REIMAGINE WENATCHEE

TARGET AREA MASTER PLAN

DISCOVERY PHASE SUMMARY

northwest studio
architects urban designers

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments

With numerous publicly and privately led redevelopments and investments slated for Wenatchee's downtown in the coming years, the Reimagine Wenatchee Target Area Master Plan seeks to identify, study, and leverage the common threads that can help tie them into a cohesive whole - one that is supportive of local business and community and that enhances the identity of the city.

The project is led by a Steering Committee composed of local business and property owners, supported by City staff and an interdisciplinary team of architects and planners, economic analysts, mobility and access specialists, and civil infrastructure engineers

Steering Committee

Travis Hornby
General Manager, Pybus Public Market

Todd Kiesz
Partner, JDSA Law

Beth Stipe
Executive Director, Community Foundation North Central Washington

Albert Rookard
President & CEO, Applied Innovation, Inc.

Rory Turner
Owner, Commercial Real Estate Services

City of Wenatchee

Laura Gloria
Executive Services Director

Rob Jammerman
Public Works Director

Consultant Team

Northwest Studio
Planning and Urban Design

EcoNorthwest
Downtown Economics

Nelson Nygaard
Mobility and Access

Perteet
Urban Infrastructure and Utilities

Introduction

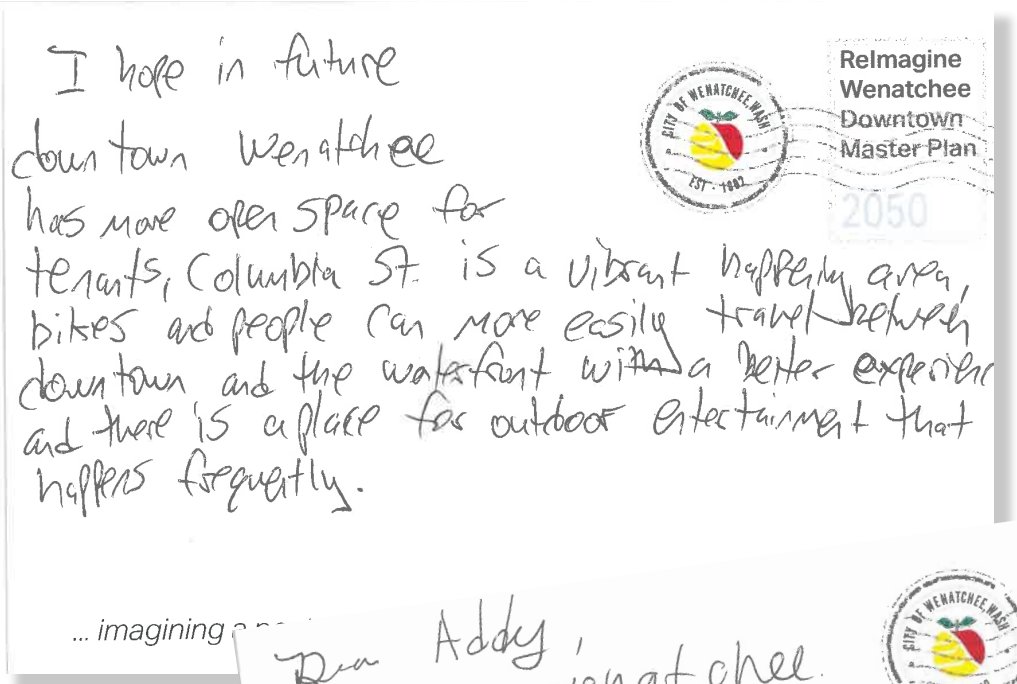
The Reimagine Wenatchee Target Area Master Plan identifies urban public realm and infrastructure improvements that can help to connect a variety of large-scale "Cornerstone" projects and integrate them with the downtown. The goal is to support an economically vibrant, sustainable live/work/play environment in a "Target Area," comprised of the central waterfront, downtown, and warehouse district, extending from Kittitas Street to 5th Street, and Chelan Street to the Columbia River.

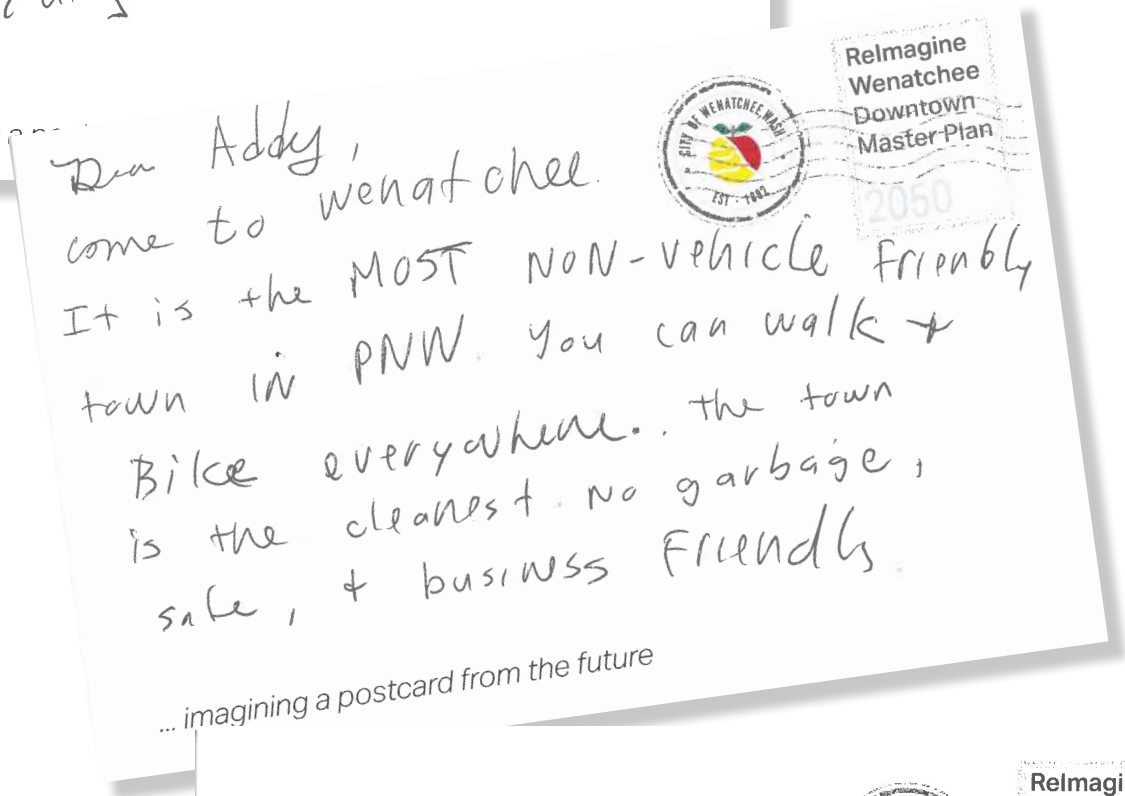
The timing of this study is critical. The Target Area will change significantly in the coming years due to the following pending Cornerstone Projects:

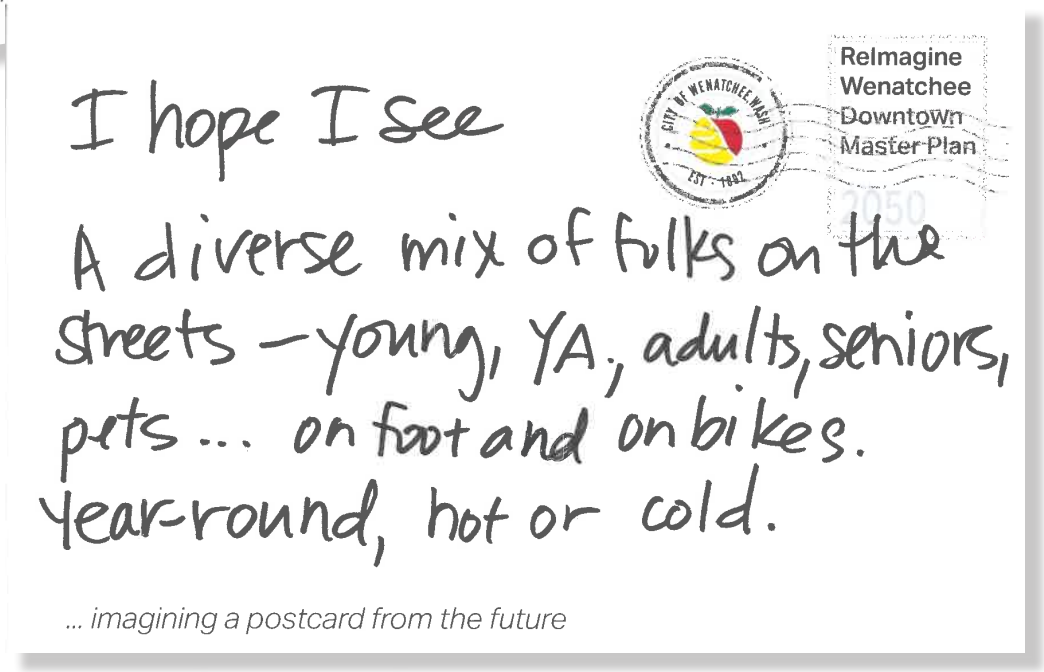
- **Warehouse District along Columbia Street**: Historic warehouse district with underutilized and vacant spaces owned by private and public entities including the Chelan-Douglas Regional Port Authority. This district has tremendous opportunity due to the building stock and proximity to downtown and the waterfront.
- **Mission/Kittitas Development**: A private/public partnership for a new multifamily development that will bring 200 multifamily units with two levels of underground parking to South Wenatchee.
- **Wenatchee Convention Center:** This facility will undergo a significant renovation to include adding additional convention center space and activating the underutilized plaza along Wenatchee Avenue.
- **Riverfront Park Master Plan:** Riverfront Park is currently undergoing phase one of a multi-phased effort to enhance the park with new amenities, expanded trails and other improvements that support the ongoing growth of the waterfront and outdoor recreation.
- **Former PUD Headquarters:** Currently undergoing a master redevelopment process to convert this from the PUD Headquarters to a private mixed-use development; this development has potential to serve as the new gateway to downtown Wenatchee.

The purpose of this Discovery Phase Summary is to establish the existing conditions for the Reimagine Wenatchee effort as well as identify opportunity areas, potential issues, and accompanying solutions for further study throughout the project.

Following the Discovery project phase, the consultant team will embark on the Design phase where we will create a range of urban design and site development scenarios that advance Reimagine Wenatchee objectives.







Example "Postcards from the Future," written by participants in the May 9, 2023 Stakeholder Meeting.

Early Stakeholder Engagement

On the afternoon of May 9th, 2023, a group of downtown stakeholders led City representatives and an interdisciplinary team of planners, urban designers, engineers, mobility experts, and economic analysts on a walking tour of the "Target Area," providing important first-hand insights into the opportunities and challenges faced by downtown businesses, residents, visitors, and property owners.

Later that evening, with logistical support from the City, the group convened a collaborative workshop at Pybus Market to discuss a Vision for the future of the Target Area. Several common themes emerged from the vibrant conversations:

Where Downtown is performing well:

- The Waterfront, including the Pybus Market and key access points across the tracks.
- The ground floor business environment along Wenatchee Ave
- The authenticity of the local building stock, proximity to sought-after recreational amenities, and the unique natural environment.
- The long-standing support and commitment of the local community.

Where Downtown could do better:

- Waste collection and activation of alleys
- Encouraging new housing, development, and a diversity of uses
- Parking
- Limited connections to the waterfront
- Clear code paths for adaptive reuse of existing buildings
- Safety

Potential Opportunities (near term and long term)

- Leverage the quality of the existing building stock to reveal a "built-in" Warehouse District, particularly along Columbia Street
- Pedestrian lighting on streets other than Wenatchee Ave can improve safety.
- Managed parking and clear urban wayfinding will help access and visibility to local businesses.
- Working with the Railroad may help to reduce blockages of crossings.
- Incentives for adaptive reuse and redevelopment.
- Celebrate community character through the creation of cultural, creative, or craft districts that provide a sense of place and showcase the valley's talent and local community.

DOWNTOWN IN CONTEXT

Image Credit: Visit Chelan County

Local and Regional Economics

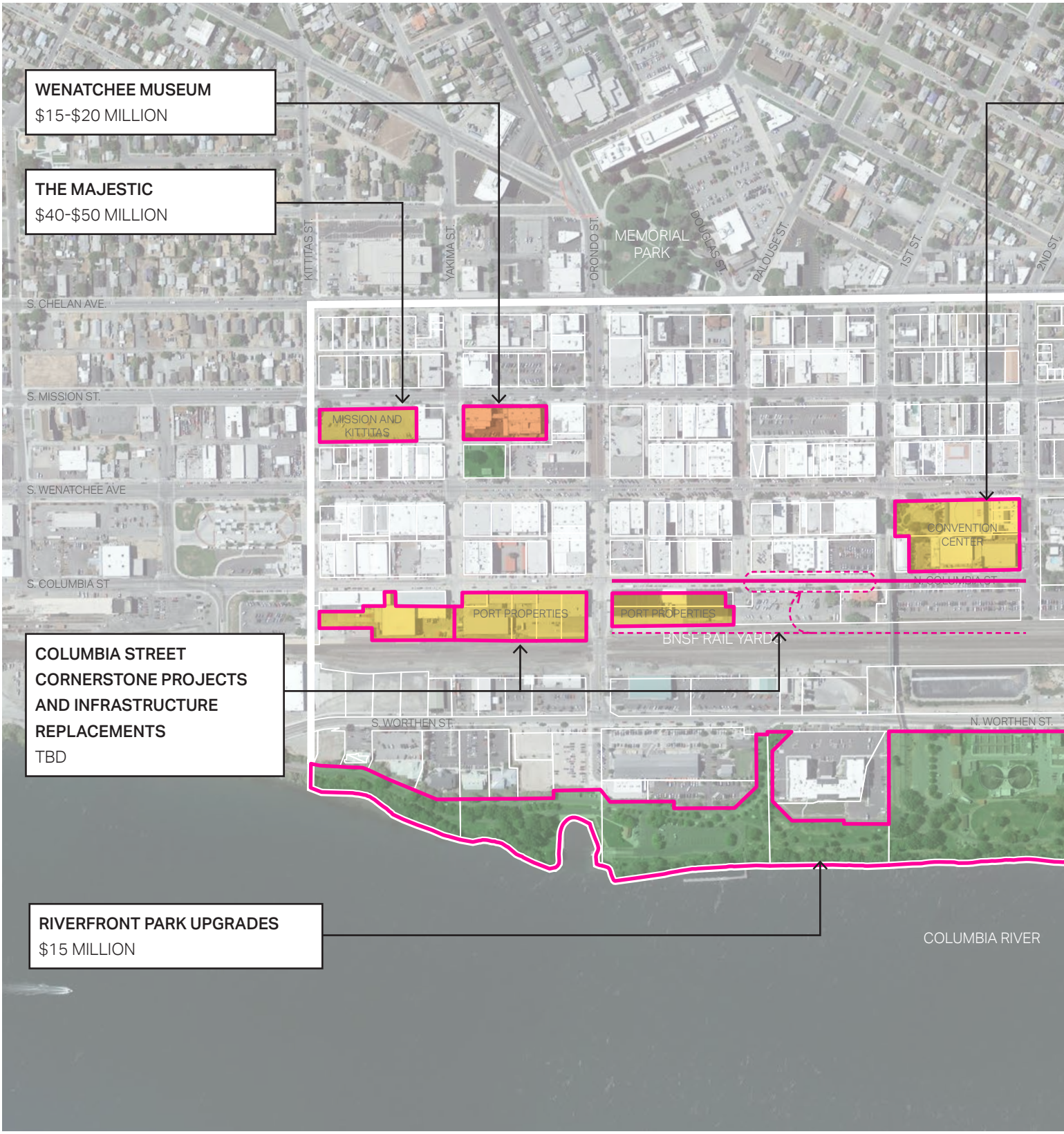
Downtown Wenatchee exists within a multi-jurisdictional context that includes East Wenatchee, Chelan and Douglas Counties, the Chelan Douglas Regional Port Authority, and several nearby cities and unincorporated towns, each of which contribute to the economic vitality of the region. In this way, Wenatchee and its Downtown are inextricably linked to the market dynamics, attributes, and performance of its local peers. Creating a Downtown that is competitive and sought-after among regional businesses and residents, among visitors and families that wish to call it home, will require, in part, an effort to leverage its critical connections to the region, while also differentiating the Downtown as unique and authentic.

