

# DOWNTOWN SANDUSKY

## — MASTER PLAN —

ADOPTED | February 2021



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## Downtown Sandusky Master Plan

### Community of Sandusky

**THANK YOU** to everyone who answered the community survey and participated in the planning process. Your experience and contributions shaped the vision and recommendations of the Master Plan.

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February 10, 2021

To The Residents of Sandusky,

If we've learned anything from the unlikely events of the last year, it is that we must have a plan. This year we've also learned that plans can and should be fluid, open to change and made with collaboration from experts and stakeholders. That is exactly what you'll find in this Downtown Master Plan. I am proud to say that this plan is the culmination of years of relentless work by many city employees, community leaders, residents and stakeholders. This plan took feedback from hundreds of people and made their ideas and dreams into actionable items. It wasn't too long ago that ideas and dreams were just that in Sandusky. I am proud that this city now makes ideas and dreams into reality. Sandusky is no longer on the path to success, we are here. The Downtown Master Plan is evidence of this and will lead us forward into the future.

Inside this plan, you'll find many facets of development designed to help Sandusky to realize its full potential. In the past few years, we've seen entrepreneurs and investors put down roots in Sandusky, believing that their enterprises would flourish here. The Master Plan gives these already-established businesses and those looking to locate here the confidence that we are committed to the success of every business and every resident. The plan addresses infrastructure, business, green and public spaces and attractions. For more than one hundred years, Sandusky has been a tourist destination in the summer months. This plan ignites Sandusky's potential as a year-round destination, not only for tourists, but for residents, too.

At the crux of the Master Plan is the idea that Sandusky is uniquely positioned on Lake Erie, affording unparalleled access to waterfront recreation, dining, fishing and leisure. Lake Erie has always been our most cherished asset. The City has a duty to this incredible natural resource and to the city's residents to create meaningful interactions with the lake for every person. It is our crowning jewel.

Thank you for the input that was built into The Downtown Master Plan. I hope you find this plan to be thoughtful, insightful, creative and passionate. I am proud to be a part of this progressive and forward-thinking document. I hope you will join me in my excitement for all Sandusky is and will be. Let's keep moving forward together.

With hopeful anticipation,



Richard R. Brady  
President  
Sandusky City Commission





# **1** INTRODUCTION

Executive Summary

About this Plan

Plan Process

Plan Objectives

# DOWNTOWN SANDUSKY

## America's Best Coastal Small Town

### Executive Summary

Downtown Sandusky has an incredible collection of assets—a diverse, engaged community, a historic, walkable downtown, an active, beautiful waterfront, a dedicated, visionary local government, connection to internationally-known destinations, and more. These factors have won the city's recognition as America's Best Coastal Small Town and will continue to draw people and investment into the region.

The Downtown Sandusky Master Plan presents a vision that will help the community **leverage Sandusky's small-town appeal** to residents and visitors, **promote the waterfront** appeal of downtown, and **become the gateway to the region's destinations** of Sandusky Bay, Cedar Point, Kelleys Island, Put-in-Bay, and Pelee Island.

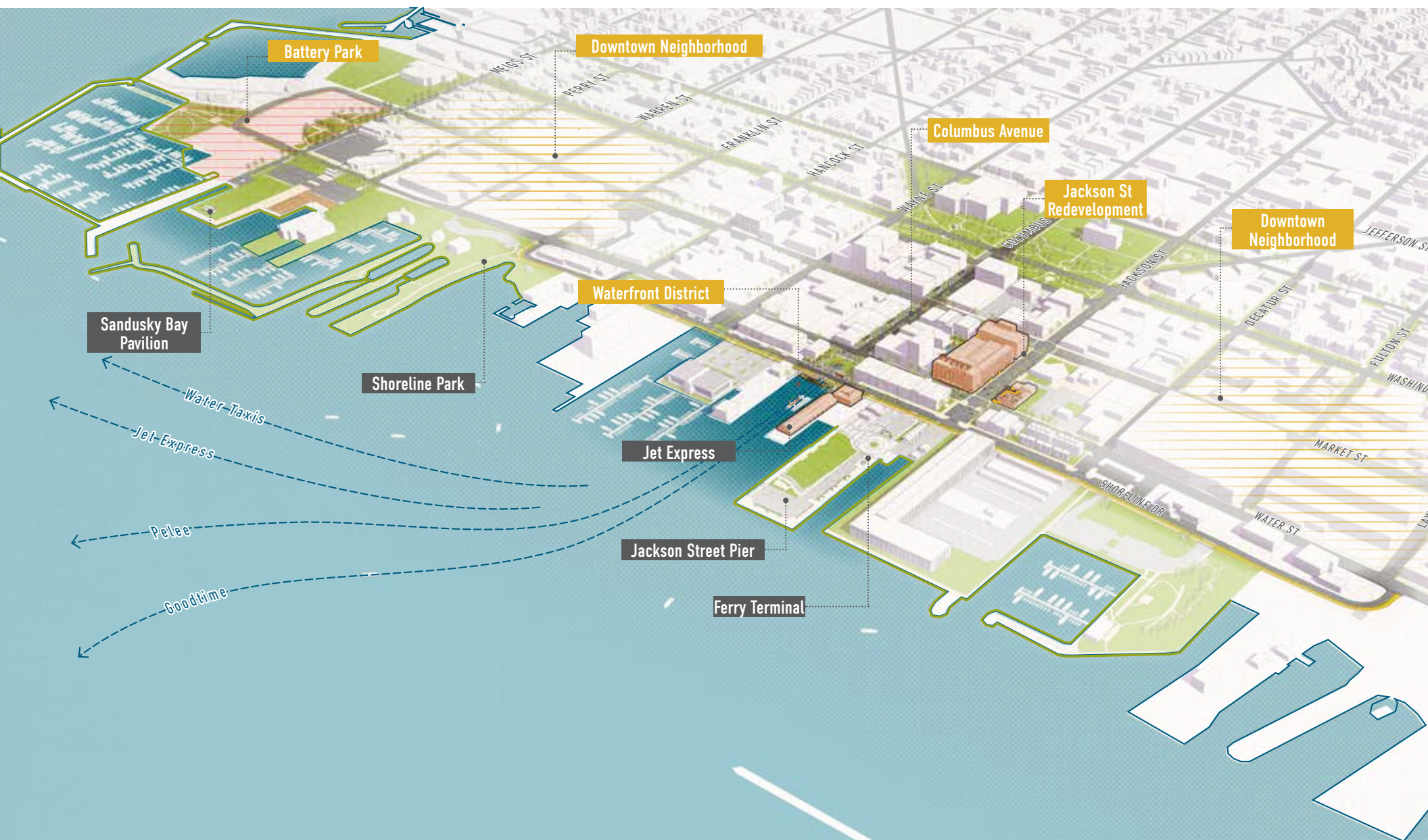
The Master Plan is organized into nine key recommendations and five focus area opportunities that together convey a cohesive, clear and flexible set of action steps to enable downtown to continue to thrive over the next five to ten years.

### 9 Master Plan Recommendations

1. **Position Downtown Sandusky as the Economic, Entertainment, and Cultural anchor of the region.**
2. **Brand something new** by creating a waterfront district identity.
3. **Generate year-round excitement** with events and activities.
4. **Consider walkability first** on all downtown streets.
5. **Create a bicycle, golf cart, and multimodal culture** to ensure access to all.
6. **Foster education + entrepreneurship** around downtown's new college presence.
7. **Revitalize with activated, high quality buildings** that create life on the street and add views to the water.
8. **Create amazing public spaces** where people make lasting memories.
9. **Prioritize investment** to maximize opportunities.

### 5 Focus Area Opportunities

- I. **Make Columbus Avenue** downtown's most vibrant street from weekday evenings to special events.
- II. **Create destination waterfront dining** that captures iconic views.
- III. **Redevelop the Jackson Street parking lot** with anchor mixed use development and event space.
- IV. **Revitalize Neighborhoods** with a variety of housing options and price points.
- V. **Connect to Battery Park** with public improvements and mixed use development.





# INTRODUCTION

## About this Plan

The Downtown Sandusky Master Plan establishes a vision for the public and private realm in Downtown Sandusky. This vision is feasible, market based, flexible to opportunities that arise, founded in community feedback, and built upon the ideas set forth in the Sandusky 2018 Bicentennial Vision.

The planning process was conducted in 2020 and included a robust series of stakeholder interviews, regular meetings with a Steering Committee, and a community survey that received 798 responses. City of Sandusky staff and the consultant team worked in close collaboration throughout the process to ensure the plan is authentic to Sandusky and authored with local, regional, and national downtown planning and economic development expertise.

The plan is organized into six sections:

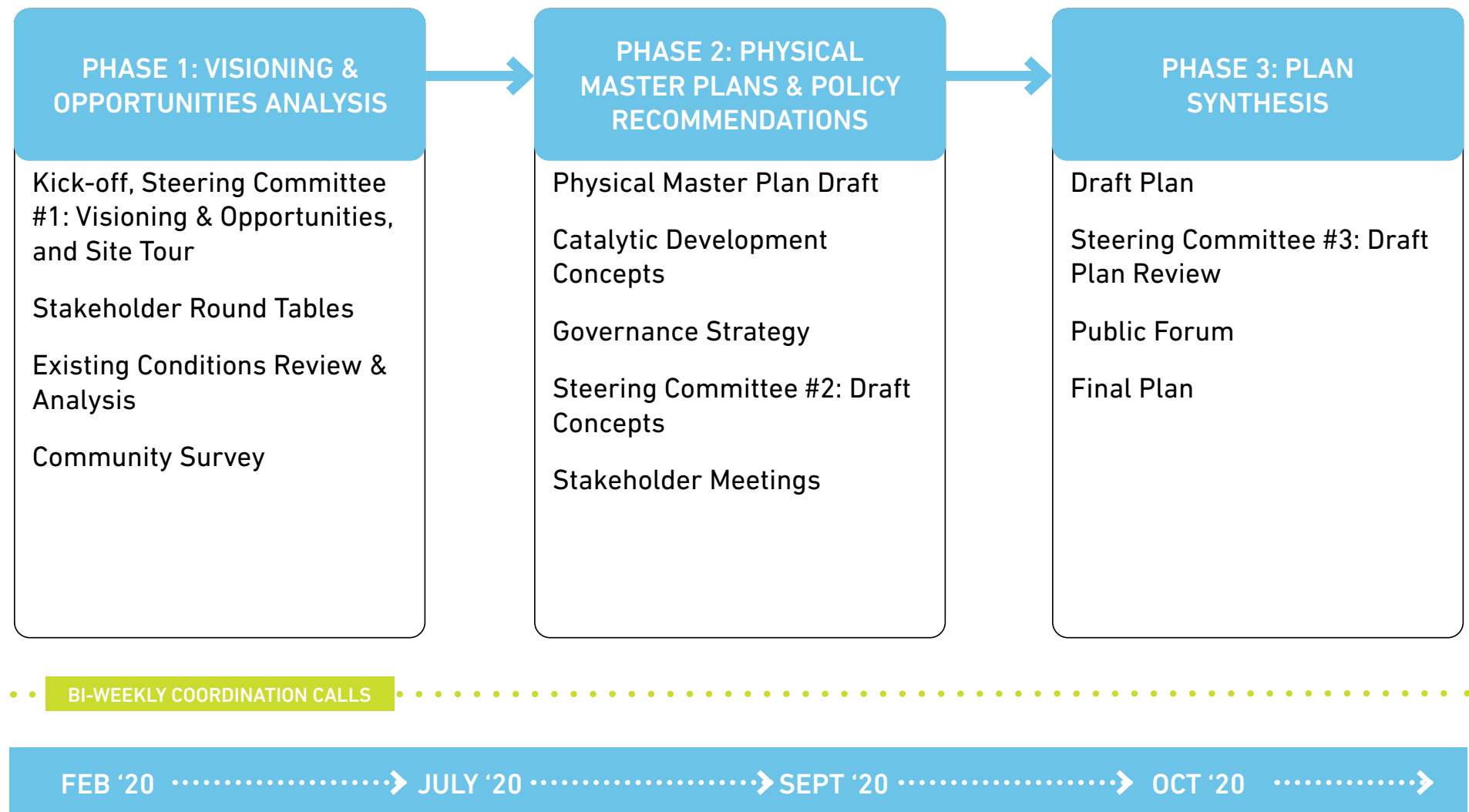
- » **Introduction** explains the plan timeline and plan objectives.
- » **Engagement** reviews the community survey and resulting guiding principles for the plan's recommendations.
- » **Market Potential** summarizes the retail, residential, and tourism market potential of downtown.
- » **Analysis** examines a series of factors that shape downtown including the history, waterfront, and built environment.
- » **Recommendations** illustrates the nine plan recommendations and five focus area opportunities.
- » **Implementation** outlines action steps for implementing the plan recommendations including program and policy actions.



# PLAN PROCESS

## Phases, Tasks, and Activities

This process overview depicts the three-phase plan development and community engagement process conducted from February to November 2020.



# PLAN OBJECTIVES

## Building Blocks

At the outset of the planning process, five building blocks were defined to frame the Master Plan direction and objectives.

The **Downtown Focus** leverages the identity of Sandusky as the “Best Coastal Small Town in America” (USA Today, 2019) to continue the momentum of recent improvements and further establish downtown as event central for Sandusky residents. Downtown was designated as an Opportunity Zone to incentivize these types of improvements. Enhancing the vibrancy of downtown also attracts visitors and tourists, fosters new business, and supports local entrepreneurship.

The plan is **Market Influenced**, utilizing Sandusky’s unique market potential and position in the region. This also helps to ensure the plan recommendations are financially feasible and supported by existing and projected future demand.

The **Conceptual Vision** for each focus area illustrates recommendations for site design, building program, and public realm improvements that reflect the ideas of the community and stakeholders. The illustrations are diagrammatic and allow for flexibility in continued community conversations as each focus area moves toward implementation.

**Potential Anchors** are identified in each focus area that illustrates private development. These concepts give the city a basis for conversation to inspire potential developers and investors in downtown, while demonstrating each site’s potential to all audiences.

A framework for **Downtown Streetscapes**, with particular focus on Columbus Avenue, answers the community’s desires for downtown to be a connected, walkable, year-round destination. The illustrations show how a transformed streetscape connects to Shoreline Drive and Jackson Street Pier to create a holistic, vibrant retail and event district downtown.





The building blocks provided a foundation for the engagement process and plan analysis:



## Downtown Focus

- » Making downtown a **year-round destination & neighborhood** while leveraging the tourist economy



## Market Influenced

- » Understanding Sandusky's **unique market potential** and position



## Conceptual Vision

- » Visualizing **priority places** for new public and private investments using urban design and planning principles



## Potential Anchors

- » Identifying **market-feasible**, potential anchors for private development



## Streetscapes

- » Particular focus on the public realm of **Columbus Avenue**



**2**

# ENGAGEMENT

Overview

Community Survey

Guiding Principles



# ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

## Overview

The *2018 Bicentennial Vision Comprehensive Plan* set a vision for downtown that included walkability, a need for anchor development and redevelopment, a desire for year-round events and activities, and an emphasis on waterfront access and public space. The ideas and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan led to, and set the stage for, this Downtown Master Plan to carry forward.

The Downtown Master Plan engaged more than 800 members of the Sandusky community, including one-on-one and group discussions with dozens of stakeholders, milestone meetings with the Steering Committee, and responses to an online Community Survey. Engagement included one in-person meeting with a site tour. The rest of the process was conducted remotely online and via phone calls, as the COVID-19 pandemic limited in-person interaction.

While Sandusky staff and leadership set the course for the planning process, the Steering Committee and stakeholders ensured the plan's Focus Area Concepts and recommendations responded to, and were shaped by, community desires and feedback.



COMMUNITY QUOTES — look for quote bubbles like this throughout the plan for quotes from community members who answered the survey.



# WHAT SHOULD THE FUTURE OF DOWNTOWN LOOK LIKE?

Share your ideas for the future of Downtown

The City of Sandusky is commissioning a Downtown Sandusky Master Plan. A master plan is a document with overarching goals and aspirations for future community development, programming, and policy. The plan will focus on how Downtown serves Sandusky residents and the larger region. Building on our momentum from recent planning efforts, such as Jackson Street Plan, The historic Point Ledge and 9050' Resort and Attraction Management Program, Sandusky Bay Pathway Mile Zero, Marketplace at Lakeside, and the reconstruction of Shoreline Drive, the plan will envision the economic potential and urban design to Downtown beyond 2020.

Tell us what you think! Share with your friends and family. Your input will help shape the vision, goals of focus, and recommendations in the plan.

Hold your camera over the "scan me" code or visit the bit.ly link below to take the survey. The survey is open through July 31.

[BIT.LY/DTS\\_MP](https://bit.ly/DTS_MP)

DOWNTOWN  
— MASTER PLAN —



# WHAT WE HEARD

## Community Survey

The Downtown Master Plan online community survey focused on gathering targeted feedback and ideas from the community regarding downtown's next steps. With all the public and private accomplishments since the *Bicentennial Vision Plan*—including the Sandusky Bay Pathway extension and Mile Marker Zero, Shoreline Drive, Jackson Street Pier, the Resort School by Cedar Point and Bowling Green State University, the Marketplace at Cooke, new restaurants and residential, and more—this survey built on that work to ask the community: “What’s next?”

The survey questions and respondent summary are listed in the corresponding graphic. Respondents were a balanced mix of Sandusky residents and those who live close to downtown and work downtown. Also, the responses represented a broad age range of residents. However, 90% of respondents identified as white. This is a much larger proportion than in the city – which is estimated by the 2019 American Community Survey to be 67.3% white, 23.9% Black or African American alone and more than 5% other or more than one race, with 7.2% also identifying as Hispanic or Latino. To ensure the plan is representative of Sandusky's diverse community, continued engagement with Black and Brown residents should be a focus for next steps. Targeted outreach and one-on-one conversations are recommended throughout plan implementation to shape each project to represent the full Sandusky community.

“It’s one of the most beautiful downtowns in the country. The draw is the beauty nature gave it: the lake, the countryside, the history.”

# 798

Total Responses

### We asked...

- » What are you most excited about?
- » What is missing downtown?
- » What are downtown's greatest opportunities?
- » How do you get to, and move around, downtown?
- » What would make Columbus Avenue downtown's most vibrant street?
- » Do you feel like downtown is clean, safe, and there is plenty to do?
- » How can downtown be a great place for residents and tourists?
- » How can marketing or communications attract you, your friends and family, tourists and visitors to visit downtown more often?

**75%** Live in Sandusky

**40%** Live within a 10-minute walk of downtown

**24%** Work in Sandusky

**13%** Own a business in Sandusky

**37%** Age 20-40

**37%** Age 40-60

**60%** Female

**90%** White

**2%** Black or African American

**2%** Multiple races

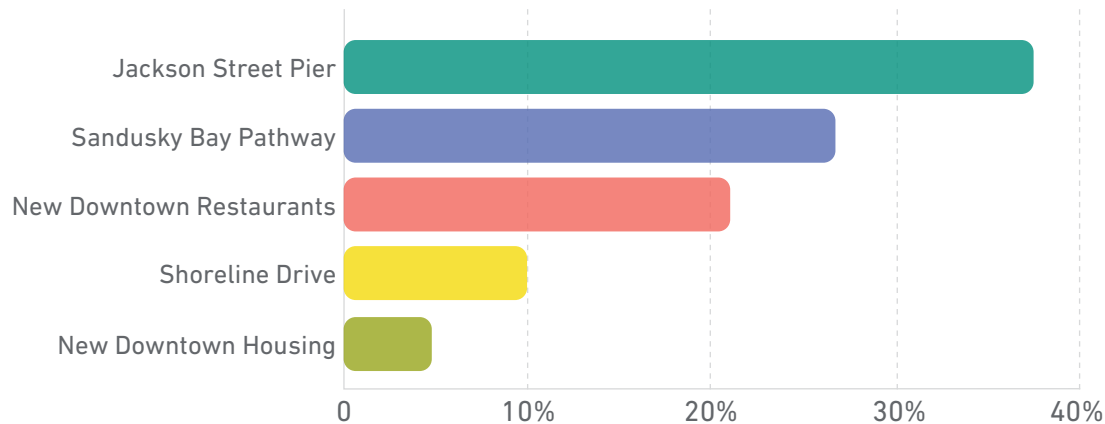
**1%** Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish

**4%** Other race or did not identify



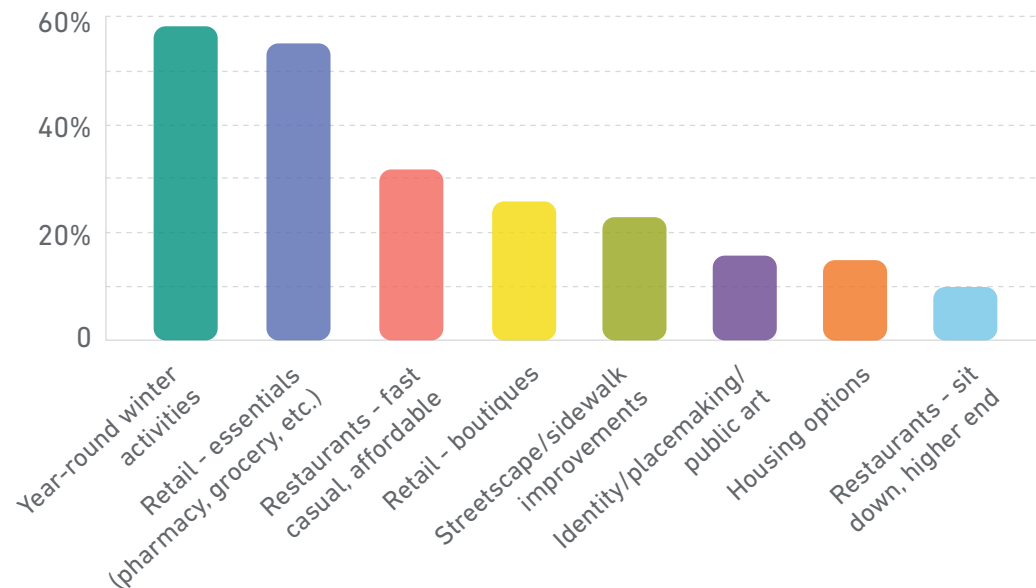
## Which new project opening are you most excited about?

Survey respondents marked Jackson Street Pier as the project opening they were most excited about. The Pier opening occurred about one month before the survey time frame.



## What is missing downtown?

Essential retail and year-round/winter activities were the top items from this list. The question asked respondents to select up to three answers.



## What are two specific ideas for things that are missing downtown?

Themes from the community ideas for what is missing downtown are:

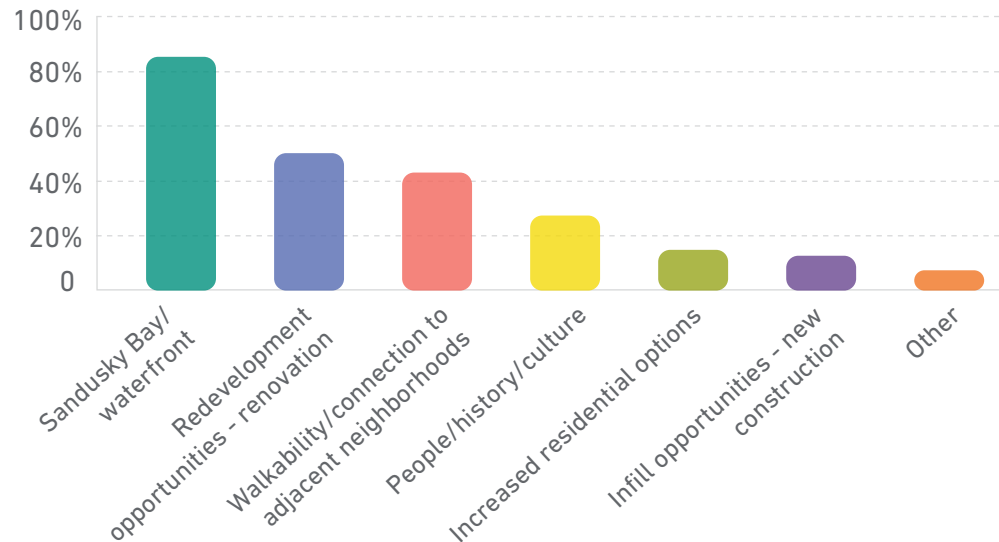
- » **Retail variety:** Grocery store / drug store / convenience store; specialty retail / boutique retail, "Sandusky" souvenir retail, brand name retail
- » **Public beach** / swimming pool / splash pad
- » More **access to the waterfront**, waterfront dining, rooftop patios / event spaces
- » **Restaurants:** outdoor dining, restaurant patios, food trucks, ice cream, bakery, coffee shops, restaurant variety, brewery/distillery, fast casual
- » **Pedestrian amenities:** trees, shade, greenery/flowers, seating, wider sidewalks, sidewalk improvements, public restrooms
- » **Hotel:** name brand, boutique, signature,
- » **Parking:** new garage, improve existing garage, dedicated resident parking, parallel parking instead of angled, parking for ferry users farther away
- » **More housing:** affordable, high end, middle end, young professional, retail and housing in 2nd and 3rd floors of buildings
- » **Arts & Culture:** cultural diversity, Black-owned businesses, inclusion, public art, murals, art museum, events/festivals, live music, outdoor games
- » **Winter activities:** winterfest, ice skating, heat lamps, table top fire places

# IDEAS FOR SANDUSKY

## Community Survey

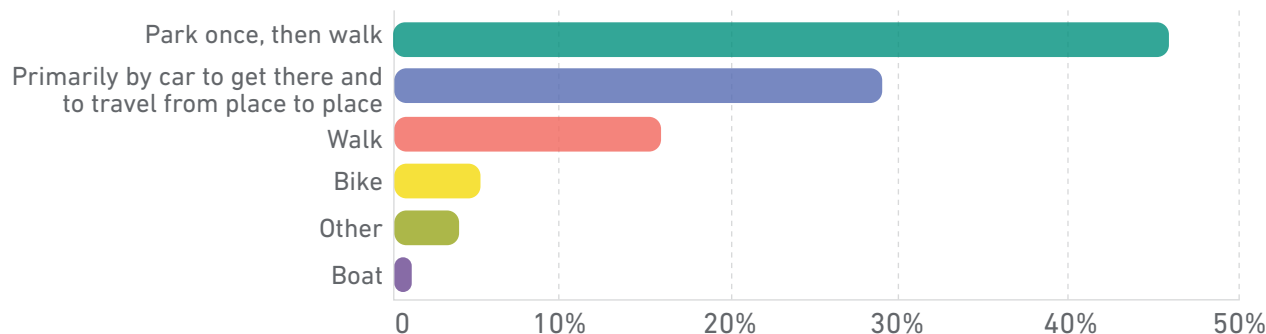
### What are downtown's greatest opportunities?

