

Oklahoma City Oklahoma



**Urban Land
Institute**

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Oklahoma City Oklahoma

Core to Shore Redevelopment: Implementing the Bold Vision

February 28–March 5, 2010
An Advisory Services Program Report

Urban Land Institute
1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW
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About the Urban Land Institute

The mission of the Urban Land Institute is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. ULI is committed to

- Bringing together leaders from across the fields of real estate and land use policy to exchange best practices and serve community needs;
- Fostering collaboration within and beyond ULI's membership through mentoring, dialogue, and problem solving;
- Exploring issues of urbanization, conservation, regeneration, land use, capital formation, and sustainable development;
- Advancing land use policies and design practices that respect the uniqueness of both built and natural environments;
- Sharing knowledge through education, applied research, publishing, and electronic media; and

- Sustaining a diverse global network of local practice and advisory efforts that address current and future challenges.

Established in 1936, the Institute today has more than 29,000 members worldwide, representing the entire spectrum of the land use and development disciplines. Professionals represented include developers, builders, property owners, investors, architects, public officials, planners, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, academicians, students, and librarians.

ULI relies heavily on the experience of its members. It is through member involvement and information resources that ULI has been able to set standards of excellence in development practice. The Institute has long been recognized as one of the world's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development.

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About ULI Advisory Services

The goal of ULI's Advisory Services Program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 400 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for issues such as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfields redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's Advisory Services.

Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the panel topic and screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI's interdisciplinary panel teams provide a holistic look at development problems. A respected ULI member who has previous panel experience chairs each panel.

The agenda for a panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives; hour-long interviews of key community representatives; and a day of formulating recommendations. Long nights of discussion precede the panel's conclusions. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel's visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consideration, participants in ULI's panel assignments are able to make accurate assessments of a sponsor's issues and to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A major strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw on the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academicians, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services panel report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

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Finally, the panel thanks all the community leaders who shared their time and ideas in the interview process. Everyone who participated in the panel process provided vital insight and demonstrated the commitment, civic dedication, and ingenuity needed to fulfill the promise of the Core to Shore Plan.

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Executive Summary

The panel members feel privileged to have had the opportunity to work with a community that has come together on such a bold vision for the future as the Core to Shore Plan represents. With the public support expressed in the passage of the Metropolitan Area Projects (MAPS) 3 funding package, Oklahoma City is in a doubly unique position for a modern American city: a bold vision and the means to begin its realization. That Oklahoma City has created this opportunity is a tribute to dedicated and creative leadership in both the public and private sectors. The Core to Shore Plan exemplifies the true spirit of Daniel Burnham's famous dictum for planning: "Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men's blood."

A Plan with Solid Fundamentals

The magic of the Core to Shore Plan resides in its big ideas, whose strength is bolstered because they also express the plan's solid fundamentals. Truly "Burnhamesque" plans take time: the realization of the Core to Shore vision will be measured in decades, not years. Five big ideas ground the plan, requiring constant vigilance over the long implementation time frame:

- Organizing the planning area around a central north-south axis, as represented by the Harvey "Spine" connecting the new Devon Tower to the Oklahoma River;
- Designating green and civic spaces including the Central Park, the Promenade Park, and the Oklahoma River waterfront;
- Boosting Oklahoma City's reputation as a destination, as represented by the proposed convention center and associated hotels;
- Strengthening the city's core by introducing a significant amount and a range of residential development; and

- Encouraging the economic development potential of the Oklahoma River in a way that integrates this amenity into the larger urban core.

The Core to Shore Plan's long-term time frame requires flexibility. The city needs to be nimble enough to adapt as market conditions change and opportunities arise while staying committed to the Plan's fundamental big ideas.

Getting the Details Right

The next step for the Core to Shore Plan is getting the details right. The vision is in place, but to fully realize the plan's potential, several obstacles need to be overcome and several tools should be employed.

Panel members tour downtown Oklahoma City and the Core to Shore planning area.



The relocated Interstate 40 will be a barrier to the north-south integration that is fundamental to the Core to Shore vision. Careful attention needs to be paid to how I-40 interacts with the surrounding land uses and to the design of circulation routes that cross it. Additional crossings, especially for pedestrians, may be necessary. The new “Boulevard” that replaces the existing I-40 may also be a barrier, unless it is designed as an exemplary arterial street with a total width of no more than 110 feet.

The convention center and associated hotels are prime means to realize the Core to Shore Plan. Great care needs to be taken in locating the convention center so that it simultaneously supports and takes advantage of the existing retail and entertainment development in and near Bricktown. The panel has significant concerns about the proposed location for the convention center along the east side of the Central Park. This location would be better served by residential development.

The plan’s relationship to the rest of downtown, especially Bricktown, needs to be considered so that the downtown districts reinforce each other without competing. Destination or lifestyle retail should be clustered in Bricktown, while retail development in the Core to Shore planning area should be on a

smaller scale, focused on supporting the office uses in the central business district (CBD) and the planning area’s residential neighborhoods and parks.

The bold vision in the Core to Shore Plan needs to be supported by more detailed planning efforts targeted to the following concepts and areas:

- An open-space framework, consisting of an integrated and hierarchical series of open spaces from the neighborhood level up to such regional attractions as the Central Park, supported by a streetscape master plan;
- A connectivity framework expressed through a downtown access and circulation master plan developed with the assistance of a new multimodal traffic model that is specific to the downtown area;
- An updated Strategic Action and Development Plan for the Oklahoma River that integrates the Core to Shore vision into the river development plan and aims to fully activate the river and capture its economic development potential; and
- Neighborhood plans for the residential areas, so that each of the four to six new or revitalized neighborhoods in the planning area has its own neighborhood plan that incorporates a range of

The existing I-40 is an elevated expressway, parts of which are planned to be converted to an at-grade boulevard once the new I-40 is opened.





housing types and price points, organizes the neighborhood around meaningful places, and includes supportive retail and community facilities.

Implementation and Phasing

Building out the Core to Shore Plan will require the participation—and partnership—of the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. The city should lead the implementation phase by developing more detailed plans for targeted areas, putting in place needed land use and design regulations, acquiring land, constructing basic infrastructure, and offering supportive financing techniques.

To catalyze development in the planning area, the panel recommends nine priority projects:

1. Development of the convention center, a convention center hotel, and related roadway improvements;
2. Development of the Boulevard;
3. Development of the Central Park;

4. Street and streetscape improvements in the Central Park District on Hudson, Robinson, and Walker avenues, including the extension of improvements on Walker Avenue to as far as the Little Flower Church;
5. Residential development west of the Central Park (cleanup, utilities, streets);
6. Relocation of the OG&E power lines and switching station;
7. Predevelopment initiatives to prepare the river's edge for residential development;
8. A strong pedestrian connection on the Harvey "Spine" north of the Boulevard, linking to Myriad Gardens; and
9. Acquisition of land east of the Central Park for future residential development.

Given the long-term nature of the Core to Shore Plan, the panel also identified the need to create a new institution to be charged with stewarding the plan through the decades of implementation.

The new I-40 under construction.

The Core to Shore Plan and the Panel's Assignment

The realignment of I-40 to the south of its current location offers Oklahoma City the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reinvent the area between its revitalized downtown and the Oklahoma River. Seizing this opportunity, city leaders from the public and private sectors joined together for 13 months to carry out the Core to Shore planning process, producing the Core to Shore Framework Plan in 2008. The public endorsed the implementation of key components of the Plan in the Metropolitan Area Projects 3 (MAPS 3) referendum that passed in December 2009.

The Core to Shore Plan is a bold and visionary program aimed at moving Oklahoma City to a new level among American cities. The plan's program of major civic improvements and private mixed-use developments encompasses planning subdistricts that cover more than 750 acres and make up approximately one-third of the city's designated downtown district. Green space programmed as several types of parks will link the traditional city center with the Oklahoma River, connecting the economic vitality of the revitalized downtown with the economic promise of the riverfront.

Regional map.



The temporary one-cent sales tax approved in MAPS 3 is expected to raise approximately \$777 million for seven projects. It will fund acquisition and construction of the Core to Shore Plan's landmark Central Park and a new convention center. MAPS 3 also will fund a downtown streetcar system and miles of new bicycle and walking trails and sidewalks.

The Panel's Assignment

With much of the Core to Shore Plan's public improvements started, the Executive Committee of the ULI Oklahoma District Council approached the city in 2009 with the desire to bring a ULI Advisory Panel to the city to address how to catalyze appropriate private development within the planning area.

In preparing for the panel, the city and ULI Oklahoma sought input from ULI members, the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, and several community leaders to generate a list of over 60 questions related to implementation of the Core to Shore Plan. Six priority questions were chosen:

1. What are the most effective means of bringing about high-quality private development (especially residential and mixed-use) that is consistent with the public objectives of the Core to Shore Plan, in order to support and not compete with the momentum in other parts of downtown?
2. What should the land uses be along the east and west sides of the park?
3. In what sequence should we implement the major components of the Core to Shore Plan?
4. How do we make mixed-use development work, especially along the Boulevard?
5. How do we interface with the river to best activate it and make the most of that asset?
6. Where should the Promenade Park be located?

The Panel's Method

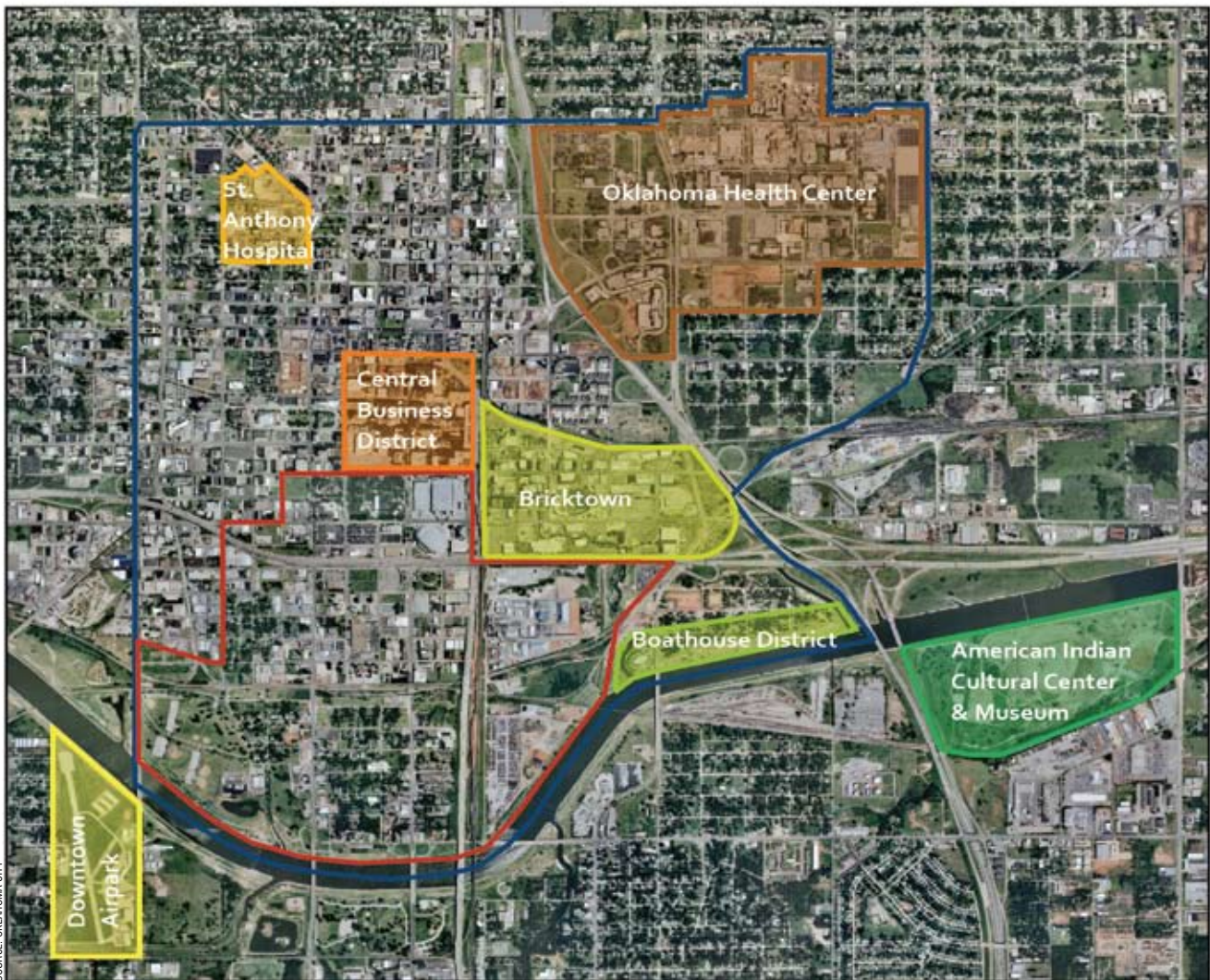
The panel met in Oklahoma City from February 28 to March 5, 2010. After studying the thorough and comprehensive briefing book prepared by Oklahoma City staff, the panel interviewed more than 100 community leaders and local stakeholders, exploring the components of the Core to Shore Plan in detail. To guide their work, the panel adopted the following principles:

- Listen to the market.
- Be aware of the demographic realities.
- Leverage MAPS 3.
- Connect the dots.

- Mix uses and housing types and prices.
- Preserve what is historically significant.
- Sustain the environment and ecology of the area.
- Promote sensible growth.

The panel began its work by conducting an assessment of the Core to Shore Plan, deciding that an in-depth understanding of the Plan's fundamental features needed to be brought forth and "truth-tested" before a prioritized list of implementation steps could be developed. On March 5, the panel presented its findings at Oklahoma City's city hall building to an overflow crowd of about 120. This report summarizes the

Core to Shore context.
 Legend:
■ Core to Shore Boundary
■ Downtown Boundary



SOURCE: OKLAHOMA CITY

panel's recommendations, starting with the panel's assessment of the Core to Shore Plan itself.

The Core to Shore Plan

Incorporating input from a cross-section of the community, the Core to Shore Plan lays out a dynamic, forward-thinking vision for the area from downtown to the Oklahoma River. The Plan is also a long-term project—full buildout could take as long as 50 years. The long time frame shaped the panel's assessment and recommendations; however, initial steps have already been taken, and more will be taken in the near future.

The Larger Downtown Context

The best way to look at the development of the Core to Shore planning area is in the context of the rest of downtown and nearby areas. Development ideas have been formulated and are being implemented

Existing Core to Shore Land Use Plan.



