

# The Future of Virginia Street Placemaking Study

Gehl



# Contents

3	How to Read this Document	75	<b>Project Vision &amp; Goals</b>
4	Executive Summary	76	Vision Statement
<b>5</b>	<b>Project Context</b>	77	Project Goals
6	Project Premise	<b>81</b>	<b>Recommendations &amp; Concept Alternatives</b>
7	Project Process	82	Strategic Moves Overview
8	Project Site	83	Strategic Moves and Placemaking Actions
9	Site History	<b>120</b>	<b>Implementation Plan</b>
10	What is Placemaking?	121	Roadmap to Success
12	Why Now?	122	Placemaking Pillars
18	Local and National Placemaking Trends	124	February 2023 Engagement Outcomes
23	Change Process	125	Placemaking Funding Initiatives
<b>25</b>	<b>What We Heard &amp; What We Saw</b>	126	Prioritization and Phasing
30	Virginia Street Today	133	Roles And Responsibilities
70	Aspirations for a Future Virginia Street	134	Cost Examples
73	November 2022 Engagement Outcomes	139	Placemaking Targets and Evaluation

This project was developed by Gehl Studio Inc.  
for the City of Reno July 2022 - March 2023



# How to read this document

This document begins with setting the [Project Context](#) and overviews the process of this work.

Then, we present the [What We Heard, What We Saw](#) Insights documenting learnings about people and their experiences and aspirations for a future Virginia Street

Next, we share the [Project Vision and Goals](#), based on the Insights in the previous section and further input from Renoites, organized around four emergent themes.

Next, we present [Recommendations and Concept design](#), represented through five strategic moves with associated action items, for both short term and longer term improvements of physical and programmatic nature

Last, an [Implementation Plan](#) outlines a roadmap for implementation, including proposed phasing, prioritization of resources, and ways to measure the impact of implemented placemaking efforts.

# Executive summary

The Placemaking Study is a result of a 10 month process investigating placemaking opportunities that reflect the local identity and history of Downtown Reno and Virginia Street and the needs and desires of Renoites for the future of Virginia Street.

The process revealed strong desires for a thriving Downtown that invites locals and visitors alike, and is a neighborhood in its own respect, serving events and everyday life.

Alongside public space activation, safety and access for people of all ages, modes, and abilities are critical components of the future of Virginia Street.

One of the greatest challenges of Virginia Street today is the overwhelming presence – measured at 70% – of inactive edges. This is being addressed with placemaking actions that support transformation of these edges through the implementation of micro-retail and facade improvements. This, alongside elevating the baseline of the street right of way with designated lanes for active mobility, intersection upgrades, signal timing changes to lower traffic speeds, and public seating will, among other placemaking actions, provide symbiotic change towards a vibrant and thriving Virginia Street.

Additionally, the placemaking study outlines a series of actions to activate adjacent open spaces with furnishings and programming, further inviting more people to Virginia Street and therefore more public life to downtown Reno.

With cross-agency collaboration; support and buy in from Renoites, property and business owners, local entrepreneurs, and organisations; and funding resources allocated for the implementation process, the future of Virginia Street is well on its way, and its success will represent Reno's spirit of ingenuity and creativity.

## Why take a people-first approach to Downtown Virginia Street placemaking?

Vibrant public spaces are inviting and exciting because of the diversity and richness of public life that happens within them. By successfully cultivating public life through placemaking, public spaces are better equipped to promote civic agency, foster health and sustainability, build social capital, and better connect people to their communities and to each other.

A people-first approach to Virginia Street will also make certain that improvements build on the strategic plans and priorities set forth by the City of Reno, RTC, and other public, private, and non-profit agencies; ensuring that the future Virginia Street prioritize the connected, vibrant, livable, prosperous, and safe growth of Reno's communities. Exemplary people-first placemaking design and programming will set the precedent for continued public space improvements for people of all modes, ages, and abilities in Downtown and the Greater Reno area.

# Project Context

Setting the Stage For Placemaking on  
Virginia Street



## Project premise

### *Putting people at the center of change*

**Placemaking is the process of creating quality places that people want to live, work, play, and learn in, through participatory processes. Understanding how people experience their environment is fundamental to creating good public spaces.**

Change is coming to Downtown Reno. With an influx of housing, jobs, students, and neighborhood amenities, Downtown is at a critical moment to set a vision for the future. Virginia Street is the spine of the city—it has tremendous opportunity to support authentic growth in Downtown Reno and improve quality of life for Renoites and visitors alike. Today, there is a need to strengthen offering, diversify the public life profile and public space quality along Virginia Street. This placemaking study for Virginia Street can have greater impact across the city than solely within the physical boundaries of the project. As one of the main corridors in the city, there is much to be done to increase invitations to walk and spend time here, and to overall identify how Virginia Street becomes a place to stay, not just move through. While there is opportunity for change, there is also a lot to build on.

The Placemaking Study is a unique opportunity for Virginia Street to become a better version of itself. The groundwork has been laid with the City of Reno Master Plan; Reimagine Reno. Now is the time to prepare for growth and embrace change, and bring this vision to life on Virginia Street. Virginia Street holds the potential to become a truly great street that cater to both special events and the everyday life of Downtown Reno. The process of this project led to a vision, goals and concept designs for the future of Virginia Street and placemaking actions that support the kind of public life that Renoites want to see downtown. Change will be an incremental process. This placemaking initiative is the start of a new era for Virginia Street!

## What is Placemaking?

*Placemaking is a people-centered approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces, that involves looking at, listening to, and asking questions of the people who live, work and play in a particular space, to discover needs and aspirations. This information is then used to create a common vision.*

# Project process

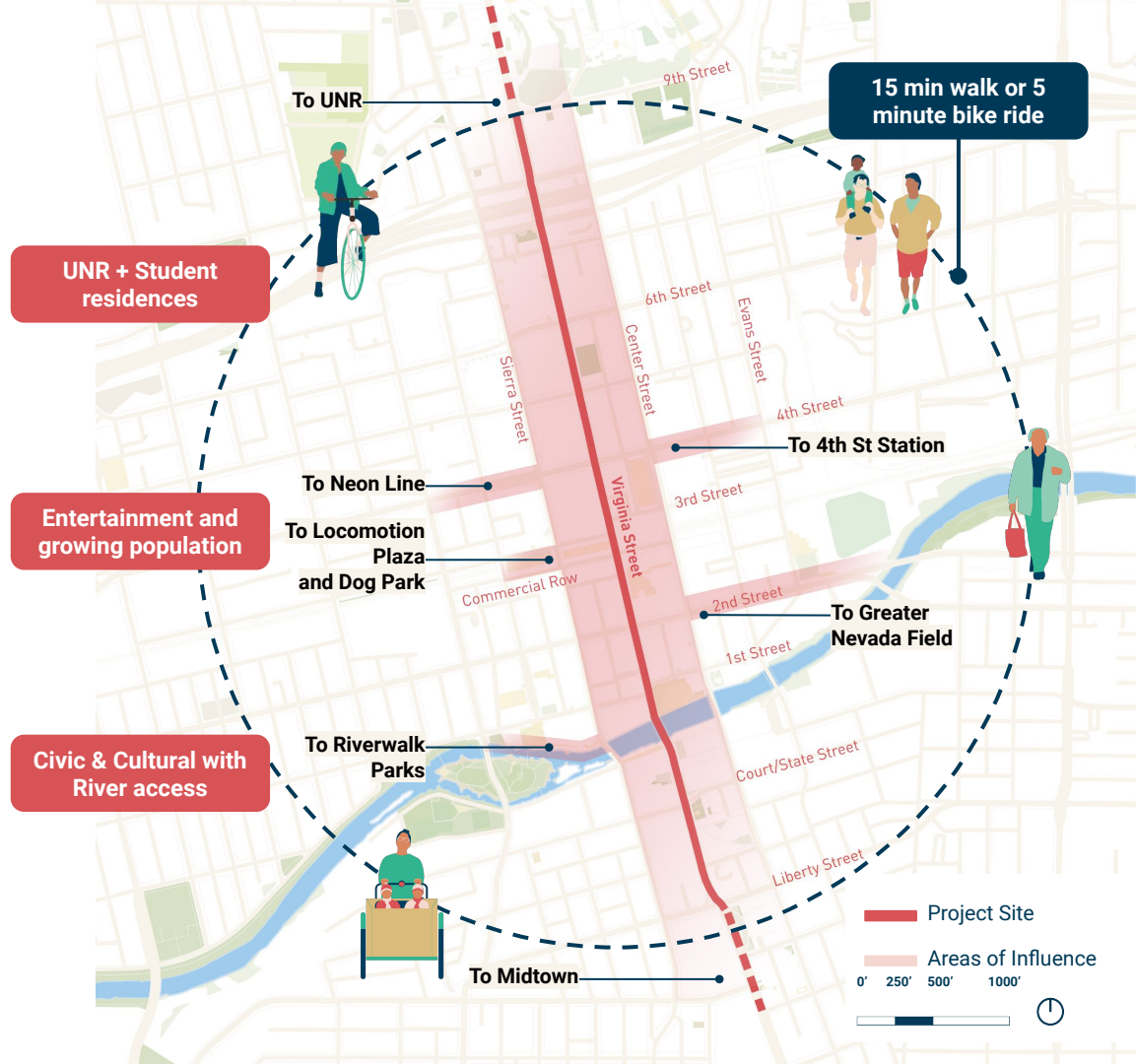


# Project site

While the project focus is Virginia Street from Liberty to UNR, the Placemaking Study speaks to downtown changes overall.

As the central spine of Downtown, Virginia Street connects various context and with that poses opportunities for placemaking interventions that are tailored to context-specific needs and desires while providing a varied experience and amenity offerings along its length.


While the placemaking concept design recommendations in this project focus on Virginia Street, it also recognizes that changes cannot happen in isolation. Virginia Street is at the core of a larger public space network, and it all needs to work together.



# A brief history of Virginia Street

Virginia Street is an iconic street in Reno. Over time, it has shifted yet maintained and important thoroughfare and destination that represents Renos history.


1861



Charles Fuller builds the first bridge across the Truckee. “Fullers Crossing” lays the foundation for Reno and Virginia Street.

Photo: Neal Cobb via Reno Historical


1868



The Central Pacific Railroad arrives, laying out a street grid as Reno consolidates around the new train station.

Photo: Nevada Historical Society


1926



The Reno Arch is built to celebrate the completion of the Lincoln and Victory Highways. Reno’s slogan is added three years later.

Photo: Philip Galbraith


1931



Nevada legalizes gambling and liberalized divorce laws. Downtown Reno becomes a destination for hotels and casinos.


Photo: UNR Libraries

1974




I-80 construction finishes, linking Reno to San Francisco but isolating UNR from Downtown Reno.

2009



The RTC Rapid bus line opens along Virginia Street, making it the city’s primary multi-modal transit corridor.

2000’s



Reno’s gaming market starts to contract, and following the recession the economic vitality of Virginia Street declines.

Photo: Reno Gazette-Journal

# Benefits of investing in placemaking on Virginia Street

Virginia Street holds the potential to become a great street. Investing in streetscape improvements can generate a series of benefits, from economic impact, to social, health and environmental impact.

More than 'nice to have', great streets produce a ripple effect of tangible individual, neighborhood and citywide benefits. Places that encourage people to walk, bike and spend time on the streets have residents that are happier, healthier, and more connected.



## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

**90 minutes of physical activity built into your routine can be achieved through urban design alone**

– "Physical activity in relation to urban environments in 14 cities worldwide: a cross-sectional study." James F Sallis, Jens Troelsen, et al.

## MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

**Removing an hour from your commute produces the equivalent happiness of a 40% pay increase**

– "The Stress That Doesn't Pay: The Commuting Paradox", Stutzer and Frey.



## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

**Biking is nearly 10X more carbon efficient than driving**

– "What's the carbon footprint of ... cycling a mile?" The Guardian

**Neighbourhoods with stronger walkability indices are associated with decreased property crime, murders, and violent crime**

– "Does walkability matter? An examination of walkability's impact on housing values, foreclosures and crime" Gilderbloom, J. et al.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Shoppers arriving on foot visit businesses more regularly spending more per month**

– "Consumer Behavior and Travel Choices: A focus on Cyclist and Pedestrians" NACTO

**Reno knows this well. The Reimagine Reno Plan calls for clear action to make Downtown streets better for people.**

## Guiding Principle 3: A Thriving Downtown and University District

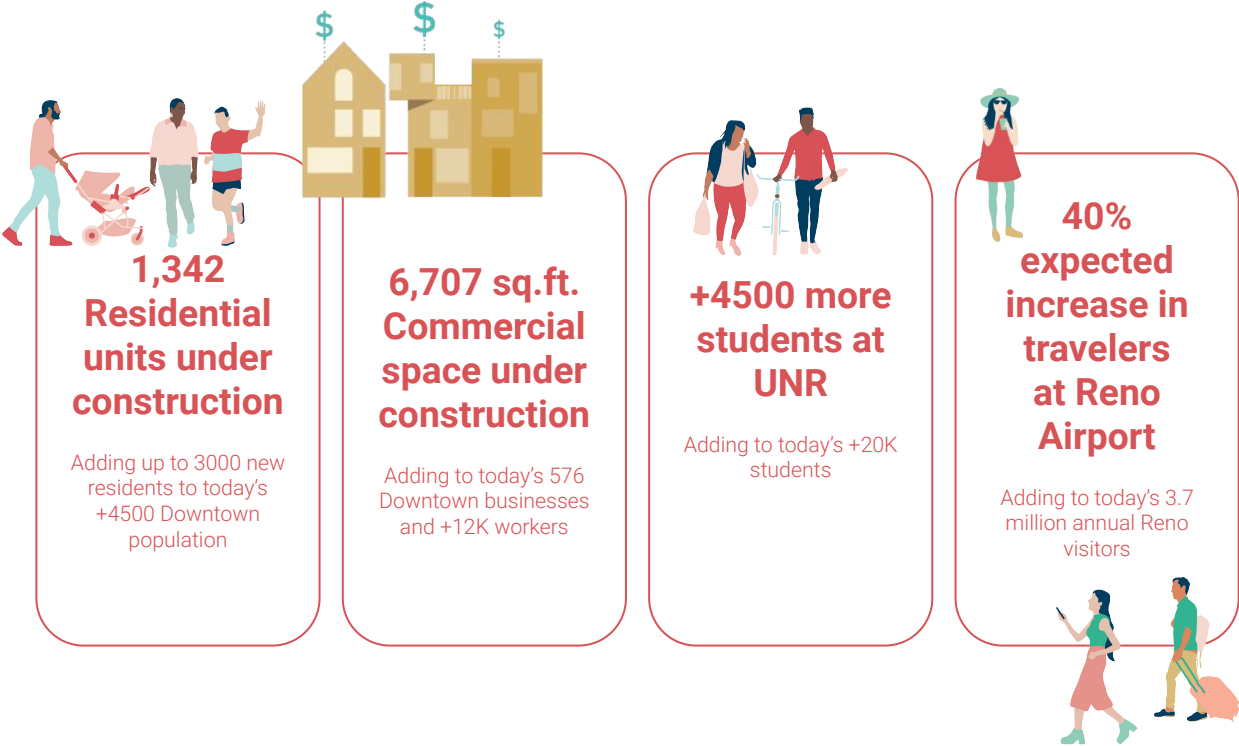
- Cultivate a vibrant and livable downtown environment that balances the needs of residents and visitors
- Enhance public safety and create inviting streets and public spaces for people
- Promote the continued revitalization of the downtown economy and built environment
- Strengthen multi-modal connection to and within Downtown Reno

The findings and recommendations of this report build upon Reimagine Reno and the Downtown Action Plan.

## Why this Placemaking Study and why now?

*The pandemic has impacted how we live, work and play.  
Streets are considered a valuable public asset and  
throughout the country and the world downtown main street  
are leading the change, towards walkable, diverse and  
resilient communities*

# Downtown Reno is changing from an event-based destination to an everyday neighborhood



Sources: Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority Visitor Profile Survey, University of Nevada Reno 2024 Campus Master Plan, and Downtown Reno Partnership Downtown Reno Development Map, Airport Technology, and census.gov

# More residents Downtown means that the public realm will need to work harder to support everyday life and economic development

Image source: Soft City by David Sim // Gehl People



# Placemaking on Virginia Street and nearby can guide this change

## Live Work Play

Image source: Soft City by David Sim // Gehl People

“With rapid urbanization and dwindling resources, we have to use existing infrastructure more efficiently, make better use of what we have – specifically the space we have – and make what we build work harder for us”(Sim).



*The time is now*

**Lean into the  
change and  
strengthen  
what makes  
Reno unique**



*The time is now*  
**To unite all  
Renoites  
around a  
shared vision  
for the Future  
of Virginia  
Street**



**With the Virginia Street Placemaking Project, Reno joins cities around North America and abroad in creating a people first approach to a thriving Downtown.**

# Balancing transportation and place



**157%**  
Increase in commercial activities

Baseline 'all about moving people through'



**30%**  
Increase in people spending time on the street

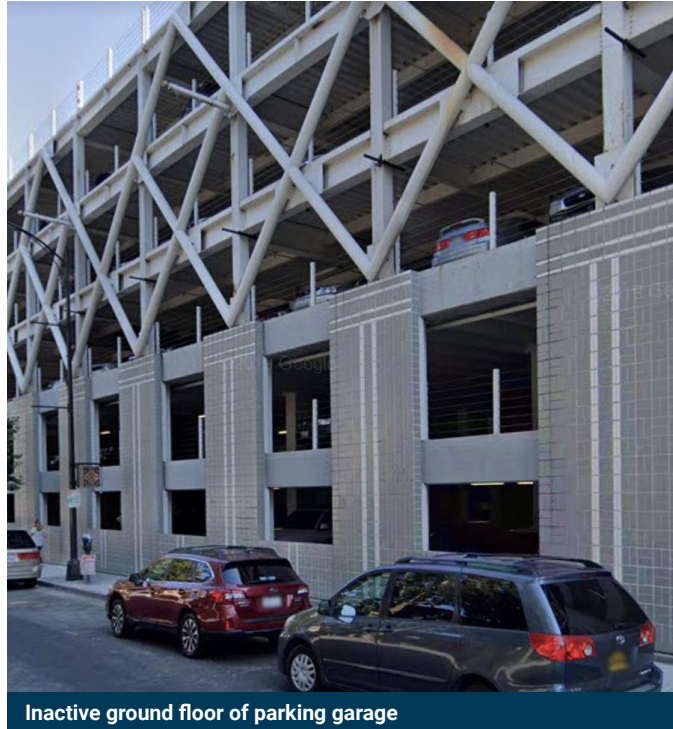
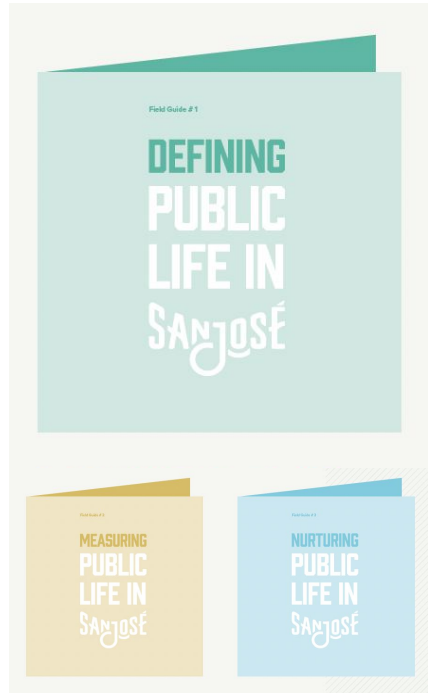
Placemaking pilot 'increasing stickiness'



Consensus for capital improvement for a Future 16th Street in Denver CO that better balances transit and public life

Vision for capital improvements

# Ground floor activation



Inactive ground floor of parking garage

Leaning into the local spirit of ingenuity has led to many placemaking initiatives in San José. MOMENT is a sustaining successful product of that

Active edge = active street

10 New businesses over 3 years



Replacement of 12 parking stalls with 4 micro-retail units

# Incremental change & resilience



Baseline = local F&B's with limited outdoor serving

**35%**

Of businesses reported increase in sales between 2019 and 2021

Only 12 vacancies out of 110 ground floor units



Pilot = outdoor serving and public seating attracting locals

**98%**

Of survey respondents and business owners approve

Economic recovery response in Downtown Mountain View led to an active street during lockdown and to support for permanent closure

## Castro Street Functional Plan and Interim Design Guidelines

Mountain View | CA

Gehl

Mountain View



Incremental change before permanent redesign

# Holistic urban development



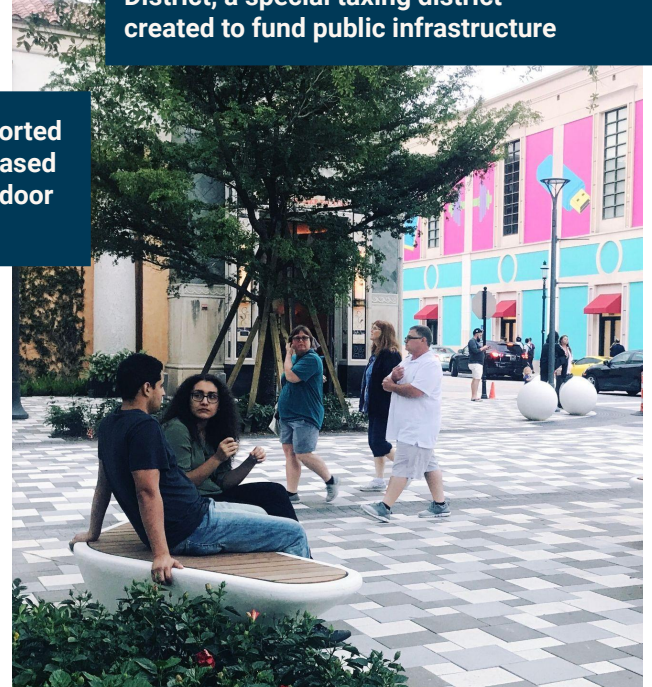
Baseline = just like any other street in the city



X3

People walking and spending times

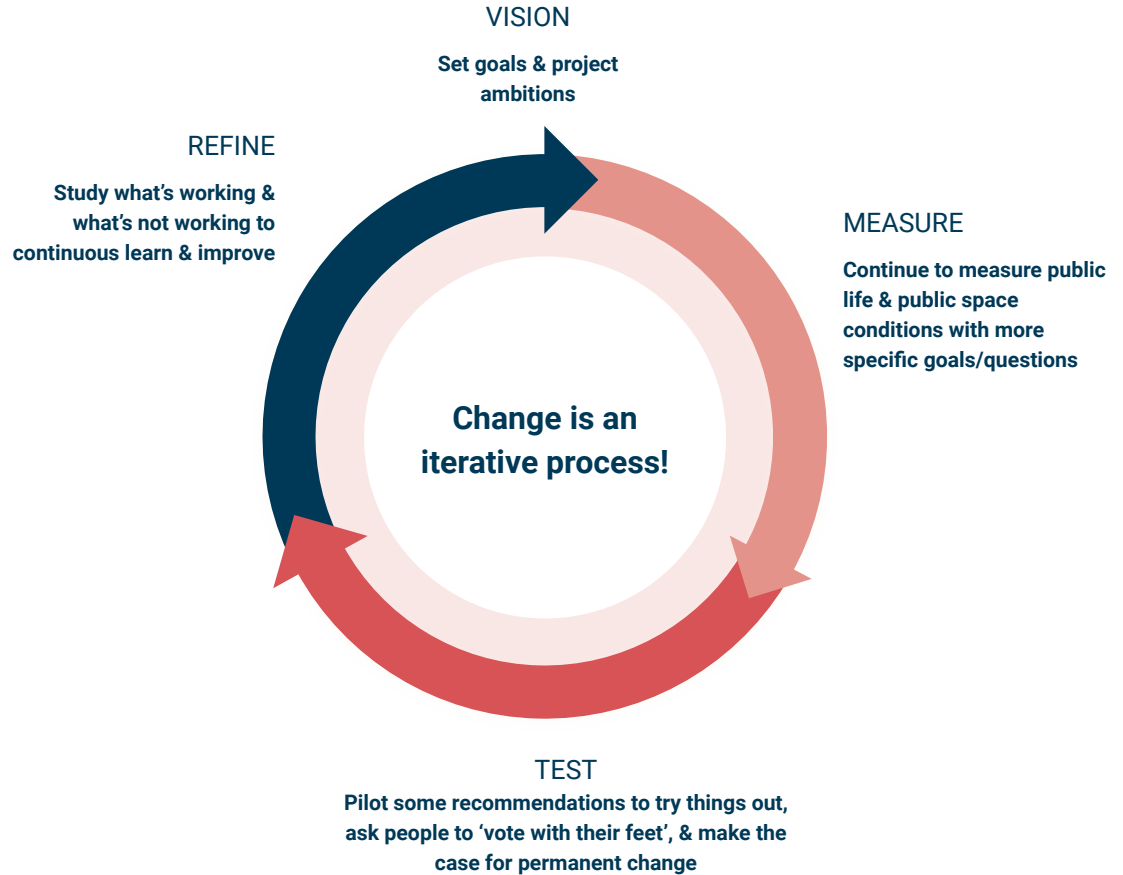
Businesses reported increased demand for outdoor seating



In West Palm Beach a developer led redesign of a public street and a privately owned public space, through CityPlace Community Development District, a special taxing district created to fund public infrastructure

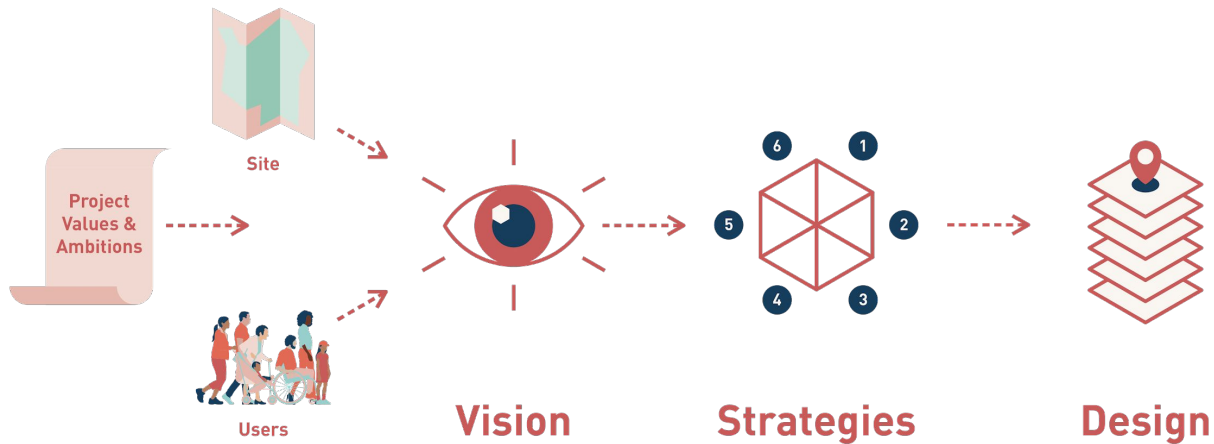
Investment in flush pavers, a lush tree canopy and quality seating = supporting the existing use while increasing public life

Virginia Street will  
not change overnight  
**Change is an  
iterative process and  
to succeed it is  
important to align  
around a shared and  
co-created vision**



Change will not  
happen in isolation

**A successful  
process requires  
shared ownership  
based on a shared  
understanding of  
challenges and  
opportunities**



# What We Heard & What We Saw

Defining Success Criteria for Virginia Street by aligning around challenges and opportunities



**02 Virginia Street has a rich history, but does not reflect the culture of creativity cherished by Renoites and visitors alike**

To understand the Placemaking opportunities on Virginia Street we applied a multi-method research approach






Good news!

