

5 DOWNTOWN

This element describes the development strategy for the City's Downtown, and provides policy framework for streetscape design, waterfront access, historical resources, and off-street parking.

Downtown Pittsburg, as identified in the General Plan, extends from the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad tracks in the south to the Sacramento River Delta waterfront in the north. The eastern and western boundaries of Downtown, generally defined by Harbor and Beacon streets, are less distinctive. Downtown stretches about ¾-mile in either direction from Railroad Avenue, encompassing an area of approximately 350 acres. Streets, utilities, railroads, waterways, and other rights-of-way account for 104 acres, or about 30 percent of the total land area.



The City's Downtown Commercial Core has historically been along Railroad Avenue (Railroad Avenue near East Third Street pictured here).

5.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Originally a way-station during the Gold Rush, Pittsburg supported mining and manufacturing industries between the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The City's Downtown developed at the juncture of the Suisun Bay waterfront and rail tracks (now Railroad Avenue) that were used to transfer coal from Black Diamond Mines to the Bay for shipping. Connection to the water continued to be an important aspect of Downtown following the decline in mining, when fishing emerged as the City's industry and canneries flourished in the area. Downtown also provided services to soldiers during World War II, when the City developed a war-based economy, with as many as 45,000 soldiers stationed at Camp Stoneman. Downtown Pittsburg also served as the major retail node in Contra Costa County in the 1940's and early 1950's.

The departure of soldiers following the Korean War marked the beginning of Downtown's decline. Construction of State Route 4 reduced accessibility from the eastern parts of the City to Downtown, and new regional and neighborhood shopping centers emerged throughout East County. The effort for Downtown revitalization continues to this day, although some sites remain vacant or unoccupied.

A DOWNTOWN IN TRANSITION

Historic preservation, redevelopment efforts, and construction of new residential units are improving the City's Downtown, though vacant buildings and underutilized sites still remain. Downtown's "transition" started with the replacement of the old cannery buildings with small-craft marinas and several new housing projects. Housing redevelopment has since included Marina Heights Apartments in the 1970s, Bay Harbor Park (townhomes) and Marina Park (single-family and townhomes) in the 1980s, and Village at New York Landing (single-family) in the 1990s. Recent revitalization efforts include facade improvements to many buildings in New York Landing Historical District (see Section 5.3), and street improvements to Herb White Way. The completion of Marina Walk residential subdivision, a pedestrian-oriented single-family development adjacent to the commercial core, will increase Downtown's population and support for a thriving commercial center.

As of 2000, current and proposed activities include the construction of a linear park along a former portion of the Sacramento Northern Railroad tracks adjacent to Eighth Street, and renovation of historic buildings in the core commercial area. Habitat for Humanity, a non-profit housing organization, is working to provide infill housing in Downtown through the development of several affordable projects. Some live-work loft conversions have also taken place, and façade improvements to buildings such as the old California Theater have also been completed.

ASSETS AND CHALLENGES

Pittsburg lays claim to having one of the oldest Downtowns in Contra Costa County, and one of the few Downtowns with shoreline access. Downtown Pittsburg has many vital physical assets, including:

- Waterfront location, adjacent to Brown’s Island Regional Shoreline Preserve;
- Mix of commercial, office, and residential uses;
- Historical character, many buildings with ornate architectural features;
- Pedestrian-scale in building design, wide sidewalks, and small plazas; and
- Traditional urban street pattern, with parking tucked behind the buildings.

Thus, from a physical vantage, Downtown already possesses a structure that could help realize a vital, mixed-use, and walkable center. In addition, Downtown’s waterfront location can potentially provide a unique ambiance. However, major challenges remain:

- Several sites in Downtown are vacant, and many buildings are unoccupied and in need of exterior modifications;
- A critical mass of activity (diverse retail, service and entertainment uses within a small core area) is needed to draw new businesses and residents seeking an urban lifestyle;
- There are few physical and visual connections to the water, with residential and industrial uses dominating shoreline areas ideal for commercial uses and public access; and



The south side of East Fourth Street demonstrates the City’s unique historical character.

- Housing, population, and employment estimates are low for a district intended to serve as the City’s historic and symbolic core.

Downtown revitalization is an issue of citywide importance. A vital Downtown can provide identity and a sense of place for all of Pittsburgh.

5.2 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

This element envisions Downtown as a mixed-use center, with specialty retail, restaurants, service uses, and professional offices integrated with residential uses. Downtown Pittsburgh should serve as both a *visitor destination* and a *neighborhood commercial center*. Economic development that attracts heavy pedestrian activity—such as gift stores, clothing boutiques, restaurants and cafes, galleries, professional offices, personal services, bookstores and coffee shops—is encouraged.

Downtown’s unique characteristics—historic buildings, marina, and open space improvements—can make it a destination point, but it must be sustained by a critical mass of vital activity. Its waterfront location and marine recreation opportunities can draw visitors from the region, while Downtown’s commercial storefronts can provide them with supplies, eating establishments, and activities for a day away from home. A mixed-use neighborhood center should provide businesses, institutions, and services meeting the daily needs of nearby residents, including convenience-oriented retail establishments (for example, grocery and drug stores) and neighborhood service uses (for example, video stores, dry cleaners, and professional services).

