DUBLIN
CALIFORNIA

A VISION FOR DOWNTOWN DUBLIN

URBAN FIELD/els+

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

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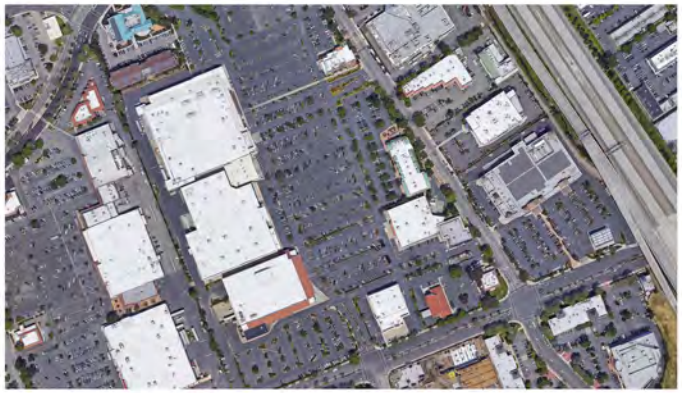

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01 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Dublin is ready for an update to the Downtown. This booklet summarizes the Vision for Downtown Dublin that was adopted by Dublin City Council on November 5, 2019. The adopted Vision will transform the existing format of the area into a mixed-use downtown with a Town Square. The future downtown will look and feel more like a classic downtown with places to walk, conveniences nearby, and a central place to gather.

The purpose of this booklet is to capture the intention of the Downtown Vision and provide a reference for discussion about future development in the Downtown. The Downtown Dublin Specific Plan and zoning code are in the process of amendment to align with the Vision. The adopted zoning code and Downtown Dublin Specific Plan will prevail as guiding policy. This booklet will not be updated to reflect the updates.

The booklet summarizes the Vision in Chapters 02 and 03, describes the urban realm in Chapters 04 through 06, and suggests the Development Standards necessary to bring the Vision to reality, in Chapter 07. Chapters 08 through 10 review the community process that informed the Vision.

This booklet was created for the City of Dublin to document and describe the Vision for the future downtown. It describes the aspirations, elements, and process to those who may carry it forward.

02 WHERE IS DOWNTOWN DUBLIN?

Downtown Dublin is located at an important historical crossroads for the area, and at the intersection of Interstate 680 and 580. The West Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station is at the edge of the Downtown and just a few blocks from downtown retailers.

Largely developed over the last 50 years, the Dublin commercial landscape is defined by low-rise, surface parked, big box retail and small shopping centers. With the closure of several big box retailers, it is clear that retail is evolving and that these older shopping centers will not remain a competitive format forever.

The identity of Downtown Dublin suffers from the old shopping center format, being too low-density and auto-oriented. The development pattern of the existing downtown does not visually establish a center, nor does it have memorable unique features. The future Downtown can build off the success of the established retail assets and become a destination that is competitive with other downtown locations in the Tri-Valley.

Even though the City of Dublin currently lacks a traditional walkable downtown, it has the perfect location. Unlike other near-by communities, Downtown Dublin has the distinct advantage of direct access to two freeways and BART. The potential area of redevelopment is also large enough to create a downtown of significant scale - elevating the City's ability to be a regional destination for jobs, housing and cultural activities.

DOWNTOWN DUBLIN IS AT THE CROSSROADS OF THE TRI-VALLEY

In 2011, the City of Dublin formally identified the downtown area. It is defined by the Downtown Dublin Specific Plan (DDSP) at the intersection of Interstates 580 and 680. This area is bounded by San Ramon Road and Amador Valley Boulevard, Village Parkway and Interstate 580.

- Two blocks from West Dublin/Pleasanton BART
- Easily accessible and highly visible from Interstate 580 and 680
- At the historical and natural crossroads in Dublin

The City lacks a traditional walkable downtown, but has the perfect location.

