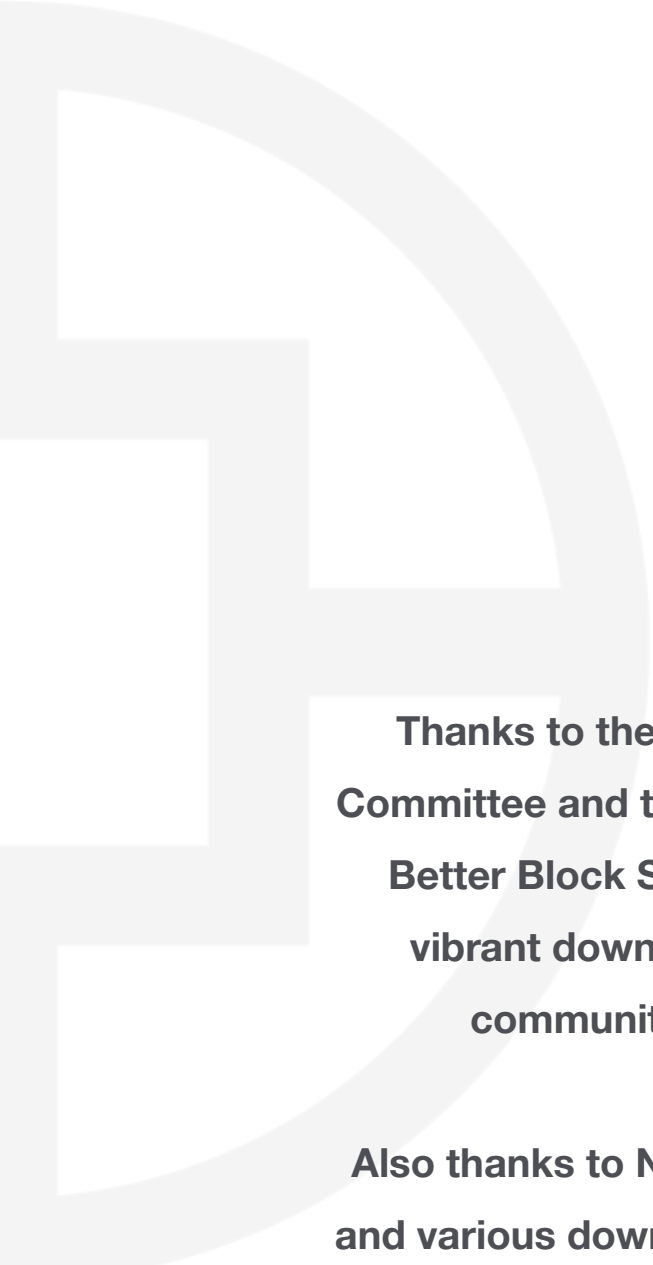


BETTER BLOCK SGF



NIXA PLACEMAKING

Impact Report



Thanks to the Nixa Downtown Revitalization Committee and the City of Nixa for partnering with Better Block SGF to reimagine a better, more vibrant downtown Nixa that will benefit the community for generations to come.

Also thanks to Nixa Hardware, Nixa Arts Council, and various downtown businesses and community activists for donating countless volunteer hours, materials, and resources to support this initiative.

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Project Info

Budget: \$11,450
Location: Downtown Nixa, Missouri
Date: September 10th - December 10th, 2022
(soft-opening August 21st)
Partners: Nixa Downtown Revitalization Committee, Nixa Arts Council, and the City of Nixa

