

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Warner Robins, Georgia **URBAN DESIGN ASSOCIATES**

JANUARY 2009



Downtown Redevelopment Plan

PREPARED FOR
The City of Warner Robins

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Executive Summary

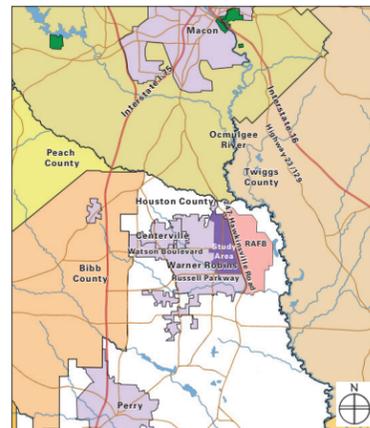
WARNER ROBINS IS LOCATED in the center of a prosperous region of central Georgia. The city has grown rapidly over the last few decades and most of this growth has been in the form of suburban expansion. It is physically organized along commercial corridors and infilled with single-family neighborhoods. The city has outstanding local government and strong schools and is considered to be family friendly.

With rapid expansion, little consideration has been given to redevelopment. The downtown area, adjacent to the region's largest employer and economic engine, Robins Air Force Base, is moribund. The downtown has lost population and has suffered from disinvestment for many years. Large concentrations of low income housing, vacancies, and languishing developments cover large swaths of land in the heart of the city.

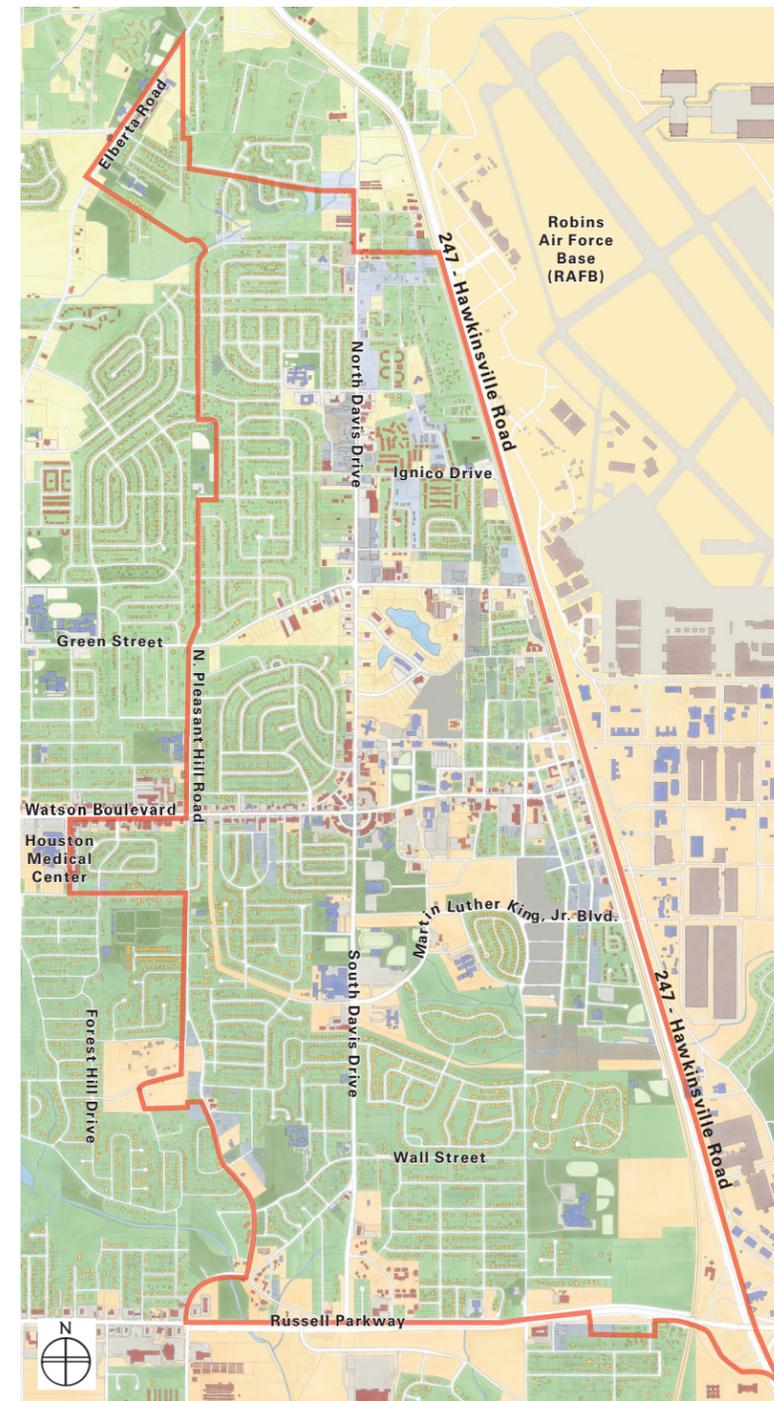
Recognizing the need to reinvest in the downtown and the importance of protecting and supporting RAFB, the City of Warner Robins selected a team headed by Urban Design Associates to prepare a Master Plan for the Redevelopment Area designated by the city that included the downtown. The redevelopment plan was prepared in an open public planning process with the participation of neighborhood residents, merchants, property owners, developers, city officials and interested citizens. The plan recommends the following key initiatives:



PUBLIC PROCESS
The Downtown Redevelopment Plan was created through an inclusive public process engaging a wide range of residents and stakeholders.



LOCATOR MAP
Warner Robins is located in Houston County, 18 miles south of Macon, Georgia. Warner Robins borders Robins Air Force Base in the east, the second largest AFB in the country, and the largest industrial complex in Georgia.

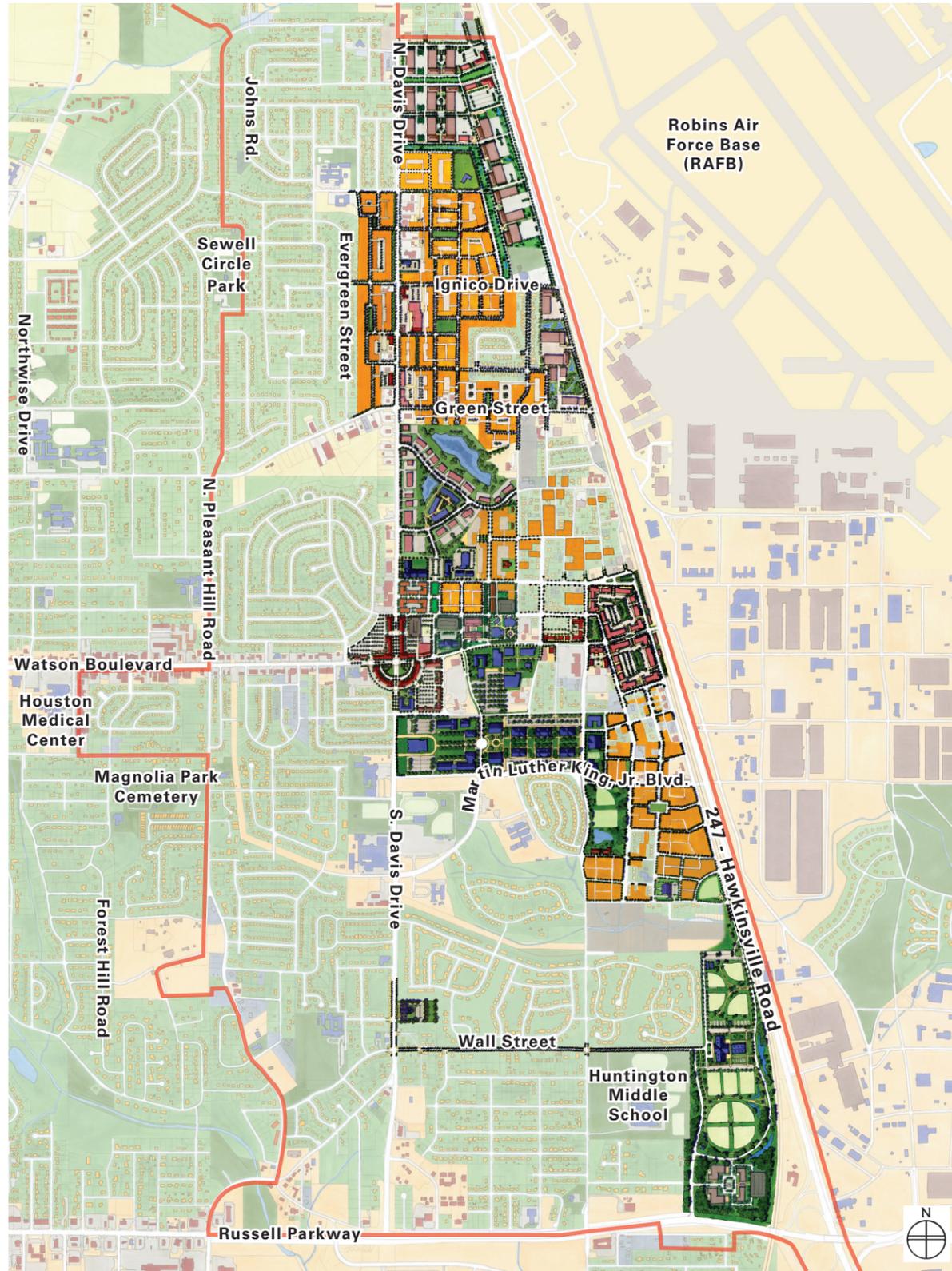


KEY CHALLENGES
» A lack of a center and sense of place in Downtown
» Unattractive and unbecoming gateways into Downtown and RAFB
» Vacant, abandoned, and neglected buildings give impression of a disinvested and unsafe Downtown
» The reliance on arterial streets for connection, as well as the disconnected local street pattern fail to connect neighborhoods to each other and healthy Downtown institutions
» Downtown neighborhoods east of Davis Drive and along 247 are in great need of reinvestment

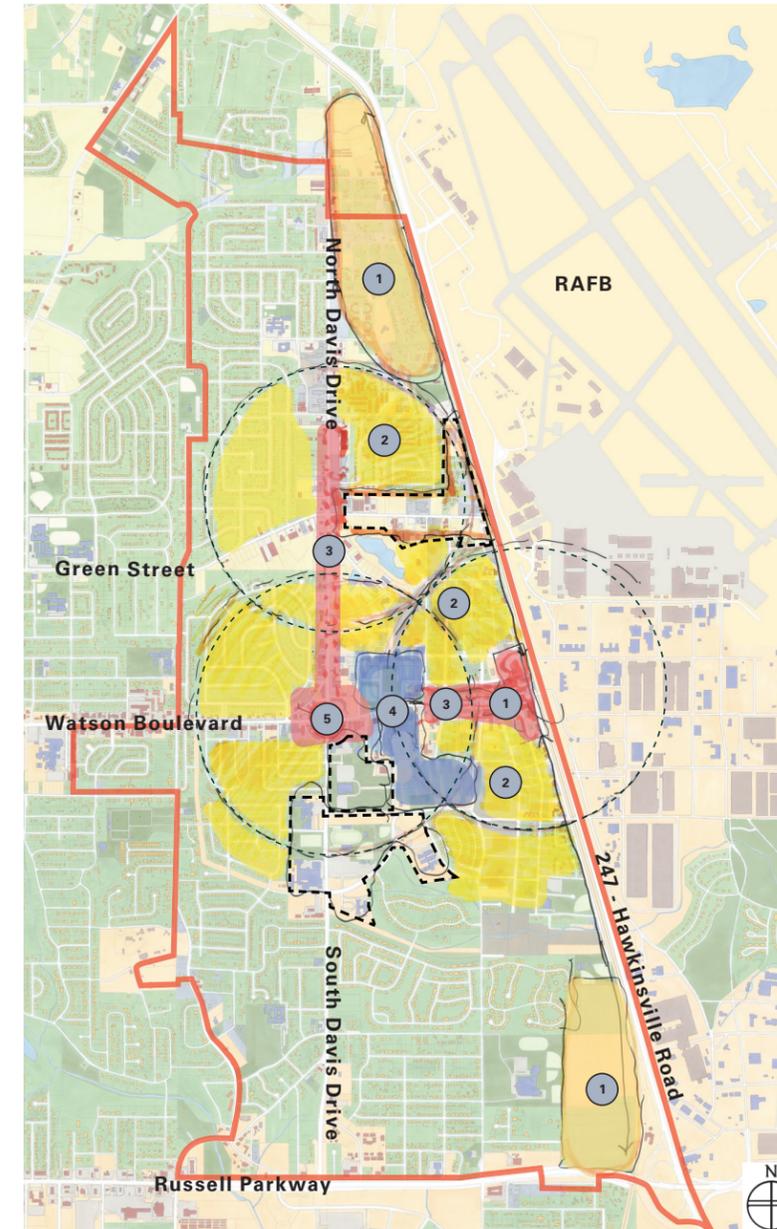
PORTRAIT OF EXISTING CONDITIONS
The portrait created during the planning process indicates existing land uses, as well as the conditions of properties and buildings, to evaluate the overall health of the study area.

DESIGN RESPONSES

- » A Downtown center for pedestrian-oriented businesses, culture, and community gathering is re-established at Commercial Circle
- » New industrial and technology centers are located along 247 and provide economic development related to RAFB
- » Commercial and civic development are concentrated at the core of Downtown to invigorate the area and create a center
- » Existing streets are connected, and new development blocks establish an interconnected street network that may be developed in a flexible manner over time
- » New Downtown neighborhoods are established with a mix of residential building types to provide housing opportunities for people of all abilities and incomes

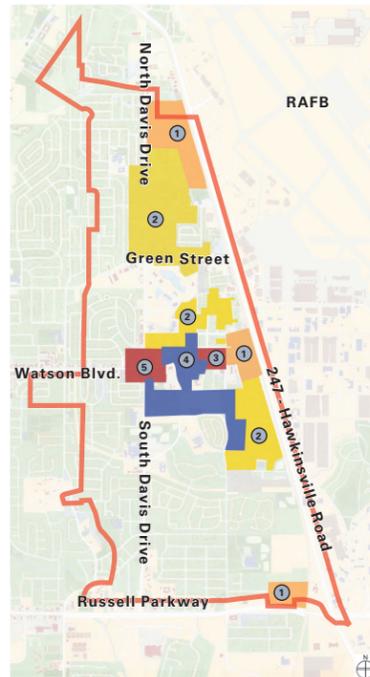


ILLUSTRATIVE MASTER PLAN Design ideas illustrate a consensus vision for the future development of Downtown Warner Robins. Design work was guided by public input and focused on areas surrounding the stable Downtown neighborhoods.



OPPORTUNITY AREAS
1 Industrial/ Technology Centers
2 Walkable Neighborhoods
3 Commercial Corridors
4 Institutional/Civic Center
5 Commercial Circle

OPPORTUNITY AREAS Opportunity areas were determined by concentration of public input, and led to the recommended initiatives detailed in the Illustrative Master Plan (study area outlined in red).



INITIATIVE AREAS
1 Technology and Industry Center
2 New Downtown Mixed-Use Neighborhoods
3 Watson Boulevard
4 Civic Center
5 Commercial Circle

EMPLOYMENT

The region has identified the 247 Corridor as a future Aerospace Corridor. The plan identifies three development areas for future office, research and development, flex space and light industrial uses that the city and regional planning agencies designated the frontage along 247 as a future aerospace corridor that will compliment and support the needs of Robins Air Force Base. The northern area is located on land suitable only for non-residential uses and immediately accessible to the base. At the terminus of Watson Boulevard near the main gate will be a concentration of office and R&D uses. The southern area near Russell Parkway will provide a campus setting for a major employer or a cluster of businesses.

NEIGHBORHOODS

The most vital downtowns in America are neighborhoods, 24 hour environments that offer a variety of unique housing combined with shops and cultural amenities. The plan recommends the creation of three major downtown neighborhoods, all within walking distance of commercial centers and employers, and built with a blend of new mixed-income rental and homeownership developments and infill housing.

INSTITUTIONS

Great downtowns are homes to significant institutions that strengthen the downtown as the center of a region. Institutions bring vibrancy and cultural richness to downtown communities and help support commercial and cultural life. The plan recognizes the importance of the existing schools and churches as cultural leaders of the community. The plan has specific recommendations for Macon State University, Happy Hour, Georgia Military College and Sacred Heart Church and School.



(ABOVE) View of a Downtown mixed-income neighborhood
(BELOW) View of research and development node along technology corridor



(ABOVE) Plan of the Civic Center (BELOW) View along Commercial Circle
(BOTTOM) View of new commercial development along Watson Boulevard



CIVIC CENTER

The plan recommends expanding the existing Civic Center by adding a new Hotel on Watson Boulevard with conference facilities that will compliment the existing auditorium. The Plan provides for consideration alternative locations for a new Law Enforcement Center. Land adjacent to the existing City Hall is currently used as a surface parking lot for city employees and guests. This parking should be accommodated in a garage, freeing up valuable land for mixed-use development.

COMMERCIAL CIRCLE

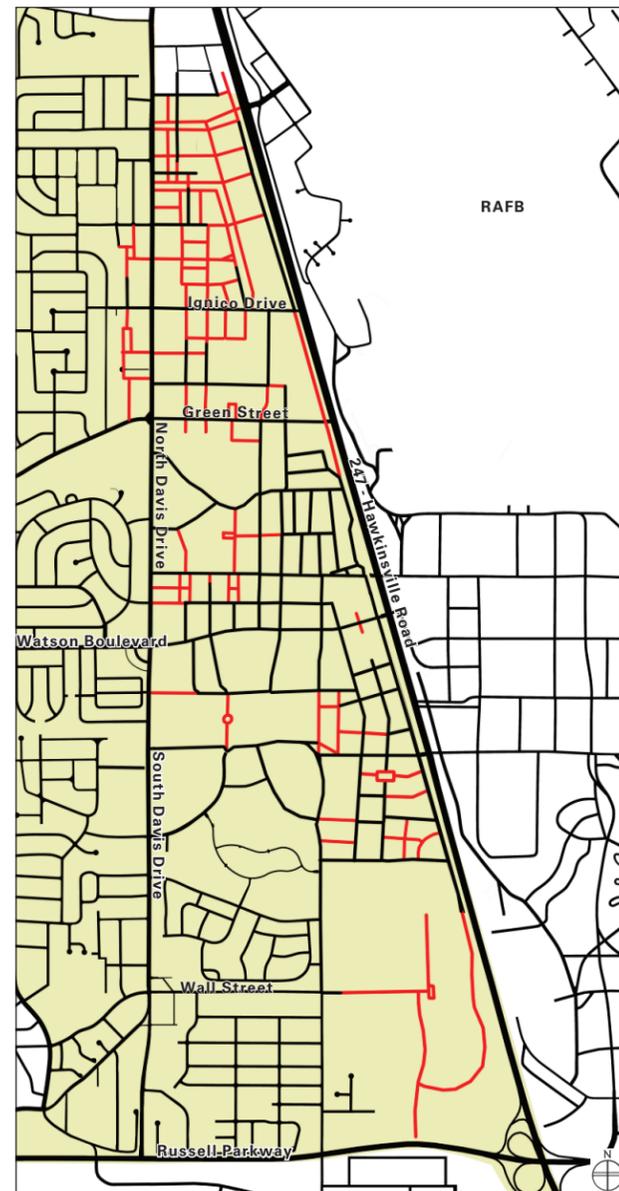
Long regarded as the geographic center of town, Commercial Circle will be redeveloped as the “town square”, an important civic space for public functions, and surrounded by new mixed-use buildings with ground floor retail and restaurants and upper floor offices and apartments. With a mix of public and private investment, Commercial Circle will once again become the civic heart of the City.

PARKS AND RECREATION

A variety of new parks and recreation areas will be built in the downtown area. They include the new Commercial Circle Town Square, neighborhood parks in the residential areas, and a regionally significant recreation facility offering a variety of athletic fields adjacent to Huntington Middle School.

STREETS

New streets will be developed in the downtown area associated with new residential neighborhoods, commercial and employment areas. Davis Drive and Watson Boulevard will be landscaped to become attractive boulevards rather than placeless strip highways.



STREETS FRAMEWORK An interconnected network of streets is introduced throughout the Downtown to link neighborhoods and create flexible development blocks (new streets in red; existing streets in black; study area in yellow)



OPEN SPACE FRAMEWORK Linkages in the form of sidewalks, trails, bicycle paths, and greenways connect civic institutions and parks within and between neighborhoods (study area outlined in red).

- INSTITUTIONS
- PARKS/ OPEN SPACE
- PLAYFIELDS
- LINKAGES

Process and Analysis

THE DEVELOPMENT OF WARNER ROBINS

The development of the present-day City of Warner Robins is inextricably linked to the establishment of Robins Air Force Base along its eastern boundary. However, as with most places, the City grew slowly over time, evolving from a farm community, to a small settlement related to the expansion of our nation's rail system, to its growth as a U.S. Army Air Corps aviation and logistics depot in 1941. As the City's largest economic generator today, RAFB has always played a basic role and meaning in the presence of the City itself.

Warner Robins was first settled as York, a crossroads consisting of a U.S. post office and general store in the middle of Georgia's rich agricultural lands. As a result of the rail expansion to connect Macon and Perry, a train station was established here, and the community was renamed Wellston after the railroad's head engineer. For nearly sixty years, Wellston remained a farm community until local leaders seized upon the opportunity of the expanding federal defense industry prior to World War II. With the onset of the conflict, Commercial Circle was established, and Warner Robins expanded as a bedroom community to support busy Robins AFB. RAFB continues to be the lead industry in the City, and many of the institutions and other businesses here are related to its presence as Georgia's single largest industrial complex.



IMAGE COURTESY OF WRING

PROPOSED G-RAMP DEVELOPMENT AREA (LOOKING SOUTH)

The G-Ramp (Georgia-Robins Aerospace Maintenance Partnership) is an aircraft maintenance, repair, and overhaul complex that would support the upkeep of the Air Force's fleet over time, including the attraction of other potential missions and related private sector technology and aerospace development, further fueling RAFB as the City's major economic engine.



CITY OF WARNER ROBINS CIRCA 1955

Warner Robins was established to support the development of Robins Air Force Base, and was laid out in a piecemeal form with a focus on utility (Commercial Circle at center)



SOURCE: A LAND SO DEDICATED

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE TODAY

RAFB remains a community anchor. The base features Air Force facilities, amenities, housing, and the nearby Museum of Aviation.

