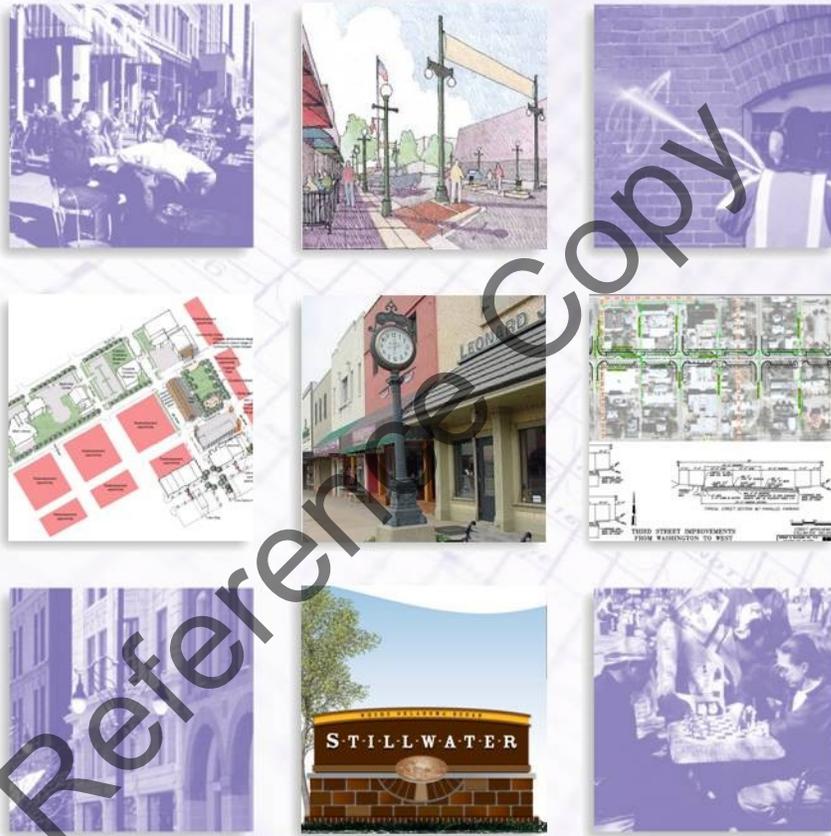


CITY OF STILLWATER CORE COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS MASTER PLAN



PREPARED FOR
THE CITY OF STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA

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Stillwater Core Commercial Districts Master Plan

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I. Executive Summary

In the spring of 2005, the City of Stillwater commissioned the Core Commercial Districts Master Plan to create tangible action-oriented improvements for the downtown, Washington Street/Strip and Knoblock/Campus Corner commercial districts. After a national search, a multi-disciplined consulting team led by Denver-based Progressive Urban Management Associates (P.U.M.A.) was selected to lead the planning process. The Master Plan evaluation encompassed the following disciplines and benefited from nationally-recognized consulting firms:

- Economics, Finance and Implementation – P.U.M.A., Denver, CO
- Urban Design and Planning – Civitas, Denver, CO
- Wayfinding and Architectural Design – Corbin Design, Traverse City, MI
- Parking Management – Carl Walker, Inc., Tempe, AZ
- Infrastructure and Engineering – Spear & McCaleb, Oklahoma City, OK

Planning Process and Key Implications

Through the summer and fall of 2005, more than 100 affected property owners, businesses and civic leaders were engaged in a participatory process that included open forums, a downtown “war room”, small group roundtables and one-on-one meetings. 729 Stillwater residents responded to a downtown survey distributed through municipal water bills. A 25-member Project Steering Committee met with the consultant team to offer creative input and a “reality check” on evolving recommendations. Key institutional players, including the City of Stillwater, Payne County and Oklahoma State University were closely integrated into the planning process. At several key decision points, the consultant team made publicly televised presentations to the City Council.

The consultant team’s extensive analysis of Stillwater market, environmental and community dynamics revealed the following implications for the core commercial districts:

- **Stillwater’s core commercial districts are at a crossroads.** The traditional legacies for these districts are threatened – Downtown by new competition and The Strip and Campus Corner by their own physical limitations.
- **New retail and aging demographics threaten downtown’s vitality.** Downtown has been fortunate that many of the new retail concepts of the past 20 years have largely bypassed Stillwater; however, this will all change beginning in 2006. In addition, the market analysis found that downtown must capture an increasing share of Stillwater’s younger markets to thrive.
- **Downtown vitality is critical to Stillwater.** More than an emotional appeal, downtown vitality is critical to the entire region’s economic development. The recent resurgence of downtown Oklahoma City illustrates how an entire community can come together, transform a downtown and sharpen a city’s competitive edge.

- **Downtown must evolve to become a multi-dimensional destination.** Like many downtowns throughout the nation, downtown Stillwater must become a place for a variety of complementary activities including dining, entertainment, employment, recreation, living and shopping.
- **An aggressive multi-faceted civic investment strategy is needed for downtown.** To make downtown an exciting and relevant destination for all of Stillwater’s residents, a civic investment strategy that focuses on family-oriented activities is recommended. New downtown attractions and improvements proposed by this plan include a public market, festival park, children’s museum, children’s spray park, Main Street dining and entertainment district, improved lighting and streetscape, parking structure and business improvement district.
- **Parking and pedestrians are key for The Strip and Campus Corner.** For the campus commercial districts to thrive, they must create additional parking for employees and customers and advance improvements to make each district more pedestrian friendly.
- **New Parking Management Strategies Can Strengthen the Campus Commercial Districts.** To improve parking, mobility and pedestrian access, a variety of parking-related improvements are proposed, including new lots, the extension of 3rd Street from Knoblock to Washington and the creation of a new parking district.

Action Plan for Downtown

An aggressive multi-faceted investment strategy is recommended to make downtown an exciting and relevant destination for all Stillwater residents. The investment strategy is guided by the following objectives:

- Establish a central gathering place for the city;
- Expand recreational and educational opportunities for kids and families;
- Create dining and entertainment options for adults;
- Develop catalytic civic amenities that will encourage new private investment in downtown;
- Make Downtown a fun place to visit, work, live and play.

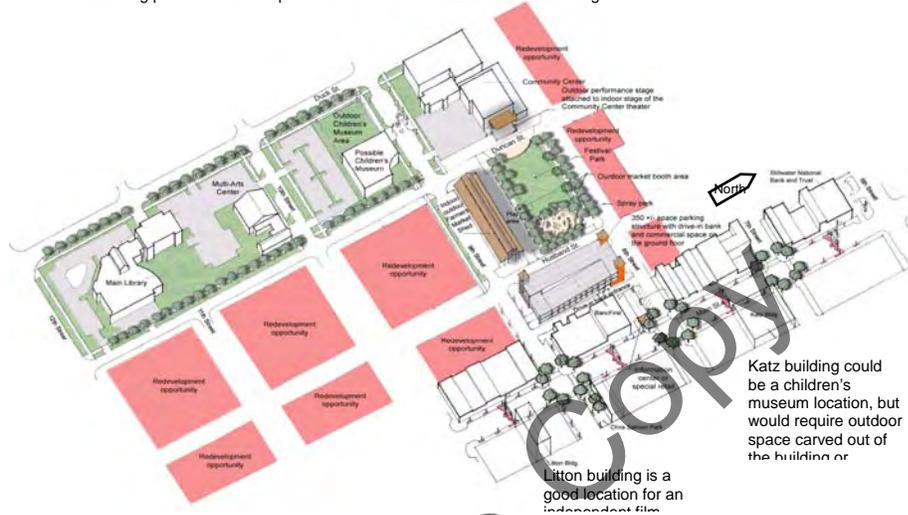
The framework for improving downtown is based upon six inter-connected initiatives.

- **Public Amenities & Streetscape – The “Z” Plan:** Major new civic amenities are proposed to connect downtown’s existing public facilities (i.e. library, multi-arts center and community center) to a revived Main Street commercial district. Through the “Z Plan”, it is proposed that a new civic activity center be constructed to connect existing public facilities to Main Street, plus catalyze new private investment and

development, including housing, throughout downtown. Amenities to be added to downtown include a permanent Stillwater Public Market, a festival park, Children’s Museum, children’s spray park, 350-space parking structure and new streetscape along Main Street and the streets surrounding the festival park.

The “Z” Plan

Illustrating potential redevelopment areas for increased downtown housing



- Main Street Dining & Entertainment District:** Incentives and development policies are proposed to encourage new dining and entertainment uses along the Main Street corridor between 6th and 10th Streets. Potential incentives include enhanced streetscape and signage, building code reforms to encourage the reuse of older buildings, liquor licensing reforms via State legislation, creation of a wi-fi “hot zone” and financial incentives including revolving loan funds and tax increment financing.

Mid-block crossing on Main Street



- **Parking Management Plan:** A new city parking management system is proposed that will manage parking resources in downtown, plus the campus commercial districts. In downtown, a new 350-space parking garage is proposed to accommodate new downtown attractions plus expand employee parking options. Better management of existing private and public parking areas will also create additional options for employees, visitors and future residents.
- **Façade Improvements & Design Guidelines:** To encourage private property owners to improve building facades, the Action Plan includes more than a dozen specific ideas for buildings on and in the vicinity of Main Street. The proposed façade improvements offer inexpensive common sense solutions that focus on paint, signage and awnings. Design guidelines are also provided to help property owners and businesses create a more attractive and cohesive business district in the future.
- **Downtown Organization & Business Improvement District:** The Action Plan offers recommendations for strengthening Downtown Stillwater Unlimited, the downtown business association that also manages Stillwater's local Main Street program. A new business improvement district (BID) is proposed to create ongoing funding through a special assessment for the marketing, maintenance and management of the downtown.
- **Downtown Living:** Downtown housing is a likely market consequence if the preceding pieces of the downtown puzzle can be assembled in Stillwater. Nationwide, housing has followed culture, dining and entertainment into central business districts. Downtown living is a natural long term extension of the Action Plan for Downtown and several logical sites are identified for higher density mixed-use housing in the future.

