



City of Denton

City Hall
215 E. McKinney St.
Denton, Texas 76201
www.cityofdenton.com

Meeting Agenda

City Council

Tuesday, December 5, 2023

11:00 AM

Development Service Center

Joint Meeting with Planning and Zoning and Parks, Recreation and Beautification Board

WORK SESSION BEGINS AT 11:00 A.M. IN THE DEVELOPMENT SERVICE CENTER

After determining that a quorum is present, the City Council of the City of Denton, Texas will convene in a Joint Special Called Meeting with Planning and Zoning and Parks, Recreation and Beautification Board, on Tuesday, December 5, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. in Training Rooms 1 through 5 at the Development Service Center, 401 N. Elm Street, Denton, Texas at which the following items will be considered:

WORK SESSION

1. Work Session Reports

- A. [ID 23-1988](#) Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding the community priorities for the Design Downtown Denton Plan.

[Estimated Presentation/Discussion Time: 2 hours]

Attachments: [Exhibit 1 - Agenda Information Sheet](#)

[Exhibit 2 - Presentation](#)

2. CONCLUDING ITEMS

- A. Under Section 551.042 of the Texas Open Meetings Act, respond to inquiries from the City Council or the public with specific factual information or recitation of policy, or accept a proposal to place the matter on the agenda for an upcoming meeting AND Under Section 551.0415 of the Texas Open Meetings Act, provide reports about items of community interest regarding which no action will be taken, to include: expressions of thanks, congratulations, or condolence; information regarding holiday schedules; an honorary or salutary recognition of a public official, public employee, or other citizen; a reminder about an upcoming event organized or sponsored by the governing body; information regarding a social, ceremonial, or community event organized or sponsored by an entity other than the governing body that was attended or is scheduled to be attended by a member of the governing body or an official or employee of the municipality; or an announcement involving an imminent threat to the public health and safety of people in the municipality that has arisen after the posting of the agenda.

NOTE: The City Council reserves the right to adjourn into a Closed Meeting or Executive Session as authorized by Texas Government Code, Section 551.001, et seq. (The Texas Open Meetings Act) on any item on its open meeting agenda or to reconvene in a continuation of the Closed Meeting on the Closed Meeting items noted above, in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, including, without limitation Sections 551.071-551.089 of the Texas Open Meetings Act.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I certify that the above notice of meeting was posted on the official website (<https://tx-denton.civicplus.com/242/Public-Meetings-Agendas>) and bulletin board at City Hall, 215 E. McKinney Street, Denton, Texas, on December 1, 2023, in advance of the 72-hour posting deadline, as applicable, and in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.

OFFICE OF THE CITY SECRETARY

NOTE: THE CITY OF DENTON'S DESIGNATED PUBLIC MEETING FACILITIES ARE ACCESSIBLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT. THE CITY WILL PROVIDE ACCOMMODATION, SUCH AS SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED, IF REQUESTED AT LEAST 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE SCHEDULED MEETING. PLEASE CALL THE CITY SECRETARY'S OFFICE AT 940-349-8309 OR USE TELECOMMUNICATIONS DEVICES FOR THE DEAF (TDD) BY CALLING 1-800-RELAY-TX SO THAT REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION CAN BE ARRANGED.



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Legislation Text

File #: ID 23-1988, **Version:** 1

AGENDA CAPTION

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding the community priorities for the Design Downtown Denton Plan.

[Estimated Presentation/Discussion Time: 2 hours]



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AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Department of Development Services

ACM: Cassey Ogden

DATE: December 5, 2023

SUBJECT

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding the community priorities for the Design Downtown Denton Plan.

MEETING OBJECTIVE

The objective of the meeting is to have a collective discussion amongst the Planning and Zoning Commission; Parks, Recreation, and Beautification Board; and City Council in order to receive direction related to the community priorities which were developed through public engagement and research to move the project forward. Therefore, staff is requesting the Council, Commission, and Board to affirm or provide direction to modify the community priorities.

The reason why this direction is needed is because the project team needs to confirm these priorities since these priorities influence the new policy direction being established for downtown, as well as subsequent action items in support of that policy direction. Ultimately, the final policy direction will come from City Council since this area plan is being done per City's Council's request and Council provides that policy direction.

