

City Square West Block Redevelopment Master Plan

Historic Downtown
Chaska

SEPTEMBER 2019

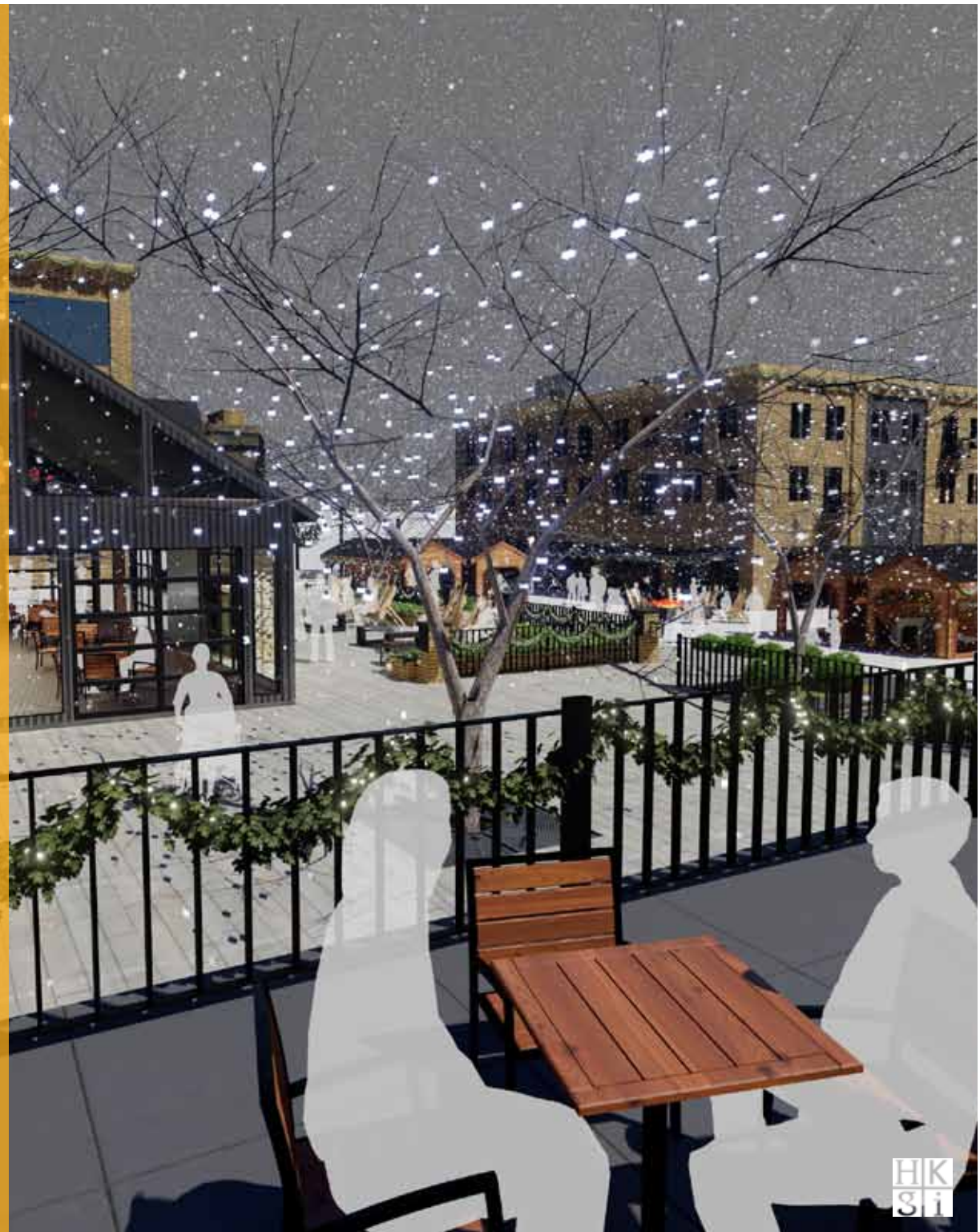


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Block 27 business tenants
Downtown Business Alliance (DBA)
City of Chaska Employee Committee
Chaska residents

