



Dunedin Community Visioning City of Dunedin, Florida

September 30, 2005

HDR

I. Introduction

In late 2004, the City of Dunedin commissioned HDR to conduct a visioning workshop for elected officials and senior city staff. These workshops took place over a two day period and allowed the city leaders to discuss a wide range of issues relating to the current and desired future conditions of the community. Each of the officials brought in images of positive and negative conditions within the community and these became the basis for a series of discussions about desired future conditions. The attendees went through a formal SWOT analysis, discussing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats relevant to the City. From this discussion, the leaders identified six specific geographic areas within the community as exhibiting both current weaknesses and future opportunities. The workshops ended with the leadership group developing a Vision Statement for the City:

Dunedin will continue to be a livable coastal community with a unique sense of place within the Tampa Bay metro area. We shall maximize our future by fostering innovative redevelopment, increasing citizen satisfaction, preserving and enhancing our natural environment, while maintaining our small town ambiance.

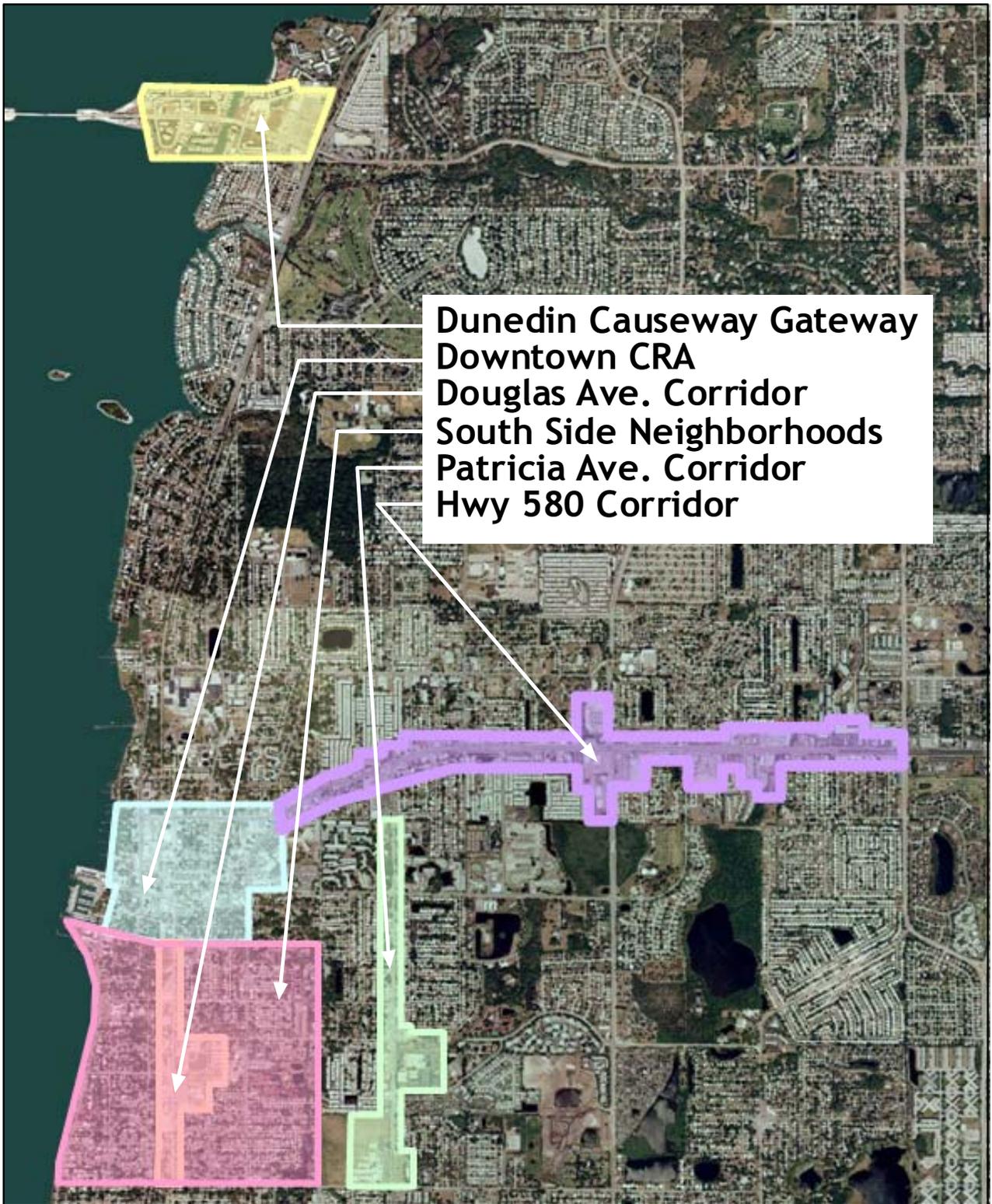


Fig.1 City of Dunedin in the Tampa Bay Region

Target Areas

The six areas determined to be of primary concern for future redevelopment are shown on the accompanying aerial map of the City. Moving from north to south, these areas are:

- Dunedin Causeway**
- Highway 580 Corridor**
- Downtown CRA (Community Redevelopment Area)**
- Patricia Avenue Corridor**
- Douglas Avenue Corridor**
- Southside Neighborhood**



Dunedin Visioning Study Areas



Fig. 2 Dunedin Visioning Study Areas

Dunedin Causeway Corridor

The Causeway Corridor is located at the western end of Curlew Road in the northeast section of Dunedin and is the gateway to the Honeymoon Island State Recreation Area. It is comprised of two man-made islands containing commercial uses and tourist-oriented facilities.

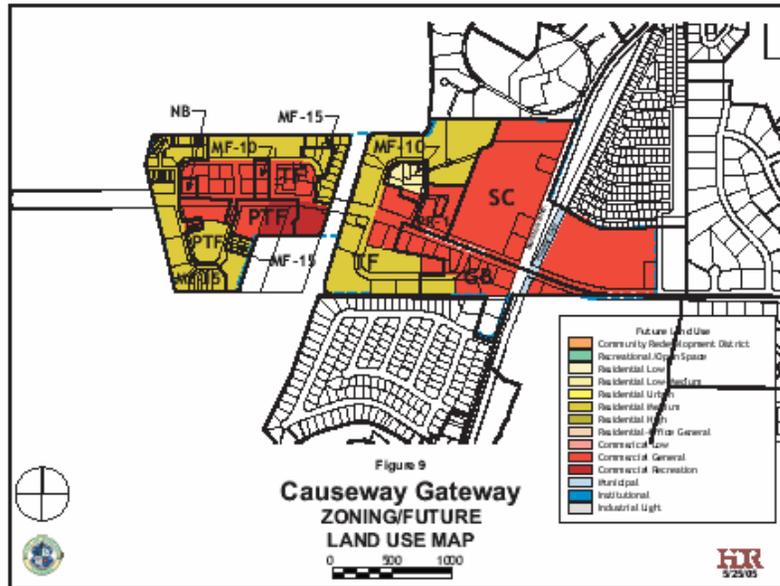


Fig. 3 Future Land Use



Fig. 4 Aerial View of the Dunedin Causeway Gateway Area



Fig. 5 Ground View of the Causeway Plaza Shopping Center

Highway 580 Corridor

The Highway 580 Corridor is the main approach to the City of Dunedin from US 19 which is the main North-South arterial in Pinellas County. It is characterized by strip malls, general commercial uses and shopping centers.

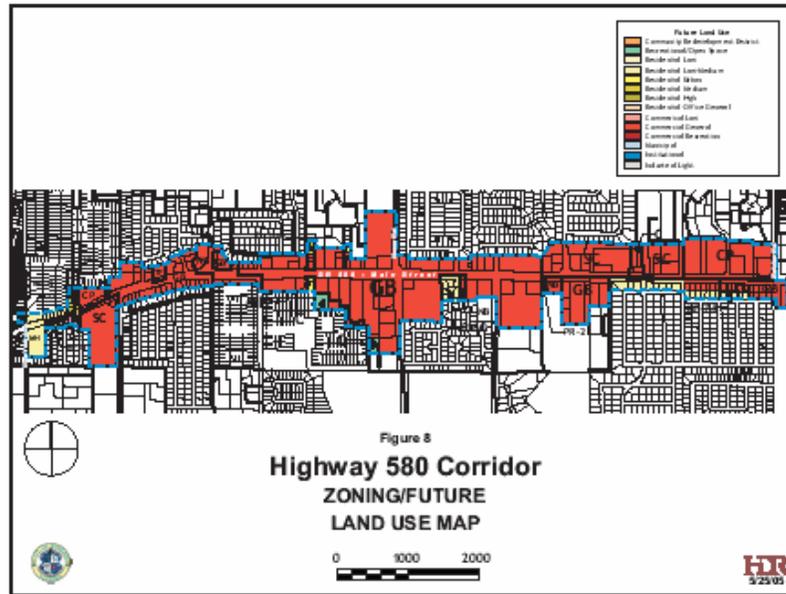


Fig. 6 Land Use



Fig. 7 Aerial View of the Highway 580 Corridor



Fig. 8 Ground View of the 580 Corridor

Downtown Community Redevelopment District (CRD)

The downtown is the core and the historic center of Dunedin. It is characterized for a healthy mix of uses and a lively activity along its main street. The Pinellas Trail and the marina at Edgewater Park are two of the main destinations in the region.

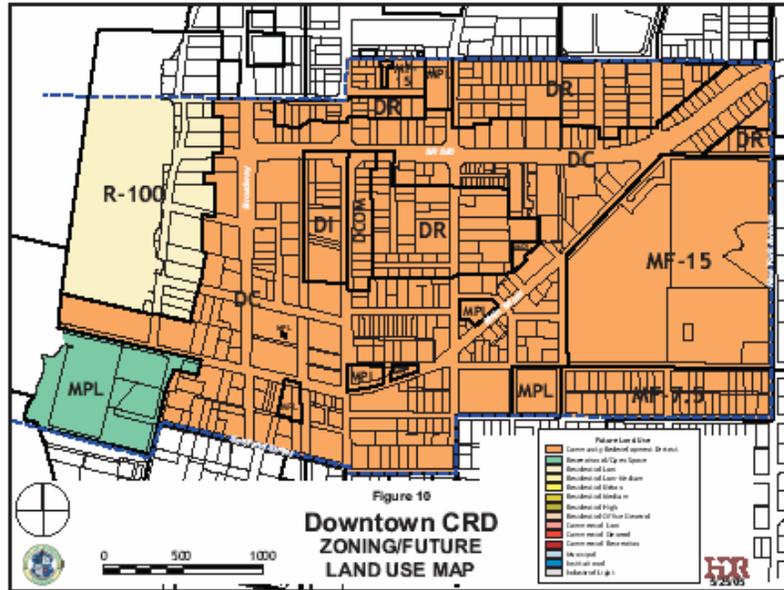


Fig. 9 Land Use



Fig. 10 Aerial View of Downtown Dunedin



Fig. 11 Ground View of Main Street

Patricia Avenue Corridor

Patricia Avenue is a residential corridor that happens to serve a now vacant light industrial parcel formerly used by Nielsen Media. The potential exists for the redevelopment of this parcel.

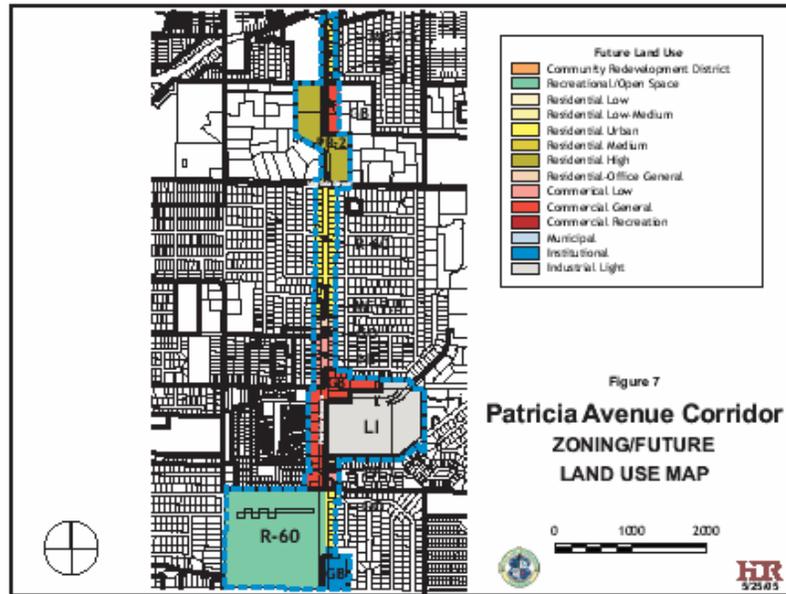


Fig. 12 Land Use



Fig. 13 Aerial View of Patricia Avenue



Fig. 14 Ground View of Patricia Avenue at the former Nielsen Site

Douglas Avenue Corridor

Douglas Avenue is a primary North-South corridor connecting to Clearwater. It is commercial and civic use in character. The Knology Park, home of the Toronto Blue Jays' spring training field, is located along this corridor.

