

MEMORANDUM (REVISED)

Date: March 17, 2026

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Gerry Beaudin, City Manager
Siew-Chin Yeong, Director of Public Works
Tracy Avelar, Chief of Police
Ellen Clark, Director of Community and Economic Development

Re: Downtown Improvements and Long-Term Work Plan Projects

In recent months, staff have received questions about the overall vitality of the Downtown and how the City can better support efforts to attract businesses and minimize vacancies to ensure Downtown remains attractive, well-maintained, and a hub of community and business activity. Various ideas and initiatives around these goals have been suggested by City Councilmembers, downtown business owners, the Pleasanton Downtown Association (PDA), and others.

This memorandum summarizes the key items brought to staff's attention across a variety of topics, from the condition of public spaces and maintenance of landscaping and street furniture, specific private property issues, parking availability and enforcement, and potential policy changes to the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) to help facilitate and support new investment and reduce business vacancy.

Staff has compiled and reviewed this list, noting that some items have been identified as "quick-fix" - generally able to be accomplished in the near term and within existing budget, as part of scheduled maintenance or existing work plan items. Others are identified as longer-term items, requiring new resources to be allocated or existing resources re-prioritized, or would have a longer lead time. This latter group would require City Council direction as to whether they should move forward.

The memo outlines the status and disposition of key items on the list, with a subset of the items requiring more significant resource commitment or policy discussion, recommended to be included in the upcoming project prioritization discussion with City Council.

A summary of status and recommendations is included as Attachment A, at the end of this memo.

A. Public Works Maintenance and Operational Improvements

1. Planned and Near-Term Fixes Requiring No New Resources

Items part of planned maintenance or achievable in short term as part of operational budget.

a. *Pleasanton Arch Sign Repair*

This item can be accommodated as part of routine maintenance. Staff is coordinating with PDA on the repainting schedule to avoid conflicts with planned special events, with target completion by Summer 2026. The estimated cost of the repairs is \$25,000.

b. *Remove Abandoned Bike Locks*

This item can be addressed within the existing operational budget. Staff would recommend:

- Providing a 48-hour posting of notices for all abandoned locks before removal.
- Public messaging to inform of enforcement and encourage people to not leave locks in place.
- While this item can be accomplished at minimal cost, it will create an ongoing requirement for regular enforcement to ensure abandoned locks are periodically removed.

c. *Downtown Sidewalk Power Washing*

Power washing is currently performed monthly, at a cost of approximately \$6,000 per month. Staff will coordinate with the contractor to ensure any heavily soiled areas are properly cleaned going forward.

Supplemental or more frequent power washing would require an additional budget allocation or reprioritization of other scheduled maintenance

d. *Improve Condition of Grass Areas near Blue Agave Restaurant*

This area, which includes a combination of turf and hardscape, is heavily used by dogs, which damages the existing turf. Turf improvements (fertilizing/reseeding) are incorporated into the regular maintenance schedule.

Staff recommends installing signage to discourage dog owners from allowing their pets to use the grass area and partnering with PDA to help share messaging. Replacing the turf with landscape plantings is not recommended, since it would impact usability for gatherings such as the Holiday Tree Lighting.

e. *Utility Box Repainting*

Staff has surveyed Downtown utility boxes and identified some that need re-painting. Staff will incorporate repainting of City-owned boxes into the regular Operations and Maintenance (O&M) schedule, prioritizing those in the worst condition.

It is noted that private/utility owned boxes (e.g. PG&E, AT&T, Comcast, etc.) would require coordination with those entities before repainting can take place.

f. Replanting of Street Trees and Repair of Brickwork around Tree Planting Area

There is already an existing Downtown tree removal and replanting program. The 2026 Main Street tree replacement is scheduled to begin on March 23 and will include saw-cutting and removing some concrete, removing pavers, removing tree stumps and tree roots, regrading and recompacting the subgrade, small amounts of new concrete, replacing pavers, and installation of 26 new trees and irrigation and modifications to a total of 31 locations.

This work will be performed within the existing program, and no additional funding is needed to complete the work.

g. Flashing Beacons at Uncontrolled Main Street Intersections

The suggestion was made to add flashing beacons at unsignalized intersections on Main Street.

