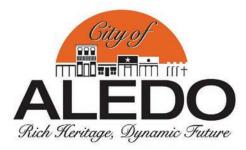
# Downtown Master Plan



Kimley »Horn Expect More. Experience Better.

**City of Aledo** 

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# Acknowledgements

City of Aledo elected and appointed officials, staff members and key stakeholders from the community provided knowledge, assistance and insight throughout the development of this plan. The contributions and efforts of the following are appreciated and helped to make this Downtown Master Plan possible:

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# Letter from the Mayor



Aledo is moving forward in an exciting way for its residents. Guided by this Aledo Strategic Plan we are pledging to maintain our core values that have made Aledo a special place, while providing the amenities and services desired by our current and future citizens, businesses, and guests.

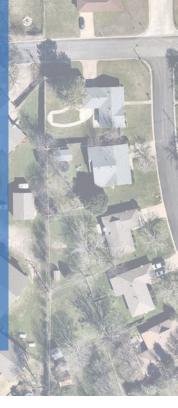
Our City leadership has been working towards the creation of a City Center, focused around the things that we treasure as a community. However, we are also conscious of the services and amenities that we are lacking today, but want to build through partnerships with the private realm and our regional partners tomorrow.

Catalyst projects like the new Pine Street Plaza and Aledo Commons Park in our Downtown will attract new forms of development that bring family entertainment, restaurants, jobs, and give us the chance to create a public gathering space for our residents. We are looking towards innovative development strategies that will enhance our Downtown center and surrounding core. We are looking for ways to be economically self-sufficient for our community and better advocates for maintaining important amenities, now and in the future.

We look to our residents to continue to guide and direct us by being supporters of this plan and helping us stimulate creative projects through participation in community events and open communication. To assist with this initiative, we are continually updating and engaging our community for these special projects that can move forward through City of Aledo Facebook and other online sources.

Let's work together in furthering our commitment to make Aledo a great place to live, work, play and raise our families.

Kit Marshall, City of Aledo Mayor Aligning Principles
1. Continue to invest in a connected and safe Aledo.
2. Focus on neighborhood infill as well as new development.
3. Support a responsible city government.
4. Align policy decisions that forward a clear vision for Aledo.
5. Facilitate regional coordination and partnerships.



# Introduction



**The foundation** for the Aledo Downtown Plan is derived from previous planning work, community engagement, and downtown best practices. These three building blocks were used to craft meaningful and appropriately scaled actions that will create a vibrant and engaging downtown of which the community can be proud of for years to come.

# PREVIOUS PLANNING WORK

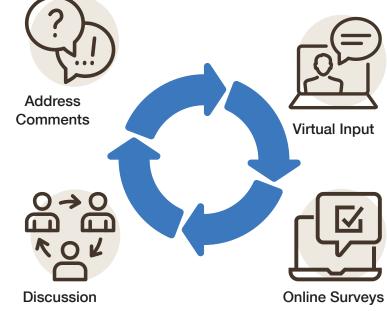
In 2010, the City of Aledo adopted a strategic plan that initiated a dialogue within the community of what the city wants to be as it continues to grow and mature. That strategic plan was able to kickstart initiatives and projects that were aligned with that vision. One of those projects was the Aledo Playbook that started to create a targeted downtown vision with identified districts and experiences.



Velocity Report of Aledo Playbook

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement in 2020 disrupted due to COVID-19 pandemic and forced engagement efforts to evolve. Typically, an engagement process will employ various techniques to engage the public. Due to guidance, along with general public concern over nonessential social gathering and interaction, this process had to change to provide opportunities for input that were all virtual. The City of Aledo and the consultant were able to gather the necessary input for the community consensus by hosting online workshops, presenting to Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council through webinars, and hosting activities and feedback loops through the project website:



Community Engagement Process

# Why this update?

In 2018, the Velocity Group was invited by the City of Aledo, to conduct a workshop to align the diverse elements of Aledo's unique character. The project team held conversations with a wide variety of stakeholders and facilitated collaborative work sessions with elected and appointed city officials to uncover ideas intended to calibrate the physical, economic, social, political, legal, technological, environmental, and cultural realms of the community.

The Aledo Playbook was the result of those conversations coupled with team member observations – with the goal to provide a new perspective for unlocking economic, cultural, and social value for maximum benefit. The document was designed to jump-start intentional conversations about the future of the city and provide inspiration for subsequent strategic actions that ensure Aledo resources are committed with clear goals and expectations.

This Downtown Master Plan is a result of several big ideas identified by the Aledo Playbook that have maintained momentum in Aledo. The following ideas have provided a baseline of the goals and objectives in this plan.

- Focus attention on downtown renewal, improved mobility, and neighborhood connectivity.
- Develop shared parking agreements with the Aledo churches around the downtown area.
- Develop a cohesive municipal campus that includes a new city hall, enhanced community center property, and trails and sidewalks that connect throughout the community.
- Discuss and outline opportunities for zoning flexibility within the municipal code.
- Create a unique identity within the region: Be Aledo.
- Create development design standards.



#### PlanAledo.com.

# DOWNTOWN BEST PRACTICES

Healthy downtowns can be categorized as vibrant, full and brimming with activity, but how do they get there? Best practices for city cores are dependent on the character, scale and context of the municipality, but all successful downtowns do have some common traits that can be used as guidance. A trait common to successful downtowns is a **pedestrian friendliness** that encourages a "park once and walk around" mentality versus an "auto-oriented" development. This doesn't mean there is no space for automobiles or parking, just that it must be planned and scaled appropriately and prioritized for the pedestrian experience.

A sense of place and character is also an important component to a healthy downtown. A person visiting the core should feel the urban core and a distinction from the rest of the development around it. Creating this placemaking opportunity is a priority when reading this plan. Throughout the plan these practices, as well as others, will be used to create a path for Aledo to become a healthy downtown. Library Sidewalk Railroad Trail Commercial Small Buildings Location Connectivity Think Industrial Access Retain Connectivity Think Industrial Parking Crossing Property Community Development Community De

Word cloud represents the most-used words in response to a question presented during an online engagement. The larger the word, the more it was used.

Successful participation with online engagements is typically 2% and Aledo achieved a 10% rate from a total population of 4,674.

# Community Engagement

# WORKSHOP

On September 3rd, 2020, the project team held a daylong design workshop focused on individual experience districts: Pine Street, Historic, Civic Center, and South Commercial. The workshop was hosted completely through a virtual platform. A whiteboard session was used to assess, design and refine concepts for how districts could support implement development in a cohesive way. Parks and plaza were introduced to the overall design, visual connections to key locations were identified, and potential infill development ideas were considered.

Key takeaways from the workshop were outlined in a conclusion presentation that was posted to the project website. This process revealed to the team that the districts had a very different mass and scale among

### them. Takeaways by District

Pine Street – Incorporation of the Pine Street Plaza to catalyze development along Pine Street, specifically properties within one block of the plaza. The purpose of this plaza is to relate to its environment, which Pine Street is a commercial street with businesses along both sides and some residential. The plaza will help with the transformation of Pine Street from a rural roadway to a walkable and commercial supportive place.

- Historic Business– Connectivity and mobility were primary concerns in this district. Identified needs in the district were slowing traffic and providing pedestrian crossings on FM 1187. These connectivity improvements will support a greater connection between the Pine Street and the Historic Business District by providing a strong sense of place and literal connection between the districts.
- Civic Center Establish a district focused on the Aledo Community Center, City Hall and Aledo Commons provides an opportunity to create a civic center that can be used for many different events already hosted by the City and other non-profit organizations. Creating functional connectivity to the north and south will be vital for extending the downtown influence to the southern district.
- South Commercial Of all the districts, South Commercial District has the most opportunity to support Downtown because of the availability of undeveloped land, proximity to schools, and a direct connection to Downtown. A carefully crafted framework of streets and open space allows for appropriate transitions between commercial and

#### residential areas.

# ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

The online hub provided a centralized location for all virtual engagement including, visual preference surveys, map exercises, and plan status updates. The City of Aledo had successful participation with online engagement, reaching a 10% engagement factor from a total population of 4,764 - exceeding our goal for engagement of two percent. The supportive online engagement tools were able to fuel the development of the overall plan "through" of the feedback and overall prioritization of concepts and ideas that came from the residents of Aledo.