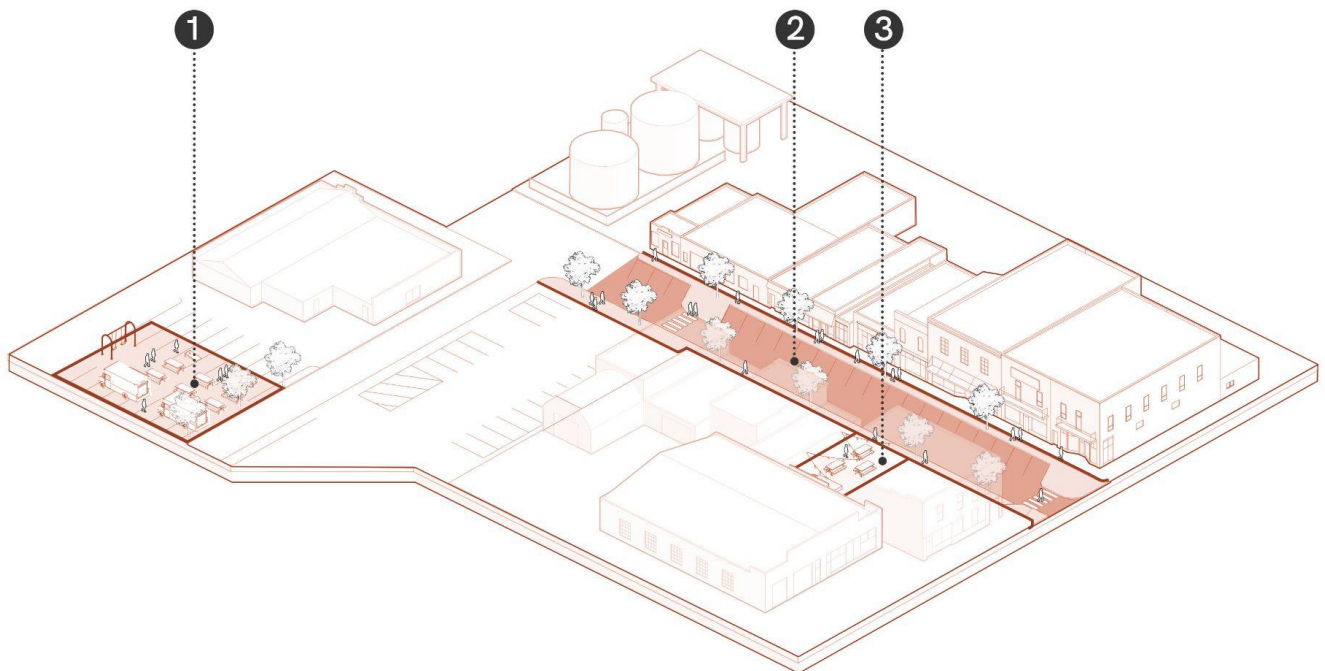
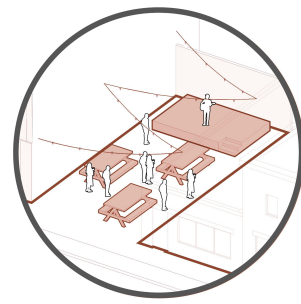
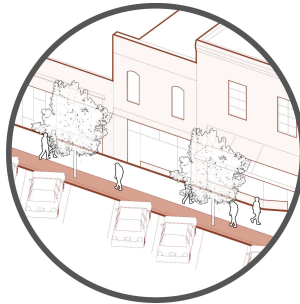
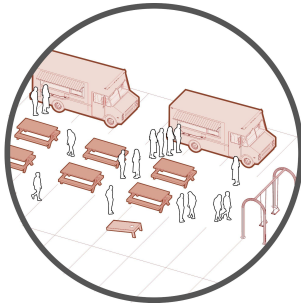
Background

Historically, downtowns are the center of activity for any small-town community. Downtowns are often the place where people come together, support their local businesses, and showcase their rich history and unique culture. The Nixa Placemaking demonstration provided an opportunity for the community to reimagine a better downtown Nixa as a community hub that supports the local economy, social interaction, and community pride.

Through an assortment of temporary interventions, the community was able to tangibly experience alternative ideas for downtown Nixa that improve safety, parking, landscaping, accessibility, art and the overall pedestrian experience. The temporary demonstration was in place for a total of 90 days, during which time Better Block SGF and other collaborating entities collected data and community feedback to gauge the level of success and/or failure of the different interventions. After the 90 days, the demonstration was completely removed and downtown Nixa was returned back to its previous state.

The primary design interventions that were utilized for the 90-day demonstration included the following elements:

- Narrowed driving lanes to 10 feet for both North and South-bound lanes.
- Removed parallel parking on the East side of Main Street.
- Expanded sidewalk by 4 feet on each side of the street and populated those zones with seating platforms and landscaping.
- Transformed the gravel alley space—currently functioning as trash pick-up zone and utility access—to become a pocket park as a public gathering space with picnic tables, outdoor games, landscaping, and lights strung overhead.
- Mid-block crosswalk to provide a safer pedestrian crossing experience and direct access to the public parking lot.



Executive Summary

Based on feedback from the community, the survey results, and our own observations throughout the 90-day demonstration period, we believe the Downtown Placemaking project was very successful in gauging the community interest in public improvements and will be extremely beneficial in helping to establish a path forward for the future development of downtown Nixa.

As with most temporary demonstrations, the most frequent *negative* feedback we received was in regards to the *quality* and *durability* of the elements utilized. With this project being the longest temporary demonstration that Better Block SGF has ever facilitated, we do believe that the project might have had a more positive response with a shorter duration with a more focused window of time to maximize public engagement and minimize the deterioration of constructed materials.

