

# Revitalization Toolkit

*presented to*

Madras Redevelopment Commission



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This report is broadly organized into two sections:

- **Findings.** Because many small town downtowns function like a single store, this report employs a store metaphor to dissect downtown into improvable components. The report opens by defining the downtown store, and then reflects on the execution of the store's core components, shown in the graphic below. In this metaphor, downtown's front doors are the entry points to downtown. Its aisles are its roads, alleys, and sidewalks. Its fixtures are the buildings in downtown, which house downtown's products, the city's businesses. Ultimately, a district draws much of its identity from the interplay between all of these elements.
- **Toolkits.** The latter half of the report is devoted to offering toolkits that property owners, business owners, and the public sector can use to improve downtown Madras' store.

Essentially, the store metaphor shares where to focus efforts, and the toolkits explain how to execute on specific projects that can enhance commerce in the downtown.

### The Downtown Madras Store

In order to improve performance in downtown Madras, all stakeholders must be laser focused on improving these four elements of store execution.

*Front Doors.* The buildings and businesses at the two main entries to downtown must be executing at a very high level in terms of visibility, transparency, and sidewalk engagement. Buildings and businesses at these key front doors are essentially the storefront windows to town, and right now, they are not getting anyone's attention, so it's easy to pass through town and not even realize a downtown is there.

*Aisles.* The two most important aisles to pay attention to are sidewalks and the one-way couplet that moves through downtown. Sidewalks need to do a much better job of showcasing people and products throughout the downtown, to encourage cross pollination between businesses. And, on the other end of the spectrum (in terms of scale), the one-way couplet through the center of town is having a negative impact. These types of streets are designed to move people through quickly, which is not good for commerce or circulation. Working with the Oregon

#### DOWNTOWN AS STORE

- Front Doors
- Aisles
- Fixtures
- Products

Department of Transportation to encourage 4th and 5th to fulfill their roles as Main Streets as well as a state highway will be critical for future success.

*Fixtures.* Buildings are the fixtures in the store metaphor, and they cradle the all important products in downtown, which are businesses. In downtown Madras, buildings appear to be working overtime to avoid attracting consumer attention. Helping buildings do a better job of a) jazzing up exteriors; b) right sizing spaces; and, c) creating a framework for tenant success with interior finishes are all crucial for improving execution in a commercial district.

*Businesses.* The brand of a downtown ultimately boils down to the collective identity of its businesses. In downtown Madras, this collective identity is nonexistent because it's impossible to see in downtown's storefront windows! Small businesses have a hard time winning over new customers, or reminding existing customers to return, if no one can see into a business. Focusing on creating transparency and offering compelling and interesting window encounters are cheap and easy ways to transform the look and feel of a downtown.

## **Managing the Store**

It is not possible for downtown to improve economic output and brand association unless the private sector and the public sector are working in lock step to make downtown thrive. An easy way to think about that is that ***everyone is in the business of improving sales per square foot downtown.***

The County is in the business of improving sales per square foot by reviewing zoning, code and processes to figure out how to be better land use collaborators, especially when it comes to renovating existing buildings and historic structures.

The City is in the business of improving sales per square foot by using the power to convene to bring the downtown community together and provide them with resources to improve downtown. Additionally, the city needs to collaborate with other public sector partners to manage the public realm — roads, street lighting, and parking policy — to the benefit of the downtown store.

Property owners are in the business of improving sales per square foot by making their buildings look awesome and by tenanting with active uses on the ground floor. Every landlord should require that tenants engage the sidewalk and rock their windows.

Business owners should be improving sales per square foot by interacting with neighboring establishments, by leveraging emotional connections with other like businesses in the downtown, and by providing places for people to see and be seen in Madras.

All of the elements of a downtown store are present in Madras, now everyone needs to work together to help it execute at its highest capacity.

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## PROJECT OVERVIEW

In February and March of 2019, the Madras Redevelopment Commission, the Madras Chamber of Commerce, and the City of Madras hosted Civilis Consultants with the goal of studying Madras downtown core and identifying opportunities for economic improvement. Civilis Consultants followed up their initial visit with an additional trip to Madras to document downtown in conditions that did not include feet of snow!

Findings and recommendations will be reported in two deliverables, both of which will include tools for businesses, property owners, and the public sector with a focus on creating brand and increasing sales per square foot in downtown. The first deliverable will be in the form of a presentation more detailed for the private sector. The second deliverable, which is this report, will provide an overarching record of Madras' findings and shared toolkits and offer more details for the public sector.



*A Downtown Winter Wonderland!*

Assessment of the districts in 2019 included:

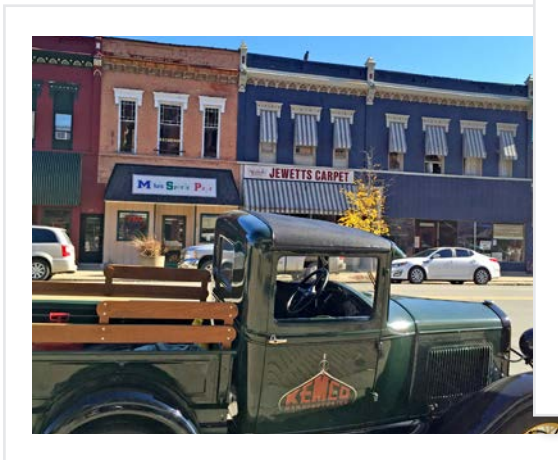
- **Tours.** With the City of Madras, Civilis reviewed commercial areas, upcoming improvement projects, and past improvement efforts in the downtown.
- **Focus Groups and Meetings.** Attended the Chamber of Commerce small format group interviews with property owners, business owners, foundation members, and local agency/staff to gather information about how Madras' commercial districts are performing. Conducted one-on-one interviews with the Madras City Manager, Finance Director, Community Development Director and Assistant Planner, as well as the Madras Chamber Director.
- **Mapping/Photography.** Documented activity on the street, assessed the highway and the downtown for short-term and long-term development opportunities, and identified nodes where it might be easiest to create a stronger identity for Madras' commercial areas.
- **District Secret Shopper.** Civilis toured businesses, and spent time in the district with a "tourist hat" on — recording what enticed and the places that provided positive brand association.



*Beautiful Snowy Madras!*

## DOWNTOWN MADRAS FINDINGS

A small town downtown is a distinct type of commercial organism. In its purest form, a small town downtown is: a) organized on a grid; b) has a commercial district that is typically comprised of a collection of smaller buildings built next to each other, right up to the sidewalk; and, c) businesses are oriented toward the street/sidewalk. In order to be economically successful, downtowns have to leverage these commercial characteristics to encourage collaboration between businesses and to provide distinct and unique experience for visitors.



**Downtown Example: Charlotte, MI**  
**Compact Form with few Parking Lots**



**Downtown Economics:**  
**Pedestrians Drive Sales/SF**

A useful way to evaluate a small town downtown is to break it into easy-to-understand components. And, because mixed-use districts generate economic activity via pedestrian traffic, these districts function much like a single store. So that is how we will frame our evaluation of downtown Madras: as a single store. In this section, we will first examine Madras' downtown store consisting of the following components: front doors, aisles, fixtures and products. And then, we will close with observations on characteristics about the downtown "store" as a whole.

### **DOWNTOWN AS STORE**

Generally, great stores execute on the same principles that promote success in places: they offer a fantastic experience, both inside and outside. In order to create those experiences, stores must consider their front doors (gateways to town), their aisles

#### **DOWNTOWN AS STORE**

- Front Doors
- Aisles
- Fixtures
- Products

and circulation patterns around the store (streets and sidewalks), their fixtures and shelving (buildings), and their product mix and merchandising (businesses and other recreational offerings).

We ask some of the same questions when trying to improve economic performance in a store as we do in a small town downtown, for example:

- How do you get customers' attention?
- What does your storefront look like?
- How do you entice them inside your store?
- What are your store's best-selling products?
- Are your aisles laid out nicely? Are they easy to navigate?
- Are there compelling products on your shelves?
- Is there something engaging throughout your store?

### ***DOWNTOWN'S FRONT DOORS***

Every person who drives through downtown should have a sense that they are there! They should immediately know: *I am in downtown!*

How do people know they are downtown?

#### **DOWNTOWN AS STORE**

- Front Doors
- Aisles
- Fixtures
- Products

**Where are the real entries to downtown?  
They aren't at the couplet, shown here!**

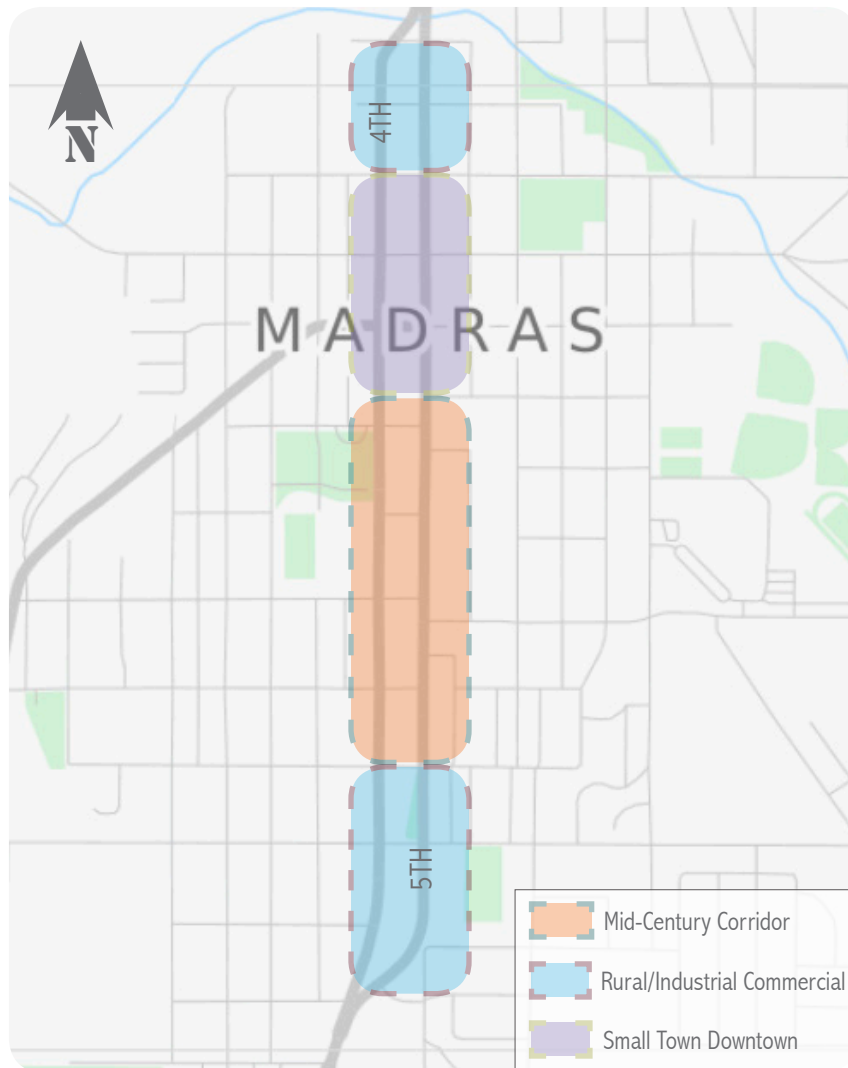


People do not figure out they are downtown from a sign!

Visitors and locals alike must feel and understand they are in a downtown from the collective experience offered by the buildings, the businesses, the streetscape, and the level of activity... they know because they see people.

To get a sense of where downtown's true front doors are right now, we started by looking at the commercial district experiences offered in central Madras, which are documented below.

## DOWNTOWN MADRAS COMMERCIAL DISTRICT EXPERIENCES



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**Rural/Industrial Commercial.** These are areas of the downtown that feature either industrial uses, and/or a wide range of very mixed uses that are usually set back from the street.

These types of districts typically have low building density and low lot coverage with high parking ratios. In this type of district, there might be a vacant lot/field next to an auto repair place, next to a fast food restaurant. Generally, these districts feature a preponderance of automobile focused uses. They are not areas where you see people walking or bicycling.

### RURAL/INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL EXAMPLES IN MADRAS



**Mid-Century Corridor.** As compared to Rural/Industrial Commercial, Mid-Century Corridors usually have a bit more building density, with structures not set quite as far back. The uses also start to segue away from industrial and include more service of-fice. Parking lots and asphalt remain dominant features of these districts though.

Mid-Century Corridor districts remain unattractive places to circulate as a pedestrian or cyclist.

### MID-CENTURY CORRIDOR EXAMPLES IN MADRAS



**Small Town Downtown.** The last category of district mapped in the city core of Madras is the Small Town Downtown district. These types of areas feature gridded streets with smaller lot development.

Images that highlight some of Madras' Small Town Downtown district are shown below.

### SMALL TOWN DOWNTOWN BUILDINGS IN MADRAS



General characteristics include some zero lot line buildings, fewer parking lots, buildings on both sides of the street, and concentrated retail, restaurant and professional service office users. Ideally for downtown commerce, there is a critical mass of many buildings erected directly up to the sidewalk edge because this intensity of activity and variety of visual offerings is what makes them engaging for pedestrians. Embracing pedestrians is important because downtowns make their money from the cross pollination of businesses that happens by walkers and bicyclists.

Currently in downtown Madras, SW 5th St has the best concentration of buildings with a Small Town Downtown feel. D Street has the next best concentration. The next two that follow are SE 6th St and SW 4th St, respectively.

Defining the boundaries of the Small Town Downtown area is critical for determining where the actual front doors are, because downtown's gateways are where buildings and businesses are offering building density and engaging visuals at the street front.

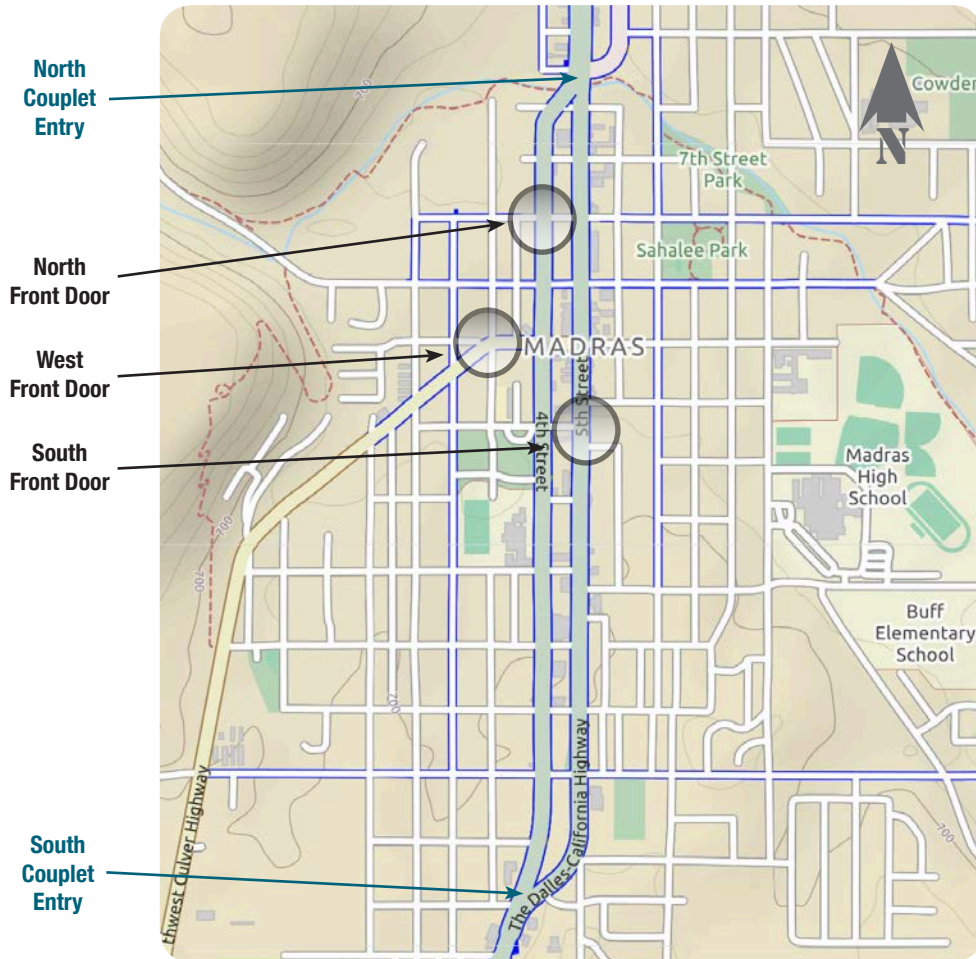
For downtown Madras, there are 3 entries that offer this experience to the Small Town Downtown area, one each on SW 4th St and SW 5th St, and one arriving from the west on Hwy 361.



*5th St Has the Best Downtown Bldgs!*

Below are the three front doors to Madras' Small Town Downtown area:

## DOWNTOWN MADRAS FRONT DOORS



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### **North Front Door**

This front door is on the one-way couplet heading south, and begins around B Street. The tractors that immediately precede this front door are engaging, even though they are an industrial use adjacent to downtown because they:

- Represent a business you would not see on an average suburban corridor. This is visually engaging and draws the eye for tourists.
- Authentically reflect the agricultural uses that surround Madras, which is a great way to brand a distinct rural experience. A community with this brand association can certainly leverage that to strengthen a food brand, for instance.



*It's Easy to Miss the North Front Door*

This front door is problematic because it is not showing passersby that a cute small town downtown area is upon them. Instead, it features two parking lots and a Taco Bell drive through, and when in traffic, as shown above right, it's hard to really tune in and realize that you are actually in a downtown.

For that reason, really emphasizing the run of small buildings on the west side of 4th at the front door will be critical for reinforcing the brand of downtown.



**North Entry: Best Buildings**



## **East Front Door**

This front door is on Highway 361 coming into town, which becomes D St. This entry is important because D St is by far the best east-west street that traverses across the highway couplet. It has the best collection of connected building stock that really showcases the idea that a downtown exists in Madras!