- Social Media Throughout the process, Facebook was used to create awareness of new engagements as they rolled out on the project site. This method was used because of the established following the City of Aledo Facebook already had, and the ability to drive traffic towards the online hub.
- Surveys In order to address specific topics, visual preference surveys were deployed regarding commercial development and public amenities.

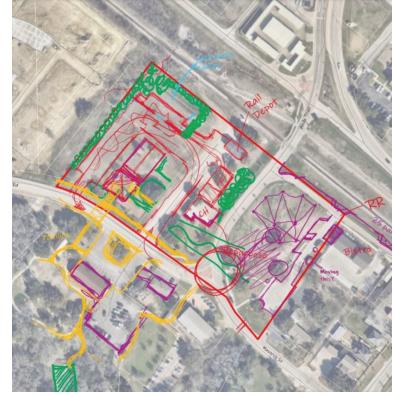
These surveys allowed the public to give targeted feedback that was crafted into goals and objectives for this plan.

Map Exercises – The project process ran in tandem with two public improvement projects, the Pine Street Plaza and Aledo Commons. Two map exercises were created with these concepts and gathered live feedback that directly contributed to the conceptual design. The online hub provided opportunities for the public to provide comment on the specific concepts.

# STAKEHOLDERS AND COUNCIL MEETINGS

The planning process included many stakeholder and City Council meetings that provided meaningful feedback while drafting the plan and added context around decisions. Stakeholder meetings were structured as casual one-on-one conversations that allowed for open discussion and feedback.

The project team also kept the City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission informed of the progress of the project throughout, and actively soughtafter guidance or direction of concepts and decisions.



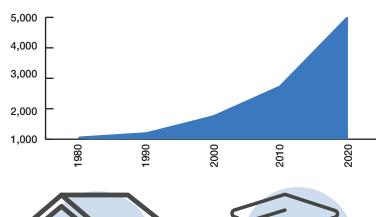
Process drawing from Aledo Workshop for the Aledo Commons

# **Existing Conditions**

# The Community

A family-friendly bedroom community for Weatherford and Fort Worth employment centers. A strong school district and community events currently make Aledo dynamic and distinct.

# Population 5,321



# **The Downtown**

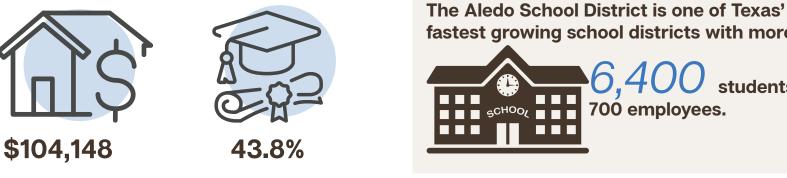
The study area consists of four distinct

character districts that

# function like neighborhoods.

The total land area for the downtown encompasses

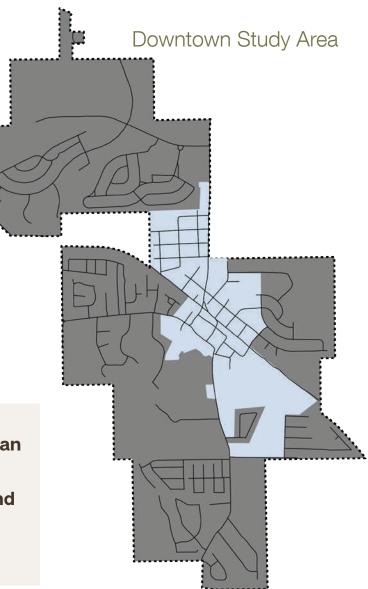
280 ACTES of residential and commercial zoned downtown properties. The Downtown includes Front Street frontage which historically was the traditional Main Street.



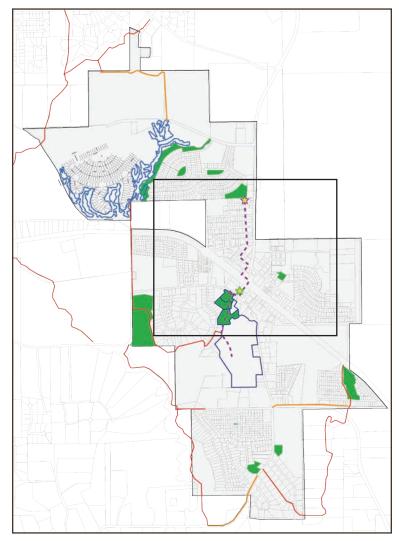
**BACHELOR'S** 

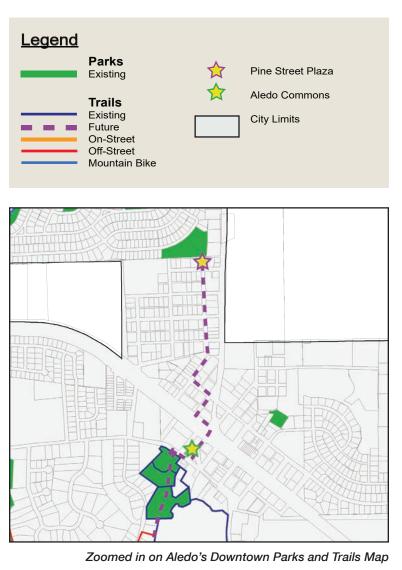
**DEGREE OR HIGHER** 

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD fastest growing school districts with more than students and 700 employees. achoo,



# **Parks and Trails**





- Parks Currently Aledo has an even distribution of parks throughout the city. Having a park within half mile of each residential area is the baseline metric for success.
- Trails A large amenity that has taken off in Aledo is the Mountain Bike trail system. This system is planned to be connected with future extensions.
- Special Amenities The Pine Street Plaza and Aledo Commons Park create special amenities that are connected by the Pine Street corridor and future city-wide trail system.



Parks of Aledo Subdivision

Aledo Parks and Trails Map

# Experience

# Districts





The Experience Districts are areas within the Downtown that have been identified for their unique characteristics and geographic perimeters in the Aledo Playbook. These districts have been carried over and modified based on existing conditions and current engagements. All the districts boost a different neighborhood feel that warrants different approaches and solutions. The districts create a diverse Downtown that is a separator from other communities.

# GOALS

#### People

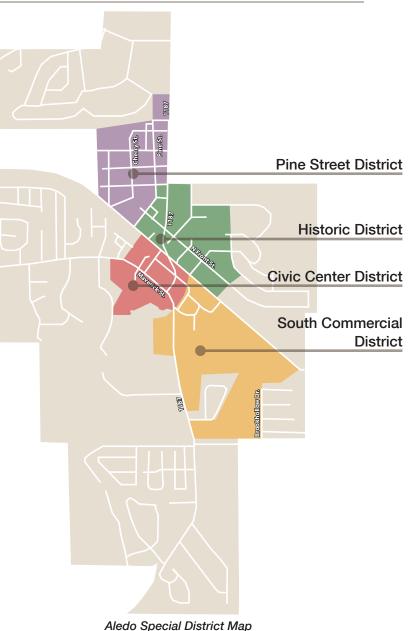
- Create multiple transportation options for people to interact with Downtown.
- Provide opportunities for people to live in Downtown.
- Develop Downtown to provide a comfortable experience for people.

#### Businesses

- Position Downtown to be competitive in attracting, retaining and encouraging new businesses.
- Increase coordination among businesses to improve or enhance the Downtown experience.
- Promote an Aledo Downtown image to attract new and returning visitors.

### Places

- Optimize the use of the limited Downtown land.
- Enhance Downtown's character and functionality.
- Make Downtown a destination with community gathering spaces.



