

## Appendix A. Implementation Strategy

The Midtown Master Plan is the result of an extensive process which would not have been possible without the contribution of countless community members and organizations who came together to develop a clear direction for the future of Midtown. It will now take a concerted and well-coordinated effort from the Midtown Missoula Association and its many partners to realize this vision laid out in the plan.

This implementation strategy is a component of the Midtown Master Plan focused on specific steps to advance the plan's recommendations that can be championed by the Midtown Missoula Association (MMA), government agencies, private sector partners, and community stakeholders. This implementation strategy identifies and evaluates short, medium, and long-term action items, including opportunities to build momentum, collaborate with key partners, consider needed resources, and next steps. It will take a sustained effort with ongoing coordination to implement the recommendations in the Plan, beginning with the actions in this strategy and identifying new opportunities as they arise.

### Implementation Framework

This implementation framework outlines the key facets of implementing the Missoula Midtown Master Plan using the classic "5 Ws" form (Who, What, Where, When, and Why). This strategy is intended to serve as the organizing mechanism for the plan's actions, with detailed considerations for sustaining momentum.

#### What: Framework Areas and Actions

This matrix shows a high-level summary of all **thirty-six actions** within the Implementation Strategy, which are organized in six framework areas. These framework areas directly tie back to the recommendation section of the Midtown Master Plan, with a more detailed list of actionable items for each category. Equitable development strategies are incorporated throughout the identified strategies in order to highlight the importance of integrating equitable processes and outcomes throughout all areas of the plan.

Framework Area	Actions
1. Land Use & Infrastructure	1.1 Simplify the development code to encourage more diverse types of housing development
	1.2 Remove regulatory barriers to promote commercial infill development
	1.3 Create a clear regulatory process for complex projects that require multi-phase development
	1.4 Streamline development permitting processes and reduce/clarify public approval requirements
	1.5 Review and calibrate parking policies to encourage higher-density and mixed-use development
	1.6 Leverage urban renewal funding to encourage redevelopment of key opportunity sites
2. Housing	2.1 Reduce development costs for affordable housing
	2.2 Preserve and keep housing in good repair
	2.3 Support affordable homeownership opportunities
	2.4 Enhance housing stability for existing residents
	2.5 Restructure and explore new development incentives for affordable housing
	2.6 Explore innovative, low-cost housing solutions to serve people experiencing homelessness
3. Business & Economic Development	3.1 Provide support for small businesses and entrepreneurs
	3.2 Support the development of a small-scale hotel to serve Midtown visitors and support tourism
	3.3 Enable more types of live-work, flex, and creative office space in employment-focused zones
	3.4 Support revitalization of buildings along Brooks Street

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	3.5 Encourage incremental infill and redevelopment on larger sites in auto-oriented corridors through regulatory changes
	3.6 Encourage pedestrian street activation and business activities on South Avenue
	3.7 Provide affordable entrepreneurship opportunities in the Midtown Junction area
<b>4. Mobility &amp; Connectivity</b>	4.1 Provide safe and frequent pedestrian and bicycle crossings across Brooks Street
	4.2 Redesign the Brooks Street/Russell Street/South Avenue intersection to improve accessibility for all users
	4.3 Advance the buildout of the planned greenway network throughout Midtown including the Master Plan new connections
	4.4 Apply Complete Streets planning, design, and operational principles to Midtown streets to better serve all users
	4.5 Prioritize improvements to the pedestrian environment around the core of Midtown
	4.6 Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety at critical greenway network crossings
	4.7 Enhance travel and generate pedestrian and bicycle activity along and around the Bitterroot Trail
	4.8 Expand pedestrian and bicycle access to the Central Park district
	4.9 Improve and expand Mountain Line Transit Service
	4.10 Implement parking management practices
<b>5. Parks &amp; Open Space</b>	5.1 Make improvements to the trail system connecting to the Bitterroot Trail
	5.2 Create more park access in the Franklin to the Fort area
	5.3 Refine a multi-agency facilities plan for the Central Park concept and engage in a planning process for Playfair Park
<b>6. Character Areas &amp; Design</b>	6.1 Integrate Indigenous history and culture in new projects
	6.2 Encourage active ground floor uses around future BRT stops and other key nodes
	6.3 Design a placemaking theme for Midtown
	6.4 Implement activation of the Festival Street concept on South Avenue

## Why: Realizing the Vision for Midtown

Each section of the Implementation Strategy includes a project description and rationale for how the action helps further the vision of the Midtown Master Plan. Each action is guided by the priorities identified by community members in the engagement process and is supported by the project team's technical analysis.

## Incorporating Equity

Equitable development is critical to ensuring that Midtown will be a vibrant place that serves the needs of all its residents, workers, and visitors. The Master Plan outlines a definition of equity, which this plan intentionally incorporates throughout each framework area in a range of actions that help to achieve equitable outcomes:

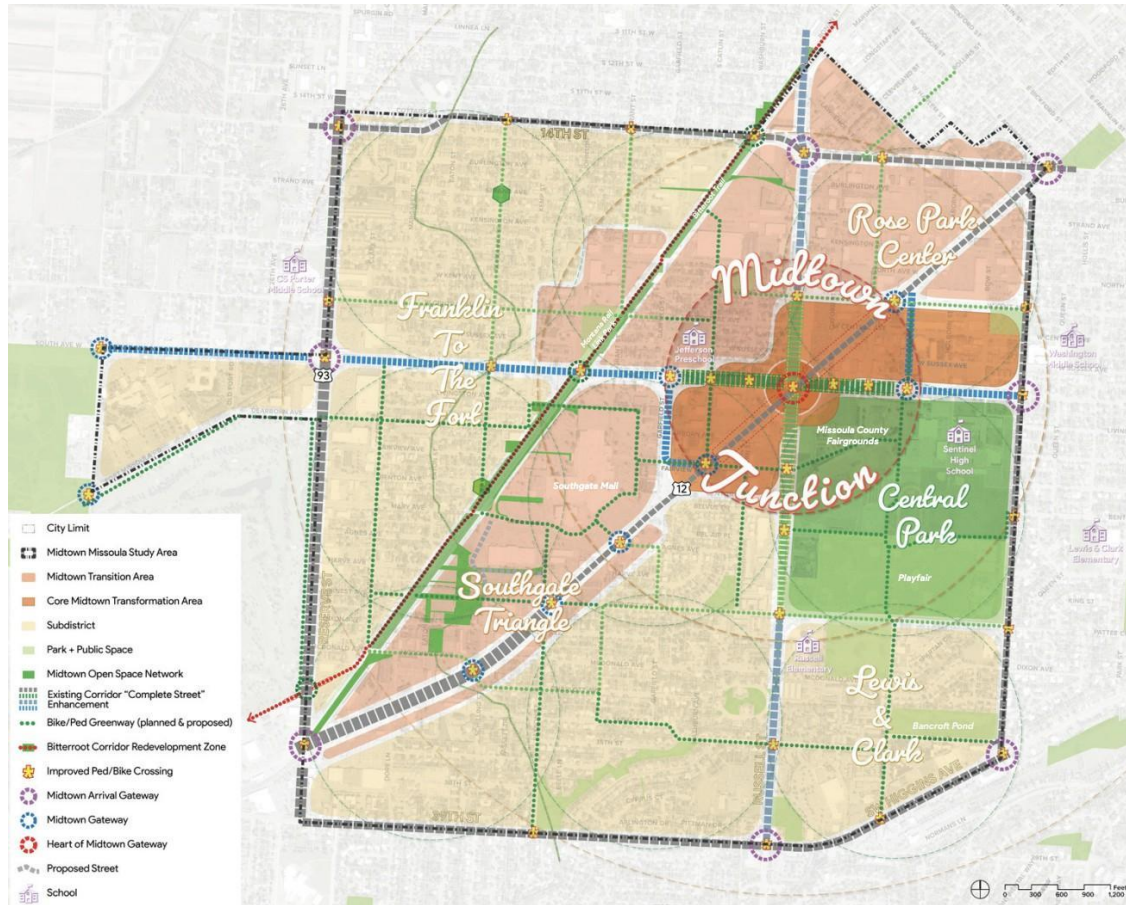
*“An approach for meeting the needs of underserved communities through policies and programs that reduce disparities while fostering places that are healthy and vibrant; An effective place-based action for creating strong and livable communities; Clear expectations that the outcomes from development need to be responsive to underserved populations and vulnerable groups; In the process, lower-income residents and people of color are successfully guiding the changes that occur within their communities rather than reacting to them.”<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> US EPA, “Equitable Development and Environmental Justice,” April 13, 2015, <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/equitable-development-and-environmental-justice>.

All actions include details on equity considerations, including the population served and intended outcomes of that action to equitably distribute the costs and benefits of the Master Plan. Where it is relevant, there is also an indication of specific areas where efforts should be focused for equitable results.

## Where: Geographic Focus Areas

Some actions may be relevant only in one focus area, such as the Midtown Junction area, the Brooks Street Corridor, or residential areas. Some actions will apply across Midtown, and others may not yet be determined. Where this is an essential part of the action, the language specifically calls out the geographic area using the Master Plan framework.



## When: Timeline and Priority

This implementation strategy uses a relative timeline of short-, medium-, and longer-term projects, organized with the following framework:

Short-Term	Medium-Term	Long-Term
<p><b>0-5 Year Actions</b></p> <p>Includes actions that have a clear path forward to begin implementation with defined partners and/or urgent needs to address for the community.</p>	<p><b>5-10 Year Actions</b></p> <p>Includes actions that will require greater lead up and will build on the momentum from short-term actions.</p>	<p><b>10+ Year Actions</b></p> <p>Includes actions that are likely dependent on other projects happening or funding becoming available before they can move forward, but are important to realizing the vision for Midtown.</p>

## Who: Partners

Advancing the Midtown Master Plan's vision will require work from a variety of partners, including the Missoula Midtown Association, public agencies, developers, and community-based organizations. For some actions, there may be a clear organization to lead the work, but in other cases it may be a broader coalition.

As an overarching action for this strategy, the Midtown Missoula Association should create an implementation committee and working group to advance the Master Plan following its adoption and coordinate with additional partners. This list represents some of the key organizations who may be involved with this committee, in addition to individual community members who may wish to be involved. To foster a more equitable implementation process, the MMA should also intentionally seek involvement from partners like culturally specific services, disability advocates, affordable housing providers, and other organizations for underrepresented community members.