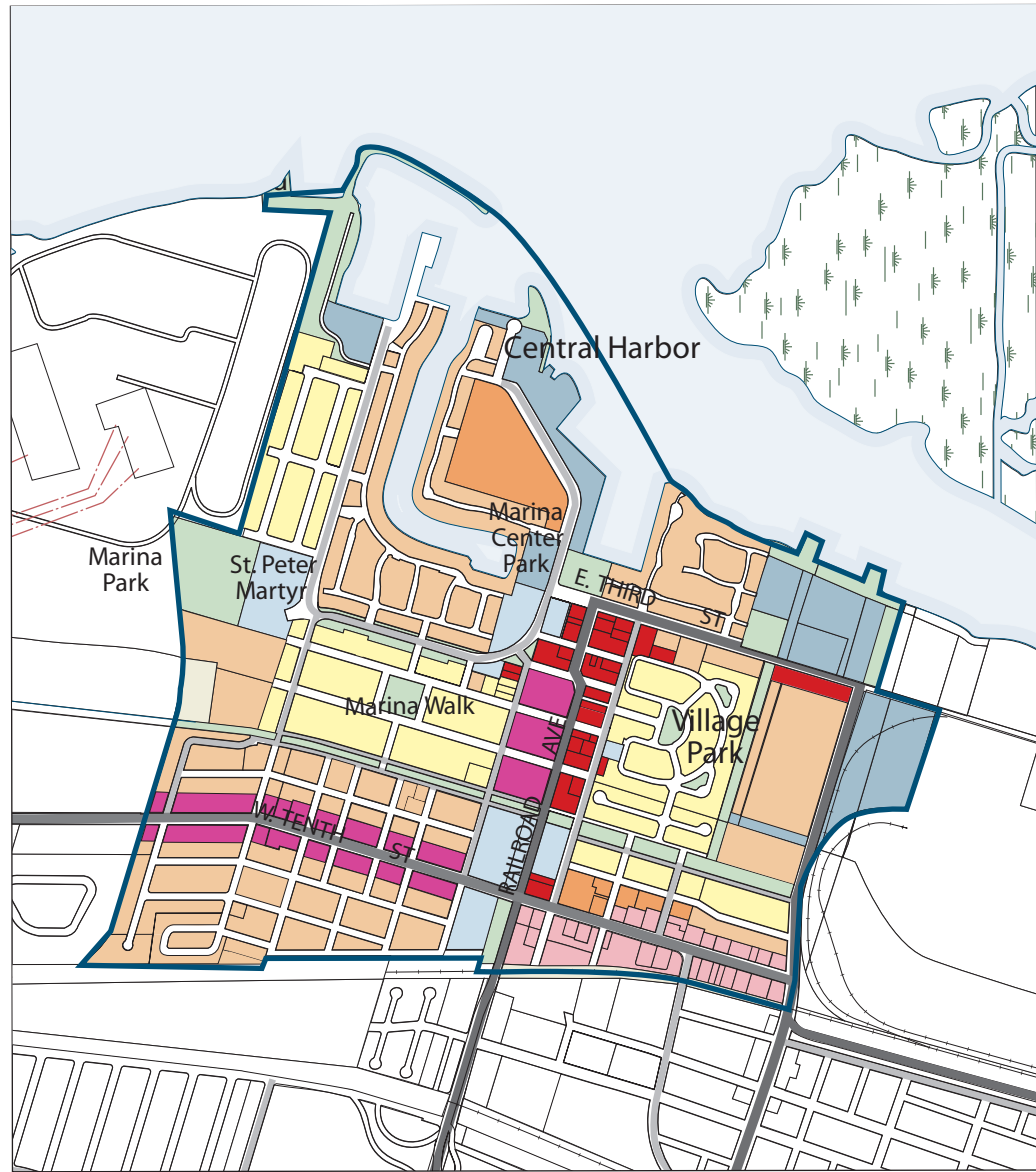
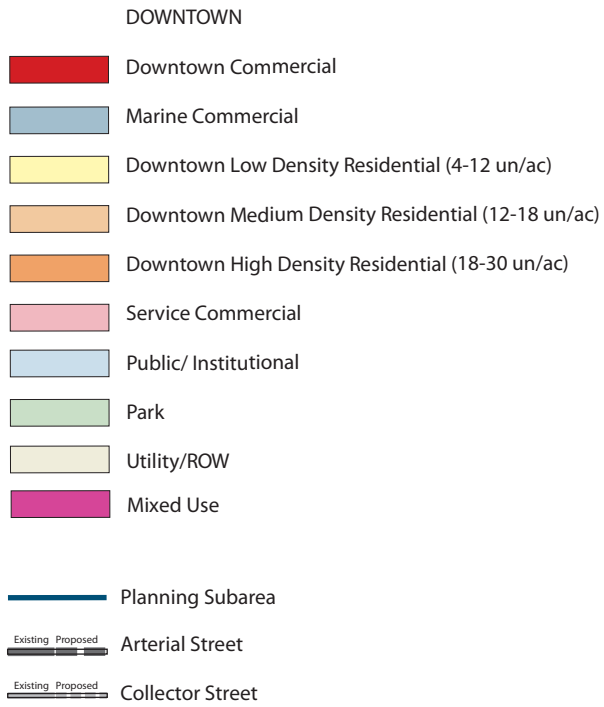
DOWNTOWN SUB-AREAS

The General Plan identifies five planning sub-areas within the Downtown. Each sub-area has its own set of land use strategies and development policies.

- *Commercial Core*. Bound by Third Street, Cumberland Street, Tenth Street, and Black Diamond Street, this area is the historical activity center of the City. The Commercial Core area is intended to be a walkable, mixed-use district. Therefore, drive-thru restaurants, auto repair shops, and other car-oriented uses would not be appropriate. Additionally, heavy industrial uses would detract from the friendly, pedestrian-focused identity preferred for the Downtown.

