City of Thousand Oaks
DOWNTOWN CORE
MASTER PLAN
Endorsed by City Council on June 5, 2018
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The Downtown Core Master Plan establishes a realistic and forward-thinking vision for creating a downtown in the City of Thousand Oaks. The 68-acre planning area (Downtown Core) is located along Thousand Oaks Boulevard, and is generally bounded by Highway 101, South Conejo School Road, and Erbes Road. The Downtown Core has many existing assets that can contribute to its success. These include a large amount of publicly-owned land, a significant civic anchor in the Civic Arts Plaza, a vibrant shopping center, great visibility from Highway 101, high traffic volumes along Thousand Oaks Boulevard that support retail, a City-owned parking structure, and vacant and underutilized land for new development. Despite these assets, the Downtown Core also faces some challenges that stand in the way of its transformation into a thriving downtown. These challenges include lack of connectivity between various existing uses, high traffic volumes and speeds on Thousand Oaks Boulevard, and the lack of a coherent approach to future development. The primary goal of this Master Plan is to present a viable, long-term vision for the Downtown Core that leverages existing assets, overcomes challenges, and lays out achievable actions to guide and catalyze public and private investment.
Aerial view of the Downtown Core Master Plan area
In early 2017, City Council established an Ad Hoc Downtown Revitalization Committee (Ad Hoc Committee) to review issues related to the Downtown Core. The Ad Hoc Committee consists of Mayor Andrew D. Fox and Councilmember Al Adam. In Summer 2017, the City Council endorsed the Ad Hoc Committee recommendation to solicit proposals for a Master Plan for the Downtown Core, with the directive that the Master Plan formulate a vision for the Downtown Core and identify the initiatives the City should pursue to create an active, pedestrian friendly area. In September 2017, the City retained a multi-disciplinary team of consultants with expertise in planning, urban design, architecture, transportation, and economics. The consultant team, led by Raimi + Associates, performed background analysis, met with stakeholders, conducted site tours of other successful downtown districts in Southern California, brainstormed alternatives, and identified desirable elements with the Ad Hoc Committee and stakeholders that could be incorporated into the Downtown Core Master Plan.

As a result of this intensive design and planning effort, the consultant team identified a comprehensive vision for the Downtown Core, and enumerated four primary actions that must occur in order to have a successful downtown in Thousand Oaks. The team also identified additional steps to support the vision. On direction from the City Council, these recommendations were then presented over a two-month period at various community events to gather input from interested residents. The recommendations and community input are summarized in this Master Plan document. It should be noted that the Master Plan recommendations will require further analysis and design refinements before being implemented.

This chapter includes a summary of existing conditions and community input received during the Master Plan development. The following chapters provide the Vision for a downtown in Thousand Oaks (Chapter 2); the primary and supporting actions that need to be undertaken to make a downtown a reality and detailed design criteria for each plan element (Chapter 3 and 4); and summary of key implementation steps (Chapter 5).
Existing Setting

Existing Land Uses

The Downtown Core Master Plan area is located on both sides of Thousand Oaks Boulevard, generally between Erbes Road and Conejo School Road. The 68-acre area includes about 56 acres of real property (the rest is public right-of-way), almost half of which are owned by the City of Thousand Oaks. Highway 101 forms the project boundary to the south. The main anchors in the area include the Civic Arts Plaza with City Hall and theatres, Gardens of the World, and The Lakes shopping center. Other uses in the area include retail, office, single family residential, a small museum, as well as an assisted living facility. These key destinations, land uses and important physical features are shown in Figure 1 and accompanying photos on the following page.

The City owns 27.5 acres, a significant portion of the Plan area, located almost entirely on the south side of Thousand Oaks Boulevard. The dominant land uses are the Civic Arts Plaza complex (1 and 2) with City Hall, 1800-seat Kavli Theatre, 450-seat Scherr Forum Theatre/City Council chambers, associated parking garage (3) and The Lakes shopping center (4) that contains 50,000 square feet of retail and restaurants. These uses attract employees, customers and event audiences and provide an immediate clientele for additional uses in the area.

Considerable expanses of the city-owned parcels are vacant or under-utilized, such as the surface parking lot behind The Lakes shopping center (5) and the Westside Property (6). The redevelopment of some of these properties, especially the Westside Property, can play a catalytic role in the creation of a successful downtown in Thousand Oaks.

The Gardens of the World (7) provides a specialized attraction as an open space and botanical garden that could become a valuable part of the new downtown, adding to diversity of uses and customers. Expanded hours and programming at this venue can bring synergy to Downtown activities.

Urban Form and Character

Buildings within the area are generally set back from the street frontage and are primarily accessed by automobile. The Civic Arts Plaza, designed in a modern and postmodern architectural style, is located in a garden-like

![Figure 1: Key Elements in the Downtown Core](image)
setting (8) not oriented to the Boulevard. The major vehicular access to the Civic Arts Plaza is along Dallas Drive adjacent to the parking structure. Pedestrian entrances are not apparent, clearly visible or well-signed. Similarly, The Lakes commercial development is sited behind large ponds with pedestrian access primarily from the rear of the site. Most of the other commercial/retail uses along the street are in typical strip center format with parking in the front (9 and 10). Figure 2 indicates the spread-out nature of the buildings in the area with large gaps in the street wall/building frontages along Thousand Oaks Boulevard.

**Thousand Oaks Boulevard**

The Downtown Core is bisected by Thousand Oaks Boulevard (11), which has a 100-foot right-of-way, four lanes of traffic, turn lanes, curbside parking and a street median in the section east of Dallas Drive. The street functions, in essence, as a barrier between the north and south sides of the area. In addition, in this section, Thousand Oaks Boulevard has an inconsistent pattern of street trees and limited amenities, the sidewalks are generally 10 feet wide, which is narrow for the anticipated higher level of pedestrian activity, and the median is too narrow to provide a refuge for pedestrians who are crossing the street. The high number of vehicles and the perceived high-speed traffic along Thousand Oaks Boulevard creates a physical and psychological barrier between the north and south sides of the street for visitors, customers, pedestrians, and bicyclists alike. The narrow sidewalks, median, inconsistent pattern of street trees, and lack of pedestrian amenities along the Thousand Oaks Boulevard frontage all provide an opportunity for improving the pedestrian environment.

**Storm Channel Easement**

An important element in the area is an underground storm drain, a 12-foot by 9-foot reinforced concrete box channel, which runs south of Thousand Oaks Boulevard at varying distances from the street right-of-way. All storm drains along Thousand Oaks Boulevard drain to this underground storm channel. A 30-foot wide surface easement (13) which limits above-ground structures has been established by the Ventura County Watershed Protection District. This constraint could be turned into a unique design feature in the Downtown Core.

**Figure 2: Existing Building Footprints**

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City of Thousand Oaks
Regulatory Setting

Two Specific Plans – the 1989 Civic Arts Plaza Specific Plan (SP11) and the 2011 Thousand Oaks Boulevard Specific Plan (SP20) – provide regulatory guidance for properties within the Master Plan area. The boundaries are indicated in Figure 3.

The Civic Arts Plaza Specific Plan was prepared for the City-owned properties and includes the Kavli Theatre, Scherr Forum, City Hall and the parking garage, the park area along Thousand Oaks Boulevard, The Lakes commercial and retail development, and a transitional commercial area towards the west.

The Thousand Oaks Boulevard Specific Plan is the regulatory document for most properties along the 3-mile length of Thousand Oaks Boulevard within the City of Thousand Oaks, as shown in Figure 3. The Specific Plan was adopted to provide regulations and guidelines for new development on the Boulevard to provide more street-oriented development with wider sidewalks and allowances for mixed-use residential.

The private sector will realize the vision of this Specific Plan as the market and site conditions determine. For example, a mixed-use project with 36 residential units and approximately 5,000 square feet of retail at the former Lupe’s Mexican Restaurant site (12) is currently under construction.

This Master Plan recommendations are generally consistent with the two Specific Plans. However, some modifications to SP20 may be necessary to make this Master Plan a reality, as outlined in Chapter 4 (page 50).
Community Engagement

Community involvement was critical to understand how residents, local business and property owners, visitors, and community organizations view the Downtown Core and how they envision the area evolving in the future. Therefore, a key component of the Master Plan process was targeted community outreach to ensure public consensus for the Master Plan’s vision and goals. Key goals of the involvement efforts were:

- Alignment of the Master Plan with changes in community needs and demographics.
- Meaningful education regarding plan goals.
- Reaching and engaging groups in the community that are typically less involved (youth, working professionals, etc.).
- Engaging and empowering relationship building with diverse community stakeholders.
- Close coordination with community organizations, business owners, public institutions and other relevant public or private agencies.

During the planning process, the City engaged hundreds of community members in a variety of venues and formats. The team presented the comprehensive vision for the Downtown Core and the primary actions and supporting steps necessary for a successful downtown in Thousand Oaks to the community at pop-up workshops, organized focus group meetings, an Open House and via online interactive tools. These engagement activities allowed numerous opportunities for the public to provide feedback on the components of the design and events programming recommendations.

These events and activities included:

**Stakeholder Interviews**

Interviews with local stakeholders were conducted at the beginning of the design process. These stakeholders included local business and property owners, business association members, local private and public organizations, local institutions, Chamber of Commerce and local Realtors.

**City Council Ad Hoc Committee Meetings**

Throughout the process, the consultant team worked closely with City Staff and Ad Hoc Committee. All decisions regarding the goals and objectives vision and design for the Downtown Core were vetted through this committee.

**Site Tours**

Members of the consultant team led a tour of three successful downtown districts in Southern California, including Old Pasadena, Pasadena Playhouse District and Old Town Monrovia. The purpose of the tours was to experience firsthand what makes these areas successful and identify the common elements that were translatable to a successful downtown in Thousand Oaks.

**Team Charrette**

Members of the consultant team, city staff, Ad Hoc Committee Members and stakeholders met over three days to discuss the overall design of the Downtown Core. This meeting was a collaboration between all parties and part of a larger iterative process for developing the preferred design for Downtown Core.

**Downtown Website**

The City created a project website providing current information, upcoming events and a link to the survey.

**Online Survey**

The *Envision Downtown* survey provided opportunities for the community-at-large to provide input on the overall goals and vision for downtown. Questions asked for input on specific design features as well as the overall concept of creating a downtown in Thousand Oaks. The survey was available for six weeks and almost 700 responses were recorded. Appendix A provides a summary of the survey results.

**Pop-Up Workshops**

The team conducted four pop-up workshops around the City to reach members of the public while they went about their normal routine. These events took place at the Oaks Mall Farmers Market (two events), the Thousand Oaks Library,
and the annual California Lutheran University Scandinavian Festival. Over 550 members of the public stopped by the workshop booths to get information about the Master Plan.

