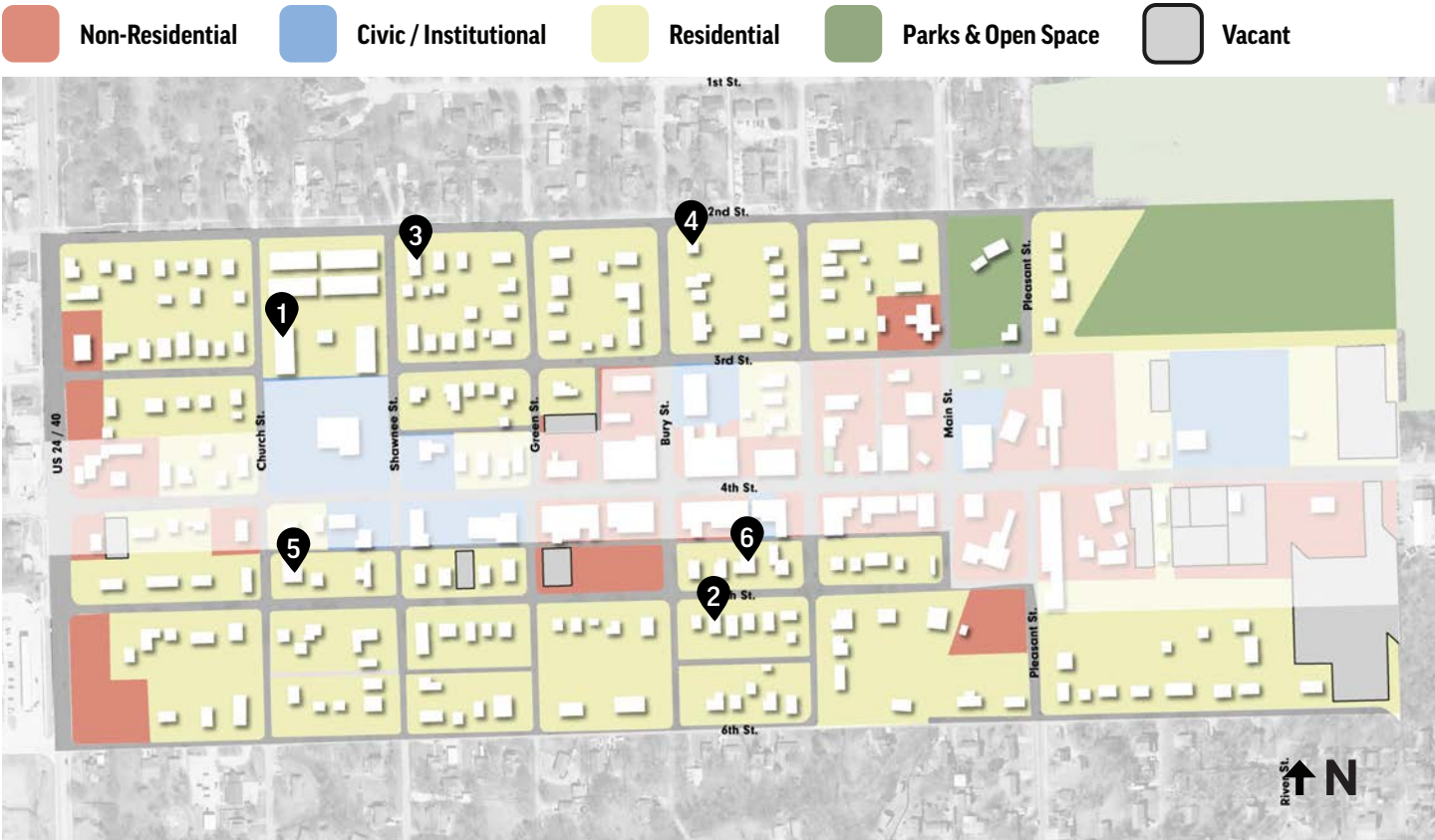
On-street parking along 2nd Street.



Off-street parking along 5th Street.

Land Use

The Downtown Neighborhoods are primarily residential, with the majority of residential uses being detached single-family houses. However, a recent development added townhomes to the area, increasing the available housing options. The commercial uses found in the area are typically overflow storage or parking from adjacent businesses, and small-scale commercial at the corners of blocks along higher-traffic streets (like US-24/40, Main Street, & Pleasant Street).



