

Downtown Renaissance Master Plan
March 4, 2026 –Stakeholder Meetings



Project Overview

Why Downtown Brownsville?

The Downtown Renaissance Master Plan allows the City to:

- Improve quality of life and sense of place through enhanced public spaces, placemaking, and connectivity.
- Position downtown as a vibrant regional destination for arts, culture, tourism, and commerce.
- Attract and retain new businesses through economic vitality strategies and retail recruitment.
- Promote walkability, sustainability, and housing diversity including affordable and mixed-income options.
- Strengthen the city's ability to secure funding, partnerships, and long-term investments.

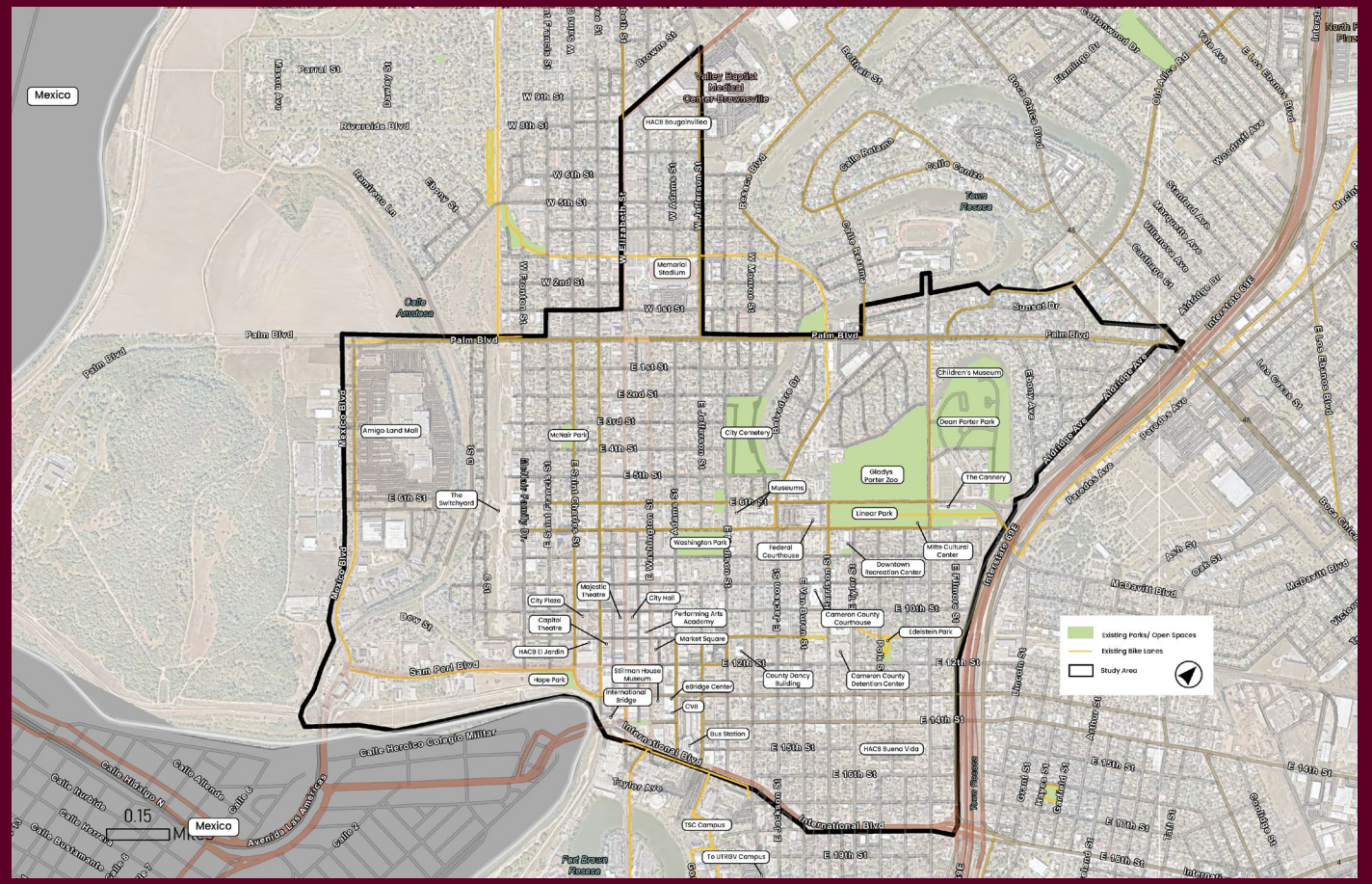
Project Goals & Intent

- Provide a holistic approach to Downtown Development
- Balance preservation with strategic growth
- Align capital investment with community vision
- Establish clear and actionable priorities
- Provide a roadmap for phased implementation



Why We're Here Today

- Present progress on the Downtown Renaissance Plan
- Highlight refinements based on community and stakeholder input
- Review key priorities and implementation strategies
- Review the five emerging "Big Ideas" or catalyst projects that shape the Plan
- Receive comments and feedback before moving toward



Study Area



Community Engagement Summary

Project Scope & Timeline – 12 Months

Aug 2025

Initiation

Workplan
Engagement Plan
Data Review

- Kickoff & Tour
- Commission Briefing
- Launch Website & Survey

Aug – Sept 2025

Analysis & Vision

Additional Site Visits
Assessments
Community Visioning

- Stakeholder Meetings
- P&Z Commission

Oct – Jan 2025 - 2026

Recommendations

Economic Development
Downtown Mobility Framework
Development Opportunities
Placemaking

- Design Team Charrette
- Stakeholder Meetings
- Commission Work Session

Feb – Mar 2026

Implementation

Code Diagnostic
Action Plan

- Stakeholder Meetings
- Commission Work Session
- *P&Z* Commission

WE ARE HERE!!!

