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INSPIRE best practices for equitable and sustainable land use through content, education, convening, mentoring, and knowledge sharing

LEAD in solving community and real estate challenges through applied collective global experience and philanthropic engagement

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Downtown Blue Springs

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL | NOVEMBER 4–5, 2026

TAP Process

- Briefing documents provided by the City of Blue Springs
- Site tour
- Stakeholder interviews with community leaders, businesses owners, elected officials, etc.
- Panel discussions
- Recommendation formation
- Public Presentation
- Final Report



TAP Panel



Carmen Chopp
Panel Co-Chair
Nomad Develops



Andrew Ganahl
Panel Co-Chair
AND Real Estate LLC



Brian Benjamin
NorthPoint Development



Brian Boyd
GBA



Tina Chace
Chace Community Growth Advisors, LLC



Eddie Crane
SplitBase Collective



Brian Hamilton
GBA



Maria Landoni
SUR Landscape Architecture



John McGurk
Flint Development



Kassie Murphy
Copaken Brooks



Aaron Ross
Of Place



Brad Satterwhite
KEM STUDIO

Scope of Work

What is the most feasible redevelopment strategy and implementation structure for the City-owned First Baptist Church and Lumberyard properties, and how should Blue Springs package and market this strategy over the next 12–36 months to attract high-quality, catalytic development?

Market Reality

City questions: What would the market support? Is high-density mixed-use feasible?

Site Strategy (What and Where)

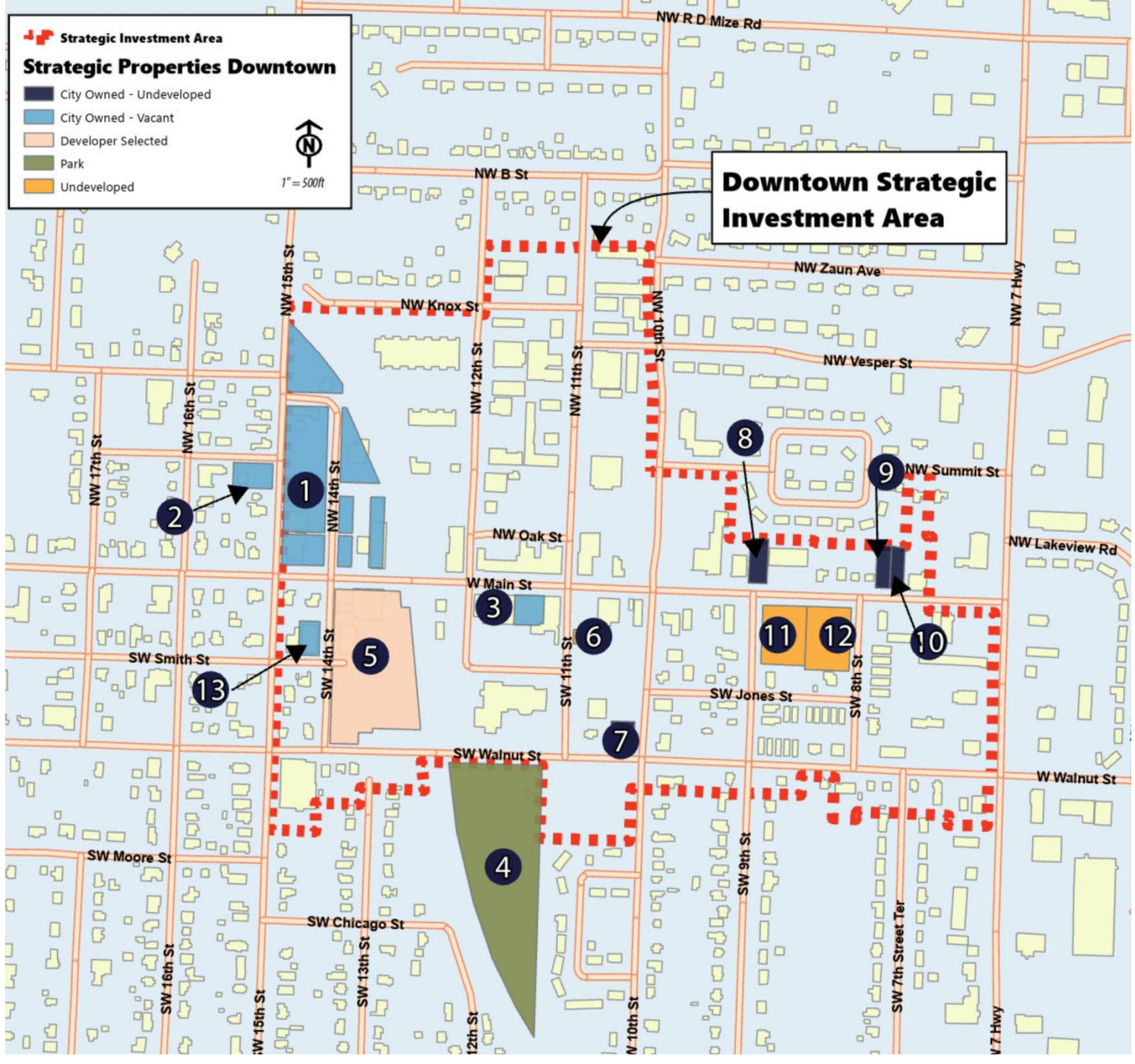
City questions: major barriers to site development; church and lumberyard as one project or two; adaptive reuse of church buildings; opportunities for community assets.

