Downtown Implementation Plan

- form based code
- complete streets
- parking strategy
- parks
- architecture
- sustainability
- future land use

City Council Approval Date: 17 August 2010

TOWNSCAPE
Bowman-Melton
RCLCO
A special thanks to all of the many Denton citizens, business leaders and students that participated in this successful plan for Downtown Denton.

Thank you!
## Acknowledgements

### The Residents and Students of Denton

### Mayor and City Council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mark Burroughs</td>
<td>Mayor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pete Kamp</td>
<td>Mayor Pro Tem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charyle Heggins</td>
<td>District 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalton Gregory</td>
<td>District 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Engelbrecht</td>
<td>District 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Watts</td>
<td>District 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James King</td>
<td>At Large Place 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Mulroy</td>
<td>Past Council Member</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Planning and Zoning Commission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walter Eagleton</td>
<td>Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jay Thomas</td>
<td>Vice-Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrice Lyke</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean Schaake</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Ryan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Bentley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thom Reece</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Downtown Task Force

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marty Rivers</td>
<td>Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peggy Capps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Chalfant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Howard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen Dickson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hank Dickenson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt Gaston</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luke Grizzaffi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shirley Hensley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herbert Holl</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greg Johnson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dale Kimble</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Milnes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Moses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex Payne</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Phillips</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Plunkette</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todd Price</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrell Ann Simmons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jay Thomas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyle Voyles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
City Staff

Core Project Team
Fred Greene  Assistant City Manager
Brian Lockley, AICP  Development Review Administrator
Ron Menguita, AICP  Development Review Liaison
Linda Ratliff  Director - Economic Development
Mark Nelson  Director - Transportation
Emerson Vorel  Director - Parks and Recreation
Julie Glover  Program Administrator - Economic Development

Special Thanks
City Manager’s Office
Denton Municipal Electric
Economic Development Department
Finance Department
Fire Department
TxDOT
Park and Recreation Department
Planning and Development Department
Solid Waste and Recycling Department
Streets and Traffic Control Department
Water Utilities Department
Utility and CIP Engineering Department
Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA)
North Central Council of Governments (NCTCOG)

Consultant Team
Jacobs
Rick Leisner, AICP  Project Director
Alexis Massaro, AICP  Project Planner
Brad Moulton, ASLA  Project Landscape Architect
Jeremy Wyndham, PE
Mike McAnelly, FAICP
Noelle Flocke, ASLA
John McCarthy, AICP
Jake Baker

Townscape
Dennis Wilson, FAICP  Form Based Code - Director
Jim Richards, ASLA

Robert Charles Lesser Co.
Todd LaRue
Chris Volney

Bowman-Melton
Bud Melton
Susan Justus
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements .................................................................................. 4  
Table of Contents .................................................................................. 6  

**Ex. Executive Summary** ........................................................................ 9  

1. **Introduction** .................................................................................... 13  
   A. Purpose of the Plan .......................................................................... 16  
   B. Context .......................................................................................... 17  
   C. Influences on Downtown .................................................................. 19  

2. **Public Involvement** .......................................................................... 21  
   A. Downtown Task Force ...................................................................... 22  
   B. Stakeholder Interviews ................................................................... 23  
   C. On-line Survey .............................................................................. 24  
   D. Public Meetings ............................................................................. 24  
   E. Additional Outreach ...................................................................... 28  

3. **Existing Condition Assessments** ...................................................... 29  
   A. Introduction ................................................................................... 30  
   B. Land Use Assessment ..................................................................... 31  
   C. Parking Assessment ....................................................................... 34  
   D. Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Assessment ............................ 37  
   E. Streets and Linkages Assessment ..................................................... 40  
   F. Solid Waste Assessment .................................................................. 43  
   G. Architectural Guidelines Assessment .............................................. 48  

4. **Downtown Recommendations - Land Based** ...................................... 49  
   A. Form Based Code (Future Land Use) .............................................. 50  
   B. Parks, Recreation, and Open Space ............................................... 54  
   Quakertown Park .............................................................................. 56  
   C. Architectural Design Guidelines ..................................................... 64  
   TOD Overview ................................................................................ 71  

5. **Downtown Recommendations - Infrastructure Based** ...................... 73  
   A. Streets and Linkages ...................................................................... 74  
   B. Bicycle Mobility ........................................................................... 88  
   C. Parking .......................................................................................... 98  
   D. Solid Waste ................................................................................ 108  