BACKGROUND

On March 22, 2022, City Council adopted an ordinance that approved an update to the City's Comprehensive Plan (Denton 2040 Comprehensive Plan). Throughout the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council work session presentations related to the update, area plans were discussed as a solution to address local challenges and were identified as one of the Commission's and Council's implementation priorities. Elected and appointed leaders, as well as staff, agreed that further in-depth analysis was needed to better refine the vision for the area and plan for future infrastructure needs. Area plans allow for a more detailed analysis of a given area within the framework of the Denton 2040 Comprehensive Plan. These types of Plans provide the ability to address more refined and specific planning and development challenges, as well as enhance potential opportunities, at a scale more specific to a given area.

Per City Council's direction, staff initiated the Downtown Denton Plan Update, otherwise known as the Design Downtown Denton plan. The Design Downtown Denton study area is generally bounded by University Drive to the north, Carroll Boulevard to the west, Eagle Drive to the south, and Bell Avenue and Mingo Road to the east. The study area is approximately 750 acres (1.17 square miles).

GOAL OF THE DESIGN DOWNTOWN DENTON PLAN

The goal of Design Downtown Denton is to update the vision for the study area, including Quakertown Park, as well as set clear policy direction and supporting implementation actions for how downtown should develop and evolve over time, including identifying key catalyst projects.

The main reason for the Design Downtown Denton plan is to build on the successes of downtown over the past decade and to create a comprehensive, actionable strategy for economic development, mobility, parks and open spaces, small business development, historic preservation, and future infill development that builds upon and leverages downtown's key assets. These unique assets, which would be difficult or impossible to replicate elsewhere in the city include walkable block patterns, a strong core of small local businesses, and historic structures. A comprehensive strategy will allow City Council to better evaluate development proposals and zoning change requests, as well as aid decision-making related to future infrastructure improvements, while also leveraging private investments within downtown.

The main purposes of the Design Downtown Denton process are:

- Confirm if the vision and goals for downtown are still relevant today and for the near future;
- Evaluate if the downtown boundary should be expanded in size to maximize future opportunities;
- Set clear policy direction and supporting implementation actions that will continue the economic growth of downtown, enhance the pedestrian experience, and preserve the character of the downtown; and
- Identify additional open space, increase housing choices, enhance mobility connectivity and balance development while protecting existing neighborhoods and historic resources.

CASE FOR ACTION

As part of an area plan, research into quantitative and qualitative data, best practices research, and research into communities with similar characteristics is essential. Alongside the first phase of public engagement, the Design Downtown Denton team has developed a "Case for Action," which lays out the results of that research. A brief summary of key findings will be presented during the joint meeting.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

A key component of any area plan is public engagement, obtaining input and feedback from stakeholders, in order to determine not only what aspects of a project's study area are most important to the stakeholders but also how the stakeholders would like the study area to be 15 to 20 years from now. Since the start of the Design Downtown Denton project there have been a variety of public engagement events that have occurred so far. Below is a list of those events and number of participants:

Date	Public Engagement	Description	Action
July 19-20, 2023	Kickoff Meeting and Site Tour	Confirmed project expectations and tour the study area	Held meeting and conducted site visit
July 19, 20, and 27, 2023	Stakeholder Interviews	Conducted one-on-one interviews with downtown stakeholders - including residents, business and property owners, and community leaders	Hosted interviews with approximately 30 stakeholders; 13 in-person
September 9, 2023	Arts & Autos Pop-up Event	Collected community input on what they "Love" and "Need" in downtown.	Hosted feedback table at event; 70+ residents gave responses (in-person)

September 15, 2023	Parking Day Pop-up Event	Collected community concerns and ideas on a map of downtown, and gather responses as to what residents “Love” and “Need” in downtown.	Hosted feedback table at event; 60+ residents gave responses (in-person)
September 16-17, 2023	Blues Fest Pop-up Event	Collected community input through an engagement map, and on what residents “Love” and “Need” in downtown.	Hosted feedback table at event; 120+ residents gave responses (in-person)
September 13-October 30, 2023	Community Map and Online Survey	Gathered input from residents through the project’s engagement website. Residents provided feedback via an interactive map of downtown and a two-question survey on downtown “Needs” and “Loves.”	Survey available for 6+ weeks; 2,000+ site visitors, 615 responses received
October 7, 2023	Quakertown Park Visioning Workshop	Conducted workshop to begin identifying preferred vision of park features and designs.	Conducted Workshop; 200+ attendees participated, including completing 73 surveys (in-person)
October 12 and 19, 2023	Twilight Tunes	Gathered input from residents on the engagement map and provided attendees with information about the engagement website and how to share their thoughts and ideas.	Hosted feedback table at October 12, 2023 event; less than 10 responses (in-person)
November 16, 2023	Downtown Advisory Group	Shared the results of the public engagement conducted so far, the draft Case for Action, and to get direction on the draft project vision, the community priorities, and December 4th visioning workshop activities.	Held meeting and received feedback
December 4, 2023	Downtown Visioning Workshop	Workshop conducted to confirm the vision for downtown and Quakertown Park.	<i>RESULTS TO BE SHARED AT JOINT WORKSHOP</i>

The results and outcomes from these events collectively provide the basis for common themes (the community priorities) that describe the study area, but also the desired outcome (vision) for the study area longer term. A summary of engagement results will be presented at the joint meeting.

