

Downtown Eugene Business Development Patterns

By Alyssa Gamble

Chaired by Dr. Rebecca Lewis

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Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	2
<i>Methods</i>	7
<i>Background and History</i>	12
<i>Where are businesses developing?</i>	20
<i>What contributes to business owners' location selection?</i>	36
<i>How can Eugene attract & support businesses downtown?</i>	44
<i>Findings and Recommendations</i>	51
<i>Conclusion</i>	54
<i>Appendices</i>	59

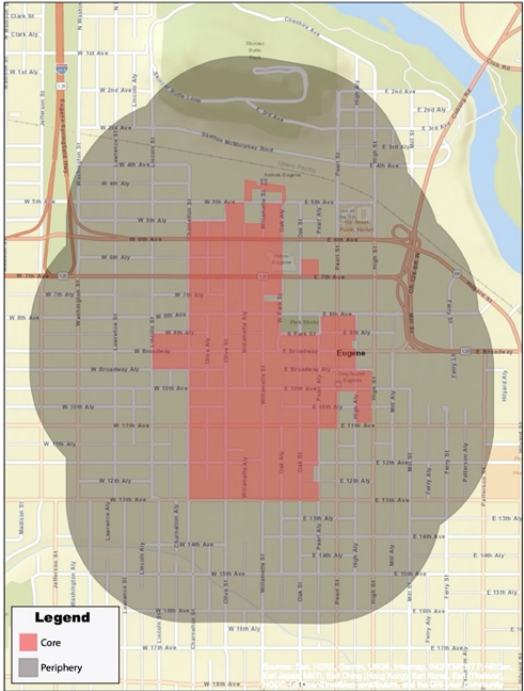
Introduction

The City of Eugene has long sought to address and encourage business development in the downtown, beginning in 1969 with the first significant redevelopment project seen in the city. This effort is on par with efforts occurring across the country to revitalize downtowns and promote economic development in the city's core to attract business activity and new businesses supporting a diversity of employment sectors in a community, including office, retail, and entertainment. Policy changes that supported highways, malls, and suburbs have shifted development patterns and consumer preferences outside of the downtown area.

The Valley River Center is an example of this shift in Eugene. Residents who once would have used the downtown for their work, home, and leisure found themselves living or traveling outside the downtown to engage in these activities. New infrastructure and business opportunities may have compounded development outside of downtown due to city downtown development requirements, which might call for more stringent municipal codes, codes that encourage development outside of the core, limited space in properties, or higher costs to rent or buy in downtowns.

Scope

FIGURE 1: CORE AND PERIPHERY BOUNDARIES



The trends listed above are still reflected in Eugene, as the city sees new businesses locating outside of the downtown. This research examines development patterns in Downtown Eugene and the area directly surrounding it (the periphery) to assess where development has been occurring over five years. For the purpose of this research, the downtown core consists of the C-3 Major Commercial Zone, given this space supports the densest allowable development in Eugene. Figure 1 shows a map of the core and periphery boundaries, respectively. The core includes many blocks from 6th Avenue to 11th Avenues between Charnelton and Pearl Streets. The periphery is the area within a quarter-mile radius around the core. There are several zoning codes and permitted uses in the periphery, but the majority is community commercial, C-2 zoning. The periphery includes much of the blocks from Lincoln to Mill street from 5th Avenue to 13th Avenue. Table 1 describes the differences between C-2 and C-3 zones in greater depth.

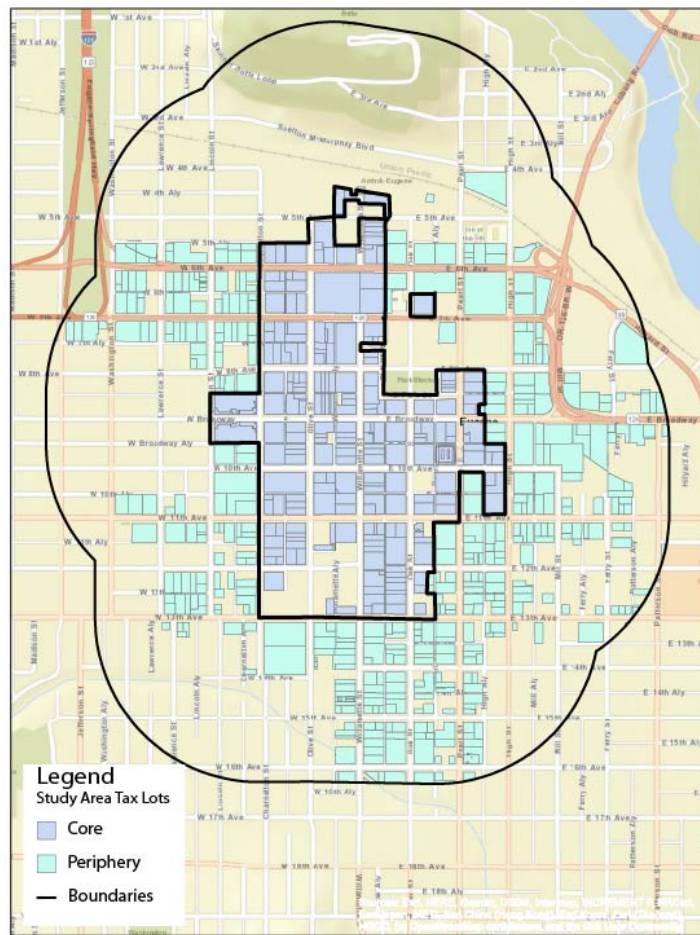
TABLE 1: DEFINED COMMERCIAL ZONES FOR STUDY AREA

C-3 Major Commercial	Uses include purchaser goods, educational opportunities, entertainment, offices, travel accommodations, and services.
C-2 Community Commercial	Commercial areas are between 5 and 40 acres large, and include goods, entertainment, office, and services for a population smaller than the metropolitan area but larger than a neighborhood. Housing is permitted but must meet conditions.

Source: City of Eugene Municipal Code, 2020

To further specify the land uses and area that will be observed in this study, all residential zoning and land classifications have been removed from tax lot data in the study. Figure 2 presents a map of the specific tax lots that will be considered in this study. The boundary lines from the previous map, indicating the core and periphery, have been included for context.

FIGURE 2: STUDY AREA TAX LOTS



Business location selection

To understand where businesses are locating, this study has limited the commercial activity under consideration by year. In this study, new business development is defined as any businesses that developed in the five-year period between 2014 and 2019. This study did not limit interviewed businesses to a specific type, resulting in the inclusion of restaurant, retail, technology, service, and arts industries in the study. I did not make assumptions about the preferred types of businesses that a downtown space should have or seek for this study. Examining the downtown through a lens of preferred type of industry moving into the future could be an area for further study. The city of Eugene does not collect business licenses for all businesses, so an understanding of where development has occurred is mainly anecdotal.

To address where businesses are locating, this study uses a triangulation strategy, using tax lot, vacancy, Limited Liability Corporation registry, building permits, and zoning data to offer context to where businesses are developing relative to the downtown. The hypothesis being that businesses that would traditionally thrive in a downtown environment are locating in the periphery. It is important to note that the definition of downtown varies by person and the city has at least three different working boundaries for the downtown space. It is entirely possible that those selecting properties in the periphery believe that they are locating in the downtown core. Given the respondents for interviews were almost all from the downtown core, understanding this perspective and its impacts has not been addressed by this research and is an opportunity for future study.

Efforts to promote downtown business development have been continuous in Eugene's history, beginning as soon as the downtown was developed. Despite this dedication, the 1960s saw the city beginning to sprawl due to developments along highways (Eugene Historic Review Board, 2003) which shifted business development to malls including the Valley River Center and Gateway Mall over time. These new developments negatively impacted the downtown as businesses relocated to these newer and larger spaces, eroding the previous relationship that individuals had with the downtown space. Understanding the historical context of downtown business development and the existing businesses downtown can point to strategies that will be most effective at downtown development in Eugene. Literature explains that strategies like tax increment financing, opportunity zones, tax abatement, and development associations have mixed outcomes at incentivizing development, based on regression models (Wassmer, 1994). This research provides additional context to this question through interviews with business owners who have a different understanding of this problem than a planner, city staff, or elected official might. It also sheds light on characteristics of the downtown that are having impacts on business owner's perception of the downtown environment.

The benefits of a centralized downtown

A vibrant, centralized downtown brings many benefits to a city, including attracting new businesses and creating a pleasant environment for residents to visit and recreate. Access to a multitude of resources, amenities, and activities can be a meaningful draw for employers to a downtown area, seeking options that create a favorable working environment for their employees. Centralized downtowns offer users

and visitors a variety of activities to engage in and can be a one-stop location for recreation, retail, banking, and employment.

Urban areas generally rely on the downtown to provide a sense of place and community, through shared spaces, centralized locations for events, art, activity, and culture. These downtown spaces tend to have a “feeling” or an emotional attachment from community members through design and history of the space (Rypkema, 2003). The downtown is the community’s living room or vision for their community’s values. This feeling can shift as the community grows and changes, which makes retaining investment in the downtown an important focus of a city. Often as business and activity shifts away from a downtown, the sense of place can likewise dissipate.

Downtowns are a space for concentrated economic activities, where businesses can have access to markets and networks of consumers and other businesses. A dense downtown is beneficial in that it creates a higher taxable value per acre in a city due to this concentration of economic activity. Given that one of the city’s largest revenue sources are property taxes, contributing \$141.29 million in revenues in 2019, it is in the city's interest to encourage denser, more concentrated development in the downtown (City of Eugene, 2019). This interest is shared by the public using services that are supported by these taxes and fees.

Purpose

This research provides the City of Eugene with a broader perspective of the business development occurring in the downtown core as compared to the periphery, providing a connection between business owners and the city to directly discuss improvements that could make the core more amenable to future business development. Other cities may use the findings and recommendations given here to promote more centralized development and can use the research framework to understand their downtown core more clearly. The questions answered by this research are:

1. Where are businesses developing relative to the downtown core?
2. What factors are contributing to business owners location selection?
3. How can the city incentivize new business development in the downtown?

Outcomes from this research answer the overarching question of whether development is occurring in the periphery instead of the core. The research also presents recommendations to the city of Eugene to support downtown business development into the future using models from other communities and context from business owner’s experience.

Report Layout

Each chapter will discuss the methods, findings, and analysis of the research questions, and concludes with a synthesis and recommendations.

- Chapter 2 provides an overview of the methods and the rationale for selecting GIS, interviews, and case studies as the best methods to answer the researcher's questions.
- Chapter 3 outlines the historical context of the city and its downtown development. This chapter includes a review of past practices, policies, and the current requirements for business development in the study area of Downtown Eugene.
- Chapters 4 through 6 detail the use of GIS analysis, interviews, and case study methods to provide an overview of each method's findings made in this chapter.
- Chapter 7 presents a synthesis of the findings from each research method. This presents layout patterns seen across the methods to inform recommendations.
- Chapter 8 concludes the report by presenting the recommendations, ideas for future research, and implications of this research for the City of Eugene and other medium-sized communities.

Methods

Investigating downtown development patterns requires a variety of methods to understand what is happening on the ground with development, experiences in navigating developing a business downtown, and practices to support successful business development. This study will use GIS analysis, interviews, and case study analysis to understand where development is happening relative to downtown and search for better understanding of how owners select a location. By understanding the context of development and perspectives of business owners, this research can explore policy solutions to support downtown business development in Eugene. This section details how the research questions are answered, rationalizing the methods selected. This study is a mixed-methods approach to address the questions listed in Table 2.

TABLE 2: RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS

Question	Method
Where are businesses developing relative to the downtown core?	GIS Analysis
What factors are causing or contributing to business owners choosing periphery locations for their business?	Interviews
How can the City of Eugene incentivize new businesses to occupy available space in the downtown?	Interviews & Case Study Analysis

Where are businesses developing relative to the downtown core?

GIS analysis assesses where businesses are developing relative to the core. This analysis provides a visual representation of business development and investment in the study area over the past five-years (2014-2019) in Eugene. The focus of this method broadly is illustrating where improvements are in commercial zones in the study area. For example, if the valuation is increasing in the downtown core and vacancy is decreasing, the hypothesis would be that both the core and periphery are growing. Further, increased quantities of building permits in an area would illustrate improvement in that area of the city. Understanding where development is occurring will allow this research to engage in further conversations about potential regulatory barriers, cost hindrances, or limited vacancies downtown that might contribute to changes in development patterns.

Data Set Summary and Metrics

A review of land use, building permits, property valuation, and occupancy data will show where development and improvements are happening respective of the core and periphery. Table 3 summarizes the data set. Data are measured through count, type, and value as indicated in the right column of the table. For further information about removing duplicates and cleaning the data, please see appendix b. Considering that the core and periphery have different numbers of tax lots and different

size in acres, the data and mapping for this study has been normalized to represent a measure per acre. A full table of the data findings can be found in appendix b.

TABLE 3: GIS ANALYSIS DATA SET SUMMARY

Data	Year(s) used	Accessed From	Measured
Zoning and Land Use	2019	Lane County	Type of zoning and land use
Building Permits Issued, commercial properties	2014-2019	City of Eugene	Count per address
Vacancy Data	2020	Lane Council of Governments	Count per address
Tax Lot Valuation	2007, 2019	Lane County	Change in assessed value
Limited Liability Corporations (LLC)	2014-2019	Oregon Secretary of State's Office	Count per address

Zoning and Land Use

Zoning and land use data is primarily used to observe the permitted uses of the downtown. Understanding the permissible uses and functions of space in the study area allows further refining the study area to exclude residential zoned areas and residential property classes, ensuring the focus of this study is on commercial spaces.

Vacancy Data

The Lane Council of Governments provided vacancy data for Eugene commercially properties. These data represent a single point in time and records the commercial vacancies in the city as of February 2020. The point in time data was plotted on a map to understand where in the study area vacancies occur and better understand how the core and periphery compare in quantity of vacancies. Plotting the vacancy points allowed this research to observe relationships with the other data in this study.

Limited Liability Corporations (LLCs)

Limited Liability Corporations are registered with the Oregon Secretary of State's office. This study used active Limited Liability Corporation data from the years 2014 to 2019 with addresses in the study area to observe the number and location of LLCs. The use of LLCs as a data point has challenges and barriers given that a registered business may not conduct business in Eugene. There might also be LLCs with addresses outside of Eugene that do conduct business in the study area. LLCs are the data that provide locations and lists of business activity available for this study, making this valuable data despite the challenges.

Tax Lot Valuation

Lane County tax lot data for 2007 and 2019 offer a glimpse into the changes in assessed value for the study area. Tax lot valuation assessment involved calculating the percent change between 2007 and 2019. Further assessment included comparing tax lots that had experienced negative, no, or positive change and those that were above or below average changes in value. Assessed valuation changes of tax lots are intended to show where value improvements have occurred in the study area and whether these are indicative of overall area improvement or decline of the core and periphery.

Building Permits Issued

The city of Eugene requires building permits for any work, outside of regular maintenance in a commercial property to ensure public safety. These permits can range from electrical and trade projects to major construction or renovation projects. Building permits from 2014 to 2019 have been assessed for this study. This data is intended to count and map where improvements have occurred in the study area. Building permits for the same address and business have been limited to a single entry. The rationale being that the study was interested in understanding where work was occurring and when this work was happening over time to assess if there had been a shift during the five-year study period. This method also made the data more manageable. The data was assessed by comparing the quantity of building permits issued by year and between the core and periphery.

What factors are contributing to business owners location selection?

Interviews with local business owners in the downtown core and periphery area assess owners' perspectives and reasoning for selecting their business location, considering whether there were specific aspects that prevented or promoted the selection of their business location. The topics explored in these interviews include:

4. Experience in the business development process
5. Location selection considerations
6. Neighborhood or community factors
7. Experiences at current business location

The anticipated factors included: development regulations; cost to rent, lease, or buy; flexibility in property size or set up; parking; social factors; and perception of safety. To give business owners the opportunity share their perspective, interview questions were open ended and anticipated factors were not presented in the interview unless an example was asked for.

Initially this study sought to limit interviews to those who had developed their business as of 2014 or later, but due to limited responses from interview requests, the interview pool was opened to those with businesses in the study area who have located there in the past 10-years. Interviewee selection was informed by findings from the GIS analysis portion of the research, highlighting focus areas of development and growth. Interviews conducted with business owners examined whether factors influence the business owner to select a business location in or outside of the downtown core. Due to the lack of business license data, business owner contact information is difficult to obtain. Contacts from The City of Eugene and the Downtown Eugene Merchants Shared their network of business owners for

interviews for this study. I reached out to 23 local business owners with locations in the study area and worked with a total of 8 business owners for interviews.

How can the City of Eugene incentivize new businesses to occupy available space in the downtown core?

Interviews and case studies inform recommendations to attract businesses to the downtown core. Interviews provide context and understanding of any barriers that business owners and developers see to locating businesses in the core. The case study analysis shows how other communities have either retained or promoted business development in the downtown core. Case study communities include Asheville, North Carolina, and Huntsville, Alabama, as cities of similar size and development history to Eugene. These assessments addressed how these communities retained or promoted development in the downtown core, and whether they have seen benefits or changes in their economic growth due to local incentives or policies.

Case studies are compared by population, assessed by reviewing the city websites for policies and practices that support downtown business development and retention. To understand the impacts that these policies have on business development, newspapers, downtown organizations, and other business focused websites and documents are reviewed.

Limitations

A barrier in this research is that the City of Eugene does not collect the business license data for all businesses, meaning that there are few options to track when businesses established, where they located, or who owns the business. As these data are unavailable, a triangulation strategy is used to conduct this research. Data collection includes observed changes in where commercial buildings are being permitted, finding valuation changes, local vacancies, and canvassing downtown to assess structures that might be new to target new businesses in those buildings. Reviewing the state registration of Limited Liability Corporations has been incorporated in this research; however, it does not provide a full or accurate list of downtown businesses. Some businesses have their headquarters on the registry as a location other than the actual business location or may not have any business activity in Eugene.

Low response rates to interview requests is a limitation, as it has resulted to fewer than anticipated interviews being conducted for the study. The majority of the interviews conducted for the study were with core business owners as these happened to be the individuals who responded to requests.

Summary

Understanding the current trends in business development patterns will support future development and improvements to the downtown and surrounding areas. This research uses GIS data to show the current status of business development in the core while also offering the perspective of local business owners. This coupled understanding can point to innovative methods to better support local businesses in the downtown for future growth. Case studies add to this conversation with models from other

communities to support business development and local businesses in downtowns. A review of the business development history, policies, and practices is in the next chapter. This information will provide added context to the report methods, findings, and recommendations.

Background and History

The city of Eugene is in western Oregon in the Willamette Valley. The city covers 41 square miles, with the Willamette River flowing north of the downtown. As of 2010, Eugene’s population is 171,259 (US Census Bureau, 2018). Eugene is the County seat and largest city in Lane County. Since its establishment, the area now occupied by the downtown has hosted various industries and businesses. This historically significant area continues to be a center for growth and development in the city. This section highlights the demographics present in Downtown Eugene as well as development practices and incentives to continue growth in this area.

The core overlaps the Downtown Urban Renewal District, an area of the city that generates extra funds through tax increment financing to make improvements and fund projects. Increases in tax revenue from the district are directed back to additional enhancements, further improving and increasing tax revenue. Eugene's Downtown Urban Renewal District was adopted in 1968 and has undergone six modifications, most recently in 2016 (City of Eugene, 2016).

Recent projects funded through Urban Renewal:

- Park Blocks Renovations*
- Installing EugNet*
- Redeveloping old LCC Building*

Source: Urban Renewal Plan for the Downtown Urban Renewal District, 2016

Early Development History

Eugene has an industrial history, starting shortly after the settlement of the city in the mid-1800s. The waterways along the Willamette River became a center for industry and was the primary area for development. Directly south of this industrial area is Downtown Eugene.

Outside of this industrial focus in the northern end of the city, downtown developed and changed, including offices, theaters, and as time progressed, churches. The 1950s saw increased office development in and surrounding the downtown. The city saw a reduction in mills and industrial uses, increased car and highway uses, and expansion of development outside of the downtown to accommodate larger businesses. In the 1960s and 70s, the city redevelopment became a prominent strategy. Observed national trends toward redevelopment and urban renewal support the experience of Downtown Eugene. This period saw increased development and large downtown projects, like the pedestrian mall, to encourage use and development in the downtown.

The Present

Downtown Eugene¹, where this research is focused, encompasses roughly 0.5 square miles with a total population of 3,635 (US Census Bureau). Of this population, 1,113 are workers living in downtown (U.S.Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies , 2017). As of 2017 there were 9,145 private primary

¹ Downtown Eugene data collected from the US Census Bureau uses data for Census Tract 39. This tract includes portions of both the core and periphery areas defined in this study, from Jefferson to High St and 5th Avenue to 13th Avenue. The US Census does not have a geography that would represent the entire study area, one that would represent the core and periphery separately, which is why this study considers this data in a rough aggregate.

jobs in the downtown (U.S.Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies , 2017). Jobs in Downtown Eugene have increased slightly since 2014, which saw 8,367 jobs recorded in that year, an increase of 9.3% (U.S.Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies , 2017). Table 4 compares downtown to the city of Eugene. In this comparison, downtown provides 9% of the city's total jobs, despite being 1% of the city's size. Downtown also has a higher population per square mile than the whole city, at 3,635 for 0.5 square miles in the downtown compared to 1,774 per 0.5 square miles across the city.

The US Census Bureau divides job sectors through the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), so government agencies can uniformly collect and analyze job data. Table 5 compares NAICS data from 2017, 2014, and 2010 for all represented sectors. To simplify a comparison, the NAICS codes were summarized into the sector groups. Figure 3 shows how sectors are aggregated into sector groups. In Downtown Eugene, the primary sector groups include Professional and Business Services, Leisure and Hospitality, and Financial Activities.

TABLE 4: DEMOGRAPHICS COMPARISON

	Downtown Eugene	City of Eugene
Area	0.5 square miles	44 square miles
Private Primary jobs	8,367	72, 979
Population	3,635	156,185

Source: On the Map, 2020

TABLE 5: COMPARISON OF THE NAICS SECTOR GROUPS IN DOWNTOWN EUGENE BY YEAR

Sector Groups	2010		2014				2017			
	# of Jobs	% of Total	# of Jobs	% of Total	Change from 2010	% change from 2010	# of Jobs	% of Total	Change from 2010	% change from 2010
Producing Goods	117	1.4%	158	1.9%	41	35.0%	114	1.3%	-3	-2.6%
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	1,008	12.7%	831	9.9%	-177	-17.6%	865	9.4%	-143	-14.2%
Information	411	5.2%	418	5.0%	7	1.7%	428	5.3%	71	17.3%
Financial Activities	993	12.5%	902	10.7%	-91	-9.2%	1068	11.6%	75	7.6%
Professional & Business Services	2,988	37.6%	3,280	39.2%	292	9.8%	3,651	40.0%	663	22.2%
Education & Health Services	789	10.0%	828	9.9%	39	4.9%	879	9.6%	90	11.4%
Leisure & Hospitality	1,280	16.1%	1,656	19.8%	376	29.4%	1,766	19.3%	486	38.0%
Other Services (excluding public administration)	351	4.4%	294	3.5%	-57	-16.2%	320	3.5%	-31	-8.8%

Source: On the Map, 2020

There has been very little change in the share of job types in Eugene between 2014 and 2017. Sector groups seem to have remained somewhat stable, with slight decreases in Transportation, and Utilities and Financial Activities since 2010. In contrast Leisure and Hospitality and Professional and Business Services have increased in the share of jobs in Downtown Eugene. These sectors are consistently some

of the largest sectors in Downtown Eugene, pointing to growth in these sectors in the community over time.

FIGURE 3: NAICS GROUPS AND SECTORS



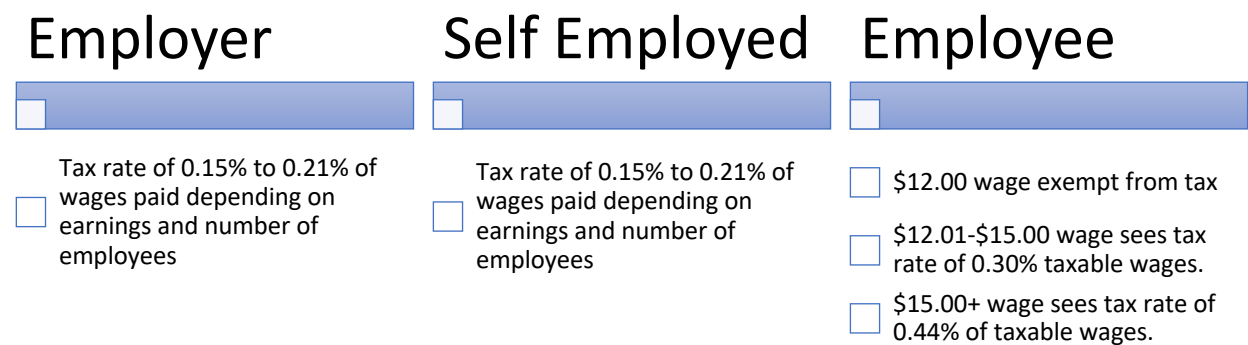
Establishing a Business

Requirements for operating a business ensure that cities can monitor and enforce regulations in a community. The city of Eugene provides a resources page with information for starting and expanding businesses in the community. The information does not make recommendations or list requirements for developing in a specific location in the city or in the downtown.

In Eugene, business licenses are not a requirement for all business types. The business license office only regulates and requires licenses for the following business activities: Payday Lenders, Public Passenger Vehicles, Tobacco Retail Sales, and businesses that sell alcohol. A comprehensive list is available on the city's website. Outside of these activities need for business licenses, the city website and municipal code are unclear about additional requirements that are necessary for starting or expanding a business in the downtown.

Eugene City Council has recently approved a Community Safety Payroll Tax, to go into effect in 2021. A payroll tax requires employers, employees, and self-employed individuals working or operating a business in the city limits to pay a tax on wages and earnings received or paid. The objective of the Community Safety Payroll Tax is to improve long term investment in community safety actions (City of Eugene , 2020). Business owners and self-employed individuals within the city limits must register with the city, registration materials are anticipated to be available in July 2020 (City of Eugene , 2020). Details about the requirements of the payroll tax for employers and employees is seen in figure 4.

