

Downtown Stakeholder Committee - Meeting 2

Duncan Auditorium at the Civic Center

4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

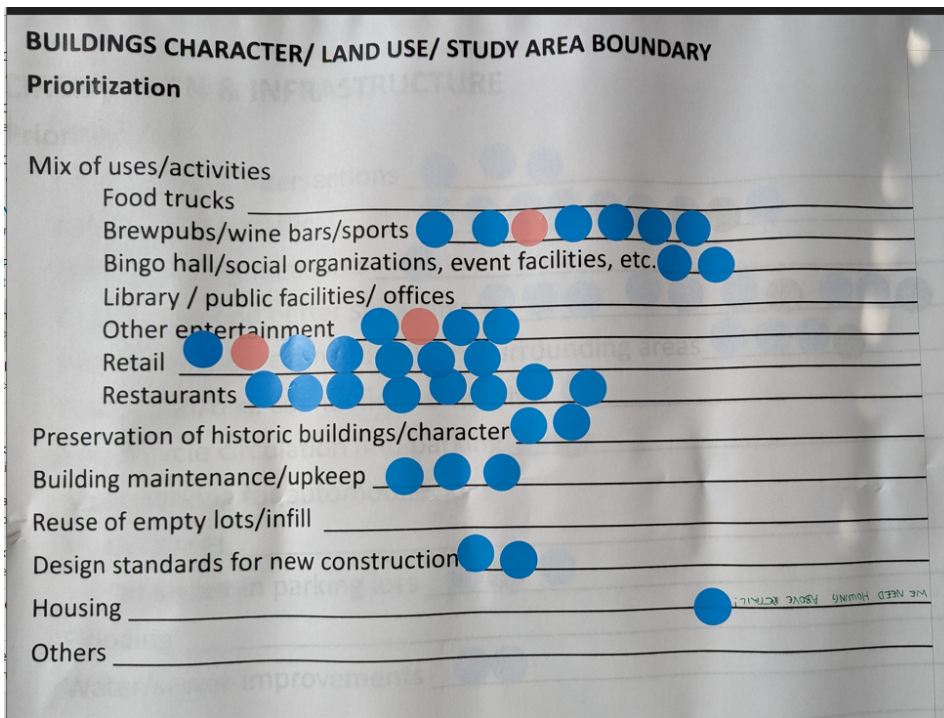
- I. Updates (5 min)
 - Recap of DSC #1 Tabletop Exercise & Map
 - Summary of Survey and Interview Results
 - Mentimeter, Community Survey, Stakeholder Interviews
 - Website
- II. Findings & Concepts (55 min)
 - Draft Vision and Guiding Principles (5 min)
 - Planning, Land Use, & Infrastructure (5 min)
 - Market Study & Economic Development (5 min)
 - Urban Design and Streetscape (25 min)
 - Discussion (15 min)
- III. Presentation by Tina Israel, Bay City Main Street Manager (25 min)
- IV. Discussion (20 min)
- V. Next Steps (5 min)

Agenda - September 26, 2023

CITY OF WHARTON DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE MEETING 2

September 26, 2023



Building Character & Land Use

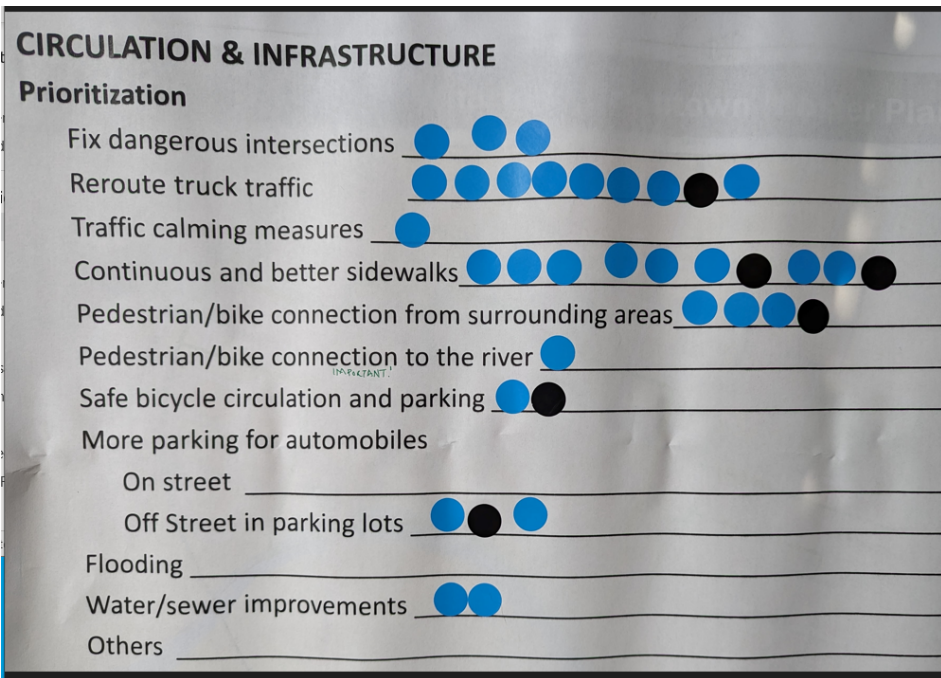
- Preferred uses:
 - Entertainment & Dining
 - Retail
- Building maintenance and upkeep
- Preservation

Tabletop Exercise - Summary

CITY OF WHARTON DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE MEETING 2

September 26, 2023



Circulation & Infrastructure

- Continuous and better sidewalks
- Reroute truck traffic
- Ped/bike connectivity

