Urban Land Institute San Francisco
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Concord

DOWNTOWN CONCORD

Technical Assistance Panel

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Urban Land Institute

San Francisco
Serving the Greater Bay Area

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About ULI

The Urban Land Institute's mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. Founded in 1936, ULI is a nonprofit organization of land use professionals with over 32,000 members in 95 countries (www.uli.org), including over 2,076 in the San Francisco District Council (sf.uli.org). ULI San Francisco serves the greater Bay Area with pragmatic land use expertise and education.

About ULI TAPs

The ULI San Francisco Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) Program is an extension of the national Urban Land Institute (ULI) Advisory Services Panel Program. ULI's Advisory Services Panels provide strategic advice to clients (public agency, nonprofit organization or nonprofit developer) on complex land use and real estate development issues. The program links clients to the knowledge and experience of ULI and its membership.

Since 1947, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) has harnessed the technical expertise of its members to help communities solve difficult land use, development, and redevelopment challenges. Over 600 panels have been conducted in 12 countries. Since 1996, the Urban Land Institute San Francisco (ULIsf) has adapted this model for use at the local level, assisting 25 Bay Area cities.

TAPs include extensive preliminary briefings followed by a one-and-a-half-day intensive working session in the client's community. A detailed briefing package and guided discussion is provided by the client to each TAP participant prior to the TAP working sessions. In the working sessions our expert panelists tour the study area either by bus or on foot, interview stakeholders, and address a set of questions proposed by the client about a specific development issue or policy barrier within a defined geographic area. The product of these sessions is a community presentation and this report. This report presents highlights of the panel's responses to the client's questions as well as contains a diverse set of ideas and suggestions.

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Figure 1: Concord Regional Location

Downtown Concord Technical Assistance Panel

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Alan Talansky, Chair, TAP Committee

City of Concord Participants

Carol Johnson, Planning Manager

John Montagh, Economic Development and Housing Manager

Joan Ryan, Project Manager, Downtown Specific Plan

Introduction

Context

The City of Concord, with approximately 122,067 residents (2010 U.S. Census), is the largest city in Contra Costa County. Concord encompasses approximately 19,840 acres or 31 square miles of land. The City limits extend to the Mallard Reservoir in the north and beyond Ygnacio Valley Road in the south. The eastern boundary of the City is defined by the extent of the former Concord Naval Weapons Station (CNWS).

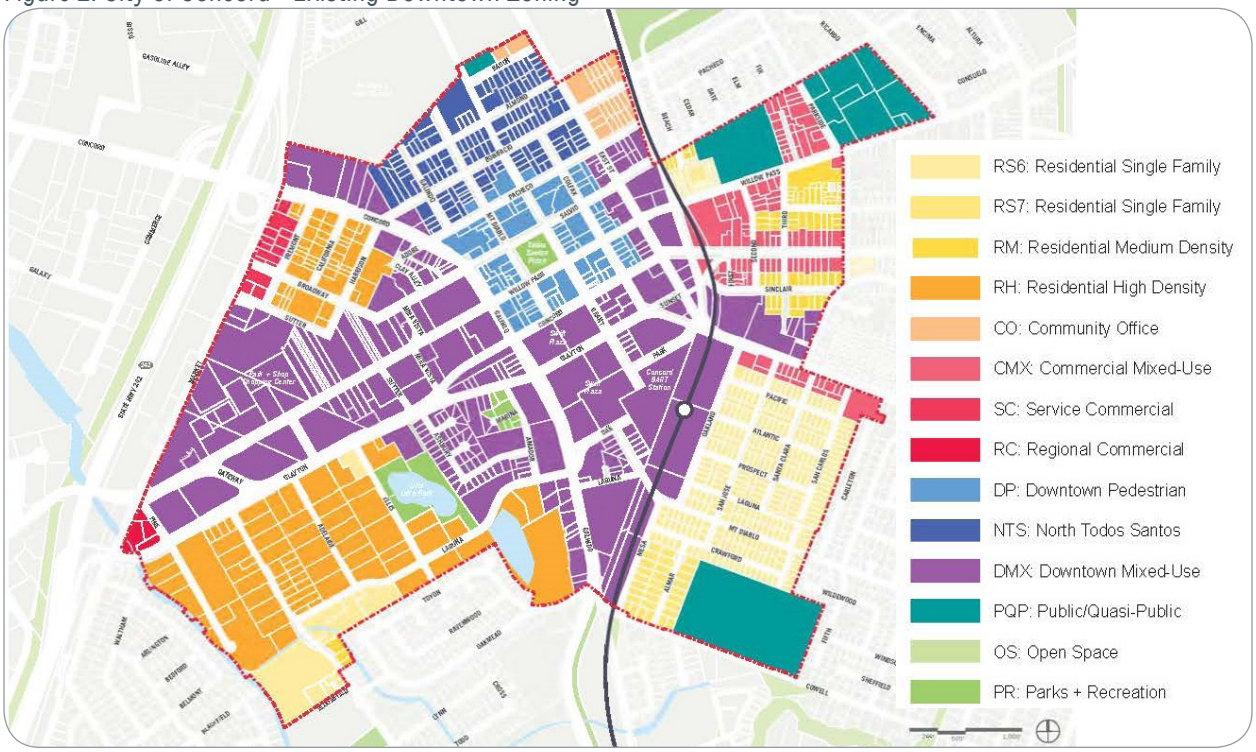
Concord has an important role in the regional economy given the assets of the City, including its central location, good transportation options, affordable housing and a job center with a skilled labor force. Although the region is economically competitive, these assets provide the potential to increase Concord's presence as a major center for the region.

The City of Concord is made up of several different neighborhoods that are knitted together through streets, open space, and urban form. Various densities, types and mixture of land uses such as residential, office, commercial, industrial, and open space give each neighborhood its defining character and identity.

Neighborhoods are important to the City's family-oriented lifestyle, which balances Concord's gracious early California heritage with vigorous, thoughtful development.

Much of the City of Concord's land use pattern can be traced to its evolution as a primary job center within the County, with the focus on Downtown and subsequently on the radiating transportation corridors. Most of the residential development in the City is low density, single family housing, and much of the commercial development is retail and office related. Business park and light industrial uses are located adjacent to transportation infrastructure. Schools and parks are distributed throughout the residential neighborhoods in the City.

Figure 2: City of Concord - Existing Downtown Zoning



Major transportation arterials transecting Concord include Highway 4, Highway 242, and Interstate 680 (Figure 3: City of Concord Regional Map). Highway 4 leads to and intersects with Interstate 80 near Hercules to the west, and connects to the cities of Antioch and Brentwood to the east. Highway 242 runs north-south, and serves primarily as the connector between Highway 4 and Interstate 680.

The median home value in Concord is $453,00, compared to $470,000 for Contra Costa County as a whole. Concord home values have gone up 21.8% over the past year, compared to an increase of 18.5% for Contra Costa County (Source: Zillow). The mean household income in 2013 was $83,996 (Claritas, 2013)

Transit in the City consists of the Downtown Concord and North Concord BART Stations and County Connection. The Concord BART Station is located along the "Yellow" line, which begins at the Pittsburg/Bay Point Station and ends at the San Francisco International Airport Station. The County Connection operates 30 weekday bus routes (three of which also operate on weekends), seven weekend-only routes, and 25 select service routes within central Contra Costa County.

Downtown Concord

Downtown Concord offers many exciting opportunities for dining, shopping and entertainment as well as a thriving business environment. The focal point of the downtown is Todos Santos Plaza. This is a full city block of public open space located four blocks northwest of the BART station. Todos Santos Plaza served as the original public square in one of the earliest blocks of Concord, and was dedicated in 1869 by founders Don Salvio Pacheco, Don Fernando Pacheco and Don Francisco Galindo. It now serves the community as a gathering place for special events such as the Farmer's Market, Music at Noon, the Music and Market series and holiday celebrations.

