SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE TOWN CENTER STUDY INITIATIVE?
The Town Center Study is an extension of the City of McKinney’s 2004 Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan was developed from community input and the leadership of McKinney to guide decision making for the City’s future growth and development. Because it considered approximately 114 square miles of McKinney’s city limits and extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), the Comprehensive Plan required a generalized approach. To more adequately address the specific needs of the Town Center area, the Town Center Study builds upon the work of the Comprehensive Plan by focusing on the single sector of town – the Town Center.

As an extension of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, the Town Center Study is a work plan initiated by the City. A work plan serves as a means by which potential polices and ordinances can be evaluated, recommended, and implemented in order to realize the goals and objectives expressed in the Comprehensive Plan and as outlined in the Town Center Study Initiative. A number of different work plans are listed in Section 12 of the Comprehensive Plan, specifically including the following items:

Prioritize 3 items in the Urban Design section, including:
- S.H. 5 Corridor Plan
- U.S. Highway 380 Corridor Plan
- Town Center Module Plan

Initiate Sector Plans

The Town Center Study is a sector planning effort that addresses all of the items above.

The Town Center Study presents many opportunities for place making and place saving. At this conceptual planning stage of Phase 1, the process is not focused on the details. Instead, the focus is on exploring how basic urban design principles can be used to foster the eventual development of new places and spaces as well as the redevelopment of existing places and spaces. This process has thus set the context and policies for people to live in, work in, and enjoy the unique character of the McKinney Town Center for many generations to come.
THE TOWN CENTER STUDY PROCESS

Phase 1 of the study established a starting point for development of an overall revitalization plan for the Town Center. Phase 1 involved the following major elements:

- Observing and documenting existing conditions
- Engaging stakeholders
- Creating a shared illustrative vision of preferred concepts and ideas
- Identifying and clarifying the significant current obstacles to realizing the vision
- Establishing a general framework for moving forward to further explore obstacles and opportunities

Looking ahead, the primary goals of Phase 2 of the study will likely involve:

- Taking a more detailed look at obstacles and opportunities
- Developing specific strategies for overcoming obstacles and taking advantage of opportunities
- Determining the appropriate actions for implementing critical components of the vision

Phase 3 and beyond:

- Initiating a combination of specific implementation tools and strategies (fiscal, regulatory, administrative, marketing, management, partnerships, etc.).

The illustrative nature of the shared vision creates the need for choices to be made for implementation. In order for the vision to become a reality, future phases of the Study will be utilized to evaluate, craft, select, relate, and phase the appropriate implementation components into a comprehensive implementation program. The long-term success of the Town Center Study will depend on the degree to which each element of the vision is implemented. Market acceptance and stakeholder ownership will be critical in that regard. Accordingly, existing implementation tools will be reviewed and potentially refined, and new tools and strategies may be developed so that the City’s future choices are consistent with the shared vision.

PURPOSE OF THE PHASE 1 REPORT

Phase 1 of the Town Center Study consisted of a series of public urban design workshops. Each workshop focused on a topic of concern and opportunity within the study area such as compatibility of land uses, enhancement of the downtown area, revitalization of the State Highway 5 (McDonald Street) corridor, the potential for transit-oriented development just east of SH 5, and the enhancement of the Kentucky/Tennessee Street corridor and the U.S. Highway 380 corridor.

The Phase 1 Report serves as the conclusion to the Phase 1 process. This report summarizes the series of urban design workshops that were held over the past year. More importantly, however, it outlines the preferred concepts and ideas that resulted from each of the public design workshops. It also explores general recommendations and strategies for moving forward with the next phase of the Town Center Study.
THE STUDY AREA
The study area, generally bounded by U.S. Highway 75, U.S. Highway 380, Eldorado Parkway and Airport Drive, contains neighborhoods and commercial districts that are well established, stable, eclectic and historic. These places collectively form the core of the City. This area includes the oldest developments in McKinney and is characterized by development patterns that occurred over the first 150 years of the community. Many of the issues now facing this area are those associated with redevelopment.

MAP OF STUDY AREA
HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AREA
McKinney has been blessed with a rich and wonderful past. This past provides the symbols for a community that is much more than a suburb of Dallas. Today, McKinney is a city centered about a historic town square with all key roads leading to the square.

Agricultural Roots
McKinney serves as the county seat of Collin County. Collin County was established in 1846 and McKinney in 1848. Both City and County were named for Mr. Collin McKinney, a patriot, land surveyor, legislator, and one of the 56 signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence. The cultivation and processing of locally grown crops fueled much of McKinney's late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century growth and prosperity. During this period, Collin County emerged as one of the leading agricultural centers in Texas. Cotton prevailed as the county's largest and most significant farm product; however, corn, wheat, and oats were also grown in large quantities. Although crop production in the McKinney area continues today, its role in the local economy diminished after World War II. McKinney's cotton-processing structures played a significant role in the town center's history and development during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Much of the area's vast agricultural potential was realized through the construction and operation of these facilities. Their establishment aided the town center's commercial development because area farmers came to McKinney to sell their crops and then purchased goods at downtown stores. These property types also laid the foundation for the town center's industrial development and supported the establishment of a textile mill.

Town Square
The town square is one of the symbols that people throughout North Texas recognize as being McKinney. The original town site presented a cardinal-point grid plan with a courthouse square near the city's center, a popular town plan throughout Texas. The majority of the state's county seats, especially those of the same vintage as McKinney, are arranged similarly. The square was the sole public space set aside in the original town plan. Anticipating that property near the town's center would be in great demand for business purposes, the city's surveyors made lots facing onto the courthouse square long and narrow, measuring 25 by 100 feet. Such a layout enabled merchants to erect buildings with storefronts for displaying merchandise. George White and Ethelred Whitley, who surveyed the new town site, divided the remainder of the City's blocks into equally sized lots that were reserved for residential use.

Arrival of the Railroad
The arrival of the railroad in 1872 greatly stimulated economic growth and brought new wealth to McKinney. The railroad enticed several industrial enterprises, such as a textile mill, grain elevators and a flour mill, to locate in the community. It also influenced much of the town center's physical growth and settlement patterns. In addition, the railroad linked the once
physically and socially isolated community with the rest of the nation, thus allowing new ideas, people, and goods to arrive in McKinney.

Post World War II
The McKinney Comprehensive Plan of 1964 was the first to propose the loop road around downtown (US 75). This event, along with post WW II population growth and a desire for a decentralized growth pattern away from urban centers, changed the image of McKinney. Prior to US 75, commercial growth was focused in downtown and along SH 5 and Highway 24 (current US 380). With the arrival of US 75, growth began to shift west and away from the town center.
SECTION 2: PLANNING PROCESS

PHASE 1 PROCESS  
Phase 1 of the Town Center Study planning process was designed to be inclusive, not simply allowing for, but actively soliciting public input through each part of the process. As a result, the process captured valuable public input while still capitalizing on the professional expertise of City Officials and hired consultants. The strength of the process will be fully realized in a plan which captures the shared vision of the community.

As a first step, City Staff posted a “Request for Qualifications,” soliciting private planning and design firms to assist in carrying out the Study. In August 2006, the City contracted with four private planning and design firms. Gateway Planning Group was awarded the role as lead consultant, with HNTB Corporation, Mesa Design Group, and Civic Design Associates also hired to play active roles in the Town Center Study process. The selected firms represent a wide range of talents, including planning, engineering, architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design. As such, the broad range of talents that the firms represent supported a process that allowed different perspectives to be brought to the table. With the selection of these firms, the City began its work on a planning process that was not only inclusive but also interdisciplinary in its approach. Along with helping to facilitate input from McKinney stakeholders, these firms have played an integral role in helping to conceptualize visions for the future.

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**TOWN CENTER STUDY PLANNING PROCESS**

**PHASE 1**
- OPEN HOUSE
  - Information Sharing
  - Image Preference Survey
- WORKSHOPS
  - Day 1 - Develop Alternatives
  - Consultant Design Studio
  - Day 2 - Select Preferred Alternative
- CREATING THE PLAN
  - Staff & Consultant Team
  - Providing Status Update
- APPROVAL PROCESS
  - Public Hearing
  - Presenting Final Document

**PHASE 2**
- IMPLEMENTATION
  - Example - Before
  - Example - After

**Sign up for Workshop**
- Presentation to City Council
- Creating the Final Document
- City Council Approval
- Implementing the Plan
Open House
On Tuesday, August 29, 2006 the Planning Department hosted a public open house to kick off the Town Center Study at the McKinney Performing Arts Center at the Historic Collin County Courthouse. City Planning Staff hosted the Open House Kickoff as a way to inform and involve public stakeholders in the Town Center Study Process. The primary goal of the Open House Kickoff was to set the stage for information sharing and involvement.

A diverse group of well over 200 people attended the open house. Throughout the event, attendees had an opportunity to view a video and hear what local residents were saying about the Town Center. Additionally, the open house was set up with 7 “stations”, with each station having a different purpose. Six of the stations were manned by Planning Staff, with the other station being covered by members of the consultant team. This set-up allowed participants to wander around to each station at their own pace, gather information, participate in the image preference survey, read posters, collect handouts, fill out workshop sign-up cards, and engage Staff members/consultants in a face-to-face discussion. Some of the station topics included:

- **Image Preference Survey**: This station gave participants the opportunity to view a series of images and score each image based on how aesthetically pleasing they found it to be. Results of the image preference survey can be found in Appendix B.

- **Overview of the Town Center Study**: This station allowed participants to learn more about the Town Center Study and the design workshop process.

- **Existing Conditions**: This station allowed participants to learn general characteristics such as existing land uses, zoning, and demographic information found in and around the Town Center Study area.

- **Overview of Design Workshops**: This station was set up to inform participants of what they could expect during the design
PUBLIC DESIGN WORKSHOPS
The Public Design Workshops represent the heart of Phase 1. A successful design workshop is as much about the process as it is about the product. In other words, the process of sitting around a table discussing ideas is just as important as the shared vision that is reached.

In a design workshop, after participants present their ideas, the professional designers and facilitators help the participants to identify key concepts that lead to the development of a preferred option and move the community in the direction of a shared vision. At the end of the design workshop process, the shared vision belongs to the larger collective group rather than to any one individual.1

In Phase 1, there were a series of 3 hands-on public design workshops each held at the McKinney Performing Arts Center and City Hall and each focusing on a different area of the Town Center. During these workshops, stakeholders were asked to describe their vision for the Town Center area in 10-20 years. With the help of the consultants, these visions were put into words and images. This format allowed stakeholders the opportunity to personally contribute to the future of the Town Center community. Because planning for the future entails many complex challenges, especially in a fast-growing community like McKinney where new development must be balanced with preservation and revitalization of older areas, City Staff went to great lengths to educate and inform workshop stakeholders in order to help them be more effective participants in the process.

Several weeks in advance of each workshop, City Staff compiled a “Participant’s Workbook” and mailed them to each participant, asking each participant to review the information in the workbook ahead of time. The workbook included the workshop agenda as well as various materials that helped participants become more acquainted with basic planning and urban design principles. It also provided background information about the study area and several maps to orient participants to the characteristics of each focus area. City Staff also recommended that participants walk around each focus area simply to explore, make observations and “get a feel for” particular places and spaces they liked or did not like.

Each workshop consisted of a Day 1, Day 2 (Design Studio), and a Day 3. On Workshop Day 1, participants heard an introductory presentation explaining the objectives of and instructions for the workshop as well as some basic guiding planning principles. Then, the participants were broken out into smaller groups each led by an appointed facilitator. Over the course of the evening, each facilitator led his group through a series of brainstorming/visioning exercises and a discussion of ideas about how the participants would like the focus areas to look and feel in 10 to 20 years. Illustrators and recorders were also on hand to sketch visuals and take note of the ideas generated. At the end of Workshop Day 1, each breakout group had the opportunity to select its preferred ideas/concepts.

1 This information has been adapted from Community Participation Methods in Design and Planning by Henry Sanoff, AIA
On Day 2, each design team (the facilitator, illustrator, etc) assembled in a Design Studio that was set up in the City Council Chambers at City Hall. Each design team compiled and reviewed the input gathered during the breakout sessions from Day 1. Then, each design team created preliminary illustrations to reflect the ideas and concepts generated by the public input. During this internal design studio, the lead consultant team facilitated a process with the other consultants to compare and contrast each design team’s approach. This process both reinforced unique strategies by the respective teams and also provided synergy for particular collective solutions that no one design team would have identified on their own.

For a short time on Friday afternoon, the Design Studio was opened to the public, and participants were invited to wander through Council Chambers to explore the design process, look at what the design teams were doing, and engage the designers in discussion. This window into the consultants’ design studio provided participants with an even greater sense of ownership of the process.

On the morning of Workshop Day 3, the participants returned to the Council Chambers to meet again with their breakout group to recap the ideas and concepts generated on Day 1 and to see the preliminary illustrations produced by the design team during the Design Studio on Day 2. Then, each group presented its illustrations and explained the associated ideas and concepts to all of the participants at the workshop. Also during the group presentations, the lead consultant facilitated a question/answer session while also helping to identify key concepts and themes on which to build consensus for a vision and a framework for a preferred option.

In the weeks following Day 3, the lead consultant team reviewed and synthesized the key concepts and common themes from all groups. Under the guidance of City Staff, the lead consultant used the key concepts and themes to create composite illustrative plans. The composite illustrative plans bring together and visually represent the key concepts and themes for each focus area. To supplement and further explain the illustrative plans, the lead consultant also prepared brief written narratives.

Throughout Phase 1, City Officials provided oversight and guidance to City Staff and the lead consultant. After each workshop, City Staff presented an update to a joint work session of the City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission. In these sessions, City Staff introduced the composite illustrative plans and explained many of the key concepts. Council members and Planning & Zoning Commissioners asked questions, discussed concerns, and generally expressed support for the direction and progress of Phase 1. These joint work sessions were open for the public to attend. In addition to these presentations, City Staff also provided the City Council with several written monthly updates.
CREATING THE PLAN

The Phase 1 Report generally serves as the conclusion to the Phase 1 process. Following all three of the public design workshops, the preferred concepts were reviewed and discussed at length by City Staff, City Officials, and the consultant teams. These results, including the composite illustrative plans and the supplemental narratives, are included in the latter sections of this report.

It is the goal of this report to create a sound basis and framework for future phases of the Town Center Study. To accomplish this goal, the Phase 1 Report is intended to:

(1) discuss and describe the series of urban design workshops that were held over the past year,

(2) describe the shared visions and preferred concepts that were developed during each workshop, and

(3) provide a stepping stone (including general recommendations and strategies) for moving forward with the next phase of the Town Center Study.
PUBLIC OUTREACH, COMMUNICATION, AND INVOLVEMENT
An important component to any planning process is establishing a method of communication to inform stakeholders (residents, property owners, business owners, etc.) and solicit public input. City Staff realized early on that public outreach, communication, and involvement were key components to a successful Town Center planning process. Without the active participation from the stakeholders of the area, it would be impossible to create a shared vision for the future.

The Town Center is a diverse mix of neighborhoods, governmental complexes, businesses, transportation corridors, civic spaces, cultural centers, and even industrial sites (such as the historic cotton mill, flour mill and ice house). More importantly, it is the part of town that still maintains the historic character of old McKinney. With such a distinctive quality, there are many different stakeholders invested in the future of the Town Center. Because of this, City Staff recognized the need for a unique planning approach that would allow active stakeholder participation and consensus building. Using the public design workshops as an integral part of the planning process, the City was able to create an opportunity for different stakeholders to come together and generate valuable discussions about what needs and issues were really important to the Town Center.

In an effort to reach as many stakeholders as possible, the City used various communication tools to get the message out about the Town Center Study initiative. Methods used to promote and solicit public input included the following:

**Local and Regional Media**
City Staff took advantage of local and regional media outlets by posting meeting notices for upcoming events on the local cable channel (McKinney 15) and in local newspapers. Additionally, throughout Phase 1, the Town Center Study received significant media attention with articles published in the McKinney-Courier Gazette, Dallas Business Journal, and the Dallas Morning News.²

**McKinney City Times / McKinneyINFO.mag**
The City of McKinney’s City Times newsletter (now known as McKinneyINFO.mag) ran several stories regarding the Town Center Study. The stories ranged from the Study’s initial Open House Kickoff to the visions and progress made following the public design workshops.

² Scanned copies of the meeting notices and article clippings are attached as Appendix A.
Town Center Study Website

The Town Center Study website is linked from the City’s homepage on the Internet. The webpage is a comprehensive site that provides information ranging from the historical background of the Town Center, the planning process, workshop updates, illustrations and pictures, and City Staff contact information. The webpage is updated regularly and is a convenient source of information for the public. The public can access the Town Center Study website by visiting www.mckinneytexas.org and clicking the “Town Center Study” link located on the left panel of the McKinney Homepage.

Stakeholder Invitations

Staff's extensive public outreach efforts also included a mail out of almost 1,000 personalized invitation letters to stakeholders within each focus area and nearly 10,000 postcard invitations to every possible address in the entire study area. Along with the personal invitations, City Staff has maintained an extensive list of contact information for those that expressed interest in staying involved with the Town Center Study.
Other communication tools used to get the word out ranged from time-tested methods such as official press releases and briefings to City-affiliated groups (Tourism, Chamber of Commerce, Main Street, Planning and Zoning Commission, Historic Preservation Advisory Board, McKinney Economic Development Corporation, McKinney Community Development Corporation, PRIDE neighborhood groups, etc.) to more sophisticated methods such as cable channel videos/interviews and an email contact list. In addition, both City Staff and the consultants were available for interviews to reporters from the local and regional media.

Additionally, City Staff and the lead consultant were always available by telephone, email or in person so McKinney stakeholders could ask questions or provide input any time they desired.
SECTION 3: EXISTING CONDITIONS

With a population that exploded from just 54,369 people in 2000 to an estimated 115,000 at the end of 2006, the City of McKinney was designated as the fastest growing city in the nation (of cities 100,000 people or larger) since the 2000 Decennial Census. With such drastic growth, the areas west of US 75 have experienced a tremendous amount of new development. The City’s core has also experienced a growth in population. However, instead of the predominately new development that is seen in the western portions of the City, the Town Center is faced with the challenge of redeveloping an area that is largely already built and predominately historic. In a commitment to ensure the future health of the Town Center, the City of McKinney initiated the Town Center Study as a proactive approach to addressing the development pressures that are being felt in the area.

Before looking to the future of the Town Center, it is important for planners, city officials and residents to understand what the Town Center is today. The information gathered in this section of the report provides a foundation for understanding the demographics, current dynamics, socio-economic makeup, current regulations, built features, and infrastructure within the Town Center. This foundation provides helpful guidance in identifying the future needs and opportunities of the City’s core.

Due to the nature and scale of this study, the 2000 US Decennial Census provided the best available data for research. As such, it is important to note that the “Existing Conditions” examined herein are a representation of data from the year 2000.

POPULATION

Population change is one of the most assessable and commonly used measures to judge the viability of a community. The rise and fall of a community’s population says much about its economic health, life cycle, and attractiveness.

The Town Center continues to experience a growth in population in light of the development boom happening on the western side of the City. In fact, between 2000 and 2005, the percent change in population growth within the Town Center actually increased by 29.7 percent while McKinney’s percent change in population growth was 74 percent. These numbers and the percent growth in population suggest that the residential neighborhoods within the Town Center are still stable and vital.

Table 1. Population Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Town Center Population</th>
<th>Percent Change in Growth</th>
<th>City of McKinney Population</th>
<th>Percent Change in Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>13,302</td>
<td>(x)</td>
<td>21,283</td>
<td>(x)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>15,481</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>54,369</td>
<td>155%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>20,076</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>94,733</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data used to evaluate the existing conditions of the Town Center study area were collected from the US Census Bureau and include the following geographic areas: Census Tract 307, Block Groups 2,3,4,5,6,7; Census Tract 308, Block Groups 1,2,3,4; and Census Tract 309, Block Groups 1,2,3 Collin County, Texas.

2 US Census Bureau, June 28, 2007
ETHNICITY/RACE
The diversity of a population helps to define what is special about its citizens as well as what its citizens have in common with one another. It can be a reflection of a region’s people or the economic attraction of a particular area. In the Town Center area, the 2000 US Census reported that over 60 percent of the population was White, with Hispanic ethnic groups (38%) accounting for the majority of the remaining population. This racial and ethnic makeup follows the same pattern as the City with White and Hispanic race and ethnic groups accounting for the majority of the population as well. The ethnic/racial distribution of the Town Center from 1990 and 2000 indicates that the overall diversity of the population has largely remained the same. However, there was a significant increase (20%) in the Hispanic population indicating a possible need for broad multi-cultural services and resources.

AGE DISTRIBUTION
The change in age distribution of a community provides some insight into the make up of the local population. It can be one measure to gauge the lifecycle of an area, whether it is attractive to young families starting out, maturing adults with greater leisure time, senior citizens, or young single adults.

The 2000 US Census reports that the median age of persons living in the Town Center is 28.9 years. Compared to the national median age of 35.3 it may seem that the Town Center area is made up of a generally younger population. However, the distribution of age groups shows that each age category is, overall, evenly represented within the Town Center. In other words, there is no predominant pull to one end of the age spectrum or the other. This identifies the need for a broad range of services stretching from entertainment attractions for the younger population to services for the older population.

The 2000 US Census also reveals that almost 30 percent of the population is under the age of 18 years, defining ‘family dominant’ characteristics in the Town Center. These characteristics represent a need for the Town Center to place a greater emphasis on providing services and attractions that cater to family needs, especially those with children. This can be either through expanding public-sector services such as parks and recreational amenities or by attracting private-sector investments ranging from childcare facilities to age specific retail shops.
HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Housing characteristics within an area can provide a glimpse of the housing choices for residents and potential residents. It can also serve as a representation of the economic activity of a given area, the dynamic of the local housing market, and an indicator into the life cycle and make up of the local housing inventory. The information below takes a look at some of the housing characteristics of the Town Center.

The 2000 US Census reveals that, within the Town Center, 47 percent of the housing units are owner occupied and 53 percent are renter occupied. Compared to the City’s tenure of 70 percent owner occupied and 30 percent renter occupied, the Town Center’s housing stock identifies a population with a broader range of housing needs than the rest of the City.

Figure 2 reveals that over 44 percent of the Town Center population has lived in the area for at least 25 years. This is remarkable because it identifies a population that, despite the tenure, has continued to reside and invest in the Town Center.

In some respects, McKinney might be classified as a young city; over 68 percent of the housing stock was built between 1990 and 2000 and only 12 percent was built prior to 1950. However, the housing characteristics of the Town Center reflect an area of McKinney that developed decades before the boom of the 1990’s and 2000’s. In the Town Center, only 15 percent of housing units were built between 1990 and 2000 while almost 45 percent were built prior to 1950, making them eligible for historic designations under certain state and national programs. Characteristics such as these create the rich and diverse physical fabric of the Town Center.
Housing valuation reveals that 48.6 percent of the owner occupied housing units in the Town Center are valued between $50,000 and $99,999. The City as a whole represents a housing market where over 50 percent of the owner occupied housing units are valued between $125,000 and $300,000. This identifies the Town Center as an area of McKinney with a generally affordable housing inventory.

Figure 4. Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
The character of a city can be defined by the educational levels of its citizens, whether that is expressed through achievement levels, set expectations, or accountability. Educational attainment can also be used as an enticement for attracting businesses or some other type entity to a community by demonstrating the human resources and knowledge base an area has to offer. A high level of educational attainment for a community is usually desirable but hard to achieve.

The City of McKinney can boast that its residential population has reached a high level of educational attainment. The 2000 Census reports that 45 percent of the population 25 years and over have earned some sort of college degree, 16 percent have earned a high school diploma, and only 17 percent have received less than a 12th grade education (no diploma).

In contrast, the educational attainment levels in the Town Center are much different from that of the City. Based on data from the 2000 Census, 40 percent of the population 25 years and over have received less than a 12th grade education (no diploma), 22 have received a high school diploma, and only 19 percent have received some form of college degree. This represents a population that is generally lacking in basic education.

Source: 2000 US Census, SFI
**INCOME CHARACTERISTICS**

Income characteristics offer a way to measure the wealth of a community. Usually, another larger geographic area is used to see how a community measures in a wider comparable average. In this case, we have compared the Town Center Study area with that of the City of McKinney and the State of Texas. In addition, measuring the change in median household income levels over time can highlight some type of adjustment occurring in the local economy, whether it is through a change in growth patterns, industrial make-up, or some other unseen socio-economic factor.

At first glance, the income characteristics of the Town Center area seem extremely low compared to the City. However, when you step outside the City Limits and compare these figures to that of the State of Texas, a more complete picture can be seen. What this comparison shows is that the City of McKinney has a significantly higher median household income than the State. Therefore, when using the City as a benchmark for the Town Center area, it is important to recognize how both compare to the larger geographic area (the State).

One of the most interesting findings associated with income characteristics is reflected in the percent change in median household income between 1989 and 1999. The City of McKinney experienced a change of over 120 percent, the State experienced a change of almost 50 percent, and the Town Center experienced a percent change in median household income of nearly 70 percent. This change shows that, although the Town Center seems to be stunted with a lower overall median household income, a stable level of growth is still being achieved.

### Table 4. Median Household Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Town Center</th>
<th>City of McKinney</th>
<th>State of Texas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>$37,399</td>
<td>$63,366</td>
<td>$39,827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>$22,351</td>
<td>$27,236</td>
<td>$27,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $10,000</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 to $14,999</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000 to $24,999</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000 to $34,999</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 to $49,999</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 to $74,999</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000 to $99,999</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 to $149,999</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000 to $199,999</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200,000 or more</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population living below Poverty Status</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Households</td>
<td>5,668</td>
<td>19,462</td>
<td>(x)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: 2000 US Census, SF3; 1990 US Census, SF3*
EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Occupational makeup and industry makeup are very strong indicators used in measuring the different level of skills of the citizens in an area. Occupations represent the type of work employees perform. Occupations group together similar job functions that can be found and measured across most industries. It is another important means for gauging the human resources of a community’s citizens. Industrial characteristics, however, classify the type of business an employed person works in rather than the type of work they are performing.

According to the 2000 US Census, over 65 percent of the population 16 years and over in the Town Center fell into one of three occupational categories; Sales and Office Occupations (23%), Management, Professional, and Related Occupations (22%), or Service Occupations (21%). These categories can be best described as “white collar” occupations.

The rise and fall of a particular industry can filter down and impact people’s lives. Therefore, it is important to consider occupation and industry characteristics in parallel. It gives the community a better opportunity to gauge the class of workers in the area, as well as the lines of business its citizens are employed in. Evaluating these characteristics together can serve as a guide for the future of occupational and industrial health.

Though the occupational characteristics of the Town Center labor force represent predominately managerial or sales/office occupations, the industry characteristics reveal that manufacturing, construction and social-related fields are the predominant types of businesses present in the Town Center. Therefore, it can be reasonably assumed that the Town Center labor force primarily performs management or sales/office jobs in construction, manufacturing, or social-related fields.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5. Occupational Makeup</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupational Makeup</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management, professional, and related occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and office occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production, transportation, and material moving occupations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2000 US Census, 2/3 (Employed civilian population 16 years and over)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6. Industry Makeup</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Population in Labor Force</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employed</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unemployed</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Makeup</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, &amp; mining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and warehousing, and utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance, insurance, real estate, &amp; rental and leasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, scientific, management, administrative, &amp; waste management services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational, health, and social services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services (except public administration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2000 US Census, 2/3 (Employed civilian population 16 years and over)

3 A social-related field refers to the Educational, Health, and Social Services industry category.
CURRENT ZONING
Zoning is the process by which a city legally controls the use of property and the physical configuration of development upon tracts of land within its jurisdiction. Zoning is an exercise of police power and, as such, is enacted for the protection of public health, safety, and general welfare.

A zoning ordinance is the local law adopted by the governing body of a city for the dual purposes of: (1) protecting existing uses from incompatible uses, and (2) achieving the desired future land use patterns of the comprehensive plan. A zoning ordinance divides a community into districts (or zones) and regulates land use activity in each district, specifying the permitting uses of land and buildings, the intensity or density of such uses, and the bulk (size) of buildings on the land. A zoning ordinance usually consists of a zoning map and accompanying text. The map divides the city into districts, and the text describes what regulations apply to each district.

The City of McKinney adopted its first zoning ordinance in the 1960’s, and it frequently undergoes amendments. The ordinance currently includes 34 zoning districts throughout the entire City, each with its own uniform regulations. In addition to the district regulations, the ordinance also includes special regulations such as parking, loading, screening, landscaping, and architectural standards. The zoning districts that are present in the Town Center study area include:

AG: Agricultural – This zone is designed to preserve lands best suited for agricultural use from encroachment of incompatible uses, and to preserve land suited to eventual development in other uses.

AP: Airport – This zone is designed to provide for airports, heliports, and landing areas for other types of aircraft.

BG: General Business – This zone is designed to provide for a wide range of retail and service establishments.

BN: Neighborhood Business – This zone is designed to provide for limited commercial uses serving the common and frequent needs of the residents of the immediate vicinity.

C: Planned Center – This district provides for medium-intensity concentrations of shopping and related commercial activities.

GC: Governmental Complex District – This zone is designed to provide standards which are conducive to the creation of a high quality environment for central governmental facilities and to contribute to the efficiency of governmental services provided to the citizens of the area.

SF: Single-Family Residential Districts (includes RED-1, RED-2, RS-120, RS-84, RS-72, RS-60, RS-45, RD-30, RG-27) – These zoning classifications are generally designed to promote and encourage a suitable environment for family life.

MF: Multi-Family Residential Districts (includes MF-1, MF-2, MF-3, RG-18, RG-25) – These zoning classifications are generally designed to provide for multiple-family residential development.

MH: Heavy Industrial – This zone provides for the widest range of industrial operations permitted in the City.
ML: Light Industrial – This zone provides for a wide range of commercial and industrial uses, all of which are comparatively nuisance-free.

MP: Mobile Home Park District – This zone is designed to provide for mobile home parks.

O: Office – This district provides for office buildings with attendant retail and service uses.

O-1: Neighborhood Office – This district is designed to provide for low intensity office uses that are appropriately located adjacent to residential neighborhood areas.

PD: Planned Development District – This district is intended to provide for the unified and coordinated development of parcels or tracts of land that are primarily vacant. There is a certain freedom of choice associated with the planned development district that provides for the special requirements or needs that might be associated with certain types of development.