The City typically reserves flashing beacons at crosswalks for locations where pedestrians may not be expected. The presence of pedestrians at all times of the day and marked ladder crosswalks provides sufficient expectation to the users on Main Street that pedestrians may cross the roadway.

Flashing beacons at crosswalks can serve a secondary purpose: providing pedestrians with greater comfort and reduced delay when crossing. This secondary purpose aligns with the new goals being drafted for the Pedestrian and Bicycle Masterplan, which focus on reducing pedestrian traffic stress in our high pedestrian-generating areas.

There are five uncontrolled intersections on Main Street. Each flashing crosswalk beacon location costs approximately \$10,000. There is also an annual maintenance cost associated with the installation of approximately \$500 per year. Staff recommends including these locations on the list of pedestrian improvements to be evaluated and prioritized in the 2026 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

h. Increase Trash Pickup Schedule

The frequency of trash pickups in Downtown and in City parks was reduced as part of the Two-Year Budget. Pleasanton Garbage Service handles trash pickups Downtown, which are scheduled for Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The City has received complaints that trash cans downtown are full or overflowing by Sunday, since trash is not being collected over the weekend.

Note that PDA organizes trash pickups on Main Street for PDA organized events, during and following events. However, visitors often stay well past the end of the event, causing trash to accumulate that is not picked up. This situation can occur on non-event weekends as well.

Staff will explore ways to augment downtown trash pickup without increasing the maintenance budget, including outreach to PDA to see if the organization could take on this responsibility (through their existing trash pickup arrangements or possibly working with a contractor). Any additional City attention to trash would require allocation of additional funding.

i. Other Minor Repairs/Maintenance

- *Repair Street Light Pole #62.* This item will be addressed as part of routine O&M activities in March 2026.
- A tree well noted as being in poor condition at 310 Main Street was determined to be located on private property, and therefore not part of the City's tree replacement program.

2. Maintenance and Operational Improvements Potentially Requiring New Resources

a. Enhanced Median Maintenance – Bernal Avenue & First Street

Median maintenance was among the items for which funding was reduced as part of the current two-year budget. The City could allocate additional resources to maintain this Downtown median via an additional one-time contractor work order, estimated at \$5,000. Funding has not been identified for this project at this time.

b. Museum on Main – Landscape Renovations

The configuration of the current Museum on Main landscaping reflects the need to maintain an access route for a vehicle to decorate the Holiday tree annually (this route is currently mulched), with other areas including a combination of turf and mulch.

Mulch is the lowest cost approach, but turf could still accommodate the truck and would improve the look of the area. The City Landscape Architect recommends retaining the existing turf and only updating a portion of the mulch area with drought-tolerant plants due to ongoing maintenance costs and the use of the area for holiday events.

A modest renovation program requiring additional funding and staff time is outlined below:

- Replace landscape immediately adjacent to the building with low maintenance and low water use plants.
- Replace mulch in front of the Museum on Main sign (the truck access route) with turf
- Refresh/replace remaining mulch areas
- Retain existing turf to remain for special events (holiday events)
- Replace irrigation only in newly landscaped areas
- Estimated Cost: \$15,000 – \$20,000

c. Mulch & Weed Abatement – City Hall & Civic Center

Scheduled mulching and weed abatement services were reduced as part of the two-Year Budget. Mulch replacement is typically performed on a two-year cycle, and weed abatement is performed monthly. More frequent mulch replacement or weed abatement could be undertaken but would incur additional costs, estimated at \$20,000 per service. A funding source has not been identified for this project at this time.

3. Downtown Asset Replacement and Major Infrastructure Upgrades

These items include replacement of assets with more significant costs and timeframes to implement:

a. Replace/Repair Decorative Planters (Color Bowls/Pedestals)

The existing decorative planters along Main Street are aging and have cracks and damage. The existing planter type is no longer commercially available, and so replacement of all the planters is recommended to retain a consistent aesthetic. The following scope and cost of a replacement program are outlined below, based on the following assumptions:



- Replace all bowls and pedestals in same quantities and locations
- Similar type of pot and pedestal
- Material pricing based on 2019 quote escalated by CPI
- Irrigation improvements limited to each individual bowl
- Each new bowl receives new soil and plantings
- Estimated Cost: \$350,000 – \$400,000 (A funding source has not been identified for this project at this time).