Partner Types	Key Implementation Partners
Businesses and Developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Missoula Association of REALTORS (<b>MOR</b>)</li><li>● Southgate Mall</li><li>● Private firms and businesses</li><li>● Local property owners</li><li>● Midtown-based entrepreneurs</li></ul>
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● City of Missoula</li><li>● Missoula County</li><li>● Missoula Redevelopment Agency (<b>MRA</b>)</li><li>● Missoula Metropolitan Planning Organization (<b>MPO</b>)</li><li>● Missoula County Fairgrounds</li><li>● Missoula Urban Transportation District (<b>Mountain Line</b>)</li><li>● Montana Department of Transportation (<b>MDT</b>)</li></ul>
Community Partners and Nonprofit Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Missoula Midtown Association (<b>MMA</b>)</li><li>● Destination Missoula</li><li>● EmpowerMT</li><li>● Human Resource Council (<b>HRC</b>)</li><li>● Homeward</li><li>● Missoula Chamber of Commerce</li><li>● Missoula Economic Partnership (<b>MEP</b>)</li><li>● United Way</li><li>● Séliš-Q̓lispé Culture Committee</li></ul>

## Funding Sources

Not all funding sources that will fully support implementation of the Midtown Master Plan vision are yet known and more may become available during its 10-year life span. However, this strategy identifies critical first-step funding opportunities that Midtown can leverage to build momentum in coming years, including:

- **Leverage urban renewal funding and explore expanding the current urban renewal area.** Much of Midtown is already within the geographic boundaries of Missoula's Urban Renewal Area III, which is one of the greatest sources of funding available for the area. Urban renewal funds can generally be used for a variety of capital projects, but only within the plan area. The MMA should track state legislative decisions about urban renewal to understand what is possible and advocate for expanding this district to align with Midtown Master Plan boundaries. This will enable more funding options through urban renewal funding throughout the study area.

- **Leverage opportunities for incorporating bicycle and pedestrian improvements into the Brooks Street BRT detailed planning study.** The Brooks Street BRT detailed planning study, which is expected to be completed by Summer 2024, is being funded with a federal U.S. Department of Transportation grant through the Rebuilding America Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program. Midtown will have the opportunity to advocate for incorporating improved pedestrian crossings, bicycle infrastructure, and other Complete Street amenities in the Brooks Street BRT design concepts.
- **Advocate for allocation of funding from the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund.** Midtown is home to a large share of the city, and it is a critical area to advocate for allocation of the AHTF.
- **Advocate for federal, state, and county resources.** Although these might be limited and sporadic, the MMA and its partners should be opportunistic about new funding sources from other levels of government such as grants and technical support. Upcoming legislature may also provide new opportunities, including HB819, which would provide grants for local organizations to help middle-income households purchase homes.

## Framework Area 1: Land Use & Infrastructure

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<b>Action 1.1 Simplify the development code to encourage more diverse types of housing development</b>			
<p>The City should explore and make modifications to the zoning code to support a broader range of housing in Midtown and across Missoula as part of the upcoming Our Missoula Code Reform process, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Allow for missing middle housing types in all residential zones</b> that do not allow for these types outright in existing residential zones. These housing types include townhomes, duplexes, cottage housing, and small multifamily plexes with up to six dwelling units. <b>Reduce minimum lot sizes in single-family zones.</b> Smaller footprint configurations could yield higher densities, lower costs, and more efficient use of land. This would also encourage the development of missing middle housing in current residential (R) zones.</li> <li>• <b>Reconfigure development standards to support higher-density development.</b> Commercial zones are prime areas for mixed-use residential development. In these areas, development regulations should allow for higher-density development, both through density allowances and other requirements for setbacks, height, and parcel area per unit that make mixed-use multifamily buildings feasible for developers.</li> <li>• <b>Reduce parking minimums</b> to support higher-density development, vertical mixed-use buildings, and smaller-scale housing types. ECO's development feasibility findings (Appendix X) show that a parking ratio of 0.7 to 1.0 spaces per dwelling unit can improve feasibility for these types. (<i>See Action 1.5 for details on parking requirements</i>). Consider requiring transportation demand management strategies for large, new developments that receive parking reductions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Allowing a wide range of housing options can support the City's housing affordability goals. Building smaller homes such as accessory dwelling units, townhomes, duplexes, and cottage clusters typically cost less to construct and maintain.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Diverse housing types provide opportunities for a broader range of people to access right-sized, affordable, and high-quality housing options. Historic housing discrimination and exclusionary practices have disproportionately affected people of color and reduced the range of housing choices available through restrictive zoning policies. By allowing a wide range of housing types, communities can promote equity by expanding housing opportunities and reducing the concentration of poverty in certain areas.</p>	Short	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula, Our Missoula Code Reform Team</p> <p><b>Partners:</b> Missoula Midtown Association (MMA), Missoula Association of REALTORS (MOR)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with the Our Missoula Code Reform project to ensure these land use and code recommendations get implemented.</li> <li>• Montana SB 323, which passed in April 2023, allows for duplex and triplex housing in local zoning.</li> <li>• The larger scope of the Code Reform process can explore how code changes will impact areas across Missoula and engage with community members.</li> </ul>
<b>Action 1.2 Remove regulatory barriers to promote commercial infill development</b>			
<p>Along with residential code changes, the City should make modifications to commercial and industrial zones to support infill development and employment uses, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Simplify use allowances</b> for retail, services, and light manufacturing in commercial and mixed-use zones. The focus should be on locally serving businesses and clarifying/simplifying that the use classification in the zoning code can be inclusive of smaller-scale retail and industrial uses. Seek opportunities to combine similar use designations that serve similar purposes to the community or</li> </ul>	Short	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula, Our Missoula Code Reform Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Like modifications to residential building standards, commercial zoning changes should be coordinated with the Code Reform project, which can explore implications</li> </ul>



Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<p>have similar site needs. For example, the City could provide the same use allowances for microbreweries, cideries, and wineries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reduce ground floor commercial requirements for vertical mixed-use buildings.</b> Reducing or eliminating ground floor commercial requirements can support the viability of vertical mixed-use development. However, some scaled-down requirements should remain to support an active street environment in core areas. This will also allow the market to respond to changing times and build better pedestrian environments, while removing requirements that are not financially feasible. Although active ground floor use requirements should remain in the Midtown Junction area, they should be sufficiently flexible to not impede development in key corridors.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Throughout Master Plan engagement, community members indicated they would like to see neighborhood-serving retail throughout Midtown and as a part of mixed-use development. Providing greater flexibility for development and use standards can ensure that small-scale commercial uses are feasible in mixed-use buildings.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Mixed-use infill development is important for achieving equitable outcomes for both housing and economic development priorities. Mixed-use multifamily buildings provide access to goods and services, employment opportunities, and space for small businesses and entrepreneurs. Small-scale storefronts can also help support the local economy.</p>		<p><b>Partners:</b> MMA, MOR</p>	<p>across Missoula, engage with businesses, and implement specific changes.</p>
Action 1.3 Create a clear regulatory process for complex projects that require multiphase development			
<p>In addition to regulatory changes for use allowances and development standards, the City should update the code to provide flexibility in the phasing plan timeline for multiphased projects on large building permits. The current two-year maximum deadline to establish a new phase hinders the ability to construct a project in multiple phases when construction typically lasts more than 12 months for large projects.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Having some flexibility in the timeline for when the City would require each phased development to occur could give projects some time to better align resources and funding to support the multiphased project and build the required infrastructure needed. In recent years, supply chain disruptions and inflationary pressures have also impacted many projects and increased costs far above original estimates. Multiphase development allows greater flexibility in adjusting projects to broad economic changes.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Smaller local developers and affordable housing developers typically cannot absorb as much risk as large national firms, so collecting returns from initial development phases can make larger projects and those which operate on small margins feasible. Enabling local developers to lead the way is also more likely to ensure community needs are heard and met by firms with greater local knowledge and relationships.</p>	<p>Short</p>	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula, Our Missoula Code Reform Team</p> <p><b>Partners:</b> MMA, MOR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To understand what kind of phasing options would be most useful for large projects, the City should convene local developers and real estate professionals to gather input on phasing and timelines.</li> <li>• The MMA and/or MOR could be conveners to bring together key stakeholders and align policy updates with development realities.</li> </ul>

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
Action 1.4 Streamline development permitting processes and reduce/clarify public approval requirements			
<p>The City should seek to change policies and regulations around development that can slow timelines and create barriers for the types of residential and commercial development that the community wants to see in Midtown, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Remove restrictions from development standards related to design and clarify landscaping requirements.</b> This should include a review of the Design Excellence Overlay, including requirements in key nodes and corridors as well as incentive structures, to remove restrictive or unclear criteria such as building materials while retaining clear open space requirements.</li> <li>• <b>Provide more flexibility in the TED regulations to promote the production of new housing.</b> This could include increasing the number of units allowed for a TED and other requirements that make infill development challenging.</li> <li>• <b>Simplify change of occupancy building code to encourage redevelopment of existing commercial buildings,</b> which would support infill development along with entrepreneurship and new locally serving businesses.</li> <li>• <b>Review and amend code requirements for setbacks and stepbacks</b> for commercial development adjacent to residential-zoned parcels. Large setbacks and stepbacks for noncommercial-zoned parcels next to residential parcels can limit the scale and redevelopment potential of these specific parcels.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Permitting processes can act as a bottleneck by delaying construction and extending development timelines. Streamlining the permitting process and having clear and objective standards can minimize these delays and allow developers to avoid lengthy permitting processes navigating the regulatory maze of variances, adjustments, and permits. Streamlining the permit process can lower overall costs by decreasing risk and project expenses.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Complex and prolonged permitting processes can be burdensome for the development of affordable housing. Because affordable housing typically operates on very small margins to provide units below market rate, financial feasibility is very sensitive to factors like timeline that overextend the budget. Larger firms may be able to absorb more risk of a prolonged permitting process but tend to provide only market-rate units. To ensure that affordable housing gets built, it is important to have, at a minimum, expedited processes for these projects.</p>	Short - Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula, Our Missoula Code Reform Team</p> <p><b>Partners:</b> MMA, MOR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some processes that require City review may not be able to be eliminated for health and safety purposes. The City should carefully evaluate before removing current processes and ensure that there is clarity about changes.</li> <li>• Administrative capacity is a challenge for expediting timelines for development. While the City is working to address these challenges and develop new resources for development, these actions could remove some current strain on permit review staff.</li> </ul>
Action 1.5 Review and calibrate parking policies to encourage higher-density and mixed-use development			
<p>The City should revisit and consider making changes to its current regulatory parking policies, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Review and revise current parking policies</b> to formalize the City's intent regarding the role parking development and parking management will play in supporting the Midtown land use vision for more compact, mixed-use development and an augmented multimodal transportation access system.</li> </ul>	Short - Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> City, Missoula Parking Commission</p> <p><b>Support:</b></p>	<p><b>Short-term considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate findings and overall goals that come out of the citywide Parking Plan effort.</li> </ul>



Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Review and revise current policies and code requirements for parking requirements.</b> Reduce or eliminate the more than eighty land use types currently requiring minimum parking. Specific configurations should take into account localized findings of the citywide Parking Plan.</li> <li>● <b>City policy should support incentives</b> for change to encourage limited parking and more multimodal-friendly living. Right-sized parking is a key incentive for development.</li> <li>● <b>Engage in strategic data collection</b> to quantify actual local demand ratios for current land uses (see Action 5.4 for further detail).</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Parking policy for new development should reflect the desired land use outcome for Midtown (to include integration of parking into the broader access vision for parking, transit, biking/walking, and Climate Action). Reducing or eliminating parking requirements, based on local parking demand data for mixed-use development, will lead to parking that is “right-sized,” cost-effective, and supportive of land use and multimodal transportation goals and objectives.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Mixed-use multifamily housing can help advance equitable outcomes in several ways. Combining residential units with commercial spaces can create opportunities for employment and access to services within walking distance, which can benefit transit-dependent households. Multifamily developments are also typically more efficient as affordable or mixed-income buildings that serve low-income households.</p>		MMA, MOR, Missoula Redevelopment Agency (MRA), Missoula Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Convene a Parking Work Group to develop a new and strategic policy for parking development and management in Midtown (see Action 5.4).</li> <li>● Initiate strategic data collection for a range of land use types and, potentially, unique area subdistricts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Medium-term considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Using local demand data, calibrate new parking standards, and if minimums are continued, factor data to account for future anticipated mode split objectives.</li> <li>● Adopt policies and new regulatory standards for development.</li> </ul>
Action 1.6 Leverage urban renewal funding to encourage redevelopment of key opportunity sites			
<p>Urban renewal funding is a powerful funding mechanism available in Midtown through URA District III, which overlaps large portions of the core Master Plan study area. The MRA in partnership with the MMA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Prioritize urban renewal funding to pay for major infrastructure projects needed to unlock development potential in large key opportunity sites.</b> Infrastructure projects could include water and sewer connections, roadway improvements and extensions, utility relocation, and remediation costs. These can often be a barrier for development, as they frequently require up-front investment from developers, particularly for projects that have lower returns such as affordable housing.</li> <li>● <b>Use urban renewal funds to purchase land for community-serving uses on large format sites.</b> Urban renewal can be an effective way to pay for land acquisition and other capital development costs. The MRA and partners should proactively identify potential partners and ideal sites that could be used for the creation of affordable housing, new employment uses, community commercial space, or needed services. Large underutilized or superblock sites in employment mixed-use areas and neighborhood mixed-use corridors near transit and active transportation routes would likely suit these uses and address the Master Plan’s goals for creating a more vibrant and connected area.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Infrastructure investments can advance projects that address community needs identified in the Master Plan. These include mixed-use projects that include new housing units, small business incubator spaces,</p>	Short - Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> MRA</p> <p><b>Support:</b> MMA, MOR, City of Missoula Public Works, property owners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MRA and MMA should evaluate expanding the URD III, particularly if high-opportunity sites do not overlap with its current boundaries.</li> <li>● To be eligible for expansion, the MRA must be able to identify findings of blight as defined by state statute, which may be challenging in some areas of the Midtown Master Plan boundaries.</li> <li>● Monitor state legislative changes to urban renewal policy, which could significantly impact how urban renewal funds can be used.</li> </ul>

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<p>social services, etc. Priority for funding should be projects with community benefits which may not be feasible without gap financing but have buy-in from property owners, developers, and key partners.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Urban renewal revenue can be a critical source of funding for community improvements that address disparities resulting from historic discriminatory practices. Urban renewal can provide critical funding for capital costs associated with housing development, creating and enhancing parks and open spaces, improving transportation infrastructure and streetscape, and supporting economic development.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MMA can help to identify potential projects that would benefit from infrastructure improvements and lead conversations with property owners and businesses.</li></ul>

## Framework Area 2: Housing

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<b>Action 2.1 Reduce development costs for affordable housing</b>			
<p>Developing affordable housing to support the Midtown community over the next 10 years and beyond will take a variety of different tools. Those which reduce up-front and ongoing costs for development and operation of affordable units include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Leverage City and urban renewal funds for required front-end infrastructure improvements</b> for affordable housing and mixed-income development projects.</li> <li>• <b>Use the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF)</b> to reduce the financial gap for affordable housing projects in Midtown.</li> <li>• <b>Create a Community Reinvestment Organization (CRO)</b> to leverage available state housing resources and identify funding sources of potential match for CRO funding.</li> <li>• <b>Make public land available at a reduced price</b> as a subsidy for affordable housing. This lowers the overall development costs and enables production of housing units at reduced rents.</li> <li>• <b>Subsidize or reduce development review or fees</b> for affordable housing, including building permit fees, planning waivers, and water and sewer fees.</li> <li>• <b>Expedite development review process for affordable housing.</b> Reducing the entitlement length process lowers costs by decreasing risk and project development expenses.</li> <li>• <b>Eliminate or further reduce parking minimums</b> for affordable housing projects near high-frequency transit and major employment areas. Eliminating parking requirements can reduce both the land required and the construction costs for building housing as well as allow greater flexibility for site design.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Creating housing that is affordable for low- and moderate-income households often requires public subsidy to be feasible. Because rents or sale prices are offered below market rate, these developments are typically not able to cover costs without contributions from government agencies or mission-based organizations. Although some programs exist at the federal level (such as the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit), these can be competitive. Local contributions can help to enhance available funding options and provide a more sustainable source of funds for ongoing programs.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Affordable housing is critical for achieving equitable outcomes in Midtown by ensuring that lower-income households can continue to live in the area and avoid displacement as new development happens. Reducing development costs for these projects through up-front public subsidies, land donation, expedited review processes, and flexible development standards can make it feasible for developers to offer housing units at reduced rents that are attainable to households at a wider range of income levels without cost burdening.</p>	Ongoing	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Missoula County, MMA, MEP, other government bodies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MMA and its partners should advocate for allocation of available City, County, and other resources to target affordable housing in Midtown. This should include support for new multifamily units as well as homeownership support (such as down payment assistance, home rehabilitation funds, and accessibility improvements) and financial support for the preservation of existing affordable housing.</li> <li>• The City uses its property by MRL Park as an emergency shelter for houseless individuals. If the City identifies a new location for an emergency shelter, this site could be available for new uses (e.g., affordable housing).</li> <li>• Modifications to parking requirements for affordable housing should be considered alongside Action 2.5 in line with a holistic update to development incentives for affordable development.</li> </ul>

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<b>Action 2.2 Preserve and keep housing in good repair</b>			
<p>As part of broader citywide housing work, the City should seek to partner with the MMA, service providers, residents, and property owners in Midtown to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Create a revolving loan fund that can be used for down payment assistance</b>, potentially using City AHTF contributions, and identifying additional local sources to help close the gap between affordability requirements and current housing prices for a range of low and moderate-income households.</li> <li>• <b>Incent housing preservation of low-cost rental units</b> by offering grants, loans, and property tax incentives to property owners in exchange for keeping units affordable.</li> <li>• <b>Support existing programs for home rehabilitation, weatherization, and accessibility improvements and explore options to expand or develop new programs.</b> These programs are critical for ensuring that existing low-income homeowners are able to make repairs to keep their homes up to code, reduce cost of utility bills, and make accessibility improvements for disabled residents and aging in place. The City and partners should proactively look for opportunities for funding that could support expanding service for these programs.</li> <li>• <b>Acquire and rehabilitate</b> both subsidized and market-rate affordable properties that are in good structural condition to increase long-lasting affordability.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Although housing prices have been rising in recent years, Midtown has an existing supply of naturally occurring affordable housing. Preserving units that are already affordable ensures that residents are able to stay in their homes; this is critical for preventing displacement as new development occurs as part of the Midtown Master Plan.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> In addition to preserving affordable multifamily housing, programs for home repairs, weatherization, and accessibility help existing low-income homeowners, seniors, and people with disabilities maintain high-quality living standards. Many older adults and people with disabilities may require physical modifications to their homes due to mobility needs. Accessibility improvements such as no-step entry, single-floor living, and door widths to accommodate a wheelchair can be costly and create displacement risk, which can be alleviated with intentional programs for homeowner support. Additionally, critical home repairs can have high, unexpected costs for low-income households; providing financial support for rehabilitation projects can ensure that residents stay in their homes and can reduce the risk of being unhoused.</p>	Ongoing	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula</p> <p><b>Support:</b> MMA, MRA, Human Resource Council (HRC), County, existing property owners and multifamily housing operators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserving existing housing helps to achieve climate goals, since rehabilitation typically produces lower greenhouse gas emissions and pollutants than new development.</li> <li>• Potential resources could come from the City, County, and mission-based organizations (including the Affordable Housing Trust Fund). The MMA and partners should advocate for funding that can support acquisition and rehabilitation of existing affordable rental units and augment homeowner programs.</li> </ul>
<b>Action 2.3 Support affordable homeownership opportunities</b>			
<p>To make homeownership accessible to more Midtown households, the City should also work with existing organizations operating in Midtown, including the MRA, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Consider pursuing alternative homeownership models such as community land trusts</b> that can provide affordable homeownership options to young families and first-time homebuyers.</li> <li>• <b>Support down payment assistance and homeownership education programs.</b> Some organizations like Homeward and HRC work already have programs for down payment assistance and homeownership support. Seeking ways to expand the reach of these programs, provide additional funding, or technical support could enhance opportunities in Midtown.</li> </ul>	Short - Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula</p> <p><b>Support:</b> MRA, Homeward, HRC, local affordable housing developers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the short term, the MMA should assess the capacity for a community land trust in Midtown and any gaps in service from existing homeownership support programs. Identifying a potential champion organization to lead a shared</li> </ul>

