



Design Charrette Opening Presentation

Downtown San Rafael
Precise Plan

Design Charrette
May 8th, 2019



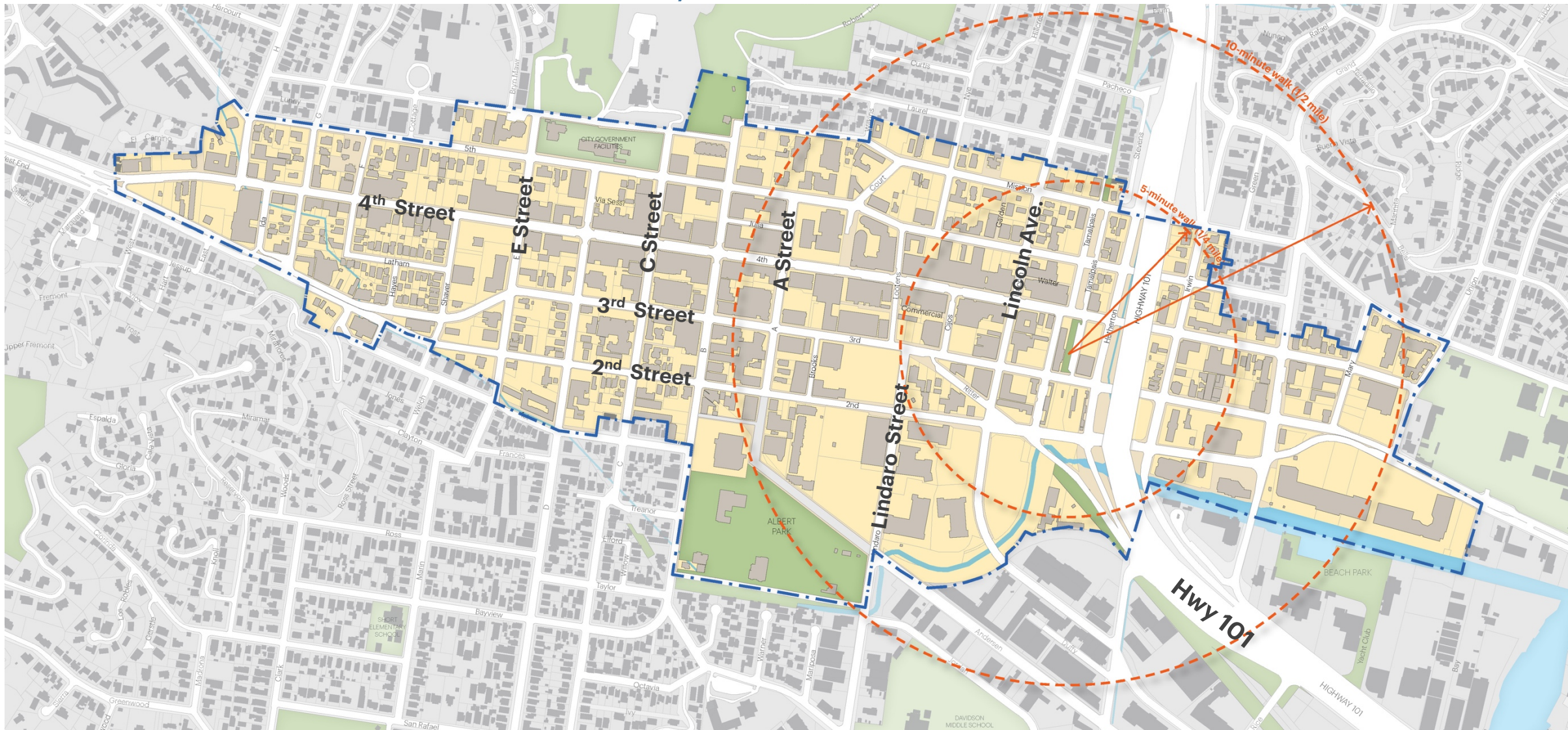
Contents

Process to Date	01
What We Have Heard	02
Design Charrette: What to Expect	03
Downtown Profile Update	04
Big Ideas for Downtown	05
Visioning Exercise	06

Process to Date



Precise Plan Study Area



Precise Plan Milestones to Date

January 30th 2019



March 13th 2019



April 10th 2019



April 12th 2019



May 8th – 11th 2019

Project Kick-Off Meeting

**General Plan Steering Committee Meeting
Visioning**

**General Plan Steering Committee Meeting
Downtown Profile**

Pop-Up Workshop at 2nd Friday Art Walk

Design Charrette



What We Have Heard



Steering Committee Visioning Exercise

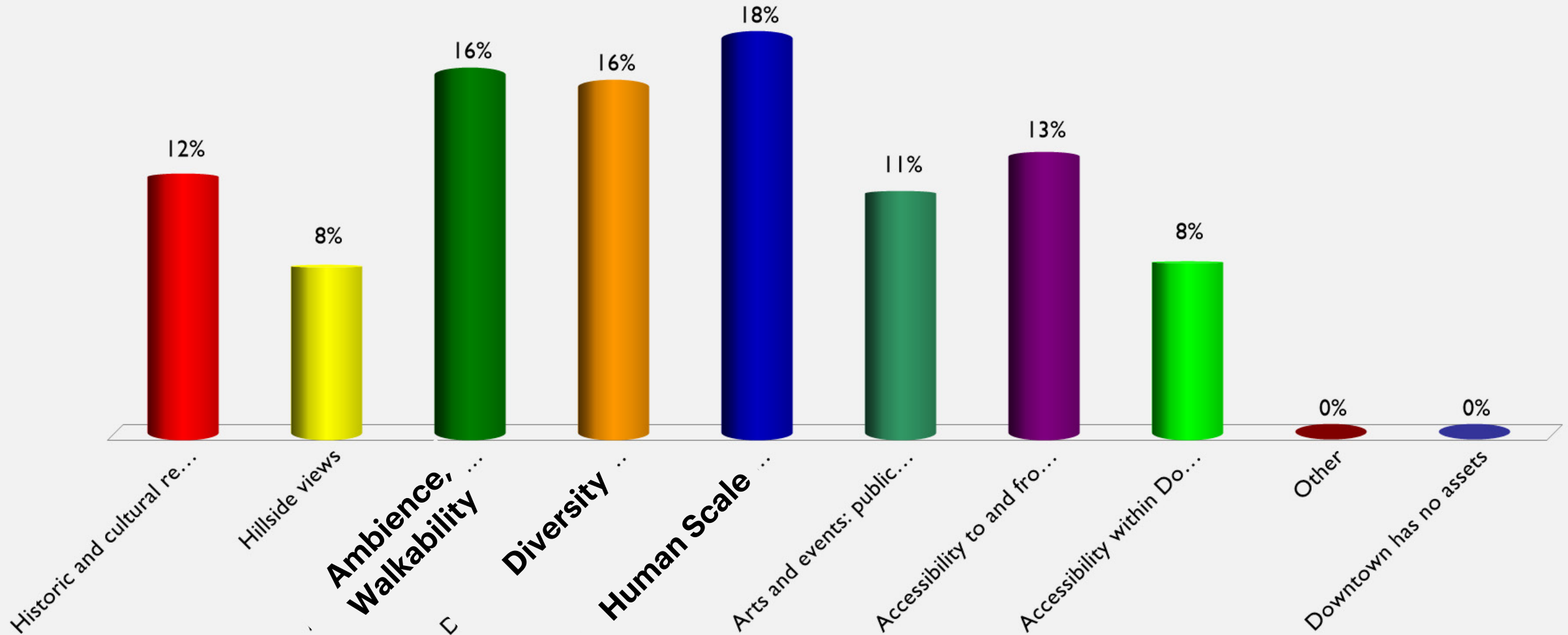


What are Downtown San Rafael's Greatest Assets?

Please rank the top three phrases you agree with most:

- A. Historic and cultural resources
- B. Hillside views
- C. Ambience: streetscape and environment makes it pleasant to walk around and be in
- D. Diversity: people, businesses and activities
- E. Human scale: not too big, not too small
- F. Arts and events: public art, 2nd Friday Art Walk, Thursday Farmers Market, etc.
- G. Accessibility *to and from* Downtown: close proximity to neighborhoods
- H. Accessibility *within* Downtown: places to sit, density of businesses facilitate walking, good parking availability, etc.
- I. Other
- J. Downtown has no assets