Focus Group Meetings
The team conducted three focus group meetings as a part of the community outreach process. One meeting was held at the Thousand Oaks Senior Center and was aimed at getting input from senior citizens, another was held at the Thousand Oaks Teen Center and targeted youth, and the last meeting was held at the Sports Academy in Newbury Park and focused on professionals living or working in Thousand Oaks. Over 60 seniors, teens and young professionals provided feedback at these meetings.

Open House
The City hosted an open house in late April 2018 to present the final vision and design for the Downtown Core. The meeting included results from the online survey, and more specific information about the primary and supporting actions. Over 30 members of the community visited the Open House to learn more and provide additional feedback.

City Endorsement
An initial overview of the vision and goals for downtown was presented and accepted by the City Council in March 2018. The Traffic and Transportation Advisory Commission reviewed the proposed design recommendations for Thousand Oaks Boulevard in April 2018. The Cultural Arts Commission reviewed the proposed event programming and Civic Arts Plaza concepts in May 2018. The Planning Commission reviewed the draft Master Plan and a summary of the community feedback in May 2018. The City Council reviewed the Master Plan, feedback from each commission and endorsed the Master Plan in June 2018.
Community Feedback

Community feedback received at the various community events on most aspects of the Master Plan was overwhelmingly positive. One of the most-heard comments from the stakeholders and the community was that the City of Thousand Oaks currently lacks an active and identifiable downtown – a destination for Thousand Oaks residents and visitors – a place where residents can meet, shop, and engage in civic and entertainment activities. Most supported the overall vision to create a pedestrian-oriented retail and entertainment environment in the Downtown Core.

Additional aspects of the community feedback included strong support for making the area more pedestrian-friendly with wider sidewalks and shade trees, cafes and restaurants with outdoor seating integrated with shopping, and a focus on additional events related to music and the arts. The need for more and convenient parking was identified as a critical component of success and community acceptability. The issue of increased traffic in the Downtown Core and in the surrounding neighborhoods was a recurrent concern.

Other issues that were raised related to the provision of bicycle infrastructure and facilities, affordability of retail stores in the area, areas for children to play, water elements, mixed use and housing developments, affordable housing, and possible public transportation options such as a citywide trolley system. These comments are summarized in Appendix B.
The Master Plan process was initiated due to a widespread recognition that the City of Thousand Oaks currently lacks an active and identifiable downtown – a destination for Thousand Oaks residents and visitors – a place where residents can meet, shop, and engage in civic and entertainment activities in a public setting. The Downtown Core Master Plan, therefore, aims at articulating a realistic vision for the creation of a downtown within the City.

This chapter describes the typical characteristics of a successful downtown, the established goals and vision for the Downtown Core, a framework for future planning and investment in the Downtown Core and the actions needed to make it happen.
What is a Downtown?

A downtown is about more than just the physical environment or the range of businesses that operate there. It is about the interaction of building design, public spaces, transportation, and mix of uses that brings people together and provides reasons to return over and over again.

As a part of the design process, the consultant team identified and studied several successful downtown districts that are similar in size to a diverse Downtown Core. While all downtowns are different, these areas have certain common characteristics that contribute to their success. The objective of this research was to consider the elements that made these areas vibrant, attractive and successful, and establish which characteristics were appropriate for Thousand Oaks.

In general, successful downtowns:
- contain an intensity and diversity of uses
- have a unique character and draw
- appeal to people of all ages
- provide an attractive environment for pedestrians
- offer sufficient and convenient parking
- have a variety of public spaces for visitors to enjoy
- are effectively marketed

The adjacent diagram illustrates the relationship between the amount of time (and hence money) spent in a downtown with the presence of a diversity of uses, especially cultural and entertainment anchors. Cultural destinations such as live theaters, music halls, movie theaters, entertainment venues, museums, and events related to such uses form the major draw for visitors. Cafes and bars provide additional opportunities for these patrons to stay and enjoy a casual drink or beverage before or after attending an event. Some of these patrons may stay longer and dine at a sit-down restaurant. The entertainment and restaurant experience is complemented by opportunities for discretionary retail. The retail uses are curated to enhance the experience of the place instead of simply fulfilling a shopping need.
Goals for a Successful Downtown in Thousand Oaks

The Master Plan envisions a vibrant pedestrian-oriented retail and entertainment environment in the Downtown Core that contributes towards a center of activity not only for the City of Thousand Oaks, but for the entire Conejo Valley region. The Downtown Core is uniquely positioned to build upon existing attractions such as the Civic Arts Plaza with its two theatres and City Hall and to leverage city-owned properties to bring additional desirable uses to the area. One of the main goals is to create connections between these somewhat isolated uses and to take advantage of the multitude of visitors, residents and employees in the area. In addition, the Downtown Core should:

- be the “place to go” in the City of Thousand Oaks
- offer diverse shopping and restaurant options
- make more entertainment and nightlife choices available
- contain a variety of uses and gathering places that appeal to people of all ages
- provide a more attractive and comfortable environment for pedestrians
- require active pedestrian-oriented uses on the ground floor along the street
- contain wide sidewalks to allow for outdoor retail/seating
- offer sufficient and convenient district parking to allow visitors to “park once” to visit multiple businesses
- maintain general traffic capacity
- provide for an ease of ingress/egress
- have residential uses within or in close proximity
- be connected with other activity centers in Thousand Oaks
Downtown will be a unique destination for people of all ages from around the Conejo Valley to gather and enjoy diverse shops, restaurants, entertainment, and cultural offerings in an active, attractive, pedestrian-friendly setting. The downtown will become the singular location where cultural, citywide and public events happening in the City are expected to take place. Thousand Oaks Boulevard within the Downtown Core will become a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented street with active retail and dining uses at the street level. Existing and future uses in the downtown will be connected, allowing for visitors to experience a diverse and engaging mix of uses, amenities and destinations along the Boulevard.
Lively downtown environment located on State Street, Santa Barbara
Figure 4: Downtown Framework Map
Downtown Framework

Figure 4 illustrates and describes the major framework elements of a successful and thriving downtown in Thousand Oaks. These framework elements implement the vision for downtown and are the basis for the recommendations of the Master Plan as described in the following chapters.

Downtown Framework Legend

1. Thousand Oaks Boulevard is reconceptualized as a pedestrian-friendly street with street amenities and landscaping.

2. A Paseo, created along the no-build drainage easement, is one of the major east-west pedestrian connections. Segments of the Paseo are lined with buildings, while other segments are paved pathways.

3. A Town Square in front of the Civic Arts Plaza is designed for hosting expanded cultural and event programming.

4. The Civic Arts Plaza frontage is redesigned to accommodate a new entry to City Hall and physically connect the Theatre Plaza level to the Town Square and Thousand Oaks Boulevard.

5. Gateways and wayfinding signage mark the arrival into the Downtown.

6. Thousand Oaks Boulevard Specific Plan (SP20) is implemented to create new active, pedestrian-oriented commercial uses located close to the sidewalk.

7. The Westside Property is developed to provide a retail, restaurant and entertainment destination.

Successful downtowns have active streets as well as periodic events that attract visitors.
Action Steps

There are four primary actions needed to make a downtown in Thousand Oaks a reality. All of these actions are intended to create a place for people to be in and use and programming to bring (and keep) them there. In addition, all four of the actions involve City-owned land and thus can be initiated by the City. These four primary actions are:

1. Redesign the Civic Arts Plaza frontage to be more active and connected.
2. Expand arts, cultural and entertainment programming.
3. Create a retail and entertainment destination on the City-owned Westside Property.
4. Improve walkability and the pedestrian environment along Thousand Oaks Boulevard.

In addition to the primary actions, there are a number of supporting activities that will help enhance the Downtown Core. The activities are:

- Create additional district parking (“Park Once”) to support retail and events. This concept allows visitors to drive to the area, “park once,” and then walk to multiple uses and activities without having to move their vehicles. Parking lots are for the entire downtown and not designated for individual uses.
- Build supporting uses on The Lakes parking lot. The parking lot behind The Lakes shopping center provides a great opportunity to add new uses, such as office, innovation hubs, and hotels to the area.
- Add active, pedestrian-oriented ground floor uses such as retail and restaurants along Thousand Oaks Boulevard. New developments implement the existing Thousand Oaks Boulevard Specific Plan and create a desired continuous building wall along the street.
- Add a greater diversity of cultural activities and spaces. This is facilitated with the redesign of the Civic Arts Plaza and could also be located elsewhere along the Boulevard.

All of these activities support the overall direction of the Downtown Core Master Plan. The following chapters describe the four major actions, supporting activities as well as implementation steps needed to make these happen.
As described in the previous chapter, the Downtown Core’s transformation will focus on four primary actions:

1. Redesigning the Civic Arts Plaza to be more active and connected.
2. Expanding arts, cultural and entertainment programming.
3. Creating a retail and entertainment destination on City-owned Westside Property.
4. Improving walkability and the pedestrian environment on Thousand Oaks Boulevard.

These actions are all within the City’s control and are critical to jump starting the success of downtown. This chapter describes recommendations, vision, design elements and implementation steps for each of the four primary actions.
Town Square at the Civic Arts Plaza

One of the primary actions is to redesign the frontage of the Civic Arts Plaza campus and the space in front of it (see Figure 5). The Civic Arts Plaza theatres, City Hall and the parking garage are tremendous assets for the community and are extremely important building blocks for a downtown. Unfortunately, as previously described, the current design is physically and visually detached from adjacent uses and from Thousand Oaks Boulevard. While at the Theatre Plaza level, visitors enjoy spectacular views of the mountains to the north; they are mostly unaware of the presence of Thousand Oaks Boulevard and the adjacent uses such as The Lakes shopping center. As a result, people drive to the garage, visit the theatres or City Hall, and then leave. The Master Plan’s goal is to make the Civic Arts Plaza both better connected to its surroundings as well as expand its potential as an outdoor destination.

The space in front of the Civic Arts Plaza today mostly serves as a foreground to the Civic Arts Plaza building; it has lawn areas with mature trees. Over 65% of the respondents to the community survey supported the notion of better utilization of this space for community and civic purposes. (See Appendix A for complete survey results). The survey results also indicated that the community wants to see a balance of landscaped areas with large trees and paved areas for a variety of events.

As such, the Downtown Core Master Plan recommends that:

- The space in front of the Civic Arts Plaza should be redesigned to become a “town square” – a meeting and gathering place for community events. The Town Square should continue to have “passive” and green areas for repose and reflection.
- The Town Square should be designed such that large-scale community-wide events and celebrations could continue into the Thousand Oaks Boulevard right-of-way for major community events.
- The Civic Arts Plaza building and City Hall should be redesigned for improved access and transparency from the façade facing Thousand Oaks Boulevard.
- Flexible and varied performance spaces and areas for activities should be created.
- Waterplay fountains, public art and other features should be added to help activate the Town Square.
- The Civic Arts Plaza redesign should ensure that existing mature oak trees are protected and retained.

