

ELM GROVE TODAY

DRAFT

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INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF MASTER PLAN

This report provides an overview which informs the Village of Elm Grove's development of a Downtown Master Plan for Elm Grove's Central Business District; along the corridors of Watertown Plank Road, Juneau Boulevard, and Elm Grove Road.

The goal of the planning process for Elm Grove Central Business District (CBD) is to provide direction, process, and context for the future of the district that will achieve locally established goals for the Business district.

- The plan will provide guidance for public and private investment decisions and practical implementation strategies. Identifying catalytic projects to guide and focus investment and development.

- The plan will identify specific infill and redevelopment opportunities, both short- and long-term. These opportunities will effectively balance community aspirations with market realities in order to maximize public benefit of future development.

- The plan will establish a clear implementation strategy, including roles and responsibilities, timelines, and financing strategies.

- The plans and study will identify area strengths, needs, highlight development opportunities, and establish priorities for development.

- The plan will identify ways to improve and maintain the vital commercial strip of downtown Elm Grove.

- The plan will make recommendations for public spaces and ways to activate spaces, providing gathering places and sense of place that fit into the character, history, and future of Watertown Plank Road. It will make recommendations regarding streetscaping improvements, façade improvements, signage, and parking design.

- The plan will make recommendations for pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular traffic access and safety, with a broader goal of making a year round walkable downtown.

- The plan will include public space improvements that will leverage the Underwood Creek daylighting project to enhance Downtown's identity and create sense of place.



School Sisters of Notre Dame



Park & Shop Entry Sign

ELM GROVE'S HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Elm Grove is located in Waukesha County, in the state of Wisconsin. It is bordered by North Avenue to the north, 124th Street to the east, Bluemound Road to the south, and Pilgrim Parkway to the west. The village is highly regarded as a premier outer ring suburb of Milwaukee, offering the natural beauty of rolling hills and forested properties within a 15 minute drive of Milwaukee. The Village's population is approximately 5,900 residents, and is characterized by strong community involvement.

Elm Grove began to see settlement in the mid 1830s in response to its surrounding fertile agricultural area. In 1848 more than 650,000 white oak timbers and planks were laid to connect Milwaukee to Watertown, establishing Watertown Plank Road. In 1856, a railroad track line was laid, spurring community development at the intersection of Watertown Plank Road and the rail line; development included a U.S. Post Office, inn, train depot, general store, mill, and tavern.

In the late 1850s a group of nuns, members of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, were travelling west on Watertown Plank Road when the horse that was pulling their wagon refused to budge from his spot near Juneau Boulevard, considering it a divine sign, the sisters purchased 20 acres to build a convent, school, and orphanage.

As a result of these development patterns the Village was incorporated in 1955 and has maintained the same footprint since.

In 1950 construction of the Elm Grove Park and Shop began. By 1964 Underwood Creek was channeled through and enclosed box culvert to maximize building and parking area. In 2003 construction of the Underwood Creek Flood Management Project began, and in 2005 a memorandum of understanding was issued by the Wisconsin DNR and Village to remove the enclosure, daylighting the stream. Stantec Engineers is currently (as of September 2018) completing the design of the proposed channel re-alignment and daylighting of the creek.

DOWNTOWN AND ITS CONTEXT

The Village consists primarily of single family residential development, with a mixed use downtown core located along Watertown Plank Road between Elm Grove Road and Juneau Boulevard. Commercial areas dot the periphery of the village, and are concentrated along Highway 18 and Pilgrim Parkway near Brookfield Square, and at the intersection of North Avenue and 124th Street. The close proximity of Downtown to Bluemound Road (Highway 18) should be leveraged to attract people to work, shop, and eat in Downtown Elm Grove.





Placemaking at creek overpass at Mill Place entrance



Empty lot behind Chocolate Factory: opportunity for infill



Expansive Surface Parking at Park and Shop



Downtown Gateway Opportunity at Bluemound Rd + Elm Grove Rd



Bike and Pedestrian Crossing at Watertown Plank Rd and Legion Dr.