DRAFT VISION STATEMENT

This vision statement has been prepared based on input received from public engagement events, the online community survey, and the Downtown Advisory Group. The Advisory Group supports the following vision statement:

"Design Downtown Denton to be a more walkable, beautiful, and fun destination for shopping, working, learning, and recreation that also serves as a hub of opportunity, welcoming all Dentonites. Cultivate a vibrant and diverse residential community. Preserve and expand the distinctive local businesses, foster a strong sense of community, and safeguard the historic and artistic character while promoting growth and development."

DRAFT COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

Based on the public engagement input received and the draft vision supported by the Advisory Group, the project team (staff and consultant team) prepared eight community priorities for the City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Parks, Recreation, and Beautification Board to consider. The community priorities are ordered based on the number of comments received from the public, and the numbers following each category represent the total number of public comments received on each of the topics. At this meeting staff is requesting for the Council, Commission, and Board to affirm or provide direction to modify the priorities listed below.

Downtown Denton Community Priorities

A. Bike/Pedestrian Safety and Mobility - 250 comments

- Enhance walkability by improving our streetscapes, including sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, and crosswalks.
- Implementing safety measures at dangerous intersections.
- Connect key areas, including the universities, the square and the transit center both physically through public realm improvements and infill development and through a common downtown brand.
- Promote a safer environment for cyclists by expanding protected bike lanes, bike parking, and trails.
- Regularly close side streets for public events and community gatherings.

B. Retail and Commercial Development - 166 comments

- Invest in areas around the square to improve business and housing variety, public safety, and overall aesthetics.
- Improve public space to encourage foot traffic and inspire building upkeep.
- Emphasize the historical significance and preservation of historical assets within the downtown area, including expanding local, state, and national designations.
- Promote and protect the local business community, including those businesses beyond the Square.
- Fill empty storefronts and vacant lots with unique local shops and food and beverage options.

C. Parks and Public Space - 156 comments

- Create a network of green spaces and public parks with amenities such as community gardens, picnic areas and kids play areas.
- Add more trees and landscaping in public spaces to provide shade and improve aesthetics.
- Build outdoor amenities like public seating, restrooms, water fountains, and more.
- Find ways to activate underutilized areas, such as alleys, vacant properties, and sidewalks.
- Preserve the view corridors and viewsheds of downtown including the Courthouse-on-the-Square and the Morrison Milling silos.

D. Arts, Entertainment, and Events - 105 comments

- Create a marketing brand for the downtown area and use that brand to tie downtown to the surrounding community.
- Encourage and promote public art and music initiatives and festivals.
- Build on current successes by adding new activities and events, especially for children and families.
- Support the addition of interactive art, music, sculptures, and lighting to create engaging spaces.
- Explore the addition and improvement of a variety of music and art venues, stages, and theaters.

E. Traffic and Transit - 101 comments

- Improve roadway safety for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists by implementing traffic closures on certain streets and during events, as well as exploring road rightsizing and traffic calming initiatives.
- Improve parking availability and management by upgrading lots with trees and landscaping, adding wayfinding signage to and from parking to destinations, and considering the construction of a public parking garage in the downtown area.
- Enhance accessibility by expanding and improving bus routes to the transit center and other key destinations.

F. Safety - 33 comments

- Improve perception of safety by partnering with service providers to address homelessness concerns and needs.
- Design streets with infrastructure to enable street closures and to support outdoor events.
- Define key pedestrian corridors and improve their streetscapes, shade canopy and lighting.
- Improve maintenance and cleanliness on sidewalks.

G. Housing Development - 32 comments

- Address rising rents and housing affordability through increased housing supply, mixed-use developments, and more residential options to foster a vibrant local community.
- Provide more housing options downtown, establishing a variety of housing stock that will appeal to many different residents' needs.