03 A VISION FOR DOWNTOWN DUBLIN

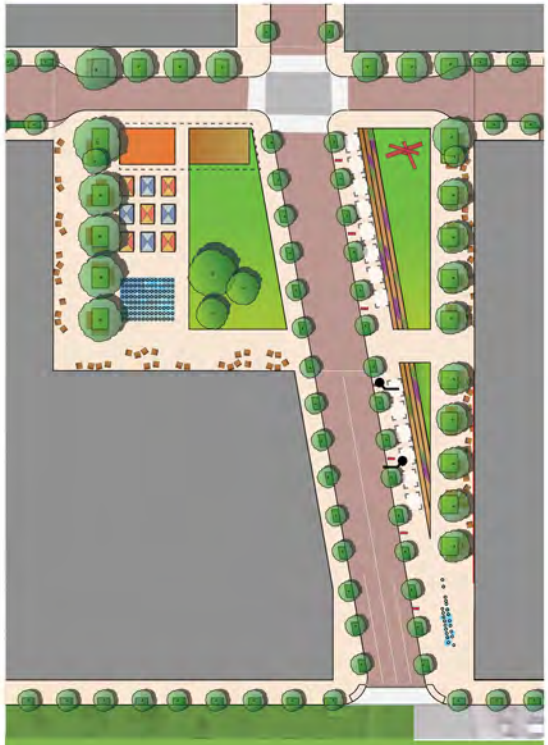
The Downtown Dublin Preferred Vision proposes a mixed-use strategy to create a place that is active throughout the day and week. Office, housing and hospitality uses create an on-site population that helps support retail uses enjoyed by the larger community. The immediate convenience of shops, services and restaurants also increases the likelihood that the on-site community will stay local and create pedestrian activity downtown throughout the day. This downtown lifestyle will fill a missing gap in Dublin appealing to both young professionals and seniors who want the convenience of living in a mixed-use place with jobs, services and retail nearby.

There are three distinct elements of the Downtown Dublin Vision: the Town Square, Street Grid, and Downtown Character.

The Vision for Downtown Dublin stated in the Downtown Dublin Specific Plan (DDSP) reads:

"Downtown Dublin will be a vibrant and dynamic commercial and mixed-use center that provides a wide array of opportunities for shopping, services, dining, working, living and entertainment in a pedestrian friendly and aesthetically pleasing setting that attracts both local and regional residents."

TOWN SQUARE



The Town Square is the central public gathering place in Downtown. It is a plaza and a park that brings people together for a meal, to meet up, to go shopping, or relax during the work day.

STREET GRID

The Street Grid is the key to providing a traditional downtown format. The street grid breaks the larger big box centric shopping centers into a walkable block pattern.

DOWNTOWN CHARACTER

The Downtown Character establishes the identity of a city center. The mixed-use buildings, located in close proximity to each other will offer convenience, vibrancy, and a sense of place.