The Planning Process



PUBLIC PROCESS
Both formal focus groups and informal open house walk-throughs were facilitated throughout the process to infuse the design with a wide range of input and local expertise.

For about a year, a multi-disciplinary consultant team, engaged by the City of Warner Robins, focused on the assembly of a Redevelopment Plan based on the aspirations of residents in establishing a true Downtown for the City. The consultant team consisted of urban designers, architects, landscape architects, and market analysts, working together to conduct a transparent and inclusive public input and planning process. Phase I: Understanding, completed in early Spring 2008, included data collection in the forms of mapping and focus groups to establish the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities within the Downtown. Phase II: Exploring, running from early Spring to early Fall 2008, was largely focused upon a four-day design charrette held in the City in June 2008. During this period, design principles were established, and design ideas were generated and discussed by the consultant team, City, and all public participants. The final phase, Phase III: Deciding, was organized around a final public meeting in November 2008 where preferred alternatives were discussed and selected. The culmination of this reporting phase is this master plan report prepared for adoption by the City Council as the blueprint for Downtown's future development.

Throughout these phases, the design process included focus group meetings with residents and civic leaders, institutions such as area churches and social service providers, State and City representatives, area businesses, and other key stakeholders. Each step in the process was organized around an open public meeting held at the Civic Center, where residents, City representatives, and the consultant team came together to listen and exchange ideas. The residents of the City enthusiastically described their aspirations for what the city of Warner Robins could become, and the process led to a consensus-based plan summarized in this document.

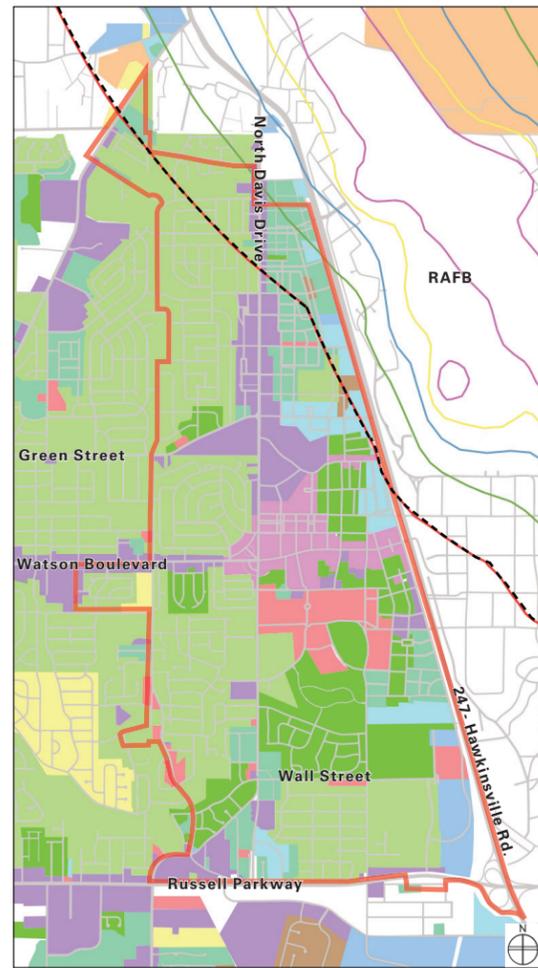
SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INPUT		
STRENGTHS/GOOD THINGS	WEAKNESSES/PROBLEMS	VISION FOR THE FUTURE
City Residents RAFB/ Museum of Aviation Macon State College Georgia Military College Houston Medical Center Churches Chamber of Commerce Base housing Public schools Commercial Circle as legacy and part of Warner Robins' history	Abandoned and vacant buildings Commercial Circle's dated look Parking Crime Drugs Residential neighborhoods on First, Second, and Third Streets North Davis Drive No public transportation Not pedestrian-friendly No enforcement of building codes	Improved safety Green space and parks Trees, paths, and bike trails Public transportation options Streetscape improvements Downtown shopping and restaurants Updated Commercial Circle Hotel/Conference Center Sports complex

PHYSICAL ANALYSIS OF URBAN FORM

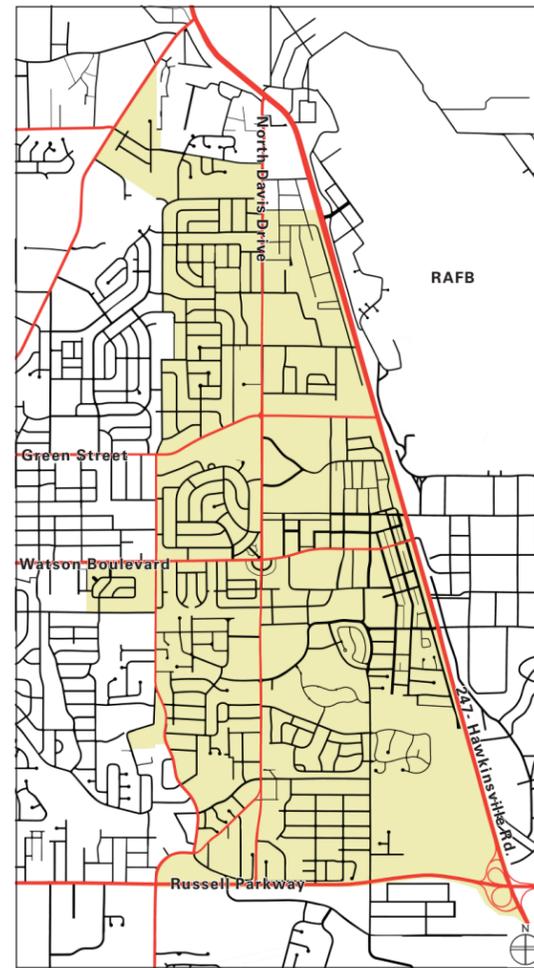
A primary tool in understanding how existing patterns inform and lead to design solutions are UDA X-Rays®, a specific set of physical analysis drawings whereby physical land use and planning information is displayed and evaluated one attribute at a time. The purpose of these diagrams is to reveal underlying patterns within a place by isolating land uses and physical features to clarify the state of existing systems to see opportunities to both repair and connect various parts of a place. The emerging patterns are then used to inform the integration of new design ideas with the unique built form and fabric within which they are found.

The following series of diagrams focus on the patterns observed at present in Downtown Warner Robins.

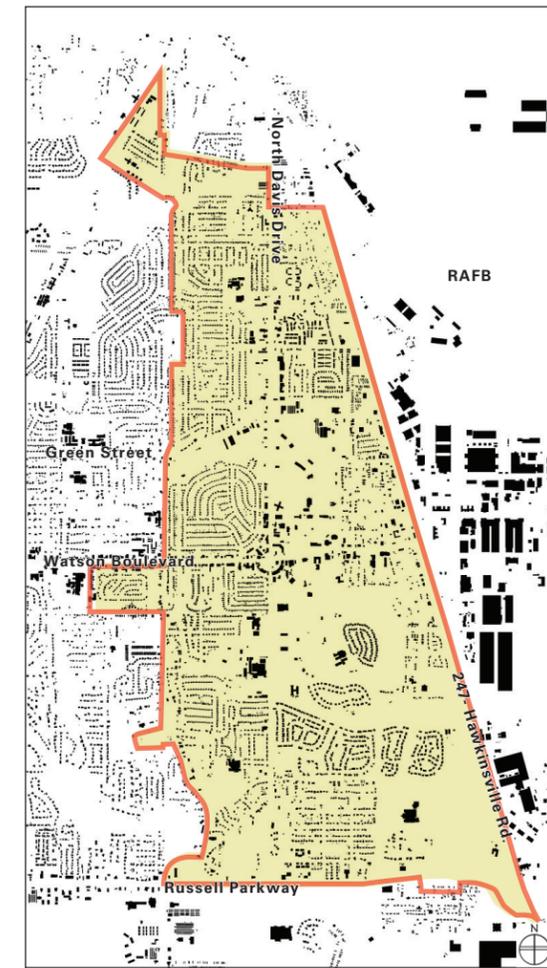
- R-1
- R-2
- R-3
- R-4
- RMH
- C-1
- C-2
- C-3
- M-1
- M-2



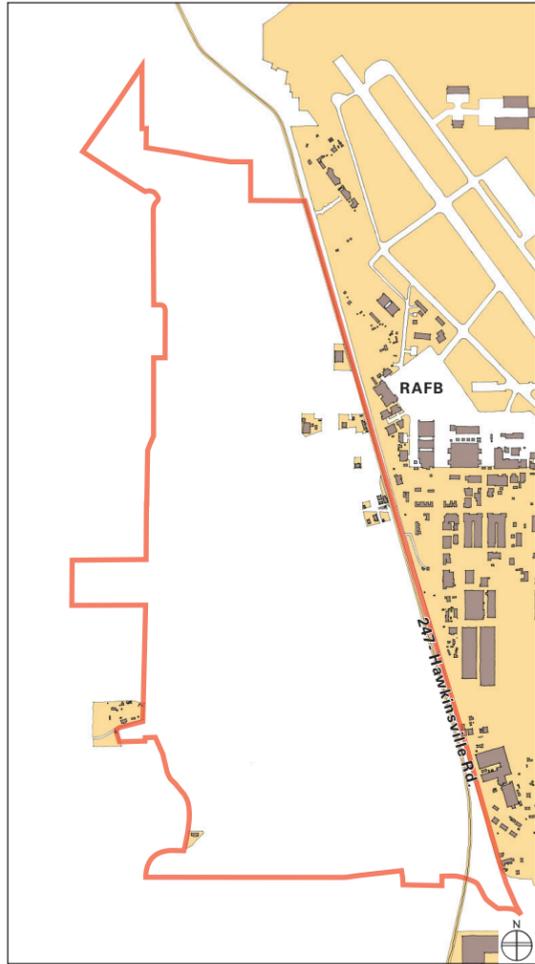
ZONING MAP
Revisions will need to be made to the City Zoning Map in order to determine the highest and best uses for land while encouraging an appropriate mix of uses for a downtown (65db sound contour in black).



HIGHWAYS, ARTERIALS, AND STREETS
Warner Robins has a range of street sizes, as well as a connected grid of minor arterials (orange) connecting to nearby major arterials (red). East of Davis Drive, the local street system (black) is somewhat disconnected, separating neighborhoods.

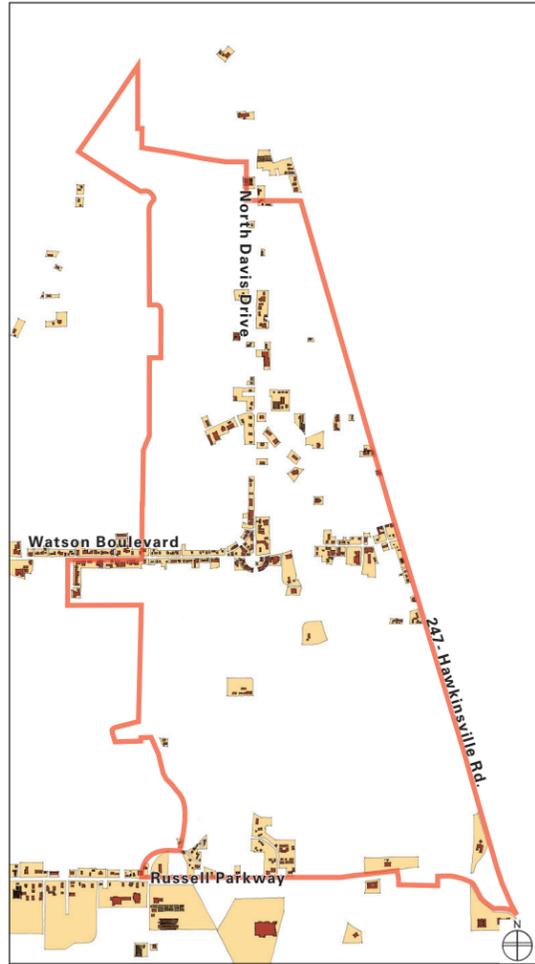


BUILDING FOOTPRINTS
The large buildings of Robins Air Force Base define the eastern edge of Downtown. Commercial Circle can be easily identified at the center of town. Besides some commercial structures on Russell Parkway, North Davis Drive, and Watson Boulevard, the rest of the area is largely low-density residential in scale. East of Davis Drive large areas remain undeveloped.



INDUSTRIAL USES

The majority of industrial land in Warner Robins is located at Robins Air Force Base. Industrial land outside the base is strategically clustered near the railway lines. A rail line parallels 247 through downtown.



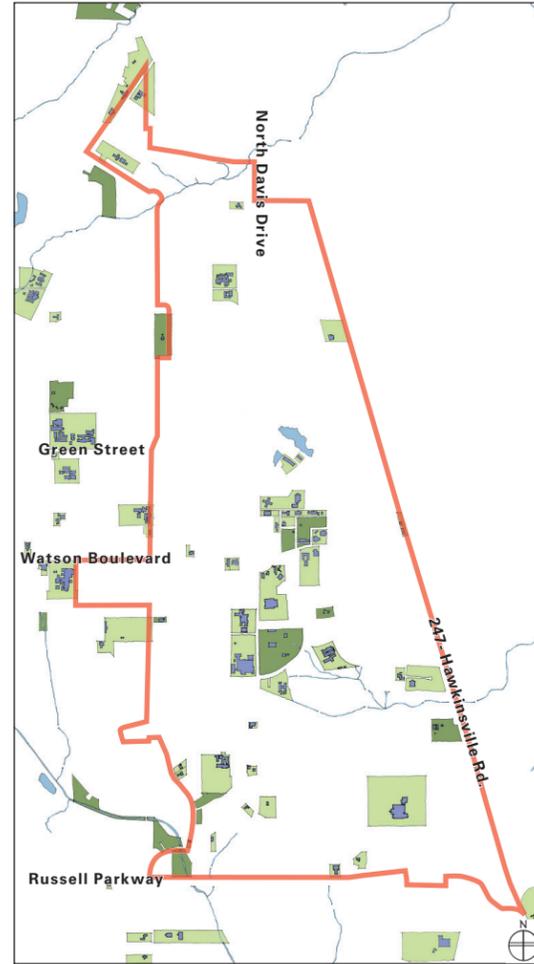
COMMERCIAL USES

Commercial uses extend outward from Commercial Circle along Watson Boulevard and N. Davis Drive. The larger building and parcel sizes at the southern edge of the map represent newer commercial development along Russell Parkway.



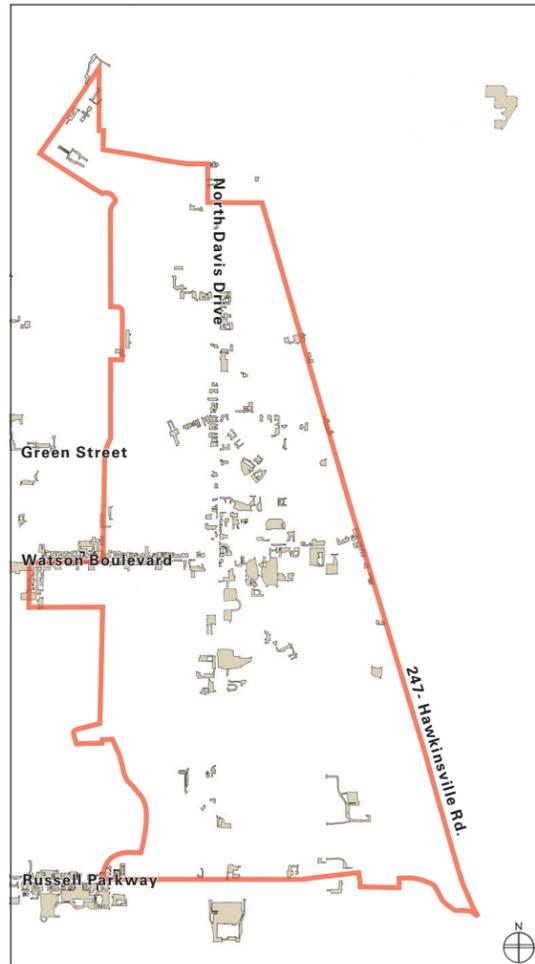
RESIDENTIAL USES

Residential blocks occupy a majority of land in the area. Most of the blocks are oversized, formed by existing dead-ends or "cul-de-sacs". A wealth of neighborhoods surround the downtown core.

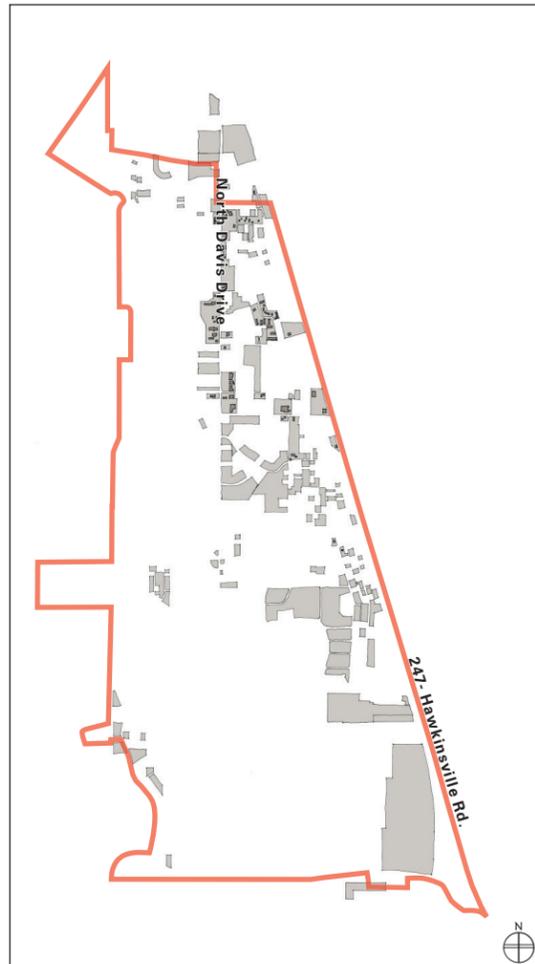


INSTITUTIONS, PARKS, AND OPEN SPACE

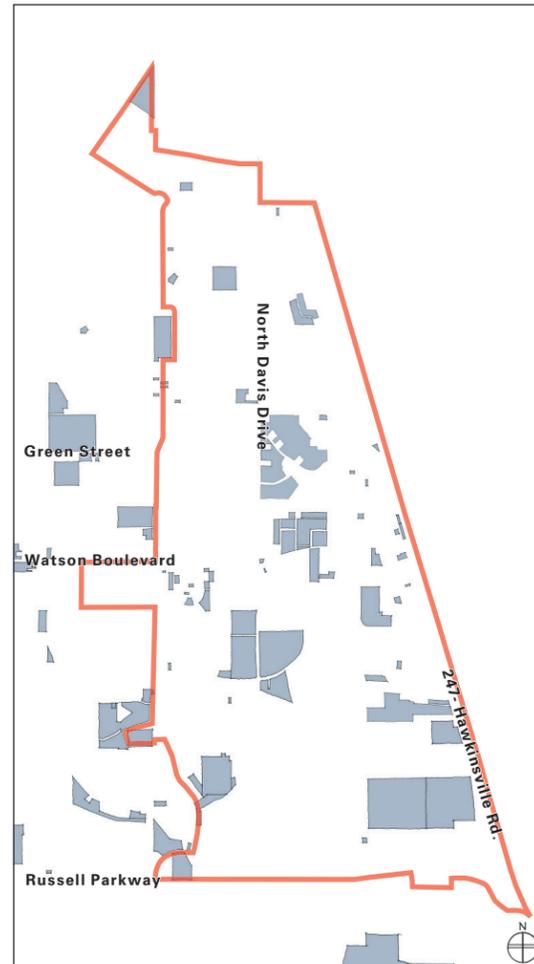
Many public institutions and schools (shown in light green and purple) are located in Downtown Warner Robins, as well as churches and other community facilities. Less prevalent are the public open spaces (shown in dark green) which are primarily occupied by athletic fields.



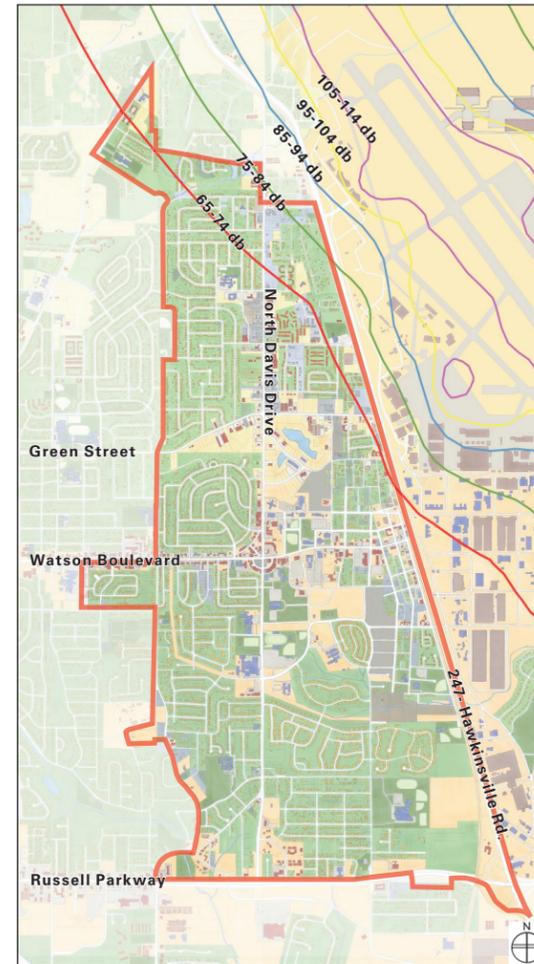
PARKING
The automobile-oriented character of the retail corridors requires large parking lots, most of which occupy the entire street frontage. This situation is most prevalent along Russell Parkway, Davis Drive, and Watson Boulevard, as well as large lots related to major institutions.



VACANCY
There is a large number of vacant parcels and derelict buildings in downtown. Most of the vacant buildings are found north of Watson Boulevard, where some large vacant parcels exist to the south.



PUBLICLY-OWNED LAND
Many parcels in downtown are publicly-owned, with existing uses including schools and parks. Additionally, some of the lots are vacant or occupied by dilapidated housing.



RAFB DIAGRAM
Noise contours related to the flight line at RAFB are shown on the map with the red line indicating a noise level of 65-74 DB with the contours growing in intensity toward the base. A portion of the study area, including largely vacant residential neighborhoods, lies within the 65 db level. This area is unsuitable for residential uses.