SOURCE: CORE TO SHORE PLAN MAP: A REDEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK, 2008.

for all the districts around the CBD. In Bricktown, entertainment, dining, and retail development is underway. North of Bricktown and in Deep Deuce, new downtown living areas are emerging, and a variety of commercial and mixed-use buildings have been built or are planned along Automobile Alley and 10th Street in Midtown. Housing is also developing in Midtown, Triangle, and the CBD, and Devon Energy is building a new office tower in the CBD. The Core to Shore planning area needs to be integrated into the other downtown planning areas and steps should be taken so that all the downtown planning districts complement and support each other.

Open-space linkages will perhaps be the most important urban design element connecting downtown and the Core to Shore area. The open spaces planned for the Core to Shore area must be extensions of the existing open-space network—which is already under improvement—downtown. Within the CBD, this includes Bicentennial Plaza, the Courthouse grounds, and Myriad Gardens, among others. Project 180, a three-year, \$140 million redesign of downtown streets, sidewalks, parks, and plazas, will link these spaces and provide some of the pedestrian-level connection to the Core to Shore area south of the Boulevard.

The Land Use Element

Given the Core to Shore Plan's long implementation time frame and the need for flexibility to respond to changing circumstances as development moves forward, it is important not to get too specific too quickly. The panel therefore simplified the Core to Shore Plan into a land use plan. Upcoming efforts will begin to fill in the details (neighborhood plans, circulation plans, zoning overlays, design guidelines, streetscape plans, etc.) and move each planning sub-area into a more finished state. But the land use plan, even at this level of generality, communicates several important messages about the future of the Core to Shore planning area.

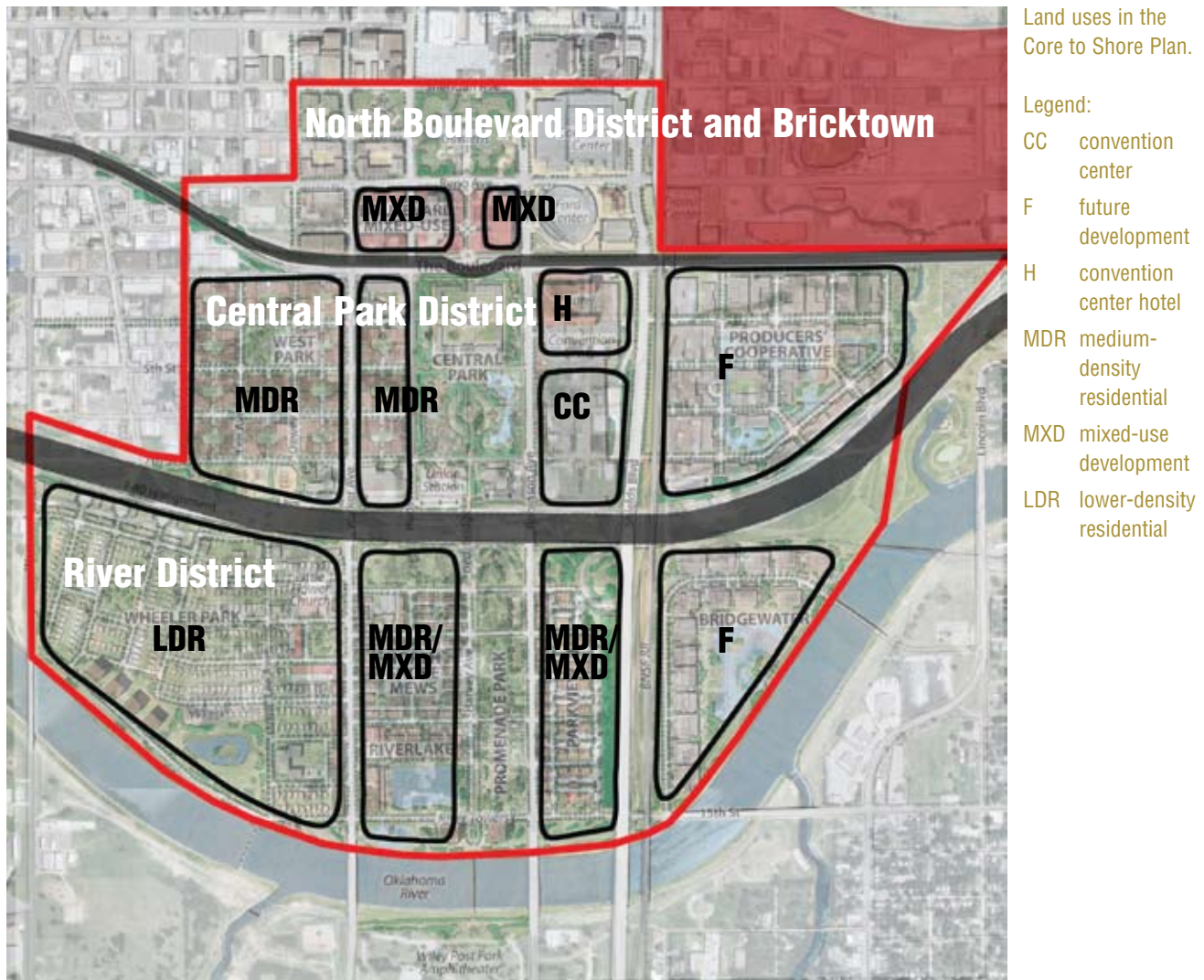
First, the plan can be understood as organized along two axes: north-south and east-west. A north-south axis begins in the CBD at the Devon Tower site, runs through the soon-to-be-renovated Myriad Gardens, continues south to the Boulevard, and then continues further south through the Central Park to the new I-40 near Union Station. Broken by the new I-40, a new north-south axis begins at the Skydance Bridge

and continues through the Promenade Park on to its terminus at the river. The panel strongly endorses the organization of the Core to Shore Plan around the north-south axis of the Central Park. This is an excellent organizing principle. Care should be taken not to dilute the north-south axis during the long implementation time frame. East-west axes, while not as bold as the north-south axis, connect the neighborhoods farther from the Central Park and the Promenade Park back to the center. Developing east-west connections back to the center will also be important to the success of the plan.

The second organizing element of the plan is the division of the Core to Shore area by the Boulevard and

the new I-40 into three development zones. For the purposes of assessment, the panel named the three development zones as follows:

- *The North Boulevard District and Bricktown (from Myriad Gardens to the Boulevard):* The Core to Shore Plan proposes a north-south visual and pedestrian connection running from Myriad Gardens south to the Boulevard, then continuing through the Central Park. It appears that this visual and pedestrian connection can be built using part or all of the existing Harvey Avenue right-of-way. The northern frontage of the Boulevard is planned for mixed-use office and retail development on a very aggressive scale.



- *The Central Park District* (from the Boulevard to the new I-40): The most significant features of this area are the Central Park, the convention center, and the historic Union Station. The Central Park will be a special place in downtown. Plans call for it to be programmed for frequent events, offered in concert with activities planned for the renovated Myriad Gardens. Union Station will be a major attraction within the park and may also be programmed for commercial and recreational activities. The park is a near-term construction project under MAPS 3.

The Core to Shore Plan calls for the area west of the Central Park to be an urban residential neighborhood with medium to high densities. The convention center and a convention center hotel are located on lands east of the park.

East of the railroad, the lumber yard and Cotton Producers properties are described in the Core to Shore Plan as future or long-term development areas. Although uses in these areas are shown as office development in the plan, the plan uses the designation of “future development” to indicate that the actual designation is still open.

- *The River District* (from the new I-40 to the Oklahoma River): The Core to Shore Plan shows detailed drawings of housing types for the River District. Because this district is the farthest from downtown’s core and Bricktown, the development specified for this area is probably the most speculative in the plan. The primary driving forces in this area appear to be the parks (the Promenade Park and the playing fields south of I-40) and the open-space corridor that will terminate at the river at some type of landmark.

The programming for the Promenade Park includes some playing fields along with more passive open areas. The playing field park near I-40 will also provide a limited number of fields. At the Oklahoma River, an urban type of major development serves as a terminus to the north-south open-space axis.

Medium-density residential and mixed-use development neighborhoods are planned near the Promenade Park, with a lower-density neighborhood to the west. The area east of Shields Boulevard is indicated as a future development area.

The New I-40 Barrier

Although the relocated I-40 was originally planned to be below grade, allowing north-south street and pedestrian connections to be at grade, conditions permit only a semidepressed expressway. At only 3 to 7 feet below grade, I-40 will be a visual barrier and will require pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle crossings to climb over it. Noise and views of traffic will penetrate the Central Park unless barriers are put in place, and then street-level visual access from the Central Park to the Oklahoma River will be blocked at I-40. The Skydance Bridge, which is to be built slightly east of the north-south axis from Devon Tower through the Central Park, will cross I-40 and establish a second visual and pedestrian axis down to the river.

The Oklahoma River

While the Core to Shore Plan addresses the river, it does not fully engage the river as a core regional destination. The river could generate economic development equal to or surpassing any other element in the plan, including the convention center. It could even be the most significant future growth area. To take advantage of the river, it needs to become a significant destination and active place for multiple groups at all times of the year.

Summary

The Core to Shore Plan is at an early stage in the process, requiring the city to remain flexible regarding plan elements that may be well off into the future, while remaining faithful to the fundamental big ideas that organize the planning vision. Over the decades of plan implementation, the big ideas that will need constant vigilance and support include the following:

- The central open space and visual spine forming a north-south axis from Devon Tower to the new I-40 and then south to the Oklahoma River;
- East-west connections back to the central spine of the planning area;
- The width and design of the new Boulevard;
- The economic development potential of the Oklahoma River; and
- The integration of the Core to Shore planning area with the rest of Oklahoma City.

Market Potential

Oklahoma City is a growing community with an economy strong enough to weather the current economic downturn relatively unscathed. The successes of MAPS 1 and 2 have created a new vitality and excitement, generating new potential for in-town neighborhoods, including the Core to Shore area. The Core to Shore Plan envisions creating several appealing in-town neighborhoods that will attract residents and businesses to complement the ongoing initiatives in the CBD, Bricktown, and Midtown. The panel's review of the market indicates that this emphasis on residential development is both appropriate and compelling.

The key finding of the market analysis is that the Core to Shore Plan is not a 15-year plan. Some portions may require as many as 50 years to reach full build-out. Although achievement of the full plan in a short period seems ideal, longer implementation is not all bad. It will allow the area and individual neighborhoods to grow organically a block or two at a time, as cities have done throughout history, introducing variety in housing types, design, prices, and rents and accommodating many types of households. The longer implementation also builds in flexibility to change over time and adapt to the market as it changes.

Achieving the area's development potential will require a series of public/private partnerships, developer incentives to help with the high cost of redevelopment, new amenities, and an active marketing and branding effort. Building the image of downtown as an exciting urban community and a great place to live will be important in increasing demand for in-town living as well as attracting new employers who offer quality jobs.

Employment and Office Market

Employment is the ultimate driver of economic growth and downtown residential demand. Oklahoma City has an aggressive business recruitment program with a particular focus on attracting corporate and regional headquarters. The city's war chest

of more than \$100 million—to provide incentives for corporate relocations—is almost unprecedented in today's economic market. Efforts to create new quality jobs downtown will be important in building the market for downtown housing as well.

Office development will not be a major element in the planning area's future. Currently, the downtown inventory of 5.2 million square feet of office space has a 24 percent vacancy rate. With the consolidation of Devon employees within the new Devon Tower, office vacancy could increase by roughly 900,000 square feet to a total of more than 2.1 million square feet, or almost one-third of the total inventory. On the positive side, the major blocks of Class A space vacated by Devon will create opportunities to attract new businesses to the downtown. The extensive vacancies suggest that there will be no major speculative office towers in the foreseeable future, though a corporation new to Oklahoma City could choose to build its own tower. The extensive vacancies also suggest a need to convert some older office buildings to residential use. Within the Core to Shore area, the only significant office development could be a corporate campus in the "future development" area near the river, suitable for a recruited company that would prefer offices near but outside the city's core. Consequently, the predominant uses in the planning area should be residential, visitor facilities, entertainment, and retail uses.

Residential Market

Like most downtowns, the Core to Shore area is likely to attract residents who are primarily childless singles and couples, such as young professionals, empty nesters, college students, artists, corporate staff on short-term assignments, and transplants just moving to town. Nationally, these populations are growing faster than traditional families, providing strong demand for smaller, close-in units that offer the opportunity to walk to work, restaurants, and entertainment.

Downtown, Bricktown, Deep Deuce, and Midtown have successfully attracted new housing over the past decade, demonstrating the viability and demand for housing in and near the core. The rapid expansion of the downtown housing stock involved multiple developers, housing types, and concepts.

Unfortunately, the for-sale housing projects focused primarily on high-end housing, overestimating the depth of that market. As a result, the marketing of these properties hit a wall with the economic downturn; sales were much slower than anticipated. New rental housing and lower-cost, for-sale housing have been better received and supported.

Going forward, the market for downtown and near-downtown housing may total 4,000 to 5,000 units over the next 20 years. Of that demand, the panel estimates that the Core to Shore area could attract and support roughly 2,000 units. Achieving the 2,000

units will depend on providing housing for households with incomes from \$30,000 up. Downtown cannot depend on only high-income households. The high-end market is not deep enough, and there are too many attractive housing alternatives and neighborhoods in other parts of the city.

Furthermore, in addressing the full range of housing demand, downtown and near-downtown housing is likely to be oriented more to rental housing. Overall, the city's housing breaks down into roughly 60 percent ownership units and 40 percent rental units. In the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, the split between owner-occupied and rental housing is likely to be closer to 50 or 60 percent rental units, reflecting the economic situation of many of the target residents. The panel recommends a housing mix that begins with prices starting at \$100,000 and rents starting at \$600 per month.

The Core to Shore Plan extends from downtown to the Oklahoma River. Market conditions in and near downtown will affect market conditions in the Core to Shore planning area.



The types of supportable housing will range from single-family detached units and duplexes to town-houses to apartment and condominium flats. For the foreseeable future, the local market's residential rent and sales price constraints will prevent private development of any high-rise housing—the construction costs are simply too high for the rents and prices that prospective residents are willing and able to pay. Given the rents and prices in the local market, the private market will not be able to develop the full range of in-town housing on its own. The development costs exceed the private investment that can be justified by the future sales prices or rents. Public/private partnerships will be essential to offset land, infrastructure, and parking costs. Financing and infrastructure strategies will be a critical part of the Core to Shore implementation strategy.

In-town residents at all income levels will be attracted by amenities, urban ambiance, the ability to walk to work and entertainment, and the whole package of programs and activities that animate downtown. Safe and comfortable neighborhoods—each with a unique character and sense of place—must be created to meet the needs of these residents. In the longer run, the growing in-town population will need additional support retail and services, such as grocery stores, drugstores, and dry cleaners.