04 TOWN SQUARE

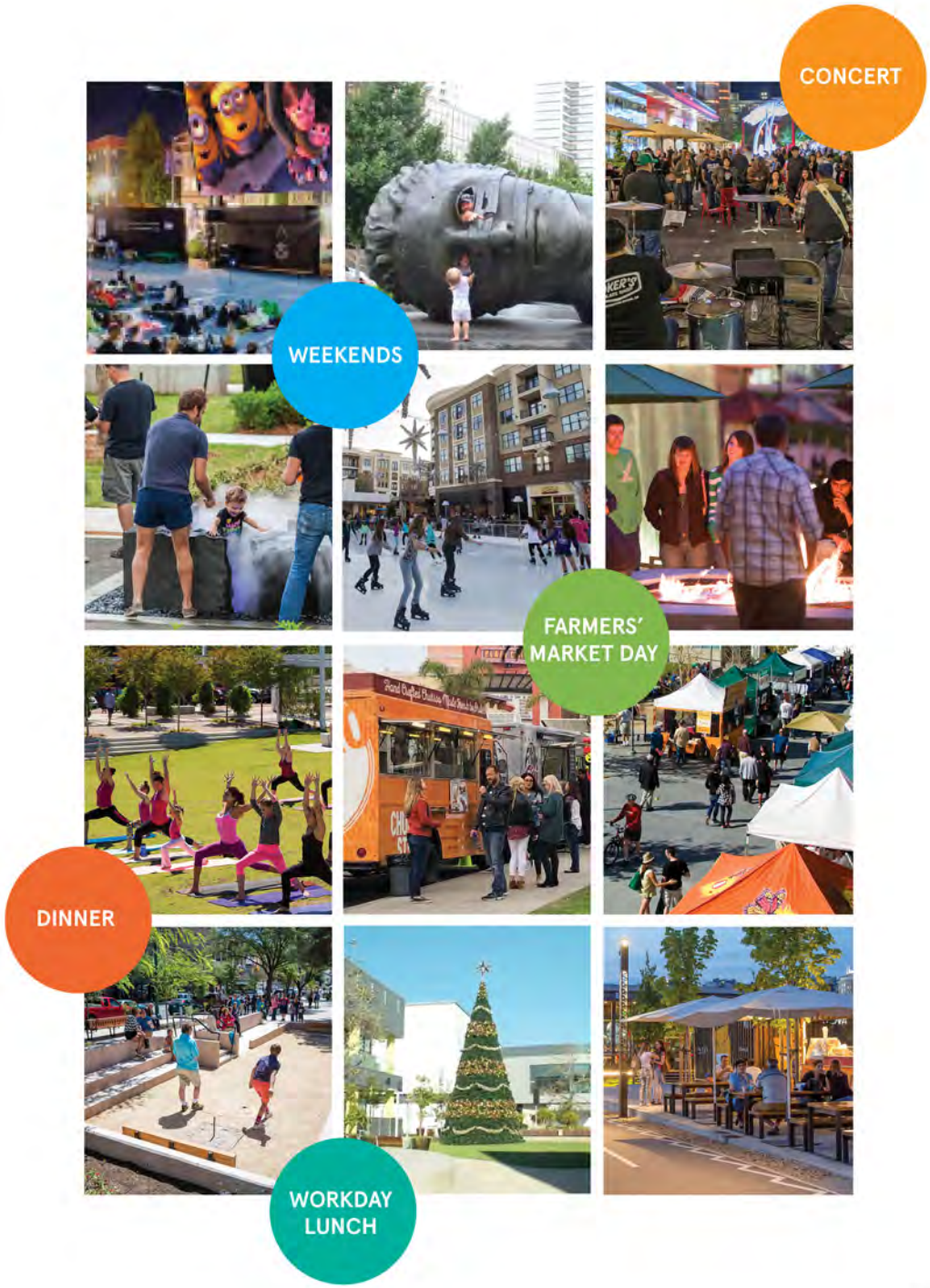
The Town Square is a one-acre park and plaza that will serve as Downtown Dublin's gathering place.

The Town Square shown has two parts, a traditional square portion and a triangular portion across the extension of Golden Gate Drive. The experience of the park also includes the streets that are within it.

The size of the Town Square from building face to building face will be 200′ by 300′ and will include a market promenade, outdoor dining, and event space.

The Town Square has been designed with open space for activation and will concentrate activity to an area where everyone can see each other.

Programming can include weekly farmers' market, yoga in the park, concerts, play and water features, and outdoor seating. The Town Square may also be programmed with temporary events that may occasionally include street closures.



These are some of the things people surveyed wanted for the Town Square:
1
2
3
4
5
6
LANDSCAPE/ GREEN SPACE
WALKABLE
SHADE FEATURES
FARMERS' MARKET
CLEAN
HAVING A PLACE TO MEET FRIENDS
A PLACE TO RELAX, READ, AND PEOPLE WATCH
SAFE
EVENTS: CONCERTS, OUTDOOR FILMS, CITY EVENTS
DISCOVER SPACE FOR PEOPLE
FAMILY FRIENDLY
FOOD VENDORS