Residential Market Study

Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc. (ZVA) is a market research firm based in Clinton, New Jersey that produces studies relating to residential market potential for a wide variety of projects in both existing places, as well as new towns. To date, they have prepared over 400 studies which are intended to inform public and private entities with regard to the residential markets to be targeted, the appropriate housing mix, as well as the optimum unit sizes, configurations, and rent and price points, to introduce in phases over time. ZVA is nationally known for their expertise, and highly regarded for the strength of their studies in establishing implementation strategies when development is ready to move forward from the planning stages.

In the case of Warner Robins, ZVA conducted a Target Market Analysis for the Redevelopment Plan area within Downtown Warner Robins (full study under separate cover). The study approaches residential market opportunity based upon a Target Market Methodology that analyzes market potential, not traditional market demand. The methodology includes migration and mobility analyses, geo-demographic segmentation by lifestyle and housing preferences, and consumer market surveys. The study area was provided by the City of Warner Robins, and includes the three census tracts within the Downtown core that are Military Empowerment Zones.

ZVA identified a number of assets within the study area upon which to build the residential market. First and foremost, Downtown's adjacency to RAFB provides a number of potential development synergies. Also, Downtown is home to several educational institutions, as well as Houston Medical Center on its western edge. All of these important anchors provide potential employment and retail opportunities within walking distance of the core Downtown, essential attributes of a thriving urban center.

MIGRATION ANALYSIS

ZVA's migration analysis reveals where the potential market for Warner Robins' Downtown lives now. The primary draw area for new residents in Warner Robins is the City itself (42.5%). Due to the opportunity for Downtown Warner Robins to provide new housing stock in a variety of unit and tenure types not currently offered in town, as well as its proximity to RAFB, the City's largest employer, the Downtown is well-positioned to attract new residents. Outside of the City, the National Draw Area, namely Georgia and the Southeast U.S., is the area from which the City will attract new residents (38.1%). Houston County (12.7%) and nearby Bibb and Peach Counties (6.7%) are other draw areas.

ANNUAL MARKET POTENTIAL & TARGET MARKET ANALYSIS

Annual Market Potential forecasts how many households may be The annual market potential is the number of households that represent the market for new and existing housing in a given area in a given year. For Downtown Warner Robins, 940 households represent the annual potential market, with an annual market potential of 4,300 households City-wide.

Beyond market potential, the ZVA study describes in detail the nature and characteristics of the target households (target market analysis). In the case of Warner Robins, younger singles and couples account for nearly three quarters, or 73%, of the annual potential market. Another 17% are likely to be empty nesters or retirees. These percentages are in striking agreement with national trends, where the two largest generations in America today – the Baby Boom, born between 1946 and 1964, and the Millennials, born between 1977 and 1996 – are demonstrating a preference for urban living in urban housing types in much higher percentages than predecessor genera-

POTENTIAL MARKET FOR NEW HOUSING UNITS DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN STUDY AREA, CITY OF WARNER ROBINS, HOUSTON COUNTY, GEORGIA		
HOUSING TYPE	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Multi-family for-rent (lofts/apartments, leaseholder)	350	26.1%
Multi-family for-sale (lofts/apartments, condo/co-op ownership)	310	23.1%
Single-family attached for-sale (townhouses, fee-simple/condominium ownership)	210	15.7%
Low-range single-family detached (houses, fee-simple ownership)	220	16.4%
Mid-range single-family detached (houses, fee-simple ownership)	160	11.9%
High-range single-family detached (houses, fee-simple ownership)	90	6.8%
TOTAL	1,340	100%

tions. At 10 percent, the smallest market for new housing in Warner Robins is traditional and non-traditional families.

HOUSING PREFERENCES OF THE TARGET HOUSEHOLDS

The ZVA report then details the housing preferences of the target households that would be appropriate in Downtown Warner Robins, as well as the general rent and price ranges that the market can support. In summary, based on market preferences, new housing in Downtown Warner Robins should consist of: Rental lofts and apartments (37%), for-sale lofts and apartments (33%), for-sale townhouses (23%), and for-sale urban houses (7%).

One of the challenges for Downtown housing development, however, is the cost per square foot required to build the appropriate housing units. According to the ZVA study, to correspond to target household financial capabilities, monthly rents should range from about \$600-1000 for units between 650-1,100 square feet (sf). Base prices of lofts should range from \$85,000-185,000 for 750-1,450 sf units. Base prices for townhouses should range from \$135,000-195,000 for units containing 1,000-1,550 sf. Urban houses, which are street-oriented houses on narrow lots, serviced by alleys, should be priced from \$145,000-215,000 for 1,100-1,750 sf of living space.

ANNUAL CAPTURE OF MARKET POTENTIAL

The annual capture of market potential, as referenced in the corresponding table in this section, describes how fast the target households will rent or buy new housing developed in Downtown Warner Robins. The rate of development is also dependent upon some existing challenges in the Downtown, which will need to be remedied and

addressed through the design of the Downtown. These challenges, from a housing perspective, are: significant disinvestment in the core of Downtown, the limited number of true neighborhood-serving retailers, the character of Downtown's overly-wide suburban streets, and the general negative perceptions associated with the current state of Downtown Warner Robins.

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESSFUL HOUSING INITIATIVES

ZVA cites three primary criteria to adhere to in order to ensure successful housing initiatives in the redevelopment of Warner Robins' Downtown. These include location, design, and proper marketing – all of which are needed to create successful residential development in Downtown. In terms of location, appropriate areas must be established for residential neighborhoods. This includes provision of proper amenities for residents, connective street and trail networks, public parks and facilities, and good connections to transportation. In terms of design, not only good unit design is needed, but great attention to the creation of places at the scale of the neighborhood, street, and address. Front doors and porches, in the tradition of great Georgia towns, need to face streets and create neighborly places. A coordination of the public realm between the City and other public entities and individual private developers is fundamental to establishing recognizable and lasting places of character versus disparate housing developments or projects suburban in nature. As for marketing, the character and condition of the study area as a whole is important to encourage new residents to settle in Downtown Warner Robins versus other parts of the City or region. As ZVA is often heard saying, if you build it and build it right, the market will come.

ANNUAL CAPTURE OF MARKET POTENTIAL DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN STUDY AREA, CITY OF WARNER ROBINS, HOUSTON COUNTY, GEORGIA			
HOUSING TYPE	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	CAPTURE RATE	NEW UNITS
Rental Multi-Family (lofts/apartments, leaseholder)	350	15%	52
For-Sale Multi-Family (lofts/apartments, condominium ownership)	310	15%	47
For-Sale Single-Family Attached (townhouses, fee-simple/condominium ownership)	210	10%	21
For-Sale Single-Family Detached (urban houses, fee-simple ownership)	70	10%	7
TOTAL	940		127

Commercial Market Study

RCLCO (Robert Charles Lesser & Co.), a world-wide real estate advisory practice with offices located in many major American cities, conducted a Commercial Market Analysis for the area studied within the Warner Robins Downtown Master Plan (full study under separate cover). In particular, RCLCO was asked to evaluate the commercial market, complete a hotel/conference center analysis, and offer program recommendations for retail, office, and industrial development within the context of the design of a true Downtown center for Warner Robins.

As similarly cited in the residential market study, RCLCO concurs that the adjacency of Downtown Warner Robins to RAFB is a primary driver for non-residential, employment, and economic development within Downtown. Concentrating investment and development of employment nodes in campuses or clusters also contributes to the successful attraction of new businesses to Downtown, especially thinking of Downtown as the incubator for new technology and industrial campuses in support of the activities at RAFB. Conversely, the current condition of Downtown with regard to its streets as well as vacant lands and underutilized buildings give an impression of neglect and disinvestment. This reality will need to be countered by coordinated development that creates whole places, bolstering the impression of Downtown Warner Robins as a place to base a business.

DOWNTOWN AS WARNER ROBINS' ACTIVITY HUB

RCLCO projects potential program numbers for Downtown Warner Robins in 5-year and 25-year forecasts, as seen in the corresponding table on this page. As with any projection, however, certain contexts are needed to ensure the success of the land use. Throughout the

planning process, Commercial Circle was seen as both the spiritual and geographical center of Downtown that has long been underutilized and underdeveloped. A few popular local businesses are located here, but in general, this area does not constitute a center in a typical Downtown case.

RCLCO recommends the creation of environments that properly support Downtown retail based upon capitalizing on market niches. This includes: creating a sense of place that is pedestrian-oriented; attracting or assembling businesses that establish a regional destination with clear circulation and accommodation of automobiles; creating complimentary offerings that do not compete with the City's current retail offerings; and focusing on locally-serving options that are useful for nearby employment centers and institutions. The place supported by these design principles is Commercial Circle, which can become a strong activity node and a catalyst for other commercial redevelopment in Downtown Warner Robins.

According to RCLCO's methodology, retail demand is driven by three key factors: population in the 3-mile trade area, growth in the trade area population, and new residents Downtown as a product of its redevelopment and the introduction of more residential offerings in the center of the City. Multiplied by the annual expenditures of these populations, and percentage of area capture, coupled with the unmet demand for a pedestrian, mixed-use retail area within the City, 350,000 square feet of retail demand may be expected in the next 20 years. Retail success is also based upon a phased approach that is market-driven. A table containing the types of retail recommended in the short and long term is found on this page.

POTENTIAL COMMERCIAL OFFERINGS	
CURRENT OPPORTUNITY	20-YEAR OPPORTUNITY
Total: 50,000 sf	Additional 300,000 sf Total: 350,000 sf
Locally-Oriented Full-Service Restaurants	Locally-Oriented Full-Service Restaurants sf53,800
Limited-Service Restaurants/Coffee Shop	Limited-Service Restaurants/Coffee Shop
Local-Serving Office	Local-Serving Office
Hobby, Books, Music, Stores	Hobby, Books, Music, Stores
Clothing/Accessories Boutiques	Clothing/Accessories Boutiques
Gifts, Florist, Misc.	Gifts, Florist, Misc.
Health and Personal Care	Health and Personal Care
Home Furnishing Boutique	Home Furnishing Boutique
	Office Supplies
	Grocery/Specialty Food

In addition to retail, Commercial Circle, seen as the center of the City, will be able to attract office users as well. The important distinction to be made is the type of office recommended to be developed. Office tenants in Commercial Circle should be smaller professional firms or creative class businesses who benefit from being clustered with other resident-serving businesses or niche retail. Examples of such office users are: banks, attorneys, medical offices, accountants, small professional firms, and the like.

DOWNTOWN AS THE NEW CENTER OF TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

RCLCO cites one of Downtown's greatest development opportunities as technology, research and development offices, and light industrial development due to its close proximity to Robins Air Force Base. Due to the way in which the U.S. Air Force is approaching management of its fleet of aircraft, there are many opportunities for Downtown to attract outside vendors and companies that service RAFB. In addition to this obvious compatibility of these uses, using Downtown as an incubator for development supporting the activities of RAFB, RCLCO employed a methodology to determine demand for office and industrial space within the defined Downtown area. In general, Houston County employment growth by industry is multiplied by a percentage of employees using that space considering an average square footage of space per employee. Assuming one will capture a percentage of the area, demand for these office and industrial uses are calculated. Current Houston County employment by industry is also multiplied by this equation, including leases in turnover, to determine demand.

Following this methodology, 25-year demand is determined, as shown in the table in this section, and this demand benefits from the corresponding growth of RAFB as derived from new aerospace projects connected to the base, including the G-RAMP opportunity. Local distribution companies serving the region will also call for office and technology space as well.

DOWNTOWN CONFERENCE HOTEL

Many prior studies have been conducted with regard to the feasibility of a conference hotel development within the Downtown. Warner Robins has a number of hotels, however, they are largely located in suburban shopping areas or near the interstate. Redevelopment of Downtown, and its location across 247 from RAFB, again presents opportunities to develop a conference hotel as a Downtown anchor. This opportunity should be seen as related to other redevelopment in Downtown as well, particularly that at Commercial Circle, designed and positioned to be the experiential heart of the City, and where the concentration of pedestrian-oriented, authentic Downtown retail, small office, and cultural uses will be planned.

RCLCO determined that the hotel opportunity is largely driven by RAFB. 92,000 annual room nights comprise the existing market audience. It is projected that in 5 years, about 50,000 additional room nights will be needed, relating to the overall development centered in Downtown Warner Robins. Therefore, about 135 more rooms will be needed to support visitors to the Downtown area. An increase in hotel stays is expected in the RAFB-related, non-RAFB business, and recreation and leisure markets, and this diversity is important to sustain a Downtown hotel.

POTENTIAL TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT		
INDUSTRIAL USES	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL POTENTIAL DEMAND (20-25 YEARS)
OFFICE R&D	Used in combination with office, research and development, and/or high tech. Typically one or two stories, ceiling heights of 16 feet or less	550,000 sf
FLEX INDUSTRIAL	Used in industrial processing, warehousing, and/or high tech. Typically one or two stories, ceiling heights of 16 feet or less	350,000
MANUFACTURING	Used in transportation, distribution, or light manufacturing. Typically one story, ceiling heights of 20 feet or more	100,000 sf

POTENTIAL INDUSTRIAL AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT		
CATEGORY	TOTAL POTENTIAL SQUARE FEET (SF) BY 2013	TOTAL POTENTIAL SQUARE FEET (SF) BY 2033
Retail	50,000 sf	350,000 sf
Office/R&D	100,000 sf	550,000 sf
Flex Office/Industrial	70,000 sf	350,000 sf
Light Manufacturing	20,000 sf	100,000 sf
Hotel	135-140 Rooms	135-140 Rooms
TOTAL DEMAND	240,000 SF	1,850,000 SF

Design Principles

IN COLLABORATION WITH VARIOUS public stakeholders and City representatives, a series of design principles were established to guide the development of the Downtown Master Plan. The principles were created during Phase I of the master planning process, and design ideas generated during the Phase II Design Charrette and Phase III Plan Refinement were tested against these overarching ideas and aspirations. The Downtown design principles are as follows, in no particular order:

- » Connect commerce and culture back to Downtown
- » Create mixed-use, mixed-income development and neighborhoods
- » Enable public/private partnerships to leverage development opportunities
- » Bring the people in the community together; do not segregate or separate
- » Think of Downtown as a neighborhood that is everybody's neighborhood
- » Create a town square in Commercial Circle
- » Create a walkable Downtown, including sidewalks, lighting, landscape, and trees
- » Convert strip highways into beautiful urban boulevards
- » Improve connectivity and start a public transportation system to aid access to needed services



CONNECT COMMERCE AND CULTURE BACK TO DOWNTOWN



CREATE MIXED-USE, MIXED-INCOME DEVELOPMENT AND NEIGHBORHOODS



ENABLE PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS TO LEVERAGE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



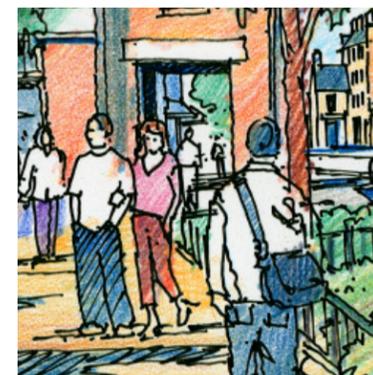
BRING THE PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER; DO NOT SEGREGATE OR SEPARATE



THINK OF DOWNTOWN AS A NEIGHBORHOOD THAT IS EVERYBODY'S NEIGHBORHOOD



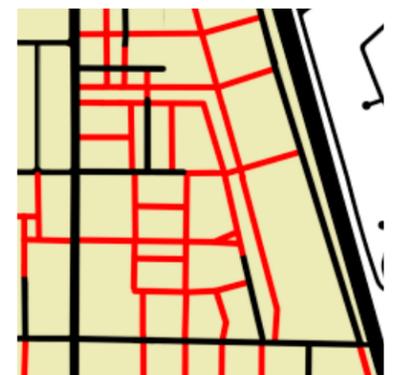
CREATE A TOWN SQUARE IN COMMERCIAL CIRCLE



CREATE A WALKABLE DOWNTOWN, INCLUDING SIDEWALKS, LIGHTING, LANDSCAPE, AND TREES.



CONVERT STRIP HIGHWAYS INTO BEAUTIFUL URBAN BOULEVARDS



IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY AND START A PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM TO AID ACCESS TO NEEDED SERVICES

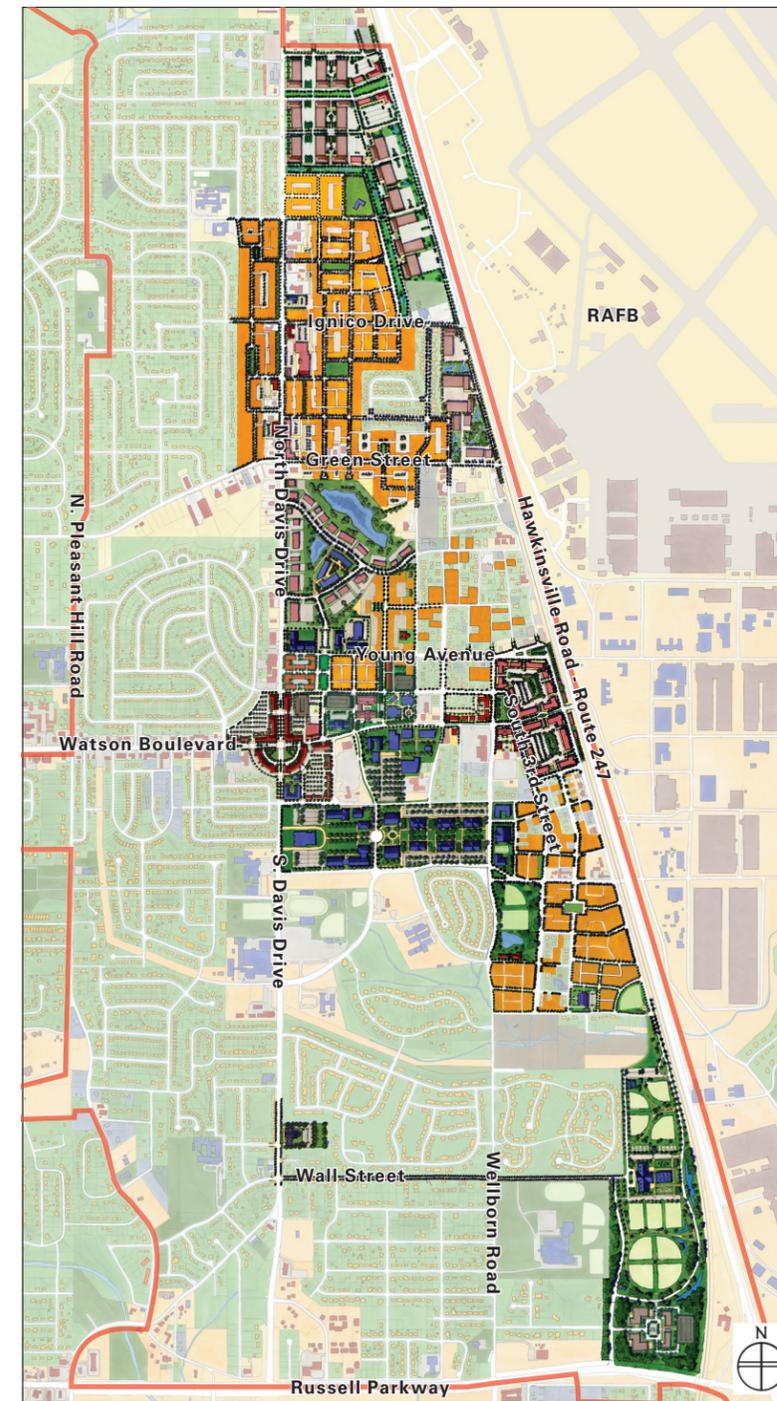
Master Plan

FRAMEWORKS REFER TO THE overarching systems of a city within which individual development initiatives fit. Frameworks vary in their type, but their importance lies in the opportunities presented when existing resources and amenities are linked together. Coordinated systems provide greater benefits to the whole of the city, in turn improving its component districts and neighborhoods as well. In the case of Warner Robins, three important frameworks were studied and developed to guide Downtown growth.

The primary map by which a city evaluates its development decisions is the zoning map. In order to develop a mixed-use Downtown, Warner Robins will have to re-evaluate the uses allowed throughout the study area. Of particular importance is the responsibility to manage the future planning of adjacent uses that are compatible, but to also allow for a mix of uses that come together to create a great mixed-use Downtown.

The street network of any place, particularly a downtown, is fundamental in setting up individual projects for success. An interconnected network of streets not only provides links between neighborhoods, commercial and civic amenities, and employment centers, but they define appropriately scaled development blocks to promote pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use environments characteristic of the best urban centers.

A network of public open space, parks, and trails, is also critical to create access to quality of life amenities for all of a city's residents and visitors alike. Open space systems not only provide recreation opportunities, but they should be considered the ecosystems that influence the environmental health of the city as well. Therefore, the open space framework also acts as wildlife corridors, stormwater management networks, etc.