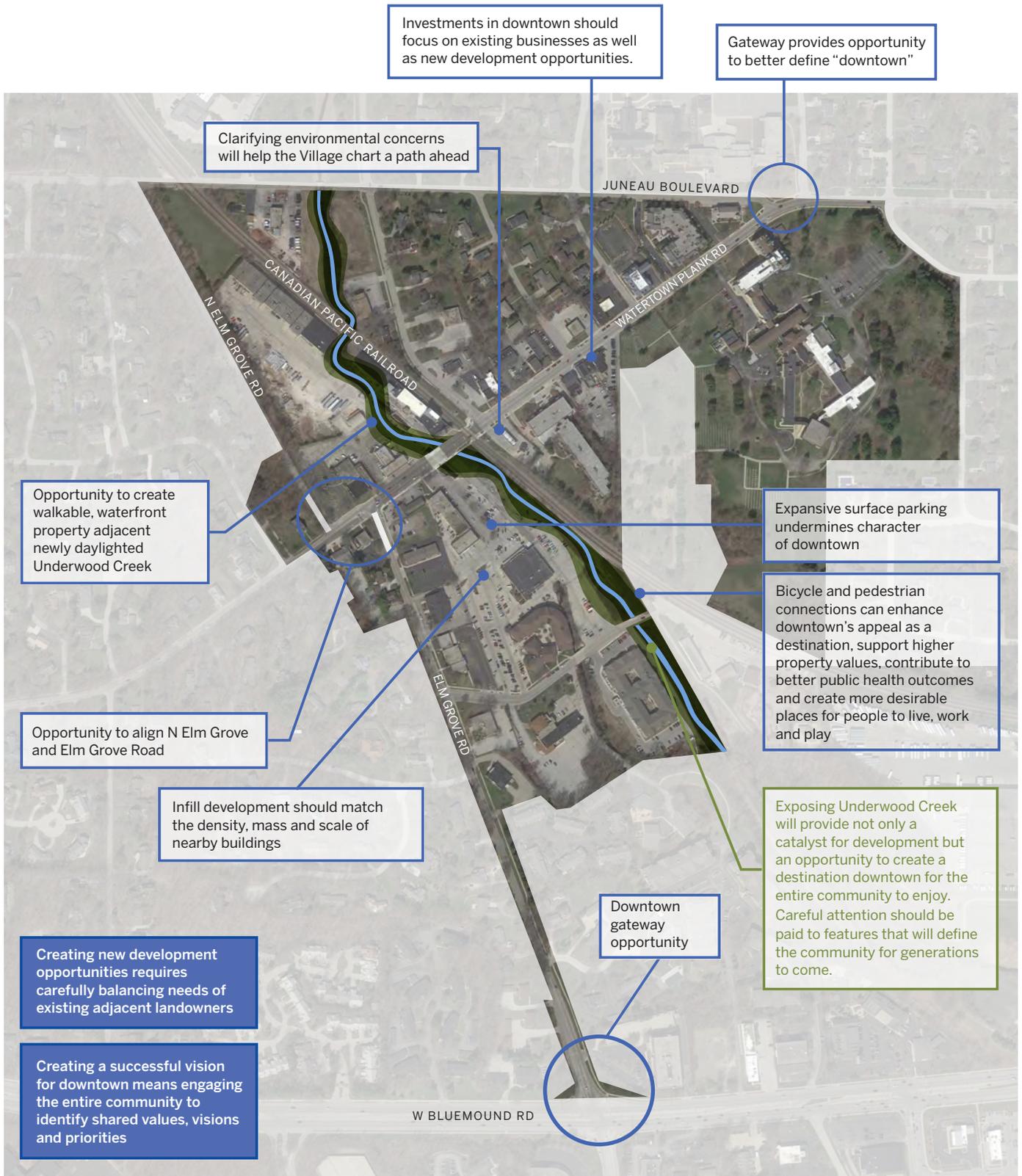


FIGURE 2 - CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT - PRELIMINARY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES



The Watermark



Downtown Restaurants



Repurposed Church



Retail/Office Space



Biking Downtown



Train Crossing



Walking Downtown



- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>(A) "890 Village Court" - 890 Elm Grove Rd - Medical imaging, retail, ballet school, developer, office space. Office occupancy nearly filled. Lots of turnover in retail spaces. Good shape.</p> <p>(B) Heritage Memory Care - 800 Wall Street - Assisted Living facility, multistory multifamily/medical. Good shape.</p> <p>(C) Sunset Playhouse - Theater, cultural, parking lot in poor condition</p> <p>(D) The Johnson Building - 780 Elm Grove Rd - Single story office space - Edward Jones, WH Yoga, Luther Group, fair building condition</p> <p>(E) 850 Elm Grove Rd - Multi story office space, fair building condition</p> <p>(F) BMO Harris Bank - 900 Elm Grove Rd - banking facility, good building condition</p> <p>(G) 910 Professional Centre - 910 Elm Grove Rd - Multi story office space, fair building condition</p> <p>(H) Badger State Tax Pros - 925 Elm Grove Rd - office space, good building condition, renovated SF home</p> <p>(I) Woller-Anger Building - 930 Elm Grove Rd - one story office space, fair building condition</p> <p>(J) Kurtz Realty - 13345 Watertown Plank Rd - one story office space, fair building condition</p> <p>(K) US Bank - 945 Elm Grove Rd - two story bank, good building condition</p> <p>(L) Chocolate Factory and Shops - 13475 Watertown Plank Rd - one story retail</p> <p>(M) 13500 Watertown Plank Rd - one story office building, good building condition</p> | <p>(N) 13448 Watertown Plank Rd - two story building: retail on first floor, offices on second, fair building condition</p> <p>(O) Mill Place - 13402-13418 Watertown Plank Rd - two story building, former mill, retail on first floor, offices on second, good building condition</p> <p>(P) 13390 Watertown Plank Rd - two story building, service & retail on first floor, offices on second</p> <p>(Q) Patched Works Quilt Shop - 13330 Watertown Plank Rd - one story retail building, parking in front, building setback breaks up downtown character, good building condition</p> <p>(R) 13350 Watertown Plank Rd - two story building, vacant - first floor retail/restaurant, second floor housing, fair building condition</p> <p>(S) 13300 Watertown Plank Rd - one story building, retail</p> <p>(T) Service Station - 13230 Watertown Plank Rd - one story service station surrounded by parking area, fair building condition</p> <p>(U) Sewing Center and Dry Cleaners - 13200 Watertown Plank Rd - one story retail/service</p> <p>(V) Town Bank - 13150 Watertown Plank Rd - two story building, first floor bank, second floor offices, good building condition</p> <p>(W) Watermark Condominiums - 13130 Watertown Plank Rd - three story residential</p> <p>(X) Chapel Adaptive Reuse - 13100 Watertown Plank Rd - office space, good building condition</p> <p>(Y) School Sisters of Notre Dame - 13105 Watertown Plank Rd - convent</p> | <p>(Z) O'Donoghues Irish Pub - 13225 Watertown Plank Rd - restaurant/pub, two story building, good building condition, inefficient parking lot in rear of building</p> <p>(1) Silver Spur Smokehouse - 13275 Watertown Plank Rd - restaurant/bar, two story building, good building condition</p> <p>(2) 13307 Watertown Plank Rd - two story building, offices and services, good building condition</p> <p>(3) Elm Grove Terrace Condominiums - 13335 Watertown Plank Rd - three story condominiums, good building condition</p> <p>(4) BP Gas Station - 13395 Watertown Plank Rd, fair building condition</p> <p>(5) Martinizing Dry Cleaner - 13405 Watertown Plank Rd, fair building condition</p> <p>(6) Elm Grove Park and Shop - 13425 Watertown Plank Rd, USPS, restaurants, retail, services, fair building condition</p> <p>(7) Sendik's Food Market - 13425 Watertown Plank Rd, fair building condition</p> <p>(8) Welkes House of Roses & Flowers - 1020 Legion Drive, 1 story retail, good building condition</p> <p>(9) 1050 Legion Drive, 1 story personal services, good building condition</p> <p>(10) 1055 Legion Drive - 1 story health services, good building condition</p> <p>(11) 1135 Legion Drive - 2 story office building on river, excellent building condition</p> <p>(12) 12 single family residential homes</p> <p>(13) Kanavas Landscape - 13575 Juneau Blvd, landscape services building and materials yard, good building condition</p> |
|--|--|--|

FIGURE 3 - EXISTING CONDITIONS, BUILDING INVENTORY- CBD Walking Tour, July 12, 2018, 8-10 am

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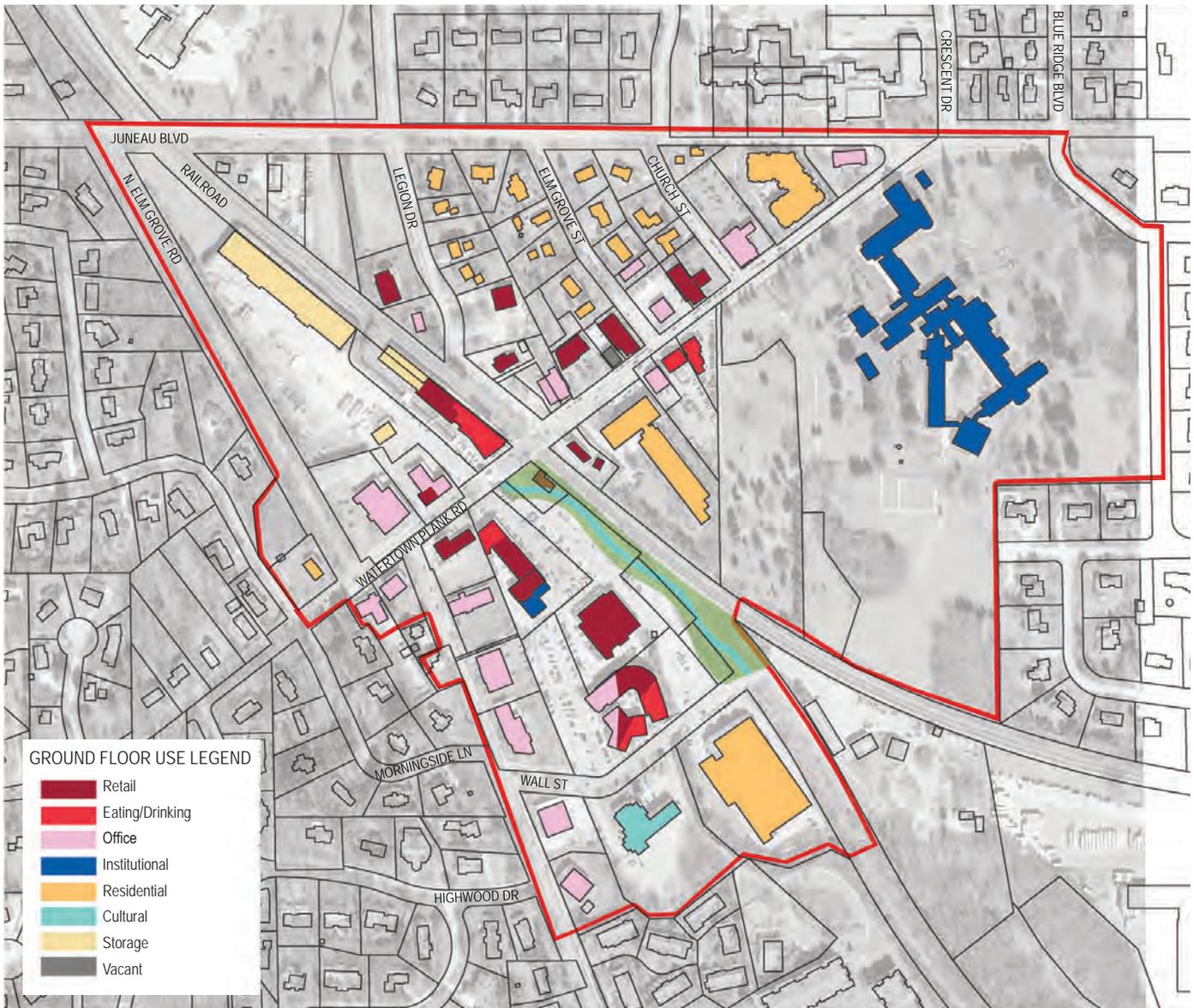