H: Historic Preservation Overlay District – In the late 1980’s the City Council of McKinney declared that, as a matter of public policy, the protection, enhancement and perpetuation of districts and landmarks of historical and cultural importance and significances were necessary to promote the economic, cultural, educational, and general welfare of the public. The Historic Preservation Overlay district is, therefore, intended to:

(a) protect and enhance the district and landmarks which represent distinctive elements of the City’s historic, architectural and cultural heritage;
(b) foster civic pride in the accomplishments of the past;
(c) protect and enhance the City’s attractiveness to visitors and the support and stimulus to the economy that they provide;
(d) ensure the harmonious, orderly and efficient growth and development of the city;
(e) promote the economic prosperity and welfare of the community by encouraging the most appropriate use of such property within the city; and
(f) stabilize and improve the values of the properties that encompass the historic area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of buildings in H District*</th>
<th>1,003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Year of Building Construction*</td>
<td>1907</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* McKinney Historical Survey

CHD: Commercial Historic District – This district is intended to ensure that the development, redevelopment, and renovations within the downtown area are consistent with the historic character of McKinney’s original business district and the surrounding area. Unlike some of the modern zoning standards that were developed as a result of automobile-oriented development patterns for retail, the zoning standards for the Commercial Historic District were developed on the human scale, capitalizing on the pedestrian-oriented retail development patterns that were prominent during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of buildings in CHD*</th>
<th>70</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Year of Building Construction*</td>
<td>1910</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* McKinney Historical Survey
Figure 5. Map of the Commercial Historic District and the Historic Preservation Overlay District

Source: City of McKinney GIS Department Data, 2007

1 inch equals 1,000 feet
EXISTING LAND USE
The existing land use map is a useful planning tool when trying to establish the baseline condition of the Town Center. The existing land use map indicates the “current” uses of property. This map was developed over time using state tax codes, which are provided by the Collin Central Appraisal District. This land use inventory was verified by City Staff using a recent aerial photo and supplemented by field observations. Changes and modifications were then made as necessary.

A general review of the existing land use map served to focus discussion during Phase 1 on existing land use issues and how land should be used in the future to build on the positive aspects and mitigate the negative aspects. This review also allowed for a basic analysis of the factors, both local and regional, which have led to the existing land use pattern and which may be anticipated to continue impacting land use. Throughout the Phase 1 process, Staff and stakeholders alike began to distinguish those factors that the City can influence from those that the City cannot.

The following are brief descriptions of the land use types.

Agricultural – Land used for agricultural uses.

Parks and Open Space – Open spaces under private or public ownership. Includes parks, common areas, nature preserves, private neighborhood parks, play grounds, sports facilities and recreation facilities, etc.

Institutional/Tax Exempt – Developed properties owned by entities that are classified as tax exempt including schools, government owned properties, post offices, churches, cemeteries, etc.

Industrial – Commercial development devoted to the processing of raw materials and/or production of goods and/or wholesale storage of goods.

Office – Commercial development providing services for sale such as an accountant or a physician, or providing general office and administrative uses.

Retail – Commercial development providing goods for sale, such as a grocery store, drug store, restaurant, or department store. Some service providers and offices are grouped with retail when located in a shopping center.

Single Family – Residential development with one detached unit per lot. This category includes townhomes and duplexes.

Multi-Family – Residential development with multiple units on one lot, or two or more attached units on separate lots. This category includes apartments, three-plexes and four-plexes.

Vacant Residential – Residential land that is undeveloped. Includes vacant lots within a developed residential subdivision.
Table 7 below lists the categories of existing land uses, some uses in that category, the approximate acreage of each category, the approximate total acreage of the Town Center area, and the percentage of each category in the Town Center.

Table 7. Existing Land Use (2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>APPROXIMATE ACREAGE</th>
<th>PERCENT OF TOWN CENTER AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undeveloped</td>
<td>Agricultural, Vacant Residential</td>
<td>+/- 510 acres</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and Open Space</td>
<td>Open Space, Parks, Recreation Centers, Common Areas</td>
<td>+/- 232 acres</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Single Family, Multi-Family, Townhouse, Duplex</td>
<td>+/- 1,105 acres</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Office, Retail</td>
<td>+/- 201 acres</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>+/- 142 acres</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public/Semi-Public</td>
<td>Government, Schools, Utility, Churches, Right-of-Way</td>
<td>+/- 877 acres</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Acreage</td>
<td></td>
<td>+/- 3,067 acres</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Land Use – Zoning Connection

In addition to serving as a guide for decision making, land use also serves as a foundation for zoning and subdivision regulations. City officials evaluate the pattern of land uses in a particular area to determine what other uses should or could be allowed. Any additional uses should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan and should lead to the type of community preferred by citizens. Based on this evaluation, zoning regulations are then created to help ensure that subsequent uses of land complement the desired pattern of development.

Because many of the properties within the Town Center were developed prior to the adoption of McKinney’s first Zoning Ordinance, it is difficult for city officials to effectively apply the regulations within the Ordinance. As a result, there are many instances where non-conforming uses (or structures) are present in the Town Center, meaning there is a legal violation of the current Zoning Ordinance. These non-conformities are legal because the use of the land (or structure) existed before the adoption of the Zoning Ordinance. How does the City deal with this issue? There is currently no comprehensive documentation of non-conformities within the Town Center area. This effort would require extensive field investigation to adequately document and verify. Although the results of an extensive investigation could serve as a useful tool, it would require a substantial amount of time and resources to properly execute. In the absence of a comprehensive investigation, city officials currently address issues involving non-conformities on a case-by-case basis when changes in occupancy are considered.

The historic development of the Town Center and its unique relationship with McKinney’s Zoning Ordinance has created a great opportunity for change. The historic character, placement, and juxtaposition of physical elements within McKinney’s Town Center give citizens and visitors an understanding as to the values they hold dear. The capacity to influence these characteristics may suggest a need for a more global approach to zoning and implementation of development standards that complement uses, building forms, and street frontages to sustain this particular character.
SECTION 4: THE VISION

WORKSHOP #1: DOWNTOWN

The first public design workshop of the Town Center Study was held on November 9, 10 and 11, 2006. The workshop focused on creating the framework for a long range revitalization plan for the heart of McKinney's Downtown, anchored by its historic courthouse square.

About the Focus Area

The core of the Town Center is the Downtown area. Dating back to the 1840's, most of the Downtown area was developed before the automobile and reflects a pedestrian-oriented development pattern. The Downtown area served as the Collin County seat, a center of agricultural trade, and the area's retail hub. These primary land uses are still reflected today in the historic courthouse and the retail storefronts on and around the square. While the businesses and wares have changed, this pedestrian-friendly commercial environment continues to draw customers to McKinney's Downtown.

The core consists of a well preserved traditional Texas courthouse square, framed on four sides by historic buildings of two to three stories in height, with predominantly retail uses at the ground level and, usually, office space above. This traditional pattern breaks down relatively quickly as one moves away from the square. While the street and block pattern is still more or less intact, the later construction is a mix of civic and light industrial uses, with the west side tending towards older homes that have been converted into light commercial use such as professional offices. The newer buildings are less consistent about fronting directly on the sidewalks and are supported by large expanses of surface parking.

The eastern boundary of the downtown study is defined by State Highway 5, a four lane thoroughfare generally flanked on both sides by strip retail and other highway oriented uses. These older commercial and light industrial uses are fairly prevalent in the northeast quadrant of the focus area. The southeast quadrant is dominated by the county courthouse complex, which is in the process of being vacated and replaced. Buildings on the west side transition fairly quickly to the scale of individual homes, although many of the homes closest to the courthouse square have been converted into small offices.

The original platting pattern consisted of a regular grid of square blocks, 200 feet on a side. An interesting variation on this pattern is introduced by a system of narrow streets, generally every other street, that function essentially as alleys within the downtown core. The primary streets that define the courthouse square (Louisiana, Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky) are all 60 foot rights-of-way, while the next parallel streets on all sides are only 20 foot rights-of-way. Development on the blocks surrounding the courthouse has reinforced this pattern by concentrating utilities and parking at the center of these larger “superblocks.”

Ringing the core is the historic residential area, a mix of pre-World War II housing in a pre-automobile, traditional neighborhood pattern to form a strong sense of place. Surrounding this area are other neighborhoods and commercial nodes. This outer zone is made up of residential units and commercial developments that have catered to surrounding residential neighborhoods from the 1880's through today. The historic residential area is made up of a mix of housing types, of varying styles and sizes, along with a smaller amount of medium density dwelling units.
This focus area, with its unique blend of land uses, building relationships, and age of development, contains much of the physical fabric that people reference as “McKinney Character.”

Community Input
As was explained in detail in Section 3 (Planning Process), a variety of facilitated exercises were used to obtain valuable input from the participating stakeholders during Day 1. The discussion topics included types of land uses, physical characteristics of the urban form, transportation linkages and possible implementation concepts and provided the basis, respectively, for each design team’s illustrative efforts during the Design Studio.

On Day 3, the participants returned to recap the ideas generated on Day 1 and to see the preliminary illustrations produced by each design team during the Design Studio. Also on Day 3, the lead consultant facilitated a question/answer session while also helping to identify key ideas and themes on which to build consensus and a framework for a shared vision. Immediately following the workshop, each design team submitted to City Staff a brief written compilation of the ideas and concepts generated by their stakeholder group. Staff has included these documents in Appendix C of this report as reference to show the origins of the concepts.

In the weeks following Day 3, the lead consultant team reviewed and synthesized all of the ideas and concepts from each group. Under the guidance of City Staff, the lead consultant filtered out any unfeasible ideas, identified common themes, and fleshed out the feasible ideas to create a composite illustrative plan (Figure 6). The composite illustrative plan brings together key concepts and visually represents the shared vision for the downtown area. Overall, the stakeholders were in agreement on a number of points regarding the future revitalization/redevelopment of the downtown area. The key concepts are summarized as follows:

Key Concepts:

- Adaptive reuse of county courthouse site into municipal mixed-use complex
- Maintain adequate public parking
- Connectivity between destinations
- Compatible transition between downtown and adjacent residential neighborhoods
- More public parks, plazas, and gathering spaces
- Protect and propagate downtown square character
- Preserve residential neighborhoods and structures
- More streetscape/pedestrian improvements
- Mixed-use infill development (more residential units and nightlife)
Key Concepts and Illustrations
The resulting composite illustrative plan (Figure 6) serves as a shared vision for the downtown area over the mid- to long-term (the next 5 to 20+ years) and provides a framework for key concepts to be implemented. The key concepts represented on the plan are illustrative and are not the only approach that could be utilized for the new vision of downtown. The elements noted on the illustrative plan could be some of the many options that work for particular concepts. In other words, the plan illustrates what the downtown area could look like over time and not what it will look like. For example, “maintaining adequate parking” is a concept, and the plan shows preferred conceptual locations for parking structures and surface parking lots. These conceptual locations assume build-out of the plan as well as realization of the market economics of the build-out density. The location of parking structures should not preclude other locations. The preferred conceptual locations, however, provide guidance as to how parking structures should be scaled and sited relative to adjacent buildings and how they can provide shared parking opportunities.
Figure 6. Workshop No. 1 Preferred Concepts and Illustrations
The vision for the downtown area establishes a coherent vocabulary of history and culture as well as potential modern attributes in terms of destination activities, relationships, walkability, transitions, scale, connections, location within the region, transit, housing and growth opportunities. The vision recognizes two new emerging quadrants (the Northeast Quadrant and the Southeast Quadrant), the enduring core (the Historic Courthouse Square), and a new corridor for redevelopment (the Transit Corridor), linking downtown with the future transit station across State Highway 5. It also recognizes the need for a clearly demarcated and focused transition zone along the western side of downtown to preserve the integrity of the adjacent single-family neighborhoods. The planning process resulted in a composite set of key concepts, which include:

**Municipal Mixed Use Complex as Anchor (No. 1 on Figure 6)**

Anchored by the already-planned relocation of City Hall operations to the existing County Court Complex, the proposed Municipal Mixed Use Complex would provide an opportunity for additional private offices for downtown. The location near State Highway 5 and the appropriateness of mixed use buildings four to five stories in height due to that location could facilitate office use floor plates or multiple floor plates for significantly sized companies. Those sizes would make the area a good candidate for corporate uses, especially in the context of a mixed use environment juxtaposed with the new City Hall.

Conceived as a complex that would enhance the existing super-block, it could transform the existing County building area into an integrated urban destination with a contained parking structure and with loft living and street-level retail on the north side. Transitioning to the west of the future City Hall, an internalized street could facilitate live-work units facing east towards the City Hall building and transitioning to the west with town homes along Tennessee Street. This approach could provide an urbane edge across from the single-family homes to the west and south. In terms of transitions of scale and intensification, the redevelopment strategy should include both the utilization of a transition of building types and numbers of stories.

**Maintain Adequate Parking (Nos. 2, 3 and 4 on Figure 6)**

Parking is a necessity. However, the form and character of McKinney’s downtown area depend on maintaining a pedestrian-oriented focus. Therefore, conceptually, parking should be kept behind, under, above, or to the side of a building’s “public” façade, whenever possible.

In light of the proposed Entertainment District and adjacency to Highway 5, a parking structure is proposed between Tennessee, Chestnut, Hunt and Lamar Streets as a super-block. One of many approaches that could be utilized to design and locate a structure, the super-block approach would not only hide the structure within active uses at the street level, it would also make it fairly accessible to the Historic Courthouse Square (well under a 5-minute walk).

More generally, it is important that parking structures be located to serve the various redevelopment areas as well as the Historic Courthouse Square and the surrounding Commercial Historic District. Regardless of the proposed location of parking structures, structured parking should not be constructed within two blocks of the Courthouse Square in order to preserve the highest and best uses feasible. Moreover, locations such as the one
proposed for the North Parking Garage enable the structure to serve not only the new redevelopment areas but the Commercial Historic District.

Similar to the North Parking Garage, the South Parking Garage is a recommendation, but it is not the only solution for expanded downtown parking to accommodate future demand. The location and configuration of the South Parking Garage would not only serve the Municipal Complex but also the mixed use residential and commercial development conceived for the Municipal Complex. Again, the recommended location could also serve the Historic Courthouse Square and the Commercial Historic District (well under a 5-minute walk).

The illustrative plan assumes the need for maintaining and enhancing surface parking lots. Preferred concepts for this strategy include locations at the intersection of Johnson and Cloyd Streets as well as a location immediately northwest of Central Park between Hunt and Logan Streets. As the market evolves, other locations could be utilized if they maintain the essential urban character of the surrounding area in terms of the pedestrian experience along the street and preserve redevelopment opportunities. Locations along Woods, Johnson, Cloyd and Henry Streets may be good candidates for selective surface lots.

Connectivity between Destinations (Nos. 5, 7, 8, and 12 on Figure 6)

The Chestnut Street Corridor and Monuments (No. 12 on Figure 6) terminating the Chestnut Corridor at the Entertainment District and the Municipal Mixed Use Complex.

One of the key challenges will be how to maintain the gravity of the historic square, while bringing significant progress and growth into downtown through the Northeast and Southeast Quadrants. The pedestrian experience and the ability to bring people back to the square from those quadrants will be critical to maintaining the essence of downtown and the coherence it enjoys today. The proposed Chestnut Street Corridor can assist with this coherence.

As people traverse north and south, monuments terminating the street are proposed as one option to announce the Entertainment District and the Municipal Mixed Use Complex. Those monuments at the respective intersections of Chestnut Street with Davis and Hunt Streets would slow traffic as people drive into the new Entertainment District and Municipal Complex. The existing effective north-south traffic flow along Kentucky, Tennessee and State Highway 5 would enable those terminated vistas to function without disrupting significantly the traffic network on the east side of downtown. In other words, the slowing of traffic along Chestnut Street into those new redevelopment areas via the monuments will enhance, not detract from, the access of those areas; while, at the same time, through-traffic can easily move north and south on the streets parallel to Chestnut. Other means to announce the Entertainment District and the Municipal Mixed Use Complex could be considered, but the selective termination of vistas in the pure grid street network existing in downtown today would add variety and sense of arrival at the redevelopment locations on the northeast and southeast sides of downtown.

A Plaza (No. 5 on Figure 6) to complement the Museum (the North Texas History Center in the old Post Office) and to provide overall connectivity and focus back to the Historic Square.

An option for creating a sense of connection back to the Historic Courthouse Square from the north-south axis along the Chestnut Corridor could be a plaza on the north side of the museum at Virginia Street. A Public Space (No. 11 on Figure 6) on the southwest corner of Virginia and
Chestnut Streets could also establish an additional sense of arrival at the intersection in order to encourage pedestrian connections back to the Courthouse Square.

In order to bring attention and movement back to the Downtown Square from the Northeast or Southeast Quadrants, it will be difficult to create a vertical element such as an obelisk on the axis on any of the important streets, especially close to the historic courthouse. The urban fabric is very dense at the center, and the grid street system (the openness of which some have considered to be the expression of American democracy because of the same uninterrupted open view it affords everyone) prevents the creation of islands on these streets where one might locate such an element. There is an absence of diagonal streets cutting across the urban fabric for an important vista. If one is to be created, it could only happen in parts of downtown that are being significantly reconstructed (which means towards the periphery). That being said, such a tower to create a sense of pedestrian choice in travel back to the Downtown Square does not have to be on the axis, but in order for it to have the desired effect, it needs to be very close. Accordingly, there are four options:

1. Landscape island to the northeast of the historic courthouse (the southwest corner of the intersection of Virginia and Tennessee Streets)
2. Mitchell Park
3. New museum plaza
4. Future transit station area

There are elements that can serve as points of reference that are not necessarily towers. Many places have some sort of gateway or an arch signifying entry to a special part of town. Something like that could be located on one of the main streets, but a more detailed analysis would be needed to determine the exact location. Another way to make a visual connection between different areas is to use street elements, of which the most effective are pavers. Portions of either the streets or the sidewalks could be paved with the same pavers between destination points. Finally, connections might be made through streets that, so far, have been less important, such as Chestnut Street (which the vision would make more important) or Cloyd Street (which could terminate into a pocket park).

**Connections between the Historic Downtown Square and the future Transit Village via a Transit Station Corridor (No. 8 on Figure 6) and Gateways (No. 7 on Figure 6)**

Connections along a north-south axis between the Northeast and Southeast Quadrants and connections along an east-west axis between the Downtown Square and the future Transit Village across Highway 5 will be critical both to sustaining the core focus of downtown and to bolstering the overall success of a transit strategy. Primary east-west pedestrian movements should connect the Downtown Square and the future Transit Village via Virginia Street and Louisiana Street. Similarly, enhanced pedestrian connections across Highway 5 at approximately Walker and Davis Streets are recommended.

**Informal “Third” Places for the Community to Socially Connect – Pocket Parks and Public Spaces (Nos. 6, 10, 11, and 18 on Figure 6)**

Informal gathering places (termed “Third Places" by urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg) are essential to a sense of community and public life because they foster unplanned meetings and chance conversations between people. “Third places" (in contrast to the first and second places of home and work) are critical placemaking tools that contribute directly to community vitality.
Pocket parks and public spaces are often used to create informal gathering places. Pocket parks provide wonderful small spaces for people to gather. Pocket parks are typically a fraction of a block in size and are framed by buildings. Several locations on Figure 6 provide preferred locations for new pocket parks, but those locations would be dependent on the specific redevelopment strategies for a block and on the architectural designs of buildings utilized.

The vision differentiates public spaces from pocket parks as improved hard-scape places that provide quaint respite for people next to buildings on a scale smaller than plazas. Again, in order to achieve a sense of arrival into an inviting space for rest or community interaction, the particular location and design of public spaces should be driven by the specific urban design strategy and building designs employed for a given block, street or intersection.

New pocket parks and public spaces carefully integrated at the sub-block level will be critical to maintaining an urbane feel as redevelopment and intensification occurs, especially in those areas where loft living is recommended in the northeast and southeast quadrants of downtown.

Another example of a publicly-owned/operated community gathering place is a farmers market (which was specifically mentioned by many stakeholders). A farmers market is a wonderful community activity to sustain vibrancy in downtowns. Accordingly, the plan suggests that the former Central Fire Station building could be adaptively redesigned to accommodate community activities such as a farmers market. This location is illustrative but is based on its adjacency to the proposed Chestnut Street Corridor as well as its proximity to State Highway 5 and the proposed Municipal Mixed Use Complex. It should be noted that, although a farmers market currently operates every Saturday morning from April through October at the corner of Church and Louisiana Streets, many stakeholders expressed the desire for the farmers market to become more established (with a permanent home and some financial support from the City).

Stakeholders commented that Mitchell Park is a valuable asset but is underutilized because it does not feel comfortable or inviting. The utilization of lofts over retail could create a sense of enclosure if developed on the north and east sides of Mitchell Park. This sense of enclosure would create an inviting and comfortable sense of place for the park. The utilization of urban living and commercial uses in multi-story buildings (2-3 stories) would also create a sense of “eyes on the street” so that people would feel more comfortable frequenting the park. One of the best examples of the effective framing of an urban park is Bryant Park in New York City.

Note: Implementing this concept for Mitchell Park would require maintaining and providing parking that would be displaced by the development of the existing public parking lot immediately to the east of the park.

The plan illustrates an aggressive redevelopment vision for the Northeast Quadrant. Adjacency to State Highway 5 and easy access to a future rail transit station east of the highway make an
Entertainment District a good candidate for the anchoring of this redevelopment area. Boutique cinemas, small scale national-credit-tenant retail and restaurants could be in demand if the loft housing proposed for the area is realized, creating a “24/7” environment. Loft living of approximately 40 to 50 units per acre would be necessary to achieve both the urban feel and economics necessary for the mixed use goals of the proposed Entertainment District. Those densities are achievable, given the emerging demand of young professionals and “empty nesters” for urban living in Collin County. Those densities will also be required to justify the economics of structured parking.

Scale and Transition of Uses (Nos. 13, 14, 15, and 16 on Figure 6)

The stakeholders embraced an aggressive redevelopment and infill vision for the downtown area. At the same time, the stakeholders made it clear that they wanted growth and change in the downtown area to be contained within the core, generally east of Benge Street. The stakeholders were adamant about protecting and preserving the older/historic single family homes generally west of downtown.

Preservation of older and historic homes is not only good policy, it is good economics (see, generally, the writings of Donovan Rypkema). In order to facilitate a containment of the redevelopment character of downtown while preserving the well-established neighborhoods to the west, the plan proposes the concept of a Scale and Use Transition Zone. Within this zone, a transition of uses and a reduction of the scale of buildings to single-family residential would be encouraged. A zone is recommended rather than a hard line so that a transition, rather than a buffer, can be achieved. Transitions encourage pedestrian activity, while buffers typically encourage only auto-oriented movements. It is anticipated that the establishment of the Transition Zone would create momentum for developing strategies (perhaps similar to the “H” historic residential overlay) for protecting the older housing stock north and south of downtown as well.

To facilitate the Transition Zone, a typical transition of building typologies has been illustrated on the plan in an axonometric view. The loft building type is depicted adjacent to the Transition Zone on the downtown side. Townhomes and live work units (Nos. 13 and 14 on Figure 6) would be utilized within the Zone to facilitate a transition of uses from commercial to non-commercial and a lessening of intensity in terms of residential building types. And, finally, cottages in several site configurations (Nos. 15 and 16 on Figure 6) are depicted to complete the transition on the west side of the Zone.

For instances where existing buildings would be adaptively re-used, the Transition Zone would also establish what types of building functions detract from the area’s character and would, thus, not be appropriate under any circumstances.
The stakeholders recognized that one of the primary attractive characteristics of the downtown is the pedestrian orientation. To improve this characteristic, the stakeholders overwhelmingly voiced preference for more pedestrian amenities in the downtown area that would foster a unified visual appearance and greatly enhance downtown’s sense of place.

Pedestrian/streetscape amenities typically include design elements such as paving, landscaping (trees and planters) and other sidewalk furnishings such as signage, lighting, seating and waste receptacles. Additionally, widening of the sidewalks around the perimeter of the square was suggested in order to encourage more restaurant uses and provide adequate sidewalk space for outdoor café-type seating environments.

These types of pedestrian/streetscape amenities are already being incorporated into the City’s Infrastructure Initiative Projects on Virginia Street (between Kentucky Street and Church Street) as well as on the Downtown Square proper. It is critically important that other street segments just off the Downtown Square receive similar streetscape upgrades in the coming years.
WORKSHOP #2: TRANSIT VILLAGE
The second public design workshop of the Town Center Study was held on March 22, 23 and 24, 2007. The workshop focused on enhancing the neighborhoods east of State Highway 5 and linking them with the Historic Downtown of McKinney. As a part of that linkage strategy, a conceptual plan for a rail transit village was developed.

About the Focus Area
State Highway 5, also called McDonald Street, is a busy 4 lane highway that generally runs north south, passing a few blocks east of the downtown and the courthouse square. It runs more or less parallel to the railroad line, which is in most places about one block to the east of the highway. Before the advent of U.S. Highway 75, McDonald Street was the main highway into McKinney. Many of the town’s original industrial and agricultural uses were located in close proximity to the highway and railroad; today, it is still a concentration of commercial uses, many of them less attractive car related uses such as car repair businesses and gas stations.

There are several older neighborhoods of modest homes located east of State Highway 5. These neighborhoods have seen relatively little new development in recent years. Demographically, the area has a larger proportion of ethnic groups than the rest of McKinney, with a household income that is less than the city median. There is a large regional park, Old Settlers Park, located in the approximate center of the focus area that features a number of recreational facilities. There is also a large industrial site just north of the park that houses a cotton compress business. The site is considered historic, although only a few vestiges of the original brick structures remain, as well as an old water tower.

The contiguous extent of Old Settler’s Park and the cotton compress, the railroad, as well as several creeks, interrupt the fairly regular grid of streets that is typical of the areas west of State Highway 5. Additionally, concern for cut-through traffic has resulted in only a few of the east-west streets connecting to Airport Drive, planned as the next major north south corridor in eastern McKinney.

The railroad, while seldom used today, is scheduled to accommodate a future expansion of the Dallas area rail transit system. A proposed transit stop in the vicinity of Louisiana and Virginia Streets is expected to act as a focal point for denser, mixed-use redevelopment around the station area.

Community Input
As was explained in detail in Section 3 (Planning Process), a variety of facilitated exercises were used to obtain valuable input from the participating stakeholders on Day 1. On Day 3, the participants returned to recap the ideas generated on Day 1 and to see the preliminary illustrations produced by each design team during the Design Studio. Also on Day 3, the lead consultant facilitated a question/answer session while also helping to identify key ideas and themes on which to build consensus and a framework for a shared vision. Immediately following the workshop, each design team submitted to City Staff a brief written compilation of the ideas and concepts generated by their stakeholder group. Staff has included these documents in Appendix D of this report as reference to show the origins of the concepts.

In the weeks following Day 3, the lead consultant team reviewed and synthesized all of the ideas and concepts from each group. Under the guidance of City Staff, the lead consultant filtered out any unfeasible ideas, identified common themes, and fleshed out the feasible ideas to create a set of composite illustrative plans (Figure 7 and Figure 8). The composite illustrative plans bring together key concepts and visually represent the shared vision for the focus area.
The stakeholders had a number of perceptive observations and ideas for the potential revitalization/redevelopment of the focus area. While there was general agreement that the area had been neglected and needs improvement, there was an overall positive assessment of the focus area’s potential. The key concepts are summarized as follows:

**Key Concepts and Illustrations**

The resulting composite illustrative plans (Figure 7 and Figure 8) serve as a shared vision for the future transit village, the segment of Highway 5 adjacent to downtown and the neighborhoods to the east of Highway 5 over the mid- to long-term (the next 5 to 20+ years) and provide a framework for key concepts to be implemented. The key concepts represented on the plans are illustrative and are *not the only approach* that could be utilized for the new vision. The elements noted on the illustrative plans could be some of the many options that work for particular concepts. In other words, *the plan illustrates what the new development and redevelopment could look like over time and not what it will look like*. For example, “the Cotton Compress provid[ing] an opportunity for a university…[and] similar civic uses in a cultural center” is a concept depicted on Figure 8. The conceptual location of a cultural and educational center at the Cotton Compress assumes realization of the partnerships needed to bring a major civic center to the east side, but the Cotton Compress could be redeveloped into another destination consistent with its location, size and the vision developed during the workshops.

Key Concepts:

- *Redesign State Highway 5 to foster a more pedestrian friendly environment*
- *Cotton Compress site provides opportunity for arts/education campus*
- *Stronger connections east-west as long as no single street is overwhelmed/multiple connections to Airport Road to disperse east-west traffic*
- *Transit-oriented development pattern at anticipated central rail station*
- *Preserve residential neighborhoods*
- *Adaptive reuse of historically significant buildings*
- *Katrina Cottages as infill housing*
- *Encourage more neighborhood support service-related businesses*
Figure 7.
Workshop No. 2
Preferred Concepts and Illustrations, Board A
The vision for a transit village, an urbanized State Highway 5 corridor, and the preservation of the surrounding neighborhoods establish a philosophy of balance in terms of destination activities, relationships, walkability, transitions, scale, connections, location within the region, transit, housing and growth opportunities. The vision recognizes four redevelopment opportunities, along with a strategy for the redesign of Highway 5 itself so it becomes the connective tissue between the Historic Downtown Square and Old Settlers Park—the heart of the neighborhoods to the east of State Highway 5.

The four redevelopment opportunities include (i) infill adjacent to State Highway 5; (ii) a rail transit village generally where the railroad crosses Virginia and Louisiana Streets; (iii) vertical mixed use infill development adjacent to Old Settlers Park, along Virginia Street to the north and Greenville Street to the south; and (iv) redevelopment of the Cotton Compress site as a cultural and educational institution. In this context, the planning process resulted in a composite set of key concepts, which include:

**A Walkable Redesign of State Highway 5 to provide both redevelopment opportunities and critical linkages (Figure 7)**

State Highway 5 presents two distinct opportunities. First, the corridor itself is ripe for redevelopment. Workshop #1 developed concepts for significant redevelopment on the west side between Walker and Herndon Streets, as an analog to the proposed new Mixed Use Entertainment District. Across the street and going further south along Highway 5, mixed use infill buildings could begin to form an urban corridor, which would be situated adjacent to the future transit village. A walkable redesign of Highway 5 would also make a meaningful linkage east to Old Settlers Park and west to the Historic Square. The importance of this linkage cannot be understated in terms of the function of downtown, the future rail station and preservation of the neighborhoods to the east in the context of rational and prudent redevelopment. The success of downtowns depends on the weaving of historical elements and modern opportunities. Linkages across State Highway 5, both functional and aesthetic, would enable the benefits of the Historic Square to reach across to the redevelopment opportunities to the east. Similarly, the emerging transit village adjacent to a rail station (proposed just north of Virginia Street) would provide a 24/7 lifeblood to the Historic Square both in terms of improved regional mobility but also increased housing opportunities for the likes of “Empty Nesters” and young professionals. Accordingly, the careful redesign of State Highway 5 as an east-west connection is indispensable.

**A Mixed Use Transit Village should be nestled between SH5 and Old Settlers Park, approximately from Lamar St. to Green St. (Figure 7)**

The utilization of the rail line for rail transit is just a matter of time. The line accommodates only a couple of freight trains a week for local traffic. The eventual extension of either DART rail service or complementary commuter rail service to McKinney from Plano and Dallas is dependent on funding. Recognized in the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) Regional Rail Plan, the implementation of a comprehensive funding strategy for rail is likely within the next few years. Accordingly, rail transit can be expected in the mid-term.

The advent of rail transit service provides an opportunity for transit-oriented development (TOD) around the station. The illustrative plan (Figure 7) carefully depicts a redevelopment strategy around the likely location of the rail platform, between Hunt Street and Virginia Street. But TOD
south of Louisiana was also analyzed assuming the location of the platform to the south instead of north of Virginia Street.