# CASE STUDIES

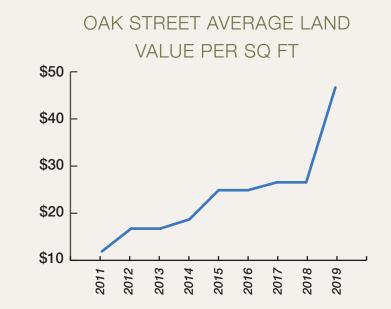
The City of Aledo has many unique characteristics that differentiate it from other communities but there are also some common conditions that peer communities have resolved through a planning and implementation process like this one. Two specific communities are Oak Street in Roanoke and Old Town Burleson. These two potential performance areas have similar foundational characteristics and allow us to look at metrics over time.

Both Oak Street and Old Town are regarded as successful projects that stemmed from infrastructure and placemaking improvements that led to a thriving district. At the start of the planning process, both areas experienced limited pedestrian traffic, active commercial, and an auto-oriented focus. Over time, both projects were able to build an environment that continued to perform well and encouraged new housing and commercial opportunities.

The percentage change in land values from the baseline year was 397% Oak Street, Roanoke

### Oak Street, Roanoke

- Before In 2006, land values along Oak Street were valued at approximately four dollars per square foot. The City undertook a visioning exercise that created several infrastructure improvements such as streetscape, lighting and landscaping, and introduced better development standards.
- After Over the course of ten years of implementing the vision, the City began to see changes in land values. The percentage change from the baseline year of 2011 to 2019 was 397%.



### Old Town, Burleson

- Before In 2011, the City of Burleson began a visioning process that created a multi-faceted approach to revitalizing the Old Town District. This district had experienced disinvestment and low land values in the area.
- After The City of Burleson completed all action items from the original visioning plan which included infrastructure improvements, programming, and tactical urbanism projects. The implementation was able to drive a significant increase in activity and demand which is reflected in the average land values climbing to \$7.50 per square feet, a 235% increase.



# I AND VALUE PER SQ FT

OLD TOWN BURLESON AVERAGE



The Pine Street district boundary is bordered by FM 1187 on the east, Oak Street and Union Pacific Railroad on the south, Jearl properties on the north, and the city limits on the west.

**District Flavor** - The Pine Street District is envisioned as an urban walkable area that will provide a wide range of residential and commercial uses. The Pine Street corridor will transition outwards to the existing neighborhood through incremental phases that promote the urban nature of Pine Street, but protect the existing housing fabric.

# **Pine Street District**



- Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) – FM (Farm to Market) 1187 is a major corridor through the district and will be a vital partnership to realize the vision being implemented on Pine Street. TxDOT will continue to be a stakeholder in all FM 5 and FM 1187 transportation conversations particularly if there is an impact on any state roadways.
- Local Businesses Existing local businesses have a stake in creating a more vibrant downtown. They will be ambassadors for the district and support additional business creation and relocation to Downtown. This type of excitement will build upon itself to create more pedestrian activity that is stable for the development of emerging businesses. This requires walkability to succeed.
- Local Developers The City will be able to move the needle with infrastructure, but will need assistance from local developers in implementing the vision for the district. Local developers will need to create exciting and impactful developments to support the vision for Pine Street.
- Neighborhood Residents One of the most important components for the plan's success is its ability to support neighbors in the community. Responding to the neighborhood needs with care through the adjustment of today's conditions to a walkable corridor will help minimize growing pains. Supporting them through action will help towards a healthy compromise.



Pine Street Commercial Frontage

# Funding Strategies

- The TIRZ (Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone) District – The recently adopted tax increment financing district will be an important funding mechanism moving forward. As development increases, the additional property tax increment will continue to rise and provide a stable source of funding for district wide improvements.
- Texas Department of Transportation As a unique partner for the district, TxDOT can support with funding from federal and state agencies that can be used to enhance and repair state highways within the district.
- Property Values Because of the TIRZ, there is a need to focus on balanced and growing property values. Utilizing a higher value per acre will result in a better fiscal balance for the City, providing additional revenues for essential services.
- Main Street District Another potential funding strategy and source of resources identified could be the Main Street Program through the Texas Historical Commission. This state program can open opportunities for technical resources, grants, and other potential assets that are in line with the vision of the Pine Street district.

# Catalytic Projects

Pine Street Plaza – The Plaza project has been identified through the Aledo Playbook document and brought forward during this Downtown Plan. As a showcase piece to the envisioned future of the Pine Street corridor, this project will be a catalyst for economic development in the area and will be a complementary amenity for businesses in the district. The plaza will be an outdoor common space on the north side of the Pine Street corridor. This space is being designed to be functional as an outdoor patio area for businesses, and a small park for the neighborhood residents.

- Infrastructure Improvements To create a vibrant pedestrian-oriented corridor, certain infrastructure improvements will be needed as catalysts. These improvements include streetscaping, crosswalks, landscaping, and on-street parking. These will need to be coordinated with existing property owners, TxDOT, and stakeholders in the area.
- Connected Trail System A major amenity for the City will be a connected trails system that can be used for recreational and transportation purposes. As more connections are created, the more the trail will become a focal point for the region, specifically for the mountain bike trails. Tying in to the regional draw of the mountain bike trail system will draw additional visitors to Pine Street and Downtown.

# The Pine Street District is the heart of the Downtown.



Pine Street Commercial Frontage

# Constraints

- Zoning Regulations In order to create the type of development that lends to the vision of Pine Street district, the zoning regulations will need to be adjusted. Developments that are smaller and that maximize the property are difficult to achieve with the current setback, lot size minimums, and variety of zoning districts.
- Community Perception Attitudes towards mixed-use vary among residents, though this type of development supports the overarching vision for the District. Utilizing block-by-block updates to the Pine Street corridor, as new infill development occurs, will help reveal the future look and feel of Pine Street, while also providing real revenue for the City.
- Auto-oriented Development- Pine Street District has an opportunity to serve a mix of uses, with auto-oriented development along FM 1187 and walkable development along Pine Street. Education and enforcement of the rules will be the key to ensuring the vision is realized. Development must look for ways to improve connectivity as much as it looks to gain visibility.

# **Opportunities**

#### Pine Street Plaza

This plaza is a gathering space for the district that is intended to be flexible. Anticipated uses include: an extension of a restaurant/cafe, special programming such as yoga space, or as a quiet space to sit down during a work break.

#### Outdoor Entertainment

A restaurant space with exterior seating and gathering space for pedestrians.

#### Preserving Old Growth Trees

Where feasible, retaining old growth trees provides a connection to an older character that cannot be replaced with new trees.

#### **Restaurant Incubator**

Beginning with food trucks, then later developing a brick and mortar building, incubates smaller businesses and provides an opportunity to use this space quicker and show the potential for attracting people to the area.

#### Infill First

3

Where space allows, subdivide and develop infill areas along Pine Street to fill in missing gaps in building frontage.



Pine Street Aerial Concept Design

### VISION

The district glimpse is of an existing perspective of Pine Street that is transformed into the vision outlined within this plan. This glimpse provides a visualization of the possibilities of implementing the plan and a goal post of the type of development the community expects from its developments.

Included in this view is a two-story building located at the front of the property line to prioritize the pedestrian walkway as the main access. In addition, street trees that provide a more comfortable walking experience by creating a buffer between the pedestrian walkway and the roadway, and providing much needed shade on hot summer days. Crosswalks are highly visible due to the different materials used to outline them. This approach also requires less maintenance of the crosswalk because it does not depend on paint.