FIGURE 4 - GROUND FLOOR USE

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS + EXISTING GROUND FLOOR USE

The downtown core consists of a mix of building types and uses. Downtown is a mix of traditional “Main Street” development along Watertown Plank Road between the Elm Grove Road and Juneau Boulevard, and vehicle centered shopping at the Elm Grove Park and Shop. Understanding the physical conditions, including parking, provides a starting place to guide future Downtown development

Existing Building Height is documented in stories above grade to guide downtown infill and development.



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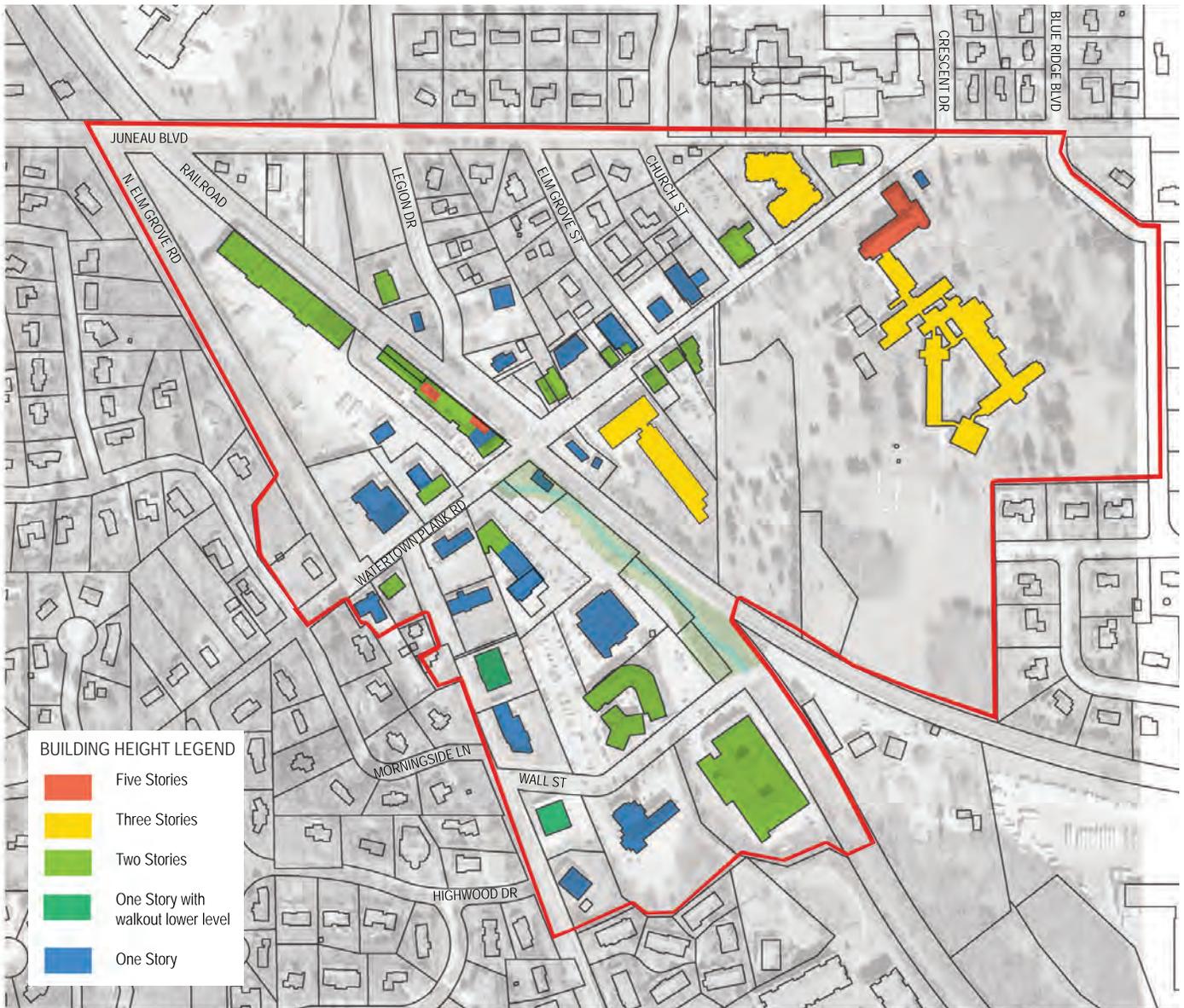