Sandusky Bay was by far the most popular selection, with 85 percent of respondents identifying the waterfront as downtown's greatest opportunity. Redevelopment opportunities and walkability were the next most supported ideas, with 40-50 percent of respondents selecting them as great opportunities. People, history, and culture was also identified as important. The question asked respondents to select up to three answers.



### How do you get to, and move around, downtown?

45 percent of respondents park once when they go downtown, then walk to various destinations and 15 percent walk there without a vehicle. These findings correlate with the importance of walkability as shown in the "Downtown Opportunities" question and suggests downtown is functioning as a walkable area for the majority of residents and visitors who go there today.



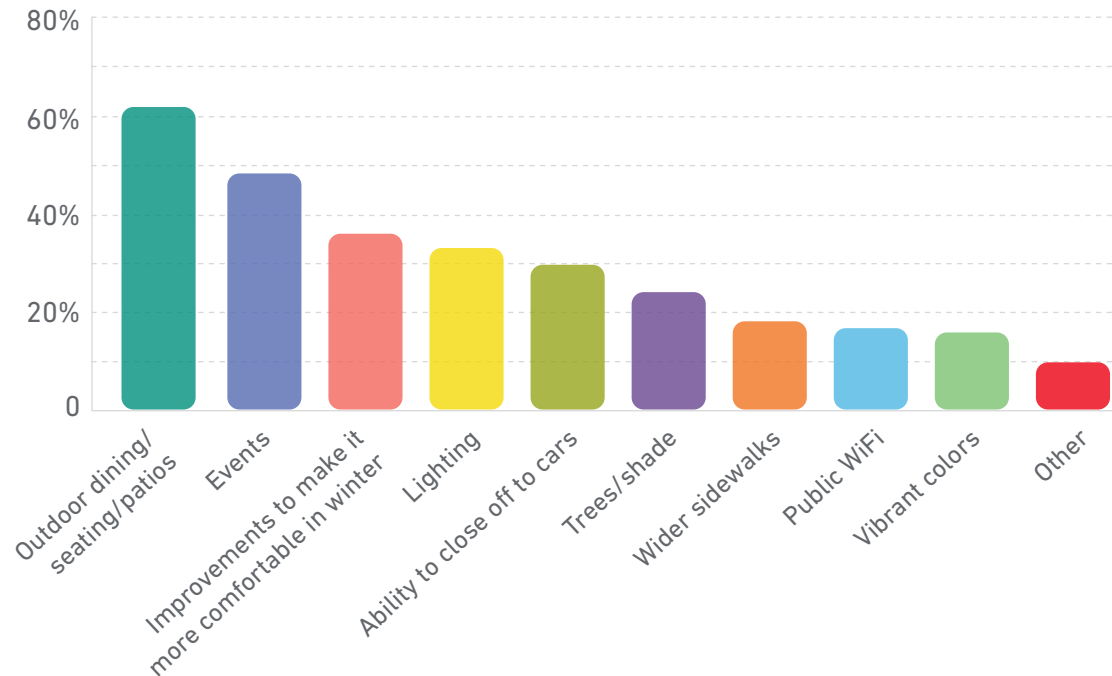
### What are two specific ideas for things that are missing downtown?

Themes from the community ideas for downtown's greatest opportunities are:

- » **Waterfront:** increase access, more dining, public beach, Battery Park, ferry service, more piers/boardwalk, transient boater access, events, porches, rooftops, seating
- » **Development:** filling empty storefronts, building renovation/preservation, anchor employment, small businesses, hotel, upper floors, more retail and restaurants
- » **Public space:** amphitheater parks, green space, streetscape/sidewalk improvements, Sandusky Bay Pathway, bike lanes, linking everything together, Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area, pedestrian-only areas
- » **Year-round recreation:** indoor playground or recreation center, trampoline park, go-carts, mini golf, theater, live music, arts and crafts, pickleball
- » **Events/festivals:** Sidewalk Chalk, Car Shows, Dancing in the Streets, Juneteenth Celebration, family/kids events
- » **Improvements and connections to surrounding neighborhoods:** streets, sidewalks, crossings, Sandusky Bay Pathway, bike lanes, linking everything together
- » **Housing:** affordable, condos, high rise, waterfront, renovation

## What would make Columbus Avenue downtown's most vibrant street?

Outdoor dining / seating / patios received the greatest response to this question, selected by more than 60% of survey respondents. Nearly 50 percent of responses emphasized the importance of events. The ability to close the street off to cars, lighting, and improvements to make it more comfortable in the winter were selected by around 30 percent of folks who answered this question. The question asked respondents to select up to three answers.



## What are two specific ideas for things that are missing downtown?

Themes from the community ideas for making Columbus Avenue downtown's most vibrant street are:

- » **Lighting:** current lighting is too dim, add string lights over the street, lights like Short North in Columbus, colorful lights, more lights in general
- » Make it more **pedestrian friendly:** wider sidewalks, greenery/flowers, trees, seating, Public WiFi, DORA
- » **Art:** color, murals, local art, custom designed streetscape amenities
- » **Outdoor dining:** patios, food trucks, outdoor vendors/carts
- » Live music / **festivals / events,** farmers market
- » **Shade** in summer and **heat lamps** in winter
- » **Parking:** make it parallel, add more, make garage nicer, take it away and add seating / wider sidewalks, more parking for handicapped
- » **Close down street:** permanently, seasonally, on weekends, in evenings, for events
- » **Paving:** repave, replace sidewalks, make the road brick or special paving

# COMMUNITY CONSENSUS

## Top Themes

What we heard from the 798 responses to the community survey, conversations with the Steering Committee, and series of stakeholder interviews consistently flowed into these top themes:



**Downtown Sandusky is on the right track.** The community is **excited about new, recent, and upcoming improvements**—including Jackson Street Pier, Sandusky Bay Pathway, Shoreline Drive, BGSU/ Cedar Fair partnership, Marketplace at Cooke, restaurants, retail, and more. Comments emphasized how important the city's investment is, and has been, for catalyzing private ventures.



**The water is downtown's greatest asset.** Respondents want more focus on the waterfront. From direct access to Sandusky Bay with amenities such as a public beach, piers, overlooks and boardwalks, to restaurant and event spaces with patios, balconies, and rooftops, to boating, water taxi, and ferry services, to themed events and souvenir shops—**people want downtown to interact with the water.**



**Activities and Events, year-round, are paramount.** In the survey results, activities or events were **mentioned 545 times**. These include arts and culture events, family events, festivals and themed special events, live music, farmers markets, year-round activities.



**The pedestrian experience is key.** People love downtown because it is walkable. Improvements should **maintain and enhance the pedestrian experience**, including seating, shade, dining, lighting, safe crossings, and connections to surrounding neighborhoods.





**Columbus Avenue should ignite all the senses.** The community has big ideas for Columbus Avenue. Specific improvement ideas include **wider sidewalks, lighting, public art, heat in winter, shade in summer, special paving, outdoor dining and seating.** Columbus Avenue should work 24/7/365 for pedestrians and businesses, with the ability to be closed down for festivals and events.



**Broader retail options could better serve residents and visitors.** Many comments discussed the desire for **essential retail** including clothing, pharmacy, and grocery. Ideas for more **shops and restaurants** included boutique, local businesses, art gallery, souvenirs, food trucks, coffee shops, and ice cream.



**Downtown needs more places to stay and more places to live.** Respondents called for **more options to live and visit downtown.** Today, hotel options are limited, and more rooms are needed to attract visitors. New residential ideas included townhomes, high rises, apartments and condos.



**Amenities that are great for residents are great for tourists, too.** While there is room for some souvenir and vacation-based shopping, the community emphasizes that the things that make Sandusky appealing for residents will attract and entertain tourists, too. Top mentions include **connections to the water, events and activities, and variety of restaurants and retail.**

# DIRECTION FOR THE PLAN

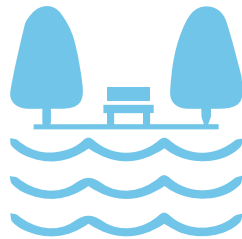
## Guiding Principles

These six guiding principles were developed to connect the top themes from the public engagement and create a foundation for developing the concepts and recommendations in the plan.

### The Downtown Sandusky Master Plan will:



» **Connect downtown's assets** with a cohesive, walkable street network full of creature comforts



» Increase **connections to the water** with public access and views



» Grow downtown as a neighborhood with more **residential options**



- » Establish downtown as a **year-round destination** with things to do every season



- » **Increase the number of visitors** to downtown and **increase how long they stay**



- » Foster the success of **downtown retail** with public realm investments and a vision for new and infill development





# **3** MARKET POTENTIAL

Summary

# DOWNTOWN'S MARKET POTENTIAL

## Summary

An analysis and summary of previous market studies was conducted in the context of 2020 to help ensure the concepts and recommendations in the plan were feasible in the marketplace. The studies included:

- » *Sandusky Site Retail Analysis (2019)*
- » *East Bay Downtown Market Analytics & Recommendations (2017)*
- » *Housing Needs Assessment (2017)*
- » *Hotel Conference Center Market Study (2017)*
- » Incentives analysis (performed as part of this plan)



Sources: *Sandusky Site Retail Analysis, Downtown-East Bay Market Analytics*

## SUMMARY OF DOWNTOWN'S MARKET POTENTIAL

**Local and tourism demand supports mixed-use developments downtown.**

### Retail

- » **Downtown:** Recent and future developments focus on **F&B, specialty stores, and experiential retail** in downtown corridor.
- » **Customers:** Locals continue to support new retail downtown, while tourists may help expand opportunities.
- » **East Bay:** **Long-term opportunity** could support waterfront-focused entertainment options.

### Tourism

- » **Tourism:** Hotels citywide are geared to **high summer demand** by visitors to Cedar Point, Kalahari, Sports Force, etc.
- » **Recent activity:** Successful opening of Holiday Inn near downtown suggests development potential.
- » **Opportunity:** Market may support a new **100-150 bed hotel at the upper-midscale range.**

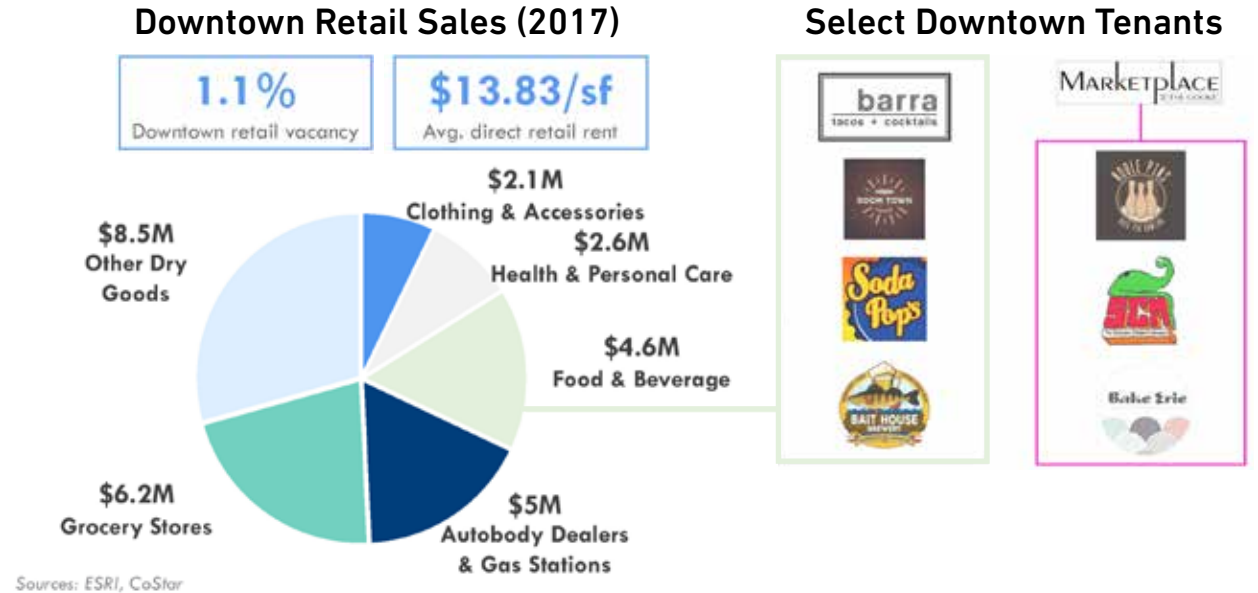
### Residential

- » **Existing market:** Downtown rentals achieve **\$1.00 - \$1.50/sf rents with high occupancy.**
- » **Recent activity:** Downtown has attracted dozens of new and rehabilitated units, both rentals and condos.
- » **Opportunity:** Demand may support up to **250 new market-rate rentals and 200 new affordable units.**

# DEMAND IS INCREASING FOR EXPERIENTIAL RETAIL DOWNTOWN

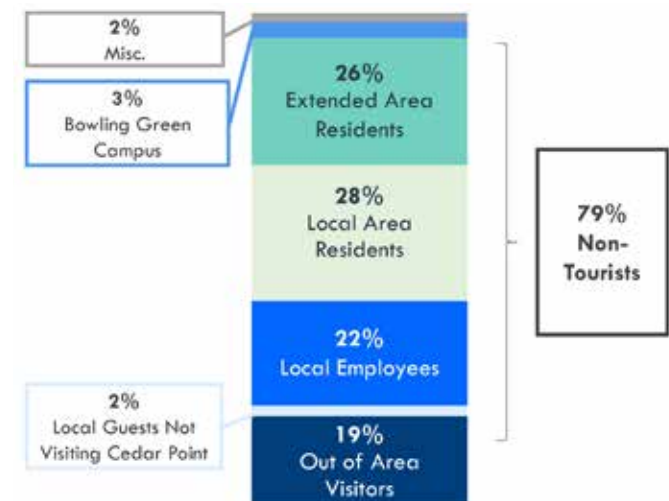
## Retail Market Summary Takeaways

The retail market summary notes recent and proposed retail redevelopment in downtown. Recent and planned retail capitalizes on mixed use redevelopments and increasing demand for experiential retail downtown.



Projected Customers: Food Hall Concept at Kreimes Grocery Site (see map)

**New development primarily responds to local and regional demand, complemented by—but not exclusively dependent on—tourism.**





**Recent and planned retail capitalizes on mixed use redevelopments and increasing demand for experiential retail downtown.**



# CAPTURING MORE VISITOR SPENDING COULD BE TRANSFORMATIONAL

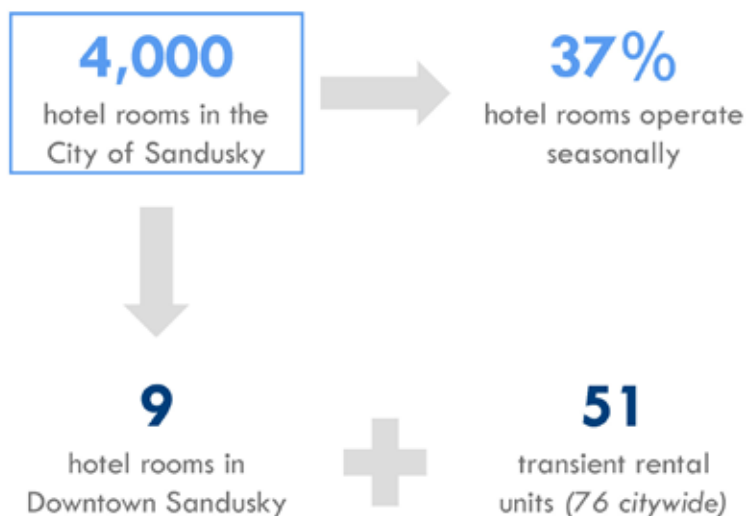
## Tourism Market Summary Takeaways

Visitors to the region spend \$1.9B annually. Of those 10 million annual visitors, 3.5 million visit Cedar Point. However, only an estimated 1% of tourist spending occurs in Downtown Sandusky. Capturing even a slight amount of that annual visitor spending could be transformational downtown. While the economy supports 4,000 hotel rooms in the city of Sandusky, downtown has only nine rooms. The hotel market analysis suggested a 100-150 hotel room demand for downtown as of 2017. Additionally, hotel occupancy rate is 50 percent or higher for six months of the year from May through October. Adding hotel rooms Downtown could bring that visitor spending to local businesses and add customers year-round.



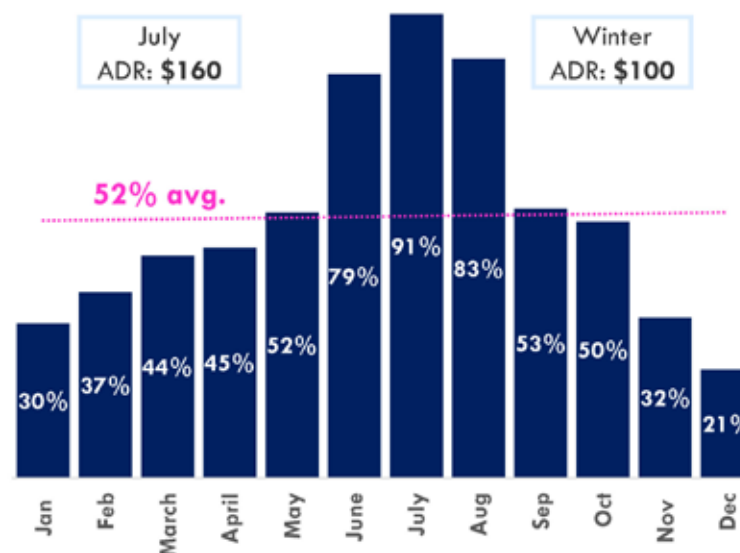
Sources: East Bay-Downtown Market Analytics; conversations with City staff.

## Sandusky's highly seasonal hotel market responds to demand for outdoor attractions such as Cedar Point.



Source: Hotel Conference Center Market Study, conversations with City staff

### 2016 Hotel Occupancy by Month

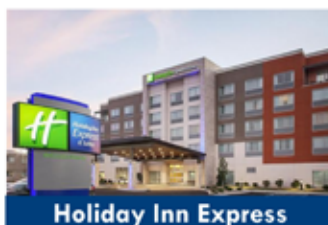


### Hotel Market Activity

Trends suggest the Downtown market can support a 125-room mid-scale hotel.



- \$2M renovation in 2016 of vacant building into a boutique hotel
- 9 rooms
- Only hotel within Downtown Sandusky



- Phase I: built in 2016 for \$7M, included 66 rooms
- Phase II: \$6M construction of an additional 66 rooms

### Hotel Market Forecasts

Holiday Inn opening did not produce adverse effects on market occupancy rates

+

5%  
RevPAR annual growth rate in City

Demand for local amenities & Sports Force Parks

=

**100-150** est. hotel room demand

Source: Hotel Conference Center Market Study (HVS), 2017.

# PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE DOWNTOWN

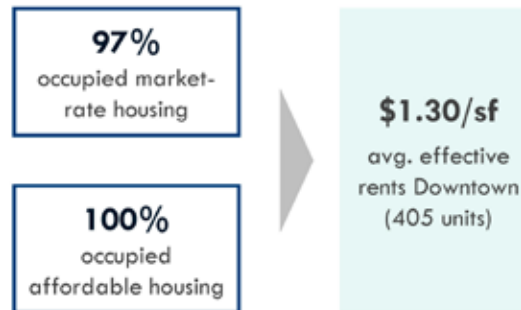
## Residential Market Summary Takeaways

Downtown, market rate housing is 97 percent occupied. This suggests pent up demand, which was estimated as demand for 190 – 250 units in a 2017 housing study. The demand has catalyzed new development and rehabilitations in downtown including the Columbus Avenue Lofts, Water Street Townhomes, and Falcon Lofts. New projects are a mixture of market-rate rental and for-sale housing.

Given the continued demand, stakeholders remain optimistic on opportunities for residential development downtown. The rehabilitation of upper floors in historic buildings likely offers a promising option to create housing in the short term, as exemplified by several recent projects. All residential development likely requires some form of public support, whether through direct funding or TIF programs.

**High occupancy for market-rate rentals has encouraged new developments and rehabilitations downtown.**

### Rental Market Background



**190-250** est. mkt.-rate unit demand

Sources: Housing Needs Assessment (VSI, 2017), CoStar, conversations with City staff.

### Rental Market Activity

#### COMPLETED



- Historical building rehab
- **18** rental units completed 2019
- Est. asking rent: **\$1.50/SF, top of market**

#### UNDER CONSTRUCTION



- New development, under construction
- **80** units targeting future BGSU students
- Projected asking rent: **\$1.50/SF**

**Recent developments have captured demand for for-sale housing downtown at upper price points.**

### For-Sale Market Background



\*Estimated using the Downpayment Assistance Program results.  
Sources: Housing Needs Assessment, conversations with City staff.

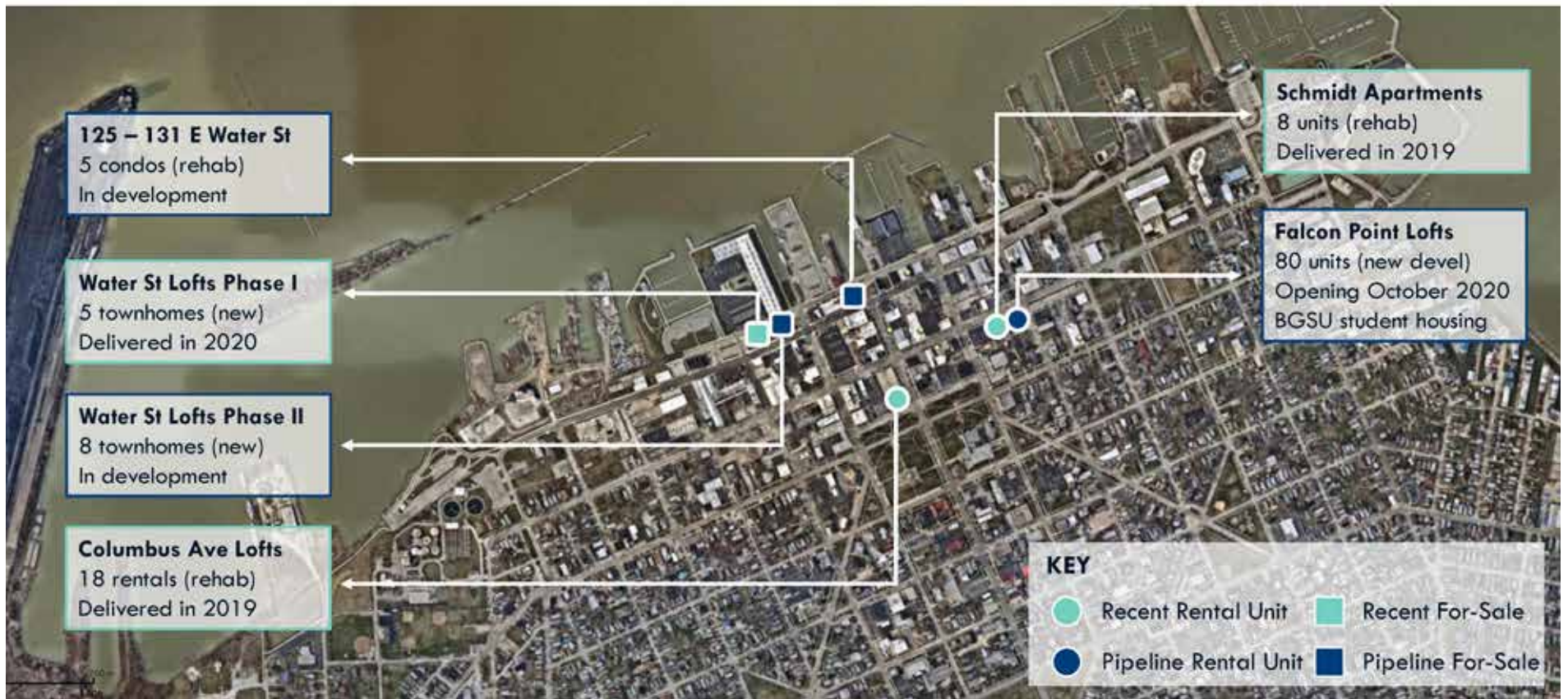
### For-Sale Market Activity



- New townhomes
- Phase I units are selling for \$300K - \$330K, or **\$150 - \$200 PSF**
- Phase II expects price increase of **\$30,000/unit**



**Recent and planned residential mixed-use developments will continue to activate downtown with residents and business.**



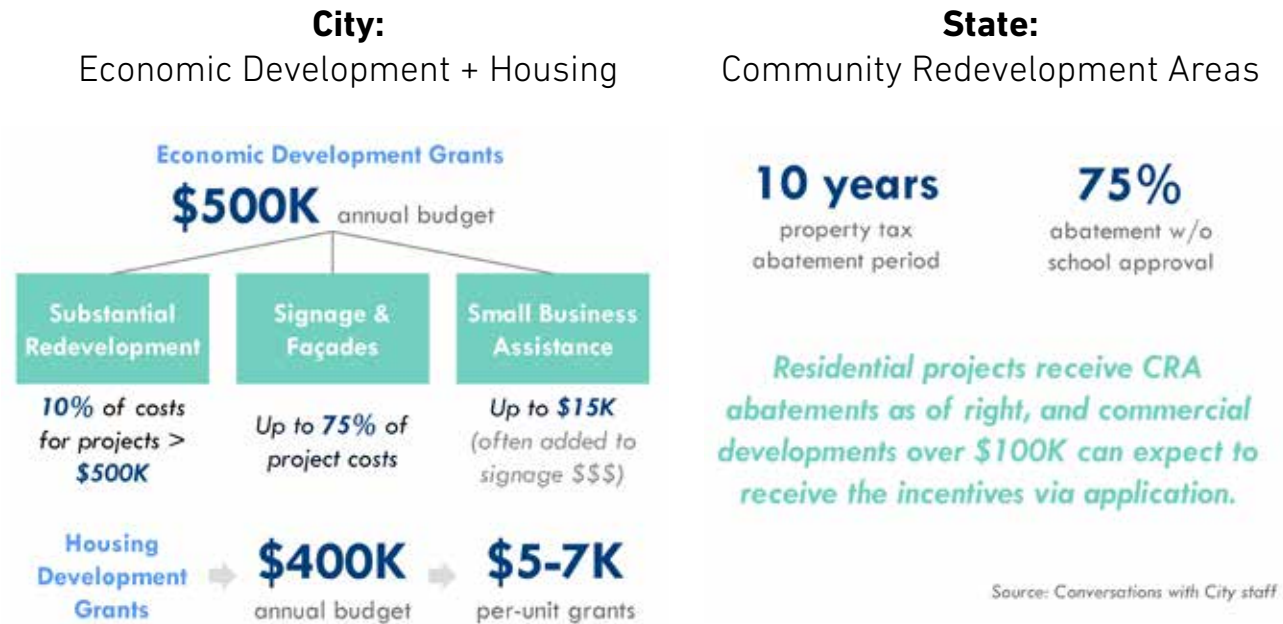
# THE CITY SPEAKS THE LANGUAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

## Market Incentives Takeaways

The City has taken proactive measure to incentivize development and downtown revitalization through several creative funding mechanisms. These include a combination of local and State programs and are used to support projects of all sizes. Development grant recipients include large projects such as the Falcon Lofts (Resort School built in partnership by Bowling Green State University and Cedar Fair). Small business grant recipients include Barra Tacos and Daly's Pub.