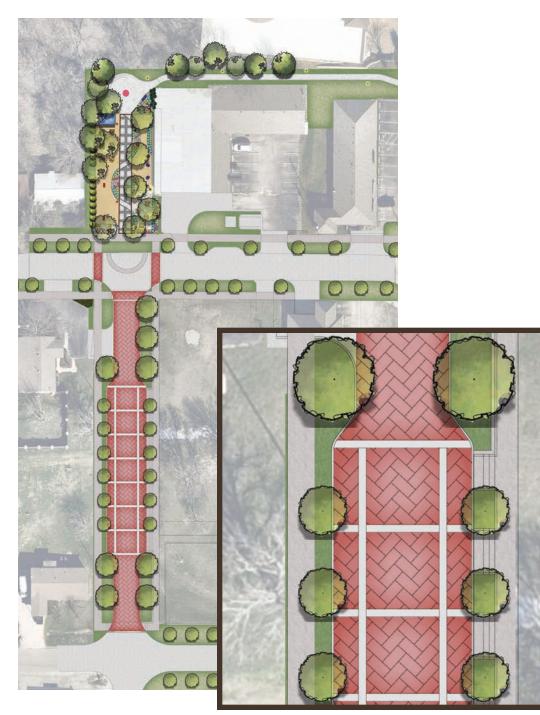
The buildings heights will increase closer to the frontage road. Thus, creating a buffer and gradual increase of height from the frontage road to the neighborhood.



Existing south view of Pine Street at the corner of Jearl Street



Concept Photomorph Design of south view of Pine Street at the corner of Jearl Street



# **Pine Street**

Pine Street is currently a 2-lane asphalt roadway with no on-street parking or pedestrian facilities. Pine Street connects the future Pine Street Plaza to the business and residential areas. As the Pine Street District continues to grow and mature, it is key that the existing corridor develop as well. The proposed corridor design will set the stage for new development in the area, encourage and emphasize pedestrian mobility, and remedy aging pavement and utilities.

#### Intent

- Serve as a gateway to the Pine Street Plaza.
- Function as the catalyst for incoming development.
- Add parking and pedestrian facilities to encourage a mixed-use environment.

### Design

- It is recommended that Pine Street be reconstructed as a 2-lane concrete roadway with curb and gutter, landscaping beds and sidewalks.
- The design incorporates stairs on the eastern side of the roadway. This was crafted by analyzing the existing conditions and drainage

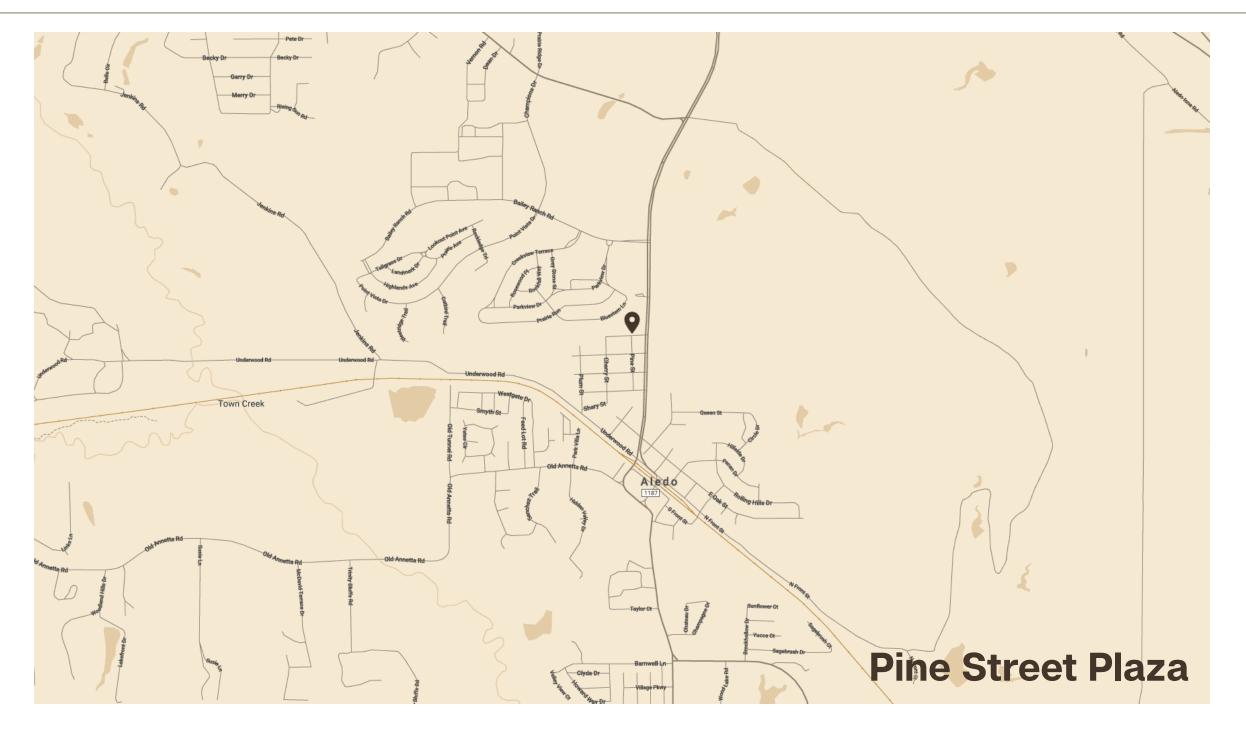
patterns. Drainage improvements are recommended to be an underground enclosed storm drain system sized for ultimate conditions to allow for future development and reconstruction.

- Pine Street reconstruction provides a design to allow for future roadway improvements further along Pine Street as well as for the side streets.
- Pedestrian curb ramps establish a safe an accessible path for visitors to traverse the Pine Street corridor.
- Parallel parking stalls on both sides of the roadway encourages patrons to visit businesses nearby.
- City water and sewer line replacement to improve aging infrastructure.

### Materials

- Landscaping bordering the roadway for a less urban feel utilizing Texas native plants and trees.
- Stamped and stained concrete pavement for the roadway surface and crosswalks should be used to set Pine Street apart from other streets in the area.
- Benches, trash receptacles, and other pedestrian amenities to encourage walkability.

#### EXPERIENCE DISTRICTS





Pine Street Plaza Proximity Map

# This is a great idea! Any traffic that helps our small businesses (or future ones) along the trail is beneficial.

- Posted PlanAledo.com Comment

# PINE STREET PLAZA

The Pine Street Plaza is at the north end of the district. It is designed to be a multi-use plaza that can accommodate a small number of people but also serve as an intimate spill out space for a restaurant. As a catalyst project for Pine Street, the plaza is able to stand alone as an amenity to complement future development.

#### Intent

- Create an urban space that can be used as a community living room for future development.
- Serve as a destination that will enliven the area with activity and programming.
- Highlight the existing businesses and provide seating for people to use.
- To function as a trailhead for existing and future trail connections.