- *East Tenth Street Corridor.* Extending along East Tenth Street from Railroad Avenue to Harbor Street, north to Eighth Street, this area serves as the Downtown’s service commercial node. Service, repair, and large retail (for example, furniture stores or contractors’ supplies) commercial activities are anticipated.
- *Marine Commercial Center.* Comprised of several large parcels at the terminus of Harbor Street, this area is designated for a marine/waterfront commercial village. The proposed village may feature marine-oriented repair and sales, restaurants, professional offices, industrial incubators (such as research and development), and specialty retail activities.
- *Marina/Waterfront Neighborhoods.* A majority of the residential neighborhoods north of Eighth Street have been redeveloped within the last several years, and provide a vibrant population to support retail activity within Downtown.
- *West Tenth Street Neighborhoods.* The aging residential neighborhoods south of West Eighth Street (between Railroad Avenue and Beacon Street) are proposed for redevelopment and rehabilitation to provide a more dense housing stock within the walkable Downtown area.

Figure 5-1 illustrates the planning sub-areas and land use distribution envisioned in this Plan. The uses described in Table 5-1 are representational of the types of uses to be allowed by the Zoning Ordinance; the use categories are based on North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) Listings, published in 1998. Suggested development standards—which include residential densities, Floor Area Ratios (FARs), maximum building heights, and setback requirements—for sub-areas within Downtown Pittsburg are shown in Table 5-2.



Source: Dyett & Bhatia

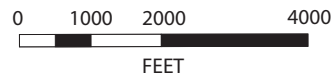
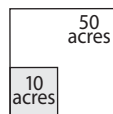


Figure 5-1
Downtown Sub-areas
& Land uses

DOWNTOWN BUILDOUT

Buildout of General Plan land use designations would result in a total of 2,640 housing units in the Downtown area. The estimated Downtown population at General Plan buildout is 7,776, an increase of more than 45% over its population in the year 2000. Redevelopment, reuse, and intensification of the southwestern portion of Downtown will contribute to the increased population base within Downtown neighborhoods. Mixed-use residential development adjacent to commercial and office uses in the core will contribute additional housing units and population. The buildout of commercial uses, particularly the development of a Marine Commercial center, will result in approximately 8,488 jobs within the Downtown core. Table 5-3 shows population and employment estimates for the Downtown.

Table 5-1

Downtown at General Plan Buildout, City of Pittsburg (excluding 'Mixed Use' designated areas)

	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Assumed Density (du/ac)</i>	<i>Dwelling Units @ Buildout</i>	<i>Assumed Housing Size</i>	<i>Population @ Build- dout</i>	<i>Assumed Intensity (FAR)</i>	<i>Building Area @ Buildout*</i>	<i>Assumed Empl (per acre)</i>	<i>Empl @ Buildout</i>
<i>Residential</i>									
Downtown Low Density	53	8	424	3.1	1,314	-	-	-	-
Downtown Medium Density	129	16	2,064	3.1	6,395	-	-	-	-
Downtown High Density	14	24	336	3.1	1,042	-	-	-	-
<i>Commercial</i>									
Downtown Commercial	11.4	6	68	3.1	201	0.5	198,634	160	1,824
Marine Commercial	33	-	-	-	-	0.5	574,992	80	2,640
Service Commercial	11	-	-	-	-	0.3	114,998	160	1,760
<i>Parks, Public, and Utility</i>									
	53	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	304.4		2,892		8,952		888,624		6,224

*Building area is based off of net acreage which is 20% less than the gross acreage presented in the table above.

ENTERPRISE ZONE OPPORTUNITIES

Identified as both an Economic Opportunity area within this General Plan and an Enterprise Zone by the State of California, the Downtown core has tremendous opportunity for redevelopment. The State's Enterprise Zone Program targets "economically distressed areas," providing incentives to encourage business investment and promote the creation of new jobs through State tax credits. Local incentives include fast-track permitting, fee waivers or reductions, on-the-job training, and business start-up loans.

The 1,400-acre Enterprise Zone in Pittsburg not only includes the Downtown core and the new Marine Commercial center, but also includes East Tenth Street and the commercial and industrial areas between State Route 4 and East Leland Road. (For further discussion and mapping of Pittsburg's Enterprise Zone, see Chapter 6: Economic Development.) The inclusion of the Downtown commercial core and Marine Commercial center within this Enterprise Zone will provide further impetus for businesses and developers to rehabilitate structures within the City's historic center. However, it must be noted that the redesignation of any commercial or industrial properties to residential uses within the Enterprise Zone would fail to take advantage of program incentives.

GOALS: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- 5-G-1 Promote Downtown as the City's symbolic center, with a mix of residential and commercial uses in a walkable, pedestrian-oriented district.*
- 5-G-2 Promote the development and intensification of the Downtown commercial core as both a visitor destination and a neighborhood retail center. Encourage a critical mass of visitor-oriented retail businesses, such as gift shops and galleries, as well as neighborhood retail and personal services.*
- 5-G-3 Encourage a variety of land uses and mixed-use developments at appropriate locations within the Downtown.*
- 5-G-4 Establish a Downtown population goal of at least 7,000 to provide vitality and support a vibrant neighborhood commercial center.*

POLICIES: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

5-P-1 Emphasize Downtown as Pittsburg's historic center, providing an identity and a sense of place for the entire city by establishing a focused revitalization strategy that integrates the initiatives of the Economic Development Strategy.

A revitalization strategy for Downtown should incorporate the relevant initiatives proposed by the Economic Development Strategy, including:

- Monitoring of land use and development trends in Downtown to ensure a sufficient supply of land of appropriate designation and development intensity;
- Establishment of a retail and consumer services strategy to attract retail and service sector business to key locations in Downtown;
- Establishment of criteria for land assembly in Downtown for the purposes of redevelopment and revitalization;
- Consideration of the feasibility of a convention or performing arts center, amphitheater, or other public cultural amenity in or linked to the Downtown;
- Facilitation of additional attractions and events that bring both residents and visitors to the Downtown; and
- Preservation and enhancement of historic structures contributing to the unique character of the Downtown.