Existing land use.

Typical Building Typologies

The majority of building types in the Downtown Neighborhoods are detached single-family houses. However, a recent development added townhomes to the area, increasing the available housing options. Buildings are between one and two stories, and most are small to medium in scale. The commercial buildings found in the area are also small in scale, helping to preserve compatibility with the surrounding neighborhoods.



Attached Single-Family (Townhomes)
Land Use: Residential
Scale: Medium, 1.5-stories



Detached Single-Family
Land Use: Residential
Scale: Small, 1-story



Detached Single-Family
Land Use: Residential
Scale: Small, 2-stories



Detached Single-Family
Land Use: Residential
Scale: Small, 1-story



Detached Single-Family
Land Use: Residential
Scale: Medium, 2-stories



Detached Single-Family
Land Use: Residential
Scale: Small, 1-story

Building Types: Form & Scale



Existing building massing within the Downtown Neighborhoods.



2 CODE ASSESSMENT

Code Assessment

The Downtown Regulating Plan's study area includes several zoning districts, each with unique challenges when applied to a historic Downtown context. As a part of this project's Due Diligence phase, each relevant zoning district has been reviewed to assess its current impact on the Downtown study area's existing patterns of development and urban design. Overall, many of the existing standards within these zoning districts do not currently function to protect or enhance the Downtown area's historic context and patterns.

Historic Business District

This district allows development that is compatible with Tonganoxie's historic Downtown development patterns, but it does not require it. For example, there is no building setback requirement and there are lenient lot standards, which allows small- to medium-scale street-front buildings, but it

would also allow large-scale lots and building footprints and uncharacteristic front setbacks. The Central Business District design guidelines address elements of historic architectural patterns, but do not specific streetscape activating frontage elements that can create compatibility regardless of the style, like highly transparent ground floors and frequent entrances.

Limited Business District

The definition of the LBD (Limited Business District) implies that it would contain neighborhood-scale retail uses, but the district's standards are not tailored to encourage or ensure this kind of development. Instead, the standards are based on minimums, so in practice the district allows development to reach larger scales of commercial development. It does not include standards that would promote development that align with Downtown Tonganoxie's historic patterns, and does not

result in neighborhood-scale and neighborhood supporting small retail development appropriate to the surrounding Downtown Neighborhoods.

I-LI & I-MD (Light Industrial District & Moderate Industrial District)

The two industrial districts that intersect with Tonganoxie's Downtown are I-LI (Light Industrial) and I-MD (Moderate Industrial). These two districts are targeted to promote the type of large industrial parks that would be more appropriate to large-scale employment districts, and not the type of small- to medium-scale artisanal or small industrial uses that could be appropriate within a Downtown. Standards within these two districts are strictly based on use, and do not align with or respond to the historic development patterns of Downtown.

R-SF (Single Family District)

The majority of neighborhoods surrounding Tonganoxie's Historic Business District are zoned R-SF. This district promotes detached houses on moderate- to large-lots, however the lot and yard requirements steer towards suburban patterns with a required 6,000 square feet and minimum 65-foot frontage. This is not consistent with the more narrow and rectangular lot patterns that exist within the gridded blocks of downtown neighborhoods, and in prevents smaller, or narrower lot arrangements that exist in some areas. The neighborhoods