Illustrative master plan

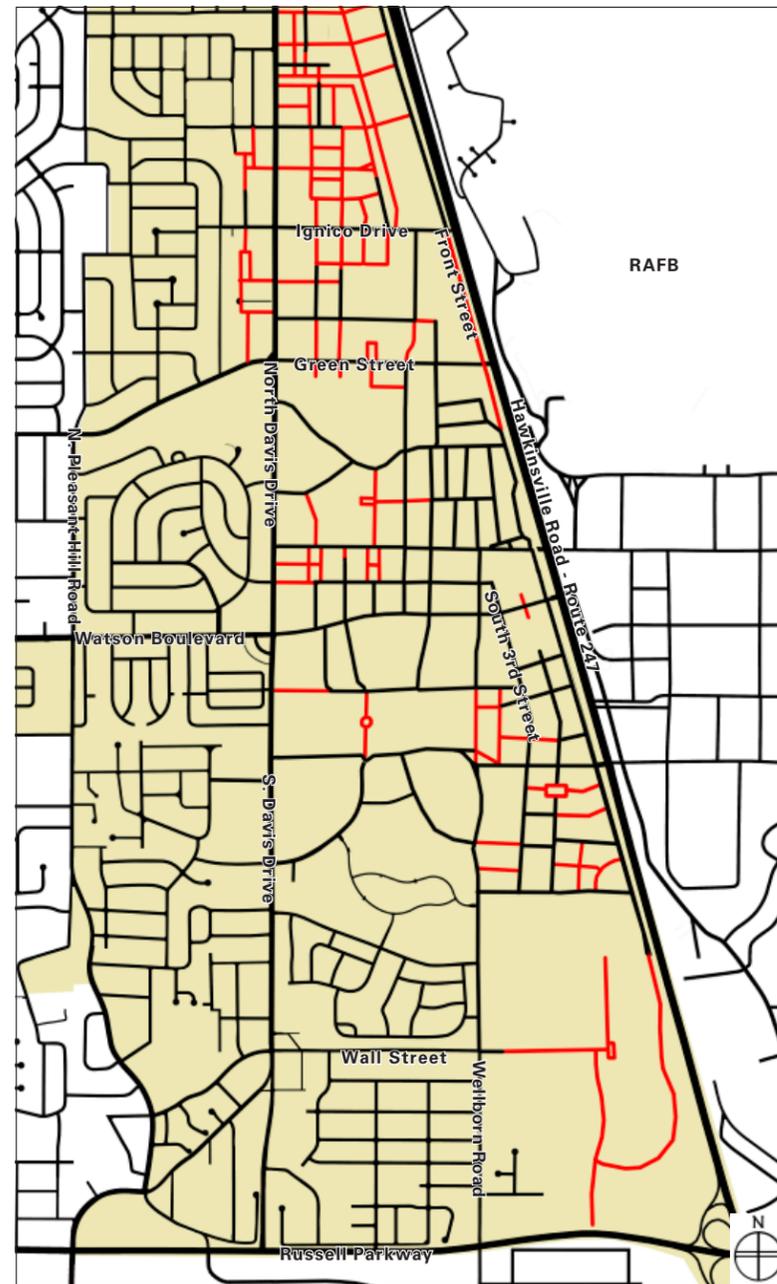
- RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT BLOCKS
- MIXED-USE RETAIL BUILDINGS
- COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS
- LIGHT INDUSTRIAL/OFFICE BUILDINGS
- CIVIC/INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS
- PUBLIC PARKS AND INSTITUTIONAL LAND
- SURFACE PARKING
- STRUCTURED PARKING

FRAMEWORK OF PUBLIC STREETS

At present, Downtown Warner Robins has developed in a piecemeal fashion, with very few of its districts and neighborhoods connected to one another. As such, primary movement throughout the City relies upon a super-grid of arterial streets. Though arterials are an important part of any City street system in order to facilitate through-movement and commuting, local collector and neighborhood streets are also necessary for overall function. A true hierarchy of street types is needed to balance local and through traffic, and to allow individual streets to perform at levels of service appropriate for their type and scale.

New public streets in Downtown Warner Robins need to be developed keeping three fundamental qualities in mind: contributions of individual streets to the overall network; planning for appropriately-scaled streets based upon the uses sited along them; and creating designed environments that coordinate and connect various modes of transportation beyond cars, such as bicycles and pedestrians.

In the case of Downtown, a few key types of street connections are made that directly contribute to the overall function of the City. An effort was made to create more intersections with the arterial grid of streets, such as Davis Drive and First Street, to facilitate access to it at multiple points. In addition, more street network was introduced in the Village at Town Centre area and other blocks just north of the Civic Center. These additional links provide increased network connections and more rational development blocks. Finally, more neighborhood streets are introduced in the new mixed-use neighborhoods planned in both the northern and southern areas of Downtown. These streets create flexible blocks that can be developed with a variety of housing types over time.



Framework of public streets

Examples of the street hierarchy proposed for the development of Downtown are depicted on this page. Generally, street widths are reflective of the land uses adjacent to them, not just the level of service needed from a vehicular perspective. Successful urban streets balance both considerations within the context of the overall Downtown street network.

MIXED-USE STREETS

Most Downtown main streets need to balance traffic volumes and multiple modes of transportation with proper setbacks to buildings to allow for success of active ground floor uses. Building setbacks between 15-25' allow for pedestrian flow and outdoor uses, such as cafes. 11' wide travel lanes are recommended, as well as parallel, on-street parking near commercial uses. Medians may also be introduced depending on the character and uses along a mixed-use, downtown street.

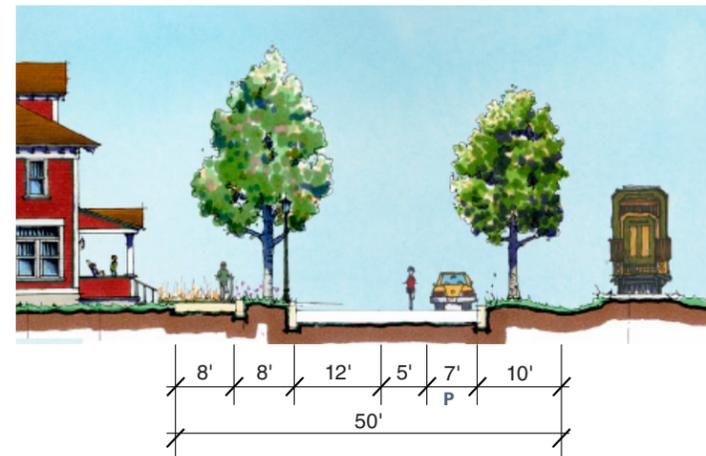
NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS

Neighborhood streets are designed for local traffic, and work best as parts of a connective street network that is both organized internally and reaches out to the local collector and arterial street system. Typical sections for two-way and one-way neighborhood streets are depicted. Accessible sidewalks for pedestrian circulation and verges with trees protect the pedestrians. On-street parking is encouraged along residential streets, as well as driving lanes at a maximum of 11' wide. These streets are designed at a scale to encourage safe crossings so neighborhood amenities, such as parks and playgrounds, can be easily reached and used by residents.

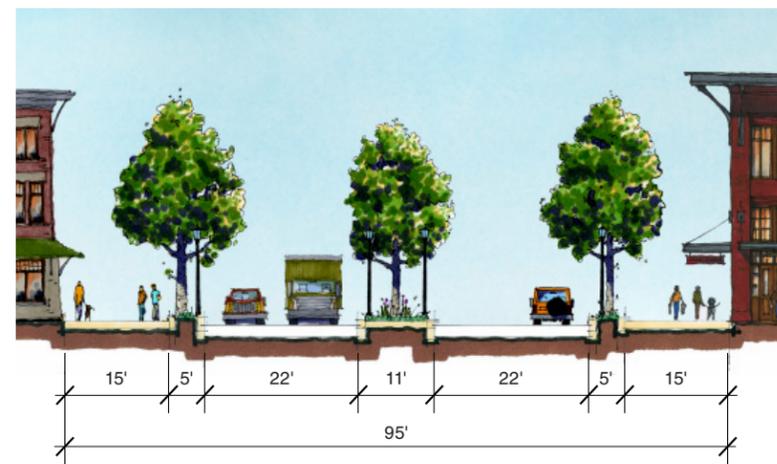
SPECIAL STREET CONDITIONS

The master plan proposes the extension and revitalization of First Street as Downtown's front door along 247 and relating to RAFB. In addition to being an address for new neighborhood and light industrial/technology development, it is an important open space corridor for the City.

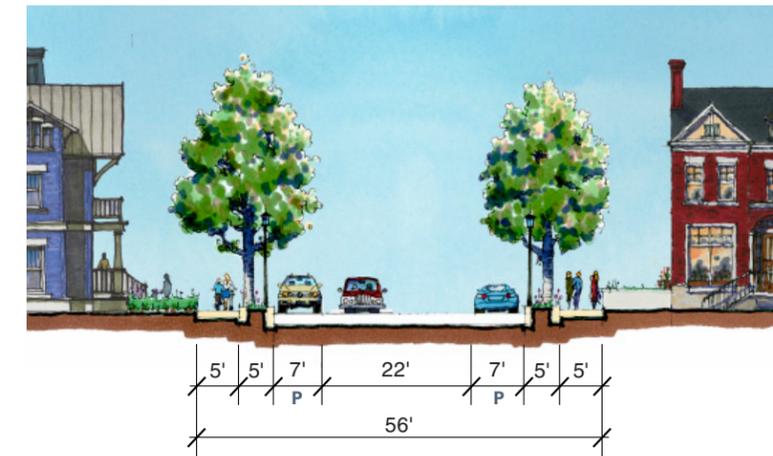
Proposed First Street



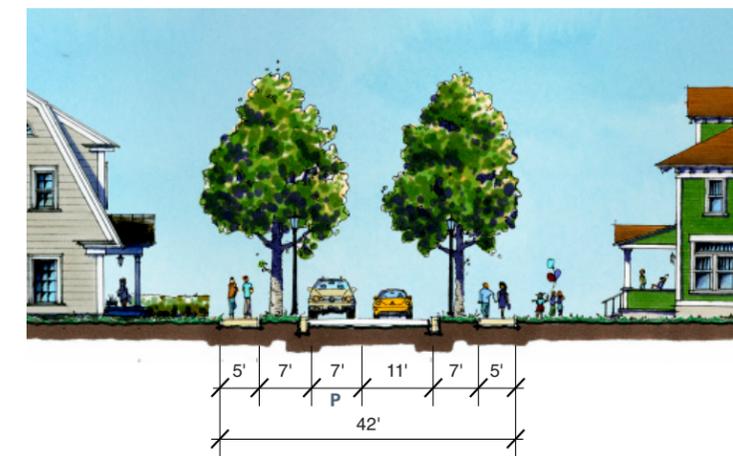
Proposed downtown street with median



Proposed neighborhood street (two-way)



Proposed neighborhood street (one-way)



Other important streets with unique character will be required throughout the long-term development of Downtown. Particular care and consideration is needed to balance vehicular needs and the needs of adjacent land uses in order to plan streets complimentary of the overall street framework.

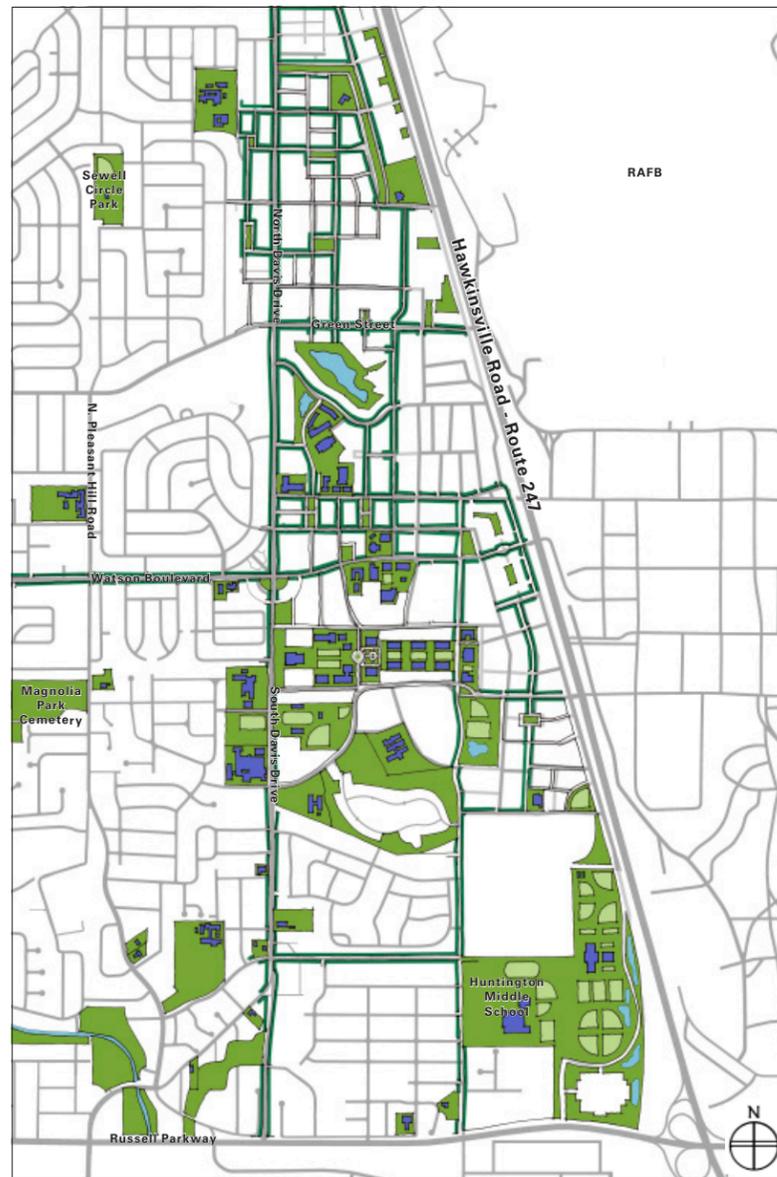
FRAMEWORK OF PUBLIC PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

The network of public open space is an important opportunity for the development of a mixed-use, multi-modal Downtown in Warner Robins. A number of recent investments in parks, open space, and institutions have already been made, and this framework seeks to create linkages between these existing amenities, as well as augment the system with new elements.

The condition of arterial streets and local connectors is a primary concern for downtown, as these ugly corridors are gateways to the downtown. Davis Drive, Watson Boulevard, and First Street, in particular, would greatly benefit from streetscape programs, not for beautification alone, but also for basic standardization of their widths and safety conditions, such as reducing curb cuts and creating continuous sidewalks. The recommended approach is to link public streetscape improvements with the timing of individual development projects, and to pursue funding for streetscape projects of a greater size and scope, at the same time.

In addition to streetscape improvements, projects must be linked to environmental best practices that handle stormwater conveyance and distribution into the groundwater system as close to the source as possible. This includes a holistic approach to environmental stewardship and stormwater management to capitalize on high-value downtown real estate.

Additionally, Downtown is in need of a true Downtown gathering space and small, neighborhood parks and playgrounds. The revitalization and densification of Commercial Circle provides an incredible opportunity to create a true central green in Downtown, for use both ceremonially and for daily, impromptu gatherings. In addition, all new Downtown neighborhoods will include small parks to allow residents easy access to recreation at the local level. Such greens and playspaces are necessary for healthy urban neighborhoods.



Framework of public parks and open space

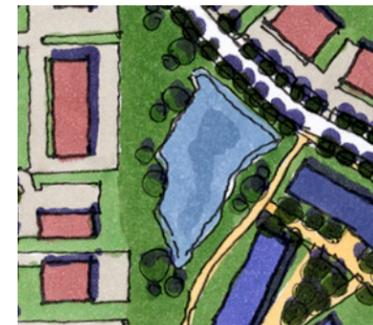
- INSTITUTIONS
- PARKS/ OPEN SPACE
- PLAYFIELDS
- LINKAGES



City-wide gathering space



Neighborhood parks



Natural parks

EXAMPLES OF OPEN SPACE TYPES

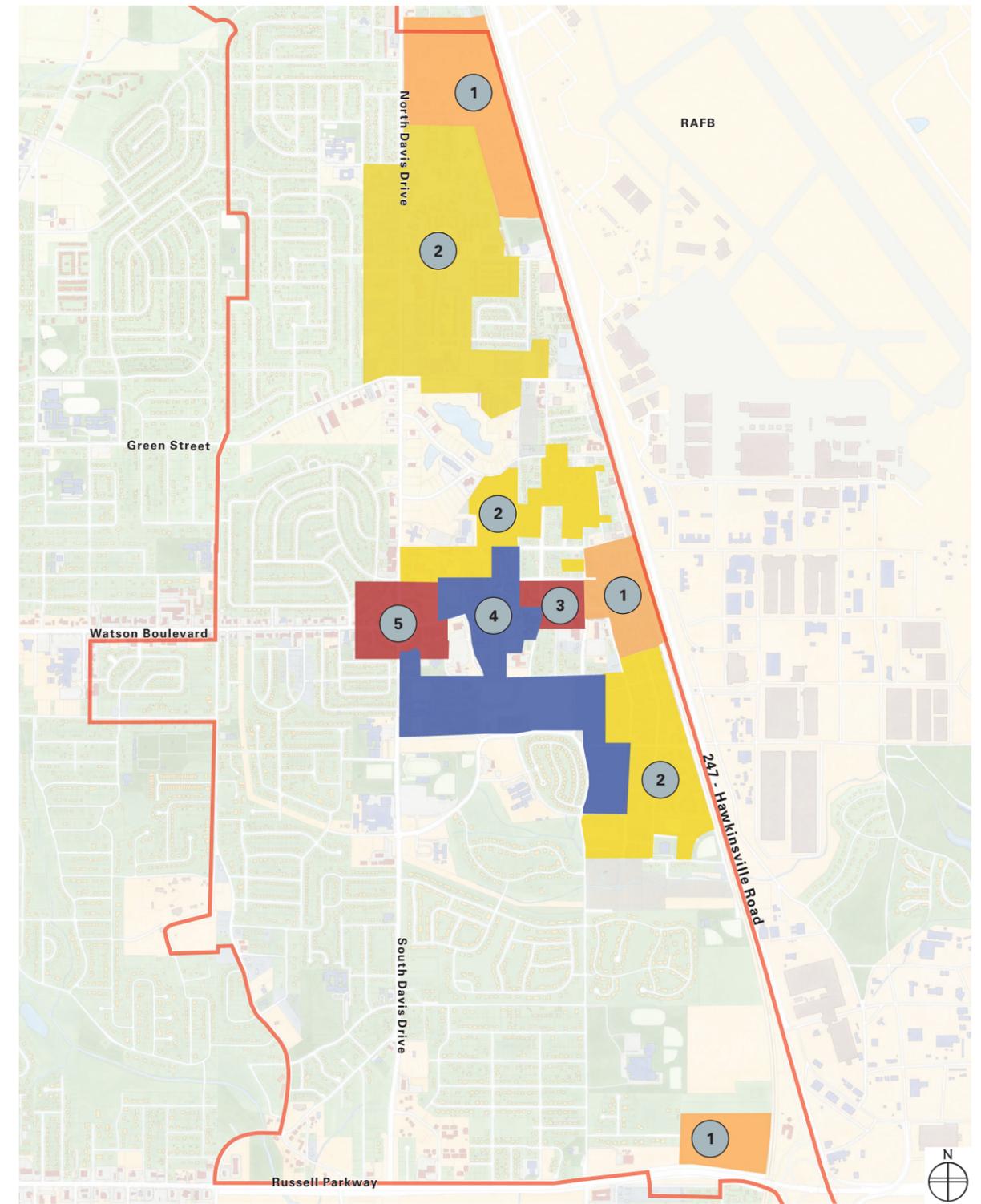


Streetscapes

Initiatives

THE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN will be implemented through a coordinated series of framework improvements and individual projects developed over time. This section describes five primary proposed initiatives located throughout the Redevelopment Area. Initiatives include geographically-defined areas that emerged from the public process as the most important places to take action. Additionally, initiatives are strategic projects which are meant to guide private development of properties that are coordinated with public improvements. Each initiative has small tasks that may be phased which work together to implement the overall Downtown Master Plan.

INITIATIVE AREAS	
1	Technology and Industry Corridor
2	Downtown mixed-income Neighborhoods
3	Watson Boulevard
4	Civic Center
5	Commercial Circle



Initiative areas diagram

INITIATIVE ONE

Technology and Industry Corridor

DOWNTOWN WARNER ROBINS HAS an important opportunity to continue its supportive relationship with Robins Air Force Base in the development of technology and industrial nodes or campuses along 247, linking to the gates at RAFB. This initiative aims to create a new relationship between Downtown and RAFB, and, in turn, a new shared front door to the City and many opportunities in Warner Robins. This initiative recommends accessible industrial developments at key arterial intersections, such as Russell Parkway and N. Paul Street, and an urban technology campus at Watson Boulevard and the ceremonial gate to RAFB. These developments include a wide variety of private development initiatives, focusing on light industrial development in the north, technology research and development offices at Watson Boulevard, and flex office/industrial, and light manufacturing in the south at Russell Parkway.

NEAR-TERM ACTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ensure allowable zoning is provided » Assemble land and/or seek development partners » Begin developing Watson Boulevard node with street-oriented, mixed-use buildings » Clean up the First Street corridor
LONG-TERM ACTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Create new street networks balancing individual development plans with existing connections » Engage development partners or tenants for spec/flex space in the Northern and Southern industrial areas » Establish a coordinated streetscape strategy along First Street and 247 as a shared gateway to Warner Robins and RAFB

MARKET POTENTIAL
» Office/R&D: 100,000sf (550,000sf)*
» Flex Office/Industrial: 70,000sf (350,000sf)*
» Light Manufacturing: 20,000sf (100,000sf)*
* Development potential over a 25-year period



Proposed technology and industrial development

NORTHERN INDUSTRIAL AREA

The Northern Industrial Area, largely defined by North Davis Drive and 247, from Shi Street south to Ignico Drive, represents a large area appropriate for industrial development related to the northern gate at Robins Air Force Base. Due to the 65dB (decibel) sound contours radiating from the Flight Line over this area, it is not appropriate for continued residential development by law. Due to this factor, this area may be properly redeveloped as a research and light industrial area with access to North Davis Drive, First Street, and 247.

Buildings are arranged to address each other in a campus fashion, with office or other habitable space addressing streets, with receiving and loading dock areas accessed from secondary streets. To maximize the buildable area and manage stormwater in a sustainable fashion, conveyances, in the form of urban boulevards, create the primary street network. This street network allows for flexible development parcels to be taken down over time as the market demands. The new neighborhood to the south is also properly buffered from this development by the conveyance boulevards.

Industrial uses in this area could include flex office, light industrial, and/or light manufacturing.



Locator map



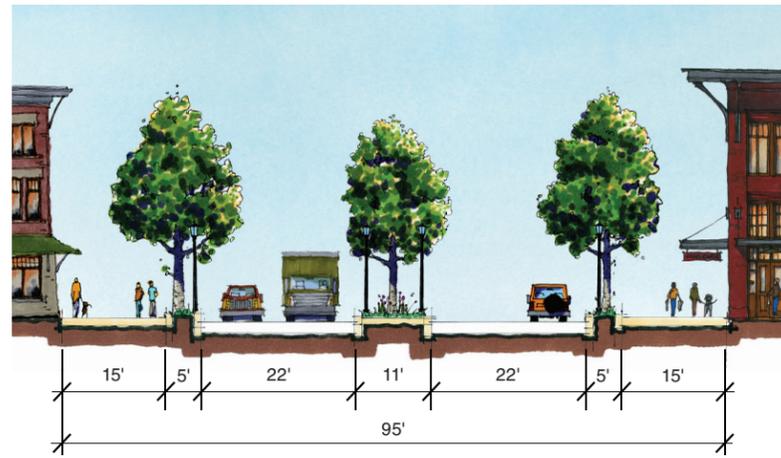
Proposed northern light industrial area



Existing conditions

WATSON BOULEVARD OFFICE/R&D NODE

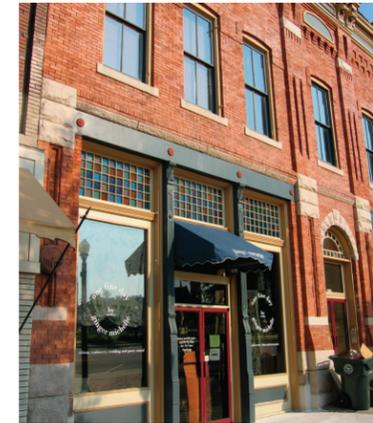
Across from one of RAFB's most busy gates, an industrial development node has been created. This center could accommodate research and office uses, potentially with a focus on aerospace companies or service providers to take advantage of its adjacency to the AFB. To efficiently maximize this prime industrial location, structured parking is suggested to accommodate a requisite amount of square footage. Buildings are oriented around a shared courtyard, forming a campus. These development blocks are serviced by a new street intersecting Watson Boulevard along the western edge of the parcel.