The City has supported development of mixed-use projects that have combined retail, restaurant, office and entertainment uses in and around Salvio Pacheco Square, Todos Santos Plaza, BART Station, and the Brenden Theater. By including a combination of uses, these projects create an active street frontage and an urban building form in the core of the older downtown area. Recent residential projects near BART include Park Central (259 units), Renaissance (132 units; Phases 2 and 3; 179 remaining units), Wisteria (37 units under construction), and Centre Pointe (100 units).

Figure 3: City of Concord Regional Map

Team Assignment and Process

The City of Concord undertook the TAP process to examine the long-term future and strategies to spur new development in Downtown Concord.

The City specifically asked the Panel four questions that helped guide the analysis and final recommendations (See "Response to the City's Questions" on page 11):

1) What strategies and implementation measures are most important to include in the Downtown Specific Plan to catalyze development that strengthens downtown Concord, supports Concord's diverse communities, and achieves the city's goal of providing a broad range of housing options for people of all incomes? Specifically:

1a) How can Concord leverage the uniqueness of the Park'n'Shop commercial center that currently does not behave like a traditional regional center in that it competes directly with Downtown for unique and local serving business?

1b) How can Concord make Downtown attractive to a broader range of retail than just food?

1c) How can Concord attract a more diverse range of housing that addresses the middle ($1300-1700/mo.) and upper ($2800+/mo.) segments of the market?

2) Where to start? Which implementation activities need to happen first (pedestrian realm, traffic calming, vacant properties, etc.)?

The panelists hail from a wide variety of disciplines, bringing a range of perspectives to the assignment, including: market potential, land use and design, finance and development strategies, governance and policy, and implementation.

Stakeholders

Elected Officials

Tim Grayson, Mayor

Ron Leone, Vice Mayor

Edi E. Birsan, City Councilmember

Laura M. Hoffmeister, City Councilmember

Daniel C. Helix, City Councilmember

Community-Based Organizations

Joel Devalcourt, Greenbelt Alliance

Business Representatives

Todos Santos Business Association

Concord Chamber of Commerce

Concord Small Business Association

Monument Business Network

Property Owners

Jeff Woods, Owner of Salvio Pacheco Square

Ed Andrews, Owner of Peet's Building

Will Lund, Owner of Swift Plaza near BART

Paul Sinz, Property Manager at Park'N'Shop

Additional valuable insight and information was brought to the Panel by various City staff including:

Carol Johnson, Planning Manager

John Montagh, Economic Development and Housing Manager

Joan Ryan, Project Manager, Downtown Specific Plan

Victoria Walker, Director of Community and Economic Development

Stakeholder Input

What We Heard

Concord has an impassioned and wide-ranging group of stakeholders. The Panel had the opportunity to hear from numerous representatives, including city staff, community organizations, property owners, business representatives, and consultant firm Perkins + Will (Downtown Specific Plan authors). These conversations led to some common statements.

Common themes the Panel heard:

- Young and diverse demographic moving to Concord
- Would like to bring more Bay Area visitors to Concord
- Concord community supports higher-density growth
- Community wants downtown to become a vibrant destination
- Todos Santos Plaza gets a “wow” factor from first-time visitors
- Concern that Concord is not getting interest from developers
- Need to improve pedestrian "linkage" from BART to Todos Santos Plaza, especially along Grant Street
- Need more population downtown to support retail
- Parking structures near BART are underutilized
- Traffic pattern not ideal for downtown
- Park'N'Shop development has been a success
- Downtown vacancy rates are an issue

Strengths

- Concord is an authentic place
- Recent examples of sensitive infill development (Park Central/Renaissance/Salvio Pacheco Square)
- BART Station
- Todos Santos Plaza at its core
- Good Walkability Score
- Plenty of available parking
- Sophisticated business owners in key sites
- Strategically located publicly-controlled parcels
- Pro-development community
- Strong daytime population

Challenges

Below is a summary of the major challenges that the team heard.

Concord's Identity Crisis. Downtown Concord currently suffers from an identity crisis and lack of branding. What and where exactly is Downtown Concord? The boundaries of Downtown are not clearly defined, nor is there ample wayfinding to the "core" of Concord. There also exists a contradictory personality within Downtown Concord - is it attempting to be a suburban enclave, or a vibrant and emerging urban destination?

Planning + Policy Delay. While many cities in the region have been proactive in creating policy and planning initiatives to encourage development in their historic downtowns, Concord has been half a step in creating similar policy.

Transportation Issues. Downtown Concord's streets focus on accommodating high-speed through traffic at the expense of destination trips and other modes. Its street design standards, signal management and performance metrics are more appropriate for an auto-oriented place than a walkable center.

Safety Perceptions. Safety perceptions regarding the homeless and property crime exist in Downtown Concord.

Poor Wayfinding. The wayfinding signs that do exist in Downtown Concord are outdated, don't display a current location, and don't give much useful direction to Downtown's amenities. This is also present in the lack of a clear connection from the Concord BART Station and surrounding neighborhoods to Todos Santos Plaza.

Concord Reuse Project Area Competition. There is major competition for new housing to be located at the former Concord Naval Weapons Station site. This would further expand the suburbanization of Concord, and move future residents farther away from the Downtown core.

Office Market Stagnant. The office market in Concord is currently underutilized and will not be a major driver of future Downtown development.

Perceptions

After spending several hours speaking with community stakeholders, below is a summary of some of the perceptions that exist in Concord.

1) Perceived mixed personality – one foot in conventional suburbia, the other foot in a walkable, mixed-use place.

2) Perceived traffic issues/timing/bunching

3) Perceived lack of sufficient parking

4) Perceived safety/homeless enclave

5) Perceived inactivity during off-peak hours and weekends

6) Perceived lack of openness to new, younger residents' interests

7) Perceived lack of interest by younger residents to locate here

8) Perceived lower quality of school district compared to neighboring communities

9 Misperception of Concord's assets and therefore lack of interest by developers

Regional Market Context

Macro Forces. Macroeconomic forces favor development in highly-amenitized inner suburban communities like Concord. The demographics, lifestyle preferences, and access for transportation options is a key driver.

Market Dynamics. The San Francisco Bay Area economy and market dynamics will place strong demands on inner East Bay communities over the next three to five years, with a particular focus on infill residential growth.

Location, Location, Location. Central Contra Costa County, and specifically Concord, with its proximity and excellent transportation links to major centers of employment, is well positioned to benefit from this market demand.

Unique Market. Concord is unique in having excellent infrastructure for the creation of an urban/suburban live/work/play/shop environment that is highly desired by the market, while also having attractive development sites and a community receptive to new development.

Economic + Market Cycle. Economic and market cycles are of unpredictable but limited duration. Concord needs to take advantage of the current favorable development environment, especially for residential use.

Downtown Focus. Immediate focus on downtown development potentials will avoid the diversion of attention that will come from development implementation of the former Concord Naval Weapons Station.

Community Vision

After spending several hours speaking with community stakeholders, the following community vision emerged.

Branding Concord. Downtown Concord needs to identify it's brand. So, what exactly is Downtown Concord?

- It's not a grape, or something about the midnight ride of Paul Revere
- It's NOT Walnut Creek, not Bishop Ranch, not Sunvalley Mall
- Concord = "con" [together] + "cord" [heart] = hearts joined together in harmony
- Downtown Concord is the true heart of Diablo Valley

Downtown Concord's Brand. What exactly should be Downtown Concord's Brand?

Local and authentic. The Farmer's Market at Todos Santos Plaza, locally-owned restaurants, pubs, and retail, as well as neighborhood-serving shops aimed towards locals.

Family Fun. Great activities for kids throughout the week and on weekends; Keep the Plaza active.

