



**Planning Advisory Board/Zoning Commission
June 28, 2022 Agenda
2 Park Drive South, Great Falls, MT
Commission Chambers, Civic Center
3:00 PM**

In order to honor the Right of Participation and the Right to Know (Article II, Sections 8 and 9 of the Montana Constitution), the City of Great Falls and Planning Advisory Board/Zoning Commission are making every effort to meet the requirements of open meeting laws:

- The agenda packet material is available on the City's website: <https://greatfallsmt.net/meetings>. The Public may view and listen to the meeting on government access channel City-190, cable channel 190; or online at <https://greatfallsmt.net/livestream>.
- Public participation is welcome in the following ways:
 - Attend in person. Please refrain from attending in person if you are not feeling well.
 - Provide public comments via email. Comments may be sent via email before 12:00 PM on Tuesday, June 28, 2022, to: jnygard@greatfallsmt.net. Include the agenda item or agenda item number in the subject line, and include the name of the commenter and either an address or whether the commenter is a city resident. Written communication received by that time will be shared with the Planning Advisory Board/Zoning Commission and appropriate City staff for consideration during the agenda item and before final vote on the matter; and, will be so noted in the official record of the meeting.

OPENING MEETING

1. Call to Order - 3:00 P.M.
2. Role Call - Board Introductions

Dave Bertelsen - Chair

Tory Mills - Vice Chair

Lindsey Bullock

Kelly Buschmeyer

Pat Green

Samantha Kaupish

Chuck Pankratz

3. Recognition of Staff
4. Approval of Meeting Minutes - June 14, 2022

BOARD ACTIONS REQUIRING PUBLIC HEARING

BOARD ACTIONS NOT REQUIRING PUBLIC HEARING

5. Amendment to the Downtown Urban Renewal Plan

COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment on any matter and that is within the jurisdiction of the Planning Advisory Board/Zoning Commission. Please keep your remarks to a maximum of five (5) minutes. Speak into the microphone, and state your name and address for the record.

ADJOURNMENT

(Please exit the chambers as quickly as possible. Chamber doors will be closed 5 minutes after adjournment of the meeting.)

Assistive listening devices are available for the hard of hearing, please arrive a few minutes early for set up, or contact the City Clerk's Office in advance at 455-8451. Wi-Fi is available during the meetings for viewing of the online meeting documents.

Planning Advisory Board/Zoning Commission meetings are televised on cable channel 190 and streamed live at <https://greatfallsmt.net>. Meetings are re-aired on cable channel 190 the following Thursday at 7 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
GREAT FALLS PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD/ZONING COMMISSION
June 14, 2022

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Great Falls Planning Advisory Board/Zoning Commission was called to order by Chair Dave Bertelsen at 3:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers at the Civic Center

ROLL CALL & ATTENDANCE

UPDATES CONCERNING PROCESS OF MEETINGS

In order to honor the Right of Participation and the Right to Know (Article II, Sections 8 and 9 of the Montana Constitution), the City of Great Falls and Planning Advisory Board/Zoning Commission are making every effort to meet the requirements of open meeting laws:

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Planning Board Members present:

Dave Bertelsen, Chair

Tory Mills, Vice Chair

Kelly Buschmeyer

Pat Green

Samantha Kaupish

Chuck Pankratz

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Planning Board Members absent:

Lindsey Bullock

Planning Staff Members present:

Craig Raymond, Director Planning and Community Development

Tom Micuda, Deputy Director Planning and Community Development

Jamie Nygard, Sr. Administrative Assistant

Other Staff present:

David Dennis, Deputy City Attorney

Jeff Hindoien, City Attorney

Mr. Micuda affirmed a quorum of the Board was present.

MINUTES

Chair Dave Bertelsen asked if there were any comments or corrections to the minutes of the meeting held on May 24, 2022. Seeing none, the minutes were approved.

COMMISSION ACTIONS REQUIRING A PUBLIC HEARING

First United Methodist Church “Emergency Shelter” Conditional Use Permit at 610, 618, and 622 2nd Avenue North, Great Falls, MT

Craig Raymond, Director of Planning and Community Development, presented to the Commission. He stated that the applicant, Pastor Jeff Wakeley, First United Methodist Church, submitted an application to request a Conditional Use Permit to allow an “Emergency Shelter” at the subject property. Mr. Raymond stated that in 2021 the First United Methodist Church began using their property to serve the homeless or “needy” population through meal service. The

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homeless ministry expanded to include the allowance of outdoor “camping” on the property. He stated that beginning in early 2022, the City began receiving complaints regarding public nuisances on the church property as a result of the homeless presence and activity including drug/alcohol abuse, harassment of citizens, assault, etc. After several of the complaints, the City started looking at the historical use of the property and checked to see if there were any permits for an “Emergency Shelter”. There were not any permits, so the City notified the First United Methodist Church to let them know that they would need to apply for a Conditional Use Permit that would need to be approved by the City Commission.

Mr. Raymond stated that the property zoning of C-4 allows applicants to request to consider a Conditional Use Permit to operate an “Emergency Shelter”. Conditional Use Permits require the analysis of the specifics of the application and the context of its surroundings and whether proposed mitigation measures adequately address anticipated impacts in comparison to the adopted “Basis of Decision” criteria found in OCCGF 17.16.36.040.

Mr. Raymond stated that the proposed site improvements by the applicant are a sight obscuring fence at an undetermined date, tents for the homeless, a Porta-Potty, and monitoring for safety.

Mr. Raymond presented a Site Plan, Aerial Map, Zoning Map, and Site Photos.

Mr. Raymond presented the Basis of Decision: On the surface, the applicant’s conditional use is consistent with the City’s Growth Policy because it provides housing and addresses homelessness in line with the following policies.

- Soc1.4.1: Work with the private sector and non-profits to increase housing opportunities in the City
- Soc1.4.5: Continue to support the development of accessible housing units for those with physical and mental challenges and special needs, including members of the community with disabilities, etc.
- Soc1.4.9: Continue to ensure that the City promotes equal opportunity housing and access to housing for all residents is in compliance with Federal and State requirements aimed at preventing housing discrimination.
- Soc1.4.15: Expand transitional housing with supportive services benefitting the homeless and special needs population in the City.

However, the specific provision of the proposed application falls short of providing legal forms of housing and significantly impacts the surrounding community, which is inconsistent with the following recommendations of the Growth Policy.

- Soc1.1.3: Support community-wide efforts in the City to reduce crime and expand crime prevention, public safety and education efforts, including neighborhood based efforts such as Neighborhood Watch.
- Soc1.1.4: Strategically improve public safety in the Downtown, as well as other city-wide “hotspots” throughout the City.

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- Soc1.4.13: Protect the character, livability and affordability of existing neighborhoods by ensuring that infill development is compatible with existing neighborhoods.