○ Cost does not include replacement of the concrete benches, although ideally these would be replaced at the same time to maintain a consistent look. Replacing benches would cost approximately \$75,000.

b. Downtown Irrigation System Replacement

The existing downtown irrigation system is in poor condition and has low pressure. While replacing the system would improve performance, a full replacement would represent a significant capital investment and cause disruption to Downtown businesses and visitors since it would involve sidewalk removal and reconstruction.

Given cost and impacts, this work is best coordinated with a larger downtown revitalization, streetscape, or concrete improvement project to avoid redundant construction.

- Timeframe: 3–5 Years (or bundled with broader downtown revitalization effort)
- Funding Source: Major CIP Project
- Estimated Cost: \$750,000

B. Parking Management and Enforcement

The availability of convenient parking for Downtown visitors has been a long-standing concern. Public parking is currently available on-street, with a combination of time-limited and non-time-limited spaces, and off-street in several City-owned parking lots. Substantial investments have been made to increase the supply of public parking in recent years including the addition of spaces along the Transportation Corridor (137 spaces in the lot between Bernal and Abbie Street), the recent opening of a new lot near Lions-Wayside Park (24 spaces), and improvements to the parking lot at St. Mary Street (38 spaces).

While there remains interest in constructing a new parking structure, doing so would involve substantial costs. The 2017 Downtown Parking Strategy and Implementation Plan studied several public and privately-owned sites, ranging in size from 0.5 to 1 acre, but recognized

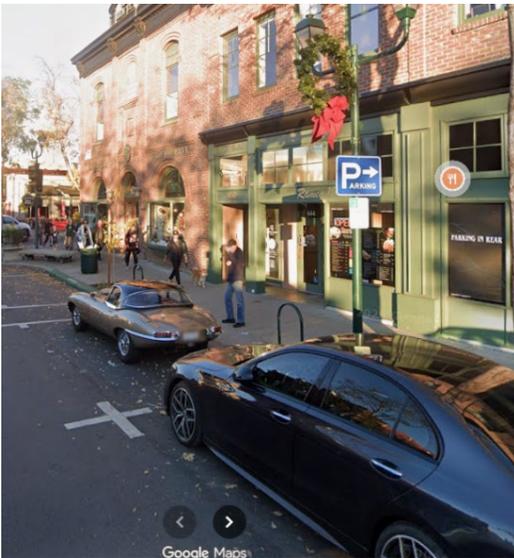
challenges for each of them. In terms of current costs, Livermore’s recently constructed parking structure cost \$47 Million for an approximately 450 space structure, or over \$100,000 per space (this does not include the cost of land). The Downtown Parking Strategy concluded that the City should focus on improved parking management strategies, before investing in a costly parking structure, and this continues to be staff’s recommended approach.

Parking Enforcement

Existing parking along and adjacent to Main Street comprises both 3-hour and short-term (20 minute) parking. In recent years, the City has not aggressively enforced posted time limits or other violations such as vehicles occupying multiple spaces. As a result, parking spaces are often occupied for longer than their allotted time (anecdotally, often by employees of local businesses), leaving them unavailable for Downtown visitors.

Police enforcement could be stepped up, with the following considerations:

- Increased enforcement should be accompanied by an education/community and business outreach effort beforehand to advise of pending enforcement efforts and offer information on non-time restricted parking alternatives.
- The cost of enforcement is unlikely to be recovered by parking fines, since the municipality only keeps a small proportion of fines collected, with the remainder going to other agencies.
- For enforcement to be effective and change parking behaviors, it must be consistently applied over the long term; this may suggest a need for investment in personnel (sworn or non-sworn staff) equipment, such as the small parking enforcement vehicles that offer more efficient patrol capabilities; or new technology to aid enforcement.
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Parking Signage

Improving the visibility and public awareness of available off-street parking could help alleviate pressure on Main Street parking and make more efficient use of existing off street public parking lots.