Affordable for young singles, families, and boomers. Concord is relatively affordable for the types of livable amenities Downtown has to offer. Continue to build housing at a variety of income levels, including market-rate, below market, and senior housing.

Walkable and safe. Leafy, interesting streets that are both safe and engaging to pedestrians.

Quirky and unexpected. Unique shops, events, markets, and pop-ups in and around Todos Santos Plaza.

Great Value. Free activities available to the community as well as discount stores such as 99 Ranch and Fry's nearby.

Town Center. Downtown Concord is destined to be the true center of Central Contra Costa County. All of the ingredients currently exist to make this a reality.

Easily Accessible. Easy access by car, BART, bike, walking, and bus. No need for a trade-off between cars and bike/pedestrian access. Concord has the capacity to have it all.

Open for Business. It's easy to set up a new business in Concord, and space is available.

Everyone is Welcome! The full diversity of the San Francisco Bay Area is represented in Concord.

Response to the City's Questions

Once the Panelists had familiarized themselves with the views of the stakeholders, read the background material and seen the study sites, they decided to reframe the City's original questions.

Question 1. What strategies and implementation measures are most important to include in the Downtown Specific Plan to catalyze development that strengthens downtown Concord, supports Concord's diverse communities, and achieves the city's goal of providing a broad range of housing options for people of all incomes? Specifically:

Question 1a. How can Concord leverage the uniqueness of the Park'n'Shop commercial center that currently does not behave like a traditional regional center in that it competes directly with Downtown for unique and local serving business?

Due to the current success of the Park'N'Shop commercial center, the Panel does not recommend major changes to the site. An updated renovation of the building facades would clean up and modernize the look of the center at a relatively low cost. An extension of Salvio Street (Figure 4: Pavement to Parks Example) into the shopping center could create a temporary or permanent promenade and would enhance pedestrian access and safety to the site. A re-striping of the parking lot could replace any parking spaces removed by adding the extension of Salvio Street into the site. The re-striping of the parking lot could actually add spaces to the site, even after the Salvio Street extension.

Figure 4: Pavement to Parks Example (Salvio Street Extension)

Source: Rebar

Question 1b. How can Concord make Downtown attractive to a broader range of retail than just food?

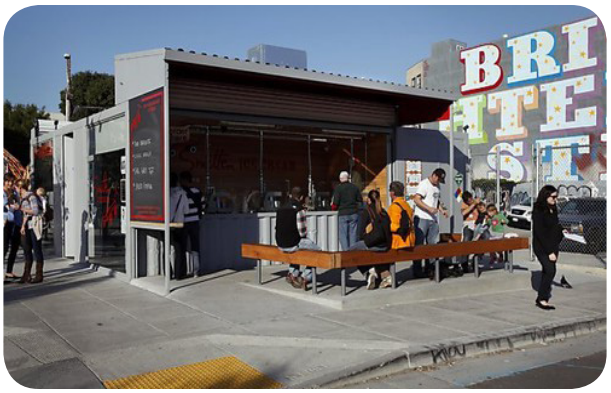
Building a successful retail district is a gradual step-by-step process in which retail visitation and expenditures rise to support a larger number of and stronger retailers. Downtown Concord is still in a relatively early phase of revival, in which food and beverage, entertainment, art galleries and other highly specialized and entrepreneurial businesses are typically supportable. A broader range of retailer categories, such as apparel, will require considerable further strengthening of the district. The downtown retail district is on a positive trajectory. However, steps can be taken to speed up this process. Several immediate steps could be taken to strengthen the area and to eventually lead to a broader range of retail categories:

- Recruit a retail chain destination to draw in shoppers from around the region to Downtown
- Infill residential development in Downtown will allow for a demand for other services that currently do not exist (i.e. salons, drug stores, home goods, etc.)
- Curate and encourage pop-up stores and shops in and around Todos Santos Plaza to encourage permanent tenancy
- Add more programming in Todos Santos Plaza on the weekends to bring more people downtown (Farmer's Market, Movie in the Park)
- While focusing on attracting retail other than just food, targeting new unique restaurants could be successful - i.e., Hop Grenade, Pig & Pickle ("brewers row")
- Improve pedestrian access for existing potential patrons surrounding the downtown, including BART riders, office workers, medical center employees and nearby residents
- Improve the overall pedestrian environment downtown

Question 1c. How can Concord attract a more diverse range of housing that addresses the middle ($1300-1700/mo.) and upper ($2800+/mo.) segments of the market?

For Downtown Concord to thrive, it needs more people living in it. Adding new residents would help create a new sense of community and would help support new and existing businesses. A variety of housing for all generations and income levels will be important to create a vibrant downtown.

Demand for market-rate housing is just beginning to surge in the East Bay in response to strong regional job growth. Near-term demand is particularly strong for rental housing at this time. A substantial number of young "Echo Boomers" are entering the workforce and they prefer rental apartments in urban environments. Older "Baby Boomers" that become "empty nesters" are also a rapidly growing market segment that could be targeted. Downtown sites might also be appealing to developers of senior living facilities. Concord is well positioned in a prime central Contra Costa location to attract near-term high-density development, given its location, BART service, developable sites and a favorable development environment. The City should encourage property owners with developable sites to market to developers and then should facilitate their development approvals. Developers can be expected to target middle and upper segments of income to reside in their buildings.



Question 2. Where to start? Which implementation activities need to happen first? (pedestrian realm, traffic calming, vacant properties, etc.)

The Panel developed a number of important "small" moves to kick-start Downtown Concord development.

1) Define Downtown Concord and create new brand

- Push BART to fund Station Wayfinding Concept Plan to better connect neighborhoods and downtown district
- Highlight downtown with directional auto and pedestrian signs
- Integrate public art and art-related workshops into Downtown
- Create a new downtown graphic/website

2) Improve access and orientation for auto drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists

- Re-time the signals on through streets to slow traffic
- Public realm investments
- Provide pedestrian access to Park'n'Shop off Salvio Street
- Demonstration bike lanes and connections at Concord Boulevard and other connections to Iron Horse and canal trails
- Accommodate pedestrian phase by default at all downtown signals

3) Develop multi-family housing on vacant or under-utilized sites.

4) Form Parking/Downtown Improvement District

- Would be managed by Todos Santos Business Association
- Leverage ample existing parking spaces
- Offer shuttle with 15 minute headways – linked destinations between BART station, Todos Santos, John Muir Medical complex and Diablo Valley College
- Ombudsperson for homeless population

5) Increase activity and destinations in Downtown

- Curate pop-up retail program with short-term leases near Swift Plaza @ Grant Street
- Retail kiosks in Todos Santos Plaza
- Target new unique restaurants -- i.e. Hop Grenade; Pig and Pickle
- Add more programming in park –farmer's markets on weekends

6) Locate Justice Center to existing vacant building

- Near Police station (do not wait for new structure on redevelopment parcel)

Implementation Strategy

In support of the strategies developed to address Concord's key questions, the Panel developed its priority list of development and transportation implementation strategies.

The immediate and near-term development opportunities focus on taking advantage of the current market to develop luxury residential along the major pedestrian paths. Sites along the streets connecting Todos Santos Plaza with the BART station and the Grant Street retail corridor offer attractive locations for walkable, transit-oriented, retail-rich apartment communities. The current economics support this land use and brings new residents close to the downtown amenities.

Those properties that are thought to be currently available are listed as immediate opportunities, as these are ideal sites. Other sites that may take time to obtain control of are listed as near-term opportunities. The majority of these are sites controlled by the successor to the redevelopment agency.

With additional residents in the downtown, the long-term development opportunities allow the implementation of continued residential development and the incorporation of targeted retail growth.

Immediate Development Implementation

Immediate development opportunities exist in Downtown Concord at the following sites (see Figure 5: Immediate Development).

