

City of Oxnard Downtown Strategic Plan Executive Summary



In the future, Downtown Oxnard will be . . .

- A multi-faceted commercial center.
- A unique, pedestrian scale shopping district boasting a wide selection of appealing shopping and business options.
- A clean and safe environment.
- A high quality entertainment and dining venues.
- An attractive place for both visitors and residents.
- Family oriented, fun, friendly, alive, attractive and profitable.

Downtown Oxnard will again be the “Heart” of Oxnard and a measure of civic pride.

Draft
April 2005

Introduction

A city’s downtown is a special place. Traditionally, it has been a place to work, recreate, shop, gather for civic activities, or, simply, to hang-out. But like many downtowns around the nation, Downtown Oxnard has become increasingly isolated from an outwardly expanding city, losing some of its former vitality and historic functions in the process. The particular challenge for Downtown Oxnard is to strengthen what remains; to build on its rich history of settlement, physical structure, and central location. Collectively, these features establish a solid foundation.



This Executive Summary distills the key findings and recommendations of the Downtown Strategic Plan, which includes a variety of more detailed information concerning Downtown and the City’s vision for its future. It sets the stage for resurrection of Oxnard’s sense of itself as both a city of historic import, and a vibrant community that is intimately connected to its core.

The Downtown “Districts”

For several years, the City’s plans for Downtown have been painted with a broad-brushed CBD zone and CBD land use designation (in the General Plan), with no articulation of the City’s expectations for the type and character of development for specific locations within Downtown. The Downtown Strategic Plan represents a departure from that approach by articulating a more detailed, yet still flexible, program for the ultimate development of Downtown Oxnard. The keys to this more nuanced approach to Downtown development are seven “Districts” that reflect particular identities in terms of land use, character, and function. The Strategic Plan’s intent is to further redefine and strengthen them by recognizing their unique contributions to creating a vital downtown, as well as recommending strategies that promote or enhance these contributions. The seven districts established for this effort are as follows:

- The Civic Center District
- Plaza Entertainment and Arts District
- “A” Street Retail District
- Transportation Center District
- Meta District
- South of Seventh District
- Five Points Northeast District

The map on the reverse side of this Executive Summary depicts the geographic boundaries of these districts and highlights the City’s vision for their future. The full report describes this vision in much more detail.

Architectural Character

Downtown Oxnard encompasses a variety of architectural styles that reflect the historical development of the area. There is no predominant architectural theme or style, so it would be neither practical nor advisable to impose an architectural program that attempts to unify the appearance of buildings in Downtown (or any of its districts), either through design of new structures or redesign of existing structures (including installation of facades).



Additional Information

For additional information concerning the Downtown Strategic Plan, please contact the City of Oxnard Development Services Department. City of Oxnard Development Services Department
305 West Third Street
Oxnard, CA 93030
805.385.7896
<http://www.ci.oxnard.ca.us/developsvcs/main.html>



Strategic Plan Recommendation Summary

The Downtown Strategic Plan includes overarching recommendations for achieving the vision set-out in the Plan, as well district-by-district recommendations corresponding with each broad category of overarching recommendation. Following are brief summaries of each:

Land Use and Development

- Mixed-use development in northern Downtown along Oxnard Boulevard and A and B Streets.
- Niche retail uses on A and B Streets, between 3rd and 7th Streets.
- Diverse commercial, including automotive-related uses, along the southern section of Oxnard Boulevard.
- Government uses in the Civic Center District.
- Cultural amenities and mixed-uses focused around the Carnegie Museum and Plaza Park.
- Residential uses south of 7th Street and along Meta Street or as part of mixed-use projects in other districts.

Streetscape Improvements

- Replacement of overhead utility lines.
- Unification of street furniture, including light fixtures.
- Lowering of the median on Oxnard Boulevard to reduce its barrier effect.
- Implementation of the *Street Tree Master Plan*.
- Establishment or redefinition of gateways and development of a overall wayfinding/signage program in Downtown.
- Development of a public art program and placement strategy.

Traffic and Pedestrian Circulation

- Wider installation of pedestrian-friendly traffic calming devices such as those in place on “A” Street (i.e., bumpouts, mid-block crossings, diagonal parking).
- Better integration of Downtown alleys and paseos into the pedestrian circulation system.

Architectural Style/Theme

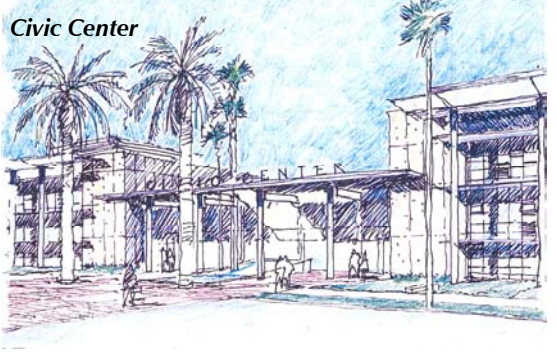
- Emphasis on context-appropriate design based on historical precedents, but without mandated or programmed design requirements.

Parking

- Encouragement of shared parking strategies to accommodate new demand.
- Development of additional parking structures.
- Establishment of an in-lieu parking fee program for new development.

Civic Center District ←

This district is intended mainly to support office uses and associated service retail. Public uses should be encouraged to locate in this district to confirm its identity as Oxnard's Civic Center. Along with the many catalyst projects that are taking place, there are still opportunities for further development in the district.



Plaza Arts and Entertainment District ←

The intent of the Plaza Arts and Entertainment District is to provide for a mixture of urban uses with an emphasis on entertainment and the arts, as well as supporting service uses (including restaurants and specialty retail). The focal points of the district are Plaza Park, the new movie theater, and the Carnegie Museum.