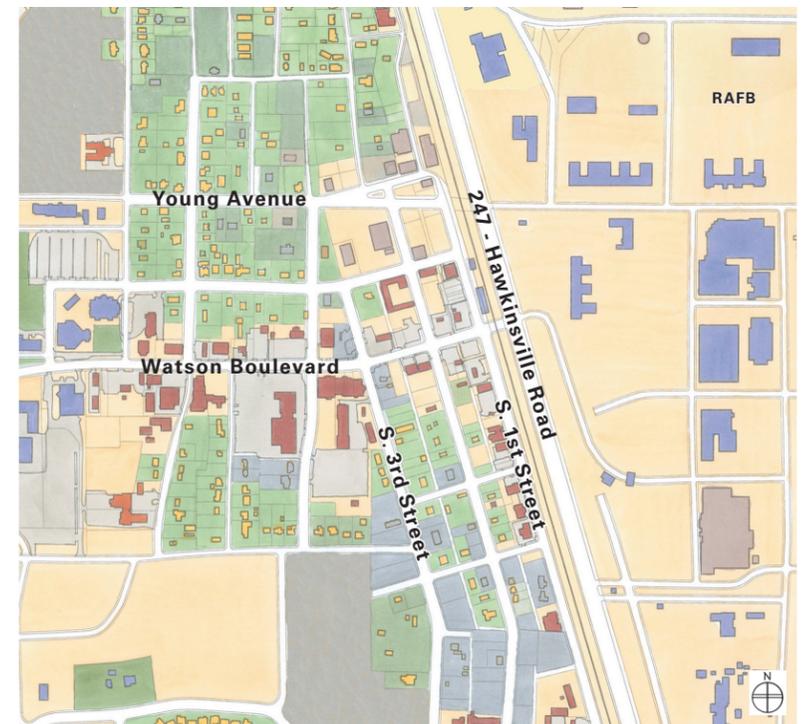
Proposed section of Watson Boulevard at First Street



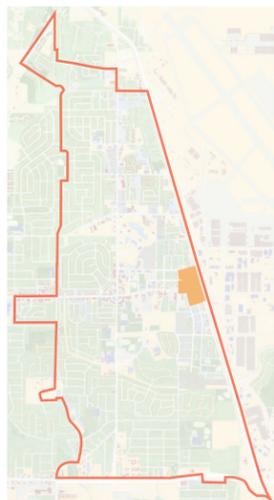
Example photos of mixed-use buildings with offices above



Proposed Watson Boulevard office/R&D node



Existing conditions



Locator map



Proposed view of Watson Boulevard at 247 (looking west)



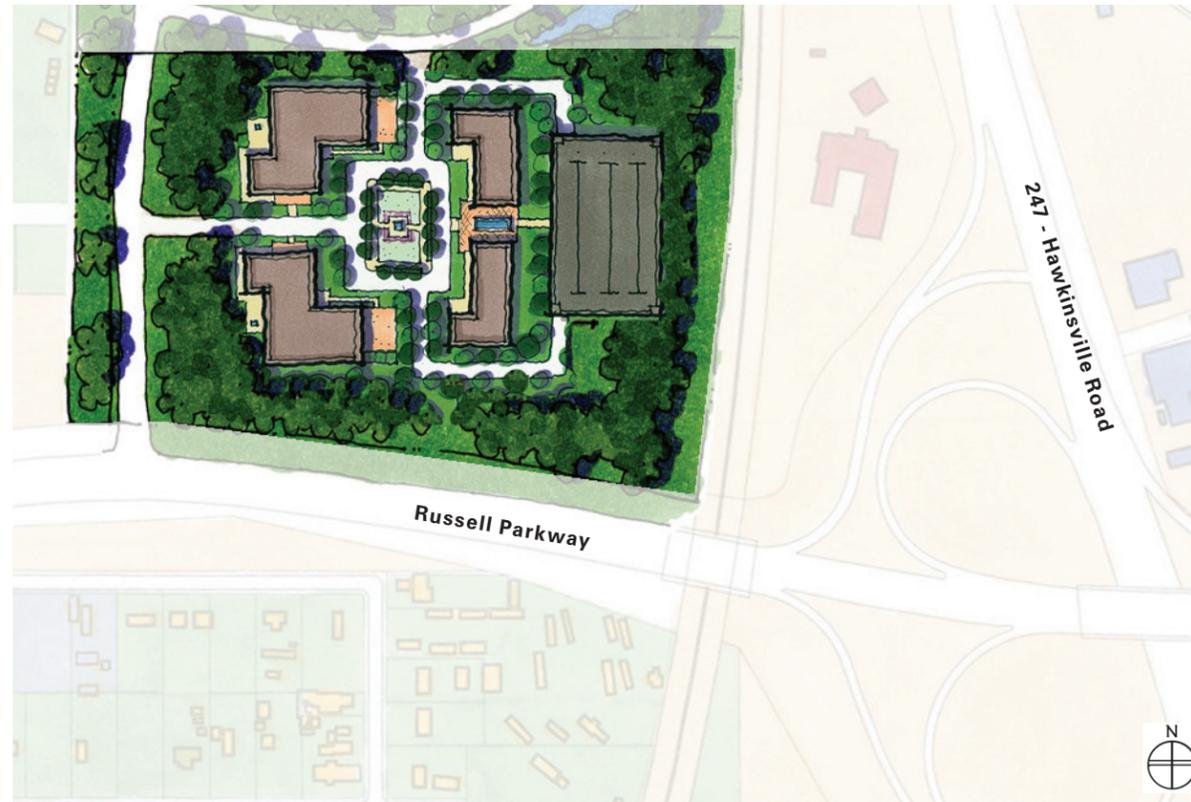
Existing conditions (looking west)



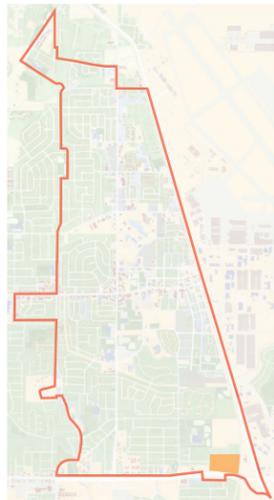
Location of above view

SOUTHERN INDUSTRIAL AREA

Situated along Russell Parkway near its intersection with 247, this industrial node is ideal for technology development, spec office, and other office uses. Access to Russell Parkway is provided through a new street running along the western edge of the parcel. Buildings are developed in a campus arrangement, and a parking structure allows for increased density of development, with easy access to RAFB through the Russell Parkway gate. As a part of the Technology Corridor developing along 247, this industrial and employment area could accommodate aerospace and other industries in support of work at RAFB.



Proposed southern light industrial area



Locator map



Existing conditions

INITIATIVE TWO

New Downtown Neighborhoods

NEAR-TERM ACTIONS

- » Relocate existing residents
- » Assemble land into contiguous parcels
- » Engage developers specializing in mixed-use neighborhood development

LONG-TERM ACTIONS

- » Extend and connect public streets to create flexible development blocks
- » Establish a mix of housing sizes, types, and price points
- » Create architectural design guidelines to ensure character and quality of development
- » Create public amenities, such as small parks and playgrounds, within the neighborhoods

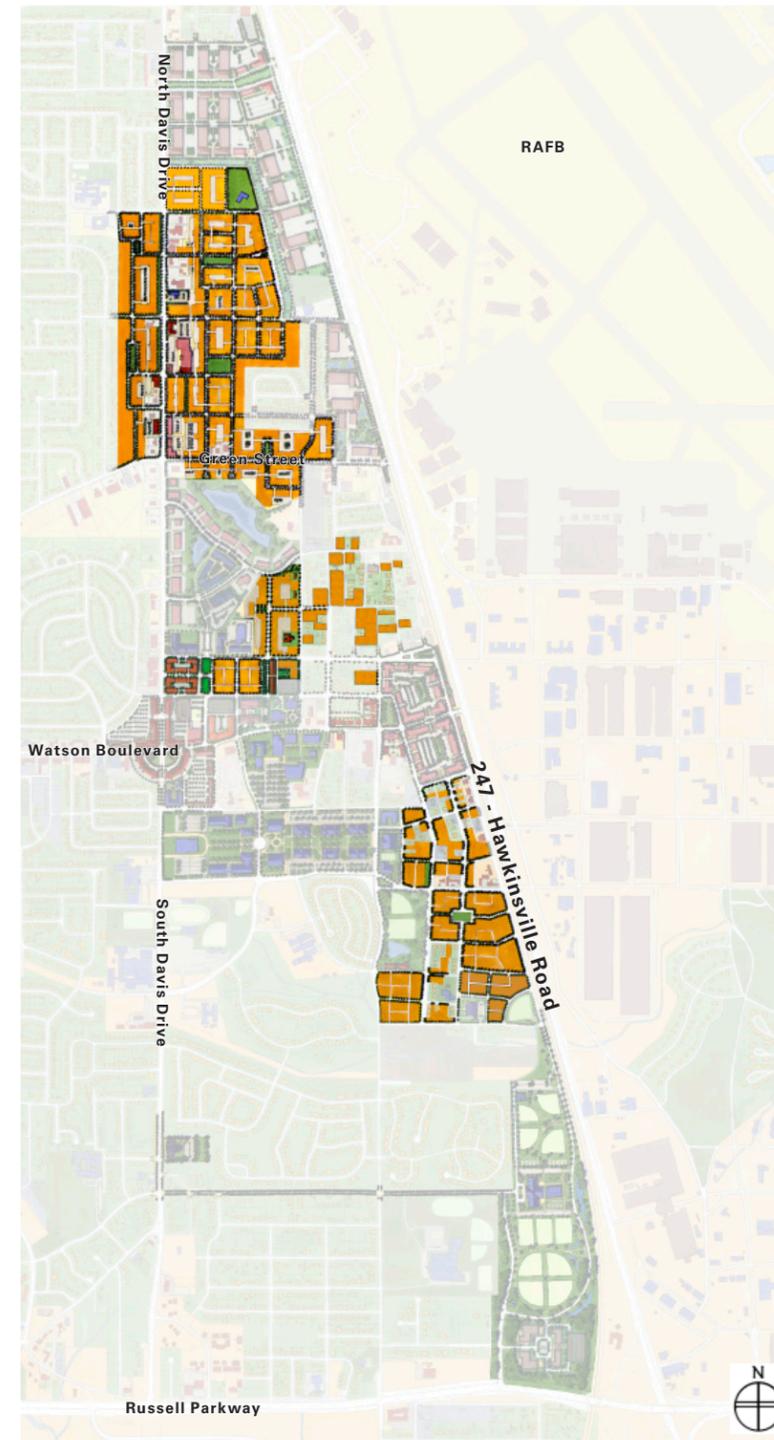
MARKET POTENTIAL

- » Multi-family rental: 350 units
- » Multi-family for-sale: 310 units
- » Single-family attached: 210 units
- » Low-range single-family detached: 220 units
- » Mid-range single-family detached: 160 units
- » High-range single-family detached: 90 units

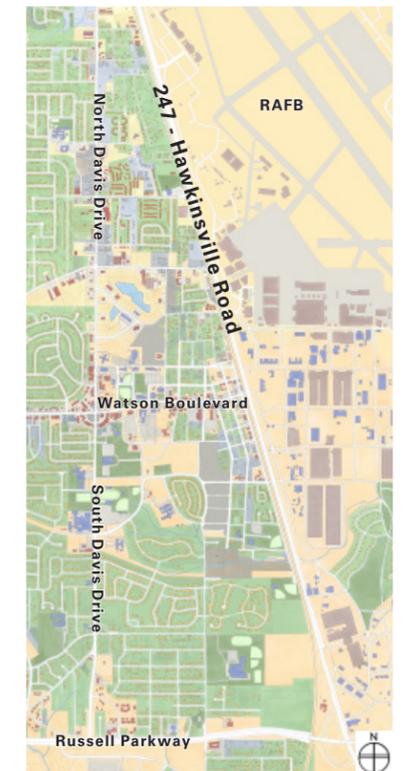
* Development potential over a 25-year period

There is an extraordinary opportunity to establish new neighborhoods in Downtown Warner Robins, and to invigorate its current core urban neighborhoods through infill and revitalization programs. Located adjacent to one of the Middle Georgia's largest employers, Downtown Warner Robins will be able to offer a variety of housing opportunities and types in support of this primary employment center.

Thinking of Downtown Warner Robins as 'everybody's neighborhood' expresses the need to develop a wide range of housing types, affordable and desirable to residents of a wide variety of family types and income ranges. The best neighborhoods beloved throughout the Country and through greater Georgia are built upon an ethic of sustainability in that people can live in one neighborhood, in different building types, as their lives and needs change. In addition, these neighborhoods mix a number of housing types in a range of styles of a character rooted in the architectural traditions of the region. Neighborhoods made up of a variety of appropriately-scaled streets, with residences surrounding small neighborhood parks, and connected to the overall street framework of the City, are most appropriate in the context of Downtown. These basic criteria will need to be met to establish successful urban neighborhoods in Downtown Warner Robins.



Proposed Downtown neighborhoods



Existing conditions

NEW DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS

There are opportunities to establish new urban neighborhoods in both the northern and southern portions of Downtown that will transform the overall character of the area's current conditions and diversify its offerings to potential residents.

» **NORTHERN NEIGHBORHOODS**

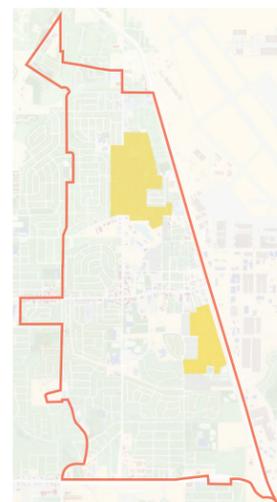
Currently, there is an abundance of derelict and vacant housing in the Ignico and Tabor Drive area, just north of Green Street. The demolition, assemblage, and reconstruction of this neighborhood has been identified as the City's highest priority in the revitalization of Downtown. Great efforts are already underway, and at the time of writing this report, the City has demolished many of the buildings and has worked to assemble the land needed to launch a new residential project to start turning around this neighborhood.

» **SOUTHERN NEIGHBORHOODS**

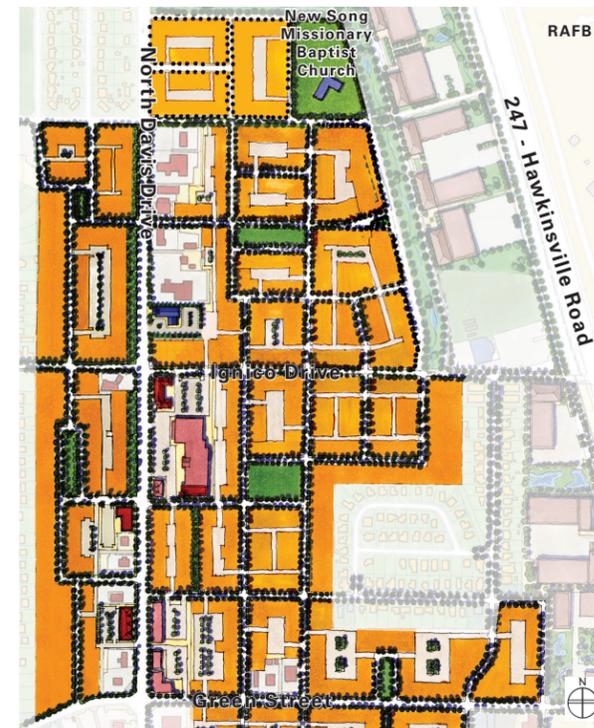
At present, a public housing project occupies much of the residential neighborhood along 247, south of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. In addition, much land formerly accommodating RAFB off-base housing, is located in the center of the neighborhood, and is controlled by Macon State University. The master plan proposes a new neighborhood in this location that serves as both a new gateway into Downtown along 247, supports the mission of the adjacent church, and creates a built edge that addresses Macon State's campus, which is set to expand over the next number of years. Some residential will add onto existing blocks, while most of the area will be rebuilt through the introduction of streets and blocks that better connect the area together, and to Watson Boulevard to the north, and 247 to the west.

» **NEW NEIGHBORHOODS**

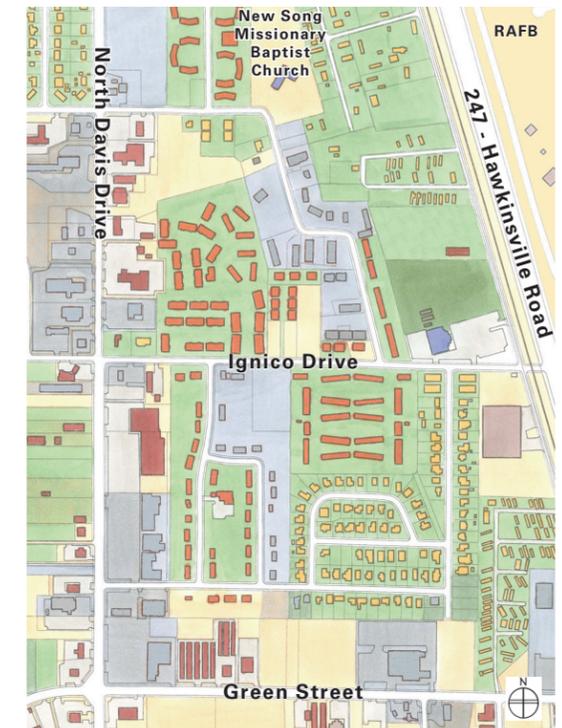
The new neighborhoods will be organized by grids of interconnected, pedestrian-friendly streets that link blocks of housing and neighborhood amenities, such as parks and nearby institutions, together. Missing street connections are introduced, where appropriate, to tie the new residential development into its surrounds. Blocks are designed of a flexible dimension so as to comfortably accommodate a variety of housing types, ranging from small apartment/condominium buildings to attached housing, such as townhouses and mansion buildings, to urban single-family houses.



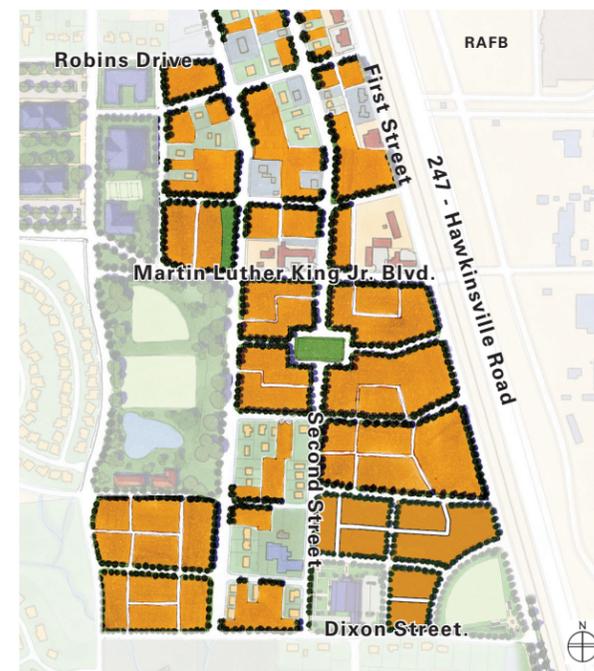
Locator map



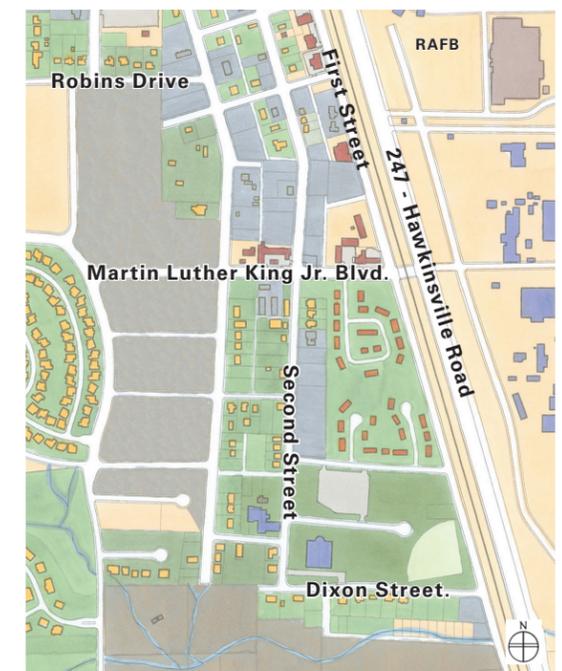
Proposed northern downtown neighborhood



Existing conditions



Proposed southern downtown neighborhood

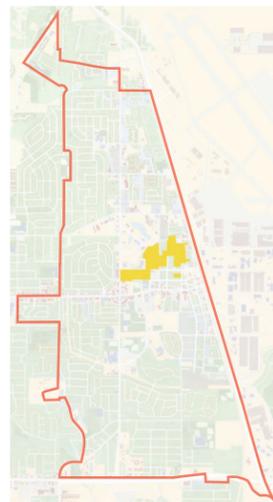


Existing conditions

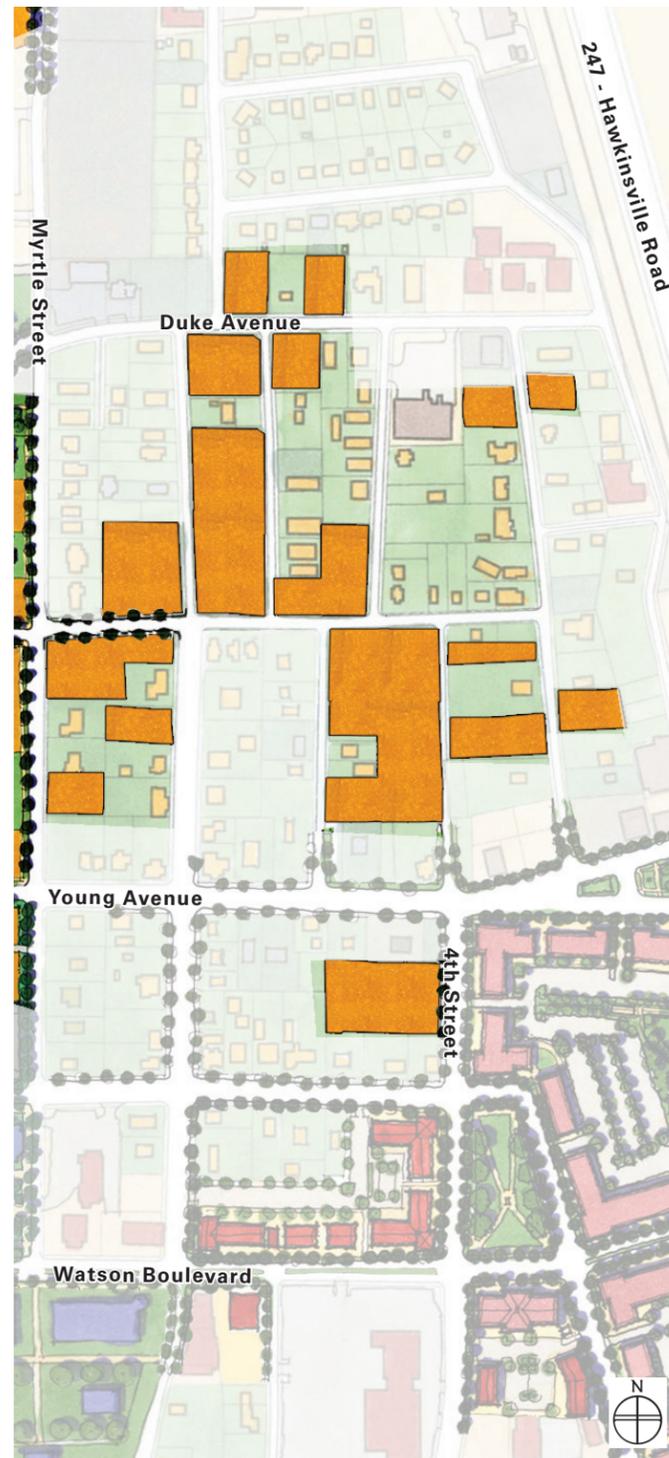
DOWNTOWN RESIDENTIAL INFILL OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to establishing new neighborhoods, there are a variety of neighborhoods that could benefit from reinvestment and infill housing programs to augment current offerings. One such area of Downtown is the residential neighborhood north of Watson Boulevard and south of Duke Avenue, between Myrtle Street and First Street. A grid of blocks and streets are already located in this area, but current housing is interspersed by vacant lots and/or vacant houses that can be reclaimed to strengthen the overall neighborhood. Where multiple lots can be assembled, new building types of a greater scale than single-family homes may be introduced, if there is desire or need. Through revitalization, the introduction of a small, neighborhood pocket park may also be desirable here to offer residents a place to gather and play.