Incentives programs help balance the cost of construction versus lower rent in the City (as compared to larger cities like Cleveland). Ongoing incentives are promoting more housing options downtown and helping to fill the market demand for living in walkable neighborhoods as well as promoting business growth which creates jobs and supports local entrepreneurs. City Economic Development and Housing Grants provide annual \$900,000 in grant funding for redevelopment, signage, building facades, and small business assistance. The Community Redevelopment Area program by the State of Ohio supports a 10-year property tax abatement period for residential projects and some commercial projects.

**Both city and state incentives programs support downtown developments. These programs help projects to become financially feasible for development.**



Downtown Sandusky is located within a federal Opportunity Zone. This designation allows investors to defer and/or abate capital gains taxes on qualified investments in local businesses and real estate developments. By improving the returns on these investments, the Opportunity Zone program potentially increases the supply of available capital and range of market-feasible projects in downtown Sandusky.

**While city programs have enabled many developments to date, future large scale projects may require new funding sources, such as a Section 41 TIF.**

### Recent Grant Recipients

#### SUBSTANTIAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT RECIPIENTS

BGSU/Cedar Fair \$1.0M	Cardinal Grocery \$150K
Water St. Lofts \$75K	125-131 E Water St. \$193K
CHESAPEAKE TIF RECIPIENTS	
Feick Building \$1.3M	Marketplace at Cooke \$150K
	Columbus Ave Lofts \$450K

#### SMALL BUSINESS + SIGNAGE GRANT RECIPIENTS

Barra Tacos \$20K	Daly's Pub \$35K
Tim Dorsey Fitness \$35K	Vita Urbana \$21K

*The Chesapeake TIF has been fully committed to fund public works. Future private development will require a Section 41 TIF or other financing vehicle.*

TIF programs, such as Section 40 and Section 41, capture the incremental increases in property taxes from parcels within defined TIF districts to fund infrastructure and investments. While Section 40 TIFs can only fund public infrastructure like roads and parks, Section 41 TIFs are able to support eligible private developments directly.







# **4 ANALYSIS**

## Existing Conditions

# A HISTORY AND FUTURE OF OPPORTUNITY

## Downtown Sandusky

### Heritage

Downtown Sandusky is located on the traditional lands of the Native American Erie tribe, who are the namesake of Lake Erie and Erie County. The city is named for the Wyandot word meaning “at the cold water” highlighting Sandusky’s integral connection to the water.

### The Kilbourne Plat

Downtown’s unique street pattern, a masonic grid, is known as the “Kilbourne Plat” after its designer Hector Kilbourne. Sandusky is one of two cities in the U.S. with a masonic grid design—the other being Washington D.C. The street grid frames downtown with diagonal streets (Central and Huron Avenues) leading to Washington Park and the County Courthouse. Washington Park is the gateway to the civic and retail core of the city—where you can look down Columbus Avenue for an iconic view of Sandusky Bay.

### Opportunity Zone

Downtown Sandusky is also defined by the Opportunity Zone boundary as shown here. The zone is roughly bound by Monroe Street along the south edge, Camp and Shelby Streets along the west, and Sandusky Bay on the east and north.

The Opportunity Zone is a federal tax incentive program intended to foster revitalization in communities. It allows investors to defer capital gains taxes by placing funds into real estate within an Opportunity Zone. If the investment is retained for 10 years, the capital gains taxes from the original investment are waived. For more information of how to take advantage of these programs, reach out to city staff and also see this “Frequently Asked Questions” resource from the IRS: <https://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/opportunity-zones-frequently-asked-questions>.

### A Working Waterfront

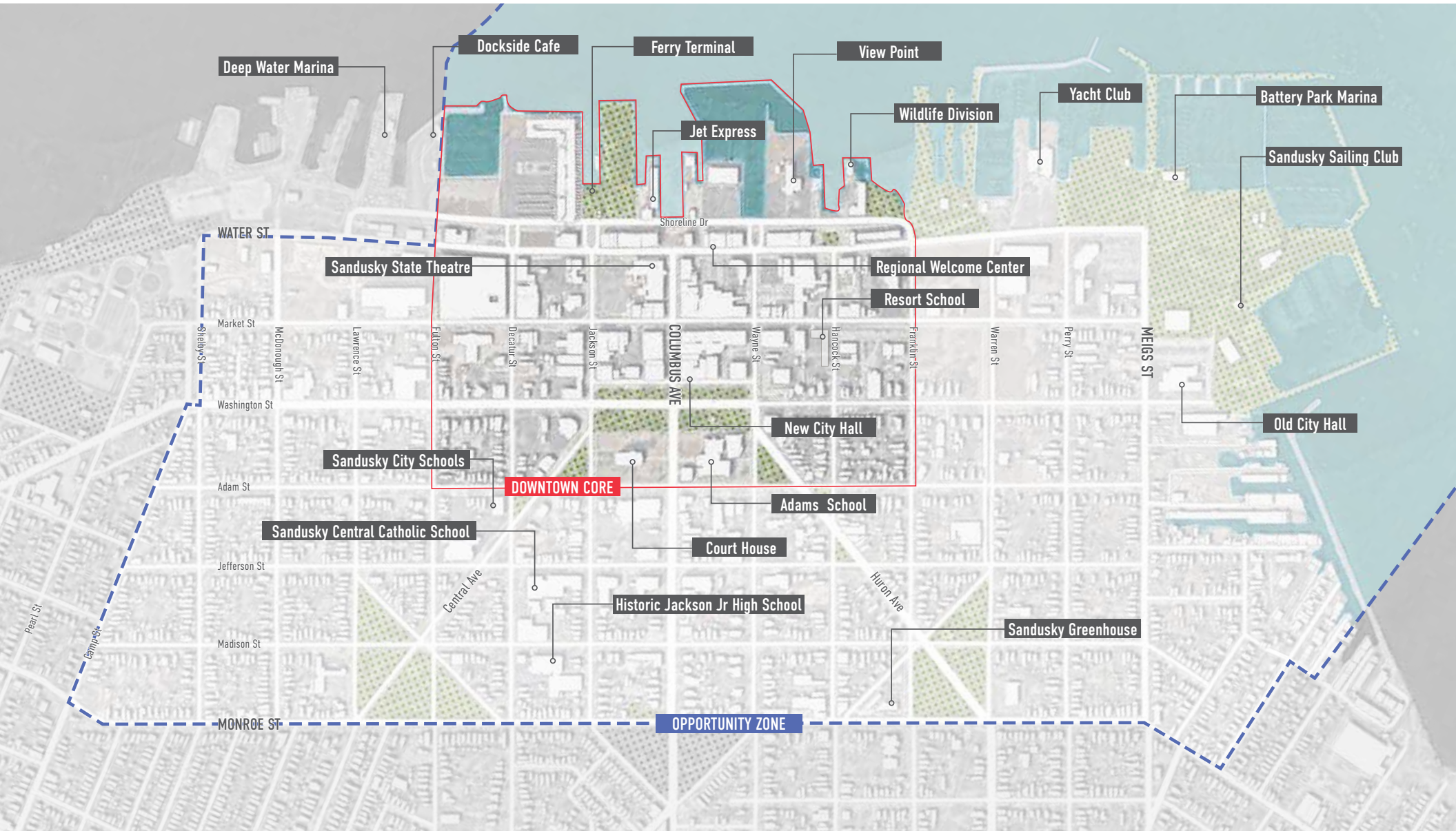
Downtown has been a working neighborhood and port location for its 200-year history, and a tourist destination for local and international tourists since the 1870 opening of Cedar Point. Over the past few decades, industry has declined in the city, and nationwide, while regional economic development has shifted focus to experiential retail and tourism. Lake Erie Shores & Islands has established a strong tourism strategy that includes Downtown Sandusky and Lake Erie destinations including Put-in-Bay, Kelleys Island, Cedar Point, the Marblehead Peninsula, and more. With growing

demand for downtown living, walkability, and amenities such as Sandusky Bay, Downtown Sandusky continues to see new investment and interest for residential, retail, food and beverage, and hospitality options. With continued revitalization and attraction of office employers, Downtown can become an employment hub for Erie County. Further, a partnership between Cedar Point and Bowling Green State University offering a new Resort and Hospitality Management program has made downtown a destination for education.

### Downtown Core

Retail and restaurants benefit by clustering together in locations with the highest amount of foot traffic. Further, civic activities and events thrive in walkable retail clusters. For these reasons, a Downtown Core was loosely defined to frame many of the recommendations for this plan. This area is the center of city government, the hub of local restaurants and retail experiences, the location for large-scale community events, and a launching point for Sandusky Bay outdoor recreation.

## DOWNTOWN SANDUSKY





# SANDUSKY BAY FRAMES THE CITY

## The Waterfront

Access to Sandusky Bay is one of the top priorities of the community. This includes a desire for more views of the water—via balconies, rooftops, patios and outdoor seating—as well as ways to get close to and interact with the water. The new Mile Marker Zero improvements at Shoreline Drive offer easier access to sit at the water's edge and look out onto the bay. This has been an extremely popular destination for residents and visitors since the opening of the Sandusky Bay Pathway and Shoreline Drive improvements in the spring of 2020. However, many barriers exist to connecting to the waterfront. Today, several of the publicly accessible places along the water, shown in green in the diagram, are not obvious places that are open to the public. One example is Meigs Street Pier, adjacent to Battery Park Marina. While the pier is publicly accessible, it is easy to mistake it for an access point for marina guests only. Another example is Washington Street Pier south of the Sandusky Sailing Club. This location feels hidden behind the Old City Hall and is not noticeable as a place to walk along the water until you get close to it on foot or via the parking lot by the Sandusky Skate Park.

The private realm also disconnects residents and visitors from the water. Many places directly connected to Sandusky Bay, especially in the Downtown Core, are privately accessible only, such as the Murray & Murray Law Offices and Viewpoint residential tower. Other sites have redeveloped and added public access to the waterfront and views, such as Chesapeake Lofts with its public walkway around the building.

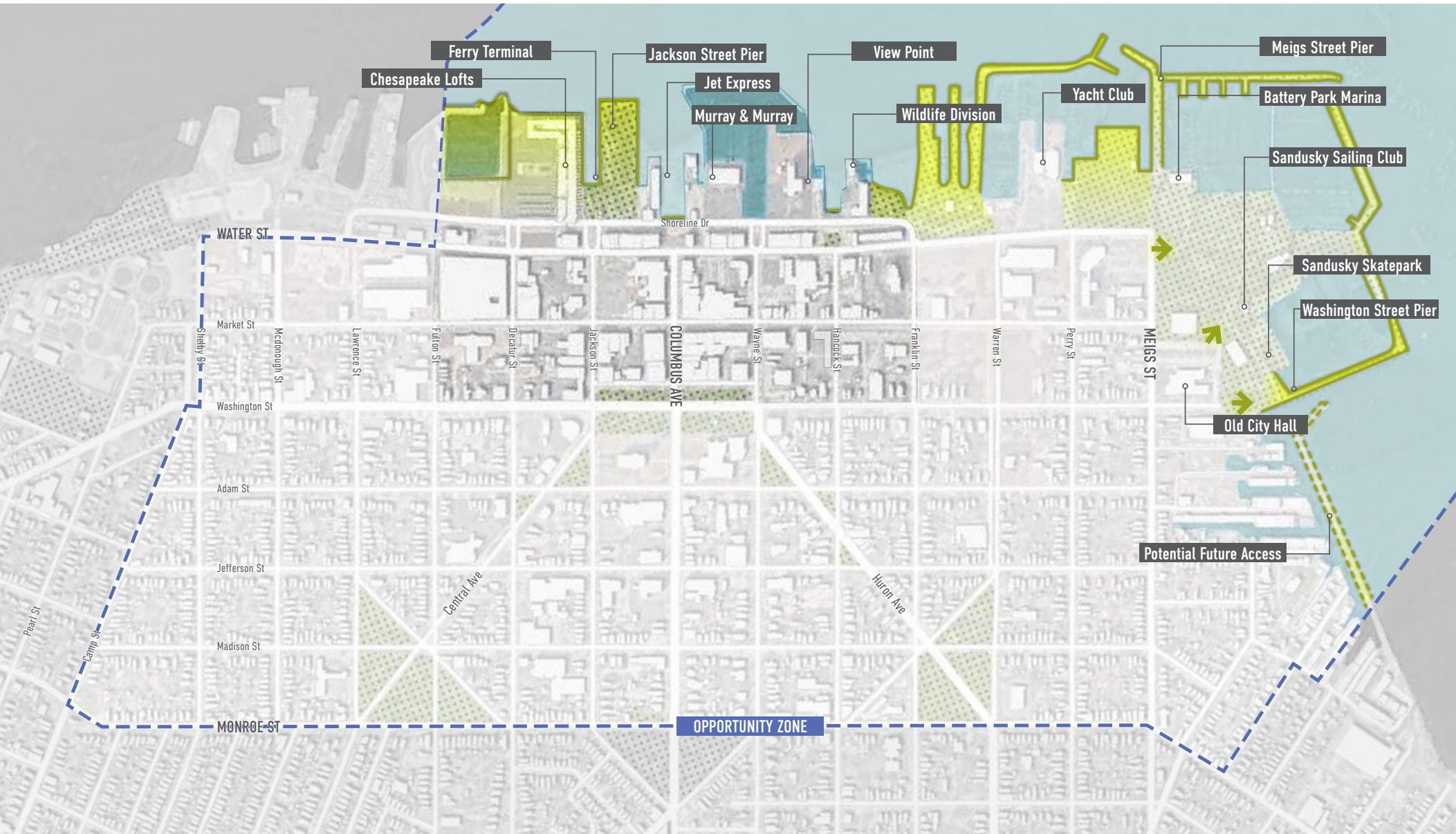


Jackson Street Pier



Dockside Cafe

## PUBLIC ACCESS





# A WALKABLE, HISTORIC, SMALL-CITY DOWNTOWN

## Built Environment

The building frontage analysis examines the relationship between buildings and the street. The pedestrian experience of walking through a historic downtown (or new areas built with urban design principles that mimic historic downtowns) is a large part of what makes these places attract people and businesses. This analysis shows that most buildings and the urban environment positively contribute to the walkable experience of Downtown Sandusky.

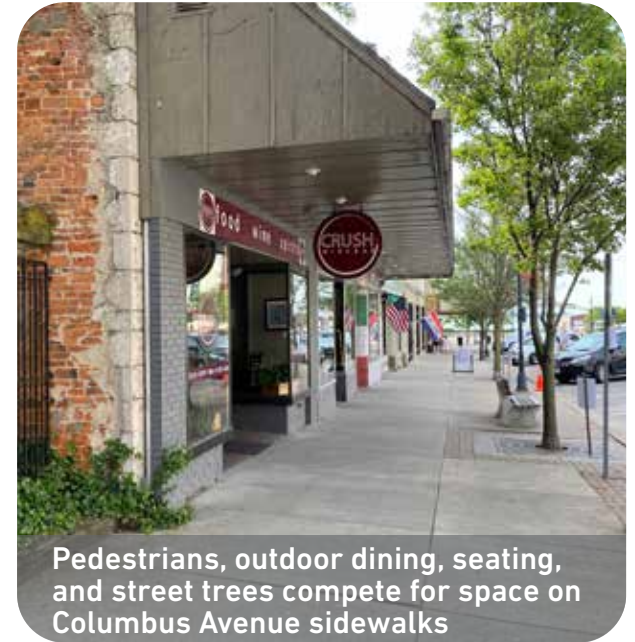
Places marked green, as “contributing frontage,” have a positive relationship with the sidewalk and street. Contributing factors include buildings that are close to the sidewalk edge with little or no setback or landscaped areas along the sidewalk. This condition creates an inviting built environment that helps to frame the street and provides storefronts and active first floor uses that engage pedestrians and encourage walkability.

Places marked red, as “non-contributing frontage,” have a negative or neutral relationship with the sidewalk and street. These sites have large setbacks or surface parking lots that break the rhythm and scale of the street. This creates a less inviting built environment for pedestrians and marks areas that might be suited for new development or redevelopment.

Some areas of contributing and non-contributing building frontage can be balanced by pedestrian improvements. Good examples of this are two areas along Shoreline Drive near the View Point residential tower. Here, Sandusky Bay Pathway improvements create a contributing pedestrian environment despite the lack of buildings close to the street.



Banners and lighting along Shoreline Drive

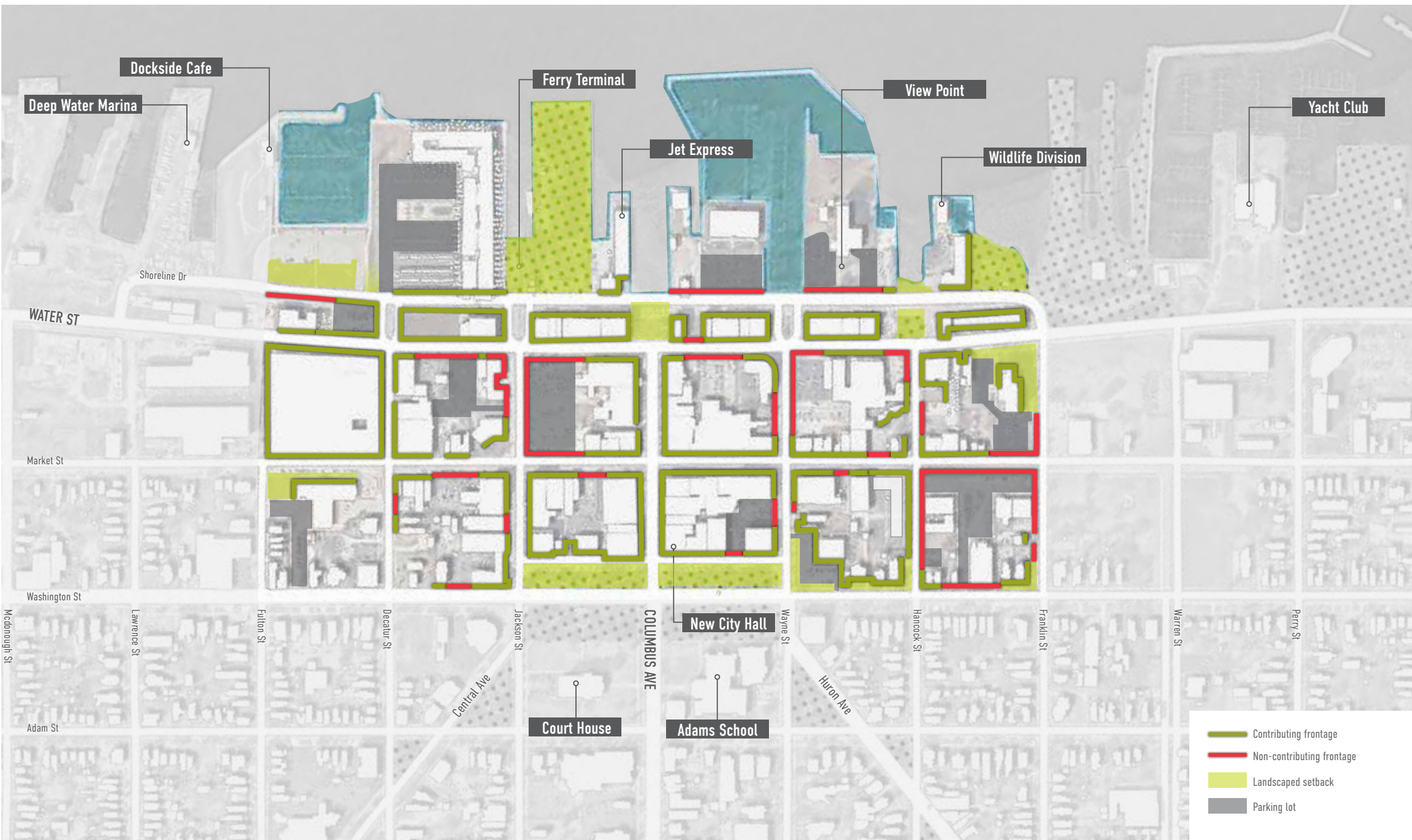


Pedestrians, outdoor dining, seating, and street trees compete for space on Columbus Avenue sidewalks



Water Street historic architecture

# BUILDING FRONTAGE





# ABUNDANT + UNDERUTILIZED PARKING

## Opportunities for Parking

Business owners and residents are concerned that parking constraints will be problematic as downtown revitalizes. Data shows there is an abundance of parking downtown, but time limits are not enforced and it is not always intuitive where to park if a spot is not available right next to a destination.

The city has conducted two parking studies, a *2014 Downtown Sandusky Parking Supply/Demand Study and Parking Management Plan* and a nine-month parking data collection in 2016 and 2017.

During parking data collection in 2016/2017 the locations of highest use were Water Street between Jackson Street and Columbus Avenue, the Columbus Avenue core and Market Street between Columbus Avenue and Wayne Street. No parking lot or parking structure was utilized to maximum capacity outside of the parking lot on Water Street behind Daly's Pub, and the Jackson Street Parking Lot on a few Saturdays during the summer. The downtown parking garage never reached over 50% capacity any of the 52 times data was collected.

Given this information, and understanding development is likely to continue downtown, downtown Sandusky's current parking supply is more than adequate to continue to offer convenient parking over the next several years.

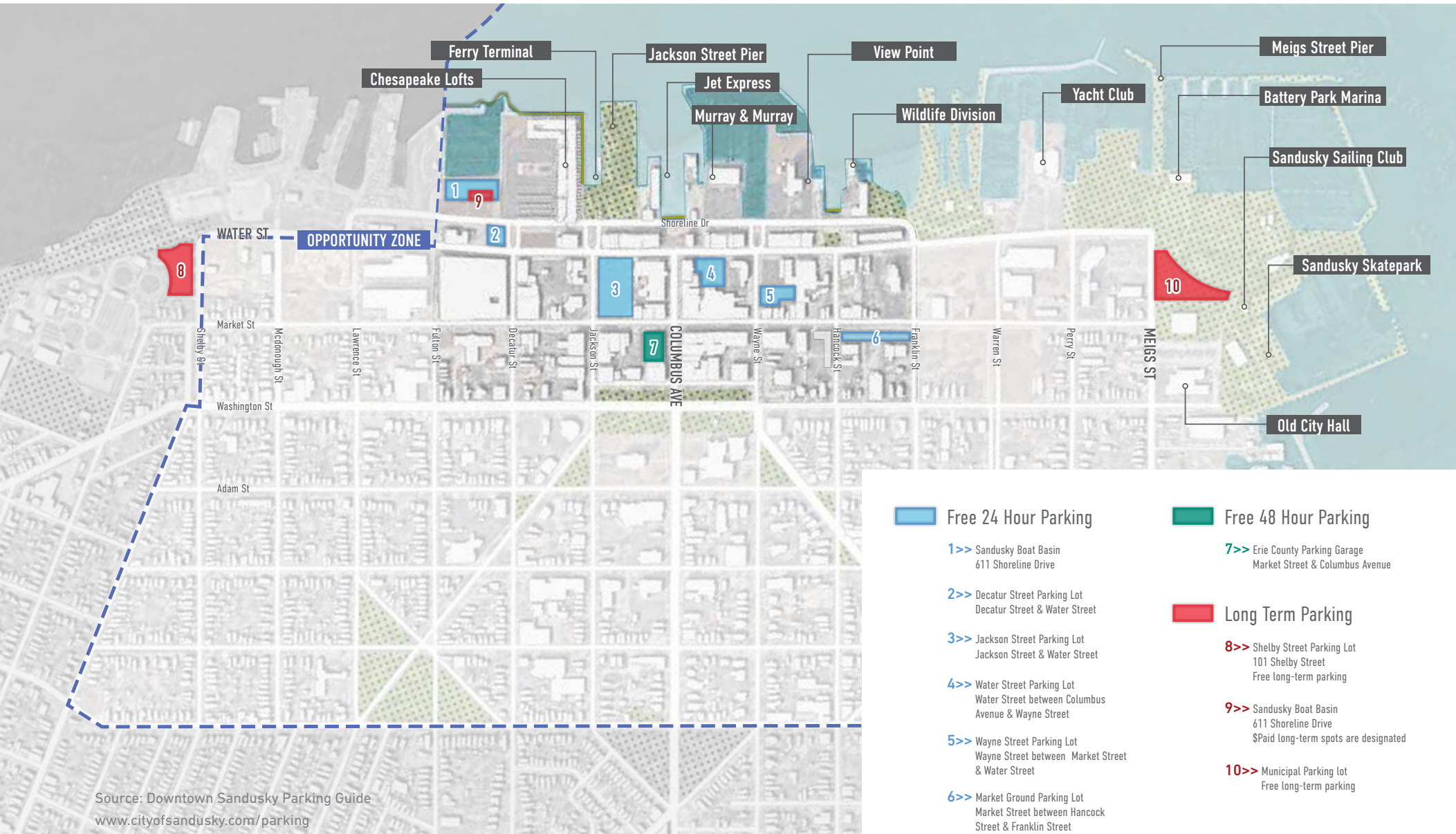
The corresponding map shows Downtown Sandusky parking locations available for free 24-hour, 48-hour, and long-term parking. These resources are in addition to ample on street parking throughout downtown.