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<p>The City could pursue a multipronged approach which could include advocacy at the state level to reduce barriers to development, incentives in exchange for affordability requirements, innovative approaches to acquiring foreclosed homes, and exploring alternative homeownership models.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The barriers to development of affordable homeownership projects are myriad, from a lack of developer capacity, financing challenges for prospective homeowners, and development regulations. Alternative models of ownership are particularly challenging for small, attached housing units on single lots. These building types cannot always support fee-simple owner occupancy and are costly to develop as condos.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Affordable homeownership options are important to stabilize households and prevent residential displacement, while also allowing residents to gain equity in their homes and build wealth. In the United States, many people of color have been historically prohibited from purchasing homes or accessing housing through discriminatory practices, such as exclusion from federal housing programs and denial of financial services. The legacy of these historical practices contributes to ongoing homeownership and generational wealth disparities. Actions that make homeownership and rental housing more attainable for people of color can help address these ongoing inequities. Prioritizing areas of Midtown with higher socioeconomic vulnerability to displacement (identified in Appendix F of the Midtown Master Plan) can help slow residential displacement in these areas which also have rising housing prices.</p>			<p>ownership model is a critical first step.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MMA can help to connect different service providers and businesses and promote programs.</li> </ul>
<b>Action 2.4 Enhance housing stability for existing residents</b>			
<p>As Midtown anticipates redevelopment, the City and MMA should engage with community-serving organizations to identify specific unmet needs for housing, services, and technical assistance (such as homebuyer education and tenants' rights counseling) and take steps to prevent displacement, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Work with partners to identify gaps and overlaps in housing services</b> to increase capacity building for housing providers and increase programs that help people stay housed.</li> <li>• <b>Explore possibilities for tenant protections.</b> This would need to happen at the city or county level and may be limited by state regulations. The MMA and partners could advocate for new protections such as caps on certain fees or notice-to-sale requirements. Programmatic options like tenant education services may be more feasible in Montana's legislative context. Consider anti-displacement strategies identified in the Equity in Land Use Report and part of the Our Missoula project.</li> <li>• <b>Proactively engage with community members in high socially vulnerable areas to identify unmet housing needs.</b> Areas with higher concentrations of social vulnerability should be prioritized for developing programs that can enhance stability.</li> <li>• <b>Work with housing program providers to identify ways to provide eviction and homelessness prevention</b> programs and support. This could include eviction legal counsel, rent and utility assistance, advocating for eviction protections, and more.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The MMA could seek to serve as a connector with government agencies, foundations, and other organizations to advocate for additional programs and resources to address community needs.</p>	Short - Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula</p> <p><b>Support:</b> MMA, HRC, Homewood, Missoula County, Missoula Housing Authority, MCES, YWCA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick wins for supporting housing stability may include increasing awareness of existing programs and fair housing rights with Midtown residents who may be more vulnerable to displacement.</li> <li>• The MMA should also track the progress of citywide displacement risk analysis to refine its understanding of where there is greater risk for Midtown residents with consideration of real estate market changes.</li> </ul>

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Community-serving organizations already have in-routes with many populations in Midtown who are more vulnerable to displacement risk as identified in Appendix X. Many also offer culturally specific resources and translation services for immigrants, refugees, and people with limited English proficiency. Working with these organizations is likely the most efficient way to identify needs through channels that already have a relationship and trust with community members.</p>			
Action 2.5 Restructure and explore new development incentives for affordable housing			
<p>As part of regulatory changes, the City should consider specific modifications to the code that can support regulated affordable housing, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Extend the existing affordable housing incentive to more zoning districts.</b> Right now, the City’s zoning code allows for the affordable housing bonus in RM2.7, RM1.5, RM1-45, RM1-35, RMH, and RM0.5 zones while several of these are applicable in Midtown today (RM2.7, RM1-45, RM1-35, and RM0.5 in small, limited areas). Creating an incentive that is applicable in all R zones and able to be used for townhome development, middle housing, and multifamily buildings would give the highest potential for a variety of new affordable housing in Midtown.</li> <li>• <b>Allow for more density that builds on other zoning changes.</b> The current code requires between 30% and 50% of units to be affordable in exchange for a 10% to 20% density bonus. The City should consider increasing the density allowance to provide a stronger motivation for developers.</li> <li>• <b>When additional entitlement is created through future planning processes, implement a well-calibrated density affordable housing bonus policy.</b> Future planning and land-use projects could recommend zoning changes and entitlement increases in Midtown. When these zoning changes occur, it is important to implement a well-calibrated density bonus where the incentives match requirements to capture value created through zone changes to support affordable and mixed-income housing in Midtown.</li> <li>• <b>Review and explore other regulatory code changes</b> that incentivize the creation of more affordable housing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The City offers a limited affordable housing bonus that applies in some of Midtown’s residential zones. It is a scaled incentive which allows a smaller parcel size and other modified building standards in exchange for up to 50% of the project developed as permanently affordable. To be eligible, units using the incentive must be affordable to households at 80% of area median income (AMI) for rental housing, or households at 120% of AMI for homeownership.</p> <p>The Midtown community has expressed the need for more affordable housing, but developers have noted that the current structure does not create a sufficient incentive for many projects to move forward, with too high of requirements for too little added benefits. Regulatory and financial incentives of a bonus program need to be calibrated to support increased utilization of the program and applied through any future zone changes as part of other planning projects.</p>	Short - Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula, Our Missoula Code Reform Project</p> <p><b>Support:</b> MMA, MOR, local developers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modifications to the affordable housing density bonus could be incorporated in the Our Missoula Code Reform project.</li> <li>• The Master Plan scope did not include a full analysis of how the bonus impacts financial feasibility of affordable housing projects. The City and partners should seek further opportunities for this analysis.</li> <li>• The City should also work with the Missoula Organization of REALTORS and developers to better understand future changes to market trends and how to best structure incentives to maximize feasibility for affordable housing projects.</li> </ul>



Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Regulatory and financial incentives can make projects that serve low-income households feasible in more areas of Midtown where higher land costs may otherwise prevent affordable housing developments. These policies can help provide a more equitable distribution of housing opportunities and reduce the disproportionate burden of housing costs on low-income households. Incentivizing developers to create more affordable units can help residents at all income levels to have access to housing in high-opportunity areas near jobs, transit, and services.</p>			
Action 2.6 Explore innovative, low-cost housing solutions to serve people experiencing homelessness			
<p>In conjunction with nonprofit organizations and service providers, the City should explore innovative ways to provide shelter to houseless individuals such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repurposing motels for permanent supportive housing</li> <li>• Examining building tiny homes on publicly owned property</li> <li>• Building a permanent shelter with services</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The Johnson Street shelter operating in Midtown serves a large share of the city's houseless population and is a critical resource, particularly in winter months. However, the current shelter is only temporary and more permanent options should be explored.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Homelessness often disproportionately affects communities who are more vulnerable to residential displacement due to a variety of socioeconomic factors (detailed in Appendix X), including people of color, people with disabilities, seniors, and LGBTQ+ individuals. Meeting the need for a shelter in Midtown is an important part of addressing the continuum of housing needs and enhancing safety for vulnerable community members.</p>	Short-Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula</p> <p><b>Support:</b> MMA, MRA, HRC, Missoula County, Missoula Poverello Center, Salvation Army Missoula</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with the City's 10-year plan for ending homelessness.</li> <li>• Midtown is home to a number of service providers. Leveraging this strength and identifying a permanent viable place within Midtown that is close to resources and services should be a priority next step.</li> </ul>

## Framework Area 3: Business & Economic Development

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<b>Action 3.1 Provide support for entrepreneurs and small businesses</b>			
<p>To encourage existing businesses and new entrepreneurship in Midtown, the MMA should partner with MEP and other stakeholders to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Leverage urban renewal dollars for tenant improvement programs</b> focused on small businesses. The City should calibrate its program by conducting outreach with prospective grantees to prioritize properties, determine the investments that could have the greatest impact, and develop grant/loan criteria. This would be an extension of the existing improvement program.</li> <li>• <b>Build relationships and join forces to market Midtown.</b> This could include coordinated outreach with businesses to understand co-marketing objectives, understanding the types of businesses that are most needed in the area, developing a cohesive brand, and identifying high-impact events that the area could host each year.</li> <li>• <b>Establish a business incubator in partnership with other organizations and improve technical assistance and support networks.</b> This will ensure that Midtown becomes a hub for small businesses and entrepreneurship that can further promote economic development.</li> <li>• <b>Initiate stabilization programs for existing businesses in key corridors identified in the Midtown Master Plan as part of new development,</b> including South Avenue, Brooks Street, and existing neighborhood nodes.</li> <li>• <b>Establish a construction disruption assistance program</b> to mitigate impacts to current businesses from publicly funded construction activities in Midtown. This will likely be most applicable on Brooks Street during build-out of new transit infrastructure but could be applicable to other large future projects with intensive site work.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Midtown's older building stock and commercially zoned land provide some of Missoula's most affordable options for retail spaces, offices, and services. New development could create pressure on entrepreneurs and small businesses in the area as rents increase. The MMA and its partners should prepare for these conditions by initiating programs to support businesses.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Supporting entrepreneurship can lead to more equitable outcomes because it can create opportunities for individuals who may not have had access to traditional employment or career paths. There are multiple barriers that exist for creating a new business, such as start-up capital, credit requirements, and affordable commercial or industrial space. Groups who have historically been prevented from accumulating generational wealth by discriminatory policies are often not able to access the funding and resources needed to be successful, primarily people of color. Providing resources to bridge ongoing opportunity gaps can have equitable outcomes and strengthen the local economy.</p>	Ongoing	<p><b>Lead:</b> MMA and MEP</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Chamber of Commerce, City of Missoula</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the short term, the MMA and its partners should look for opportunities to connect entrepreneurs and start-ups with existing programs. As the Master Plan implementation progresses, new services for entrepreneurs and small businesses may be needed. The MMA should continue to foster these relationships to understand emerging needs.</li> <li>• Cohort-based programs like incubators can efficiently serve multiple businesses with similar needs (such as an online retail-focused cohort, restaurant-focused cohort, etc.). These can also be tailored to provide culturally specific services like cohorts conducted in a shared language.</li> </ul>
<b>Action 3.2 Support the development of a small-scale hotel to serve Midtown visitors and support tourism</b>			
<p>The MMA should take action with the Chamber of Commerce and private sector partners to support development of Midtown as a more distinct tourism destination, including:</p>	Medium	<b>Lead:</b> MMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Market Analysis shows that demand is likely to grow beyond the existing economy hotels in Midtown</li> </ul>