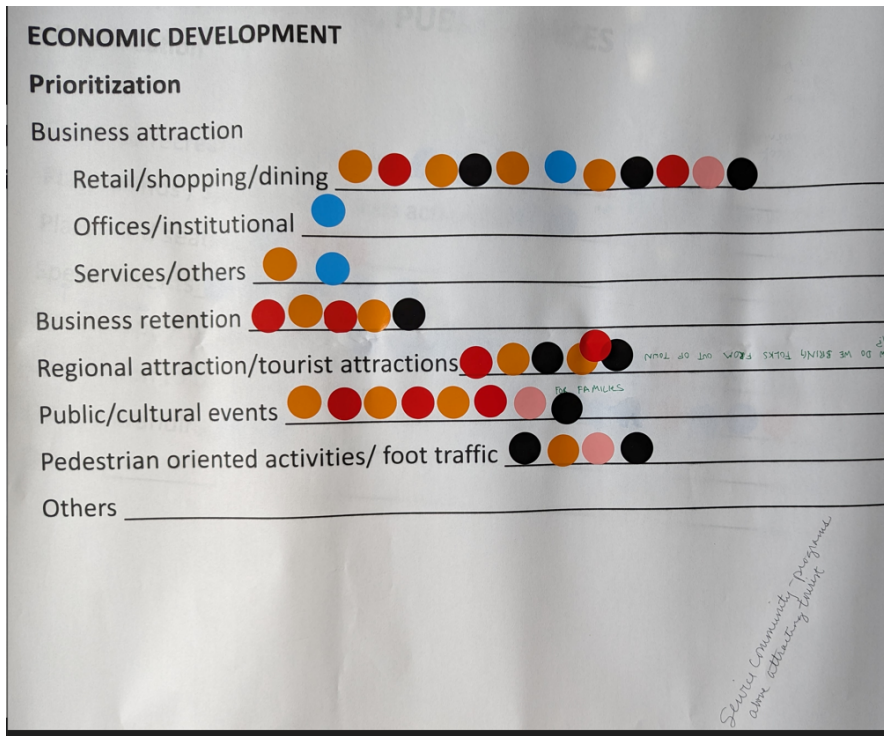
Tabletop Exercise - Summary

CITY OF WHARTON

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE MEETING 2

September 26, 2023



Economic Development

- Retail/shopping/dining
- Public/cultural events
- Regional/tourist attraction
- Business retention

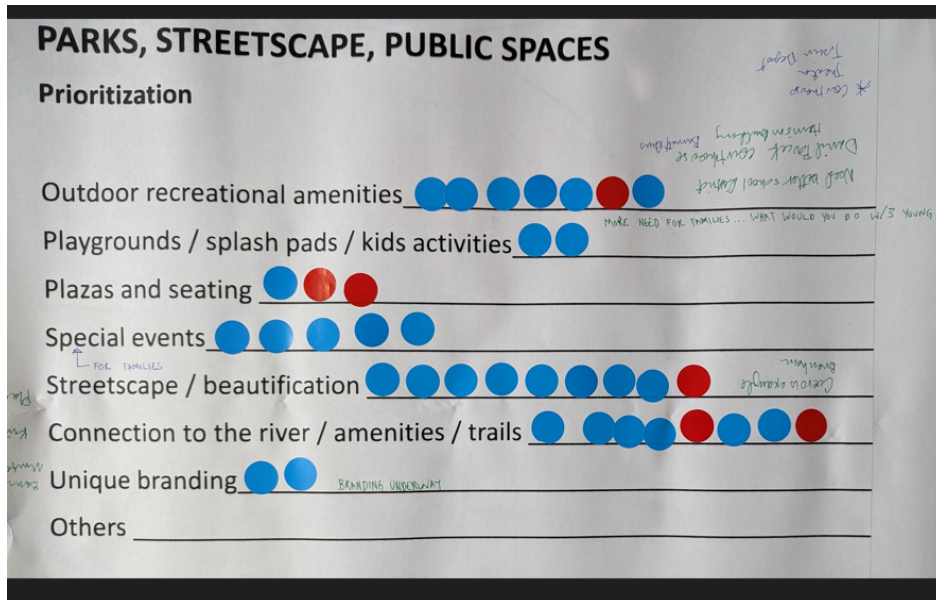
Tabletop Exercise - Summary

CITY OF WHARTON

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE MEETING 2

September 26, 2023



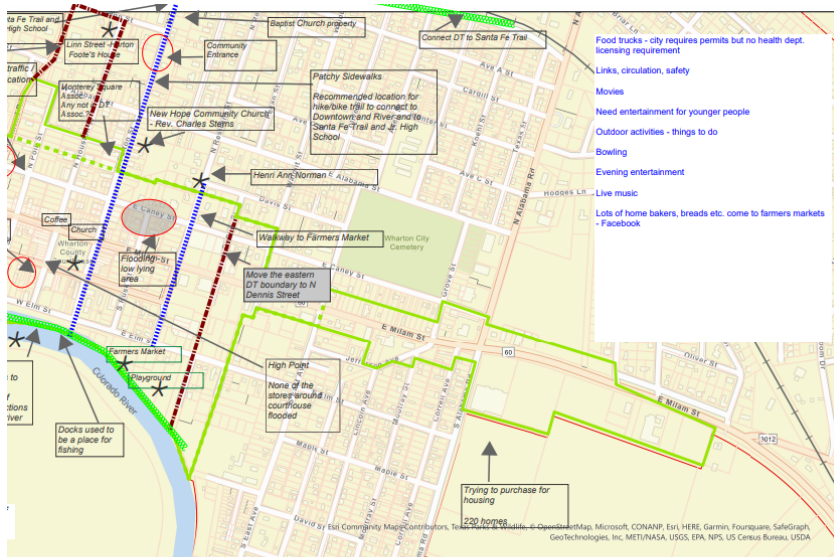
Parks, Streetscape, Public Spaces

- Streetscape/beautification
- Connection to the river/amenities/trails
- Special events

Tabletop Exercise - Summary

CITY OF WHARTON DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

- Boundaries – include Horton Foote’s House; move the eastern boundary to Dennis St.
- Wharton Steet – multimodal connection between river and Santa Fe Trail, through DT
- Better connection between points of interest *Depot, River, Farmers Market, County Courthouse, New Hope Comm. Church, Horton Foote’s House, Santa Fe Trail*
- Entry signs to Downtown
- Missing or lack of sidewalks
- Areas of local flooding
- River access/activities/trails
- Connectivity to Farmers market & parking lots
- Problematic intersections - traffic



Map Exercise

CITY OF WHARTON DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

Downtown Stakeholder Committee - Meeting 2

September 26, 2023

Downtown's current strengths are:



Downtown's current strengths are:



Downtown's current strengths are:



Strengths

- Historic buildings and character
- Community/public facilities
- Building maintenance & upkeep
- Special events

Summary of Mentimeter Surveys

CITY OF WHARTON

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

What are your three favorite things about Downtown Wharton?
34 Responses



What are your three favorite things about Downtown Wharton?
61 Responses



What are your three favorite things about Downtown Wharton?
25 Responses



Favorite Things

- Courthouse
- Unique character & beauty - history/architecture/historic buildings/Plaza Theatre
- River

Summary of Mentimeter Surveys

CITY OF WHARTON DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

What are the three biggest concerns or problems with Downtown Wharton?
21 Responses



What are the three biggest concerns or problems with Downtown Wharton?
13 Responses



at are the three biggest concerns or problems with Downtown Wharton?
2 Responses



Concerns

- Traffic/truck traffic
- Vacancy & business retention
- Poor building condition
- Lack of multimodal accessibility/sidewalks
- Lack of mixed uses/ vibrant uses

Summary of Mentimeter Surveys

CITY OF WHARTON DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

Additional Input

- **Need foot traffic to support businesses**
- Lighting
- Food trucks
- Coordination among businesses

What kind of activities, businesses, events, features, amenities would you like to have Downtown?

2 Responses

Some sort of focus on the river.

Restaurant and bar culture

What kind of activities, businesses, events, features, amenities would you like to have Downtown?

5 Responses

tapas/cocktail lounge

Festivals

Community programs

Food trucks, restaurants, night life.

Bakery, ice cream shop, florist

Summary of Mentimeter Surveys

CITY OF WHARTON

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

What cities would you like Wharton's downtown to be more like, and why?
12 Responses



What cities would you like Wharton's downtown to be more like, and why?
2 Responses



Aspirational Cities

Fredericksburg

Wimberly

Temple

Granbury

Brenham

Columbus

El Campo

Navasota

San Marcos

New Braunfels

Belton

Summary of Mentimeter Surveys

CITY OF WHARTON

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

- Community questionnaire is posted online in English and Spanish.
- Have received over a hundred responses so far.
- Survey will remain open into October.

City of Wharton Downtown Master Plan

The City of Wharton is currently in the process of developing its Downtown Master Plan, which aims to create a vision for Downtown Wharton. The Downtown Master Plan is YOUR plan, and your input is critical to its success.

INTRODUCTION

- [About the WHARTON DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN](#)
- Downtown Stakeholder Committee (DSC)
 - [Purpose and Members](#)
- [Proposed Work Schedule](#)

MEETINGS

CITY COUNCIL, PLANNING COMMISSION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (EDC)

- Agendas
 - [City Council meeting June 26, 2023](#)
 - [Economic Development Corporation meeting July 17, 2023](#)
 - [Planning Commission meeting July 17, 2023](#)
- [Presentation](#)
- Input/Polling Results
 - [EDC July 17, 2023](#)
 - [Planning Commission July 17, 2023](#)
- Photos

DOWNTOWN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DCA)

- DSC Meeting 1
 - Agenda
 - Presentation
 - Summary
 - [Input/Polling Results](#)
 - [Maps - Identification of Opportunities and Challenges](#)
 - Prioritization Exercise
 - Photos
- DSC Meeting 2
 - [Agenda](#)

COMMUNITY RESPONSE SUMMARY

**CITY OF WHARTON
DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN
Community Input**

The City of Wharton is currently in the process of developing its Downtown Master Plan to improve and revitalize the Downtown as a vibrant destination. This Downtown Master Plan will serve to enhance the quality of life for residents, businesses, and visitors.

Your diverse perspectives and experiences will help create a vision for Downtown Wharton that will shape the plan.

Please take 5-10 minutes to complete our survey and encourage your friends and family to participate. It is important that the vision that is developed reflects community member priorities and values.

All input collected will remain confidential and used only for the purpose of identifying common themes toward a common vision. The survey closes on September 15, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

For more information or to submit hard copies please contact:
Glenyth Tamm, CHIC, CHIC
Director of Planning & Development
100 E. Carey Street, Wharton, TX, 77168
www.cityofwharton.com
Phone: 379-532-2499 x.228
Fax: 379-532-0267

YOUR INPUT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.

1. What words come to your mind when you think of Wharton Downtown?

2. What do you like most about Wharton Downtown?



Your participation, feedback and involvement are important! Please take this opportunity to share your thoughts and visions to guide the Plan. All responses are welcome!

Click Here or Scan QR Code Below



Disponible en español



Community Survey

CITY OF WHARTON DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN



City of Wharton Downtown Master Plan



Your participation, feedback and involvement are important! Please take this opportunity to share your thoughts and visions to guide the Plan. All responses are welcome!

Click Here or Scan QR Code Below



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DOWNTOWN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DCA)

- DCA Meeting 1
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COMMUNITY RESPONSE SUMMARY

WEBSITE

CITY OF WHARTON

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

Revitalize (reinvigorate) downtown to **reinstate** its position as the **heart of the city** with **year-round** and **all-day** activities centered around the **Courthouse Square**, to serve as a **gathering place for residents** and to **attract visitors, celebrating** the **local history, culture** and **architecture, reconnecting the river** as an integral part downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, in manner that is **safe for all**.

Historic buildings and character

Connect neighborhoods to Downtown

Support small businesses

Recreation

Nightlife

Pedestrian

Riverfront

Safety (traffic)

Community events & festivals

Attract people

Small-town feel

Findings & Concepts - Draft Vision

CITY OF WHARTON

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

- 1. Create a Sense of Place** – preserve and enhance Courthouse Square as a focal point of Downtown, encourage visitors from out-of-town, relaxing environment, promote interaction, plaza, gathering places, parks, amenities (restrooms), food trucks, remove unused power lines/electric poles in front of historic buildings, underground utilities, preserve history
- 2. Historic buildings** – preserve and enhance, ensure compatible facades for new development and redevelopment
- 3. Maintain the character** – charm, beauty, urban design, new buildings to enhance existing character, streetscape and amenities
- 4. Encourage mixed uses** – offices, residential, apartments/condos, civic uses, community facilities, no churches (want all-day uses), restaurants, no adult entertainment, food trucks. Activities – night life, Plaza Theater, restaurants.