5-P-2 Ensure coordination between the Pittsburg Redevelopment Agency, Planning and Building, Engineering, and Economic Development Departments in order to achieve the goals and policies envisioned for Downtown.



The City's Railroad Avenue/Downtown Commercial Core near the intersection with Fifth Street, pictured here, provides retail opportunities for City residents.

The following policies apply to the five Downtown sub-areas, as designated:

Commercial Core

5-P-3 Concentrate Downtown Commercial activity—which includes specialty retail, professional offices, personal services, entertainment and other uses along the Railroad Avenue corridor.

The concentration of retail and service commercial uses within the Downtown, including visitor-serving and neighborhood commercial establishments, along Railroad Avenue would provide an identifiable corridor for redevelopment investment. The inclusion of the Commercial Core as an Economic Opportunity Area (see Chapter 6: Economic Development) further strengthens its identity as an up-and-coming investment area.

5-P-4 Encourage mixed-use developments within the Commercial Core by providing incentives for residential units, such as live-work spaces or housing on upper stories.

The development of housing adjacent to commercial and office uses will increase the level of round-the-clock activity within the Downtown core. The General Plan provides incentives for residential development by reserving at least half of the floor area ratio (FAR) in the Commercial Core for residential uses.

5-P-5 Pursue the development and promotion of cultural activities and facilities, such as museums, meeting halls, community theatres, public art galleries and shows, located within the Commercial Core.

Increased cultural activities, such as City festivals, will contribute to a vibrant Downtown that serves as a multi-purpose destination point for residents and visitors.

- 5-P-6 Encourage property-owners in the Commercial Core to utilize ground-level storefronts for retail and pedestrian-oriented commercial activities (for example, restaurants, boutiques, and personal services).*

East Tenth Street Corridor

- 5-P-7 Limit commercial uses along the southern side of East Tenth Street to Service Commercial businesses – including repair and maintenance, retail sales, special trade contracting and other uses.*

East Tenth Street has historically been developed with service commercial uses. With its location backing onto the BNSF Railway corridor, East Tenth Street remains an effective place for the continuance of such uses.

- 5-P-8 Permit mixed-use projects with service commercial uses on street frontage along the northern side of East Tenth, to provide a transition to Downtown residential areas.*

Mixed-use development—service commercial, office and residential—provides a transition area between the heavy service uses to the south and residential neighborhoods to the north.

- 5-P-9 Pursue the development of a community/public use in the large vacant lot facing East Tenth, adjacent to the brick Adventist Church.*
- 5-P-10 Discourage the establishment of religious centers within 1,000 feet of one another.*
- 5-P-11 Improve streetscaping along East Tenth Street with a landscaped median, wide sidewalks, pedestrian amenities (for example, benches and trash/recycling receptacles), and street trees.*



The Johns Manville property located on East Third Street is the side of a historically heavy industrial use in the Marine Commercial Center subarea of the Downtown.

Marine Commercial Center

5-P-12 Undertake active efforts, including land acquisition and assembly, to develop a waterfront activity center at the terminus of Harbor Street, featuring a cluster of Marine Commercial uses, including specialty retail, services, restaurants, marine repair and docking facilities, hotels and other uses.

5-P-13 Develop a detailed design plan for the City's new Marine Commercial center, featuring:

- Mixed-use village atmosphere;*
- Walkable layout, with pedestrian amenities;*
- Public access to the shoreline and views of Browns Island; and*
- Focus on visitor attractions, as well as traditional marine services.*

The planned development of the City's new Marine Commercial center will ensure the cohesive design of a pedestrian-oriented commercial village. Additionally, it will allow the City to work with property-owners in the joint-planning of public open space and waterfront access areas.

5-P-14 Acquire land at the terminus of Harbor Street for the development of a public park and promenade, providing access to the waterfront and open space at the center of the new Marine Commercial center.

5-P-15 Encourage redevelopment of the Johns Manville property (designated Marine Commercial). Allow existing Industrial uses to operate until redevelopment occurs (including rebuild, if damaged or destroyed).

The Johns Manville site is currently used and valued as a heavy industrial activity directly adjacent to Downtown. Future redevelopment activities within Downtown and construction of a Marine Commercial Center directly across Third Street may create land use conflicts.

Marina/Waterfront Neighborhoods

- 5-P-16 Support the continued maintenance of redeveloped neighborhoods within Downtown.*

Recently redeveloped neighborhoods in the Downtown are a sign of reinvestment within the core area. These neighborhoods must be maintained to ensure continued redevelopment in surrounding areas.

- 5-P-17 Pursue the dedication of public open space during the redevelopment of infill sites within the Downtown, particularly adjacent to the waterfront area.*

The provision of numerous open space areas within the Downtown would promote it as a destination for day-trips, featuring such activities as shopping and picnicking along the waterfront.

West Tenth Street Neighborhoods

- 5-P-18 Encourage public acquisition and/or private assembly of neighborhood blocks surrounding West Tenth Street for redevelopment to higher density housing, including rebuilding of the existing affordable housing stock.*

Although the older residential areas south of Eighth Street provide denser housing within the historic grid street pattern, the condition of housing and infrastructure in these neighborhoods is generally poor. The provision of high-density housing would both redevelop the aging neighborhood and offer expanded housing opportunities.

- 5-P-19 Encourage high-density residential development in Downtown neighborhoods, according to the density standards in Table 5-1. Ensure that the development program for the West Tenth Street Neighborhoods provides for at least 755 housing units, which is the minimum total of units that can be built under densities designated by this General Plan.*

Recently constructed residential neighborhoods in the Downtown area have



Like other Marina/Waterfront Neighborhoods, the Marina Park subdivision in Downtown provides residents with private waterfront views.

lower densities and introverted street networks. Higher-density housing within the Downtown will contribute to a larger population base and active Downtown streetscape.