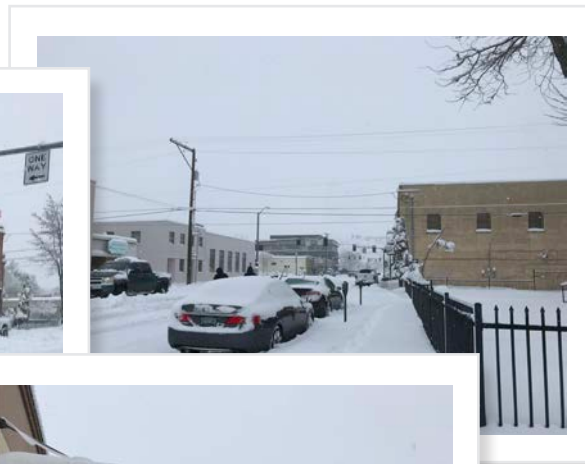
*East Front Door*

Unfortunately, this entry on D St and SW 3rd St has three parking lots/ empty lots on the four corners. The new mixed use building is a visual plus though!

Also, this front door has a “round the bend” nature. Folks traveling in on 361 take a right turn before the road straightens out and you see the visual pictured above right.

Below are some perspectives of D Street, which show the wonderful concentration of buildings that offer a real Main St/small downtown feel.

## **D St Building Density is Good!**



## **South Front Door**

This final front door is for northbound traffic on Highway 26, which on the one-way couplet forces drivers on 5th St. This street is the original two-way highway, and today has the best remaining collection of downtown infrastructure in the city.

There is a downward grade change on 5th St right around E street, where this front door is located. So this entry is perched at the top of the hill into downtown, so to speak.

This is the strongest, and most important front door because it has the best collection of businesses and buildings that are needed to drive downtown identity and commerce. The goal for this front door will be to make it impossible for anyone to drive through and NOT notice downtown!

Identifying these important points of entry for the downtown Madras experience will help guide investment of resources and improvements to the right place for the biggest economic impact on downtown.



*South Front Door to Downtown*

## ***DOWNTOWN'S AISLES***

In a store, aisles should be easy to navigate and understand, and there should be items of interest for people to look at and interact with while they wander the aisles. In a downtown, things like streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, alleys, trails, and waterways can serve as aisles.

Aisles are the circulatory system for a downtown, and they have many important roles to play that either harm or help economic performance.

The bottom line in a downtown environment is that if walkers don't feel comfortable on the sidewalk, and drivers don't feel they can easily locate their destinations, then the critical cross pollination between businesses that propels sales per square foot in a mixed-use district cannot exist.

In this section we will discuss the types of aisles in downtown Madras and geographical context that may be having an impact on their function.

### ***DOWNTOWN AS STORE***

- > Front Doors
- > Aisles
- > Fixtures
- > Products

## One-Way Streets

Downtown Madras is dominated by the one-way couplet comprised of SW 4th St and SW 5th St. (A one-way couplet is when traffic carried on a single, two-way street is diverted onto two, one-way streets.)

### DOWNTOWN MADRAS ONE-WAY COUPLET



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Since a small downtown operates much like a single store, it stands to reason that its aisles might act in a similar fashion to one another. So let's turn the downtown as store metaphor on its head. Let's ask how a store would fare if we treated its aisles the same way the one-way couplet impacts Madras' circulation.

Consider what a shopper's reactions might be if a store had unidirectional aisles. Imagine a shopper entering a supermarket and discovering they had only one

proscribed path they could take upon entering. And once inside, what if they were required to walk down certain aisles in one direction, and other aisles in an opposite pattern? What if this shopper found that some aisles had no products, and others demanded people to walk more rapidly than was possible to really absorb the experience of where they were? Or imagine that some aisles only featured the backs of displays? Or had random spots to park shopping carts?

I can tell you what the shopper's reaction would be: *leave the store, and never come back!!* This is the same reaction that people have in small downtowns dominated by one-way couplets.

A traditional downtown two-way street grid functions well economically for a downtown because it allows for efficient circulation (multiple ways to get from point A to point B), it encourages exploration, and it ensures that every block face has a "front," creating life and vibrancy throughout the street network. (Traditional downtown development would include small lots that would fill the block faces with buildings facing outward, and not provide on-street parking.)

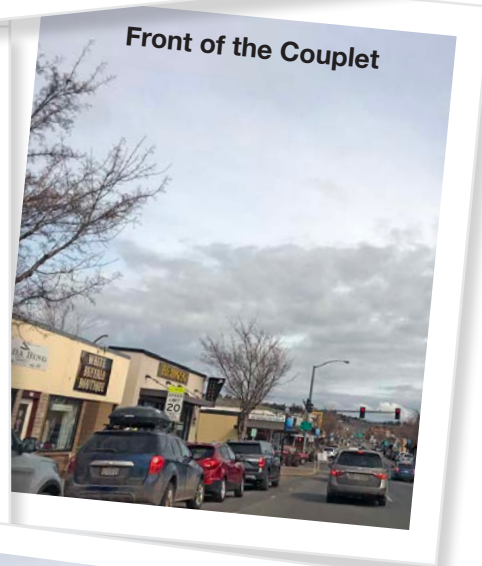
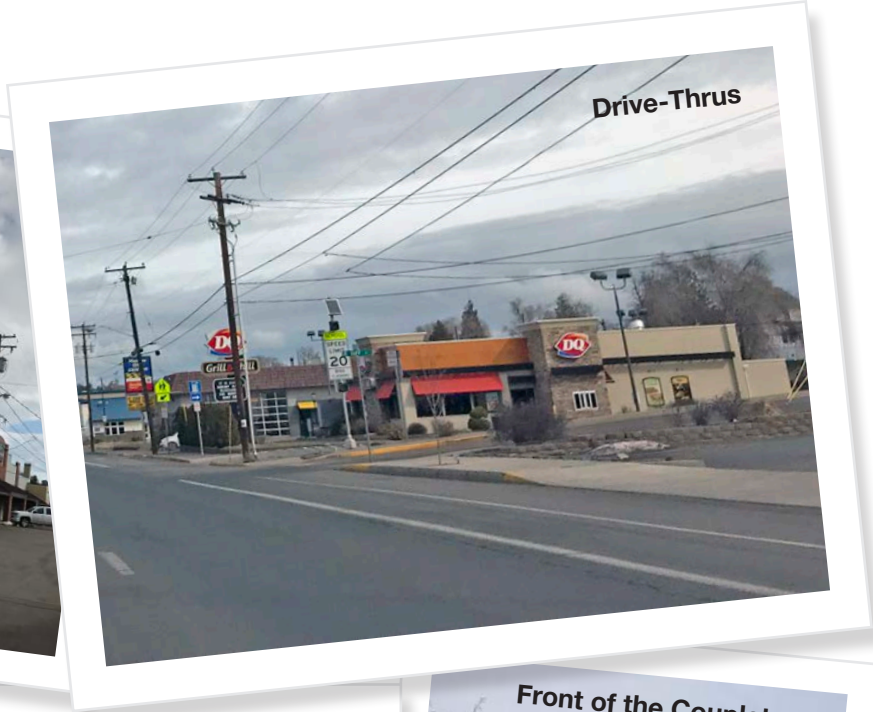
On the other hand, one-way couplets make it easier to drive *through* places, but in facilitating throughput, they generally make the district more difficult to drive or walk *around*. Over time, downtowns with one-way couplets typically become more auto accommodating over time, including exhibiting the following characteristics:

- Buildings get torn down to make room for parking.
- The addition of national chain drive-through businesses.
- Less retail, more service office and light industrial uses.
- Structures built with setbacks, often oriented on parking lots instead of streets and sidewalks.
- Lots are combined to create larger parcels that can accommodate buildings with higher parking ratios that do not mirror traditional downtown development patterns.
- In the downtown core, couplets often end up with one side feeling more like "the back" in a district, and the other side feeling like "the front" of the district.
- Loss of cross couplet connectivity in the grid for both pedestrians and cars.
- Degradation of the pedestrian environment due to increased curb cuts, fast moving automobile traffic, and the louder traffic noise.

These conditions exist in Madras, shown in the images on the following page.



# COMMON ONE-WAY COUPLET CONDITIONS



Additionally, one-way street grids restrict lines of sight for passers through, giving them only one perspective of a place.

The other challenge with the couplet in Madras in particular is that the two sides of the couplet do not dovetail well with spending mood for tourist traffic.

4th St is the “I’m *happy, I’m on vacation, I have money*” side of the street. This is when downtown wants to draw visitors and when tourists are primed to spend the most money. Yet, there is a minimum of infrastructure that actually makes a driver feel they are in a downtown along SW 4th St. Adding more activity and more buildings on SW 4th St between C and D will be important to enticing more tourists to stop in Madras.



SW 4th Is the “I’m on Vacation Street” Side of St But Looks Like the “Please Pass Through” Side

Meanwhile, SW 5th St has the best collection of buildings to draw the eye and lure visitors for a downtown experience. Unfortunately, they are located on the side of the couplet that is the “*I have to go back to work, I am in a hurry, and I am out of money and time*” direction.

Over time, accentuating the downtown feel of 5th St, and bringing that small downtown district feel to 4th St and the cross streets of B, C, D and will be essential to downtown’s future success. These need to feel and act as downtown neighborhood-serving streets, not pass through state highway streets.



Parked Trucks Blocking Biz—Not Cool

### **State Highways**

Madras is at the intersection of multiple state highways: Highway 26/97 which runs on the N/S couplet, and Highway 361, which comes in from the west.

The challenge for small towns with State Highways in any jurisdiction is that these roads usually have to play two roles: that of Main St for the downtown, and that of pass-through highway. Usually, State Departments of Transportation control these roads, and they err on the side of freight throughput, rather than encouraging livability and commerce.

Highway 26/97 has a lot of truck traffic that travels fairly quickly through town, and creates both noise and some nuisance, such as trucks parking on the road in front of storefronts, blocking views into businesses. Focus group participants referenced dangerous vehicle-pedestrian interactions that occur on the State Highway in the core part of downtown.

Traffic counts on each side of the couplet generally range between 10,000 to 11,000 cars per day, according to 2017 Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) 2015 Transportation Volume Tables.

### **Streets & Grade Changes**

There is quite a bit of grade change in downtown Madras. There is a downhill slope from south to north, and a downhill slope from east to west. This results in some infrastructure being harder to see from the road, either being above or below grade.



*Parts of Downtown are Less Visible b/c of Grade*

This not only impacts visibility, but can also make it harder to entice customers to stop, and to choose to go into a business.

One of the biggest challenges a business faces is to induce customers to engage in the simple act of crossing a threshold. If a storefront door is above or below sidewalk level, it is even more difficult.

### **Sidewalks**

The second major type of aisle in a downtown Madras' store is the sidewalk.

To get a better sense of how sidewalks in economically under-performing downtowns are functioning as aisles, it's helpful to imagine a store where every aisle contained products hermetically sealed in glass walk-in cases. While walking through this store's aisles, you could not smell, hear, taste, or touch anything without entering the walk-in case. Probably not a great idea for a store, and it is definitely not a great idea for a downtown.

But sadly, that is how many downtown retail environments evolved over the years as they tried to compete with malls after World War II. Since the mid-century advent of automobile-based retail, ground floor businesses have forgotten how to leverage downtown infrastructure to drive sales.

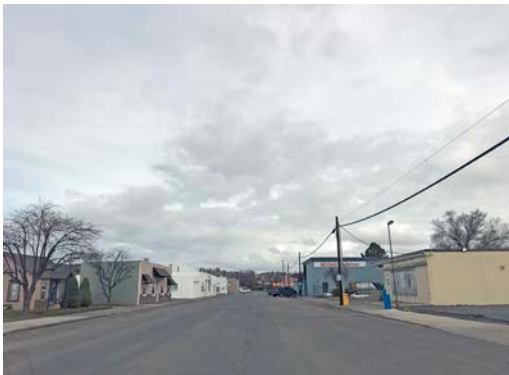
Bland sidewalks were not always the retail norm in downtowns. In the past, mixed-use environments blurred the border between businesses and the street, creating a multi-sensory environment on the sidewalk where pedestrians could touch, smell, taste, and hear. Businesses brought their business out onto the sidewalk on a routine basis.

Madras' sidewalks have some good news and some bad news.

**Sidewalk Good News!** Much of the good news is in the public realm: nice street lights, flower basket holders, and decorative banners are all positive elements that are a part of sidewalk life. Additionally, the triptych of pots positioned on key intersections that contain evergreens are attractive, even in heavy snowfall, as you can see in the photographs on the following page.



Challenges in the public realm include narrow sidewalks, signage and posts in the pedestrian right of way, long crossings with no bump outs across the highway, and not a consistent presence of street trees. Additionally, there are no sidewalks on some areas of 3rd St.



*Sidewalk Dialog Is Essential to Draw Visitors*

**Sidewalk Not So Good News.** In general, the private sector is not leveraging sidewalks and the pedestrian environment to drive sales, either in a snowy environment or in dryer conditions.

A sidewalk is like a stage; it's a place to tell a city's story, a place to see and be seen in Madras, a place to interact with businesses in a multisensory way.

The private sector is not leveraging the sidewalk to tell an engaging and compelling story about what it has to offer. The bottom line is that sad sidewalks equal lower economic output in a downtown.

There is good news about the bad news: it is relatively cheap and easy to amp up the sidewalk dialog to engage visitors and locals alike.

## DOWNTOWN'S FIXTURES

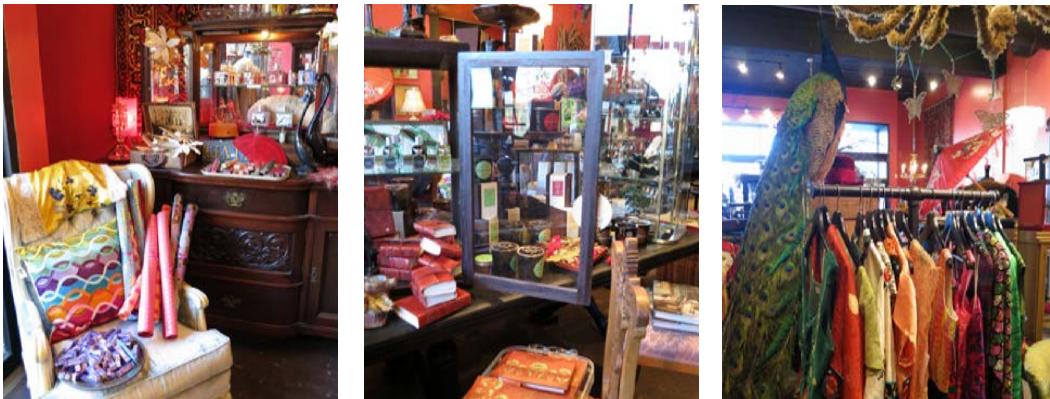
In a store, the equipment that cradles, displays, houses, and shows off the products are called fixtures. These display devices can be utilitarian, or they can actually help create ambience and mood, showcasing merchandise in a compelling and meaningful fashion.

In the pictures below, every fixture contributes to the experience of being in the store Flutter and does a stellar job of showcasing products, which is how it should be.

### DOWNTOWN AS STORE

- > Front Doors
- > Aisles
- > Fixtures
- > Products

### THESE FIXTURES CONTRIBUTE TO STORE BRAND AND AMBIENCE



In a downtown, the fixtures are its buildings and its products are its businesses. Using your products and fixtures appropriately in a downtown is critical for economic performance. And, it's important to remember that these critical components of downtown's store are controlled almost exclusively by the private sector.

There are two key questions that must be answered when it comes to fixture (building) execution in the downtown commercial environment:

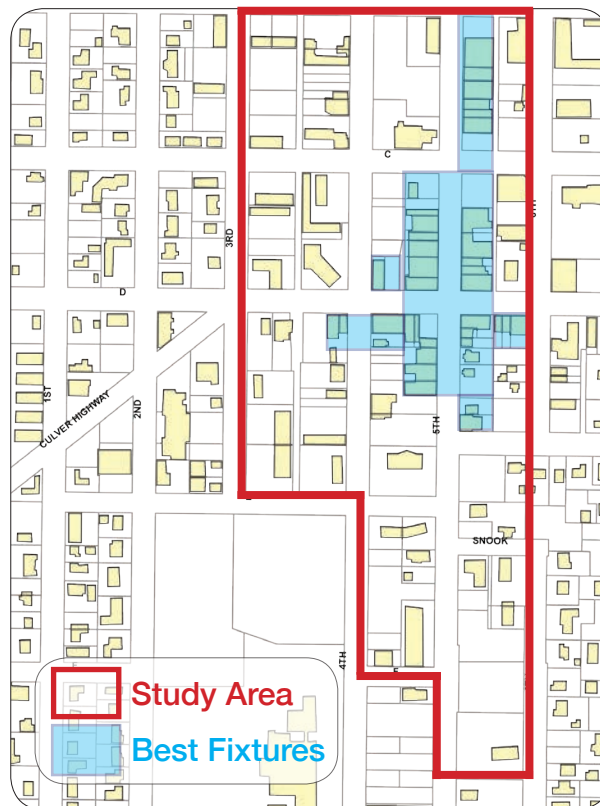
1. Is there a sufficient concentration of buildings built right up to the sidewalk, right next to each other, without parking lot interruption?
2. Does each building contribute to or detract from downtown's brand? If each building isn't doing its level best to create a positive district experience and get my attention, then money is being left on the table in downtown.

The first characteristic, density of offerings, is important in both a store or a downtown. Shoppers in a store do not want to see big blank spots with no fixtures or merchandise. Similarly, walkers in a downtown do not want to see blanks in the physical environment, such as inward-facing buildings, ugly buildings, or vacant lots. A store with a lot of blanks makes shoppers leave, and so does a downtown with a lot of blanks.