Findings & Concepts - Draft Guiding Principles

CITY OF WHARTON

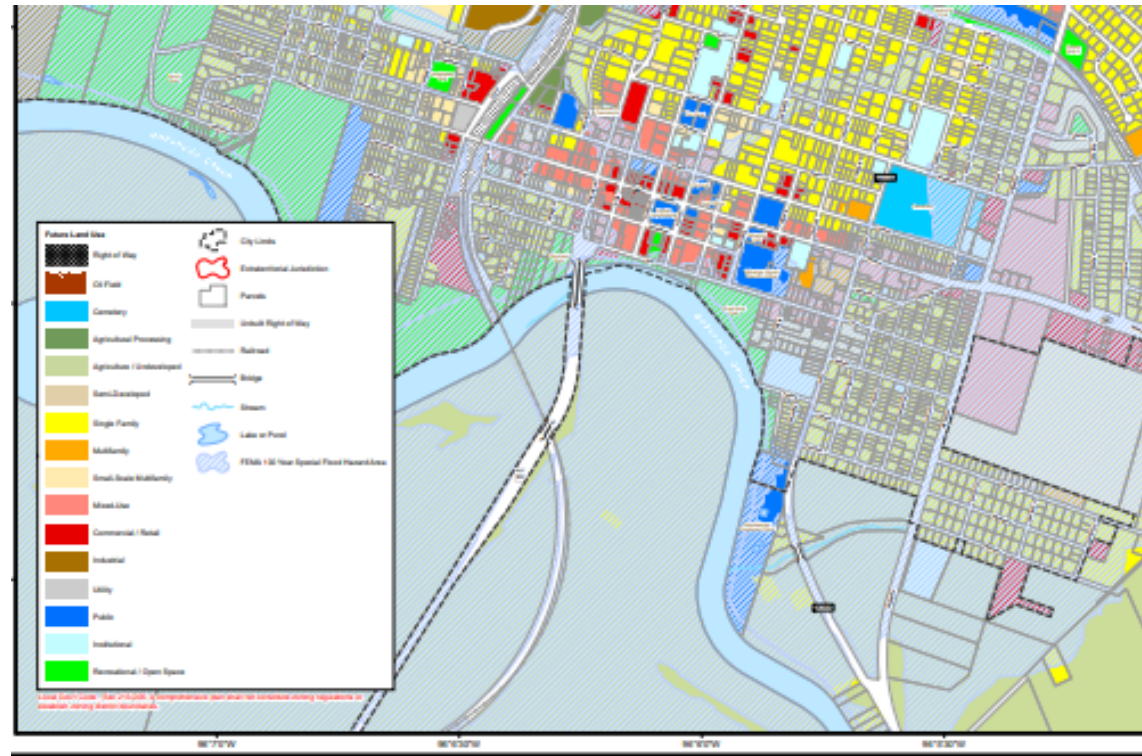
DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

5. **Promote community events** - festivals, community programs, food trucks
6. **Community** - rural, friendly small-town feel, connectivity
7. **Economic Development** - support small businesses, enhance tax base
8. **Multimodal Traffic** - safety, truck traffic, wider and safer sidewalks, availability of parking, bike/ped circulation, accessibility, safe circulation (wrong way), adequate lighting (pedestrians)
9. **River** - enhance the river, develop riverfront park, connect the river to downtown neighborhoods
10. **Maintenance and upkeep** - address decay, vacant and abandoned building, neglected building
11. **Coordinated efforts, implementation** - fractured, lack of continuity, factions

Findings & Concepts - Draft Guiding Principles

CITY OF WHARTON

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN






GrantWorks, Inc.
2201 Northland Drive, Austin, TX 78758
Phone (512) 420-8302 Fax (512) 420-8302

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Wharton County, Texas



Wharton County

City of Wharton
Wharton County, Texas

Map 4B
Future Land Use
(Central Wharton)
October 2018

Planning & Land Use – Existing Comprehensive Plan

CITY OF WHARTON DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

Existing Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

- Preservation of the city's character including the downtown's historic origins and traditional use as a commercial center
- Capitalization on Wharton's National Historic Register Districts
- Consideration of regulations and public investments that:
 - Preserve existing historical structures and lot layout
 - Encourage compatible new construction
 - Provide additional benefits to draw people to downtown
- Focus on Development Ordinances and Financial Incentives due to lack of zoning
- Chapter 12: Central Business District Study

Planning & Land Use

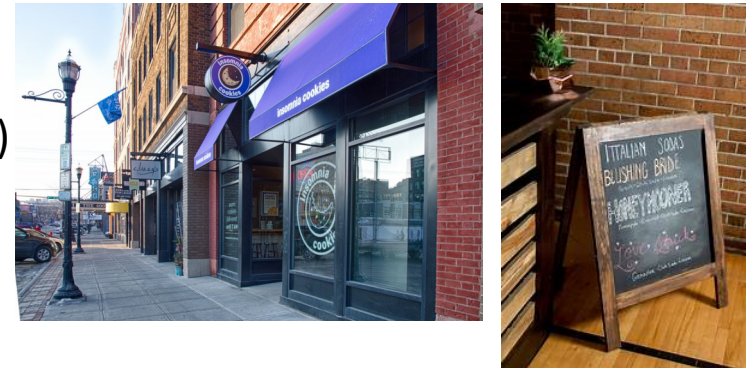
CITY OF WHARTON

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

Development Standards

Review of existing code requirements

- **Suburban-style standards** (variances)
- **Site layout** (dictated by setbacks/parking)
- **Parking** (clarifications regarding exemptions)
- **Sidewalks & curb cuts** (lack of guidance)
- **Fencing/screening** (not tailored)
- **Landscaping** (not tailored)
- **Detention** location along streets (not pedestrian-friendly)
- **Platting** rules (not tailored to DT layout)
- **Signage** (not tailored to DT, extension of signs into the ROW, portable signs, banners, flags, awning signs)



Recommend changes to align with Vision/Guiding Principles, Urban Design, Traffic, and Infrastructure

