

How Downtowns?

Houston-Galveston Area Council
Bringing Back Main Street Program



NOV
NORRIS DESIGN

25 January 2022

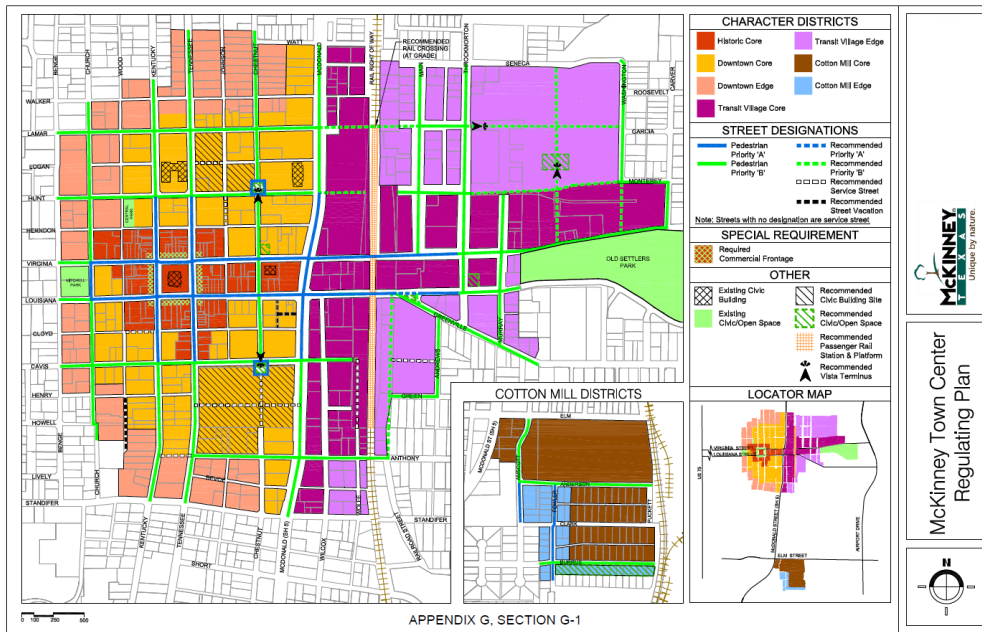
How Downtowns?

but really -

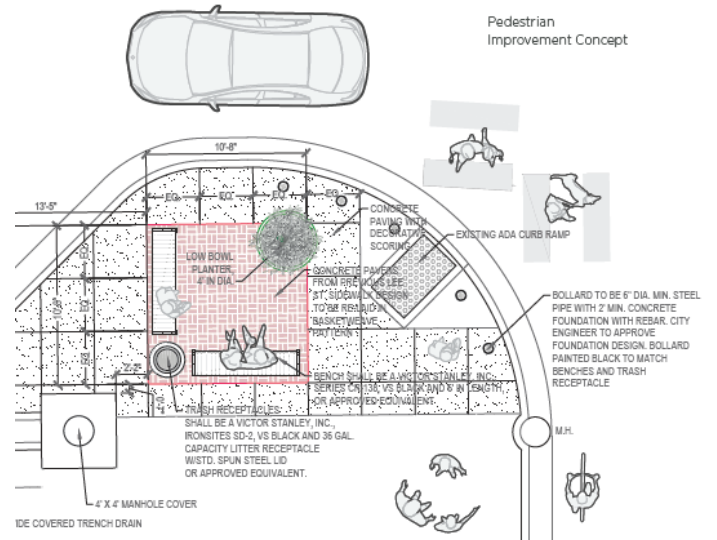
How are Downtowns Successful?