Financing and the Funding Gap (How)

City questions: biggest financing / development challenges; whether the City has the financial mechanisms to attract development; funding for future community assets.

Implementation and Marketing (Who and When)

City questions: best structure for catalyzing development (RFQ, RFP, P3); how to communicate streetscape and revitalization investments; how to signal development readiness; how to market the August downtown legislation and a possible Opportunity Zone, and to whom.



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Study Area Context

Church Property

- ”Historic” corner building
- Added buildings include open sanctuary
- $16M estimate for redevelopment ($6M to bring to code)



Former Lumber Yard

- 4 acres
- Cleared, clean
- Bordered by Main, railroad, 14th and Walnut



Bank Building

- 2 stories
- Early façade improvements are funded
- Public parking on north



Agenda for Today

- What the Panel Heard and Observed
- Development Overview
- Residential Refinements
- Commercial Refinements
- Market Commons and Public Realm
- Final Thoughts
- Q&A



Development Vision for Downtown

- Create an active downtown the people want to visit and enjoy from morning to evening
- Central amenity for city residents and advertisement for Blue Springs
  - Create a meaningful public realm that contributes to an identity for the area
  - Adds opportunities for substantial new residential housing to enliven downtown
  - Continues to provide opportunity for Main Street retailers



What the Panel Heard and Observed

What the Panel Heard and Observed

- Elected leaders, staff, and community are generally aligned
- The City has good plans in hand and the streetscape improvements show progress
- Passionate downtown business owners; Downtown Main Street org is strengthening
- Community wants local businesses downtown
- Strong service presence (need more retail)
- Residential density is welcome downtown
- Commercial rents are affordable; low vacancies and more businesses want to move downtown
- Main Center Redevelopment Corp (MCRC) provides Ch 353 tools
- Residents would like more “things to do” and options after 5 pm, more dining, greater activation would be welcome
- Need more rooftops/households downtown
- Central gathering space and more civic spaces are wanted
- Strong community arts focus (murals, food, ballet, music)
- Need to connect uses along Main St
- Downtown is the heart of the city

Unifying Themes



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Unifying Themes – What Makes Downtown Unique

PIONEERS – MAKERS – INNOVATORS

ROOTED IN HISTORY. BUILT FOR WHAT'S NEXT – OR – A COMMUNITY OF CREATIVES

Blue Spring's history as a community of pioneers, traders, merchants, and settlers gives it an authentic foundation. Today's makers, artists, entrepreneurs, craftspeople, and small businesses are simply the next generation of that story.

- **Pioneers:** Honor the history of Blue Springs and the people who established the community.
- **Makers:** Celebrate the businesses, craftspeople, artists, restaurants, and entrepreneurs who give downtown its character today.
- **Innovators:** Create opportunities for new businesses, creative industries, technology, entrepreneurship, and future investment.

Unifying Themes – What Makes Downtown Unique

Establish Main Street as the birthplace of the brand

- Create a recognizable Main Street visual district identity – (Branding)
  - Made on Main – Makers on Main – Made in Blue Springs
- Make storefronts part of the experience
  - Artwork on store fronts, window decals, light pole flags
- Make downtown a place to start and grow a business
  - Public art and maker stations
  - Entrepreneur incubator

Launch the initiative with a signature community event

Poll all stakeholders for a custom branding design



PIONEERS – MAKERS – INNOVATORS

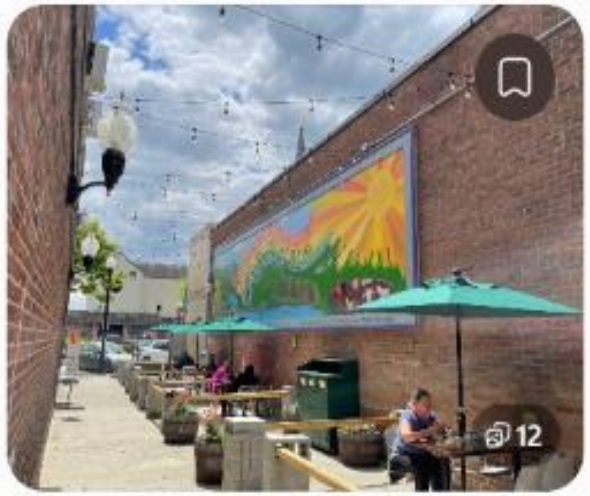
Rooted in history. Built for what's next – or – a community of creatives

ACTIVATION STRATEGY

- Downtown assessment and stakeholder engagement
- Community identity and brand development
- Main Street activation strategy (ULI Recommendations)
- Business and property owner engagement
- Public art and maker programming strategy
- Launch event planning
- Twelve-month implementation roadmap and performance measures









