



What do you want
Downtown
Wheaton
to be?

DOWNTOWN WHEATON STRATEGIC PLAN & STREETSCAPE PLAN



AGENDA – MAY 29, 2013

- Review of Public Input from April
- Review of Streetscape Plans
- Review of other recommendations (Strategic Plan)
- Discussion of Next Steps



DOWNTOWN WHEATON | VISION STATEMENT

Elevate the position of Downtown Wheaton as a destination district in the western portion of the Chicago region by pursuing a number of civic improvements and regulatory changes designed to increase the capture rate of retail, office, and residential land uses in the Downtown.

The City Council endorsed this “Vision Statement” for Downtown Wheaton in February, based in part on information provided by the consultant team in a market study and an infrastructure study for the downtown district.

CONCEPTS | WHEATON DOWNTOWN PLAN

- Festival Streets
- Streetscape Design and Style
- Green Dining Alleys
- Central Park Concept
- Connectivity
- Parking Strategy
- Gateways
- Utilities Upgrades
- Signage/Wayfinding
- Economic Development
- Marketing Strategies
- Implementation Strategy

The recommended Downtown Plan includes a variety of components, ranging from streetscape elements such as Festival Streets to economic development and marketing recommendations.

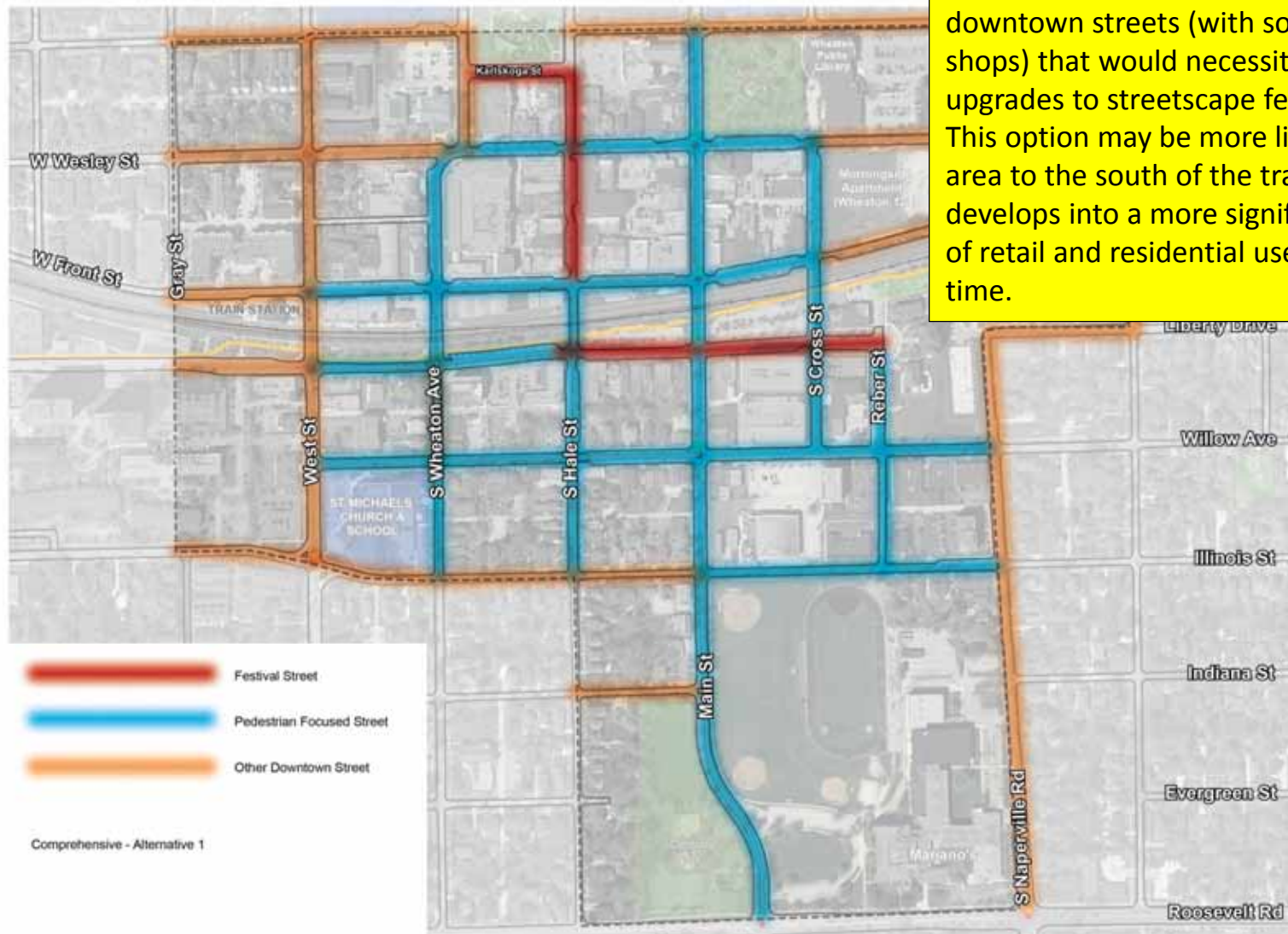
RECOMMENDATIONS | DOWNTOWN STREET CLASSIFICATION – TWO OPTIONS

The Downtown Plan recommends the upgrade of parts of Hale, Karlskoga, and Liberty Drive as “festival streets” (labeled in red in the diagrams that follow). The city may complete improvements to the other streets in the downtown area based upon whether they should evolve as “pedestrian focused streets” (labeled in blue) or as “other downtown streets” (labeled in orange). Pedestrian focused streets would represent more retail-oriented streets in the downtown area and would include streetscape design (including benches, sidewalks, lighting, etc.) that serve retail, dining, and a higher level of pedestrian activity. “Other” downtown streets, mainly oriented around the outside edges of Downtown Wheaton, would serve various non-retail land uses (including churches, small offices, and residences) and would continue to appear similar to typical residential streets in the older part of Wheaton.

The two diagrams that follow provide two options for classifying different streets in Downtown Wheaton according to this system.