There are other criteria for Conditional Uses that must be met including:

1. The establishment, maintenance or operation of the zoning and conditional use will not be detrimental to, or endanger the health, safety, morals, comfort or general welfare. The applicant's request is detrimental:
 - The City has received complaints of defecation/urinating in plain view and on City Rights-of-Way (sidewalks)
 - Great Falls Police Department has received approximately 95 calls for service this year to date and 92 total last year and have written 46 citations this year to date and 77 total last year and have made 15 arrests this year to date and 6 total last year. Mr. Raymond stated that there was a call on the previous weekend for people burning furniture and the Great Falls Fire Rescue was called to put the fire out.
2. The conditional use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood. The applicant's request creates injury:
 - Based on formal nuisance complaints, surrounding land use and enjoyment is negatively impacted unnecessarily.
 - Blight has shown to decrease property values.

Mr. Raymond stated that the recommendation from Neighborhood Council #7 on June 13, 2022, was denial of the CUP, and was voted on unanimously. He stated that every member present was concerned about taking care of the homeless, but none of them felt like the approach that was being taken by First United Methodist Church was the right approach.

Mr. Raymond stated that the City also recommends denial of the CUP, but that the City has a long history of supporting homeless efforts. He stated that in the C-4 zoning district downtown, there are three facilities currently that the City supports, and the City has continual involvement in the Continuum of Care effort in association with the Community Development Block Grant and HOME program. He stated that the City thinks that it is possible to have a homeless shelter in the zoning district and encourages the community to get together and propose a plan that would work, but stated that the proposal, as it is presented, is not something that can be supported by the City, based on the Basis of Decision and Findings of Fact.

PETITIONER'S PRESENTATION

Pastor Jeff Wakeley of First United Methodist Church, stated that the original Conditional Use Permit did not include the present encampment. The present encampment has come about because there is a need. He stated that the church has been helping people in Great Falls since

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1888. He stated that he agrees with everything that was presented and knows that it is not perfect. He stated that the homeless situation at the church started in 2021 and is the direct result of the COVID Pandemic and the effect that it has had on the houseless. He stated that it is not a homeless issue, that it is a houseless issue. There is not enough housing in Great Falls. When they were giving out lunches they began to notice that people would stick around. He stated that the rule on the property, is that you cannot drink and if you do, then you are thrown off of the property. People started to sleep on the property, so they allowed people to gather and use the property. He stated that the 95 police calls to the property is localized and if the homeless residents were not there, then it would be elsewhere throughout the city.

Pastor Wakeley stated that the original application for the Conditional Use Permit, was to allow people to sleep in the parking lot, and not the tents, but it got away from them, because the need is so great. It's a place for people to stay until they get a more permanent place.

Pastor Wakeley stated that in January 2022, he invited a group of community leaders to create an Adhoc committee to talk about homelessness with the goal of building another low barrier shelter. The group has now become Housed Great Falls. The church is hoping that they will take over the running of the encampment. He stated that the encampment started before the group formed. He stated that he did not want the tents there, but they are trying to make the best of it.

Pastor Wakeley stated that things have been screwed up since the City filed a lawsuit against them. He stated that they cannot put a fence up, because they do not want to aggravate the suit against them, so their goal has been to bring the encampment under more control. He stated that it is messy, but they are hoping that Housed Great Falls, which is a non-profit organization has recently been formed for find a more permanent solution for a homeless shelter, will be stepping up.

Pastor Wakeley stated that they have allowed the encampment at the church, because that is where the homeless are gathering. He stated that instead of going to the city and putting up a fight, they are trying to minister to all of the people in the community.

Pastor Wakeley stated that their plan is to put up a fence and add security. They will continue to serve the homeless and houseless community regardless if the Conditional Use Permit is approved or not, as they are a church and people matter. He stated that there is no place for low income people to go because there is no housing in Great Falls.

Pastor Wakeley stated that he would love to get more security from the Great Falls Police Department. He is hoping that the City will give them what they need to work on and they will try and do it better. He wants the City's support.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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None.

BOARD QUESTIONS

None.

OPPONENTS

There were 26 opponents that spoke. The key points in the opponents' testimony are listed below. For a full accounting of the entire testimony, please access the meeting video at <https://greatfallsmt.net/boc-pabzc/planning-advisory-boardzoning-commission-june-14-2022>.

1. There are needles on the ground in parking lots and sidewalks where people walk.
2. People are defecating in parking lots and sidewalks
3. At Perkins, employees need to watch the front door 24 hours a day, and people used to be able to use their restrooms and they can't allow it anymore.
4. Houses and rentals are in the community but people need to work more.
5. It is an unsafe environment for residents and business owners.
6. It is a danger to local residents.
7. Substance abuse counseling and mental health counseling need to be made available.
8. Other churches serve food to the homeless.
9. Laws are being broken. There are reports of theft, trespassing, fighting, urinating, masturbating, people having sex, prostitutes, drug dealers, and beer and food theft at local businesses.
10. People are being spit on and punches thrown.
11. Employees around the area do not feel safe. They have had their cars vandalized and their license plates stolen.
12. Employees in the area cannot walk to work anymore.
13. There is a difference between helping and enabling.
14. Neighbors can no longer be in their front yards because people from the encampment come into their yards, have had gas syphoned, and people passed out in their yards.
15. There is a problem that needs to be addressed but downtown is not the place.
16. What is the strategy of the City, as setting up tents is not the answer?
17. Dairy Queen opened their lobby with great reluctance as people from the encampment come in to clean up in their restroom and employees are scared to empty garbage cans afraid of what they might find.
18. There are Help Wanted signs all over Great Falls.
19. The encampment is an eye sore.
20. There is significantly more crime.

21. There are squatters in abandoned houses and the neighbors are scared of living in their homes.
22. People can no longer walk to the library.
23. It is a lawless zone.
24. It is a risk to public health and safety.
25. People at the encampment are there to party and there are several fights there.
26. Pastor Wakeley does not want the police involved and gives out his phone number for people to call with issues.
27. There is zero accountability and zero security.
28. Great Falls deserves better and the people staying in the encampment deserve better.
29. There needs to be help for the people that want it.
30. The community needs a long term recovery center.

The overall consensus conveyed by the opponents was that they know that there is a need to address the homeless issue, but the downtown area of Great Falls is not the place for it, and the approach that the church is taking is not the answer.

PROPONENTS

There were 20 proponents that spoke. The key points in the proponents' testimony are listed below. For a full accounting of the entire testimony, please access the meeting video at <https://greatfallsmt.net/boc-pabzc/planning-advisory-boardzoning-commission-june-14-2022>.

1. There are disabled veterans living at the encampment that have nowhere else to go.
2. It is expensive to get into housing.
3. The homeless problem is not going to go away and is just going to get worse.
4. A police presence would help with the drinking and drug use in the church parking lot.
5. The encampment is a work in progress. They need time and input from the community.
6. Help is needed. It is a crisis situation.
7. The arrangement at the United Methodist Church is not permanent but it is necessary for now.
8. Homelessness is not a choice.
9. Discrimination against the homeless is unacceptable.
10. The homeless people are our community too.
11. Homeless people don't have the resources to get the help that they need. They can't get jobs because a lot of them do not have high school diplomas and clothes that are nice enough for work environments.
12. Homelessness is not a moral failing.
13. Services in Great Falls are lacking.
14. Homelessness has increased since the pandemic.
15. Ending homelessness is the responsibility of the government. Great Falls is behind the issue of homelessness instead of in front of it.
16. COVID aid was given to Great Falls to assist with the homelessness and so far it has not been used.