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MSR Design (architecture)
Walker Parking Consultants (parking structure feasibility)
The Beard Group (development market)
The Musicant Group (public space activation)

Redevelopment Opportunity

in Historic Downtown Chaska

Growing Need for Redevelopment of the City Square West Block

The City Square West block was identified as one of three catalyst redevelopment sites in the city's 2012 Downtown Master Plan. The three catalyst sites were identified as significant opportunities for visible and positive change that could catalyze new interest in and revitalization of downtown Chaska. The first two catalyst sites have been successfully redeveloped and set the bar for high quality redevelopment in downtown. The Landing, a senior housing building on the riverfront catalyst site, was completed in 2014. The Chaska Curling and Event Center, along with a complete reconstruction of Firemen's Park, was completed in 2015 and has been a phenomenally popular new destination at the north edge of downtown.

The City Square West (CSW) block occupies a unique location in the heart of downtown across from historic City Square, with frontage on Chestnut Street, downtown's "Main Street". Chestnut St, which is also State Highway 41, serves as a high-traffic regional roadway with great visibility and access for businesses. The CSW block sits midway between 2nd St, the city's most historic commercial street, and civic and commercial destinations north of 4th St. While this block contains shops, services and restaurants that have provided a positive contribution to downtown over the years, the existing buildings are in need of reinvestment and do not contribute to the long-term character, scale and identity of downtown.

A significant opportunity exists for the CSW block to be redeveloped as a block with complementary mixed use buildings for commercial and residential, a central public gathering place, and public parking facilities that together can better reflect the historic character and scale of a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented downtown. Since no historic structures exist on this block, redevelopment could proceed without disturbing any of downtown's existing small-scale historic buildings. The limited number of property owners makes it relatively more feasible to assemble properties to enable a full block redevelopment project. Creative redevelopment of this block will enable reconnection of the north and south ends of historic downtown Chaska.

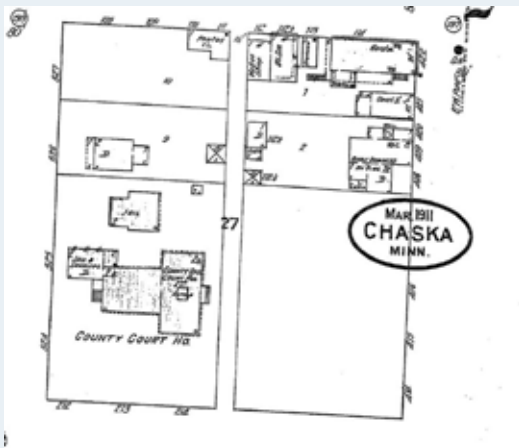


Aerial photo of existing site conditions and context, 2019

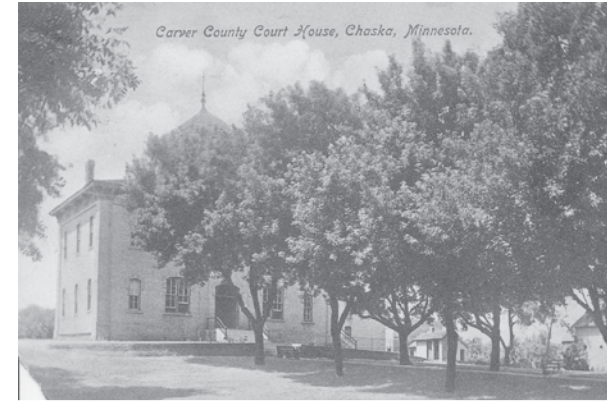
Site Background

History of City Square West Block

Block 27 is located immediately west of the community's historic City Square and along Chestnut Street, the city's "Main Street". For more than a century, this block was the site of the Carver County Courthouse, including a front lawn that faced City Square across Chestnut St. The two-story Italianate-style building was torn down in 1966. The northeast portion of the block was once home to a cluster of traditional retail buildings. Both the County Courthouse and commercial storefronts were oriented to Chestnut St and City Square, enhancing City Square as the center of the community and downtown's pedestrian environment. These buildings were torn down for redevelopment of the block in the 1960s, replaced by the current auto-oriented commercial buildings.