**There is consensus that  
Virginia Street is a central  
part of Downtown Reno...**

90% of online survey respondents  
agree that Virginia Street is important

Cross departmental city staff and  
leadership agree



# There is also consensus that Virginia Street lacks invitations for locals...

75% of online survey respondents finds  
that Virginia Street lacks reasons for  
them to visit

Cross departmental city staff and  
leadership agree

# Today, Virginia Street...

01

draws locals and visitors alike for events, but is not a place that Renoites gravitate towards everyday

02

has a rich history, but does not reflect the culture of creativity cherished by Renoites and visitors alike

03

physically connects well-visited downtown destinations, but few Renoites choose to walk between them

04

is home to businesses that are an important part of the Downtown DNA, but lacks amenities and businesses with a local draw

**01 Virginia Street draw locals  
and visitors alike for events,  
but is not a place that  
Renoites gravitate towards  
everyday**

# Renoites come to Virginia Street for events...

...but express a need for programming, more public life, and “eyes on the street” for them to visit on an everyday basis

→ Source: The Future of Virginia Street online survey.

“I liked the benches that used to be along the road so that you could sit and watch the cars go by and the events etc. Now there isn't anywhere to stop and take a break to watch anything unless you want to stand up all the time....”



“As an older person, it would be nice to have benches or shady places to sit and rest.”



“Virginia street is a lot of fun during events, like Blues Brews BBQ etc. It's great when people are out and about.”



“More places designed to sit and stay awhile; let my teens socialize here on their own”

“There is not enough activity for people to feel safe, because it feels desolate.”

...Because of the casinos, there can be entire blocks where the whole building is just a fake wall, it makes it feel eerie and scary at night.



**Virginia Street is famous for events that bring 4-5X the number of visitors to Virginia Street than on non-event days...**

→ Sources: The Future of Virginia Street online survey. Sources: Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority *Visitor Profile Survey*.



**64% of survey respondents state they primarily use Virginia Street to pass through, not to linger**

**When no events,  
there are few  
invitations to linger  
on Virginia Street**

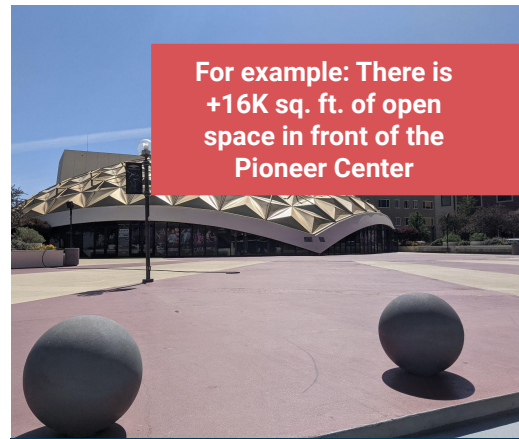
**The bus stops offer  
the only public  
benches on the  
street**



**Yet, there are loads of sq.ft. that could be further activated and programmed and invite Renoites to spend time...**



Sidewalks and street plazas



Areas in front of cultural destinations



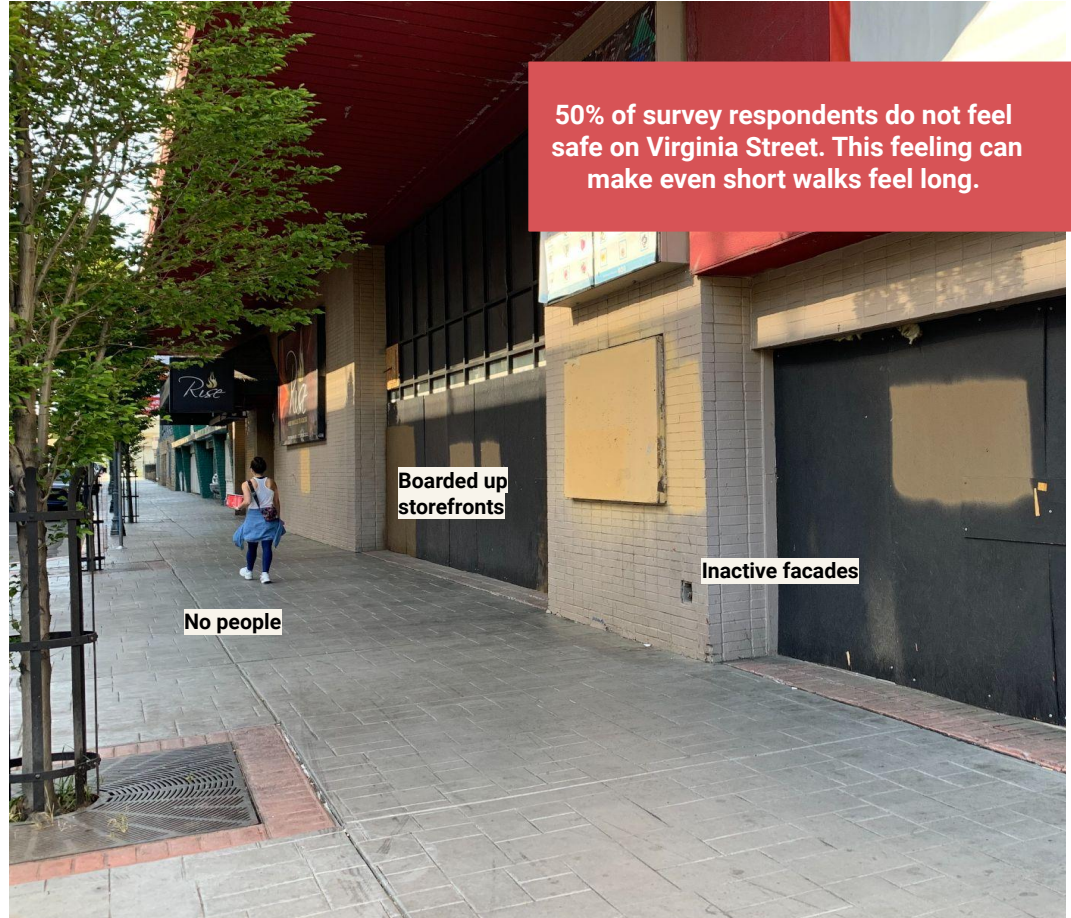
Adjacent public plazas



Parking lots

# Due to lack of public life “eyes on the street”, Virginia Street has a safety perception challenge

→ Source: The Future of Virginia Street online survey.



50% of survey respondents do not feel safe on Virginia Street. This feeling can make even short walks feel long.

Boarded up storefronts

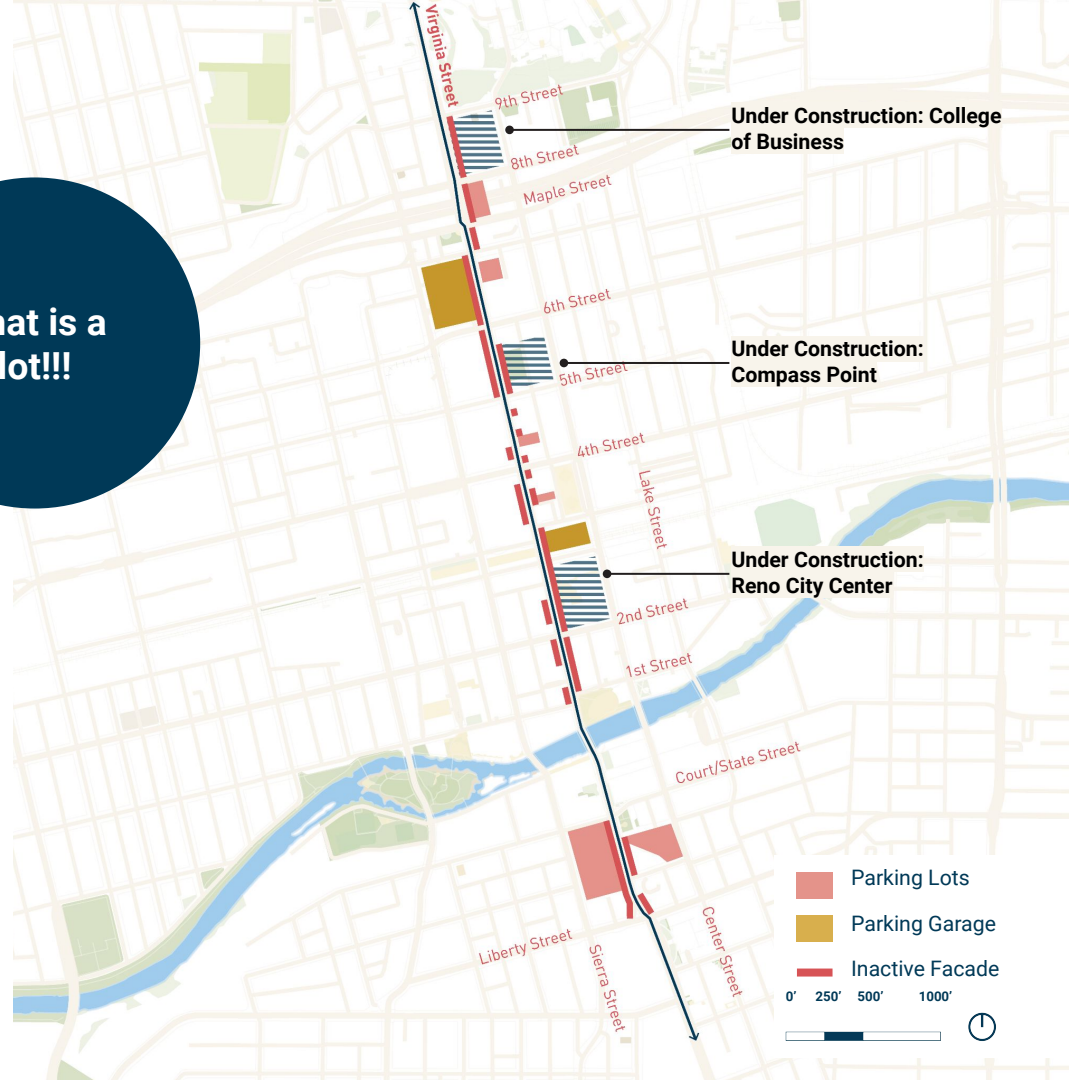
Inactive facades

No people

**In fact, 70% of  
Virginia Street is  
fronted by inactive  
facades, parking  
garages and empty  
lots...**

**All of which can  
make even the  
shortest walk feel  
uncomfortable**

**That is a  
lot!!!**



## Placemaking opportunities

**Convert underused sidewalk  
and plaza space into inviting  
places for people, with  
seating, small scale repeat  
programming, and building  
edge activation**

Tree canopy

Shade

Vehicle access

Bike Access

Event space

Seating

Greening

Active Edges

Human Scale

Local Businesses

Ample room for walking



Lighting

Public seating

Outdoor serving

Active Edges

Loading zones

Greening

Sun / Shade

Vehicle access

Ample room for walking

Distinct character

Bike Access

**Renoites love the history of Virginia Street, the Arch, and the art...**

**but also state that there is a disconnect between the street today and its glory days**

→ Source: The Future of Virginia Street online survey.

"It is Reno's history on display. I would love to see it upgraded to its former glory."

"It has all of the quintessential nostalgic elements of Reno's history. I see potential there for it to be fully revived."



"Love the history and the beautiful historic buildings... the Downtown Post Office, Piazza Building (St. Francis Hotel), Reno National Bank and Washoe Savings Bank, and the Reno Arch"

I love/like...  
"Cruising under the Reno arch."



"The Reno Arch sign and art additions are nice."



The iconic Arch is appreciated by locals and visitors, and it is a perfect Instagram moment...

...but needs a platform for appreciation for non-drivers too

Source: Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority Visitor Profile Survey.



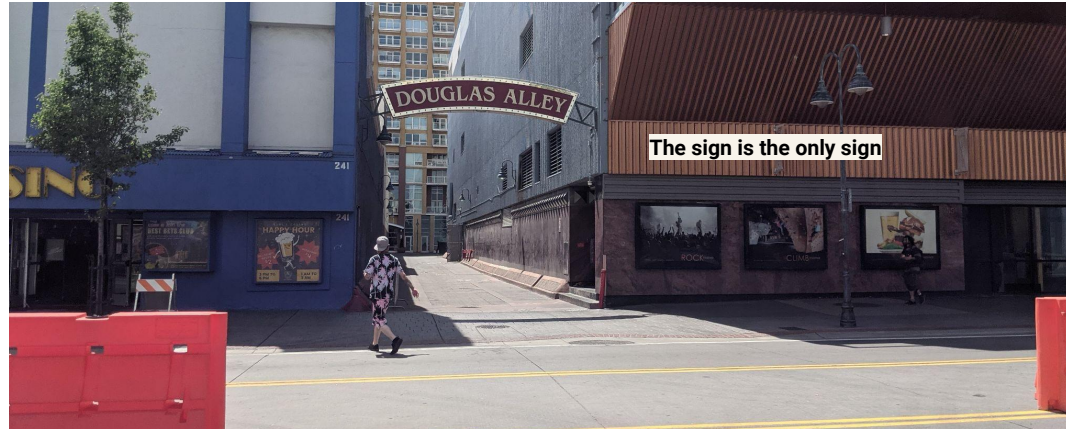
**Like the Arch,  
beloved historic  
buildings are fronted  
by unceremonious  
public space...**

**... and while parking  
is important, a better  
balance can be  
struck**



**Historic alleys are  
back of house with  
important service  
functions...**

**...but could serve as  
shortcuts for people  
walking and as  
programmable,  
human scale space**



**Murals soften  
surfaces and bring  
delight...**

**... but given the  
culture of creativity  
in Reno, arts  
programming could  
do more to activate  
Downtown...**

→ Source: Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority Visitor  
Profile Survey



## **Placemaking opportunities**

**Provide quality public space  
for appreciation of iconic  
signage and historical  
buildings, and include the  
alleyways in the Downtown  
public space network with art  
& programming**

Edge activation

Historical signage (art)

Wayfinding

Historical details

Lighting

Eyes on the street

Edge activation

Ample room for walking

Iconic, without  
visual clutter

All year attraction

Up close appreciation

Plaza space with  
seating and shade

Viewing platform

**03 Virginia Street physically connects well-visited downtown destinations, but few Renoites choose active mobility to get around**

**Renoites want  
Virginia Street to be  
safe and  
comfortable for  
people walking and  
wheeling...**

**...but appreciate  
being able to drive  
two-ways**

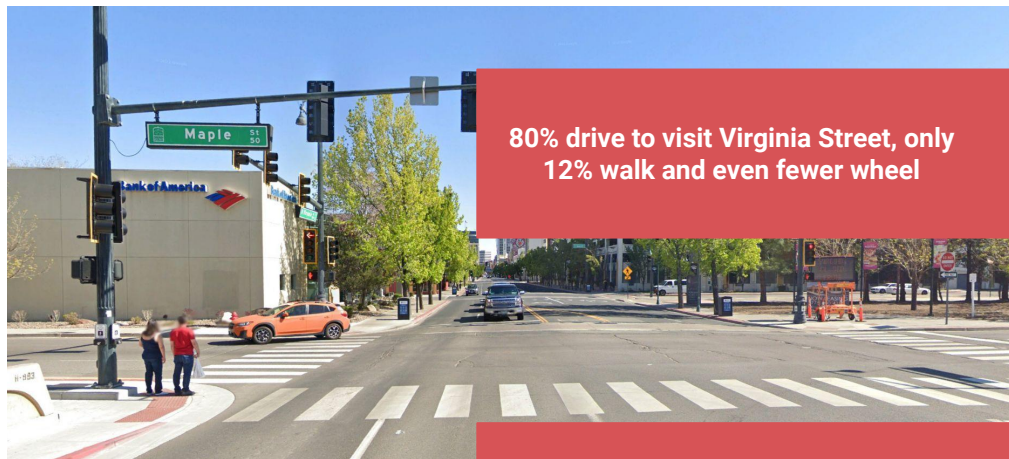
→ Source: The Future of Virginia Street online survey.



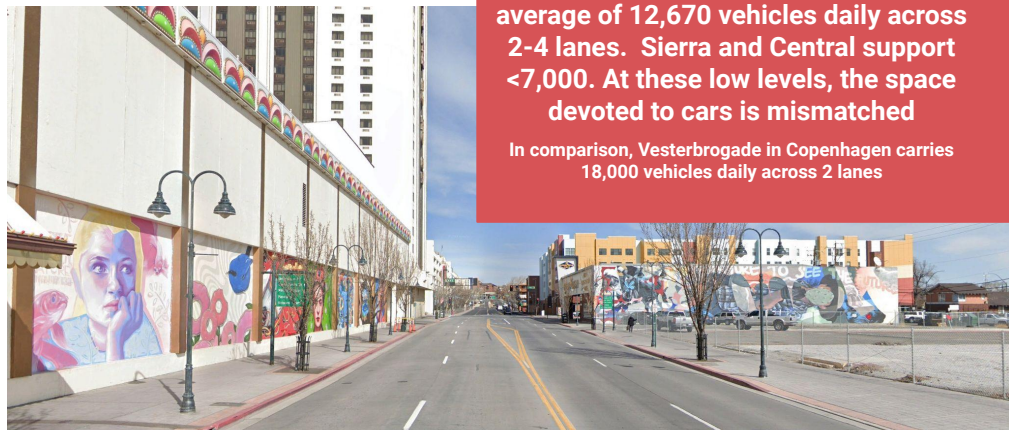
**Today, most Renoites drive to Virginia Street. But! After parking, drivers becomes pedestrians too!**

**Yet, streets with ample space for cars pose challenges to all other users.**

→ Source: The Future of Virginia Street online survey.



**80% drive to visit Virginia Street, only 12% walk and even fewer wheel**



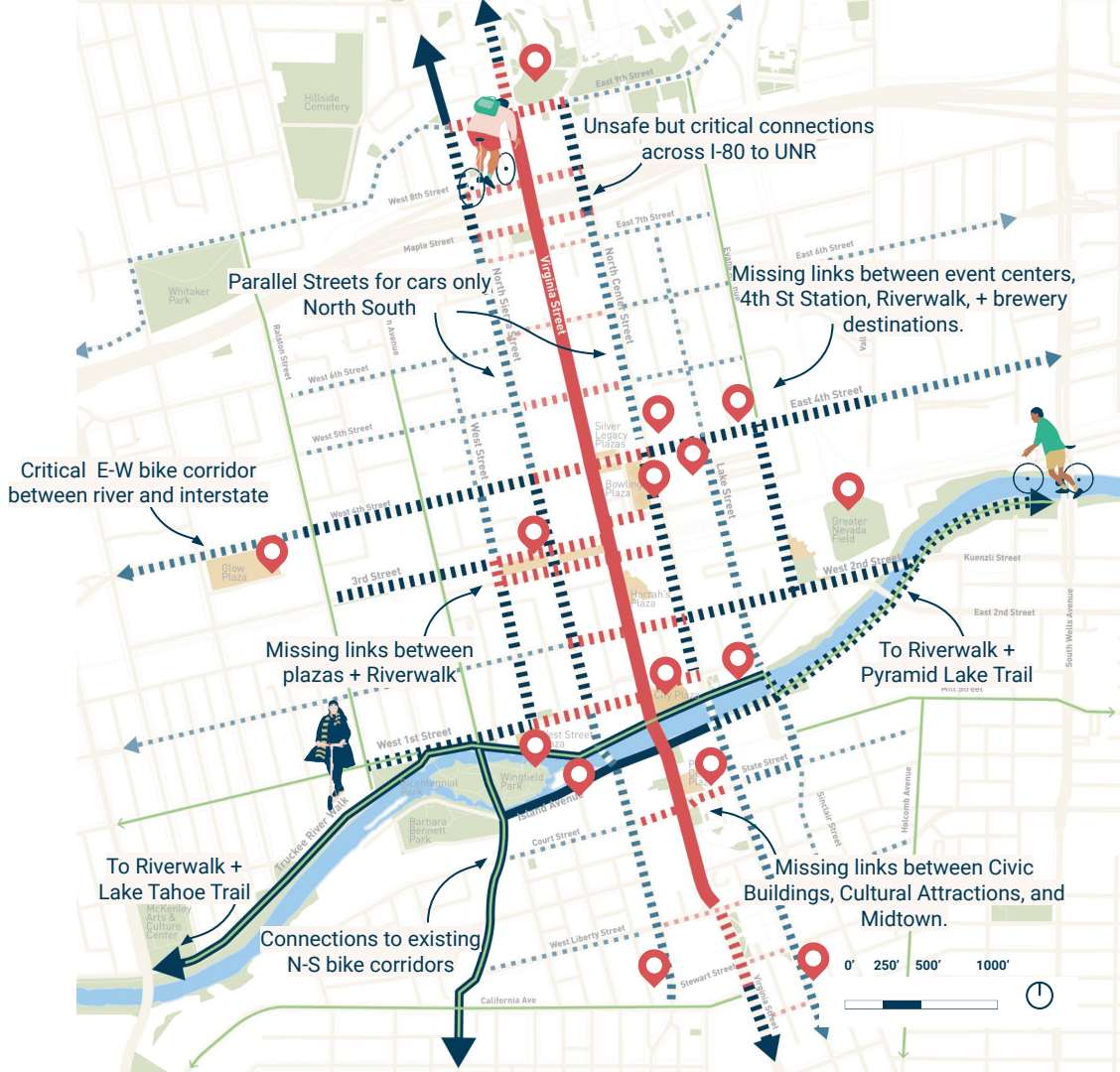
**Virginia Street carries an annual average of 12,670 vehicles daily across 2-4 lanes. Sierra and Central support <7,000. At these low levels, the space devoted to cars is mismatched**

**In comparison, Vesterbrogade in Copenhagen carries 18,000 vehicles daily across 2 lanes**

# Missing links between destinations for people walking and wheeling, make traveling without a car less desirable

- Project Area
- Existing Strong Connection
- Missing Links:  
immediate context  
highest-lowest priority

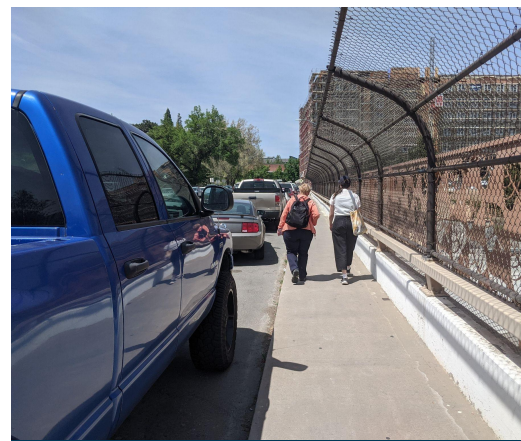
- Missing Links:  
downtown connectivity  
highest-lowest priority
- Existing Bike Link



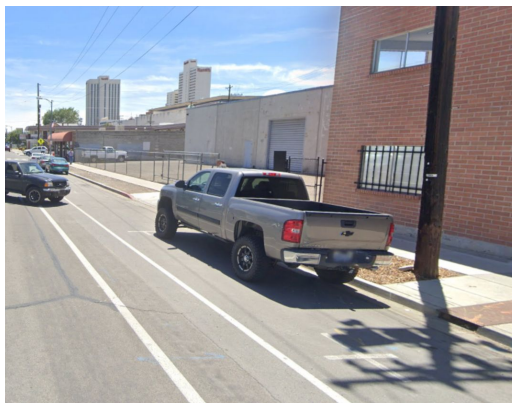
**When Renoites DO walk and wheel, they brave low quality sidewalk conditions, limited bike infrastructure, and are exposed to traffic and the elements...**



Wide streets and exposure to traffic



Narrow, exposed sidewalks



Bike lane protected parking



Summer or Winter, exposure is a challenge

**Large intersections with limited time to cross, wide turning radii, and fast and heavy traffic further discourage people from walking and wheeling plus increase the risk of crashes**

→ Source: NDOT crash data 2015-17



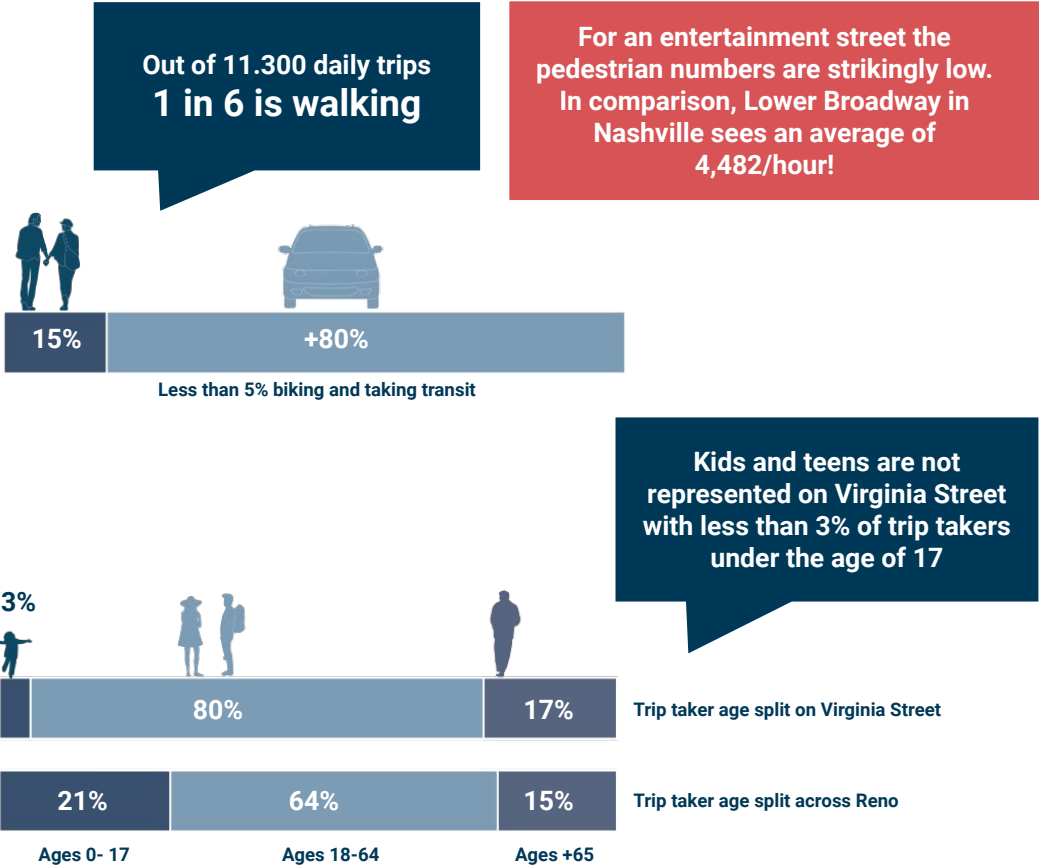
Intersection signaling  
is rarely in favor of  
non-drivers,  
increasing the risk of  
people crossing  
outside of designated  
crossing time



The numbers reflect few people walking and biking on Virginia Street...