For in-town neighborhoods to attract and retain young couples once they start to have children, it will be essential to provide quality education and child care services. Several downtown residents said that they felt “forced” to move to other neighborhoods in order to enroll their children in good schools.

Retail Market

Retail development will be an important element in creating vibrant new neighborhoods. Currently, there is a relatively limited supply of retail and services to support downtown employees and residents. Expansion of the resident, visitor, and employee base downtown will help to support new retail facilities in key locations that meet retailer needs and requirements.

The Core to Shore Plan calls for aggressive retail development on the blocks south of Myriad Gardens to the new Boulevard. During the interviews, the panel heard desires for a major new shopping destina-

tion with a department store anchor—dreams of a Nordstrom or a Neiman Marcus. The panel cautions that destination retail on this scale is not going to happen. Downtown lacks the density of residents, employees, and visitors to support such a major facility. Furthermore, very few department stores are being built today, and the incentive packages required to attract one to a downtown location start at \$40 million or more.

Moreover, the blocks south of Myriad Gardens and north of the new Boulevard are not the best location for major retail facilities. Good retail streets have low speeds and retail on both sides of the street. Shopping along the Boulevard should be focused more on restaurants and cafés to serve downtown employees and residents, as well as shops with cards and gifts, office supplies, and sundries.

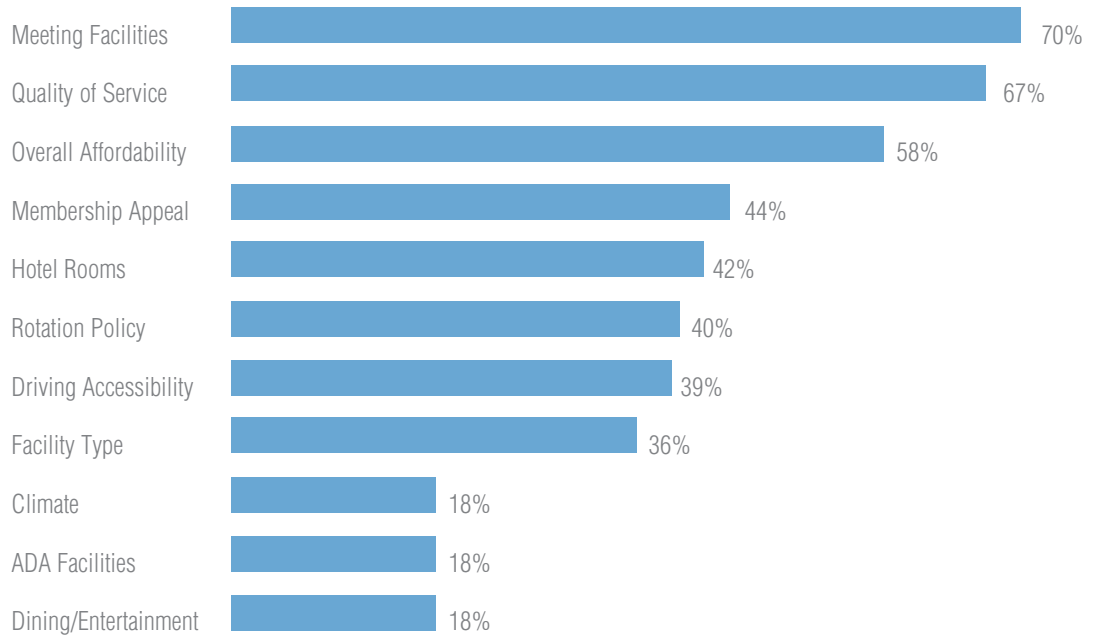
From the perspective of Oklahoma City's regional market, more appropriate than a large department store would be smaller lifestyle-type retailers such as restaurants, a bookstore, home furnishings stores, and a few apparel retailers that do not depend on department stores to attract customers. The types of lifestyle retailers that could be attracted to create a concentration of retail space will require both pedestrian activity and auto access and parking. Such retailers would fare better if clustered in Bricktown, both as infill uses and in a center at the eastern end of Bricktown near Bass Pro Shops. This location would offer greater visibility to regional residents from I-235 and to visitors to Bass Pro Shops and Bricktown.

Hotel and Convention Market

Convention centers carry out four functions in a community: education, trade, recreation, and social interaction. Where airports are a city's welcome mat, convention centers are a city's living room. Each event at a convention center blends these functions, placing emphasis on different ones.

A proper convention center for Oklahoma City, the state capital, is appropriate. The center will attract state, regional, national, and international conventions and trade shows, and also host consumer shows, festivals, entertainment events, and social functions. Most events attracted to the new convention center will be new to Oklahoma City

Figure 1
Meeting Planners' Most Frequently Used Selection Criteria for Local, Regional, and National Meetings



Sources: ASAE's Meeting Industry Trends; Johnson Consulting.

Note: This figure shows the responses of meeting planners who placed events in convention centers, including local, regional, national, and international events.

and the state, although some events that would be better served by the new facility will be drawn from the Cox Convention Center.

Oklahoma City should set its sights on becoming a player in tourism-oriented markets, but the city should be conscious that time, effort, and resources will be needed to achieve this status. Fort Worth, Austin, Nashville, and San Antonio are models to emulate. Because university and capital uses are not located in the downtown core, however, Oklahoma City will at a disadvantage in comparison with Nashville and Austin.

Industry Trends

The meetings industry has developed to include a varied group of events ranging from large trade and exhibition events to small business conferences. As societies mature and become more sophisticated, so does the meetings market. The diverse nature and

characteristics of event types necessitate a variety of alternative facilities. Virtually all categories of event types have experienced rapid worldwide growth since the early 1970s. The pursuit of education and commerce has fueled the development of new events and the expansion of existing events in both size and attendance. Cities throughout the world have responded to this demand by supplying millions of square feet of new or renovated exhibition and meeting space in both small and large markets.

Selection Criteria Used by Meeting Planners

The American Society of Association Executives surveyed its members about their criteria for selecting a convention destination. These executives select the destinations for a variety of events, from small meetings to large exhibitions. Although the meeting planners are based in the United States, the survey provides insight into the major selection factors that

Figure 2
Convention Centers in Peer Markets

	Convention Center Size (Sq. Ft.)			
	Metropolitan Population ^a	Exhibit Hall	Ballroom	Meeting Space
Oklahoma City				
Current	1,230,369	80,000	25,000	28,566
Recommended		200,000	40,000	70,000
Current Competitors				
Albuquerque	864,696	166,546	31,164	48,575
Little Rock ^b	690,000	82,892	18,362	7,616
Omaha	838,875	194,300	41,876	22,050
Target Profile				
Columbus	1,811,662	300,000	39,729	58,132
Fort Worth	6,409,378	182,266	28,160	58,809
Louisville	1,252,795	191,000	30,000	70,352
Tourist Cities				
Austin	1,762,915	250,000	66,718	46,964
Dallas	6,409,378	951,726	45,000	98,699
Indianapolis	1,746,373	300,000	66,923	96,857
Nashville	1,649,381	366,300	82,700	94,100
San Antonio	2,087,385	400,052	89,102	110,117

Source: Johnson Consulting.

a. Population for the Core Base Statistical Area.

b. State House Center only.

apply internationally as well. Figure 1 shows the responses of members who placed events in convention centers, including local, regional, national, and international events.

The survey respondents gave a high level of importance to five factors:

- The availability of meeting room facilities,
- Quality of service,

- Overall affordability,
- Membership appeal, and
- The availability of hotel rooms.

Of the high-importance factors, developers can control all but overall affordability. Meeting planners considered climate, facilities that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and dining and entertainment options as least important.

Size of the Recommended Convention Center

Oklahoma City’s current convention center is insufficient for a market of its size, as the panel’s analysis of peer markets shows (figure 2). Even though the Cox Convention Center was built in the 1970s, it follows the 1950s and 1960s “civic center” pattern of integrating an exhibit hall and an arena.

For a city of its size, Oklahoma City warrants a convention center that offers 200,000 to 250,000

square feet of exhibit space, a 40,000-square-foot ballroom, and 60,000 to 70,000 square feet of meeting space. After the first phase of building the new convention center, a second phase should be planned, allowing for a 50 to 100 percent expansion. The lead time for convention center and hotel development is long. However, its impact on the plan is great. This project should take a priority in the sequencing of redevelopment of the area.

Figure 3
Hotel Room Supply and Convention and Visitor Bureau Budgets, Peer Markets

	Hotel Supply		Convention and Visitors Bureau
	Metropolitan Area	Downtown	Budget (\$)
Oklahoma City			
Current	21,807	2,004	4,232,100
Recommended		4,000	8,000,000
Current Competitors			
Albuquerque	17,458	1,000	6,831,275
Little Rock	11,755	1,200	3,500,000
Omaha	12,771	2,000	2,920,160
Target Profile			
Columbus		3,700	6,461,017
Fort Worth	28,023	2,000	7,697,527
Louisville	20,845	4,000	12,372,317
Tourist Cities			
Austin		5,500	9,419,567
Dallas	28,023	1,000	14,085,578
Indianapolis	30,958	5,033	10,382,436
Nashville		2,800	11,810,500
San Antonio		9,000	22,429,679

Source: Johnson Consulting.

Hotel Strategies

Currently 2,000 rooms serve the downtown area. According to Smith Travel research, occupancy for these hotels was 66 percent in 2008 and dropped to 64 percent in 2009. The average daily rate was \$121 in 2008 and dropped to \$114 in 2009. As a whole, Oklahoma City had a slightly higher occupancy rate but a lower average daily rate compared with a set of peer cities (figure 3).

Competitive convention centers require a sufficient number of hotel rooms. Hotels do not allow all their rooms to be used by conventions, typically capping convention use at 50 percent of the inventory. At today's downtown hotel room inventory, that leaves only 1,000 rooms available for convention use. Ultimately, 4,000 hotel rooms will be needed downtown, with half (2,000 rooms) available to serve larger conventions. The target inventory of hotel rooms in the downtown core is 4,000 rooms over the next 15 to 20 years.

The panel recommends the following hotel types:

- New headquarters hotel: 600 to 700 rooms (cannot be phased)
- Two boutique hotels: 70 to 100 rooms each
- Second full-service hotel: 400 rooms
- Two focus-brand hotels: 150 to 200 rooms each

A headquarters hotel with 600 to 700 rooms must open within six months of the opening of the convention center. It should be a four-star quality, brand-affiliated hotel offering 60,000 to 70,000 square feet of meeting and ballroom space and located within easy walking distance of the convention center. The other hotels can be located throughout the planning area but, except for the boutique properties, should be clustered within 2,000 feet of the convention center.

Future of Cox Convention Center

The Cox Convention Center offers a 13,000-seat arena, 80,000 square feet of exhibit space, and nearly 55,000 square feet of meeting and ballroom space. Attendance at this building has ranged from 400,000 to 600,000 people annually. The arena component is the most used, but in the absence of an appropriate convention center, the exhibit hall and meeting



The panel considered the retail market in the Bricktown entertainment and retail district when making its recommendations for the Core to Shore planning area.

space is also used. The meeting space, which is managed by John Q. Hammons, serves the company's two adjacent hotels.

The presence of a Class B arena and smaller exhibit hall is useful in a community. It can accommodate sports and entertainment events, youth and collegiate sports tournaments, and a secondary sports franchise, and can host events in association with the Ford Center. Retention of this venue is recommended until physical obsolescence reduces its utility, a new large arena is built, or the new convention center expands. This time frame is estimated at 15 to 20 years.

Summary of Market Potential

The market potential for the land uses designated in the Core to Shore Plan is a mixed picture. The panel sees a relatively strong market for residential uses targeted to a range of incomes. The convention center and associated expansion of hotels, as proposed in the Core to Shore Plan, represents an opportunity for Oklahoma City to boost its status as a destination for the convention, conference, and meetings market. Retail opportunities will be for restaurants and smaller-scale retail that primarily serves the existing office market to the north of the planning area and the neighborhoods as they develop. The panel cautions that developing a major shopping destination anchored by a high-end department store is highly unlikely and would require a substantial incentive package. To the extent that lifestyle retail is expanded in downtown, the best location is near the current retail area of Bricktown.

Development and Land Use Strategies

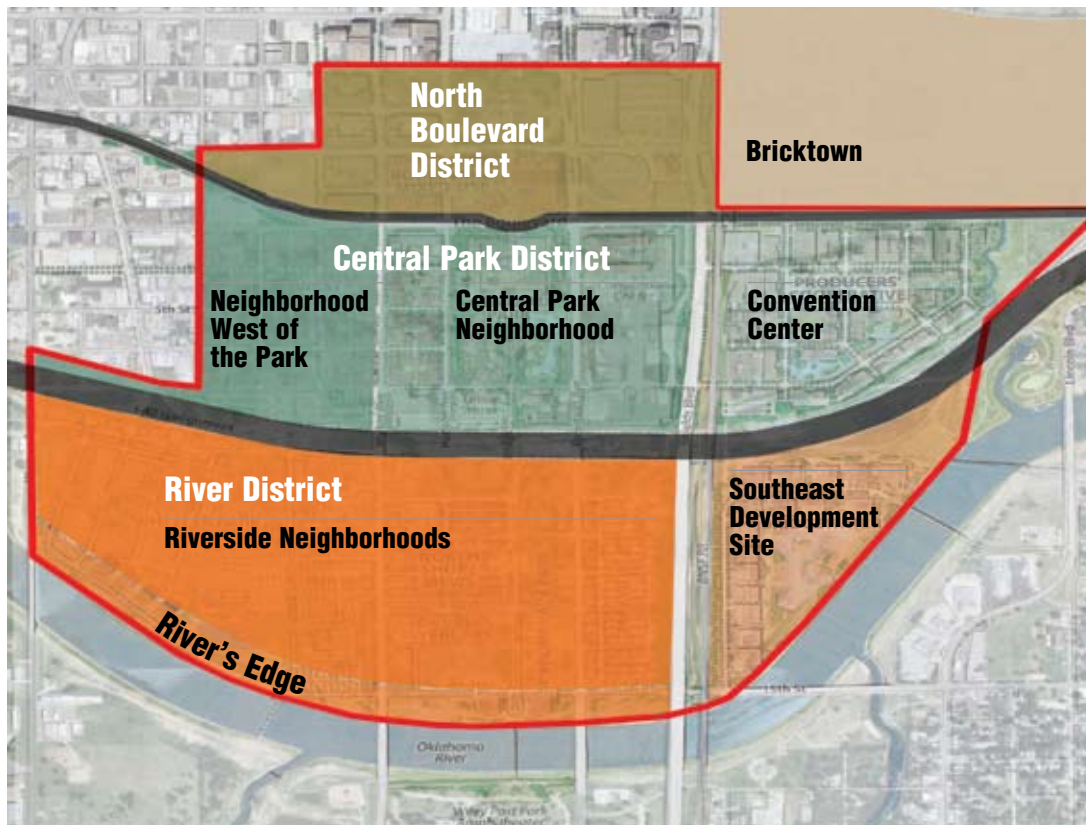
Development and land use strategies for the Core to Shore planning area are sorted into the three districts identified by the panel: the North Boulevard District and Bricktown, the Central Park District, and the River District. Each district is a cohesive development area on its own, while also supporting the larger Core to Shore vision (figure 4).