A critical mass of interconnected buildings tells a physical story of vibrancy and excitement, a story that can be broadcast by the district 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It's a story that is enticing to pedestrians, which is important because it is the cross pollination between businesses that happens by people on foot that drives economic success in a downtown.

Currently, in downtown Madras, the best concentration of building density is located in the blue boxes, shown below.

### BEST FIXTURE DENSITY IN DOWNTOWN STUDY AREA



Quality of fixtures is also important, and relates back to individual building presentation. In simpler terms, is every individual building contributing to the overall brand of a place, and is that building creating a framework for tenant success? A series of great buildings can make a downtown district, and a series of ugly buildings surrounded by

ugly parking lots can break a downtown district. Likewise, a great building can uplift a mediocre business, and a horrible building can sink a wonderful business. The blunt way to say it is: *How Fixtures Look Really Matters*.

The good news is that there are some great buildings in downtown Madras, and spots on 5th St and on D St that have a critical mass of building density as shown on the diagram on the previous page. Many of these buildings could really pop right away with smaller investments.

However, there is still a fair amount of work to do to ensure that they are making downtown's store better. Challenges include:

- **Too Much Beige!** It is the job of downtown buildings to get our attention. It is the job of downtown buildings to highlight interesting architectural features in the downtown. It is the job of downtown buildings to set the stage for the products (businesses) in their ground floors. If everything is some vague, tasteful, and forgettable shade of beige, none of those things is being accomplished. Currently Madras is using a very bland color palate.
- **Too Many Parking Lots/Boring Parking Lots.** As discussed previously in aisles, a common problem in a downtown with a one-way couplet is that a plethora of parking lots spring up over time, disconnecting the downtown and discouraging circulation between businesses.
- **If I Can See It, It's a Front.** Another by-product of the one-way couplet and the plethora of parking lots that arise out of these environments is that we have buildings that are essentially islands, with all of their faces visible. (As opposed to traditional downtown zero lot-line development where structures are built next to one another, ensuring that side and back walls are not visible.) In a downtown, if a customer can see any part of your building, then it is contributing, or detracting from downtown, and needs to be treated as a "front". Bottom line, right now downtown Madras is dominated by unadorned walls on the sides of walls and the backs of buildings, often with a mix of building services like trash and recycling very visible.
- **Dated Interiors with Bad Lighting.** Any space that is not offering the best experience that a historic downtown district has to offer in terms of exposed finishes, high ceilings, and great lighting is making it more difficult for tenants to succeed and is detracting from downtown's brand. Dated interiors



*There Are Blank Walls Everywhere Downtown*

also speak to space sizes. Usually spaces that are vacant or underutilized on some way are also very large, not offering the size/amenities that retailers and restaurateurs need to today.

- **Lack of Transparency.** In a downtown, a customer should be able to participate in the interior experience while they are outside, and vice versa. It is a property owners job to a) ensure that windows are transparent; and b) require window transparency and activation from their tenants. Currently, there is a very hard line between interior and exterior in downtown Madras. This will be covered in more detail in the next section “Products” below.
- **Tenant Mix.** Over time, property owners need to make sure they use their fixtures to house active businesses. (Product selection is key for a downtown and for a store.)



## DOWNTOWN'S PRODUCTS

The last element of the store metaphor we have been using to describe downtowns is to look at products, or its businesses.

When we are inside a store, the experience provided to us as visitors is driven largely by the products for sale, and how they are merchandised. If there is a great selection of products, engagingly displayed, beautifully lit, and inventively laid out in a nice environment, then we are going to have a great experience in that store.

Downtowns are no different. Downtown Madras takes its identity from ground floor businesses, which are essentially the products in downtown's store. What types of businesses contribute to identity? Generally those that are local, active, and visually engaging are the key to building economic success.

As a short-cut, we are going to call these businesses “active”. Ideally, active uses are businesses that are a) open to the public; b) have dynamic and interesting windows; c) create multi-sensory experiences; d) be something a pedestrian might frequent; e) use the sidewalk as an extension of their business; f) collaborate and cross-pollinate with other businesses; and, g) are ever-evolving. An economically successful downtown district is one that always gives customers a new experience!

Active means that I can look at the business from the street, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and get a sense of what the business sells, who its target market is, and what sort of experience it will offer a consumer on the interior. I should get this impression in a few seconds.



When we study an individual store to document customer experience, one of the things that we map are hot spots and cold spots—the areas of the store where people spend a lot of time and the areas where they don't spend enough time. For a downtown store, we do something similar, called the Ground Floor Activation Map (GFAM). Here, we are trying to map our areas of activity (blue), and our areas of inactivity (red and green). The Madras GFAM is below.

GROUND FLOOR ACTIVATION MAP FOR DOWNTOWN MADRAS



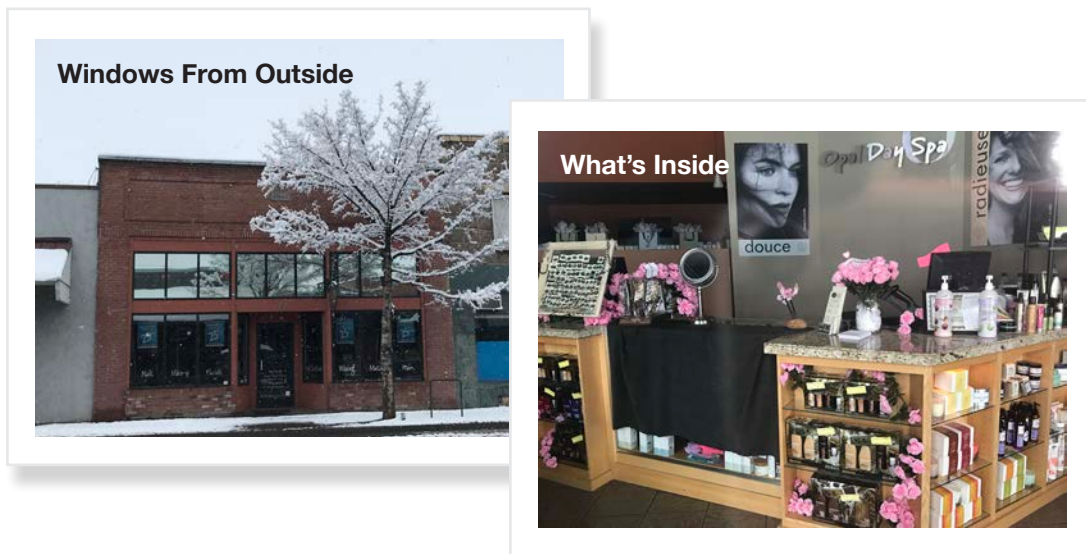
In the map on the previous page, ground floor uses are color coded to indicate which buildings are vacant (no products), which areas are active (well merchandised with interactive products), and which areas are inactive (products kept under a counter that no one can see or interact with, or products that aren't inherently engaging to pedestrians, or products not open to the public).

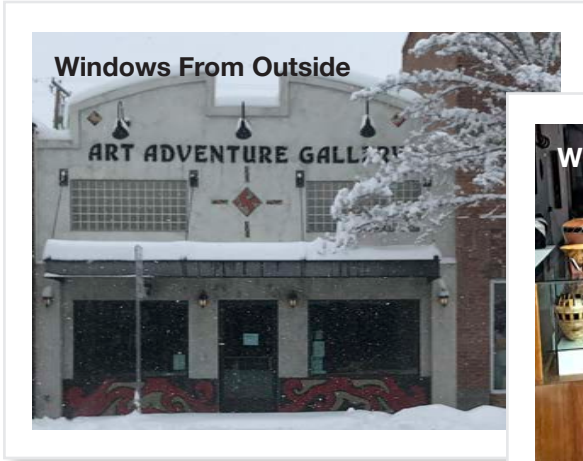
The two biggest challenges for downtown commerce are visible on this map:

1. **Too Many Empty Lots/Parking Lots.** Anything on this map that is not colored in the commercial areas is a parking lot or vacant lot. Downtown needs a more concentrated fixtures so it can host more interconnected products!
2. **Too Much Red!** Coloring the GFAM requires some judgement calls. The map created for Madras is the most generous interpretation in terms of awarding blue. I say that because many of the businesses that I have awarded with a blue label are not actually executing on engaging windows and sidewalk activation. But even with this generous interpretation, there is entirely too much red in the downtown. Every business on the ground floor has to engage with the street and create more cross pollination.

So, the goal for everyone downtown to spur more economic activity is to string together as much concentrated blue as possible. The more blue in a district, the healthier it is. The more green and red, the more vacant it feels, and the less likely people are to visit because there is not a critical mass of offerings.

The cheapest and easiest way to begin creating more of that activity is by tackling windows. There are really cool spaces in downtown Madras, and they are all invisible from the street because almost all business windows are overly reflective. See the examples that follow:





**Windows From Outside**



**What's Inside**

And don't forget restaurants. These are the establishments that absolutely must execute on creating activation in a downtown. They must blur the line between interior and exterior because the most effective way to drive business to a food service establishment is to showcase people. Humans are pack animals, and we are hard wired to go do, see, and experience what we observe others doing, seeing, and experiencing. Yet, when traveling through downtown Madras, it's almost impossible to understand how many restaurants there are, and whether or not there are any customers in those restaurants. Given the number of tourists traveling through Madras, there is a lot of missed opportunity here.

Restaurant window examples from Madras are below. The best sign for a restaurant is happy people dining that are visible from the street. Both of these restaurants look closed because I cannot see in the windows.



**Restaurants Need Transparent Windows to Showcase People**



## Minding the Store

General observations about downtown's store came out of focus group meetings, findings for which will be discussed below. This section will also recount the experience downtown Madras offers in the evening and discuss regional brand associations and resources.

### Focus Groups

In focus groups about downtown, businesses mentioned that recovery since the Great Recession has been steady, but many still have not reached pre-recession volumes of business. This is common for smaller communities around the country.

Many focus group attendees mentioned wanting a wider variety of food options available in the downtown, as well as wishing there were more clothing options for both men and women. It was noted that a large portion of establishments in downtown are local serving, but some derive the majority of their business from pass through traffic.

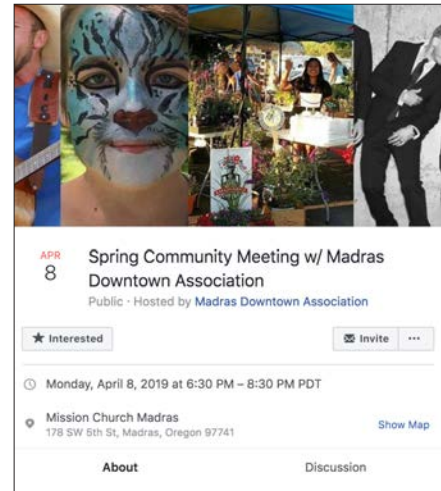
There currently does not seem to be a lot of cross promotion happening between businesses. But, the formation of the downtown association and calendar of events that has been created and implemented for the downtown are a fantastic step in the right direction to start forging relationships, sharing information, and cross pollination customers.

Curing these interviews, Madras' real passion for community and volunteerism was identified as a core tenet of citizenship in this city. There are a lot of people and organizations participating in multiple layers of civic engagement.

It was frequently mentioned that people choose to live in Madras partly because of the physical beauty, and it is true that many of the residential developments in the upper elevations around Madras offer spectacular views. This idea of physical beauty could be better reflected in the downtown!

Professional recruitment was referenced as a difficulty in Madras, for instance trying to attract doctors to the hospital. Both a lack of amenities and a lack of higher end housing options were mentioned as obstacles to attracting these kinds of residents.

Challenges with housing affordability were also mentioned as being an issue in Madras. Having a wider array of housing, both for sale and rent, was mentioned as being something that would help the city economically. It was particularly mentioned that trying to



*Madras Downtown Association Events*

recruit and retain entry level professionals, such as teachers, was a problem because there wasn't enough housing stock that was accessible for them to purchase or lease.

The news that a splash pad will be coming to downtown Madras was shared as a point of excitement. This will definitely be a "best selling" product in downtown that will draw locals. Businesses will want to play off of this to drive sales.

### *Downtown After Dark*

A downtown in any climate should never feel closed after dark. If people still pass through your community, then your buildings and your businesses should always be trying to show them something. Owners and businesses are paying for their real estate 24/7, so it should be serving as a fantastic 24/7 advertisement for downtown as a whole, and for each individual business, regardless of whether establishments are actually open or closed.

In the Pacific Northwest, where it gets dark by 4:30 pm in the winter, and feels dark even earlier when it's cloudy, this is even more important. Downtown must be compelling in the darkness because almost all of your businesses will be open at some point during the night.

There were some bright spots (pun intended!) in terms of good evening experiences, see below.

### BRIGHT SPOTS DOWNTOWN!

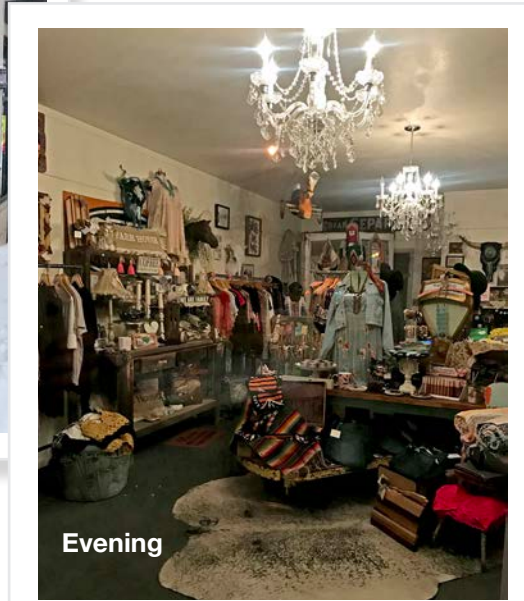


There were a few businesses that had a better presentation through their windows at night when they were closed, than they did in the daylight when they were open, such as the White Buffalo Boutique and the Black Bear Diner, which you can see on the following page.



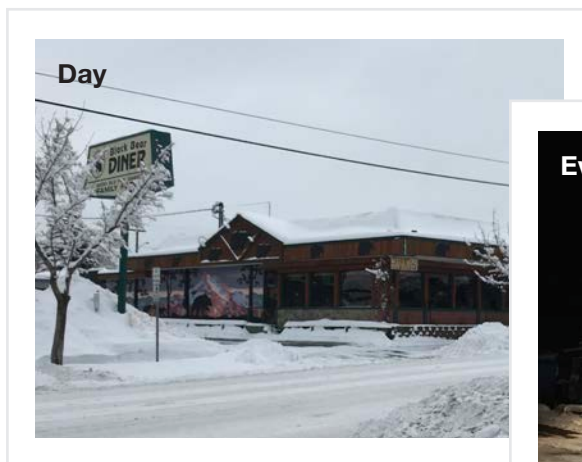
Day

**Transparency  
Improvement at Night**



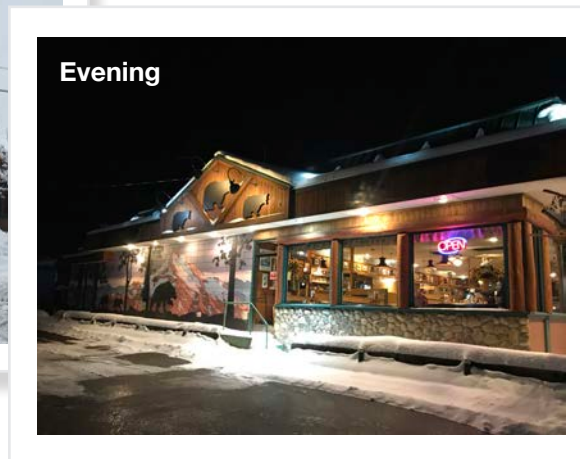
Evening

As was discussed previously, showcasing people is one of the most important roles of restaurants, to build their own business and to improve the overall brand of downtown. The Black Bear Diner looks like a different, much more vibrant place in the evening.



Day

**Transparency  
Improvement at Night**



Evening

Despite these glowing examples, there is definitely room for improvement in lighting downtown's store in several areas:

### **Type Of Lighting**

- ***Interior Lighting.*** There are a lot of downtown ground floor commercial spaces with fluorescent lighting.
- ***Window Lighting.*** All windows should have track lighting directly above the panes so that storefront displays are visible.
- ***Exterior Building Lighting.*** Sconce lighting, goose neck lighting, etc helps to showcase and frame buildings, provide architectural features in and of themselves, and to create district ambiance.
- ***Art/Mural Lighting.*** Existing and future art projects in the downtown. Consider light installations that are works of art in and of themselves.
- ***Decorative Lighting.*** This can be tree lighting, holiday lighting, etc.

### **Color of Lighting**

- ***Street Lighting.*** The historic street lights are gorgeous, but the actual color spectrum of light in the bulbs being used are very blue and do not create an appropriate ambiance. Generally lighting at 3000 Kelvin or lower is preferred for the shade of amber it produces.
- ***Programmable Lighting.*** Modern LEDs are fully programmable to be able to display a full spectrum of light and can be programmed to change seasonally.

### ***Regional Identity and Resources***

A downtown should be a distillation of what is happening around it regionally, and be place that reflects its people. To that end, it's important to think about what surrounds downtown, and how Madras can be a gateway to what is happening around the county. After all, downtown is the region's most visible face. It's also critical to understand what resources are available regionally to interconnect and express the region's offerings. The following areas of strength were mentioned in interviews and focus groups, and/or observed during time-on-the-ground.

- ***Agriculture.*** The entry into Madras from the north takes visitors immediately by the large presence of inventory from Ag West. And from the south, the

drive between Redmond and Bend is dominated by agricultural uses, with farm equipment sales becoming visible as automobile traffic enters Madras. So there is a dominant visual theme around agriculture as you enter downtown, but there is almost no expression of agriculture while in downtown.