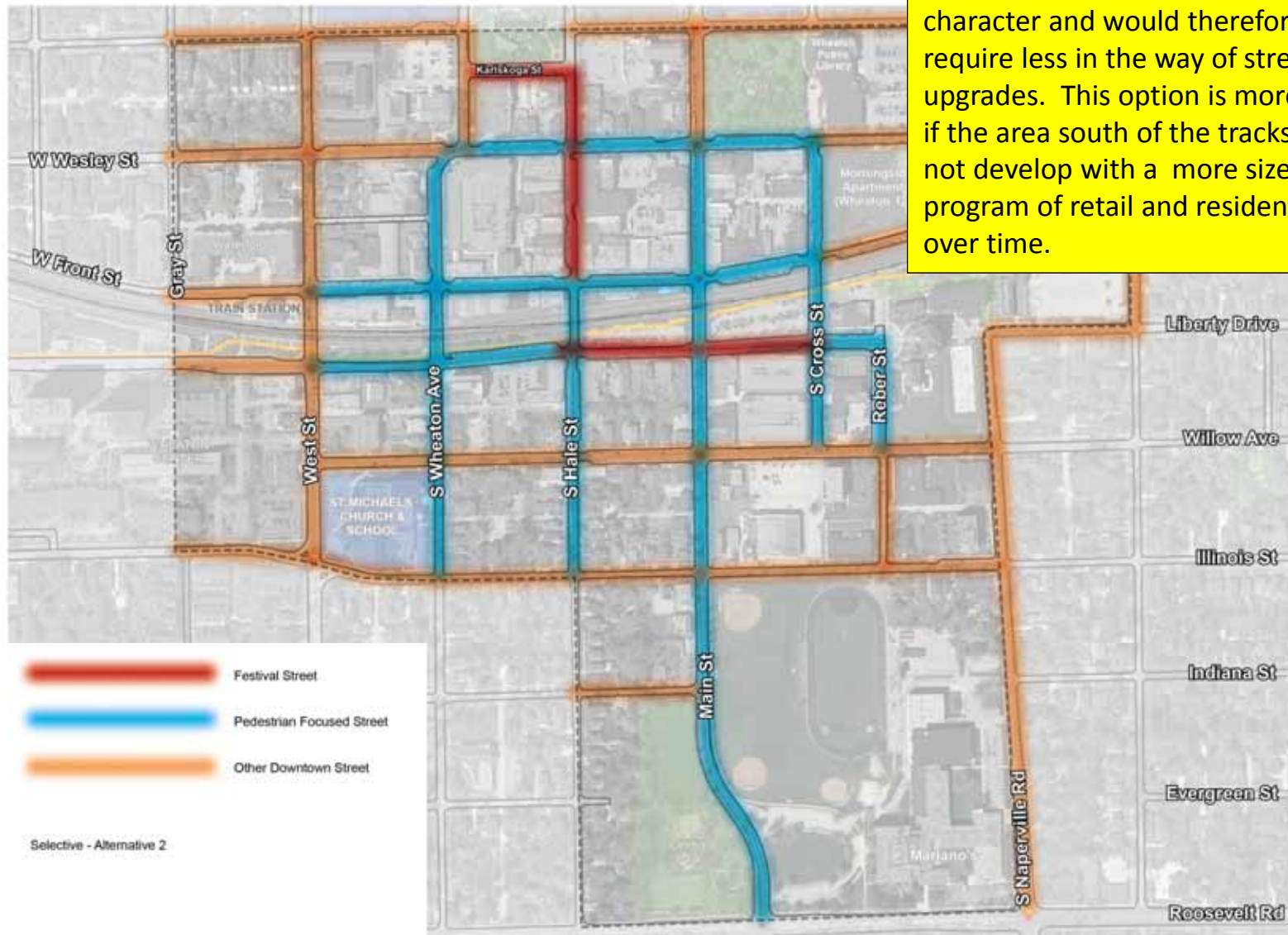
RECOMMENDATIONS | STREETSCAPE TREATMENT – OPTION 1

Option 1 assumes that Willow Avenue and the portion of Hale and Wheaton Avenue, south of the tracks, would evolve into regular downtown streets (with some retail shops) that would necessitate upgrades to streetscape features. This option may be more likely if the area to the south of the tracks develops into a more significant area of retail and residential uses over time.



RECOMMENDATIONS | STREETSCAPE TREATMENT – OPTION 2

Option 2 assumes that Willow Avenue and other streets south of the tracks would retain their existing character and would therefore require less in the way of streetscape upgrades. This option is more likely if the area south of the tracks does not develop with a more sizeable program of retail and residential uses over time.



RECOMMENDATIONS | PUBLIC SPACES



The Downtown Plan will outline ideas for how to provide for enhanced public spaces around the district. One of the main ideas of the downtown plan is to create a central park along the south side of the tracks, between Main and Hale streets, as illustrated here.

RECOMMENDATIONS | PUBLIC SPACES



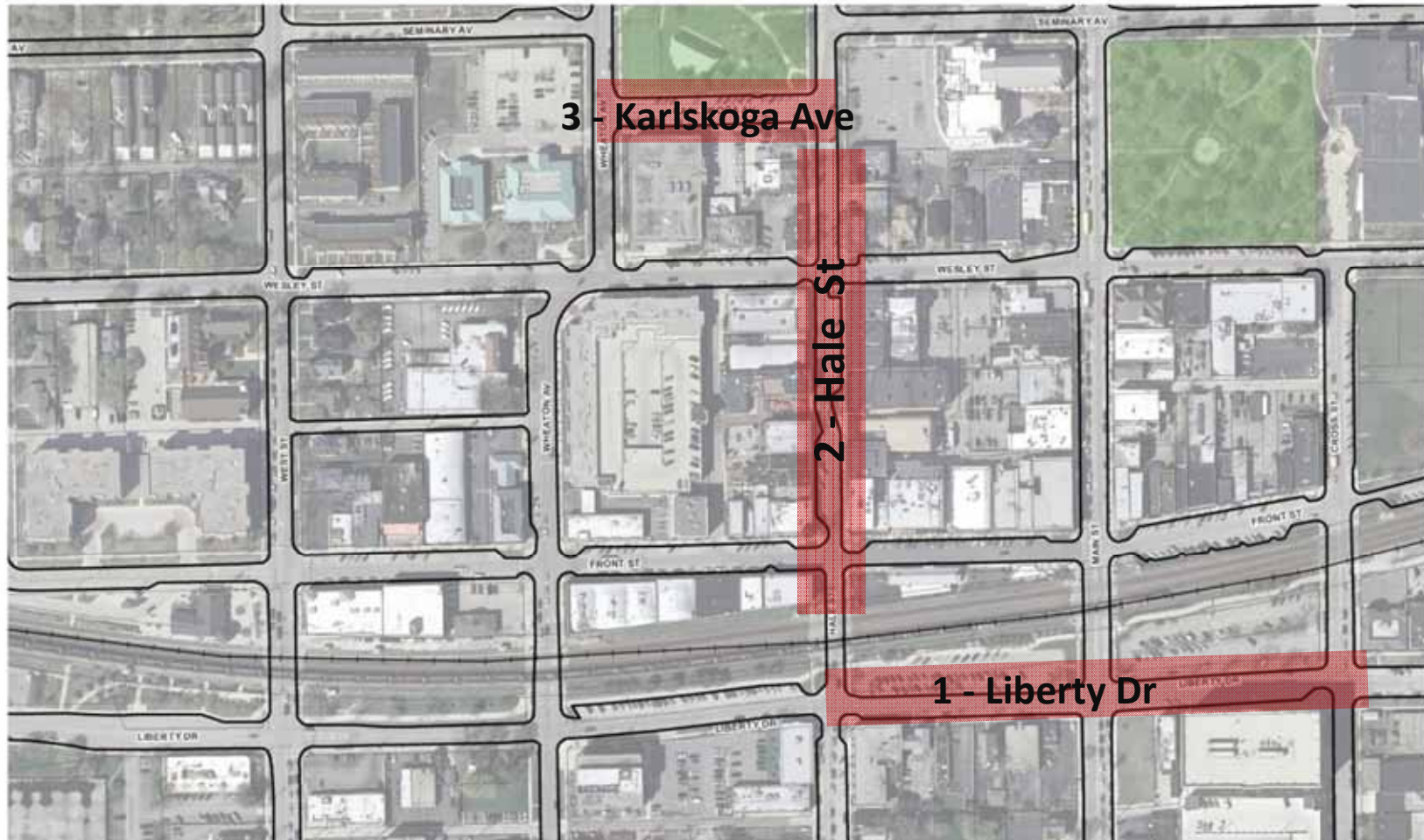
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RECOMMENDATIONS | FESTIVAL STREETS

