



CORRIDOR SPOTLIGHT

5TH STREET DISTRICT: FROM VISION TO EXECUTION

Shaping Sachse identifies Old Town and the 5th Street corridor as priority reinvestment areas and establishes a clear expectation that significant public participation will be required to catalyze new development and redevelopment. With limited undeveloped land remaining, the success of the 5th Street District is central to Sachse's ability to deliver a more complete community with local businesses, quality of life amenities, downtown activations, and long-term economic value.

The heart of the 5th Street District is comprised of property owned by the City and EDC. While investments in the Old Town District have improved 5th Street and portions of Alexander Street, the City- and EDC-owned parcels face known constraints related to existing street conditions and other necessary infrastructure projects such as improvements to sidewalks, parking, drainage, and utilities. These constraints limit private development today and cannot be resolved by the market alone. In this context, strategic public investment is not a subsidy—it is a necessary step to reduce risk, signal readiness, and create the conditions for private investment to follow.

This section establishes a clear sequence of actions—a practical roadmap that aligns public investment, sets expectations, and guides implementation over time. Rather than prescribing a single development outcome, it creates the flexibility to respond to market opportunities while maintaining clear priorities.

A SEQUENCED APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation in the 5th Street District should follow three distinct phases. Each phase reflects a different role for the City of Sachse, the Sachse Economic Development Corporation, and the private sector.



Phase 1: Enable — No-Regrets Public Investments (Years 1-2)

The first priority is addressing infrastructure needs that must be resolved regardless of how the district ultimately develops. These "no-regrets" investments are foundational and unavoidable—actions that must occur for development to be feasible, or that unlock multiple future paths without committing the City or EDC to a specific project, tenant, or buildout scenario.

In the 5th Street District, no-regrets investments include:

- Reconstruct key streets (Billingsley Street, Boone Street, and Sachse Road), including curb, gutter, sidewalks, and crossings.
 - Creates development-ready infrastructure consistent with TIRZ #3 Project and Finance Plan.
- Implement coordinated drainage solutions, including underground detention, to preserve developable land.
 - Addresses known constraints that limit private development today while maximizing usable site area.
- Strategic parcel acquisition
 - By owning more of the land within and adjacent to the 5th Street District (Old Town), the City of Sachse and the Sachse EDC maintain greater influence and control relative to the future development of the area with regard to land uses, aesthetics, quality of life opportunities, and more.
- Install gateway, wayfinding, and streetscape elements that establish district identity and improve visibility.
 - Signals investment readiness and creates a sense of place before vertical development occurs.

Phase 2: Activate — Catalytic Projects and Early Momentum (Years 2-4)

Before full commercial buildout is realistic, the district needs visible activity and a reason for people to visit. In early-stage districts, these anchors are often civic, employment-focused, or innovation-oriented—not traditional retail.

Catalytic actions that create momentum and demonstrate viability include:

- Consider developing a small-scale innovation coworking hub, or other similar flexible and creative opportunities, to attract entrepreneurs and remote workers.
 - Creates daytime activity and establishes the district as a destination for Sachse's professional workforce.
- Create flexible civic or event-oriented spaces that support regular programming, including connections to Museum Mile.
 - Builds foot traffic and community identity while testing concepts before permanent investment.
- Consider City- or EDC-led vertical prototypes on controlled sites to test the market and demonstrate viability.
 - Reduces perceived risk for private developers by proving demand and establishing quality expectations.

Phase 3: Build — Private Vertical Development (Years 3-5)

As infrastructure improvements are completed and catalytic uses establish momentum, the district will be better positioned to attract private vertical development. At this stage, development interest is more likely to respond to predictable conditions, clear zoning expectations, and targeted incentives.

Catalytic actions that create momentum and demonstrate viability include:

- Continue to engage site-specific development partners as opportunities emerge, while considering issuance of an RFI/RFP/RFQ, or interviewing potential qualified development candidates, to assist in the comprehensive development of the EDC- and City-owned parcels.
 - Reflects lessons learned from Sachse's prior efforts and allows the City to shape outcomes while adapting to market realities.
- Deploy targeted incentive packages for mixed-use commercial, professional services, quality of life, and employment-focused projects aligned with the Old Town District goals.
 - Attracts quality vertical development that complements public investments and delivers long-term fiscal value.
- Coordinate density strategies on adjacent parcels, along the SH-78 corridor and within the Old Town District, and through redevelopment of existing residential or multifamily sites—rather than concentrating all new residential development and/or redevelopment on City- and EDC-owned parcels within the area.
 - Ensures commercial district success through proximity to people while preserving City-owned land for employment, commercial, recreational, and civic priorities, while also keeping the door open for possible sale or transfer of property to private ownership, such as through partnership with a master developer or as part of an incentive package.