17. The "Emergency Shelter" is an emergency right now.
18. There is a housing crisis in Great Falls.
19. Everyone in the community deserves a place to stay.
20. The encampment will save the city's resources as people will not be receiving trespassing tickets in city parks.
21. One encampment is a benefit as it is in one location so it is easier to support with services.
22. The encampment will give homeless people a space to call home and some dignity.
23. The city needs to collaborate with Housed Great Falls.
24. The homeless lack the resources to overcome their additions.
25. First United Methodist Church is filling the vacuum left by the Rescue Mission and the City of Great Falls.
26. The encampment is encouraging people to face their problems, but not with cruelty or disrespect.
27. There is an organic home grown program seeking to improve the community for the benefit of both of its members and neighbors. It is seeking to build fences for security around the encampment, to establish laws and rules and to partner with services for nutrition and mental health.
28. The unhoused will not disappear when they leave the lot. They will spread to the city and jails where they become the cost of the community.
29. First United Methodist Church is not causing a Homelessness problem. The community has a problem and needs to come together to find a resolution.
30. The CARES Act Money was sent to Great Falls for homelessness.
31. Because of the encampment, people are getting educated about homelessness in Great Falls. It's not the best situation, but it is the best that can be done right now.
32. The people at the encampment are human beings and need to be treated like it.
33. The Great Falls Rescue Mission is great for those that can participate.
34. Homelessness can be solved.
35. There are several members in the Community that are one paycheck away from being homeless.
36. What is the plan if the Conditional Use Permit does not get approved? No one else is stepping up like First United Methodist Church.
37. People are dying because of the cold winters and having no shelter.
38. Resources in Great Falls are overwhelmed.
39. First United Methodist Church is working on getting a fence put up.
40. There is a Facebook site for Housed Great Falls and they are open for suggestions and any help.

The overall consensus of the proponents was that there is a need in Great Falls and First United Methodist Church is trying to fulfill the need. It is not the best scenario, but the community needs to come together to help the homeless population. The local government needs to be involved.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND ACTION

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Mr. Bertelsen stated that there was a lot of emotion in the Commission Chambers and a lot of people feel passionate about the homelessness issue. No one will ever be 100% happy. The bottom line is that the Conditional Use Permit does not meet the zoning rules. The partnership is a great idea. There is a downtown core that the community is trying to revitalize and create a good place for families to live and interact.

Mr. Pankratz asked if there was ever another Conditional Use Permit in the area for the same type of Permit. Mr. Raymond responded that there was for the Rescue Mission and the Cameron Center for enclosed structures. There has never been an approved Conditional Use Permit for an encampment.

Mr. Pankratz asked that if the Conditional Use Permit is denied, what action the City would take in regards to the current situation. Mr. Hindoien responded that there is a lawsuit for the land use that is not permitted in the C-4 zone.

MOTION: That the Zoning Commission recommend the City Commission deny the Conditional Use Permit as legally described in the Staff Report, and the accompanying Findings of Fact.

Made by: Mr. Mills

Second: Ms. Kaupish

VOTE: All in favor, the motion carried 6-0

COMMUNICATIONS

A request to amend the 2012 Downtown Urban Renewal Plan will be presented at the June 28, 2022 meeting.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

A member of the community asked when the Conditional Use Permit recommendation will be going before the City Commission. Mr. Raymond responded that another public hearing is

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tentatively planned to be conducted on July 19, 2022 at 7:00 P.M. in the Commission Chambers at the Civic Center.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Bertelsen adjourned the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY



Meeting Date: June 28, 2022

**CITY OF GREAT FALLS
PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD / ZONING COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT**

Item: Amendment to the Downtown Urban Renewal Plan

Initiated By: Planning and Community Development

Presented By: Tom Micuda, Deputy Director, Planning and Community Development

Action Requested: Recommendation to City Commission for the approval of the Downtown Urban Renewal Plan amendment

Suggested Motion:

1. Board Member moves:

“In accordance with Montana Code Annotated §7-15-4213, I move that the Planning Advisory Board recommend to the City Commission that the proposed amendment to the Great Falls Downtown Urban Renewal Plan, as described in the Staff Report is (in conformance/not in conformance) with the 2013 Growth Policy.”

2. Chairman calls for a second, public comment, board/commission discussion, and calls for the vote.

Background:

In 2012, the City Commission adopted the Downtown Urban Renewal Plan (DURP). The creation of the DURP was the result of the development and adoption of the Downtown Master Plan. The Downtown Master Plan (DMP) provides a blueprint for the revitalization and redevelopment of Downtown, and recommended the creation of an Urban Renewal District that utilizes Tax Increment Financing to help fund public improvements called out within the DMP and the City’s Growth Policy.

Summary of Projects Triggering the Need to Amend the Plan:

The City’s Public Works Department is moving forward with two capital projects designed to address drainage issues within the Urban Renewal Plan Area. The first project is designed to resolve flooding and ice buildup problems currently taking place within the alley behind the Celtic Cowboy and Hotel Arvon. This alley section, known as 2nd Avenue Alley, is located between Park Drive and 2nd Street South. Because there is almost no slope in the alley and buildings on either side block out sunlight, water has a tendency to pond in the alley and then turn to ice in wintertime conditions. Pedestrians regularly traverse the alley because there is a parking garage on the south side of the alley that hotel guests use.

The proposed project will install drainage inlets and a conveyance pipe to drain the water more effectively to an existing storm drain system in 2nd Street South. The Public Works Department has requested \$90,000 of Downtown TIF funds and would like to bid the project in August with a completion during the fall of this year.

The second project is a much larger project designed to upgrade the capacity of the storm drainage network downtown. The proposed project area encompasses the streets and avenues bordered by 2nd Avenue North, 2nd Street, 4th Avenue South, and 5th Street. Additionally, the proposed project would include work from the intersection of 4th Avenue South and 2nd Street South to the east bank of the Missouri River. The project will involve adding storm drain inlets, increasing underground pipe capacity, and better conveying storm water to the Missouri River. The project is expected to take place between 2022 and 2027 and be divided up into four distinct phases.

The total cost of the project is estimated to be slightly over \$6.3 million. Funding for the project will come from three sources: ARPA Grant funds and City storm drain funds (\$3.8 million), and Downtown TIF funds (\$2.5 million). In order to reduce the financial impact on the TIF District’s cash balance, the request will be done in \$500,000 increments over the five year project period. The current balance in the District is \$4.1 million.

Need for the Proposed Urban Renewal Plan Amendment:

Investments in public infrastructure are clearly authorized by Montana law governing TIF Districts. However, when the City developed its DURP in 2012, it did not address the need for public investments in drainage facilities, water and sewer upgrades, and general upgrades to streets and alleys. This was clearly an oversight related to the issues that were points of emphasis during the Downtown Master Plan development process that occurred in 2011.