Apr – May 2026

Finalization

Full Draft Plan
Review & Revisions

- Online Public Review of Draft

+ Adoption

- Adoption Meetings

Overview (As of 2/24/2026)

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Participación pública



12

Tabling and Public Events

Mesas y eventos públicos



731

Survey Responses

Respuestas de la encuesta



10

Stakeholder Focus Groups

Grupos focales de partes interesadas



3109

Letters sent to landowners within the study area

Cartas enviadas a los propietarios de tierras dentro del estudio



6

Commission Meetings

Reuniones de la Comisión



61

Interative Map Responses

Respuestas del Mapa Interactivo

74

Idea Wall Comments

Comentarios del Muro de Ideas

"Family friendly spaces and spaces for single people, where women can feel safe to be by themselves."

"Que estuviera mas limpio, los locales vacios dan muy mal aspecto."

"Implementing shade on sidewalks through green infrastructure would improve the overall walkability of Downtown."

"We need more parking options, I understand downtown parking is always a challenge but more parking options will help."

"Ahorita es muy difícil andar en la tarde-noche... es tan difícil poder andar a esas hora por las calles del centro por la seguridad."

"Third spaces that have access to protection from the weather where people could go in and just hang out and chat for a while!"

Engagement Overview

Total – 28 in person events and 866 online touchpoints

- August 2025 Public Kickoff Meeting
- Nov 2025 Stakeholder & Community Hosted Open House
- Tabling - First Fridays, GPZ , University Campuses, Farmers Market, Pumpkin Patch, BeerFest, I-LinCP Mixer
- Stakeholders - Mixed-perspective group, Nonprofits, City Staff, Property and Business Owners, Local Artists, HACB, Catholic Diocese, Mitte Cultural District Consultant
- Youth Advisory Board Workshop
- Public Commission Meetings - Council & HPC
- City Commission Worksessions
- Online/Virtual Engagement - survey, vision wall, pin map









This Week's Meetings

- Tabling at Charro Days/Sombrero Fest and March FF
- Additional Stakeholder Meetings
  - Mixed-perspective stakeholder focus group
  - Catholic Diocese
  - COB Department Heads
  - Downtown Business Owners
  - Downtown Property and Landowners (3109 Letters sent)
- Public City Commission Meeting
- City Commission Worksession
- Stakeholder & Community Hosted Open House #2

Future Engagement Opportunities

- Website remains open with pin map and visioner wall
- Plan Draft available for public review and comment early Summer



Engagement Key Themes



Safety

Top survey complaint (81%); strong demand for better lighting and security presence, mostly at night.



Cleanliness

Concerns about litter and maintenance; emphasis on consistent trash pickup and beautification.



Public Amenities

High priority for more shade, seating, and public restrooms.



Vacant Storefronts

Business owners urged filling empty spaces, discouraging long-term vacancies.



Housing & Affordability

Mixed-use and mixed-income housing, while preventing displacement of current businesses.

Engagement Key Themes



Mobility & Accessibility

Shaded streets, safer crossings, trolley expansion, and ADA-compliant infrastructure.



Arts & Culture

Expanding arts, music, and cultural venues.



Public Realm Activation

Events, festivals, murals, and creative spaces that bring life to public areas.



Community Identity

Celebrating local heritage and the city's bicultural connections, particularly ties to Matamoros.



Family & Youth

Desire for family-friendly spaces, play areas, and youth-oriented programming.

Vision for Downtown



A Downtown for Everyone
safe, inclusive, family-friendly

Connected and Walkable
shade, safe crossings, trail links

A Place to Celebrate
events, arts, dining, nightlife

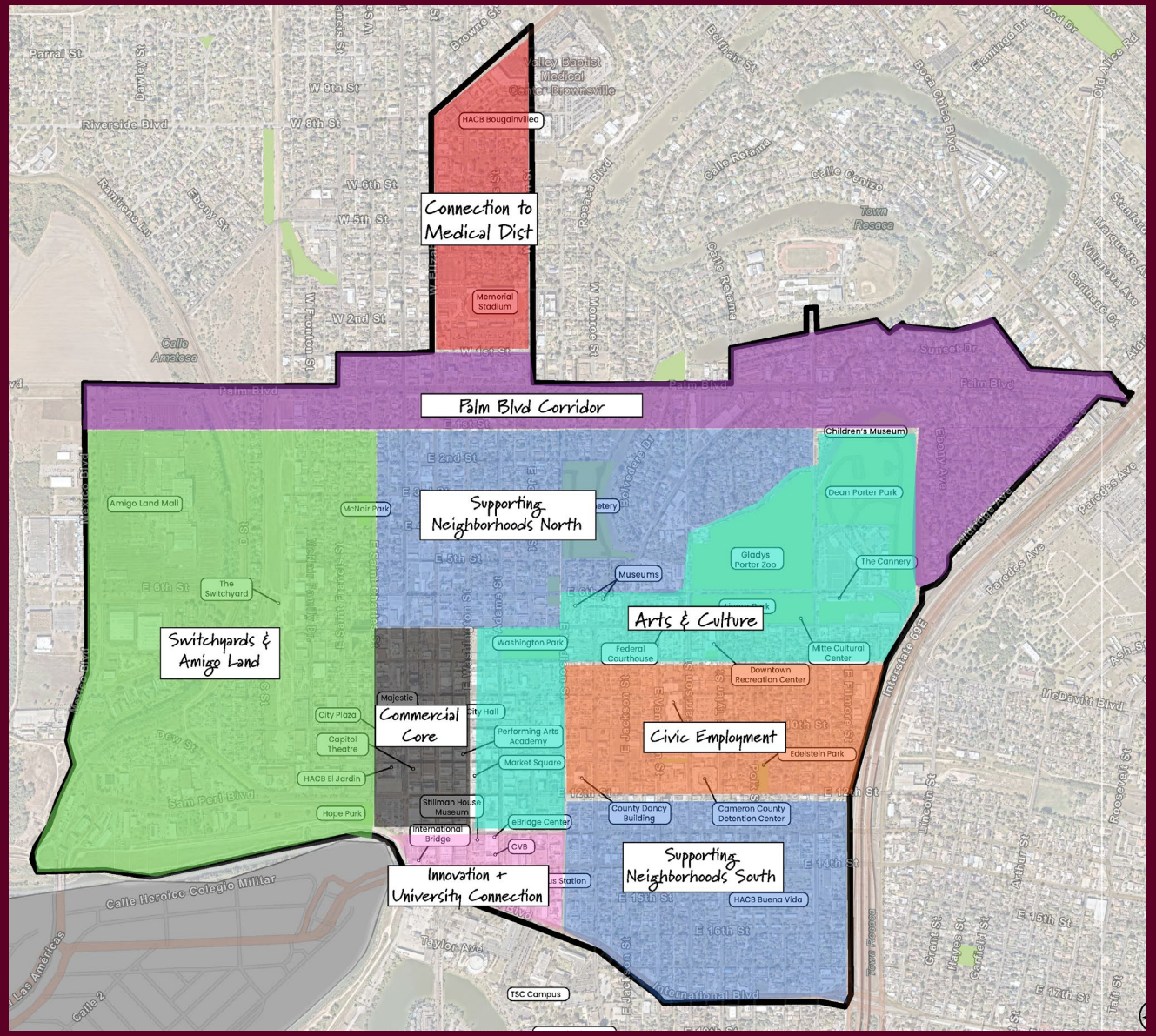
Living Downtown
more housing + upper-story reuse