Several of Downtown's existing assets can help to underpin a vibrant, shared Vision for the Target Area: the waterfront park, the historic Downtown, the Pybus Public Market, and the major transformations planned by upcoming Cornerstone redevelopment projects.

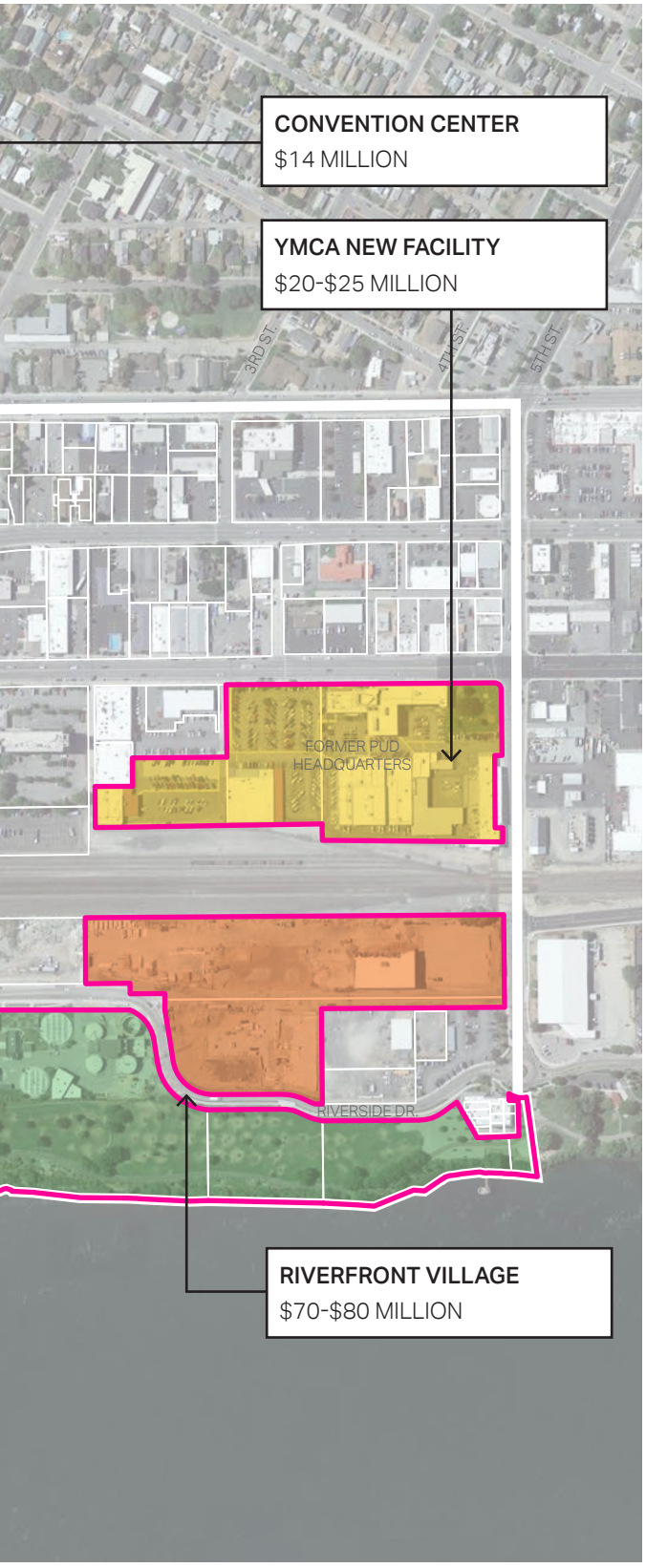
The public sector can enhance the capacity of these assets to support the Downtown by:

1. Implementing sound public policy. Regulations that are clear, sensible, and goal-oriented can significantly influence the feasibility of new programs and developments - whether public or private - to support the Vision for Downtown. New projects are happening Downtown, which indicates that City codes and development standards are working.

2. Identifying and removing obstacles. The two most common financial barriers to new development typically are infrastructure upgrades and high land costs. In this case, several public sector agencies such as the City Port and PUD control land in downtown that they could leverage to yield the highest and best benefit to the community. This could be in the form of new residential units, retail services, and education services. To help offset infrastructure costs, the public agencies could also help with funding the necessary infrastructure upgrades through several funding tools available to government entities. These funding tools may include, but not limited to Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) and Tax Increment Financing (TIF).



The Target Area has $174-$204 million of planned new investment



The Project Pipeline

Downtown Wenatchee and its surrounding area will experience significant investment in the coming years. The Chelan Douglas Regional Port Authority (CDRPA) and the City of Wenatchee have large ownership of land in Downtown which is ready for redevelopment. There are also several projects being spearheaded by other public and non-profit agencies, along with projects being led by the private sector, which will further catalyze new development. These private development projects include the Majestic and Riverfront Village residential units. Other significant public projects worthy of mention include the Wenatchee Museum east entrance construction, convention center renovation, and YMCA's new facility on a portion of the Chelan County PUD's former headquarters.

In all, there are about $200 million dollars in planned downtown renovations and new construction underway. This does not include major infrastructure projects which the City of Wenatchee is analyzing, planning, or considering as well.

Project	Renovation/Construction Cost
The Majestic Apartments	$40-$50 million
Riverfront Village Apartments	$70-$80 million
Wenatchee Museum East Construction	$15-$20 million
Convention Center Renovation	$16 million
YMCA New Facility	$20-$25 million
Riverfront Park Upgrades	$15 million
Columbia Street District/ Infrastructure	TBD
Total	**$174-$204 million**

Cornerstone Projects

Other Planned Projects

While there are several important local examples for large-scale district-wide redevelopment and repositioning, such as the implementation of the Wenatchee Waterfront Plan, it is instructive to gather lessons from other municipalities as well - to help ground check best practices, key drivers, potential partnerships, and pathways to implementation.

Case Study
Bellingham Waterfront District

Bellingham's Waterfront District has undergone a remarkable transformation since the Port of Bellingham acquired the Georgia-Pacific property in 2005. The district, once plagued by industrial closure and contamination, has been revitalized through extensive cleanup efforts and strategic planning. The redevelopment plan, estimated to span 40-50 years across five phases, aims to reconnect downtown to the waterfront by creating a mixed-use neighborhood that combines commercial, residential, educational, and recreational spaces.

The Port and the City of Bellingham have formed a partnership, making significant public investments in environmental cleanup, infrastructure development, public access, and marine facilities. The Port is primarily responsible for cleanup and marine infrastructure costs, while the City funds streets, parks, and utilities. Both entities anticipate recovering their investments through increased property values and private development. A master development agreement with Harcourt Developments kickstarted private development of the waterfront. The Waterfront District has successfully attracted new businesses, generating employment opportunities and reinvigorating the local economy.

Image Credit: Bellingham Downtown Waterfront

Lessons Learned

Having a Vision is Key

It took many years from when Georgia-Pacific shut down its pulp, paper and chemical plant on Bellingham's downtown waterfront to when private development began to happen. However, the early development of a vision and framework plan for how the waterfront should be transformed and help seed smaller capital and infrastructure projects to get the land ready for redevelopment.

Overall, having a vision and framework plan can provide a strategic and comprehensive guide for the development and growth of a specific subarea within a larger region. It serves as a blueprint for future land uses, development patterns, and community engagements within the planning area.

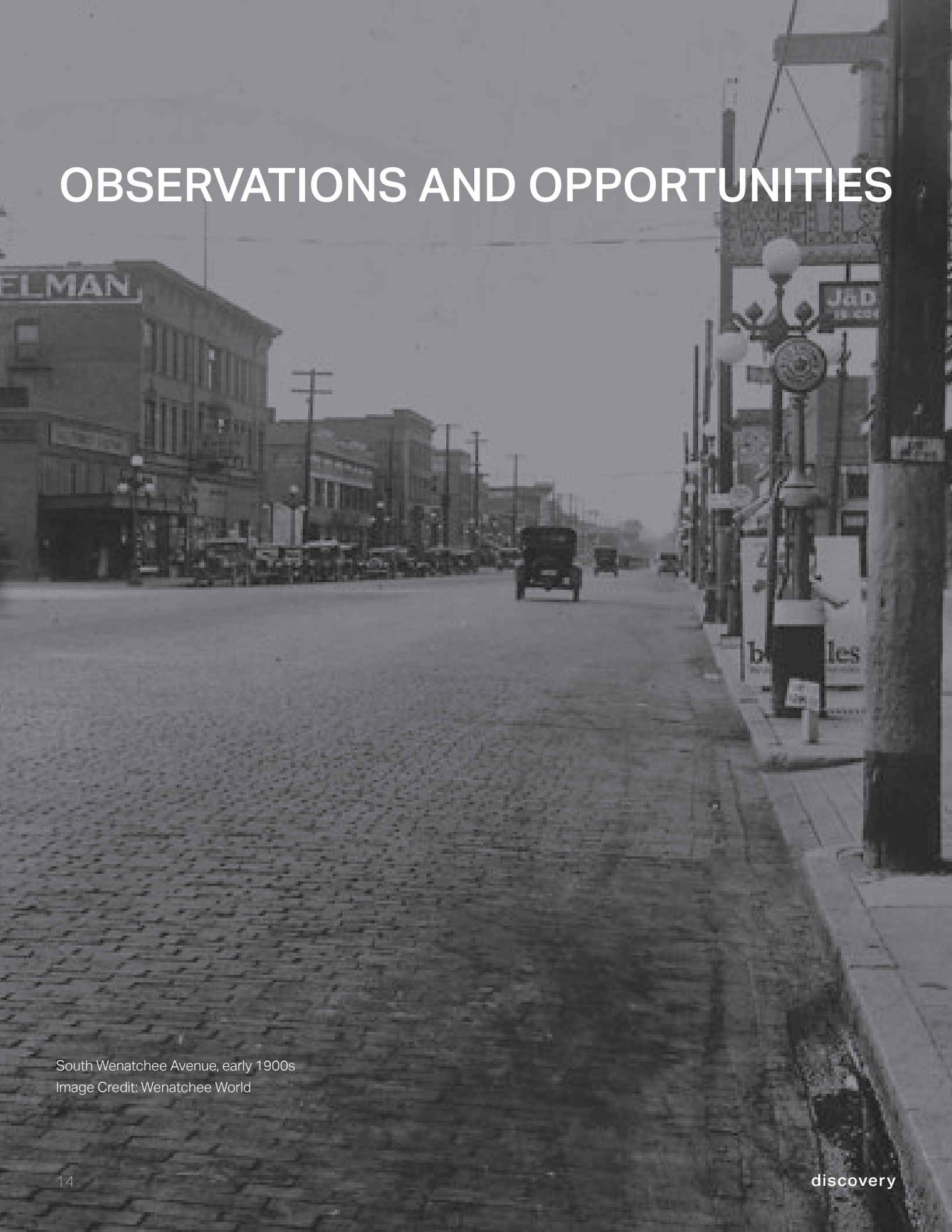
Partnerships & Public Investments

The Port and City of Bellingham have joined forces in a strategic partnership to revitalize the Waterfront District through a comprehensive redevelopment plan. This collaboration involves substantial public investments in critical areas such as environmental cleanup, infrastructure development, public access enhancements, creation of public open spaces, and marine infrastructure improvements. The primary objective behind these public investments is to stimulate and attract a significant private investment. By making strategic public investments, the Port and City aim to create a favorable environment that encourages private sector participation and leverages additional resources to further transform and develop the Waterfront District.

Funding for Infrastructure & Clean Up

The Port takes on the responsibility of funding the majority of the environmental cleanup efforts and the development of marine infrastructure within the Waterfront District. Furthermore, the Port will offer the City any required properties for the development of infrastructure, public access points, parks, and open spaces. To recoup its investment in the Waterfront District, the Port plans to sell or lease the property in the future. On the other hand, the City bears the costs associated with streets, parks, and utilities. It anticipates recovering its investment through increased property values on the waterfront, which will generate additional revenue.

OBSERVATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

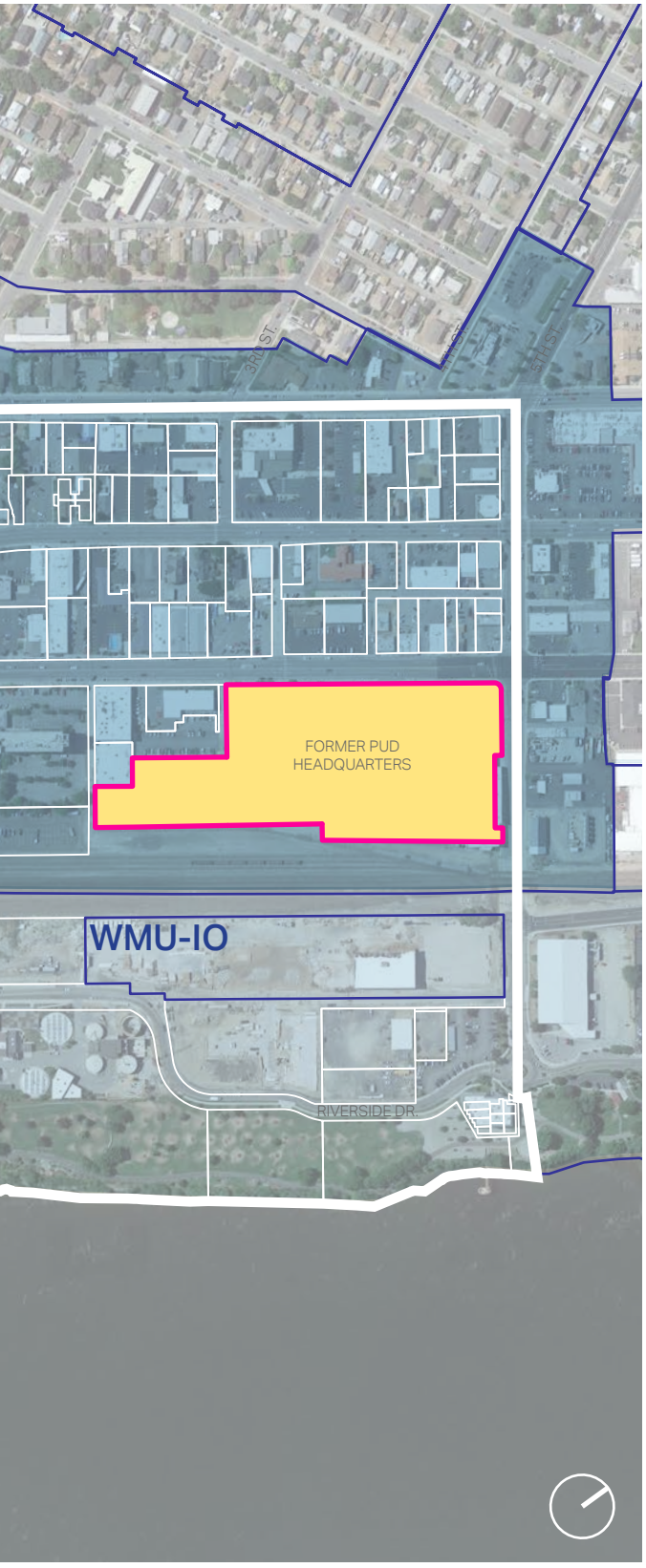


South Wenatchee Avenue, early 1900s
Image Credit: Wenatchee World

The following observations stem from a comprehensive review of City of Wenatchee planning and transportation information, as well as conversations with agency partners (e.g., Link Transit, City of Wenatchee, and the Chelan Douglas Transportation Council [CDTC]) and the project Steering Committee comprised of downtown business and property owners.