To provide policy guidance for the two proposed drainage projects as well as create policies to support future infrastructure investments, the following amendments to the DURP are being proposed on page 8 of the attached Plan:

8. Improve transportation and utility infrastructure in the Downtown.			
a. Upgrade the capacity of the City's existing storm water infrastructure network to address flooding and the impact of large storm events.	COGF	Immediate	Capital Improvements
b. Maintain and upgrade, when necessary, the City's water and wastewater utility network.	COGF	On-going	Capital Improvements
c. Identify deficiencies in the condition and functionality of the Downtown street and alley network , and undertake improvements to address those deficiencies.	COGF	On-going	Capital Improvements

Conformance with 2013 Growth Policy: The Planning Advisory Board is required to provide the City Commission with a recommendation on whether the amended DURP language is consistent with the City’s 2013 Growth Policy. To this end, staff notes the following policies in the Growth Policy document that provide support for infrastructure investments in the downtown.

- **Eco3.7.3** - Manage the City's Tax Increment Finance Districts (TIFs) toward the creation of long-term improvements, with special emphasis on applying funds to capture, retain and reinvest dollars within the designated TIF boundaries.
- **Eco3.7.10** - Invest, spend and manage public dollars in a fiscally prudent manner.
- **Eco3.7.11** - Consider and pursue, where economically sound, catalyst projects and partnerships such as:
 - b. Projects that represent sound investment of Tax Increment Finance Tax revenues

- **Phy4.3.2** - Plan for the provision of appropriate infrastructure improvements, where needed, to support development.

Concurrences:

The Planning and Community Development Department has coordinated with the Public Works Department, Finance Department, and the City's outside legal counsel from Dorsey & Whitney LLP throughout the process. At its June 22 monthly meeting, the Downtown Development Partnership voted to recommend support for both the Public Works drainage projects as well as amended DURP document.

Fiscal Impact:

While there is no direct fiscal impact with the adoption of the amendment of the Downtown Urban Renewal Plan, the amendment will provide a critical opportunity to utilize Downtown Tax Increment Funds to support needed drainage improvements in the downtown area.

Staff Recommendation:

In accordance with Montana Code Annotated §7-15-4213, staff recommends that the Planning Advisory Board recommend to the City Commission that the proposed amendment to the Great Falls Downtown Urban Renewal Plan is in conformance with the 2013 Growth Policy.

Alternatives:

The Planning Advisory Board could choose to recommend that the proposed amendment to the Downtown Urban Renewal Plan is not in conformance with the 2013 Growth Policy. For such a decision, the Board should examine the analysis above and provide an alternative basis for decision.

Attachments/Exhibits:

Amended Downtown Urban Renewal Plan

CITY OF GREAT FALLS

Amended and Restated Downtown Urban Renewal Plan



~~October 2020~~ August 2022

Introduction:

The City of Great Falls has embarked on an ambitious program to revitalize downtown Great Falls. In October 2011 the Great Falls City Commission unanimously adopted the Downtown Master Plan (DMP). Referenced throughout the 2013 Growth Policy Update, the DMP serves as the guiding policy document for downtown. The DMP provides a strategically focused, goal driven “blueprint” for the future growth and development of downtown. The DMP creates a vision and outlines strategies, actions, partnerships and timeframes that will facilitate the re-development of a regional destination.

The 82 strategies within the DMP are each designed to capitalize on downtown’s assets and proactively address downtown’s issues. The strategies all seek to create a downtown that has a balance of amenities, housing and transportation options, goods and services and cultural, entertainment and educational opportunities.

The DMP recommends the creation of an Urban Renewal District that utilizes Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to fund public improvements recommended in the DMP in an effort to revitalize Downtown Great Falls. The proposed Downtown Urban Renewal District (DURP) will be the third urban renewal district established in the City of Great Falls. The Central Place Revitalization Urban Renewal Program, established in 1977, has since expired while the West Bank Urban Renewal District, established in 2006 is currently operational.

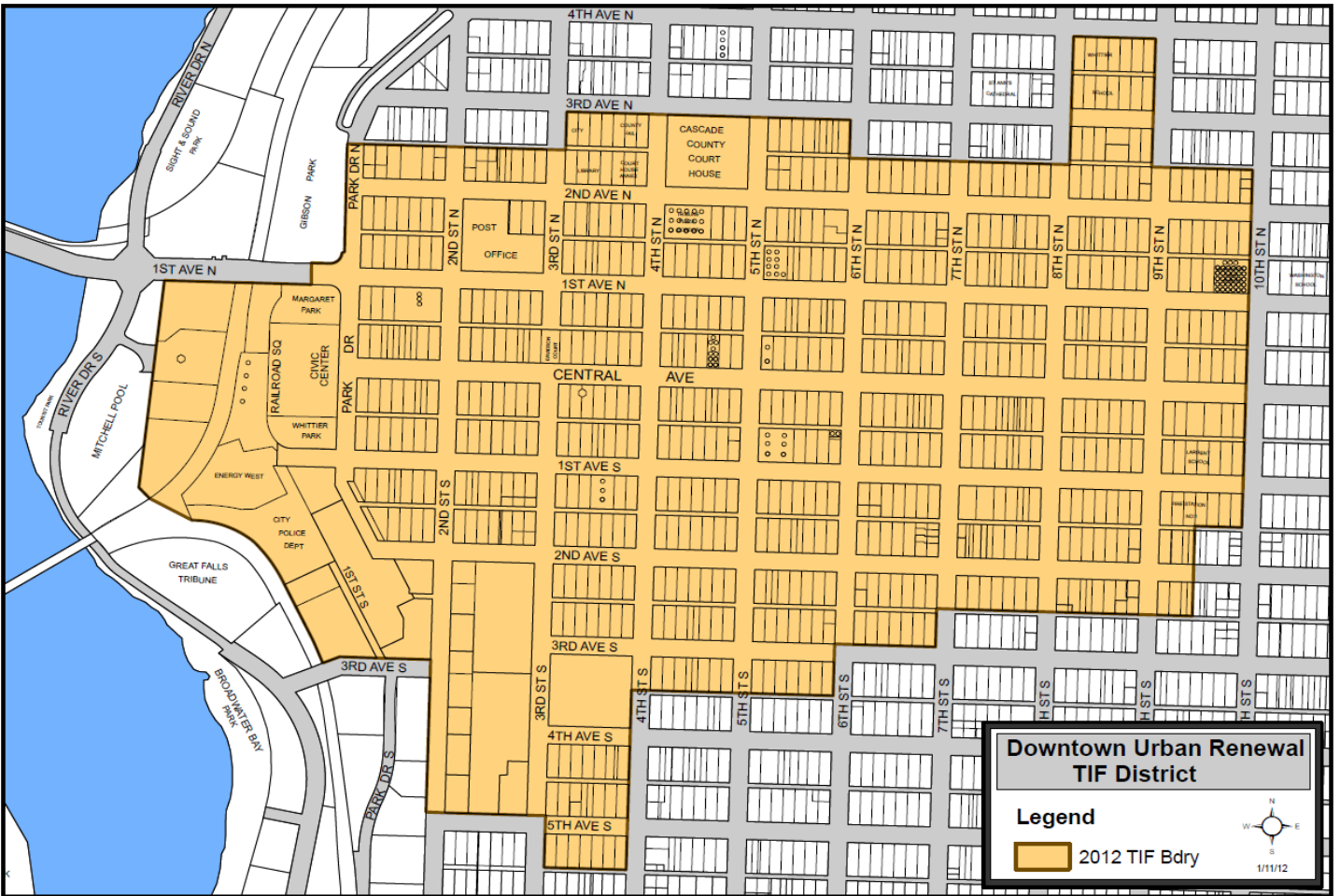
The Downtown Urban Renewal District and TIF funds generated through the improvements to property in the district are anticipated to be the primary funding sources to implement the recommendations of the DMP. Previous urban renewal districts in the City have been successful in redevelopment and revitalization efforts. It is the hope of the City of Great Falls and the Downtown stakeholders that this urban renewal district will yield the same positive results.