...and a demographic split that is not representative of the Reno population

→ Source: Replica trip data by mode and by age groups



## **Placemaking opportunities**

**Elevate the baseline for  
active mobility users of all  
ages and abilities, with  
comfortable [and shaded]  
sidewalks, quality bike lanes,  
and safe crossings**

**Shade for people  
walking and rolling**

**Ample room for  
walking**

**Lighting**

**Parking protected  
cycle tracks**

**Travel lanes**

**Pedestrian  
refuge islands**

**Elevated crosswalks**



What We Heard, What We Saw

4<sup>th</sup> Ave



EXCEPT BICYCLES

Shade

Ample room for walking



Dedicated loading zones

Lighting

Even more shade!

Parking

Travel lanes

Buffered bike lanes

Short crossing distances

ADA ramps

Corner bulb outs

Bike marking

**04 Virginia Street is home to businesses that are an important part of the Downtown DNA, but lacks amenities and a local draw**

**Renoites see the casinos as an important part of Reno's DNA...**

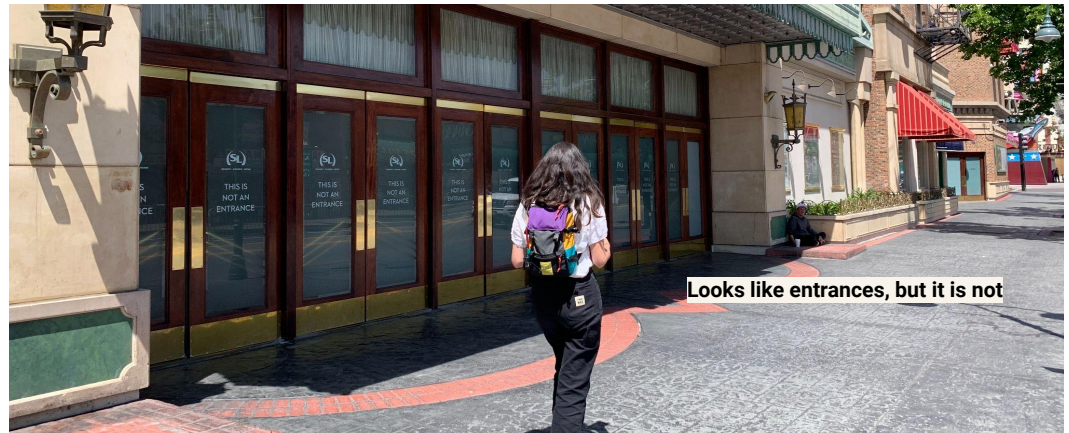
**...but want to see more local shops and eateries mixed in**



→ Source: The Future of Virginia Street online survey.

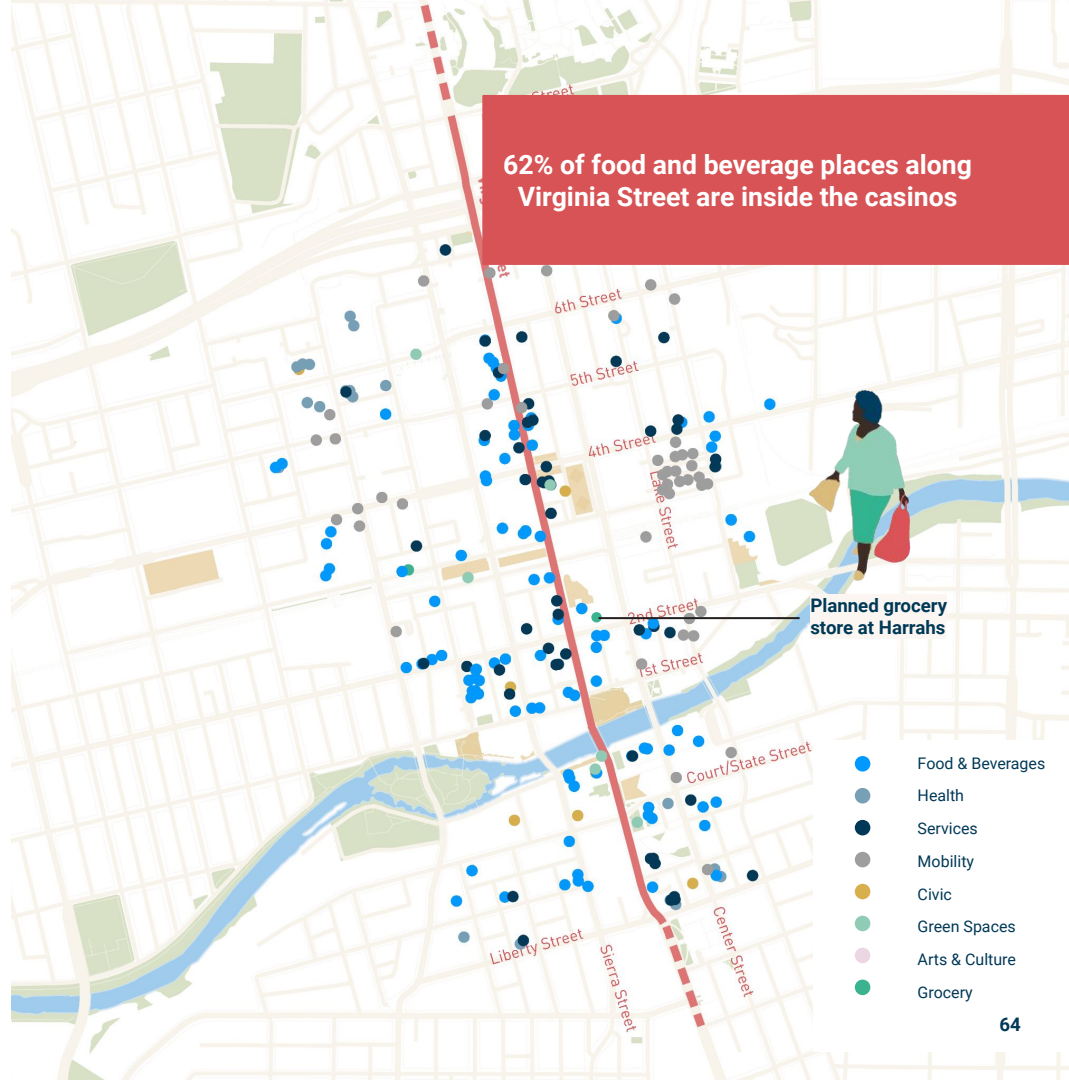
Large singular businesses turn their backs to the street with no or few entrances...

... limiting access to existing businesses



**Existing food and beverage places are off the street, and few have direct access from Virginia Street...**

**... this adds to an empty street**



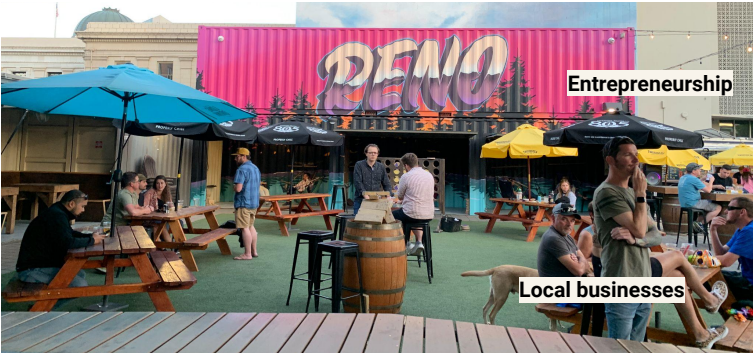
# Local attracts!

# Renoites love Midtown, with walkability, quirkiness, and its local businesses.

# More of THIS!



# And THIS!!!



## Placemaking opportunities

**Bring Reno entrepreneurs  
and Virginia Street property  
owners together to convert  
inactive ground floors to  
thriving businesses and  
amenities with local and  
visitor draw**

## Ground floor activation

Interaction between building  
function and street

Local business

Creative

Small scale

Colorful

Interaction between building  
function and street

Ground floor activation

Local business

Seating

Signage

Ample space for walking

Shade

# Aspirations for a Future Virginia Street

Insights are informed by:

- Workshops with City staff
- Conversations with Council members
- Responses to an online survey open to all Renoites through an online survey
- Site surveys
- Observational studies

These guide the project vision and goals on the following, that will set the stage for concept design recommendations

From a street locals avoid...

To a place that invites Renoites and visitors alike to linger...

From a special once per year event venue...

To a venue for recurring and regular happenings

From a street with little public life and low sense of safety

To a vibrant and lively street with high sense of safety

From an Instagram only art experience...

An ever-evolving canvas for arts and creativity

From a place with history...

To a place that celebrates the history and looks to the future

From a drive to destination place...

To a connected network to safely and comfortably walk and wheel

From a “grey” street exposed to the elements

To a “green” street with shade, shelter and ample tree canopy

From a retail, food and beverage on-street desert...

To a street with a rich diversity of culinary experiences

From large scale monofunctional and inactive street edges

To vibrant edges where local small-scale businesses thrive

**Change to become  
more like we are**



**Change to  
become different**

# Engagement Summary

## November 2022

In November 2022, the project team conducted in-person and online engagement focused on understanding the common challenges with Virginia Street today, and the desired qualities that Renoites would like to see on Virginia Street in the future.

The purpose with the engagement was to develop a consensus-based vision and series of goals for a future of Virginia Street, to serve as the guiding north star for conceptual programming and design recommendations.



### Stakeholder Conversations

With Local Businesses and Property Owners, Downtown Residents and UNR Students, the DRP Board, local and regional transportation authorities, the ROW, and the RSCVA



### Online and In-Person Survey

From November 2 to November 17, **481** Renoites responded to the Second “Future of Virginia Street Survey. An additional **25** responded to an identical physical survey at the open house.

### Open House Presentation and Mixer

On November 2, the “What We Hear and What We Saw” chapter of the placemaking study was presented at the McKinley Arts & Culture Center. The presentation was open to the public, live streamed online, and the recording of the presentation was posted to the project website. Approximately 60 Renoites attended the event live and 45 attended virtually.

# Engagement Summary

## November 2022

The predominant themes from the engagement highlights a desire to better balance Virginia Street as a place for events with everyday activities. Renoites want to see changes to the street itself and further activation of the built edge and the adjacent public spaces.

Note: For a detailed summary of the survey results and the compiled response data supplement, please refer to the *Engagement Round 2: Survey Data Appendix*.

Of the four major findings in “What We Heard, What We Saw,” that “Virginia Street draws locals and visitors alike for events, but is not a place that Renoites gravitate towards everyday” was selected by over 50% of respondents as the most resonant.

When asked what role they could play in the transformation of Virginia Street, the majority of respondents said “visiting more.” About a fifth of respondents also responded with “Actively participating in programming.”

When asked what additional information should be taken into consideration for the Future of Virginia Street, perceptions of security and concerns around balancing circulation modes were the most common responses

For The Future of Virginia Street Renoites want to see:

- Ample seating for a variety of configurations, uses, and group sizes
- Comfortable, shaded environments
- Places active across all times of day and seasons of the year
- Shade trees and lush shrub plantings
- Spaces organized around a pedestrian scale
- Smaller-scale gatherings
- A diverse age range, specifically inclusive of children and elders
- Activations of liminal spaces
- Active ground floor facades with businesses that spill into the street
- Commercial offerings for everyday needs (eg. groceries, cafes)

# Project Vision & Goals



# The future of Virginia Street

## Vision Statement & Placemaking Goals

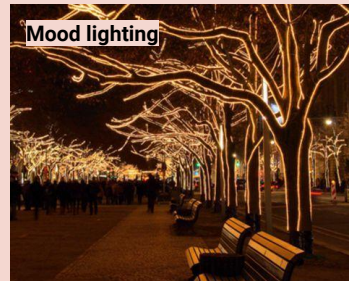
- A** 18/7 Activation & Programming
- B** Platform for Creativity & Innovation
- C** Enhanced Connectivity & Climate
- D** Local Economic Development

**Virginia Street is the backbone of the downtown neighborhood. It connects the City's assets, is a platform for creativity, and is a safe and inviting place to walk or spend time for Renoites and visitors alike.**

# A 18/7 Activation & Programming

## Strengthen the invitations for everyday life with...

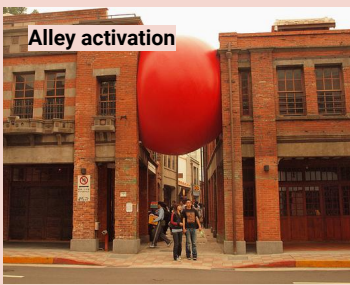
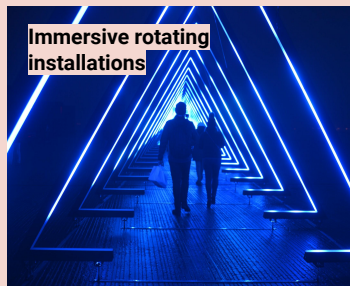
- Invitations to sit, rest, and linger, for shorter and longer periods of time
- High quality inclusive, intergenerational public space that offer a variety of amenities
- 18/7 activation and programming with adjacencies that invite diverse groups of people to spend time and interact
- A programming cadence that invites people to spend time everyday, all year, and outside of special events
- Reinforced perception of safety through a more diverse public life profile, active edges, and eyes on the street



# B Platform for Creativity & Innovation

## Bring Reno's culture of creativity and innovation to the street through...

- Incentives for local makers to create installations and deliver engaging activation and programming
- Leveraging the iconic signage and facades with stronger viewing platforms that spark curiosity and social connection
- Celebrating the historic alleyways with activation turning them from backsides into complementary public spaces and shortcuts for people on foot and wheels



# C Enhanced Connectivity & Climate

## Support connectivity and climate with...

- A well-defined identity that invites visitors from adjacent districts and provide a sense of belonging for downtown residents
- A walking experience with convenient and direct connections, and opportunities for leisurely strolls and discoveries
- Clearly defined access for all modes, that improves real and perceived safety and encourages people of all ages and abilities to use active mobility
- Lush planting that represents Reno's natural beauty and connects from the Truckee River to the University
- A comfortable microclimate and protection from the elements all year round



Ample room for walking



Dedicated bike access



Integrated multimodality



Epic tree canopy



Accented tree plantings



More green!



Local habitat



Local stormwater management



Shade - Shade - Shade

# D Local Economic Development

## Focus economic growth on local entrepreneurship and daily needs through...

- Bringing neighborhood amenities on to, and adjacent to, Virginia Street making it possible to meet daily needs within a 15 minute walk
- Lowering the barrier for entry for local entrepreneurs, with small-scale affordable commercial spaces, curated to offer a diverse range of commerce, and food and beverage at varied price points



# Recommendations & Concept Alternatives



# Strategic moves

01

**Celebrate the character areas**

02

**Elevate the baseline**

03

**Connect the dots**

04

**Activate the underutilized**

05

**Activate the edges**

Placemaking Profiles      Placemaking design, activation, + programming concepts

# 1 Strategic move

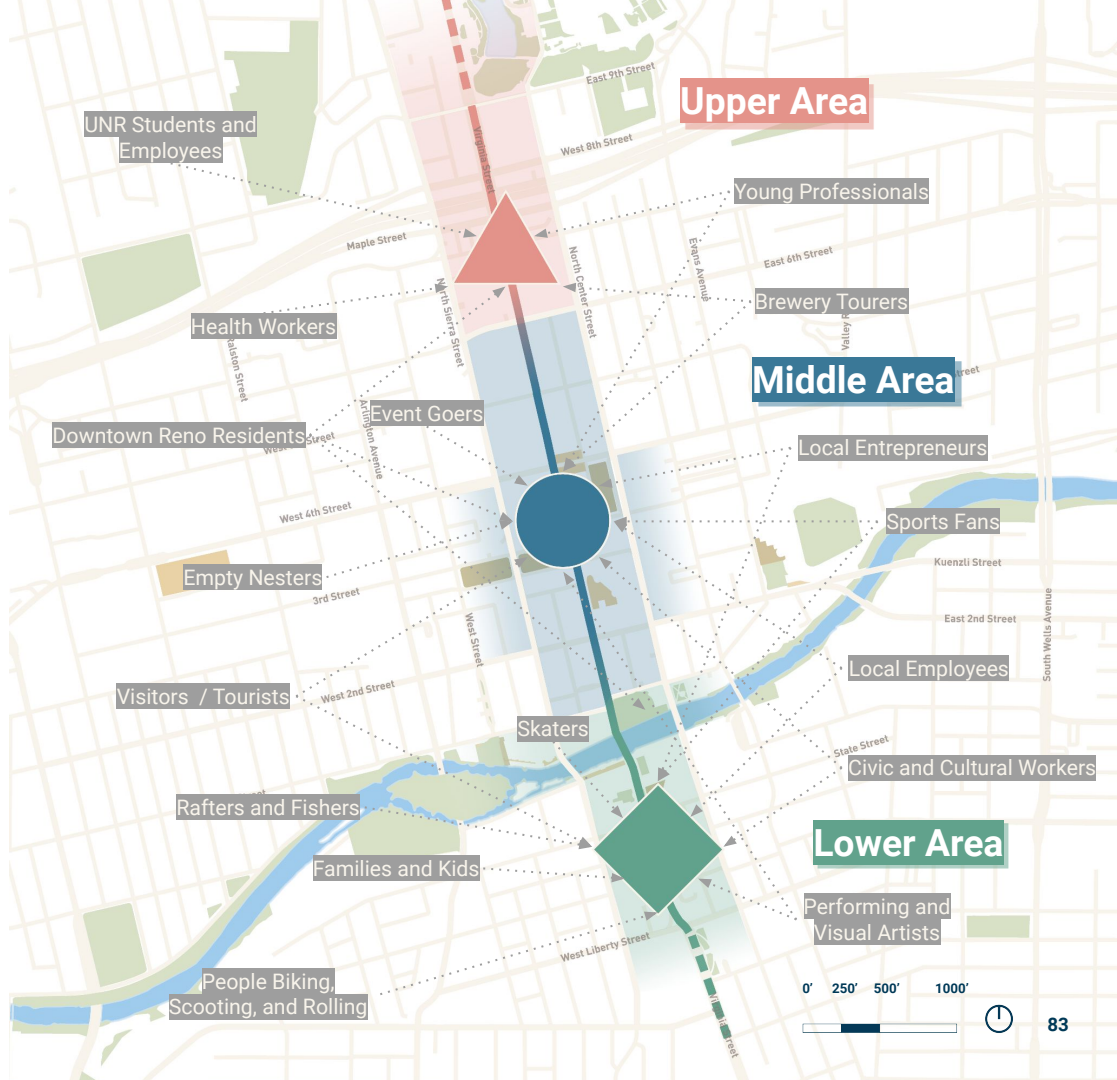
## Celebrate the character areas

Deliver context responsive street design and programming that caters to the needs and desires of the unique user groups within each of Downtown Virginia Street's sub-areas, creating a varied experience along its length.