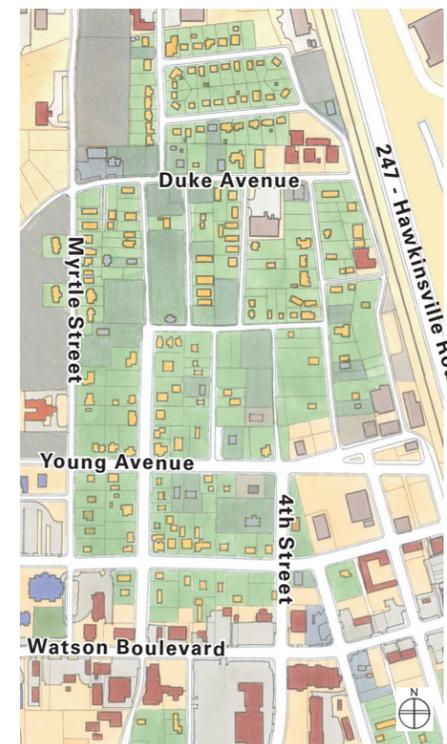
Addressing housing needs on scattered sites is very important for Downtown's as housing stock ages, turns over, and is in need of repair. It is recommended that the City seek developers that are interested in this neighborhood development, and establish a program for its support.



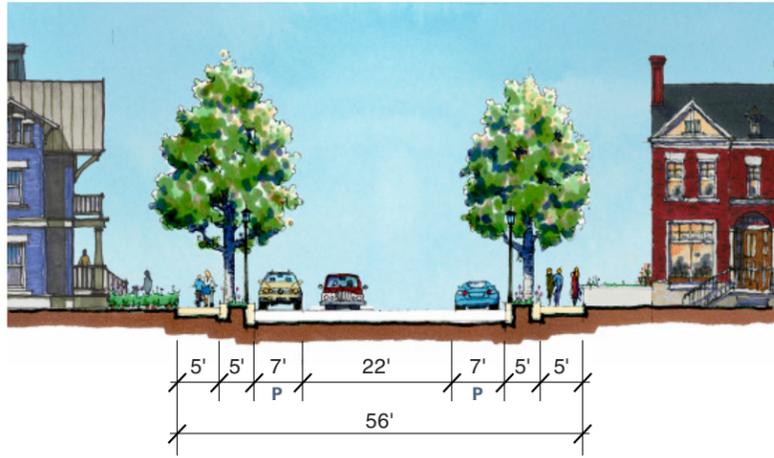
Locator map



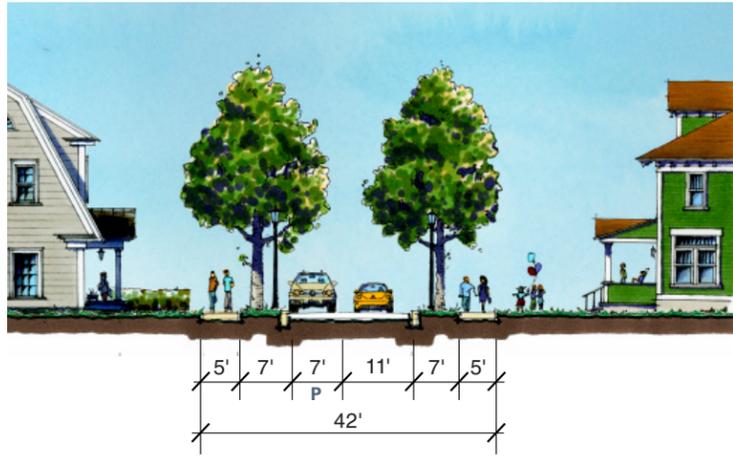
Proposed neighborhood infill



Existing conditions



Section of a high density residential street



Section of a low density residential street



View of a high density residential street



View of a low density residential street

FLEXIBLE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
BLOCK PROTOTYPES

Traditional Downtown neighborhoods are made up of flexible blocks that can accommodate a variety of building types suitable for urban environments. A connective network of streets creates multiple addresses that may be developed, and the resulting block structure is flexible to meet market demands and be built out over time.

As depicted on this page, with different parking resources and circulation, a wide variety of densities may be achieved in the same size block. All of the blocks depicted are appropriate for the development of neighborhoods within Downtown Warner Robins. The highest density block is most appropriate closest to the Civic Center, Commercial Circle, and along North Davis Drive and Watson Boulevard – the area to become Warner Robins’ mixed-use core. The mixed-use buildings or apartment buildings depicted in the first two blocks are most appropriate on arterials and local connector streets. Attached housing, as depicted on the southern faces of the third and fourth blocks anchor public spaces such as greens and playgrounds, very well. Other attached housing types, such as mansion buildings, which are apartments or condos located within the form of a very large house, are appropriate throughout the neighborhoods, as well as two-family or single-family houses.

Such a flexibility in how one develops each block is critical to the sustainability of the neighborhoods as they evolve over time.



HIGH-DENSITY BLOCK ←

→ LOW-DENSITY BLOCK



EXAMPLES OF MIXED-USE BUILDINGS



EXAMPLES OF LARGE MULTI-FAMILY BUILDINGS



EXAMPLES OF SMALL MULTI-FAMILY BUILDINGS



EXAMPLES OF ATTACHED HOUSES



EXAMPLES OF SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSES

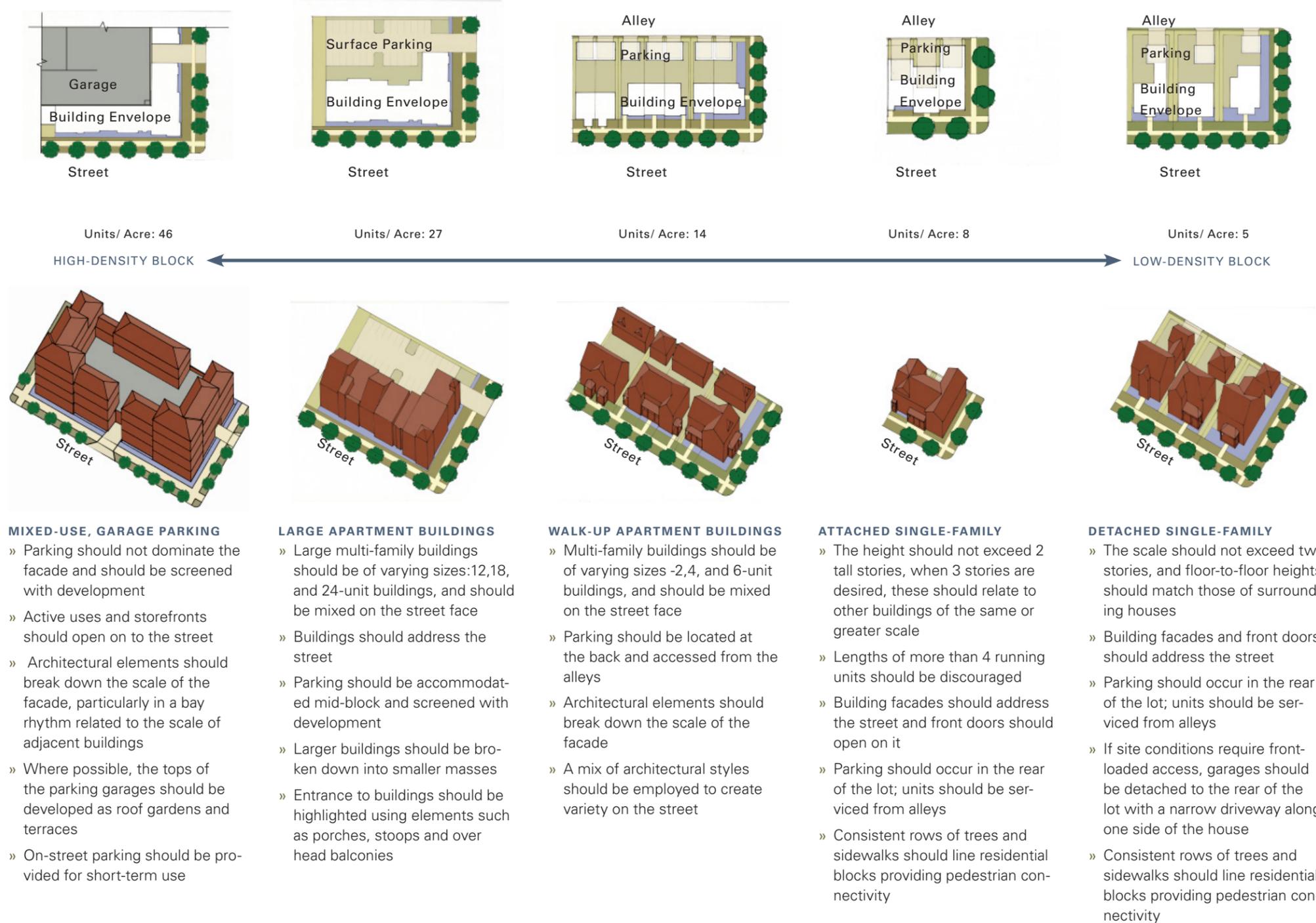


GENERAL DESIGN GUIDELINES AND ESSENTIAL PLANNING STRATEGIES

Illustrated on this page are some basic urban design guidelines that should be considered while developing these prototypical residential blocks as urban infill opportunities arise in the near future.

These are all aimed towards promoting development that respects the public realm while creating communities that offer residents a high quality of life and form long lasting places.

As the various initiatives outlined in this document proceed forward, their implementation can be closely enforced by adopting detailed urban design guidelines such as Form-Based Codes, Pattern Books, etc.



- MIXED-USE, GARAGE PARKING**
- » Parking should not dominate the facade and should be screened with development
 - » Active uses and storefronts should open on to the street
 - » Architectural elements should break down the scale of the facade, particularly in a bay rhythm related to the scale of adjacent buildings
 - » Where possible, the tops of the parking garages should be developed as roof gardens and terraces
 - » On-street parking should be provided for short-term use

- LARGE APARTMENT BUILDINGS**
- » Large multi-family buildings should be of varying sizes: 12, 18, and 24-unit buildings, and should be mixed on the street face
 - » Buildings should address the street
 - » Parking should be accommodated mid-block and screened with development
 - » Larger buildings should be broken down into smaller masses
 - » Entrance to buildings should be highlighted using elements such as porches, stoops and over head balconies

- WALK-UP APARTMENT BUILDINGS**
- » Multi-family buildings should be of varying sizes - 2, 4, and 6-unit buildings, and should be mixed on the street face
 - » Parking should be located at the back and accessed from the alleys
 - » Architectural elements should break down the scale of the facade
 - » A mix of architectural styles should be employed to create variety on the street

- ATTACHED SINGLE-FAMILY**
- » The height should not exceed 2 tall stories, when 3 stories are desired, these should relate to other buildings of the same or greater scale
 - » Lengths of more than 4 running units should be discouraged
 - » Building facades should address the street and front doors should open on it
 - » Parking should occur in the rear of the lot; units should be serviced from alleys
 - » Consistent rows of trees and sidewalks should line residential blocks providing pedestrian connectivity

- DETACHED SINGLE-FAMILY**
- » The scale should not exceed two stories, and floor-to-floor heights should match those of surrounding houses
 - » Building facades and front doors should address the street
 - » Parking should occur in the rear of the lot; units should be serviced from alleys
 - » If site conditions require front-loaded access, garages should be detached to the rear of the lot with a narrow driveway along one side of the house
 - » Consistent rows of trees and sidewalks should line residential blocks providing pedestrian connectivity

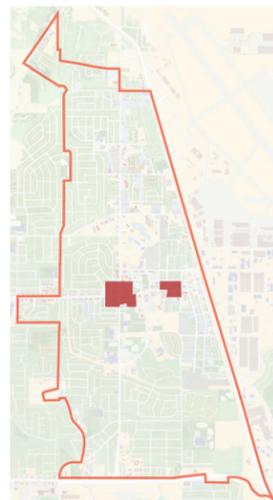
INITIATIVE THREE

Watson Boulevard

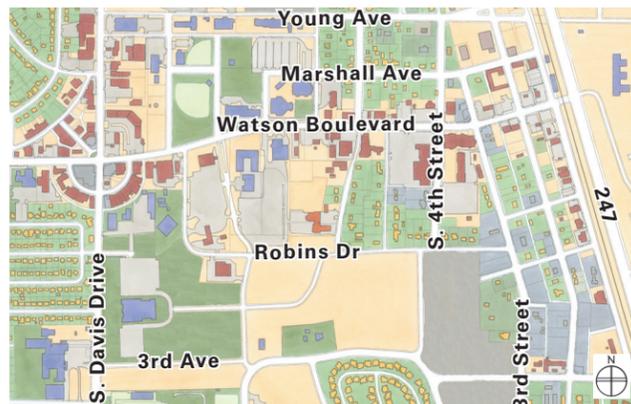
Watson Boulevard is Warner Robins' main street, and one of the first streets established to link Robins Air Force Base to Commercial Circle in the 1940s. A number of important institutions line this street, and it is one of the primary arterials in Downtown.

In recent years, the street itself has fallen into disrepair with a number of suburban commercial uses leading into Downtown from its intersection with 247. The condition of the street and its disparate uses overshadows the civic institutions located on the street. The Watson Boulevard area is home to Happy Hour, a non-profit social service provider for the community; Georgia Military College and other employment anchors within the Village at Town Centre; Macon State University's Warner Robins campus, a growing educational institution; and Sacred Heart Church and School, a faith-based institution that has recently built facilities in the Downtown core. Such healthy and community-oriented institutions will anchor Downtown revitalization efforts, and can be strengthened through more linkages to the greater community.

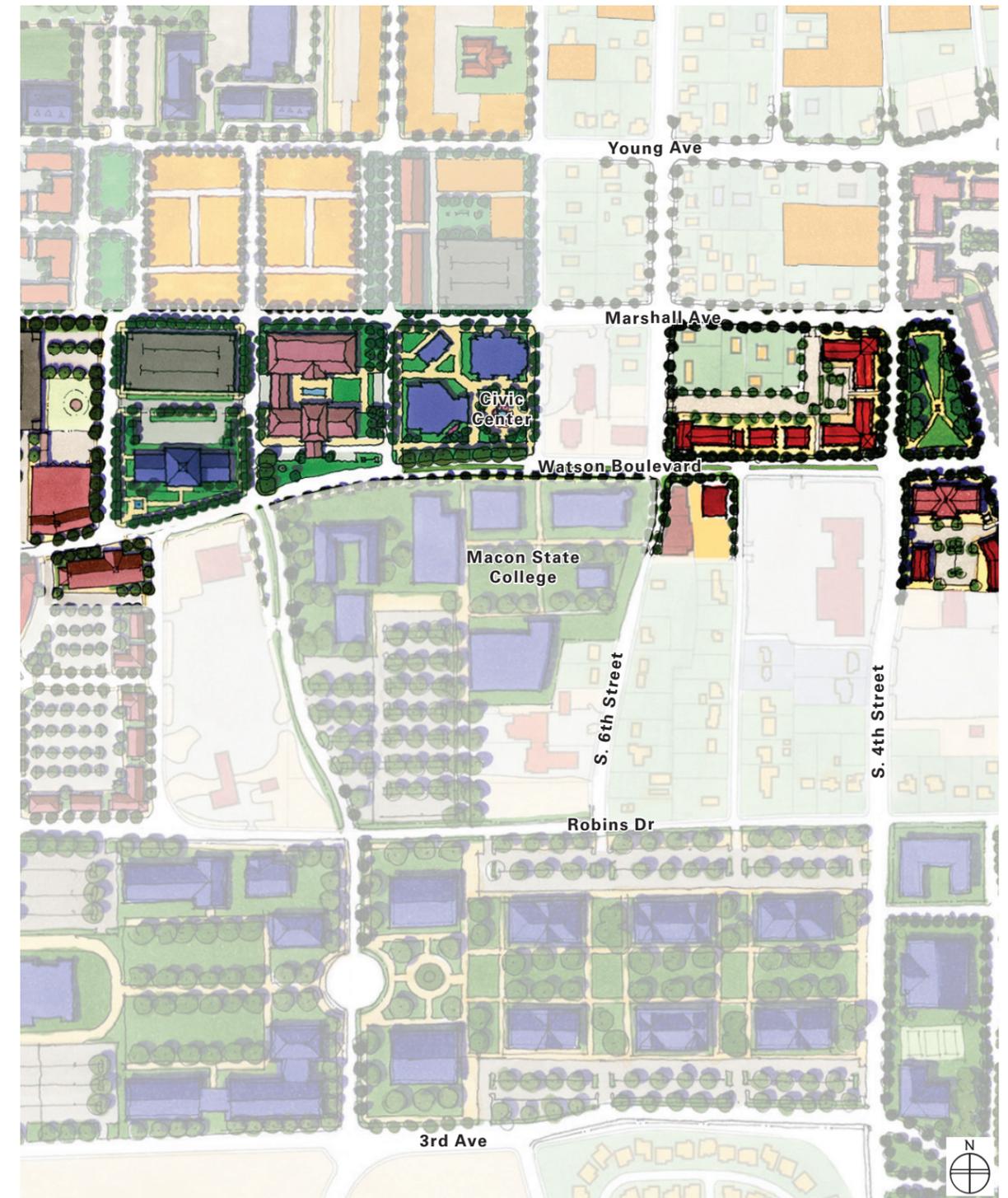
NEAR-TERM ACTIONS
» Develop a coordinated streetscape initiative along Watson Boulevard to link areas
» Create a steering committee of Downtown institutions to coordinate institutional growth plans
LONG-TERM ACTIONS
» Work with Institutions to ensure Downtown development considers their needs within the context of the overall programming of Downtown redevelopment
» Create an institutional node in Downtown that supports development of existing institutions and attracts additional institutions to the City
» Develop unattractive commercial properties
» Increase the presence of Macon State College on Watson Boulevard



Locator map



Existing conditions



Proposed plan of Watson Boulevard initiatives

HAPPY HOUR

Happy Hour is an important community service organization serving Warner Robins and Houston County since the late 1950s. The organization serves the developmentally disabled by providing housing and specialized employment opportunities with a particular focus in support of RAFB contracts.

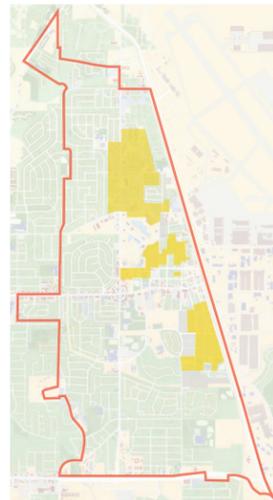
The non-profit organization Happy Hour owns a large area of land just north of the Civic Center. They operate out of existing buildings on the site, and they operate some homes for their clients. Working closely with them, their land can be redeveloped with a substantial number of new market rate homes. This will enable Happy Hour to fulfill one of their missions by integrating more subsidized homes for their clients into the development as affordable units. In addition, a new facility can be built to consolidate and improve their recycling and counseling operations.