Development Overview

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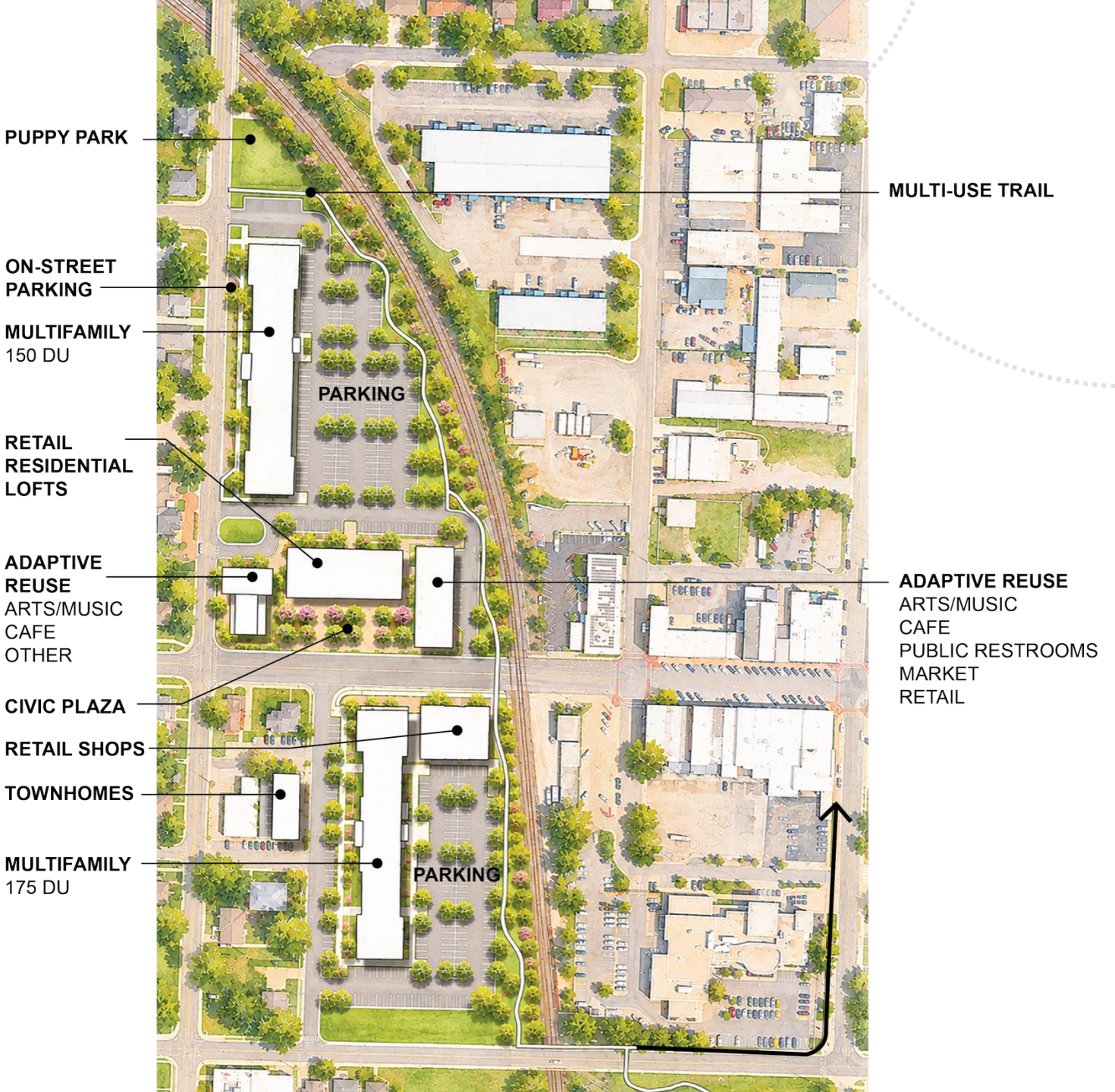
Master Plan Refinement

- GREEN LINK I Park to Park
- CIVIC PLAZA I Community Connections
- RESIDENTIAL I Activate + Animate
- RETAIL I Complement + Complete
- REUSE I Refresh + Reenergize
- CULTURE I Education + Expression

