Agenda

Existing Conditions Review

• Existing Land Use + Policy Framework
• Downtown Framework, Built Form + Street Network
• Opportunity Sites
Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan Area
Existing Land Use + Policy Framework

Land Use Patterns, 2005 General Plan, Draft 2030 General Plan, Zoning
Existing Land Uses

- Mix of retail, commercial, civic, religious, industrial and residential uses

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Land Use Category</th>
<th>Area in Acres</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
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<td>Vacant/Other</td>
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Existing Land Uses
Existing Land Uses
## 2005 General Plan

- Higher intensity permitted within the Central Downtown Parking District
- Additional residential density allowed in RHD areas

<table>
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<th>DESIGNATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Central Commercial (CC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Commercial (GC)</td>
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*Higher intensity permitted within the Central Downtown Parking District*
*Additional residential density allowed in RHD areas*
Relevant Policies in 2005 General Plan

- **Downtown Intensification** – Permit an increase in residential density for R-HD lands (up to 36.99 du/acre, or 42.99 du/acre for SROs)
- **Housing Development Pacing** – ensure jobs/housing balance to avoid becoming a bedroom community.
- **Housing Support** – A variety of moderate and high-density housing to support the downtown commercial area and provide housing for the employment base of the Westside Industrial Area.
- **Historic Preservation** – Encourage continued identification, designation, and maintenance of significant buildings, homes and landmark features.
- **Visitor Commercial** – Plan for additional visitor serving facilities within the CBD and in proximity to Highway 1.
- **Downtown Design Plan** – Prepare and implement a downtown design plan for the CBD that addresses elements for building appearance, street landscaping, circulation, sign control and parking.
- **Priority CBD Processing** – Provide priority development review processing for mixed use (residential/commercial) projects.
Draft 2030 General Plan

- Contains policies and guidance for Downtown
- Envisioned to grow substantially – 750 HH & 975 jobs
- Focus the most intensive redevelopment on underutilized sites
- Protect and enhance historic properties
- Strengthen retail and cultural destinations
- Broaden available housing options
- Create a “sense of place”
- Design the interface between the public and private realms
- Make pedestrian-friendly streets and urban environments
Existing Zoning

- Housing permitted in upper floors in CCA Zone
- Housing allowed by Special Use Permit (SUP) only in CT & CN Zones
- Housing not allowed in IG Zone
- Height limit restrictions

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Findings

- Both the 2005 General Plan and Draft 2030 General Plan envision Downtown as a mixed-use area that serves all Watsonville. Current General Plan policies are supportive of this vision.

- Zoning regulations are less consistent with the vision:
  - Base zoning
  - Allowed uses by right
  - Densities
  - Height
  - Setbacks
  - Parking requirements

- Design guidance for the public realm and the interface with the private frontages is needed.

- Current mix of uses is not supportive of a vibrant successful downtown.

- Opportunities for infill and revitalization.
Downtown Framework, Built Form + Street Network + Frontages

EXISTING ZONES, NEIGHBORHOODS AND CORRIDORS
Downtown Framework

- **CALTRANS ROUTES:**
  - SR-129 (To Salinas / Holister)
  - SR-152 (To Santa Cruz & Gilroy)
  - “One-Way “Couplet”: 2 travel-lanes northbound and southbound (Lake Ave & Beach St) competes with the intent of a walkable downtown.
Downtown Framework

LARGE BLOCKS DOWNTOWN:

- Most blocks in Downtown Watsonville are **600ft or longer** (2,000-3000 ft block perimeters)
- Typical walkable urban blocks: **250-400 ft** block lengths (>1,200 ft perimeter)
- **Watsonville Plaza**: 280 x 250 ft
- **Additional connectivity needed through large blocks** (paseos & walkable alleys)
Downtown Framework

FRAMEWORK NETWORK

- **Main St Corridor** (Historic Main Street)
- **Regional Connectors:**
  (Lake Ave, Beach St, Riverside Dr, Freedom Blvd; connections to Santa Cruz, Salinas, Gilroy and the beach)
- **Cross-Town Connectors:**
  (Union St, Rodriguez St & Walker St)
- **Local (Downtown) Street Network**
- **Historic Depot / Bus Depot / South Lake Ave Corridor**
Downtown Gateways