■ Polling Results: Downtown Assets

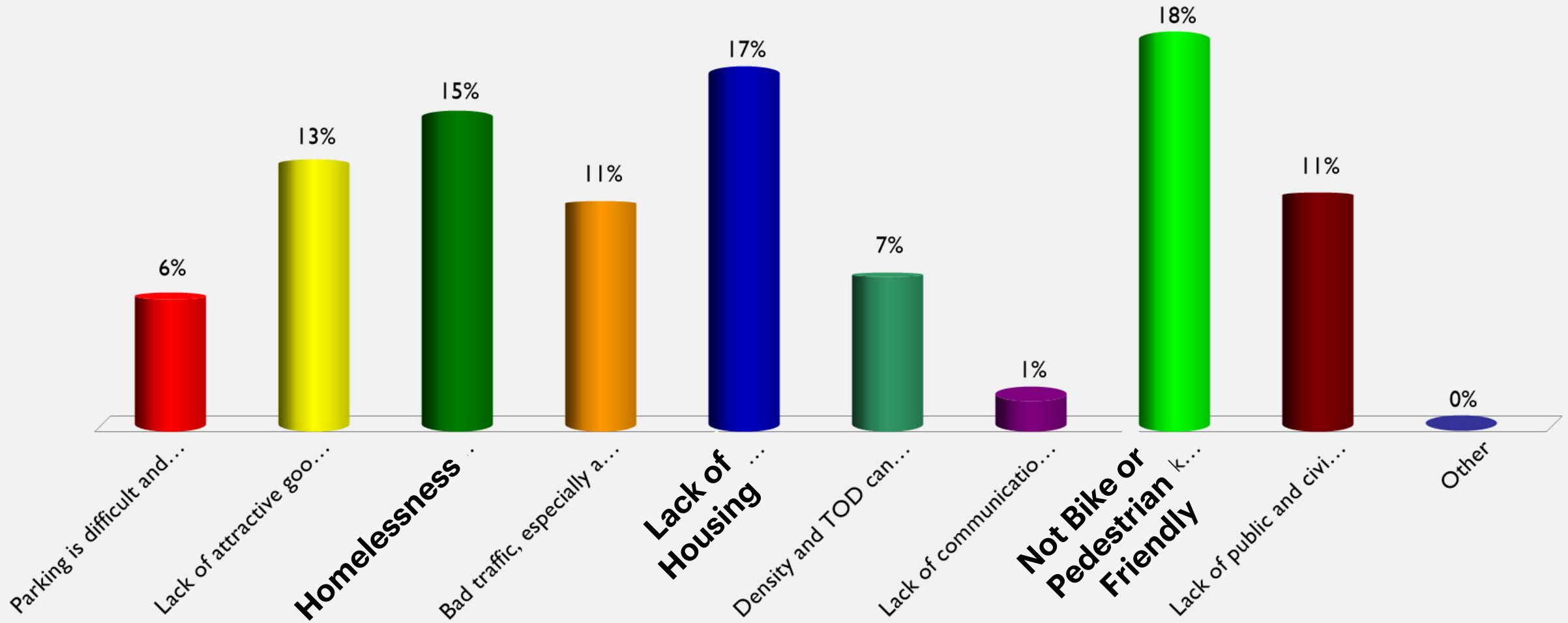


What are Downtown San Rafael's Greatest Constraints?

Please rank the top three phrases you agree with most:

- A. Parking is difficult and expensive
- B. Lack of attractive goods and services → unexciting Downtown → lack of foot traffic → (repeat)
- C. Homelessness makes Downtown unattractive and uncomfortable
- D. Bad traffic, especially at rush hour
- E. Lack of housing and people to support businesses
- F. Density and TOD can worsen congestion and parking issues if residents/ visitors still demand privately-owned cars
- G. Lack of communication to the public about new economic development
- H. Not pedestrian or bike friendly: cars too fast, too much through-traffic
- I. Lack of public and civic space (for example a town square that is programmed well)
- J. Other

■ Polling Results: Downtown Constraints

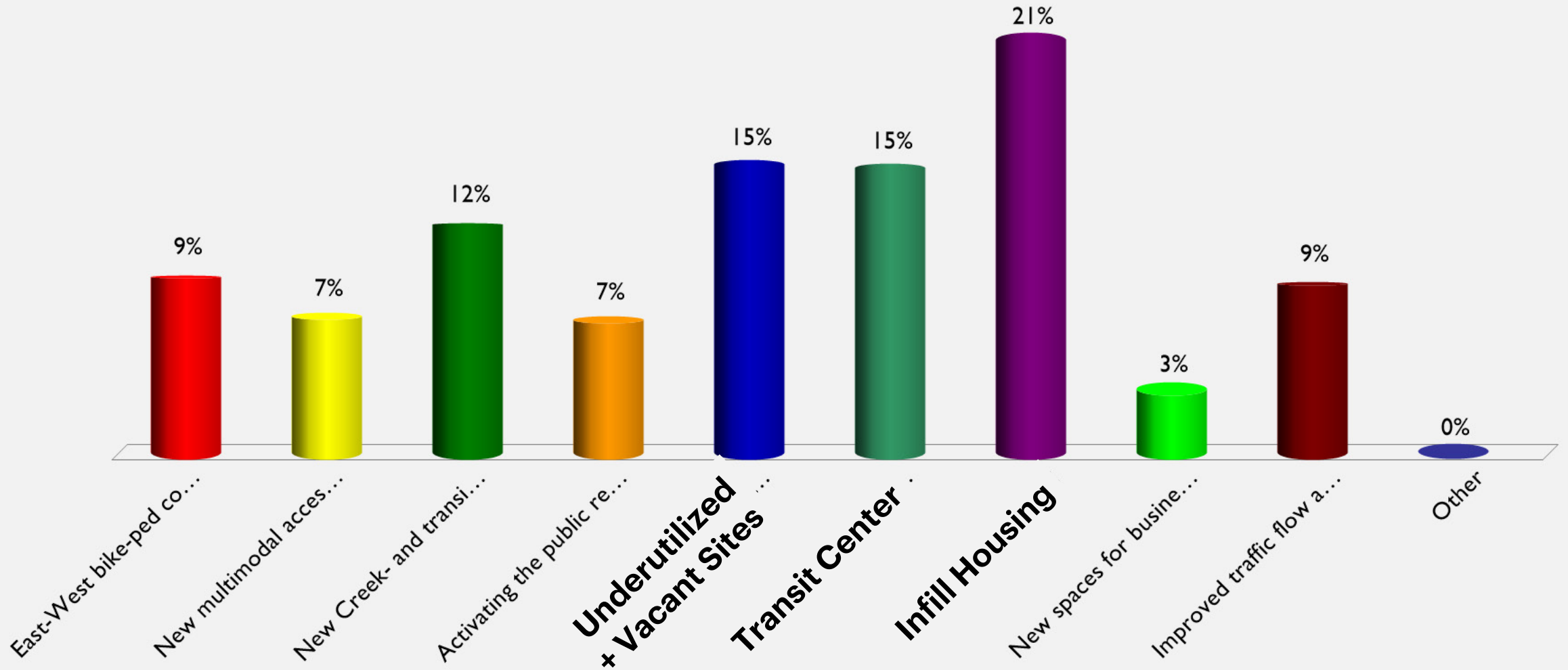


What are Downtown San Rafael's Greatest Opportunities?

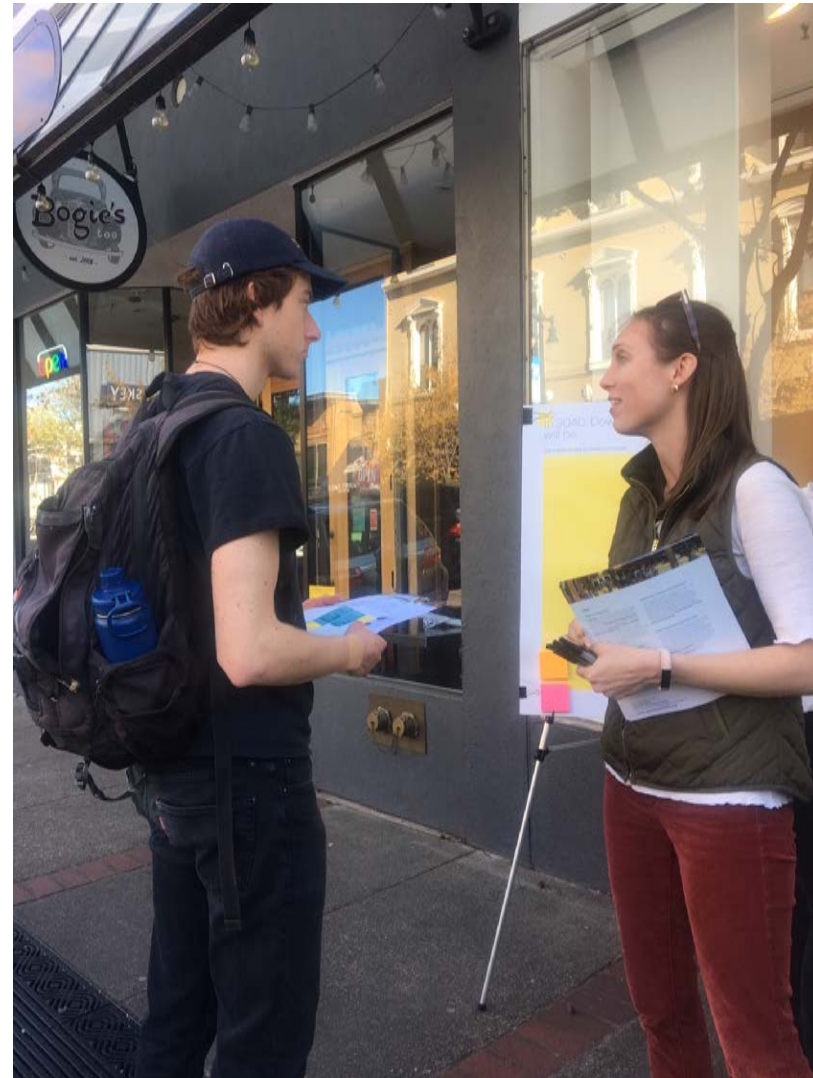
Please rank the top three phrases you agree with most:

- A. New east-west bike-ped. connection and bike lanes on 4th Street from San Rafael High to West End
- B. New multi-modal access along SMART corridor (for example, a greenway)
- C. New creek-oriented and transit-oriented urban neighborhood on the east side of Highway 101 (Montecito Plaza area)
- D. Activation of the public realm for all ages and users that showcases Downtown's unique identity
- E. Repurposing of obsolete areas, such as vacant and parking lots, for infill and civic space
- F. Reuse of Bettini Transit Center and Whistlestop blocks
- G. New infill housing
- H. New spaces for business incubation and entrepreneurship
- I. Car-free public spaces
- J. Improved traffic flow and less congestion
- K. Other