FIGURE 4: COMMUNITY SAFETY PAYROLL TAX BREAKDOWN



Source: Community Safety Payroll Tax Business Owner Overview, City of Eugene, 2020

Businesses engaging in redevelopment, renovations, or construction activities must apply for building permits through the city's Planning and Development Department. A business in the downtown would be likely applying for a commercial permit, which supports new construction, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, multi-family, site development, tenant infill/change of use, and demolition projects (City of Eugene , n.d.). The city of Eugene provides a 4-step breakdown for applying for a commercial building permit, which entails:

1. Prepare for the commercial permit process. In this step, applicants will review relevant zoning and ordinances for the space under construction. This can include understanding relevant improvements needed for the space like sidewalk construction, flood plain mitigation, and stormwater management.
2. Apply for permits. Applications are to be submitted online and are reviewed by staff within 3-days.
3. Project plan review. This will be done with a staff member who will become the project's key contact. Staff will review the project plan to ensure compliance with relevant codes, ordinances, and policies for the site.

4. Begin construction. The project has 360 days from the time the permit is issued to have an inspection to retain the permit.

Mixed use buildings that incorporate both commercial and residential uses would apply for a commercial building permit. Permit applications are to be submitted online, but developers and business owners can meet with city staff to discuss the project and ask questions. Some of these commercial projects are eligible for financial support from the Eugene Business Services Department.

Eugene Business Development Incentives and Support Services

Support services help businesses and support the economic growth and quality of life throughout the city. There are options available for businesses throughout the city for different types of commerce, whether commercial, manufacturing, or industrial. Some incentives are location specific, drawing business development to several areas of the community, such as downtown, the riverfront, campus, and west Eugene.

Of these many opportunities, there are a select few support services that would be relevant to businesses in the downtown core area, including Business Growth Loans, Downtown Loans, Art Loans, pre-development conferences, development investment group, and opportunity zones. Table 6 summarizes the objectives and requirements of each incentive available in the study area. These programs are opportunities for businesses in the study area based on the geography of the services. These services offer business owners monetary and information support in starting their business. Table 6 indicates resources that are monetary and information resources. The majority of the financial resources offered by the city low interest loans to businesses, however opportunity zones are included in this list and are an incentive for investors to reduce the tax burden on capital gains.

TABLE 6: SUMMARY OF THE CITY OF EUGENE BUSINESS INCENTIVES

Financial Incentives		
Business Growth Loans	Financial Support	Loans to create jobs while stimulating private sector investment. Funds are available for working capital, inventory, machinery, and other purposes.
Downtown Loans	Financial Support	Flexible financing encourages investment in the Downtown Urban Renewal District, including building renovation, tenant improvements, and historic preservation of downtown buildings.
Art Loans	Financial Support	A collaboration of the City and Arts and Business Alliance of Eugene, these loans are available for projects, such as signs or murals, cost of materials for commissioned art, and creative place-making projects or events.
Opportunity Zones	Financial Support	Allow investors to reduce the tax burden from capital gains by participating in opportunity funds in three areas, downtown, riverfront/campus, and Bethel (west Eugene).
Information Incentive		
Pre-Development Conferences	Information Support	The conferences are a free consultation on building or remodeling projects between city staff and developers. These meetings offer answers questions and alleviation of potential problems.
Development Investment Group	Information Support	Make development less complicated by calling City staff, who support development stages with free design and permit guidance, to help projects maximize potential and save time and money.

Source: City of Eugene, 2020

Another incentive to encourage development in the downtown include fiber internet accessibility for downtown properties, called EUGNet. Interested firms need to inquire with EWEB, who manages the program and pay a fee to connect their building to the network. EUGNet is open access and allows for internet service providers to lease fibers to serve area customers (Eugene Water and Electric Board, n.d.). Incorporating this fiber has led to lower prices and faster internet speeds in the downtown area.

In addition to the financial opportunities, businesses can seek support from several organizations outside of the city of Eugene, including Downtown Eugene, Inc., Downtown Eugene Merchants, RAIN Eugene, Lane Community College and the city of Eugene library for information and insights on

developing a business in downtown. The city of Eugene provides links to the RAIN, Lane Community College's Lane Small Business Development Center, Library Business Support, and the Oregon Business Xpress websites for more information about developing. Access to other support networks like the Downtown Eugene, Inc. and Eugene Merchants are not found on the "Starting or Growing a Business" website and likely need additional web searching or prior knowledge about these organizations to seek support.

Summary

Downtown Eugene is both commerce and residential oriented, having a higher concentration of both residents and businesses than the city at large. Downtown is a space that sees investment in the community through Tax Increment Financing and encouragement for commercial uses by the city. The city provides several loans and opportunities to encourage business development in the area. There is an interest in retaining this area as a vibrant area of commerce and gathering. In these times, this area must be adaptable to the time and trends. This study will further explore areas that the city is doing well and how they can improve for future businesses and users.

Where are businesses developing?

This analysis provides a visual representation of business development over the past five years, from 2014 to 2019, in Eugene. GIS mapping describes the defined core and periphery boundaries and identified areas of increased development graphically, providing a simple representation to address where businesses are developing relative to the downtown core using buffer analysis. Table 7 summarizes the data set, related year, and where these data were accessed. Appendix B lists the tables and maps used in this chapter for reference. For more information about the methods for this chapter, refer to chapter 2.

TABLE 7: DATA SET SUMMARY

Data	Year(s) used	Accessed From
Commercial Building Permits Issued	2014-2019	City of Eugene
Commercial Vacancy Data	2020	Lane Council of Governments
Zoning and Land Use	2019	Lane County
Commercial Tax Lot Valuation	2007, 2019	Lane County
Licensed Liability Corporations (LLC)	2014-2019	Oregon Secretary of State's Office

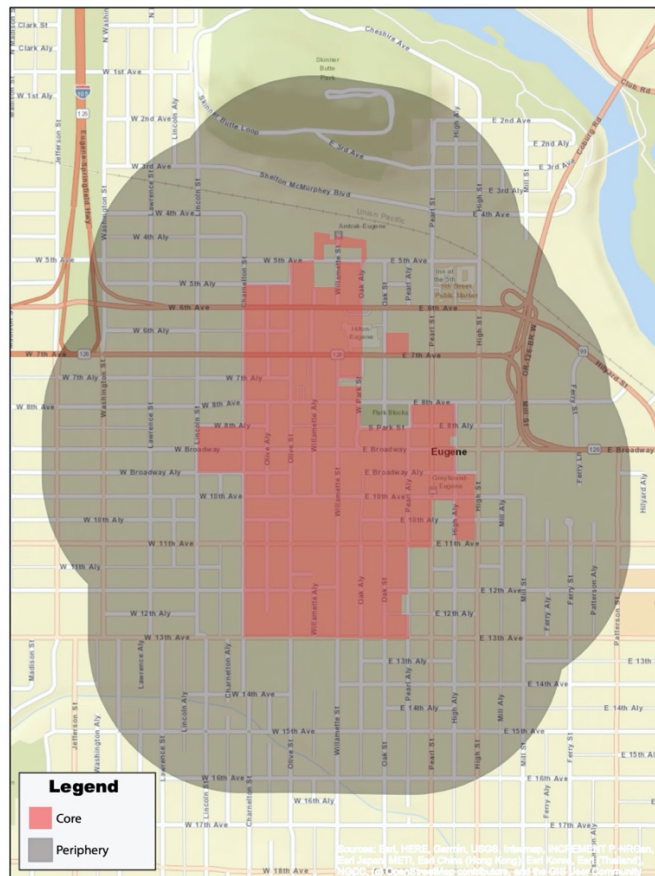
Zoning, building permits, tax lot valuation, and vacancy data give an idea where in the city development and property improvements are happening. While this analysis does not have a full list of business locations, triangulating new building permits, vacant properties, and LLC locations provides a clearer picture of where new business developments, relocations, or renovations may occur. Tax lot valuation changes between 2007 and 2019 illustrate where businesses have been locating in the recent history or which locations may be more attractive. Appendix B explains how data was collected and cleaned for this research.

What is downtown?

The Boundaries established for this study include the downtown and the area surrounding it. Figure 4 shows the study area to give context to the rest of the chapter. The core, in red, is zoned as c-3 Major Commercial and is home to some of the densest development in the city. The core is also an area incorporating traditionally important business corridors for the city. Refer to the background chapter for

further details. The periphery, highlighted in black in Figure 5, represents a quarter-mile buffer around the core. The quarter-mile buffer was selected to limit the study scope to a reasonable area, close to downtown. Much of the area outside of this buffer is residentially zoned and omitted from the study. Comparing the boundary areas, the core has an area of 104.8 acres and the periphery has an area of 446.9 acres.

FIGURE 5: CORE AND PERIPHERY BOUNDARIES



To offer a more direct comparison, I have omitted open space and residential land use from the periphery and the core. To further specify the area measure, the area of the specific tax lots involved in this study have been calculated, which omits roadways from the study area. Table 8 compares the commercial land classifications of the core and periphery areas in number of tax lots, acreage of those lots, and tax lots per acre. There are 260 tax lots in the core and combined they are 67.3 acres. The tax lots in the periphery, in contrast, are 104.3 acres with 452 tax lots total. Comparing the tax lots per acre in the core and periphery, there are several tax lots per acre. The periphery is denser than the periphery when comparing the number of tax lots per acre. It would be estimated that the core would have greater tax lots per acre. The observed density in the periphery could be due to a larger study area or new developments in the special areas.

TABLE 8: COMPARISON OF CORE AND PERIPHERY IN AREA AND TAX LOTS

		Core	Periphery	Study Area Total
Area in Acres	Study Boundary	104.8	446.9	551.7
	Total Tax Lot	78	315.8	393.8
	Non-Residential ² Tax Lot	67.3	104.3	171.6
Count of Tax Lots	Study Boundary ³	296	1605	1901
	Total Zoned Commercial	289	727	1016
	Total Commercial Land Class	255	617	872
	Non-Residential	260	452	712
Percentage of Tax Lots	Total Zoned Commercial	97.6%	45.3%	53.4%
	Total Commercial Land Class	86.1%	38.4%	45.9%
	Non-Residential	87.8%	28.2%	37.5%
Tax Lots Per Acre	Zoned Commercial	3.7	2.3	2.6
	Commercial Land Class	3.3	2.0	2.2
	Non-Residential	3.9	4.3	4.2

Source: City of Eugene, 2014-2019

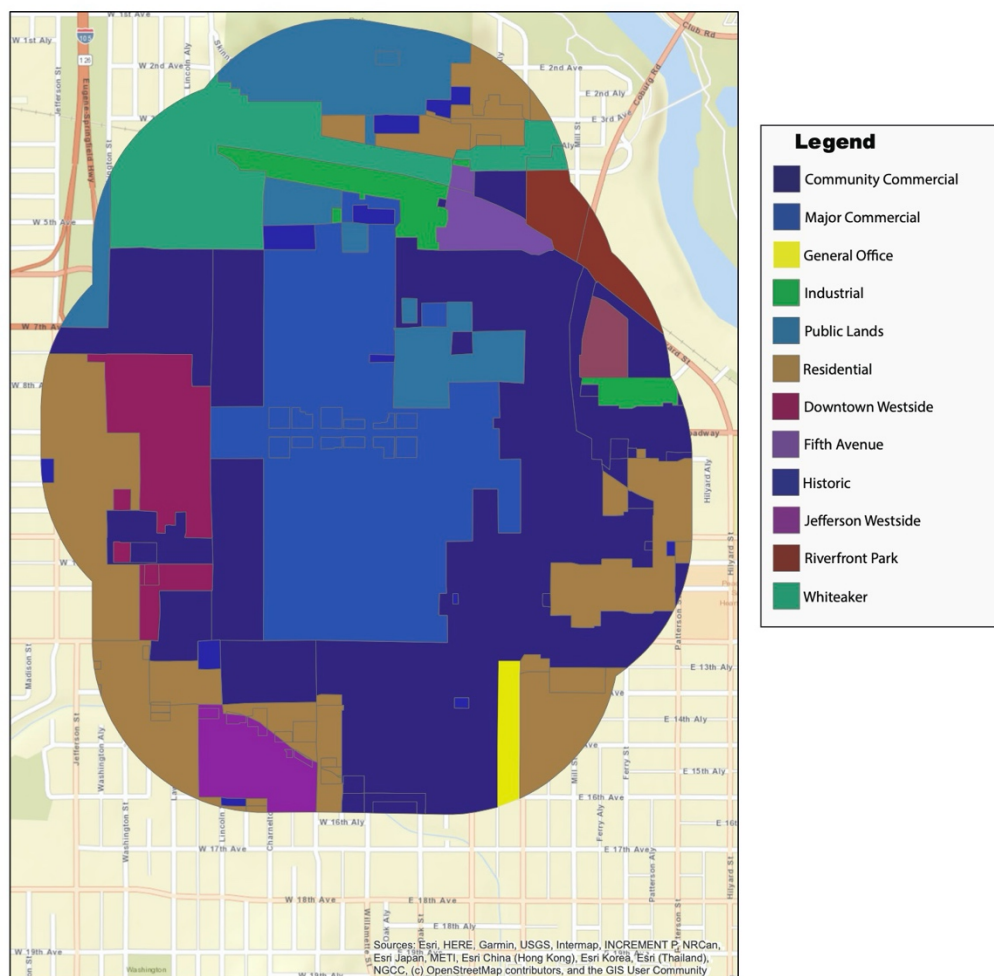
² Non-Residential tax lots are those used in the analysis for this study, which omits all residential zoning and land classifications and includes special areas, industrial, general office, and commercial uses in the core and periphery,

³ Study boundary includes all tax lots in the study area, regardless of zoning or land classification for reference.

What has developed downtown?

Figure 6 shows the zoning in the study area. As can be seen, the primary zones in the study area are c-3 Major Commercial and c-2 community commercial. The community commercial zone surrounds the core for 1-2 blocks on almost all sides. Other land uses in the periphery include five special areas, the Whitaker, Downtown Westside, Jefferson Westside, 5th Avenue, and Riverfront special areas. There are also varying densities of residential uses, office, historical, industrial, and public lands use permitted in the periphery study area. The primary focus of this study is on the periphery's commercially zoned areas, although the surrounding uses may impact the area's development trends. An understanding of the uses surrounding the core shows where similar businesses and development trends occur.

FIGURE 6: STUDY AREA ZONING



Vacancy

Understanding the vacancy and available space in the study area contributes to this research in that there have to be vacancies for new businesses to locate. If there are no vacancies or no new buildings are being built, new businesses need to look elsewhere to find space. Observing the locations of available commercial space contribute to this study and increase understanding about why businesses may be locating to a specific area over others. If there are higher vacancies, it could indicate that businesses are not thriving; business parking, size, or public access needs are not met; available properties are not clean or renovated; or the cost is too high. Appendix A examines the challenges to business location selection in greater depth.

TABLE 9: VACANCIES

	Core	Periphery	Study Area Total
Vacancies	18	11	29
Vacancies per acre	0.3	0.1	0.2
Source: Lane Council of Governments, 2020			

Table 9 shows the vacancies represented in the core and periphery and offers a comparison of vacancies per acre. In the core, there are 0.3 vacancies per acre and 0.1 vacancies per acre in the periphery. The Core has 63% more vacancies than the periphery. Comparably, the core is a smaller area with fewer tax lots than the periphery. A higher vacancy rate in the core could indicate that rents are unattractive in core commercial areas, shifting development to the periphery.

FIGURE 7: VACANT COMMERCIAL SPACE DISTRIBUTION

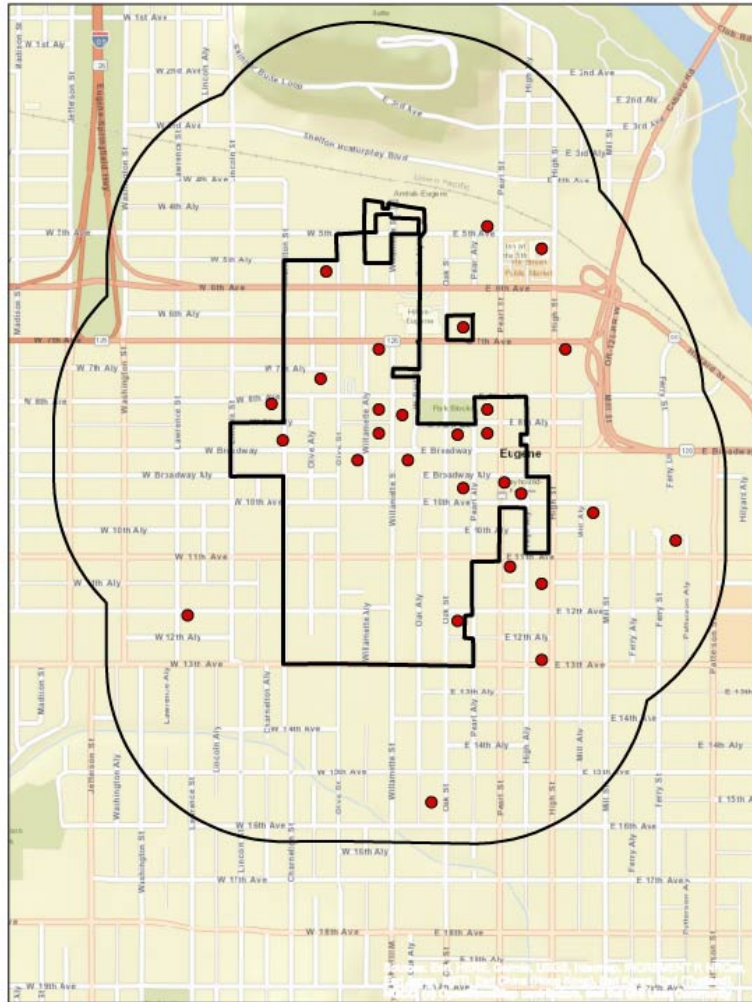


Figure 7 shows the distribution of vacancies in the study area. There are 29 total vacancies in the study area, with 18 in the core and 11 in the periphery, most commonly on Willamette, Broadway, and 10th Avenue in the core. In the periphery, vacant properties are more scattered. However, there are some concentrations in the blocks between Pearl and High street and 11th Avenue and 13th Avenue, where there are three vacancies, each within a block of the other. Interestingly, there are no more than one vacancy at any given address, indicating that buildings with multiple suites or offices are near or at capacity, with no more than one vacant office at a given time.

Limited Liability Corporations

Limited Liability Corporations (LLCs) are included as another metric to map new businesses operating in the city. The Oregon Secretary of State's office records LLCs in the state. The reliability of LLC data is limited, as businesses that function in Eugene may not list their actual operating locations. LLCs may use an agent, owner, or manager address or a PO Box mailing address on their registration with the state of

Oregon instead of the physical business address. For example, a business headquarters is located in a city, but has a business located in another city. In this case, the LLCs would likely only include the headquarters address and not the addresses of the other location. There are other cases where an LLC may consist of multiple records for one business, listing different agents, numerous managers, mailing and physical address, or some combination of these data. A single physical address is used in this study, removing duplicated entries.

There are a total of 1091 LLCs in the study area, with 360 LLCs in the periphery, and 731 in the core. Table 11 illustrates how LLCs are spread proportionally between the study areas. Both areas contain a large proportion of LLCs. The core in contrast has greater concentration of LLCs in specific buildings. This can be seen in Figure 8 which shows LLCs spread relatively evenly throughout the periphery and the core, with nearly one or more per block, however darker purple blocks indicate a higher number of LLCs registered to a single address. White parcels do not have an LLC listed.

TABLE 10: STUDY AREA ACTIVE LLCs

	Core	Periphery	Study Area Total
LLCs	731	360	1091
LLCs per Acre	10.9	3.5	6.4

Source: Oregon Secretary of State’s Office, 2014-2019

Table 12 shows the number tax lots with concentrations of LLCs. These ranges support the map in Figure 9. 77% of properties throughout the study area do not have an LLC registered at the tax lot address. There are two tax lots in the study area that have greater than 100 LLCs registered to the space. The spaces are located on Oak Street and Willamette Street, both in the core. The properties have been identified as the Citizen’s Building and Eugene US Bank Building, seen in Figure 8. These buildings are known to have high concentrations of law offices in them, which could be an explanation for the high concentrations of LLCs associated with these addresses.

TABLE 11: NUMBER OF TAX LOTS WITH LLC CONCENTRATIONS

# of LLCs	Core	Periphery	Study Area Total
0 LLCs	198	348	546
1-10 LLCs	52	97	149
11-25 LLCs	4	5	9
26-50 LLCs	2	1	3
51-75 LLCs	0	1	1
76-100 LLCs	2	0	2
101-125 LLCs	0	0	0
126-150 LLCs	1	0	1
151-169 LLCs	1	0	1

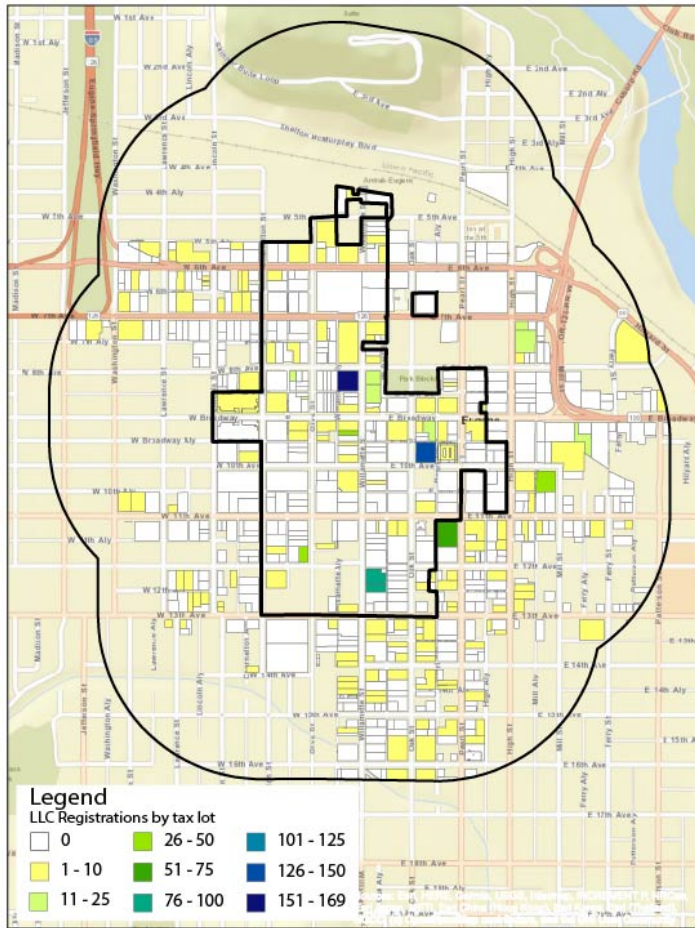
Source: Oregon Secretary of State’s Office, 2014-2019

FIGURE 3: PHOTOS OF HIGH CONCENTRATION LLC PROPERTIES



The US Bank Building (left) & Citizen’s Building (right) in the Downtown Core have the highest concentrations of LLCs in the study area
 Photo Credit: Dougherty Landscape Architects & Loopnet.com

FIGURE 9: LLC DISTRIBUTION



The gradient in Figure 9 represents the concentration of LLCs in the study area. As can be seen the majority of tax lots have between 1 and 10 LLCs. In fact, 21% of tax lots have between 1 and 10 LLCs registered at the address. LLCs seem to be observed in office buildings, especially in the core. Office suites are often the address for LLCs, and there are concentrations of LLCs attributed to a single building. Some LLCs for different corporations are tied back to the same address, including the office suite or number, indicating that several LLCs use the same agent or that LLCs share an address in the same building.

Outside of the core, the western side of the study area also sees a concentration of LLCs present in a few buildings. The number of LLCs in these buildings are between 1 and 10 LLCs listed in each parcel. While this does not meet the density seen in buildings in the core, it does point to potential office buildings outside of the downtown core

area.

Non-Residential Tax Lot Valuation

Tax lot valuation shows where properties have increased or decreased in value over time. The data available for this study included tax lot valuation data from 2007 and 2019. The data observed change in tax lot assessed value, or the value of the land as compared to other parcels.

The average change for the study area was a 78% increase in value during the 12-years. This average is likely reflective of a few outlying parcels that had significant improvements in value of over 100%. Figure 10 gives a representation of the average value changes in the study area. As can be seen, the majority of the study area experienced no change to their assessed value. These areas have probably not had their assessed value updated during the study time frame. It is unlikely that this entire area of the study area has experienced no change during the study timeframe.

There is a mix of above and below-average change in the north and northwest portion of the study area. Below average change (<78%) seems to be concentrated along 6th and 7th avenues and on Olive and

Charnelton between 5th Avenue and 11th Avenue. There are 75 below average tax lots in the periphery compared to 69 in the core area. There are 35 above average lots in the core and 30 in the periphery.