- Serve both the need for vehicular connectivity, while also providing key public gathering spaces
 - Multi-functional public street that promotes community interaction
 - Reinforce commercial and mixed-use activity, provide space for outdoor dining and enhance quality of pedestrian environment
 - “Flex zone” or “parklet” system - temporary and consume 2-4 parking spaces identified through a pavement change
-
- ✓ **PRIORITY ONE - Liberty Drive** between Hale and Cross Streets
 - ✓ **PRIORITY TWO - Hale Street** between Karlskoga Ave and Front Street
 - ✓ **PRIORITY THREE - Karlskoga Avenue** south of Memorial Park

Based upon input at the public meeting in April, Liberty Drive is the highest priority street to complete “Festival Street” improvements, followed by Hale and Karlskoga.

RECOMMENDATIONS | FESTIVAL STREETS



RECOMMENDATIONS | FESTIVAL STREET CONCEPT

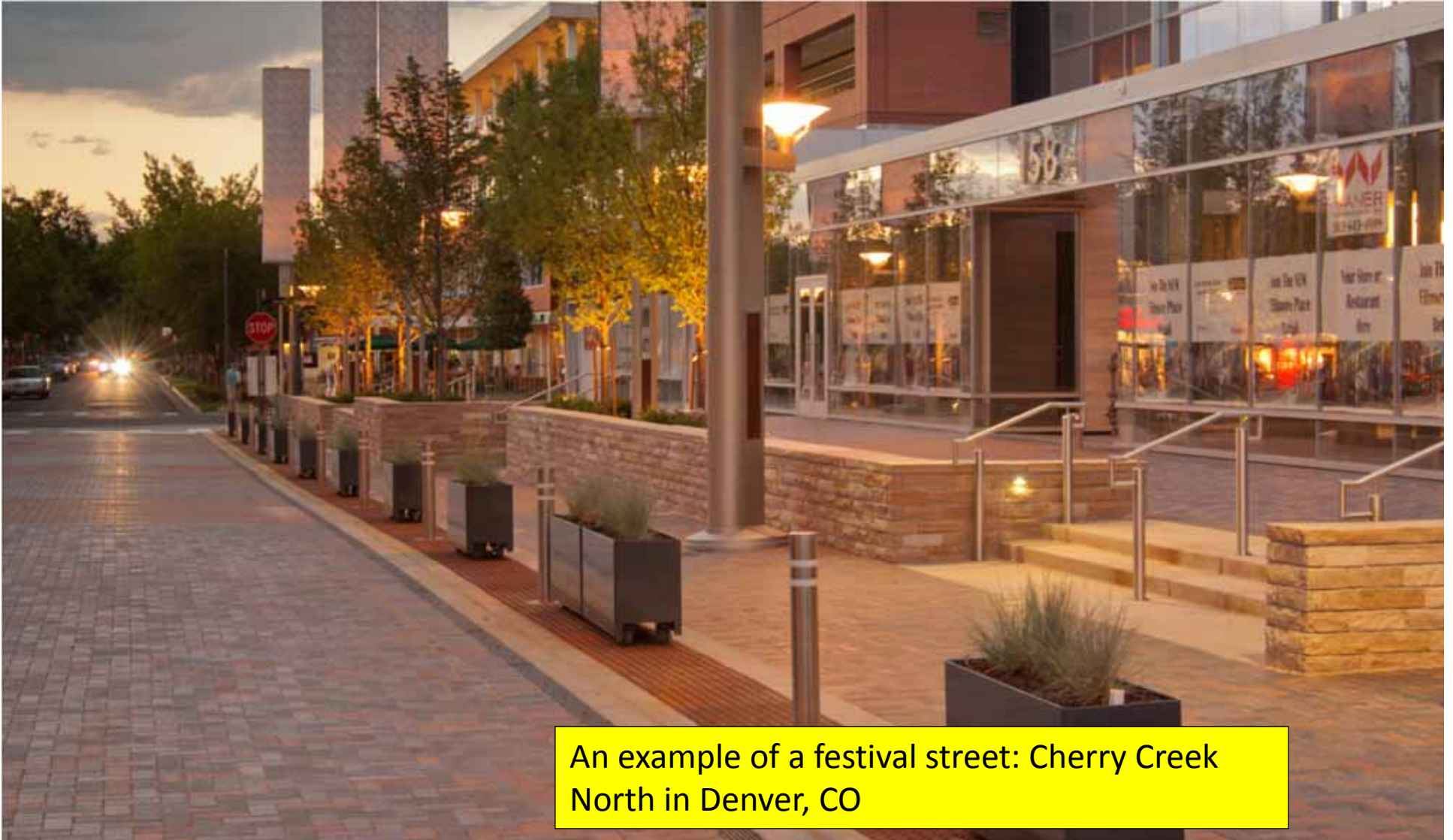


RECOMMENDATIONS | FESTIVAL STREET CONCEPT



An example of a festival street: Cherry Creek North in Denver, CO

RECOMMENDATIONS | FESTIVAL STREET CONCEPT



An example of a festival street: Cherry Creek North in Denver, CO

RECOMMENDATIONS | FESTIVAL STREET CONCEPT



An example of a festival street: Larimer Square in Denver, CO

RECOMMENDATIONS | FESTIVAL STREET CONCEPT

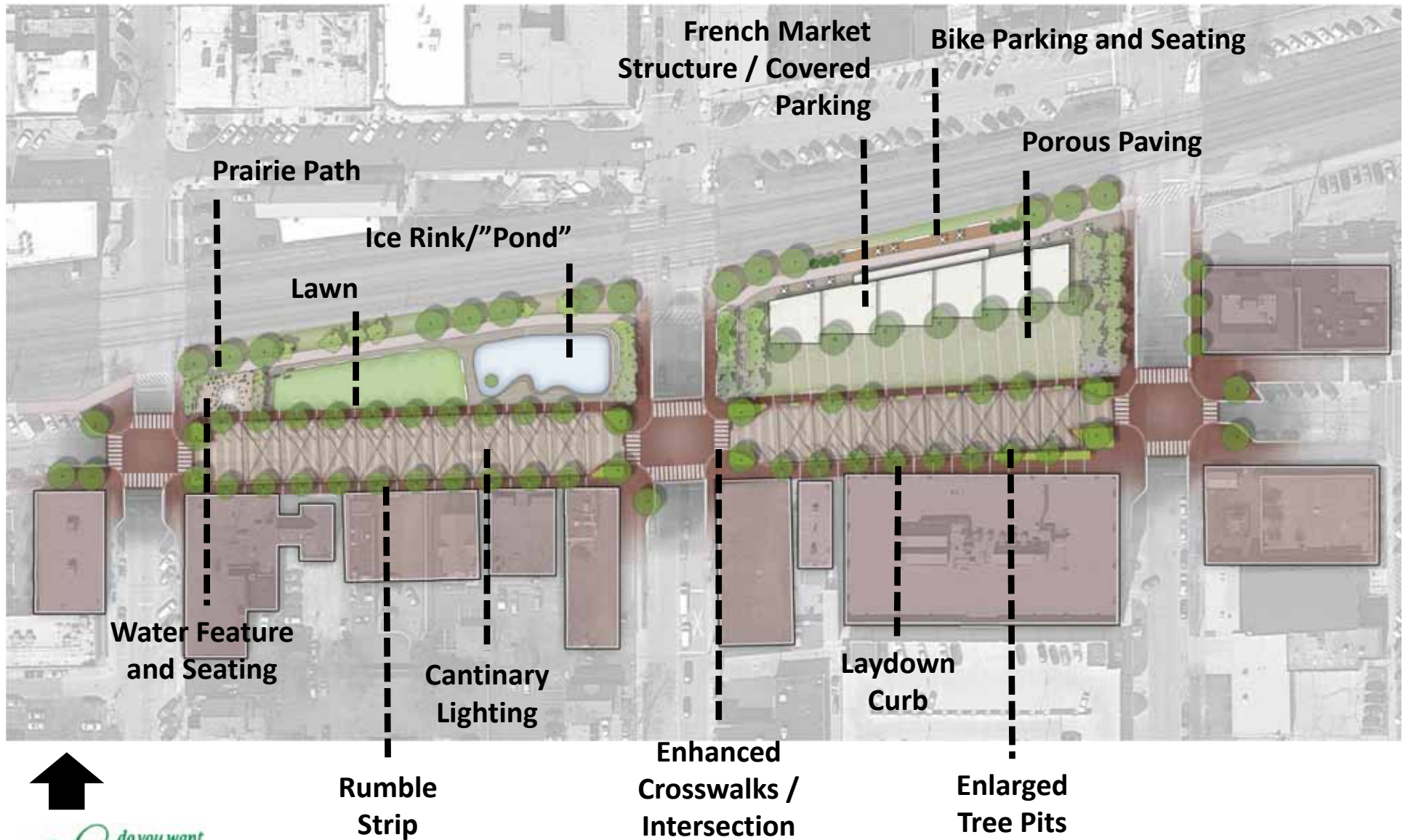


An example of a festival street: Larimer Square in Denver, CO

RECOMMENDATIONS | LIBERTY DRIVE (FESTIVAL STREET)

- Becomes a part of the proposed park creating a more robust setting for the French Market and other events
- Creates a “front door” to downtown Wheaton as one arrives from the Metro
- Creates a primer or catalyst for focusing redevelopment south of the rail road tracks
- Addition of seating areas, planting, street trees, bike parking, crosswalk improvements, flattened curb, parklet ‘flex spaces’ and bollards/moveable planters
- System of catenary lighting strung across the street
- Public input indicated support for a more contemporary application of streetscape materials, as compared to the historic application applied throughout downtown

LIBERTY DRIVE



CANTINARY LIGHTING



Benefits: Strengthens the identify of the festival streets and creates a setting for outdoor dining and shopping.

GRASS PAVERS