■ Polling Results: Downtown Opportunities



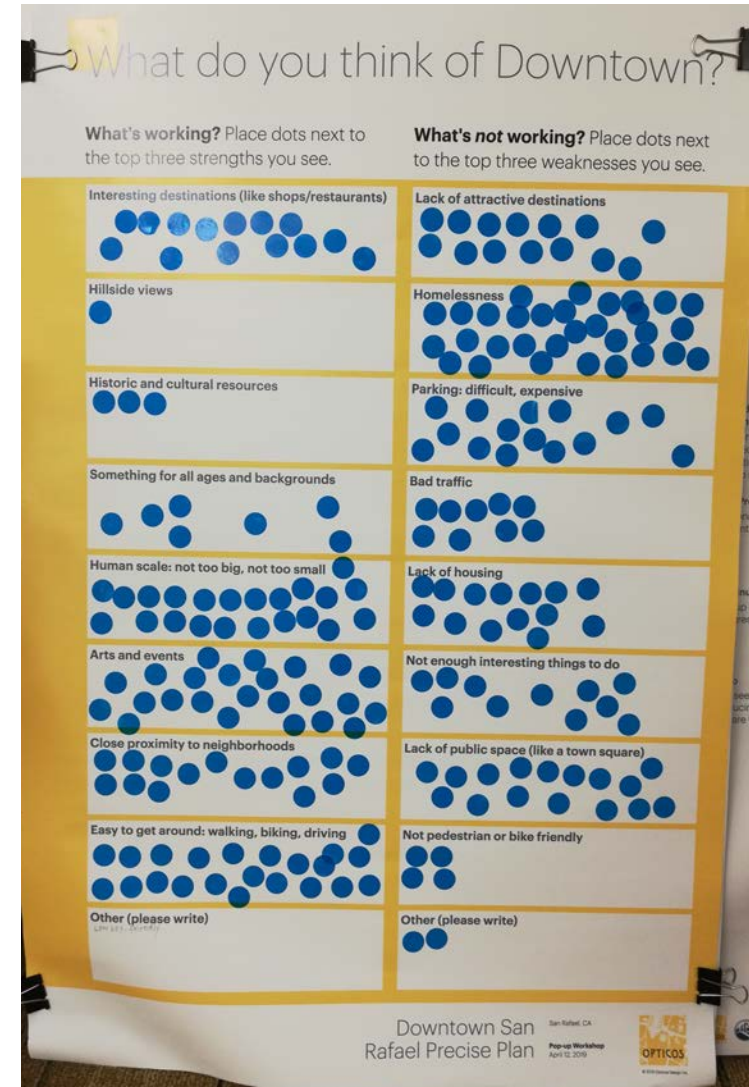
Downtown Plan Visioning Pop-Up



Visioning Pop-Up Results

What do you think of Downtown? [35 People Polled]

<i>What's working?</i>	<i>Dots</i>	<i>What's not working?</i>	<i>Dots</i>
Interesting Destinations	14	Lack of attractive destinations	14
Hillside Views	1	Homelessness	31
Historic and Cultural Resources	3	Parking: difficult, expensive	15
Something for all ages and backgrounds	7	Bad traffic	9
Human scale: not too big, not too small	22	Lack of housing	14
Arts and events	24	Not enough interesting things to do	11
Close proximity to neighborhoods	15	Lack of public space (such as a town square)	16
Easy to get around: walking, biking, driving	22	Not pedestrian or bike friendly	4
Other (please write)	0	Other (please write)	2

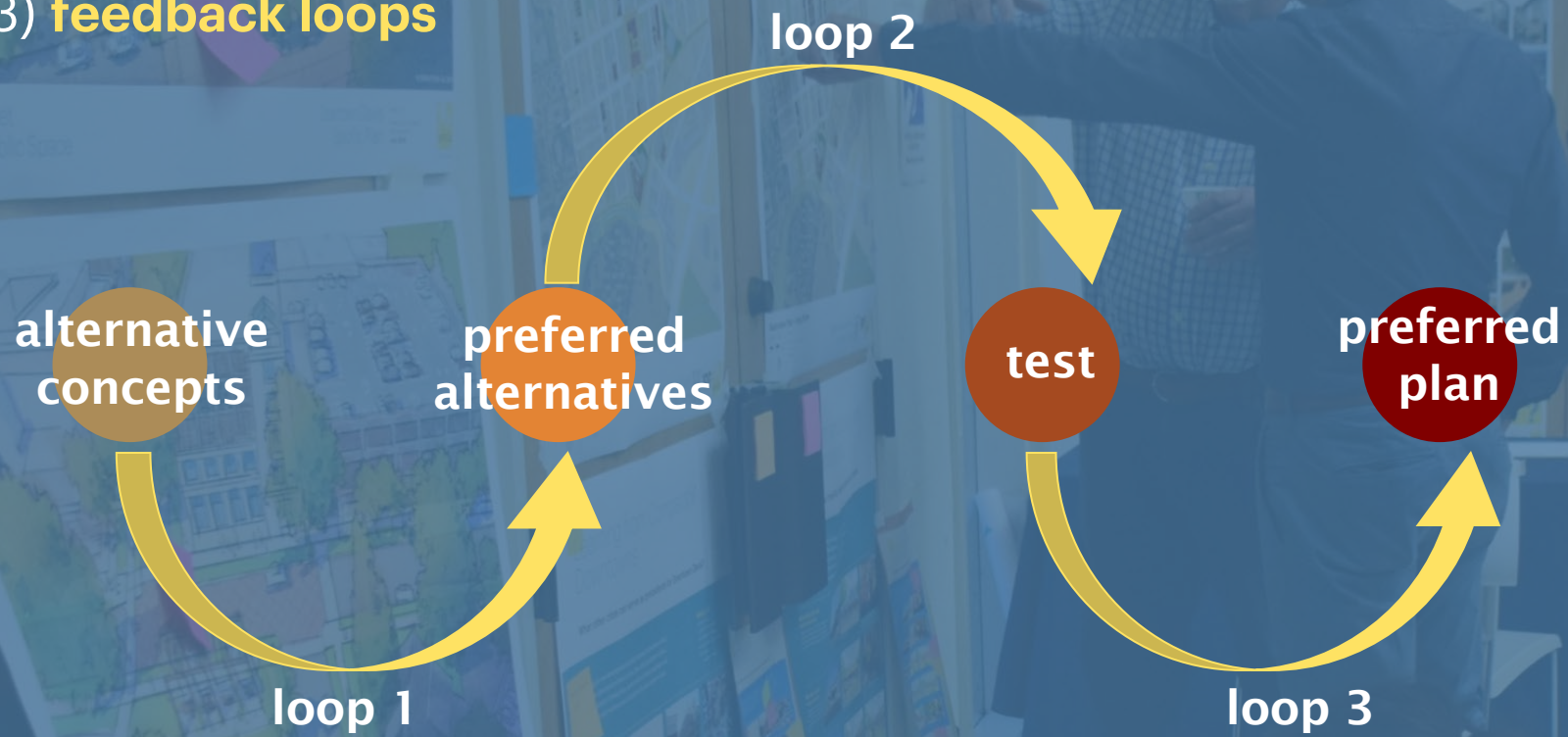


Charrette: What to Expect



What is a Charrette?

A **collaborative and iterative process** that relies on several (minimum 3) **feedback loops**




Slide repurposed from Bill Lennertz, National Charrette Institute

Charrette Schedule

Many Opportunities to Participate

- Opening + Closing Presentations
- Midpoint Pinup
- Brown Bag Lunches
- Open Studio