Balance Heritage & Innovation
historic preservation + modern amenities



Character and Transportation Frameworks

Character Areas & Framework



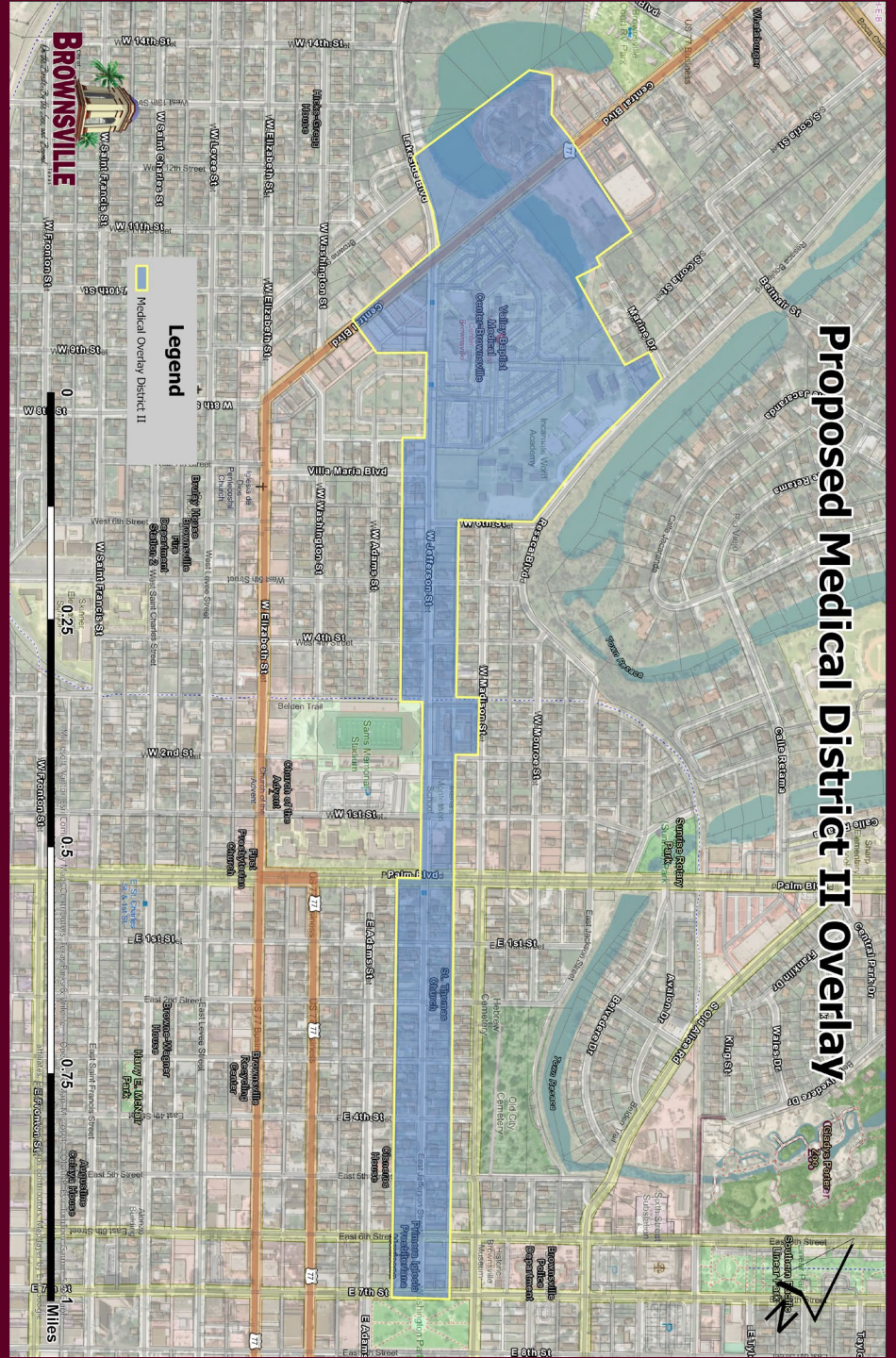
- **Connection to Medical District –**connectivity & safety
- **Palm Blvd Corridor** – beautification & safety
- **Supporting Neighborhoods North** – preservation and connections
- **Supporting Neighborhoods South** – revitalization, infill and missing middle housing, connectivity
- **Civic Employment** – parking and amenities for employees
- **Switchyards & Amigo Land** – redevelopment, connectivity, green amenities
- **Commercial Core** – Beautification, experience, parking, support for businesses
- **Arts & Culture** – Primary event spaces, connect to the core (trolley), parking, hospitality, Adams Shared Street
- **Innovation & University** – Connect to TSC & UTRGV, integration of Gateway Project

Connection to the Medical District

The Jefferson Street Medical District

- Strategically included in the study area due to its connections between downtown to Memorial Stadium, Valley Baptist Hospital and the housing authority's Bougainvillea development.
- **Uses:** Medical offices, housing near employment, supportive services, local retail, and transit facilities.
- **Scale:** Generally low- to mid-rise, consistent with surrounding development.