FIGURE 10: AVERAGE CHANGE IN COMMERCIAL TAX LOT VALUATION

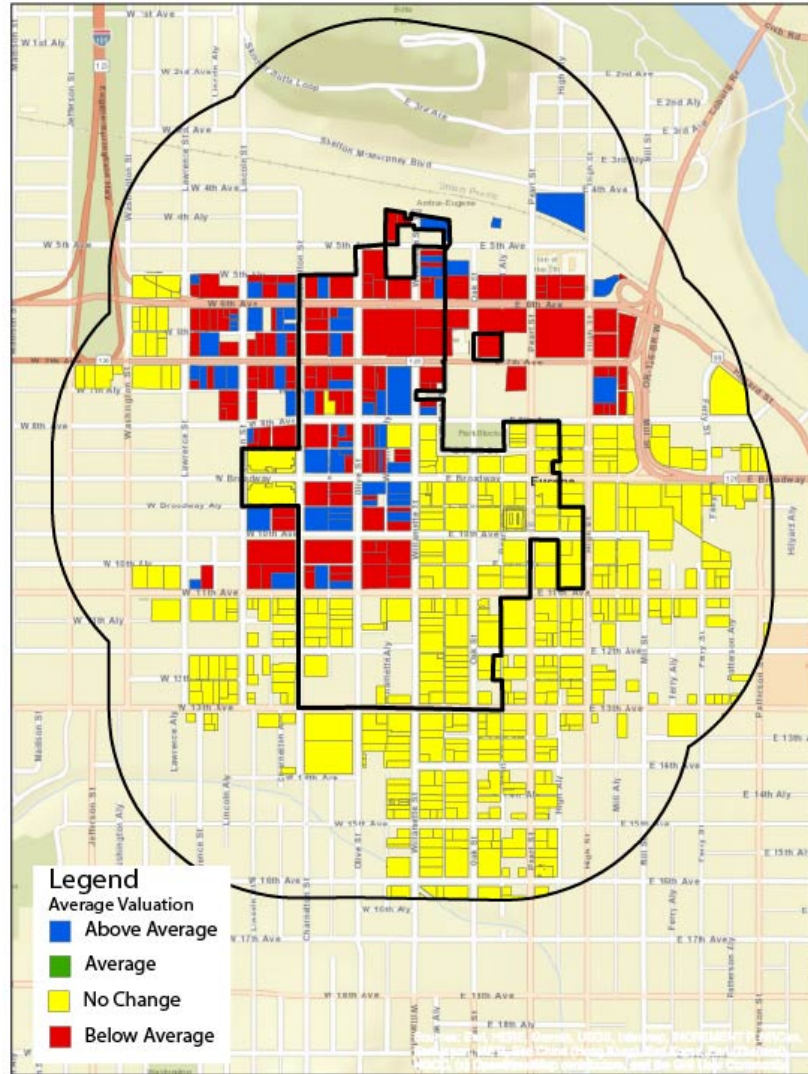
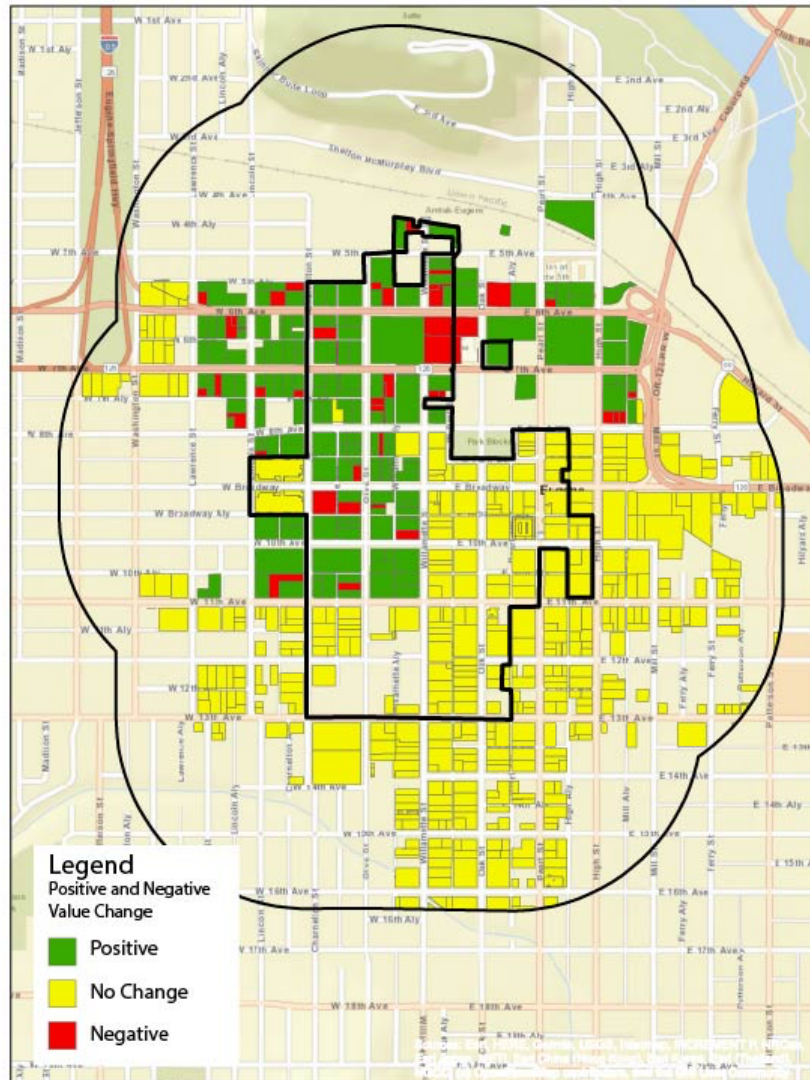


Figure 10 shows positive and negative tax lot valuation changes during the 12-years in commercial land classes. Observing positive and negative value change offers insight into the improvements made and areas that have declined in value during the period. The above average indicator includes any property that has experienced greater than 78% change, which includes several lots with greater than 100% change. Comparing the positive and negative changes to the averages map, you can see that some lots that have had positive changes do fall in the below-average category. In the core, 94 lots have seen positive change, and 26 lots have seen negative change during the study time frame. Comparatively, the periphery has 82 lots with positive change and 26 lots with negative change.

FIGURE 11: POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE TAX LOT VALUATION CHANGE



Generally, improvements in value seem to be concentrated in the northwest corner of the core and between the core and special areas like the Whiteaker and Fifth Avenue districts. Looking at Figure 11, lots that have experienced a decline in value tend to be smaller lots used for retail, restaurant, or small offices. An exception to this trend is the building directly east of the Hult Center, between 6th and 7th Avenue. One of these lots includes the Graduate Hotel, a hotel marketed to visitors to the University of Oregon. This business recently opened in 2019, so its impact on that lot's value may not be observable given the new redevelopment.

Table 13 examines the change in tax lot valuation., considering both the average change and positive or negative change⁴. This table shows that in general, change between the areas are similar. While the periphery has seen a greater above average change in value, the core experienced more positive change in value. These metrics indicate that, where available, the core and periphery have improved similarly, although there is slightly more positive change in the core. There has been very little below average decline in the core, indicating that this area is growing generally as a similar rate. The periphery has both a larger percentage of above and below average change. These changes may be representative of the wide geography of the area and may present a less stable growth pattern. Updated assessed values for the southeast study area would better represent the change that has occurred, as this area occupies a significant number of the total parcels in the study.

TABLE 13: VALUE CHANGE IN COMMERCIAL TAX LOTS PER ACRE

	Core		Periphery		Total	
	Count	# per Acre	Count	# per Acre	Count	# per Acre
Negative	26	0.4	26	0.3	52	0.3
Below Average	267	4	727	7	944	5.5
No Change	175	2.6	658	6.3	833	4.9
Above Average	29	0.4	38	0.4	67	0.4
Positive	94	1.4	82	0.8	176	1

Building Permits

The city of Eugene requires building permits for construction, renovations, updates, and upgrades. Issuance of a building permit recognizes that the building seeing these changes comply with local building codes. One address may receive multiple building permits as improvements occur over time. This section will assess and compare the building permit applications granted during the study timeframe. This study incorporates building permit data from 2014 to 2019 from the Downtown Neighborhood Association, West University Neighbors, and the Jefferson Westside Neighbors areas. This data explores where new buildings and improvements are in the study area. For this research, building permit analysis is limited to commercial uses only and do not incorporate building permits issued for residential use. Building permits for a single address are aggregated to remove duplicates. This research does not distinguish between the types of permits pulled, other than in limiting by commercial

⁴ Tax lot data could also be compared by the average assessed value per square foot of the building, offering analysis that can normalize between large offices with multiple suites, and single level properties. Unfortunately the square footage of the building was not available, which is why the tax lot acreage has been used.

properties and a single address. Appendix B offers greater detail about the GIS data processing and selection.

There were 587 addresses with a building permit issued in the study area, 348 in the core, and 239 in the periphery. Table 14 offers a breakdown of the building permits per acre issued by year to show changes in development and improvement trends over time. The core had a large number of building permits per acre issued in 2014. Across both the study area we see a decline in the number of building permits issued per acre during the 5-year period. The core has a greater number of building permits issued per acre overall, and sees fewer than the periphery only in the year 2017. Overall, the core sees 125% more building permits issued per acre than the periphery.

TABLE 14: BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED BY YEAR

	Core		Periphery		Study Area Total	
	Count per Acre	Count	Count per Acre	Count	Count per Acre	Count
All Years	5.2	348	2.3	239	3.4	587
2019	0.0	2	0.1	10	0.1	12
2018	0.3	18	0.2	18	0.2	36
2017	0.1	7	0.3	30	0.2	37
2016	0.3	22	0.3	31	0.3	53
2015	1.9	129	0.8	82	1.2	211
2014	2.5	170	0.7	68	1.4	238

Source: City of Eugene, 2014-2019

FIGURE 12: BUILDING PERMIT DISTRIBUTION

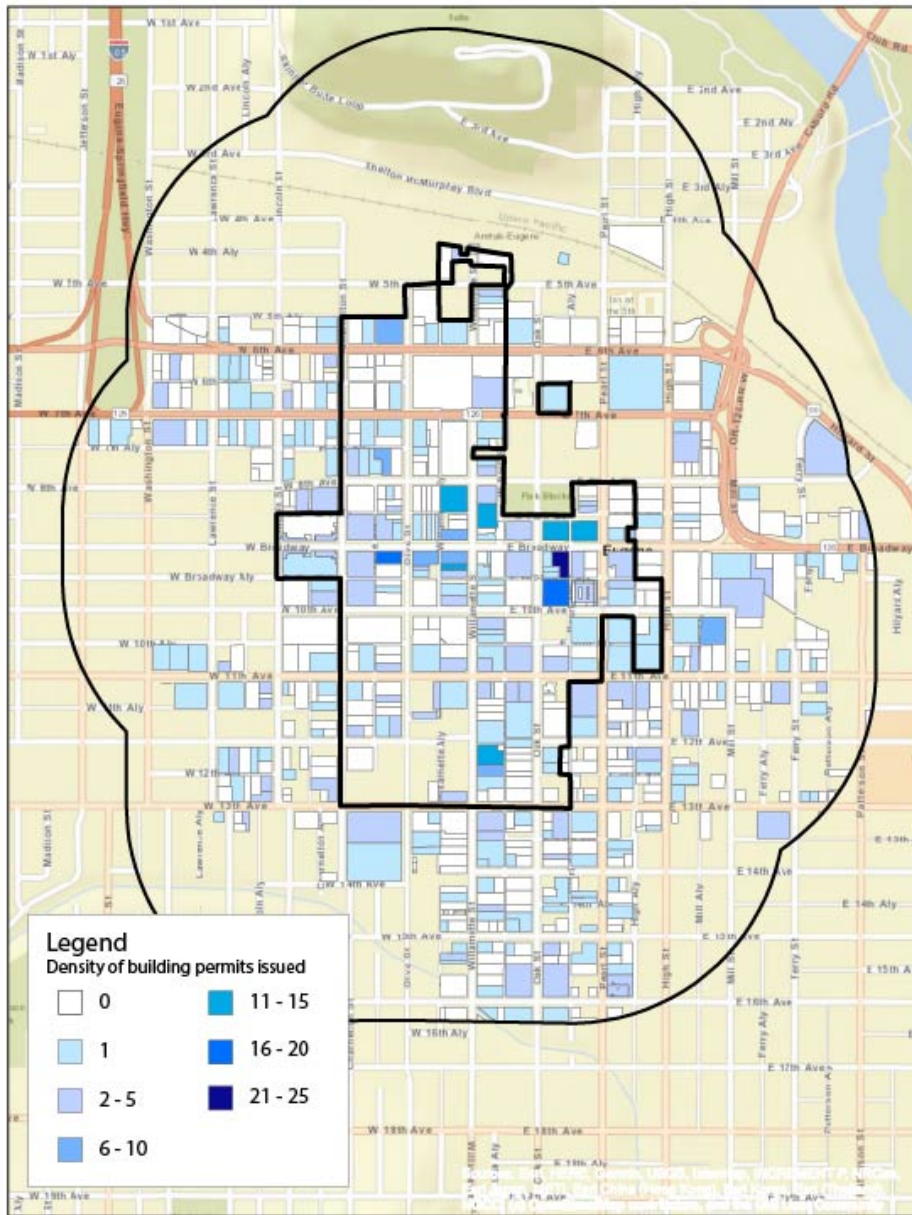


Figure 12 illustrates the building permits issued locations. The highest concentrations of building permits issued are in the core, on either side of West Broadway between Lincoln to Pearl Street and on Willamette Street between 7th Avenue and 11th Avenue. In the periphery, the tax lot that sees a concentration of over 8 permits is in the southwest corner of the study area on Lincoln and 14th Avenue.

Analysis

When comparing boundaries, vacancies, building permits, LLCs, and tax lot valuation, the core and periphery see some similarities. Generally speaking, the core has seen more improvements, reflected in

the building permit frequency and valuation changes in this area. The core has more office buildings, which can be assumed by the number of building permits and LLCs evident at specific parcels. While these observations can provide some context to how downtown is developing, comparing and contrasting these data points offers greater detail in answering the question, "where is development occurring relative to downtown?" These data shows that vacant properties in the core have seen valuation increases, Office buildings in the core have seen more renovations and improvements than other office areas

1. **The periphery is developing rapidly in some areas.** While the periphery is nearly double the size in area of the core, it is a space that has seen growth and improvement during the study time frame. Periphery areas have fewer vacancies, relatively high levels of improvement, and a greater number of physical improvements than the core. Given that much of the periphery includes special areas near downtown, like the riverfront, fifth street, and Whitaker areas, this is not entirely surprising. Each of these areas have had significant projects planned during this period.
2. **Vacant properties do not occur in areas of declining value.** At the time of this study, vacant properties did not overlap with properties that observed a decline in assessed value between 2007 and 2019. Vacancies occurred in properties that saw either no change or a positive change. Vacancies coinciding with an increase in value may result in expensive leases for current or prospective leases. Core vacancies more frequent overlap with positive value change, which might mean that lease prices in the core are higher than those in the periphery. These trends indicate that the vacant core properties may be too expensive for a new or start-up business and that they are too high a financial risk to be attractive to new businesses. In considering more affordable options, new businesses may consider options outside of the core that have seen less improvement, like the two in the periphery, which experienced an assessed value decrease.
3. **Office buildings in the downtown core have seen more building permits than the periphery.** Figure 12 shows a handful of buildings with a greater number of issued building permits, indicating that there are multiple suites or offices within these buildings with separate permits. Often concentrations of building permits issued also correspond to high numbers of LLCs, which further suggests that office buildings have seen more improvement.
4. **Vacancies occur primarily in office buildings.** All but seven of the vacant properties correspond with an address used in an LLCs, indicating that these buildings include multiple suites or offices in use. Concentrations of building permits that overlap with vacancies and LLCs in the study area also support that vacancies are primarily in offices. Six of the seven are vacant properties in the core, indicating that vacant properties in the core may be more suitable options for an office setting than retail or restaurant uses.

Summary

The core has seen some growth and improvement during the study time frame, but it is more suitable for office development than other uses. Table 15 summarizes the changes seen over time in the study area by comparing the metrics described in this chapter and comparing the periphery and core. The downtown study area has seen overall physical and value improvements, especially in the core. Core

vacancies reflect these physical and value improvements, occurring in areas with LLCs and building permits generally. This finding indicates these spaces may be associated with a higher cost to lease. This cost, coupled with core vacancies in office buildings, shows that opportunities for new restaurants or retail in the core are limited and that there may be more opportunities for these types of businesses in the periphery, specifically the west side of the periphery, between the core and the University of Oregon.

TABLE 15: SUMMARY TABLE OF COMMERCIAL LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT GIS FINDINGS MEASURED PER ACRE

Indicators	Measured per Acre		
	Core	Periphery	Study Area Total
Commercial Tax lots	3.9	4.3	4.2
Commercial Vacancies	0.3	0.1	0.2
Commercial LLCs	10.9	3.5	6.4
Comercial Building Permits	5.2	2.3	3.4
Valuation			
Negative change in value	0.4	0.3	0.3
Below average value change	4	7	5.5
No change in value	2.6	6.3	4.9
Above-average value change	0.4	0.4	0.4
Positive change in value	1.4	0.8	1

These trends are interpretations of downtown business development and provide context to the interviews with business owners for this study. The GIS analysis provides an understanding of what has been occurring on a large scale, where interviews offer more specific experiences inside the context of current development patterns. The next chapter will explore the business community’s experience interacting with these development realities in recent years to contextualize gaps in service and support that may further impact development patterns.

What contributes to business owners' location selection?

Interviews with local business owners address community and development factors that influence the final selection of a business location. Through the conversations, I assessed business owners' perspectives and reasoning for selecting their business location. Interviews provided an opportunity for expectations of their location or the city to be shared. Synthesis of the interviews shows that there are opportunities for increased support for small businesses, women and minority-owned businesses, improved communication of business incentives and permitting processes, as well as partnerships with businesses to address social and safety concerns.

Mutual contacts with the City of Eugene and the Downtown Eugene Merchants lead to contacting interviewees. Through this method, communications with these organizations shared contact information with interested business owners. Once I established a contact list, each business owner received a personal email to explain the research and confirm interest in scheduling an interview. Due to a changing situation regarding the COVID-19 outbreak, only one interview occurred in person—all others were done over the phone.

Respondent Characteristics

I completed eight interviews for this research; seven participants from businesses in the core, and one interview from a business in the periphery. Table 16 details the demographics of those businesses who agreed and participated in interviews and table 17 illustrates the range of years each interviewed business has operated in their space downtown. Interview participants represent both large and small businesses, minority and woman-owned, with varying space needs. This diversity in business type allows this research to show commonalities that exist across types of businesses and points to items that might be specific to business types or size.

TABLE 16: INTERVIEW BUSINESS CHARACTERISTICS

Metric	Measure	% of total
Employees	Businesses interviewed with employees	75%
	Business interviewed with > 30 employees	25%
	Business interviewed with between 1 and 30 employees	50%
Business Classification	Woman-Owned	38%
	Minority-Owned	13%
Type of Businesses	Retail	25%
	Service	25%
	Restaurant/Bar/Brewery	38%
	Creative sector	13%

TABLE 17: YEARS AT CURRENT BUSINESS LOCATION

Years in business at current location	Average	4.5 years
	High	9 years
	Low	Less than 1 year

Findings

Interview questions focused on the location selection and potential for relocation, perceptions of downtown, and business development experiences. This section will detail the results and outcomes from these interview questions.

Location Selection

The selection of a location was incredibly valuable to the business owners. Some had specifically sought out a space in Downtown Eugene, where others selected their space while pursuing other amenities and needs. Primary themes seen from interviews indicate that location selection was due to availability, price, foot traffic and accessibility, design preference, and personal values as prerequisites for selecting a space.



Available Vacancies

Business owners indicated that the availability of space was a concern in selecting a location. Several owners were waiting for a space for a significant time or occupied other spaces before choosing a final location. One interviewee mentioned looking for a space in the downtown for over a year before finding one that met their other needs, noting that there is limited space suitable for retail in the downtown. A second interview supported this notion, discussing that their organization was not looking specifically for space downtown, but that this is one of the only areas that can support an office space of suitable size for their operation and staffing needs. There seems to be a dichotomy between limited available space in the core and adequate space outside of the core. In one case, limited available, appropriate space in a preferred area required widening a search for location, which resulted in the business locating in downtown. Some business owners have a greater interest in the attributes of a space than the physical location, similar to observations of people purchasing homes.



Price

There was no indication that price prohibited owners from investing in downtown when space was available. Still, cost is a consideration that business owners keep in mind during the selection process. Business owners expressed concern about not overcommitting to a space that is too expensive or too large as one of the driving factors for their selection of a location. One owner discussed the benefit of their selected location being inclusive of all utilities in their monthly leased price. An important distinction for this owner was the exclusion of triple net⁵, which this owner discussed would have the potential to increase the cost to lease over time. Another owner acknowledged that finding space for a suitable price can be a challenge, but it is not necessarily a factor that the city can control.



Foot Traffic and Accessibility

Owners, especially of restaurant and retail businesses, expressed an interest in having foot traffic near their business. Opening a business on the street with ample pedestrian, bike, and car access is an asset of a location. Access to a customer base that is conducting other business around town makes up a portion of these businesses market that these businesses find valuable.

⁵ Triple Net Leases require the tenant to pay real estate taxes, building insurance, and maintenance in addition to rent and utilities.

Businesses that did not express an interest in being centrally located for customer access were interested in having a location that was easily accessed by walking, biking, or public transit for their employees. This amenity allows their employees to easily reach work on safer bike and pedestrian routes than other locations. Businesses cite access to other businesses for meetings, lunches, or other uses as a benefit of a central location.

In addition to the ability to access a business location by varying modes of transportation, business owners discussed the accessibility of markets and areas of Eugene, putting their business at a crossroads or middle ground between areas. Two businesses specifically discussed reaching multiple markets and areas of the city through their location, a restaurant in the periphery, and a retailer in the core. The periphery location, which is just outside of the core area, wanted to ensure that they had access to downtown markets without physically being located in the core area. The business owner cites their location in the periphery connects them to South Eugene and University neighborhoods in addition to downtown.



Design Preference

One business owner discussed that their organization was looking for a specific building or interior design in a location in the downtown. This business was able to find a space in a building undergoing renovation that offered the business some flexibility in the interior design of their office space. The business owner discusses that this situation surpassed design constraints they would typically be working around and that the organization felt that they were part of overall investment in the downtown after locating and designing their space.



Personal Values

Some business owners saw the downtown as a valuable place for the community. These owners see it as their obligation to invest in this space to show their value and do what they felt they could to contribute to its improvement. Business owners are optimistic that the downtown will become more vibrant in years to come and that placing their organization in the downtown can be a solution to the safety and social problems in the area. The interviewees sharing this sentiment represent both small and large organizations and retail and office businesses. There is an understanding that the concerns or challenges of downtown need addressing, but that it is a community effort. One owner mentioned that adding more new businesses and attracting people to the downtown for more than restaurant and bar activities can contribute to this solution.

Challenges in Downtown

Despite most owners' ability to find a space meeting their needs, there are some challenges in the development and operation of a business, regardless of its location in the core or periphery. Challenges generally center on the safety and size of the space. In some cases, these problems become too high for a business owner to handle, whether it impedes business, or some other reason. In these cases, business owners may be interested in relocating out of their current location. This section explores

responses from the interviews as it regards to challenges and how business owners respond to said challenges.



Safety

Nearly all of the business owners interviewed expressed concerns about safety and the prevalence of a large homeless population in the downtown. Several owners detailed firsthand experiences they or their staff have experienced as it relates to this concern, so safety concerns hit home for many. In some cases, employees raised concerns that they felt unsafe or threatened navigating and working in the downtown.

A restaurant owner expressed frequent and direct contact with the homeless population outside of their restaurant, discussing a time when the problem was particularly difficult with people ill in the street in front of their restaurant. During this time, the owner cited a loss in projected revenue. This owner expressed concern and frustration at both the situation and the city's response, feeling that action is not being taken to address ongoing homelessness problems in the downtown.

The periphery owner interviewed for this study cited safety and security concerns as one of the primary reasons they selected a location outside of the core. They are close enough to the downtown to have access to the market still but feel removed from the core's perceived safety concerns.

Size of Space

Generally, the size of the space was not a concern for business owners, with a few exceptions where there were more employees to accommodate. A business owner expressed concerns about the size of their current property and the relative size of other downtown properties. This business needs more space to accommodate its operation and staffing needs. Business owners do not see this space in the downtown, and they will likely need to relocate to accommodate their ongoing business growth.

Business Development Experiences

None of the interviewed businesses used the city of Eugene's incentives to establish their business, but business owners generally discuss a good working relationship with city staff. There are some areas in which the city could streamline their process or provide greater support to business owners, included in this section. Interviews showed that some business owners refer to other organizations for help and information in starting their business rather than going to the city. This section identifies potential gaps in development understanding and presents opportunities for additional service provision.

Experience with the City of Eugene

Generally, interviews revealed that business owners felt that the City of Eugene provided adequate answers to questions and offers a good working relationship with businesses. Conversations about experiences with the city revealed that business owners feel that the city could be more supportive through resources offered and provide a streamlined permitting process.

There seems to be a different experience among interviewees regarding requisite business permitting with the city. In one case, a business did not need to apply for additional permits, as their location had previously been permitting for restaurant use. In this case, the start-up experience was very straight forward and simple. In another example, a restaurant owner expressed frustration at an arduous permitting process. Having had businesses elsewhere in the country, this business owner shared that they had completed three times more paperwork to open a restaurant in Eugene than elsewhere in the country.

While business owners generally felt supported by the city, some business owners did not feel they were able to participate in incentive programs. Small businesses with fewer than 12 employees, indicated that incentive programs did not support small businesses. This group also felt that the downtown culture was not welcoming to small businesses. Another concern was that Development incentives were not supportive of small businesses in the community. Interviewees were less interested in loans, choosing to either move forward with a loan through their bank or start their business using personal capital. Secondly, some respondents believed the incentive program funds were limited and would not be available to them even if they applied. These incentives offer support to larger businesses with many employees or for those undertaking extensive renovations and upgrades. There is a belief that these incentives do not apply to new, small businesses. Some of the larger business owners discussed their experience with a keen City of Eugene, eager to support investment in the downtown.

There are some concerns about the handling of public problems as they relate to the business community, especially ongoing, visible concerns like the unhoused in downtown. Several businesses cite impacts on their employees from interactions on the streets with presumed unhoused individuals, and one business discussed direct impacts on their expected revenues when the problem was particularly bad. This individual felt that they were unsupported and have been incredibly frustrated with ongoing delays in addressing the issue through the planned updates to the Park Blocks and other methods. They feel that the city needs to be more direct and dedicated to their proposed actions.

According to small business owners, the city views small businesses as a low value contribution to the community outside of their contribution to in property taxes. Among smaller businesses, there seemed to be mixed opinions about whether this sentiment was improving. One particular business owner has observed the City of Eugene becoming more welcoming and better facilitating small business relationships in the community. This owner discussed how the city had shifted the perspective that business owners have the privilege of operating in the city or the core to a mindset that there are direct benefits to the city in supporting small businesses. There is a perspective that the city is working to facilitate a more welcoming business environment. This work slow, and there is room to improve, but relationships with businesses and the city have improved.

With Other Entities

Owners generally did not work formally with any one organization in starting their business. Those who did, tended to be smaller businesses relying on Downtown Eugene Merchants and business partners as a reference for the development process. Other supports came from a start-up organization called Fertilab and the Regional Acceleration and Innovation Network (RAIN). These organizations supported a business with finding a temporary space until they found a location with suitable space and price.