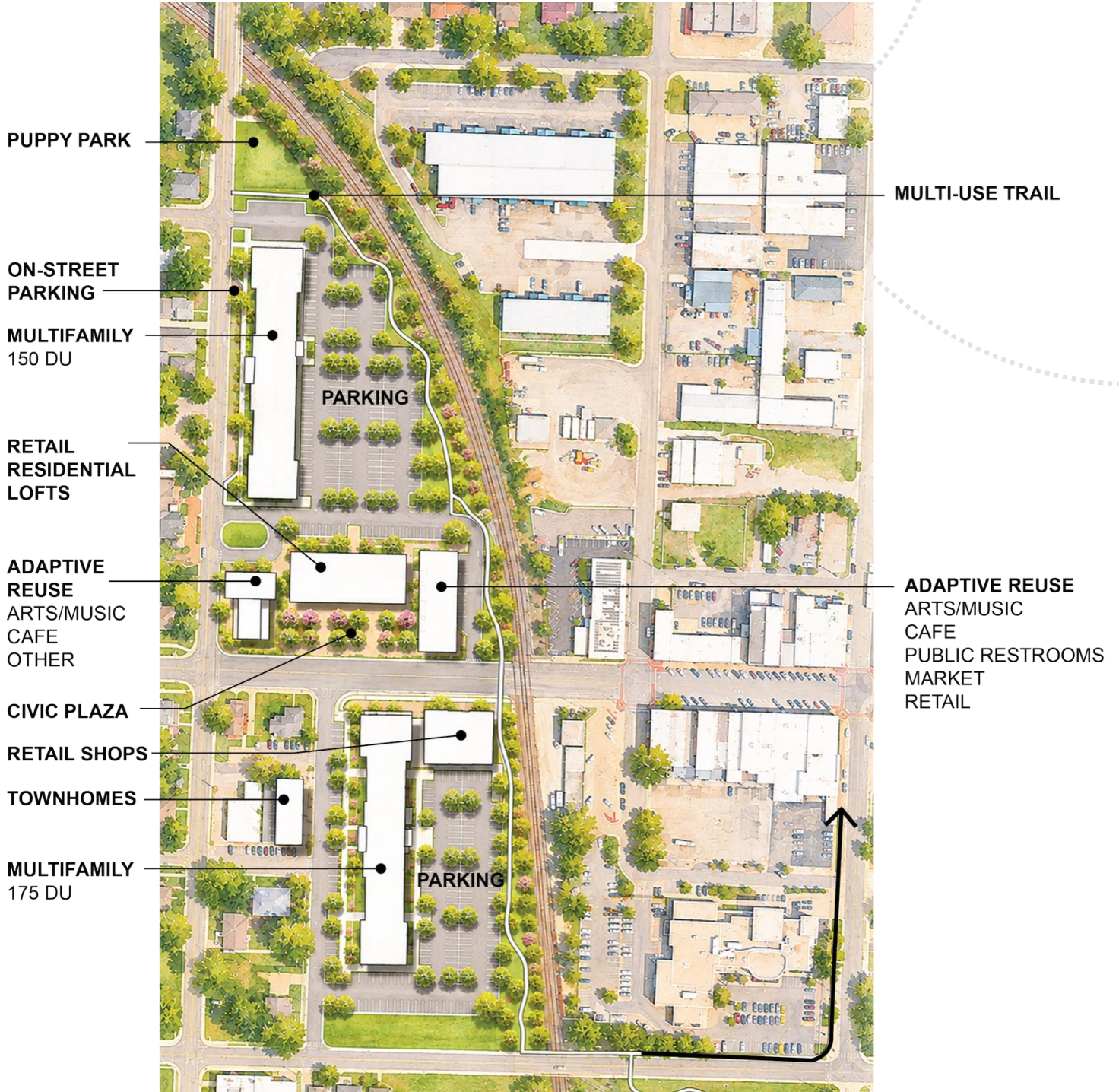
The Sum is Greater than its Parts.....