1911 Sanborn map of Block 27



County Courthouse and front lawn



Klein Bank original facade in the 1960s



Old retail buildings



Retail strip mall before remodeling

Existing Site Conditions

The City Square West redevelopment site, whose legal description is Block 27 of the City Lots of Chaska plat from 1867, is a typical two-acre downtown Chaska block. The block consists of three parcels and three private property owners. All three parcels contain commercial buildings built in the 1960s, including a retail strip mall, bank, and post office. The block's existing development character consists of primarily one-story buildings that are oriented more toward automobile access, including surface parking lots and drive-thru facilities, than downtown's pedestrian environment. Since this block's development pattern does not fit with the character of the historic downtown and reuse of the buildings would require significant reinvestment, the community has identified this block as a key downtown redevelopment site.



Existing bank building facing Chestnut St



Existing post office building facing Pine St



Existing retail strip mall facing 4th Street

Downtown Vision & Guiding Principles

VISION DIAGRAM FROM 2012 DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

During the downtown master planning process, the City established a holistic, long-term downtown vision and set of guiding principles. This vision resulted from numerous project task force meetings, public meetings, and interviews with key downtown institutions and development stakeholders.

Vision

Revitalize downtown Chaska as the hub of community destinations and gathering places, which reflect and celebrate our historic character, traditional small town atmosphere and values."

Guiding Principles

- » Enhance the community's pride and historic sense of place in downtown
- » Reinvigorate the variety and vitality of downtown's main street destinations
- » Create signature community gathering places
- » Preserve and strengthen downtown as the hub for community institutions
- » Expand downtown's role as an employment center
- » Enhance downtown's neighborhoods and housing options
- » Create inviting downtown streets, sidewalks and trails
- » Strengthen downtown partnerships to achieve common goals



Redevelopment Concept Plan & Objectives

City Square West Block Redevelopment Objectives

- A. New restaurants, retail and services strengthen downtown as a vibrant multi-generational commercial destination for Chaska and surrounding communities
- B. Redevelopment is accomplished in a high quality manner that continues the City of Chaska's legacy of visionary projects as demonstrated by Chaska Community Center, Chaska Town Course, and Chaska Firemen's Park/Curling Center/Event Center
- C. New buildings are designed to complement the block's surrounding historic character, scale and materials without creating a false sense of historic development
- D. Desirable and visible destinations and amenities that collectively create an economic "value premium" in downtown Chaska to retain existing and attract new business growth, employers, residents, and visitors
- E. Evolving retail/service behavior and technology trends are accounted for in site and building design, e.g. decreasing demand for auto-oriented facilities
- F. Adequate parking is provided for this block to meet the proposed redevelopment's needs as well as public downtown parking
- G. Transparency and open lines of communication about City Square West redevelopment planning are maintained with existing property owners and their tenants
- H. High quality pedestrian, bicycling and open space connections are integrated into the block and to adjacent destinations, such as a pedestrian/paseo connection and views of historic City Square
- I. City Square West's redevelopment is designed to face Chestnut Street/Hwy 41, while also mitigating the negative impacts of Highway 41's high traffic
- J. City Square West's redevelopment is designed to be welcoming to all - Chaska residents downtown, near downtown, above the bluff, as well as surrounding communities
- K. Opportunities for incorporating a WOW factor are explored in the block's redevelopment
- L. The block's redevelopment is grounded in fiscal and market realities for both private and public stakeholders



**All off-street parking to be provided underground*

The CSW Block Redevelopment Objectives were developed by the CSW Project Task Force, which consisted of 15 community members and 6 staff members. Selection of the task force members reflected broad representation of the community's citizens and stakeholder groups. The task force met six times during the project. General community input was received at major community events and a public open house.

Preferred Concept Plan



City Square West Block - Preferred Concept Plan

Concept Overview

The preferred concept encompasses redevelopment of the entire block to fit downtown's traditional character of multi-story mixed use buildings oriented to the streets and historic City Square. To pick up on downtown's existing alleys and pedestrian pathways (paseos), the concept includes public open space for community gathering activities and pedestrian movement through the interior of the block. Development of multiple buildings is envisioned to better compliment the scale of downtown's historic buildings, enable a mix of residential and commercial uses, support public gathering and movement in the block's open space areas, and provide desirable views to City Square and historic buildings to the north and south. All off-street parking needs are envisioned to be provided in an underground parking structure accessed from West 3rd Street.