IMPLEMENTATION GOVERNANCE

Implementation of the 5th Street District vision as identified within this strategic plan will require coordination across City departments and governing bodies. Actions such as zoning amendments, major capital investments, and incentive approvals require City Council consideration and action. The Economic Development Corporation Board serves at the pleasure of and receives direction from Sachse City Council. The EDC Board can utilize their given authority to provide recommendations to City Council on potential incentives, land acquisitions utilizing the EDC Fund, policies and matters related to economic development, and other such items as specified within the bylaws or allowed by State law. Clarifying these roles ensures that staff actions are clearly aligned with adopted policy and supported by the City Council and the EDC Board of Directors.

See Appendix for the Implementation Priorities table.



Strategies

- 4.1** Use streets and public right-of-way as catalysts for private redevelopment by accelerating strategic streetscape investments.
- 4.2** Further explore opportunities using zoning tools such as overlays, text amendments, rezonings, etc. to create clear development standards that positions Highway 78 as Sachse's economic spine.
- 4.3** Modernize zoning to enable mixed-use development and remove barriers to quality redevelopment.
- 4.4** Attract restaurants and retailers that activate corridors and create destinations where people want to gather.
- 4.5** Establish a Strategic Property Acquisition Program to secure catalyst sites for quality development.

Strategy 4.1

Use streets and public right-of-way as catalysts for private redevelopment by accelerating strategic streetscape investments.

Why it Matters

Developers cite public infrastructure quality as a primary factor in site selection. When streets are substandard, sidewalks are missing, and the public realm feels neglected, even discounted land prices can't overcome the perception that an area isn't ready for investment. Strategic streetscape improvements flip this dynamic by leading with quality public infrastructure; the city signals market readiness and reduces the risk developers perceive in being early movers. Placemaking investments can be incremental, low-cost, and quick to build, activating areas targeted for economic development. Over time, these strategies can evolve into larger capital investments, but they don't have to start there. Sachse's streets and rights-of-way are among the city's largest assets, leveraging them for placemaking maximizes this resource while implementing Shaping Sachse and driving economic development.

What's Needed?

- Create a "Museum Mile" walking trail in Old Town, connecting the key local destinations to the Sachse Historical Society Museum using recent 5th Street improvements.
 - Leverages existing assets, including new sidewalks, lighting, and destinations on both sides of SH 78.
- Coordinate with TxDOT to improve the SH 78 crossing at 5th Street in Old Town with leading pedestrian signals, continental crosswalks, shading, lighting, and curb improvements.
 - Addresses real and perceived safety concerns for businesses and visitors in Old Town.
- Consider substandard street upgrades for Sachse Road that include operational changes to support on-street parking and future one-way conversion to catalyze development or as development activity increases.
 - Positions the corridor for activation by addressing infrastructure gaps while preserving flexibility for future traffic and parking configurations.
- Consistent with Shaping Sachse recommendations, prioritize investment from the City Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and EDC for trail and sidewalk implementation in catalyst areas, connecting neighborhoods to commercial areas.
 - Creates walkable, complete communities where people want to live and businesses can thrive.



- Create a comprehensive wayfinding signage program and install gateway/wayfinding signage at key intersections, as identified in Shaping Sachse.
 - Implements multiple placemaking treatments at once by creating a sense of place while promoting walkability.
- Train city staff in "quick build" methods such as Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contracts—pre-negotiated agreements with contractors that establish unit pricing and terms upfront, allowing the city to order specific improvements as needed without going through full procurement for each project.
 - Enables faster implementation of streetscape improvements, including intersection treatments, shared-use paths, and gateway treatments, while creating conditions for private amenities like sidewalk cafés.
- Utilize the tax increment reinvestment zone (TIRZ) #3 project plan list to accomplish streets and right-of-way improvements recommended in this section, specifically related to Sachse Road and Parking.
 - Aligns economic development priorities with TIRZ funding mechanisms and project locations.



Strategy 4.2

Further explore opportunities using zoning tools such as overlays, text amendments, rezonings, etc., to create clear development standards that positions Highway 78 as Sachse's economic spine.