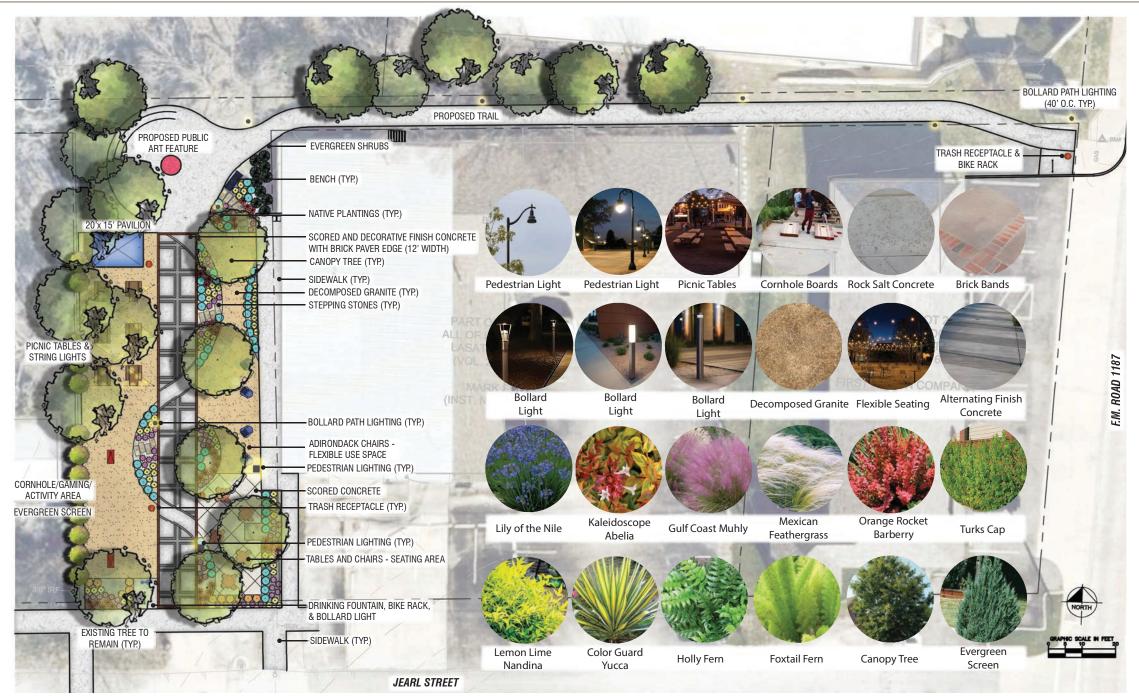
### Design

- A focal point at the end of Pine Street to grab your attention and draw you into the space.
- Pop-up stage and seating for events with overhead lighting.
- ▶ Interactive art and game tables for people to use.
- Lighted path that connects from the street into the space.
- Drinking fountains, benches, and bike racks incorporated as amenities and functional pieces to facilitate programming.

### Materials

- Plantings (or 'plants') that are native to Texas and can withstand the harsh heat in the summers and require minimal maintenance to be thriving.
- Plenty of trees to create shade and make the space more comfortable.
- Benches, fountains, and bike racks are dispersed throughout the place to encourage active transportation.





Pine Street Trailhead Plaza Design



The Historic District boundary is described by city limits to the north, the rail to the south, Pine Street to the west, and Rolling Hills Drive/Chestnut St to the east.

**District Flavor** - The Historic District is envisioned as a family friendly, large community space that includes Front Street commercial, the library, and churches. As a corridor district it will bridge connections across roadways and rail as well as districts and their amenities. This district is an activity generator that spills into adjacent districts with easy-to-traverse connections.

# Historic District



- Texas Department of Transportation F.M. (Farm to Market) 1187 is a major corridor through the district and creates a boundary between the east and west portions of the district. Coordination will be vital when discussing potential crosswalks or connections.
- Library The existing library is a community asset that can involve programming within the district. This type of use complements all sorts of residential and commercial uses that will be essential in creating a distinct character to the neighborhood.
- Main Street Program The Texas Historical Commission Main Street Program is a potential community partner that can provide resources and knowledge needed to create an economic development movement that complements the work the City is completing.

Funding Strategies



TIRZ District – The TIRZ district can be a district funding mechanism that spans multiple districts within the Downtown. This will be especially important when implementing projects such as trails, street and other amenities that span several areas.

- Main Street The Main Street program administers several grants through its state program as well as technical expertise and resources that can serve as matching supplementals for other opportunities or as standalone assets.
- Grants Different opportunities can arise throughout the year with federal, state, and local programs regarding funding. These opportunities should be reviewed and assessed on viability for the district and staff capacity.
- Certified Local Government Program The CLG (Certified Local Governments) program disperses grants amongst its participants grants for projects identifying or improving district level amenities. The Historic Downtown district would have the highest probability of satisfying the requirements

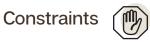


East Parker County Library on 1187

### Catalytic Projects

Street Enhancements – Enhancing the public realm for the pedestrian oriented streets will create foot traffic that can sustain significant economic development through retail commercial.

- Pine Street Alignment and Connection Connecting the Pine Street district south should be a main priority. Piecing together different catalytic projects can start to create an urban atmosphere that is missing in Aledo.
- Connection across FM (Farm to Market) 1187 - In the same vein as the Pine Street Alignment, the connection across FM (Farm to Market) 1187 should be a priority moving forward. Front Street was divided when the state highway was created which has had a negative effect on the economic development of the area. A connection across will serve as a catalytic action that can reinvigorate the district.
- Public Programming Using the library as an anchor for the district, programming can be scheduled to create stable activity that can complement the retail activity from Pine Street corridor. Programming can include activities such as a book club, 5k walk, or art competition.



- Segmentation between Districts The railroad and state highway have seperated this district from the rest of the Downtown; reconnecting the district should be a priority.
- Lack of Activity within the District While the district is the traditional core of Aledo, it is missing commercial activity that creates activity and vibrancy.

Connecting the Pine Street district south should be a main priority of the district...



N Front Street Commercial Store Front

# HISTORIC DISTRICT REDEVELOPMENT

As a main component of Downtown, the Pine Street corridor will create a sense of place for an urban shopping experience that currently is missing within Aledo. To create a successful experience, there must be several policies established to set the stage for catalyst developments along the corridor.

- Pedestrian Priority The Pine Street corridor is envisioned as an urban walkable main street which cannot succeed without a prioritization to pedestrians. This shift in development standards is different than the current development trends within Aledo. The policy prioritizes factors when evaluating a project along this corridor such as the resolution of pedestrian access, site orientation, and public realm.
- Development Optimization Maximizing development space within properties will be key in creating a vibrant corridor. Open spaces should be strategically placed, not an afterthought in development. Small incremental spaces should be encouraged to allow for flexibility in commercial or residential occupants.
- Multiple Connections and Coordination -Connections among properties should be contemplated when developing projects. Creating multiple connections within developments create a sense of place and exploration that makes the corridor feel larger and more expansive.

# **Opportunities**

#### Promenade

The Pine Street Promenade allows for pedestrian activity in the Pine Street corridor without requiring additional right-of-way. Buildings could front onto this plaza space and parking could be placed to the side or rear of the buildings.

#### Medical Wellness facility

An opportunity to provide a space for retail and commercial, focused on health, wellness and recreation.

### Plaza

New construction must consider outdoor spaces that are focused on providing spill out space and easy pedestrian connections from FM 1187 to the Pine Street corridor.

#### **Gateway Development**

This library site has an opportunity to become a gateway to the Historic Downtown area, with a prominent focus on FM 1187 and Oak Street.



Historic District Aerial Concept Design

# VISION

Along FM 1187 the library is adjacent to an underutilized space. This concept envisions this space as a plaza with outdoor seating and landscaping to allow functions and spill out space for a commercial tenant. Commercial perspective would position their front doors against the plaza space to take advantage and enhance the space. Along the edge of FM 1187, a sidewalk is expanded and landscaping is added to create a safer pedestrian experience along the highway.



Existing south view of East Parker County Library on 1187



Concept Photomorph Design of south view of East Parker County Library on 1187



The Civic Center is bordered by Union Pacific Railroad to the northeast, school district property to the south, the City property to the west, and Crockett Drive to the east.

**District Flavor** - The Civic Center District is the municipal core of Downtown as well as the large venue center for the City. Large events will typically be held at the community center, City Hall or the Aledo Commons Park which has emerged as the main character. Large entertainment performances and important events will take place here and will shape the type of uses that pop up.

# **Civic Center District**



- Parks Board In terms of programming and generating a steady stream of activity, the Parks Board can support staff in developing a programming plan to get the Civic Center District identified and educate citizens about future plans. The administration of the farmer's market and association with vendors will be important to building consistent programming in this district.
- Farmers Market The farmer's market is a successful regular event in Aledo. Strategic planning for expanded programming during holidays, building on local first and working towards non-profit management of the farmers market will help it build an identity.
- Downtown Business Association Through the Economic Development Corporation, building a Downtown Business Association, which gains membership from local businesses, will ensure that there is a conduit for business needs in the community. Having a point of contact for everyday logistics of the Downtown will become more important as Downtown grows into a vibrant space.
- Texas Department of Transportation As with all the downtown districts, TxDOT will need to be intimately involved in the plans and procedures happening within Downtown in order to properly account for the changes in development along FM1187.