- **Outdoor Recreation.** Fishing and rock climbing were most frequently mentioned as the preeminent outdoor recreation opportunities in Jefferson County. Also, the large number of trails around the town were cited as being frequently used and a big community amenity. On a regional basis, there are impressive trail networks for everything from horseback riding to Nordic skiing to garden variety hiking. You can even rent a houseboat on Lake Billy Chinook.
- **Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon.** The Confederated Tribes are located in Jefferson County, but there is little expression of this adjacency within downtown. The reservation is the largest employer in Jefferson County, and it is home to the Warm Springs Museum, a fantastic collection celebrating the culture and history of the three Confederated Tribes: the Warm Springs, Wasco and Paiutes.
- **Cultural Diversity.** Interviewees shared that the diversity in Madras was a real strength, and reported that the schools, and the population at large in the county were roughly split evenly between Latinos, Native Americans, and Anglos. Although there are not currently efforts focused on intentionally reflecting and/or leveraging diversity in the downtown, there are many institutions that could collaborate to ensure that happened. (See last bullet point.)
- **Airport/Airshow/Air Museum.** It's very unusual for a community the size of Madras to have an airport, complete with a museum housing the Erickson Aircraft Collection and the annual Airshow of the Cascades.
- **Jefferson County Fairgrounds.** Events at the south end of downtown, such as the Jefferson County Fair and Cowdeo are fantastic to have in the community.
- **Madras Performing Arts Center.** This multi-use theater shared with the high school is located just to the east of downtown and brings a high quality visual arts venue to Madras. It seats 600.
- **Organizational Capacity.** There are many organizations in Madras serving the greater region, including Jefferson County, the City of Madras, the Madras Redevelopment Commission, the Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council, the Central Oregon Community College, the Central Oregon Agriculture Research and Extension Center, and the Bean Foundation. In regards to the latter, Madras is fortunate to have a philanthropic organization like the Bean Foundation operating in its midst, since this is a resource not usually available to a city with the population of Madras.



## Facade Improvement Assessments

Below are the facade improvement projects that have been completed under the MRC's Urban Renewal program over the years.

### DOWNTOWN MADRAS FACADE IMPROVEMENTS



Civilis Consultants has been asked to assess the facade improvement programs with an eye toward capturing lessons that will inform the next incarnation of improvement programs to boost economic performance in downtown Madras. The projects can be grouped into two typologies: Maintenance Improvement and Exterior Improvement. Please see descriptions and information below.

## *Maintenance Improvement*

Projects that do not result in a change of use to something more active, do not significantly improve the exterior appearance of a building, or result in a new demising scheme to make space more leasable are listed under this section and are considered Maintenance Improvement projects in this report.

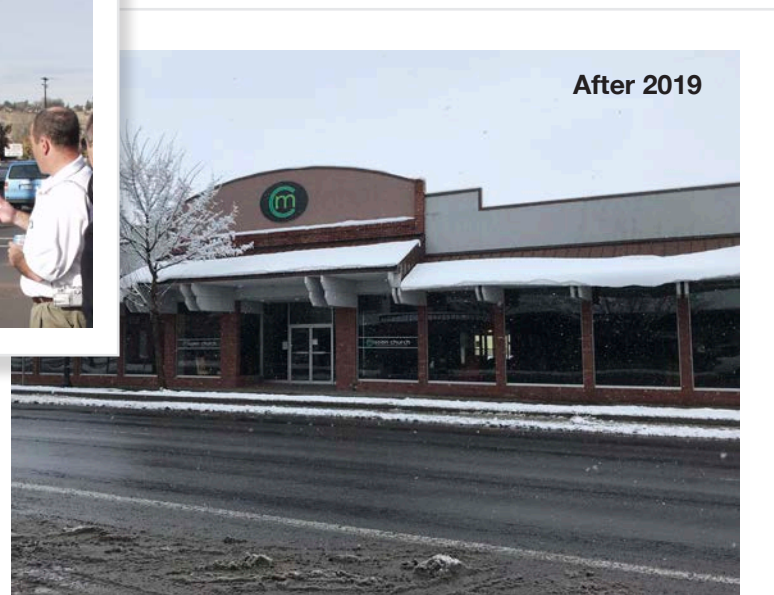
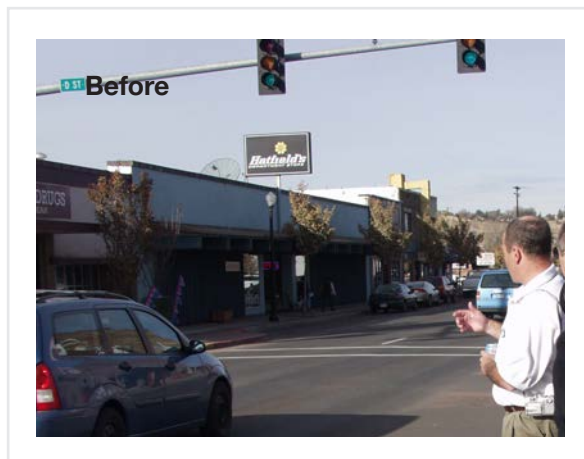
Generally, if a facade improvement program is not **significantly** raising the bar in terms of use, activity, brand execution, visual appeal, or space size/finish, then it should not receive public investment.

The two projects in this section are a pub and church facade improvement.

While the church project represents some improvement to the exterior, it is still too large a space, it is still a space that does not activate or interact with the commercial uses that surround it, and it is still visually bland. This facade improvement does not offer enhanced appeal for downtown. (On a side note, there is tremendous opportunity to carve out social goal commercial space on the front of the church!)

The pub is another use that might be mildly better than previously, but it's still not helping downtown, which needs food uses to have outdoor seating and showcase people!

### MISSION CHURCH



## MADRAS PUB & DELI

After 2019



After 2019



### *Exterior Improvement*

The remaining four improvement projects — Wild Bleu, Reynoso, Great Earth and Madras Vision Source — more significantly altered the exteriors than what was found in Maintenance Improvement projects.

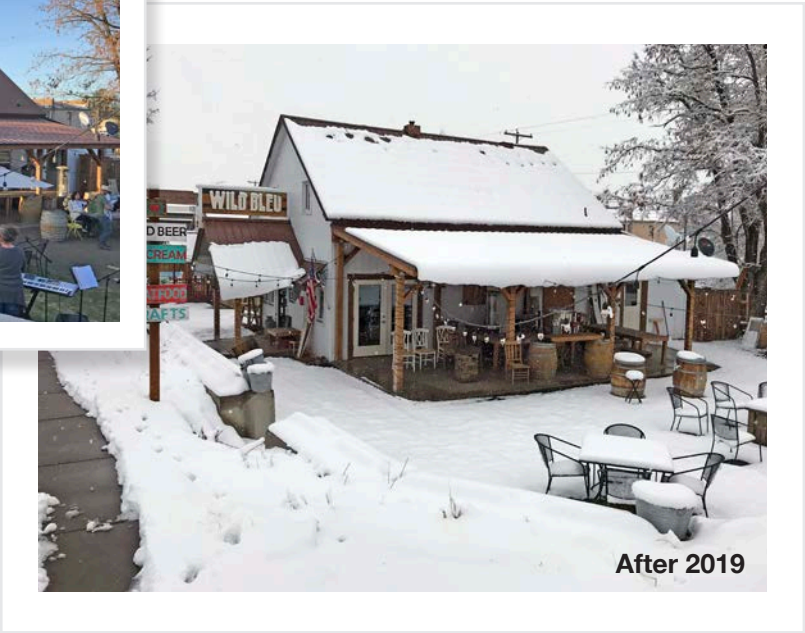
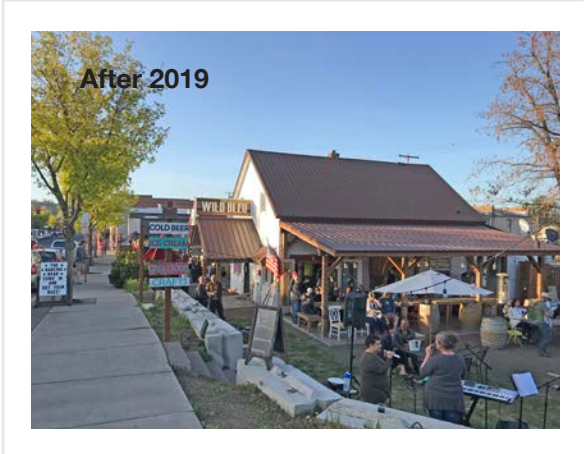
The Wild Bleu project brought dramatic visual change, primarily through improving its parking lot space and converting it to customer space. The building exterior is better, but maybe a wild blue paint scheme would be appropriate for craft-centric Wild Bleu!

The optometrist renovation is a major change to the exterior, and it is definitely a more visually interesting structure with a lot of engaging textures that are pedestrian scale. The renovation does little to showcase and drive sales for the retail portion of the business though: the vending of frames, lens, and sunglasses.

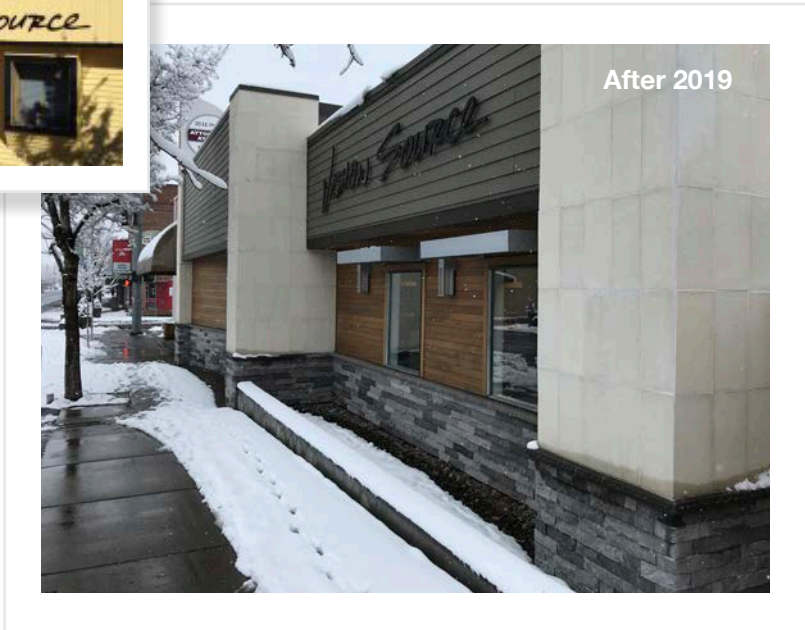
Reynoso is a unique store distinct to Madras, these are the kinds of businesses we definitely want to highlight downtown! This building transformation was large, but could have been more focused on eye-catching finishes, retail friendly lighting, and window transparency. Retailers should strive to be unignorable!

Great Earth's building is much sleeker without the giant awning, and the exterior lighting is really pleasant as an evening pedestrian. But, the color could be more bold!

## WILD BLEU



## MADRAS VISION SOURCE



## REYNOSO

During Facade Renovation



After 2019



2007 Before



After 2019



## PROPERTY OWNER TOOLKIT

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Of the three groups that impact revitalization, property owners are the most important because they control how buildings look and what tenants go into those buildings. That is game, set and match right there when it comes to economic improvement. How buildings look and what tenants go into those buildings is the actual toolkit for property owners: implementing a vision for their buildings and tenanting to build long-term value.

### **Property Owner Toolkit #1: Looks Matter!**

There are three areas to consider for immediate action by property owners that will make space easier to lease and that will incubate successful outward-facing businesses that create district identity and strong rents. These action items are going to focus on the ground floor, because that is where the identity of a district is almost entirely established. If street-level buildings, businesses, and the public sphere are not working hard to get visitor's attention, those potential consumers will pass by, leaving everything unnoticed, at best, or disliked, at worst.

There is a fundamental rule for retail commercial districts, whether you are a dentist or a women's clothing boutique: *People form their opinion of a business and your district long before they walk in the door!*

Therefore, the most immediate and highest impact way to improve district brand and experience is to work with each individual building to change the story it tells from the street. This is vitally important because a place tells a story 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so every space better be telling a great story, all the time, open or closed. Every building should **show** me something about the district, the area, the businesses, and why I might want to stop there as a customer, or why I might want to lease space if I were a business. How buildings look really matters.

The three areas of focus for property owners are listed below:

- Building Interiors
- Building Exteriors
- Parking Lots/Sidewalks (particularly relevant on Highway 26)

#### ***Building Interiors***

Subpar interior space is important because the interior experience strongly shapes our perception of a business and its products, and it heavily impacts our mood just as we are closest to making purchases. The interior of a space also plays a huge role in:

a) how leasable the space is; and, b) how successful a business will be in a space. In other words, you can take a great business and put them in a horrible looking (or horrible smelling) space, and they will fail. Likewise, you can take a fair business and put it in a rocking space, and it will do well.

Consider the interior of the coffee shop, pictured below left. It is clearly a neighborhood gathering spot and is offering a modern but cozy retail experience on the interior. It's very well done.

You might be surprised to learn that this space is inside a small older little strip mall in Carmichael, CA, pictured below right.



*Surprising Strip Mall Interior in Carmichael, CA*



*The Dated Strip Mall That Houses the Coffee Shop*

There are basic elements that create a framework for success in ground floor commercial space, whether it is in a Small Town Downtown district or a Mid-Century Corridor, which is particularly important in districts that are comprised of local businesses.

These basic elements include:

- *Right Size Spaces.* Most long-term vacancies, or less-than-optimally tenanted spaces, or spaces with a lot of turnover, occur in buildings such as dated strip mall/box infrastructure, or in old downtown department stores and banks. Why? Because these are large spaces, larger than the retail/restaurant/active-use market wants to absorb. In order to appeal to the widest possible pool of tenants and uses, spaces need to be designed so they can be divisible down to sizes more likely to be absorbed by the local market: about 1,000 SF to 1,500 SF is optimal for retail. One of the most important skills in adaptively reusing buildings is dividing spaces into optimally usable spaces that are going to return the most in rent per square foot. The smaller the space, the higher the return per square foot, typically.

- *Tall Ceilings.* Remove low ceilings, be they acoustical tile drop ceilings or old hard lids. Anything that smacks of a 1980s office space ceiling with fluorescent lighting is not providing a distinct brick-and-mortar experience, which is what small businesses must provide in today's retail climate. In studies on human reactions to ceiling height, psychologist Oshin Vartanian of the University of Toronto-Scarborough found that "participants were more likely to judge a room beautiful if it had a high ceiling" and that "part of the appeal of high ceilings seems to be that they capture our visual attention and engage our desire to observe our surroundings." (Source: Fast Company, *Why Our Brains Love High Ceilings*, Eric Jaffe, March 5, 2015.) Both of these characteristics are great for business!

The formula for ceiling success is to rip out false ceilings, expose the roof deck and/or truss structure, and then put insulation above the roof deck or between roof joists.

- *Make Windows Transparent.* Windows are the eyes into the soul of your commercial district. Landlords need to make sure glass is as transparent as possible, and that any window film allows for maximum visibility. (Window film that prevents UV damage and heat gain, but is still fairly transparent is available.)
- *Introduce Great Light.* It's always easier to attract tenants in light, bright cheerful spaces. Especially if you are completing renovations of dated strip malls. And, the interior experience in spaces with great light is always better. So, every owner should consider installing opaque skylights in one-story buildings and installing reasonable baseline light fixtures too. A good rule of thumb is to create lighting in the color range of 3,000 kelvins or less (this has a more amber character that makes both product and people look good). Also, encourage bulbs with a CRI (color rendering index) as high as you can afford, generally above 90.

WE WANT TO SEE IN YOUR WINDOWS MADRAS!





## Building Exteriors

The four elements needed to execute on a great exterior building experience, that will draw maximum customer attention and loyalty, are listed below. These four items are easy to implement in phases, they can be approached over time, out of cash flow for the private sector, and they provide the biggest district bang for the lowest cost.

- *Color.* There is no cheaper or easier way to bring vibrancy and excitement to a place than by introducing color. When was the last time that someone called you up and said, “Oh my gosh, the coolest building just got painted in our downtown, you have to come see it!” That is exactly what happened with the building pictured to the right. Every building in all of your districts should be using color to show visitors something about their business, about the area, and about the experience they want to provide.



*Second Floor Office Space in Concrete Block Bldg*

- *Highlight Building Detail.* Every building has interesting elements or unique materials that can be highlighted to make the structure engaging, eye catching, and inviting. This is doubly important on a corridor, where potential consumers are hard to engage. In the example below, you can see a mid-century building painted all white that was largely used as legal offices. The owner of the practice was retiring and was going to begin leasing space. Using color to make the building more appealing, and to highlight building detail, completely changed market perception of the space.



*BEFORE: Drab Mid-Century Legal Office*



*AFTER: Highlights Horizontal Siding, Shapes & Windows*

- *Transparency.* The hardest thing that any business has to do is get someone to walk through the door, whether it's for the first time or as a repeat customer. This is particularly true for a small business with which we have no familiarity. The bottom line is that customers do not like to enter businesses unless they can see inside, because they want to first understand the experience on offer. So both the store and the merchandise in the windows must appeal to consumers. This lesson is all too often lost with small ground-floor businesses, especially if they have blocked their windows. Consumers should be able to tell whether a store is open or closed, and know what a business actually does by glancing at the windows for a second or two.



*Window Transparency at Small Town Optometrist*

This idea of transparency is doubly important for food businesses because their customers are unique—their only job is to hang out and the product is multi-sensory! So every restaurant/bar should be showcasing its customers, essentially making them very visible, in order to attract more visitors. And, it makes a district vibrant!

- *Exterior Lighting.* Every place, every building, and every business is telling a story, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Just because a business closes at 5 pm does not mean their responsibility for contributing to the experience of being in the district ends at 5 pm. It is building lighting, tree lighting, product lighting, sign lighting—everything other than street lighting—that tells us a district is safe, a district is welcoming, a district is interesting, a district is open for business.