Analysis

The conversations from these interviews lead to some important considerations for the City of Eugene. While the city may not control the market price and availability of property, policy and practices can address some of the other challenges experienced by new business owners, particularly in the downtown. Supportive actions would include engagement and financial resources for small businesses and women or minority-owned businesses. There is room for improved communication of the permitting process and facilitating partnerships to address social issues in the community.

- 1. Small businesses in downtown Eugene would benefit from support and community.** Businesses with fewer than 12 employees discussed feeling that they were either 1) not supported through incentive programs, or 2) that their business was viewed as tax revenue by the city. Some businesses may feel that perceptions are shifting, there is generally an ambivalence to working, whether through seeking resources or problem-solving support, with the city by some small businesses. The city has the opportunity to address these concerns and limit this perception in future small businesses. Clarifying the intent, requirements, and availability of the incentive program funds can improve relationships with the business community.
- 2. Women and minority-owned businesses could be better supported.** Many of the businesses in this study are woman-owned businesses that have not applied for or received special classification. The city has an opportunity to engage this community to ensure efforts to support women or minority-owned businesses are effectively reaching these targets.
- 3. There is an opportunity for partnership with businesses in addressing social concerns.** Some downtown business owners feel a sense of investment and responsibility to support this area. Addressing the social and safety concerns in Downtown Eugene supports both changing the perception of the space and also assists businesses operating downtown. This partnership could request volunteer time, funds, or pro bono work to support the community's efforts to address ongoing concerns and problems. Incorporating the voice of concerned businesses will also further facilitating relationships with the business community in Eugene.
- 4. Improve understanding and ease of the permitting process.** Based on comments from interviews, there is a varying experience with the permitting process. Some business owners cite a cumbersome permitting process, where others had a minimal and easy process. In starting a business, some business owners reach out to other organizations or business partners to evaluate and learn the process of starting a business. While this can be a great resource and diverse support for businesses, it points to an opportunity to clarify the development and permitting information. There is an opportunity to create a reference list for new businesses, given the diversity of organizations referenced in the interviews as a support in developing a business. Such a list would give businesses information about organizations and programs that might be able to support them in addition to resources from the City of Eugene.

Summary

Interviews have offered direct comments on business owners' interest and experience in and near the downtown. While most owners appreciate their location downtown for visibility and customer access purposes, they have some concerns about being located downtown. Businesses in the downtown are

unlikely to relocate because of these problems, but owners are interested in seeing them addressed. In addressing these concerns, I will look to other communities as case studies. The case studies will examine communities of similar size and make-up to Eugene and their methods to address ongoing community concerns and practices to support development in their downtowns.

How can Eugene attract & support businesses downtown?

This section looks at two communities: Asheville, North Carolina, and Huntsville, Alabama. Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network (RAIN) Eugene identified these communities as cities of similar size and development history to Eugene. This chapter gives an overview of the community demographics, development patterns, and regulatory requirements. The study includes a review of their economic development, planning department, or an equivalent website material to understand community practices to promote growth. This review consists of any plans or report documents that would show steps taken or intended by the city to support development. These communities also have prevalent organizations dedicated to downtown development, such as a merchant's association, downtown associations, advocacy groups, and other involved stakeholders, included in the study. Newspaper articles offer an external assessment of how community practices impacted the community and whether policies lead to beneficial outcomes.

Community Demographics

According to RAIN Eugene, the case study communities Asheville and Huntsville are of similar size and development history. Table 18 includes a breakdown of various demographic metrics for both community's downtown and the city of Eugene to compare the downtowns better. The boundary used to assess the downtown demographics is the census tract that the downtown area is found in and is. Therefore, an approximation of the number and type of jobs that can be found in the downtown, as the boundaries may not align exactly ⁶.

⁶ Downtown Asheville is in Buncombe County census tract one, and Downtown Huntsville is in Madison County census tract 31.

TABLE 18: DOWNTOWN DEMOGRAPHICS

	Asheville, NC	Huntsville, AL	Eugene, OR
Area of downtown	0.37 square mile	1.67 square mile	0.5 square mile
Jobs downtown	7,649	10,441	8,367
Population	1,499	5,116	3,635
Population that lives and works downtown	391	755	1,113
Major industries	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; and Accommodation and Food Services	Health Care and Social Assistance; and Administration and Support, Waste Management and Remediation	Administration and Support, Waste Management and Remediation, Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, and Accommodation and Food Services

Source: On the Map, 2020; US Census Bureau American Community Survey

The population of the case study communities is relatively low relative to the area of the downtown. The downtown area is more focused on commerce and jobs over housing downtown workers. These workers will be commuting from elsewhere in the city or county.

Asheville appears to be developed more densely than Huntsville. Huntsville is more than four times the size of Asheville in area, but there are only 25% more jobs in Huntsville than Asheville. Dominant industries in these regions do not overlap but seem to be primarily service-based industries. The city of Asheville likely has more offices or mixed-use buildings due to their smaller downtown, based on the dominance of office and restaurant jobs in this area. Huntsville, in contrast, likely relies on a large hospital facility that provides the majority of the downtown's employment, given that this industry provides a significant portion of the downtown's jobs. When it comes to understanding worker demographics of the area, women are greater than 50% of those employed in the downtown core of each of these cities.

Downtown Challenges

Asheville and Huntsville communities have expressed concern about several challenges facing their downtown through newspaper reporting, survey responses, and advocacy by downtown associations. These areas of interest include a prevalent homeless population, public alcohol and drug use, cleanliness, safety, and parking. Many of these problems do not have resources readily available to

assess community progress in solving them. An example is homelessness, commonly addressed in a collaborative effort between the county, city, and non-profit entities. This case study will focus on cleanliness and transit availability to promote the downtown. Work to address these challenges are ongoing in the communities. This section will highlight the community challenges and actions taken to address them, encouraging the use of the downtown.



Cleanliness

Cleanliness was a concern indicated in the recent survey for the city of Asheville Downtown Master Plan and a city of Huntsville blog post. Both communities suggest that managing the city's appearance is integral to attracting visitors and retaining businesses. Communities employ varying strategies so the community can meet cleanliness standards.

Asheville Solution

- Awarded a contract for a local landscaping company to improve and clean the Central Business District. Some of the contracted tasks the landscaping company will complete, including litter removal, cleaning trash cans, removing weeds from sidewalks, and pressure washing sidewalks. The Downtown Association has commended this increase in funding, stating that the dedication to a clean downtown is supportive of their members, the business community, and visitors of this space (McDaniel).

Huntsville Solution

- Started the Green Team Initiative, that manages engagement in downtown and overall community appearance management. In the downtown, volunteers conduct neighborhood clean-ups and can opt to "adopt a mile" that they are obligated to keep tidy (Revelle). In addition to these volunteer efforts, the Green Team's downtown arm cleans litter, removes graffiti, and engages in periodic landscaping to promote the downtown.

Parking and Transit



Generally, access to the downtown is imperative, and if people cannot easily park downtown, alternative modes must be available and encouraged to draw people to the area. In the past, residents and businesses in both communities have complained about parking accessibility in the downtown. Business owners indicate that inadequate parking is anywhere from detrimental to their business. Residents also expressed frustration in finding parking to visit the downtown. Huntsville residents and users express particular concern in the "growing pains" of inadequate parking as new businesses develop as the community draws new events and conferences. Users are often confused about where they can find parking in the city on any given day, resulting in driving more before parking.

Asheville Solution

- Asheville has focused on investment in transit in the downtown. The Asheville 2018 Transit Master Plan led to increased frequency, later service times, and new routes throughout the city, in part to promote access to the downtown (McDaniel, Newly adopted Asheville Transit Master Plan to result in more and better ART bus service). These options provide a diverse array of options for downtown users to access the space, although these developments did not have related monitoring or any updates newer than 2019.

Huntsville Solution

- Increased parking stock through construction of a new parking garage and improved community information about locating parking, especially during conferences and events in the downtown.

Policies and Practices

In addition to addressing challenges, content analysis shows policies and practices in which the study communities work with their business community. These practices can support new businesses and create a sense of community among existing businesses. Methods include connecting businesses to resources, efforts to understand the demographics of business owners in the city and simplifying permitting and licensing processes.

Connections to Resources

Both Asheville and Huntsville emphasize providing resources to their business community. A standard method of streamlining resources is to include a database or toolkit of resources available for any variety of development in a community. These resource lists can provide both technical resources and financial opportunities available to businesses through city, county, state, or non-profit support. In Asheville, the toolkit provides a brief description of eligibility for the resource and offers links to applications and additional details for each. This method allows a user to assess their need and qualification for said resource quickly. To be useful, websites and resource links must be up to date. Asheville's Community Event Partnerships Fund is an opportunity for city partnership for events that meet Community and Economic Development goals, including; supporting a diverse community, contributing to a local economy, investing in life-enriching programs, and demonstrating sustainability (City of Asheville Community and Economic Development , 2019). This funding opportunity is the only source in Asheville's toolkit that is not a loan program.

Although Huntsville does employ a similar database of resources, the city also has planned a task force of small business owners, community members, and economic development organizations mentioned in its Comprehensive Plan. The objective of the task force is to provide businesses with proper support to meet their needs. The actual use of this task force is unclear, as a review of press releases and

committees serving the city, do not show meeting minutes or actions by this task force. Implementing this strategy could offer many benefits, including an improved understanding of the business owner's perspective and opening opportunities for future collaboration and problem-solving between public and private interests.

A Sense of Community

Community and creating a sense of dedication to small businesses is expressed as a priority in the case study communities, especially as it pertains to the City of Huntsville. A series of promotions and events hosted in conjunction with the city gives local businesses a sense of commitment. The city promotes a Small Business Saturday and a Shop Local celebration during National Small Business Week. Another popular campaign for area businesses is Huntsville Restaurant Week, which highlights the many restaurants operating in Huntsville. This community also engages in a recognition activity in the city, the Huntsville Madison Chamber of Commerce Annual Small Business Awards, themed as Huntsville's version of the Academy Awards is a celebration of small businesses that thrive and work in the community (City of Huntsville, 2020).

Permitting Processes and Applications

The Asheville Community and Economic Development office includes a business inclusion arm of the department to identify women and minority-owned businesses so that they may be recognized and meet city goals of ensuring equal opportunity for business owners from these groups. This effort seeks to widen participation and competition in the commercial arena and ensure that public funds are spent effectively (City of Asheville, Community and Economic Development , 2020). The website page includes links to resources and guides for applying for business certification and is framed as a call to action to identify these individuals.

Asheville also incorporates a questionnaire for new business owners or developers that indicates the required types of permits and licenses for their project, along with estimated fee amounts (City of Asheville Development Services , 2019). This questionnaire is called [Asheville Open for Business](#) and asks questions about the business type, location, permits, and fees, then provides a summary to the individual. Following the completion of the questionnaire, if the owner chooses to move forward with an application, the Asheville Open for Business tool will allow the individual to submit a permit application to the city directly from the survey, retaining the information already entered.

Analysis

Communities in this study face a variety of challenges and have shown an effort to draw businesses and visitors to their communities. Following a review of various practices and initiatives that communities use to address these challenges, an analysis has occurred to explain potential implications and recommendations for the city of Eugene.

1. **Engaging Business Owners.** The communities contrast each other in their use of volunteer versus predominantly paid labor in keeping their downtowns clean for users. Combining these two methods could create a balance between city investment and community engagement in the city of Eugene. Further, including organized volunteer efforts can assist in creating a sense of

ownership and community among business owners and residents of the downtown for those who seek to contribute.

Implementing a task force to monitor and better understand the needs of the business community is a beneficial step. It would add to conversations between business owners, city development staff, and other organizations. It could be a method to conduct engagement with the business community, while gathering data and better understanding their needs and perspectives, especially as it relates to hard problems facing the downtown.

2. **Expanding and specifying incentive programs.** Both communities provide incentive programs for their communities and rely heavily on databases or toolkits to offer current and prospective business owners a comprehensive list of opportunities through the city, county, state, and non-profit organizations. The majority of funding opportunities in both communities are loans to support capital improvements, renovations, or small business start-ups. Neither community indicated the effectiveness nor use of the city's incentive programs.
3. **Clarify the permitting processes.** While permitting processes and applications are citywide, this community's efforts to encourage a simplified process can be a contributing factor in drawing prospective business owners to the community. There is a potential for these surveys to include questions about potential interest and qualification for city-sponsored incentives or support to streamline these processes further.
4. **Promote downtown businesses.** Encouraging a weekly or monthly event that promotes business and draws residents downtown could be an effective method to showcase the strong support for small businesses. This function would be suitable in a downtown area, encouraging makers, artists, musicians, and other activities to use the downtown space and showcasing businesses. Other popular and similar options include sponsored gallery strolls, open house nights, or diner passports that encourage visitation at many businesses in the core. These efforts would require significant partnerships between the city, businesses, and non-profits to organize and implement. Including a variety of options that showcase the diversity and variety of businesses in the core will be vital to ensure that more than one industry benefits from this practice. Awards and recognition can go a long way in sharing community successes with other business owners and the community. The city of Eugene engages in placemaking events, primarily through the cultural services department. These events draw artists, musicians, and makers to the downtown core to create a vibrant downtown atmosphere. These innovations can expand to include retail, restaurant, and other businesses downtown to build a sense of community and rapport between the City and businesses downtown.

Summary

The communities of Asheville and Huntsville have experienced growing pains as their downtowns continue to develop. Residents and business owners are increasingly concerned about parking, transportation, safety, and cleanliness as new people visit these downtowns. In answering how the city of Eugene can encourage new businesses to occupy available space in the downtown, Asheville, NC and Huntsville, AL have offered several helpful practices that Eugene can model. Providing simplified and direct information and encouraging a sense of community and dedication to business owners are things that both communities do well. Implementing and adapting the practices outlined in this chapter could

further support a growing Downtown Eugene's business community as the city continues to change and face challenges.

Findings and Recommendations

Understanding the findings from the GIS, case study, and interview methods from this study, there are several areas where the city of Eugene is doing well, and some that could see some improvement to better support business communities. Presently, it seems that there are no significant shifts in investment between the core and downtown when comparing the beginning of the study timeline to 2019. Interviewed business owners feel generally supported, and most would not move locations due to preexisting factors. Offering more support and acknowledgment of businesses needs can help retain and encourage new business activity in the area. Through this study, we can say the following about business development patterns in and around Downtown Eugene:

- 1. Businesses may be growing outside of the core, but the core has not experienced a significant development shift.** The periphery includes some special areas, such as the Jefferson Westside, Whitaker, and Riverfront, that are seeing some growth based on the trends observed in GIS analysis. Further, in the 2020 State of the City address, Mayor Vinis discussed that these special areas are "expanding the downtown core." This study observed through GIS analysis that while development is occurring in the periphery, there have not been recent shifts in business development away from downtown. Buildings in this area have seen investment and overall have a reasonably limited vacancy, especially as it pertains to customer-facing retail and restaurant businesses. Past development and gaps in the downtown may remain in the perception of development downtown. This perception is not indicative of the actual changes in downtown. The data shows that while there are vacancies in the core, these vacancies have seen positive changes in value. Overall, there are limited parcels which saw a decline in tax lot valuation during the study timeframe. This area has grown and improved during the study period.
- 2. Finding available space that suits a business operation is a challenge in developing Downtown.** Business owners cited a long search for a location that met their specific needs. This sentiment spanned owners in an office, restaurant, and retail setting. Some businesses discussed moving several times, whether around the core or periphery, before settling on their preferred location. We see these challenges reflected in GIS analysis, knowing that the majority of vacancies occur in what are believed to be office spaces. There may be a more significant burden in finding a location on retail or restaurant-oriented businesses in the downtown.
- 3. The city can improve communication about incentives and resources available to downtown business owners.** The interviewed businesses did not use incentive programs offered by the city of Eugene. While this does not mean that they go unused by business owners in the downtown, interviews did indicate some confusion about who could apply and what these incentives offered. Interviewees who were small businesses stated that they did not believe that incentives applied to their business, feeling that the incentives support larger businesses or significant development projects. Case study analysis showed that other communities also offer business incentives, but they include specifics about who is eligible for which incentives in the

description. Case study communities also provide a variety of tools and resource lists for new and existing businesses to use, including information about resources offered by other city departments or non-profits that support business development. The city could model a comprehensive resource list after these examples to provide businesses ease in understanding and selecting appropriate resources.

Recommendations

The findings from this research point to four key areas that the city of Eugene can improve their support of development in the downtown and foster it for the future: creating a development toolkit, increasing business community engagement, community events, and recognizing perceptions of downtown. This research coincided with the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak in Oregon. While these recommendations support the development of Downtown Eugene, they are not an economic recovery or response strategy to the COVID-19 impacts on businesses. These actions are relevant to ongoing, long-term investment and development occurring in the downtown. They will lead to improved relationships between the city and businesses, creating a sense of community among downtown businesses, and clarifying information about starting and supporting businesses.

- 1. Create a downtown development toolkit.** Adapting the current resources, incentives, and development requirements would improve the business community's access to information. Resource lists can include financial assistance, advice for working with the city, and understanding the specific steps in the development process could aid new businesses in the area. Using an online questionnaire tool may be resource-intensive, but this would offer those applying for permits a quick understanding of what permits and paperwork they need to take care of to open. If modeled after Huntsville, this option could further support downtown business owners by transferring the applicant's information from the questionnaire to the permit application. Connecting users of the tool to applicable business incentives would clarify confusion individuals have about their ability to apply for and receive incentives from the city.
- 2. Increase business community engagement to understand needs and leverage business owner interest in problem-solving.** Engaging this community will improve the understanding of the challenges and needs of the business community in Downtown Eugene. One form could be a business task force that allows business owners and the city to come together and discuss challenges and identify solutions. Given that some business owners are interested in contributing to solutions to community challenges, the taskforce format can offer a method to connect with likeminded business owners. These opportunities for collaborative work and engagement can lead to innovative problem-solving techniques for the downtown area.
- 3. Sponsor or host community events to showcase the downtown business community.** Gallery strolls, passport programs, and other activities can improve the use of downtown and increase visits to local businesses. These practices have proven useful in the case study communities and through Eugene's placemaking strategy, especially by Cultural Services. While these events activate the downtown space, they are often not explicitly targeted to supporting businesses. Supporting passport programs, for example, promotes visits and purchases at local businesses, with raffles and prizes for full passports, can be an effective method to introduce visitors to businesses new and old in the community. These events create a sense of community among participating restaurants or retail businesses. Further, interviews indicated that the city and

business community were often not on the same page, with some business owners feeling a lack of support from the city. Coordinating events and programs that directly promote businesses and draw activity to the downtown will help to address this concern.

While community events can be a way to improve business development and retention outcomes in the city, timing these functions will be of considerable importance, especially given the ongoing public health crisis surrounding Covid-19. Given the circumstances, it is not realistic to implement this strategy immediately. Following recovery stages, events are a valuable option to encourage visits to local businesses and downtown.

- 4. Acknowledge and address perceptions of downtown.** There are several perceptions of downtown, indicating that this space is lacking development or seeing a shift to the periphery area. The findings of this study do not suggest that development in the periphery is mutually exclusive from development in the core. It appears that development in both areas is ongoing and leading to value improvements. It would be beneficial to highlight the improvements and new growth that has been ongoing in the city to dispel the idea that development is shifting out of downtown.

Summary

These recommendations are intended to be actionable steps that the city can take in furthering relationships and rapport with businesses in the downtown. They are in no way a comprehensive list of actions that the city can take, rather a connection to data, perspectives, and models that the city can use to improve an understanding of development in the downtown and retain businesses that choose to develop here. Support for the downtown businesses is even more prevalent than ever, given ongoing economic impacts related to COVID-19. Fostering relationships between the city and the downtown business community will take time and effort. It is my goal that these findings and recommendations from this study emphasize opportunities to serve the downtown business community better and promote business development downtown.

Conclusion

This research began with a question about the business development of downtown Eugene. City of Eugene staff were concerned that businesses were choosing periphery locations over locations in the downtown core to start their business. This research indicates that, at this time, development has not shifted from the core to periphery. Eugene has engaged in immense development and placemaking of the downtown in the past decade, filling pits, encouraging renovation and development of new and existing buildings, and engaging in capital infrastructure projects like redesigning the Park Blocks and installing EugNet fiberoptic internet. There has been significant beneficial change over the past several years at supporting new businesses in the downtown. This study began in an attempt to answer three questions:

1. Where are businesses developing relative to the downtown core?
2. What factors are causing or contributing to business owners choosing periphery locations for their business?
3. How can the City of Eugene attract new businesses to occupy available spaces downtown?

Based on the research done here, new businesses and investment in the downtown area are occurring both in the core and in the periphery. There has not been a significant shift away from the downtown core between 2014 and 2019. Factors influencing businesses are generally price, location, and a space that fits their needs. Business owners are usually interested in being in the downtown, especially when spaces suit their needs. Further, some see personal value in investing in an area that is so important to the community, whether through locating, or addressing community problems. Case studies showed that other cities offer models that the city can use to successfully support businesses in developing in the downtown, including promoting events and easy access to resources and information on websites.

The findings from this research indicate some dissatisfaction among small business owners with the city organization. The relationship with the city is generally fine, however small business owners see the city as unsupportive. They cite a lack of relevant resources, poor responses to problems, and a culture that devalues small businesses in the community. Small businesses play a significant role in creating a vibrant and full downtown space and it is often these types of businesses that attract and retain larger offices and tech businesses who want to locate in an urban setting surrounded by restaurants and other businesses. There needs to be clarity on the resources and dedication from the city in their support of small to mid-sized businesses downtown to ensure that the space remains a vibrant location with diverse commercial use.

There are many options the city of Eugene may use to encourage development in Downtown Eugene. The recommendations from this study are based on findings from a review of Eugene's development context through GIS analysis, conversations with business owners, and a review of other community's business development strategy. To promote downtown business development, the city should:

1. create a development toolkit,
2. increase engagement of the business community,

3. bring business-focused community events and programs to downtown, and
4. acknowledge and address perceptions of the downtown.

To be effective, these recommendations will require collaboration and inclusion of the business and non-profit communities to be effective. A development toolkit must incorporate resource and knowledge from a wide diversity of business and development focused organizations, including non-profits. Partnering with outside organizations in developing will crowdsource knowledge and experiences in the development process which can lead to a robust and effective resource for new business owners.

Engaging the business community will improve the city's understanding of the needs and challenges of downtown business owners, in addition to partnering with these interested business owners in addressing downtown community concerns. To do accomplish this engagement, the city can organize a task force with business owners and city staff in membership. The city could conduct interviews and surveys with existing and potential business owners to receive a wider sample of experiences than available for this study.

Business focused events will also be a venue for collaboration with businesses and non-profits in the community. This function could be a product of the engagement conducted in the previous recommendation. There are many forms that these events can take to support a wide variety of businesses. The selected events should be collaborative and targeted to support trade, hospitality, and arts as these are sectors that rely heavily on foot traffic in the downtown. These efforts contribute to the placemaking objectives from the 2016 Placemaking in Eugene report, which calls for community programming, art, and gatherings throughout the downtown (Project for Public Spaces , 2017). Business events will add to this conversation by supporting a key demographic of users of the downtown, those who operate and are employed downtown.

The final recommendation to acknowledge the perceptions that surround downtown and be direct about the methods and actions the city is taking to address them will offer clarity to the users and business owners in downtown. The city should support these solutions with data and transparent communication as they move forward.

These four recommendations are opportunities for improved relationships and understanding in what the city of Eugene can offer to support the business community. The recommendations will support future development and growth in the downtown, especially as the economic, business, and perceptions of downtown change over time.

Covid-19 Impacts

As stated earlier in the report, COVID-19 has impacted downtown businesses. While these recommendations are not formatted to be economic reopening or emergency actions, there will come a time when we are past the immediate impacts. Offering support to downtown businesses will be increasingly important for downtown. Implementing the recommendations from this research will provide improved access to information, financial support through incentives and revenues from events and programs, and a sense of community among downtown businesses and the city.

As of concluding this research, both the City of Portland and Eugene have introduced measures to offer retail and restaurants to receive permitted use of sidewalks, parking spaces, and streets to conduct business. These adaptive measures in response to Covid-19 health concerns can be extended to large community gatherings and business focused events that were recommended in this study. Models of large outdoor events with restaurants and retail storefronts predated Covid-19. Eugene can look to these examples, like; Park City, UT Savor the Summit or Winnipeg, Canada, Table for 1201 that operate large, outdoor restaurant centered events annually (Marcotte, n.d.). These functions involve business, non-profit, artist, and city partnership to operate successfully. Using these and similar events as models, the city can safely engage in community events to support the business community, placemaking, and those who live and work in the downtown.

Other items that the city should consider regarding Covid-19 recovery include prioritizing where resources are spent in relation to business incentives. As seen in this study, some business owners in the community feel that the financial resources to support them are not there. Given the financial problems anticipated after this crisis, the city has an opportunity to improve transparency and share how the city's financial incentives like loans are being allocated within certain business sectors. A tiered model with the most essential businesses being funded as the base, receiving greater revenues and support and the highest tier being a landing place for smaller allocations or less essential businesses. This range can help the city determine where the most necessary spending for incentives and business support is, especially as the community looks to recover financially and support new and existing businesses in opening their doors in downtown.

Downtown Eugene has not yet seen the shifting from core to periphery that was questioned in this study. Given the new world we live in, the city will have to consider methods to retain the sense of place they have dedicated the last decade to developing. Communities are expecting business closures and shifts in the way business is done. This time of transition is an opportunity to act on the interdependence among businesses and how together they all make a vibrant downtown. The recommendations laid out in this study can offer improved relationships with the business community, improved communication, and directed actions of support for the business community. These actions are by no means comprehensive to ensure vitality of the downtown, but they will be helpful steps to keep the good work that Eugene has done in building up downtown.