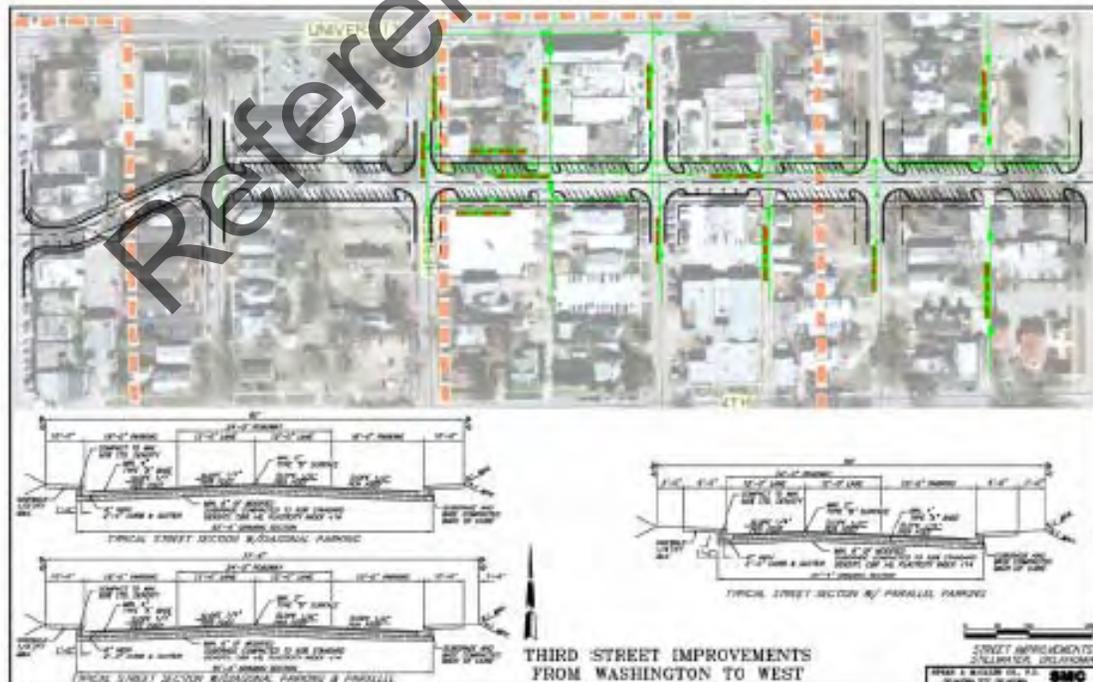
Reference Only

Action Plan for The Strip and Campus Corner

Stillwater's campus commercial districts – The Strip and Campus Corner – are challenged by physical limitations. Each district is surrounded by residential and/or university property, creating ongoing land use and parking compatibility challenges. For these business districts to thrive, they must create additional parking for employees and customers, and advance improvements to make each district more pedestrian friendly.

To address the priorities of property and business owners in these two commercial districts, the Core Commercial Districts Master Plan focuses primarily on parking management issues. In addition to providing recommendations on developing parking lots and creating an on-street pay parking system, the extension of 3rd Street from Knoblock to Washington is strongly recommended. The 3rd Street extension will create an estimated 175 new parking spaces and offers additional benefits, including:

- A permanent and logical pedestrian linkage between the Washington and Knoblock, the two primary campus commercial districts;
- The beginning of a campus-to-downtown pedestrian linkage east on 3rd Street to Duck, and then south on Duck to 6th or 9th Streets into downtown;
- An opportunity to create a new development pattern along 3rd Street that would encourage quality high density residential mixed-use development. New development along 3rd Street could include ground floor commercial uses connecting The Strip and Campus Corner, and creating a vital mixed-use environment at the southern edge of Oklahoma State University.



Citywide Wayfinding Program

“Wayfinding” can be defined as the orderly structuring of information required to enable people to comfortably and successfully access an environment. Wayfinding is also critical to the image of a community, providing a visual representation of civic values and aspirations.

In developing a wayfinding system for Stillwater, Corbin Design completed an extensive community orientation process that led to the development of two design concepts. After seeking input on the two design concepts from core commercial district stakeholders, city staff and elected officials, a final design array was created. The system is also designed to comply with Oklahoma Department of Transportation guidelines.

The resulting wayfinding system, which includes proposed destinations, sign site locations, design schematics and maintenance principles, is based upon the following rules and understanding of wayfinding logic:

- Consider the first-time visitor.
- Lead, don't point the way.
- Information should be presented in a logical and orderly fashion.
- Elements should be designed for easy updating as information changes.



Implementation Sequencing

Next Six Months	Responsibility
City of Stillwater endorsement/adoption of Master Plan	City/Steering Committee
Create Phase I Downtown business improvement district	DSU/City
Insert Wayfinding & 3 rd Street extension projects into City sales tax extension for streets	City/Steering Committee
Initiate process to form parking management system	City/Steering Committee
Initiate process to form campus parking district	City/Campus Commercial Districts
Finalize design and cost estimates for Downtown Action Plan improvements	City/Steering Committee/DSU
Initiate efforts to form the Main Street Dining & Entertainment District, including regulatory reforms and incentives	DSU/City

Next Six to 18 Months	Responsibility
Build community support for Downtown Action Plan bond issue and/or sales tax initiative	Steering Committee/DSU
Design and install Wayfinding & 3 rd Street improvements	City
Implement Phase II BID	DSU
Final design, development and implementation of Downtown Action Plan improvements	City/DSU
Manage and develop the Main Street Dining & Entertainment District	DSU/City
Ongoing downtown marketing & business development	DSU

Financing Strategy

Improvement	Est. Cost	Source of Funds
Downtown Action Plan Public market, festival park, Children's Museum, spray park, parking garage, lighting & streetscape, land acquisition	\$ 11.8 million	Citywide sales tax or general obligation bond Fall 2006
Citywide Wayfinding System	\$ 580,000	City streets sales tax extension Winter/Spring 2006
3rd Street Extension , including new water and sewer lines, land acquisition	\$1.15 million	City streets sales tax extension Winter/Spring 2006
Downtown Business Improvement District Phase I	\$50,000 per year	Downtown property & business owner assessment Winter 2006
Campus Commercial Districts Parking & Pedestrian Improvements	To be determined	Campus Commercial Districts Parking District 2006

II. Market Conditions & Implications

To determine the economic context for Stillwater's core commercial districts, the consultant team undertook a comprehensive market analysis during the summer of 2005 that included an economic profile, community attitudes survey and extensive interviews and forums with commercial district stakeholders.

Economic Profile

The economic profile provides a snapshot of current market conditions and recent trends that affect Stillwater's core commercial district marketplace. In addition to helping to define the economic context for the Core Commercial Districts Master Plan, the economic profile can be used by existing and/or new businesses to help guide individual merchandising and growth strategies. Current market information is provided for the following:

- Demographic summary and trends, including population, income, education and racial characteristics;
- Building permit and housing activity;
- Employment and retail sales;
- Traffic counts in each of the core commercial districts;
- Overview of public transportation, amenities, attractions and events;
- Crime statistics for each core commercial district;
- A downtown retail profile identifying the current store mix by type and size;
- Competitive analysis of the retail environment, evaluating five existing retail destinations in Stillwater plus new development that is proposed.

Highlights from the economic profile reveal the following characteristics about Stillwater and its core commercial districts:

- Stillwater has experienced slow and steady growth through the past 15 years, with a municipal population of 40,731 in 2004. Stillwater is the hub of a five county region that has more than 166,000 residents.
- Education is the cornerstone of the community. Anchored by Oklahoma State University's 7,500 jobs, education is the city's largest employer. Significantly, 48% of adult residents (age 25+) hold a bachelor's degree or higher.
- Stillwater is a regional attraction for retail spending, evidenced by a "trade pull factor" estimated at 1.52. The "pull factor" suggests that Stillwater is capturing sales within the city plus an additional 52% from beyond its borders.
- Downtown's existing 440,000 square foot of retail space will soon be doubled by two new retail developments in Stillwater – the new Lakeview Pointe shopping center north of downtown and a second Wal-Mart store planned west of downtown.
- Downtown's apparel segment includes 16 stores that collectively account for about 50,000 square feet of space – the new Belks Department Store at Lakeview Pointe will offer competitive product in 58,000 square feet.

Community Attitudes Survey

As part of the Stillwater Core Commercial Districts Master Plan, a direct mail survey was distributed to 5,000 Stillwater households as an insert in the June and July municipal water bills. Surveys were widely distributed to households throughout the City in random billing routes. 729 surveys were returned, representing a return rate of 14.6%.

The community attitudes survey focused on downtown. It sought to determine current downtown use patterns by Stillwater residents, plus identify improvements that would increase future visitation to downtown. Similar to the economic profile, the community attitudes survey is both an important economic analysis component of the Master Plan and a useful tool that can help guide merchandising and growth decisions by existing and/or new businesses.

Highlights from the survey results include:

- Downtown is relevant and familiar to the respondents of the community attitudes survey. 73% visit downtown twice a month or more.
- Top downtown attractions include the post office (80%) followed by shopping (67%), personal services (49%) and the library (40%). Notably, 40% of respondents also visit downtown for restaurants and bars, while only a handful of these establishments actually exist.
- Top reasons for avoiding downtown are the lack of diverse retail (59%) and a lack of restaurant options (53%). Limited parking is a distant third (32%).
- Many Stillwater residents leave the region to shop. Oklahoma City (41%), Internet/Catalog (32%) and Tulsa (26%) are shopping destinations frequented by Stillwater residents once a month or more.
- Top improvements that would encourage downtown visitation include more restaurants, brand name stores and movie theaters. These suggestions were reasonably consistent among all age groups. More than 1,100 open response suggestions for improving downtown were provided by survey respondents.
- Older respondents are more likely to visit downtown with higher frequency. 63% of oldest respondents (over 69) visit downtown once a week or more, while only 28% of those age 25 to 34 visit downtown once a week or more. Interestingly, there is a slightly higher frequency (34%) of the youngest 18 to 24 age group visiting downtown once a week or more.
- Overall, the under 34 age groups are most receptive to improvements that would increase downtown visitation. Top improvements for this age group include more restaurants, unique shops, brand name stores, movie theaters and special events.

