



Task Force Process

The City Council set the completion of a new Downtown Strategy as a priority in 2006-07. During its January 16, 2007 meeting, the Redevelopment Agency Board appointed 22 people to serve on the Downtown Strategy Task Force. The Committee included members of several City commissions and committees as well as members of the general public.

The Committee met a total of eight times. During the meetings, the Committee studied the history of downtowns throughout America, the history of Merced's Downtown and the current economic and physical state of Downtown Merced. To help broaden their perspective, the Committee visited five different downtowns (San Luis Obispo, Paso Robles, Stockton, Lodi and Livermore). The Committee discussed Downtown's current state and the opportunities and challenges Downtown will face in the coming years. A significant amount of public input was received through surveys and commentary gathered during the Thursday Night Festival and the Merced County Fair. The Committee also received several surveys from the public through the City's website.

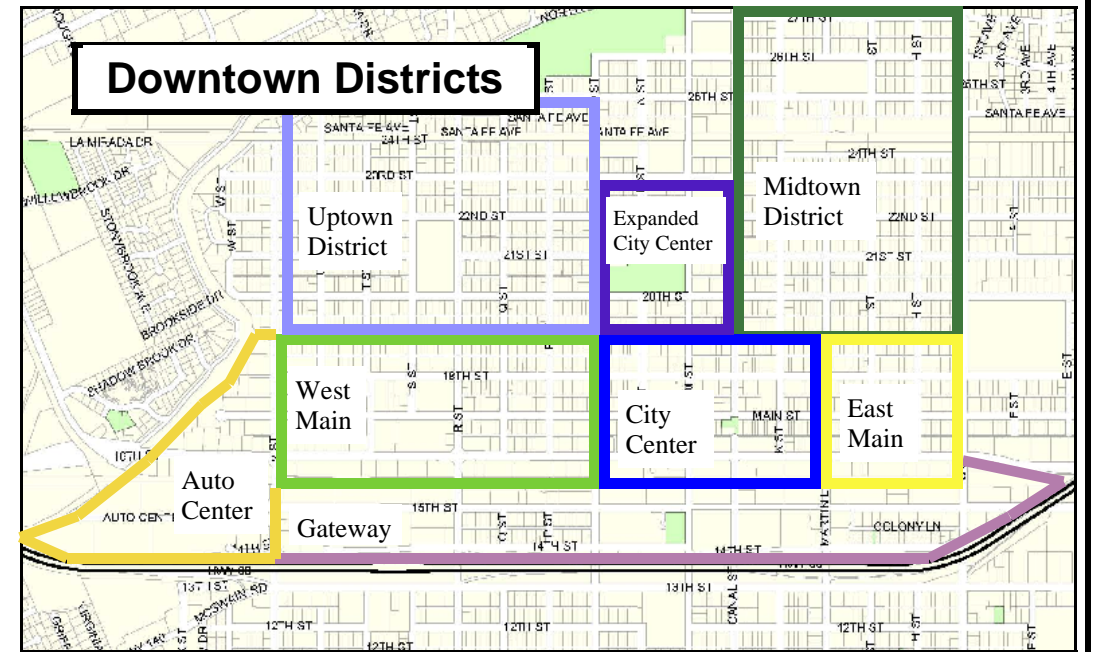
Downtown Strategy Task Force

- Nicola Adams**, Toni's Courtyard Café
Parks and Recreation Commission
- Mary Camper**, Whimsy
Redevelopment Advisory Committee
- John Hofmann**, Retired Urban Planner
Design Review Commission
- Mary Ward**, Assemblymember Galgianni's Office
Planning Commission
- Todd Bender**, Summerton Homes
- Kathleen Crookham**, County Supervisor
- Michael Fagalde**, Allen, Proietti & Fagalde
- Doug Fluetsch**, Fleutsch & Busby Insurance

- Michael Greenberg**, Cold Stone Creamery
- Forrest Hansen**, Berliner Cohen
- Kristine Keennon**, Senator Denham's Office
- Melyssa Laughlin**, Merced CVB
- John Lemen**, J. Lemen Kitchen Design
- David Love**, Century 21
- Joe Ramirez**, County Bank
- Grey Roberts**, Roberts and Allan
- Craig Scott**, DCA Architects
- Joan Sortini**, Community Foundation
- Lars Tatom**, Playhouse Merced
- John White**, UC Merced



Downtown Merced is the heart of the City. As the vibrant cultural and historic center for residents and visitors, Downtown is the destination for fine dining, shopping, nightlife and the arts, creating a welcoming place to live, work and visit.