- 5-P-20 Encourage the development of small-lot single family (SLSF) parcels in Medium Density areas of the West Tenth Street Neighborhoods and Downtown Core. Provide flexible SLSF development standards in the City's Zoning Ordinance.*

Construction of SLSF units provides single-family detached homes at affordable housing costs. Reduction of land costs in zero lot-line and small-lot development can provide reasonably-priced housing units with enough rooms for large families.

- 5-P-21 Pursue acquisition and development of a new park site, as designated in Figure 5-1. Provide a variety of recreational facilities to serve residents of surrounding neighborhoods.*

- 5-P-22 During development review, ensure that transitional buffer areas—such as landscaped berms, parking lots, and storage areas—are placed between new residential units and the BNSF railroad tracks along the southern edge of the West Tenth Street Neighborhoods.*

- 5-P-23 Limit multi-family development in the West Tenth Street neighborhoods to sites more than two acres, and/or sites which encompass all High Density designated land in a given City block. Require all new multi-family residential projects to have a minimum of 20 units, unless the High Density designated land in a given City block is not adequate in size to support that number of units, or unless the City determines that less units, sized to accommodate large family households, better serves the public interest. In such cases, there shall be no less than 16 units within a project.*

For new multi-family residential projects intended to replace existing units, the developer should acquire enough adjacent parcels to fulfill the minimum 30-unit requirement, at a density that is appropriate for the specific location and land use designation.

5-P-24 Improve streetscaping along West Tenth Street with a landscaped median, wide sidewalks, pedestrian amenities (for example, benches and trash/recycling receptacles), and street trees.

5.3 DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Downtown occupies a prominent waterfront location in the City, with good access from the surrounding neighborhoods and State Route 4. It has a well-defined street grid with a clear circulation pattern. Buildings front both Railroad Avenue and East Tenth Street, and a diversity of architectural styles are represented. Downtown is also undergoing transition and change. Façade renovations have been completed on many of the historic buildings, and residential development is being constructed.

Downtown's urban design quality is affected by several components, including landmarks and views, streetscape, building massing and design, linkages and barriers, and historical resources. The following sections discuss each component as it relates to Downtown's physical character.

LANDMARKS AND VIEWS

Possibly the most noticeable landmark signaling one's arrival in Pittsburg is neither within Downtown nor City proper, but in the unincorporated area west of Downtown. The power plant built by PG&E in the mid-1950's (now owned by Mirant), with its 450-foot tall smokestacks, is located on the bank of the Suisun Bay near Riverview Park. From State Route 4, the northerly view of the City is dominated by the structure as it rises above the horizon. The power plant is a highly visible backdrop to Downtown, and can be seen from many locations throughout the City.

Railroad Avenue offers views on either end of the street, though a slight offset at Fifth Street interrupts the visual continuity. Visible from below the curve are the open hills to the south. An art deco building and Steel Worker statue to the north of the bend give it the appearance of being the northern terminus. North of the offset, however, another statue (Fisherman) lies at the real terminus of Railroad Avenue at

Third Street. The waterfront lies just beyond the end of Railroad Avenue, and the public plaza where the Fisherman statue stands invites the possibility of redesign and expansion to allow direct access to the shoreline.

STREETSCAPE

Although Downtown Pittsburg was developed in a traditional grid street network, several recent residential developments have replaced the grid with introverted, curvilinear neighborhood systems. Street trees and landscaping are generally sparse in Downtown, except on certain blocks of Railroad Avenue and in Bay Harbor Park, located north of Third Street. Buildings in the Commercial Core vary between one and two stories in height. Older housing units consist of one-story bungalows and some multi-family dwellings, while more recent developments are generally two-story single-family structures and townhouses.

A number of small plazas are scattered throughout the commercial core. They are similar in design, and contain bronze statues or sculptures representing various aspects of the City's history. These plazas are located at:

- Heritage Plaza;
- The terminus of Railroad Avenue at Third Street;
- The northeastern corner of the Railroad Avenue/Fifth Street bend; and
- The intersection of Marina Boulevard and Black Diamond Street (two plazas diagonally facing each other).

Central Harbor Park and a landscaped pathway connecting Railroad Avenue to a parking lot located between Third and Fourth streets are of the same design as the plazas. Together, these open spaces afford a greater sense of identity and character to Downtown.

BUILDING DESIGN

The most distinctive buildings in Downtown are those that make up the New York Landing Historical District, located in the northern end of the Commercial Core (see Figure 5-2: New York Landing Historical District). This district was established by the City to ensure the preservation of structures of historical value. Structures within the district generally appear as simple, rectilinear buildings set along the streetfront. Architectural details include cornices, belt courses, and decorative window heads. Large display windows are common to buildings in this area. Structures in newer, adjacent commercial areas are simpler in design, with less attention paid to ornamental details. Residential and commercial buildings are generally in better condition in the northern portion of Downtown. The redevelopment of businesses at the southern end of the Commercial Core should extend the sense of the historical core area by utilizing similar architectural detailing and display as found in the northern end.

LINKAGES AND BARRIERS

Two major design issues—linkages and barriers within Downtown—must be addressed to create a more accessible Downtown for both visitors and residents:

- *Connection to the Waterfront.* The linkage between Downtown and the waterfront could be improved, both visually and physically. The two waterfront parks—Riverview and Central Harbor—are hidden from view and have limited pedestrian access from Railroad Avenue. However, signage improvements, linear park linkages, and expanded public access points can create a more unified waterfront identity.
- *Barriers within Downtown.* The BNSF railroad tracks represent both a visual and physical barrier to Downtown. Railroad Avenue crosses the BNSF tracks in a long overpass that isolates Downtown from southern portions of the City. The significance of this barrier has resulted in the tracks being identified as the southern edge of Downtown. However, gateway improvements and “way-finding” signage leading to Downtown can significantly improve the perception of Downtown as a separate, unique district.