Observations describe the current regulatory context for potential new public and private sector development, parking, utility infrastructure, and the functionality of the Downtown public space network, including streets, trails, and open spaces.

Because downtown is largely built-out, new development will likely be infill, adaptive reuse, large-scale Cornerstone projects, or other public



OBSERVATIONS

The Regulatory Landscape

Key adopted regulations and planning efforts affecting the Target Area include:

- South Wenatchee Ave. Corridor Study
- North Wenatchee TIF District Implementation
- Our Valley Action Plan
- Central Business Subarea Plan
- Wenatchee Waterfront Sub Area Plan

Zoning

Several distinct zoning categories regulate land use and built form within the downtown, providing development standards and guidelines that are unique to the purpose and intent of each district or overlay. A Historic Entertainment Overlay establishes additional opportunities for investment assistance and/or tax relief through preservation programs. Several districts permit building heights up to 90'. Select characteristics for each zone are noted below:

- **Central Business District (CBD)**
  90 feet building height
- **CBD - Historic Entertainment Overlay (HEO)**
  90 feet building height
  Frontage on Wenatchee Ave required.
- **CBD - Columbia Street Overlay (CSO)**
  Raised docks permitted
- **Waterfront Mixed Use (WMU)**
  90 feet building height
- **WMU - Pedestrian Overlay (WMU-PO)**
  Live work permitted, 60' feet building height between Kittitas and First
- **WMU - Industrial Overlay (WMU-IO)**
  Light Industrial permitted as a Conditional Use.
- **Shoreline Master Program Overlay** (eff. 10/31/14)

While the downtown zones and development standards enable substantial density, generally small lot sizes and a limited number of large property assemblies will likely cause new privately led developments to be focused on infill, adaptive reuse, or partnerships that augment large-scale Cornerstone projects, or other public/private development sites.

focused on scattered site
c/private development sites.

Cornerstone Projects

Publicly-Owned Properties

Potential Private Redevelopment Sites

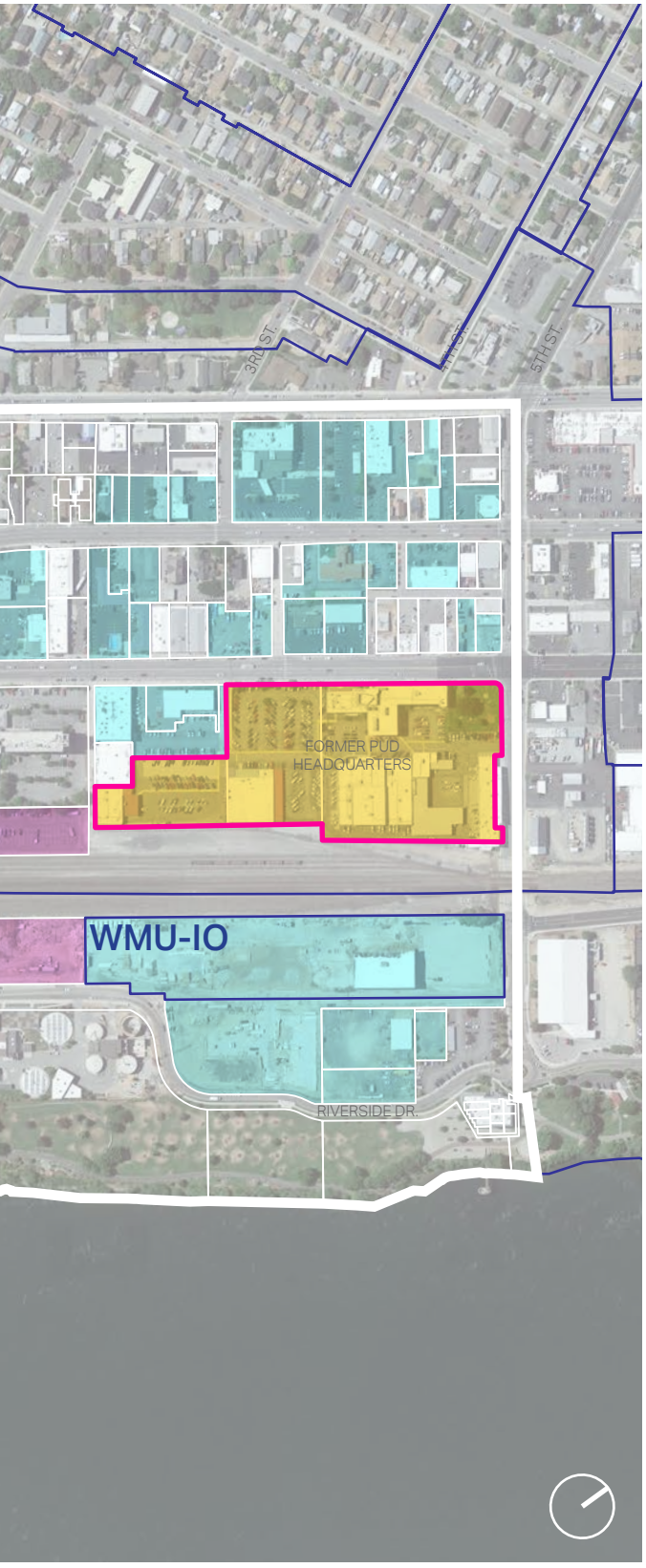
Nearly the entire Eastern frontage along Columbia St. is publicly owne

OPPORTUNITIES

The Regulatory Landscape

Nearly the entire Eastern frontage of Columbia Street is publicly owned and could be redeveloped, leveraging the potential for new uses and street level activities to enliven the public realm. As the Steering Committee (note membership on page 4) and local stakeholders have commented through walking tours and meetings, this presents an opportunity to reveal an inherently authentic and "built-in" warehouse district in Downtown Wenatchee.

Similarly, new private development sites waterward of the BNSF tracks have the potential to establish a new band of programs and functions fronting Riverside Drive and the Columbia River, opposite the Pybus Market. This could provide vital opportunities for residents and businesses to enliven the area "across the tracks" from the center of downtown - during more times of the day, and into the night, increasing a sense of security and leveraging the City's history of investment in projects along the waterfront.



ed and could be redeveloped.

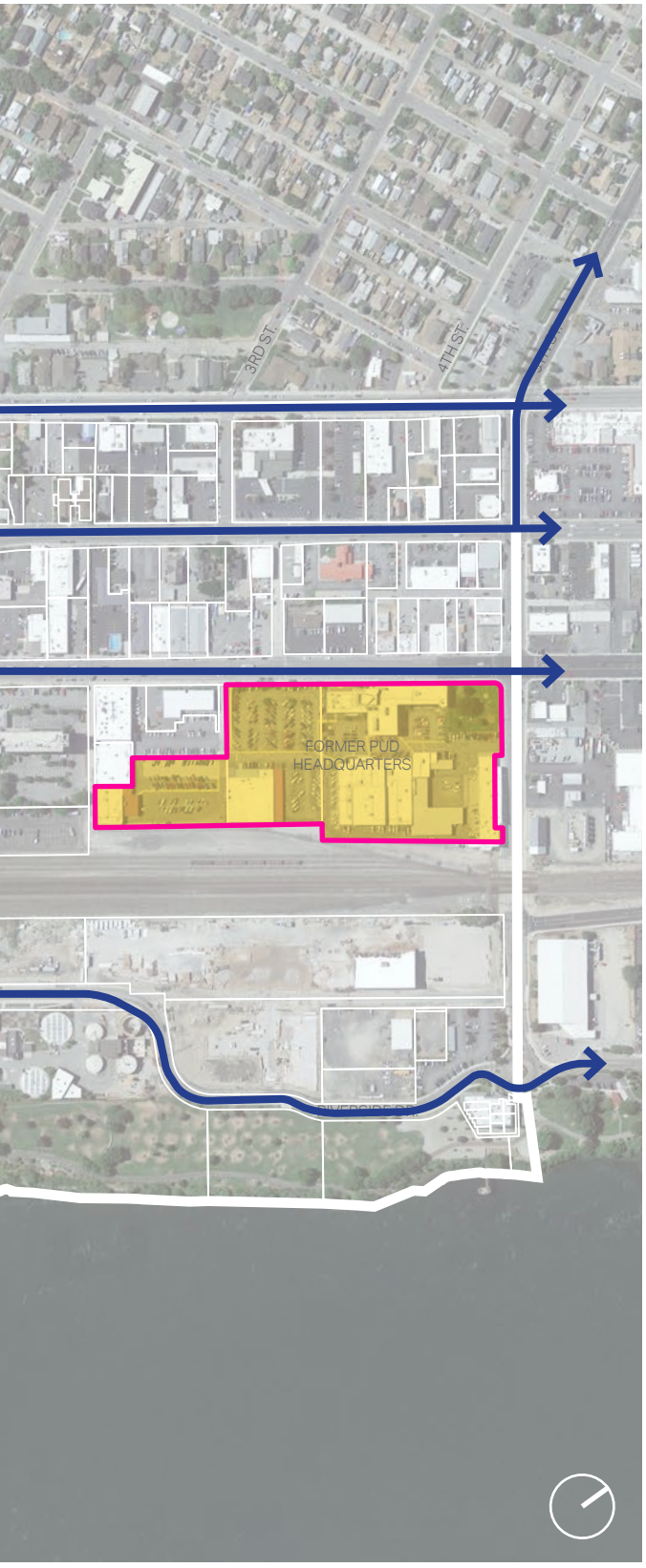
Cornerstone Projects

Publicly-Owned Properties

Planned Frontage Redevelopment

Potential Frontage Redevelopment

Wenatchee Ave is Downtown's North-South transit spine, but stops la



ck ADA access.

OBSERVATIONS

Transit

Wenatchee Ave is Downtown's north/south transit spine. Link Transit provides transit service every 15 minutes along Wenatchee Ave that connects riders to destinations in North Wenatchee.

The Chelan Ave and Mission St couplet (SR 285) and Columbia Station serve riders making regional trips via transit. Link Transit operates many of its intercity routes along Chelan Ave and Mission St that connects riders to Downtown Wenatchee via Columbia Station from Leavenworth, Cashmere, Entiat, Chelan, Rock Island, and Malaga.

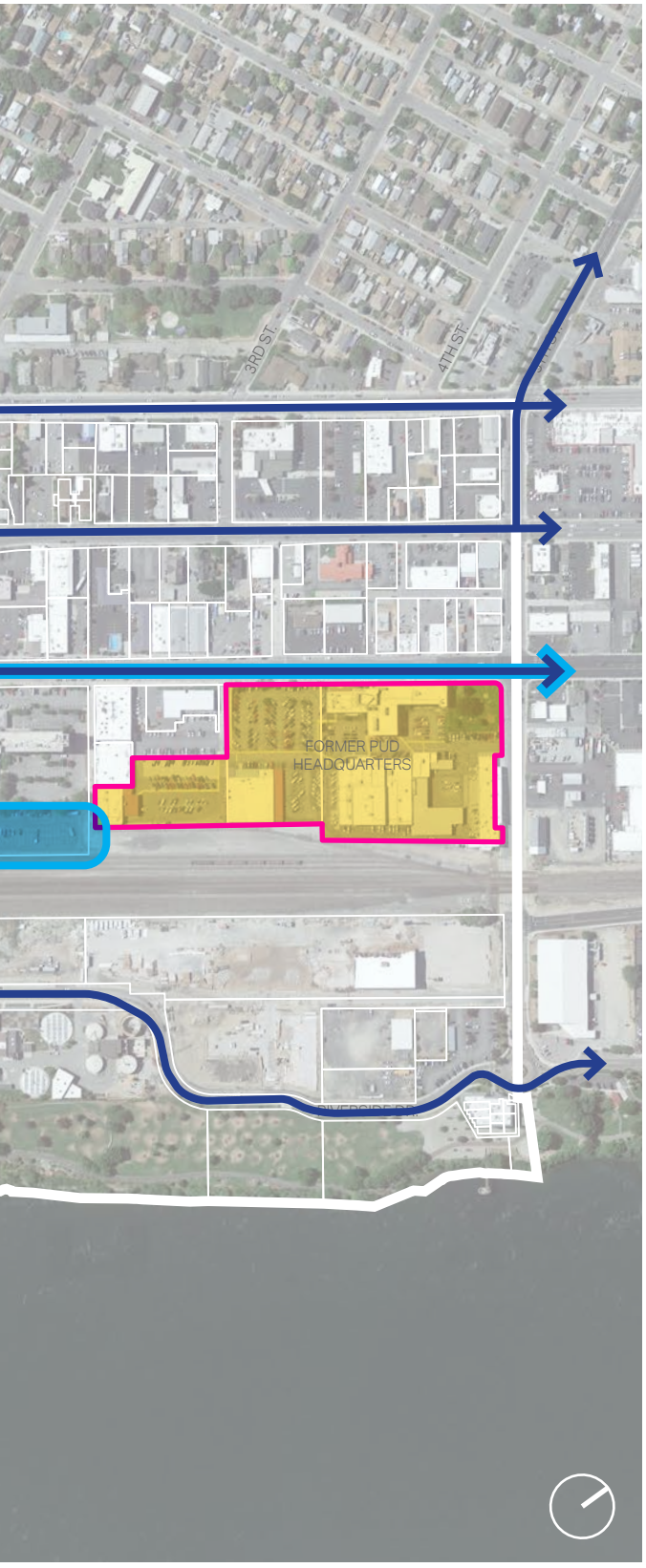
Transit stops along Wenatchee Ave in Downtown are not easily accessible to people using mobility devices. The configuration of the Wenatchee Ave streetscape and curb line limits Link Transit buses from deploying accessible ramps for riders using mobility devices directly onto the curb level. Currently, buses stop at crosswalks, and riders descend curb ramps into the streetspace to access the bus.

Link Transit provides free, frequent transit service for everyone traveling to destinations in Wenatchee and regional destinations, including Leavenworth, Chelan, the Saddlerock trailhead, and the Mission Ridge ski area.

Columbia Street connects buses to/from Columbia Station. The four-way stop at Columbia St/Orondo Ave supports reliable bus turning movements for routes traveling west from Columbia Station. The Wenatchee Ave/ Orondo Ave intersection lacks a turn signal. Link Transit runs out-of-service buses along Columbia St to avoid confusing riders waiting for the bus along Wenatchee Ave and Mission St.

