

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Appendix C: Public Outreach Summary

historic
home community
art live history
play helena
place potential
work fun commercial
core family
heart
downtown

March 31, 2016



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Public Outreach Summary

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Downtown Helena Master Plan Survey

Project Description

The Downtown Helena Master Plan will be a visioning and guiding document for the management and future growth of Downtown Helena by the Helena Business Improvement District (HBID), the City of Helena, and other agencies. The plan will:

- Provide a tool for guiding downtown economic growth
- Reaffirm the downtown's role in the community
- Guide decision making for public improvements, private investments, and changes to existing zoning codes and regulatory mechanisms

The Master Plan will be a community-based planning effort with numerous opportunities to participate and provide input. The Plan will address specific elements related to streetscape improvements, open space and parks, historic preservation, land-use and development opportunities, transportation and parking, utility infrastructure, and governmental and cultural facilities. The Plan will be approved and adopted by the HBID, Helena/Lewis and Clark County Consolidated Planning Board, and City Commission as an amendment to the Helena Growth Policy.

Study Area

The image on the right shows the boundaries of the Helena Business Improvements District. For the purpose of this project, this boundary represents the general area referred to as “downtown”.



Survey

The purpose of this survey is to identify and prioritize critical needs, issues, and opportunities in Downtown Helena. This survey is also available online at www.downtownhelena.com/about-us/bid/

The first series of questions will ask about how you use downtown:

1. How often do you go downtown?
 - Everyday
 - 1-3 times a week
 - 1-3 times a month
 - 1-3 times a year
 - Never
2. What days of the week do you go downtown?
 - Weekdays
 - Weekends
 - Weekdays & Weekends
3. What time of the day are you most frequently downtown (choose all that apply)?
 - In the mornings (before 8 am)
 - During business hours (8:00 am – 5:00 pm)
 - In the evenings (6:00 pm – 9:00 pm)
 - At night (after 9:00 pm)
 - Other: _____
4. How do you get downtown (choose all that apply)?
 - Walk
 - Bike
 - Car
 - Bus
 - Other: _____
5. Please select what best describes your relationship to downtown (choose all that apply)?
 - I own property downtown
 - I own property and a business downtown
 - I own a business downtown
 - I work downtown
 - I live downtown
 - I just visit downtown
 - I have no relationship to downtown
 - Other: _____

The next series of questions will ask you about your perceptions of downtown:

6. What is important to you about downtown (choose all that apply)?

- Location
- Historic Buildings
- Aesthetic Character
- Events/Activities
- Retail/Shopping
- Parks/Plazas (i.e. Women's park, walking mall)
- Entertainment (i.e. restaurants, breweries, theaters)
- Services (i.e. city/county, courts, banking)
- Jobs/Employment
- Housing
- Library
- Proximity to trails / open space
- Other: _____

7. Please rate the convenience of the following downtown features (circle):

	Very Inconvenient	Somewhat Inconvenient	Neither convenient or inconvenient	Somewhat convenient	Very convenient
Parking	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic circulation in and out of downtown	1	2	3	4	5
Signage for parks, museums and other amenities	1	2	3	4	5
Trash cans and recycling	1	2	3	4	5
Bike parking	1	2	3	4	5

8. Is downtown safe?

- Very safe
- Somewhat safe
- Somewhat unsafe
- Not at all safe
- Comments: _____

9. Please rate the following statements about downtown's sense of place (circle):

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Downtown Helena is a very special place	1	2	3	4	5
Downtown represents Helena's unique culture and heritage	1	2	3	4	5
Downtown offers many different reasons to visit	1	2	3	4	5
Downtown offers interesting and attractive amenities such as building facades, window displays, parks, landscaping, public art and public gather places	1	2	3	4	5
Downtown streets, sidewalks, and parking lots are safe, attractive, and well maintained	1	2	3	4	5
Downtown is vibrant, with many people out and about, and activities and amenities that encourage people to spend time downtown	1	2	3	4	5

10. Please rate the following statements about the general direction downtown is heading (circle):

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I think downtown is "better off" than it was five years ago	1	2	3	4	5
I think downtown is headed in the right direction	1	2	3	4	5
I think downtown has potential to be more than it currently is	1	2	3	4	5

The next series of questions will ask you to identify what you think needs to be addressed in downtown:

11. In your opinion, what issues need to be addressed or improved upon (choose all that apply)?

- Infrastructure
 - storm drainage
 - street lighting
 - overhead power lines
 - broadband/high speed internet
 - capacity to support new development
- Transportation
 - one-way streets
 - mini-malfunction junction
 - traffic congestion
 - traffic speeds
 - bicycle/pedestrian connectivity
 - accessibility (ADA)
 - parking
- Economic Conditions
 - business health
 - retail/office mix
 - walking mall
 - competition from other areas
 - safety/security
- Land Use
 - zoning regulations
 - views/hillside development
 - downtown housing
 - transitions to residential neighborhoods
 - parks/open space
 - historic preservation
 - new development
- Streetscape
 - General landscaping
 - Public art
 - Trees
 - Flowers
 - Banners

Other: _____



12. What are impediments to downtown growth and redevelopment?

The final series of questions will ask your opinion on locating downtown:

13. Would you work at a business downtown?

- Yes
- No
- Comments: _____

14. Would you locate a business downtown?

- Yes
- No
- Comments: _____

15. Would you live downtown?

- Yes
- No
- Comments: _____

If you have additional comments on any topic, feel free to include them here:

16. Additional Comments: _____

Would you like to receive project updates and meeting announcements (please provide your preferred method of contact)?

Name: _____

Address or Email: _____



Please return completed survey to:

**WGM Group
Attn: Cindy Kuns
1111 E. Broadway
Missoula, MT 59802
ckuns@wgmgroup.com**

For additional information or questions contact:

**Jeremy Keene
Project Manager
jkeene@wgmgroup.com
(406) 728-4611**

For more information visit:

www.downtownhelena.com/about-us/bid/

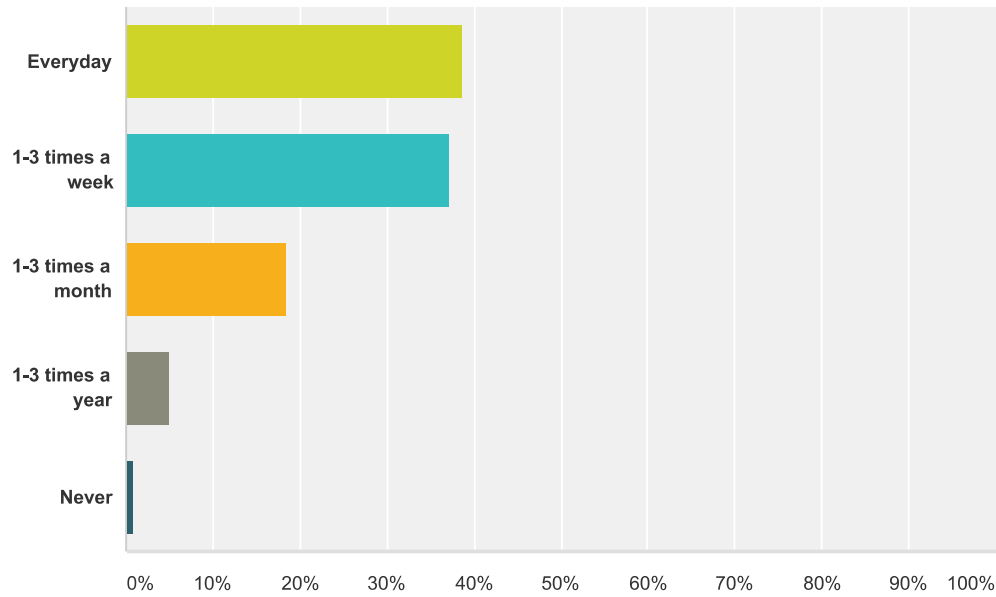
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www.facebook.com/DowntownHelenaMasterPlan



Q1 How often do you go downtown?

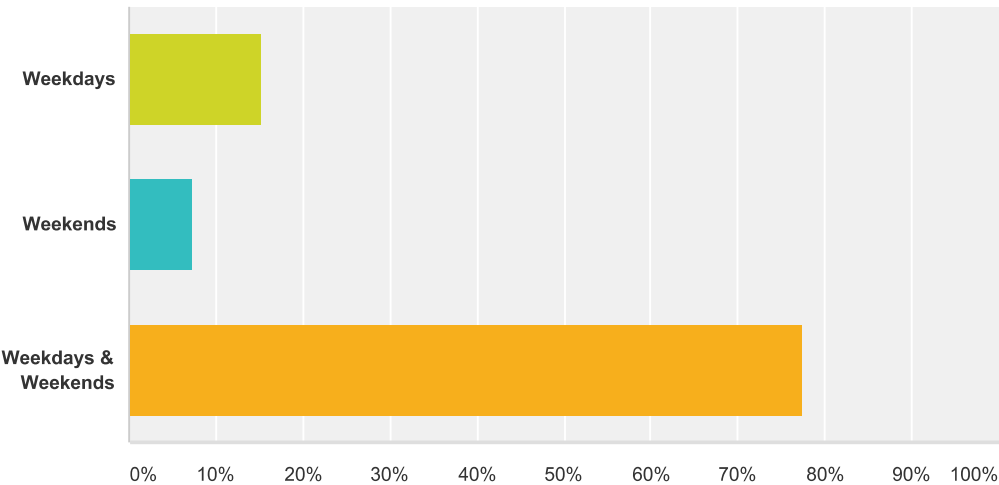
Answered: 704 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses	
Everyday	38.64%	272
1-3 times a week	37.22%	262
1-3 times a month	18.32%	129
1-3 times a year	4.97%	35
Never	0.85%	6
Total		704

Q2 What days of the week do you go downtown?

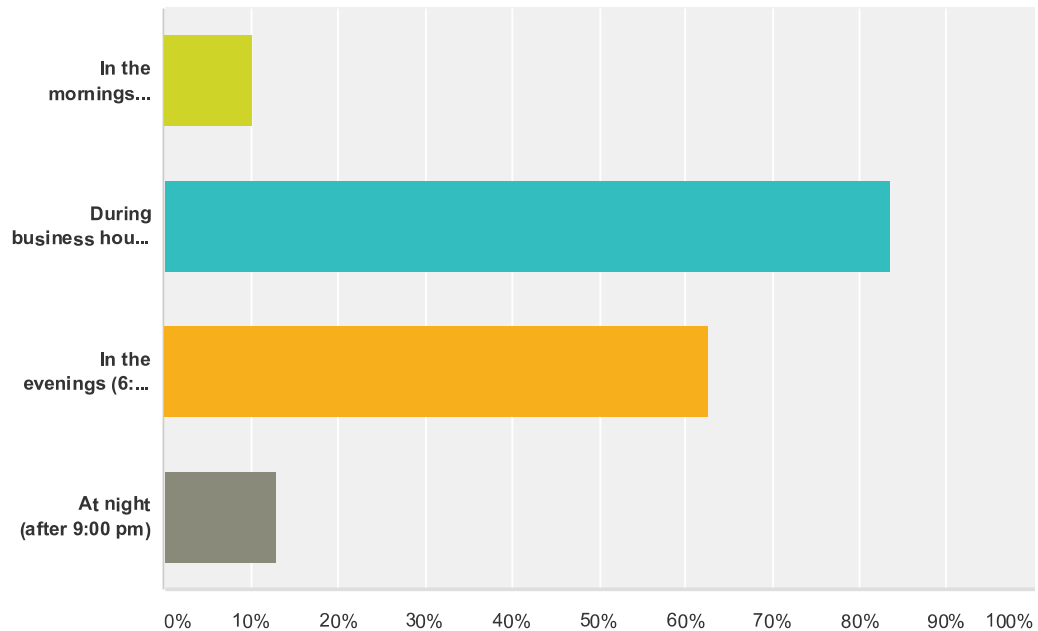
Answered: 703 Skipped: 3



Answer Choices	Responses
Weekdays	15.22%107
Weekends	7.25%51
Weekdays & Weekends	77.52%545
Total	703

Q3 What time of the day are you most frequently downtown (choose all that apply)?

Answered: 697 Skipped: 9



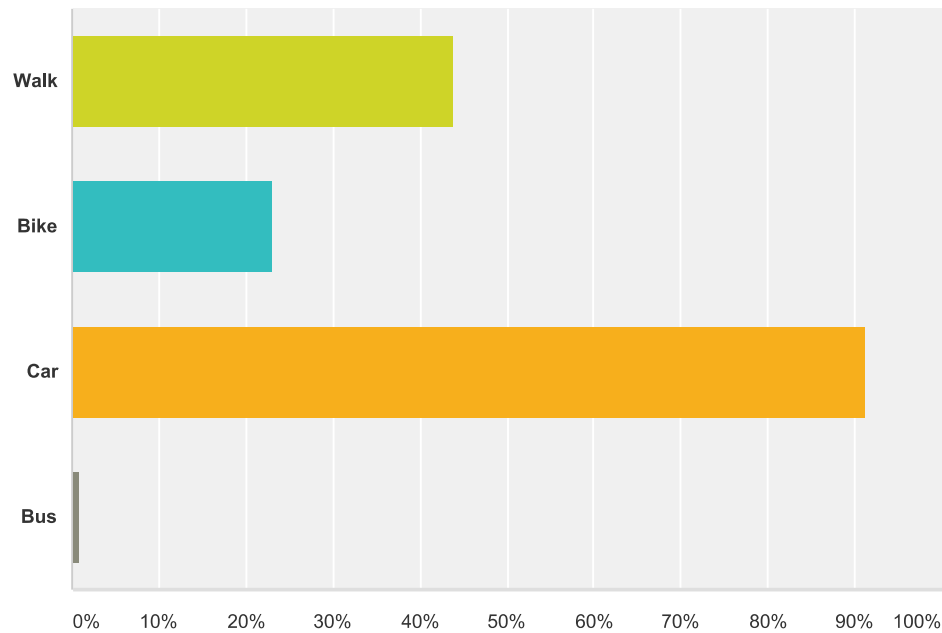
Answer Choices	Responses
In the mornings (before 8 am)	10.19% 71
During business hours (8:00 am – 5:00 pm)	83.50% 582
In the evenings (6:00 pm – 9:00 pm)	62.70% 437
At night (after 9:00 pm)	12.91% 90
Total Respondents: 697	

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Before 8am and after 5pm	8/27/2015 9:56 PM
2	Live and work downtown.	8/27/2015 11:17 AM
3	I live downtown.	8/23/2015 11:13 PM
4	Live in area	8/4/2015 3:08 PM
5	I work downtown from 10-530	8/4/2015 8:47 AM
6	I am only in the downtown area due to work location M-F 8-5	7/23/2015 1:57 PM
7	I live downtown and I work downtown, but every single day I am obliged to drive away from my neighborhood because Helena's only downtown school – Central – is and has been closed. My children, like half the children who attend that school, have never been inside the "real" school. Young families are moving away from downtown because this situation is not only inconvenient and erosive to our neighborhood cohesion, but is also destroying the quality of the education our children receive in their entirely displaced school. If we want our downtown to remain a viable place for families to live we must reopen our elementary school.	7/21/2015 3:30 PM
8	This depends on what I'm doing. Weekends tends to be either in the mornings and at night; weekdays tends to be business hours and evenings.	7/21/2015 9:57 AM

9	Lunch time too	7/18/2015 7:53 AM
10	Live and Work Downtown	7/16/2015 10:13 AM

Q4 How do you get downtown (choose all that apply)?

Answered: 699 Skipped: 7

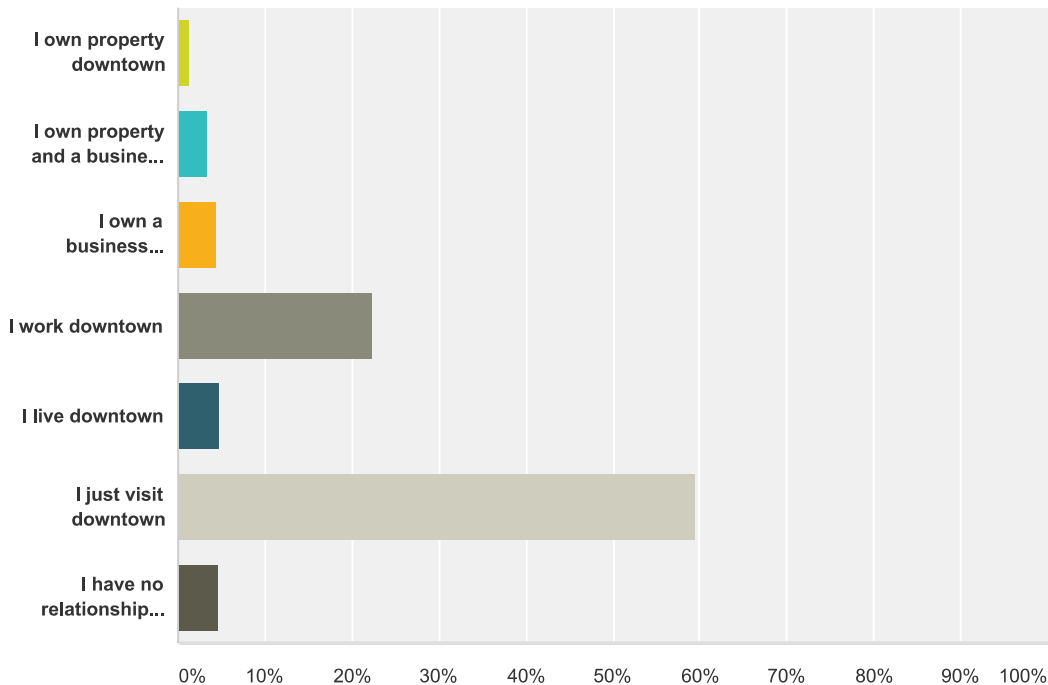


Answer Choices	Responses
Walk	43.92%307
Bike	22.89%160
Car	91.27%638
Bus	0.86%6
Total Respondents: 699	

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Bike or walk	8/27/2015 9:56 PM
2	Too dangerous to bike downtown.	8/23/2015 12:46 PM
3	Sometimes run.	8/23/2015 7:41 AM
4	I work in the area	8/21/2015 6:47 PM
5	Would bus if available	8/19/2015 4:30 AM
6	Live in area	8/4/2015 3:08 PM
7	Drive	8/3/2015 2:58 PM
8	I walk downtown during the summer months, but during the long school year I have little choice but to drive. Central Elementary is now actually located at 1325 Poplar and for those of you who've never been there, it's across highway 12 and the Roberts street railyard, about four blocks from the Interstate.	7/21/2015 3:30 PM
9	motorbike, car bicycle	7/20/2015 3:11 PM
10	motorcycle	7/16/2015 10:13 AM

Q5 Please select what best describes your relationship to downtown (choose all that apply)?