### Why it's important

- Today's Virginia Street doesn't respond to the unique contexts of its North, Central, and South sections, resulting static offerings and limited public life activity
- While there is limited street and edge activity along Virginia Street today, placemaking actions should build on who is already in and adjacent to the street to secure a more thriving future

Note: The following 3 pages provides a baseline Placemaking Profile for each of the character areas. Specific design, activation, and programming concepts are further detailed in the following 4 Strategic Moves



## Placemaking Profile

# Upper area

### Virginia Street

Student life meets a local workforce, existing and novel businesses, and new and improved small scale public space. These offerings provide a platform for everyday life with places to comfortably sit, meet, enjoy a quiet moment of respite, and socialize with friends, neighbors, and colleagues

#### Who is here

- UNR Students & Employees
- Young Adults
- Young Professionals
- Downtown Reno Residents
- Local Businesses & Employees
- Health Employees (St. Mary's)

#### The Draw

- Local small-scale businesses plus affordable food and beverage offerings
- Amenities that cater to local residents, from daycare to a grocery store
- An active streetscape with places to sit, socialize, wait for transit, and grab a drink or a bite

#### Measures of success

- Students, young professionals, and local residents feel safe and choose to walk and bike to accessible and affordable local amenities and food and beverage offerings
- Existing Reno businesses are provided with brick and mortar opportunities, increasing the presence of local businesses that drawing locals and visitors while celebrating Reno's entrepreneurial spirit
- Visitors and tourist cite local draws as common interests, expand their sphere of Downtown experiences, and choose to stay longer in Downtown Reno

## Placemaking Profile

# Middle area

### Virginia Street

**Downtown Reno's history, present, and future meet as weekly, monthly, and annual events draw locals and visitors alike. Iconic gateways and public art supports an active and engaging public realm where active building edges offer both to-go, quick-bite, and dining patios with a side of people watching.**

#### Who is here

- Visitors / Tourists
- Event-goers
- Young Professionals
- Empty Nesters
- Local Businesses & Employees
- Downtown Reno Residents
- Non-downtown Reno Residents

#### The Draw

- Memorable gateways with viewing platforms that double as meeting places
- Engaging public art
- Lunch spots, dining, and nightlife
- Weekly/monthly repeat markets, combined with additional programming at Locomotion Plaza
- Continued, larger scale annual events with full street closures

#### Measures of success

- Downtown Reno's relationship with the City's culture of creativity, entrepreneurship, and the arts increases
- Tourist and event-goers stay longer and report increased satisfaction with their time in Reno and Downtown's offerings
- Local businesses diversify, orient to the street, and see an increase in patrons
- Reported increase in safety and satisfaction, with amenity offerings for residents, employees, and visitors resulting in an increase in walking in Downtown

## Placemaking Profile

# Lower area

### Virginia Street

**Reno's civic and cultural life meets the Riverwalk, where local residents, workers, and visitors intersect with local entrepreneurs and creatives to enjoy active recreation and play for all ages in a balanced natural and urban setting**

#### Who is here

- Families and Kids
- Teens / Young Adults
- Local entrepreneurs
- Civic and Cultural Workers
- Local Businesses & Employees
- Downtown Reno Residents
- Non-downtown Reno Residents
- Visitors / Tourists

#### The Draw

- Cultural programming in key public spaces like Pioneer Center Plaza and Believe Plaza
- Local businesses and eateries
- Natural setting with increased access and connectivity to the Truckee River and the Riverwalk
- Improved connectivity to Midtown
- Play and active recreation for all ages

#### Measures of success

- Reno's entrepreneurial and innovative spirit is experienced in the public realm and at eye-level through high quality front porches to existing and new businesses
- Employees and patrons of cultural and civic offerings choose to walk between their destinations and local businesses and eateries
- Downtown's relationship to the incredible natural backdrop of the Sierra Nevadas is strengthened through improved access to Truckee River, increased nature in the City, and more people participating in active recreation

# 2 Strategic move

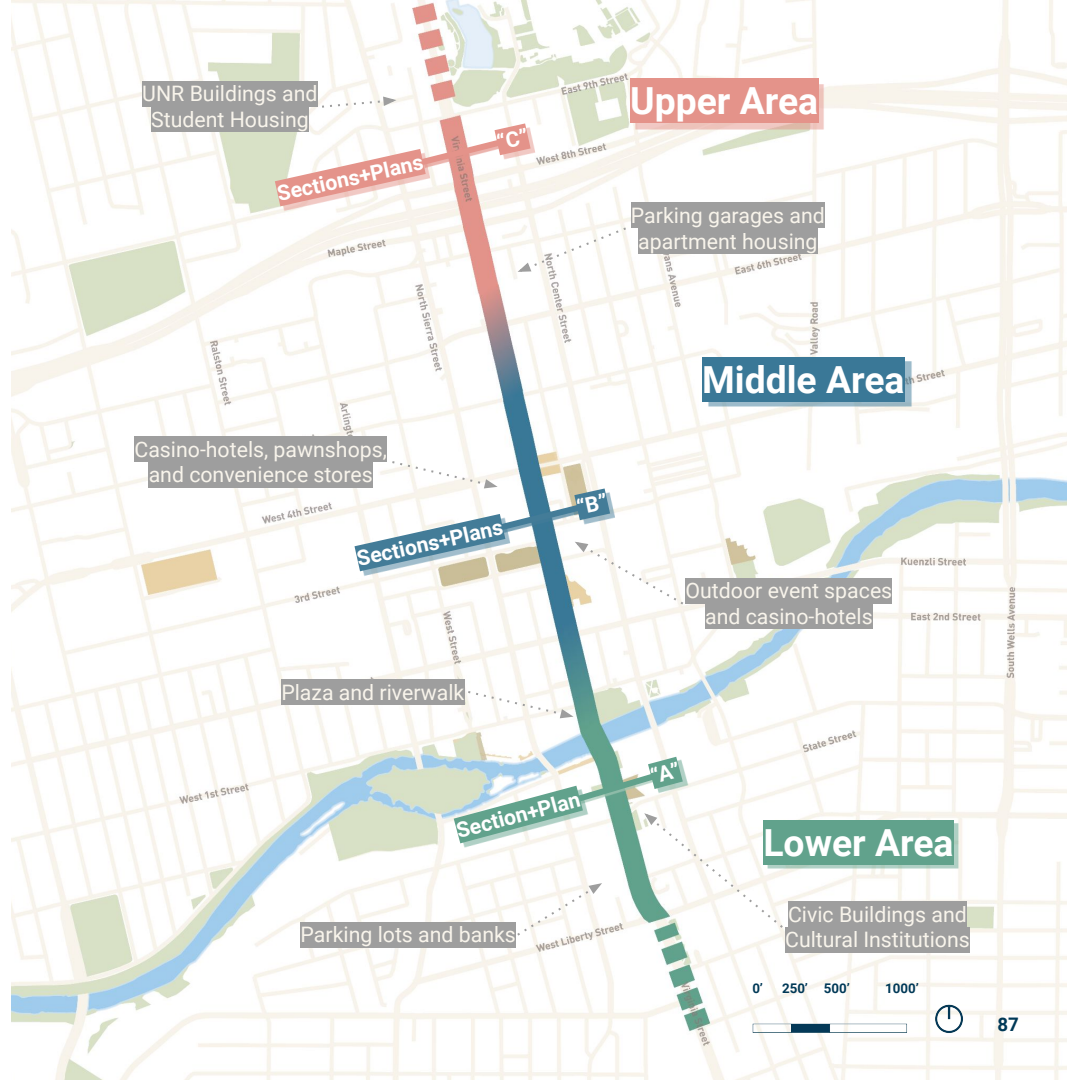
## Elevate the baseline

Make Virginia Street **the** downtown connector through a continuous street treatment, roadway redesign, and amplified placemaking. Transform Virginia street into a place where people linger for short and long everyday experiences by designing for all modes and providing a safe, comfortable, and enjoyable journey.

### Why it's important

- Today's Virginia Street promotes speed by design and is dominated by vehicular traffic
- There is limited protection from traffic and the elements and limited options to sit and meet along the way or enjoy outdoor serving at a local establishment
- Virginia, Sierra, and Center Streets are overbuilt for today's vehicular volumes. There is an opportunity to allocate through-traffic capacity off Virginia St.

Note: The following pages outline a series of actions, focused predominantly on physical improvements to the Virginia Street streetscape and conceptual designs for how to manifest the actions in a physical response.



## 2 Placemaking actions

# Elevate the baseline

The placemaking actions in Strategic Move 2 focus on improvements to the existing conditions that can be achieved within the public right of way for better access people of all modes, ages and abilities, alongside small-scale placemaking improvements to invite people to stop and stay.



Invest in furnishing zone improvements, with public seating of varying types that invites for shorter and longer stays

Secure continuous, generous, and unobstructed sidewalks, building on today's ample sidewalks

Integrate event infrastructure into the plan for the redesigned streetscape, with electrical access and operational plans for pre and post event staging

Integrate shade and protection from the elements, such as tree canopy, awnings, and free-standing shade structures in targeted locations within the furnishing zone. Identify where tree planting is not a viable solution due to underground utilities or structures and consider shade structures

Implement continuous protected bike lanes for people biking and wheeling, complementing the ongoing downtown-wide plan for a connected micro-mobility network

Pilot a public seating program that invites local artist and entrepreneurs to submit ideas for a 'Reno Bench' through an artist call for submissions

Include short term pick up drop off (PUDO) and loading zones in select locations on each block

Invest in a Downtown Reno branding and identity strategy that showcase the diversity of experiences that Downtown has to offer

Integrate native planting zones within the furnishings zone for improved stormwater management and heat island effect mitigation

Design for slow speeds, with two-way access for vehicles, while limiting through traffic with signal timing that promotes slow speeds and encourages through traffic to take other North / South parallels routes

Consider how new street furniture can complement and enhance the character of the street with its historic facades and iconic signage

# 2

## Placemaking actions

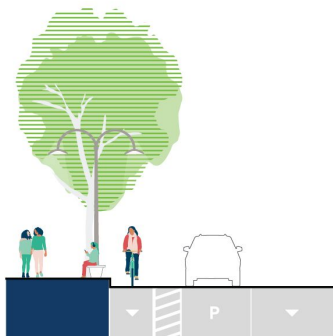
# Elevate the baseline

### Principles for Virginia Street cross sections

This page provides an overview of the key right of way components represented in the further detailed conceptual designs on the following pages.

The proposed upgrades to the street do not include a continuous modification of the existing curb, rather changes to number of vehicle travel lanes to allow space for protected bike lanes and on street parking. Curb modification only apply to special condition areas such as in relation to integration of on-street parking and where bike lanes meet parking and bus stops. Preserving the existing curb is cost efficient, as it will not require regrading the street and making changes to drainage.

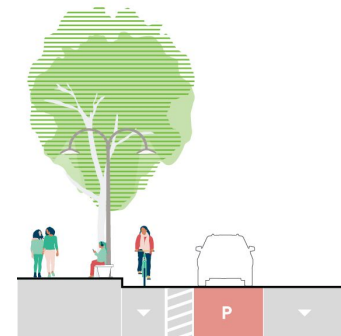
Note: The proposed concept designs do not include an exploration of a street plaza concept for the central part of Virginia Street, as this is not a feasible solution for Virginia Street of the near future. Rather, a plaza concept is something to be explored in a future scenario were successful placemaking have increased the public life activity of Virginia Street.



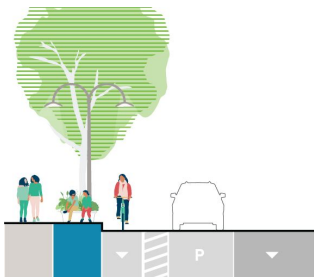
**Maintain existing curbs**  
to prioritize ample sidewalk space and minimize construction cost



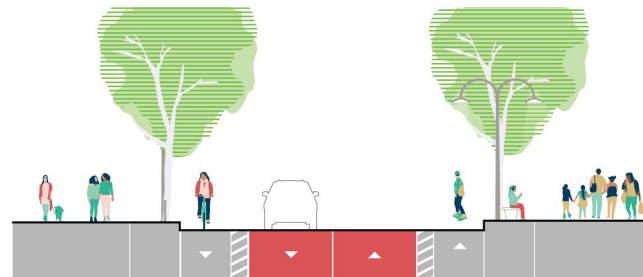
**Add protected bike lanes**  
to prioritize active mobility



**Increase on-street parking**  
to improve business access and calm traffic



**Expand the furnishing zone**  
to include seating, shade, bike racks and micro-mobility parking, and increased street greening and wayfinding



**Go to one lane, two-way vehicle lane configuration**  
with parallel couplet streets providing an alternative route for swift through traffic, to further improve safety for all modes

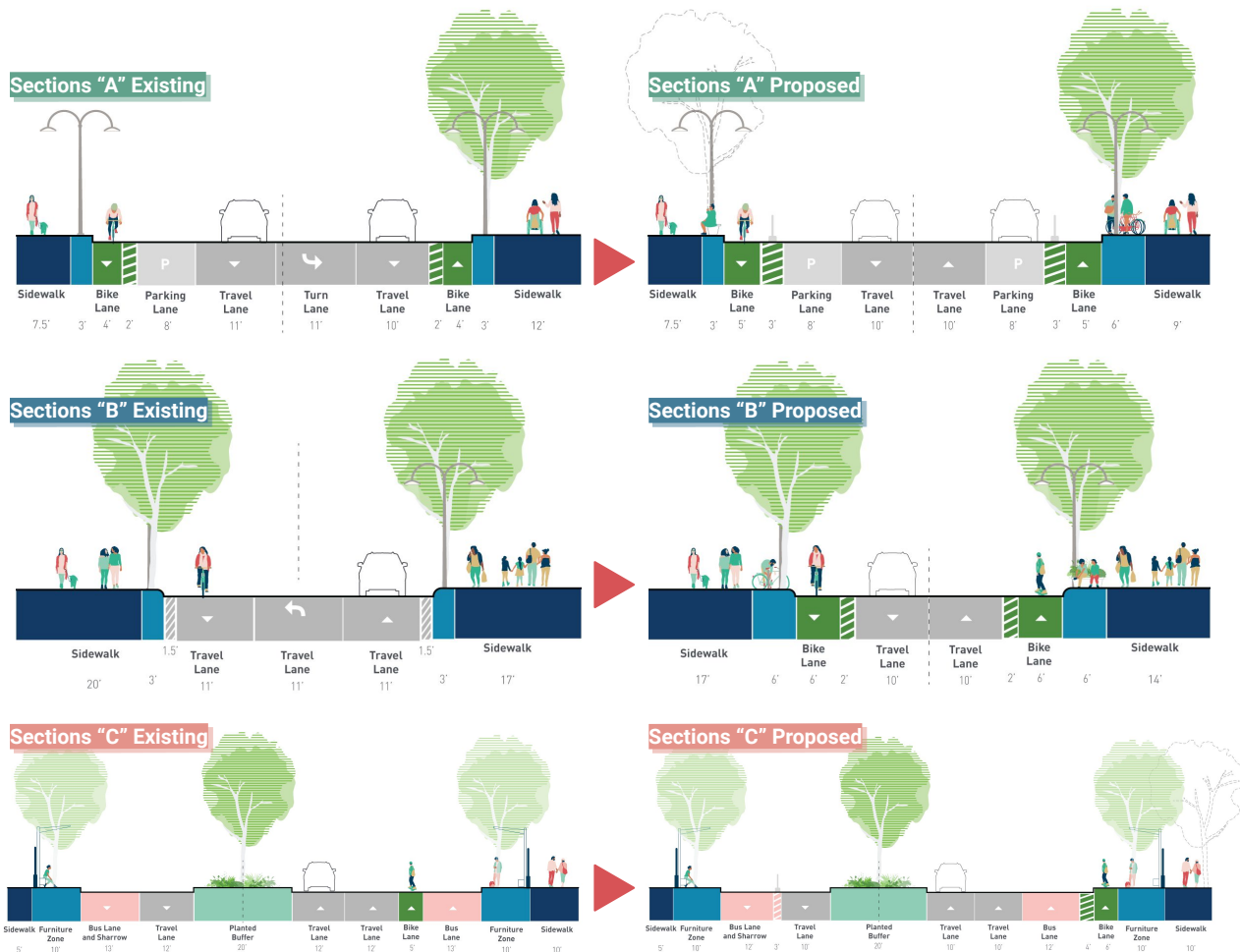
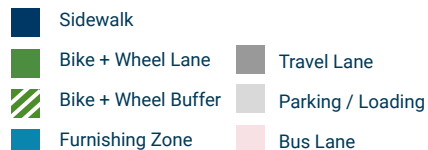
# 2 Placemaking actions

## Elevate the baseline

### Existing vs. proposed road sections

This page provides an overview of the proposed representative conceptual changes to the right of way, corresponding with the 3 primary street typology conditions along Downtown Virginia Street.

The proposed is further detailed on the following pages.



# 2 Placemaking actions






## Elevate the baseline

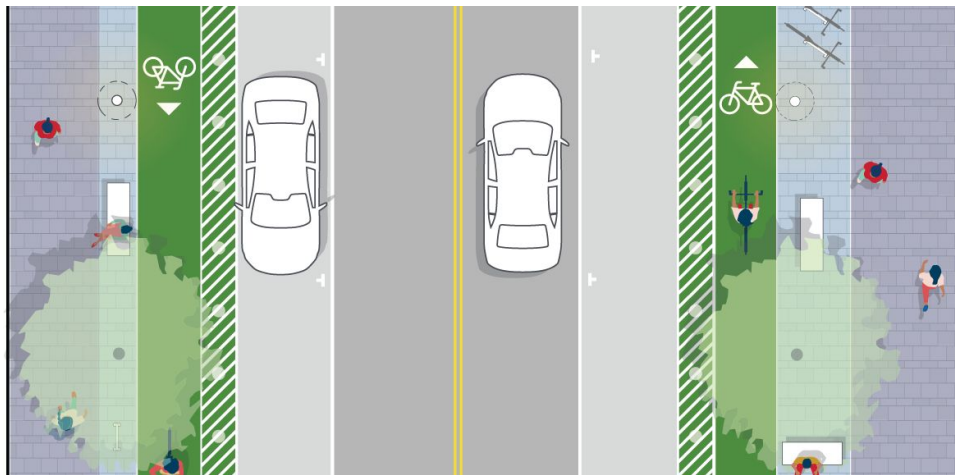
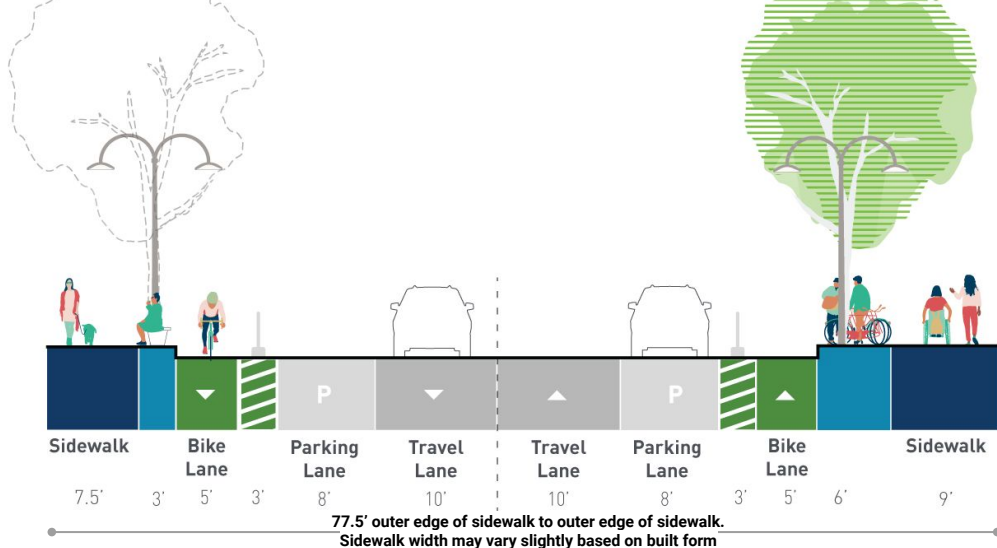
### Lower area - Pioneer Center section

This section applies between Liberty Street and the Truckee River. It expands on the new parking protected bike facilities between State and Liberty Street by providing additional parking for visitors to the Pioneer Center.

#### Additional Considerations

- Provide bike lanes through the intersection of Virginia and Liberty Streets to prioritize people biking and wheeling as they transition from a protected lane to a sharrows lane.
- Explore expanding tree coverage in front of historic buildings such as the Reno Court House.

	Through Zone		Travel Lane
	Bike + Wheel Lane		Parking / Loading
	Bike + Wheel Buffer		Bus Lane
	Furnishing Zone		



# 2

## Placemaking actions

### Elevate the baseline

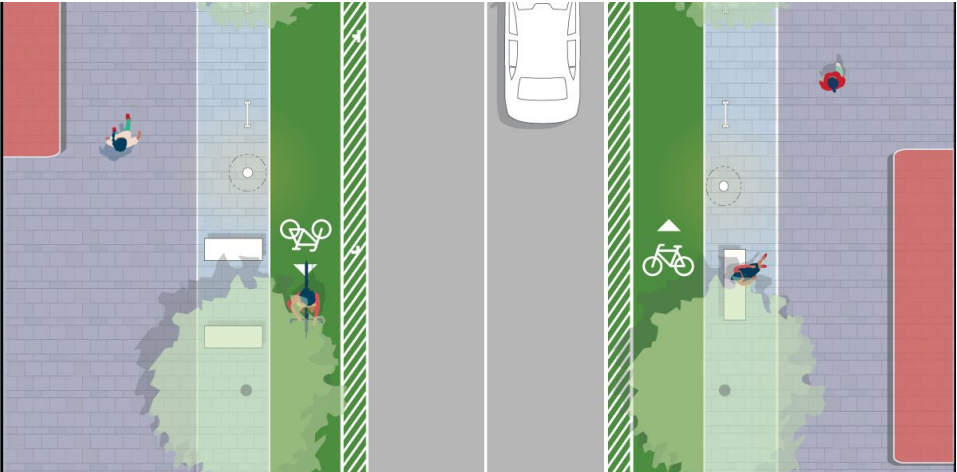
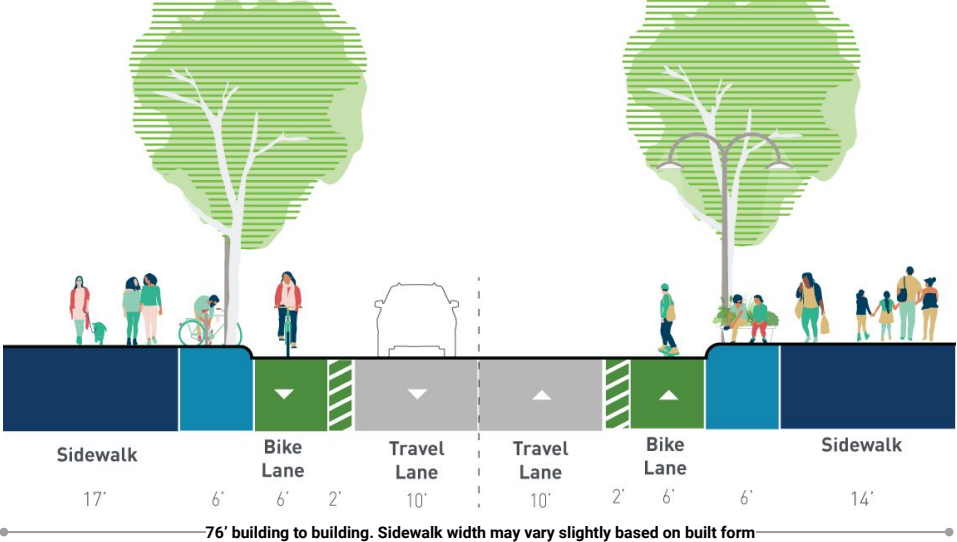
#### Middle area - typical section

This section grouping applies between 1st and 4th Streets, expanding on the existing parking pullouts and integrating them with protected bike facilities on each side of the road.

#### Additional Considerations

- Given that the constrained right of way and existing basements preclude adding trees in much of the Middle Area, consider incentivising awnings to provide a continuous shaded through zone for people walking.

Through Zone	Travel Lane
Bike + Wheel Lane	Parking / Loading
Bike + Wheel Buffer	Bus Lane
Furnishing Zone	



# 2 Placemaking actions

## Elevate the baseline

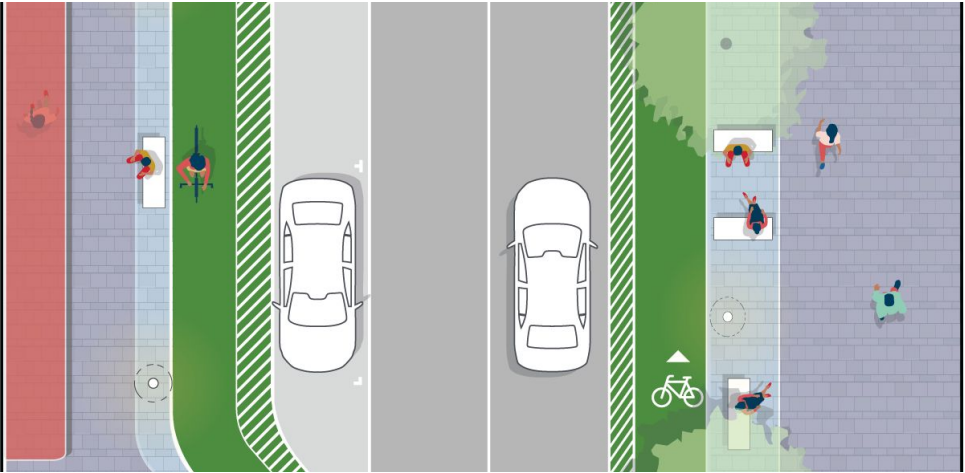
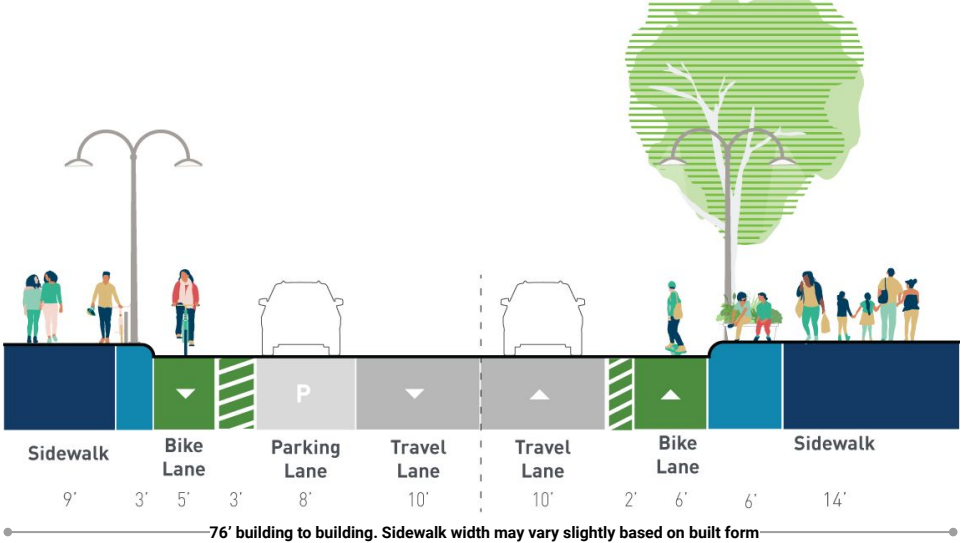
### Middle area - special condition

This section grouping applies between 1st and 4th Streets, expanding on the existing parking pullouts and integrating them with protected bike facilities on each side of the road.

#### Additional Considerations

- Consider installing plantings in the liminal spaces created by parking pullouts for stormwater management, traffic buffering, and beautification.

Through Zone	Travel Lane
Bike + Wheel Lane	Parking / Loading
Bike + Wheel Buffer	Bus Lane
Furnishing Zone	



# 2

## Placemaking actions

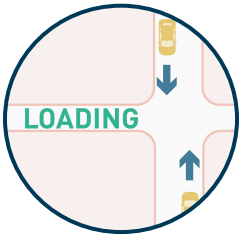
# Elevate the baseline

### Middle area - parking strategies

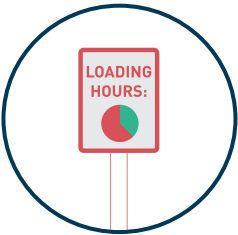
While most Renoites currently access Virginia Street via private vehicles, the demand for on-street parking needs to be weighed against the project vision of a more inviting and vibrant Virginia Street for walking and spending time.

This page outlines five strategies that can be deployed to more effectively utilize the existing Virginia Street roadbed for private vehicle access.

Given the existing public and private parking stock available in garages neighboring Virginia Street, adding additional parking spaces should only be considered after the potential existing parking stock has been fully utilized.



**Move loading of goods**  
off of Virginia Street and into  
alleys/side streets



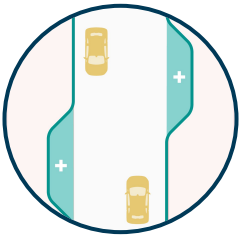
**Improve enforcement of  
loading zones and times**



**Add designated pickup/dropoff**  
to pre-existing loading spaces  
on Virginia Street



**Experiment with short term parking**  
in select locations on Virginia Street



**Explore adding pickup/dropoff  
spots to high demand areas**

# 2 Placemaking actions

## Elevate the baseline

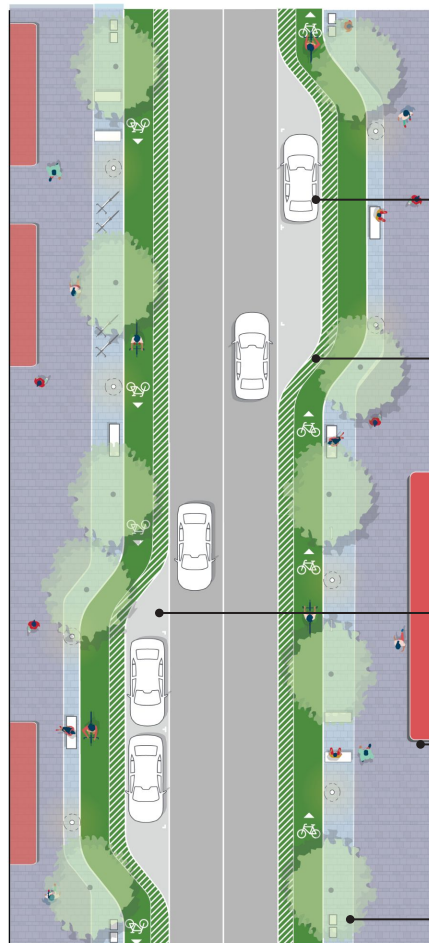
### Middle area - special condition

Between 1st and 4th streets along Virginia St, expand the existing loading pullouts to create more short term parking, pick-up and drop-off, and loading zones on each block.

#### Additional Considerations

- Parking should alternate between the East and West side of the Street and be offset so one side of Virginia Street is always shaded by trees.
- Bike lanes should shift behind parked vehicles to provide additional protection for active mobility.
- Formalizing pick up, drop off, and loading locations is a key element of reducing potential conflicts with expanded active mobility lanes.

Note: Between 4th Street and I-80, the expanded roadbed can be used to create continuous rows of parallel parking. Along corridors with over designed roadways, converting travel lanes into parking is an efficient way to calm traffic and protect bike lanes while supporting local businesses.



Parking pullouts are offset and alternated so one side of the street is always shaded with trees

Bike lane shifts behind parked cars to provide additional protection to people biking

Between 4th and I-80, consider using the expanded roadbed to provide continuous rows of parallel parking

Explore incentive programs to encourage property owners to provide awnings along the streetscape

Trash and recycling bins consistently placed within the furnishing zone

# 2

## Placemaking actions









# Elevate the baseline

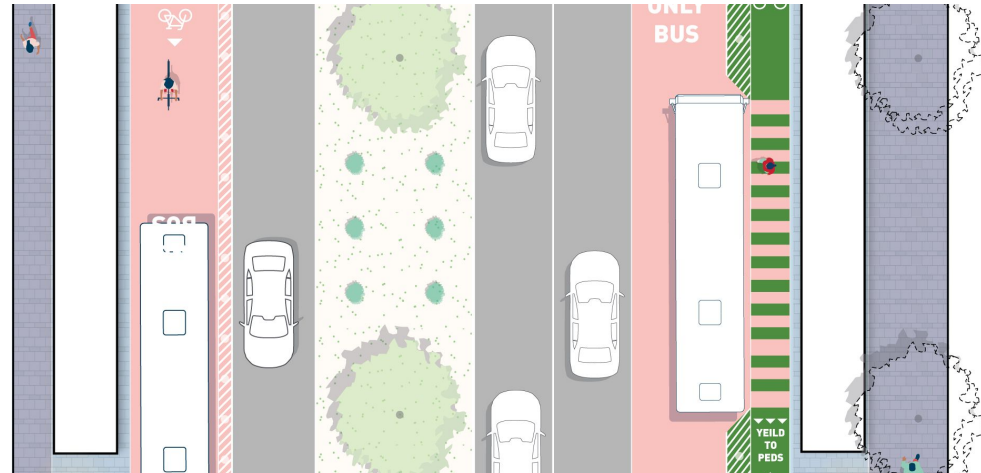
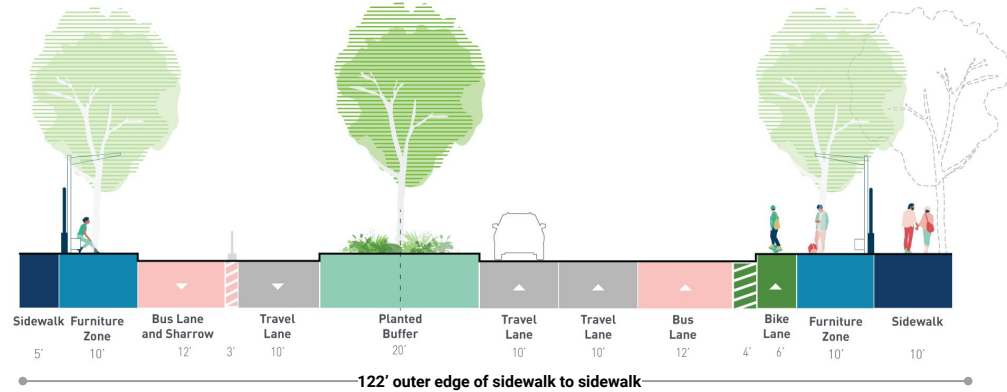
### Upper Area - existing improved

This section applies to Virginia Street between 8th and 9th Streets.

### Additional Considerations

- Bike lanes will only be raised to sidewalk level at the transit stops to provide a level surface for people boarding busses.
- Alternatively, consider rerouting the Virginia bike lanes to University Way in order to cross the interstate.

	Through Zone		Planted Buffer
	Bike + Wheel Lane		Travel Lane
	Bike + Wheel Buffer		Parking / Loading
	Furnishing Zone		Bus Lane



# 2 Placemaking actions

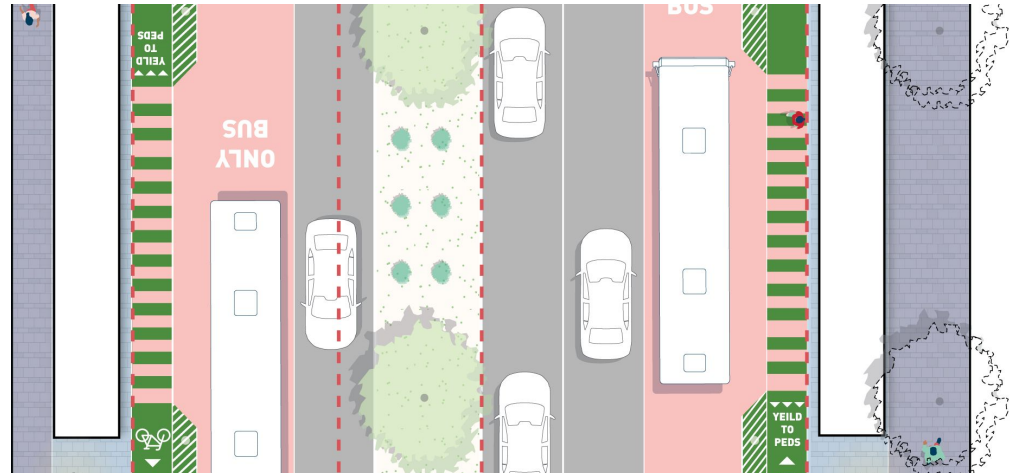
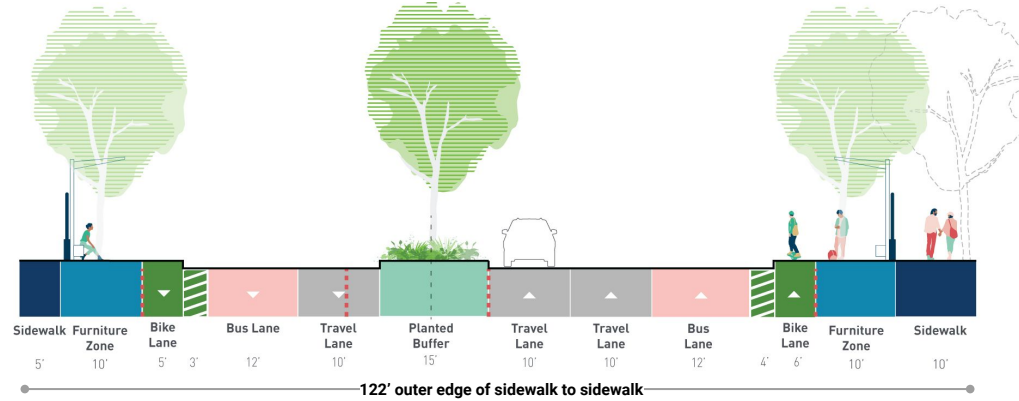
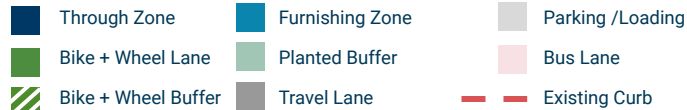
## Elevate the baseline

### Upper Area - proposed reconstruction

This section applies to Virginia Street between 8th and 9th Streets and assumes a redesign of the central median to compensate for the lack of a Southbound bike lane.

### Additional Considerations

- Bike lanes will only be raised to sidewalk level at the transit stops to provide a level surface for people boarding busses.
- Any reconstruction of the blocks between the Interstand and 9th also need to be considered in conjunction with the northern street context as it stretches into UNR, ideally creating a protected bike and dedicated bus network throughout.



# 2 Placemaking actions

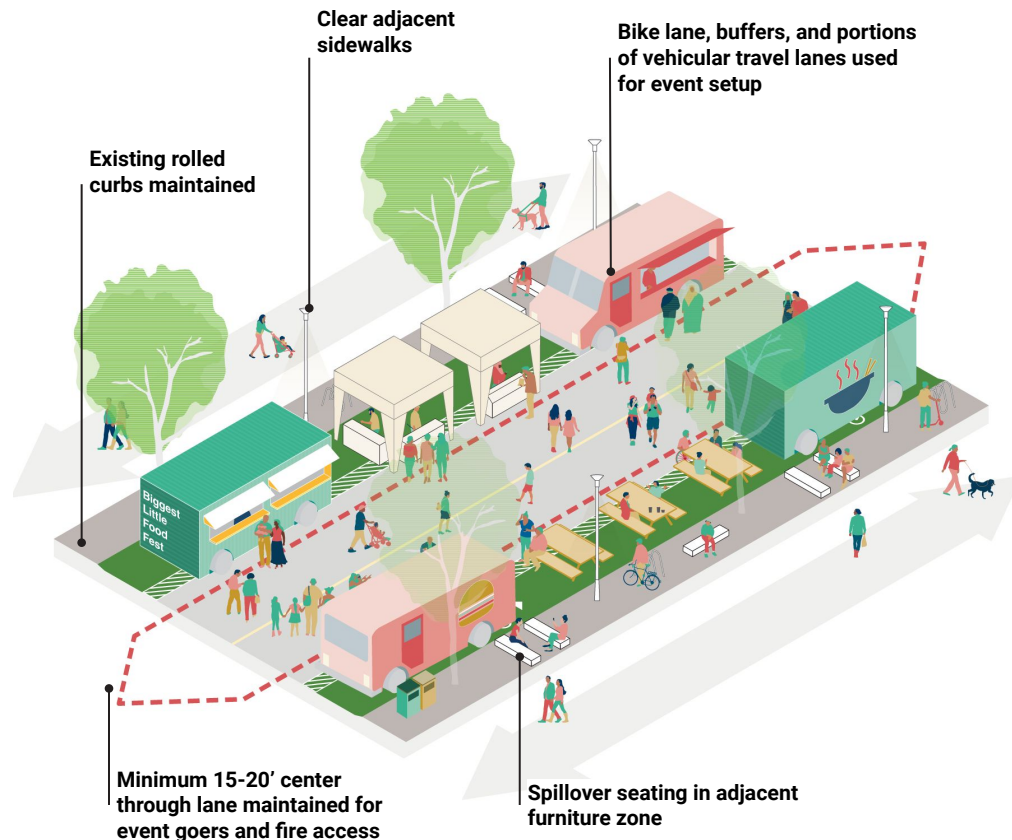
## Elevate the baseline

### Events along Virginia Street

Street closures for annual events is an integral part of public life on Virginia Street, and the proposed streetscape configurations allows for a continuation of the established event layout.

- The proposed streetscape generally maintains the existing rolled curbs along Virginia Street.
- This diagram depicts an events set up along the narrower portion of Virginia Street from 2nd -4th Streets. From 4th-6th Streets, a wider roadbed along Virginia Street allows for a wider through zone or expanded event tents.

Note: Vertical delineators in the bike buffer may prove expensive to re-install and remove for events. Instead, deploy the other traffic calming actions to create a safe and comfortable biking experience.



# 3 Strategic move

## Connect the dots

Improve Downtown's connectivity for people walking and wheeling. Start with the intersections along Virginia Street and by strengthening key East-West connections to surrounding districts and destinations, complementing improvements to Virginia Street itself.

### Why it's important

- Today, intersections along Virginia Street do not cater to people walking and wheeling
- Links to downtownwide assets and destinations are poor, uncomfortable, and discourage people from getting out of their car and seeking other modes of transport
- Virginia Street is part of a network and cannot succeed in isolation
- Providing strong contractions for people to walk and wheel in between existing assets comes with positive environmental, social, and economic impacts



# 3 Placemaking actions

## Connect the dots

The placemaking actions in Strategic Move 3 focus on improvements to the existing conditions that can be achieved within the public right of way of Virginia Street itself and the intersect with all cross streets.



Upgrade all intersections along Virginia Street with tightened corner radii and upgraded crosswalk and bike markings

Change the downtown signal timing to slow traffic speeds and better cater to people walking, biking, and wheeling

Consider how further upgrades to special condition intersections along Virginia Street, like the northern freeway access intersections and the southern intersection at Liberty Street, can be implemented to further improve conditions for people walking, biking, and wheeling.

Note: Changes to the complex intersections around the freeway will require further studies and engineering detailing to determine feasibility and design solutions

Develop a wayfinding strategy that leverages the Reno culture of creativity with wayfinding solutions beyond traditional signage. Consider a wayfinding pilot program through an artist call for creative wayfinding

Pilot a shuttle bus program that connects across downtown – East to West and North to South – linking together districts and destinations for non-drivers and promoting less driving. Consider how the program can be tied to reoccurring programming and activation in Downtown, from larger annual events to weekly programming like a farmers' market, to better link Reno residents to Downtown offerings

Tie intersection redesigns to the downtown-wide micro-mobility network planning, and double down on additional safety measures at intersections, such as bollards, staggered signal timing, and vehicle turning restrictions

Include the alleyways in planning for improved connectivity between destinations for people walking

Consider lowering the traffic speed limit across Downtown. Further explore this limit as part long term network planning. Consider convert of one-way streets in Downtown to two-way streets to further promote traffic safety and access for all modes

# 3 Placemaking actions

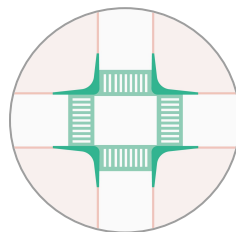
## Connect the dots

### Intersection principles

This and the following page provide an overview of key design interventions to consider at intersections to improve the overall mobility experience for all modes to move safely and comfortably along and across Virginia Street. Deployed together, these principles calm traffic and create safe and pleasant walking and biking experiences, and limits accidents risks.

As the City takes a closer look at improving intersections, a detailed design project, these principles should guide the physical design layout, especially for the “Unique Condition Intersections” outlined on page 99.

Pages 103-105 explore how these principles could be arranged, with conceptual layouts for intersections at the core of Downtown Virginia Street.



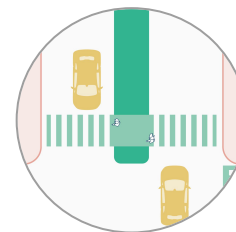
#### Corner radii + crossings

Tighter corner radii reduce turning speeds and pedestrian crossing distances, which should be clearly marked.



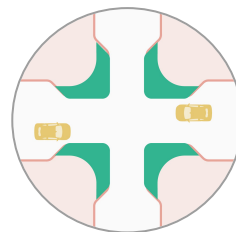
#### Bike crossing + boxes

Prioritize cyclist safety by providing indicated travel, queuing, and turning routes.



#### Refuge islands

Break long crossings into two parts for pedestrian ease and safety.



#### Neckdowns

Reduce crossing distances for pedestrians, calm traffic, and create opportunities for bus stops and parking.



#### Signal timing + prioritization

Prioritizes active modes of transportation, calm traffic, and reduce conflicts. Consider removing right-on-red.

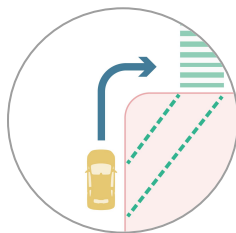
# 3

## Placemaking actions

# Connect the dots

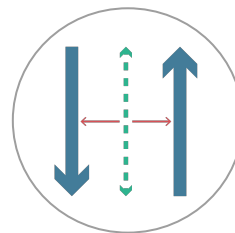
### Intersection principles continued

See descriptive text on previous page.



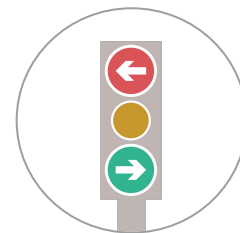
#### Removing slip turns

Reduces dangerous vehicular-pedestrian conflicts and prioritizes safety over speed.



#### Encourage through traffic to use parallel roads

Encourages people to linger, not pass through, Virginia St. Sierra St and Center St are operating under capacity, and the micro-mobility pilot showed that through traffic will redistribute off Virginia St.



#### Controlled turn intersections

Eliminate left turns and right-on-red turns to prioritize pedestrian safety and reduce traffic delays.

# 3 Intersection Concepts

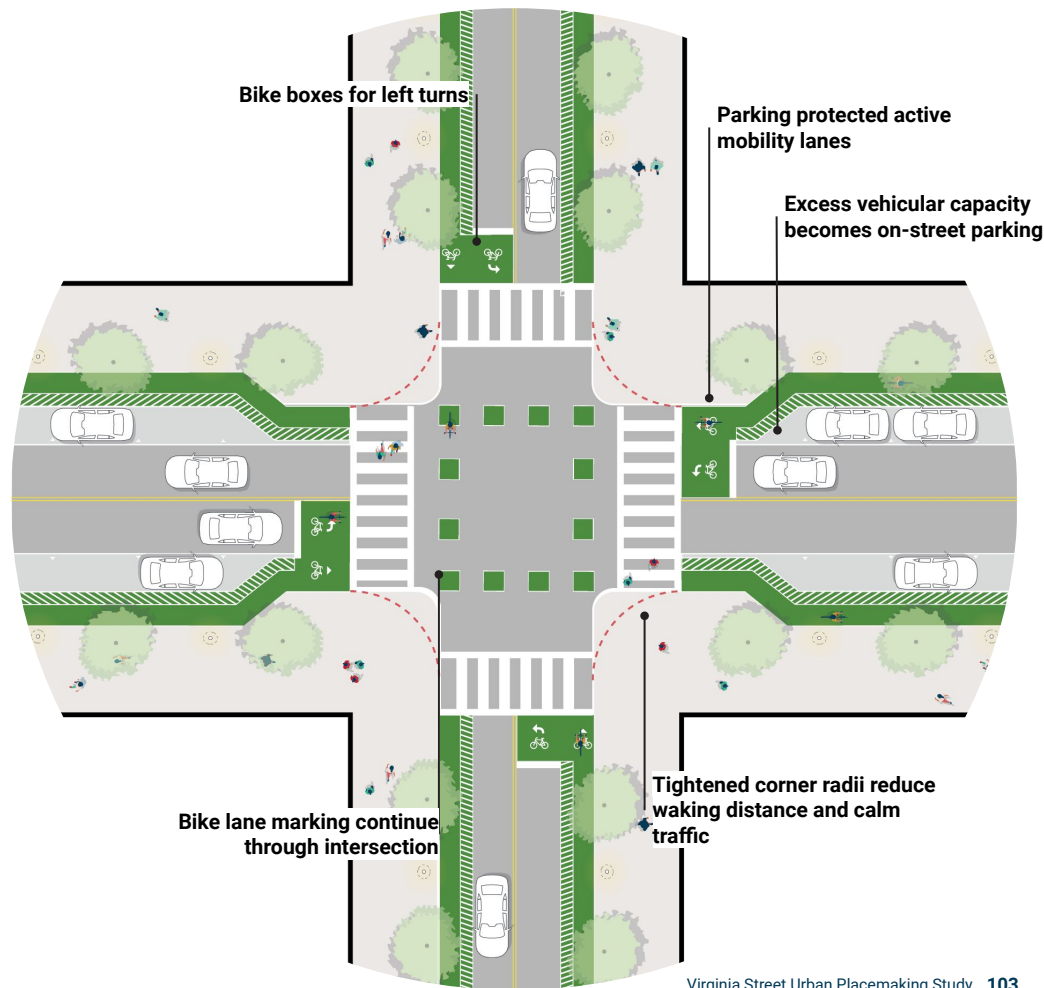
## Connect the dots

### Upgraded neckdown intersections

Applicable at intersections with existing neckdowns and bulbouts, such as 2nd, 5th's western side, 6th, and 7th.

#### Additional Improvements

- Adjust signal cycles and timing to provide a leading pedestrian and cyclist interval. This improves safety by giving people walking and rolling more time to cross the intersections and makes them more visible to turning vehicles.
- Consider making major crossing along Downtown Virginia Street "No Right on Red" intersections.
- Consider lowering traffic speeds across Downtown.



# 3 Intersection Concepts

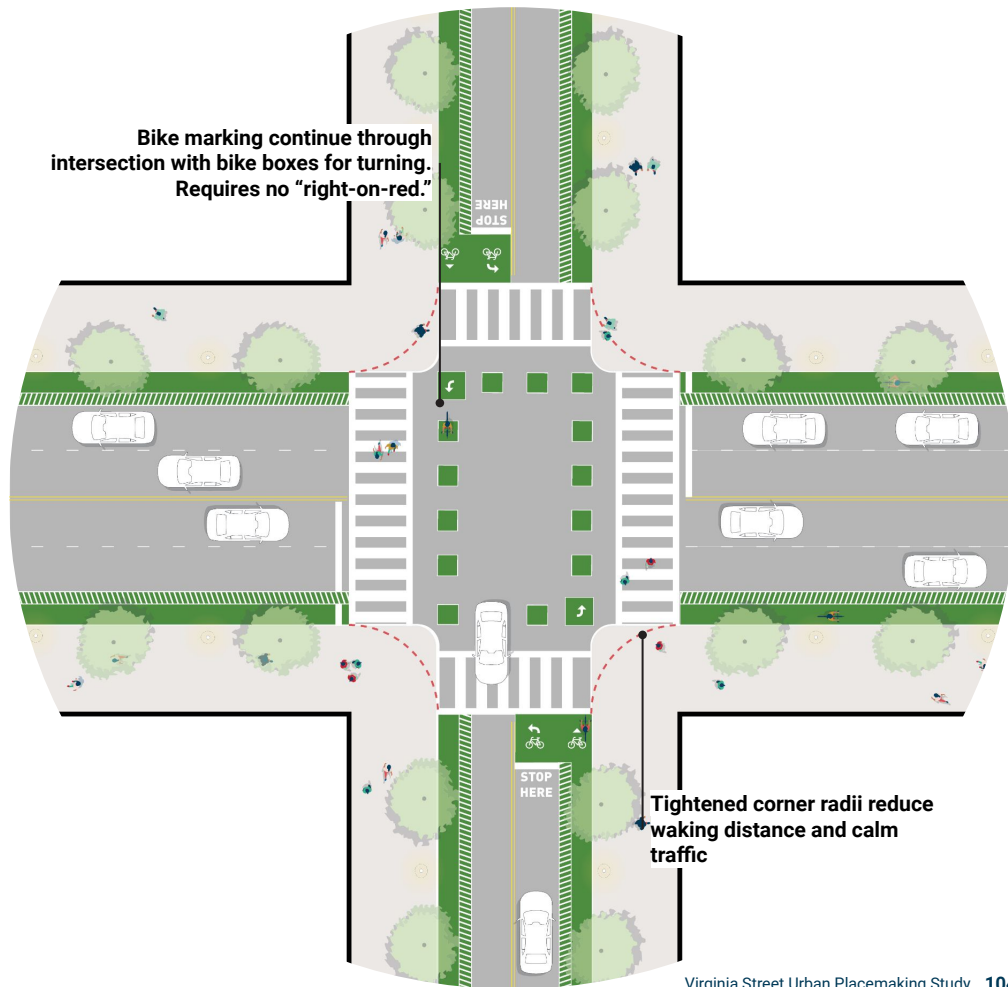
## Connect the dots

### Upgraded linear intersections

Applicable at intersections without neckdowns/bulbouts, such as 4th. If traffic levels allow, consider converting one lane of traffic in each direction to on street parking, effectively creating a neckdown.

#### Additional Improvements

- Adjust signal cycles and timing to provide a leading pedestrian and cyclist interval. This improves safety by giving people walking and rolling more time to cross the intersections and makes them more visible to turning vehicles.
- Consider making major crossing along Downtown Virginia Street “No Right on Red” intersections.
- Consider lowering traffic speeds across Downtown.



# 3 Intersection Concepts

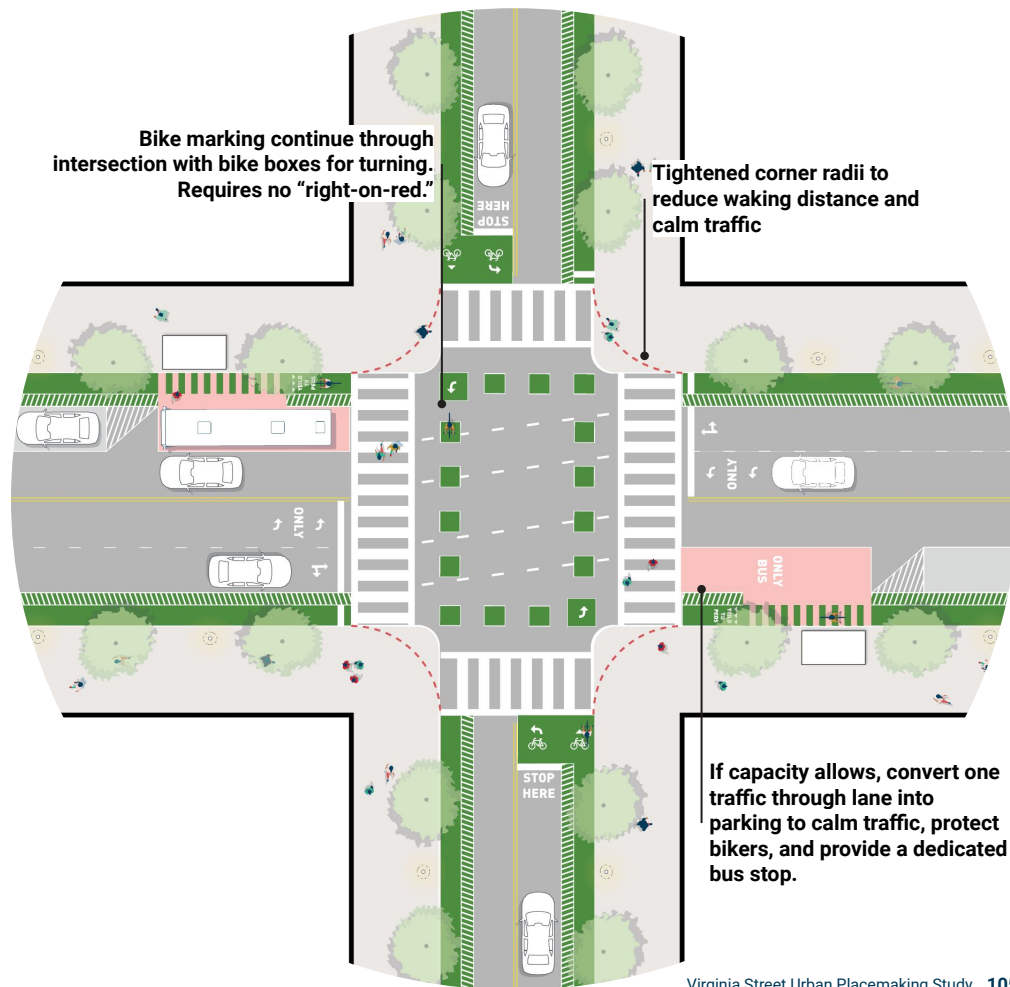
## Connect the dots

### Upgraded linear intersections - Cross street road diet

Applicable at intersections without neckdowns/bulbouts, such as 4th. If traffic levels allow, consider converting one lane of traffic in each direction to on street parking, effectively creating a neckdown.

#### Additional Improvements

- Adjust signal cycles and timing to provide a leading pedestrian and cyclist interval. This improves safety by giving people walking and rolling more time to cross the intersections and makes them more visible to turning vehicles.
- Consider making major crossing along Downtown Virginia Street "No Right on Red" intersections.
- Consider lowering traffic speeds across Downtown.



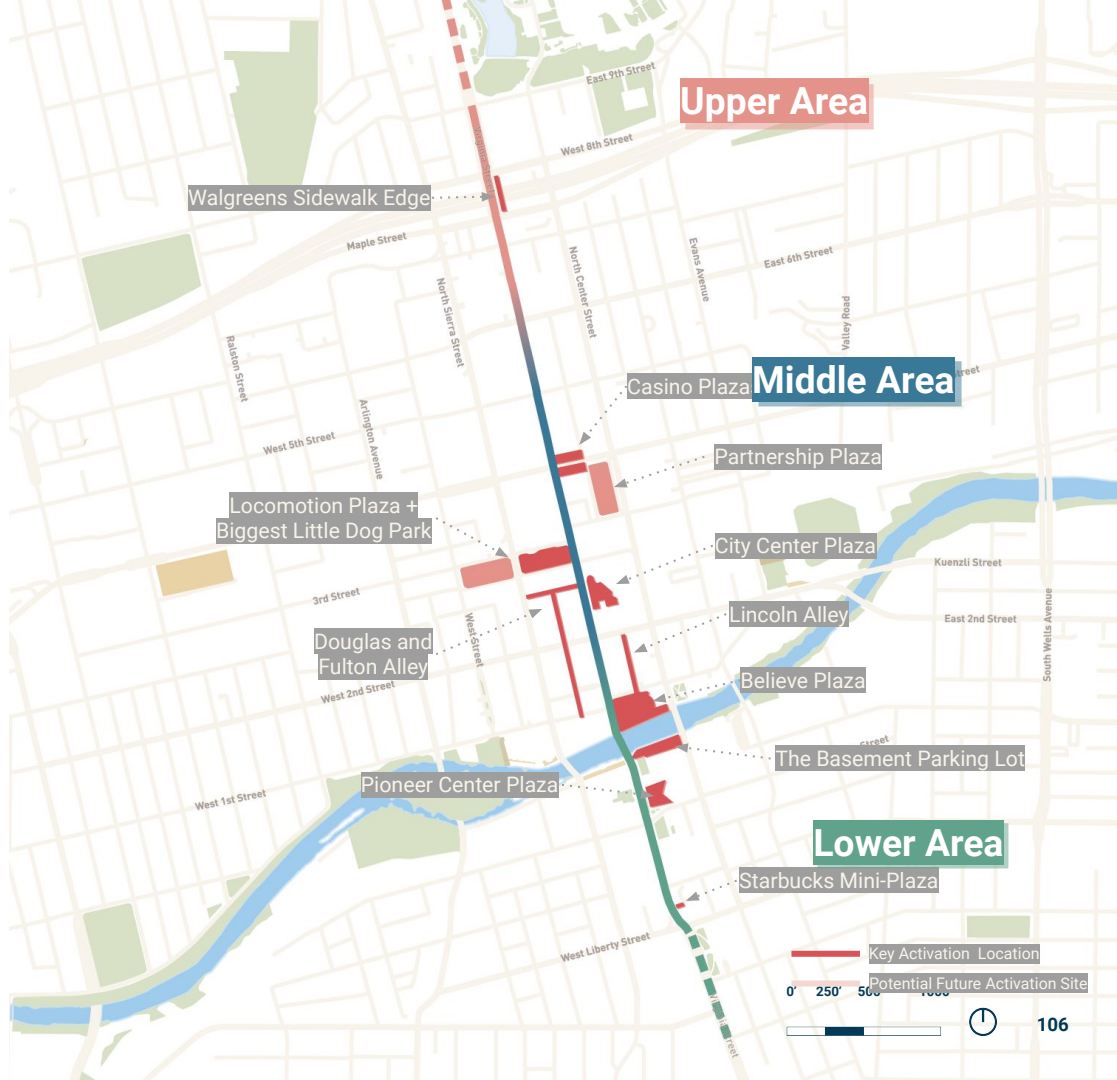
# 4 Strategic move

## Activate the underutilized

Deliver placemaking improvements to setbacks, unbuilt lots, and larger adjacent public spaces along Virginia Street to offer a variety of everyday invitations to recreate and socialize that cater to a diverse audience.

### Why it's important

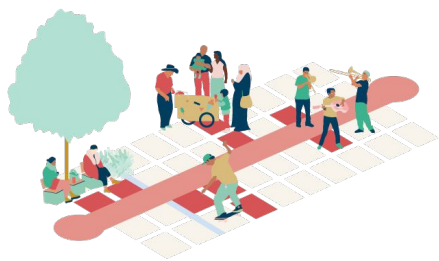
- While there are multiple public spaces along Virginia Street, everyday activity is limited due to a lack of baseline components like protection from the elements, seating, and variation in activation and programming.
- Asides from the Riverwalk, the adjacent public spaces along Virginia Street do not significantly vary in typology and scale, which limits who uses them and when they do



# 4 Placemaking actions

## Activate the underutilized

The placemaking actions in Strategic Move 4 focus on placemaking opportunities within open spaces directly abutting Virginia Street.



Develop an incentive or partnership program for privately-owned, publicly accessible open spaces and setbacks along Virginia Street in collaboration with businesses, institutions, and property owners. Consider incentivizing: seating, shade, greening, art, and shared public-private operations

Break down the scale of Believe Plaza with sub-areas that invite different uses, such as skateboarding, seating in a shaded and green environment for quiet respite, and play. Consider adding more natural plantings and a more defined riverfront path with water access

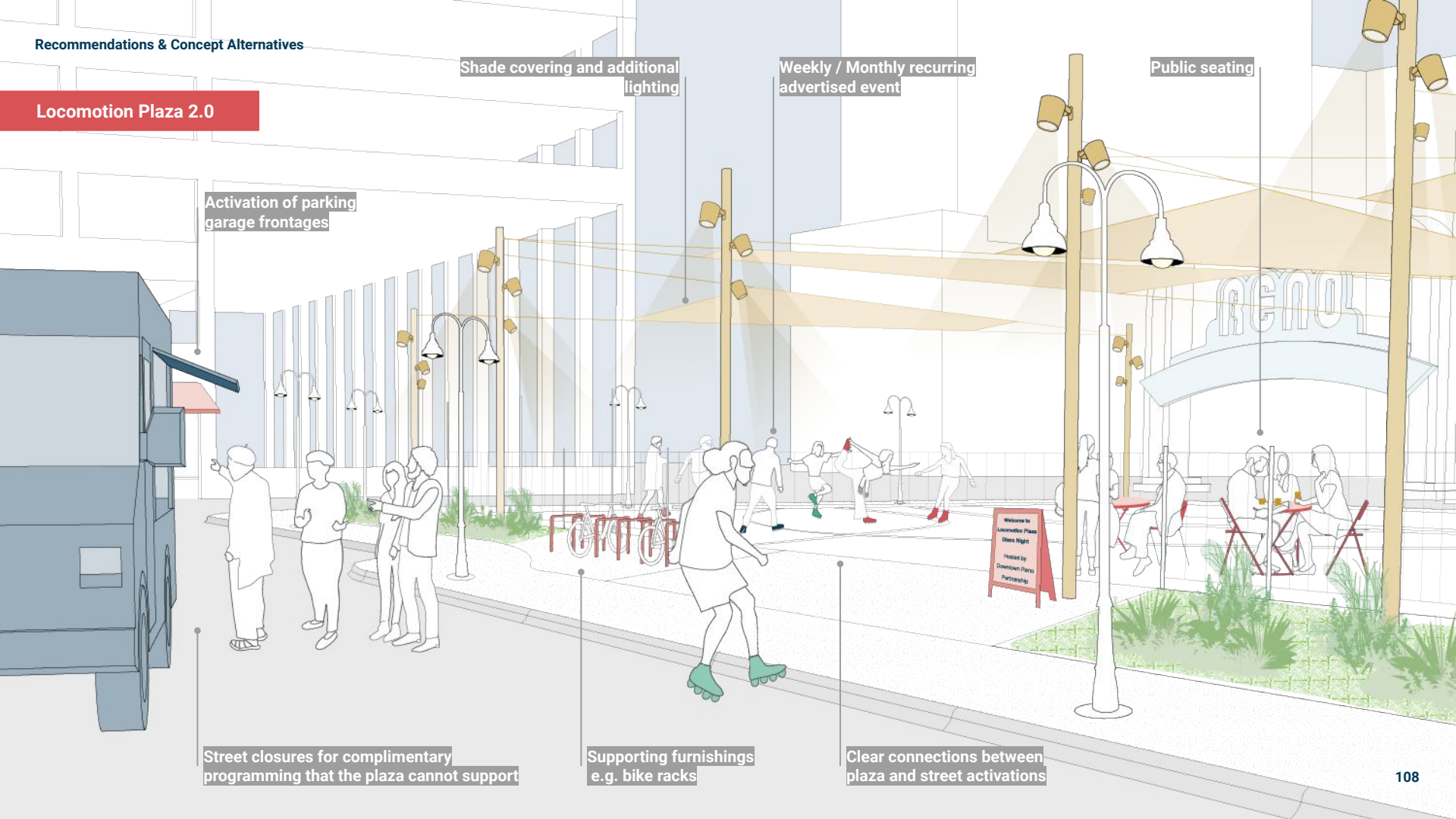
Establish a comprehensive downtown public space plan that promotes streets as public spaces. Plan for how public spaces across Downtown of varying typology and scale can cater to diverse audiences. Include property owners and activation partners in the planning process

Develop a programming plan for open spaces along and adjacent to Virginia Street that includes recurring weekly and monthly activities. Start with Believe Plaza and Locomotion Plaza in parallel with the DRP led initiatives for Partnership Plaza. Develop a plan for needed infrastructure and furnishings to support programming and enhance everyday use

Expand on Believe Plaza programming opportunities by integrating the adjacent parking area as a location for markets and other types of events, and pilot a concession stand on Believe Plaza that doubles as a tourist information outpost. Believe Plaza is well suited for more varied programming, activation, and smaller scale events

Include the alleyways in the comprehensive downtown public space plan, not only as spaces for movement and services, but as locations for targeted activation, programming, and additional integration of art that reflects Renos culture of creativity. Elevate the storied history of the alleyways and their connection to Reno's development

Locomotion Plaza 2.0



Activation of parking  
garage frontages

Shade covering and additional  
lighting

Weekly / Monthly recurring  
advertised event

Public seating

Street closures for complimentary  
programming that the plaza cannot support

Supporting furnishings  
e.g. bike racks

Clear connections between  
plaza and street activations

## Locomotion Plaza 2.0

The location of Locomotion Plaza – situated between draws for visitors and locals such as the iconic Reno Arch, hotels, casinos, the Biggest Little Dog Park, and student housing – makes it a well-suited location for recurring events and enhanced everyday activation.

To support events and everyday activation there is a need for physical improvements, like seating, shade and lighting, coupled with support infrastructure to supply storage, power, and, water for programmed events.

While Locomotion Plaza holds great opportunities, this does not come without challenges. The plaza is a deck that cannot support heavier elements. But by leveraging the adjacent side streets for special events, complimentary amenities like food trucks can be included.

DRP will serve as the programming partner, and events like DJ nights, roller discos, farmers markets, and more are being considered. The City of Reno will be responsible for physical improvements to support events and everyday activation. It is recommended that recurring monthly events are included to establish a cadence that people can work into their routines.

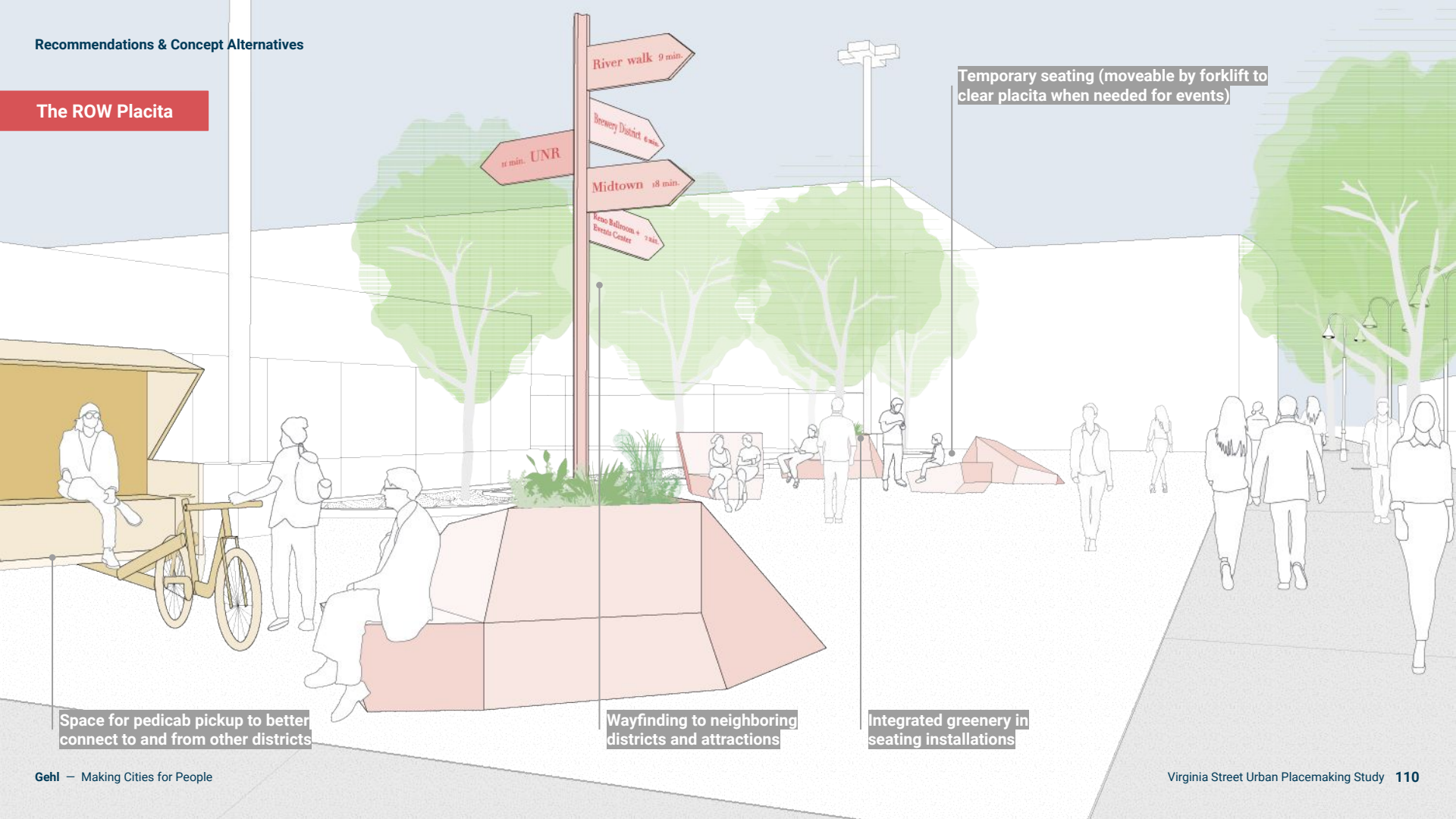
### Physical improvements

- ❑ On site storage facilities for movable furniture and programming elements
- ❑ Event infrastructure, such as electrical hookups and water tap access
- ❑ Shade structures
- ❑ Improved lighting
- ❑ Movable public seating
- ❑ Support amenities, such as bike racks and waste bins

### Project partner roles and responsibilities

- ❑ The City of Reno, to secure funding and install physical improvements
- ❑ Downtown Reno Partnership, to steward the space, organize programming, seek out programming partners, and serve as link to local organizers, event communication
- ❑ Reno Organizations, to bring their events and programs to Locomotion Plaza 2.0

## The ROW Placita



Temporary seating (moveable by forklift to clear placita when needed for events)

Space for pedicab pickup to better connect to and from other districts

Wayfinding to neighboring districts and attractions

Integrated greenery in seating installations

## The ROW Placita

The ROW Placita has the opportunity to be a lively destination nexus on Virginia Street. It is centered between multiple districts, including the Brewery District, and key entertainment destinations such as the the Reno Ballroom, Events Center, National Bowling Stadium, and the ROW hotel-casinos.

Today, however, the Placita is an empty lot that is only converted into a spirited hub of activity during large events. Transforming the lot into the ROW Placita is an opportunity to fill in gaps in activation by furnishing a comfortable space for people to linger while they wait for friends and connect between downtown attractions.

Setting the stage for activation will require investments in wayfinding to elevate the site's role as a connecting space, as well as inclusion of public seating, ideally with integrated greenery to enhance comfort. Designing the furniture so it is movable by forklift will preserve the Placita's current role as an event staging ground.

Creating the ROW Placita will require cooperation between the ROW, City, and DRP to coordinate and fund the improvements, operations, and stewardship of the Plaza.

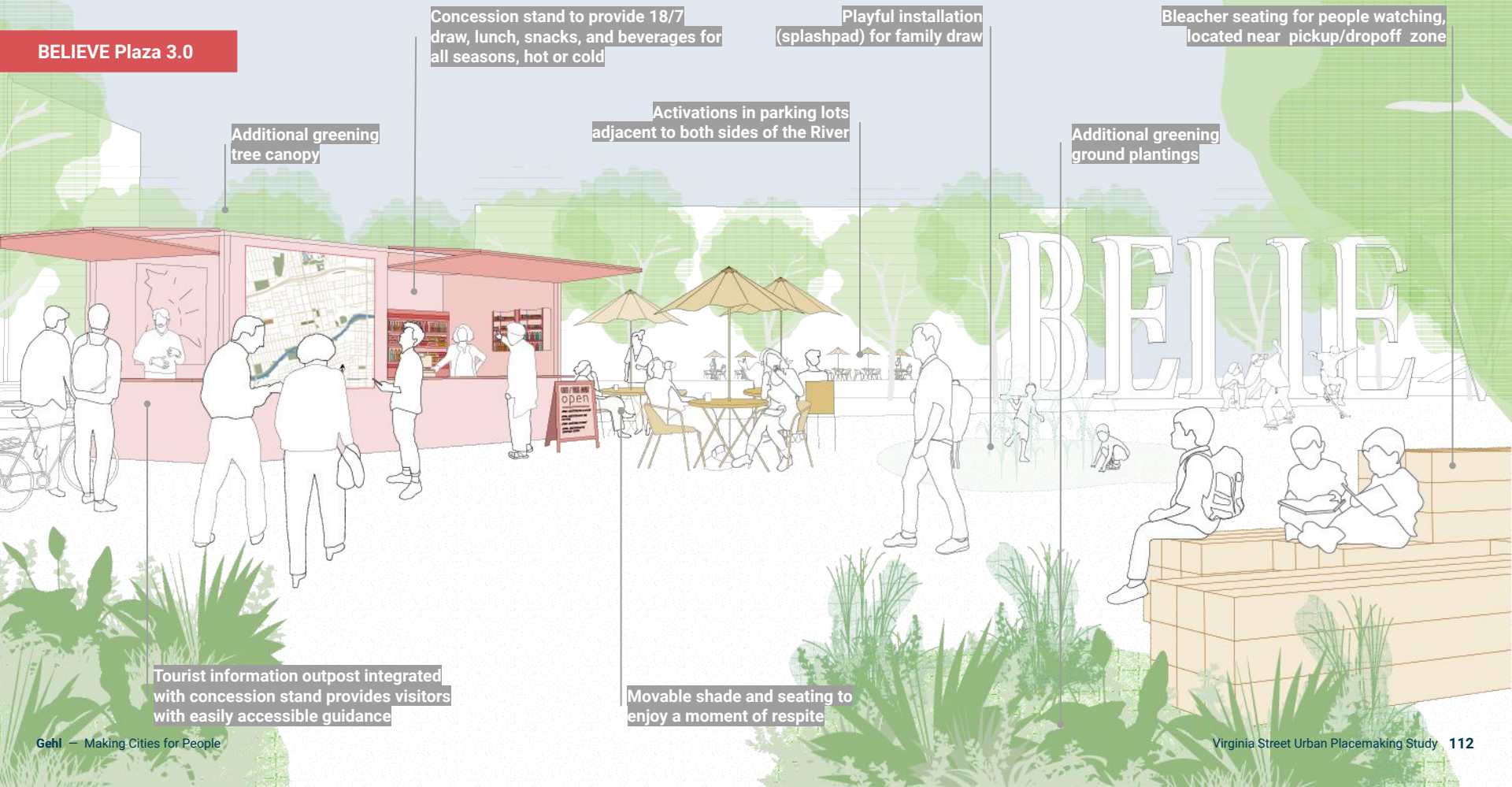
### Physical improvements

- ❑ Public seating, with integrated greenery and sculptural forms. The seating should be movable by forklift for events
- ❑ Wayfinding to nearby destinations
- ❑ Designated spaces for pedicab pickup, further accenting the Plaza's role as an interchange between destinations

### Project partner roles and responsibilities

- ❑ The ROW, to open access to the Placita and coordinate when the seating installation need to be relocated for events
- ❑ The City of Reno, to secure funding to design and install the public seating and wayfinding, including maintenance and operations related to relocation for events
- ❑ Downtown Reno Partnership, to steward the space

**BELIEVE Plaza 3.0**



Concession stand to provide 18/7  
draw, lunch, snacks, and beverages for  
all seasons, hot or cold

Playful installation  
(splashpad) for family draw

Bleacher seating for people watching,  
located near pickup/dropoff zone

Additional greening  
tree canopy

Activations in parking lots  
adjacent to both sides of the River

Additional greening  
ground plantings

Tourist information outpost integrated  
with concession stand provides visitors  
with easily accessible guidance

Movable shade and seating to  
enjoy a moment of respite

## BELIEVE Plaza 3.0

Between Locomotion Plaza, Partnership Plaza, temporary Virginia Street street closures and more, Downtown hosts ample space for large and medium sized events, while it lacks public space for everyday life. Believe Plaza is well-situated to deliver a space for the local community and visitors to come together around outdoor activities, small-scale events, and new amenities. With more diverse activation, the plaza can draw a broader audience, and in return, deliver increased sense of safety.