Several actions are already planned or are ongoing to help ensure parking downtown is intuitive to find and available. These include:

- » Increase marketing, signage, and highlighting off-street parking areas to be sure that visitors and those looking to park downtown longer than two hours aren't parking on street.
- » Designate a location for paid long-term spaces that will replace the designated long-term spaces that were located on Jackson Street Pier.
- » Begin enforcing on-street parking time limits, at first through warnings, in targeted areas to be sure there is the proper amount of turnover. (Ex: 2 hour 9 am – 5 pm).



## DOWNTOWN PARKING: 24-HOUR, 48-HOUR AND LONG TERM





# THINGS TO DO + PLACES TO SEE

## Contributing To Downtown Vibrancy

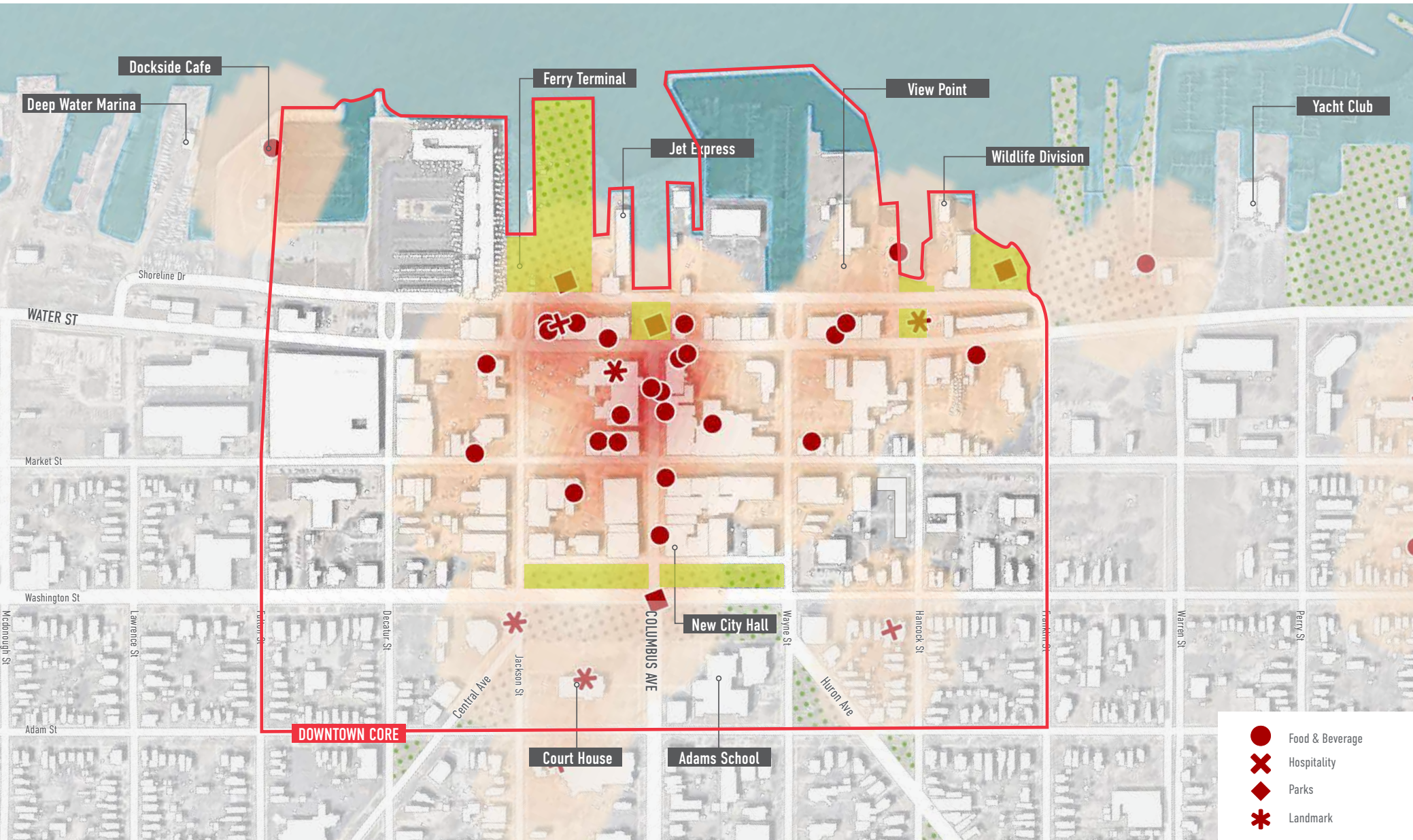
How do visitors—and even residents—experience new places and decide what new businesses to try out? Often, they search Google and Yelp for reviews and recommendations. This retail and attractions activity density analysis illustrates Downtown Sandusky food and beverage, hospitality, parks, and landmark destinations (i.e. State Theatre). The darker red areas of the map highlight which establishments have the highest number of reviews, where the lighter peach areas of the map show the locations with the fewest number of reviews. This is one way to see places that customers are discussing online and destinations in downtown that are attracting visitors.

New and existing businesses will benefit if their online presence is increased. Individual businesses can take initiative to solicit reviews and post to social media. In many cities, various downtown organizations assist businesses in marketing to broad audiences. Sandusky has had such organizations in the past but no current active organization.





## RETAIL + ATTRACTIONS





# IMPROVEMENTS + INVESTMENT CONTINUE TO BUILD MOMENTUM

## \$100M Recent + Ongoing Investments

Nearly \$100 million in recently completed, planned, and ongoing investments are shaping the built environment and increasing the momentum of downtown revitalization. These include public, private, and public-private partnership investments.

Some recently completed investments include:

- » Jackson Street Pier – a new city park and event space that includes seating along the water, a boardwalk, an event lawn, a rentable year-round pavilion, and parking
- » Shoreline Drive and Sandusky Bay Pathway – multi-use path and street improvements including lighting, signage, and the Mile Marker Zero installation at Shoreline Drive and Columbus Avenue
- » Lake Erie Shores & Islands – historic building renovation and office headquarters
- » City Hall – historic building renovation and City Hall location on Columbus Avenue
- » Cedar Fair/BGSU collaboration – new building holds a recently established Resort and Hospitality Management education program and Falcon Lofts market-rate residential units

Ongoing investments include:

- » Cooke Complex – new building under construction at Columbus Avenue and Market Street, which will house first floor retail with residential above
- » Water Street Lofts – recently completed, under construction, and future phases of for-sale townhomes on Water Street
- » Feick Building – historic building rehabilitation underway with retail on the first floor and residential above



City Hall and Vita



Water Street Lofts

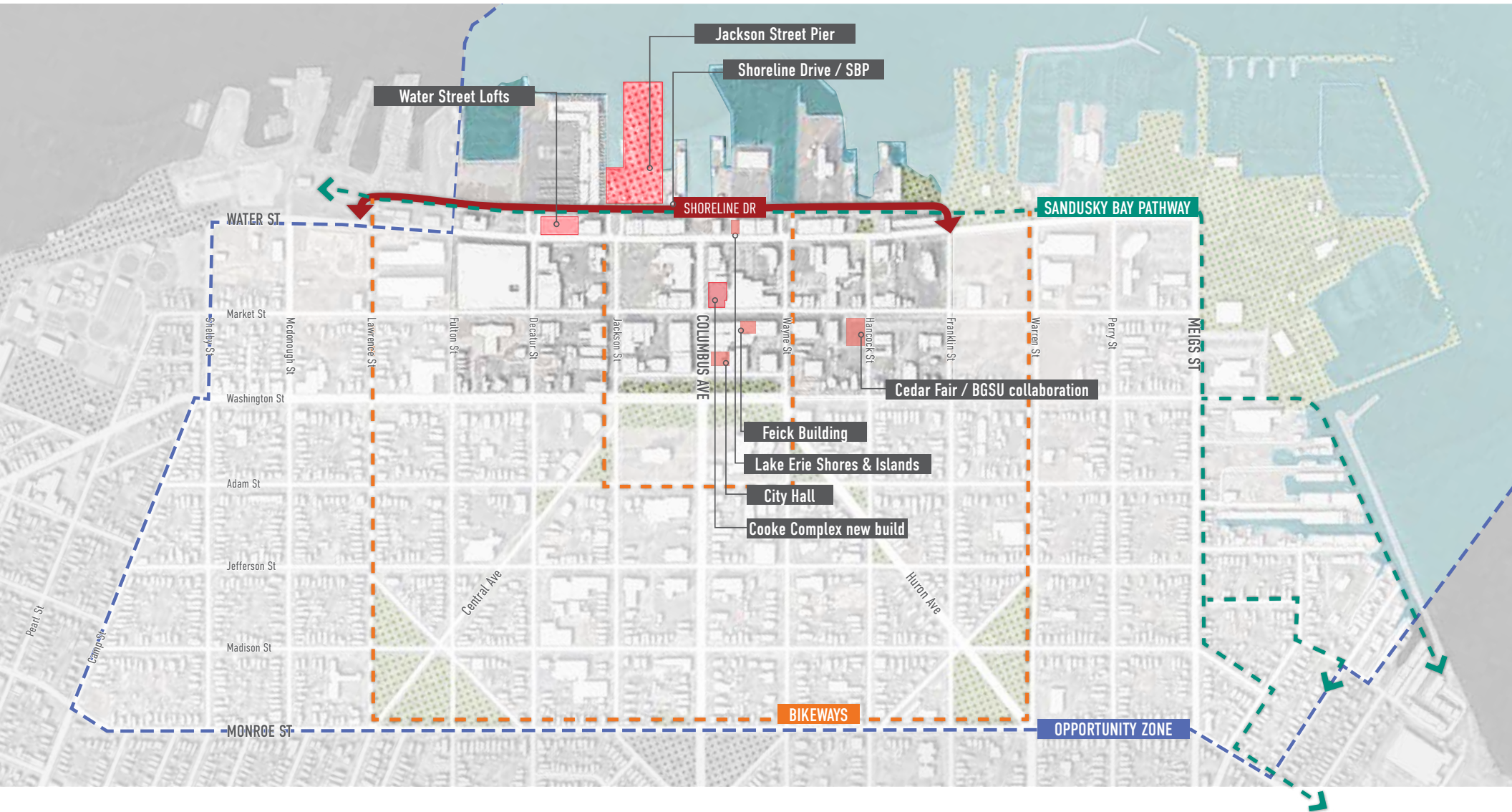


Lake Erie Shores & Islands



Jackson Street Pier

## RECENT + PROPOSED LARGE-SCALE INVESTMENT





# **5** RECOMMENDATIONS

9 Plan Recommendations

5 Focus Area Opportunities



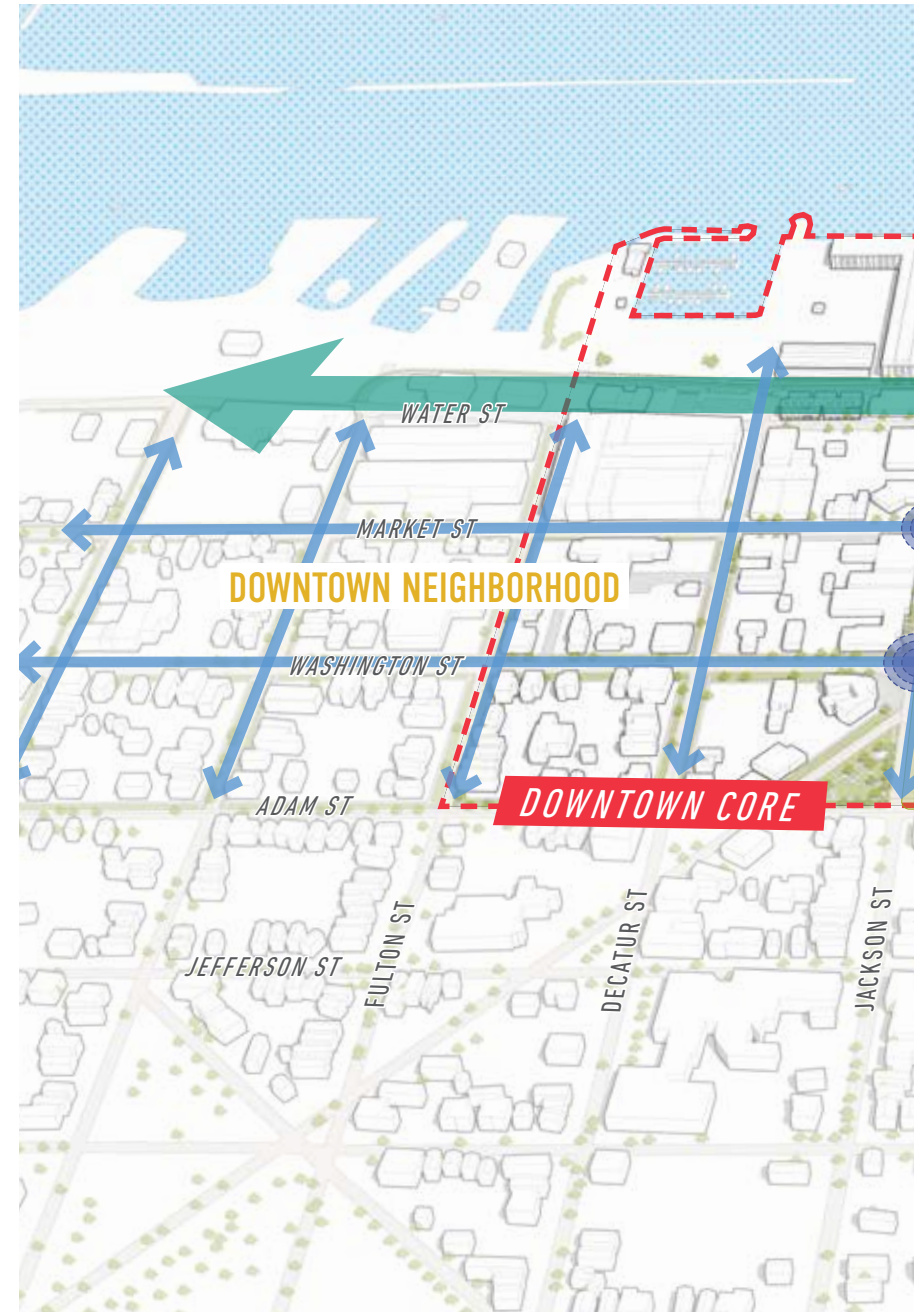
# SET THE STAGE

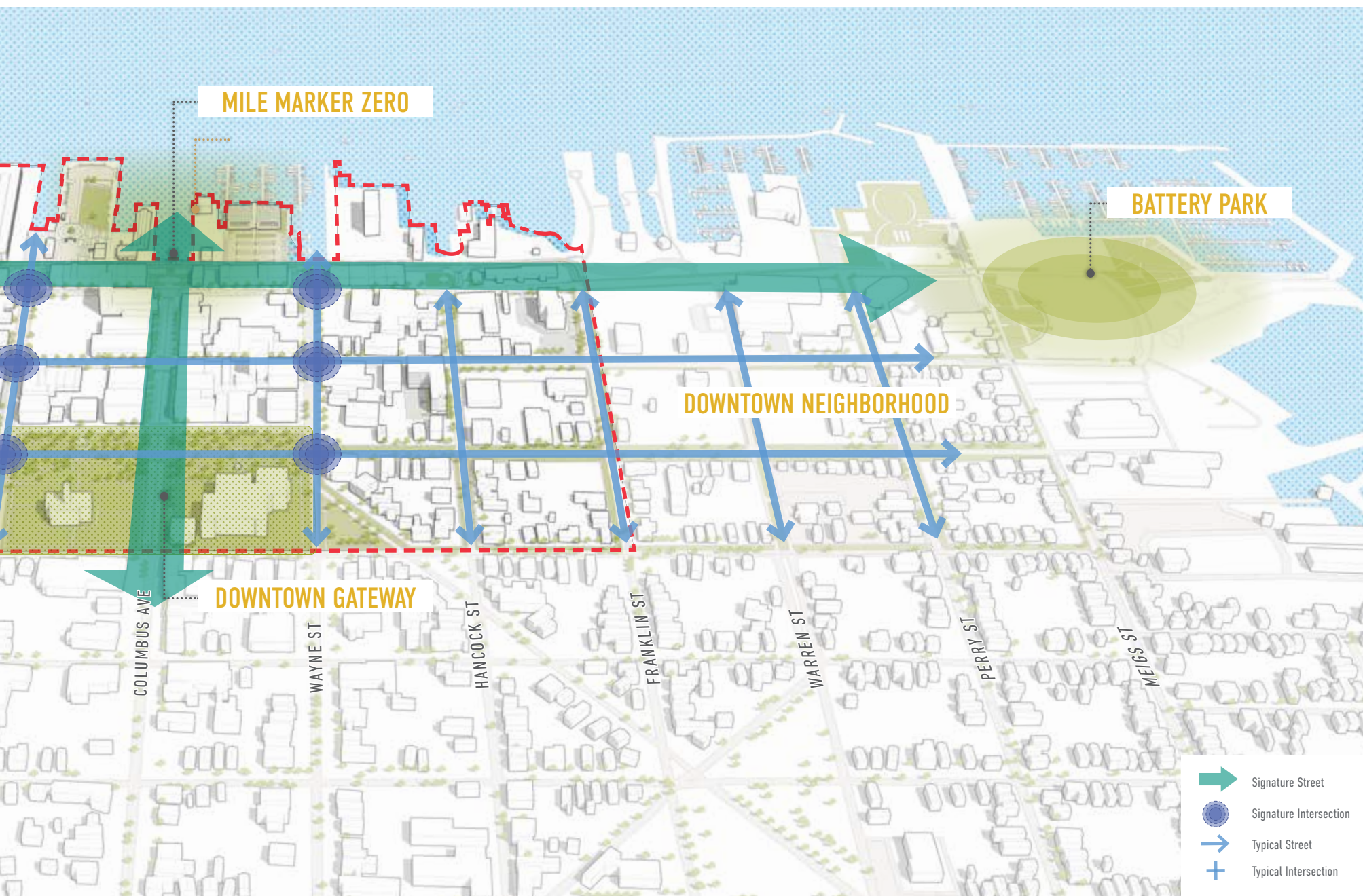
## Plan Framework

The Master Plan recommendations focus on the Downtown Core because retail, restaurant, and businesses benefit from being clustered together. Key elements shape the context for the plan recommendations to help continue making Sandusky a great place to live and visit, including the waterfront, green space, and grid of walkable streets. The Plan Framework defines elements of downtown which create the platform for the plan recommendations.

The 9 Plan recommendations are:

1. Position Downtown Sandusky as the Economic, Entertainment, and Cultural anchor of the region.
2. Brand something new by creating a waterfront district identity.
3. Generate year-round excitement with events and activities.
4. Consider walkability first on all downtown streets.
5. Create a bicycle, golf cart, and multimodal culture to ensure access to all.
6. Foster education + entrepreneurship around downtown's new college presence.
7. Revitalize with activated, high quality buildings that create life on the street and add views to the water.
8. Create amazing public spaces where people make lasting memories.
9. Prioritize investment to maximize opportunities.





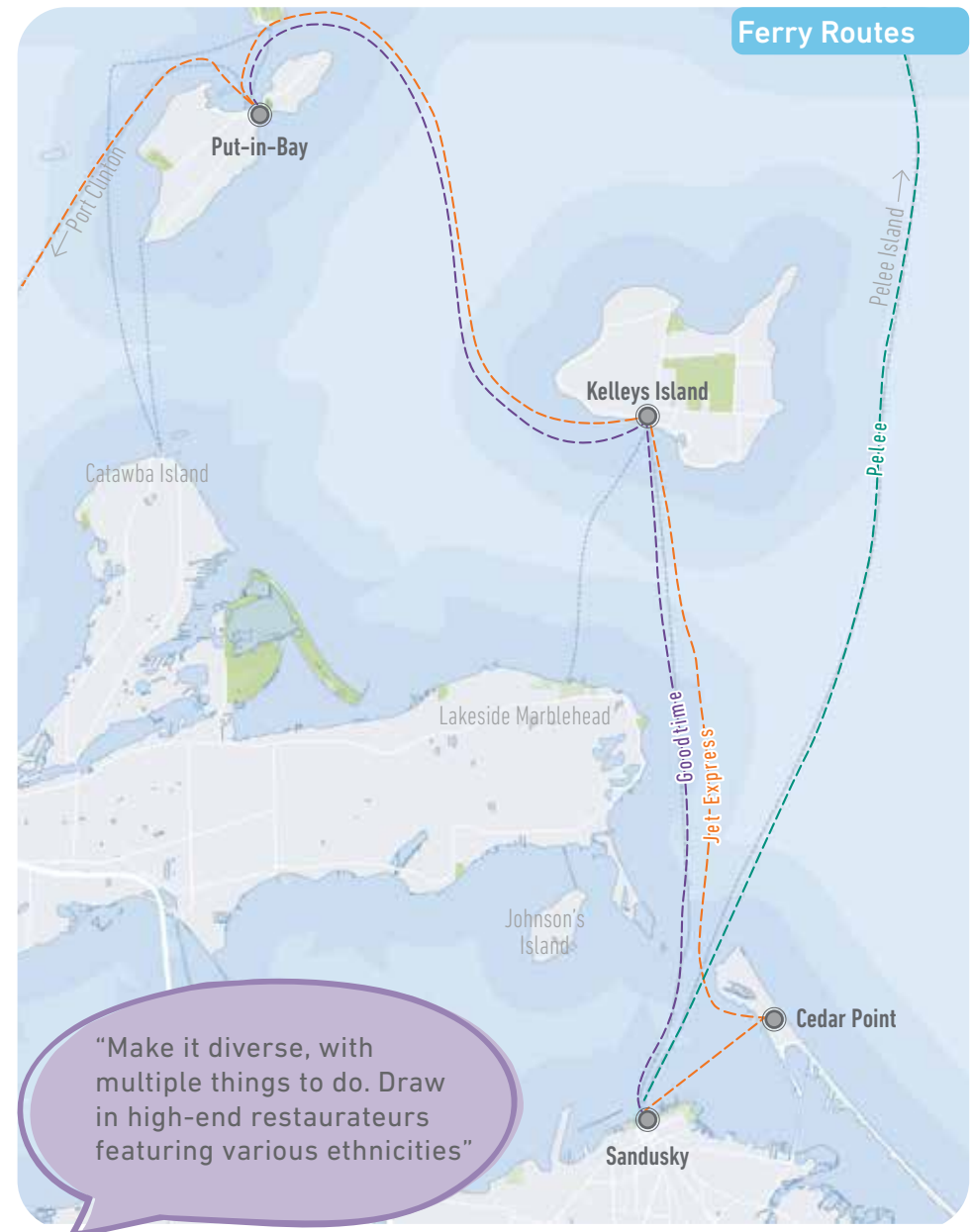


# 1. POSITION DOWNTOWN SANDUSKY AS THE ECONOMIC, ENTERTAINMENT, & CULTURAL ANCHOR OF THE REGION

**This starts with enhancing the waterfront.** It is why people are attracted to the city, and sets up Sandusky to be an economic, entertainment and cultural anchor in the region. Removing barriers to public enjoyment of the water will fuel continued success in downtown revitalization and economic development. As redevelopment and property sales occur over time, Sandusky should focus on increasing the public connections to the waterfront and regional Lake Erie attractions, and enhancing existing connections.

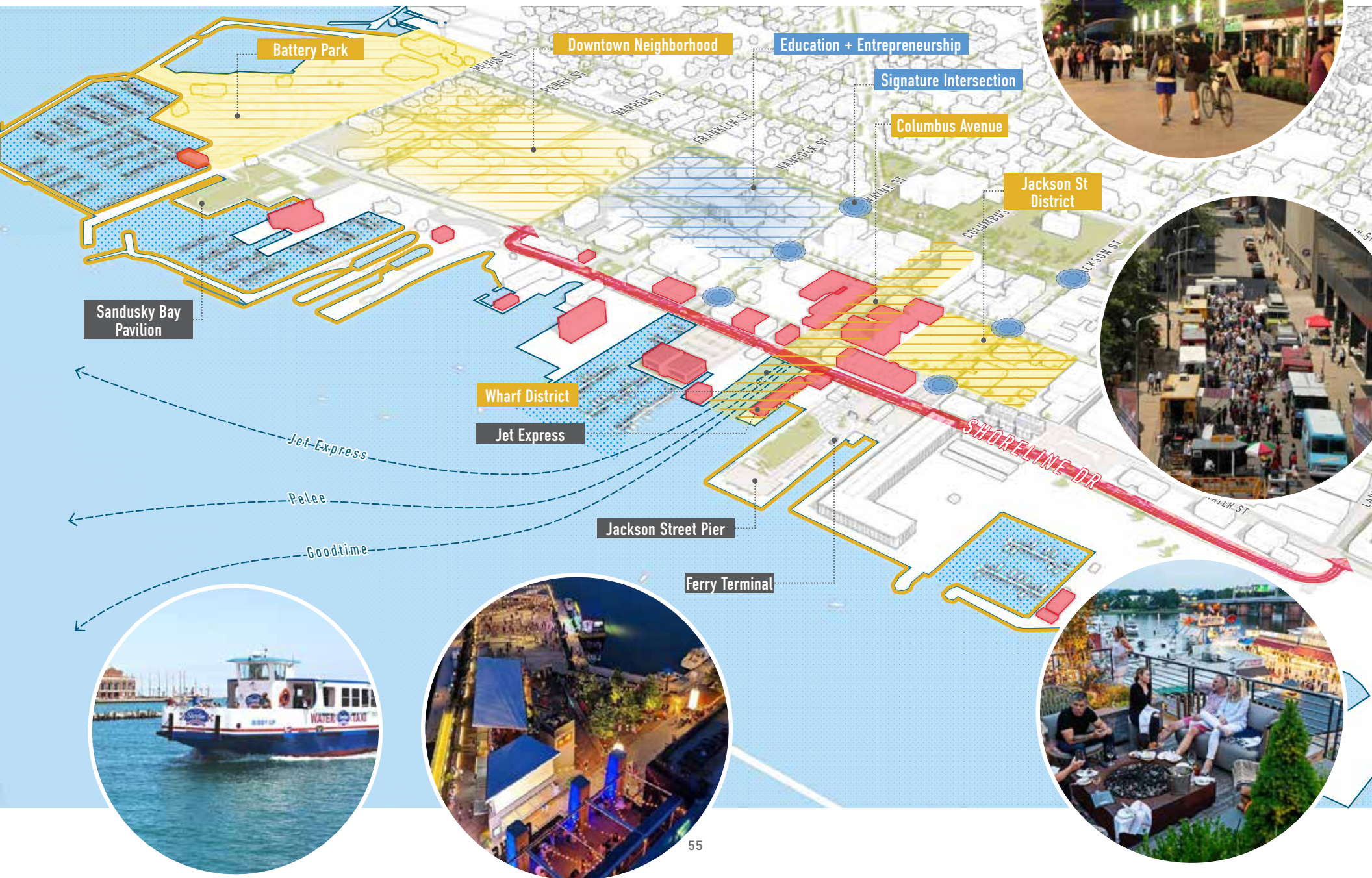
## **Recommendations to enhance the Waterfront include:**

- » Continued focus on regional water transportation to Put-in-Bay, Kelleys Island, Cedar Point and Pelee Island including ferry service and water taxis.
- » Increase pedestrian connectivity into publicly accessible sites, such as public parks and commercial spaces.
- » Incentivize private landowners to create public amenities on the water-facing edges of property. Amenities may include seating, plaza spaces, viewing platforms, boardwalks, bike parking, public art, etc.
- » Allow food trucks, vendor carts, small commercial spaces, and other innovative retail entrepreneurs to operate on existing sites.
- » Encourage offering of transient boater slips, with signage and wayfinding, to property owners with boat parking.
- » Emphasize mixed use, residential (including upper floor rehabilitation of historic buildings), and hospitality land uses along the water.
- » Ensure new construction and redevelopment plans maximize views to the water with site/building design, balconies, and rooftop access.
- » Park improvements at Shoreline Park such as consideration of fence removal or alteration, addition of adult fitness equipment, pedestrian connectivity and accessibility to the waterfront.