*Seating Area in Former Parking Lot at Night*

A great example of vision by a property owner, both interior/exterior, is found in the Mid-Century Corridor renovation of a gym into a Trader Joe's, shown on the next page. It is a mid-century box with a parking lot, located near a freeway. Notice how they introduced transparency by opening up the facade, and they used warm natural wood as a dominant color, inside and out, to create an inviting atmosphere in a sea of asphalt. Of course, it has great lighting too!

This building is priming people to want to shop, to want to spend money, to want to partake of the Trader Joe's experience long before they walk in the door!

Courtesy Emerick Architects



*BEFORE: Dated Box Last Used as a Gym*

Courtesy Emerick Architects



*AFTER: Reimagined Into Vibrant and Compelling Retail*

## *Parking Lots/Sidewalks*

The last area of improvement that property owners need to consider is tackling parking lots and sidewalks—they can be used to advantage, creating identity, generating revenue, and providing a necessary buffer from busy traffic on fast corridors.

In the strip mall redevelopment shown on the next page, they did a great job of making their parking lot and sidewalks engaging from all angles. From the bus stop, which is incorporated into the development, to the street, which has interesting landscaping and a cool rusted metal wall to block out the image of cars being so dominant. It also creates a welcome gateway to those passing by, on foot or by car, with a walkway between the store-sidewalk and the



*Even Parking Lots Can Be Pedestrian Friendly*

street-sidewalk. And, it used some of the parking spaces in front of the restaurant to create a beautiful outdoor seating area, softening the edges of the hardscape.

### STRIP MALL PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENT EXAMPLE

**Parking Lot Screen**



**Integrated Bus Stop**



**Strip Mall**



**Walkway**



**Seating Area**



The recipe for improving the parking lot and sidewalk experience is as follows:

- *Engage Both Sidewalks.* One of the challenges of having a recessed building is that businesses and buildings have two sidewalks to engage—the one directly in front of the building (the building sidewalk), and the one directly adjacent to the street (the street sidewalk). To optimize the consumer experience, businesses and buildings have to create a great experience on both.

- *Create a Pedestrian Walkway Between Both Sidewalks.* Every recessed building should have an area focused for walkers to pass through the parking lot, like the one pictured to the right, which leads to a medical-office building. (There is also a public garden they programmed into the parking space as well on the left!)
- *Create a Store Zone on the Building Sidewalk.* Many older corridor buildings have parking lots that run right up to the edge of the building, as the former auto body shop pictured below did. Generally, with recessed buildings, you want to create a buffer between the parking and the actual stores and businesses by developing a store zone where people can circulate, sample products, maybe go to a food cart, or use as a seating area.



*Great Walkway Between Sidewalks!*

Below is an example of a corridor building removing all of its parking and converting it to seating. This was a typical mid-century auto body shop that was slightly recessed from the street. This boring concrete block warehouse was converted into micro restaurant spaces. Notice, they entirely removed the parking lot in front of the building and created a gigantic store zone that is a shared seating area, which is ever evolving and showcases people!

### **Parking to Seating Conversion**



## Property Owner Toolkit #2: Tenant for Long Term Value

The second major thing every property owner should be thinking about is how to tenant in such a way that they build a good base for stable rents and increased property values. How can owners do this? By finding the right tenants, and by appropriately tenant mixing.

### *Finding the Right Ground Floor Businesses*

In a nutshell, property owners should always be thinking about how they can tenant to increase sales per square foot in their district. Why? Because the more successful the businesses are, the more sales they generate, and the more sales they generate, the more rent spaces can generate, and the more rent your spaces generate, the more your building is worth.

So landlords are in business with their tenants, in a sense.

In districts that have yet to become mature, stable retail or mixed-use areas, there are two ways to manage property:

- Manage for Short Term Cash Flow
- Manage for Activity

**Managing for Short Term Cash Flow.** In this scenario, landlords only care about tenant stability and the fact that the tenant is financially able to pay rent every month. On the surface, this may sound like a good way to manage real estate. But, in districts where you are trying to build brand, identity, and sales, it is disastrous. It can actually bring about the death of a district because the very tenants that are the most stable financially are the ones that kill a retail district: accountants, doctors, dentists, lawyers, real estate firms, and insurance agencies.

These kinds of uses are not engaging at the street, they don't always cross-pollinate well with other retail and restaurant uses, and they are often open only from 9 am to 5 pm, which makes it difficult to create an 18-hour district, a goal when creating a thriving commercial node.

So, while I like all these uses, I generally prefer them to be upstairs, or have very small storefronts with spaces toward the rear of a building if it is a Small Town Downtown district. In Mid-Century Corridor Districts, I generally don't want these to dominate the ground floor either. But if you do have service office uses, then group them in a building theme around like professional services (real estate, or health and wellness, for instance). And, they still have to make it look great from the ground floor.

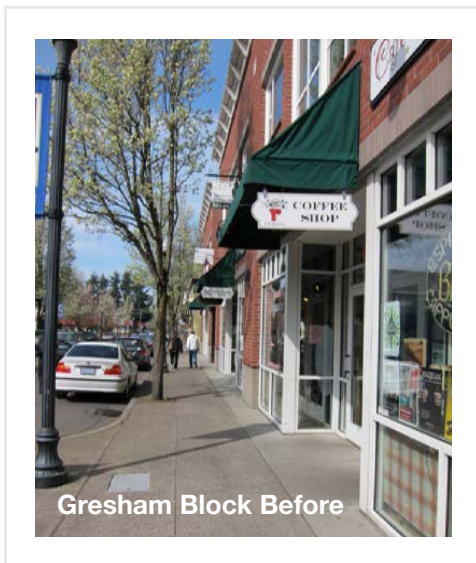
**Managing for Activity.** The other way to manage your property is to tenant for activity. Instead of asking if the tenant can pay the rent every month, your first question should be, “Is this tenant going to add vitality to the building, create a great sidewalk experience, merchandise some awesome windows, and cross-pollinate with other nearby businesses?”

That’s it. The more you increase activity, the more people want to be there. And the more people you have in one place, the higher your sales per square foot... and we know where that leads: higher property values... eventually!

It can feel like a bit of a leap to tenant your buildings based on activity, because some of these businesses may not make it. And it’s true that this approach does sometimes result in more turnover. But over the long-term, you will make more money as a property owner if you tenant for activity.

As an example, consider Cliff Kohler who owned many properties in Gresham’s downtown. He decided to change only two things about how he managed his property: he delivered more engaging interior spaces with high ceilings and exposed finishes, and he tenanted for activity. On the latter, he chose tenants that would activate storefront windows and the sidewalk. By offering better spaces and choosing only active tenants, in a little over two years, he took a dead block on Main St and made it the most happening block and, in the process, achieved the highest rents he had been able to command up to that point.

Please find sidewalk photos before and after of this Gresham example below:



## *Tenant Mixing*

Property owners in every kind of commercial district should be thinking about how to tenant mix, which is grouping businesses around themes and/or with an eye toward what will create the most cross-pollination between businesses.

In Small Town Downtown Districts, a mix of what we call “active destination businesses” are the most desirable tenants to attract for success. These are businesses that have an active storefront but whose customers are coming as a part of a planned trip rather than just stopping by purely on an impulse. Examples include:

- Restaurants/Food (Coffee, Bakery, Brew Pub)
- Fabric/Knitting/Quilt Shop
- Specialty Paper/Printing Store
- Eyeglass/Optometrlist Store
- Music/Instrument Store
- Bird Feed/Yard Supplies
- Manufacturer/Showroom
- Wholesaler/Retailer
- Pet Grooming/Specialty Pet Food
- Antiques
- Salon/Spa/Wellness



*Service/Office Tenant Mix in Madras*

In a Small Town Downtown District, it is absolutely essential to have a mix of active tenants from a variety of these kinds of categories. If you cluster around just one theme, you will have a dead place. For instance, if you have all salons, then you will have no cross-pollination between businesses because customers don't leave one salon and go into another salon immediately after. In contrast, customers will browse in other stores while waiting for an appointment, or sit in a coffee shop if they are early. That is why you need a variety of offerings.

Unlike downtowns, Mid-Century Corridor infrastructure is more able to absorb some thematic tenancing because each development is its own node, and these nodes typically don't offer pedestrian environments that encourage cross-pollination between them. So, for arterial spaces without storefront windows, with large setbacks, or which aren't visible from the main arterial, feel free to tenant and brand around like clusters with less activity (service businesses, health and medical, professional office, etc).



## PROPERTY OWNER SPOTLIGHT

### So Where Do You Start?

Property owners in Madras definitely need to focus on tenancing retail and restaurant commercial spaces with active uses. They need to write into their leases that ground floor uses will engage the sidewalk. And, they need to participate in helping make their spaces offer a framework for tenant success. This should be a priority for owners not because they will be a “good guy” for doing the work, but because it is what is best for owners economically, and it is what is best for the district economically. Anything you do that improves sales per square foot correspondingly increases building value.

The goal is to encourage, highlight, and support activity. Every building needs to offer a visually interesting, appealing, and eye catching view from the street. And, they need to offer spaces of approximately 1000 SF with an interior experience that reflects today’s shopping tastes (no false ceilings and carpet, lots of natural light and windows).

Any building owner can implement the techniques from this section. Having said that, districts get more of a multiplier effect on brand and commerce when these improvements are made in concentrated areas, and when they are featured in retail and restaurant space, which is the most visible and where people in the community congregate.

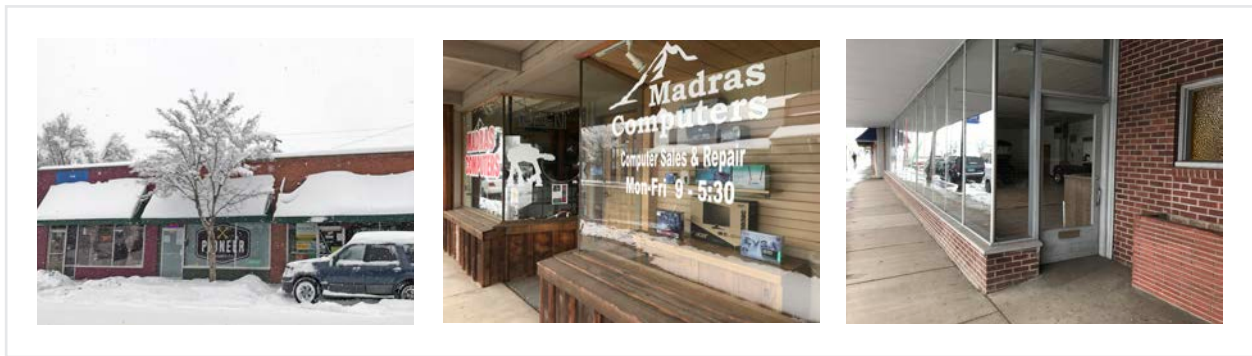
Below we will look at the types of redevelopments that should be facilitated and where it should be prioritized in downtown Madras. Please refer to the presentation PDF deliverable for more detailed information and recommendations for the private sector.

### *Types of Development to Facilitate*

- **The Easy Fix.** Buildings that need awning removal, window film removal, the installation of exterior lighting and a few cool paint colors are offer a great bang for the public sector investment buck! The building that houses El Surtidor is a good example of this.
- **The Revamp.** These are projects where you take a dated building (these are often buildings built or renovated in the mid-century) and make them more relevant to the market and downtown experience required to be successful today. This can involve both interior and exterior updating. The Madras Computers building is a good example of this type of structure.
- **Adaptive Reuse.** These projects are usually bigger and might include taking a vacant building and getting it occupied with an active user. They might involve having to significantly upgrade a building to modern day building code. It might involve a renovation that has complicated structural elements because of the addition of new storefront systems. It could involve demising a large space into smaller space. The vacant car showroom is an example of this kind of project.

- **Site Intensification.** For buildings with large parking lots, I would love to see owners building new structures to improve density. These could be housing, office, or retail depending upon the location upon the lot. Please see page 68 for an example of site intensification.
- **Zero Lot Line New Construction.** Downtown needs less parking lots, more small buildings built right up to the sidewalk, right next to one another. That is what a downtown is.
- **Parking Lot Activation.** Downtown has way too many parking lots, so getting them activated with new construction projects, art, activities, eating, food carts, etc will help downtown.

CANDIDATES FOR THE EASY FIX, THE REVAMP, & ADAPTIVE REUSE (left to right)



### *Where to Focus*

- **Best Building Stock.** Improving your best buildings where they are the most concentrated, as shown on Map on page 20, will give the best return on initial investment.
- **Front Doors.** Pay attention to those critical buildings at the front doors shown on the map on page 13 will be important to downtown's success.
- **Anything Active.** As shown on the GFAM on page 23, anything in blue, especially that is in the Small Town Downtown area (shown on page 6) would be a good candidate for improvement assistance.
- **Make the Back a Front.** Where there is a good run of buildings that are visible from the back as well as the front (West side of SW 5th St from C to D), fix up the back so they tell the charming buildings in a downtown story from all angles.
- **Multi-Story.** Taller buildings are more visible, so renovating these so they have a big visual impact will provide a multiplier effect on the downtown environment.

## BUSINESS OWNER TOOLKIT

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Madras already has an interesting mix of businesses, but many are in buildings that are not offering a framework for success (remember, the retail experience happens long before someone walks in the door). And, many are not executing on the basics of the most important tool for ground floor businesses: “*Show, Don’t Tell*”, so that is where we will be focusing.

### **Biz Toolkit #1: Show, Don’t Tell**

Every business should pretend that signs are illegal and language doesn’t exist. Then, they should consider how they are going to *SHOW* customers what sort of experience they offer, what their business actually is, and why a customer might want to interact with them. Every single ground floor business should *show* us what they do, not try to *tell* us with a sign.

Consider the photograph to the right. This is a dentist’s office in a medical tourism town in Mexico where North Americans come for affordable dental work.

Now consider, how do people feel when they go to the dentist? Nervous. How do they feel going to another country to get medical care? Nervous. Do you think they travel there alone? No.

What is this practice showing us to assuage these concerns? It demonstrates success in the finish work, caring and calmness with the color and design, and they have a great place to sit and wait for those accompanying patients here!



*Beautiful Dental Office In Mexican Medical Tourism Town*

They are showing patients that they are going to take care of everything!

The three most important areas of execution for Show, Don’t Tell are:

- Windows
- Lighting
- Sidewalks

## Windows

Windows are really the heart and soul of a commercial district. They are the one item that should always be changing and they should always be engaging. Improving windows is usually the cheapest, quickest, and easiest project to improve district brand and get people walking in the door of businesses.

A checklist for window *Show, Don't Tell* execution is below.

- *Can I see your windows?* You would be surprised at how often I have to ask this! It's very common for storefront windows to be blocked by landscaping, by hanging flower baskets, by signage. If you can't even see a storefront window, that should be fixed.



*A Linen Store's Window When Closed*

- *Can I See in Your Windows Day and Night?* Storefront windows are a 24/7 advertisement for your business, so make sure they look great when you are open, and that they look great when you are closed. This is not only important for businesses, but it's important for districts too, so it always looks inviting, safe, and active no matter what time of day or evening.
- *Do Your Windows Provide Store Transparency?* When you are a small business, and especially when you are a small business on a busy corridor, your prospective customers are unlikely to commit to walking through your door unless they can get a sense of who you are from the exterior. If you build out window boxes, or otherwise block your windows, it will discourage people from dipping their toe in the pool of what your business has to offer!
- *Are your Windows Merchandised Well?* This speaks for itself. If people walk by your window and never turn their head, if they never look in, then you aren't doing it right! Again, windows are where you market you business, no matter what it is. Make sure they are fantastic.
- *Do Your Windows Change Frequently?* At a minimum, every ground floor business should be changing their windows every month, with the exception of restaurants. The latter should just be showcasing people in their windows!

Every street level business should answer yes to every one of the above questions.

## Lighting

Light impacts our mood very dramatically. It makes products look either alluring or anemic and it also makes human skin appear either alluring or anemic (an important consideration when selling products that require customers to look attractive in a mirror)!

Proper retail lighting could be a report in and of itself. For the purposes of this toolkit, and the fundamentals for Show, Don't Tell, we are going to focus on window lighting specifically because this type of lighting, when done properly, is what makes windows transparent during the day, and it's what makes storefronts look amazing at night. Also, this type of lighting makes product almost appear to hop through the glass, enticing people into businesses.

The keys to good window lighting are pretty simple:

➤ *Install Spot Light Fixtures Just Inside the Window.* Every window should have spot lights just inside the glass, pointed down toward the products and slightly back toward the store.

➤ *Proper Shape/Size/Color of Bulb.* A bulb is essentially a shower head of light. And the size and spread of a bulb must be selected so the light focuses on the

products in the window, not above or below them, so you are essentially aiming your shower head of light! To aim light with high ceilings, a bigger bulb with a narrower spread is needed (spread is the width the light angles out from the bulb). For lower ceilings, smaller bulbs with slightly wider spreads are optimal. Again, color should be lower than 3,000 Kelvin for warmth. And the Color Rendering Index, or CRI, should be above 90, if possible.

You can change the world with good lighting!



*Lighting is Mood*



*This Wedding Dress Store is Perfectly Lit, It Glows!*

## Sidewalks

Sidewalks are public spaces where we should see people, product, and activity. Human beings are pack animals, and we are wired to go do, and see, what other people are doing. And the sidewalk is the most public place to showcase product, to *show* something about your business, and draw people. The bottom line is that if a district doesn't make its sidewalks appealing and attractive, it is costing sales.

In this report we are going to look at the types of sidewalks we usually encounter on corridors and in downtowns: street sidewalks and building sidewalks. Below, please note which sidewalk types marry to the types of districts found in Madras.

### CORRIDORS

- Street Sidewalks
- Building Sidewalks

### SMALL TOWN DOWNTOWNS

- Building Sidewalks



*Giant Ball of Yarn on Yarn Store Sidewalk  
(Photo Courtesy of Megan Curry)*

**Street Sidewalks.** In arterial form, these are the kinds of sidewalks that have street on one side, parking lot on the other. They may be the most sad and neglected types of sidewalks in America. Ways to improve the street sidewalk were discussed in the Property Owner Toolkit because these changes are typically considered improvements undertaken by property owners.