1. People
2. Place
3. Purpose

Downtown – Planning & Design



Planning



Site Design

Rick Leisner, AICP, PLA

Norris Design

Agenda



Agenda:

1. 3P's

- People
- Place
- Purpose

2. Case Studies

- Denton
- Sanger
- McKinney
- Fort Worth, TX (corridors)
- Athens
- Sabinal

People



People

P1 - People

1. Define your primary user group?
 - Young vs. elderly
 - Family vs. singles
 - Children vs. adults
 - Alcohol vs. non-alcohol
2. How will people arrive?
 - auto, walk, bike, transit, etc.
 - arrival sequence
3. Create people living in downtown.
4. Create people eating in downtown.
5. This all creates economic success in downtown.

Place (i.e. PLACE making)



Place

P2 - Place (PLACE making)

1. The act of design a quality place
 - Comfort and image
 - Sociability
 - Access and connections
 - Activities
2. Places need to have flexibility
 - Moveable chairs and tables
3. Places need to have green
4. Places should be designed for a broad set of users if possible
5. PLACE making can be achieved on a low budget (\$\$)

Purpose



Purpose

P3 - Purpose

1. Purpose = Programming
 - Activities
 - Family
 - Food
 - Fun
 - Related to existing site
2. Create a special downtown association
 - Main Street
 - EDC
3. Full or part-time organization
4. Requires funding

Lessons Learned

CASE STUDIES

A photograph of a pedestrian-friendly downtown street. The street is paved with brick and lined with trees. On the left, there are shops with awnings, including one with a sign that says "RITZ". In the foreground, a woman is sitting on a chair, and a man and a child are sitting on a bench. The background shows more buildings and parked cars. The text "CASE STUDIES" is overlaid in large, bold, black letters across the center of the image.

Downtown Denton



Downtown Denton

1. Hickory Street the focus
2. Auto only environment - wide
3. No focus on PLACE
4. The Square was alive, but City wanted additional success
5. The vision – Create a simple pedestrian street.
 - wide sidewalks
 - tame the traffic (City Engineers)



Downtown Denton

Downtown Denton /Lessons Learned

1. Wider sidewalks w/ outdoor dining allowed
2. Street trees
3. Reduced lane width 15' to 11'
4. Change existing parallel parking to angled and back in stalls (for safety of bikes)



Downtown Sanger



Downtown Sanger

1. Downtown includes 6 or 8 blocks
2. Currently struggling
3. Little to draw young Sanger families downtown.
4. PLACE making poor
5. Looking for a catalyst opportunity



Downtown Sanger

DOWNTOWN SCENARIO: PREFERRED

LEGEND

Urban Single Family Residential	Urban Mixed-Use	Religion	Utility
Urban Multi-Family Residential	Urban Retail	School	Parking
Mixed-Use Development	Civic/Municipal	Park	Existing Building



Downtown Sanger / Lessons Learned

1. Create a new downtown Park
2. Simple design / multi-function
3. Focus design on family friendly
 - Food trucks
 - Lawn for play
 - Stage for music / etc.



Downtown McKinney

Downtown McKinney

1. 1980's downtown in decline
2. No quality
3. No focus on PLACE
4. A good amount of buildings to support new growth – if it comes