## WATERFRONT ACTIVITY + DOWNTOWN OPPORTUNITY SITES





## 2. BRAND SOMETHING NEW

### Waterfront District Identity

**District identities attract people and businesses. In Sandusky, a branded waterfront district could serve as a unifying theme for downtown placemaking along Shoreline Drive—with Jackson Street Pier, ferry boats, and water taxis serving as its anchor.** Many cities are known for their waterfront districts, such as the examples shown. As Downtown Sandusky continues to revitalize, the waterfront could thrive with a distinct brand identity, events, park space, and placemaking that would make it known in the region as a place to visit.

**Recommendations for creating a branded waterfront district in Sandusky include:**

- » Conduct a branding, placemaking, and architectural theme exercise to discover the name, colors, textures, stories, and materials that would create an authentic Sandusky waterfront district.
- » Identify a boundary for the district and placemaking elements for public and private spaces that would solidify its identity as a unique part of downtown.
- » Inspire businesses and property owners to embrace the district identity with investment in marketing materials, public art, renovation/facade improvements, year-round events and outdoor spaces, adding transient boat parking, and increasing public access to the waterfront.
- » Create one or more signature events to celebrate the district annually and attract visitors to the area.





## WATERFRONT DISTRICT COMPONENTS

"There is a lot of wasted waterfront space, However, the improvements up until now have been phenomenal."

**Walkability + Bikability**

**Vibrant Commercial District**

**Dynamic Public Spaces**

**Ferry + Water Activity**

**Residential Options**

# 3. GENERATE YEAR-ROUND EXCITEMENT

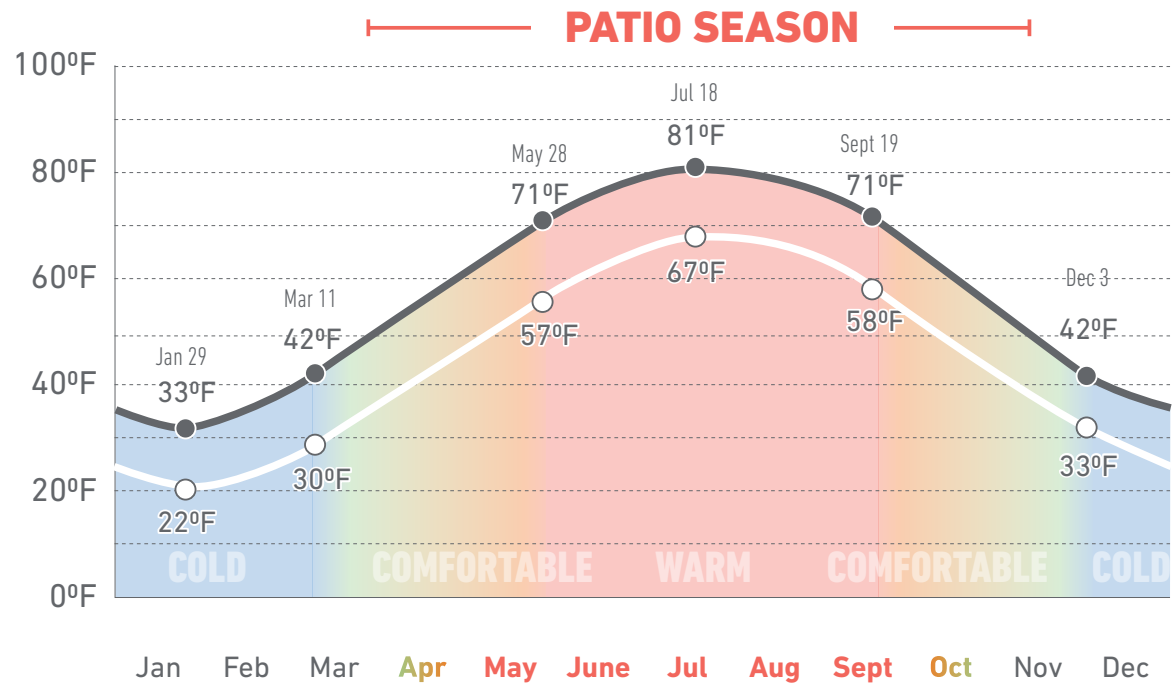
## Events & Activities

**Downtown Sandusky is in the position to be a year- round destination for residents and visitors.** It has small-city appeal, historic charm, and a variety of restaurants and shops. The city can attract people, generate excitement, and foster emotional connection to downtown with programming and events. Activities should celebrate the arts and culture of Sandusky's diverse community, beauty of the waterfront location, and unique attractions created by local entrepreneurs.

### Recommendations for events and activities include:

- » Dedicated funding and staffing for programming
- » Investment in complementary structures such as a screen for outdoor movies, temporary stage for concerts and theater, and ice rink for winter attraction
- » Create a flexible Columbus Avenue that could be closed for events
- » Engage the community to create new events that celebrate the diversity and culture of residents
- » Invest in connected public spaces in a variety of sizes and shapes (plazas, green space, etc.) that can be utilized in four seasons for public, private, and semi-public/private events
- » Create marketing and storytelling that build the city's brand as an event destination for the region
- » Market the waterfront's photogenic qualities for events and photoshoots
- » Patio season is longer than you think it is. Collaborate with the marinas and area businesses to host events and activities in the spring and fall

"Adding more activities for people who live in Sandusky, especially in the winter. There are places to eat but not a lot of inexpensive activities for people who live here. The pier helped but we want more than one free thing to do downtown."







"I live here all year round, but it is a tourist spot. Bring more events which will bring more tax dollars, resulting in more opportunities for locals."

# 4. CONSIDER WALKABILITY FIRST

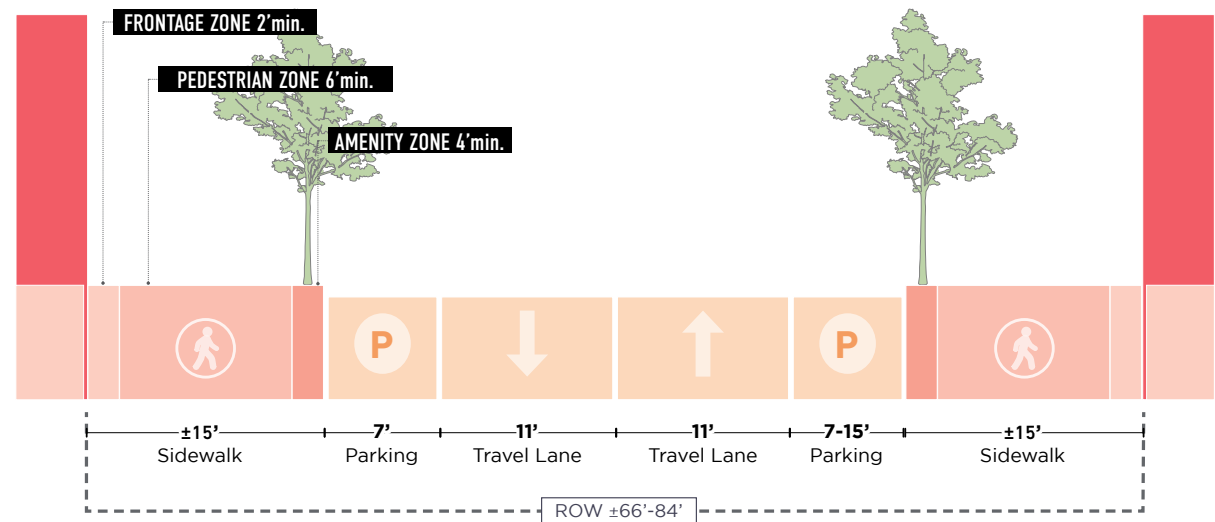
## Downtown Streets Framework

**Walkability downtown is paramount.** Not all downtown streets should be signature streets, but they all need streetscape to frame the built environment, pedestrian amenities to promote accessibility, and safe crossings to ensure connectivity.

**This scheme for a typical downtown street is a generalized framework for streetscape improvements.** Some streets may get special attention, for example, if they have a strong retail presence or if they are a busy vehicular corridor. The framework is a guide for street dimensions that promote walkability.

"Focus on the adjacent neighborhoods."

### TYPICAL DOWNTOWN STREETS



#### Downtown street dimension recommendations include:

- » Maximum 11' vehicle travel lanes
- » 7' parallel parking lanes where appropriate
- » Up to 15' angled parking lanes when right of way allows and street intent corresponds
- » Minimum 15' Sidewalk and amenity zone including 2' frontage zone, 6' pedestrian zone, and 4' amenity zone for trees and lighting
- » Large, high canopy, urban-tolerant street trees. Small or low canopy trees not permitted. A recommended tree list is located in the implementation chapter.



## TYPICAL DOWNTOWN STREETS



This diagram shows how building facades close to the street, connected sidewalks, large trees, and parking lane contribute to the walkability of a typical street. These conditions calm traffic and promote multimodal connectivity downtown. On-street parking zones (angled or parallel) are encouraged and appropriate on typical downtown streets depending on the context and right of way width.

# 4. CONSIDER WALKABILITY FIRST

## Downtown Streets Framework

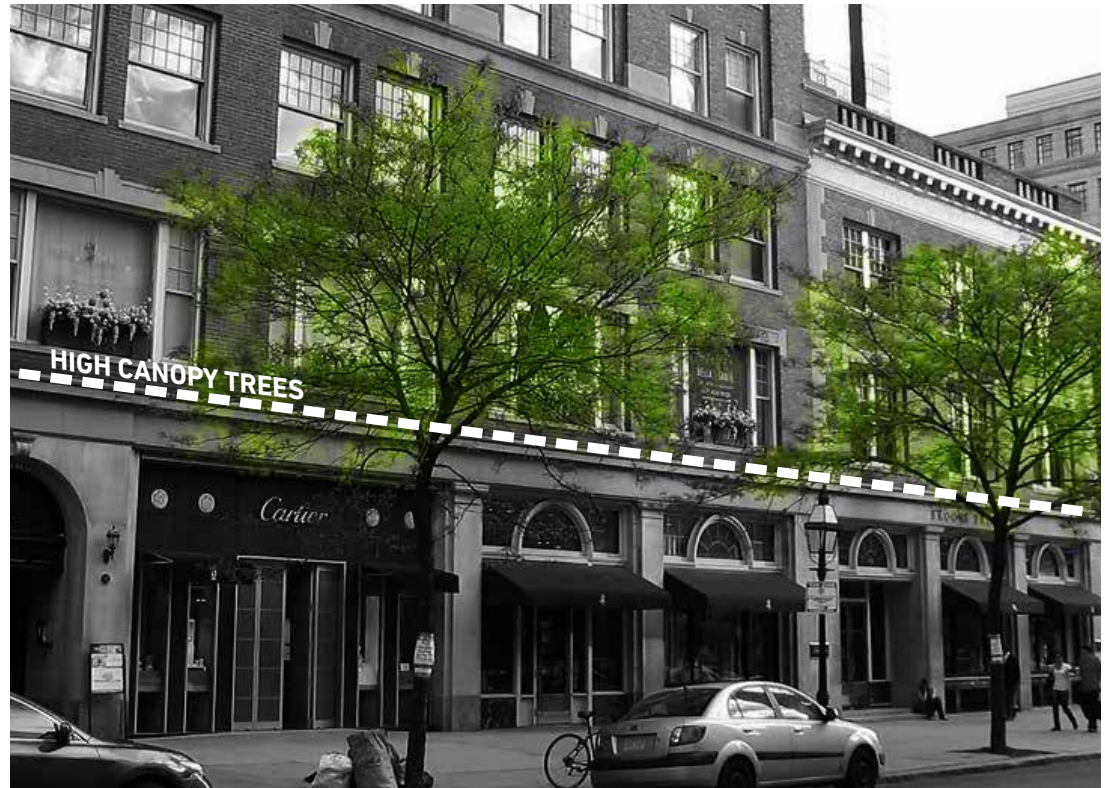
**Walkability also demands safe, comfortable, and accessible crossings.** Two schemes are shown for intersection treatments downtown. The signature intersection is intended for placement in the six adjacent intersections to Columbus Avenue in the downtown core. Then, all other intersections in the streets framework get a lighter touch treatment that corresponds with the look of the signature intersections.

**Recommendations for signature intersections include:**

- » Wide, high visibility crosswalks made with lasting materials
- » Thermoplastic or paver pattern application of art iconic to Sandusky, such as a specially designed downtown branding element

**Recommendations for typical intersections include:**

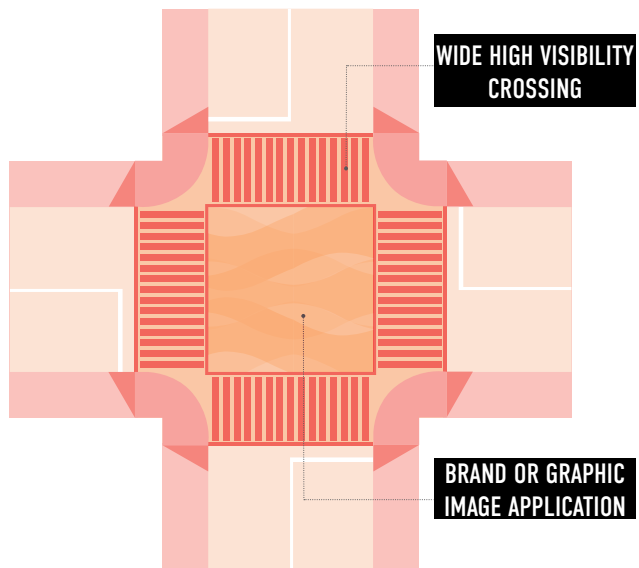
- » Typical width, high visibility crosswalks made with lasting materials
- » Thematic elements that correspond with signature intersections



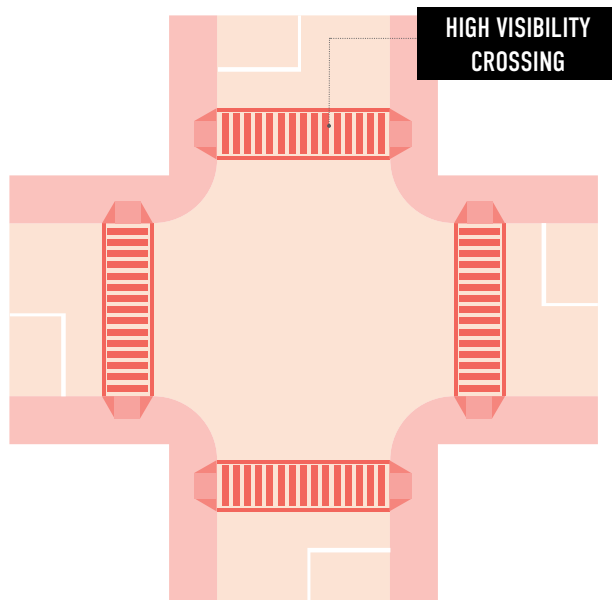
This diagram shows how high canopy trees increase visibility of retail and restaurants while enhancing the public realm and pedestrian comfort on the sidewalk.



## SIGNATURE INTERSECTION



## TYPICAL INTERSECTION



# 5. CREATE A BICYCLING, GOLF CART, AND MULTIMODAL CULTURE

## Transportation + Accessibility

Together with walkability, **a robust collection of transportation and mobility options Downtown would enhance the public realm** and ensure people had a multitude of options to move from place to place. **Bicycles, pedicabs, golf carts, scooters, and valet are all mobility options that would contribute to the vibrancy of street life downtown** while also alleviating a visitors desire to park right next to any given destination. Further, these type of options would help to ensure mobility is accessible for everyone downtown. They improve livability overall and improve connectivity especially when weather conditions inhibit walking.

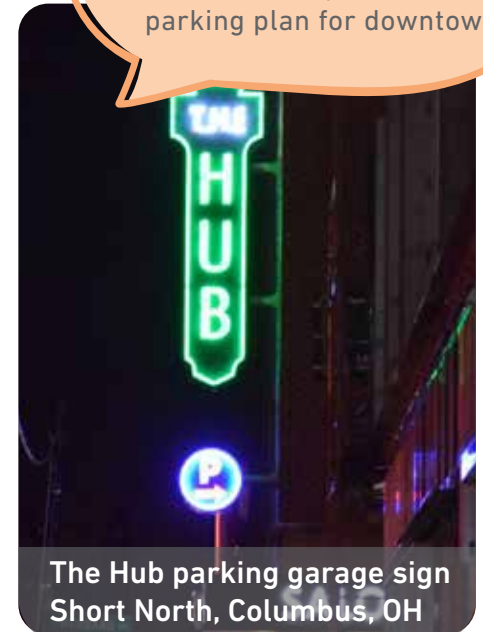
We know from community survey responses that, for many, downtown is already functioning as a “park once” district—where people find one spot and then walk to various destinations. However, others express concern that there is not enough parking today. Since the county garage, public parking lots, and street parking spaces are underutilized most of the year, this perception of lack of parking can be addressed with multiple interventions.

Imagine if the number of marinas along the waterfront (who provide parking) also provided or rented golf carts and bicycles. Then those boat owners would have more options to not drive their cars to visit a downtown shop or restaurant—even if they are unable to walk the distance from their boat to their destination.

Recommendations for creating a bicycling, golf cart, and multimodal culture downtown include:

- » Collaborate with the county to improve visibility and signage of the downtown parking garage to increase use.
- » Add creative signage and wayfinding to ensure drivers know where to park downtown and how to get to multiple destinations after parking once.
- » Consider public programs or partnerships to incentivize multimodal services, which could include:
  - » Valet service
  - » Bike rental or bikeshare program
  - » Golf cart rental or shuttle service
  - » Pedicab shuttle service
- » Consider adding golf cart designated parking spaces in several areas, such as near intersections where regular spaces compromise the sitelines, as part of a larger promotional campaign to increase their use downtown.
- » Collaborate with the marinas to connect boaters to downtown destinations while keeping their cars stored in marina lots.
- » Purchase a city golf cart for staff use in downtown trips to demonstrate their ease of use and viable option for downtown mobility.
- » Increase bike parking in public spaces and require them in new development.

“Connecting neighborhoods via bike-paths and walkways must be coupled to increased access to public transit, as well as a comprehensive parking plan for downtown.”



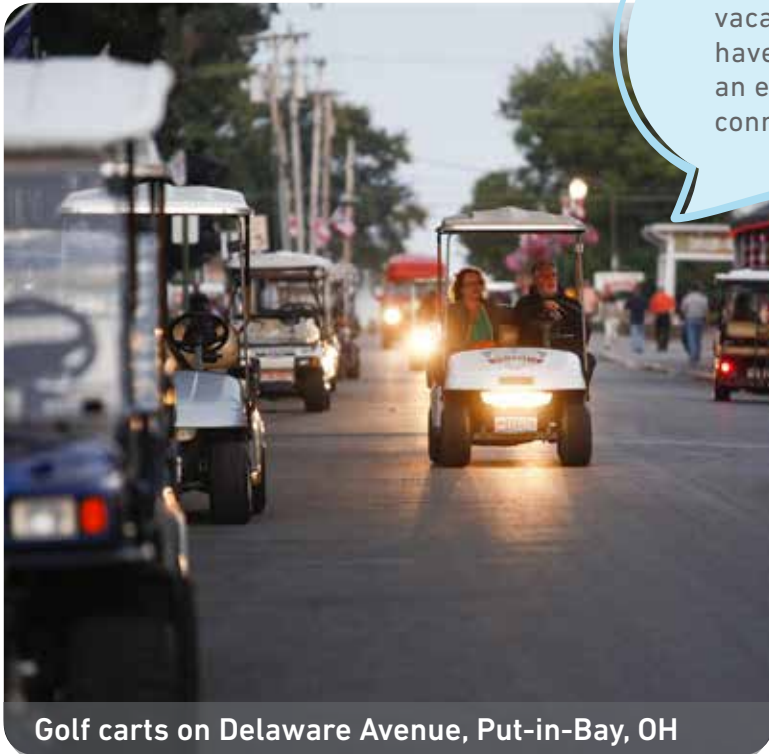
The Hub parking garage sign  
Short North, Columbus, OH



Valet program, Traverse City, MI



"Something missing that would give downtown that vacation-feel that the islands have is golf carts. They are an easy way to add fun and connectivity."



Golf carts on Delaware Avenue, Put-in-Bay, OH



Multiple vendors rent bicycles and golf carts on Kelleys Island and Put-in-Bay



Sandusky Transit



Parking Garage Mural, Albany, NY



Pedicab, Annapolis, MD



# 6. FOSTER EDUCATION + ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## Downtown Livability

The new Resort & Hospitality Management program downtown, created in partnership with Bowling Green State University and Cedar Fair, will bring an increasing number of students to Downtown Sandusky. Their presence and scholarship will also deepen the connection between Cedar Point and downtown. The program is expected to increase over four years to house 200 students at its maximum.

**Students activate an area.** They frequent coffee shops, restaurants, boutiques, and entertainment venues. They rely on libraries, bookstores, laundry facilities, and essential retail stores. Student and higher-education presence in a city often fosters arts-focused and small businesses, creating dynamic, vibrant districts.

As the student population increases in Sandusky, the area around the resort school will have opportunity for new land uses and retail spaces that serve not only students, but also educators and staff.

### Supporting recommendations for campus planning include:

- » Focus on attracting land uses that build on the education anchor. Such uses may include incubator spaces, entrepreneurial programs such as the Erie County RISE program, live/work spaces geared toward artists, and additional higher-education programs that serve the region, such as science programs focused on Sandusky Bay research.
- » Encourage retail, food and beverage establishments to serve area students.
- » Encourage partnerships, internships, and other collaboration with area businesses and students.
- » Improve high-speed internet connectivity and/or public WiFi
- » Create strong, walkable connections with signage and streetscape from campus to Columbus Avenue.



Coffee shop near Ohio University campus,  
Downtown Athens, OH



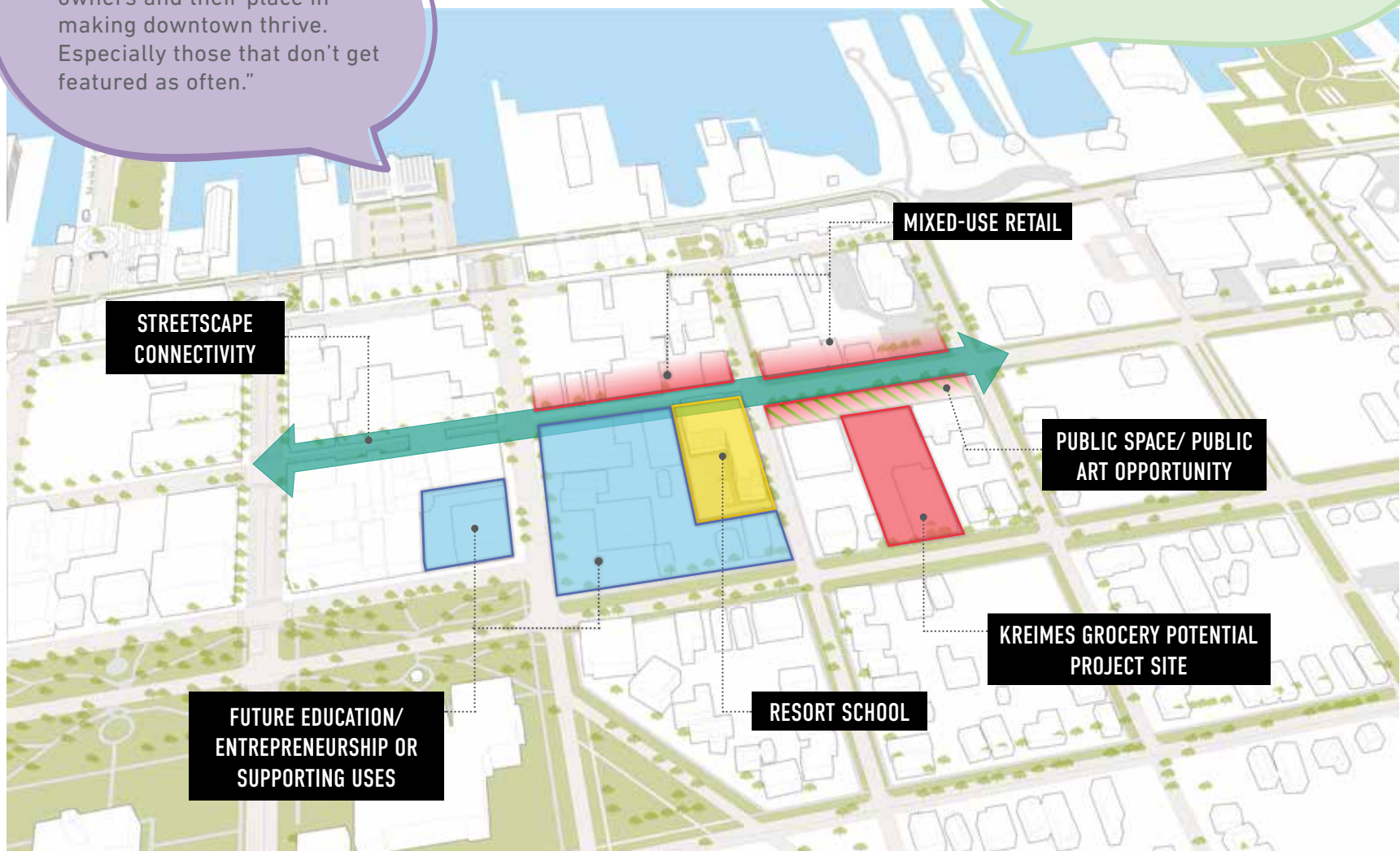
Kricker Innovation Hub by Shawnee State  
University, Downtown Portsmouth, OH



Student housing + greenspace  
BGSU main campus,

"Feature small business owners and their place in making downtown thrive. Especially those that don't get featured as often."