Planning & Land Use

CITY OF WHARTON

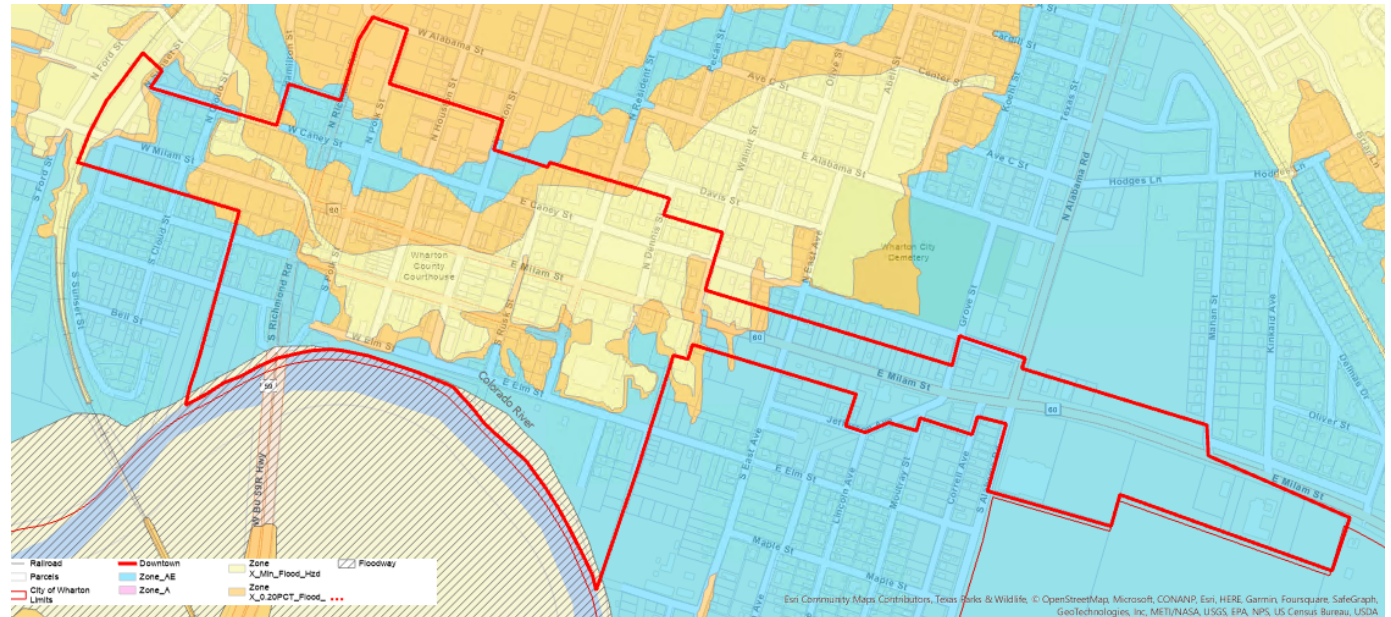
DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

FLOOD PLAIN - DOWNTOWN

- Hurricane Harvey impact

Significant home flooding affecting 745 properties.

- Minimal flooding in DT



Findings & Concepts –Infrastructure

CITY OF WHARTON

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

EXISTING OPEN DITCHES – DOWNTOWN

- City maintains approximately 300,000 LF of the roadside ditches.
- Some roadside ditches in the eastern part of Downtown.



Findings & Concepts –Infrastructure

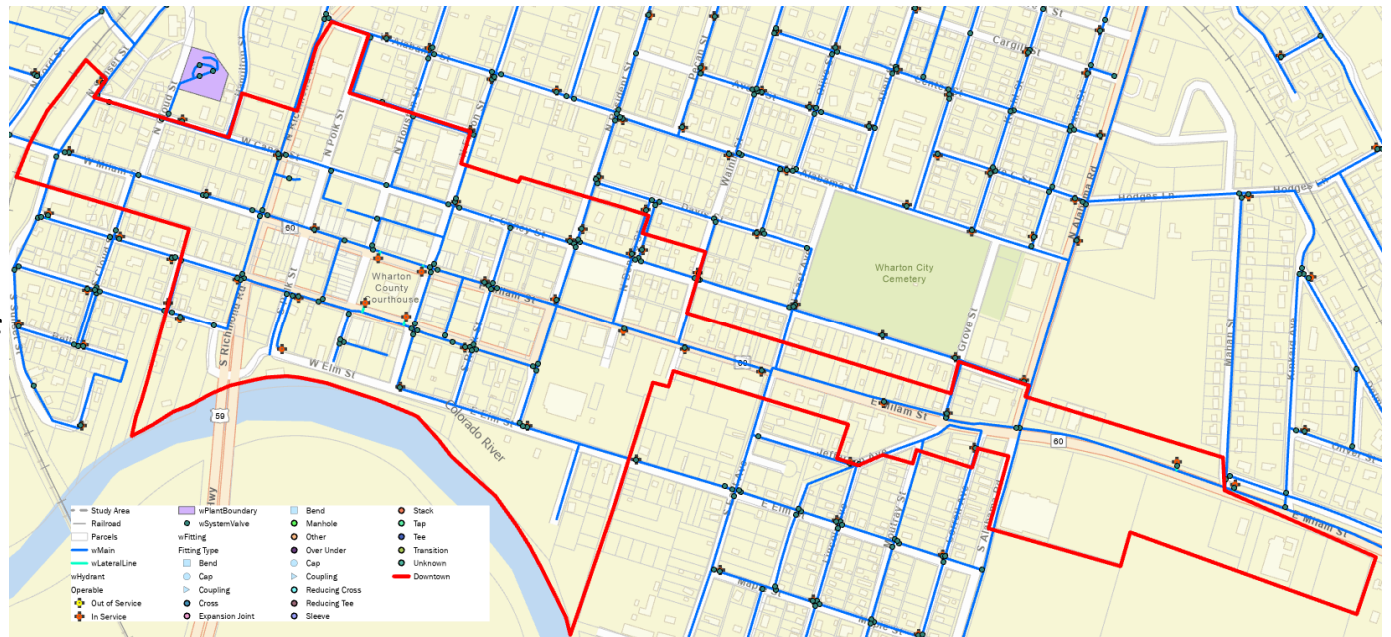
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DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

EXISTING WATER LINES - DOWNTOWN

The City maintains waste lines.