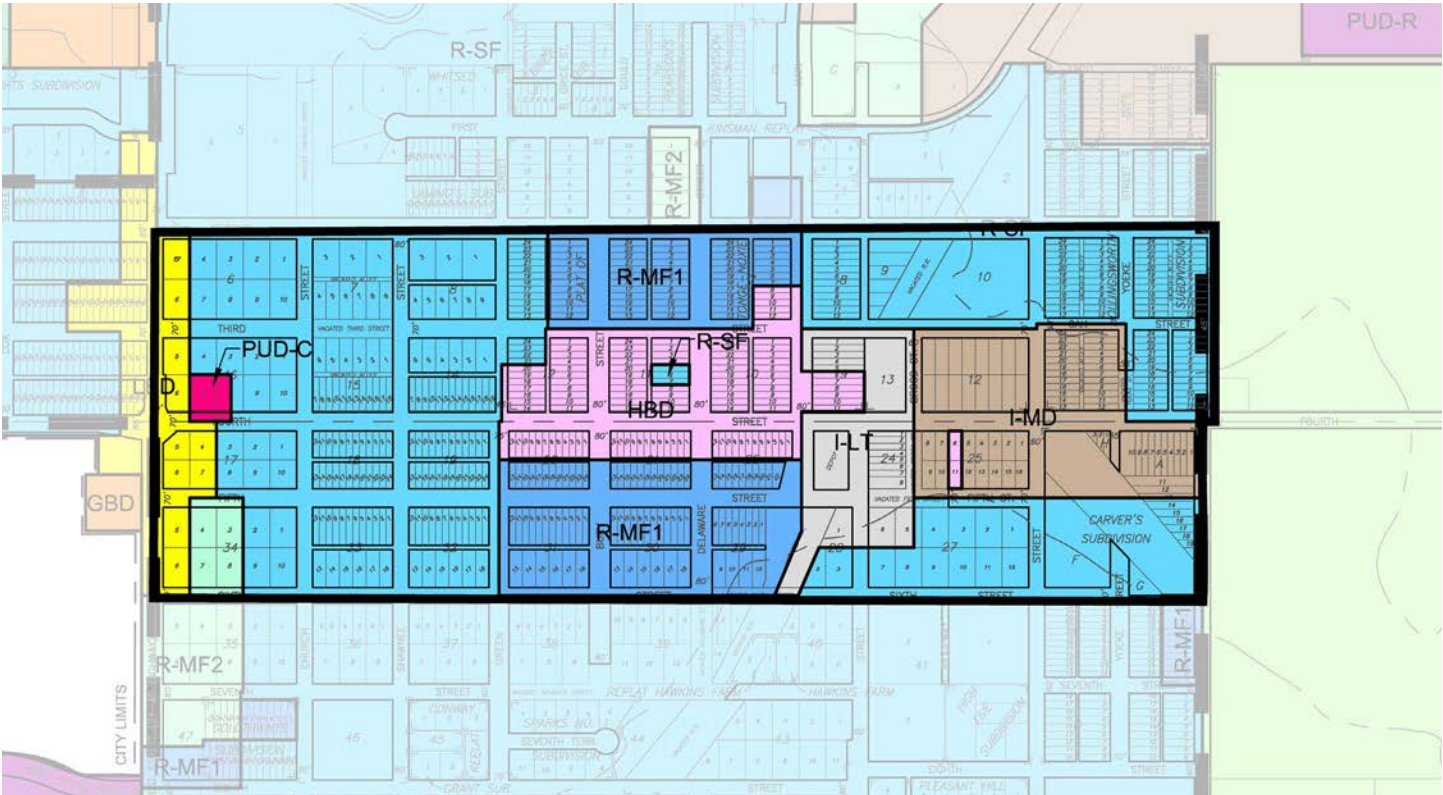
have a mix of small, medium, and large lots that reflect specific patters and arrangements based on the street and block patterns. Additionally, beyond the minimum setbacks, there are not standards to promote the traditional arrangements of buildings, out-buildings, lot access, and frontage designs that allow this mix to occur in a compatible manner.

R-MF1 (Multi-Family I District) & R-MF2 (Multi-Family II District)

Two residential multi-family districts intersect with the Downtown study area: R-MF1 and R-MF-2. These districts are intended for smaller-scale, multi-unit buildings that are appropriate for mixed-density neighborhoods and support near-downtown development (i.e. 2-, 3-, and 4-unit buildings, row houses, and small apartments). However, the development standards are based on minimum lot sizes and minimum densities, which are abstract and tend to result in larger scale projects. In contrast, smaller lots and building types with maximum sizes will better fit this area's context and support the historic patterns, regardless of the densities. Therefore, standards based on a range of specific and compatible building types that are prevalent in the area can set better expectations for infill development supportive of the downtown area and consistent with the desired neighborhood character.