However, since the placemaking project was intended to be a temporary **demonstration** of improvement **ideas**, we believe the most valuable feedback received are the comments in regards to the actual design concepts proposed. Based on our observations, we believe there is a strong desire to improve the pedestrian experience and walkability of downtown. The community responded very positively to the added crosswalk, wider sidewalks, as well as the seating and landscaping elements. Most respondents noted the desire to minimize (or remove) on-street parking. However, we noted a strong desire to maintain two-way traffic and vehicular access through the downtown area.

There was also a very positive response to the pocket park that was created by simply repurposing the gravel alley to be a flexible public gathering space. During the kickoff event, many attendees enjoyed having an area to rest and gather with friends and family while listening to live music. We believe this space could be a huge amenity to the community if developed further and improved to create an even more functional outdoor gathering space and outdoor venue.

Lastly, the street mural and other painted elements created by various artists from Nixa Arts Council was an incredible indication of the abundant talent and passion deeply rooted into the community. We believe downtown has a huge opportunity to build on these strengths and other characteristics that define the Nixa community to better define and communicate the unique and vibrant culture of Nixa, and weave these qualities into the very fabric of downtown through future public improvements and commercial development.



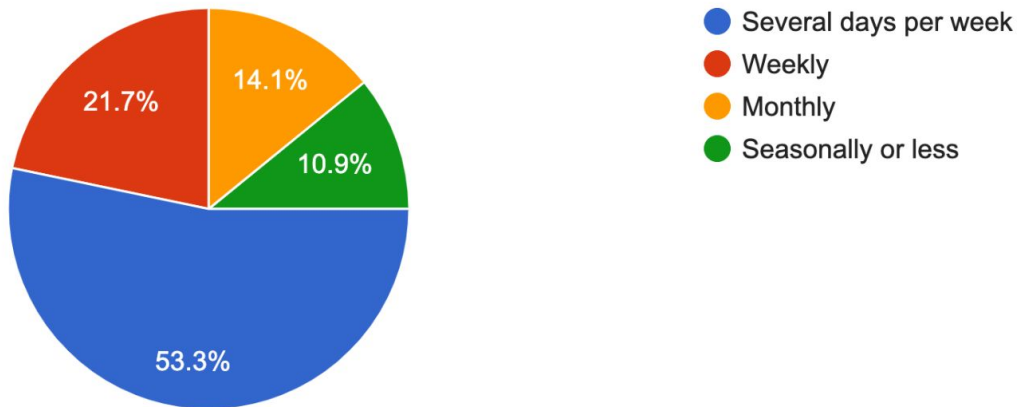
Addison Jones
Founding Director

Community Survey Results

Throughout the duration of the Nixa Placemaking demonstration, a public survey was conducted to gather community feedback and gauge the impact of the temporary interventions. 92 individuals completed the survey.

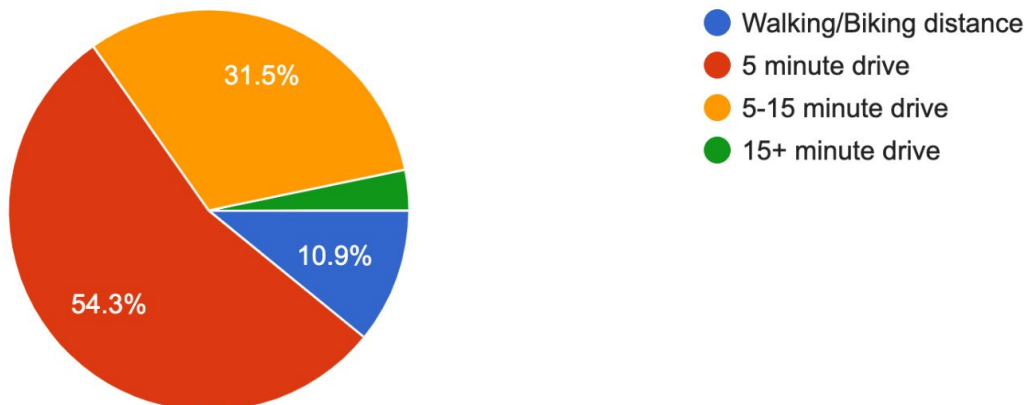
How frequently do you visit Downtown Nixa?

92 responses



How far did you travel to visit Downtown Nixa?