Cornerstone Projects


MEMORIAL PARK
YAKIMA ST.
DOUGLAS ST.
PALOUSE ST.
1ST ST.
2ND ST.
S. CHELAN AVE.
S. MISSION ST.
MISSION AND KITTITAS
S. WENATCHEE AVE
T
S. COLUMBIA ST
CONVENTION CENTER
PARKING
PORT PROPERTIES
PORT PROPERTIES
BNSF RAIL YARDS
COLUMBIA RIVER



OPPORTUNITIES

Transit

Encourage transit for Downtown trips and connections to parking. Link Transit provides free, frequent transit every 15 minutes along Wenatchee Ave. Transit connections can connect residents, visitors, and employees from their homes or parking hubs to the heart of Downtown. Transit can play an important role in supporting the influx of visitors accessing the Convention Center and other Downtown destinations during events.

Installing additional sidewalk improvements at the existing bulb-outs along Wenatchee Avenue would improve mobility access and increase efficiency for buses at all specific stops.

Work with Link Transit to activate and optimize convenient connections to Columbia Station. Wenatchee's Amtrak train station and transit center (Columbia Station) consolidate regional mobility connections between Columbia St and S Wenatchee Ave along Kittitas St. Improved pedestrian connections between Amtrak Station and Columbia Station, along with enhancements to S Wenatchee Ave and Columbia St, could help create a key gateway for regional travelers coming to Downtown.

Additional opportunities to enhance connections to Columbia Station include:

- **Potential reconfigurations of the existing four-lane cross section along South Wenatchee Ave**, which could include angled parking, transit stop improvements, all ages and abilities bikeways, and truck route improvements. The City of Wenatchee is currently conducting a study of South Wenatchee Avenue to understand how the street can most effectively serve the mobility needs of people traveling in South Wenatchee.
- **Bus stop and access improvements at South Wenatchee Ave and Kittitas St**, which could support transit speed and reliability and improve passenger access. Bus bulbs could shorten street crossing distance, and operational efficiency could be improved by allowing buses to pick up passengers at in-lane stops or without entering the Columbia Station bus loop.
- **Leveraging planned Columbia Station improvements create a regional mobility hub** that serves residents needing to commute to or through downtown, and that also serves as a gateway for visitors connecting to the many uses and amenities Downtown.

Wenatchee's sloped streets and sidewalks can be a challenge for urb

OBSERVATIONS

Walking, Rolling, and Biking

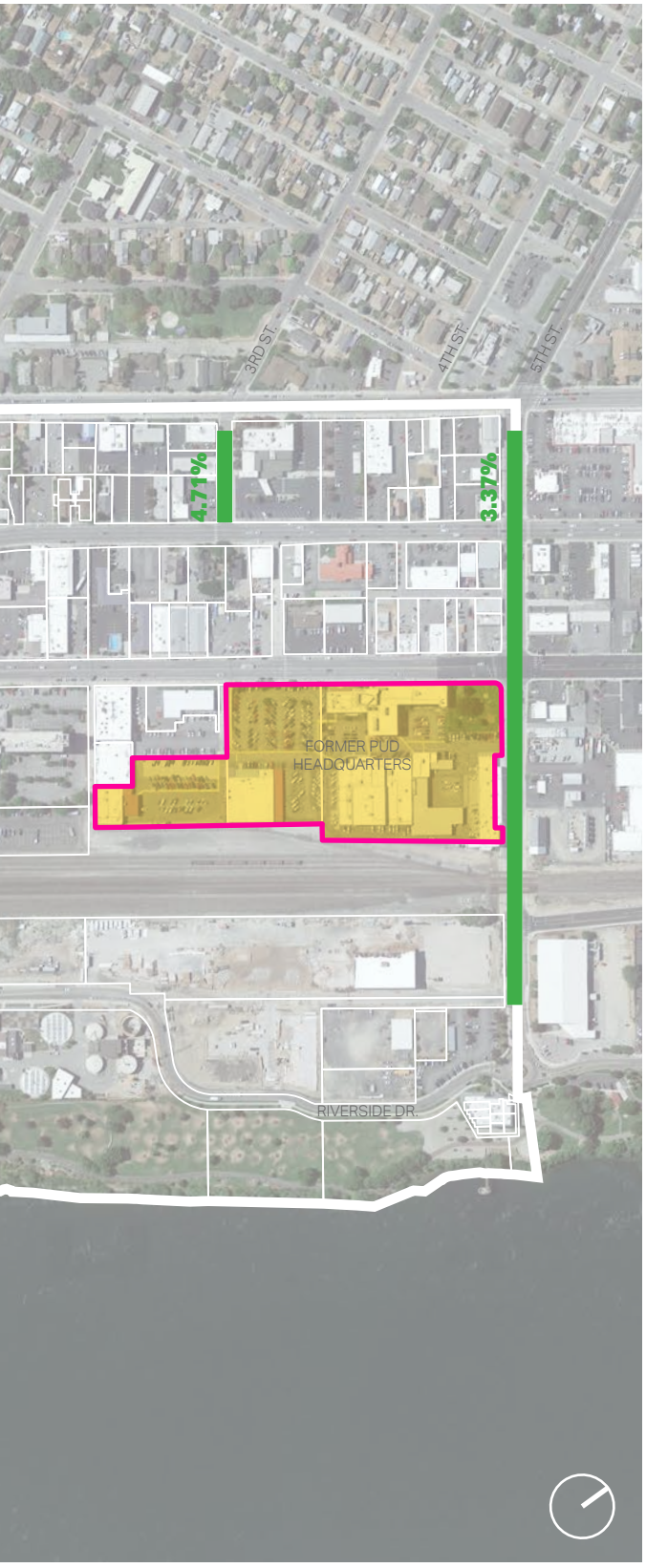
Columbia St lacks sidewalks and needs repair.
While most of Downtown has a complete network of sidewalks, Columbia St and the railroad crossing at Orondo Ave lack accessible sidewalks and crossings. The roadway surface along Columbia St is in disrepair creating a bumpy ride for people on bikes, in buses, and driving cars.

It is important to note here that there is direct contrast between the need for safe walking and biking routes along Columbia Street and the critical needs of local manufacturing and industrial businesses, which rely on adjacent parking, freight movements, and convenient vehicle access to their facilities.

The Apple Loop Trail is Wenatchee's premier active transportation facility, yet only has one designated direct connection from Downtown. The 1st St bike/ped bridge is the gateway between Downtown and the Apple Loop Trail. 5th St and Orondo Ave provide at-grade connections across the railroad tracks via painted bike lanes.

The City has made good headway in establishing connected bikeways but much work is still left to be done to implement facilities that serve people of all ages and abilities. Except for the one-block protected bike lane along 1st St between Mission St and Wenatchee Ave and the painted bike lane across the railroad tracks along Orondo Ave, there is little to no dedicated space for people traveling by bike within Downtown.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) it is good practice to make the public realm as accessible as possible to all mobility types and abilities.



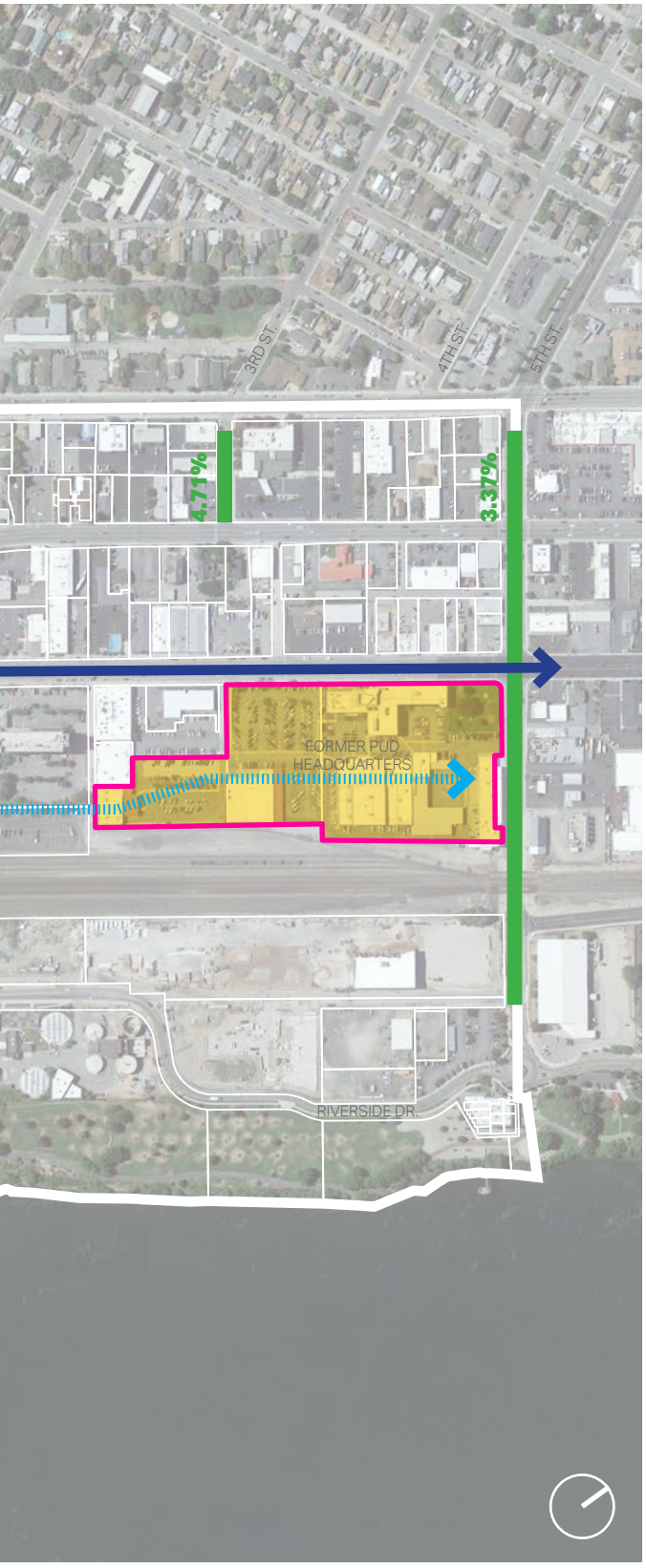
an accessibility.

Cornerstone Projects

Streets with average slope greater than 5%

Streets with average slope less than 5%

Columbia Street could become a shared space for multiple modes of



transportation.

OPPORTUNITIES

Walking, Rolling, and Biking

Create an all ages and abilities bikeway network Downtown. Safe, comfortable bikeways connecting to Downtown can make biking an easy choice for people traveling Downtown or to the waterfront and Apple Capital Recreation Trail (Loop Trail).

The CDTC's Bike Plan recommends bikeways along 1st St connecting to the bike/ped bridge over the railroad tracks as well as complete bikeway connections along 5th St and Orondo Ave to the waterfront. Repurposing street space for separated space for people biking will make Downtown more comfortable and accessible to more people. Safe crossings of busy streets like Chelan Ave and Mission St are important for the Downtown bike network.

Columbia St presents an alternative for a north/south connection for people biking in Downtown, especially if it connects from Columbia Station and the railroad crossing at Thurston St to 5th St via Electric Avenue through the PUD Headquarters redevelopment.

Make Columbia St a business-focused streetscape, recognizing that the future of urban commerce will require delicately balancing interactions between vehicles, pedestrians, bikes, and service deliveries. Columbia St lacks accessible sidewalks and street crossings for people walking and rolling. As noted above, Columbia St could also function as a safe and comfortable alternative to Wenatchee Ave for people biking north/south in Downtown. The potential new connection to 5th St through the PUD Headquarters redevelopment could create a complete connection from Columbia Station to the Riverfront Park via 5th St. Columbia St could function as a vibrant, people-focused spine with shared or festival street treatments that connect people to businesses, create calm, slow speed conditions for people walking, rolling, and biking north/south, and accommodate cars and delivery trucks accessing local businesses.

Use streetscape infrastructure upgrades to improve options for mobility impaired. Orondo could become an accessible grade connection between Columbia and Wenatchee and across the tracks.

Throughout the downtown, opportunities exist for outdoor seating, gathering, and the use of sidewalks and public realm components for open space.

- Cornerstone Projects
- Existing Shared-Space Bike Infrastructure
- Potential New Dedicated Bike Infrastructure
- Potential Secondary Bike Infrastructure

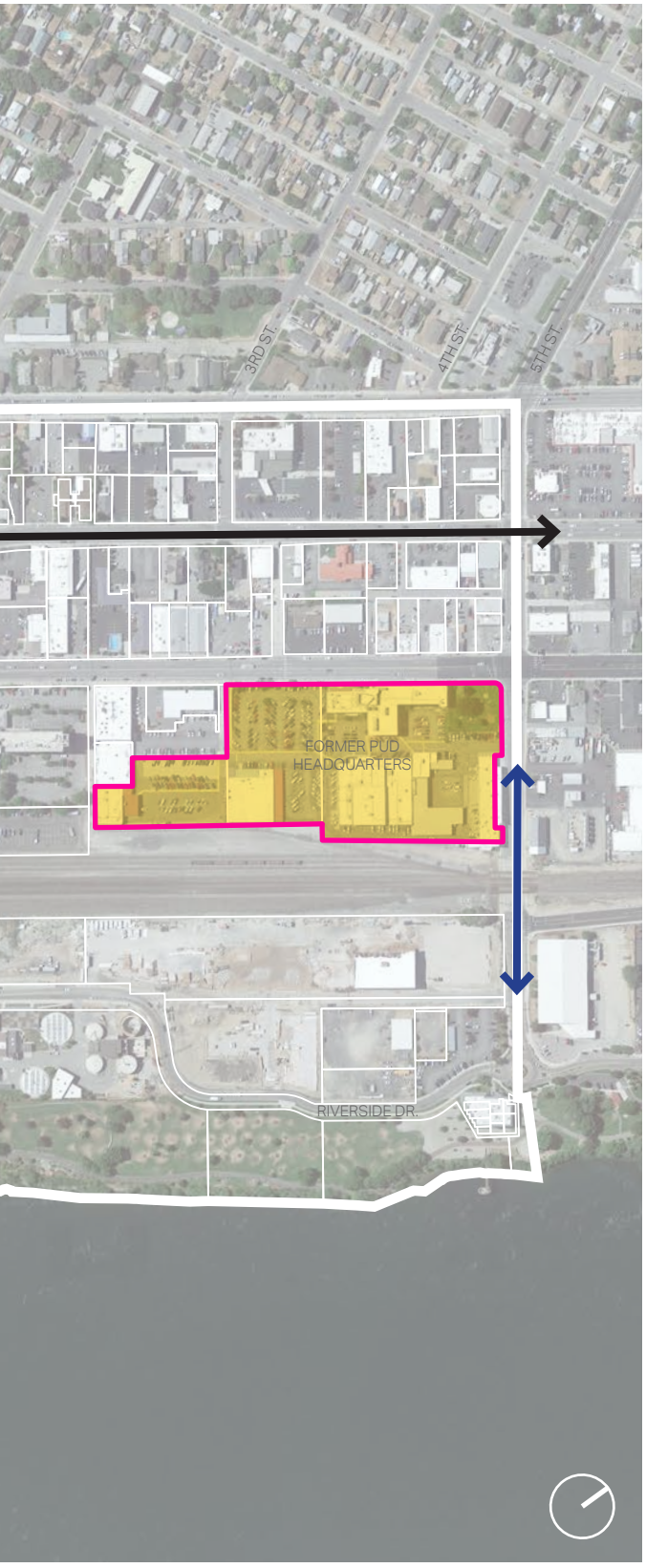
The Target Area has over 4,000 lineal feet of waterfront, but only three

OBSERVATIONS

Connectivity

Railroad tracks and a state highway bound Downtown and limit east/west connectivity. State Route 285 (SR 285) is the Chelan Ave and Mission St north/south couplet along the west edge of Downtown. Both Chelan Ave and Mission St are three travel lanes wide in one direction and carry large amounts of fast-moving traffic through the heart of Wenatchee. The BNSF railroad tracks to the east have limited crossings, including a pedestrian bridge at 1st St and at-grade crossings at 5th St, Orondo Ave, and Thurston St. Trains sometimes block at-grade crossings for more than 20 minutes at a time limiting east/west travel between Downtown and the waterfront.