A careful series of plazas and infill along State Highway 5 and east towards Old Settlers Park would provide an opportunity for a true TOD. Unlike many suburban rail transit station locations, the central station area is conceived to be a live-work-shop-environment. Three and four story loft buildings with ground floor retail along the north side of Virginia can complement the mixed use “Flour Mill” redevelopment on the south side of the street. To the west along State Highway 5 and south towards Louisiana Street (the Grain Elevator area with the historic warehouses), a careful balance of preservation and infill is illustrated.

**Redevelopment of the edge of Old Settlers Park should be balanced with the preservation of the single family housing stock of the P.R.I.D.E. communities (Figure 8)**

The transit-oriented development along State Highway 5 and around the rail station could be transitioned into a strong development edge around Old Settlers Park. The park would provide an excellent opportunity to provide loft living, townhomes and live/work uses so that density is accommodated in an urbane and comfortable way. Developing infill around the park and utilizing that density as a transition north between Virginia and Monterey Streets could provide a walkable mixed use linkage to the Cotton Compress site as well as back to the west through the rail station and across State Highway 5.

Behind the infill along Virginia Street to the north and Greenville to the south, however, the plan recommends that the single family housing fabric be left intact. This strategy would enable the single family neighborhoods to benefit from the infill development along the park and west through the transit village without fearing incremental encroachment into the core of the P.R.I.D.E. communities. A critical design element for implementation of the balance of infill development around the park and preservation of the neighborhoods to the north and south would be utilization of improved trails and green corridors. Such corridors would encourage community cohesion while linking new development with older neighborhoods.

**A Transit Corridor expanding the reach of the Historic Downtown requires not only a careful redevelopment strategy but also meaningful roadway linkages (Figure 7 and Figure 8)**

As presented on the illustrative boards, a careful redevelopment strategy should be undertaken at the lot and building level to realize a transit village and infill mix along State Highway 5 that would complement the neighborhoods to the north and south of Old Settlers Park. With infill and redevelopment, mobility and access needs will also need to be addressed. The plan carefully encourages linkages across State Highway 5 and north up Throckmorton. As the area redevelops, especially as rail transit comes on line, connections to the east towards Airport Drive would be desirable and necessary for the new residents and emerging infill destinations. At the same time, expected increasing regional traffic moving east-west on U.S. Highway 380 likely could create a tendency for additional cut-through traffic in the Town Center. Inevitably, traffic would increase in this context, both from internal sources within the neighborhoods but also from regional movements. Negative impacts of cut-through traffic between Airport Drive and downtown can be mitigated, however, by dispersing the traffic through the grid street.
network. Accordingly, the Area Illustrative Master Plan on Board B indicates conceptually proposed connections to Airport Drive at Virginia, Greenville and Anthony Streets.

The Cotton Compress site to serve as a cultural or educational destination on the east side, expanding Old Settlers Park as the heart and soul of the east side (Figure 8)

The Cotton Compress site provides an opportunity for a university, art institute, a research & design center, or a combination of similar civic uses in a unified cultural center. Certain select historic elements such as the brick wall of arches running north-south in the middle of the site and the water tower should be preserved for history and wayfinding. Otherwise, the large parcel of redevelopment opportunity should be leveraged for a significant aggregation of civic, cultural and educational uses. Careful programming would be needed before any detailed site design is undertaken. Regardless of the ultimate uses programmed, the resulting site design would need to carefully embrace the connection to Old Settlers Park to the southeast and the future transit village to the southwest. Similarly, connections to the Throckmorton Creek Corridor to the North would need to be embraced by any final design of the redevelopment of the Cotton Compress site.

As a grand entrance into the Cotton Compress site, a new street is proposed north-south from Virginia Street just east of Murray Street. New mixed use development could anchor that new street, linking the proposed infill along Virginia Street and a civic destination at the Cotton Compress site.

In this context, Murray Street would become a critical linkage from the Cotton Compress site to the neighborhoods to the southwest and south of Old Settlers Park. Murray Street would need to transition as it moves south in order to provide an inviting walkable feel; but it should not become a means for redevelopment to overwhelm the neighborhoods going south of the park. The Building Type Transition Illustration on Figure 8 shows a likely infill pattern that would respect the existing single family housing fabric while providing opportunities for townhouse and small house infill.

Use Katrina Cottages for infill housing on vacant lots and specifically to replace trailers along Dungan Street (Figure 8)

Concerns were understandably raised by the stakeholders about the long term role of the trailers along Dungan Street. The concerns appeared to be more about aesthetics than anything else. Consistent with the philosophy of preserving housing opportunities for a mixed income environment on the east side, public-sector support for the replacement of the trailers with Katrina Cottages should be considered.

The Katrina Cottage was developed to provide permanent high quality housing instead of FEMA trailers for those of modest means who lost housing opportunities in the wake of the Katrina Hurricane. High quality and appearing as a traditional stick built cottage, the Katrina Cottage (now available through Lowes Home Improvement Centers) is typically a modular house that is panelized and built on site (Figure 8). The Katrina Cottage offers a design solution that could not only serve housing needs in a sustainable way along Dungan Street but also as medium to
higher end housing for scale transitions from the transit village to the north and to the neighborhoods to the south and southeast.

Any zoning overlays considered by the City for the area should include the ability to build Katrina Cottages significantly below 1,000 square feet in size to accommodate the varied demographic of the modern-American home buyer (e.g., single working mothers). Additionally, any non-profit home building entities (i.e. Habitat for Humanity) should be encouraged to use Katrina Cottages in lieu of traditionally built homes that usually lack the appropriate design elements to blend into the existing character of the neighborhood.

**Establish Mixed Use Neighborhood Centers (Figure 8)**

Small mixed-use neighborhood centers could provide opportunities for easy access to basic retail/service convenience needs while also providing informal community gathering places (shown conceptually at the following locations: Elm Street at Rockwall Street; U.S. Highway 380 at Throckmorton Street; U.S. Highway 380 at Airport Drive; Greenville Street at Airport Drive). These nodes on would provide neighborhood support without many of the negative impacts on the surrounding single family residential neighborhoods.
WORKSHOP #3: CORRIDORS

The third and final public design workshop for the Town Center Study was held on June 28, 29 and 30, 2007. The workshop focused on several key corridors passing through the Town Center. The purpose of the workshop was to gain public input about the difficulties that currently face the redeveloping neighborhoods along these design-challenged roadways and within a somewhat haphazard mix of uses and lot sizes. Ultimately, the results of the workshop answered some fundamental questions and raised others about what it will take to sustain momentum for redevelopment for the entire Town Center.

The workshop provided insight into common challenges for these corridors and the surrounding respective neighborhoods. Some of the challenges include residential-to-commercial conversions, compatibility of uses and parking conflicts with site conditions, among other issues. Ultimately, it became clear that a match of street function and appropriate land use and compatibility standards will be needed to sustain healthy neighborhood cohesion while redevelopment occurs. At the same time, it became clear that the three roadways themselves deserve attention to their ultimate design in order to better anchor the appropriate development and redevelopment.

Fundamentally, the workshop also provided insight into the unique needs of the adjacent residential neighborhoods. The neighborhoods straddling both the US Highway 380 corridor as well as the north and south ends of the Tennessee/Kentucky Street corridor will require the same kind of sustained preservation as was recognized during the second workshop for the neighborhoods north and south of Old Settlers Park. In other words, Workshop 3 uncovered some key concepts and potential strategies for ensuring long-term neighborhood success in the context of three critical roadway corridors. Success in this regard will ultimately be the key to implementing the illustrative plans established for the historic downtown core, the future transit village and areas east of SH 5 as they were crafted during Workshop 1 and Workshop 2.

About the Focus Areas

The US Highway 380 (University Drive) Corridor runs east/west generally from Graves Street to SH 5. A divided six-lane highway, relatively busy at a volume of 30,000 – 35,000 average daily trips (ADT), it accommodates a significant amount of truck traffic as one of the designated truck bypass routes for the region. Currently, the corridor is home to a range of light industrial, retail, office and single family uses. However, the transition between these uses is not creating a cohesive pattern along the corridor.

Many of the properties facing US 380 have been converted from their original single family use to retail or office use, creating considerable challenges regarding access, circulation, parking, screening and buffering, trash disposal, and signage. As an example, current zoning regulations require a certain amount of parking on these lots that do not have the capacity to hold additional parking spaces. These requirements have led to front and back yards being paved over to accommodate these regulations. Additionally, some of the older neighborhoods along the corridor seem to have lost their identity due to the growth of commercial uses around them.

The SH 5 (McDonald Street) Corridor runs north/south from US 380 on the north to Eldorado Parkway on the south. The central portion of this corridor, from approximately Lamar Street to Standifer Street, was included in the Workshop 2 focus area. Historically, SH 5 was the main north/south highway through the City. However, since the expansion of US Highway 75, this role has diminished. Nonetheless, SH 5 still supports a large portion of local traffic as well as a concentration of industrial, retail, office, and residential uses, including many typically unattractive auto-related sites such as gas stations, drive-in restaurants, repair shops and used
car sales lots. The northern portion is more industrial and agribusiness in character, including some fairly large, contiguous tracts. The southern portion includes a high proportion of narrow and shallow tracts, typically with small, aging single-story buildings on them.

As with the Tennessee/Kentucky Street corridor, much of the development along this corridor pre-dates the advent of McKinney’s zoning regulations. Therefore, most of the developments do not meet current zoning standards (i.e. lot size, setbacks, parking, landscaping, etc). This has created an insufficient network of infrastructure and access along the corridor as well as haphazard architectural standards. Some of the lots fronting onto SH 5 are shallow by current standards, further challenging the redevelopment opportunities along the corridor. To a certain degree, some of the unique character of the Town Center area results from the pre-zoning standards along this corridor, and it may be to the City’s advantage to play off this unique development pattern and preserve a snapshot of McKinney’s history. However, at the same time, it may be possible and desirable to continue the revitalization that has been steadily occurring along the corridor in a more strategic and harmonious manner.

The Kentucky/Tennessee Street Corridor runs north/south between US 380 and Eldorado Pkwy (not including the segment through downtown). The Kentucky/Tennessee Street corridor runs parallel to SH 5 a few blocks to the east, with the same endpoints on the north and south. The Kentucky/Tennessee Street corridor consists of a unique blend of residential, commercial, and industrial uses. Much of the development along this corridor pre-dates the advent of zoning regulations (McKinney’s first zoning ordinance was adopted in the late 1960’s). As a result, many of the development standards that are typical of contemporary suburban development (i.e. landscaping, parking, building set backs, screening of adjacent uses, signage, etc.) were not provided.

Kentucky Street and Tennessee Street are narrower and less trafficked than SH 5 or US 380 but were, at one time, the principal north/south arterials of McKinney. They run past either side of the historic courthouse in the downtown square. In the downtown core, for less than 10 blocks, the streets are a one-way pair, with Kentucky Street going south and Tennessee Street going north. Beyond the downtown core, they are two-way streets. In most places, the block between the two streets is just 200 feet deep and in one portion north of downtown it is only 130 feet deep. Because of their close proximity to each other, these streets are considered together.

In recent years, redevelopment along the corridor has been challenging due to the issues associated with applying conventional (suburban) zoning requirements to the unique and non-conventional redevelopment sites, such as the block with the 130 foot depth. This piecemeal and disjointed approach disrupts any continuity along the street frontage and creates inadequate buffering and screening between different types of uses. An updated range of allowable uses and specific redevelopment standards for infill would help to preserve the residential parts of the corridor and achieve a smoother transition between different land uses and building types.
Public Input
As was explained in detail in Section 3 (Planning Process), a variety of facilitated exercises were used to obtain valuable input from the participating stakeholders on Day 1. The initial session on Day 1 opened with a video produced by City Staff to highlight some of the challenges facing the revitalization of the corridors. The video provided an informational overview and served as a springboard for the stakeholder group breakout sessions.

On Day 3, the participants returned to recap the ideas generated on Day 1 and to see the preliminary illustrations produced by each design team during the Design Studio on Day 2. Also on Day 3, the lead consultant facilitated a question/answer session while also helping to identify key ideas and themes on which to build consensus and a framework for a shared vision. Immediately following the workshop, each design team submitted to City Staff a brief written compilation of the ideas and concepts generated by their stakeholder group. Staff has included these documents in Appendix E of this report as reference to show the origins of the concepts.

In the weeks following Day 3, the lead consultant team reviewed and synthesized all of the ideas and concepts from each group. Under the guidance of City Staff, the lead consultant filtered out any unfeasible ideas, identified common themes, and fleshed out the feasible ideas. The stakeholders had a number of perceptive observations and ideas for the potential revitalization/redevelopment of the corridors.

Generally, it was clear from the public input that there seemed to be considerable concern about these areas, reflecting the awkward transitional nature of the corridors as well as some genuine trepidation as to the future possibilities for specific parcels. On the positive side, there was a certain hopeful tone to the public commentary. The nature of the historic downtown is seen as a huge benefit, one that could spread its positive influence to include these corridors. The notion of a diversity of uses with neighborhood oriented commercial services within walking distance and a range of housing alternatives is seen as a positive, particularly as it would reinforce the character of the Town Center as it once was.

Stakeholder observations covered a wide range of corridor-related issues, including the following:

- Gateways are needed at the north and south ends of the Town Center to announce arrival and provide visual cues to drivers that they are entering the district.
- Commercial redevelopment is not categorically rejected; rather, rational and quality redevelopment is desired.
- Cleaning up the image of State Highway 5 was repeatedly underscored.
- Many voiced a perception that code enforcement was lacking, both in terms of improper uses and failures to keep property kept up to appropriate standards.
- More pedestrian connections and parks are needed to anchor community pride and enhance quality of life.
- A question was raised several times about how adequate parking can be provided for converting residential uses.
• Frustration about piecemeal zoning was voiced, but participants also acknowledged the challenges of limiting uses and growth.

• Overall, the stakeholder participants wanted to see the diversity of the corridors maintained.

US Highway 380 Corridor:
In the public perception, the Highway 380 corridor has overwhelmed the residential areas near it, and the transition of residential properties to commercial use is typically unattractive, involving paving a significant portion of the site to yield the needed parking. The residents of the neighborhood on the north side are wary of the encroaching commercial development, and there are clearly already signs of incompatibility conflicts. The highway itself is busy, noisy, and intimidating to cross.
Kentucky and Tennessee Street Corridor: This corridor was of particular concern because it is so integrally tied into the existing fabric of the Town Center. The historic neighborhood immediately to the west is undergoing something of a renaissance, particularly along Church Street. Many historic homes front on Kentucky Street and would be impacted by the redevelopment of the other side of the street. Since these streets are less traveled than the other corridors, the commercial uses are smaller and seem to be less busy. Many are in poor condition, and the prospects for better development are not clear.

State Highway 5 Corridor: While it is acknowledged that many of the existing businesses along the corridor provide a needed service to the community, the overall appearance and character leaves much to be desired. Many of the properties are older and in poor condition. The potential for redevelopment is hampered by the fragmented nature of the small parcels, particularly on the segment of the corridor south of downtown. There are several areas where the depth of the parcels fronting on State Highway 5 is especially shallow. The parcels between State Highway 5 and Chestnut Street in the southern portion are especially awkward because the west side of Chestnut Street is a viable residential area with a number of historic homes.
Key Concepts and Strategies
Unlike the first two workshops, the third workshop was undertaken to explore specific issues and generate conceptual solutions rather than to develop an illustrative master plan. Accordingly, the remainder of this synopsis focuses on some key concepts and strategies that could ultimately aggregate to a comprehensive and sustainable context for not only the three corridors but for the Town Center overall:

Protect neighborhoods immediately north and south of US 380 through a redesign of US 380, internal neighborhood improvements and creation of a unifying design theme for the corridor

A starting point for resolving the conflicts along US Highway 380 could be a redesign of the cross-section entirely through the utilization of a multi-way boulevard. A multi-way boulevard would allow through-traffic along the main lanes and local traffic to move more easily in and out of the small lot conditions of the development up and down the street. It is acknowledged that TxDOT would be very concerned about any proposed change to the roadway. But recently, Gateway Planning consultant Scott Polikov appeared before TxDOT’s Texas Transportation Commission as a prelude to the creation by the Commission of a statewide committee (on which Polikov will serve) to begin the revision of the State’s Roadway Design Manual. This revision aims to better match the design of state controlled or funded roadways as they traverse through areas in which they should function as urban thoroughfares. US Highway 380 would be one of those candidates.

Notwithstanding the issue of the need to measure the ultimate capacity of a redesign, the redesign concept for US Highway 380 is to segregate the faster through-traffic from the local traffic by introducing a new section that splits the center four lanes from the outer two lanes. Doing so would maintain the current capacity but would allow for a different character of use. The center through-lanes would not be interrupted by driveways and would be further buffered from the fronting uses by a landscaped strip that occurs between the through-lanes and the local lane. The local lane would be further functionalized by the addition of parallel parking (potentially on both sides.) This would take some of the pressure off of adjacent parcels to provide parking and open additional redevelopment options. With parking on only one side, this section could be accomplished within the existing 120-foot right-of-way. With parking on both sides of the local lane, it would encroach some 4 feet into the adjacent parcels, although it would provide a reasonable portion of the parking requirement off-site.

This functional segregation would mean that the adjacent parcels would essentially front on a relatively slow access road and would allow for a fairly liberal driveway placement. Nevertheless, the potential exists for the access road to be more pedestrian friendly so that front building setbacks could be reduced and additional off-street parking could be encouraged at the rear of the lot.
A unifying theme could be established to complement any redesign of University Drive. The dominant period of development, both commercial and residential, gives rise from the 1950’s. Carefully crafted architectural standards and signage controls could enhance this theme, providing more guidance on scale, materials and building bulk. The key would be meshing new regulatory requirements with existing structures so that new development complements, but is not totally controlled by, the 1950’s theme - a style beloved by many of the area stakeholders. The Route 66 style of signage could begin to set the pattern for new regulatory standards.

A number of existing City mechanisms could be utilized to help re-brand the adjacent neighborhoods with a sense identity. For instance, a P.R.I.D.E. group could be established for the residential neighborhoods in the vicinity of US 380. This would provide an opportunity for the residents to actively participate in neighborhood activities. P.R.I.D.E. stands for Promoting Resident Involvement Development and Enthusiasm. In order to address neighborhood priorities, PRIDE Area Leaders and residents attend community meetings with Staff members of various City Departments. PRIDE groups also participate in community activities such as Rebuilding Neighborhoods Clean Ups, National Night Out block parties, and various seasonal “festivals.”

Additionally, to encourage residents in the neighborhoods immediately north of US Highway 380 to invest in and rehabilitate their properties, the City could also expand the Historic Neighborhood Improvement Zone (HNIZ) to include the neighborhoods north of U.S 380.

The redesign and re-branding of US Highway 380 to better complement adjacent uses would not be sufficient to secure the long term protection of the neighborhoods to the north. In order to make meaningful changes, a careful rezoning of some lots may be needed to better balance the residential and commercial transitions. Some refinements of the Neighborhood Business District or another appropriate new district could provide a more fine-grained transition of uses between the commercial corridor and the neighborhood. Uses such as salons, workout studios, therapy offices, bookstores, etc. could complement the more traditional auto-oriented uses along the corridor.

Finally, some street network changes may be useful: linking Inwood Drive and Wysong Drive, thereby making the residential area larger and more contiguous; terminating Inwood Drive as a cul-de-sac where it meets the natural buffer; and enhancing the entry drive at West Way with a divided median, additional landscaping and monumentation to announce the neighborhood. On the south side of US 380, some considerations could include: encouraging consolidation of small lots for the area north of Second Avenue; vacating and reclaiming Second Avenue between West Street and College Street to create some needed buffer; and terminating Bradley Street and West Street as culs-de-sac where they meet vacated Second Avenue. A comprehensive combination of transportation improvements, regulatory changes, improved corridor branding, and some potential land aggregation would enable US Highway 380 to better anchor commercial growth while complementing and sustaining the adjacent neighborhoods.
Because SH 5 is a main commercial corridor and regional state highway parallel to US Highway 75, improvements should focus primarily on aesthetic improvements. Adjacent to the Historic Downtown, a redesign of SH 5 was proposed to better re-connect downtown to the future transit village (during Workshop 2). But north and south of the Historic Downtown along SH 5, fundamental changes in uses are probably not likely to occur, as those “highway” type uses are likely to always be in demand. Accordingly, the concept of a comprehensive aesthetic plan was developed during Workshop 3. The concept of a traditional boulevard with a raised and planted median and zones with varying plant materials resonated among stakeholders.

The plan is based on zones for the planting of street trees to create a gateway both north and south into Historic Downtown. Both ends of the corridor would begin with an Ornamental Zone, transitioning once inside the main intersections to the Boulevard Zone. As the driver or pedestrian nears downtown, the zone would transition to Ornamental Zone A; when inside the downtown core, the zone would change to Ornamental Zone B. The purpose of these transitioning zones would be to signal to the pedestrian, bicyclist, or driver the changes in the land use and would encourage them to follow the corridor to its conclusion into the downtown core. Plant materials such as the dwarf crape myrtle and the medium ornamental tree would be similar but different enough to signal the change in land use without being distracting. Landscaping would also provide a unifying element for a corridor with a variety of uses that may currently lack cohesiveness. Any street tree plan for SH 5 would also be coordinated with the McKinney Crape Myrtle Trails non-profit organization.

The public right-of-way could serve as the starting point for implementing this concept. As improvement efforts along the corridor gain momentum, an incremental approach could be taken to incorporate landscape standards for private developments along State Highway 5. These standards would ensure that new and redevelopment projects are built in a manner that is consistent with the traditional boulevard concept for SH 5.
Correlate the Character of the Land Use with the Character of the Fronting Street

The capacity to influence building type and use along particular streets suggests the need for a more global approach to zoning and how to implement development standards complementing uses to achieve a particular character. This sort of approach would enable neighborhoods to better absorb desirable infill growth. The solution could take the form of a regulating overlay grounded in street frontage types.

The street frontage overlay concept for redevelopment along these corridors begins by classifying the nature of each corridor itself. State Highway 5, for example, is a through-highway, relatively busy and fast. Kentucky Street, on the other hand, is a narrow, slower street that should be a pedestrian-friendly neighborhood street. Yet currently, a parcel zoned BN, Neighborhood Business, is subject to identical rules regardless of whether it fronts on State Highway 5 or Kentucky Street. The corridor overlay concept, thus, would attempt to correlate development character with the character of the fronting street. Each corridor type would be defined by the nature of the traffic, the street parking situation, and the type of buildings and uses that are best suited for it. In narrative form, the corridors could be characterized as follows:

**Neighborhood Transition Corridor.** Would allow for the compatible co-existence of existing single family residential uses with other uses, somewhat denser and more intensive in scale. The street should be relatively narrow, two-lanes of traffic, with parallel parking on both sides. New development could be built closer to the right-of-way line, although it should still maintain a front yard buffer of 10 to 15 feet. Uses should be limited to several types of residential of no more than three stories in height, although the ground floor could incorporate home occupations or a limited list of small scale neighborhood service businesses. Parking should be limited to the rear half of the lot, and the use could get credit for any on-street parking that directly abuts the property. This type of corridor would be an appropriate designation for Kentucky Street.

**Neighborhood Commercial Corridor.** As the name suggests, this would be more commercial in nature, although it would still be intended for relatively narrow neighborhood streets with on-street parking. Uses would include a broader range of commercial, with retail preferred at the ground level. Front setbacks could be as little as zero for a retail frontage, but no more than ten feet generally. Upper stories could be commercial as well as residential. Parking should be limited to the rear half of the lot but may encroach into the front half if screened from the pedestrian way by landscaping or attractive fencing. This would be appropriate for most of Tennessee Street, as well as for US Highway 380 if the lanes could be split functionally (“local” and “regional” lanes).

**Urban Highway.** This would be intended primarily as a traffic artery, though it would try to create buffers to widen the possibilities for development along it. These types of corridors should have a center median or controlled left-turn access, as well as a generous landscape buffer (at least 10 feet wide) on either side. This would limit the continuous expanse of pavement as well as allow for the attractive landscaping of the roadway. Driveway access to the highway should be limited, with access preferably from a side street or the rear of the lot. Uses could be fairly liberal in scope, with appropriate performance standards regarding noise generation, screening of unsightly components, etc. in more
sensitive areas. This would apply to State Highway 5, although the segment adjacent to downtown might behave a bit differently, more like a Neighborhood Commercial Corridor.

**Pursue a comprehensive parking program**

Parking remains a considerable challenge for these corridors (and the Town Center in general). Parking standards for the zoning districts available for these corridors (and the Town Center in general) are primarily suburban in the nature; that is, they require a liberal amount of parking that is off-street and on-site. Generally, non-residential uses require a substantial amount of parking, even when pedestrian access is available and convenient. Relatively high parking requirements typically require generous setbacks and low floor-area-ratios. But the goal of infill is to encourage higher densities and utilization of urban building types (with minimal setbacks and higher floor-area-ratios). This apparent conflict requires a more creative approach to parking.

One approach would be for the City to provide as much on-street parking as possible. But on-street parking alone would not suffice. Additional considerations should include: flexibility, minimization of visual impacts with screening, unification in terms of planning for multi-use and mixed-use projects, and facilitation of shared parking when appropriate. Flexibility is most critical, as adherence to rigid standards could likely result in discouraging some of the most desirable uses, particularly in transitioning areas such as these corridors.

Shared parking is the notion that one land use meets the parking requirement by sharing with another land use. Generally, the peak parking times for the land uses must be compatible, and an arrangement is usually needed between land owners to facilitate the shared parking. The Vehicle Parking Section (41-202) of the existing McKinney Zoning Ordinance allows for shared parking but in very limited circumstances. Therefore, in order to realize the myriad benefits of shared parking within the context of compact and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods in the Town Center, the City could look to expand the shared parking provision (perhaps by increasing the allowed distance between the parking and the use).

The sharing factor, one of the more innovative shared parking mechanisms, is provided in the SmartCode template (see image above). It essentially uses a sharing factor to reduce the overall number of spaces required for the relative complementary parking demands of broad use categories. The graphic illustrates the sharing factor for mixed use included in the City of Leander’s SmartCode. The benefit of this method is that it avoids excessive off-peak parking. It could also be argued that such a policy would encourage mixed-use developments because of the parking “break” or incentive provided.
Additional modifications that could be made to the existing parking ordinance include the following techniques:

- Credit given for on-street parking
- More flexible off-site or shared parking allowances with municipal lots, businesses, and churches
- In-lieu-of/parking impact fee program with a rational nexus for the usage of the fees to support a garage, public parking lot improvements or street improvements
- Administrative discretion given on an individual basis. Additional authority would be given to the Planning Staff rather using a formulaic approach during the site approval process
- Encourage valet parking for restaurants, bars, and other nightlife activities to increase capacity of existing facilities during selective peak time
- Alley parking for transitional neighborhood commercial uses

For example, the graphic below illustrates the concept of alley access of a sample block in the Tennessee/Kentucky Street corridor that has transitioned from mostly residential to home office or commercial uses. The concept suggests parking in the rear by accessing a narrow continuous alley.

Encouraging increased use of bicycles in these corridors (and in the Town Center in general) would help to reduce the demand for parking spaces but would require a more aggressive bicycle parking strategy. One approach could be instituting a minimum requirement for bicycle parking racks to be provided with infill development or simply encouraging bicycle use by installing city-purchased bicycle parking racks in key locations. When the City eventually moves to a more robust bus/rail transit system, bike racks could be installed on all buses, and bicycle locking/storage facilities could be provided at the rail transit station.
As described above, the proximity of Tennessee and Kentucky as well as the mix of older and historic homes and eclectic commercial uses poses a special challenge to infill growth. Conceptually, the solution could rest on creating dual frontage types along these respective streets. Essentially, Kentucky would be more residential in nature with the facades set back along a front yard zone, although more urban (10 to 15 feet) rather than suburban in scale. Along Tennessee, the frontage would be more commercial, with buildings set closer to the street and built higher (2 to 3 stories).

Essentially, these street pairs would facilitate a smoother transition from the commercial corridor running up and down SH 5 (and to some extent Tennessee Street) with the neighborhoods to the west. Because the viability of commercial businesses, especially at the neighborhood scale, is dependent on parking, the availability of on-street parking and easy access is critical. Accordingly, maintaining both Kentucky Street and Tennessee Street as two-way streets with parking on both sides is desirable. One mechanism to achieve a matching of urban design and street function may be to create a regulating corridor overlay with development standards driven by the street frontage character established for any given section of street.

To specifically address the narrow block condition between Kentucky and Tennessee Street, a prototype town home development has been conceived. This concept could be backed up internally, providing good frontage on both Kentucky and Tennessee Streets. The building type on Tennessee Street could also be designed as a live-work unit to take advantage of the more commercial environment along that street. Parking would be provided internally at the back of the buildings with access at the ends of the blocks on the perpendicular streets.

A slight variation on this prototype design would allow for two larger multi-family buildings (4-plexes that are designed to mimic the appearance of a large house) at the ends of the blocks instead of access for parking behind. The parking in this design would be accessible mid-block along Kentucky and Tennessee Streets instead of at the end of the blocks.
A reoccurring theme for these corridors (and for the Town Center in general) is the implementation of additional public spaces, especially pocket parks and easily accessible greens. A number of pocket park opportunities were identified during the workshop process by the consultant teams. A complementary tactic for the public sector's acquisition of lots for pocket parks could be a program similar to the one utilized in Alexandria, Virginia, where citizens identify and submit candidates for pocket parks. This approach would create momentum for the acceptance for the parks and a way to rationalize limited public dollars for their acquisition and improvement.
SECTION 5: NEXT STEPS

Adopting the report by reference into the Land Use Section (Section 7) and Urban Design Section (Section 11) of the Comprehensive Plan enables the initiative to serve as a meaningful policy guide for city officials, staff, property owners, and private developers when considering proposals for development/redevelopment in the Town Center.

The illustrative nature of the shared vision creates the need for choices to be made for implementation. In order for the vision to become a reality, Phase 2 of the initiative will be utilized to evaluate, craft, select, relate, and phase the appropriate implementation components into a comprehensive implementation program or Action Plan. The long-term success of the Town Center Study initiative will depend on the degree to which each component of the vision is implemented. Market acceptance and continued stakeholder buy-in will be critical in that regard.

In other words, Phase 2 will involve taking a more detailed look at the preferred concepts, studying specific aspects to determine if change is warranted, and prioritizing a set of specific tasks (Action Plan) for implementing critical components of the vision. Existing implementation tools will be reviewed and potentially refined, and new tools and strategies may be developed so that the City’s future choices are consistent with the vision. (Beyond Phase 2, implementation will also involve the monitoring and amending of the plan as necessary over the years)

**Action Plan:** To help manage implementation of the vision, an Action Plan will be developed that identifies and evaluates specific tasks, recognizes unique opportunities, establishes priorities, and sets a timeline. Some actions may be set in motion right away (1-2 years); others may be implemented in the intermediate term (3-5 years); still others may be implemented over a much longer period (5-20 years). The Action Plan will be comprised of the following primary components:

1. **Marketing, Public Outreach and Awareness component**

   Implementation of the vision will depend on whether citizens, city staff, elected and appointed officials, developers, property owners, builders, investors, real estate professionals, lending professionals, neighboring communities, and other government agencies are aware of the vision and the goals, objectives, and concepts contained therein (especially if they have particular interest or expertise in the type of development that is consistent with the vision). As with the other components of implementation, marketing and public outreach will be an ongoing process. This is especially true in McKinney, given the rapid growth being experienced. Without an aggressive, ongoing campaign to increase awareness about the vision, many people will not be able to contribute to the implementation process. In order to become active in participating in local government, people will need to understand the direction and course the City has set for the Town Center.