6. **Implementation Strategy** .................................................................... 115  
   A. Relationships ............................................................................... 116  
   B. Organizational Structure ............................................................... 118  
   D. Funding Mechanisms and Development Incentives ....................... 120  
   E. Implementation Strategy ............................................................... 124
a. Appendix
A. Bibliography................................................................. 130
B. Case Studies................................................................. 131
C. Stakeholder Survey....................................................... 138
D. DTIP Website................................................................... 143
E. News Articles................................................................. 144

List of Exhibits

Executive Summary
EX.0 - Catalyst Project Recommendations - Phase One................. 13
EX.1 - Short Term Priority Recommendations - Phase Two........... 14
EX.2 - Medium Term Priority Recommendations.......................... 14

1. Introduction
1.0 - Regional Area Map..................................................... 16
1.1 - Study Area Map......................................................... 16
1.2 - DCTA Station Rendering............................................ 18
1.3 - North Texas Daily Article.......................................... 19
1.4 - Dallas Morning News Article..................................... 19
1.5 - Downtown Location Map.......................................... 20

2. Public Involvement
2.0 - DTIP Logo.................................................................. 28

3. Existing Condition Assessments
3.0 - Existing Land Use Map.............................................. 31
3.1 - Land Use Summary................................................... 33
3.2 - Parking Assessment Map.......................................... 34
3.3 - Parking Assessment.................................................. 36
3.4 - Parks, Recreation, & Open Space Map.......................... 37
3.5 - Existing Streets Map.................................................. 40
3.6 - Denton Mobility Roadway Plan................................... 42
3.7 - Solid Waste Map........................................................ 43

4. Downtown Recommendations - Land Based
4.0 - Framework Plan....................................................... 50
4.1 - Block Face Example.................................................. 52
4.2 - Building Form.......................................................... 53
4.3 - Parks and Open Space Plan....................................... 54
4.4 - Quakertown Park Concept Plan.................................. 56
4.5 - Elevation Defining Correct Use of Elements.................... 67
4.6 - Elevation Defining Correct Use of Elements.................... 68
4.7 - LEED Certification Symbol........................................ 69
4.8 - TOD Districts............................................................ 70
4.9 - TOD Future Land Use Concept.................................... 70

5. Downtown Recommendations - Infrastructure Based
5.0 - Downtown Streets..................................................... 74
5.1 - Urban Transect.......................................................... 75
5.2 - Downtown Street One - Hickory Street (East of Square)........ 76
5.3 - 3-D Perspectives of Hickory Street................................. 77
5.4 - Downtown Street Two - Locust and Elm.......................... 78
5.5 - Downtown Street Three - Hickory and Oak (West of the Square)........... 79
5.6 - Downtown Street Four - Oak (East of the Square).................. 80
5.7 - Downtown Street Five - Sycamore...................................... 81
5.8 - Downtown Street Six - Mulberry........................................ 82
5.9 - Downtown Street Seven - Mews Streets............................... 83
5.10 - Downtown Street Eight - Alley Streets............................. 84
5.11 - Downtown Street Nine - Regional Streets.......................... 85
5.12 - Mews Street Concept Plan................................................ 86
5.13 - Mews Streets Prototype Trash and Delivery........................ 87
5.14 - Existing Street Hierarchy.................................................... 87
5.15 - Bicycle Mobility Plan....................................................... 88
5.16 - Traffic Accident Locations................................................ 90
5.17 - Bike Lane Signs............................................................... 92
5.18 - Shared Lane Marking.......................................................... 93
5.19 - Bicycles May Use Full Lane Sign........................................ 93
5.20 - Other Signs................................................................. 94
5.21 - Bike Route Signs............................................................. 94
5.22 - Hickory and Other Downtown Streets................................. 94
5.23 - Parking Strategy............................................................ 94
5.24 - Parking Calculations for New Development......................... 94
5.25 - Parking Calculations for Existing Development..................... 94
5.26 - Wayfinding Signage......................................................... 95
5.27 - Solid Waste Strategy....................................................... 95
5.28 - Hickory and Other Downtown Streets................................. 95
5.29 - Parking Strategy............................................................ 98
5.30 - Parking Calculations for New Development......................... 98
5.31 - Parking Calculations for Existing Development..................... 98
5.32 - Wayfinding Signage......................................................... 98
5.33 - Solid Waste Strategy....................................................... 98
6. Implementation Strategy
6.0 - Concept/Strategy/Implementation Relationships.................... 116
6.1 - Financial Characteristics of Downtown.................................. 117
6.2 - Recommended Funding Mechanisms and Development Incentives... 121
6.3 - Additional Supporting Tools............................................... 122
6.4 - Non Desirable Tools.......................................................... 124
6.5 - DTIP Implementation Strategy............................................. 124
6.6 - DTIP Implementation Strategy............................................. 125
6.7 - Cost Analysis - Prototypical Parking Garage......................... 128
List of Photographs