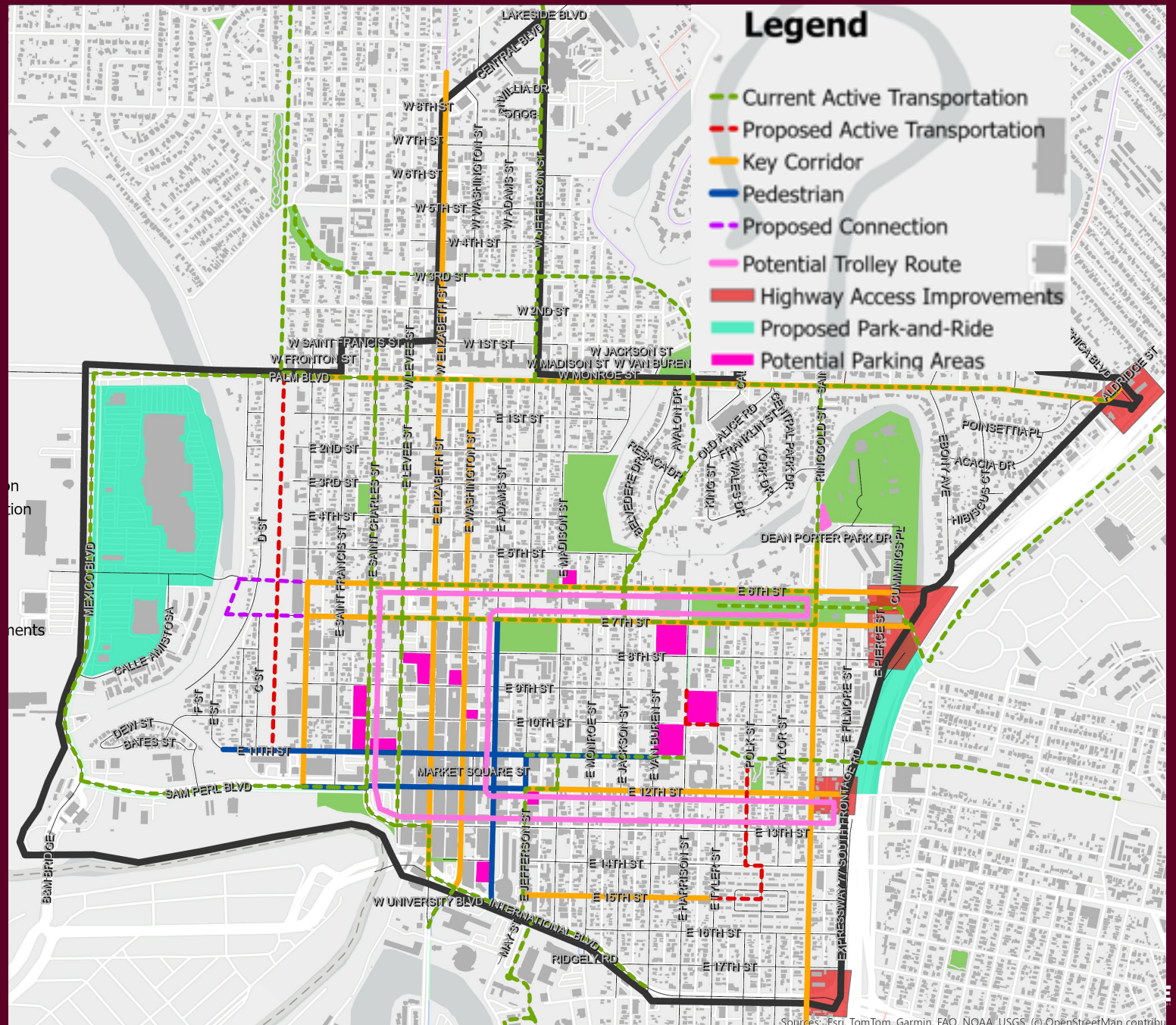
- **Primary Opportunities and Investments:**
  - Focus on facilitating transit, bike, and pedestrian connectivity along the Jefferson Street corridor to the downtown.
  - Enhanced and safe crossings into downtown across Palm Boulevard.
  - Encourage land uses along the Jefferson Street corridor that support and are supported by proximity to downtown.



Transportation Framework: A Gateway at Three Levels

Transportation planning at three levels of analysis:

- Downtown Brownsville as *The* Downtown of the Rio Grande Valley
  - Transportation to make Downtown Brownsville accessible as a key urban center for the entire region
- Downtown Brownsville as a destination for the City of Brownsville
  - Transportation to support travel to and use of Downtown from across the City
- Downtown Brownsville as a hub of daily life and economic activity
  - Transportation to serve those who live and work Downtown everyday



Focus Corridors & Context Sensitive Design

Corridors *INTO* Downtown

- **Palm** - Multiple functions, focus on safety and traffic calming; management of transitions between kinds of context along length
- **6th and 7th** – Gateways or "Showcase" streets for Downtown; focus on multi modal & transit infrastructure
- **12th** - most direct route, focus on mobility
- **International** - High peak volumes and connection to Port-of-Entry, focus peak-period congestion management and reduction of barrier effects

Corridors *WITHIN* Downtown

- **Washington and Elizabeth** – Travel & commercial "Main Streets", maintain through traffic and focus on a vibrant urban experience
- **11th and 12th** – Active transport, focus on pedestrian priority
- **Adams** – A destination, focus on a pedestrian and transit corridor (Paseo concept)
- **Ringgold & Polk** – focus on connecting neighborhoods with each other
- **15th** – Bringing complete streets network together