H. Culture - 25 comments

- Foster increased diversity and inclusion through the acknowledgement of history and increased opportunities for all Dentonites
- Protect/continue to embody what people love most about the feel of Denton: community pride, welcoming atmosphere, and historic scale.
- Celebrate and connect downtown to Denton's colleges and universities.
- Highlight the downtown culture with the broader Denton community and county.

NEXT STEPS

After the project team receives direction from the Planning and Zoning Commission; Parks, Recreation, and Beautification Board; and City Council at the December 5, 2023 joint meeting related to the community priorities, the project team will develop action items in support of accomplishing the vision for downtown, as well as work on identifying potential catalyst projects.

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1 - Agenda Information Sheet

Exhibit 2 - Presentation

Respectfully submitted:

Tina Firgens, AICP

Deputy Director of Development Services/
Planning Director

Prepared by:

Cameron Robertson, AICP

Project Manager



DESIGN DOWNTOWN DENTON

Joint Workshop
December 5, 2023

Agenda

Introductions and Project Overview (10 minutes)

Case for Action Update (10 minutes)

Public Engagement Results Update (20 minutes)

Draft Project Vision and Community Priorities (60 minutes)

Feedback Requested - Do these priorities represent Council / PZ
/Parks Board priorities?

Next Steps (5 minutes)

INTRODUCTIONS

Mend Collaborative

Lead Consultant



Zakcq Lockrem, AICP

Project Manager



Todd Austin

Associate Planner



Michelle Bright, SITES

Principal-in-charge, QA/QC Lead



Sandy Meulners-Colmstock, PLA

Open Space Lead



**DESIGN
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DENTON**

Additional Team Members



Post Oak Preservation

Historic Preservation

Ellis Mumford-Russell
Historic Resources Lead

Rachel Alison
Associate

WILLIAM FULTON GROUP

William Fulton Group

Economic Development/
Implementation Strategy

William Fulton
Founder/CEO



Nelson/Nygaard

Mobility/Parking

Jackson Archer, AICP
Mobility Lead

Sam Ergina
Mobility Support



The Catalyst Group

Market Research/TOD
Strategy

Paris Rutherford
Market/TOD Strategy Lead



DESIGN
DOWNTOWN
DENTON


PROJECT OVERVIEW

Study Area


Downtown Denton

Legend

 Downtown

 City and County Parks

 Universities

 Railroad

 Waterways



Project Approach and Schedule



**DESIGN
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Topics



DESIGN DOWNTOWN DENTON



Historic Preservation



Arts & Culture



Development and
Small Businesses



Mobility



Parks



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CASE FOR ACTION UPDATE



Case for Action

- The Case for Action is an approximately 50 page presentation that details:
 - Research from many data sources including the US Census, the American Community Survey, the Denton County Assessors Office, TXDOT, and other city sources
 - Best practices and analysis
- We will be recording a video that will be released publicly