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Explore opportunities to attract a hotel and other services for visitors to Midtown’s many regional destinations.</b> Properties on Brooks Street offer a combination of high vehicle traffic, easy access to major destinations, and underutilized land with redevelopment potential that could be leveraged for rehabilitation or renovation of a hotel space.</li> <li>• <b>Consider using urban renewal funds</b> to help pay for potential infrastructure improvements and help make a hotel financially viable.</li> <li>• <b>Develop a branding theme for Midtown and implement the wayfinding master plan.</b> Strong branding can be used to market Midtown for visitors and leverage its existing assets to reach a wider audience. A specific brand can also help to unite businesses and capture traffic from large events held at the Fairgrounds and sports fields.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Year-round events at the Missoula Fairgrounds and other destinations bring large crowds to Midtown, but many visitors do not stay in the area due to the lack of new hotels nearby. More coordination is needed to promote Midtown as a district.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Investing in tourism can create benefits for local businesses and entrepreneurs by increasing the number of visitors to Midtown. These efforts should be done in alignment with creating a placemaking theme (detailed in alignment with Action 6.3), which reflects the whole community and history of Midtown. Celebrating Midtown’s identity, history, and culture should intentionally include work with the Séliš-Q̓lispé Culture Committee and other culturally specific organizations and should ensure that these communities benefit from growth in tourism.</p>		<b>Support:</b> MEP, Midtown businesses	today. Near-term opportunities could include repositioning of older economy lodging toward a more boutique lodging concept that leverages the cultural and community assets of Missoula and Midtown.
Action 3.3 Enable more types of live-work, flex, and creative office spaces in employment-focused zones			
<p>To encourage new types of employment spaces in Midtown, the City and MMA should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Create definitions and promote employment uses</b> in the code, including live-work and flex spaces</li> <li>• <b>Clarify allowed uses in the northeastern employment focus areas</b> shown in the Business and Economic Development recommendations map in the Master Plan to support employment-focused mixed-use development.</li> <li>• <b>Relax standards for the share of parcel area required for nonresidential uses.</b> Consider scaling requirements to be more tailored to parcel size and reducing the share for nonresidential uses to allow for small retail to be integrated into development. The City should retain ground floor commercial requirements in the Midtown Junction area to promote entrepreneurship and active streets.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> COVID-19 made a lasting impact on how people work. Many employers now demand hybrid and flexible workspaces. Some employers may choose to reposition older industrial and commercial spaces in Midtown to cater to home-based businesses started during the pandemic, start-up entrepreneurs, and shared office spaces. Opportunities for small brick-and-mortar retail and services in key corridors can ensure that new businesses also have places to scale up and continue their life cycle in Midtown while modifying ground floor retail requirements that are not achievable in the market and not likely to create needed housing and desired services through mixed-use development.</p>	Medium	<b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula  <b>Support:</b> MMA, MEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developer capacity and experience with these types of spaces might be limited in Missoula today. The MMA and partners can help to increase developers’ comfort with these types of projects, hold information sessions or talks with professionals for other places, or consider organizing a best practices trip to comparable jurisdictions.</li> </ul>

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> New types of employment spaces can provide opportunities for a broad range of small businesses and entrepreneurs, while reducing commuting time and expenses for residents. Adaptive reuse of existing buildings as live-work or creative office spaces can also contribute to the revitalization of disinvested areas by repurposing underutilized or vacant buildings, attracting businesses, and creating vibrant hubs for workers and residents.</p>			
<b>Action 3.4 Support revitalization of well-designed buildings along Brooks Street</b>			
<p>New development around future stops of the Brooks Street BRT detailed planning study project should be oriented to support street activation through design and mixed uses, such as retail and services. Not all existing buildings along Brooks Street warrant revitalization. Supporting the revitalization of those that are well designed and oriented to support pedestrian activation should be prioritized. This includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Continue to fund the facade improvement program.</b> The URD III will sunset in 2040 after the life of this plan, but may begin allocating funding to other programs. The timeline for the Brooks Street BRT detailed planning study project on Brooks is still uncertain. Planning now for continuation of the program into the future can help ensure there are resources for improving the streetscape.</li> <li>• <b>Develop criteria for which existing builds are appropriate for revitalization.</b> This criteria will ensure that building characteristics (i.e., building orientation, age, quality, etc.) help support the future of Midtown while improving the building for a new life. <b>Simplify change of use standards</b> to encourage reuse of existing buildings and promote reinvestment.</li> <li>• <b>Simplify zoning standards</b> to provide flexibility of food carts to be parked on commercial properties to provide short-term use of a property.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> To support reinvestment of vacant or underutilized property along Brooks Street, small programs such as facade improvement programs and changes to zoning can help revitalize old buildings into something new without doing a full redevelopment of the site.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Revitalizing Brooks Street as it undergoes the planning process for a new BRT route will support transit-oriented development and ensure a more active street environment for pedestrians and transit users. These changes may also foster greater opportunities for local businesses to locate in the corridor and provide visibility for underrepresented entrepreneurs.</p>	Long	<p><b>Lead:</b> MMA, MRA</p> <p><b>Support:</b> MEP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although there has been initial discussion about locations for future Brooks BRT stops, these are not yet finalized. As planning efforts progress for the BRT project, the MMA should track whether there are significant changes to the streetscape or station areas.</li> <li>• The URA District III provides some tenant improvement funding for storefronts in Midtown today. The district sunsets in 2040, but the MMA should proactively look for other sources of tenant improvement funding as a supplement to current resources and as sustainable options in coming decades.</li> </ul>
<b>Action 3.5 Encourage incremental infill and redevelopment on larger sites in auto-oriented corridors</b>			
<p>The City should make the following considerations as part of regulatory changes to remove barriers for infill development that support goals of growing inward, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Encourage outpad development on surface parking lots of large format commercial uses.</b> Infill development can help to slowly utilize parking areas of large format commercial sites like those located along Reserve Street. When outpad development occurs, support orientation and design to improve street activation.</li> <li>• <b>Support Mall economic activity and incremental redevelopment.</b> Southgate Mall is a major regional destination that brings in visitors to Midtown. Allowing buildings at a variety of heights, including</li> </ul>	Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Southgate Mall, large commercial developers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outpad development can begin with temporary uses, such as food carts, pop-up retail, or seasonal uses before progressing to permanent development.</li> <li>• See Action 4.10 for programmatic parking recommendation details.</li> </ul>

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<p>single-story buildings and a broader range of businesses, can support a more walkable pedestrian environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Encourage creative parking solutions.</b> Shared parking can help to reduce the need for large surface parking lots, allowing land to be used for outpad development for small retail or services. The City can encourage and promote this option and help to support creative solutions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Midtown's older building stock and commercially zoned land provide some of Missoula's most affordable options for retail spaces, offices, and services. New development could create pressure on entrepreneurs and small businesses in the area as rents increase. The MMA and its partners should prepare for these conditions by initiating programs to support businesses.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Redeveloping larger sites in currently auto-oriented corridors can attract new community-serving businesses and services to corridors like Reserve Street. This can help to incrementally reduce disparities in access to goods and services based on location or income for Midtown residents near these corridors, contribute to reducing environmental impacts to adjacent communities, and support the build-out of more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly environments.</p>			
<b>Action 3.6 Encourage pedestrian street activation and business activities on South Avenue</b>			
<p>The MMA should champion pilot events and help to transition South Avenue to a more vibrant and pedestrian-focused business corridor, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Activate spaces in front of businesses</b> through street furniture, parklet, and outdoor dining opportunities.</li> <li>● <b>Partner with local businesses to host pop-up events</b> such as a farmers markets, street art painting, and cultural festival events.</li> <li>● <b>Market South Avenue as a festival street</b> and seek opportunities to connect with major seasonal events in Midtown. Major placemaking opportunities exist to convert South Avenue between S Garfield and S Russell Streets.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> South Avenue's existing businesses and proximity to several destinations give it potential to be activated with several activities that leverage the existing businesses and low car volume.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Street activation can create more inclusive and accessible public spaces, promote social cohesion and community building, and increase opportunities for physical activity and recreation. This action can also stimulate local business development by increasing foot traffic and attracting visitors. South Avenue is already home to some small brick-and-mortar shops with relatively affordable leases.</p>	Short	<p><b>Lead:</b> MMA</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Midtown businesses, MRA, MEP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consider low-cost options as a first step to ensure success for activating the street.</li> <li>● Coordinate with the transportation department to facilitate easy permitting process for full closure of street.</li> <li>● Coordinate with the City transportation department and MDT to allow temporary installation of street furniture and outdoor dining on public right of way.</li> </ul>

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
Action 3.7 Provide affordable entrepreneurship opportunities as part of redevelopment in the Midtown Junction area			
<p>As the MMA champions implementation of the Master Plan, it should actively seek opportunities for development that meets community needs in the Midtown Junction area. Attainable, ground floor retail space can allow entrepreneurs and local businesses to thrive and add to the vibrancy of the core area, while representing the community.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The Midtown Junction area is intended as a mixed-use area that will serve a variety of community needs in close proximity to transit and key destinations. It is expected to see the greatest intensity of new development near the intersection of Brooks, South, and Russell.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> The Midtown Junction area is envisioned as the heart of Midtown and will likely be a highly desirable area for businesses, visitors, and residents. Ensuring that entrepreneurs and local businesses are also able to benefit from new development is key for creating inclusive, vibrant spaces. Affordable storefront space for underrepresented entrepreneurs can help to bridge opportunity barriers for small businesses owned by people of color, immigrants, refugees, and other groups.</p>	Medium - Long	<p><b>Lead:</b> MMA</p> <p><b>Support:</b> MEP, Community-serving orgs, affordable housing developers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A physical business incubator space located in the Midtown Junction area could provide a rotating space for new entrepreneurs with high foot traffic for exposure.</li> <li>• Locating retail in regulated affordable housing is often difficult because of federal funding policies, so affordable commercial space would more likely be successful as a partnership with market-rate housing.</li> </ul>