1
2
3
4
5
6

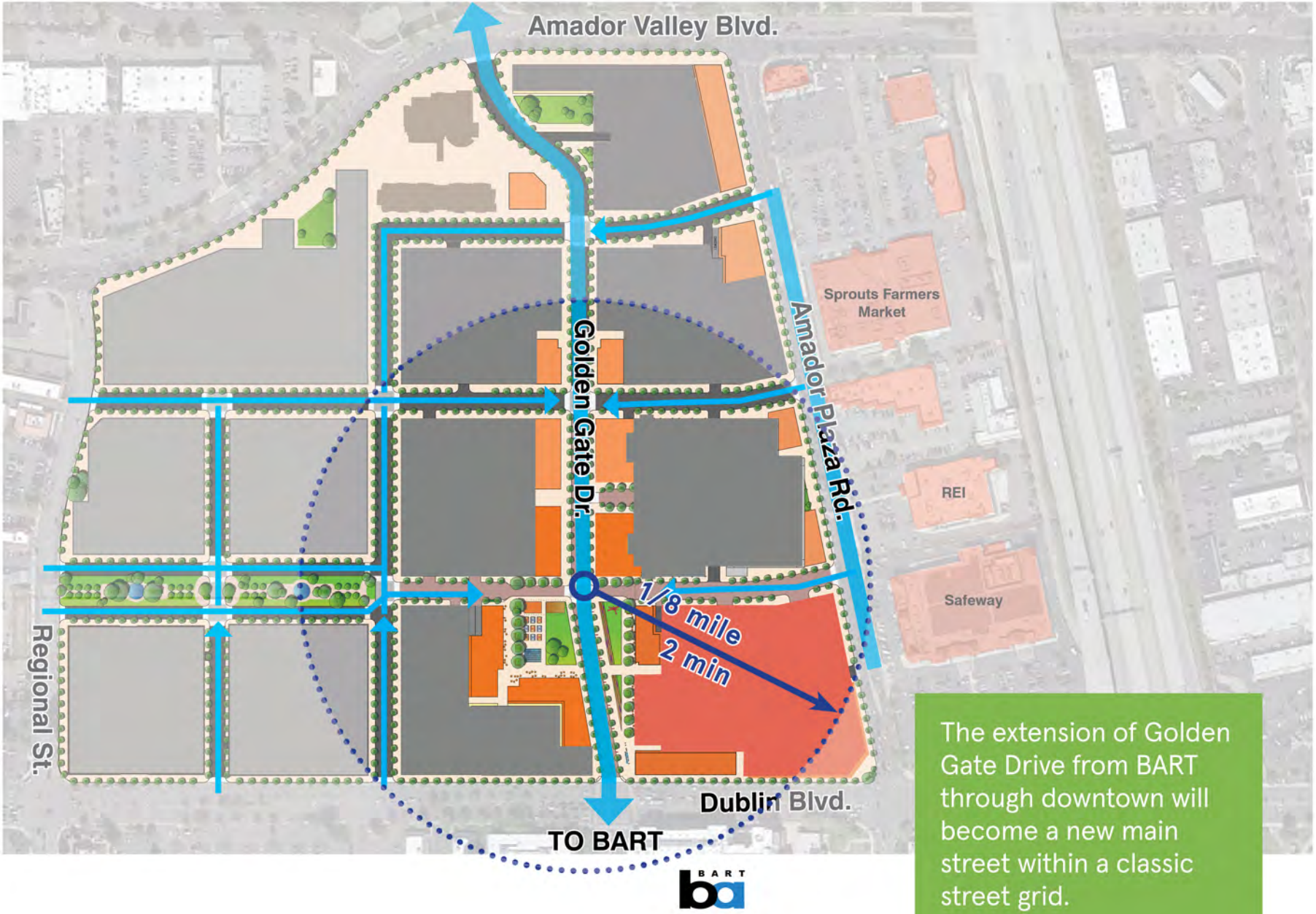
05 STREET GRID

The proposed street grid provides a unifying framework that integrates varied activities and amenities into a coherent district. Direct connectivity to the Town Square enhances the value of nearby parcels as does connectivity to key tenants such as Safeway, REI and Sprouts Farmers Market.