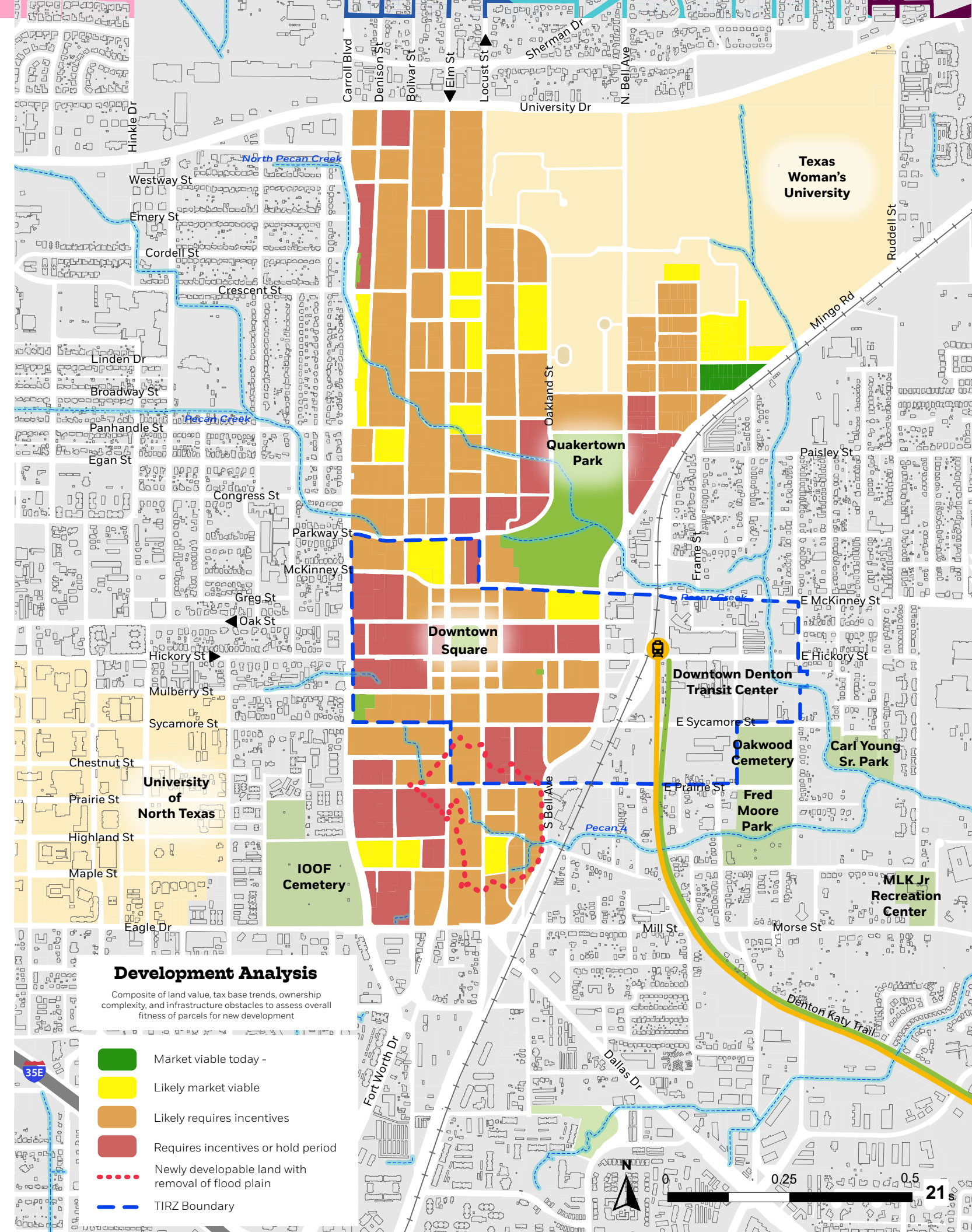
Development Analysis

Four analyses were overlaid to determine the best **blocks for new investment**:

- Land Value
- Ownership complexity
- Tax Base Trends
- Infrastructure encumbrances

Much of Downtown **will** require partnerships to move development forward.

A ten-year forecast for market demand revealed a potential for **358,000 additional square feet of retail**, of which more than 50% is in food and beverage, and **50,000 square feet of office space**, with a focus on finance, insurance, and professional and legal services.