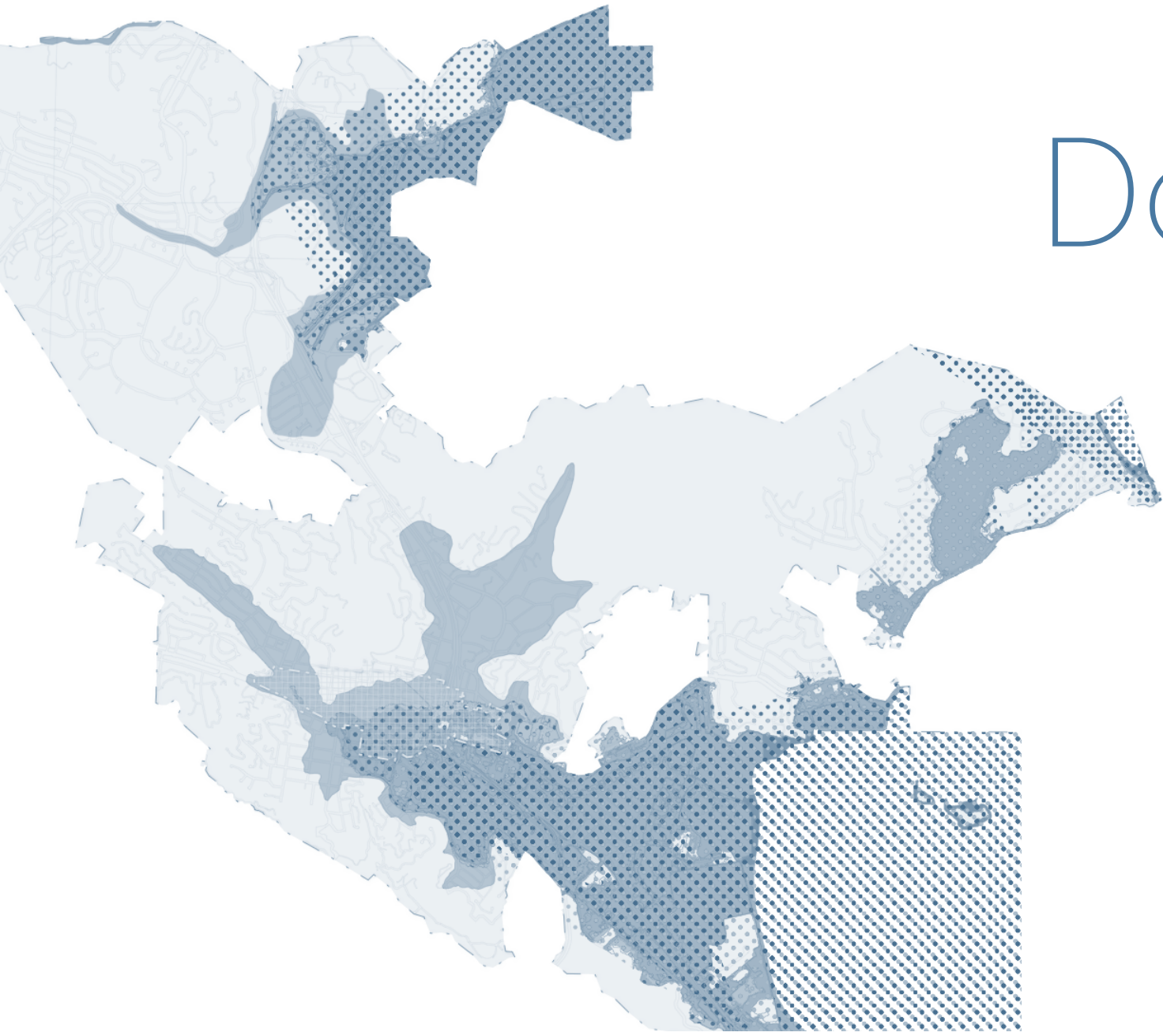
 If you have limited time to participate, come to these events

	Wednesday 8th May	Thursday 9th May	Friday 10th May	Saturday 11th May	
	Closed Studio 10.00 am - 7.00 pm			Closing Presentation 9.30 am - 12.00 pm <i>Jackson's Café, Whistlestop</i>	
10 - 11 am		Open Studio 10.00 am - 5.00 pm	Open Studio 10.00 am - 12.00 pm		
11 am - 12 pm				Brown Bag Historic Resources 12.00 - 1.00 pm	Brown Bag Economics 12.00 - 1.00 pm
12 - 1 pm					
1 - 2 pm				Midpoint Pinup 5.00 - 6.30 pm <i>1200 4th St</i>	
2 - 3 pm					Closed Studio 6.30 - 9.00 pm
3 - 4 pm				Opening Presentation 7.00 - 9.00 pm <i>Jackson's Café, Whistlestop</i>	
4 - 5 pm					
5 - 6 pm					
6 - 7 pm					
7 - 8 pm					
8 - 9 pm					



Downtown Profile Update





Downtown Patterns



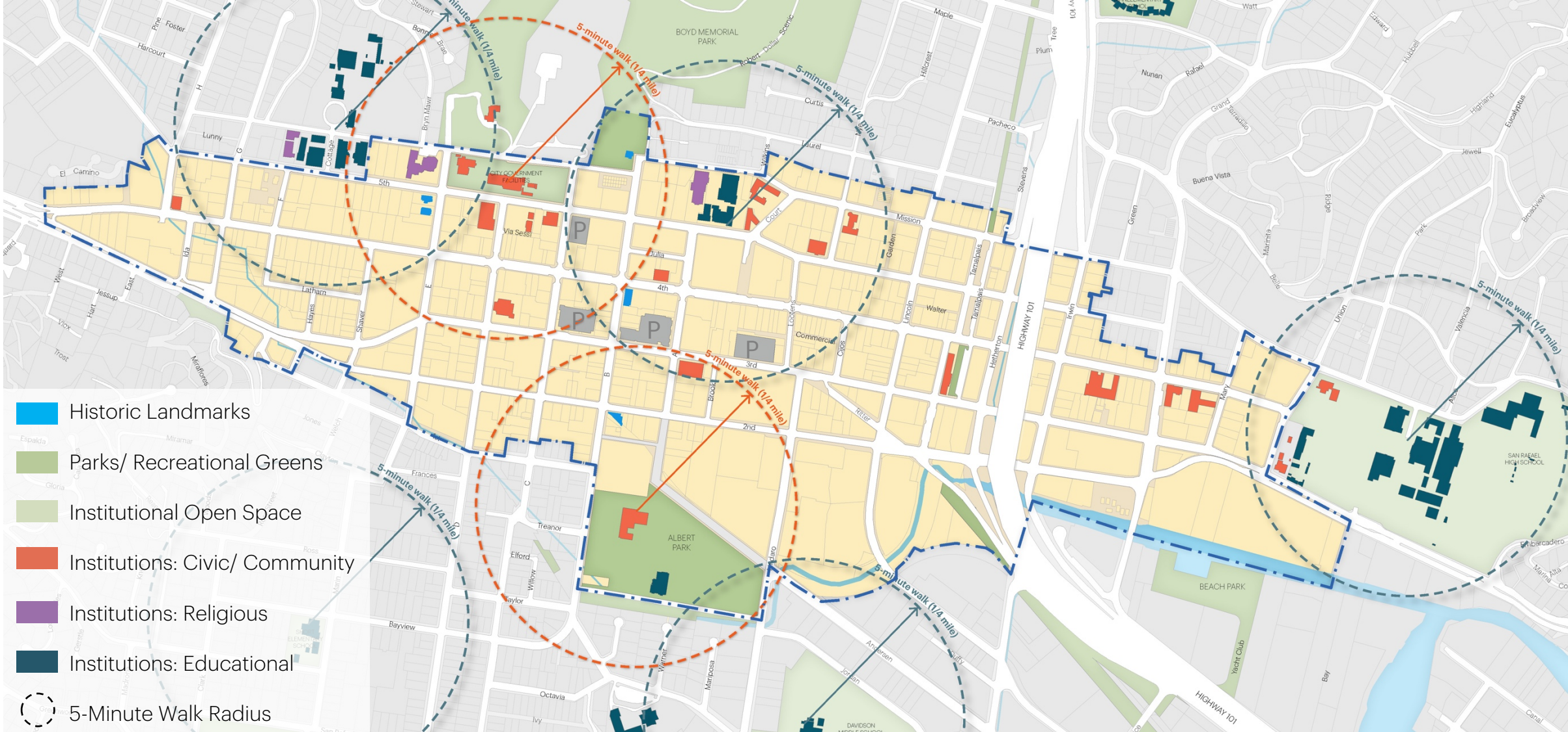
Built Form



Greater proportion of **block-form, larger buildings** compared to adjacent neighborhoods

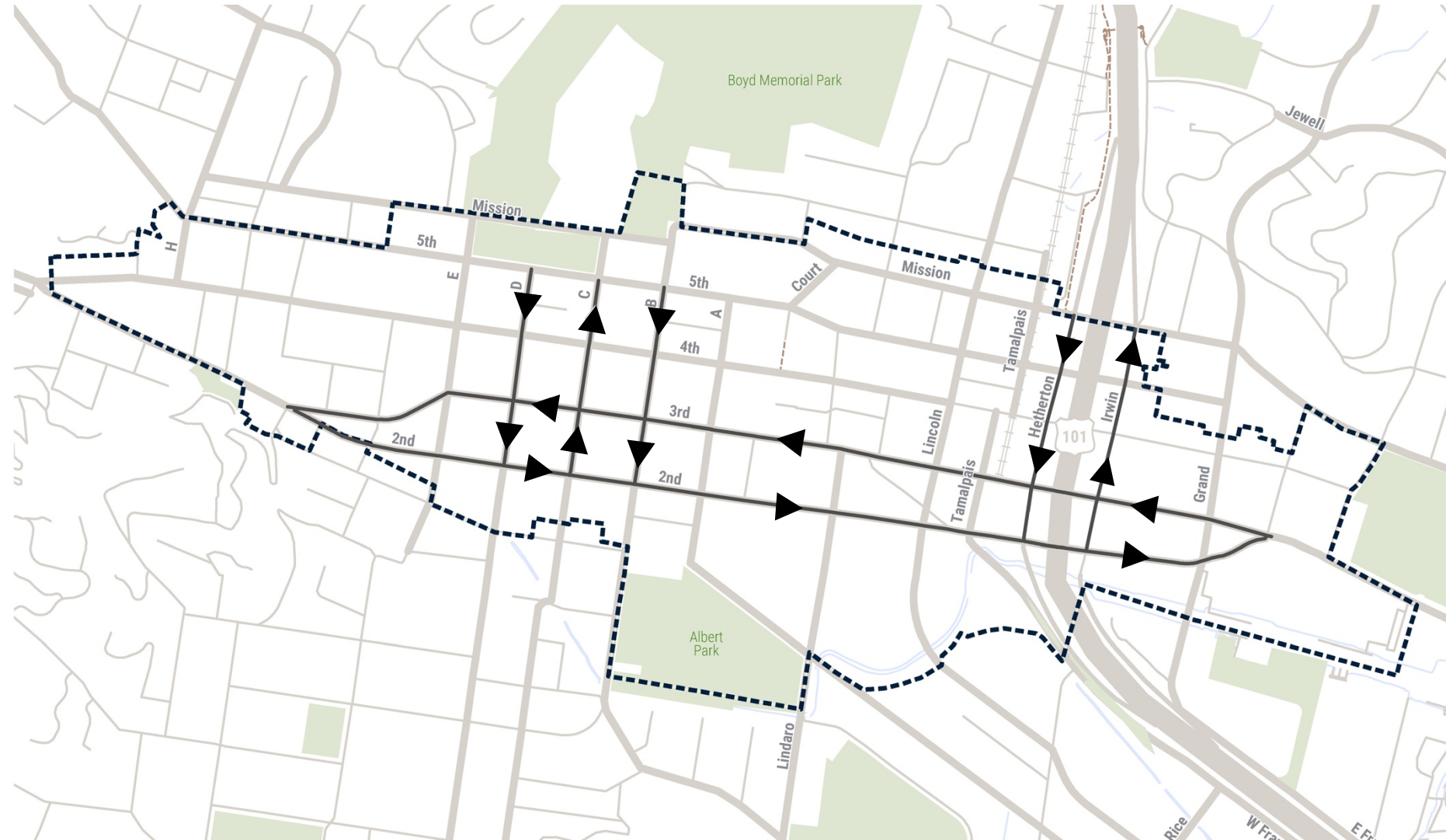
Coherent facades and frontages along 4th Street between A and E