VILLAGE AT TOWN CENTRE/GEORGIA MILITARY COLLEGE

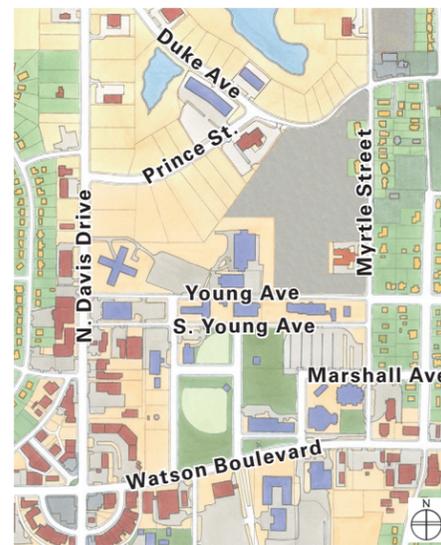
Village at Town Centre is Downtown’s primary business park. City-owned, this area includes employment uses, many in support service of RAFB. Continuing the build-out of this campus is encouraged to focus job creation in Downtown, bringing more employees Downtown in support of other local businesses. The master plan proposes infill of commercial and office buildings along North Davis Drive and Duke Avenue.

Georgia Military College, or GMC-Warner Robins, was established in 1989, offering an educational program at Robins Air Force Base. In 2003, the institution expanded to Elliott Hall, a building at the Village at Town Centre. Though this junior college continues offering job placement and internship opportunities at RAFB, it is an important Downtown anchor.

GMC plans to expand into more new buildings over time, as class offerings grow and diversify. Future educational buildings should be arranged around a courtyard that can service educational needs, encouraging students to stay in Downtown all day.



Locator map



Existing conditions



Proposed plan of village at town center and Georgia Military College

MACON STATE COLLEGE

Macon State College at Warner Robins is a rapidly-growing satellite campus of its main location in Macon, Georgia. Due to the institution's focus on workforce development, its program in Warner Robins is closely related to training at Robins Air Force Base. During the master plan process, the consultant team met with leaders at Macon State, who shared the college's master plan, and worked collaboratively with the City to weave the ideas of the two groups together. In this way, Macon State will fit into the fabric of Downtown, and will fully connect its students and faculty to the redevelopment of Downtown itself.

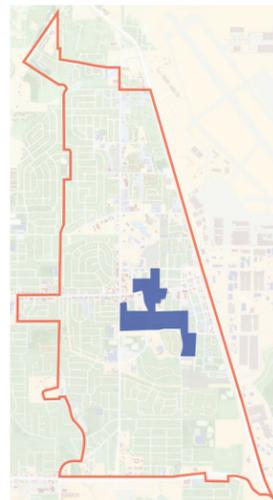
Macon State controls a great deal of land along Watson Boulevard and south toward Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive. A new campus plan was developed that works with the current investments and adds traditional quadrangles as it expands over time. In addition, sports fields and a field house may be constructed as the college grows. In time, Macon State will begin to take on full-time students in Warner Robins, and will have a need to provide student apartments as well. Both the influx of students in Downtown, particularly those who will live in the area, and commuters will help enliven

Downtown and jumpstart new businesses, as Downtown college campuses are complimentary to the revitalization of urban centers.

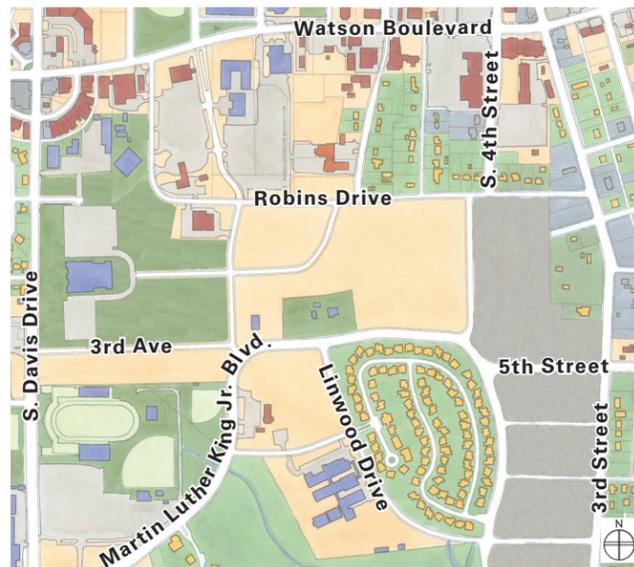
SACRED HEART CAMPUS

Sacred Heart Church is a new worship place in Downtown Warner Robins. When the congregation of the church had the option to build a new sanctuary in Downtown or in a suburban location, the Church chose to again build in the City's center through their belief in the Downtown, and in service to the needs of its population. Sacred Heart Church, and its associated School, is an important institution in Downtown and its investment, even prior to the work of the master plan, represent a faith in Downtown that was expressed by many pastors and congregations participating in the process.

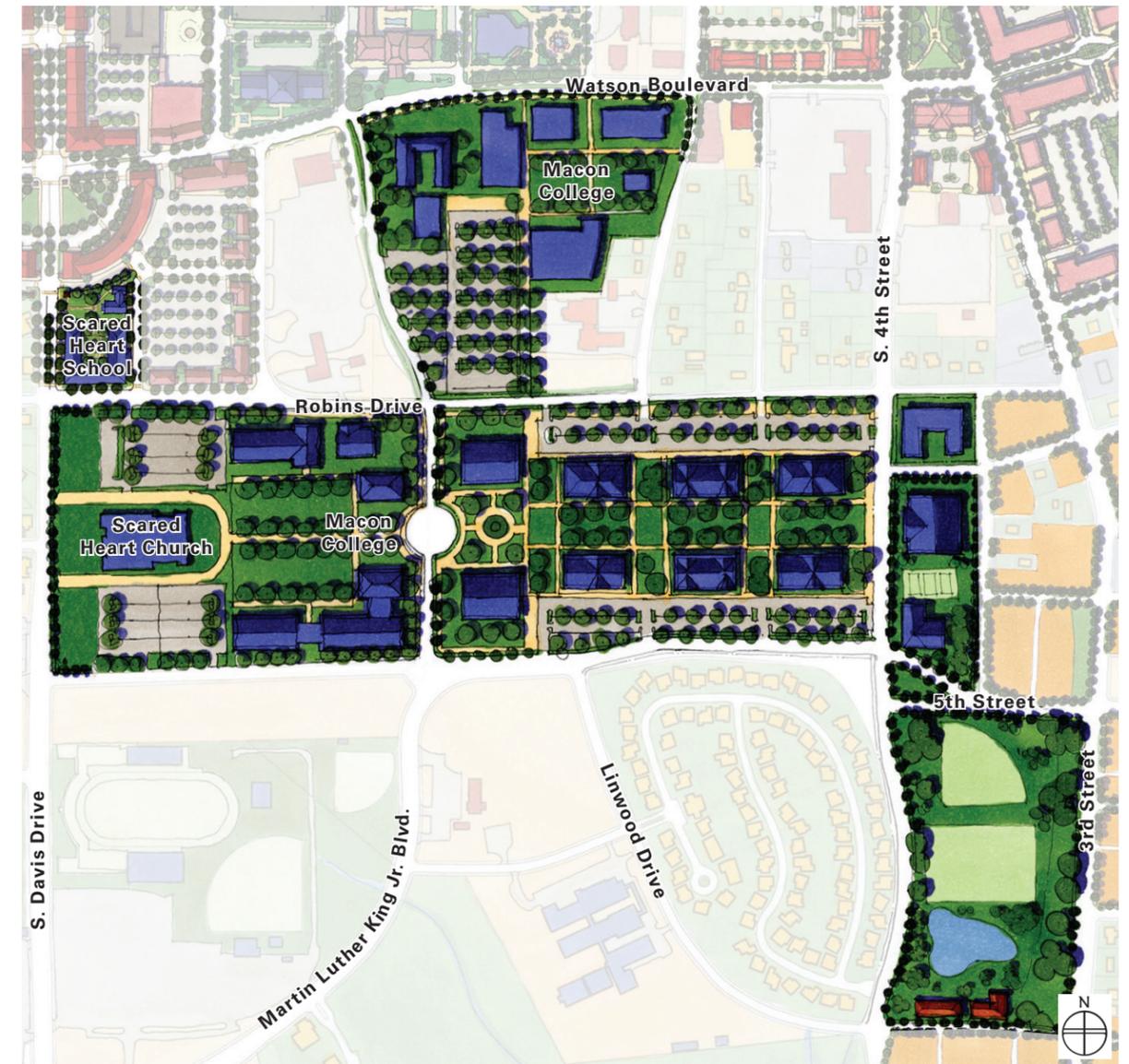
With so much land at the core of Downtown, a new school and expanded educational campus is sited just south of Commercial Circle on South Davis Drive. In addition, a quadrangle complimentary to that of Macon State can connect the two institutions and bring together primary and secondary education in the Downtown area, as well as the potential to share facilities, if desirable.



Locator map



Existing conditions

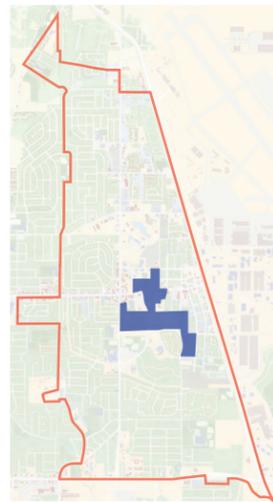


Proposed plan of Macon State College and the Sacred Heart campus

INITIATIVE FOUR

Civic Center

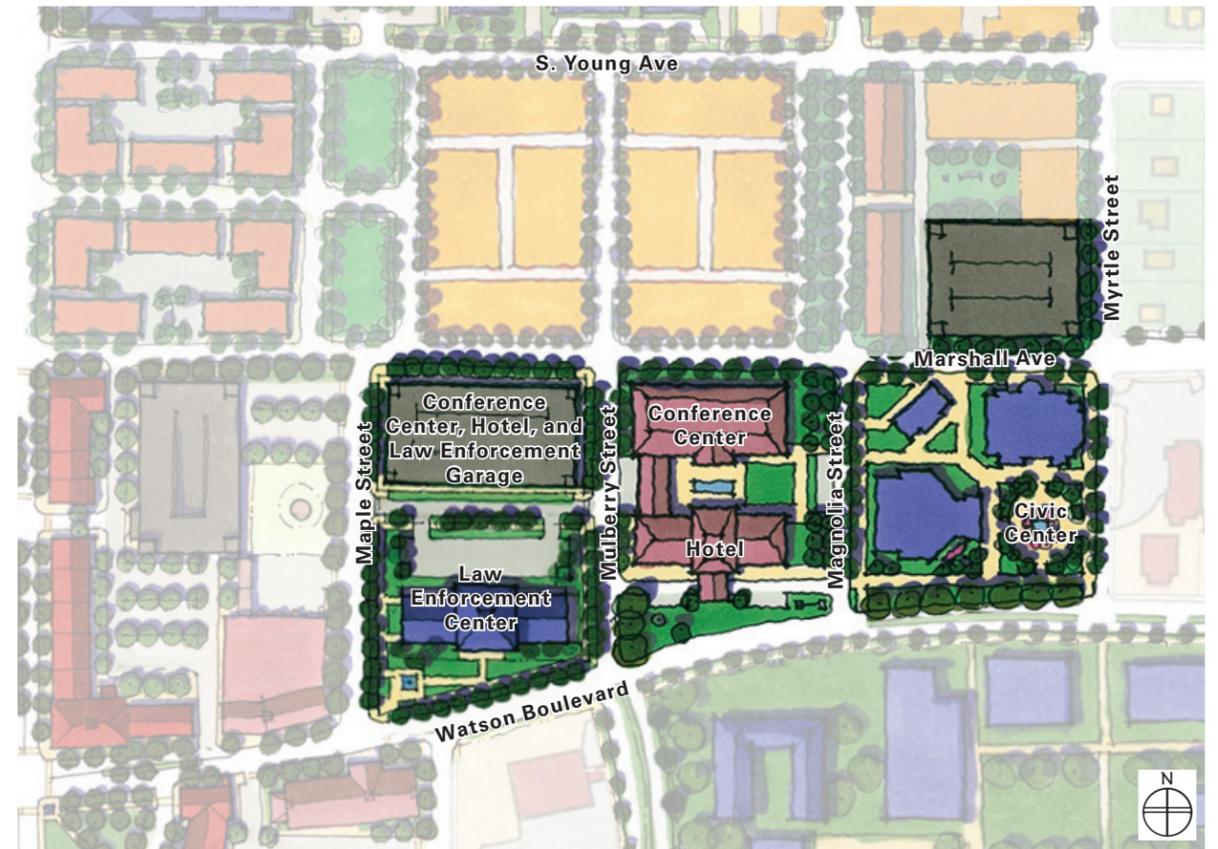
NEAR-TERM ACTIONS
» Use due diligence work to create an RFQ/RFP for Conference Center/Hotel development
» Create a parking plan to balance Civic Center and surrounding Downtown uses through the course of redevelopment
» Begin siting strategies for City facilities being moved to alternate locations
» Connect public streets to form clear development blocks that fit into the overall master plan
LONG-TERM ACTIONS
» Build Conference Center/ Downtown Hotel
» Create shared parking structures, potentially as a TIF project(s)
» Rebuild displaced City facilities in other appropriate locations concurrent with Civic Center development
» Create an overall streetscape and wayfinding program for visitors to the Civic Center and Downtown Conference Center



Locator map

One of the most iconic areas of Warner Robins is the Homer J. Walker Civic Complex. Home to the City's Auditorium, Council Chambers, and City Offices, as well as a ceremonial plaza, this complex anchors Watson Boulevard as the center of public and cultural life in Warner Robins.

One of the great development opportunities in Downtown is the development of a Conference Center and Hotel at the center of the City. Siting this facility adjacent to the Civic Center allows for shared amenities between the two facilities, and will invigorate Downtown through the influx of businesspeople and visitors to both the City and Robins Air Force Base. The existing athletic field west of the Conference Facility should become a redevelopment block. That block should accommodate structured parking to serve the conference center and hotel. A range of uses are possible fronting Watson Boulevard. Another new parking structure accommodating workers and visitors to the Civic Center itself should be built at Marshall Avenue and Myrtle Street to free up surface parking lots for redevelopment. Land values in Downtown Warner Robins will increase as redevelopment begins, and shared parking structures are appropriate for the center of Downtown.



Proposed plan of the civic center



Existing conditions

CONFERENCE CENTER AND DOWNTOWN HOTEL

A number of feasibility studies have been conducted with regard to the construction of a Conference Center and Hotel in Warner Robins. A number of sites have been considered during this due diligence process, and comparable facilities have been visited across the eastern United States. The commercial market study conducted along with this master plan supports the conclusions of the feasibility studies, and with increased investment and activity in Downtown, the block to the west of the Civic Center seems the best option. This central location creates synergies with the Civic Center, RAFB, Macon State College, The Village at Town Centre, and Commercial Circle. The new hotel in this location will be a critical ingredient to the redevelopment of Commercial Circle.

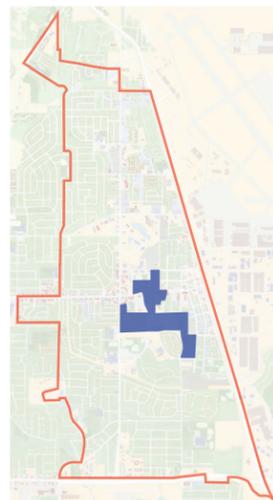
The Conference Center will include 10,000 square feet of conference space, in the form of large gathering spaces, as well as smaller breakout rooms. It can also share the 1500-seat auditorium at the neighboring Civic Complex. The hotel will be Downtown's first, and will be a flag with 100-150 keys. Successful downtowns across the Country have a hotel in the core of their civic, cultural, and commercial offerings. This hotel will compliment those already existing out toward I-75, but the Downtown location will also support the many successful institutions in Downtown as well.

The existing conference facility and hotel most appropriate as precedent for Warner Robins, as concluded by the feasibility study, is a new conference center hotel in Suffolk, Virginia. Urban Design Associates helped design this facility, and the spatial and servicing specs were used in siting and designing the Conference Center and Hotel in Downtown Warner Robins.



Examples of a similar convention center in Suffolk, Virginia

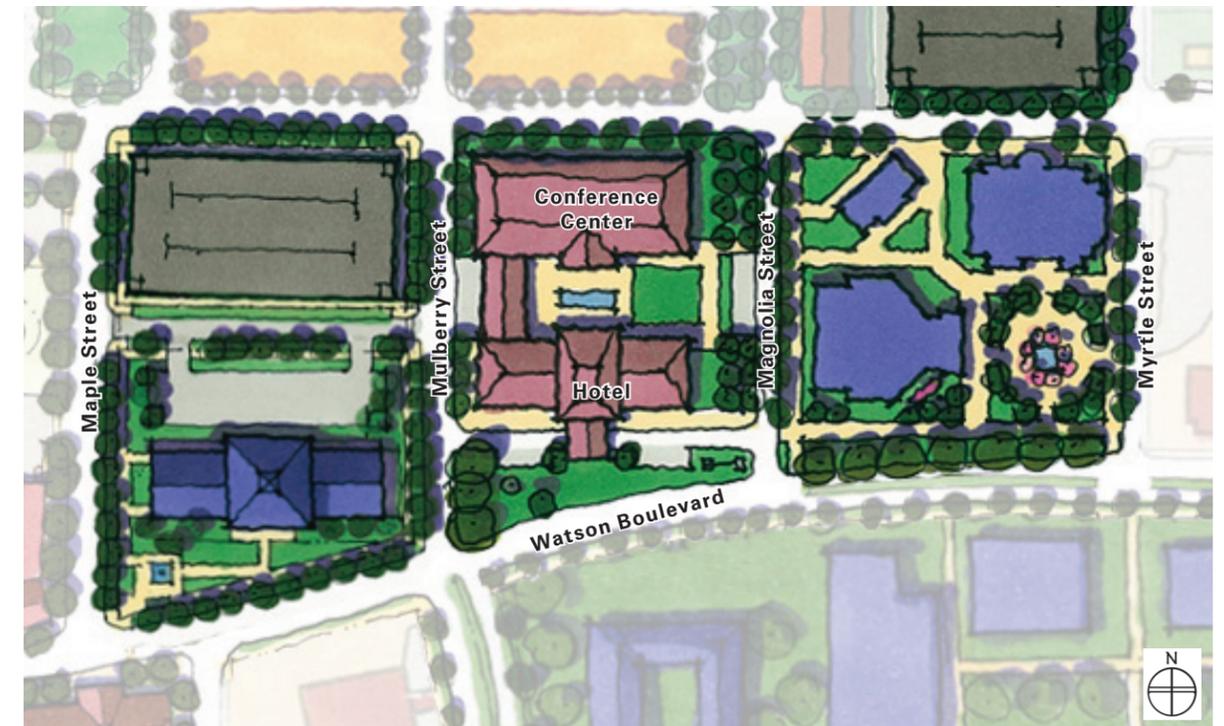
© 2009 URBAN DESIGN ASSOCIATES



Locator map



Existing conditions



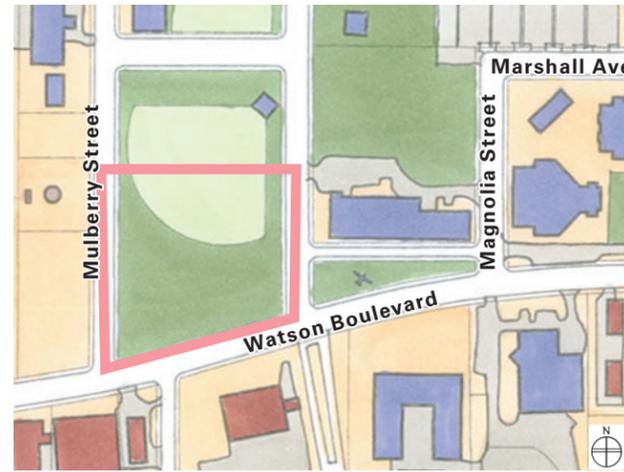
Proposed conference center and downtown hotel

CITY LAW ENFORCEMENT CENTER

One of the public service investments to be made in Warner Robins in the near future is the construction of a Law Enforcement Center in the Downtown area. The consultant team was asked to consider this facility within the context of the Downtown master plan, and to offer alternative locations that will fit into the revitalization and growth of the City over time. Most importantly, all potential sites are located within the Downtown core, which is very appropriate for a City with interest in further developing their Downtown.

There is much community discussion with regard to the siting of the Law Enforcement Building, which will likely go on as feasibility studies are conducted as to its design and specific location. Three alternatives are illustrated in this document that are in keeping with the overall aims of the Downtown plan. The primary alternative is a location on Watson Drive near the civic complex and a potential new conference center and hotel. Another option is to locate it on Prince Street in the Village at Town Centre. A third alternative is to locate the facility at North Davis Drive and Green Street, with a presence on North Davis.

Each location is evaluated side-by-side on this page to aid City leaders in siting the facility in a way that supports the overall aims of the Downtown Master Plan.



Existing conditions



Option 1: Law Enforcement Building

LOCATION: WATSON BOULEVARD
» Adjacency to Civic Complex
» Presence on Watson Boulevard
» Need to build shared structured parking to accommodate needs of this building and other nearby facilities



Existing conditions



Option 2: Law Enforcement Building

LOCATION: VILLAGE AT TOWN CENTRE
» City-owned property
» Parcel ready for development
» Easy connections to existing services
» Ample on-site parking



Existing conditions



Option 3: Law Enforcement Building

LOCATION: NORTH DAVIS DRIVE/GREEN STREET
» Direct access and presence on North Davis Drive
» Great access to the city's arterial streets
» Presence between downtown core and new northern neighborhoods
» Vacant building and site; needs to be purchased

DOWNTOWN RECREATION CENTER

As in the case of the Law Enforcement Building, much study and community discussion is underway with regard to the feasibility of a new public recreation center for Warner Robins. There are many facilities for specific sports throughout southern Warner Robins and Houston County, however, there is no modern recreation center serving the center of the City. There was much discussion about recreation needs throughout the input process. Many area places of worship have created smaller facilities for their congregations that are additionally shared with nearby neighborhoods, but there is no one place for indoor public recreation.

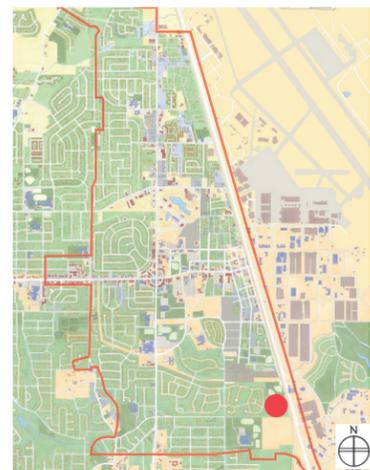
The consultant team considered a recreation facility as a community-serving anchor within the context of the overall master plan, and offers thoughts on the qualities of all sites studied throughout the process. Currently, a large site along First Street, south of Memorial Park, is being cleared. This site is a potential location for an indoor recreation facility serving the Downtown area. Also, a site is being considered along North Davis Drive in the new Commercial Circle. Late in the process, another alternative was raised for a location west of the Redevelopment area, but proximate to the Downtown.