Stakeholder Interviews & Forums

During the entire process of the Core Commercial District Master Plan, the consultant team conducted a series of interviews and forums with stakeholders in each of the affected districts. Property owners, businesses and civic leaders were asked for impressions and creative input at the beginning of the process (May/June) and then to respond to initial concepts developed by the consultant team (August/October). Stakeholder input was also sought as part of the market analysis process to absorb the market knowledge and “savvy” from stakeholders that had been active in the Stillwater market for many decades. More than 100 district stakeholders participated in Master Plan forums and interviews.

In June of 2005, the consultant team held a three day reconnaissance workshop in each of the core commercial districts. A primary objective was to determine the top improvement priorities for each district. As determined by participating property and business owners, priorities ranked in order of importance, included the following:

Downtown	Washington Street “The Strip”	Knoblock Corridor “Campus Corner”
Attract more businesses, retail & restaurants	Increase/better manage parking supply	Increase/better manage parking supply
Attract a destination anchor, think big!	Enhance the pedestrian environment	Improve aesthetics/code enforcement & zoning
Increase/manage parking	Locate deliveries off-street	Housing for mature markets
Create more evening activity	Create alleys	
Re-energize Katz building	Create/re-configure housing	
Encourage more residential	Collaborative marketing	

Downtown stakeholders emphasized an aggressive economic development agenda, acknowledging vulnerabilities posed by new competition in the retail marketplace.

Washington and Knoblock stakeholders sought more emphasis in improving parking – both in increasing and managing the supply of parking. Given their proximity to the Oklahoma State University campus, creating additional customer and employee parking and reducing conflicts with student and University parking demands are their primary economic challenge.

Implications

Findings from the economic profile, community attitudes survey and stakeholder interviews and forums lead to the following market implications for Stillwater's Core Commercial Districts at the beginning of 2006:

1. Stillwater's Core Commercial Districts Are at a Crossroads.

Buoyed by tradition, Stillwater's core commercial districts provide an enduring link to the rich history of both the City and Oklahoma State University. Today, the traditional legacies for these districts are threatened – Downtown by new retail competition and The Strip and Campus Corner by their own physical limitations.

2. New Retail and Aging Demographics Threaten Downtown's Vitality.

Downtown has been fortunate that many of the new retail concepts of the past 20 years have largely sidestepped the Stillwater market; however, this will all change beginning in 2006. Between the Lakeview Pointe shopping center to the north and a second Wal-Mart store to the west, new retail product will double downtown's existing space. In addition, the community attitudes survey found that downtown is most frequented by older residents – Downtown must capture an increasing share of Stillwater's younger markets to thrive.

3. Downtown Vitality Is Critical to Stillwater.

Downtown is important as the civic heart and identity for the community, and a healthy and vibrant downtown is a critical foundation to advancing economic development for the entire city. Citywide benefits of a vital downtown include:

- A vital downtown is an important civic amenity that can help to recruit employees and students to Stillwater.
- Site selection teams for companies often list a healthy downtown as a top priority for basing relocation decisions.
- A strong central business district can help to increase property values and stability in adjoining residential neighborhoods.
- The City of Stillwater already has a significant civic investment in downtown with the library, multi-arts center, community center, City Hall and police station – A vital downtown fortifies this existing investment in the future.

Oklahoma City's MAPS (metropolitan area projects) program provides a striking example of a community that has reinvested in its downtown to promote economic development. Before MAPS, Oklahoma City found that it could not compete with other cities for jobs. MAPS, a bond issue of civic improvements concentrated in downtown, was envisioned to elevate Oklahoma City's overall quality of life for existing residents with the added benefit of making the city more attractive for new business. Today, Oklahoma City's downtown renaissance is recognized as one of the most dramatic in the country, and the growing city is once again successfully attracting new jobs and investment.

- 4. Downtown Must Evolve to Become a Multi-Dimensional Destination.** Currently, downtown Stillwater is primarily a retail shopping district. Despite having many unique and intriguing shops, downtown must diversify its offerings in order to compete with new retail that is entering the market and to attract younger customers that are critical to its long term success. Like many downtowns throughout the nation, Stillwater's central business district must become a multi-dimensional destination – a place for a variety of complementary activities including dining, entertainment, employment, recreation, living *and* shopping.
- 5. An Aggressive Multi-Faceted Civic Investment Strategy Is Needed for Downtown.** To make downtown an exciting and relevant destination for all of Stillwater's residents, a civic investment strategy that focuses on family-oriented activities is recommended. This strategy aims to fill many gaps in Stillwater, including:
- Establish a central gathering place for the city;
 - Expand recreational and educational opportunities for kids and families;
 - Create dining and entertainment options for adults;
 - Develop catalytic civic amenities that will encourage new private investment in downtown;
 - Make it fun to visit, work, live and play downtown.
- 6. Parking and Pedestrians Are Key for The Strip and Campus Corner.** Stillwater's campus commercial districts – The Strip and Campus Corner – are challenged by physical limitations. Each district is surrounded by residential and/or university property, creating ongoing land use and parking compatibility challenges. For these business districts to thrive, they must create additional parking for employees and customers, and advance improvements to make each district more pedestrian friendly.
- 7. New Parking Management Strategies Can Strengthen the Campus Commercial Districts.** New parking management approaches are proposed to help the campus commercial districts improve parking, mobility and pedestrian access. The extension of 3rd Street from Knoblock to Washington is suggested to add parking, create a pedestrian link between the two districts and help attract new investment to the area. A parking district financed by on-street meters is also proposed to raise revenue that can be reinvested in localized parking and pedestrian enhancements.

III. Infrastructure Evaluation

Spear & McCaleb (SMC), an Oklahoma-City based engineering firm, conducted an infrastructure investigation to determine the general condition of the streets, alleys, public parking, public plazas, sidewalks, wastewater collection system, potable water lines and storm drainage to establish the context and constraints for suggested physical improvements. This assessment also included a general review of public access (sidewalks) compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Each of the Core Commercial Districts was divided into blocks to aid in identifying the infrastructure being investigated. A visual infrastructure investigation was conducted by walking each individual block and photographing the observable infrastructure, streets, sidewalks, alleys etc. Field notes were also made. In the field notes, visible infrastructure was graded on a relative scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the best condition. The condition, location and size of the buried infrastructure such as water, sewer and storm sewer lines were investigated by interviewing the City of Stillwater staff and their records to determine, the condition, material and size of the buried infrastructure. A complete photo record along with field notes are contained in the Appendix.

In general, SMC found that infrastructure in the Downtown and Knoblock areas to be adequate but aging, and, in the event of street, sidewalk or alley reconstruction, infrastructure in these areas needs to be replaced. The Washington Street area benefits from infrastructure that was substantially replaced in 1999.

A summary of the infrastructure evaluation follows and the Core Commercial Districts are coded as follows:

- “A” is Downtown
- “B” is the Knoblock/Campus Corner area
- “C” is the Washington Street/Strip area

Streets: The streets are generally in good condition with Main, Duck and Washington Streets in excellent condition. In Area A, the lower scores were Duncan Street between 6th and 7th Avenues, the street parking particularly along 9th, the intersections at Husband Street and 8th Avenue, 9th Avenue and Duncan Street, 9th Avenue and Husband Street, and 10th Avenue and Duncan Street. In Area B University Avenue scored low, along with intersections at 4th Avenue and Knoblock Street, and Hester Street and 6th Avenue. Streets near the bottom of the list in Area C were again University Avenue, the side street to 6th Avenue, and 4th Avenue east of Washington Street.

Sidewalks: In general the physical condition (i.e. concrete condition) was in fair condition. Some sidewalks stamped WPA and dated 1934 were still in fair condition. However, numerous trip hazards could be found. The photo record shows examples of some of the most grievous trip hazards found. In some cases the sidewalks were neglected, needed mowing and had vegetation growing in the cracks.

In Area A the worst sidewalks are on the east side of Husband Street between 9th and 10th Streets, north side of 10th Avenue between Husband and Main Streets, and south side of 10th Street between Main and Lewis Avenues. In Area B the worst sidewalks can be found on the north side of 3rd Avenue between Hester Street and the alley to the east, and the north side of 4th between Hester and Knoblock Streets. In Area C the worst scoring sidewalk was found along the south side of 4th Avenue.

Alleys: Most of the alleys were concrete and were patched with asphalt and/or concrete with the remaining alleys being gravel or gravel/asphalt. Alleys usually serve two purposes. One is to provide utilities (sewer, electrical, gas etc.), often buried; the other is to provide access for trash pick up and for businesses. These purposes are often at odds with each other. Utilities must be maintained, which requires they be unearthed and thereby destroying the road surface necessary for traffic. Many of the alleys investigated show evidence of utility repair and therefore road surfaces were not in perfect condition. Some alleys had trash and debris lying about and had vegetation needing to be trimmed and/or removed.

Sewer Lines: In Area C sewer lines were replaced 1999. The sewer lines in Areas A and B are composed of 6” and 8” asbestos concrete pipe. Asbestos concrete pipe was phased out of production around 1985, so it is assumed that the sewer lines are rather old. A sewer line in Area B located in the alley west of Knoblock between University Avenue to 6th Avenue was replaced in 2001.

The current Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) standards states that “gravity sewers shall not be smaller than 8-inches in diameter”, however the City has not experience any capacity problems and appears to have adequate capacity for the current wastewater load. The GIS shows water and sewer lines in close proximity (within 10 ft.) of each other in a couple of alleys. DEQ regulations require a minimum of 10 feet of separation.

