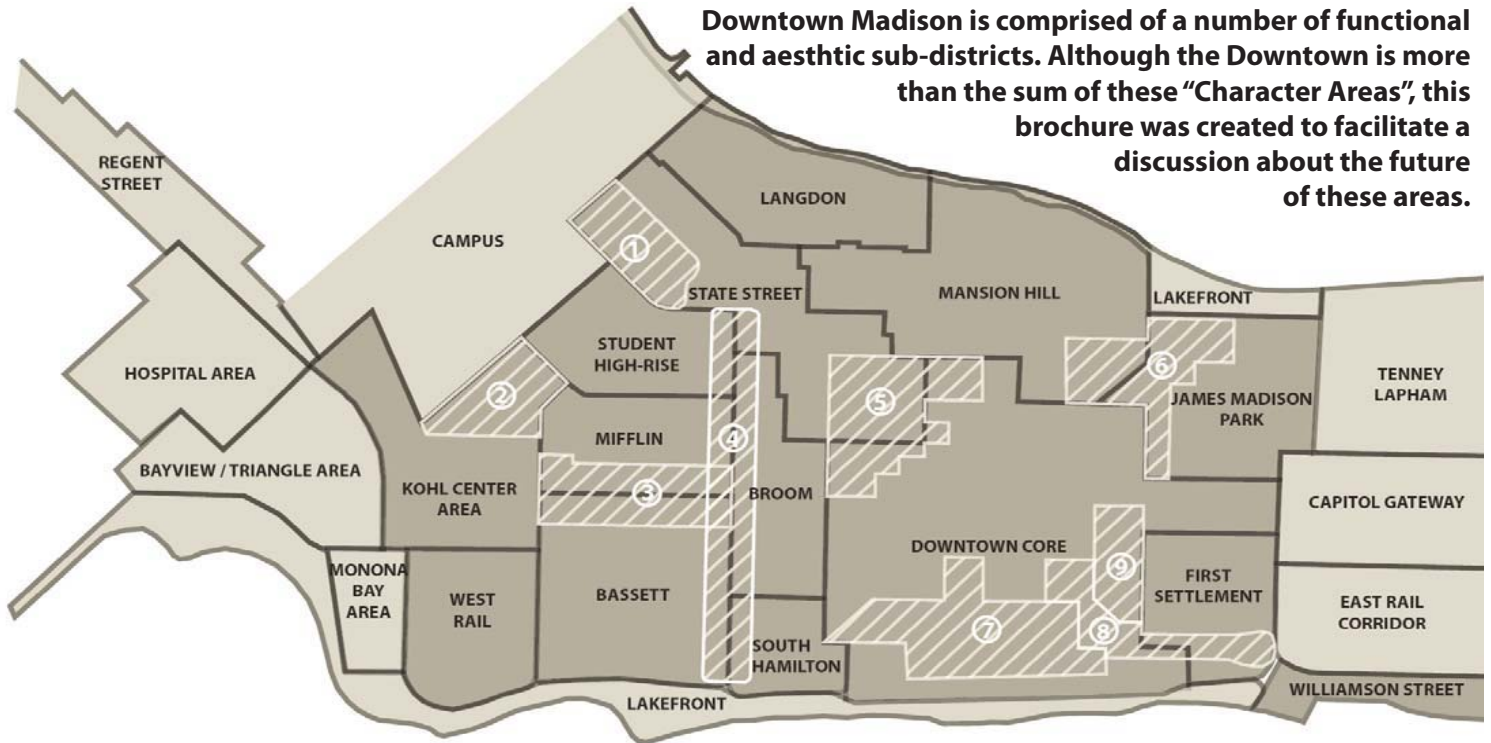


Downtown Madison is comprised of a number of functional and aesthetic sub-districts. Although the Downtown is more than the sum of these "Character Areas", this brochure was created to facilitate a discussion about the future of these areas.



DOWNTOWN CORE CHARACTER AREA

Urban Context:

This is the center of Downtown and possesses the highest intensity development that mixes office, employment, retail, government, residential and other uses. It contains multiple landmark and potential landmark buildings, but has also experienced significant development in the past 20 years (and numerous opportunities still exist). There are many important views to both lakes, and of the Capitol through this area. Due to its location, it is surrounded by other character districts, but in some cases not well connected to them.

