

# 5 The Master Plan

The Master Plan is the “meat” of this document. It identifies what needs to be accomplished on the ground in order to reach the vision described in Chapter 4. There are three elements to this chapter: (1) the text, (2) the maps, and (3) the renderings. They work hand in hand to provide a detailed sketch illustrating downtown’s future and identifying the actions needed to get there. Harrison French Architecture and Sandcreek Engineering prepared the renderings and illustrations for the plan.

## Gateways and Intersections

### Create Identifiable Gateways

Gateways are the primary entrances into an area, in this case, downtown. They provide a sense of arrival, offer directional information, and enhance the overall appearance and “feel.” Entrances should make an excellent first impression to new visitors.

Downtown Bentonville’s gateways were identified in the first chapter. There are four primary entrances into the downtown area:

- 1 Hwy 102 at SW A Street/SW Main Street (See rendering)
- 2 Walton Boulevard at SW 8<sup>th</sup> Street
- 3 Walton Boulevard at Central Avenue
- 4 SW J Street at Central Avenue (See rendering)

Landscaping and signage are the primary elements that will be installed at the gateways to emphasize a sense of arrival downtown. Signage will be of monument style (6’ or smaller in height) incorporating the adopted logo for downtown Bentonville. The signs will be lit and surrounded by professional landscaping consisting of evergreen shrubs and perennial flowers. Directional signage for parking will be placed at gateways. The sign might include an area for interchangeable messages that can promote special events occurring downtown.

Landscape design of the gateways will incorporate trees according to the City’s Street Tree Corridor plan. For example, the Redbud is the designated street tree for Central Avenue. Both gateways on Central will use the Redbud tree in the landscape design.

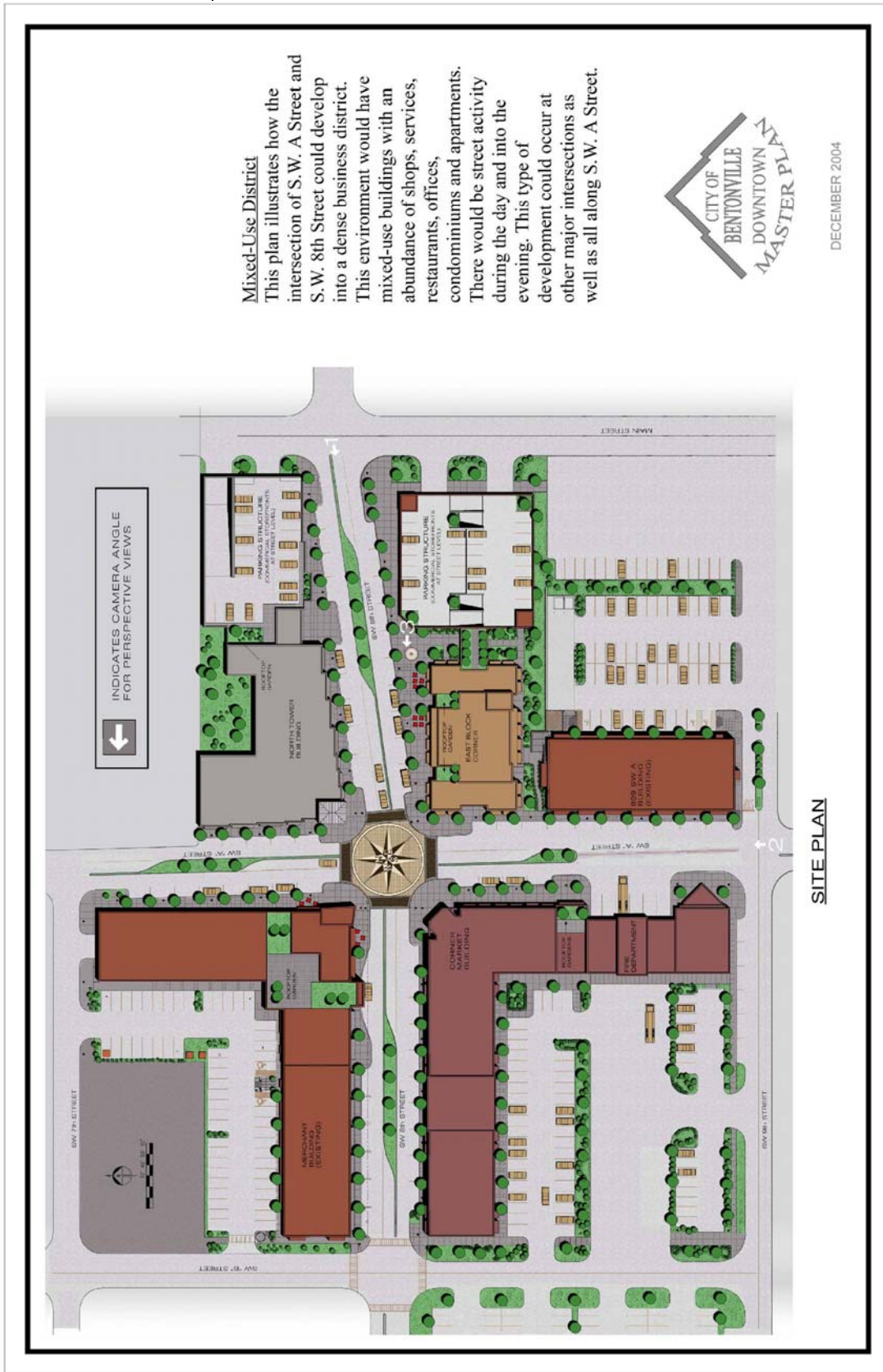


CENTRAL AND J STREET

ENTRANCE-SIGNAGE PERSPECTIVE

DOWNTOWN MASTERPLAN

CITY OF BENTONVILLE



**Mixed-Use District**  
 This plan illustrates how the intersection of S.W. A Street and S.W. 8th Street could develop into a dense business district. This environment would have mixed-use buildings with an abundance of shops, services, restaurants, offices, condominiums and apartments. There would be street activity during the day and into the evening. This type of development could occur at other major intersections as well as all along S.W. A Street.



DECEMBER 2004



### Form Place-making Intersections

A “place-making” intersection is one that gives visitors a sense of being downtown in an urban setting; an intersection that is easily identifiable with the community and that has special features and characteristics that differentiate it from other areas in the city.

The primary place-making intersection is at SW 8<sup>th</sup> Street and SW A Street. As an intersection of two primary thoroughfares through downtown, it will carry a significant volume of traffic. To create an intersection that exudes a “sense of place”, emphasis should be placed on the corners, pedestrian crosswalks, directional signage, public art, and a focal point or feature. This particular intersection can be improved with buildings on the west side of SW A Street that are placed at the street, with parking located to the rear or to the side. An architectural feature on the structural corner, such as a round corner with glass elements, further enhances the image of that corner.