2. **Physical component**

   **Public Improvements:** The City owns and controls a significant amount of property in the Town Center, including not only buildings, parks and parking lots but also street rights-of-way. Therefore, any changes the City makes to the public realm can have a
tremendous impact on the physical look, feel, and function of the Town Center. One of the primary strategies for revitalizing the Town Center will likely be for the City to continue to provide targeted capital improvements (upgrades to roads, sidewalks, water systems, wastewater systems, drainage systems, parks, municipal buildings, parking facilities, etc.). Implementation of the vision will also depend on continued and targeted public improvements in streetscapes, pedestrian plazas, pocket parks, gateway features, and wayfinding signage to enhance aesthetics, transit access, and the pedestrian experience.

In recent years, the City has been investing significantly in public improvements in the Town Center (fire station; library; eventual relocation of City Hall and municipal offices to county courthouse; renovation of historic courthouse into a performing arts center; infrastructure initiative; downtown infrastructure project; parking lot reconstruction; wayfinding signs). These efforts should obviously continue, but programming for future improvements will need to be adjusted for consistency with the vision.

Making future public improvements in accordance with the urban design concepts of the vision will make it more likely that ongoing public investments will be leveraged instead of isolated. Such maximization of public improvements will then create a more positive image and climate to consistently attract additional private investment for redevelopment. Additionally, providing on-site improvements to support a specific private sector catalyst development may also be considered.

Development Regulations: Realization of the vision also largely depends on the City’s utilization of appropriate development regulations (zoning, subdivision, building). Phase 1 has revealed that certain aspects of current development regulations may be ineffective at not only addressing unique redevelopment challenges but also at achieving the desired form and character of the vision. Additionally, while it is acknowledged that development regulations cannot solely address the redevelopment problem (land use controls cannot compel anyone to invest in an area), development regulations can be cumbersome, conflicting, and redundant. A city that proactively improves its development regulations and removes regulatory impediments can help to entice investment and redevelopment.

Most current zoning regulations in the Town Center are oriented to a conventional low-density suburban development pattern. This study confirmed that the City needs to be very careful not to undermine the eclectic charm and placemaking character of the Town Center with generic development regulations. Therefore, Phase 2 should be used to explore form-based development standards which may be better suited to produce the community’s desired outcome (the vision) by achieving synchronization between zoning and the surrounding context (street types, building form, lot size). In other words, instead of continuing with conventional regulations that only prohibit extremely undesirable outcomes, it may be better to use regulations that actually produce the types of development that have historically shown to be economically sustainable and attractive.

Additionally, Phase 2 should include an evaluation of the synchronization between development regulations and public capital investment. It is possible for a community’s land use and capital investment policies to be at odds with one another and for each to undermine and frustrate the intent of the other. Along those same lines, it is also important for guiding policies to be consistent and complementary. Phase 2 should further explore existing inconsistencies and recommend ways to reconcile them.
(for instance, does the City’s existing Multi-Family Policy need to be revised, given the vision of the Town Center to realize residential growth in the two urban villages?).

Revising development regulations to ensure consistency with the Town Center vision should send a signal to the private sector and go a long way toward establishing a level playing field for developers and investors. It is possible to revise development regulations in such a way to insure that realization of the vision will not depend on future political pressure or discretionary design review by city officials or staff. More predictability in the development process translates to less risk for the private sector and comfort in knowing that adjacent property owners will be held to the same set of standards.

3. Funding/Partnerships/Management component

Achieving success with revitalization plans most always require that the City play an active role in funding and managing key pieces. In Phase 2, the City needs to evaluate to what extent it is willing to enter into partnerships with property owners and private developers to insure realization of the vision. The City may consider collaborating with developers/investors on specific private sector catalyst developments (helping the economic feasibility of a catalyst project by filling a financial gap with incentives or by facilitating development approvals). To insure that the City is a major controlling player when the market ripens for a catalyst project in the transit village, the City may also explore a proactive strategy of land assembly.

To be able to determine the appropriate level of public/private partnership, a fiscal impact analysis of “trends development” versus “redevelopment under the new vision” would provide detailed insight about the capacity for attracting new capital and investment into the Town Center. From there, a detailed program for value capture could then be crafted. Phase 2 should answer questions such as: Would Tax Increment Financing be appropriate, and to what geographic scope and to what level? What about the utilization of a Public Improvement District? Would a parking authority be appropriate? And, how should all of these programs be related and phased? For successful implementation, the development of these fiscal and management tools must be undertaken.

The Town Center vision contains ideas and goals that are also shared by several other City-affiliated entities (McKinney Economic Development Corporation; McKinney Community Development Corporation; McKinney Housing Authority) and departments (Code Enforcement; Community Services). Realization of the vision will require internal cooperation between these different groups.

Realization of the vision will also require ongoing external cooperation between property owners, the City, and a wide range of other public agencies. Every level of planning and construction will be affected, from the site design of small individual projects to the construction of significant public facilities. Ongoing coordination with the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT), Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) will be critical to ensuring that future transportation facilities are properly integrated into the overall vision.
FINAL REMARKS

The McKinney Town Center is blessed with and well-positioned to leverage its location, physical assets, history, community pride, existing base of tourism, many vibrant businesses, cultural arts facilities, diverse demographic composition and a robust municipal tax base. Extending this sector planning initiative into Phase 2 should provide the Town Center with the strategies and tools needed to compete with other areas and continue to attract and guide reinvestment.

The only way to fully realize the vision and insure the future economic vitality of the Town Center is for revitalization of the Town Center to continue to be a goal over the long term. Realization of the vision will require patience and a long-term commitment. A sustained effort from city leaders and staff, in conjunction with property owners, will help the City build on its previous investments and fully capitalize on the unique opportunities presented by the Town Center (future rail transit, residential and commercial historic areas, diverse socioeconomics, regional destination, etc.).

The vision needs to become ingrained in the City’s institutional memory like the Comprehensive Plan. Perhaps a task force (comprised of City Council members, Planning and Zoning Commissioners, Historic Board member, City Staff and key citizens/property owners/business owners) should be created to champion the vision, keep stakeholders engaged, and steer the implementation process?

The vision is balanced—not too modest but also not too far-fetched. All of the concepts are implementable—some concepts can be achieved with little change in current practices and some concepts may require significant changes in funding routines, development standards, and organizational structure. Sustaining implementation over the long-term will undoubtedly be challenging. Realizing the vision may require city leaders and staff to push beyond their comfort zones and consider implementation strategies that may be innovative and unfamiliar.

Given the general demographic shifts (back to the city movement; aging baby boomers seeking low maintenance housing that is conveniently located close to activity, diversity and vibrancy of urban living; single parent households; multi-generational households, etc.) and emerging retail and office trends, McKinney’s Town Center is poised to fill a unique niche for people who want the urban lifestyle but with a small town feel. If the vision is fulfilled, the Town Center could prove to be an appealing alternative to generic suburban subdivisions, strip shopping centers, and congested auto-oriented roads, offering many of the positives of a big city lifestyle without many of the negatives that typically come with a big city.

In his article, Economics and Historic Preservation, Donovan Rypkema (1995) observes that “[i]f in the long run we want to attract investment to our communities to have community rebirth, we must differentiate them from anywhere else. It is our built environment that expresses, perhaps better than anything else, our diversity, our identity, our individuality, our differentiation.” In the context of the uniqueness of the Town Center, McKinney offers what no other community in the Metroplex can. But realizing redevelopment and new investment that complements this uniqueness will require a sustained and comprehensive effort for many years.
Public outreach and communication are important components to any planning process. They establish a method of communication to inform stakeholders and solicit public input. In an effort to reach as many stakeholders as possible, the City used various communication tools to promote and solicit public input. Appendix A is a compilation of materials that served as tools in gaining and promoting public participation.
City of McKinney Press Release
For Immediate Release

For More Information, Please Call:
Steve Hill
Communications Specialist
972-547-7525

Town Center Study to Guide Revitalization

Future vision for McKinney’s older areas will be determined

McKINNEY, Texas (Aug. 15, 2006) – What do you see? That's the question the City of McKinney will ask its residents at a public open house to discuss the vision for several of the city's older districts.

The open house is scheduled for 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Aug. 29 at the McKinney Performing Arts Center, 111 N. Tennessee. The meeting is the first step in the Town Center Study.

"The Town Center Study will closely consider the features and issues that make the older areas of McKinney unique, focusing on specific issues such as compatibility of land uses, enhancement of the downtown area, revitalization of the McDonald Street corridor and the potential for transit-oriented development," said Senior Planner Barry Shelton.

The goal of the study is to develop a consensus-based plan that will promote and encourage the revitalization of the study area, which is generally bounded by U.S. Highway 75, U.S. Highway 380, Eldorado Parkway, and Airport Road.

Residents, property owners, business operators and representatives of relevant community-wide interests are invited to attend. The Open House will provide further information about the study and about the public’s role in the planning process. City planners will be available to answer questions. Attendees will also be able to sign up to participate in any of the hands-on design workshops that will take place in the coming months.

# # #

About McKinney

McKinney, Texas, is unique by nature. One of the fastest-growing cities in the U.S., McKinney has a current population of 104,000. Incorporated in 1848, the city is located 30 miles north of Dallas and is the county seat of Collin County. McKinney offers rolling hills, lush trees, a historic downtown square and unique neighborhoods and developments. Visit the city’s Web site at www.mckinneytexas.org.
You’re invited to attend an Open House to kick off the **Town Center Study**, an important upcoming city planning study that will look at the older areas of McKinney, focusing on issues such as the compatibility of land uses, enhancement of the downtown area, revitalization of the State Highway 5 corridor, and the potential for transit-oriented development just east of S.H. 5.

As a [downtown property owner] in the study area, your input is important. During this study, you will have the opportunity to be an active participant in the planning and design process. Take the first step toward making your vision a reality by attending our public Open House.

The Open House will introduce the study process, and you will learn how you can help plan for the future of McKinney. You will have the chance to sign up to participate in any of the 3 hands-on design workshops that will take place in the coming months as part of the study process. City Staff will be available to answer any questions. The Open House is scheduled for:

- **Date:** Tuesday, August 29th, 2006
- **Time:** 5:00 – 8:00 pm (feel free to come and go at your convenience)
- **Place:** McKinney Performing Arts Center at the Historic Collin County Courthouse, 111 N. Tennessee Street, (First Floor)

Should you have any questions or comments, please contact me by mail, phone, fax, or e-mail. See you at the Open House!

Regards,

Kevin Spath, Long Range Planner

Para más información, llame 972-547-7571
Town Center Study Area
What Do You See?

Town Center Study
City of McKinney
Planning Department
What do you see?
Take the first step toward making your vision a reality. Help us kick off the Town Center Study by attending our public Open House.

Where:
The McKinney Performing Arts Center at the Historic Collin County Courthouse, 111 N. Tennessee Street

When:
Tuesday, August 29, 2006 from 5 to 8 p.m. Come and go at your convenience. City staff will be available to answer your questions.

For more information about the open house contact Planning at 972-547-7432 or kspath@mckinneytexas.org

Para más información, llame 972-547-7571
Come August 28
Something new
The Start of
August 16, 2006
Wednesday
Chamber members invited to open house kickoff for Town Center Study

Members of the McKinney Chamber of Commerce are invited to attend an informational open house to kick off the Town Center Study.

The open house is scheduled for Tuesday from 5 to 8 p.m. (feel free to come and go at your convenience) at the McKinney Performing Arts Center at the Historic Collin County Courthouse (First Floor).

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A new look...
Coming Monday...
same dedication

McKinney Gazette
Your Collin County Daily Newspaper Since 1897
August 27, 2006

Sunday
McKinney begins Town Center Study

City encourages citizen participation

BY KRIS GONZALEZ

The city of McKinney kicked off its Town Center Study at a public open house Tuesday at the McKinney Performing Arts Center.

McKinney residents and property owners were invited to meet with city planners to discuss the city’s strategy to revitalize one of its older districts. In 2008, the city launched its new Comprehensive Plan, based on the input of residents and city leaders, as a guide for making decisions about McKinney’s growth and development. It was a lengthy document that covered planning and development for the entire city, said Kevin Spalding, Planner for the city of McKinney.

The Town Center Study is an extension of that plan, but focuses on the Town Center area, which is bound by U.S. Highway 75, U.S. Highway 289, McKinney Parkway and Airport Drive, Spalding said.

“We’re looking at those areas in greater detail,” Spalding said.

Residents were encouraged to sign up for workshops to “help give the city vision of McKinney,” said Richard Lewis, engineer of planning, urban and design planning, for HNTB Corp., one of the three planning firms contracted to conduct the workshops for the city.

“They are dynamic workshops,” Lewis said. “We will draw and sketch and help them see open house, page 3A

McKinney Senior Planner Barry Shelton, top right, leads a group of residents in a brainstorming session during an open house at the performing arts center in downtown. This photo and more available through MyCapture at www.crb.com
Open house
From Page 1A

realize their ideas."

The objective of the workshops is to
offer a more hands-on approach to public
participation in the study, Spalth said. For
the next six months to a year, residents and
city leadership will participate in Phase 1,
which allows them to engage in planning
discussions, present design ideas and "cre-
ate a common vision."

"Everybody sits down at the table and
lays out their ideas," Spalth said.

Once Phase 1 is complete, the city coun-
cill will be presented a Phase I Report from
which they will consider adopting some, all
or none of the planning recommendations.

Spath said there must be support and
leadership from the City Council to move on
to Phase 2, the implementation stage.

At that point, planners and city staff will
work to develop the economic strategies,
partnerships, zoning ordinances, and
address a whole range of issues before
putting any proposals into action, he said.

McKinney residents Erma Benson and
Maria Gore said they are excited about the
entire project.

"This is such a fabulous process to have
involved all the cross sections of
McKinney," said Benson, the interim tourism
director for the city of McKinney. "It's the
opportunity for everybody to be
involved in what McKinney is to become."

"It's smart growth," she said. "We don't
have to re-create. We just have to build on
whatever we have."

Gory, a Parks and Recreations Board
member and community activist, agreed.

"We need to revitalize the resources we
currently have as opposed to building on
open or preserved land," Gore said. "Now
we have the opportunity to look at every-
thing we've done in the past and make the
appropriate changes."

"McKinney is unique by nature," she
said. "We want to preserve that nature. We
have plenty of concrete facilities to reuse."

Brian James, planning director for the
city of McKinney, said he hopes the open
house gets more citizens excited about
being a part of the revitalization of
McKinney.

"We're hoping to get people enthusiastic
about the project," James said. "We want
them to know how the study benefits them
and that we really want to know what they
think."

Anyone interested in attending a work-
shop but who could not attend the open
house to sign up can contact the Planning
Department at 972-547-7432.

The workshops will address the follow-
ing areas or topics:

- Downtown area
- State Highway 8 Corridor
- U.S. Highway 380 Corridor
- Potential Transit Village

Contact staff writer Kris Gonzalez
at kgonzalez@mcngazette.com.
North Texas Municipal Water District Offers Plans to Meet Future Water Demand

As Stage 3 watering restrictions continue into late summer, many residents want to know what the plans are to increase the water supply in our rapidly growing region. The current drought conditions have presented a challenge and the North Texas Municipal Water District (NTMWD) has presented plans to meet this challenge.

In the last twelve months, the North Texas Municipal Water District (NTMWD) has contracted for two additional supplies of water to meet the near-term demands:

- One supply was obtained in 2006 through the purchase of 18,000 acre-feet per year (ac-ft/yr) of water from the Greater

-continued on page 4

What Do You See? Town Center Study Seeks Public Participation at Open House

What is your vision for the older areas of McKinney? How should they develop over the next 10 to 20 years? What should the look and feel of the areas be?

City planners need your help to answer these and many more questions as the Town Center Study gets underway later this month. The Town Center Study will closely consider the features and issues that make the older areas of McKinney unique, focusing on specific issues such as compatibility of land uses, enhancement of the downtown area, revitalization of the McDonald Street corridor, and the potential for transit-oriented development.

The goal of the study is to develop a consensus-based plan that will promote and encourage the revitalization of the study area, which is generally bounded by U.S. Hwy. 75, U.S. Hwy. 380, Eldorado Pkwy, and Airport Rd.

To kick off the Town Center Study, the City of McKinney will host a public Open House on Tuesday, Aug. 29 from 5 to 8 p.m., at the McKinney Performing Arts Center. Residents, property owners, business operators and representatives of relevant community-wide interests are all invited to attend. The Open House will provide further information about the study and about the public’s role in the planning process. City planners will be available to answer questions.

Attendees will also be able to sign up to participate in any of the hands-on design workshops that will take place in the coming months.

-for Open House information, see page 4
NTMWD Plans to Increase Water Supply for Growing Region

continued from page 1

Texas Utility Authority from Lake Texoma. The facilities and pipelines are in place for the immediate use of the raw water.

A second supply was obtained in October 2005 from the Sabine River Authority for the use of 50,000 – 80,000 ac-ft/yr from the upper Sabine River Basin (Lake Tavakoni and Lake Fork). The facilities and pipelines are under design with construction commencing later this year. The expedited design and construction has the additional supply online in early 2008.

In addition to these developed supplies, NTMWD has submitted applications for:

- A water rights permit for the East Fork Raw Water Supply Project in Kaufman County, which will initially produce 80,000 ac-ft/yr and ultimately 120,000 ac-ft/yr - a supply equal to the current supply produced by Lake Lavon. The design of the project is being completed, and construction of the 1,800-acre wetlands project is underway. With the approval of the water rights permit from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), the project is currently scheduled to be online in 2008.

- A water rights permit from the TCEQ and United States Corps of Engineers (USACE) storage contract for an additional 113,000 ac-ft/yr of water from Lake Texoma. Once the permit and contract are approved, NTMWD will have access to 217,000 ac-ft/yr of water from Texoma. NTMWD anticipates receiving the water rights permit within the next twelve months. Full utilization of the additional Texoma water will require connection of an additional fresh water supply that can be used to blend with the Texoma supply.

Other longer term projects included in the Region C State Water Plan for NTMWD include:

- Implementation of water conservation strategies to ensure NTMWD customers are using the precious resource wisely and without waste.

- Construction of the proposed Lower Bos d' Arc Creek Reservoir in Fannin County. Once developed, this project would supply NTMWD with 123,000 ac-ft/yr. NTMWD anticipates having the reservoir constructed and online by 2020.

- Construction of the proposed Marvin Nichols Reservoir in Northeast Texas. NTMWD’s share of this project is 174,840 ac-ft/yr. The project is currently scheduled to be online by 2030.

- Connection of Toledo Bend Reservoir to the NTMWD system. NTMWD’s current share of the project is 200,000 ac-ft/yr. Facilities to deliver the water are scheduled to be online by 2050.

- Purchase of raw water from the State of Oklahoma. Oklahoma has a substantial volume of raw water that is potentially available to NTMWD. NTMWD continues to pursue this option even with the State of Oklahoma placing a moratorium on the out-of-state sale of water.

In addition, NTMWD has explored all available sources of water that could potentially be available to NTMWD including:

- Purchasing water from the City of Dallas.

- Purchasing groundwater, including water from Mesa Water, Inc.

- Obtaining water from other reservoirs.

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**What Do You See?**

Take the first step toward making your vision a reality. Help us kick off the Town Center Study by attending our **Town Center Study Open House**

**August 29 • 5-8 p.m.**

McKinney Performing Arts Center
111 N. Tennessee Street

Come and go at your convenience. City staff will be available to answer your questions. For more information about the open house contact Planning at 972-547-7432 or kspath@mckinneytexas.org

Para más información, llame 972-547-7571
Local residents voice preferences for city planning

BY BRANDI HART
MCKINNEY COUNCIL-
GAZETTE

The preferred options chosen from residents who met in focus groups about zoning, planning and design issues about downtown McKinney, the Historic District, and nearby areas at the November Town Center Study Workshop should be submitted to the City Council in late February. The workshop is the first of at least three scheduled to get residents’ feedback on zoning, planning and design issues about areas in McKinney.

 Held at the McKinney Performing Arts Center on Nov. 9 and Nov. 11, about 30 people told city staff and employees of three consulting firms what they like best about the area and what they might change.

Some of the questions the participants were asked were: What are the best places in the downtown area and what are the worst; where do kids like to go; where are the safest places; where are the most dangerous places; and what is great about the area?

During the “group vision” exercise, participants were asked: What is your best hope for the downtown area in 10 to 20 years; what transition exists between the commercial core and surrounding residential neighborhoods; what is housing like; and how are people getting around?

One of the topics discussed at the workshop was the possibility of expanding the Historic District, said Senior Planner Kevin Spath of the city of McKinney.

Whether that becomes an option that will be submitted to council remains to be seen and only the City Council has the power to expand the district, Spath said.

The city paid a total of $76,250 to three consulting firms, the Gateway Planning Group, the HNTB Corp. and Civic Design Associates to conduct the first phase of the workshops Nov. 9 and Nov. 11.

Phase 2 will include the implementation of the study, Spath said. The cost of implementation will depend on which options are chosen to be pursued and which types of implementation tools are utilized, Spath said.

The city is planning to hold a similar workshop for residents to discuss the area of town east of State Highway 5 and the Sh 5 corridor sometime in the spring.

Contact staff writer Brandi Hart at hartb@acnpapers.com.
Old suburbs aim to build new urban oases - Dallas Business Journal


Old suburbs aim to build new urban oases
McKinney, Roanoke & Duncanville buying into rejuvenation idea

Dallas Business Journal - January 28, 2007 by Dave Moore Staff Writer

Three North Texas cities are formulating plans to convert their decaying downtowns into thriving hubs of apartments, condos and commerce.

Urban planner Scott Polikov is part of an $820,000 effort to draw up separate plans for McKinney, Roanoke and Duncanville that will replace those communities' decaying cores with walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods that he claims will drive property values up and build sustained tax bases for the cities.

Polikov's initiatives move away from viewing outlying cities as satellites of Dallas and Forth Worth, and toward making them destinations unto themselves.

Polikov, a native Texan and former Washington lobbyist, is now preaching the gospel of mixed residential and commercial development, referred to as "new urbanism," to many smaller North Texas towns, where decision-makers are joining his congregation, especially Duncanville Mayor David Green.

"You're either going to redevelop and make a community that everyone's proud of, or you're going to decline," Green said. "There's no treading water."

Polikov, president of Fort Worth-based Gateway Planning Group Inc., says that all this can be done at a net gain to the cities involved, as long as there's a collaboration between cities and private partnerships.

One study Polikov commissioned by Austin-based economic analysis firm TXP Inc., showed development in downtown Roanoke would net about $181,000 annually in new property and sales taxes.

And cities are literally investing in this vision: Duncanville has committed to spend $295,000 for its plan, Roanoke has committed to spending $275,000 and McKinney is spending $350,000.

Beyond Polikov, McKinney has engaged three other firms -- HNTB, Civic Design Associates and Mesa Design -- in planning its future downtown.

New urbanism, in short, focuses on promoting pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods that have a mix of housing, retail and service jobs. The idea aims to restore a sense of community to a neighborhood by mixing homes and commerce.

Smaller downtowns such as Duncanville, Roanoke and McKinney work well with this philosophy because they already have small neighborhoods that have the potential for rebirth, Polikov said.

Old suburbs aim to build new urban oases - Dallas Business Journal:

While Duncanville leaders concede their downtown isn't completely revitalized yet, they don't think it's too far away.

The city of Duncanville bought a block on Main Street to help feed the rebirth of its downtown. The development of the property — likely with upscale townhouses — will follow after the city gets plans back from Polikov this fall, Green said. The city paid about $350,000 for the land, as its contribution to Main Street area improvement project.

Duncanville officials said the development is being aided by $564,000 in North Central Texas Council of Government grants.

The money will pay for street and sidewalk improvements. Private developers are expected to build the 31 townhouses, which will be built above street-level businesses.

A chance at rail
While access to rail travel isn't requisite to create a walkable downtown, Duncanville, Roanoke and McKinney are planning to include it in their downtown plans.

A complicating factor for McKinney is that State Highway 5 would separate downtown from its potential rail station. As a result, Polikov plans on lobbying the Texas Department of Transportation to reduce the highway's speed to about 30 mph and to narrow the five-lane highway to make it more pedestrian-friendly.

One problem is that none of the three cities have means of funding a rail line, though there's talk of exempting a rail tax from the statewide cap on sales tax.

"The rail station depends on the action of this year's state Legislature," said Duncanville Economic Development Director Earle Jones. Jones said there's little doubt whether Duncanville will see passenger train travel return to its city limits. 'It is a question of 'when', not 'if,'" he said.

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Residents east of S.H. 5

Tell city consultants what their visions are for area’s future

BY BRANDI HART
MCKINNEY COURIER-GAZETTE

About 47 McKinney residents and non-residents who own property east of State Highway 5, told planners with the Gateway Planning Group and the Mesa Design Group what they want the area of McKinney east of S.H. 5 to look like in the next decades. Pictured from left are McKinney residents Amy Rose, sitting, Robert O’Donnell, Berry Napier, and Silvia Encamilia, Dallas resident Lawrence Watts, who owns the former Elm Street Saloon building east of S.H. 5, and Rick Laliner of the Mesa Design Group of Dallas. They were some of the people in group two of the McKinney Town Center Workshop II held Thursday night at the McKinney Performing Arts Center. This photo and more are available through MyCapture at www.sxcux.com.

McKinney resident, Amy Rose, who lives north of the Historic District east of U.S. 75, said she thought the area east of S.H. 5 possesses many valuable historic features, including the different styles of housing and architecture. One of the biggest weaknesses for the area east of S.H. 5 is the stigma or misconception that some people have that the area is a "ghetto" as it’s east of S.H. 5, or not west of U.S. 75.

She, along with everyone else in group two, said they wanted the area east of S.H. 5 to have more parks, improved infrastructure and a cultural arts center in the area to help build a link from the area to the neighboring square west of S.H. 5.

Other groups discussed how to better utilize the baseball fields at Old Settler’s Park, McKinney Main Street Program Director Ty Lake, Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission Don Day, McKinney resident and director of engineering for Collin County Judicial Delgado, and John Ratan, chairman of the McKinney Main Street were in some of the other groups at the workshop.

The Gateway Planning Group and the Mesa Design Group will take the ideas from each group and will create designs of what the area could possibly look like today at City Hall. The designs will be open to the public for viewing in an open house from 3 to 5 p.m. in the City Council chambers at City Hall, 222 N. Tennessee St.

The workshop will resume Sunday morning to review the designs created by the planners. The designs and vision that each group created for the area will be compiled into a 10-page summary that should be presented to the council and the P&Z Commission possibly in early June, said Deputy Director of Development Services for the city of McKinney, Brian James.

Contact staff writer Brandi Hart at barth@scnpapers.com. To post comments online, access this story at www.sxcux.com.
City to begin working on Town Center Study ideas

BY BRANDI HART
MCKINNEY COURIER-GAZETTE

What areas of McKinney could each future see and how to balance residential with commercial uses are just some of the topics that were discussed in the last few months for the city's Town Center Study meetings, which ended Saturday.

Fewer than 100 people, some of whom have lived in McKinney for 30 years, and some who are new to town, gave their input to the city of McKinney's Planning Department, since November, about how they want to see the downtown, Historic District, area east of Highway 380 and areas north of U.S. 380 developed.

Working with planners and architects from the architectural and planning firms the Gateway Group, which designed the new Heard Museum in Dallas, the Mosca Design Group and the University of Houston, city staff took the ideas generated in the meetings which were held in November, March and last Thursday and Saturday and created renderings and hand-drawn maps of what the area east of U.S. 75 might one day look like.

The focus of the study is to develop detailed plans that address the issues and priorities of that sector.

The study is an extension of the city's 2004 Comprehensive Plan, which developed from community input and city staff to guide decision making for the city's future growth and development.

The Town Center Study is funded through a grant from the City of McKinney. The project is the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan by focusing on a single sector of town, the downtown area.

Scott Polkow, of the Gateway Group, led the meetings along with senior planning staff, and said at the end of the day the ideas have to make sense to city staff for members to enter the ideas into the city's planning software.

The downtown area, in order to stay vibrant, needs to have more people here. We proposed having five to 10-story living areas east of Highway 5.

See STUDY, page 3A

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Study
From Page 1A

downtown, and an entertainment center. It might, in fact, be the core of downtown is causing problems. You've got people drinking at night and more activi-
yes. We thought the area could raise more of a cafe-style environment, but with 10-foot sidewalks it's constrained," Polkow said. "We also recom-
ned to the city that some form of parking structure be put in place in the downtown area and they seemed receptive to that.

"The consultants from the four planning firms suggested that the city consider the sidewalks on the square from the existing 9 feet to 10 feet wide, Polkow said. "The city is considering the idea in the downtown capital improvement plan that should be presented to the council sometime this winter.

"Some people also told the consultants they want larger lots for the area east of U.S. 75, they want commercial space in the area east of some residents park in the front yards and too many people people living in one residence is also causing traffic issues, Polkow said. The consultants, city staff and residents also dis-

ted making SIH 5 more pedestrian friendly and to make people driving along the road more aware that they are entering a pedestrian area.

Utilizing Old Settler's Park was also a key focus for the residential area east of SIH 5.

"We really wanted to take advantage of Old Settler's Park while maintaining the integrity of the single-family neighborhoods in areas east of Highway 5. We want to have an urban core or a walkable core around the park so this area is almost an extension of downtown," Polkow said.

Kent Butler, also of the Gateway Planning Group, said residents said they liked the small-town atmosphere and historic areas east of U.S. 75, but commercial development in the neighborhoods, there needs to be a more of a buffer or thoughtful transition between business and residential areas, many streets in the area need a lot of repairs and the city's building codes and ordinances need to be enforced in the area.

"People said there is too much trash around, too many people living in one house, there is a need for better access to get around, and a desire for more sidewalks in certain areas. There needs to be historic preservation and some of the smaller houses people don't want to see torn down that are not being maintained. They may be rented and the people cannot fix the homes because they don't own them, and those of us who support the area are the homeowners who are paying taxes," Butler said.

Resident Deja James lives north on Echo Drive, north of U.S. 380 and east of Wadfield Street, and attended the study workshops to give the city staff feedback on what her neighbor-
hood could look like in the future. She along with other members of group five of the study told senior planning staff Saturday that they were concerned about the amount of traffic along U.S. 380, John Bassett, executive director of the city's Development Services Department, which houses the Planning and Engineering Departments, and Brian James, the deputy director of Development Services, worked with group five on Saturday morning and presented the idea that the area north of U.S. 380 between Graves Street and Church Street could take advantage of the 1950s-style signs featured along the highway and 1950s ranch homes to create its own identified of McKinney 380.

The area could even feature drive-in movies driven on the side of a building, or antique car shows in a vacant parking lot in the area to home in on the 1950s-style architecture and signage in the area's neighborhoods, Kondel said.