Answered: 694 Skipped: 12



Answer Choices	Responses
I own property downtown	1.15%8
I own property and a business downtown	3.31%23
I own a business downtown	4.32%30
I work downtown	22.33%155
I live downtown	4.76%33
I just visit downtown	59.51%413
I have no relationship to downtown	4.61%32
Total	694

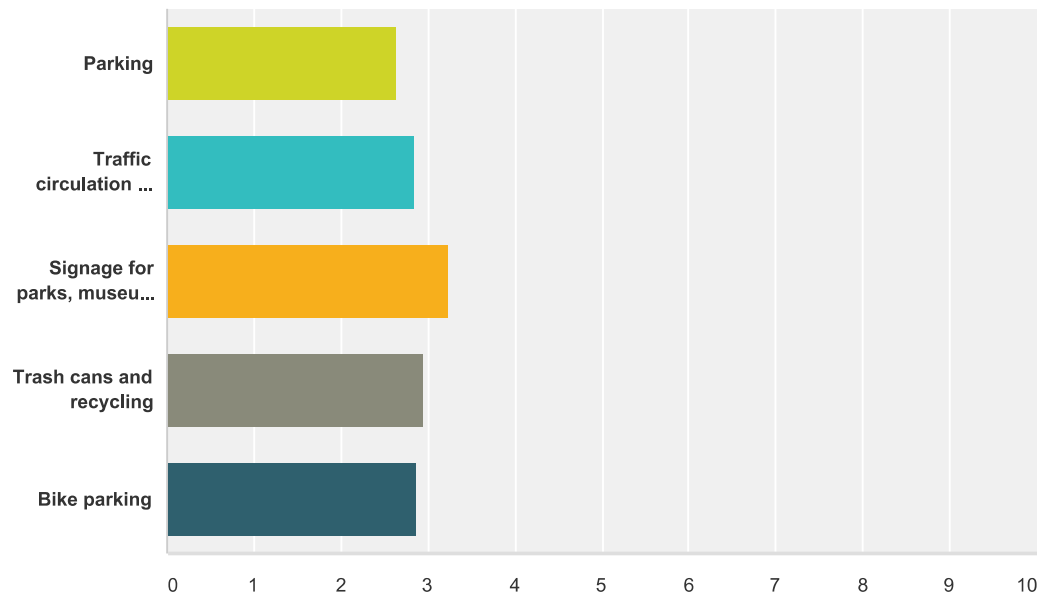
#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	I am a Helena native who lives, works and owns a business downtown.	8/27/2015 11:17 AM
2	I like downtown	8/25/2015 4:26 PM
3	I live close to downtown and enjoy walking there to eat and shop.	8/25/2015 8:36 AM
4	bank, city hall	8/24/2015 10:23 PM
5	It is not accessible	8/24/2015 6:38 PM
6	To shop	8/23/2015 10:20 PM
7	shop and recreate	8/23/2015 12:46 PM

8	And work downtown	8/23/2015 6:34 AM
9	I live close to the down town area I like to stroll my daughter around and look in the shop.	8/23/2015 12:11 AM
10	I like to take visitors downtown to see the buildings and some of the shops	8/22/2015 7:29 AM
11	I worked downtown for 6 years	8/21/2015 8:08 PM
12	I am a sales rep who calls on businesses downtown.	8/20/2015 8:37 PM
13	Much of my business is transacted downtown	8/20/2015 4:22 PM
14	I manage social media for several downtown businesses and also work out of coffee shops downtown.	8/20/2015 4:01 PM
15	The survey won't allow me to select more than one option; however I frequent several downtown businesses at least weekly.	8/20/2015 3:03 PM
16	It won't let me choose more than one. I own a business downtown and I visit downtown.	8/19/2015 5:18 PM
17	I couldn't choose more than one option. Mostly I'm Downtown for work, but also visit Downtown.	8/19/2015 10:23 AM
18	I own the New York Life Office on Helena Ave, close to downtown.	8/19/2015 9:48 AM
19	I used to own a business downtown.	8/18/2015 9:08 PM
20	Visit	8/18/2015 5:52 PM
21	My business is on Helena ave. I'm downtown member.	8/16/2015 7:23 AM
22	I live very close to downtown.	8/7/2015 2:27 PM
23	I work in the Great Northern Town Center. I go downtown when I have a business meeting or need to visit one of the retail shops	8/7/2015 10:37 AM
24	I also live and play in and near downtown	8/7/2015 10:34 AM
25	I also work downtown	8/5/2015 9:13 AM
26	Utilize walking mall businesses	8/4/2015 3:13 PM
27	I also dine downtown, shop downtown	8/3/2015 10:51 PM
28	I have work down town though I do not work there in an office and frequently use the post office and attend the Farmer's Market .	8/3/2015 7:40 PM
29	I've been utilizing Helena's downtown for 62 years.	8/3/2015 6:24 PM
30	I live just outside of the "downtown" area on the map.	8/3/2015 1:17 PM
31	This is a HORRIBLE self serving question. Relationship!!! Please!	8/2/2015 1:47 PM
32	I spend most of my time downtown. I do work here, but I also use ALL the restaurants, bars and do as much shopping downtown as I can. I use the library, the art center, the Myrna Loy and the parks.	7/31/2015 1:23 PM
33	...or did until June 1, 2015	7/30/2015 5:28 PM
34	I work and spend time outside of work downtown every day.	7/27/2015 11:16 AM
35	I own property, work downtown and live close to downtown	7/26/2015 7:21 PM
36	Spouse works downtown	7/25/2015 12:51 AM
37	I used to enjoy going downtown (back when there was still 2 hour parking)	7/22/2015 12:46 PM
38	and also tend to personal business downtown	7/22/2015 12:01 PM
39	I am walking distance from downtown.	7/22/2015 8:18 AM
40	farmers' market participant	7/22/2015 8:06 AM
41	My children are active at the library and Grandstreet Theater so I am downtown often.	7/21/2015 9:50 PM
42	family work there i go to visit and meet with people as well as do school work and play with my kid	7/21/2015 8:29 PM
43	I shop and recreate downtown	7/21/2015 6:12 PM
44	Downtown is actually kind of painful place for me. My children should be making memories in a playground that overlooks the BID. Instead, that playground is a place where people break mad dog 20/20 empties and the children of Central are quietly forgotten in an educational setting that is uniquely inferior and coming apart at the seams.	7/21/2015 3:30 PM

45	Work is on the "border" of downtown. Our organization is a Member of DHI.	7/21/2015 8:18 AM
46	I live a block off downtown	7/21/2015 6:47 AM
47	I love downtown Helena	7/20/2015 10:31 PM
48	I drink beer and wine downtown	7/20/2015 5:35 PM
49	I live very close by. (Rodney St.)	7/20/2015 2:01 PM
50	shop, visit, work	7/20/2015 12:46 PM
51	won't let me select more than one, i also visit downtown	7/20/2015 12:37 PM
52	i live near downtown and like to do stuff downtown.	7/20/2015 10:29 AM
53	Husband works downtown	7/20/2015 7:09 AM
54	I wish I could live downtown. There needs to be more downtown residential	7/19/2015 11:44 AM
55	I live a block from LCG.	7/18/2015 8:07 AM
56	I live less than a half mile from downtown.	7/17/2015 3:34 PM
57	(it won't allow "all that apply")	7/17/2015 9:23 AM
58	I live near downtown. I bought a house close to downtown so I could walk to downtown.	7/16/2015 10:02 PM
59	All that apply wasn't an option I also work downtown	7/16/2015 5:13 PM
60	the question does not allow multiple options. I live, work, shop and play downtown.	7/16/2015 2:33 PM
61	I live within 6 blocks of downtown.	7/16/2015 10:42 AM
62	also live downtown (cannot select more than one option here)	7/16/2015 10:13 AM

Q6 Please rate the convenience of the following downtown features:

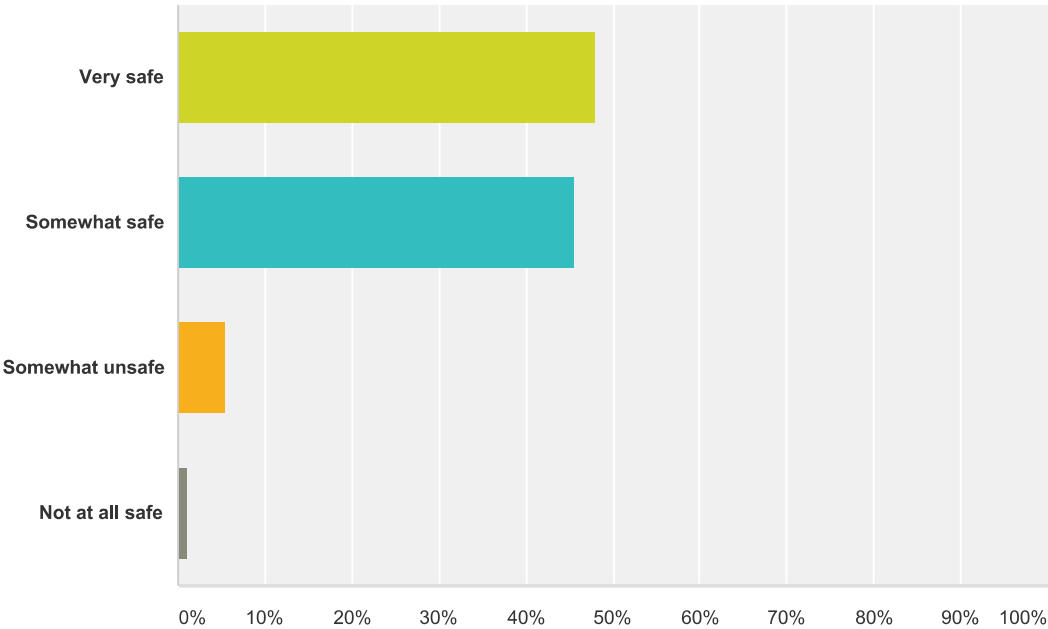
Answered: 672 Skipped: 34



	Very inconvenient	Somewhat inconvenient	Neither convenient or inconvenient	Somewhat convenient	Very convenient	Total	Weighted Average
Parking	20.06% 132	35.56% 234	13.83% 91	22.19% 146	8.36% 55	658	2.63
Traffic circulation in and out of downtown	8.83% 58	34.70% 228	26.48% 174	24.05% 158	5.94% 39	657	2.84
Signage for parks, museums and other amenities	7.87% 52	14.52% 96	34.80% 230	32.38% 214	10.44% 69	661	3.23
Trash cans and recycling	11.46% 76	25.64% 170	28.36% 188	26.85% 178	7.69% 51	663	2.94
Bike parking	9.98% 63	19.65% 124	48.65% 307	16.48% 104	5.23% 33	631	2.87

Q7 Is downtown safe?

Answered: 669 Skipped: 37



Answer Choices	Responses
Very safe	47.98% 321
Somewhat safe	45.44% 304
Somewhat unsafe	5.53% 37
Not at all safe	1.05% 7
Total	669

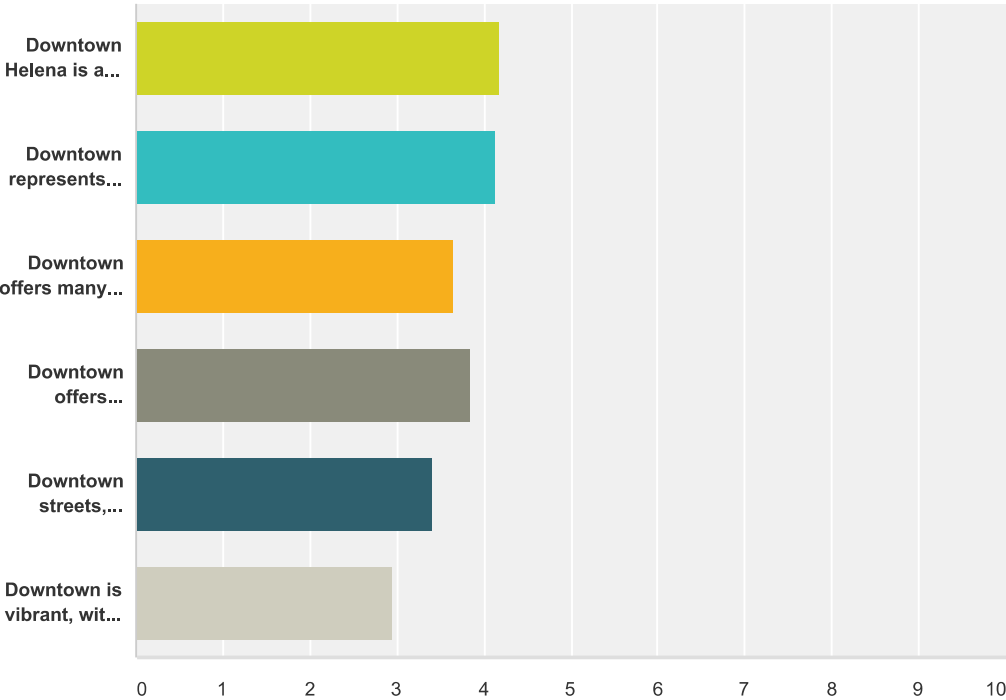
#	Comments	Date
1	The presence of God's Love causes me to question safety.	9/1/2015 9:13 AM
2	Except for the sidewalks!	8/28/2015 12:00 PM
3	The homeless shelter brings a host of crime, vagrancy, and other issues. On a daily basis, I witness people who are fearful of the transients, public urination/defecation, conflict, panhandling, police involvement, litter (alcohol cans/bottles). The transients gather and often have a "gang mentality", that they own our downtown parks and make them less welcoming for others. Visitors/tourists complain that they don't feel safe due to these issues. And typically, these are the first things that tourists see when they enter our downtown area. Not good for tourism or businesses!	8/27/2015 11:33 AM
4	The transient population causes increased refuge, crime, public nudity, public urination, foul language, tourist deterrent.	8/27/2015 9:58 AM
5	Transients in the parks. Lack of police enforcement	8/25/2015 1:21 PM
6	pushy impatient 'dangerous' drivers	8/24/2015 10:26 PM
7	but can be very dirty and unattractive - especially down near post office.	8/24/2015 10:16 AM
8	there are often disturbances at the western bar.	8/23/2015 11:18 PM
9	I have never been fearful in downtown Helena.	8/23/2015 7:00 PM
10	The Golds Bar is in an unfortunate location.	8/23/2015 6:58 AM

11	Very safe during daylight hours.	8/23/2015 1:54 AM
12	That alley next to the sweet grass gives me the creeps	8/22/2015 6:24 PM
13	I am not downtown much at night	8/22/2015 7:33 AM
14	Teenage kids are scary and without conscience.	8/21/2015 11:07 PM
15	Mostly safe, but there is a large population of homeless people, wandering and at times causing disruption.	8/19/2015 5:20 PM
16	Dive bars and Gods Love attract some threatening individuals to the area.	8/19/2015 4:44 PM
17	The homeless are scary to be around.	8/19/2015 12:14 PM
18	It could be safer for bicyclists and some of the intersections could be safer for pedestrians	8/19/2015 11:12 AM
19	Not at night	8/19/2015 10:15 AM
20	Uh	8/18/2015 8:21 PM
21	I would not be downtown by myself at 12:00 pm or later - other than that I feel safe	8/18/2015 1:03 PM
22	Don't want to be downtown late when bars are closing	8/17/2015 3:17 PM
23	Very safe in the Last Chance area, not as safe on the Rodney side	8/5/2015 9:15 AM
24	In general it is safe, however there are often people under the Cruse ST bridge or around library that make me question what they are doing exactly.	8/4/2015 8:06 PM
25	I think very safe during the day but somewhat unsafe at night.	8/4/2015 9:00 AM
26	Lots of transients walking through.	8/4/2015 8:49 AM
27	Used to be a very safe downtown. Now it seems that burns proliferate though as a 6'4" 250 pound man they don't bother me. Same can't be said for my wife and daughter though.	8/4/2015 8:40 AM
28	It depends largely on the time of day.	8/3/2015 10:59 PM
29	Gods love needs to go away. Downtown will never thrive while gods love is there.	8/3/2015 5:43 PM
30	The older rundown motel should be bought out and replaced	8/3/2015 3:55 PM
31	Not for the tax payers that do not benefit from the missing funds, that should be paid to the general tax base, absconded by the BID!	8/2/2015 1:47 PM
32	Downtown feels less safe later in the evenings and at night.	8/1/2015 10:12 AM
33	Depends on time of day or night and exact downtown location.	8/1/2015 10:10 AM
34	More consistent lighting would help.	8/1/2015 9:52 AM
35	Panhandlers, transients in library and under steps behind buildings (in their parking spots)	7/31/2015 9:16 PM
36	I have never personally had any issues with safety downtown.	7/31/2015 1:24 PM
37	The main problem with safety is the crazy people that walk around unchecked. This is also a problem for customers and employees in stores. I have had to call the cops and ambulance six times in three years.	7/31/2015 10:08 AM
38	Very safe – with the exception of Anchor Park	7/31/2015 10:06 AM
39	There is quite a bit of traffic	7/27/2015 8:42 AM
40	occasional meth head ot God S Love folks	7/24/2015 6:37 PM
41	lacking police or police community liason presence-especially late at night. skateboards and BMX bikes are dangerous fot pedestrians	7/24/2015 11:40 AM
42	Constant speeding down last chance, lots of car break ins, not enough patrol	7/24/2015 11:03 AM
43	Not sure what the definition of safe is your looking for	7/23/2015 2:13 PM
44	There are areas I thin twice about walkng through - Women's Park, near the anchor at the library, God's Love. There can be some skethcy characters at certain times of the year.....	7/23/2015 8:50 AM
45	Though I am not there much in the evenings.	7/23/2015 8:13 AM
46	I hate saying it but walking past God's Love is often an opportunity to be yelled at or insulted.	7/22/2015 5:44 PM
47	More people would make it safer	7/22/2015 12:51 PM

48	Lighting of parking garages should be reviewed.	7/22/2015 8:27 AM
49	i don't feel safe at times especially alone or with my kid.. the way people whip thru on bikes or skateboards and in cars to park . no one really stops to let people cross the road and it a toddler thats dangerous.	7/21/2015 8:31 PM
50	It would be safer if Central school had 250 kids in it, instead of the refuse of last night's party.	7/21/2015 3:33 PM
51	there is a preponderance of late night crime in some areas	7/21/2015 10:55 AM
52	Daytime very safe - night time somewhat	7/20/2015 10:34 PM
53	police Women's Park more often, please	7/20/2015 4:11 PM
54	most parts are safe. the gold bar area at night isnt great as well as the homeless in womens park. Most are kind though, never had a problem. but wouldn't let my daughter roam free downtown by that area.	7/20/2015 2:48 PM
55	Wouldn't want to be downtown by Rialto, The Western or Gold Bar late at night.	7/20/2015 1:24 PM
56	Never have felt uncomfortable - but I am not out there after midnight.	7/20/2015 12:51 PM
57	perception of safety can vary by location and time of day.	7/20/2015 10:33 AM
58	During Art Walk, I have heard comments from people on the 400 block that the presence of God's Love was a deterrent to walking toward the Studio Art Center on Logan or to the Northern Town Center. People would cross the street to avoid walking in front of Gods Love, or turn around entirely. This is clearly a perception issue/mental block for folks, not necessarily an actual behavior issue from the people at God's Love.	7/19/2015 11:58 AM
59	More eyes on the street would make it feel more safe.	7/19/2015 5:07 AM
60	Very safe except very late at night when the bars are near closing time	7/17/2015 9:22 AM
61	Only at night time are there occasional problems downtown, but that's true of all parts of town.	7/17/2015 3:35 AM
62	Alive at 5 really doesn't make downtown safe (neither does the Econolodge or whatever that old hotel is on LCG.) I do not go downtown on Wed evenings because of the drunks at Alive at 5.	7/16/2015 10:06 PM
63	Efforts to move the homeless shelter away from downtown?	7/16/2015 1:26 PM