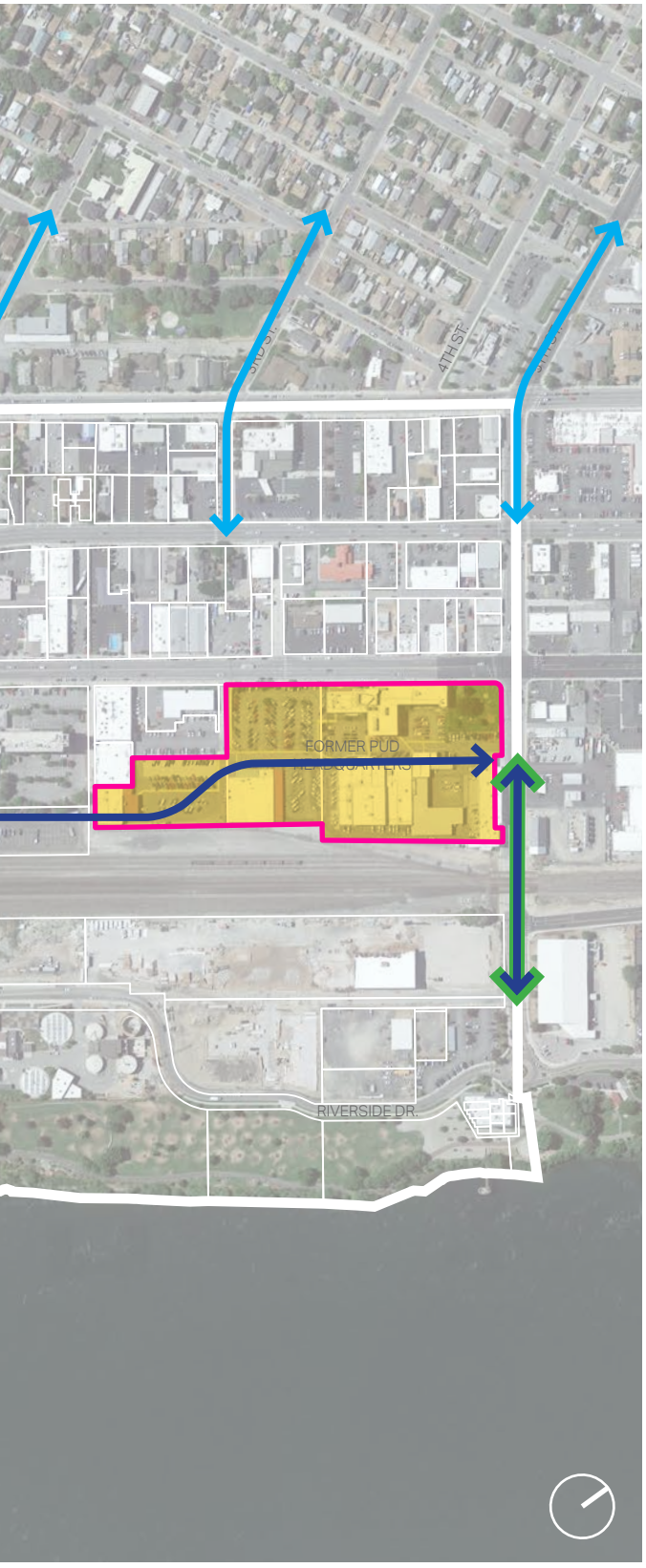
Confluence Parkway will provide a new regional connection between North Wenatchee across the Wenatchee River to US 2/97 and points north. Funded by a federal INFRA grant, Confluence Parkway will relieve congestion on N Wenatchee Ave/SR 285 by creating a second north/south connection that will serve regional freight and transit routes among other travelers. Currently, congestion along N Wenatchee Ave causes significant delay that results in unreliable freight and transit travel. The project includes upgrades to the Loop Trail and waterfront in North Wenatchee. Confluence Parkway will connect to the Downtown street network either via the Chelan Ave/Mission St couplet or Wenatchee Ave.



e points of access to Downtown.

- Cornerstone Projects
- Grade Separated Railroad Crossings
- At-Grade Railroad Crossings
- SR 285


MEMORIAL PARK
DOUGLAS ST.
S. CHELAN AVE.
S. MISSION ST.
MISSION AND KITTITAS
S. WENATCHEE AVE
S. COLUMBIA ST
PORT PROPERTIES
PORT PROPERTIES
BNSF RAIL YARDS
CONVENTION CENTER
N. COLUMBIA ST
S. WORTHEN ST.
N. WORTHEN ST.
COLUMBIA RIVER



OPPORTUNITIES

Connectivity

Enhance the comfort and convenience of east/west connections into and through Downtown. People must cross Chelan Ave and Mission St (SR 285) to access Downtown from the residential areas to the west. Additionally, the lack of crossings of the railroad tracks limits connections between Downtown and the waterfront. Safe, comfortable crossings of SR 285 and the railroad for people walking, rolling, and bicycling could enhance access to Downtown, calm traffic along Chelan Ave and Mission St, and strengthen Downtown's connection to the waterfront.

- Elevate comfortable and convenient access to the pedestrian bridge at 1st St and at-grade crossings at 5th St, Orondo Ave, and Thurston St to provide access across the railroad tracks. The Central Business District Sub Area Plan (2007) identified 1st St, Palouse St, and Orondo Ave as key east/west commercial corridors. The CDTC Bike Plan (2022) recommends safe, comfortable east/west bikeway connections at 5th St, 1st St, and Orondo Ave.

  The City of Wenatchee's 2023-2028 transportation improvement program allocates funds for an improved pedestrian crossing at 5th St and Emerson Ave. to support 5th St as a safe, comfortable east/west connection along the north edge of Downtown that connects to Riverfront Park.

Leverage potential new connections (i.e., Electric Avenue concept) through the redevelopment of the Fifth St Chelan County PUD site. The community vision for the redevelopment of the PUD's Fifth Street Headquarters introduces a concept to create a north/south spine through the campus that connects to Downtown and the Convention Center campus via Columbia Street. A new north/south connection parallel to Wenatchee Ave could add connectivity to Downtown and support Columbia St as a people-focused connection and streetscape.

Use the new connections created by the Confluence Parkway and North Wenatchee Ave spine to enhance mobility options to and through Downtown. The design of Confluence Parkway's connection to the Downtown street network—whether via Chelan Ave/Mission St (SR 285) or Wenatchee Ave should balance the priorities of vehicles with people walking, biking, and using transit needing travel to and through Downtown and provide intuitive wayfinding for the new connections.

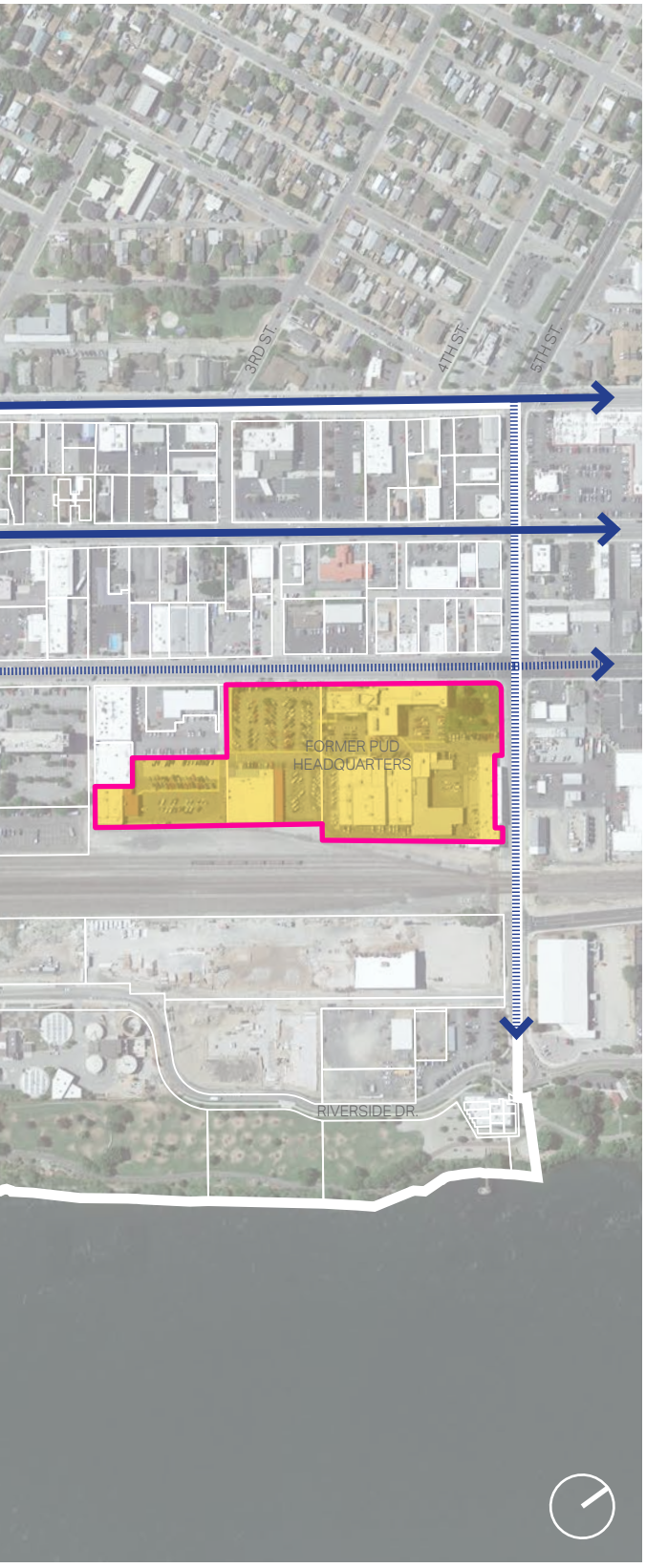
Cornerstone Projects

Enhanced connection Opportunity

Bike connections recommended by prior plans

Key Connections to Residential Areas

Current freight movements avoid angled parking and pedestrians alo



OBSERVATIONS

Freight

Chelan Ave and Mission St (SR 285) are the primary freight routes to and through Downtown.
Truck route signage along SR 285 directs trucks to access Downtown businesses and the waterfront via 5th St, Orondo Ave, or Kittitas St.

Wenatchee Ave restricts truck through-traffic and only allows local deliveries.
Truck diverters on Wenatchee Ave at 2nd St and Kittitas St direct trucks eastbound to access Columbia Street. Downtown deliveries use Orondo Ave to access businesses.

ng the core of Wenatchee Ave

Cornerstone Projects

Primary Freight Route

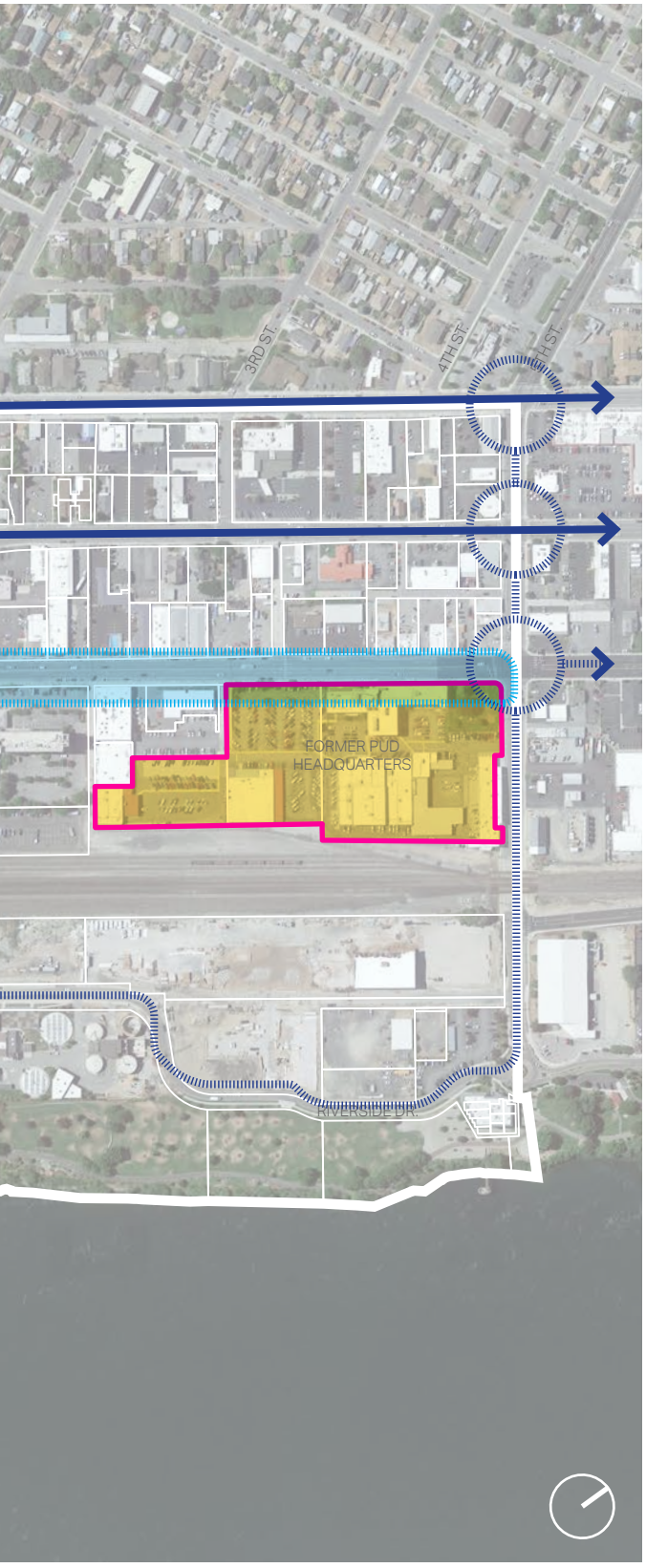
Secondary Freight Route

Explore alternative (and productive) freight routes to carve out new pu

OPPORTUNITIES

Freight

Ensure reliable goods movement and local deliveries to Downtown businesses. Chelan Ave and Mission St (SR 285) are Downtown's primary freight routes. Trucks accessing the waterfront or Downtown businesses must use streets in the supporting freight system, including Columbia St, 5th St, 2nd St, Orondo Ave, or Kittitas St. Truck through-traffic is not allowed along Wenatchee Ave in Downtown. Design improvements to streets in the supporting freight system Downtown (such as Columbia St.) must accommodate truck movements and business access.