"Have local artists come in and be featured on paintings on the wall etc. Make walking around a historical and visual adventure."





# 7. REVITALIZE WITH ACTIVATED, HIGH-QUALITY BUILDINGS

## Vision For Development

**Downtown revitalization includes many scales of building rehabilitation, adaptation, and new development.** As are relevant, the city should audit and revise zoning regulation and design guidelines to ensure development with the following products and features is allowed and encouraged:

### High Quality Development

- » Residential products including townhome and multifamily development
- » Hospitality options such as medium-size and boutique hotel experiences
- » Infill retail in current vacant spaces and first floors of new buildings

### Activated Buildings

- » Balconies and rooftops to increase the number of public and private places with view to the water
- » Active storefronts including retail and other active uses such as fitness centers and offices so the street is lively and adds to walkability
- » Enhanced alleys that encourage safe and interesting pedestrian connections to businesses and parking

### High Quality Development



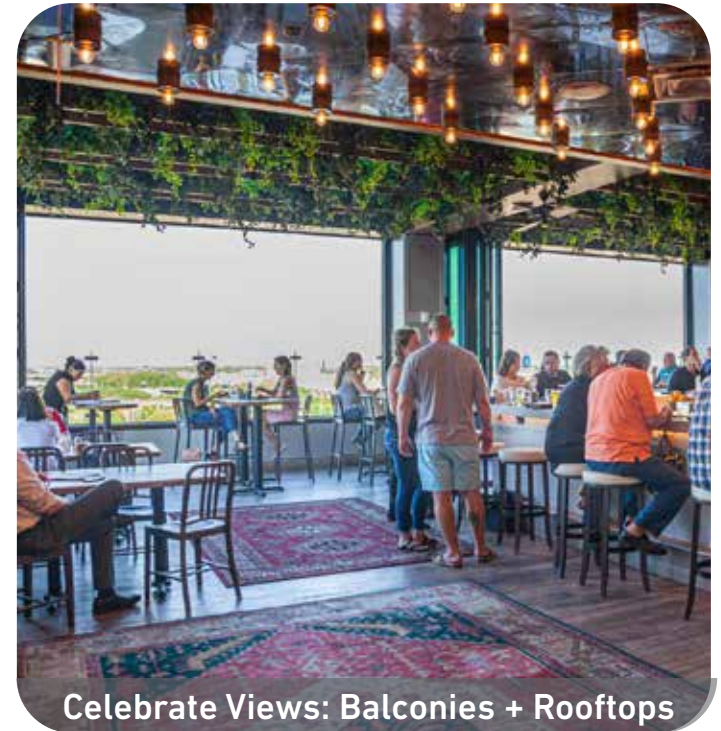


## Activate Buildings

“High rise condos and apartments with incredible views/balconies”



Celebrate Views: Balconies + Rooftops



Celebrate Views: Balconies + Rooftops



Encourage Active Storefronts



Enhance Alleys



# 8. CREATE AMAZING PUBLIC SPACES

## Vision for the Public Realm

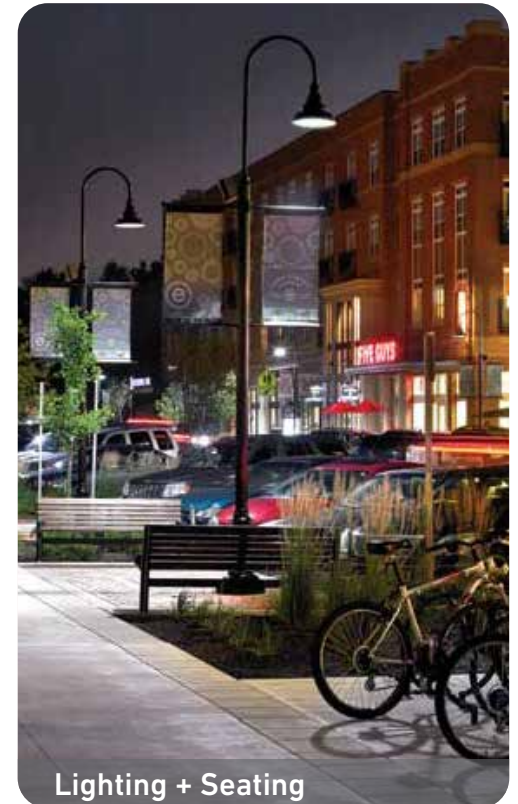
### Streetscape Components

Investment in the public realm increases walkability, aesthetics, comfort, and safety. Vibrant, walkable streets full of pedestrian amenities attract customers to area businesses and signal to potential investors where investment and revitalization is occurring.

#### Key components to create a vibrant public realm and support downtown businesses include:

- » Ample sidewalks – accommodate pedestrians, outdoor retail displays, and outdoor dining.
- » High canopy street trees – add shade in the summer, block wind in the winter, and rise above retail storefronts so stores are visible to pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.
- » Public art and interesting or eclectic elements – pique curiosity, add joy and vibrancy, and become part of the unique story of a place.
- » Lighting and seating – increase comfort, safety, and accessibility for a broad mix of people.

### Streetscape Components



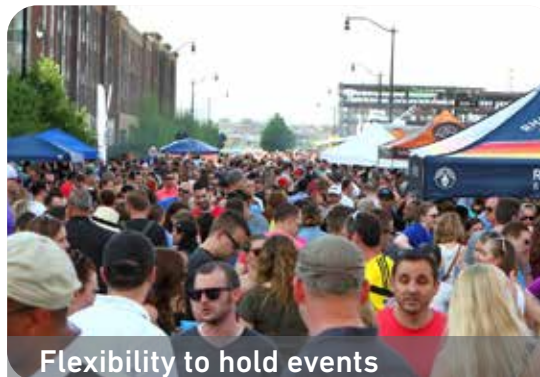
“More live entertainment and space for performance art + access to water for non-motor boats + more bike/pedestrian friendly”

## Festival Street + Plaza

For Columbus Avenue, the conversation focused on how to make this downtown’s most vibrant street. To do this, it needs to stand out from other downtown streets and have the ability to act as a plaza or festival street.

Key components for festival and plaza streets include:

- » Specialty paving – adds creative elements and clearly communicates the uniqueness of a festival street. Pavers with patterns slow traffic and add to walkability while also serving as a durable roadway surface.
- » Outdoor dining – a top-mentioned desire of the community. Larger dining spaces along a signature street add vibrancy and life to the streetscape.
- » Storefront activity – includes seating, retail installations, artistic elements on storefront signage, awnings and window displays. These elements enhance the public realm and increase customer foot traffic.
- » Dynamic seating – adds places for public gathering and conversation, while also providing an artistic element that can tie a plaza design theme together.
- » Flexibility to hold events – includes design solutions such as removable bollards that enable street closure to traffic, flush curbs to reduce tripping hazards, and utility connection to offer electric to vendors.



## Festival Street + Plaza





# 9. PRIORITIZE INVESTMENT

## Focus Area Opportunities

With guidance from city staff, stakeholders, and the community, **the Master Plan illustrates opportunities for downtown revitalization in five focus areas.** These are:

- I. Make Columbus Avenue downtown's most vibrant street from weekday evenings to special events.
- II. Create destination waterfront dining in the Boeckling building that captures iconic views.
- III. Redevelop the Jackson Street parking lot with mixed use development and event space.
- IV. Revitalize Neighborhoods with a variety of housing options
- V. Connect to Battery Park with public improvements and mixed use development.

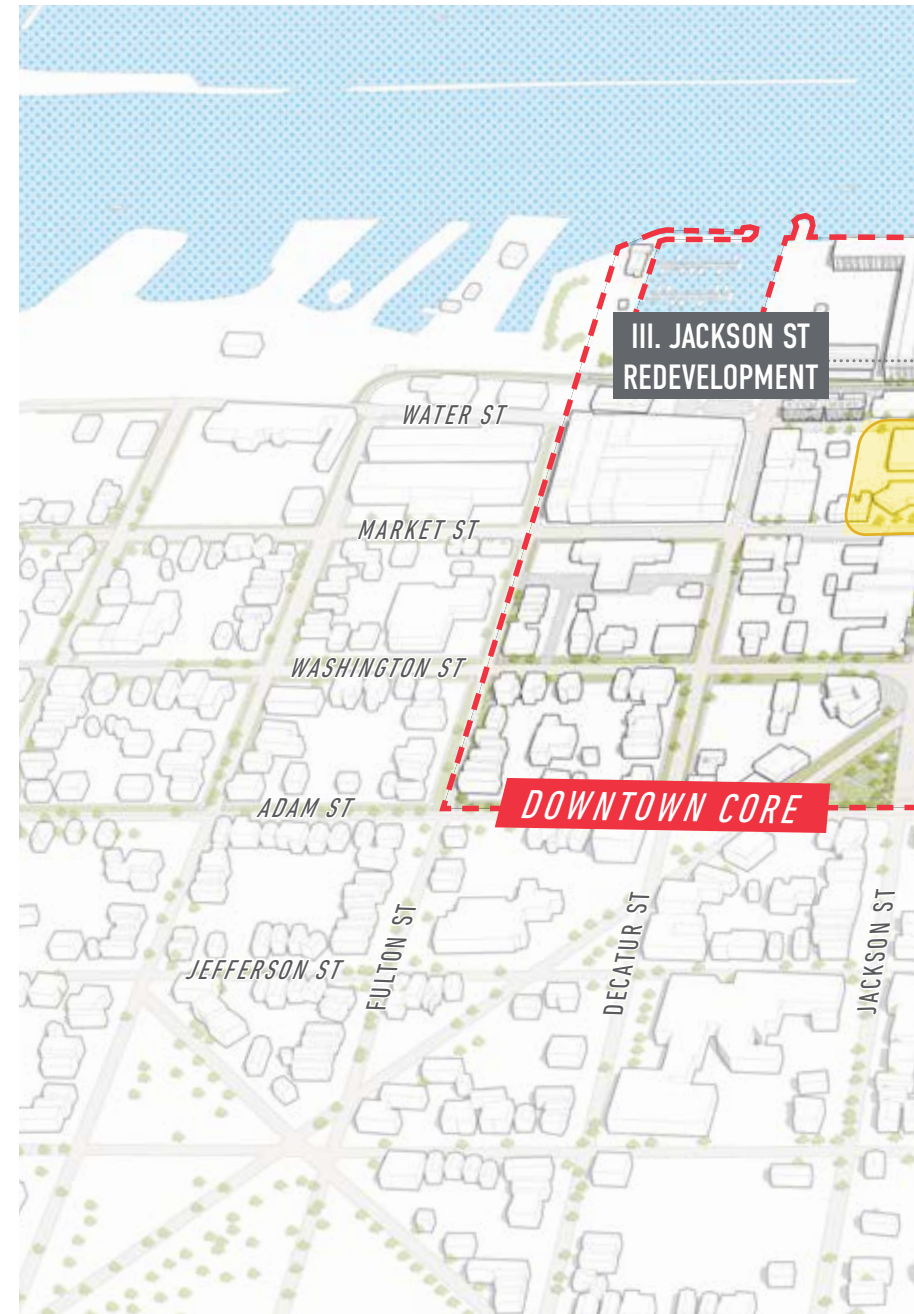
**Concept illustrations include a mixture of private development and public improvements. These are high-level, flexible concepts designed to show what could be possible in these focus areas, inspire potential investors, and spark conversation that could lead to new partnerships and ventures.**

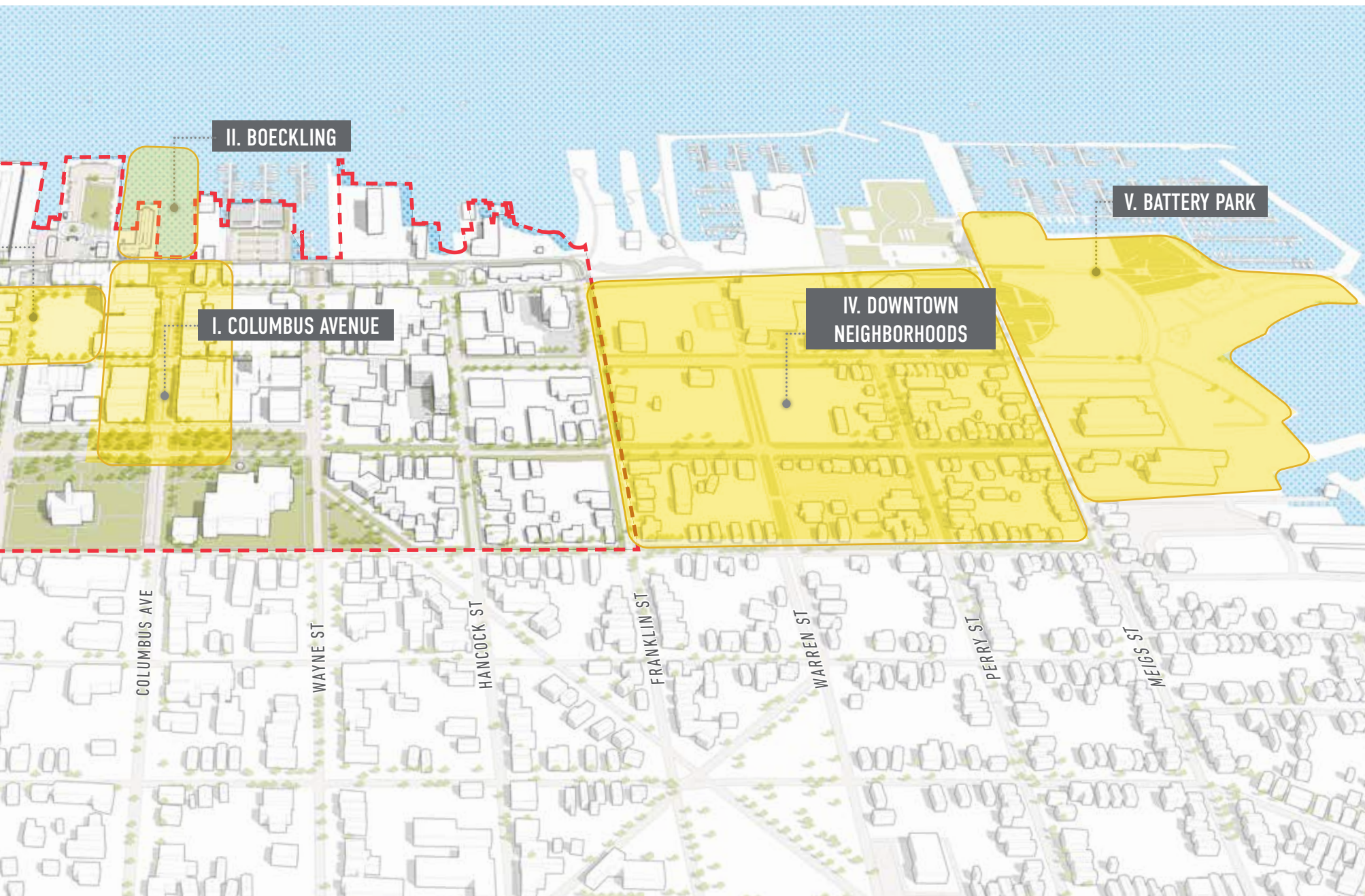


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# I. MAKE COLUMBUS AVENUE DOWNTOWN'S MOST VIBRANT STREET

## Columbus Avenue

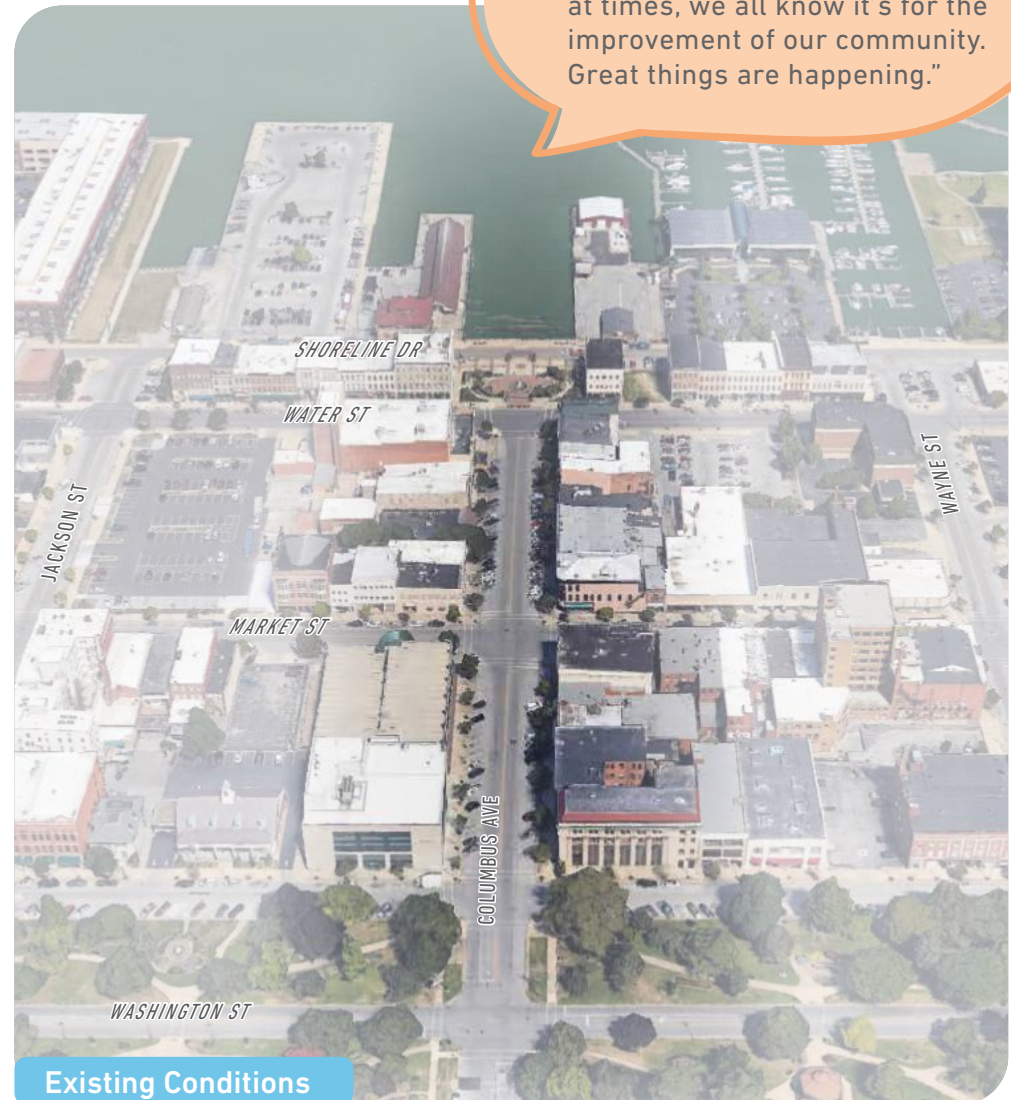
Sandusky has made incredible progress in revitalizing downtown infrastructure, most notably in the recently finished Jackson Street Pier and Shoreline Drive projects. Future phases of downtown infrastructure improvements will continue the revitalization process by bringing the next set of key places up to the quality and usefulness of these recent improvements.

Columbus Avenue is a focus of the Master Plan for this reason—it is the logical place for the next set of improvements. **As the central spine of downtown, Columbus Avenue terminates into Schade-Mylander Plaza with iconic views of the water. Columbus Avenue is Sandusky's "Main Street," anchored by City Hall and Sandusky State Theatre.** The street also functions as the center of downtown's retail environment, connecting the bustling retail spaces on either side along Market Street, Water Street, and Shoreline Drive.

**The Columbus Avenue Focus Area includes Columbus Avenue and Shade-Mylander Plaza. Planning Objectives for these concepts include:**

- » Make Columbus Avenue downtown's most vibrant street
- » Foster connection to Shoreline Drive and Jackson Street Pier
- » Anchor the civic and retail core of downtown
- » Increase waterfront connection and outdoor dining opportunities
- » Continue the transformation of experience at the terminus to Sandusky Bay

"The redevelopment of the area that is already in progress is amazing. Although inconvenient at times, we all know it's for the improvement of our community. Great things are happening."





## COLUMBUS AVENUE CONCEPT DIAGRAM



# I. MAKE COLUMBUS AVENUE DOWNTOWN'S MOST VIBRANT STREET

## Festival Street + Linear Park

The Columbus Avenue streetscape concept emphasizes the idea of the corridor as a “Festival Street,” including elements described in the Vision for the Public Realm, and adds a “Linear Park” experience to the streetscape.

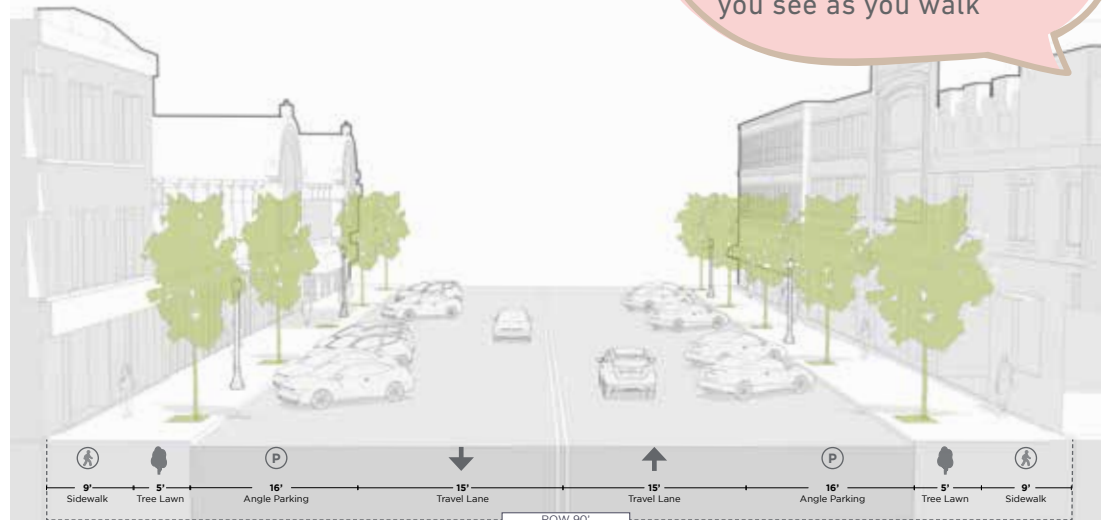
**Columbus Avenue Concept | Festival Street + Linear Park** creates a parallel parking condition on Columbus Avenue to enable a seamless festival area in the center of the street (for times it is closed to traffic) and connect Washington Park with Schade-Mylander Plaza with a linear park experience along the sidewalk edge. Sidewalk size is increased from nine feet today to between 15–20 feet (since right-of-way dimensions vary from block to block). An 11–14 feet amenity zone for park elements such as seating and public art is added within the linear park space containing seasonal plantings and high-canopy street trees.