TRANSITIONS AND BUFFERING

Buffering and transition is an important issue, especially at the eastern end of Downtown, where residential uses come into contact with heavy industrial uses. Streetscape improvements and buffering areas are needed to soften abrupt changes from one use to another. Buffering areas that allow transitioning between conflicting uses may include landscaped berms, parking lots and storage areas, and greenway corridors.

HISTORICAL RESOURCES

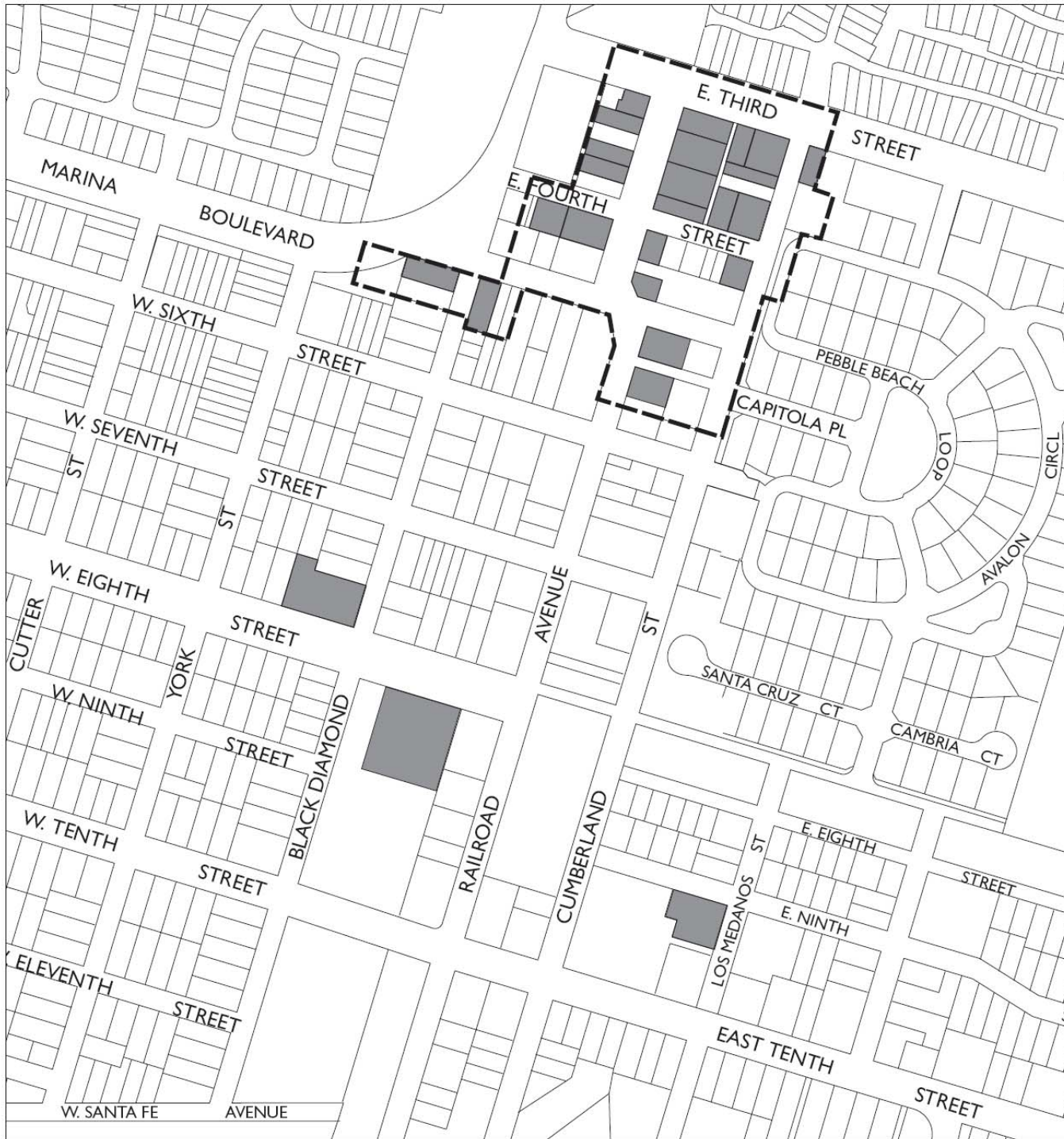
California's Office of Historical Resources inventories buildings, structures, and objects determined to have some historical value. Historical resources found throughout the City are described in Chapter 9: Resource Conservation. To recognize and preserve the unique historical resources in Pittsburg, the City established the New York Landing Historical District in 1981. Buildings in the Historical District were constructed between 1914 and 1930, and reflect the architectural styles prevalent during that time period. Some structures, while not considered significant in and of themselves, enhance the overall character of the district. Figure 5-2 shows resources in the New York landing Historical District.



GOALS: DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

5-G-5 Improve streetscapes within the Downtown, including:

- *Clearing public views of the waterfront and southern hills;*
- *Providing pedestrian amenities;*
- *Strengthening transitions between land uses; and*
- *Increasing landscaping and planting more street trees.*

5-G-6 Provide increased pedestrian connections to and vistas of the Suisun Bay/New York Slough waterfront.



-  Historic Building
-  New York Landing District



Source: California Office of Historic Preservation, 1997;
New York Landing Historical District

Figure 5-2
**New York Landing
Historic District**

5-G-7 Maintain the grid street pattern within Downtown, and improve connections between Downtown and surrounding areas.