### Public Art and Culture

#### Awaken Ghost Signs



Repainted ghost sign.

A ghost sign is an old advertisement painted onto the side of a building. Bentonville has its own ghost sign located at SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and SW Main Street. Initial study indicates that part of the sign is a 7Up ad. This ghost sign is a historic part of downtown Bentonville and should be restored. This eliminates the current faded and weather-worn appearance and will add to the public art element. The owner of the building has photos of the advertisements. Consider asking a local distributor of 7Up to contribute the paint needed to restore the ad. The location is shown on the Master Plan Map at the end of this chapter.

#### Build Upon Art and Craft Fairs

The City is already home to several craft and art events. The master plan suggests expanding the art and craft element as follows.

*Square A-Fair.* The Square A-Fair is currently held twice per year during the summer and fall. To bring about a strong presence of art and culture, the Main Street Resource Team suggests holding the art fair on a more frequent basis, such as Friday nights.

*Craft fairs.* Bentonville is home to the Applegate Craft Fair, which is held three times per year. This is a perfect opportunity for downtown to capitalize on an existing event. The Farmer’s Market could be expanded to include arts and craft during the weekends of Applegate.

#### Inject Live Action

The Main Street Resources Team suggests opportunities for street theater, which may include street performers, carts and vendors. This will help to create an image of downtown as being a fun and lively place to be. In their report, *Creating a Great Third Place in Downtown Bentonville*, they state “street musicians and visual arts add an ambiance to the downtown and will help reinforce the image of the square as the center of the community’s cultural activity.” They also encourage retail carts and food vendors such as hot dog or ice cream stands. A benefit of vendors is that they provide more eyes on the streets which can add to the sense of safety.



Unframed art on exterior wall.



Kiosk with map of downtown.



Downtown is the center for civic events.



The Farmer's Market on the square is an excellent example. Consider expanding to another day of the week or expanding the type of market items available.

Offer something for people to do when they come downtown. Besides shopping, dining, or conversing, consider placing board and table games in the square or in a park.

**Promote Public Art**

According to the results of a study conducted by the Travel Industry Association of America in 2001, more than two-thirds of American adult travelers say they included a cultural, arts, heritage or historic activity or event while on a trip of 50 miles or more. This emphasizes the role public art can play in tourism and economic development and is therefore an important elements to the development of downtown as a place of choice.

Public art includes sculpture, mosaics, fountains, fine art crafts, mixed-media video and computer-generated works decorative, ornamental or functional elements, murals, drawings, paintings and monuments that are located in the public realm. Art and culture personalizes the built environment and functions as a conversation piece.

Examples of public art include: (1) decorating blank walls with murals; (2) have artists work in public; (3) use art as reference points in providing directions and locations; (4) embed art into the sidewalks (See rendering of intersection of SW A St. and SW 8<sup>th</sup> St.); and (5) decorate street surface with designs on manhole covers.

Artwork, especially statues and sculptures should be built sturdy to allow children to climb and be part of the experience. It is important that the artwork be appropriate to its location and surroundings. This may result in a Public Art Board and should serve as a model for the entire city.

**Provide bulletin boards**

Bulletin boards provide a means of communication with the rest of the community. It is critical that someone be in charge to remove old and dated items and relocate those that overwhelm the other notices.

**Accommodate Civic Events**

The Square should serve as the primary location for all civic events, including parades, such as the homecoming parade, Christmas Parade, Firefighter Awareness Parade, and Veteran's Day Parade. It should also serve as the starting point for recreational events and benefits, such as the National Guard Benefit Run and Tour de Cure cycling event.

**Public Investment**

**Enhance SW A Street**

The square has recently undergone renovation with brick pavers, fountain, seating and traditional lighting. The second phase of the downtown redevelopment will take place in 2005. The next focus for major public improvement is SW 'A' Street. SW A Street is the most important north-south corridor and it plays a significant role in visitors making an opinion about downtown Bentonville. At this time, SW 'A' Streets is in need of major improvement. The improvement would consist of

placing overhead utilities underground, curbing the streets and marking on-street parking, paving the road, and providing pedestrian access through sidewalks and crosswalks. The City has included the costs of hiring a consultant to prepare the design work for the enhancements in the Capital Improvement Plan for the year 2005. The City is also setting aside \$175,000 per year for the next four years to go toward these improvements.



### Improve SW 8<sup>th</sup> Street

SW 8<sup>th</sup> Street is the second major east-west thoroughfare downtown (Central being the first) and also makes a big impact on the perceptions of downtown. SW 8<sup>th</sup> St. will be upgraded with curb and guttering and sidewalks. (See the rendering of SW 8<sup>th</sup> Street). The City has indicated this project is the top priority in 2008 according to the FY 2005-2009 Capital Improvement Program.



New Bentonville  
Public Library

### Construct a New Public Library

The new Bentonville Public Library will begin construction in 2005. The goal for the new library is to transform it into a magnet for people of all ages and backgrounds throughout the county. It will offer a blend of tradition and technology. The features of the library will include a colorful, enlarged children's department with an activity center; a high-energy teen center; local history, genealogy research center; public seating for quiet reading and work spaces; flexible meeting, program and exhibit space; and a technology center, providing access to important electronic resources. The new library will further enhance the downtown vision as a community center of choice.



New Technical  
Services Building

### Construct New Technical Services Building

The City recently approved a \$2 million budget to build a new technical services building. The effort is in response to the increasing need to provide quality customer service to the citizens of Bentonville. It also shows the commitment of the city to retain city services at a downtown location. The building will be constructed immediately north of the existing technical services building on SW A Street. It will be a two story brick building with traditional architectural styling. It will have underground utilities and on-street parking and will serve as an example of the desired future development of downtown.

### Consider a Civic Center

The City does not have a civic center and if it is ever under consideration, it should be located downtown. A civic center would include an exhibit hall, a banquet hall and meeting rooms. Civic centers provide a central location for city activities and it would provide an inside alternative to the square.



Redbud trees along  
Central and SW A Street

## Aesthetics

### Plant Street Trees

Trees are not only crucial to the survival of humanity, but they are connected with the economics of property values. They freshen the air, offer fragrances, provide a haven for birds, and enhance livability in an urban setting. They are important to the overall streetscape. The Tree and Landscape Advisory Committee has identified the following street trees for streets within the downtown area:



Red Maple trees along SW A Street.



Provide visible trash receptacles



Provide plenty of seating

Downtown Streets on Street Tree Corridor Plan	
Street	Street Tree
Central Avenue	Redbud and Sugar Maple
SW A Street	Red Maple and Redbud
SW Main Street	Honey Locust and Saucer Magnolia
SW 14 <sup>th</sup> Street	Red Oak and Trident Maple
Walton Boulevard	Ash and Golden Raintree

These trees should be encouraged of all new development that front on these streets. Redevelopment activities should incorporate these trees into all landscaping plans. The use of flower boxes, planters and hanging flower baskets is encouraged. Installed landscaping should result in year-round foliage. Identify all trees and plants with markers including Latin names.