While there are already some directional parking signs downtown (see photo), parking signage and wayfinding could be enhanced. This includes low-cost options such as installation of larger or more visible directional signage on existing poles; or improved navigation tools for downtown visitors (e.g. working with on-line mapping apps to ensure public parking lots are identified). These strategies could be deployed at minimum cost (\$10,000 to \$20,000) as the signs can be fabricated and installed by City staff. Funding has not been identified for this project.

More costly options would include installation of dynamic, digital message boards indicating number of available spaces or partnering with parking availability app providers (e.g Park Assist,

Verra Mobility) to direct people to available spaces. This would involve steps such as creating an updated parking inventory and conducting detailed engineering, parking, and planning analysis. As a rough cost estimate, installing the digital directional parking signs at City's parking lot within the Downtown area (three locations) would be approximately \$200,000 to \$300,000, depending on power availability. Staff recommends pursuing other, less expensive options, particularly improved wayfinding and use of app-based technology and evaluating their effectiveness, before investing in these more costly approaches.

C. Downtown Code Enforcement

As the City Council is aware, the City has a single employee (a Senior Code Enforcement Officer) whose responsibilities extend citywide. As a result, Code Enforcement largely occurs on a complaint basis, and, since the volume of inquiries and complaints exceeds staff capacity, the Code Enforcement Officer is required to prioritize his enforcement efforts, starting with immediate life-safety items, down to quality of life or nuisance issues. This [August 2025 City Council memorandum](#) explains some of the current challenges and code enforcement approaches.

Staff routinely responds to Downtown code compliance complaints and is typically able to reach a resolution on those items. However, the higher sensitivity around the Downtown and its many small businesses, combined with the need to maintain a balance between aggressive enforcement and supporting local businesses, enforcement can be challenging and often time-consuming.

With respect to outdoor dining, in recent years, staff enacted a more aggressive enforcement campaign to ensure that outdoor dining areas located within the public right-of-way met minimum sidewalk clearances and held valid permits. Railings were required to be affixed to the sidewalk; however, it appears that some of the fixed railings are now loose, causing encroachment into sidewalk areas. Staff will conduct a site visit over the coming weeks, and work with business owners to bring any non-conforming dining areas into compliance.

More broadly, if Code Enforcement, generally, is to be more of a priority, it would be necessary to provide more resources to allow for proactive enforcement downtown, beyond the current complaint-based approach.¹

D. Downtown Business Attraction and Investment

1. Downtown Vacancies/Tenant Improvements

Concerns have been raised about the number of Downtown vacancies and slow pace of construction for some tenant improvement projects. Staff recently conducted a review of Main Street business vacancies, noting a total of 14 vacant businesses. Six of these are storefronts that are vacant and have no current leasing activity (to staff's knowledge); a further eight have current leasing activity of which staff is aware, or tenant improvements under construction. Attachment 2 summarizes the status of Main Street vacancies as of March, 2026.

¹ The outdoor pergola at Inklings was observed as being in poor condition/dry rotted and possibly dangerous. Building Division staff inspected the pergola and agrees it is need of repair to be safely occupied. A "red tag" was applied to the pergola, with notification to the business owner on March 9, 2026.

Staff compiled data on downtown commercial vacancy rates in Pleasanton, Livermore, Danville and Walnut Creek. Pleasanton's vacancy rate stands at 8.6%, compared to 10.0% in Walnut Creek, 4.7% in Danville, and 5.5% in Livermore. Vacancy rates currently exceed historic averages across all four downtowns, indicating a challenging market in the region as a whole; although Pleasanton's rate (+2.51%) above its 10-year average is higher than both Danville and Livermore (+1.46% and +1.54%, respectively). The reasons for this difference are not clear but may include Pleasanton's prevalence of older or historic buildings, which can be challenging to lease, as a proportion of the total inventory; smaller downtown size (creating less overall activity to support business); or other challenges. Regardless of the reasons, a focus on leasing and tenanting vacant downtown spaces is a priority.

Staff continues to provide the opportunity for prospective tenants and building owners to meet with City staff, and to convene staff from Economic Development, Planning, Building and other Divisions to provide early input on proposals, advise on process, and identify potential project stumbling blocks. The Economic Development team's 2026 work plan priorities include enhanced collaboration with PDA, downtown landlords and leasing agents to connect prospective tenants with vacant spaces and provide support through City planning and building processes. With the Economic Development Division now fully staffed, the City is increasing efforts to publicize and market these services and ensure Downtown is part of the City's broader business attraction and retention efforts.