The gridded street pattern breaks down the sense of distance and effort that often deters pedestrian activity. There are more opportunities for spontaneous and unplanned purchases when consumers walk instead of driving between shops. In regards to the car, the street grid helps disperse traffic by providing more options for connections. Additional benefits such as intuitive way-finding and traffic calming further enhance the overall value and experience of the district.

The grid is also designed for development flexibility and shifts in market demand. The number of streets and the distances between them are carefully considered to allow walkability and parcel sizes that support office, hospitality and residential development amongst retail. Blocks are designed to accommodate parking structures and buildings that line or wrap around them. This reduces the visibility of parking, and provides more opportunities for entries on each side of the block. Parking structures can be designed to blend in with the urban environment, be attractive and be easy to use.

The resulting streetscape includes generous sidewalks and landscaping and serve all modes of transportation.



The extension of Golden Gate Drive from BART through downtown will become a new main street within a classic street grid.

06 DOWNTOWN CHARACTER

Retail is changing, and to remain competitive brick-and-mortar retail formats are now catering to customers that prefer experience over convenience.

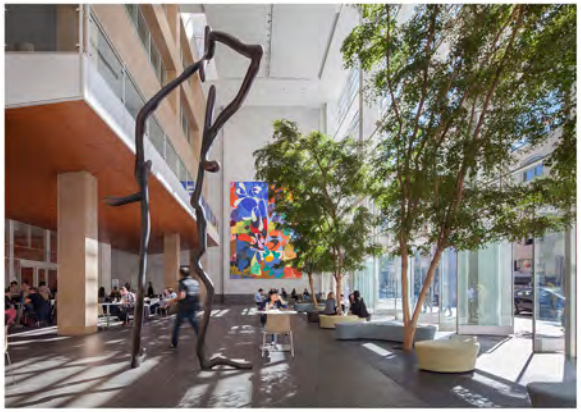
There are many benefits to building new development with a Downtown Character. The mixed-use format diversifies the economic base of the entire district. Residents, workers, shoppers, visitors, and locals will activate the district more continuously throughout the day, week, and year. A Downtown Character invites a range of activity and has the flexibility to endure change.

The mix of uses that are desired for Downtown include:

- Retail ranging from small independent to national and regional serving tenants
- Restaurants and cafes
- Professional Services
- Entertainment
- Office
- Housing
- Hotels

The massing and density that support the mix of uses envisioned aligns with the vision of the DDSP. DDSP design standards will be amended to reflect the intended character through a separate process in 2020.

The Downtown Character is distinctive in comparison to other places in the Tri-Valley. It will help to establish a sense of place.



AERIAL VIEW UP GOLDEN GATE DRIVE FROM DUBLIN BOULEVARD - From above, it is possible to see how mixed-uses are configured. Blocks are designed to allow for parking structures to be hidden by buildings that surround them. There is enough space for courtyards in the middle and to mix smaller and larger formats.

DOWNTOWN DUBLIN TOWN SQUARE – This view is set from one of the perimeter buildings that overlooks the Town Square. The Town Square is the central gathering place in Downtown Dublin, with a variety of spaces for all to enjoy.

GOLDEN GATE DRIVE - Mixed-use buildings with retail at the ground floor line Golden Gate Drive. The opportunity to live, work, and play are all located within walking distance from each other, making it possible to park once and walk to all the conveniences.

07 DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The following page shows one scenario, amongst many, for the potential build out of the downtown. It is a test of potential development. The ideas shown illustrate the potential form buildings and the urban realm would take to achieve the downtown character intended. The scenario tested does not comply with existing development standards for the Retail District, which were written for a low-density suburban large format retail.

The scenario demonstrates what is possible within the timeframe of the next 20 to 50 years. It shows the Downtown Core, which is anticipated to be the first area to be developed. The North and West Core are both new neighborhoods that could be developed on independent timelines.