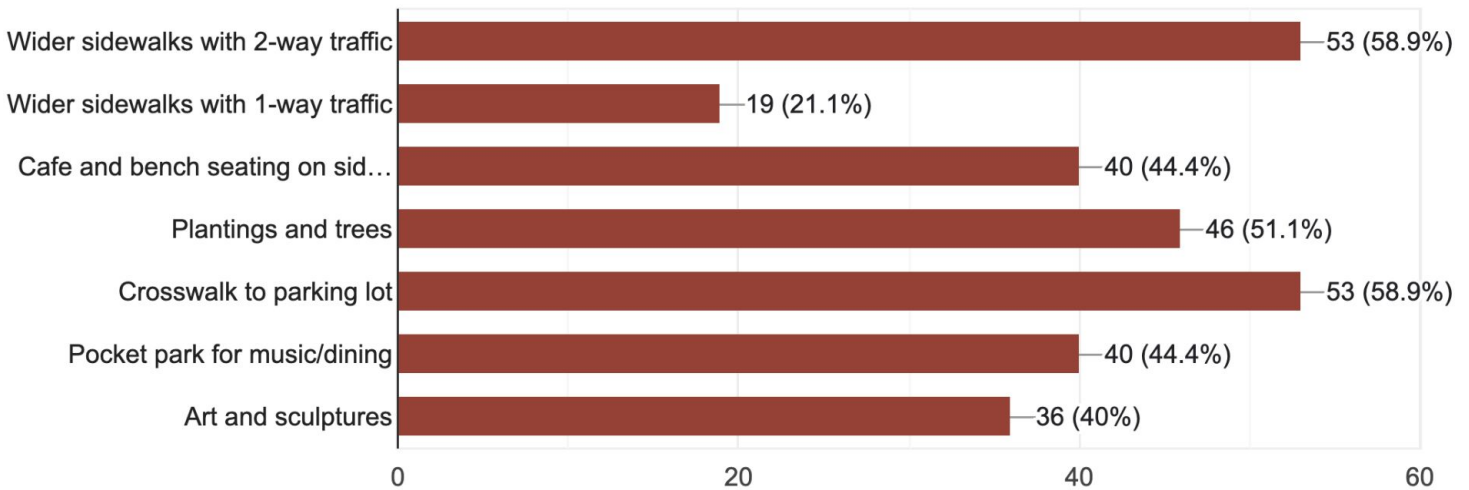
92 responses



(Community Survey Results cont.)

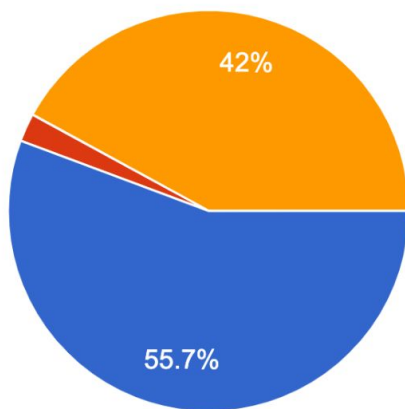
Which of the temporary improvements would you like to see made permanent? Checkmark all that apply.

90 responses



What kind of future growth would you like to see in Downtown Nixa?

88 responses



- Inward growth (utilizing vacant buildings and improving others)
- Upward growth (building up)
- Outward growth (extend retail and commercial space beyond Main Street)