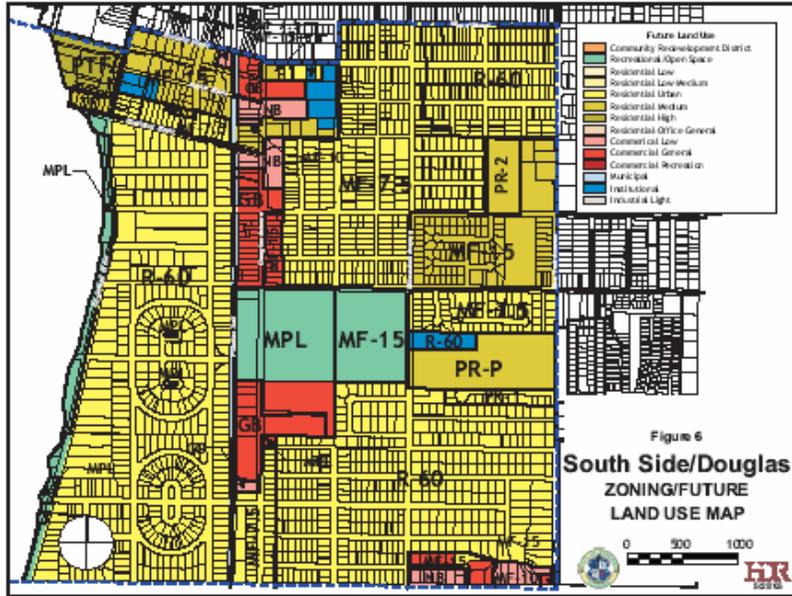


Fig. 15 Land Use



Fig. 16 Aerial View of Douglas Avenue and Knology Park



Fig. 17 Ground View of the Douglas Plaza Shopping Center

Southside Neighborhood

This area is primarily a single-family residential neighborhood with some occurrences of duplexes.



Fig. 18 Aerial View of South Side Neighborhoods



Fig. 19 View of a Historic Home on Edgewater Drive

Community Visioning Workshops

Early in 2005, the City commissioned HDR to build on these initial efforts by taking the visioning process to the community at large. The specific charge for this second effort included repeating the visioning exercises for expanded groups of citizens, verifying the six geographic locations as areas of concern, and soliciting additional input relevant to the future direction of the community. As part of this process, HDR agreed to develop a Community Character Preference Analysis to help members of the community determine pertinent physical and architectural conditions for future development within the City.

HDR set up two three-hour workshops, one held on a weekday evening and the other on a Saturday morning. Combined, over two hundred people participated in these workshops, the full results of which are included at the end of this document as an appendix.



Fig. 20 Community Visioning Workshop

Community SWOT Analyses

The SWOT analysis and associated geographic analysis did, indeed, confirm the leadership's assessment of the six areas of primary concern. The lists of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats generally mirrored those of the leadership, with additional levels of detail due to the significantly increased number of respondents. The summary analyses for each of these areas are included below.

Strengths

The attributes that are most important to the community are heavily related to the natural environment and to recreational activities. More than half of the recorded responses (53%) fall into three related categories –Natural Environment (19%), Recreation & Leisure (19%) and Water (15%). These clearly indicate that the physical setting and opportunities for outdoor activities are key characteristics of the Dunedin community. In addition to the top three attributes, three additional areas can be linked together to comprise a key characteristic of Dunedin: Community Character (12%), Downtown (7%) and Programs (5%). Together, these account for nearly one-quarter of the responses and can be viewed as the counter point to the top three categories as they relate to the built characteristics of the City, especially the Downtown, and to the communal activities that they take place there.

In summary, Dunedin is a city blessed with a beautiful natural setting and many opportunities for outdoor recreation and leisure time activities. It is also a city that has a distinct sense of community character, focused on its historic downtown and the numerous social and civic events that occur there.

Weaknesses

The two areas of the City that are perceived as the weakest are Infrastructure (21%) and Transportation (16%), another form of infrastructure. Combined these account for over one-third of the responses, indicating that support elements of the built environment are perceived as lacking. In both Infrastructure and Transportation, three concerns are voiced: (1) existing systems are insufficient to meet demand; (2) desired systems are lacking; and, (3) the existing systems have aesthetic deficiencies. This last issue, combined with the fifth highest ranked category Aesthetics (10%) indicate that there are concerns that the community is not functioning as well as could be desired and that its attractiveness could be enhanced.

The third highest ranked perceived weakness is Development (15%). The category covers both the quality of existing properties, the absence of desired uses and development, and the perceived weakness associated with future construction – in particular, this is a voiced concern that recent and future development is and will be too dense.

If the category of Development (15%) is associated with the category of Aesthetics (10%) and the category of Planning (6%), the combination accounts for nearly one-third of all the perceived weaknesses within the community. It seems clear that many members of the community are not knowledgeable about planning and development issues within the city and are not particularly happy with the built outcomes of either activity. This indicates an opportunity for City staff to both better communicate these issues to the community and to actively encourage and solicit involvement from the community.

Opportunities

The dominant perceived Opportunity within the City of Dunedin is in the area of Planning & Development; this single category accounted for 42% of the responses. Recognizing that some degree of growth and development is going to occur, participants in the SWOT exercise saw a wide range of opportunities for how this development should occur. There is significant demand for mixed-use development, particularly incorporating residences, as well as for development that is pedestrian-friendly and includes a range of attractions such as coffee shops, bakeries, outdoor dining, small groceries and the like.

Accepting that growth and infill development will occur, the respondents are fairly unified in suggesting lower-scale development that incorporates a great deal of green space.

Among the other categories, Infrastructure (15%) and Transportation (10%) combined to account for one-quarter of the recommendations. The suggestions cover issues pertaining to aesthetics, function, accessibility and variety, with strong sentiments for improving the community's facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, and making parking more effective within the City. (Several items that are listed in the category of Environment also address these issues.)

Threats

Just as the most significant perceived Opportunity for the community is in the areas of Planning & Development, so too, the area that is seen as having the most potential to negatively impact the future of the city is Planning & Development (30%). Within this area, the dominant concerns are about development that is too dense for the community and buildings that are too high for the desired scale of the community.

Combining Planning & Development with the category of Environment (17%), respondents to the SWOT analysis are concerned with the addition of too much development and the loss of existing green space, particularly habitat, and access to the water.

New development will need to be matched by improvements in Infrastructure, and should not come at the loss of the city's very desirable sense of community.

Summary Analysis

Dunedin is defined by significant strengths. Chief amongst these is the beauty of its natural environment and its waterfront setting. It offers many opportunities for outdoor activities, particularly for recreation and leisure. It has a historic downtown that defines a unique sense of physical character, and is the setting for numerous civic and social events. It has a "small town" feel and sense of scale.

The infrastructure of the community including its roads and its provisions for parking are not as advanced as the community would like. Traffic is seen as a problem as is the low aesthetic quality of many of the major roadways. Parking, particularly in the downtown is problematic. Stormwater systems need to be improved, and residents would like to see overhead power lines buried.

The community is aware of recent increases in development activity and recognizes that much more of this will occur over the next twenty years. Many fear that the current and future development will detract more than add to the cherished character of the community, particularly by replacing desired open space or making access to desired environmental features including the Bay more difficult.

Nonetheless, many citizens recognize that future growth and development can be a boon for the City and can help strengthen a sense of community, help reinforce a unique sense of place, and can provide additional services and amenities that are currently lacking or missing. There is considerable optimism about future mixed-use development and additional growth within the downtown, as long as it enhances the existing characteristics.

At the same time, there is a level of mistrust about future growth and the planning that is currently underway to plan for this growth. Citizens want to see low- and medium-height buildings that do not greatly diminish the amount of green space or make access to the water more difficult.

For over a decade, Dunedin has been unique among the small cities in the Tampa Bay area in its efforts to revitalize its downtown, enhance its livability and make itself into a desirable place to live and visit. The City has accomplished a great deal during this time and recognizes that there is potential to accomplish a great deal more. It is imperative that the City work with the community in future planning and development efforts, incorporating citizen input and participation into the growth of the community and making particular efforts to optimize existing strengths, maximize potentials, and avoid damaging the community's charm and character.

Community Character Preference Analysis

To move beyond the generally conceptual discussion that took place as part of the SWOT analyses, HDR devised a thirty-minute full-group exercise designed to gauge the community's affinity for or against certain urban conditions. This Community Character Preference Analysis comprised thirty-six pairs of matched photographs, each falling into one of eight primary categories. Community members were asked to vote for their preferred image as it would relate to their desired future vision of Dunedin. That is, which image presented a condition most desirable for the future of the community. Attendees were given the option to choose both images equally or to reject both images as inappropriate.

The categories of images were:

- Streets & Roads
- Parking
- Pedestrian Realm
- Public Realm
- Water's Edge
- Building Scale
- Architectural Character
- Signage

Streets & Roads



Fig. 21 Streets and Roads

The recurring predominant characteristics in the conditions selected by the community as desirable include pedestrian-friendly design, urban streetscaping, and landscaping. Five of the six images selected as preferable come from Downtown. The sixth image is from downtown Kissimmee.

Almost all of the images include on-street parking.

There seems to be a preference for streets that create a sense of containment, either through continuous street walls or through the use of continuous trees along both sides of the street.

In most examples, power lines have been buried, and there is a thematic quality to the lights, flag poles and other vertical streetscape features.

Parking



Fig. 22 Parking

A range of approaches to the provision of parking seems to be acceptable.

The selected scenarios include on-street parking, surface lot parking and parking structures.

In each example, the parking is seen as more than simply utilitarian storage. The Granada Plaza parking lot, in Dunedin, is heavily treed to create a pleasant level of shade. The Main Street angled parking adds life to the street and serves as a buffer between vehicles and pedestrians. The parking garage at Old Hyde Park Village in Tampa was carefully scaled and designed to fit into its historical context, and includes a mix of street-level retail and restaurant uses.

Pedestrian Realm

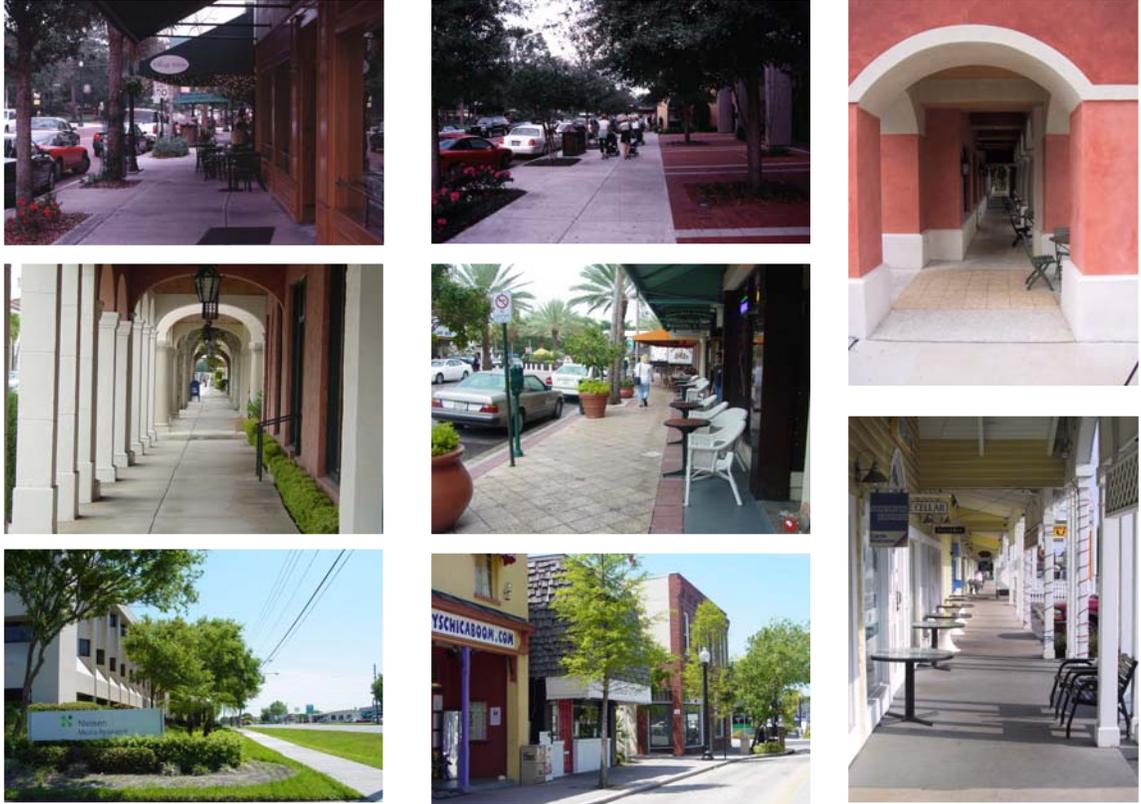


Fig. 23 Pedestrian Realm

People in Dunedin prefer that the pedestrian realm be pedestrian-friendly with certain constituent features:

1. Ample space for walking or strolling;
2. A clear zone of separation between the walkway and the moving cars (this could be occupied by grass or by parked cars);
3. Activities (on-street dining) or interesting architecture to look at along the non-vehicular side;
4. Continuity along the street.

There seems to be some interest in the creation of arcades along heavily traveled streets, along with integrated streetscaping, landscaping, signage and other types of detail.

Public Realm



Fig. 24 Public Realm

Respondents acknowledged a wide variety of acceptable public spaces.

These include areas such as Ocean Drive which are heavily traveled and continuously filled with diners, strollers and other forms of activity; Armstrong Park which is heavily landscaped and generally fit for passive activities; the fountain area at Old Hyde Park Village, which is adaptable to a wide range of formal and informal activities throughout the course of the day, week or year; the Dunedin Band Shell which is designed for certain types of civic activities but which also lends itself to a range of other formal and informal uses.

Civic spaces should be placed in locations that are accessible in multiple ways yet are not, themselves, the center of circulation.