Concern regarding age and condition of water and wastewater lines.



Findings & Concepts –Infrastructure

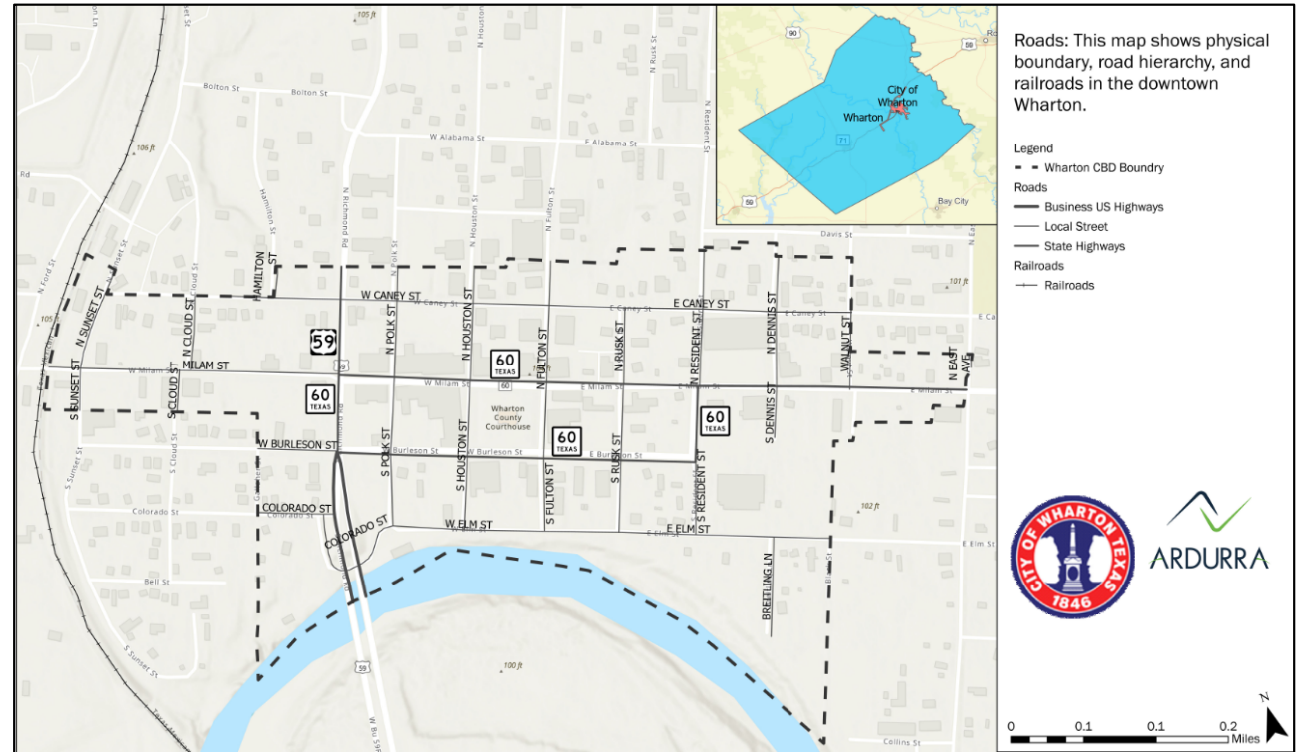
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DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

TRAFFIC GENERATORS – POINTS OF INTEREST

In the downtown study area **seven points of interest** are significant traffic attractors and generators.

- Plaza Theater
- City Hall
- Wharton County Courthouse
- Courthouse Annex
- County Appraisal District Office
- Wharton County Sherriff's Office and Jail



