

## STRATEGY 9: PUBLIC RESTROOM

A common desire heard during the stakeholder input process and one that staff hears often from residents is that there needs to be a permanent public restroom at or near the LOT. There are several events that occur at the LOT each year and the use of temporary restrooms is not appealing to many event attendees. The City should work with property owners to identify the best location for constructing a restroom that can feasibly be served by utilities and to determine a budget in order to seek funding. Examples of public restrooms that have been successfully implemented in Texas downtowns recently include Brenham and Cuero.

**Initial Steps:** Determine best location and budget for project.

**Added Value:** Improve existing entertainment venues  
**Associated Goals:** Activity, Livability  
**Timing:** Medium-Term

**Partners:** Property Owners  
**Relative Cost:** \$\$  
**Relative Impact:** Medium

## STRATEGY 10: OUTDOOR SPACE ACTIVATION

Within the greater downtown area, there are three public parks – the Pond Branch Trail, Katherine Rose Memorial Park, and Town Park. While these are great amenities on the periphery of downtown, there is no public park space in the core of downtown. A fun, interactive play space for kids in the core downtown area would give families more entertainment options in downtown. If the uses in the city-owned property adjacent to the LOT change, then that would be a prime candidate for a compact new park space. Examples of unique, interactive play spaces include the Railyard in Waxahachie that features an immersive sound playground. An interactive water feature such as a splash pad could also be explored.



*Immersive playground in downtown Waxahachie park (above).*

**Initial Steps:** Seek public input on the type of play features desired in downtown.

**Added Value:** Additional family entertainment  
**Associated Goals:** Activity, Livability  
**Timing:** Long-Term

**Partners:** The LOT  
**Relative Cost:** \$\$\$  
**Relative Impact:** High

# STRATEGY 12: FACADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Historic Main Street is a unique asset that differentiates Downtown Mansfield from newer, auto-oriented commercial development in other parts of the City and surrounding area. The City of Mansfield should incentivize preservation, restoration, and improvement of Downtown's building stock through a façade improvement and restoration program. Common in North Texas and throughout the state, façade improvement programs typically provide grant funds to building owners for eligible exterior improvements such as restoration of historical architectural features and context appropriate signage to enhance visual appeal. In most cases, funding is made as a grant or reimbursement, and requires adherence to design guidelines and approval, a maintenance standard, and matching investment. For example, in Downtown Garland the façade improvement program reimburses owners for exterior improvements using tax increment reinvestment funds on a 50/50 matching basis.<sup>1</sup> Lewisville will reimburse up to 40% of improvement costs in Old Town to a maximum of \$40,000.



*There are buildings within the greater downtown area that could benefit from facade improvements (above).*

**Initial Steps:** Inventory buildings that may benefit from a façade improvement program and reach out to property owners to help shape the program.

**Added Value:** Improved look and feel and more consistent facades in downtown  
**Associated Goals:** Identity  
**Timing:** Medium-Term

**Partners:** Property Owners  
**Relative Cost:** \$\$  
**Relative Impact:** High

## STRATEGY 13: THE LOT ACTIVATION

The City of Mansfield should activate The LOT for public use when there are no large scheduled events set to take place, through improved design and programming. Redesigning the LOT to make it more inviting and visually accessible without compromising the ability to hold ticketed events would reinforce it as a natural gathering space for Mansfield, and better tie into the rest of Downtown, which starts with rethinking the wall that surrounds the property. This will allow for users to enjoy the LOT as passive park space when there are not performances and create opportunities to interface with adjacent commercial property. For example, in Old Town Lewisville, the Wayne Ferguson Plaza is used as a venue for concerts and movies as well. However, it is also a place for pedestrians to enjoy when nothing is scheduled. Restaurants have taken advantage of the public space by placing café-like tables alongside the Plaza for people to observe and enjoy. The City should also seek out ways to link the LOT into the broader network of parks and trails dispersed that connect through Downtown to the rest of the City.

**Initial Steps:** Coordinate with the LOT on interim activation opportunities such as a temporary passive park space.

**Added Value:** Activate downtown's main entertainment venue more often

**Associated Goals:** Activity, Identity

**Timing:** Short-Term

**Partners:** The LOT

**Relative Cost:** \$

**Relative Impact:** Medium



*The Lot Downtown entry (above).*

### PUBLIC SPACE IMPROVEMENTS RESOURCES:

1. City of Garland, Downtown Facade Improvement Program. <https://www.garlandtx.gov/3643/Downtown-Facade-Improvement-Program>.



## STRATEGY 16: TRAFFIC CALMING

The City has previously initiated efforts to calm traffic along Main Street, which has helped reduced speeds to an extent. Other traffic calming efforts include adding enhanced intersection treatments at the intersection of Main and Broad. Intersection treatments could include decorative and raised pavers to slow traffic. A mid-block crossing may be appropriate at Kimball Street across from the Mansfield EDC building when redevelopment causes increased demand. Considerations that must be assessed before a mid-block crossing is installed include visibility, traffic speeds, and calming features such as raising the crossing to slow traffic speeds.



*Mid-block crossing in downtown Broken Arrow, OK.*

**Initial Steps:** Narrow down potential location for mid-block crossing near Kimball Street for future implementation when pedestrian traffic increases.

