



CITY OF STILLWATER

DOWNTOWN FRAMEWORK PLAN DRAFT



BONESTROO

City of Stillwater

Downtown Stillwater Framework Plan

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I. INTRODUCTION

Downtown Stillwater has evolved through dynamic incremental changes from the “Birthplace of Minnesota” to a major destination as Minnesota’s iconic “River Town”. Through its evolution the downtown has been the subject of numerous transportation, parking, planning, and design studies that provide key resources on which to build. The following mission statement from the 1988 Downtown Plan summarizes the sentiment and intent of all the downtown planning efforts and has guided this 2008 update to the Comprehensive Plan:

The image and identity of Downtown Stillwater is of primary importance. It is represented in its historic buildings, its natural setting, and its dedication to open spaces, pedestrian accessibility, and the river. The goal of the Downtown Plan is to enhance and retain the historic rivertown image of Stillwater through a conscientious and gradual process of change and economic growth so that Stillwater, “the Birthplace of Minnesota,” continues to be a special place to live, to work, and to visit.

A. Purpose

Downtown Framework Plan

This plan represents a real change for downtown by focusing on linking the surrounding neighborhoods to Main Street and the riverfront to create a framework for growth that reinforces Stillwater’s ‘rivertown’ character. The plan knits together a network of streetscapes, open spaces, and land uses to create amenities, which will attract and retain residents and businesses. It strives to balance pedestrian and vehicular needs, and to provide spaces for a variety of gatherings and festivals.

The approach for this process involved gaining an understanding of what has already been done, synthesizing and weaving together the pertinent aspects of past plans to maintain continuity among these efforts and ultimately creating a single integrated comprehensive planning document.

B. Recurring Themes

Consistent among the numerous downtown planning efforts are three recurring themes:

1. Managing Growth to Reinforce Small City Character

- Preserve and enhance the historic rivertown image of Stillwater.
- Encourage a viable and compatible mix of community and visitor services and activities.
- Preserve and reinforce residential neighborhoods.

2. Connect Main Street to Riverfront & Residential Neighborhoods

Develop a system that provides convenient pedestrian interconnections amongst destinations such as the Lowell Park, open spaces along the river, community trails, Main Street and the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

- Balance the functional design of flood control elements with aesthetic considerations and connections to the river.
- Maximize the efficiency of the limited parking supply through user education, signage enforcement, pricing and other measures.
- Minimize the negative impacts of traffic and parking on the downtown image while supporting appropriate economic activity.

3. Maintain Compact Core Downtown Area

Downtown Stillwater is a unique community within the Twin Cities Metro Area because of its topography, riverside location, and historic infrastructure of buildings, streets, and bridges. Downtown Stillwater is fortunate to be contained by distinct boundaries defined by the St. Croix River and the crescent shape of the river bluff to the north, east, and south. These physical edges help contain development and utilize space within the downtown to more efficiently nurture a walkable, compact and diverse downtown.

Stillwater's Downtown Plan should be considered in the context of existing and future growth pressures, as downtown's regional position and market desirability will evolve as the larger region grows and new projects, such as the St. Croix River Bridge and flood control project, change market dynamics. The ultimate success of this effort will be achieved by capturing the opportunities available in the market.

C. Community Based Planning

Some of the community's greatest assets for the comprehensive plan are the knowledge, interest and contributions that its citizens, businesses, local officials, and advisory commissions can make to the development of the community's vision and next-generation plan. The planning process provided opportunities for community involvement in creative and practical ways to help shape the future of the historic downtown.

Steering Committee

The Downtown Steering Committee was appointed as the primary group to guide the preparation of the Downtown Plan. The committee included representatives of the City Council, Planning Commission, Park and Recreation Commission, Downtown Parking Commission, Joint Planning Board, Chamber of Commerce, business owners, Heritage Preservation Commission, and residents.

Workshops

The major forces, issues, and opportunities associated with the downtown have been defined through a series of interactive community meetings which included issues workshops to define strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT), "dot-macracry", goal cafes, joint neighborhood and downtown planning meetings, open houses, and small group discussions.

The top five community responses in each category of the SWOT exercises were:

Strengths

- 15 Natural resources
- 12 Historical context
- 8 View of river
- 6 True downtown with independent businesses
- 5 Walkable

Opportunities

- 12 Enhancement of waterfront experience
- 11 Creative financing for improvements
- 9 Improve riverfront amenities
- 6 Promotion as year round destination
- 6 New bridge/better traffic control

Weaknesses

- 9 No lodging tax
- 8 Lack of diversity of businesses
- 8 Not implementing past plans
- 7 No common vision
- 6 Traffic

Threats

- 13 Delay of levee new bridge projects
- 10 Traffic volume on Main Street
- 10 Lack of funding by city on traffic issues
- 9 Non-cohesive store hours
- 7 Conditions of buildings and parking lots along water front

The results of the community exercises have been synthesized into goals, objectives, policies and implementation programs to shape the vision for downtown and guide the creation of a Downtown Framework Plan. See Appendix---for a summary of the community meetings.

This chapter of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan organizes the results of the community based planning process in the following sections:

- **Background.** This section includes a summary of past plans, existing conditions, and current issues & opportunities
- **Downtown Framework Plan.** This section presents the goals, objectives, policies and implementation programs for the following key components:

*Land Use, Urban Design and Character Districts
Transportation, Transit, and Streetscape Hierarchy
Parks, Trails and Riverfront
Local Economy and Tourism*

- **Implementation Strategies and Phasing.** This section outlines strategies for the implementation of proposed public improvements and includes a prioritized list of short, mid, and long-term action steps as well as cost estimates, potential funding sources, and responsibilities.

D. Study Area

The boundaries of the Downtown Plan are loosely defined as including both the downtown core area and its immediately adjacent Old Town neighborhoods (See Figure 1).



Figure 1. Downtown Framework Plan: Study Area

II. BACKGROUND

A. Past Studies

The City of Stillwater has invested a significant amount of time and effort studying the different pieces of the downtown puzzle. The Downtown Framework Plan will weave together the relevant findings and outcomes from these past planning studies in an effort to ensure that the downtown remains viable. The pertinent projects include:

- *1988 Stillwater Downtown Plan*
- *1992 Renovation of Lowell Park Plan*
- *1995 Comprehensive Plan*
- *Aiple Property/Kolliner Park Master Plan (dated 12/8/98)*
- *Comprehensive Trail Plan (dated 11/16/00)*
- *North Main/Lowell Park Plan Update (dated January 2004)*
- *Locally Preferred Plan for the downtown Stage III floodwall/levee project St. Croix River Crossing FEIS (dated 8/04)*
- *Current and Future Trail Plan Revision (BRA, 11/1/05)*
- *Shoddy Mills buildings relocated to Aiple Property (SRF, dated 1/1/06)*
- *2006 Design Manual, Commercial Historic District*
- *Washington County Comprehensive Plan*

The key recommendations for physical improvements from the most relevant plans are outlined below. Figure 5 provides a composite view of the key recommendations of all of relevant previous studies. See Appendix----for a summary of all the studies listed.

1. Stillwater Downtown Plan 1988 – Prepared by BRW, Inc.

This plan is one of several area plans developed by the city subsequent to adoption of its 1979 Comprehensive Plan. The Downtown Plan is a predominantly visual guide to meet the challenges and opportunities of downtown in the late 1980s. Elements of the plan are listed below.

- Land Use
 1. A new Central Business/Commercial District recognizes existing uses and provides direction for complementary commercial uses.
 2. New parks, recreation and open space, transportation, utilities and parking, and public administration/office districts are proposed to recognize existing development patterns and guide new development.
 3. Nine special sites are identified because of their importance to the downtown and special land use and design guidelines proposed.
 4. Development opportunities identified in the Economic Study are recognized and included as preferred uses of special sites.

5. The site of the Maple Island city parking lot and Mulberry Point represent an opportunity for a major mixed use development, possibly including retail/office/hotel uses.
- Parking
 1. Alternative locations for parking structures are identified at Second as well as at Olive and Mulberry and Second Streets.
 2. A financing plan to pay for parking improvements including possibly a parking structure is proposed for a first year activity.
 - Urban Design
 1. Relocate railroad car storage outside of downtown.
 2. Preferred land uses are shown along riverfront and North Main Street.
 3. A continuous riverfront pedestrian walkway should link downtown and other prominent points in the planning area; i.e., Pioneer Park, Lowell Inn, Broadway Overlook.
 4. Surface parking lots should be small and well landscaped.
 5. A series of observation and interest points should be connected by walkways to enable the visitor to overlook the downtown and get a closer view of parks and sites of interest.
 6. Streetscapes for the St. Croix riverfront, Main Street, side streets, Water Street and visitor center and plazas are proposed.

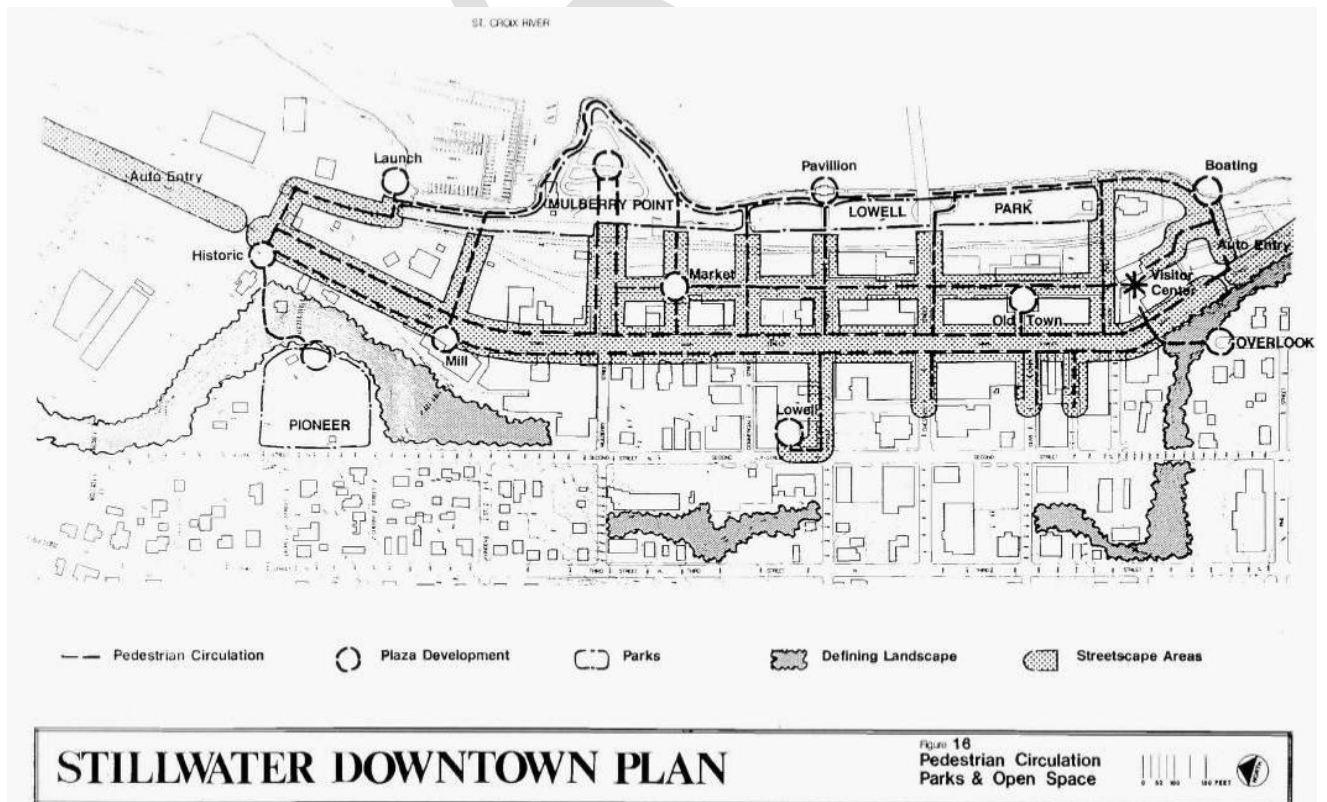


Figure 2. Illustration from 1988 Downtown Plan

2. 1992 Renovation of Lowell Park Plan – Prepared by Sanders Wacker Wehrman Bergly, Inc.

Almost 80 years old at the time, Lowell Park was showing its age and consequently the city became interested in park improvements. In response this 1992 plan was created. Depending upon whether improvements were to be undertaken in the southern part of the park or the northern, there was a specific set of proposed guidelines.

South Design Guidelines

- Develop a continuous riverfront pedestrian walkway linking new and existing areas of the downtown.
- Create regular visual and pedestrian access corridors linking the riverfront, Lowell Park and Main Street.
- Design parking to serve both the downtown and Lowell Park. Screen views of lots from within the park.
- Provide short term docking along lower levee.

North Design Guidelines

- Upgrade Mulberry point to the passive recreational and pedestrian character defined by the Morrell and Nichols Lowell Park Plan
- Consolidate boat launch and vehicles with trailer parking at the existing marina site and eventually north and south of downtown
- Develop Mulberry Street into a more formal 'processional' boulevard, linking the riverfront and Main Street

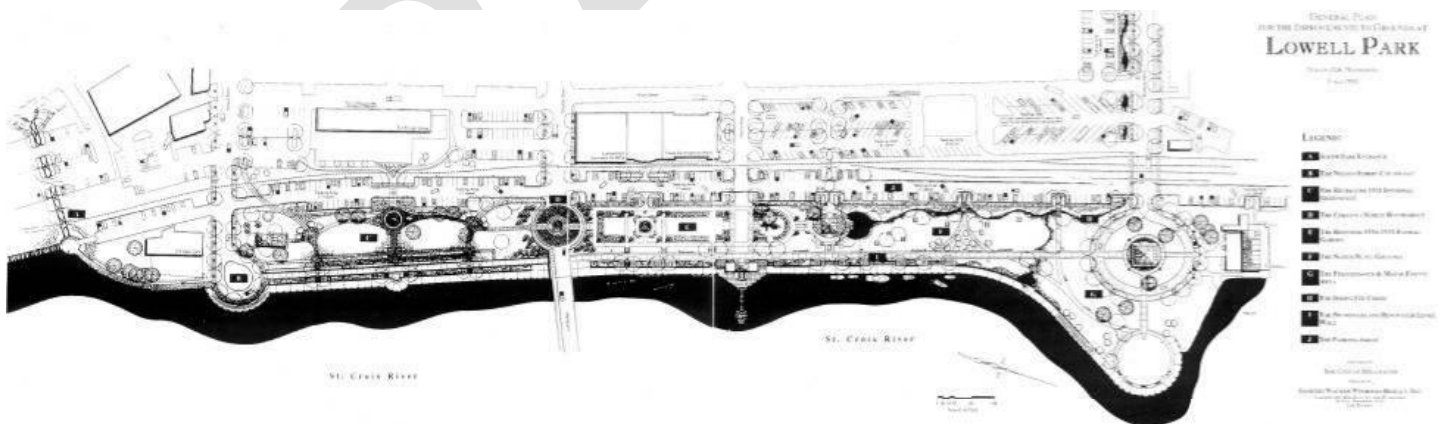


Figure 3. Illustration from 1918 Morrell and Nichols Plan

3. Comprehensive Trail Plan (dated 11/16/00) – Prepared by City of Stillwater

The goal for the 2000 trail plan was to develop and maintain a city-wide network of interconnected trails that provided valuable recreational and transportation opportunities for city residents and visitors.

Goals specific to the downtown area of the city included:

- Examine potential trail sites and develop trails as appropriate noting their historical and natural setting, such as the Minnesota Zephyr right of way, city ravines, and greenways, and their ability to connect downtown and residential neighborhoods, including the expanding annexation areas.
- Integrate McKusick Ravine into the trail system as a natural extension of the McKusick Lake Trail to downtown.
- Encourage MnDOT to provide continuous bicycle paths along the Frontage Road from County Road 15 to Trunk Highway 95 and along Trunk Highway 95 from Oak Park Heights through the downtown.

4. North Main Street/Lowell Park Plan Update – Prepared by SEH, January 2004

In 2002 the City of Stillwater purchased the last of the railroad right-of-way that bisected the downtown area. The purchase was a major milestone that made possible a number of potential improvements. To give initial form to the possibilities, the city initiated this 2004 study. Its key conclusions were:

- Expand Lowell Park area by 0.76 acres and extend the park to Water Street.
- Organize and consolidate parking.
- Provide the opportunity for a visitor center/restroom/hospitality center for downtown visitors.
- Locate a linear landscaped trail that traverses the entire downtown from north to south.
- Provide location for a flood barrier on west side of Lowell Park.
- Provide for strong pedestrian connections between Main Street and the river.
- Accommodate community festivals, farmers' market, and special arts and crafts events.

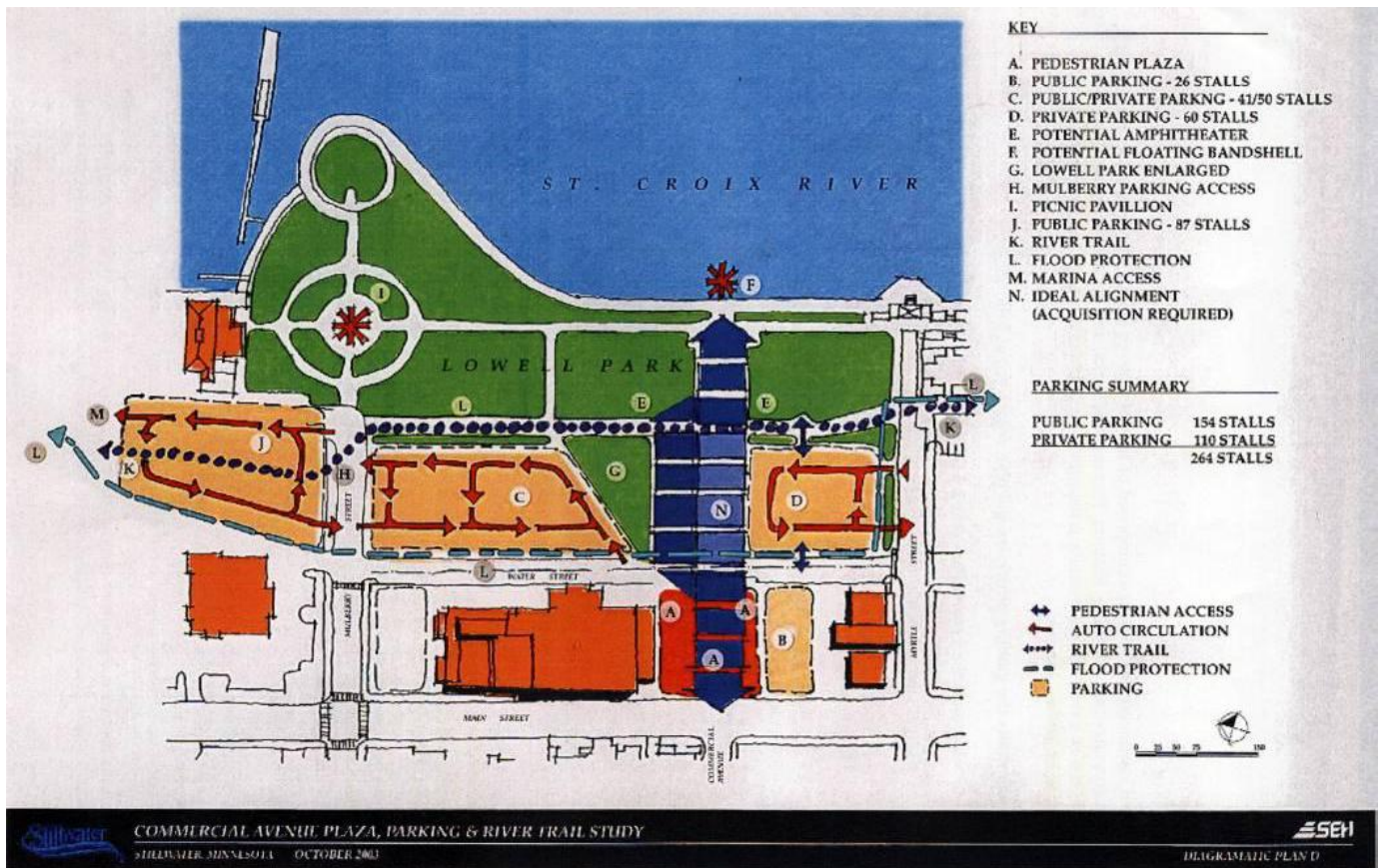


Figure 4. Preferred Alternative from 2004 Study

5. Stage III floodwall/levee project (July 30, 2004)

The first two stages of a project to protect the downtown from river flooding have already been completed. The third and final stage of the project is still being designed. The design is consistent with a conceptual plan referred to by the US Army Corps of Engineers as "The Locally Preferred Option". The locally preferred option was presented to the Corps of Engineers on July 30, 2004.