### Festival Street + Linear Park components:

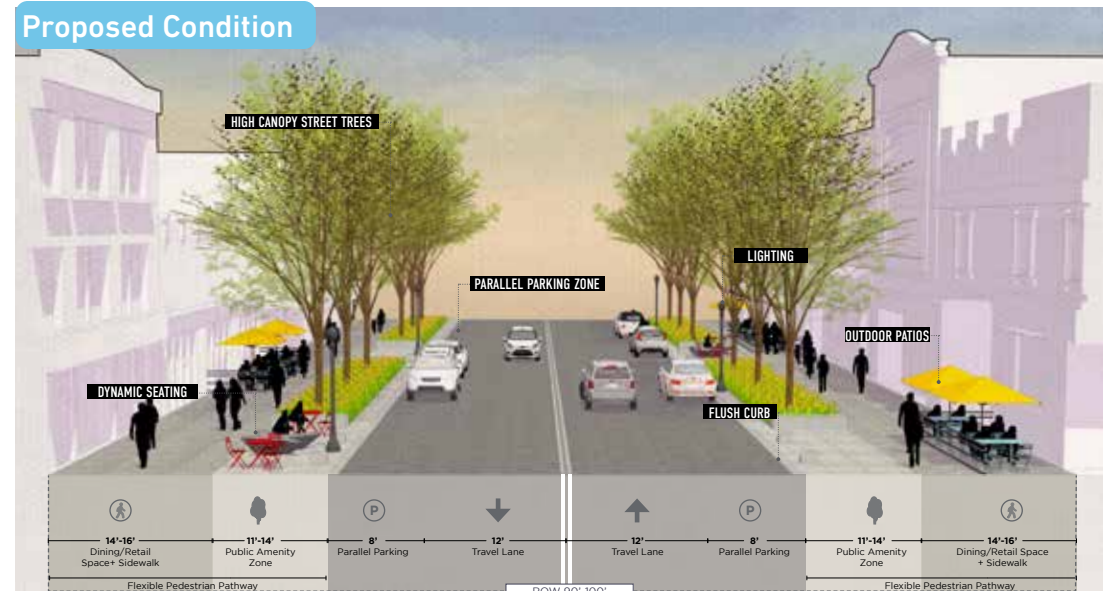
- » Site-specific, amenitized and flexible design
- » Specialty paving with flush curb for increased walkability and enhanced festival condition
- » Dynamic publicly accessible seating, lighting, and public art
- » Expanded sidewalk and space for business' outdoor dining and retail display
- » Ability to be closed to traffic for events and festivals
- » High-canopy, urban-tolerant shade trees replace existing trees
- » Tree lawn forms linear park
- » Amenity zone for additional placemaking and pedestrian attractions such as seating and public art

“The sidewalks could use some work and “pizazz” —like paintings or other Sandusky related things you see as you walk”

### Existing Conditions



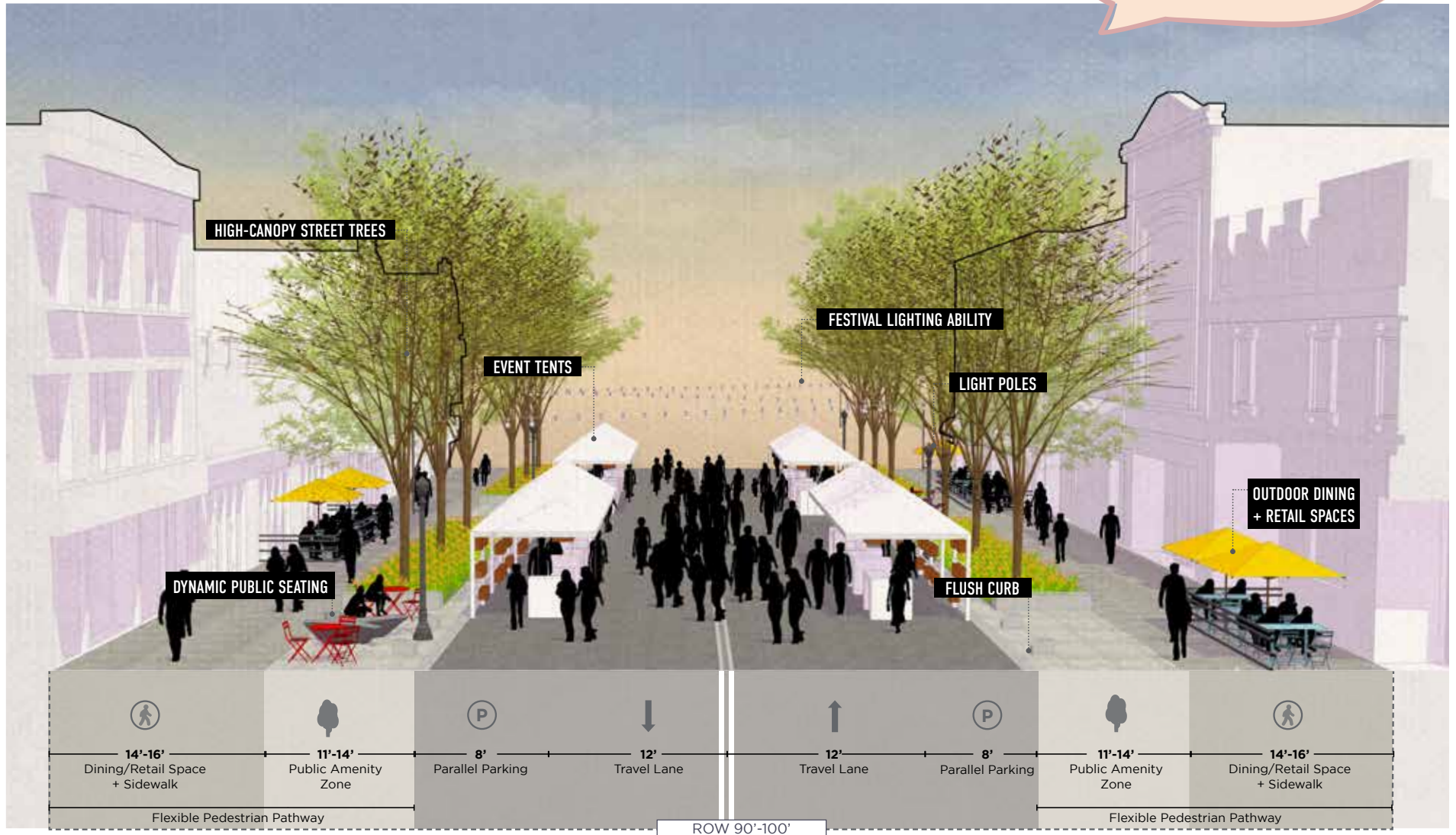
### Proposed Condition





## COLUMBUS AVENUE: A FESTIVAL STREET + LINEAR PARK

"If the sidewalks were wider, you could have more outdoor patios and more room for pedestrians to be walking around"





# I. MAKE COLUMBUS AVENUE DOWNTOWN'S MOST VIBRANT STREET

## Imagine the future of the Plaza

**Schade-Mylander Plaza is the critical connector from Columbus Avenue to Shoreline Drive and Jackson Street Pier.** Offering iconic views of Downtown Sandusky, Sandusky State Theater, and the Sandusky Bay, this plaza can be a vibrant gathering place and a place for quiet contemplation.

To match the quality of Jackson Street Pier and Shoreline Drive, Schade-Mylander Plaza needs a face lift. Two concepts were developed for improvements. All options show a Water's Edge Platform at Mile Marker Zero and a supergraphic SANDUSKY public art installation.

**Concept 1A + 1B | Landscape + Interactive Fountain** are options to update the existing plaza for today's use. A new, interactive fountain could add play space and beauty to the space, while offering the flexibility to turn it off and use the plaza for small events.

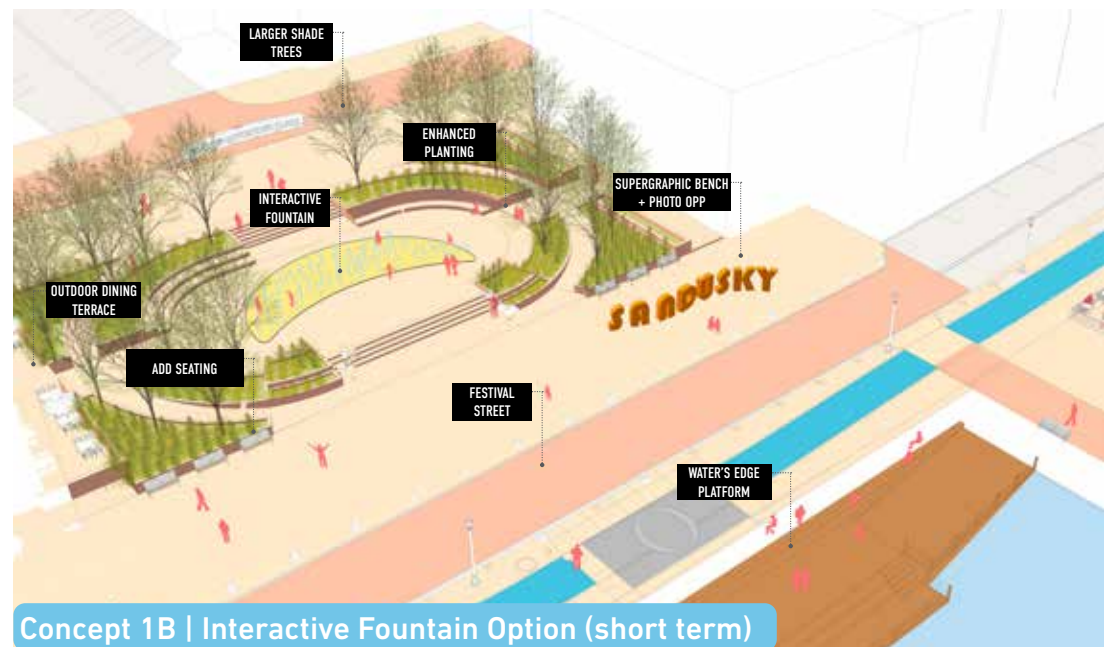
Concept 1A + 1B | Landscape + Interactive Fountain Option components:

- » Shade trees that frame the space and views
- » Plaza-style interactive fountain

**Concept 2 | Reimagine the Plaza** expands the footprint of the plaza to gain space for amenities and open up the views to downtown and Sandusky Bay. Step features add seating options and an artistic, interactive fountain adds lighting, play, and public art to frame the space.

Concept 2 | Reimagine the Plaza components:

- » Larger, more flexible plaza space
- » Shade trees that frame the space and views
- » Interactive lighting and public art fountain
- » Step seating





## SCHADE-MYLANDER PLAZA CONCEPTS

In stakeholder conversations, Concept 2 was preferred, but community members thought this concept might be a longer-term option.

"This area should excite all your senses"

### Concept 2 | Reimagine the Plaza (preferred, long term)





## II. CREATE A WATERFRONT CULTURAL ANCHOR

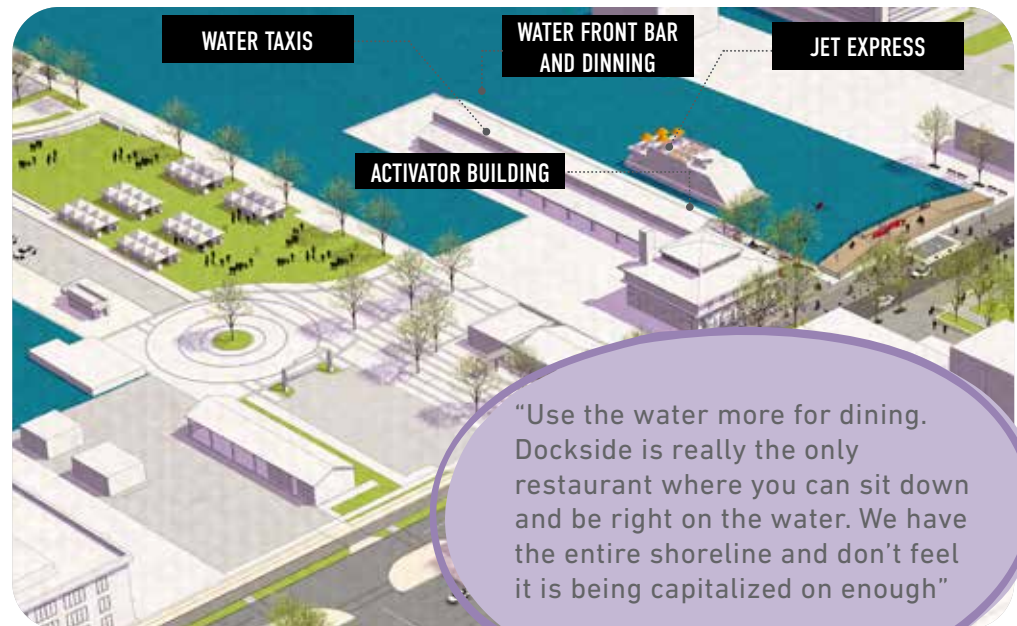
### Historic Boeckling Building

The historic Boeckling Building and Jet Express pavilion sit next to Jackson Street Pier and look out onto the water, Columbus Avenue, Shoreline Drive, and Schade-Mylander Plaza. Currently the home of Ohio Department of Natural Resources offices, this site is ripe for a fresh look and new uses.

The Waterfront Concept shows a signature restaurant, or multiple smaller vendors in a readapted Boeckling building with large patio spaces along the water's edge and Shoreline Drive. In this concept, the Boeckling Building becomes a gateway to the ferry and the waterfront district. Families and Jet Express passengers can grab a snack or visitors can sit down to a full meal experience, while taking in the views and people-watching that make this area so special. Small retail vendors on the ground floor and office spaces above activate the building and streetscape around it. Water taxis run regularly to and from Cedar Point. Redevelopment or re-imagining of the Jet Express pavilion could also be a part of a concept at this location, with small vendor spaces in the existing building or a new mixed use building with architecture that pays homage to the current pavilion structure.

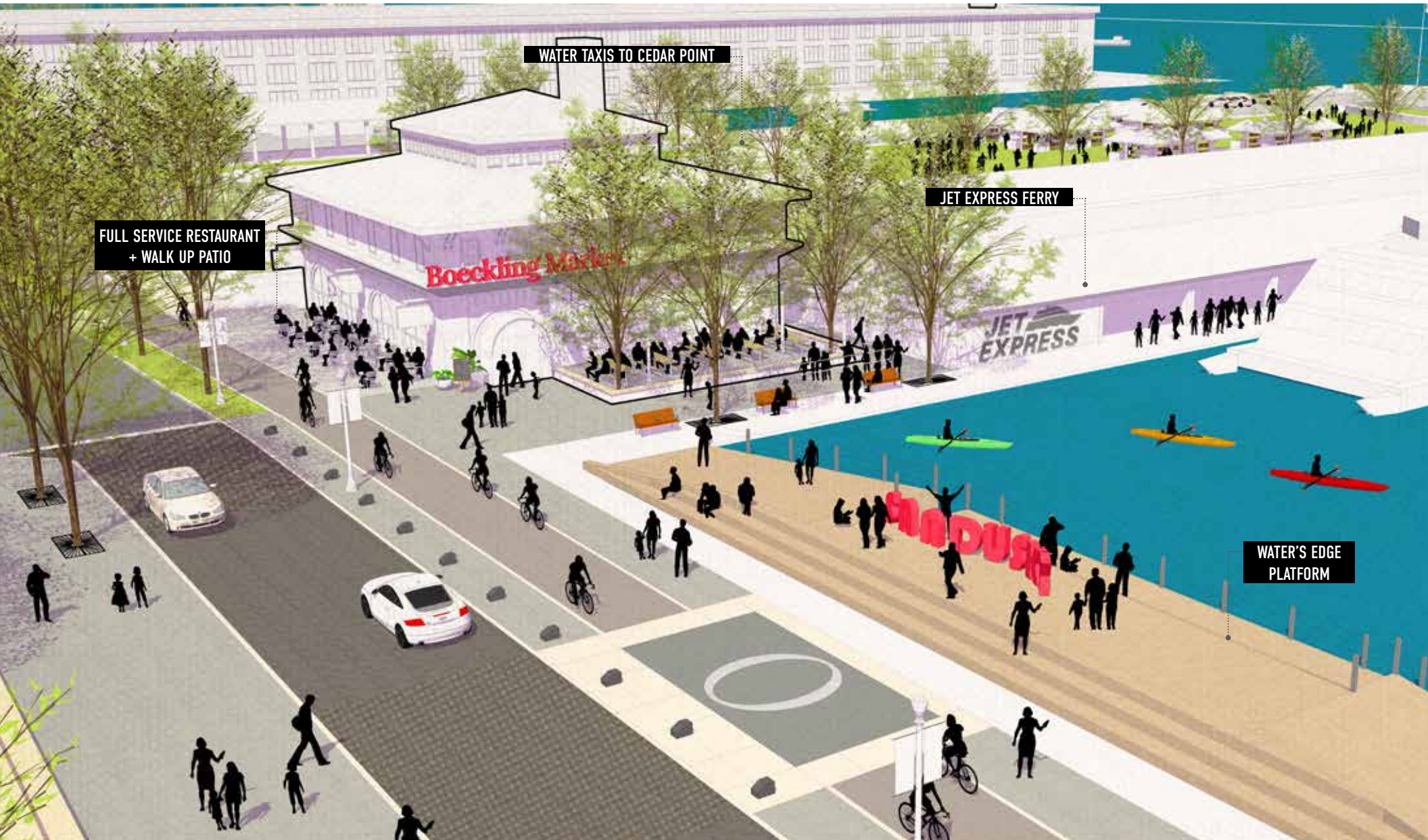
#### Waterfront Concept components:

- » Water's Edge Platform for seating and events
- » Preservation and readaptation of Boeckling Building
- » Patio along Shoreline Drive
- » Patio along the Water
- » Signature restaurant or several small restaurateur spaces including walk-up service and full service
- » Ground floor vendors with office uses above
- » Water taxis to Cedar Point





## WATERFRONT CULTURAL ANCHOR





# III. REDEVELOP THE JACKSON STREET PARKING LOT

## Jackson Street Anchor Redevelopment

**The Jackson Street Anchor Redevelopment** shows a vision for connecting the built environment downtown where there is currently a city-owned parking lot.

**The vision for private development and public infrastructure on the site activates Water Street and downtown in several ways:**

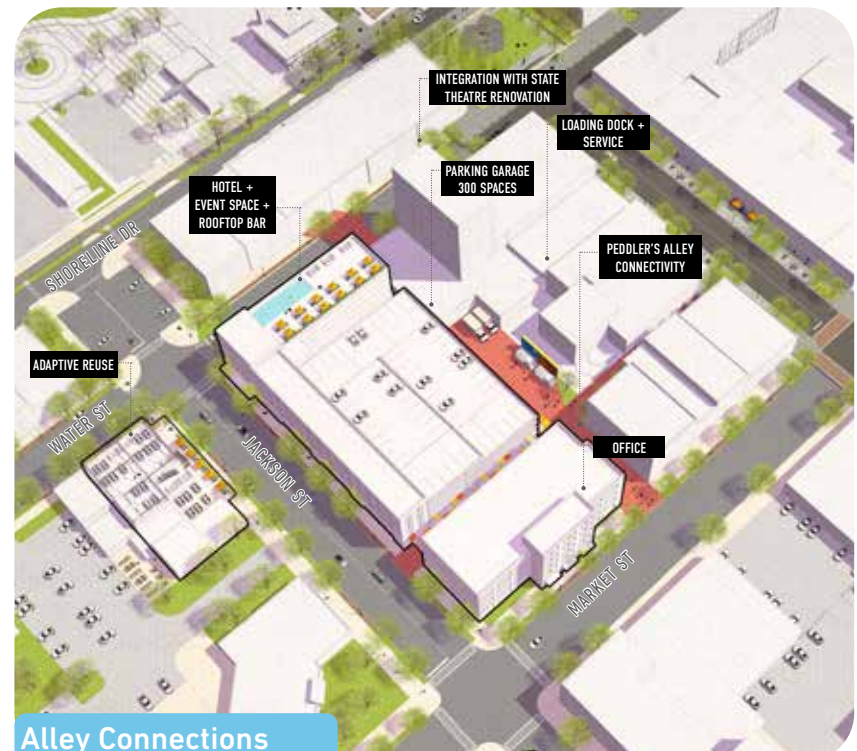
- A new hotel with ground floor retail spaces activates Water Street
- Event space and rooftop bar captures water views
- Anchor office/mixed use development activates Jackson and Market Streets
- Connection to Sandusky State Theatre renovations and integration of loading zone
- 300 space public parking garage serves new uses and increases public parking
- Alley connection increases walkability and refreshes Peddler's Alley
- Adaptive reuse concept for activating existing building on Jackson Street



Rooftop Views



Existing Conditions



Alley Connections



## JACKSON STREET CONCEPT

### CONCEPT COMPONENTS:

- ±120 KEYS HOTEL
- 5K - 10K ft<sup>2</sup> EVENT SPACE
- ROOFTOP BAR
- 44 K ft<sup>2</sup> OFFICE/MIXED USE
- 300 PARKING SPACES
- 8.4 K ft<sup>2</sup> RETROFITTED WAREHOUSE

INTEGRATION WITH  
STATE THEATRE  
RENOVATION

HOTEL + EVENT SPACE  
+ ROOFTOP BAR

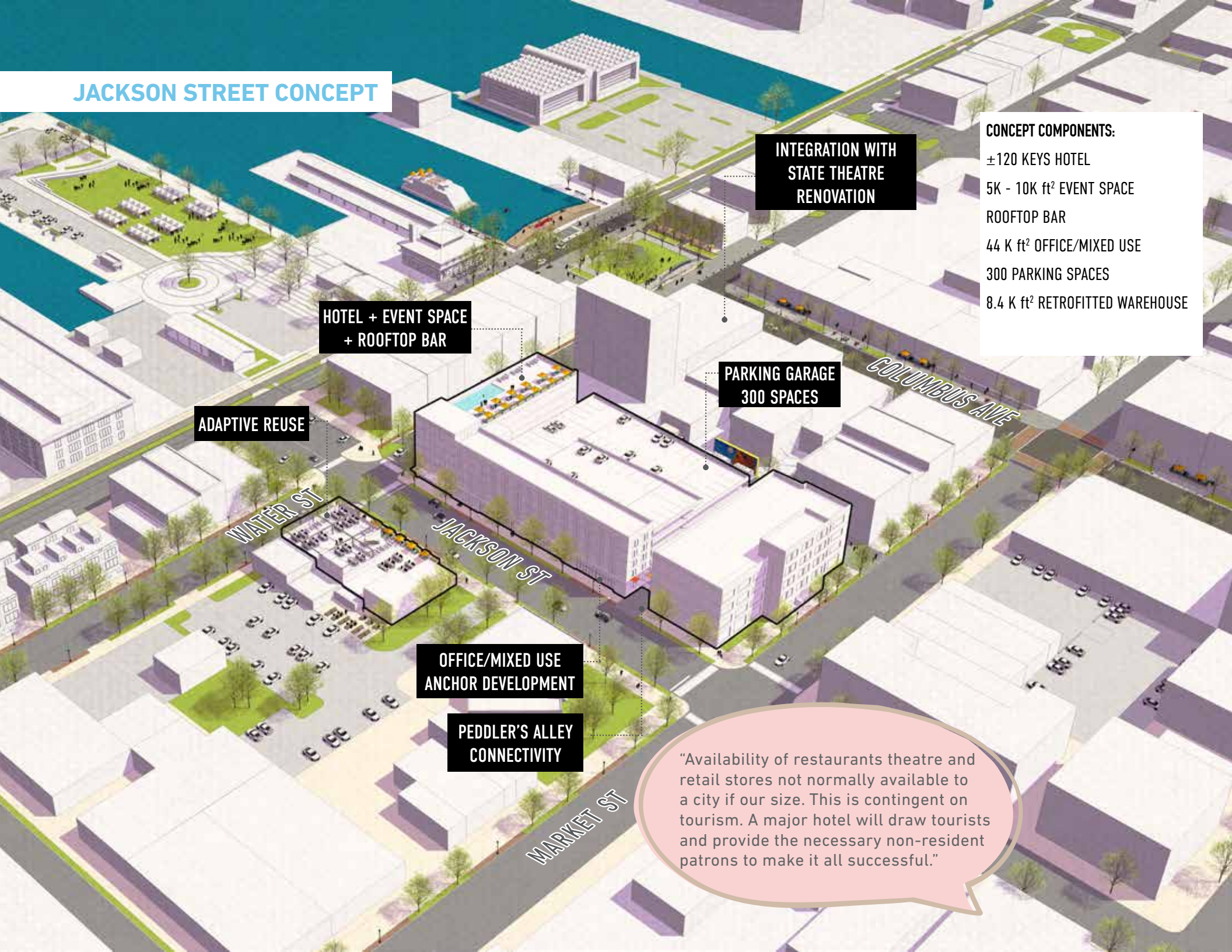
PARKING GARAGE  
300 SPACES

ADAPTIVE REUSE

OFFICE/MIXED USE  
ANCHOR DEVELOPMENT

PEDDLER'S ALLEY  
CONNECTIVITY

"Availability of restaurants theatre and retail stores not normally available to a city of our size. This is contingent on tourism. A major hotel will draw tourists and provide the necessary non-resident patrons to make it all successful."





# IV. REVITALIZE NEIGHBORHOODS

## Downtown Neighborhoods

Within Downtown Sandusky, but outside of the downtown core, there is a mix of retail, residential, employment, and vacant land uses. As downtown revitalizes, Sandusky residents and newcomers will be attracted to these areas for investment.

**The Downtown Neighborhoods concept** sets a direction for future development in the areas east and west of the downtown core, using the blocks east of the core as an example.

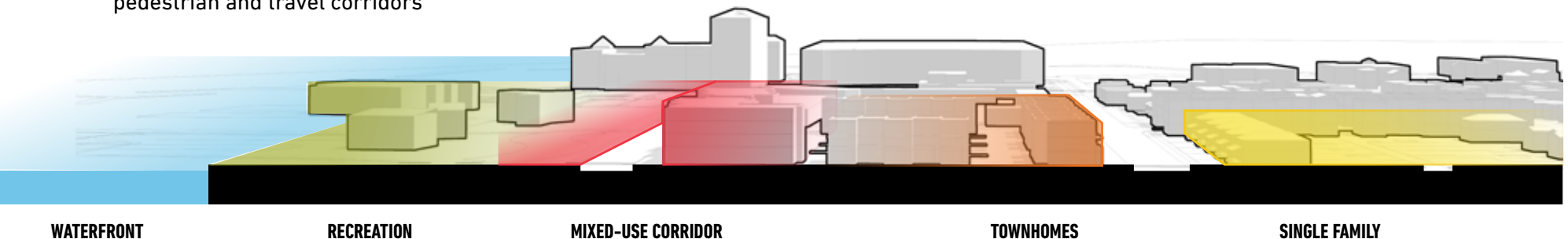
**Compatible land uses, transition into existing single family residential, walkability, and connectivity along Water Street are all important considerations for future development.**

Downtown Neighborhood concept components:

- » Increasingly higher density the closer you get to Columbus Avenue or Water Street
- » Mixed use, streetscape enhancements and recreational/ connection to the water along Water Street
- » Transition in density, including townhome and multi family residential uses moving south into existing single family neighborhoods
- » Consideration of affordability and variety of housing options
- » Protect viewsheds, especially views of the water from pedestrian and travel corridors



"Increased residential options will help drive the demand for several other needs. I say keep expanding residential options."