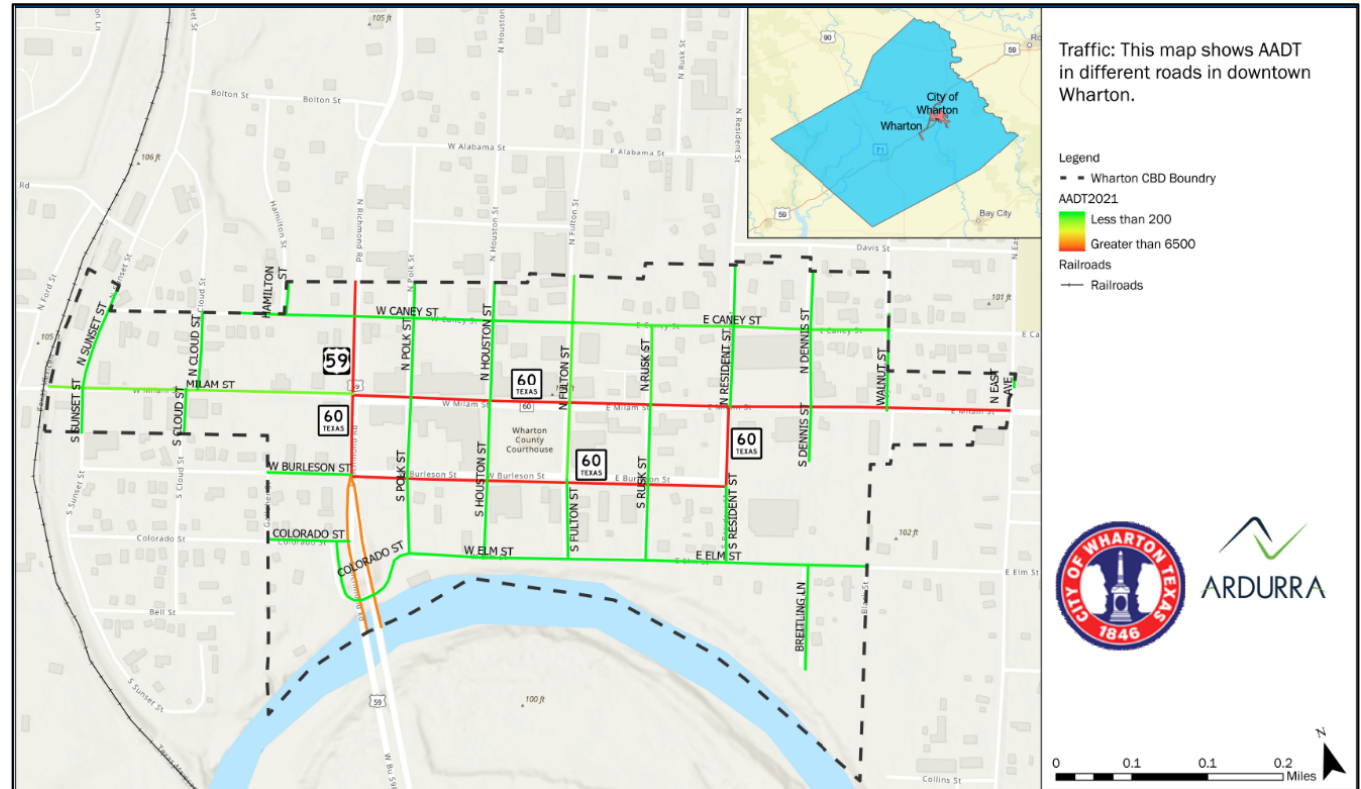
Findings & Concepts – Mobility

CITY OF WHARTON DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRAFFIC

Traffic volume :

- High-volume throughways— US 59 and SH 60 (Milam St, Burleson St, and Richmond Rd.) (red = 6,500 vehicles per day)
- Low-volume local streets (green = fewer than 200 vehicles per day)



Findings & Concepts – Mobility

CITY OF WHARTON DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

CRASH ANALYSIS

16 crashes in last 5 years

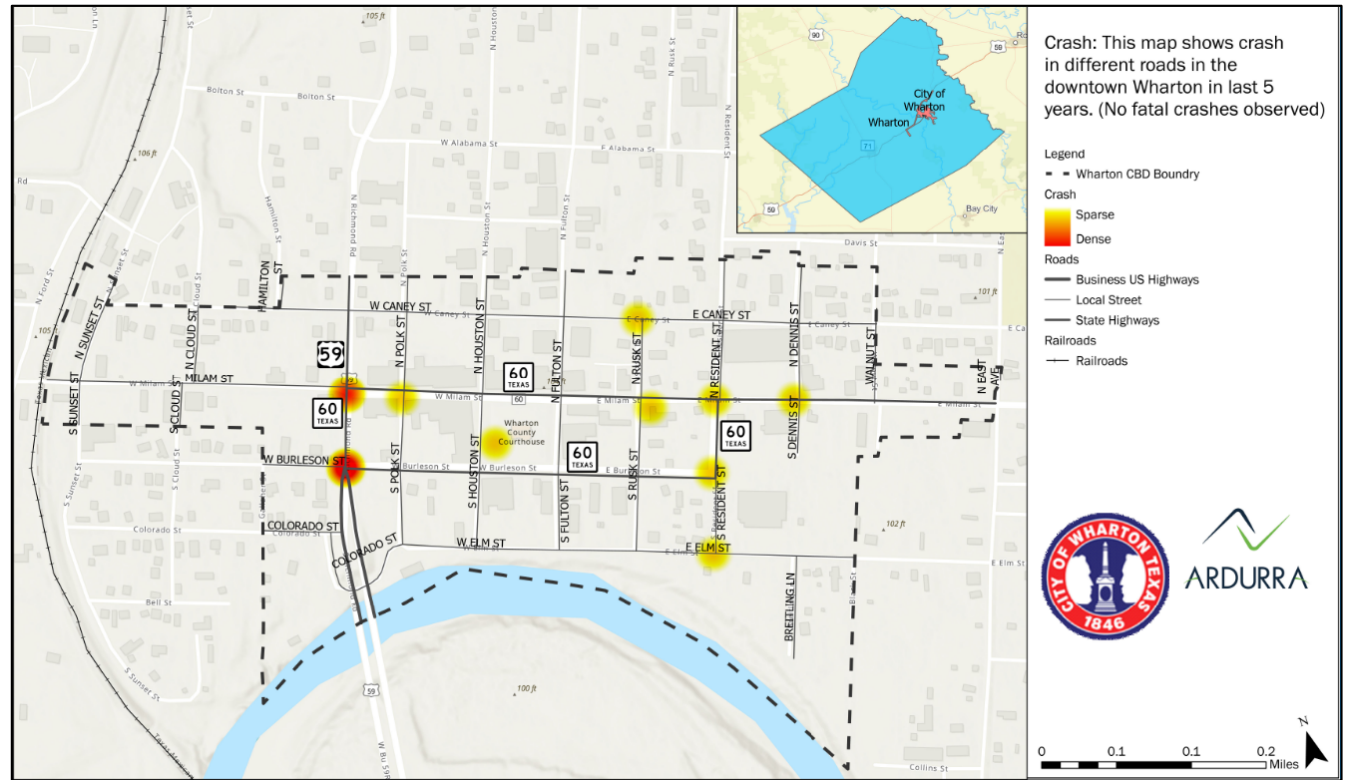
1 crash – speeding

Others - jumping a stop-and-go signal, driver inattention, distraction in vehicle, and impaired visibility.

14 of the 16 were rear-end crashes

11 of the 16 crashes occurred on UB 59 and SH 60

5 occurred on local streets.