Figure 5: Location of the Civic Arts Plaza and Town Square
Vision for Town Square

The Civic Arts Plaza building and the space in front of it will be redesigned to provide a “front door” to City Hall and create a Town Square - a central event and gathering space for Thousand Oaks residents. The Town Square will retain existing mature trees, provide flexible performance and active public space, incorporate water elements, as well as include quiet, contemplative spaces that are an amenity for all to enjoy. Visual and physical connections from the Kavli Theatre Plaza level to the Town Square and Thousand Oaks Boulevard level will be established to encourage theatre patrons to stay and experience downtown.
Design Elements of Town Square

The following design elements should be an integral part of a Town Square:

**Landscape Elements**
- Existing significant trees are preserved.
- Lawn areas and areas for quiet reflection and passive activities are retained or added.

**Event Spaces**
- Paved areas in Town Square are located and designed to accommodate a variety of events – from small scale art installations, to weekly farmers markets or food truck events, to community-scaled events such as Annual Chili Cook-Off, etc.
- The upgraded paving design extends across Thousand Oaks Boulevard (between Dallas Drive and The Lakes Drive) to provide a seamless expanse for community-wide events to occur. Retractable bollards located along the edge of the Thousand Oaks Boulevard right-of-way are lowered for creating a large event space, which extends across the street. This segment of Thousand Oaks Boulevard is closed off for traffic at Dallas Drive and The Lakes Drive for these occasional but important community events. Access to parking areas is maintained along these two streets.
- A small outdoor amphitheater provides space for small-scale performances such as poetry readings and musical performances.

**Town Square Amenities**
- Permanent (or temporary) kiosks offer amenities to visitors – coffee, snacks, information, etc.
- Public art installations, both existing and new, are a part of the Town Square.
- A freestanding pavilion or community room hosts temporary art installations, cultural performances, and other community events within Town Square. The Master Plan anticipates that the pavilion size could range between 2,000-4,000 square feet with the exact size to be determined based on final programming.
- Water fountains, both visual and play-oriented, provide a respite and visual interest.

*Town square amenities should include public art, interactive water features and kiosks*
**Paseo**
- The Paseo has a physical manifestation in the paving design as it connects to the Westside Property to the west and The Lakes shopping center to the east.

**Civic Arts Plaza Building Redesign**
- City Hall is reconfigured to have a major entrance facing Thousand Oaks Boulevard. Pedestrian pathways connect this new City Hall entrance to the parking structure and the short-term parking lot located to the west.
- A grand staircase element connects the Theatre level terrace with the street level public space.

**Event Infrastructure**
- Utility hookups for utilities such as electricity and water are available at appropriate locations.
- Permanent or temporary public restrooms are easily accessible.
- District parking is close and available for visitors.

Figure 6 illustrates a conceptual design plan that incorporates the above described elements. This diagram should serve as the starting point for further design efforts.
Figure 6: Town Square Concept Design
Next Steps

The Master Plan recommends that the City of Thousand Oaks engage the services of a highly qualified design firm to further explore the redesign of the Civic Arts Plaza frontage and creation of a Town Square. The design should be led by an architect and include urban design, landscape architecture, and fountain design expertise. As a part of the design process, it is recommended that the Thousand Oaks community be involved in providing additional input on the design, selection of amenities and other design features, and final aesthetics for the Town Square.

City Hall redesign should be coordinated with the current ongoing design effort to renovate the interior and repurpose some of the space for other uses.
Cultural Activities and Events in Downtown

The next important component of the Master Plan is programmatic – an expansion of events and activities that already exist in this area. Today, the Civic Arts Plaza frontage (Figure 7) is used for occasional civic and community events. The Lakes shopping center provides frequent activities and events in the area around the lakes fronting Thousand Oaks Boulevard. The Gardens of the World also holds periodic events throughout the year. With opportunities for activities and events in a newly designed Town Square, it is imperative that these spaces be programmed to maximize the frequency and variety of events.

The goal of the Master Plan is to make downtown the place where City events take place. When the public hears about an event happening in the City, the assumption should be that the event is in downtown. To achieve this, there should be a layering of events, both large and small, throughout the year. These events should include but not be limited to:

- Weekly farmers markets
- Weekly food truck events
- Summer movie nights
- Theatrical performances
- Outdoor concerts and plays
- Music and food/beer/wine festivals
- Art shows
- Other citywide events such as the Chili Cook-Off and Classic Car Show

Regional and international events such as start or finish of the Amgen Bicycle Tour of California among others.

Over 60% of the community survey respondents supported the vision of making the downtown the premier meeting and event destination in the region. The survey results also indicated that the community wants to see a variety of events in the Town Square including outdoor concerts and plays, farmers markets, art fairs, food truck events, etc. (See Appendix A for complete survey results).

These events could generally occur in designated areas of the Town Square such as the amphitheater, paseo, or the “great room” as illustrated in Figure 6. In the case of citywide or regional events, Thousand Oaks Boulevard could be temporarily closed off to allow for an expanded area for the largest of events.
The downtown in Thousand Oaks will be a regional hub for culture, arts, and events that draws visitors from around Thousand Oaks and the wider Conejo Valley, offering numerous events and programming for participants of all ages, interests, and abilities.
Elements of Activity and Event Programming

To achieve the goal of an actively programmed and utilized Town Square, a diversity of types and sizes of spaces should be created as part of the Civic Arts Plaza redesign as described in the previous section. Besides providing locations for events, most cities with successful downtowns also provide material and institutional support for attracting, organizing and maintaining the kind of event programming necessary to make an area successful. Today, the City’s Cultural Affairs Department and Conejo Regional Park District (CRPD) are responsible for organizing a wide variety of community and cultural events in the City. The Master Plan recommends continued City support and organization. In addition, the following items should be pursued to support successful activity and events programming:

City Permitting Support

- A single point of contact available for event organizers and vendors looking to arrange an event in the Town Square.
- Various City departments work with event organizers and vendors to expedite City event permits.
- City considers permit fee reductions/waivers in order to attract events to the area.
- City works with the County Health Department to expedite permits for special events with alcohol and food sales on City property.

Coordination with Thousand Oaks Boulevard Association (TOBA)

- City coordinates with TOBA to bring complementary activities and programming to the Downtown Core.

Active Recruitment

- City and/or TOBA actively partners with outside groups for attracting events.
- City provide assistance in marketing events.

Coordination with The Lakes shopping center

- City and/or TOBA coordinates with The Lakes shopping center to expand complementary activities and programming at The Lakes.

Coordination with Gardens of the World

- City and/or TOBA to work with The Gardens of the World on expanding activities and hours open to the public.

Citywide events bring visitors and activity and at the same time, build civic pride and community
The Master Plan recommends that the City of Thousand Oaks work on expanding the range of events and activities that occur in the Town Square and Civic Arts Plaza by actively recruiting events to the area. In order to make the Downtown Core the meeting and event space of the region, the City should task appropriate City entities to develop more intensive programming for the open spaces at Civic Arts Plaza and for downtown in general. In the absence of internal staff resources, the City could issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for an outside organization to take on the responsibility.

The City should initiate or continue coordination with The Lakes Shopping Center operator, TOBA and The Gardens of the World to bring additional events and activities to downtown.
City-Owned Westside Property

The third primary action that the City should undertake is to leverage the City-owned, 3-acre property located to the west of Dallas Drive (see Figure 8). This property is a tremendous asset in the City’s efforts to create a successful downtown. City ownership of this parcel allows the City to direct the type of development and the activities that occur on this site to be supportive of the vision for the Downtown Core. The uses on this property should support the civic, cultural and arts activities in the Civic Arts Plaza as well as the larger downtown.

The Master Plan envisions a one-to-two story retail, restaurant and entertainment complex with the focus of development along the Paseo. In the community survey (see Appendix A), the community expressed a strong desire to see coffee shops, cafes, restaurants, breweries or pubs, wine bars and tasting rooms, as well as specialty food stores. Other suggested entertainment uses include a comedy club or music venue.

The Master Plan recommends that development on this site accomplish the following key features:

- Provide purpose-built entertainment, restaurant and retail space along the Paseo segment.
- Consider including a boutique hotel in the development.
- Connect along Paseo to the Civic Arts Plaza.
- Build district parking to support other uses in Downtown.

Development of the Westside Property is critical for the success of the Downtown Core.
Vision for Westside Property

This City-owned Westside Property (located to the west of Dallas Drive) will be designed to provide a retail, restaurant and entertainment space, with a meandering outdoor paseo that provides opportunities for outdoor dining, public art and beautiful landscaping. Additional potential uses include a small, high-quality boutique hotel, and district parking.
Design Elements for the Westside Property

The following important elements should be incorporated in the design of the Westside Property:

Site Organization
- The design is organized along a pedestrian paseo, that follows the 30-foot drainage easement described in earlier sections.
- The Paseo continues physically and visually east to the Town Square across Dallas Drive as shown in Figure 9.
- The project design also takes into account potential connections to future developments on the west.
- The Paseo has landscaping, public amenities and public art.
- Topography on the site allows a parking garage in the rear of the site to be concealed from view from Thousand Oaks Boulevard.

Site Uses
- Retail, restaurant, and entertainment uses create the desirable activity and vibrancy.
- A boutique hotel with 35-50 rooms is incorporated in the design with the lobby and public spaces located on the first floor and the rooms on the upper floors.
- Office uses are placed on upper floors.
- Art galleries and other cultural uses are also potential tenants on this site.

Figure 9: Westside Property Concept Diagram Context

The Paseo becomes the organizing feature for development on the Westside Property
Vehicular Access and Parking

- A parking garage is tucked in the back of the site to provide parking for the Westside development as well as additional district parking for other downtown uses.
- Access to the parking garage is from Dallas Drive (taking advantage of the topography) and from a new street along the western end of the City parcel that connects to Oakwood Drive. The parking garage provides additional parking and the new street serves as a safety valve for traffic on event nights at the Civic Arts Plaza.
- Hotel access and loading is also off of this new street, thereby limiting impacts on Dallas Drive.
- The parking garage roof is a potential solar “garden” (usable and landscaped roof space).

Figure 10 illustrates a conceptual design plan that incorporates the above described elements. This diagram should serve as the starting point for further design efforts.