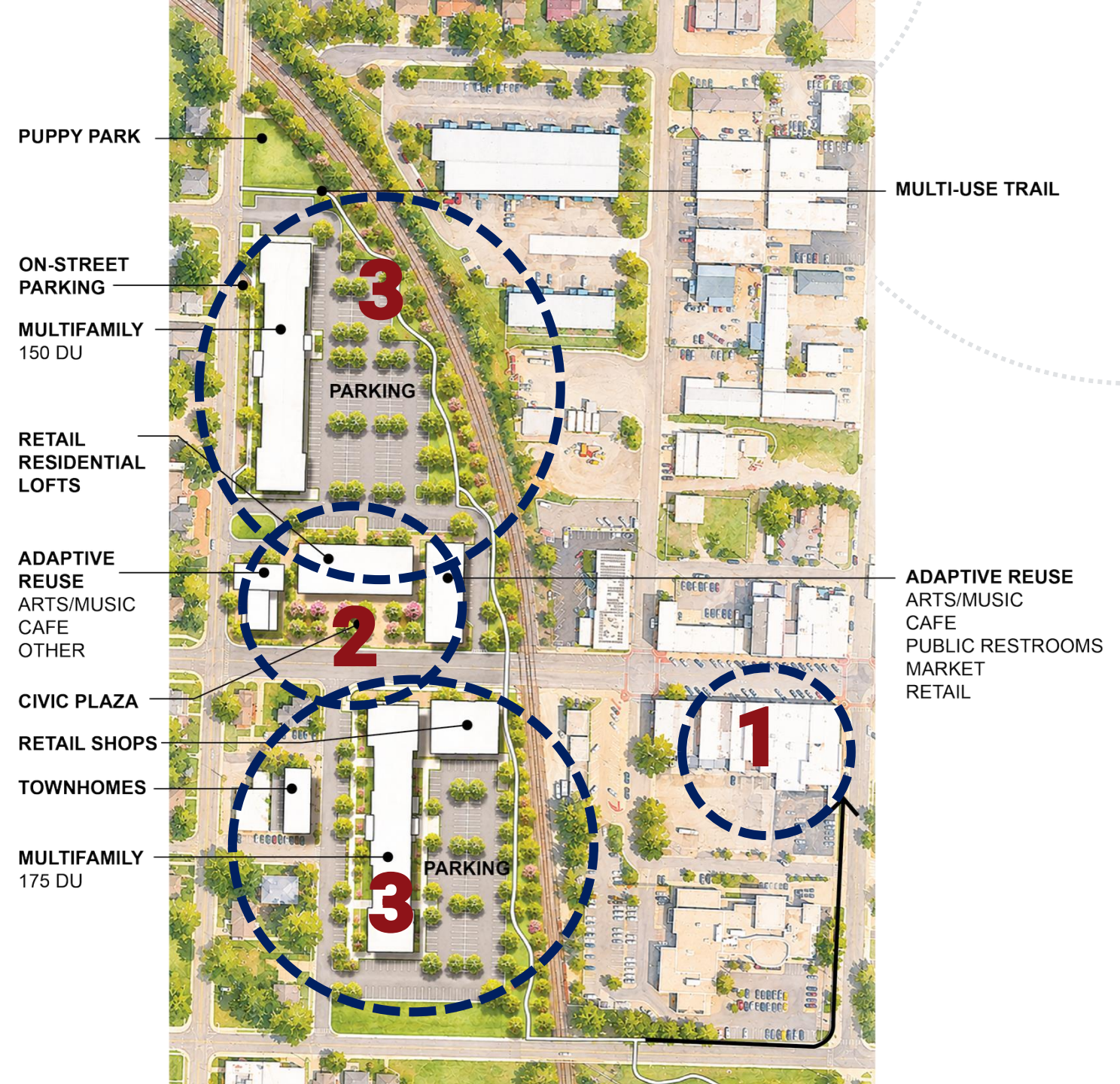
Master Plan Refinement

INFRASTRUCTURE I Possible 1st Step

- Realign and eliminate existing utility infrastructure to reduce public works maintenance and site ready development costs.
- Conduct early environmental studies and remediation
- Parcel consolidation