## Framework Area 4: Mobility & Connectivity

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<b>Action 4.1 Provide safe and frequent pedestrian and bicycle crossings across Brooks Street</b>			
<p>The City of Missoula and its partners should provide safe and frequent pedestrian and bicycle crossings across Brooks Street that provide short crossing distances, good visibility, and reduced conflicts with motor vehicles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>As an immediate step, prioritize improving pedestrian crossings on Brooks, both to the north and south of the Brooks/South/Russell intersection.</b> While there are other parallel planning processes in Midtown, the timeline for large-scale investments like the Brooks Street BRT detailed planning study are not yet determined. To support the high need for pedestrian safety, the City should pursue near-term projects that improve safety on this corridor, which may include signals, beacons, lighting, signage, pavement markings, and other best practice strategies.</li> <li>• <b>Over the medium- to long-term, coordinate with the ongoing Brooks Street BRT detailed planning study</b> to implement safe crossings that align with plans for future transit and streetscape design along Brooks Street. Continue communication with the project team to understand timing and future street design, work toward mutual goals, and identify any funding opportunities for pedestrian improvements.</li> <li>• <b>Consider closing, consolidating, and/or reorienting intersecting side streets to Brooks Street</b> to support bicycle and pedestrian crossings. Reducing the number of crossing points along Brooks Street greatly reduces the chances of collisions with vehicles and improves overall safety for everyone.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> There is an urgent need to improve the pedestrian environment along Brooks Street and enhance safety for those who walk and bike across this key corridor. While the Brooks Street BRT detailed planning study will propose strategies to mitigate many of the existing issues along Brooks Street, it remains a major barrier to east-west movement in Midtown due to infrequent crossing opportunities for pedestrians and bicyclists that residents describe as uncomfortable. Although many intersections along Brooks Street are signalized with marked crosswalks, the existing number of lanes, traffic volumes, and skewed orientation of Brooks Street reduces crosswalk visibility and requires safety countermeasures beyond just crosswalk markings. To address connectivity challenges across Brooks Street and allow greater cyclist and pedestrian access throughout Midtown, the City must look to improve existing crossings and build new crossings at key locations.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Improvements to pedestrian crossings on Brooks Street will increase safety for all users, particularly those who walk and bike to reach their destinations or connect to transit lines. Lower-income individuals and households are more likely to depend on active transportation to travel within or outside of the area. Accessibility is also a key consideration for community members with disabilities, older adults, and families with children. These improvements can reduce the number of pedestrian accidents and encourage greater cohesion throughout Midtown. With the anticipation of the Brooks Street BRT detailed planning study, it is also important that all community members are able to safely reach station areas to benefit from investments in transit.</p>	Short - Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula (Public Works &amp; Mobility Department)</p> <p>Montana Department of Transportation (MDT)</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Missoula Urban Transportation District (Mountain Line)</p> <p>MRA, MMA, MPO, MRA Board, Mountain Line Board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City should consult national best practices and standards to implement crosswalk enhancements, such as signals and beacons, lighting, and signing and pavement markings, to make crosswalks and crosswalk users more visible to drivers.</li> <li>• Installing or improving bicycle and pedestrian crossings signals, such as pedestrian hybrid beacons, can be funded through local sources such as the Missoula MPO Transportation Alternatives (TA) program.</li> </ul>

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<b>Action 4.2 Redesign the Brooks Street/Russell Street/South Avenue intersection to improve accessibility for all users</b>			
<p>The City and its community partners should redesign the Brooks Street/Russell Street/South Avenue intersection to prioritize pedestrian and bicycle travel, network connectivity, and safety at the heart of Midtown. Steps to improve this critical area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>In the short term, prioritize increasing access and safety over large-scale design solutions.</b> The final timeline for the Brooks Street BRT detailed planning study project is unknown, but the BRT detailed planning study is scheduled to be completed by Summer 2024. Implementation will be dependent on adequate capital funding and results of the study. Although it will have implications for this intersection, the City can begin to make improvements that improve accessibility in the timeline of the Midtown Master Plan and should consider solutions that calm traffic, enhance visibility, and improve the streetscape.</li> <li>• <b>As it progresses, coordinate with the Brooks Street BRT detailed planning study to understand the long-term implications for redesigning this intersection.</b> It is critical to begin making improvements as soon as possible to create a safer and more vibrant center of Midtown. However, longer-term capital investments should consider the recommendations of the Brooks Street BRT detailed planning study in determining the appropriate phasing and configuration.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> A virtual walk audit conducted as a part of the Midtown Master Plan revealed that while community members use the existing crosswalks available at this intersection, it is also confusing, feels unsafe, prioritizes motor vehicles, and is not accessible for all. The intersection is not only difficult to navigate and hostile for active transportation users, but it also represents a large gap in the existing bicycle network. The Brooks Street/Russell Street/South Avenue intersection has potential to be a key community gateway and connector. The City should focus on improving this major junction.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> The Master Plan envisions the intersection of Brooks, South, and Russell as a critical area of transformation for Midtown, which should be accessible for all community members. The redesign of this area should ensure that residents, workers, and visitors of all ages and abilities are able to safely navigate this intersection and benefit from new development in Midtown Junction.</p>	Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula (Public Works &amp; Mobility Department)</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Mountain Line, MRA, MMA, MPO, MRA Board, Mountain Line Board, MDT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of the redesign of this intersection, the City should consult national best practices and standards to apply appropriate intersection design principles that prioritize pedestrian and bicycle movement and safety.</li> <li>• The Brooks Street BRT detailed planning study should offer the community the opportunity to articulate the specific configuration for the Brooks/South/Russell intersection that increases accessibility and supports active uses at the heart of Midtown.</li> </ul>
<b>Action 4.3 Advance the build-out of the planned greenway network throughout Midtown, including the Master Plan new connections</b>			
<p>In the near term, the City should advance the build-out of the planned greenway network recommended in the Bicycle Facilities Master Plan and the Missoula Connect by redesigning planned greenway streets to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages and abilities. Specific steps to support this include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Begin expansion of the planned network starting with the Schilling Street/McDonald Avenue connection</b> recommended in this Master Plan, which introduces an important east-west connection across Brooks Street. As a near-term step, look for opportunities to pilot new improvements such as safety lights, striping, or other features at this crossing on Brooks.</li> <li>• In the medium term, <b>advance the connection on Ernest Avenue from Grant Street through Playfair Park and other greenway connections.</b> The Ernest Avenue connection introduces an</li> </ul>	Short - Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula (Public Works &amp; Mobility Department)</p> <p><b>Support:</b> MMA, MPO, City of Missoula (Planning and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the longer term when the planned network is implemented, the City should consider making all greenway streets tier 1 snow clear streets to ensure usability year-round.</li> </ul>

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<p>important east-west connection through the Lewis and Clark neighborhood, in accordance with the Bicycle Facilities Master Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Over time, expand the currently planned greenway network</b> to include this Plan's new connections along low-volume and low-speed neighborhood streets to close gaps in the greenway system and provide a safe, secure, and convenient pedestrian and bicycle network.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rationale:</b> A reliable greenway network will connect Missoulians to key destinations across Midtown. Continuing to establish planned neighborhood greenways will connect community members to parks and trails, sidewalks, and the city's bicycle network, which will increase opportunities for biking and walking. The recommended greenway network presented in the Midtown Master Plan supplements the existing and planned neighborhood greenways to fill in gaps and create a comprehensive greenway system.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> The City of Missoula receives a high rate of resident complaints regarding high-speed, cut-through traffic on neighborhood streets. Neighborhood greenways use traffic calming to reduce vehicle speeds and cut-through traffic, making biking and walking safer and more enjoyable for all users. Greenways can also effectively improve active transportation across Midtown, including areas which have seen less investment in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.</p>		Engineering, Parks and Recreation), MDT	
Action 4.4 Apply Complete Streets planning, design, and operational principles to Midtown streets to better serve all users			
<p>Apply Complete Streets planning, design, and operational principles to Midtown's boundary and connector streets, including Reserve Street, Brooks Street, Russell Street, South Avenue, Mount Avenue/14th Street, Higgins Avenue, and Bancroft Street</p> <p>The City of Missoula is considering conducting a separate process of applying Complete Street principles to streets citywide. Through this process pedestrian, bicycle, and transit benefits should be evaluated with the trade-offs for vehicle operations. Extensive community engagement should focus on communicating the Complete Streets concepts and the associated trade-offs and evaluate how to balance the bike/ped improvements with the trade-offs.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The Midtown Master Plan aims to reduce or eliminate serious injury and fatal crashes. Complete Streets are streets that are designed to make travel safe for everyone, regardless of mode choice, and have been proven to improve safety on traffic-heavy streets with high rates of crashes and conflicts between bicyclists/pedestrians and motorists. Implementing Complete Streets in Midtown supports multimodal transportation goals outlined in Missoula's Community Climate Action Plan and Missoula Connect 2060 Long-Range Plan.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Implementing Complete Street principles across Midtown can provide safe and accessible transportation options and create pedestrian-friendly streetscapes that can improve overall health of residents and design of the built environment. In addition, Complete Streets prioritize the safety of all users, improving access to essential services and promoting physical activity. As a result, Complete Streets by design benefit population groups most vulnerable in our society, leading to more just, inclusive, and sustainable communities.</p>	Long	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula (Public Works &amp; Mobility Department)</p> <p><b>Support:</b> City of Missoula (Planning and Engineering, Utilities Operations and Maintenance), MMA, MPO</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Build out Complete Streets in alignment with Complete Streets recommended in Missoula Connect.</li> <li>● Build out Complete Streets in alignment with City of Missoula Resolution Number 8098 (Complete Streets Policy)</li> <li>● Work with the City of Missoula to create a Complete Streets Toolkit to complement the street typology plan.</li> <li>● Align with the placemaking plan in Action 6.3.</li> </ul>