Plan Direction:

This area will remain the core of Downtown and will continue to be an office and employment center with government serving as the anchor. Mixing other uses, such as retail and entertainment and residential, as well as many community-wide events, will help ensure that it remains a vibrant area beyond normal business hours. Views from and to the area would be preserved. Although there are still opportunities for redevelopment, architecturally significant structures should be preserved. Street frontages around Capitol Square should be reserved for non-residential uses. The outer loop should be enhanced to be more engaging. Connections to and through the Downtown Core need to be improved.

Primary Use: Mixed Use
Emphasis: Transition



FIRST SETTLEMENT CHARACTER AREA

Primary Use: Residential
Emphasis: Preservation



Urban Context:

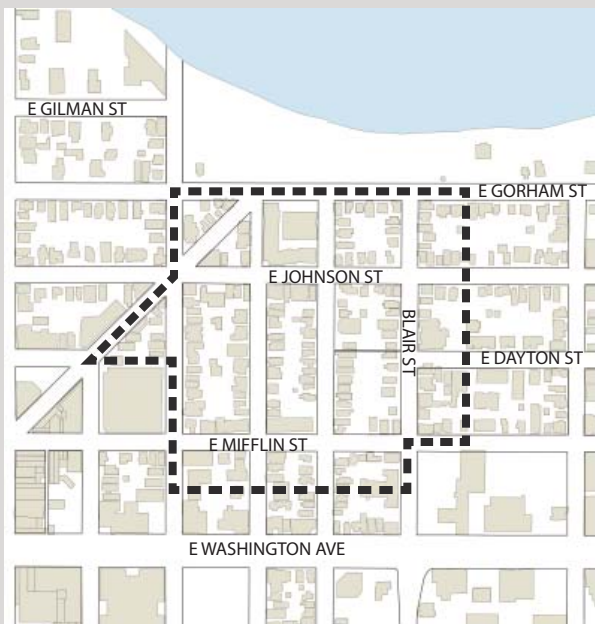
This is a small local historic district that is primarily residential with commercial uses primarily around its perimeter. It includes a portion of a National Register historic district, and possesses numerous landmark, potential landmark, and contributing buildings. It is somewhat isolated from other neighborhoods and Lake Monona by major streets. It possesses several infill/redevelopment sites. The First Settlement Neighborhood Plan was accepted by the city in 1995.

Plan Direction:

Development on key sites (Brayton Lot, Block 115, and the reservoir site) could strengthen the neighborhood and its identity as a historic enclave. A potential rail transit stop could drive additional development in this area. Opportunities exist to better connect this area to the lake and views of it from within the neighborhood should be preserved. The Wilson St. commercial corridor, and its extension to King St. should also be enhanced.

JAMES MADISON PARK CHARACTER AREA

Primary Use: Residential
Emphasis: Conservation



Urban Context:

This area is characterized by fairly intact residential blocks and is adjacent to the Mansion Hill and Tenney-Lapham Neighborhoods. Many of these houses have been rental properties for decades. It is relatively near an elementary school, large park, and Lake Mendota. A National Register historic district runs along portions of E. Gorham St. It is identified in the Downtown Historic Preservation Plan as a conservation area.

Plan Direction:

This downtown neighborhood is most likely to be suitable for families with children, given its proximity to Lapham Elementary School and presence of structures that could accommodate such families. The renovation of existing structures coupled with selective redevelopment that reflects the scale and rhythm of the existing structures will help ensure the future vibrancy of the area, provide a variety of housing options, and strengthen linkages to the Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood. Block faces adjacent to the Capitol North parking garage may be appropriate for more intense development.

MANSION HILL CHARACTER AREA

Urban Context:

This area possesses a rich architectural heritage as reflected by the presence of local and National Register historic districts. It contains numerous local historic landmarks and contributing buildings, most of which were originally large single-family homes converted to multi-family rental properties years ago. There are also several larger institutional and employment uses. Although it is adjacent to Lake Mendota, public access to the lake is limited.

Plan Direction:

The historic character of the area is a major asset, and new development should primarily focus on residential opportunities that reflect these historic attributes. However, ensuring the long-term viability of many non-residential uses can also benefit the area, but this area is not viewed as a significant growth area for non-residential/commercial uses. Views to the lake should be preserved, and a lakefront path should be pursued. Wisconsin Ave. should be enhanced to reflect its prominence as a major avenue radiating from the Capitol to Lake Mendota.