POINTS OF ARRIVAL

1. Main St South (from Santa Cruz);
2. Main St North (from Salinas);
3. W. Riverside Dr (from Salinas)
4. E. Lake Ave (from Gilroy)
5. Lake Ave (from Bus/Rail depot)
Downtown Gateways

TYPICAL CHALLENGES

- Lack of gateway/arrival signage and wayfinding to Downtown Core;
- Suburban development patterns at the entries provide no sense of arrival into Watsonville’s Downtown;
- Auto-oriented public realm
- Caltrans Routes (152, 129) CALTRANS Standards compete with placemaking goals of the Downtown.
Downtown Character Areas

POTENTIAL AREAS

- Downtown Core
- Civic Core
- Commercial “Flex”
- Workspace / Industrial “Flex”
- “Flex” Neighborhoods – (East & West)
Downtown Core

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Historic Main Street** (Beach St to 5th St);
- **Watsonville Plaza**: Anchors the Downtown Core and Civic Districts;
- **Several Historic Landmarks**: give the Downtown Core a distinct identity;
- **Opportunity Sites**: Several key vacant / underutilized sites in the Core;
- **CALTRANS RTE 152** poses a significant challenge to the intended urban environment envisioned for downtown.
Downtown Core

STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Many remaining historic buildings and landmarks give Downtown Watsonville a unique and authentic character;
- Downtown is easily accessible to everyone in the city;
- Several key-opportunity sites for significant infill development;
- The city owns/controls several key parcels along the historic Main Street;
- Strong existing street-network with a clear hierarchy.
Downtown Core

CHALLENGES

- **Lack of activation** Downtown; Limited retail/dining options, and most businesses are not open in the evenings;

- **Car oriented public realm** (CALTRANS routes in particular) does not prioritize pedestrian activity / safety;

- **Lack of housing** in the Downtown Core; not yet / no longer a mixed-use district;

- Many **vacant/underutilized storefronts** and “blank” frontages Downtown.

- Many existing buildings have large floorplates and **high rental rates** deter potential business;

- **Little private (re)investment** in Downtown.
Downtown Core

HISTORIC LANDMARKS

- Several Historic Landmarks in the Downtown Core:
  - Watsonville Plaza
  - Lettunich Building
  - Fox Theater
  - Mansion House
  - Brewington Block
  - Resetar Building
  - Etc…
Downtown Core

BUILDING FRONTAGES (CHALLENGES):

- Many building frontages in the Downtown Core are “non-contributing”; either lacking storefront windows and openings altogether or underutilizing those that exist.

- Disrupt historic Downtown patterns

Across the street from this:
Downtown Core

COMMON FRONTAGE ISSUES – BLANK WALLS

- MISSING UPPER FLOOR WINDOWS & OPENINGS ("Eyes on Street")
- "BLANK WALLS" / MISSING SHOPFRONTS ("Activity")
- LACK OF ENTRIES
Downtown Core

COMMON FRONTAGE ISSUES – LOW QUALITY FAÇADE RETROFITS

- BLANK WALLS ALONG THE STREET
- OPAQUE / “BLANK” SHOPFRONTS
- INAUTHENTIC MATERIAL RETROFITS
- BLANK WALLS ALONG THE STREET
Downtown Core

WATSONVILLE PLAZA

- Major landmark of the city, well programmed with many special events (Strawberry Festival, Farmers Markets, Outdoor Concerts, etc...)