Q8 Please rate the following statements about downtown’s sense of place:

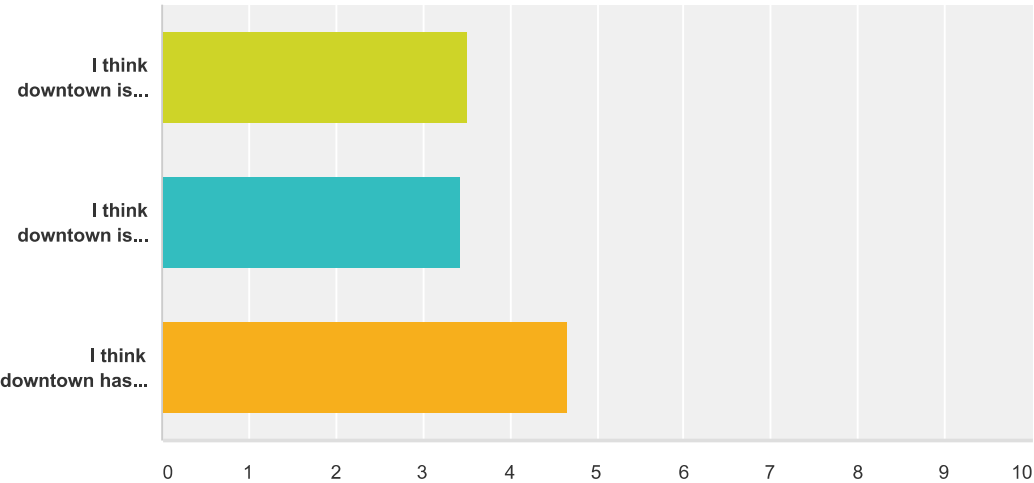
Answered: 675 Skipped: 31



	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Total	Weighted Average
Downtown Helena is a very special place	2.68% 18	6.71% 45	9.99% 67	30.70% 206	49.93% 335	671	4.18
Downtown represents Helena's unique culture and heritage	2.84% 19	7.32% 49	9.42% 63	34.23% 229	46.19% 309	669	4.14
Downtown offers many different reasons to visit	5.67% 38	16.72% 112	13.58% 91	34.18% 229	29.85% 200	670	3.66
Downtown offers interesting and attractive amenities such as building facades, window displays, parks, landscaping, public art and public gather places	3.74% 25	11.66% 78	11.81% 79	41.70% 279	31.09% 208	669	3.85
Downtown streets, sidewalks, and parking lots are safe, attractive, and well maintained	4.45% 30	20.47% 138	19.14% 129	42.14% 284	13.80% 93	674	3.40
Downtown is vibrant, with many people out and about, and activities and amenities that encourage people to spend time downtown	13.17% 88	29.19% 195	17.07% 114	30.69% 205	9.88% 66	668	2.95

Q9 Please rate the following statements about the general direction downtown is heading:

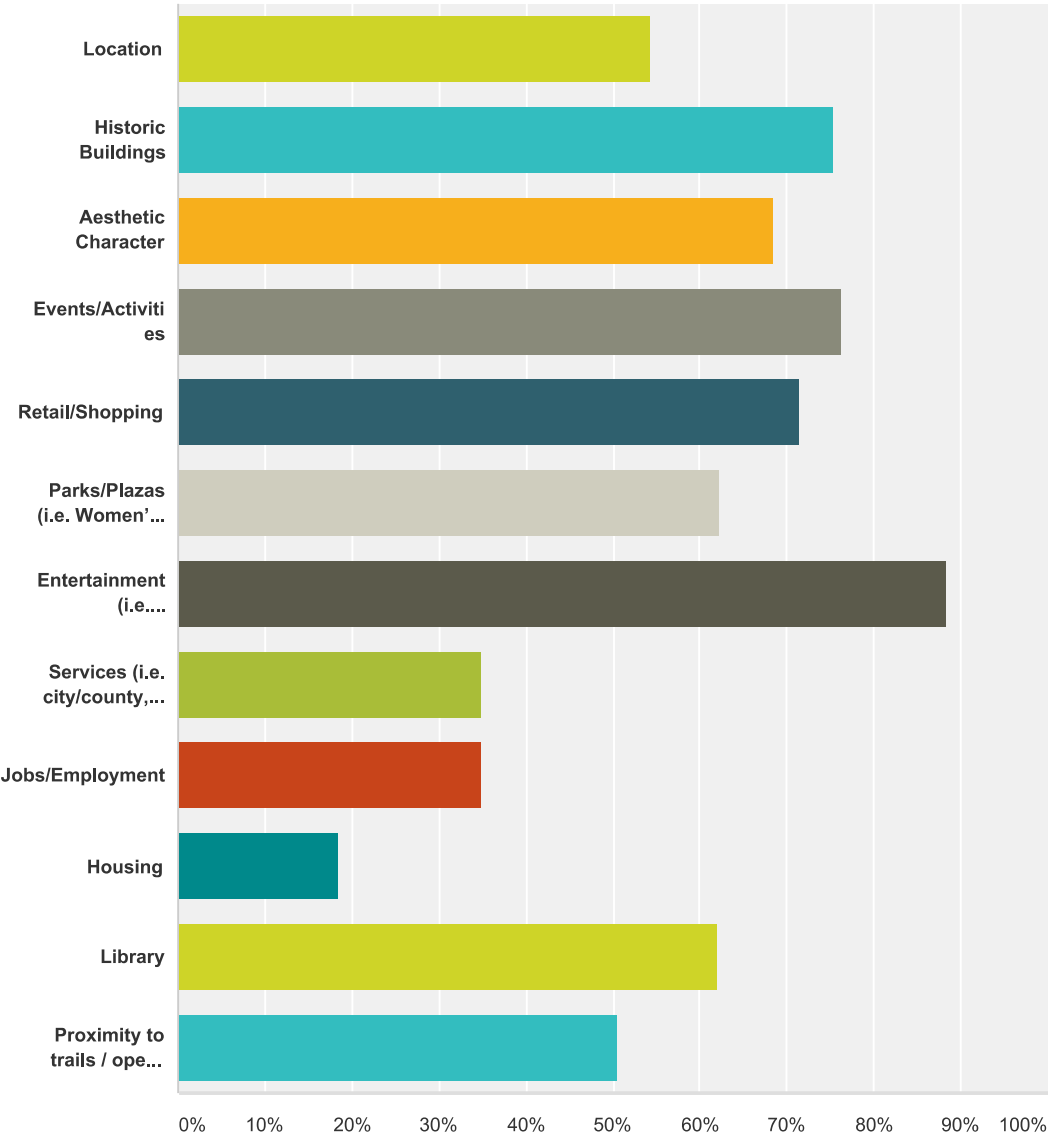
Answered: 674 Skipped: 32



	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Total	Weighted Average
I think downtown is "better off" than it was five years ago	4.39% 29	10.61% 70	29.39% 194	40.76% 269	14.85% 98	660	3.51
I think downtown is headed is the right direction	4.86% 32	15.48% 102	23.22% 153	44.31% 292	12.14% 80	659	3.43
I think downtown has potential to be more than it currently is	1.34% 9	1.04% 7	2.98% 20	20.68% 139	73.96% 497	672	4.65

Q10 What is important to you about downtown (choose all that apply)?

Answered: 670 Skipped: 36



Answer Choices	Responses	
Location	54.18%	363
Historic Buildings	75.37%	505
Aesthetic Character	68.51%	459
Events/Activities	76.27%	511
Retail/Shopping	71.49%	479
Parks/Plazas (i.e. Women's park, walking mall)	62.24%	417
Entertainment (i.e. restaurants, breweries, theaters)	88.21%	591

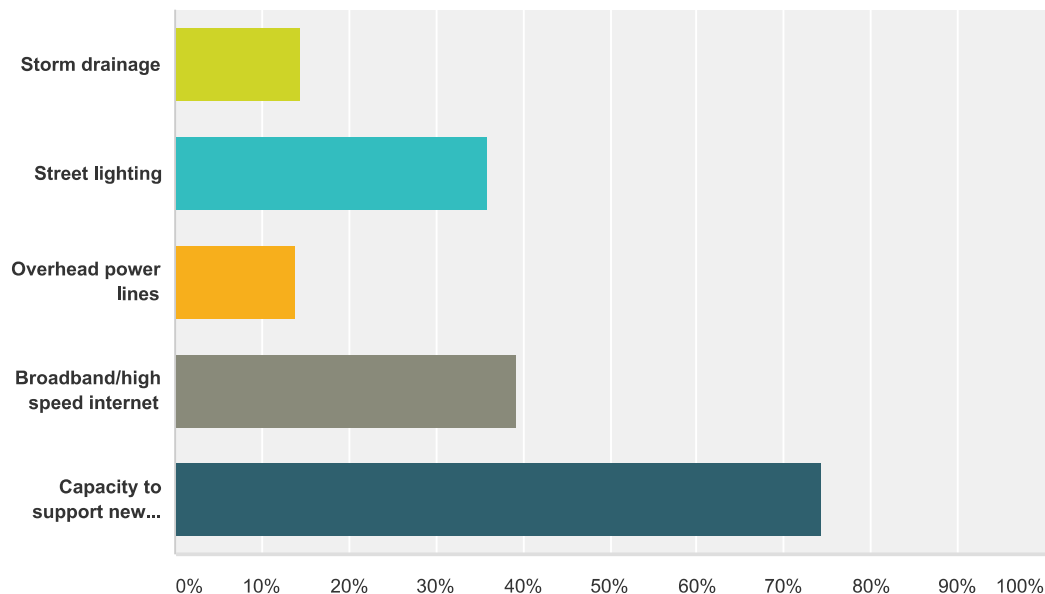
Services (i.e. city/county, courts, banking)	34.93%	234
Jobs/Employment	34.93%	234
Housing	18.36%	123
Library	61.94%	415
Proximity to trails / open space	50.45%	338
Total Respondents: 670		

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Public Art and History	8/28/2015 10:38 AM
2	Art	8/25/2015 2:21 PM
3	I think that main floor spaces in downtowns should be for the public - art, food, shopping,etc.	8/24/2015 10:16 AM
4	You need a combination of all services to draw people downtown.	8/23/2015 10:19 PM
5	Love downtown Helena!!!	8/23/2015 1:54 AM
6	Helena needs better night life	8/22/2015 6:24 PM
7	Dentist and dermatologist	8/22/2015 7:33 AM
8	need more restaurants, bars, outdoor venues, evening hours	8/21/2015 7:45 PM
9	After work and weekend hours	8/21/2015 7:13 PM
10	When I think about what makes downtown Helena special to me, it's personal connections and a sense of community fostered by a handful of businesses.	8/20/2015 3:07 PM
11	i guess it is all important...	8/19/2015 10:33 PM
12	Walkable and bikeable	8/19/2015 4:44 PM
13	The walking mall is inconvenient. Allowing vehicles would be better.	8/19/2015 11:34 AM
14	Arts scene	8/19/2015 11:27 AM
15	That is bicycle/pedestrian friendly	8/19/2015 11:12 AM
16	Business are never open after 5. Would visit more often if that was the case.	8/19/2015 10:15 AM
17	Downtown street fronts still need more retail businesses and they need to be open later for customers, especially in the summer months.	8/7/2015 10:39 AM
18	Appreciate the brewery's wine bars, more upscale boutiques coming in.	8/4/2015 3:16 PM
19	Would love to see it opened up (have walking mall removed). It does not serve any purpose and I feel it gives a "DO NOT ENTER" vibe. I do the feel of the 400 block and all the businesses there. 6th to Broadway could create that too if the street was open.	8/4/2015 9:23 AM
20	I used to visit downtown merchants more, but they've been forced to move to other places where traffic could see them.	8/3/2015 10:59 PM
21	Preservation of what urban renewal didn't destroy.	8/3/2015 6:03 PM
22	The Hawthorn is the best thing to happen down here in a long time!	8/3/2015 3:36 PM
23	I moved out of town due to the complete lack of affordable housing. Could not justify the overpriced houses in the south central neighborhood	8/3/2015 3:00 PM
24	What's left of our heritage and history	8/3/2015 2:06 PM
25	More individual, eclectic places to eat—please no chain restaurants, ever!! Traffic is congested, parking is a challenge.	8/1/2015 9:52 AM
26	Of course all of these things are important	7/31/2015 1:24 PM
27	a well-thought-out plaza is lacking	7/30/2015 5:28 PM
28	It could be so much more than it is	7/25/2015 8:23 PM

29	Safety	7/25/2015 10:43 AM
30	Ability to get around without a vehicle - proximity of all above	7/24/2015 8:37 AM
31	Since I do not find downtown a welcoming place there is nothing of importance to me	7/23/2015 2:13 PM
32	It is important that we make these things better	7/23/2015 10:50 AM
33	I like that it is compact. Easy to walk from one end to the other.	7/22/2015 8:21 AM
34	Need more outside eating opportunities	7/21/2015 6:15 PM
35	Downtown needs a school. Your downtown neighborhood is being emptied of children every single morning.	7/21/2015 3:33 PM
36	Having a pedestrian zone is important to me. The walking mall is rarified and we should be proud of having this no vehicle zone.	7/21/2015 10:00 AM
37	I would like a grocery	7/20/2015 10:37 PM
38	Proximity to neighborhood schools... oh wait...where's all that \$\$ you guys were spouting off about now\$	7/20/2015 9:34 PM
39	very few places to shop anymore and don't count bead shops and other 60's type shops.	7/20/2015 1:17 PM
40	It is Helena!	7/20/2015 12:51 PM
41	no roundabout!	7/20/2015 12:48 PM
42	More of the retail stores should stay open in the evenings.	7/19/2015 11:47 AM
43	Returning Central school students back downtown	7/17/2015 3:07 PM
44	We absolutely love the walking mall and never want to see it disappear. It is what makes downtown special.	7/17/2015 3:35 AM
45	Bakeries and coffee shops, arts (like JMACs and the various galleries), unique places	7/16/2015 10:06 PM
46	kid friendly	7/16/2015 3:13 PM
47	Helena absolutely sucks when it comes to live entertainment and music - there is NO music scene in Helena MT!	7/16/2015 10:17 AM
48	Live music, Alive at Five, Farmer's Market	7/16/2015 9:31 AM

Q11 In your opinion, what issues related to infrastructure need to be addressed or improved upon (choose all that apply)?

Answered: 539 Skipped: 167



Answer Choices	Responses
Storm drainage	14.47% 78
Street lighting	35.99% 194
Overhead power lines	13.73% 74
Broadband/high speed internet	39.33% 212
Capacity to support new development	74.40% 401
Total Respondents: 539	

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Also completion of some sidewalks and crosswalks	8/28/2015 10:46 AM
2	The 500 block needs to be spruced up big time, including relocation of the homeless shelter (Missoula did this and there are funds available from MCDCI). See article: http://helenair.com/news/local/montana-community-development-corp-awarded-m-in-federal-tax-credits/article_0f007322-876c-5cb5-bd35-d27d60229c8e.html The 500 block is the "gateway to the gulch" and needs to entice tourists/residents in that direction. The walking mall is bad for business and some form of traffic should be allowed. The landscaping is hideous and the trees are overgrown blocking the views of many buildings.	8/27/2015 11:49 AM
3	More of an art scene	8/25/2015 2:22 PM
4	Walking mall surface, ADA access	8/25/2015 1:21 PM
5	Open the walking mall to car traffic	8/24/2015 8:16 PM
6	Cleanliness of downtown streets/sidewalks.	8/24/2015 12:16 PM
7	Pedestrian bulb-outs installed. Bike lanes.	8/24/2015 10:19 AM
8	Clearing snow from streets.	8/23/2015 12:10 PM