**Maintain a Clean Appearance**

Keeping the downtown clean is of utmost importance. Clean streets encourage neighborhood pride and increase property value; improve the attractiveness of the City; reduce roadway pollution; reduce water pollution; and people litter less in clean neighborhoods.

A key approach to maintaining a clean downtown is with the assistance with downtown residents and businesses. The City of Bentonville Adopt-A-Street Program is a partnership between the City and the people who live and work in Bentonville to keep the city free of litter...one street at a time. The program reduces the cost of litter removal and increases awareness of environmental issues. Groups adopt a street ½ mile or more in length and agree to remove litter four (4) times per year. All groups are provided with safety vests and trash bags. The City picks up filled trash bags after the clean-up event.

Downtown still has several streets that are not adopted or where the adoptive agency has been inactive in the program for an extended period. The following downtown streets that need to be adopted are provided on the Adopt-a-Street Plan on the next page.

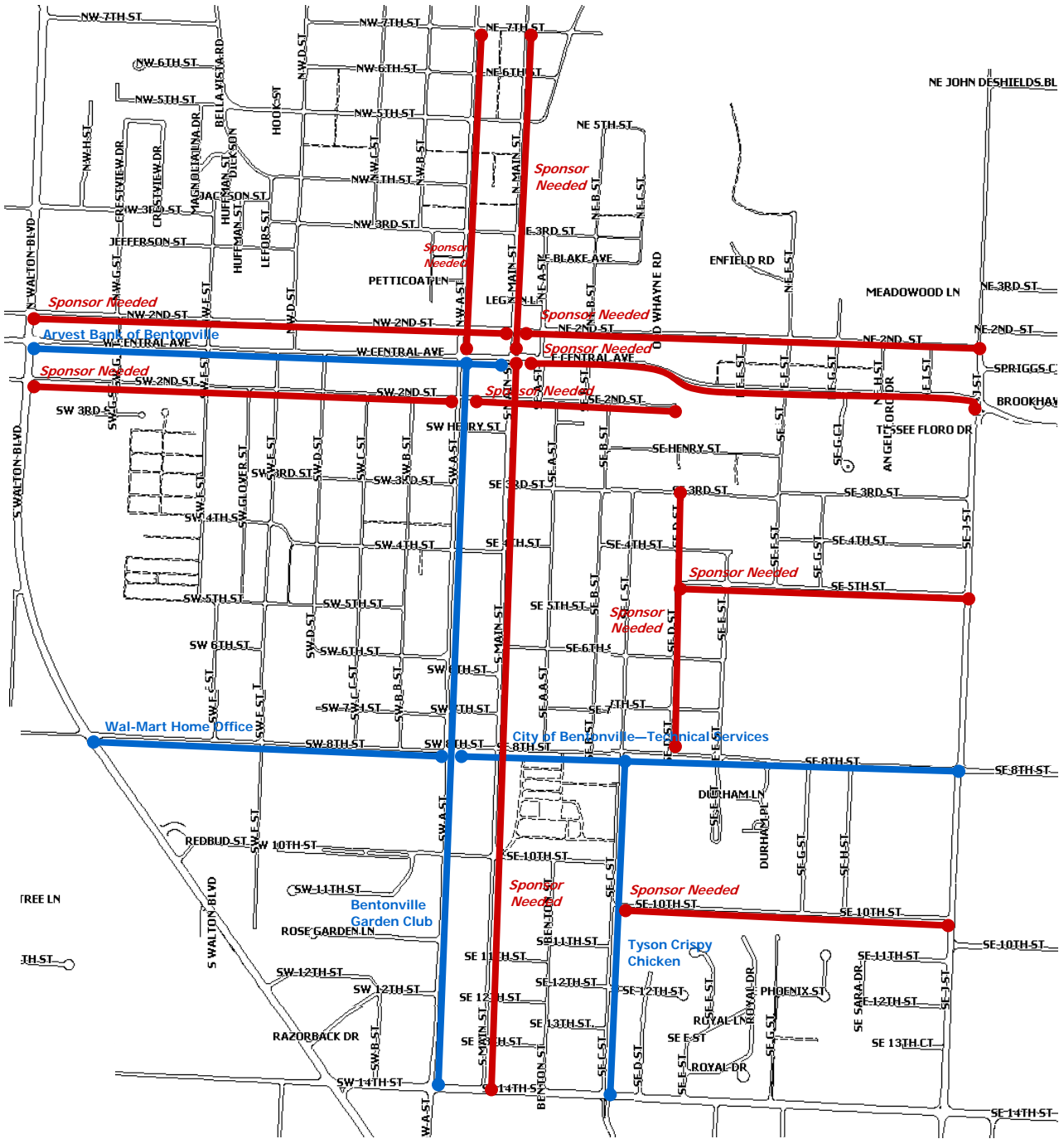
**Create a “Living Room”**

Street furniture enhances the visit to downtown by providing lighting, places to sit and places for eliminating trash – a living room for the community. Benches, trash receptacles, street lamps, and planters are considered street furniture.

Street furniture will be focused around the square and the SW A Street corridor. The street furniture for the square has already been selected and is of a black metal design for benches and trash receptacles. The planters around the square are cement rectangles with a floral design. The street lights will be the standard residential street lights for the city, which are of a traditional design at pedestrian scale with an acorn style lamp. The design for the SW A Street corridor should compliment the existing furniture around the square.

Moveable chairs should be purchased to be left in the town square park at all times. It allows for visitors to move them around as needed and encourages gathering and community activities. People can arrange them as needed, such as to face into or away from the sun and wind, away from noise, and accommodate the number of people gathering and create a personal space.

# Downtown Bentonville Adopt-A-Street Plan



**Legend**

-  Street with sponsor
-  Street without sponsor





**Improve Appearance of Overhead Utilities**

Downtown is an area of older development where utility lines were located overhead on wood poles. The overhead utility lines present an eyesore that needs to be addressed. The appearance of the lines was mentioned several times



Visible overhead utility lines



Utility lines removed

throughout the planning process. According to Scenic America, utility relocation or enhancement can “encourage business and homeowner investment and can contribute to higher property values, raise business profitability and attract new businesses.” There are several approaches to reducing the visual impact of overhead lines. One method is relocating the utilities underground. Today, common practice in new development is to place utilities underground. However, taking existing lines and placing them underground presents a significant financial challenge. There are other maintenance issues that the utility company is concerned about. This is likely the best option, however, may not be the most affordable or practical. Further research on this approach is needed. It should be incorporated to any street improvements to SW A Street.