WATERFRONT

RECREATION

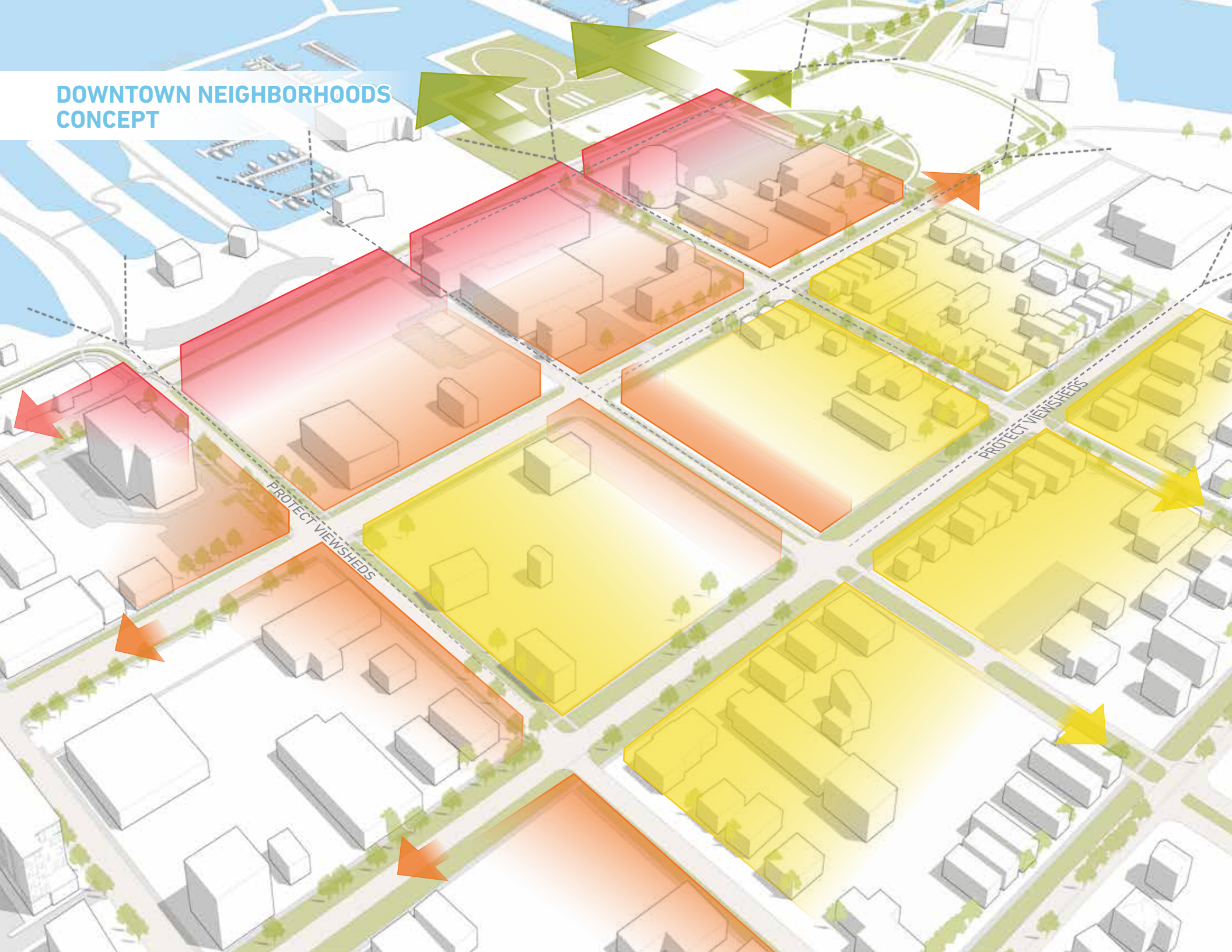
MIXED-USE CORRIDOR

TOWNHOMES

SINGLE FAMILY



DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS  
CONCEPT





# V. CONNECT TO BATTERY PARK

## Battery Park Redevelopment

Battery Park, also known as the East Bay, has been a focus for redevelopment in the city for some time. The area has outstanding views of Sandusky Bay and Cedar Point and large parcels of publicly-owned land. This site is expected to develop with a scheme aligned with the concepts outlined here, with potential uses that include a hotel, residential, retail spaces facing the water, public boardwalk, park and event space.

As development occurs, considerations to ensure it connects to existing neighborhoods as an extension of the historic street grid will be important for the success of new development. Likewise, development on this site should have no “back,” meaning it is welcoming to pedestrians approaching it from Water and Meigs Streets as well as to boaters approaching from Sandusky Bay.

**The Battery Park concept emphasizes a balanced mix of uses and neighborhood character, including public and private development, public spaces, walkability, connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods, and connectivity to the downtown core.**

Battery Park concept components:

- » Improvements to the old City Hall and Police Station site
- » Expansion of the park space that includes the Sandusky Skatepark
- » Improvements to Sandusky Bay Pavilion park
- » Streetscape, green space, and connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods
- » Sandusky Bay Pathway connection
- » Public boardwalk with continuous public access to the waterfront
- » Battery Park public event space
- » Mixed use development, such as hotel, medium to high density residential, and retail



The Boardwalk at Towne Lake, Cypress, TX

“I love Sandusky. I go downtown as much as possible. Emphasize the ease of movement from place to place via walking”



2017 Draft Vision Plan by Smith Group, JJR, and The Trust for Public Land



## BATTERY PARK CONCEPT COMPONENTS

EXPANSION OF THE PARK SPACE THAT INCLUDES THE SANDUSKY SKATEPARK

MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

BATTERY PARK PUBLIC EVENT SPACE

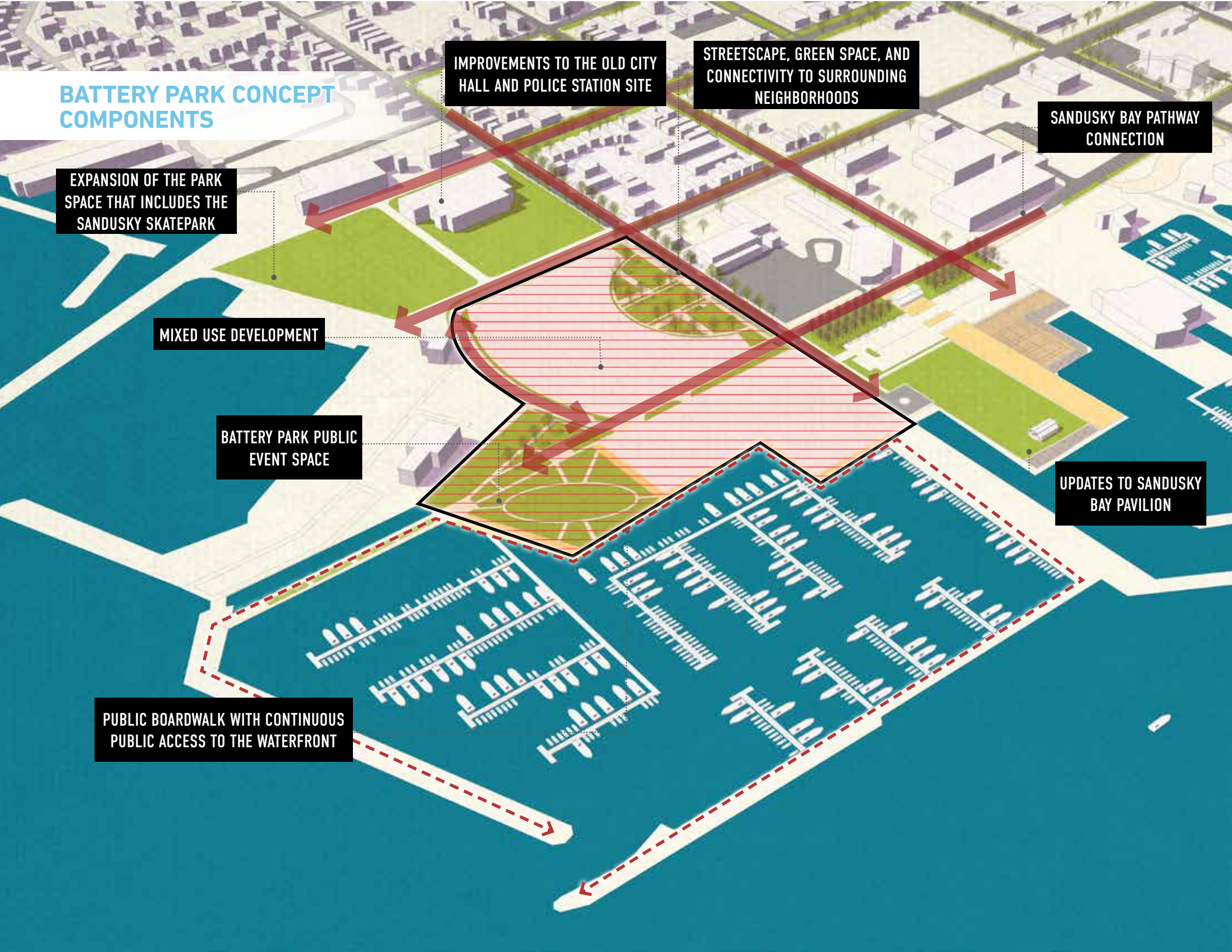
PUBLIC BOARDWALK WITH CONTINUOUS PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE WATERFRONT

IMPROVEMENTS TO THE OLD CITY HALL AND POLICE STATION SITE

STREETSCAPE, GREEN SPACE, AND CONNECTIVITY TO SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS

SANDUSKY BAY PATHWAY CONNECTION

UPDATES TO SANDUSKY BAY PAVILION





# **6** IMPLEMENTATION



# IMPLEMENTATION

## Priorities

The recommendations in this plan span the region. Implementation will include public responsibilities, private investment, and collaboration with community and regional partners. This section is targeted to plan implementation with multiple tools including:

- » TOP TEN Policy/Programming Priorities: items for the city to focus on in order to facilitate early wins and make progress across multiple plan recommendations.
- » TOP TEN Priority Project: for the city to continue to collaborate with regional stakeholders and private investors to implement.
- » Summary Matrix + Action Steps: Summary table of the nine plan recommendations and action steps with draft time frames and responsible city departments and potential implementation partners.
- » Downtown Anchors and Drivers: framework for considering the balance of city resources and focus as plan implementation is underway.
- » Real Estate Prioritization + Funding Tools: tables for referencing target time frames for development typologies and available funding tools.
- » Enabling Projects: order of magnitude budget ranges for priority public improvements.
- » Recommended Street Tree List: list of trees appropriate to downtown conditions

## TOP TEN Policy/Programming Priorities

*0-2 Years*

- 1 CREATE A NONPROFIT PARTNER FOCUSED ON DOWNTOWN**  
To be funded in part by city economic development and/or programming/marketing funds, along with philanthropic and stakeholder partners, as well as creating earned income revenue streams and other funding. Develop strong governance model with mix of regional players and downtown stakeholders. Focus on marketing, programming, placemaking, maintenance, merchant coordination (in addition to, not in place of existing city efforts).
- 2 CREATE DOWNTOWN OUTDOOR REFRESHMENT AREA**  
Include pricing of cups, what funds raised will go toward, model for implementation, and implementing partner. Needs legislation.
- 3 IMPLEMENT A PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN**  
Focus on on-street management, long term parking and resident parking program, strategy for cost of implementation and potential revenue generation.
- 4 ESTABLISH AN INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**  
Focus on utilizing downtown and future TIFs, as well as leveraging outside funding sources to fund future infrastructure needs without utilizing traditional funds designated for local infrastructure. In addition, pursue the creation of a Section 41 TIF to support private development that contributes to public priorities downtown.
- 5 OUTLINE PROGRAMMING STRATEGY**  
Establish a plan for a major festival to be developed, a summer series of programs on the pier, activation of shoulder seasons, partnering on pub crawls and similar low cost events marketed on social media, and winter programming utilizing theater (and/or built around ice skating rink). Unveil Jackson Street Pier Amenities: Announce and set in place a plan for funding operations. Identify responsibilities of city and/or partners, including ice skating rink, movie screen, and stage.

*0+ Years (Ongoing)*

- 6 DIVERSIFY DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDERS & CUSTOMERS**  
Intentionally seek to diversify the businesses, residents, and visitors of downtown. Do targeted outreach to understand obstacles and design programming and strategies specifically to ensure everyone feels welcome and a sense of ownership of downtown.

*2-5 Years*

- 7 CREATE SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT/MAINTENANCE PLAN**

The new nonprofit should coordinate with downtown stakeholders to determine appropriate scale and use of funds on enhancing downtown aesthetics and maintenance.

- 8 START WATER TAXI SYSTEM**  
Identify a funding model and operations strategy, implement.

- 9 DEVELOP RETAIL STRATEGY**  
Develop a coherent strategy for retail and a model for how the city and partners can execute it, include more consistency of hours, programs designed specifically to boost retail, and joint marketing.

- 10 CREATE TRANSIT AND CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY**  
Improve connections via transit through the Sandusky Transit System. Explore the idea of a enhanced downtown transit center. Improve corridor experience for those arriving into Sandusky along Route 6, Route 250, Hayes Ave and Tiffin Avenue.

## TOP TEN Priority Projects

*0-5 Years*

- 1 Early Pipeline Projects (Cooke Building Construction, Feick Building Renovation)**
- 2 State Theatre Restoration**
- 3 Jackson Street Parking Lot Anchor Redevelopment**
- 4 Columbus Avenue Streetscape**
- 5 Residential Upper Floor Rehabilitation**
- 6 Schade-Mylander Plaza Masterplan**
- 7 Downtown Streetscapes and Intersection Improvements**
- 8 Residential Infill East of Downtown/Warren Street Corridor**
- 9 Boeckling/Ferry Terminal Redevelopment/Water Taxi**
- 10 Begin implementation of Battery Park Masterplan**

# PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

## Summary Matrix + Action Steps

This table includes the nine plan recommendations and action steps with target time frames and potential leading agency and supporting partners for each.

RECOMMENDATION	ACTION STEPS	TIMEFRAME			RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	
		SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM	LEAD	SUPPORT
1. Position Downtown Sandusky as the Economic, Entertainment, & Cultural anchor of the region	Continued focus on regional water transportation to Put-in-Bay, Kelleys Island, Cedar Point and Pelee Island including ferry service and water taxis.				City of Sandusky	Cedar Point, Ferry Services
	Increase pedestrian connectivity into publicly accessible sites, such as public parks and commercial spaces.				City of Sandusky	
	Incentivize private landowners to create public amenities on the water-facing edges of property. Amenities may include seating, plaza spaces, viewing platforms, boardwalks, bike parking, public art, etc.				City of Sandusky	Property Owners
	Allow food trucks, vendor carts, small commercial spaces, and other innovative retail entrepreneurs to operate on existing sites.				City of Sandusky	Property Owners
	Encourage offering of transient boater slips, with signage and wayfinding, to property owners with boat parking.				Marina Owners	City of Sandusky
	Emphasize mixed use, residential (including upper floor rehabilitation of historic buildings), and hospitality land uses along the water.				City of Sandusky	Developers
	Ensure new construction and redevelopment plans maximize views to the water with site/building design, balconies, and rooftop access.				Developers	City of Sandusky
	Park improvements at Shoreline Park such as consideration of fence removal or alteration, addition of adult fitness equipment, pedestrian connectivity and accessibility to the waterfront.				City of Sandusky	Firelands Regional Medical Center
2. Brand something new	Conduct a branding, placemaking, and architectural theme exercise to discover the name, colors, textures, stories, and materials that would create an authentic Sandusky waterfront district.				New Downtown Organization	City of Sandusky
	Identify a boundary for the district and placemaking elements for public and private spaces that would solidify its identity as a unique part of downtown.				New Downtown Organization	City of Sandusky
	Inspire businesses and property owners to embrace the district identity with investment in marketing materials, public art, renovation/facade improvements, increasing access to the water, adding transient boat parking, and increasing public access to the waterfront.				New Downtown Organization	City of Sandusky
	Create one or more signature events to celebrate the district annually and attract visitors to the area.				New Downtown Organization	City of Sandusky



RECOMMENDATION	ACTION STEPS	TIMEFRAME			RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	
		SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM	LEAD	SUPPORT
3. Generate year-round excitement	Dedicated funding and staffing for programming				City of Sandusky	New Downtown Organization, Philanthropy, Corporate Partners
	Investment in complementary structures such as a screen for outdoor movies, temporary stage for concerts and theater, and ice rink for winter attraction				City of Sandusky	New Downtown Organization, Philanthropy, Corporate Partners
	Create a flexible Columbus Avenue that could be closed for events				City of Sandusky	
	Engage the community to create new events that celebrate the diversity and culture of residents				New Downtown Organization	City of Sandusky, LESI
	Invest in connected public spaces in a variety of sizes and shapes (plazas, green space, etc.) that can be utilized in four seasons for public, private, and semi-public/private events				City of Sandusky	
	Create marketing and storytelling that build the city's brand as an event destination for the region				New Downtown Organization	
	Market the waterfront's photogenic qualities for events and photoshoots				New Downtown Organization	City of Sandusky, LESI
	Collaborate with the marinas and area businesses to host events and activities in the spring and fall.				New Downtown Organization	City of Sandusky, LESI
4. Consider walkability first	Update technical documents as needed to reflect downtown streets framework. These may include street tree list, street design standards, maintenance program, and development proposal requirements.				City of Sandusky	
	Replace unhealthy or struggling existing street trees with high-canopy street trees. Replace all existing trees in circumstances of substantial new development or streetscape updates.				City of Sandusky	
	Implement signature crosswalks at specified locations and typical crosswalks on remaining downtown intersections				City of Sandusky	

# PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

## Summary Matrix + Action Steps

RECOMMENDATION	ACTION STEPS	TIMEFRAME			RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	
		SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM	LEAD	SUPPORT
5. Create a bicycle, golf cart, and multimodal culture	Create conceptual and schematic design plans for signature and typical intersections				City of Sandusky	
	Collaborate with the county to improve visibility and signage of the downtown parking garage to increase use.				Erie County	City of Sandusky
	Add creative signage and wayfinding to ensure drivers know where to park downtown and how to get to multiple destinations after parking once.				New Downtown Organization	City of Sandusky
	Consider public programs or partnerships to incentivize multimodal services, which could include: valet service, bike rental, bike share, golf cart rental, golf cart shuttle, pedicab shuttle				City of Sandusky	Marinas, Sandusky Yacht Club, Ferry Services
	Consider adding golf cart designated parking spaces in several areas as part of a larger promotional campaign to increase their use downtown.				City of Sandusky	
	Collaborate with the marinas to connect boaters to downtown destinations while keeping their cars stored in marina lots.				Marinas	City of Sandusky
	Purchase a city golf cart for staff use in downtown trips to demonstrate their ease of use and viable option for downtown mobility.				City of Sandusky	
	Increase bike parking in public spaces and require them in new development.				City of Sandusky	
6. Foster education + entrepreneurship	Focus on attracting land uses that build on the education anchor. Such uses may include incubator spaces, entrepreneurial programs such as the Erie County RISE program, live/work spaces geared toward artists, and additional higher-education programs that serve the region, such as science programs focused on Sandusky Bay research.				Cedar Fair/BGSU/ECEDC	City of Sandusky
	Encourage retail, food and beverage establishments to serve area students.				New Downtown Organization	BGSU/Cedar Fair
	Improve high-speed internet connectivity and/or public WiFi				City of Sandusky	
	Create strong, walkable connections with signage and streetscape from campus to Columbus Avenue.				City of Sandusky	
7. Revitalize with activated, high quality buildings	Update downtown design guidelines				City of Sandusky	
	Incorporate master plan principles and recommendations into the development review process				City of Sandusky	
8. Create amazing public spaces	Implement public space components of the master plan				City of Sandusky	
9. Prioritize investment	Continued engagement with focus area property owners				New Downtown Organization	City of Sandusky
	Incorporate streetscape and public realm improvements into new development and redevelopment				City of Sandusky	

# IMPLEMENTATION

## Downtown Anchors and Drivers

These key anchors and drivers set the context for creating the master plan and the policy, programming, and key project initiatives the city will continue focus on in the short term. Considering a balance of improvements across these areas as the plan is implemented will facilitate the success of downtown.

### Cultural Entertainment

- » Legacy Anchors: State Theater, Merry Go Round Museum, Maritime Museum
- » Recent Projects: Children's Museum
- » Potential: State Renovations, Public Art, Programming Amenities Package

### Residential Development

- » Legacy Anchors: Chesapeake Lofts
- » Recent Projects: townhouses, Columbus Ave Lofts, Schmidt Apartments, Windau
- » Potential: 2nd floor residential in downtown buildings, infill multi-family, townhome and small footprint single family, Feick, Cooke

### Hotel/Hospitality

- » Recent Projects: Chesapeake (transient), Hotel Kilbourne, Columbus Ave and Market Street VRBOS, Cove District
- » Potential: anchor hotel and conference center on JSP, on Battery Park, expand transient rental as legal within a certain radius of downtown/within Kilbourne Plat and Cove

### Government and Corporate Offices

- » Legacy: Civista, Murray and Murray
- » Recent: City Hall Relocation, Ashley Group
- » Potential: Corporate HQ site on Jackson Street Parking Lot

### Marinas & Waterfront Transportation

- » Legacy: Ferry services, private marina, transient marina
- » Potential: water taxi service, continued transient expansion

### Waterfront Access & Recreation

- » Legacy: Battery Park, Shoreline Park
- » Recently Completed: Sandusky Bay Pathway, Jackson Street Pier
- » Potential: activate through programming, extend Sandusky Bay Pathway

### Education

- » Legacy: Adams School, Jackson, Sandusky Central Catholic
- » Recently Completed: BGSU/Cedar Fair
- » Potential: continued expansion of offerings

### Food and Beverage

- » Legacy: Daley's, Zinc, Crush, Dockside, New Sandusky Fish Company, etc
- » Recently Completed: Barra, Small City, Shorehouse, Great Lakes Grinders, Baithouse etc
- » Potential: continued expansion

### Retail

- » Legacy: Erik's, Fabulous Female, Encore
- » Recent: Marketplace at Cooke
- » Potential: continue supporting and attractive niche boutique retail

### Active Living

- » Legacy: Skate park, tennis courts
- » Recent: Paddle & Climb, Nexxt Level, Sandusky Crossfit, Tim Dorsey, Macca Root, Shoreline Playground
- » Potential: Increase active living amenities such as adult fitness, updated skate park, waterfront recreation, bikeways, health food, active recreation options in downtown



# IMPLEMENTATION

## Real Estate Prioritization + Funding Tools

### Real Estate Prioritization

This table outlines the target time horizon for different product types downtown, organized by short term (1-3 years), medium term (2-5 years), and long term (5-10 years).

USE	TIMEFRAME		
	SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM
Residential: Upper Floor Rehab			
Residential: New Low-Rise Townhome and Detached			
Residential: New Mid-Rise Multifamily			
Hotel: New/Rehab Downtown			
Hotel: New Battery Park			
Retail: Ground Floor Rehab			
Office: New/Rehab			

### Fundability

The city has developed a robust array of economic development and housing grants to support rehabilitation and new construction downtown. While developers consider these tools essential, they also rely on state and federal programs to achieve feasibility. In particular, stakeholders consistently reiterated the benefits of TIF funding. Since prior TIF vehicles have been exhausted, the City is considering the creation of a new Section 41 TIF program downtown. The Section 41 program directly supports investments in private development downtown, including priority projects such as upper-floor rehabilitation for residential uses. This matrix highlights the different funding sources cited by stakeholders at different scales of development.

FUNDING SOURCE	APPLICATION		
	SITE TREATMENTS	REHABILITATION	NEW CONSTRUCTION
<b>Private</b>			
Third-Party Financing			
Specialty Programs (e.g. new homebuyers)			
<b>Local</b>			
Signage/Facade Grants			
Small Business Assistance Grants			
Substantial Redevelopment Grants			*
Housing Development Grants			*
Land Cost Abatement (if City-owned site)			
<b>State</b>			
Community Redevelopment Area Abatement			
Section 41 TIF			
Historic Preservation Tax Credit			
<b>Federal</b>			
Historic Preservation Tax Credit			
Opportunity Zones			

\* May be insufficient in magnitude to significantly support new construction

# IMPLEMENTATION

## Enabling Public Projects

### Enabling Public Projects

This table projects budget numbers for public project identified in the plan recommendations and focus areas. Estimated project costs are in 2020 dollars.

ENABLING PROJECT	UNIT	QTY	UNIT COST	BUDGET RANGE
<b>Columbus Avenue Streetscape</b> Includes Groundplane, Stormwater, Electrical	SF	65,612	\$45 – \$75	\$2.9M – \$4.9M
<b>Schade Mylander Plaza</b> Includes Groundplane, Stormwater, Electrical	SF	29,000	\$45 – \$75	\$1.3M – \$2.2M
<b>Fountain</b> Includes Groundplane, pump, filter, reservoir	SF	480	+/- \$1K	\$450K - \$500K
<b>Water's Edge Platform</b>	EA			\$250K – \$450K
<b>Jackson Street Garage</b>	SPACE	300	\$25K – \$30K	\$7.5M – \$9M
<b>Typical Downtown Streetscape</b> 1 side, 16-18 Ft ROW	LF			\$350 – \$500 per linear foot
<b>Intersection Treatments</b>				
Paint	SF	2700	+/- \$1	\$3K range
Thermoplastic	SF	2700	+/- \$6	\$16K range

# IMPLEMENTATION

## Recommended Street Tree List

The following tree species are appropriate to the Sandusky climate and will create the high canopy condition recommended in the plan.

<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>
<i>Acer campestre</i> Hedge Maple (B&B Typ)	<i>Platanus occidentalis</i> 'Bloodgood' Bloodgood London Planetree
<i>Acer freemanii</i> 'Sienna Glen' Sienna Glen Red Maple	<i>Quercus acutissima</i> Sawtooth Oak
<i>Acer rubrum</i> 'October Glory' October Glory Maple	<i>Quercus bicolor</i> Swamp White Oak
<i>Acer rubrum</i> 'Sun Valley' Sun Valley Red Maple	<i>Quercus coccinea</i> Scarlet Oak
<i>Acer saccharum</i> 'Commomoration' Commomoration Sugar Maple	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i> Burr Oak
<i>Betula nigra</i> River Birch (Single Stem)	<i>Quercus robur</i> , "Fastigiata" Pyramidal English Oak
<i>Carpinus betulus</i> European Hornbeam	<i>Quercus rubra</i> Red Oak
<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i> American Hornbeam	<i>Tilia cordata</i> 'Greenspire' Greenspire Linden
<i>Cercidiphyllum japonicum</i> Katsura Tree	<i>Ulmus americana</i> 'Princeton' Princeton American Elm
<i>Eucommia ulmoides</i> Hardy Rubber Tree	<i>Ulmus</i> 'Frontier' Frontier Elm
<i>Gleditsia Triacanthos</i> Honeylocust	<i>Ulmus parvifolia</i> Chinese Elm
<i>Koelreuteria paniculata</i> Goldenrain Tree	<i>Zelkova Serrata</i> 'Green Vase' Green Vase Zelkova



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