That idea was well received by the group for the most part, but Deja James said it was also somewhat trite as she did not want the theme played up too much in the area. Bill Smith's Cafe sign and the Nichols' Laundry mat sign, at the southeast corner of College Street and U.S. 380, were used as examples of the 1950s-style architecture featured in the area.

Kondel mentioned that maybe residents of the area could create a PRIDE group, which stands for promoting residential involvement, development, and enthusiasm.

The PRIDE Program is designed to help maintain and increase the sustainability of McKinney's neighborhoods that do not have homeowner assoca-

Resident Marcie Williams lives in the area east of U.S. 75 and attended all the study workshops, which she felt was a good experience.

"I thought it was good, I really compliment the city in involving the citizens on this. We who live in the areas and work in the downtown area, who are home, and we're letting these people generate ideas to people who know how to conceptualize them," Williams said. "I think it's a compliment to the city and city govern-
ment that they have the foresight to involve the citizens." Brian James said the city could look at improving the landscaping at the intersection of U.S. 380 and Church Street and could work with the Texas Department of Transportation to give the city more of an "aura," or create a sense of identity for the area.

"It's been very successful in Historic District. The home values have gone up in the neigh-

borhood. Now, the homes that were built in the 1950s are historic and we've got to start think-
ing that way, this is a treasure," James said.

Melissa Henderson said the fact the process is over is great and city staff now needs to incorpor-
ate them into the ordinances.

This is the small piece of a much larger process. The next step is to pull it together and report it to council. The next step is the implementation, which is the nitty-gritty part and writing ordinances. They will have to be new ordinances, and we may need to change some exisiting ordinances. Be prepared to stay involved, this is what makes our jobs fun. This is what we have to do," Henderson said.

The city also held workshops with members of the public about the Regional Employment Center in 2008, which includes the north end of SIH 11 and Center Road and was originally mostly zoned for commercial uses, but is now home to the residential development Craig Ranch and McKinney Bauch, Henderson said.

For more information about the city's PRIDE program, call the city's Neighborhood Services Department at 972-547-7600, visit the city's Web site www.mckin

See STUDY, page 3A
McKinney’s Town Center Study is creating a vision for revitalization in a unique center of the city…and they are taking their cue from area business owners and residents.

McKinney’s Town Center, an area generally bound by Redbud Trail, U.S. Hwy. 380, Eldorado Pkwy. and Airport Dr., has been a hub for business, entertainment, transportation, retail and dining in Collin County for nearly 160 years. To ensure the area’s continued growth and development, city leaders have recognized that steps must continuously be taken to promote and encourage business and residential revitalization.

This was noted in the City of McKinney’s 2004 Comprehensive Plan, a document developed using community input and leadership to guide decision making for McKinney’s future growth and development. As an extension of that plan, the city launched the Town Center Study in late 2006.

“The Town Center Study is a planning and design process intended to build on the Comprehensive Plan by promoting and encouraging revitalization of this unique sector of McKinney,” said Kevin Spath, Senior Planner for the City of McKinney. “This area is vital because it contains historic and diverse neighborhoods and commercial districts that form the core of the city.”

Phase 1 of the Town Center Study consisted of a series of urban design workshops, each focusing on a topic of concern within the study area. Topics ranged from compatibility of land uses, enhancement of the downtown area, revitalization of the S.H. 5 (McDonald St.) corridor and the potential for transit-oriented development just east of S.H. 5. Planning consultants from Gateway Planning Group, HNTB Corporation, Mesa Design Group and Civic Design Associates were brought in to facilitate the workshops, build consensus, provide design expertise, create visual exhibits and help City planning staff develop preferred options.
“In August 2006, we decided to kick-off the study with an open house at the McKinney Performing Arts Center,” Spath said. “More than 200 people attended the event and had the opportunity to meet with City planners and members of the consultant team.”

Three workshops were held and each focused on a different piece within the Town Center Study area. The first, held in Nov. 2006, drew 50 participants and focused on the downtown core and the immediate surrounding area. The second took place in March 2007, and the nearly 60 participants focused on the area surrounding an anticipated transit village just east of S.H. 5 and the segment of the S.H. 5 corridor adjacent to Historic Downtown. The third workshop was held in June 2007 with nearly 100 participants in attendance. They concentrated on the U.S. Hwy. 380, S.H. 5 and Tennessee St./Kentucky St. corridors.

Each three-day workshop followed the same basic process. Participants were broken out into small, interactive groups, with each group being facilitated by a different consultant team. Each group discussed and brainstormed ideas for how they would like the area to look and feel in 10 to 20 years. Then, each design team created preliminary drawings that reflected their group’s ideas and concepts, followed by presentations to all workshop participants. The consultants also facilitated a question and answer session while identifying key concepts on which to build a framework for preferred options.

Results from the first two workshops were presented to the McKinney City Council earlier this year. Results from the third workshop will be presented this Fall.

City planning staff is now drafting a Phase 1 Report that comprehensively documents the visioning process for all three workshops and makes recommendations for moving forward with Phase 2—Implementation. The report will be taken to the City Council before the end of the year.

“We are close to presenting some overall recommendations on how to enter Phase 2 and begin turning concepts into reality,” said Spath. “It is very exciting because we are already seeing real-life results from input we gathered. For example, the plan for the downtown square infrastructure project scheduled to begin in January 2008 includes elements suggested during our first workshop.”

Additional information, concepts and illustrations resulting from Phase 1 of the Town Center Study are available at www.mckinneytexas.org.
Appendix B
Image Preference Survey Results

An image preference survey is a planning and public participation tool that uses visual images to help people recognize and understand important physical planning principles and urban design elements. During the Public Open House held on August 29, 2006, public participants were asked to rate the following images on a scale from -5 to +5 (with 0 being neutral) depending on how much they liked or disliked each image. The results of this survey have been recorded in Appendix B. For each image, the average score is shown.
An image preference survey is a planning and public participation tool that uses visual images to help people recognize and understand important physical planning principles and urban design elements.
This survey presents 40 images (containing elements such as buildings, roads, signs, street trees, sidewalks, parking lots, open spaces, parks, etc.) showing contrasting ways of how the physical pattern and placement of these elements have been arranged to create a different sense of place.
During the Open House on August 29th, you were asked to rate each image on a scale from -5 to +5 (with 0 being neutral) depending on how much you liked or disliked each image.
For each of the following images, the average score for each image is shown in a box.
IMAGE 8

-3.45
IMAGE 23

1.33
2.41
IMAGE 35
Following Workshop 1, each design team submitted to City Staff a brief written compilation of the main ideas and concepts generated by their stakeholder group. Appendix C contains these written documents as well as most of the accompanying preliminary illustrations and sketches. Appendix C is intended to supplement the synthesis of the overall shared vision which appears in Section 4 of this report.
The core of downtown McKinney consists of a well preserved traditional Texas courthouse square, framed on four sides by historic buildings of two to three stories in height, with predominantly retail uses at the ground level and, usually, office space above. This traditional pattern breaks down relatively quickly as one moves away from the square. While the street and block pattern is still more or less intact, the later construction is a mix of civic and light industrial uses, with the west side tending towards older homes that have been converted into light commercial use such as professional offices. The newer buildings are less consistent about fronting directly on the sidewalks, and are supported by large expanses of surface parking.

The eastern boundary of the downtown study is defined by State Highway 5, a four lane thoroughfare generally flanked on both sides by strip retail and other highway oriented uses. These older commercial and light industrial uses are fairly prevalent in the northeast quadrant of the study area. The southeast quadrant is dominated by the county courthouse complex, which will soon be vacated and replaced by City offices. Buildings on the west side transition fairly quickly to the scale of individual homes, although many of the homes closest to the courthouse square have been converted into small offices.

The original platting pattern consisted of a regular grid of square blocks, 200 feet on a side. An interesting variation on this pattern is introduced by a system of narrow streets, generally every other street, that function essentially as alleys within the downtown core. The primary streets that define the courthouse square, Louisiana, Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky, are all 60 foot rights-of-way, while the next parallel streets on all sides are only 20 foot rights-of-way. Development on the blocks surrounding the courthouse has reinforced this pattern by concentrating utilities and parking at the center of these larger “superblocks.”

Public Input

The public and local stakeholders seemed to be in agreement on a number of points regarding the future redevelopment of the downtown area. The following is a summary of the urban design and planning concepts generated by Group 1. These concepts resulted from the direct input from our McKinney stakeholders and were reviewed by them during workshop #1.
1. The courthouse square and surrounding historic development is the pride of the community. Future development should continue that general pattern of historically compatible buildings, of three to four stories in height, with an active, commercial ground floor use directly adjacent to the sidewalk.

2. Mixed use buildings are generally desirable in the downtown area. Typically, they should have retail, restaurants, or some other use that contributes to pedestrian activity and provides for a public destination. Upper floors may be office or residential uses. Potential incompatibilities should be handled through performance standards that would address such factors as noise generation, fumes, unattractive storefronts, etc. rather than strict separation.

3. An appropriate transition should be made to the historic neighborhoods to the west that preserves the scale and character of those areas, but allows for a transition to somewhat larger buildings, and conversion of residential to commercial use as one approaches the downtown core.

4. Historic buildings should be preserved, and also serve as the model for future infill. The light industrial and county uses in the eastern portions of the study area should be considered as opportunities for large scale redevelopment.

5. Parking should be adequate and convenient, but generally less visible. Placing it behind the primary buildings, at the interior of blocks, or integrated into structures are all preferable to large, surface parking lots. On-street parking should be continued and expanded where possible.
6. Mitchell Park is somewhat forlorn and needs to be framed and activated by more development along its edges. Commercial uses would be appropriate along the eastern side, while the north and south sides might have more of a townhouse character. The historic residential character needs to be maintained on the west side.

7. Other green spaces should be incorporated within the downtown infill, but not at the scale of an entire block, like Mitchell Park. Small pocket parks should be incorporated along the main streets, while the streets themselves should be lined with additional trees.

Redevelopment Framework
The redevelopment concepts and diagrams developed during the design workshop attempt to address the objectives defined by the public. An overall plan diagram of the eventual development potential is attached on the following page.

It is important to understand that this plan is a conceptual diagram only. It has not been extensively researched as to which existing buildings should be preserved, nor does it imply that each redevelopment parcel should be developed exactly as shown. It does, however, make several general points about the preferred framework for future development, as discussed below.

First, one can get a general idea of the amount of infill that can potentially be accommodated here. In the plan, existing buildings to remain are shown in dark gray, while new buildings are shown in the reddish-brown color. The amount of new building that can be accommodated is considerable, particularly in the northeast and northwest sections of the study area. Assuming an average of three stories in height, the total area represented by the new building footprints totals about 2 million square feet. The ground floor space should be predominantly commercial, particularly on the major streets, while the upper stories may contain office and residential uses.

Second, one can get a sense of the disposition of parking in the downtown. As discussed previously, the narrow street/superblock pattern currently in place allows for a natural location for parking to be concentrated in the middle of the larger blocks, with new development shown directly abutting the sidewalk along the edges of the blocks. This
allows for an ample supply of parking to be located in a convenient, yet discrete location generally out of the immediate public view. This parking may be surface or structured, although most of it would have to be structured in order to support the amount of development shown in the ultimate build-out scenario.

Third, this plan shows a commitment to the street environment as the primary open space component of a dense and vibrant downtown. While the streets need to be maintained for vehicular traffic, additional efforts can be made to calm traffic flow and enhance the pedestrian environment. Lanes can be narrowed slightly, and additional “bulb out” areas can be provided at corners to reduce crosswalk distances and to provide opportunities to introduce additional landscaping. Along the primary commercial streets, sidewalks should be widened wherever possible.
Schematic Plan of the Proposed Downtown Redevelopment

APPENDIX C
An opportunity for the immediate application of these principles exists in the proposed infrastructure work around the courthouse. The existing traffic lanes can be narrowed to 11 feet, and the traffic deflected further toward the center of the square so that the sidewalk against the buildings fronting on the square can be widened by about 5 feet. This widening would provide for a passive zone between the main circulating portion of the sidewalk and the curb that could accommodate evenly spaced tree wells for smaller scale trees as well as a place for cafè tables, light poles, benches, etc., leaving a full 10 feet of width clear at the building face for pedestrian circulation. It appears that this modification could be readily accommodated along Kentucky and Tennessee Streets, possibly as an amendment to the currently planned improvements.

While the improved pedestrian streets will act as the “glue” of the open space system, it is also important to have occasional relief in the form of a small park or plaza. Currently, only two actual city parks are located within the downtown area, at Mitchell Park and Central Park, suggesting that the eastern portions of the study area are lacking in open space. Additional space should be defined in certain locations; the plan diagram suggests that such opportunities might present themselves across from the old post office/museum, the existing open space in front of the library, and at the Highway 5 frontage between Louisiana and Virginia Streets. They do not have to be large areas; but they should all have the characteristics of being located on a primary street, being defined by buildings with an active, pedestrian accessible frontage, and being designed with a functional combination of usable hardscape and green space.

The new development concentrates on defining the street edges of the primary streets, not only the ones defining the courthouse square, but also the next major streets in the grid, namely Church, Chestnut, Davis, and Hunt Streets. These streets should have buildings generally limited to three stories in height, fronting directly on the sidewalk, and should have a permeable, active use on the ground floor, preferably commercial within the downtown core area. The intermediate “alley” streets, namely Wood, Johnson, Cloyd,
and Herndon, should be maintained, although they would serve primarily as access to the parking areas at the interior of the superblocks.

Beyond the downtown core, the existing development on the west side transitions fairly quickly to a stable, single-family detached residential neighborhood with many historic homes. The character and scale of these residential areas needs to be maintained, but there should be a transition from that type of character to the hard-edged commercially oriented development in downtown. This transitional area could contain a variety of uses ranging from attached townhomes to historic homes that have been converted to professional offices. Some light, neighborhood oriented service uses may also be appropriate, as long as the overall scale of development remains compatible with the adjacent neighborhood. On the plan, this transitional area is indicated by the pair of heavy dashed red lines that define a zone of approximately one block in width. Again, the location of this zone is approximate and diagrammatic, and should not be interpreted as an absolute determination.

The entire study area fits neatly within a quarter-mile radius of the courthouse, as shown by the light blue dashed circle. This is a fairly traditional neighborhood planning module, representing a five-minute walk from center to edge. Thus, the downtown should be seen as a traditional, mixed-use neighborhood that has the courthouse square as its focal point.

**Implementation Considerations**

The redevelopment scenario outlined here attempts to build on the strengths of the historic fabric, as seen in the area immediately surrounding the courthouse and the historic neighborhoods to the west. The primary concerns in implementing this vision are to define the appropriate compatible infill typologies, provide for a smooth and natural transition between the neighborhood and the downtown scale, to maintain the integrity of the street grid, particularly as a pedestrian system, and to provide for adequate, contemporary parking accommodations.

Private development can be guided through a form-based zoning regulation that would cover the study area as well as the transition zone. In addition, the City and County already own and control significant property in the downtown areas, and may be in a position to define certain catalyst developments through a development RFP process that would stipulate certain objectives. Additionally, they may reserve certain parcels for open space use.

Parking is likely to be a significant obstacle to redevelopment in the future. Land values are rapidly approaching the threshold where structured parking becomes an economically viable alternative. Unfortunately, structured parking, by its nature, requires a certain minimum size and scale that is poorly suited to small scale infill redevelopment. The solution is to disassociate development with a minimum parking requirement, and to have the parking consolidated and managed as an area-wide consideration. The overlay regulations should zone the properties within the downtown core as a building edge along the primary streets, with the interior/alley frontages reserved for parking use. The actual building of parking facilities may be done by a parking authority or a developer who can
assemble sufficient property. Smaller properties may opt out of providing parking by paying an in-lieu fee into a fund dedicated to the provision and maintenance of parking facilities.

The McKinney downtown is poised to capitalize on a unique opportunity to expand a historic, human scaled environment that is all too rare in contemporary times yet is highly valued by the public. Such an opportunity can not be left to chance, however; it requires a coordinated balance between private development forces and context sensitive public policies working toward a shared and commonly understood vision.
The following is a summary of the urban design and planning concepts generated by Group 2. These concepts resulted from the direct input from our McKinney stakeholders and were reviewed by them during workshop #1.

1. **Adaptive mixed-use village for Collin County complex quadrant (relocated city hall, new retail, residential and structured parking / connected to existing street grid)**

   As a large significant land use and employer near downtown, the reuse of the Collin County quadrant is important to the success of downtown McKinney. Redevelopment and integration into the core of downtown is critical for this multi block area. The original connection to downtown was lost as streets were closed and surface parking lots separated the complex. This is a long-term need which can begin in a phased approach. The initial phase is for the City of McKinney to take ownership of the site and move City Hall functions and other related services to the supporting buildings. The attached image shows the new land uses shown in the Sector Plan produced by Group 2. This site needs to transform into a mixed use environment. The new development includes residential condominiums and/or townhouses and three-story mixed use structures with ground floor retail or office. A new adjacent parking garage services the shops and businesses of downtown. This new development pattern needs to be connected with the city through an extension of the existing street grid. The new buildings need to front the street similar to nearby existing urban structures and reconnect this area to downtown. A new downtown public park is also included in this proposed revitalization scenario.

2. **New contemporary mixed-use (retail, residential, entertainment & structured parking) village located on Highway 5 that reflects the urban design and character of downtown McKinney**

   Our team felt that a new commercial development pattern needs to be included near downtown to offer variety and a new alternative floor plan option for today’s retail patterns. To effectively re-use existing buildings in interesting ways, this new commercial development needs to be included as renovated existing space. This description defines a new pattern of commercial development offering larger footprints. This needs to be sited away from the downtown core and on State Highway 5 for access.

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This development is a mixed-use facility that covers approximately four blocks. The development includes theatre (film) entertainment, live stage performance theatre, retail, urban residential and parking. This development must have a matching scale (height and mass) to surrounding development. The exterior of the development should be compatible in scale to the pattern of window and door treatment of the downtown core.

3. Strategically located public parking garages with ground floor commercial and punched window facades to blend into historic fabric of downtown McKinneyThe concept plan identifies two (2) locations for parking garages that are integrated with attached new developments. These garages will serve the new development along with supporting current commercial needs in the downtown area. The greater density of current and future development defines the location for these garages between State Highway 5 and North Tennessee Street. Potential specific locations for these facilities include one within the current Collin County quadrant and the other attached to the contemporary mixed-use entertainment development located on State Highway 5. The facades that have street frontage will need to be brick and have punched openings giving the feeling of windows. This will aide in making the garages background buildings and will blend in to fabric of downtown McKinney.
4. A transition zone between downtown and adjacent residential neighborhoods

The transition zone should be a minimum of one block wide and include uses on both sides of the street. These uses should be compatible in height, mass and land use. This area allows for a transition of land uses to occur from the residential adjacent neighborhoods to the mixed-use commercial uses near the core of downtown. Land uses and building style, character, and scale within the transition zone should be compatible with use in each district providing a subtle buffer between zones.

5. Townhouse development two- to three-story maximum with parking and lifestyle amenities enclosed in center of blocks

Two areas were identified in downtown McKinney for extensive townhouse development to increase residential density and diversity in downtown McKinney. This concept will bring a use to the downtown area not currently available. One location was on the north side of downtown surrounding the library along Tennessee and Kentucky Streets. The second area was part of the redevelopment of the Collin County quadrant along Davis Street and fronting along a portion of Tennessee Street. In both of these locations the townhouse developments would serve as residential transitions between McKinney’s historic residential neighborhoods and the downtown McKinney’s commercial areas. Townhouse heights would be sensitive to adjacent urban single family and historic residential housing heights having a maximum height of three-stories. Townhouse development would also be compatible with new mixed use developments identified on the northeast quadrant of downtown and the redevelopment of the Collin County complex.

Townhouses would face the street and would include an interior courtyard incorporating parking and lifestyle amenities (such as a townhouse block association private swimming pool, clubhouse, exercise center, etc.). Streetscape treatments beside townhouse developments would include street trees, benches, and enhanced lighting fixtures. Townhouse setbacks would either be flush with the sidewalk or have a minimal setback of two-to three-feet to provide limited greening of the sidewalk.

6. Create a hierarchy of streetscape improvements that will define primary, secondary and other levels of pedestrian amenity streets

Improving the appearances of streets that define downtown should be considered to enhance the pedestrian experience and to create continuity in form and scale. The major streets that have always define downtown McKinney – east-west Louisiana and Virginia Streets and north-south Tennessee and Kentucky Streets – should be considered for primary pedestrian amenity enhancements. In addition, McDonald Street should also fall into this primary group. McDonald Street serves as the main highway leading to the downtown area, and this roadway will take on greater importance with a potential transit
station anticipated to be located on the east side. Urban design streetscape improvements, such as pedestrian crosswalks, outdoor pedestrian furniture, and enhanced lighting, should be focused around the old courthouse square and at major intersections along McDonald Street. Secondary streets, such as Davis, Walker, and Anthony Streets, would be included in a secondary level of pedestrian improvements, limited to street trees and crosswalk improvements at major intersections. These streetscape improvements are geared to making the pedestrian experience in downtown McKinney enjoyable, safe, and aesthetically pleasing.

7. Public parks as needed for downtown citizens

This plan includes two (2) primary downtown parks to serve as open space amenities for the residents of the proposed townhouse development and the enjoyment by downtown McKinney shoppers. One of the parks is located in the redevelopment for the Collin County quadrant. The other park is sited at the southeast corner of Hunt and Johnson Streets in the vicinity of new mixed use and townhouse development. Both parks are located within a one- to two-block walking distance of the old courthouse square. Each park is placed in areas where surrounding properties lack significant improvements. These properties could be developed for a higher and more compatible use, such as mixed use, townhouse, and infill urban retail that work best fronting a public park. In creating an interesting, walkable downtown McKinney these new public parks would serve as ‘green points of reference’ in the downtown street grid system.

8. Infill development for downtown structures

Starting at the periphery of the blocks adjacent to the old courthouse square and spreading outward there are pockets of land that remain empty, their buildings and improvements long-gone. As the downtown area takes on greater emphasis due to interest in the historic areas, the possible transit station, and redevelopment opportunities, this patchwork of vacant parcels takes on added value. These vacant parcels become candidates for infill development, either for commercial structures or for residential living. Closer to the commercial center this can be in the form of mixed use structures, urban retail, urban office, and a live/work storefront compatible with a residential setting. Closer to the historic residential neighborhoods infill development can take the form of urban single family detached housing, townhouses, duplexes, granny flats, and corner mixed use buildings. While some of these vacant parcels will remain desirable for surface parking, design controls should be considered to heighten the aesthetic qualities of the parking locations that would be compatible for an active living, shopping, and working downtown area.

9. Mixed use two- and three-story developments

Mixed use development is concentrated on the east side of downtown along McDonald Street on either side of Louisiana and Virginia Streets. There is also a limited amount of mixed use development proposed as part of the redevelopment of the Collin County complex and on the periphery of the entertainment and retail near State Highway 5. Most of the mixed use development would be part of the new contemporary mixed-use village described above (item #2). These mixed use developments would serve as a transition between residential and commercial developments. The mixed use type of developments

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would provide a product type not currently available in downtown McKinney, but having
a greater need with continued urbanization and a walking proximity to a potential transit
station.

10. Downtown wayfinding / signage system

Downtown McKinney currently has a limited wayfinding and signage system to direct
out-of-town shoppers and promote local destinations. As the downtown area grows and
further development takes place there will be a greater need to institute a consistent,
attractive signage program throughout the downtown area that is simple to use and
understand. Wayfinding adds an interesting, and sometimes offbeat, means to
communicate activities in an area, such as downtown McKinney. By words, symbols,
graphic arts, and/or images, a successful wayfinding system for downtown McKinney
can incorporate signs, maps, light fixtures and banners, and branding to help direct and
inform people while they explore the downtown area. An opportunity also exists to
extend the signage system down primary routes to and from the downtown area.
The following is a summary of the urban design and planning concepts generated by Group 3. These concepts resulted from the direct input from our McKinney stakeholders and were reviewed by them during workshop #1.

1. **Preserve the blocks around the old courthouse square**
   For many people, McKinney’s old courthouse square helps to represent the values of residents and defines the essence of the Town’s charm and character. Though decades have passed and ownership and uses of the locally-owned shops have changed, this character has remained strong through building preservation and improvements that have maintained the old world scale and design form consistent with the turn-of-the-century town square. Recent pedestrian improvements, for example, have enhanced the square’s character through the use of appropriate pavement materials, street furnishings, and detailing, and by creating outdoor spaces for people to meet and greet each other. Preserving the square is important to local residents in keeping the qualities and the character people have come to appreciate about McKinney.

   When considering additional future improvements on the square, McKinney residents who served as team members of Group #3 emphasized the importance of preserving architectural style, building scale, appropriate building materials, and existing facades whenever possible to keep the character of the square strong. Restoration of existing buildings and preservation of facades were emphasized as being critical to the Group #3. Though adaptive re-use was considered a possibility, it was desired that improvements to the old courthouse square appear subtle. New development that does not support and enhance the historic flavor of the square is frowned upon. Also desired was a broader mix of ground floor retail types that would offer a variety of establishments and attractions beyond the many antique shops currently on the square. Loft-office and/or residential space also were considered attractive to Group #3 residents. Restaurant uses also were desired, but entertainment venues with loud music spilling outdoors were not attractive due to the square’s proximity to the historical residential areas.

2. **Four gateway parks**
   It was recognized that there are four major streets used to enter into downtown and that define the old courthouse square: Kentucky, Tennessee, Louisiana, and Virginia Streets. These roadways are considered the primary entryways into downtown; however, these entryways, with the exception of Mitchell Park west of the square,
lack any formal or defining element that establishes a gateway or sense of arrival into downtown McKinney. Residents participating in Group #3 wanted to expand upon the Mitchell Park idea of using outdoor space / parks to create focal points that would serve as these “gateways” into McKinney’s downtown area. In addition, these Gateway Parks would provide additional new development opportunities facing each park space. Four Gateway Parks were proposed at the following locations:

1) West side gateway park (existing Mitchell Park) bounded by Benge, Virginia, Church, and Louisiana Streets,
2) North side gateway park bounded by Kentucky, Walker, Tennessee, and Lamar Streets,
3) East side gateway park bounded on the north by Virginia Street, on the south by Louisiana Street, on the east by the Dallas Area Rapid Transit railroad tracks, and a mid-block split between McDonald and Chestnut Streets, and
4) South side gateway park bounded on three sides by Kentucky, Davis, and Tennessee Streets.

The Westside Gateway Park, Mitchell Park, recently built on the west side of downtown McKinney, was noted as the first of these outdoor spaces. Because this park is located on the edge of a historic residential neighborhood and the downtown area, development around the park should enhance this transition, or buffer, with compatible uses and building style and scale. Proposed park perimeter development includes single-story urban retail along Virginia and Louisiana Streets to Benge Street because these streets are more identified with and serve the residential neighborhood to the west. To the east, a mix of urban retail and two-story mixed-use along Church Street was desired, because Church Street defines the perceived border into the downtown commercial zone. Group #3 proposed two-story mixed use fronting the park along Church Street between Virginia and Louisiana Streets to provide a strong view of the park and to place more activity and vibrancy of use adjacent to the park. All buildings should face the public street surrounding the park.

The proposed Northside Gateway Park would serve as another transition and green buffer between historic residential neighborhoods and the downtown edge. This north area is currently defined by scattered single-family detached houses, high rental use, nearby commercial/light industrial uses, and a patchwork of vacant lots. Because the residential density is lower in this area, and a pattern of mixed-use is already in place, an opportunity exists to increase density and additional mixed-use at this park. The transition at this location would be in the form of two- to three-story urban single-family residential housing to the north of the park, with two-story townhouses bordering the park on the west, north, and northeast sides. On the south and southeast sides closer to the downtown area, development fronting the park would transition into mixed use structures. The area on the south of the park and adjacent to the existing library could become mixed-use, or perhaps maintained as open space or parking in order to hold open the opportunity for a library expansion in the future. This expansion of the library would place a civil use next to the park. This Gateway Park area also would serve as a northside edge to a proposed Northeast Village.

On the east side of downtown, an Eastside Gateway Park was proposed that would function as a major entryway into downtown from McDonald Street and a potential
rail transit station. This was proposed as a larger park than the other three park spaces to provide a venue for large outdoor events and to take advantage of strong access from the potential rail station. Such a park would provide a setting for holding larger public gatherings, including outdoor concerts and festivals. The park would cross McDonald Street furthering the ‘green front lawn’ entry into downtown and serving as a focal point to downtown and the potential transit village. West of McDonald Street, development along Virginia and Louisiana Streets would include existing notable historic structures, as well as new, compatible construction for mixed use, urban retail, and spill-over entertainment from the Chestnut Street entertainment row. Uses east of McDonald Street were not defined, being left for future town sector discussions focusing on McDonald Street and the potential transit village.

A proposed Southside Gateway Park would be the smallest of the four parks spaces proposed. The proposed park entry would front along Davis Street between Kentucky and Tennessee Streets. Like the first two gateway parks noted above, this park would provide a transition between the historic residential areas to the south and the downtown commercial development to the north. Two-story urban single family housing would border this proposed park on the south and southwest sides where traditional residential fabric exists. Two-story townhouse and mixed use development would transition on the northwest side, as one approaches the more retail-identified downtown. Existing development patterns on the northeast side should front onto the park space. Directly east, a proposed two- to three-story parking garage with ground floor retail would replace the surface parking lot currently serving the County Courthouse complex. For development surrounding the proposed park, all ground floor space should front onto the park space.
3. **Downtown trolley connector**

As downtown McKinney’s development patterns grow and take shape, alternative choices of movement should be available to provide circulation options, to increase comfort, convenience, and accessibility; to provide efficient, functional connections between proposed uses; and to more efficiently use existing infrastructure. While walking is always an option, another alternative for those frequenting downtown McKinney could be a bus trolley connector. A trolley connector not only would add to the historic character of downtown McKinney, it also would transport riders to key destinations around the downtown area directly from the potential rail station. Group 3 identified several locations appropriate for such a trolley, including the following:

- Potential transit station *(suggested starting point)*
- Chestnut Street entertainment row
- Northeast Village/parking garage at Hunt and Chestnut Streets
- McKinney Memorial Library
- Old courthouse square
- Southeast Village/parking garage at Davis and Chestnut Streets
- Chestnut Street entertainment row
- Potential transit station *(end)*

The group team members emphasized the importance of a looped circulation pattern for the trolley concept to ensure riders will return back to their place of origination. The system would link pick-up and drop-off locations at notable locations, and possibly provide a local means of transportation that connects to a regional system.

4. **Chestnut Street Entertainment Row near McDonald Street Park**

An entertainment use was seen as an important mix in downtown McKinney’s future to increase business diversity and options; however, it was not desirable near the historic residential neighborhoods to the north, west, and south. A location closer to McDonald Street but within walking distance of the old courthouse square was considered desirable. Chestnut Street was a logical location due to its walking distance proximity to both McDonald Street and the old courthouse square. This north-south road would also serve as an interesting pedestrian link between the proposed Northeast Village and Southeast Village.