A second method is to relocate the overhead lines to locations that are not so visible. A common practice is to move these lines into alleys behind buildings. The appearance can be improved by consolidated lines, instead of criss-crossing the streets.

A third method and one that will be strongly encouraged is camouflaging the appearance. Scenic America suggests the following techniques to reduce the intrusiveness of overhead wires:

- Erecting stronger, slimmer poles that compliment their surroundings;
- Using heavier cable and stronger poles to reduce the number of poles and wires needed;
- Using tree wire to hide overhead wire in trees;
- Re-routing wires for streetlights and traffic signals through pole arms wherever possible;
- Requiring use of better on-premise signs in commercial areas to draw the eye down and away from the overhead wires;
- Decorating poles with banners and public art work;
- Raising wires above sight lines along buildings and signs to make them less noticeable; and
- Extending sidewalks to narrow the street and offset poles.

### Maintain Traditional Architectural Design

Architecture that is compatible provides another element of the visual aesthetics of downtown. Analysis of the existing architecture and results of the Visual Preference Survey show a strong preference toward traditional architectural styles.

*Design.* Architectural design should be compatible with the developing character of the neighboring area. Design compatibility includes complementary building style, form, size, color and materials. The restoration or renovation of a storefront should attempt to return the façade to its original character. Preserve original materials or details and the shape and size of original window openings. Replace missing original elements such as transom windows. Multiple buildings on the same site should be designed to create a cohesive visual relationship between the buildings. The first floor and upper floors should have a visual separation, such as molding or jogs in the surface.

*Material.* Brick and stone appear to be preferred over predominantly glass and metal. Traditional materials including brick, rock and stone should be used as the primary building materials. Tile, glass block, copper flashing, metal and wood should be considered for accent material. Front facades are encouraged to be finished with more than one material. Aluminum, vinyl or fiberglass siding materials should be discouraged on the facades or sides of buildings visible from a public right-of-way. Metal roof materials should be permitted only when screened by a parapet. Painting of previously unpainted brick is discouraged.

*Awnings.* Pedestrians should be protected from the elements by awnings. Retractable or operable awnings are encouraged. Long expanses of awning should be broken into segments that reflect the door or window openings beneath them. Awnings should be constructed of durable protective, and water repellant material. Plastic and/or fiberglass awnings are discouraged. Awnings should be maintained so as to be free of rips, holes, stains or fading. Backlighting of awnings is discouraged.

*Windows.* Windows should be incorporated into the first floor for window displays that provide visual impact and encourage shopping. On upper floors, the windows should be vertically oriented. Arched tops, columns framing the windows and decorative lintels are encouraged. Window accessories, such as shutters, window boxes, muntins and mullions and awnings are encouraged.

*Facades.* Facades should have articulation to avoid long, blank walls. Techniques for articulation include:

- Breaks in the surface of the wall itself
- Placement of window and door openings
- Placement of balconies, awnings and canopies
- Dividing façade into series of display windows with smaller panes of glass
- Constructing the façade with small human scale materials such as brick or decorative tile
- Providing traditional recessed entries
- Careful sizing, placement and overall design of signage

*Roofs.* Flat roofs are preferred with parapets that articulate the rhythm of the buildings. A masonry tower or pediment at the cornice line is encouraged. Sloped roofs are discouraged unless the roof form is concealed by a parapet or false front.



Designed cornices represent traditional architecture



Awnings provide protection from the elements



Upper floors are separated from the first floor with awnings



**Color.** The color of buildings should complement the adjacent buildings' colors. Bricks in the red and brown tones are encouraged. Buildings should use primarily earth tones with light and bright colors used only as accents. Vents, gutters, downspouts, flashing, electrical conduits, etc. should be painted to match the color of the adjacent surface.

**Franchise Architecture.** Franchise architecture (building design that is trademarked or identified with a particular chain or corporation and is generic in nature) should be discouraged. Franchises or national chains should follow any adopted designed guidelines or standards to create a unique building that is compatible with downtown Bentonville.

The City's adoption of design guidelines or standards is one technique for reaching the structural and site design goals.

**Preserve Local History**

The following is a statement from the 1996 downtown study that addresses historic structures:

“The City of Bentonville is extremely fortunate to have a legacy of a large number of historically-significant and well-preserved structures both within the project boundaries and within the larger metropolitan area. These buildings and places represent irreplaceable elements within the community, which are physical reminders of Bentonville’s rich historic traditions. Proposed planning proposals for the CBD need to make careful consideration to incorporate and preserve existing designated historic buildings, ensuring that they will be integral components of a comprehensive plan. In addition to aesthetic and historic considerations, these older buildings also represent an economic asset to the City in terms of tourism.”

Rehabilitation of existing buildings to retail downtown’s historical character is critical. The façade enhancement program offered by Main Street Bentonville can assist in the rehabilitation of existing structures.

The Heritage Trail and the Trail of Tears should be properly signed.

**Human Scale**

Human scale is critical to pedestrian activity which in turn impacts the economics. In order to help maintain human scale, buildings need to adhere to this feature. Again, adoption of design guidelines is a tool to achieve this goal.

