



PART I

CHAPTER

02







# VISION, GOALS, AND POLICIES

The vision, goals, and policies for Downtown Vacaville draw upon the ideas, aspirations, and values of the city’s residents, business owners, staff members, elected and appointed officials, and other community stakeholders. The vision conveys the overarching intent for Downtown’s continued growth and evolution. The accompanying goals and policies guide the priorities for implementing that vision. The aim is to unlock Downtown’s full potential as a vibrant and walkable mixed-use destination where people live, work, shop, and play—a Downtown with a great history and a great future.



*Downtown during an event on Main Street (Source: City of Vacaville)*

## 2.1 An Active Downtown

It is the community’s intent to reestablish Downtown as the heart of the city, a lively place that offers residents and visitors an urban experience that is authentically Vacaville. This experience will build upon those elements that differentiate Downtown from other areas of the city, including its historic charm, pedestrian-scaled Main Street environment, number of locally owned businesses, and quaint residential neighborhoods. Strategic improvements to streetscapes, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, public gathering spaces, lighting, directional signage for wayfinding, and other elements to create a sense of place will enhance the area’s character and help to attract an economically vibrant mix of uses that promote street-level activity and invite people to rediscover Downtown.

Initial efforts will focus on strengthening the Downtown core as an active hub of retail, entertainment, cultural, civic, dining, and office uses, thus generating momentum to catalyze the remainder of the Downtown Plan Area and enhance its vibrancy. The Downtown core will be centered on an expanded Town Square, an extended CreekWalk, and a transformed gateway corridor along Davis Street, and will include upgraded street furnishings, public art, and other improvements. New residential and mixed-use development will be integrated to expand the local resident base, support businesses, reactivate upper floors, and extend the hours of activity.

### Downtown Vision

*Establish Downtown as Vacaville’s premier experiential destination by leveraging its unique setting and brand to attract a greater mix of people, uses, activities, and investments.*

The subareas outside of the Downtown core, illustrated in **Figure 3.5-1** in DTSP Part I, Chapter 3, “Setting and Context,” vary from historic residential to contemporary commercial. The individual character of these subareas will be enhanced with a focus on improving connectivity, integrating with the Downtown core, and contributing to the success of the greater Plan Area. Refer to Section 3.5 in DTSP Part I, Chapter 3, for descriptions of the Downtown subareas.

The topics presented in the goals and policies of this document are articulated in more detail throughout DTSP Part I, Chapter 4, “Development Framework.” Additional supporting information can be found in DTSP Part II, Chapters 9–14.

## 2.1 Visioning Themes

The goals and policies of the DTSP provide guidance for implementing the vision for Downtown. They build upon the themes described below, which advocate for a Downtown that has the following qualities:

**Vibrant.** A pedestrian-oriented, retail, entertainment, and cultural destination that attracts people, generates housing, and fosters street-level engagement.

**Connected.** An accessible mobility network that allows for the safe and convenient movement of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and automobiles in addition to barrier-free access based on existing federal code requirements for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access in all public spaces.

**Attractive.** A well-designed blend of buildings, landscaping, streetscapes, and public spaces that carefully integrate with Downtown’s historic character.

**Sustainable.** A future built upon a healthy environment, a strong economy, and the well-being of residents and businesses.

**Resilient.** A community able to adapt and grow in response to changing environmental, economic, and societal conditions.

**Equitable.** A diverse place where all residents equitably participate in its planning, growth, quality of life, and prosperity.

**Safe.** A secure environment with well-lit and defensible spaces that add to the comfort and safety of residents, businesses, and visitors.

## 2.2 Goals and Policies

**Goal 1** Attract active retail and related uses unique to Downtown.

### Policies

- 1.A **Intensification.** Encourage intensification of Downtown with an economically varied mix of retail, housing, recreational, and cultural uses.
- 1.B **Active Uses.** Target retail and other “active” uses that promote street-level engagement, increase foot traffic, and draw people to Downtown.
- 1.C **Resident Oriented.** Support uses that provide goods and services that meet the daily needs of local residents, while also appealing to visitors.
- 1.D **Local Tenant Mix.** Cultivate a diverse tenant mix that emphasizes unique, locally owned businesses.