North Boulevard District

The North Boulevard District is appropriate for the second full-service hotel called for in the convention center hotel strategy, as well as specialty retail and restaurants. The recommended location for

the hotel, a corporate/leisure hotel, is on the north side of the Boulevard across from the Ford Center. The hotel site could also include some retail and sidewalk cafés, which would help activate the pedestrian environments along the Boulevard and across from the Ford Center, while supporting the convention center.

West of the full-service hotel is an appropriate place for specialty retail and restaurants that serve workers, visitors, and hotel users, as well as the residents in the Central Park District neighborhoods. Smaller blocks, instead of a super block, are recommended. The specialty retail and restaurants, however, will be dependent upon the attraction of residential devel-



Recommended planning areas and neighborhoods.

opment to the Central Park District, with additional patronage coming from the convention center hotels.

Bricktown should be included in the consideration of land uses north of the new Boulevard. The strategy is to build on Bricktown’s momentum by enhancing its energy. Bricktown provides an opportunity for two limited-service hotels to serve the convention center, Bricktown itself, and the CBD.

Residential development should be continued and entertainment and lifestyle retail, including an urban specialty grocery, should be encouraged. Retail development should be in context with the existing, brick-clad, three-story buildings rather than bigger boxes, which diminish connectivity. The continuing presence of appropriate cultural and educational uses such as the Academy of Contemporary Music also contributes to Bricktown’s vitality.

Figure 4
Summary of Recommended Land Uses for the Core to Shore Planning Area

NORTH BOULEVARD DISTRICT AND BRICKTOWN		
North Boulevard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second full-service hotel • Specialty retail • Restaurants 	Bricktown <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two limited-service hotels • Continued residential development • Entertainment and lifestyle retail • Urban-type specialty grocery • Continued cultural and educational uses 	
CENTRAL PARK DISTRICT		
Neighborhood West of the Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blended mix of townhomes, apartments, and condominiums • Neighborhood grocery • Neighborhood retail 	Central Park Neighborhood <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convention center headquarters hotel • Higher-density residential • Boutique hotels • Neighborhood retail • Parking for convention center and park 	Convention Center Area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convention center • Associated uses
RIVER DISTRICT		
Riverside Neighborhoods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two or three complete neighborhoods • Blended mix of townhomes, apartments, condominiums, and single-family houses • Cultural, educational, historic, and nonprofit uses • Specialty and neighborhood retail 		Southeast Development Site <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water-oriented recreation or entertainment • Possible corporate campus
River’s Edge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher-density residential • Retail and entertainment uses such as restaurants and small boutiques 		

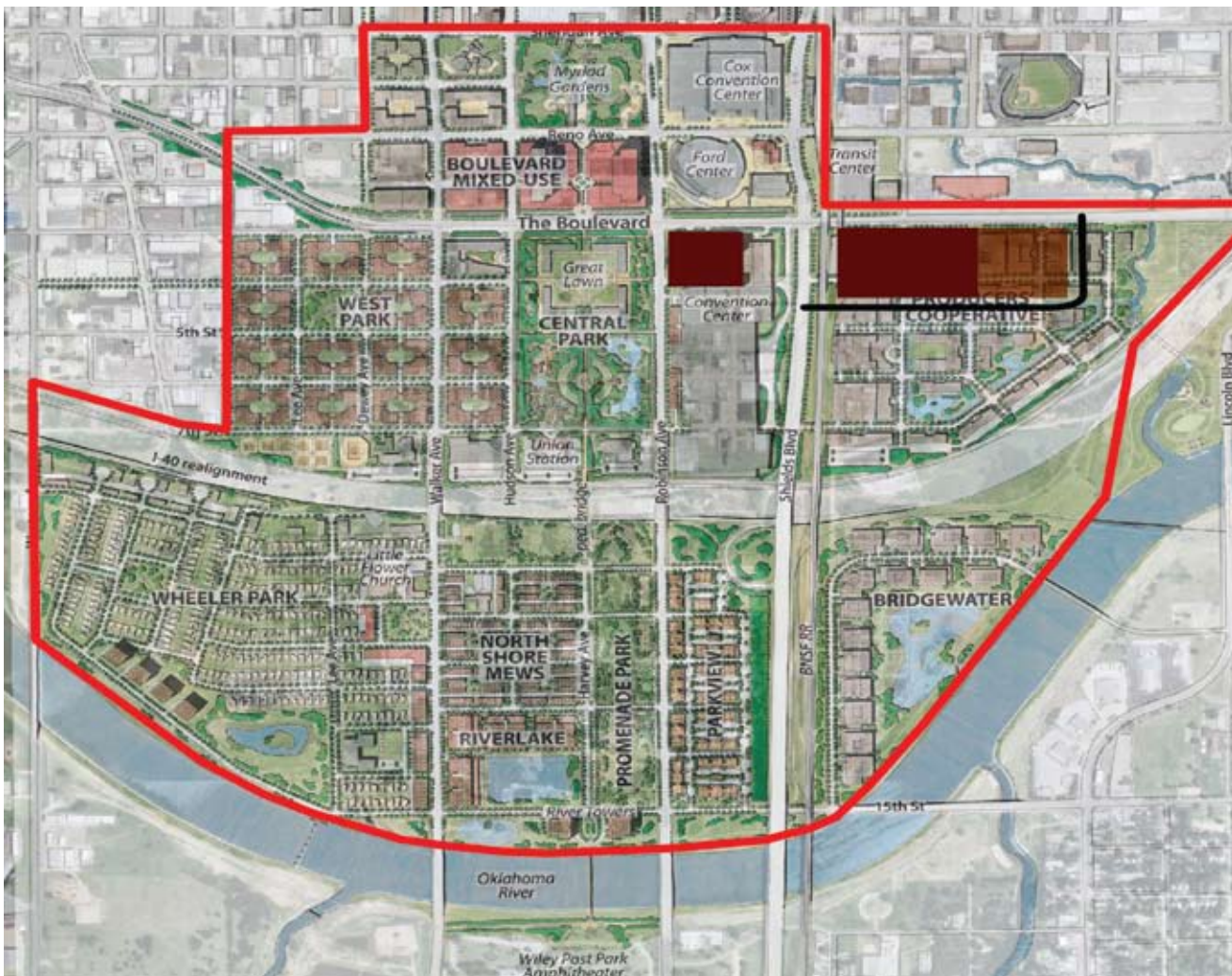
Central Park District

The Central Park District, encompassing the area between the Boulevard and the relocated I-40, is the focus for immediate and near-term public improvements designed to activate the entire Core to Shore Plan. The Central Park will be Oklahoma City's great public common and civic gathering space, making it the premier park not only for the planning area but also for the entire metropolitan region. The convention center is part of downtown's economic development strategy. The Central Park, the convention center, and the private development associated with both spaces are of critical importance to the success of the Core

to Shore Plan, as recognized in one of the panel's high-priority questions: "What should the land uses be along the east and west sides of the park?"

Convention Center

The location of the convention center has been a controversial issue; when weighing the pros and cons of the proposed location, persons of good conscience will differ in their conclusions. Guided by experience, the panel worked with the information gathered from the city and the interview process. Recognizing that more study undoubtedly needs to be done, the panel raises concerns about the planned location for the new convention center and recommends consideration of different sites.



Recommended locations for the convention center and the convention center hotel.

The Core to Shore Plan currently locates the convention center immediately east of the Central Park. Physically, this site works; however, from an aesthetic and development perspective, it is very troubling. The height of the convention center will be 60 to 70 feet. Using this location will create a massive wall right against the city's premier park. Recognizing this hazard, the Core to Shore Plan proposes to wrap the west side of the convention center with housing. This is a creative solution, but the panel fears it will not be possible to develop this unusual mixed-use product. Just as important, locating the convention center east of the park would consume one of the most attractive sites for private development.

The convention center is a key component in the plan to activate the Core to Shore planning area and, indeed, for the economic development of the entire downtown. Thus, the panel looked for an alternative

site that would accomplish the Core to Shore planning objectives without interfering with the Central Park.

For the new convention center, the panel recommends the site currently occupied by the lumber yard, on the southeast corner of Shields Boulevard and the Boulevard. A convention center at this site will provide an anchor to Bricktown and establish a presence on the new Boulevard. This site has other benefits as well:

- Good access and visibility,
- Good access to Bricktown, with no barriers to this zone,
- A prime location facing the Boulevard,
- Separation from open-space corridors so as not to create a visible barrier to other areas in the plan, and
- Easier assembly of land.

Oklahoma City's existing downtown convention center.



A parking garage to support the convention center and other uses, including the Central Park, would be appropriate on the west side of Shields Boulevard.

Headquarters Hotel Site

The headquarters hotel does not have to be physically connected to the convention center, but proximate walking distance is essential. The site shown in the Core to Shore Plan, along the Boulevard across from the Ford Center and adjacent to the Central Park, is ideal to serve a convention center on the lumber yard site. For this site to work, however, requires an attractive railroad underpass to draw conventioners along the Boulevard. The current site is also larger than needed: the head-

quarters hotel will require a site of 80,000 to 100,000 square feet, one-half to one-quarter the size of the site shown in the Core to Shore Plan.

Central Park Neighborhood

The Central Park neighborhood is made up of the Central Park and the immediately adjacent land along its east and west sides. Land uses facing the park should be primarily higher-density residential (40 to 50 units per acre). Along the east side of the park and just south of the headquarters hotel will be attractive sites for boutique hotels and neighborhood retail. Near the realigned I-40 and Union Station is a good location for short-term and shared parking for events in the Central Park.

A railroad underpass converted into a welcoming gateway.



Neighborhood West of the Park

A second residential neighborhood should be developed west of the Central Park. Rather than one type of residential use, density, and style, as indicated in the Core to Shore Plan, neighborhood vibrancy will be enhanced with a blended mix of townhomes, apartments, and condominiums, averaging 30 to 40 units per acre. A range of sale prices and rental rates should be considered. While remaining committed to quality planning and design, this neighborhood should attract residential products that are more market-driven.

In addition, a neighborhood grocery and other neighborhood retail would enhance the viability of this neighborhood for urban living. A retail location along I-40, accessible from the south by Walker Avenue, would provide a visual and sound buffer for I-40, while also serving the residences in the River District. Until the neighborhoods in the River District are more fully developed the grocery may need subsidies, but a grocery is important in attracting developers and residents.

River District

The River District contains the area between the relocated I-40 and the Oklahoma River. Although most development in this district will probably occur in the later decades of plan implementation, it is important to initiate some development in the near term to create the feeling of forward momentum and to attract market creativity. Of course, forecasting the marketplace decades in advance is problematic, so flexibility is also encouraged.

Riverside Neighborhoods: West of the Railroad to Wheeler Park

The Core to Shore Plan calls for a variety of residential uses west of Shields Boulevard. The panel sees the potential for two or three complete residential neighborhoods in this area. For residential uses to function as neighborhoods, they need a blended mix of townhomes, apartments, condominiums, and single-family houses with a range of sale prices and rental rates. Residential densities supported by the market will be a little lower than in other districts, averaging 10 to 15 units per acre.

The Riverside neighborhoods will be well served by being oriented around cultural, educational, and historic nonprofit organizations or open spaces. For example, the Little Flower Church, which is adjacent to a plaza with neighborhood retail, and a nearby school seem like amenities that could anchor a vibrant neighborhood. The Promenade Park and a repurposed Hubcap Alley retail area are also potential neighborhood anchors. The section on planning and design discusses opportunities to incorporate the unique features of the existing Riverside neighborhoods and Hubcap Alley.

Southeast Development Site

The eventual use of the southeast development site will depend on future market forces. The site may be attractive for a corporate campus, or it may support water-oriented recreation or entertainment destination uses that do not compete with Bricktown, such as rented paddle boats or kayaks, as well as public boat ramps.

River's Edge

The land immediately along the Oklahoma River is a special place that will tie together the entire River District and be a destination for residents and visitors. Residential densities should rise (40 to 50 units per acre for apartments and condominiums) and pricing should vary. The area could also support retail and entertainment uses such as restaurants and small boutiques, with users accessing them by walking and biking trails as well as by automobile.

Planning and Design

Because the Core to Shore Plan covers such a large area and a long time frame, additional, more detailed planning and design activities will be needed if the city is to take advantage of the special opportunities in the districts within the planning area. This section describes frameworks for open space, connectivity, and arts, education, and culture; it highlights specific recommendations for neighborhoods, the Boulevard, and the Oklahoma River.