The Chestnut Street Entertainment Row could provide settings for live and recorded entertainment and could even be a potential site for expanded performing arts venues. The entertainment row would also serve as a site for restaurants and clubs offering outdoor entertainment. Noise from these establishments would be absorbed by the downtown commercial area buildings and traffic along McDonald Street. While entertainment uses would be clustered and concentrated around Virginia and Louisiana Streets, some establishments may develop along adjacent side streets and front the east side park entry. Near Chestnut and Hunt Streets on the north and Chestnut and Davis Streets on the south, uses would transition from entertainment to mixed use and urban retail. Two large parking garages are proposed at these intersections. A trolley connector would circulate through this area.

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5. Public parking structures

Two large parking garages are proposed in the downtown area in walking proximity to the old courthouse square. These parking garages would serve downtown workers, shoppers, and users of downtown establishments and institutions. These parking structures would not be used by commuters using a potential transit station to the east. Due to their one-block proximity to State Highway 5 (McDonald Street), access to these parking garages should be encouraged from McDonald Street. Ground floor retail and offices facing the streets/sidewalks should dominate at least 80% these structures facades. These structures should have sufficient setbacks from the streets to encourage minor outdoor activities, such as outdoor seating uses, displays, and space for outdoor retail to show their wares. The height of these parking structures needs to be sensitive to the surrounding buildings within a two-block distance, and should be no higher than three-stories in height above ground. In the Southeast Village (see below), the parking structure should stair-step back from Tennessee Street to be compatible with the existing one- to two-story residential rooftops. These structures can also provide underground parking if feasible.
6. Northeast Village

The Northeast Village includes those properties fronting Hunt, Tennessee, Lamar, and McDonald Streets northeast of the old courthouse square. This area would be a higher-density mixed use and urban retail section for downtown McKinney. It would feature ground floor retail and office uses, with office and residential uses above. The ground floor space would offer floor spaces currently unavailable in the older building structures around the old courthouse square; thereby providing greater opportunities for alternative retailers, as well as greater choices for McKinney residents and downtown users. Group #3 team members also proposed that parking for these structures should be behind the buildings, either being surface parking or structure parking, in order to allow storefronts to be placed adjacent to wide sidewalks to better define the street character.

Maximum building heights would range from two- to three-stories in height with two-story structures being adjacent to transitional townhouse units. These townhouses would then transition to two-story urban single family housing. Along Hunt Street, between Tennessee and Chestnut Streets, is a proposed parking garage. The structure would be two- to three-stories in height above ground and would incorporate ground floor retail and services, with adequate setback from the street to allow for outdoor activities along the sidewalk.

7. Southeast Village

Group #3 team members proposed the concept of a Southeast Village which would be the result of a redevelopment of the Collin County Courthouse complex into a more intimate future McKinney City Hall Village Square with a south side residential expansion. The Collin County Courthouse complex extends from Davis Street on the north to Anthony Street on the south and from Tennessee Street on the west to McDonald Street on the east. On the southeast corner a small quadrant known as Chestnut Square would remain single family residential.

As proposed, the main six- to seven-story building and an adjacent structure to the north would remain as a government facilities with adjacent surface parking. Along the north side of Anthony Street and the east side of Tennessee Street, two- and three-story townhouses have been proposed to serve as a residential wall-buffer between the existing urban single family structures on the south and west side of these streets.
and the remaining government complex. Along Davis Street between Tennessee and Chestnut Streets is a proposed parking garage. The structure would be two- to three-stories in height above ground and would stair-step back from Tennessee Street to provide a roof height along the street compatible to nearby residential uses. The structure would incorporate ground floor retail and services and would have a sufficient setback from the street to allow for outdoor activities. The parking garage would provide parking for users of the future city hall as well as patrons of downtown businesses. The remaining three corners of Davis and Chestnut Streets would include mixed use and urban retail activities to better blend with the character of the commercial district to the north and east.

In addition, extending the nearby downtown street grid pattern through the government complex would make the future city hall development less imposing and more accessible. This would include extending Chestnut Street south of Davis Street to Anthony Street and extending Henry Street eastward from Kentucky Street to McDonald Street.

8. Transition zones

As noted above in discussions related to the four gateway parks, Northeast Village, and Southeast Village, land use conflicts exist between McKinney’s historic residential neighborhoods and downtown commercial areas. Like in many communities across the country, these areas often become “grey zones” of distressed, underutilized areas of vacant lots, obsolete and abandon structures, or the last remains of what once was. While this presents some challenges for security, aesthetics, and appropriate land use, opportunities can be realized through creative land use plans that encourage reinvestment and redevelopment to recapture greater potentials these properties can offer. Such “grey zones” often are irregular, can vary in size and can be scattered throughout an urban fabric, requiring flexible solutions that address the issues and dynamics of the area immediately around these zones. These transition zones can be turned into productive places within the community through a graduated method of compatible land uses. A suggested transition between McKinney’s historic residential neighborhoods and the downtown commercial area can be as follows:

- **Historic residential neighborhood**
  - Urban single family detached
  - Townhouse or Quadplex
  - Mixed use with residential above
  - Urban retail
  - Mixed use
  - Mix of commercial

- **Downtown commercial area**
The following is a summary of the urban design and planning concepts generated by Group 4. These concepts resulted from the direct input from our McKinney stakeholders and were reviewed by them during workshop #1.

On the first evening of the workshop, Thursday night, the stakeholders representing Group 4 appeared cohesive in their support to accommodate growth in the context of the culture and history of downtown. Group 4 spent a significant amount of its time discussing the nature of the growth that could be accommodated into downtown. Without objection, the stakeholders believed that growth, both in terms of residences and businesses, was required to continue the success of downtown.

The discussion of growth tracked the eventual connection and benefits of the DART rail transit opportunity to the east of downtown across Highway 5. In broader terms, the stakeholders consistently linked transportation challenges and opportunities to the character, scale, location and nature of existing and new uses. Accordingly, the stakeholders of Group 4 underscored many of the same themes promoted by the other groups, but they focused in particular on access, movement, mobility and connections.

Connections across the courthouse square over to the future DART station location to the east and improved entry corridors from Central Expressway to the west were viewed as more than just aesthetic considerations. In parallel to this focus was a request to analyze the “alleys” and areas that have provided aggregated opportunities for parking such as at the intersection of Johnson Street and Cloyd Street. These observations by the group provided the Group 4 design team insight about the fine-grained opportunities for improving the walking network of downtown through a refined hierarchy of streets including the alleys.

This hierarchy analysis led to the group discussing the location and character of uses. All agreed that the integrity of uses generally west of Mitchell Park should remain status quo but that uses east and generally along Highway 5 should be encouraged to evolve through aggressive redevelopment.
There was broad agreement that northeast of the square uses such as loft living and destination non-residential uses should be encouraged. However, the group did not have a coherent sense of how far north redevelopment should occur. There was some concern about disturbing the single family homes north of Lamar Street, but almost everyone agreed that the area south of Walker Street and east of the current city complex should be aggressively redeveloped.

We asked to what scale and height would be acceptable, and a group consensus emerged at four to five stories in height and buildings that are built to the property line with internalized and on-street parking.

Regarding parking, the group believed that the implementation of master parking strategy would ultimately requires parking garages, but that those garages should be carefully located to enhance land uses and not simply provide more parking. The northeast quadrant was a consensus location for a parking structure. This conclusion was driven by the notion that the structure could be utilized for immediate new uses in the redevelopment area, but also it could be used as overflow for activities closer to the square as the distance to the square from the garage would only be 3 blocks.

In terms of uses, the group supported not only intense multifamily (lofts, etc.) in the northeast quadrant redevelopment area but also transition housing such as town homes and live work units on the west side of downtown, especially the southwest quadrant. The group believed that such uses would be desirable from a market perspective but also helpful as a transition use into the single family neighborhoods to the west. In addition, the group wanted more activity type uses such as a farmer’s market. This discussion spawned support for additional pocket parks and other public spaces. The group believed that public spaces created the desired ambiance and character desired for downtown. The group encouraged the city to look at improving the nature of the streets themselves as public spaces, believing the walking experience was the defining element for the success of downtown.

**Design Strategy**

On Friday, the design team turned to building on the input from the stakeholder discussion the day before and the team’s own analysis building up to the workshop. The Group 4 design team focused on several key assumptions:

1. **Several sub-districts – redevelopment block clusters**

   The design team recognized four emerging quadrants for redevelopment: (a) the N.E. Quadrant, (b) the S.E. Quadrant, (c) the Square, and (d) the Transit Corridor, linking the future transit station across Highway 5.

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1 This point in turn brought the focus of the discussion back full circle to transportation, prompting support for the eventual implementation of a transit shuttle system to connect uses within downtown and to other points within the City.
a. The N.E. Quadrant’s adjacency to Highway 5 provides substantial opportunities for destination uses such as national-credit-tenant retail and more entertainment such as a cinema as proposed by Group 2.

b. The S.E. Quadrant will be anchored by the new city complex and provides an opportunity for additional offices in transitional mixed use housing types such as loft units above non-residential and non-residential uses in transition live-work “brownstone” style buildings.

c. Improvements to the Square should be focused on the pedestrian experience.

d. A transit corridor via linkages through the Virginia/Louisiana Corridor will be critical to the overall success of a transit strategy. Utilization of a linear park and public amenity on the east side of Highway 5 will be used to anchor the linkage. On the west side of Highway 5 on the south side of Louisiana between Chestnut and Highway 5, a wonderful opportunity exists to improve the space covered by the car port as a covered café or “beer garden” environment. Encouraging the building associated with that space and the space to become an active restaurant/club use will create momentum for vibrant activity along the corridor between the square and future transit station.

2. More parks and public spaces
The Group 4 design team believes that additional public spaces should be facilitated through small parks no larger than a quarter of a block in size. The challenge of Mitchell Park in terms of its lack of framing underscores the better opportunity via smaller parks
and more quaint public spaces. In other words, new full block parks are neither needed nor desirable from an urban design standpoint if substantial smaller spaces are developed and improved.

3. **Concentric walkability analysis around old Courthouse and DART station** indicates that a NE quadrant lofts district development site (9 sq. blocks) is a key integrated development, including a parking structure covering 2 small blocks; similar future demands of the new municipal complex justifies a structured parking facility in the S.E. Quadrant.

The design team concluded that the aggregation of new growth in the N.E. and S.E quadrants warranted parking structures, but that sufficient on-street parking, improved surface parking management and eventual transit will suffice in terms of parking in the N.W. and S.W. quadrants.

4. **Street hierarchy for linkages between NE and SE quadrants and Hwy 5 transit linkages**

Street improvements should be based on their respective and relative importance to the new plan. For example, Chestnut will become a critical pedestrian linkage from the N.E. Quadrant redevelopment area down to both the square and over to the future rail transit station on the other side of Highway 5. Accordingly, that street, now considered a “B” street, should be elevated to “A” status in terms of streetscape improvements and how new buildings and uses address the street (urban v. suburban, e.g., parking in rear, not in front of buildings, etc.).

**Miscellaneous Implementation Considerations**

The CHD should be expanded, or a hybrid needs to be developed between the CHD area and Lamar Street to the north, the transition zone to the west, Anthony Street to the South and somewhere east of Highway 5. This will enable parking regulations to match the parking strategy of the plan.

In order to improve Mitchell Park, buildings should be developed directly east on Church Street. This will create a slight parking deficit, both in terms of lost existing parking in that location but also as the buildings in that new development should be granted reduced parking waivers if not currently covered in the CHD. The parking overall can be managed by attempting to maintain some existing parking at the center of that block as well as select shared parking further south down Church and Wood Streets.

Building height and scale should be viewed in terms of the character of the development as it radiates out from the square and differentiated as redevelopment occurs near the Highway 5 corridor versus the transition zone on the west side of downtown. Two to three stories should be allowed in the immediate area of the Square and the transition areas west towards the adjacent neighborhoods, while four to six stories should be considered in the redevelopment areas along Highway 5 (especially in the N.E. Quadrant).
Overall Schematic Illustration
Appendix D
Illustrations and Concepts
Workshop 2

Following Workshop 2, each design team submitted to City Staff a brief written compilation of the main ideas and concepts generated by their stakeholder group. Appendix D contains these written documents as well as most of the accompanying preliminary illustrations and sketches. Appendix D is intended to supplement the synthesis of the overall shared vision which appears in Section 4 of this report.
Preliminary Illustrations and Concepts from Workshop No. 2  
Group 1  
Facilitated by: Civic Design Associates

State Highway 5, also called McDonald Street, is a busy 4 lane highway that runs approximately north south, passing a few blocks east of the downtown and the courthouse square. It runs more or less parallel to the railroad line, which is in most places about one block to the east of the highway. Before the advent of Highway 75, McDonald was the main highway into McKinney. Many of the town’s original industrial and agricultural uses were located in close proximity to the highway and railroad; today, it is still a concentration of commercial uses, many of them less attractive car related uses such as car repair businesses and gas stations.

There are several older neighborhoods of modest homes located east of the railroad tracks. These have seen relatively little new development in recent years. Demographically, the area has a larger proportion of ethnic groups than the rest of McKinney, with a household income that is less than the city median. There is a large regional park, Old Settlers Park, located in the approximate center of the study area that features a number of recreational facilities. There is also a large industrial site just north of the park that houses a cotton compress business. The site is considered historic, although only a few vestiges of the original brick structures remain, as well as an old water tower.

The contiguous extent of Old Settler’s Park and the cotton compress, the railroad, as well as several creeks, interrupt the fairly regular grid of streets that is typical of the areas west of Highway 5. Additionally, concern for cut-through traffic has resulted in only a few of the east-west streets connecting to Airport Drive, planned as the next major north south corridor in McKinney.

The railroad, while seldom used today, is scheduled to accommodate a future expansion of the Dallas light rail transit system. A proposed transit stop in the vicinity of Louisiana and Virginia Streets is expected to act as a focal point for denser, mixed-use redevelopment around the station area.

Public Input
The public and local stakeholders had a number of perceptive observations and ideas for the potential redevelopment of the area, but they seemed to gravitate around two main points:

1. The Highway 5 corridor needs a fairly substantial makeover. Many of the buildings lining it are unattractive, and the highway itself is a busy, fast road that inhibits crossing and tends to separate the areas on either side.
2. The character of the existing east side neighborhoods needs to be respected and maintained. While they need basic infrastructure improvements and the gradual improvement of the housing stock, there was concern for gentrification and the potential that the existing residents would be priced out of the area.

While there was general agreement that the area had been neglected and needs improvement, there was an overall positive assessment of the area’s potential. The transit station should bring a much needed economic boost to the area. The large site of the cotton compress is an opportunity to bring a large institutional/cultural use into the area, such as a university campus. Old Settler’s Park and the historic buildings in and near the flour mill are seen as assets. The area is very close to the historic downtown and would benefit greatly if better east-west connections could be achieved. Besides the park, the creeks provide a large amount of natural green space.

**Redevelopment Concepts**

The redevelopment concepts and diagrams developed during the design workshop attempt to address the objectives defined by the public. It is important to understand that this plan is a conceptual diagram only. It has not been extensively researched as to which existing buildings should be preserved, nor does it imply that each redevelopment parcel should be developed exactly as shown. It does, however, make several general points about the preferred framework for future development, as discussed below.

Several of the main themes expressed by the public can be realized by concentrating on the area between Virginia and Louisiana Streets, just east of Highway 5. There are about four blocks of relatively lightly developed land, which includes the flour mill, located between the highway and Old Settler’s Park. A strong link should be established between the park and the courthouse square. The proposal is to redevelop these blocks as a large, linear urban plaza, more hardscape in character than the park, more like a Latin American plaza. In addition to acknowledging the ethnic character of the neighborhood,
this plaza, intermittently populated by the remaining historic one-story buildings, could accommodate a lively mix of activities, including an open air “mercado.” The buildings could be rehabilitated as retail, and a grocery store, needed in the area, would make a good complement to the other uses. This largely open, low scale plaza would provide a clear view of the flour mill, which could be adapted to residential use.

The north side of the mercado is proposed as the site of the transit stop, flanked by fairly intensive development that would add a number of residential units to the area. The ground floor, particularly that frontage facing the mercado, could accommodate a wide range of retail and restaurant/café uses, located along a generous sidewalk of around thirty feet in depth. Residential would be located above, and the entire complex could rise to around five or six stories in height. The transit stop itself would be sheltered by a dramatic train shed that would be clearly visible from the plaza area.

The development around the station area suggests that a strong connection is needed across Highway 5 to the downtown area. While the highway is expected to remain busy (currently accommodating about 30,000 cars per day), any future improvements within the right-of-way should focus on calming traffic and promoting pedestrian activity to the greatest degree possible. The clear intent is that the highway should not expand beyond the existing four through lanes in the foreseeable future. Additional capacity may be gained by distributing traffic through more of the existing street grid, as well as identifying Airport Drive as a north-south thoroughfare.

Within the core area, running approximately between Lamar and Anthony Streets, Highway 5 is proposed to have a four lane divided section with a 16 foot wide landscaped median. This width of median allows for a substantial amount of landscaping, even where left turn lanes are needed. It also provides for a pedestrian refuge while crossing. On-street parking is not practical at this volume of traffic, and would require additional pavement width. This would leave enough width on either side to accommodate a wide sidewalk as well as a substantial landscape buffer between the sidewalk and the traffic. At least in the core area, the buildings facing Highway 5 should be placed at the right-of-way line, with active, pedestrian friendly frontages. Although it is anticipated that the primary pedestrian activity,
and hence the more desirable street frontage, will be on the east-west streets, the goal would be to wrap the corners with consistent frontages and have them continue along the highway as much as possible.

The intent is to discipline the street frontage along Highway 5, at least within the downtown core area. Beyond that, the building standards could be more relaxed, and could also allow for parking in front of the buildings, although the depth of parking should be limited to one or two bays. While the highway frontage should be more consistent and orderly, there are a number of parcels immediately behind these that abut the railroad track. These are typically less desirable, and would be an appropriate location for the variety of light industrial and auto-related uses that, while less attractive, nevertheless provide a needed service to the community.

The cotton compress tract is large enough that, if redeveloped, offers a number of possibilities for positively transforming the area. It would allow for opening up a new north-south boulevard to connect between Old Settlers Park and the creek, forming a landscaped greenway that knits together the open space into a coherent network. Here, it is proposed that this boulevard contain a wide median that would incorporate the remaining masonry wall of the historic site, letting it act as a focal point for the redevelopment. The frontage along the park would be appropriate for higher density residential development, on the order of four to five stories in height (see image below). The size of the site also presents an opportunity for a large institutional use, such as a university, to have a coherent, campus like presence, in this case conveniently located near a transit stop.
The neighborhood areas, while in need of improvements, do not require radical measures. The street and block configuration is sound, and the City has recently been making infrastructure improvements in the area. These areas are appropriate for selective infill opportunities that leave the basic neighborhood structure intact, but allow for the incremental redevelopment of the housing stock. Wherever possible, the existing platted alleys should be re-instated. Apart from improving the accommodation of cars and garages, it also allows for accessory units, sometimes called “granny flats,” diversifying the housing opportunities and allowing for some income to be generated on a residential lot. Residents of the neighborhood are very sensitive to being taxed out of their neighborhoods. It should be noted that an incremental infill approach does not force anyone to move, but the issue of increased taxable value is an acknowledged problem.
Area-wide Considerations

Many of the concepts proposed here have broader implications. The treatment of Highway 5 as less of a through highway suggests that other streets in the grid will have to absorb additional traffic. In particular, the future Airport Drive development should try to attract more of the large scale commercial and industrial uses, particularly those that generate truck traffic. The potential of a transit stop suggests the possibility of higher residential density. Several public comments were made to the effect that the five to six story buildings proposed here would be out of character with the existing development patterns. This can certainly be refined as the planning process proceeds, but such densities are already being implemented in portions of Craig Ranch.

Discussions about appropriate densities must address the reality of the growth facing McKinney. As recently as 20 years ago, it was still a rural town with a largely agricultural economic base. Now, it is literally at the edge of the growth front of the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area, with a huge amount of land undergoing development, concentrated, for the moment, to the south and west of the downtown. Future growth projections for the town suggest a potential build-out approaching 400,000 in population. This is no longer a country town. Transit presents an opportunity to introduce an alternative development pattern, at least in a limited area, that offers a counterpoint to the land-intensive, low density pattern that is currently the norm. The east side of McKinney is an area that seems well suited for this type of development. Indeed, it presents an opportunity for high-quality environment that will provide the city with many benefits, both tangible and intangible.
The focus area for this workshop is defined as McDonald Street (Highway 5) close to downtown and the neighborhoods east of Highway 5 to Airport Drive. This focus area does not include any development actions related to traffic on the new Airport Drive.

**Group Outline Concepts**
The planning team summarized our group’s large-scale concepts into a brief list which were presented at the Saturday morning session. This list includes the following items in no particular order:

- Preserve existing single family residential to solidify neighborhoods
- Preserve existing historic buildings for use as redevelopment opportunities
- Implement transit oriented development (TOD) patterns within a quarter-mile radius of the proposed train station. This adds street level retail, mixed use development and pedestrian connections to the area.
- Redevelop Cotton Compress site into east side higher education and/or university campus utilizing existing character elements (masonry walls, railroad track, etc) in the new design.

- Define Highway 5 corridor into three (3) separate zones for future development and aesthetics. Development pattern should include recommendations for density, parking, access from Highway 5, pedestrian connections and general building standards. Aesthetic elements will include signage, streetscape design, building color & materials, awning style & color, banners and thematic items. Implement components of context sensitive design (CSD) standards along Highway 5 which will increase traffic flow while slowing down design speed and making the corridor safer for pedestrians.
**Master Plan Conceptual Recommendations**

The conceptual recommendations for the large-scale study area from this group include the following:

- Commercial and/or mixed use edge to Highway 5 frontage
- Adaptive reuse of historic structures to form a district of character businesses and retail different from “the square”.
- Old Setters Park is developed into a grand town amenity that creates higher property values along the frontage of the park. The park’s design needs to be civic in nature. A park master plan is needed by the Parks and Recreation Department.
- Cotton Compress site redeveloped into university as noted above.
- Residential single family neighborhoods will require infill and infrastructure improvements as the City is in progress.
- The Louisiana and Virginia Streets couplet system needs to be extended through the east side connecting into Airport Drive. The intersection with Airport Drive must be designed for autos only and discourage through traffic at this time.
- Anthony Street can be improved into a major east west connector.
- Develop creek channels into trails where existing development patterns allow.

**Transit Village Conceptual Recommendations**

The development recommendations for the long term transit village are site specific and respond to the future LRT or heavy rail station. The development pattern for land uses and densities relate to the station. The village conceptual recommendations include:

- LRT / heavy rail station located just north of Virginia
- Urban park developed east of the transit station as a full block amenity
- Mixed use development will surround the urban park and station
- Adaptive reuse for historic buildings
- Commercial development for frontage along Highway 5
- All the commercial development will create a need for structured parking to be included in the mixed use development and a public garage.
- Create streetscape connections that link the commercial areas on the east side with downtown McKinney along Louisiana, Virginia, Lamar and Anthony Streets.
- Shared parking strategies need to be implemented in the east side commercial area similar to parking requirements in Downtown McKinney.
- Infill townhouse and attached housing within the quarter-mile radius from the proposed station.
- Highway 5 requires a set of streetscape improvements defining a theme for the corridor. Improvements should include: street trees, street lighting, pedestrian sidewalks, banners, bus shelters and benches.
- Create a linkage between the future McKinney City Hall complex and the east side neighborhoods
- Wayfinding signage system
State Highway 5 Conceptual Recommendations

Our group developed two (2) different sets of conceptual recommendations for Highway 5. The first concept is a traditional set of design elements that would not only improve the look and function of the road but would also positively impact development along the road, with context-sensitive design improvements, signalized street crossings, identifiable streetscape treatments, quality pedestrian linkages (sidewalks), ground floor retail and two-way traffic on Highway 5. A more detailed study would be needed in Phase 2 to determine which streets can be signalized. The ones that we suggest are the intersections with Highway 5 at Louisiana, Anthony and Lamar Streets.

The alternative concept for Highway 5 is to create a couplet having split the north and south bound traffic onto two different streets. The southbound traffic could be on the current alignment of SH 5 and the northbound traffic could swing to the east on a new street one-block from the current SH 5 along or near the railroad track. The couplet would create a wider zone of commercial frontage on SH 5. This commercial area could be accessed by car and foot from two different directions. Side oriented drives could assist in the access and parking for the couplet, along with a positive oriented façade to SH 5. Generally, couplets can aide in managing the flow of traffic just as the Louisiana and Virginia Street couplet does for downtown McKinney coming from US 75. As proposed, the northbound side of the couplet could play an important role in reorganizing the development pattern east of Highway 5.
Detailed/Sketch Recommendations

The design team developed two perspective sketches that were used in the Saturday morning session of the workshop to help stakeholders visualize particular concepts. Sketch #1 defines a view looking south above the proposed east side urban park. The park is adjacent to the transit station and is surrounded by new mixed-use development. The development is in response to the transit station and the transportation potential. Sketches 2a and 2b identify some neighborhood commercial for the east side. This new development is related to the street with parking on the side or rear and connected to the neighborhood with gracious sidewalks. Street trees and residential front porches overlook the street views of the neighborhood.
Connecting East-West and North-South

Group 3 stakeholders thought the area around downtown McKinney, the proposed transit station, and east McKinney in general would experience strong growth and major development opportunities over the long term. This growth and development opportunity would necessitate and generate a higher density of development and create a pedestrian-oriented urban design pattern for movement and activities in and around the area. To ensure that the key component of pedestrian connectivity is addressed for the future development that would be integrally connected to the existing fabric of east McKinney, the downtown and the highway 5 corridor, several north-south and east-west linkages were identified. These are listed below:

Natural systems linkage – Due to east McKinney’s placement adjacent to the East Fork floodway, the community can take advantage of the numerous streams flowing downstream through the area and into a future East Fork greenbelt gateway. The City has already taken advantage of one natural amenity with the improvements at Old Settler’s Park. Several blocks to the north between Broad / Charleston and Fenet / Roosevelt Streets exist another stream and wooded area. This area has the potential of becoming an east-west linkage from the East Fork floodway into the surrounding neighborhoods.

Linking natural systems with streetscape fabric – It is important to make a firm connection between the trails within the natural systems and the sidewalk and street grid in the urban built environment. Greater attention needs to be given to making these connections and the urban pedestrian walkways attractive, useful, and easy to follow. The existing trail running east-west within Old Settler’s Park should be tied into an enhanced sidewalk and streetscape plan along Virginia and Louisiana Streets. This type of connection should also occur several blocks to the north with the open space improvements noted above between Broad / Charleston and Fenet / Roosevelt Streets. A further extension from this natural amenity would include a north-south path running along the east side of Railroad Street and connecting into the urban transit mall at Lamar Street.
Urban transit mall linking civic plaza – Under the Group 3 concept plan, the proposed transit station would be located south of Louisiana Street. Because of this location, a north-south urban transit mall has been proposed alongside the railroad tracks extending from Lamar Street on the north to Anthony Street on the south. An urban transit mall much like the DART condition in Downtown Dallas provides a wide barrier free continuous pedestrian mall on to which buildings front directly onto providing retail, entertainment, and neighborhood services for transit riders and neighborhood residents. In addition, on the south end, the urban transit mall would link into the future McKinney City Hall complex (the current Collin County Courthouse complex) through an east-west civic plaza that would cross SH 5 just north of Anthony Street. The urban transit mall would also connect with a northward extension of Fitzhugh Park along Fitzhugh / Dungan Streets.
Retaining the downtown east-west pattern – The ease of vehicular access to shops in downtown McKinney was considered a plus that should be extended to the future transit village and development pattern east of State Highway 5 (SH 5). Instead of creating a commercial corridor parallel to the existing SH 5, future development east of the highway corridor would extend the downtown street grid pattern on an axis that is perpendicular to the Highway 5 corridor and urban transit mall. Higher density mixed use and urban commercial buildings would feature north and south head-in parking and on-street parking for retail frontage to support ground floor shops and services. Overflow parking would be provided on second-story or third-story rooftop parking lots. The extended east-west streets would terminate at an internal north-south street. This internal north-south street would also include on-street parking and internal parking garages that would support the buildings fronting the urban transit mall. In addition, several east-west streets were also considered important to be either extended eastward across the railroad tracks or allow a pedestrian crossing the tracks. These included Lamar Street (street extension), Hunt Street (pedestrian crossing), and the proposed civic plaza / Green Street connection (pedestrian crossing).

Identifying future key centers
There are several important existing neighborhood centers in the study area. These include the Mouzon Ball Fields, the Aquatic Center and Recreation Center in Old Settlers Park; Fitzhugh Park; J.W. Webb Elementary School, and the old Doty High School (today’s Holy Family School). Future community centers were identified as part of the Group 3 workshop. These included the following:

Proposed transit station – When McKinney reaches the point where light rail or commuter rail is a possibility, a central McKinney transit station will become an important center for the downtown McKinney / east McKinney community. The destination transit station will serve as a focal point to a transit village that would include higher density mixed use, entertainment, and urban commercial activities. An alternate station north or south of the downtown area would serve as the primary rail station with appropriate parking and accommodations.
Adaptive reuse – A triangular public space opportunity was identified within the adaptive reuse area east of the railroad tracks. The space is currently used as a surface parking lot. The sight lines from both directions on Louisiana Street and looking northwestward along Greenville Road are directed into this potential public space. The space is defined where the main traffic flow along Louisiana Street turns southeast to become Greenville Road. A minor turn off continues Louisiana Street to the east, but also forms another side to this triangular public space. The remaining boundary to this triangular public space is formed by the older industrial building on the north. The site provides a location for a public art piece, monument, or another form of public display.

Amphitheater – An outdoor amphitheater was proposed at the existing rock quarry plant off of US 380. Such an amphitheater would serve as a community amenity. This center would also function as a gateway attraction for travelers heading west on US 380 across the East Fork floodway and entering McKinney.

Transitioning
Stakeholders in Group 3 thought there was a direct link to area’s growth between the continued investment in downtown McKinney and a proposed transit station. In addition, this growth could positively impact the surrounding neighborhoods in east McKinney with proper transitioning of land use activities. Three transition areas identified in the study area are listed below:

APPENDIX D
Connecting to downtown
Transit village to adaptive reuse
Adaptive reuse to neighborhood

The SH 5 corridor serves as the transition area between downtown McKinney and the proposed transit village. As considered during Workshop #1, many of the future uses along the downtown, or west, side of the SH 5 corridor are likely to consist of mixed use and urban commercial activities. These future downtown uses would be compatible with the existing downtown development patterns and business establishments. In the second workshop, the same land use activities were proposed on the east side of the highway corridor; however, these activities would take their cue due to their proximity to the proposed transit station. A central park sited on both sides of SH 5 between Louisiana and Virginia Streets would identify the central connection point. This central park would function much like the old courthouse square does for the downtown area to the west, providing an east-west and north-south focal point. A scattering of older buildings on either side of the corridor would be preserved for adaptive reuse. Preserving these dispersed older structures in this transition area supports the second transition area – transit village to adaptive reuse.

The transit station will function as the center point for a future transit village. The transit village would consist of higher density mixed use residential and office buildings intermixed with urban retail and office structures. Adjacent to the future transit village is a collection of older buildings that represent a glimpse into McKinney’s agricultural roots. These structures continue to hold value to the community, as symbols of a long-ago economy that brought wealth to many in this community. Instead of leveling these older buildings due to their proximity to the proposed transit station, these buildings should be protected and restored to emphasize this area as a destination. The older structures and their fixtures should be incorporated with the transit village’s newer mixed uses buildings to help blend this transition. Adaptive reuses include ground floor retail and entertainment activities and upper floors loft office and residential space.