Downtown McKinney

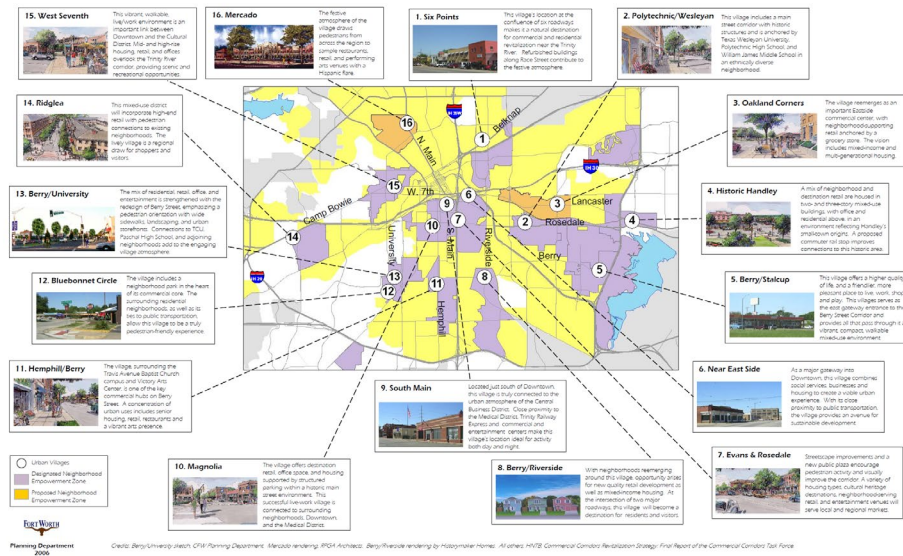
Downtown McKinney / Lessons Learned

1. Increase the pedestrian realm (5' to 15+')
2. Tame the traffic
3. Allow shops to come outside
4. Outside dining
5. Create community events (program / purpose)
Octoberfest / Christmas / Car shows / Bike rally



Fort Worth's Urban Corridors (Villages)

Community Vision for Urban Villages and Surrounding Neighborhood Empowerment Zones



Corridors in Fort Worth

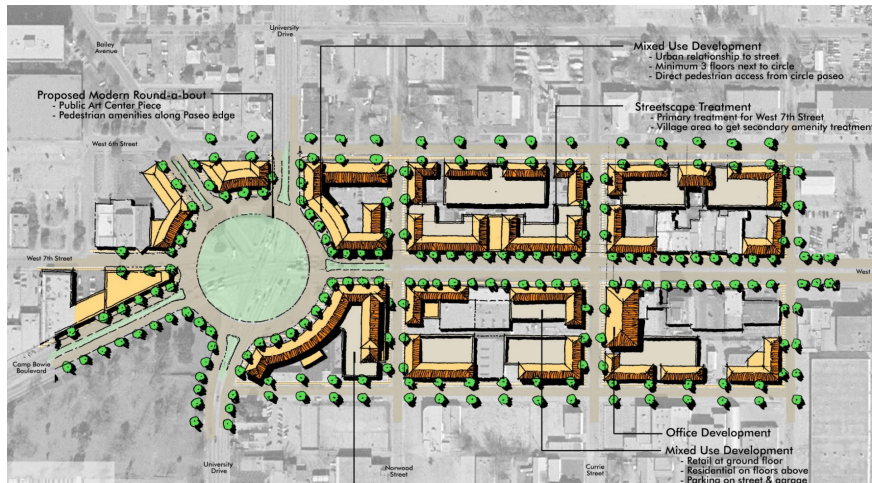
1. Commercial corridors needing upgrade
2. Detailed analysis
3. Catalyst for new investment / series:
 - Opportunities for density, public space, transit, large parcels and good access (ped & auto)
4. Village actions will assist the entire corridor and grow. (Value add)

Typical City Commercial Corridor

Fort Worth's Urban Corridors (Villages)