The preference for streetscape items such as street furniture seems to tend towards those pieces with a more “urban” feel, made of metal, with some traditional references, in contrast to elements made of wood, concrete or plastic-coated metal.

Water's Edge

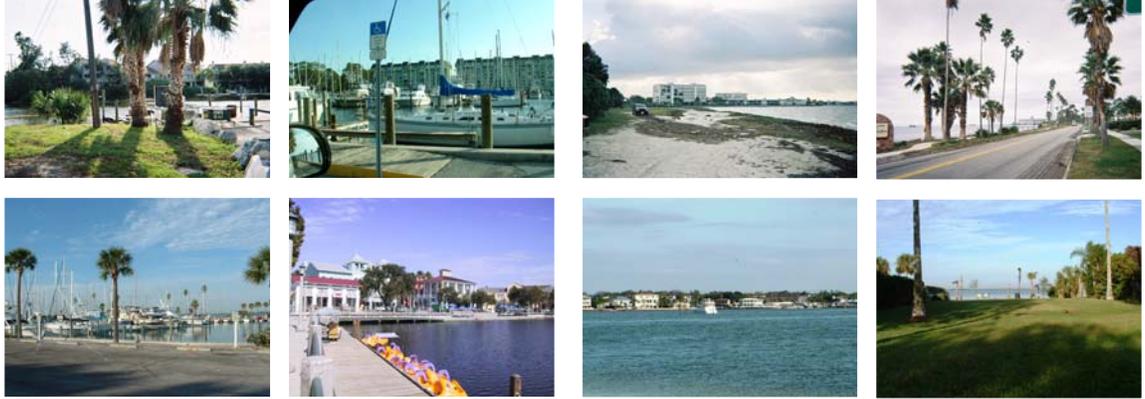


Fig. 25 Water's Edge

The relationship between the City and the water is clearly a dominant concern for many residents of the community and is clearly seen as one of the more desirable aspects of living there.

A wide variety of edge conditions seems to be acceptable, ranging from quiet passive park space to an almost urban waterfront esplanade condition as shown in the example taken from the Town of Celebration, near Orlando.

The paramount concerns seem to be that the waterfront remains as accessible as possible to as wide a range of users as possible, and that the treatment vary according to location. Within the Downtown, the interface can be more urbane; along the Causeway it can be relatively untreated; within the neighborhoods it should be treated in a more park-like manner.

Building Scale

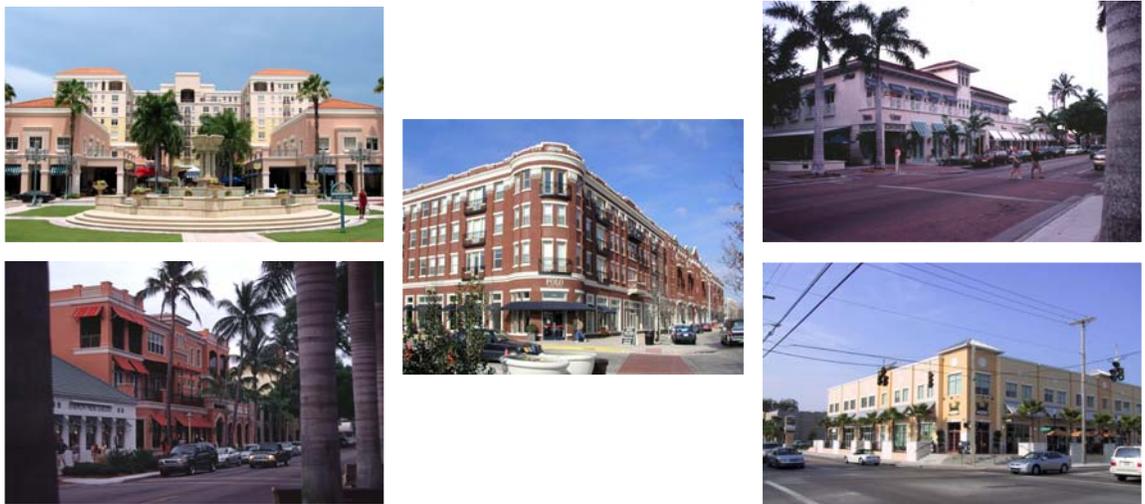


Fig. 26 Building Scale

The images chosen as acceptable or appropriate for Dunedin range in scale from two- to seven stories, and include a range of masonry materials.

Each preferred situation includes buildings that are built up to the edge of the public right-of-way, and which help define active streets or civic spaces.

Two-, three-, and four-story buildings can sit directly adjacent to the Right-of-Way (ROW) or lot line; for taller buildings the preference seems to be that the building step-back as it goes up so that the scale immediately adjacent to the ROW is lower rather than higher.

(In an unrelated situation, the respondents seem very comfortable with the concept of mixed-use buildings that incorporate two or more uses, including residential.)

Architectural Character



Fig. 27 Architectural Character

The architectural taste of the respondents seems to run towards more traditional styles and detailing, with a preference for masonry materials. The one stylistic exception is the Fine Arts Center which appears to be well-liked within the community.

Signage

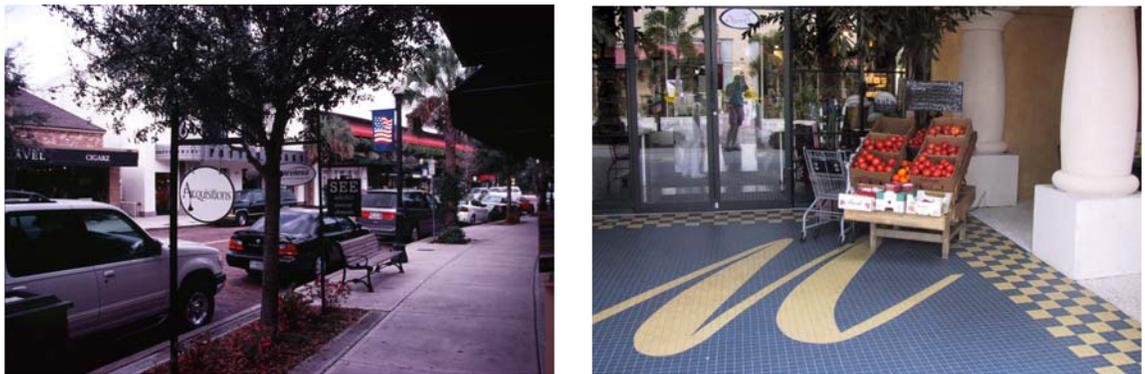


Fig. 28 Signage

The paucity of signage examples makes it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about the respondent's attitude towards signage. Nonetheless, there seems to be a liking for understated, yet expressive, signage that is part of an overall coordinated approach that includes urban design, landscaping, streetscaping and architectural details.

Community Character Preference Survey Summary Analysis

There is a clear preference for pedestrian-friendly streets, of all scales, with accessible sidewalks and a clear separation between pedestrians and moving vehicles. Trees and other forms of landscaping are appreciated, as are interesting and accessible buildings on the private edge of the Right-of-Way (ROW).

Downtown Dunedin is seen by most as a special place, with its “small town” character, its pedestrian-friendly streets and its historic architecture.

Community members appreciate on-street parking, prefer parking lots that are shaded and aesthetically pleasing, and are prepared to consider parking structures if they are well located, of the right scale, and if they are architecturally pleasing and mixed-use.

Within the pedestrian-realm, community members want to see more street-level activities including outdoor cafes. Wider sidewalks would be appreciated as would enhanced signage, streetscaping and landscaping along the streets.

Civic spaces of all sorts are appreciated, addressing a range of activities from outdoor dining to special events to passive sitting. Again, streetscaping and landscaping are critical, with a preference for more coordinated “urban” furniture and fixtures.

Citizens appreciate the wide range of ways in which the community interacts with the water, and all such situations ranging from quiet and open to active and urban should be enhanced and embellished.

Architecturally, residents prefer low- and medium-scale buildings of between two and four stories. When well designed, buildings can be built right up against the adjacent right-of-way. Buildings as tall as seven stories are acceptable, if the tallest parts are stepped back from the street.

Architecturally, there is a clear preference for more historical or traditional styles of architecture, although representative examples of more contemporary design similar to the Dunedin Arts Center are well liked.

Community Vision Statements

Attendees at each of the two community exercises were asked to help compile a vision statement for the future of Dunedin.

Statement One

Dunedin is a delightfully quaint, small coastal community. It is diverse yet integrated with an old Florida ambiance. Dunedin has a respect for preserving its history and the natural environment, while planning a safe and secure lifestyle for future generations. Growth while inevitable is tailored to enhance and improve each individual's quality of life.

Statement Two

Dunedin is a vibrant waterfront community; it is ecologically sound, culturally and economically diverse. It supports a wide range of fine arts and provides many opportunities to live, to work and to play, with activities and programs for people of all ages and income levels. Mindful of its heritage, it is focused on protecting and enhancing all of the above.

Zoning & Land Use Analysis

While the community exercises were being developed and carried out, HDR was also reviewing and analyzing the City of Dunedin's Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Regulations and Zoning ordinances. In general, the consultants were looking for potential discrepancies between the current enacted regulations and the desired future conditions as determined through the two sets of visioning exercises. In particular, they were looking at the potential impact the current regulations might have on preventing or hampering the potential to create the types of redevelopment indicated as desirable by the leaders and the community.

The following analysis examines the current Future Land Use and zoning classifications for the six study areas of interest, and analyzes the differences between the two. In addition the document outlines land use strategy recommendations based upon the City of Dunedin's Existing and Future Land Use (FLU), the Land Development Regulations (LDR), which include Zoning Code of Ordinances, and the community visioning workshop results. This preliminary report will assist the City of Dunedin with the formulation of redevelopment opportunities and urban design strategies for the six study areas.

II. Study Areas - Findings and Issues

A. Southside Neighborhoods

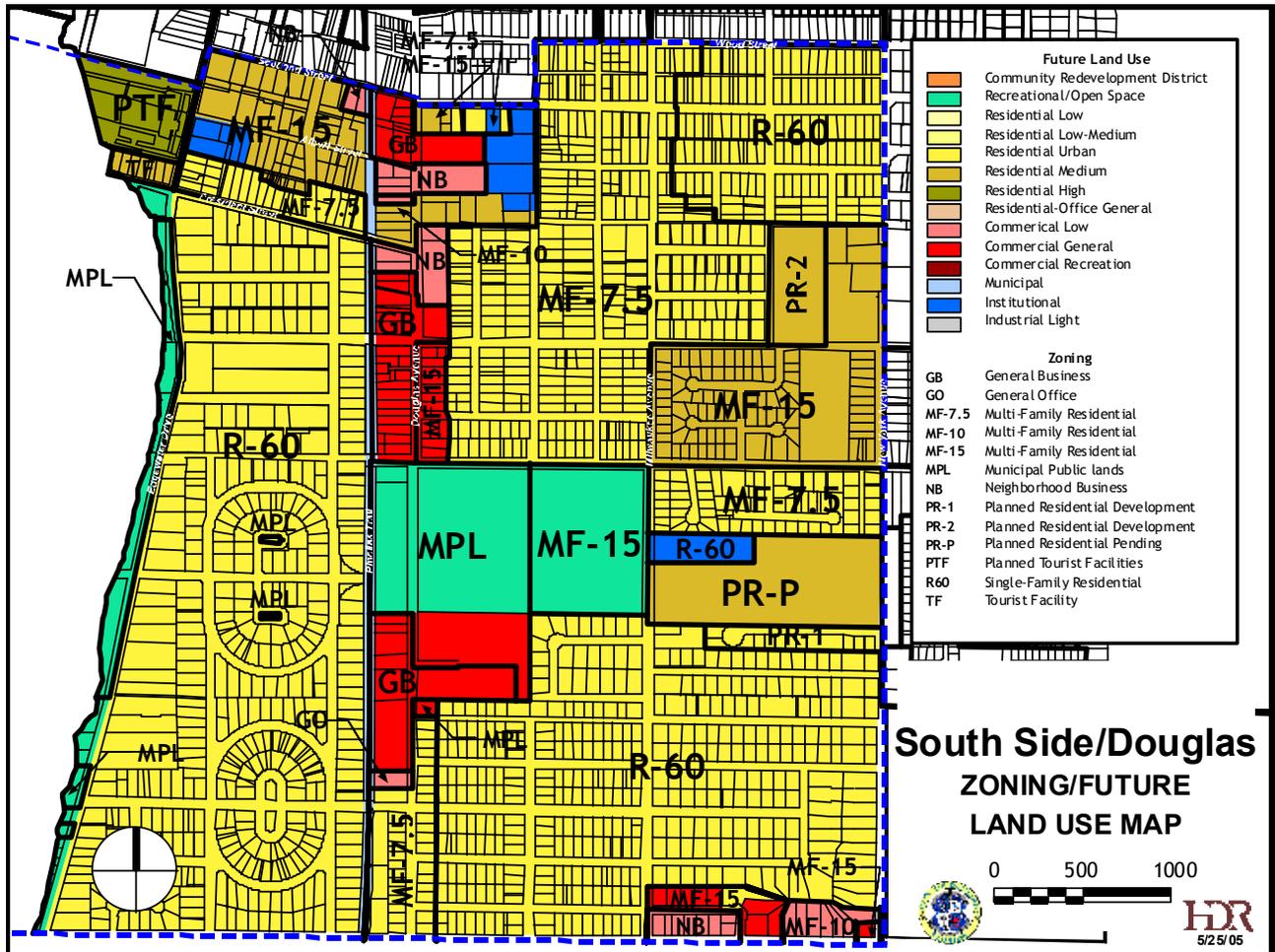


Fig. 29 South Side/Douglas Zoning and Future Land Use

Description

The study area is located in the southeastern section of the City. The study area is bounded to the north by Scotland Street and the downtown, to the south by Union Street and the City of Clearwater, to the east by New York Avenue, and to the west by the St. Joseph's Sound. In addition, located within this study area are approximately 850 historic homes or homes that were built before 1955 (*source: City of Dunedin GIS*). Existing language in the Land Development Regulations indicate that the City has tried in previous occasions to implement a historic district in the area; however there is no evidence of a historic district being established. With the exception of the Douglas Corridor, which is addressed below, the Southside Neighborhoods are predominantly residential in nature. The strip between Edgewater Drive and St. Joseph's Sound is set aside as a park and provides ample views of the water, and the City is currently updating the sidewalk and the landscape. The area adjacent to the downtown is characterized by higher residential densities and 50 foot-wide lots in some blocks. The platting of the district varies by location; lots along Edgewater Drive tend to have deeper lots with depths, up to 280 feet in some instances. Between Edgewater and the Pinellas Trail lots tend to have widths between 65 and 75 feet, whereas on the east side of Douglas Avenue lots tend to be between 50 and 65 feet in width. Redevelopment of single-family homes occurs indiscriminately throughout the neighborhood as properties become available. Although there are no hard data comparing percentages of raze-and-rebuild versus remodeling, there is a growing sentiment in the Southside that the introduction of the so-called "Mac-mansions" (single-family buildings that maximize foot print and height of construction) are negatively impacting the neighborhoods' scale. Developable land on the waterfront is scarce; however, a mid-rise development is presently under construction on the waterfront at President Street.