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Appendices

<i>Appendix A- Literature Review.....</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>Appendix B- GIS Data and Maps</i>	<i>65</i>
<i>Appendix C- Interview Guide Draft Script</i>	<i>76</i>
<i>Appendix D- Interview Recruitment Materials</i>	<i>78</i>
<i>Appendix E- IRB Determination Letter.....</i>	<i>83</i>

Appendix A- Literature Review

Downtowns have concentrated commercial activities including offices, retail, cultural, recreation, and entertainment businesses (Jamal 2018). Traditionally, the focus of a downtown was to support its Central Business District, but in recent years, authors view housing, retail, and entertainment overshadowing traditional office focus of the downtown (Strom 2008).

Downtown spaces offer a sense of place to a community with resources, amenities, employment and entertainment. The physical structures in a downtown offer a sentimental value to a community, marking a historic event or change in time (Rypkema 2003), offering diverse gathering spaces for the community. In addition to the emotional and convenience of a dense, vibrant urban space, there are unique public health benefits that a vibrant urban space offers users (Braun and Malizia 2015). The density often seen in downtowns contributes to a community's property and income tax, often being a notable source of the city's revenue to pay for services and projects to further improve the community (Riposa 1996).

Downtowns across the globe have had concerns with decline. Policies and political forces encouraged decentralization through large lots, highways, and superstores that often cannot be accommodated in a downtown space. As people and businesses have shifted to the suburbs, cities have a difficult time filling vacant properties and maintaining that sense of community feel in downtowns (Faulk 2006). Redevelopment of downtowns has become a practice to make community improvements and encourage infill, but zoning policy and ordinances often make infill difficult for developers (Lewyn 2012). Losing the important downtown space can leave a community with a figurative (and sometimes literal) hole at the core of the community.

Overall, the literature points to these challenges, which largely focus on policy, political will, parking, and safety of downtowns. Challenges inhibit the use of downtown by residents and encourage businesses to locate outside of these spaces. Cities address the challenges through varying strategies, including the use of financial and policy incentives to attract businesses. This review will examine the challenges and comparative incentives to locating in a downtown to offer context for the study of Eugene, Oregon business development shifts from core to periphery.

Challenges

Definitions and uses of the downtown are changing with the times. People seek areas with 24-hours of activity in which to live, work, and play downtown (Faulk 2006). Tied to these changes are barriers that limit the ability of a city to respond and react to these changes. Past policy, political will, parking accessibility, and safety can hinder development and success of downtowns. The potential that downtowns don't meet the needs of the residents, visitors, or business owners, could shift these uses to other areas, resulting in expansion of the commercial area or into suburbs (Faulk 2006).

Policies

Municipal code and zoning ordinances can affect a community's ability to draw new businesses and development. Ordinances can require that new development provide parking spaces, build with specific

designs, landscaping, and signage that developers might see as a barrier to building in a space (Faulk 2006; Lewyn 2012). Developers might then select a location without these requirements to build or establish their business.

Auto-centric decisions to connect cities in America have led to downtown decentralization and expansion to suburbs, including American highway policy, limited alternative modes of transportation, and zoning requirements for developers, especially policies that require the provision of parking. America's highway policy sought to connect large cities with 41,000 miles of roadways, which resulted in shifting housing patterns to the suburbs, and the development of malls and big box stores not suitable for downtown spaces (Cannon 2012). Auto-centric policies draw more cars to the road, leading to congestion and a need to expand to other areas to accommodate additional users of the road space and downtown. Communities have addressed concerns about highway and auto policies through support of public transportation, and dedication to limiting road capacity (Filion, Charney, and Weber 2015; Lewyn 2012).

Parking

A study from Laramie, Wyoming observed that having too much or too little parking in a downtown can hinder parking (Gribb 2015). Ensuring a downtown has sufficient parking stock draws potential visitors to the downtown space and quell worries from business owners that customers will visit businesses where they can find parking. In contrast, too much parking can lead to over use and traffic congestion, especially in larger cities (Faulk 2006; Gribb 2015). Finding a balance in parking is essential to address both sufficiency and access to the downtown space. A potential solution to parking concerns, is to include multiple modes of transportation, including bus, bike, and parking infrastructure around the downtown (Gribb 2015). Another option that can be pursued by downtowns, once their parking stock meets the demand, is limiting minimum parking requirements, which can encourage new development to move outside of the downtown space to avoid parking requirements (Lewyn 2012).

Safety

Public safety is an ambiguous term. It is often related to the perceptions of some activities or users of a space as unclean or unattractive, making the majority group feel unsafe and unwilling to use a space. The "broken windows" theory of crime has produced the idea that minor crime will lead to more severe or frequent crime in an area, leading to declined use of a space (Tretter 2013). This theory has led to increased citations of minor crimes including, panhandling, vagrancy to shift unapproved use of a space to other areas. Policing of these crimes is generally limited to the downtown, to encourage visits and result in a vibrant area where individuals can shop, eat, and recreate (Tretter 2013).

In contrast, public spaces with diverse activity can make some other users feel safe (Nemeth 2004). This dichotomy is seen in LOVE Park in Philadelphia concerning the skateboarding community. Some surveyed said the skateboarders intimidated them and others said they were more intimidated by the space when skateboarders were banned and not using the park (Nemeth 2004).

Political will and public trust

Political will is necessary for any public facing project. Developers, city workers, business owners, and/or citizens could call for action, but without political backing a project or policy will not move forward.

Asheville, NC is an example of this phenomena, where there was limited political will to move forward on a development strategy for the downtown until a grassroots organization came together to move policy forward (Strom and Kerstein 2017). In contrast, examples from Chicago and Toronto have the political will to move their projects forward and ensure economic development in their cities (Filion, Charney, and Weber 2015).

Incentives

Development incentives are used to attract businesses to a city by making the city seem more competitive or business friendly than other communities (Wassmer and Anderson 2001). Few studies examine the actual impacts of such policies (Wassmer 1994). The three studies reviewed were conducted using Michigan cities to analyze the effectiveness of incentives like tax increment financing, industrial development bonds, property tax abatement, and downtown development authorities on impact business location selection and community economic health. The conclusions of these studies, note that not all incentives should be equal and that they are not end all, be all measures to improve development outcomes in a community (Reese 2014; Wassmer 1994; Wassmer and Anderson 2001).

In 1994, Wassmer conducted a study analyzing the effectiveness of local incentives on economic development, concluding that while some incentives can be effective, the majority of situations do not have a positive effect on development outcomes (Wassmer 1994). A 2001 study conducted by Wassmer and Anderson, which reviewed employment rate, poverty rate, and commercial property values for cities in the Detroit metro area to assess whether incentives impact business location. Authors concluded this study by presenting three options for incentives, but favor a targeted local incentive for communities that are fiscally blighted. (Wassmer and Anderson 2001) Reese assessed the impacts that incentives have when used in combination with one another. Her assessment is important as incentives may have differing impacts from one another and are surely being used in conjunction with other development incentives. This study concludes by seeing no significant increase to economic health through the use of varying incentive program combinations.(Reese 2014) The heavily quantitative analysis by these authors leads to further questions about the increased use of incentive programs by governments over the years. If these are neutrally or negatively effective in practice, there is likely a need to consider alternative methods to encourage development in a community.

The above incentives are by no means comprehensive. Cities also have the ability to designate downtowns as historic districts, which can come associated with rehabilitation tax credits for eligible historic buildings (Faulk 2006). This option also allows some control over the design of a historic building, contributing to the community's sense of place. Low interest loans from the city or development organization can support redevelopment of the downtown space, promoting infill in the downtown space through partnerships with local banks and referrals from the city (Faulk 2006).

Enterprise zones are an incentive used by cities, which offers businesses within the zone access to tax credits, and fewer regulation, leading in theory to a higher profit (Faulk 2006; Riposa 1996). Zones tend to occur in economically depressed areas of a city, so there is some risk to a developer in their location selection, which is believed to be offset by the increased profit margins (Riposa 1996). Enterprise zones success is heavily influenced by the size of the zone, which should be targeted to a specific area in need

of support. Some communities have enterprise zones the size of the city, or several miles wide, which are less effective at generating the development and jobs intended by the program (Riposa 1996).

Gaps in literature

The literature described here discusses challenges and incentives to downtown business development. The challenges to developing in a downtown space likely do not end with policy, parking, safety, and political will. My research will address the perceptions of business owners relative to their experience developing in or near the downtown space, specific to the community in Eugene.

Further gaps in the literature include the limited explanation of small interest loans as an incentive for local communities. The single article that discussed small interest loans did not specify how these are used, who generally receives the loans, what use of the program is, and how effective the program is. Small interest loans are a prominent incentive for the downtown area in Eugene, and this study will address the perspective and use of these incentives by local business owners.

Summary

The literature surrounding downtown function and business development addresses the challenges to developing downtown and incentives to promote this infill despite challenges. Understanding the context of other communities and research grounds my research with expectations and strategies to address common concerns with business owners and users of the downtown space. It also illustrates how communities are addressing the shifts in downtown development.

Downtown Eugene has experienced several of the described challenges in its history, predominantly related to political will for redevelopment and trust in the actions taken to support the downtown. Their mixed history dates back to converting a portion of the street to a pedestrian mall and shortly after its completion, converting it back to a roadway. The community has expressed concerns about parking accessibility, and safety relative to the downtown. The concerns are present notwithstanding a greater commercial and event activity in the space and accessible public transit and bike infrastructure throughout the space. The reflection of challenges and incentives in Eugene and other communities across the United States contextualizes the expected outcomes and findings from this study. This study examining business development patterns adds to this literature by providing a Eugene specific context, allowing a comparison to findings from elsewhere in the country in similar work.

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Appendix B- GIS Data and Maps

Data source summary table

Data	Year(s) used	Accessed From
Commercial Building Permits Issued	2014-2019	City of Eugene
Commercial Vacancy Data	2020	Lane Council of Governments
Zoning and Land Use	2019	Lane County
Commercial Tax Lot Valuation	2007, 2019	Lane County
Licensed Liability Corporations (LLC)	2014-2019	Oregon Secretary of State's Office

Data cleaning methodology

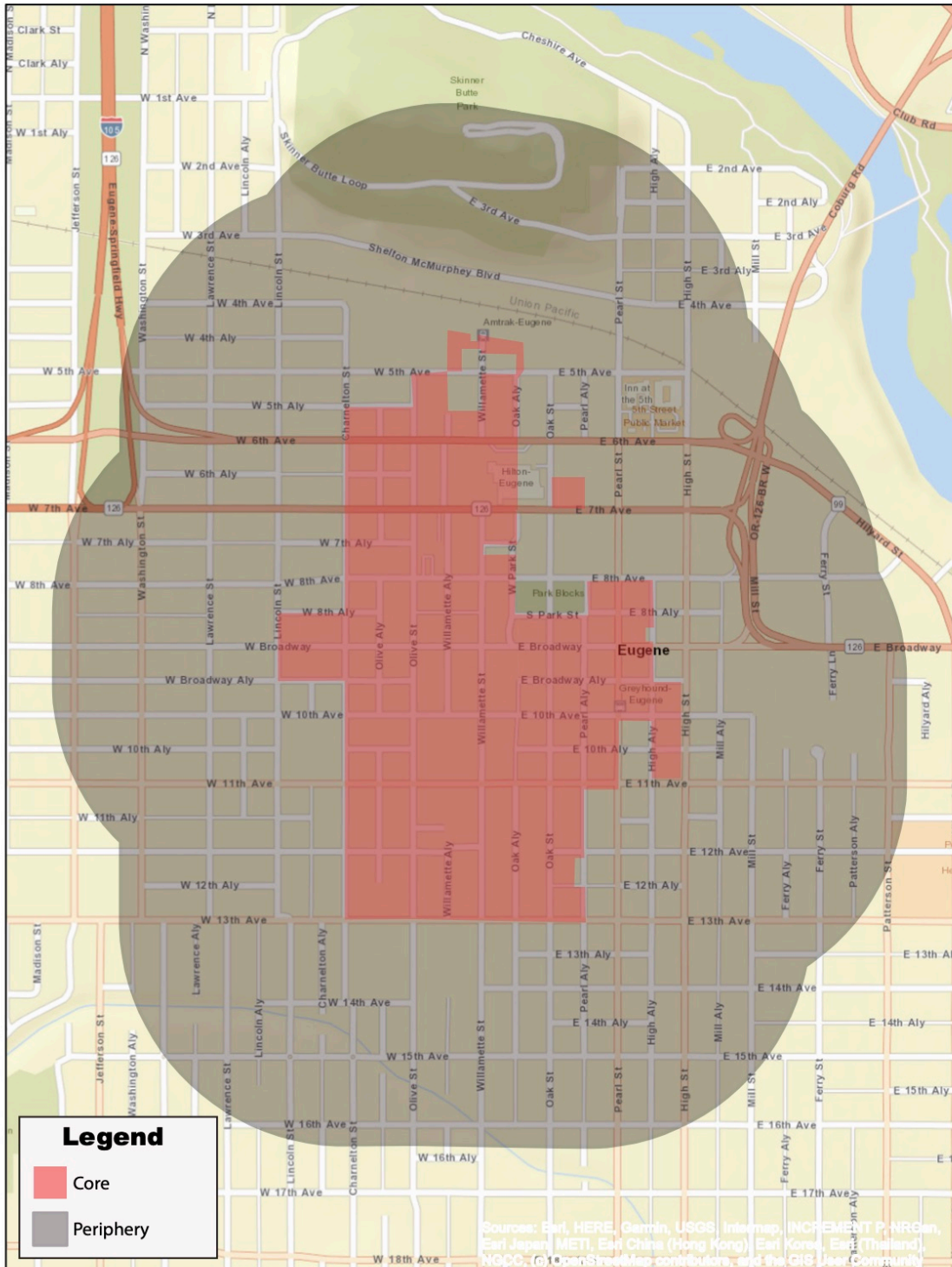
At the time of collection, much of the data included duplicate entries, primarily the LLC and Building permit data. This could be related to multiple site improvements that may have occurred at a property over time that would have required multiple building permit applications. This could result in two or more permits issued for one property for electrical and construction permits for example. In regard to LLC data, duplicates were often as a result of agents, owners, or managers being listed in addition to or in place of a mailing or physical address on the Secretary of State LLC registry. LLC duplicates were limited to a single entry, placing priority on either the place of business address or mailing address. When these were not available, the duplicates were limited to one single entry of another classification, such as agent, owner, manager, or other. PO Boxes were omitted from this analysis as they do not support mapping a geographic location. Unfortunately, data points that only included PO Boxes were omitted from the study completely due to the lack of geographic information related to the business. Building permit data was limited to a singular address, to show whether improvements had occurred during the study time period. Suites or offices within the same building were treated as separate addresses.

GIS Analysis Summary Table

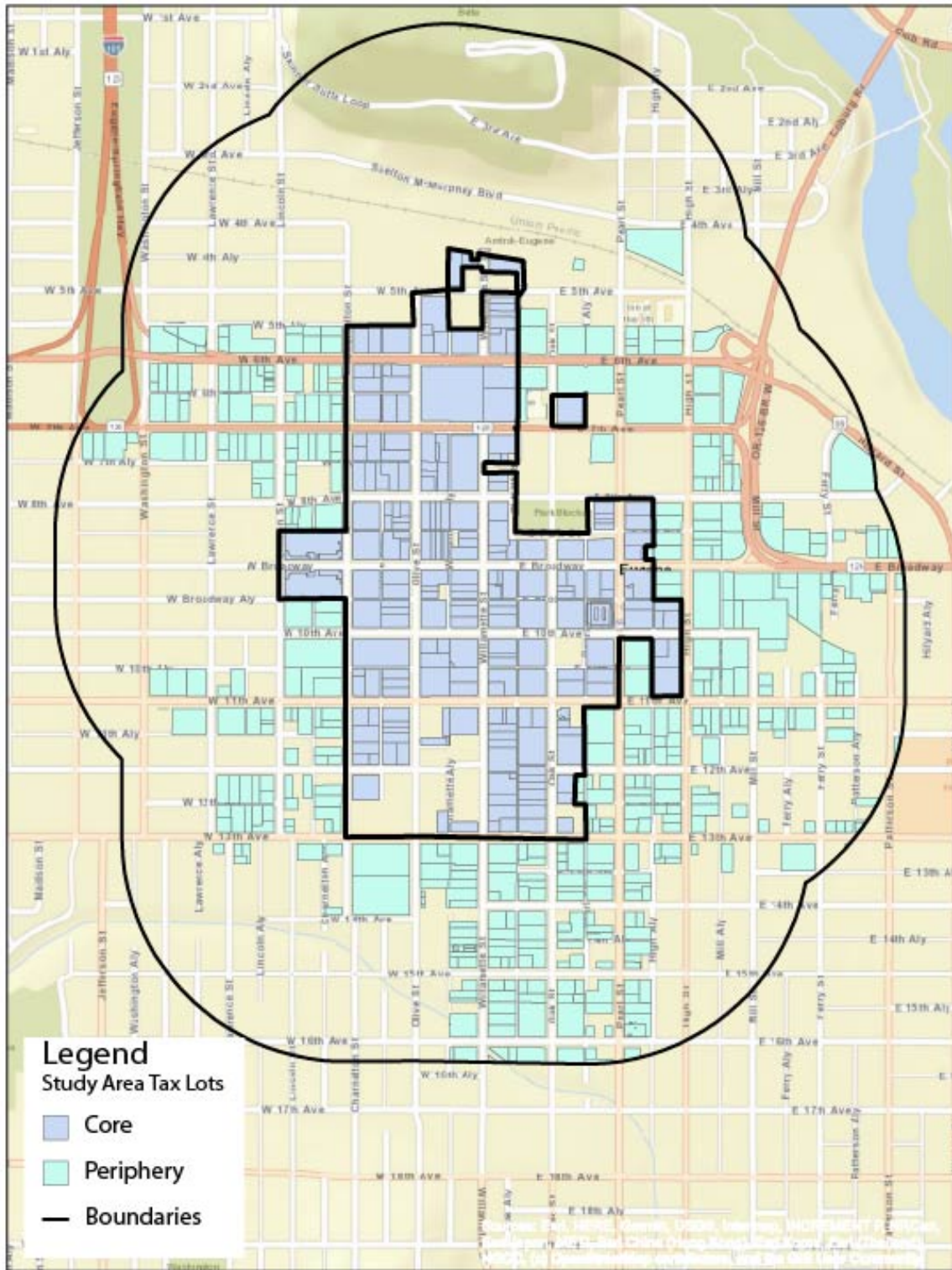
Indicators		Core	Periphery	Total
Area of Boundary line		104.80	446.90	551.70
Area in Commercial Acres		67.30	104.30	171.60
Tax Lots		260.00	452.00	712.00
Tax Lots per Acre		3.86	4.33	4.15
Vacancies		18.00	11.00	29.00
Vacancies per Acre		0.27	0.11	0.17
LLC Registrations	All Years	731.00	360.00	1091.00
	1-10 LLCs	52.00	97.00	149.00
	11-25 LLCs	4.00	5.00	9.00
	26-50 LLCs	2.00	1.00	3.00
	51-75 LLCs	0.00	1.00	1.00
	76-100 LLCs	2.00	0.00	2.00
	101-125 LLCs	0.00	0.00	0.00
	126-150 LLCs	1.00	0.00	1.00
	151-169 LLCs	1.00	0.00	1.00
	tax lots w/ no LLC	198.00	348.00	546
LLC per acre	10.86	3.45	6.36	
Building Permits	All Years	348.00	239.00	587.00
	2019	2.00	10.00	12.00
	2018	18.00	18.00	36.00
	2017	7.00	30.00	37.00
	2016	22.00	31.00	53.00
	2015	129.00	82.00	211.00
	2014	170.00	68.00	238.00

Building Permits	All Years	59%	41%	100%
	2013	17%	83%	100%
	2012	50%	50%	100%
	2011	19%	81%	100%
	2010	42%	58%	100%
	2009	61%	39%	100%
	2008	71%	29%	100%
Building Permits per acre	All Years	5.17	2.29	3.42
	2019	0.03	0.10	0.07
	2018	0.27	0.17	0.21
	2017	0.10	0.29	0.22
	2016	0.33	0.30	0.31
	2015	1.92	0.79	1.23
	2014	2.53	0.65	1.39
Valuation	Negative	26.00	26.00	52.00
	Below Average	267.00	727.00	944.00
	No Change	175.00	658.00	833.00
	Above Average	29.00	38.00	67.00
	Positive	94.00	82.00	176.00
Valuation per acre	Negative	0.39	0.25	0.30
	Below Average	3.97	6.97	5.50
	No Change	2.60	6.31	4.85
	Above Average	0.43	0.36	0.39
	Positive	1.40	0.79	1.03