The scenario shows:

1. **A NEW TOWN SQUARE.** This would be the focal point for the district and is located a block from Dublin Boulevard, yet in a place that is still visible from Dublin Boulevard. The size of the town square is approximately 1.0 acre. Distinctive open space, in the form of plazas, neighborhood parks, and courtyards, would also be found throughout the district to be enjoyed by both downtown residents and the general public.

2. **A NEW GRID OF PUBLICLY DEDICATED STREETS.** The streets are carefully placed in this scenario to form blocks that are a walkable size. This scenario shows Golden Gate Drive extending north from the West Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station, and five new public streets that add up to about 7,600 linear feet in total.

- A Street is located over an existing utility right-of-way, which becomes the northern boundary of the new town square.
- The walkable character of the street will include traffic calming measures and a streetscape that supports a vibrant atmosphere. Cars are expected to cruise down Golden Gate Drive, rather than pass through it quickly.
- The scenario imagines a lively streetscape on Golden Gate Drive with enough sidewalk space for sidewalk dining, landscaping, and other amenities.
- The new streets will include on-street parking and passenger drop off and pick up locations.

(Text continues on following pages)

AMADOR VALLEY BOULEVARD
RETAIL DISTRICT
Senior Center
STREET C
RETAIL DISTRICT
Sprouts Farmers Market
STREET B
AMADOR PLAZA ROAD
REI
FIRST STREET
DOWNTOWN CORE
STREET A
Safeway
REGIONAL STREET
SECOND STREET
GOLDEN GATE DRIVE
LARGE FORMAT RETAILER ABOVE PARKING
DUBLIN BOULEVARD
PHASE 1 OF DOWNTOWN CORE
TRANSIT ORIENTED DISTRICT
LEGEND
DOWNTOWN CORE
SUBDISTRICT BOUNDARY
UTILITY RIGHT-OF-WAY
PHASE BOUNDARY
RETAIL
RESTAURANTS
LARGE FORMAT RETAILER
PARK, PLAZA OR COURTYARD
HOUSING
OFFICE
HOTEL
EXISTING RETAIL

3. **A VARIETY OF RETAIL.** In this scenario, existing large format retail is replaced in phases (not all at once) as business terms change. The retail that incrementally replaces the "big boxes" is a mixture of food and beverage retail (about 78,000 square feet) and neighborhood and regional serving shops (100,000 sf). To provide flexibility, blocks are also sized large enough to accommodate future large format retailers that park on the roof.
    - It is important to note that retail is concentrated along Golden Gate Drive and by the future town square in this scenario.
    - Golden Gate Drive - with smaller shops, entertainment, and dining - will complement the existing retail on Amador Plaza Road to make this a competitive retail location in the Tri-Valley.
    - The retail in this scenario is attractive to both the local and regional population and concentrated in a way that customers can easily walk from one shop to another without driving.
    - The design of retail in downtown is important to the leasability and success of Downtown Dublin. Future development will need to design for retail first and prioritize the ground floor experience before designing the housing above it.

4. **HOUSING.** New housing will be located above the retail that is shown near the town square. This puts the new community of downtown residents close to the amenities of the district. In this configuration, it is possible to go downstairs or walk a block or two for a coffee and shopping. The average size of the housing shown here is a 1000 sf, 1-bedroom apartment which is perfect for professionals and empty nesters. Parking for the housing is accommodated in parking structures that are hidden from view by the units that wrap around or are placed on top of them. The six blocks that make up the Downtown Core in this scenario include around 600 units. Affordable housing is expected as an integrated component of new housing.

5. **OFFICE.** Two office buildings are shown located near the town square. Workers can walk from BART and take advantage of the amenities in the downtown area. They add to the daytime activity of the area. The two office buildings in this scenario are visible from Interstate 680 and are approximately 300,000 sf in size. Two future office buildings are also shown in the West Core along Dublin Boulevard.

6. **HOTEL.** There is the opportunity to make the downtown a destination with a boutique hotel within the heart of the downtown. The hotel shown would be about 200 rooms with lobbies that have restaurants and bars in them.