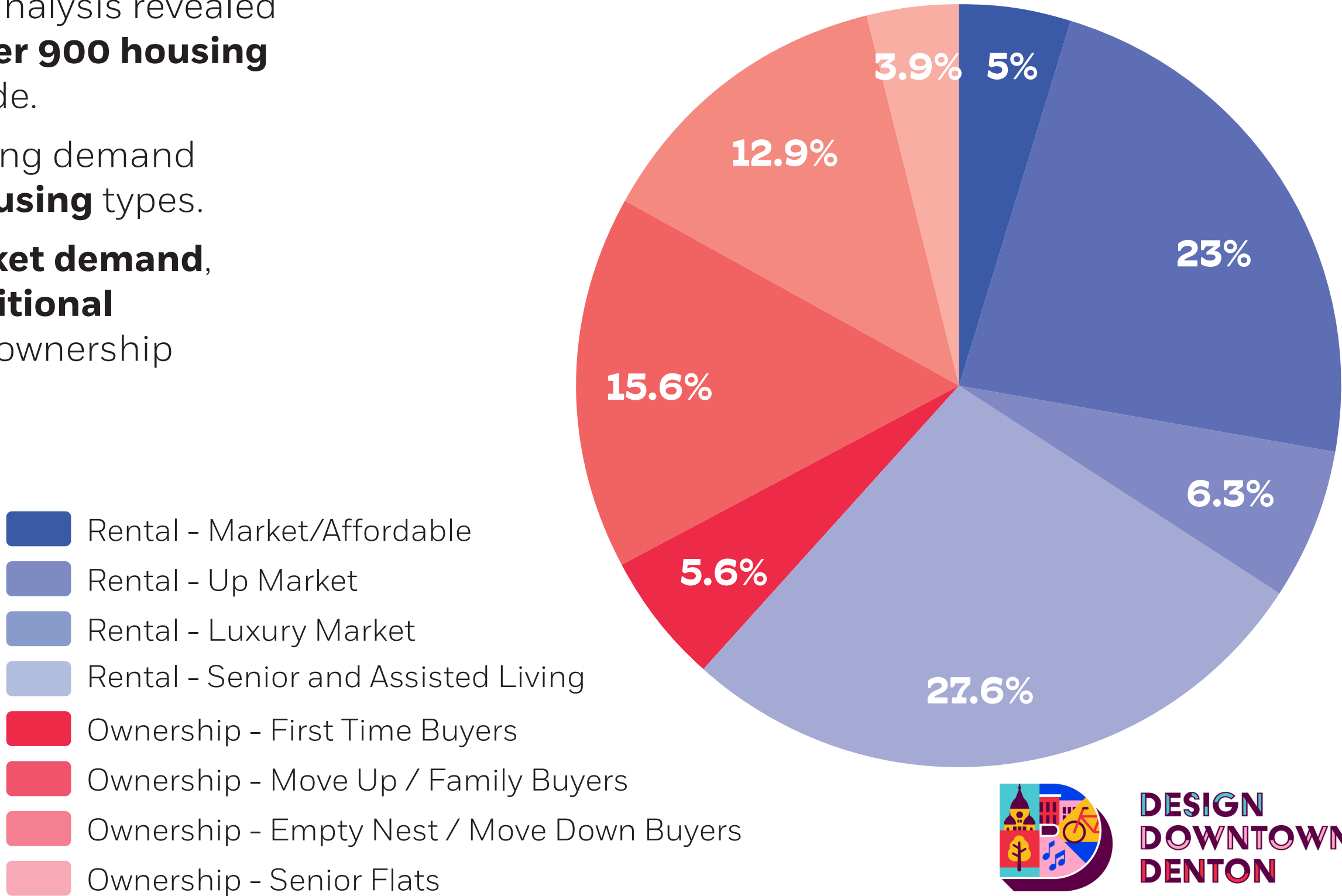


10 year market housing forecast

The ten year demand analysis revealed an ability to absorb **over 900 housing units** in the next decade.

The market shows strong demand across **a variety of housing** types.

In addition to the **market demand**, there is a need for **additional affordable** rental and ownership opportunities.



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

Engagement Activities

September

- 9/9 Arts and Autos
- 9/15 Parking Day
- 9/15-17 Denton Blues Fest
- 9/28 National Night Out

October

- 10/6-8 Denton Arts and Jazz Festival
- 10/12 Twilight Tunes
- 10/19 Twilight Tunes



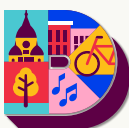
Social Map
Dentonites were able to provide location specific feedback on a large map brought to events or on the engagement website. Comments could be categorized as ideas for a location, ideas specifically for parks or mobility, what they like about Downtown, or what they have concerns about.



Visioning Activity
Residents and visitors commented on what they love about Denton today and what they believe Denton needs to be even better in the future. They added their notes to the board at tabled events. This activity was also available on the engagement website.

