

3. Revitalization Strategy

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the policies, plans and actions that will revitalize Downtown Livermore. The Revitalization Strategy that follows will serve as a road map for change on the Downtown district. In this chapter, revitalization objectives for the Downtown are translated into strategic actions to be taken by the City in order to create a vibrant, active, exciting Downtown.

Revitalization Objectives

Downtown should be the cornerstone of the community. It is the place where its residents come together on important occasions, and the place where they meet each other in their everyday comings and goings. At one end of the spectrum, it should be a center for all of Livermore, a place that shows off the best of the City. Amenities and options are found here that are unavailable elsewhere: access to unique shops and destinations; connections to public transportation facilities; and public and cultural facilities, like parks, theaters, and museums. On the other end of the spectrum, it should serve as a neighborhood center for people who live there, providing a variety of compatible shopping and service opportunities for everyday: groceries, hardware, banks, doctors and dentists, shoe repair, and other local services, all in close proximity so that its denizens have the ability to walk to buy a gallon of milk, to church, or to the post office.

The primary goal of the Livermore Downtown Specific Plan is to revitalize Downtown as the most public district in the City- the indisputable functional, symbolic and activity "heart" of the community. The objectives that are the steps along the way to this goal are as follows:

1. Provide a cohesive, comprehensive strategy that addresses each of the Downtown's roles as the center of the City: as Livermore's most unique shopping district, as its civic meeting place, and as a neighborhood hub for the residential enclaves that surround it.
2. Bring to the surface the distinctive visual character of Livermore, by drawing from the best of what is already there: Downtown's historic fabric, its yellow-bricked buildings and ornate detailing, and some of the surrounding wine country.

3. Reflect the unique qualities of the Livermore community: its social history, its architectural heritage, its agricultural past, the scientific and artistic influences of today, and the individuality of the populations who call it home today.
4. Make Downtown a part of the regional economy and an economic success to ensure its continued viability with market attractions that meet the needs of the area, and are a draw for the community and beyond.

The Strategy for the Downtown

The Revitalization Strategy for Downtown is based on a mix of public actions and private activities that will work together to meet both of these roles. These actions are intended to bring more activity to the streets, lure more people to linger in public places, and attract more money to stores and businesses. The Revitalization Strategy links the land use and development policies, design recommendations and capital improvements detailed in subsequent plan chapters so that each individual policy, design or action works toward the attainment of Downtown-wide goals. The result will be a Downtown that is a community center for its residents, and shows off its strongest assets to visitors.

The strategies stated below describe how the community vision described on the first pages of the Specific Plan can be achieved. Near-term Downtown revitalization will be achieved through the following strategies, listed in order of priority from highest to lowest, based on their potential to deliver desired revitalization objectives. These strategies are also summarized in the Revitalization Strategy diagram on page 3.

1. *Promote the concentration of activity-generating uses in a compact cluster in the center of Downtown.*
 - a. Assess the potential demand for retail in Downtown, in order to gauge the likely market share of the City's population that can choose to spend their dollars there.
 - b. Designate a Downtown Core within the Specific Plan Area as the location for Downtown's retail activity. Size this Core area larger than necessary to support the potential demand based on its likely market share in order to accommodate growth as the number of people living Downtown increases. Limit ground