- Small scale infill (1A, 1C, 1E)
- Marginal Properties Site (1B)
- Retail Kiosks at Todos Santos Plaza & Grant Street (1D)
- RREEF Site on Grant Street (1F)
- Swift Plaza (1G)
- Renaissance Phase 2 (1H)

Near-Term Development Implementation

Near-term development opportunities shown below consist of the following sites that are part of the successor to the former redevelopment agency (see Figure 6: Near-Term Development).

- Vacant lot at NW corner of Port Chicago Highway and Willow Pass Road (2A)
- Wells Fargo Site (2B)
- SE corner of Concord Boulevard and Grant Street (2C)
- BART Station Sites (2D, 2E)

Long-Term Development Implementation

Long-term development opportunities shown below are potential sites that could be prime for development in future years (see Figure 7: Long-Term Development).

- Vacant lot at SE corner of Salvio and East Streets (3A)
- Masonic Temple Site (3B)
- Oak Street Site (3C, 3D)

Figure 5: Immediate Development

Figure 6: Near-Term Development

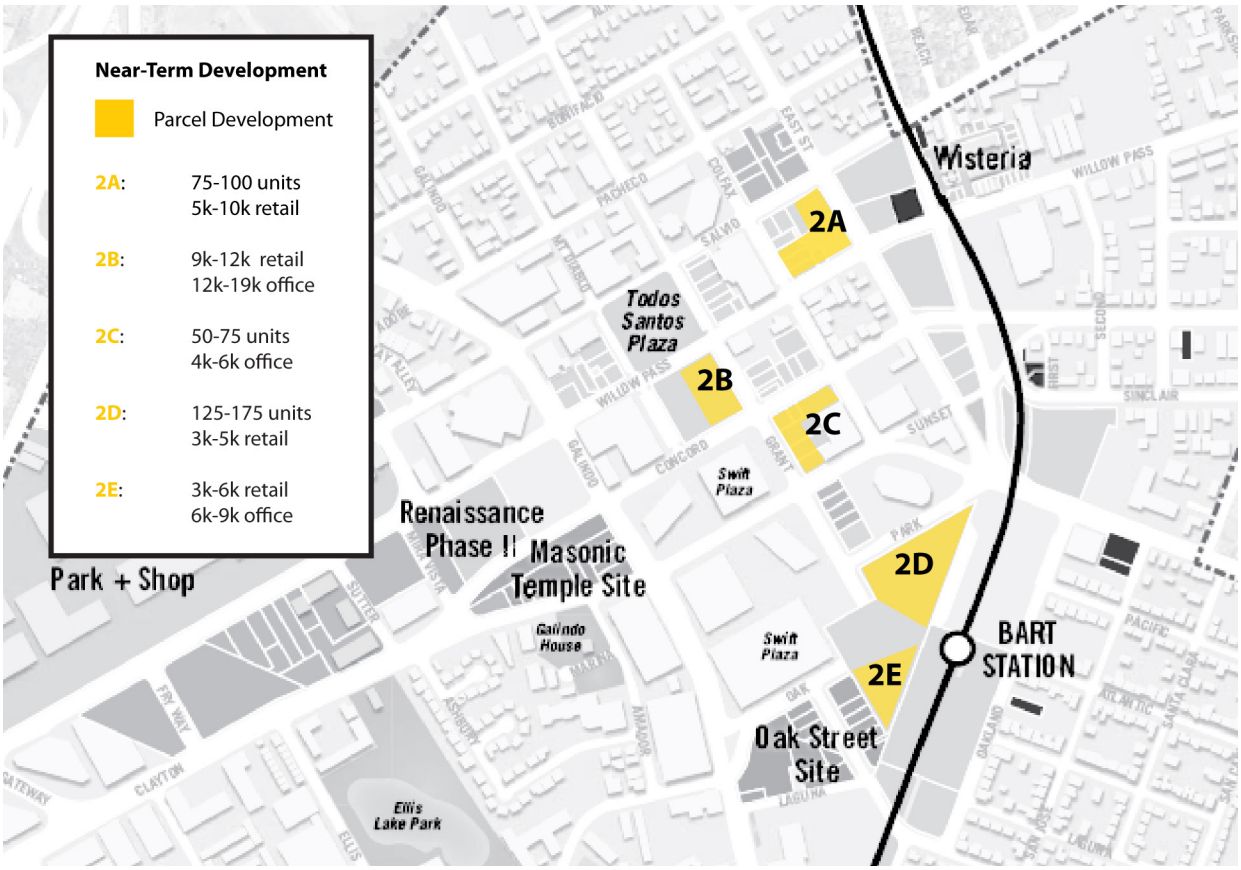


Figure 7: Long-Term Development

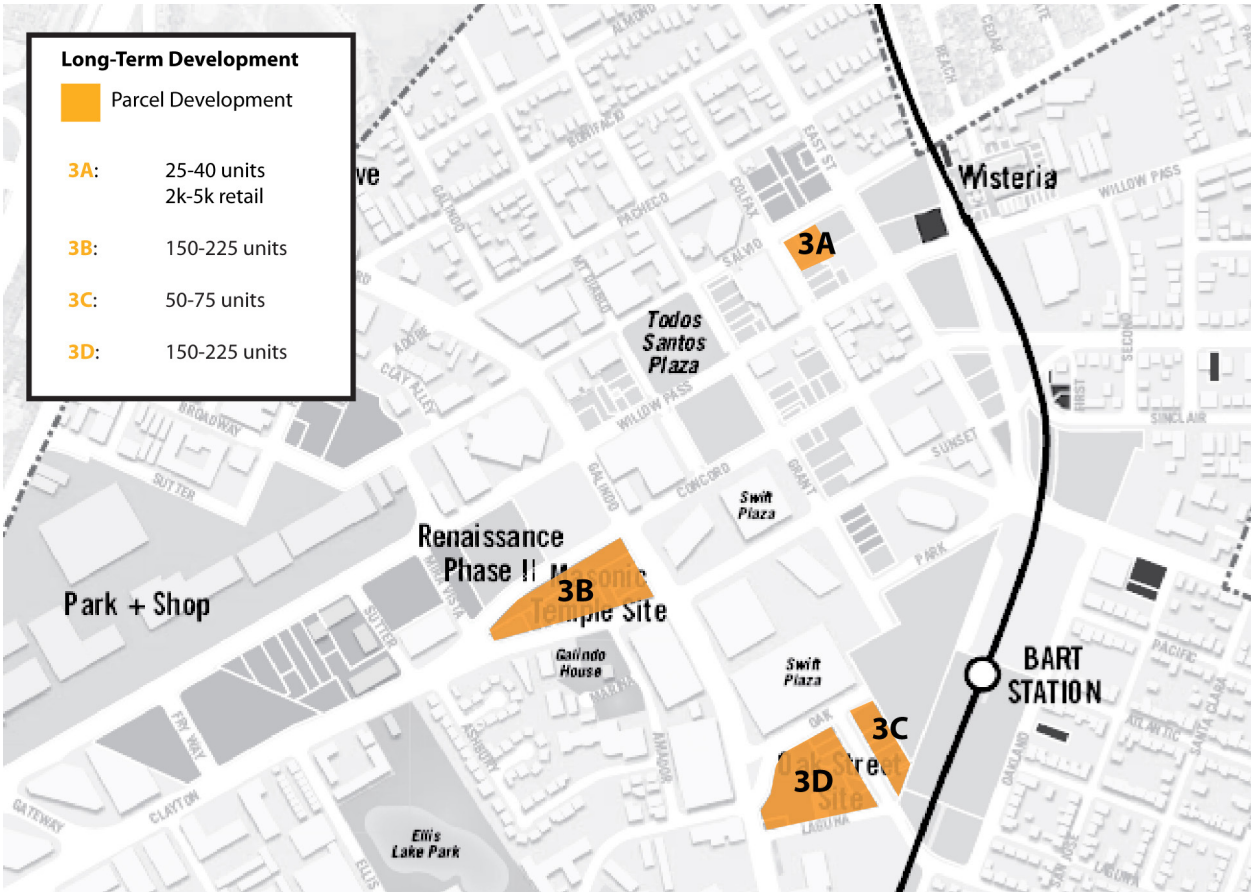


Figure 8: Overall Development

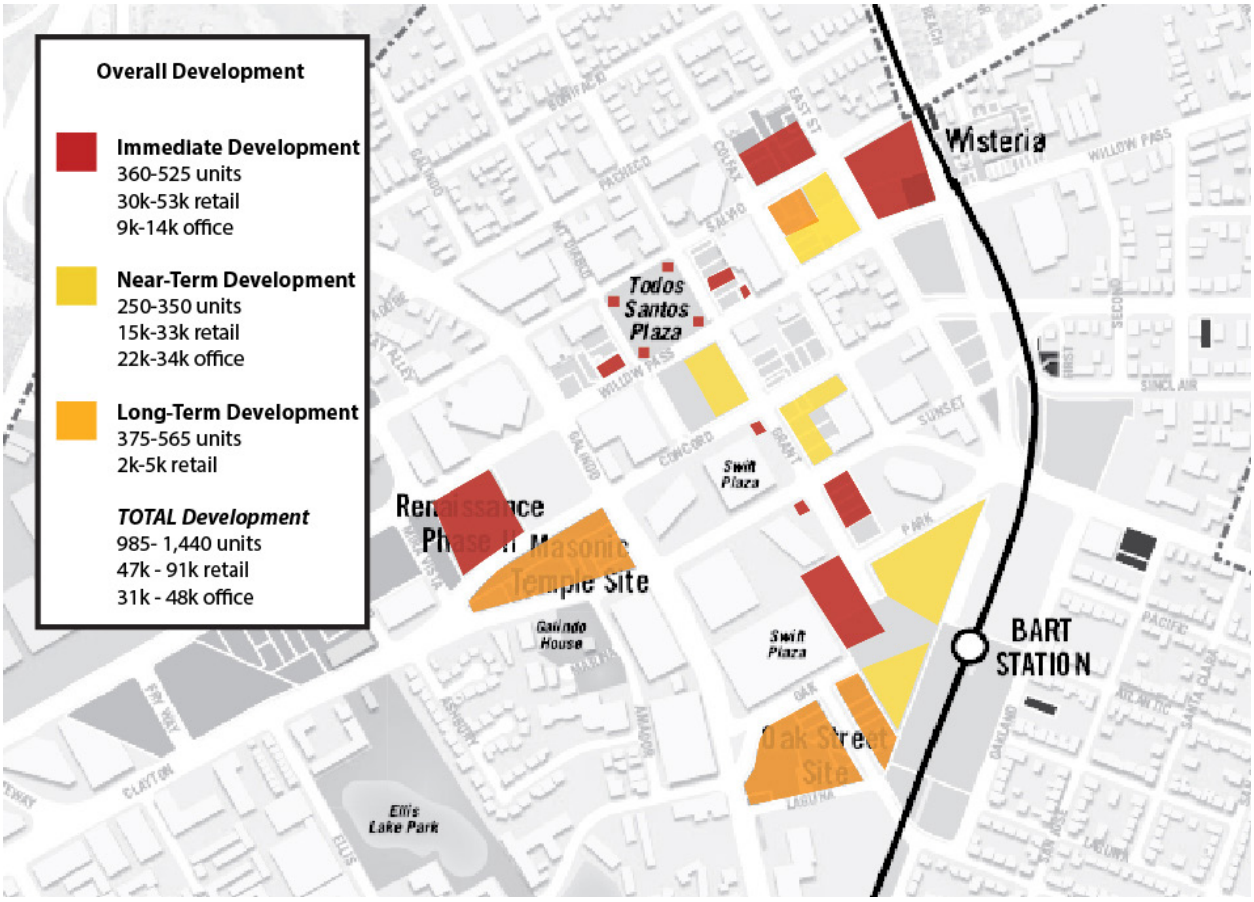
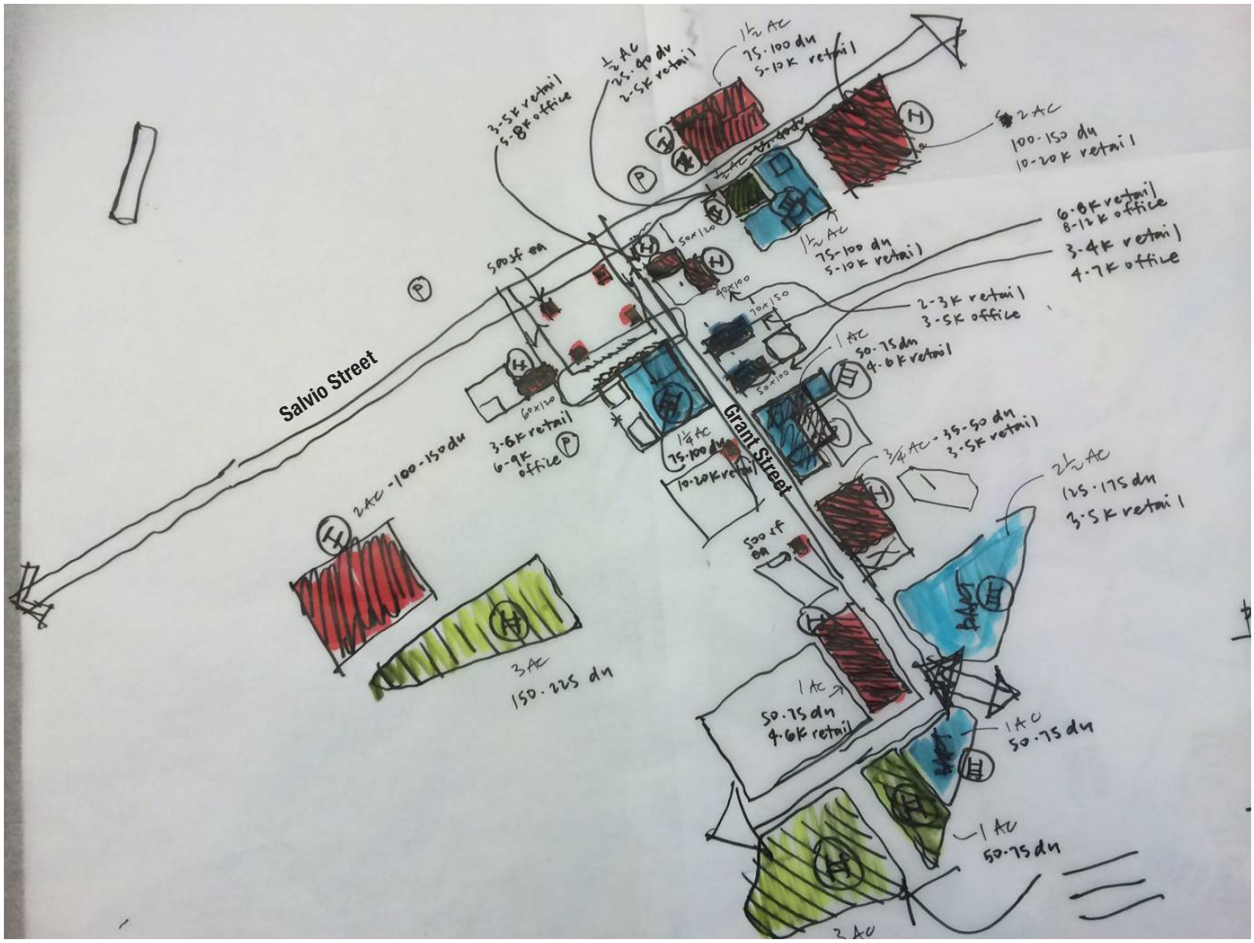
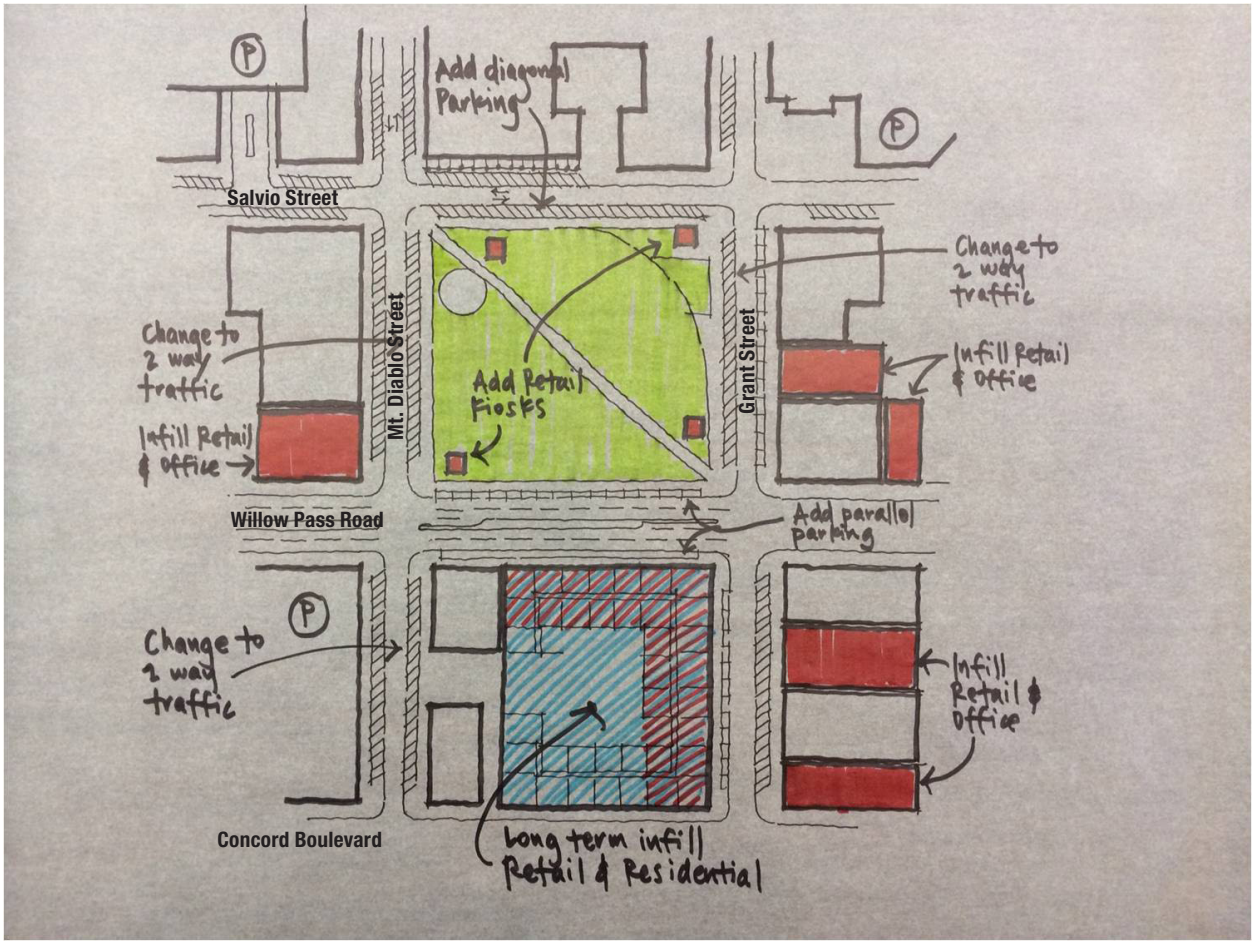