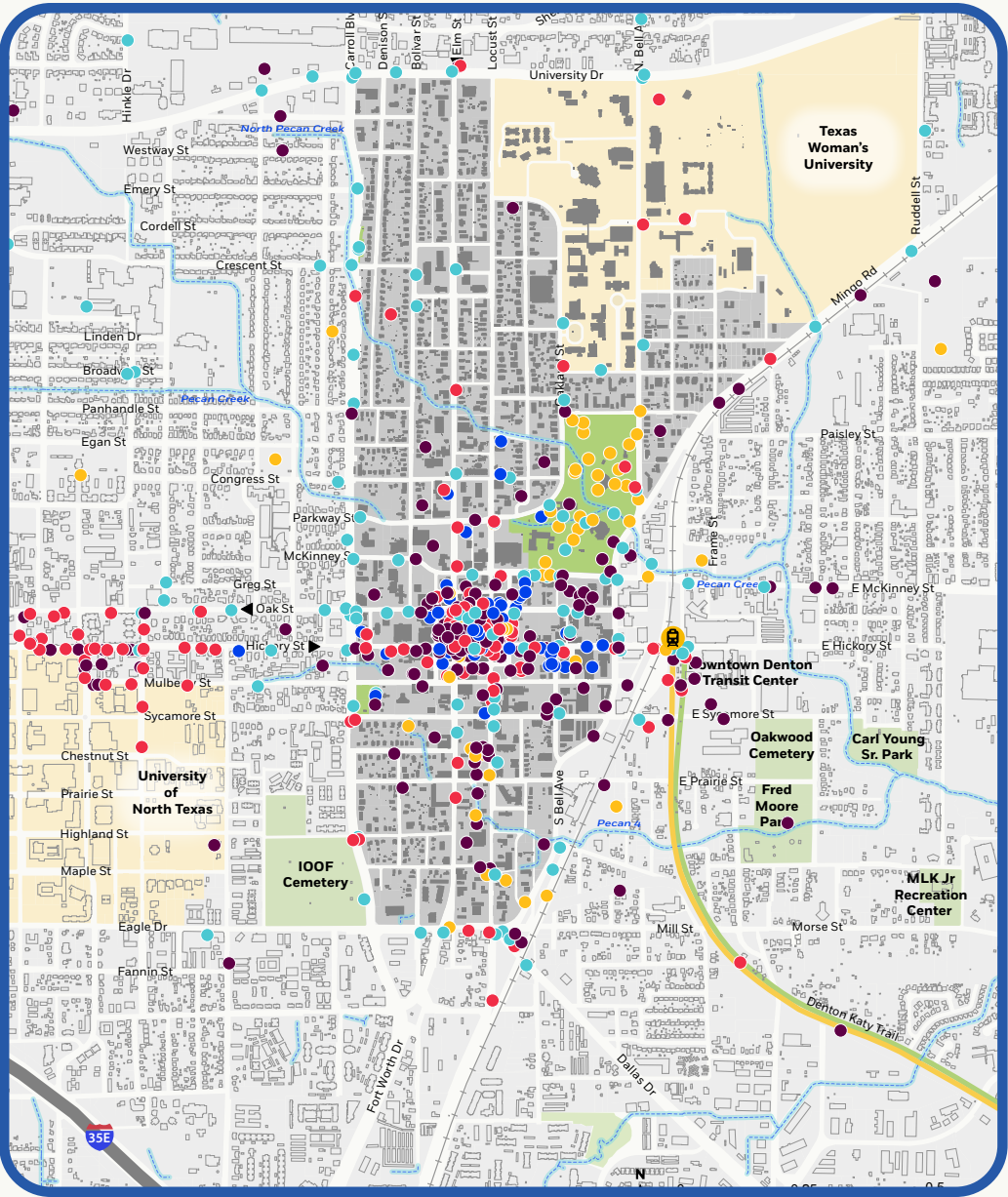


Surveys
A survey was conducted with local businesses for feedback on what has helped them succeed in Downtown and what they need going forward. A survey for Quakertown Park was also done at Arts and Jazz Fest where visitors commented on what their priorities for improvements to the park are.



Engagement Data

907 total comments provided
3,391 total reactions
158 total survey responses
(85 business survey, 73 Quakertown Park)








Online

3,032 visits by 2,054 visitors
462 Social Map Comments
153 Downtown Love/Need Comments

Pop-Ups

102 Map Comments
190 Downtown Love/Need Comments

564 Comments provided on the social map

-  49 I like this!
-  199 I have an idea!
-  121 I have a concern!
-  135 I have a mobility idea!
-  60 I have a park idea!

391 comments provided within downtown



Overall Themes

The most prominent themes from over 900 comments provided by residents of and visitors to Downtown Denton:



Bike and Pedestrian Mobility

Enhance walkability, expand protected bike lanes, and close streets to vehicles for events and gatherings.

"Downtown is the best area of Denton because it's the only place where one can walk around, have a picnic, shop, and drink without a car!"

Retail and Development

Invest in local businesses, increase housing, and protect historic landmarks.

"Work with economic development to help bring businesses in here that would make these West side streets destinations, such as a coffee shop"

Parks and Public Spaces

Expand network of parks and public spaces, add trees and landscaping, program underutilized areas.

"Invest in more trees. Trees are important to cool the area, and also bring wildlife and happiness to people."

Arts, Entertainment, and Events

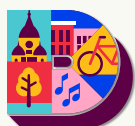
Develop visual brand for Downtown area, bring new activities to Downtown, encourage and support artists, public arts, and art venues.

"The large murals on some of the downtown buildings is wonderful. I would love to see more of that. However, it needs to be quality art and maintained."

Traffic and Transit

Improve traffic safety, parking management, and transit accessibility.

"Better public transportation in the form of buses, better safe parking in the form of garages, improved walkability and bike lanes."



Vision Activity

Visitors to pop-up booths and the engagement website were asked to briefly write down what they love most about downtown Denton and what they believe Downtown needs to be even better in the future.

I love Downtown because...

307 comments+reactions

“I can park in one place and walk from business to business!”

“Family-friendly festivals!”