Parks, Civic + Historic Landmarks

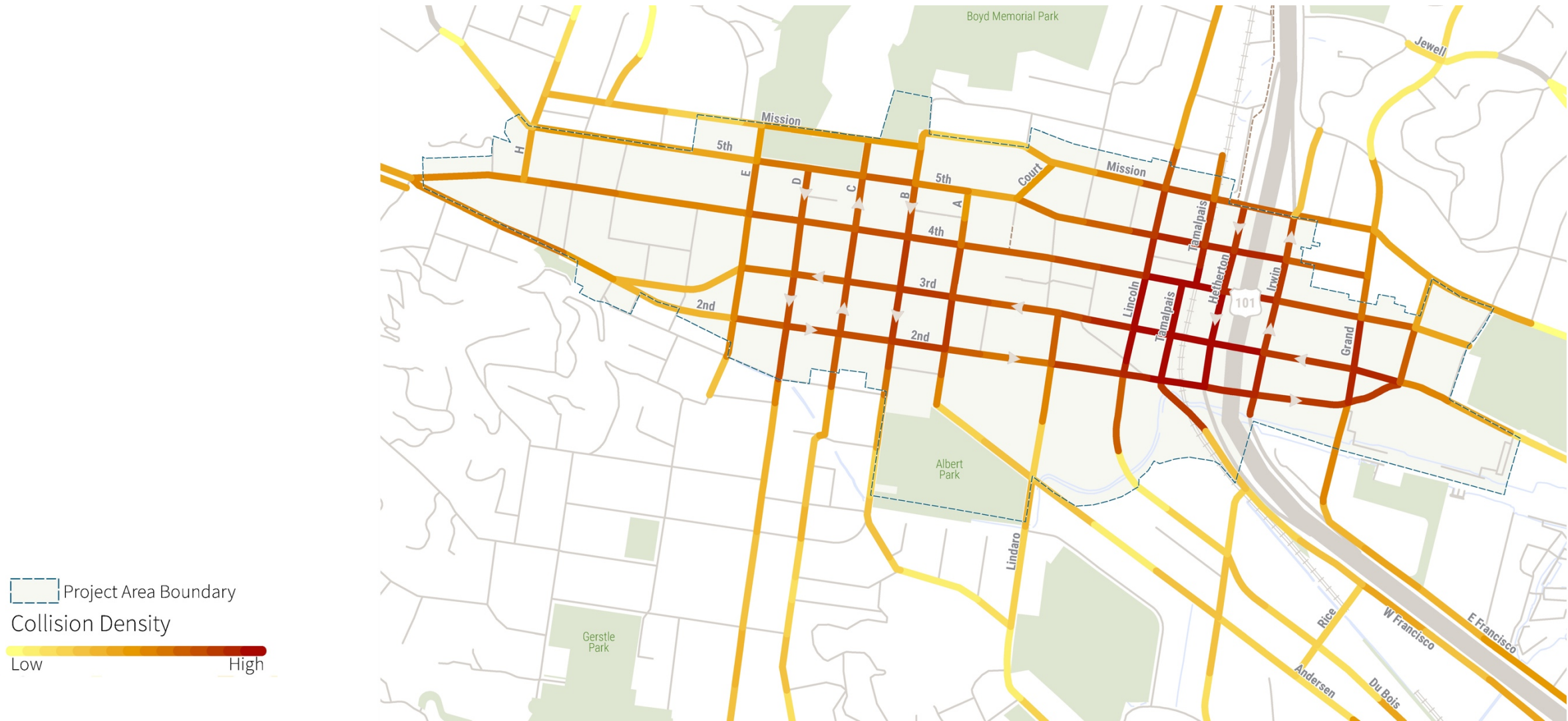


Existing One-Way Streets

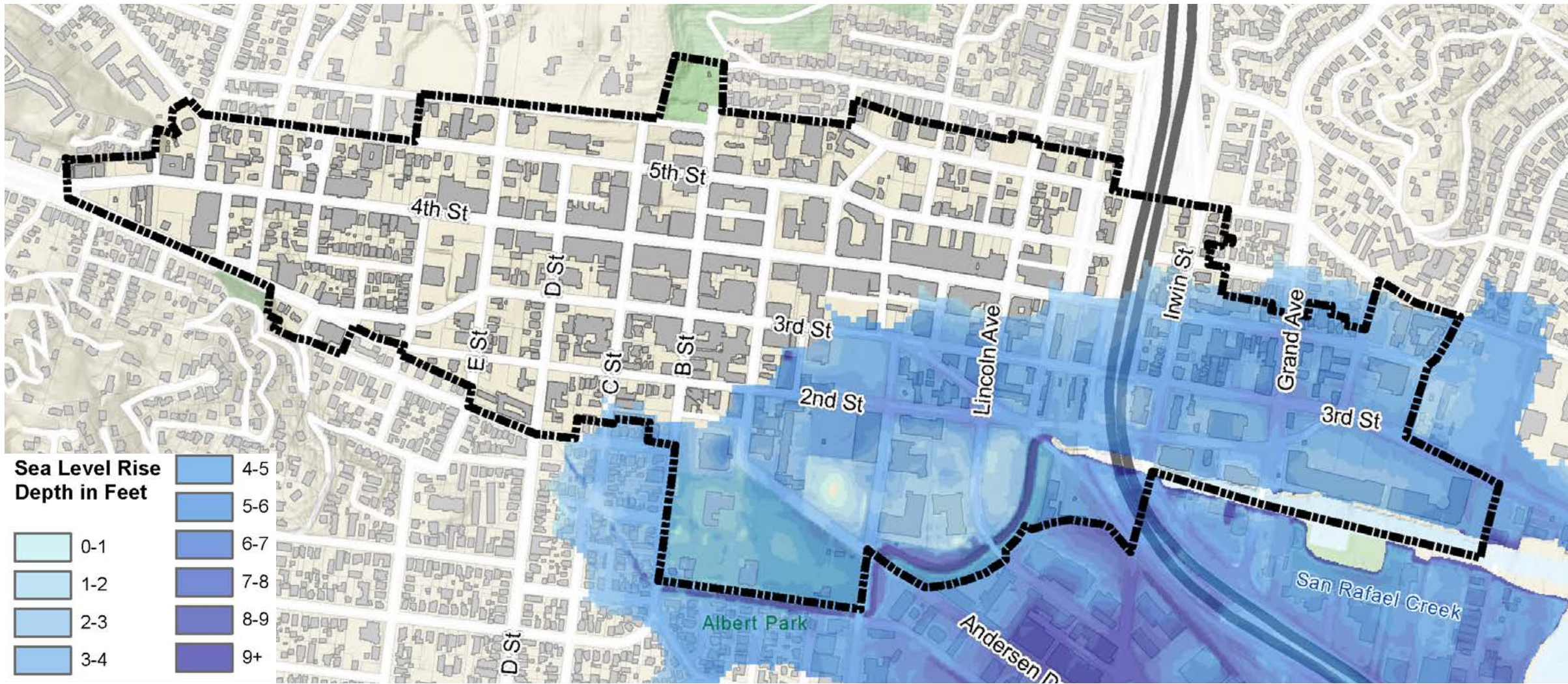
The primary streets within Downtown for vehicular traffic are the **Second and Third Street** One-way Couplet.