Downtown Parking

On-Street Parking

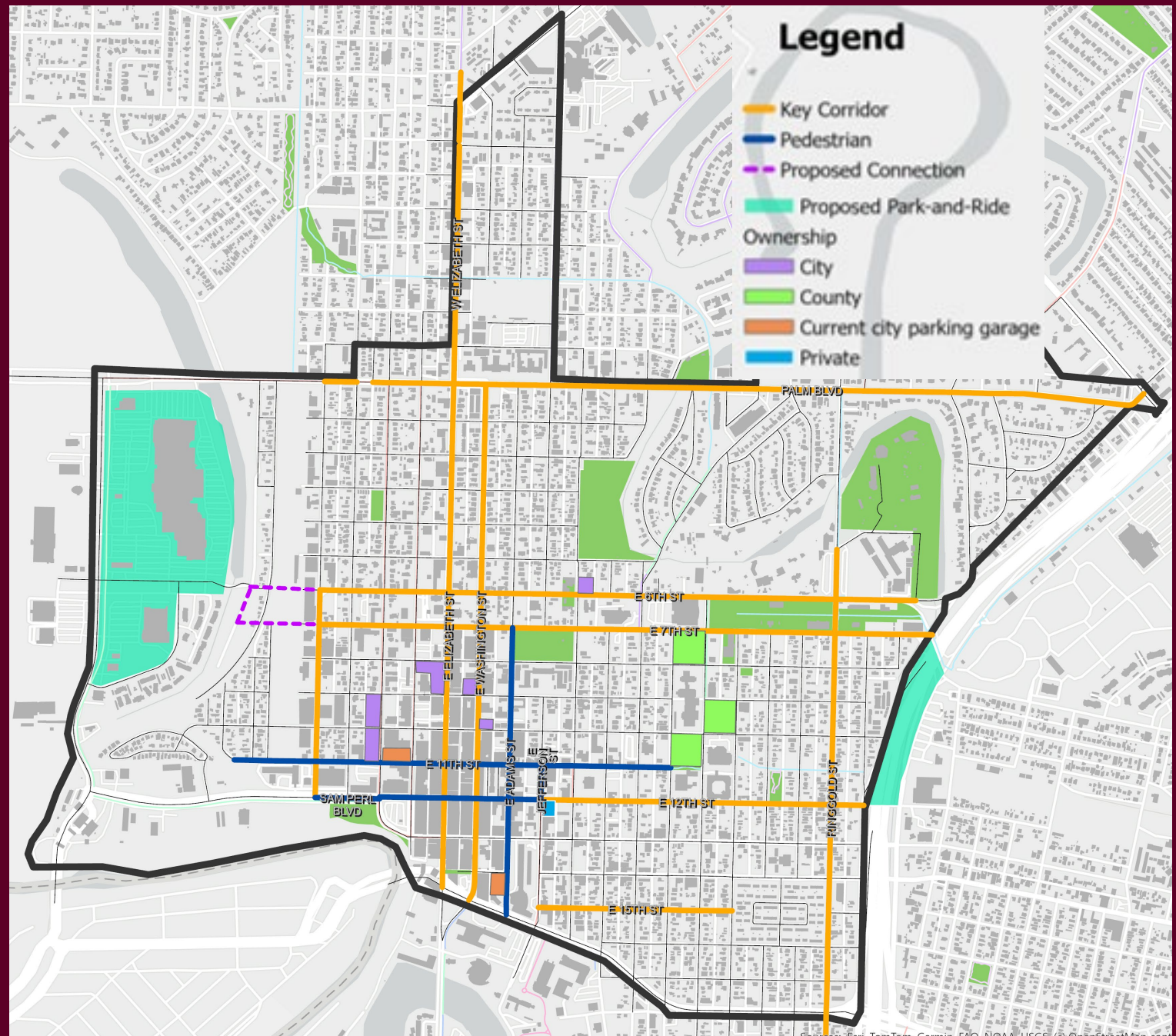
- Short-term, High-turnover Priority
- Consistency and Legibility
- Safety, Visibility, and Traffic Calming

Parking Garages

- St. Charles Street Civic Parking
- Cultural District Parking
- Private Garage Integration
- Wayfinding and Pedestrian Access

Park and Ride and Event Parking

- Event-Focused Park and Ride
- Under-Highway and Edge Locations
- Amigoland Area Options
- Trolley and Wayfinding