Residential Infill District

The residential infill district is an unmapped district intended to promote development compatible with the unique patterns and context of the near-downtown neighborhoods, described by geographic boundaries. To achieve this, the district allows relief from the otherwise applicable residential standards (R-SF, R-MF-2, or R-Mf-3), recognizing that the standards are not representative of existing lot and building patterns. However, the district contains no specific standards and only vague criteria for aligning development with the context and surrounding properties, rather than specifying a mix of building types, lot patterns, and frontage designs that are present throughout these areas.



Zoning map of the Downtown Regulating Plan study area.

Zoning Districts Legend

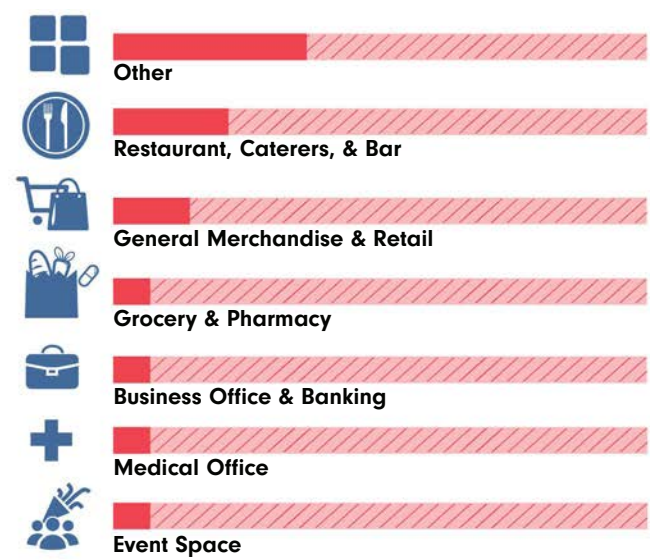
	HBD Historic Business District		Residential Infill District
	LBD Limited Business District		R-SF Single Family
	I-LT Light Industrial		R-MF1 Multi-Family I
	I-MD Moderate Industrial		R-MF2 Multi-Family II



3 SURVEY REVIEW

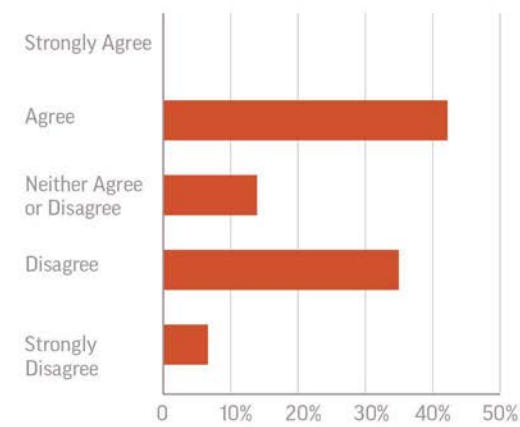
Survey Review

Business Types



Building Appearance Requirements

Do you agree that downtown should have stringent and uniform requirements for building appearance, signage and landscaping?

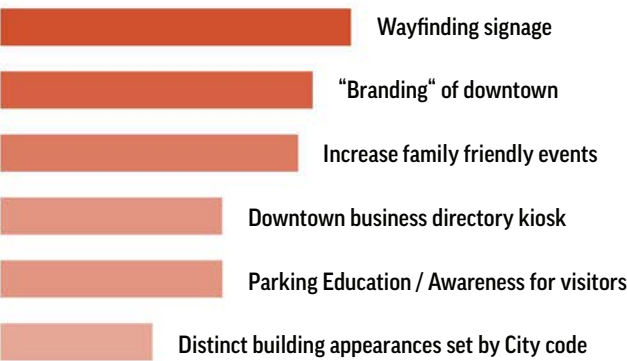


Questions and results from the Downtown Business Owners Survey most relevant to the Downtown Regulating Plan project.

Ownership

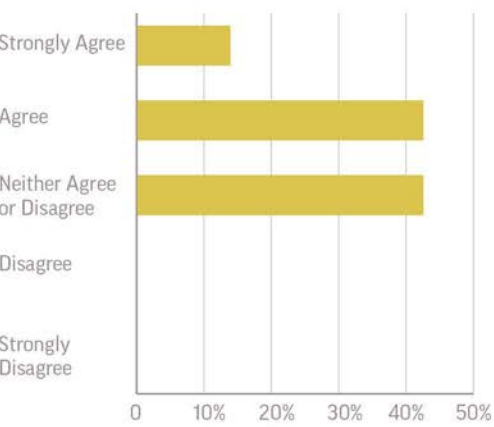


Impact Items Rating



Downtown Housing

Do you agree that if downtown had more housing options it would increase your business potential?