Why it Matters

SH 78 runs through the heart of Sachse, but without intentional planning, it risks becoming a generic strip rather than an economic destination. Zoning tools provide the regulatory framework to ensure development contributes to a unified vision that enhances property values, attracts quality tenants, and positions Sachse as a destination rather than a pass-through community. This addresses transitions between the four SH 78 character areas defined in Shaping Sachse, manages access, establishes urban design and gateway treatments, and provides clear entitlements for desired uses. This directly implements multiple Shaping Sachse action items related to corridor design standards, multimodal connectivity, and regional coordination, giving staff clear tools to guide private investment toward outcomes that serve long-term fiscal and quality-of-life goals.

What's Needed?

- Convene an interdepartmental working group to explore the creation of an overlay district or other zoning updates along SH 78.
 - Ensures the zoning updates maximize opportunities for mobility, parks and open space, urban design, and infrastructure improvements toward a common vision. Focus on parcel connectivity and assembly, design aesthetics, and streamlined development standards. If preferred, pilot within a quarter-mile of the Old Town District.
- Based on the findings of the interdepartmental working group, consider initiating zoning amendments to include identified recommendations for additional zoning overlay, text amendments, and other considerations along SH 78.
 - Provides the regulatory foundation to attract quality development and redevelopment along Sachse's main corridor.
- Coordinate strategic parcel acquisition activities with zoning requirements to maximize intentional redevelopment consistent with Shaping Sachse.
 - Strategic parcels within TIRZ #3, as well as along and adjacent to SH 78 are visible and accessible, making them vital tools for Old Town activation.
- Collaborate with TxDOT and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (North Central Texas Council of Governments) early in the process, concurrent with the interdepartmental working group.
 - Ensures ideas are reasonable and feasible per TxDOT standards and contemplates regional factors.

Strategy 4.3

Modernize zoning to enable mixed-use development and remove barriers to quality redevelopment.

Why it Matters

Zoning regulations can create unintended barriers to development and redevelopment that community members consistently identify as priorities. When regulations are unpredictable or require projects to navigate multiple hurdles through special use permits and overly technical codes, smaller developers—often the ones most likely to create authentic, locally-oriented projects—choose to invest elsewhere. This strategy removes friction from the development process while maintaining design quality standards, making Sachse competitive with neighboring communities for the housing diversity, quality of life amenities, and commercial activity needed to support complete communities.