Amended and Restated Downtown Urban Renewal District Plan

Legal Description of the District:

Beginning at a point that is the southeast corner of Lot 1, Block 11, of the Broadwater Bay Business Park; thence south across 3rd Ave So to the northeast corner of Lot 6, Block 9, of the Broadwater Bay Business Park; thence south along the west right of way line of 2nd St So to a point that is directly west of the southwest corner of Lot 8, of the Amended Plat of Block 453, of the Great Falls Original Townsite (GFOT); Thence east across 2nd St So to the southwest corner of Lot 8, of the Amended Plat of Block 453, of the GFOT; thence east to the southwest corner of Lot 14, Block 452, of the GFOT; thence south to the southwest corner of Lot 1, Block 455, of the GFOT; thence east to the southeast corner of Lot 7, Block 455, of the GFOT; thence north along the west right of line of 4th St S to a point directly west from the southwest corner of Lot 1, Block 420, of the GFOT; thence east across 4th St So to the southwest corner of Lot 1, Block 420, of the GFOT; thence east to the southeast corner of Lot 7, Block 421, of the GFOT; thence north to the southeast corner of Lot 8, Block 413, of the GFOT; thence east across 6th St So to the southwest corner of Lot 14, Block 412, of the GFOT; thence east to the southeast corner of Lot 8, Block 412, of the GFOT; thence north to the southeast corner of Lot 7, Block 412, of the GFOT; thence east to the southwest corner of Lot 1, Block 411, of the GFOT; thence east to the southeast corner of Lot 3, Block 409, of the GFOT; thence north to the southeast corner of Lot 3, Block 376, of the GFOT; thence east to the southeast corner of Lot 7, Block 376, of the GFOT; thence north along the west right of way line of 10th St N to the northeast corner of Lot 8, Block 258, of the GFOT; thence west to the northeast corner of Lot 8, Block 257, of the GFOT; thence north to the northeast corner of Lot 7, Block 242, of the GFOT; thence west to the northwest corner of Lot 1, Blk 242, of the GFOT; thence south to the northwest corner of Lot 14, Blk 257, of the GFOT; thence west to the northeast corner of Lot 8, Blk 254, of the GFOT; thence north to the northeast corner of Lot 7, Blk 254, of the GFOT: thence west to the northwest corner of Lot 1, Blk 252, of the GFOT; thence south to the northwest corner of Lot 14, Blk 252, of the GFOT; thence west to the northwest corner of Lot 13, Blk 250, of the GFOT; thence continuing west to a point that is located on the west right of way of Park Dr N; thence south along the west right of way of Park Dr N to the corner of Park Dr N and 1st Ave N; thence around a curve to the left to a point of tangent thence continuing west eighty feet along the north right of way of 1st Ave N; thence south on a perpendicular line to the south right of way line of 1st Ave N; thence west along the south right of way line of 1st Ave N to the northwest corner of Lot 5, Blk 13, of the Broadwater Bay Business Park Addition (BBBP); thence southwesterly to the southwest corner of Lot 2, Blk 13, of the BBBP; thence southeasterly to the southeast corner of Lot 2, Blk 13, of the BBBP; thence continuing southeasterly to a point that is the intersection of the north railroad right of way line and the westerly boundary of Mark 22A (City of Great Falls Police Department); thence southeasterly along a curve to the right also being the north railroad right of way line to the southwest corner of Lot 1, Blk 12, of the BBBP; thence easterly along the north right of way line of 3rd Ave S to the point of beginning.

District Boundary



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Determination of Blight:

To establish an Urban Renewal District in Montana, it must be found that conditions of blight are present in the area. Section 7-15-4206 (2) MCA defines blight as “an area that is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and crime, that substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the city or its environs, that retards the provision of housing accommodations, or that constitutes an economic or social liability or is detrimental or constitutes a menace to the public health, safety, welfare, and morals in its present condition and use, by reason of:

- the substantial physical dilapidation, deterioration, age obsolescence, or defective construction, material, and arrangement of buildings or improvements, whether residential or nonresidential;
- inadequate provision for ventilation, light, proper sanitary facilities, or open spaces as determined by competent appraisers on the basis of an examination of the building standards of the municipality;
- inappropriate or mixed uses of land or buildings;
- high density of population and overcrowding;
- defective or inadequate street layout;
- faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
- excessive land coverage;
- unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- deterioration of site;
- diversity of ownership;
- tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land;
- defective or unusual conditions of title;
- improper subdivision or obsolete platting;
- the existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes; or
- any combination of the factors listed in this subsection (2).



With the adoption of Resolution 9961, the Great Falls City Commission found that the following conditions of blight are present in the District:

The substantial physical dilapidation, deterioration, age obsolescence, or defective construction, material, and arrangement of buildings or improvements, whether residential or nonresidential.

Vacancy, underutilization and a lack of maintenance has led to the substantial physical dilapidation and deterioration of a number of buildings within the district. Not only does this affect the aesthetic character of these buildings, and the district it also produces conditions that are unsafe, unsanitary and not conducive to economic development.



Inappropriate or mixed uses of land or buildings.

A large amount of land within the District is currently used as surface parking for automobiles. While a certain amount of parking is necessary to support other uses within the District, surface parking lots are an inefficient use of land in the City's commercial core. This land could potentially be redeveloped as commercial, office, residential or mixed use activities that would improve the vitality of the downtown and increase the taxable value of the District.



The heavy industrial nature of the southwest area of the District is incompatible with the adjacent commercial and retail and residential uses of the area. This area has the potential to be redeveloped in a mixed-use or transitional fashion to provide a key entry corridor into the District.

Defective or inadequate street layout.

Three one-way couplets currently traverse through the district. Multiple studies and analyses conducted across the U.S. indicate that downtown access and circulation, customer parking and property values increase when downtown one-ways are restored to two-way streets. The City of Great Falls conducted and completed a study in April 2013, which resulted in the *Downtown Access, Circulation, and Streetscape Plan*. Although it was never adopted, the study is used as a resource and guide for city staff.