2. Downtown Specific Plan and Policy Updates

Several ideas have come forward about potential revisions or updates to the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) and other policy documents to encourage downtown investment. A particular concern has been raised that the DSP update in 2019 introduced overly restrictive standards for ground floor active uses, and that these standards should be relaxed. There has also been interest in creating a more conducive environment or streamlining/easing permitting requirements for businesses operating later at night, through a right-to-do business ordinance or amendment of the existing Hospitality Guidelines.

A recent staff review of the City's mixed-use development standards, which apply to properties downtown, has similarly noted that some of the DSP's standards may be overly restrictive and/or discourage investment or redevelopment of sites. For example, DSP policies that require one-for-one replacement of commercial square footage may make some mixed-use development projects infeasible. Policies that discourage three-story buildings are likely to make most townhome development challenging to build, since constrained downtown sites and standard designs typically demand two stories of living space over parking.

While it would require investment of resources to update the DSP, staff believes there may be merit in making some focused amendments to the Plan, to address the above areas, as well as to potentially re-look at / update the policies around redevelopment of the Civic Center to reflect more recent thinking about this site.

Assuming focused amendments, with some limited consultant support around the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and design standards, staff estimates a DSP update could be completed within 12 months, for approximately \$150,000. Funding has not been identified for this project at this time.

3. Other Programs

Finally, there has been interest in helping to incentivize Downtown investment through a façade improvement program (City support or funding for cosmetic updates) or through programs like the Mills Act that offer property tax incentives for historic building renovations. Both programs would involve a significant investment of time to develop and implement, and based on limited staff resources, costs, and relatively limited benefit to a small number of property owners, staff does not recommend moving forward with them at this time.

ATTACHMENT 1: Summary of Potential Downtown Work Plan Items and Costs

A. Public Works Items			
Operations and Maintenance – Short Term, No New Resources			
Pleasanton Arch Sign Repair	Coordinate schedule with PDA to avoid event conflicts; target completion by summer.	\$25,000 (within existing PW Operating Budget)	By Summer 2026
Removed Abandoned Bike Locks	48-hour posting of notices for abandoned locks, then removal; regular enforcement and public messaging.	Minimal / within existing operational budget	Short term / near-term
Sidewalk Power washing	Monthly power washing; staff to coordinate with contractor to ensure heavily soiled areas are properly cleaned.	~\$6,000/month if frequency increased	Ongoing (monthly)
Refresh Grass Areas near Blue Agave	Turf fertilizing/reseeding in regular maintenance; consider PDA partnership and/or signage; replacing turf not recommended due to event use.	No new cost identified (within routine maintenance)	Ongoing / near-term
Utility Box Repainting	Repaint City-owned boxes within regular O&M; coordinate with utilities for private boxes.	No new cost identified (routine O&M)	Ongoing / as scheduled
Replanting of Street Trees & Repair of Brickwork around Tree Planting Area	2026 Main Street tree replacement includes concrete/paver work, 26 new trees, irrigation modifications at 31 locations; within existing program.	No additional cost (existing program)	Begins March 23, 2026
Pedestrian Safety / New Flashing Beacons (evaluated)	Evaluate crosswalks as part of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Masterplan update and prioritize installation accordingly	\$10,000 per flashing crosswalk location.	Bicycle and Pedestrian Masterplan timeline for completion Summer 2026.
Increase Trash Pickup Schedule	Pickups currently Monday, Wednesday and Friday (no weekend); staff exploring options with PDA/contractor	No cost (if alternative solutions can be found)	March/April 2026
Other Minor Maintenance	Repair Street Light Pole #62	No additional cost	March 2026
	<i>Subtotal (new funding)</i>	<i>\$0 (assuming no increased service frequency)</i>	
Operations and Maintenance and Operational Improvements – Some New Resources			
Enhanced Median Maintenance at Bernal Avenue & First Street	One-time additional contractor work order to improve reduced median maintenance levels.	\$5,000 (one-time)	Near-term (upon authorization)
Museum on Main Landscape Renovations	Modest renovation: turf along truck access route, refresh mulch, retain event turf; replace irrigation only in new landscaped areas.	\$15,000 - \$20,000	Near-term (upon budget allocation)