The existing older structures currently border several existing residential neighborhoods. The derelict condition of some of the older commercial structures appears to have filtered down to the neighborhood level. Many nearby residential streets have a distressed appearance consisting of vacant lots and stand-alone houses. Further investment of the older commercial buildings for adaptive reuses purposes should go hand-in-hand with neighborhood assistance for infill urban single family houses and townhouses to support the transition from former industrial and commercial uses to nearby single family land use activities.

**Redeveloping State Highway 5 (SH 5)**
McKinney stakeholders in Group 3 had strong concerns about the future development and character of SH 5. Many of the concerns/ideas expressed are summarized below:
- Clean up the corridor
- The aesthetics of the corridor are unattractive
- Long stretches are monotonous (blank walls or hedges)
- Want to maintain many of the “mom and pop” establishments and small businesses
- Many of the business establishments along serve an important need in the community
- Corridor has a special character that should be enhanced
- The varying depth of parcels along the corridor places challenges for a consistent remedy
- Travelers using corridor have little to indicate noted points of entry, such as downtown McKinney
- The corridor is not pedestrian friendly, lacking sidewalks and crosswalks
- Vehicles speed through the corridor, despite the fact that there are schools nearby
- Corridor is hot looking and needs to be “greened-up”
- Make corridor into a crape myrtle boulevard
- Concerns about future traffic volume based on City’s growth and future transit village
- Area of corridor around downtown McKinney and proposed transit station should be higher density
- Create a “tree tunnel” effect coming into Louisiana and Virginia Streets
- Bury SH 5 between Louisiana and Virginia Streets and create a deck park on top

The corridor’s length, parcel sizes, and character of existing development provide several challenges that limit a “one size fits all” solution. Instead, it was decided the corridor should be broken down into zones that cater to a location’s limitations and exploit its opportunities. During the Friday workshop, there were five zones identified by the design team, which included the following:

**Corridor’s central park** - straddling both sides of SH 5 between Louisiana and Virginia Streets, the park would be the corridor’s center point and serve the surrounding higher density mixed use and urban commercial developments.

**Higher density mixed use and urban commercial** – Starting at the periphery of the central park, this higher density development would be enhanced by development of a proposed transit station. This zone would extend from Lamar Street on the north to Anthony Street on the south. Design standards for development would include those described in ‘retaining east-west retail frontage’ (See above in ‘Connecting east-west and north-south’).

**Corridor commercial** – This zone stretches from Anthony Street to just south of Wilson Creek Parkway/Elm Street. The parcels’ depth along this zone limits development to many of the existing uses. Urban design solutions to the roadway, building facades, and

APPENDIX D
vehicular / pedestrian movements, along with community incentives should be a next step to making this section of the corridor aesthetically pleasing.

**Office and service establishments** – This zone covers two areas - between Wilson Creek Parkway/Elm Street and Eldorado Parkway/Industrial Boulevard on the south end, and from Lamar Street to Midway Street on the north side. Both areas are characterized by existing office and service activities and greater parcel depths. Redevelopment opportunities should focus on development opportunities adjacent to the roadway, shared parking, and improvements in the aesthetic quality and pedestrian / vehicular movement along the roadway.

**Industrial** – This last zone is found at the northern end of the corridor between Midway Street and US 380. Industrial uses and supporting uses should continue in this zone with improvements in the aesthetic quality and pedestrian / vehicular movement along the roadway.
Turning Cotton Compress into community asset / cultural institution

While Group 3 expressed strong concerns about the future development of SH 5, residents were not as forthcoming about the future of the Cotton Compress site (bordered by Throckmorton, Seneca, Washington, and Virginia). Perhaps the utilitarian design of the metal buildings, the size of the site, and the complex’s placement among several neighborhoods made opportunities hard to fathom. Nevertheless, the remaining brick walls and the economic, social, and physical influence the Cotton Compress has had on McKinney character demands consideration. A future use for this complex should positively impact the surrounding neighborhoods and function as a community asset. When the current uses are abandoned, the Cotton Compress could be transformed either into a regional art institution, an apparel research and design center, or institution of higher learning. Existing buildings could be transformed into dormitories, studios, classrooms, and exhibit halls and the surrounding open space used for outdoor exhibits and community paths linking buildings and surrounding neighborhoods. Having this as a community asset could help foster related incubator industries in the surrounding area.
Stakeholder Input
During the group discussion, the Group 4 stakeholders voiced diverse interests but with a cohesive tone of balancing preservation with redevelopment. Several members of the group appeared sensitive to the affected neighborhoods on the east side even though they did not live there. It became apparent rather quickly that preservation of the neighborhoods to the north and south of Old Settlers Park was paramount to the ability of the community to agree on any specific strategies for Highway 5, a future transit village or the enhancement of the areas around Old Settlers Park.

The desire for the preservation of “town friendliness” was underscored for such issues as wanting the future rail transit station to be a true destination, not just a park-and-ride. But the participants in Group 4 wanted more for the area; they wanted to see the east side anchored by the same cultural destinations as the historic square. For example, the discussion focused extensively on the utilization of the Cotton Compress site as a true cultural destination. The desire for a higher education facility was discussed extensively, as well as a center for the arts and crafts where artisans could not only aggregate studios but also facilitate a market for the arts.

Transportation dominated a good portion of the discussion. The participants focused on Highway 5 and regional access as well as on impacts and improvements needed within the neighborhoods themselves. A robust discussion looked at creating a one-way couplet out of Highway 5 or to reroute Highway 5 entirely in favor of creating just a purely local boulevard along the corridor. This discussion eventually evolved into the realization that permeability across Highway 5 would be better served by simply enhancing the existing two-way street.

Additionally, the desire for good access was immediately recognized in the context of dispersed traffic through the east side. Accordingly, the participants almost universally agreed that multiple access points with Airport Drive would diffuse traffic instead of concentrating it so as to avoid overwhelming a particular street such as Virginia.

In addition, the group wanted to make sure that improvements to any streets internal to the neighborhoods were focused on pedestrian function and not regional mobility. In this
context, the idea emerged in the discussion to focus redevelopment along the north and south perimeters of Old Settlers Park, in addition to the transit station area so as to keep the scale and feel of the existing neighborhoods to that existing today. This reinforced the fact that a preponderance of the homes in the neighborhoods is owner occupied.

The discussion also dealt with the desire for Highway 5 redevelopment and transit village redevelopment to provide additional “neighborhood” businesses such as dentists and other similar services. In the area north of Virginia and east of Highway 5, the participants did say that additional light industrial or low impact businesses would be desirable if the design of the business was appropriate and sensitive to neighboring development. This point was underscored by the desire to not run off employment from the east side but, instead, to encourage it if it is appropriate in terms of adjacent neighborhoods.

Cheri Bush of DART participated in the group discussion and confirmed that the freight traffic on the rail line is very low, limited to just two short-haul trains a week for Encore. She was supportive of not committing yet to a particular rail technology, whether DART light rail or commuter rail. She said that DART would continue to be at the table, as needed, to support the development of rail transit for McKinney with a destination station just north or south of Virginia.

Jason Brodigan of TxDOT (also a McKinney resident) offered the group substantial input on the potential enhancement of Highway 5. He said informally that, if McKinney maintained the existing number of lanes (4), TxDOT would be open to a redesign of the cross-section to encourage more of a destination function of Highway 5 adjacent to the historic square and the future rail station. He said that an improved median with tree plantings would be possible, along with additional signalized intersections and improved pedestrian friendly design along the perimeter.

Additionally, there was discussion about possible ways of preserving the affordable housing where the linear trailer park is located along Dungan Street. The discussion produced some agreement that a solution should be explored. All agreed that the trailers were not worthy of saving long term but that the street was ripe for a redevelopment strategy that provided similar housing affordability if possible.
Design Strategy
On Friday, the design team turned to building on the input from the stakeholder discussion the day before and the team’s own analysis building up to the workshop. The Group 4 design team focused on several key concepts:

1. Utilize Old Settlers Park as the anchor for the eastside

The design team recognized opportunity to extend downtown east by using Old Settlers Park as mini-Central Park as the plan below depicts. The group wanted to build on the current function of the park, both in terms of passive uses and the formal ball fields. The design team discussed the potential for moving the ball fields to another nearby location to allow for redevelopment as can be seen in the plan below, but that idea was eventually rejected for many reasons.
Adjacent to the “Central Park,” the design team envisioned the creation of an urban edge, creating a healthy contrast between the green space and an urban living environment (as depicted through the street section below). The urban development along Virginia and Louisiana Streets would transition immediately to the single family neighborhoods one block north and south respectively. The blocks between Old Settlers Park and the Cotton Compress site would provide a continuous urban experience going north into the Cotton Compress site, to the west through the future transit village, and ultimately across Highway 5 into the Historic Downtown Square.

2. The Cotton Compress Site as a campus of Higher Education and/or Culture

The potential for aggregating enough land to create a civic destination became apparent from our analysis of the Cotton Compress site. The retention of the historic wall and the water tower appear to be sufficient to maintain the historic character of the site, enabling substantial redevelopment to be aggregated over a large contiguous tract. The concept of urban mixed use housing on the south side of the site with a truly walkable multi-building institution in the core was considered and rendered below.
3. **Extend Throckmorton south to Short Street to create a redevelopment corridor and neighborhood center**

As can be seen above, the design team envisioned extending Throckmorton Street southward to Short Street in order to create a redevelopment corridor paralleling Highway 5 redevelopment. At Short Street, a neighborhood center would also provide a mixed use destination for the neighborhoods south and east of Fitzhugh Park. However, in order to extend Throckmorton Street to the south, several homes would need to be eliminated. As a result, this concept would not be very feasible.

4. **Facilitate permeability along not only Highway 5 but also Airport Drive**

The team emphasized connectivity into and out of all perimeters of the east side. As the area redevelops, cut through traffic will become a concern; but that concern may be more perception than reality. Because the east side already is blessed with a grid-like pattern and because access into the east side from Highway 5 is not dependent on just a few intersections, increased access along Airport Drive into the east side would not likely encourage cut through traffic. Rather, increased access points on the east will complement the already existing extensive access along Highway 5 as well as the internally diffused traffic network within the commercial areas and the neighborhoods on the east side. In other words, adding more access into an already widely interconnected network of streets will tend to keep traffic spread, not concentrated. As such, the team opted for the following concept: increase access along Airport Drive to enable as many options to and from the area so as to minimize overloading any one particular corridor such as Virginia Street.
Miscellaneous Implementation Considerations
A careful analysis should be undertaken to examine the feasibility of extending the Commercial Historic District across Highway 5. There are candidates for protection such as the flour mill, the grain elevator, and the ice house. Some of those structures may already be subject to de facto protection (such as the flour mill through current redevelopment activities), but that market-only context may not endure to ensure preservation of candidate structures. Regardless of the intent to extend protection, it will be a challenge to extend the Commercial Historic District into the east side, given the lack of a contiguous relationship between the locations of the likely candidates. Nevertheless, the analysis should also examine the feasibility of designating by zoning ordinance those certain structures/sites/objects as historic landmarks.

Due to the widespread and stable owner-occupied single family character of the neighborhoods on the east side, Group 4 and its design team stressed in its discussion and design approach during the workshop that an aggressive and detail-oriented regulatory strategy would be necessary to preserve the current neighborhood character and feel. Accordingly, the design team focused on the detailed location of redevelopment opportunities, even backing off of some locations as being too aggressive and in conflict with the need for preservation of the single family character. A carefully crafted overlay will be necessary to realize the design philosophy embraced by Group 4 so that redevelopment enhances the single family neighborhoods north and south of Old Settlers Park without eventually displacing them.
Following Workshop 3, each design team submitted to City Staff a brief written compilation of the main ideas and concepts generated by their stakeholder group. Appendix E contains these written documents as well as most of the accompanying preliminary illustrations and sketches. Appendix E is intended to supplement the synthesis of the overall shared vision which appears in Section 4 of this report.
Existing Conditions
The subject area for the third workshop focused on several highway corridors passing through or near the downtown area. This also included the development along the corridors, extending in some cases for several blocks from the highway itself. The specific corridor areas included:

- **US Highway 380**, also called University Drive, from Graves Street on the west to SH 5 on the east. This is a divided six-lane highway, relatively busy at around 35,000 ADT volume, including a significant portion of truck traffic. Indeed, this is one of the designated truck bypass routes for the region. The uses along this corridor are fairly eclectic, ranging from several strip shopping centers to a number of smaller establishments. Many of these are converted single family homes, and the properties along the corridor have gradually been re-zoned from residential to commercial use. There are still a few residential properties along 380, as well as a reasonably intact single-family neighborhood on the north side of 380 that has been surrounded by commercial uses.

- **SH 5**, also called McDonald Street, from US 380 on the north to Eldorado Parkway on the south. The central portion of this corridor, from approximately Lamar to Standifer, was included in the Workshop 2 study area. This is a four lane divided highway, also fairly busy. It is lined on both sides with an assortment of commercial and light industrial uses, typically unattractive, car related uses such as gas stations, car repair establishments, strip shopping centers, and inexpensive restaurants, many with drive-thru lanes. The northern portion is more industrial in character, including some fairly large contiguous tracts. The southern portion includes a high proportion of narrow and shallow tracts, typically with small, aging single story buildings on them.

- The Kentucky and Tennessee Street corridors, running parallel to SH 5 a few blocks to the east, with the same endpoints on the north and south. These are narrower and less trafficked than the highways but were once upon a time the principal north-south arterials of McKinney. They run past either side of the historic courthouse at the center of downtown. In the downtown area itself, for less than 10 blocks, they are a one-way pair, with Kentucky going south and Tennessee going north. Beyond that, they are two-way streets, two lanes each in a 50-foot right-of-way. These streets are considered together because they are close together; in most places the block between them is only 200 feet deep, and in one portion north of downtown, only 130 feet deep. This makes it difficult to have buildings fronting on both streets. Kentucky is more residential in character, since the historic residential neighborhoods of McKinney are located
immediately to the west, while Tennessee is more commercial in character. Despite that, most of the property is zoned for neighborhood commercial, although there are a few light industrial tracts.

Most of the property along these corridors can be described as transitional in use. Areas that were once predominantly residential have become more commercial in nature. Sometimes the residence was converted to commercial use; in other cases, a new commercial structure was built. Most of this happened over the last several decades, as there are few new buildings, with 380 showing the more recent signs of transition.

The zoning of properties along the corridors includes about a half-dozen different categories, although most of it is zoned either BN, Neighborhood Business, or BG, General Business. There is some industrial, as well as a few residential properties. The zoning regulations for these districts can be characterized as fairly suburban in orientation, typically requiring generous setbacks and fairly low coverage and floor-area ratio limitations. Also, parking requirements are more typical for contemporary suburban development. This has had the effect of inhibiting redevelopment, with most properties, particularly the smaller tracts, limited to smaller, older buildings. In some cases, the transition in use had to be accomplished by re-zoning the parcel into a PD, Planned Development. This seems to be the established method for addressing non-conforming uses, where the regulations are based on one of the base zoning districts, but specific exceptions are made to certain provisions such as setbacks or parking requirements in order to bring the property into compliance.

Public Input

In contrast to the public comments for the previous two workshops, it was clear that there seemed to be more concern about these areas, reflecting the awkward transitional nature of the corridors, as well as some genuine trepidation as to the future possibilities for specific parcels. In the public perception, the 380 corridor has overwhelmed the residential areas near it, and the transition of residential properties to commercial use is typically unattractive, involving paving a significant portion of the site to yield the needed parking. The residents of the neighborhood on the north side are wary of the encroaching commercial development, and there are clearly already signs of incompatibility conflicts. The highway itself is busy, noisy, and intimidating to cross.

The Kentucky and Tennessee corridors were of particular concern because they are so integrally tied into the existing fabric of the city. The historic neighborhood immediately to the west is undergoing something of a renaissance, particularly along Church Street.
Many historic homes front on Kentucky Street and would be impacted by the redevelopment of the other side of the street. Since these are less traveled than the other corridors, the commercial uses are smaller and seem to be less busy. Many are in poor condition, and the prospects for better development are not clear.

Finally, Highway 5 seems to be everyone’s favorite scapegoat. While it is acknowledged that many of the existing businesses along the corridor provide a needed service to the community, the overall appearance and character leaves much to be desired. Many of the properties are older and in poor condition. The potential for redevelopment is hampered by the fragmented nature of the small parcels, particularly on the segment of the Highway corridor south of downtown. There are several areas where the depth of the parcels fronting on Highway 5 is especially shallow. The parcels between Highway 5 and Chestnut Street in the southern portion are especially awkward because the west side of Chestnut is a viable residential area with a number of historic homes.

On the positive side, there was a certain hopeful tone to the public commentary. The nature of the historic downtown is seen as a huge benefit, one that could spread its positive influence to include these corridors. The notion of a diversity of uses with neighborhood oriented commercial services within walking distance and a range of housing alternatives is seen as a positive, particularly as it would reinforce the character of the town as it once was. In general, it was understood that the old McKinney is a rare jewel that just needs a bit of polish. On the other hand, the potential threats were also acknowledged.

Our group was given a brief overview of the current zoning regulations governing the various districts in the study area. While we did not dwell on technical issues, it was generally understood that regulations that might work well in other, newer areas of McKinney needed to be re-evaluated for the town center area. The stakeholders seemed receptive to the notion of regulations based on more qualitative criteria such as form, character, and performance rather than the usual geometric standards. Parking requirements also seemed to be of particular concern, to the extent that excessive parking lots are damaging to the traditional character.

**Revitalization and Redevelopment Concepts**

One of the emerging concepts in planning is the linkage of land use and transportation. Actually, it is not a new concept, but recent development patterns have highlighted its importance. As highways get wider and busier, they tend to attract larger uses with greater traffic demand. For a highway within an established urban area, this is harder to accomplish due to the existing land use pattern. When highways are indiscriminately widened in established areas, they frequently have a detrimental effect on the neighboring uses. In some cases, such as in McKinney’s town center, the existing historic pattern is deemed to be of sufficient quality and value that the demands of the highway are resisted. This can cause a certain stagnation in redevelopment activity as the opposing tendencies come to a stand-off.
When overlaid with conventional zoning schemes, the incompatibilities are highlighted. The results, as seen on these corridors, are parcels with a particular zoning, be it residential or commercial, that imposes the same regulations whether the parcel fronts on a busy highway or a local residential street.

Our design team began our analysis by trying to define the idealized condition for each corridor that addressed the particular issues facing it. Then, we tried to relate the nature of the development with the nature of the corridor. Finally, we attempted to organize the results into an overall organizational framework that classified each corridor according to its traffic pattern, parking condition, and fronting development. The ultimate goal is to arrive at a regulatory strategy that, perhaps through a zoning overlay, establishes this framework.

**Highway 380.** As a busy, six-lane divided highway, this poses certain challenges in an urban context. The fragmented parcel pattern on the frontage requires frequent driveway access, each of which creates a potential conflict point. The small uses, including professional offices and even a few residential homes, are incompatible with the heavy traffic.

The concept for Highway 380 is to segregate the faster through-traffic from the local traffic by introducing a new section that splits the center four lanes from the outer two lanes. This maintains the current capacity but allows for a different character of use. The center through-lanes are not interrupted by driveways and are further buffered from the fronting uses by a landscaped strip that occurs between the through-lanes and the local lane. The local lane is further functionalized by the addition of parallel parking (potentially on both sides.) This would take some of the pressure off of the parcel to provide parking and open additional redevelopment options. With parking on only one side, this section can be accomplished within the existing 120-foot right-of-way.
With parking on both sides of the local lane, it would encroach some 4 feet into the property, although it would provide a reasonable portion of the parking requirement off-site.

This functional segregation would mean that the parcels would essentially front on a relatively slow access road and would allow for a fairly liberal driveway placement. Nevertheless, the potential exists for the access road to be more pedestrian friendly so that front building setbacks could be reduced and additional off-street parking could be encouraged at the rear of the lot.

**Kentucky/Tennessee.** Since these two streets are separated by a relatively shallow block, they are considered together. In many locations, a significant change in use occurs over just a few blocks. The west side of Kentucky is generally residential in character, while the uses along Tennessee, which was the original main highway through McKinney, tend to be more commercial. The block between Kentucky and Tennessee, thus, absorbs a considerable amount of transition. In many cases, the commercial use fronting the west side of Tennessee occupies the entire block so that it presents a rear elevation to the houses along Kentucky. In one particular area where the streets are separated by only 130 feet, this transition can be quite abrupt.

The concept for this corridor addresses the block between the two streets and defines a redevelopment strategy that establishes a frontage on both streets, with the two frontages varying to better reflect their context. Thus, the Kentucky frontage should be more residential in character, with the building face set back behind a front yard zone, although it should be less than the typical 25 foot setback of the single-family residential. The Tennessee frontage, in contrast, should be more commercial (2 or 3 story buildings) in nature, with the building face abutting the sidewalk. The ground floor should accommodate a variety of small scale neighborhood commercial uses, while the upper stories could be either residential or office. The buildings on the two blockfaces are separated by an access drive that leads to rear-loaded parking. Additional parking can also be included between the buildings, as long as it is accessed from the mid-block drive and is screened from the street frontage.

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The two streets themselves should continue to be two-way streets, one lane in each
direction with parallel parking on both sides. Besides adding to the overall parking
inventory, on-street parking also helps to make the street more pedestrian friendly by
generating pedestrians as well as forming a buffer between the sidewalk and moving
traffic.

**Highway 5.** In many ways, this is the most difficult of the corridors to address. It
accommodates almost as much traffic as Highway 380 but in only four lanes. Consequently, it seems busier. It also has a narrower right-of-way that precludes the idea
of adding a local access lane separate from the through-lanes. Yet, it is also one of the
principal ways into town from the south; indeed, it should be considered as one of the
principal gateways into McKinney’s town center, since it provides such ready access into
downtown.

As discussed in Workshop 2, which addressed the segment of Highway 5 immediately
adjacent to downtown, the basic strategy is to tame the traffic and visually improve the
quality by several means. Narrowing the lanes slightly will have a traffic calming effect,
as well as yielding a little more space for landscape buffers. A wide center median and
relatively generous landscape buffers on either side will improve the aesthetics for drivers
and pedestrians alike, as well as creating a slightly more accommodating frontage for
development. While the outer segments of Highway 5 (north of Lamar and south of
Standifer) are not likely to ever be a high-quality pedestrian environment, they can be a
more attractive area for incremental redevelopment. Redevelopment, when it does occur,
should be encouraged to take access from either the side street, or where available, the
back street. In some cases it may be possible to negotiate cross access easements so that
an interior lot can access a side street through an adjacent property.
Corridor Overlay Concept

The overlay concept for redevelopment along these corridors begins by classifying the nature of the corridor itself. Highway 5, for example is a through-highway, relatively busy and fast. Kentucky Street, on the other hand, is a narrow, slower street that should be a pedestrian-friendly neighborhood street. Yet a parcel zoned BN, Neighborhood Business, would be subject to identical rules regardless of whether it fronted on Highway 5 or Kentucky Street. The corridor overlay concept, thus, attempts to correlate development character with the character of the fronting street. For the sake of simplicity, we begin with three basic corridor classifications, although a more subtle classification may be necessary upon further study. Each corridor type is defined by the nature of the traffic, the street parking situation, and the type of buildings and uses that are best suited for it.
In narrative form, the corridors may be characterized as follows:

- **Neighborhood Transition Corridor.** Allows for the compatible co-existence of existing single family residential uses with other uses, somewhat denser and more intensive in scale. The street should be relatively narrow, two-lanes of traffic, with parallel parking on both sides. New development may be built closer to the right-of-way line, although it should still maintain a front yard buffer of 10 to 15 feet. Uses are limited to several types of residential of no more than three stories in height, although the ground floor may incorporate home occupations or a limited list of small scale neighborhood service businesses. Parking should be limited to the rear half of the lot, and the use may get credit for any on-street parking that directly abuts the property. This type of corridor would be an appropriate designation for Kentucky Street.

- **Neighborhood Commercial Corridor.** As the name suggests, this is more commercial in nature, although it is still intended for relatively narrow neighborhood streets with on-street parking. Uses would include a broader range of commercial, with retail preferred at the ground level. Front setbacks could be as little as zero for a retail frontage, but no more than ten feet generally. Upper stories could be commercial as well as residential. Parking should be limited to the rear half of the lot but may encroach into the front half if screened from the pedestrian way by landscaping or attractive fencing. This would be appropriate for most of Tennessee Street, as well as for Highway 380 if the lanes can be split functionally as proposed earlier in this report.

- **Urban Highway.** This is intended primarily as a traffic artery, though it tries to create buffers to widen the possibilities for development along it. These should have a center median as well as a generous landscape buffer (at least 10 feet wide) on either side. This will limit the continuous expanse of pavement as well as allow for the attractive landscaping of the roadway. Driveway access to the highway should be limited, with access preferably from a side street or the rear of the lot. Uses can be fairly liberal in scope, with appropriate performance standards regarding noise generation, screening of unsightly components, etc. in more sensitive areas. This would apply to Highway 5, although the segment adjacent to downtown might behave a bit differently, more like a Neighborhood Commercial Corridor.

**Implementation Considerations**
The concepts outlined above are in preliminary form. After being further defined, the implementation falls into two main categories. The first are improvements within the public realm, in this case primarily in the corridor rights-of-way themselves. The re-configuration of street sections, on-street parking, and landscaping is a public capital expenditure that has to be appropriately programmed and budgeted. In some cases, coordination with other jurisdictions such as TxDOT will be necessary. To the extent that these recommendations are consistent with their long-term mobility goals, these other agencies may also serve as a partial funding source. In any event, the guiding
principle is that any future public investment in these corridors shall serve to promote better and more context-sensitive redevelopment. By making the corridors more responsive to issues such as access and parking, further options for private development are created. These need to be further guided by the second implementation concern, which is an appropriate regulatory framework for development. This is typically done by either re-zoning the parcels in question or by adopting an overlay regulation. While the former is ultimately cleaner and more straightforward, it is more difficult to accomplish.

The general approach outlined here may also be applied to other nearby areas. For example, questions of neighborhood compatibility come into play along other streets in the historic district. Church Street is well on its way to revitalization, yet some of its parcels extend all the way back to Wood Street and abut parcels with a commercial zoning. Linking the character of development to the nature of the fronting street would imply that a development should have one type of scale and character on Kentucky Street, but a less intense character along Wood Street, even though it is all part of one similarly zoned parcel.
The “focus areas” for this workshop include:
- US 380 Corridor (generally between Graves St and SH 5)
- Tennessee/Kentucky Street Corridor (generally north and south of downtown)
- SH 5 Corridor (generally north of Lamar Street and south of Standifer Street)

**US 380 Corridor**
Generally, the corridor area can be described as a large area that is in transition. US 380 is a regional roadway that should have regional land uses abutting the road. The highway has, instead, grown up from it early days in McKinney as a primary street serving residential development. This type of corridor is located all over the United States and is characteristic of the changing relationship between land use and transportation patterns.

**Conceptual Recommendations**
The planning team summarized our group’s large-scale ideas into a brief list which was presented at the Saturday morning session. Generally, the planning team crafted a number of concepts intended to reflect the desire of the stakeholders to protect and enhance the existing residential neighborhoods on the north side of US 380 between Graves Street and College Street (refer to illustrations entitled “380 Concept,” “380 Massing Diagram”) and “380 Rezoning Strategy”).
**Recommendations for the north side of US 380 include:**

- Replace some of the commercial development that suffers as a residential conversion.

- Reclaim a few adjacent lots along the north side of US 380 between Waddill Street and Oak Street for a park/open space to serve as a natural buffer between the neighborhood and US 380.

- A roadway connection should be made linking Inwood Drive and Wysong Drive together. This would make the residential area larger and contiguous.

- Terminate Inwood Drive as a cul-de-sac where it meets the natural buffer. Vacate the remaining portion to be reclaimed as part of the natural buffer.

- Enhance the entry drive at West Way with a divided median, additional landscaping and a neighborhood entry monument sign.

- Design and implement a unified screening and buffering plan for the entire northern edge of US 380 in this area.

**Recommendations for the south side of US 380 include:**

- For the area north of Second Avenue, encourage consolidation of existing small lots into larger lots more suitable for larger-scale commercial redevelopment

- Vacate and reclaim Second Avenue (between West Street and College Street). Within the reclaimed area, create a buffer between the larger commercial area to the north and the residential neighborhood to the south with minimum 10’ landscape buffer and masonry wall treatment.

- Going north from First Avenue, terminate Bradley Street and West Street as culs-de-sac where they meet vacated Second Avenue. Culs-de-sac should have landscaped island treatments within their centers.

- Establish and implement unified commercial signage standards (monument types) for all redevelopment.

- Establish and implement a streetscape plan for US 380 that provides for a quality and safe pedestrian experience.
North Tennessee / Kentucky Corridor

Generally, this focus area can be described as a linear area that changes between a residential and commercial area. The corridor is located on the edge of several strong land use zones. Generally, the corridor needs help transitioning from these areas of residential to commercial. This transitioning could be achieved by establishing a mixed-use center as the focal point for the area, serving both the residential and commercial community.

Conceptual Recommendations

The primary concept recommended along this portion of the corridor is the development of a neighborhood mixed-use block between Kentucky Street, Tennessee Street, Heard Street and McCauley Street. This block would have both multi-family residential and ground floor low intensity retail to serve the immediate surrounding neighborhoods. Supporting development on adjacent corners would also be commercial to support the edges of the mixed use development. The small block just to north could also be turned into an urban neighborhood park. This park would be the open space amenity for the corridor and would work well adjacent to the proposed mixed use development.
Additional recommendations for the North Tennessee/Kentucky Street corridor are:

Residential:
- Single family infill for the area between downtown and Heard Street. This land use supports the strong neighborhood character of this area.
- Business conversion for residential structures in this area should be capped at 10% maximum.

Multi family:
- Multi family housing for the area generally between Josephine Street and Leland Avenue. This land use would correspond with the Housing Authority site adjacent to the east on Tennessee.
- The building type for this multi family land use needs to be townhouse in character and built up close to the street front and sidewalk.

Commercial:
- One story commercial land uses should be located from Leland Avenue to U.S. 380.
**South Tennessee / Kentucky Corridor**

Generally, this focus area can be described as having more of a residential character (as compared to North Tennessee/Kentucky) that shows some transition to commercial uses close to downtown. In the past few years, this area has seen increased demand for conversion of residential structures to non-residential uses. This area also contains a number of historic period homes not currently included in the “H” historic preservation overlay district. Finch Park also serves the area well as a large city park with passive and active recreation.