Recommendation

Based upon community input from the visioning workshops, previous requests by residents, and analysis of the Land Development Regulations, the application of a Historic Preservation Overlay Zoning District is recommended for the areas with a significant concentration of historic buildings. The Historic Preservation Overlay would assist in the designation and preservation of the existing historic homes and inform future development policies and would build upon previous studies.

A second recommendation is to convert the Single-family residential (R-60) zoning of the area bounded by Wood Street, New York Avenue, James Street and Milwaukee Avenue to Planned Residential Development District (PR-1 or PR-2). This would be more compatible with the higher densities of the downtown and existing neighboring heights. This conversion will facilitate an increase in the development densities and encourage cohesion with the existing residential districts found in Downtown. Also, applying PR-1 or PR-2 to this area complies with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

B. Douglas Corridor

Description

The study area is located along Douglas Avenue, within the Southside Neighborhoods area described above. The corridor is one lot deep to the east and is bounded by the downtown to the north, the Pinellas Trail to the west and by Union Street to the south. There are five different land use categories and seven different zoning designations in several locations along the corridor. This gives the corridor a fractured and confusing character, when the intent is to have a unified development approach to the corridor. The upper third of the corridor is characterized by general and neighborhood commercial, and multi-family residential uses. Knology Park and the Hale Activity Center are located in the middle third of the corridor, followed to the south by the public library. The lower third of the corridor contains general commercial and residential uses. There is land available for new development and significant redevelopment in the general area of the intersection of Douglas and Lyndhurst Street.

Recommendation

Apply a mixed use Future Land Use (FLU) category, for instance Commercial Neighborhood (CN), available as an approved Pinellas Planning Council land use category.

Excerpt from Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan:

2.3.3.5.1 Category/Symbol – Commercial Neighborhood (CN) Purpose-It is the purpose of this category to depict those areas of the County that are now developed, or appropriate to be developed, in a manner designed to provide local, neighborhood scale, convenience commercial goods and services; and to recognize such areas as primarily well-suited for neighborhood commercial use consistent with the need, scale, and character of adjoining residential areas which they serve.

C. Patricia Avenue Corridor

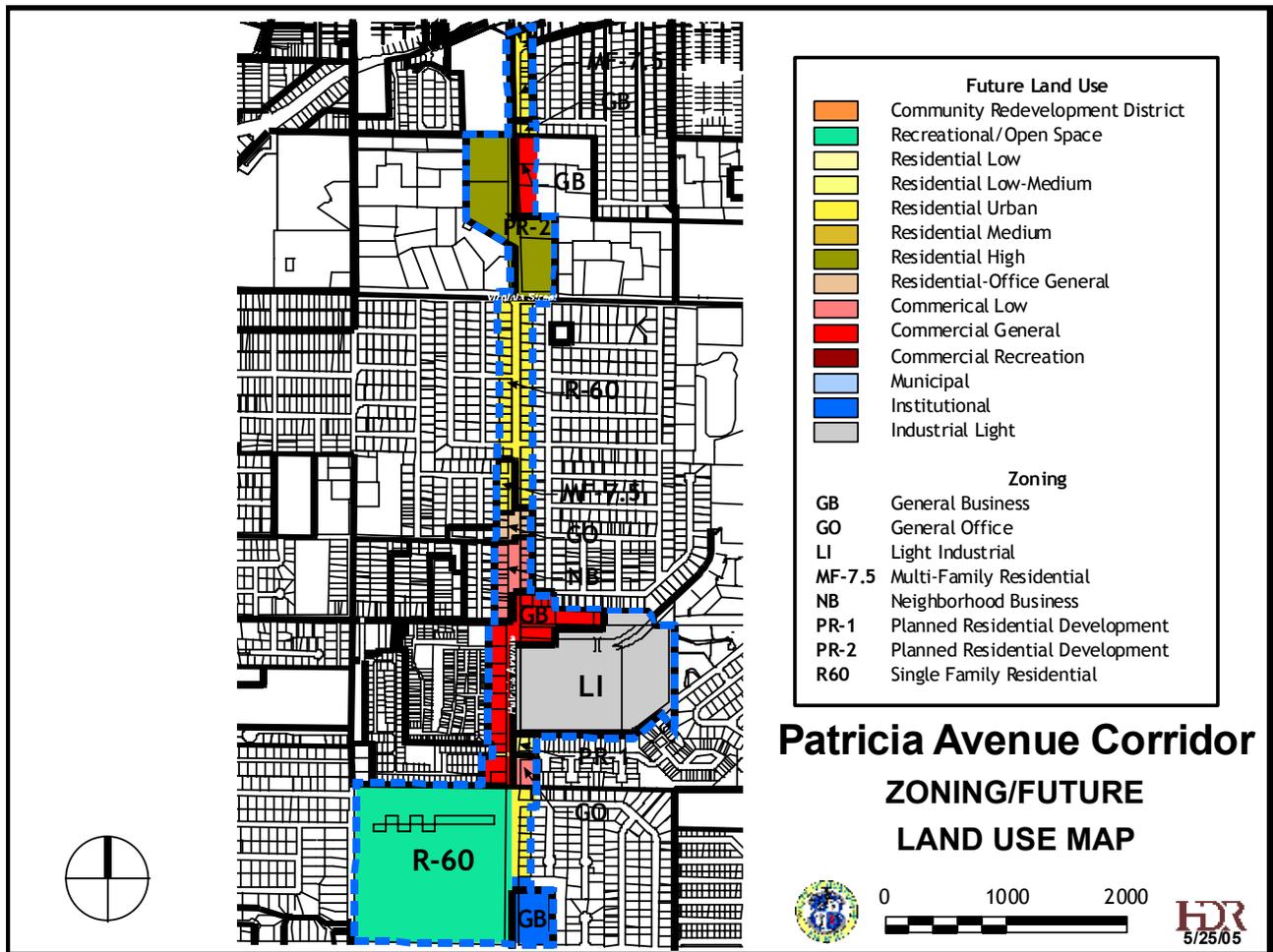


Fig. 30 Patricia Avenue Corridor Zoning and Future Land Use

Description

The Patricia Avenue Corridor study area is one-lot deep on both sides of the avenue and includes the Nielsen property and the high school parcels. It is bounded to the north by Angle Road, which is one-block south of S.R. 580, and to the south by Union Street. The corridor is characterized by a combination of residential, office, and commercial land uses. The Nielsen property is both a challenge and an opportunity since the vacant, 24 acre site, is zoned Light Industrial (LI), a zoning designation that would not allow for mixed use development. The opportunity resides in the size and location of the site.

These allow for a complete mixed-use community center with employment, retail, residential, and ancillary uses that would provide some of the needed complementary uses in the general area.

Recommendation

Change the Future Land Use (FLU) to Residential/Office General (R/OG) for the 24-acre parcel south of Cedarwood Avenue. The R/OG category would allow for the Nielsen property to be redeveloped as a mixed use facility.

Excerpt from the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan:

2.3.3.4.2 Category/Symbol - Residential/Office General (R/OG) Purpose- It is the purpose of this category to depict those areas of the County that are now developed, or appropriate to be developed, in a office and/or medium density residential use; and to recognize such areas as primarily well-suited for mixed use of an office/residential character consistent with the surrounding areas, transportation facilities and natural resource characteristics of such areas.

D. State Road 580 Corridor

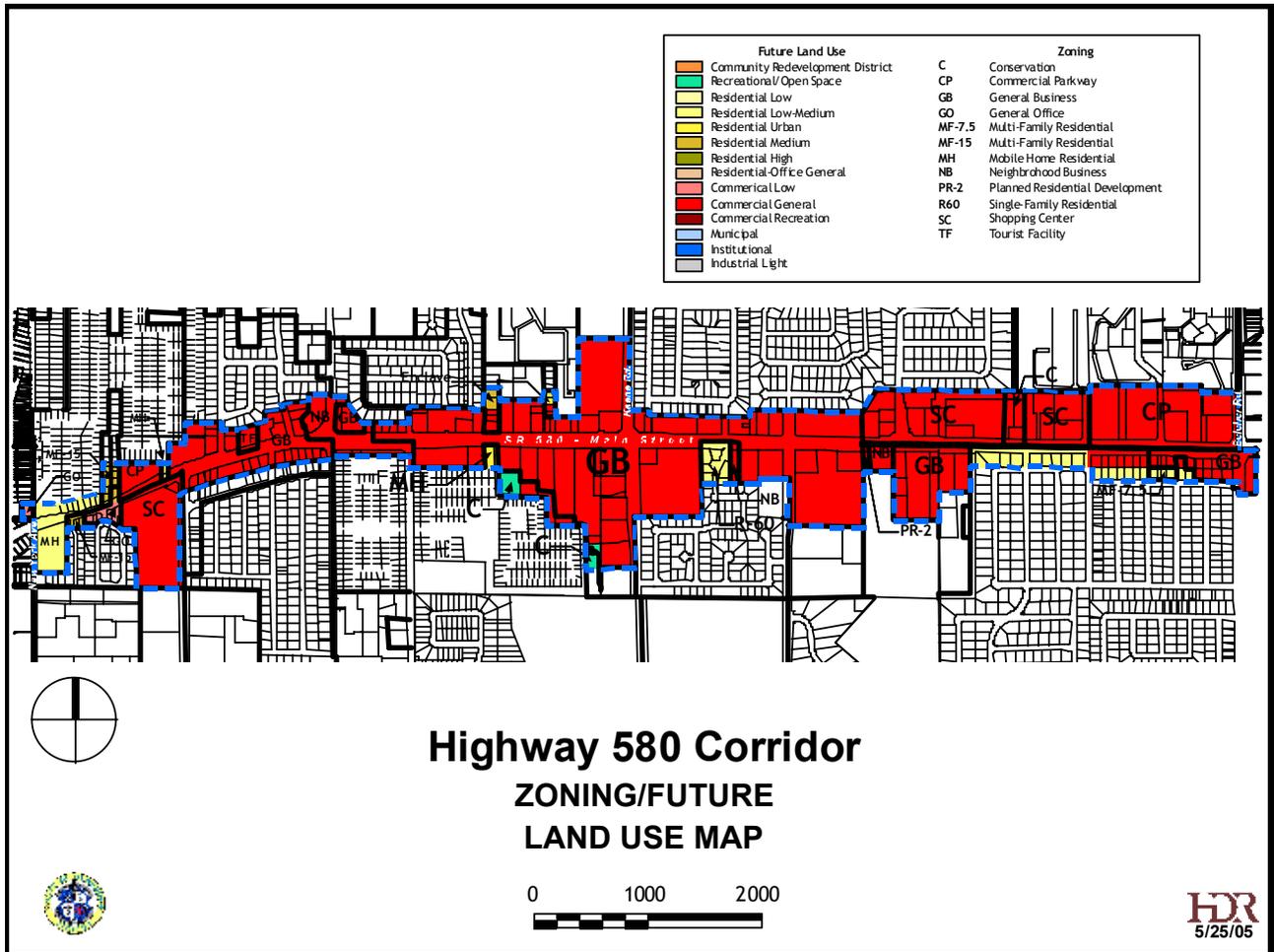


Fig. 31 Highway 580 Corridor Zoning and Future Land Use

Description

The S.R. 580 Corridor is one-lot deep on both sides of the road from Belcher Road in the east to New York Avenue in the west. Beyond the one-lot breadth of the corridor, the area is mostly single-family residential. The future land use designation for most of the corridor is Commercial General (CG); however, there are at least 11 different zoning

designations within this area including General Business (GB), Neighborhood Business (NB), and Shopping Center (SC).

The different commercial and retail uses include segregated strip malls and shopping centers, and isolated residential development. The development standards for SC allow for large-scale commercial development, including big-box retail establishments that conflict with the purpose of the Commercial General FLU designation. However, the Commercial General (CG) zoning designation alone does not recognize or preserve the adjacent neighborhoods.