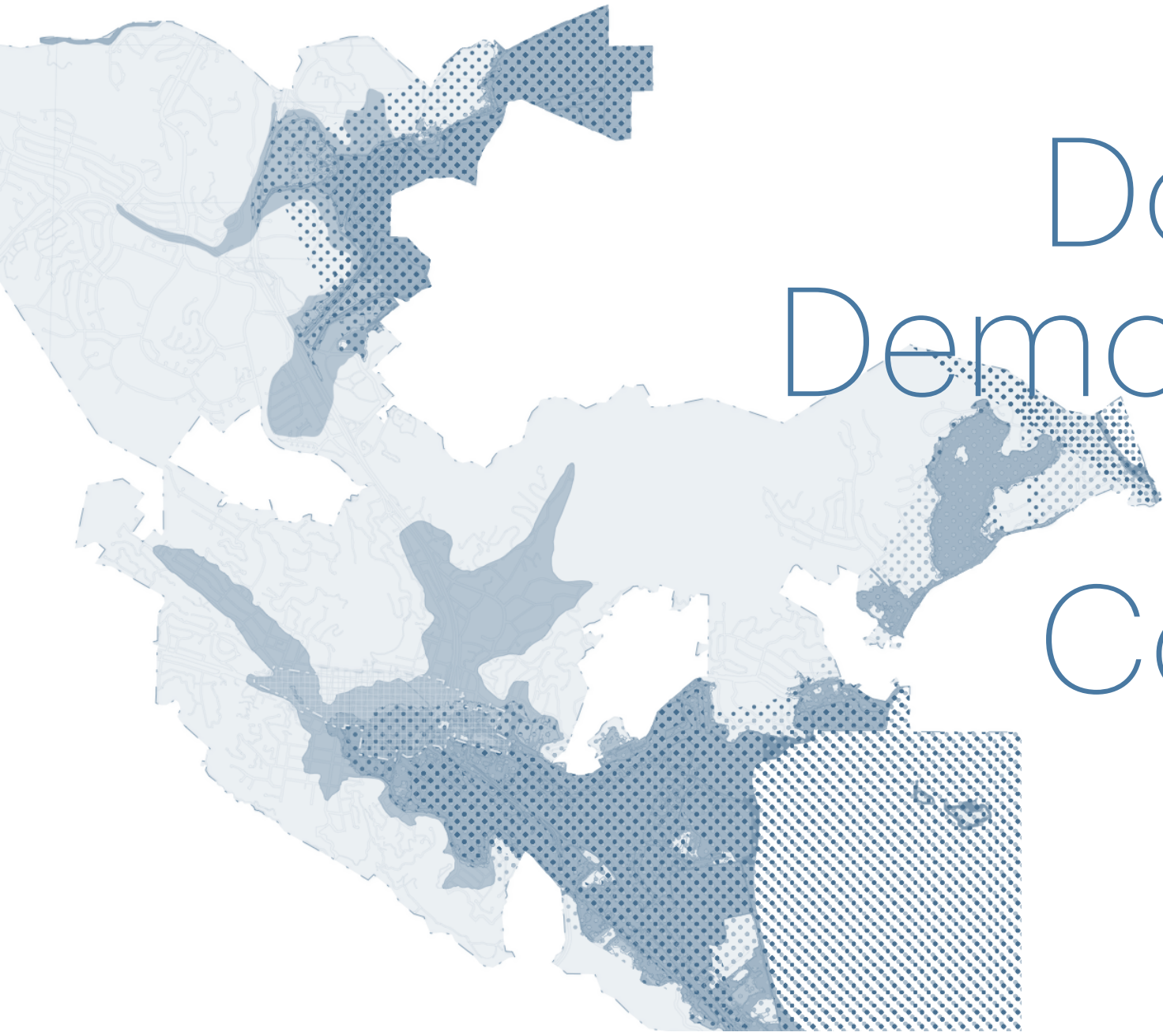


Collision Density – All Types (2012-2016)



2100 Sea Level Rise + 100 Year Storm

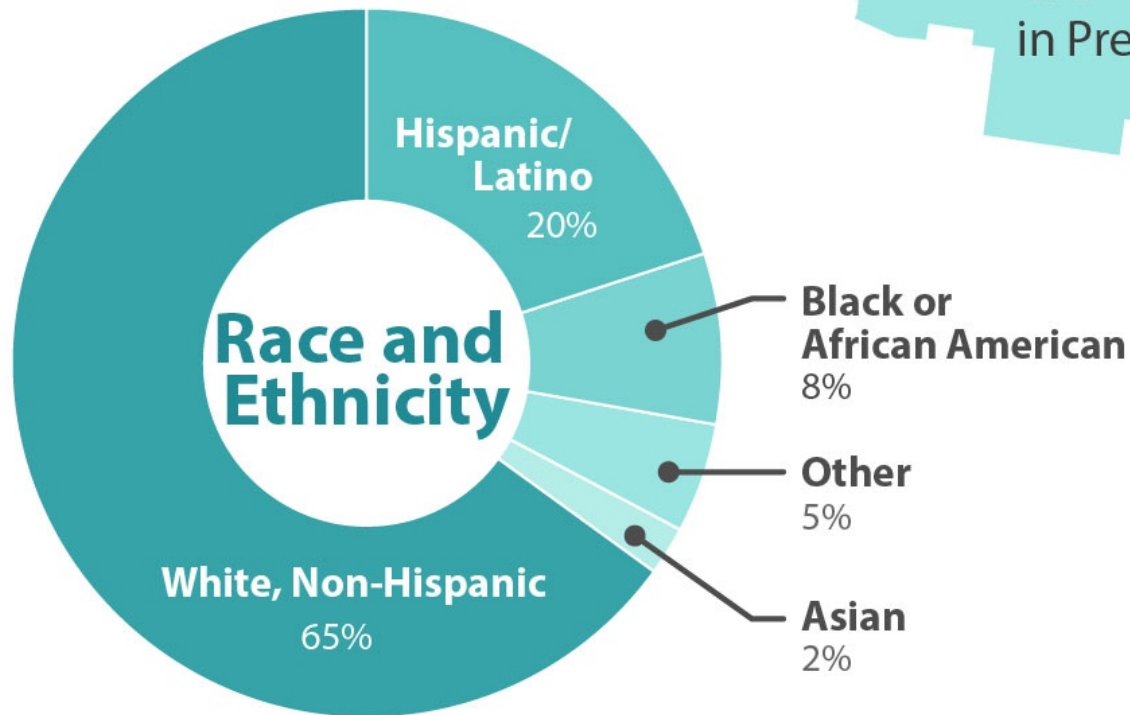




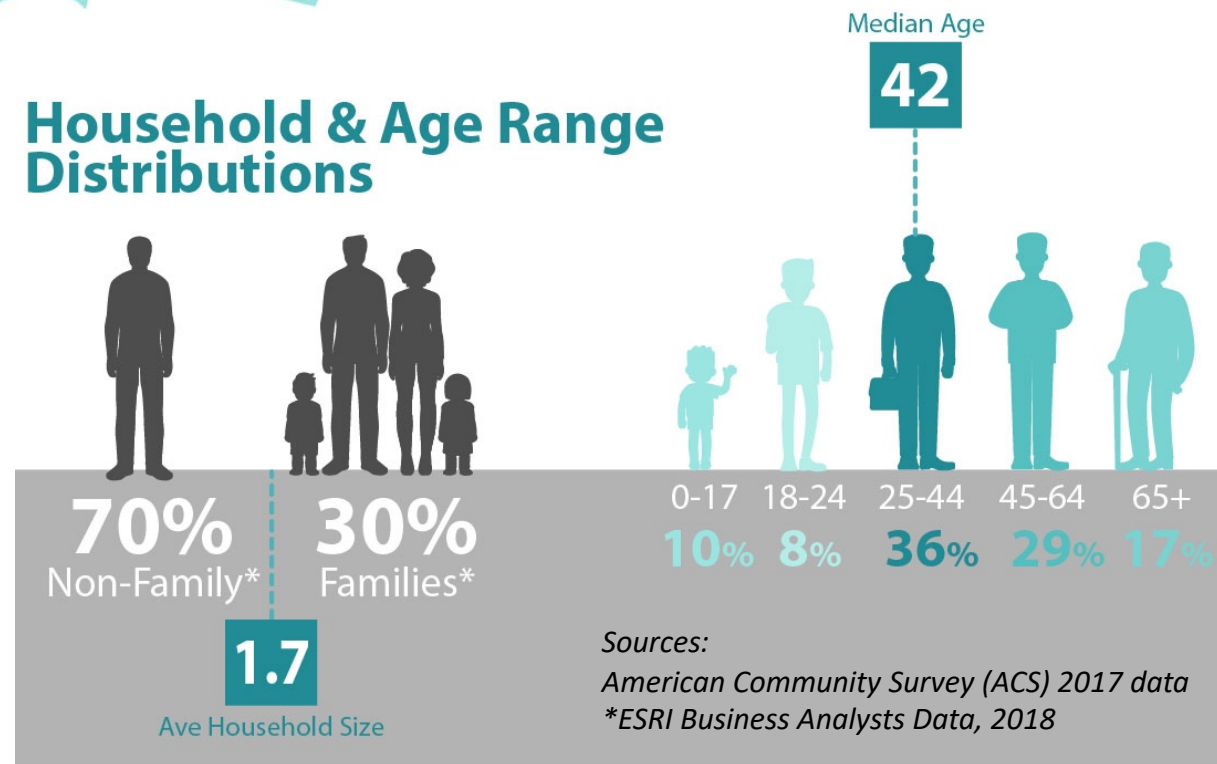
Downtown Demographics & Market Conditions