Water Lines: The water lines in the Area A are 16”, 12”, 8”, 6” and 4” with most of the lines in the 8” to 4” range. Main Street is serviced with a 6” water line running on the west side, an 8” running on the east side and 4” in the alley to the east. A 16” water line runs parallel to 5th Street on the north side and on the east side of Husband Street between 7th and 9th Avenues runs a 12” water line. A 12” water line runs parallel to 10th Street on the south side and a 12” water line also runs along Lowery Street.

All of the water lines in Area A are cast iron, with the exception of one four-inch asbestos concrete line. The water lines are assumed to be rather old; however the City of Stillwater has not had major maintenance or capacity problems with these water lines.

In Area B the water lines are composed of 24”, 8”, 6”, 4” and 2” water lines with most in the range of 8” to 4”. A 24” water line runs on the east side parallel to Hester Street between University Avenue and 3rd Street. The 24” line then turns to the east and runs on the north side parallel to 3rd Street. Lines in Area B are cast iron, PVC and asbestos concrete, with the majority of the lines being cast iron. All of the lines are assumed to be

rather old with the exception of a PVC line. The Hideaway Pizza has experienced “red water” presumably from the corrosion of old cast iron pipes.

In Area C water lines were replaced in 1999.

Storm Sewers: From workshops with business and community members it was pointed out that there are storm water drainage problems in the alley behind the Katz building and on the north end of Knoblock. Most of the streets in the project area use curb and gutter for the transportation of storm water. In Area A, only Main Street has inlets and storm sewers. In Area B, only the northern part of Knoblock has inlets and storm sewers. In Area C, only Washington Street has inlets and storm sewers which were rehabilitated/replaced in 1999.

General Recommendations

If surface infrastructures such as streets, sidewalks, and alleys are to be replaced, then the buried infrastructure below them in Areas A and B should also be replaced considering the age of the water and sewer lines. The smaller 6” sewer lines should be replaced with new 8” sewer lines to meet current DEQ regulations. If water and sewer lines do not have the DEQ required 10 feet of separation, then this should be corrected. All 4” water lines should be replaced with 6” or 8” lines to provide improved fire flows.

At the City’s recommendation, the following water lines in Area B should be replaced:

- 6” line along University Avenue between Hester Street and Knoblock Street.
- 4” line along Knoblock Street between University Avenue and Mathews Avenue.
- 4” line along Knoblock between 3rd Avenue and 6th Avenue.

Where the storm sewers exist beneath streets, sidewalks and alleys being replaced, they too should be rehabilitated and/or replaced. Correcting storm drainage issues on the north end of Knoblock and in the alley east of Main Street between 7th and 8th should be addressed if other improvements are considered in these areas.

Replacing the alley surface without replacing old utilities is not advised. If replacing the utilities is cost prohibitive, an inexpensive alternative to improve the appearance of an alley is to patch potholes and then lay a slurry seal on top of the existing surface. A number of alleys could be cleaned and have vegetation trimmed and/or removed to make them more presentable.

The City should install audible signals at the stop lights and Braille signs. Curb ramps should comply with ANSI 4.7 with warning domes. The sidewalks should be continuous with curb ramps on both side of a street or alley. The serious trip hazards should be repaired. Ideally sidewalks should be designed like the Walgreen’s drug store at the corner of 6th Avenue and Main Street to avoid the blurring of the sidewalk and parking lot. Three foot sidewalks should be replaced with five foot sidewalks.

IV. Core Commercial Districts Parking Management Plan

Carl Walker, Inc., a parking planning and engineering firm based in Tempe, Arizona, conducted a thorough review of existing parking challenges and opportunities in each of Stillwater's core commercial districts. Carl Walker offers recommendations for each individual district, plus an overall parking management strategy for the City of Stillwater.

It has been said that “parking is not rocket science... it's harder!” Parking is a specialized area of expertise that impacts people in very direct ways. It is political. It generates passion. It can generate controversy. It is expensive. It impacts economic development. Because of our dependence on the automobile, it is a critical piece of civic infrastructure – one that must be effectively planned, managed and maintained like any other infrastructure resource.

Because of Stillwater's relatively small size, one person should be assigned to manage all parking issues in all the core commercial districts – Downtown, The Strip and Campus Corner. Selecting the right person for this position will be important. This individual will need to possess good communications skills, some planning and program development skills, an ability to assess technical issues and equipment and have the ability to build consensus and manage a program to achieve a defined set of program objectives.

The different commercial areas will require different parking management strategies and tactics. To give some initial structure and direction to the development of an overall parking management program the following recommendations are proposed:

Structure/Organization

- Create either a half-time or full-time city position who will have as a primary responsibility the development of a parking management program for the City's core commercial districts, building on the recommendations of this report.
- It is recommended that all parking related activities be overseen by this individual including parking program planning, management, maintenance, enforcement, selection of new technologies, etc. It is important that this person supervise all aspects of the program so that the program functions as a system. Sample parking manager position descriptions are provided in the appendix that can be modified to meet the specific needs of Stillwater.

Mission/Vision/Guiding Principles

- To give some initial direction to the development of an overall parking management program it is recommended that specific parking program mission and vision statements be crafted. These statements should be deepened by the development of a set of “guiding principles”. A draft set of each of these documents is provided in the appendix of this report.

- We recommend that a parking taskforce made up of community stakeholders be created to evaluate these draft documents and customize them to reflect the needs of the community. Typically a parking taskforce for a community the size of Stillwater would include representatives from the city (community development, planning, police, public works, elected officials, etc.), the Main Street organization (representing property owners, merchants, etc.), representatives from the Knobloch and Washington Street areas and a representative from Oklahoma State University.

Parking Program Scope

The following table lists some of the possible program scope elements for the new parking program.

Possible Scope of Operations	
Overall Leadership and Management	Manage Off-Street Parking Facilities
Program Definition and Development	Employee Parking
Parking Planning	Parking Facility Maintenance Programs
Marketing/Promotion/Information	ADA Compliance
Community Outreach	Facility Safety / Security
Parking Resource Allocation	
Rate Setting	On-Street Parking Management
Service and Information Center (Maps, Parking Hotline, etc)	Meter Collections
Equipment and Technology Specifications	Meter Maintenance
Contract Management	Enforcement
Develop Consolidated Financial Reporting System	
Parking Wayfinding and Signage	Special Programs
Customer Service Programs	Special Events
Validation Programs	Residential Parking Permit Programs
Parking and Transportation Demand Management	Valet Parking Programs

Detailed recommendations from Carl Walker, Inc., for start-up and initial activities of the proposed parking management program are provided in the “Major Program Recommendations” document in the appendix.

V. Action Plan for Downtown

Framework Summary

As revealed by the Core Commercial Districts Master Plan market analysis, downtown Stillwater's viability is threatened by new retail competition and an aging customer base. An aggressive multi-faceted investment strategy is recommended to make downtown an exciting and relevant destination for all Stillwater residents. The investment strategy is guided by the following objectives:

- Establish a central gathering place for the city;
- Expand recreational and educational opportunities for kids and families;
- Create dining and entertainment options for adults;
- Develop catalytic civic amenities that will encourage new private investment in downtown;
- Make it fun to visit, work, live and play downtown.

The framework for improving downtown is based upon six inter-connected initiatives that are explained in detail in this Action Plan. The five initiatives include:

- **Public Amenities & Streetscape – The “Z” Plan:** Major new civic amenities are proposed to connect downtown's existing public facilities (i.e. library, multi-arts center and community center) to a revived Main Street commercial district. Currently, the City's public facilities are located two blocks west of Main Street – a distance that discourages interaction and pedestrian activity. Through the “Z Plan”, it is proposed that a new civic activity center be constructed to connect existing public facilities to Main Street, plus catalyze new private investment and development, including housing, throughout downtown. Amenities to be added to downtown include a permanent Stillwater Public Market, a festival park, Children's Museum, 350 space parking structure and new streetscape along Main Street and the streets surrounding the festival park.
- **Main Street Dining & Entertainment District:** Incentives and development policies are proposed to encourage new dining and entertainment uses along the Main Street corridor between 6th and 10th Streets. Potential incentives include enhanced streetscape and signage, building code reforms to encourage the reuse of older buildings, liquor licensing reforms via State legislation, creation of a wi-fi “hot zone” and financial incentives including revolving loan funds and tax increment financing.
- **Parking Management Plan:** A new city parking management system is proposed that will manage parking resources in downtown, plus the campus commercial districts. In downtown, a new 350-space parking garage is proposed to accommodate new downtown attractions plus expand employee parking options. Better management of existing private and public parking areas will also create additional options for employees, visitors and future residents.

- **Façade Improvements & Design Guidelines:** To encourage private property owners to improve building facades, the Action Plan includes more than a dozen specific ideas for buildings on and in the vicinity of Main Street. The proposed façade improvements offer inexpensive common sense solutions that focus on paint, signage and awnings. Design guidelines are also provided to help property owners and businesses create a more attractive and cohesive business district in the future.
- **Downtown Organization & Business Improvement District:** The Action Plan offers recommendations for strengthening Downtown Stillwater Unlimited, the downtown business association that also manages Stillwater's local Main Street program. A new business improvement district (BID) is proposed to create ongoing funding through a special assessment for the marketing, maintenance and management of the downtown. A phased approach to the BID is suggested. Phase I, which could be implemented immediately, recommends that the BID be created to provide additional funding to support downtown business development and marketing efforts. Phase II, which would be contingent upon capital funding for the proposed public amenities and streetscape, would increase the BID assessment to help market, maintain and manage the new public market, festival park, Main Street streetscape improvements and parking structure.
- **Downtown Living:** Downtown housing is a likely market-driven result if the preceding pieces of the downtown puzzle can be assembled in Stillwater. Nationwide, housing has followed culture, dining and entertainment into central business districts. Downtown living is a natural long term extension of the Action Plan for Downtown and several logical sites are identified for higher density mixed-use housing in the future.