Recommendation

Apply a different FLU category that recognizes and preserves the adjacent neighborhoods. For instance, if the SC category is eliminated and changed to Commercial Neighborhood (CN), the option for large-scale (big box) development is removed in favor of a more appropriate mixed-use neighborhood scale development.

E. Causeway Gateway

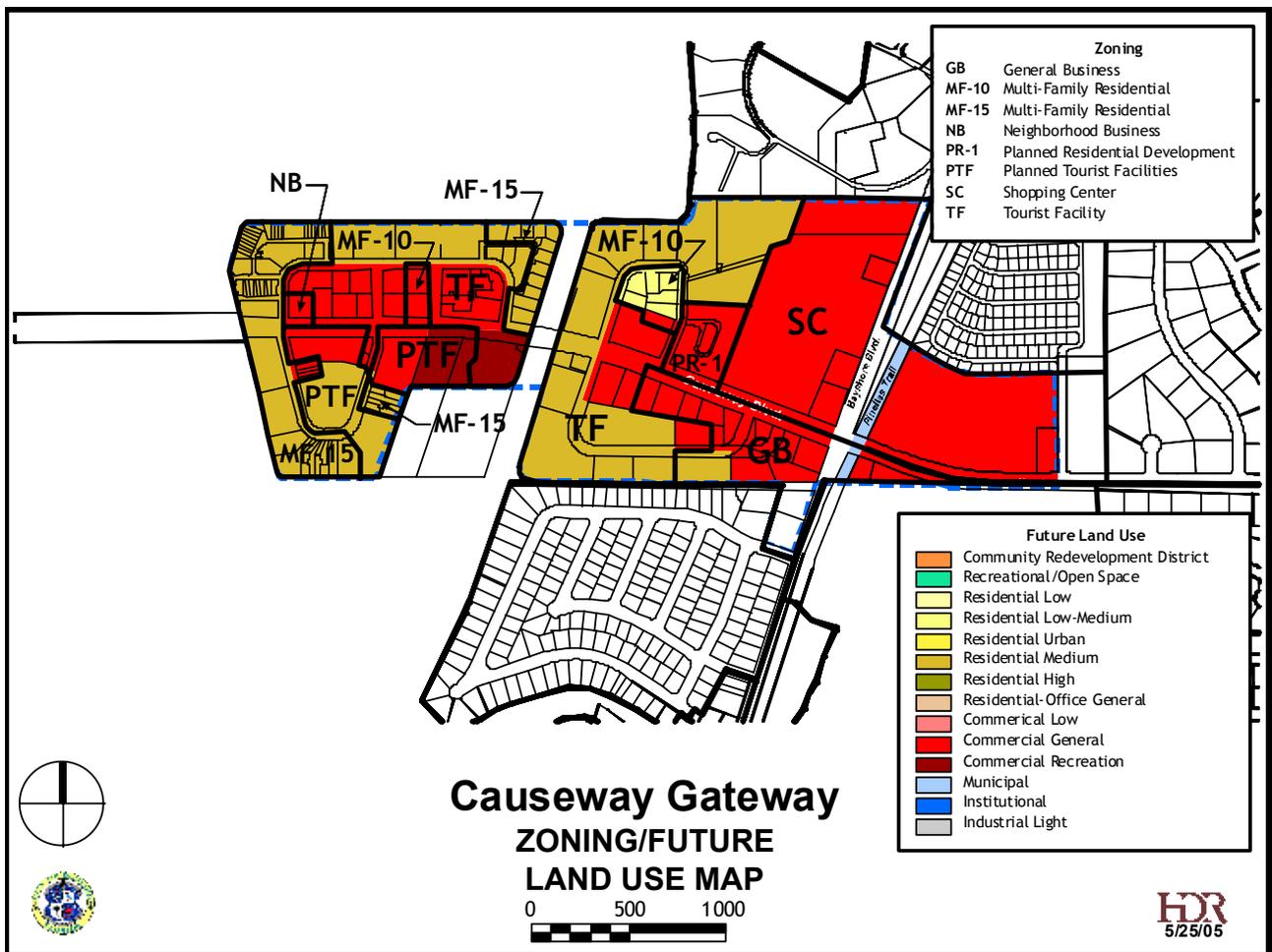


Fig. 32 Causeway Gateway Zoning and Future Land Use

Description

The study area is located at the western end of Curlew Road in the northeast section of Dunedin. The study area is the gateway to the Honeymoon Island State Recreation Area. Analysis of the area's Future Land Use finds the dominant categories are Commercial General (CG) and Residential Medium (RM), with the Commercial/Recreational (CR) use represented by the Commodores Boat Basin. There are eight

different zoning designations including multifamily residential (MF-10 and MF-15), Shopping Center (SC), General Business (GB), Tourist Facility (TF) and Planned Tourist Facility (PTF). Results from the community vision workshops suggest this area become a “gateway” to Honeymoon Island or, at the least, an activity center. The Causeway Plaza Shopping Center at the corner of Causeway Boulevard and Bayshore Boulevard is at the end of its intended life cycle and represents an opportunity for redevelopment able to introduce support uses and urban space that would satisfy the need for a mixed-use activity center.

Recommendation

Change the Shopping Center (SC) and General Business (GB) zoning designations to Residential/Office/Retail (ROR), thus enabling the four corners of the gateway area to redevelop into a mixed use center.

F. Downtown CRD

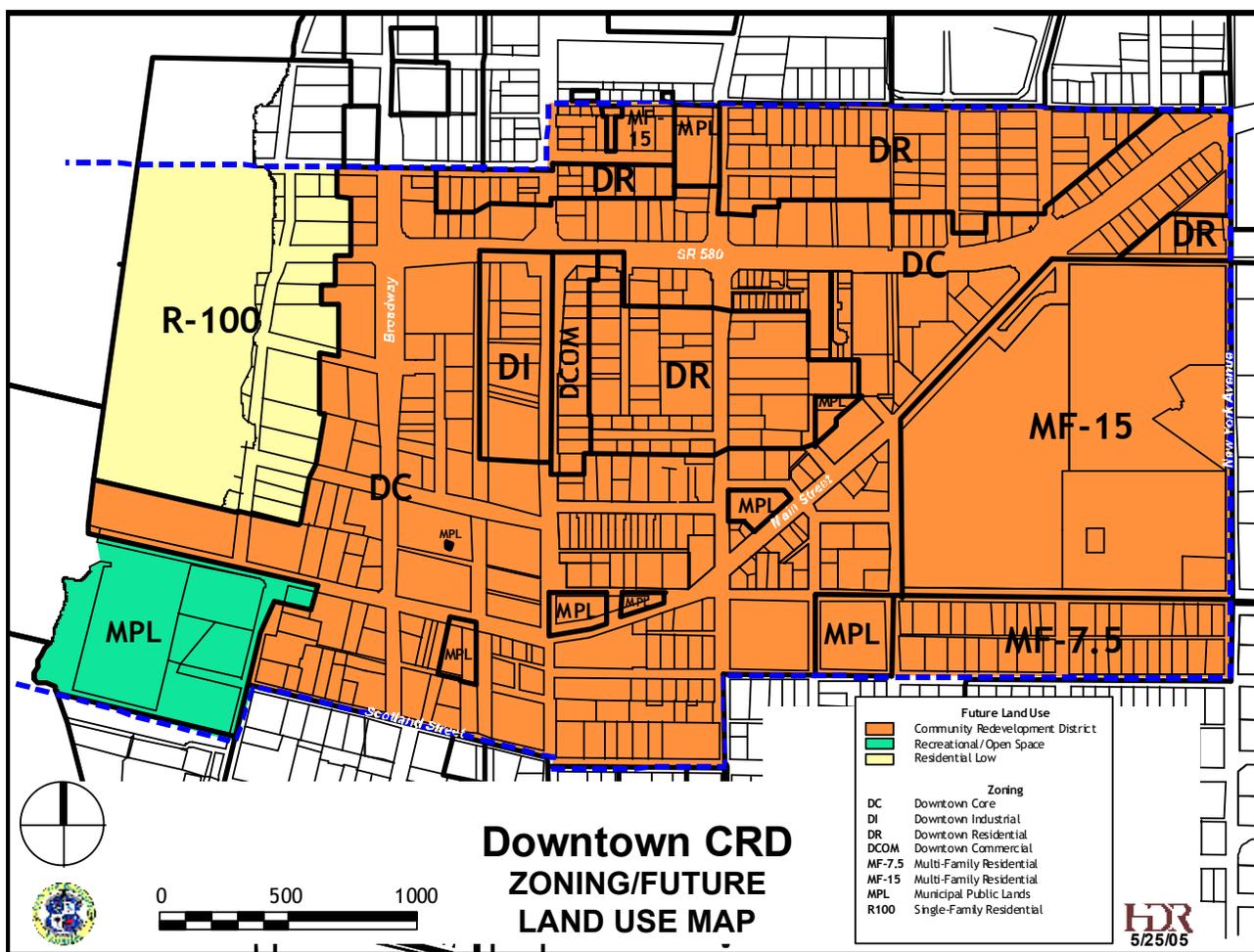


Fig. 33 Downtown CRD Zoning and Future Land Use

Description

The study area is bounded by the waterfront to the west, New York Avenue to the east, Palmetto Street and Bay Street to the north and Scotland Street and Wood Street to the south. The underlying FLU for the area is Community Redevelopment District (CRD) that enables high density residential uses along with retail, office services and other uses. Eight different zoning designations are in Downtown of Dunedin including Municipal (MPL), Downtown Industrial (DI), Downtown Core (DC), Downtown Residential (DR) and

Downtown Commercial (DCOM); the development standards for the above districts vary and create a mixture of standards. The other zoning districts are R-100 Single Family Residential on the waterfront at Victoria Drive, and several designations (MF-7.5, MF-10 and MF-15) of multi-family residential on the edges of the district. Main Street is the signature street and is well-attended by visitors and local residents, due in part to the Pinellas Trail that traverses downtown from north to south. Redevelopment activity in the downtown area has been steady, and its success is starting to create parking demands difficult to meet. A recurring complaint of Downtown Dunedin, expressed by the citizens at the community vision workshops, is that despite the Pinellas Trail, the Downtown is not pedestrian or bicycle friendly enough.

Recommendation

Combine the four districts DI, DC, DR and DCOM into a single district. This single district can be implemented through a Form-based Code (FBC). The FBC is integrated into the physical plan of the City through a Regulating Plan that describes the physical placement and hierarchy of streets, blocks, lots, and open space. The FBC assigns building, park, and lot types to specific areas at several scales: Center, Neighborhood, Corridor, District, Street, Block, and Lot. The Form-based Code typically includes the buildings' architectural forms as opposed to zoning prescriptions without changing the underlying Future Land Use. Design standards describe permitted or recommended building and landscape materials and their applications.

III. Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations - Findings and Issues

- A. **Comprehensive Plan** – Only the following Comprehensive Plan elements were provided by the City of Dunedin for analysis: Future Land Use, Housing and Intergovernmental Coordination. The following identify areas in the City's Comprehensive Plan that may require further consideration;

1. *Future Land Use – Objective G, Policy 6: The Residential/Office General, Commercial Limited, and Commercial General Land Use Categories shall allow for mixed uses within the zoning districts allowing for mixed uses.*

Zoning Code – Sec. 134-1012: General Office Permitted Uses, The following uses are permitted within the GO general office district: (1) Business Offices (2) Residential dwelling units as accessory to approved commercial units.

Recommendation

Change the General Office (GO) zoning to allow for commercial and multi-family uses. This would be consistent with the Future Land Use and would also allow for mixed-use activity centers.

2. *Future Land Use – Objective H, Policy 1: The City will maintain its existing innovative land development regulations such as Planned Residential and Tourist Facilities zoning.*

Recommendation

Apply the Planned Residential (PR-1/PR-2) zoning designations to specific locations within the study areas, for example the Southside Neighborhoods study area.

3. *Future Land Use Categories* – The analysis of the Future Land Use Plan (FLUP) categories for Pinellas County reveals that some available categories that are not being applied to the City's Future Land Use map. The City might consider adding the following FLU categories:

- a. Residential Very High (RVH)
- b. Resort Facilities Medium and High (RFM and RFH)
- c. Residential/Office Limited (R/OL)
- d. Commercial Neighborhood (CN)

Recommendation

The recommendation is for the continued analysis of the four categories and to determine whether the categories might benefit the City of Dunedin. Each of the categories allows for a mixture of uses and densities, which would facilitate redevelopment opportunities for the six study areas.

- B. **Land Development Regulations** – The Historic Preservation Overlay District is in the Land Development Regulations for the City of Dunedin (Sec. 134-1431); however, there is no physical evidence that this district overlay is being utilized.

Recommendation

Develop the historic district regulation beginning with district boundaries and purpose. Ultimately the historic district should have a list of contributing structures and its own design guidelines for preservation and development.

- C. **Countywide Scenic/Non-Commercial Corridor** – according to the Pinellas County, Countywide Scenic/Non-Commercial Corridor Plan Element, there are two mixed use corridor sub classifications at the intersections of Keene Rd. and Belcher Rd. along S.R. 580. The future land use category for the two intersections is Commercial General (CG).

