

Downtown Core Recommendations

Objective 4.1: *The Downtown Core is the center of Downtown, and should generally possess the highest intensity of development. A mix of office, employment, retail, government, residential, cultural, entertainment, and other uses should be pursued to retain the area’s vibrancy, including beyond normal business hours.*

Recommendation 62: *Encourage non-residential uses, focusing on retail, cultural, and entertainment uses, on the ground floor of street frontages around Capitol Square, and on King Street, South Pinckney Street, East Wilson Street, the 100 blocks of West and East Mifflin Streets, and the 100 blocks of West and East Main Streets.*

Recommendation 63: *Develop more active uses between Capitol Square and the Capitol East District, particularly where opportunities exist (i.e., the Brayton Lot, Government East Parking Ramp, and the US Bank Building).*

Recommendation 64: *Reinforce the identity of Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard as a civic spine connecting the Capitol to Monona Terrace.*

Recommendation 65: *Update the Urban Design Guidelines for Downtown Madison that currently apply to portions of the Downtown Core to encourage creativity and flexibility and architectural quality and incorporate them into the Zoning Ordinance.*

Recommendation 66: *Integrate the Judge Doyle Square project and multi-modal transportation hub into the built environment of the area and capitalize on the opportunities it presents to implement public and private improvements in the area as described in this Downtown Plan.*

Recommendation 67: *Encourage smaller scale, active urban uses, such as entertainment, restaurants, shopping and cultural activities for “triangle (flatiron) blocks” at the corners of Capitol Square, including flat-iron building forms.*

Recommendation 68: *Preserve and rehabilitate landmarks, and encourage the adaptive reuse of heritage resources, including the use of TIF.*

This section of the plan includes a brief discussion of the smaller neighborhood and district sub-areas within Downtown, and offers a future direction for each. It also provides recommendations specific to those areas, in addition to those found in other sections of this plan.

■ Downtown Core

The Downtown Core is the nucleus of Downtown and accommodates a wide variety of office, employment, retail, government, residential and other uses in larger-scale buildings that comprise the most densely developed part of the city. It is anchored by the State Capitol and Capitol Square — the geographic and symbolic center of the city and host of many major community events. The Downtown Core has experienced significant development in the past twenty years and numerous redevelopment opportunities remain. Block 89, the Risser Justice Building, the State Department of Administration building, the Tommy Thompson State Office Building, the Madison Mark, the Dane County Courthouse, the Hilton Hotel, and the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center are just some of the buildings constructed in the Downtown Core since the last Downtown plan was adopted. The Downtown Core contains many historic buildings, and is home to the Simeon Mills National Register Historic District (see the National Register Historic Districts Map in Key 7). There are also several important views to both lakes, and of the Capitol through this area.

Continued expansion of a mix of uses, such as employment, retail, entertainment, cultural, and residential, will help ensure that the Downtown Core remains a popular destination beyond normal business hours. Street frontages and the first floor of buildings around Capitol Square should be reserved for non-residential uses to provide an active

pedestrian connection between State Street and the King Street-Monona Terrace area.

Major new development opportunities exist on the Brayton Lot (Block 113), public parking structures and other sites. Development of the Judge Doyle Square project, that could potentially incorporate a hotel, retail and office space, and multi-modal transportation connections, is currently in the planning stage, with initial phases of redevelopment expected to occur in the near term. It is particularly important to preserve the landmark buildings on the Capitol Square and the triangular blocks at the corners of the Square. These buildings provide the Capitol Square with a diversity of engaging spaces and architecture which adds to its vitality and life. These blocks also provide smaller first floor venues that house numerous small retail and restaurant businesses.