*Special event on Main Street in Downtown Vacaville (Source: City of Vacaville)*

- 1.E **Retail Activity.** Cluster new retail activity, design of public spaces, and connectivity improvements along highly visible pedestrian frontages to create critical masses of activity that will influence and generate further interest for those frontages, and entice others to patronize local businesses.
- 1.F **Ground-Floor Interaction.** Provide for continuous and concentrated ground-floor activity along pedestrian frontages to support safe interactions and flow while also promoting window shopping and engagement between pedestrians and businesses.
- 1.G **Public Realm Activity.** Promote the use of sidewalks, streets, alleys, and plazas for retail and ancillary activities, such as the operation of sidewalk cafes, merchandise displays, and outdoor sales.
- 1.H **Pop-Up Uses.** Allow temporary gallery, retail, and other pop-up uses in vacant building and plaza spaces.



*Special event in Downtown Vacaville (Source: City of Vacaville)*

## Goal 2 Reinforce Downtown as a lively entertainment, cultural, civic, and dining destination.

### Policies

- 2.A **Entertainment Uses.** Target a wider variety of Downtown entertainment, dining, cultural, and related uses that serve all ages and offer almost around-the-clock activity or “18-hour” activity to help the Downtown flourish outside of a typical 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. workday.
- 2.B **Improved Public Spaces.** Invest in the creation of new and improved public spaces that can be used for daily activities and to host special events and gatherings.
- 2.C **Expanded Town Square.** Expand Town Square and improve its connection to the adjacent Town Square Library, McBride Senior Center, and Andrews Park to enhance the area’s visibility and usability as the center of Downtown.
- 2.D **Andrews Park.** Integrate new community events and facilities in or near Andrews Park to serve residents and visitors of all ages and abilities.
- 2.E **Art-Related Activities.** Support recurring activities that increase Downtown’s reputation as an arts and cultural venue, such as a Main Street Art Walk and Downtown Murals Program.
- 2.F **Theaters and Hotels.** Enhance pedestrian interaction and visual connectivity between the Downtown core and the nearby movie theater, hotel, and related uses along Davis and Mason Streets.

Goal 3 Provide a broad range of quality housing choices in Downtown.

Policies

- 3.A **Additional Housing.** Facilitate additional Downtown housing to support local businesses, expand activity, and allow more people to access services and workplaces by walking and biking.
- 3.B **Diverse Housing Types.** Provide for a variety of quality purchase and rental housing types and sizes to support a mixed-income population base.
- 3.C **Higher Density Housing.** Incentivize high-density, mixed-use, and “missing middle” housing, including the use of publicly owned land for such housing. “Missing middle” housing refers to smaller scale housing types, with multiple units, that may be lacking in the Downtown.
- 3.D **Second-Floor Reinvestment.** Support reinvestment in the second floors of existing buildings for renewed residential use.
- 3.E **Established Neighborhoods.** Maintain the identity and livability of established neighborhoods while allowing for a greater array of housing types and increased densities.
- 3.F **Funding.** Target available incentive and grant programs for the preservation, rehabilitation, and creation of attainable housing.
- 3.G **Displacement Strategy.** Implement the recommendations of the Downtown Affordable Housing Assessment and Anti-displacement Strategy.

Goal 4 Expand Downtown employment opportunities.

Policies

- 4.A **New Office Development.** Target new office uses to expand the assortment of higher wage employment opportunities and businesses that can benefit from a central urban location.
- 4.B **Strategic Locations.** Integrate office and other “non-active” uses on second floors and other strategic locations that do not interrupt “active” pedestrian frontages.
- 4.C **Maker Use and Sales.** Allow makers, artisans, and custom manufacturing uses to make and sell products in the same space.
- 4.D **Emerging Businesses.** Encourage the provision of space for small, new, emerging, and innovative businesses and implement business assistance programs, such as a business ombudsman program, upper floor renovation program, and storefront redesign program.