The excerpt from the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan notes:

Section 4.1 Corridor Sub classification. Mixed Use. Areas characterized by medium to high density residential uses classified as Residential Low Medium (RLM), Residential Medium (RM), Residential High (RH), Residential Very High (RVH); mixed use classified as Residential/Office Limited (R/OL), Residential/Office General (R/OG), Residential Office Retail (R/O/R); commercial uses classified as Commercial Neighborhood (CN), Commercial Limited (CL), Commercial Recreation (CR), Commercial General (CG); or a combination of these land use designations.

Recommendation

An alternative FLU category may be better suited for these intersections due to the proximity of surrounding residential neighborhoods. The FLU category Residential/Office General (R/OG) or Commercial Neighborhood (CN) is recommended based upon code analyses.

- D. **Economic Development and Redevelopment Plan for the Pinellas Community (EDRP)** – The EDRP, though not yet finalized by Pinellas County, creates a framework that establishes *Centers in Pinellas County*. The following four types of centers identified in the EDRP include; Neighborhood Centers, Suburban Commercial Centers, Town Centers, and Urban Centers. Downtown Dunedin has been identified as a Town Center in the EDRP. The typologies shall be investigated further to determine whether they may be applicable to the Dunedin study areas.

IV. Building Heights

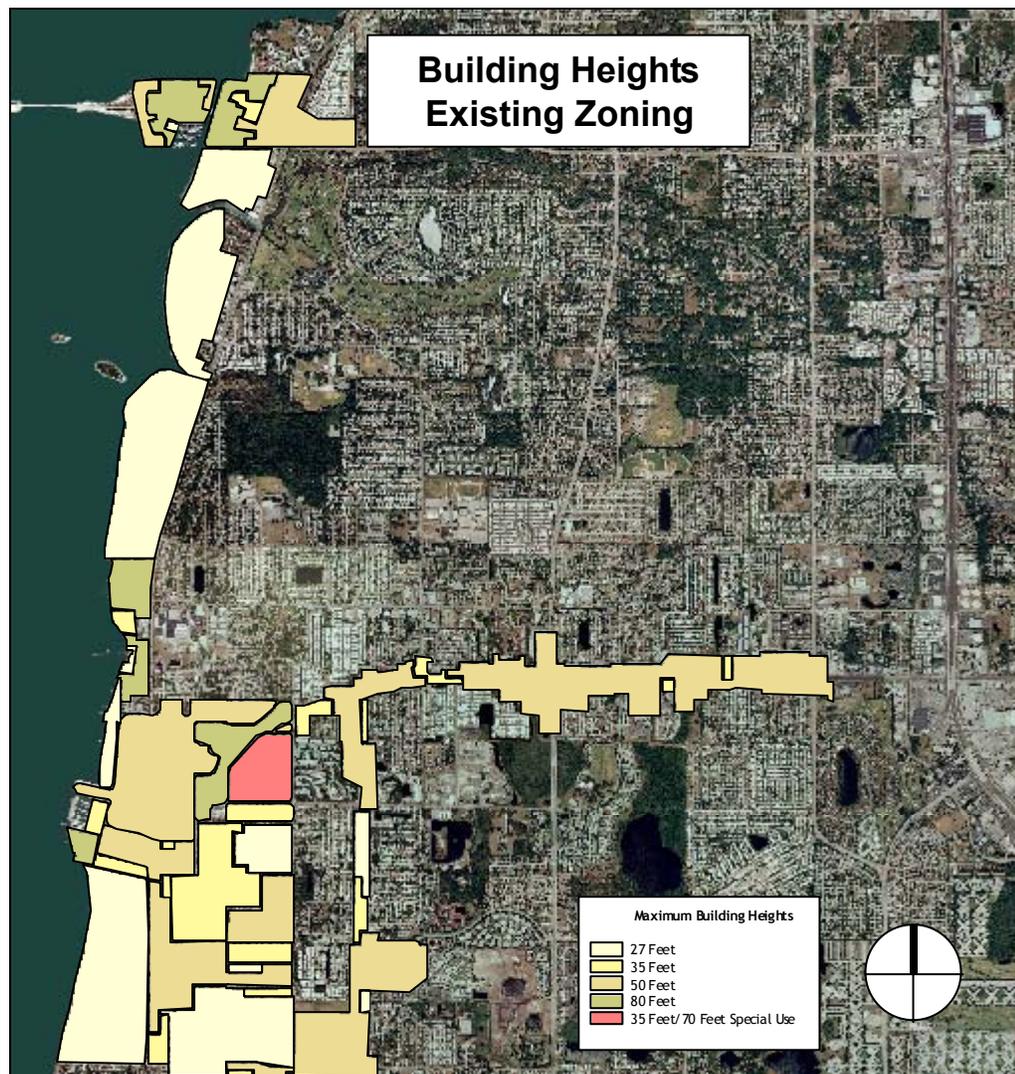


Fig. 34 Building Heights in the Study Area

Throughout the course of the Community Visioning project, the topic of building heights elicited considerable discussion from members of the community. There was particular concern that new development and redevelopment not impact the low-scale village-like quality of the city as it exists today. As the Character Preference Analysis indicated, an overwhelming majority of the participants prefer smaller-scale development, ideally in the range of two to four stories.

The concern about the height of future redevelopment is particularly intense in and around the traditional Downtown, where it is actually at odds with the height limits currently permitted by the City's codes.

Land Use	Maximum Building Heights				
	27 Feet	35 Feet	50 Feet	70 Feet Special Use	80 feet
South Side/Douglas Corridor					
PTF					✓
MF-15;GB;PR2;TF			✓		
MF-10;MF-7.5;GO;NB;PR1		✓			
R-60	✓				
Patricia Avenue Corridor					
GB;LI;PR2			✓		
GO;MF-7.5;NB;PR1		✓			
R-60	✓				
Highway 580 Corridor					
GB;GO;MF-15;PR2;SC;TF			✓		
C;CP;MF-7.5;MH;NB		✓			
R-60	✓				
Causeway Gateway					
PTF					✓
GB;MF-15;PR1;SC ;TF			✓		
MF-10;NB		✓			
Downtown CRD					
DC and DI(East of Highland)					✓
MF-15(Special Use)				✓	
DC and DR (West of Highland);DI;DCOM			✓		
DC(Marina);MF-7.5		✓			
R-100	✓				

Table 1. Building Heights by Zoning in the Study Area

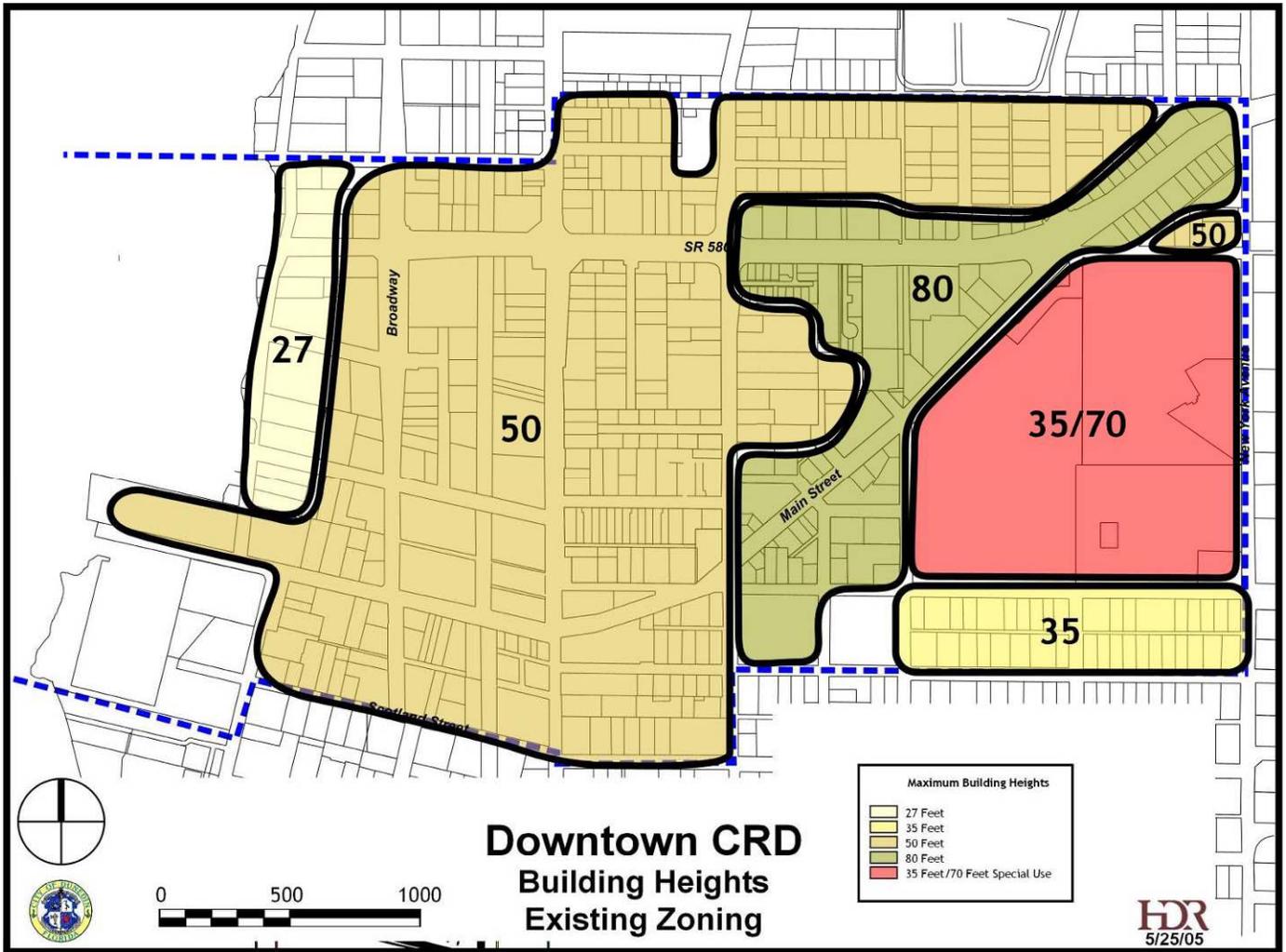


Fig. 35 Existing Allowable Heights

Within Downtown Dunedin, maximum building height is currently matched to zoning category. That is, the zoning of a particular piece of property also defines the height of the building that can be built on this property. While there is some validity to this approach, as it currently exists in Dunedin, it presents the potential to develop a downtown environment marked by buildings of widely disparate heights and scales. This will be particularly acute in situations where two adjacent properties have different underlying zoning and, hence, different potential redevelopment heights, or where the zoning categories differ from one side of the street to another. For instance, there is a 30-foot height differential that can occur along Highlander Avenue where buildings on the east side of the road can be substantially higher than buildings on the west side.



Fig. 36 Aerial View of Downtown Dunedin

This practice of attaching height limits to underlying zoning designations may negatively impact the creation of the physical character indicated as desirable by the community. Whereas the workshops and analyses indicate a dominant preference for a tightly integrated downtown with buildings ranging between two and four stories, the current zoning and land development regulations are set up to generate a downtown that can range in height from one to seven stories and where street continuity will be difficult to obtain as individual developers pursue their projects in isolation.

The image of the downtown that emerges from the community workshops will be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve under the current zoning requirements. The densities and intensities of development allowed currently are not primarily a problem; rather, it is the formal attributes of the zoning that need to be examined and changed. Other communities looking to effect redevelopment that is sympathetic to the underlying character of the original environment have begun to use what are known as “form-based” or “design-based” zoning codes to ensure appropriately scaled and detailed future development.

Such an approach tends to relax some of the specific requirements for the uses to be accommodated within a new project while, at the same time, becoming much more detailed as to the physical attributes of the new development. Quite often, design-based codes not only facilitate, but require mixed-use development and include a fairly generous range of use combinations as acceptable. In return, they are quite specific in addressing the ways in which a new building can sit on its site, its maximum height, its optimal form, how it must relate to its neighbors and to the fronting streets, how it must accommodate parking, and so forth.

It is rare that a shift from use-based zoning to design-based zoning has a negative impact on the amount of development that can be built on a site. Often, this approach allows a smart developer to actually increase that density or intensity of his or her project. All new development, however, must conform to the specific physical design standards promoted by the community.

In the case of Dunedin, the desired future physical form of the downtown, as proposed by participants in the visioning exercises, adds to and enhances the current physical form, which is repeatedly described as “village-like.” This includes lower scale structures, continuous street frontages with parking on-street or at the rear of buildings, and a delicate continuous scale relationship between the width of the fronting street and the heights of the buildings along the street frontage.