Primary Use: Residential
Emphasis: Preservation



LANGDON CHARACTER AREA

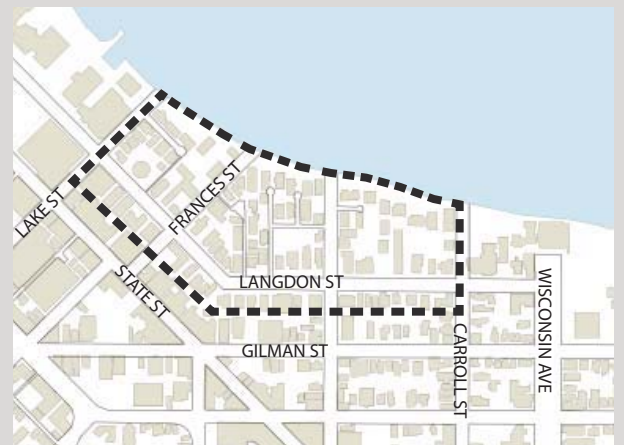
Urban Context:

This student-oriented neighborhood including many fraternities and sororities is adjacent to the UW, Lake Mendota and State St. Mostly included in a National Register historic district, it contains many contributing buildings and local landmarks. The eastern portion is in a local historic district. Although numerous buildings have suffered from years of neglect as student rental properties, they collectively establish a clear character for the area. Steep slopes in some areas and limited public land limit lake access, which is mostly off unimproved street ends. A well-used informal pedestrian path parallels Langdon St. midway to the lake. Downtown Design Zone requirements limit building heights to 5 stories in the eastern portion and 8 stories in the western portion.

Plan Direction:

This area is well situated to continue as a student neighborhood. It can accommodate a limited amount of higher-density residential redevelopment on selected sites while preserving the historic and architectural heritage of the area. Preserving and enhancing Langdon St. will be an anchor. New development must enhance the essential character and not diminish views of the lake. Development near the lake should reflect the topography and not create a wall of tall buildings along the lake. Lake access should be enhanced through a lakefront path and the development of street ends to viable public spaces. The pedestrian walkway between the lake and Langdon St. should be formalized to enhance its aesthetics and safety and to make stronger connections to the lakefront path.

Primary Use: Residential
Emphasis: Preservation / Conservation



STATE STREET CHARACTER AREA

Primary Use: Mixed Use (retail / culture / entertainment)
Emphasis: Preservation / Conservation



Urban Context:

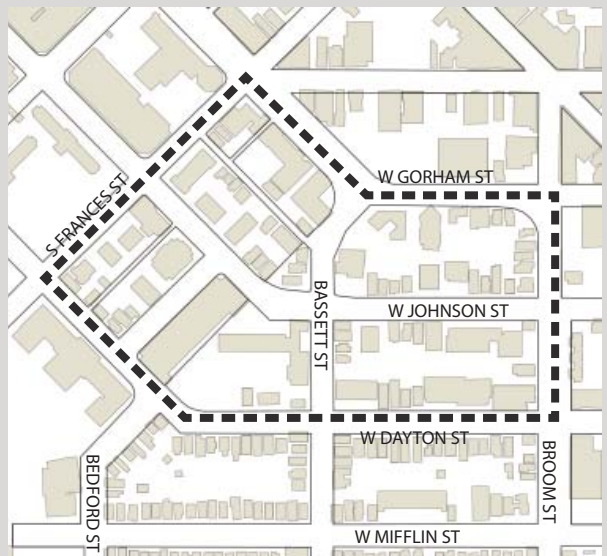
This district is centered on the city's premier street connecting the University with Capitol Square. It is a lively corridor of 2-4 story small footprint buildings with ground floor retail and restaurant uses and upper story residential and office uses. A node of cultural uses exists near the Square. Although it is an eligible historic district, one has not been established. The Downtown Design Zone requirements limit building heights to 6 stories.

Plan Direction:

The existing character and vitality of the district should be supported, with no major changes envisioned. Additional office uses on upper floors could be appropriate. Some larger-scale redevelopment could be appropriate near University Ave. and Gorham St. A National Register Historic District designation could be considered.