FIGURE 5 - BUILDING HEIGHT

Use	First Floor (SF)	% of First Floors	Total All Floors (SF)	Total %
Eating/Drinking	16,000	7%	14,000	3%
Retail	47,500	20%	57,500	12%
Office	73,400	31%	88,100	18%
Repair Services	2,500	1%	2,500	1%
Storage	14,000	6%	38,000	8%
Gov/Religious/Non-profit	14,000	6%	204,000	41%
Cultural	15,000	6%	30,000	6%
Personal Services	44,000	19%	50,003	10%
Vacant	10,800	5%	14,800	3%
TOTALS	237,200	100%	498,903	100%

TABLE 1 - BUILDING USE (Downtown Business District)

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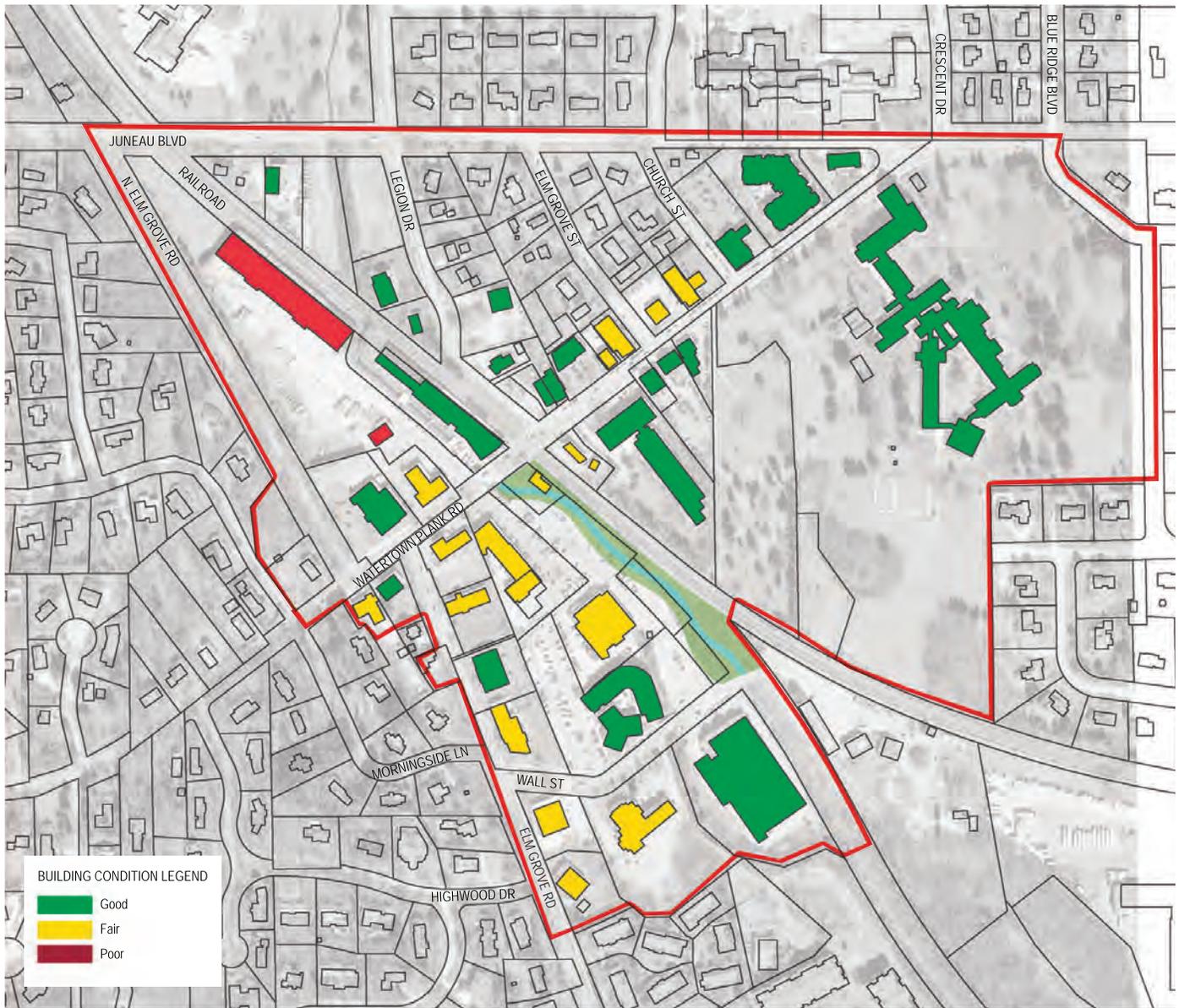