Benefits: Allows water to pass through small openings to re-enter ground water. Prevents runoff and pollution.

Grass pavers could be installed for parking spaces along Liberty Drive in order to help absorb more rain water and enhance the aesthetic quality of the area.

WATER FEATURE / POP JET



Benefits: Strengthens the park as a destination along the Liberty Drive festival street.

ICE RINK / POND



Benefits: Strengthens the park as a destination along the Liberty Drive festival street.

A new park area between Liberty Drive and the tracks, and between Main and Hale, could include an ice skating rink as a key gathering spot for the community.

AMPHITHEATRE SEATING



Benefits: Strengthens the park as a destination along the Liberty Drive festival street.

The park area along Liberty Drive could also include a small amphitheater seating area to accommodate live music in small events.

STREET FURNITURE PALETTE – LIBERTY DRIVE



Benefits: Capitalizes on opportunities to create a more contemporary feel for the proposed infill areas along Liberty Drive.



Based upon input at previous public open houses, the downtown plan calls for the installation of more modern or contemporary street furniture along Liberty to give this part of downtown a “newer” look.

RECOMMENDATIONS | HALE FESTIVAL STREET

- Further strengthens this street as the retail and dining ‘core’ of downtown
- Builds on the existing demand for outdoor dining through ‘flex spaces’ – flexible spaces used for parking or gathering
- System of catenary lighting strung across the street
- The design engages the Wheaton Grand Theatre by providing additional space in front of the entrance and enhanced planting
- Addition of seating areas, planting, bike parking, street trees, crosswalk improvements, flattened curb, parklet ‘flex spaces’ and bollards/moveable planters
- Public input indicated support for the continued application of the historic street furniture palette currently applied within downtown

HALE STREET

Bulb-outs with Dining
Space

Flex Space Parking/
Dining

Green Dining Alley

Bike Racks

Cantinary Lighting

Rumble Strip /
Laydown Curb

Large Tree Pits

Enhanced Crosswalks

Rain Garden

Enhanced
Plaza

Bollards

Moveable
Planters



PARKLET



Benefits: Creates space for outdoor dining on a temporary basis when sidewalks are too narrow.