Recommended uses on the Westside Property include restaurants, hotel, wine bars and supportive district parking
Figure 10: Westside Property Concept Design

SECOND FLOOR OFFICES
(E) LOT; NOT IN PROJECT
PASSAGE
PASEO
LINE OF DRAINAGE CHANNEL
HOTEL @ 35 “KEYS” 4-STORIES
HOTEL DROP-OFF
LOADING ENTRY
THOUSAND OAKS BOULEVARD
GROUND FLOOR RETAIL
STAIR TO SECOND FLOOR RETAIL
SECOND FLOOR RETAIL PASSAGE
THIRD FLOOR HOTEL TERRACE
SOLAR “GARDEN” OVER PARKING
EXISTING PARKING STRUCTURE
± 5’
± 20’

Section looking east
Next Steps

The Master Plan recommends that the City of Thousand Oaks prepare a program statement and issue a Developer Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the development of the Westside Property. The consultant team believes that an RFQ will attract a greater level of interest and a higher quality of developers who can be short-listed for a subsequent Request for Proposal (RFP) process. This type of two-step process will result a higher-quality and more tailored project that better meets the expectations of the City. Following the RFQ process, the City should issue a Developer RFP and negotiate development agreement(s) for the Westside Property site.
The fourth and final primary action that the City should undertake is to redesign Thousand Oaks Boulevard within the Downtown Core (Figure 11) to be more pedestrian-friendly, and supportive of the larger objectives of this project, including branding the area as a regional destination. Today, the street primarily functions as a traffic conduit through the City, and occasionally as an alternative to the commuters on Highway 101. Lane widths on Thousand Oaks Boulevard are as wide as those on Highway 101. As such, the street acts as a barrier between the north and south sides of the street and a detriment to the pedestrian environment along it. The street is lacking in pedestrian amenities with narrow sidewalks, intermittent shade trees, limited street furnishings, and lack of active uses that encourage and retain interest. Many parcels have parking between the building and the sidewalk, creating a poorly defined and inactive sidewalk character.

Streets of a scale and traffic volumes similar to Thousand Oaks Boulevard can be found in many successful districts. Examples include Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena, Ventura Boulevard in Woodland Hills and Santa Monica Boulevard in West Hollywood. What makes these areas successful is that there is ample sidewalk space for pedestrians, on-street parking buffers the passing traffic from the sidewalks, and active uses are located along the street. The City can take important steps to redesign Thousand Oaks Boulevard to support the vision of a walkable, pedestrian friendly destination.

Almost two-thirds of the survey respondents supported the vision of making Thousand Oaks Boulevard an attractive, pedestrian friendly environment in Downtown, while maintaining the street’s traffic functions (see Appendix A for complete survey results). Survey respondents also provided input on the street furniture palette selection and gateway design. Comments also included concerns regarding impacts of the proposed improvements on traffic and parking.
The following features are recommended for Thousand Oaks Boulevard, within the Downtown Core:

- Two traffic lanes should continue to be maintained in each direction in order to maintain the traffic capacity of the street.
- Sidewalks should be widened to a minimum of 15 feet to accommodate both more pedestrian activity and amenities.
- On-street parking should be retained (or provided) to ensure that there is street-front parking for businesses, additional district parking supply, and create a buffer between moving vehicles and pedestrians.
- Until bicycle usage increases significantly, bicycle connectivity to the citywide bicycle network should be provided with “sharrows” (bicycles share the outside traffic lane with cars).
- An interrelated palette of street trees, street furniture, street lighting, signage and landscaping should be provided to create a cohesive streetscape environment, which in turn is attractive to visitors and residents alike.
- A signage and wayfinding system and gateway features should uniquely identify Downtown Core within the 3-mile Thousand Oaks Boulevard corridor.
- The street design should provide flexibility to accommodate other street configurations within the curb-to-curb dimensions in response to projected future needs.

Streets with active uses, ample sidewalk space to accommodate pedestrian amenities create a desirable downtown environment
Downtown Thousand Oaks Boulevard Vision

Thousand Oaks Boulevard will be a pedestrian-friendly, active and attractive environment. It will feature 16-foot wide sidewalks and narrower vehicular travel lanes with adjacent active retail uses, opportunities for outdoor dining, tree-lined streets, and pedestrian amenities.
The following design elements should be incorporated in the redesign of Thousand Oaks Boulevard within the downtown segment:

**Street Configuration**

The recommended street section for Thousand Oaks Boulevard is illustrated in Figure 12. Its components are as follows:

**Number of traffic lanes** – The redesigned street has the same number of traffic lanes (two in each direction) as today. The traffic lanes are narrowed to help calm traffic, while maintaining overall capacity.

**Sidewalk widths** – Wider sidewalks (16’) provide additional usable space for pedestrians and outdoor dining.

**On-street parking** – Curbside parking provides convenient short-term parking close to businesses, while at the same time, serves as a buffer from the moving vehicles. Curb management policies should be considered to accommodate emerging mobility trends such as ride-share services.

**Bicycle connectivity** – Painted sharrows connect to the citywide bicycle network.

**Erbes and Los Feliz Intersection** – The design concept does not include the intersections of Thousand Oaks Boulevard with Los Feliz Drive and Erbes Road, as these are being redesigned as part of a separate effort.

**Future configurations** – Future configurations that respond to projected future needs can be accommodated within the curb-to-curb dimensions established by the recommended street section.

Over the longer term, demand for cycling is anticipated to increase. When this occurs, it may be possible to provide dedicated facilities for cyclists. Options include removing on-street parking, left turn pockets or even one lane of traffic in each direction. These options will need to be carefully analyzed before implementation.
**Streetscape Elements**

**Street Trees** – a palette of carefully selected street trees unifies the variety of existing and future land uses in the Downtown Core. A uniform pattern of street trees increases connectivity and sense of cohesion on both a pedestrian and auto-oriented scale, as well as offers a pleasant sidewalk experience. Consideration should be given to a tree species that:

- Is appropriately-sized for the scale of the street; i.e. is large enough at maturity to define the street edge,
- Offers shade along the sidewalks, and
- Adds to the urban forest, as well as lowers overall temperatures on sidewalks and roadways by shading.

Accent trees that bring seasonal color should also be considered.

The Master Plan recommends the London Plane “Yarwood” tree (*Platanus x acerifolia*), or similar species, as the street tree for Thousand Oaks Boulevard. The recommended spacing is 30-40 feet on center and placed in a tree well per City specifications.
Pedestrian Amenities - A unified street furniture palette provides amenities for users as well as helps create a cohesive streetscape environment, which in turn is attractive to visitors and residents alike. Street furniture includes benches, trash receptacles, bicycle racks, newspaper racks, and bus stops. Design criteria include:

- Bench and trash receptacle construction should be of durable, high quality materials, such as galvanized or stainless steel.
- Trash receptacles should be side-opening to allow easy access for removal of garbage bags.
- Bicycle racks should offer a minimum of two points of support for bikes unless the rack can support a bike in two places, such as a post and ring configuration.
- Materials should be painted to reflect colors similar to nearby elements or if selected, the district color. Material and paint selection should be graffiti resistant.

The online survey presented the community with three options for street furniture – two of the three received significantly more support than the third option. The final selection should take into account the style and design characteristics of the two popular palettes.
Street Lighting - Lighting promotes safety and helps to create an appealing walkable environment for evening and nighttime activities. Lighting provides spatial definition to the sidewalk, adds ambiance, and provides a sense of security to users. In addition to maintaining the existing vehicular-scaled lights, the Master Plan recommends adding pedestrian-scaled lighting along Thousand Oaks Boulevard in the Master Plan area. Design criteria include:

- Selected light fixture should be compatible in style and color with the selected street furniture palette.
- The light fixture should be 15’-20’ tall.
- All light fixtures in the public right-of-way should be LED.
- The selected light fixture should adhere to guidelines set forth by the Dark Sky Association to protect the area’s view of stars.

Banner Program - District banner programs are often utilized in downtowns to convey identity, vitality and a visual cohesiveness. Banners enhance commercial visibility and activity and to provide ornamentation and excitement to the street environment. Banners are also a cost-effective way of celebrating and highlighting an area. Successful banner programs have rotating banners that change several times a year. These are often tied to seasons and other celebrations, such as Fourth of July celebrations, winter holidays, and Halloween. The Master Plan recommends that the City explore setting up a banner program for the Downtown Core. Ongoing and regular maintenance and replacement should be an integral part of any new banner program.
**Signage and Wayfinding** - Wayfinding helps people orient themselves in physical space and navigate from place to place through effective signage, markers, and/or monuments. It is how people choose a path within the built environment. The wayfinding system directs motorists and pedestrians to the important destinations in and around the Downtown Core. The signage and wayfinding system could also incorporate educational opportunities that include informational signs highlighting the City’s oak tree heritage, topographical features such as Conejo Mountains and Mount Clef Ridge, among other natural elements. Design criteria include:

- The wayfinding signage system should be both functional and decorative.
- The system should consider consolidated designs to avoid sign clutter.
- The wayfinding system should provide unifying identity to the Downtown Core.

**Gateways** – Gateways note the entry points of distinct environments and clearly communicate identity for an area. The Downtown Core is a half-mile segment of the three-mile Thousand Oaks Boulevard corridor. Gateways at Conejo School Road on the east and Zuniga Drive on the west will distinguish this core section of the street from the rest of the corridor.

The community survey included a question regarding the gateway design – monument, street arch or pedestal. The community overwhelmingly preferred monument gateways.
The monument gateways should be scaled proportionate to the scale of the street and to be visible for passing motorists. In addition, the design of the gateways should be coordinated with that of the district wide signage and wayfinding system. The City could also consider a design by a public artist.

Public Art - Public art complements and enhances a downtown and makes positive contributions to the public’s experience and understanding of life in the area. Arts and culture help to enrich everyday life, stimulate the local economy, enhance the environment, celebrate the nature, engage citizens, and foster neighborhood pride. Art brings the community together, creating situations not merely for enjoyment and beauty, but also for dialogue, thought, and growth. Examples of appropriate public art include permanent and temporary installations such as murals, sculptures, water features, interactive art, and artist-designed light installations.
Configuration for Events at the Town Square

The central segment of Thousand Oaks Boulevard within the Downtown Core – between The Lakes Drive and Dallas Drive – is designed such that it could be closed to traffic temporarily for use during special events such as fairs, festivals and outdoor concerts (these events take place in the street and in the Town Square in front of Civic Arts Plaza).

During event closures, access to parking areas is maintained from Dallas Drive and The Lakes Drive. Enhanced paving from the Town Square is continued across the street bed to create a seamless experience. In addition, the street is at the same level as the Town Square with the curb line demarcated by retractable or removable bollards. These bollards can be lowered or removed when there is an event.

Special consideration will need to be given to the re-routing of traffic during these events so as to minimize impacts on surrounding streets and neighborhoods.
Next Steps

The Master Plan recommends that the City:

• Issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Thousand Oaks Boulevard Street, Sidewalk and Design Improvements. This RFP should request a team led by a transportation-planning firm supplemented by urban design and landscape architecture expertise.
• Issue an RFP to retain a graphic design firm with urban design expertise to design the signage and wayfinding system and gateways.
• Identify funding sources for the recommended improvements.
In addition to the primary actions described in Chapter 3, there are a number of supporting activities that will help enhance the Downtown Core and make it more vibrant. These activities include creating a parking district in downtown that allows shared parking and a “park once” concept; building supporting uses on The Lakes parking lot that enhance the overall vision for downtown; bringing retail and mixed uses to Thousand Oaks Boulevard in accordance with the Thousand Oaks Boulevard Specific Plan; and adding a greater diversity of cultural activities and spaces in and around the downtown. These activities are further described in this chapter.
The “Park Once” concept allows visitors to drive to the area, “park once,” and then walk to multiple uses and activities without having to move their vehicles, further reducing traffic and negative impacts from traffic including collisions and emissions. Parking lots serve the entire downtown and are not designated just for individual uses.