**Conceptual Recommendations**

The design team feels this area has a strong potential to be an in-town residential neighborhood. The area is already home to one of the local elementary schools at the corner of Elm and Tennessee streets. The design team is proposing a new park between Anthony and Standifer Streets which could be the catalyst for infill redevelopment on all sides. This park would be a small full block park with public roads on all four edges. South of the future municipal mixed use complex (as proposed in Workshop #1) to Christian Street, the design team proposes that business conversion for residential structures should be capped at 10% maximum. This would allow the residential character of the area to stabilize. Residential single family would remain in the blocks between Christian and Elm Streets, along with the areas adjacent to the school. The school is the anchor of this corridor and should set the tone for residential infill. Land uses south of Elm Street should be a mix of residential, home office, professional offices and multi family because this area would serve as a transition between the residential neighborhood to the north and the retail adjacent to State Highway 5 to the far south.
Additional recommendations for the South Tennessee/Kentucky Street corridor include:

- Commercial land uses in the area between Chestnut Street and SH 5.
- Street tree plantings connecting Tennessee and Kentucky Streets to the downtown core
- Large footprint retail along SH 5 anchoring the southern end of the corridor.
**Overall Recommendations**
The design team makes the following overall recommendations for these focus areas:

**Overall Planning and Design Recommendations:**
- Pedestrian sidewalks need to be constructed on both sides of the street.
- Placement of new buildings should respect the predominant placement of adjacent buildings (for instance, placed closer to the street on Tennessee/Kentucky).
- Land uses are best if the same scale, intensity and type on both sides of a street.
- Land uses best transition at mid block and alleys.
- Mixed use development is defined as mixed together vertically.
- Ground floor retail requires individual single access per store, not grouped together for several shops.
- Parking requirements on these infill urban corridors need to be reduced/more flexible and not at the same requirements as typical new suburban development.
- Bicycle lanes should be implemented for some of these primary corridors leading to downtown, US 380 and State Highway 5.

**Overall Implementation Recommendation for Kentucky/Tennessee Street Corridor:**
Historically, Kentucky Street and Tennessee Street have shared a symbiotic relationship with the downtown core. Just as the downtown core depends on its compact physical form and pedestrian-friendly pattern of development for vitality, the Kentucky/Tennessee Street Corridor also depends on its physical form. The Kentucky/Tennessee Street Corridor should consider a set of form-based development codes to clearly and easily communicate the desired physical direction to ensure that all future redevelopment activities are sustainable and in keeping with the preferred character.

APPENDIX E
The following community concerns and challenges were identified through the sector planning process prior to Workshop 3.

1. US 380 Corridor (east of Graves Street): Incompatible land uses can be found along this corridor with residential uses adjacent to commercial sites. Transitioning these uses to increase land use compatibility is a long-term goal for this corridor. How can this corridor convert residential structures to commercial sites? What aesthetic improvements can be made to enhance the corridor and ease this transition? Should the view from the road be the only consideration or is the viewpoint of a pedestrian a reasonable consideration? Will there be adequate parking for the newly transitioned commercial sites? If not, what parking solutions are available to this corridor? How can the aesthetics of trash containers be improved? What land use planning policies can we use to protect the adjacent residential neighborhoods?

2. SH 5 Corridor (between Walker and 380 at the north end and between Walnut and Eldorado at the south end): Similarly, SH 5 faces issues related to aesthetic improvements of this corridor and incompatibility between existing commercial uses and the adjacent residential uses. This corridor presents challenges related to contextually appropriate infill, constraining lot depths and corner lots that front narrow side streets. Additional issues along the SH 5 Corridor include the following:
   - Sidewalks are currently not continuous presenting pedestrians with increased opportunities for vehicular conflicts. Field observation demonstrates that pedestrian traffic from nearby schools and churches in addition to the local businesses would likely benefit from continuous sidewalks.
   - Inconsistent development standards, building orientation, and a lack of screening has resulted in a corridor that feels like a mish-mash of uses rather than a street with useful community services with landscaping and other aesthetic treatments that act as the unifying elements.

3. Tennessee/Kentucky Corridor: As with the US 380 and SH 5 corridors, this corridor is also transitioning uses from dissimilar to similar and compatible uses. Again, when uses vary or are in transition, the aesthetics of a corridor are inconsistent. Identifying aesthetic elements to unify all three corridors was a common theme of Workshop #3. Providing adequate parking for the newly converted uses and the necessary circulation is also an issue. Lastly, identifying opportunities for pocket parks that would provide additional green space in this changing corridor is a need.
Group 3 focused on the following challenges from the above list of issues previously identified:

1. Parking. Parking was a common theme and challenge for each corridor. The original neighborhoods consist of a mix of home styles and eras with most homes built in and around the 1940s in a bungalow style with approximately 1500-2000 square feet of living space, small by today’s suburban home standard. Limited square footage often forces residents to use their garage as storage rather than for the intended parking further limiting their parking options and forcing on-street parking. Additionally, most of these homes were likely built when many Americans shared one car. The evolution of two and even three car families has placed further constraints on nearby parking options. Most significantly, the parking provided in this traditional residential neighborhood was never intended to accommodate the transition from residential uses to home office or commercial uses and the circulation required to access these uses. Lastly, the current parking standards can be summarized as a suburban code applied wrongfully to a town center. Addressing the challenges of parking associated with transitioning uses and the related circulation issues was a goal of Group 3.

2. US 380 land use conversion. A sample block was identified to suggest how an area, in this case the block, might transition to consistently commercial uses over time.

3. SH 5/McDonald Street aesthetic improvements. A street tree diagram was provided to assist in unifying this corridor.

4. Screening suggestion for both parking and trash were provided.

5. Pocket Parks. Time constraints allowed only cursory consideration of pocket park options. Developing a process for identifying and creating pocket parks was the focus so that the process could be applied city-wide rather than providing specific geographic locations of future potential pocket parks.

Public Input
Following a video presentation that highlighted many of the concerns and challenges of the focus areas, the stakeholders were broken out into smaller groups.
Stakeholders in Group 3 offered the following contributions during a facilitated discussion:

- Need tougher code enforcement for signage and uses along SH 5 and US 380.
- Maintain traditional architecture of the downtown core. New buildings should, when possible, take inspiration from downtown.
- Address parking challenges, particularly for residences converting to businesses along US 380 and Tennessee/Kentucky Streets.
- Increase pedestrian circulation through sidewalk and intersection/cross-street improvements.
- Consider the multi-modal opportunities by locating a Collin County Area Regional Transit (CCART) transfer center near the future planned DART Station.
- Manage redevelopment so that it does not lower property values.
- Create additional park areas.
- Encourage a grocery store within walking distance of downtown.

**Design Studio**

The design teams worked in an all-day “Design Studio” in City Hall. The studio was opened up to stakeholders to walk through and provide feedback on the illustrations and renderings. The following themes emerged:

- **Protecting and preserving the character of the traditional neighborhoods was a paramount concern.** The increasing number of home offices and the transition to commercial uses has put the community on alert and suggests a near-term solution may be necessary to protect the long-term historic nature of these neighborhoods. Stakeholders also reiterated the value of encouraging rehabilitation and renovation of existing structures in an effort to maintain the character.

- **Parking.** Response to various potential parking solutions was mixed. Although stakeholders generally agreed with the assessment of the parking issues, some concern was voiced over the alley parking concept. However, support was provided for increased encouragement of shared parking.

**Preliminary Concepts**

An informal presentation was given by our group at the conclusion of Workshop 3, summarizing the group’s efforts. The stakeholder input received following the presentation has been provided below:

- **SH 5 Street Tree Diagram.** Stakeholder response to the Street Tree Diagram was generally very positive. Most stakeholders were pleased to see the Crape Myrtle reappear as a common landscape theme locally associated with the Crape Myrtle Trails. More specifically, the concept of a traditional boulevard with a raised and planted median and zones with varying plant materials resonated among stakeholders. The group was hopeful that the landscape amenities would provide a gateway to the downtown and encourage drivers to observe the transition in land uses that correspond to the varying plant materials.
• **Parking.** Stakeholder response following the presentation was very positive. The stakeholders appeared to appreciate the creative approach to solving the city’s parking challenges and agreed that a new flexible parking ordinance was needed. They supported the notion of credit for on-street parking. Additional shared parking strategies such as the sharing factor referenced in the City of Leander’s SmartCode was also well received.

Additional comment not directly related to the issues Group 3 addressed has been bulleted below:

• **Code enforcement** with respect to vegetation, fence height, paint color for businesses, and noise was mentioned by several stakeholders. Some stakeholders told us that they were hesitant to expand their economic investment in properties if code enforcement couldn’t be relied upon to assist in maintaining property values. During the discussion on code enforcement, the idea of having a Neighborhood Planner (within the Planning Department) to interface and coordinate more effectively with the Code Enforcement Department was well received.

**Recommendations**

**Parking**

Group 3 collaborated with the lead consultant (Gateway Planning) to develop the principles and potential techniques to be used in the development of a parking ordinance. Our discussion centered on developing principles that would change the existing suburban parking standards to address the parking concerns voiced earlier in the sector planning process. The bulleted principles below summarize the intent and purpose of the future parking ordinance.

Parking Principles:

- Flexible
- Minimize visual impacts with screening
- Unified planning for multi-use and mixed-use projects
- Shared parking when appropriate

The future parking ordinance should be flexible, allowing administrative discretion on a case-by-case basis when possible as well as other creative parking solutions. Adherence to rigid standards may result in discouraging some of the most desirable uses, particularly in transitioning areas such as these corridors.

When creating the new parking ordinance consider including side yard parking standards that require set-back requirements and screening that might include berms, fencing, and preferred plant materials. For lots in which the parking would occur at or near the corner, a hedge separating the sidewalk from the surface parking would also provide screening.
from the sidewalk and the street. These screening techniques could be employed for surface parking lots, future garages, and trash receptacles.

Requiring unified parking and circulation plans should also be a requirement of the new parking ordinance. Parking requirements are often developed for peak use times. When the peak times are short and sharp this requirement may result in long periods of empty parking spaces as is often the case with churches. (Donald Shoup, FAICP supports this premise in an article he wrote in February 2006. See the Reference section for details). Employing the sharing factor technique as part of a unified parking and circulation plan may avoid requiring unnecessary parking for new developments or the conversion of uses.

Shared parking (different from the sharing factor technique) is the notion that one land use meets the parking requirement by sharing with another land use. Generally, the peak parking times for the land uses must be compatible, and an arrangement is usually needed between land owners to facilitate the shared parking. The Vehicle Parking Section (41-202) of the existing McKinney Zoning Ordinance allows for shared parking but in very limited circumstances. Therefore, in order to realize the myriad benefits of shared parking within the context of compact and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods in the Town Center, the City should look to expand the shared parking provision (perhaps by increasing the allowed distance between the parking and the use).

Additional modifications that could be made to the existing parking ordinance include the following techniques:

- Credit given for on-street parking
- More flexible off-site or shared parking allowances with municipal lots, businesses, and churches.
- In-lieu-of/parking impact fee program with a rational nexus for the usage of the fees to support a garage or street improvements
- Administrative discretion given on an individual basis. Additional authority would be given to the Planning Staff rather using a formulaic approach during the site approval process
- Sharing factor for mixed-use
- Encourage valet parking for restaurants, bars, and other nightlife activities to increase capacity of existing facilities during selective peak time
- Alley parking for transitional neighborhood commercial uses

One of the more innovative techniques listed, the sharing factor, was employed by Gateway Planning in the City of Leander. The graphic that illustrates the Sharing Factor for Mixed Use included in the City of Leander’s SmartCode has been provided below for explanatory purposes. As mentioned previously, this method avoids excessive off-peak parking. It could also be argued that such a policy would encourage mixed-use developments because of the parking “break” or incentive provided.

APPENDIX E
Lastly, the Tennessee/Kentucky Corridor Commercial Concept graphic illustrates alley access of a sample block in a traditional neighborhood that has transitioned from mostly residential to home office or commercial uses. The concept illustrated suggests parking in the rear by accessing a narrow continuous alley. A cross-section of this concept has also been provided.

Additional ideas such as establishing a minimum requirement for bicycle parking spaces or simply encouraging bicycle use by installing city-purchased bicycle parking racks might offer another travel mode reducing the need for parking spaces, particularly to events such as music festivals and the Farmer’s Market.
US 380 Land Use Conversion
The illustration entitled “Reuse & Redevelopment” provides a sample block along US 380 that is currently in transition for the purposes of discussion. This block includes both residential and commercial uses adjacent to each other. As suggested in the illustration, the transition process from mostly residential to consolidated commercial uses would happen over time, suggested by the Phase 1 and 2 designations. In Phase 1, the front of the block would convert to commercial while the back side of the block would remain residential. Parking could be consolidated in the rear, and curb cuts could be combined. By Phase 2, the entire block would be commercial and the residential neighborhood would start across the street at the next block. The neighborhood would be buffered in both phases but most effectively buffered in Phase 2 where a new residential edge would occur. Similarly, cross-access could occur in both phases, but, by Phase 2, pedestrian connectivity between blocks would be most successful. Once entire blocks have been captured in Phase 2, new neighborhood villages could be encouraged in adjacent blocks fronting US 380.

The Group discussed a range of uses appropriate for when the commercial use is adjacent to residential neighborhoods. The following uses were suggested:
- Bed and breakfast
- Hair salon
- Small Yoga/Pilates/dance studio
- Massage/physical therapy/reflexology practice
- Limited religious meeting houses
- Neighborhood grocery at nodes (see the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood in Austin, Texas for an interesting application of landscaping and set-back requirements)
- Internet cafe/independent bookstore/gallery
However, when the corridor provides essential commercial services that already exist on a street with either deep or inconsistent front set-backs or “big-box” retail such as those uses found on portions of US 380, concentrating these uses and applying aesthetic treatments is likely a more effective approach then attempting to maintain a residential character. Concentrating uses might also encourage the relocation of incompatible uses currently adjacent to residential neighborhoods elsewhere in the city. Adjacency to other businesses might also encourage trip-chaining. Utilizing design guidelines for building height, set-back and facade along with signing and screening ordinances would minimize the visual impact and soften these commercial-only areas.

**SH 5/McDonald Street Aesthetic Improvements**

A street tree diagram (see McDonald St. Street Tree graphics) recommends various zones as a gateway to downtown and suggests planting materials for the SH 5 corridor. Both ends of the corridor would begin with an Ornamental Zone, transitioning once inside the main intersections to the Boulevard Zone. As the driver or pedestrian nears downtown, the zone transitions to Ornamental Zone A; when inside the downtown core, the zone changes to Ornamental Zone B. The purpose of these transitioning zones is to signal to the pedestrian, bicyclist, or driver the changes in the land use and to encourage them to follow the corridor to its conclusion into the downtown core. Plant materials such as the dwarf crape myrtle and the medium ornamental tree are similar but different enough to signal the change in land use without being distracting. Landscaping also provides a unifying element for a corridor with a variety of uses that may currently lack cohesiveness. Any street tree plan for SH 5 should be coordinated with the McKinney Crape Myrtle Trails (see www.crapemyrtletrails.org for more information).

**Pocket Parks**

Rather than identifying individual parcels for use as pocket parks, Group 3 researched pocket parks hoping to find examples of successful programs initiating the development of pocket parks. The City of Alexandria, Virginia employs a process for creating pocket parks that requests residents to submit locations for consideration (http://alexandriava.gov/recreation/parks/pocket.html). The benefit of using this type of program is the increased public support for each individual park. This concept could easily be modified to suit the requirements of the City of McKinney. For additional information please see the attached criteria form.

**References**

City of Alexandria, Virginia. Pocket Park Criteria Form.  


During the initial analysis of the three major corridors for the Workshop 3 focus study, many issues became apparent.

**Zoning:** It became clear that the current zoning code does not provide a set of development standards that adequately deal with the difficulties of the eclecticism and infill character of these corridors. For example, conventional landscape buffer requirements (geared towards suburban conditions) do not lend themselves to the small lot conditions prevalent along these corridors (i.e. residential structures converting to commercial uses along Tennessee Street or US Highway 380).

Other development standards such as screening between residential and non-residential uses, loading, trash containment, signage, and parking cannot be sufficiently dealt with under the current code. Ultimately, the unique lot and block conditions and a lack of a way to coherently deal with both public- and private-frontage conditions (i.e. setbacks, how much parking is really necessary for a particular type of use and where to located the parking) were repeatedly apparent in the hodgepodge of infill activity.

Additionally, the zoning code does not seem to provide enough flexibility when dealing with certain types of land uses that may be appropriate in certain areas but do not fit neatly into the list of allowed uses for a particular zoning district.

**Architecture/Urban Design:** One of the assets of these corridors is the diverse mix of architectural styles (i.e. the 1950’s Ranch style along the U.S. 380 Corridor; the classic bungalow styles along Kentucky/Tennessee Street). It appears that, over the last few years, these assets have been significantly diminished due to an accumulation of architecturally-insensitive renovations and new infill structures. In a few short years, without a strategy to preserve some of these architectural periods, the remaining stock could be lost through wholesale redevelopment.

**Non-contributing Redevelopment:** There have been several infill redevelopments along these corridors in recent years (a good sign from a market standpoint). However, due to a lack of strong urban design standards, most of these redevelopments have not made appropriate contributions to the look and feel (“character”) of these corridors. For instance, the conventional redevelopment of the grocery store site on State Highway 5 underscores the lack of urban design tools available to encourage better quality redevelopment along the corridor. The inability of the City to influence the position of the building (in terms of its relationship with the street) or the cladding of the building in a more appropriate exterior color was a significant missed opportunity to contribute to a unifying or cohesive design scheme for that corridor.
**Gateways:** Where these corridors intersect (Tennesee/Kentucky Streets at U.S. 380; State Highway 5 at U.S. 380; Eldorado Pkwy where State Highway 5. and Tennessee St. merge), there are presently no visual cues to drivers that they are entering the Town Center district. Several opportunities for gateways became apparent during the site visit, including both aesthetic and development opportunities.

**Stakeholder Input**
Initially, stakeholder feedback in our group mirrored much of what was focused on in the video that was produced by Staff and shown at the beginning of the workshop.

At the end of the workshop, Group 4 stakeholders focused on the following:

- The workshop process should be kept alive via localized conversations within the Town Center.

- Public housing should be integrated into the community, but special attention should be to the design of such sites and how they fit into the existing physical fabric of the area.

- Additional pocket parks both north near U.S. Highway 380 and south near Eldorado Pkwy should be facilitated.

- The stakeholders offered ideas in support of a gateway concept for the south gateway for the Town Center. It utilizes the land between McMakin and Franklin for an urban redevelopment scenario. While at the same time, the scheme provides a true announcement that one has arrived at the Town Center when driving north from McDonald or east from Eldorado.

APPENDIX E
Design Session
In addition to the gateway concept for the south end of the Town Center, the Group 4 team used stakeholder input from our group to create three other concepts: U.S. Highway 380 design and redevelopment; a transition module for development straddling Kentucky and Tennessee between downtown and U.S. Highway 380; and an overall concept for addressing parking challenges.

US Highway 380

The Group 4 team supported the notion of a redesign of US Highway 380. Our group’s concept was to maintain the 6 lanes of through-traffic and create a slip lane, likely on private frontages, to facilitate a better relationship from building to building in terms of access, parking and the pedestrian experience. The challenge with US Highway 380 is the truck freight capacity and the current significant average daily trip (ADT) counts, suggesting the need to maintain six lanes of through-traffic at first blush. Group 4’s concept attempts to meet this concern.

(Group 4’s concept can be contrasted with Group 1’s concept. Group 1’s concept looks at only 4 lanes of high capacity through-traffic, with a multi-way boulevard redesign utilizing true slip lanes for the other 2 lanes within the existing ROW.)
Transitional Development between Kentucky and Tennessee Streets

Based on stakeholder feedback in our group, we attempted to tackle the narrow block condition between Kentucky and Tennessee Street. Group 4’s solution is based on the town home housing type that can be backed up internally, providing good frontage on both Kentucky and Tennessee Streets. The building type on Tennessee Street can also be designed as a live-work unit to take advantage of the more commercial environment along that street. Parking is provided internally at the back of the buildings with access at the ends of the blocks on the perpendicular streets.
An alternative design would allow for two larger multi-family buildings (4-plexes that are designed to mimic the appearance of a large house) at the ends of the blocks instead of access for parking behind. The parking in this alternative design would be accessible mid-block along Kentucky and Tennessee instead of at the end of the blocks.
Parking

Group 4 worked extensively on the prevailing parking issues in the Town Center and along these corridors in particular. Group 4 team worked closely with the Group 3 team on these issues. Please refer to Group 3’s write up for the analysis and recommendations for a comprehensive parking strategy.

Implementation

Group 4 developed a framework for implementation. The framework consisted of identification of the issues, which fell into the following non-exhaustive categories (y-axis):

1. Corridor Improvements
2. Transition from major arterials to neighborhoods (e.g. SH 380)
3. Dealing with different uses across the street
4. Transitions from industrial to residential
5. Transitions from residential to commercial
6. Street Edge (what changes; what remains)
7. Pedestrian experience on SH 380 and SH 5
8. Gateways (north and south)
9. Affordable and aesthetically integrated multi-family
10. Creation of live-work for artists and other small business people
11. Signage
12. Parking

We concluded that the implementation of these issues and others raised during workshops 1 and 2 would need to be dealt with in the following ways (x axis):

1. Regulation
2. Community
3. Design
4. Economics
5. Phasing

We are not married to this particular structure but believe that some sort of matrix approach to implementation will be helpful.

Concluding Remarks

The eventual resolution of many of the issues in workshop 3 will enable the overall implementation of the Town Center initiative to be both substantial and sustainable. If the transitional neighborhood and redevelopment issues are not dealt with proactively along U.S. Highway 380, State Highway 5, and Kentucky and Tennessee Streets, the shared vision of linking the historic downtown across State Highway 5 into a new transit village (with a careful preservation of the existing residential neighborhoods) will not be viable long term.

APPENDIX E
The three focus areas defined for workshop 3 are as follows:

- The US 380 corridor between Graves Street and SH 5
- The Kentucky/Tennessee Street corridor between US 380 and Eldorado Parkway (not including the segment through downtown)
- The SH 5 corridor between US 380 and Eldorado Parkway (not including the segment adjacent to downtown)

A. Existing Conditions and Issues

Some of the existing conditions and pertinent issues for the three focus areas include:

The US 380 corridor between Graves Street and SH 5. The US 380 corridor, also called University Drive, is one of McKinney’s busiest corridors. Currently, the corridor is home to a range of light industrial, retail, office and single family uses. However, the transition between these uses is not creating a cohesive pattern along the corridor. Many of the properties facing US 380 have been converted from their original single family use to a retail or office use, creating considerable challenges regarding access, circulation, parking, screening and buffering, trash disposal, and signage. As an example, current zoning regulations require a certain amount of parking on these lots that do not have the capacity to hold additional parking spaces. These requirements have led to front and back yards being paved over to accommodate these regulations. Additionally, some of the older neighborhoods around the area seem to have lost their identity due to the growth of commercial uses along the corridor.

The Kentucky/Tennessee Street corridor between US 380 and Eldorado Pkwy (not including the segment through downtown). The Kentucky/Tennessee corridor consists of a unique blend of residential, commercial, and industrial uses. Much of the development along this corridor pre-dates the advent of zoning regulations (McKinney’s first zoning ordinance was adopted in the late 1960’s). As a result, many of the development standards that are typical of contemporary suburban development (i.e. landscaping, parking, building set backs, screening of adjacent uses, signage, etc.) were not provided. In recent years, redevelopment along the corridor has been challenging due to the issues associated with applying conventional (suburban) zoning requirements to unique and non-conventional redevelopment sites. This piecemeal and disjointed approach disrupts any continuity along the street frontage and creates inadequate buffering and screening between different types of uses. An updated range of allowable uses and specific redevelopment standards for infill would help to preserve the residential parts of the corridor and achieve a smoother transition between different land uses.
The SH 5 corridor between US 380 and Eldorado Pkwy (not including the segment adjacent to downtown). Historically, SH 5 was the main north/south highway through the City. However, since the expansion of US Highway 75, this role has diminished. Nonetheless, SH 5 still supports a large portion of local traffic as well as a concentration of industrial, retail, office, and residential uses. As with the Tennessee/Kentucky Street corridor, much of the development along this corridor pre-dates the advent of McKinney’s zoning regulations. Therefore, most of the developments do not meet current zoning standards. This has created an insufficient network of infrastructure and access along the corridor as well as haphazard architectural standards. Some of the lots fronting onto SH 5 are shallow by current standards, further challenging the redevelopment opportunities along the corridor. To a certain degree, some of the unique character of the Town Center area results from the pre-zoning standards along this corridor, and it may be to the City’s advantage to play off this unique development pattern and preserve a snapshot of McKinney’s history. However, at the same time, it may be possible to continue the revitalization that has been steadily occurring along the corridor in a more strategic and harmonious manner.

B. Public Input

The local stakeholders that participated with Group 5 were extremely helpful in identifying some key issues and generating some key ideas. Although many different concerns were brought to the table, the group as a whole seemed to agree on a few key items:

- Protection of older residential neighborhoods along the US 380 corridor. The rapid redevelopment of properties along US 380 has caused the older neighborhoods along the corridor to lose their identity. Stakeholders would like to reestablish their sense of community with more sidewalks, connectivity, parks, and better overall infrastructure.

- Pedestrian-scale street environment needs should be addressed. A lack of sidewalks, crosswalks, and general connectivity seem to plague the single family residences in all three corridors. Stakeholders acknowledged that, due to the unique constraints of the corridors, traditional methods of creating pedestrian-scale street environment may have limited applicability. Stakeholders expressed a desire to see creative solutions such as establishing small areas of landscape plantings to create pockets of separation from motor vehicles.

- Diversity is a good thing. Many of the stakeholders were extremely vocal in expressing their affection for the vitality of the local culture along the corridors.
C. Conceptual Recommendations

The following conceptual recommendations were made by Group 5 to address some of the above issues.

Create a Unifying Theme for the “US 380 District”
Architectural Standards and a Sign Ordinance for the area could be utilized to mandate a cohesive look that conjures a unique 1950’s image. These measures would also address the issues of aesthetics along the corridor.

- Some of the existing commercial and residential units are a 1950’s style architecture. This is an asset to the area and public input revealed that such places are highly valued by the residents in the neighborhood. In order to create a unique identity for the area, such assets could be preserved, and redevelopment of similar character could be encouraged in terms of the architectural style and signage.

- Standards that regulate the material, height, bulk, and architectural style of development could be modified. These regulations would need to be carried out in such a way that the mandated style blends with, and adds to, the existing assets of the area which are a unique 1950’s style.

- The sign ordinance could be updated in a complementary manner. Illustrations provided by City Staff show concepts that are similar to the “Route 66” style of signage. These concepts could serve as a guideline in defining signage style in the ordinance. (Bill Smith’s Café, Nixon’s Laundromat, Sonic Drive-In)
Create Neighborhood Identity by ‘District Branding’
The City of McKinney has a number of existing mechanisms that could be utilized to help recreate a sense identity for neighborhoods that are adapting to local changes along the corridors.

- Establish a P.R.I.D.E. group for the residential neighborhoods in the vicinity of US 380. This would provide an opportunity for the residents to actively participate in neighborhood activities. P.R.I.D.E. stands for Promoting Resident Involvement Development and Enthusiasm. In order to address neighborhood priorities, PRIDE Area Leaders and residents attend community meetings with staff members of various City Departments. PRIDE groups also participate in community activities such as Rebuilding Neighborhoods Clean ups, National Night Out block parties, and various seasonal “festivals.” The purpose of the P.R.I.D.E. Program is to create:
  - effective, independent, and involved neighborhoods;
  - a unified approach to community driven communication and planning to promote mutual responsibility and joint problem solving; and
  - a spirit of teamwork between the residents in the community and the City.

- Expand the Historic Neighborhood Improvement Zone (HNIZ) to include the neighborhoods north of U.S 380.

- Create a destination neighborhood by fostering district special events such as “Drive in” style movies in the parking lot, forming a car club, organizing BBQ competitions, etc. This could provide the area a unique appeal and identity.

Gateway/Intersection Treatments
Gateway treatments could be established to create a sense of arrival into some of McKinney’s unique neighborhoods and districts. Gateway treatments are proposed for the following intersections:

1. US 380 at Church Street
2. US 380 at Tennessee Street
3. US 380 at SH 5

APPENDIX E
Preferred Land Uses, Building Types, and Frontages along Kentucky and Tennessee Streets:
Based on stakeholder input, Group 5 developed a ‘Preferred Land Use’ map, which shows a conceptual future land use plan for the stretch of Kentucky and Tennessee Streets between US 380 and Eldorado Parkway. It integrates the proposed conceptual plan that was the result of Town Center Study Workshop #1 (which included stretches of Kentucky and Tennessee Streets between Walker Street and Anthony Street). The conceptual land use plan focuses on the following key concepts:

- Avoiding incompatible land uses by creating smooth transitions between commercial and residential uses.
- Building on the character of the Kentucky/Tennessee Street corridor by requiring that the development of new buildings adequately blend with existing buildings in terms of size, scale, and massing.

North Kentucky/Tennessee Street Corridor

- Given the existing uses and structures, encourage commercial uses on Kentucky Street near McCauley Street.
- Allow multifamily units (8 units per building) or town homes mid-block along Kentucky Street from Erwin Avenue to Leland Street. This provides a much needed transition between commercial/office uses and single family residential uses. An illustration of this concept shows the preferred type of development with regard to height, bulk etc. The illustration also shows the preferred transition between single family homes to multifamily units by proposing a ‘Big House’ concept on the corner lots. It also shows the functioning of services such as parking and trash pickup.

- Encourage development to face both Kentucky and Tennessee Streets, thus eliminating views of the rear of buildings on one side.
- Modify development standards, specifically: (1) Establish a build-to line that pulls structures up to the street. This allows parking to be “hidden” at the rear or side of a building rather than in the front, thereby creating a more inviting, aesthetically
pleasing streetscape and encouraging more pedestrian activity, (2) Allow a reduction in required parking and allow some on-street parking to satisfy parking requirements.

- A pocket park is proposed on Tennessee Street north of White Avenue. This park would not only provide a visually pleasing element to the passers-by, but would also provide a transition from commercial to residential uses. Additionally, the park would serve as recreational space for the residents both east and west of it.

- Expand the Historic District to protect the “unique” McKinney look. Old houses, no matter their size, should not be torn down or inappropriately rehabilitated but, instead, should be restored to remain residential or converted to light intensity office uses.
South Kentucky/Tennessee Street Corridor

- Protect and maintain the residential character and feel along the south end of Kentucky Street.

- Maintain an appropriate buffer between commercial and residential uses where one kind of use is at the back or side of the other.

- Along Tennessee Street, achieve a mix of residential and low intensity uses such as office and personal service type uses that are able to preserve the residential character of a structure.

- Maintain residential structures but allow them to convert between low intensity commercial uses and residential uses, as has occurred historically in the area.

- For lots between Kentucky and Tennessee Streets that have frontage on both streets, commercial uses should front Tennessee Street but have appropriate treatment along Kentucky Street to respect residential areas.

- Create reduced parking requirements for Tennessee Street office and professional service uses. This could be achieved by utilizing on-street parking.

APPENDIX E
Note: Exclusion of Recommendations for SH 5
Recommendations for the SH 5 corridor do not appear in Group 5’s report. The majority of the stakeholders in this group represented only the US 380 corridor and the Kentucky/Tennessee Street corridor. Given the time constraints of the workshop, City Staff did not offer recommendations for the SH corridor.