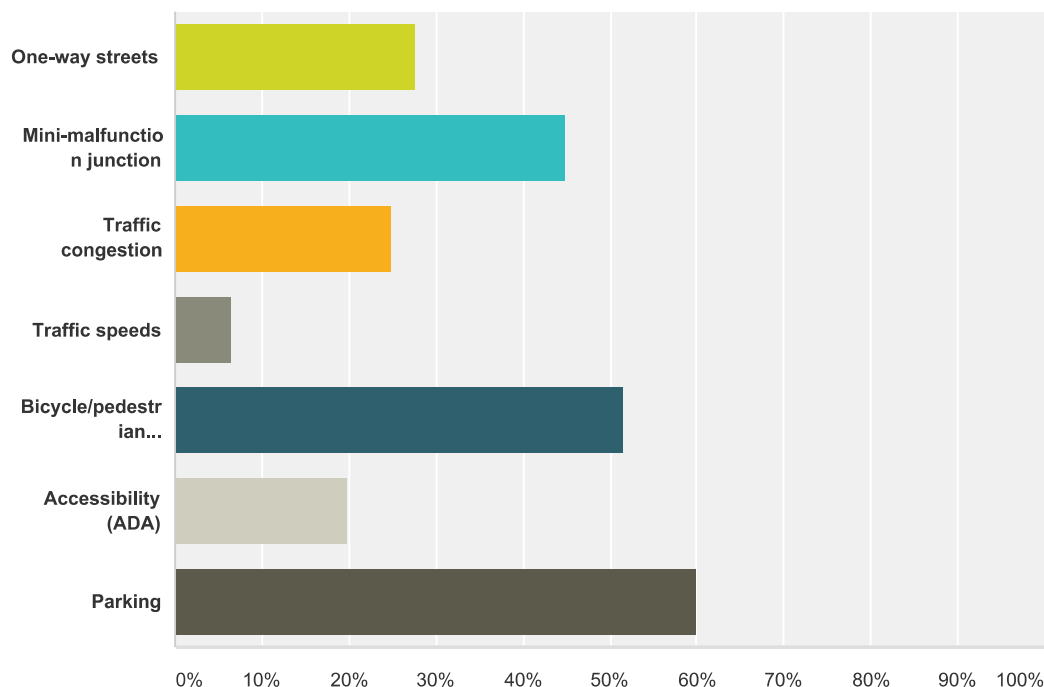
9	More important, I think, is finding a way to cherish our history and preserve it while keeping it relevant to today's society. Personally, I would not trade history for convenience or to help anyone feel better about our history. We are a beautiful community with a great and inclusive history. Please keep it intact without removing it or changing it to suit today's mentality.	8/23/2015 11:02 AM
10	Better use vacant spaces in downtown area to concentrate the amenities in downtown rather than in other areas of Helena	8/23/2015 6:40 AM
11	Please, NO NEW DEVELOPMENT!	8/23/2015 1:59 AM
12	North side of Jackson parking garage	8/22/2015 10:05 PM
13	Sidewalks	8/22/2015 9:10 PM
14	Bicycle lanes	8/22/2015 7:59 PM
15	Better support for pedestrians	8/22/2015 12:00 PM
16	painted curbs	8/21/2015 10:27 PM
17	Parking	8/21/2015 7:19 PM
18	Parking	8/21/2015 6:37 PM
19	I think all of these are fine.	8/21/2015 8:27 AM
20	More public art and places for art	8/20/2015 8:48 PM
21	general maintenance and more graffiti lately	8/19/2015 5:31 PM
22	Restoration of historical buildings	8/19/2015 11:29 AM
23	One lane traffic on walking mall	8/19/2015 8:28 AM
24	I'm not sure.	8/18/2015 8:07 PM
25	In winter the snow clean-up on sidewalks	8/18/2015 1:07 PM
26	safe walkability on sidewalks and the walking mall, ADA accessiblity is safe, Broadway St. ped crossing safety issue when driving. This "updated" area has made it more dangerous for vehicles to pass.	8/17/2015 3:22 PM
27	Bicycle and pedestrian access	8/13/2015 4:49 PM
28	Infrastructure seems pretty good downtown although I think patching and repaving roads deserves more attention (lumps and bumps in sidewalks throughout Helena as well). Parking in Helena is atrocious. Ditch the stupid fee stations and meters and let us buy a rechargeable digital pass that can go on our phones or something.	8/8/2015 4:56 PM
29	I often hear water "running" under storm drains. Is it possible to daylight some of the storm drainage? Whatever happenned to the water feature on the walking mall?	8/7/2015 2:41 PM
30	sidewalk repair	8/4/2015 6:44 PM
31	The openness between 6th and Broadway to give a welcome inviting people to enjoy it rather than the current closed doors.	8/4/2015 9:31 AM
32	Parking that is FREE for 2 hrs or more	8/4/2015 8:33 AM
33	more handicapped parking	8/3/2015 11:41 PM
34	Parking	8/3/2015 10:17 PM
35	Parking is horrible and the streets are in need of repair, some of them are just plain awful!	8/3/2015 7:47 PM
36	Handicap & disabled access is mostly nonexistent	8/3/2015 6:00 PM
37	Gods love torn down	8/3/2015 5:45 PM
38	Get rid of the walking mall	8/3/2015 2:13 PM
39	I believe that if the BID district wants to be maintained, improved or grow it should but not at a cost to all other tax payers. Or should I say from the absence of tax monies from which the entire city should benefit DIRECTLY! The BID should function under the same terms as a "Home Owners Association" and pay for any special amenities they choose to receive. To be verbose, the BID should do as they choose not CHEATING the general fund from money that should go to the General Fund.	8/2/2015 1:56 PM
40	Bike access! Bike lanes and parking.	8/1/2015 8:46 AM

41	Turn the "stream" back on! We all miss it and it's a great addition to the walking mall	7/31/2015 8:23 PM
42	Pavement on Walking Mall needs to be improved, made safer and made consistent throughout	7/31/2015 1:24 PM
43	Parking that does not force customers to run out of store due to tickets. We need a option for customers to be accidental customers. Businesses thrive when customers from one business can have time to shop in another.	7/31/2015 10:20 AM
44	walking mall maintnance	7/30/2015 5:30 PM
45	Ensure the sidewalks and street crossings are ice free in winter. A person should be able to walk or travel in a wheelchair from their car to offices, shops, etc. without fear of slipping. (This may be related to storm drainage.) The worst area that I know of is the sidewalk N of 6th AVE and E of Last Chance Gulch	7/30/2015 3:11 PM
46	Paving roads, increasing visibility in intersections, sidewalks ada	7/27/2015 7:50 PM
47	Better signage, and perhaps video cameras to deter people from smoking cigarettes and urinating in the parking structure elevators and stairwells. The cameras, and signage that they are on camera, might serve as a deterrent even if the cameras were not operational.	7/27/2015 11:38 AM
48	The Great Northern is the only truly nice area in downtown. Can we get some guidance and vision from the people that did this to help with the rest of downtown and Helena as a whole?	7/25/2015 8:42 PM
49	Improve sidewalk surfaces, especially in parts of walking mall	7/25/2015 10:50 AM
50	more living and owner occupied properties	7/24/2015 11:47 AM
51	Your first 5 choices miss the mark the most important improvement is to fix the traffic circulation by adding an exit point on the other end. The gulch is a one-way dead end route which is not an effective means to get people in or out of the area.	7/23/2015 3:04 PM
52	parking	7/22/2015 8:08 PM
53	Fix mini malfunction junction	7/22/2015 5:51 PM
54	Parking and clearing of snow	7/22/2015 12:51 PM
55	Appropriate use of existing storefronts	7/22/2015 10:10 AM
56	Lighting in the parking garages should be examined. The Park Ave/6th St. garage does not feel safe at night.	7/22/2015 8:34 AM
57	The use of public bathrooms in the downtown area	7/21/2015 4:25 PM
58	Central Elementary. What's happening to the school building — and the student body — is shameful.	7/21/2015 3:39 PM
59	Broadway/walking mall intersection stoplight	7/21/2015 2:59 PM
60	Need to seriously consider developing new multi-story buildings 6-8 stories and promoting mixed use.	7/21/2015 2:02 PM
61	Rent is a barrier to small businesses in the BID; the preponderance of non retail, white collar type businesses is evidence of this. There are few affordable spaces downtown for small business start up. Also snow and ice maintenance needs improvement; enforcement of snow and ice removal by businesses on all sidewalks is critical for non-motorized and disabled use from late fall to mid spring.	7/21/2015 10:04 AM
62	New businesses in historic buildings	7/20/2015 10:39 PM
63	Better timed traffic lights	7/20/2015 10:36 PM
64	Traffic flow	7/20/2015 6:06 PM
65	DO NOT DEVELOPE DOWNTOWN ANYMORE LEAVE IT ALONE. NO URBAN DESTRUCTION!	7/20/2015 3:17 PM
66	sidewalks, signage	7/20/2015 1:21 PM
67	rental price for commercial space - - - I have been told by business owners that it is very expensive	7/20/2015 12:19 PM
68	basic clean up of historic buildings to make them more enticing for repurposing.	7/20/2015 11:13 AM
69	Snow Removal	7/19/2015 12:01 PM
70	New residential options, first floor zoning for only stores not offices.	7/19/2015 11:51 AM
71	Street parking too short	7/19/2015 7:25 AM
72	Have the stream running all summer.	7/18/2015 7:32 AM
73	Building a downtown school	7/17/2015 3:09 PM
74	More sidewalks	7/17/2015 10:21 AM

75	bring the walking mall creek back (sorry, not exactly "infrastructure" but...)	7/16/2015 10:23 PM
76	Public restrooms in parks and walking mall areas are needed	7/16/2015 5:51 PM
77	Tree lined streets, sidewalks are lacking in many sections. The old downtown is not connected to the newer Great Northern Section.	7/16/2015 2:41 PM
78	replace existing lights with nice poles as in Great Northern & remove/bury unsightly power & telephone lines	7/16/2015 2:17 PM
79	Walking mall repairs.	7/15/2015 6:51 PM

Q12 In your opinion, what issues related to transportation need to be addressed or improved upon (choose all that apply)?

Answered: 612 Skipped: 94



Answer Choices	Responses
One-way streets	27.61% 169
Mini-malfunction junction	44.93% 275
Traffic congestion	24.84% 152
Traffic speeds	6.54% 40
Bicycle/pedestrian connectivity	51.63% 316
Accessibility (ADA)	19.93% 122
Parking	59.97% 367
Total Respondents: 612	

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Snow plowing needs to be improved to prevent dangerous streets, especially at crosswalks from plowing and on all of the street due to ice following storms.	9/1/2015 2:17 PM
2	Remove the one way street, make the malfunction junction more pedestrian friendly, add better sideways and crossing for pedestrians, add better signage and wayfinding	8/28/2015 10:46 AM
3	If you want to get it right, look at Main Street in Bozeman. That's how Helena used to be....busy and vibrant.	8/27/2015 11:49 AM
4	Tourists would like to have more public transportation accessible. Tour train pick-up downtown.	8/27/2015 10:08 AM
5	I wont stop at businesses along Last Chance Gulch because parking is so difficult to find.	8/25/2015 1:21 PM

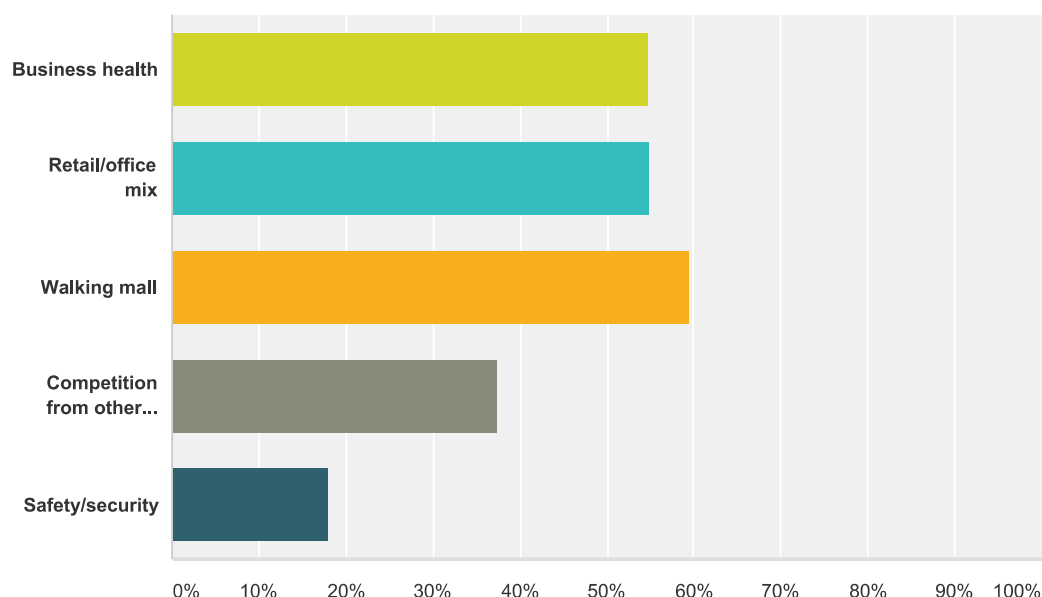
6	Parking in Helena, Montana is NOT bad at all. Anyone who thinks it is needs to spend a day in a large city.	8/25/2015 10:21 AM
7	It's getting to expensive. 69 a month and some times there's no convenient place to park	8/24/2015 3:33 PM
8	Road/street condition.	8/24/2015 12:16 PM
9	Last Chance Gulch is a one-way bringing you into downtown and then it stops at the walking mall with 1) no where to park, and 2) no good route out of downtown. It's a huge inconvenience.	8/23/2015 10:29 PM
10	1hour parking is a huge problem for. Eating lunch and shopping	8/23/2015 2:59 PM
11	signage for directions to additional parking	8/23/2015 1:07 PM
12	A small bus designated to run from parking lot(s) closer to Hwy 12 and have that bus run thru only the downtown area to move people from their vehicles to the downtown area.	8/23/2015 11:02 AM
13	Reestablish two way traffic.	8/23/2015 5:40 AM
14	patrons are discouraged to stay longer by parking tickets	8/22/2015 2:09 PM
15	I like the transportation offered downtown	8/21/2015 11:12 PM
16	Public transportation	8/21/2015 9:04 PM
17	Flow, add round about at the old federal building area to get traffic turned back around	8/21/2015 5:17 PM
18	Get rid of the walking mall and encourage business	8/21/2015 3:15 PM
19	Again, I think these are fine. Occasionally it is difficult to find parking, a spot is usually not far away.	8/21/2015 8:27 AM
20	I understand the reasoning behind the change from 2-hour parking to 1-hour parking, but that impacts on-street parking for lunch visits. More monthly garage parking for downtown workers might help alleviate that, but I suspect that's wishful thinking.	8/20/2015 3:21 PM
21	Two way traffic	8/20/2015 12:00 PM
22	open the walking mall to bikes	8/19/2015 5:31 PM
23	PARKING!!! and signage to show visitors parking options, especially when driving down Last Chance Gulch	8/19/2015 5:21 PM
24	Public transportation	8/19/2015 11:29 AM
25	The walking mall prevents traffic from driving completely up the gulch to support business. I am completely for pedestrian corridors in big cities, but it does not work in small towns like Helena. It stifles development downtown.	8/19/2015 11:22 AM
26	Bicycle parking; timing of pedestrian signals; slowing traffic on north end of LCG and Neill/Helena Ave	8/19/2015 11:21 AM
27	Why are there no round abouts. The traffic lights are ridiculous.	8/19/2015 10:19 AM
28	traffic light—synchronization to keep traffic moving instead of stop...start...stop....start	8/19/2015 9:48 AM
29	One lane traffic on walking mall	8/19/2015 8:28 AM
30	traffic lights on park at 6th and Lawrence frequency is terrible	8/19/2015 8:00 AM
31	Very nice transportation. Always plenty of parking or very cheap. Low traffic	8/18/2015 8:40 PM
32	The angle parking on park is accident prone	8/18/2015 6:03 PM
33	You need to get a handle on the parking commission. People avoid downtown because of the draconian enforcement practices.	8/18/2015 2:25 PM
34	Crossing Last Chance Gulch from the Bagel Company to the Great Northern for a walker is frustrating	8/18/2015 1:07 PM
35	Bicycle parking is limited and often inadequately installed so that the rack is placed without the space to use as intended. Open the one-way streets to two directions.	8/7/2015 2:41 PM
36	Mirrors added at intersections where street parking blocks the view of oncoming traffic	8/6/2015 11:08 AM
37	Main Street needs to be a two-way road, one-way negatively affects businesses. People speed on a one-way and even getting out of a parked vehicle is dangerous. Getting out of the car with kids and crossing the street is more dangerous than it should be.	8/5/2015 12:46 PM
38	Bus or trolley system that goes in a loop around downtown; great for winter, convenient in summer	8/5/2015 9:19 AM
39	It is RIDICULOUS that so much of the parking is for 1 hour on Last Chance. That DOES NOT encourage people to utilize multiple stores in one visit.	8/4/2015 10:23 AM

40	I think the current pattern of traffic is great and no improvement is needed.	8/4/2015 9:31 AM
41	Open up Main between Sixth and Broadway to two-way traffic!	8/3/2015 11:04 PM
42	Condition of the streets	8/3/2015 7:47 PM
43	I force current laws. Don't mess with what is working. No traffic circles!	8/3/2015 6:48 PM
44	The southern part of the district is handicapped disabled unfriendly, the rest is poor	8/3/2015 6:00 PM
45	Make walking mall one way one lane vehicle accessible	8/3/2015 5:58 PM
46	Public transportation between downtown and all residential neighborhoods would be ideal.	8/3/2015 4:23 PM
47	Police should enforce traffic rules in town.	8/3/2015 3:02 PM
48	unplowed snow/plowed snow clogging parking	8/3/2015 2:34 PM
49	none of the above	8/3/2015 2:13 PM
50	The "Mini-malfunction Junction" should be made into a turning circle. It would afford traffic a clear path while creating additional space for Art or park space in the center if the new "Circular Drive". Parking: I object to taxpayer funds being used, via bonds, to build structures at which many spaces are "reserved". I am all for monthly passes at a discounted rate to ensure usage. But designated or reserved areas are not acceptable.	8/2/2015 1:56 PM
51	Don't limit the parking to two hours during business hours.	8/1/2015 10:28 AM
52	More bike racks, bike lanes, bike paths	8/1/2015 9:57 AM
53	Bicycles should be allowed on the Walking Mall. There should be 2 hour or 3 hour parking spots for visitors and maybe diagonal parking should be considered all along Last Chance Gulch.	7/31/2015 1:24 PM
54	Parking, parking, parking	7/31/2015 10:25 AM
55	The main problem is parking is confusing to tourists and aggravating to locals. Why would someone pay for parking if they can get it free in front of their destination? The worst part is when the hour is up they must move and walk back. Most customers will not do this and will drive off.	7/31/2015 10:20 AM
56	I favor traffic on the walking mall north of Broadway, but thar be dragons thar.	7/30/2015 5:30 PM
57	Malfunction Junction #2 (on LCG) desperately need a roundabout.	7/30/2015 10:27 AM
58	I would bike more often if there were more bike lanes and the city was more bike friendly.	7/27/2015 7:33 PM
59	We need a FREE circular shuttle that runs every 15 minutes on weekdays and weekends between the Carousel/Ex Works and the Library.	7/27/2015 11:38 AM
60	A roundabout is strongly needed at malfunction junction. The walking mall should remain vehicle-free.	7/27/2015 11:09 AM
61	Helena drivers are the worst. Please, if you do one thing, time the damn stop lights to keep traffic moving. Does the HPD actually make any money or are they a cost to the city overall? this town is too small for parking to be this difficult.	7/25/2015 8:42 PM
62	Skateboarding, especially late at night, is a negative for downtown.	7/25/2015 10:50 AM
63	police handicap parking for non-handicaps	7/24/2015 4:00 PM
64	connect up down with downtown for peds	7/24/2015 11:47 AM
65	There needs to be more two hour parking. One hour is not long enough to shop, eat or take a class.	7/24/2015 11:37 AM
66	I have a hard time finding handicap parkiing when I have older visitors	7/24/2015 10:56 AM
67	reduce amount of vehicles by increasing public transportation and walk/bikability of the area	7/24/2015 8:41 AM
68	Lots of time is spent at mini-malfunction junct. sitting there with no one going because light is green for direction with no cars!! Plus, that intersection is so pedestrian unfriendly.	7/24/2015 4:20 AM
69	Get rid of the one way street	7/23/2015 10:06 PM
70	As you enter Helena (from any direction) it looks like a rat hole. Downtown could be the nicest part but if I was from out of town and passing through 1, I wouldn't know how to get there and 2, if I judved it from how it looks driving in I'd meep going.	7/23/2015 11:05 AM
71	The walking mall needs to be seasonal. Walking in the summer and one lane with a few parking spots in the winter.	7/23/2015 8:17 AM
72	Do NOT propose a round-about at mini-malfunction junction. It won't work!	7/22/2015 3:39 PM