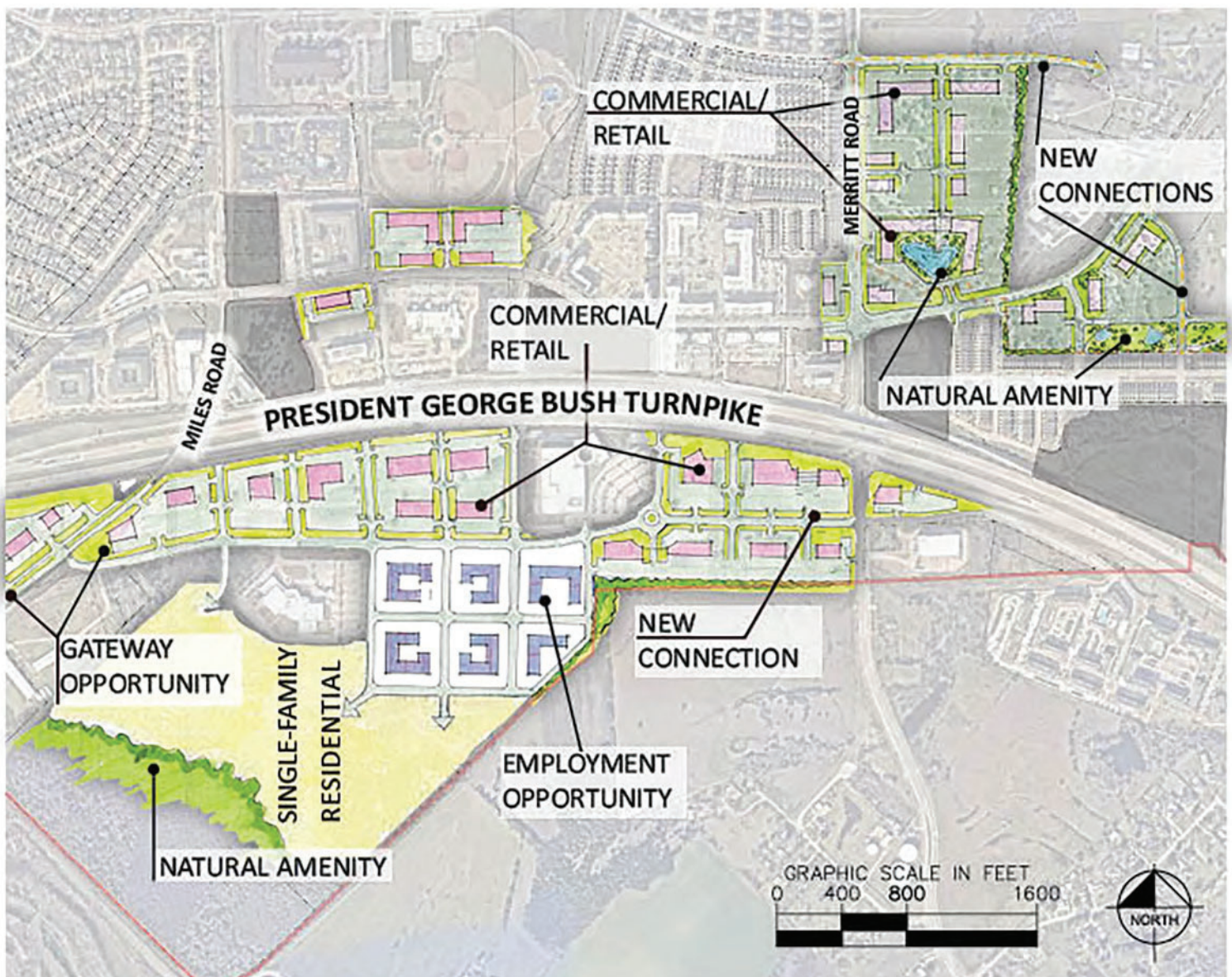
Successful commercial districts also require proximity to people. While City- and EDC-owned parcels within the 5th Street District are intended to prioritize employment, mixed-use commercial, quality of life amenities, and civic uses, long-term success will depend on complementary residential growth in surrounding areas. Accordingly, strategies to support appropriate density should focus on adjacent parcels, opportunities along the SH 78 corridor consistent with established character areas, and redevelopment or modernization of existing multifamily sites—rather than concentrating all new residential development and/or redevelopment on City- and EDC-owned parcels within the area. By providing clear, predictable pathways for development that aligns with the Comprehensive Plan, the city positions itself as "open for business" while retaining the ability to guide outcomes toward community priorities.

What's Needed?

- Review form-based codes for Old Town and PGBT areas to determine what's working and what's not.
 - Allows real-world examples to drive amendments that accelerate development and redevelopment.
- Amend form-based codes in Old Town and PGBT to remove barriers and add clarifications, such as in street cross-sections to improve pedestrian comfort and multimodal options while potentially reducing mobility infrastructure costs.
 - Consider possible changes in accordance with best practices and to ensure alignment with the desired vision for these areas.



- Consider strategic opportunities to incorporate missing-middle housing as a permitted use within appropriate areas along or adjacent to the SH 78 corridor.
 - Addresses the need for more housing diversity to support affordability, growth, and Sachse's economic development strategy.
- Allow on-street and publicly-owned parking to count toward parking requirements for new development, especially in Old Town, and amend non-complying use regulations accordingly.
 - Reduces development costs while addressing real and perceived lender and investor risks regarding parking supply.
 - Protects property owners by ensuring developments don't become non-conforming if the city later adjusts on-street parking for complete streets improvements or other public purposes.



Strategy 4.4

Attract restaurants and retailers that activate corridors and create destinations where people want to gather.

Why it Matters

Restaurants and retail aren't just amenities; they're economic development tools that activate corridors, create jobs, and signal investment readiness. The right mix of dining and shopping options makes corridors feel like destinations rather than pass-throughs, attracting both residents and daytime workers. Quality restaurants and locally owned retail also support business attraction by demonstrating quality of place to companies evaluating Sachse. But restaurants and retail won't locate in corridors that lack foot traffic, feel disconnected, or have unclear market positioning. Strategic recruitment paired with corridor activation ensures Sachse attracts the dining and retail concepts that strengthen identity, support other economic development goals, and create the gathering spaces that make complete communities work.

What's Needed?