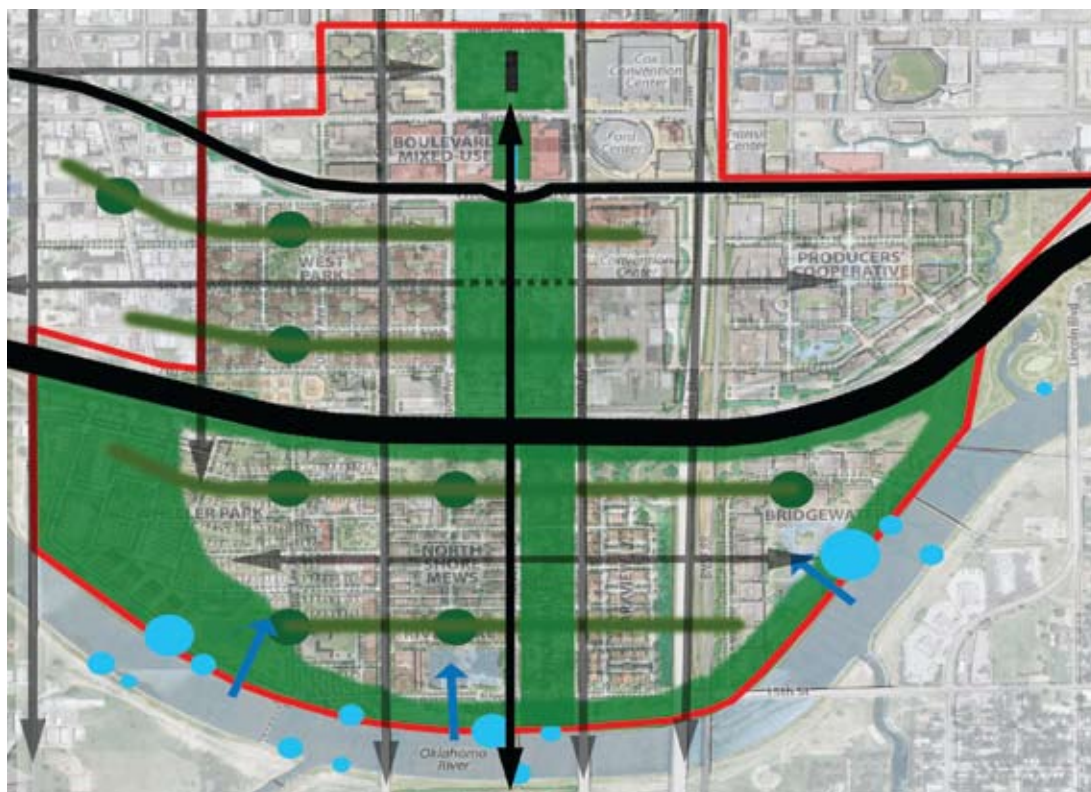
Open-Space and Urban Design Frameworks

The success of the Core to Shore Plan results from the interplay of “big moves” such as the Central Park and the Harvey Spine, the creation of meaningful places

within neighborhoods, and the links connecting the local and regional spaces. Open-space and urban design techniques are tools to bring these pieces together.

The Bold Vision: the Harvey Spine

A key principle in the Core to Shore Plan is to provide better connections—conceptually, physically, and visually—from downtown to the river. The relocated I-40 and the new Boulevard, if built at widths of more than 200 feet as indicated in the plan, will be significant obstacles to following this principle. In contrast, the Harvey Spine—the central north-south axis—represents the bold vision of this connection. The Core to Shore Plan successfully communicates the strength of this primary north-south axis as it moves through parks, crosses highways and major streets, and organizes development. To support the



Open-space framework.

plan's bold vision for a north-south axis, the panel recommends the following:

- *Reinforce the Harvey Spine from Devon Tower to the Oklahoma River.* The panel recommends that the Harvey Spine start at the Devon Tower site; pedestrian connections north of the Boulevard linking to Myriad Gardens should be ensured. South of I-40, this axis should be reinforced, creatively and repeatedly, to create new landmarks as the River District neighborhoods develop.
- *Locate east-west transmission lines underground to protect the visual connection.* OG&E anticipates installing two new transmission lines by 2014: one north-south line west of Walker Avenue and one east-west line in the vicinity of the new I-40. To locate these lines underground could cost approximately \$40 million. At a minimum, the city should consider locating the east-west lines below grade, preserving views along the Harvey Spine. The costs to install this line could be reduced if the city and OG&E work together and if OG&E absorbs some of the cost of the relocation into the service rate structure. The city and OG&E should work together to identify the best solution for the community to fund burying the east-west transmission line.

Meaningful and Memorable Places

Great cities are memorable because of the neighborhoods that compose them. Memorable neighborhoods contain a unique and creative use of open space, transportation, and development, organized by bold urban design elements. Open space is made up of a hierarchy and network of streets, parks, trails, and waterways. The Core to Shore area should contain a full range of streetscapes, parks, and waterways. The organization and character of all these elements form landmarks and shape mental maps.

Streetscapes should be hierarchical and relate to land uses and building scale. The consistency of streetscapes contributes to the character of a place, while allowing for public art and distinctive architecture within neighborhoods. Comfortable streetscapes are wide enough for walking and other needed purposes, including biking and sitting, but narrow enough to cross easily, especially in energetic and dynamic pedestrian areas like shopping districts.

Park spaces should also be connected by a hierarchical network of regional, community, neighborhood, and pocket parks. The larger the park and the wider the range of users, the more programming becomes required.

The Oklahoma River has become a major regional attraction; its potential will grow with the implementation of the Core to Shore Plan.





Waterways are unique places that are highly attractive and desirable destinations. Because of this, waterways become natural areas in which to locate residential neighborhoods and recreational and entertainment land uses.

To make meaningful and memorable places in the Core to Shore planning area, the panel recommends the following:

- *Adapt to the impact of I-40.* With the eastbound lanes of the new I-40 located only 6 to 7 feet below grade and the westbound lanes only 3 to 4 feet below grade, a barrier will exist between downtown and the neighborhoods south of I-40. It will be necessary to consider providing some type of visual or sound protection from I-40, and in some cases it may be advisable to give up some developable land for berms that provide sound and visual barriers rather than build extensive sound walls along the roadway. Although I-40 will be a barrier to north-south connections, it also provides an opportunity for a grade-separated open-space system, including an east-west trail running along the south side of the highway. Architectural culverts or pedestrian access points beneath the bridges that cross I-40 could be connected to open-space trails that run along the periphery of the River District. In addition to reinforcing east-west connectivity, the trail would also establish a buffer south of I-40.

- *Prepare neighborhood plans in open-space frameworks.* The Core to Shore Plan considers the components of open space, but more detailed planning is needed to define the purpose of each component in the context of the proposed neighborhoods. This planning will give each neighborhood meaning and help to create authenticity and uniqueness for the neighborhoods and the city. In addition, the open-space framework typically directs drainage; other sustainability principles should be integrated into the framework and neighborhood plans to minimize harm to people and the environment.
- *Prepare a streetscape master plan.* The Core to Shore Plan presents principles for street design; the next step is to complete a streetscape master plan for the area that establishes streetscape types, applied to a hierarchical network. Streetscape types to be considered include riverfront, parkways, boulevards, arterials, local streets, and public alleys. The streetscape master plan should be coordinated with the circulation master plan recommended in the next section. This effort should start with identifying each street type within the hierarchical street network.
- *Direct design quality through new policies.* Once the more detailed neighborhood or framework plans are developed, steps should be taken to guide the quality of urban design. Design standards and guidelines should include statements of

Myriad Gardens will be incorporated into the Core to Shore planning area's open-space system.

intent that establish the goals; standards described in enough detail so that they can be achieved without separate review and approval; and guidelines for the reviewing authority that address instances where standards cannot be met.

To administer design quality, the Core to Shore area is currently divided into two design review areas, Downtown and the River. Design review can benefit developers by clarifying the approval process, articulating issues to be resolved throughout the process, and ensuring subsequent development will also follow high-quality design practices.

Connectivity Frameworks

Fostering new development and additional redevelopment requires good connectivity between different parts of the city and major destinations. Connectivity means more than just driving from place to place. Walking, cycling, and riding transit all play important roles in meeting people's travel needs, which also vary depending on whether a person is commuting to work, going to lunch, taking in a ballgame, or looking for outdoor recreation.

Recent studies, including the Core to Shore Plan's transportation element and the Project 180 Streetscape and Street Improvement Plan, describe various means of accommodating vehicles, pedestrians, and bikes. Although they offer much useful guidance, they do not resolve issues about the size of the Boulevard, the location of streetcar routes, and the access needs of land use and development plans. In short, there is a need to coordinate the many projects.

New Tools to Coordinate Plans and Projects

Given the profound transportation changes—the relocated I-40, the new Boulevard, and the streetcar project—occurring in and around downtown, it is vital that Oklahoma City use the best technology available in order to be able to make the most informed decisions regarding connectivity and circulation. Older, regional traffic models that were used for previous analyses, including the I-40 relocation studies, are being replaced by a newer model that is more sensitive to local transportation needs. A new, regional, multimodal model that is under development will provide an excellent basis for fine-tuning

a model specific to downtown and its environs and should be used to test transportation and development scenarios.

Expectations for the streetcar project funded by MAPS 3 should be kept in perspective. Travel demand modeling will be especially important for decisions about the streetcar project. Although streetcars elsewhere have created a positive image for neighborhoods, their part in spurring development is less clear. Streetcars tend to be one of many factors that support development. In light of transit's limited role in the city now and the less-than-conducive conditions for greater transit use, transit planning is essential. The streetcar's purpose, routing, and costs deserve careful consideration. The panel is concerned that the community may be moving too aggressively too soon to implement the streetcar.

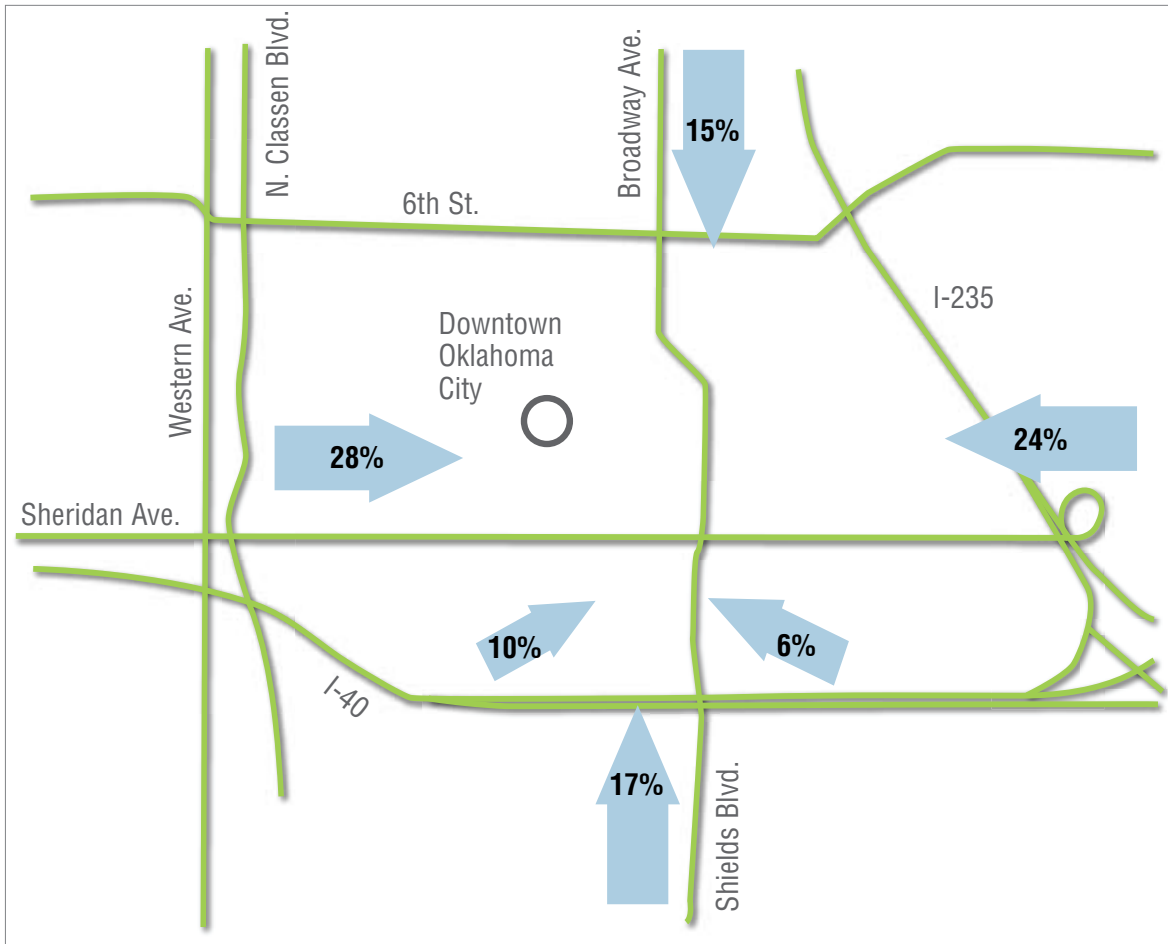
The panel recommends that a downtown access and circulation master plan be produced using a travel demand model specially tailored to the downtown area. The purpose of the master plan is to coordinate the function, capacity, and design of all transportation facilities and services.

The upcoming alternatives analysis for the streetcar should be coordinated with the downtown access and circulation master plan. The alternative analysis will compare ridership estimates for different routes; other factors that should be considered include how easily riders understand the route and the total cost per rider for each alternative. These factors will provide a better understanding of the best value for the MAPS 3 investment.

Guidelines for a Connectivity Framework

The transportation element of the Core to Shore Plan and any subsequent planning for the Core to Shore area should consider principles and guidelines for increasing connectivity both within the planning area and between districts in the larger downtown area.

For the street network, the panel recommends creating continuity of circulation, which requires maintaining and reclaiming the existing street grid wherever possible and identifying a hierarchy of streets to meet the needs of local and through traffic. Special exceptions to the hierarchical function may occur when accessing major destinations such as the convention center or the Central Park. Two-way streets are best in most



Estimated traffic distribution into downtown.

situations: they are easier for drivers to understand and more direct, reducing recirculation.

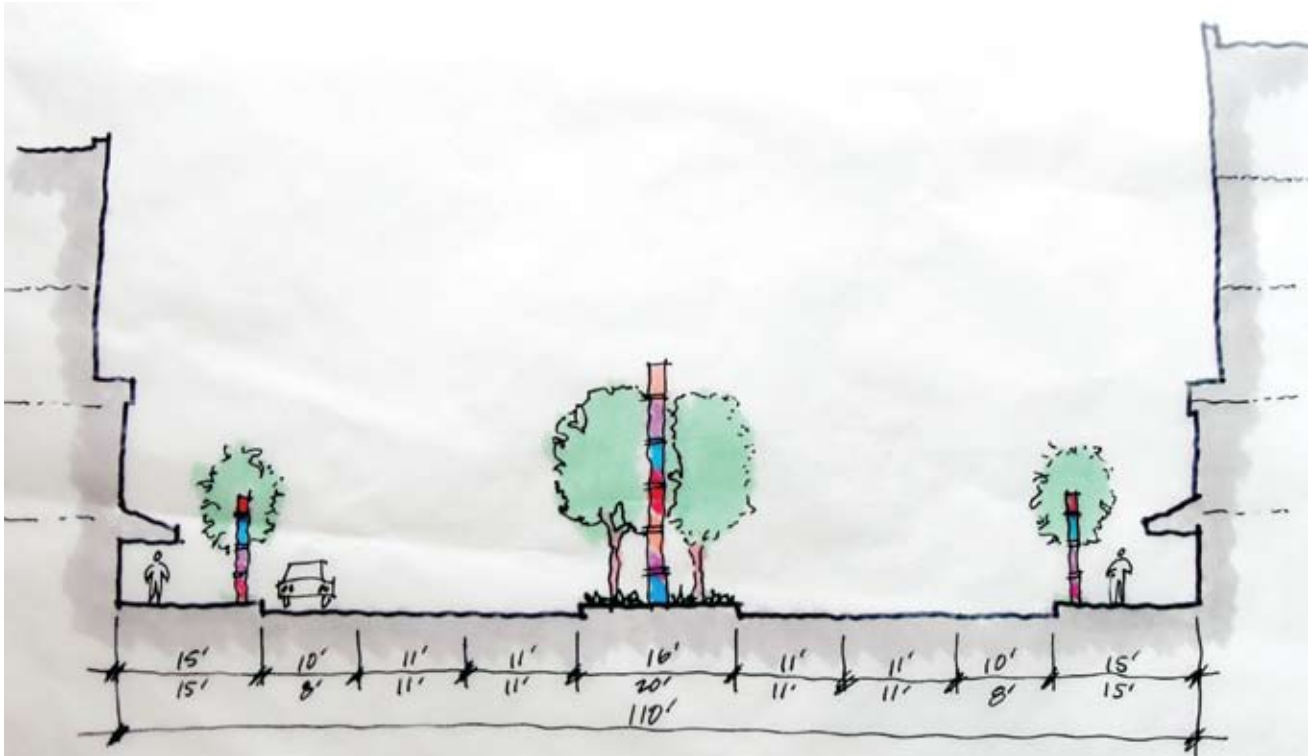
For pedestrian and bicycle networks, walkways or bicycle paths at grade should be developed wherever possible. When grade-separated walkways or bicycle paths are required in order to cross barriers, the crossings should be obvious, attractive, well lit, and convenient. Bicycle lanes can be incorporated on many low- and moderate-volume streets, as either shared or dedicated lanes. Bicycle paths in a continuous trail system can link districts together and enable bicycle traffic to avoid high-volume and high-speed streets.