The central premise of this recommendation is that to the extent feasible, parking in the Downtown Core is shared by different users. This allows for more efficient use of parking, and thus, reduced demand for parking. A centralized parking supply accompanied by a clear wayfinding system of directional signage also reduces traffic, as motorists are less likely to “circle” in search of a space.

In order to achieve this concept, the City has to undertake the following actions:

- Establish an in-lieu fee program for parking in Downtown Core. Under this program, a one-time payment (at a rate to be determined) could be substituted for some of the required parking for all uses but residential, hotel and institutional (e.g., college and universities). These fees, in turn, could be used by the City to fund improvements including the proposed new parking facilities (note, however, that in-lieu fees are expected to cover only a small portion of the costs for a parking structure).

- Make modifications to the City’s parking regulations to allow for a portion of the required parking to be located off-site within the downtown.

- Re-evaluate the parking ratios for various permitted uses to better align with current parking standards recommended for downtown areas.

The Master Plan has identified several locations for district-wide parking facilities including the Civic Arts Plaza garage which is mostly vacant, except on performance days. Other sites include the Westside Property and The Lakes parking lot.

Well-designed parking structures should be integrated into downtown buildings to minimize visual impacts.
The Lakes Parking Lot Redevelopment

The parking lot behind The Lakes shopping center currently contains 458 parking spaces for the retail and restaurant uses in The Lakes. Over the long-term, development on the site could be intensified while continuing to provide requisite parking. The parking lot provides a great opportunity to add new supportive uses that bring additional vitality, expand the customer base and attract users to the downtown. These uses include creative office space, an innovation hub, or hotel. Multi-family residential uses are also an option.

Any redevelopment of this site will need to ensure that:

- Parking spaces for both current and future uses are provided. In addition, if feasible, additional district parking is incorporated into the project design. In order to intensify development on this property, structured parking will be necessary.
- Improved pedestrian and visual connections are made to the Civic Arts Plaza, Town Square and the existing retail in The Lakes shopping center. New sidewalks along The Lakes Drive as it connects Thousand Oaks Boulevard to Conejo School Road will be necessary to create the desired pedestrian connectivity.
- The new uses and design on the site are coordinated with The Lakes shopping center operator to ensure compatibility with the existing shopping center. The rear facades of the existing buildings may need to be reconceptualized to integrate with new development on the parking lot.
- Alternate facilities for school bus parking is accommodated on the redesigned site or elsewhere. The parking lot is regularly used as a bus parking pickup area for school visits to performances at the Civic Arts Plaza.
New Development Along Thousand Oaks Boulevard

While the focus of the Master Plan’s recommendations is on City-directed actions and City-owned properties, complementary uses and development along Thousand Oaks Boulevard are supportive of and compatible to the success of the Downtown Core. The private properties within the Downtown Core are governed by the existing Thousand Oaks Boulevard Specific Plan, which allows mixed-use development along Thousand Oaks Boulevard. New developments are strongly encouraged to have active ground floor uses such as retail and restaurants, with office space or residential uses on upper floors. Active, pedestrian-oriented retail uses along Thousand Oaks Boulevard will make the Downtown Core stronger. The success of the Downtown Core will extend along the rest of the Thousand Oaks Boulevard corridor over time.

While the goals and recommendations of the Master Plan are generally consistent with the regulations established in the Thousand Oaks Boulevard Specific Plan, a few minor modifications to that document could improve the quality of the pedestrian experience along Thousand Oaks Boulevard. These modifications, described below, will need to be carefully considered by the City before implementation:

- The Specific Plan requires a minimum 10-foot sidewalk easement for new development within the Downtown Core to obtain wider sidewalks. It will be important for at least five feet of the easement to be located at the same level (without any grade changes) as the public sidewalk, so as to create a seamless pedestrian experience along the sidewalk.

- The Specific Plan allows setbacks up to 15 feet along Thousand Oaks Boulevard. Buildings are required to be located no further back than the setback line to create a uniform building wall. Pedestrian amenities such as outdoor dining areas, pots and planters, and seating should be required in the setback areas.

- The Specific Plan contains a height limit of three stories up to 50 feet. 50 feet is an appropriate height limit for the Downtown Core, and some projects could have more than three stories within a 50-foot height limit. The City should consider allowing an additional floor within the 50-foot limit as a discretionary action. Appropriate community benefits could be obtained in return for the additional floor.

- The Specific Plan provides parking regulations for private development. Changes may be necessary to implement a shared parking approach and the “park once” concept, as described earlier in this chapter.
Connect with other Activity Centers in the City

The Downtown Core is anticipated to be the civic and cultural heart of the city and “the” place for people to congregate for community events. However, institutions such as California Lutheran University, and shopping centers such as The Oaks Mall, Janss Marketplace, the Promenade, etc. are established activity centers in the City that will continue to thrive and attract visitors. The Master Plan recommends that the City look for ways to connect these citywide destinations with the Downtown Core and to build on the synergy of these activity centers. Physical connections that can be explored include improved bus transit, a new trolley system, and a robust network of protected bicycle facilities. The City should also consider coordinating citywide events and activities with these and other citywide organizations.

*Top left: Janss Marketplace, Bottom left: The Oaks Mall, Top right: The Promenade at Westlake, Bottom right: California Lutheran University*
As a part of the community survey and individual feedback received at various events, community members expressed a strong desire to incorporate public art and culture into the fabric of the downtown. Expanded events and spaces for these activities are an important element of the overall vision for the Downtown Core. In addition to the space and opportunities for such events made possible by the redesigned Town Square at the Civic Arts Plaza and the Westside Property, the Master Plan encourages additional locations, both temporary and permanent, along the Boulevard. These could include art galleries, private entertainment venues such as comedy clubs or destination restaurants, and live-work spaces for artists. The City should also work with other local partners to bring art-related uses and public art to other locations throughout downtown.

One of the local partners is the Gardens of the World, located in the heart of the Downtown Core. The Gardens is a unique attraction that bring a distinctive identity to the area. Today, the Gardens hosts limited art exhibits and tours. The Gardens could become a more integral part of downtown’s cultural setting with expanded hours and programming. In addition, the Gardens entrance area could be redesigned to create in a better relationship with the public realm. For example, the setback area could be redesigned to create usable public space with retail kiosks and outdoor seating areas. The City should coordinate with the property owner to further discuss and coordinate these recommendations.

California Lutheran University’s Scandinavian Festival is an example of existing cultural activities that can be expanded in the Downtown Core.
Next Steps

The Master Plan recommends that the City study the formation of a parking district for the Downtown Core. As a part of the study, parking regulation modifications, potential “park-once” locations and in-lieu fee programs should be explored.

The City should consider the long term reuse of The Lakes Shopping Center parking lot in coordination with the current operator.

The City should make the necessary modifications to the Thousand Oaks Boulevard Specific Plan in order to fully leverage private development, as and when it occurs.

Finally, the City should continue to expand on additional events, activities and facilities for arts and culture throughout downtown.
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The Downtown Core Master Plan presents a vision for a successful, vibrant downtown in the City of Thousand Oaks and provides a series of primary and secondary recommendations needed to realize that vision. The Plan also provides detailed design guidance and the actions necessary for implementation. While the focus of the Master Plan is on defining City-led actions, additional support and partnerships between the City and the private sector will be necessary as the plan is implemented. Initial investments by the City are intended to create conditions that will attract new private investment in the Downtown Core. The implementation steps described in Chapter 3 and 4 are summarized in this chapter.

The Downtown Core Master Plan process actively engaged stakeholders, community members, decision makers and City Staff to develop the vision. Further discussions with the stakeholders, decision makers and the community will also continue as the City implements the plan.
Implementation Actions

The key implementation actions recommended in the Master Plan have been identified in Chapters 3 and 4. As mentioned earlier, the Master Plan recommendations are predicated on the City taking the lead responsibility for implementation. Table 1 provides a summary of these implementation tasks as well as the timeframe for initiating these items.

Financing Tools

Plan implementation is a critical element in realizing the desired vision for the creation of a new destination downtown in Thousand Oaks. Significant investments in the public realm and certain actions by property owners and local businesses will be required to meet the objectives described in this plan.

Besides general obligation debt, there are a wide range of financing tools available to the City for implementing the recommended public improvements. These tools are described in Appendix C. Table 2 shows which financing tools can be used for each of the identified public improvements. Note that this is a combination of discretionary expenditures and grant programs. None of these financing programs are “as of right,” and it will require active coordination by the City to create a policy and public outreach strategy that would allow for these mechanisms to be accepted by either the affected parties or outside funding sources.

Several funding mechanisms that have been identified will require planning and outreach prior to their adoption. One or more potential funding sources have been identified for each major improvement or program proposed as part of the Downtown Core Master Plan, along with a discussion of issues and constraints regarding the use of the different funding sources. After agreeing on the funding priorities for those improvements that will require public funding, it will be necessary for the City to integrate those funding priorities with overall citywide priorities. Many funding sources involve revenues that must be allocated not only among different improvements identified for the Downtown Core Master Plan area but among projects located throughout the City. Therefore, it will be important for the City to integrate the financing needs identified for this project with the City’s existing financing plans and programs, including the CIP, and the process for allocating grant funds to local projects and activities. Once funds are available, the City can refine the implementation schedule with funding dates that are more specific and reflect the anticipated availability of funds for projects and programs, consistent with updated citywide financing plans.
### Table 1: Summary of Implementation Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS</th>
<th>TIME FRAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Town Square and Civic Arts Plaza</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further explore the redesign of the Civic Arts Plaza frontage in coordination with the current ongoing design effort to renovate the interior.</td>
<td>Short term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue a Request for Proposal/Qualifications (RFP/Q) to engage the services of a design firm to work with the community on the design for a Town Square.</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural Activities and Events</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a single Citywide entity for managing event programming in Downtown</td>
<td>Up to 12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task appropriate City entities to develop more intensive programming for the open spaces at Civic Arts Plaza and for downtown in general.</td>
<td>Up to 12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for an outside organization to develop more intensive programming for the open spaces at Civic Arts Plaza (optional)</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiate or continue coordination with The Lakes Shopping Center operator to bring additional events and activities to downtown.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiate or continue coordination with TOBA to bring additional events and activities to downtown.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The City should initiate or continue coordination with the Gardens of the World to bring additional events and activities to downtown.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>City-Owned Westside Property</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare a program statement and issue a Developer Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the Westside Property.</td>
<td>Up to 12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following the RFQ process, issue a Developer RFP and negotiate agreement(s) for Westside Property site.</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin construction on the Westside Property</td>
<td>3+ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thousand Oaks Boulevard</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue an RFP for the Thousand Oaks Boulevard street, Sidewalk and Design Improvements.</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue an RFP for the design of a signage and wayfinding system and gateways.</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursue funding sources for the recommended public improvements.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supporting Activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study the formation of a parking district</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss the long term reuse of The Lakes Shopping Center parking lot in coordination with the current operator.</td>
<td>3+ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make the necessary modifications to the Thousand Oaks Boulevard Specific Plan in order to fully leverage private development, as and when it occurs.</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect with other citywide activity centers.</td>
<td>3+ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue expansion of additional events, activities and facilities for arts and culture throughout downtown.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Table 2: Financing Tools Available for Recommended Improvements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thousand Oaks Boulevard Redesign</th>
<th>General Obligation Bonds</th>
<th>Capital Improvement Program (CIP)</th>
<th>Parcel Taxes</th>
<th>Certificates of Participation</th>
<th>California Bank</th>
<th>Statewide Community Infrastructure Program (SCIP)</th>
<th>Gasoline Taxes</th>
<th>Transportation Enhancements</th>
<th>Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)</th>
<th>Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grants</th>
<th>Community Facilities Districts</th>
<th>Landscape and Lighting Districts</th>
<th>Development Impact Fees</th>
<th>Development Agreements</th>
<th>Business Improvement District</th>
<th>Development Request for Proposals (RFP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Widen sidewalks</td>
<td>■</td>
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SURVEY FORMAT AND RESPONSES