- Key vacant / underutilized parcels surrounding Plaza are important opportunity sites
Downtown Core

STREETSCAPE & PUBLIC REALM - CALTRANS ROUTE 152

- **Main St** (west of Beach);
  - 4 x 12 ft lanes; (60ft curb-to-curb)
  - 10 ft sidewalks (small) w/ planters;

---

- 2 - 12 ft. travel lanes each direction
- 8ft parking lanes
- 10ft sidewalks

- Wide; 10 ft. is typical lane width in urban district
- Parking Lane Planters
- Parklets to accommodate café dining
- Quite narrow for urban district

---

6ft clear

---

2 - 12 ft. travel lanes each direction

---

8ft parking lanes

---

10ft sidewalks

---

Downtown Watsonville Specific Plan | 28
Downtown Core

STREETSCAPE & PUBLIC REALM - CALTRANS ROUTE 152

- **Main St** (west of Beach);
  - 4 x 12 ft lanes; (60ft curb-to-curb)
  - 10 ft sidewalks (small) w/ planters;

- **Beach St** (Main to Lincoln);
  - One-way northbound;
  - 2 x 16 ft lanes; (50ft curb-to-curb)
Downtown Core

STREETSCAPE & PUBLIC REALM - CALTRANS ROUTE 152

- **Main St** (west of Beach);
  - 4 x 12 ft lanes; (60ft curb-to-curb)
  - 10 ft sidewalks (small) w/ planters;

- **Beach St** (Main to Lincoln);
  - One-way northbound;
  - 2 x 16 ft lanes; (50ft curb-to-curb)

- **Lake Ave** (north of Main);
  - One-way southbound;
  - 2 x 13 ft lanes; (44ft curb-to-curb)
Civic Core

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Anchored by City Hall and new/joint-use Library, and Post Office;

- Recent Streetscape Improvements on Main St: Landscape median and crosswalks are a good start;

- New Shared Parking Structure: (2nd St & Rodriguez St);

- Mostly suburban development patterns: limit the Civic Core’s effectiveness as a gateway into Downtown.
Civic Core

STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

- **New joint-use Civic Plaza** is a prominent building anchoring the district & fronting the street;

- **New parking structure** can add to the shared parking supply of the core on nights and weekends;

- **Streetscape improvements** (landscape median and crosswalks) are a positive start;

- Civic Core directly **accessible from historic neighborhoods to the north**;

- **City-controlled vacant/underutilized sites** on Main St are a big opportunity to evolve the Civic Core into the East Gateway to Downtown.

- **Main St** is *not* under CALTRANS jurisdiction between Riverside Dr and Beach St only.
Civic Core

MAIN CHALLENGES

- Predominantly “suburban” development patterns
  - Buildings set back behind parking and large landscape setbacks.
- Incomplete Streetscape improvements;
- High-speed traffic; additional calming measures needed;
- Currently not a strong gateway to downtown;
- South edge (Rodriguez St) of Civic Core breaks down urbanistically; is “the back” – but there are important infill opportunities across the street.
Civic Core

COMMON FRONTAGE ISSUES – “INWARD-ORIENTED” BUILDINGS DO NOT ENGAGE THE STREET

- INWARD-ORIENTED SITE PLAN (MAIN ENTRY ACCESSED VIA PARKING LOT)
- LACK OF ENTRIES
- LACK OF WINDOWS AND OPENINGS FRONTING STREET
Civic Core

STREETScape & Public Realm

- This section of Main St. is not a CalTrans route anymore.
- The city has already taken steps to improve the streetscape along this section.
- Traffic calming would be beneficial here to slow down cars.
- Sidewalks are too narrow and have no buffer with the driveways.
- Opportunity to extend improvements towards historic core
Civic Core

STREETSCAPE & PUBLIC REALM – MAIN ST

- Main St (west of Beach);
  - 4 x 12 ft lanes; (60ft curb-to-curb)
  - 10 ft sidewalks (small) w\ planters;

- Narrow with utilities for urban district
- Wide; 10 ft. is typical lane width in urban district
- Existing sharrows; opportunity for Class II if lanes narrowed
- No Curbside Parking;
- Opportunity to stripe Curbside Parking on North Side

- Civic Plaza site only
- “Bulb-in” parking

10ft sidewalks
2 - 12 ft. travel lanes each direction + left-turn median
Commercial Flex

**KEY CHARACTERISTICS**

- Widely varied development patterns ranging from urban to very suburban;

- “Mix of uses”: Housing and commercial; less coherent organization than Core;

- Brennan/Union & Rodriguez are very important corridors: the “seams” that stitch the Core to the surrounding neighborhoods;

- Many vacant/underutilized parcels: significant infill opportunities (particularly for housing) in this Area.