Downtown Demographics

Population



Household & Age Range Distributions

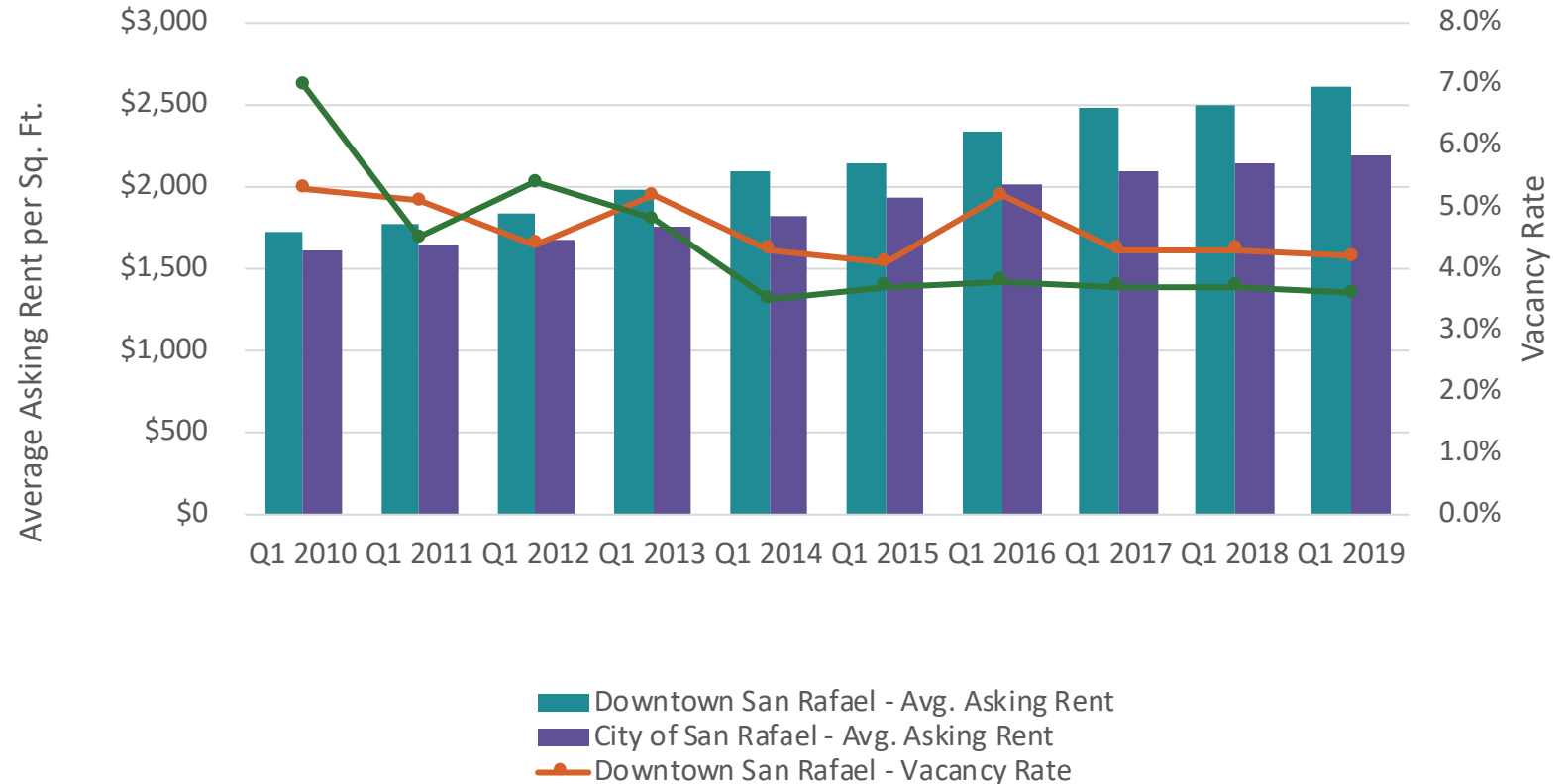


Sources:
American Community Survey (ACS) 2017 data
*ESRI Business Analysts Data, 2018

Living Downtown

Multifamily Rental Trends:

- The average multifamily asking rent is **\$2,499**, higher than city average of \$2,144.
- New and renovated historic buildings have higher rents.
- Downtown has a **low multifamily vacancy rate of 4.2%**, only slightly higher than the citywide and county.
- High rents and low vacancy indicate **strong demand for multifamily rental units.**

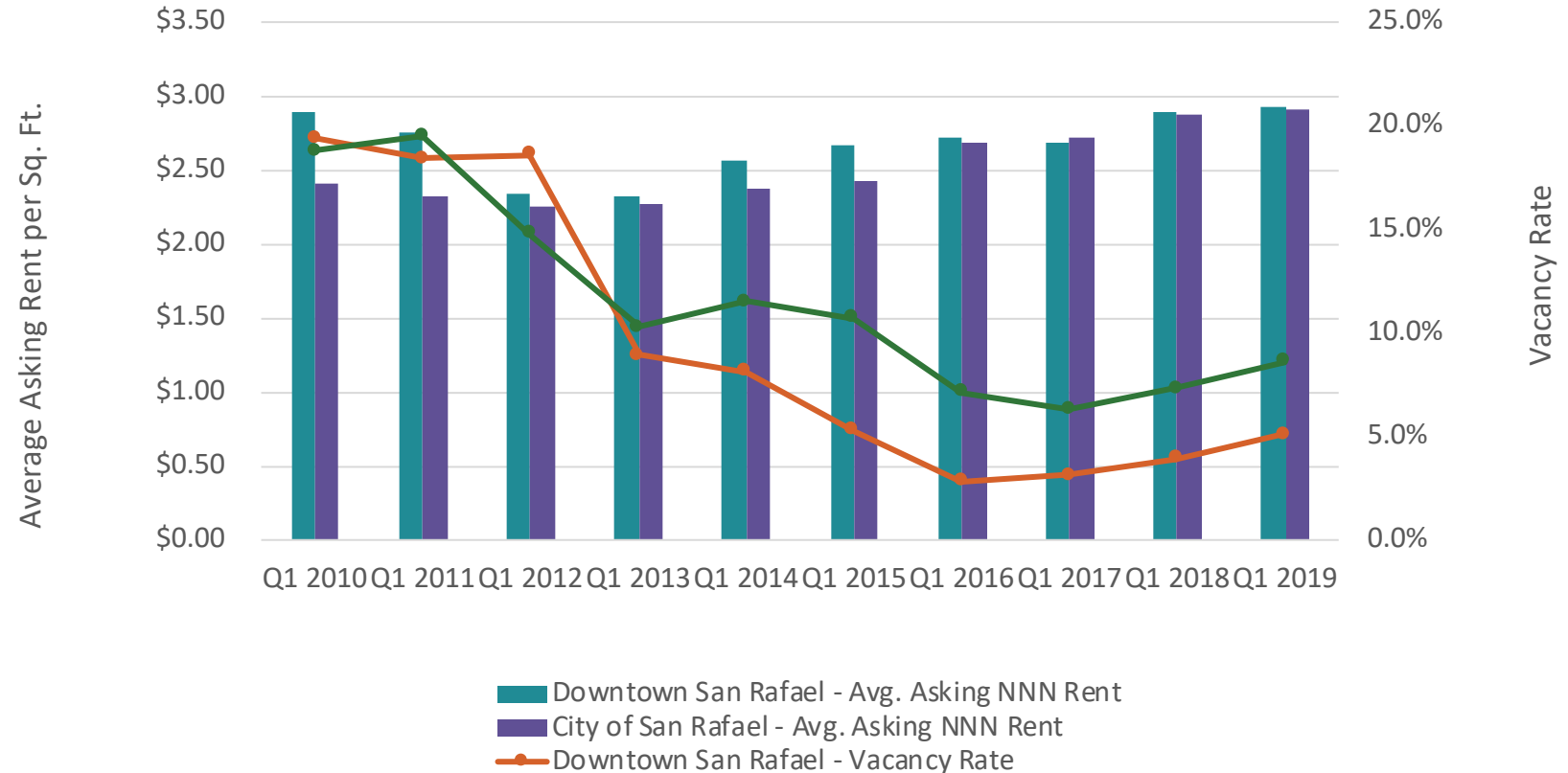


Sources: CoStar, 2019; BAE, 2019

Working Downtown

Office Market Trends

- Downtown office inventory of **\$1.6 million sf** (1/3 of total San Rafael inventory)
- Average rents of **\$2.92 per sf per month**, low vacancy rate of 5.1%
- Increasing preferences for office space in **mixed-use areas with transit and amenities.**
- Regional and national trends show an increasing prevalence of **shared workspaces and co-working spaces.**