Retail business in Downtown Vacaville (Source: City of Vacaville)

**Goal 5** Improve connectivity in and around Downtown to offer desirable choices for all travel modes.

**Policies**

- 5.A **Pedestrian Preference.** Incorporate design standards and public improvements that give priority to the pedestrian and bicycle over the automobile and promote public health.
- 5.B **Gap Improvements.** Fill gaps in the existing pedestrian and bicycle network, both within and connecting to Downtown, including completion of the Class I path along Ulatis Creek or within Andrews Park.
- 5.C **Complete Streets.** Apply Complete Streets principles in the planning, design, operation, and maintenance of roadways to enable safe and comfortable access for all users.
- 5.D **CreekWalk.** Extend the CreekWalk to enhance its connectivity, and integrate additional amenities and lighting to make it a more desirable and safe location to walk, jog, and cycle.
- 5.E **Intersection Improvements.** Improve traffic flows and pedestrian/bicycle accessibility at key intersections, particularly along Mason Street and East Monte Vista Avenue.
- 5.F **Linkages.** Improve the design, function, and flow of key vehicular and pedestrian linkages that function as important feeders into Downtown such as Davis Street, Merchant Street, Mason Street, and East Monte Vista Avenue.
- 5.G **Transit Use.** Expand transit use and connectivity to the Downtown Transit Plaza to enhance accessibility for residents of all ages and abilities.

- 5.H **Emerging Mobility Options.** Provide for emerging mobility options such as rides-for-hire services, bike and scooter share, e-mobility hubs, zero-emissions vehicles, and autonomous vehicles.
- 5.I **Connectivity Plan.** Implement the recommendations of the Downtown Connectivity and Streetscape Design Plan (adopted in February 2020).



*Sidewalk off Main Street in Downtown Vacaville (Source: ESA)*



Goal 6 Manage parking resources in Downtown to promote a “park-once-and-walk” environment.

### Policies

- 6.A **Park Once Setting.** Encourage a setting where employees and customers can park in one location and visit multiple Downtown destinations via high-quality and well-lit pedestrian connections.
- 6.B **Parking Management.** Actively manage the supply of on-street and off-street parking to increase parking availability and improve customer awareness.
- 6.C **Parking Distribution.** Distribute adequate, convenient, and accessible public parking lots at strategic locations throughout Downtown based on quantified need.
- 6.D **Curbside Management.** Balance on-street parking with other curbside mobility and business service needs.
- 6.E **Directional Signage.** Provide comprehensive directional signage for public and private parking facilities in Downtown.
- 6.F **Bicycle Parking.** Require ample bicycle parking facilities.
- 6.G **Parking Strategy.** Implement the recommendations of the Downtown Specific Plan Parking Analysis and Strategy.

Goal 7 Create an attractive built environment to enhance Downtown’s brand.

### Policies

- 7.A **Public Realm.** Install new and improved amenities such as benches, street trees, greenery, lighting, and parklets to enhance Downtown’s walkable character and aesthetics.
- 7.B **Wayfinding.** Prioritize wayfinding to and within Downtown to improve visibility, consumer awareness, and sense of arrival.
- 7.C **Active Façades.** Ensure that buildings have active ground-floor façades (portions of buildings facing the street/sidewalk) that incorporate high levels of transparency, entries, and pedestrian amenities that entice patrons and increase activity within the Downtown.
- 7.D **Historic Preservation.** Preserve, enhance, and adapt architecturally, historically, and culturally significant buildings and resources as connections to Vacaville’s identity.
- 7.E **Public Art.** Promote public art at prominent locations that contribute to Downtown’s brand such as gateways, plazas, Town Square, and the CreekWalk.
- 7.F **Ulatis Creek.** Better leverage Ulatis Creek as a scenic amenity to further activate adjacent uses and outdoor spaces.
- 7.G **Davis Street Entry.** Activate the Davis Street corridor as a “grand” entry to the Downtown core.
- 7.H **Renovation.** Encourage the renovation of existing suburban commercial centers along Davis Street, Mason Street, and East Monte Vista Avenue to reduce the visual prominence of parking lots and make the centers more pedestrian friendly.