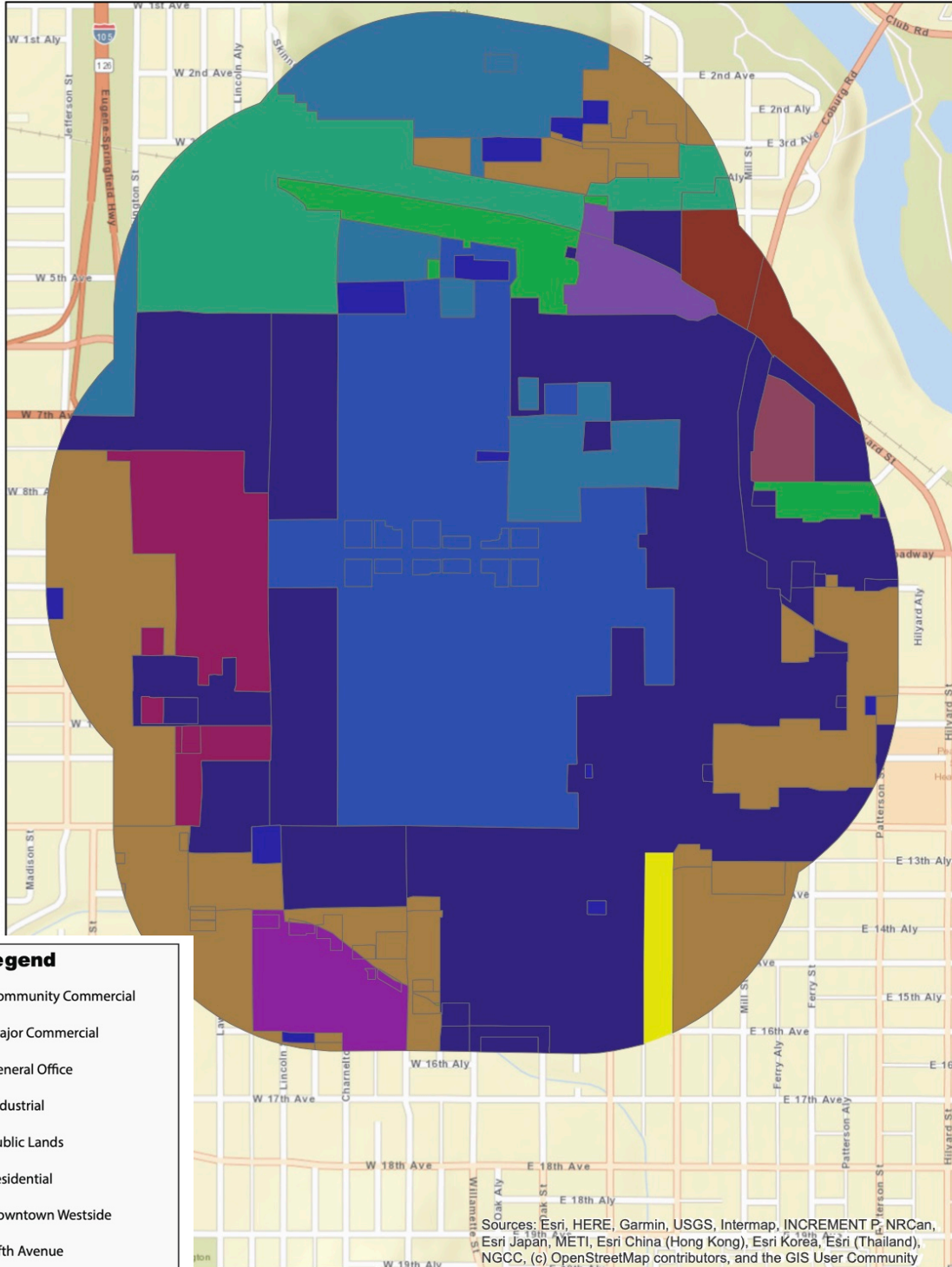
MAP 1: STUDY AREA BOUNDARY



MAP 2: STUDY AREA TAX LOTS



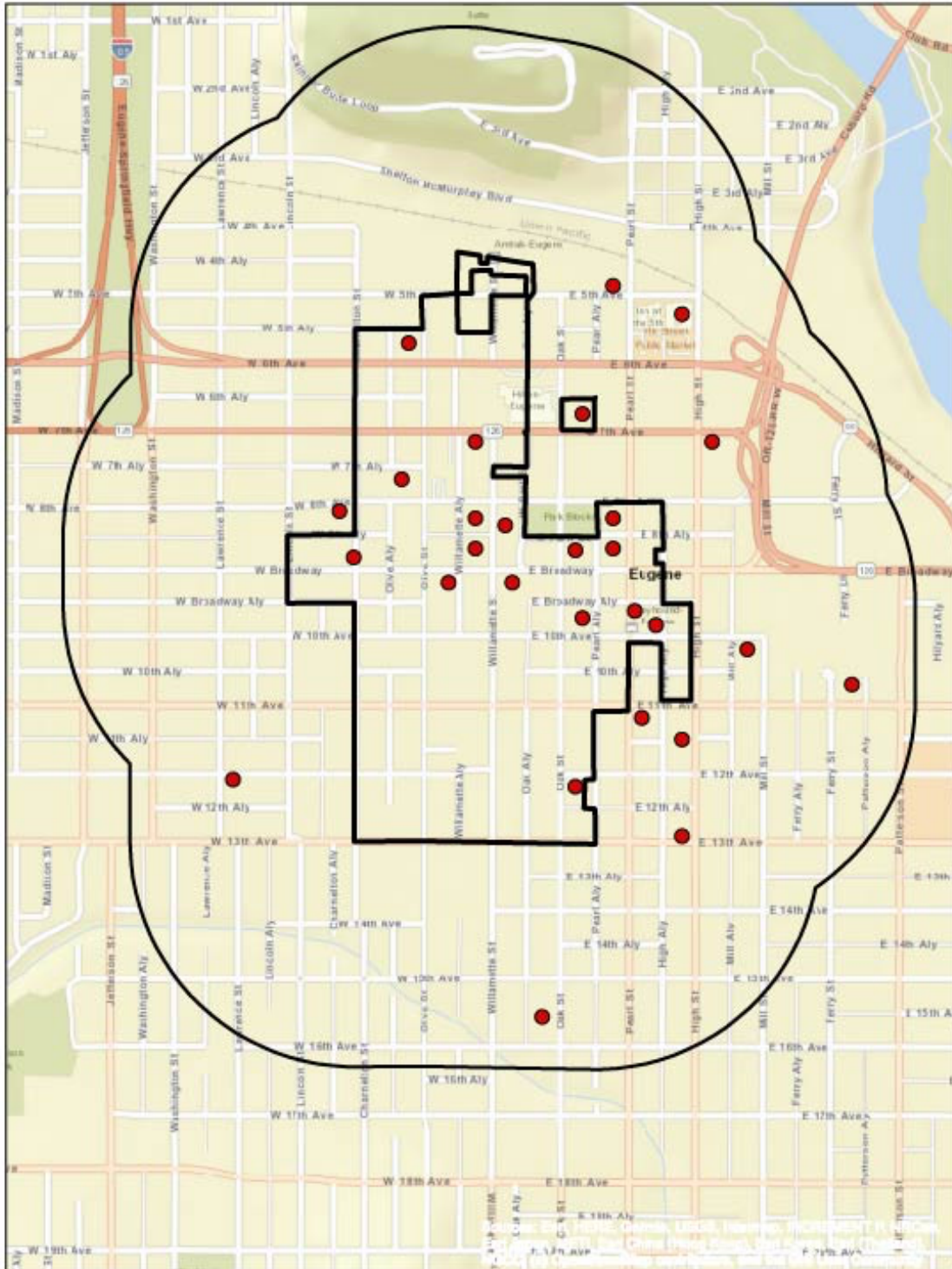
MAP 3: STUDY AREA ZONING



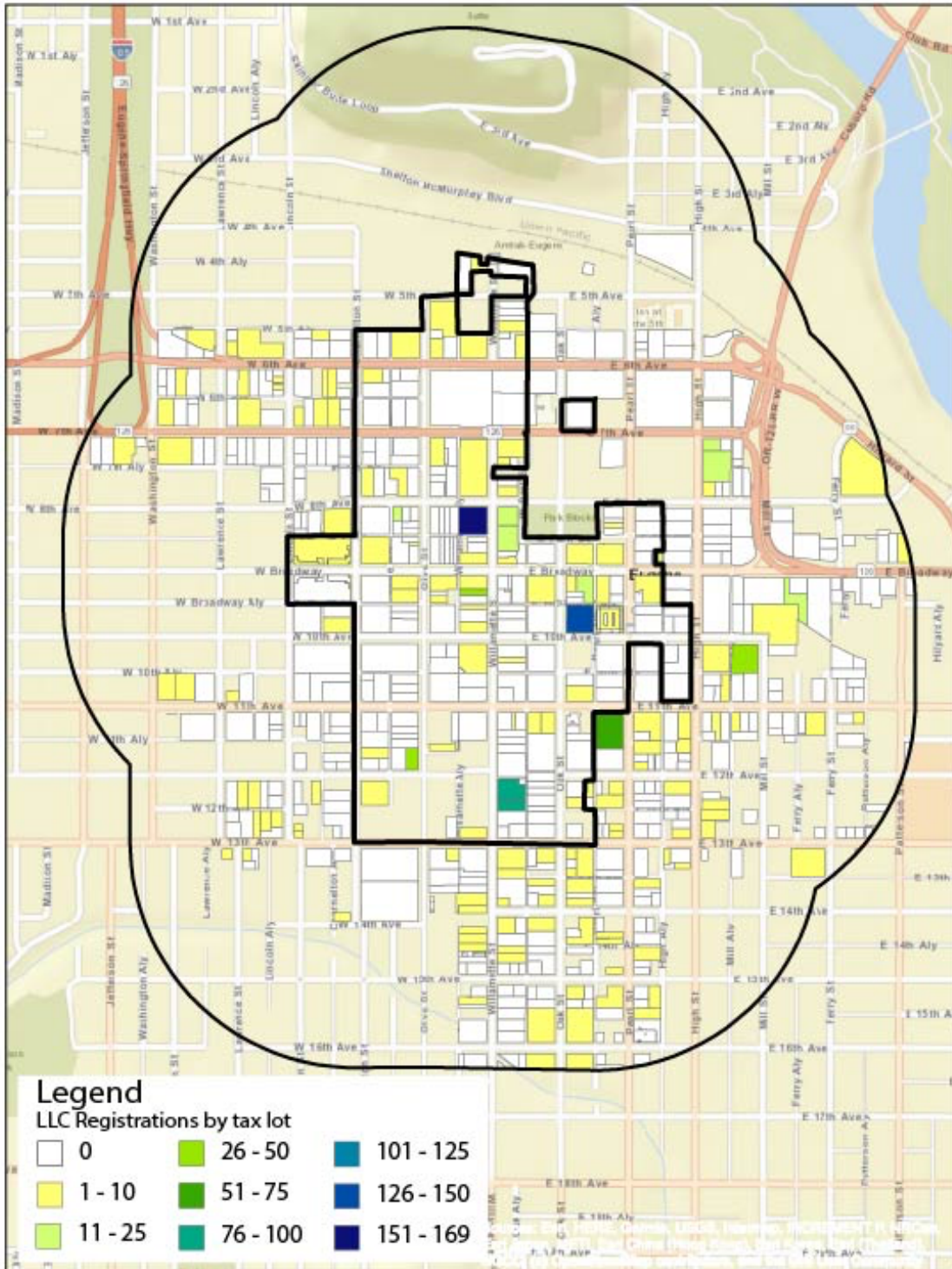
Legend

- Community Commercial
- Major Commercial
- General Office
- Industrial
- Public Lands
- Residential
- Downtown Westside
- Fifth Avenue
- Historic
- Jefferson Westside
- Riverfront Park
- Whiteaker

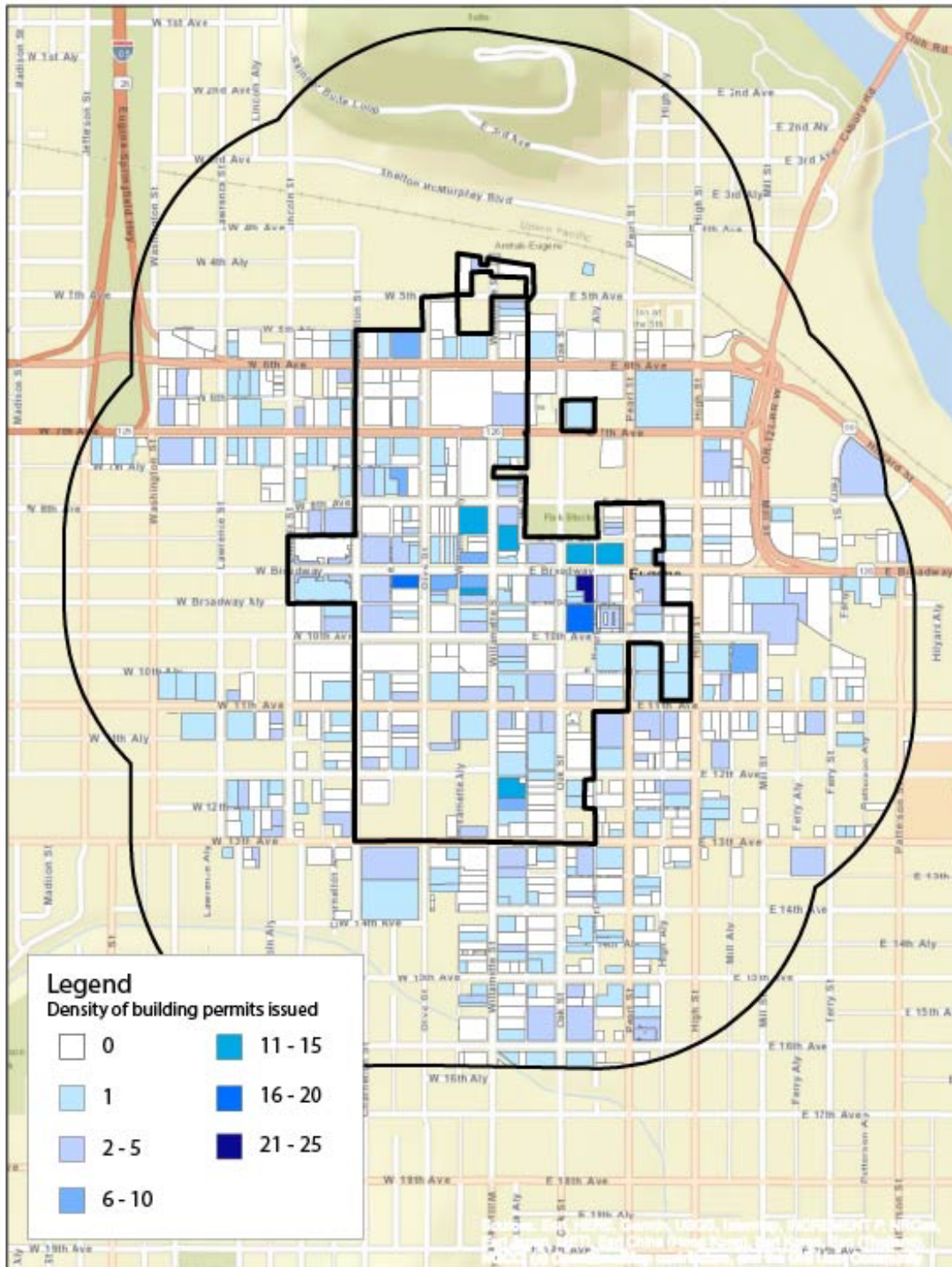
MAP 4: STUDY AREA COMMERCIAL VACANCIES



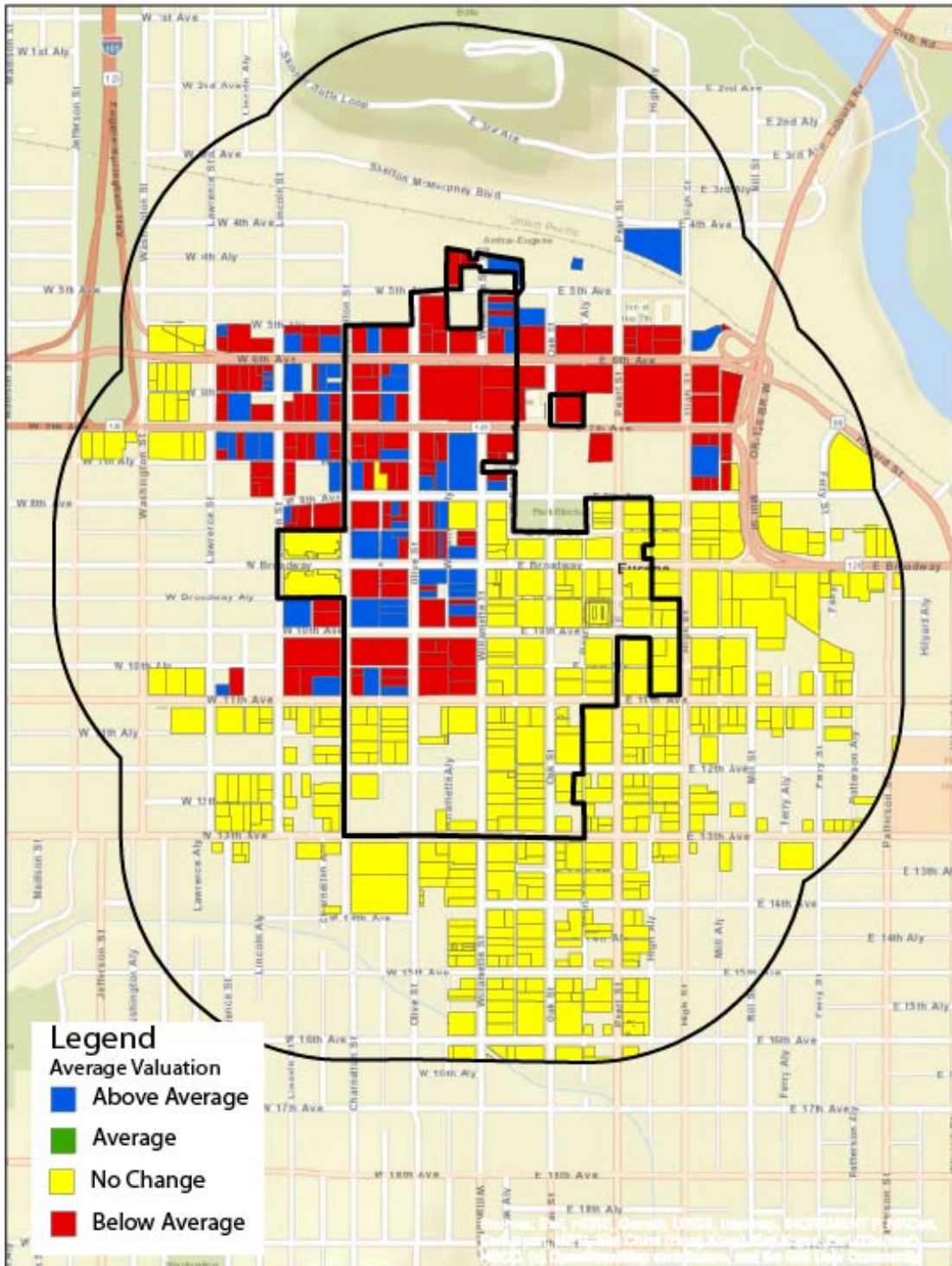
MAP 5: STUDY AREA LLCs



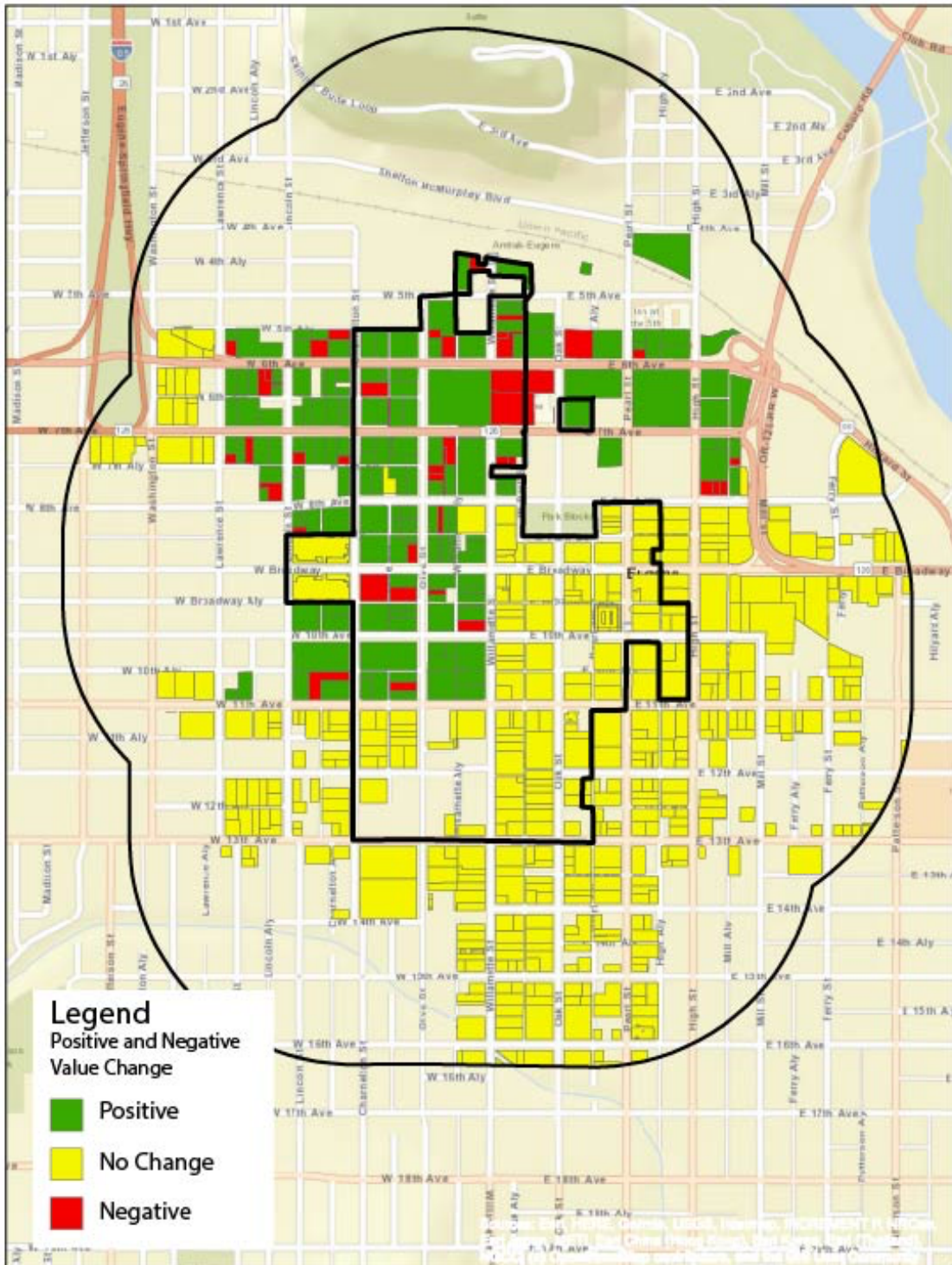
MAP 6: STUDY AREA BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED



MAP 7: AVERAGE TAX LOT VALUATION CHANGES



MAP 8: POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE VALUATION CHANGES



Appendix C- Interview Guide Draft Script

This script will guide the interview process of this study. The participants will be business owners who have been recommended to me to speak to, who have established a business in Eugene in the past 5-years, and whose businesses exist in either the downtown core or the periphery area outside of this core. These boundaries will be defined in the GIS analysis portion of the research. The interviews will assess why business owners select their business location. All interview questions will be open ended. A draft script can be found below.

Introduction and Oral Consent

This study will provide better understanding of the development patterns in Downtown Eugene and the surrounding areas. Your participation will give context to the perspectives of local business owners with property in these areas. You will be asked to give your reasoning for your business site selection, including any benefits or concerns relevant to this location. The interview will also ask a series of questions about your thoughts generally about the downtown and surrounding area to gain your insights into characteristics and development patterns in these areas.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If at any time during the interview you feel uncomfortable and do not want to answer a question, please tell me pass and we can continue to another question. You may at any time stop the interview and request not to be involved. This interview holds minimal risk to participants; therefore, you will not be asked any questions that would put you in greater physical or psychological risk of an ordinary day. All responses will be anonymous and will in no way be connected to your business or department. Additionally, your responses will not be used as a reflection of your business or agency's viewpoint. Knowing these terms, would you like to continue as a participant for this study?

During the interview, I will ask several questions about your perceptions of Eugene's downtown and new development in the area. I will be taking notes. Do I have your permission to record this interview on my laptop or phone?

- (if yes) Thank you, I have started the recorder following your confirmation of consent to record.
- (if no) Thank you, I will proceed with only typed or handwritten notes.

Business Location

- What is your business address?
- How long has your business been at its current location?
- Did you build, purchase, or lease the property?
- What were the factors that contributed to your selection of business location?
 - Since opening your business, would you consider relocating your business due to factors or attributes of the area in which your business is located? Why?
- Were there factors about certain neighborhoods or areas in Eugene that discouraged you from locating your business at another location in the city? What were these factors?

Experience in Development Process

- What extend did you work with the City of Eugene or other organizations in starting your business?
 - Can you share what other organizations or programs you worked with to start your business? (non profits, other businesses, etc)
 - Did you work with the City of Eugene through an incentive program while establishing your business?
 - What if any incentive programs are you aware of for businesses in Downtown Eugene?
- How would you describe your experience working with the City of Eugene?
 - Would you say that your experience in selecting a location, developing your business, and working with the City were timely?
- Have you had much contact or interaction with the City of Eugene in the operation/function of your business? Before opening? Since opening?

Demographics

- What is your business sector/trade?
- Do you have any special business classification? (Women owned business, minority business, etc)
- What type of business do you own? (retail, restaurant, entertainment, etc)
- How many employees to you have? (if multiple businesses, specify by the locations that fall in this study.
- What is your square footage at your business(es)? Does this meet your needs?
- Do you reside in Eugene?
- Do you have anything else to add?

Appendix D- Interview Recruitment Materials

Email to Business Owners

Hello,

My name is Alyssa Gamble. I am conducting research to better understand where new businesses are developing relative to Downtown Eugene. This research will provide insight into trends or patterns that could be used to inform policy in communities similar to Eugene. _____ suggested that you might be interested in participating or learning more about this study. (if applicable)

I know that your time is very valuable. The interview will be fairly brief, 30-minute conversation to get your insight about business and development trends in the City, including any attributes in the city that you feel informs this conversation. Your participation will provide valuable context and insight to this study.

All of your responses will be recorded as anonymous and only your job sector and/or profession will be identified. If you are interested in participating, or if you have any questions, please respond to this email. I will be conducting interviews from now until April 2020. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Thank you for your time,

Alyssa Gamble
Planning, Public Policy, and Management
University of Oregon

Phone Call to Business Owners

Hello, my name is Alyssa Gamble. _____ suggested that you might be interested in participating or learning more about this study. (if applicable) I am a Graduate Student at the University of Oregon. This Spring I am conducting research to better understand where new businesses are developing relative to Downtown Eugene. Specifically, I am looking for business owner's insight about business and development trends in the City, including any attributes in the city that you feel informs this conversation. Interviews will take approximately 30-minutes and your responses will be recorded anonymously, not attributed to yours or your businesses name. Your participation will be very valuable to this study, is this something that you might be willing to participate in?

Consent for Research Participation

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study. The box below highlights key information about this research for you to consider when making a decision whether or not to participate. Carefully consider this information and the more detailed information provided below the box. Please ask questions about any of the information you do not understand before you decide whether to participate.

Key Information for You to Consider

Voluntary Consent. You are being asked to volunteer for a research study. It is up to you whether you choose to participate or not. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled if you choose not to participate or discontinue participation.
Purpose. The purpose of this research is to better understand business development patterns and experiences in the City of Eugene.
Duration. It is expected that your participation will last 30 minutes, and up to 1 hour at most.
Procedures and Activities. You will be asked to participate in a single open-ended interview.
Risks. This research does not require you to engage in anything of greater than minimal risk tasks.
Benefits. There are no direct benefits for participants in this research, however the societal benefits could be informed policy and development codes for the future that adapt to workers preferences related to shared work environments.
Alternatives. Participation is voluntary and the only alternative is to not participate.

Who is conducting this research?

Alyssa Gamble is enrolled at the University of Oregon, and is the primary researcher asking for your consent.

Why is this research being done?

The purpose of this study is to better understand business development patterns and experiences in Downtown Eugene. You are being asked to participate because you own a business in or near the downtown area. Upon consent, you and approximately 10-15 other professionals in the area will take part in this research.

How long will I be in this research?

Depending on how much you would like to share, you will be participating in this interview for about 20-30 minutes. You can anticipate your participation will last one hour at most.

What happens if I agree to participate in this research?

If you agree to be in this research, your participation will include a single interview. A follow up email and/or phone call for clarification might occur, but only if necessary to clarify answers to interview questions. You will be informed of any new information that may affect your willingness to continue participation in this research.

What happens to the information collected for this research?

Information collected for this research will be used to compile a general analysis of the experiences and perspectives of business owners who have businesses in or near Downtown Eugene. The answers provided in your interview will be anonymously coded into themes and key findings to understand the experiences of business owners in the City of Eugene and their understandings of downtown characteristics.

How will my privacy and data confidentiality be protected?

I will take measures to protect your privacy by not affiliating your name or contact information with your responses in the interview. I will take measures to protect the security of all your personal information, including secured documents that are not visible or could be accessed by anyone outside the primary research investigators. All data for this research will be saved on a protected computer, and only be used by the principal investigator or faculty advisor. The data collected will be discarded after two years. Individuals and organizations that conduct or monitor this research may be permitted access to and inspect the research records. These individuals and organizations include: the faculty advisor, Rebecca Lewis from The University of Oregon. Inspecting the research records may include accessing information such as your phone number and email address. The permission to use [this-these](#) data will be tracked and obtained either in-person or electronically. In either case, data will be unidentifiable to the participants' contact information.

What are the risks if I participate in this research?

This research presents risks no greater than of minimal risk. Therefore, your participation includes no activity or procedure that you would be ordinarily encountered with in your everyday life. Furthermore, does not require any physical or psychological examinations or tests. Since your answers will be anonymous, the only possible risk associated with this study: social risk: (e.g., social stigma, chance of being ostracized or shunned), economic risks (e.g., change in employment or insurability) is very unlikely.

What are the benefits of participating in this research?

Your perspective of downtown development and starting a business can provide better understanding to local city governments in how they prioritize development initiatives to encourage economic development. This study has the potential to inform policy or partnerships to better support the local economies in a community.

What are my responsibilities if I choose to participate in this research?

If you take part in this research, you will be responsible for answering interview questions honestly. If you would like to stop participating during the interview, you may request so at any time.

What other choices do I have besides participation in this research?

It is your choice to participate or not to participate in this research. Therefore, the alternative to participating in this research is to not participate.

What if I want to stop participating in this research?

Taking part in this research study is your decision. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You do not have to take part in this study, but if you do, you can stop at any time. You have the right to choose not to participate in any study activity or completely withdraw from continued participation at any point in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with the researchers or the University of Oregon. If you experience harm because of the project, you can ask the State of Oregon to pay you. If you have been harmed, there are two University representatives you need to contact. Here are their addresses and phone numbers:

General Counsel/ Office of the President

1226 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-1226
(541) 346-3082

Research Compliance Services

5237 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-5237
(541) 346-2510

A law called the Oregon Tort Claims Act may limit the amount of money you can receive from the State of Oregon if you are harmed.

Will I be paid for participating in this research?

Participating in this research is voluntary, therefore there will be no compensation for your time.

Who can answer my questions about this research?

