



Santa Maria:

Downtown Development Opportunities in the Central Coast's Largest City



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INTRODUCTION

Santa Maria is located on the famed Highway 101 at the mid-point of California's Central Coast and is the largest city in Santa Barbara County with a population of 108,500.

Santa Maria is the industrial, commercial, agriculture and retail hub for a region that includes approximately 212,500 residents located within a 20-mile radius in northern Santa Barbara County and neighboring southern San Luis Obispo County.

Agriculture, tourism, personal services, and government/military activity form the economic base of the Santa Maria Valley. At the same time, the local economy continues to expand far beyond this traditional base to include regional trading, manufacturing and service industries, health care, transportation, oil, and commercial space launch at nearby Vandenberg Air Force Base. Manufacturers in the area produce a wide array of products ranging from medical testing supplies to aircraft interiors and baby care products to fire hoses. Recent expansions in Santa Maria have also grown the presence of the financial services and technology industries.

Santa Maria is a pro-business community that promotes responsive and properly planned growth. It is a safe, family-oriented community where residents enjoy working and living. Over the years, Santa Maria has been the recipient of numerous awards, including the 1998 All-America City Award.

Culturally, residents and visitors to Santa Maria enjoy world-class wineries, professional theatre anchored by the PCPA/Pacific Theatre Conservatory, professional rodeo, biking through idyllic rolling hills, the exploration of the natural Pacific coastline including the tallest beach dunes, smog free air and mild temperatures year-round.

DOWNTOWN SANTA MARIA - STATISTICS



TRAFFIC COUNTS

....

25,000 vehicles/day
at the Broadway/Main
intersection.



HOUSING UNITS

....

14,000 units
within a 3 mile radius.



EMPLOYEES

....

± 1,500 people working
within downtown core; key
concentrations include:
225 working for City;
200+ working for County and
Superior Court at Court Complex.
250+ Professional Services (eg.
Banking, Medical, Legal, Non-Profit)

DOWNTOWN SANTA MARIA TODAY

Santa Maria's Downtown area, as defined by the [Downtown Specific Plan](#), encompasses approximately 391 acres, and generally radiates outward from the intersection of two historically prominent streets: Main Street (State Route 166) and Broadway (State Route 135). Both of these streets are state highways, owned and operated by CalTrans. These streets serve as important regional streets that conduct a high volume of both vehicle and truck traffic through the downtown area.

New investment is beginning in Downtown, most prominently a new four-story, mixed-use building was recently approved by the City for the northwest corner of Broadway and Main. The building will include 3,360 square feet of retail on the ground floor, and residential units on the upper floors. Construction is expected to begin in 2019.

The City is upgrading the physical environment as well. A streetscape planning project has just been finalized, funded by a grant from CalTrans, with more information [HERE](#). The report, accepted by the City Council in early 2019, highlights investment and policy opportunities for the City, CalTrans, and the private sector to explore with an eye to creating a more welcoming, pedestrian and bicycle-friendly downtown.

The City of Santa Maria, in partnership with WAVE Broadband has deployed miles of active and dark fiber throughout the City in support of local government connectivity to fiber-based gigabit high-speed internet and as an economic development tool. Commercial buildings and businesses within the City of Santa Maria can now access top-tier connectivity that delivers faster data transmission speeds with fewer potential fail points through dense, direct path networks.



Proposed four-story building, artist rendering

In addition, the City built and operates a state-of-the-art data center that can house server farms for new or existing local businesses that are challenged with limited internal data-center space to accommodate their growing enterprise network operations or to house their data backup and disaster recovery systems. This City-owned data center also serves as WAVE's local network operations center.

Additional demographic and information about Santa Maria's business community is included as an appendix to this document.



Downtown Santa Maria, 1972



Downtown Santa Maria, Present Day

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY SITES



1. Town Center West parking area 1 (north of Falls)

This approximately 2-acre site is bounded by Heritage Walk and Main Street businesses to the north, Falls to the west and south, and Broadway to the east. Opportunities exist to add to the Broadway frontage and to integrate the existing Heritage Walk to the overall site design. A pedestrian bridge crosses Broadway and connects to Macy's and Santa Maria Mall. A potential street can be created in alignment with Town Center East driveway across Broadway. An existing driveway adjacent to the south of Heritage Walk can be relocated or removed. Parking is available at Town Center East; however, patrons will need to cross Broadway.