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<b>Action 4.5 Prioritize improvements to the pedestrian environment around the core of Midtown</b>			
<p>In and around the Brooks Street/Russell Street/South Avenue intersection, incorporate countermeasures to lower vehicle volumes and speeds, attract pedestrian activity, and cultivate a vibrant pedestrian environment.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> With the current extent of missing sidewalks and an overall lack of sufficient pedestrian infrastructure, Midtown has been unable to attract and maintain pedestrian activity. Especially in areas near the Brooks Street/Russell Street/South Avenue intersection, which serves as the most prominent north-south-east-west connector for transportation network users, traffic calming is necessary to generate pedestrian activity and encourage mode shift.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> The core area is envisioned as the center of transformation in Midtown. Integrating improvements to the pedestrian environment is critical to supporting an active and vibrant center and ensuring that all community members benefit from new investment.</p>	Short	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula (Public Works &amp; Mobility Department)</p> <p><b>Support:</b> MMA, MRA MPO</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate with the ongoing Brooks Street BRT detailed planning study.</li> <li>Prioritize increasing low-cost countermeasures over large-scale design solutions in the short-term.</li> <li>MRA has been (and should continue to be) a partner in building out the sidewalk network in Midtown within the urban renewal area in areas with adequate rights of way or where it was possible to obtain easements. MRA should coordinate with the Public Works and Mobility Department to identify and build sidewalks to standards to achieve the vision for the public realm for Midtown.</li> </ul>
<b>Action 4.6 Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety at critical greenway network crossings</b>			
<p>The City and its partners should improve pedestrian and bicycle safety at critical greenway network crossings to improve safety and accessibility throughout Midtown. Crossings along Russell Street, 14th Street, Mount Avenue, South Avenue, and Brooks Street should be a priority as the greenway network expands as a part of Action 4.3.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Action 4.6 is necessary to support and supplement actions 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3. A successful greenway network that encourages people to walk and bike is reliant on safe points of access that connect users to popular destinations and other active transportation facilities.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Improvements to greenway network crossings can help to ensure that all community members, regardless of their mode of transportation, can safely access and navigate important active transportation corridors. Creating safer crossings in areas with high pedestrian and bicycle traffic reduces the risk of accidents and injuries, which disproportionately affect vulnerable populations like people with disabilities, seniors, and youth. Enhancing safety at these crossings promotes equitable access to greenway networks, allowing all community members to enjoy the benefits of active transportation.</p>	Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula (Public Works &amp; Mobility Department)</p> <p><b>Support:</b> MMA, MPO, City of Missoula (Planning and Engineering, Parks and Recreation)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult national best practices and standards to apply appropriate intersection design principles that prioritize pedestrian and bicycle movement and safety.</li> </ul>
<b>Action 4.7 Enhance travel and generate pedestrian and bicycle activity along and around the Bitterroot Trail</b>			
<p>The City Parks and Recreation Department along with other agencies should work to enhance travel and generate pedestrian and bicycle activity along and around the Bitterroot Trail with lighting, signage, wayfinding, placemaking, and active and passive recreation opportunities for all ages.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The Bitterroot Trail is a major recreation destination in Midtown, connecting people across the city and region. In support of this Plan's goal to help Midtown increase the number of walking and bicycling trips, enhancing the environment along the Bitterroot Trail to be and feel safer will generate more active modes of travel.</p>	Short	<p><b>Lead</b> City of Missoula (Parks &amp; Recreation)</p> <p><b>Support</b> City of Missoula (Bicycle and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align with trail system improvements in Action 5.1.</li> <li>Align with the placemaking plan in Action 6.3.</li> </ul>

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> The Bitterroot Trail is an important public resource for Midtown residents and people across Missoula who use it to travel and recreate, including households without cars who may be dependent on active transportation modes. These improvements can improve safety, integrate inclusive wayfinding, and benefit a variety of users.</p>		<p>Pedestrian Office), Neighborhood associations</p>	
Action 4.8 Expand pedestrian and bicycle access to the Central Park district			
<p>City departments should work collaboratively over the medium term to expand pedestrian and bicycle access to the Central Park area. As a multiagency facilities plan is developed as a part of Action 5.3, upgrading existing pathways and building new trail connections to Central Park should also be a priority.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> As the Central Park concept advances, connectivity to and through the district will become vital for mobility on the west side of Midtown. Missoula should prioritize bicycle and pedestrian facility investments surrounding Central Park to ensure seamless connections and access to the area.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Central Park is a critical destination for major events, social gatherings, and recreation opportunities for people who live, work, and play in Midtown. Accessing the area today can be more challenging for people without cars and people with mobility impairments. Making improvements to the pedestrian environment can help ensure that people are able to safely and easily use active transportation to access Central Park.</p>	Medium	<p><b>Lead</b> City of Missoula (Parks &amp; Recreation)</p> <p><b>Support</b> City of Missoula (Bicycle and Pedestrian Office)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in building out the trail network surrounding Central Park.</li> <li>Align with the greenway buildout plan in Actions 4.3, beginning with Ernest Avenue.</li> <li>Align with multiagency facilities plan in Action 5.3.</li> </ul>
Action 4.9 Improve and expand Mountain Line Transit service			
<p>Missoula's Urban Transportation District should seek to increase the frequency of Mountain Line transit service in Midtown as new development is anticipated to increase demand. In the short term, this should include upgrading transit stops, and ensuring first- and last-mile connectivity to transit stops. Current studies are underway where the City and Mountain Line are conducting the Brooks Street BRT detailed planning study to examine how to implement BRT which includes 15-minute headways on Brooks Street; the study is expected to be completed by Summer 2024. Over the medium and long term, Mountain Line should continue to monitor ridership to make decisions on expansion.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> As Missoula continues to grow and develop, transit service must evolve to support that growth and increased travel demands. Missoula must consider where fast-growing areas are, where transit needs to be, and determine how it should connect to the rest of the transit system.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> By providing more reliable and frequent transit service, residents can more easily access essential services, reduce transportation costs, and encourage more residents to use public transportation rather than using a car. Upgrading transit stops ensures that they are accessible by all residents, especially those with mobility impairment who might use an electric wheelchair or other devices. This ensures that there are no physical barriers that would limit them from accessing public transportation.</p>	Ongoing	<p><b>Lead:</b> Missoula Urban Transportation District (Mountain Line)</p> <p><b>Support:</b> MMA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the short term, upgrade bus stops to improve rider comfort.</li> <li>Evaluate existing ridership to inform changes to route alignments and frequency.</li> <li>Prioritize building accessible routes to and from bus stops.</li> </ul>

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<p data-bbox="90 212 625 237"><b>Action 4.10 Implement parking management practices</b></p> <p data-bbox="90 248 1121 334">In the short term, the City's Parking Commission should prioritize coordinating district management in Midtown that measures performance and demand. This should include gathering additional stakeholder input and a sounding board process with the community.</p> <p data-bbox="90 370 1131 483">Once this is established, implement control of the on-street parking system. Identify opportunities for shared use parking in the existing off-street supply and continue measurement of performance and demand throughout Midtown. This monitoring should continue throughout the life of the Master Plan and support analysis of future capacity, capital planning, and financing.</p> <p data-bbox="90 519 1142 695"><b>Rationale:</b> Time must be taken to establish a formal, routine, and best practices approach to parking regulation and management in Midtown. Parking plays a critical role in its influence on urban form, density, connectivity, and the successful use of alternative modes as a reasonable option to drive alone, thus reducing the demand for built parking supplies. Moving to consolidate district management, establishing clear and consensus-based policy and goal priorities, measurement of parking activity, and daily management of the public supply will serve as a foundational support system for the Midtown vision.</p> <p data-bbox="90 730 1142 894"><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Parking management practices can be designed to promote equity by considering the needs and accessibility requirements of all community members and the potential cost burden of paid parking on low-income communities. In addition to meeting ADA requirements, parking infrastructure and facilities should consider universal design principles. Implementation should identify equity-oriented fee structures that offer reduced rates or exemptions for specific populations such as seniors, residents with disabilities, and low-income households.</p>	Ongoing	<p data-bbox="1304 248 1478 334"><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula Parking Commission</p> <p data-bbox="1304 370 1486 545"><b>Support:</b> MMA, a newly established Midtown Parking Work Group/Advisory Committee</p>	<ul data-bbox="1520 248 1961 456" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At present all on-street parking in the Midtown study zone is unregulated. All off-street parking is in private ownership. No data is available to determine actual parking demand within the Midtown District (by area or subzone), regardless of land use type.</li> </ul>



## Framework Area 5: Parks & Open Space

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<b>Action 5.1 Make improvements to the trail system connecting to the Bitterroot Trail</b>			
<p>As part of the Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Comprehensive Plan Update, Missoula Parks and Recreation should identify opportunities for increased access to the Bitterroot Trail from adjacent neighborhoods. This would include designing and building additional trail access points on the Bitterroot Trail.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The Bitterroot Trail is an important asset for local and regional recreation and connectivity in Midtown. Currently, access to the trail is intermittent and does not have sufficient connections for cyclists and pedestrians moving to, from, and within Midtown.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Leveraging the Bitterroot Trail and the surrounding trail system to the Bitterroot Trail can provide improved access to amenities, such as parks, stores, schools, the Fairgrounds, and other essential services that can be accessible by walking or biking. This improves mobility and reduces disparities among different socioeconomic groups. Completing the trail system throughout Midtown can also encourage physical activity, leading to improved health outcomes, particularly for residents who may not have access to other forms of exercise.</p>	Short - Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula (Parks &amp; Recreation)</p> <p><b>Support:</b> City of Missoula (Bicycle and Pedestrian Office), MMA, MRA, Ped/bike advocacy groups, Neighborhood associations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signage/wayfinding could be a longer-term addition that encourages better navigation</li> </ul>
<b>Action 5.2 Create more park access in the Franklin to the Fort area</b>			
<p>The Missoula Parks and Recreation department should define standards for smaller neighborhood park facilities (1 to 3 acres), which would include standards for the location and adjacent uses to ensure the parks adequately reach nearby residents. This process will likely occur as part of the Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Comprehensive Plan Update and should include engagement with residents in the Franklin to the Fort neighborhood to further understand specific needs. The plan should include fundings sources for these types of parks. In partnership with the MMA and the Urban Renewal District III, look for opportunities where there is vacant and or available land that could be purchased for the creation of park space.</p> <p>Once the standards are set, a real estate broker could help to identify potential properties that would be suitable and available for future parks. Then the City would acquire the property, design, and build the parks.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The existing conditions evaluation and feedback from the community revealed that the Franklin to the Fort neighborhood has a deficit of park space. Community members have expressed a desire for smaller parks scattered throughout the neighborhood.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Equal access to parks is important for ensuring that all community members have a high quality of life. Parks offer many benefits, including community gathering spaces, opportunities for active recreation, and mitigation of urban heat island effects. However, not all areas of Midtown have equal access to parks and green spaces today. Analysis of park space and feedback from residents of the Franklin to the Fort area indicated that there is a deficiency of open green space in the area. Improving access to parks for</p>	Short - Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula (Parks and Recreation)</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Franklin to the Fort Neighborhood Association, MMA, MRA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These recommendations for Midtown should be integrated with the City's upcoming Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Comprehensive Plan Update, expected to start in 2023. This extensive effort can explore implications for access and impacts across Missoula's park system.</li> <li>Work through existing standards and address the lack of a standard for smaller parks, given the expressed need for these facilities.</li> <li>Consider ways to develop efficient maintenance plans, given concerns raised about upkeep costs for smaller parks.</li> <li>Look to locate parks in close proximity to the greenway system to encourage access in areas with safe</li> </ul>