POLICIES: DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

(Graphically Illustrated in Figure 5-3)

Streetscape and Architecture

5-P-25 Continue streetscape beautification efforts within the Downtown, focusing on improving the visual connection between the Commercial Core and the waterfront.

5-P-26 Encourage the repetition of key historical architectural features—such as windows and displays, cornice details, and roofline/pitch elements—in the redevelopment of commercial structures in Downtown.

5-P-27 Continue the preservation, rehabilitation, and reuse of historically significant structures within the Downtown (as designated in Figure 5-2).

5-P-28 Ensure that new construction and remodeling throughout Downtown (including the New York Landing Historical District) are reviewed for design compatibility by the Planning Commission.

5-P-29 Encourage property-owners of vacant Downtown structures to allow window box displays created by the Historical Society, rather than boarded-up glass storefronts.

5-P-30 Design and implement a gateway project at the Railroad Avenue underpass between Central Avenue and Tenth Street, providing an identifiable gateway into the Downtown.

The construction of a design feature at the Railroad Avenue underpass will provide a distinct entry to the City's Downtown. A design competition to decide what sort of landmark design feature should be constructed will

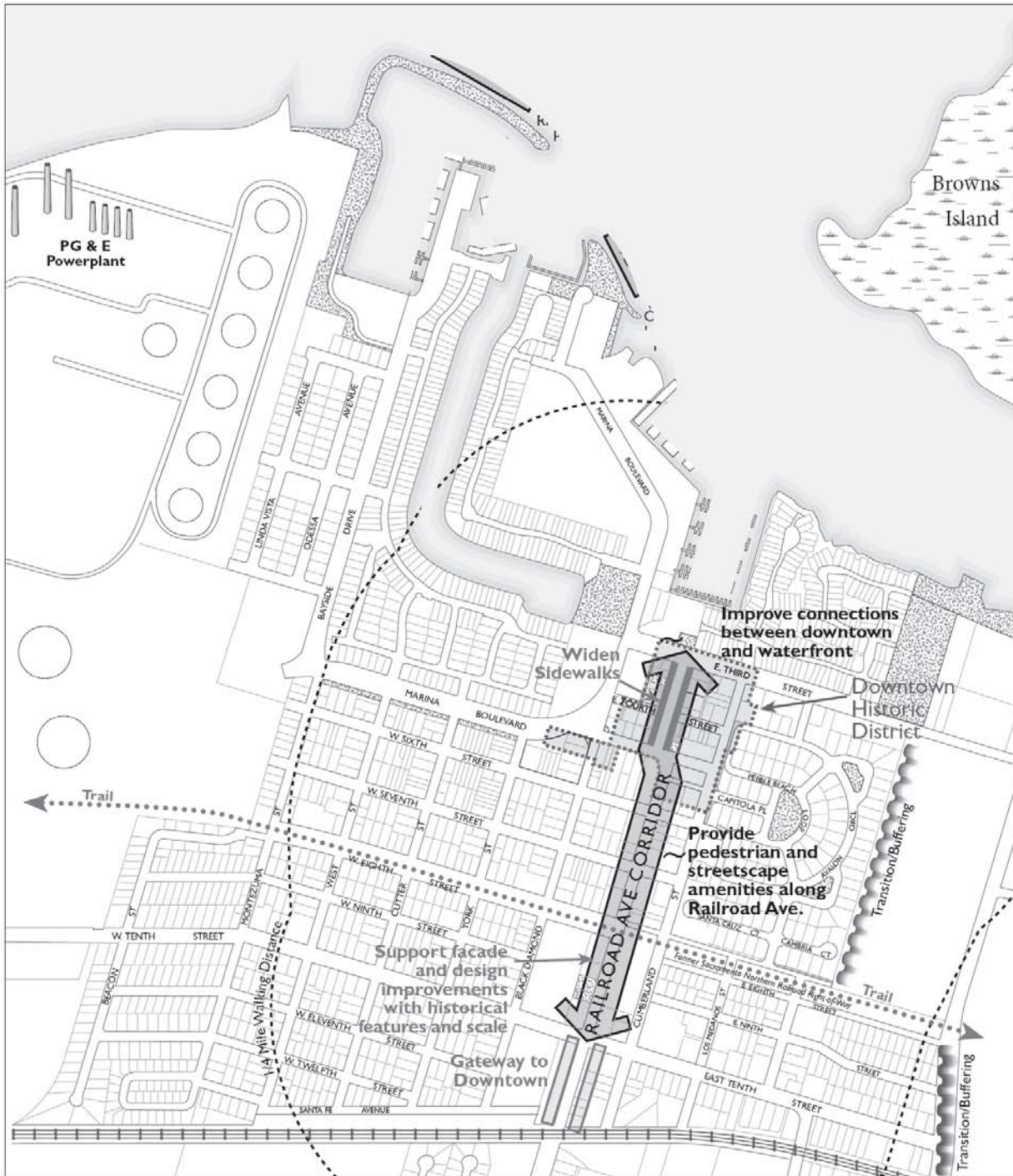


Figure 5-3
 Design and Development
 Improvements

encourage interest in Downtown redevelopment and potentially spur private investment.

5-P-31 Develop a “way-finding” system for Downtown Pittsburg. Install uniform signage and banners informing visitors of major attractions, including directions to Downtown from State Route 4 and to the waterfront from Downtown.

Another method to establishing a distinct identity for Downtown areas is developing a way-finding system. Uniform signage directing visitors and residents to and throughout the Downtown marks the core area as a special destination.

5-P-32 Require transitional buffers along the edges of new and redevelopment projects adjacent to the industrial uses east of Downtown. Such buffers may include a combination of landscaped berms, parking areas, pedestrian walkways, and storage facilities.