The basic idea underlying the locally preferred option is that the flood barrier would give protection only for the 50 year flood. Any flooding more severe than that would be prevented through the use of dike construction prior to the flooding. This allowed the permanent flood barrier remain low enough not to obstruct views of the river.

The alignment of the flood barrier and an associated trail would be important to improvements both to Lowell Park and city parking lots.

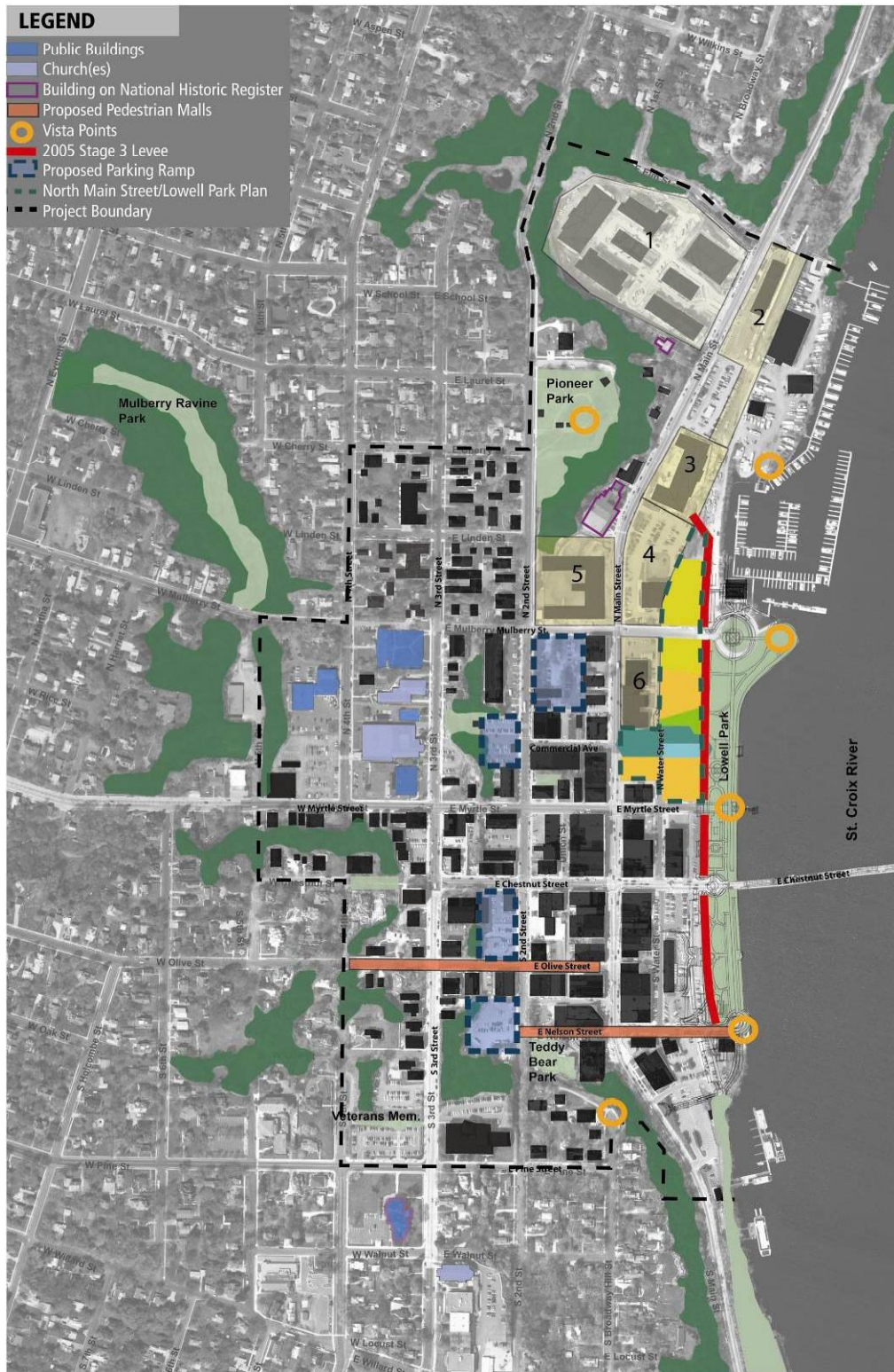


Figure 5. Composite of Recommended Downtown Improvements

B. Existing Conditions

This section augments base information that has already been documented in previous studies. The primary purpose is to identify the unique components of the existing downtown that will define design parameters and shape the design alternatives.

1. Development Pattern

The St. Croix River and limestone bluffs have strongly shaped the downtown development pattern. The core downtown area is characterized by a traditional compact urban development, which creates pedestrian-scaled. The fringe areas outside of the core downtown area, specifically north of Mulberry Street and west of 2nd Street, evolve into a more open, motor vehicle oriented, suburban development pattern that results in an undefined pedestrian realm.



Figure 6: Downtown Development Pattern

2. Downtown Parking

Sufficient parking that is easily accessed, well signed and convenient is necessary downtown for the success of retail, office, services, tourism, and community events. As of January 1, 2008 there were 2, 854 parking spaces downtown. Their location can be seen in Figure 6.

On-Street Public Parking	615 stalls
Off-Street Public Parking	1,062 stalls
Off-Street Private parking	1,177 stalls

- ***Parking along river creates barrier***

A majority of the publicly owned parking lots within the core downtown, comprising roughly 75% of all public parking spaces, are located adjacent to Lowell Park and the riverfront. The location of these parking facilities creates a physical and psychological barrier for pedestrians. The wide expanse of impervious surface void of trees and lacking pedestrian connections creates a negative visual image and barrier between Main Street and the riverfront.

- ***Parking ramp on 2nd Street at Commercial Avenue***

During the planning process for the Downtown Framework Plan the City of Stillwater initiated an RFP process and invited architectural firms to submit proposals for a feasibility study for the design of a new public parking ramp within the downtown. Four sites that were identified within the North Main Street/Lowell Park Update Plan of 2004 continue to be recognized as potential public parking structure locations. The sites include: the corner of 2nd and Mulberry Street, 2nd Street at Commercial Avenue, 2nd Street between Chestnut and Olive, and 2nd Street at Nelson. For a number of reasons, the preferred parking ramp site became the 2nd Street location at Commercial Avenue. The new parking will:

- Provide a strong visual and physical link from the public parking ramp to Main Street and Lowell Park along Commercial Avenue.
- Create at least 300 parking spaces.
- Compliment the architectural fabric of the historical setting on 2nd Street north of Myrtle.

- ***Downtown Parking Objectives***

The Downtown Framework Plan identifies some key objectives for the improvement of parking within the downtown. These key objectives are:

- Existing parking lots provide opportunities for future redevelopment and open space improvements.
- Look for shared parking opportunities associated with redevelopment of parking lots or downtown properties.

- c. Create multi-purpose spaces within parking lots that can be converted for public events or gatherings.
- d. Utilize shuttles and remote parking for large community events.
- e. Define opportunities to relocate parking within the downtown core away from Lowell Park and the riverfront.
- f. New parking should include pervious technologies to infiltrate, cleanse and manage stormwater on-site.
- g. Improvements to existing public parking lots should include more defined access, pedestrian connections, edge treatments and landscaping enhancements.



Figure 7. Downtown Parking

3. Gateways and Viewsheds

Gateways

The gateways into the downtown form the first impressions, as well as provide a sense of orientation for visitors (See Figure 7.) The primary gateway corridors into Downtown Stillwater are:

- North/South gateways on both ends of Main Street.
- East/West gateways into the downtown on Chestnut and Myrtle Streets.

Viewsheds

Views of the riverfront, limestone bluffs, significant buildings, and other landmarks create a cognitive map of the city and orient people within the downtown. The natural features that define the boundaries of the downtown also create long encompassing views that allow you to see the entire downtown from one vantage point. The important view corridors within the downtown include:

- North of Terra Spring looking south on Main Street into downtown.
- South of the Oasis looking north on Main Street into the downtown.
- South along E. Olive, W. Myrtle, Mulberry and E. Chestnut Streets from top of bluff into the core downtown and the riverfront.
- North and south along 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Streets from the top of the bluff into the core and fringe downtown areas.

The Downtown Framework Plan identifies some key objectives for the improvement of the gateway and view corridors within the downtown. These key objectives are:

- Preserve natural character of bluffs and river along north and south gateways to downtown. Enhance these corridors with native landscaping, frame views to the downtown, improve pedestrian connections and open views to river.
- Shape edge of gateway corridors with architecture, landscaping and sign ordinances.
- Reinforce natural features, landmarks, steeples and significant structures along gateway corridors.
- Reinforce E. Olive, W. Myrtle, Mulberry and E. Chestnut Streets as primary pedestrian view corridors into the downtown.

Downtown Focal Points

Focal points orient visitors, contain edges, provide visual stepping stones and reinforce, enhance and terminate vistas within Downtown Stillwater. These focal points represent some of the more memorable architectural and cultural elements in the downtown. Primary Focal Points include:

- Staples Mill
- Historic Lift Bridge
- Historic County Courthouse
- Several city bluff stairways
- Several downtown churches

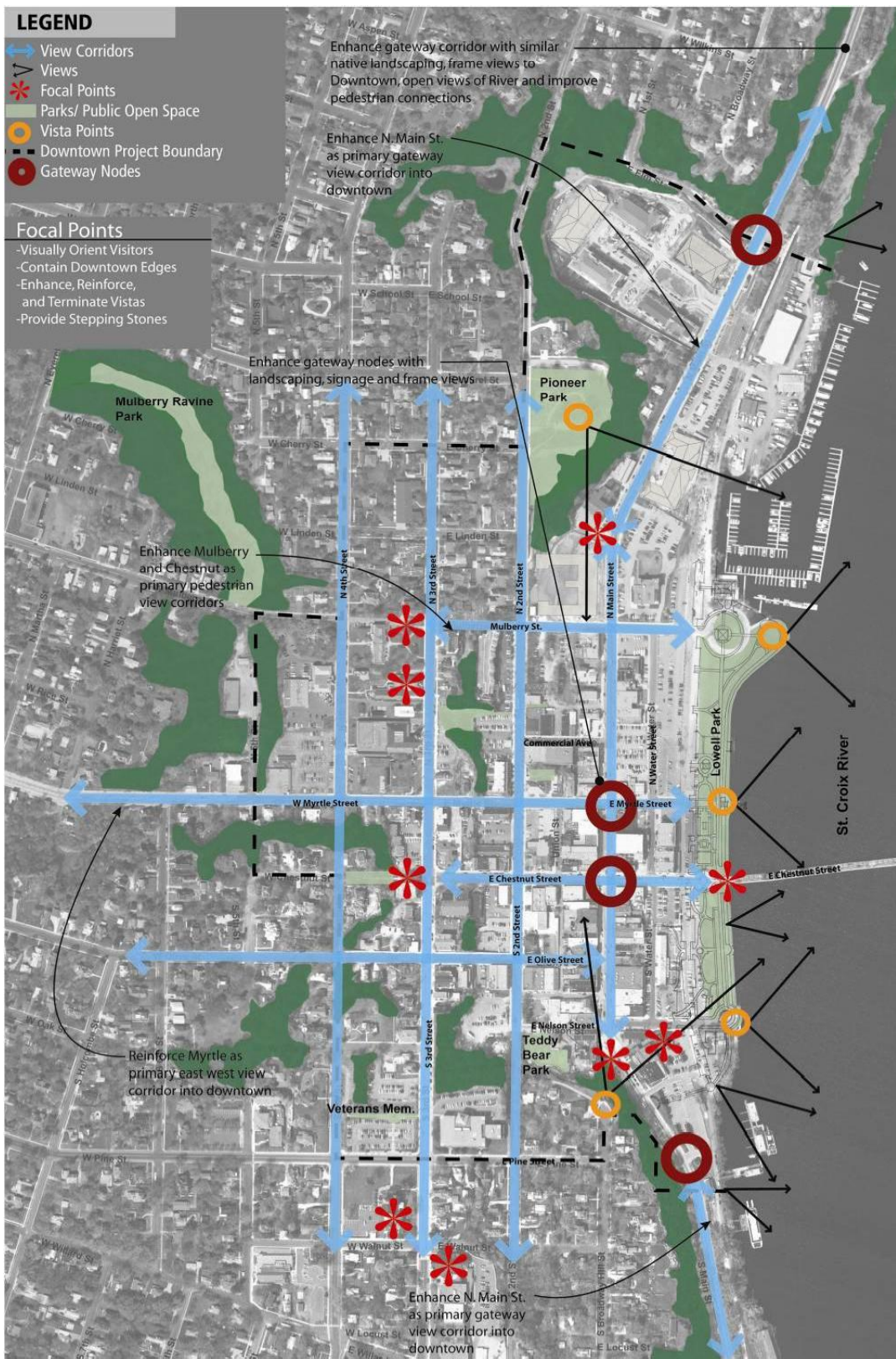


Figure 8. Gateways and Viewsheds

4. Open Space and Pedestrian Connections

Five and Ten minute walk Distance

One objective of the framework plan is to encourage walking by defining safe, comfortable and appealing routes from the neighborhoods, peripheral downtown uses and parking areas to Main Street and the river. One-quarter mile is the approximate distance a person can walk in five minutes and is generally the distance people will consider walking to amenities, shops, and services. Beyond that distance, a car may become more appealing. Facilities within the five-minute walking distance of the core downtown include the Post Office, numerous retail shops, professional offices and restaurants, public open spaces including Lowell Park and Teddy Bear Park, and numerous historic sites including the Lowell Inn, the Freight House, Water Street In and the Historic Lift Bridge. The fringe areas are generally within a ten-minute walk of the core downtown. Included within this ten-minute walking distance are the city hall, public library, police/fire station, the veteran's memorial, Pioneer Park, and several churches.

Primary and Secondary Pedestrian Circulation

The primary pedestrian circulation occurs within the core downtown and along the riverfront. Secondary pedestrian circulation occurs within the fringe areas of the downtown. Currently within the downtown there is a nearly complete system of sidewalks to support the primary and secondary circulation. Some key objectives for pedestrian circulation within the downtown include:

- Opportunity to enhance primary and secondary circulation systems with additional pedestrian amenities
- Provide a hierarchy of streetscape treatments that reinforce the historic character throughout downtown
- Provide wider walks within the downtown
- Improve secondary pedestrian connections to adjacent neighborhoods with landscaping, lighting, signage and pedestrian crossings

Future Trail Connections

A series of future trail improvements and pedestrian connections have been identified for the downtown. Each proposed trail and/or connection will provide a missing link to create a complete park and trails system for the downtown.

The future trail and pedestrian connections include:

- Loop Trail
- Zephyr line
- Additional downtown stairs to connect to adjacent residential neighborhood
- Connection to Mulberry Ravine Trail
- Streetscape and open space connections between the riverfront, parking and Main Street
- Future riverfront trail connections north and south to adjacent public open spaces



Figure 9. Pedestrian Connections

5. Parks and Open Space

Downtown Stillwater has attractive gathering places and spaces for outdoor events. There are three primary park spaces that cater to a wide variety of resident and visitor activities and needs. The three park spaces are Lowell Park, Teddy Bear Park and Pioneer Park. Primary recommendations to improve the parks and open space system within the downtown include:

- *Provide additional public docking or mooring areas along Lowell Park*
- *Create multi – functional open spaces within the downtown*
- *Define more opportunities for pocket parks, green space and outdoor cafes to activate street level*
- *Increase accessibility to Lowell Park and river*
- *Expand riverfront open space*
- *Explore connections to Boom site and Aiple property*



Figure 10. Downtown Area Parks & Open Space

6. Downtown Opportunities

The Downtown Framework Plan is shaped by the numerous opportunities that emerged from the analysis of existing conditions, as well as findings from previous planning studies. A synthesis of these findings and conditions is illustrated in Figure 11. Primary downtown planning and design objectives are illustrated as well. The Downtown Framework Plan described later in this chapter addresses these items.

The primary opportunities for redevelopment and public investment identified through past studies and meetings with city staff and the Downtown Steering Committee include:

a. Reinforce connections between river front, Lowell Park, Main Street and neighborhoods

The riverfront, parks, trails, stairways, and streetscapes create a network of connections and amenities which will attract and retain residents and businesses, balance pedestrian and vehicular needs, and provide the necessary connections to create an integrated circulation system within the downtown. The opportunity exists to enhance the current circulation system with additional connections, open spaces and improvements to enhance and strengthen the current system. Some of the potential enhancements to the current circulation system include:

- *Define areas for pedestrian “malls”*
- *Improve pedestrian connections along river north and south of Lowell Park*
- *Expand riverfront open space*
- *Integrate Zephyr line into parks and trails system*
- *Improve and highlight connection to Mulberry Ravine Trail*
- *Reinforce pedestrian connections with a hierarchy of streetscape treatments*
- *Locate farmers’ market and programmed uses along riverfront*
- *Provide additional public docking or mooring areas along Lowell Park*
- *Integrate levee improvements into circulation system*

b. Focus streetscape treatments within a 10 minute walk distance of core downtown and adjacent neighborhood

Many of the streets within a block of Main Street have very narrow rights-of-way and are utilized very efficiently. However, many of the secondary streets adjacent the core have wider underutilized rights-of-way. A hierarchy of streetscape treatments is recommended to emphasize and respond to the different downtown districts, role and function of each street within the downtown.

c. Preserve natural character of bluffs and river along north and south gateways to downtown

d. Reinforce view and gateway corridors along Myrtle, Mulberry, 2nd, 3rd and Main Streets

The gateways and view corridors into the downtown form the first impressions and create a cognitive map of the city and orient people within the downtown.