Two major types of transit trips should be considered for the downtown district including the Core to Shore Planning area: commuting opportunities, including potential park and ride locations, and mid-day circulation needs within downtown and between major activity centers. Determining the potential for

transit service to support special events and tourist services is an additional consideration when planning and evaluating transit routes and services.

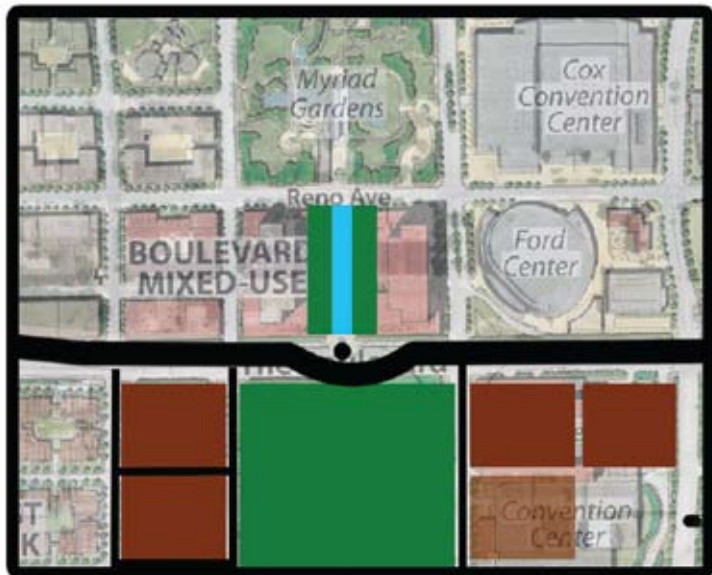
For major destinations such as the convention center, the Central Park, or the Oklahoma River boathouses, arrival and departure routes must be identified for all modes of transportation. Pedestrian and bicycle routes should be safe, convenient, and reliable. Routes and access for service vehicles are also important. Trucks should have ready access from regional highways, and their routes should avoid conflicts with primary pedestrian routes.

The relocated I-40 deserves special attention because of its potential to disrupt vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic. The more connectivity and access between the downtown and the river, the less of a barrier the highway will become. Many medium-sized cities in the nation, including Indianapolis, Denver,



The Boulevard: a great street at 110 feet.

A curve in the Boulevard creates the opportunity for a dramatic visual feature at the Central Park, while also drawing attention to the park.



and Dallas, have connected 80 to 90 percent of their streets across below-grade interstate highways.

The approximately quarter-mile spacing of arterials across the relocated I-40 is reasonable for vehicular traffic. For pedestrians and bicyclists, the panel recommends maximizing connections across the highway through pedestrian bridges and additional local-vehicle bridges where possible. At a minimum, the panel recommends an additional pedestrian crossing west of Walker Avenue, especially given the residential and park uses planned in this area for both sides of I-40.

The Boulevard as a Great Street

The panel strongly recommends that the new Boulevard, which replaces the elevated I-40, should be an exemplary arterial street—a great street. It should not, however, be an overly wide street. The appropriate design for the Boulevard should reflect its role in providing downtown access and the needs of adjacent land uses. The Boulevard should be the best of downtown’s many entryways.

Design of the 110-Foot Boulevard

The Boulevard should be a high-quality, landscaped, arterial street fitting within a maximum 110-foot right-of-way. The scale of the Boulevard is vital both to the success of development along the street and to the integration of the downtown area with new development to the south. In short, the scale is vital to the success of the Core to Shore Plan.

The new Boulevard would join some of the most memorable streets in the world, which succeed as great streets without great widths:

- The Ramblas in Barcelona, Spain: between 93 and 106 feet
- Castro Street in Mountain View, California: 80 feet
- Royal Palm Way in Palm Beach, Florida: 95 feet
- Regent Street in London, England: 83 feet

- Boulevard Saint-Michel in Paris, France: 98 feet

A beautiful and properly sized Boulevard would establish a new appearance for downtown, fully serve new land uses, and help restore the vitality of this and other important arterials connecting to downtown.

The recommended width of the Boulevard fits within the existing right-of-way. At no more than 110 feet, it would be less than half the width proposed in the Core to Shore Plan. The narrower Boulevard leaves surplus land, rather than requiring significant land acquisition.

In addition, the panel recommends consideration of the following suggestions for the Boulevard:

- *Build on Project 180.* Project 180's streetscape plans include excellent guidelines for creating a series of downtown boulevards with planted medians. The Boulevard should be a special case among Project



An example of a landscaped boulevard in downtown Oklahoma City.

180's arterials, establishing an appearance and character that can be emulated on other important arterials connecting downtown and adjacent districts. It is also a wonderful candidate for a design competition to elicit a wide range of creative ideas for turning the Boulevard into the desired memorable street.

- *Connect congestion and vitality.* Located adjacent to or near major destinations in the Core to Shore area, Bricktown, and downtown, the Boulevard should not be designed to prevent all congestion. Some on-street parking in a parking lane will be appropriate. Congestion in urban areas signals vitality and slows traffic, providing a safer environment during peak use by pedestrians and vehicles.
- *Be good for pedestrians.* Great streets are created by accommodating the needs of all users, especially pedestrians. The panel recommends that the Boulevard have slow traffic speeds, under 30 miles per hour. Pedestrians should travel along the Boulevard on wide sidewalks separated from travel lanes by either a parking lane or landscaping. They should cross the Boulevard at street intersections and at mid-block crossings where land uses support additional connectivity. A median refuge should be provided, so that pedestrians are not forced to cross more than two or three travel lanes at one time.
- *Create a dramatic visual feature on axis with the Central Park.* One way to distinguish the Boulevard, while reinforcing the north-south connections and the Harvey Spine, is to curve the Boulevard when it crosses the Harvey Spine. At the intersection of the primary north-south axis and the primary east-west axis, a dramatic feature such as a fountain, sculpture, or monument, visible from the Boulevard from both the east and west, would reinforce awareness of the park spine. Travelers along the curve in the Boulevard would also have views into the Central Park.
- *Consider extending the Boulevard to Pennsylvania Avenue.* Instead of an expressway spur that begins its descent into the Boulevard at Western Avenue, the panel notes that the Boulevard could be rebuilt as an at-grade arterial street as far west as Pennsylvania Avenue, where it would reconnect with I-40. This would have several benefits. It would allow property now used for ramps between Virginia Avenue and Western Avenue to be reclaimed for other

uses. A new transition between the surface arterial and local streets in the vicinity of Western Avenue and Classen Boulevard would allow traffic to choose among the Boulevard, Reno Avenue, and Sheridan Avenue for trips to and from downtown. And for downtown, extending the length of the at-grade section of the Boulevard would reinforce its arterial function, instead of having to quickly transition from the highway function represented by the I-40 spur. This benefit would also encourage traffic to choose among the Boulevard, Reno, Sheridan, and other parallel streets to move through downtown, better balancing demand and capacity. Finally, this extension would create greater arterial continuity and increase redevelopment possibilities along the extended Boulevard and the associated streets.

The Oklahoma River: The Focus for the Future

The Oklahoma River is a significant destination not only for the Core to Shore Plan but also for the entire metropolitan region. To generate the river's economic development potential, it needs to be an active place used by multiple groups throughout the year. Special planning and design approaches are required.

As activity along the river increases, demand for development will also increase, filling in the neighborhoods between the river and the new I-40. The key risk to maximizing the potential of the river is to attempt to stimulate activity by accepting densities that are too low in the early development stages.

The panel recommends two strategies to support the river's economic development potential:

- *Integrate the Core to Shore Plan into the Strategic Action and Development Plan for the Oklahoma River.* To guide development and design decisions, the city, the Riverfront Authority, and other associated agencies should consider working together to update the Strategic Action and Development Plan for the Oklahoma River. They should prepare a riverfront master plan that encompasses both banks for the length of the river that interacts with the Core to Shore Plan. The master plan should set the broad vision; it could include design standards and guidelines, and land development regulations to organize the urban form framework for desired

View into downtown Oklahoma City from Myriad Gardens and Cox Convention Center.



development. A design competition also could be included in the master-planning process.

- *Expand river attractions.* As recognized in the Strategic Action and Development Plan for the Oklahoma River, locating significant cultural, recreational, and entertainment uses along the river will attract more people to the riverfront. The boathouses and Olympic training site establish an athletic theme, and the American Indian Cultural Center and Museum, currently under construction, establishes a cultural theme. These themes can be built upon and expanded and new, compatible themes can be added. Possible uses suggested during the panel's interviews included a kayak course, an aquatic center, a regional riverfront park, a Girl Scouts camp, a marina, and medium- to high-density housing.

Neighborhoods

The Core to Shore area will accommodate four to six residential neighborhoods. These neighborhoods will be one of the defining features of a successful plan, bringing 24-hour activity to the area and providing additional demand for the area's retail and entertainment uses. The neighborhoods will develop at different stages and paces over the long-term development time frame of the Core to Shore Plan, requiring flexibility as

demographic and market conditions evolve. Allowing for this flexibility while creating the conditions that support high-quality development is essential.

Principles for Neighborhood Planning and Design

Planning for the residential neighborhoods will continue throughout the life of the Core to Shore Plan. Each neighborhood should strive for a unique identity, based on some common principles:

- *Create neighborhoods with interconnected meaningful places.* Neighborhoods should be organized around meaningful destinations such as parks, shops, civic or cultural buildings, or other places where residents can come together. Each neighborhood needs such places; they communicate the reason for the neighborhood's organization and create a hierarchy of interconnections. These places can include uses that attract people from surrounding neighborhoods and communities. Meaningful places should also create authentic character that make the neighborhood memorable and a landmark in the broader community. Although the physical place is important—the place creates the opportunity for people to gather—it is the place's uses, events, and programs that bring people together.

- *Provide housing for a full range of economic groups.* Recent residential development downtown has targeted the higher end of the housing market. As the Core to Shore neighborhoods develop, it will be important to accommodate and integrate a complete range of housing products for all economic groups. The development of diverse, vibrant neighborhoods requires that each neighborhood evolve to include its own range of economic groups and housing products. This kind of evolution will also reduce impacts on roads by allowing economic groups that provide services downtown to live in neighborhoods near where they work.
- *Leverage open space to allow for mixed-income neighborhoods.* One way to provide a range of market-rate housing is to use urban design and open-space planning to organize housing products. Housing that has easier access to open spaces, parks, waterfronts, or other amenities will command higher relative premiums, with units that have views and easy access receiving the highest premiums. Housing products targeted to different economic groups can be located near each other. Neighborhood planning, open-space development, and housing policies should be coordinated to create inclusive neighborhoods in the Core to Shore area.
- *Consider using architectural history to create distinct, meaningful neighborhoods.* The cultural history of the Core to Shore area, including Hubcap Alley and the Little Flower Church, could enhance the creation of meaningful places in the neighborhoods. A historically based set of architectural guidelines or a pattern book is one tool for incorporating cultural history into neighborhoods. Although the market will also guide the style of development, recent residential development north of I-40 already suggests an appreciation for Oklahoma City's architectural history. Architectural guidelines can address a range of criteria, including building orientation, spatial arrangement, materials, colors, and methods; they can also be coordinated with land development regulations for overlay districts, if required.