5-P-33 During redevelopment of the West Tenth Street Neighborhoods, require that the grid street network and pedestrian connections are maintained.

Railroad Avenue

5-P-34 During redevelopment of commercial properties along Railroad Avenue, pursue widening of sidewalks north of Eighth Street, as site configuration allows. Allow and encourage outdoor seating and services adjacent to restaurants and other food/beverage sales.

5-P-35 Retain existing pedestrian-scale lampposts and amenities along sidewalks within Downtown.

5-P-36 Plant and maintain a double row of trees on either side of Railroad Avenue, extending south to State Route 4.

5-P-37 Develop standards for placement of pedestrian amenities along sidewalks on Railroad Avenue.

Examples of amenity standards include: benches mid-way down each block; bike racks adjacent to major intersections; and planter boxes, newspaper racks, and trash/recycling bins at regular intervals.

- 5-P-38 Encourage developers to orient exterior design elements of Commercial Core structures toward pedestrians (for example, large display windows on street frontage, weather coverings over entryways), and extend the historical flavor of architectural features within the New York Landing Historical District to the intersection of Railroad Avenue and Tenth Street.*

Open Space and Waterfront Access

- 5-P-39 Pursue acquisition of the Railroad Avenue terminus by transferring existing private recreation facilities due west of the adjacent Medium Density Residential neighborhood. Redesign the public plaza to ensure that both visual and physical access from Downtown is achieved.*

The residential development at the terminus of Railroad Avenue provides a landscaped buffer and recreational area between the street frontage and the adjacent small-craft harbor. The redesign and reconstruction of this terminus area to allow public access to the marina would significantly improve the City's desired connection between the waterfront and the Downtown core.

- 5-P-40 Encourage design of the Harbor Street terminus to provide an unobstructed view of New York Slough and a 30-foot wide promenade to the waterfront. This linear park/promenade should function as a public square, with buildings oriented toward it and pedestrian amenities leading from East Third Street to the shoreline.*

The proposed redevelopment of the Harbor Street terminus will provide the City with a tremendous opportunity to enhance visual connections with the waterfront area. A well-designed marine commercial development could capitalize on the provision of public access to the shoreline.

- 5-P-41 Improve the pedestrian path along Marina Boulevard, connecting the Downtown core to the waterfront/marina area. Provide a wide path right-*



Pittsburg's downtown waterfront marina (sign reads "Pittsburg Yacht Club") is an important ecological and recreational resource.

of-way, way-finding signage, landscaping, interpretive plaques, and street lighting.

The expansion and development of linear park features along Marina Boulevard would increase the Downtown's connection with the waterfront/marina area, thereby further contributing to the City's shoreline identity.

5.4 ACCESS AND PARKING

Railroad Avenue serves as the primary access route linking the marina and waterfront areas, Downtown Commercial Core, State Route 4, and southern Pittsburg. Most streets in Downtown support two-way traffic.

Downtown Pittsburg was developed in a traditional grid-iron street system, with fairly uniform blocks and 9-foot wide sidewalks. The widest streets in Downtown include Marina Boulevard, Railroad Avenue, Tenth Street, and Third Street. The new Marina Walk development maintains this grid street network. However, four large residential developments—Marina Heights, Marina Park, Bay Harbor Park, and Village at New York Landing—have replaced the original grid with inward-looking, curvilinear street systems with few access points.

GOALS: ACCESS AND PARKING

5-G-8 Provide sufficient parking opportunities to support a vibrant Downtown Commercial Core.

5-G-9 Encourage redevelopment projects to reinforce a walkable grid street layout, integrated with the existing grid network.

POLICIES: ACCESS AND PARKING

Street Network and Parking

5-P-42 Ensure that new Downtown residential projects preserve and continue the traditional grid street network. Consider extension of the grid street network east of Downtown as existing industrial uses are redeveloped.

The extension of the grid street network will reinforce the City's interconnected, walkable urban core.

5-P-43 Provide public parking lots within Downtown, and limit private, single-user parking areas. However, ensure the provision of off-street parking facilities in periphery Downtown areas to encourage pedestrian movement.

Parking should be convenient and accessible in order to encourage the Downtown as a shopping area.

5-P-44 Reduce off-street parking requirements within High Density Residential neighborhoods of the Downtown to one space per housing unit. Allow further reductions in parking requirements for new residential projects that provide transit-friendly design features.

Transit-supportive design features include new transit stops/shelters within the development plan, pedestrian paths and associated signage to nearby transit stops, and bicycle storage facilities.

5-P-45 Consider making all one-way streets two-way by eliminating on-street parking, if necessary.

Two-way streets create a better "urban" character within small-city Downtowns by encouraging business development through ease of access.

5-P-46 Investigate use of diagonal on-street parking spaces on Downtown commercial streets.

Diagonal striping provides additional, easy-to-access on-street parking for commercial areas and narrows the travel lanes to encourage slower-moving traffic.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation

5-P-47 Continue to install and maintain crosswalks and landscaped curb extensions at heavily-used intersections within the Downtown.

Curb extensions used as traffic calming devices should be designed to be bicycle-friendly.

5-P-48 Design sidewalks in the Downtown Commercial Core that allow for the free flow of pedestrians, and include conveniently located rest areas with shade and seating.

5-P-49 Develop a bikeway along the Downtown waterfront from Central Harbor Park to the proposed Marine Commercial Center, adjacent to the proposed Marina Boulevard pedestrian path.

5-P-50 Develop a bikeway connecting the Downtown and waterfront areas to the Civic Center area along Railroad Avenue.

5-P-51 Create pedestrian and bike path linkages between existing Downtown parks.