Downtown Business Owners Survey

The Downtown Business Owners Survey provides a recent window into the goals of Tonganoxie's Downtown Business Community regarding improvements to the Downtown district. The survey was sent to twenty-five storefront businesses along 4th Street in 2023, and contained fourteen total questions. Fourteen responses were received. The survey respondents were asked about the types of businesses they operate, whether they own or lease their space, and a variety of specific questions about potential improvements to Downtown.

As a part of this existing conditions assessment, discrepancies between the current physical and regulatory conditions of Downtown, and the needs and desires of the business community have been identified. One limitation of the results of this survey is the limited answer choices provided on some questions, and lack of open-ended response options. As a part of upcoming community engagement opportunities, this project will ask the Downtown and greater Tonganoxie community about needs and goals for Downtown that may not have been included on this survey.

Impact Items Rating

The "Impact Items Rating" question asked the survey recipients about six potential improvements or alterations to Downtown to gauge which were the most popular. The three most popular options were wayfinding signage, a "branded" identify for Downtown, and increasing family-friendly events.

Wayfinding signage was the most popular element. Downtown Tonganoxie does already incorporate some wayfinding signing throughout the Historic Business District and the Transition areas, but there are opportunities to increase wayfinding signage, expand the destinations listed on the signage, and improve accessibility of wayfinding signage.

"Branding" of Downtown was the second most popular option. So far, a comprehensive effort to create a branded identity for Downtown has not been undertaken. This Downtown Regulating Plan presents the opportunity to begin such an initiative, and tie in a distinct branded identity with other

popular Downtown elements and improvements (like branded wayfinding signage, incorporating downtown branding with events and programming, and including a branded Downtown identity in urban design and public realm elements).

Increasing family-friendly events was the third most popular option listed on the survey. The variety of open and civic spaces within and near Downtown Tonganoxie provides plentiful space, both indoor and outdoor, for increased events. Event space could be found in or on the grounds of the Public Library, at the local parks within Downtown (Gallagher Park, Tonganoxie Water Park, Pocket Park), and at City Hall or the Council Chambers. 4th Street could temporarily be closed to vehicles to create a larger space for a block-party or street-market type event. Partnerships with organizations like the library, Tonganoxie Business Association, local schools, religious organizations, and other local organizations could provide the programming ideas for increased events.

Building Appearance Requirements

Two questions asked respondents about the possibility of "stringent and uniform" building appearance standards, or "distinct building appearances set by City code". This possibility was the least popular option on the "impact items rating" survey question. In the separate "Building Appearance Requirements" question, respondents were highly split over whether this was a desired possibility. Currently, the Central Business District Design Guidelines govern architectural appearance in Downtown.

Downtown Housing

The possibility of increasing residential options Downtown was also addressed, and most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that more housing options in Downtown would provide increased support for their businesses. There are opportunities for adding housing variety to Downtown with housing types like mixed-use, small multi-family, live-work, and attached single-family that could fit into the existing neighborhood context.



4 OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Opportunity Areas

Following the physical assessment, code assessment, and review of the Downtown Business Owners Survey, four initial Opportunity Areas have emerged. Downtown's identity, streetscape, urban design, and development all provide opportunities to build on current strengths, improve current constraints, and enhance Downtown as a destination to support economic investment.

Downtown Identity

A unique, distinctive identity for Downtown Tonganoxie would provide the opportunity for increased awareness of Downtown as a destination to attract more visitors and increase economic opportunities for current and future businesses. This could be accomplished in a variety of ways, including:

- ▶ Increasing the extent and reach of downtown **wayfinding** signage increases awareness of a downtown's destinations, businesses, and amenities to attract visitors and support local businesses.
- ▶ Creating and publicizing a strong **brand identity** for a downtown increases awareness and helps the area reach local and regional recognition as a destination.
- ▶ **Public art** expresses and contributes to the character and identity of a downtown, and creates the sense that people are in a unique, distinct place. Expanding, documenting, and publicizing Downtown's existing collection of public art can be a draw for visitors, and creates opportunities for programming and art-centric events.
- ▶ **Gateways** create the first impression that local and regional visitors receive of a downtown. Thoughtfully designed and developed gateways signal to people that they are entering a recognizable and distinct place. Landscaping, signage, public art, and development that is characteristic of the rest of the downtown are all elements that contribute to a successful gateway.