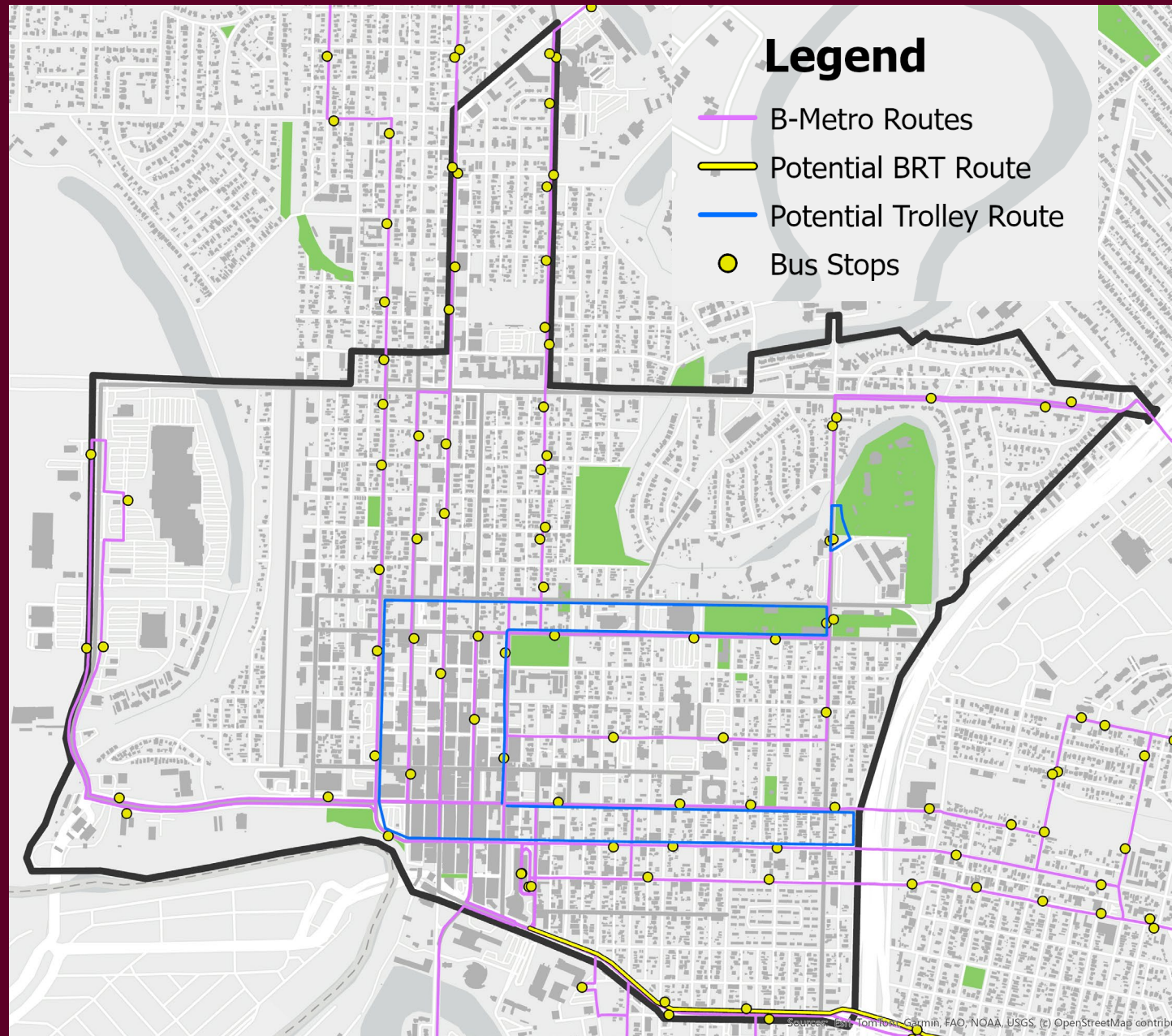
Transit and Trolley

Transit:

- Brownsville currently operates as regional bus transit hub
- B-Metro represents strongest public transit system in Rio Grande Valley
- Systems such as BRT development support this continued strength

Circulator Trolley and Demand-Responsive Transit:

- Fixed-Route Trolley can support B-Metro through a circulator route Downtown
- Event-based Trolley service can help support parking needs for events and serve as pilot
- Demand-Response Transit can serve as supplemental tool to fixed-route service to cover gaps



Active Transportation and Alley Activation

Active Transportation:

- Pedestrian Priority Corridors
  - Adams Street
  - 11th and 12th Street
- Bicycle Access and Downtown Connectivity
  - Expansion of protected lanes throughout Downtown
  - Support expansion of network to create induced demand

Alley Activation:

- Alley Activation across Downtown
  - Lighting, corridor aesthetics, safety improvements to create greater access throughout Downtown network
- Priority Alleyways
  - Market Square Alleyway
  - Alleys supporting Adams street as a walkable spine



Market Square Alleyway Design Concepts from City of Brownsville Market Square Alleyway June 20, 2025

Regional Connections and Inter-Agency Coordination

- Highway Access Improvements
  - Coordination with TxDOT for long-term improvements for highway access
- International Boulevard and the International Bridge
  - Coordination with Cameron County on International Bridge improvements and congestion management on International Boulevard

Mobility Projects for Downtown

- 6th and 7th Street connection to Amigoland area
  - Missing connection through from Amigoland area to Downtown at 6th and 7th street
  - Needs coordinated solution to connection with both 6th and 7th street to “unlock” potential
- Pedestrian Crossing at International Boulevard
  - Development of solutions to provide for pedestrian crossing of International Boulevard, especially at Adams Street and Ringold Street to reduce barrier effects



“Big Ideas”

1 Public Realm First

- Upgrades for safety, comfort, and functionality of the public realm.
- Consistent Lighting
- Landscaping and furniture enhancements
- Shade trees or canopies pedestrian amenities
- Clean, consistent aesthetics
- Maintenance

Street Trees





Furnishings



Colonnades



Awnings & Canopies



Cool Pavements



Comfortable

- Cleanliness
- Shade
- Materials
- Convenient Parking
- Compatibility of Land Uses