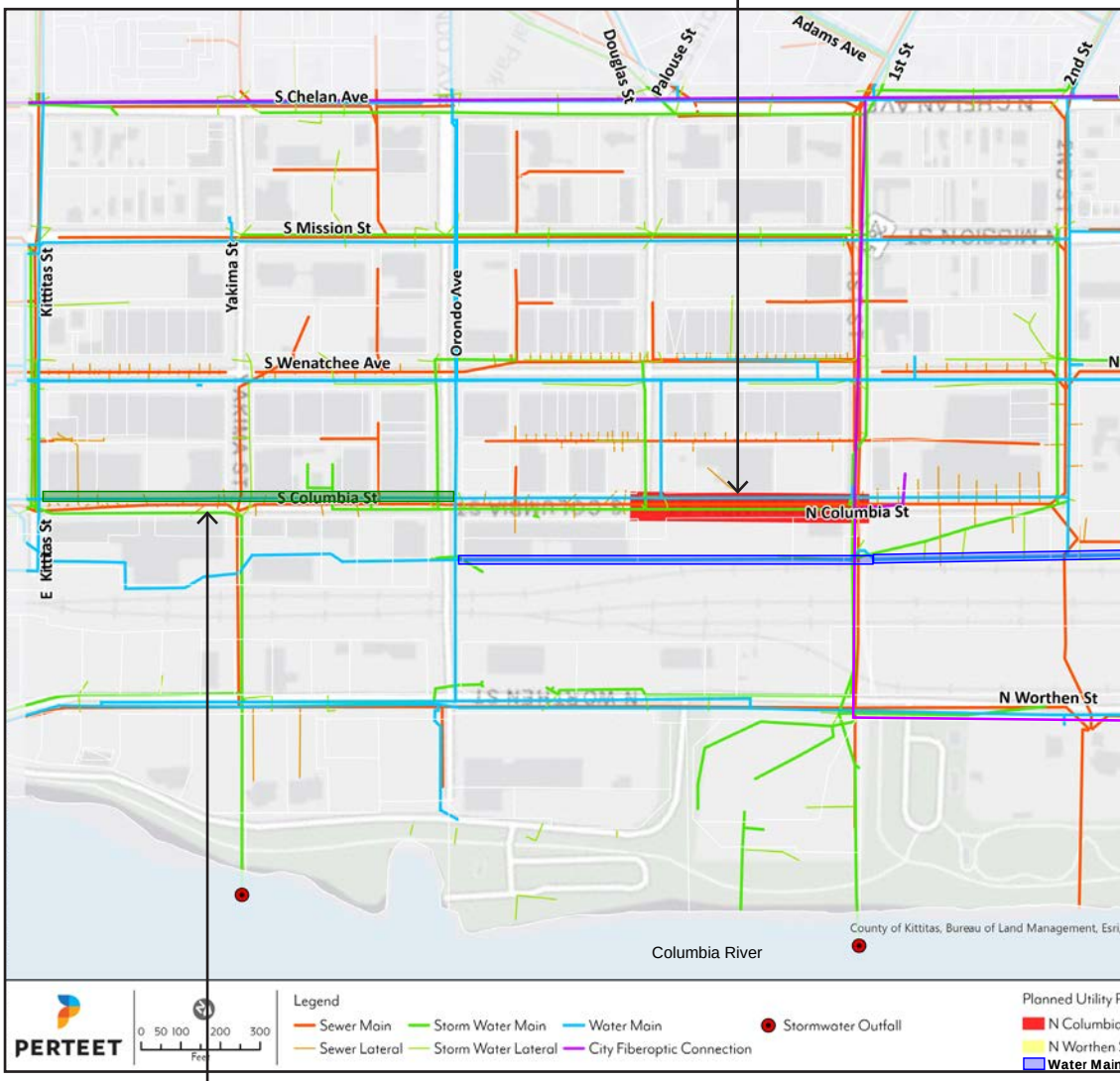
ublic spaces.

Cornerstone Projects

Primary Freight Route

Secondary Freight Route

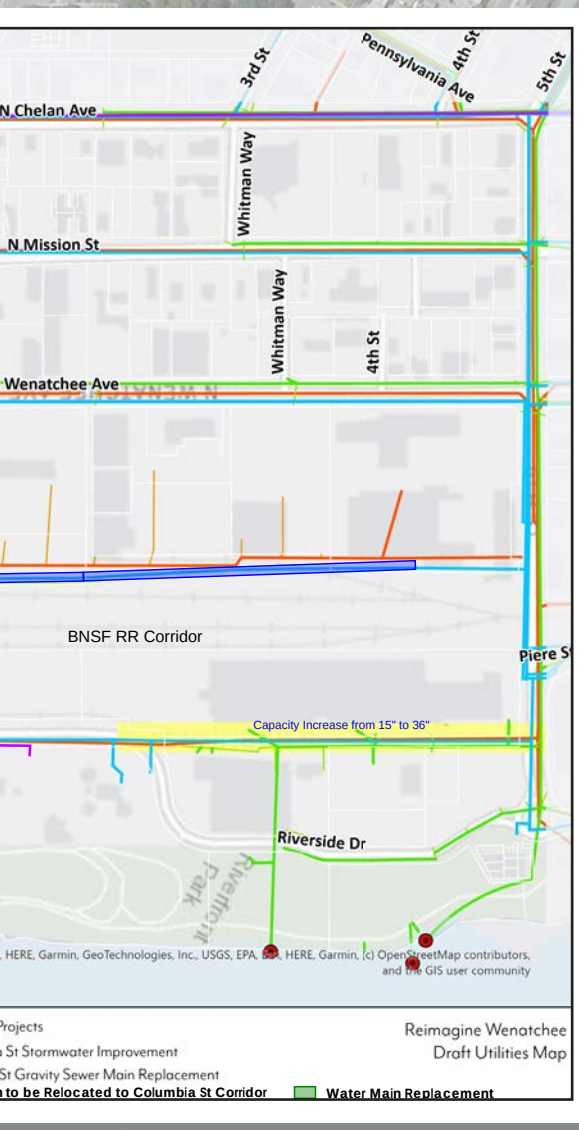
The August 2020 Stormwater Plan by the City of Wenatchee identifies one stormwater CIP project within the target area: N Columbia Avenue from Palouse Street to 1st Street as having undersized storm drainage facilities. Installation of new or parallel pipes are proposed to improve drainage and system capacity. This project is identified as Priority 1 – meaning the project has the highest urgency in need of completion and is planned to be implemented between 2020 and 2026.



The City's GIS Capital Projects portal identifies one water project within the target area – a planned replacement of 10-inch diameter cast iron pipe in S Columbia Street from Palouse Street to Kittitas Street.

OBSERVATIONS

Public Works desires to remove the existing water line currently in BNSF right of way, and replace it with a water line in Columbia Street along with other corridor utilities.



Utility Infrastructure

Water

In the target area, generally distribution water mains range from 8-inch to 12-inch diameter and are predominantly cast-iron pipe, with some sections of ductile-iron pipe. There are two large mains – one 20-inch diameter cast-iron distribution and one 24-inch diameter cast-iron transmission running parallel in 5th Street. A 16-inch diameter transmission main runs parallel to the BNSF tracks east of Columbia Street. There are two active crossings of the BNSF railway within the project area – at 5th Street (20-inch diameter distribution main parallel with 24-inch diameter transmission main) and at Orondo Avenue (6" distribution main).

Sanitary Sewer

The target area is key for the City's wastewater infrastructure as all the City's wastewater is transported to the Wastewater Treatment Plant located on Worthen Street. Sanitary sewer main sizes vary within the target area from 6-inch diameter to 42-inch diameter. Predominantly the existing mains are concrete or reinforced concrete and Clay mains. Several sections of pipe within the target area have been retrofitted with Cured-In-Place (CIP) Pipe.

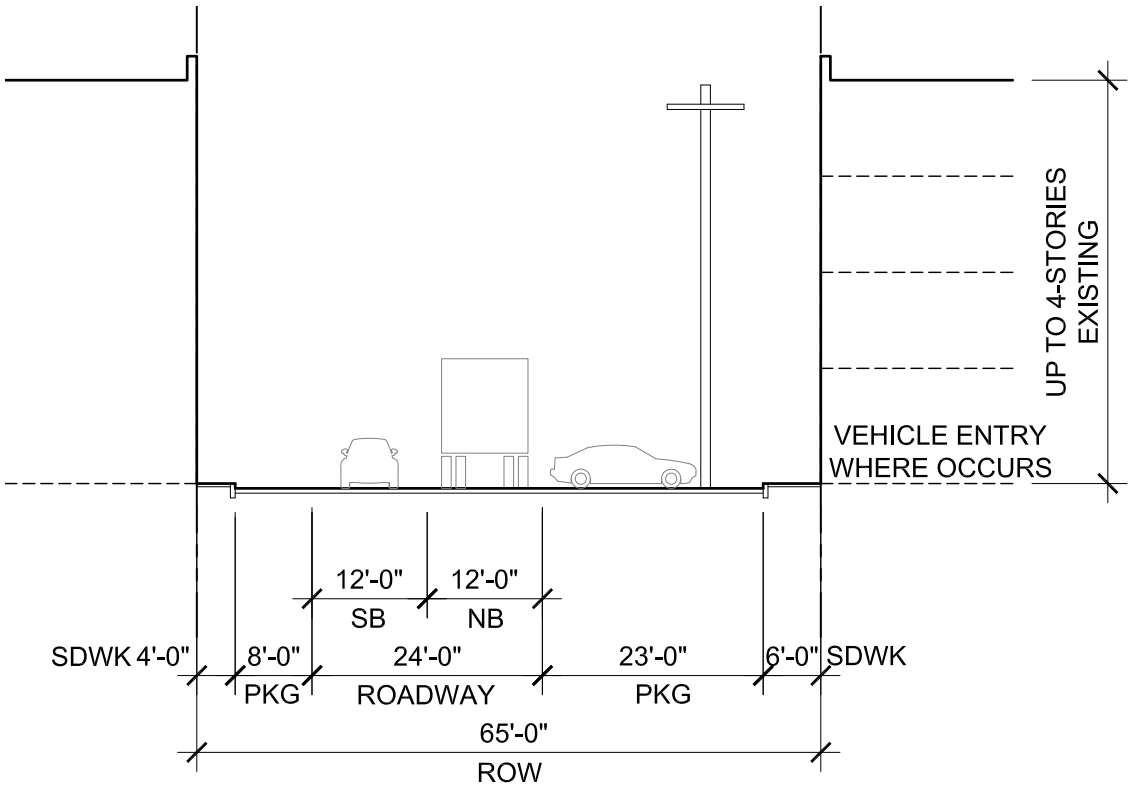
Stormwater

The target area generally drains from west to east towards the Columbia River. There are four main outfalls in the target area – Yakima Street, 1st Street, North Worthen, and 5th Street – each outfalling into the Columbia River. There are three crossings of the BNSF railway in the target area – an 18-inch diameter of unknown material in Yakima Street, a 36-inch diameter concrete pipe in 1st Street, and a 48-inch diameter concrete pipe in 5th Street.

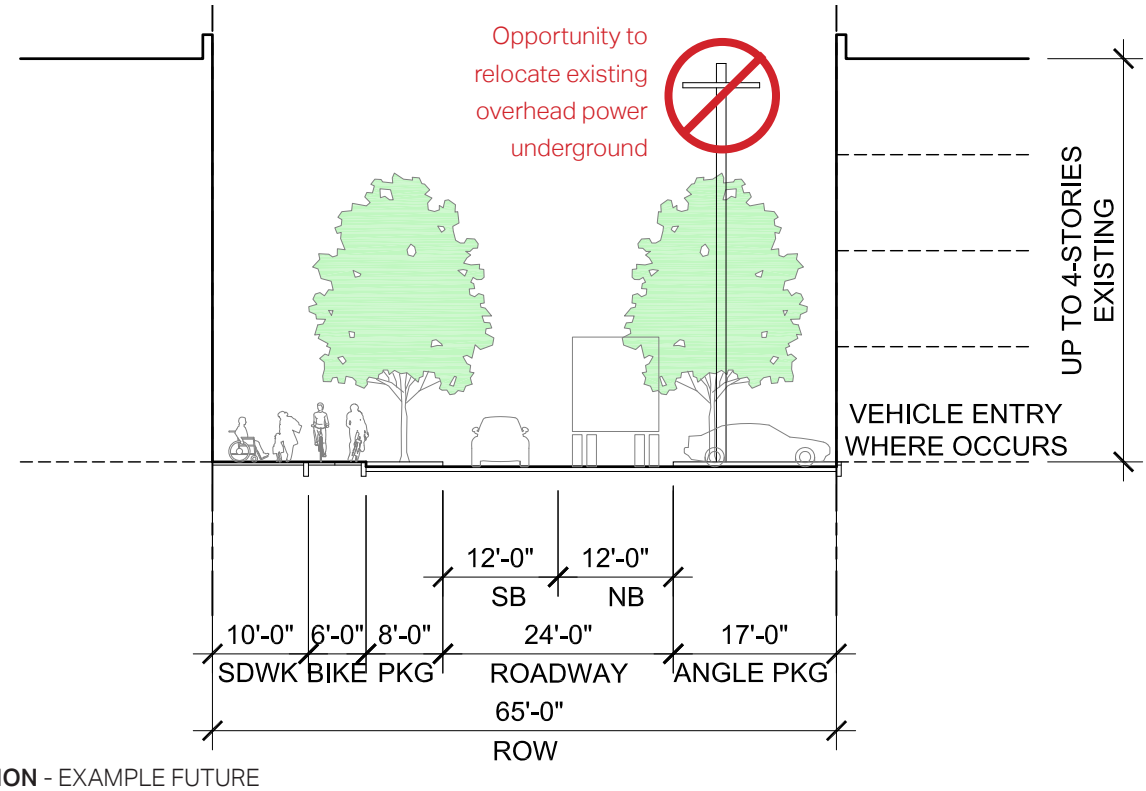
Utility Connections

Redevelopment of properties in the target area may require upsizing of existing services or additional new service connections to the mains. Requirements for utility work within the City's right-of-way are outlined in City of Wenatchee's Policy G-2. Further requirements for service connections to the mains can be found in City of Wenatchee standard details W-250A through W-250D.

Stormwater management is required for all new development and redevelopment projects. In addition, land-disturbing activities of all sizes may require a Land Surface Modification Permit and temporary stormwater control. Specific stormwater management practices will vary based on the final scope of proposed work.