The primary recommendations to reinforce the view and gateway corridors include:

- *Shape edge of corridors with architecture, landscaping and sign ordinances*
- *Reinforce natural features, landmarks, steeples and significant structures*

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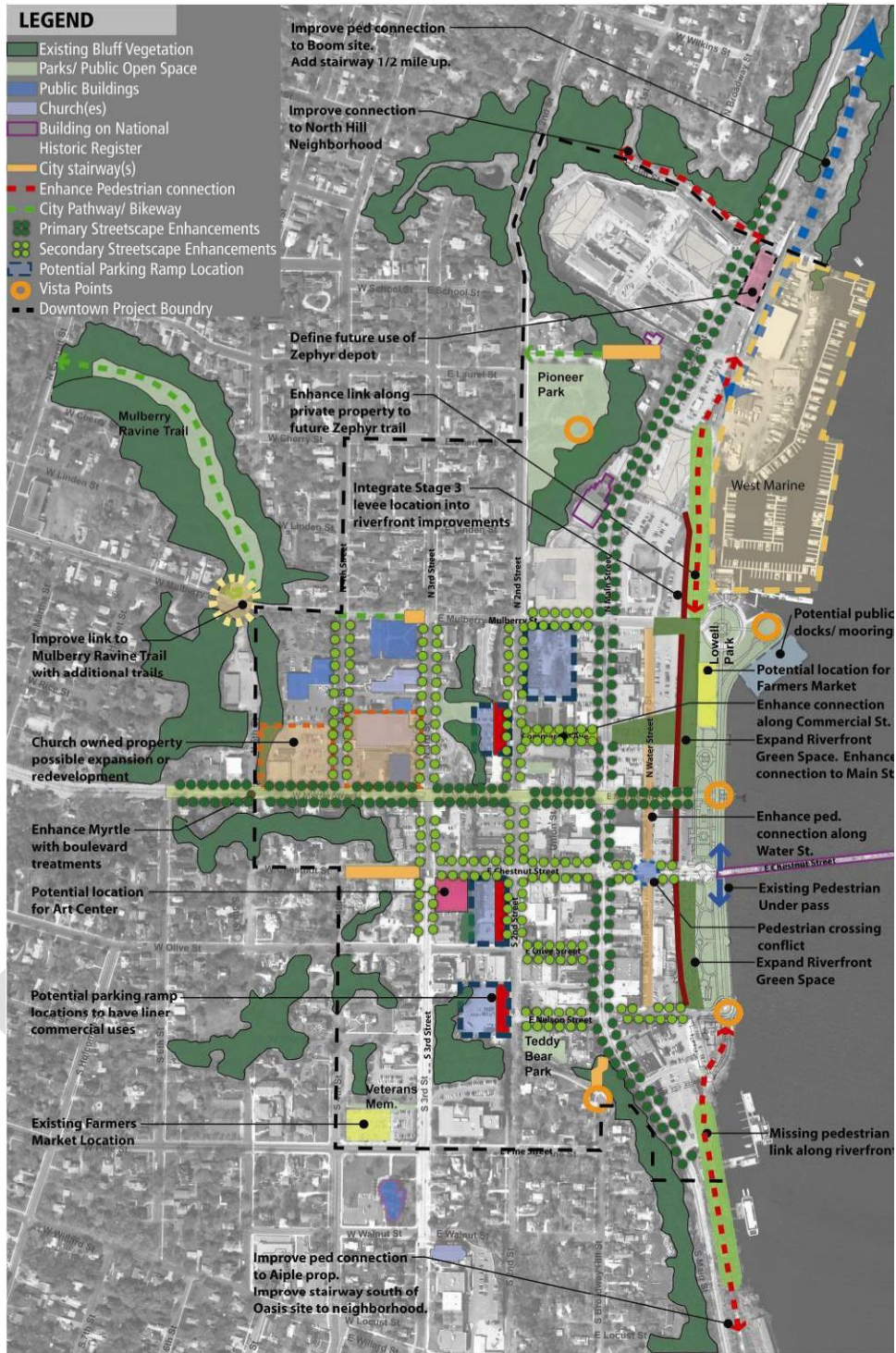


Figure 11: Downtown Opportunities

III. DOWNTOWN FRAMEWORK PLAN

The Framework Plan is intended to guide public and private development in the Downtown Stillwater. It is also intended to identify improvements to the public realm that would reinforce, enable and encourage well planned growth. The Framework Plan offers design principles, goals and objectives that foster future development consistent with the vision of the community (See Figure 12.)

Conceptual alternatives are presented for key components of the Downtown Framework Plan. The Framework Plan responds to the goals and objectives that were established by the community during numerous visioning sessions. The Framework Plan also weaves together the relevant components of numerous previous studies as well as flood control into a single integrated document.

The primary components of the framework plan include:

- Land use, downtown urban design and character
- Transportation, transit, and streetscape hierarchy
- Parks, trails and riverfront
- Local economy and tourism

Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs

The goals, objectives, policies and programs outlined in each section of this Framework Plan, are a refined compilation of the community visioning sessions and relevant items from the 1995 Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan Committee, Downtown Plan Committee and City Council reached consensus on each of these items through a lengthy review and editing process.

A. Land Use and Downtown Urban Design

Downtown Stillwater has a unique combination of historic architecture, a traditional commercial district and authentic Victorian homes nestled within a stunning river valley, which combine to create a compelling tourist destination and source of pride for the city and the state. The intent of the Downtown Plan is to preserve and enhance the components of land use, urban design and overall character that define Stillwater so that “the Birthplace of Minnesota,” continues to be a special place to live, to work, and to visit.

Goals

Goal 1. Develop a land use plan that fosters economic growth and evolution by reinforcing the “rivertown” image of Downtown Stillwater and promoting a compact mixture of commercial, office, residential, recreational, and institutional uses, and is flexible to respond to varying market conditions.

Goal 2. Encourage a viable and compatible mix of community and visitor-serving activities that builds on the assets of downtown as a desirable place to live, work, shop, and visit consistent with the capacity of public services and facilities and the natural resources.

Objectives

- Encourage architecture and urban design which recalls late 19th Century commercial design, is refined and subdued, introduces more color consistent with the Victorian Era, and helps create an environment which is pleasing and interesting to pedestrians.
- Reinforce pedestrian connections with a hierarchy of streetscape treatments. Focus streetscape treatments within a 10 minute walk distance of core downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.

Policies

Policy 1: Maximize the waterfront as a community and regional amenity.

Policy 2: Preserve and reinforce views to natural features, landmarks, steeples, and other significant elements.

Policy 3: Continue to refine and administer design guidelines so that the integrity of the existing and surrounding buildings is maintained and new development is of a height, size, and design compatible with the best examples of existing development. The guidelines should also encourage rehabilitation of existing buildings to the original style or design.

Policy 4: Reduce the visual impact of overhead telephone and electricity lines.

Policy 5: Preserve the limestone retaining walls located throughout downtown. Require new retaining walls fronting public areas to be limestone or a material consistent with historical retaining walls and similar to existing stone used throughout downtown.

Policy 6: Continue to reinforce the unique character of the Downtown district through appropriate land uses, architecture, and site design.

Land Use and Zoning

The current 2002 Land Use plan has a mixture of community commercial, administrative office, multi family and open space designations. The 2005 Zoning ordinance designates the majority of downtown as the Central Business District Zone (CBD) with the Institutional area along 4th street designated as Public Administration. The CBD Zone is flexible enough to allow for a compact mixture of uses to foster a viable downtown. The city also recently adopted height limitations for the downtown area to preserve views to the river corridor (See Figures 13 & 14.) The Land Use Chapter of this 2030 Comprehensive Plan designates the downtown area as “Mixed Use”, which more accurately reflects the mix of uses downtown and is more flexible than the current CBD Zoning designation.

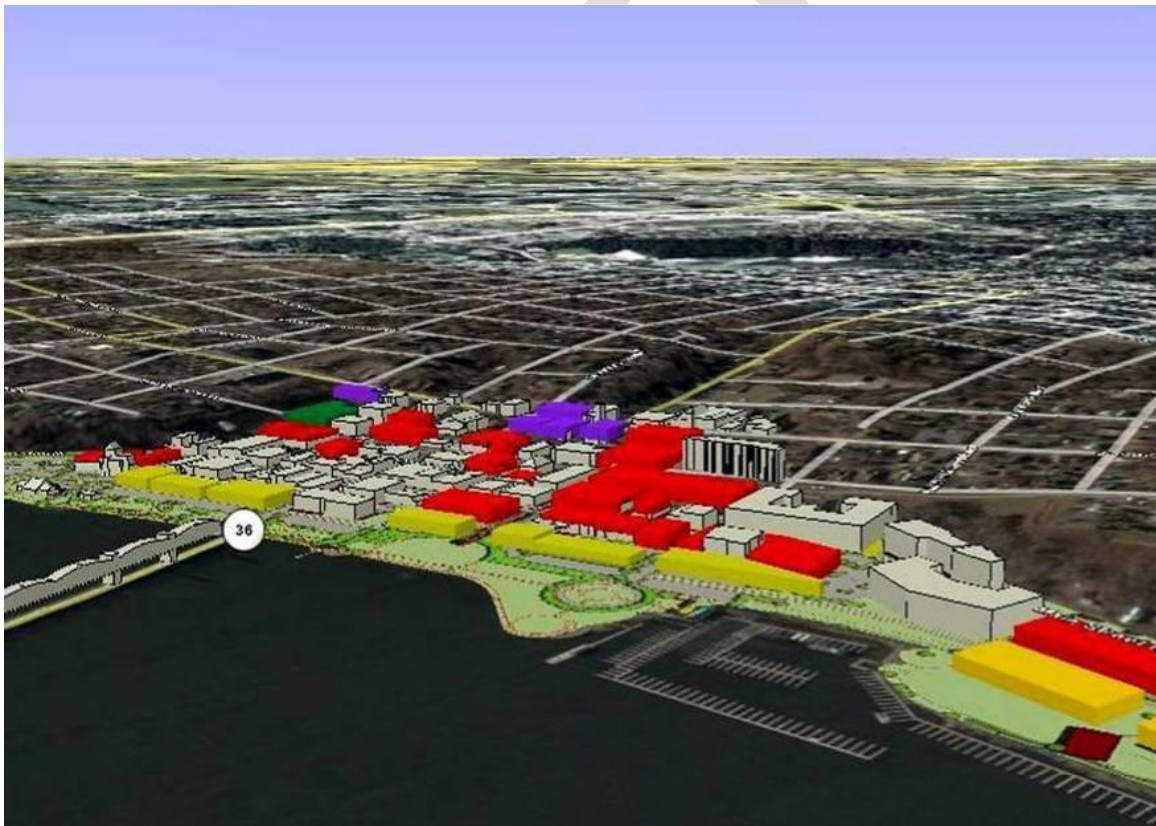


Figure 13. Downtown Massing Potential

Downtown Districts

The Downtown Framework plan defines six downtown districts, each possessing its own unique character created by the mix of land uses, architecture and open spaces (See Figure 16.)

1. *Downtown Mixed Residential District*

The Downtown Mixed Residential District helps shape the gateway into the core downtown from the north. The district has numerous buildings on the national register of historic places, including the Washington County History Museum and the Staples Saw Mill. The district includes most of the multi-family redevelopment that has occurred within the downtown as well as office space.



2. *North Hill Residential District*

The North Hill Residential District is characterized by the historic single family homes and stone walls that line the residential streets. Mixed into the fabric of the historic homes are some larger multi-family residential buildings and multi-family conversions. The historic Lowell Inn is located in the district along Myrtle Street. From this district there exist long prominent views of the core downtown area and the St. Croix River Valley.



3. *Public/Institutional District*

This district is home to many of the civic buildings in the community including city hall, the Stillwater Public Library, the fire/police station, the post office, the city water works and other public offices. Some existing

single family housing, public parking lots and two significant church facilities also give form to the district.



The framework plan recommends preserving and reinforcing this evolving institutional district through complimentary land uses, architecture and streetscape treatments.

Trinity Lutheran Church owns several parcels at the intersection of Myrtle and 4th Street. Figure 15 illustrates how future expansion of the church facilities or other infill uses could reinforce the institutional district through complimentary architecture and site planning. The buildings are placed close to the street to both reinforce the view corridor along Myrtle Street as well as, shape the 4th street corridor. Parking is provided behind and or to the side of the buildings.

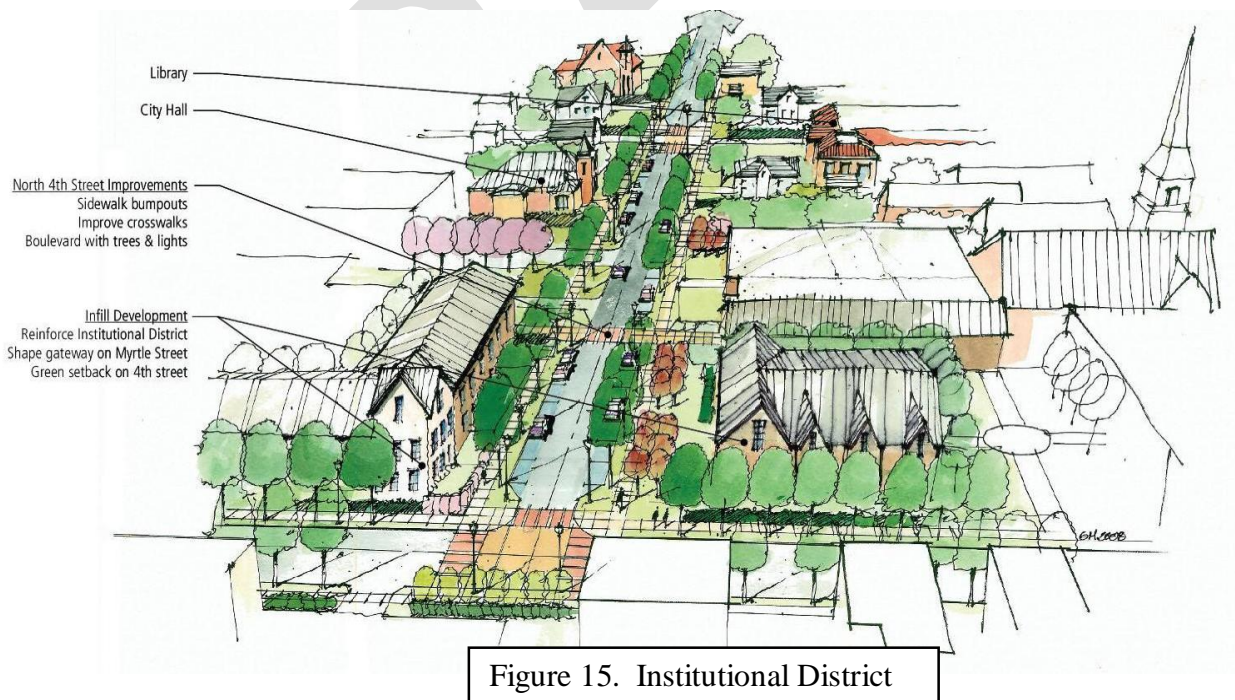


Figure 15. Institutional District

4. Historic Commercial District

The historic commercial district is the heart of Downtown Stillwater and is the location of most small retail and service businesses. This district is also the location of many of the notable historic commercial structures and entertainment related businesses.



5. South Hill Residential/ Institutional District

The South Hill Residential district is located between W Myrtle Street and E Pine Street adjacent to the Historic Commercial District. Include within the district are retail businesses, single and multifamily housing, Cub Foods Corporate Headquarters, Teddy Bear Pak and numerous public parking lots. From this district long prominent views of the core downtown area and the St. Croix River Valley can be found.



6. Riverfront District

The riverfront district contains historic Lowell Park, the most prominent public green space in the City of Stillwater. Most of the western edge of the district is defined by public and private parking lots that serve the riverfront and downtown businesses. Also located in the district are notable structures that recall the history of logging and saw mills along the river, including the Freight House, Water Street Inn and the Historic Lift Bridge. In addition, the Minnesota Zephyr depot and the Stillwater Marina give definition to the northern end of this district.



Downtown Land Use and Urban Design Implementation

To implement the Land Use and Downtown Urban Design section of the Downtown Framework Plan, the city will consider:

- Build on Stillwater's unique aspects by creating a marketing strategy based on the historic and Rivertown characteristics of the downtown.
- Enhance aesthetics of corridors leading into the downtown along Myrtle, Mulberry, 2nd Street, 3rd Street and Main streets. This could include adoption of guidelines or ordinances that would shape the edge of the corridors with buildings, landscaping and appropriate signage.
- Create architectural focal points at the river, such as arbors, sculpture or gazebos at terminal points of Mulberry, Myrtle, Chestnut, and Nelson Streets.
- Incorporate an interpretive system to celebrate the historical and natural resources of the downtown including the river, the bluffs, east bank of the river, the ecology, and geologic history of the river corridor.
- Use landscaping to blend the downtown into the natural attraction of the St. Croix River Valley, to improve the enjoyment of the Riverfront, and to soften features such as parking lots and service areas which may be inconsistent with the desired downtown image.



Figure 16. Downtown Districts

B. Transportation, Transit, and Streetscape Hierarchy

The quality, function and scale of the streets have a great deal to do with shaping the small city character of Downtown Stillwater. A goal of the Transportation Chapter of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan is to provide an integrated system of roads, bikeways, transit lines, and pedestrian paths throughout the city and particularly downtown.

Washington County Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Planning

Washington County is in the process of updating the county comprehensive plan and is preparing a transportation plan with traffic modeling for Downtown Stillwater as part of their planning process. The modeling will analyze traffic patterns both with and without the proposed Trunk Highway 36 bridge. Preliminary modeling indicates that traffic volumes will be significantly reduced from current volumes in downtown when the new bridge is completed. This reduction in traffic will open up many opportunities to create a better balance between pedestrian and vehicular needs within the downtown, particularly on Main Street.

Rather than duplicate efforts, the transportation planning for Downtown Stillwater will rely primarily on the Washington County Plan. As of this writing, a draft of the Washington County Comprehensive Plan is anticipated to be completed in September 2008. The focus of this Stillwater downtown transportation plan is to recommend improvements to the streetscape system that will improve connections between neighborhoods and Main Street and Main Street to the riverfront.

Highway 36 Bridge

When the Stillwater comprehensive planning process began in April 2007, funding for the proposed Trunk Highway 36 bridge over the St. Croix River had not been defined and construction was not likely within the next 10 years or within the anticipated life span of this plan. In June 2008, the Minnesota Legislature approved a new program for funding transportation projects and defined the Trunk Highway 36 bridge as one of the top priorities with final design to occur in 2013 and construction to begin in 2014.

Regardless when the new river crossing is constructed, its impact will be to alleviate the traffic congestion problems currently caused downtown by pass through traffic using the lift bridge. Until the new bridge is constructed, an interim downtown traffic management plan should be created and implemented to address the congestion problems. This plan will require a large scale coordination effort among Mn/DOT, Washington County, the City of Stillwater, the local Chamber of Commerce and business owners and residents in the Downtown Stillwater area.

GOALS

Goal 1. Support construction of the new interstate bridge and TH 36 corridor improvements to provide for regional traffic demands and to relieve cut-through traffic downtown and in residential areas.

Goal 2. Develop and locate new roads sensitive to historic structures and sites, as well as natural features.

Goal 3. Provide an integrated system of roads, bikeways, transit lines, and pedestrian paths. The transportation system should minimize the impact of through traffic.

Objectives

- Reduce through traffic impact in residential areas by means of road design and traffic management.
- Enhance the function, safety and appearance of Stillwater's streets, highways and major entryways into the city.
- Utilize pervious and other green technologies for stormwater treatment associated with parking lot and street improvements where possible and economically feasible.
- Use topography and other site planning methods to minimize the visual presence of parking lots.
- Maintain existing public stairways throughout the community, particularly in the downtown.
- Study the use of the railroad line right of way for potential use as a walkway and/or bikeway connecting downtown to the city areas to the west.
- Explore alternative transportation and transit opportunities for Downtown Stillwater.
- Develop pedestrian pathway and bikeway plan to provide for recreational and commuter trips.
- Work with Washington County and the state in developing park and ride lots, trailway systems and other programs to reduce auto use.
- Increase transit ridership and support transit service for transit dependent residents, particularly senior citizens, provide adequate transit facilities (bus stops, transfer station) to support transit use, and cooperate with the regional transit authority and Washington County to provide conveniently located park and ride facilities at major transit stops.

Policies

Policy 1: Work with MnDOT, County, local government agencies and local businesses/employers to address transportation management methods to relieve bridge traffic congestion concerns.

Policy 2: Ensure that planned transportation infrastructure, capacity and access will accommodate proposed land use and development.

Policy 3: Improve traffic and parking in and around commercial areas.

Policy 4: Encourage transit use through subdivision design, land use planning and education.

Policy 5: Plan and construct a city-wide bikeway system throughout the city to connect major activity centers and scenic open space area.