STUDENT HIGH RISE CHARACTER AREA

Primary Use: Mixed Use (residential / commercial)
Emphasis: Transition



Urban Context:

This area is predominately student occupied. It contains an aggregation of building types, styles and character that do not relate well. Its location near campus and State Street, have lead to the development of several student apartment towers in recent years, and several potential redevelopment sites remain. It is bisected by a major thoroughfare-- W. Johnson St.

Plan Direction:

This area is appropriate as a higher density student residential area mixed with some commercial uses. It will continue to transition from underutilized parcels to more intense development, and plan recommendations should focus on creating active and engaging street frontages and quasi-public areas. Linkages to adjacent areas should be enhanced so it is less isolated.

MIFFLIN CHARACTER AREA

Urban Context:

This area is dominated by students living in houses that have been divided into apartments as long-term rental properties. Although many buildings require significant reinvestment and many have been altered, overall there is a consistent scale and rhythm to the street from these largely intact blocks. It is located close to campus and has an identity within the community as a location associated with the 1960s student counter culture. It is four block area and does not contain any public open space. Maintaining the status quo for this area is not a long-term solution.

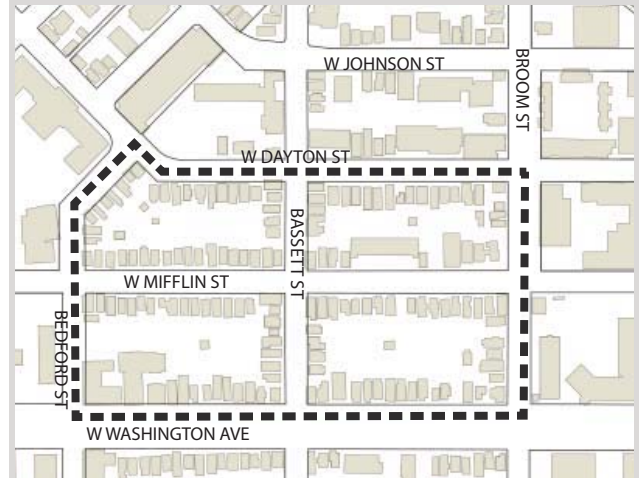
Plan Direction:

At this stage in the planning process, there are several scenarios for the future of the area, two of which are described herein:

Alternative A: This would perpetuate the existing fabric of the area by emphasizing the retention/renovation of the existing structures or new structures with similar characteristics and enhancing the streetscape and connections to surrounding areas (especially Bassett).

Alternative B: This suggests that the area would transition over time to somewhat larger residential or mixed-use buildings with more of an urban form (i.e. flat roofed "new warehouse loft" style buildings) that would increase the density and take advantage of its proximity to the Downtown Core. It would provide opportunities for some non-student housing and the establishment of new open spaces. In general, the buildings along W. Washington Ave. should be retained to complement the character on the south side of the street.

Primary Use: Residential
Emphasis: Conservation / Preservation (Alt. A) or Transition (Alt. B)



BROOM STREET CHARACTER AREA

Urban Context:

This area contains a mix of higher intensity development that includes many recently-developed condominium, office, and other buildings. It is bordered on the west by Broom Street-- a major entrance into the Downtown-- which also provides a clear transition from larger buildings towards the Square and smaller-scale buildings to the west.

Plan Direction:

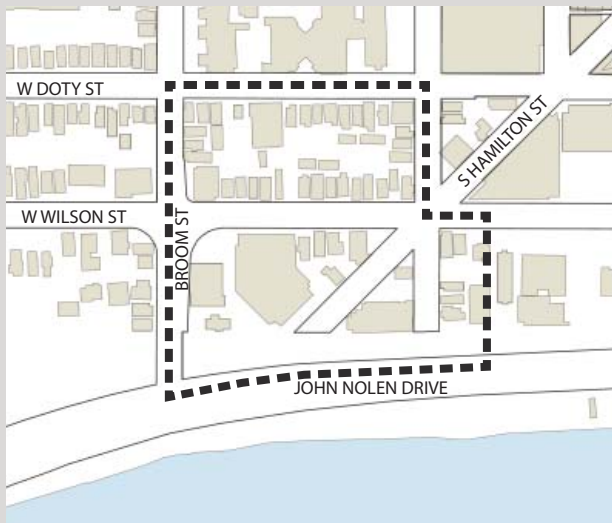
Since much of the development in this area is recent, the plan direction calls for more of the same. Emphasis should be placed on creating more lively and engaging street frontages and better linkages with surrounding areas.