Findings & Concepts – Mobility

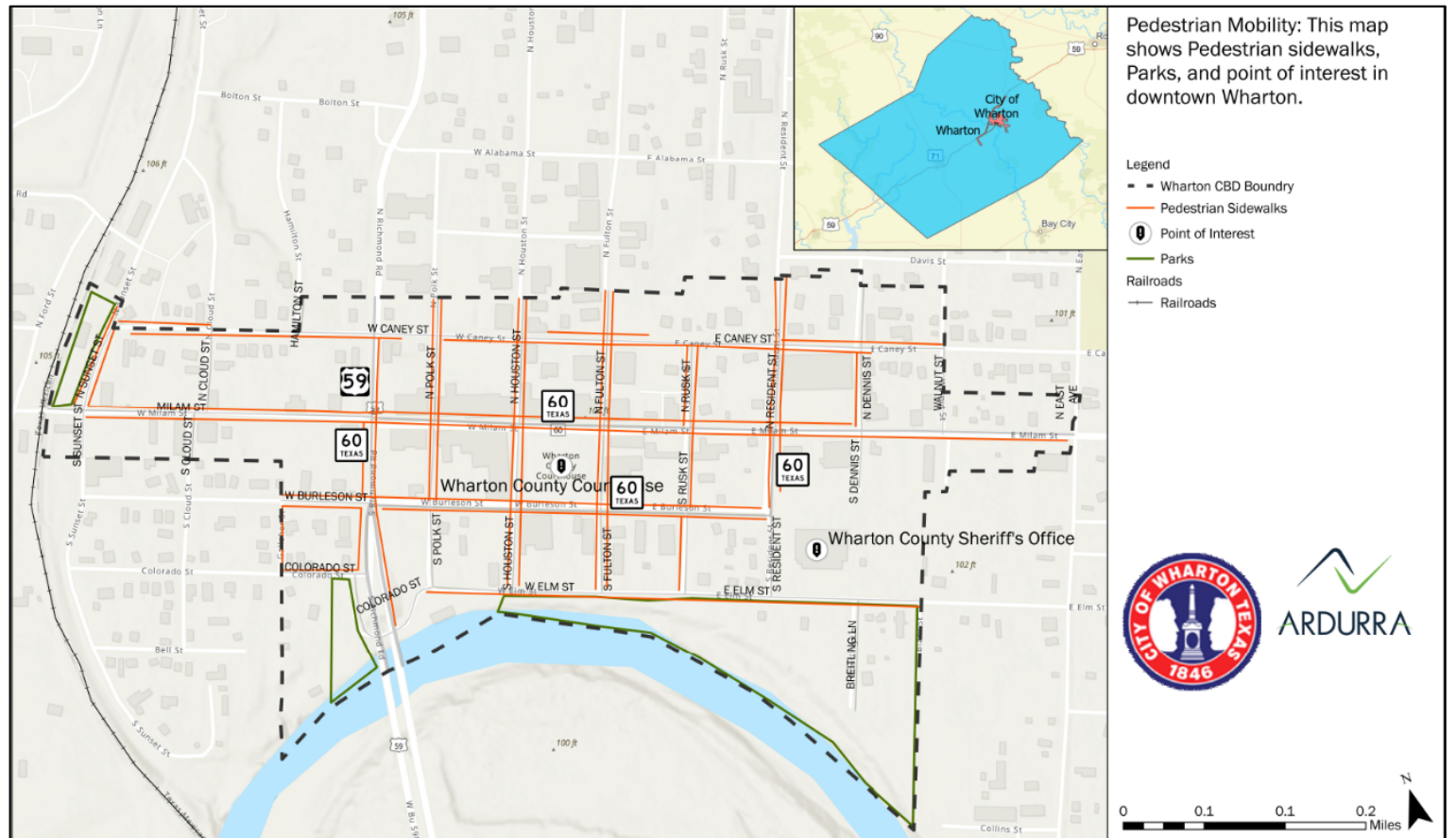
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DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

PEDESTRIAN MOBILITY

Pedestrian
sidewalks

Missing
segments



Findings & Concepts – Mobility

CITY OF WHARTON DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

City Wide

Demographics

- Population increased more than forecasted. 2023 estimate is 8,756
- **Population growth negative** from 2010-2028
- Largest age cohort is age 35 to 44
- City average HH income is \$72,680

Housing

- 93.7% of housing units are single family
- 86% of units are occupied – 54% owners and 46% renters
- Median value is \$145,192
- The average listing price is \$248,187 or \$140.05psf.
- Average sales price \$199,358 or \$117.16psf
- The single-family rentals range average \$1,441 or \$1.10psf
- **Demand for additional housing negative thru 2030**

Markets

- **Retail lost in the past 3 years**
- Since 2020, housing values have gone up 55% in the City
- Affordable units lost in Harvey are now under construction – 184 units

Findings & Concepts – Market Study & Economic Development

CITY OF WHARTON

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

City Wide

Multifamily

- **Vacancy 3.5%**; rents \$1.01psf
- Due to Harvey - **184 known Affordable Housing** units in the pipeline
- Considering the pipeline projects of multi-family units in Wharton and household growth projected, **there is negative demand thru 2030**

Office

- 749,281 square feet of retail space in 74 buildings. The occupancy rate is 95.68% with average rentals at \$13.63 psf
- **Demand for 69k sf thru 2025**

Retail

- 749,281 square feet retail in 74 buildings
- The occupancy rate - 95.68% (Av. rentals -\$13.63 psf)
- Supportable new establishments - fast food restaurants, eating places, and motor vehicles and parts
- **Demand for 31,517 sf** of new retail space of all types over the next **5 years**

Findings & Concepts – Market Study & Economic Development

CITY OF WHARTON

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

Downtown

- 113k sf of commercial space (multifamily, retail, office)
- **95% occupied**
- Average age of buildings 1933 (several dating back to 1900)

Housing

- **No listings**, 1 sale in 2023 - \$85k
- 2022 Average sale price \$88,250
- Average single-family lease is \$1,058 or \$1.11psf
- 2 new multifamily complexes on W Milam St – 51 units.
- **Several lofts above retail** – rents \$650 to \$1650

Retail

- **60,171 sf of retail space**
- The market rent is \$13.73psf
- **Vacancy at 11.9%**
- Demand for 13k sf thru 2025

Office

- **45,458 sf** of office space
- Market rent is \$20.68 psf with **0% vacancy**
- **Capture 30,615 sf over next 7 years**

Source: CoStar

Findings & Concepts – Market Study & Economic Development

CITY OF WHARTON

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE MEETING 2

September 26, 2023

Next Steps (10 min)

Draft Downtown Master Plan

October-November 2023

- Receive input from DSC (online or hard copy)
- Refine design materials based on input
- Prepare draft report for City, DSC and Project Committee review
- DSC Meeting 3
- Townhall Meeting (include City Council and others)
- Social media and website update

DISCUSSION, WRAP-UP & NEXT STEPS

CITY OF WHARTON

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN