



CITY OF APACHE JUNCTION

**CONCENTRATED**  
**DOWNTOWN MASTER**  
**PLAN UPDATE**  
**2024**

Prepared for: City of Apache Junction Concentrated Downtown Update  
September 2024



# PROJECT TEAM:



Client:  
City of Apache Junction



**SWABACK**<sub>plc</sub>  
Architects + Planners

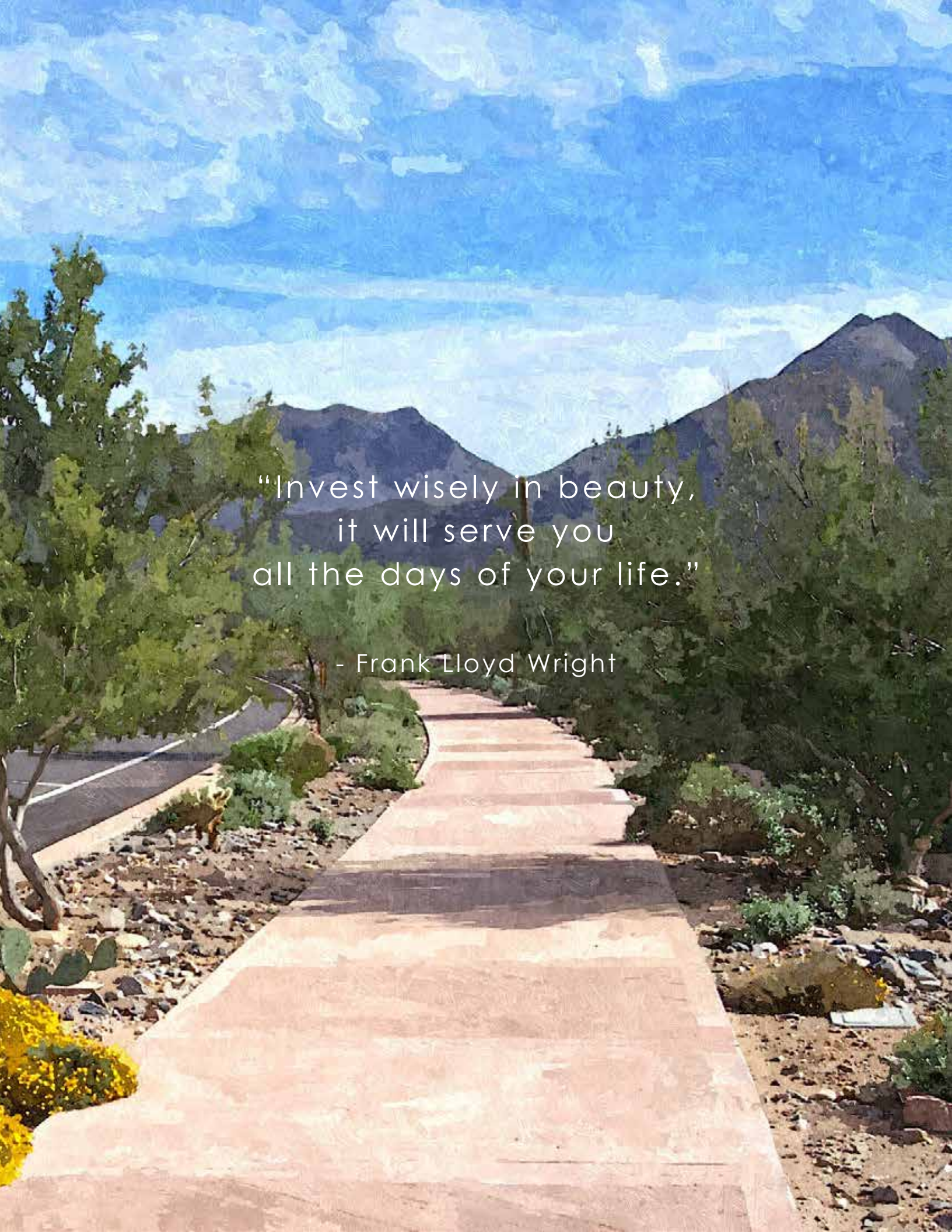
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A scenic landscape featuring a paved path that leads through lush greenery towards a range of mountains under a bright blue sky. The path is made of reddish-brown concrete slabs and is flanked by various plants, including trees and cacti. The mountains in the background are dark and rugged, with some snow or light-colored patches. The sky is a vibrant blue with some light clouds.

“Invest wisely in beauty,  
it will serve you  
all the days of your life.”

- Frank Lloyd Wright





# A Brief Overview of Swaback

Swaback is a team of dedicated individuals providing services in hospitality, special case architectural design and planning, interior design, environmental and graphic design, and community development services.

*Swaback's award winning office, The Studio on Cattletrack, is a series of highly individualized suites arranged around a central garden. Among its design honors was the top AIA award in the state.*



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## Mayor and City Council

Mayor - Chip Wilson  
Vice Mayor - Robert Schroeder  
Council Member - Tess Nesser  
Council Member - Bambi Johnson  
Council Member - Peter Heck  
Council Member - Bryan Soller  
Council Member - Darryl Cross

## City Manager

Bryant Powell

## Assistant City Manager

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## Staff Committee

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# 02

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the past three years, the City of Apache Junction completed and adopted the 2020-2050 General Plan and the Economic Development Strategic Plan, both of which reference the need to update the downtown master plan. The latest downtown plan, Downtown Redevelopment and Implementation Strategy (“DRIS”), completed in 2010, set the stage for several initiatives, including public projects, streetscape and wayfinding improvements, architectural design standards, and more. The City completed a substantial number of public projects and initiatives to advance this plan, including the construction of Flatiron Community Park, the installation of streetscape and wayfinding elements, enhancement to the medians along Apache Trail, improvements to the focal point project at Apache Trail and North Apache Trail, and the adoption of architectural design guidelines. This document will build on the DRIS and intertwine the wishes of the community with a market study to come up with an attainable vision for Downtown Apache Junction”.



## 02.1 INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

The update to the DRIS is only a *partial* update focusing on a 400 +/- acre study area. This particular section of Apache Junction is at a pivotal point, given the development interest in the area, the desired balance of land uses to create a true mixed-use downtown district, and the reality of thousands of travelers consistently traversing through the downtown on State Route 88 to visit several attractions north and east of the City. One critical aspect of this updated planning document, is the desired focus on the “core” of the downtown, which is the area surrounded by North Apache Trail, Idaho Road, and West Apache Trail.



Downtown Zones from the DRIS



Aerial View Over Apache Trail

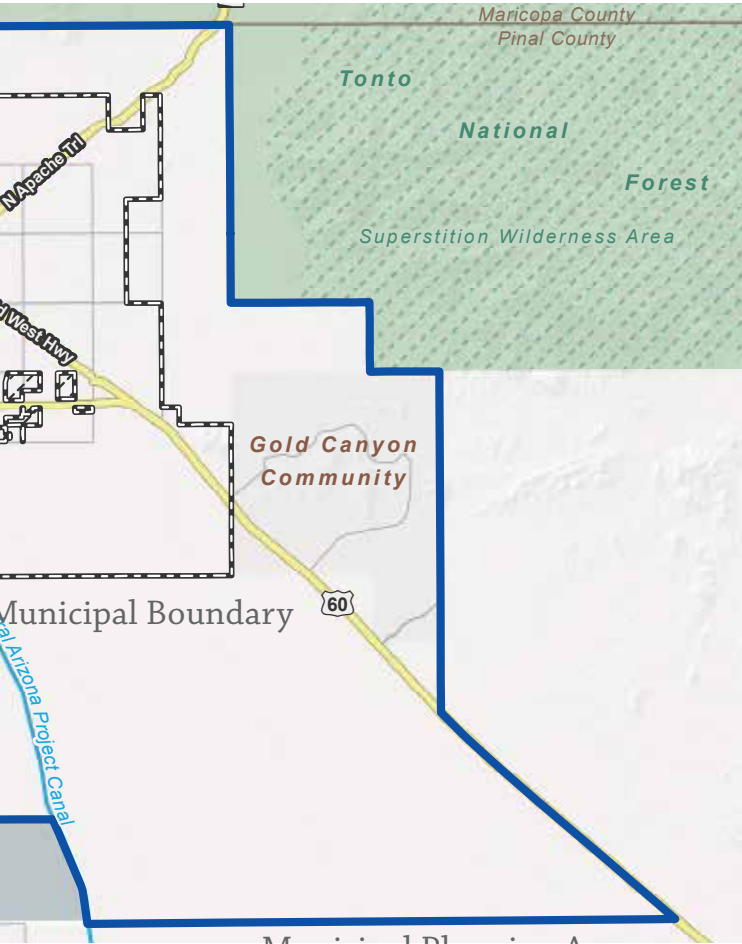


## 02.2 THE HISTORY AND LEGACY OF AJ

The City of Apache Junction has a rich history and a unique legacy, tracing back to its origins as a settlement near the intersection of the Apache Trail and the original U.S. Route 60. The location was vital for transportation and served as a gateway to the scenic and storied Superstition Mountains, an area steeped in legend and mystery. As the 20th century progressed, Apache Junction evolved from a modest stopover point into a growing community that embraced a significant influx of residents, drawn by the area's natural beauty, affordable living, and opportunities for outdoor recreation.

The continued development of this downtown area, will not only support the local economy by generating jobs and opportunities for entrepreneurs but also strengthen the social fabric of the community. It will be a place where people can connect, celebrate, and enjoy Apache Junction's rich history and vibrant future, ensuring the city's legacy is preserved and cherished for generations to come.





Municipal Planning Area





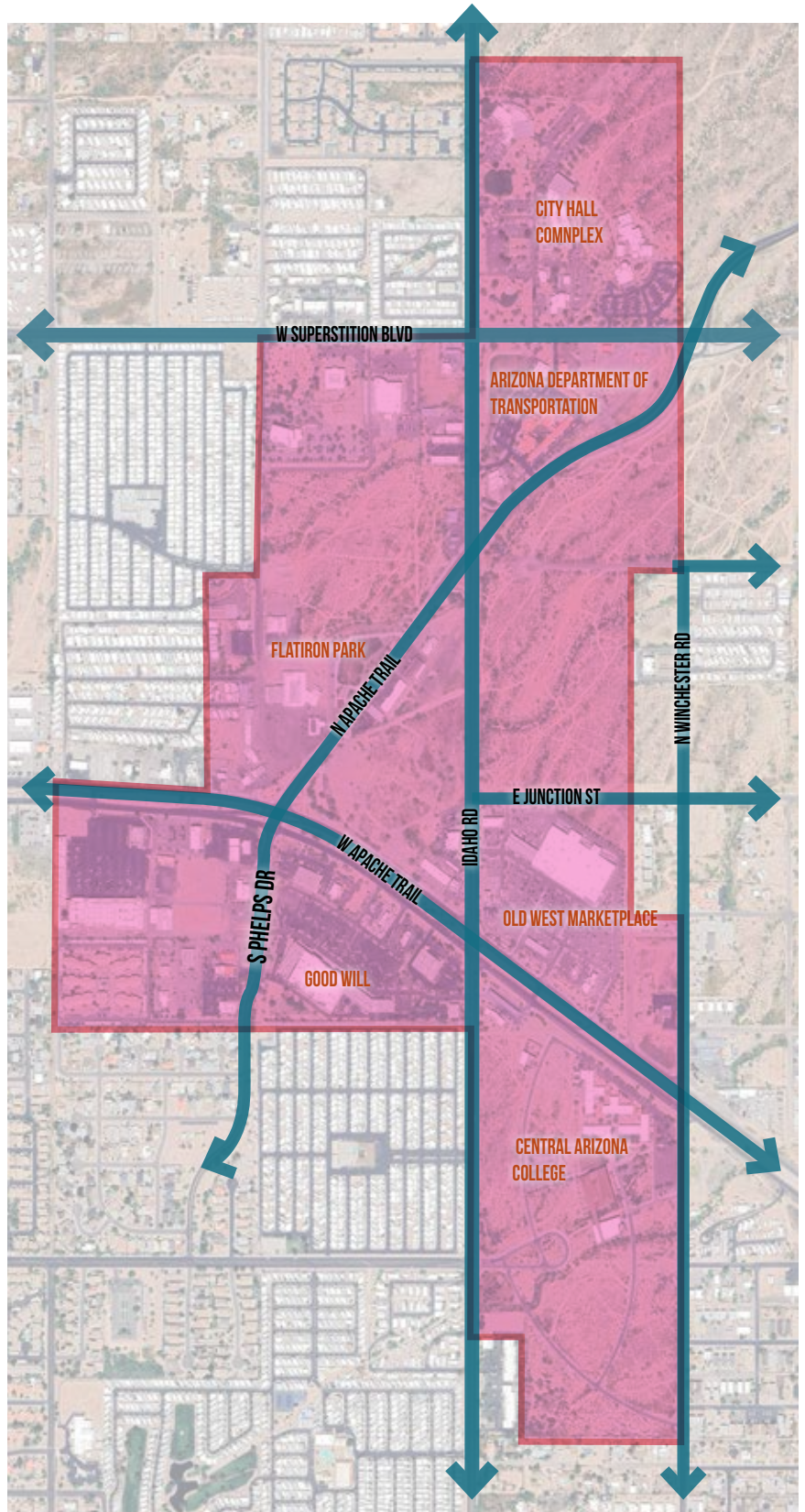
### **02.3 SITE INFORMATION**

The City of Apache Junction is working with Swaback Architects and Planners (SWABACK) to create an updated vision and plan for the downtown district, defined by Idaho Road, N. Apache Trail, W. Apache Trail, and Old West Highway. Based on the overwhelming interest from stakeholder interviews and community feedback, Apache Junction's downtown master plan will focus on a 16-acre parcel within the broader downtown site. This 16-acre core is strategically selected to serve as the epicenter of future development, and is designed to become a vibrant, mixed-use hub that will help anchor the downtown district.

There will be several elements that the consultant team will assess and update as part of this plan, including:

- Helping determine the types of businesses and development projects for the Downtown district based on a comprehensive market study
- Laying out future roadways and trails
- Identifying areas for potential art and place-making installations
- Making recommendations on certain infrastructure upgrades
- Recommending other specific items to help create a sense of place

The study area will remain the same to help with continuity between the DRIS and the Concentrated Downtown Master Plan. This study area is referred to as the Downtown Core and is shown in the corresponding photo.



The Study Area



## **02.4 PROJECT APPROACH**

The following six key components highlight the overarching approach to this planning effort. Working closely with the City, the consultant team has organized this overarching process in an effective and efficient manner that references previous work and incorporates new ideas

1. Our team understands the significant efforts made to date by countless individuals who shared the goal of creating a vibrant and sustainable downtown for Apache Junction. We will “stand on the shoulders” of all the valuable work done thus far. Often, in such situations, a consultant team would want to put their mark on the plan and make it “their own”. We will analyze past efforts, re-affirm and refine the plan to best meet the community’s needs moving forward.
2. Focus on an authentic brand and planning/design character that best reflects the community’s heritage and culture. This reinforces the notion of creatively and appropriately building on the past relative to all potential uses and users.
3. Provide creative planning and design options that carefully consider the range of influences, including private property owners, stakeholders, City goals, appropriate incentives, traffic and circulation, market factors, phasing, and cost.
4. Coordinate with the City and Economic Development Department to consider the functional economics of the broader downtown area and then zero in on the complementary demands that can be crystallized in the focused study area. This area should be considered for mixed-use real estate scenarios.
5. Establish a consensus-building process that opens dialogue and communication among all participants. It will be important to consider input appropriately and illustrate the eventual outcomes based on a qualitative evaluation process. It is not good enough to listen to input. We must show how we have considered the potentially broad range of input and how the most appropriate ideas and strategies are incorporated into a preferred outcome.
6. Based on the preferred strategies, we will work with the City to implement refined goals and policies that best represent the desired vision for the Downtown. This will include analyzing the downtown’s real estate economics to understand the potential investment returns and likely costs associated with various development/ redevelopment scenarios.



Aerial view of the Study Area



## **02.5 METHODOLOGY**

While the consultant team was prepared to dive in and lavish significant resources and attention on the effort, it was necessary first to establish the framework process and bring the entire team together in a kick-off coordination meeting. We have found these sessions very helpful to staff and City leadership. As part of this initial session, we reviewed the contracted scope of services, associated deliverables, agreed-upon schedule, and key meeting dates. This kick-off included the development of a Vision Statement and key Project Principles. Memorializing these components ensured everyone is on the same page.

We conducted a SWOT analysis and identified project precedents to help broaden considerations. We held bi-weekly meetings with the City's staff to ensure agreed-upon progress throughout the planning process. This process will highlight key relevant information, reports, plans, policies, laws, regulations, and utility information. Again, all efforts looked to build on the previous work completed.

SWABACK also coordinated with the City to establish a Public Participation Plan for all communication-related efforts. This effort included input from City Council, City Departments, City Commissions, property owners, business owners, and community stakeholders. All these efforts were planned and orchestrated in collaboration with City staff.

### **Keys to the Public Participation Plan**

- We wanted the development community and stakeholders to have clarity on what we want to accomplish
- We wanted to understand better the community's interests and expectations for the update and its outcome
- We wanted to understand the community's perceived priorities and how this may relate to the overall process and outcome

### **Identify the Public's Unique and Often Broad Perspective(s)**

We needed to ensure we understood a broad cross-section of stakeholder opinions and attitudes. We not only wanted to garner input but also understand the context of the input relative to the overall effort.

As part of this initial consideration, it was essential to identify the different types of stakeholders and how best to leverage input from each perspective (landowners/business owners/potential developer partners/tenants/homeowners/community leaders/interested citizenry/ etc.).

We worked closely with the Economic Development Department and City leaders to understand the context of all feedback and gauge and measure the response and input appropriately to help build consensus.



Group discussion at the First Open House, May 8th



## **02.6 VISION STATEMENTS**

*This vision is not original to this downtown study, and with slightly different wording, it has been reflected over the last twenty years in Apache Junction’s downtown studies. However, it is also apparent that little actual change has occurred from those prior studies. The emphasis of this plan is to develop a strategy that is clear in direction, detailed in recommendations, and capable of being implemented in small increments.*

TO CREATE A DOWNTOWN THAT SERVES AS A CENTRAL PLACE OR FOCAL POINT OF THE COMMUNITY, IDENTIFIED BY RESIDENTS AND VISITORS ALIKE AS THE FUNCTIONAL AND SYMBOLIC “HEART” OF THE CITY.

The design of the Downtown District will reflect the heritage of the Apache Junction community as it evolves into a 21st-century city. The revitalized Downtown will reflect various types of development, architecture, and uses while reinforcing the message of “Discover the West – Discover Apache Junction.”

**Source:** “DOWNTOWN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY”

## KEY PROJECT PRINCIPLES

- Create **DIVERSITY** of housing densities
- Promote **BUSINESS** districts
- Expand Downtown **DINING** options
- Create **WALKABILITY**
- Create **SUSTAINABILITY**
- Create “**MAIN STREET**” experience
- Create Business and Housing Type **VARIETY**
- Create **GATHERING** places
- Create **unique** **IDENTITY**

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Organize the **CORE** into **COMMERCIAL, GOVERNMENTAL, EDUCATIONAL** - the community’s center.
- Incorporate **PEDESTRIAN FEATURES** and uniquely **AJ DESIGN ELEMENTS** in buildings.
- Explore opportunities to purchase land for **PUBLIC-PRIVATE** development partnerships.
- Develop a community and **SPECIAL EVENT LOCATION** within the **CORE**.
- Ensure new development is compatible with adjacent **RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**.
- Establish a design palate for buildings in line with the **COMMUNITY’S HERITAGE**.
- Preserve key **VIEW CORRIDORS** while respecting the Rights of Adjacent Property Owners.

**Source:** “*APACHE JUNCTION DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY*”



## **02.7 MARKET ANALYSIS**

### ***Scope of Work***

A market analysis was conducted by ESI Corp, an economic development consultant agency, on the Apache Junction downtown core to determine the number of acres of commercial square footage and residential dwelling units that can be supported over time.

#### **1. The Real Estate Market Analysis focused on the following:**

- a) Obtained data from the city of Apache Junction that included but not limited to CoStar data, city sales tax collections, and historical building permit data.
- b) Gathered and reviewed business and demographic data for Apache Junction and the defined Primary Trade Area (PTA).
- c) Analyzed Apache Junction trade leakage/capture for retail and food and beverage expenditures.
- d) Obtained plans for commercial real estate and multi-family projects in Apache Junction from the city staff.
- e) Prepared a market analysis on the PTA to determine the number of commercial and office square footage that can be supported and the number of residential units needed through the year 2040. Incorporate population, employment, and housing projections from MAG into the analysis.
- f) Based on average floor-to-area ratios (FARs), ESI translated the supportable square feet of space and dwelling units for the downtown core into acres.

#### **2. Development Scenarios**

- a) Applied the market demand analysis findings and prepared land use development scenarios for the downtown core, with various densities of employment, residential, mixed-use, open space, and public infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, drainage).
- b) Collaborated with SWABACK to apply scenarios for the core.

#### **3. Prepared a written report summarizing the methodology and findings of the market analysis and development scenarios.**

#### **4. Participated in a series of working meetings.**

## **Summary**

Apache Junction has engaged SWABACK to create a concentrated downtown master plan. ESI Corp conducted a market demand analysis to forecast commercial, office, and housing development within a defined trade area through 2040. This analysis uses various data sources to assess commercial and housing space demand, including CoStar real estate data, TPT 2023 collection data, and MAG socioeconomic projections.

For commercial space, demand is based on projected household growth, income levels, and employment in office and healthcare sectors. Housing demand relies on MAG's housing unit projections and vacancy rates within the city. A 200-acre parcel earmarked for development is adjusted to account for non-developable land, and two development scenarios are created to allocate land for retail, office, mixed-use, and residential purposes, with acreage converted to square footage using FARs. These scenarios informed the urban core aspiration plans that SWABACK developed, guiding future growth and development in Apache Junction.



## 02.8 THE VISION

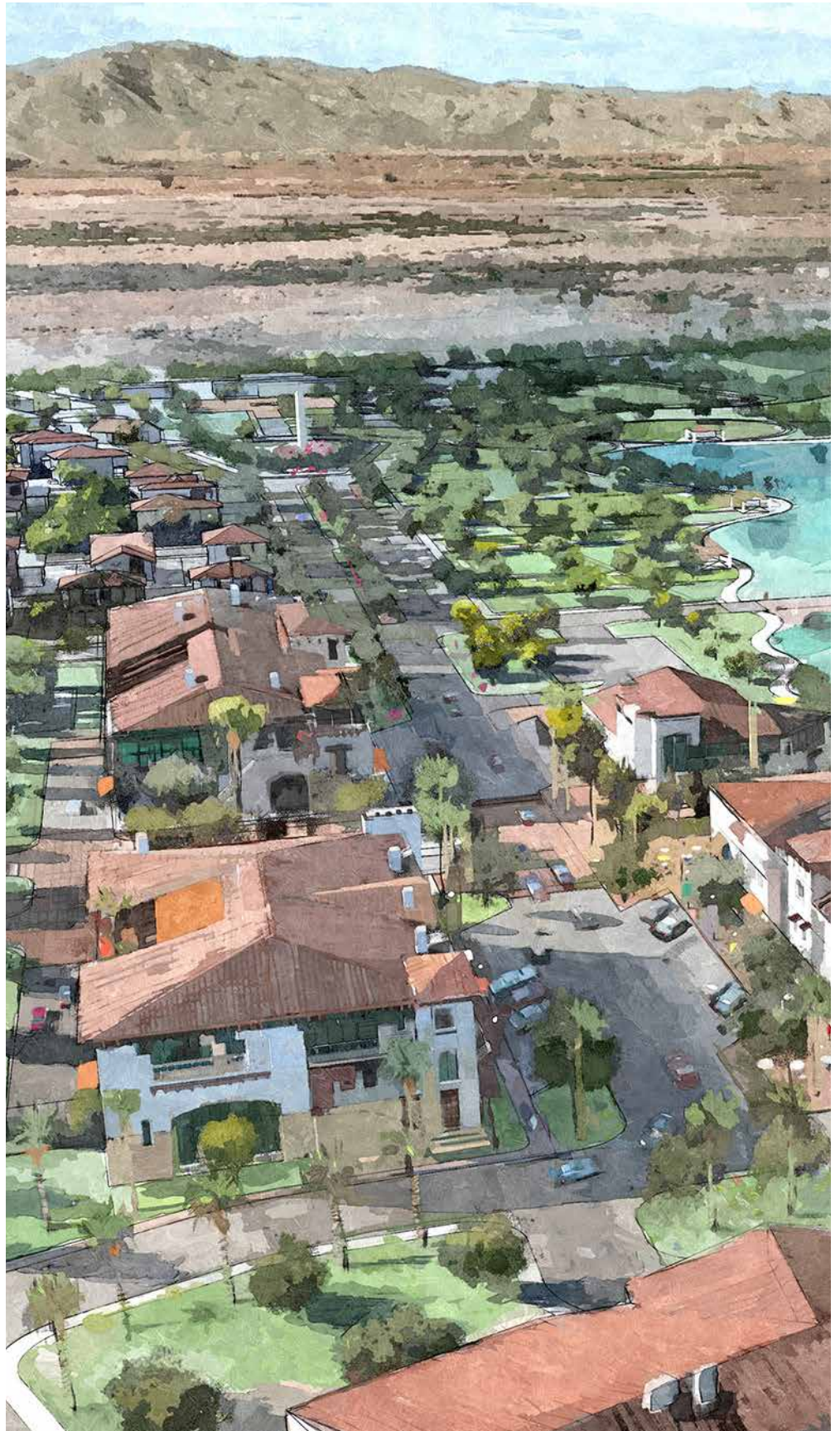
The vision is to create a vibrant downtown for Apache Junction that serves as the functional and symbolic heart of the city. This “central place” will be a dynamic hub where residents and visitors can gather, interact, and celebrate the community’s unique heritage as it evolves into a thriving 21st-century setting. By honoring the rich history and incorporating modern amenities, the vision suggests a mixed-use environment that includes residential, commercial, and recreational spaces. Architectural diversity, thematic consistency reflecting the spirit of the West, and a strong emphasis on outdoor activities will create a lively, visually appealing authentic environment.

Creating this downtown vision requires the active participation and input of the community. We have been committed to a transparent and inclusive planning process that engages residents, business owners, and stakeholders at every stage. Through collaborative efforts, we ensured that the updated plan reflects the diverse voices and aspirations of Apache Junction. By embracing the city’s rich history while looking forward to future growth, the goal has been to create a downtown that embodies the spirit of Apache Junction, serving as a source of pride for the community and a destination for visitors. All together, Apache Junction will build a vibrant and enduring heart for our city.



Great Mixed-use Main Street





Great Main Street with Mountain Views



# 03

## OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC INPUT

Public input was a cornerstone of the planning process for the updated downtown Plan. We recognize that the success of this project hinged on the active participation and diverse perspectives of our community members. By engaging residents, business owners, city officials, and other stakeholders, we were able to gather valuable insights and feedback that shaped the development of a downtown that truly reflects the needs and aspirations of Apache Junction.

Our approach to public input has been multi-faceted, ensuring we captured a broad range of opinions and ideas. This included "open house" meetings, surveys, focus groups, and "one on one" sessions designed to facilitate open and constructive dialogue. We also worked with staff to leverage digital platforms and social media to reach a wider audience and encourage ongoing participation. By fostering a collaborative environment, we ensured that every voice was heard and that the final plan for downtown Apache Junction is a product of the community's collective vision and wisdom.



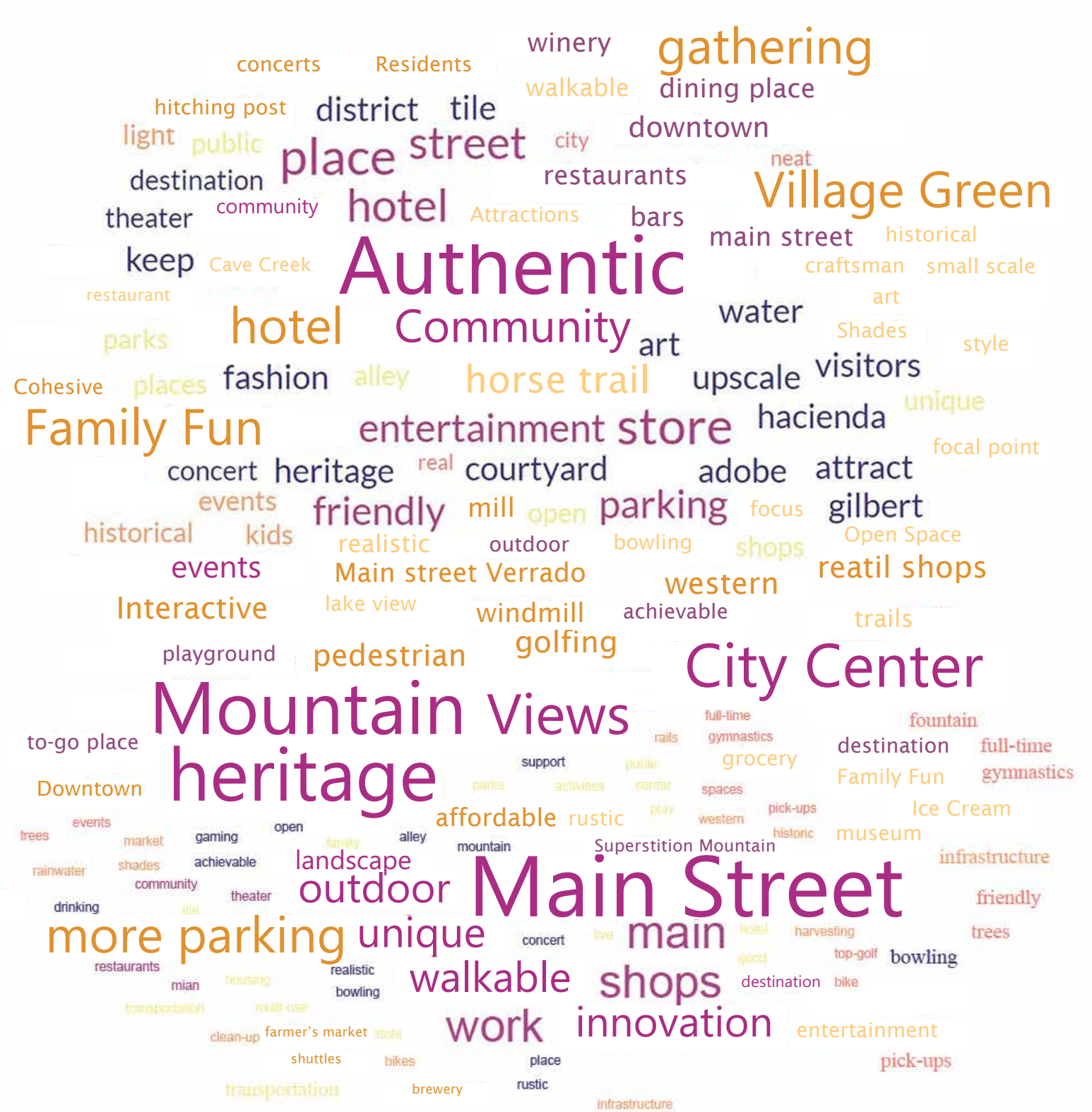
### **03.1 STAKEHOLDERS**

Our approach to developing the new downtown of Apache Junction was deeply rooted in collaboration with various stakeholders, including city departments, local businesses, property owners, developers, community organizations, and residents. We established strong partnerships through regular communication and joint planning efforts, organizing coordination meetings, work sessions, and an advisory staff committee to share insights, concerns, and innovative ideas. By fostering an environment of mutual respect and open dialogue, we ensured that all perspectives were integrated into the development process. These collaborative efforts enhanced the quality and relevance of the downtown plan and built a sense of ownership and commitment among all involved parties, paving the way for a successful and sustainable transformation of Apache Junction’s downtown area.

#### **Entities/ Agencies Involved:**

- City Council**
- Planning and Zoning Commission**
- Public Arts Commission**
- Public Works Department**
- Development Services Department**
- Economic Development Department**
- Public Safety, Parks & Recreation Departments**
- Salt River Project (“SRP”)**
- Various Internet Providers**
- Apache Junction Sewer District**
- Southwest Gas**
- Apache Junction Water District**
- Arizona Water Company**





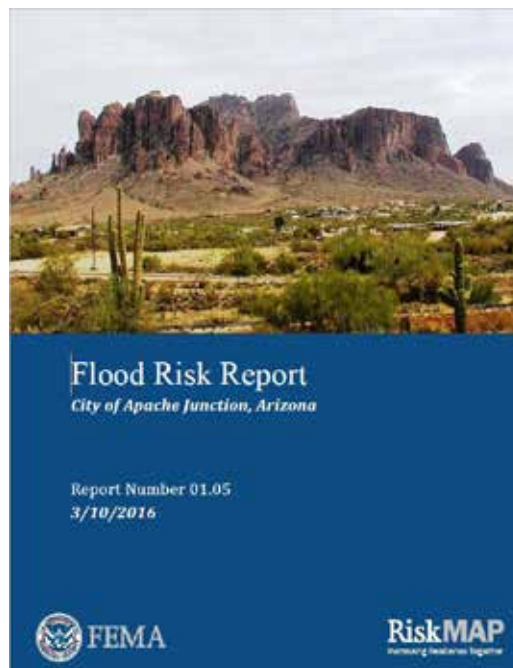
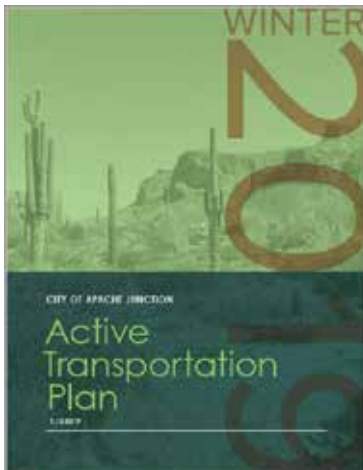
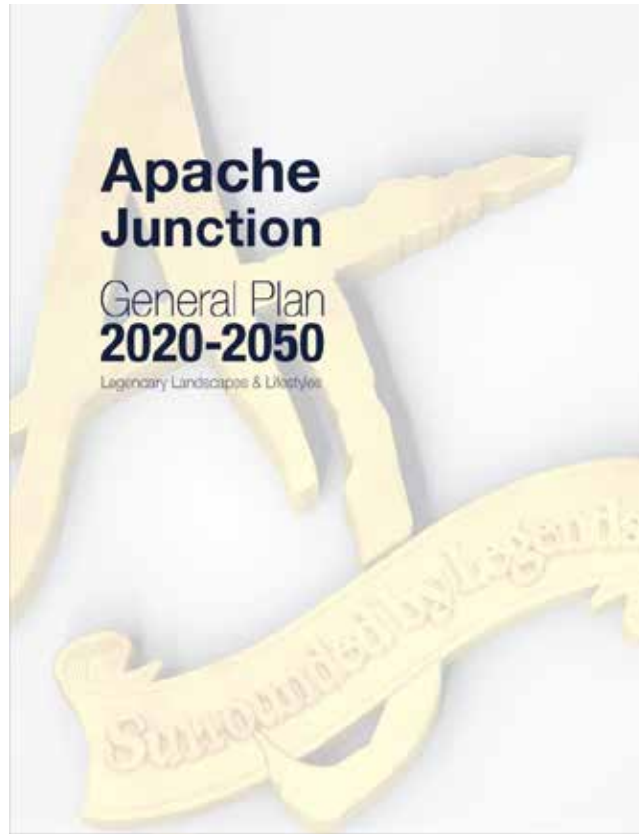
### **03.2.1 PREVIOUS EFFORTS**

As part of the overall effort, SWABACK reviewed a series of historic documents to ensure a clear understanding of previous efforts. As stated, the goal was not to create a “new” plan, but to prepare updates accordingly. This included a review, refinement, confirmation and/ or expansion of previous efforts.

**The following documents have been reviewed as part of the overall effort:**

- Economic Development Strategic Plan (2022)
- Apache Junction General Plan Update (2020)
- Apache Junction Active Transportation Plan (2019)
- FEMA Flood Risk Report (2016)
- Downtown Overlay District Design Guidelines (2011)
- Downtown Redevelopment and Implementation Strategy (2010)
- Bike Route and Trail System Map (2021)
- Downtown Apache Junction Development Map (2023)
- Apache Junction Zoning Map (2023)
- Apache Junction Economic Development Map (2023) - Attachment
- General Plan Land Use Map (2020) (page 60 of 119 in the PDF)



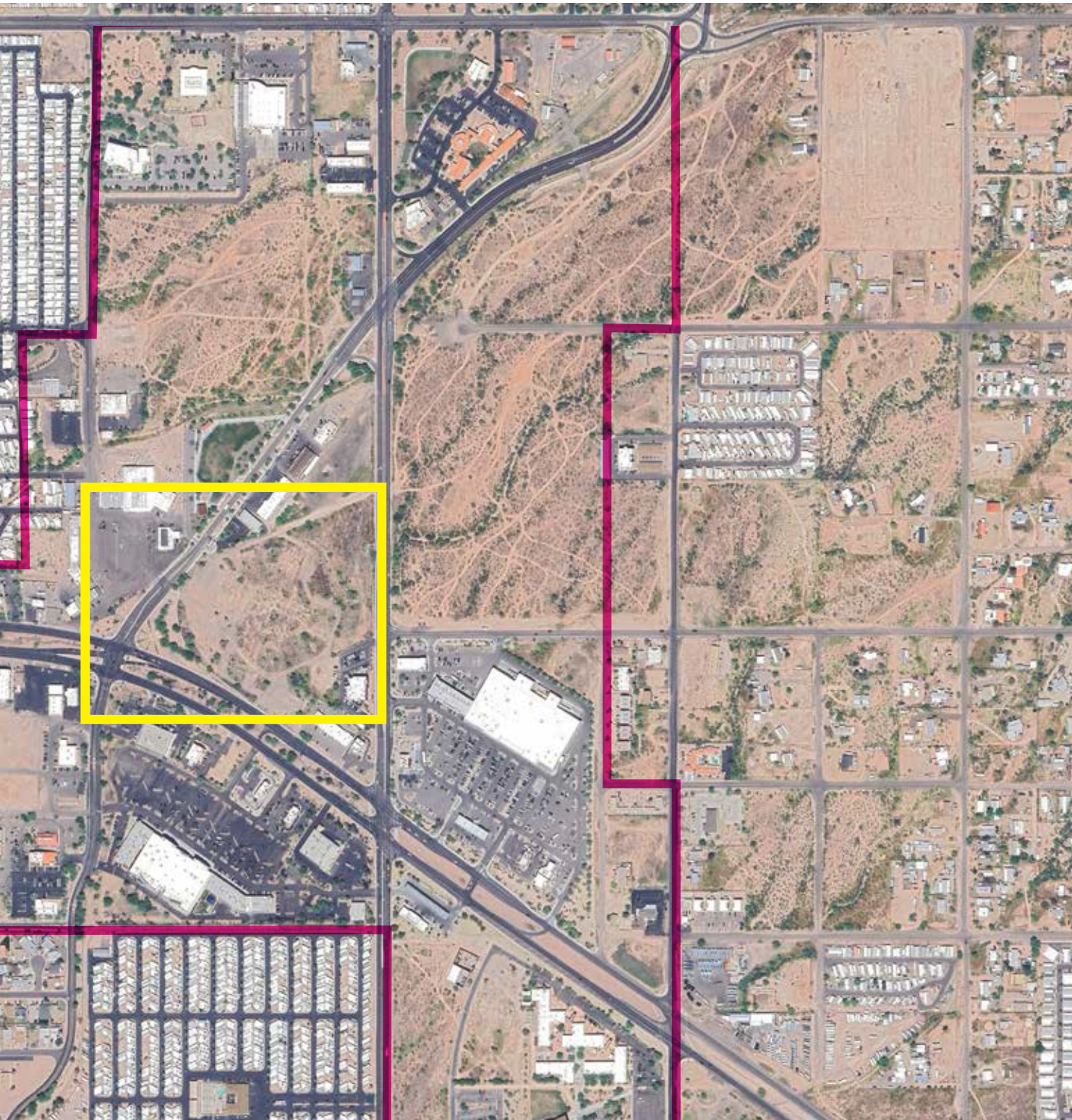


### **03.2.2 SCALE COMPARISON**

To ensure that the new downtown of Apache Junction is functional and visually appealing, a series of project precedents from similar successful downtown projects were used as benchmarks for scale comparison. We can draw valuable lessons on appropriate building heights, street widths, and public space dimensions by examining comparable downtown areas. This comparative analysis helped participants understand the optimal scale and density needed to create a vibrant, cohesive environment. By integrating these insights into the planning process, the suggested aspirational downtown plans are well-scaled, practical, and aligned with the community's vision, ensuring a central hub that captures the spirit of Apache Junction.







Study Area of Scale Comparison



0.3 Overview of Public Input



VERRADO,AZ



LADERA RANCH,CA



FLAGSTAFF,AZ



CHERRY CREEK,CO





PRESCOTT, AZ



JEROME, AZ



GILBERT, AZ



BENTONVILLE, AR



### 03.2.3 “THIS NOT THAT”

To shape a thriving downtown for Apache Junction, participants carefully compared both exemplary and less successful downtown projects to influence our vision. By analyzing successful examples, best-practices were identified and effective strategies contributing to vibrant, functional urban spaces proposed—such as effective pedestrian layouts, engaging public spaces, and balanced mixed-use developments. Conversely, by examining less successful examples, participants learned from common pitfalls and challenges—like poor integration of public spaces, inadequate infrastructure, or mismatched building scales—that have led to underwhelming outcomes. This comparative approach allowed us to clearly define what we want to achieve, ensuring that the downtown embodies the best qualities of successful models, while avoiding the shortcomings of less effective approaches. We will create a downtown that meets the community’s needs and aspirations by carefully implementing or avoiding elements from both positive and negative precedents.

\* *Blue Dots ● represents the votes from the Community meeting*

OUTDOOR DINING



URBAN SIGNAGE



MAIN STREET



FACADE



SHADE





**SIDEWALK**



**PUBLIC ART**



**LIGHTING**



**PARKING**



**BIKE LANE**





### 03.2.4 SWOT ANALYSIS



#### STRENGTHS



AVAILABLE LAND FOR DEVELOPMENT



ESTABLISHED REDEVELOPMENT AREAS



TRANSPORTATION ACCESS AZ-202, US-60 AND SR-24



INTERSTATE FREEWAYS WITHIN 1 HOUR DRIVE



ICONIC NATURE RESOURCES AND TOURIST ATTRACTIONS



CANYON LAKE



EXISTING ACTIVE CIVIC CENTER



AFFORDABILITY



CENTRAL ARIZONA COLLEGE – APACHE JUNCTION CAMPUS



AIR SERVICE



AWARD WINNING EVENTS

ART FESTIVALS



EMBRACING WESTERN LIFESTYLE



LOW VACANCY RATES



ADJUTING PROXIMITY TO STATE AND NATIONAL PARKS



PARKS & TRAILS



CONTINUALLY GROWING POPULATION

EASY ACCESS FROM US-60





WEAKNESSES



AGING POPULATION



OUTDATED INFRASTRUCTURE



DISTANCE FROM SKY HARBOR AIRPORT AND URBAN CORE



AGING HOUSING WITH LIMITED VARIETY OF DENSITIES



LACK OF MARKET IDENTITY



LACK OF HOTEL/RESORTS



LIMITED PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS



LACK OF MATURE LANDSCAPING



MARKETING IS NOT WELL KNOWN



0.3 Overview of Public Input



OPPORTUNITIES



GROWING DEMAND FOR HOUSING



LOCAL EVENTS



DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT



REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

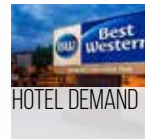
INCREASE COMMERCIAL PASSENGER ACTIVITY



GATEWAY TO MTNS, LAKES, OUTDOOR RECREATION, HERITAGE AREAS



SR 24 EXTENSION, U.S. 60 CORRIDOR AND FUTURE 505 FURTHER INCREASE THE ATTRACTIVENESS



HOTEL DEMAND



COMMERCIAL RETAIL GROWTH



GROWING TOURISM



NEW FLOOD CONTROL MEASURES UNDER CONSTRUCTION



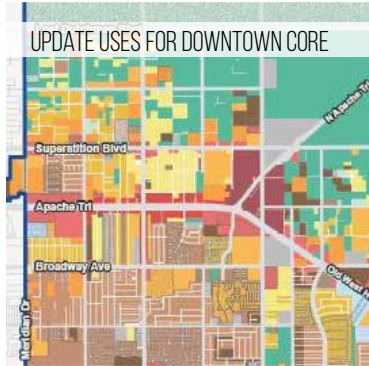
EDUCATION CENTER



LAND TO SUPPORT NEW MANUFACTURING



GROWING REGIONAL EMPLOYERS



UPDATE USES FOR DOWNTOWN CORE



VACANT LOTS WITH HIGH POTENTIAL



ELECTRIC VEHICLE MANUFACTURING



COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

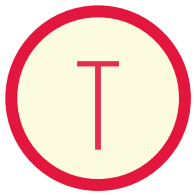


PREMIERE GOLF CLUB

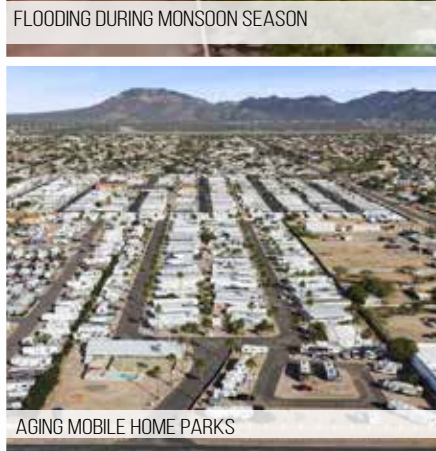
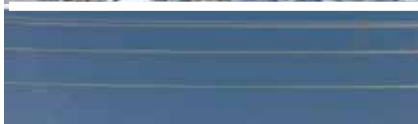


REINVESTMENT STIMULATE ADJACENT PROPERTIES





THREATS



As part of the analytic aspects of the planning process, it was important to work with the community to consider a variety of contextual conditions that may impact future development. The range of conditions included, “Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats”. The pictorial exercise and analysis provided the basis for discussion on a range of related topics that helped to remind all participants that future planning is impacted by many factors.



### 03.2.5 VOICE FROM THE COMMUNITY

A great amount of feedback was documented and recorded throughout the planning process. All this data was considered, prioritized and incorporated into the overall planning effort. While not everyone’s individual ideas were literally incorporated into the preferred aspirational plans, SWABACK was diligent in framing those aspirations that represented the majority of respondents and participants.



#### Meeting Notes with Council and Planning Commission members

Aspiration for a successful downtown for City of Apache Junction

- Creating a downtown can support community.
- Restaurants and Bars
- A Downtown has stuff to do
- A Downtown integrated with its rich history
- A center piece of the city
- A place to eat and drink with the family
- More entertainment and destination for city
- Theater / concert
- A gathering place
- Bring more “Body heat” to Downtown area

#### COMMUNITY CONCERNS:

- Where would parking be?
- Will there be a pedestrian only street?
- Where is the housing going?
- Is this still considered the “Gateway to AJ”? If so, what will draw them in?
- Existing condition not walkable, will there be change soon?
- Flooding? More detention areas?
- Will this gentrify the place?
- Will there be more development for the Gateway Airport?
- Will the buildings be too tall to block the view?

#### COMMUNITY DEMANDS:

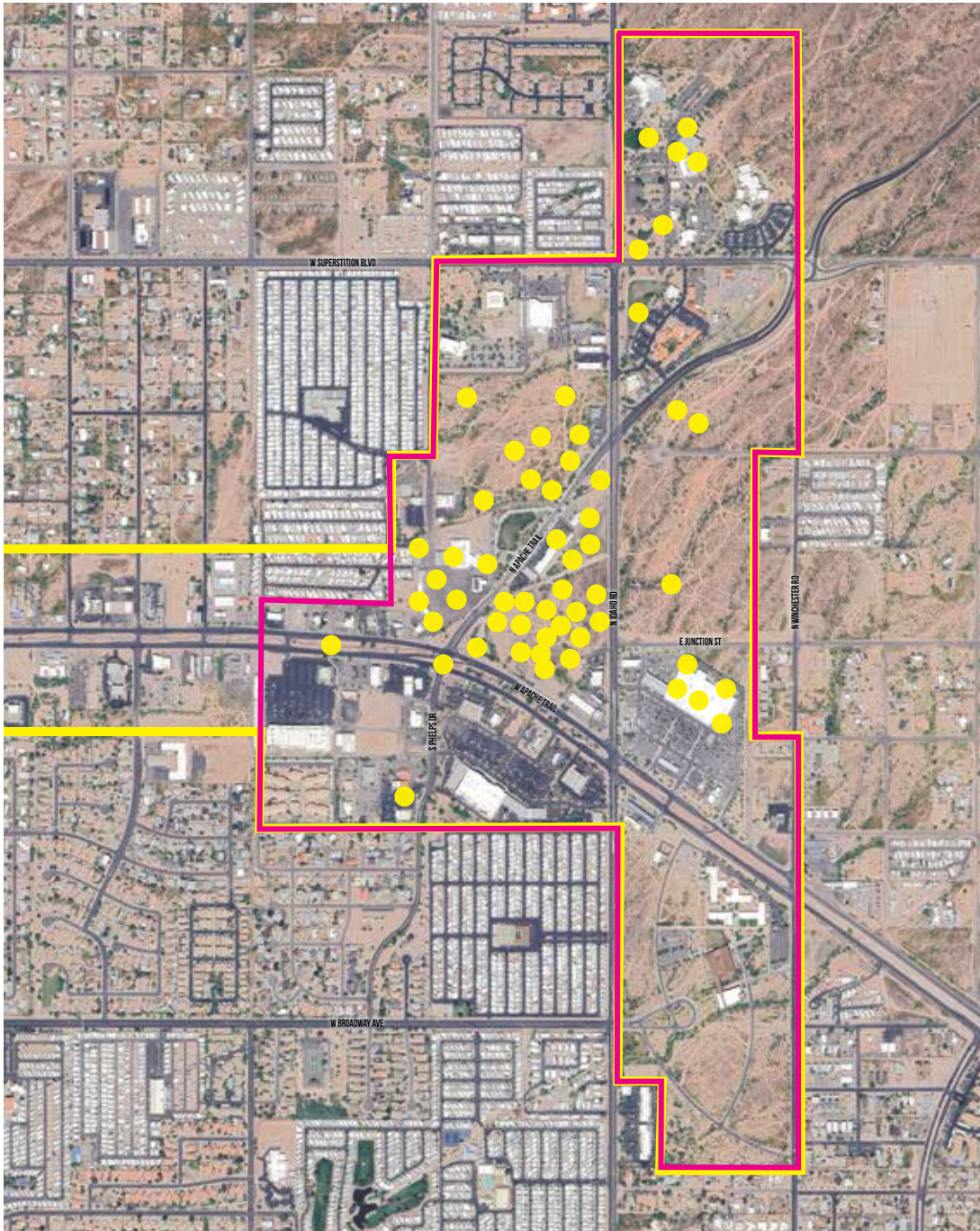
- Ice cream place, Grills, Parks, Shops
- Affordable housing for those under 55
- Another grocery store: Costco, Trader Joe’s, Sprouts, Whole foods, maybe a Target
- Live, work, play, Multi-use
- More public transportation, more buses, more bikes, less cars
- Splash pads & Shades
- Put a drive-through store on the way to Canyon Lake right passed the round-a-bout
- opportunity for rainwater harvesting, green infrastructure on ROW / businesses
- Bowling Alley
- Hotel, restaurants, steakhouse
- More open space for people
- Better location for food truck events
- Farmer’s market
- Hitching rails for equine

- Horse trails are crucial.
- We want the Downtown update to be realistic and to scale, unique but not typical.
- Keep the old west characters, create the jewel of the city.
- Utilize the view of the Superstition Mountain



### 03.2.6 HEART & SOUL OF THE COMMUNITY

One key question that was asked of all participants; Where is the center/ heart of the downtown? The overwhelming response focused on the “triangular” parcel between N Apache Trail, Idaho Road and West Apache Trail (site of the old Grand Hotel). This key feedback helped to direct where the focus of our planning efforts would be. In addition, this feedback aligned well with the fact that the City recently purchased 10-acres of that core area.



Dot Exercise Result of the Community Meeting



### **03.2.7 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**

Two robust and interactive “open house” work sessions were orchestrated for community members. Over two hundred participants committed their time to learn about the planning effort and to provide their thoughts and input. Each of these open house sessions were carefully organized with a series of “stations” that focused on key topics associated with the planning process. As participants went from one station to the next, they were able to learn more about the process, methodology, key topics and associated information. At every step along the way, staff and consultants had robust discussions with community members. Feedback was noted and the majority of comments were incorporated into the aspirational plans.







Group discussion at the 2nd Open House, July 10th



# 04

## **CURRENT & FUTURE LANDUSE**

Land Use designations will continue to be the basis for all related municipal planning and development within the downtown of Apache Junction. By Arizona State Statute, all municipalities are required to update their General Plan every decade. The General Plan is much more than simply a map with a series of colors suggesting different kinds of uses. The General Plan is a “living” document that articulates a range of policies, principles and goals associated with several key planning elements including; land use, open space, environmental, cost, water resources, transportation, etc.

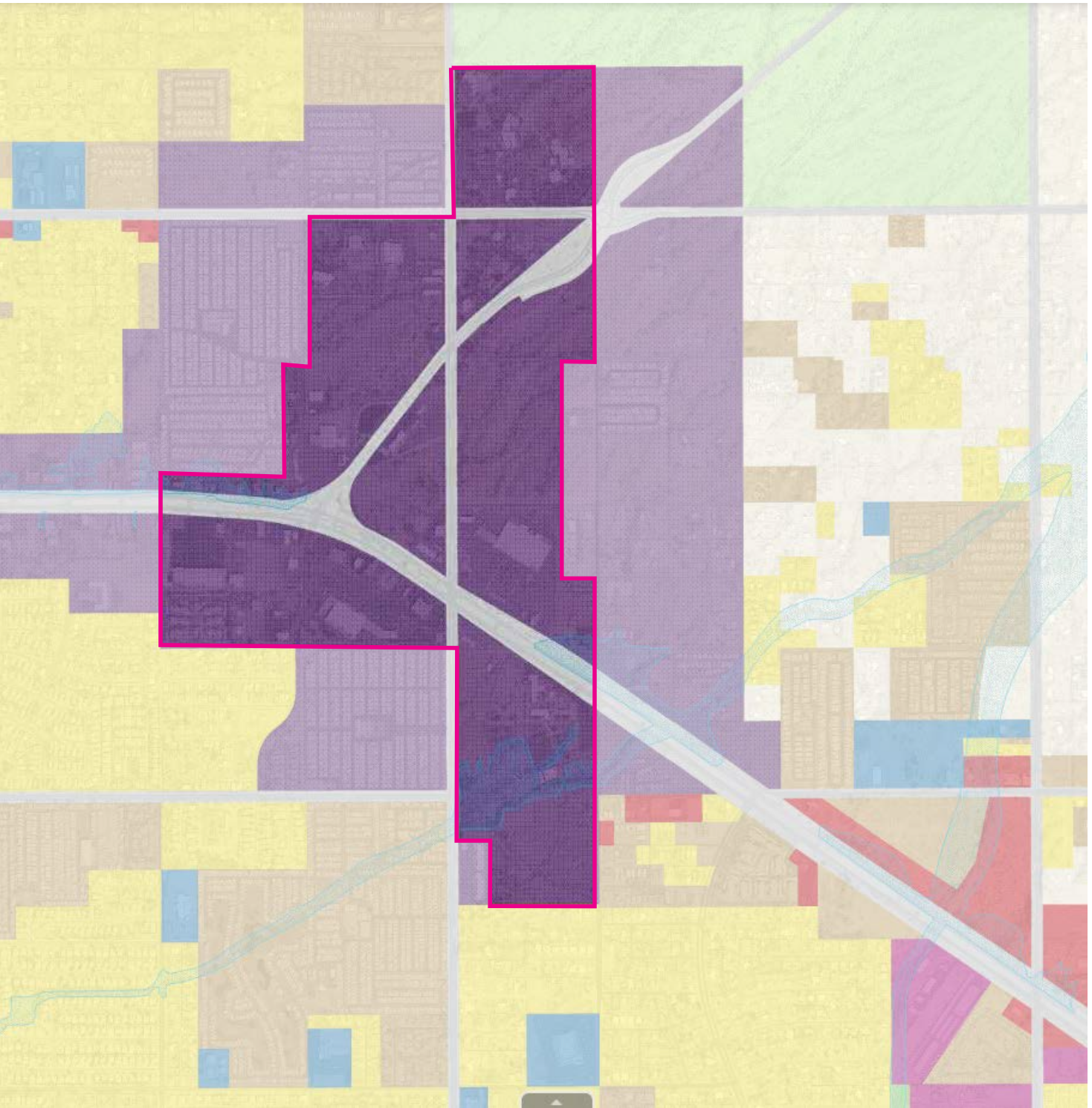
For the purpose of this Concentrated Downtown Master Plan Update 2024, our focus has been more geared toward detailed site planning associated with the “Triangle” parcel. Land use will continue to be a key aspect of all future planning that occurs in Apache Junction.



### **04.1 CURRENT LAND USE**

The accompanying exhibit represents the current “state” of land use within the area of downtown Apache Junction. The key to this existing land use is the “downtown” mixed-use” designation that allows for a great degree of flexibility in and around the downtown area. As the City continues to refine future development in and around the downtown core, it will be important to continue to align policies, goals and principles that best work for “mixed-use” development. In addition, although the current land use map has separate designations identified for residential (darker brown, yellow & grey), commercial (red) and public/ institutional (blue) uses- the “mixed-use” land use category encourages all these uses to be integrated together in a more compact, walkable and sustainable way.





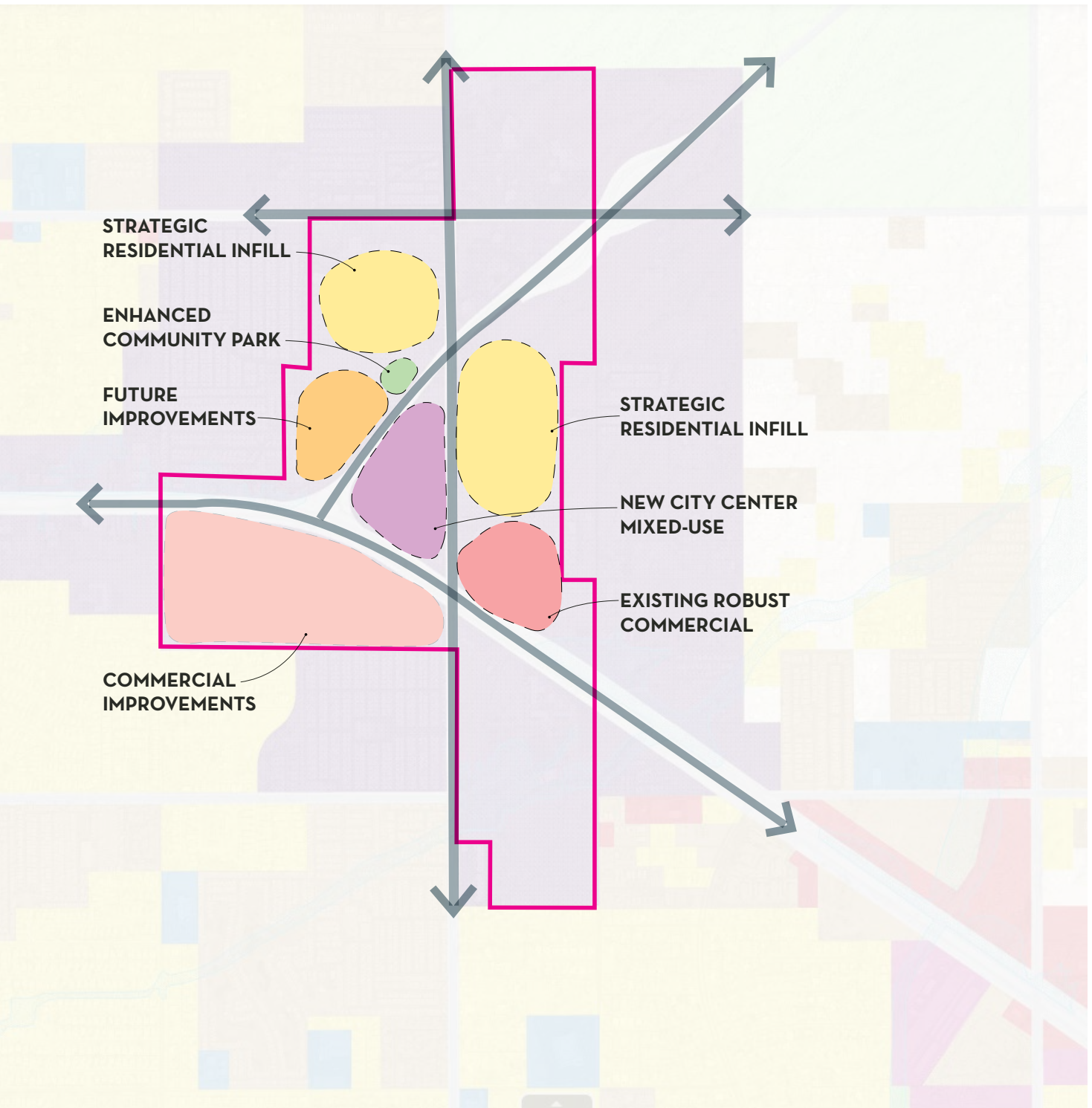
- HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL



## **04.2 FUTURE LAND USE**

The adjacent diagram provides a more detailed graphic sense of the expectation for future land uses in and around the downtown core. The “triangle heart” is envisioned as true mixed-use development. This area is being considered for commercial retail, commercial office, hospitality (hotel), recreation and other specialty uses. Besides the adjacent commercial spaces (mostly existing with some that need degrees of rehabilitation), the other important land use will be residential. For any successful downtown mixed-use core to be successful, there must be adjacent residential (rental and or ownership) that helps support the commercial activities.





- HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL



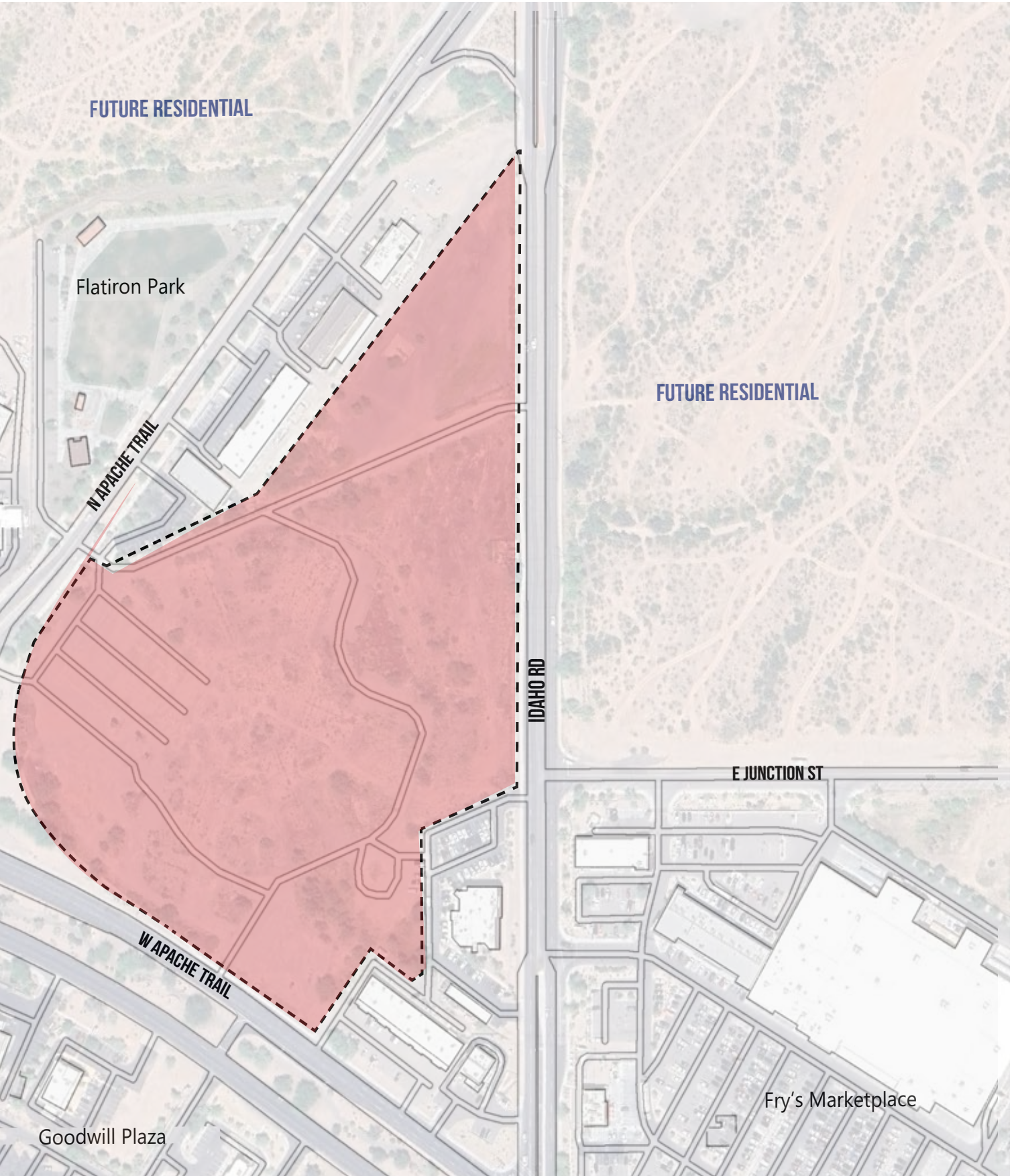
### 04.3 KEY STUDY AREA

As noted from the community input section of this document, most of the efforts have concentrated on the area highlighted in red on the adjacent exhibit. This includes the 10-acre land purchase the City has made, plus an additional 6-acres of land along the southern boundary next to W Apache Trail which is privately held. Together, this 16-acre parcel provides a wonderful opportunity to develop the property and project as a “public-private partnership”. It will be important to balance city aspirations with time-tested private sector, real-world economic demand. Together, these forces have the potential to set a new trajectory for the “heart” of Apache Junction. A destination oriented development that is authentic to the special history of Apache Junction and one that brings people together to live, work and play.

As part of the community engagement process, Section 04.4 on the following pages highlights a series of “place-making” examples that community members highlighted and identified as “what ifs” for Apache Junction..... “What if “we could have:

- A great **Main Street**
- A new **Village Green** with Bandstand
- More specialty **Outdoor Dining**
- **Family Fun** activities
- More unique **Community Gathering**
- **Shaded Sidewalks** for comfort
- More opportunities for **Specialty Entertainment**
- Pedestrian **Trail System** throughout downtown
- **Bridle Path** connecting to the downtown area
- Unique **Nighttime Events**
- Frame one of a kind **Mountain Views**
- Celebrate **Authenticity** of Apache Junction
- Incorporate micro-retail spaces to embrace local entrepreneurs starting a business







### 04.4 "WHAT IF" INSPIRATIONAL PLACEMAKING

#### 1. GREAT MAIN STREETS



#### 2. VILLAGE GREEN WITH BAND STAND



#### 3. OUTDOOR DINING



#### 4. FAMILY FUN

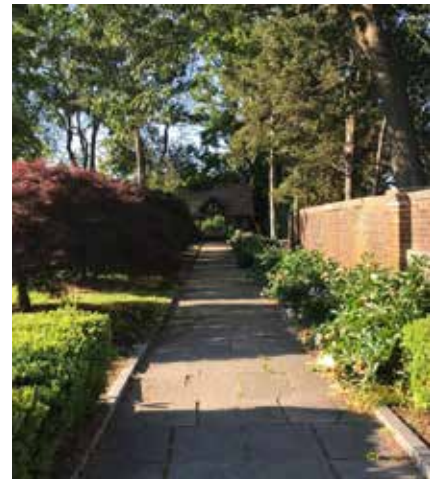




### 5.COMMUNITY GATHERING



### 6.SHADED SIDEWALK





### 7. SPECIALTY ENTERTAINMENT



### 8. PEDESTRIAN TRAIL SYSTEM



### 9. BRIDLE PATH



### 10. NIGHT TIME EVENTS





### 11.MOUNTAIN VIEWS



### 12.AUTHENTIC APACHE JUNCTION





### **04.5 INSPIRATION PLAN SCENARIOS**

The following series of planning and design scenarios for the 16-acres provides the basis for consideration as the City moves ahead to lead the development of this land. These studies are not intended to be solutions, but rather, “inspirations”, based on all the input and feedback received from the community. All the plans are organized in a manner that establishes a foundation for great place-making with all the key components requested. In each case, these plans all suggest a new main street type roadway that connects North Apache Trail to Idaho Road. In addition, the plans suggest; on-street parking, adjacent shaded sidewalks, storefront shopping, outdoor dining, village green, mix of uses, framed views of surrounding mountains, a new hotel site, and convenient parking.

After listening to the community stakeholders, there is an ideal setup to try and develop the 16-acres in a cohesive manner such as Scenario #2. In order for this strategy to be successful, it will be critical for the City to coordinate with the private property owner on the south 6-acres to ensure a cohesive development plan. While Scenario #2 is desirable, other concept plans were designed in a manner dependent on the outcome of development timing and future ownership changes. The most successful outcome that meets all the aspirations of development should balance typical convenient drive-through/fast-food access (along W Apache Trail), with unique, one-of-a-kind, specialty, destination oriented places and spaces in and around the middle of the property (complemented by the envisioned hotel to the north).



One key aspect of all these inspiration plans is the importance of scale and walkability. Too often, towns and city's develop BIG master plans for large scale "urban" centers. These ambitious plans more often than not never make it to the finish line. One comment that was made multiple times by community members was the desire to "see something done". References were made to past plans that never came to be and residents expressed some degree of frustration.

The City's proactive approach to purchasing these 10-acres and focusing this area as the future city center, aligns with the goal of "right-sizing" the downtown and ensuring that the plan is realistic and achievable. The market analysis and demand study prepared as part of this report reinforces that desire. Many of the examples of successful city centers that were shared with the community illustrated small blocks and street fronts.

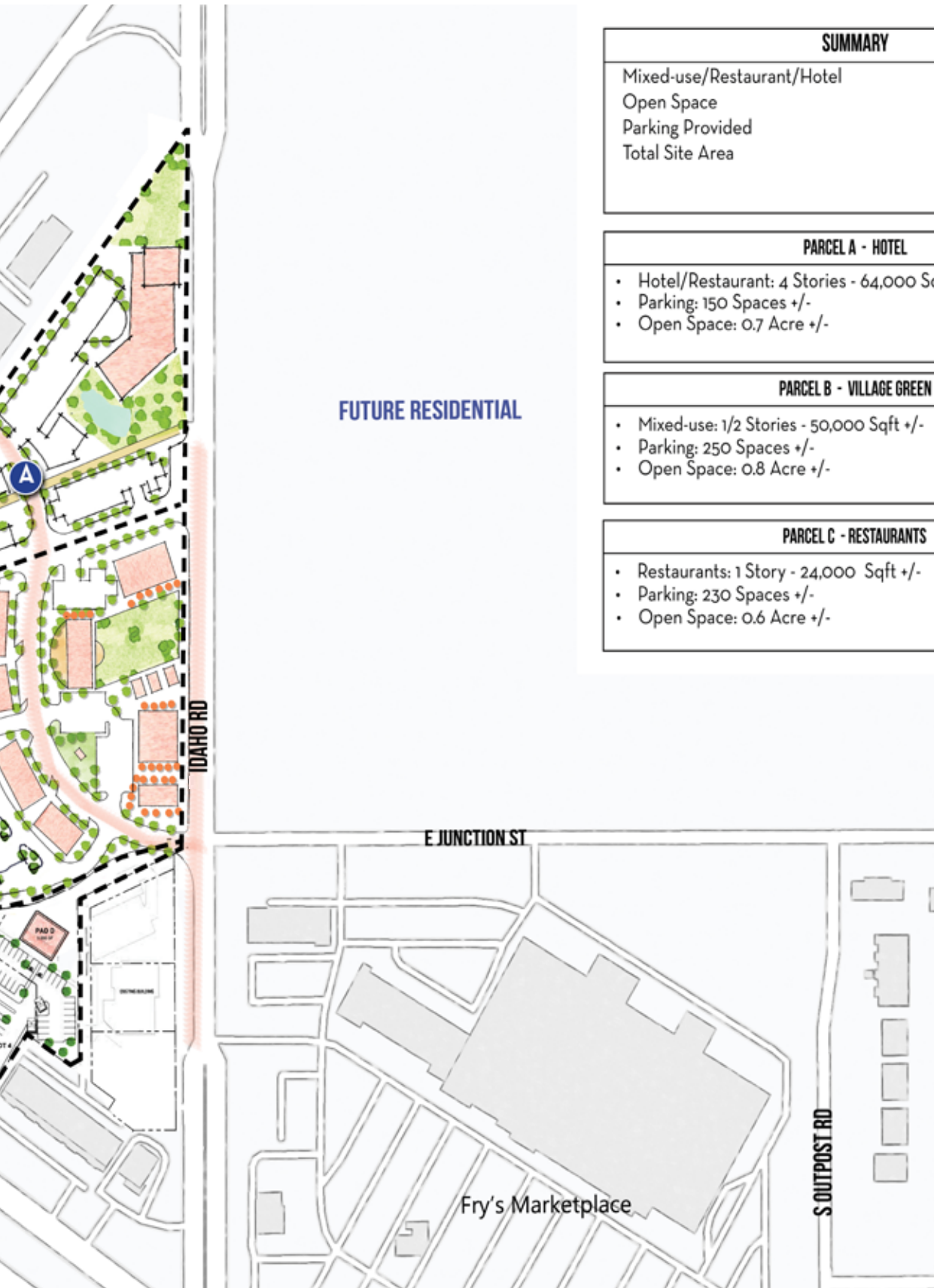




**04.5 INSPIRATION PLAN : SCENARIO 1**



This is a concept plan and shall not be construed as approval of any entitlements



**FUTURE RESIDENTIAL**

SUMMARY	
Mixed-use/Restaurant/Hotel	138,000 Sqft +/-
Open Space	1.5 Acre +/-
Parking Provided	630 spaces +/-
Total Site Area	16.5 Acre +/-

PARCEL A - HOTEL	4.0 ACRE +/-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hotel/Restaurant: 4 Stories - 64,000 Sqft +/- - 100 Keys</li> <li>• Parking: 150 Spaces +/-</li> <li>• Open Space: 0.7 Acre +/-</li> </ul>	

PARCEL B - VILLAGE GREEN	6.0 ACRE +/-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed-use: 1/2 Stories - 50,000 Sqft +/-</li> <li>• Parking: 250 Spaces +/-</li> <li>• Open Space: 0.8 Acre +/-</li> </ul>	

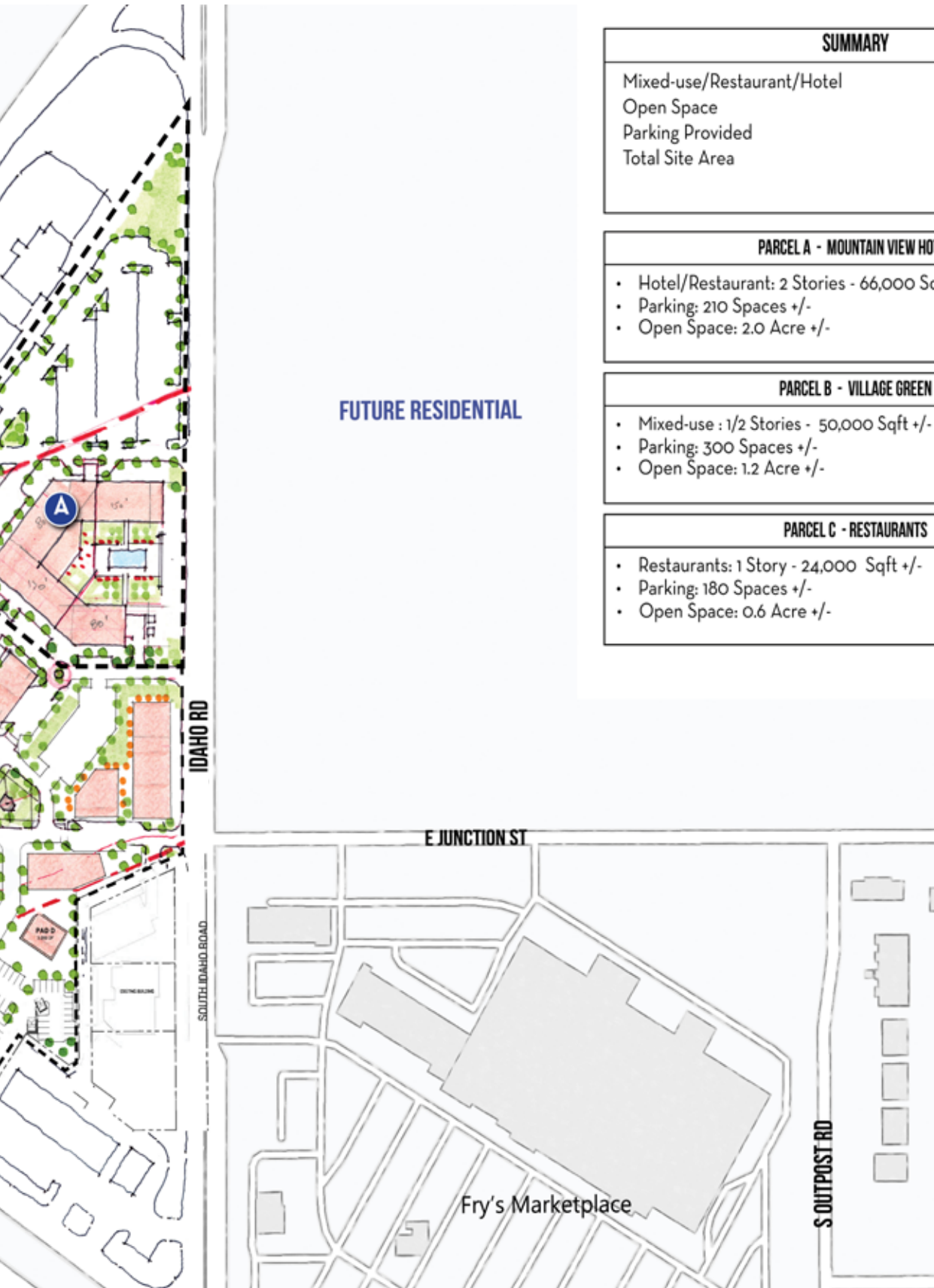
PARCEL C - RESTAURANTS	6.5 ACRE +/-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restaurants: 1 Story - 24,000 Sqft +/-</li> <li>• Parking: 230 Spaces +/-</li> <li>• Open Space: 0.6 Acre +/-</li> </ul>	



**04.5 INSPIRATION PLAN : SCENARIO 2**



This is a concept plan and shall not be construed as approval of any entitlements



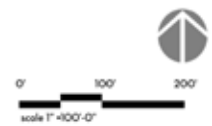
**FUTURE RESIDENTIAL**

SUMMARY	
Mixed-use/Restaurant/Hotel	140,000 Sqft +/-
Open Space	3.8 Acre +/-
Parking Provided	690 spaces +/-
Total Site Area	16.5 Acre +/-

PARCEL A - MOUNTAIN VIEW HOTEL	5.2 ACRE +/-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hotel/Restaurant: 2 Stories - 66,000 Sqft +/- - 140 Keys</li> <li>• Parking: 210 Spaces +/-</li> <li>• Open Space: 2.0 Acre +/-</li> </ul>	

PARCEL B - VILLAGE GREEN	6.1 ACRE +/-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed-use : 1/2 Stories - 50,000 Sqft +/-</li> <li>• Parking: 300 Spaces +/-</li> <li>• Open Space: 1.2 Acre +/-</li> </ul>	

PARCEL C - RESTAURANTS	5.2 ACRE +/-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restaurants: 1 Story - 24,000 Sqft +/-</li> <li>• Parking: 180 Spaces +/-</li> <li>• Open Space: 0.6 Acre +/-</li> </ul>	

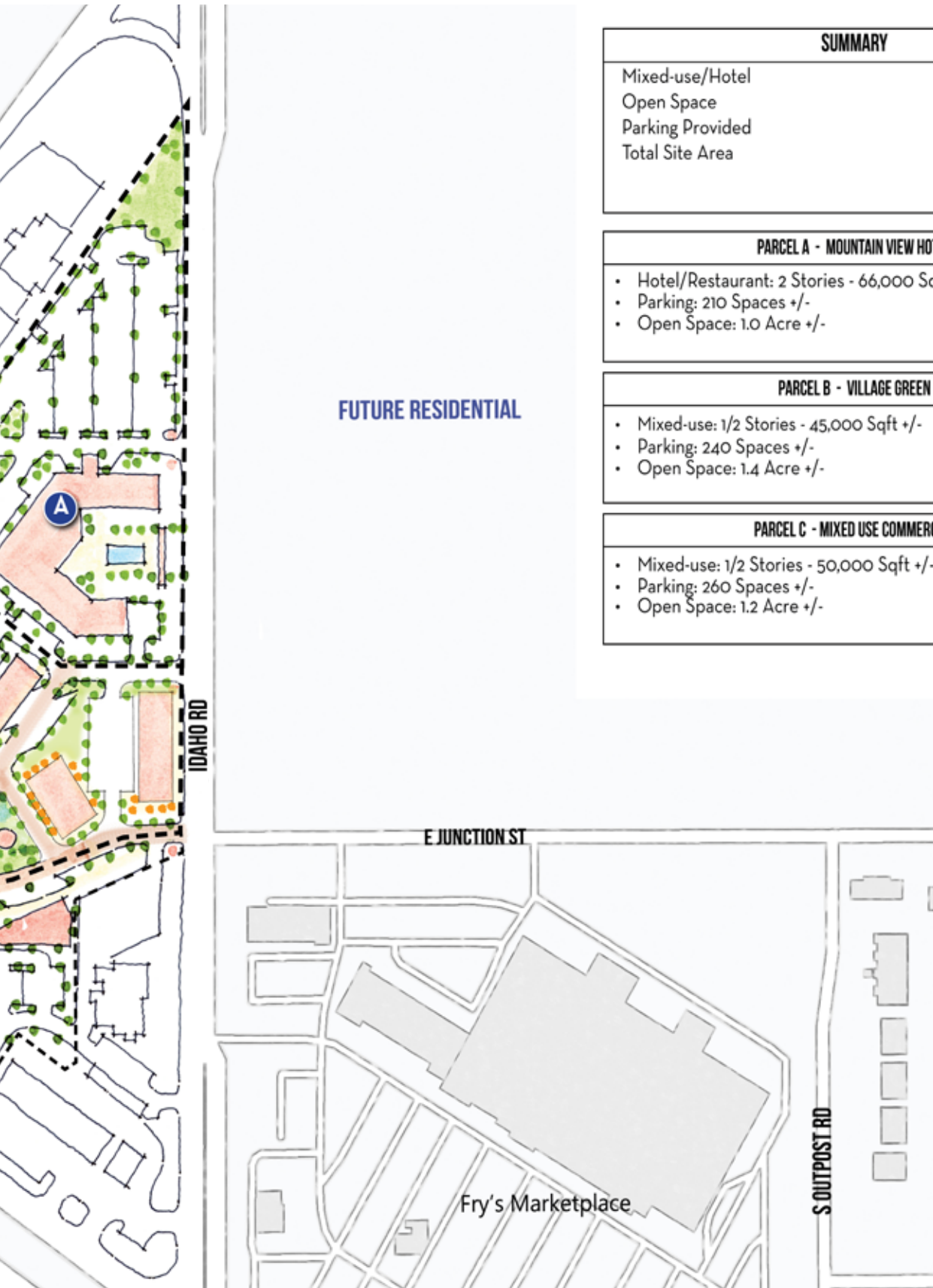




**04.5 INSPIRATION PLAN : SCENARIO 3**



This is a concept plan and shall not be construed as approval of any entitlements



SUMMARY	
Mixed-use/Hotel	161,000 Sqft +/-
Open Space	3.6 Acre +/-
Parking Provided	710 spaces +/-
Total Site Area	16.5 Acre +/-

PARCEL A - MOUNTAIN VIEW HOTEL	5.0 ACRE +/-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hotel/Restaurant: 2 Stories - 66,000 Sqft +/- - 140 Keys</li> <li>• Parking: 210 Spaces +/-</li> <li>• Open Space: 1.0 Acre +/-</li> </ul>	

PARCEL B - VILLAGE GREEN	5.3 ACRE +/-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed-use: 1/2 Stories - 45,000 Sqft +/-</li> <li>• Parking: 240 Spaces +/-</li> <li>• Open Space: 1.4 Acre +/-</li> </ul>	

PARCEL C - MIXED USE COMMERCIAL	6.2 ACRE +/-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed-use: 1/2 Stories - 50,000 Sqft +/-</li> <li>• Parking: 260 Spaces +/-</li> <li>• Open Space: 1.2 Acre +/-</li> </ul>	



**04.5 INSPIRATION PLAN : SCENARIO 4**



This is a concept plan and shall not be construed as approval of any entitlements



SUMMARY	
Mixed-use/Restaurant/Hotel	130,000 Sqft +/-
Open Space	1.8 Acre +/-
Parking Provided	660 spaces +/-
Total Site Area	16.5 Acre +/-

PARCEL A - MOUNTAIN VIEW HOTEL	4.3 ACRE +/-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hotel/Restaurant: 2 Stories - 60,000 Sqft +/- - 135 Keys</li> <li>• Parking: 200 Spaces +/-</li> <li>• Open Space: 0.8 Acre +/-</li> </ul>	

PARCEL B - VILLAGE GREEN	5.7 ACRE +/-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed-use: 1/2 Stories - 45,000 Sqft +/-</li> <li>• Parking: 230 Spaces +/-</li> <li>• Open Space: 1.0 Acre +/-</li> </ul>	

PARCEL C - RESTAURANTS	6.5 ACRE +/-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restaurants: 1 Story - 24,000 Sqft +/-</li> <li>• Parking: 230 Spaces +/-</li> <li>• Open Space: 0.6 Acre +/-</li> </ul>	

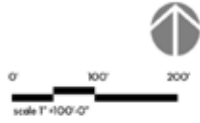
FUTURE RESIDENTIAL

E JUNCTION ST

Fry's Marketplace

S OUTPOST RD

SOUTH IDAHO ROAD





# 05

## INVENTORY OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

It is important to note that the City's investments into planning reports such as this is not simply to articulate goals, policies and procedures associated with development. The true goal is to put in place recommendations for improvements that City leaders can "position" for implementation, both in the short-term and long-term. These improvements can take time and often be incremental in nature. While this planning document is "concentrated" on the downtown master plan, it is important to acknowledge and applaud those aspects of implementation that are on-going. The following information is a reminder of the significant improvements that have been made in and around the downtown area. Such improvements will be considered within the context of these new recommendations to build on progress made to date.

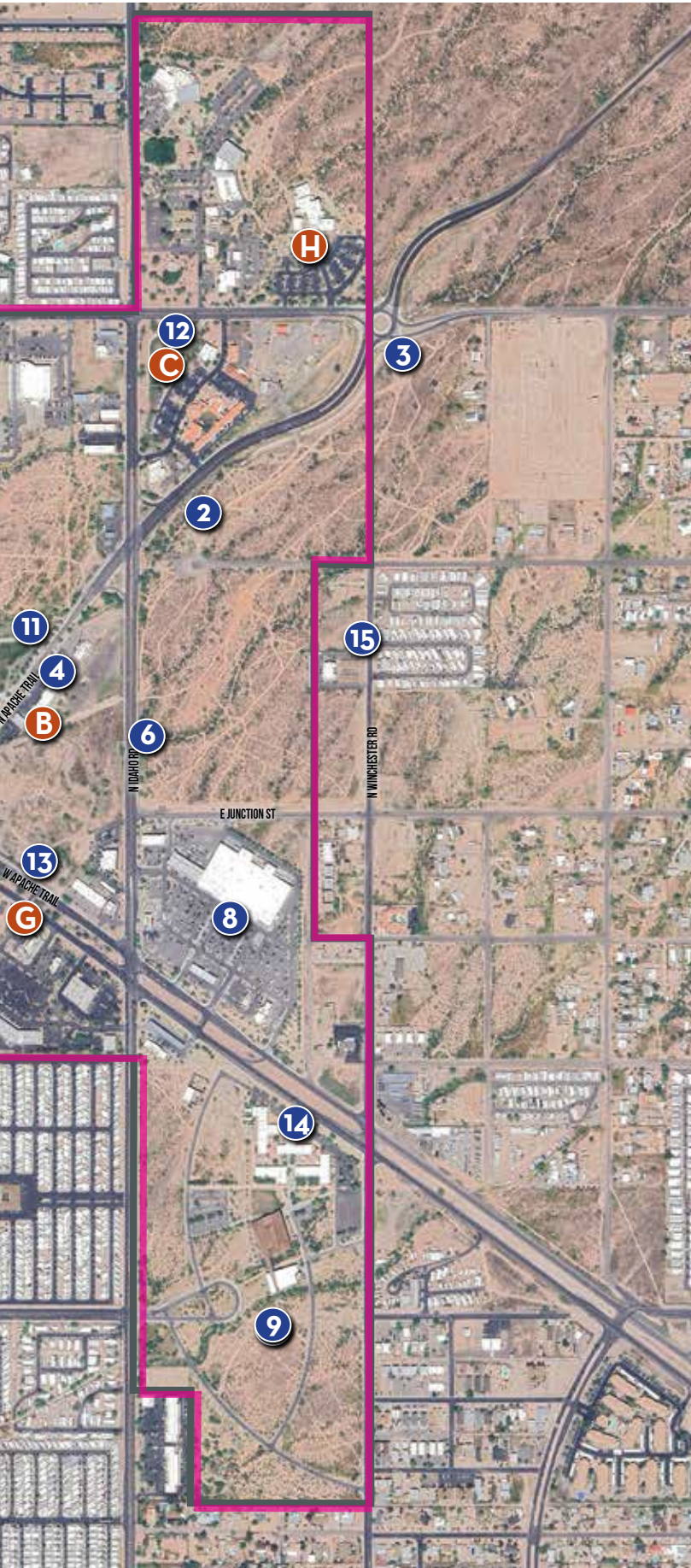


## **05.1 PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS & ART COMMISSION SITE MAP**

1. Apache Trail median improvements 2014-2025
2. Superstition Basin – 2024
3. N. Apache Trail and Superstition Blvd. roundabout installation
4. North Apache Trail road improvements by city 2012
5. Plaza Dr road improvements by City
6. Idaho Rd improvements by city 2023
7. Thunderbird Dr improvements 2020
8. Old West Marketplace – offsite improvements along Old West Hwy and Idaho Rd; undergrounding of overhead power lines 2018
9. SRP undergrounding of large overhead transmission lines along this segment; installation of a regional retention basin on CAC property behind the Connolly Plaza
10. Superstition Plaza stormwater improvement
11. Flat Iron Park construction and enhancements
12. Lost Dutchman Dog Park
13. New Filiberto's (50 W. Apache Trail)
14. CAC expansion (805 S. Idaho Road)
15. AJ Apartments addition (230 N Winchester Road)







**A. Spread Love Mural**



**B. Floral Wall Mural**



**C. Dutchman Dog Park**



**D. Focal Point Monument**



**E. Lost Dutchman Legend**



**F. Kachina Statue**



**G. Javelina Metal Art**



**H. Lost Dutchman Miner Statue**





## **05.2 INVENTORY OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA SINCE 2010**

1. Apache Trail median improvements 2014-2025 – enhanced drainage, landscaping, and spots for art installation for streetscape improvements.
2. Superstition Basin 2024 – temporarily retain nearly 9.7 million gallons of stormwater to reduce flood runoff flowing into the downtown area and reduce the amount of sediment carried by flood runoff into downtown – explore opportunities for enhanced public open space in the upper tiers of the basin.
3. N. Apache Trail and Superstition Blvd. roundabout installation - 2018 ADOT - initiated safety project – reconstruct a 45-degree intersection with a major road and a state highway with extremely poor site visibility by installing a roundabout – resulted in traffic moving through the improved intersection more efficiently – opportunity for public art in the center of the traffic circle.
4. North Apache Trail Road improvements by City 2012 – using newly developed Main Street cross-section, which includes on-street angled parking, landscaping pockets for trees, and old-style streetlights.
5. Plaza Dr road improvements by City - improvements south of Superstition Blvd using newly developed Main Street cross-section, which includes on-street angled parking, landscaping pockets for trees, and old-style streetlights.
6. Idaho Rd improvements by City 2023 – from Superstition Blvd north to beyond the boundary of the study area, added curb and gutter, sidewalk in areas where missing, striped bike lane, and pedestrian sidewalk between AJ Public Library and Apache Junction Villas development.
7. Thunderbird Dr improvements 2020 – east side improved with curb, gutter, and sidewalk as part of the Dutch Bros development.
8. Old West Marketplace – offsite improvements along Old West Hwy and Idaho Rd; undergrounding of overhead power lines.
9. SRP undergrounding of large overhead transmission lines along this segment; installation of a regional retention basin on CAC property behind the Connolly Plaza.
10. Superstition Plaza storm water improvement.
11. Flat Iron Park construction and enhancements.
12. Lost Dutchman Dog Park.
13. New Filiberto's (50 W. Apache Trail)
14. CAC expansion (805 S. Idaho Road).
15. AJ Apartments addition (230 N Winchester Road).
16. Apache Trail Floodplain Restudy 2012 by Pinal County Flood Control District.

### 05.3 WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE

A. (4'x8'): placed on northbound Idaho Road approaching Old West Highway, approximately 800 feet south of the intersection on CAC property. Sign to be angled between 15-25 degrees to face northbound traffic.

B.(3'x6'): placed on southbound North Apache Trail west side of road opposite driveway entrance.



**SIGNAGE A**



**SIGNAGE B**

C. Downtown wayfinding sign installations 2019.

D. SEC Superstition/Plaza stop sign w/ street name signs.



**SIGNAGE C**



**SIGNAGE D**



E. NEC Idaho/Junction stop sign w/ street name signs.

F. Westbound Old West Hwy approaching Plaza.

G. Southbound Plaza.

H. Northbound Idaho approaching Superstition.



**SIGNAGE E**



**SIGNAGE F**



**SIGNAGE G**



**SIGNAGE H**

## **05.4 THE PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT SINCE 2010**

### **203 W Apache Trl - Popeyes**



#### **BUILDING**

Type 3 Star Retail Fast Food  
Year Built: 2021  
GLA 2,356 SF  
Stories 1  
Typical Floor 2,356 SF

#### **LAND**

Land Acres 0.89 AC  
Parcels 101-14-004C

### **505 W Apache Trl - Discount Tire**



#### **BUILDING**

Type 3 Star Retail Auto Repair  
Year Built: Jul 2018  
GLA 2,112 SF

#### **LAND**

Parcels 101-14-002E

### **35 S Idaho Rd - Big O Tires**



#### **BUILDING**

Type 3 Star Retail Freestanding  
Tenancy Single  
Year Built: 2019  
GLA 6,144 SF  
Stories 4  
Typical Floor 6,144 SF

#### **LAND**

Land Acres 1.13 AC  
Zoning COMMERCIAL  
Parcels 101-21-073



### 95 S Idaho Rd - Old West Marketplace



#### **BUILDING**

Type 3 Star Retail Storefront  
Year Built: Sep 2017  
GLA 14,000 SF  
Stories 1  
Typical Floor 14,000 SF  
Docks None  
Construction Reinforced Concrete

#### **LAND**

Parcels 101-21-072

### 150 E Old West Hwy - Fry's Marketplace



#### **BUILDING**

Type 3 Star Retail Supermarket  
(Neighborhood Center)  
Year Built: 2017  
GLA 123,000 SF  
Stories 1  
Typical Floor 123,000 SF  
Docks 5 ext  
Construction Reinforced Concrete

### 180 E Old West Hwy - Wendy's



#### **BUILDING**

Type 3 Star Retail Fast Food  
(Neighborhood Center)  
Tenancy Single  
Year Built: 2017  
GLA 2,612 SF  
Stories 1  
Typical Floor 2,612 SF  
Construction Wood Frame

#### **LAND**

Land Acres 0.87 AC  
Parcels 101-21-075

**220 E Old West Hwy**



**BUILDING**

Type 3 Star Retail Bank  
Tenancy Single  
Year Built: Aug 2020  
GLA 3,000 SF  
Stories 1  
Typical Floor 3,000 SF

**LAND**

Land Acres 0.81 AC  
Parcels 101-21-076

**165 S Idaho Rd - Panda Express**



**BUILDING**

Type 3 Star Retail Fast Food  
Tenancy Single  
Year Built: Dec 2019  
GLA 2,500 SF  
Stories 1  
Typical Floor 2,500 SF

**LAND**

Land Acres 0.76 AC  
Parcels 101-21-074

**625 N Plaza Dr**



**BUILDING**

Type 3 Star Office  
Tenancy Single  
Year Built: 2010  
RBA 34,846 SF  
Stories 3  
Typical Floor 11,615 SF

**LAND**

Land Acres 7.26 AC  
Zoning N/A  
Parcels 101-11-002M



# 06

## **CURRENT & FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

In order to attract private sector capital, it is always important for municipalities to focus on infrastructure improvements. While not always the most “glamorous” projects, infrastructure is always at the top of mind for most developers as they consider making significant investments in communities associated with new projects. Apache Junction continues to focus on infrastructure related improvements in and around the downtown area in order to ensure services for the community, as well as reinforce the notion that the downtown is “open for business” and eager to work with the private sector on the right kinds of projects for the community. The following pages highlight several current/ recent infrastructure improvements in and around downtown Apache Junction as well as several future infrastructure projects that the City has identified.

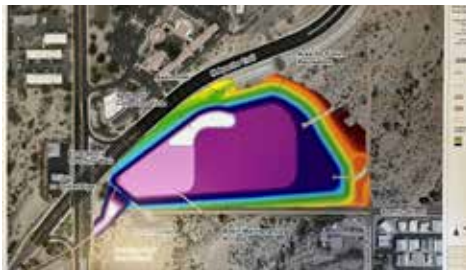


### 06.1 CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

- Apache Trail median improvements 2014-2025 – enhanced drainage, landscaping, and spots for art installation for streetscape improvements.



- Superstition Basin 2024 – temporarily retain nearly 9.7 million gallons of stormwater to reduce flood runoff flowing into the downtown area and reduce the amount of sediment carried by flood runoff into downtown – opportunity for public open space in upper tiers of the basin.



- N. Apache Trail and Superstition Blvd. roundabout installation – 2018 ADOT-initiated safety project – reconstruct a 45-degree intersection with a major road and a state highway with extremely poor site visibility by installing a roundabout – resulted in traffic moving through the improved intersection more efficiently – opportunity for public art in the center of the traffic circle.



- Plaza Dr improvements by City



- Flat Iron Park construction and enhancements - one of the components of the Downtown Revitalization Implementation Strategy (DRIS) was creating a public space in the downtown area to attract visitors and residents to the hub of local businesses.



- Lost Dutchman Dog Park



## **06.2 FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

- SRP undergrounding of large overhead transmission lines along this segment; installation of a regional retention basin on CAC property behind the Connolly Plaza.



- Upcoming ADOT Highway Safety Improvement Program streetlight installation safety project along Apache Trail and Superstition Blvd, which will be advertised for construction later this calendar year. On Apache Trail, streetlights are planned from Palo Verde Dr east to Phelps Dr/North Apache Trail.





# 07

## **MARKET ASSESSMENT & RECOMMENDATIONS**

While many municipalities conduct a planning process that focuses on a vision, design ideas, goals and policies; for this Concentrated Downtown Master Plan Update, the City has also included a real estate market demand analysis and associated recommendations for related uses. This “two-pronged” approach provides an overarching vision for the downtown area that is both creative and realistic (based on market forces). It’s not enough to create a magnetic vision for future development, it’s important to “back up” that plan with detailed research and data that quantifies market demand in order to confirm forecasting for the range of potential uses (residential, hospitality, office, & retail). The following market analysis and associated recommendations aligns with the inspiration scenarios for the downtown core of Apache Junction.



Apache Junction Trade Area



## **07.1 OVERVIEW AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Apache Junction retained the services of SWABACK to prepare a concentrated downtown master plan. The planning process includes a land use market assessment and the creation of a detailed downtown plan by SWABACK. ESI Corp was retained to provide the land use market analysis, which is used to help guide future development. The land use market analysis was completed May 2024.

The analysis evaluates existing market conditions and forecasts additional commercial and office square feet and housing units through the year 2040. These findings are translated into acres of commercial, office, and residential that could be supported. Finally, two development scenarios are provided which detail the range of development density from low to high.

The findings for this real estate analysis are based on a detailed review of key data associated with growth models for the community and region. In addition, the model considers existing real estate data, housing and commercial building permits, socio economic projections, population and employment growth, and other related factors. The study considered a core 200-acre area in and around the downtown. Within this core area, the real estate economic forecasting model considers “buildable lands” within the context of market demand for the range of uses identified.

Based on these growth scenarios/projections; Apache Junction will have significant demand in all these sectors to more than accommodate strategic development in and around the downtown, and especially within the 16-acre parcel currently illustrated. The following series of charts and associated data illustrates in detail the demand within the Apache Junction Trade Area.

When we consider these demands for the downtown core and within a 200 acre zone, residential densities could exceed 900 units and office/commercial space could exceed 475,000 square feet.

## **07.2 METHODOLOGY AND ASSUMPTIONS**

A market demand model is utilized to forecast commercial, office and housing development for a defined Apache Junction trade area through the year 2040. The geographic boundaries of the trade area are defined by City staff and include a larger geographic area than the municipal boundaries. This is done to help understand land uses the trade area can support and ultimately captured in the downtown area. A variety of assumptions and data are incorporated into the model and include, but not limited to the following:

- CoStar real estate data (obtained by Apache Junction staff from GPEC)
- City of Apache Junction housing and commercial permit data
- MAG Socioeconomic Projections, June 2023 dataset
- Esri data: population, households, employment summary, business establishment data, household income and household spending patterns, 2023 dataset
- U.S. Census American Community Survey, 1-Year Housing Tenure and Occupancy

Following details the approach and assumptions incorporated into the market demand analysis.

- Demand for commercial space is driven by spending. The analysis includes projections for households and median household income for the defined trade area. Included in the demand model is a percentage of income spent on retail and food and beverage and retention of resident spending. Existing and under construction square footage is subtracted from the overall demand to identify net new demand (residual demand).
- Demand for office space is based on employment projections in office and healthcare producing jobs (excluding government) for the trade area. Average square feet per employee is applied to the number of projected jobs to estimate office demand. Existing square feet and under construction square feet is subtracted from overall demand to identify net new demand. Overall housing demand is based on MAG's housing unit projections for Apache Junction municipal boundaries. Vacancy rate is from the ACS 1-year estimate for Apache Junction. Projected units are net of both the existing supply and units under construction (construction data provided by Apache Junction).
- The 200 acre parcel is reduced by 30 percent to reflect net developable land. This reduction represents land for roads, sidewalks, drainage, slope and open space. Two distinct development scenarios have been created that show percentage of land attributable to commercial, office, mixed use and residential development. Acres for commercial, office and mixed use are converted to square feet utilizing floor to area ratios (FARs) and residential is based on density per acre.
- The mixed use land category could include a variety of uses including commercial, office, residential, entertainment/recreation, and hospitality. Findings of the two scenarios will be utilized by SWABACK to generate inspirational plans for the downtown master plan.



### 07.3 MARKET DEMAND FINDINGS

Results of the analysis represent demand through the year 2040. In total, Apache Junction is projected to support an additional 1,066,660 square feet of commercial space, 332,981 square feet of office, and 15,637 residential units. A portion of this can be captured within downtown Apache Junction.

#### 07.3.1 COMMERCIAL

When forecasting the demand for commercial space, household projections and spending formulate the basis of the analysis. By the year 2040, Apache Junction is projected to have 40,629 resident households and a population of 96,498 people.<sup>1</sup> Median household income is estimated at \$94,952<sup>2</sup> and retention of retail sales is 81.2 percent. New demand is estimated at 1.06 million square feet.

**Table 1 – Apache Junction Trade Area Commercial Demand**

Commercial Demand	2040
Households	40,629
Median Household Income	94,952
Percent of Income Spent on Retail	40.8%
Retail Sales Potential	\$1,572,738,689
Retail Sales Retention	81.24%
Sq. Ft. Demand from Trade Area Households	1,277,616,760
Sq. Ft. Market Demand (including frictional vacancy[1])	3,545,738
Less Existing Supply	2,479,078
<b>New Demand</b>	<b>1,066,660</b>

<sup>1</sup> MAG Sociodemographic Projections, June 2023

<sup>2</sup> Utilizing an average inflation rate of 2.5% per annum

### 07.3.2 OFFICE

Office demand is based on employment growth within the office sectors (not including government). Total employment within the Apache Junction Trade Area is projected to reach 20,861 by 2040, with 33 percent of the workforce estimated to occupy office space. New demand for office space is projected to reach 332,981 square feet.

**Table 2 – Apache Junction Trade Area Office Demand**

Office Demand	2040
Total Trade Area Employment	20,861
Percentage Occupying Office Space (non govt.)	32.99%
Total Employed in Office Space (non govt.)	4,295
Average Sq. Ft. per Employee	150
Sq. Ft. Office Demand (including frictional vacancy <sup>2</sup> )	678,158
Less Existing Supply	345,177
<b>New Demand</b>	<b>322,981</b>

### 07.3.3 RESIDENTIAL

Housing demand for Apache Junction is based on housing unit projections from MAG and includes a vacancy rate of 14.05 percent.<sup>3</sup> In 2040 the projected number of housing units in Apache Junction is 38,750 and the forecasted number of new housing units needed is 44,194. Subtracting existing, permitted and planned housing of 28,557 units, the net new demand by 2040 is another 15,637 housing units.

**Table 3 – Apache Junction Trade Area Housing Unit Demand**

Housing Demand	2040
Total Housing Units	38,750
Vacancy Rate	14.05%
Projected Number of Housing Units Needed	44,194
Less Existing, Permitted and Planned Housing Supply (2023)	28,557
<b>New Demand</b>	<b>15,637</b>

<sup>3</sup> ACS 2022 1-Year estimate and held constant throughout the analysis.



### 07.4 LAND DEMAND

Findings of the market demand analysis are utilized to inform the Apache Junction Downtown Master Plan development scenarios. The acreage demand to accommodate employment and residential uses within the entire city by the year 2040 is presented in Table 4. Employment uses have a lower and upper bound of development intensity based on a floor to area (FAR) ratio and residential density per acre. The FAR for office and commercial and density per acre for residential are applied to calculate acres. The number of acres needed by 2040 range from 2,623 at lower intensity development to 1,999 at higher intensity development. These findings provide guidance for square footage and residential unit capture within downtown.

**Table 4 – Apache Junction Trade Area Additional Land Demand through 2040**

		Lower Intensity	Higher Intensity
<b>Total Demand</b>	<b>SF By 2040</b>	<b>FAR</b>	<b>FAR</b>
Retail (Sq. Ft.)	1,066,660	0.25	0.35
Office (Sq. Ft.)	332,981	0.38	0.55
Residential HU's	15,637	---	---
<b>Acre Demand</b>		<b>Acres</b>	<b>Acres</b>
<u>Employment</u>			
Retail		98	70
Office		20	14
	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>84</b>
<u>Residential</u>			
Low Density Residential		1,955	1,368
Medium Density Residential		456	391
High Density Residential		94	156
	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>2,504</b>	<b>1,916</b>
<b>Grand Total Acres</b>		<b>2,623</b>	<b>1,999</b>

## 07.5 DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

The findings of the land use demand analysis (Table 4) are incorporated in two development scenarios. These scenarios assume that the downtown will capture a portion of the total square feet and housing unit demand.

Approximately 200 acres of the study area is potentially available for new or redevelopment. When preparing development scenarios, 60 acres (30%) have been set aside for roads, sidewalks, drainage, slopes and open space leaving 140 acres for development. Two scenarios showcase “Suburban,” and “Downtown Development” development patterns, each with varying acreage of land use by type. Both scenarios include residential, office, commercial and mixed use development.

Mixed use development can consist of all uses including office, commercial, entertainment/recreation, hospitality and residential development. If residential is added to mixed use land category, the number of dwelling units by scenario will be greater than what is noted in Table 5. If additional acreage is added to the downtown master plan, then the number of housing units and square feet of employment space would increase but should adhere to the upper bounds noted in Table 4.

Inspirational plans prepared by SWABACK detail the uses for the Apache Junction Downtown Master Plan. As mentioned above, the mixed use land category could incorporate restaurants, hotel, and other commercial uses.

Following is a summary of each development scenario. Table 5 presents the detail analysis by land use for each scenario.

- **Suburban Development** – this land use scenario represents the least dense development with 105 acres of residential development yielding 420 dwelling units, and 25.2 acres of office and commercial and another 9.8 acres for mixed use, which could be used for residential, office, commercial, hospitality or entertainment. Total square feet that could be accommodated equals 500,858 square feet of space.
- **Downtown Development** – under this development scenario, residential density increases for a total of 78 acres generating 944 dwelling units, and 61 acres of employment land use producing 1.2 million square feet of space. The mixed use category of 25.3 acres could be built out as residential, office, commercial, hospitality or entertainment.



**Table 5 – Downtown Master Plan Development Scenarios**

Suburban	Percent	Acres	DU/AC		
			FAR	Sq. Ft.	H/U's
Residential (low density)	75.0%	105	4	--	420
Employment:	18.0%	25.2			
Office	9.1%	2.3	0.38	37,959	
Commercial	90.9%	22.9	0.25	249,945	
Mixed Use	7.0%	9.8	0.50	213,444	
		140.00		500,858	420
Roads, sidewalks, drainage, slope & open space	30%	60.00			
<b>Total Acres</b>		<b>200.00</b>			

Downtown Development	Percent	Acres	DU/AC		
			FAR	Sq. Ft.	H/U's
Residential (medium density)	56.2%	78.68	12	--	944
Employment:	25.7%	35.98			
Office	42.0%	15.11	0.38	250,139	--
Commercial	58.0%	20.87	0.25	227,257	--
Mixed Use	18.1%	25.34	0.67	739,553	--
		140.00		1,216,949	944
Roads, sidewalks, drainage, slope & open space	30%	60.00			
<b>Total Acres</b>		<b>200.00</b>			

These two development scenarios provide SWABACK with market based findings for use in preparing a variety of inspirational plans that comprise the downtown master plan.

## **07.6 REPORT CONSIDERATIONS AND LIMITING CONDITIONS**

The market analysis prepared by ESI Corporation is subject to the following considerations and limiting conditions. The analysis is based on data from MAG, the City of Apache Junction, Esri, US Census, and GPEC. The following general conditions apply:

- It is our understanding that this market study is for your planning purposes. Our report, nor its contents, nor any of our work were intended to be included and, therefore, may not be referred to or quoted in whole or in part, in any registration statement, prospectus, public filing, private offering memorandum, loan agreement or other agreement or document without our prior written approval, which may require that we perform additional procedures, nor can it be used for any purpose other than as expressly stated in this report.
- Except as specifically stated to the contrary, this market assessment will not give consideration to the following matters to the extent they exist: (i) matters of a legal nature, including issues of legal title and compliance with federal, state and local laws and ordinances; and (ii) environmental and engineering issues, and the costs associated with their correction.
- The reported findings presented in this report will represent the considered judgment of ESI Corporation based on the facts, analyses and methodologies described in the report.
- All direct and indirect written information supplied by the client, its agents and assigns, is assumed to be true, accurate and complete; additionally, information identified as supplied or prepared by others is believed to be reliable. However, no responsibility for the accuracy of such information is assumed.
- This market assessment is intended to be read and used as a whole and not in parts.
- Our analyses are based on currently available information and third party data, which is subject to uncertainty and variation. Accordingly, we do not represent them as results that will be achieved. Some assumptions will not materialize, and unanticipated events and circumstances may occur; therefore, the actual results achieved may vary from the estimated results.



# 08

## IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Representatives from SWABACK and the City of Apache Junction received a lot of feedback from a wide range of stakeholders. The good news is that there was a lot of consensus on what folks would like to see in the Core Downtown Zone. As such, many of the recommendations made below weave the suggestions made throughout this process and help create a vibrant mixed-use downtown. The list of recommendations below are in no particular order.



<b>08.1 CIRCULATION ENHANCEMENTS</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAMES(SUGGESTED)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with ADOT to enhance connection points along Idaho Road between Old West Highway and N. Apache Trail.</li> </ul>	3-5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have Public Works and Development Services staff work closely with each developer/contractor to ensure any planned pathways are adequately designed for bicyclists, pedestrians and equestrian traffic.</li> </ul>	0-2 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that hitching posts are tastefully added to new commercial developments within the downtown area that are adjacent to planned equestrian trails.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◊ Consider consulting with local horse groups and advocates to ensure that equestrian improvements are strategically placed.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	0-2 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create unique western-themed crosswalk paint designs to help visually connect the blocks in the downtown area. Work with the Apache Junction Arts Commission to adopt certain designs that then get improved on the street system.</li> </ul>	3-5 Years
<b>08.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAMES(SUGGESTED)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take full advantage of existing development fee credits on the former Grand Hotel site to assist with attracting desired uses.</li> </ul>	3-5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue utilizing the existing incentive districts such as the established Redevelopment Areas to promote new business growth.</li> </ul>	6-10 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue evaluating other designations to assist with the growth of the downtown area such as establishing an Entertainment District, Infill Incentive District, and other state-enabled zones or districts.</li> </ul>	6-10 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider having new buildings achieve environmental sustainability such as LEED Certification in order to save on energy costs for businesses operating out of such spaces.</li> </ul>	3-5 Years

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a policy to provide for the waiving of fees such as Planning and Zoning filing fees, engineering and building permit fees or reimburse such fees as part of a Development Agreement after all promised uses finish construction and are open for business. The reimbursement of such fees shall be established through a development agreement approved by the City Council.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◊ Consider including as many administrative approvals as possible in development agreements to allow City staff to initiate and execute the elements of the agreement to ensure that projects can progress in a timely manner.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>3-5 Years</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leverage partner agencies, such as the Chamber of Commerce and Central Arizona College, to initiate the process of applying for federal and state economic development grants, low-interest loans, and job training programs that apply to downtown businesses.</li> </ul>	<p>3-5 Years</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue working with leadership from Central Arizona College to create workforce training programs at the Apache Junction campus that will directly benefit downtown businesses such as culinary arts, hospitality management and retail-based business operations.</li> </ul>	<p>6-10 Years</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider creating a policy to expedite plan reviews for permits related to restaurants, retail, entertainment and other hospitality uses within the downtown study area at no extra cost to the applicant or reimburse the expedited review fees to the applicant when such business opens.</li> </ul>	<p>0-2 Years</p>



<b>08.3 PLACEMAKING, SIGNAGE AND ART-BASED ENHANCEMENTS</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAMES(SUGGESTED)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be sure that art installed or improved in the downtown area can be seen from adjacent public places or the public rights-of-way to add visual interest in the downtown district.</li> </ul>	0-2 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote ‘call for artist’ opportunities on as many community platforms as possible to increase the number and quality of responses.</li> </ul>	0-2 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage local artist groups in the event any art donations made to the City are located in a high-impact area. Work with the Apache Junction Arts Commission to help place any future donated artwork. Perhaps come up with guidelines to accept any donated artwork such as durability of materials and even themes.</li> </ul>	3-5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with local academic institutions to see if any class projects could be created for an outdoor environment and donated for public display in the downtown area.</li> </ul>	3-5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage as many art-based programs to take place in the public spaces within the downtown district to liven the street and activate the local resident base (one example could be to ‘Chalk Up The Town” and encourage families to create chalk art on the downtown streets and sidewalks in a secure setting).</li> </ul>	0-2 Years
<b>08.4 GENERAL LAND USE AND SITE PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAMES(SUGGESTED)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage residential space on the periphery of the downtown core to help create ‘body heat’ and increase the customer base of local businesses.</li> </ul>	6-10 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that an integrated development concept occurs on the former Grand Hotel site, where the uses complement each other and work together to form and add to a cohesive and interactive downtown.</li> </ul>	3-5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capitalize on the opportunity to move patron parking behind buildings, allowing buildings to be constructed much closer to street frontages.</li> </ul>	3-5 Years

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow for as much shared parking opportunities as possible to encourage downtown goers to park in one spot and traverse the rest of the downtown area without the use of a personal vehicle. This will allow for more land to be utilized for public open space or for private development.</li> </ul>	3-5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider allowing for shared ground signage opportunities through signage easements to assist businesses that are mid-block or do not have signage facing Idaho or Apache Trail/Old West Highway.</li> </ul>	0-2 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that newly planted trees and other landscaping elements do not block business signage.</li> </ul>	0-2 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be mindful of the property rights of adjacent property owners when considering the design of view corridors looking onto the surrounding mountains.</li> </ul>	0-2 Years

<b>08.5 GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAMES(SUGGESTED)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider relocating the Apache Junction Chamber Office and Visitor center closer to the Grand Hotel site to encourage tourists to visit this area while seeking travel information.</li> </ul>	3-5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with neighboring property owners and business owners to co-host western-themed, semi-annual block parties to hyper promote the local businesses and public amenities. Use parking lot facilities like City Hall and the Central Arizona College to accommodate the influx of vehicles.</li> </ul>	3-5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have the City Council consider additional land purchases in the downtown area to facilitate further development and redevelopment opportunities when such listings arise.</li> </ul>	6-10 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider building strategically placed municipal parking lots to assist with reducing private off-street parking supply in the downtown area.</li> </ul>	3-5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider tracking the progress of this plan and the DRIS with any future Economic Development Committee.</li> </ul>	6-10 Years



# 09

## RECOMMENDATIONS FULFILLED FROM 2010 DRIS

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Since the adoption of the 2010 Downtown Revitalization Implementation Strategy (DRIS), considerable progress has been made in implementing many of the key recommendations that have helped shape the growth and revitalization of the downtown area. Projects such as streetscape improvements, enhanced pedestrian infrastructure, and the promotion of mixed-use development have significantly contributed to the vibrancy and accessibility of the downtown core. These accomplishments reflect the strong foundation laid by the original DRIS, and this partial update recognizes the importance of continuing to build upon that success. While many recommendations have been fulfilled, some remain ongoing or need further update to adapt to current needs. It is important to note that not all strategies from the 2010 DRIS are included in this section, as some are specific to areas outside of the Downtown Core Zone. This update focuses on continuing the efforts initiated by the 2010 DRIS, ensuring that these strategies evolve alongside the changing dynamics of the downtown area while maintaining the vision of creating a more vibrant, livable, and sustainable urban environment.



## **09.1 UNIQUE IDENTITY/BRANDING**

**GOAL 1.1 - Adopt a consistent brand that focuses on the Superstition Mountains as the main image for the community and downtown and incorporates the “western” feel of Apache Junction in areas such as equestrian, historical mining, cowboy life style, outdoor and recreational activities.**

### **STRATEGIES:**

- a) Include a consistent ‘brand” in the promotion of the downtown.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- b) Consistency with the “brand” as reflected in different Downtown zones should be encouraged.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- c) Funding should be set aside each year to promote the brand.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- d) Adopt a logo and color palate consistent with brand and apply to public improvements.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- e) Emphasize the brand in business recruitment and retention efforts as well as special events.  
**Status: Ongoing**

**GOAL 1.2 - Clearly define the edges or entries of the community and the downtown to create a separate identity and image. The purpose is to create a unique identity and brand for the community, and to create a sense of arrival into the downtown.**

### **STRATEGIES:**

- a) Gateways should be installed at key locations in the downtown.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- b) Specific improvements should be made to define the major entries into Apache Junction.  
**Status: Ongoing**

**GOAL 1.3 - Clearly define the edges or entries of the community and the downtown to create a separate identity and image. The purpose is to create a unique identity and brand for the community, and to create a sense of arrival into the downtown.**

### **STRATEGIES:**

- a) Develop a sign template that can be used for public roadway signs.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- b) Upgrade the existing signs along the roadways identifying city facilities.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- c) Erect new signs that identify federal, and county building locations.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- d) Install seasonal banners along Apache Trail that celebrate the history of Apache Junction.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- e) Work with local major attractions on installing wayfinding signage.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- f) Provide secondary street signage to Downtown Apache Junction and to its “major attractions”.  
**Status: Ongoing**

## GOAL 1.4 - Strategically focus the branding and advertising to attract winter visitors and special activities.

### STRATEGIES:

- a) Establish a program to collect ‘hard’ data on winter visitor statistics.  
**Status:** Consider reactivating this recommendation.
- b) Working with local businesses jointly promote or sponsor events and activities.  
**Status:** Ongoing
- c) Identify ways to attract horse owners and explore the construction of a trailhead.  
**Status:** Ongoing - Refer to Active Transportation Plan
- d) Provide opportunities for stables adjacent to RV parks.  
**Status:** Ongoing
- e) Focus advertising and media outreach on outdoor recreation.  
**Status:** Ongoing
- f) Provide a local events calendar of scheduled activities and events for residents and visitors.  
**Status:** Accomplished and Ongoing via VisitAJ.com.