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<p>Franklin to the Fort can address this issue and should be done in tandem with anti-displacement strategies to ensure that residents in the area today see these benefits.</p>			<p>transportation connections for cyclists and pedestrians.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban renewal funding from the URD III could potentially be a resource for property acquisition and park development.</li> </ul>
Action 5.3 Refine a multiagency facilities plan for the Central Park concept and engage in a planning process for Playfair Park.			
<p>Given the various ownership of the properties between Russell Street, South Avenue, Bancroft Street, and Pattee Creek Drive, the Missoula Parks and Recreation Department should convene a partnership organization to evolve the Central Park concept. This area includes key destinations in Midtown, including Playfair Park, the Missoula County Fairgrounds, and Russell Elementary and Sentinel High School. It provides opportunities for improved active transportation connections, recreation, tourism industry development, and establishing an identity for Midtown.</p> <p>The process of developing a facilities plan should include working with the Séliš-Qłispé Culture Committee to develop an interpretive signage theme for this combined open space area and conversations around the "Central Park" name. This will offer an opportunity to recognize the cultural heritage that has existed in the area as well as envision the future role of the site within the evolution of Midtown. The multiagency and stakeholder organization should develop a facilities plan that includes a collective vision and goals that align with the Midtown Master Plan. It should address approaches to elements specific to this open space area, including transportation, access, shared parking, safety and security, amenities, site improvements, and other program elements. The group should identify opportunities to engage with the community to seek feedback specific to the programming of this area and refine the vision.</p> <p>Once the plan is developed, the City and County will work on implementation of the plan and identify funding sources. The City should also align the vision for this area with the development of the Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Comprehensive Plan Update.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The Central Park concept has continued to evolve beyond the Midtown Master Plan process. Given that it involves agencies at the City and County level and presents opportunities for public investment, it should have a separate, more detailed vision and plan. Important discussions about future placemaking and design of this area in coordination with the Séliš-Qłispé Culture Committee will also extend beyond the timing of the Midtown Master Plan. Further work and partnership will help to further refine the future of this area.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> This action intends to make Central Park an accessible area for people across Midtown to gather and recreate. Creating a multiagency facility plan should include participation with the Séliš-Qłispé Culture Committee as well as other community-based organizations to help steer the direction of this central resource for the area to be an inclusive gathering place.</p>	Short - Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula (Parks and Recreation)</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Missoula County Fairgrounds, Séliš-Qłispé Culture Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Short-term considerations:</b></li> <li>As an initial step in developing a multiagency facilities plan, the City should engage in a planning process for Playfair Park to the southwest of the Fairgrounds area. This has potential to be a key connection through the Central Park area, which serves a variety of functions for the community.</li> <li>Connect this area to the greenway system for a complete transportation system with safe crossings to and from Central Park.</li> <li><b>Medium-term considerations:</b></li> <li>Consider the potential of the NW corner of the property as an opportunity to contribute to Midtown Junction and the future solution to this intersection through programming, new buildings, etc.</li> <li>Pay special attention to the frontage along South Avenue and look for opportunities for interfacing with the public realm (e.g., existing fencing restricts access).</li> </ul>

## Framework Area 6: Character Areas & Design

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<b>Action 6.1 Integrate Indigenous history and culture in new projects</b>			
<p>A crucial step in this action is to continue to foster a relationship between the City and the Séliš-Qłispé Culture Committee through coordination that respects tribal processes and cultural significance. This may include discussion prior to identification of new projects to figure out what the Culture Committee would like to see happen in Midtown and for the City to facilitate that implementation when appropriate.</p> <p>Implementation may take the form of looking for opportunities to express indigenous history and culture through design or interpretive elements, art, storytelling, etc. This may also look different for the range of new projects in Midtown and will ideally transform existing systems to incorporate Tribal involvement in a meaningful way.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The Midtown Master Plan process included targeted outreach to the Séliš-Qłispé Culture Committee, specifically for input on tribal history and significance for the January workshop event. The project team and community identified the importance of continued partnership and understanding how to meaningfully address indigenous history and future impact in Midtown.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> A key benefit of integrating indigenous history and culture in new projects around Midtown is the honoring and preservation of the Séliš-Qłispé culture for generations to come. In addition, it can further promote inclusivity and diversity, enhance community engagement, provide economic opportunities, reconcile past injustices, and overall strengthen relationships between the Séliš-Qłispé and the community of Midtown.</p>	Medium - Long	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Séliš-Qłispé Culture Committee MMA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Processes and timelines for working with Indigenous communities will look different and require different priorities than typical planning or development processes. Therefore, the execution of this action item may take a different form than other actions in the Master Plan.</li> <li>Look to develop a relationship that evolves the Midtown vision in a meaningful way and addresses the needs of the Séliš-Qłispé Culture Committee.</li> <li>Elevate the importance of setting aside adequate funding for identified projects.</li> <li>Incorporate efforts from Action 6.3</li> </ul>
<b>Action 6.2 Encourage active ground floor uses around future BRT stops and other key nodes</b>			
<p>The City should consider short and long-term potential for activation of ground floor uses. In the short term, this could include temporary installations (e.g., pop-ups, food carts, etc.) to activate key nodes while waiting for development to occur. Also in the short term, the Our Missoula Code Reform project should address code updates that encourage active ground floors, while also allowing for flexibility that encourages development. A balance of strategic but scaled requirements for ground floor uses in transformative areas can help to ensure active street environments without impeding feasibility for vertical mixed-use projects.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The City and MMA should continue to be actively engaged in the BRT design process to represent the Midtown vision described in the Master Plan. This includes assistance with identifying key properties near BRT station areas and other key nodes. Active ground floors should provide access to uses with locations relative to active transportation routes, including the greenway system and crossing locations along Brooks.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Active ground floor environments contribute to safer and overall improved experiences along streets and in the public realm. These improvements promote a sense of community, create</p>	<p>Short (code updates/BRT planning)/</p> <p>Medium/Long (actual development)</p>	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula, Our Missoula Code Reform Project Team</p> <p><b>Support:</b> MMA, MRA, Brooks Street Project Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage active ground floor uses without restricting redevelopment and offer flexibility.</li> <li>Consider other form-based code elements that would contribute to active ground floors.</li> </ul>

Project Description & Rationale	Phasing	Roles	Considerations (Next Steps, Funding, etc.)
<p>opportunities for social interaction, and provide essential goods and services in easily accessible locations. For residents with limited access to transportation, providing these amenities in easily accessible locations can help to reduce disparities in access to resources and improve quality of life.</p>			
<b>Action 6.3 Design a placemaking theme for Midtown</b>			
<p>The City should develop a streetscape plan and wayfinding standards for Midtown to advance the vision in the Master Plan. This includes incorporating the public realm and the vision for open spaces that are part of concurrent planning efforts, such as the Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Comprehensive Plan Update. The plan should include a gateway design, updated signage code, a public art plan, and identifying funding for the improvements. Preserving structures preserve the story of that place. Historic resources can help support the creation of a placemaking identity in Midtown. The process should seek additional input from the Midtown community about what they would like to see in this plan and what they would like the design elements to look like.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> A key component of bringing the vision for Midtown to life is in cohesive design elements that identify Midtown's character. A placemaking theme can be achieved through both temporary (in the short term) and permanent installations.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> Placemaking is an important way to express the identity, history, and character of the community. A newly designed theme for Midtown should intentionally incorporate the experiences of Indigenous people, people of color, immigrants, refugees, and other groups within the community who may not be heard. Partnership with the Séliš-Qłispé Culture Committee, culturally specific service providers, and community-based organizations should be a critical part of developing a theme to represent all of Midtown.</p>	Short -Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> City of Missoula</p> <p><b>Support:</b> City of Missoula (Parks and Recreation), MMA, Séliš-Qłispé Culture Committee, community-based organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align with Action 6.2 to bring temporary elements and energy around placemaking elements.</li> <li>Align with Action 5.5. for placemaking components specific to the Festival Street.</li> <li>Learn from Downtown efforts to activate spaces and develop a placemaking theme.</li> <li>Strive for authentic representation of existing Midtown culture that reflects community feedback.</li> </ul>
<b>Action 6.4 Implement activation of the Festival Street concept on South Avenue</b>			
<p>To keep the momentum of the vision for Midtown going, the City should look for ways to provide short-term activation of the Festival Street concept. This could include temporary closures of South Avenue for events sponsored by MMA or other local groups, particularly on the west side of Brooks. Initially, this could also be done through a pilot project along one block or section of South Avenue through a short-term installation. Partnerships with organizations like Better Block could help to design and launch these ideas.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> A core component of the Master Plan framework is transformation of the area defined as Midtown Junction. Part of this transformation includes development of a Festival Street along South Avenue that bolsters the placemaking opportunities in this core area.</p> <p><b>Equity Benefits:</b> The Festival Street concept is intended as a way to celebrate the culture and people of Midtown through street activation programs and events. It is an opportunity to integrate culturally specific celebrations of the diverse community Midtown. Working with culturally specific organizations and local businesses should be an important part of implementing this action.</p>	Short - Medium	<p><b>Lead:</b> MMA</p> <p><b>Support:</b> City of Missoula, Community organizations, Midtown businesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align with the placemaking plan in Action 6.3.</li> <li>Implementation will come in phases, with temporary installations leading the way for permanent solutions. Keeping the momentum for this concept is key.</li> </ul>

## Glossary of Terms

**Area Median Income (AMI)** - The U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) annually produces a median family income to determine affordability thresholds for a given metro area. Affordable housing projects' income limits, rent limits, loans, and other characteristics are based on this calculation.

**Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)** - High-capacity, frequent bus transit that delivers fast and efficient service that may include dedicated lanes, busways, traffic signal priority, and station areas.

**Complete Streets** - Streets designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all users, including drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, or public transportation riders of all ages and abilities.

**Green Infrastructure** - Infrastructure that filters and absorbs stormwater where it falls, including a network of different features which can include open park space, street trees, rain gardens, green roofs, and other elements.

**Greenway** - Streets which intentionally prioritize bicycle and pedestrian safety that typically include traffic calming features and connections to open space.

**Missing Middle Housing** - Missing middle housing refers to medium-density housing like duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, courtyard style apartments, cottage clusters, or accessory dwelling units. These types of housing developments were largely outlawed in the post-war period in favor of single-family housing units. Recent efforts call for relegalizing missing middle housing to increase density and affordability in highly walkable, opportunistic neighborhoods.

**Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)** - Intentional development located within walking distance of frequent transit networks (like BRT lines). Typically intended to create compact, mixed-use communities near transit where people enjoy easy access to jobs and services.

**Urban Renewal District** - An area deemed blighted by the City Council where economic growth has been impaired and there is a lack of public and private investment. These areas have defined boundaries included in an Urban Renewal District plan adopted by Council.