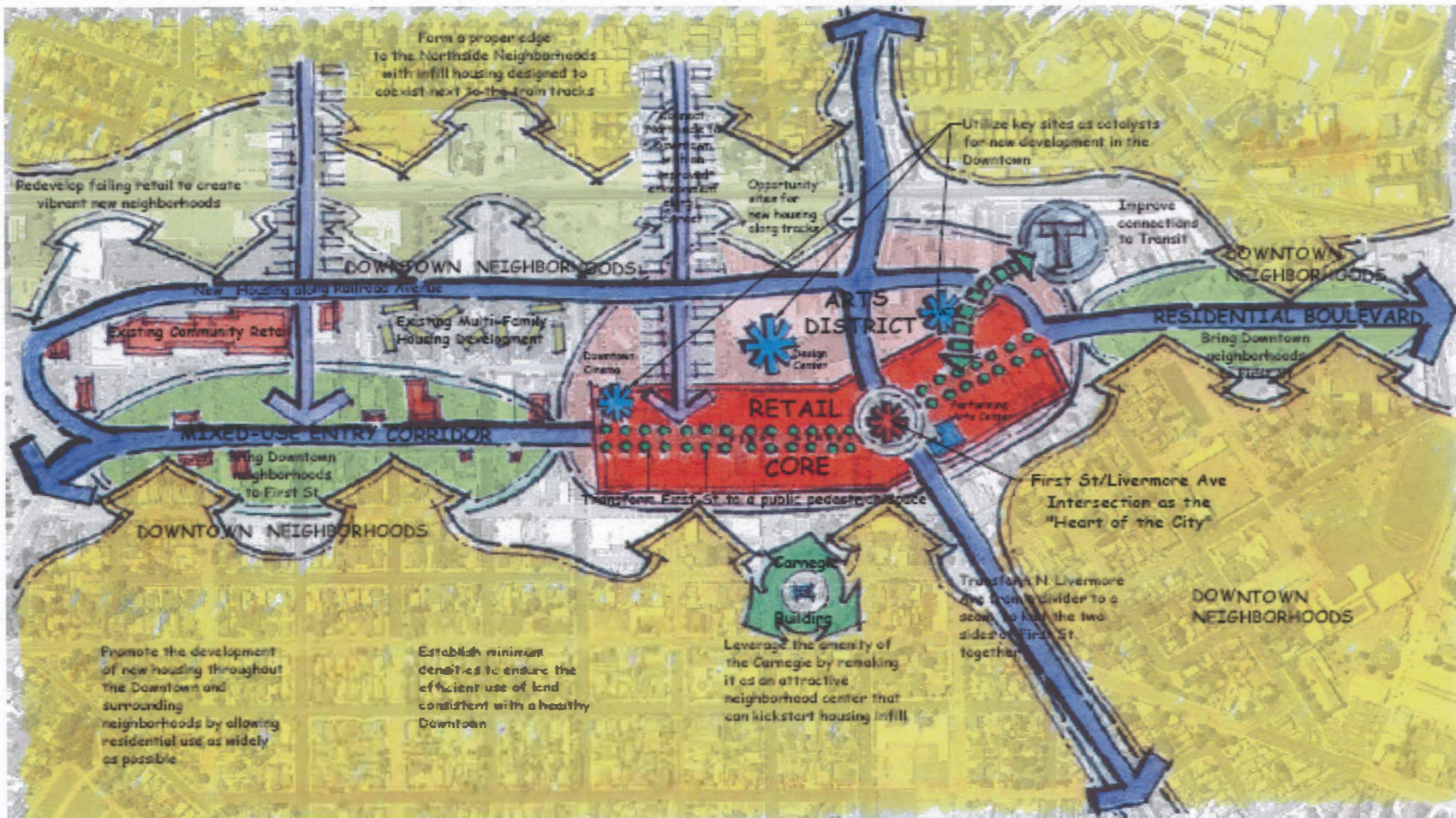


FIGURE 3-1: REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

Livermore Downtown Specific Plan

floor shops, restaurants, entertainment venues, galleries, personal and business services.

c. Direct investment towards the Downtown Core, through the following policies:

- Remove retail entitlements for properties within the Specific Plan area located outside of the Downtown Core. Existing retail uses outside of the Core will become legal non-conforming uses that may be continued; however, no existing structure devoted to retail (or any other use not permitted in the Plan Area) shall be enlarged, extended, reconstructed or structurally altered according to the provisions of Chapter 9 of the Livermore Development Code.
- Consider limiting the development of uses that are competitive with Downtown (i.e. specialty retail, restaurant, entertainment and services) outside of the Specific Plan Area. Policies include directing personal or business services, video rental or family restaurants to the Downtown and to other neighborhood centers, and restricting these uses within regional centers.
- Create business relocation programs to assist existing community businesses that could be an asset to Downtown to relocate to the Core.
- Develop business recruitment programs to create incentives for outside businesses with a guaranteed loyal clientele to locate in Downtown.
- Support those establishments already Downtown, and make efforts to retain those that are an important part of Downtown's retail community.
- Work with business organizations to market Downtown as "the place to be" with a diversity of retail, restaurants, shopping, entertainment, arts and cultural activities.
- Focus capital improvements Downtown to provide a highly visible demonstration of the City Council's commitment to Downtown revitalization (see below).