73	Nobody should have to ever pay for parking in Montana	7/22/2015 12:51 PM
74	Parking policy - always a problem - needs intensive study using other communities nationwide as examples.	7/22/2015 12:31 PM
75	One way streets are dangerous and annoying.	7/22/2015 8:25 AM
76	Traffic congestion downtown could be alleviated if hundreds of parents weren't forced to drive out of downtown every day for school	7/21/2015 3:39 PM
77	Need to examine whether opening the walking mall up to vehicle using context sensitive design, bulb outs, bike lane etc will increase retail and visitor traffic.	7/21/2015 2:02 PM
78	Transit improvement to serve ADA and youth	7/21/2015 12:51 PM
79	free parking	7/21/2015 10:54 AM
80	Taxis	7/21/2015 9:18 AM
81	Parking. Parking. Parking.	7/21/2015 8:52 AM
82	better connectivity from downtown to great northern	7/20/2015 10:40 PM
83	Leave Last Chance Gulch Alone!	7/20/2015 3:17 PM
84	Public Transit	7/20/2015 2:06 PM
85	There is nothing wrong with mini malfunction junction. Please do not create a round-about	7/20/2015 1:27 PM
86	possibly mini-malfuntn but no change is better than earlier proposals	7/20/2015 1:21 PM
87	feeding meters or paying to park in park garages when there isn't any shops to go to is frustrating	7/20/2015 1:20 PM
88	traffic lights need to be synced better throughout town. no more roundabouts!	7/20/2015 12:52 PM
89	making the walking mall open to traffic; doing two way traffic on last chance gulch	7/20/2015 12:41 PM
90	mini-mal function continues to be discussed in ways that invite conflict rather than innovative solutions, signs for nonmotorists should include wayfaring information.	7/20/2015 11:13 AM
91	I strongly feel that Helena should look to stop vehicle traffic on Last Chance Gulch at mini malfunction junction and create a longer walking mall. Larger parking garages at either end and in the middle child accommodate for lost parking on Last Chance. Walking connectivity from the walking mall to the Great Northern Towncenter via Womens and Pioneer Park, would help with the flow of downtown. An emphasis on condo and apartment housing on the upper floors and local shops on the street level in the walking mall would give Helena a unique experience to locals and tourists not found anywhere else in Montana.	7/20/2015 11:11 AM
92	Better public transit	7/19/2015 9:40 PM
93	People drive too fast and don't give pedestrians the right of way.	7/19/2015 7:25 AM
94	Remove one way streets and walking mall! Thru traffic is important for creating vibrant areas.	7/19/2015 5:16 AM
95	The free 1 hr. Parking is not long enough. Parking lot spaces are to small & close.	7/18/2015 7:32 AM
96	Need parking meters on Last Chance. Free parking is nice but 1-hour isn't enough, and 2-hour parking gets abused.	7/17/2015 3:57 PM
97	the parking ticket enforcement is too harsh. need more free parking times.	7/17/2015 1:34 PM
98	Train overpass/underpass. Too much coal train traffic, potential to cause air and surface water quality issues, etc.	7/17/2015 10:21 AM
99	I prefer diagonal parking	7/17/2015 9:44 AM
100	Parking is getting too expensive	7/17/2015 9:27 AM
101	the parking meters are ridiculous. either meter it all or get rid of 2-hr and 1-hr parking. every block is something different.	7/16/2015 10:23 PM
102	Get rid of pigeons	7/16/2015 8:01 PM
103	Change 1-way to 2-way. Make roundabout @ mlfncn jcnctn. more free parking that encourages rather than discourages people from coming downtown	7/16/2015 2:17 PM

Q13 In your opinion, what issues related to economic conditions need to be addressed or improved upon (choose all that apply)?

Answered: 604 Skipped: 102



Answer Choices	Responses
Business health	54.80% 331
Retail/office mix	54.97% 332
Walking mall	59.44% 359
Competition from other areas	37.42% 226
Safety/security	17.88% 108
Total Respondents: 604	

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	More visible and secure bike racks would be helpful.	9/1/2015 2:17 PM
2	more residential	9/1/2015 9:14 AM
3	Rent/lease control	8/30/2015 1:43 PM
4	My safety concerns are related to the condition of many of the sidewalks/ walking area, especially the walking mall. Some very unsafe and hazardous conditions exist right in front of busy businesses!	8/28/2015 12:00 PM
5	need to provide incentives for business to be downtown, also need to do public awareness about parking and all their is to do downtown	8/28/2015 10:46 AM
6	Relocate the homeless shelter out of downtown to the 6th Ward or Walmart area. The transient population would benefit as those areas are closer to county health department, Food Share, bus terminal, Walmart, railroad tracks, etc.	8/27/2015 11:49 AM
7	Transient population relocation to an area with less tourism, local businesses.	8/27/2015 10:08 AM
8	unless you have time to walk and are physically fit it is damned inconvenient just to go downtown	8/24/2015 10:29 PM
9	Lighting and better maintenance of the mall. Redesign mall to be pleasant, yet require less maintenance?	8/24/2015 8:09 AM

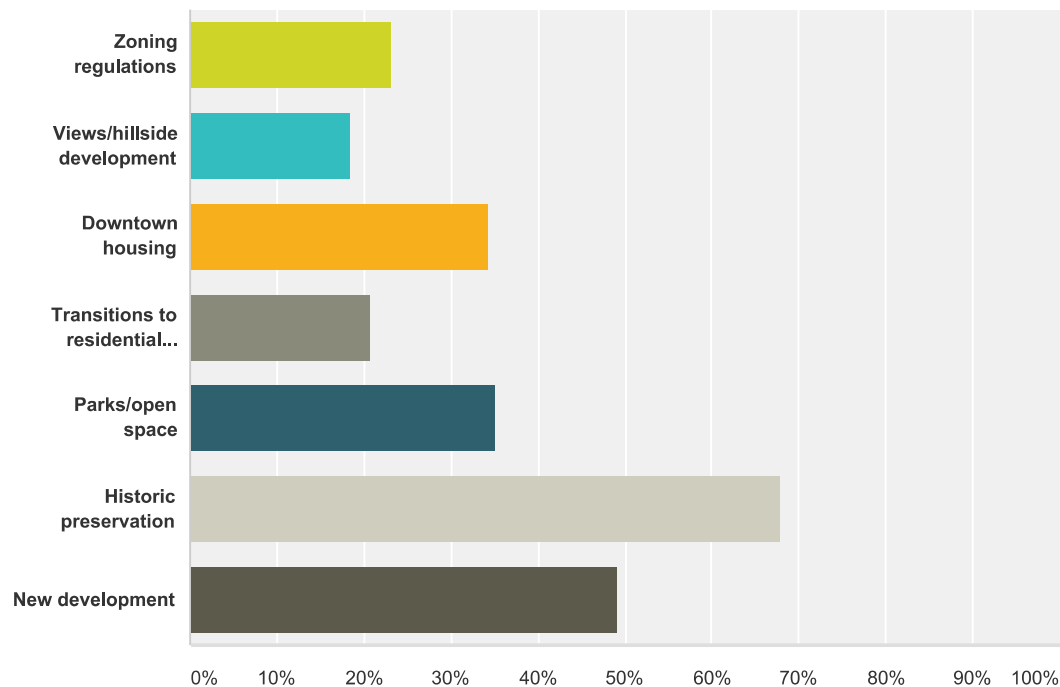
10	Cleanliness; get rid of pigeons! So disgusting to have poop everywhere.	8/23/2015 5:40 AM
11	After bars close is a little sketchy for females... businesses don't seem to last long in their spaces downtown.	8/23/2015 1:59 AM
12	more restaurants, bars, eating venues all day and at night	8/21/2015 7:48 PM
13	Hours of businesses, limited weekend hours, bozeman and Missoula are hopping with people while Helena might have 10 people downtown	8/21/2015 6:56 PM
14	More shopping and restaurants please. This is what gets me downtown.	8/21/2015 8:27 AM
15	Retail stores should be open on weekends and after 5pm on weekdays	8/21/2015 5:29 AM
16	Tax incentives to locate business downtown	8/20/2015 8:48 PM
17	Additional restaurants and more capacity for outside enjoyment of bars and restaurants	8/20/2015 4:28 PM
18	There is too much office space downtown relative to other uses. And much of it is vacant.	8/20/2015 3:21 PM
19	Traffic on the mall in winter	8/20/2015 12:00 PM
20	Mixed use development	8/20/2015 9:38 AM
21	Have business open on off hours	8/19/2015 10:37 PM
22	Not sure about safety issues.	8/19/2015 10:05 PM
23	The first floor of all building should be required to have retail or food/beverage occupants by code. Building owners should get tax breaks for occupied space, or have their taxes increased if buildings are unoccupied for extended periods of time.	8/19/2015 9:39 PM
24	Liquor and gambling laws limit competition for existing bars and restaurants restricting new business development and limiting the incentive for existing businesses to improve their facilities.	8/19/2015 4:55 PM
25	Central school needs to be re opened in its original location	8/19/2015 1:13 PM
26	Get rid of it. Businesses on the walking mall typically don't make it due to inconvenience of access.	8/19/2015 11:35 AM
27	The walking mall prevents traffic from driving completely up the gulch to support business. I am completely for pedestrian corridors in big cities, but it does not work in small towns like Helena. It stifles development downtown.	8/19/2015 11:22 AM
28	Outdoor seating at more restaurants/coffee shops - maybe through use of parklets	8/19/2015 11:21 AM
29	Keep them open later.	8/19/2015 10:17 AM
30	Retail hours of business "should" be open longer hours...walking mall expectation to shop, tourism, guests	8/19/2015 9:48 AM
31	Everything is closed early and on Sundays	8/18/2015 8:40 PM
32	Competition from chains, strip malls, and big box stores	8/13/2015 4:49 PM
33	I would have put housing as part of the economic conditions	8/6/2015 11:38 AM
34	Draw more businesses, some places are just empty. Develop them for public use if able. (i.e. electronic charge stations). Add elements (Scan square barcodes) to be accessed by electronic devices to link to a history of Helena wiki.	8/6/2015 11:08 AM
35	Downtown loses many new business startups to other locations. Improving communication with small business owners to highlight the benefits of being downtown (as compared to MT Ave). The downtown walking mall is a treasure and needs to be supported with outside dining and complementary businesses. Business hours need improvement and expansion, although this may be corrected by addressing other areas first, thereby bringing more customers.	8/5/2015 12:46 PM
36	I really don't like all the offices downtown-you can go almost a block and not see any retail!	8/4/2015 3:19 PM
37	It time has been served and no longer has a purpose. The mall needs to be opened up inviting people downtown and closing them out. See previous comments.	8/4/2015 9:31 AM
38	The walking mall has killed that part of Main. Today it's too much offices and too little retail. The downtown business district needs traffic to be seen.	8/3/2015 11:04 PM
39	Encourage more retailers to locate in area. Promote the area.	8/3/2015 6:48 PM
40	The area needs to be a lot more accommodating to people who have mobility problems, instead of bikers, and hikers	8/3/2015 6:00 PM
41	A more open/friendly environment could be encouraged by more public seating and a relaxed open container law.	8/3/2015 4:23 PM
42	Retail business. Look at Missoula and Bozeman. Retail and dining. Not just offices.	8/3/2015 2:13 PM

43	"Downtown" needs more residential space. If more people lived downtown it is more likely to become more of a focal point for real activity and business.	8/2/2015 1:56 PM
44	Reeder's Alley seems to have so much potential if it wasn't primarily used as office space.	8/1/2015 10:28 AM
45	Providing outside seating for walking mall restaurants would increase its appeal; more evening activities	8/1/2015 9:57 AM
46	Retail needs to be encouraged and developed by making spaces more affordable. There needs to be better connectivity between businesses so all are working together to create a vibrant business environment.	7/31/2015 1:24 PM
47	We need to get locals back into downtown. Shops are hurting because they dont get enough sales.	7/31/2015 10:20 AM
48	Pretty good mix of retail, office, services, residential and entertainment now. Retail rents are somewhat high.	7/30/2015 5:30 PM
49	Zoning seems odd in this city. I feel there needs to be more retail/restaurant space on ground level. Also, liquor licensing seems like it's pushing out the unique restaurants and bars downtown.	7/27/2015 7:33 PM
50	Downtown restaurants need to be open every day, even on weekends; they should not be closed on certain days of the week or closed during lunch. And, downtown community amenities like Exploration Works and the Library should be open all day on Saturday and Sunday which would bring more people to the restaurants. Right now, everyone is closed on Sunday (the library opens very late) so it looks like a ghost town.	7/27/2015 11:38 AM
51	with state and federal government jobs accounting for roughly 70% of the overall workforce, we clearly need to diversify and make Helena a more attractive place to do business.	7/25/2015 8:42 PM
52	Residential	7/25/2015 10:50 AM
53	Homeless shelter and clinics are a deterrent/change the feel of the area. I know we need them but perhaps not right in the center of retail.	7/24/2015 11:30 PM
54	housing for the elderly....not subsidized	7/24/2015 4:00 PM
55	DHInc and other downtown interests need to add a focus on encouraging more residences and people who live downtown. People who live downtown also spend downtown. That seems to be forgotten. Also, more should be done to get businesses other than ones related to serving alcoholic beverages downtown. That seems to be all that has moved in lately.	7/24/2015 11:37 AM
56	City should continue to promote residential use downtown. The more people who live there, the more vibrant downtown will be.	7/24/2015 4:20 AM
57	Get rid of the walking mall and make it a street so there is the potential for more people to drive to the stores.	7/23/2015 10:06 PM
58	Lack of nightlife	7/22/2015 12:51 PM
59	ACCESS TO DOWNTOWN BY AUTOMOBILE !!	7/22/2015 12:31 PM
60	Make it cheaper to rent/lease downtown. Downtown needs a drug store and hardware store!!	7/22/2015 8:25 AM
61	It would be wonderful if the rest of the walking mall was as lively as the half-block from the ice cream place to the Parrot. The owner of the Arcade building and the Power block has way too much vacant space downtown.	7/21/2015 9:54 PM
62	Walking Mall is an underdeveloped asset.	7/21/2015 7:26 PM
63	Need to stop the mantra that downtown isn't doing well	7/21/2015 6:20 PM
64	I make no incidental purchases downtown. By the time I get home after driving across the tracks for the FOURTH TIME that day, I have little desire or time to stop by the Parrot with my kids. The closure of Central is turning downtown into a child-free zone.	7/21/2015 3:39 PM
65	Hours conducive to leisure/tourism	7/21/2015 2:31 PM
66	Need to examine whether opening the walking mall up to vehicle using context sensitive design, bulb outs, bike lane etc will increase retail and visitor traffic.	7/21/2015 2:02 PM
67	The more entertainment you have the more people will come.	7/20/2015 9:25 PM
68	Downtown residences - they stimulate the economy because people who live there are likely to be out in downtown and contribute to street life, particularly at night. Otherwise, it's a chorus of crickets at night.	7/20/2015 4:46 PM
69	please either move God's Love, or build it in a less central location	7/20/2015 4:13 PM
70	make it easier to start and own a business downtown	7/20/2015 2:52 PM
71	the increase of homeless in the area	7/20/2015 1:33 PM
72	more residential downtown to provide localized business more hours of the day and returned school	7/20/2015 1:21 PM

73	we need more shops and not the 60's ones that sell beads or 60's clothing need more restaurants	7/20/2015 1:20 PM
74	i would love to see old time block dances.	7/20/2015 12:52 PM
75	the US Bank parking structure is such an eye sore, needs work, needs to go away and have better use	7/20/2015 12:41 PM
76	the walking mall is not its own economic condition; if it is then it is in a better condition than it has been in years. The competition of big box stores and perception of strong parking enforcement deter visitors from downtown.	7/20/2015 11:13 AM
77	I love the walking mall. wish it could be made more vibrant.	7/20/2015 7:20 AM
78	Filling in empty retail space with new business, more downtown-wide events like the art walk	7/19/2015 9:56 PM
79	I think it's great	7/19/2015 9:40 PM
80	Too much office, not enough social.	7/19/2015 11:57 AM
81	Business hours are terrible, more weekend and after 5 hours	7/19/2015 8:11 AM
82	Times that businesses are open- if everything closes at 5, and i get off work at 5, its not good!	7/19/2015 7:43 AM
83	WalKing mall is a business killer. Can still have large sidewalks for waking while also allowing car and bicycle traffic through the area.	7/19/2015 5:16 AM
84	Smart growth. More incentives for businesses to build or move downtown. More mixed use with residential and commercial zones sharing space.1	7/18/2015 8:13 AM
85	Downtown needs to capitalize on its historic nature & also be more like Bozemans old downtown	7/18/2015 7:32 AM
86	Rents too high to support existing retail traffic; too many vacant business/retail spaces; not enough good restaurants, music venues	7/17/2015 8:08 PM
87	Downtown housing would help stimulate more retail activity. Need to get offices out of storefront spaces.	7/17/2015 3:57 PM
88	RETURN CENTRAL STUDENTS DOWNTOWN	7/17/2015 3:09 PM
89	No more bars, PLEASE! Or banks. I would like to see office space (for rent) be more affordable. I think the big box store all along the North/East sides of town are going to hurt downtown in the long run. The Walking Mall is great – please don't cut out any more trees.	7/16/2015 10:23 PM
90	Get rid of walking mall btwn sixth & Broadway & revive 2 way traffic on Last Chance Gulch south to Broadway	7/16/2015 8:01 PM
91	The empty lot at the Great Northern is an eye sore. Access from the parking lot to the buildings is poorly pathed. The walking mall is nearly vacant in parts. Overall Downtown is a patchwork of healthy areas and messes.	7/16/2015 2:41 PM
92	Would be nice to have retail and ent. Business's open after 6pm. Ghost(down)town Helena starts after 6. ;-)	7/16/2015 10:23 AM

Q14 In your opinion, what issues related to land use need to be addressed or improved upon (choose all that apply)?