Reference Copy

Action Plan for Downtown: Public Amenities & Streetscape

Through the “Z Plan”, it is proposed that a new civic activity center be constructed to connect existing public facilities to Main Street, plus catalyze new private investment and development, including housing, throughout downtown. Amenities to be added to downtown include:

- A permanent Stillwater Public Market and farmer’s market venue;
- A festival park with outdoor performance stage and children’s spray park;
- Children’s Museum;
- 350-space public parking structure;
- Enhanced street and pedestrian lighting on Main Street and the streets surrounding the festival park;
- Banners and flag poles on Main Street;
- Mid-block crossings on Main Street.

The Denver-based design firm of Civitas has prepared an Urban Design Notebook that illustrates the design principles, background, thinking, estimated costs and alternatives proposed to enhance downtown Stillwater.

While acknowledging the limitations of downtown’s aging infrastructure, the preceding plan does not require the reconstruction of streets, sidewalks and alleys that would offer the opportunity replace sewer, water and storm drainage lines. SMC has reviewed the Civitas “Z Plan” and, with the exception of selective sewer line replacement, finds that existing infrastructure is more than adequate to accommodate the new facilities.

Design Principles: The public amenity and streetscape package developed by Civitas is based upon the following design principles:

- **Connection = Synergy:** The urban design concept aims to link the civic facilities located along Duck Street (i.e. library, multi-arts and community center) to Main Street. Currently, these activities and destinations are located across a sparse two block expanse that discourages pedestrian interaction. The “Z Plan” creates a central civic amenity – public market, festival park, parking garage and children’s museum – that closes this spatial gap.
- **(Family & Kids) + (Food & Dining & Entertainment) = Special Destination:** To enliven downtown Stillwater, and broaden it’s offerings beyond a one dimensional shopping experience, the “Z Plan” aims to create a multi-dimensional destination that takes advantage of immediate market opportunities and is founded upon Stillwater’s core values.
- **Main Street Streetscape Design Principles:** Civitas offers the following design principles that guide the lighting and streetscape improvements proposed for the Main Street corridor from 6th to 10th Streets:

- Develop a streetscape design that will reinforce downtown’s history. No place else in Stillwater can lay claim to being the birthplace of the city, nor compete as the community’s “heart and soul”.
- Create a unifying, high quality character for Main Street that gives it a distinct identity and adds cache to the Main Street address.
- Visually and physically unify both sides of Main Street, enticing pedestrians to cross this wide street with a series of mid-block crosswalks.
- Add visual density to Main Street by populating the wide street with more vertical design elements.
- Add vertical design elements that can be seen from a distance, adding to Main Street’s identity and a sense of arrival as one approaches downtown.
- Add pedestrian lights to support the proposed emphasis on evening dining and entertainment activities.
- Provide shade on sidewalks through a coordinated building facade awning program.
- Maintain the existing street cross-section to minimize construction impacts on existing retail and to maximize the use of limited funds for above-ground amenities and activities.

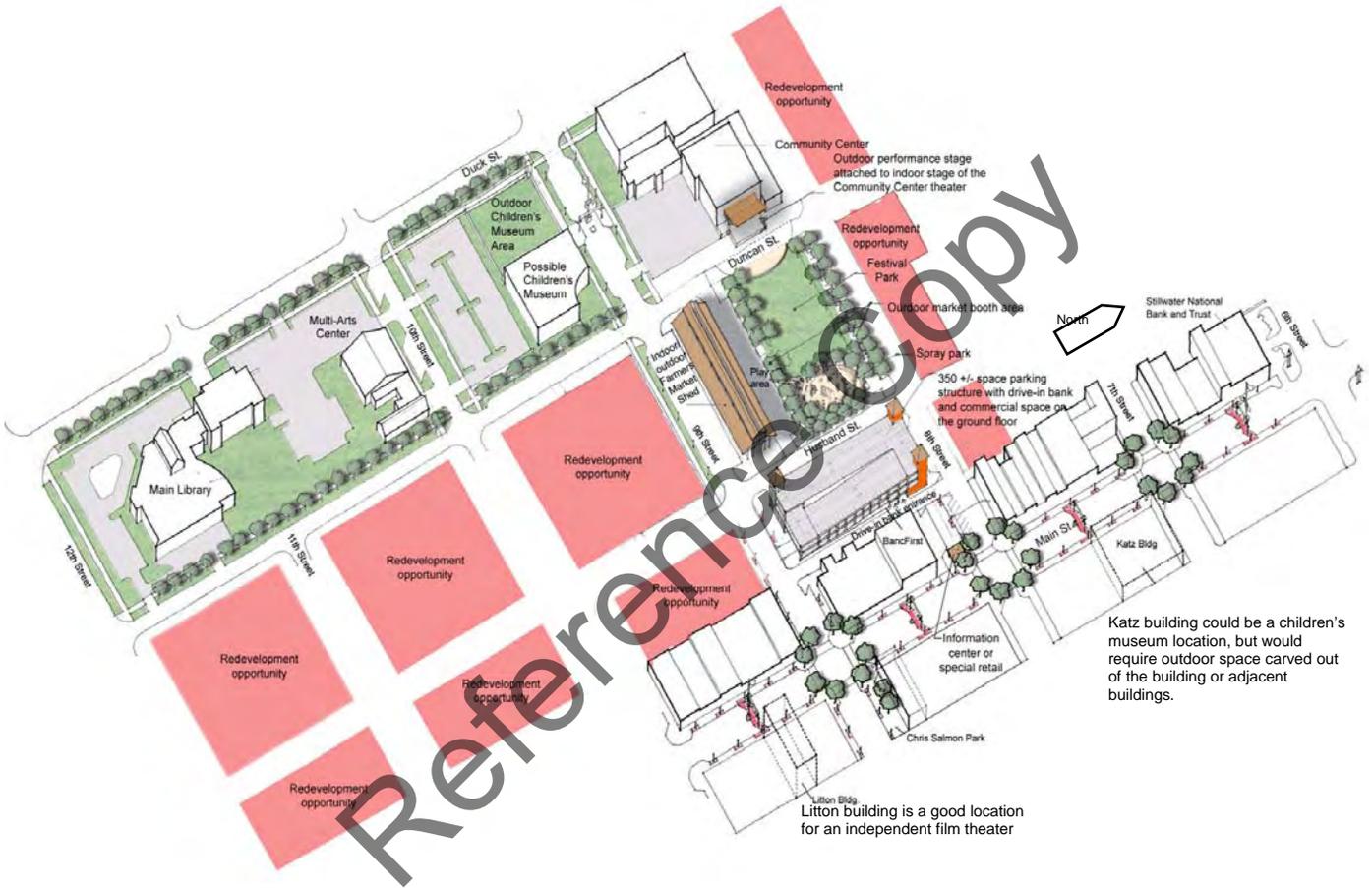
Highlights from the Urban Design Notebook are provided below and on the following pages.

Mid-block crossing on Main Street



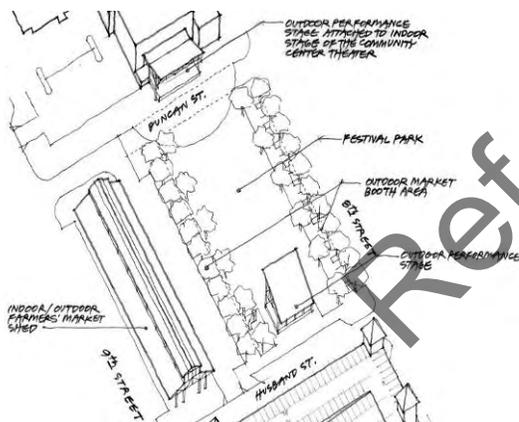
The "Z" Plan

Illustrating potential redevelopment areas for increased downtown housing



Proposal for City owned property and BancFirst property between 8th and 9th Streets

- Indoor/outdoor farmers market shed
- Festival park with outdoor stage
- Children's spray park
- 350 space parking structure
- Outdoor performance stage attached to Community Center Theater

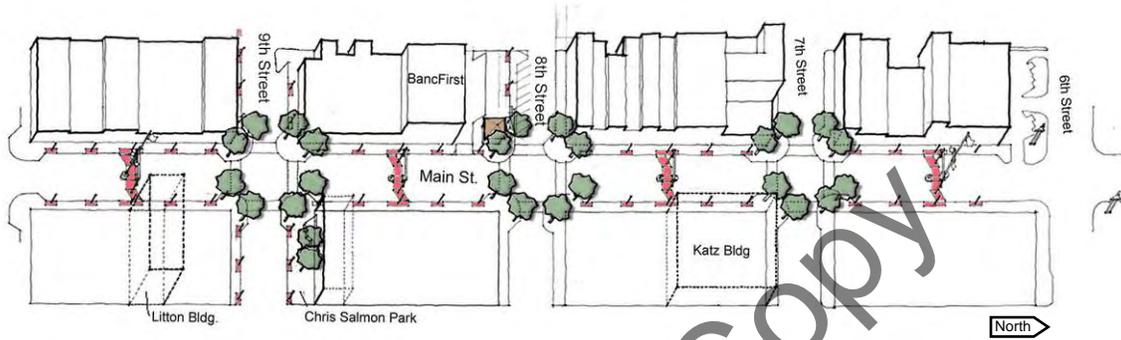


Festival park alternative with a second performance stage in place of the spray park