Commercial Vendors – Partnering with commercial vendors can range from farmers markets to food trucks for public events in the district. This creates a productive relationship that serves as a driver for people to attend events but also a spike in small businesses that participate.

# Funding Strategies

- City Most of the municipal facilities within Aledo will be located within this district and the new City Hall site which will be using funds to move enhancements to the area forward. This could open opportunities for incorporating broader improvements for the district, so envisioning this project as a placemaking effort, more than just a building development will be important for its lasting impact.
- TIRZ The TIRZ district can also serve as a funding mechanism for district improvements especially if the improvements are tied to the full downtown area. These funds should be directed towards improvements that will enhance private development so improvements to the trails system, sidewalks and utilities will be appropriate in this area.
- Events Revenue from events can be reinvested into the community as more momentum builds. This will take many forms, but ultimately there will be of a need to have a full-time coordinator within a downtown entity.

#### EXPERIENCE DISTRICTS





### **Opportunities**

- ► Aledo Commons The Aledo Commons will be designed to accommodate various events and activities. It will create a sense of place that is currently lacking in Downtown. This park will be a complementary asset to the new City Hall and Aledo Community Center.
- ▶ New City Hall The City Hall will be an important addition to solidify the Civic Center and provide much needed parking for Downtown events.
- Trail System and Connections Connecting from the Civic Center district, a planned series of mountain bike trails will become an important asset for the community. These trails will be connected to the new trails system in the north of Aledo to maximize the effect they have. The Civic Center district is in a location that can provide those connections and act as a central trailhead for regional activity.



- District segmentation Roadway divisions are a constraint that has impacted how the properties are accessed in this district. Working towards creating intentional pedestrian connections is an important goal.
- Vehicles Speeds Aledo Trail continues to be a high speed corridor, even with reduced speed signs. Additional work with TxDOT could prove to support walkable urban thoroughfares within Downtown, and help alleviate the intense car speeds.

### **City Hall**

New City Hall building will house the staff administration of the City of Aledo and be a one stop shop for communication with the City. The remainder of the site will provide overflow parking for Downtown events.

#### **Farmers Market Canopy**

The structure would serve as covered parking in off times, and would be a vendor canopy during market times, supporting allweather vending.

#### 3 Streetscaping

Provide extensions to the current sidewalks, crosswalks and preserve old growth trees where feasible.

### Law Enforcement Station

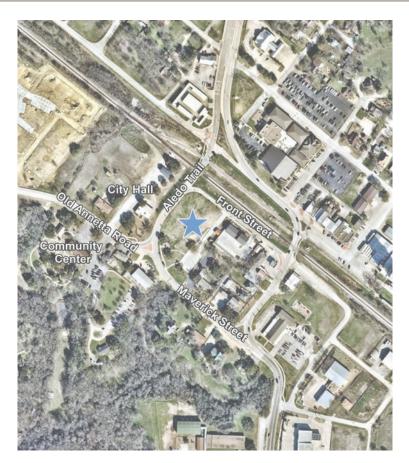
As the Law Enforcement department grows this facility will become a hub in Aledo.

#### **Aledo Commons**

The newest design of the Aledo Commons will include a shaded amphitheater, new landscaping, and covered seating and tables.



Civic Center District Aerial Concept Design



Designed to feel like multiple parks linked towgether.

# ALEDO COMMONS

The focal point of the Civic Center is Aledo Commons. The current site is largely grass turf with an incline that provides interesting topography. The new park design will incorporate strategies for functionality and encourage pop-up events such as festivals, outdoor concerts, city gatherings, etc.

#### Intent

- Incorporate trail system throughout the park to tie elements together and encourage movement through the space.
- Design the space to accommodate large events to still be comfortable when large events are not happening.
- ► Facilitate active and passive programming.
- Emphasize a seating area with enhanced plantings around the memorial plaza. Important to the park is to encourage improved pedestrian flow and an area for people to reflect.

### Design

- The design is crafted from previous plans and community input from engagement activities.
- Direction was guided by City leadership in order to provide institutional knowledge.
- Includes a multi-tier amphitheater with limestone block seating and decomposed granite base for less maintenance. Unique shade sails extending from the covered stage to the back of the amphitheater.

- Incorporate covered stage and seating to encourage public gathering and events. Unique shade sails extending from the covered stage to the back of the amphitheater.
- Food truck and utility hookup area to allow for potential food vendors to visit Aledo Commons during events.
- Extra parking in and around the area.

### Materials

- Utilize native landscaping to decrease maintenance requirements and increase likelihood of plantings lasting year-round.
- Incorporate covered picnic areas for visitors.





Civic Center Aledo Commons Design



The South Commercial District is bordered by Union Pacific Railroad on the northeast, Crockett Drive wand FM1187 on the west, FM1187 on the south and Brookhollow Drive on the east.

District Flavor - The South Commercial District is envisioned as a vibrant mix of residential and commercial that can build off a medical village and the adjacent school campus. As the southern gateway into Downtown there will be a focus on branding.

# South Commercial District



- Private Developers As the majority of the district is undeveloped, developers will need to take the risk, but will require a partnership with the city in order to deliver a product that will fit within the vision and be financially feasible for both public and private sectors.
- Local businesses A large component of creating a district with a rich variety in housing is to support the commercial businesses within Downtown. Local businesses are partners in this endeavor as they expand existing business or create a new ones.
- Implementing Attainable Housing Traditional home builders in Aledo have built single family residential but the community will need to partner with them to expand their range of housing options to include more variety and various price points, to get to a more moderate household income balance.

Funding Strategies

TIRZ District – The TIRZ district can serve as a funding mechanism for developing the roadway framework on these large tracts of land. These roadways need to promote the connectivity of trails, sidewalks and vehicles that expand the capacity of the Downtown grid. This area needs to divert local traffic from being forced to use FM 1187.

- Economic Development This area is a major source of untapped ad valorem and sales tax revenue. There needs to be a cohesive approach to supporting good development that promotes education, employment, housing and commerce.
- Private Investment Proximity to the major investments being done in the civic center district and Pine Street district will become marketing opportunities for these properties. This momentum in development excitement can stem more private investments especially with the school facilities.

# Catalytic Projects

- Master Planning To develop these large tracts optimally they need to be master planned together to implement a cohesive program. Zoning should be updated to match the intended master plan and development agreements should be produced to support a public-private partnership.
- Medical and Nursing Education An opportunity to partner with local college programs to provide a center for nursing and medical education will serve the greater East Parker County region and also develop a strategic employment opportunity within the City of Aledo.

#### EXPERIENCE DISTRICTS

# Constraints

- Lack of Connections Currently this district is auto-oriented and does not have adequate pedestrian connections. Sidewalks can be tied in to existing active transportation networks when development is proposed.
- Auto-oriented development the existing commercial uses are auto-oriented and can be a constraint on the envisioned land uses and building types. A clear expectation of what is envisioned should be communicated to the community and area to create an acceptable master plan.



Example of small lot housing fronting a rosecourt.

### **Opportunities**

2

3

5

### Nursing-Medical Education Center

The northern portion of the district is identified as an opportunity for nursing education in partnership with the local college district.

#### Flexible Employment

Flexible space to be used for retail, employment or other neighborhood services and light manufacturing will support growth of local production and employment.

#### Ample Landscape Transitions

Providing landscape transitions and green space will help provide a natural progression from residential to commercial, without needing to build walls and gates.

#### Missing Middle Housing

Creating more housing options with townhomes and small lot housing provides a variety of price points and lifestyle choices.

#### **Additional Single-Family**

Lining the existing single-family residential area, additional single-family lots will help to naturally buffer small lot residential and townhomes.



City of Aledo Downtown Master Plan

# Implementation



# How do we get this done?

# INTRODUCTION

This section describes specific actions the City and its partners can take to implement this plan. The strategy can be used to guide Aledo's Downtown development in a deliberate manner and in coordination with stakeholders. It calls for specific short-term actions to be implemented in the next three years and is more general with respect to middle- and long-term tasks.