- Online Community Survey open from March 15 through April 22, 2018
- Distributed business cards with survey link at local businesses, public facilities, pop-up events and focus groups
- Notifications of survey posted on the City’s Downtown website, Thousand Oaks Acorn newspaper, Ventura County Star newspaper, NextDoor neighborhood app, and Facebook
- 689 total responses
Appendix A: Survey Results Summary

DEMOGRAPHICS
What is your age range?

Demographics
Appendix A: Survey Results Summary

What is your gender?

Demographics
Do you live or work in Thousand Oaks?

![Bar chart showing the survey results for living, working, both living and working, and neither living nor working.]

- Live: 48.33%
- Work: 5.37%
- Both live and work: 42.96%
- None: 3.34%
Appendix A: Survey Results Summary

Do you have children at home?

Demographics
Appendix A: Survey Results Summary

How long have you lived in Thousand Oaks?

- Less than 1 year: 2.61%
- 1-5 years: 14.37%
- 6-10 years: 8.56%
- 11-20 years: 20.46%
- Over 20 years: 46.73%
- Don’t live in Thousand Oaks: 7.26%

Demographics
Appendix A: Survey Results Summary

VISION FOR DOWNTOWN THOUSAND OAKS
Do you agree that Thousand Oaks needs a downtown?

- Strongly disagree: 19.00%
- Somewhat disagree: 6.39%
- Neutral: 5.30%
- Somewhat agree: 20.25%
- Strongly agree: 49.07%
Appendix A: Survey Results Summary

Should Downtown contain a variety of gathering places that appeal to people of all ages?

- Strongly disagree: 13.23%
- Somewhat disagree: 5.35%
- Neutral: 5.35%
- Somewhat agree: 19.84%
- Strongly agree: 56.22%

Vision for Thousand Oaks
Appendix A: Survey Results Summary

Should Downtown provide a more attractive and comfortable environment for pedestrians?

- Strongly disagree: 12.44%
- Somewhat disagree: 3.46%
- Neutral: 6.61%
- Somewhat agree: 16.22%
- Strongly agree: 61.26%
Appendix A: Survey Results Summary

Should Downtown require active pedestrian-oriented uses on the ground floor along the street?

- Strongly disagree: 14.49%
- Somewhat disagree: 4.62%
- Neutral: 8.92%
- Somewhat agree: 21.34%
- Strongly agree: 50.64%

Vision for Thousand Oaks
Appendix A: Survey Results Summary

Should Downtown offer diverse shopping and restaurant options?

- Strongly disagree: 12.46%
- Somewhat disagree: 3.99%
- Neutral: 6.23%
- Somewhat agree: 18.05%
- Strongly agree: 59.27%

Vision for Thousand Oaks
Appendix A: Survey Results Summary

Should Downtown make more entertainment and nightlife choices available?

- Strongly disagree: 14.80%
- Somewhat disagree: 5.67%
- Neutral: 11.18%
- Somewhat agree: 22.36%
- Strongly agree: 45.98%
Appendix A: Survey Results Summary

Should Downtown contain wide sidewalks to allow outdoor retail/seating?

- Strongly disagree: 14.33%
- Somewhat disagree: 3.94%
- Neutral: 9.76%
- Somewhat agree: 21.89%
- Strongly agree: 50.08%

Vision for Thousand Oaks
Appendix A: Survey Results Summary

Should Downtown offer district parking to allow visitors to park once for multiple businesses?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>Somewhat agree</td>
<td>16.08%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>59.55%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A: Survey Results Summary

Should there be residential uses within or close to Downtown?

- Strongly disagree: 19.43%
- Somewhat disagree: 10.27%
- Neutral: 19.27%
- Somewhat agree: 20.06%
- Strongly agree: 30.96%

Vision for Thousand Oaks
TOWN SQUARE AT CIVIC ARTS PLAZA
Appendix A: Survey Results Summary

Do you agree with the vision for the Town Square at the Civic Arts Plaza?

- Strongly disagree: 14.96%
- Somewhat disagree: 7.48%
- Neutral: 10.57%
- Somewhat agree: 26.99%
- Strongly agree: 40.00%
What type of features would you like to see in the Town Square at the Civic Arts Plaza? Please check all that apply:

- **Landscaping and large trees**: 72.53%
- **Quiet contemplative spaces**: 68.50%
- **Public art**: 61.17%
- **Open-air amphitheater**: 58.97%
- **Paved areas for a variety of events**: 56.78%
- **Permanent kiosks**: 51.10%
- **Temporary exhibits for children**: 43.96%
- **Art pavilions/display spaces**: 42.31%
- **Water play space for children**: 34.80%
CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS
Do you agree with the vision of making Downtown the premier meeting and event destination in the region?

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<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>18.89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Somewhat disagree</td>
<td>8.94%</td>
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<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>40.64%</td>
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</table>
Appendix A: Survey Results Summary

What types of cultural activities and events should take place in Downtown Thousand Oaks? Pick all that apply:

- Outdoor concerts/ plays
- Farmers markets
- Art fairs
- Food truck events
- Cultural fairs
- Outdoor movie events
- Theatrical performances
- Outdoor crafts for children
- Swap meets
THOUSAND OAKS BOULEVARD
Do you agree with the vision for Thousand Oaks Boulevard?

- Strongly disagree: 19.54%
- Somewhat disagree: 8.44%
- Neutral: 8.28%
- Somewhat agree: 23.01%
- Strongly agree: 40.73%
Appendix A: Survey Results Summary

Which of the following images of a gateway feature is appropriate for Thousand Oaks Boulevard? Select one:

1. [Image 1]
   - Image 1: 59.29%

2. [Image 2]
   - Image 2: 33.40%

3. [Image 3]
   - Image 3: 7.31%

Thousand Oaks Boulevard
Of the three street furniture palettes shown below, which do you like most for Thousand Oaks Boulevard in Downtown?

![Palette 1](image1)

![Palette 2](image2)

![Palette 3](image3)

---

*Thousand Oaks Boulevard*
CITY-OWNED WESTSIDE PARCEL
Do you agree with the vision for the Westside Area?

- Strongly disagree: 17.44%
- Somewhat disagree: 6.31%
- Neutral: 7.97%
- Somewhat agree: 25.25%
- Strongly agree: 43.02%
What types of shops or eateries should go here? Pick all that apply:

- Coffee shops/cafes: 86.12%
- Sit-down restaurants: 84.60%
- Breweries or pubs: 72.05%
- Wine bars: 60.46%
- Specialty food stores: 59.89%
- Art galleries: 45.82%
- Specialty retail: 28.90%
Oaks Mall Farmers Market Pop-Up

**Date:** Thursday, March 15th  
**Time:** 1pm – 3:30pm

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**Voting Activity**

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<td>Neutral</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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**Post-It Note Comments:**

- This area definitely needs modernization + charm
- Music + arts, parking
- Mom & pop shops
- Pet friendly
- Access to free camping! Permatrail.org
- Needs to be bike-able please!
- Mixed use residential and commerce
- More bike friendly
- Parking without taking car lanes away, sitting areas
- Construct an overpass to connect the two areas
- Wide sidewalks!
- Pedestrian friendly
- Community garden + rooftop gardens
Appendix B: Community Outreach Summary

**Senior Center Focus Group**

**Date:** Saturday, March 17th  
**Time:** 10am – Noon

| Attendees | 12 |

**Comments:**

- Parking to access buildings for seniors  
- Able to walk to front of building easily  
- What is the cost for all of this?  
- What is the impact on existing merchants?  
- Will there be bus access to the site?  
- Are there going to be apartments? Or mixed use? What number of housing units?  
- Rush hour has increased traffic and more residents  
- Mixed use is missing – need affordable housing  
- Like Scottsdale, AZ  
- CA Arts Museum is the perfect anchor here; draws crowds  
- Support the CAP frontage  
- Desire public wi-fi for Downtown  
- CAP arts fair in September? What happened to it?  
- Have a trolley running along T.O. Boulevard

- “Livable City” status - 51/100 livability status, should have higher rating  
- Condos and single family housing under construction  
- Need news updates on current development, support for what is underway  
- Mom/pop restaurant workers need housing  
- Shared parking – tie to development  
- Affordable parking, don’t charge, or charge small amount  
- Peddle cars or bike and brew could be a fun attraction and tourist draw  
- Lighting for pedestrians, security cameras  
- CAP police need to be visible  
- Shade for hot days – solar panels and structures  
- Less expensive stores/restaurants  
- Wayfinding  
- Move street fair from Moorpark Road to Downtown
Appendix B: Community Outreach Summary

Teen Center Focus Group

Date: Saturday, March 17th
Time: 3:30pm – 4:30pm

| Attendees | 7 |

Comments:

- How will we maintain local T.O. mom and pop shops?
- Will this be all shops and restaurants like the mall? Or will there be jobs and housing?
- Will there be housing on T.O.B.? Is it allowed?
- Gardens of the World – can we open it up? Can’t see it. Maybe can be space for picnics and shows
- New developments can have parking in the back so you can see what's going on from the street
- Longer hours for shops and entertainment within the Core
- Larger variety of restaurants at cheaper price points
- Summer concerts in front of the CAP
- Vision/branding in the area – banners talking about Downtown
- A bowling alley is desired
- Create something like Dojo Boom (at the Janss Marketplace)
- Have a street car line – or trolley like San Diego, Dallas as a central hub for people getting around T.O.
- Offer bikeshare – maybe using your library card
- Have water fountain area for kids to play
- Drop off area for rideshare