In terms of programming, stakeholders and participants cited a need for an indoor swimming pool to support independent recreation, as well as the programs of the local schools. In addition, an indoor basketball court with seating could become a central anchor for local school and faith-based league play. Workout facilities should also be included to address the fitness needs of City residents. Such a center in the heart of Downtown will bring more residents to the area, in support of the other new developments associated with Warner Robins' renaissance.



Option 1: recreation center

LOCATION: SOUTH FIRST STREET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Adjacent land to build associated outdoor fields » Cleared site and ample room for development » Connection to adjacent neighborhoods with extension of Wall Street » Proximate to Huntington Middle School and planned First Street Greenway

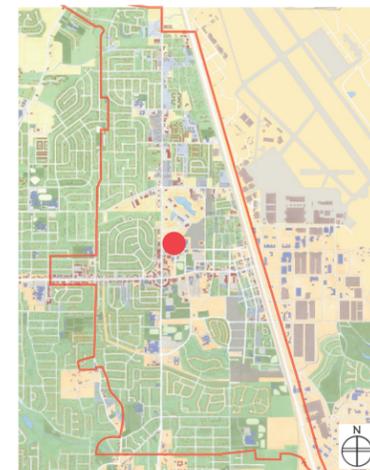


Locator map

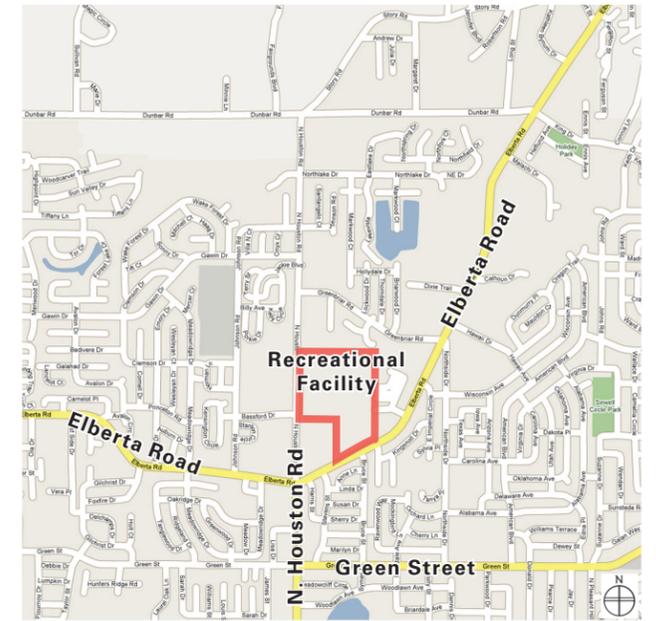


Option 3: recreation center rebuilt along the street

LOCATION: NORTH DAVIS DRIVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Adjacency to Commercial Circle » Location at center of Downtown » Link to Civic Complex

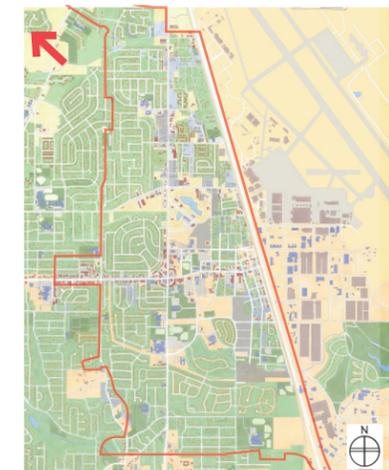


Locator map



Option 2: recreation center

LOCATION: ELBERTA ROAD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Proximate to many highly-populated residential areas » Adjacent to Houston Road » Readily-developable, large site



Locator map

INITIATIVE FIVE

Commercial Circle

NEAR-TERM ACTIONS

- » Create a Steering Committee made up of City and private property owners
- » Work with private property owners to create a consortium/assemble land for the project
- » Demolish the existing City-owned buildings along the southeast quadrant
- » Issue an RFQ/RFP for design of the Park within Commercial Circle
- » Begin streetscape redesign and improvements along the southeast quadrant
- » Create design guidelines for the site design and mixed-use buildings to ensure design quality for the City
- » Create an intermediate parking strategy

LONG-TERM ACTIONS

- » Institute street improvements along the crescent
- » Build the new City Park
- » Begin construction of the mixed-use buildings and shared parking

MARKET POTENTIAL

» Retail: 50,000sf
(350,000sf)*

* Development potential over a 25-year period

Throughout the stakeholder meetings, focus groups, and public meetings, Commercial Circle was repeatedly cited as the historical heart of Downtown Warner Robins, and that it should be revitalized as the center of the City. Currently, one can walk or drive through the Circle without even noticing its unique form. Many derelict and vacant buildings surround the space, with the exception of a favorite local sandwich shop and a few automotive shops. Regardless, this area has great potential to be reassembled, and can be the site of the City's signature space. Shops, offices, and cultural facilities can line the space in new, mixed-use buildings to create Downtown and the City's only premier pedestrian-oriented destination.

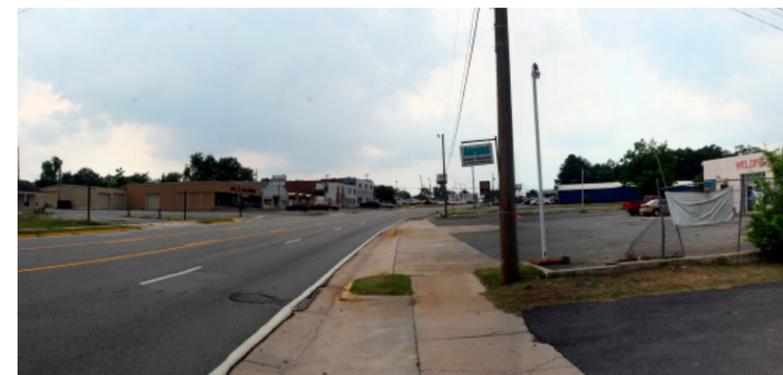
Commercial Circle is an important gateway to Downtown Warner Robins, and is located at an important intersection along Watson Boulevard, one of the City's main arterial streets that lead from I-75 to RAFB. As such, it should become the hub of mixed-use activity characteristic of a traditional Downtown. Redevelopment of Commercial Circle offers an opportunity to create a sense of place in Warner Robins which has not yet been capitalized upon.

PHASED REDEVELOPMENT OF COMMERCIAL CIRCLE

As in most city building, design and vision for Commercial Circle must be flexible to be developed over time in a phased manner. There is a large amount of public and private leadership and investment needed to make such a place a reality. However, there are many small changes that can be made that will contribute to the feeling meet and work together to assemble lots into developable parcels. The City has begun this process through ownership of the southeast quadrant of the space, but all owners will have to believe in the vision to achieve the ultimate vision of the City's residents. In addition, public improvements to streets, sidewalks, and the green space within the



View of commercial circle looking west along Watson Boulevard



Existing view of commercial circle looking west along Watson Boulevard



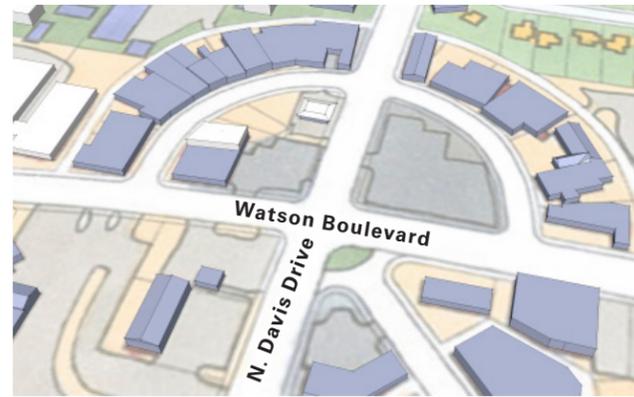
Location of above view

Circle can be made to support and leverage private development of mixed-use buildings around its edges.

The first phase recommended is to build a Downtown central park within the current open land within the Circle. The service streets around the perimeter of this space will also need to be resized and programmed with on-street parking to support the creation of a mixed-use center. In the near-term, additional parking may need to be constructed within the Circle's green space until proper parking fields are created behind the new street-oriented buildings. McCall's can remain in this area as the Circle's main successful business and main community gathering spot. The green space itself will need to be programmed not only with shade trees, landscaping, and furniture, but will need to be planned with a calendar of events and rituals, from daily lunches to holiday celebrations, to activate the space and bring it to the attention of City residents.

As a first step to rebuilding the space, mixed-use buildings should be redeveloped along the southeast quadrant as a demonstration of what can be achieved around the entire Circle in the long-term. Buildings of at least three storeys are needed to anchor the scale of the green space and help calm traffic at the Davis Drive/Watson Boulevard intersection through their presence. A first development project could be shared by the City, Macon State, and Sacred Heart since all entities are invested in the success of Downtown as a whole.

At build-out, new mixed-use buildings of three and four storeys should be introduced. Buildings should be oriented to the street and define the public realm, not unlike that of Cherry Street in Macon. In order to create a walkable, urban environment, parking lots will be created behind the new buildings, and safe passages to these lots will be created through the buildings themselves. Metered, convenience parking will be created long both sides of the curved service streets for quick visits.



Existing conditions



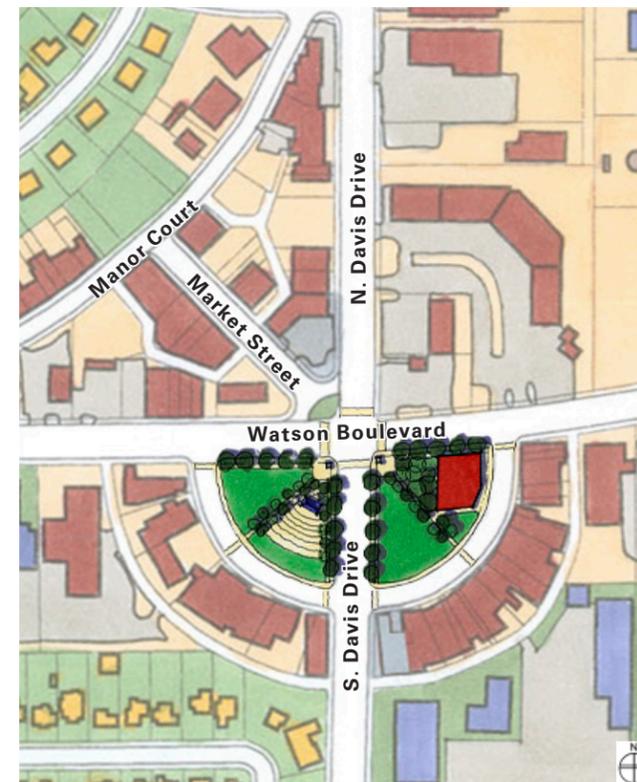
Phase one: Build a Downtown park and begin redevelopment of the circle



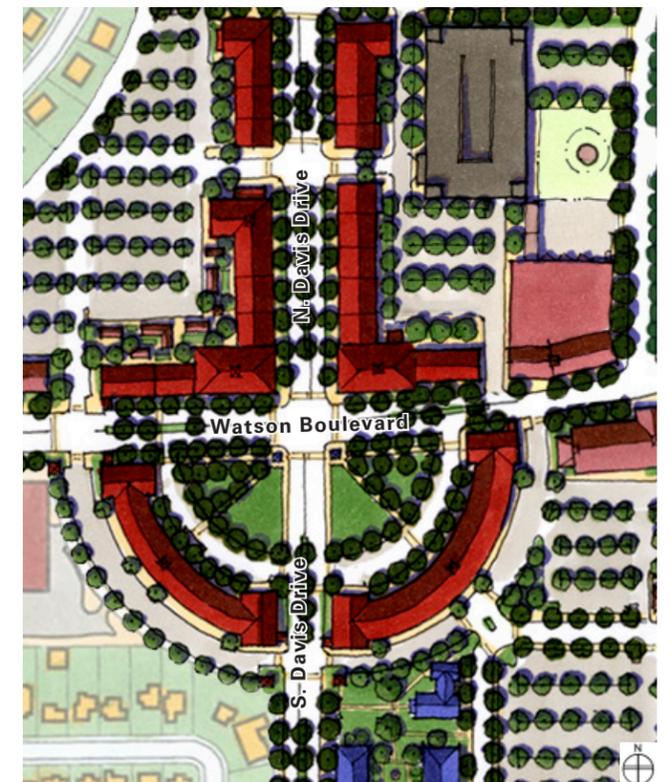
Build-out: build mixed-use buildings around the space



Existing conditions



Phase one: Build a Downtown park and begin redevelopment of the circle



Build-out: build mixed-use buildings around the space

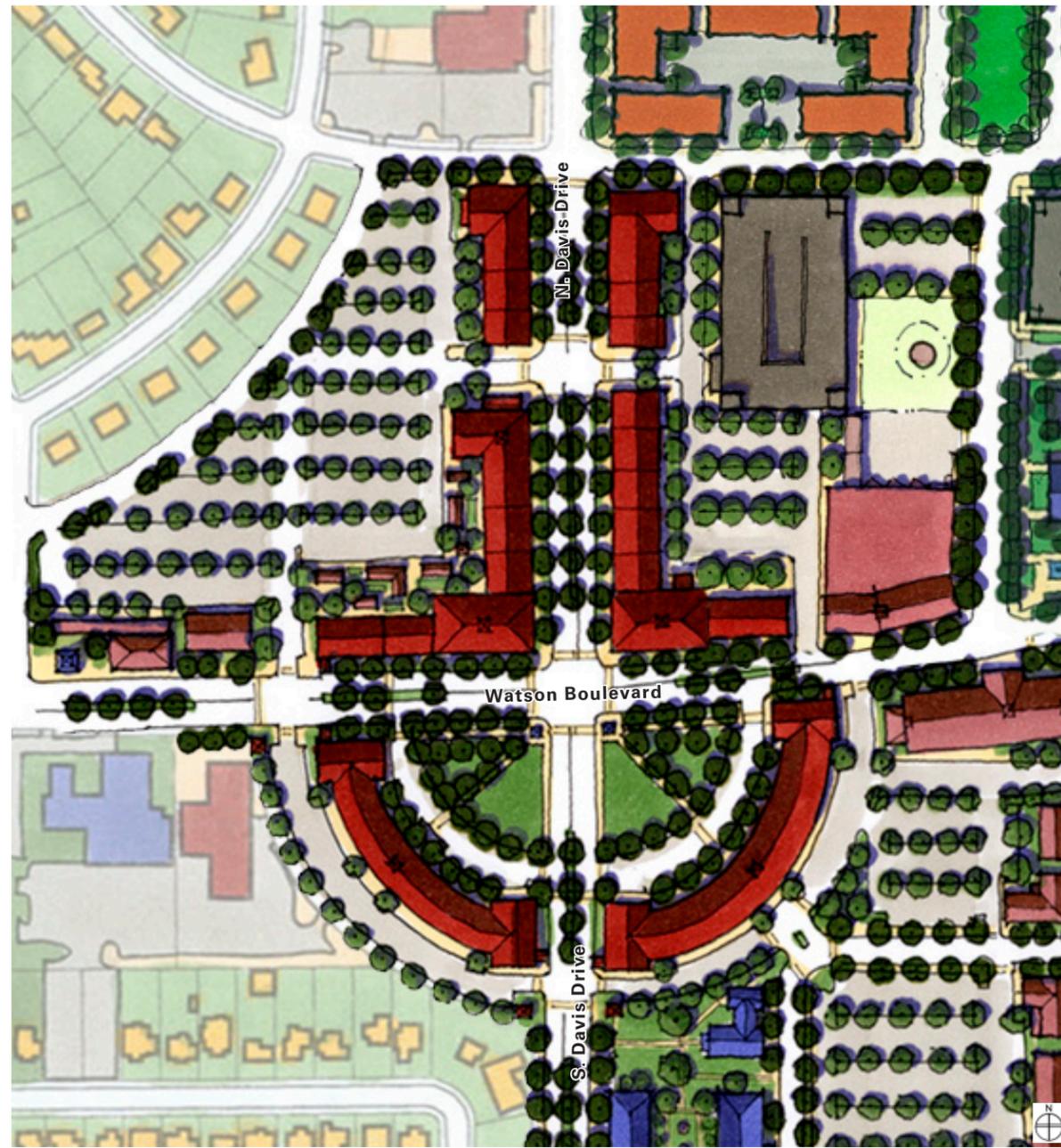
Ground floors of the buildings should be activated as much as possible with retail, neighborhood service, and cultural uses, while floors above the street are ideal for professional offices and residences. The presence of full-time residents in the area will not only transform the character of Downtown as a whole, but will attract tenants to these buildings in such a unique environment and location.

VISION FOR COMMERCIAL CIRCLE

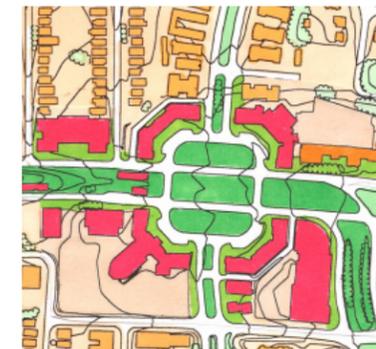
A number of examples of spaces of a similar scale and usage can be looked to envision the future of Warner Robins' Commercial Circle. The images on this page detail the basic character and built form requirements needed to achieve the public's vision for this Downtown center.

Placemaking is a common term used in the creation of new places, or the revitalization of sectors of existing cities. Qualities that imbue a place as one that is a lasting destination are many – some qualities are definable and others are not. However, in all cases, a sense of human scale, safety, and general comfortability are needed, and these qualities can be ensured by the urban design and architectural decisions that go into placemaking.

Buildings need to be street-oriented, and need to include ground-floor uses that invite users, particularly on foot. Setbacks to buildings should be minimal, 25' maximum from curb to building face, to achieve a sense of enclosure and safety. Public realm elements, such as substantial street trees of a minimum 4" diameter, human-scaled street elements, such as street lamps, banner poles, traffic lights, and the like will help define the outdoors.



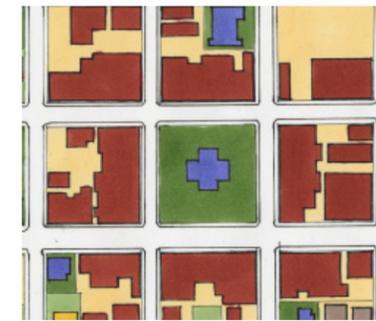
Build-out: build mixed-use buildings around the space



Shaker Square, Shaker Heights, Ohio



Pack Square, Asheville, North Carolina



Courthouse Square, Winterset, Iowa



On-street parking should be provided on the curved service streets, at a minimum, to invite users, and ample parking will be needed to sustain uses, particularly businesses and gathering places. Welcoming, well-lit spaces and passages will be needed to offer a sense of safety.

The architecture of the buildings themselves needs to have a clearly articulated base, middle, and top. Buildings should be constructed of durable materials that provide a sense of permanence. Ground floors should have shopfronts and windows that are interesting and invite activity. Clear service areas and zones should be designed so buildings work properly and flexibly accommodate uses changing over time.

The examples illustrated on this page reflect spaces and requisite activities that can be expected when ample care, attention to detail, and coordination is exercised between public investments in the public realm reinforce and encourage complimentary uses that attract people.



View of commercial circle looking east along the crescent



Existing view of commercial circle looking east along the crescent



Location of above view

Implementation

THE INITIATIVES DESCRIBED in the master plan will be implemented over many years. Some are required to set the stage for others. Public investment in streets and parks will set the stage for private investment. Some of the development ideas presented in the master plan were being contemplated by the City before this planning process began – others have emerged as priorities for the revitalization of the Downtown. Some of the initiatives can serve as catalytic investments that promote revitalization of surrounding areas. The master plan positions these key developments in the most strategic locations in terms of leveraging the future revitalization of Downtown Warner Robins.

IMMEDIATE CATALYTIC PROJECTS:

1 Recreation Complex

Construction of new athletic fields and a new recreation building will free up critical land in the Civic Center for new development.

2 New Law Enforcement Center

Construction of a new Law Enforcement Center can have a positive influence on the surrounding area and project a new and fresh image of civic rebirth in the center of the City.

3 Hotel and Conference Center

Construction of a new Hotel and Conference Center in the Civic Center will bring visitors into the heart of the Downtown, strengthen the viability of redevelopment of Commercial Circle, bring vibrancy and stimulate new retail and restaurants, improve the viability of the Civic Complex, and provide immediate access to multiple users including RAFB, Macon State, City Hall, and private companies.

4 Land Acquisition

Continue acquisition of land for the three Technology/Industrial Parks along the 247 Aerospace Corridor, as well as land for the new residential neighborhoods.

5 Commercial Circle Town Square

Develop Phase I of the town square to create the civic space improvements for future redevelopment around the circle.

MAJOR REDEVELOPMENTS:

6 Technology Parks

When the land has been assembled, build the street and utility infrastructure to create development-ready parcels for new employment uses.

7 Residential Neighborhoods

With land control, partner with residential developers who have proven experience in urban mixed-income neighborhoods based on the sound planning principles illustrated in this master plan. Multiple developers specializing in certain types of residential and commercial development may be required to create complete new neighborhoods.

8 Commercial Circle Redevelopment

With land control sufficient to accommodate new buildings and required parking areas, partner with a developer that has proven experience in mixed-use buildings in urban areas. The developer should have experience in finding multiple funding sources, working with commercial tenants, office development, and urban loft residential development.

9 Sacred Heart

Sacred Heart controls land critical to the redevelopment of Commercial Circle. Coordinate their institutional expansion program with redevelopment of the Circle. Provide critical street linkages shown in the plan as a component of redevelopment of the area.

10 Macon State College

Assist the university in facility expansion and property acquisition along Watson Boulevard to increase the presence of the College across from the Civic Complex in the Downtown. Their timetable will be influenced by the vigor of redevelopment of the Civic Center and Commercial Circle.

11 Happy Hour

Happy Hour is an important institution in the City and controls land critical to the future vitality of the Downtown. Work closely with Happy Hour and a talented developer to integrate their mission into redevelopment of their land holdings as a vibrant new urban neighborhood. A developer of mixed-income urban neighborhoods with a track record of team building will be ideally suited for this area.