Development Zone



Commercial Refinements

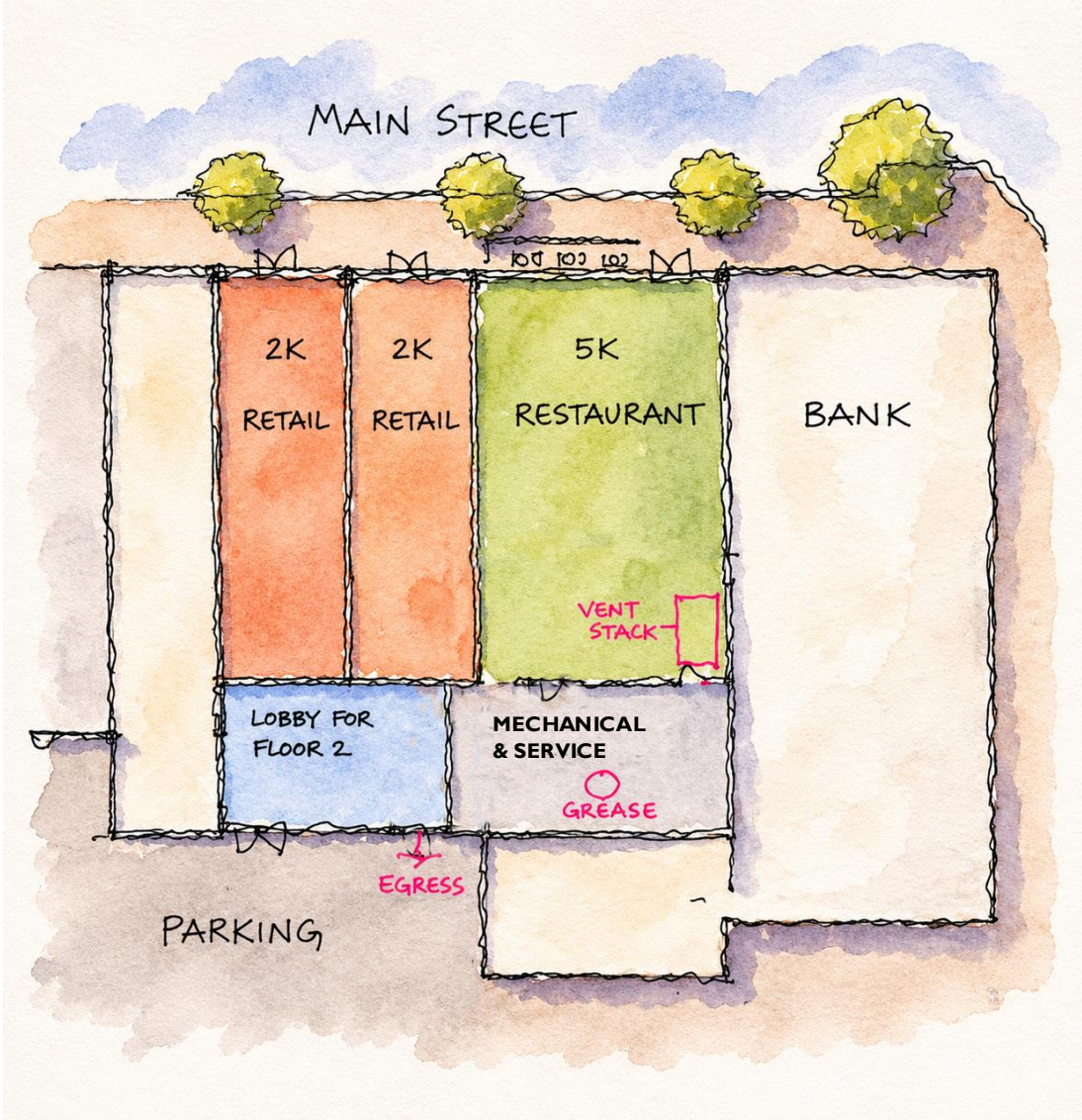
Bank Building – Restore & Reposition





Commercial Refinements – Bank Building

- Restore original storefront architecture and improve street-level visibility.
- Reconfigure and white box the ground floor into three marketable commercial spaces: ~5,000 SF restaurant + two ~2,000 SF retail bays.
- Incorporate a ~2,000 SF shared corridor for restrooms, second-floor access, deliveries and trash.