Downtown Merced's Present Situation 2007

Downtown is experiencing a renaissance. Throughout the early years of Merced's history, Downtown was the center of community life. This began to change during the 1960's and 1970's when Downtown lost its dominance with the development of north Merced. Throughout the 1980's and 1990's efforts towards rebuilding Downtown were focused on creating a niche for Downtown within the community.

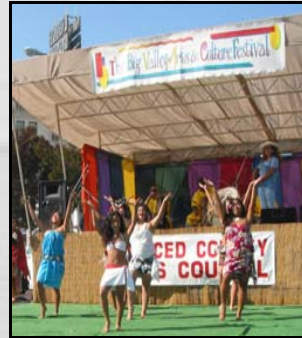
Downtown became the center for entertainment, arts and government as well as strengthening its position as the region's financial center. For the first time in decades, private investment, spurred by governmental investment, returned to Downtown. Despite this progress, Downtown is still confronted with a demographic shift as Merced's affluent population continues to move north. In addition, significant new retail projects are on the horizon, increasing Downtown's competition.

**City of Merced
Redevelopment
Agency**

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1.0 Create a superior ambiance.	Schedule
1.1 Create a unique pedestrian environment through public art, signage, landscaping and sensory experiences.	Ongoing
1.2 Enhance lighting throughout Downtown.	Dec. 2009
1.3 Encourage appropriate events in the City Center.	Ongoing
1.4 Increase open spaces throughout Downtown and enhance current spaces.	June 2012
1.5 Encourage additional outdoor dining.	Dec. 2008
1.6 Create entry gateway monuments.	June 2011
1.7 Update Downtown marketing materials.	June 2008

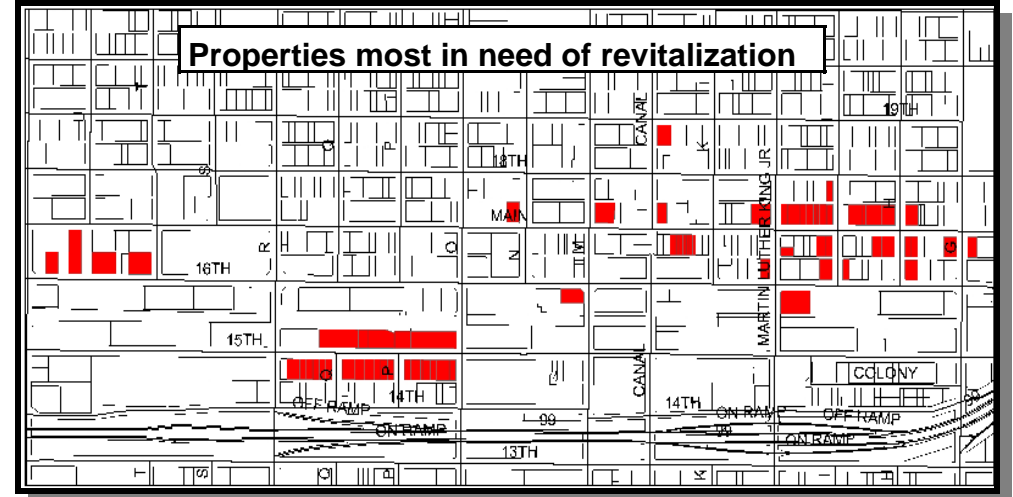
2.0 Create exceptional Downtown residential neighborhoods.	Schedule
2.1 Develop policies to encourage Downtown housing development.	Dec. 2008
2.2 Develop the Mid-Town neighborhood as a premiere residential district with historic character.	Dec. 2011
2.3 Build at least 300 housing units throughout the Downtown.	Dec. 2012