CANTINARY LIGHTING

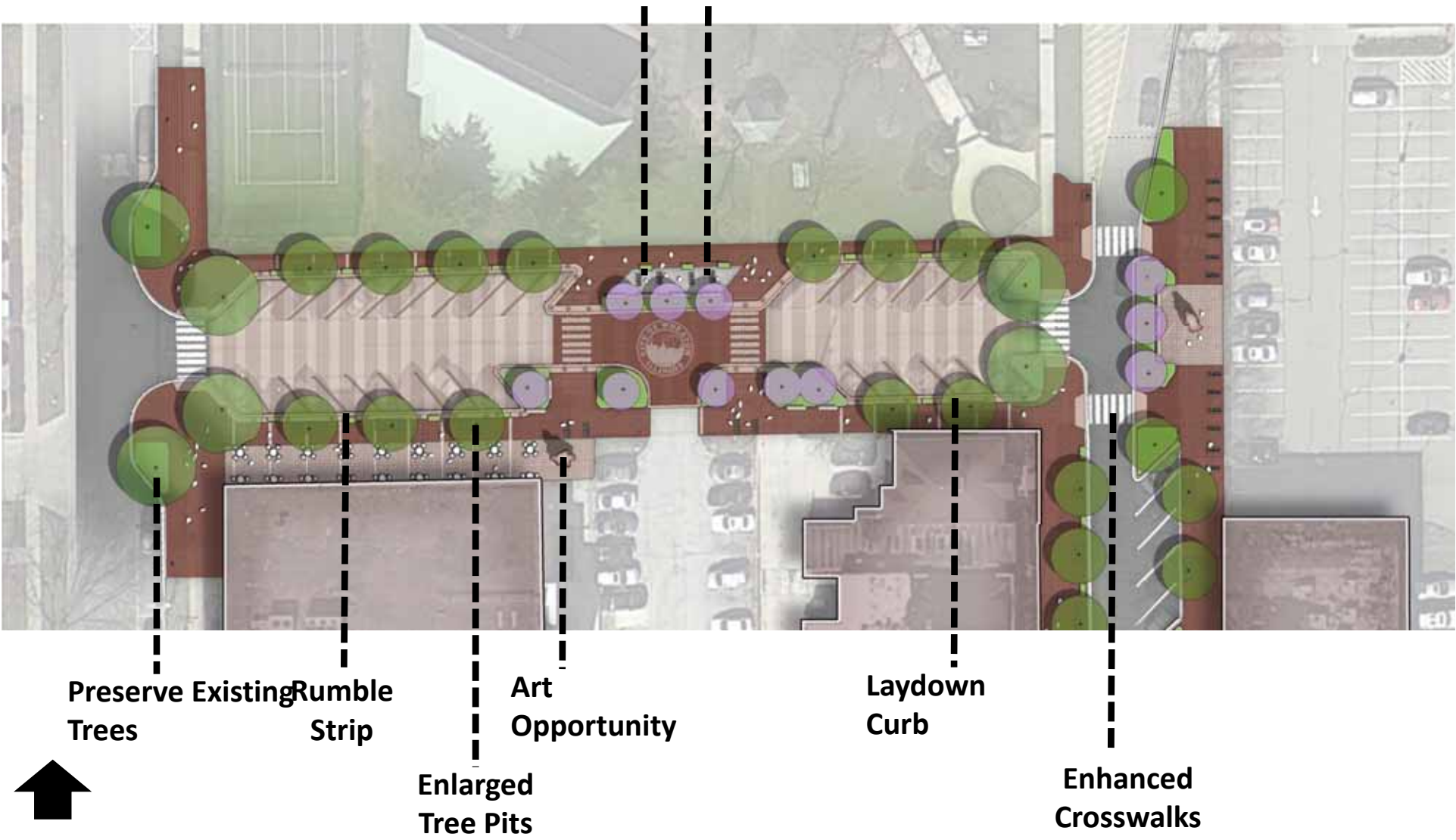


Benefits: Strengthens the identify of the festival streets and creates a setting for outdoor dining and shopping.

RECOMMENDATIONS | KARLSKOGA (FESTIVAL STREET)

- Designed to provide “spill over” space for the events held in Memorial Park (Taste of Wheaton)
- Creates a seamless space between the park and the street
- Addition of seating areas, bike parking, planting, street trees, crosswalk improvements, flattened curb, and bollards/moveable planters
- Public input indicated support for the continued application of the historic street furniture palette currently applied within downtown

KARLSKOOGA STREET



RECOMMENDATIONS | MAIN STREET (SOUTH OF TRACKS)



Main Street

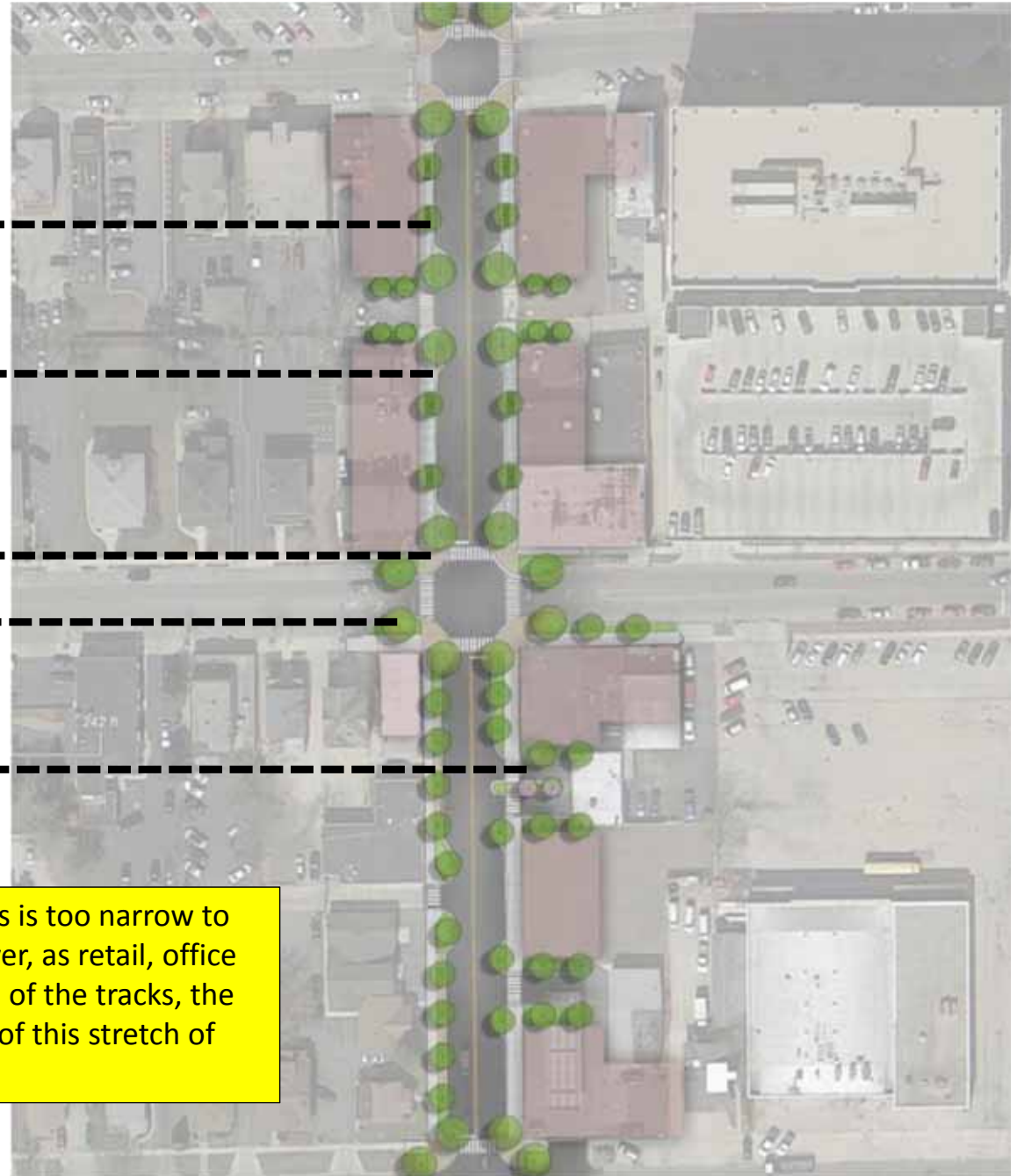
Enlarged Tree Pits

Widened Sidewalks
(where possible)

Bulb Outs with Enhanced Paving

Consistent Tree Types

Consolidated Curb-Cut/Access (where possible)



The right of way of Main Street south of the tracks is too narrow to allow for a widening of the street section. However, as retail, office and residential development evolves to the south of the tracks, the city may work to upgrade the overall streetscape of this stretch of Main Street.