1. Introduction
   1.0 - Denton Courthouse.......................................................... 17
   1.1 - DCTA A-Train................................................................... 18

2. Public Involvement
   2.0 - Task Force Meeting.......................................................... 22
   2.1 - Participants at Public Meeting........................................... 23
   2.2 - Public Meeting #1............................................................ 24
   2.3 - Public Meeting # 2............................................................ 25
   2.4 - Public Meeting # 2............................................................ 26
   2.4 - Public Meeting # 2............................................................ 27

3. Existing Condition Assessments
   3.0 - Parking Conditions in Downtown..................................... 35
   3.1 - Downtown Denton Openspace......................................... 39
   3.2 - Downtown McKinney, Texas.......................................... 45
   3.3 - Downtown Rockwall, Texas............................................. 45
   3.4 - Solid Waste Removal Options......................................... 47
   3.5 - Orginal Opera House...................................................... 48
   3.6 - Downtown Square........................................................... 48
   3.7 - Downtown Circa 1940’s................................................... 48

4. Downtown Recommendations - Land Based
   4.0 - Active Community.......................................................... 51
   4.1 - Retail at Grade............................................................... 52
   4.2 - Residential at Grade...................................................... 52
   4.3 - Bicycle Accommodation............................................... 53
   4.4 - Open Space................................................................. 55
   4.5 - Jazz Fest........................................................................ 55
   4.6 - Lakefront...................................................................... 59
   4.7 - Library......................................................................... 59
   4.8 - Garden/Performance...................................................... 60
   4.9 - Park and Perimeter Edge............................................... 60
   4.10 - Pavilion/Performance.................................................. 61
   4.11 - Passive....................................................................... 61
   4.12 - Amphitheater/Performance......................................... 62
   4.13 - Civic Edge.................................................................. 63
   4.14 - Contributing Architecture in Downtown.......................... 64
   4.15 - Contributing Architecture in Downtown........................ 65
   4.16 - Contributing Architecture for Downtown...................... 66
   4.17 - Non-Contributing Architecture Facades in Downtown...... 70

5. Downtown Recommendations - Infrastructure Based
   5.0 - Hickory Street.............................................................. 95
   5.1 - Hickory Street at Denton Branch Trail.......................... 95
   5.2 - Sycamore at Denton Branch Rail Trail............................ 95
5.3 - Sycamore at Bell Avenue.................................................. 95
5.4 - Example of HAWK Signal................................................. 96
5.5 - Wayfinding Signage - North Texas Examples...................... 103
5.6 - Solid Waste Management............................................... 109
5.7 - Front Load Container and Truck...................................... 110
5.8 - Side Load Container and Truck........................................ 111
5.9 - Recycle Material Container............................................. 112
5.10 - Trash Container Screen............................................... 112
5.11 - Solid Waste Strategy Elements..................................... 113
Executive Summary

Downtown Denton is the cultural, social, and historic center for Denton, the heart of the community. Denton prepared and adopted the Denton Downtown Master Plan in 2002, which balances a desire to encourage development with an interest to ensure that proper design practices are employed. The purpose of this Downtown Implementation Plan (DTIP) is to achieve the 2002 Master Plan goals for downtown and to provide the implementation strategy roadmap to guide and coordinate public and private investments while increasing economic development downtown.
The DTIP was carefully coordinated with Denton city staff, and it was prepared with extensive community engagement so that the document reflects the values and preferences of the public. The Downtown Task Force guided the DTIP’s development; numerous stakeholder meetings were held; on-line surveys were conducted, plus project entries were included and updated on the city’s website; and two public meetings were held with open-house sessions, formal presentations, and questionnaires. In addition, a project logo was developed and used extensively, multiple city press releases were issued on the project, and two Denton Economic Development Downtown newsletter articles featured the DTIP project.

The DTIP addresses the approximately 155-acre “Downtown Core” area, which is bounded by Withers Street on the north, Exposition Street on the east, Sycamore Street on the south, and Carroll Boulevard on the west. The 2010 existing conditions in this study area were inventoried and analyzed to develop the DTIP’s implementation recommendations. The following topics were addressed: land use; parks and open space; architectural design; streets and linkages; bicycle mobility; parking; and solid waste.