- Kids aren’t biking in the area because of safety reasons
- Have multiple downtowns?
  - o Districts like Pasadena
- For additional outreach – go to high schools and talk to students
Appendix B: Community Outreach Summary

Thousand Oaks Library Pop-Up

Date: Saturday, March 17th
Time: 1pm – 3:30pm

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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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Post-It Note Comments:

- All kinds of fountains
- Cafes, restaurants with outdoor seating and trees
- Limit bicycles to bike paths
- No dogs please
- Add new parking structure behind The Lakes, then reclaim ½ of existing Lakes parking for a mini-Starlight Bowl.
- Tree shade
- Seating
- More art display
- Strongly want more cafes and restaurants integrated with shopping etc.
- Bring more events and fairs here
- Indoor play space for kids
- Programming of kids
- Include community art gallery
Oaks Mall Farmers Market Pop-Up #2

Date: Thursday April 5th
Time: 4pm – 6pm

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Post-It Note Comments:

- Goods + services for all income levels
- Mixed use/mixed income (La Chapala Lofts in Santa Barbara)
- Affordable housing
- I would love to see better options for public transportation especially for young people
- Please include affordable housing for all ages groups, mixed housing + retail/businesses
- I like to go to the water park
- My favorite place is the water park
- The places are fun for kids, they are amazing
Professionals Focus Group

Date: Thursday April 5th
Time: 7pm – 8:30pm

Attendees: 27

Comments:

- Signage – visibility from the street and from the freeway
  - Include maps and wayfinding signage
- Building heights and visibility from the freeway?
  - High end, well known tenants might expect to have freeway visibility
- Small scale – keep with T.O. charm
- Make it pet friendly
- Maintain oak trees
- CAP could include meeting and conference space
  - Regional meetings/conferences CLU could use too
  - Added draw with proximity to Civic Arts Plaza
- Marketing events – funding needed for additional events and marketing?
- Affordability of uses
- Mom & pop stores, not all chains
- Space for entrepreneurs -- young up and coming artists, tech industry etc.
- Movie theatre or bowling alley
- Fun/art outdoors
- Affordability is key
- Housing in the downtown?
  - Shortage in the City
CLU Scandinavian Festival Pop-Up

**Date:** Saturday April 21st
**Time:** 10pm – 1pm

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**Post-It Note Comments:**

- Info booth or kiosks
- Information for seniors
- Please consider 60-degree angled parking stalls
- Look at very narrow vehicle lanes
- Redondo Beach Pier
- No bike lanes on lower State Street in Santa Barbara
- Potential wedding venues
- Look at University Town Center in La Jolla (the outdoor mall with Macy’s etc., in it)
- We need maps and brochures so people can be informed of what is in the area
- Also merchandize some T.O./oak tree items
- A casual easy place to eat
- If you go to the Huntington Library, you will see people love to order a cup of tea and visit near the gardens. Or a 1950s counter with stools for a soda fountain
- Oaks-inspired art made from metal and/or stone
Appendix B: Community Outreach Summary

Open House

**Date:** Thursday, April 26\(^{th}\)  
**Time:** 6pm-8 pm

Visitors logged on clicker | 30

**Did We Hit the Mark?**

**Civic Arts Plaza & Town Square**

- Maintain existing mature trees  
- We already have lots of farmers markets  
- I like the boulevard the way it is  
- So long as planning and execution is done right. It’s a great idea to make the improvements, but keeping it to scale is extremely important  
- Not in favor of closing T.O. Boulevard to push more traffic to residential neighborhoods  
- Love the performing amphitheater idea, maybe work with CLU to have student productions to give students exposure in different open-air environments

**City-Owned Westside Parcel**

- Parking and a park with walkways to Civic Arts Plaza on gardens  
- Very worried about parking, because just like at The Lakes, any additional lot will be used for Civic Arts Plaza Theatre parking; as a resident, I want free parking. I would not visit the new proposed establishments if I had to pay for parking
Appendix B: Community Outreach Summary

**Thousand Oaks Boulevard**
- I don’t think that we need any of this
- The City + this vision has to have right people to execute – they must be experienced
- Gateway features are not necessary

**Master Plan Vision**
- Put a hotel behind The Lakes
- The Lakes and Mr. Caruso have to have a new agreement, hopefully better deal for the City this time
- Love the vision for activating T.O. Blvd. – beneficial for residents, local businesses and economic vitality for the City of T.O.
- Thinking that residential uses are not a good idea for downtown
- Need to provide shuttles/pedicabs or something. People in fancy shoes or dressed up for an evening won’t want to walk the ½ mile to get to the next store or restaurant or wine bar.
- Concerned about effect on traffic and lack of parking. Not sure there’s demand for dining/entertainment, etc. as other areas already in the City are not utilized. Don’t want to see another Lakes fiasco.
- Custom street signs with oaks or acorns featured
- Make it happen this time!
Additional Comments:

- Bike parking
- Huge opportunity to activate the land at the Civic Arts Plaza and make restaurant and retail synergize with entertainment, public spaces
- Support more gathering spaces but don’t like the idea of permanent amphitheater development. Keep parcels as natural as possible
- Area for possible rickshaw loading and unloading. area for trolley stops
- Art from local artists
- Sharrows are nonsense, we need class 1 bike paths to encourage more people to ride the Boulevard
- Agree with recommended street section. Narrower lanes will calm traffic speeds, maintaining lanes will maintain flow
- Love the wider sidewalks, together with the vision for land uses along T.O. Boulevard.
- Activate the street and support pedestrian orientation
- This is a great concept – kudos to Drew, Al, and Andy – everyone. A long time coming and time to go, but so happy it is on its way.
- I suggest put good hotel behind The Lakes, not boutique hotel on Westside property. The Westside property has more to offer without a hotel.
- Not in favor of more congestion in streets and pushing traffic to Hillcrest.
- Need pedestrian safety bollards along curb to protect from errant vehicles
- Let’s do protected bike lanes!
- Don’t narrow T.O. Boulevard, keep cars moving, lessen traffic congestion
- Drought tolerant plants
- No hotels – we have plenty in T.O./Westlake Village/Newbury Park
- New street is a great idea
- Honor the land and what was here originally. Indian exhibit. Old 1950’s and 1960’s photos
- History and science information on oaks trees
- Stonehaus is a fabulous example of what we need here – eat/drink/meet people
- Pick a theme – perhaps oak trees to incorporate information signage
- Get a better deal from Mr. Caruso!
- Like the solar panels over the parking
- Development of Westside parcel will help activate T.O. Boulevard – I support the proposed uses of retail, hotel and office
- Concern that the City will not negotiate a good deal with developer, don’t give away the store.
- Have a community exercise area like for outdoor yoga/tai chi classes – have it be reservation or sponsored through CRPD or CV Adult School so doesn’t get usurped by private businesses. Could be free like the concerts in the park, possibly or a nominal fee
- Need shuttles/pedicabs so women in heels can feel free to dress up for performances without worrying about strolling afterwards.
- Like the idea of gathering places in front of Civic Arts Plaza but don’t support narrower traffic lanes, T.O. Boulevard is bad enough
APPENDIX C
AVAILABLE FUNDING MECHANISMS
INTRODUCTION

This Appendix describes the various funding mechanisms that are available to the City and/or partner agencies to implement the planned public improvements and support some annual operations and maintenance costs. The discussion below includes potential funding sources for improvements described in the plan. Ultimately, the plan will largely be implemented via private investment as landowners and development partners seek to maximize the value of the plan's land use entitlements and respond to changing market conditions. Changes to the public realm can be brought about by public sector expenditures, public-private partnerships, and private sector activities. These funding approaches are described below.

Public Sector Funding

Local City Funding and Grants

General Obligation Bonds

A general obligation bond is a type of municipal bond that is secured by a state or local government's pledge to use legally available resources, typically including property tax revenues, to repay bondholders. General obligation bonds are restricted to defined capital improvements. Credit rating agencies often consider a general obligation bond to have very strong credit quality and frequently assign them investment-grade ratings. In California, cities must secure a two-thirds voter approval to issue general obligation bonds if the issuance is for noneducational purposes. The burden of general obligation bonds falls upon all property owners in the issuing jurisdiction proportional to the value of their property. This very broad base of funding provides excellent security for the bonds, thus typically garnering the lowest interest rate of any municipal debt instrument.

General obligation bonds allow public entities to finance at a low fixed rate over the useful life of the asset. However, these bonds are limited to capital improvement expenditures and can be used only for the precise purposes outlined in the authorizing ballot measure. General obligation bonds are commonly restricted to particular capital uses (e.g., street improvements, drainage improvements, parks, and recreation).

General Fund Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

Local revenues are collected in the City General Fund from property tax, sales tax and transient occupancy tax and are expended on projects and programs as defined in the City's adopted budget. Each year the City makes expenditures according to its Capital...
Appendix C: Available Funding Mechanisms

Improvements Program. Individual projects and programs that are funded by this source of money generally include those items which cannot be paid for by other sources. Capital investments that which provide a direct community-wide benefit for the residences or businesses in the city are usually given the highest priority for this source of funding. The City General Fund could be used for a number of the improvements identified in the Downtown Core Area Master Plan. However, since the CIP is the City’s primary source for capital expenditures demands for this funding is highly competitive, and as a result it should be looked at as a secondary source to fund most projects.

Parcel Taxes
Citywide parcel taxes can be imposed with voter approval to fund municipal services and infrastructure. In practice, they are typically used to provide a broad-based source of funding for citywide services. Due to the voter approval requirements, and similar to general obligation bonds, jurisdiction-wide parcel taxes or special taxes are usually only successful if they fund highly desirable public services and improvements, such as upgraded public safety services. Parcel taxes differ from general obligation bonds in that they can be used for maintenance and operations and are not levied “ad valorem” (i.e., they typically have a flat or escalating rate structure applied to particular classes of properties). Parcel taxes (including infrastructure investments) can be imposed with majority voter approval if used for general purposes, but for special purposes, they require two-thirds voter approval. They may be used for funding ongoing services or pledged to debt service. Parcel taxes are limited to the purposes for which they were approved. They also are commonly subject to a “sunset” date and must be reauthorized periodically to maintain funding.

Certificates of Participation
This funding approach is typically used by government agencies for construction or improvement of public facilities. Through the use of a lease-type repayment structure, the monies needed to fund these building projects do not (by California law) constitute public debt or require voter approval. Usually, a public entity enters into a tax-exempt lease-purchase with a lessor, and the lessor provides the agreed-upon public facility. In this way, government agencies may use their leasing powers to provide more expedient access to the capital markets than the more restricted powers to incur debt. Agencies typically use tax-exempt leases to finance non-enterprise projects, such as schools, courthouses, jails, and administration buildings.