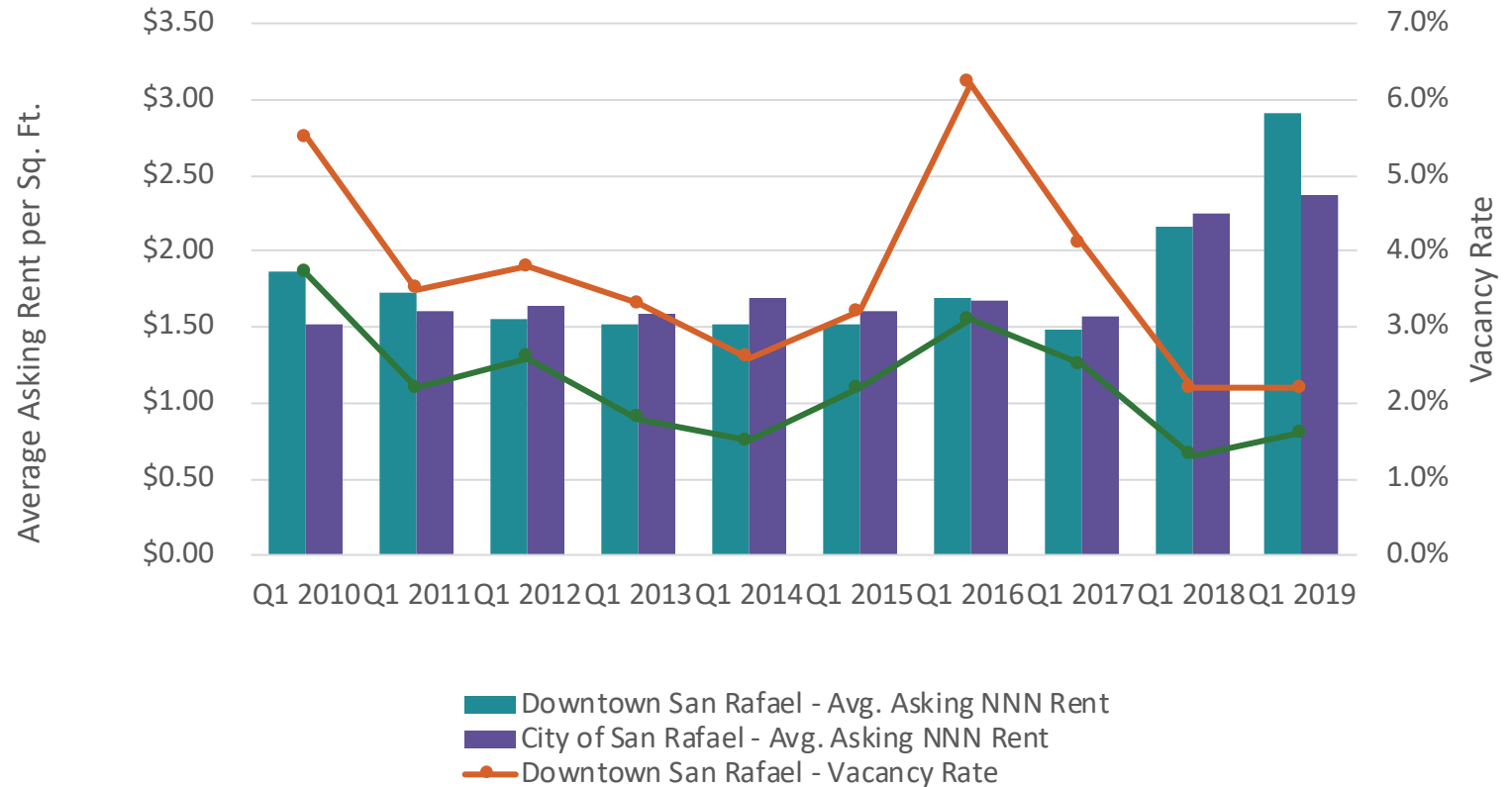


Sources: CoStar, 2019; BAE, 2019

Working Downtown

Retail Market Trends

- Regionally and nationally, retail tenants are increasingly seeking **mixed-use environments** that support **experiential retail**.
- The **rise of e-commerce** has led to **shifts in tenant mixes**.

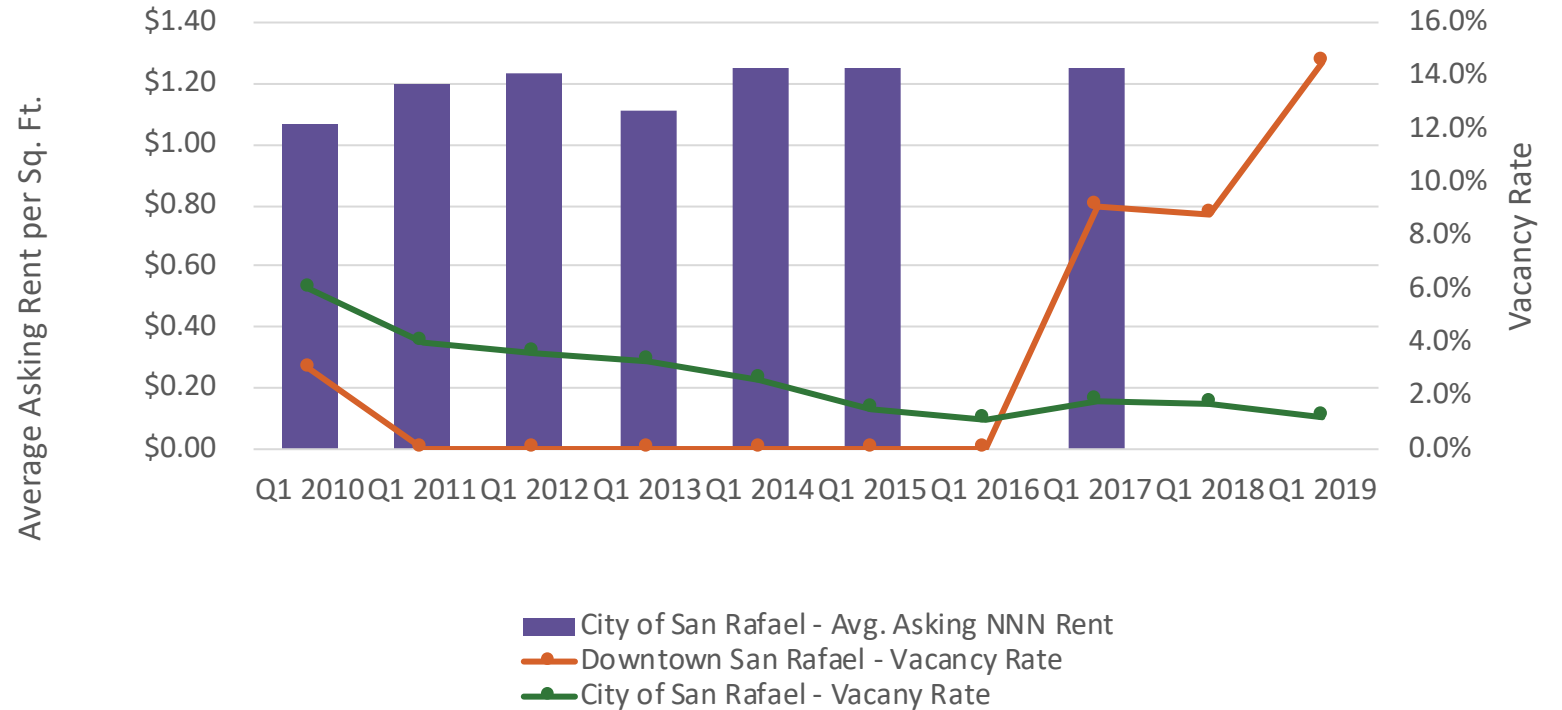


Sources: CoStar, 2019; BAE, 2019

Working Downtown

Industrial + Flex Market Trends

- San Rafael has a relatively large industrial/flex inventory citywide (4.2 million sq. ft.) with a low 1.2% vacancy rate, indicating **strong demand for industrial space elsewhere in the City.**



Sources: CoStar, 2019; BAE, 2019

Big Ideas for Downtown



What Makes a Downtown Memorable?

Rooted in Place and History

Human Scale and Walkable

Transit-Oriented and Connected

A Diverse Mix of Uses



Rooted in Place and History

A Unique Destination

- **A place that people identify with, form attachments to and want to reinvest in over time**
- **Residents enjoy downtown living with easy access to amenities**
- **Visitors cherish their experience and want to come back**

Authenticity

- **Celebrates local history, culture and unique assets**
- **Evolves over time, but stays rooted in community character**

Rooted in Place and History

**How do we
celebrate and
enhance historic
and cultural assets?**



Rooted in Place and History

How do we encourage creative development ideas but stay true to the historic character of a place?





Human Scale and Walkable

Small Blocks and Narrow Streets

- **Designing with small blocks and fine grain to enhance walkability**
- **Right-sizing the scale of new development to be compatible with the existing context**

Public Realm as Open Space

- **Removing existing barriers to walkability and prioritizing pedestrian movement for people of all abilities**
- **Design streets and buildings to promote safety and active use at all hours**

Human Scale and Walkable

**An example from
Downtown San
Rafael of what to
avoid**



Human Scale and Walkable

**An example from
Downtown San
Rafael of what to
emulate**





Transit-Oriented and Connected

Regional and Local Transit Networks

- **Transit Hub as a unique opportunity to improve access and walkability**
- **Transit-oriented development to encourage a car-free or car-light lifestyle**

Multimodal Connectivity

- **Convenient access and independence for people of all abilities**
- **Balance the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, transit users and car users**

Transit-Oriented and Connected

**Can a transit plaza
improve access
and also be a
community space?**

Del Mar station, Pasadena



Transit-Oriented and Connected

Can 'Complete Streets' be used to balance the needs of all users?

Can streets function as public space?



A Diverse Mix of Uses

A Balanced Mix of Uses

- **Provide housing for a variety of households and incomes**
- **Active, ground floor spaces to provide retail, entertainment and services**
- **Flexible office spaces**
- **Publicly accessible spaces and activities for all age groups**

A Diverse Mix of Uses

What role can arts and culture play in crafting a unique identity?

Can a vacant storefront be used as an art gallery?



A Diverse Mix of Uses

**How do we make
Downtown safe and
active at all times?**



Visioning Exercise



We Need Your Input!

Share your vision for Downtown San Rafael.

- Table map exercise from 8 to 9 pm
- Work in small groups
- Sketch your ideas, write down your thoughts
- Report back: summarize ideas from each table

Please remember

- There are no bad ideas
- Differing opinions should be respected
- Everyone should have a chance to participate

Thank you for participating!