- Maximize connections from major destinations such as the Livermore Valley Center, the Downtown retail core, and the new Cineplex to Downtown transit facilities by providing clear pedestrian connections.
- d. Encourage the redevelopment of failing retail outside of the Core area, particularly retail strip centers located along Railroad Avenue west of Downtown, consistent with new Specific Plan Districts.
2. *Maximize investment in new housing construction throughout the Specific Plan Area.*
 - a. Revise land use policies to allow housing at a range of types and densities everywhere except on the ground level in the Downtown Core.
 - b. Encourage the construction of housing above storefronts in the Downtown Core by requiring new buildings to be mixed-use (defined for the Core as the combination of retail with residential or office uses in the same buildings).
 - c. Identify opportunity sites that provide immediate development prospects for new housing and that offer the potential to deliver a significant number of new units. Examples include the former Lucky's site in the heart of Downtown and several vacant, formerly commercial parcels located to the east of Downtown.
 - d. Attract potential Downtown residents with transit opportunities that enable them to travel easily and conveniently to job centers in the region- see Strategy #14, below.
 3. *Dramatically transform the character of the Downtown's primary pedestrian space, First Street, along its length in the Downtown Core between M Street and Maple Street.*
 - a. Prohibit trucks on First Street by relocating State Highway Route 84; and establish alternate routes for through traffic and for delivery.
 - b. Slow down the traffic, through the following:

- Relocate State Highway Route 84 in order to reduce through trips, and establish a more attractive route for regional commute traffic along Isabel Avenue.
 - Reduce the number of lanes along First Street from four to two to slow roadway traffic moving through the heart of the City.
- c. Make the sidewalks of First Street a wonderful environment for pedestrian activity of all kinds, with more shade trees and seating, pocket plazas to stop, rest and gather; outdoor areas for eating; and public places for art and special events.
 - d. Make pedestrian crossing on First Street much easier and safer, particularly at key points like the intersection of First Street and South Livermore Avenue by bulbing out the sidewalk at intersections. Stop signs or other appropriate traffic control devices could be used at J and K Streets to slow traffic and ease pedestrian crossing.
4. *Focus immediate attention on opportunity sites capable of delivering dramatic short-term beneficial change. Key catalyst projects include:*
- b. Catalyst Project #1: Livermore Valley Center (LVC) - Proceed with the development of a conference and cultural complex including retail, office, a local theater, and a hotel.
 - c. Catalyst Project #2: The former Lucky's Site (bounded by L Street , Railroad and South Livermore Avenues)- Work with developers to create a mixed-use project including new retail, a public park, a science and society center, a black box theater, a public parking structure, surface parking, a workforce housing development, and supportive infrastructure including streets and a pedestrian network.
 - d. Catalyst Project #3: Groth Brothers Site (northwest corner of First and L Streets) - Consider uses on this site that can be a catalyst/anchor including restaurants, entertainment (such as live music, comedy clubs or similar uses), retail or second-story office space.

5. *Promote the development of an arts and culture component, to make Livermore's Downtown a "Center for the Arts".*
 - a. Promote the financing and construction of the LVC and its arts component.
 - b. Promote the establishment of an artist community in the district.
 - Designate Downtown as Livermore's Arts District and establish programs such as an Artist-In-Residence Program; community arts events such as an annual Arts Festival, gallery nights, lecture series, or brown bag concerts ; and curriculum based arts education programs in the schools , or art programs for at-risk youth or people with disabilities. Examples of Arts Districts, artist-in-residence programs, and festivals are detailed in Appendices -Art and Culture Case Studies.
 - "Kick-start" the Arts District with artist live-work-sell lofts. Provide space immediately adjacent to the Downtown Core where artists can live and work, and sell their work from ground floor workshop spaces.
 - Assist in the development of an artist's workshop facility, in order to provide a gathering place for the local arts community that is capable of evolving into a center for the Tri-Valley area.
 - Encourage the re-use of existing structures to provide additional spaces for artists living, working and selling Downtown, as the "Arts District" grows and expands.
6. Identify, target and recruit uses with a wide regional appeal that are undersupplied in the Tri-Valley. Complement Downtown's locally-oriented uses like retail and restaurants with other uses that have the capacity to draw customers from throughout the region. Use these high-value regional draws to bring more people into other Downtown stores and restaurants.
 - a. Design Center: Use Tri-Valley demand in the area of home furnishings and interiors to create a niche

market that supplies design-related supplies and services to the region. Create a focused retail development that offers goods and services not available elsewhere in the area. Locate this development directly adjacent to the retail core, to enable interaction between the Design Center and other Downtown retail.