Corridors in Fort Worth / Lessons Learned

1. Create a downtown place
2. Create a value-added condition
3. Use PLACE Making



Downtown Athens



Downtown Athens

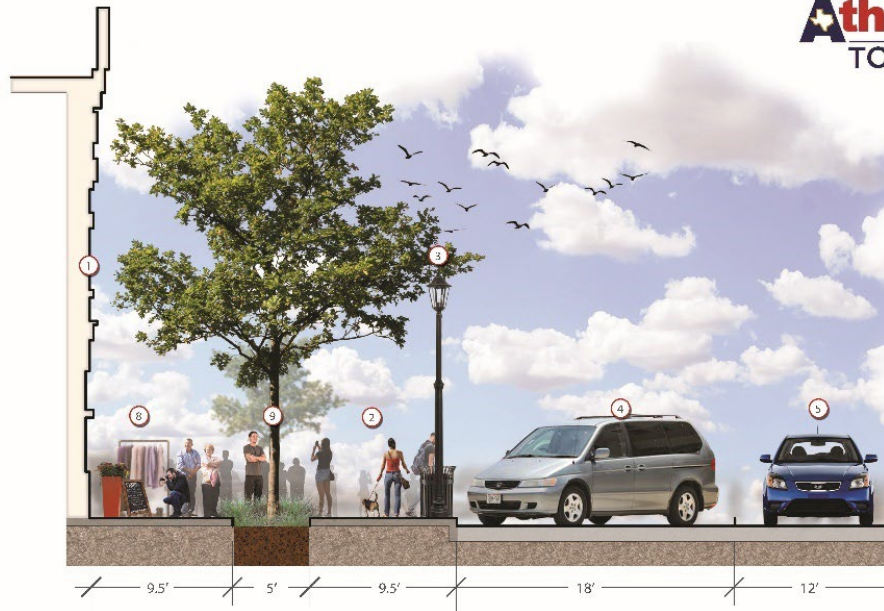
1. Square has great potential
2. Ruled by the auto / TX DOT roadways
3. Create “Complete Street”
4. Needs a low cost solution
5. Requires TX DOT support
6. Public process was a part of the success



Downtown Athens

Downtown Athens / Lessons Learned

1. With the support of the public . . .
2. “Road Diet”
3. PLACE making w/ string lights
4. Safety for pedestrians!



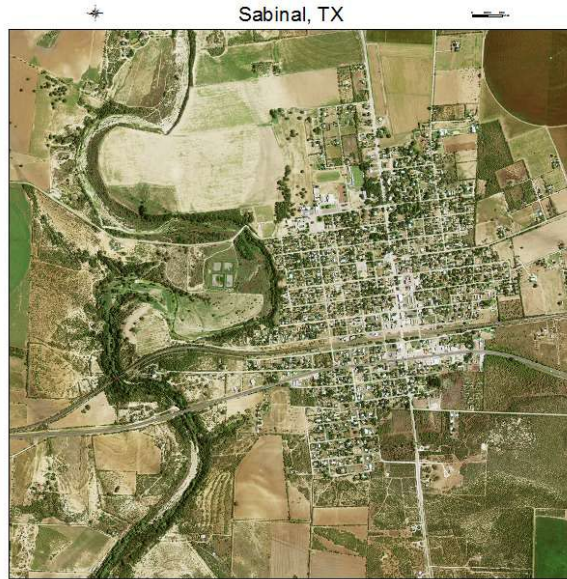
Athens
TOMORROW

- ① RETAIL BUILDING
- ② PEDESTRIAN SIDEWALK
- ③ EXISTING AMENITIES
- ④ PARKED CARS
- ⑤ OUT-BOUND LANE
- ⑥ IN-BOUND LANE
- ⑦ COLUMN Y COURTHOUSE
- ⑧ STREET RETAIL ZONE
- ⑨ STREET SHADE TREE

SCALE: 1" = 10'



Downtown Sabinal



Downtown Sabinal

1. Main Street downtown
2. Linear in form
3. Need to stop and slow down traffic
4. Needs a green space
5. Requires TX DOT support