Figure 9: Illustrative Development





Transportation Improvement Implementation

Multi-modal transportation improvements are necessary for Downtown Concord to be a safe, vibrant, and quality place to live, work, and enjoy leisure. Improvements for the following are described in this section:

- Bicycle Priorities
- Pedestrian Priorities
- Roadway Priorities
- Parking Priorities
- BART Station Priorities
- Transit Priorities

Bicycle Priorities

Downtown Concord is currently cut-off from the regional bike paths , lanes, and trails. As shown in Figure 9: Proposed Future Bike Lanes & Paths, downtown would connect with the rest of the regional system, including Iron Horse and Contra Costa Canal trails. The following bicycle improvements were identified for Concord:

Bike Lanes

- Concord Boulevard/Clayton Road from Oakhurst Street to Detroit Avenue
- Clayton Road/Sunset Avenue from Detroit Avenue to Concord Boulevard
- Detroit Avenue from Clayton Road/Concord Boulevard to Contra Costa Canal Trail Spur
- Salvio Street from Port Chicago Highway Path to Olivera Road and Reuse Project
- Grant Street from BART Station to Willow Pass Road

Bike Paths

- Port Chicago Highway from Salvio Street to Sunset Street
- Contra Costa Canal Trail to Detroit Avenue
- BART right-of-way from Systron Drive to BART Station to Port Chicago Highway path