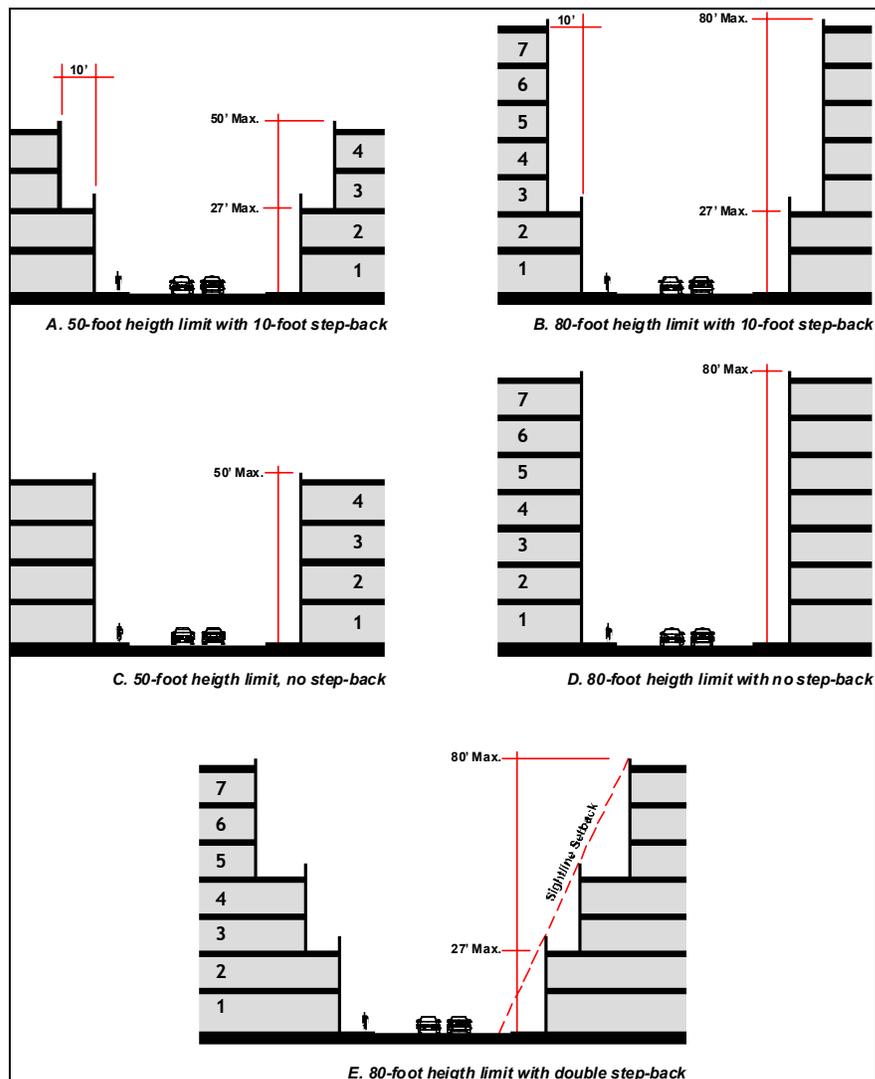


Fig. 37 Graphic Describing the Relationship of Building Height to Street Width

The relationship between street width and adjacent building heights is critical. In general, pedestrians and visitors express peak comfort in situations where the heights of the buildings on either side of a street are somewhere between one-half and one-third of the width of the distance between the facades of the buildings on opposite sides of the street. (See the accompanying diagrams for graphic expression of these relationships.)

There are certainly examples around the country and the world of distinctly charming and desirable communities where these precise ratios are not met, but overall, they seem to apply well in Dunedin. Main Street, which is seen by many as the psychic heart of the Downtown and, by extension, the City, varies in width from 60 to 70 feet. The buildings on either side tend to vary from fifteen to thirty feet in height, creating ratios of height to width that run from 1:4 to 1:2. These existing ratios should be respected in future development along Main Street and, to enhance the sense of the Downtown as a coherent district rather than simply a single street, these relationships should be extended to describe the feel of all the streets within the district, rather than only on Main Street.

The physical implications of this approach, were it to be strictly enforced would be to limit development within the Downtown to somewhere between thirty and forty feet in height, depending on the width of the fronting ROW. This would effectively equate to buildings approximately two to three stories high. Currently, with the exception of certain zones to the east, zoning in the Downtown limits heights to fifty (50) feet, which under most desirable construction types and land uses effectively equates to four-story structures.

There are several approaches to be considered. The City could replace the existing dimensional height limit with a limit related to the number of stories allowed in new construction, with secondary physical limits on the dimensions of individual stories. Thus, the height limit within the downtown could be listed as three stories with a specified maximum dimension between average grade at the front of the building and the top of the building. These limits would need to include a definition of the "top" of a building. This could variously be described as the height of the parapet across the front of the building, the highest point on the roof decking on a flat-roofed structure, the height of the eaves on a pitched roof structure (with further limitations on the allowable pitch of the roof itself).

The following chart describes some reasonable dimensional standards associated with this approach. Assuming that the ground floor of much new development will be retail, restaurant or other commercial use, it is not unreasonable to assume a floor-to-floor dimension of 15' or 16 feet for the ground floor. Upper stories will logically comprise commercial office or residential uses. Here, it is not unreasonable to assume floor-to-floor dimensions of 11' to 13' as standard. A three story mixed-use structure, therefore, would have a minimum height to the top of the roof deck (on a flat roofed design) of 37' and a maximum height of 42'. If one assumes a 32" – 36" parapet or railing at the front of the building, the maximum height of this parapet would come to between 39'8" and 45'0".

Given the 60' to 70' existing ROW along Main Street, these ratios would be somewhat out of scale with the desired 1:2 and 1:3 standards. To help rectify this condition, the City could further control the perceived relationship between building heights and street widths by mandating that all new construction step-back from the primary façade above the second story. That is, a new building would be built along the front lot-line or a mandated build-to line for the first two floors. Above this height, the building would step back a required dimension; ten feet has been mentioned as a reasonable standard for this step-back.

Under these conditions, the perceived “height” of the buildings immediately along the edge of the street would effectively be between 28’8” (15’ floor-to-floor for first level, 11’ floor-to-floor for second level, 32” parapet or railing on third-level step back) and 32’0” (16’ plus 13’ plus 36”). These heights fall well within the ratios of height-to-width currently found along Main Street within the Downtown.

Floor Level	Minimum Floor-to-Floor Height	Minimum Parapet or Railing Height	Maximum Floor-to-Floor Height	Maximum Parapet or Railing Height	Total Minimum Height		Total Maximum Height	
	Floor One	15' 0"		16' 0"		15' 0"		16' 0"
Floor Two	11' 0"		13' 0"		26' 0"		29' 0"	
Eave Line						26' 0"		29' 0"
Parapet/Railing		2' 8"		3' 0"		28' 8"		32' 0"
Requires Mandatory 10'-0" Step Back at Second Level								
Floor Three	11' 0"		13' 0"		37' 0"		42' 0"	
Eave Line						37' 0"		37' 0"
Parapet/Railing		2' 8"		3' 0"		39' 8"		45' 0"
Not Permitted in All Areas								
Floor Four	11' 0"		Not Permitted		48' 0"		49' 4"	
Eave Line						48' 0"		49' 4"
Parapet		2' 8"		3' 0"		50' 8"		52' 0"

Table 2 Recommended Heights

In keeping with this design-based approach to limiting heights within the Downtown, the City will need to codify the street-types within the Downtown in order to help perpetuate continuous height-to-width relationships for new development. Each street-type would define different acceptable height-to-width ratios, and thus describe different characteristics for new development.

The following map of the Downtown presents such an approach. It defines the Downtown in terms of three distinct street-types, listed here simply as “A” streets, “B” streets and “C” streets.

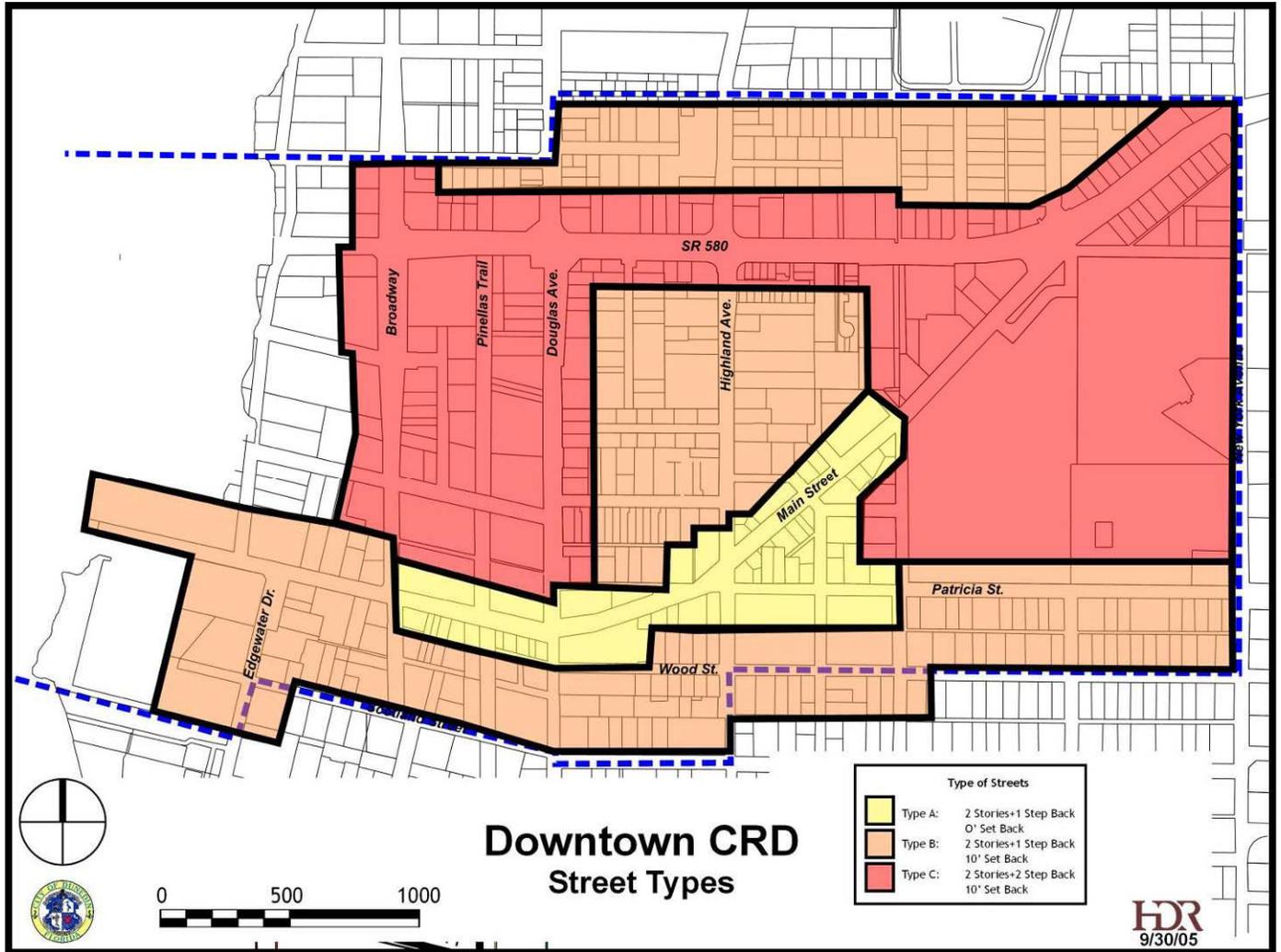


Fig. 38 Street Types

“A” Streets

Within this system “A” streets have the most rigorous standards for new development. All new construction should be built directly to the front lot line (the edge of the public ROW). All new buildings will be continuous across their frontage, with the exception of passageways which are allowed to provide access between the street and parking to the rear of the buildings. These passageways should be no more than seven feet wide and their design and construction must adhere to all applicable building codes. The decision to include a passageway in the design of a building is left to the developer of the building. However, there can be no more than one passageway per block.

All buildings built along an “A” street must be at least one story tall, with stories built according to the aforementioned dimensions. Above the second story and additional third story can be built, but only after stepping back ten feet behind the primary façade of the building. (For many uses, this stepped-back area can become usable space as a balcony or deck.)

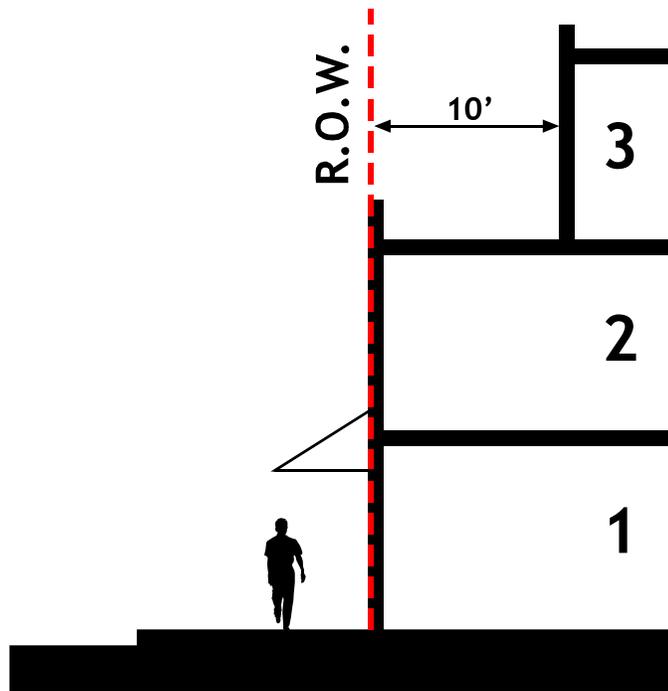


Fig. 39 Type “A” Street

“B” Streets

“B” Streets tend to be located adjacent to or connecting with “A” streets but might not contain the same degree of commercial and retail use or pedestrian activity. Nonetheless, the character of new development along these streets should help perpetuate the desired character of the downtown as a whole.