PEDESTRIAN FOCUSED STREETS (INCLUDING MAIN) – MATERIAL ALTERNATIVES



Concrete with Colored Bands



Colored scored concrete



Grey Concrete

The design of Main Street may include different options for materials for sidewalks, ranging from gray concrete to concrete with colored bands, to colored scored concrete.

RECOMMENDATIONS | WILLOW AVENUE (RETAIL STREETS SOUTH OF TRACKS)



RECOMMENDATIONS | WILLOW AVENUE (RETAIL STREETS SOUTH OF TRACKS)



PEDESTRIAN FOCUSED STREETS (INCLUDING WILLOW AVENUE) – MATERIAL ALTERNATIVES



Concrete with Colored Bands

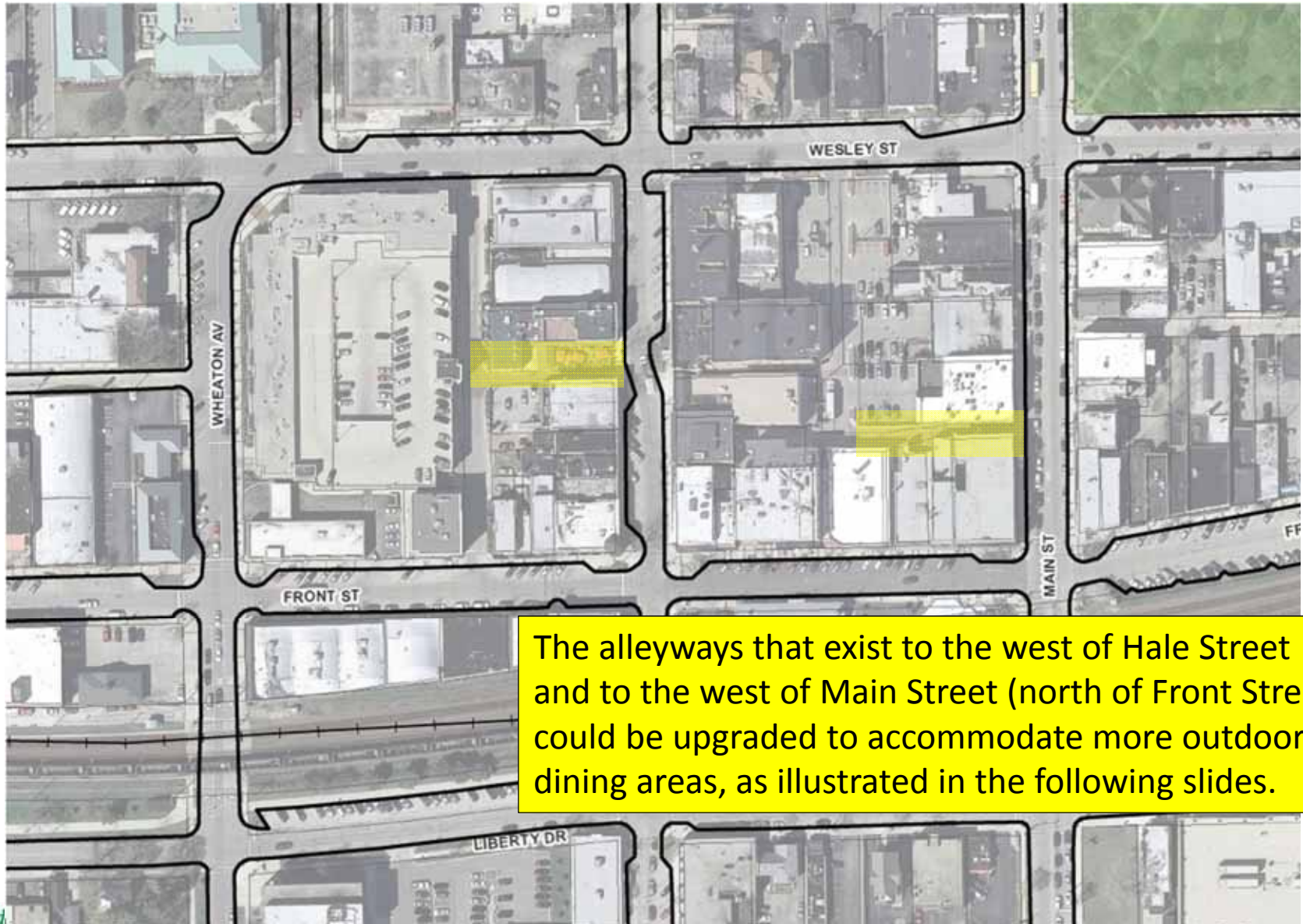


Colored scored concrete



Grey Concrete

RECOMMENDATIONS | GREEN/DINING ALLEYS



The alleyways that exist to the west of Hale Street and to the west of Main Street (north of Front Street) could be upgraded to accommodate more outdoor dining areas, as illustrated in the following slides.