FIGURE 6 - BUILDING EXISTING CONDITIONS

BUILDING EXISTING CONDITIONS

Buildings in Downtown Elm Grove are generally well maintained, the majority of buildings appear to be over 50 years old.



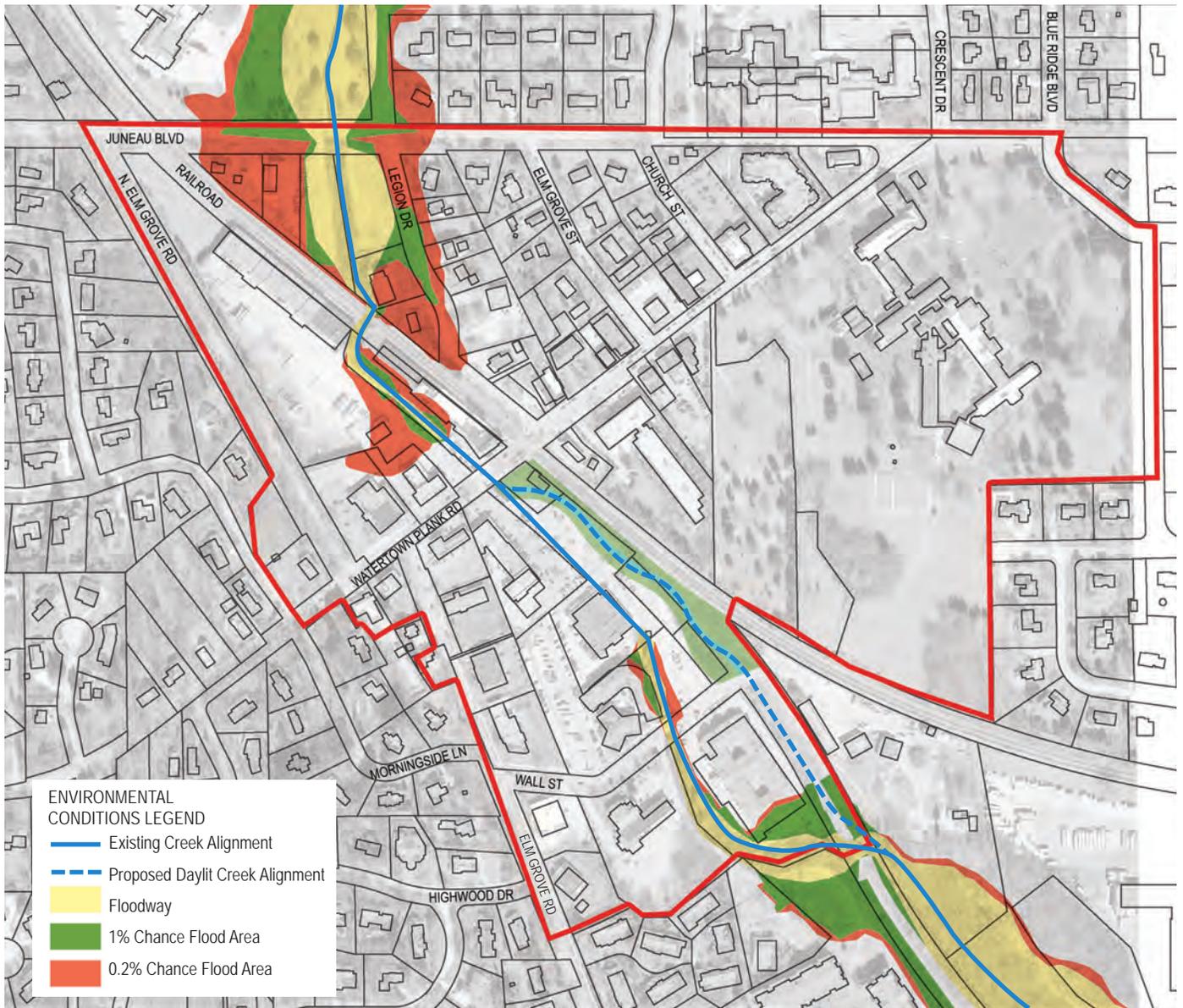


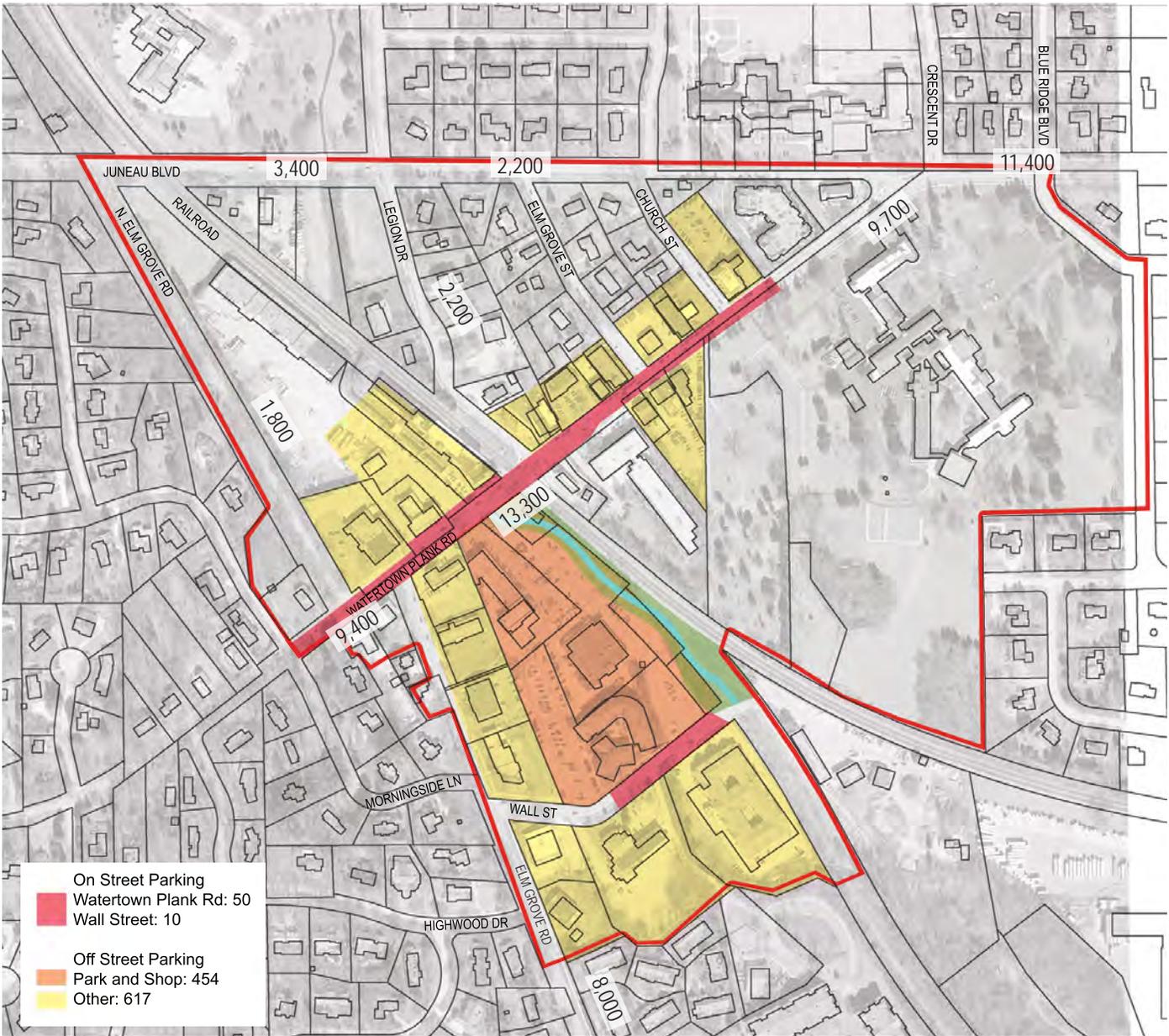
FIGURE 7 - BUILDING EXISTING CONDITIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Underwood Creek runs through the downtown district. Since the 1960s the creek has been located within a culvert. The proposed daylighting project will realign the creek to the periphery of Elm Grove Park and Shop, adjacent the railroad right of way.



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Traffic Count Data: Kalibrate Technologies Q1, 2018, prepared by ESRI

TRAFFIC

The greatest traffic counts are along Watertown Plank Road; average traffic volume is between 9,400 and 13,300 vehicles per day.

Road and Juneau Boulevard. Wall Street provides 10 parallel parking stalls. The Park and Shop lots provide 454 parking stalls in total. An additional 617 stalls are provided in the downtown area within parking lots, with a major concentration at Sunset Playhouse.