3.0 Build a distinguished Downtown.	Schedule
3.1 Focus investment in redeveloping key Downtown properties.	Ongoing
3.2 Establish a commercial recruitment program that supports the Downtown vision.	Dec. 2008
3.3 Investigate adjusting development fees.	June 2009
3.4 Investigate and address Downtown parking needs.	June 2009
3.5 Create a significant City Center anchor to complement the Mainplace Theater.	June 2011

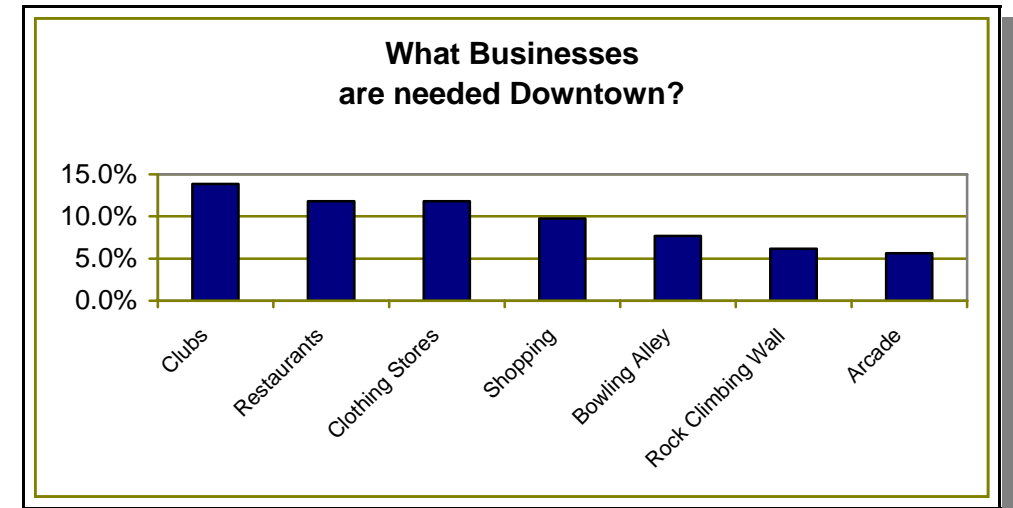
4.0 Solidify Downtown's role as the arts, entertainment and dining destination.	Schedule
4.1 Encourage the creation of a strong and capable Arts and Entertainment Committee.	Dec. 2009
4.2 Assist in developing an Arts Season combining musical, theatrical and visual arts in Downtown.	June 2010
4.3 Develop a program to utilize available commercial spaces for artistic endeavors.	Dec. 2010
4.4 Develop a program to increase public art throughout Downtown.	Dec. 2010
4.5 Recruit fine dining, clubs and outdoor dining.	Ongoing

5.0 Adopt and enforce policies to protect and enhance Downtown.	Schedule
5.1 Assure redevelopment progress continues.	Dec. 2008
5.2 Protect entertainment uses in Downtown.	June 2009
5.3 Enforce existing codes and ordinances.	Ongoing
5.4 Complete Downtown design standards.	Dec. 2008
5.5 Restrict uses that hamper further City Center development.	Dec. 2008
5.6 Increase funding for marketing, cleaning and securing Downtown.	June 2009
5.7 Encourage the creation of a strong and capable Downtown Business Group.	Dec. 2009

6.0 Connecting Downtown.	Schedule
6.1 Improve Bicycle/Pedestrian connections.	June 2012
6.2 Encourage improved bus service.	June 2010
6.3 Expand and enhance connections between the Downtown and Merced College and the University of California.	Ongoing



As voted by the Public during outreach campaigns.



As suggested by the Public during outreach campaigns.

City Council
 Ellie Wooten, Mayor
 John Carlisle, Mayor Pro Tempore
 Joseph Cortez
 Michele Gabriault-Acosta
 Noah Lor
 Jim Sanders
 Bill Spriggs

Redevelopment Agency Staff
 James Marshall
 Gregory Diaz
 William Cahill
 Frank Quintero
 Daniel Ainslie
 Maria Pineda
 Claudia Weeks