Answered: 580 Skipped: 126



Answer Choices	Responses
Zoning regulations	23.28% 135
Views/hillside development	18.28% 106
Downtown housing	34.31% 199
Transitions to residential neighborhoods	20.69% 120
Parks/open space	35.17% 204
Historic preservation	67.76% 393
New development	49.14% 285
Total Respondents: 580	

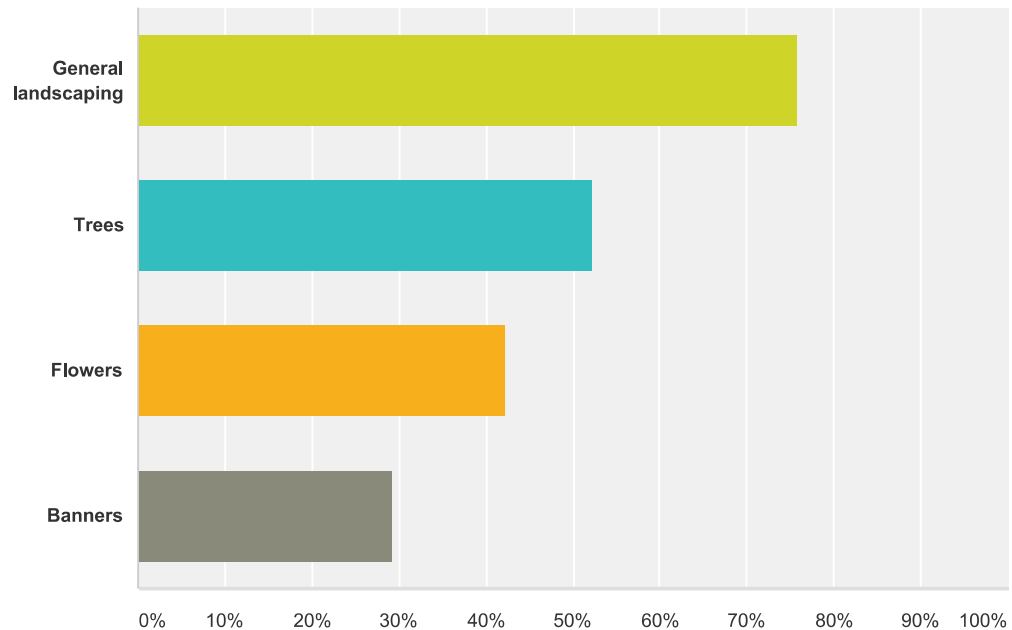
#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Accessible biking and pedestrian routes should be improved to get from downtown to open lands or to parks system.	9/1/2015 2:17 PM
2	I do not know enough about zoning issues to weigh in.	8/28/2015 12:00 PM
3	Add housing and everything gets better	8/28/2015 10:46 AM
4	provide tax incentives to promote business in downtown historic buildings	8/28/2015 10:14 AM
5	Need to look at other cities and see how they've revitalized their historic districts to make downtown somewhere people want to go.	8/23/2015 10:29 PM
6	Downtown should be preserved and enjoyed. Not changed.	8/23/2015 11:02 AM

7	I would hate to see any of the historic buildings or spaces falling into disrepair, or being vandalized... the day downtown Helena is modernized will be the day I'd no longer want to live here.	8/23/2015 1:59 AM
8	,	8/21/2015 7:48 PM
9	maintain what's there	8/21/2015 6:56 PM
10	None	8/21/2015 5:29 AM
11	More restaurant locations, revises liquor laws to promote restaurants	8/20/2015 8:48 PM
12	In the 11 years I've lived in Helena, there has been an ongoing debate about how to get more people downtown. I've lived in a number of cities that have had successful urban revitalizations, and they share one thing: people living downtown. When people already live there, you don't have to draw them in. Downtown Helena needs more moderately priced apartments/condos that are attractive to young professionals. (As opposed to the luxury units on Front Street).	8/20/2015 3:21 PM
13	Mixed use, intergenerational housing, property tax incentives for multi-story mixed use housing in the downtown core	8/20/2015 9:38 AM
14	We need more mixed use buildings in residential areas	8/19/2015 8:24 PM
15	I am opposed to the hillside development, it is impossible for emergency vehicles to access effectively, it is a fire danger and it is an eyesore.	8/19/2015 8:20 PM
16	we need to make developing property easier than the valley. not to prevent valley sprawl like blue cross moving	8/19/2015 5:31 PM
17	I like the walking mall the way that it is.	8/19/2015 12:17 PM
18	I wish we could build buildings larger than three stories!	8/19/2015 10:19 AM
19	cost of development stifled within the city, forcing development in the county...very bad for long-term planning, costs, lifestyles, vitality of the city.	8/19/2015 9:48 AM
20	One of my biggest wishes would be to reverse the havock that urban renewal wreaked on the downtown area. I wish I could bring back all of those beautiful historic buildings. The most important thing in my opinion is that no more history be "renewed" and lost forever.	8/18/2015 9:17 PM
21	Make preservation and reuse a priority	8/18/2015 8:40 PM
22	Need to learn to reuse buildings instead of pushing new construction	8/18/2015 6:03 PM
23	communication of city comissioners with landowners and retailers. They won't return email or calls	8/14/2015 11:33 AM
24	Transition the downtown to a form-based zoning code for greater flexibility and increased creativity in land use.	8/7/2015 2:41 PM
25	New and vibrant retail business that can function year around.	8/7/2015 10:41 AM
26	High-quality housing is a must for downtown. Helena deserves a comprehensive assessment of historic resources with an aim of preservation and development.	8/5/2015 12:46 PM
27	Please help guide new building to fit into the historic character of downtown.	8/3/2015 11:04 PM
28	No hillside development should be allowed.	8/3/2015 6:48 PM
29	Get rid of the beggars and bums	8/3/2015 5:45 PM
30	I think new development is a mistake – refitting and reuse of current buildings should be primary	8/3/2015 3:55 PM
31	I would like to see the "business district" expanded to neighborhoods throughout the city. It would make neighborhoods more vibrant and create "social zones" which, would re-create neighborhoods of the past. There is no place where "neighbors" can congregate or even see each other in their own communities. People don't know each other. Neighbors are not "Neighbors" in the traditional sense. They just happen to live nearby!	8/2/2015 1:56 PM
32	Preserving and maintaining our historic buildings are critical to our downtown character	8/1/2015 9:57 AM
33	parking	7/31/2015 9:19 PM
34	Better pedestrian connectivity between the historic downtown and the GNTC	7/27/2015 11:38 AM
35	It all starts with increased housing. More people will warrant more business growth & development. Look at Bozeman or Billings.	7/26/2015 1:20 PM
36	The "planning" that has gone on here for the last 40 years is an embarrassment. This is the capitol city yet there seems to be no pride in the appearance of things (the Great Northern being an exception) around here	7/25/2015 8:42 PM
37	No more hillside development!	7/25/2015 10:50 AM

38	The regulations are fine, the property owners need to do more to make downtown attractive including better store hours to accomodate people who work and cannot shop until after 5 pm	7/23/2015 3:04 PM
39	Tax breaks for retail spaces. Maybe this happens to the building owner so they can lease their space for less money. There should not be offices on main levels, it should only be retail or restaurant etc.	7/23/2015 8:17 AM
40	aesthetics	7/22/2015 8:08 PM
41	None.	7/22/2015 2:02 PM
42	Women/Hill parks are wonderful but between those and the wide Neill Ave. there is an unfortunate disconnect between "old" downtown and all the growth in and around the Great Northern. Need to find a way to better connect these two areas.	7/21/2015 9:54 PM
43	Downtown needs a school. The time is now. Many Central parents are coming to feel that Helena would rather fight and talk and point fingers that actually reopen our school. Displacement is killing our school community and more and more of us are seeing permanently closure as a better alternative than prolonging the disaster of our displacement.	7/21/2015 3:39 PM
44	Need to seriously consider developing new multi-story buildings 6-8 stories and promoting mixed use.	7/21/2015 2:02 PM
45	Connectivity between historic Downtown and the Great Northern Town Center	7/21/2015 9:47 AM
46	NO NEW CONSTRUCTION. LOOK AT THE UGLY HOLIDAY INN FOR CHRIST SAKE!	7/20/2015 3:17 PM
47	Pedestrian/bike issues	7/20/2015 1:49 PM
48	Urban Renewal was the worst thing that ever happened to our downtown. What a shame tearing down all those old buildings.	7/20/2015 1:27 PM
49	not sure	7/20/2015 12:54 PM
50	if we truly want to preserve our heritage, zoning needs to be strict. that's just the way it is.	7/20/2015 12:52 PM
51	revitalize downtown with new deelopment that honors the historic features & values, make zoning creative and encourage the City to make their processes more streamlined!	7/20/2015 11:13 AM
52	More businesses in empty spaces	7/19/2015 9:40 PM
53	retail/office mix - offices should not occupy street level	7/19/2015 10:18 AM
54	More mixed development and everyday services. No more gift stores or art galleries!!!	7/19/2015 5:16 AM
55	Downtown School	7/17/2015 3:09 PM
56	Always favor historic preservation. WOuld like to see the hillside along Cruse Ave re-vegetated (on both sides and above the parking lot behind the Windbag). The apartment complex on Broadway and Park is a hideous site to behold, as are the Tower Apartments by the old fire tower. The really are an eyesore and do not fit in with the downtown historic "look." Like the access from residential areas to downtown.	7/16/2015 10:23 PM
57	There are too many vacant office spaces or partially developed areas in the Great Northern and walking mall.	7/16/2015 2:41 PM
58	Put zoning in pace (such as Bozeman has) that ensures certain standards - i.e. make things look nice	7/16/2015 2:17 PM
59	I'd like to see more incentives and more penalties for walking mall & downtown business economic development. Penalties for not having retail/restaurant in storefront spaces.	7/16/2015 10:52 AM

Q15 In your opinion, what issues related to the streetscape need to be addressed or improved upon (choose all that apply)?

Answered: 483 Skipped: 223



Answer Choices	Responses
General landscaping	75.78% 366
Trees	52.17% 252
Flowers	42.24% 204
Banners	29.19% 141
Total Respondents: 483	

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Amazing improvements over past couple years. Is there ever too much? Never! Condition of plantings is vastly improved.	8/28/2015 12:00 PM
2	The banners are silly and don't reflect the actually events that bring people downtown	8/28/2015 10:46 AM
3	Street lane paint	8/27/2015 10:02 PM
4	I find the streetscape quite attractive and am proud of how downtown looks to our visitors.	8/27/2015 12:02 PM
5	Thin the overgrown forest in the walking mall area. Make attractive improvements like Whitefish or Missoula. The HPC doesn't do a great job of maintaining parking lots, many are dirty and filthy.	8/27/2015 11:49 AM
6	It would be great if the 600 & 500 blocks of Last Chance Gulch could have more landscaping.	8/27/2015 10:08 AM
7	The banners now have such tiny writing that the only way you could possibly see what they have to say is if you're right up upon them. They do a terrible job of communicating anything about downtown because no one can see what they are supposed to say.	8/25/2015 10:21 AM
8	get rid of the bump outs and walking mall	8/24/2015 10:29 PM
9	Cleanliness and condition of sidewalks.	8/24/2015 12:16 PM

10	Get rid of pigeons.	8/23/2015 5:40 AM
11	Looks great!	8/23/2015 1:59 AM
12	More trees	8/22/2015 6:26 PM
13	I worry about the uneven sidewalks..love the hanging flower baskets..thank you	8/22/2015 2:09 PM
14	Parts of the walking mall walking surface is in poor shape	8/21/2015 11:12 PM
15	,	8/21/2015 7:48 PM
16	New banners are nice but too wordy. More trees and plants. More attractive street lights.	8/21/2015 5:17 PM
17	More live plants are always welcome.	8/21/2015 8:27 AM
18	None	8/21/2015 5:29 AM
19	I appreciate that the flower beds have been maintained this summer	8/20/2015 4:28 PM
20	More outside dining opportunities	8/20/2015 3:21 PM
21	Remove the trees ,businesses are not visible	8/20/2015 12:00 PM
22	Too many banners. Steal from the trees and flowers (summer only)	8/19/2015 10:21 PM
23	while trees on the walking mall seem like a good idea, they obstruct the historic facades	8/19/2015 10:18 PM
24	Efforts have been made, but could always be better especially the flowers and flowering trees	8/19/2015 8:20 PM
25	signage and general sidewalk maintenance	8/19/2015 5:31 PM
26	Road diets are needed on Cruse Ave. collector and arterial streets need improved bike and pedestrian features.	8/19/2015 4:55 PM
27	None	8/19/2015 12:17 PM
28	Christmas decorations	8/19/2015 11:21 AM
29	pretty good...but what city couldn't use more trees and flowers?	8/19/2015 9:48 AM
30	More of the above	8/18/2015 8:40 PM
31	Looks great to me!	8/18/2015 8:07 PM
32	Torn outdated banners are worse than no banners	8/18/2015 6:03 PM
33	Worn, faded, or dated banners should not be installed.	8/7/2015 2:41 PM
34	garbage lid containers need to be cleaned when emptied	8/7/2015 11:14 AM
35	Most of these are very nice and don't need improvements	8/7/2015 10:41 AM
36	Definitely headed in the right direction!	8/7/2015 10:39 AM
37	a few more unique bench pieces, like near the carousel.	8/6/2015 11:08 AM
38	Trees please!Add some significant public art as well. Our downtown art dates from the 1970s and needs help. The Bullwhacker? Seriously? Stones from knocked down historic buldings? Really? I bet Archie Bray and the Holter would love this opportunity to create a walking downtown art exhibit.	8/5/2015 12:46 PM
39	I think a great job is done on these already!	8/4/2015 3:19 PM
40	none	8/4/2015 2:07 PM
41	I am strongly disappointed that the water does not run down the concrete channel as has for so long. This is a disappointment because I used to work on the system when I was employed for the city and I understand how it can be fixed.	8/4/2015 11:03 AM
42	I think it's beautiful with flowers, flags, trees etc.	8/4/2015 9:31 AM
43	First, make sure there's a street. There's still room for trees and greenery along the street and still allow traffic.	8/3/2015 11:04 PM
44	Down town is mostly dirty and the streets are horrible. For a capital city we should have more pride in our little city.	8/3/2015 7:47 PM
45	Why isn't the water flowing in the fake creek?	8/3/2015 4:17 PM
46	Maintain the walking mall!	8/2/2015 1:56 PM
47	More comfortable outside seating.	8/1/2015 10:28 AM

48	Graffiti	7/31/2015 11:36 PM
49	We could use more public art in landscaped areas on the Gulch and better maintenance of lawn and trees. Could be kept cleaner and greener.	7/31/2015 1:24 PM
50	All trash receptacles should be labeled "recycling" "compost" and "landfill"	7/27/2015 11:38 AM
51	we own street sweepers, right? Can we use them more often? picking up other peoples cigarette butts is disgusting!	7/25/2015 8:42 PM
52	More trees on streets going into downtown like on route 15 in front of cafe zydeco. You could have medians in the middle with trees and greenery.	7/24/2015 11:30 PM
53	Eliminate sidewalk & flag signage this form of advertising is very tacky and lends to the look of a trashed out area.	7/23/2015 3:04 PM
54	More of this would be nice. Less electronic signage would be nice	7/23/2015 11:05 AM
55	None.	7/22/2015 2:02 PM
56	Parklets	7/22/2015 12:51 PM
57	Quit wasting money on watering flower baskets that hang from street poles.	7/22/2015 8:25 AM
58	All downtown tenants should have to keep their store fronts/sidewalk areas completely swept and clean in order to show pride in their downtown and impress tourists.	7/21/2015 8:09 PM
59	More painted murals, more outdoor art	7/21/2015 6:20 PM
60	Banners and flowers are not more important than saving the oldest school in Montana. If Downtown cares about its historic, walkable neighborhood, you need to get behind Central in a big way before its too late.	7/21/2015 3:39 PM
61	Edible landscaping!!!!!!	7/21/2015 9:18 AM
62	Parking	7/20/2015 9:25 PM
63	sidewalks	7/20/2015 2:52 PM
64	crumbling or non existant sidewalks, weed control, horiibly ugly pothole repairs	7/20/2015 1:21 PM
65	think is fine as is	7/20/2015 1:20 PM
66	Looks great	7/20/2015 12:54 PM
67	Take note from the Greening America's Capitols Report and do it! Get high school students to do art on all the downtown utility boxes too!	7/20/2015 11:13 AM
68	RECYCLING BINS!! For plastic, aluminum and glass bottles	7/19/2015 9:40 PM
69	More street trees!	7/19/2015 5:16 AM
70	It's already great	7/17/2015 5:49 PM
71	Sidewalks, paving & striping are looking pretty shabby.	7/17/2015 3:57 PM
72	More trees and shrubs are always lovely, but lordy no more ash trees Helena! The lindens downtown smell wonderful, and I am glad Women's Park still as a couple old cottonwoods. Wish there were more. Last Chance could use some more trees...	7/16/2015 10:23 PM
73	Banners are way too small. Get fewer banners but make them bigger...,street wide even!	7/16/2015 8:01 PM
74	Professionaly trimmed trees by a certified arborist is desperately needed not only in downtown but other areas as well. There is data available that shows increases in business where trees are beautiful	7/16/2015 5:51 PM
75	sidewalks	7/16/2015 3:15 PM
76	Trees are dying. The city looks dead at night time.	7/16/2015 2:41 PM
77	The banners on street poles (and flowers) are a nice touch. All of the yard flags/teardrop signs that have popped up around town are god awful!	7/16/2015 2:17 PM

Q16 What are impediments to downtown growth and redevelopment?

Answered: 336 Skipped: 370

#	Responses	Date
1	People who like it how it is... Too many insurance and law offices.	9/2/2015 2:39 PM
2	Metered or permit parking for employees should be expanded in retail area.	9/1/2015 2:17 PM
3	The amount of ground floor office space vs retail.	9/1/2015 9:14 AM
4	again finish some sidewalks, especially on Front street, add way finding so that conference attendees at the great northern know how to find the rest of downtown, make a better transition between the Great Northern and the rest of downtown, encourage more residential areas in second floor and above, encourage retail and business in first floor store fronts. Just re-read the question, I think a big impediment is a misconception about access. That is is hard to get downtown, there is no where to park, etc. I also think that cheap land outside of downtown encourages businesses (BCBS) to leave and build new buildings in areas without surrounding retail and restaurants.	8/28/2015 10:46 AM
5	slow and unhelpful regulations that hinder remodel of existing buildings.	8/28/2015 10:14 AM
6	We need more outside seating at restaurants.	8/28/2015 5:46 AM
7	Helena City Commission is the biggest impediment to downtown growth	8/27/2015 4:38 PM
8	Not allowing bikes on the walking mall is a detriment to the businesses on the walking mall. Bike connectivity is also a problem. Biking to downtown for an afternoon is a big family activity that would be better with a more biking friendly downtown.	8/27/2015 2:58 PM
9	On-street parking. Could angle parking work in some areas?	8/27/2015 12:02 PM
10	Homeless shelter, walking mall, lack of free parking.	8/27/2015 11:49 AM
11	From multiple sources, tourists and Helena residents alike there seems to be an ongoing safety concern with the transient population downtown. Tourists are more likely to stay and play longer if they feel invited and safe in our lovely downtown. Locals also have expressed resistance to visiting parts of downtown due to the concerns for safety.	8/27/2015 10:08 AM
12	zoning,too high rent	8/25/2015 4:31 PM
13	lack of youth involvement	8/25/2015 2:22 PM
14	Too many business/corporate offices in the historic/tourist sections, as well as too many new houses being built on Mt Helena, which distracts from Helena	8/25/2015 1:43 PM
15	City policies, infrastructure needs and parking	8/25/2015 1:21 PM
16	Not easily accessible or parking. If you aren't very mobile hard to get around. Not much to draw people there other than a few spots.	8/25/2015 11:16 AM
17	Signage - people miss the downtown. I work in Reeder's Alley and people end up here ALL the time and as - is this the walking mall?	8/25/2015 10:21 AM
18	Waste of resources projects.	8/25/2015 10:10 AM
19	Nothing is open in the evening as far as shopping.	8/25/2015 8:44 AM
20	1 hour parking. There should more 2 hours spaces and or meter / pay parking everywhere. We should be encouraging to to spend time downtown. Look at Bozeman and Missoula, their downtowns are far more successful than ours. Also, rent incentives for new retail would be great for starting businesses, say for the first six months.	8/25/2015 8:41 AM
21	Access	8/25/2015 7:31 AM
22	Parking fees, fines, and time constraints	8/24/2015 10:29 PM
23	High rent and lease costs	8/24/2015 8:55 PM
24	The walking mall.	8/24/2015 8:16 PM
25	Public apathy, regulations	8/24/2015 7:40 PM
26	Parking and small business growth	8/24/2015 6:33 PM