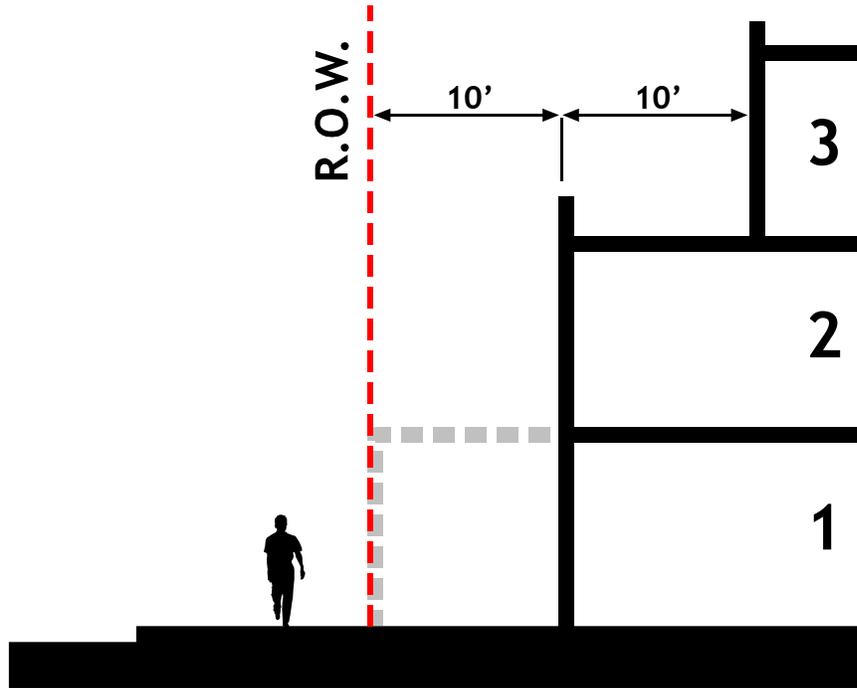


Fig. 40 Type “B” Street

For “B” streets, the same formal criteria must be followed as with construction along an “A” street, with several exceptions: new development must be built along a mandated “build-to” line that is set back ten feet (10’0”) from the fronting street, and adjacent developments must be built at least seven feet apart from each other with this intervening dimension designed as a passage-way to rear-lot parking, some form of usable outdoor space – i.e. a restaurant patio, or as landscaping.

The ten-foot mandated set-back between the street and the façade of the building can be designed as porch or gallery if this relates to the intended use on the first floor of the building --i.e., outdoor dining—and if the height of the porch or gallery does not exceed the level of the second floor of the building.

“C” Streets

“C” streets are those streets within the Downtown that have the widest ROWs. New development along these streets must meet the same conditions for placement as for development along “B” streets – they must be set back ten feet from the front lot line. Given the wider dimension of the fronting street, however, these buildings can be built to a maximum height of four stories, with the same mandated ten-foot step-back above the second story. The maximum dimensional height for a building along a “C” street is 52’0” to the highest point on the front parapet for a flat-roofed structure and 50’0” to the eave-line for a building with pitched roofs. The pitch of the roof on a pitched-roof building shall be no less than 3:12 and no more than 6:12, with the highest point of the roof (ridgeline) no greater than 60’0”.

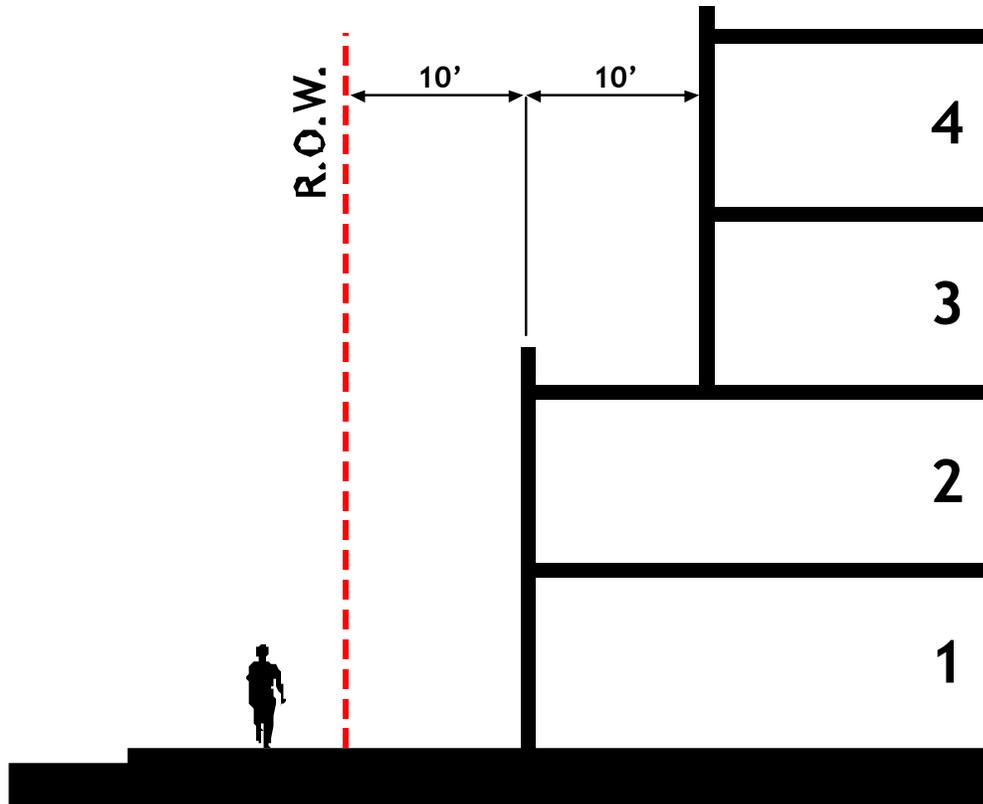


Fig. 41 Type “C” Street

Corner Conditions

Where two streets intersect to create a development parcel that sits on a corner, the conditions affecting the street with the higher qualitative ranking should predominate. That is, if a development parcel sits at the corner of an A-street and a B-street, the A-street design criteria should pertain. Where a B-street and a C-street intersect, the additional story allowed for the C-street development can carry over to the B-street but only with an additional ten-foot step-back. That is, the frontage along the B-street can extend to a height of four-stories, but only after the required ten-foot front-yard set-back, the ten-foot second-story step-back and an additional ten-foot third-story step-back.

Where two streets of equal ranking intersect, both facades should be considered primary facades and should be treated as such.

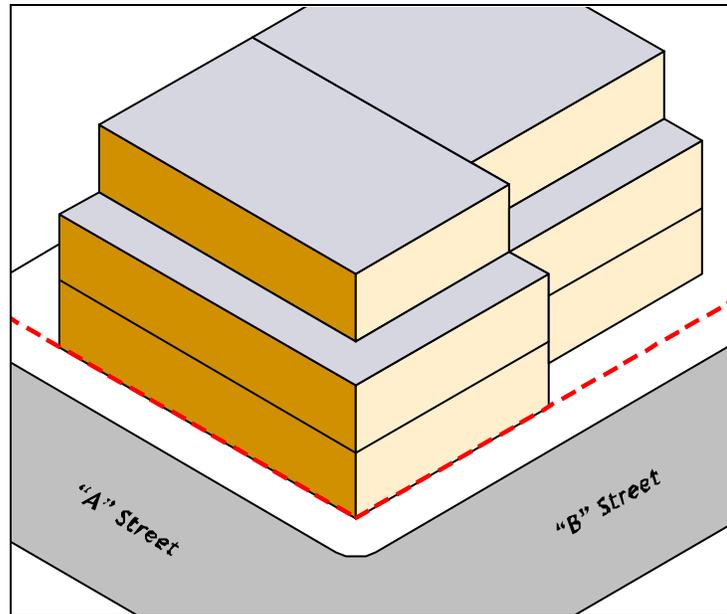


Fig. 42 Corner Formed by "A" and "B" Streets

Recommendation

The recommendations and guidelines described above are extremely preliminary but should be effective in initiating more rigorous control over the character of future development within the community.

One way to assist in both the enforcement of these proposed recommendations and the fine-tuning of the overall impact, would be to devise a design-based zoning code for critical locations within the community. This code would include language that rigorously controls the placement of buildings on their sites, their relationship to the fronting streets, and the height, scale and design of the primary facades. Additional requirements could be written into this code to address issues such as architectural style, required (or prohibited) materials, colors, textures, etc., fenestration, detailing, lighting, signage, landscaping, etc.

This code would be devised to permit the allowable underlying density or intensity of use currently applicable to each parcel of property but would also help create formal and physical characteristics along the streets and blocks that relate to the desired conditions expressed by the community.

In lieu of developing a formal design-based zoning code, the City could create a zoning overlay for designated redevelopment zones within the City with additional urban design guidelines applied to all redevelopment projects that occur within these zones

These guidelines can build upon the ones described above, and can be as general or as detailed as the City leaders feel they should be.

Design Reviews

In addition to developing and applying these urban design guidelines, the City should insist on rigorous design review for all proposed future development within these designated districts, beginning at the level of schematic design.

As part of this process of refining the formal criteria to be applied to new development, the City should remove any potential administrative variances that would result in buildings whose dimensions exceed those outlined above. The text of the current zoning code includes the following verbiage:

Due to construction variations within federally mandated flood prone areas of the city, building heights may be varied by the zoning administrator, or his designee, no more than 30 percent above the maximum building heights as indicated in subsection (a) of this section.

This language needs to be removed and replaced by language similar to that which was used as part of the building heights moratorium, which read as follows:

No variance shall be issued by the Board of Adjustment of Appeals or any other agency of the City of Dunedin, including City staff or employees that will have the effect of modifying in any respect whatsoever the standards set forth herein; except that for those properties located within designated flood prone areas, the only administrative exception pursuant to Section 134-1622(2) of the Uniform Development Code to the maximum allowable building height will be the specific amount necessary to elevate the building above existing grade to achieve minimum FEMA base flood elevation requirements.

Incentives

With respect to the provision of development incentives, the City should reserve the right to negotiate with developers for potential additional development density or intensity for specific instances where the developer is able to offer the City elements that reflect substantial civic benefit. Chief among these, within the Downtown, and potentially within other redeveloping enclaves within the City, is the provision of public parking. A second type of civic benefit could be a small pocket park or functional civic space. Additional potential benefits are sure to emerge over time.

Negotiations for such incentives should be initiated by the City.

V. Development Scenarios

The images of potential future development shown in the following illustrations were developed as a way of expressing the general intentions of the community as revealed through the visioning exercises, SWOT analyses, and character preference surveys. These images were developed approximately half-way through this project and were presented to the city leaders and staff for comments and discussion. Based on these comments and discussion, the recommended guidelines and approaches to future development have been further modified. In the case of the development scenarios done for the locations within the Downtown, these subsequent modifications invalidate some of the aspects of the scenarios as shown in the renderings. The primary modification is the institution of a mandatory ten-foot step-back above the second story, for all new buildings within the Downtown.

Despite these distinctions, these scenarios are presented here as capturing, in part, the essential elements that the community would like to see in future development and redevelopment within the City.

Eastern Gateway to Downtown

The corner of Main Street and Skinner Boulevard should mark the East gateway to the downtown. As shown in the rendering below, this site can be redeveloped into mixed-use buildings, with ample structured parking toward the interior of the blocks. (The buildings shown here are three stories in height; subsequent discussion considered the possibility that buildings at this location could even go to four stories without seriously impacting the character and feel of the environs.) Structured parking with a retail liner at the ground level can help define the new streetscape without sacrificing appearance or pedestrian activity, and can help create the overall scale and physical character described in the various visioning processes.

Causeway Shopping Center

The general approach to the redevelopment of Causeway Shopping Center has become increasingly common in other parts of the country where obsolete shopping centers are retrofitted into mixed-use communities. Depending on the intensity of development and the market needs, structure parking becomes necessary and affordable. For the Causeway Shopping Center the development is organized along a north-south axis that serves as a main street. The redevelopment program includes 112 dwelling units in two-story buildings on the north end and two mixed-use three-story buildings on Causeway Boulevard. Each of the two main buildings include parking for close to 250 cars; some or all of the ground floor, this is an area close to 90,000 square feet, can be used for retail and /or other uses.

Main Street Infill, Downtown Dunedin

One of the key sites in the downtown is at the northeastern corner of the intersection of Main Street and the Pinellas Trail. This site is currently used for surface parking, but has been proposed for new development. As depicted in the illustration below, this would be a three-story structure with retail uses on the first floor and office or residential uses above. To accommodate the necessary parking plus to make up the parking that currently occupies the site, a four-level parking deck is shown behind the main development. While entirely schematic at this point, such a structure could conceivably accommodate as many as three-hundred vehicles.

Based on subsequent discussions, an infill development on this site would be required to step back ten-feet from Main Street above the second level. This would serve to reduce the scale of the building somewhat, but would allow much of the character depicted below to continue.

Conclusions

The community visioning process in Dunedin has progressed from an exercise involving commissioners and staff to a community-wide effort that has helped clarify directions for future development within the City. This document describes both the community-wide visioning process and the results and implications of the effort. Changes are recommended to the city's zoning code and land use regulations for each of the six areas targeted for redevelopment. Preliminary height limits and design guidelines are proposed for the Downtown, with the hope that these will help channel new and future redevelopment to better match the vision put forth by the community.

Discussions among City leaders and staff touched upon the potential to devise a design-based zoning code for Dunedin. While recognizing the merits of such an approach, it must also be acknowledged that such a code would be without precedent in Pinellas County and would entail significant investments of money and staff resources to bring to fruition. The general goals of the community and its leaders should be achievable with a more modest approach of revising the existing zoning codes and adding a series of urban design guidelines as formal requirements within designated redevelopment focal areas.

Should the City decide to simply modify its existing zoning and development regulations to include the preliminary design recommendations outlined here, leaders and staff should commit to rigorously enforcing, testing, modifying and revising these guidelines over an extended period of time in order to ultimately create a working set of regulations that produce the desired development outcomes.