If you have questions, concerns, or have experienced a research related injury, contact the research team at:

Alyssa Gamble

435-830-3707
agamble@uoregon.edu

An Institutional Review Board (“IRB”) is overseeing this research. An IRB is a group of people who perform independent review of research studies to ensure the rights and welfare of participants are protected. UO Research Compliance Services is the office that supports the IRB. If you have questions about your rights or wish to speak with someone other than the research team, you may contact:

Research Compliance Services

5237 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-5237
(541) 346-2510

Appendix E- IRB Determination Letter



DATE: January 27, 2020

IRB Protocol Number: 01152020.021

TO: Alyssa Gamble, Principal Investigator
Department of DSGN Policy Research and Engagement

RE: Protocol entitled, "Business Development Patterns in Downtown Eugene"

Notice of Review and Exempt Determination

The above protocol has been reviewed and determined to qualify for exemption. The research is approved to be conducted as described in the attached materials. Any change to this research will need to be assessed to ensure the study continues to qualify for exemption, therefore an amendment will need to be submitted for verification prior to initiating proposed changes.

For this research, the following determinations have been made:

- This study has been reviewed under the **2018 Common Rule (45 CFR 46)** and determined to qualify for exemption under **Title 45 CFR 46.104(d)(2)**.

Approval period: January 27, 2020 - January 31, 2021

If you anticipate the research will continue beyond the approval period, you must submit a Progress Report at least 45-days in advance of the study expiration. **Without continued approval, the protocol will expire on January 31, 2021 and human subject research activities must cease.** A closure report must be submitted once human subject research activities are complete. Failure to maintain current approval or properly close the protocol constitutes non-compliance.

You are responsible for the conduct of this research and adhering to the Investigator Agreement as reiterated below. You must maintain oversight of all research personnel to ensure compliance with the approved protocol.

The University of Oregon and Research Compliance Services appreciate your commitment to the ethical and responsible conduct of research with human subjects.

Sincerely,

Chris Duy
Research Compliance Administrator
Research Compliance Services

CC: Rebecca Lewis



INVESTIGATOR AGREEMENT: Principal Investigator and Faculty Advisor Responsibilities

A. Conduct of the Research

1. I accept responsibility for the ethical conduct of this research and protection of participants as set forth in the Belmont Report, Declaration of Helsinki, the Nuremberg Code, the Common Rule, and the ethical principles of my discipline.
2. I accept responsibility for ensuring this research is conducted according to:
 - (a) sound research design and methods;
 - (b) the parameters of the Research Plan and activities described in these application materials;
 - (c) the applicable terms of the grant, contract and/or signed funding agreements; and
 - (d) applicable laws and regulations, including those for protecting the rights, safety, and welfare of human subjects.
3. I certify that I am or my faculty advisor is sufficiently qualified by education, training, and/or experience to assume responsibility for the proper conduct of this research. I accept responsibility for ensuring that members of this research team, including study staff and trainees, are appropriately qualified, trained and supervised.
4. I accept responsibility to personally conduct and/or directly supervise this research. I certify that I have sufficient time and resources to properly conduct and/or supervise this research.

B. Ensuring and Maintaining Compliance

1. I will comply with relevant regulatory and institutional requirements, including those relating to conflicts of interest, responsible conduct of research and research misconduct.
2. I understand it is my responsibility to ensure that any research personnel, including myself, responsible for the design, conduct, and reporting of research declare any potential conflicts of interests related to the research and to maintain current records. I will ensure changes in conflicts of interest are promptly disclosed to RCS.
3. I will ensure that prospective agreement and/or informed consent is obtained and a copy is provided to participants, when appropriate.
4. I will ensure all research activities are either determined exempt or have the necessary IRB approval prior to beginning human subject research activities. I will obtain confirmation of continued exemption or otherwise seek IRB approval for any amendments to this research.
5. I will conduct this research within the approved project period. I will submit a closure report form prior to the protocol expiration or within 45 days of completion of all activities involving human subjects or identifiable participant data. Alternatively, I agree to submit a progress report to request continued approval and extend the project period at least 45 days in advance of the expiration date.
6. I will maintain approval, as applicable, with collaborative entities including approvals from other countries or jurisdictions.
7. I will promptly report to RCS and/or the IRB (no later than seven days of discovery) any instances of noncompliance and any unanticipated problems.
8. I will assist in the facilitation of any monitoring and/or auditing of study activities and/or records as required by RCS, the IRB, funding entities, sponsors, and/or any federal and state regulatory agencies.



C. Investigator Records, Reports and Documentation

1. I will maintain research records, all protocol materials, and any other documents associated with this research (e.g., research plan, consent materials, and RCS and/or IRB correspondence).
2. I will maintain records for at least three years after this research ends, or for the length of time specified in applicable regulations or institutional or sponsor requirements, whichever is longer. I will take measures to prevent accidental or premature destruction of these records.
3. I will ensure the safe and secure storage of this research information (whether in paper or electronic formats) and will protect the confidentiality of the information in accordance with any provisions described in the protocol.
4. I will submit written reports to RCS and/or the IRB and permit inspection of the research records as required by RCS and/or the IRB.



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS
RESEARCH COMPLIANCE SERVICES

EXEMPT DETERMINATION APPLICATION

Purpose: Some categories of minimal risk research qualify for exemption from the federal regulations and do not require additional oversight by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) or may only require limited IRB oversight; however, these studies do require review by Research Compliance Services (RCS) to determine their eligibility and the degree of IRB oversight. An exempt determination from RCS is required in order to conduct exempt human subject research at the University of Oregon. Use this form to request an exempt determination from RCS.

Instructions:

- **Initial requests:** Complete this form only after you have assessed (use [self-assessment tool](#)) that your study may qualify for exemption under one of the exemption categories.
- **Amendment requests:** To amend research previously determined exempt, complete this form only after you have assessed (use [self-assessment tool](#)) that your study may still qualify for exemption. Provide responses according to the amended research plans. If your study is no longer eligible for exemption, stop and prepare an [Initial Review Application](#).

RCS will review and verify the exempt determination. If RCS determines the study does not qualify for exemption, you will need to prepare and submit a protocol using the Initial Review Application.

If you self-determine your study qualifies for exemption, complete this application and submit the items noted in the Submission Checklist at the end of the form to Research Compliance Services (RCS).

PART I: STUDY AND INVESTIGATOR INFORMATION

Study Title:	Business Development Patterns in Downtown Eugene		
Principal Investigator (PI) Name:	Alyssa Gamble	PI Department:	Planning, Public Policy, and Management
PI UO Email:	agamble@uoregon.edu	PI Telephone:	435-830-3707
Role at UO:	Graduate Student	If other, specify role:	

➤ A faculty advisor must be listed on all student protocols.

Faculty Advisor:	Rebecca Lewis	Faculty Advisor Department:	Planning, Public Policy, and Management
Faculty Advisor UO Email:	rlewis9@uoregon.edu	Faculty Advisor Telephone:	541-346-4432

1. Exemption Verification Request (select one of the following):



INITIAL REVIEW REQUEST

➤ What are the anticipated project dates for beginning and ending human subjects research?

Start (month and year): January 2020

End (month and year): June 2020



AMENDMENT REVIEW REQUEST



EXEMPT DETERMINATION APPLICATION

<p>➤ Describe the changes:</p>	
<p>➤ Provide a rationale for the changes:</p>	
<p>➤ Is the project end date changing?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Revised End Date (month and year):</p>	
<p>➤ For amendment requests, provide responses in the remainder of this form according to the amended research plans.</p>	
<p>2. Research Personnel Form. All research personnel, including the Principal Investigator, Faculty Advisors, Co-Investigators, and Research Assistants, must be listed on the research personnel form.</p>	
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research Personnel form attached.</p>	
<p>3. Is this research funded or sponsored from an internal UO or external source?</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No If "yes," complete and attach a Funding and Sponsorship Form for each source of funding.</p>	
<p>PART II: SCREENING</p>	
<p>➤ Complete this section to identify study characteristics that do not qualify for exemption.</p>	
<p>1. Below are specific characteristics that disqualify a study for exemption. Answer the following:</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>(a) Does this research involve the use of any drug, substances, or biologics?</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>(b) Does this research involve the use of an investigational medical device?</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>(c) Does this research involve the use of any ionizing radiation (X-ray, DEXA scan, etc.)?</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>(d) Does this research involve the use of genetic information and/or tests?</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>(e) Does this research propose to study prisoners as a targeted population? Note: If a participant becomes a prisoner, the study will no longer qualify for exemption.</p>
<p>2. In some circumstances, studies that otherwise qualify for exemption must undergo expedited or full board review by the IRB. These are typically due to additional, study specific circumstances. Answer the following to determine if your study is otherwise ineligible for exemption:</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>(a) Is there a state, federal or other applicable law (e.g., tribal or other international law) that prohibits an exemption determination?</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>(b) Does the agency funding your research or an agency with whom you are working prohibit an exemption determination and require that you have IRB approval?</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>(c) Any other study specific requirements that prohibit exemption (e.g., sponsor's requirements)?</p>



EXEMPT DETERMINATION APPLICATION

✓ **If you answered “yes” to any of the questions above, stop completing this form and proceed with preparing an [Initial Review Application](#).**

PART III: EXEMPT CATEGORY(IES) (§.104)

➤ Based on the brief description and/or your completion of the [self-assessment tool](#), select one or more of the categories below that appear to be applicable to your research. Then complete the Exempt Category Worksheet(s) as directed.

1. Research conducted in an established or commonly accepted educational setting that specifically involves normal educational practices. Complete [Exempt Category 1 Worksheet](#).
2. Research that ONLY includes interactions involving:
 - (1) Educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), OR
 - (2) Survey procedures, OR
 - (3) Interview procedures, OR
 - (4) Observation of public behaviorComplete [Exempt Category 2 Worksheet](#).
3. Research involving ONLY benign behavioral interventions in conjunction with the collection of information from an adult subject through verbal or written responses or audiovisual recording. Complete [Exempt Category 3 Worksheet](#).
4. Secondary research using identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens, collected for another purpose. Complete [Exempt Category 4 Worksheet](#).
5. Research and demonstration projects conducted or supported by a Federal department or agency that is designed to study, evaluate, improve, or otherwise examine public benefit or service programs. Complete Exempt [Category 5 Worksheet](#).
6. Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies. Complete [Exempt Category 6 Worksheet](#).
7. — Storage or maintenance of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens for potential secondary research use for which [broad consent](#) is required.
NOTE: UO IRB does not plan to implement the broad consent option at this time. Limited exceptions may be considered. Please contact Research Compliance Services if you are interested in requesting an exception and having your research considered under this category.
8. Secondary research involving the use of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens for which [broad consent](#) was obtained.
NOTE: If you propose submitting a study for consideration under this exemption category, you must consult with RCS to obtain the category worksheet for submission due to the additional consent provisions and tracking requirements.



EXEMPT DETERMINATION APPLICATION

✓ If you were unable to identify an applicable exemption category and/or the worksheet(s) leads you to determine the study does not qualify for exemption, stop completing this form and proceed with preparing an [Initial Review Application](#).

PART IV: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

➤ Attach a [research plan](#) to this application detailing the information solicited below or provide responses to the following questions. Check *either 1 or 2 below*.

1. Research plan attached, skip to Part V
- OR -

2. No research plan attached, answer the following questions.

a. Briefly describe the purpose of your research and the anticipated contributions to generalizable knowledge (e.g., research aims, description of any anticipated publications, etc.).

b. Provide an overview of your research design and methods.

c. Describe your study population including estimated number and age range of participants.

PART V: INFORMED CONSENT

- Obtaining the informed consent of potential participants is ethically important in the responsible conduct of research. While the informed consent process for exempt research does not need to include all elements of informed consent in the Common Rule regulations, researchers should employ a consent process when interacting with participants.
- Researchers are strongly encouraged to continuing using the [informed consent guidance](#) and [template](#).
- At minimum, the informed consent process needs to include disclosure of the following to participants:
- That the activity involves research.
 - A description of the procedures.
 - That participation is voluntary.
 - Name and contact information for the Researcher.

1. Does the research involve interaction with participants?

Yes No

If "yes," the research design must include an informed consent process or provide justification for not obtaining informed consent from participants.

Research plan is attached and includes a description of the informed consent process or justification for not obtaining informed consent

- OR -



EXEMPT DETERMINATION APPLICATION

- Describe the informed consent process or provide justification for not obtaining informed consent from participants below:

2. If conducting an informed consent process, provide a copy of the informed consent form and/or script.

- Informed Consent Form/Script attached.
 n/a - not conducting informed consent

3. Does this research involve the use of [Protected Health Information](#) (PHI)?

- Yes No If "yes," [Attach Appendix D - HIPAA](#).

PART VI: OTHER INSTITUTIONS, PERFORMANCE SITES, AND NON-UO RESEARCH PERSONNEL

- Instructions: Complete all required fields to prepare this form for submission to RCS. Upload attachments as prompted. If you have multiple files, these will need to be bundled into a single file before being uploaded.
- See our website for additional guidance on [Collaborative Research](#).

1. Will individuals from outside of the UO (e.g., other universities, hospitals, etc.) be engaged in this research?

- Yes No
- If yes, one of the following agreements/approvals is necessary to provide oversight for their involvement with the research:
 - If any individual is acting independent of an institution with an IRB or their institution is not required to have an IRB, an [Individual Investigator Agreement](#) for the individual will need to be executed.
 - If any individual is acting as an agent of an institution with an IRB, either IRB approval or an IRB Authorization Agreement (IAA) will need to be requested. To request an IAA be considered, submit an [IRB Institutional Authorization Agreement Request Form](#).

Name all individuals acting independent of any site/organization:

- These individuals will need to complete the Individual Investigator Agreement (IIA).

Attach any IRB approvals and/or executed IRB collaborative agreements.

Name all individuals acting as an agent of another site/organization with an IRB. Indicate whether the IRB will conduct their own review or enter into a [collaborative agreement](#):

Attach any IRB approvals and/or executed IRB collaborative agreements.

Name all individuals acting as an agent of another site/organization without an IRB:

- These individuals will need to complete the Individual Investigator Agreement (IIA).



EXEMPT DETERMINATION APPLICATION

Attach any IRB approvals and/or executed IRB collaborative agreements.

2. Will research activities occur at other site(s)/organization(s) other than UO (e.g., public schools, tribes, non-profit organizations, companies, etc.)?

Yes No

- If another institution is [engaged](#) in this research and it has an IRB, approval must be obtained from that institution's IRB. Otherwise, an IRB Authorization Agreement must be executed to defer IRB oversight to one of the participating institution's IRB. To request a deferral, submit an [IRB Institutional Authorization Agreement Request Form](#) for review.
- *If a site/organization does not have an IRB, the site/organization may need grant permission to conduct the research.*
- Documentation of [IRB determinations and Authorization Agreements](#) must be in place prior to engaging in associated human subject research activities.

List all sites and describe the status of any required approvals:

- See our website for additional guidance on documentation requirements for [permissions and approvals](#).

Attach any IRB approvals and/or executed IRB collaborative agreements.

3. Does this research involve activities outside of the United States?

Yes No

If yes, list the country(ies) below and indicate the status of permissions.

Are there additional requirements that apply to research conducted in the listed country(ies)? (e.g., European Union and the General Data Protection Regulations)

- See our website for additional guidance on documentation requirements for [permissions and approvals](#).

Yes, there are additional requirements that apply

If yes, describe and discuss how these are addressed for the proposed research and include any approval documentation.

No, there are no additional requirements that apply

If no permission required, explain.



EXEMPT DETERMINATION APPLICATION

4. Does this research require permission from an internal UO department or service (e.g., Registrar's Office, Campus ListServ, etc.)?

Yes No If yes, list the departments and include applicable documentation of permission. If permission is pending or no permission is required, explain.

PART VII: ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

1. Will this research involve recruiting subjects from a University of Oregon Human Subject Pool(s) (e.g. psychology/linguistics, marketing, or SOJC pools)?

Yes No If yes, list the subject pool that will be used below.

NOTE: Be sure you are familiar with requirements of the pool (e.g., the pools require specific standardized consent language). Ensure you have developed debriefing materials and obtained clearance from the pool coordinator when debriefing is required.

2. Does this research involve procedures, materials, and/or a lab space that requires [UO Environmental Health and Safety \(EHS\)](#) oversight or inspection?

Yes No If "yes," attach relevant clearance or approval documentation (e.g., biosafety committee approval, radiation safety committee approval, etc.).

3. Will this research include obtaining, accessing, or using data from outside sources, e.g., universities, data repositories, government agencies, etc.?

Yes No If "yes," name the source(s) below and answer questions "a" and "b" below. If "no," move to Part VII.

Name of outside source(s): Lane Council of Governments, State of Oregon Secretary of State, City of Eugene, U.S. Census Bureau.

Yes No **(a)** Are there terms, restrictions, or conditions regarding the data?

If "yes," describe:

Yes No **(b)** If "yes," include a copy of the agreement in this submission and contact Innovation Partnership Services at techtran@uoregon.edu to ensure appropriate institutional approval is obtained to enter into the agreement.

PART VIII: CLINICAL TRIALS

• Does the research meet the definition of [clinical trial](#) under NIH or other sponsor requirements and/or FDA, or 2018 HHS regulations?

Yes No If "yes," the principal investigator is responsible for ensuring the additional requirements related to conduct of clinical trials are met:



EXEMPT DETERMINATION APPLICATION

- All individuals involved in the design, conduct, oversight, and management of the clinical trial must complete Good Clinical Practice (GCP) training. Current training dates need to be listed in the Research Personnel Form.
- For NIH sponsored research that meets the definition of clinical trial, research must be registered with and any results submitted to clinicaltrials.gov per program requirements. This may be required by other sponsors or federal agencies.
- For non-exempt research reviewed under the 2018 Revised Common Rule, the informed consent form must be posted to a federal website after the study is closed to recruitment and no later than 60 days after the last study visit by any subject.

See the [RCS Clinical Trials](#) page for more information and guidance.

PART IX: HUMAN SUBJECTS CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- *It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator (PI) to ensure that any research personnel, including the PI, **responsible for the design, conduct, and reporting** of research complete the [Human Subjects Conflict of Interest \(COI\) form](#).*
- *The PI must keep completed copies of all Human Subject COI forms for their records.*
- *The PI must submit with this application Human Subject COI forms only for those individuals who have identified a real, perceived, or potential conflict of interest on their form.*

Yes, conflicts are identified and Human Subject COI form(s) are attached for the following individuals:

No conflicts are identified. Keep a copy of COI form(s) for your records, but do not submit with the application.

[Remainder of page intentionally left blank; acknowledgements and signature page to follow.]



INVESTIGATOR AND FACULTY ADVISOR AGREEMENTS / PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Conduct of the Research

1. I accept responsibility for the ethical conduct of this research and protection of participants as set forth in the [Belmont Report](#), [Declaration of Helsinki](#), the [Nuremberg Code](#), the [Common Rule](#), and the ethical principles of my discipline.
2. I accept responsibility for ensuring this research is conducted according to:
 - (a) sound research design and methods;
 - (b) the parameters of the research plan and activities described in these application materials;
 - (c) the applicable terms of the grant, contract and/or signed funding agreements; and
 - (d) applicable laws and regulations, including those for protecting the rights, safety, and welfare of human subjects.
3. I certify that I am or my faculty advisor is sufficiently qualified by education, training, and/or experience to assume responsibility for the proper conduct of this research. I accept responsibility for ensuring that members of this research team, including study staff and trainees, are appropriately qualified, trained and supervised.
4. I accept responsibility to personally conduct and/or directly supervise this research. I certify that I have sufficient time and resources to properly conduct and/or supervise this research.

B. Ensuring and Maintaining Compliance

1. I will comply with relevant regulatory and institutional requirements, including those relating to conflicts of interest, responsible conduct of research and research misconduct.
2. I understand it is my responsibility to ensure that any research personnel, including myself, responsible for the design, conduct, and reporting of research declare any potential conflicts of interests related to the research and to maintain current records. I will ensure changes in conflicts of interest are promptly disclosed to RCS.
3. I will ensure that prospective agreement and/or informed consent is obtained and a copy is provided to participants, when appropriate.
4. I will ensure all research activities are either determined exempt or have the necessary IRB approval prior to beginning human subject research activities. I will obtain confirmation of continued exemption or otherwise seek IRB approval for any amendments to this research.
5. I will conduct this research within the approved project period. I will submit a closure report form prior to the protocol expiration or within 45 days of completion of all activities involving human subjects or identifiable participant data. Alternatively, I agree to submit a progress report to request continued approval and extend the project period at least 45 days in advance of the expiration date.
6. I will maintain approval, as applicable, with collaborative entities including approvals from other countries or jurisdictions.
7. I will promptly report to RCS and/or the IRB (no later than seven days of discovery) any instances of noncompliance and any unanticipated problems.
8. I will assist in the facilitation of any monitoring and/or auditing of study activities and/or records as required by RCS, the IRB, funding entities, sponsors, and/or any federal and state regulatory agencies.

C. Investigator Records, Reports and Documentation

1. I will maintain research records, all protocol materials, and any other documents associated with this research (e.g., research plan, consent materials, and RCS and/or IRB correspondence).
2. I will maintain records for at least three years after this research ends, or for the length of time specified in applicable regulations or institutional or sponsor requirements, whichever is longer. I will take measures to prevent accidental or premature destruction of these records.
3. I will ensure the safe and secure storage of this research information (whether in paper or electronic formats) and will protect the confidentiality of the information in accordance with any provisions described in the protocol.
4. I will submit written reports to RCS and/or the IRB and permit inspection of the research records as required by RCS and/or the IRB.

INVESTIGATOR AND FACULTY ADVISOR AGREEMENTS / PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- By signing below, the Principal Investigator attests to having read and agrees to uphold the responsibilities and duties as outlined above. In addition, the materials provided in support of this application are an accurate reflection of the proposed research.

Alyssa Gamble

01/02/2020

Principal Investigator Signature

Date

- Electronic signatures acceptable. The name of the Principal Investigator may be typed in the signature line.
- If the person emailing this application is not the Principal Investigator, the Principal Investigator must be copied on this application submission.

REQUIRED FOR STUDENT RESEARCH

- By signing below, the Faculty Advisor attests he/she has read and approves the attached protocol submitted for review. In addition, he/she agrees to provide appropriate education and supervision of the student investigator, and share the Principal Investigator responsibilities as stated above.

Rebecca Lewis

01/13/2020

Faculty Advisor Signature

Date

- Electronic signatures acceptable. The name of the Faculty Advisor may be typed in the signature line.
- If the person emailing this application is not the Faculty Advisor, **the Faculty Advisor must be copied on this application submission and all subsequent correspondence.**



EXEMPT DETERMINATION APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Instructions: Use this checklist to identify all items necessary to compile a complete exempt determination submission. Submit all materials identified below to ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu. Contact Research Compliance Services (RCS) by email or phone (541-346-2510) with any questions.

NOTE: Save this form for the life of the study as it can be updated for future amendment submissions related to the study.

- **If submitting all materials in one document, order the materials as listed below.**
- **For amendments, supplemental materials should be submitted with changes clearly delineated using tracked changes or highlighting.**

Incl.	n/a	Items
Required for Submission:		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	—	Exempt Determination Application, completed and signed by the Principal Investigator and, if applicable, the Faculty Advisor
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	—	Exempt Category Worksheet(s), completed by the Principal Investigator
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	—	Research Personnel Form and solicited applicable training documentation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Human Subject Conflict of Interest (COI) Form (only for those individuals with a potential conflict identified on the form)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Funding and Sponsorship Form with the human subject portion of the grant proposal (only if the study is supported by an award)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Informed Consent/Assent Materials (only when interacting with participants)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Appendix D - HIPAA (if accessing individually identifiable Protected Health Information for research purposes)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	HIPAA Authorization Form (if accessing individually identifiable Protected Health Information for research purposes)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Permissions, support letters, and approval documentation as identified in Part IV of this application
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Clearance or approval documentation from applicable UO Environmental Health and Safety oversight/inspection
Optional for submission, but strongly encouraged:		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A Research Plan and applicable appendices (grant applications or excerpts from a grant will NOT be accepted as a Research Plan)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Data Collection Materials (questionnaires, surveys, data collection forms, focus group/interview scripts, etc.)
The following are items that the investigator should develop as part of conducting ethical research. These items <i>do not</i> need to be submitted to RCS with the application but should be maintained as part of the research records and study administration materials.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recruitment Materials: Emails, letters, scripts, flyers, posters, brochures, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Debriefing Materials
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Release Form for Translators and Transcribers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Data Safety Monitoring Plan
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Data Use Agreement(s)

Suggestions and Tips:

- **Research Plan:** It is expected that a researcher will have developed and will follow a detailed [Research Plan](#). It is recommended that researchers use RCS' [Research Plan Guidance](#) document to assist with developing a plan. While not required, researchers are strongly encouraged to submit a Research Plan with this application to assist with the review of the proposed study activities. Having a well-developed Research Plan will assist the investigator when working through this form and answering the targeted questions and will assist RCS' verification of the exempt determination. Additionally, if the proposed research does not qualify for exemption, IRB review is necessary and a Research Plan will be required for submission.
- **Data/Information Collection Materials:** It is strongly encouraged that a researcher has developed data/information collection materials and assessments (if possible) when developing a research plan and when working through this form. Researchers are strongly encouraged to submit data/information collection materials and assessments (questionnaires, surveys, data collection forms, interview guides/scripts, etc.) to assist RCS' verification of the exempt determination. Additionally, if the proposed research does not qualify for exemption, IRB review is necessary and all data/information collection materials will be required for submission.