27	Concentration of homeless shelters.	8/24/2015 12:16 PM
28	the walking mall being permanent closed during all seasons. one-way traffic flow on Last Chance.	8/24/2015 10:19 AM
29	Lame stores	8/24/2015 9:38 AM
30	Lack of communication between city gov,Helena bid and local businesses	8/24/2015 1:06 AM
31	Less office spaces on ground level. We need more shops/retail/restaurants on the street level.	8/23/2015 11:08 PM
32	It's not just downtown, it's this whole city. Because of its geographic location, centered between four of the six largest cities in the state, Helena could (and should) be a destination town for them all but it's merely a place people drive through on their way to one of these other cities. We need a whole city plan that encompasses a variety of citizens, not just politicians and the wealthy.	8/23/2015 10:29 PM
33	Not enough attractions for younger residents. Meek dining options.	8/23/2015 10:11 PM
34	Parking	8/23/2015 7:35 PM
35	Space. I would not necessarily want to see new building, rather space that is downtown being occupied.	8/23/2015 7:05 PM
36	Don't over grow it with business, it will lose its quaintness	8/23/2015 6:31 PM
37	We are. You and I. At times, we expect today's amenities in places that are not new. They are historic and need to be accepted and maintained as is. Stop redeveloping history. I would have thought the cries you heard the last time you tore down our history would resonate with you. If you want growth, go over to Montana Ave. Go over to the mall and redevelop that, it is failing. The only problem with downtown is that we need to go there and spend time and money so the shops can thrive.	8/23/2015 11:02 AM
38	Parking is the biggest problem for downtown retail stores and restaurants. The employees of the office business and government branches located downtown use most of the convenient parking spots. This makes it difficult to go downtown during business hours and shop at the retail stores or go to a restaurant. The parking is forcing retail shops and restaurants to build in the valley so they can have parking for their customers. Getting tokens from the business for parking is a huge pain and not a good option to deal with parking for customers. Parking downtown should be free for customers of the downtown retail stores and restaurants and there needs to be a better way to deal with this situation.	8/23/2015 9:54 AM
39	Number of worn down and vacant store fronts. Also, there are quite a few 'hidden' businesses that no one knows about. Finally, there are quite a few of the same types of stores ie cheaply made clothing, that are strewn about downtown. The gold bar is also an eyesore and can deter people from exploring downtown at night.	8/23/2015 9:53 AM
40	The way on last chance gulch I believe is an impediment.	8/23/2015 8:48 AM
41	Cost for business to stay/come into downtown spaces	8/23/2015 8:26 AM
42	Allowing all the big shopping on N Montana makes for unfair competition.	8/23/2015 7:22 AM
43	Open traffic to walking mall to help existing businesses.	8/23/2015 5:40 AM
44	Please keep downtown Helena the way it is!!!	8/23/2015 1:59 AM
45	More parking that you don't have to pay for	8/23/2015 12:27 AM
46	Desperately need more activities and events in downtown to attract people. The walking mall is packed when there is an event, but it is dead when there's no events going on. Focus on giving citizens a reason to go downtown. Parking is a bit of an issue but I don't think that's what stops people from going, it's the lack of activities.	8/22/2015 11:41 PM
47	Lack of planning & zoning/requirements on businesses in county	8/22/2015 10:38 PM
48	Location, off the beaten path. Buildings without retail. Parking.	8/22/2015 9:31 PM
49	Businesses should be open later and on weekends.	8/22/2015 9:10 PM
50	Can't build up	8/22/2015 6:26 PM
51	parking tickets discourage so many people from coming downtown..I wish the HPC could generate funds without ticketing	8/22/2015 2:09 PM
52	Liquor license laws. All the quotas to to casinos, very few good restaurants in Helena.	8/22/2015 7:35 AM
53	High rents	8/22/2015 7:18 AM
54	Hours of business operation do not align with times when people are there!	8/21/2015 11:12 PM
55	Great Northern and the Gulch neighborhoods are divided by the no man's land of Neil Avenue/federal building, etc.	8/21/2015 10:27 PM

56	People just don't seem out and about very often. Need more reasons to go. Better restaurants and diversity.	8/21/2015 9:22 PM
57	\$\$\$	8/21/2015 8:22 PM
58	Rents are too high. Everything closes at night and on weekends. Need more business that cater to people who don't work downtown.	8/21/2015 7:48 PM
59	Most of the time when I go downtown, especially the walking mall, it seems the shops I want to go to are closed. Fun place to take the family but when we go for ice cream everything else is closed,etc.	8/21/2015 7:19 PM
60	what draws people to downtown?	8/21/2015 6:56 PM
61	Limitations of ground floor spaces. Restaurant, bars, and retail do better when Co located like on a walking mall. Find a way to limit housing and office spaces to upper floors and get ground floor spaces dedicated and built put to retail/food/beverage/art/activities. Think downtown bozeman	8/21/2015 5:17 PM
62	Competition from big box stores. Need more outdoor seating for eating and relaxation. Need bike lanes on Last Chance and either on walking mall or parallel with it.	8/21/2015 5:12 PM
63	I think if traffic flowed slowing 15mph with angled parking and access to businesses the walking mall could be vastly improved	8/21/2015 3:15 PM
64	Lack of support from locals that don't even know what's going on downtown. First Fridays....it's not advertised enough.	8/21/2015 2:07 PM
65	The historic part of downtown is very quiet (empty) with the great northern development. However, it would be amazing if/when the entire downtown meets and connects in the middle and is safe and easy walking between all parts. Helena is beautiful and the whole downtown has so much potential to be wonderful.	8/21/2015 11:16 AM
66	I am not sure. The businesses I frequent have kept with the feel of downtown Helena.	8/21/2015 8:27 AM
67	As mention earlier the store hours need to be adjusted so customer can shop	8/21/2015 5:29 AM
68	Expensive rent and restrictive building codes in regards to renovating older buildings. Provide county or city tax incentives for historic renovation and redevelopment.	8/20/2015 8:48 PM
69	Outdated walking mall. No co-ordination with retail businesses with days and hours open to the shopping public. One hour parking with a 25.00 fine is a huge red flag to shopping downtown.	8/20/2015 4:38 PM
70	I suspect it is easier for businesses to locate outside of the downtown for a number of reasons. However, the successes of Margaret Corcoran, Anna Doran, Jill Roberts and Shalon Hastings (and Lucca's) prove that it is possible to success downtown and that the walking mall is not an impediment if the destination is appealing	8/20/2015 4:28 PM
71	Old mentalities	8/20/2015 4:00 PM
72	Lack of vision and small mindedness. Ironically, the opposite (with urban renewal) created a lot of the issues that downtown Helena has re: lack of special feeling. Much of what could really distinguish downtown was obliterated and there's no getting it back. But restoring more of a live/work/play balance to downtown could help significantly. At present, there is still far too much office space that empties at close of business. This, combined with nearly all downtown business being closed on Sunday really creates a ghost-town feel at times. More residents would alleviate that and support more restaurant,cafe, and bar businesses.	8/20/2015 3:21 PM
73	Too few draws for people in the evenings. The Hawthorne, Big Dipper, and breweries have improved matters, but still not enough evening activity or good restaurants. The parking commission's new garage hours, reduced curbside hours, and enforcement also greatly discourage people from going downtown. But most of all, there need to be more businesses open in the evenings and weekends. Downtown could be really great if there were a more vibrant atmosphere outside regular business hours	8/20/2015 3:17 PM
74	1 way traffic ,parking	8/20/2015 12:00 PM
75	blocks of "dead space" without retail or engaging street level occupancy, too many drive through banks, Curse Avenue was and is a mistake, lack of multi-family housing with some parking capacity, lack of vision and will	8/20/2015 9:38 AM
76	There is not enough to do to draw people there	8/20/2015 7:34 AM
77	More retail and restaurants that draw people downtown. Also, expanded hours of operation to compete with other businesses in town. If downtown residential living is the direction development takes, the lack of a small market could be an impediment.	8/20/2015 6:17 AM
78	Constant disagreement between stakeholders and studies that only result in more discussion.	8/19/2015 10:18 PM
79	Ability to provide infrastructure (parking, roads, access) to attract tenants for retail dining business mix like other Montana cities with a bustling downtown	8/19/2015 10:05 PM
80	Building owners who profit from leaving their building vacant rather than courting businesses to occupy their spaces.	8/19/2015 9:39 PM

81	Free parking.	8/19/2015 8:20 PM
82	zoning and too strict parking requirements for new building also light manufacturing could be easier.	8/19/2015 5:31 PM
83	Lack of funding for projects.	8/19/2015 4:55 PM
84	Competition from business is moving out in the valley	8/19/2015 12:46 PM
85	The Walking Mall	8/19/2015 11:35 AM
86	Connecting the Great Northern to the Historical downtown and bringing more retail and restaurants to create a localized hub for shopping etc	8/19/2015 11:29 AM
87	The walking mall prevents traffic from driving completely up the gulch to support business. I am completely for pedestrian corridors in big cities, but it does not work in small towns like Helena. It stifles development downtown. Business that start in the walking mall see a huge difference in business once they move out. It could be redeveloped in such a better manner. Please replace it with vehicle traffic, wide sidewalks and cycle tracks please!	8/19/2015 11:22 AM
88	Too many professional businesses on the first floor of buildings - needs limited to retail/food; North of Neil/Helena Ave needs improved to look more like other half - narrowing street/adding bicycle lanes, slowing traffic, more trees and flowers - same thing with Helena Ave and Neill. Downtown is not vibrant on evenings and weekends	8/19/2015 11:21 AM
89	Restrictions on building height and flow of traffic.	8/19/2015 10:19 AM
90	Closes down at 5:00.	8/19/2015 10:17 AM
91	city planning, costs, infrastructure, politics	8/19/2015 9:48 AM
92	Old walking mall needs one way or two way traffic	8/19/2015 8:28 AM
93	Need more downtown living space for professionals just starting out. We have a beautiful downtown that deserves to be used and alive. The people coming to Helena want to be close to downtown and bike/hike opportunity. We have it all except for enough nice updated apartments/condo living space.	8/19/2015 8:00 AM
94	Parking and traffic flow out of the area; other areas of town developing that offer larger/cheaper retail space.	8/19/2015 7:38 AM
95	In cities with a thriving downtown, they have residential properties that attract people with disposable income. We need people to live downtown who will walk out their front door and spend money to keep businesses thriving.	8/19/2015 6:02 AM
96	Not enough people spend money downtown to support retailers.	8/19/2015 4:42 AM
97	There is no cohesive and funded organization focusing on creating a vibrant and bustling downtown. There are lots of ideas and attempts, but until there is a concerted effort that is staffed and funded and creates outstnding and creative reasons along with businesses that people want to support downtown won't be anymore than it is now. There are many of us who love, work and shop downtown, but you can't by a bandaid if you need one. The business owners can't be expected to do everything on their own. They need support. Downtown has to be relevant to people's lives and routines. And it needs to be a place to come for fun you can't get elsewhere. Alive @ 5 became successful, because one person wanted to make it happen. A teAml of people with shared vision and commitment is key, pay them there is no shortage of good ideas and people want to help. Look at what they did with the I90 corridor in ID. Those tiny towns were dying. Now there a cyclist and tourists everywhere. The city councils all got together and made a plan in partnership with business owners and the railroad.	8/18/2015 10:41 PM
98	Not Place to walk. More walk/bike friendly streets, side walk	8/18/2015 10:23 PM
99	The attitude of governing officials. Other cities like Bozeman, Missoula and billings have great downtown destinations and development. Why can't Helena	8/18/2015 9:42 PM
100	the walking mall	8/18/2015 9:27 PM
101	The walking mall. It could be a great thing but we don't use it. Example: we hold the farmer's market on a street we close. (Dumb when we have a mall for that purpose.) We also insist on pay parking so people go shop where parking is easy and free. We don't have public transportation so people are afraid to have a few drinks there. The BID has in the past served itself, not businesses. Example: scheduling events that pull away from downtown businesses instead of augmenting.	8/18/2015 9:17 PM
102	Unknown	8/18/2015 8:40 PM
103	Infill development	8/18/2015 8:31 PM
104	People getting down to park. Has to be a good reason to pay to park. Stores need to have later hours	8/18/2015 8:25 PM
105	Parking... Need for FREE parking!	8/18/2015 8:07 PM
106	Alan Nicholson and the city commissioners	8/18/2015 6:03 PM

107	Traffic, cleanliness. Great Northern sets, a high bar for being an attractive, clean place in downtown Helena.	8/18/2015 2:29 PM
108	1. The general lack of interest our city leaders show in keeping large businesses located downtown (Blue Cross). Infill development should be a huge priority over ever increasing sprawl. Downtown needs traffic to be vibrant and unfortunately it has been the policy to inhibit traffic as much as possible (draconian parking enforcement, the walking mall and its prohibition on cars AND bikes AND anything other than two feet), development policies that favor cheaper development away from downtown.	8/18/2015 2:25 PM
109	Getting people to come downtown instead of the "sprawl" areas on the edge of town	8/18/2015 1:07 PM
110	Location, effort from businesses (open when they want to be open, not what is convenient for shoppers), historic preservation versus new development	8/17/2015 3:22 PM
111	need fresh perspective/new voices and away from status quo need more retail /shopping businesses	8/17/2015 2:22 PM
112	Traffic/access flow into the area. Dead end. The lower amount of business traffic due to vacancies and types of businesses operating in downtown.	8/16/2015 7:29 AM
113	Need to build a sense of community and activity, nightlife. Get shops and restaurants that are open past 5:00 and on Sunday. Encourage people to hangout downtown. Need a venue like Caras Park in Missoula where people can congregate and, for god's sake do something about that damn train honking.	8/14/2015 8:49 PM
114	city commission	8/14/2015 11:33 AM
115	Limited progressive insight	8/14/2015 11:21 AM
116	Lack of after work hours amenities.	8/13/2015 4:49 PM
117	No through traffic and no businesses for the working class.	8/12/2015 1:36 PM
118	Very limited in space that is available to grow downtown. The lack of a major retail chain store is harmful to downtown. Too many non-retail businesses on the ground level of the walking mall. These should be specifically for retail stores.	8/12/2015 11:51 AM
119	The walking mall is great, and, since I have been in Helena (2006) several new businesses that actually attract people to downtown (e.g. The Hub, Hawthorne, Tread Lightly, Big Dipper) have popped up there but there but there is still too much vacant space. How about encouraging things like a small, local grocery or a hardware store so that one does not have to cross the railroad tracks into big boxville to get some nails. Events like Alive at 5 or First Friday help but what downtown Helena needs is more variety in food and entertainment in my opinion. The intersections (e.g. mini-malfunction) need to be upgraded. Make traffic flow. How about some elevated walkways so that pedestrians can walk over some of the busier thoroughfares (near Women's Park for example). Speaking of that area, any chance we could get rid of the ugly and useless Federal Bank building that completely breaks the pedestrian flow from the walking mall to Great Northern Center? Those are just some of my thoughts, I could provide more.	8/8/2015 4:56 PM
120	Offices located on street level, should be as much retail as possible at street level.	8/8/2015 1:11 PM
121	Free parking that is not taken up by residents or workers....and educating the public that parking in huge big box store lots is often further away than parking one street over.	8/7/2015 1:40 PM
122	The empty buildings on the walking mall. Parking issues to get more customers to the area. The walking mall is wonderful in the summer but customers really want convenient parking near the businesses in the winter	8/7/2015 10:41 AM
123	Too much first floor professional offices - should be rezoned retail/restaurant only. Not enough residential in downtown. Need a downtown market.	8/7/2015 10:39 AM
124	business owner attitudes as to change too much office on main floors of buildings lack of an "anchor store" to draw people and also draw additional new businesses parking restrictions for shoppers/business workers parking in front of businesses	8/7/2015 10:07 AM
125	depressionary economy, fascism, sprawl, I-15	8/6/2015 6:03 PM
126	lack of available space for new development challenges with reinventing older buildings for new uses	8/6/2015 11:38 AM
127	Parking arrangements	8/6/2015 11:08 AM
128	Urban sprawl	8/6/2015 7:54 AM
129	Lack of creative vision	8/5/2015 4:15 PM
130	Ignoring the historic building potential. Also, it's strength (the Gulch) is also its weakness: BCBS and other development is moving out to open spaces. This whole valley and city has sprawled for decades and the downtown has limited infill opportunities. So, historic buildings must be maintained/developed so that business comes in.	8/5/2015 12:46 PM

131	Lack of vision--not doing this sooner. We are so far behind Bozeman and Missoula but we should be even better since we are the capital. Also lack of access to opportunities to put new businesses in. The ones that come in immediately go out because no one is downtown enough to shop at them. A music venue or movie theatre would also be great downtown to keep people there. We just need a few staples then other small business owners will want to come in.	8/5/2015 9:19 AM
132	Lack of free parking	8/4/2015 10:17 PM
133	Not sure what the problem is, but there appears to be many many empty spaces downtown. Why are there so many empty buildings? Why can't downtown attract more restaurants and other businesses that will last?	8/4/2015 8:09 PM
134	Too much congestion with people and cars, with not enough parking areas.	8/4/2015 6:44 PM
135	Old, long-time owners of buildings and office space with unrealistic expectations of what their space is actually worth and dragging down any true urban renewal vision through failure of imagination. Helena has always stubbornly resisted change unless it came from specific community leaders. Helena has sooo much potential, but continues to be a sleepy little graveyard.	8/4/2015 5:21 PM
136	There is endless discussion over what to do with downtown and little to nothing is accomplished. I've lived here 23 years and it amazes me how little has changed in Helena while other communities like Bozeman and Missoula have made enormous strides in improving their downtown experiences.	8/4/2015 3:37 PM
137	Office buildings taking up choice space on the walking mall, scary streets near the L&C brewery, not great parking near the brewery, and not enough to keep me busy in that area-until the climbing wall business comes in!	8/4/2015 3:19 PM
138	There should be a parking garage built by the Post Office, so one can peruse those shops on the 300 and 400 block. The East end has really improved and the Great Northern Town Center has been a wonderful addition.	8/4/2015 2:07 PM
139	Hour of operation for retail and food vendors. Everything closes so early and nothing open on Sunday so patrons are forced to head towards the commercial businesses on Custer and have to battle traffic and crowds when we could otherwise walk or ride a bike for errands or a meal.	8/4/2015 11:46 AM
140	With all of the growth off of I-15 and Custer more people are being pulled that way. Downtown needs a better way of communicating with the community about events. Maybe partner with radio or news stations in town to have a weekly feature regarding downtown to help get the word out consistently. Events are what bring people downtown. The more people that attend events the more likely they are to see a business to do business with vs a big box.	8/4/2015 10:23 AM
141	Consideration of opening up the downtown area. The mall has really served no purpose other than closing people out. I think business growth would happen just as in the 400 block if the city would just let go!	8/4/2015 9:31 AM
142	The one way street! Too many office buildings. It's not inviting to walk past architect buildings and the revenue buildings. They're not active and take up lots of space. Need more retail/restaurants!!	8/4/2015 8:52 AM
143	The walking mall. Get rid of it.	8/4/2015 8:52 AM
144	Parking!	8/4/2015 8:33 AM
145	ADA accessibility.	8/3/2015 11:41 PM
146	I've lived in Helena since the end of Model Cities. That just about drove a stake through the heart of businesses downtown. Bring back the streets and let retail businesses grow again.	8/3/2015 11:04 PM
147	Parking commission strict desires	8/3/2015 10:18 PM
148	Lack of parking, delays with permits at City	8/3/2015 10:17 PM
149	1 hour parking and businesses that don't stay open after 5	8/3/2015 10:14 PM
150	Parking	8/3/2015 9:19 PM
151	Paying a parking commissioner to make sure those of us who do shop down town often have to worry about parking and tickets. There is absolutely no parking in the Great Northern when a good movie is playing. Perhaps a bigger parking garage for movie goers.	8/3/2015 7:47 PM
152	Traffic congestion. 1 hour parking limit downtown Lack of on street parking	8/3/2015 6:53 PM
153	High rent, crime and mischief. Encourage new businesses and people to come to the area.	8/3/2015 6:48 PM
154	Businesses that don't stay open past 5pm	8/3/2015 6:22 PM
155	The area is not convenient or friendly to the physically disabled. . For that reason go elsewhere if there is an option.	8/3/2015 6:00 PM
156	HUD and urban redevelopment unfortunately happened.	8/3/2015 5:58 PM
157	GET RID OF GODS LOVE	8/3/2015 5:45 PM