PARKING CONSIDERATIONS

Redevelopment of the Village of Elm Grove’s Central Business District should ensure an appropriate quantity of parking spaces for residents and visitors from outside the district. Current parking counts for the downtown business district are indicated above.

Watertown Plank Road provides 50 parallel parking and 90 degree head in parking stalls between Elm Grove



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SYNOPSIS OF MARKET STUDY

Text and figures forthcoming.
Refer to Appendix for complete Market Study.



DOWNTOWN MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

The following opportunities and challenges were identified in focus group meetings with Elm Grove business owners. (August, 2018)

OPPORTUNITIES TO LEVERAGE

1. The Village Center could be adaptively re-used to include upstairs residential units.
2. An effort should be made to proactively engage the community at the neighborhood level. There should be a discussion about the importance of supporting desired businesses downtown in order for them to succeed.
3. The Village needs to be made aware of the need to financially support priority projects in the downtown in order to create the type of quality development the community envisions. Community leaders need to understand what other successful communities are doing to position themselves for success.
4. Better community wayfinding and destination signage is needed in the downtown district and at key gateways such as Bluemound and Elm Grove. Some businesses suffer from a lack of visibility.
5. Mixed use infill along Watertown Plank road could provide space for higher end shops and some housing units above. Infill development should be 2-3 stories in height.
6. There is a strong demand for market rate housing in the community. People need options to allow them to age in place without leaving the community. Housing should provide adequate storage space and a range of unit sizes should be made available – not just very small units but also larger units for hosting friends and family.
7. Higher density residential development downtown would encourage more people to walk downtown. More people living downtown will help existing businesses thrive and allow the Village to attract additional desired commercial activity.
8. There should be a focus on higher end retail and restaurants including trendy, healthy offerings. Quality women's stores and a higher end destination restaurant or bakery were cited as good opportunities. On the other hand, it was also noted that these types of downtown businesses have struggled in the past.
9. Professional and personal services should do well downtown (Orthodontists, dentists, financial advisors, lawyers, etc....) There may be a market for smaller office spaces or co-working options.
10. A series of smaller social nodes should be created downtown to enliven the district and encourage walkability. Given the size and proximity of Village Park, there is not a need to duplicate a large central social gathering space, however a small plaza or square could help tie different land uses and destinations together, encouraging people to park once and visit multiple shops on foot. Pedestrian routes should be highlighted and the daylighting of the creek should be done in a manner that supports existing downtown businesses. Seating areas and shade along the Riverwalk will encourage people to eat outside and linger with friends and family.
11. The Village should proactively address parking concerns, including better optimizing what currently exists and evaluating structured parking to support additional downtown infill development.
12. A reinvigorated downtown business association is needed to bring in more attractions and sustain more events. Business and community leaders need to work together to build community-wide support for a great downtown. There needs to be agreement on an overall vision for the FUTURE OF DOWNTOWN.



CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME

1. There is a dichotomy in the community between those that want things to stay the same, and those that would like to see more vibrancy downtown. There is a strong perception that current leadership doesn't want to see much change. Things don't happen fast in Elm Grove.
2. Many residents value the quiet of the community and prefer to drive a short distance to shop at the many offerings conveniently located outside the Village yet within a 5-10-minute drive time. Traffic volumes in downtown Elm Grove are not very high.
3. The downtown lacks a unified theme or image to tie it all together. Land uses are disjointed and there is a lack of concentrated activity in the downtown to attract people. There are limited evening shopping and dining options, which projects an image of downtown Elm Grove as mostly vacant/dead at night.
4. The downtown is not as well curated or managed as it could be. For example, first floor office space takes away opportunity for retail and other uses. The limited number and scattered nature of existing brick and mortar shops downtown makes it more difficult to attract customers. Customers which do visit downtown often visit a single destination and then leave, rather than parking the car and visiting multiple downtown businesses on foot.
5. Some of the downtown businesses are run more as hobbies than as financially motivated businesses. These phenomena can have negative implications for store hours, customer service, and product selection.
6. There is an over inflated sense of what properties downtown are actually worth. Property owners are not always able to get the rents they need to make the type of investments in their properties they would like to (for example, higher rents would allow property owners to invest in exceptional landscaping and façade improvements).
7. Parking requirements and winter maintenance are both challenges.
8. The perception and awareness among residents of existing downtown retail businesses may be an issue. Shopping habits are very different in Elm Grove compared with communities such as Shorewood or Whitefish Bay. In Elm Grove shoppers are more cost conscious and often looking for a bargain whereas in other communities with similar demographics shoppers are not as frugal. There is a perception that local residents do not support Elm Grove retail businesses to the extent they could, in part because they do not seem to be aware of what local businesses exist. On the other hand, residents do seem to support local service businesses, including personal and professional services. The community also strongly supports Sendik's, the local grocery store.

APPENDIX

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Market Study