- Very Large Block Sizes limit walkability
Commercial Flex

STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

- **Multiple Infill opportunities**: a significant opportunity to inject a concentration of new residents and activity into Downtown;
- **Land values** / barrier to entry for new development is relatively low;
- **Much of the original/authentic building stock still in place**: could be revitalized with relatively minor improvements;
- **Basic street network is already strong**, and additional/improved connectivity can be added relatively simply as infill occurs;
- **Directly adjacent to historic neighborhoods just north of Downtown** (strong customer base)
Commercial Flex

MAIN CHALLENGES

- Predominantly suburban development patterns; auto-oriented frontages;
- Very large block sizes (up to 1000ft long) deter walkability;
- Streetscape improvements needed in many places to support pedestrian circulation, calm traffic, and improve property values;
- Very little reinvestment by Property Owners; many buildings/sites suffering from blight;
- Many buildings with large floorplates makes rent unaffordable for prospective business owners.
Commercial Flex

COMMON FRONTAGE ISSUES

- Large Setbacks from street;
- Entries poorly defined, often oriented to parking areas rather than street;
- Large amount of site devoted to parking;
- Buildings “buffered” from street by parking and landscape areas
- Building/façade maintenance issues;
Commercial Flex

POSITIVE URBAN FRONTAGES

- Many original buildings are street fronting with strong urban frontages;
- Minor façade and/or “public frontage” improvements /maintenance is all that is needed in many cases;
Commercial Flex

FLEX RESIDENTIAL FRONTAGES

- Numerous existing single-family homes; many of which have been converted to commercial/office.
Commercial Flex

“EDGE” CORRIDORS

- Brennan St / Union St Corridor: The “seam” between the Commercial/Civic Core and the Historic Neighborhoods to the north;

- Rodriguez St Corridor: The “seam” between the Commercial/Civic Core and the “Industrial / Flex Neighborhoods” to the south.
Commercial Flex

STREETSCAPE & PUBLIC REALM – BRENNAN ST / UNION ST

- Brennan St (west of Lake);
  - 14 ft lanes; (44ft curb-to-curb)
  - 8 ft sidewalks with no landscaping;
  - Residential neighborhoods across the street from commercial
Commercial Flex

STREETSCAPE & PUBLIC REALM – BRENNA ST / UNION ST

- **Brennan St** (west of Lake);
  - 14 ft lanes; (44 ft curb-to-curb)
  - 8 ft sidewalks with no landscaping;
  - Residential neighborhoods across the street from commercial

- **Union St** (east of Lake);
  - 12 ft lanes; (40 ft curb-to-curb)
  - 8 ft sidewalks with no landscaping;
  - Neighborhoods across Street

- Opportunity to insert landscape parkways & street trees on neighborhood side
- Intermittent traffic calming features like chokers or chicanes with landscape elements
- Wide; 10 ft. is typical lane width in urban district
- Traffic calming measures (lane width reductions) recommended
- Intermittent traffic calming features like chokers or chicanes with landscape elements
Commercial Flex

STREETScape & Public Realm – Rodriguez St

- **Rodriguez St** (east of Lake);
  - 13 ft lanes; (60ft curb-to-curb)
  - 10 ft sidewalks with no landscaping;
  - Seam between “Flex Neighborhoods” (south) and Civic and Downtown Core (north);
  - Opportunity to become significant bike corridor:

  2 - 13 ft. travel lanes & 13 ft left-turn lane (60ft curb-to-curb)
  - Excessively wide travel lanes; 10 ft. is typical lane width in urban district
  - Traffic calming measures (lane width reductions) recommended
  - Add buffered bike lane
  - Curb extensions to reduce crossing distance
  - Re-evaluate left-turn lane

  Civic (“back-of-site”)
Workplace / Industrial Flex

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Characterized by factory and light-industrial businesses originally serviced by rail;
- **Historic Depot:** Terminates Lake Ave (at Walker St); this area could be a future “entry” to downtown (assuming LRT)
- **Strong jobs base** and good opportunity for new businesses to locate downtown
- **Many vacant/underutilized parcels:** significant mixed-use infill opportunities
- **Very Large Block Sizes** limit walkability
Workplace / Industrial Flex

STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

- **Historic Depot**: could provide future passenger rail access to Watsonville, **making this area a new Downtown Gateway**;

- Inexpensive land in this area could **incentivize new investment**;

- Large underutilized industrial buildings that can be **adaptively re-used**;

- **Business incubator** for tech, maker-spaces, creative offices, breweries, coffee roasters, etc...