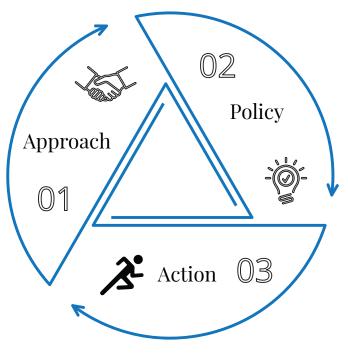
This plan organizes tasks according to when they should be completed: short-term (0-3 years), midterm (3-5 years), and long-term (5+ years).

# IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITY

Ultimately, the responsibility for implementing this plan rests with community leaders. This plan should help leaders make predictable decisions. Implementing the plan in a deliberate, step-by-step process that will help to align public and private sector activity and build a more vibrant and unique Downtown. Planning Commissioners and staff should refer to the plan when reviewing development applications, conceptualizing new infrastructure, or creating annual work programs. In addition to the municipality, implementation of the plan will be more successful if the private sector and additional public sector partners are invited to play meaningful roles. Private developments can help to drive the pace of implementation by coordinating engagement with the public. New policies and programs will be viewed as more legitimate if the public is regularly involved in their design.

# OBJECTIVE

The objective of this plan is to coordinate public and private investment within Downtown. Each action in this implementation strategy was designed with that objective in mind and crafted to be achievable through a three-tier system outlined by approach, policy, and action.



# Strategy 1: Develop a Thriving Downtown

### Approach

The community has expressed interest in creating an urban walkable core. The heart of the community should be active, fun and thriving. In order to develop this thriving downtown, there will need to be a mix of partnerships, coordination, infrastructure and regulatory programming. There is no silver bullet in creating this type of atmosphere that is characteristic of downtowns around Texas, but with a clear direction and actionable steps, it can be accomplished systematically.

### Policies

- Encourage infill residential development.
- Promote locally owned businesses.
- Prioritize community gathering spaces.
- Update zoning and development regulations to match vision of plan.



#### Actions

Short-term - 0-3 years

- Adopt Downtown Plan that establishes the overall vision for the Downtown.
- Craft and adopt zoning that supports walkable mixed-use along Pine Street and the Historic Business District and creates an intentional transition into adjacent neighborhoods.
- Identify a point of contact for the Downtown.
- Make catalytic projects shovel-ready.
- Coordinate with developers adjacent to catalytic projects.
  - Pine Street and Plaza
    - Develop 30% conceptual plans, determine cost of construction.
    - Apply for TIRZ project funding for design and construction.
    - Implement design and construction documents.
    - Construct plaza and one block of Pine, John and Jearl Streets.
  - Civic Center Plan
  - Complete designs of Aledo Commons and City Hall site.

- Assemble financing mechanism to construct Aledo Commons and City Hall.
- Construct Aledo Commons and City Hall.
- Plan and organize enhancements to Community Center to support farmers market and other programming.
- Improve pedestrian connectivity within the civic center area.

#### Mid-term - 3-5 years

- Identify, market and infill vacant tracts.
- Establish a metric for balancing density, housing choice and existing character as well as monitor progress towards it.
- Design remainder of Pine Street Corridor.
- Begin construction of remainder of Pine Street down to Oak Street.

#### Long-term - More than 5 years

- Establish a Downtown advocacy group/ organization.
- Design and reconstruct intersection of Oak Street and FM 1187 for pedestrian crossing.
- Design and reconstruct Oak Street east of FM 1187 for walkability.

# **Strategy 2:** Create an Active Transportation Network

### Approach

An emerging asset in Aledo is the existing and planned mountain bike trails. This system has become a spark for taking the amenity to the next level. This involves building on the infrastructure to promote connectivity, functional transportation uses, and destination focused recreational activity. Implementing this strategy will build Aledo to be a regional center for active trail recreation.

### Policies

- Encourage people to bike/walk
- Prioritize businesses that contribute to the active trail recreation experience.
- View new public amenities through a pedestrian/ cyclist perspective.

#### Actions

Short-term - 0-3 years

- Adopt City-wide parks and trails map.
- Partner with local biking organizations to assist with planning, design, construction and maintenance of trail systems.
- Structure infill developments to promote walkability and connectivity
- Structure active programming events utilizing the trail system.
- Work with TxDOT to identify potential crosswalk connections along FM 1187 and Aledo Trail.
- Explore and identify possible trailhead locations.
- Partner with school district to identify priority pedestrian connections for schools.
- Identify areas with the largest vehicular/ pedestrian conflict points.
- Host parking awareness engagement and educational events for community on available parking.

#### Mid-term - 3-5 years

- Prioritize Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) to contribute to active transportation and mitigate problem areas.
- ► Host regional active trail recreation events.
- Identify and prioritize missing trail and sidewalk connections.
- Design and construct previously identified crosswalks along FM 1187.
- Expand active transportation funding sources.
- Expand possible partnerships for implementation of active transportation projects.
- Adopt and implement a shared parking ordinance that encourages smarter parking habits.

#### Long-term - More than 5 years

- Update plans to incorporate future extensions and trailhead options.
- Complete downtown streets to include pedestrian scaled lighting and sidewalks.
- Construct transit ready project

# Strategy 3: Build a Local-First Economic Mentality

#### Approach

The most consistent comment received from the community was the need for more commercial businesses, specifically restaurants. This approach is structured towards targeting meaningful actions that will drive towards a local-first economic strategy. Over time with dedication and focus there can be a vibrant economic development scene that prioritizes local businesses to thrive including a vibrant restaurant scene.

#### **Policies**

- Encourage residents to support local businesses by shopping locally.
- Work with local businesses to increase retention and expansions within Downtown.
- Prioritize infrastructure improvements that increase development potential in Downtown.
- Grow residential population within the City limits to show economic resilience for new businesses.

#### Actions

Short-term - 0-3 years

- Update TIRZ project and finance plan.
- Build a PR program for local shops that profiles and features a business or owner, can also be used to feature farmers market vendors
- Establish a Downtown brand that local businesses can use.
- Explore opportunity to create a Downtown Business Association.
- Structure Downtown regulations to promote less barriers to entry by addressing economical and regulatory obstacles.
- Explore opportunity to apply for Certified Local Government status.

Mid-term - 3-5 years

- Host developer/builder stakeholder meetings to promote the downtown vision as part of identified catalyst projects.
- Achieve creation of Downtown Business Association and/or Certified Local Government status to unlock potential funding sources from federal and state. entities.
- Support local builders and businesses local-first procurement process.
- Pursue economic opportunities outlined by economic strategic plan
- Actively market Downtown Aledo economic development opportunities.
- Long-term More than 5 year
- Utilize economic development incentives to drive in vision appropriate developments.
- Conduct an economic strategic plan in partnership with Parker County EDC.