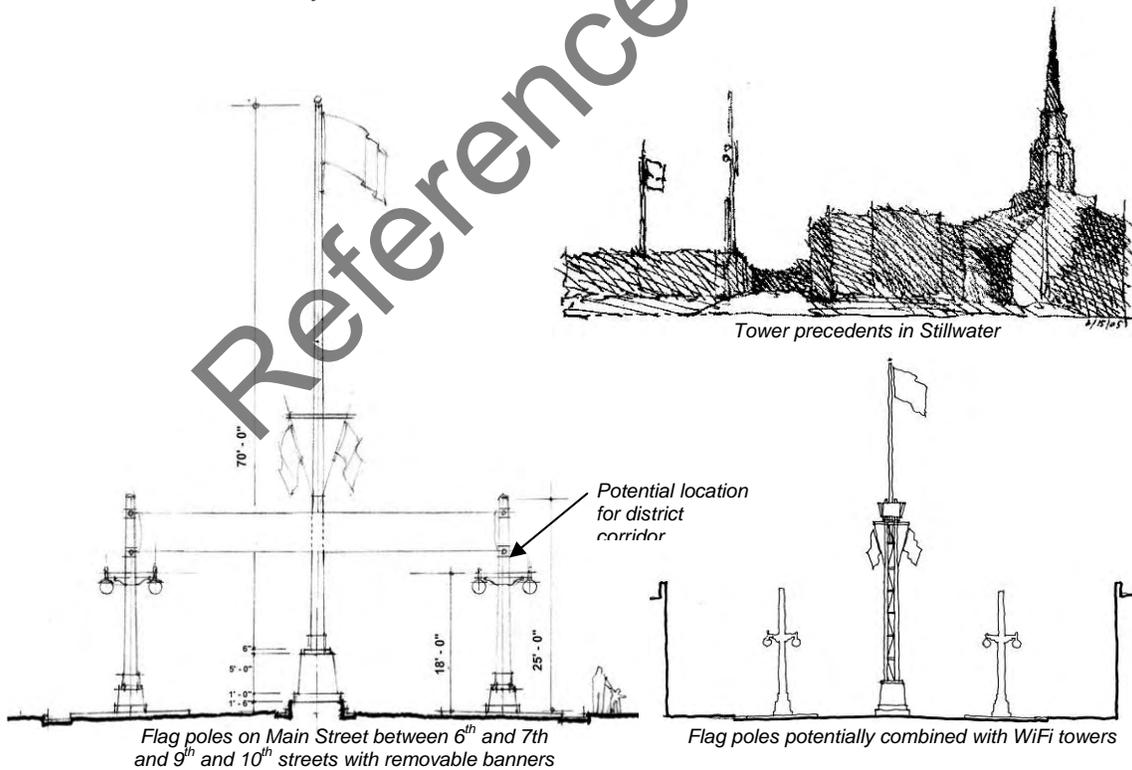


Main Street Recommendations

- Historic Replicas for Pedestrian and Street Lights
- Four Midblock crossings on Main Street between 6th – 10th
- Flag Poles near 6th and 9th in center of Main Street
- Cluster street trees at intersections
- Shade provided by a coordinated awning program
- Connections to farmers market and festival park at 8th and 9th streets



Main Street Gateway



Action Plan for Downtown: Main Street Dining & Entertainment District

The Core Commercial Districts Master Plan market analysis identified a strong market opportunity for creating a dining and entertainment district in downtown. According to the community attitudes survey, the top improvements that would encourage all Stillwater residents to visit downtown include more restaurants, brand name stores and movie theaters. Enthusiasm for these improvements is more evident in the respondents age 34 and younger. The younger demographic also adds unique shops and special events to the list of desirable improvements.

Currently, Stillwater's sole traditional dining and entertainment district is found along "The Strip" on Washington Street. This area, adjacent to Oklahoma State University, caters primarily to a younger collegiate market. For persons over the age 24, dining and entertainment choices are limited primarily to chain and franchise restaurants located along major thoroughfares. Downtown has an immediate opportunity to fill this void and be Stillwater's dining and entertainment district for adults.

Surprisingly, the community survey found that 40% of respondents visit downtown for dining –despite having less than a handful of eating establishments, and, at the time of the survey, only three that were open for dinner. This result suggests that the Stillwater market is predisposed to visiting downtown for dining – all that needs to happen is for the establishments to actually exist! Respondents to the community survey offered more than 200 suggestions for improving downtown dining with the most popular options being "steakhouse", Italian and "ethnic" restaurants including Mexican and Indian. Other characteristics with high frequency included "upscale", "classy" and "family".

Entertainment options are also limited in Stillwater. While the University and City Community Center offer traditional entertainment such as live theater and concerts, there are very few options for movies, live music and dancing. Downtown, as the entertainment district for adults, could fill this void by offering independent movie screens, live music such as jazz and dancing such as country and western fare.

To encourage investment in dining and entertainment type uses in downtown Stillwater, the following actions are proposed:

- **Designate Main Street as Stillwater's Dining & Entertainment District:** Main Street bound from 6th to 10th Avenues and a half block in depth on the western and eastern sides, should be designated as Stillwater's "Dining and Entertainment District". The district designation would allow property owners and businesses to tap a variety of incentives designed to help attract and support dining and entertainment uses. The proposed incentives follow.
- **Main Street Streetscape:** The proposed streetscape design supports the creation of a pedestrian-oriented and active dining and entertainment corridor. Proposed new lighting reinforces the historic ambiance of the corridor and new light standards are lower and closer together, providing a drastic improvement to

nighttime lighting. The proposed mid-block crossings further encourage pedestrian use, and the dramatic mid-street flagpole elements offer a distinctive and festive accent to downtown.

- **Outdoor Dining/Sidewalk Cafes:** Within the Dining and Entertainment district, seasonal outdoor dining and sidewalk cafes will be encouraged. Existing sidewalk depths are adequate to support outdoor tables and seating.
- **Building Code Reforms:** Property owners have indicated that it can be time consuming and expensive to bring older buildings in conformance with existing Stillwater building codes. Many communities have had success in implementing historic building codes that provide more flexibility in adapting older buildings. Within the Dining and Entertainment district, the City of Stillwater should develop an expedited and streamlined permitting process for dining, entertainment, housing and specialty retail uses that aim to reuse older buildings.
- **Wi-Fi “Hot Zone”:** Stillwater should explore installing wi-fi wireless internet technology to serve the entire downtown business district. This technology is becoming more common and cost-efficient in downtown business districts. For example, Boulder recently installed a downtown wi-fi system that is powered almost entirely by solar energy. A district-wide wireless network would enhance downtown’s attractiveness for business, living, dining and entertainment. The concept is compatible with Stillwater’s role as a major college town. Plus, new wi-fi technology can offer benefits to the City’s communications systems, providing benefits to police, fire and other essential services.
- **Liquor Licensing Reform:** Many downtown sites are limited for dining and entertainment use by state liquor laws, particularly the requirement that any liquor serving establishment be located more than 300 feet from churches. Stillwater is encouraged to join a statewide coalition of downtown business districts to amend this law, particularly as it relates to a designated Dining and Entertainment District.
- **Financial Incentives:** Several financial incentives should be explored to help support dining and entertainment uses in downtown. Options include:
 - **Tax increment financing** to support large entertainment-related development, such as a multi-screen theater for first run and/or independent films. Tax increment financing allows future sales and property tax increases from a development project to be used to finance improvements related to initial development of the project. It is a common tool in downtown development nationwide.
 - A **revolving loan fund** to provide working capital and/or property improvement funds for new dining and entertainment uses. A local revolving loan fund could be capitalized from a variety of sources, including community development block grant funds, statewide Main Street funds and other local, state and federal economic development sources.

➤ A **bank community development corporation** (CDC) or other pooled lending mechanism should be explored by Stillwater’s lending community. The type of businesses envisioned for the Dining and Entertainment District – restaurants, entertainment venues and specialty retail – are likely to be local independent concepts that traditional lenders view as high risk. A bank CDC or pooled loan fund could allow several participating banks to reduce risk, meet community lending goals and participate in the revitalization of downtown.

- **Marketing and Management:** Downtown Stillwater Unlimited (DSU) and its Main Street program should become a strong advocate and promoter of the Dining and Entertainment District. The downtown organization could work with city officials to craft and adopt regulatory reforms, including the proposed building code, liquor licensing and street café reforms. A strengthened DSU could also focus energy on business recruitment, providing a one-stop “portal of entry” for business prospects that are consistent with the Dining and Entertainment District vision. DSU could help businesses identify appropriate space, understand market opportunities and access financing through banks and public agencies.

Reference Copy

Action Plan for Downtown: Parking Management Plan

As discussed earlier in the Core Commercial Districts Master Plan, a new parking management system is recommended to be administered by the City of Stillwater for all of the core districts. In downtown, this new parking management program would aim to meet the following objectives:

- Improve the ease and availability of parking for customers, employees and visitors.
- Develop a balanced system of incentives, penalties and alternatives to encourage employees to park in off-street parking lots.
- Create new parking supply to encourage the growth of downtown and to encourage new investment that attracts jobs, residents, customers and visitors.

Downtown Parking Structure: A multi-level parking structure providing approximately 350 spaces is recommended to support the downtown dining and entertainment district as well as the proposed new amenities that include the public market, festival park and Children's Museum. The proposed location of the parking structure is on Husband Street between 8th and 9th Streets. Because this location is currently a surface parking lot for BancFirst, accommodations for BancFirst employees to park in the structure are assumed. Another feature of the current deck concept is the incorporation of a replacement bank drive-through.

The concept as currently envisioned is for a two bay, single helix structure with parking on the ramps and with end bay parking. This is the most efficient configuration for the site and given the length of the site should create a design efficiency of less than 325 square feet per space. This will help keep the cost of the structure relatively low. This circulation system is also simple and user friendly.

From an urban design perspective, it is recommended that some retail or office space be incorporated on the first floor. Public restrooms are also suggested to support the activity in the proposed park across Husband Street. To create the 350 spaces the parking structure would be three to four levels high.

Based on recent parking structure developments in the region (assuming a cost per space of \$13,500) the estimated development costs of this structure is approximately \$5,000,000 to \$6,000,000 depending on the degree to which other amenities (such as street-level retail, bank drive-thru, architectural enhancements, etc. are developed.