A primary intersection within the district - Park Drive and 1st Avenue N - is unsafe and difficult to navigate for pedestrians. Additionally, the configuration of the intersection produces inefficient conditions for automobiles, especially those making turns at high volume portions of the day.

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Deterioration of site.

Vacant, underutilized or unmaintained buildings and parcels concentrated within specific areas of the district have created pockets of site deterioration throughout the district. The deterioration of sites has often led private investment and development to move to outlying areas of the City and has also slowed redevelopment and infill efforts downtown. If site deterioration is not addressed, the exodus of commercial and residential development will continue and ultimately lead to further deterioration.

The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes.

A number of buildings in the district are in conditions that could potentially endanger life of property. Multiple factors have contributed to these conditions including fire damage, the use of hazardous construction materials, negligence on behalf of a property owner and extended vacancy among others. Buildings that have reached this condition are often the target of graffiti and other forms of vandalism, leading to further deterioration in the district.

Urban Renewal Plan

The DMP will guide the urban renewal and revitalization efforts within the district. The overall vision of the DMP and the goals, objectives and strategies of the Plan provide a comprehensive framework for the redevelopment of the downtown core. The following table displays the 90 strategies of the DMP and additional project priorities, with associated timelines, categories and partner organizations.



Strategy	Partners	Timeframe	Category
1. CONNECTED:			
1. Improve pedestrian connectivity and safety Downtown.			
a. Ensure streetscape improvements are designed to enhance pedestrian safety and pleasure by providing sufficient space for pedestrian needs and uses.	CofGF (P&CD, PW)	Short	Regulatory Framework
b. Develop public/private partnerships to ensure Downtown is safe, clean and accessible for all users.	CofGF, DAA (Safety team)	Immediate	Program
c. Identify, prioritize and correct accessibility barriers to sidewalks, curbs, pedestrian signals and other pedestrian facilities.	CofGF (P&CD, PW) Accessibility group	Short	Program
2. Develop a comprehensive Downtown bicycle network to connect into a city-wide system.			
a. Prepare a complete streets policy to guide roadway construction and rehabilitation.	CofGF, GFGF, GFBC	Immediate	Regulatory Framework
b. Update the bikeway chapter of the Long Range Transportation Plan, including prioritization of improvements and routes for implementation.	CofGF (P&CD, P&R), GFBC, RTI, TWG	Short	Regulatory Framework
c. Improve and expand bicycle connections to the River's Edge Trail through signage and routes.	CofGF (P&CD, P&R), GFBC, RTI, TWG	Short	Capital Improvement
d. Ensure that bike routes link and connect neighborhoods, employment centers, amenities and destinations.	CofGF (P&CD), GFBC, RTI	Short	Regulatory Framework
e. Develop public education and marketing programs to maximize the use of the bicycle network.	RTI, GFBC	Short	Program
3. Reduce or eliminate Downtown one-ways.			
a. Conduct a one-way conversion plan to help facilitate an environment that is pedestrian and retail friendly, improves local circulation, and increase access to Downtown businesses.	CofGF (P&CD, PW), MDT	Medium	Program
b. Effectively communicate the costs and benefits of one-way conversions to all stakeholders.	CofGF, DAA (BID, DGFA)	Medium	Program
c. Develop roadway and streetscape design standards to further the intended benefits of one-way conversions for all users.	CofGF	Medium	Regulatory Framework
4. Improve connectivity to the Missouri River, River's Edge Trail, and Gibson Park for bicycles and pedestrians.			
a. Improve the attractiveness and enhance the visibility of railroad crossings and underpass tunnels that connect Downtown to the Missouri River, River's Edge Trail and Gibson Park.	CofGF (P&CD, PW, P&R), RTI	Medium	Capital Improvement
b. Identify locations and develop design options to develop an additional separated grade bike and pedestrian crossing of railroad tracks.	CofGF (P&CD, PW, P&R), RTI	Long	Capital Improvement
c. Utilize signage, pathways and striping to provide pedestrians and bicyclists with safe and efficient connections between Downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods.	CofGF (P&CD, PW), RTI, TWG	Short	Capital Improvement
5. Develop a comprehensive Downtown wayfinding system.			
a. Develop a comprehensive wayfinding program.	CofGF, DAA (GFDA), Private Business	Short	Capital Improvement

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b. Supplement proposed wayfinding program with printed maps and brochures, digital and audio tours and websites and apps to guide visitors throughout Downtown.	CofGF (P&CD), HPAC, CVB, TBID	Medium	Program
c. Incorporate a series of named or themed pathways that connect Downtown amenities and destinations.	CofGF (P&CD), HPAC, CVB, TBID	Long	Capital Improvement
6. Optimize Downtown parking for all stakeholders.			
a. Conduct a comprehensive parking study to guide Downtown parking program.	CofGF (P&CD)	Short	Regulatory Framework
b. Improve bicycle parking facilities Downtown.	CofGF (P&CD, PW), GFBC, BID, private business	Short	Capital Improvement
7. Expand the use of public transit Downtown.			
a. Promote the use of transit for Downtown specific events.	GFTD, DGFA	Short	Program
b. Encourage expanded partnership between the Great Falls Transit District and Great Falls Public Schools to promote transit usage to reach Downtown events and activities.	GFTD, GFPS, DAA (DGFA)	Short	Program
c. Encourage Downtown businesses to work with the Great Falls Transit District to provide subsidized bus passes for employees as an alternative to Downtown parking.	DGFA, BID, GFTD, Private Business	Short	Program
8. Improve transportation and utility infrastructure in the Downtown.			
a. Upgrade the capacity of the City's existing storm water infrastructure network to address flooding and the impact of large storm events.	COGF	Immediate	Capital Improvements
b. Maintain and upgrade, when necessary, the City's water and wastewater utility network.	COGF	On-going	Capital Improvements
c. Identify deficiencies in the condition and functionality of the Downtown street and alley network, and undertake improvements to address those deficiencies.	COGF	On-going	Capital Improvements
DESTINATION:			
1. Market Downtown's entertainment, culture, shopping and dining.			
a. Continue to actively cross-promote and package Downtown's entertainment, culture, shopping and dining facilities with Downtown events.	MT, MEC, DGFA	On-going	Program
b. Work with various groups and organizations including the Convention and Visitors Bureau, Tourism BID, Montana Expo Park and Airport Authority to promote Downtown as a tourism and convention destination to the region and Canada.	DAA (CVB, TBID), MTEP, GFIA	Short	Program
c. Develop a comprehensive and coordinated Downtown marketing campaign utilizing print, radio, television and social media.	DAA (all), TA	Immediate	Program
2. Promote a broad range of family friendly entertainment and recreational opportunities and activities Downtown.			
a. Review existing Downtown events and add free or low cost activities that engage a variety of age groups including: families, teens, young adults and older adults.	CofGF (P&R), DGFA	Short	Program
b. Promote new and exciting events in Downtown's parks, pools and recreational facilities that attract families with young children.	CofGF (P&R), DGFA	Short	Program
c. Encourage Downtown organizations and facilities to establish programs for parents to drop children off while they utilize Downtown's shopping and amenities.	Private Business, DGFA, Museum Group	Short	Program