State Transportation Funding and Grants

California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank—Infrastructure Revolving Fund Program
This loan program provides low-cost financing to public agencies for a variety of infrastructure programs, including streets, bridges, and recreational facilities. This type of loan could be used to fund the infrastructure upgrades and improvements proposed along Thousand Oaks Boulevard. Funding assistance ranges from $250,000 to $10,000,000. There must be a dedicated source for debt service of the loan, and the term of the loan can be as long as 20 years.

Statewide Community Infrastructure Program
The Statewide Community Infrastructure Program (SCIP) is a program of the California Statewide Communities Development Authority (CSCDA) that exploits a local government’s ability to create land-secured financing districts. The program “pools” debt obligations to gain a comparatively lower interest rate and issuance costs (particularly if the total amount to be financed is less than $5 million). Thousand Oaks can benefit from SCIP-eligible project types, including
roads, streetlights, and landscaping. CSCDA is a joint powers authority sponsored by the League of California Cities and the California State Association of Counties. SCIP financing is available for development projects situated within cities or counties (local agencies) that have elected to become SCIP participants.

**Gasoline Taxes/Operations and Maintenance**

Each city in California receives state gasoline taxes that may be used for operating and maintenance expenditures related to streets and roads. These funds are limited, but the City’s annual budgeting process may designate a portion of them for facilities specified in the Downtown Core Master Plan area, subject to annual budgeting priorities. This source could fund interventions on Thousand Oaks Boulevard itself, including the creation of active transportation improvements.

**Transportation Enhancements**

Under the Transportation Enhancements program, California receives approximately $60 million per year from the federal government to fund projects and activities that enhance the surface transportation system. The program funds projects under 12 eligible categories, including landscaping, streetscaping, and the provision of bicycling lanes, trails, parking, and other bicycling facilities. In California, 75% of this funding is distributed by the regional transportation planning agencies. Caltrans allocates the remaining 25% at the district level.

**Federal Funding and Grants**

**Community Development Block Grant**

The City participates in the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), provided by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to support community investment. Infrastructure included in the Downtown Core Master Plan may be eligible to receive funds through this program. The key uses for this funding include the acquisition, rehabilitation, construction, and improvement of public facilities. Utility upgrades and street improvements are also eligible for CDBG funds. Any projects in the Downtown Core Master Plan area would need to be specified in future CDBG plans and applications in order to be considered.

**Federal Economic Development Administration Grants**

The Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) is another potential source of grant money for plan elements. Funds from the EDA can be used to finance construction and rehabilitation of infrastructure and facilities that are necessary to achieve long-term growth and dynamic local economies. These competitive grants could potentially support the utility upgrades and street improvements specified in this plan.
Public-Private Partnerships

Assessment Districts
Assessment districts are commonly established to finance the construction of public capital improvements and authorized to operate and maintain costs of certain public facilities. Assessment districts are formed in two different ways: (1) property owners petition the appropriate public agency to form a district and provide a needed public improvement or (2) a public agency foresees the need for an improvement and approaches the affected property owners with an assessment district proposal.

Community Facilities Districts
Community Facilities Districts (CFDs), also known as Mello-Roos districts, can fund the planning, design, purchase, construction, expansion, improvement, or rehabilitation of “capital facilities,” defined as having a useful life of five or more years. CFDs can also fund a variety of public services, such as public safety, parks and recreation, schools, libraries, cultural facilities, landscape maintenance and lighting, flood control, and site remediation.

CFDs levy a special tax instead of a special assessment. This tax may be applied to the value of each property rather than assessed based on the level of special benefit received. However, because it is a special tax on real property, a two-thirds majority vote is required to approve its levy. If the district has 12 or more registered voters, the election polls voters, with each having an equal vote. If there are fewer than 12 registered voters, the election polls property owners, with each vote weighted by acreage owned within the district boundary (such properties need not be contiguous). Finally, establishing a CFD requires only a general description of the facilities, services, and costs associated with the district.

CFDs may fund the construction of the following types of facilities:

- Local park, recreation, parkway, and open-space areas
- Elementary and secondary school sites and structures
- Libraries
- Childcare
- Transmission/distribution for water, natural gas, telephone, electricity, and cable television
- Flood and storm protection and storm drainage
- Other governmental facilities that the legislative body creating the district is authorized by law to contribute revenue toward, construct, own, or operate.
- Work to bring public or private buildings or real property into compliance with seismic safety standards and regulations

CFDs may also fund the following types of services:

- Police protection
- Fire protection and suppression
- Ambulance and paramedic
- Recreation programs, libraries, maintenance for elementary and secondary school sites and structures, and the operation and maintenance of museums and cultural facilities
- Maintenance of parks, parkways, and open space
Appendix C: Available Funding Mechanisms

- Flood and storm protection, including but not limited to the operation and maintenance of storm drainage systems and sandstorm protection systems
- Removal or remedial action for the cleanup of any hazardous substance released or threatened to be released into the environment

The City may choose to seek to establish a CFD for a portion of the plan area and define the district area to include fewer than 12 registered voters to simplify the process of establishing the district. The City could also choose to seek to establish a CFD for all or a portion of the plan area and define the district area to include more than 12 registered voters, if the City believes that resident registered voters might be more likely to approve the CFD than property owners. The City could also establish multiple CFDs across the plan area to accommodate phased growth.

A new approach that is emerging in established urban areas involves creating a small district tied to specific projects. As additional properties are developed, the CFD boundaries can be amended to incorporate those properties. Because such a CFD would only contain property owners who wish to join, it avoids the need for a larger election with many property owners and the potential for rejection of the creation of the district. This approach can work for site-specific improvements to the public realm.

Landscape and Lighting Districts
Thousand Oaks has the option to establish districts to maintain landscape and lighting in the downtown core. These districts allow for the maintenance cost to be paid for by assessments on property owners. Assessment levels are based on land use type and are used to supplement maintenance costs. The Landscaping and Lighting Act of 1972 (Streets and Highway Code Section 22500) enables assessments to be imposed to finance the following:

- Acquisition of land for parks, recreation, and open space
- Installation or construction of planting and landscaping, street lighting facilities, ornamental structures, and park and recreational improvements
- Maintenance and servicing of any of the above

Development Impact Fees
A development impact fee is an ordinance-based, one-time charge on new development designed to cover a “proportional share” of the total capital cost of necessary public infrastructure and facilities needed to serve the demands created by the development. The creation and collection of impact fees are allowed under AB-1600 as codified in California Government Code Section 66000, known as the Mitigation Fee Act. To the extent that required improvements are needed to address both “existing deficiencies” and the projected impacts from growth, only the portion of costs attributable to new development can be included in the fee. Consequently, impact fees commonly are only one of many sources used to finance a city's needed infrastructure improvements. Fees can be charged on a jurisdiction-wide basis or for a particular sub-area of the jurisdiction (such as a specific plan area).

Development impact fees can be imposed through adoption of a local enabling ordinance supported by a technical analysis showing the “nexus” between the fee and the infrastructure demands generated by new development. Fees may be charged for a particular improvement (e.g., transportation) or include multiple infrastructure improvement categories in a comprehensive program. Impact fee programs must be reviewed annually and updated periodically to assure adequate funding and proper allocation of fee revenues to the infrastructure for which the fees are collected. The burden of development impact fees is upon the project developers and builders who pay them. Fees are a cost of development and “internalized”
into project costs as are all other development- and construction-related costs.

A benefit of impact fees is that they provide a comprehensive and programmatic framework for identifying and allocating infrastructure costs to new development based on a demonstrated nexus between the new development and infrastructure need. In addition, there is no discretion on the part of developers’ subject to the fees, nor is voter approval required. The key limitation of development impact fees (in addition to the nexus requirement) is the timing of funding. Infrastructure often is needed up front, while fees are paid over time as development occurs. This means that other funding or financing methods are needed to fill the timing gap.

## Private Investment

### Development Agreements

A development agreement (DA) is a legally binding agreement between a local government and developer authorized by state statute (Government Code Section 65864 et seq.). A DA is a means for a developer to secure a development entitlement for a particular project for an agreed-upon period (often long-term approvals) in exchange for special considerations by the city, generally including infrastructure improvements, amenities, or other community benefits that cannot be obtained through the normal conditions applicable to the project. DAs are entirely discretionary on the part of local government (there is no nexus requirement) and must be individually adopted by local ordinance. DAs vary widely, and cities often establish their own policies and procedures for considering them.

### Business Improvement District

A Business Improvement District is an established benefit assessment district that can be formed based on the provisions of AB 3754. These districts are geographically defined business areas in which private property owners unite to realize a common goal, such as to gain legal standing or generate sufficient revenue to improve area services and facilities. In January of 2005, the City authorized the Thousand Oaks Boulevard Property Business Improvement District (the “BID”) and designated the Thousand Oaks Boulevard Association to act as the “Owners Association” for the administration of the BID. The BID can serve as the responsible entity for implementing programs and activities recommended in the plan. The BID can perform a number of activities designed to supplement existing City services, such as marketing district businesses and activities, promoting public events, cleaning streets and sidewalks, removing graffiti, promoting tourism,
providing sanitation, and retaining and recruiting retail. Physical improvements—such as plazas, planting areas, restrooms, pedestrian shelters, benches, kiosks, trash receptacles, signs, lighting, and fountains—are also often funded through a BID.

**Development RFP**

For the Downtown Core Plan area, the opportunity for the City to act as a partner in development represents the most effective method for achieving the vision articulated in this plan. The City currently owns a 3.02-acre property to the west of the Civic Arts Plaza with frontage along Thousand Oaks Boulevard. The ability for the City to enter into a long-term ground lease for private development on the site or via contribution of land as an equity partner with a developer will allow the City to specify the development program and quality and form of development that could occur on the site. By issuing a call for development proposals, with the City soliciting development partners for the site, it will be possible to market the property so as to produce desired outcomes. The land would need to be appraised and evaluated, as an equity contribution to a development partnership. An economic development conveyance of land at a sub-market rate would be subject to restrictions in California law.

The Master Plan recommends that the City of Thousand Oaks prepare a program statement and issue a Developer Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the development of the Westside parcel. An RFQ will attract a greater level of interest and a higher quality of developers who can be short-listed for a subsequent Request for Proposal (RFP) process. This type of two-step process will result a higher-quality and more tailored project that better meets the expectations of the City. Following the RFQ process, the City should issue a Developer RFP and negotiate development agreement(s) for the Westside Parcel site.

Key components of the development RFP would include:

- Overview and description of the site
- Description of the development opportunity, including desired program and performance
- Existing land use entitlements and planning standards for the site
- An independent market assessment of the opportunities
- Disclosure of material facts, including any environmental conditions
- Technical submittal requirements, including background and qualification of proponents along with financial disclosure
- Request for development proposal, including financial terms that can serve as the basis of the development partnership between the City and the proponent

The City would make the final approval with a selected development partner, based on a review of submitted proposals.