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The Plan for downtown is both general and specific, giving guidance for long-term policy and budgeting decisions and at the same time providing details where appropriate for specific improvements. The Plan is organized around six basic objectives. For each objective, a series of policy statements and action items are recommended. Where appropriate, the timing and responsibility for implementation are also given.

**Objective 1: Encourage mixed-use developments.**

**Policy 7.1.1: It is the policy of Johnson City to provide a mix of urban residential types and densities within the Downtown Core area.**

**Policy 7.1.2: It is the policy of Johnson City to provide for the location of unique shopping facilities, restaurants and office developments in the Downtown Core area.**

**Policy 7.1.3 It is the policy of Johnson City to provide appropriate zoning for the entire Downtown Core area.**

**Policy 7.1.4: It is the policy of Johnson City to update the Zoning Ordinance to include the following:**

1. The B-2 District regulations should specify that no new or enlarged building shall appear to be less than two stories and not greater than seven stories;
2. The B-2 District regulations should require that the fronts of commercial buildings be aligned with the sidewalk or a permitted outdoor use, such as an outdoor dining area;
3. Civic buildings within the Downtown Core area and institutional buildings in other locations may be sited with public open space or lawn in the front. As with commercial buildings, automobile parking should not be permitted between the front of the building and the street;
4. Prohibit auto-oriented uses such as auto repair and drive-through sales and services;
5. Prohibit uses which do not serve and are not accessible to pedestrians, including truck terminals, and industrial uses or manufacturing;
6. **Prohibit residential uses on the first floor of all buildings; With the change market forces and less demand for large retail space along with the need for additional downtown residents, code changes should make opportunities for 1<sup>st</sup> floor residential while maintaining commercial storefronts.**
7. Revise the provisions regarding alcohol sales for consistency with those in other commercial zones;
8. Prohibit the use of chain link fences; and
9. Require screening of private dumpsters and mechanical equipment.

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10. Encourage grocers or small markets to locate in the downtown core to serve visitors and downtown dwellers.

**Policy 7.1.5:** It is the policy of Johnson City to encourage restaurants to provide space for outdoor dining, including the privilege of using a portion of adjacent sidewalks or walkways for outdoor seating, if adequate space for pedestrian travel can be assured.

**Policy 7.1.6:** It is the policy of Johnson City when new parking garages are built or existing structures renovated, street level spaces should be used for retailing, display windows, or other uses which contribute visual interest and activity to the street.

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. Improve pedestrian connectivity to parking structures to encourage use.

**Objective 2:** Create a physical setting that is comfortable, convenient, visually interesting, and secure.

*Streetscape*

**Policy 7.2.1:** It is the policy of Johnson City to attach street signs to existing poles to decrease clutter of the streetscape, where practical.

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. Street name signs should be attached on existing traffic and pedestrian signal poles or the mast arms that extend over roadways;
2. Where traffic signal poles and mast arms are not available, the city should attach street name signs on street light poles, where available; and
3. Where neither traffic signal poles with mast arms nor street light poles are available, the city should attach street name signs on decorative street sign poles.
4. The back of each sign should have a black plate on the reverse side were applicable.

**Policy 7.2.2:** It is the policy of Johnson City to improve the street name signage throughout the Downtown Core area.

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. The city should evaluate using brown as the background district-appropriate color and style, as approved by the HZC, for street name signs in the Downtown Core area; and
2. Street name signs should include a railroad theme to commemorate the history of Johnson City.

**Policy 7.2.3:** It is the policy of Johnson City to support the creation of welcome signage and wayfinding signage identifying the Downtown Core.

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. Refer to the City's Wayfinding Plan.
2. The city should identify the Downtown Core with "aesthetically pleasing" signage at the five major corridors that enter and exit downtown. A list has been created to add priority as to where gateway signs should be located as motorists or

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pedestrians enter and exit the Downtown Core area. Gateway signs should be placed at these areas (see Map 14):

- State of Franklin Road at Buffalo Street;
  - South Roan Street at State of Franklin Road;
  - North Roan Street at Fairview Avenue;
  - East Market Street at Interstate 26 exit ramp; and
  - West Main Street at South Boone Street.
3. The city should enhance gateways with improved landscaping, reduced overhead wiring, improved lighting, cleanliness, and building maintenance;
  4. The city should assist visitors to the Downtown Core with the development of wayfinding signage. Wayfinding signs located inside the Downtown Core area should be placed at the following locations:
    - East Market Street in front of Rose Hill Wedding Chapel;
    - Intersection of East Market and South Roan streets;
    - Intersection of East Main and South Roan streets;
    - Intersection of South Roan Street and State of Franklin Road;
    - Intersection of Buffalo and Roan streets;
    - Intersection of North Roan and Millard streets;
    - Intersection of Buffalo and Market streets;
    - Intersection of Buffalo and Main streets;
    - Intersection of Buffalo Street and State of Franklin Road;
    - Intersection of State of Franklin Road and Spring Street;
    - Intersection of West Market and Commerce streets;
    - Intersection of West Main and Commerce streets;
    - Intersection of Boone and West Main streets; and
    - Adjacent to the Courthouse on Buffalo Street.
  4. The city should assist visitors to Johnson City with the development of wayfinding signage throughout the city assisting with directional information. Wayfinding signage located outside the Downtown Core area that is directive to the Downtown Core area should be placed at the following locations:
    - I-26 at Market and Main street exits;
    - Intersection of State of Franklin Road and West Market Street;
    - North Roan Street and I-26;
    - Highway 11E;
    - Intersection of North Roan Street and John Exum Parkway;
    - Intersection of South Roan Street and University Parkway;
    - East Unaka Avenue and I-26;
    - State of Franklin Road and I-26;
    - Route 321 at Washington/Carter county line;
    - Bristol Highway at Allison Road;
    - Intersection of North Roan Street and Unaka Avenue; and
    - Intersection of West Market Street and John Exum Parkway.
  5. Additional information kiosks should continue a similar design and style, and future kiosks should be placed at the following locations:
    - In the green space near the courthouse at the intersection of Buffalo Street and East Market Street; and
    - South of West Main Street on Buffalo Street at Flag Plaza.

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**Policy 7.2.4: It is the policy of Johnson City to require screening and buffering adjacent to areas that are not aesthetically pleasing, such as dumpsters, transformers, and mechanical units located on city-owned property.**

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. The city should require screening around dumpsters that are easily accessible to downtown users in the:
  - Downtown Square parking lot;
  - West Market Street/Commerce Street parking lot;
  - West Main Street/Commerce Street parking lot; and
  - Two Cherry Street parking lots.

**Policy 7.2.5: It is the policy of Johnson City to maintain the existing scale of the Downtown Core area.**

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. The adoption by the Historic Zoning Commission of the Main Street Design Guidelines for the Downtown Core area; and
2. The adoption by the City Commission of the Main Street Historic District boundaries for the Downtown Core area.

**Policy 7.2.6: It is the policy of Johnson City to install traffic and pedestrian signal poles that are consistent throughout the Downtown Core area.**

*This policy is to be implemented by the following action:*

1. All traffic and pedestrian signal poles should be black in color in parks and green in color along streets throughout the Downtown Core area.

**Policy 7.2.7: It is the policy of Johnson City to continue replacing the cobra and box style lights with pedestrian scale period style lights throughout the Downtown Core area. The existing period style light of 20 feet should be shortened to 12-15 foot maximum height street lights.**

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. The city should install pedestrian scale period style street lights on the following streets:
  - Concentrated at intersections for improved safety
  - Buffalo Street;
  - South Roan Street between Buffalo and East Market streets;
  - East Market Street between I-26 and Colonial Way;
  - South Roan Street between State of Franklin Road and East Main Street;
  - East Main Street between I-26 and Colonial Way;
  - McClure Street;
  - North Commerce Street between West Market and North Roan streets; and
  - West King Street between North Boone and North Roan streets.
2. The city should follow the Small Cell Antenna ordinance in order to ensure that poles replaced for cellular facilities meet the standards of downtown aesthetics.

**Policy 7.2.8: It is the policy of Johnson City to provide appropriate style street furniture in the Downtown Core area:**

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**Johnson City Comprehensive Plan  
Downtown Revitalization Plan**

**Recommendations**

1. The city should remove the existing pebble façade trash receptacles and install appropriate black trash receptacles in the Downtown Core area. They should be added at the following locations (see Map 16):
  - Buffalo Street;
  - Fountain Square; and
  - As future needs dictate.
2. The city should install appropriate black park benches in the Downtown Core area. Additionally, a fund should be established to include commemorative plaques on benches throughout the Downtown Core area, which could be administered through the JCDA office. Below is a list of locations where benches should be placed:
  - Along West Market and West Main streets;
  - Intersection of Buffalo and North Roan streets;
  - Intersection of Commerce and North Roan streets;
  - Intersection of King and North Roan streets;
  - Intersection of Fairview Avenue and North Roan Street;
  - Intersection of Buffalo and Main streets;
  - Intersection of Buffalo and Market streets;
  - Intersection of Millard and North Roan Street;
  - Spring Street Park; and
  - **Earth Day Park** Sabores Breezeway.
  - **Majestic Park**

**Policy 7.2.9** It is the policy of Johnson City to provide and encourage public art in the Downtown Core.

*Historic Markers*

**Policy 7.2.10:** It is the policy of Johnson City acting through the Historic Zoning Commission to design and approve the location of historic markers in the Downtown Core area.

*Parks and Open Space*

**Policy 7.2.11:** It is the policy of Johnson City to maintain, with a regular schedule, the city parks and open spaces within the Downtown Core area.

**Policy 7.2.12:** It is the policy of Johnson City to create a maintenance schedule for upkeep of planters, pruning trees, cleaning out culverts, sidewalks, and other streetscape items.

**Policy 7.2.13:** It is the policy of Johnson City to actively pursue a program to plant and maintain street trees within the Downtown Core where practical using the recommended varieties described in Appendix 1.

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. The city should adopt the use of the recommended eight varieties of street trees to be used throughout the Downtown Core. These trees should be situated in one of the following locations:

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**Johnson City Comprehensive Plan  
Downtown Revitalization Plan**

**Recommendations**

- In the grass strip between the sidewalk and curb;
  - In a tree grate surrounded by the sidewalk;
  - Behind the sidewalk; and
  - In a public open space.
2. The city should plant additional street trees on the following streets:
- East Market Street between I-26 and South Roan Street;
  - East Main Street between Colonial Way and I-26;
  - West Market Street between Buffalo and Montgomery streets;
  - West Main Street between Buffalo and Dodge streets;
  - Buffalo Street between State of Franklin Road and Freewill Baptist Church;
  - Roan Street between East Market Street and Fairview Avenue; and
  - Other remaining streets in the Downtown Core area as development takes place.

**Policy 7.2.14:** It is the policy of Johnson City to encourage private open areas, especially private parking lots to landscape with street trees from the approved list described in Appendix 1.

*Utilities*

**Policy 7.2.15:** It is the policy of Johnson City to require that all existing overhead utility lines be relocated underground as funding is available. Electric, phone, and cable TV lines should also be included in this policy.

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. The city should work with the necessary private companies to have existing overhead wiring relocated underground. Below are streets that have been identified with overhead wiring, that should transition to underground wiring:
  - South Roan Street between Buffalo and East Market streets;
  - East Market Street between I-26 and Colonial Way;
  - West Market Street between Boone and Dodge streets;
  - West Main Street between Dodge and Boone streets;
  - McClure Street;
  - North Commerce Street between West Market and North Roan streets;
  - West King Street between Boone and North Roan streets; and
  - Other areas within the study area as needed.

*Safety*

**Policy 7.2.16:** It is the policy of Johnson City to support the integration of a pedestrian friendly streetscape and enhance safety throughout the Downtown Core area.

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. The city will encourage the following actions, but not limited to: pedestrian friendly crosswalks, increased green-space, planting of more trees, and aesthetically pleasing sidewalks;

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2. The city should increase efforts to promote a safer downtown. Examples are, but not limited to: increased police protection and increased lighting in areas of poor visibility; and
3. The city should encourage improved pedestrian access and safety improvements to the Downtown Parking Garage such as: elevators, lighting, security cameras, and security personnel.

**Policy 7.2.17:** It is the policy of Johnson City to deter criminal activity and to create a an environment that is safe for all users and age groups through the combination of 1) law enforcement presence and 2) a variety of measures which aim to increase the activity of law-abiding citizens, thus creating “eyes on street” which naturally assist with the prevention of criminal activity. ~~enforce existing regulations that prohibit vagrants from loitering in the Downtown Core area.~~

**Objective 3:** Encourage shared-parking design, common access, and circulation features between adjoining properties to maximize parking arrangements, encourage a greater utilization of existing parking areas, and expand access to safe pedestrian networks.

**Policy 7.3.1:** It is the policy of Johnson City to provide public parking facilities located in the B-2 (Central Business District) district. It should be noted that parking capacity is a major topic surrounding downtown and it is important that this issue be prioritized and addressed in order to ensure success for downtown. As a City, we should maximize the utilization of existing parking facilities and engage professional parking experts to study and make recommendations regarding parking as it relates to the Downtown Core and the W. Walnut St. District.

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. **Short-Term Recommendations for Parking:**
  - Delineate time restricted on-street parking spaces;
  - Review public parking signage; and
  - Increase enforcement of parking regulations.
2. **Long-Term Recommendations for Parking:**

There are several measures that are recommended for consideration over the next three to ten years. These recommendations may require special action by the city, increased funding, or simply may not be needed until demand increases.

  - Give consideration to metered parking given the limitations to parking enforcement under the most recent Supreme Court ruling in regards to marking tires with chalk.
  - Improve existing off-street parking lots and consideration of additional parking structures
  - As demand for on-street parking increases, consider additional angle parking;
  - Share available parking in private parking lots; and
  - Provide overhead pedestrian connections on busy streets.

**Policy 7.3.2:** It is the policy of Johnson City to investigate the feasibility of converting one-way streets into two-way streets and/or converting Main/Market back to brick streets.

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*This policy is to be implemented by the following action:*

1. The city of Johnson City should partner with downtown businesses, the JCDA, neighborhood groups/organizations, and other citizens to determine whether or not Main Street and Market Street should be converted to two-way streets.
2. The City should work with TDOT to shift the state route from E. Main St/E. Market St to W State of Franklin so as to gain local control of lane configuration and to shift truck traffic out of the Downtown Core.
3. Consider unearthing existing historic brick streets and trolley car lines, make appropriate repairs to allow for the continued use as brick paved streets, and limiting the hours in which cars can access E. Main St (Weekend Nights, Festivals, etc.)

**Policy 7.3.3: It is the policy of Johnson City to identify prominent locations for pedestrian crossings at key intersections and at mid-block areas where significant pedestrian traffic is expected.**

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. A common style, color, and material should be chosen for all new crosswalks within the Downtown Core area. (Pattern currently used downtown: Ashler Stone – Random Interlocking Pattern – L.M. Scofield Company);
2. When existing streets are repaved, the city should apply a consistent stamping pattern to create an identifiable pedestrian crosswalk;
3. When existing streets are rebuilt or new streets are constructed, patterned and colored crosswalks (of concrete, brick, or stone) should be installed at appropriate locations;
4. A list of sidewalks that are identified for stamping should be completed and prioritized in the following order:
  - Buffalo Street;
  - East Main Street;
  - East Market Street;
  - West Market Street;
  - West Main Street; and
  - Once these sidewalks have been completed, others should be replaced with stamped patterns in areas that are feasible in the Downtown Core area.
5. A list of crosswalks that should be stamped bricked has been prioritized in the Downtown Core area including:
  - Buffalo Street (at the intersections with East Main and East Market streets);
  - Intersection of Buffalo Street and State of Franklin Road;
  - State of Franklin Road (entering into Downtown Square parking lot);
  - Intersection of Roan Street and State of Franklin Road;
  - Intersection of East Main and Roan streets;
  - Intersection of East Market and Roan streets;
  - Intersection of Buffalo and Roan streets;
  - Intersection of Commerce Street and West Market Street;
  - Intersection of Commerce and West Main streets;
  - Intersection of Boone and West Main streets;
  - Intersection of Boone and West Market streets;
  - Intersection of King and Roan streets;



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**Johnson City Comprehensive Plan  
Downtown Revitalization Plan**

**Recommendations**

- Intersection of Fairview Avenue and Roan Street; and
- Intersection of Millard and Roan streets.

**Policy 7.3.4: It is the policy of Johnson City to identify locations for bike racks within the Downtown Core area. Additional racks should be placed at the following locations:**

- Majestic Park; and
- Fountain Square.
- Downtown Square Breezeway
- Spring St Park
- King Commons

**Policy 7.3.5** It is the policy of Johnson City to concentrate streets enhancements, lane reconfigurations, and other improvements in the downtown core along E. Main St in order to stabilize private investment in the city’s historic district.

**Policy 7.3.6** It is the policy of Johnson City to preserve the existing brick-lined streets and trolley car lines.

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. Explore opportunities to expose these historic features and the potential to return them to regular use.
2. Ensure that measures are taken to minimize the impact to these elements any time public infrastructure is disturbed by Public Works, Water & Sewer, and other utility projects.

**Objective 4: Encourage the renovation and rehabilitation of existing buildings and storefronts.**

**Policy 7.4.1: It is the policy of Johnson City to retain the older, historically valuable buildings listed in the historic district and that are on the National Register in and around the Downtown Core area. Encourage adaptive re-use of older buildings by promoting rehabilitation and reuse of existing structures that contribute to the overall design character of downtown.**

**Policy 7.4.2: It is the policy of the city acting through the Historic Zoning Commission to coordinate with the Johnson City Development Authority the preservation and promotion of the Downtown Core area.**

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. Develop incentives in addition to Federal Tax Credits, to encourage businesses and dwelling units to locate in the Downtown Core area;
2. Coordinate with the Johnson City Development Authority that historic resources in the Downtown Core area and surrounding area are maintained, restored, or renovated. The design guidelines for the Downtown Historic District should be reviewed for periodic updates and revisions; and
3. Enlarge the Downtown Historic Zoning District. **Nominate the former CSX Train Depot located at the intersection of Buffalo Street and South State of Franklin Road to the National Register of Historic Places.** **Nominate blocks along W Main and W Market east of Commerce St**

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**Policy 7.4.3: It is the policy of Johnson City to support the Johnson City Development Authority (JCDA) in its efforts to revitalize downtown.**

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. The city should support the JCDA in the promotion and marketing of the Downtown Tax Increment Financing District;
2. The city should provide support to the Johnson City Development Authority in maintaining the designation of the Tennessee Main Street Program;
3. The city should support the JCDA in its efforts in working with local colleges and universities to bring academic programs into the downtown where space is available; and
4. The city should support the JCDA to continue applying and implementing Transportation Enhancement Grants and other funding to improve and enhance the streetscape and other downtown projects.

**Objective 5: Improve stormwater management and prevent future flooding downtown.**

**Policy 7.5.1: It is the policy of Johnson City to implement a stormwater utility fee to help fund projects that improve stormwater management and eliminate flooding in the Downtown Core area.**

**Policy 7.5.2: It is the policy of Johnson City to encourage all development within the flood-prone areas of the Downtown Core area to be designed in a way that minimizes flood-related damage and avoids increasing flood impacts elsewhere.**

**Objective 6: Build public/private partnerships that result in the redevelopment of underutilized property and projects that achieve maximum benefit from such partnerships.**

**Policy 7.6.1: It is the policy of the city of Johnson City to review the Downtown Core first when locating city-funded operations using city tax funds.**

**Policy 7.6.2: It is the policy of Johnson City to encourage city, federal, state, county, and other governmental services to remain or locate in the Downtown Core area.**

1. Consider relocating City Hall back to the downtown core to improve the daytime population to support existing businesses and to have city leadership experience downtown on a regular basis.

**Policy 7.6.3: It is the policy of Johnson City to pursue grant opportunities in the Downtown Core area.**

**Policy 7.6.4: It is the policy of Johnson City to support incentive programs in the downtown that will offer businesses a more competitive edge to remain and expand.**

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. The city shall support future programs that will entice development throughout downtown;

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2. The city shall support future enhancement opportunities to continue downtown improvements; and
3. The city shall provide and update necessary infrastructure to downtown businesses.

**Policy 7.6.5: It is the policy of Johnson City to support infill development in areas where infrastructure is currently provided.**

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. The city shall promote tax incentive programs; and
2. The city shall encourage the use of Federal Tax Incentives for the restoration of historic buildings.

**Policy 7.6.6: It is the policy of Johnson City to support and encourage local colleges and universities to incorporate university level programs as part of their presence in the downtown.**

*This policy is to be implemented by the following action:*

1. The city shall support JCDA's efforts in working with local colleges and universities to bring specific academic programs and uses into the downtown where space is available. Advantages of locating downtown may offer benefits to specific programs or classes such as; geographic location, space availability for classes, or displaying projects and a market to support student services.

**Policy 7.6.7: It is the policy of Johnson City to support events that encourage visitors to the downtown.**

*This policy is to be implemented by the following action:*

1. The city shall continue to support existing events including festivals, block parties, concerts ~~such as the Blue Plum Festival, First Fridays, Founders After Five, UMOJA/Unity Festival,~~ and new downtown events that may be created in the future.
2. Look to expand events into the downtown core along E. Main St utilizing Majestic Park as well as in the newly formed public greenspaces.

**Policy 7.6.8: It is the policy of Johnson City to notify, in advance, affected property owners, tenants, and the public of projects in the Downtown Core.**

*This policy is to be implemented by the following actions:*

1. Work with the Community Relations Department to create fun and creative signage notifying the public of upcoming projects
2. Meet with affected property owners and tenants in advance of projects.