**Building Sidewalks.** This type of sidewalk, built directly next to buildings, is present in both downtown and in corridor development. How can businesses use these sidewalks to improve sales and ramp up positive brand association? Two ways:

1. Know your Zone
2. Follow the Rules

#### **Know Your Zone**

Building sidewalks have two zones, the “store zone” and the “district zone”.

*The Store Zone* is the area of the sidewalk right next to businesses. In the store zone, every business should be showing customers something unique and interesting about what they do (like the yarn store, above right).

*The District Zone.* This is the area near the curb of the building sidewalk. This is where you place repetitive banners, way-finding for a strip mall, benches, street furniture, district landscaping, etc.

**Follow The Rules**

*Sidewalk Rule #1.* The store zone can invade the district zone. It is perfectly normal, even desirable, for stores to put their own stamp of identity on the entire sidewalk.

*Sidewalk Rule #2.* The district zone should not invade the store zone. District identifiers are repetitive and, when located right in front of businesses, aren't actually showing anything unique about the offerings in the establishments. In fact, if the same bench, planter, or piece of street furniture is found in front of all businesses, it will all appear the same to passersby, and they will tune out the businesses because there is nothing distinct to catch their attention.

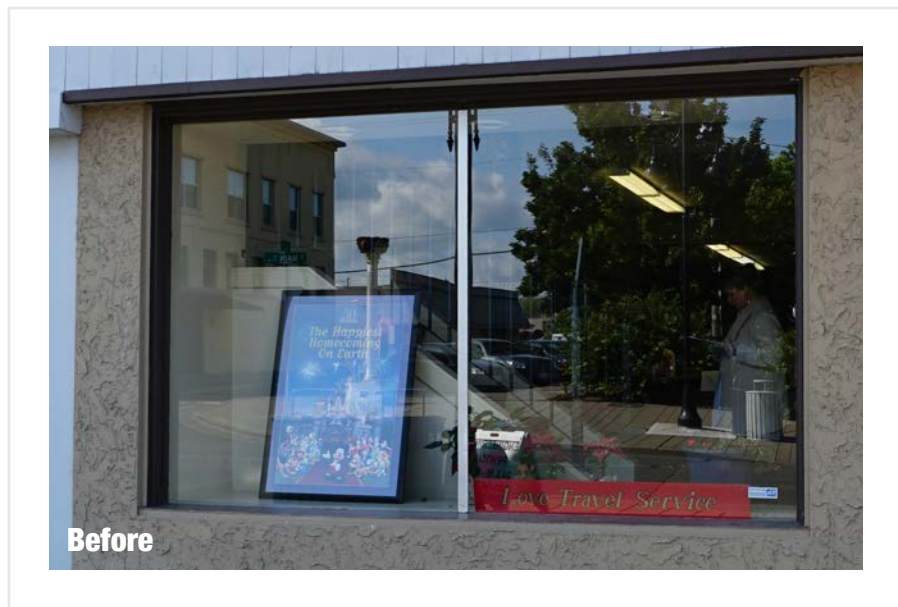


*Building Sidewalk Zones*

***SHOW, DON'T TELL EXAMPLE***

Here is an example of the impact of Show, Don't Tell using windows, lighting, and sidewalks to offer a new visual experience in a service office business—Love Travel—in the small downtown area of Auburn, WA.

*Right: This window is dark, it provides no store transparency, and it has an old, faded poster propped up against a staircase, and some poinsettia plants left-over from Christmas six months before. There is a much more dynamic story about travel to tell here!*





**LIGHTING.** The first thing we did was install the correct size, shape, and color of light bulb into their window lighting infrastructure and turned it on. This made the window transparent.

**WINDOW.** Next, we decorated the window with items that *SHOWed* the type of travel people would be making in this season (it was cold), with a colorful display mostly reusing items already found throughout the travel agency—posters, luggage, etc.

**SIDEWALK.** And last, we brought the story out to the sidewalk. The owner had a collection of antique uniforms in the agency, so we bought a form for her to use with these over time. In this instance, with our tropical cruise/travel theme, we chose all weather Hawaiian hula material for the form as well as all weather nautical flags. All of this is better than an A-board sign. The skirt and flags move gently in the wind, they make everyone smile when they go by, and they are tactile to touch and interact with. (And they can be moved inside easily at the end of every day.)

Right: And, of course, the window is sensational at night, reminding everyone traveling through when the business is closed that they might want to take a cruise! This building is also making downtown look incredible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They are a good steward of the store sidewalk and are adding to district experience, open or closed.





## Biz Toolkit #2: Leverage Adjacencies

Adjacencies in retail-theory are the science of what merchandise is placed adjacent to each other in a store to increase sales. The same theories apply to building brand in a retail district. How do you do a better job of connecting what is there and cross-pollinating sales and retail activity between the businesses?

There are two broad types of adjacencies to consider in a district. The first is physical and the second is emotional.

### *Physical Adjacencies*

Everything that is next to a business impacts that business, whether it is a bus stop, a parking lot, or another store. You have to leverage what is adjacent to a place of business so that the sum of the parts is greater than each individual element.

To develop adjacencies, you must first get businesses to work together and get to know each other. Believe me, there is no business that can't figure out how to create an adjacency with their neighbors.

As an example, let's take two disparate uses, such as a dentist and a bar. It would seem, on the surface, difficult to create an adjacency. But a creative new dental practice did just that. They thought about what bars need and they came up with coasters. So they created funny, original coasters that could be used as a coupon and provided them to the adjacent bar. The coasters were so popular, he now provides them to other bars on the street, which is a busy corridor that also serves as a State designated "high and wide" freight route.



**Dentist's Coaster**



**Dentist's Coaster Coupon**

These are funny. These create connection. They are a great example of creating a physical adjacency between two very different types of businesses.

This same dentist pipes music towards a bus stop next to his office to make waiting for transit a more enjoyable experience for folks on the sidewalk. This is not only thoughtful, but he's really owning the adjacency of the bus stop.

Every business needs to engage with what is next to them, particularly focusing on creating nodes around places where people get out of their car and walk.

### *Emotional Adjacencies*

Emotional adjacencies are things that you might be able to interconnect within your district, around a vertical market or a theme. Events can also create emotional adjacencies.



*Emotional Adjacency: Weddings!*

Examples:

In Tigard OR, besprinkled around their downtown was a wedding planner, a high-end stationary store, a jewelry store, a caterer, and one of the largest ballroom dance floors west of the Mississippi. These businesses were not physically next to one another, but they had a natural emotional adjacency around weddings they could have been collaborating upon.



*Great Collection of Man Businesses on Old 27*

One of my favorite possibilities for creating a strong emotional adjacency was in the light-industrial area of Old 27, a former State Highway in central Michigan. The area contained an auto junk yard that was a large regional draw for everyone from artists to car enthusiasts, it had multiple types of lumber yards, a sprinkler contractor, sports bars, auto body shops, kitchen & bath places, and the list goes on and on.

Everyone wanted to “improve” this district by replacing this vibrant set of businesses with establishments such as an Outback Steakhouse. Really though, they already had a very successful district with a distinct brand. They just needed to do a better job of Show, Don't Tell around it being the best **“man district”** in the region!

## BUSINESS OWNER SPOTLIGHT

### Get to Showing!

More details for business owners will be provided in the presentation part of the deliverable for this project. However, a summary of ideas is to really focus on simple Show, Don't Tell ideas and implementing basic adjacency building projects between businesses, events, and brands in Madras.

The simplest, speediest, and most affordable way to start transforming how a downtown looks is by using the techniques of Show, Don't Tell, particularly with windows and sidewalks. It not only can bring about dramatic visual changes in a district, and it's also a great way to build relationship, build community, and cross-pollinate sales between businesses. It's an area where you can have a big impact with sweat equity and smaller sums of money, so they are good areas for early projects!

Madras needs to build a makeover team and start working on projects. I want everyone to imagine that signs are illegal, that language doesn't exist, and then I want them to think about how they would show a customer why they would want to shop in their business.

- **Windows, Windows, Windows.** Make them transparent. Install track lighting just above them so pools of light can be directed away from the window, slightly toward the store, down onto the merchandise. Make sure the appropriate size/color of bulbs are in place. And lastly, create interesting window displays. That's for retailers and office users. Restaurants have it easy, they just need to display people. Focus first on windows with very active retail businesses, restaurant windows, storefronts to spaces that look cool for some reason, front doors, and in areas with the highest concentrations of businesses and buildings.
- **Sidewalks.** Extend the brand and experience of your business to the sidewalk, weather/space permitting.



*People Buy What They Touch*



*Make Windows Look Great!*

## Create Adjacencies through Curation!

Every business should think about how they are interconnecting their products, events, and expertise with every other business downtown. Nothing impacts a business more than the uses that surround it. Additionally, downtown has to consider how it is building bridges to larger themes and connecting emotional adjacencies throughout downtown and to relating them to the larger brand identities in Madras.



Mural: Old World Food Craftsmanship



Garden Behind Restaurant, Winters, CA

### Agricultural Adjacencies

- **Great Earth.** A mural on the side of Great Earth Cafe and Marketing that harkens back to an old world shopping experience would Show what they do and also add to the ambiance of downtown, reinforcing the historic nature of the area where the store is located.
- **Farm to Fork.** Any restaurant using locally sourced meats, fruits, vegetables, grains, etc. should feature that on the menu.
- **Ag Games.** Hold a funny, rancher/farmer twist on the Highlander Games and hold it in the many downtown Madras parking lots. Small riding tractor race, avoid the manure obstacle course, etc.
- **Community College.** Partner with the culinary program to run a food location, commercial kitchen, and classroom space downtown.
- **Urban Farming.** Have some gardens to supply local restaurants in vacant lots downtown. An example from the town of Winters is shown above left.

### Hospitality/Entertainment Adjacencies

- **Create Guide for Hotels.** To the right is a visitors piece they created in Astoria that was placed in hotels and commercial locations around the city. The guide told interesting stories about locals, shared information about various businesses, and provided a window into the district as a whole. In general, it's better to curate expe-



Curate Madras Experiences!

riences, expeditions, and outings for different markets (families, nights out, etc.) rather than throw out a list of every single business in downtown Madras.

- **Product Placement.** Place products in each other's stores, and in hospitality locations. An example might be placing an empty growler bottle in an Airbnb that can be filled at a local brewpub, which would drive visitors to a specific restaurant.
- **Latino Food Guide.** There are mercados with snacks, a panadería, and Mexican restaurants with distinct experiences on offer in Madras. Make it a more well known element of the food culture in Madras, curating destination visits from tourists passing by. Best place to get authentic Latin food in Central Oregon!
- **Build on Existing Events.** Think about how to interconnect existing events with downtown. For example, if you have a classic car show, consider holding an outdoor sock hop downtown one night—close down a street.
- **Combine Experiences.** Think about how to take two businesses and put together an experience that combines their offerings, such as having a dinner and bowling special, or a costume disco bowling night and disco dance on Halloween! (Downtown is lucky to still have an amenity like a bowling alley.) Or a ladies night out for special shopping hours at a few select stores/salons.



*Rio: Great Food and Tableside Guac!*

## MADRAS AMENITIES, LEVERAGE FOR ADJACENCIES



## PUBLIC SECTOR/AGENCY TOOLKIT

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The public sector and agency role in revitalization is several-fold. First, agencies need to collaborate with the private sector to implement their toolkits, incentivizing and facilitating a series of changes, often small, over a period of time. Second, they need to think about the areas under their bailiwick — roads, the public realm, zoning, code — and how they can be used to boost economic activity. And third, the public sector should be thinking about how to intentionally catalyze development that benefits a wide cross section of people.

### **Public Sector/Agency Toolkit #1: Incentivize Incremental Improvement**

The public sector and agencies interested in revitalization should be creating programs to support and incentivize the private sector activities previously outlined in this report. Just as a district is greater than the sum of its parts, revitalizing a district is about achieving a greater good through a series of small, medium and sometimes large investments.

Incentivizing Incremental Changes includes the following steps:

- Quantify & Focus
- Assemble the Team
- Use the Power to Convene
- Create Improvement Programs

#### *Quantify & Focus*

While any property owner or business owner can individually implement changes based on the recommendations in this report to improve their core ventures, the city and MRC should take a 10,000 foot view of what they would like to accomplish in terms of improving downtown Madras prior to zooming in on specific projects and investments.

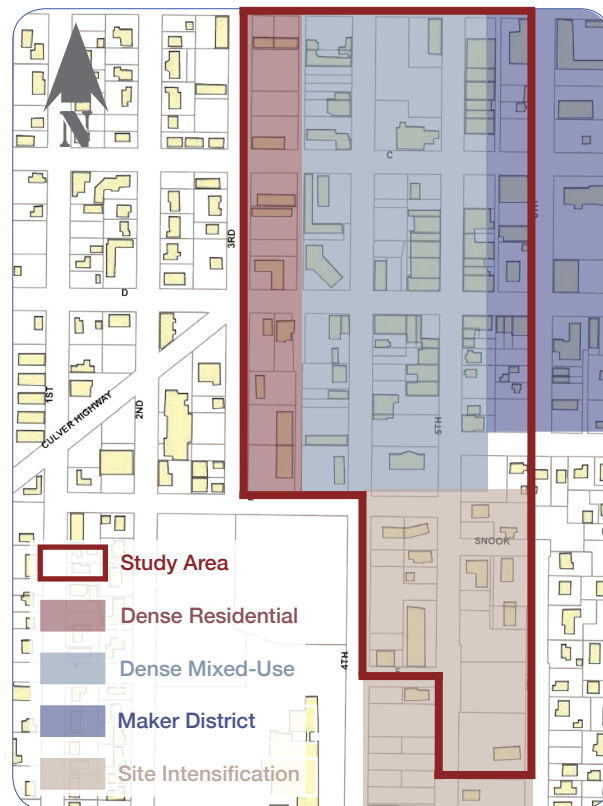
In general, the public sector and agencies should be encouraging interventions in places where they will have the most economic impact first. And, they should be considering what sorts of district characteristics and identity they are trying to work toward so all of the public sector/agency toolkit is aligned with the end results that are desired.

The more concentrated the improvements are in areas that augment active uses and good infrastructure, and the more those move Madras' town center toward a downtown feel, the more likely it is that these interventions will be successful.

On the next, what follows is a description of the four types of development patterns that marry well to the study area.

1. **Dense Residential.** The area on 3rd within the study area is ideal for adding more residential density to downtown as a transition zone between the smaller, dense single family homes already in the area and downtown. This could include row houses, a tiny house installation, cottage commons, ADUs, or any combination of the above!
2. **Dense Mixed-Use.** Downtown needs to look and feel more like a downtown, which means a higher concentration of buildings built right up to the sidewalk, right next to each other, without interruption. Or, in other words, more small lot development, less parking and no drive-thru development in this area.
3. **Maker District.** The area to the east of the couplet is already a mix of creative, office, and light industrial. Keep that! And deliberately concentrate more maker space in this area, especially connected to agriculture, value added food production, and wood industries. Zoning should encourage a wide mix of uses.
4. **Site Intensification.** This area should focus on projects that might intensify use on a particular lot, please see the example under Intentionality on page 70 at the end of this section for more information on this type of development.

### ASPIRATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS BASED ON DISTRICT CHARACTERISTICS



## *Assemble the Team*

Who are the designers, architects, contractors, engineers, planners, development consultants, brokers, and generally talented creative people in your community and region that are interested in collaborating on how to make your existing buildings look incredible, provide a framework for tenant success, and be a good home for active uses? This team can work on everything from building code upgrades, healing bad mid-century storefront remodels, and picking paint colors for a fabulous three-color paint scheme.



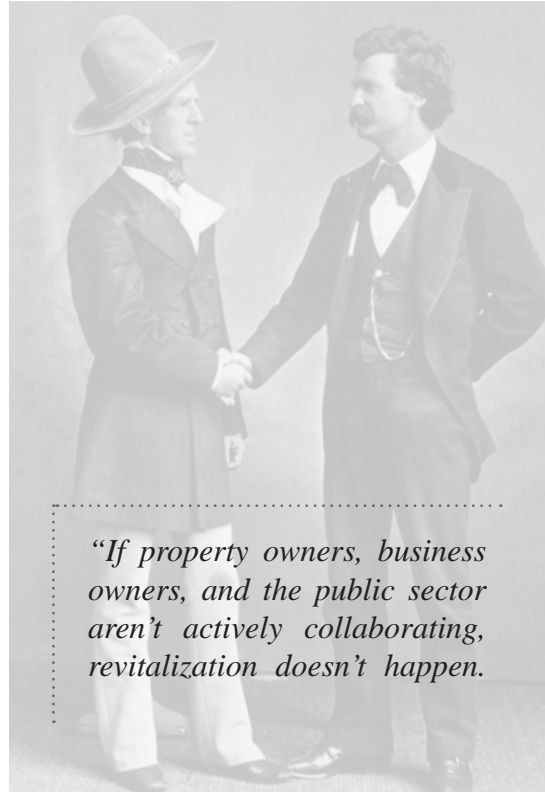
*Replace This Mid-Century Storefront*

When a district's property owners are willing to do something new and different with their buildings, one of the MRC's and City's roles should be to help connect owners with the resources that can ensure projects will be successful. The public sector needs a go-to list of people that love the "improve what you have" puzzle and enjoy working within the existing fabric of a place that currently has buildings, businesses and a brand.

## *The Power to Convene*

Successful districts usually have a tight-knit band of people working in concert to promote their district, lobby for their district, and advocate for change in their district. Every single business and every single building is impacting every other business and every other building in all of your commercial districts. No man is an island in a commercial district. And if they aren't working together, it's akin to working against each other. The public sector and non-profit agencies are uniquely positioned to use their power to convene to gather together and organize the private sector commercial community to help to improve commerce and experience.