The designs included are offered as a concept reflecting established standards. Of note, these street prototype cross sections were established without the aid of survey controlled information. The concepts presented will need to be modified during the design phase to include specific details regarding: utilities, building property lines, street right-of-way’s, buildings prior to redevelopment and other site specific items. Additionally, some segments of existing street right-of-way’s may not be able to accommodate the proposed recommendations. This may require securing additional right-of-way property or as noted, a modified design configuration.

This document’s implementation strategy builds a framework for strategic investment and provides short- and medium-term action items that city decision-makers can execute in a tactical way. The implementation strategy identifies and evaluates potential funding mechanisms and development incentives; and it details a prioritized step-by-step implementation strategy. Case study references for transit-oriented development (TOD) projects in Plano and Dallas show how downtown development can be achieved in Denton using the right tools and incentives to capitalize on upcom-
ing downtown transit investment. This implementation strategy is intended as a guide, rather than a controlling mechanism, because downtown is a dynamic, urban environment and part of a larger whole.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIMING</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
<th>COST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short Term</td>
<td>Create TIF District (Tax Increment Finance District)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pursue NCTCOG Sustainable Development funding and grants</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formally adopt FBC (Form Based Code)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create and implement wayfinding signage network for parking</td>
<td>$125 k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Screen all trash containers in the Square District</td>
<td>$600 k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Term</td>
<td>Create DDC (Downtown Development Corporation)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create DPMA (Downtown Parking Management Authority)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implement Hickory Street “Grand Street” project</td>
<td>$4.1 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enlarge existing public parking lots</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Catalyst Project Recommendations - Phase One_  
*Exhibit EX.0*

**Catalyst Projects**

Summary Exhibit EX.0 lists catalyst projects, which are recommended as the highest implementation priorities for downtown Denton, as these activities provide the necessary implementation tools to stimulate downtown economic development and to realize the downtown master plan. These first steps, which Denton should complete expeditiously (within the next three years) are listed in the table below.

**TIF District**

One of the most important of the above catalyst recommendations is to create the TIF district as this tool will provide the funding to build new downtown infrastructure and give the private sector incentives to invest in downtown. A TIF assigns future taxes from proposed development, which would not accrue but for that development, to infrastructure, land costs, and related improvements needed to accomplish the development. TIF is locally initiated and administered, does not count against a municipality’s debt limit, and does not raise residents’ taxes. This tool is an especially important funding mechanism for downtown Denton.

**Short Term - Phase Two Projects**

Summary Exhibit EX.1 lists additional short-term recommendations that Denton should work to complete over the next five years.
**ELEMENTS** | **RECOMMENDATIONS**
---|---
**Land Use** | Formally adopt DTIP
Establish a new zoning district in the Denton Development Code titled “Downtown District”

**Architectural Design** | Formally adopt DTIP, which defines quality, place, and environmental design elements
Follow tri-partite architectural proportions

**Streets and Linkages** | Adopt DTIP street standards for downtown
Implement early-action street and mobility items

**Bicycle Mobility** | Adopt DTIP bicycle standards for downtown

**Parking** | Increase on-street parking
Establish cash-in-lieu-of-spaces parking program
Early-action parking projects

**Solid Waste** | Conduct pilot program
Implement preferred plan (location, type, and pricing for solid waste removal)

---

**Short Term Priority Recommendations - Phase Two**

**Exhibit EX.1**

**Medium Term - Priority Projects**
Summary Exhibit 3 lists additional medium-term priority recommendations that should be completed within the next five years. These priorities include: creating a series improvements for downtown which will leverage additional growth and redevelopment.

Downtown Denton has great potential to grow and be-

```
**ELEMENTS** | **RECOMMENDATIONS**
---|---
**Parks and Open Space** | Create a series of urban spaces: pocket parks, neighborhood parks, and wide pedestrian sidewalks
Create public music and fine arts venues
Implement Quakertown Park Master Plan

**Architectural Design** | Establish LEED rating goal for all new development

**Streets and Linkages** | Modify city mobility plan to include downtown street standards
Implement Mews Streets program for parking, safety, and solid waste removal

**Bicycle Mobility** | Implement bicycle lanes on Sycamore Street for access to the proposed DCTA transit center
Conduct traffic studies for specific intersection designs (involve TxDOT)
Implement bicycle signage program downtown (shared and designated bike lanes)
Incorporate DTIP bicycle standards into city of Denton systems and standards

**Parking** | Establish shared-parking program

**Solid Waste** | Establish a broad downtown waste recycling program
Create a downtown recycling center
```

**Medium Term Priority Recommendations**

*Exhibit EX.3*

come an even more dynamic place to live, work, and play. This plan provides the guide to achieve that future for downtown Denton.