STREETSCAPE HIERARCHY

A hierarchy of streetscape treatments is recommended to emphasize and respond to the different downtown districts, role and function of each street within the downtown. Many of the streets within a block of Main Street have very narrow rights-of-way and are utilized very efficiently. However, many of the secondary streets adjacent the core have wider underutilized rights-of-way. This presents an opportunity to use the area more efficiently and create more “complete” streets which balance the need to provide vehicular capacity and parking with pedestrian and bicyclist safety and comfort. The hierarchy of streets is illustrated on Figure 17, and includes four streetscape types.

1. Gateways and View Corridors: Preserving the Essence of Stillwater

The streets classified as gateways act as the approach routes and gateways by directing regional traffic to the core downtown. These street segments should signal to motorists they are entering a downtown district and traffic calming elements should be added to the streetscape to reduce the perceived scale of the street. Treatments may include boulevard trees, distinctive lighting, entry monuments, and directional signing. Gateways include:

- **Trunk Highway 95 north of Elm Street and south of Nelson Street.** The limestone bluffs, woodlands and views to the St. Croix River shape the character of the gateways in these segments and should be preserved.



- ***Myrtle Street west of 2nd Street.*** The most dramatic view of Stillwater's natural setting is from the top of the bluff as you approach downtown on Myrtle Street. The street corridor, shaped by trees, buildings and limestone walls, directs your view to the gazebo, river and bluffs beyond. Future infill development should reinforce the view corridor through building placement, architecture, materials and streetscape treatments. The Comprehensive Plan also proposes a city bike path be included within the Myrtle Street corridor.



View Corridors

Views of the riverfront, limestone bluffs, significant buildings, and other landmarks create a cognitive map of the city and orient people within the downtown. The natural features that define the boundaries of the downtown also create long encompassing views that allow you to see the entire downtown from one vantage point. The important view corridors within the downtown include:

- North of Terra Spring looking south on Main Street into the core downtown.
- At the Oasis Restaurant looking north on Main Street into the downtown.

- On Olive, Myrtle, Mulberry and Chestnut Streets from top of bluff looking into the core downtown and the riverfront.
- North and south along 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Streets from the top of the bluff into the core and fringe downtown areas.

The Downtown Framework Plan identifies some key objectives for the improvement of the gateway and view corridors within the downtown. These key objectives are:

- Preserve natural character of bluffs and river along north and south gateways into downtown. Enhance these corridors with native landscaping, frame views to the downtown, improve pedestrian connections and open views to river.
- Shape edge of gateway corridors with architecture, landscaping and sign ordinances.
- Reinforce natural features, landmarks, steeples and significant structures along gateway corridors.
- Reinforce Olive, Myrtle, Mulberry and Chestnut Streets as primary pedestrian view corridors into the downtown.

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Figure 17. Streetscape Hierarchy

2. Primary Activity Streets: Linking Downtown to the Riverfront

These streets are within the core retail, business and cultural heart of the city and serve as primary commercial frontage, vehicular and pedestrian linkages between the Core downtown along Main Street municipal parking and the river. Primary activity streets include Main, Nelson, Olive, Chestnut, Commercial, and Mulberry Streets. These streets will receive the most intense streetscape treatments which may include on street parking, sidewalk bumpouts with street trees where possible, pedestrian scaled ornamental light fixtures, decorative paving, benches, parking lot buffers, planting areas, kiosks, banners, public art, and a coordinated signing system.

The right-of-way for many of these streets is narrow and presents some spatial challenges for including streetscape treatments. The geometric requirements for each street will need to be evaluated to determine what is possible.

Connections between Main Street and the Waterfront

The following examples illustrate potential streetscape treatments to Nelson and Myrtle Streets that will improve connections to the waterfront by:

- Improving pedestrian comfort and safety by providing sidewalk bumpouts to define traffic lanes, shorten crosswalks and provide space for trees and other landscape materials.
- Provide space for directional signing, ornamental lights, kiosks, public art and interpretive wayfinding system.
- Improve the view corridors by buffering parking areas and defining the street edge.

These proposed improvements would not restrict the current traffic flow or necessarily change in response to reduce traffic counts anticipated after the construction of the Trunk Highway 36 bridge.



Figure 18. Existing Nelson Street



Figure 19. Proposed Nelson Street



Figure 20. Proposed Nelson Street



Figure 21. Existing Myrtle Street



Figure 22. Proposed Myrtle Street



Figure 23. Proposed Myrtle Street

Main Street: Reinforce an Environment for Commerce While preserving the Historic Core

Currently, the segment of Main Street between Commercial Avenue and Nelson Street is the most concentrated zone of commercial uses, buildings and pedestrian and vehicular activity. The right-of-way is constrained and packed full of competing interests. Fortunately the street wall shaped by the continuous building frontage creates a classic enclosed “main street” scale and character. The street wall begins to break down north of Myrtle Street with the inclusion of more conventional suburban site design and architecture.

If and when the Trunk Highway 36 bridge is built, the anticipated significant decrease in traffic counts would provide an opportunity to revisit the geometrics of Main Street and possibly reduce the lane widths and widen sidewalks. Figure 25 illustrates the inclusion of sidewalk bumpouts on Main Street in areas where a right turn lane is not needed, such as Mulberry Street. Also illustrated are shortened and highlighted crosswalks, parking buffers street trees and planting areas.



Figure 24. Existing Main Street at Mulberry Street



Figure 25. Proposed Main Street at Mulberry Street

3. Secondary Activity Streets: Linking Neighborhoods to Downtown

This category includes all other local streets beyond the primary activity streets within a 10 minute walk of downtown. These streets serve the fringe of downtown and provide linkages between the neighborhoods, parking lots, and the commercial core. Treatment of these streets will have to be analyzed on a street by street basis and may include narrowing lanes, widening sidewalks and boulevards, storm water infiltration, incorporating street trees and decorative lights, as well as, highlighting crosswalks, and accommodating bicycles.

4. Special Streets

Four streets within the downtown present opportunities to shape important districts, define important connections, and provide important pedestrian space for the future. These streets deserve unique treatments and include 3rd and 4th Streets, Commercial Avenue, and Chestnut Street between Main Street and the bridge.

3rd and 4th Street: Institutional District

Third and Fourth Streets are designated as secondary streets and could be redesigned to utilize the right-of-way more efficiently. Figures 28, 29, and 30 illustrate how narrowing lanes, widening sidewalks and boulevards, incorporating street trees and decorative lights, as well as, highlighting crosswalks can create a safer pedestrian realm and compliment the institutional district.

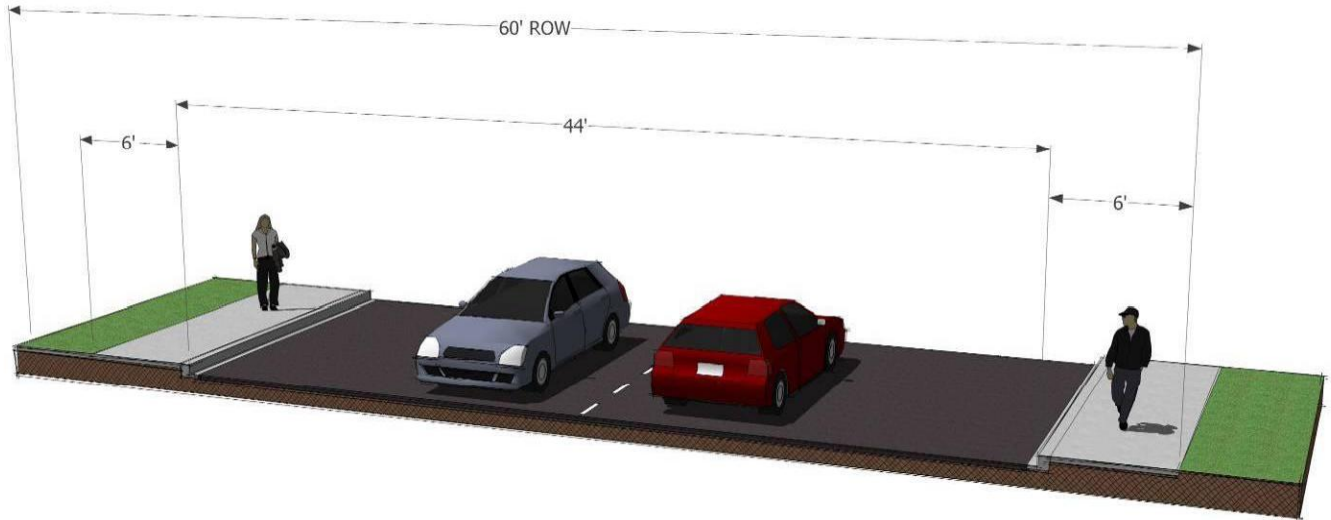


Figure 28. Existing 4th Street Section

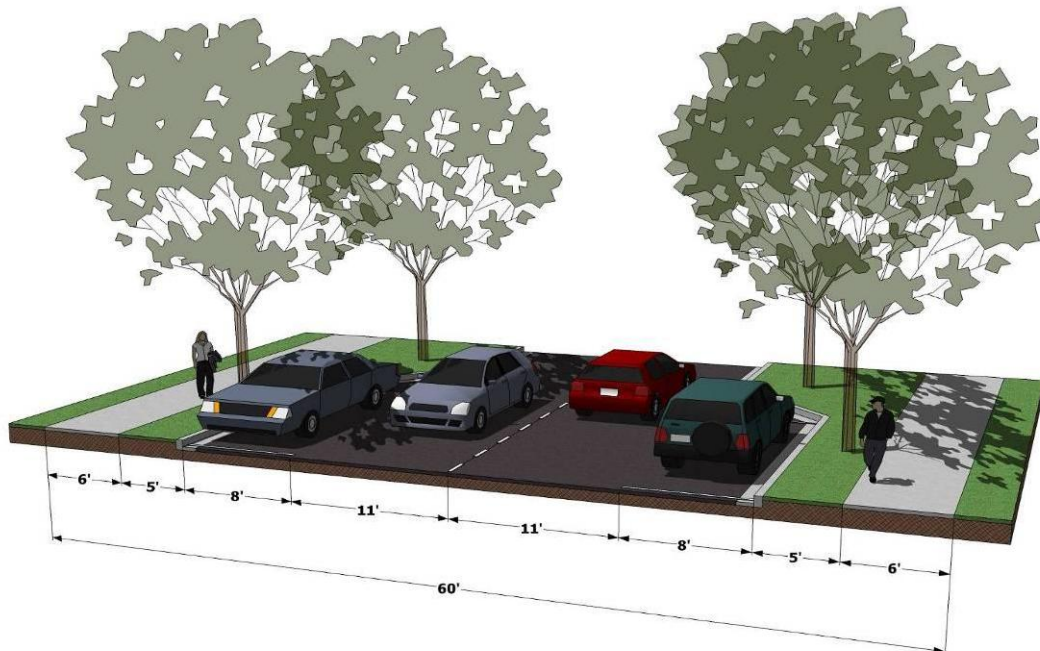


Figure 29. Proposed 4th Street Section



Figure 30. Proposed Street Treatment

Commercial Avenue Connection: Linking Neighborhoods to Main Street and the River

A primary objective of the Framework Plan is to improve Connections from the residential neighborhoods to Main Street and from Main Street to the river. Commercial Avenue will become the primary link between the new ramp at 2nd and Main Street.

To improve this important connection Commercial Avenue is proposed to include parking on one side of the street only, sidewalk bumpouts and street trees where possible, highlighted cross walks, pedestrian scaled ornamental light fixtures, decorative paving, benches, parking lot buffers, planting areas, information kiosks and /or wayfinding elements (See Figures 31 and 32.)



Figure 31. Existing Commercial Avenue



Figure 32. Proposed Commercial Avenue

Commercial Avenue Plaza: Focus of Commercial, Pedestrian, Transit, and Cultural Activity

A public plaza is proposed as the primary link along Commercial Avenue from Main Street to the river. A riverfront amphitheater is planned at the terminus of the plaza. This finger of open space will bisect the riverfront parking lots bringing a more direct connection to the river from Main Street (See Figures 34 and 36).

A mixed use commercial building is proposed to infill the remainder of the public parking lot and vitality to the downtown by fronting directly on Commercial Avenue Plaza and Main Street.

Transit Station

A transit facility is proposed to be included in the river side of the mixed use building on Commercial Plaza. Water Street is proposed as the circulation route for buses with the primary stop at Commercial Street Plaza. The combination of the activity generated by the transit facility, commercial uses, pedestrian linkages to the river and amphitheater, plus the proximity to new bike paths should make Commercial Street Plaza a very active and memorable place.



Figure 34. Plan View of Commercial Avenue Plaza



Figure 35. Existing Condition ▲



Figure 36. Proposed Commercial Avenue Plaza ▼

Chestnut Street Plaza

As part of the future Trunk Highway 36 bridge project the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) will be converting the existing historic lift bridge into a vehicle free pedestrian and bicycle connection. Chestnut Street east of Main Street will also be partially converted into a pedestrian plaza. The Stillwater lift bridge will be maintained as an important connection for the park system and to the heritage of the area

Structured Parking

Four sites were identified within the North Main Street study of 2004 as potential public parking structures. The sites include: the corner of 2nd and Mulberry Street, Commercial Avenue at 2nd Street, 2nd Street between

Chestnut Street and Olive Street, and 2nd Street at Nelson Street. At the time of this writing, the Commercial Avenue structure was planned to begin construction in the fall of 2008.

Incorporating structured parking will foster a more compact development pattern by making available surface lots for a higher and better use such as housing/commercial mixed use infill redevelopment. The demand for surface parking along the water front may be offset by structured parking along 2nd Street and thus provide an opportunity to expand the riverfront open space.

The steep terrain of Downtown Stillwater enables parking structures to be set into the bluff and thereby minimizing their visual presence. This condition also enables vehicles to enter on different levels of the ramp.

The Framework Plan also illustrates the use of commercial liner buildings along the frontage of parking structures to promote a more active and vital street environment.

Implementation

To implement Transportation, Transit, and Streetscape Hierarchy section of the Downtown Framework Plan, the city will consider the following measures:

To develop a coordinated transportation system that provides for local as well as area-wide traffic, the City of Stillwater will:

- Develop an area-wide coordinated road improvement program with Mn/DOT and Washington County.

To develop and locate new roads sensitive to historic structures and sites, as well as natural features, the City of Stillwater will:

- Develop a comprehensive streetscape plan for planting and improvements shall be developed for major streets. This would have aesthetic and traffic calming benefits.

To make it easy and convenient to travel in and around Stillwater, tie allowable new development to the capacity of roadways; limit impact of non-residential traffic in neighborhoods when possible and develop a comprehensive sidewalk, trail and bikeway system, Stillwater will:

- Develop a comprehensive signage program. The program will identify key gateways into the city; will create gateway signage/monuments; will create consistent directional signage; and will direct regional traffic to downtown Stillwater via routes that avoid residential neighborhoods.

- Provide bicycle parking, locations and attractive bicycle storage racks at key locations including parks, downtown and commercial centers.
- Work with state, regional and other partners on a transit plan.
- Keep updated parking plan and parking management program for the downtown area.
- Consider developing a parking plan to improve the usage of underutilized public/private parking in Downtown Stillwater.

To provide an integrated system of roads, bikeways, transit lines, and pedestrian paths, the City of Stillwater will:

- Develop and implement a bikeway system facilities plan and implementation program.
- Continue implementing the sidewalk/pathways maintenance and improvement program.
- Develop a plan for sidewalk and trail snow removal.
- Improve the appearance of bus stops and better integrate stops into neighborhood or area design.
- Encourage MnDOT to provide continuous bicycle paths along the frontage road from CR 15 to TH 95 and along Highway 95 from Oak Park Heights to TH 95 through the downtown area.

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C. PARKS, TRAILS AND RIVERFRONT

The riverfront has played a major role in the evolution of Downtown Stillwater as a major destination and Minnesota's iconic "River Town." A primary goal of this plan is to reinforce the riverfront as the focus of the downtown Stillwater's open space system and as a significant cultural and historical amenity, as well as a dynamic asset for economic development. Along with the riverfront, the parks, trails, stairways, and streetscapes create a network of connections and amenities which will attract and retain residents and businesses, balance pedestrian and vehicular needs, and provide spaces for a variety of gatherings and festivals to build economic value overtime.

The riverfront plan proposed in this framework synthesizes and combines recommendations from several previous parks and open space plans including: the Lowell Park Plan (1992), the Aiple Property/Kolliner Park Master Plan (1998), the North Main Street/Lowell Park Plan Update (2004), and the Stage 3 Levee Plan.

GOAL

Reinforce the riverfront as the focus of the Downtown Stillwater open space system and as a significant cultural and historical amenity.

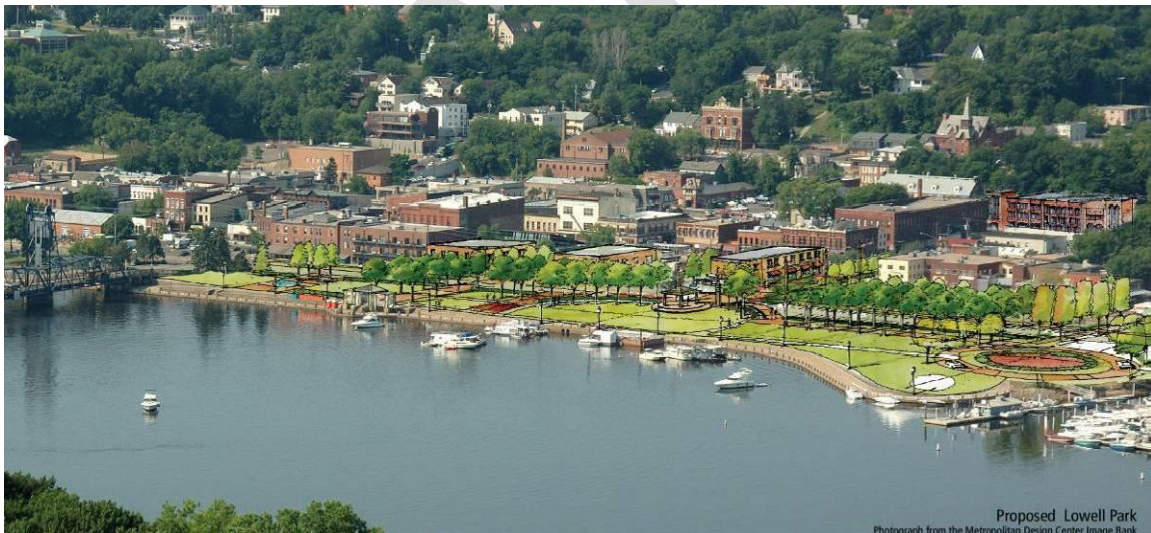


Figure 37. Proposed Riverfront Improvements

Policy 1: Bikeways, hiking trails, rest areas and picnicking accommodations should be provided within designated trail corridors, wherever feasible. In addition the trails and staircases connecting neighborhoods into downtown should be well identified with signage. A linear trail should be developed in Lowell Park running from the Dock Café to the MN Zephyr depot. Trail connections should also be explored that connect Lowell Park to the Aiple property, Kolliner Park, the Boom Site, as well as to regional and state trails.

Policy 2: The city should work together with other agencies to develop a trail system to connect the Aiple property to Downtown Stillwater and Kolliner Park.

Policy 3: Continue to explore the feasibility of acquiring additional land along the St. Croix River for park purposes.

Policy 4 The city-owned Aiple property and Kolliner Park shall be preserved for its natural setting and passive recreational opportunities.

Policy 5: Balance the functional design of the levee with aesthetic considerations and connections to river.

OBJECTIVES

- Preserve, enhance and restore the riverfront based on its natural setting, recreational uses and historic integrity for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.
- Design parking to serve both the downtown and Lowell Park. Screen views of parking from within Lowell Park and improve the visual impact of parking in the downtown area.
- Encourage access to Downtown Stillwater from the river.
- Provide setting, location, and design for special downtown festivals and events.
- Integrate elements of the Stage 3 Levee by providing permanent 50 year flood protection that is designed into the downtown circulation and open space system. Improve the connections between Old Town neighborhoods, downtown, and the riverfront through improved visual access, trails, streetscape treatments, and spaces.