Interesting

- Active & Unique Frontages
- Aesthetics
- Public Art
- Other People



Safe

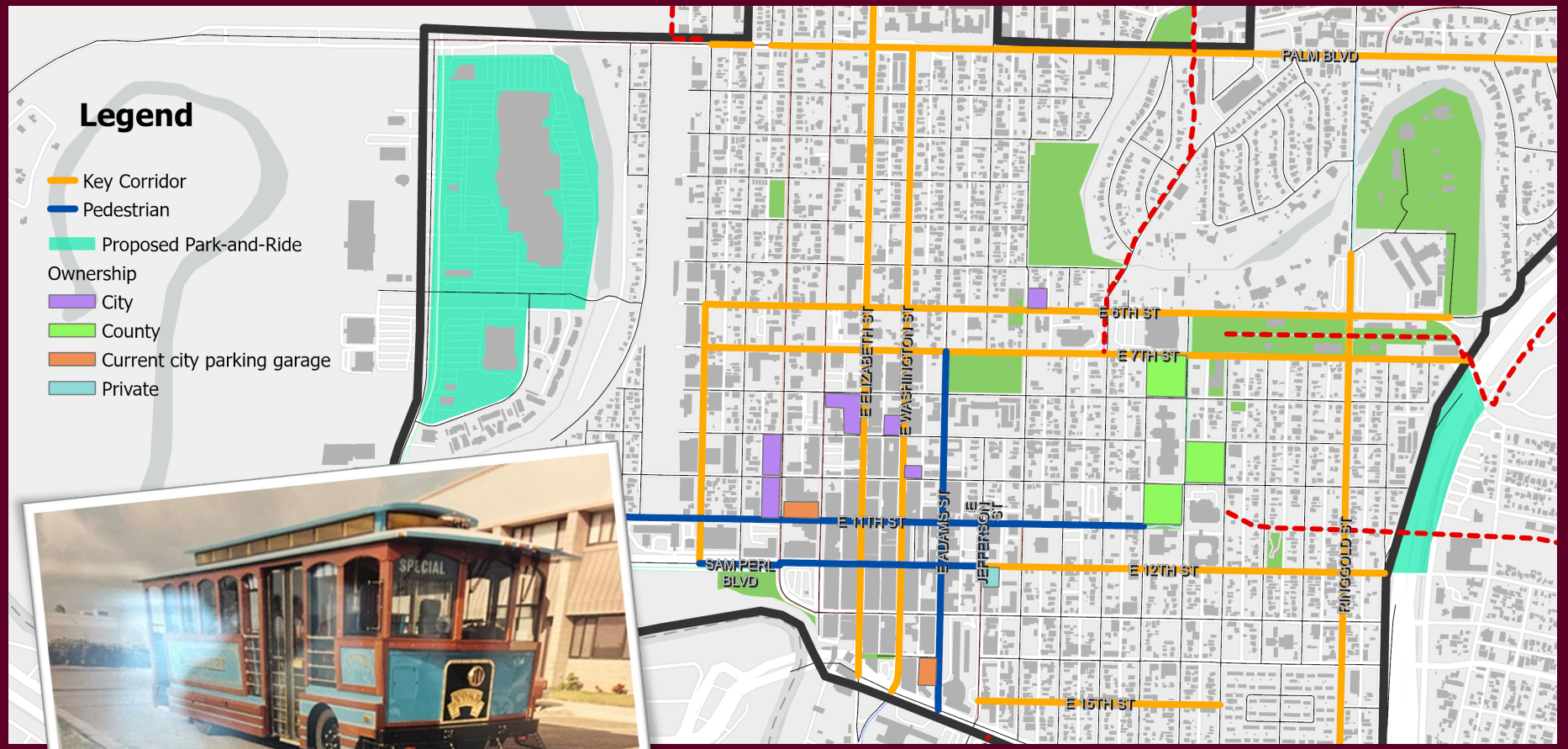
- Minimizing Vehicular Conflicts
- Lighting
- Public Safety & Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)
- Bike Lanes

Purposeful

- Variety of Destinations
- Events & Activation of Public Spaces (parks and plazas)

2 Mobility, Parking & The Trolley

- Potential parking garage locations
- Modern trolley service (or similar micro-mobility)
- Park & Ride options
- Parking management solutions & payment schemes



3 Big Idea: Revamp Washington Park

- Ongoing efforts with Sombrero Fest
- An important nexus between the commercial core, the switchyards, and Mitte cultural district.



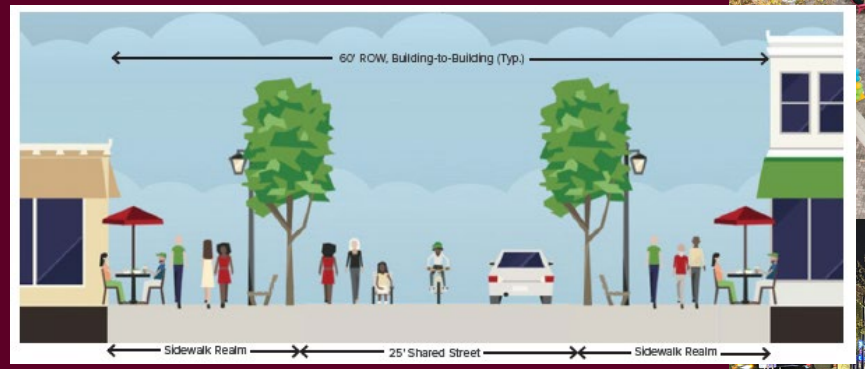




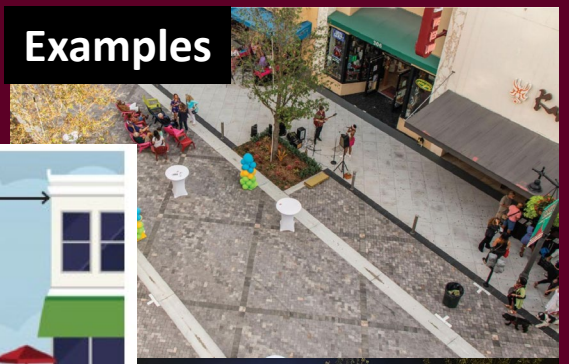


4 Big Idea: Adams Street Paseo

- Traffic calming & safer crossings
- Wider sidewalks, shade, lighting
- Active ground-floor storefronts
- Stronger connections across Downtown