Action Plan for Downtown: Façade Improvements & Design Guidelines

To help encourage and guide private investment in downtown, Traverse City, Michigan-based Corbin Design has developed Design Guidelines for façade repair, restoration and renovation. As opposed to a prescriptive or regulatory approach, the Corbin Design Guidelines offer cost-effective and common sense ideas that include awnings, paint colors and commercial signage.

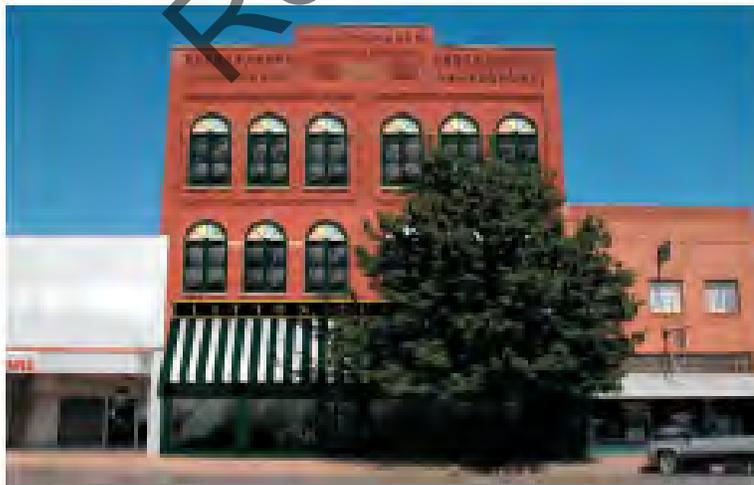
The general rules for Design Guidelines include:

- Building facades can be improved by restoring their original geometry, if not their original materials.
- Respect the symmetry that is often inherent in older buildings. It gives order to the appearance of the façade.
- Remove anachronistic elements that distract from the integrity of the character of the original building whenever possible.

Selected illustrations of the Design Guidelines follow. The full array of suggested improvements and Design Guidelines are provided in the Appendix.



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



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Action Plan for Downtown: Organization and Business Improvement District

Downtown Stillwater Unlimited (DSU) is a non-profit business advocacy organization that also manages downtown's Main Street program. DSU receives annual operating support in the form a \$20,000 grant from the City of Stillwater and generates additional revenue through a series of special events, promotions and memberships.

Currently, DSU is not adequately capitalized to be an effective champion and marketer for downtown. DSU's resources will pale in comparison to the marketing budgets of new retail competitors. In addition, if the ambitious public amenities and streetscape outlined in this plan are implemented, downtown property and business owners will need to take a stronger role in the marketing, maintenance and management of these new assets.

A Downtown Stillwater Business Improvement District

To advance the evolution of the DSU as a capable downtown champion, marketer and manager, a new business improvement district (BID) is proposed for downtown Stillwater. The BID would create a special assessment on all commercial properties within the downtown study area. In addition to helping downtown better compete as a consumer destination, the BID will demonstrate the downtown community's willingness to share in the proposed civic investment that could transform the central business district. An operating outline of the proposed BID follows.

Goals & Objectives

- Professionally market, maintain and manage downtown.
- Improve downtown's ability to compete.
- Increase occupancies, values and sales.
- Create a unified voice for property and business owners.
- Strengthen the working partnership with the City.

Proposed Service Area

Commercial properties within the Downtown Study Area of the Core Commercial Districts Master Plan would be assessed for the BID. This area is generally bounded by 6th Street to north, 12th Street to the south, Duck Street to the west and Lewis Street to the east. The area also includes the Main Street corridor north of 6th Street to 4th Street.

Improvements & Activities

- Marketing initiatives to promote downtown Stillwater as a consumer destination.
- Economic development to recruit new businesses and assist existing businesses to grow.
- Advocacy to champion downtown and help implement the Action Plan for Downtown.
- Assist the City to maintain and manage new civic amenities and streetscape.

Method of Financing Special assessment upon commercial properties that benefit from improvements and activities.

- Annual Assessment Budget**
- **Phase 1** (immediately) **\$50,000 per year**
 - **Phase 2** (upon approval of city financing for Action Plan public amenities and streetscape) **\$150,000 per year**

In addition to assessments, annual operating budgets would be leveraged by additional grants, event sponsorships, service contracts and other earned income.

Method of Assessment

Several methods of assessment have been explored. It is recommended that assessments be based upon the following formula based upon a combination of market value, lot square footage and building square footage of commercial properties, and then allocated to individual commercial properties:

Assessment Variable	Phase I: Estimated Annual Rate	Phase II: Estimated Annual Rate
Market Value	0.0007	0.0021
Lot Square Ft.	0.0139	0.0417
Building Square Ft.	0.0238	0.0714

Cap Annual assessment budgets may increase by 5% or the consumer price index for all urban consumers, whichever is less.

City Services The BID would not replace any pre-existing City services. The City would be encouraged to continue its annual operating contribution of \$20,000 to Downtown Stillwater Unlimited.

BID Governance The City of Stillwater would contract with Downtown Stillwater Unlimited to manage BID services. DSU would reconfigure its board of directors so that a majority of board members are commercial property owners that are also paying BID assessments.

Term The BID would have an initial term of 10 years. If the Action Plan public amenities and streetscape are installed, proponents of the BID would agree to renew the BID to be consistent with the estimated life of the new civic assets (i.e. 30+ years).

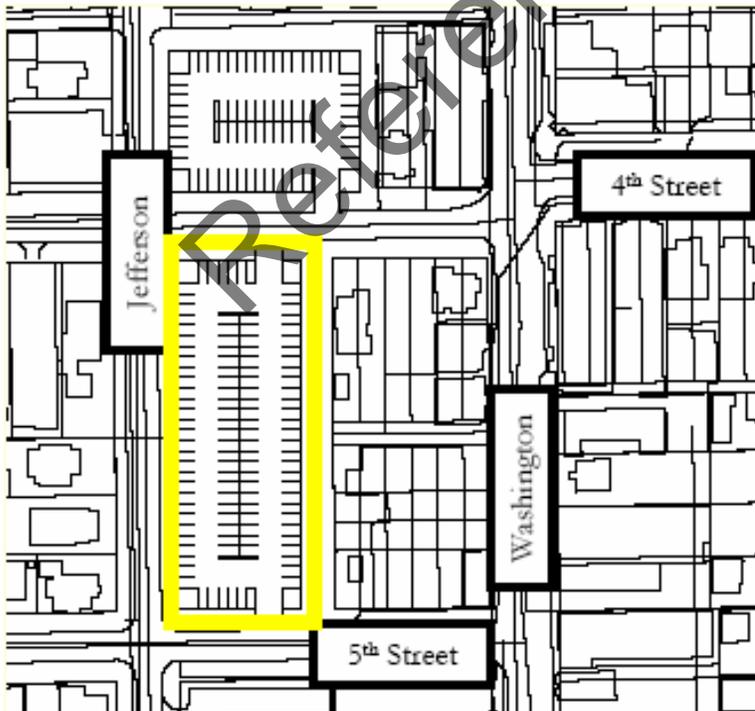
VI. Action Plan for Washington/Knoblock

Stillwater's campus commercial districts – The Strip and Campus Corner – are challenged by physical limitations. Each district is surrounded by residential and/or university property, creating ongoing land use and parking compatibility challenges. For these business districts to thrive, they must create additional parking for employees and customers, and advance improvements to make each district more pedestrian friendly.

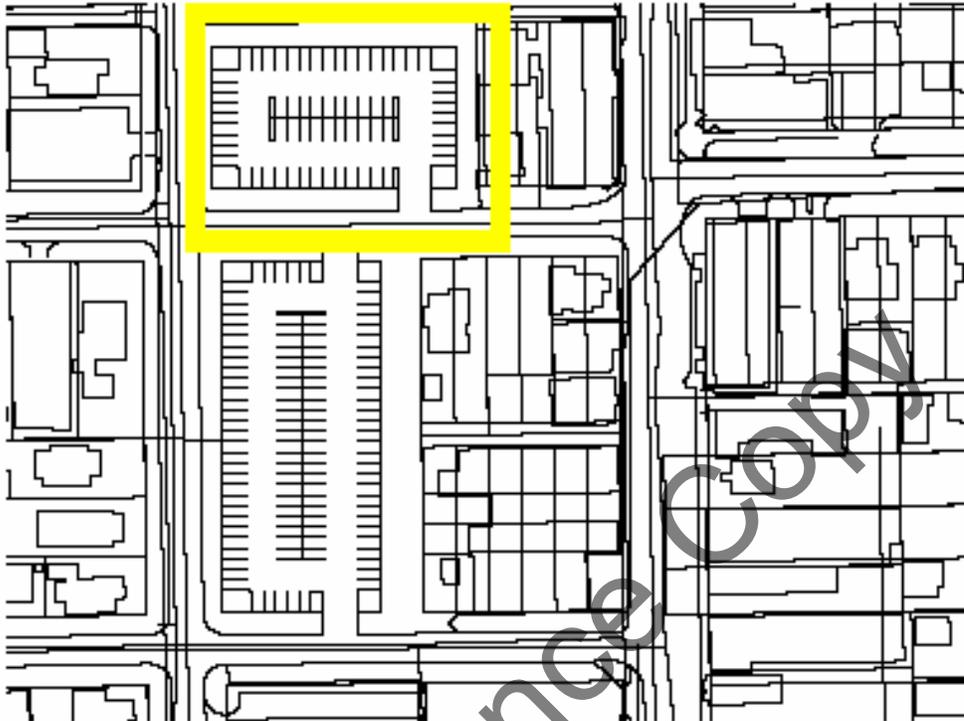
To address the priorities of property and business owners in these two commercial districts, the Core Commercial Districts Master Plan focuses primarily on parking management issues. In addition to providing recommendations on developing parking lots and creating an on-street pay parking system, the extension of 3rd Street from Knoblock to Washington is strongly recommended.