## 09.2 THREE ZONE CONCEPT

## GOAL 2.1 - Modify the General Plan, city codes and policies to reflect the special nature of the downtown and uniqueness of each of the three districts.

### STRATEGIES:

- a) Develop new Design Guidelines for each of three Downtown Zones.  
**Status:** Accomplished in 2011
- b) Allow non-conforming properties more latitude in redeveloping by modifying the zoning code.  
**Status:** Ongoing
- c) Modify the General Plan to represent the downtown area as a mixed use designation.  
**Status:** Accomplished - 2020 General Plan Update
- d) Amend the zoning code to allow mixed uses by right in all zoning districts in the downtown.  
**Status:** Ongoing
- e) Revise the sign code to allow signs reflective of each district.  
**Status:** Ongoing

### **09.3 APACHE TRAIL MEDIAN**

#### **GOAL 3.1 - Visually tie the downtown together through the enhanced treatment of medians in the downtown area focusing on Apache Trail.**

##### **STRATEGIES:**

- a) The number of lanes on Apache Trail should remain as 6 lanes.  
**Status: Accomplished**
- b) The width of the center median on Apache Trail should remain intact and preserved.  
**Status: Accomplished**
- c) The medians from Meridian to Winchester should be enhanced to visual link the three zones.  
**Status: Ongoing (almost finished)**
- d) The median Improvements should include lighting, public art, signage, and additional landscaping.  
**Status: Ongoing (new Arts Commission has been formed since adoption of DRIS)**
- e) On-street bike lanes should be added along Apache Trail.  
**Status: Accomplished**

#### **GOAL 3.2 - Median improvements should be constructed in a systematic way with a consistent set of improvements over the multi -year project.**

##### **STRATEGIES:**

- a) The improvements on the median should be done systematically and in a phased fashion.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- b) Landscape center medians should be added on key adjacent streets.  
**Status: Ongoing**

#### **GOAL 3.3 - Provide safe and convenient non-motor access along and across Apache Trail.**

##### **STRATEGIES:**

- a) Provide striped crosswalks at signalized intersections and provide midpoint signals in the medians.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- b) Signalize the Winchester-Old West Highway intersection.  
**Status: Accomplished**
- c) Assess connecting future trails into the Town Center.  
**Status: Ongoing**



## 09.4 REVITALIZATION/ECONOMIC VITALITY

**GOAL 4.1 - The barriers to revitalization of small properties (especially in the Transition District) should be mitigated.**

### STRATEGIES:

- a) Encourage commercial buildings to connect existing sewer lines through financial incentives.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- b) Address the existing flood plain designation along the north side of Apache Trail.  
**Status: Ongoing**

**GOAL 4.2 - Support the revitalization of existing buildings and smaller properties in the Transition Zone as a unique commercial entity.**

### STRATEGIES:

- a) Adopt design guidelines for Transition Area in order to achieve a more southwestern image.  
**Status: Accomplished in 2011**
- b) Sponsor a series of businesses development seminars to promote the area.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- c) Secure federal, state, or county monies for an ongoing facade matching grant program.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- d) Identify key locations within the district to erect western features to support the brand.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- e) Facilitate adjacent property owners working together to improve access.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- e) Provide free initial architectural design assistance to properties that are proposing to remodel.  
**Status: Ongoing**

**GOAL 4.3 - Develop a downtown that is unique within its boundaries and from the freeway oriented uses along US 60.**

### STRATEGIES:

- a) The zoning code should be revised to reflect the unique characteristics of each zone.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- b) Allocate percent of new city sales tax from development outside downtown to DT.  
**Status: Offer Only When State Statute is Satisfied**

**GOAL 4.4 - Identify and actively recruit small locally owned businesses and non-retail organizations for the Transition District and the Town Center.**

### STRATEGIES:

- a) Make personal contact with targeted businesses in adjacent communities.  
**Status: GPEC Contract Violation**
- b) Participate and make presentations to local civic groups on Downtown AJ.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- c) Establish an annual award given to most significant revitalization contribution.  
**Status: Consider reactivating this recommendation.**
- c) Consider forming a BID for enhanced services.  
**Status: Consider reactivating this recommendation.**

**GOAL 4.5 Promote tourism in Apache Junction and the downtown as the home base or trail head for visiting the area's attractions.**

**STRATEGIES:**

- a) Work with local and regional agencies to coordinate and promote the downtown area.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- b) Establish a community based organization with representatives from major tourist attractions.  
**Status: Consider reactivating this recommendation.**
- c) Consider dedicating a portion of the City of Apache Junction's Transient Lodging Tax for tourism.  
**Status: Tourism marketing budget has been established.**

**GOAL 4.6 - Promote public art and local artists as a unique feature of public and private downtown development and for creating a unique niche in the downtown.**

**STRATEGIES:**

- a) Allocate 1% of the construction cost of new public projects for art within downtown.  
**Status: Accomplished - New Art Commission Formed and City Codes Updated**
- b) Public art projects should attempt to select artists from the area.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- c) Invite volunteers from the arts community to review new city public projects.  
**Status: Consider Reactivating this Strategy**
- d) Involve students at CAC in a local downtown arts competition.  
**Status: Consider Reactivating this Strategy**
- e) Work with the arts community to secure a building for a local retail outlet for local artists.  
**Status: Consider Reactivating this Strategy**

**GOAL 4.7 - Identify and support strong, existing residential neighborhoods that are in or close to the downtown.**

**STRATEGIES:**

- a) Program infrastructure improvements (water, sewer, streets) to eliminate deviancies and enhance livability.  
**Status: Consider Reactivating this Strategy**
- b) Provide safe, convenient pedestrian connections between neighborhoods and downtown, particularly to Downtown Core.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- c) Establish occasional neighborhood Saturday clean-up events; with city staff assistance and a picnic hosted by the city.  
**Status: Accomplished and ongoing**

**GOAL 4.8 - Focus on attracting additional quality housing in or near the downtown to support the commercial areas and to provide alternatives for existing and new residents.**

**STRATEGIES:**

- a) Develop programs to recruit specialty housing for unique groups such as students from CAC, winter visitors, and seniors.  
**Status:** Consider Reactivating this Strategy
- b) Provide a density bonus for market-rate multiple-family housing that provides 10 per cent of its units as affordable.  
**Status:** Zoning Code has been updated for more density
- c) Pursue federal, state funding that provide assistance for high quality affordable housing that meets design guidelines.  
**Status:** Consider Reactivating this Strategy

**GOAL 4.9 - – Provide a program for negative or outdated residential development to upgrade or transition to a more supportive land use.town development and for creating a unique niche in the downtown.**

**STRATEGIES:**

- a) Establish a voluntary rental housing assistance program to aid relocation of dislocated residents. (Complementary with 75b)  
**Status:** Partial Update Needed
- b) Conduct regular inspections of developments that have repeated code violations or frequent police calls for service.  
**Status:** Partial Update Needed
- c) Help property owners secure county, state or federal monies to upgrade existing facilities, build new affordable housing.  
**Status:** Partial Update Needed



## 09.5 DOWNTOWN CORE

### GOAL 5.1 Create a Downtown Core that is the symbolic center of the community.

#### STRATEGIES:

- a) Reinforce “Y” intersection as center of downtown to establish community identity.  
**Status: Accomplished - Constructed focal point**

### GOAL 5.2 - Incorporate urban and uniquely Apache Junction design elements in the building of the Town Center.

#### STRATEGIES:

- a) Approve a new downtown “Main Street” design as a pedestrian oriented street.  
**Status: Accomplished-Public Works developed a “Main Street” design that was used on S Plaza Dr south of Superstition and on North Apache Trail between Old West Highway and Idaho Rd along Flat Iron Park**
- b) Build new “Main Streets” in the core of downtown.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- c) Improve existing streets as a “Main Street” in downtown core.  
**Status: Partially accomplished and ongoing**
- d) Incorporate the Elements of a Great Downtown into mandatory design guidelines.  
**Status: Consider Reactivating this Strategy**
- e) Incorporate sustainable elements in the downtown as a requirement for new development.  
**Status: Ongoing**

### GOAL 5.3 - Explore opportunities to spur development in the Town Center.

#### STRATEGIES:

- a) Explore the purchase of land to connect Idaho and North Apache Trail.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- b) Consider partnerships with the owners of the existing lands within the Town Center.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- c) Work with the property owner of older shopping centers to improve commercial viability.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- d) Encourage owners of commercial properties to work together to create a new “Main Street”.  
**Status: Ongoing**

### GOAL 5.4 - Develop a community and special events location.

#### STRATEGIES:

- a) Improve North Apache Trail as a “Main Street”.  
**Status: Accomplished - streetscape improvements constructed**
- b) Consider the potential of acquiring the two four unit buildings along North Apache.  
**Status: Accomplished - Flat Iron Park constructed - took over these parcels**
- c) Design the reconstruction of North Apache Trail as a facility that can accommodate special events.  
**Status: Accomplished - Flat Iron Park constructed**

## GOAL 5.5 - Ensure compatibility of new development with existing neighborhoods.

### STRATEGIES:

- a) High density housing should be concentrated along Idaho and along the North Apache Trail.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- b) Lower density housing should be focused along Winchester north of the Old West highway.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- c) Housing over 2 stories should be of varying heights especially if next to residential areas.  
**Status: Ongoing**

## 09.6 SUPPORTING PRINCIPLES

## GOAL 6.1 - Establish a building form and design palette that is uniquely Apache Junction.

### STRATEGIES:

- a) Incorporate southwestern architecture as the primary design requirement.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- b) Connect all areas of the Downtown Core with shaded sidewalks w/new development. zoning code.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- c) Select Street Furniture that reflects a southwestern image.  
**Status: Accomplished - 2020 General Plan Update**
- d) Install a continuous row of unique street lights along Apache Trail.  
**Status: Partial Update Needed**
- e) Provide a variety of building heights in the Town Center to create the impression buildings evolved over time.  
**Status: Partial Update Needed**
- f) Create a sense of excitement by using color, lights, signs and banners, particularly in Town Center.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- g) Enhance Focal Point by improving adjacent corners ( Welcome sign on NW corner).  
**Status: Accomplished - sign constructed at specific corner**

## GOAL 6.2 - Provide accessibility and basic infrastructure system to support development.

### STRATEGIES:

- a) **Roads**
  - 1. Install roundabout at Superstition/SR 88.  
**Status: Accomplished - 2018**
  - 2. Restripe Apache Trail to create three 10-foot lanes with a 6-foot bike lane.  
**Status: Accomplished - 2018**

3. Use landscaping curbs, or other device to protect pedestrians at driveways and along major streets.  
**Status: Ongoing**
4. Install curb and gutter and use straight tapered transitions for turn lanes/Apache Trail.  
**Status: Ongoing**
5. With Town Center, consider trolley to connect CAC, neighborhoods with DT Core.  
**Status: Omit Recommendation**
6. Install landscaped median on Idaho Rd.  
**Status: Omit Recommendation**
8. Require new development to build “Main Streets” at time of development.  
**Status: Omit Recommendation**

**b) Traits**

1. Connect the downtown to the larger community horse and bike trails system.  
**Status: See Active Transportation Plan - Partial Update Needed**
2. Install horse facilities in Town Center as terminus for community trail system.  
**Status: Recommendation reactivated**
3. Establish an equestrian/multipurpose trail head convenient to Downtown.  
**Status: See Active Transportation Plan - Partial Update Needed**
4. Develop a comprehensive Pedestrian Circulation Plan that connects 3 areas of Downtown Core.  
**Status: See Active Transportation Plan - Partial Update Needed**
5. Explore securing grant for “Park and Share” facility for carpooling and special event parking.  
**Status: See Active Transportation Plan - Partial Update Needed**

**c) Water and Sewer Service**

1. Enlarge the water line to 12” on Apache Trail as part of its reconstruction.  
**Status: See 2023 Water Study**
2. Offer incentives for existing development to connect septic system to SMCFD #1.  
**Status: See 2023 Water Study**
3. Work with property owners east of Idaho Rd. to gauge interest in improvement district.  
**Status: See 2023 Water Study**

**d) Flood Control**

1. Conduct study to for handling drainage in Downtown and in flood zone.  
**Status: Ongoing**
2. Develop a comprehensive approach to storm water management.  
**Status: Ongoing**



**GOAL 6.3 - Views of the mountain backdrop at key locations should be considered in new developments.**

**STRATEGIES:**

- a) Preserve the view, if possible, of Superstition Mountains from the “Y”.  
**Status:** View corridor recommendations modified.
- b) Require a variety of building heights in large developments to ensure view corridors.  
**Status:** Ongoing
- c) Protect the Four Peaks view along N. Apache Trail with the “Main Street” design.  
**Status:** View corridor recommendations modified.

**GOAL 6.4 - Identify a variety of event locations and activities that will attract residents and visitors alike into the downtown or the region.**

**STRATEGIES:**

- a) Work with Pinal county to acquire rodeo grounds.  
**Status:** Accomplished - Purchased in 2023
- b) Incorporate Public Space into design and construction of N. Apache Trail.  
**Status:** Partially Accomplished - streetscape and public space constructed
- c) Program this Public Space for live entertainment activities, such as weekend music jamboree.  
**Status:** Recommendation reactivated
- d) Work with region to attract and program special events in the Downtown (Day of the Cowboy, etc.).  
**Status:** Ongoing
- e) Identify existing activities, such as Barleen’s, that could be connected or attracted to Downtown.  
**Status:** Ongoing

**GOAL 6.5 - New development in the Downtown Core shall utilize the principles of sustainability and serve as a local example of a model 21st Century downtown.**

**STRATEGIES:**

- a) Explore the use of solar collectors to power decorative tree lights in the median and right-of-way.  
**Status:** Ongoing
- b) Consider alternative paving design that is porous for the on-street parking on “Main Street”.  
**Status:** Ongoing
- c) Promote the Downtown as a “Green City” as part of its 21st Century City image.  
**Status:** Ongoing

**GOAL 6.6 - Within the downtown the City Council should be pro-active in eliminating blight and indicators of decline (Nuisance Abatement).**

**STRATEGIES:**

- a) Continue a proactive code enforcement program in the downtown focused on blight and visual issues.  
**Status:** Ongoing
- b) Aggressively and proactively enforce the city codes regarding vacant buildings and buildings in disrepair.  
**Status:** Ongoing
- c) Utilize volunteers, Community Service workers to do regular maintenance on city

property; low-income private properties.

**Status: Ongoing**

- d) Establish a downtown “Spring Clean-up” in the fall of each year prior to the arrival of winter visitors.

**Status: Ongoing**

- e) When normal enforcement is not effective the city should use abatement procedures to clean up properties, bill owners.

**Status: Ongoing**

## **09.7 IMPLEMENTATION AND MEASURING SUCCESS**

**GOAL 7.1 - The Downtown revitalization program should be organized as a long-term effort by the City of Apache Junction government, residents, businesses, and property owners.**

### **STRATEGIES:**

- a) Develop Capital Improvements Program to include Downtown projects.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- b) Develop an annual Work Program with an Implementation Matrix.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- c) City Council should adopt the Downtown Annual Work Program as part of its budget process.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- d) City should cooperate and develop strong alliances with existing downtown-supporting organizations.  
**Status: Ongoing**

**GOAL 7.2 - The city organization should place a high focus on implementation of the Downtown Strategy and the revitalization of the downtown.**

### **STRATEGIES:**

- a) Create staff Downtown Technical Committee with responsibility to implement Annual Work Program.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- b) Assign a staff person as Downtown Coordinator.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- c) Assign additional staff support to augment the Downtown Coordinator.  
**Status: Ongoing**

**GOAL 7.3 - The city should review all of its codes, processes and fees relating to development in the downtown to ensure consistent support for the revitalization program.**

### **STRATEGIES:**

- a) Amend Zoning Code to allow staff-level approval for small projects in Transition Zone.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- b) Modify the Meridian Redevelopment Area boundaries to correspond with Project Study boundaries.  
**Status: Ongoing**

- c) Amend Zoning Code to reflect three Downtown Zones.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- d) Develop Economic Development website focused on the Downtown to provide information to the public.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- e) City Toolkit should be updated to reflect correct information.  
**Status: Ongoing**

**GOAL 7.4 - The development process improvements should consider how to make the review and process for new development and building permits in the downtown area more efficient. This should, where appropriate, differentiate between small developments and larger developments.**

**STRATEGIES:**

- a) Establish a development project tracking system to document predictability for applicant.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- b) Require staff comments prior to Preliminary Development Review meeting.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- c) Written comments should be given to applicant at beginning of PDR meeting.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- d) Appoint and train Planners to be Project Managers as single point of contact.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- e) Track development projects and time in the process.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- f) Prepare an ongoing report on the status of each project and permit on a bi-weekly basis.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- g) Conduct semi-annual training program on customer service.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- h) Establish an ongoing customer feedback system for each application.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- i) Revise the Infill Incentive District to reflect actual incentives.  
**Status: Ongoing**

**GOAL 7.5 - The city should pursue federal and state grants and programs to revitalize downtown neighborhoods and commercial areas and determine annually, as part of the budget process, what is the most effective way to spend public dollars to revitalize downtown.**

**STRATEGIES:**

- a) Utilize CDBG and State Housing Trust Fund dollars to continue with the city's housing rehab program.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- b) Explore Relocation Assistance Program for change of use of existing substandard mobile home parks.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- c) Focus TEA-21 transportation enhancement funding toward downtown revitalization projects.  
**Status: Ongoing**
- d) Direct city's annual allocation of CDBG funds toward the revitalization efforts of Downtown.  
**Status: Ongoing**





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