RECOMMENDATIONS | GREEN/DINING ALLEYS



RECOMMENDATIONS | GREEN/DINING ALLEYS



RECOMMENDATIONS | GREEN ALLEYS



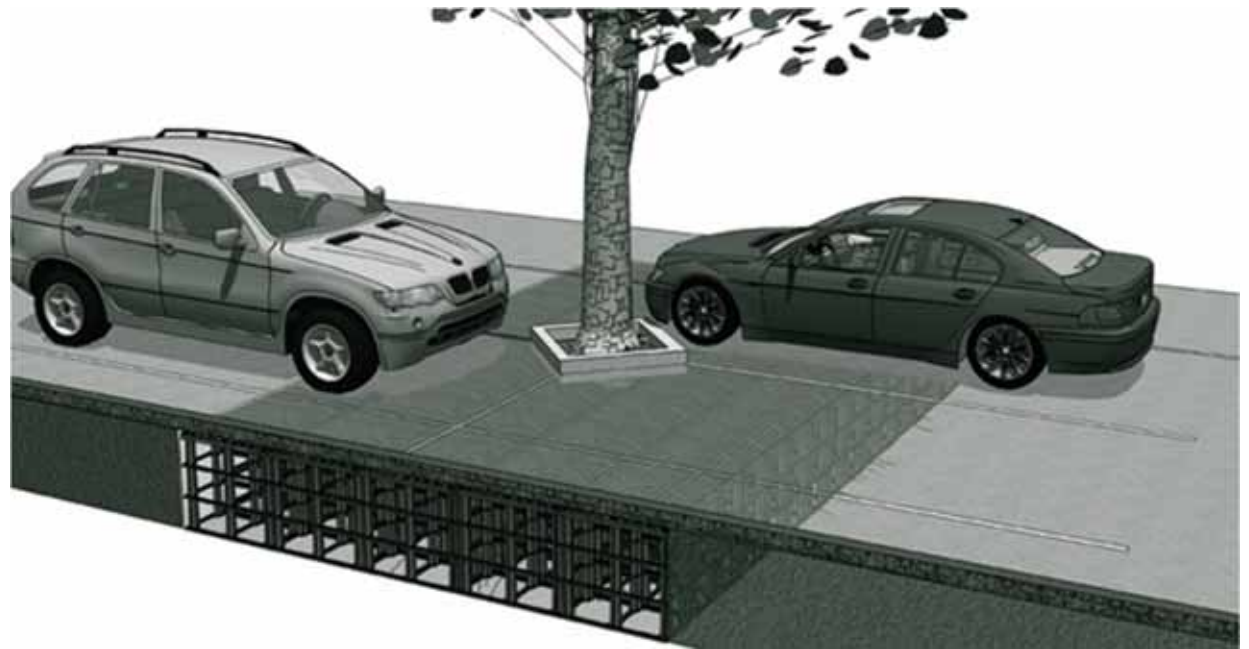
RECOMMENDATIONS | PUBLIC SPACES

- Central Park along the Prairie Path, just north of Liberty Drive
- Provide additional programmatic elements to the Prairie Path
 - Exercise structures
 - Bicycle storage facilities
- Provide a permanent structure for an enhanced French Market
- Public washrooms
- Material and design upgrades to Martin Plaza



RECOMMENDATIONS | STREET TREE HEALTH IMPROVEMENTS

- Utilize suspended pavement rather than tree grates
- Provide larger tree pits for additional growth area and soil volume (Ideal soil volumes are 1,000 cubic feet)
- Employ Silva Cells or suspended paving systems in key areas and/or provide larger tree planting areas



RECOMMENDATIONS | DECREASE STORMWATER RUNOFF

- Employ permeable paving
- Increase the amount of softscape
- Provide raingardens and facilities for bioretention



RECOMMENDATIONS | INCREASE NATIVE PLANTING

In urban environments, native plantings can...

- Improve landscape performance
- Reduce the need for water, fertilizer and maintenance
- Attract birds, bees, and butterflies

Native grasses and wildflowers mixed with selected shrubs will provide the back bone for the planting palette



BULB OUTS



Benefits: Creates shorter pedestrian crossings, enlarged planting areas and ideal settings for parklets.

RAIN GARDEN



Benefits: Allows water to pass through small openings to re-enter ground water. Prevents runoff and pollution.

PERMEABLE PAVING



Benefits: Allows water to pass through small openings to re-enter ground water. Prevents runoff and pollution.

MOVEABLE PLANTER POTS



Benefits: Can be rolled away for special event or community needs

HANGING FLOWER BASKETS



Benefits: Decorative piece to bring additional color to Downtown

OVERHEAD STRUCTURE



Benefits: Creates a consistent look and feel between the green dining alleys and Hale Street.

LARGER TREE PLANTING AREAS



Benefits: Allows more room for root system to grow and support larger trees with more tree canopy and shade

STREET FURNITURE PALETTE



Benefits: Strengthens the historic character of the downtown core.



While Liberty Drive may included more of a contemporary look and feel, based upon public input, the future streetscape of Downtown Wheaton (north of the tracks) is more likely to retain a historical look and feel.

DISTRICT IDENTITY SIGNAGE



Benefits: Branding technique to give Downtown Wheaton a stronger identity.

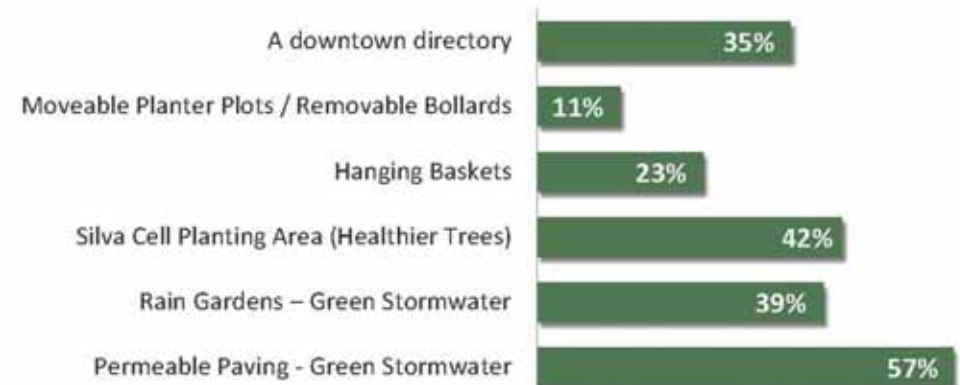
DOWNTOWN WHEATON | PUBLIC INPUT

What two strategies would you prioritize for additional improvements on the festival streets downtown? (choose 2)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results

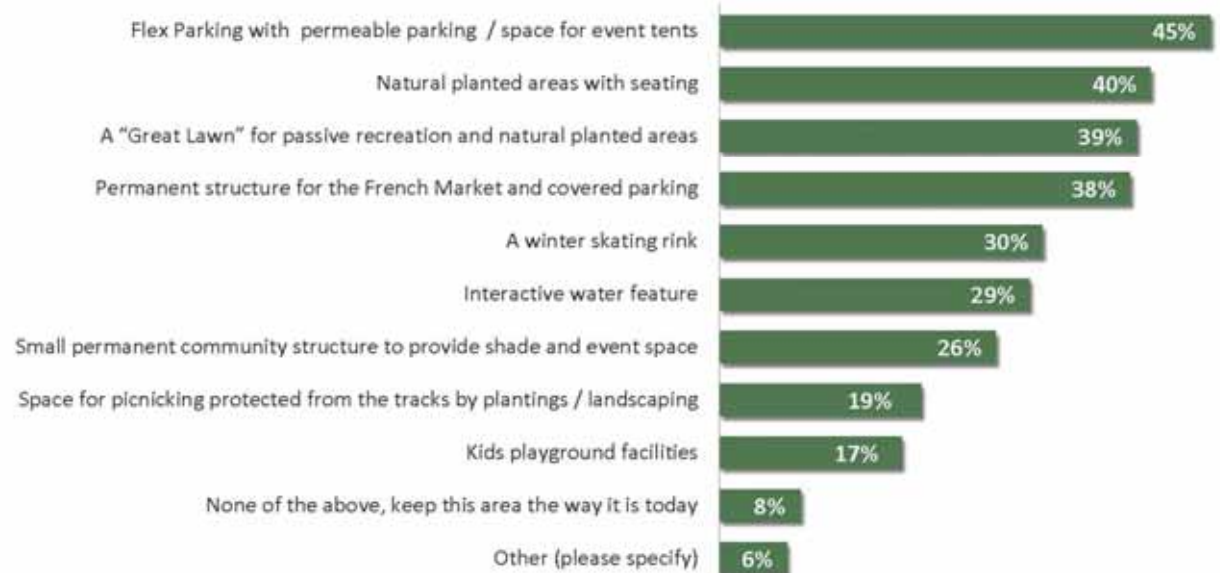


I like the following
elements the most for the
park along the Metra
Tracks: (choose top 3)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