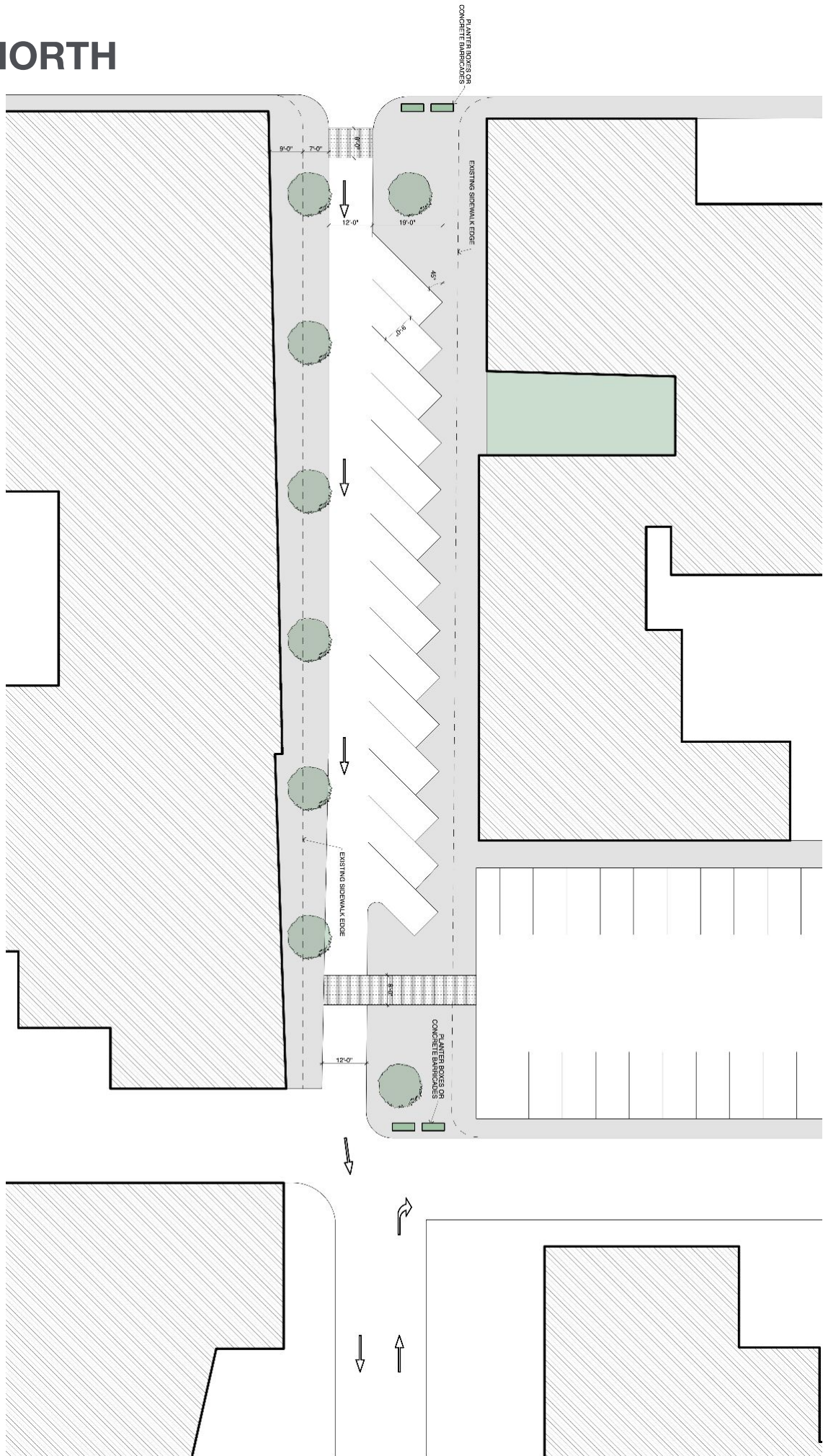
One-Way Scheme

Though it was unable to be implemented during the 90-day placemaking demonstration, we discovered a significant interest from the community and business owners to see a one-way scheme considered for future implementation.

After working through several iterations and consulting with local traffic engineering and planning experts, we have provided the following one-way scheme as an alternative approach to re-imagine Main Street.

The plan would allow for South-bound traffic only, and shift all parking to the East side of Main street. The 45 degree angled parking would provide an easier parking experience for downtown visitors, therefore minimizing potential traffic congestion. Using only one lane for vehicular traffic would also allow for a significant amount of street space to be repurposed as pedestrian space for wider sidewalks, landscaping, seating areas, etc.

Coordination with MODOT would be required to ensure the appropriate traffic signaling is provided at the intersection of Main Street and Highway 14.



Next Steps

The Nixa Placemaking project revealed many opportunities to build upon existing positive elements in downtown Nixa, and introduce new ideas that will positively impact the community for generations to come. Based on the results from the temporary demonstration, we have provided the following recommendations for immediate, short-term, and long-term implementation.

Immediate

- Additional investment and formalization of the gravel lot “pocket park” to become a public gathering space.
- Update and maintain mid-block crosswalk with formal traffic signage and other elements to increase pedestrian safety.

Short-term (1-5 years)

- Expand sidewalks on both sides of the street to provide space for landscaping, seating, public art, and pedestrian circulation.
- Invest in landscaping, outdoor furniture, and other amenities to improve the pedestrian experience and quality of place.
- Incentivize redevelopment of existing structures and allow temporary activation of vacant storefronts in the meantime.
- Conduct a comprehensive parking and traffic study to determine feasibility of a one-way traffic scheme. Include areas beyond the immediate downtown district to consider the impact on adjacent neighborhoods.

Long-term (5-10 years)

- Conduct a comprehensive growth and development strategy to identify potential rezoning and development opportunities to expand the downtown district beyond the current boundary.



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