COLUMBIA STREET SECTION - EXISTING

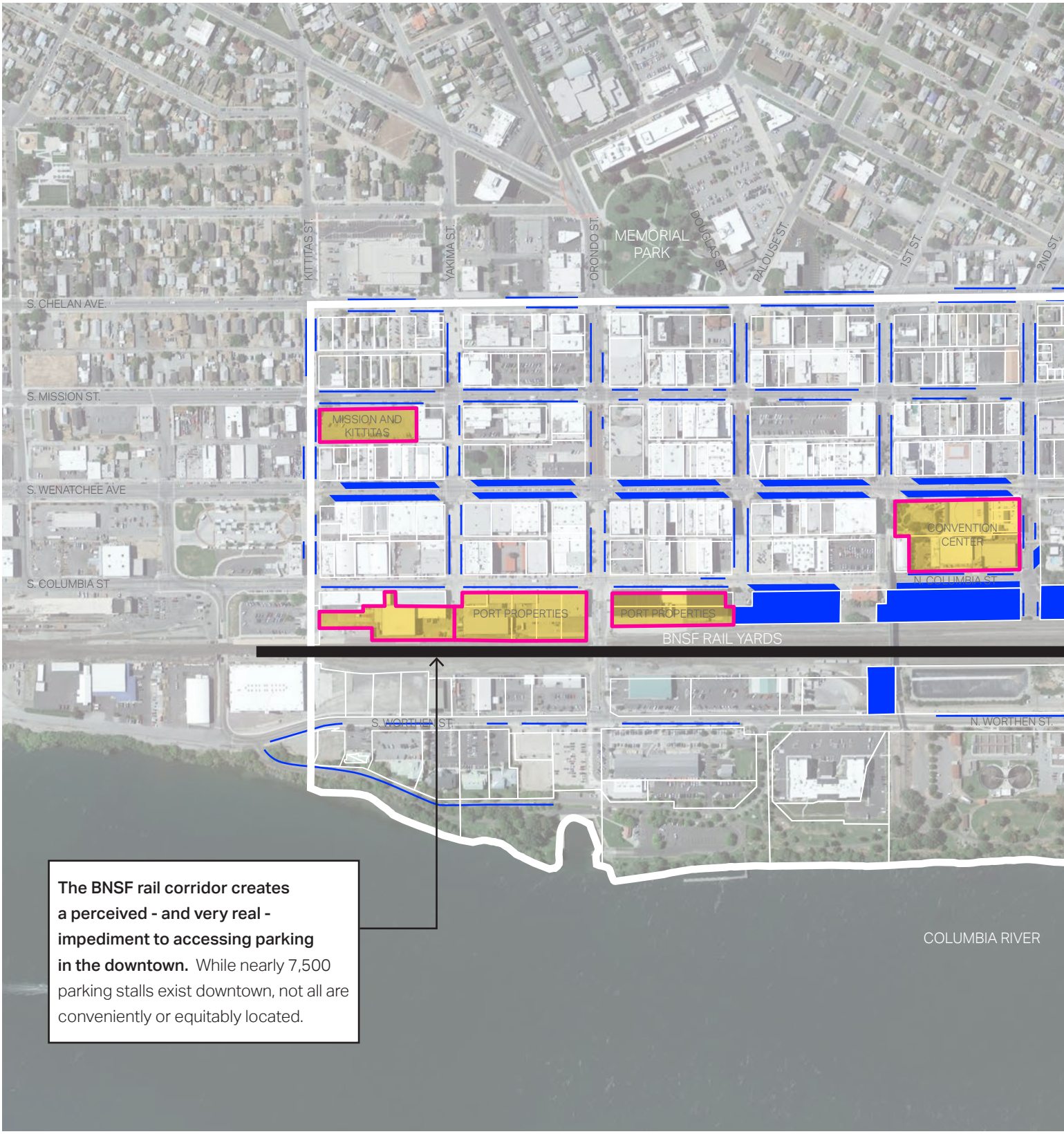


COLUMBIA STREET SECTION - EXAMPLE FUTURE

Freight Streets can be great streets

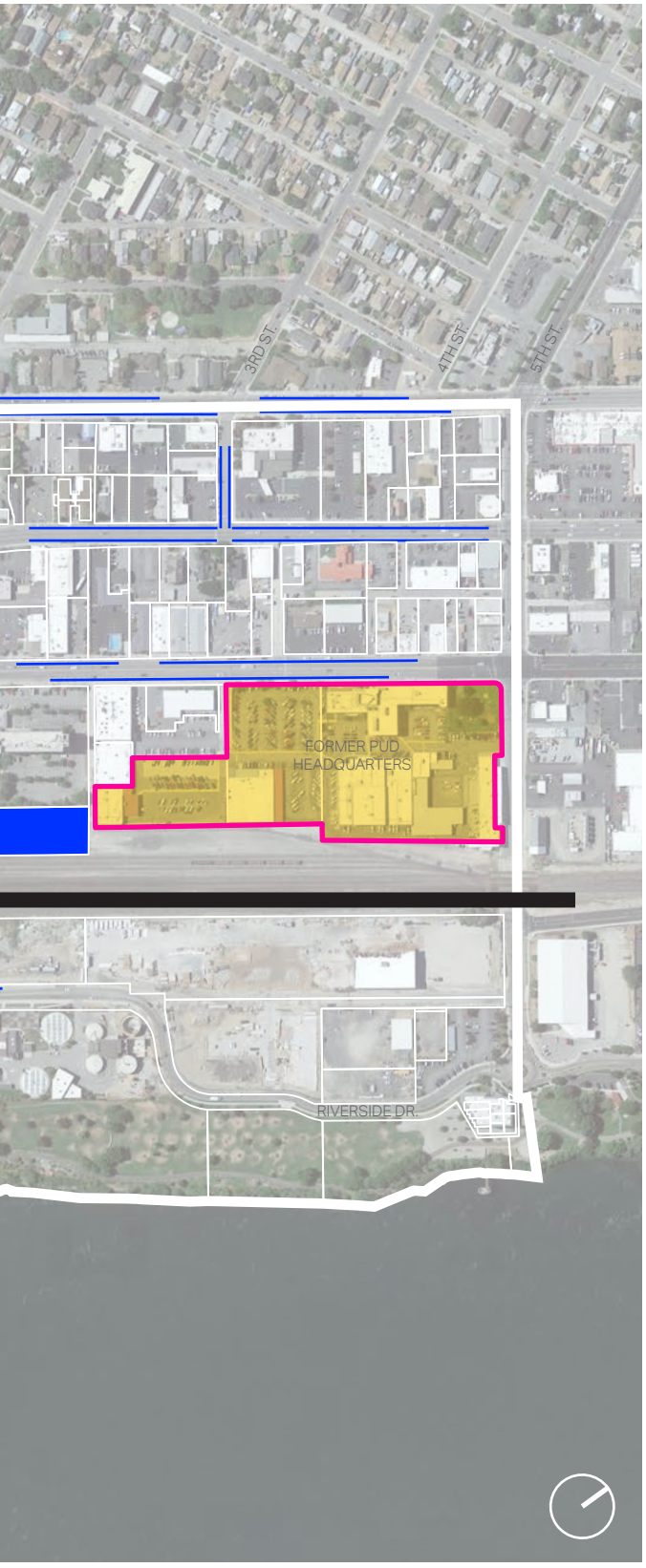
In areas where the City's utility infrastructure is slated for revisions or replacement, the opportunity exists to rethink, redesign, and reconstruct the public realm (open spaces, streets, and sidewalks) in service of the downtown community. Columbia Street is a candidate for relocating over 1,500 lineal feet of water line, which offers the potential to imagine the function and character of a key transportation conduit in the downtown.

Columbia Street looking South, existing conditions.



The BNSF rail corridor creates a perceived - and very real - impediment to accessing parking in the downtown. While nearly 7,500 parking stalls exist downtown, not all are conveniently or equitably located.

Public parking in the Target Area exceeds 2,300 stalls. Roughly 5,200 additional stalls are available on over 200 private sites. The BNSF tracks and the termination of Columbia St. at 2nd Ave create impediments for search patterns and access



OBSERVATIONS

Parking

For most American downtowns, the importance of parking is hard to overstate. Even the perception of parking access, or lack thereof, can have significant impacts on the viability of business, the desirability of urban living, and economic development and tourism. Parking strategies in Downtown Wenatchee will need to acknowledge that overcoming access challenges faced by employees, residents, and visitors will require a multi-faceted and multi-modal approach - potentially protecting parking supplies in some areas, while adjusting capacity in others, to enable new mobility options that can help to reduce overall parking demand and increase choice and affordability among the transportation options to, from, and through downtown.

Downtown Wenatchee has nearly 7,500 parking stalls, with approximately 1,800 on-street and 5,700 off-street. The majority of off-street parking is distributed among over 200 private sites. Only four lots, containing approximately 500 of these off-street parking stalls, are controlled by the City. While the distribution and fragmented control of this parking supply presents both opportunities and challenges to a holistic parking strategy, the Downtown Strategic Parking Management Plan (2017) notes that the overall total is an excessive amount of parking to meet the demand for a downtown of Wenatchee's size.

Parking is consistently in highest demand near the Convention Center, along N Wenatchee Ave between 1st St and Orondo Ave. On-street parking near the Convention Center is consistently at 85% utilization at peak-hour (i.e., 12-1PM on a weekday). The surface parking lot behind the Convention Center provides over 100 stalls of free parking and is consistently 85% occupied.

Most parking in Downtown Wenatchee is free. Currently, 60% of on-street parking in the Downtown core is limited to three hours. Nearly 300 stalls across Downtown allow unlimited parking. On August 1, 2023, the City of Wenatchee reduced the current 3-hour parking limit to a 2-hour limit at the request of the Downtown Association to encourage more turnover. The City is hiring a parking enforcement officer to accompany this change.

Across Downtown, both on- and off-street parking is underutilized, or less than 55% occupied. Occupancy rates of 55% or less indicate that parking is readily available. Off-street lots are underutilized, especially on the weekends.

Cornerstone Projects

Public Parking

Clearly marked, conveniently located public parking structures and surface lots provide access to the downtown and its retail core along W. Colorado Boulevard.

Image Credit: Old Pasadena Management District

Case Study

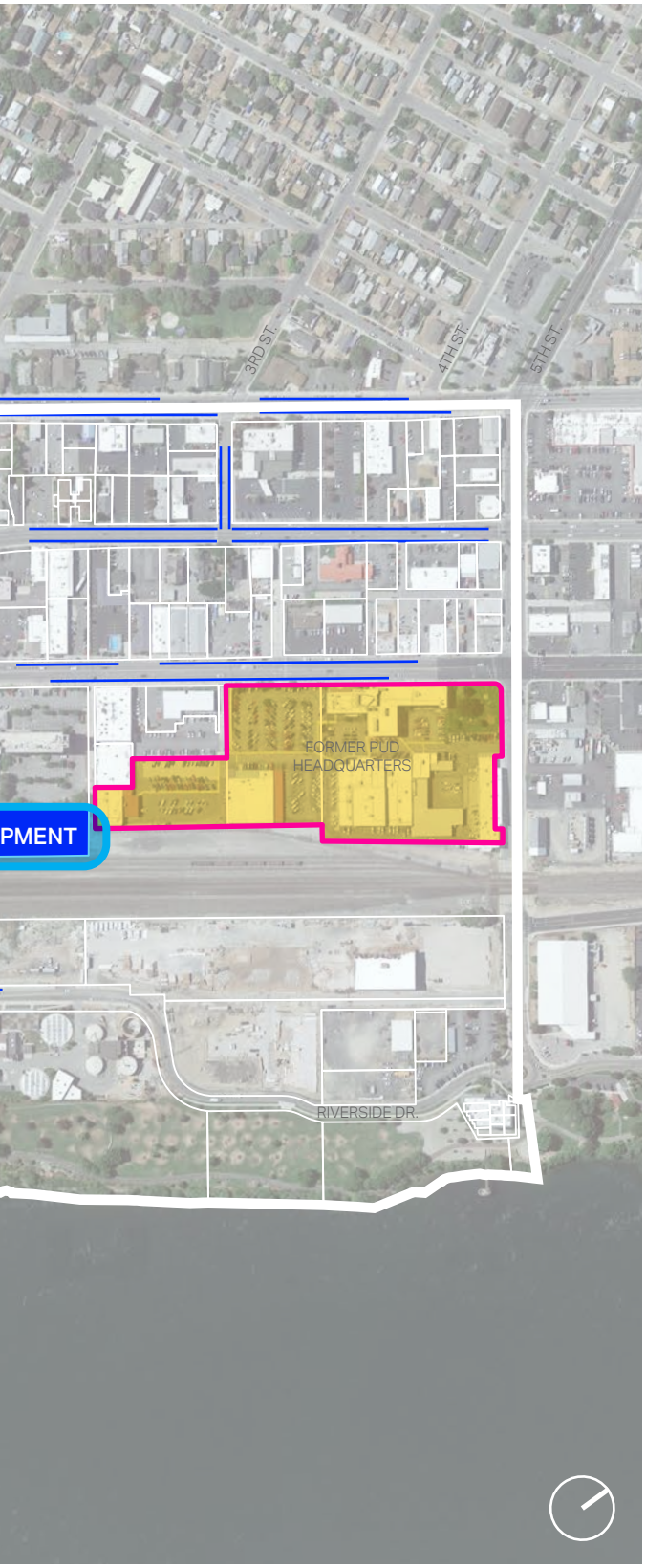
Pasadena, CA

Like Wenatchee, Old Town Pasadena also has approximately 7,500 parking stalls for its downtown core, but its population is 4x that of Wenatchee.

A free and downloadable app allows visitors to find and pay for parking with their mobile device.

Image Credit: Old Pasadena Management District

Create a unified parking brand, including wayfinding, management, ar



nd funding.

OPPORTUNITIES

Parking

Manage parking to support access and turnover that supports Downtown vitality. While most Downtown parking is underutilized, the visible, free parking near the Convention Center in the core of Downtown is highly utilized. During peak events such as conventions and Downtown festivals, parking feels hard to find. The Downtown Strategic Parking Management Plan (2017) recommends the strategies listed below to support increased parking access downtown.

Consolidate downtown parking—both on- and off-street—into a unified parking brand, including wayfinding, management, and funding.

- Price on-street parking along Wenatchee Ave and side streets where parking is consistently in highest demand to encourage turnover, business access, and generate revenue for Downtown improvements.
- Work with owners of off-street parking lots Downtown to consolidate off-street parking into a singular, intuitive parking network.
- Build on and strengthen Wenatchee's existing parking wayfinding. Create a recognizable, unified brand that helps people know where they can find parking Downtown, including app-based and real-time availability information.

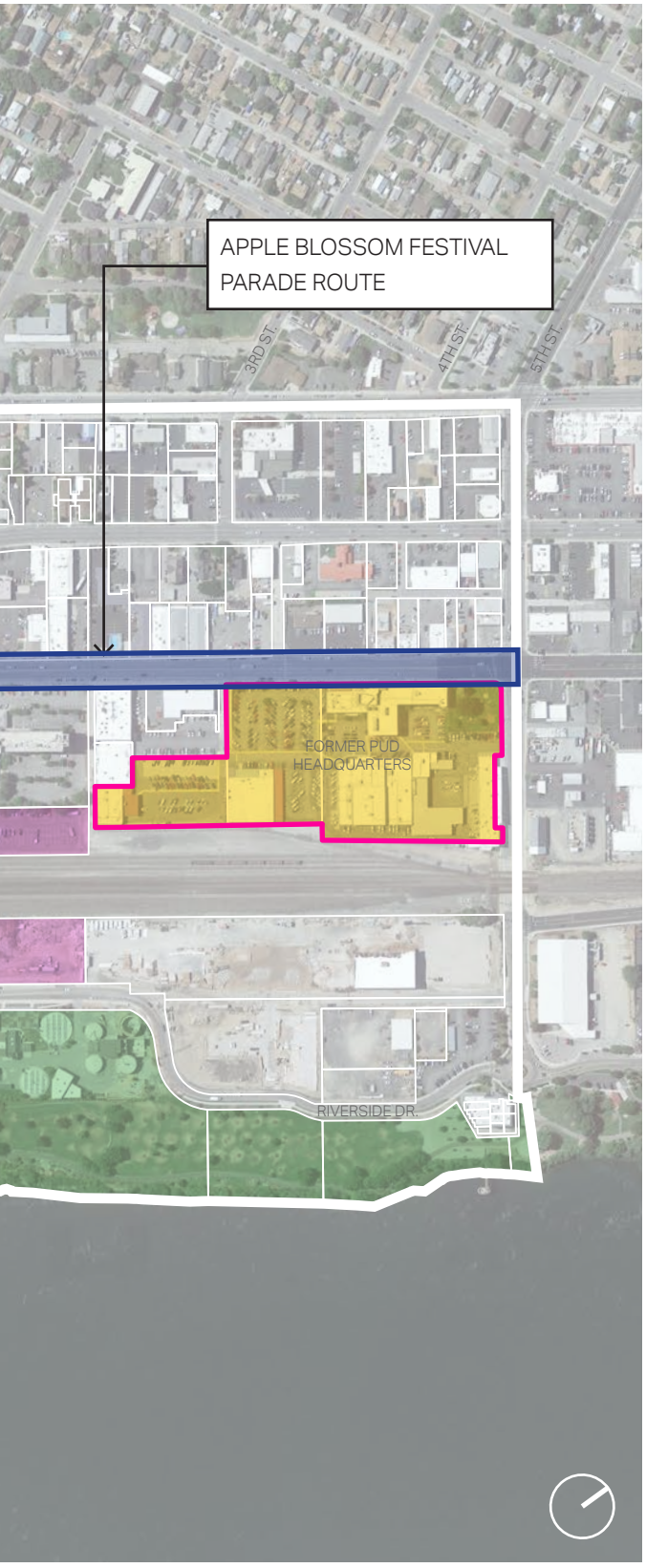
Study and map the primary vehicular access routes into Downtown to inform wayfinding and resolve points of frustration for people looking for parking. Downtown Wenatchee's street network includes one-way streets, limited east/west connections, and turn restrictions. Steering Committee members have expressed that "you have to know where you're going" to find off-street parking Downtown. Understanding the primary routes that visitors in cars use to access Downtown could inform wayfinding and circulation improvements that help people get to available off-street parking Downtown.