Several options for increasing the parking supply were identified in the Washington Street and Campus Corner areas. Stakeholders offered several possible options for increasing off-street parking. These options were evaluated and conceptual layouts were developed.

Parking Lot Option #1: Purchase seven properties on the east side of the 400 block of Jefferson, south of 4th street. Create a ½ block wide parking area for the full block length, and providing a north-south service alley. Existing elevations may result in the parking lot being lower than Jefferson. The lot could include a public restroom and electrical power.



Parking Lot Option #2: The parking area would be bordered by Jefferson, the north alley, 4th Street and the commercial property on the corner of 4th Street and Washington.



Parking Lot Option #3: The consultant team is supportive of community efforts to design parking into proposed pocket park and entryway improvements located at 6th and Washington Streets. About 10 additional diagonal spaces can be added to the northern edge of the pocket park.

3rd Street Extension

A more creative approach that dramatically increases on-street parking is to punch through 3rd Street and create a “parking street”. This strategy could create an estimated 175 additional spaces. The exciting part of this concept is the new development patterns and opportunities it creates by providing a link between the Washington Street/Strip and Knoblock/Campus Corner areas. In addition to creating parking, this option provides:

- A permanent and logical pedestrian linkage between the Washington and Knoblock, the two primary campus commercial districts;
- The beginning of a campus-to-downtown pedestrian linkage east on 3rd Street to Duck, and then south on Duck to 6th or 9th Streets into downtown;
- An opportunity to create a new development pattern along 3rd Street that would encourage quality high density residential mixed-use development. New development along 3rd Street could include ground floor commercial uses connecting The Strip and Campus Corner, and creating a vital mixed-use environment at the southern edge of Oklahoma State University.

The 3rd Street extension is illustrated in the following diagram:



Parking District Concept for Campus Commercial Districts

The stakeholders and merchants in the Washington Street/Strip and Knoblock Street/Campus Corner areas were very supportive of implementing paid on-street parking in their district to promote on-street space turn-over. An important component of their support of this management practice was a desire to have the parking revenues generated by the program to be reinvested in the district. Parking revenues could be used to pay for a variety of campus commercial district improvements, including:

- Finance capital and maintenance costs of the proposed on-street meters;
- Acquire land and improve property for off-street lots;
- Market parking in the campus commercial districts;
- Design and install a variety of public space improvements to help make the campus commercial districts more pedestrian-friendly, including signage, lighting, decorative sidewalks and landscaping.

The primary options for implementing on-street paid parking include:

Electronic Single-Space Meters: A key advantage of electronic single space meters is that everyone knows how they work and when they see them in front of a parking space they intuitively know they have to pay for parking. The new electronic meters are much more reliable than their mechanical predecessors and they have many advantages in terms of programming flexibility and auditing. Electronic single-space meters can be configured to also accept smart cards or “cash keys” as mechanisms to provide customers with alternative payment choices other than coins.

Multi-Space Pay Stations: Many municipalities are moving toward using multi-space pay stations. In general one multi-space meter can be used to control one block face or approximately 8 to 10 spaces. If used in a small surface lot where all pedestrians are generally routed in one direction, one multi-space unit can control more spaces.

While both of the preceding options are viable, the consultant team recommends that Stillwater consider the use of dual-headed, electronic single space meters as the preferred option.

Next Steps:

- Develop preliminary list of equipment and support accessories.
- Develop initial capital budget
- Develop operating policies and procedures for a Campus Parking District
- Develop operating budget, including staffing and revenue projections

VII. Citywide Wayfinding Plan

“Wayfinding” can be defined as the orderly structuring of information required to enable people to comfortably and successfully access an environment. Wayfinding is also critical to the image of a community, providing a visual representation of civic values and aspirations.

In developing a wayfinding system for Stillwater, Corbin Design completed an extensive community orientation process that led to the development of two design concepts. After seeking input on the two design concepts from core commercial district stakeholders, city staff and elected officials, a final design array was created. The system is also designed to comply with Oklahoma Department of Transportation guidelines.

The resulting wayfinding system includes proposed destinations, sign site locations, design schematics and maintenance principles, and is based upon the following rules and understanding of wayfinding logic:

- Consider the first-time visitor.
- Lead, don't point the way.
- Information should be presented in a logical and orderly fashion.
- Elements should be designed for easy updating as information changes.



VIII. Implementation Sequencing & Financing Strategies

Implementation Sequencing

Next Six Months	Responsibility
City of Stillwater endorsement/adoption of Master Plan	City/Steering Committee
Create Phase I Downtown business improvement district	DSU/City
Insert Wayfinding & 3 rd Street extension projects into City sales tax extension for streets	City/Steering Committee
Initiate process to form parking management system	City/Steering Committee
Initiate process to form campus parking district	City/Campus Commercial Districts
Finalize design and cost estimates for Downtown Action Plan improvements	City/Steering Committee/DSU
Initiate Main St. Dining & Entertainment District <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate Main Street as a formal “dining & entertainment district” • Evaluate pros and cons for re-use of older buildings of City building codes and development review process • Initiate work to develop statewide coalition to support liquor licensing reforms for designated entertainment districts – seek assistance from Oklahoma Main Street program • Explore feasibility of establishing financial incentives to support dining & entertainment uses 	DSU/City

Next Six to 18 Months	Responsibility
Build community support for Downtown Action Plan bond issue and/or sales tax initiative	Steering Committee/DSU
Design and install Wayfinding & 3 rd Street improvements	City
Implement Phase II BID	DSU
Final design, development and implementation of Downtown Action Plan improvements	City/DSU
Manage & Develop Main Street Dining & Entertainment District <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist small business prospects to locate downtown • Implement City building code and development process reforms for the dining & entertainment district • Lead statewide approach to liquor license reforms for designated dining & entertainment districts • Create financial incentive program to support dining & entertainment uses 	DSU/City
Ongoing downtown marketing & business development	DSU

Financing Strategy

To determine financing strategies for the improvements proposed in the Core Commercial Districts Master Plan, the Edmond firm of Municipal Finance Services, Inc., (MFS) has been consulted. MFS specializes in Oklahoma public finance and has served as the City of Stillwater's financial advisor in a variety of capacities in the past. Based upon consultations with MFS, the following public finance strategies are recommended:

- **Stillwater Street Improvements Sales Tax:** The City of Stillwater has been able to finance capital improvements to streets through a 0.50% sales tax last approved by voters in 2001. The City of Stillwater plans to seek extension of this sales tax from voters in early 2006. The Core Commercial Districts Master Plan suggests that the following improvements be incorporated into the next iteration of City street improvement projects:
 - Citywide wayfinding signage program
 - 3rd Street extension project from Washington to Duck Streets
- **Downtown Business Improvement District (BID):** The proposed BID would create a special assessment on commercial property located within downtown study area. Downtown property owners can initiate a petition to form the BID at any time. The Master Plan suggests that downtown stakeholders move to form the BID in early 2006 and demonstrate the resolve of downtown property and business owners to improve their district and make downtown more competitive.
- **Downtown Action Plan Improvements:** The public amenities and streetscape improvements proposed as part of the Action Plan for Downtown amount to an estimated **\$11.7million**. In exploring financing options with MFS, there appear to be two primary options for financing this investment:
 - Sales tax increase: An increase of 0.25% in the Stillwater sales tax over 15 years could generate adequate revenue for the downtown improvements, plus, if local sales taxes continue to increase, create additional revenue for enhancements and/or early retirement of the tax.
 - General obligation bonds: An average property tax mill levy increase of slightly more than four (4) mills over 15 years could also create sufficient revenue to issue general obligation bonds for the downtown project. The projected mill increase would create a total property tax levy that is below that of past years, before the recent retirement of other debt.

There are advantages and disadvantages to each option. While the sales tax option could create more revenue, overall sales tax rates are viewed as relatively high in Stillwater. The mill levy, while not generating excess revenue, would allow property taxes to be below rates established in prior years before the recent retirement of debt. The City, the project Steering Committee and downtown advocates will need to weigh the pros, cons and timing of each approach. The Plan recommends that a

method be determined in the first half of 2006 and that downtown advocates work toward a citywide vote on the issue in the fall.

Project Area A, referenced as the “downtown area”, has the following proposed:

Improvement	Estimated Cost *
Downtown Action Plan:	
Phase I:	BID revenues beginning at \$50,000 per year and incrementally increasing to \$150,000 per year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Program (Marketing, Management and Maintenance) 	
Phase II: (listed in priority order)**	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main Street streetscape, including lighting, mid-block crossings & monument flagpoles, 6th to 12th 	\$ 886,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Festival park, including community center outdoor performance stage, children’s spray park, and replace sewer lines 	\$ 1,402,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmer’s Market shed 	\$ 1,201,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wi-Fi 	\$ 106,000
	\$ 3,595,000
Phase III:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children’s Museum 	\$ 2,000,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land acquisition & project management 	<u>\$ 800,000</u>
	\$ 2,800,000
Phase IV:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 350-space parking structure 	\$ 5,500,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streets surrounding parking garage, 8th, 9th, Husband, alley 	<u>\$ 129,000</u>
	\$5,629,000
Total	\$12,024,000

Project Areas B & C, referenced as the Campus Commercial Districts, have the following proposed:

Campus Commercial Districts Plan:	
3rd Avenue Extension	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street construction, including new water lines & building demolition 	\$ 800,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land acquisition & project management 	<u>\$ 350,000</u>
Total	\$1,150,000
Parking & Pedestrian Improvements, (possible Business Improvement District)	To be determined

In addition to the specific project areas, a wayfinding system is proposed communitywide.

Citywide Wayfinding System	\$ 580,000
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*Master plan level cost estimates are subject to change as the scope for each listed item is more specifically defined.

**Downtown Phase II does not include any street upgrades or land acquisition that may be necessary to implement the plan.

Plan adopted by Stillwater City Commission, February 27, 2006 as indicated herein.

Reference Copy

PROGRESSIVE URBAN
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES



P.U.M.A.