Short Term Actions (0-3 YEARS)		iate Actions (3-5 YEARS)	Long Term	Actions (5 YEARS +)
STRATEGY	ACTION	PARTNER(S)	TARGET TIMELINE/ PRIORITY	POTENTIAL RESOURCE(S)
Develop a Thriving Downtown	Adopt Downtown Plan that establishes the overall vision for the Downtown.	Downtown businesses, TIRZ board	Within 1 year	General Funding
Develop a Thriving Downtown	Craft and adopt zoning that supports walkable mixed-use along Pine Street and the Historic Business District and creates an intentional transition into adjacent neighborhoods.	Downtown businesses and residents, TIRZ board	1-2 years	General Funding and TIF Funding
Develop a Thriving Downtown	Identify a point of contact for the Downtown.	TIRZ board	Within 1 year	General Funding
Develop a Thriving Downtown	Make catalytic projects shovel-ready.	Local developers	2-3 years	General and TIF Funding
Develop a Thriving Downtown	Coordinate with developers adjacent to catalytic projects.	Downtown organization, local businesses, and residents	2-3 years	General Funding

Short Te	rm Actions (0-3 YEARS) Interme	diate Actions (3-5 YEARS)	Long Terr	m Actions (5 YEARS +)
STRATEGY	ACTION	PARTNER(S)	TARGET TIMELINE/ PRIORITY	POTENTIAL RESOURCE(S)
Develop a Thriving Downtown	Identify, market and infill vacant tracts.	Downtown Organization	2-3 years	General Funding
Develop a Thriving Downtown	Establish a metric for balancing density, housing choice and existing character as well as monitor progress towards it.	Downtown Organization, businesses, and residents	2-3 years	General Funding
Develop a Thriving Downtown	Design remainder of Pine Street Corridor.	Downtown residents and businesses	3-4 years	TIF Funding, Grant Funding
Develop a Thriving Downtown	Begin construction of remainder of Pine Street down to Oak Street.	Downtown residents and businesses	5 years	TIF Funding
Develop a Thriving Downtown	Establish a Downtown advocacy group/ organization.	TIRZ Board and Downtown Organization	5 years	General Funding and Partnerships
Develop a Thriving Downtown	Design and reconstruct intersection of Oak Street and FM 1187 for pedestrian crossing.	TIRZ Board and TXDOT	5 years	TIF Funding, TXDOT, and General Funding

Short Term Actions (0-3 YEARS) Intermed		ate Actions (3-5 YEARS) Long Term		Actions (5 YEARS +)
STRATEGY	ACTION	PARTNER(S)	TARGET TIMELINE/ PRIORITY	POTENTIAL RESOURCE(S)
Develop a Thriving Downtown	Design and reconstruct Oak Street east of FM 1187 for walkability.	TIRZ board and TXDOT	5 years	TIF Funding, TXDOT, and General Funding
Create an Active Transportation Network	Adopt City-wide parks and trails map.	School district and biking organizations	Within 1 year	General Funding
Create an Active Transportation Network	Partner with local biking organizations to assist with planning, design, construction and maintenance of trail systems.	Biking organizations	Within 1 year	General Funding and Partnerships
Create an Active Transportation Network	Structure infill developments to promote walkability and connectivity	Downtown Organization	1-2 years	General Funding
Create an Active Transportation Network	Structure active programming events utilizing the trail system.	Downtown Organization/economic development	1-2 years	TIRZ Funding
Create an Active Transportation Network	Work with TxDOT to identify potential crosswalk connections along FM 1187 and Aledo Trail.	TIRZ board and TXDOT	3 years	TXDOT, General Funding and TIF Funding

Short Term Ac	tions (0-3 YEARS) Intermed	liate Actions (3-5 YEARS)	Long Term /	Actions (5 YEARS +)
STRATEGY	ACTION	PARTNER(S)	TARGET TIMELINE/ PRIORITY	POTENTIAL RESOURCE(S)
Create an Active Transportation Network	Explore and identify possible trailhead locations.	Biking organizations	1-2 years	General Funding and Partnerships
Create an Active Transportation Network	Partner with school district to identify priority pedestrian connections for schools.	School District	1-2 years	General Funding and Partnerships
Create an Active Transportation Network	Identify areas with the largest vehicular/ pedestrian conflict points.	TXDOT and Downtown organization	1-2 years	General Funding
Create an Active Transportation Network	Host parking awareness engagement and educational events for community on available parking.	Local businesses	3 years	General Funding
Create an Active Transportation Network	Prioritize Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) to contribute to active transportation and mitigate problem areas.	City Council	3 years	General Funding
Create an Active Transportation Network	Host regional active trail recreation events.	Biking organizations	5 years	TIF Funding

Short Term Actions (0-3 YEARS) Intermediate		e Actions (3-5 YEARS)	Long Terr	m Actions (5 YEARS +)
STRATEGY	ACTION	PARTNER(S)	TARGET TIMELINE/ PRIORITY	POTENTIAL RESOURCE(S)
Create an Active Transportation Network	Identify and prioritize missing trail and sidewalk connections.	Biking Organizations	3 years	General and TIF Funding
Create an Active Transportation Network	Design and construct previously identified crosswalks along FM 1187.	TXDOT	5 years	General, TXDOT, and TIF Funding
Create an Active Transportation Network	Expand active transportation funding sources.	Downtown Organization	5 years	Main Street Program and Other Grant Opportunities
Create an Active Transportation Network	Expand possible partnerships for implementation of active transportation projects.	Local Developers	3 years	General Funding
Create an Active Transportation Network	Adopt and implement a shared parking ordinance that encourages smarter parking habits.	Local Businesses	5 years	General Funding
Create an Active Transportation Network	Update plans to incorporate future extensions and trailhead options.	Downtown Organization and TXDOT	5 years	General Funding

Short Term Ac	tions (0-3 YEARS) Intern	nediate Actions (3-5 YEARS)	Long Ter	m Actions (5 YEARS +)
STRATEGY	ACTION	PARTNER(S)	TARGET TIMELINE/ PRIORITY	POTENTIAL RESOURCE(S)
Create an Active Transportation Network	Complete downtown streets to include pedestrian scaled lighting and sidewalks.	TIRZ Board	7 years	TIF Funding
Create an Active Transportation Network	Construct transit-ready project	Local Developers, Downtown Orgainzation, and School District	5-10 years	Partnerships, TIF, and General Funding
Build a Local-First Economic Mentality	Update TIRZ project and finance plan.	TIRZ Board	Within 1 year	TIF Funding
Build a Local-First Economic Mentality	Build a PR program for local shops that profiles and features a business or owner, can also be used to feature farmers market vendors.	Downtown Organization/ Economic Development	Within 1 year	General Funding
Build a Local-First Economic Mentality	Establish a Downtown brand that local businesses can use.	Downtown Organization/ Economic Development	1-2 years	TIF and General Funding
Build a Local-First Economic Mentality	Explore opportunity to create a Downtown Business Association.	TIRZ Board	3 years	General Funding

Short Term Actions (0-3 YEARS) Intermediate		nediate Actions (3-5 YEARS)	Long Ter	m Actions (5 YEARS +)
STRATEGY	ACTION	PARTNER(S)	TARGET TIMELINE/ PRIORITY	POTENTIAL RESOURCE(S)
Build a Local-First Economic Mentality	Structure Downtown regulations to promote less barriers to entry by addressing econom and regulatory obstacles.		2-3 years	TIF and General Funding
Build a Local-First Economic Mentality	Explore opportunity to apply for Certified Lo Government status.	cal Downtown Organization	1-3 years	Grant Funding
Build a Local-First Economic Mentality	Host developer/builder stakeholder meeting to promote the downtown vision as part of identified catalyst projects.	s Downtown Organization	3 years	General Funding
Build a Local-First Economic Mentality	Achieve creation of Downtown Business Association and/or Certified Local Governm status to unlock potential funding sources fr federal and state. entities.		3-5 years	TIF and General Funding
Build a Local-First Economic Mentality	Support local builders and businesses local first procurement process.	- TIRZ Board	3 years	General Funding

Short Term Actions (0-3 YEARS) Intermediate Actions (3-5 YEARS)		Long Term Actions (5 YEARS +)		
STRATEGY	ACTION	PARTNER(S)	TARGET TIMELINE/ PRIORITY	POTENTIAL RESOURCE(S)
Build a Local-First Economic Mentality	Pursue economic opportunities outlined by economic strategic plan	Downtown Organization, Local Developers, and Businesses	5 years	TIF Funding
Build a Local-First Economic Mentality	Actively market Downtown Aledo economic development opportunities.	Downtown Organization	3-5 years	General Funding
Build a Local-First Economic Mentality	Utilize economic development incentives to drive in vision-appropriate developments.	Economic Development and TIRZ Board	5 years	TIF Funding
Build a Local-First Economic Mentality	Conduct an economic strategic plan in partnership with Parker County EDC.	Downtown organization and Parker County	5 years	TIF Funding