Neighborhoods in the River District

In the residential neighborhoods in the River District, south of the relocated I-40, additional neighborhood-level planning will be required in order to select and develop the interconnected meaningful places that

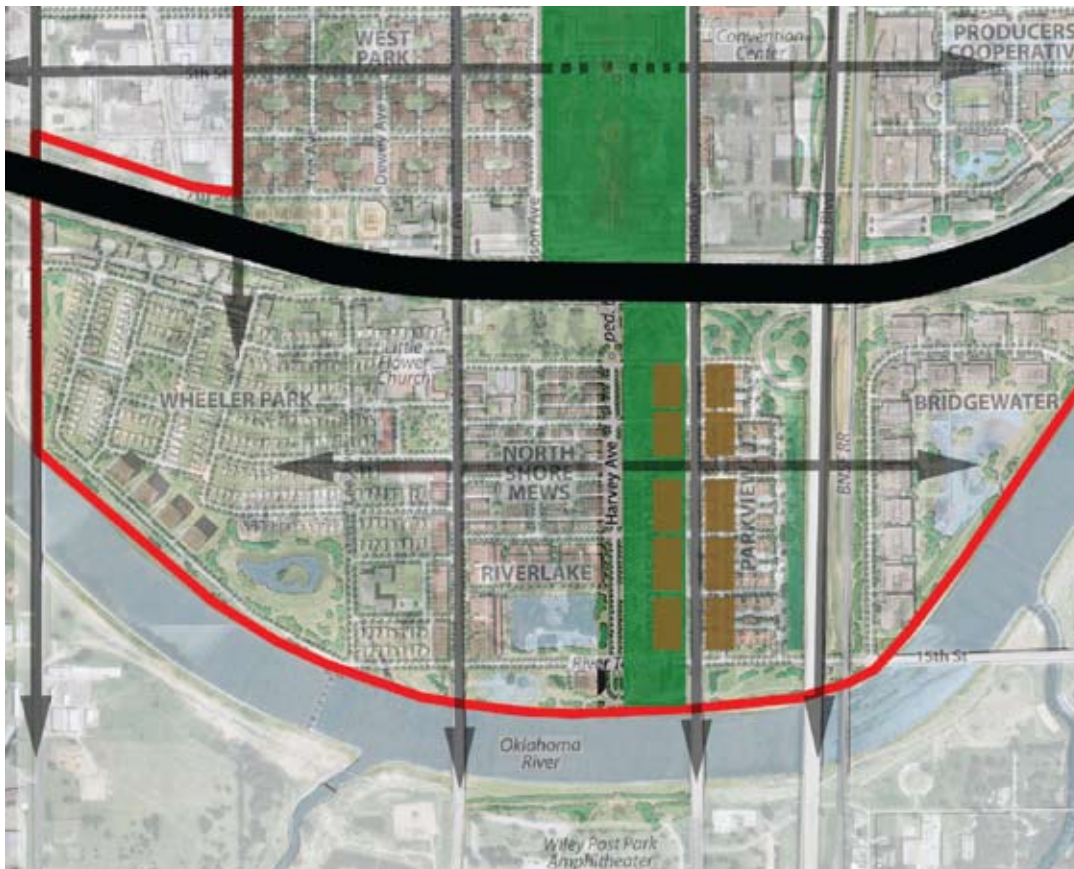
will make them attractive and memorable landmark neighborhoods. The panel recommends considering the following strategies while conducting the neighborhood-level planning:

- *Consider using water to organize the River District neighborhoods.* Recognizing the importance of the river as an economic development magnet, the current Core to Shore Plan includes introducing water directly from the river into the River District neighborhoods. This should be encouraged and could even be expanded. Water could be extended further into the neighborhoods, serving as an organizing element for development. Water could even surround the entire district in a canal stretching along I-40, connecting to the river on both sides and encircling the River District. These water concepts require more analysis to determine their compatibility with neighborhood planning and available funding.
- *Build on historic architectural styles.* Around the country, investors and homeowners are looking for unique places to build and live. There are numerous examples of older neighborhoods that have been redeveloped as successful communities using their historic nature as the central organizing feature, while remaining affordable places to raise a family, work, and play. The extant housing in the River District, especially in the Riverside neighborhood, includes examples of smaller single-family homes, often bungalow styles, that can provide the Core to Shore with a focused, interesting architectural district of historically preserved houses and new home construction. Creating this district will require identifying a few well-preserved units that can act as the catalyst for the community character. Using these units as the model, an architectural pattern book can be created that the district's administrators can use to encourage new houses that emulate the look of the older units. A pattern book should also aid in the planning of bungalow restoration and rehabilitation and landscape design projects. This architectural district should be coordinated with the development of specific neighborhood plans.
- *Encourage mixed-use development around Hubcap Alley.* Hubcap Alley along Robinson Avenue could become an interesting, unique neighborhood south of the I-40 realignment if it were rejuvenated with flexible development types. Using its appealing but irregular feel, this

area should be encouraged to develop small-scale retail, restaurants, and specialty shops. As the adjacent neighborhood matures, some local services and shops may be supported. By locating these uses and medium-density housing on the east side of the Promenade Park, the mixed-use development could help frame the park and offer a different character than other parks in the system. The retail area could become a day destination or a waypoint along the Promenade Park to the river. A pattern book or design guidelines should be established to help encourage the rehabilitation of existing structures and the compatibility of new development.

- *Narrow the Promenade Park to create complete neighborhoods to the east and west of the park.* At the conceptual level, the location and design of the Promenade Park reinforces the Harvey Spine. Additional neighborhood planning and more detailed park design should aim to balance community needs for open space with maintenance of a critical mass

of development for adjacent neighborhoods on both sides of the Promenade Park. The distance between Walker Avenue and Shields Boulevard is approximately 2,100 feet. This width could contain roughly seven medium-density blocks with a 300-foot centerline-to-centerline dimension. The central block could be dedicated to the Promenade Park, leaving three blocks each to the west and to the east. Those blocks would create a critical mass on each side of the park; the park's open space would attract a range of housing units, at various price points, to the blocks east and west of the park. Additional study should focus on the most compatible block pattern that integrates the park and the existing street grid, while still producing two to three blocks for residential neighborhoods. The Promenade Park could also be conceptualized as a large parkway, with one-way traffic along each side and a 100- to 150-foot park in the middle. Again, this concept would require analysis to determine its compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods.



Narrowing Promenade Park will allow for a complete neighborhood to the east of the park.

Education, Arts, and Culture

For the Core to Shore neighborhoods to become complete communities, they will need to include facilities for education, arts, and culture. Those facilities and programs can be part of a strategy to attract private sector development to the area.

Residential development is a key to the Core to Shore Plan's vision for urban vitality. As such, quality educational opportunities, especially for young families, will be a major hurdle. Many center-city school districts have improved educational opportunities in their core areas by implementing specialized programs (often as magnet schools) that draw from a broad area. The success of Classen High School as an arts magnet school is an example of this strategy. That success suggests the potential for a second such school located in or near the downtown emerging arts district, in convenient proximity to serve Core to Shore neighborhoods.

Magnet schools (public or charter) can also be implemented at lower grade levels. For example, Tampa offers K-5 education for children of downtown workers, offering lower teacher-student ratios and accelerated curricula (such as conversational Spanish) with "before and after" school care. The downtown magnet school concept offers advantages to parents, employers, and school districts:

- Parents like the additional time spent with their children during the daily commute.
- Employers like the reduced time parents take from the workday to check on illnesses.
- School districts like the high level of parental support and involvement.

Furthermore, the decision to locate facilities for Oklahoma City University's School of Law and the University of Central Oklahoma's Academy of Contemporary Music at the northern edges of the Core to Shore area suggests an opportunity to enhance their connection with the downtown through related programming and support. This could include the presence of students energizing the streets while enjoying Myriad Gardens and the Central Park. In addition, these institutions could attract other institutions of higher learning.

The presence of arts and cultural facilities and programs can identify an area as distinct and special. Arts and cultural facilities often encourage direct investment by both tenants and residents. Downtown Oklahoma City has made a good start with the Museum of Art, Norick Library, and the Civic Center Music Hall, as well as with Myriad Gardens, Carpenter Square Theatre, the Arts Council, and the emerging Film District—all parts of the Arts District.

The annual Arts Festival is one of the most successful in the country and is one of four major events that focus on downtown. A number of arts organizations would likely welcome the opportunity to offer programming in the Central Park and other locations within the Core to Shore planning area. Even the remarkably planned American Indian Cultural Center and Museum, though slightly removed from the Core to Shore area, could establish a presence through selected special events.

Particularly in the early years, modestly scaled arts-related activities and elements, including artist housing and studios, could provide liveliness and herald bigger things to come. Street performers, public art, and high-quality design for the public realm can set a standard for the downtown area and the region as a whole.

Signs mark the downtown Oklahoma City arts district.



Implementation

Thanks to significant funding from the MAPS 3 program, the Devon tax increment financing district, and the general obligation bond program passed in 2007, Oklahoma City has a remarkable leg up on implementing the Core to Shore Plan. The dollars are in place to develop the Central Park and the convention center, two of the key organizing elements, as well as the start of a transit system and trails to provide connectivity to and through the area.

Next Steps

The panel considered the sequencing of projects, including the predevelopment phases and the potential for leveraging other projects. It recommends that the following nine projects take priority:

1. Immediate movement on development of the convention center, a convention center hotel, and related roadway improvements;
2. Development of the Boulevard;
3. Development of the Central Park;
4. Street and streetscape improvements in the Central Park District on Hudson, Robinson, and Walker avenues, including the extension of Walker Avenue improvements to as far as the Little Flower Church;
5. Residential development west of the Central Park (cleanup, utilities, streets);
6. Relocation of OG&E power lines and the switching station;



Public art along the Bricktown canal.

7. Predevelopment initiatives to prepare the river's edge for residential development;
8. A strong pedestrian connection on the Harvey Spine north of the Boulevard, linking to Myriad Gardens; and
9. Acquisition of land east of the Central Park for future residential development.

Recommended next steps to implement the Core to Shore Plan include the following:

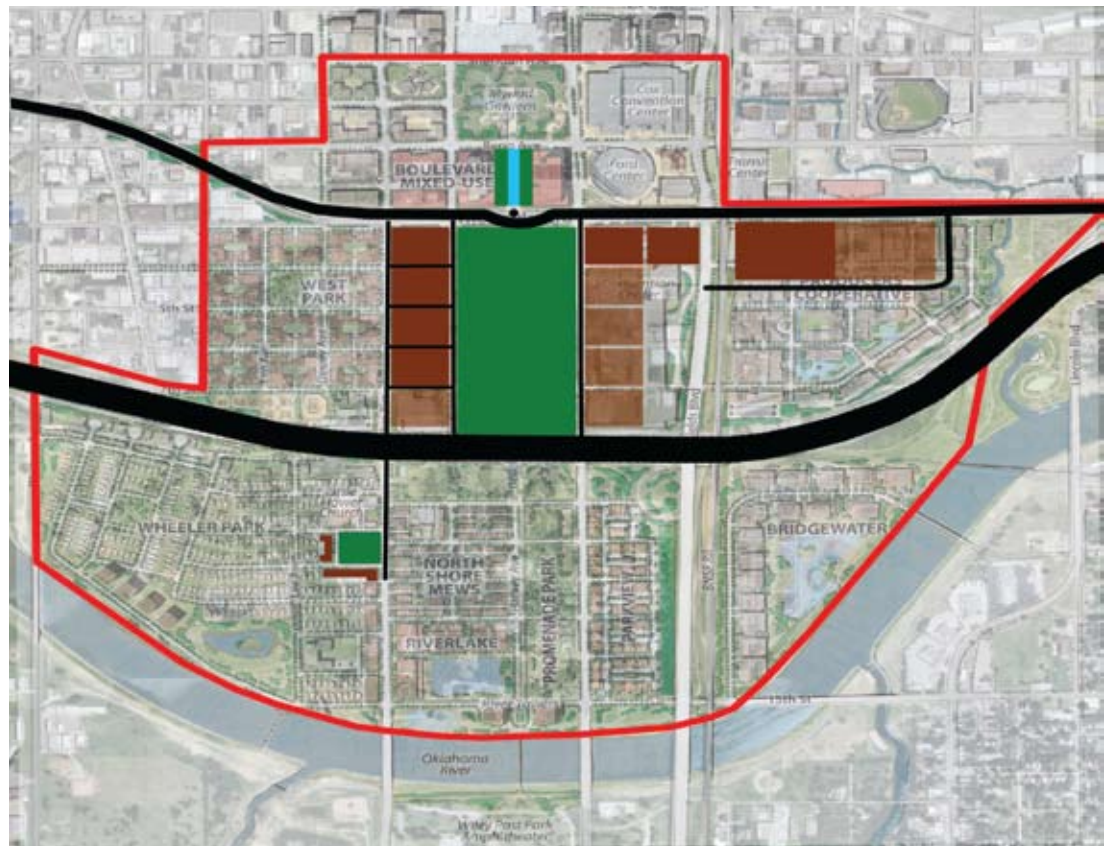
- Develop neighborhood plans, overlay zoning, design guidelines, and other regulations and incentives for targeted areas, especially for those areas fronting the Boulevard, the Central Park, and the Promenade Park but also for the other redevelopment areas, including the neighborhoods.
- Acquire land, clear blight, and remediate sites for the convention center and the Central Park.
- Secure land adjacent to the Central Park, both east and west.

- Plan OG&E utility relocations and the land transfer.
- For the parks and open-space areas, establish business plans for long-term programming, maintenance and management responsibility.

Financing

Over and above the funding already available, additional financing techniques will need to be used to facilitate public/private partnerships to serve community needs such as infrastructure to support a range of housing price points, appropriate not-for-profit facilities, and intensive management, programming, and marketing. To support the first phases of increased residential development, subsidies may be needed for infrastructure such as rebuilt and reconfigured local streets and streetscapes and a neighborhood grocery. Techniques currently available include tax credit programs such as New Market Tax Credits, additional tax increment financing districts, and special assessments (such as in business improvement districts).

Implementation: park, streetscape, and development priorities.



For the convention center hotel, it is likely that coming up with the financing will be a complex undertaking. From a strategy standpoint, the city must demand a sufficiently sized four-star hotel, with 60,000 to 70,000 square feet of meeting space. Long experience shows that too small a hotel or one with insufficient meeting space affects the performance of a convention center. The city must be unyielding as it advocates the growth of the overall room inventory. It must insist on the size and quality of the headquarters hotel. To make the first hotel successful requires incentives. A 700-room hotel will cost \$200 to \$220 million. Incentives required for a project this size have recently ranged from 20 to 30 percent of cost, or close to \$50 million.

Great stress occurs as a community debates financing for a headquarters hotel. Existing hotels forget incentives that they may have received and claim unfair competition. The hotel's developers cannot structure conventional financing. Therefore, cities have used various strategies to finance headquarters hotels:

- Appropriate incentives in the form of cash, parking, land, and infrastructure;
- Use of city debt to serve as the “bank” for the commercial loan, with the developer investing equity; and
- Ownership of the hotel by a publicly sponsored corporation.

The third approach, public ownership, puts control in the city's hands and has the absolutely lowest cost of capital. Other approaches work well as well but add complexity to the deal structure.

Plan Stewardship

The Core to Shore Plan is a long-term plan that will overlap with numerous political transitions and changes in market forces and economic conditions. Accordingly, there is a need for ongoing, focused stewardship that addresses the following:

- Communication with stakeholders, including the public at large;
- Coordination among the various public agencies;
- Convening authority; and

- Continuity from city administration to administration.

The panel recommends the creation of an institution that is specifically designed to provide this long-term continuity. Dallas and St. Louis both have useful models that could be explored. When the Dallas Arts District Master Plan was adopted in the early 1980s, the mayor appointed an Arts District coordinator, a loaned executive who acted as the mayor's representative. In St. Louis, a broad community initiative in 1999 resulted in the adoption of the Downtown Development Action Plan, with the emphasis on “action.” As a result, a new not-for-profit was formed, led by a former banker with expertise in the strategic use of tax credits. Also in St. Louis, the adoption of a master plan for the length of the 1.2-mile Gateway Mall called for the design and development of distinct sectors. Coordination of design and eventual management and programming of the Mall was assigned to a newly formed not-for-profit conservancy.