Bird's Eye Views



Chestnut St/Highway 41

These four (4) bird's eye views of the redevelopment concept show multi-story buildings along Chestnut St/Highway 41, as well as West 4th St and West 3rd St. The concept illustrates that the buildings should hold to the corners of the block with mid-block openings into the public paseo and plaza spaces. 360 degree architecture will be important as these buildings will front onto both streets and the public open space within the block. In the views to the left, street level commercial uses are shown facing Chestnut St/Highway 41 and portions of West 4th St and W 3rd St. Residential or office uses could be located in upper stories. All four streets, including sidewalks and boulevards, surrounding this block will be redesigned and reconstructed in conjunction with the redevelopment of this block.



BIRD'S EYE VIEWS



West 3rd, West 4th and Pine Streets

In the views above, the redevelopment concept shows 3-story buildings typically fronting onto West 3rd and Pine Streets. The site naturally slopes down from its highest point in the southwest corner toward the north and east, which may enable a 4-story building fronting onto 4th St. Primarily residential uses are envisioned along these three streets, although non-residential uses may be appropriate along 4th St at street level. Since the west side of Pine St consists of detached homes with front yards, the concept shows the Pine St frontage having separate residential entries and small yards. The potential for private residential outdoor amenities are shown on the building's rooftop.

Concept Visualizations

VIEW FROM LOWER PASEO LOOKING WEST



A public paseo stretching through the interior of the block will enhance downtown pedestrian movement and provide a new public open space for community gathering activities. The concept envisions activities in the paseo year-round, such as a fire pit and holiday market in the winter shown above.

VIEW FROM ROOF TOP OF BUILDING C TO THE SOUTHWEST



The terraced plaza concept will provide a variety of public spaces that could accommodate multiple activities. Programming of the public space will involve a partnership between the City and the developer.

VIEW FROM TERRACED PLAZA TO THE NORTHEAST



The design of the public paseo and terraced plaza is intended to enable winter-friendly outdoor and indoor activities, such as an enclosed public pavilion, holiday market, and ice skating.