Identify parking hubs (within mixed-use structures), complemented by free, frequent transit to access Downtown. Much parking exists within a short walk of the Downtown core. Link Transit provides free, frequent transit between North and South Wenatchee as well as along the waterfront. Especially during peak events such as conventions and festivals, the City of Wenatchee can work with Link transit, property owners, and event producers to map, manage, and publicize free parking available on the perimeter of Downtown and free, frequent transit access to Downtown destinations.

- Parking hubs that are easy to find and use (along with seamless access via transit) can also free up critical street space to enable areas for open space, gathering, or critical green urban infrastructure.
- Parking hubs (structures) can be integrated with new mixed-use development

Major community events use public space and streets downtown.

A resilient public space network should enable ped/bike and parking acce



OBSERVATIONS

Civic Life

Much of the public life in cities happens outdoors, in parks, along streets and sidewalks, and within the open spaces between private offices and residential buildings. While local climate and climate responsive design certainly play a role in the extent to which the urban outdoors is used, the level of safety convenience (both in terms pedestrian/bike access and parking), and quality are each equally important.

Downtown Wenatchee's outdoor spaces are host to a full annual schedule of programs and events, which should be considered in any future planning scenario:

Spring

Wenatchee Marathon, ½ & 10k,
Washington State Apple Blossom Festival
Cinco De Mayo/La Terraza de Plaza
Wenatchee Valley Farmers Market
Apple Capital Century Bike Ride
Evening Farmers Markets

Summer

Wenatchee Valley Fourth of July celebration
NCW Dahlia Show

Fall

Make a Difference Day
Pray for Snow Concert
Dia de los Muertos/Day of the Dead
Holiday Wine Walk

Winter

Numerica Festival of Trees
Last Minute Market
Apple Drop New Year's Eve Celebration and Concert
Wings & Wishes Tree Lighting
Rails & Ales Mission Ridge & Badger Mountain Brewery
Spring Wine Walk

Source: www.visitwenatchee.org

Cornerstone Projects

Publicly-Owned Properties

Public Spaces used for Events

ess even during pulse points.

Image Credit: Run Wenatchee

Supporting Civic Life

Targeted, actively managed initiatives led by an agency or coalition (e.g., Downtown Association) that support and complement capital improvements can support a vibrant, connected Downtown. Examples include:

- **Add and unify bike parking Downtown to celebrate Wenatchee's identity and provide easy business access by bike.** Incentivize Downtown trips by bike with visible, convenient on-street and sidewalk bike racks that give visitors and patrons front-door access to their destinations. In a Downtown setting, multiple bike parking spaces should be available on each side of each block (or one bike parking space per 1,000-2,000 square feet of commercial square footage). Weather protection, lighting and outlets for charging e-bikes, especially along Downtown's primary bike routes could enhance bike parking.
- **Integrate mobility connections and parking into Downtown's unified wayfinding system.** Wayfinding signage and complementary street treatments can help people find destinations as well as vehicle parking, bike routes and parking, bus stops and transit connections, and regional connections like the Amtrak train station. Building upon Downtown's existing wayfinding to create a recognizable brand could help visitors easily access destinations and encourage multimodal travel to and through Downtown.
- **Explore expanding the use of available, underutilized, or soon-to-be-completed urban open spaces for Downtown festivals and events.** Steering Committee members have expressed that there is no place for large outdoor gatherings Downtown. The streets are Downtown Wenatchee's biggest public space and could be one area where additional closures for public uses are studied. Temporary closures for festivals, markets, and parades complemented by access and parking management strategies could add vibrancy to Downtown. Street improvements along key people-focused streets, including those that connect to parks, plazas, and the waterfront could support periodic street closures and Downtown programming. Key public spaces that could be considered for additional uses include:
    - The new Wenatchee Convention Center Plaza
    - Centennial Park
    - Existing City Parking Lots (where parking capacities can be provided elsewhere)

POTENTIAL FUNDING OPTIONS

Image Credit: Flickr

Potential Funding Options

Overview of Developing a Funding Approach
Planning for and constructing infrastructure has three different phases:

1. Strategy and planning,
2. Funding and financing,
3. Project development.

The City can accomplish a number of the early steps, such as inclusion of a project into the City's Capital Improvement Program and updating its other funding programs.

This plan will ultimately be about funding projects and implementation. Consideration of funding at this point provides some realism for what otherwise could become a wonderful but unconstrained plan. As Exhibit 1 shows, the project funding and financing phase consists of three sequential elements.

- **Capital Strategy:** A capital strategy includes creating high-level costs estimates, outlining long-term objectives, and identifying potential funding sources for a 10-year planning horizon.
- **Capital Plan:** A capital plan is a shorter-term plan to set priorities to meet the long-term objectives of the capital strategy and confirms cost estimates and funding sources for specific projects.
- **Capital Budget:** A capital budget is needed, as a project is ready to move forward within the next year. The capital budget allocates funds approved from specific sources to the project(s) identified.

Once a jurisdiction has some clear notion of where it plans to get funding it can develop a strategy within the constraints of the potential funding. After that, it can move to the details of implementation and financing.

Overview of Types of Funding Sources
Funding comes from households, businesses, and development that pay taxes and fees that give the various levels of government money to build capital projects. Examples of funding mechanisms are tolls, sales taxes, and impact fees. Funding for capital projects in the Reimagine Wenatchee plan can come directly from private sources, such as development, or from different levels of public sources, such as taxes and fees.

Private Sources

Washington State law has a few mechanisms for requiring land development to fund needed infrastructure. These mechanisms are described below. RCW 58.17 is a long-standing planning tool for ensuring new areas have full range of services by regulating subdivision of land to promote the public health, safety and general welfare. These laws require developers to install, at their own expense, improvements necessary for full range of services at time of subdivision or development. However, they are typically limited to on-site or adjacent improvements.

Impact fees through the Growth Management Act, Local Transportation Act, and Transportation Benefit Districts provide another means of collecting funds from new development to pay for infrastructure. Generally, local governments cannot fully recover the cost of improvements from new development. Impact fees must be balanced by other sources of public funds. More so, impact fees can only be imposed for the proportionate share of the costs of system improvements reasonably related to and reasonably beneficial to the new development.

Public Sources

Public sources come from three levels of government: (1) federal, (2) state, and (3) local. The funding mechanisms for all of these levels government come in some form of income, consumption, and business taxes or user fees. From the point of view of local policymakers, federal and state funding sources are the most desirable sources of funding, but also the most difficult to control. These sources are desirable because the taxes and fees are collected at a broader geographic level for local benefits. They bring new money into the community for local facilities that provide local benefits and lower the costs for local stakeholders. In contrast, local stakeholders often view local funding sources as a burden in the form of an increased tax or fee.

Project Specific Mechanisms vs. Non-project Approaches

It is important to distinguish between project level funding mechanisms and more general funding sources that may be applied to projects. In general, project specific funding sources are usually tied to a development project themselves via some part of the permitting and entitlement process (discussed above) or through the pursuit of project-specific competitive grant awards.

Conversely, non-project sources come mostly public sources of dollars that are either restricted to capital purposes or are derived from general purpose funding sources and decision-makers have discretion on where and how much to spend. For these non-project specific funding sources, the approach is to prioritize projects for funding via a capital improvement

program since funding is fairly fixed. The ultimate funding package for a project may mix both public and private sources as well as project and non-project specific sources.

City of Wenatchee Approach

Wenatchee's approach to funding local infrastructure is like many cities across the nation. Typically, a "growth pays for growth" approach seeks to leverage private funding sources (principally through the land development process) with forms of public funding, especially from the Federal and State level. The priority of the public funding is to seek out earmarks, grants, and other competitive awards as a first source before moving to more locally based funding sources.

While federal and state funding sources are more desirable, they are difficult for local policymakers to control, or even to predict. Federal programs that exist today may not exist in a few years, and allocation formulas and competitive processes may change. The list of local needed projects may not align with eligibility and project scoring criteria.

While local stakeholders can always lobby federal and state governments for increased funding, they have no direct authority over allocations, which mean state and federal sources that are not specifically authorized are always somewhat speculative. Ultimately, how much funding can be obtained from these non-local public sources is part political (getting necessary support for a project) and part administrative (dedicating effort towards the preparation of grant awards).

For the Reimagine Wenatchee infrastructure projects, the area has both vacant and existing uses. The area is predominantly characterized by land uses that have been in place for decades (some which there are redevelopment opportunities), but also has a large number (and size) of vacant or underutilized parcels. To make things even more interesting, the City and its community partners are working on the redevelopment of many cornerstone projects. The implication for infrastructure development is that the needed projects will only be constructed when development is financially feasible and constructed. On large, vacant sites, the entire infrastructure projects can typically be constructed when development occurs. However, for infill sites, only a portion of an improvement is typically made when development occurs, leading to the patchwork completion of an entire infrastructure project.

The policy issue confronted by many local jurisdictions is whether some level of public funding support can be contributed to help offset the financial cost for constructing an entire local infrastructure projects; or, in areas where

development is not happening, whether public investment is needed to improve or complete needed projects before development occurs. Local sources may not be the biggest part of a funding strategy Reimagine Wenatchee capital projects, but the City has more discretion over local sources of revenue (how they are raised and how they are spent). As a result, they are a critical component of any funding strategy. For example, local funding as a match may be what moves a project up on funding priorities of an award list. The success of implementing these projects will depend largely on steps the City can take to raise and administer revenue from local sources.

Candidate Local Sources

As stated above, considering the provision of more local funding for projects will be necessary for three main reasons. First, the pursuit of competitive funding sources will be enhanced (if not required) with local match funding. Second, providing more local funding allows the City to fund projects sooner than it might otherwise be able to through its CIP process. Third, local funding provides more control and flexibility for public-private partnership in redevelopment negotiations.

Broadly, there are two ways Wenatchee can create more local funding capacity for infrastructure construction.

1. Enhance existing capital funding tools. The City already uses a variety of capital restricted funding mechanisms. City policy-makers have some discretion on the rates and fees charged and how these funds are spent.
2. Create New Local Area Funding Options. The City can take measures to put into place (often with voter or property owner consent) new funding mechanisms. These mechanisms are typically new forms of taxes, fees, and special assessments.

Key candidate local options are described below.

- Local Improvement District. Most local jurisdiction may form a local improvement district (LID) and levy a special assessment on properties within the LID that would benefit from the improvement. These improvements include streets, parking facilities, park boulevards, and other public places along with local transportation systems, such as buses and railways, and the facilities necessitated by these systems.
- A LID may provide a form of local area private funding needed to move certain project forward. Based on the assessment above, an LID may be an appropriate mechanism for contributing funds toward road projects where development feasibility may be a ways off in the future. LIDs are

administratively complex to create and administer, especially as the district expands in scope and size.

- Community Facility District. Community Facility Districts (CFD) is a financing tool created by the Legislature that allows cities and counties to finance infrastructure improvements through establishing a special assessment district. A CFD may finance a variety of improvements including water, sewer, roads, storm drainage, sidewalks, and other forms of infrastructure. CFDs have the ability to issue bonds, but must also provide security for payment of the bond.
- The formation of a district requires 100% of property owners within the district to sign a petition to form the district. The petition establishes the boundaries of the district, specific projects to be funded, and the proposed method of assessment. A CFD gives property owners more control over the district than other options such as a local improvement district (LID). A CFD also allows for more flexibility in the types of improvements funded compared to LIDs.
- Tax Increment Financing. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a powerful economic development tool and was adopted into law in Washington State in 2021. The Washington State Legislature created the TIF authority through House Bill 1189 (now codified as RCW 39.114) for a city, county, or port to create a tax increment area (TIA). TIFs are used throughout the United States to promote economic development.
- In general, our State's TIF is a financing option that allows a public agency (city, county, or port) to fund publicly-owned infrastructure determined necessary to encourage the envisioned private development within a TIF area designated by the public agency. As private development occurs (as a result of the public agencies' investment in the identified public improvements), property values rise, and the public agency uses the property tax generated by that development in the TIF area to pay for the public improvement projects. After the project costs are paid, the public agency retires the TIF area.
- Business Improvement Districts. Business Improvement Districts (BID or BIDs) are special assessment areas authorized by Chapter 35 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW). BIDs are generally able to be formed by a petition signed and presented to the City by a certain percentage of business owners located within the proposed geographic boundaries of the new district, or by the legislative authority of a local government (such as the City). BIDs are governed by a Board of Directors, and they charge a monthly assessment (collected by the City) to administer programs for the collective maintenance, security, and marketing of the district.

KEY QUESTIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Image Credit: Washnington Main Street

Questions to frame further study

As the project team transitions from the Discovery Phase to the Design phase, the following additional areas of analysis, mapping, and visualization could help to support the co-development of design scenarios and planning strategies with the Steering Committee and local stakeholder group:

- **Which factors contributing to Downtown's parking challenges, both in terms of real and perceived supply and availability, could be better understood?** The Downtown Strategic Parking Management Plan (2017) is six years out of date and could be updated to assist in identifying potential parking demand management strategies and gaps in supply. This could include mapping the off- and on-street parking in Downtown in relation to the current and future residential and job growth to provide context for the future needs for vehicle storage Downtown. Additionally, mapping circulation and primary entry points for people driving Downtown and needing parking can inform street improvement identification. Identification of potential parking hubs served by frequent transit can also inform parking strategies for Downtown.

- **Where are there critical gaps in regulatory standards or information about upcoming capital projects that could help support and encourage new private or partnership development?** The Cornerstone projects, along with the variety of capital investments, will shape the future of Downtown. Understanding and identifying the key new connections, street improvements, and other public realm relationships required for each project will be critical to planning a Downtown that supports the overall Vision of the Reimagine effort.

- **Of the planned capital infrastructure improvements, which could be prioritized to form the backbone of the Reimagine effort? In the near term? In the long term?**

- **How might a Reimagined Columbia Street interact with an Electric Avenue connection to 5th? What challenges would this pose? What opportunities could it create?**

Prepared for the City of Wenatchee by:

northwest studio
architects urban designers

EcoNorthwest
Downtown Economics

Nelson Nygaard
Mobility and Access

Perteet
Utility Infrastructure

Image Credit: Visit Chelan County