- b. Supporting businesses: Bring in other individual businesses related to design and the arts that can create synergies with the presence of the Design Center. Encourage businesses that are supportive of local art culture, such as galleries, designers and decorators, and independent retailers.

7. *Place high priority on the design, financing and construction of a public park, public parking structure, surface parking, roads, pedestrian circulation, and related open space amenities to catalyze private investment in Catalyst Project #2.*

- a. Reserve sufficient land for each component of the Council-approved Downtown Core redevelopment plan.
- b. Partner with private non-profit and commercial developers to facilitate development of the retail, science and society center, black box theater, and housing components of the redevelopment project.
- c. Orient the public and private development to activate the open space and create a vibrant and active streetscape.

8. *Revive the role of the First Street and Livermore Avenue intersection as the Heart of the City.*

- a. Increase pedestrian amenities and comfort at the intersection by narrowing the crossing distance. Decrease the proportion of intersection land devoted to rapidly moving vehicles by closing the right turn land and redirecting this land area as public pedestrian space.
- b. Provide a central public open space on the southwest corner of the intersection, which has historically served as Downtown's crossroads and the City's most visible "center".

- c. On the northwest corner, retain Lizzie Fountain, but also encourage either additional building frontage, or landscaping features, capital improvements or activities -designed in concert with the fountain -that will generate pedestrian activity.
9. *Build on the high quality stock of historic structures to set the tone for design in the district.* Use the strong architectural heritage as the basis for design recommendations including:
- a. Stringent design guidelines for new structures, and facade improvement programs for the repair of older ones.
 - b. Distinctive features to characterize the streetscape of Downtown, including special street furniture and lighting, custom planters designed specifically for Livermore, and unique outdoor artwork interspersed throughout the Core.
10. *Leverage the high amenity value of the Carnegie Block to promote investment in the residential neighborhood south of the Downtown Core.* Market downtown to developers, builders, and lenders as a good place to build housing, emphasizing that homes fronting on or near to the Carnegie Park will be desirable and highly marketable to residential developers. Use this historic building and park to "kick-start" residential infill in the Downtown.
11. *Enhance the convenience of Downtown parking and access.* Make it easy for people to come Downtown and to stay there by providing visible, easily accessible public parking throughout the Core. Specific steps include:
- a. Maximize easily accessible curbside parking with new on-street parking spaces along the redesigned First Street and throughout all new streets in the District.
 - b. Build new public parking lots and structures as new development occurs. Locate these new lots and structures close to retail and other destinations. Design new parking efficiently, to facilitate easy circulation as well as to maximize the number of spaces built. A key location for a new parking structure is behind the First Street shops within the former Lucky's site to serve the Downtown Core.

- c. Develop a Shared Parking Program. Promote the configuration of new lots that provide spaces that can be shared by all developments, so as to handle different demands at different hours. Encourage existing private lots to shift to shared spaces. Allow uses that incorporate shared parking to receive reduced parking requirements.
12. *Take every opportunity to concentrate civic (and quasi-public) buildings in the Downtown.* Do this to re-establish Downtown as the primary place where its residents come together.
- a. Consider the possibility of locating new City facilities (such as the new Council Chambers) in the heart of Downtown.
 - b. Locate other quasi-civic facilities Downtown, such as cooperative facilities for the production of arts, or cultural venues such as cinemas, theaters and local performing arts centers.
 - c. Support the development of a Downtown hotel. Such a facility would serve as a supportive public use that can accommodate tourists and people on business, two market segments that will grow as Downtown revitalizes.
13. *Take every opportunity to revive Downtown's role as a primary job center.*
- a. Identify opportunity sites for office development. Encourage office uses above retail in the Core to maximize land use and value, and to bring more people to Downtown Livermore on a daily basis.
 - b. Use the amenities and assets of Downtown- its proximity to transit, nearby stores and restaurants, and services facilities within walking distance- to attract desirable small-scale office tenants (i.e. smaller independent businesses and services, architects, engineers, doctors, lawyers).

14. *Maximize transit opportunities for commuters to conveniently travel to Downtown Livermore.*
 - a. Provide clear pedestrian connections from the ACE train station and LAVTA bus depot to the Downtown Core. Increase transit routes to provide service directly on First Street and to provide more frequent and comprehensive bus service to the Downtown. Encourage future development of integrated mass transit systems, including BART or other rail technology to Downtown.