7. **PARKING.** Parking structures and areas are thoughtfully located and sized for the land uses in the area, with the potential for shared parking to be used for the most efficient parking in the area. Parking is located in the center of blocks and concealed as much as possible.

8. **OTHER NEIGHBORHOOD SERVING USES**. Land uses that complement the Senior Center and provide cultural significance to the people of Dublin were not shown in any specific location in this scenario, but were imagined as part of the downtown.

08 SUPPORT FROM THE CITY OF DUBLIN

The City Council adopted this Preferred Vision for Downtown Dublin on November 5, 2019.

The Preferred Vision builds upon the DDSP's vision and its intent to do the following:

- Move forward with Phase 1 (Town Square and surrounding development) in the next five years.
- Engage private stakeholders by generating interest.
- Be used to understand stakeholder goals and objectives.
- Guide potential deal structures and/or match potential partners.
- Better communicate the City's expectations and development approval process with more clarity and certainty.
- Initiate an amendment to the General Plan, DDSP and any other policy document.
- Chart a path forward over the next few decades.

Public spaces such as the Town Square can be used to attract high quality retail and office tenants. By creating connectivity to a mix of uses through the street grid, the benefits of these amenities can be shared with nearby parcels beyond an immediate adjacency.

To the greatest extent possible, the City will work with interested property owners to implement the Downtown Preferred Vision.

The City has set aside funds for the Town Square and is prepared to acquire the land for the Town Square or exchange the dedication of the land for fee credits.

The City has identified additional resources from reserves, collected fees and community benefits, and land proceeds that can fund a portion of the cost of other public open spaces, publicly dedicated streets, and utility improvements.

Private developers will need to contribute to future infrastructure improvements through:

- Impact fees
- In-kind developer contributions
- Community benefit payments

There are a few other options for funding the construction and maintenance of future infrastructure improvements:

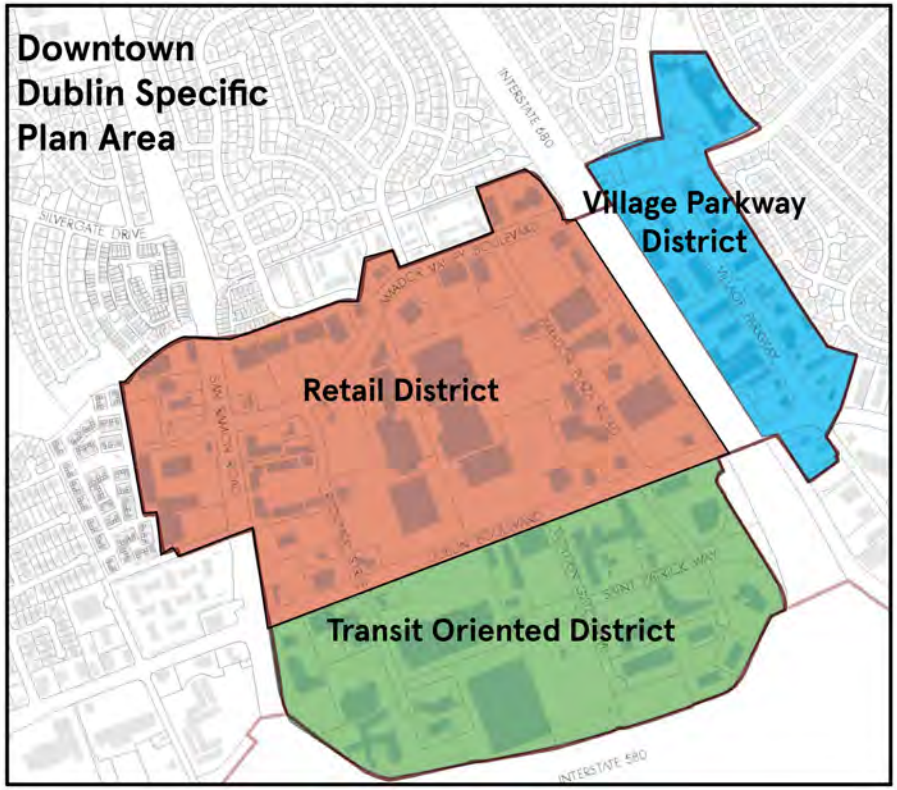
- Explore creating a Community Facilities District, or use of other property-based funding tools
- Explore grants for street improvements. These include:
  - Measure B/BB Funds, Alameda County Transportation Commission
  - One Bay Area Grants, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
  - Active Transportation Program, California Transportation Commission
  - Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities, California HCD