Figure 38. Riverfront Plan

LOWELL PARK FLOOD CONTROL, PARKING, AND REGIONAL TRAIL

Concurrently with the downtown comprehensive planning process, the City of Stillwater has been collaborating with the Army Corp of Engineers in the preparation of final phase of the flood control improvements for the downtown riverfront. The timing of this process has been fortuitous because the objectives of the Downtown Framework Plan could be integrated with the objectives of the flood control plan to balance the functional design of the levee with aesthetic considerations and connections to the river. As a result the proposed levee south of Mulberry St. has been converted to a seat wall that will provide 50 year flood protection seamlessly integrated into Lowell Park.

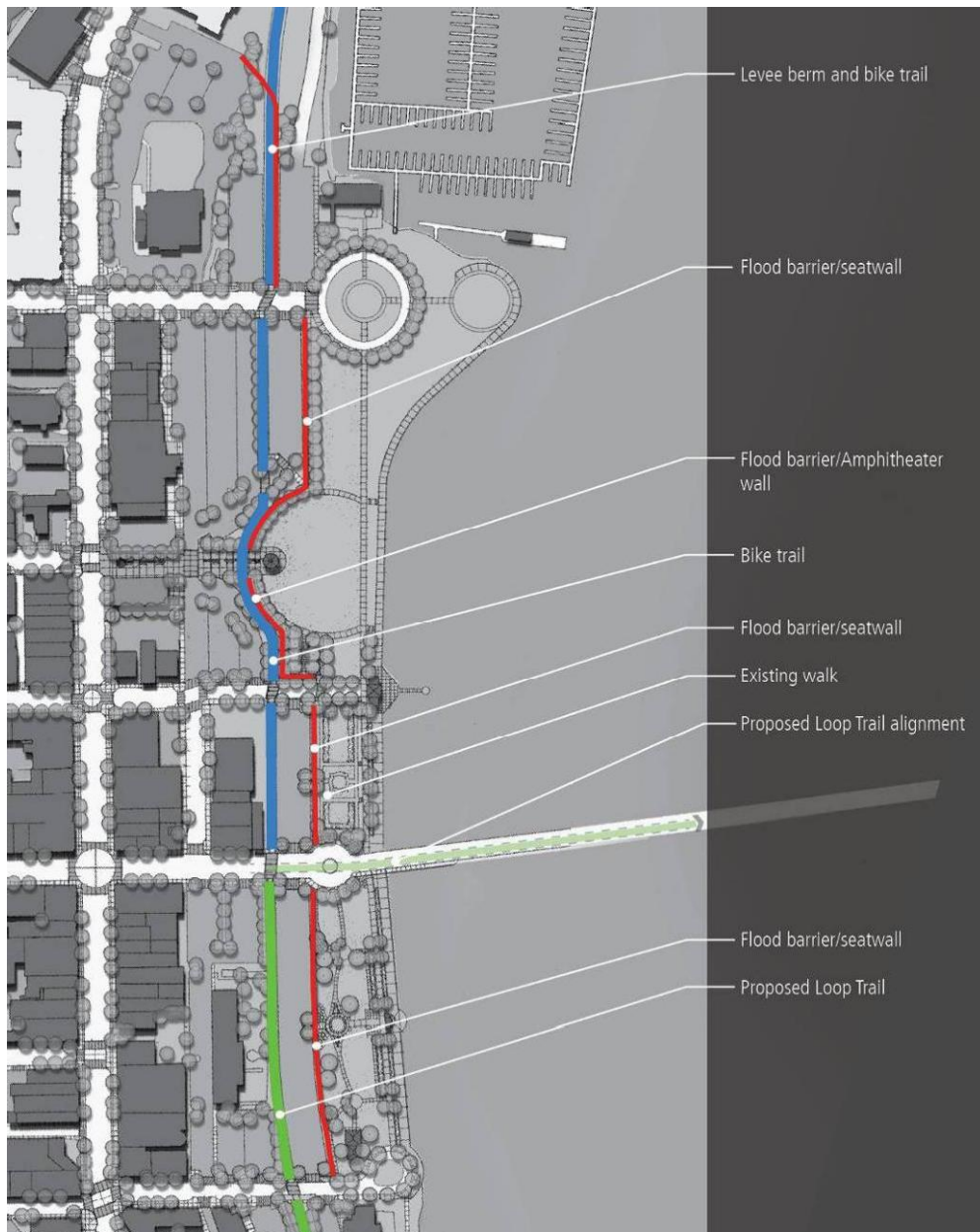


Figure 39. Final Phase of Flood Protection Improvements

The Army Corp of Engineers with SEH, Engineering Consultants, prepared an Engineering Documentation Report (EDR) that summarizes the key points of the flood control design and engineering. Pertinent excerpts for the Comprehensive Plan from the EDR are outlined below.

St. Croix Riverfront Historical Background

The St. Croix River is one of America's first "Wild and Scenic Rivers" and is subject to the legislation that protects such designated rivers.

Stillwater was established in 1843 as the result of abundant timber resources and the river which provided the necessary transportation of the timber. Three and a half billion logs passed through the nine sawmills located on the riverbank at the Port of Stillwater. The sawdust and wood debris make up a portion of the soil of the riverfront.

A formal park was established along the riverfront in 1911 and named Lowell Park. A double retaining wall system was constructed in 1938 to project the fragile riverfront from erosion, and protect most of the flood plain from annual flooding. The riverfront retaining wall was built by the WPA when the Corps of Engineers constructed Lock and Dam No. 3 on the Mississippi River at Welch, Minnesota. The wall, the park, a lift bridge across the St. Croix River, and downtown Stillwater are included on the National Register of Historic Places.

Stillwater has a population of about 18,000 and is a major tourist destination. During the summer months and the peak fall colors it is not unusual to have 20,000 visitors a day to the city. The riverfront is a focal point for many of the tourist activities.

Project Description

The current flood control project is divided into three stages as described below.

Stage 1 involved the repair and reconstruction of the 1,000 foot long existing double retaining wall system from Nelson Street on the south end of the project to the gazebo near East Myrtle Street at the north end. Construction of Stage 1 was completed in November 1997.

Stage 2 involved extending the existing wall system to the north and installing riprap erosion protection to the south of the existing wall. The wall system was extended approximately 900 feet from the gazebo near East Myrtle Street to the north side of Mulberry Point located at Mulberry Street.

Due to poor subsurface conditions which included an extensive layer of organic silt which was the result of a dam break on McKusick Lake and its associated debris flow, sawdust, and wood debris left over from sawmills that once existed in the area, a surcharge of the Stage 2 construction area was completed to improve the soil conditions at Mulberry Point. The surcharge project was designated Stage 2S. Construction of Stage 2S was completed in 1999 and construction of Stage 2 was completed in November 2002.

Stage 3 involves the expansion of the wall system. This portion of the project consists of constructing a low floodwall along the western side of Lowell Park paralleling the railroad right-of-way. The floodwall consists of a sheet pile founded concrete I-wall extending approximately 3 feet above the existing ground level. Other Stage 3 project features include a seepage control system and interior flood control facilities including portable pumping facilities.

In order to facilitate Stage 3 improvements, the City of Stillwater purchased the railroad property that traversed the entire downtown area and removed the railroad tracks. A secondary benefit of purchasing the railroad property is that the city can incorporate into the floodwall project. Removal of the railroad tracks also impacts the plans for construction of the emergency levee during major floods.

Regional Trails

Loop Trail

In conjunction with the new river crossing a continuous loop trail is proposed to connect Minnesota with Wisconsin. The trail would run across the new bridge, then north along Trunk Highway 95 through the former Aiple barge site and the city's South Main Street public parking lot, then continue through downtown along the former railway to Chestnut Street, where it would turn eastward over the historic lift bridge and head into Wisconsin and turn south to return to the new river crossing bridge.

Zephyr Trail

Washington County has committed funds for a significant portion of the cost of purchasing the Minnesota Zephyr railroad line. Together with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and other agencies the line would be converted to a trail. The trail would begin at the Zephyr Depot and follow the rail alignment northward into the Brown's Creek valley. From here it would head westward and join the Gateway Trail out of St. Paul.

Other Trails

The Parks and Trails Chapter of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan proposes other new trail segments. One is a city bike path within the Myrtle Street corridor all the way through the downtown to the river. Another trail link is proposed along East Elm Street to the north of downtown. This trail would utilize excess right-of-way and connect North Hill neighborhoods to the future Zephyr Trail.

Riverfront Parking

Currently, the riverfront parking lots present a physical and psychological barrier between Main Street and the riverfront. A primary objective of the Framework Plan is to design parking to serve both the downtown and Lowell Park, while minimizing the barrier effect through improved pedestrian connections, landscaping, streetscapes, signage and open space expansions. Also, demand for surface parking along the waterfront may be reduced somewhat by the construction of the proposed municipal structured parking on 2nd Street at Commercial Avenue. This would provide more flexibility in reconfiguring the current parking areas to allow for more landscape and open space improvements.

The current dimensions for some of the parking areas are generous and inefficient. The Framework Plan illustrates a parking configuration that maintains a simple circulation pattern, minimizes the parking aisle and row dimensions and accommodates expansion of Lowell Park to the north. Water Street is maintained as a circulation route for service vehicles, visitors and future transit.



Figure 40. Framework Plan's Effect on Parking Spaces

Floodwall Alignment

The alignment of the floodwall throughout the project area had to accommodate parking lots, the regional bike/walking trail, decks and patios for businesses, and historic park features. The city also stressed that they wanted minimum impacts to the trees in Lowell Park. In addition, the landward side of the floodwall must accommodate the construction of a temporary earthen dike for flood events that exceed the 50 year flood event elevation of the floodwall.

Flood Control/Seat Wall

One of the main goals in the layout of the floodwall alignment and parking lot grading was to minimize the exposed height of the wall. The City desired to have the wall as low as possible so that it would not block views of the river from downtown, or give the appearance of a barrier to the Lowell Park. It was also a goal of the city to use the floodwall as a seating wall. Where necessary the parking lots will be graded to give the appearance of a low wall. For the majority of the wall south of Mulberry Street the resulting wall exposure is about 2 feet.

There are five sections planned for the floodwall. The design of each depends upon surrounding topography and other existing conditions. Therefore, each is unique to its specific location. The five sections are described below.

Section A: North of Mulberry Street

The portion of the floodwall north of Mulberry Street is located west of the current access road to the Stillwater Marina. This allows for the construction of additional parking in the area. The regional trail would be adjacent to the floodwall on its west side. Therefore, the exposed height of the wall on the west side will be about 2 feet. But, the exposed height on the east side of the wall would be 4-5 feet to accommodate the parking and access road. The top of the wall will not accommodate seating in this area and instead will have a railing for safety. This can be seen in Figure 40.

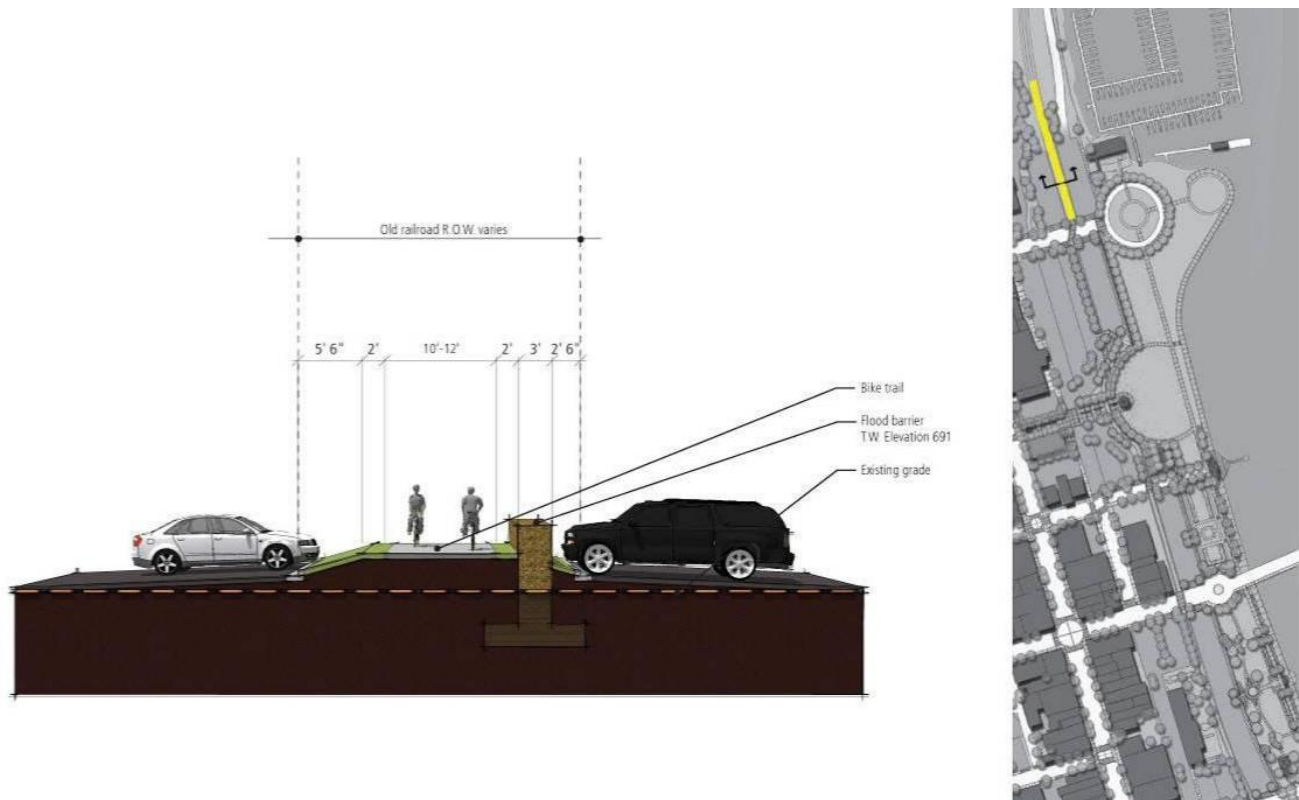


Figure 41. Section A of Floodwall

Section B: Mulberry Street

The 1992 Lowell Park Plan included a performance pavilion at Mulberry Point. This caused the storm sewer discharge pipes and the water control structures at Mulberry Street to be routed around the proposed pavilion location. In the current Comprehensive Plan the pavilion at Mulberry Street has been eliminated and Commercial Street is now designated at the location of the amphitheater.

The ground topography generally tapers lower as you approach Mulberry Street. Thus, the exposed floodwall height increases therefore the seating area in the top of the floodwall was eliminated between Commercial Street and Mulberry Street. The exposed wall on the west, or landward, side of the wall is about 2 feet since the regional trail will be adjacent to the west side of the wall. The exposed height of the wall will be about 4.5 feet on the east, or landward, side of the wall at Mulberry Street.

A road raise was designed in Mulberry Street at the floodwall in order to reduce the exposed height of the wall, to better accommodate the regional trail, and reduce the height of an emergency levee. The maximum height of the road raise is about 2 feet. Due to the road raise the speed limit of the road in this area will need to be reduced from 30 mph to 20 mph.

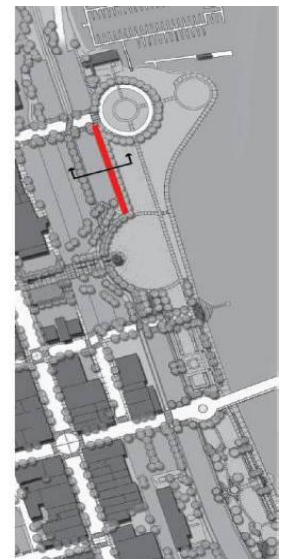
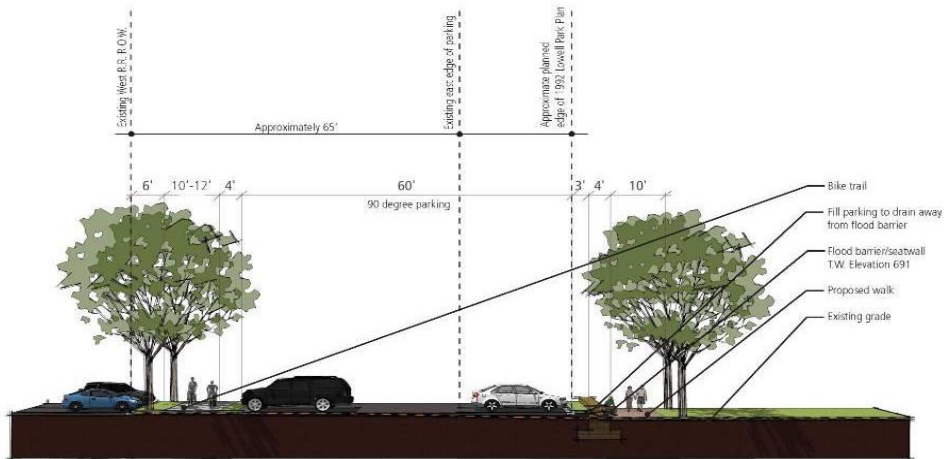


Figure 42. Section B of Floodwall

Section C: Commercial Avenue Amphitheater

An amphitheater is proposed along this segment of the floodwall. The amphitheater would be an addition to Lowell Park at the terminus of the Commercial Avenue Plaza. The proposed improvements in this area would accomplish several objectives:

- Increase the open space area of North Lowell Park to accommodate larger events. The Commercial Avenue location works well for this objective because it aligns with the floating stage that is currently used for Lumberjack Days and other events.
- The city parking lots in this area facilitate expansion of Lowell Park.
- A strong pedestrian connection is possible at this location that would link Main Street with the amphitheater and river beyond.
- The combination of activity generated by the planned municipal ramp one block west on Commercial Avenue, a potential transit facility, new commercial uses, pedestrian linkages to the river and amphitheater, plus the proximity to proposed new bike paths here should make Commercial Avenue Plaza a very active and memorable place.



Figure 43. Proposed Amphitheater



Figure 44. Section C of Floodwall

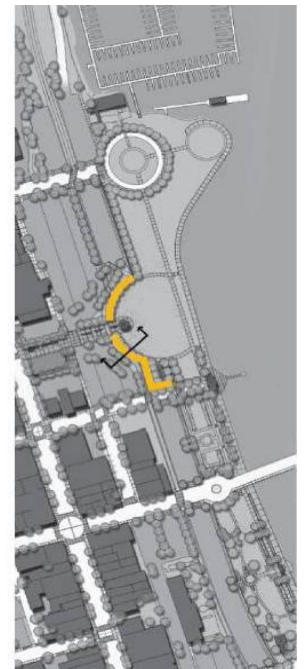
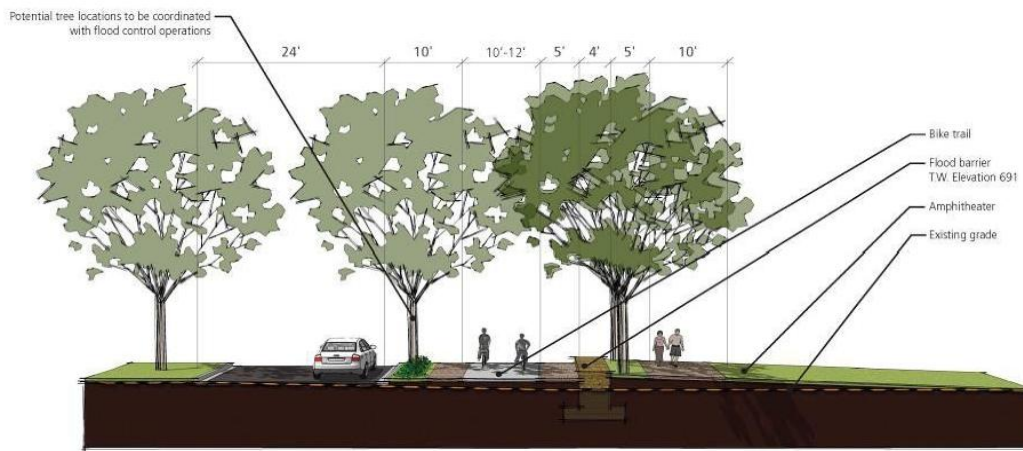


Figure 45. Section C of Floodwall

Alternative Section C: Short Term Alternative Alignment

One of the challenges for the floodwall alignment in this section is that the city does not own all of the property immediately to the west of the former railroad right-of-way. Consequently, the full arc of the amphitheater can not be built at this time. Until that is possible an interim truncated version is proposed. This interim version can be seen in Figures 46 and 47. The short term solution for the floodwall is to terminate it at each side of the amphitheater. The grade between the ends of the floodwall would be raised to the 50 year flood event elevation of 691 feet above sea level, the same height as the top of the floodwall. The ground will be sloped toward the river so that people sitting on the grass in the park can look down toward the performance stage on a barge in the river. This solution would also allow for an emergency levee to be built without encroaching on private property.