Downtown Streetscapes

Improved streetscapes could create a safer and more inviting, pleasant, and accessible experiences for patrons of Downtown Tonganoxie. This could be accomplished in a variety of ways, including:

- ▶ A safe downtown **pedestrian experience** is critical for providing access to local businesses, retaining visitors in downtown, and increasing downtown's overall attractiveness as a destination. Pedestrian experience can be made more safe, inviting, and comfortable through improvements like like better intersection crossings, mid-block crossings, and curb extensions to improve pedestrian visibility. These can be implemented creatively with low-cost tactical improvements like planters, paint, and on-street art, leading to more permanent improvements as funding allows.
- ▶ An increased canopy of **street trees** would improve the pedestrian experience by providing shade, while beautifying the downtown, softening the appearance of development, and contributing to the overall image and identity of downtown.
- ▶ Improved design of the pedestrian and amenity zones of **cross streets** can help to increase the safety and connectivity between the primary downtown “main street” and surrounding areas by making it easier to get downtown and more inviting to access the business located on the cross streets.
- ▶ Throughout the wider downtown area, **amenity zones** can create a unique streetscape while providing pedestrian amenities for visitors. 4th Street's unique configuration of two amenity zones on each side of the street (one on either side of the sidewalk) creates the opportunity for creative showcasing of local character.
- ▶ Where there is excess **on-street parking**, that space provides the opportunity to incorporate more activating downtown features or events like parklets and outdoor eating areas, food trucks, or street markets.

Downtown Urban Design

Downtown Tonganoxie has a strong tradition of architecture and urban design that can be enhanced and protected in some key ways to strengthen the area as a destination and attract business investment. This could be accomplished in a variety of ways, including:

- ▶ The continuation of the downtown's traditional patterns of build-to-street building **frontage**, and frontage features like traditional storefronts with plentiful windows, transparent entries, awnings, and signage. These elements contribute to a pattern of development that activates the streetscape and makes the pedestrian environment an engaging and safer space, while allowing business owners to express creativity through the color and design of these elements.
- ▶ **Parking and access** are necessary elements of a downtown, and can be provided in ways that will not interfere with a downtown's attractiveness and pedestrian experience. Locating off-street parking behind buildings, screening parking with landscaping, and maintaining alley access to minimize sidewalk interruptions all help a downtown foster a pedestrian-oriented streetscape while addressing parking and access needs. In addition, accessibility improvements like ADA parking should be considered, along with improved safety standards for parking design.
- ▶ Increased **landscaping** provides many benefits for a downtown: beautifying streetscapes, improving attractiveness of gateways, helping with stormwater management, and even traffic-calming. Moveable or curb-side planters, street trees, curb extension planters, parking lane planters, and amenity zone planting beds are all possibilities for increasing landscaping in a downtown environment.
- ▶ Improved **maintenance** of amenities throughout downtown is an opportunity to ensure the enduring benefits of investment and improvements.

Downtown Development

Improvements to Downtown Tonganoxie's public realm could attract development to further activate the downtown. This could be encouraged in a variety of ways, including:

- ▶ **Vacant or under-utilized** buildings and sites in a downtown provide ideal spaces for new business investment. Measures that activate downtown like improving streetscapes, enhancing urban design, and investing in a cohesive downtown identity help to create an environment with the momentum to attract more business investment.
- ▶ **Open spaces** that are public or semi-public provide the space and opportunity for activation, programming, and events that draw visitors to a downtown and can help increase awareness of the businesses and amenities that downtown offers. Events like farmers markets, craft and art fairs, food truck events, and block parties are examples of the kinds of programming that these open spaces can host and that benefit all downtown businesses.
- ▶ Adding context-appropriate **housing options** to a downtown can increase local support for existing businesses. Townhomes, small multi-family buildings, live-work accessory apartments, and mixed-use housing are examples of housing that is typically appropriate in a downtown setting.



TONGANOXIE
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