VIEW FROM PINE STREET ENTRY TOWARD CITY SQUARE PARK



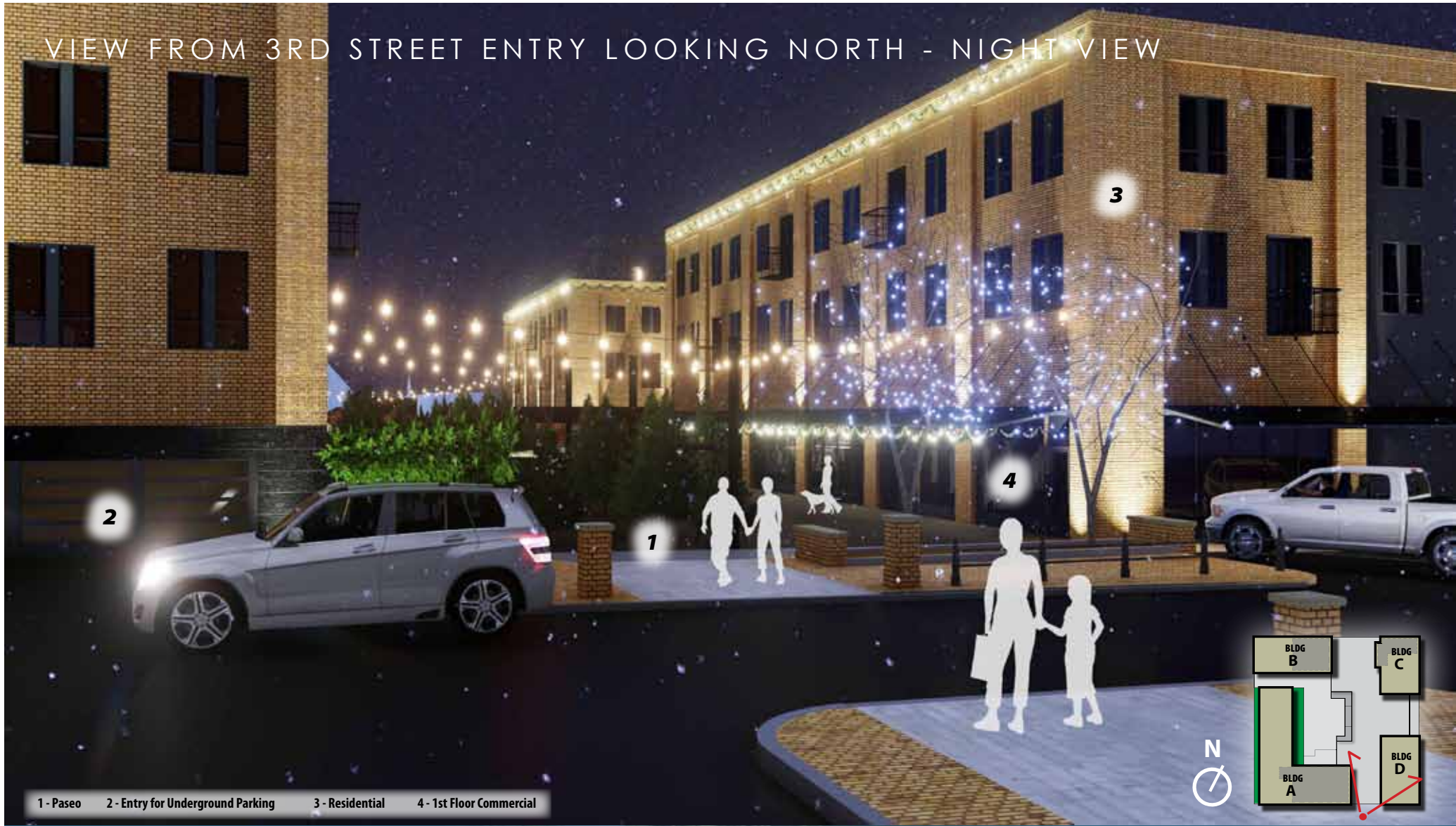
Openings to the streets from the public paseo and terraced plaza will enable physical and visual connections to surrounding downtown landmarks, such as City Square Park, downtown pedestrian network, and historic buildings.

VIEW FROM TERRACED PLAZA TOWARDS BUILDING A



A transition space between the public plaza and the private residential building(s) is envisioned, such as slightly elevated entries into the building and small private front yard space.

VIEW FROM 3RD STREET ENTRY LOOKING NORTH - NIGHT VIEW



To attract people to use the public paseo and plaza in the evening, the concept includes street access from all four directions and pedestrian-oriented lighting.

VIEW FROM CITY SQUARE PARK LOOKING WEST - DAY VIEW

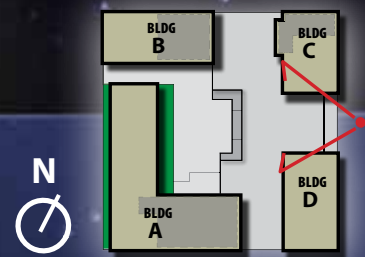


A strong physical and visual connection between the existing City Square Park and new public open space is important.

VIEW FROM CITY SQUARE PARK LOOKING WEST - NIGHT VIEW



1 - Entry Identity Feature 2 - 1st Floor Commercial 3 - Seasonal Movable Structures (Winter/Summer Market) 4 - 2nd + 3rd Floor Residential



The new public open space's location adjacent to State Highway 41 offers a unique opportunity for a new Chaska identity feature.

VIEW FROM 4TH STREET ENTRY LOOKING SOUTHEAST - SUMMER DINING



The design and size of the public paseo offers opportunities for businesses to expand outdoors seasonally, such as outdoor dining for restaurants.