2. Town Center West parking area 2 (south of Falls)

The approximately 2-acre site is bounded by the First United Methodist Church and a medical office building to the south, Falls to the west and north, and Broadway to the east. The Town Center West shopping center, including businesses such as Big 5, Rite Aid, and other restaurants, is located across a drive aisle to the west. An opportunity exists to add to the Broadway frontage. Parking is available at Santa Maria Town Center; however, patrons will need to cross Broadway. Some surface parking should be reserved for the existing medical office and church uses.

3. Central Plaza (Perlman) Park

This 1.12 acre property is on the northeast corner of Main and Broadway and is currently the only park and open space area in the Downtown area. The park has a playground, a water feature, and walking paths that lead to nearby apartment complexes. Developers should consider preserving portions of this site toward open space, or redevelop these portions as gathering spaces in the form of plazas and paseos. The addition of a few uses may be sufficient to “activate” the existing park area by introducing new foot traffic to the area. Parking is available south of Main Street in the parking structures, and some street parking is available nearby.

4. Bank of America parking/plaza area

This half-acre site is an area with parking for Bank of America as well as plaza space and landscaping. A large monument sign for Santa Maria Town Center sits at this location. Sensitivity shall also be given to this location, due to a firefighter’s memorial, which may need to be preserved, rebuilt, or relocated in some manner. This property is on the southeast corner of Main and Broadway and will be a focal point for the center of the city. Despite the smaller parcel size, the entire property can be considered for development, given the adjacent parking structures.

5. Chapel parking area

This 0.83 acre property is located on the southeast corner of Chapel and Pine and is away from the primary corridors of Main and Broadway. An alley and other Main Street businesses are located to the south. Street parking can be used to serve the site.

In addition to these specific parcels, there are a number of privately-controlled opportunities as well. For information on these, please contact Suzanne Singh, Economic Development Director, at (805) 925-2403 or suzanne@santamaria.com.

LAND USE/ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

The available properties are located within the Downtown Specific Plan. The review process begins with City staff, but is subject to approval by either the Zoning Administrator, the Planning Commission, or the City Council, depending on the scope and location of the project. Given that the majority of the available sites are located either on a “critical corner” and/or a “major corridor” (Main and/or Broadway), City Council review will be required.

INCENTIVES

Development incentives are negotiable, as part of the terms of a development and lease or purchase agreement. The primary incentive opportunity available at this time is the City’s ownership of the key parcels. Depending on the value added to the community by a particular development opportunity, the City will consider incentive-based terms for the lease or sale of the various parcels.

The [Downtown Specific Plan](#) also provides incentives for new projects, dependent on conformance to Specific Plan vision and objectives.

Projects can be awarded incentives including waived Downtown Permit fees, waived building permit plan check fees, waived building permit fees, and up to a 50% reduction in impact fees for hotel, commercial, and office uses (currently authorized for projects started through 2020).

The majority of the parcels highlighted in this invitation are currently designated as Opportunity Zones under the new federal program to incentivize investments in under-performing areas.

THE VISION

As stated in the [Downtown Specific Plan](#), the vision for Santa Maria's downtown includes:

- A pedestrian-oriented city center with an integrated mix of land uses (retail, office, residential, entertainment and civic/cultural) woven together by well-designed streetscapes in a safe and clean environment;
- A culturally rich environment that reflects the character and community of Santa Maria through its events, public spaces, and design elements;
- An area with diverse entertainment opportunities such as movie theaters, restaurants with outdoor dining, thriving regular community events, and special events that feature music and artistic performances;
- A place where new businesses are eager to locate and are attracted by the improvements and the encouragement the City gives to investors, downtown merchants, and property owners;
- A place for living as well as working with new office spaces and residential units for a diverse age group; and
- An area enriched with new cultural, recreational, and civic facilities to support the mixed-use environment.