Primary Use: Mixed Use (residential / commercial / employment)
Emphasis: Transition



SOUTH HAMILTON CHARACTER AREA

Primary Use: Residential
Emphasis: Conservation (Alt. A) or
Transition (Alt. B)



Urban Context:

This is a small enclave of mostly residential uses ranging from new, high-density condominium buildings to older houses--most of which have been converted to multi-unit rental properties. It is separated from the Bassett area by Broom St. It is adjacent to Lake Monona offering views of the lake through and adjacent to this area, but John Nolen Drive limits access.

Plan Direction:

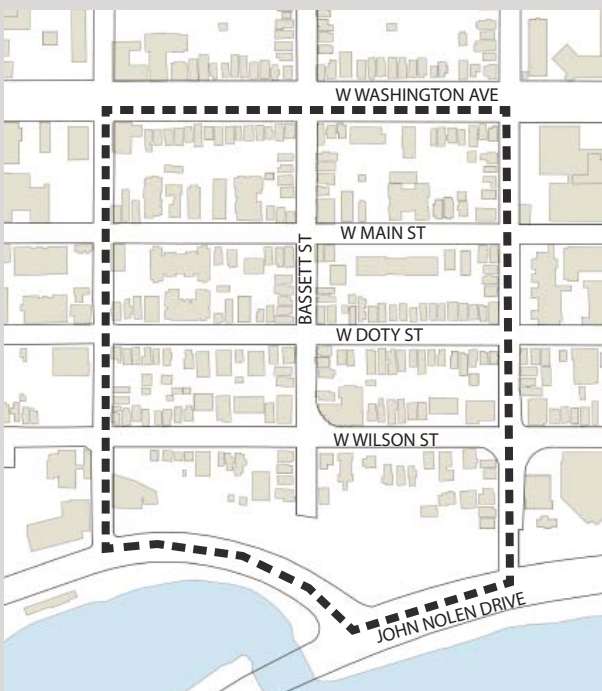
At this stage in the planning process, there are two scenarios for the future of the area as described below:

Alternative A: This builds on the relatively intact lower scale residential blocks, and would allow new development that would retain this scale and be more consistent with the character of the Bassett area to make it more integral to that neighborhood. Views of the lake and views of the Capitol would be preserved.

Alternative B: This scenario would allow more redevelopment of this area with higher density residential buildings, while preserving existing landmark and historically significant structures. Views of the lake and views of the Capitol would be preserved.

BASSETT CHARACTER AREA

Primary Use: Residential
Emphasis: Conservation



Urban Context:

This area has recently experienced a replacement of many houses with new multi-family (owner & renter occupied) that have helped stabilize the neighborhood by introducing new housing options. However, the bigger, taller buildings have also somewhat eroded its basic character. The area is located close to the lake, but not particularly well connected to it. Broom St., along the eastern edge, demarcates the smaller scale of this area and the larger developments to the east. The Bassett Neighborhood Plan was adopted in 1997. The Downtown Historic Preservation Plan identifies this area as a potential conservation district.

Plan Direction:

The continuation of selective redevelopment that is compatible with the scale and character of the existing buildings is expected. Slightly larger buildings should be directed to the Broom St. frontage. Rehabilitation of houses along the east-west streets should be encouraged. Preserving views of the lake and strengthening connections and access to it are important. Particular attention should be paid to preserving the house structures along W. Washington Ave. to compliment those on the opposite side of the street. Older zero lot-line buildings should be redeveloped.

WEST RAIL CHARACTER AREA

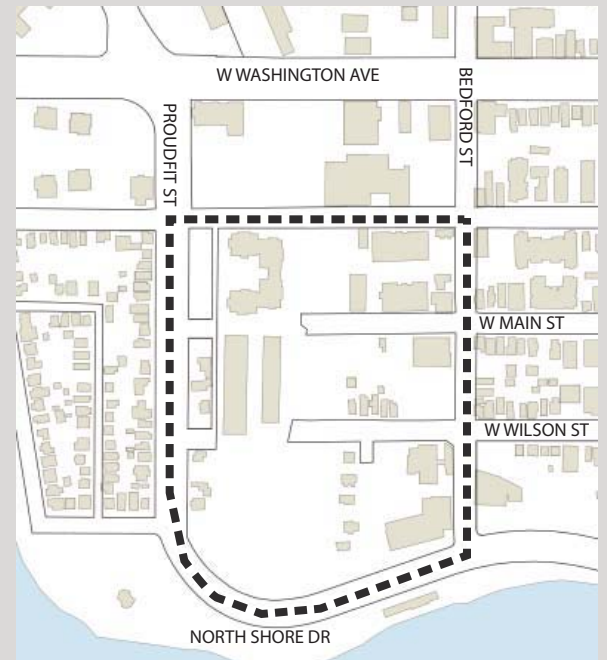
Urban Context:

This area has experienced a successful transformation in recent years to a residential and office area that builds on the heritage as a rail yard. It blends new buildings and restoration of historic structures pursuant to a master plan. It is located near Monona Bay and blends in with the Bassett area. A bike path and planned commuter rail corridor bisects the area.

Plan Direction:

The development of the remaining parcels pursuant to the master plan would complete this area. Future emphasis should be on strengthening connections to surrounding areas and enhancing the streetscape and open spaces.

Primary Use: Mixed Use (office / residential)
Emphasis: Conservation & Transition



KOHL CENTER CHARACTER AREA

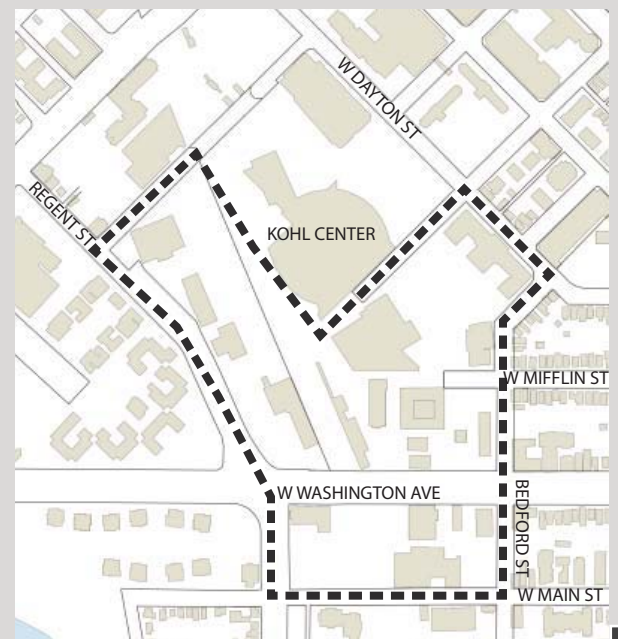
Urban Context:

The area is currently dominated by institutional and business uses located in larger buildings that don't relate well to each other. Part of the area is on the UW campus. The area is bisected by the bike path and rail corridor. There is also an abundance of surface parking lots and underutilized properties. It contains a few local historic landmarks.

Plan Direction:

This area has significant growth opportunities and a high potential for change. Its proximity to major street, bike path and pedestrian corridors, coupled with the potential rail transit stop could make this a highly accessible location for new employment (including UW) and district-serving commercial uses that may incorporate residential opportunities. New loft-style buildings could provide the flexibility for a variety of uses and accommodate change over time, with taller buildings closer to the railroad corridor.

Primary Use: Mixed Use (employment / commercial / residential / institutional)
Emphasis: Transition



NOTES ON NODES AND CORRIDORS

In addition to the Character Areas, there are several nodes and corridors that serve as transitions between the Character Areas or transcend their boundaries. These nodes and corridors are shown as hatched on the Character Area Map.

Some key notes on these include:

- ① Higher-intensity portion of the State Street District
- ② Preserve MMSD Administration Building, Allow UW uses, Engaging street frontages
- ③ *Alternative A:* Conservation and preservation, limited infill at Same mass/scale/form
Alternative B: Urban form residential redevelopment with mid-rise structures
- ④ Mid-rise urban form structures, Preserve historic structures, Transition between larger-scale buildings and smaller-scale residential neighborhood
- ⑤ Concentration of cultural/arts facilities and activities
- ⑥ Redevelopment generally OK, Upper story setbacks for view preservation, smaller buildings, some setbacks, and spaces in between
- ⑦ Government focus - civic buildings and public spaces
- ⑧ Focus on entertainment and restaurants with upper story offices uses, historic district
- ⑨ State office cluster