Mulch & Weed Abatement at City Hall & Civic Center	More frequent mulch replacement and/or weed abatement beyond reduced service levels.	\$20,000	Near-term (upon budget allocation)
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$40,000-\$45,000</i>	
Downtown Asset Replacement and Major Infrastructure Upgrades			
Replace/Repair Decorative Planters	Replace bowls/pedestals to maintain consistent Main Street aesthetic; limited irrigation upgrades per bowl; new soil/plantings.	\$350,000 - \$400,000, and additional \$75,000 if replacing benches too.	Longer-term (design/procurement lead time)
Downtown Irrigation System Replacement	Full replacement; best bundled with larger downtown revitalization/streetscape/concrete improvement project due to disruption.	\$750,000	3- 5 years (or bundled with broader revitalization)
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$1.1 – 1.15 Million</i>	
B. Parking Management and Enforcement			
Parking Enforcement (increased consistency)	Step up enforcement with education/outreach; may require personnel/equipment/technology; Citation revenue unlikely to recover all costs.	Cost TBD	Ongoing (if prioritized)
Parking Signage / Wayfinding - low-cost options	Enhance directional signage and/or mapping app identification of public lots.	\$10,000 to \$20,000	Near-term
Digital Directional Parking Signs (3 locations)	Dynamic message boards showing available spaces; requires updated inventory plus engineering/planning analysis.	\$200,000 - \$300,000	Not recommended at this time: staff recommends pursuing lower cost strategies first
New Parking Structure	Build new parking structure	\$25-30 Million, plus cost of land (250 space structure @~ \$100k per space)	Not recommended at this time: staff recommends pursuing lower cost strategies first
C. Downtown Code Enforcement			
Downtown Code Enforcement - proactive focus (resource-dependent)	One Senior Code Enforcement Officer citywide; largely complaint-based with prioritization (life-safety first).	More intensive or proactive Code Enforcement would require re-deployment of resources, or additional staff. (cost TBD)	TBD
D. Downtown Business Attraction and Investment			
Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) - Focused Amendments	Focused amendments with limited consultant support (CEQA/design standards) to address overly restrictive standards and support investment; could update Civic Center redevelopment policies.	~\$150,000	Within ~12 months

ATTACHMENT 2

Summary of Downtown Vacancies and Status of Active Construction (as of March 5, 2026)

Note: List includes Main Street, ground floor businesses only

Vacant/Available Spaces (with no leasing or permit activity):

- 249 Main Street – former First Republic Bank (lease assumed by Chase Bank)
- 260 Main Street – former Wig & Toupees retail store
- 310-D Main Street – former Middle 8 Bar
- 520 Main Street – former Prim Boutique retail store
- 730 Main Street – former Tri Valley Upholstery retail store
- 855 Main Street – former Handles Gastropub (right half of building only. Left half of building occupied by Ruby's & Roses Restaurant)

Other Spaces (with leasing or permit activity):

- 310-C Main Street (former Sole Desire retail shoe store): Tenant improvements under construction for Tori Izakaya Restaurant
- 337 Main Street (former Bank of America): Property manager currently in lease negotiations with a potential tenant
- 401 Main Street (former Cafe Main): Tenant improvements under construction for Nela's Restaurant
- 503 Main Street (former Starbucks): Property manager currently in lease negotiations with a potential tenant
- 629 & 633 Main Street (former Christensen's): Building permits issued for exterior facade renovations for the whole front facade, and tenant improvements for right half of the building. Left half of the building leased to women's clothing boutique store.
- 711 Main Street – former Candy King retail store. Same owner as Main Street Gas station; intends to integrate as part of gas station improvements.
- 725 Main Street (new construction): Tenant improvements under construction for Mantra Indian Restaurant.
- 828 Main Street (former Main Street Brewery): Property manager currently in lease negotiations with a potential tenant for the left half of the space. Right half of the space (formerly Main Street Brewery Bites & Brews) has been leased to a restaurant user, but no building permits have yet been submitted.