Examples





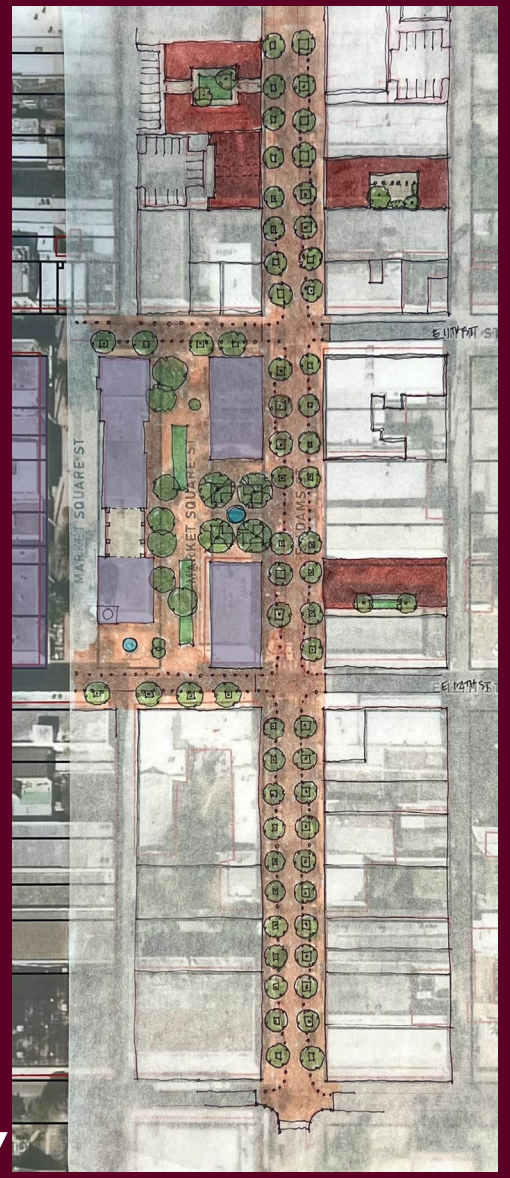
Adams Before



Adams After

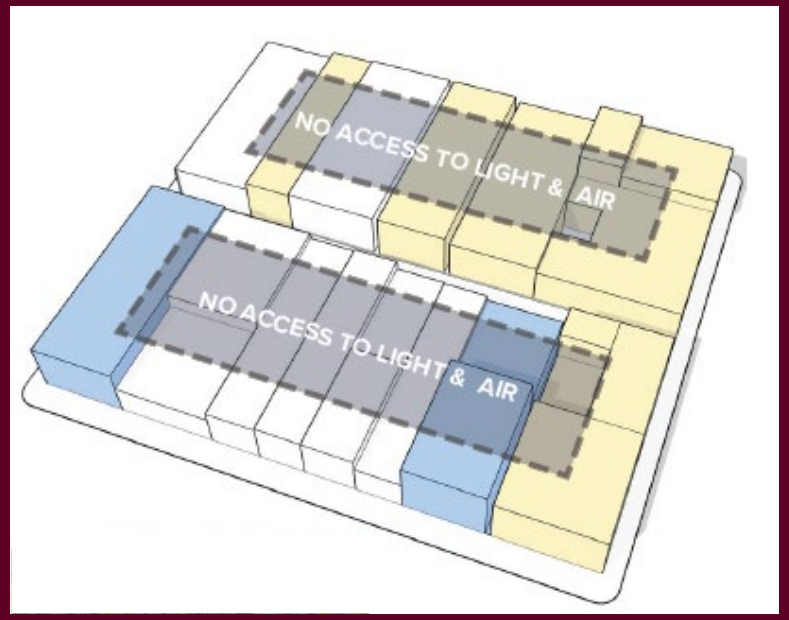


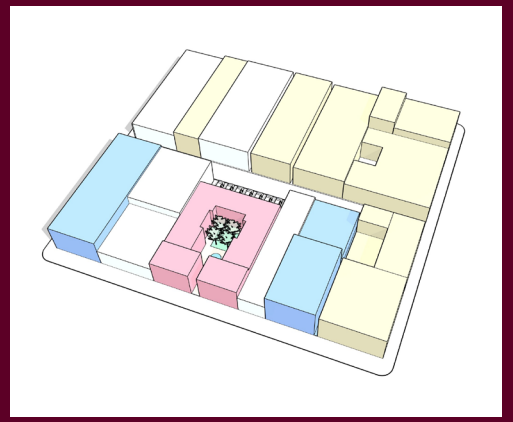
Possible Phase 1: 10th to 13th Street

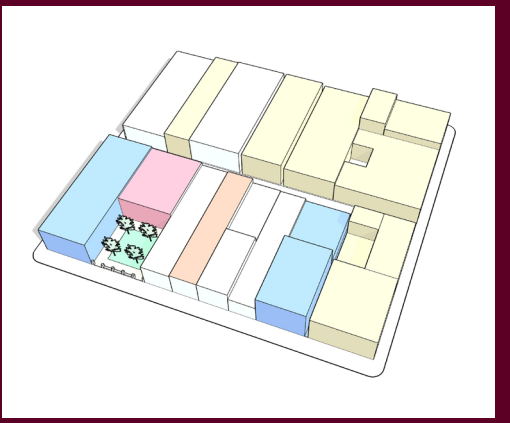


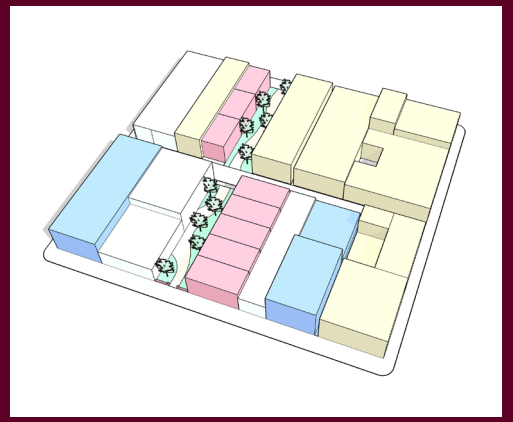
5 Big Idea: Downtown Living

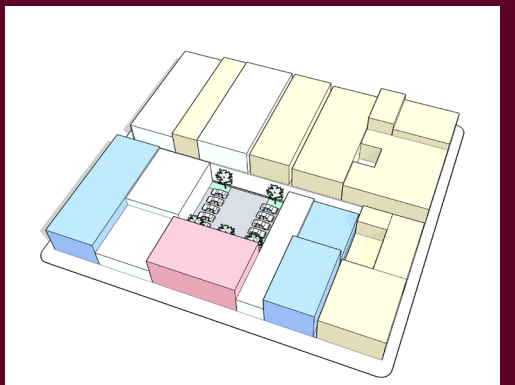
- Support new residential development
- Promote mixed-use infill
- Activate vacant upper floors
- Strengthen neighborhood-serving retail and services











Heritage Site

Historic Site

Example infill building

Group Discussion Questions

Does the plan's current direction reflect the right long-term direction and priorities for Downtown Brownsville?

Does this level of transformation match your ambition for Downtown?

Group Discussion Questions

What implementation risks or challenges should we anticipate and incorporate solutions to?

What issues or risks will need to be addressed for the Big Ideas to be successful?

Additional Questions or Feedback?

www.BTXDowntownRenaissance.com

Downtown Renaissance Master Plan
Thank you!