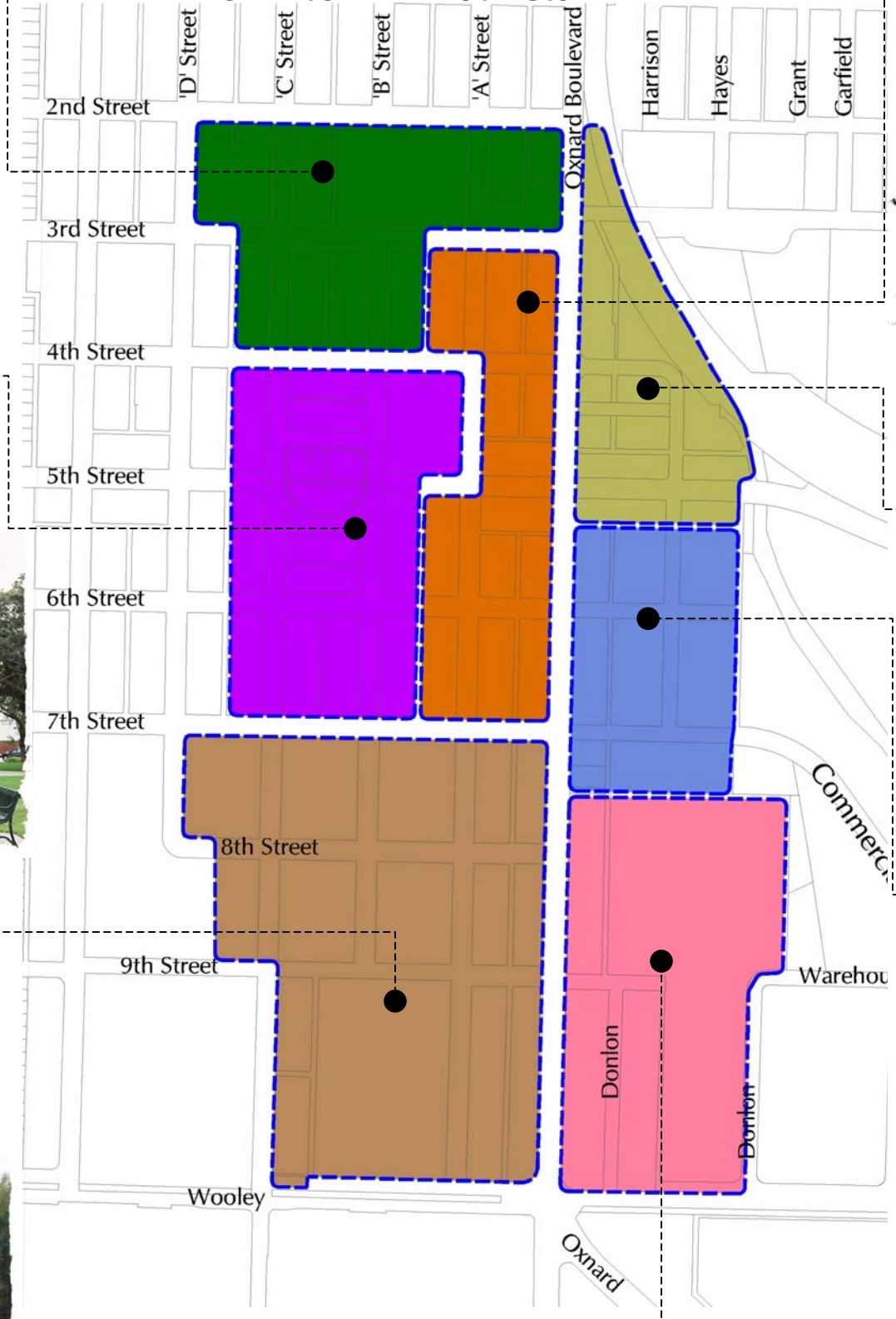


South of Seventh District ←

The South of Seventh District is the largest downtown district and is intended to evolve into an urban residential neighborhood. The eventual conversion of existing non-residential uses to mid- to high-density residential uses will enhance the already-established residential character of the district. This will result in the further envelopment of Downtown's office, retail, and entertainment districts with residential neighborhoods that will provide vitality and contribute substantially to the built-in consumer base for the other districts.



**City of Oxnard
Downtown Strategic Plan
Downtown Districts**



→ **"A" Street Retail District**

"A" Street is Downtown Oxnard's "Main Street." The intent of the "A" Street Retail District is to sustain and enhance the existing character by continued support of retail/office mixed-use, with retail/restaurant on the street level and one or two floors of office space above. The existing scale and character of the buildings on "A" Street, together with the pedestrian-oriented streetscape, set the stage for a thriving commercial district. This includes capitalizing on the district's mid-block alleys and paseos to add visual interest and streetscape amenities, as well as additional points of access and enhanced visibility to ground-floor uses.



→ **The Transportation Center District**



The presence of excellent transportation access, coupled with adjacent land that appears ripe for redevelopment, offers strong opportunities for the establishment of transit-oriented urban center within Downtown. Sufficient parking would have to be provided to accommodate parking demand associated with the OTC and other uses along Fifth Street.

→ **Meta District**

The vision of the Meta District is to establish a unique, mixed-use urban neighborhood. To achieve this vision, future development would consist of medium-density infill housing and neighborhood-oriented retail uses.



Five Points Northeast District ←

The Five Points Northeast District will continue to be anchored by residential uses in the interior of its blocks, but will be buoyed by the addition of new retail and mixed-use projects along Oxnard Boulevard and Wooley Road. These new projects could range from two- to three-story mixed-use structures with retail on the street level and residential units above, to high-volume retail uses dependent on automobile transportation.