- This area could **evolve into a vibrant mixed-use / live-work area**, providing a concentration of new jobs and residents within a short walk of the Core.
Workplace / Industrial Flex

MAIN CHALLENGES

- Very large blocks, and **incomplete pedestrian infrastructure deters walkability**;

- **Auto (truck)-oriented public realm**; *(this is an operating industrial district)*; complete lack of streetscape;

- Many vacant and underutilized buildings; in general, **area looks aged / blighted**.

- **Frontage Issues**; a mix of uses (industrial buildings and residential houses) in this area, **without proper frontage transitions and calibrations**.
Workplace / Industrial Flex

COMMON FRONTAGE ISSUES

- **“Loading” / Industrial Frontages:** Loading docks and areas in front of industrial uses dominate the public realm;

- **Incompatibility:** Large industrial uses across from or next to single-family houses need transitional frontages;

- **Public Realm disrupted by multiple, large driveways / parking access,** (sidewalks are an afterthought);
Workplace / Industrial Flex

COMMON STREETSCAPE & PUBLIC REALM

- Auto/Truck-oriented streets and public realm;
- Very wide street-widths; exacerbated by missing curbside parking due to multiple/large driveways;
- Lack of pedestrian infrastructure, narrow sidewalks with no street trees (no shade, no buffer from cars);
- Walker Street contains the planned Segment 19 of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail. It is both a multi-use path and an on-street facility.
Walker Street contains the planned Segment 19 of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail. It is both a multi-use path and an on-street facility.
Workplace / Industrial Flex

COMMON STREETSCAPE & PUBLIC REALM

BUILDING HAS GOOD FRONTAGE / ACTIVATES & HOLDS CORNER

WIDE TRAVEL LANES (12’)

SIDEWALK BROKEN BY WIDE DRIVEWAY / PARKING ENTRY

8’ CURB SIDE PARKING ONLY IN FEW AREAS

8’ SIDEWALKS; LACKS TREES & LANDSCAPING
Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods

**KEY CHARACTERISTICS**

- **Existing “Mixed-Use” Neighborhoods:**
  - *East Neighborhood:* Mix of traditional single-family homes (most of which have been converted to office), “downtown” commercial, civic, and industrial (Martinelli’s) in traditional urban patterns;
  - *South Neighborhood:* Mix of multi-family, commercial, and industrial, in less-orderly, suburban patterns.

- **Concentration of Residents already living Downtown**
Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (East)

STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

- **Strong traditional urban development patterns**: where Downtown extended into the Historic Neighborhoods;

- **Significant amount of the original building stock in place** creates authentic character.

- **Public Realm mostly in-tact**: Only minor improvements needed;

- **Strong Frontages**, that contribute to an active, walkable public realm.

- **Landmark Civic and Industrial Buildings** add unique character to this neighborhood; (Martinelli & Co., Veteran’s Memorial Building, School, Church, etc…);
  - Potential for future adaptive re-use of Martinelli’s?
Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (East)

MAIN CHALLENGES

- Flanked by CALTRANS Route 152: High traffic volumes and speeds exacerbated by one-way “couplet” (Lake Ave & Beach St)
- Large block sizes (Civic and Industrial blocks) deter walkability;
- (Relatively Minor) Streetscape improvements needed to support pedestrian circulation, calm traffic, and improve property values;
- Frontage improvements needed: some buildings need maintenance, so they contribute to the public realm.
- Currently zoned “Neighborhood Commercial” with residential allowed by CUP only. (even though many historic homes exist)
Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods *(East)*

TYPICAL URBAN FRONTAGES
Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (East)

STREETSCAPE & PUBLIC REALM – BEACH ST / SR 152

- Beach St (East of Main);
  - 2 x 12 ft lanes; (40ft curb-to-curb)
  - 10 ft sidewalks without planters;
  - One-way Street
  - Curbside parking on both sides.
  - Lack of trees.