THE CITY OF DUBLIN WILL WORK WITH INTERESTED PROPERTY OWNERS TO IMPLEMENT THE DOWNTOWN PREFERRED VISION

VIEW FROM DUBLIN BLVD. & GOLDEN GATE DR. – The view across Dublin Boulevard is an extension of the existing route from the West Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station. This gateway to the Downtown gives a peek into the Town Square and invites the community to visit.

09 THE VISIONING PROCESS

The City of Dublin has been planning for a downtown for a while. The West Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station opened in 2011. Also in 2011, the City Council made it a high priority goal to prepare a comprehensive Downtown Dublin Specific Plan (DDSP). The plan included a community outreach process, a traffic study, updated development standards, and the establishment of a Development Pool and Community Benefit Program.



2006-2007
City Council high priority goal to prepare a comprehensive DDSP

2009
DDSP Guiding Principles (Chapter 3)

2009
Building heights increased, Land Use Concept, Development Pool, Community Benefit Program proposed

2010
Traffic Studied

2011
DDSP adopted

BART opens West Dublin/ Pleasanton Station

2011
ULI TAP suggests removing residential unit cap

July 2014
Amendment adopted

Nov. 2019
DDPV approved

10 COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Downtown Dublin Preferred Vision

May 2019
Open City Hall Survey Opens

June 13
Community Meeting 1

-26 attendants

July 31
Survey Closes

-248 responses

September 14
Splatter

-Spoke to 174 people
-Collected 35 comment cards

Summer
7 Farmers' Markets

September 16
Community Meeting 2

-70 attendants
-45 comments collected

The Vision for Downtown Dubin is built from community support. The City asked for the community's participation in the siting of the Town Square and in the planning of the Preferred Vision. Participants were overwhelmingly in support of the vision for a new downtown.

Feedback about the Downtown Dublin Preferred Vision:

"I love the idea of a mixed-use area!"

"Create places for more people to make downtown more lively."

"As a 40 year resident of Dublin, I'm excited at the idea of our "own" downtown."

"The time horizon is too long, do it sooner!"

In 2011, the Urban Land Institute conducted a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) to study the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) District adjacent to the BART Station. The TAP "truthed" the viability of the Specific Plan and made suggestions for implementing the DDSP, including streetscape improvements on Golden Gate Drive and a focus on residential in the TOD district by removing residential unit caps. The City of Dublin took the suggestions seriously and worked to amend the DDSP in 2014 and improve Golden Gate Drive.

The vision to create "a vibrant and dynamic commercial and mixed-use center" from its current pattern of big box and fragmented ownership presents many challenges. In 2018, the Urban Land Institute revisited Downtown Dublin with a rare second Technical Assistance Panel to assist with the Retail District. The 2018 TAP made suggestions for untangling the Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions at Dublin Place and Dublin Plaza Center, and suggested locating a gathering space with programmed amenities to create a sense of place.

The City Council, through its Strategic Planning process, continues to place importance on the Downtown. Through the City Council's Strategic Plan, the Council has directed Staff to focus efforts on ways to strengthen the City's economic vitality, including the Downtown, through public investment and economic development.

The City of Dublin has made downtown a priority as demonstrated by:

- Establishing a Downtown Action Team consisting of various City departments
- Adopting the Downtown Dublin Preferred Vision
- Amending and updating the Downtown Dublin Specific Plan
- Working on a Downtown Streetscape Master Plan

Downtown Dublin
Public Meeting

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