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER CONCEPTS - IMAGES BY MSR ARCHITECTS



VIEW FROM CORNER OF 4TH AND CHESTNUT



VIEW FROM 3RD STREET LOOKING INTO PASEO

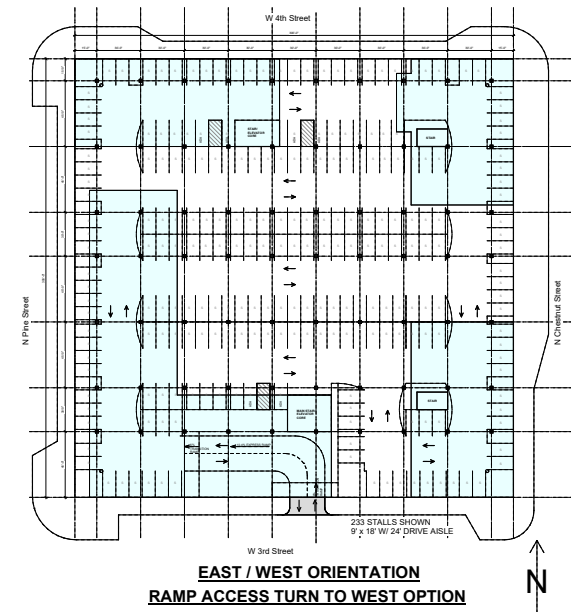
These street level views are intended to illustrate the desired general character of new buildings on the City Square West Block.

Public Improvement Plans

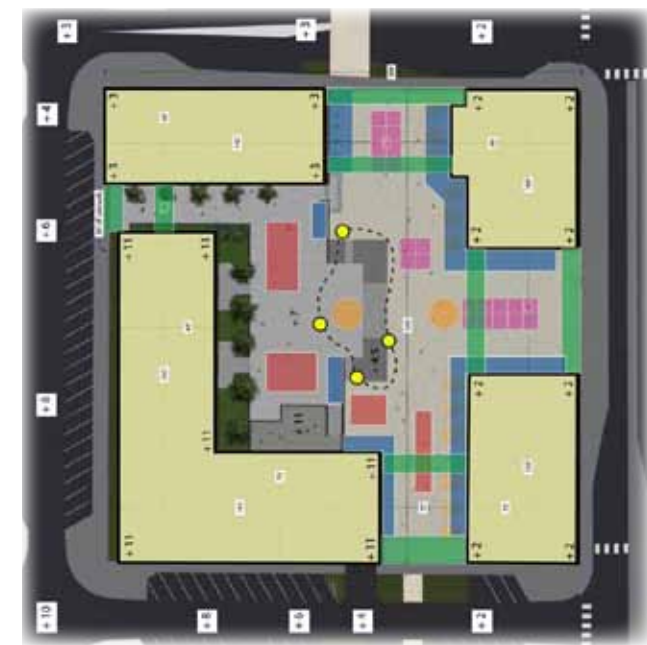
Underground Parking Structure

The City has worked with a parking consultant on high level concepts for development of an underground parking structure on this block. Four concepts have been developed to explore parking layout orientation (east/west vs. north/south), drive ramp access (straight in vs. turning to the west), and locations for elevators/stairs. These concept layouts show the potential for 220 -230 underground parking spaces.

UNDERGROUND PARKING CONCEPT



PUBLIC PLAZA ACTIVATION CONCEPT



DRAWING KEY:

- Gateway Elements
- Patio/Private Seating -
- Market Tent (10'x10') -
- Game/Activity Areas -
- Interactive/Connective elements + path
- Stage and/or performance area

Downtown Public Spaces Activation Plan

The City has worked with a placemaking consultant to develop an activation plan for downtown, including the public paseo and plaza concept on the City Square West block. The Downtown Chaska Activation Plan, a separate plan document developed by The Musicant Group, lays out a strategy to guide the short and long term transformation of the site into a more vibrant place that attracts people to it and supports surrounding uses and businesses. The City Square West public space goals identified in the plan are:

- Provide better and more connections through downtown
- Provide a new pedestrian connection with a heightened experience away from auto traffic
- Act as an activity and gathering hub
- Provide space and opportunity for 'social' businesses
- Build activity and energy for downtown and adjacent spaces like City Square Park
- Build out the space for all season use and activity