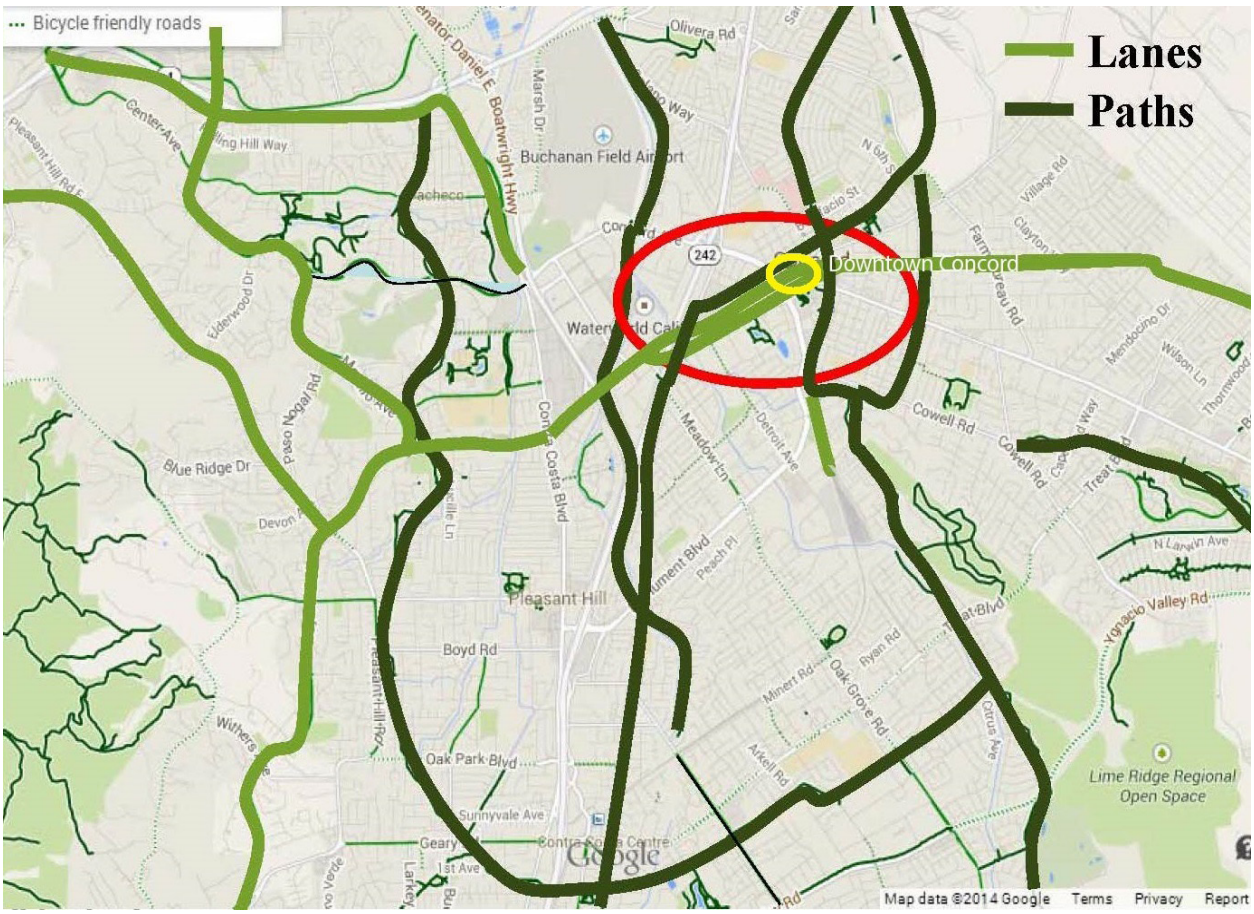
Neighborhood Greenways

- Oak and Laguna Streets between Detroit Avenue and BART Station
- Salvio Street from Port Chicago Highway to Fry's

Source: Jeff Tumlin

Source: East Bay Regional Parks District

Figure 9: Proposed Future Bike Lanes & Paths

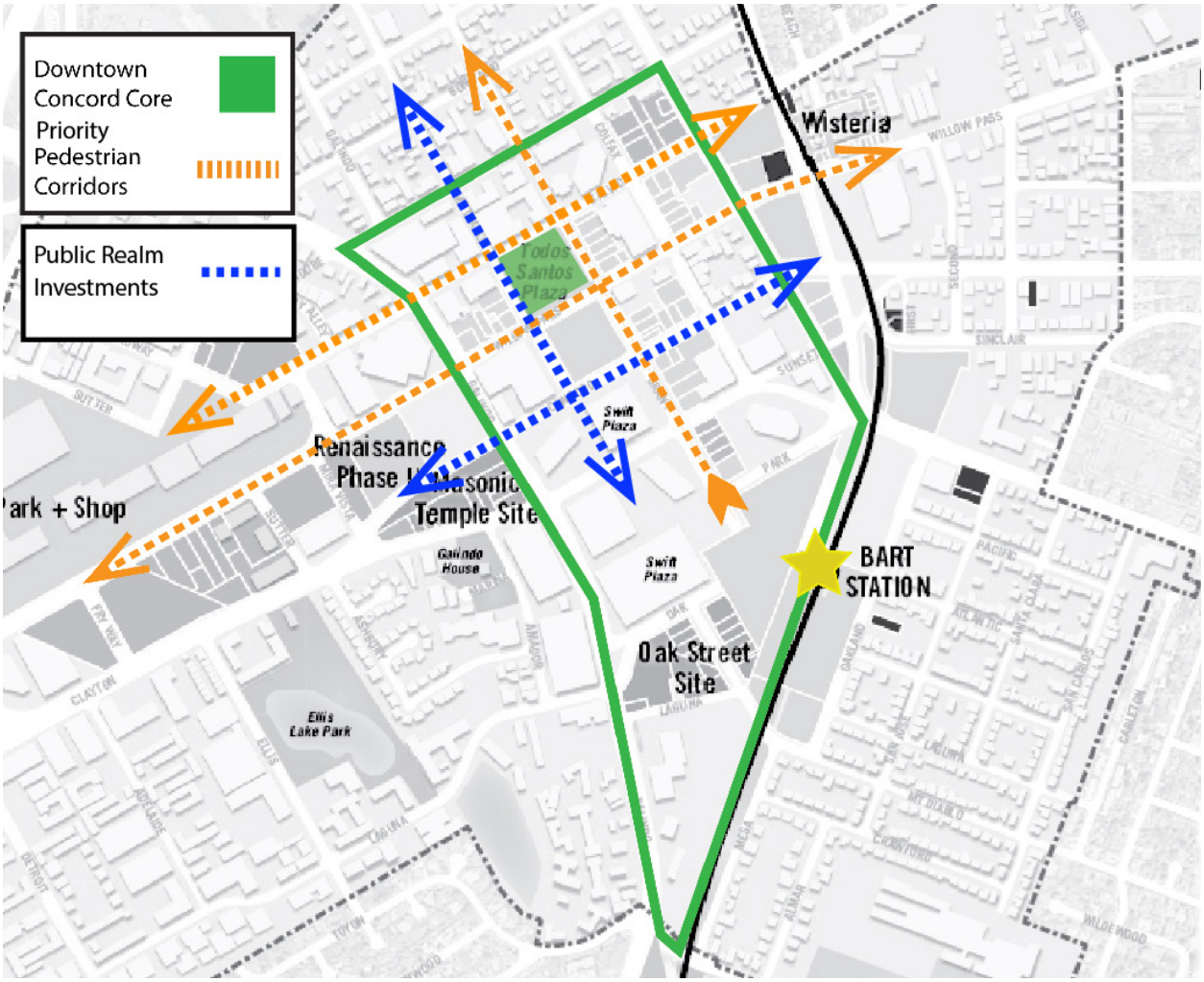


Pedestrian Priorities

Downtown Concord currently suffers from wayfinding issues and lack of a pedestrian connection from BART. As shown in Figure 10: Proposed Pedestrian Corridors, future prioritized pedestrian corridors would connect BART with Todos Santos Plaza and the Park'N'Shop center, while creating an inviting and pleasurable pedestrian experience in Downtown. The following pedestrian priorities were identified:

- Public realm investments along all streets surrounding Todos Santos Plaza
- Focus on activating Grant Street through coffee carts, outdoor seating, and kiosk retail
- Allow pedestrians to walk down Grant Street without having to push the walk button to cross street
- Accommodate pedestrian crossings in all signal phases in Specific Plan area, at least during daytime
- Sidewalk widening along Willow Pass Road, Concord Boulevard, and Clayton Road

Figure 10: Proposed Pedestrian Corridors



Roadway Priorities

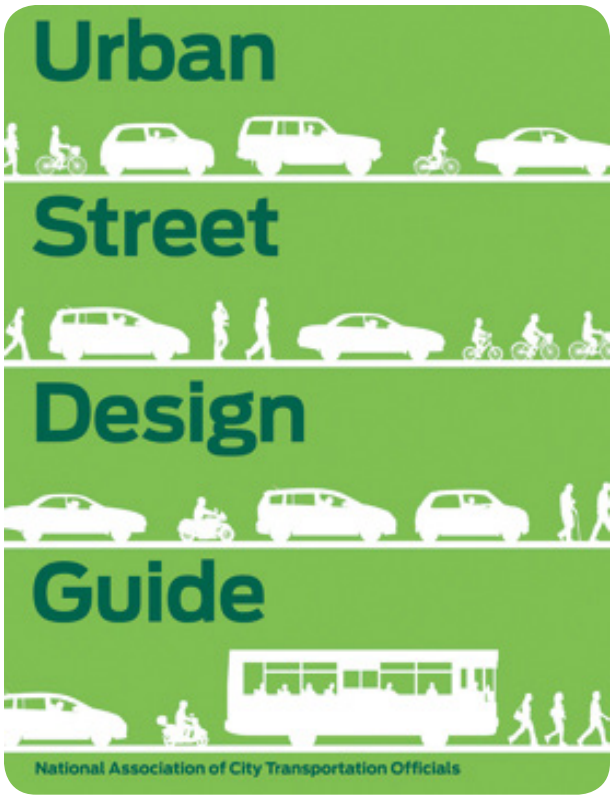
Downtown Concord's surrounding roadways serve as fast thruways for automobiles, and don't accommodate multi-modal forms of transportation. The following roadway priorities were identified:

Near-Term

- Re-time signals for quicker cycle and better progression
- Convert Grant Street and Mt. Diablo Street to two-way traffic between Concord Boulevard and Salvio Street
- Adopt National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide for use on all streets
- Eliminate Levels-of-Service (LOS) thresholds for downtown environmental analysis

Long-Term

- Extend Salvio Street into the Park'N'Shop center



Parking Priorities

Downtown Concord currently has a surplus of parking. There is no need for any additional parking. There are, however, numerous priorities to improve the current parking situation Downtown:

Near-Term

- Allow off-site parking arrangements to meet any commercial parking requirements administratively
- Delegate the management of parking to Downtown/ Todos Santos Business Association
- Lease surplus parking from private owners and make available to public
- Valet parking for Thursday evening peak

Long-Term

- Install parking wayfinding and real-time availability information

BART Station Priorities

The following priorities could be implemented in the near-term to improve the current situation at the BART Station:

- Partner with BART to get Concord Station prioritized in upcoming round of major station improvements
- Prioritize pedestrian arrival at Grant Street

Transit Priorities

The following transit-related priorities could be implemented in the near-term to improve the current situation in Concord: (see Figure 11: Transit Opportunities)

Near-Term

- Partner with Diablo Valley College, John Muir Medical Center, Todos Santos Business Association and County Connection to rebrand and improve frequency on Line 20. Run buses every 15 minutes all day to match the BART schedule

Long-Term

- Consider rerouting Line 314 between John Muir Medical Center, Concord BART and Pleasant Hill BART via Monument Boulevard and improve headway to match BART schedule

Figure 11: Transit Opportunities

ULIsf Participants

Jeff Tumlin, Principal, Nelson/Nygaard
Concord TAP Chair. Jeffrey Tumlin is an owner and director of strategy at Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, a San Francisco-based transportation planning and engineering firm that focuses on sustainable mobility. For more than twenty years, he has led station area, downtown, citywide, and campus plans, and delivered various lectures and classes in 20 U.S. states and five other countries. These projects have won awards from the U.S. General Services Administration, Institute of Transportation Engineers, American Planning Association, American Society of Landscape Architects, Congress for the New Urbanism, and Urban Land Institute. He is the author of Sustainable Transportation: Tools for Creating Healthy, Vibrant and Resilient Communities, published by Wiley in 2012.

Alan Billingsley, Principal, Billingsley Interests. Mr. Billingsley has spent an over 30-year career in investment advisory services and research for the real estate industry as an urban economist. He recently retired from RREEF (now Deutsche Asset and Private Wealth Management, a part of Deutsche Bank) after 13 years, where he served as Head of Americas Research. He managed a large team who provided the basis for the firm's investment strategy. Prior to RREEF, Mr. Billingsley had 20 years of experience in all forms of real estate development and investment analysis, including work for both public and private sector clients. Before joining RREEF, he was a Managing Partner with Sedway Group (now CBRE), a real estate and urban economics consulting firm with a staff of approximately 30 people, and with offices in San Francisco and Los Angeles. Prior to this, Mr. Billingsley served as a Principal with Economics Research Associates (now AECOM) where he served for nearly 10 years in its Los Angeles, Chicago and San Francisco offices. He began his real estate career with RCLCO. He is an active member of the Urban Land Institute at both national and local levels, is past-President and member of the board of the local chapter of Lambda Alpha International; is past-President of the local chapter of the Counselors of Real Estate; is a member emeritus of the Research Task Force at ICSC; is active in several civic and educational organizations and is an outside Director for a major international design firm. He is a former member of NCREIF and PREA. He is a frequent speaker at industry events and has authored numerous articles in real estate journals. Mr. Billingsley holds an M.A. in Architecture and Urban Planning from UCLA.

Will Fleissig, President, Communitas Development, Inc. Will Fleissig has over thirty years' experience in real estate development, public finance, urban design and environmental stewardship. He founded Communitas Development & Advisory Services to generate inclusive solutions for urban citizens. He has successfully managed the planning and development of diverse projects located in San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Jose, Boulder, Denver, Washington, D.C., Boston and Cambridge. Mr. Fleissig also served in the public sector as the Director of Planning and Development for the City of Boulder, CO, and as the Director of Downtown Planning and Development for Mayor Federico Peña in Denver, where he led the city's efforts to revitalize the historic Lower Downtown and Central Platte Valley districts. Previously, Mr. Fleissig directed the planning of many prominent TOD projects, including the North Station Development Plan in Boston, MA for the BRA; Kendall Square/Cambridge Center Master Development Plan in Cambridge, MA for Boston Properties and the CRA; and the Denver Union Terminal Master Development Plan for the City of Denver and RTD. Mr. Fleissig is Co-Founder of the non-profit TransitCommunities.org, and a board member for Reconnecting America and the Center for Transit Oriented Development. He received a B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania; a B.Arch in urban design from the City College of New York, and an M.P.A. with an emphasis in public finance from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

Chris Haegglund, Principal, BAR Architects. Chris Haegglund, a Principal at BAR, brings over 25 years of experience designing high-quality mixed-use, multifamily residential, retail and resort facilities. Currently, Chris is working on several mixed-use and multifamily projects in San Francisco, including the high-profile Seawall 330 project in conjunction with Snohetta, a 2.3 acre mixed-use development adjacent to the new Golden State Warriors Stadium, Alta Laguna a 330-unit multifamily project currently under construction and 99 Rausch, a 112 unit development over neighborhood serving retail. Chris also recently completed work on the design of 38 Dolores, a mixed-use development for The Prado Group targeted for LEED Gold. He has worked closely on successful mixed-use, multifamily residential and hospitality projects with national developers including Equity Residential, Wood Partners, Federal Realty, Related California, Grosvenor, The Irvine Company, DMB, Hines, and Maguire Properties.

Kathleen Livermore, AICP, Retired Planning Manager, City of San Leandro, Currently, Contract Planner, City of Alameda. Kathleen Livermore, retired as San Leandro's Planning Manager in June 2010. She has a master's in City and Regional Planning from UC Berkeley and has over 29 years working for local government in the SF Bay Area. Kathleen was the Project Manager for San Leandro's Downtown TOD Strategy and has worked on various General Plan Updates and Housing Element implementation strategies to increase densities in context sensitive locations. She has been the CEQA coordinator for various cities and brings that experience to the sphere of large and complex land use entitlement applications.

Anu Natarajan, Council Member City of Fremont. Anu Natarajan earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Architecture and a Masters degree in Urban Design and Planning from the University of Washington. Her professional experience includes working as an architect, public agency planner, and as an urban planning consultant. Through a community-based planning process, she believes in creating well-designed, sustainable, and livable communities, which is essential to fostering economic growth.

Paul Ring, Vice President of Development, The Core Companies. Mr. Ring manages the development of urban infill residential and commercial communities in the San Francisco Bay Area. At The Core Companies, he oversees the acquisition, entitlement, design and marketing of luxury apartments, tax-credit affordable housing, and for-sale homes. He was previously the Director of Operations at the San Francisco office of a multinational parking consulting and structural engineering firm focusing on urban mixed use design.

Cameron Mueller, Urban Planner, AECOM. Cameron Mueller is an Urban Planner at AECOM with 5 years of experience. Cameron's experience includes master planning, comprehensive community planning, and policy development. He has worked on a variety of strategic planning efforts. His experience and skills include policy analysis and development, land use planning, data collection and analysis, organizing and managing community involvement efforts, and writing plans and implementation strategies. Cameron has a variety of public and private sector experience, contributing to a deep and thorough understanding of the planning and development process.

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