This power is best used to a) bring educational resources to the table for the district; b) provide connections to



*"If property owners, business owners, and the public sector aren't actively collaborating, revitalization doesn't happen."*



professional services; and c) create a platform for information sharing between different agencies, groups, and stakeholders in the downtown. The power to convene can be ...as grass roots as gathering a group to repaint a building; ... as simple as assembling artsy creative types to complete window merchandising projects for service businesses; ...as technical as helping a specific property owner with vacancies or inactive buildings through one-on-one technical assistance; ... as supportive as helping your downtown association; ...or as fun as hosting tours of in-process facade improvement projects so owners can learn from each other!

Notice that the convenings suggested above are usually built around taking direct action on a specific project, or focused on a specific group and bringing tools to the table for their needs. It's always easiest to build relationship around the shared experience of actually doing something to make things better! So try to gather people around action, not organization.

### ***Offer a Range of Improvement Programs***

It is common for the public sector to try to catalyze improvement by placing public funds into one large mega project somewhere. Unfortunately, even if you complete one exciting new project somewhere, if the rest of the existing businesses and buildings are not executing on creating a great experience, it won't really matter.

To make real progress, you have to weave together a tapestry of new visual experiences within the existing fabric of Madras. This means incentivizing a mix of changes. The most proven way to do this is through various types of improvement programs. When creating these programs, consider how to take advantage of volunteer help and affordable/guerilla approaches to improvement that can be completed over time, for smaller amounts of money.

Based on Madras' current levels of funding in the downtown urban renewal area, the types of improvement programs listed on the following pages are the sorts that could be invaluable. They are designed to encourage a mix of opportunities for small, medium, and large investments and are programs that could be available for businesses and property owners. They need not all be offered concurrently, or at all times. Some communities will have a continual sort of "meat and potatoes" facade improvement program available all the time, and rotate through speciality programs, such as Window Improvement or Large Scale Adaptive Reuse.

Funding levels, the types of projects and appetite for change, and capacity for administration are all factors which must be taken into account in terms of how much to offer at any given time. Also note, the "Max Grant" listed in the tables that follow for MRC contribution would be recommended maximums. Initial program amounts can be smaller, they can change over time, and be loans, grants, or a combination.

**WINDOW IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.** Create a program that provides financial resources to businesses just for the development of better window displays and making those displays more visible. Infrastructure covered by such a program might include: installation of track lighting with moveable heads, light bulbs, display platforms up to where the storefront window sits, storefront window ceiling grids, more replacement of reflective window film with transparent window film, and display fixtures. Assistance could also include merchandising and display classes as a launch for this program.

A program such as this could be funded by the MRC, but be administered by the Madras Downtown Association as a way to leverage the creative capabilities in the group and to give them a program to oversee which will build relationships between the organization and its constituents. Parameters for such a program could be within the following ranges:



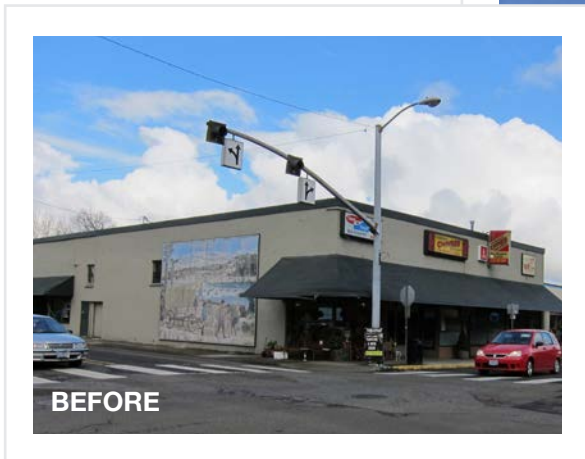
*We Want to See Inside These Great Businesses*

<b>Target:</b>	Businesses
<b>Match Ratio:</b>	4 to 1 (\$4 MRC contribution for every \$1 business contribution)
<b>Max Grant:</b>	\$4,000.00 (MRC contribution)
<b>Goal:</b>	This program must require that businesses achieve window transparency so that customers can see into businesses and displays 24/7. It also should be used to create interesting window merchandising schemes that change on a periodic basis.

**PAINT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.** This could be a subset of the Building Improvement Program, which follows. Or, it can be its own stand-alone program. The goal with this is to help transform buildings with paint, versus buildings that need a lot of facade renovation work.

<b>Target:</b>	Businesses/Property Owners
<b>Match Ratio:</b>	n/a
<b>Max Grant:</b>	\$3,000.00 (MRC contribution for paint and materials)
<b>Goal:</b>	Applicants must work with an MRC-approved color consultant, and must be introducing a color schemes to the district that are eye catching, and bright! Three- and four-color paint schemes should be the norm. This is “walking speed” detail and design, not driving speed!

**Paint Makes a Big Difference!  
Downtown Oregon City, OR**



**BUILDING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.** This program should improve buildings to elevate the overall brand experience of downtown and create a framework for tenant success. Participation should require design technical-assistance, so resulting spaces, visual appearances, windows, doors, and layouts are designed to maximize commerce, exchange, and customer experience. These programs can be structured in a two-phase process where clients receive gratis, no obligation design assistance from an approved MRC designer/architect. If they decide to proceed with the project, they apply for matching funds per the terms discussed below.

<b>Target:</b>	Property Owners
<b>Areas of Focus:</b>	Front Doors, Small Town Downtown
<b>Preliminary Design Services:</b>	Paid by MRC for MRC-Approved Architect (Fees are typically negotiated between MRC and architects in advance.)
<b>Construction Grant:</b>	Up to \$50,000 (Maximum MRC Contribution)
<b>Match Ratio:</b>	3 to 1 (\$3 MRC contribution for every \$1 property owner contribution)

**Goal:**

This program should be used for interior or exterior improvement that accomplish the following:

Exterior

- Vibrant, three-and four-color paint schemes that create visual interest in the district brand and identity.
- Decorative exterior lighting.
- Building transparency through the addition of more windows and/or glass replacement with more transparency.
- Addition of an outdoor seating area visible from the street.
- New signage, particularly blade signs. (These funds should never be used for suburban, strip mall style lighted box signs.)

Interior

- Replacement of false ceilings or low, hard ceiling lids to raise ceiling height.
- Exposure of original building features, such as exposed brick, ceiling trusses, etc.
- Replacement of fluorescent light fixtures with a range of general light and spot light
- Addition of natural light to the space, such as the restoration of transom windows or the addition of opaque skylights, particularly in deep spaces.
- Removal of carpet.

**Application & Awards:**

*Step 1:* Simple application for award of design services.

*Step 2:* Obtain bids.

*Step 3:* Matching grant application.

**ADAPTIVE REUSE PROGRAM.** This plan of action is designed for a larger investment in a targeted improvement program designed for larger projects. Demising larger spaces into smaller spaces involves more complex engineering/storefront systems, adding to a building, or a change of use. Vacant to restaurant, for instance. Again, must be for an active destination use, must be designed to

improve the impact of the exterior of a building. Major renovations should require retail and design technical-assistance, so resulting spaces, windows, doors, and layouts are designed to maximize commerce, exchange, and customer experience.

<b>Target:</b>	Property Owners
<b>Areas of Focus:</b>	Front Doors, Small Town Downtown
<b>Preliminary Design Services:</b>	Paid by MRC for MRC-Approved Architect (Fees are typically negotiated between MRC and architects in advance.)
<b>Construction Grant:</b>	Up to \$150,000 (Maximum MRC Contribution)
<b>Match Ratio:</b>	3 to 1 (\$3 MRC contribution for every \$1 property owner contribution)
<b>Goal:</b>	<p>This program should be used for larger projects and can be applied to interior or exterior improvement that bring about a) change of use to a more active tenant; b) occupancy of a long-term vacancy; or, c) demising of a space into a more usable configuration. Projects should include elements of the previous program and might be these types of scale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renovation of a historic facade.</li> <li>• Conversion of a warehouse to a maker hub.</li> <li>• New space demising and storefront entries.</li> <li>• Market-based development assistance.</li> <li>• Restaurant conversion. (In this case, public funds should only be invested in items that stay with the building, such as hood venting, increased HVAC needed for restaurant use, floor drains, and restrooms.)</li> </ul>
<b>Application &amp; Awards</b>	<p><i>Step 1:</i> Simple application for award of design services.</p> <p><i>Step 2:</i> Obtain bids.</p> <p><i>Step 3:</i> Matching grant application.</p>

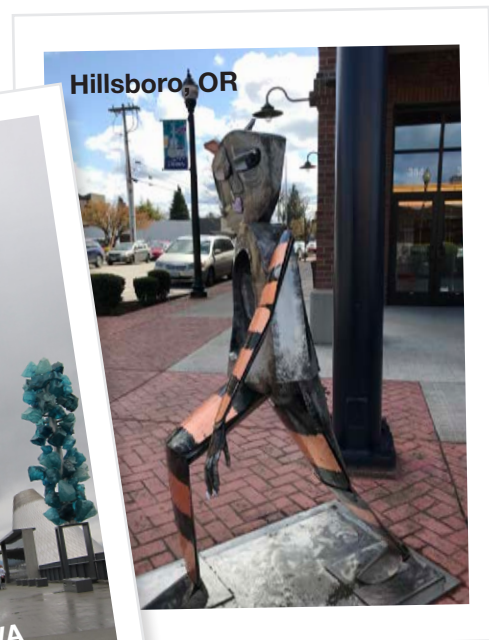
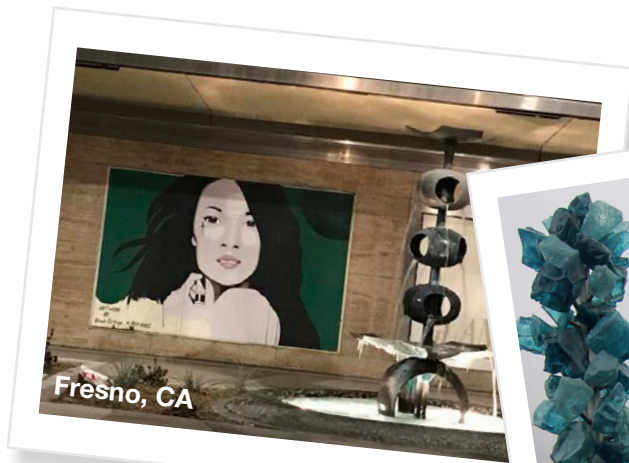
**PUBLIC ART PROGRAM.** Economically functioning downtowns are great places for people. We want people to be encouraged to circulate, to get out of their cars, to hang out. In order to do this, we need to offer experiences that satisfy the walker, that is people traveling at 3 miles per hour. The textures, details and

senses that are engaged at 3 miles per hour are very different than those that are engaged at 40 miles per hour, the speed at which many cars zip through town.

Exciting downtowns, whether they be large or small, are very savvy about creating those human scale multisensory experiences partially through public art programs. These can be commissioned pieces in the public realm, or collaborations with the private sector to include art on building walls!

There's never any such thing as too much art, and it's something you can do slowly, over time, as budget allows.

### EXAMPLES OF PUBLIC ART ON THE WEST COAST



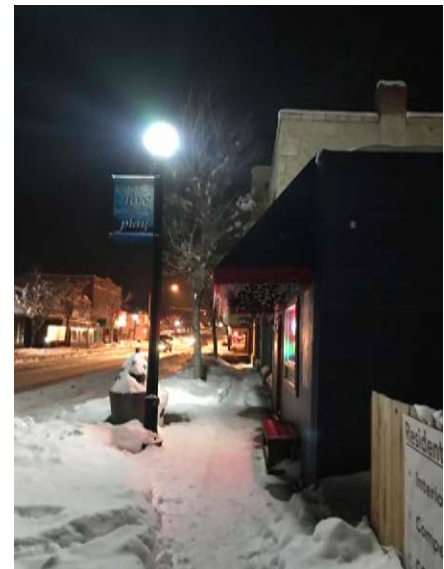
Remember, there is no better way to build relationship between the public and private sector than for the public sector to say, “We are going to bring you some technical expertise on how to make more money from your building and your business. And, we are going to give you some funds to implement what you learn.” And there is no better way to build relationship between the people who own, live, and work in a district than to have them come together to spend this money wisely.

## Public Sector/Agency Toolkit #2: Reward What You Want to See

A large part of renewal is about reusing and improving what is already there and then bringing in active uses. In order to do that, it has to be cheaper and easier to rehabilitate a building than to build new. And, it has to be possible to bring in active uses without triggering building form that hurts the downtown environment or incurs unnecessary fees. If a place’s fee and code structure is set up to regulate new greenfield development, it can make adaptive reuse, site intensification, and active tenanting almost impossible. If a place has very restrictive parking minimums, it can be difficult to develop with the sort of lot coverage that downtowns need to be successful.

Enticing building owners and businesses to improve their buildings and land usually involves the following from the perspective of the public sector toolkit:

- **Fee & Tax Structure.** If a simple improvement project triggers greenfield-scale impact fees, requires all new utility upgrades, and tacks on street improvements, then rehabilitation will never happen because places with economic challenges cannot support these fees.
- **Zoning and Use.** Active uses and blended uses need to be encouraged and allowed. Zoning in particular needs to allow for a mix of activity and be flexible, especially now as a retail is changing. And, zoning needs to be out of the businesses of regulating mandatory parking (although it can stay in the businesses of setting parking maximums so downtown doesn’t turn into a single giant parking lot).
- **Circulation.** Downtown Madras needs to be a good place to walk around, instead of being an easy place to drive through. It should be safe to cross 4th and 5th, it should be simple to walk, bike or drive around town. Traffic should slow in town not because of a posted speed limit, but because the road environment causes drivers to travel the correct speed. When it comes time for highway road improvement projects with ODOT, treatments that stress the Main St function of the road will be paramount.



*Encourage Downtown-ness with Code*

- **Prize Activity.** To make downtown more vibrant, and to improve its brand association with customers, the MRC should be looking to upgrade existing uses to more active businesses (such as vacant warehouses to maker spaces, light industrial uses to retail, or ground floor office to restaurant). Unfortunately, upgrading the use of a building can trigger a host of expensive upgrades, not to mention sometimes triggering the need for higher parking requirements. The latter is a particular problem for downtown Madras as the downtown should be eliminating parking lots, not adding them! Generally, the City and County should consider zoning/building code, fee structures, and parking minimums to determine what structural and/or financial impediments might exist to increase intensity of uses.

Two areas the City and County should be looking at right away in terms of rewarding what it wants to see through the zoning and code are to a) begin developing a parking plan (from the downtown parking toolkit); and, b) encouraging site intensification.

### *Parking Plan*

There is not enough real estate in a downtown to compete with suburban infrastructure in terms of parking ratios. As a result, a downtown that tries to compete with the high parking ratios and minimums of suburban form will typically be a wildly unsuccessful downtown. Too much parking in a downtown means it does not deliver on the fundamental economic building block of downtown commerce: great experiences for walkers.

So the job of a downtown is essentially to create an actual parking problem! If you have one, then it means you are inciting so much commerce, you can't stuff everyone in there. These are good problems that every downtown wishes it had.

Now, that doesn't mean you don't do anything about parking. It just means you have to create and implement a downtown parking toolkit that responds to the realities of downtown economics. (Hint: the downtown parking toolkit looks nothing like the suburban parking toolkit!) Next steps for downtown Madras in terms of approaching parking include:

- **Clearly Stripe all on-street parking.** This is particularly important on the one-way couplet as it helps to narrow the road and slow traffic, which is good for pedestrians, and good for business.
- **Start Collecting Data.** This doesn't have to be an expensive outside consultant. Your downtown association, high school classes, or a community college class could work together to collect parking usage data over time, perhaps rolling it into a regular course offering for assessment during various semesters?



There is a great guide to affordable volunteer processes for obtaining parking data that was developed in 2013 by the Oregon Transportation & Growth Managements, "Parking Made Easy: A Guide to Managing Parking in Your Community". Specifically, Chapter 7 will be most helpful for developing community-based surveying capacity.

Generally, you want to ensure you are making decisions about parking from a position of knowledge, not myth! So data tracking is critical. You want to quantify your on-street and off-street capacity, your public and private capacity, how capacity is being used, and what turnover is.

- **Form a Parking Subcommittee.** Over time, your downtown group should have a subcommittee that becomes your parking working group. (A downtown group doesn't necessarily form around managing parking issues, but managing parking conversations can become an activity and/or area of responsibility.)
- **Create a Downtown Parking Plan.** Generally, downtowns want to prioritize customers and encourage commerce with their on-street parking. As a downtown organization becomes more solidified, it should create its own downtown parking pledge, perhaps something like the Gresham Customer First plan, which has its own logo, shown to the right.



Generally, a downtown parking plan should be prioritizing customers for the best on-street spaces, moving employees to the edges. Or, long-term parkers, such as people attending a half day spa session, to a shared private lot. Or, encouraging park sharing between businesses on private lots. And, in the later stages, you can create a parking improvement district, which taxes owners to pay for maintenance on lots private owners agree to share.

A good rule of thumb for these discussions is to let the 85% rule govern your thinking. The accepted metric in parking is if 85% of your parking is full most of the time during peak hours, then you are ready to take the next step in your parking plan... timed parking, parking meters, the development of the garage... it depends where you are on the continuum. Regardless of where you are, you must have the data to make the right decision.

- **Remove Parking Minimums.** Most downtowns that are serious about economic development, regardless of size, have been removing their parking minimums for commercial uses in the downtown core. And, in some cases, they are establishing maximums so that new parking craters are not created. This is very good policy. It helps to encourage the adaptive reuse of existing

structures, it makes it easier to tenant with active uses, and it encourages site intensification on larger lots, which is covered in more detail below.