Installing a concession stand and tourist information outpost will invite local workers and visitors throughout the day and across the week, and ample movable seating and shade to support lunchtime and other activity on the plaza should be provided. A play amenity can bring families to the Plaza and a more extensive tree canopy and permeable surfacing can support a pleasant micro-climate. As part of transforming Believe Plaza it is critical to recognize and include the current skateboarding activity and community as part of the life on the plaza.

The adjacent City parking lot can be included in the transformation, and in interim conditions serve as space for events that require tents and vehicle access, such as Farmers/ Markets

### Physical improvements

- ❑ Concession stand and tourist information outpost
- ❑ A play feature, e.g.splash-pad
- ❑ Expanded tree canopy
- ❑ Additional ground plantings / permeable surfacing
- ❑ Movable seating and shade elements
- ❑ Benches and/or bleachers along key entrances of the plaza

### Project partner roles and responsibilities

- ❑ The City of Reno, to secure funding, guide design, and manage physical improvements
- ❑ The RSCVA, to staff and curate the tourist information outpost
- ❑ A local food and beverage business, to staff and manage the concession stand\*

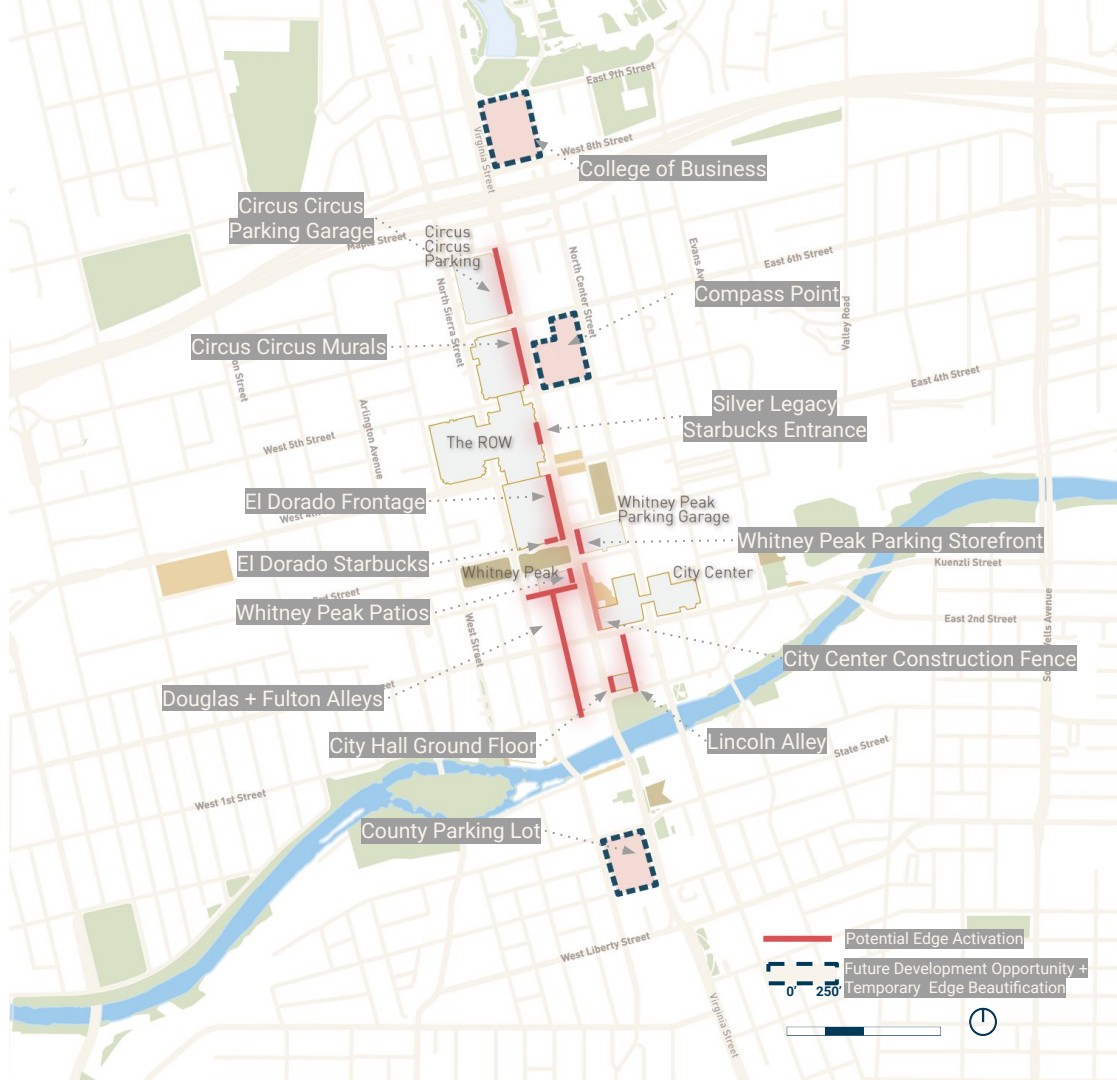
\*This can be sourced through the outreach for other efforts led by the City such as the activation of the Circus Circus parking garage

# 5 Strategic move

## Activate the edges

Improve the Virginia Street experience as a place for both locals and visitors, with improved access to existing businesses, activation of underutilized building edges, affordable food and beverage venues, local retail, and other

- Today, there are multiple establishments and businesses along Virginia Street that are not visible nor easily accessible from the street. Locals, much less visitors, may not know what's behind the walls = missed opportunity!
- Local draws and amenities are missing within the Downtown Virginia Street corridor. Both locals and tourists are drawn to other parts of Reno, like Midtown, where these can be found



# 5

## Placemaking actions

### Activate the edges

The placemaking actions in Strategic Move 5 focus on placemaking opportunities within the existing and future built edges directly abutting Virginia Street.



Develop a ground floor activation and facade improvement incentive program that promotes well-kept, active, and vibrant building edges while limiting vacancies. Consider vacancy fees on empty commercial properties to further limit vacancies along Virginia Street and across Downtown. Incoming funds can be redirected to the ground floor activation and facade improvement program

Develop ground floor guidelines for new developments to ensure activation to benefit both property owners and create a more thriving downtown main street. Consider how this can inform a downtown-wide effort

Continue the dialogue with the property owners – such as the Circus Circus parking garage, the ground floor of the Whitney parking garage, and other Virginia Street fronting garages and empty commercial ground floors – about the creation of spaces and tenancy directed towards local and anchor businesses that can fill amenity gaps in the Downtown, including affordable healthy food offerings. Consider a program run by the City or the DRP, similar to programs in other cities

Review and update impeding bylaws and zoning ordinances to allow for a broader ground floor activation along Virginia Street

Investigate the feasibility of piloting a micro-unit edge along the County owned parking lot (Court and Liberty). Consider space for and in dialogue with local artists and makers. Use this as a pilot to inform the ground floor incentive program to expand to active construction fencing along vacant lots and lots under construction

Work with property owners and the historical society on plaques, guided tours and preservation measures to elevate notable buildings and signage along the street

Develop a startup program that matches local entrepreneurs and creatives with vacant storefronts for shorter term rentals and pop ups

Circus Circus Garage Micro Retail

Benches and bike racks  
integrated into tree line

Parking stalls transformed into  
micro-retail units. Mix of local retail,  
quick-mart, and beverage businesses

Existing iconic siding  
incorporated into gates for  
new businesses

Seating nooks with space for movable  
tables and chairs connected to businesses



### Circus Circus Garage Micro Retail

As the University Gateway projects, Canyon Flat Apartments, and University Crossing bring more development to the upper area of Virginia Street, the Circus Circus parking garage is well located to be another link in the chain connecting UNR to Virginia Street through an active streetscape. Though the garage is currently a block long inactive facade, it is one of the most pleasant pedestrian experiences along Virginia Street thanks to its wide sidewalk and double row of trees.

Transforming the sidewalk facing parking bays, which are currently storage, into micro retail units can serve as a springboard for local businesses to find an affordable start in the Reno market, with the adjacent students as a clientele base. Upgrades to the sidewalk with benches and bike racks are important supporting features, and the garage facade decorations can be integrated in the building edge to create a visual identity tied to Downtown Reno history.

Further coordination between the ROW and the City to determine project resources is needed. However, this builds on efforts undertaken by the City's Revitalization Manager and provides an opportunity to support local businesses and encourage minority and women led businesses to become a larger part of Downtown.

#### Physical improvements

- ❑ Adaptive reuse of sidewalk facing parking stalls into micro retail units, with electric hookups and, if not cost prohibitive, water
- ❑ Preservation of existing comfortable characteristics, such as double tree line and decorative garage siding
- ❑ Support amenities, like bike racks and benches

#### Project partner roles and responsibilities

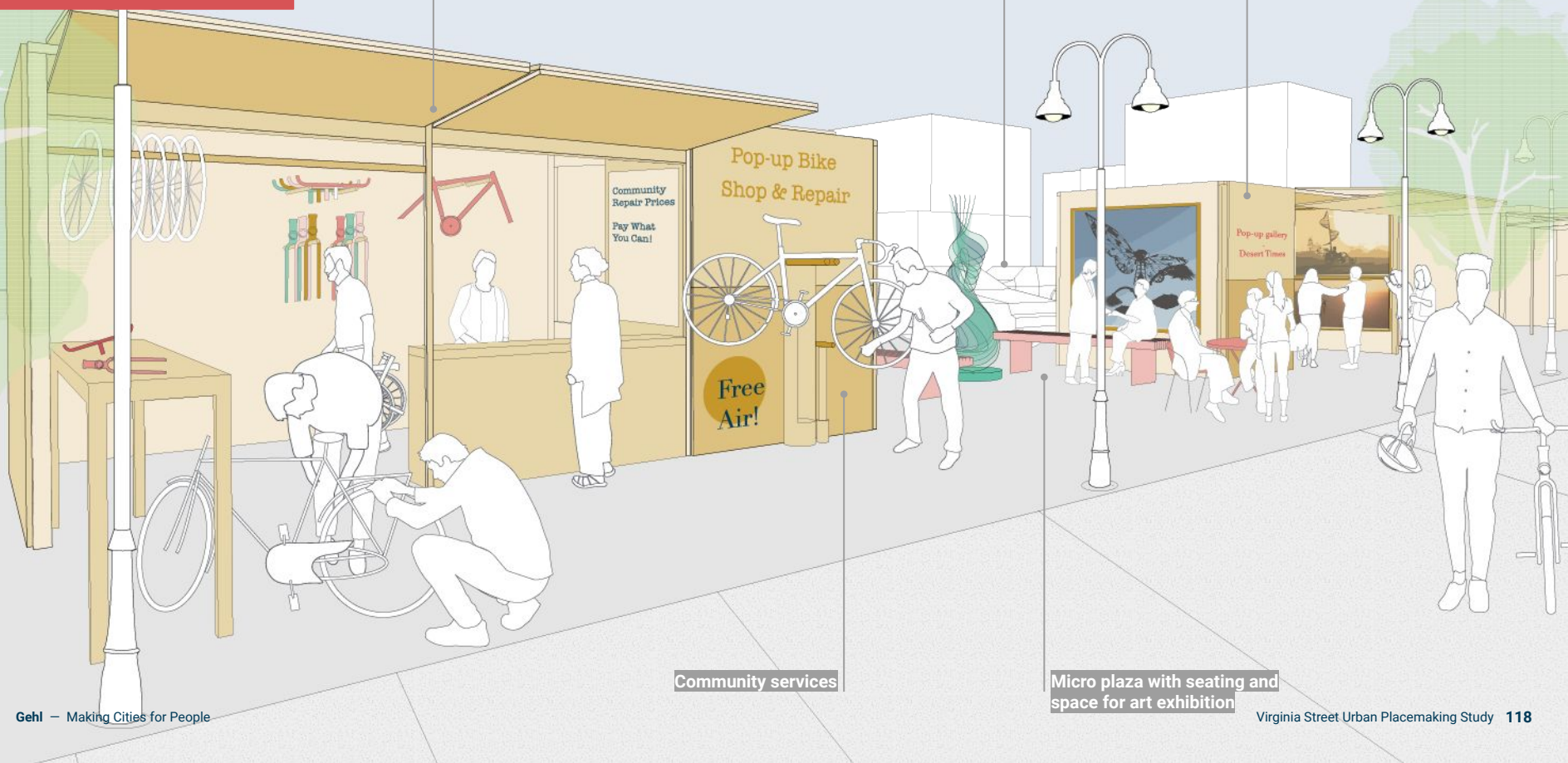
- ❑ The ROW, to open access to the Circus Circus Garage and coordinate stewardship and maintenance of the retail space with the City
- ❑ The City of Reno, to secure funding to design and build the micro retail units and to seek out and manage small local businesses
- ❑ Small local businesses, to staff and activate the micro retail units

Maker Row @Court Street

Pop up workshop spaces for  
local makers and artists

Parking lot maintained  
behind micro shops

Pop up gallery spaces for local  
makers and artists



Community services

Micro plaza with seating and  
space for art exhibition

## Maker Row @Court Street

Despite their proximity, a long stretch of inactive facades and underutilized lots exaggerates the distance between Midtown, the River Walk, and Downtown Reno. The Maker Row @Court Street offer an opportunity to activate the sidewalk edge of the Washoe County parking lot, provide a more engaging walking experience, and simultaneously provide a venue for Reno's creative community while building on the success of adjacent venues like Basement.

Reno has a robust, diverse creative scene and providing a physical space for local makers and artists can anchor this culture in the Downtown core for both Renoites and visitors to experience. Freestanding workshop and gallery spaces installed parallel to the sidewalk, with space in between for access, seating, and art installations, can provide a place for interaction between patrons and proprietors.

The project focus on the sidewalk facing edge of the parking lot, and the majority of the lot remains parking. Following this model, as more development comes to Downtown, similar projects can be integrated into construction sites to provide interim activation and serve as construction mitigation. Creating the Maker Row requires coordination with Washoe County, with the City taking the lead on improvements and the search for local makers.

### Physical improvements

- ❑ Workshop and gallery spaces with electric hookups and, if not cost prohibitive, water
- ❑ Fixed and movable seating along the length of the Maker Row

### Project partner roles and responsibilities

- ❑ Washoe County, to open access to the parking lot and coordinate stewardship and maintenance of the with the City
- ❑ The City of Reno, to secure funding to design and build the workshop and gallery spaces and to seek out local artists and makers
- ❑ Local artists and makers, to activate the Maker Row, curate installations

# Implementation Plan



# A roadmap to success

## The future of Virginia Street

Successful public spaces support local businesses, build social capital, foster health and sustainability, and connect people to their communities with vibrant public life. As the backbone of a changing Downtown Reno, Virginia Street is well-positioned to become a thriving main street and key public space in the City serving locals and visitors alike.

A successful transformation process requires intention, constant assessment and adaptability, and is contingent upon more than physical roadway improvements. Placemaking is never finished. It requires continuous project stewardship, dialogue, and documentation of the impacts of implemented actions, whether physical or programmatic.

The implementation plan for the future of Virginia Street is a guide and a starting point. It serves as a roadmap to success and builds on ongoing efforts, such as the City's allocation of \$2 million in American Rescue Plan Act [ARPA] funding for placemaking. It outlines an implementation process to continuously be assessed and adapted as placemaking efforts are carried out and lessons are learned.

Through this effort, the stage is set for a future of Virginia Street that puts people and place at the center of the decision making process and reinvests in Virginia Street as Downtown Reno's main street.

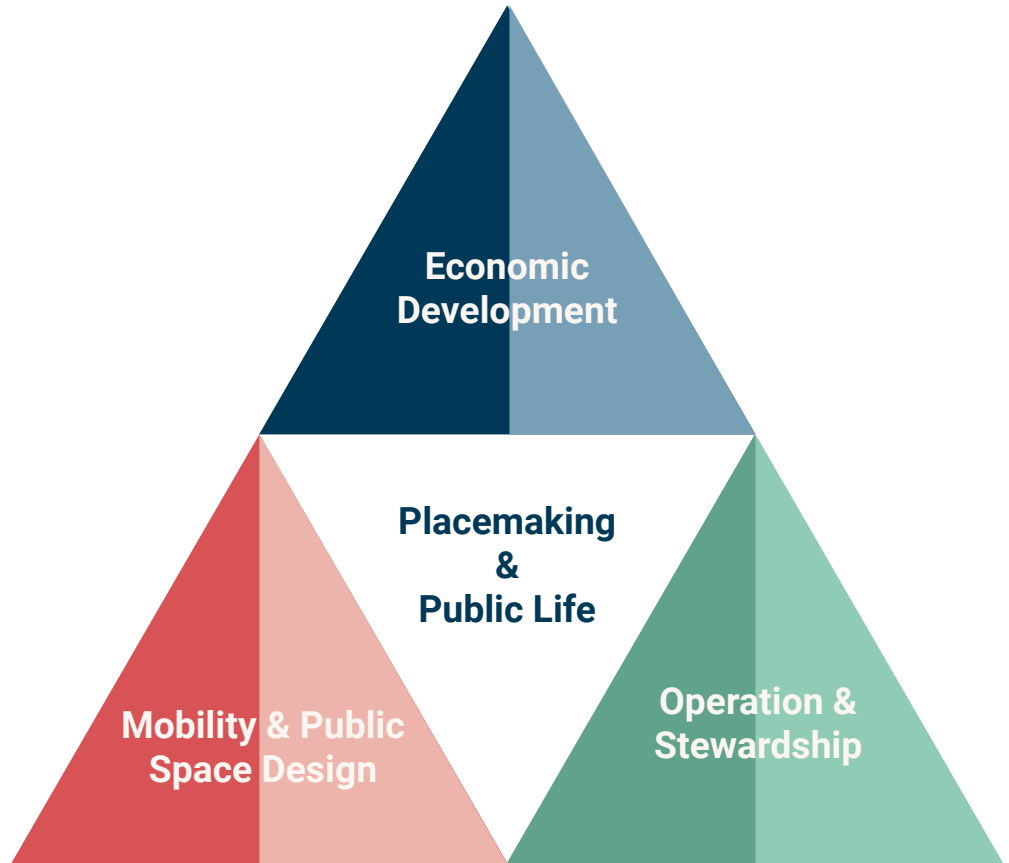
# Placemaking pillars

## The future of Virginia Street

*Success = Economic Development + Mobility & Public Space Design + Operation & Stewardship*

For maximum impact of investment on Virginia Street, all three placemaking pillars needs to work in unison and be considered across the recommended placemaking efforts.

The success of the future of Virginia Street is contingent upon securing a strong framework for placemaking and public life, mobility and public space design, operation and stewardship, and economic development.





## Economic Development

Long-lasting and sudden crises bring accelerated needs for economic change. The pandemic spurred an increased focus on the need to invest in mixed-use areas that are walkable and host key amenities to secure local resilience. This will be critical to the future Virginia Street and Downtown Reno, as the number of local residents increase and the need and desire for an environment that caters to living local continues to grow alongside continued private sector investments in housing, tourism, and entertainment.

As part of and alongside the Placemaking Study, the City of Reno is rethinking its urban and economic development endeavors as a unified strategy. The implementation of planned programs for facade improvement and investments in the built edges along Virginia Street and its adjacent open spaces will be key to the success of the placemaking efforts.



## Mobility & Public Space Design

When reinvesting in Virginia Street as a key public space in Downtown Reno, the goal is to create a stronger balance between movement and place while expanding on the invitations for people to stop and stay by implementing creative and experiential placemaking solutions.

An iterative approach is recommended to redesign the street, starting with the actions outlined in this document. It will be critical to continuously assess the success of the implemented changes and consider next steps throughout the process. As the impacts of the multi-pronged placemaking actions brings more people to Downtown Virginia Street, steps towards greater change to the street can be taken. It is recommended that placemaking actions related to changes to the street right of way are implemented as capital improvements, and the data supports these changes. The proposed concept designs are cost efficient, and the baseline safety and comfort for people of all modes, ages, and abilities should not be negotiable.



## Operation & Stewardship

A strong framework for operation and stewardship is essential to coordinate hard and soft investments, from branding, wayfinding and identity, to streetscape improvements and ground floor activation, to programming and events.

Throughout the Placemaking Study, Renoites voiced that safety is a major concern. This is addressed through the increased collaboration between the City of Reno and DRP with the Ambassador Program and planned placemaking efforts. The collaboration between the City of Reno and DRP, with the City being responsible for capital improvements and DRP investing in events and ongoing operation and maintenance, mirror successful models from other North American downtowns, such as Brooklyn, Denver, Santa Monica, and Calgary AB. Continued cross sector collaboration will be critical to the placemaking efforts' success. The City of Reno cross departmental agencies, DRP, RTC, private sector, local creatives, and entrepreneurs can all play a role in the successful future Virginia Street and Downtown Reno.

# Engagement summary

## February 2023

To inform prioritization of the proposed placemaking actions, the project team conducted in person and online engagement in February 2023.

Through the engagement we learned that delivering a safe-feeling, high quality pedestrian experience is key to Renoites. Respondents prioritized basic amenities like seating, shade, and crossings alongside programs to activate ground floors along Virginia Street with small businesses.

Note: For a detailed summary of the survey results and the compiled response data supplement, please refer to the *Engagement Round 3: Survey Data Appendix*.

Over 50% of respondents felt that the vision statement resonated or strongly resonated with them.

Of the four placemaking goals, over  $\frac{2}{3}$  of respondents ranked “Enhance Connectivity & Climate” and “Local Economic Development” as their top priorities.

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that each of the five strategic moves were critical for successful placemaking.

Mirroring prior engagement results, when asked about additional improvements they would like to see respondents expressed concern around safety, improving multimodal infrastructure, preserving vehicular through lanes, and a desire to see more diverse businesses downtown.

The placemaking actions that are most important to Renoites are:

- Maintaining ample sidewalk space
- Enhancing the furnishing zone
- Upgrading intersections for increased pedestrian and cyclist priority and safety
- An incentive program to invite public life to privately-owned, publicly accessible open spaces
- Improved and varied seating, shade, and activation on Locomotion Plaza and Believe Plaza
- A ground floor activation and facade improvement incentive program
- Vacancy fees on empty commercial properties to further limit vacancies
- A startup program that matches local entrepreneurs and creatives with vacant storefronts for shorter term rentals and pop ups

# Laying the groundwork

## Placemaking funding initiatives

This implementation plan builds off of the ongoing efforts of the City of Reno and Downtown Reno Partnership to create a more successful Downtown Virginia Street and Downtown Reno.

Notably, the City has already kickstarted the placemaking process by allocating federal dollars from the American Rescue Plan Act [ARPA] for physical, programmatic, and capacity building improvements that will benefit the entire Downtown. The City has also designated funding for implementing placemaking on and adjacent to Virginia Street, removing a critical barrier to success.

Allocated funding secures that the recommended placemaking improvements and the Future of Virginia Street can commence. The following pages outlines a proposed phasing plan that takes funding, resources and buy-in into consideration.

**\$2 million** in funding approved for **Placemaking on Virginia Street!**

Hiring of an **Activation Coordinator Position**, to coordinate and develop events and connect community organizations to \$350,000 in special event sponsorship.

\$550,000 in funding for a **Facade Improvement Program**, improving the visual appeal of buildings Downtown.

\$500,000 **Tenant Improvement/Lease Support Program for Small Businesses**, fostering more local businesses.

\$500,000 in ADA improvements so **City Hall can host an accessible cafe** and activate their street frontage.

\$3 million for a **River Path Plan and Improvements**, enhancing Downtown's connection to nature and the Truckee River.

Recurring, on-site walking **meeting between Virginia Street service providers**. These standing meetings help assure nimble coordination between agencies, a speedy response time to safety issues, and a more efficient allocation of resources.

DRP is **expanding the Ambassador Program** to provide night-shift services, improving the sense of safety and Downtown hospitality.

\$45,000 for a **Clean and Safe Truck** and \$100,000 for a **RISE-DRP Van**, facilitating the connection between social services and Downtown Reno.

\$300,000 in improvements for **Downtown Waste Disposal**, cultivating a cleaner Downtown.

# A step by step approach to change

## Placemaking actions prioritization and phasing

Alongside the engagement input, other factors for prioritization of the approved placemaking actions needs to be considered. This includes the following factors:

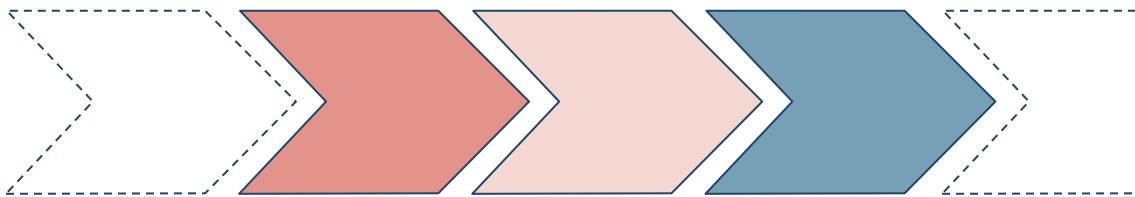
- Resources, implementation, maintenance, and operations costs
- Application for funding from federal, state, and other sources
- Project readiness, i.e. how far along is the coordination with impacted property owners and other project partners (identified and to be identified)
- Timing, construction obstruction and mitigation, and coordination with other ongoing and planned projects

The following 3 pages outlines a proposed prioritization of the proposed placemaking actions as a 3 step process. This is intended to serve as guidance and to be further developed and detailed as part of the continued Virginia Street Placemaking effort.