“The unique vibe and local shops!”

“The attractive historic structures!”

Downtown needs...

364 comments+reactions

“More street trees and shade.”

“Less empty retail and an expansion of sidewalks and other pedestrian safety features.

“To expand outdoor patios, dining spaces, and seating.”

“A fully connected, protected bike network that gets to essentials.”



Business Survey

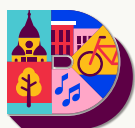


85 surveys completed

16 business types including retail, restaurants, real estate, art studios, consulting, and nonprofits

64 rent spaces

21 own property



What attracted you to downtown?

- Growth potential,
- Vibrant community, and
- Central location around the bustling Square.

What other businesses, attractions, or other development Downtown contribute to your success?

- Bars, restaurants, shopping and events that keep people in the area all day
- Complimentary businesses that attract similar demographics

What Downtown events, if any, contribute most to your success?

- Holiday lighting
- Arts and Autos
- Day of the Dead
- UNT football
- Wine walks
- Jazz Festival

What types of public improvements (for example sidewalks or parks) Downtown would be most beneficial to your business?

- More clean and well-maintained sidewalks
- Easier parking
- More parks and family-oriented activities

**Additional Slides Summarizing the 12-4
Engagement will be added**

DRAFT VISION AND COMMUNITY PRIORITIES



Project Approach



**DESIGN
DOWNTOWN
DENTON**

Design Downtown Denton to be a more walkable, beautiful, and fun destination for shopping, working, learning, and recreation that also serves as a hub of opportunity, welcoming all Dentonites. Cultivate a vibrant and diverse residential community. Preserve and expand the distinctive local businesses, foster a strong sense of community, and safeguard the historic and artistic character while promoting growth and development.



**DESIGN
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Community Priorities

1

**Bike/
Pedestrian
Safety and
Mobility**

2

**Retail and
Commercial
Development**

3

**Parks and
Public Space**

4

**Arts,
Entertainment
and Events**

5

**Traffic and
Transit**

6

Safety

7

**Housing
Development**

8

Culture



**DESIGN
DOWNTOWN
DENTON**

Bike/Pedestrian Safety and Mobility

- Enhance walkability by improving our streetscapes, including sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, and crosswalks.
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Retail and Commercial Development

- Invest in areas around the square to improve business and housing variety, public safety, and overall aesthetics.
- Improve public space to encourage foot traffic and inspire building upkeep.
- Emphasize the historical significance and preservation of historical assets within the downtown area, including expanding local, state, and national designations.
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- Fill empty storefronts and vacant lots with unique local shops and food and beverage options.



Parks and Public Space

- Create a network of green spaces and public parks with amenities such as community gardens, picnic areas and kids play areas.
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- Build outdoor amenities like public seating, restrooms, water fountains, and more.
- Find ways to activate underutilized areas, such as alleys, vacant properties, and sidewalks.
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Arts, Entertainment and Events

- Create a marketing brand for the downtown area, and use that brand to tie downtown to the surrounding community.
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- Build on current successes by adding new activities and events, especially for children and families.
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Traffic and Transit

- Improve roadway safety for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists by implementing traffic closures on certain streets and during events, as well as exploring road rightsizing and traffic calming initiatives.
- Improve parking availability and management by upgrading lots with trees and landscaping, adding wayfinding signage to and from parking to destinations, and considering the construction of a public parking garage in the downtown area.
- Enhance accessibility by expanding and improving bus routes to the transit center and other key destinations.

Safety

- Improve perception of safety by partnering with service providers to address homelessness concerns and needs.
- Design streets with infrastructure to enable street closures and to support outdoor events.
- Define key pedestrian corridors and improve their streetscapes, shade canopy and lighting.
- Improve maintenance and cleanliness on sidewalks.

Housing Development

- Address rising rents and housing affordability through increased housing supply, mixed-use developments, and more residential options to foster a vibrant local community.
- Provide more housing options downtown, establishing a variety of housing stock that will appeal to many different residents' needs.

Culture

- Foster increased diversity and inclusion through the acknowledgement of history and increased opportunities for all Dentonites
- Protect/continue to embody what people love most about the feel of Denton: community pride, welcoming atmosphere, and historic scale.
- Celebrate and connect downtown to Denton's colleges and universities.
- Highlight the downtown culture within the broader Denton community and county



NEXT STEPS

Next Steps

- Case for Action video
- Phase Two engagement summary
 - Additional online engagement
 - Focus groups on topics identified through engagement
- Development of actions, catalyst projects, and pilot projects