- Add Parking Lane Planters and Street Trees
- Restore two-way traffic?
- Add Landscape Parkway and Street Trees

- One way - 2 x 12 ft. travel lanes

- Planters in Parking Lane on Commercial Side?
- Vary wide; promotes high traffic speeds;
- One way streets promote fast thru traffic; not conducive to a neighborhood;
- Opportunity to restore two-way traffic?
- Add corner and mid-block bulb-outs to visually narrow street?
- Add landscape Parkway and Street Trees?
Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (West)

STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Numerous historic houses with strong architectural character;
- Many properties have been improved and/or well-maintained;
- Neighborhood already has a strong mix of uses;
- Short walk to Downtown Core;
- Live-Work Opportunity – concentration of residents within close proximity to Industrial/Workplace District and Downtown and Civic Core.
- Strong mix of uses: ranging from housing to commercial, to light industrial/maker space;
Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods *(West)*

**CHALLENGES**

- Incomplete / low-quality public realm; discourages walking and biking;
- Disorderly development patterns: Incompatible uses (multi-family residential directly adjacent industrial, storage, etc...); neighborhood lacks uniformity;
- Very Large Blocks: (up to 1,000 ft long) deters walking/biking;
- Many vacant, underutilized, blighted properties; *(also opportunities for reinvestment)*;
- Small businesses struggling due to difficulty attracting patrons into this area.
Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (West)

COMMON FRONTAGE ISSUES

- **Car-dominant frontages**: Many frontages are devoted to large driveways for parking.

- **Low-quality Public Frontages**: The pedestrian realm constantly interrupted by driveways; no street tree canopy or landscape buffers;

- **Inconsistent frontage quality**: Many properties have fallen into disrepair.
Downtown “Flex” Neighborhoods (West)

COMMON STREETSCAPE & PUBLIC REALM ISSUES

- **Wide Travel Lanes** (2 x 12ft)
- **Sidewalks** broken by driveways
- **Sidewalks** lack trees
- **Power Lines** rule out street trees in parkway
- **Private frontage needs improvement**
Frontage Analysis

- **Private Frontage Assessment:**
  - **Strong (Contributing) Frontage:** Includes most historic buildings. These buildings typically have well-fenestrated façades, clear and inviting building entrances, and active ground floor uses.
  - **Minor Improvements Needed:** Buildings with private frontages that are generally right, but with relatively minor improvements, could be assets.
  - **Significant Improvements:** Buildings that require significant improvements to their street-fronting facades to (re)establish the intended urban patterns downtown. (For e.g., Buildings with “blank” walls, buildings set back very far from the street behind surface parking, etc.)
Frontage Analysis

Public frontages are the space between the outer travel lane of the public street and the private property fronting it, typically including clear sidewalk space for pedestrian circulation; street furnishing, landscaping and lighting; curbside parking, services and amenities.

Public Frontage Assessment:

- **Minor Improvements Needed:**
  Use curbside parking lanes for streetscape amenities, parklets, etc.

- **Significant Improvements:**
  Non-existent sidewalks or sidewalks with no amenities

- **Incomplete Streetwall:**
  Section where the streetwall pattern is broken
Opportunity Site Analysis
Publicly-owned, Vacant + Under-utilized parcels
Publicly-Owned Parcels

- Public-owned parcels, especially those that are City-owned, may serve as catalysts for future revitalization.
Vacant Parcels

- Vacant sites – 3 acres
- Opportunities for infill
- Parking lots
- Others
Opportunity Sites

- **Vacant** – no existing buildings on site
- **Adaptive Reuse/Intensification** – revitalizing and reusing existing buildings for best appropriate use
- **Parking Lot** (Publicly and Privately owned) – surface parking lots
- **Other** – existing uses on site
Existing Conditions Analysis