EXEMPT CATEGORY 2
EDUCATIONAL TESTS, SURVEYS, INTERVIEWS,
OBSERVATIONS OF PUBLIC BEHAVIOR

<p>1. Does the research include ONLY interactions involving the following?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), OR • Survey procedures, OR • Interview procedures, AND/OR • Observation of <i>public behavior</i> (including visual or auditory recording) – Note that state laws (including Oregon law) may also affect your ability to record public behavior. If permission is required for observation, the setting may not be considered public) 	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<p>Describe the interactions:</p> <p>This research includes interviews with business owners to understand their perspectives and experiences with business development in the City of Eugene. These questions will ask them to provide their perception of community characteristics that did contribute to their selection of business location.</p> <hr/> <p>If conducting <u>observations of public behavior</u>, describe the setting and how/why this is considered public:</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>This research does not qualify for exemption under this category.</p>
<p>2. When the research involves children as participants, are the research activities limited to educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement) or observation of public behavior where the investigator(s) will NOT participate in the activities being observed?</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<p>Describe:</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>This research <u>does not</u> qualify for exemption under this category.</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a	<p>Children are not involved as participants in this study.</p>
<p>3. Select the following condition(s) that apply to this research:</p>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>The information obtained is recorded in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained either directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects;</p> <p>Explain:</p> <p>Interview responses will be aggregated in the report to show common themes in the perceptions. Interviewees will not be identified in the research products without permission from the interviewee.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation;</p> <p>Explain:</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Information obtained is recorded in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects but adequate provisions have been made to ensure that the data collected are appropriately monitored and secured to ensure the privacy of the subjects.</p> <p>Describe provisions to protect privacy of participants:</p>



EXEMPT CATEGORY 2
EDUCATIONAL TESTS, SURVEYS, INTERVIEWS,
OBSERVATIONS OF PUBLIC BEHAVIOR

	Describe provisions to maintain confidentiality of participant data :
<input type="checkbox"/>	None of the above statements applies.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>If you answered 'yes' to Question 1, 'yes' or 'n/a' to Question 2, and were able to select an applicable statement for Question 3, your project likely qualifies for exemption:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Complete any additional category worksheets applicable to your research;○ Proceed with completing Parts III-VI of the Exempt Application Form;○ Submit the items noted in the Submission Checklist at the end of the form to Research Compliance Services (RCS). RCS will review and verify the exempt determination;○ If RCS determines the study does <u>not</u> qualify for exemption, you will need to prepare and submit a protocol using the Initial Review Application. <p>If you answered 'no' to Question 1, 'no' to Question 2, and/or were unable to select an applicable statement for Question 3, this research is not exempt under this category. Return to the screening form to identify alternative categories for exemption. If you conclude that no categories are applicable to your research, your study is not eligible for exemption. Proceed with preparing an Initial Review Application.</p>

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
<p>Note: When amending this form, highlight any changes (e.g., adding a new researcher, change in research role)</p> <p>Name (Last Name, First Name)</p>	<p>Email</p>	<p>Institutional Affiliation (Name of the researcher's home institution. If not affiliated with an institution, indicate "N/A")</p>	<p>If not affiliated with UO, does home institution have an IRB? (Yes/No or N/A)</p>	<p>Research Role/Title (limited to those listed in the drop-down list)</p>	<p>Human Subjects Training Date</p>	<p>Responsible for Design, Conduct, or Reporting? (Yes/No)</p>	<p>Interact with Participants and/or Identifiable Participant Data? (Yes/No)</p>	<p>Include on General Corresp.? (Yes/No)</p>	<p>Brief Description of Research Responsibilities (e.g., research design, data analysis, data collection, etc.)</p>	<p>Additional Relevant Training (e.g., translator qualifications, blood borne pathogens, fMRI, first aid/CPR, specific methodology, etc.) include short description, training dates and expiration date, if any (if none, indicate "N/A")</p>
Gamble, Alyssa	agamble@uoregon.edu	University of Oregon	N/A	Principal Investigator	02/13/19	Yes	Yes	Yes	research design, data analysis, data collection, report writing	N/A
Lewis, Rebecca	rlewis9@uoregon.edu	University of Oregon	N/A	Faculty Advisor	10/24/18	No	Yes	Yes	report and chapter editing, participation in general correspondence, research design and data analysis support.	

Name	Removal Date
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Research Plan

IMPORTANT: When completing this outline, please use the [Research Plan Guidance](#) for the content necessary to develop a comprehensive yet succinct Research Plan. Using the guidance to complete this outline will help facilitate timely IRB review.

Study Title: Business Development Patterns in Downtown Eugene

Protocol Number: TBD

Principal Investigator: Alyssa Gamble

A. Introduction and Background

This research will examine the development patterns in Downtown Eugene and the area directly surrounding it to assess where development has been occurring over the past several years. Given that the City of Eugene does not collect business licenses for all businesses, this understanding is largely anecdotal or supported by other data, like vacancy or valuation data. Over the decades there have been efforts to promote downtown business development, however without an understanding of the existing businesses downtown, it is difficult to create or know which strategies will be most effective at downtown development in Eugene. This research will provide additional context to this question through interviews with business owners who have a different understanding of this problem than a planner might.

B. Specific Aims/Study Objectives

This research will provide a better understanding of where development is occurring and the perceptions of business owners on the development process. Business owners will be asked to share their experiences with the development process and what factors contributed to their selection of business location. This will provide context for improvements that could be made in the development process or highlight community attributes that promote or deter business development in Eugene. This research will lead to recommendations for improvements to promote development in the downtown that are specific to the Eugene context, but could be applied or tailored for other communities.

My aims in conducting this research involve creating effective recommendations for the City of Eugene to better serve business owners. This will include understanding where development is occurring and gaining the perspective of business owners as to why this might be. The specific research questions are:

1. Where are Eugene businesses developing relative to the downtown core?
2. What factors are causing or contributing to business owners choosing periphery locations for their business?
3. How can the City of Eugene incentivize new businesses to occupy available space in the downtown core?

Expected Findings

Several potential social factors have been presented as potential contributors to shifting business development. Homelessness and perceptions of public safety are considerable concerns in downtown

Eugene, given the high homeless population and lack of shelters for these individuals. This coincides with safety concerns in the downtown area.

It is expected that the cost of space in the downtown core is higher than that in the periphery. The cost could be attributed to higher taxes and/or leases in the core compared to nearby locations. This significantly impacts the bottom line for new businesses and would prohibit development in available core space.

Other factors that may arise during the research is in regard to spatial concerns of the downtown. Business owners may feel that there is limited available space in the downtown for expansion or that the available space is not as attractive as that in the periphery area. A lack of available space or a lack in flexibility in the set up or overhead required to update a space could contribute to selecting a different business location. Along this vein is the perception that parking is a considerable problem in Downtown Eugene. Business owners may select locations outside the downtown core in order to provide greater parking access to their customers.

Finally, an expected finding is that development in the periphery and core are not so different over the past five years. If development in the core is equal to or greater than that of the periphery, it would provide the City of Eugene with an understanding that a shift in development is not occurring and could inform alternative actions that the city could take to further attract residents and improve or expand the core area.

C. Methods, Materials and Analysis

This study will rely on a triangulation strategy, using data from multiple secondary sources to determine where businesses are developing due to The City of Eugene not collecting business licenses for all businesses. Data collection for this project will include observing changes in where commercial buildings are being permitted as a method to see where new commercial businesses may be developing, observing valuation increases in parcel data which may indicate increase in business activity, observing occupancy data collected by Lane Council of Governments, and canvassing downtown to assess buildings that might be new to target new businesses in those buildings. Reviewing the state registration of LLCs and DBAs, will also be incorporated in the data, however this does not provide a full or accurate list of businesses in the downtown, as some businesses have their headquarters listed with the state, not each property location.

The methods that will be used to address research questions include, with further details about how these methods will be operationalized below.

Method	Question
GIS Analysis	Where are Eugene businesses developing relative to the downtown core?
Interview	What factors are causing or contributing to business owners choosing periphery locations for their business?
Case Study	How can the City of Eugene incentivize new businesses to occupy available space in the downtown core?

Where are Eugene businesses developing relative to the downtown core?

A GIS analysis will be used to assess where businesses are developing relative to the downtown core to provide a visual representation of business development over the past 5 years (2013-2018) in Eugene. This method will support this research and present the defined boundaries and identified areas of increased development graphically, providing a simple representation to address where businesses are developing relative to the downtown core. Land use type, building permits, property valuation, and occupancy data will all be reviewed over time to address where development and improvements are happening. The focus will be more broadly, where businesses are choosing to put their money in the City. If, for example, valuation is increasing in the downtown core and occupancy is decreasing, one could infer that decentralization is not in fact occurring in Downtown Eugene as originally believed. Using these four types of data will allow the researcher to assess whether there are regulatory barriers through land use, cost hinderances through valuation, or limited vacancies downtown that might contribute to seeing increased development at the periphery.

What factors are causing or contributing to businesses owners choosing periphery locations for their business?

Interviews with local business owners in the downtown core and periphery area will assess owners' perspectives on the reasoning for selecting their business location and whether there were specific aspects that prevented or promoted the selection of their business location. The research objective will be to interview 10 to 12 business owners during a 6-week period. Interviews will take approximately 30 minutes to conduct and will be conducted either over the phone, or in person. This is the only aspect of my research which will involve human subjects.

Follow-up is not required for this study; however, it may be necessary to reach out to participants for clarification of their responses. To follow up with interview participants, I will email them to explain my reason for contacting them and provide a detailed explanation of how their response was interpreted. Then, I will confirm their approval or clarification of their response to record in the research study.

I will record the interviews using a voice recorder on my computer and by using handwritten or typed notes. I will first ask the interview participant for consent to record the audio of the interview and proceed to record only if consent is given. Notes will be taken by hand or by typing them on the computer during the interview process. Responses of interview questions will be recorded and analyzed for patterns. Information will be categorized into themes, and responses will be coded. The data collected will be synthesized based on recurring statements, phrases, and words that the participants refer to in their answers.

The interview questions will target specifically whether there were factors during dealings with the city, differences between their selected business location and any considered locations that moved them to choose the core or periphery for their business location. Although the focus in these interviews will be primarily regulatory factors from the City that impact business site selection, it is anticipated that owners will have input on other aspects of the city that contributed to their choice of business location such as availability of space, costs, parking, safety, etc. This has been anticipated and will be addressed during the interviews by differentiating regulatory factors from social and spatial factors.

Due to the lack of business licenses, streamlined access to business owner contact information is difficult to obtain. Contacts from The City of Eugene, Downtown Eugene, Inc, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Downtown Merchants have agreed to reach out into their networks to recommend businesses in the core and periphery to interview. Interviews will also be informed by findings from the GIS analysis portion of the research, highlighting focus areas of development and growth, where interviewees might be found to provide context to this question.

How can the City of Eugene incentivize new businesses to occupy available space in the downtown core?

Interviews and Case Studies will inform recommendations to attract businesses to the downtown core. Interviews will provide context and understanding of any barriers that business owners and developers see to locating businesses in the core and case study analysis will show how other communities have either retained businesses in the downtown core or how they have shifted development back to the core area. Potential case study communities include Asheville, NC; Springfield, OR; Toronto, CA; Salem, OR; and Chicago, IL. This assessment will ask how these communities retained or promoted development in the downtown core, how centralized their core is compared to the periphery, and whether they have seen benefits or changes in their economic development as a result of said incentives or policies.

D. Research Population & Recruitment Methods

The population that will be engaged is adult business owners and operators in Downtown Eugene and adjacent areas. The population will be restricted by the number of years since development, only including new business owners as of the last 5-years and will not be exclusive of gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, or orientation. This population has been selected as they will best be able to provide a working perspective of development and constraints to developing a business, having recently engaged in this process.

The target number of interviews to support this research is 10-15 individuals, all of whom are business owners or developers in the City of Eugene. Interviewees will be recruited through existing contacts with the City of Eugene, Downtown Eugene Inc, Downtown Merchants, and other development and community organizations involved in business development locally. Initial contact with these individuals will be via phone or email to introduce the researchers and provide information about the research conducted. The communication will end by asking for their interest in participating. Interviews will be scheduled formally via phone call or email and will be tracked by the Principal Investigator. Follow-up contacts will be conducted as needed, first by email, then by phone if no email response has been received.

The script for recruitment is provided in subsequent documents. The PI will be the primary contact for interview participants. The faculty advisor role is to suggest individuals for the PI to contact but will not take part in the interview process.

E. Informed Consent Process

The informed consent process will occur verbally before the phone or in-person interview and will be included in the interview script. The informed consent process will be detailed to participants during the recruitment process and the participants decision to consent will be verified at the beginning of the interview.

The PI will conduct the research role for consent. The faculty advisor will provide guidance and feedback on the design of the consent procedure. All participants will experience the same consent process.

F. Provisions for Participant Privacy and Data Confidentiality

Information from participants will not be connected to their name. If any part of the interview will be quoted from the interview, it will not be associated with the person who said it, unless verbal and/or written consent is given by that person. No record or affiliation of the opinions will be linked to specific

participants or representatives of the business, and their responses will not be linked to their name in the analysis.

Voice recordings will be an identifier if the participant allows for audio recording of the interview. The audio recording would be used for the sole purpose of transcribing the interview afterward. If the research desires to select a direct quote and attribute it to a specific interview participant, that interview participant will be notified and asked permission first. They will be allowed to see and review the quote prior to dissemination or deny the use of the quote and/or their attribution to it all together. If the participant wishes not to be quoted directly, the quote will not be used, or will be used with permission but their name/association will not be linked to it. The record of analysis will be kept electronically through word or excel files. The participants will be assigned an individual code, and a supplemental document with the code key and the participant's contact information will be created. Only the PI and faculty advisor will have access to the decoding document. The code will be retained by locking the document; only those with permission or passcode can view. The participants' identity will not be disclosed as a result of this research.

All data for this research will be saved on a protected computer or hard drive, and only be used by the PI or faculty advisor. The voice recording will also be uploaded to the hard drive. However, the code with identifiers will not be stored in the hard drive, but in a locked folder on the personal computer of the PI. Aside from the PI, only the faculty advisory will have access to the files. The data for this research will be discarded after 2 years. For further research, the faculty advisor or PI may use the data collected in this research project. The permission of use will be tracked and obtained in-person. If transmitting electronically, data will be unidentifiable to the participants' contact information.

G. Potential Research Risks or Discomforts to Participants

There will not be any potential research risk or discomfort to participants. Participation in this research does not require physical and psychological examinations or tests and presents minimal risks in participation. Answers will be recorded anonymously and reports in analysis will be unidentifiable. The only potential risks associated with this study are 1) social risk (e.g. social stigma, chance of being ostracized or shunned), and 2) economic risk (e.g. change in employment or insurability). Participants have a significantly low probability of incurring either social or economic risk by participating in this research.

To ensure that risk remains minimal, a participant may choose not to answer any question, discontinue the interview at any time, or request that their interview be omitted from the study.

H. Potential Benefits of the Research

This research will provide the City of Eugene with a broader perspective of the business development occurring in the downtown core as compared to the periphery. It will engage in data collection of information that the City does not presently have and may inform methods for the City to use to better track business development for improved understanding of current and future development. This research will also provide a connection between business owners and the city to directly discuss improvements that could be made to make the core more amenable to future business development. Other cities may use the recommendations given here to promote more centralized development and

can use the research framework to understand their downtown core and the perspectives of business owners more clearly.

I. Investigator Experience

Principle Investigator: Alyssa Gamble

The PI is a graduate student in the school of Planning, Public Policy, and Management at the University of Oregon, pursuing a MA in Community and Regional Planning. She has a BS in Political Studies from the University of Utah. Past research experience includes both professional and academic research, using mixed methods. She has experience administering surveys and conducting recruitment outreach for survey participation. She also has experience conducting phone interviews and collecting primary qualitative data related to these specified research methods. The PI had academic research training through graduate courses, including Community Planning Workshop, Research Methods, Research Design, and Project Colloquium. These courses trained students to conduct a variety of methods as well as how to successfully set up a research plan, conduct interviews, and establish a study scope. Additional training or guidance will be provided as needed by the faculty advisor.

Faculty Advisor: Rebecca Lewis

The faculty advisor is an associate professor at the University of Oregon for the School of Planning, Public Policy and Management. Her education background is a Ph.D. (urban and regional planning), University of Maryland College Park (2011), M.P.P. (environmental policy), University of Maryland College Park (2008) and a B.A. (political science), University of Kentucky (2006). Her research experience is demonstrated through over 40 research publication through academic journals, book chapters and writing contributions. She has experience with a mixed methods approach and has conducted interviews throughout her career. The faculty advisor will provide guidance for conducting interviews for this research. She will have a limited role with the data, and thereby be used as a reference to guide analysis and synthesis strategies.

Recruitment Materials

Email to Business Owners

Hello,

My name is Alyssa Gamble. I am conducting research to better understand where new businesses are developing relative to Downtown Eugene. This research will provide insight into trends or patterns that could be used to inform policy in communities similar to Eugene. _____ suggested that you might be interested in participating or learning more about this study. (if applicable)

I know that your time is very valuable. The interview will be fairly brief, 30-minute conversation to get your insight about business and development trends in the City, including any attributes in the city that you feel informs this conversation. Your participation will provide valuable context and insight to this study.

All of your responses will be recorded as anonymous and only your job sector and/or profession will be identified. If you are interested in participating, or if you have any questions, please respond to this email. I will be conducting interviews from now until April 2020. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Thank you for your time,

Alyssa Gamble
Planning, Public Policy, and Management
University of Oregon

Phone Call to Business Owners

Hello, my name is Alyssa Gamble. _____ suggested that you might be interested in participating or learning more about this study. (if applicable) I am a Graduate Student at the University of Oregon. This Spring I am conducting research to better understand where new businesses are developing relative to Downtown Eugene. Specifically, I am looking for business owner's insight about business and development trends in the City, including any attributes in the city that you feel informs this conversation. Interviews will take approximately 30-minutes and your responses will be recorded anonymously, not attributed to yours or your businesses name. Your participation will be very valuable to this study, is this something that you might be willing to participate in?

Consent for Research Participation

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study. The box below highlights key information about this research for you to consider when making a decision whether or not to participate. Carefully consider this information and the more detailed information provided below the box. Please ask questions about any of the information you do not understand before you decide whether to participate.

Key Information for You to Consider

Voluntary Consent. You are being asked to volunteer for a research study. It is up to you whether you choose to participate or not. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled if you choose not to participate or discontinue participation.
Purpose. The purpose of this research is to better understand business development patterns and experiences in the City of Eugene.
Duration. It is expected that your participation will last 30 minutes, and up to 1 hour at most.
Procedures and Activities. You will be asked to participate in a single open-ended interview.
Risks. This research does not require you to engage in anything of greater than minimal risk tasks.
Benefits. There are no direct benefits for participants in this research, however the societal benefits could be informed policy and development codes for the future that adapt to workers preferences related to shared work environments.
Alternatives. Participation is voluntary and the only alternative is to not participate.

Who is conducting this research?

Alyssa Gamble is enrolled at the University of Oregon, and is the primary researcher asking for your consent.

Why is this research being done?

The purpose of this study is to better understand business development patterns and experiences in Downtown Eugene. You are being asked to participate because you own a business in or near the downtown area. Upon consent, you and approximately 10-15 other professionals in the area will take part in this research.

How long will I be in this research?

Depending on how much you would like to share, you will be participating in this interview for about 20-30 minutes. You can anticipate your participation will last one hour at most.

What happens if I agree to participate in this research?

If you agree to be in this research, your participation will include a single interview. A follow up email and/or phone call for clarification might occur, but only if necessary to clarify answers to interview questions. You will be informed of any new information that may affect your willingness to continue participation in this research.

What happens to the information collected for this research?

Information collected for this research will be used to compile a general analysis of the experiences and perspectives of business owners who have businesses in or near Downtown Eugene. The answers provided in your interview will be anonymously coded into themes and key findings to understand the experiences of business owners in the City of Eugene and their understandings of downtown characteristics.

How will my privacy and data confidentiality be protected?

I will take measures to protect your privacy by not affiliating your name or contact information with your responses in the interview. I will take measures to protect the security of all your personal information, including secured documents that are not visible or could be accessed by anyone outside the primary research investigators. All data for this research will be saved on a protected computer, and only be used by the principal investigator or faculty advisor. The data collected will be discarded after two years. Individuals and organizations that conduct or monitor this research may be permitted access to and inspect the research records. These individuals and organizations include: the faculty advisor, Rebecca Lewis from The University of Oregon. Inspecting the research records may include accessing information such as your phone number and email address. The permission to use this data will be tracked and obtained either in-person or electronically. In either case, data will be unidentifiable to the participants' contact information.

What are the risks if I participate in this research?

This research presents risks no greater than of minimal risk. Therefore, your participation includes no activity or procedure that you would be ordinarily encountered with in your everyday life. Furthermore, does not require any physical or psychological examinations or tests. Since your answers will be anonymous, the only possible risk associated with this study: social risk: (e.g., social stigma, chance of being ostracized or shunned), economic risks (e.g., change in employment or insurability) is very unlikely.

What are the benefits of participating in this research?

Your perspective of downtown development and starting a business can provide better understanding to local city governments in how they prioritize development initiatives to encourage economic development. This study has the potential to inform policy or partnerships to better support the local economies in a community.

What are my responsibilities if I choose to participate in this research?

If you take part in this research, you will be responsible for answering interview questions honestly. If you would like to stop participating during the interview, you may request so at any time.

What other choices do I have besides participation in this research?

It is your choice to participate or not to participate in this research. Therefore, the alternative to participating in this research is to not participate.

What if I want to stop participating in this research?

Taking part in this research study is your decision. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You do not have to take part in this study, but if you do, you can stop at any time. You have the right to choose not to participate in any study activity or completely withdraw from continued participation at any point in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with the researchers or the University of Oregon. If you experience harm because of the project, you can ask the State of Oregon to pay you. If you have been harmed, there are two University representatives you need to contact. Here are their addresses and phone numbers:

General Counsel/ Office of the President

1226 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-1226
(541) 346-3082

Research Compliance Services

5237 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-5237
(541) 346-2510

A law called the Oregon Tort Claims Act may limit the amount of money you can receive from the State of Oregon if you are harmed.

Will I be paid for participating in this research?

Participating in this research is voluntary, therefore there will be no compensation for your time.

Who can answer my questions about this research?

If you have questions, concerns, or have experienced a research related injury, contact the research team at:

Alyssa Gamble

435-830-3707

agamble@uoregon.edu

An Institutional Review Board (“IRB”) is overseeing this research. An IRB is a group of people who perform independent review of research studies to ensure the rights and welfare of participants are protected. UO Research Compliance Services is the office that supports the IRB. If you have questions about your rights or wish to speak with someone other than the research team, you may contact:

Research Compliance Services

5237 University of Oregon

Eugene, OR 97403-5237

(541) 346-2510

Interview Guide- Draft Script

This script will guide the interview process of this study. The participants will be business owners who have been recommended to me to speak to, who have established a business in Eugene in the past 5-years, and whose businesses exist in either the downtown core or the periphery area outside of this core. These boundaries will be defined in the GIS analysis portion of the research. The interviews will assess why business owners select their business location. All interview questions will be open ended. A draft script can be found below.

Introduction and Oral Consent

This study will provide better understanding of the development patterns in Downtown Eugene and the surrounding areas. Your participation will give context to the perspectives of local business owners with property in these areas. You will be asked to give your reasoning for your business site selection, including any benefits or concerns relevant to this location. The interview will also ask a series of questions about your thoughts generally about the downtown and surrounding area to gain your insights into characteristics and development patterns in these areas.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If at any time during the interview you feel uncomfortable and do not want to answer a question, please tell me pass and we can continue to another question. You may at any time stop the interview and request not to be involved. This interview holds minimal risk to participants; therefore, you will not be asked any questions that would put you in greater physical or psychological risk of an ordinary day. All responses will be anonymous and will in no way be connected to your business or department. Additionally, your responses will not be used as a reflection of your business or agency's viewpoint. Knowing these terms, would you like to continue as a participant for this study?

During the interview, I will ask several questions about your perceptions of Eugene's downtown and new development in the area. I will be taking notes. Do I have your permission to record this interview on my laptop or phone?

- (if yes) Thank you, I have started the recorder following your confirmation of consent to record.
- (if no) Thank you, I will proceed with only typed or handwritten notes.

Business Location

- Where is your business located?
 - What neighborhood would you say your business is located in? (University, Riverfront, Downtown, etc)
- How long has your business been at its current location?
- What were the factors that contributed to your selection of business location?
 - Since opening your business, would you consider relocating your business due to factors or attributes of the area in which your business is located? Why?

- Were there factors about certain neighborhoods or areas in Eugene that discouraged you from locating your business at another location in the city? What were these factors?

Experience in Development Process

- What extent did you work with the City of Eugene or other organizations in starting your business?
 - Can you share what other organizations or programs you worked with to start your business? (non profits, other businesses, etc)
 - Did you work with the City of Eugene through an incentive program while establishing your business?
 - What if any incentive programs are you aware of for businesses in Downtown Eugene?
- How would you describe your experience working with the City of Eugene?
 - Would you say that your experience in selecting a location, developing your business, and working with the City were timely?
- Did you build, purchase, or lease your business location?
- Have you had much contact or interaction with the City of Eugene in the operation/function of your business? Before opening? Since opening?

Demographics

- What is your business sector/trade?
 - Do you have any special business classification? (Women owned business, minority business, etc)
 - How many employees to you have? (if multiple businesses, specify by the locations that fall in this study.
 - What are your square footage needs at your business(es)?
 - Do you reside in Eugene?
-
- Do you have anything else to add?

			January		
task	subtask	Due	12/29-1/4	1/5-1/11	1/12-1/18
General	Define periphery boundary	6-Jan		6-Jan	
	Review downtown requirements and codes for business development	6-Jan		6-Jan	
	IRB	14-Jan			14-Jan
	PPPM Awards Ceremony	21-May			
	5/22 defense day	22-May			
	Final PDF and committee evaluation form due	12-Jun			
	GIS Analysis	Data Collection	1-Feb		
Data Analysis		14-Feb			
Interviews	Draft Interview questions	20-Dec			
	Final Draft Interview questions	30-Dec	30-Dec		
	Requests for Interviews	2-Feb			
	Conduct interviews	14-Mar			
Case study	Select case studies	24-Dec			
	Case Study Analysis	1-Feb			
Written Drafts	Proposal Due	6-Dec			
	Report outline	17-Dec			
	report formatting/template	17-Dec			
	Draft Introduction	24-Dec			
	Draft Methods	27-Dec			
	Draft GIS findings	7-Mar			
	Draft Interview findings	21-Mar			
	Draft Case Study findings	22-Feb			
	Synthesis of all methods findings	25-Apr			
	Draft recommendations	2-May			
	Internal report draft complete	4-May			
	Complete draft to committee	15-May			
	Internal updated draft	1-Jun			
	Final draft due to committee	5-Jun			