Building along Main Street in Downtown Vacaville (Source: ESA)

## Goal 8 Support a sustainable, resilient, and equitable Downtown.

### Policies

- 8.A **Sustainable Design.** Promote sustainability in building and landscaping design, construction, and renovation such as greywater recycling, green roofs, alternative paving, sustainable building materials, and net-zero energy.
- 8.B **Green Infrastructure.** Integrate green infrastructure, enhanced tree canopies, and urban greenery into public improvement designs and retrofit projects.
- 8.C **Climate Change Resilience.** Consider climate readiness and resilience in new development and renovations by encouraging design features that buffer storms, mitigate urban heat islands, and conserve water.
- 8.D **Universal Design.** Incorporate universal design principles into private development and public improvements to encourage use by people of all ages and abilities.
- 8.E **Healthy Foods.** Increase access to healthy foods by supporting neighborhood-oriented, specific sources such as farmers' markets, local outlets, and community gardens.
- 8.F **Environmental Justice.** Consider environmental justice issues for a diverse array of stakeholders and any potential health impacts on land use and development approval decisions, as they relate to such stakeholders and community members who may disproportionately experience the impacts of limited resources, accessibility, or environmental burdens.



*Special event in Downtown Vacaville (Source: City of Vacaville)*

- 8.G **Vulnerable Populations.** Prioritize investments and projects that significantly address the social and economic needs of economically vulnerable populations.
- 8.H **Diverse Engagement.** Provide for the engagement of diverse stakeholders, such as business owners, neighborhood associations, students, and local service providers, in the planning and development decision-making process.
- 8.I **Tribal Coordination.** Closely coordinate with California Native American tribes with ancestral lands within the purview of the DTSP to aid in the protection of tribal cultural resources.

**Goal 9** Increase the perception of personal safety in Downtown to support activity and investment.

**Policies**

- 9.A **Upgraded Lighting.** Provide higher levels of uniform lighting and natural surveillance throughout Downtown to increase safety and nighttime activity.
- 9.B **Crime Prevention through Environmental Design.** Integrate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies and applications to enhance crime prevention.
- 9.C **Homelessness.** Continue to work with the City’s Community Response Unit and Solano County Health and Human Services Department to proactively address homelessness and illegal camping.
- 9.D **Code Enforcement and Maintenance.** Deliver consistent code enforcement and regular maintenance of public spaces to align with current code enforcement practices or any known safety issues.



*Encourage a family friendly and safe Downtown environment for visitors and residents (Source: City of Vacaville)*

Goal 10 Prioritize planning, improvements, and actions that advance the vitality of Downtown.

Policies

- 10.A **Downtown Core.** Concentrate initial planning efforts, improvements, and investments on the Downtown core as a catalyst for the remainder of Downtown.
- 10.B **Capital Improvements.** Prioritize capital improvements that provide for “quick wins” and the greatest return on investment toward achieving an active Downtown.
- 10.C **Streamlining.** Remove barriers and streamline the approval of development prototypes and other projects that are consistent with and implement this specific plan.
- 10.D **Utilities.** Ensure that adequate public utilities and infrastructure are programmed in accordance with the DTSP’s water, sewer, and drainage impact evaluations.
- 10.E **Funding.** Secure adequate funding sources to implement Downtown improvements, programs, and maintenance in accordance with the DTSP’s financing strategy.
- 10.F **Downtown Brand.** Collaborate with local businesses, property owners, the Downtown Vacaville Business Improvement District, and other champions to comprehensively promote the Downtown Vacaville brand.