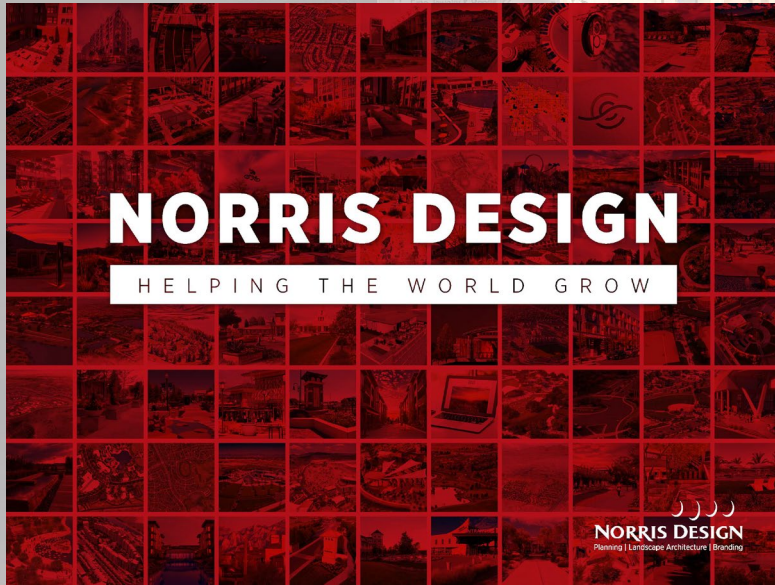
Downtown Sabinal



Downtown Sabinal / Future Opportunities

1. Work with community on downtown space – family focus
2. What are economic assets to grow?
3. Tame the traffic
4. Understand economic framework of south central Texas
 - Uvalde
 - Leakey, etc.
5. Public process

Question & Answers



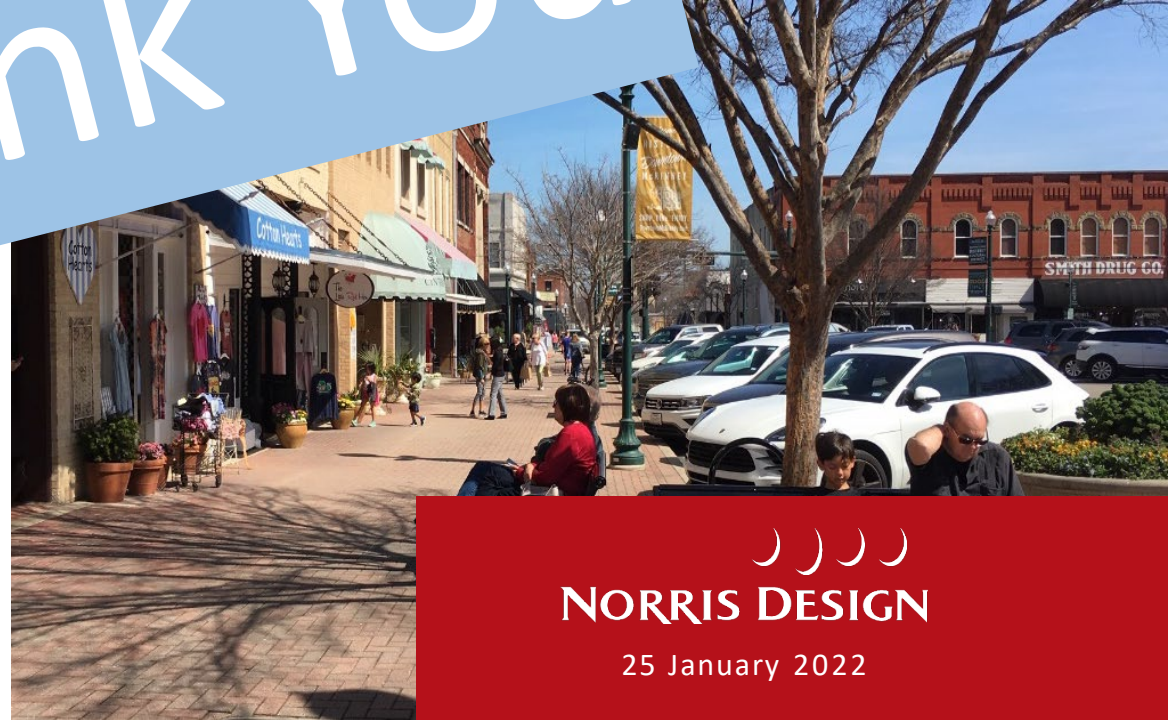
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Thank You



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