Figure 46. Interim Amphitheater Plan

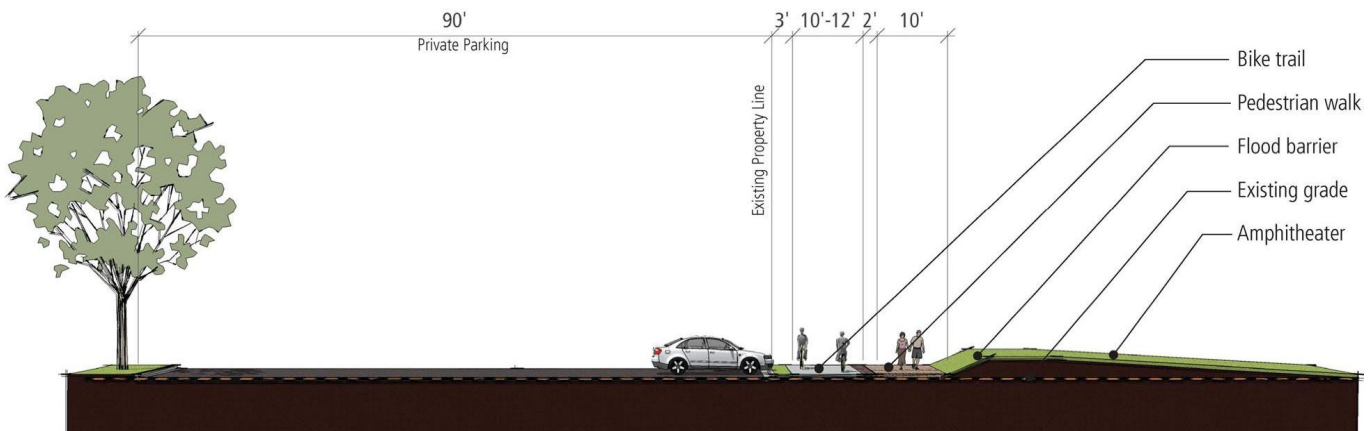


Figure 47. Interim Amphitheater Cross Section

Section D: Floodwall Alignment between Chestnut Street and Myrtle Street

The main challenge in the alignment in this section of floodwall is the presence of The Water Street Inn located immediately adjacent to the former railroad right-of-way. Therefore, the regional trail corridor needed to be aligned so that there was a safe separation from both the Inn and the edge of the city parking lot.

Another challenge in this reach is the presence of a historic retaining wall along the St. Croix River bridge concourse and electrical facilities required for operation of the lift portion of the bridge. The floodwall was curved to the west to avoid the wall and electrical facilities.

In this section there are historic staircases in Lowell Park on the east, or riverward, side of the wall. The floodwall was positioned so that it would not impact the staircases and to allow for construction of a sidewalk between the staircases and the floodwall.

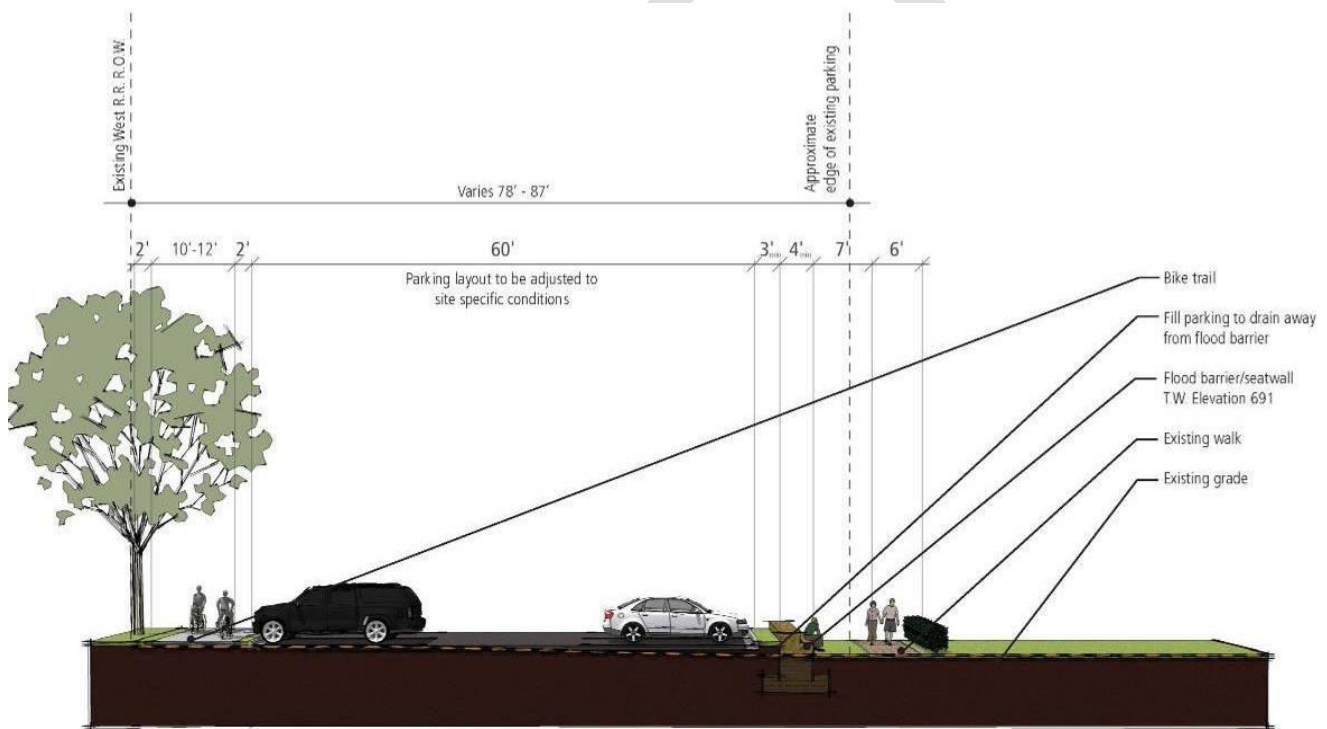


Figure 48. Section D of Floodwall

Section E: Floodwall Alignment between Nelson Street and Chestnut Street

As with Section D, the challenge throughout this section of floodwall is in accommodating wall, boulevards, parking lot and trail corridor all within the relatively confined distance between Lowell Park and the deck of the Freight House Restaurant. A boulevard was designed between the parking lot curb and the floodwall to allow for snow removal and to account for the overhang of cars. Similarly a boulevard was factored in on the west side of the parking lot

so that vehicles do not hang over the regional trail. The position of the regional trail is midway between the back of the parking lot curb and the Freight House Restaurant deck.

As with Section D, the alignment of the floodwall was curved westward as it approached Chestnut Street in order to avoid the historic concourse wall at Chestnut Street.

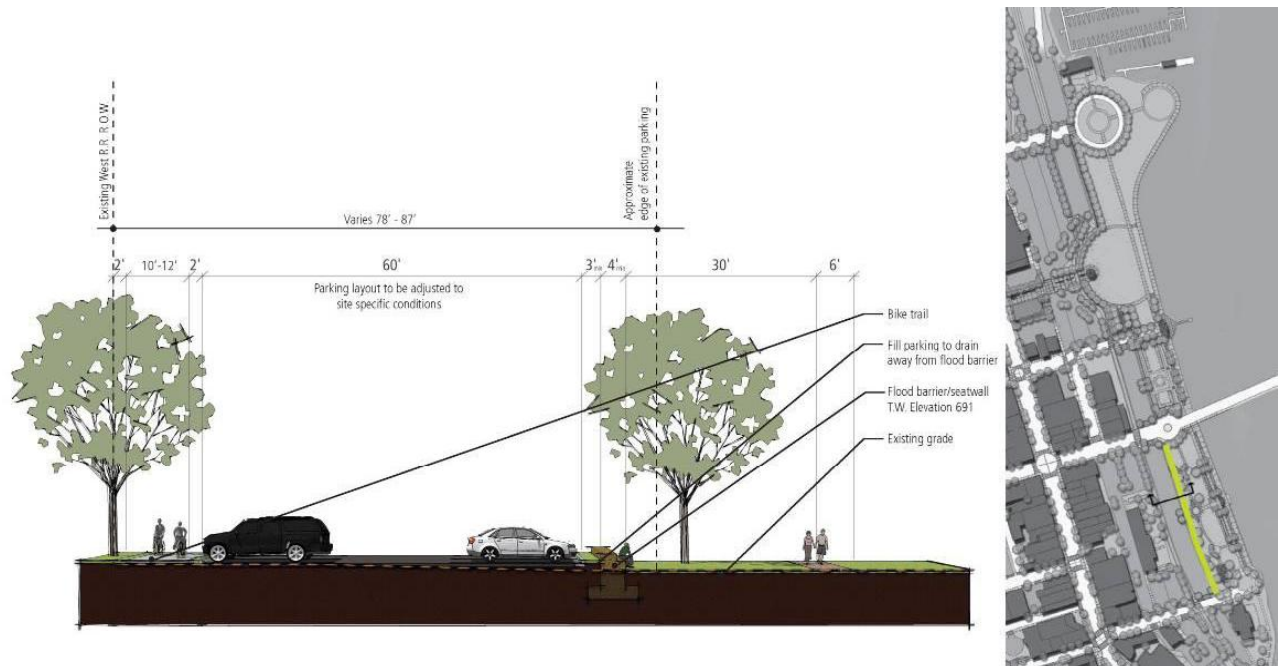


Figure 49. Section E of Floodwall

Implementation

To implement the Parks, Trail, and Riverfront section of the Downtown Framework Plan, the city will consider the following implementation measures, which were developed from the goal and policy categories, listed in the beginning of this chapter.

- Prepare integrated and detailed park plans for the downtown riverfront properties based on the concept plans developed as part of the Lowell Park Plan (1992), the Aiple Property/Kolliner Park Master Plan (1998), the North Main Street/Lowell Park Plan Update (2004), and the Stage 3 Levee Plan.
- Maintain the Stillwater/Houlton Bridge as an important connection for the park system and to the heritage of the area.
- Explore developing plans for additional points of public access to the river.
- Upgrade Mulberry point to the passive recreational and pedestrian character defined by the Morrell and Nichols Lowell Park Plan.
- Develop Mulberry Street into a more formal “processional” boulevard linking the Riverfront and Main Street.
- Expand Lowell Park area toward Water Street.

- Provide pedestrian amenities such as landscaping, visitor center, restrooms, trails, sidewalks, and interpretive sites of the downtown and river.
- Consider incorporating performing and visual art within Downtown Stillwater.
- Improve existing stairway connections to adjacent residential neighborhoods with landscaping, lighting, and a wayfinding system.
- Incorporate more viewing areas with benches – particularly looking north from the south bluff.

D. Local Economy and Tourism

The City of Stillwater has made a conscious decision to build its economy by capitalizing on its historical riches and maintenance of a high quality of life. Stillwater is a destination location for residents of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and beyond. This destination status provides a wealth of economic activities that would not normally be expected in a community of the size and demographic characteristics of Stillwater. During the summer months and when fall foliage colors peak it is not unusual to have 20,000 visitors a day in the city. The riverfront is a focal point for many of these tourist activities.

By maintaining the city's quality of place, not only does it receive additional economic benefit from tourism, but it attracts residents and businesses that treasure the unique marriage of small town living with high quality and unique merchants typically only found in much larger communities or the central cities.

This Local Economy and Tourism section of the Framework Plan will:

- Outline the city's goals and policies with respect to economic development and tourism;
- Summarize market research and analysis that was completed for the 2030 Comprehensive Plan process; and
- Provide a list of programs for implementation of the goals and policies.

Local Economy

As the "Birthplace of Minnesota", Stillwater has not only one of the oldest economies in the state, but also one of the more vibrant. The city has consistently exceeded the suburban economic norms for the metro area, particularly in the area of employment. The city worked with citizens to prepare economic development goals with supporting objectives, policies and programs. The goals, objectives and programs are the foundation of the Local Economy and Tourism section of the Downtown Framework Plan. They highlight the city's role in protecting and enhancing the local economy in the coming years.



Goals

Goal 1. Increase the tax base and provide opportunities for economic growth for Stillwater and Stillwater area residents.

Goal 2. Promote and maintain the downtown as a central focus for community economic and cultural activity.

Goal 3. Provide new locations for job growth in close proximity to housing and with convenient access.

Objectives

Support business expansion in the downtown commercial district and West Stillwater Business Park area.

Policies

Policy 4. Work with local and regional economic development interests to promote local economic development.

Policy 5. Encourage downtown as a relocation destination for successful businesses.

Tourism

Stillwater's preserved historical sites of the 1800's lumbering era have made the city an attractive destination for tourists. Much of the downtown area is filled with businesses targeted to this tourist trade including historic hotels, beds and breakfast, museums, riverboats, the Minnesota Zephyr, specialty shops, and a variety of restaurants. Stillwater is also host to many special events that annually draw thousands of tourists to the community including, Lumberjack Days, The Rivertown Art Festival and Music on the Waterfront.



Goals

Goal 1. Promote tourism consistent with retaining Stillwater's unique natural resources and historic and architectural character.

Objectives

Maintain Stillwater's historic, cultural and natural resources, community uniqueness

Support historic preservation efforts

Support tourism as a major basic city industry

Support public improvements and maintenance that enhances the attractiveness of downtown

Policies

Policy 1. Attract visitors and shoppers to the community

Policy 2. Support year around activities that enliven the downtown public and cultural life

Policy 3. Promote activities which lengthen the time visitors spend in Stillwater

Policy 4. Reinforce the unique historic character of downtown

Policy 5. Maintain public facilities so that the downtown is an attractive place to visit

Policy 6. Work with the Stillwater Area Chamber of Commerce and Convention and Visitors Bureau in promoting downtown activities and improvements



MARKET ATTRIBUTES OF DOWNTOWN STILLWATER

Bonestroo analyzed the current and historic market trends for retail, office, and residential uses, as a majority of downtown is devoted to one of these three uses.

Downtown Stillwater consists of a mix of businesses and residences that exist in a unique setting within the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. The positive characteristics that contribute to the economic vitality of the area include:

Positive Attributes

- Location along a protected National Scenic Waterway (the St. Croix River)
- Topography that is varied, which allows for desirable views of city structures and the St. Croix River Valley
- Cohesive, well-preserved stock of historic buildings
- Pedestrian-friendly environment
- Well-known throughout the metropolitan region
- Strong community identity (sense of pride)
- Vibrant retail/commercial activity

Despite the positive characteristics that have contributed to the downtown's economic vitality, there are challenges such as:

Negative Attributes

- Limited access from major metropolitan highways
- Perceived lack of convenient and/or accessible parking
- Traffic
- Limited offerings for local residents
- Few, if any, transit options
- Limited development or redevelopment opportunities
- Location that is somewhat isolated from the metropolitan area

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Because of Downtown Stillwater's uniqueness, many of the businesses draw customers from throughout the metropolitan region. This is also true of households who want to live in Downtown Stillwater. Therefore, the future potential of both commercial and residential growth is strongly related to regional demographic trends. The following are key conditions affecting Downtown Stillwater:

- The population and household base of the 13-County Twin Cities Metropolitan Area is forecasted to grow steadily through 2020 (see Tables 1 and 2). A growing metropolitan area will mean a growing consumer base for businesses located in Downtown Stillwater.
- The population is aging and the proportion of households with young children is declining at both the regional and local level (see Tables 3

and 4). This suggests that over the next 10 years, as more households reach retirement age, discretionary spending of the type that supports many downtown establishments will increase.

- Through 2020, Washington County and communities adjacent to Stillwater are forecasted to grow at rates that will exceed the metropolitan growth rate (see Tables 1 and 2). This suggests that commercial activity associated with convenience-related and other non-destination retail has the potential to increase in the downtown provided these new growth areas are easily accessible to the downtown.

CURRENT DOWNTOWN HOUSING CONDITIONS

For-Sale Market

The for-sale housing market is currently slumping locally, regionally, and nationally. Historically low mortgage interest rates, lax lending standards, and rampant speculation during the first decade of the century has led to an oversupply of for-sale homes on the market. To gauge the impact of current market conditions on the for-sale housing demand downtown, Bonestroo surveyed recent and current for-sale developments (see Table 5). Below are important findings:

- New for-sale development primarily consists of multi-story condominium buildings
- Since 2004, seven buildings have been built or are under construction with a total of 336 units
- Of the 336 units, 112 (33%) are currently for-sale
- Sales have slowed substantially over the last 18 months
- Very few units under \$250,000 remain available
- Outside the central cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Stillwater has been one of the most popular locations for new condominium development

Given its current condition, Bonestroo concludes the following about the future of for-sale housing in the downtown:

- It will remain saturated with available supply and be marked by slow absorption for the next two years; especially for units priced above \$350,000
- There is some immediate potential to absorb more units priced under \$250,000; however, land and construction costs will make this difficult to achieve
- Aging baby boomers and empty nesters will continue to trade down to smaller, more efficient units
- Downtown Stillwater has an unparalleled array of amenities to offer condo buyers, which will result in a faster rebound in the market compared to other suburban areas

Rental Market

In contrast to the for-sale market, the rental market has significantly improved over the last several years. Vacancy rates throughout the metro area have declined from a peak of 8% in 2005 to below 4% in 2007 (Graph 1). Related to declining vacancies are rising rents. Over the last two years, the average rent in the metro area, and Stillwater has increased between 3-5% (Graph 2). Although increased demand for rental housing has placed upward pressure on rents, properties in Stillwater typically do not command the same rental rates as those in other parts of the metro area. This is primarily due to the fact that the rental housing stock in Stillwater, especially in the downtown, is older and located in smaller buildings with few amenities (Graph 3).

Given the condition of the rental market, Bonestroo concludes the following:

- Limited new development in the past 10 years along with increased market demand has resulted in opportunities for additional rental housing in the downtown
- The strongest demand is for properties targeted to seniors, especially market rate units with up-to-date layouts, features, and amenities
- Some rental demand is from younger households; however, it is limited to those who work in the downtown or grew-up in the area

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

It is estimated that Downtown Stillwater could support up to 250 new housing units over the next 10 years. All of these units would be in multifamily buildings (owned or rented). A significant proportion (between 25-50%) could be age-restricted. Because of current conditions in the for-sale market, most of this demand will not occur for at least three to five years, though there is some immediate demand for rental housing.

From 2000 to 2007, about 20% of Stillwater's residential development occurred in the downtown. Given that available land on the outskirts of the city will become scarce over the next 10 years, we might assume that the 20% proportion will increase to 40%. Thus, since the Met Council anticipates Stillwater will grow by 600 households over the next 10 years, we would calculate that 40% (about 250 units) could be developed in the downtown.

CURRENT DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Commercial uses in the downtown (i.e., office and retail) mostly consist of professional service firms (e.g., real estate agents, financial planners, attorneys, etc.) that occupy small office spaces and destination-oriented retail shops that are dependent on non-local customers. The lack of other commercial uses is the result of a transformation that began several decades ago when the development of auto-oriented shopping centers outside of the downtown siphoned off convenience-related retail (e.g., grocery stores, hardware stores, drug stores, etc.). In order to assess Downtown Stillwater's position as an important commercial center, Bonestroo collected data on the retail and office markets, which are summarized below.

Retail Market Conditions

Metro-wide, the retail market has been strong for many years, but is now showing signs of a slowdown due to rising energy prices, sagging consumer confidence, and the slumping housing market. According to the Minnesota Shopping Center Association, retail vacancy is around 6% metro-wide, which, though healthy, is rising.

The vacancy rate in Downtown Stillwater appears to be in line with the metropolitan area. A windshield survey revealed a small number of empty spaces due to the recent relocation of several businesses as well as a couple of recently constructed buildings with new space waiting to be filled. Nonetheless, the vacant retail space has not negatively affected rents, which range from \$16 to \$27 per square foot for new space and from \$10 to \$18 per square foot for older or less visible space. These are rents that are comparable to many of the smaller shopping centers located throughout the metro area.

Interviews with real estate professionals familiar with Downtown Stillwater revealed that many remain bullish on retail market. Some respondents even cited examples of continued interest from national retailers to open stores. Despite this favorable impression, some respondents also noted that recent tax changes may have dampened demand somewhat. However, others are optimistic that the recent formation of a business association will improve market conditions by coordinating marketing efforts among many of the retailers.

Given the current retail market, the following conclusions can be made:

- A declining retail market will be most strongly felt by shopping centers built to anticipate residential growth. This won't be the case in Downtown Stillwater. Instead, Downtown Stillwater's retail market may increase during this latest economic slowdown because reduced air travel may increase interest to vacation and thus spend discretionary dollars closer to home.
- Growth in the number of empty nesters and retirees will fuel demand for more destination-oriented retail.
- Improved access to Downtown Stillwater will be essential for future growth; metro area residents must be able to get into and out of Downtown Stillwater.
- Neighborhood retailers or convenience retail (i.e., grocery stores, hardware stores, drug stores, etc.) will remain absent from the downtown unless many more housing units are built in or near the downtown. Assuming the consumer spending habits of a typical household supports roughly 40 square feet of neighborhood commercial space, then Stillwater will need to add a minimum of 2,000 new housing units to support such a retailer.

Office Market Conditions

The metro-wide office market has been improving in recent years as the overall vacancy rate has declined from 18.9% in 2003 to 14.7% in 2007

(Figure 4). In particular smaller office buildings, which constitute most of the Downtown Stillwater market, have been performing very well as of late. Over 60% of the firms located in Stillwater have between one and four employees compared to the metro area rate of about 55% (Figure 5). Moreover, such figures include commercial properties in Stillwater that are outside the downtown. If we were able to isolate such data on the downtown, the proportion of firms with fewer than four employees would likely be even higher.

The businesses that occupy office space in Downtown Stillwater are primarily financial, insurance, and professional service firms. These tend to be smaller businesses in which the proprietor has an established client base and locates their business in Downtown Stillwater out of choice and not out of necessity. In many instances, the proprietors live in Stillwater as well.

The office space in the downtown tends to be concentrated along 2nd Street and in lower trafficked areas of Main Street (i.e., north of Commercial Avenue and upper story spaces). Rents for office space have a wide range, mostly depending on views. The low end tends to be around \$10 per square foot, while the upper end can be as high as \$20 per square foot.

Based on the current office market conditions, the following conclusions can be made:

- The demand for office space in Downtown Stillwater will continue to come from small professional service firms because the downtown lacks sufficient access to the remainder of the metro area to support large-scale office users
- Growth in the number of early retirees may increase demand for niche office space in Downtown Stillwater

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

It is estimated that Downtown Stillwater could support approximately 20,000 square feet of new retail space and 10,000 square feet of new office space over the next 10 years. Most of the retail would be limited to restaurants and specialty retailers who rely on destination shoppers. Meanwhile, most of the office space would be limited to small professional and business service firms with fewer than 20 employees.

From 2002 to 2006, approximately 21,300 square feet of new commercial space was built in Downtown Stillwater, all of which was classified as Mixed-Use according to the Met Council. During this same time period, the Twin Cities developed on average about 560,000 square feet of Mixed-Use commercial space per year. Downtown Stillwater, therefore, captured a little more than 1% of that annual average. If Mixed-Use developments continue at the same pace and Downtown Stillwater captures a similar proportion of that development, it would calculate to demand for nearly 65,000 square feet of space over the next 10 years. However, this would be aggressive given roadway capacity issues and the availability of developable sites. A more pragmatic adjustment to the calculation would, therefore, be to reduce this amount by 50%. The result is a forecast for something closer to 30,000

square feet, two-thirds of which is anticipated to be retail in orientation, while one-third is anticipated to be office in orientation.

Table 1
Population Growth Trends
Stillwater Study Area
1990-2020

	1990	2000	Projections		Change					
			2010	2020	Numeric			Percentage		
					90-00	00-10	10-20	90-00	00-10	10-20
Stillwater	13,882	15,143	19,100	21,300	1,261	3,957	2,200	9.1%	26.1%	11.5%
Oak Park Heights	3,486	3,957	5,500	5,400	471	1,543	-100	13.5%	39.0%	-1.8%
St. Joseph, WI (town)	2,657	3,436	4,150	4,720	779	714	570	29.3%	20.8%	13.7%
Bayport	3,200	3,162	4,600	5,300	-38	1,438	700	-1.2%	45.5%	15.2%
May Twp.	2,535	2,928	3,200	3,600	393	272	400	15.5%	9.3%	12.5%
Somerset, WI (town)	1,975	2,644	4,174	5,010	669	1,530	836	33.9%	57.9%	20.0%
Stillwater Twp.	2,066	2,553	2,690	2,940	487	137	250	23.6%	5.4%	9.3%
Somerset, WI (village)	1,065	1,556	2,840	3,580	491	1,284	740	46.1%	82.5%	26.1%
Baytown Twp.	939	1,533	1,820	1,960	594	287	140	63.3%	18.7%	7.7%
Marine on St. Croix	602	602	760	880	0	158	120	0.0%	26.2%	15.8%
Subtotal	32,407	37,514	48,834	54,690	5,107	11,320	5,856	15.8%	30.2%	12.0%
Washington County	145,880	201,130	258,542	316,083	55,250	57,412	57,541	37.9%	28.5%	22.3%
St. Croix County (WI)	50,251	63,155	80,779	95,202	12,904	17,624	14,423	25.7%	27.9%	17.9%
Twin Cities Metro Area ¹	2,538,834	2,968,806	3,471,727	3,916,357	429,972	502,921	444,630	16.9%	16.9%	12.8%

¹ 13-County Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)

Sources: U.S. Census; Metropolitan Council; Minnesota and Wisconsin State Demographic Centers; Bonestroo, Inc.

Table 2
Household Growth Trends
Stillwater Study Area
1990-2020

	1990	2000	Projections		Change					
			2010	2020	Numeric			Percentage		
					90-00	00-10	10-20	90-00	00-10	10-20
Stillwater	4,982	5,797	7,500	8,100	815	1,703	600	16.4%	29.4%	8.0%
Oak Park Heights	1,322	1,528	2,180	2,300	206	652	120	15.6%	42.7%	5.5%
St. Joseph, WI (town)	885	1,193	1,483	1,750	308	290	267	34.8%	24.3%	18.0%
May Twp.	820	1,007	1,200	1,400	187	193	200	22.8%	19.2%	16.7%
Somerset, WI (town)	668	927	1,500	1,870	259	573	370	38.8%	61.8%	24.7%
Stillwater Twp.	639	833	960	1,110	194	127	150	30.4%	15.2%	15.6%
Bayport	743	763	1,140	1,300	20	377	160	2.7%	49.4%	14.0%
Somerset, WI (village)	406	635	1,216	1,590	229	581	374	56.4%	91.5%	30.8%
Baytown Twp.	302	492	600	680	190	108	80	62.9%	22.0%	13.3%
Marine on St. Croix	234	254	320	370	20	66	50	8.5%	26.0%	15.6%
Subtotal	11,001	13,429	18,099	20,470	2,428	4,670	2,371	22.1%	34.8%	13.1%
Washington County	49,246	71,462	97,749	122,764	22,216	26,287	25,015	45.1%	36.8%	25.6%
St. Croix County (WI)	17,638	23,410	30,814	37,655	5,772	7,404	6,841	32.7%	31.6%	22.2%
Twin Cities Metro Area ¹	960,170	1,136,615	1,366,056	1,570,974	176,445	229,441	204,918	18.4%	20.2%	15.0%

¹ 13-County Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)

Sources: U.S. Census; Metropolitan Council; Minnesota and Wisconsin State Demographic Centers; Bonestroo, Inc.

Table 3
Household Type
Stillwater Study Area
1990 & 2000

	Total HH's		Family Households						Non-Family Households				
	1990	2000	Married w/ Child		Married w/o Child		Other *		Living Alone		Roommates		
			1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	
Number of Households													
Stillwater	4,982	5,797	1,616	1,589	1,388	1,724	647	802	1,097	1,408	234	274	
Oak Park Heights	1,322	1,528	324	324	331	374	174	224	427	532	66	74	
St. Joseph, WI (town)	885	1,193	372	430	298	453	54	96	122	160	39	54	
Bayport	743	763	161	142	249	233	71	114	219	237	43	37	
May Twp.	820	1,007	358	386	274	378	58	79	96	128	34	36	
Somerset, WI (town)	668	927	249	310	216	324	71	105	106	141	26	47	
Stillwater Twp.	639	833	321	357	222	334	39	45	40	72	17	25	
Somerset, WI (village)	406	635	122	138	91	121	61	132	97	170	35	74	
Baytown Twp.	302	492	138	218	100	185	26	33	31	44	7	12	
Marine on St. Croix	234	254	73	65	88	92	20	21	48	60	5	16	
Subtotal	11,001	13,429	3,734	3,959	3,257	4,218	1,221	1,651	2,283	2,952	506	649	
Washington County	49,246	71,462	19,058	24,307	14,671	22,011	5,548	8,347	7,927	13,374	2,042	3,423	
St. Croix County (WI)	17,638	23,410	6,439	7,206	5,220	7,204	1,657	2,536	3,480	4,958	842	1,506	
Twin Cities Metro Area ¹	960,170	1,136,615	269,928	294,213	258,213	298,924	120,817	151,166	238,122	303,050	73,090	89,262	
Percent of Total													
Stillwater	100.0	100.0	32.4	27.4	27.9	29.7	13.0	13.8	22.0	24.3	4.7	4.7	
Oak Park Heights	100.0	100.0	24.5	21.2	25.0	24.5	13.2	14.7	32.3	34.8	5.0	4.8	
St. Joseph, WI (town)	100.0	100.0	42.0	36.0	33.7	38.0	6.1	8.0	13.8	13.4	4.4	4.5	
Bayport	100.0	100.0	21.7	18.6	33.5	30.5	9.6	14.9	29.5	31.1	5.8	4.8	
May Twp.	100.0	100.0	43.7	38.3	33.4	37.5	7.1	7.8	11.7	12.7	4.1	3.6	
Somerset, WI (town)	100.0	100.0	37.3	33.4	32.3	35.0	10.6	11.3	15.9	15.2	3.9	5.1	
Stillwater Twp.	100.0	100.0	50.2	42.9	34.7	40.1	6.1	5.4	6.3	8.6	2.7	3.0	
Somerset, WI (village)	100.0	100.0	30.0	21.7	22.4	19.1	15.0	20.8	23.9	26.8	8.6	11.7	
Baytown Twp.	100.0	100.0	45.7	44.3	33.1	37.6	8.6	6.7	10.3	8.9	2.3	2.4	
Marine on St. Croix	100.0	100.0	31.2	25.6	37.6	36.2	8.5	8.3	20.5	23.6	2.1	6.3	
Subtotal	100.0	100.0	33.9	29.5	29.6	31.4	11.1	12.3	20.8	22.0	4.6	4.8	
Washington County	100.0	100.0	38.7	34.0	29.8	30.8	11.3	11.7	16.1	18.7	4.1	4.8	
St. Croix County (WI)	100.0	100.0	36.5	30.8	29.6	30.8	9.4	10.8	19.7	21.2	4.8	6.4	
Twin Cities Metro Area ¹	100.0	100.0	28.1	25.9	26.9	26.3	12.6	13.3	24.8	26.7	7.6	7.9	

	Change 1990-2000											
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Stillwater	815	16.4%	-27	-1.7%	336	24.2%	155	24.0%	311	28.4%	40	17.1%
Oak Park Heights	206	15.6%	0	0.0%	43	13.0%	50	28.7%	105	24.6%	8	12.1%
St. Joseph, WI (town)	308	34.8%	58	15.6%	155	52.0%	42	77.8%	38	31.1%	15	38.5%
Bayport	20	2.7%	-19	-11.8%	-16	-6.4%	43	60.6%	18	8.2%	-6	-14.0%
May Twp.	187	22.8%	28	7.8%	104	38.0%	21	36.2%	32	33.3%	2	5.9%
Somerset, WI (town)	259	38.8%	61	24.5%	108	50.0%	34	47.9%	35	33.0%	21	80.8%
Stillwater Twp.	194	30.4%	36	11.2%	112	50.5%	6	15.4%	32	80.0%	8	47.1%
Somerset, WI (village)	229	56.4%	16	13.1%	30	33.0%	71	116.4%	73	75.3%	39	111.4%
Baytown Twp.	190	62.9%	80	58.0%	85	85.0%	7	26.9%	13	41.9%	5	71.4%
Marine on St. Croix	20	8.5%	-8	-11.0%	4	4.5%	1	5.0%	12	25.0%	11	220.0%
Subtotal	2,428	22.1%	225	6.0%	961	29.5%	430	35.2%	669	29.3%	143	28.3%
Washington County	22,216	45.1%	5,249	27.5%	7,340	50.0%	2,799	50.5%	5,447	68.7%	1,381	67.6%
St. Croix County (WI)	5,772	32.7%	767	11.9%	1,984	38.0%	879	53.0%	1,478	42.5%	664	78.9%
Twin Cities Metro Area ¹	176,445	18.4%	24,285	9.0%	40,711	15.8%	30,349	25.1%	64,928	27.3%	16,172	22.1%

* Single-parent families

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Bonestroo, Inc.

Table 4
Age Distribution
Stillwater Study Area
1990 & 2000

	Total Population		Under 5		5 to 17		18 to 24		25 to 54		55 and Older	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Number of Persons												
Stillwater	13,882	15,143	975	991	3,009	3,198	1,198	957	6,072	6,833	2,628	3,164
Oak Park Heights	3,486	3,957	203	234	586	629	363	362	1,648	1,918	686	814
St. Joseph, WI (town)	2,657	3,436	239	240	574	765	212	170	1,350	1,740	282	521
Bayport	3,200	3,162	109	78	267	312	149	389	2,027	1,842	648	541
May Twp.	2,535	2,928	206	158	582	692	177	161	1,234	1,395	336	522
Somerset, WI (town)	1,975	2,644	160	183	456	585	162	164	927	1,298	270	414
Stillwater Twp.	2,066	2,553	155	134	506	646	149	162	1,054	1,197	202	414
Somerset, WI (village)	1,065	1,556	95	145	234	324	125	208	462	713	149	166
Baytown Twp.	939	1,533	64	73	222	409	74	90	444	714	135	247
Marine on St. Croix	602	602	50	33	98	102	43	20	301	273	110	174
Subtotal	32,407	37,514	2,256	2,269	6,534	7,662	2,652	2,683	15,519	17,923	5,446	6,977
Washington County	145,896	201,130	12,138	15,346	32,177	43,879	11,771	13,726	70,614	96,428	19,196	31,751
St. Croix County (WI)	50,251	63,155	4,140	4,423	10,977	13,194	4,286	5,160	22,235	29,267	8,613	11,111
Twin Cities Metro Area ¹	2,538,834	2,968,806	206,030	212,810	463,405	580,592	260,134	274,068	1,178,947	1,390,853	430,318	510,483
Percent of Total												
Stillwater	100.0	100.0	7.0	6.5	21.7	21.1	8.6	6.3	43.7	45.1	18.9	20.9
Oak Park Heights	100.0	100.0	5.8	5.9	16.8	15.9	10.4	9.1	47.3	48.5	19.7	20.6
St. Joseph, WI (town)	100.0	100.0	9.0	7.0	21.6	22.3	8.0	4.9	50.8	50.6	10.6	15.2
Bayport	100.0	100.0	3.4	2.5	8.3	9.9	4.7	12.3	63.3	58.3	20.3	17.1
May Twp.	100.0	100.0	8.1	5.4	23.0	23.6	7.0	5.5	48.7	47.6	13.3	17.8
Somerset, WI (town)	100.0	100.0	8.1	6.9	23.1	22.1	8.2	6.2	46.9	49.1	13.7	15.7
Stillwater Twp.	100.0	100.0	7.5	5.2	24.5	25.3	7.2	6.3	51.0	46.9	9.8	16.2
Somerset, WI (village)	100.0	100.0	8.9	9.3	22.0	20.8	11.7	13.4	43.4	45.8	14.0	10.7
Baytown Twp.	100.0	100.0	6.8	4.8	23.6	26.7	7.9	5.9	47.3	46.6	14.4	16.1
Marine on St. Croix	100.0	100.0	8.3	5.5	16.3	16.9	7.1	3.3	50.0	45.3	18.3	28.9
Subtotal	100.0	100.0	7.0	6.0	20.2	20.4	8.2	7.2	47.9	47.8	16.8	18.6
Washington County	100.0	100.0	8.3	7.6	22.1	21.8	8.1	6.8	48.4	47.9	13.2	15.8
St. Croix County (WI)	100.0	100.0	8.2	7.0	21.8	20.9	8.5	8.2	44.2	46.3	17.1	17.6
Twin Cities Metro Area ¹	100.0	100.0	8.1	7.2	18.3	19.6	10.2	9.2	46.4	46.8	16.9	17.2

	Change 1990-2000		Change 1990-2000		Change 1990-2000		Change 1990-2000		Change 1990-2000		Change 1990-2000	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Stillwater	1,261	9.1%	16	1.6%	189	6.3%	-241	-20.1%	761	12.5%	536	20.4%
Oak Park Heights	471	13.5%	31	15.3%	43	7.3%	-1	-0.3%	270	16.4%	128	18.7%
St. Joseph, WI (town)	779	29.3%	1	0.4%	191	33.3%	-42	-19.8%	390	28.9%	239	84.8%
Bayport	-38	-1.2%	-31	-28.4%	45	16.9%	240	161.1%	-185	-9.1%	-107	-16.5%
May Twp.	393	15.5%	-48	-23.3%	110	18.9%	-16	-9.0%	161	13.0%	186	55.4%
Somerset, WI (town)	669	33.9%	23	14.4%	129	28.3%	2	1.2%	371	40.0%	144	53.3%
Stillwater Twp.	487	23.6%	-21	-13.5%	140	27.7%	13	8.7%	143	13.6%	212	105.0%
Somerset, WI (village)	491	46.1%	50	52.6%	90	38.5%	83	66.4%	251	54.3%	17	11.4%
Baytown Twp.	594	63.3%	9	14.1%	187	84.2%	16	21.6%	270	60.8%	112	83.0%
Marine on St. Croix	0	0.0%	-17	-34.0%	4	4.1%	-23	-53.5%	-28	-9.3%	64	58.2%
Subtotal	5,107	15.8%	13	0.6%	1,128	17.3%	31	1.2%	2,404	15.5%	1,531	28.1%
Washington County	55,234	37.9%	3,208	26.4%	11,702	36.4%	1,955	16.6%	25,814	36.6%	12,555	65.4%
St. Croix County (WI)	12,904	25.7%	283	6.8%	2,217	20.2%	874	20.4%	7,032	31.6%	2,498	29.0%
Twin Cities Metro Area ¹	429,972	16.9%	6,780	3.3%	117,187	25.3%	13,934	5.4%	211,906	18.0%	80,165	18.6%

* Single-parent families

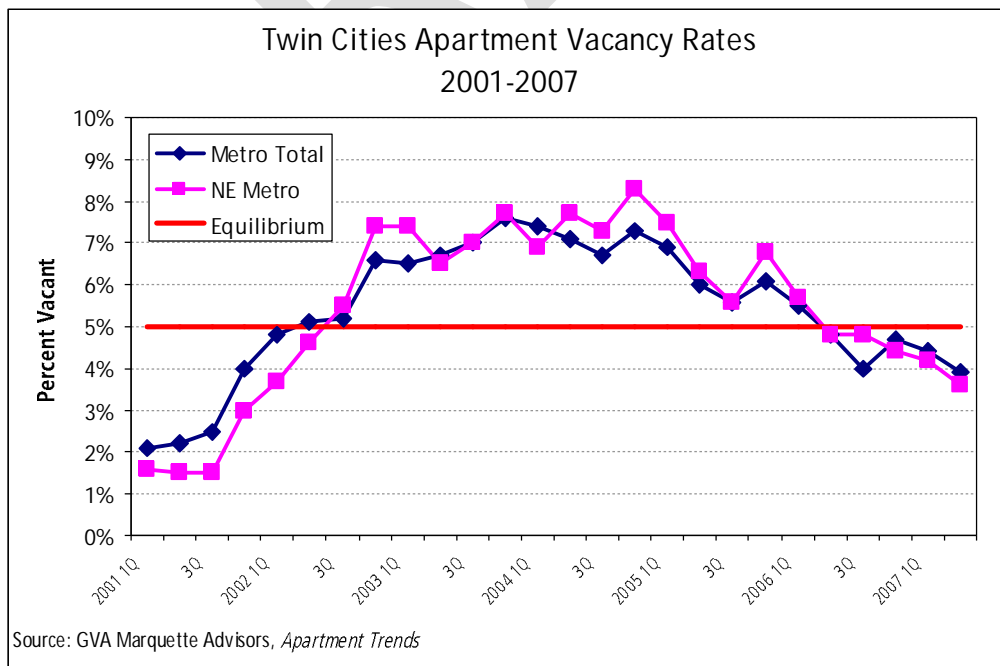
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Bonestroo, Inc.