- Develop a restaurant and retail recruitment target list for each priority corridor (5th Street, PGBT, SH 78) based on corridor identity, demographic fit, and gap analysis.
 - Ensures recruitment efforts focus on concepts that align with corridor positioning and fill market gaps rather than generic outreach.
- Create a "first-to-market" incentive program (tenant improvement or infrastructure grants, rent subsidies, expedited permitting and fee waivers, marketing support) for priority restaurant and retail concepts willing to be early movers in emerging corridors.
 - Reduces risk for quality operators and demonstrates city commitment to corridor activation.
- Evaluate current process and regulations for outdoor dining, sidewalk cafes, and activation programming in PGBT and Old Town that would bring restaurants and retail into the public realm.
 - Proactively identify potential regulatory barriers while creating the activated streetscapes that attract additional investment.
- Partner with existing and prospective restaurants, retailers, and vendors on corridor activation events, including food truck nights, pop-up markets, and seasonal programming.
 - Builds momentum and foot traffic while demonstrating market viability to prospective businesses.
- Integrate restaurant and retail recruitment into broader business attraction strategy by highlighting dining and shopping options in marketing materials and site selector conversations.
 - Positions quality of place as a competitive advantage while signaling that Sachse understands restaurants and retail as economic development priorities.

Strategy 4.5

Establish a Strategic Property Acquisition Program to secure catalyst sites for quality development.

Why it Matters

Market forces alone don't guarantee that development aligns with community vision. When strategic properties are controlled by the City and/or EDC rather than left entirely to the market, Sachse gains the ability to shape development timing, quality, and character. Strategic property acquisition allows the city to secure key parcels before incompatible development occurs or prices become prohibitive. This is particularly valuable in strategic corridors and catalyst areas where site control can catalyze the mixed-use, walkable development envisioned in Shaping Sachse. Unlike traditional approaches focused on blight remediation, this program is proactive and opportunity-focused, positioning Sachse to compete for quality development while maintaining community character. The program generates returns through strategic disposition to quality developers, creating a tool that reinforces other Goal 4 strategies.

What's Needed?

- Establish a Strategic Property Acquisition Program with clear criteria for property selection, holding, and disposition.
 - Provides explicit authority and framework to acquire properties supporting economic development goals.
- Develop acquisition criteria prioritizing strategic corridor properties, catalyst sites, parcel assembly opportunities, gateway locations, and sites aligned with zoning requirements or mixed-use development goals.
 - Ensures strategic focus on properties most likely to advance comprehensive plan implementation and catalyze economic development.
- Create a Property Acquisition Review Committee with city staff and real estate expertise to evaluate potential acquisitions.
 - Provides structured decision-making and reduces risk through expert review.
- Establish disposition and management policies defining target end-users, minimum development standards, timeline expectations, community benefit requirements, and return on investment parameters.
 - Ensures acquired properties serve the community vision while generating returns to reinvest in economic and community development.
- Develop temporary use and holding cost strategies that maintain property values and generate activity while awaiting optimal development opportunities.
 - Protects city investment and keeps sites activated rather than vacant eyesores.
- Utilize the TIRZ #3 project plan list to accomplish the strategic property acquisition recommended in this section, specifically related to Old Town and SH 78 areas.
 - Aligns economic development priorities with adopted TIRZ funding mechanisms and project locations.



GOAL 4:

MEASURING IMPACT AND SUCCESS

Implementation Milestone Achievement

Track completion of two critical implementation actions: (a) SH 78 zoning updates adopted, (b) form-based code barrier amendments completed.

Development Activity Using New Regulatory Tools

Track the number of projects utilizing updated zoning provisions, missing-middle housing zones, and public parking credit provisions to assess whether new development tools are functional and attractive to developers.

Old Town Activation and Leveraging of Existing Assets

Track placemaking and activation initiatives in Old Town and the 5th Street corridor, including new public space improvements, pedestrian connectivity enhancements, community events, and programming that increases foot traffic and demonstrates development readiness in priority areas.

Mixed-Use and Missing-Middle Housing Unit Production

Count the number of housing units permitted in missing-middle typologies and mixed-use developments within catalyst areas.

Properties Acquired and Managed

Count strategic properties acquired along the SH 78 corridor and in Old Town, total acreage under EDC/City control, and average holding costs (including maintenance, security, insurance, and opportunity costs) as a percentage of acquisition price.

Private Investment Leverage

Calculate the ratio of private development investment to public acquisition costs for disposed properties, measuring the program's ability to catalyze quality development that exceeds initial public investment.