- City completes façade improvements, then markets the property for sale or partner with a private developer.



Master Plan Refinement – Phase One, Interim Opportunities



Master Plan Refinement – Phase One









Master Plan Refinement – Future Phase



Residential Refinements



Residential Refinements



Residential Refinements





Market Commons and Public Realm

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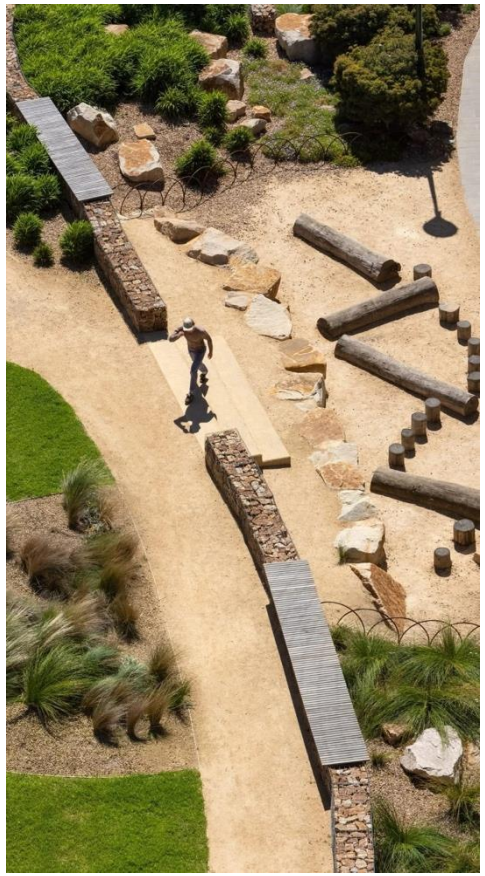
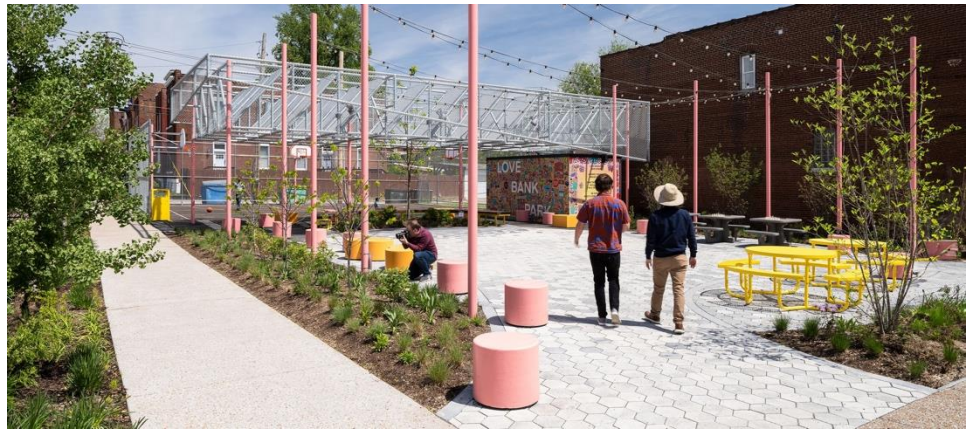
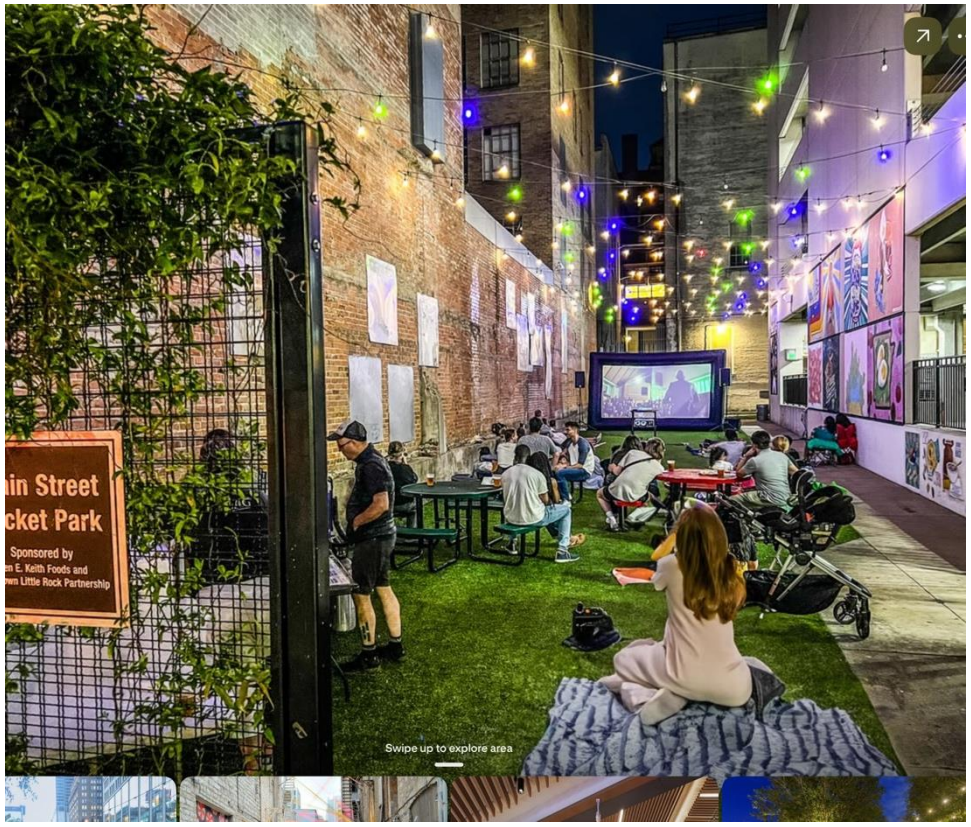
Public Realm Refinements




