

Downtown Plaza Design

Tracy, CA



At a former parking lot, the Downtown Plaza has created a new community gathering place and investment catalyst flanked by historic buildings on its north, the new Transit Center to its south, and future mixed-use sites within the 43-acre "Bowtie" area.

BEFORE

- The plaza site is at downtown's 1910 crossroads flanked by the Grand Hotel and the train station.
- With 1920s auto traffic and the train station's closure, retail shifted north towards 11th Street, and the site became a parking lot.
- FTS' draft 2009 Downtown Specific Plan laid out revitalization strategies including a new multi-modal Transit Center and a public plaza.

ASSIGNMENTS

- Create an activity focus and everyday-use plaza at the southern edge of downtown.
- Shape public space to activate shops in historic buildings and link to the new Transit Center .
- Reconfigure traffic with angled parking and a roundabout to support storefront businesses while enhancing circulation.



Aerial view looking north up Central Avenue at the former parking lot along 6th Street (Transit Center site at bottom)

- Complement downtown's historic character while supporting the community's tastes and lifestyles of today.
- Develop concepts through community workshops while working with a modest budget.

OUTCOMES

- Construction was completed on time and on budget in May 2012.
- The design features a roundabout, a paved plaza and 4 pylons with fountain jets, lawn areas, shade trees, and angled parking at existing shops in a "flexible parking/dining" format.
- A plaza pavilion may be built in a future phase.

RECOGNITION

- 2012 San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Award for Downtown Revitalization from the Fresno Council of Governments.

CLIENT: City of Tracy

IN COLLABORATION WITH: CHS Consulting Group (traffic), Ron Hodges Landscape Architect (landscape architecture), Rempel Architects (architecture), Alliance Engineering (electrical engineering), City of Tracy (civil engineering and project management)



Rendering of Plaza design concept (view north-east) with interactive fountain pylons and multi-purpose central paving, flanking lawn areas, shade trees and garden planters, backdrop of existing downtown historic buildings and westbound 6th Street lane (north side) and a future plaza pavilion structure to the plaza's east.



Illustrative plan view of roundabout at Central Ave. and 6th St. intersection, fountain plaza and lawns infilled onto former parking lot site, westbound 6th street lane restored along north side shops and angled parking with "flexible zone" dining areas, future plaza pavilion east of plaza, and eastbound 6th St. lane, Transit Center building and drop-offs at south side.



View of the completed Plaza with bronze pylons and interactive fountain jets for urban play and delight in warm weather (functions as a multipurpose space for performances, dancing and gathering at other times). Large trees will grow to shade the lawn areas in the future. The new Transit Center and its 6th Street frontage forms a backdrop to the Plaza's south.