Summary of Implementation Recommendations

Using the Core to Shore Plan to transform the area from Oklahoma City's downtown to the Oklahoma River waterfront will require building on the finance tools already in place. Starting with the Central Park and using this new public amenity to attract residential development to the area will help create the momentum needed to attract the other land uses identified in the plan. In the same way, the convention center and the convention center hotel will also help bring in the people needed to make the other aspects of the plan lively and economically viable. Given the Core to Shore Plan's ambitious aims and long-term time frame, coordination between the public and private sectors is crucial for success. In many instances, formal public/private partnerships and development subsidies, especially in the early stages, will be required. A nonprofit institution set up specifically to shepherd the plan through its decades of implementation can provide both a vehicle for public/private coordination and a voice to speak for the plan's values and vision.

About the Panel

William H. Hudnut III

Panel Chair
Chevy Chase, Maryland

Former four-term mayor of Indianapolis, Congressman, author, public speaker, TV commentator, think tank fellow, and clergyman, Hudnut is a Senior Fellow Emeritus at the Urban Land Institute, a lecturer at Georgetown University, and a principal in Bill Hudnut Consultants, LLC. He is probably best known for his 16-year tenure as mayor of Indianapolis, from 1976 to 1991, during which he used sports to leverage economic growth and maintained the city's AAA bond rating. His stated goal was to build a "cooperative, compassionate, and competitive" city. He spearheaded the formation of a public/private partnership that led to the emergence of Indianapolis during the 1980s as a major American city. A past president of the National League of Cities and the Indiana Association of Cities and Towns, Hudnut helped Indianapolis record spectacular growth throughout his tenure.

Hudnut recently stepped down as mayor of Chevy Chase, Maryland, and as a member of the board of the National League of Cities. He was a member of the Millennial Housing Commission appointed by Congress in 2001–02. Before assuming his position with ULI in 1996, Hudnut held posts at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, the Hudson Institute in Indianapolis, and the Civic Federation in Chicago.

Hudnut is the author of *The Hudnut Years in Indianapolis, 1976–1991*, a case study in urban management and leadership; *Cities on the Rebound*, an analysis of clues to the successful city of the future; *Halfway to Everywhere*, a portrait of America's first-tier suburbs; and *Changing Metropolitan America: Planning for a More Sustainable Future*. His work at ULI has concentrated on promoting responsible leadership in the use of the land and on building vital, sustainable metropolitan areas.

Hudnut has received Princeton University's highest alumni honor, the Woodrow Wilson Award for public service; *City and State* magazine's designation as "Nation's Most Valuable Public Official"; the Rosa Parks Award from the American Association for Affirmative Action; and the Distinguished Public Service Award from the Indiana Association of Cities and Towns.

Hudnut graduated from Princeton University with high honors and election into Phi Beta Kappa. He graduated summa cum laude from Union Theological Seminary in New York City.

William L. Clarke

Ross, California

Clarke is licensed as both a civil engineer and a landscape architect and has more than 30 years of experience in planning, design, and construction projects. He consults to developers, planning and design firms, and public agencies on issues ranging from new community plans to site planning and engineering.

For over 20 years Clarke worked with two of the largest landscape architecture firms in the country. As a principal at the SWA Group in Sausalito, California, he worked on the Weyerhaeuser corporate campus outside Tacoma, Washington; the engineering planning for the Woodbridge community in Irvine, California; and for ARAMCO compounds in Saudi Arabia. As a principal at EDAA, Inc., he led a team that won a design competition for a government complex in Doha, Qatar; prepared two plans for more than 6,000 homes and 800,000 square feet of office industrial space in Tracy, California; and prepared construction documents for Washington Harbor in Washington, D.C. In recent years, Clarke's work has centered on the planning and implementation of a variety of projects: an 11,000-acre residential development near Livermore, California; an 800-acre commercial/industrial plan in Tracy, California; and a 300-acre business park in Livermore. He was also part of a team preparing a resource management plan

for the island nation of Palau. Currently he is working on the implementation of a town center for the new community of Mountain House, California.

James A. Cloar

Tampa, Florida

Cloar has spent more than 40 years as a professional downtown planner and manager. He is writing a book on civic leadership for the 21st century, with a focus on downtown revitalization.

From 2001 to 2009, Cloar was president and CEO of the membership-funded Partnership for Downtown St. Louis and of the \$2.6 million Downtown St. Louis Community Improvement District. He was also president of Downtown Now!, a not-for-profit development corporation that developed, owns, and manages a 30,000-square-foot public park and plaza. He chaired the city's Downtown Economic Stimulus Authority and was on the boards of the St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association, the Fair St. Foundation, and the Bridge (a homeless services agency). In 2006, he received the St. Louis mayor's "Quality of Life" award.

From 1992 to 2001, Cloar was president of the Tampa Downtown Partnership, representing the downtown business community. His accomplishments included initiating and managing a business improvement district, assembling land for a new sports and entertainment arena, developing a downtown park, and facilitating the opening of a downtown elementary school. While in Tampa, he served on the boards of the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, the Florida Aquarium, the University of Tampa, and the Tampa Bay Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Previously, Cloar was a partner and principal of a Columbia, Maryland-based urban design consulting firm and executive vice president of the Urban Land Institute in Washington, D.C. From 1977 to 1985, he was president of the Central Dallas Association, where his activities included numerous steps that led to the implementation of the Dallas Arts District. Cloar has been a consultant or advisor on downtown planning, development, and organizational issues to more than 50 cities throughout the United States and abroad.

Cloar served 19 years on the board of directors of the International Downtown Association and is a former

chair of the organization. In 2009, the association presented him with its Individual Achievement Award. He is immediate past chair of ULI's Public/Private Partnership Council (Blue Flight) and has served on ULI Advisory Services panels addressing downtown planning and development for Raleigh, Orlando, New Orleans, Charlotte, and Denver. He is also the principal author of *Centralized Retail Management: New Strategies for Downtown*, published by ULI.

Cloar received a BS degree in civil engineering and a master's degree in regional and city planning from the University of Oklahoma.

Tom Hester

Tempe, Arizona

Hester is a senior urban designer with the Place-Making Group at PB, which integrates land use and transportation to plan and design sustainable community development projects with a sense of place. He is currently working on projects in Topeka, Kansas; Andover, Kansas; Lewisville, Texas; and Tempe, Arizona.

Hester has earned a national reputation for his ability to help public and private sector clients strategically position development projects and improve their overall performance and viability. His strong leadership and management skills have helped diverse groups build consensus and attain project goals. He brings skills in and knowledge of zoning, design guidelines, public and private partnerships, real estate finance and development, community planning, and transportation planning and design to his projects. Before joining PB, Hester held senior positions at Canin Associates in Orlando, at Civitas, Inc. in Denver, and at EDAW in Australia.

Hester earned a bachelor of architecture degree from California State Polytechnic University in Pomona and a master of architecture in urban design degree from Harvard University's Graduate School of Design, where he earned top honors for leadership and academic studies. He has taught architecture, graphic design, and computer imaging at California Polytechnic State University and Otis College of Art and Design, and has lectured on the integration of information technologies within architectural curricula.

He is a member of ULI, where he has participated in a number of forums and Advisory Services panels and has taught at the Real Estate School.

Charles Johnson IV

Chicago, Illinois

President of C.H. Johnson Consulting, Johnson is a nationally recognized consultant with 26 years of experience in convention, sports, hospitality, and general real estate consulting. He has worked on more than 600 public assembly and urban development consulting assignments in the United States and abroad.

Before forming Johnson Consulting, he worked for the Chicago-based real estate development firm Stein & Company, which was the design builder for the expansion at McCormick Place and its Hyatt Hotel in Chicago. Previously, he was national director of KPMG Peat Marwick's Convention, Sports, and Leisure consulting practice. As program manager for the Puerto Rico Convention Center District project in San Juan for four years, he successfully guided that project from an idea to a highly regarded 110-acre urban redevelopment project.

Johnson is working on four collegiate arena, conference center, and football stadium projects. He is also working on convention center and hotel projects in Nashville, Rochester, Charleston, and suburban Miami. He is managing two other major projects: the redevelopment of the Roosevelt Roads Navy base in Puerto Rico and a major mixed-use development in Saigon, Vietnam.

Anita Morrison

Washington, D.C.

Morrison founded Partners for Economic Solutions after more than 30 years of economic and development consulting. During her career, she has specialized in public/private partnerships, real estate advisory services, redevelopment strategies, and economic impact analysis. From large cities to small towns, she applies her understanding of real estate economic fundamentals to questions of development, redevelopment, and smart growth. She helps decision makers and communities understand how economics and land planning interact. Her market

analysis helps to frame the scale, mix, and pace of development. Financial analysis evaluates project feasibility, quantifies any funding gap and required investment, and assesses the potential for long-term returns. Fiscal impact analysis forms the basis for realistic and creative funding strategies and enables decision makers to evaluate the potential returns and risks associated with their investment. Morrison is adept at incorporating these economic realities into workable solutions.

While working with other consulting firms, Morrison assisted and represented a number of development agencies and actors with major public/private partnerships, including the District of Columbia Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation, the Atlanta Development Authority, the Maryland Department of Transportation, the Fort Monroe Federal Area Development Authority, the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, the Orlando Community Redevelopment Agency, the Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington, and the city of Dallas.

In her 12 years as real estate advisor to the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation in Washington, Morrison quantified the potential returns from redevelopment as the basis for disposition strategies that encouraged residential, retail, and arts development. She evaluated development team proposals for a variety of projects, focusing on their financial feasibility and the resulting return to the Corporation. This highly successful endeavor remade the face of "America's Main Street," attracting \$1.7 billion in private investment.

In her economic development practice, Morrison focuses on entrepreneurial economies and technology-driven opportunities. She helps communities build from the ground up, using local talent and resources to create a sustainable economy that is not dependent on attracting industry from outside the area. She prepared the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Oklahoma City Empowerment Community in 2000, focusing on low-income neighborhoods surrounding downtown. While a principal at another consulting firm, she helped develop program guidelines and legislation for the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's SmartZones program, which emphasizes

collaborations between the state's universities and cities. Morrison has evaluated market potentials and recommended development strategies for more than a dozen research and technology parks, including the Colorado Science+Technology Park at Fitzsimons; the University Research Park in Madison, Wisconsin; the Virginia Biotechnology Research Park; the University of Louisville's new Shelby Campus; and research campus development at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. In related assignments with large and small universities, she has developed strategies to leverage university research and workforce development to support local and regional economic growth.

Morrison has served on ULI Advisory Services panels in Albuquerque, New Mexico; Paterson, New Jersey; Little Rock, Arkansas; and Salem, Oregon. She earned a master of public policy degree from the University of Michigan.

Steven W. Spillman

Mission Viejo, California

Spillman is a principal of Pacifica Companies, a national investment, development, and advisory firm. He specializes in mixed-use development and has had responsibility for office, retail, multifamily, medical, industrial, corporate, and public projects as well as master-planned communities. His experience includes financing, partnership relations, entitlements, marketing, leasing, acquisitions and sales, design and construction, and property management in challenging political and competitive settings.

As the executive vice president and operating officer of EDC, an affiliate of the \$10 billion investment bank W. P. Carey, Spillman turned around a troubled, high-profile, public/private project. While a principal at Mitsui's Birtcher, he developed and managed office, retail, and mixed-use projects in California and Arizona. At Aetna's Urban Investment and Development Co., Jaymont Properties, and Burnham Properties, he led the development of high-rise office, multifamily, and retail projects in New York City, Boston, Cleveland, Chicago, Milwaukee, Dallas, and Houston. Spillman began his career as an architect designing similar projects, including hospitals and medical facilities.

Spillman is currently a ULI Program Committee vice chair and has chaired Advisory Services panels, Urban Development/Mixed-Use Councils, and regional Trends Conferences. He is also ULI's Council Counselor for its Urban Development/Mixed-Used Councils, Transit Oriented Development Council, and Responsible Property Investment Council. He chaired the public/private Centraplex Marketing Consortium. He also created and taught ULI financing workshops and a University of California graduate course in real estate finance. After attending Purdue University, he earned a bachelor of architecture degree (cum laude) from Kansas State University and graduated with an MBA in investment and finance from the University of Missouri.

Ross Tilghman

Seattle, Washington

Tilghman heads up the Tilghman Group, providing transportation planning services. He has 24 years of urban planning experience, including serving as executive director of a downtown business improvement district. He provides transportation-related revenue projections, market studies, and planning and development strategies to government, not-for-profit, and private sector clients facing real estate development challenges. His projects typically involve downtown revitalization, academic and institutional campus planning, historic district redevelopment, mixed-use projects, special event access, and parking.

Frequently working with nationally recognized planning teams, Tilghman's recent work includes master plans detailing transportation requirements for Evergreen State College; Gallisteo Basin Preserve, New Mexico; and St. Mary's College of Maryland, as well as for downtowns in Evansville, Indiana; Natchez, Mississippi; St. Louis, Missouri; Green Bay, Wisconsin; and Parker, Colorado. Central to these plans are parking studies to determine future demand and space needs, from which he develops parking management plans to support planned development.

Tilghman has provided parking studies for the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, Washington, as well as for Savannah, Georgia; Portland, Oregon; Sioux City, Iowa; and Olympia, Washington. He conducted transit market studies to identify ridership potential for

new services in Denver and Los Angeles. Tilghman has also specialized in transportation planning for state capital campuses, working with Washington, Iowa, and Minnesota to improve their access and parking programs. In addition, he has completed special event and recreation area transportation plans for San Diego's Balboa Park; Joe Robbie Stadium in Miami, Florida; the Iowa Events Center in Des Moines; Stones River National Battlefield in Murfreesboro, Tennessee; the Shreveport Riverfront in Louisiana; and the Downtown and Riverfront areas in Vicksburg, Mississippi.

Since 2000, Tilghman has been working with the city of Tacoma to address its downtown parking needs, including the parking plan for the new convention center. He provided the revenue forecasts used to issue parking revenue debt.

Tilghman also served three years as director of a downtown business improvement district in Illinois. He oversaw maintenance, facade improvements, parking, and upper-story redevelopment efforts in accordance with Main Street redevelopment principles. He successfully wrote a \$1.9 million grant proposal to fund a streetscape construction project, which was completed in 2002.

Tilghman frequently participates in national resource panels, assisting communities with development questions. Past assignments include ULI Advisory Services panels, as well as panels hosted by the Mayor's Institute on City Design, AIA R/UDAT, and the Ohio Design Assistance Team.

Tilghman received an AB degree in history, magna cum laude, from Washington University in St. Louis and a master's degree in geography from the University of Washington, Seattle.



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