Swipe up to explore area




LOVE
BANK
PARK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Sponsored by
n E. Keith Foods and
wn Little Rock Partnership
Swipe up to explore area




CREPE
Je t'aime à la folie

Public Realm Refinements – Arts & Music Incubator



- Retain historic portion of church on Main
- Repurpose as arts and music incubator
- Demand already exists
- Increases foot traffic
- Funding opportunities already exist

Phasing & Financing



Phasing Timeline / Top Priorities



Q4 2026

Complete Streetscape Improvements

Q1 2027

Setting Stage to Activate Bank Building & Church Demolition

- Façade improvement planning
- Define scope of work for F&B operator (hood, grease trap)
- Issue RFP for development partner or identify owner's rep to market space
- Branding and marketing

Q3 2027

Demolish Church Buildings

- North Sanctuary Building & adjacent middle church building
- Retain the oldest Southernmost building
- Temporary activation of student life center as a pop up market until operator identified
- Activation of remaining church building as arts space

Q4 2027

Activate Student Life Center Building

- Market Commons Concept
- Rent abatement paired with grant for TI work
- Activate space while working to land swap J&S Irrigation to other parcel
- Carve out portion for public use on North side of building (bathrooms, meeting space, roughly 2,500 SF of 7,700 SF total space)

2028

Utility Infrastructure Improvements

Lumberyard & Church

- Sanitary & Water Main Relocations

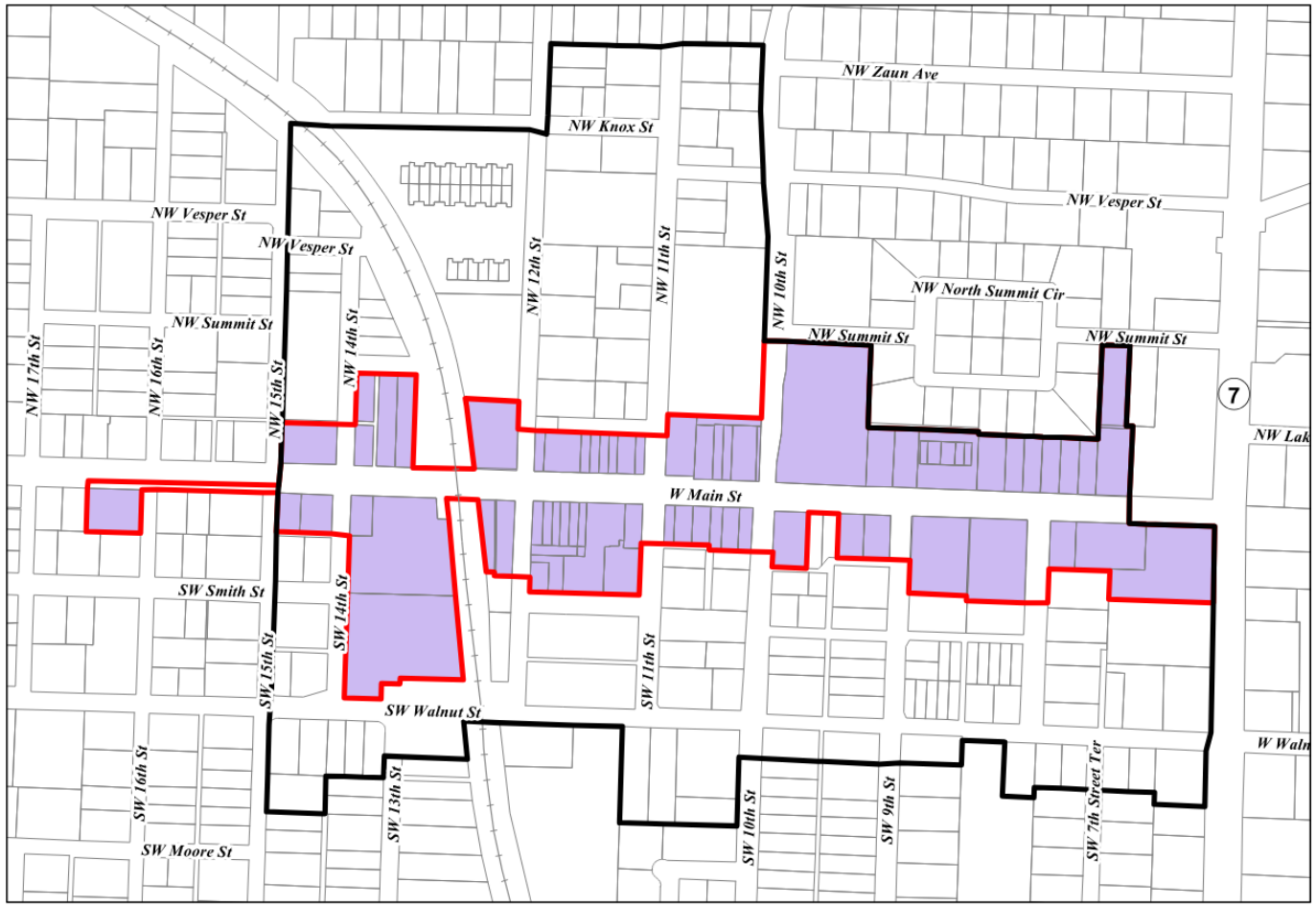
2029

Town Square Expansion

- Construct new 1-story retail building to connect Church building to Student Life Center

Financing Methods

- Expand CID boundary
- Incorporate property tax levy for downtown programming
  - Allocate existing 1% sales tax to capital projects
- Streamlined permitting process
  - Reduced/waived permit fees
  - Permit concierge
- MCRC Level 1A will be mandatory to attract investment (25 Years at 100% abatement)
- Chapter 100 for sales tax exemption
- TIF district or CID for horizontal infrastructure reimbursement over time
- Land contributed to development
- Limited/no retail required for res. Dev.
- Opportunity Zone decision



Note – Red boundary is CID limits, black boundary is MCRC

Final Thoughts



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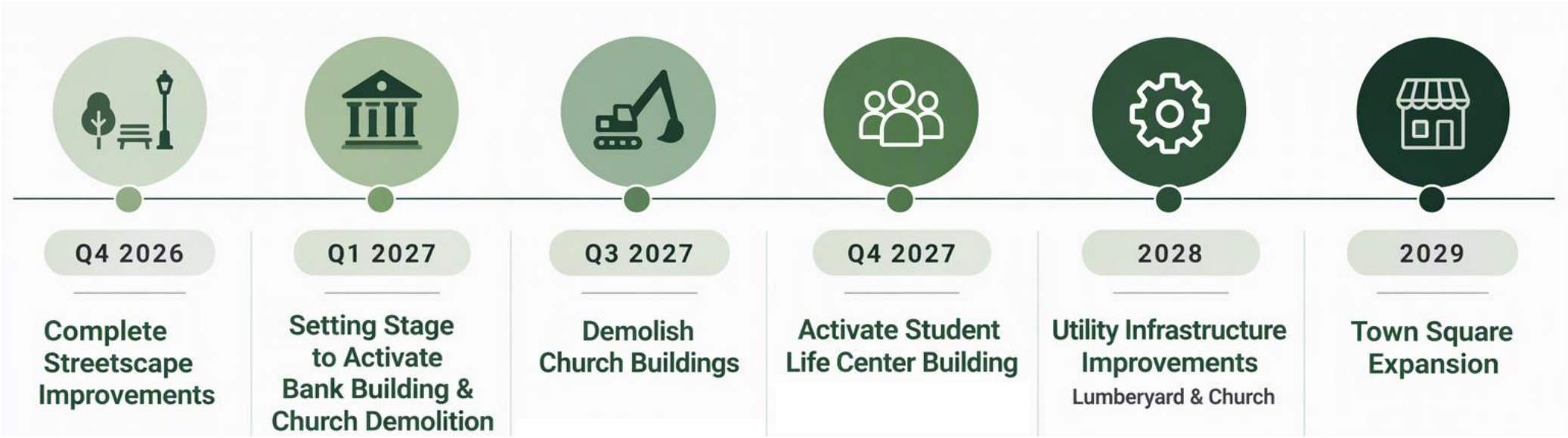
Final Thoughts

- Civic alignment has created a window of opportunity for the downtown district
- Downtown business enthusiasm is a great foundation for more success
- Quick wins will extend existing momentum (created by streetscaping) and branding will help





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Technical Assistance Panel

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