### ***Site Intensification***

The portion of downtown in the Mid-Century Corridor and Rural/Industrial Commercial districts should consider a policy of site intensification, such as:

1. Improve and/or re-tenant existing structures.
2. Add new office/retail buildings on the front of lot.
3. Place new residential or office on the back or the side of the lots, away from the busy arterial.

Site intensification is a much more sustainable way to develop on older corridors because it allows owners to develop in phases, improving their properties over time. Redeveloping an existing building until it is cash flow positive, and then tackling the rest of the site with a mix of new development can be a very sustainable model for improving lot coverage while keeping ownership in local hands. The following example was built along the former Highway 99 in Portland, OR.

### **VANPORT PROJECT** RETAIL REDEVELOPMENT & NEW OFFICES AND ROW HOUSES



#### **DEV PHASES**

**Phase 1: Existing Building Renovation**

**Phase 2: New 3-Story Mixed-Use Office/ Retail Building Constructed**

**Phase 3: Row Houses Built Near Existing Residential, Away from Busy Road**

**VANPORT PROJECT**  
RETAIL REDEVELOPMENT &  
NEW OFFICES AND ROW HOUSES



Before Existing Building



After Existing Building



After Existing Building

The Vanport Project includes an adaptive reuse of a mid-century building and a new construction mixed-use structure. Retail space is located at the front of the buildings, and office spaces along the back.



After New Building Interior



After Row Houses

At the rear of the entire lot, furthest from the highway, residential row houses were built and are pictured on the left. This was Phase 3 on the schematic of the previous page.

## Public Sector/Agency Toolkit #3: Intentionality

During interviews, it was clear that the people of Madras did not want the city to go the way of Bend, with rapid displacement and a deep change in the character of the city. But, market forces exact their toll on cities, whether people want them to or not. So, while it's not possible to stop change, it is possible to shape the change a city would like to see. This means looking beyond the usual "jobs at all costs" economic development strategy, and instead considering how to foster intentional policy approaches that afford a wide cross section of people access to opportunity, wealth building, and housing. There is no better place than downtown to be the epicenter of an economic development approach that is by Madras for Madras.

As an example, consider the Vanport Project listed on the previous page. This was a New Market Tax Credit/TIF public/private partnership that offered commercial condominium space for sale in a manner that reduced financial barriers to entry for small business owners. The units were offered for sale with a down payment of 6% and an interest rate of .41% for the first 10 years. These small businesses got the opportunity to own their space for about the same monthly cost as leasing. And, they were primarily sold to women and minority-owned business and long-time residents of the surrounding neighborhood.

Downtown Madras should also look at housing as an economic development policy. Workforce and service industry rental housing and entry-level home ownership product are a fundamental part of creating a functional economy; namely, building a place where a broad employee base can continue to afford to live and work. In Madras, a project might include partnering with the Bean Foundation to create new teacher row housing with low down payments.

### SOCIAL GOAL DEVELOPMENT EXAMPLE: PORTLAND MERCADO



## PUBLIC SECTOR/AGENCY SPOTLIGHT

### Outdoor Recreation

It was mentioned repeatedly in the focus groups that a love of the outdoors, and access to many different types of recreation, are a huge part of the reason that people like to live and visit the greater area around Madras. Unfortunately, this connection to outdoor recreation is not seen in the commercial areas of town. Showcasing this activity should be a priority. Some options to consider to strengthen this brand association include:



*Show Madras Is An Outdoor Destination*

- The parking lot on 4th St between C and D is absolutely critical for drawing the eye and should absolutely be programmed in the short term with uses that create activity and entice visitors coming to Central Oregon. Making that parking lot into something that showcases people, slows down traffic, and makes vacationers want to stop would do a lot for downtown commerce. Interventions to pursue in the short term include:

1. **Bouldering Rock Installation.** Create a micro park with a bouldering rock. There are myriad public parks around the country that have installed these, and if they are under 10 feet, they meet the same safety requirements as playgrounds. This also might get cross traffic with families that go to the splash pad that is also coming to downtown. Anyone that might walk between the two would help create a sense of activity in downtown.

2. **Water Station/Visitors Center.** Madras has the best water in America. In this parking lot, create temporary kiosk/visitor center where people can refill their water bottle and learn more about what to do and where to stay. This should be come a “must do” when in town. Whenever you can get someone to stop and get out of their car, you then have the opportunity to sell them on other Madras offerings!



*Activating This Parking Lot Is Crucial!*

3. **Trail Access to Downtown.** It was mentioned there are a plethora of trails around the city that attract locals on a regular basis. So, bring the termination point of the closest trail system to a point in downtown.

## CONCLUSION

Madras is starting out of the revitalization blocks with a few advantages other rural communities don't have: an amazing natural setting, and multiple agency and public sector organizations ready and willing to put resources on the table. On top of that, it has some wonderful local businesses and a great historic section of downtown. In short, Madras is further along than it may feel in the race toward revitalization!

The three groups that impact economic performance downtown are property owners, business owners and the public sector. They each have a role to play to bring a little more *downtown* to the downtown!

- *Property Owners.* Visually improving the impact and presence of the mix of buildings from all different eras that exist in downtown will be a key element to driving more traffic to the city center. Owners should focus on differentiating their buildings from one another and tenanting them with outward facing uses. Over time, it would be great to see sites with large parking lots intensify their use with small new buildings, interconnecting with areas around them. It's especially strategic to focus on structures that are ideally suited to division into smaller space. Executing on the introduction of new color schemes, outdoor lighting, and the introduction of more transparency will go a long way to helping improve commerce downtown.



*Downtown Madras Has a Lot Going for It!*

- *Businesses.* A distinct identity can be created in any place where there are interesting collections of small, one-of-a-kind businesses, experienced locals, or people offering world-class services. Small business expertise and performance are the basis upon which you want to brand your districts, helping them to better highlight their offerings and work together to offer an integrated experience. Frankly, streets that are stuffed with the same old national tenants found in every other community are difficult to turn into beloved community assets. Local businesses definitely can compete with nationals, but they have to execute at a high level, because brick & mortar is more and more about delivering an authentic and fantastic experience rather than about selling a commodity. Business should focus on Show, Don't Tell as much as possible, bringing their stories out to the sidewalk, creating an environment with multisensory experiences for everyone passing through downtown.
- *The Public Sector/Agencies.* The MRC, the City of Madras, Jefferson County, the COIC and agencies like the Bean Foundation can help the private sector execute on their roles by providing assistance, education and programmatic funding in target

areas to improve important buildings and to foster catalytic types of projects. In the short-term, they can help facilitate the private sector to execute on the basics of creating a vibrant retail district. On a longer-term basis, the city can think about how it's fostering more dense development, how it is connecting to fundamental themes around agriculture and outdoor recreation, and how downtown can offer economic and housing opportunities to a wide variety of Jefferson County residents. An economically sustainable city is one where all income demographics can live, work, and play in the same town with a limited commute.

Lastly, everyone needs to be collaborating. At the end of the day, a downtown is a place to see, and be seen. It is a place that should distill and fundamentally express everything about Madras that is special and interesting. Downtown should clearly display to customers why we might want to connect with Madras. And the built environment should reflect residents' pride in their city, showcasing local talent and expertise.

Madras has all of the building blocks needed, and more, to take it to the next level in terms of economic activity and improved brand connection.



# **Downtown Improvement Toolkit**

*presented to*

Madras Redevelopment Commission

Madras, OR

May 13, 2019



## APPENDIX A: REDEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

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At the request of the city, we have studied possible redevelopment scenarios for two sites in downtown Madras:

- SITE 1: 171 SW C St
- SITE 2: 520 SW 5th St (2 development options)

# REDEVELOPMENT SCENARIO: 171 C ST

This parcel is located on a critical corner on SW 4th St and SW C St. It is critical because it is in the “happy vacation” side of the one-way couplet in the Small Town Downtown area of the Madras’ city core that currently has too little of the type of building density a downtown needs to be economically successful. For this reason, the site should feature a high building coverage ratio and a mix of small, unique local uses would be most beneficial for encouraging tourists to stop and improving circulation around downtown. Parking minimums should be waived for this site and it should be developed for maximum activity.



### New Two Story Building Commercial w/ Apartment

Small lot building to mirror the construction type on SW 5th St between B and D. A commercial owner-user would be a good developer. Retail glass walls face interior & exterior.

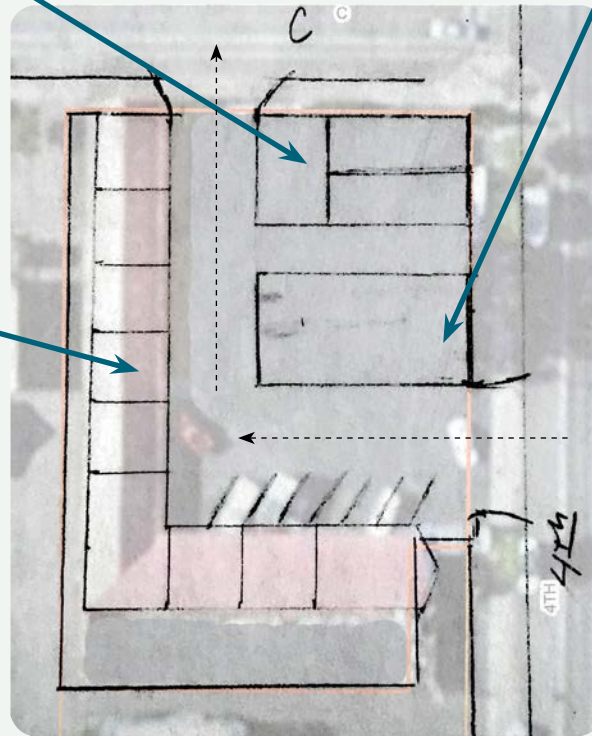


### One or Two Story Building

Should be an eye-catching, stylish building with an active use. It can be one story to improve sight lines to the interior. Retail storefronts on interior & exterior to improve exchange throughout project.

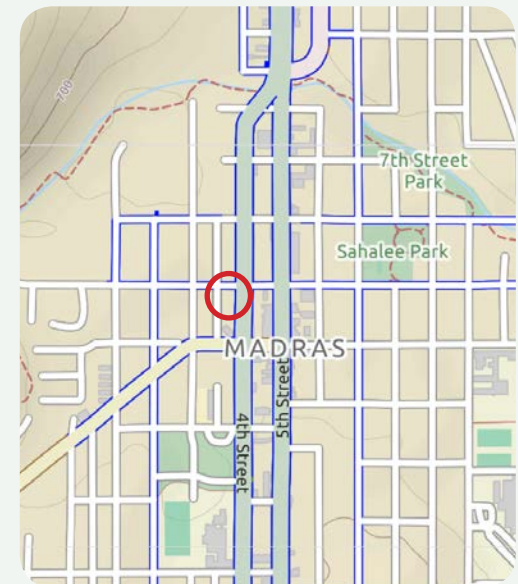
### Redevelop Motel Micro Commercial Condo Spaces

The existing motel structure could be redeveloped into small commercial spaces for sale, offered with an equity lens to encourage wealth building for women- and minority-owned firms. The project could be tenanted around a theme, such as ag/value-added food, or a beauty and wellness hub for stylists, estheticians massage therapists, etc. See an example of a micro-salon space below.



Site Photos

Location



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# REDEVELOPMENT SCENARIO 1: 520 SW 5th St

This parcel is located in the Mid-Century Corridor area of the downtown and is an interesting candidate to begin demonstrating site intensification because there is far too much parking in this part of downtown. 6th St due east of the lot is a nice residential street, but it is up a substantially high grade. This site is compelling because of the presence of an existing Masonic Lodge, which this program envisions repurposing into high-ceilinged townhouses. Perhaps the housing portion of this project could be a partnership with the Bean Foundation to provide entry-level, for-purchase housing for teacher recruitment.

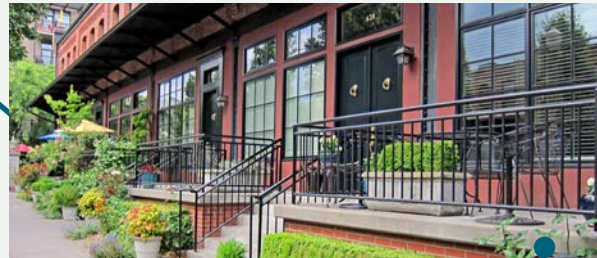


### New Multi-Story Row Houses

The two along 6th could be built in such a way that a floor could be accessible to 6th via deck/walkway. All parking would be outdoor behind the renovated lodge building.

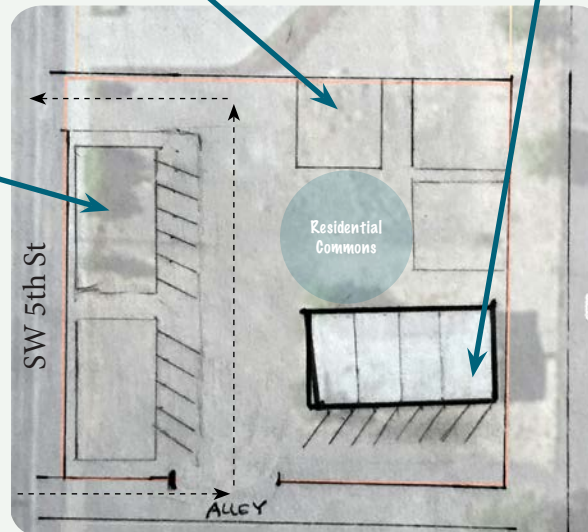
### Renovate Lodge into Four, Two-Story Townhouses

The southern anchor of the residential commons could be a modern or historic inspired townhouse lodge conversion (both pictured here).



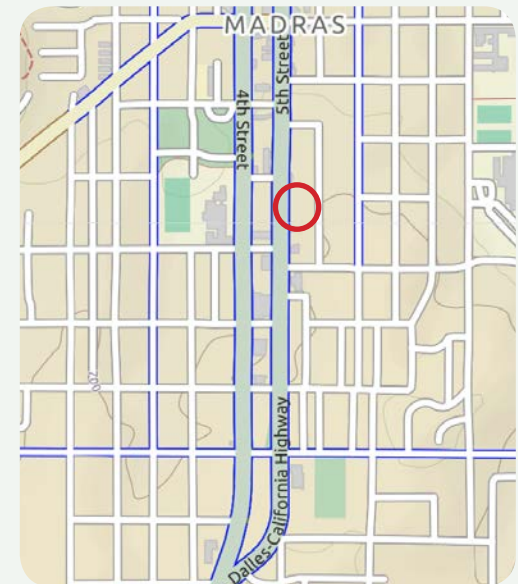
### Easily Divisible Small Retail Buildings

It would require more subsidy to build multi-story in the front of the site, so these would most likely be one story. Good storefronts, with colorful paint schemes and things like operable windows or roll-up doors would go a long way to updating the look and feel of this part of downtown. These spaces would have parking in the rear, minimum standards should be waived if they are more onerous.



Site Photos

### Location



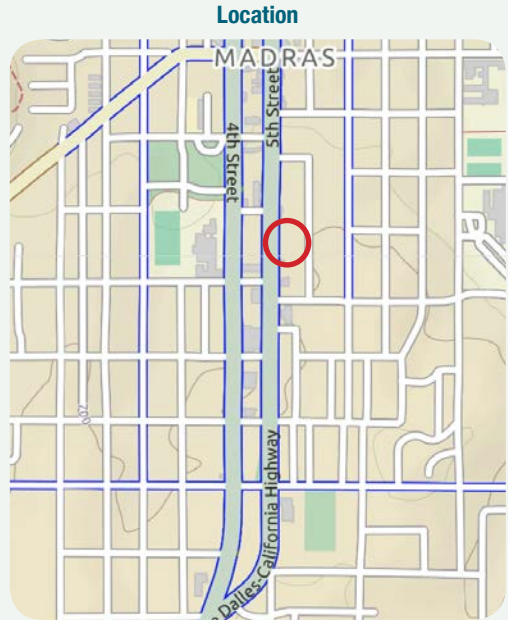
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# REDEVELOPMENT SCENARIO 2: 520 SW 5th St

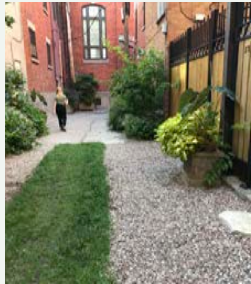
This parcel is located in the Mid-Century Corridor area of the downtown and is an interesting candidate to begin demonstrating site intensification because there is far too much parking in this part of downtown. 6th St due east of the lot is a nice residential street, but it is up a substantially high grade. In this version of redevelopment, the Masonic Lodge is removed and the remaining land is redeveloped into five new, for-sale housing products. Perhaps the housing portion of this project could be a partnership with the Bean Foundation to provide entry-level, for-purchase housing for teacher recruitment.



Site Photos



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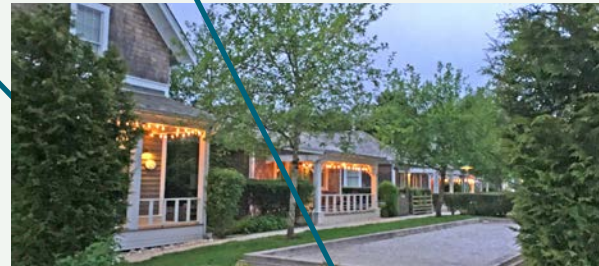


### Garage Loading in the Back, One-Way Alley Around Project

Back loading allows for there to be a residential commons in the front of the project. And remember, just because it's an alley doesn't mean it can't be gorgeous too! (pic on left)

### Build Three Row Houses & Two Skinny Houses

A wonderful residential commons between these houses could be created. Smaller houses, close together can be very cozy!



### Easily Divisible Small Retail Buildings

It would require more subsidy to build multi-story in the front of the site, so these would most likely be one story. Good storefronts, with colorful paint schemes and things like operable windows or roll-up doors would go a long way to updating the look and feel of this part of downtown. These spaces would have parking in the rear, minimum standards should be waived if they are more onerous.