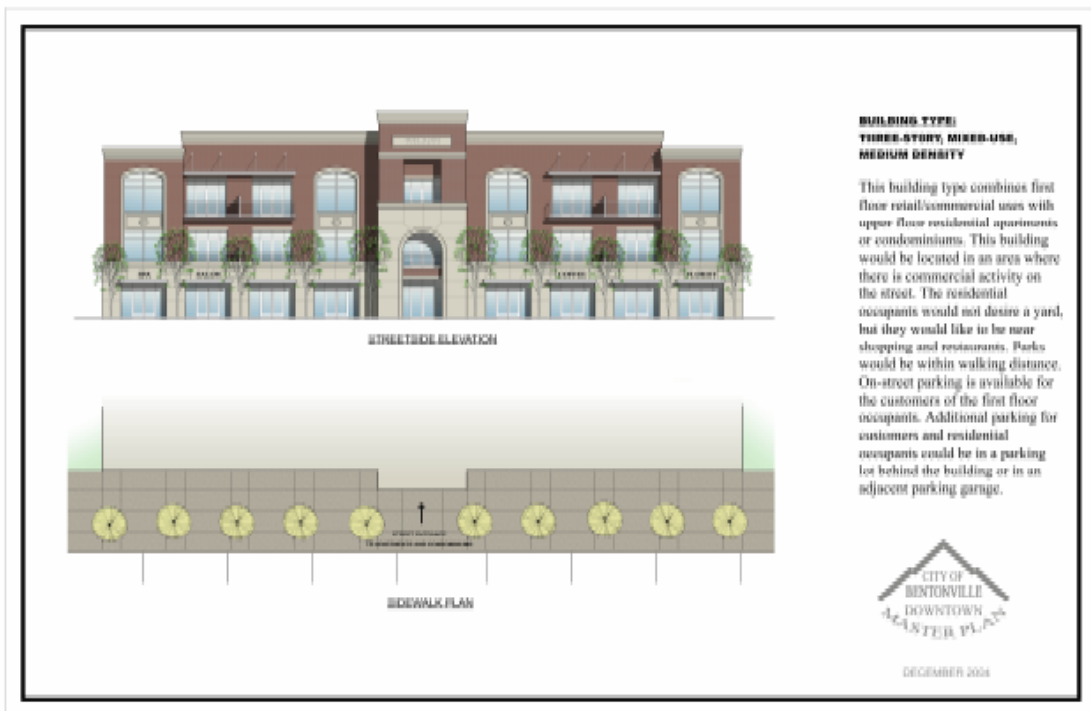
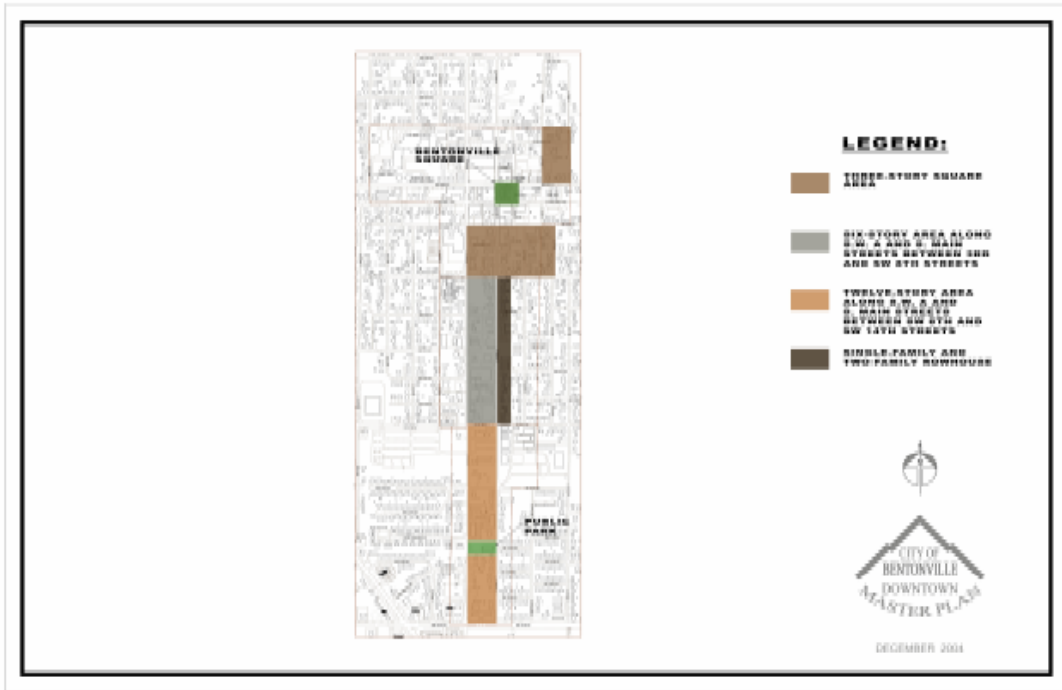
**Adopt Height Restrictions**

The committees have identified three areas with suggested height limitations that should be incorporated into the City’s Zoning Code. See examples on following pages.

- Town Square District - 3 stories maximum
- SW A Street and S. Main Street, from SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to SW 6<sup>th</sup> Street – 6 stories maximum
- SW A Street and S. Main Street, from SW 6<sup>th</sup> Street to SW 14<sup>th</sup> Street – 12 stories maximum



Bentonville’s historic courthouse.



**BUILDING TYPE:**  
SIX-STORY, MIXED-USE,  
HIGH DENSITY

This building type combines first floor retail/commercial uses with upper floor residential apartments or condominiums. Although not illustrated here, this building could have commercial offices on some upper floors as well as the residential units. This building would be located in an area where there is commercial activity on the street. The residential occupants would not desire a yard, but they would like to be near shopping and restaurants. Parks would be within walking distance. On-street parking is available for the customers of the first floor occupants. A building of this density would most likely require a parking garage.

**CITY OF BENTONVILLE  
DOWNTOWN  
MASTER PLAN**

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**BUILDING TYPE:**  
MULTI-STORY, MIXED-USE,  
HIGH DENSITY

This building type combines first floor retail with upper floor offices and apartments or condominiums. A hotel could also operate in this type of building. This building would be located in an area where there is strong commercial activity on the street. The residential occupants would not desire a yard, but they would like to be near shopping and restaurants. A health club would likely be located in the building. Parks would be within walking distance. On-street parking is available, but this building would require a parking garage.

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DOWNTOWN  
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### Create a Sidewalk Edge



Buildings create an edge to the sidewalk.

Buildings should work together to create a “wall of buildings” along the sidewalk edge. Taller buildings should be at the corner of a block. In instances where parking areas abut the street, the sidewalk edge should be delineated with pillars, fencing, and/or landscaping. New development and redevelopment should complement the existing pattern of building heights and widths. Floor to floor heights should appear similar to those of buildings in the area. In a project that incorporates more than two stories, additional stories should be set back substantially from the sidewalk edge such that the building will appear to be a one or two story building in height as seen from the street.

### Provide Compatible Parking

Parking lots should be kept small and close to the businesses served. Larger parking lots should have visual breaks with four-season landscape treatments. Shared or combined parking is encouraged. Pedestrian pathways are encouraged to use small sidewalk pavers such as bricks or texture-stamped concrete. Off-street parking should be located behind or to the side of buildings and should have landscape features along the perimeter.

### Screen Equipment

The screening of exterior trash and storage areas, service yards, loading areas, transformers and air conditioning units should use the same materials, color and/or style as the primary building. All roof equipment should be screened if visible from the street.

### Provide Site Amenities

New development should incorporate site amenities, such as benches and trash receptacles. Pedestrian open spaces such as covered walkways, courtyards, and plazas are encouraged. Bike racks should become more commonplace. The square will serve as the convergence of several trails that can accommodate bikes. But, cyclists need to be sure that they have a place to put their bikes safely while they visit downtown.

### Light the Night

Full cutoff fixtures are encouraged to reduce sky glow and light trespass. Lighting fixtures are encouraged to be of a traditional style, compatible with the downtown historic character. Lighting should be directed downward to avoid light pollution.

### Identify Building Entrances

Entrances should be enhanced and emphasized such as slightly recessed or use of color, materials or special paving treatment. Primary public entrances should face the street. Rear entrances should have a sign indicating the name of the businesses it serves. Primary public entrances should have a feature providing protection from the elements, such as an awning, canopy or balcony.



Site amenities for a single business.



Bike racks provide a secure location for bicycles.

## Circulation and Parking

The ease of getting around in an urban setting is necessary to encourage visitors. Vehicle travel is important, but pedestrian activity is even more critical in an urban setting. Pedestrian activity offers opportunities for people to meet. When the pedestrian element is active, visitors have a greater sense of safety and security. The plan is strongly geared toward improving the pedestrian aspect of downtown circulation.

### Install Way-finding Signage

Signage to and through downtown is critical and can be accommodated fairly easily without great expense. Two primary types of signage are needed: (1) direction to downtown, and (2) direction to parking. The Circulation Plan identifies the location of directional signage to downtown. These are primarily at the gateways. The directional signage to parking is located within the downtown boundaries. Directional signage from the airport to downtown will be of big assistance to air travelers. All signage should include an adopted common signage theme.

### Establish a Trolley Route

When trolleys were first introduced, they offered another means of transportation aside from horse and buggy. Trolley systems expanded greatly during the time between 1890 and World War I. But when the automobile became inexpensive for individuals to own, the freedom was more desirable than mass transportation. Today, trolleys are making a comeback as forms of public transit, as well as for the nostalgia factor.

The trolley concept is perfect for Bentonville. With thousands of employees in the downtown area, a quick method of transportation can get them to restaurants and shops over the lunch hour, without having to travel by car. Main Street Bentonville is in the process of researching the potential for a trolley. A route that incorporates the Wal-Mart/Sam's Home Office and Bentonville Plaza, the Square, and the SW A Street Corridor is recommended. A sample routes is provided on the Circulation Plan map. The trolley should operate primarily during the lunch hours and should also be available for special events. Part of this concept needs to include trolley stops that offer shelter from heat, wind and rain. A schedule of stops as well as the routes should be posted at the trolley stops. Bike racks on the trolleys would allow cyclists to combine transportation modes.

### Build Trails

Trails provide a more natural aspect to pedestrian movement. The City is beginning to aggressively address the trails within the City, and downtown is part of that process. The trails are shown on the Circulation Plan map. All downtown trails should be incorporated into the city's Master Trails Plan.

*Downtown Trail.* A trail proposed specifically for the downtown is one that begins at Wal-Mart General Office traveling northeast toward SW A Street, heading north of SW A Street, and eventually connecting with Compton Gardens. The downtown trail will have spurs to the new public library, chamber of commerce, and downtown parks. The trail should be lighted with well-marked crosswalks.

*North Bentonville Trail.* At Compton Gardens, the trail will link to the city's North Bentonville trail which will eventually be connected with the Bella Vista Trail to the north and to the community college to the east.



Way-finding signage to public facilities and public parking



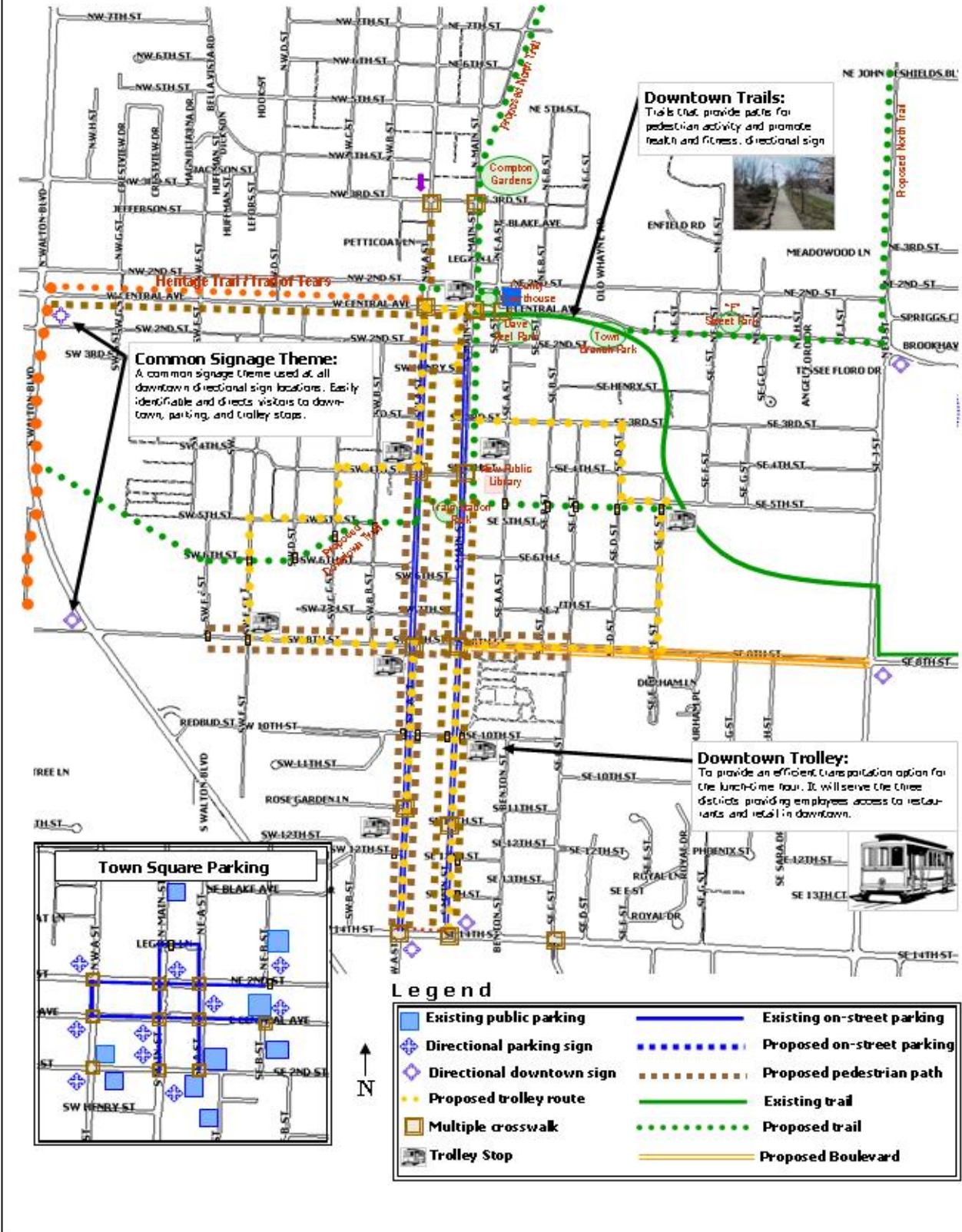
Trolleys can address transportation and parking challenges



Bike and pedestrian pathways should be clearly marked

# Downtown Bentonville Circulation & Parking Plan

(Parking, pedestrian pathways, trails and parking)





*Heritage Trail and Trail of Tears Route.* Expand and better identify the historic heritage trail.

### **Improve and Add Sidewalks**

Sidewalks and trails must create a continuous network that fosters access by foot. Sidewalks are fairly evident around the square, but less visible in areas surrounding the square. An inventory of sidewalks within the downtown study area is needed to determine where sidewalks need to be improved and where they need to be installed. (A portion of downtown has been studied; see Appendix D.) The City should conduct this survey and incorporate improvements into the City's Capital Improvement Program. Part of this includes installing pedestrian signals as well as the sounds, such as the "chirp" that lets you know it's safe to cross. It is important that everyone be able to access downtown freely and safely.

### **Provide Parking**

*On-Street.* On-street parking should be encouraged as part of new developments along SW A Street and S. Main Street from Central to Highway 102. On-street parking serves as a barrier between pedestrians and the moving traffic. However, employees should park in designated lots and avoid consuming spaces that should be available for patrons.

*Shared.* Share parking should strongly be encouraged especially between uses that have opposite operating days and hours. This may be especially useful for employee parking.

*Parking Deck.* Options and locations for a parking deck should be considered. Design of the parking deck should be consistent with adopted design guidelines. Use of the ground floor for retail use is encouraged. If a parking deck is constructed, this should be the primary location for employee parking. The Old Seafirst Building in Seattle identifies each floor with a city and then plays music associated with that city. For example, on the New York level the song played is the theme from "New York, New York" (Source: City Comforts, David Sucher). Be creative to make the parking deck one more element to the ambiance of downtown.

### **Offer an Airport Shuttle**

A long term goal is to establish a shuttle to and from the airport to downtown. Many vendors to Wal-Mart travel by air. Having a shuttle that will bring them from the airport to the General Office will ease their trip. It will also be very beneficial if a hotel or a civic center locates downtown. A visitor could essentially fly into Bentonville and never have to rent a car. A traveler can catch a shuttle to downtown and use the trolley system and improved pedestrian access to reach Wal-Mart home office, eating, and entertainment.

## **New and Re-Development**

### **Revise Impact Fee Exemption Boundary**

The current location of the boundary of the Downtown Redevelopment District is limited to the commercial areas of the square and the SW A Street and S Main Street corridors. Expanding the Redevelopment District to incorporate the areas of the SW 8<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor and the residential areas will entice new development and redevelopment downtown. Since this is a desired outcome, the City Council should adopt the revised Downtown Redevelopment District boundaries as



On-street angled parking

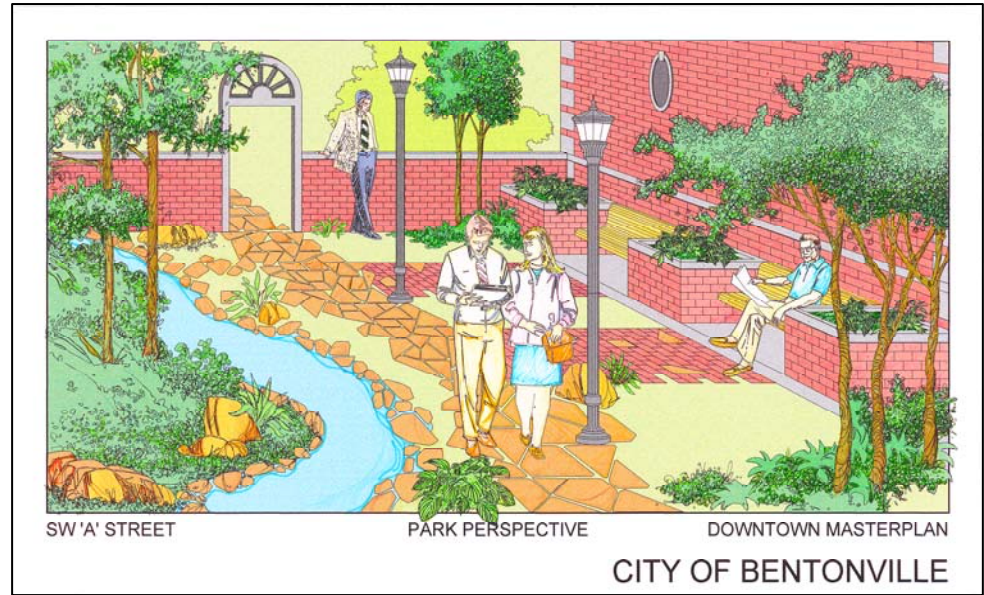


Parking garage blends in with urban setting

provided for on the Proposed Downtown Redevelopment District Boundaries on the next page.

### Redevelop Deteriorating Areas

Immediate and apparent areas for redevelopment are (1) the properties on the very southern end of the SW A / SW Main Street corridor and (2) Benton County Fairgrounds. These areas offer potential for mixed use development that offer a variety of residential opportunities, as well as retail and office space. Park development is likely in some of these deteriorating areas.



### Expand Residential Opportunities

Medium density residential development is strongly encouraged. This can be achieved through loft apartments above offices and retail uses. Live / work units would be inviting to entrepreneurs. Renderings show the recommended residential types.

### Business Mix

Retail and restaurant development are critical to the success of downtown as a community center. Retail and restaurants provide the pull to come downtown during leisure time.

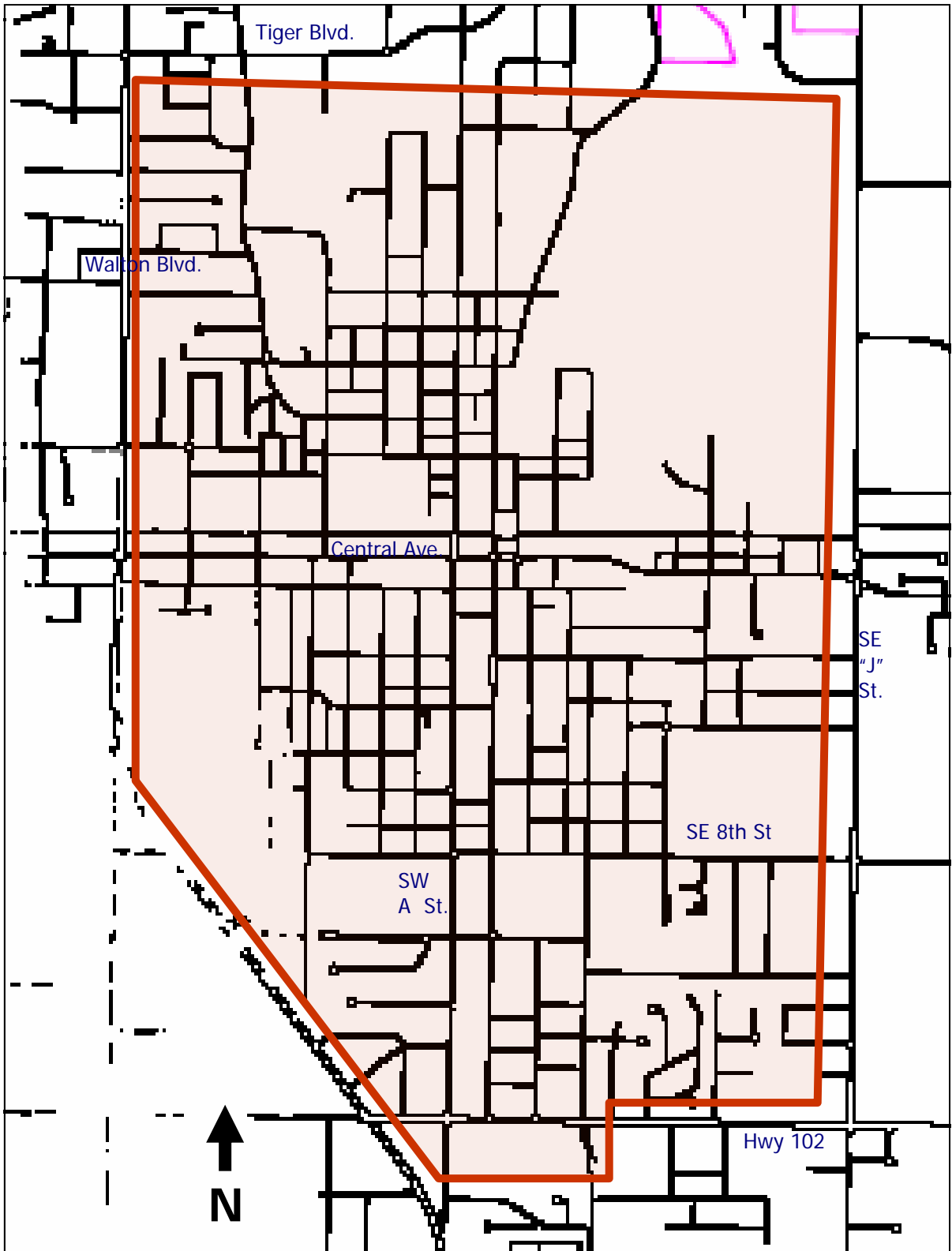
The strip style, national chain shopping offered in neighboring Rogers does present a challenge. However, downtown Bentonville should address specialty retail and restaurants, as opposed to the big box type development. It helps to maintain the quaintness of downtown and supports the pedestrian activity.

A primary goal for downtown is to capture a larger portion of the retail market in Northwest Arkansas.



Specialty retail shops

# Recommended Downtown Redevelopment District Boundaries






**BUILDING TYPE:**  
**SINGLE FAMILY DETACHED HOUSING, MEDIUM DENSITY**

These homes are designed for narrow lots and would be located in residential neighborhoods near the downtown area. Each home would have front and rear yards. Each home would have a garage located on a rear alley. Each home would be within walking distance of the mixed-use commercial areas although the walk could take more than 5 or 10 minutes. Parks would be within walking distance.

**STREETSIDE ELEVATION**



DECEMBER 2004



**BUILDING TYPE:**  
**RESIDENTIAL TOWNHOUSE, MEDIUM DENSITY**

This building is a townhouse concept intended for residential use only. It could be located in a transition zone between mixed-use and single-use residential. The residents may have a small front yard or back yard. Each unit may have its own garage located on a rear alley. This building would be within easy walking distance of the mixed-use commercial areas. Parks would also be within walking distance.

**STREETSIDE ELEVATION**



**SIDEWALK PLAN**



DECEMBER 2004



**BUILDING TYPE:  
TWO-STORY, SINGLE-USE  
RESIDENTIAL APARTMENT  
BUILDING**

This building is intended for residential use only. It could be located in a transition zone between mixed-use and single-use residential. The residents would not desire a yard although there may be a yard or lawn as part of the building's common area. This building would be within easy walking distance of the mixed-use commercial areas. Parks would also be within walking distance.



DECEMBER 3, 2004

**Identify the Market**

There are two existing markets for downtown Bentonville. The first is the downtown residents and the second are those employed downtown. Downtown residents need daily services, such as groceries, dry cleaning, video stores, postal services, and child care. A significant portion of these needs are met by existing business. The daytime employees also need those services so they can run errands over the lunch hour or immediately after work. The downtown workers also create an existing lunch crowd for restaurants.

It is highly recommended that a complete market study be conducted and a marketing plan prepared to determine the exact markets in order to target. It is important that the target market matches the type of businesses that locate downtown.

**Encourage Experiential Businesses**

Experiential businesses are those that offer something to do. Here are some examples:

- Pottery painting
- Dance classes
- Culinary classes
- Hobby and craft stores
- Day spas
- Bike rental
- Public art
- Jewelry making, art galleries
- Indoor play places for children

**Concentrate Offices on Upper Stories**

Maximize business space downtown by encourage upper story office use. The office element plays an important role in the daytime activity of downtown. These offices provide the shoppers and patrons of the downtown retail businesses and restaurants. Therefore, there is a strong desire to retain this element.

**Use Storefronts for Retail and Personal Services**

Downtown Bentonville is successful in filling its storefront spaces, but the businesses located in those storefront are not always the best use. According to a downtown plan for Lowell, Massachusetts, most successful downtowns have a high proportion of retail and service retail uses in the first floor storefront space. It creates foot traffic and street level activity. Office and institutional uses in storefronts limit the potential for street activity. Also, it limits the real estate available for new retail and restaurant uses. Retail and restaurant uses should be located on the first floor.

**Provide Excellent Customer Service**

Customer service is critical. Retailers should be encouraged to be open past 5 p.m. and to be open on the weekends. Window treatments should be professional and appealing. Every customer should be made to feel special and have their needs met. Customer service training for local businesses is strongly encouraged.

**Expand on the Home Furnishing Cluster**

A retail cluster is a group of businesses that offer similar products. They give shoppers variety within a particular area and generate competition among businesses to maintain reasonable prices.



Well designed window displays



Expand on existing home furnishings / home decorating services niche

Downtown is already becoming a place for home furnishings and decorating services. Because it already exists, it provides a foundation for expanding this niche market. The home furnishing niche can be expanded with remodeling specialties, furniture / antiques, art / framing, appliances, flooring/drapery, lawn and garden, and home interiors and accessories.

### **Offer a Variety of Eating Places**

Downtown currently has one eating place right on the square – and it is packed at lunch time (Two more are planned for opening in early 2005). There is a critical need for additional eating places. It is important not only to have several eating places, but places that offer variety in the menus, décor and atmosphere. These places need to be open in the evenings and the weekends to encourage night time activity.