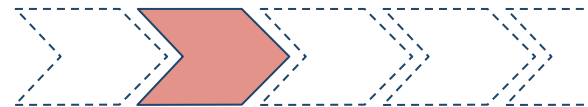
As a central part of the placemaking effort on and along Virginia Street, it is recommend that a comprehensive downtown public space plan is developed, targeting open space transformations and programming efforts to deliver a variation of experiences across downtown. It is recommended that the alleyways are included in the public space plan and that the history of the alleyways, historic

buildings, and signage is celebrated throughout future transformation of downtown Reno. It is also recommended that the City of Reno develops ground floor guidelines for new developments.

A part of, or alongside the placemaking effort, it is recommended that the City of Reno, in collaboration with other entities such as DRP and Visit Reno, consider investing in a branding and identity strategy that showcase and daylight the diversity of experiences downtown Reno has to offer. For a successful placemaking effort, it is furthermore important to review and consider updates to impeding bylaw or zoning to achieving the placemaking vision for the Future Virginia Street.



# Placemaking actions prioritization, phase 1



**Linking it all together:** Consider piloting an accessible shuttle bus program that connects across downtown as part of phase 1

## Streetscape furnishing zone improvements

- ❑ Implement public seating on every block of Virginia Street
- ❑ Pilot wayfinding signage with walking distances to districts and destinations
- ❑ Assess opportunities for integration of shade: trees where not in conflict with underground, other shade
- ❑ Assess need for upgrades to event infrastructure

## Facade improvement & activation

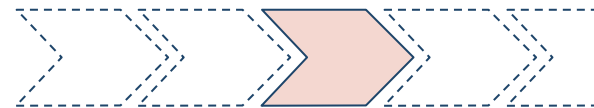
- ❑ Develop program and source funding for facade improvement program to manage vacancies and support groundfloor activation
- ❑ Pilot ground floor activation, starting with micro-retail for local businesses in the edge of the Circus Circus parking garage

## Locomotion Plaza 2.0

- ❑ Site and implement event infrastructure and storage facilities
- ❑ Source and implement movable chairs and tables, including lounge style chairs
- ❑ Pilot a shade structure
- ❑ Develop and communicate a plan for recurring events

## The ROW Placita

- ❑ Source and implement seating elements, movable by forklift, and include wayfinding with walking distances to districts and destinations
- ❑ Coordinate operations and maintenance agreement with the ROW and DRP, consider using this as a pilot for a partnership program for activation of privately owned public space



# Placemaking actions prioritization, phase 2

## Streetscape improvements across the site

- ❑ Implement signal timing for slower speed in preparation for physical improvements to the right of way
- ❑ Assess need and feasibility of implementation of PUDO's in middle and upper area - will require curb adjustments
- ❑ Assess impact of proposed intersection upgrades to the wider bike and vehicular network

## Streetscape improvements lower area

- ❑ Implement continuous on street parking and bollard and buffered protected bike lanes - elimination of turn lane
- ❑ Implement bike markings across intersections
- ❑ Assess how the Liberty intersection can be upgraded to better serve people walking and wheeling, including removal of slip lane

## Streetscape improvements middle area

- ❑ Implement two-lane bi-directional vehicle lanes and continuous buffered bike lanes - including elimination of turn lanes and center loading
- ❑ Implement intersection improvements; tightened corner radii, bike marking, and planned changes to cross streets within the block

## Believe Plaza 3.0 initiation

- ❑ Pilot a concession stand and tourist information outpost. Consider implementation of a permanent structure in relation to further planned improvements to the plaza
- ❑ Implement movable seating and shade
- ❑ Implement bleacher seating and pilot a play feature



# Placemaking actions prioritization, phase 3

## Streetscape improvements upper area

- ❑ Implement continuous bollard and buffered protected bike lanes through redesign of the central median. Include raised bike lanes at the bus stops for bus access
- ❑ Implement clear bus lane markings
- ❑ Assess how the freeway intersections can be upgraded to better serve people walking and wheeling

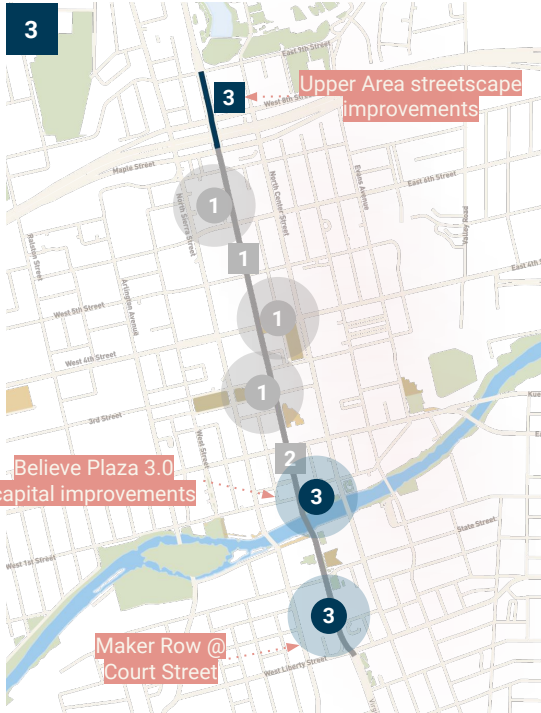
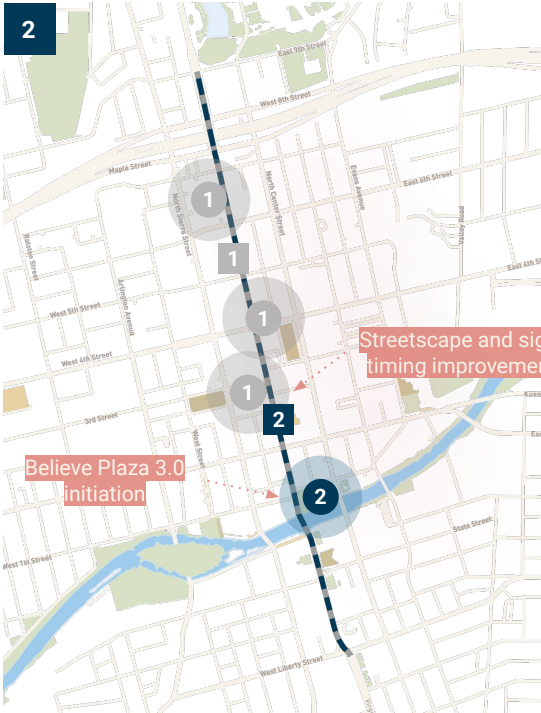
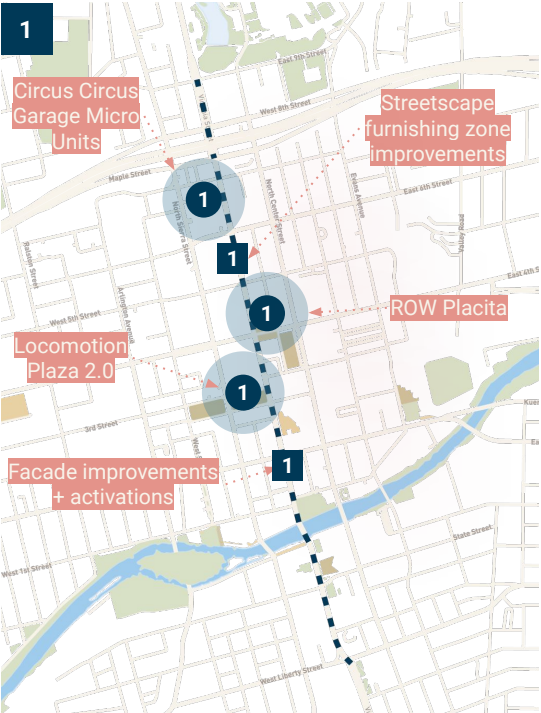
## Maker Row @Court

- ❑ Pilot edge activation of the county parking lot with micro-units for local makers and artists. Use lessons learned from implementation of the Circus Circus parking garage

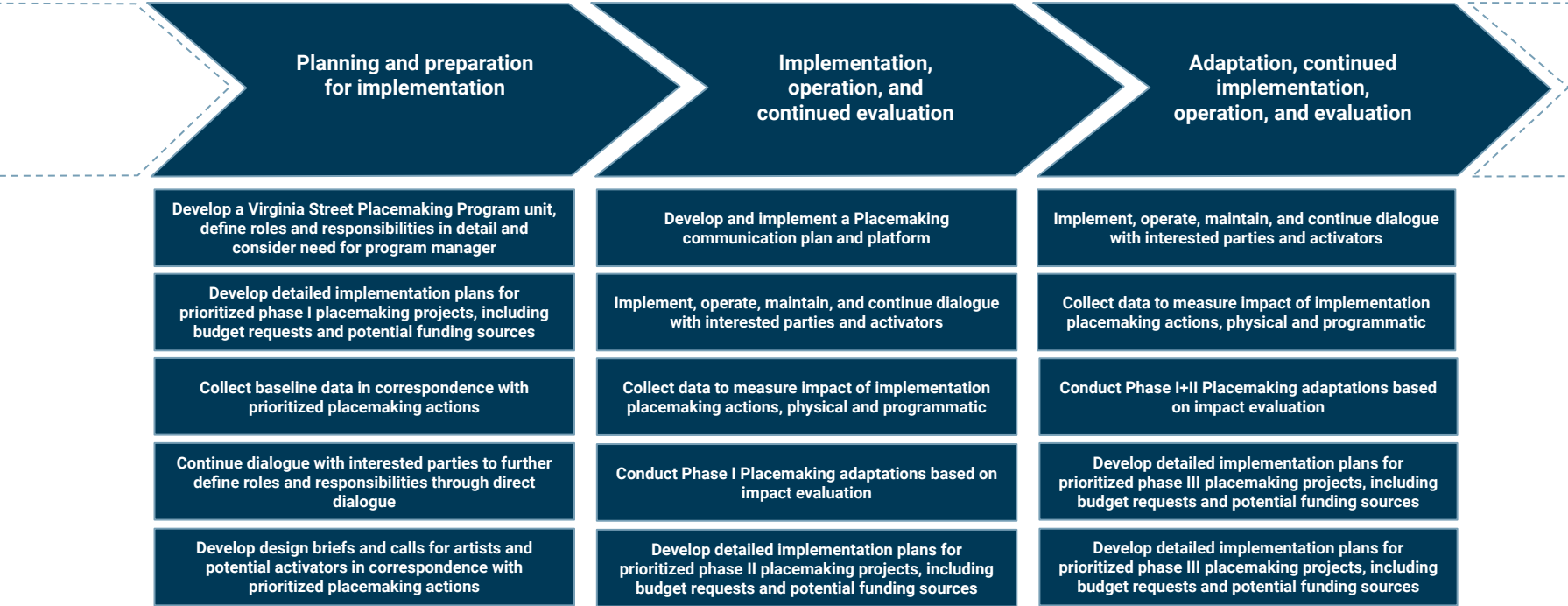
## Believe Plaza 3.0 capital improvements

- ❑ Develop a comprehensive plan for transformation of the plaza
- ❑ Include additional greening and trees
- ❑ Include permanent play and urban sports and games features. E.G. splash-pad, ping-pong, chess, dedicated area for skateboarders

# Proposed phasing overview



# Implementation process



# Roles and responsibilities



***Note:** More specific roles and responsibilities to be further detailed by the City of Reno*

# Cost examples

The following pages provides cost examples based on comparable placemaking and streetscape improvement projects.

Cost estimates include examples of:

- Complete projects, including programming and physical improvements for both pilot projects and capital improvements
- Edge activation projects
- Specific furnishings and streetscape improvement components as line items / linear ft costs

These cost examples are non-exhaustive and are not prescriptive. Rather, they are intended to be used as a starting point for creating preliminary placemaking intervention budgets.

This information is included here for reference and mirrored in a supplemental spreadsheet for budgeting purposes.




The image displays four overlapping spreadsheets from the 'Virginia Street Urban Placemaking Study'.

- Streetscape improvement cost examples:** A table with columns for Improvement Type, Improvement, Unit Measure, Unit Count, Name, and Cost Estimate. It lists items like 'Standard public bench' and 'Wayfinding - periodic'.
- Furnishing cost examples:** A table with columns for Furnishing Type, Furnishing, Unit Measure, and Cost Estimate. It lists items like 'Cafe chairs and table set' and 'Standard Chairs And Tables'.
- Capital improvement cost examples:** A table with columns for Project Name, Location, Area Size, and Cost Estimate. It lists projects like 'Mammet' and 'Helen Miller Child Center Playgrounds'.
- Programming & activation cost examples:** A table with columns for Project Name, Location, Area Size, Cost Estimate, Details of Activation, and Example Photo. It lists projects like 'The Porch at 20th Street Station', 'Promenade 3.0 Experiment', and 'Meet in the Streets'.

Each spreadsheet includes a disclaimer: '\*All projects completed by Gehl between 2018 and 2020. Price estimates do not take market rate increase and current volatility into account. Estimates were compiled between 2022-2023'.

\* All projects included in the cost estimates were completed between 2018 and 2020. Price estimates for furnishings were compiled between 2022-2023 and do not take market rate increase and current market volatility into account.

## Programming & activation cost examples

Project Name	Location	Area Size	Cost Estimate	Details of Activation	Example Photo
<b>The Porch at 30th Street Station</b>	<i>Philadelphia, Pennsylvania</i>	33 parking spaces (30,000 sq ft) transformed into pedestrian-friendly public space	\$320,000 - \$375,000	Custom designed furniture including design and fabrication along with a yearly art and activation budget. The price does not include operations and maintenance.	
<b>Promenade 3.0 Experiment</b>	<i>Santa Monica, California</i>	3 blocks of pedestrian mall	\$185,000 - \$240,000	1 month of activation and programming, including design, fabrication and materials + monitoring impact. The price does not include operations and maintenance. Design utilized in stock city and BID furniture. See spreadsheet for further cost breakdown.	
<b>Meet in the Streets</b>	<i>Denver, Colorado</i>	1 mile transit mall corridor, including cross street blocks	\$100,000 - \$150,000	6 consecutive weekends in the summer of activation and programming, including design, fabrication and materials + monitoring paid for with BID funds + supporting grants from local businesses.	

## Capital improvement cost examples

Project Name	Location	Area Size	Cost Estimate	Details of Project	Example Photo
<b>Moment</b>	<i>San Jose, California</i>	Four Micro retail units. Unit size ranges from 275-347 sq ft	\$780,000	\$730,000 in initial costs, including construction and construction of adjacent parklets. \$50,000 in additional funding to support programing and staffing.	
<b>Helen Diller Civic Center Playgrounds</b>	<i>San Francisco, California</i>	Two adjacent playgrounds. 28,000 sf ft total project site	\$10 million	Playgrounds include large custom built climbing structures. Cost estimate includes implementation.	
<b>Cafe Kiosk at Civic Center</b>	<i>San Francisco, California</i>	640 sq ft commercial kitchen and bathroom	\$2.4 million	Kiosk has awnings that fold down into walls at night to prevent vandalism. Cost estimate includes implementation.	

Furnishing cost examples			
Furnishing Type	Furnishing	Unit Measure	Cost Estimate (Exclusive of installation cost. Assume ≥150% markup for install.)
Standard Chairs And Tables	Cafe chairs and table set	Table and four chairs	\$375
	Adirondack chair	One chair	\$230
	Picnic table	Table with integrated seating	\$1,100
Seating	Presidio loveseat	One extra-large chair, fabricated to order	\$680
	Magis spun chair	One spinning top chair	\$955
	Philadelphia Porch Swing	One swing	\$32,000
	Stephen Ave Bleacher Seating and Custom Deck Chairs	1 bleacher Climbing Structure 5 deck Chairs	\$35,000
Game and Play Installations	Metal Ping Pong Table	One table	\$5,500
	Chess Table	Table and two stools	\$5,500
	Musical Bench	One integrated bench and xylophone	\$19,500
	Foosball	One foosball table	\$4,750
	Seesaw	One seesaw	\$4,500

## Streetscape improvement cost examples

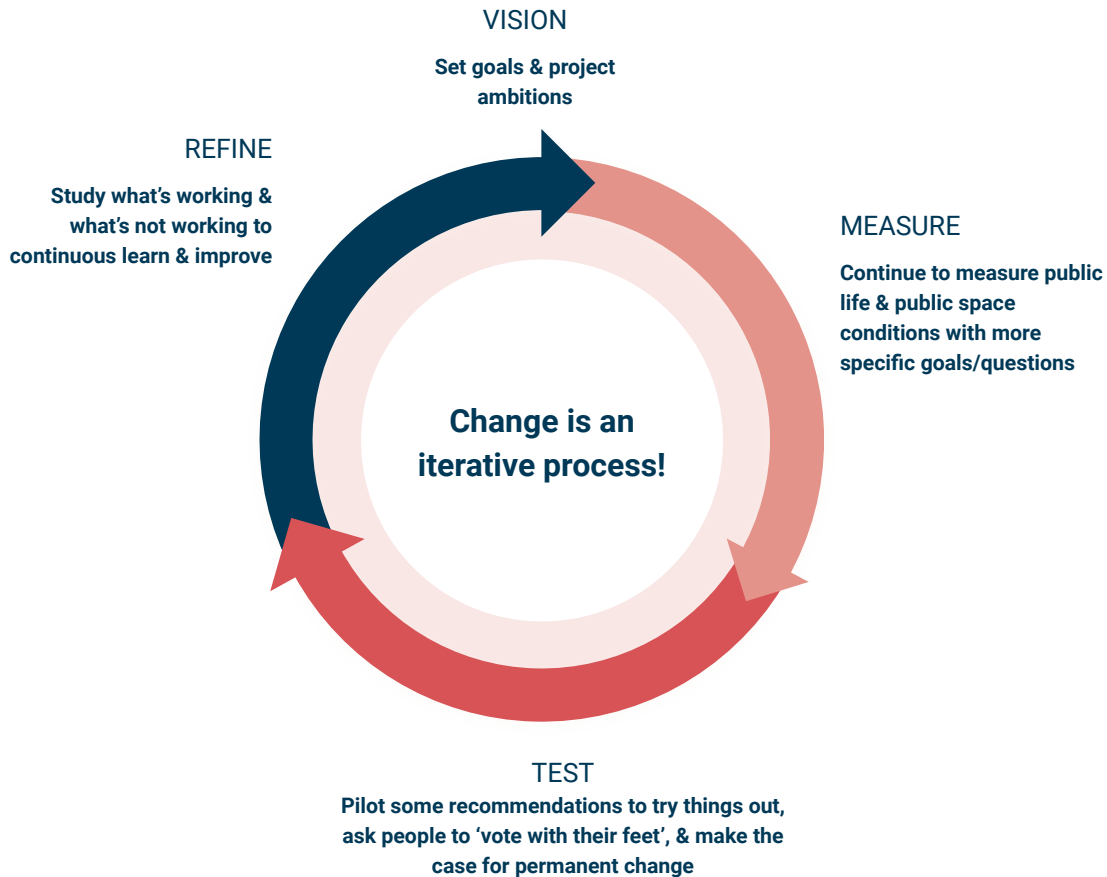
Improvement Type	Improvement	Unit Measure	Unit Count	Notes	Cost Estimate
Furniture Zone	Standard public bench	Bench	Design dependent		\$
	Wayfinding - temporary	Sq ft	Design dependent	Vinyl or foil street sticker	\$50 sq ft
	Wayfinding - permanent	Unit	Design dependent	Pole placard or building signage	\$
	Street tree	tree	Design dependent		\$
	Bike racks	1 rack	Design dependent		\$
	Planter Bed	Dq ft	Design dependent	See recent example at Canyon Flats Apartments	\$
Right of Way	Bike lanes	5545 lin. ft.	2	Measure includes paint through intersection	\$
	Bollards	1 bollard	Design dependent		\$
	Bus lane	360 ft	2	Paint treatment for dedicated bus lane	\$
	Parking bay	3 car bay	Design dependent	Consider additional parking bays after other, adjacent parking resources have been exhausted	\$
	Street restriping	5545 lin. ft.	1	Linear measure of corridor through intersections	\$
	Intersection improvements	Intersection	9		\$

# Placemaking targets and continued evaluation

As part of a successful transformation and placemaking effort, documenting the impact of implemented actions can serve as a tool for informed decision making.

The following pages outline a series of placemaking targets tied to the project goals (see pages 75 to 80) revealed through the Placemaking Study. These goals are then tied to desired outcomes and evaluation methods.

It is recommended that baseline data is collected prior to implementation to properly document the impact of placemaking investments on and around Virginia Street.



# Tying project goals to desired outcomes

## Placemaking Targets

Goal A: Strengthen invitations for everyday life with. . .	Desired outcome	Evaluation method
Invitations to sit, rest, and linger for shorter and longer periods of time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in # of people spending time</li> <li>• Increase in public seating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stationary Activity Mappings</li> <li>• Public Seating Tally</li> </ul>
High quality inclusive, intergenerational public space that offer a variety of amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in age and gender diversity</li> <li>• Higher reported satisfaction with Downtown offerings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age and Perceived Gender Counts</li> <li>• Questionnaire-based Survey</li> </ul>
18/7 activation and programming with adjacencies that invite diverse groups of people to spend time and interact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in public life AM and PM</li> <li>• Increase in reported positive social interactions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stationary Activity Mappings</li> <li>• Questionnaire-based Survey</li> </ul>
A programming cadence that invites people to spend time everyday, all year, and outside of special events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in public life throughout the seasons</li> <li>• Increase in small-scale repeat events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stationary Activity Mappings</li> <li>• Event and Event Attendance Tally</li> </ul>
Reinforced perception of safety through a more diverse public life profile, active edges, and eyes on the street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease in Ambassador and first responder calls</li> <li>• Higher reported sense of safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activity Reportings</li> <li>• Questionnaire-based Survey</li> </ul>

# Tying project goals to desired outcomes

## Placemaking Targets

Goal B: Bring Reno's culture of creativity and innovation to the street through . . .	Desired outcome	Evaluation method
Incentives for local makers to create installations and deliver engaging activation and programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to diverse public art experiences</li> <li>• Increase in local makers work on public display</li> <li>• Increase in art related tourism</li> <li>• Increase in # of people spending time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Art Tally/ Questionnaire-based Survey</li> <li>• # of Makers Engaged</li> <li>• Tourism Survey</li> <li>• Stationary Activity Mappings</li> </ul>
Leveraging the iconic signage and facades with stronger viewing platforms that spark curiosity and social connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in social media posts</li> <li>• Higher reported satisfaction with Downtown offerings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Media tags</li> <li>• Questionnaire-based Survey/ Tourism Survey</li> </ul>
Celebrating the historic alleyways with activation, turning them from backsides into complementary public spaces and shortcuts for people on foot and wheels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased movement activity</li> <li>• Higher reported sense of safety</li> <li>• Reno history coming to life for people to enjoy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Movement by Mode Counts</li> <li>• Questionnaire-based Survey</li> <li>• Stationary Activity Counts</li> </ul>

# Tying project goals to desired outcomes

## Placemaking Targets

Goal C: Support connectivity and climate with. . .	Desired outcome	Evaluation method
A well-defined street identity that invites visitors from adjacent districts and provides a sense of belonging for downtown residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in Reno residents visiting</li> <li>• Higher reported social connection among residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response-based Survey/ Movement by Mode Counts</li> <li>• Response-based Survey</li> </ul>
A walking experience with convenient, direct connections and opportunities for leisurely strolls and discoveries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in # of people walking</li> <li>• Increase in Downtown leisure trips</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Movement by Mode Counts</li> <li>• Response-based Survey</li> </ul>
Clearly defined access for all modes that improves real and perceived safety and encourages people of all ages and abilities to use active mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in # of people biking and wheeling</li> <li>• Decrease in traffic accidents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Movement by Mode Counts</li> <li>• Accidents Reportings</li> </ul>
Lush planting that represents Reno's natural beauty and connects the Truckee River to the University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in street trees and greening</li> <li>• Increase in biodiversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree Canopy and non-paved sqft Tally</li> <li>• Species Richness Index</li> </ul>
A comfortable microclimate and protection from the elements all year round	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease in heat island effect</li> <li>• Improved air quality</li> <li>• Increase in people spending time all year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Temperature Monitoring</li> <li>• Local Air Quality Monitoring</li> <li>• Stationary Activity Mapping</li> </ul>

# Tying project goals to desired outcomes

## Placemaking Targets

Goal D: Focus economic growth on local entrepreneurship and daily needs through. . .	Desired outcome	Evaluation method
Bringing neighborhood amenities on to, and adjacent to, Virginia Street, making it possible to meet daily needs within a 15 minute walk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase in everyday neighborhood amenities</li><li>• Increase in local sales</li><li>• Higher reported satisfaction in access to affordable and healthy food</li><li>• Increase in # people walking, biking, and wheeling</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amenity Mapping</li><li>• Sales Stubs Reportings and Tax Revenue</li><li>• Response-based Survey/ Product Sales Reporting</li><li>• Movement by Mode Counts/ Response-based Survey</li></ul>
Lowering the entry barriers for local entrepreneurs with small-scale affordable commercial spaces that are curated to offer a diverse range of commerce, food, and beverage at varied price points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Decrease in inactive facades</li><li>• Increase in # of businesses</li><li>• Increase in # of local entrepreneurs with Downtown brick and mortar locations/pop ups</li><li>• Increase in food-forward community events, from Farmer's Markets to Food Truck Nights</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Facade Mapping</li><li>• Amenity Mapping</li><li>• Business Survey</li><li>• Event Tally/ Attendance Tally</li></ul>