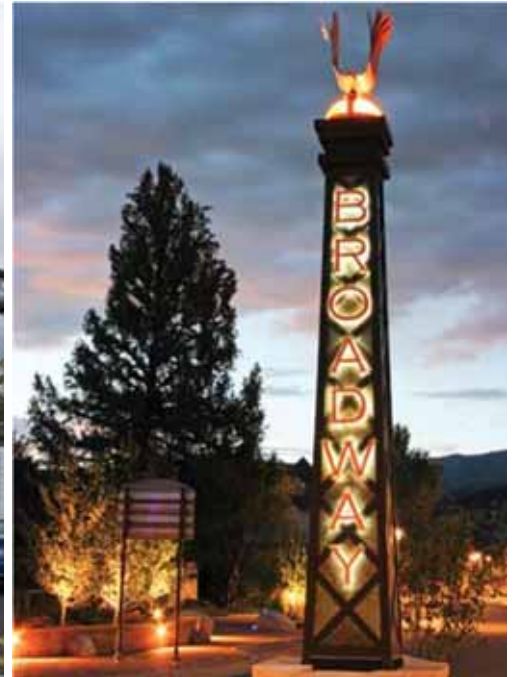
RECOMMENDATIONS | PARKING AND ZONING

- Provide customer parking spaces for different time limits (15 mins, 1 hour, 2 hour, etc.)
- Modify parking regulations south of tracks to encourage shared parking (between different land uses)
- Potential new parking garages on south side
- Enhance signage for parking to guide shoppers to available parking spaces and parking structures



The City may wish to upgrade Gateways into Downtown Wheaton from key locations, such as the ones identified on this map.

RECOMMENDATIONS | GATEWAY OPTIONS



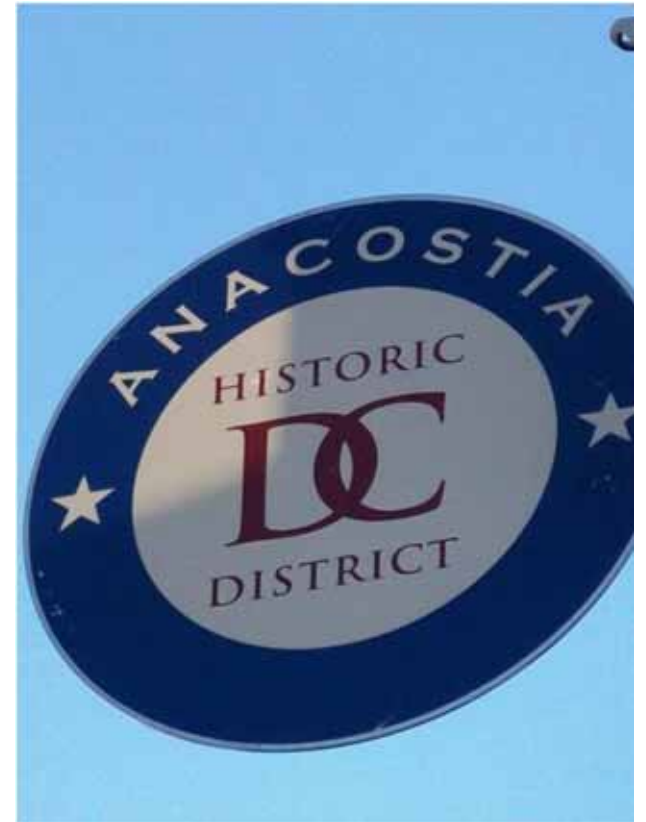
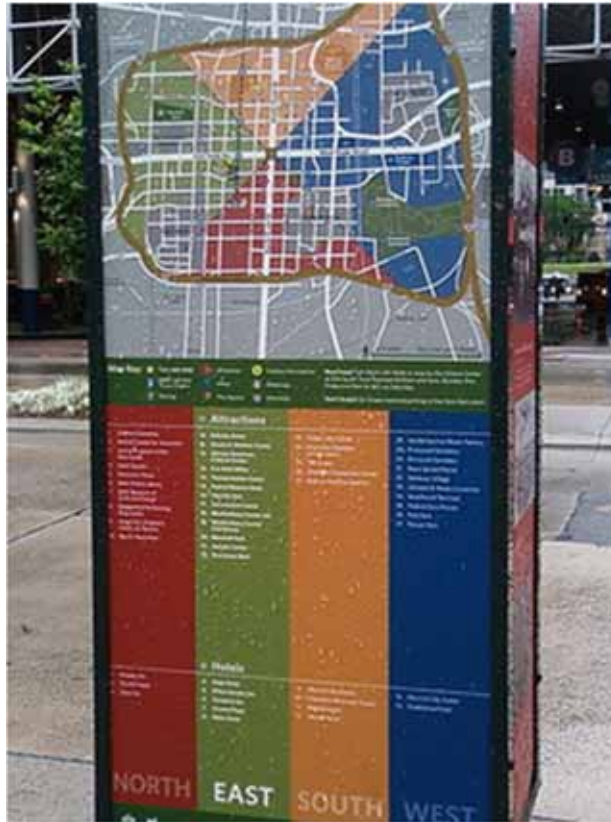
Gateways into Downtown Wheaton may include traditional wall entrances (left), an arch-style gateway (center), or a vertical structure (example on the right).

RECOMMENDATIONS | SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING

- Improve directional signage to key destinations within downtown
- Enhance signage directing people from the Prairie Path to downtown
- Create more visible signage directing drivers to parking locations within downtown
- Provide directional signage to existing overpass at Wesley Street
- Opportunity for additional 'branding'



RECOMMENDATIONS | SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING



Examples of signage and wayfinding from other districts around the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS | EMPHASIZE HISTORY, CULTURE + ART

- Increase the number of arts and cultural events hosted in Downtown Wheaton
- Diversify event programming
 - Gospel Fest
 - Incorporate visual and performing arts from Wheaton College
 - Art installations within the streetscape
 - Create a downtown art walk
 - Create a walk of fame or history walk and other interpretive displays downtown



Overall recommendations for downtown Wheaton: (choose top 3)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Results from a survey conducted on April 4 (public meeting) and online (April and May).

NEXT STEPS- FINALIZING THE DOWNTOWN PLAN

- Iterate cost estimates and details with city staff (This week)
- Draft plan document to staff for review (June)
- Final plan (Later this summer)
- Final Council presentation of final plan (July or August)



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