Table 5
Recent and Active Condominium Developments
Downtown Stillwater
April 2007

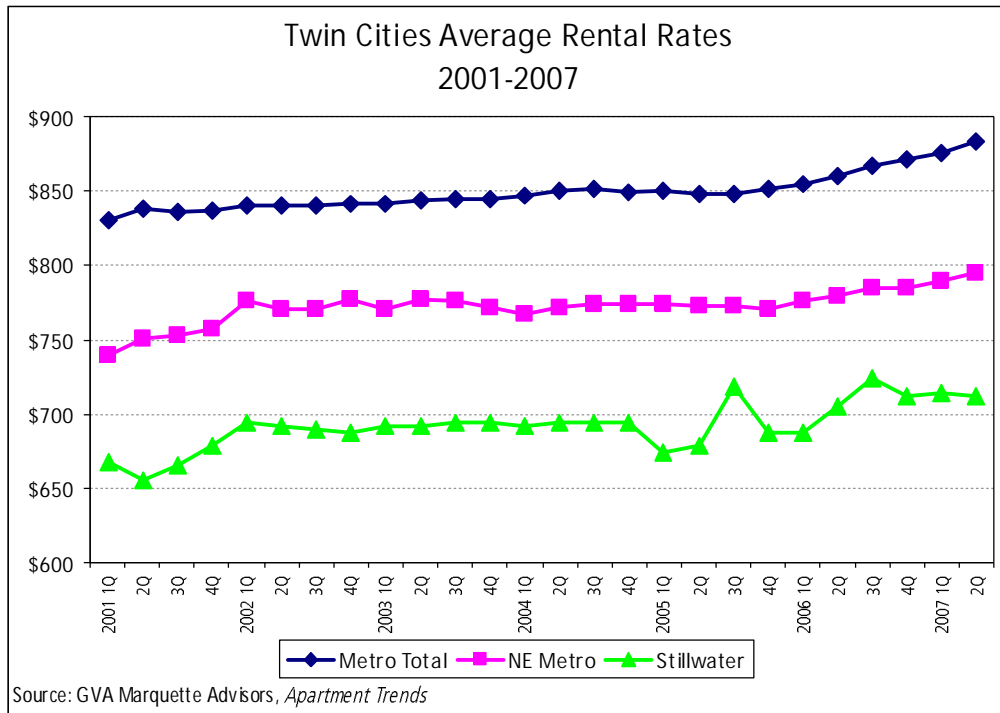
Project Name/ Location	Date Open	Total Units	Unsold Units	Unit Mix	Unit Size	Price Range		Price/Sq. Ft.		Comments
						Low	High	Low	High	
Terra Springs I & II 610 & 620 N Main St	2004	59	2	1 - 1BR/L	1,084	\$227,640		\$210		Developer: Frauenshuh Sweeney Bldg Type: 3- and 4-story bldgs (new construction) Absorption: Marketing began Spr '03 6 units/month during 1st yr of marketing
				42 - 2BR	1,106 - 1,515	\$209,000 - \$310,575	\$189 - \$205			
				8 - 2BR/D	1,379 - 1,434	\$296,485 - \$299,000	\$209 - \$215			
				8 - 3BR	1,870 - 2,174	\$398,615 - \$456,540				
Terra Springs III 630 N Main St	2005	46	8	4 - 1BR	938 - 1,122	\$209,900 - \$231,650	\$224 - \$206		Developer: Frauenshuh Sweeney Bldg Type: 4-story bldg (new construction) Absorption: Marketing began	
				1 - 1BR/D	1,295 -	\$232,950	\$180 -			
				37 - 2BR	1,180 - 1,748	\$239,900 - \$379,900	\$203 - \$217			
				4 - 2BR/D	1,640 - 1,748	\$379,900 -	\$232 - \$0			
Territorial Place at Terra Springs 640 N Main St	2006	36	11	- 1BR	689				Developer: Bob Engstrom Bldg Type: 3-story bldg (new construction) Absorption: Marketing began	
				- 1BR/D	1,162 - 1,391	\$229,000 - \$339,000	\$244 - \$197			
				- 2BR	1,269 - 1,511	\$339,000 - \$425,000	\$281 - \$267			
Riverview at Terra Springs 650 N Main St	2008	37	32	1 - 1BR	936				Developer: Frauenshuh Sweeney Bldg Type: 4-story bldg (new construction) Absorption: Marketing began	
				30 - 2BR	1,320 - 2,030	\$399,000 - \$625,000	\$308 - \$302			
				3 - 2BR/D	1,990 - 1,998	\$479,000 - \$633,548	\$317 - \$241			
				3 - 3BR	1,977 - 2,633	\$627,000 - \$659,000	\$250 - \$317			
Lofts of Stillwater 501 N Main St	2005	62	15	31 - 2BR	1,285 - 1,750	\$319,000 - \$759,000	\$248 - \$434		Developer: Mark Saliterman Bldg Type: 4-story Condo (new construction) Absorption: Marketing began Spr '03; 1 unit/month	
				31 - 2BR/D	1,800 - 2,491	\$359,000 - \$1,059,000	\$425 - \$199			
Stillwater Mills 350 N Main St	2006	96	44	12 - 1BR	879 - 1,018	\$219,240 - \$249,570	\$245 - \$249		Developer: Steve Haglund Bldg Type: 4-story Condo (new construction) Absorption: Marketing began	
				31 - 1BR/D	1,057 - 1,250	\$264,350 - \$529,124	\$250 - \$423			
				41 - 2BR	1,057 - 1,746	\$281,322 - \$749,900	\$266 - \$429			
				10 - 2BR/D	1,440 - 1,861	\$440,640 - \$659,251	\$306 - \$354			
				2 - 3BR+	2,168 - 2,653	\$749,426 - \$1,095,000	\$346 - \$413			
Totals		336	112		689 - 2,653	\$209,000 - \$1,095,000	\$180 - \$434			

Sources: Project Sales Offices & Websites; Bonestroo

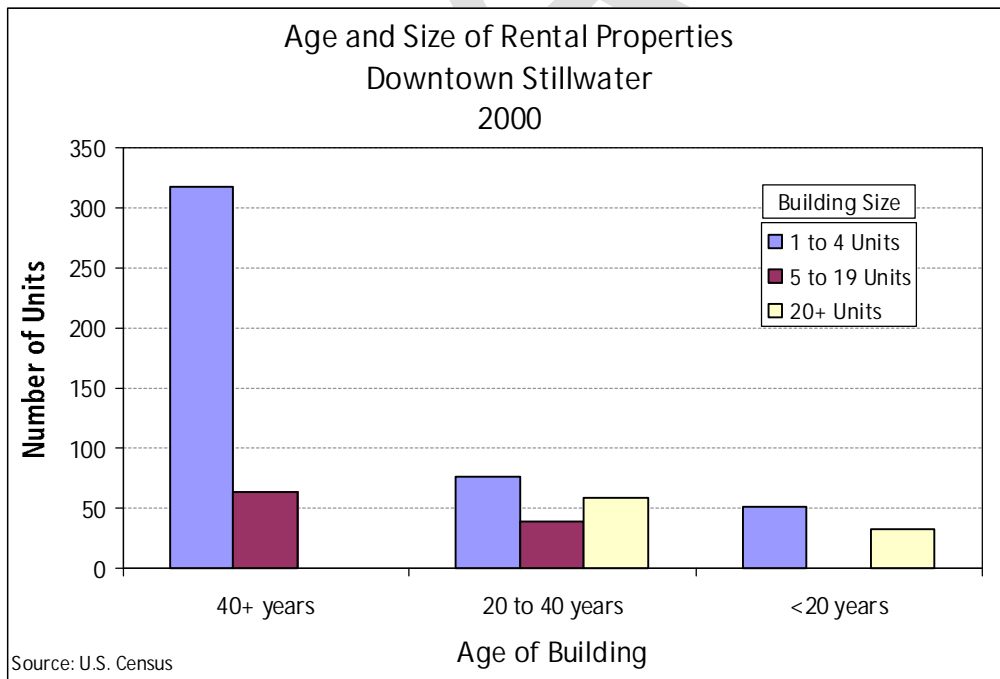
Graph 1



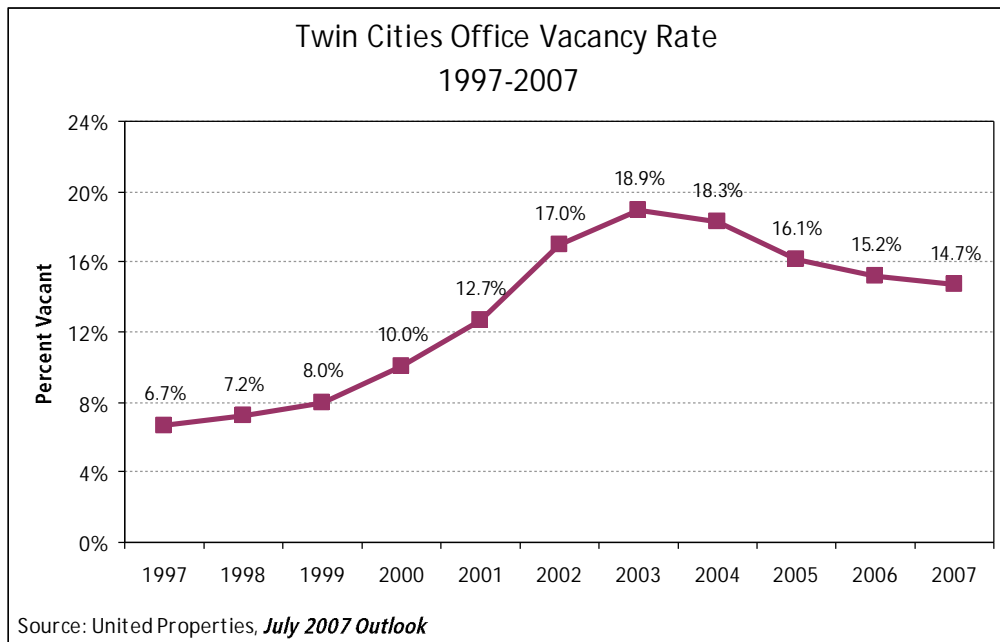
Graph 2



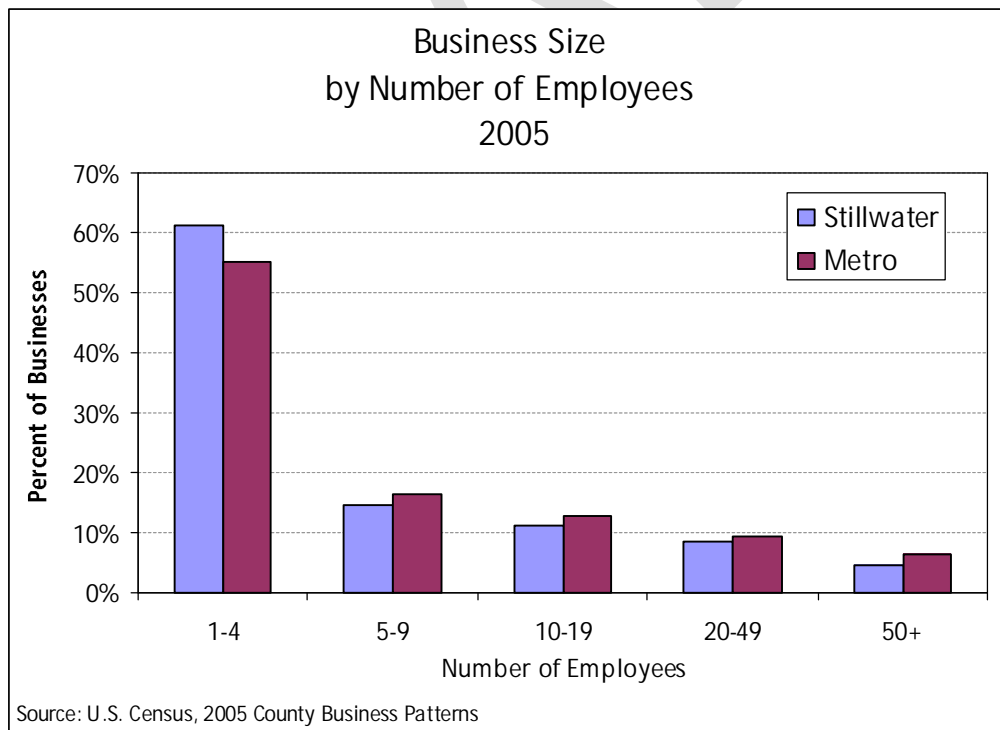
Graph 3



Graph 4



Graph 5



Implementation

To implement the Local Economy and Tourism section of the Downtown Framework Plan, the city will consider the following implementation measures:

To promote and maintain the downtown as a central focus for community economic and cultural activity, the City of Stillwater will:

- Use tax increment financing to assist major new investment downtown
- Encourage downtown as a relocation destination for successful businesses
- Encourage small locally owned business particularly in the downtown
- Promote office and service job locations in and around the downtown

To promote tourism consistent with retaining Stillwater's unique natural resources and historic and architectural character, the City of Stillwater will:

- Work with the Stillwater Area Chamber of Commerce and Convention and Visitors Bureau in promoting downtown activities and improvements
- Support year around activities that enliven the downtown public and cultural life
- Maintain public facilities so that the downtown is an attractive place to visit
- Consider establishing incentive programs for rehabilitation of older buildings
- Continue to use design review guidelines and process to ensure new development and renovation is consistent with the historic character of downtown
- Construct a new public parking ramp Downtown Stillwater for employees and visitors
- Support the Downtown Parking Commission as advisory group for managing downtown parking

IV. IMPLEMENTATION & PHASING OF PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

The best plans are of little value if they are not implemented. Maintaining a vital downtown and implementing the opportunities outlined in this Downtown Stillwater Framework Plan is dependent upon continuous proactive leadership of the community and an orchestrated collaboration amongst city officials and departments, county and regional governing authorities, the business community, Chamber of Commerce, other civic organizations and developers.

The approach to sustaining and enhancing Stillwater's downtown as a vital place to live, work, and play focuses on:

Design and Planning Tools

Community Organization and Promotion

Public Improvements

A. Design and Planning Tools

A primary goal of the Framework Plan is to reinforce Stillwater's rivertown "sense of place." The design of the streetscape, buildings, signs, open spaces and landscaping, must all work together to reinforce a strong, cohesive and memorable identity. Currently, the 2006 Design Manual for the Commercial Historic District is a strong design tool that fosters buildings reflecting the historic character desired by the community.

To bolster the design guidelines we recommend considering amendments that address the following:

- *Site Planning and retaining wall treatments*
- *Parking Lot Edge Treatments*
- *Stormwater Treatment*
- *Sustainable Building Practices*
- *Parking Structures*
- *Landscape/streetscape treatments*

B. Community Organization and Promotion

Key to long term success is organizing a diverse group of people to achieve the work tasks, build public/private partnerships, foster ongoing leadership, program events and promotions, and provide a voice for Downtown Stillwater.

Downtown Chamber of Commerce Vision

Concurrently with this comprehensive planning process the Downtown Stillwater Chamber of Commerce has prepared their Downtown Stillwater Vision Plan. This plan includes strategies for economic development, design, community organization and promotion. This group is committed to the downtown area and will act as an advocacy group to coordinate promotional campaigns and small projects. The Chamber has also expressed interest in forming public/private partnerships to implement short term seed projects such as: temporary and long term public art

projects, landscaping, short term streetscape enhancements and landscaping, banners, arts competitions, rotating sculpture with Art Reach Alliance & others.

C. Public Improvements

The public improvements associated with the overall vision will act as a catalyst for reinvestment, and represent a positive step toward ensuring a vital long-term climate for living, working and playing in Downtown Stillwater.

Implementation Strategies and Phasing: Figure 50 outlines a prioritized list of short, mid, and long-term public projects with cost estimates, potential funding sources, and agency responsibilities. Figure 51 illustrates the proposed phasing of city, county and state projects within the downtown. The following strategies should be considered for all public improvement projects in order to integrate the improvements into an ongoing revitalization and community building strategy and to gain the most benefit from streetscapes, parks, and other public amenities:

1. Coordinate Objectives with all City Departments

The planning, engineering, and inspections departments, as well as potential advisory groups, should refer to the guidelines and associated public/private improvements and amenities when reviewing individual development proposals within the downtown area. Each proposed development should comply with the guidelines, reinforce the desired character of development, and contribute to creating a cohesive, pedestrian friendly, memorable, and economically viable place.

Developers should work with city staff and refer to the guidelines within the Framework Plan – and previous planning studies – prior to generating design concepts, in order to better understand the overall goals of the community and how their property fits into the context of the framework plan and expectations for public/private amenities.

The guidelines for site planning, building placement, parking lot edge treatments and landscaping should be referenced during the site design phase of the project. Developers should also discuss the options for their particular site with city staff to determine if parking lot edge treatments will be constructed as part of the site redevelopment or a larger public street improvement project.

2. Place projects in the Capital Improvement Plans

City departments should refer to the components in this Framework Plan to coordinate, design, and budget for capital improvements and to define public/private partnerships to finance and maintain public realm improvements. City departments should refer to the schematic designs for the individual areas as a basis from which to develop more detailed plans for construction.

3. Coordinate Staging and Funding

The city should share its redevelopment objectives with the state and county DOTs and determine schedules for street improvements and potential funding sources.

4. Coordinate Staging and Funding with Redevelopment Projects



Figure 51. Implementation Phasing