DOWNTOWN STREETScape PLAN

Downtown Streetscape Plan

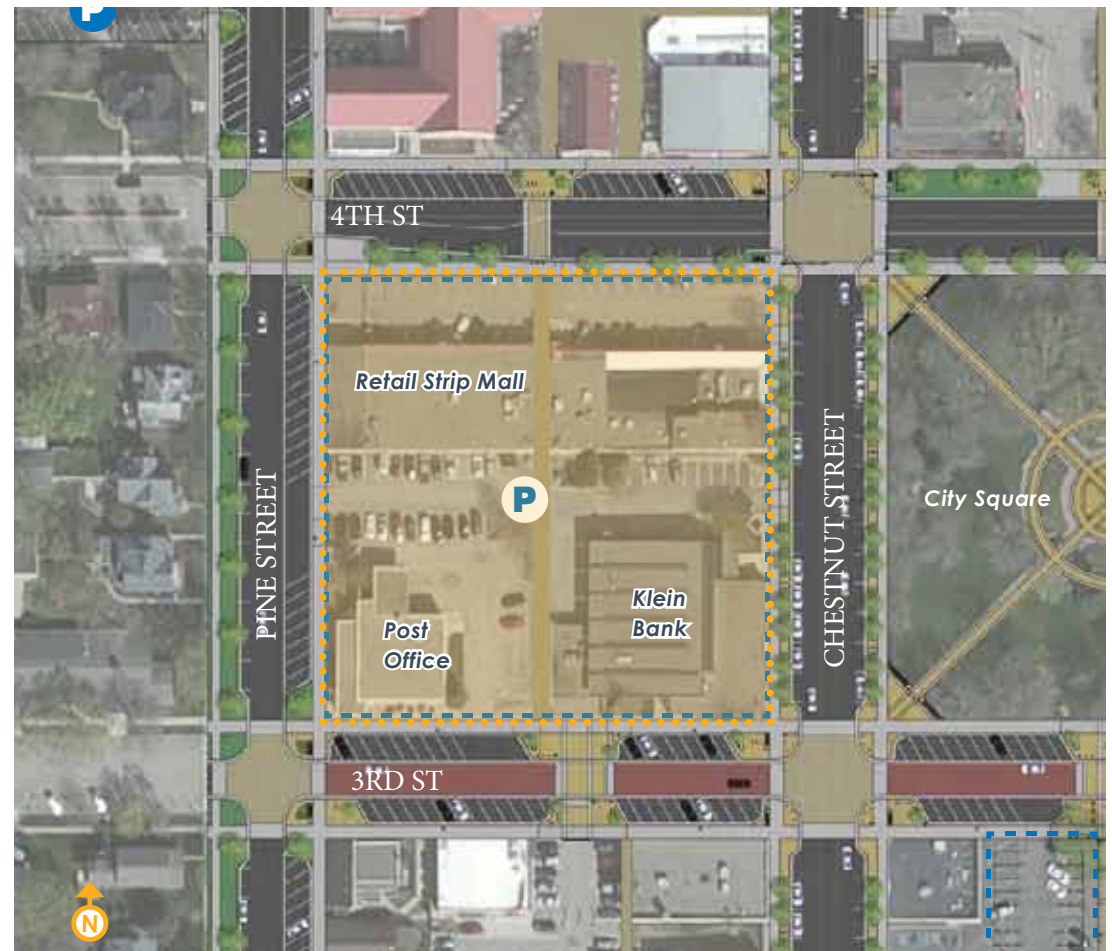
The City is in the midst of a 10-year downtown streets reconstruction program. The Downtown Streetscape Schematic Design Plan was completed in 2014 to guide reconstruction of the downtown core streets, including the streets adjacent to the City Square West Block. Streetscape enhancements on West 4th St and West 3rd St will include seating (benches, seatwalls, seatwalls with planters), movable planters, bollards, bike racks, street gateway features (brick columns and railings), heritage walls and columns, wayfinding kiosks, pedestrian lights, and trash receptacles. West 3rd St will also be reconstructed with reused clay pavers within the drive lanes. The photos below show the reconstructed streetscapes on East 3rd St and East 2nd St.



New streetscape on East 3rd St



New streetscape on East 2nd St



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