Individual project proposals are not expected to meet all components of this vision for the downtown area; however, projects should contribute to this vision. Developers should familiarize themselves with goals, objectives, requirements, and guidelines of the [Downtown Specific Plan](#), as well as the Downtown Streetscape and Framework plans, in order to incorporate the intent of these plans.



South Broadway - Potential Future Streetscape Perspective

THE OPPORTUNITY

The City of Santa Maria believes that the time is right to partner with developers to redevelop and reinvigorate our historic downtown core. The City seeks to partner with private development teams to advance our downtown vision. The City owns several key parcels downtown where it will consider creative proposals.

Developers interested in exploring opportunities on one or more of the parcels highlighted in this invitation are encouraged to submit a Letter of Interest, outlining your initial concept. In preparing development concepts to propose to the City, please keep the following considerations in mind:

- Project concepts should consider the existing context, while also helping transition the Downtown into a destination that meets the vision defined in the previous pages. The project may be phased, recognizing market and financial considerations.
- The developer is encouraged to consider the best and most productive uses for the available properties. The expected development yield will vary depending on the proposed use(s) and the degree to which proposals incorporate use of the existing parking facilities. A project design that accommodates excess surface parking would result in smaller building square footage. One goal of this project is to convert under-utilized spaces consisting largely of parking areas into viable and productive uses.
- The City is flexible as to the mix of proposed uses, including retail, office (professional and medical), residential, civic, or educational. In order to maximize the impact of any project(s) built on these opportunity sites, the City expects buildings proposed to be multi-story (3-5 floors). The City expects that the proposed uses will contribute to the economy of Downtown and the city as a whole, whether through the generation of sales and property tax revenues, and/or through the addition of new jobs, educational opportunities, sense of place, or housing supply.
- Attention must also be given to the “spaces between the buildings,” including the street corridors, open spaces, plazas, and paseos that allow for movement between specific uses and that create environments for people to gather, such as the existing “Heritage Walk.” The City expects that new development will enhance the existing corridors of Main and Broadway; however, there are also opportunities on smaller, connecting streets, such as Chapel, McClelland, and along in new, internal connections.
- The City is flexible as to the structure of the partnership and will consider both proposals to purchase or enter into long-term ground leases for the parcels highlighted in this opportunity. The City will also consider the overall impact of the project when determining pricing for the land.

SUBMITTING A LETTER OF INTEREST

Developers wishing to enter into a discussion with the city about potential projects in Downtown Santa Maria should submit a Letter of Interest which includes the following components:

A. General Information

- Lead Firm Name, address, telephone number and fax number.
- Project Representative or other person to contact for clarification of any item contained in the proposal.
- Provide your Federal Tax ID Number and City of Santa Maria Business Tax Certificate Number if you possess one. Prior to conducting business in the City of Santa Maria, a business tax certificate number (license) will need to be obtained.

B. Proposed Project Approach

This section will outline the project and should include:

- **Project description.** Provide a summary of the project and the proposed building/use. Identify the parcel(s) included in the proposed project.
- **Development Concept Summary.** Describe how your development concept would address the following:
 - The extent to which the proposed development meets the vision and objectives of the [Downtown Specific Plan](#)
 - Explain the expected beneficial economic impact the development may have on Downtown, including:
 - Likelihood that the development will stimulate other desirable economic development and/or redevelopment activity;
 - Projected increases in tax revenues attributable to the development;
 - Expected increases in employment and earnings within the city, including the number and quality of jobs created;
 - Potential of the project to attract new visitors, residents, workers, and consumers to Downtown.
 - The demonstrated capacity of the developer to finance, market, manage and complete similar previous projects, including the ability to secure successful tenants;
 - The developer's demonstrated readiness and ability to proceed on the project including reasonable time schedules and attainable benchmarks.

While the City will entertain development concepts at any time, we are especially interested in moving forward this year. To that end, Letters of Intent received by March 1, 2019, will receive priority consideration.