<b>Added Value:</b> Safer pedestrian experience	<b>Partners:</b> n/a
<b>Associated Goals:</b> Connectivity, Livability	<b>Relative Cost:</b> \$\$
<b>Timing:</b> Medium-Term	<b>Relative Impact:</b> Medium

## STRATEGY 17: TRAIL EXTENSION

Within downtown, the Pond Branch Trail is constructed from Kimball Street in the south to Sycamore Street in the north. The existing trail in downtown provides a safe, comfortable path for pedestrians, joggers, and cyclists. The Walnut Creek Linear Trail is an approximately two mile paved shared-use trail that follows Walnut Creek from Town Park in downtown to James McKnight Park to the east. The 2009 Parks Master Plan identified the extension of the downtown trail to connect to the existing walking paths in Katherine Rose Memorial Park to the north of the railroad track. These walking paths link up to the main east-west segment of the linear trail. Once this strategic connection is made, there will be a safe, off-street connection to downtown from other areas of Mansfield, including east of U.S. 287.

A new bridge crossing over the railroad track would be expensive and take extensive coordination with the railroad. An alternative would be to route the trail extension to the east at Walnut Creek Drive or the west along Smith Street using at-grade crossings to link to Katherine Rose Memorial Park. As with any trail project, considerations related to property ownership, topography, floodplain, vegetation, and environmental constraints needs to be fully evaluated during the design process.

**Initial Steps:** Assess different alternatives for the trail extension and initiate the design process.

<b>Added Value:</b> Additional active transportation connection	<b>Partners:</b> Railroad, Property Owners
<b>Associated Goals:</b> Connectivity, Livability	<b>Relative Cost:</b> \$\$\$
<b>Timing:</b> Medium-Term	<b>Relative Impact:</b> High

## STRATEGY 18: PEDESTRIAN PASS-THROUGH

As previously stated, pedestrian connectivity is extremely important, especially in an urban environment like downtown. One strategy to better connect pedestrians along Main Street to other parts of downtown is a pedestrian pass-through or alley, which provides a break in between buildings in the middle of a block for pedestrians to pass through. South of Broad Street, there is an existing pedestrian pass-through as part of a private development at 109 S. Main (currently By the Horns Brewery and Twisted Root). This provides easy access for patrons from the parking behind the buildings to Main Street instead of having to go around the block.

One potential location north of Broad to implement a pedestrian pass-through is the existing small parking lot between 114 N. Main and 110 N. Main (currently the Chamber building and Flying Squirrel Coffee Company). Currently this void in building faces seems like a gap, but if it were designated as a pedestrian pass-through with appropriate streetscape features, it would feel more cohesive. The pass-through would provide a linkage to Smith Street, and eventually, if uses along Smith Street transform, could provide a direct linkage all the way to the existing linear trail.

Local examples of a pedestrian pass-through include downtown Lewisville, where the Wayne Ferguson Plaza connects to Main Street via the pedestrian mall. Within this space, patio seating is set up for downtown passers-by and murals are painted on the sides of buildings.

**Initial Steps:** Convene surrounding property owners to discuss possibility of pedestrian pass-through to determine benefits and trade-offs.

**Added Value:** Link Main Street to rest of downtown

**Associated Goals:** Connectivity

**Timing:** Long-Term

**Partners:** Property and business owners

**Relative Cost:** \$\$

**Relative Impact:** Medium



*Existing pedestrian pass-through at the Backyard in downtown Mansfield (above).*



*Pedestrian pass-through between downtown buildings in Lewisville, TX (above).*

## STRATEGY 19: SMITH STREET PEDESTRIAN PLAZA

A catalytic project to explore is to convert a portion of Smith Street into a pedestrian plaza to further link Main Street to the surrounding downtown mixed-use area and to the trail. In this sense, a pedestrian plaza is akin to a ‘backyard main street’ that prioritizes the pedestrian by closing a section of a roadway to vehicular traffic. The benefits would include promoting the same urban feel along Main Street on a parallel street to encourage redevelopment over time. Given that vehicular traffic still needs to be maintained, the portion of Smith Street from Broad to Elm is the only segment that is proposed to be part of this treatment. That would leave vehicular access from Oak Street further to the north. This would tie into the proposed pedestrian pass-through that would link Main Street to Smith Street. It is critical that good vehicular access is maintained to the 4-acre tract owned by the City. Improvements to Elm Street should be made before this recommendation is implemented. In order to ensure continued delivery access to businesses, a loading zone area could be established on the north side of the pedestrian plaza.

**Initial Steps:** Temporarily close off the section of Smith Street from Broad to Elm to determine how traffic circulation and emergency access is impacted to determine if permanent closure of this section is feasible.

**Added Value:** Prioritize pedestrians, encourage urban feel on streets parallel to Main St.

**Associated Goals:** Livability, Activity, Connectivity

**Timing:** Long-Term

**Partners:** Property and business owners

**Relative Cost:** \$\$\$

**Relative Impact:** Medium

### Pedestrian Plaza Highlight | Lewisville, TX

Lewisville received funding through NCTCOG’s Sustainable Development Funding Program to improve pedestrian connectivity in downtown. The Wayne Ferguson Plaza serves as a central open space in Old Town Lewisville. Just to the south of the plaza is a pedestrian pass-through that connects Church Street to Main Street.

The pedestrian pass-through on Poydras Street in Lewisville serves as an extension of the open space plaza. There are tables and chairs set up and the businesses on either side of the pass-through have added side entrances to their buildings.

The space, converted from a previous roadway, can serve as both formal and informal gathering space and has greatly improved pedestrian activity in Old Town Lewisville.



*View of pedestrian-pass through on Poydras Street in Old Town Lewisville.*