3. Ensure Downtown is active and vibrant during the evenings and weekends.			
a. Actively pursue the development of a Downtown boutique hotel to provide quality lodging and amenities for Downtown visitors.	DAA (GFDA, CofGF), Private Business	Medium	Site Specific
b. Develop programs and events that provide opportunities for people to remain in and visit Downtown in the evening and on the weekend.	DAA (DGFA), CofGF (P&R)	Short	Program
c. Actively recruit an already successful restaurant to relocate or expand into Downtown.	GFDA, BID, DGFA	Short	Program
d. Work with existing restaurant and bar/tavern owners to identify, develop and promote a Downtown Dining District.	DGFA, TA, DAA (all)	Medium	Program
e. Market Downtown's amenities and activities to current employers and employees to encourage the workforce to stay Downtown after business hours.	DAA (DGFA), TA, Restaurant owners	Immediate	Program
f. Create a year-round public market / food and arts incubator that would cater to residents, employees and visitors.	GFDA, DGFA, CofGF	Medium	Site Specific
4. Increase the utilization of the Convention Center and Mansfield Center for the Performing Arts (Mansfield).			
a. Develop public/private partnerships to package the facilities at the Civic Center and Mansfield with catering and dining services and lodging facilities to enhance the attractiveness of Downtown as a convention destination.	CVB, TBID, MCPA	Medium	Program
b. Enhance partnerships with entertainment promoters to utilize the Mansfield as a concert venue.	MCPA	Short	Program
c. Educate potential users of the Civic Center and Mansfield about the opportunities available at the facility, policies and prices.	MCPA	Immediate	Program
FLOURISHING:			
1. Identify and support an organization to lead and champion Downtown revitalization.			
a. Establish a formal Downtown Development Agency within the City of Great Falls, in partnership with public and private entities, to foster new development and redevelopment Downtown and implement the goals, objectives and strategies identified in the Plan.	CofGF, DAA (all), Private Business	Immediate	Regulatory Framework
b. Establish a Downtown TIF and associated Urban Renewal Plan district to fund Downtown projects, improvements and organizational management.	CofGF, GFPS, CC	Immediate	Regulatory Framework
c. Update zoning and land use regulations to support recommendations of the Plan.	CofGF (P&CD)	Short	Regulatory Framework
2. Improve the public realm to provide a safe, attractive and welcoming environment.			
a. Encourage a partnership between Downtown organizations and stakeholders and the City Police Department to ensure a clean and safe environment.	DAA (W&S), GFPD	Short	Program
b. Establish a volunteer based Downtown clean-up day and/or program.	DAA (W&S)	Short	Program
c. Increase street level vitality by encouraging the active use of ground floor space in the Downtown core.	CofGF (P&CD), BID, DGFA	Short	Regulatory Framework
3. Identify and attract high paying employers and jobs to Downtown.			
a. Develop a comprehensive Downtown business retention and development plan that focuses on successful and emerging business clusters Downtown.	GFDA, CofGF	Short	Program
b. Utilize GFDA's business attraction and retention resources to leverage Downtown business investment.	GFDA	Immediate	Program

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4. Support existing and attract new commercial and retail business Downtown.			
a. Establish a mentor program to pair new entrepreneurs with successful Downtown business owners.	DGFA, BID, GFDA	Short	Program
b. Utilize national research and trends to identify and attract “Downtown friendly” retailers.	GFDA, BID, NW	Short	Program
c. Conduct a Downtown market analysis to guide commercial and retail development.	GFDA, BID, DGFA	Medium	Program
d. Provide existing business owners with market research and technical and financial assistance.	CofGF, GFDA, DGFA, BID	Medium	Program
e. Conduct a Downtown business and building inventory to establish and maintain an accurate database of what is currently located Downtown and what opportunities exist for business expansion, attraction and relocation.	CofGF (P&CD), BID, DGFA	Immediate	Program
5. Attract a diverse mix of visual and performing artists to live and work Downtown.			
a. Revive and support the Great Falls Arts Council to develop and promote arts programs, events and education.	CofGF, DAA (all)	Short	Regulatory Framework
b. Encourage the development of lofts, studios and live/work spaces in vacant or underutilized buildings to attract artists to Downtown and increase arts and culture activity.	CofGF (P&CD), DAA (GFCC, GFDA)	Medium	Program
c. Develop a roster of visual and performing artists and craftspeople's living in and around Great Falls to utilize for Downtown programs and events.	DGFA	Short	Program
d. Capitalize on the success of Western Art Week by drawing visitors to Downtown galleries, shops and restaurants.	DAA (GFCC)	Immediate	Program
e. Continue to promote Downtown art galleries and artists through events such as the First Friday Art Walk.	DAA (DGFA)	Immediate	Program
LIVING:			
1. Promote a wide range of housing choices throughout Downtown.			
a. Ensure that the proposed City of Great Falls Downtown Development Agency is a champion of Downtown housing development.	NW, CofGF (P&CD)	Short	Regulatory Framework
b. Evaluate zoning and land use regulations to ensure policies allow for and encourage Downtown housing in the form of rehabilitation and preservation of existing buildings, infill development and new construction.	CofGF (P&CD)	Short	Regulatory Framework
c. Conduct a Downtown housing inventory to establish and maintain an accurate database of housing and property available for rent, ownership, and/or rehab.	NW, W&S, CofGF (P&CD)	Short	Program
2. Ensure existing housing is safe and attractive.			
a. Actively monitor the condition of existing housing and enforce the City's Property Maintenance Code.	CofGF (P&CD), W&S	On-going	Program
b. Promote and utilize the City of Great Falls Housing Rehab Loan program and Neighborworks Great Falls programs to enhance existing homes and rental properties.	CofGF, NWGF	On-going	Program
c. Develop a volunteer based residential improvement plan to ensure Downtown neighborhoods are clean and safe.	W&S, NC	Short	Program

3. Attract private investment and financing for Downtown housing.

a. Create new and promote existing incentive programs to encourage residential development.	NW, CofGF	Short	Program
b. Prepare a housing market study to assist developers, lending institutions and private property owners in developing Downtown housing.	Realtors, HBA, NW, GFDA	Short	Program
c. Establish a clearinghouse and/or database of residential financing options and incentives.	Realtors, HBA, NW, GFDA	Short	Program

4. Attract retailers and neighborhood services that cater to Downtown residents.

a. Survey Downtown residents and utilize national research to identify neighborhood based commercial, retail and services that are missing Downtown.	NW, NC	Immediate	Program
b. Encourage mixed-use development that places residents within close proximity to commercial activities.	CofGF (P&CD)	Short	Regulatory Framework

AESTHETICS:

1. Preserve, restore, and reuse Downtown’s historic buildings and sites.

a. Market Downtown’s historical resources to facilitate improvements and restoration of properties through tax incentives and preservation grants.	CofGF, HPAC	Immediate	Program
b. Educate current property owners and developers of the funding programs available to make improvements to the Downtown buildings.	HPAC, DAA (BID)	Immediate	Program
c. Establish a technical assistance and incentive program to encourage the adaptive re-use, rehabilitation and preservation of historic buildings and sites.	CofGF, HPAC	On-going	Program

2. Increase the number and diversity of public spaces Downtown.

a. Actively pursue the development of an indoor/outdoor community gathering space to host activities and events and attract residents, employees and visitors throughout the year.	CofGF, Private Business	Short	Site Specific
b. Encourage diversity in the form and function of Downtown parks, plazas and gathering spaces.	CofGF (P&CD, P&R)	Medium	Regulatory Framework
c. Explore the feasibility of developing rooftop green spaces.	CofGF (P&CD, PW), Private business	Medium	Regulatory Framework

3. Promote quality design and construction in Downtown’s built environment.

a. Develop design guidelines to enhance the character of Downtown through the quality design and construction of Downtown’s built environment.	CofGF, DAA (all)	Short	Regulatory Framework
b. Evaluate the function, authority and scope of the City’s Design Review Board to ensure aesthetic goals of the Plan are achieved.	CofGF	Short	Regulatory Framework

4. Create attractive gateway design features that welcome residents and visitors to downtown.

a. Identify priority entrances into Downtown to construct gateway design features.	CofGF (P&CD, P&R), GFDA	Short	Capital Improvements
b. Establish a program to encourage community and/or service groups, private businesses and other stakeholders to “sponsor” the construction of gateway features.	DAA (all)	Short	Capital Improvements

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5. Expand and enhance the existing downtown streetscape.			
a. Develop a comprehensive Downtown streetscape plan that prioritizes future improvements and builds upon the existing streetscape.	CofGF (P&CD, PW)	Short	Regulatory Framework
b. Ensure streetscape improvements are implemented in coordination with the construction of gateway design features.	CofGF (P&CD)	Short	Regulatory Framework
c. Work with the City Forester to establish tree planting programs throughout Downtown.	DAA (BID), NC	Short	Program
6. Actively pursue the preservation and rehabilitation of the Rocky Mountain Building.			
a. Identify an organization or partnership to lead restoration efforts including assisting in permitting process and requirements, identifying funding options, leading fundraising efforts and recruiting a mix of building tenants.	CofGF (P&CD), DAA (all)	On-going	Program
b. Encourage the current building owners to move forward with restoration improvements before weathering and damage continue to a point where rehabilitation is no longer feasible.	CofGF (P&CD), DAA (all)	On-going	Program
7. Actively pursue the preservation and rehabilitation of the Civic Center.			
a. Fund and complete the Civic Center façade renovation project.	CofGF	Immediate	Capital Improvement
b. Identify and complete rehabilitation projects within the Civic Center property including, but not limited to, landscape and asphalt restoration.	CofGF	On-going	Capital Improvement
c. Determine and complete preservation projects within the Mansfield Center for the Performing Arts including, but not limited to, seat and architectural feature renovations.	CofGF	On-going	Capital Improvement
d. Identify and complete rehabilitation projects within the Convention Center including, but not limited to, upgrading lighting and architectural feature renovations.	CofGF	On-going	Capital Improvement

Funding and Administration:

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is necessary to encourage private reinvestment within the District, create employment opportunities, implement the goals set forth in this plan and increase the tax base of the District. The Downtown Urban Renewal District is hereby established as a tax increment financing urban renewal area in accordance with 7-15-4282-4292 and 4301-4324 (MCA).

For the purpose of calculating the incremental taxable value each year for the life of the district, the base taxable value shall be calculated as current base taxable value of the district as of January 1, 2012.

Administration

The District will be administered in accordance with 7-15-4232 (MCA). The Great Falls City Commission has the authority to administer and manage the District and the implementation of the DURP. Under 7-15-4232 (MCA) the City Commission may authorize a City Department to manage the program and implement the recommendation of the DURP. It is envisioned that the Commission will receive recommendations and input from the Planning and Community Development Department in partnership with the Downtown Partnership of Great Falls (the Partnership).

Planning and Community Development Staff will work with the Partnership to prepare an annual District work plan and budget, which the Partnership will submit to the City Commission for consideration and adoption. The work plan will list the activities and cost of activities for the coming fiscal years and a method of financing those activities. The Partnership will enter into an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or other form of agreement that outlines the roles and responsibilities of this group in relation to the District.

The Planning and Community Development Department will provide initial staffing to assist the Partnership in preparing the annual District work plan and budget, preparing and presenting annual reports to the City Commission, and coordinating the review of proposed projects and development requesting TIF funding. It is anticipated that TIF moneys will be used in the future to fund a permanent staff position.

Planning and Community Development Staff will provide to the City Commission and the public an annual program evaluation as part of the annual report.

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Conformity with the Growth Policy

The establishment of the Partnership and the Downtown TIF are both direct recommendations of the Downtown Master Plan. Additionally, specific themes, goals and policies of the City's Growth Policy (displayed below) are supported by recommendations contained within the DURP.

- Encourage livable, walkable, visually and functionally cohesive neighborhoods that incorporate traditional design concepts (Land Use pg. 20).
- Formulate and adopt modern, flexible land development regulations in order to preserve and enhance the scale, quality, and character of existing neighborhoods (Land Use pg. 21).
- Encourage mixed land uses in new and redeveloping areas to achieve a high degree of self-containment, reduce auto dependence, and foster a strong live-work-play pattern of activity within neighborhoods (Land Use pg. 22).
- Encourage preservation of corridors of land for non-motorized transportation routes/trails and provide public investment for non-motorized transportation facilities (Land Use pg. 22).
- Review existing zoning to ensure it is consistent with neighborhood objectives, and pursue rezoning of areas where conflicts are found (Land Use pg. 23).
- Increase code enforcement activity in order to help protect neighborhoods from decay, decline and disinvestment (Land Use pg. 23).
- Allow for compatible, small-scale commercial uses that support existing neighborhoods and reduce dependence on automobile travel (Land Use pg. 24).
- Encourage public investment in parks and schools that are neighborhood focal points, consistent with the Comprehensive Park and Recreation Master Plan (Land Use pg. 25).
- Proactively direct development through public investment in infrastructure (Land Use pg. 28).

Amendment of the DURP

The DURP may be modified at any time by the City Commission as necessary to eliminate and prevent the development or spread of blight and to encourage urban rehabilitation. The process for plan amendment shall be consistent with the procedures outlined in 7-15-4212 - 4219 (MCA).

Conclusion:

The City of Great Falls Downtown Master Plan recommends the establishment of an Urban Renewal District that utilizes TIF funding to revitalize and rehab downtown. The Plan provides an ambitious yet obtainable framework of goals, objectives and strategies that are intended to transition this area from its current condition to a vibrant and thriving destination. The Downtown Urban Renewal District has tremendous potential to re-emerge as the commercial, cultural and entertainment center of Great Falls.

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