158	The place is a dead zone other then offices.	8/3/2015 4:12 PM
159	Traffic flow and not enough green space.	8/3/2015 3:57 PM
160	Stores not open in evenings, when there are events downtown	8/3/2015 2:34 PM
161	Too much emphasis on office space. Helena Business Improvement District too much of "a good old boys club". I was born, and have lived, here for over sixty years. The rail yards were never "downtown". Name that something else. Downtown has and, at least for me, ended at Neil Ave.	8/3/2015 2:13 PM
162	The men's shelter is scary because of those who are in the area.	8/3/2015 12:42 PM
163	Lack of residential space in downtown corridor.	8/2/2015 1:56 PM
164	The lack of kid friendly areas	8/1/2015 3:34 PM
165	Access and parking	8/1/2015 11:49 AM
166	People who think it has to stay as they remember it, regardless of the faulty memories they cling to.	8/1/2015 11:41 AM
167	Competition from other areas	8/1/2015 10:57 AM
168	bike travel and connectivity, walking safety, loss of retailers, empty buildings, lack of good restaurants, minimal evening activities, lack of parking space to access retail/restaurants/businesses	8/1/2015 9:57 AM
169	There is a lack of stable, vibrant businesses and it is dead downtown after 8:00 PM. Also, many of the restaurants are not open early in the week or only at lunch time.	8/1/2015 9:30 AM
170	The parking is too restrictive. No one can do anything in an hour. Also, The walking mall needs some thing more designed and community minded like a fountain or something. Lastly, there should be a residents parking pass or discount. It doesn't seem fair that residents get charged the same as businesses for parking. It costs me \$650 a year to not drive my car to work? I'm appalled at that. I'm environmentally friendly by keeping my car off the road but it costs me more than those who drive. Where I came from in Australia, they had parking passes for residents in the downtown areas. Show some good faith towards us please! It would be much appreciated!	8/1/2015 8:20 AM
171	We need more quality, mid-cost restaurant options.	8/1/2015 7:50 AM
172	Parking. Lack of quick access to business and shopping.	8/1/2015 7:26 AM
173	The Valley	7/31/2015 11:03 PM
174	Free, ample parking	7/31/2015 9:19 PM
175	Insistance that cars and parking be accommodated when walking and biking- safety for pedestrians- should be augmented.	7/31/2015 9:01 PM
176	Better promotion and MARKETING is needed to bring Helena people downtown especially to shop. We get tourists downtown but not so many locals. It needs a fresh new image/look/website etc.	7/31/2015 1:24 PM
177	The biggest problem I have seen in the past three years is parking. I realize there is no perfect solution, however the current set up just does not make sense. Having one hour is not enough for people to fully shop a block. Because its free they prefer not to pay to be further away. A customer needs a option where they have parked to get more time. Businesses thrive when someone shops one shop and moves to the next.	7/31/2015 10:20 AM
178	Business hours. It is frustrating to come downtown on the weekends, or after work, and half the stores are closed.	7/31/2015 10:08 AM
179	Building codes and the culture of the building department, but that's not currently fixable. The perception of parking problems, but that has deep roots in Helena.	7/30/2015 5:30 PM
180	The lack of a master plan is the biggest impediment. With a collaboratively-developed vision and master plan, efforts can be prioritized. With extensive outreach related to the development and implementation of the vision and plan, residents and businesses can work together to make downtown and even better place to work and play.	7/30/2015 3:11 PM
181	Downtown Helena has a catch-22 in that its character derives from locally owned businesses, and the owners are the main operators. That means they go home in the evening and at night. Thus, Helena dies at 8pm and hibernates in the winter. It is hard to have a vibrant and growing commercial center, particularly for young professionals, when it is impossible to go out to dinner after 8.	7/30/2015 10:27 AM
182	I've just heard that it is more expensive and more restrictions to run a business downtown. Not sure if this is true but the stigma exists	7/27/2015 7:50 PM
183	Expensive liquor licenses (and from what I've heard through the grapevine...the Tavern Association). Outdated zoning.	7/27/2015 7:33 PM

184	not enough condos for seniors who can afford and want a nice condo with elevator access. Bzn, Msla & Gt Falls have condos above retail so should we!	7/27/2015 6:39 PM
185	1. The Federal Reserve Bank and the wide/busy street at Neil and Fuller/Front are a major impediment to the GNTC/historic downtown connection. We need to redevelop Front Street between Neil and W 14th to create a lively, inviting business corridor, create a safer pedestrian crossing at Fuller/Neil/Front, and create a shorter/more direct pedestrian connection from Neil/Front to the movie theater/GNTC. 2. The fact that downtown businesses are closed during odd hours on weekdays, or not open at all on certain weekdays or on Sundays is a major impediment to downtown growth and redevelopment.	7/27/2015 11:38 AM
186	Alan Nicholson and the box stores in the valley.	7/27/2015 11:09 AM
187	Building permit process and box store/north side development	7/26/2015 7:33 PM
188	Costly restrictions on housing development, need to be more developer friendly and affordable.	7/26/2015 1:20 PM
189	Cathy Burwell. Jim Smith. The attitude that "well, that's how we've always done it." and accepting that as good enough.	7/25/2015 8:42 PM
190	Lack of grocery store/pharmacy impedes upscale residential growth.	7/25/2015 10:50 AM
191	Historic structures and cost of new larger buildings for housing more business. Also parking is a pain almost none available where convenient.	7/25/2015 8:42 AM
192	The city not being friendly to business growth, overly prohibitive laws and regulations.	7/25/2015 8:08 AM
193	Inflexible Business hours	7/25/2015 1:22 AM
194	As noted above zoning issues with clinics and homeless shelters. We need them but move them out of the downtown retail area.	7/24/2015 11:30 PM
195	Lack of business	7/24/2015 9:21 PM
196	Buildings with no storefronts on walking mall.	7/24/2015 9:04 PM
197	Maintaining the historic feel with new developments. City standards should enforce the look and feel of downtown while supporting small businesses.	7/24/2015 8:36 PM
198	Contentment with the current dining scene. New options mean more competition and forced improvement among current establishments.	7/24/2015 8:23 PM
199	Parking	7/24/2015 8:03 PM
200	I wish there was a better walking connection from the movie theatre to women's park/ the walking mall. The science museum looks run down in the inside and not well kept. The toddler area is non functional with a giant barn and not stimulating props and such. It needs an update!	7/24/2015 6:56 PM
201	Parking	7/24/2015 6:40 PM
202	City permitting makes it hard for new businesses to open.	7/24/2015 5:53 PM
203	Need more reasons to go there..with parking so awful there is no such thing as a quick trip	7/24/2015 4:50 PM
204	Attitude of city officials ("what's the use") Attitude of the public (no parking, no retail variety). Parking. All the junk, pawn, and "antique businesses that drive people to other areas of town.	7/24/2015 4:00 PM
205	City planning department	7/24/2015 3:34 PM
206	Urban housing, safety for peds	7/24/2015 11:47 AM
207	Close early and nothing is usually open on sundays	7/24/2015 11:19 AM
208	Lack of long-term vision (20-30 years) and lack of resources for change/growth, esp. financial resources	7/24/2015 11:14 AM
209	Limited space	7/24/2015 11:06 AM
210	Traffic, parking (especially short meter times and lack of handicap parking), accessibility when there's snow and ice	7/24/2015 10:56 AM
211	The downtown area needs an identity and marketing of the amenities. Great Northern has a cohesive feel which is lacking in other parts of downtown. Connect south and north ends	7/24/2015 8:41 AM
212	As nice as the walking mall can be, it's not an easy place for new retail establishments. With only foot traffic, no vehicles driving by, its tough to get visibility.	7/24/2015 4:20 AM
213	The walking mall. I rarely go to the walking mall in the winter or inclement weather because I would prefer to drive to the businesses.	7/23/2015 10:06 PM

214	Face it geographically the downtown is not conducive to a vibrant business center. You can throw millions and millions of dollars at it but keep in mind that was done once remember "Urban Renwal" that fixed it up - Not. If you are really serious complete a business loop, I think Helena is the only large city in Montana without a true business loop and focusing on an area with limited to no potential to establish one is just wasting time and more money until the elected officials and business community come to the realization that a commitment to complete a vision is a better approach than just talking about a dream that is written in a study and never used.	7/23/2015 3:04 PM
215	The bars, casinos and pawn shops. The attitude that things are fine the way they are. As stated above, that even if downtown was the crown jewel, people passing through wouldn't know it from judging by how the town looks driving in from any direction.	7/23/2015 11:05 AM
216	According to the map downtown covers a large area that is broken up - no real connectivity. Each section has it's own feel.	7/23/2015 10:48 AM
217	I feel the mix of uses is totally backwards. It seems predominately office/commercial and light on retail, restaurants, etc. It basically shuts down at 5 or 6 every evening - its a ghost town on the weekends. The area around the Blackfoot, Mediterranean, Base Camp seems to be thriving, but that's basically it. Its not transportation, infrastructure, landscaping, etc. - in my opinion its the mixture of existing land uses that needs to be changed to attract more people to the area.	7/23/2015 8:54 AM
218	Downtown retail needs to connect its self with the rest of the community retail, not try to be on its own.	7/23/2015 8:03 AM
219	The lack of it being family friendly. 1 hour to shop is not enough time for families with little kids.	7/23/2015 7:46 AM
220	Accessibility	7/22/2015 8:13 PM
221	Attitude mostly - there is a need for a qualified ombudsman to assist start ups - City rules and regulations are not well known or understood (outside the design/development community) Also, there is generally poor follow up to certain issues i.e. reports of trash, vandalism, graffiti, broken or missing lights, doors, hinges, windows, containers, signs etc... this stuff contributes to a negative sense of place. Some feel that to develop outside the CBD may be easier, cheaper or involving less "stuff" to deal with than downtown. -- I'm in favor of two way traffic Neill to 6th Ave. I liked the idea of opening the North end of the walking mall to single lane one way travel southbound. I favor historic preservation efforts when appropriate but am eager to support a tear down and rebuild project too (i.e FRB, GNTC, FIB, BKBH, etc). The BID would be a better place with if it were more dense; had better housing, walk-ability & more connectivity -- traffic, pedestrian & business conflicts can result in creative solutions -- you can't manage it all so some of it ought to be less managed & regulated. We should invite a more open and permissive review process allowing new ideas, and creative people to start businesses and be encouraged to let stuff to happen downtown. The biggest threat to downtown is a loss of jobs -- the BID, DHI, City and Chamber should work to prevent that from happening. We need a Downtown First and Foremost mentality if this place is to thrive in spite of its physical and economic challenges. Get out of the way and let it happen.	7/22/2015 4:07 PM
222	I get the feeling that residents prefer their personal preferences instead of promoting business development (business interests come second to individual requests for bikes, parks, etc.)	7/22/2015 3:39 PM
223	Parking, BID	7/22/2015 2:58 PM
224	Insanity of parking commission.	7/22/2015 12:51 PM
225	1- City government policy toward Downtown is lukewarm and somewhat hands-off. It has no specific, robust downtown support policy. It needs to step up and commit. 2- Automobile access to Downtown is awkward. It needs better flow, perhaps including using Helena Avenue in a vastly improved "Malfunction Junction" on Montana Ave. 3-Design of buildings and the retention of historic buildings needs to be formal, rigorous and enforced. Now there is indecision, hand-wringing and inconsistency on the City Council's part. They won't do their job. They need to pass regulations and enforce design standards.	7/22/2015 12:31 PM
226	City commission' slack of understanding with regards to needs of small businesses.	7/22/2015 10:29 AM
227	appropriate mix of retail, food/beverage, office	7/22/2015 10:10 AM
228	Lack of parking is a big problem. I know people who have stopped attending the farmers market because of the lack of parking on Saturdays. Also, short term parking regulations discourage people from shopping and dining downtown during business hours.	7/22/2015 8:34 AM
229	bankers and real estate agencies.	7/22/2015 8:25 AM
230	Retail business hours are horrible. The '400' block and the walking mall should be great opportunities for tourism related retail activities and yet most locations close early in the day. Parking in the '400' block should also be changed to allow nose in parking on one side of the street rather than parallel parking. Parallel parking is too time-consuming and results in a significant disruption in traffic flow. Nose in allows vehicles to get out and into traffic quickly.	7/22/2015 8:16 AM
231	Need for restaurants and filling vacant storefronts	7/22/2015 7:05 AM

232	It feels like there are two downtowns, new and old.	7/21/2015 10:46 PM
233	There is a lot of empty office space but no incentive to encourage businesses to occupy this space. Daytime office workers are needed to keep the downtown business viable.	7/21/2015 10:13 PM
234	Vibrancy and downtown Helena needs a make over and new leadership to gain vibrancy.	7/21/2015 9:27 PM
235	Rent is too high for small business and/or for a new start up business in addition to the lease period being high.	7/21/2015 8:09 PM
236	Parking is a challenge. it is usually OK – Also, there needs to be more entertainment. The performance square could be better used, more actively used.	7/21/2015 7:26 PM
237	The media constantly perpetuates the belief that the downtown is dead or dying. I own a business there, on the walking mall, and it's great! Parking is an impediment. I would like to see us do what other cities, Bozeman, do by offering free parking. Perhaps businesses could pay a fee.	7/21/2015 6:20 PM
238	Stores are great would love more and more diversity and better business fronts. Love the new yarn shop but I worry it will survive given its hard to find without a storefront. Too many offices or offices should be on second floor.	7/21/2015 5:24 PM
239	The lack of an elementary school. When our school closed in March of 2013, we had nearly 250 kids. Today we have 176 – despite the fact that our school aged population is growing at more than 3 percent a year. People are streaming out of Central – or moving out of the district altogether – because our displacement is a disaster that is ruining not only our children's educational experience, but our cohesive downtown neighborhood.	7/21/2015 3:39 PM
240	Need interesting shopping and activities that draw folks downtown especially in winter months.	7/21/2015 3:32 PM
241	Overpopulation getting out of hand before changes are made.	7/21/2015 2:59 PM
242	Parking... KEEP the walking mall, but need more parking on perimeters of walking mall. Make it free fit me hours to attract people downtown	7/21/2015 2:38 PM
243	Business hours--a vibrant downtown remains vibrant in the evenings/on weekends	7/21/2015 2:31 PM
244	poor traffic flow	7/21/2015 2:31 PM
245	Insensitive regulations for an historic area; lack of public (city) involvement or activity to create public-private developments such as new housing and infill development	7/21/2015 2:25 PM
246	Competition with retail development on the Northeast side of Helena, over attachment to the walking mall and opposition to new development (taller buildings) in the downtown i.e. departure of Blue Cross Blue Shield.	7/21/2015 2:02 PM
247	Not enough convenient FREE parking for businesses and their clientele.	7/21/2015 1:24 PM
248	The homeless people hanging around do not make it feel safe... Get rid of the old bars that also bring down the retail value... Keep nurturing small business development - interesting street performers - like Pearl Street Mall in Boulder, CO.	7/21/2015 1:13 PM
249	Parking and business access.	7/21/2015 12:30 PM
250	Parking rules are the main impediment for going downtown. Having to pay for time is a barrier.	7/21/2015 10:58 AM
251	Traffic congestion, lack of parking, strong businesses with appeal to all	7/21/2015 10:09 AM
252	A sense of anti business.	7/21/2015 8:52 AM
253	There isn't enough vertical growth and mixed use building. Store fronts are empty. I think a lot of that is about parking. People who are already downtown might not mind, but to attract people from the valley and tourism there needs to be more parking. Parking decks instead of lots are a better use of space	7/21/2015 8:50 AM
254	non retail occupants	7/21/2015 7:03 AM
255	The BID is an organization lacking in passion and progressive thinking.	7/20/2015 10:40 PM
256	impractical regulations. More distinct vision for what we want downtown to look like and use that as a guide for policies that incentivize what we like and don't stagnate positive improvements.	7/20/2015 10:39 PM
257	Parking	7/20/2015 10:06 PM
258	Lack of community support for a group of businesses who want us to "turn around" and not vote for our kids...	7/20/2015 9:35 PM
259	Old and crowded. Needs a face-lift.	7/20/2015 9:25 PM
260	Alan Nicholson	7/20/2015 6:22 PM
261	Failure to be part of the larger and more business oriented surrounding areas of Helena.	7/20/2015 6:06 PM

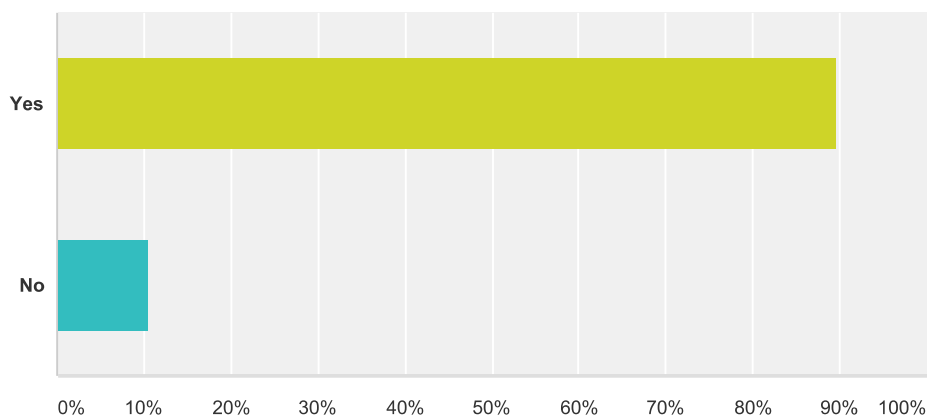
262	We need to help and encourage more restaurants, especially more variety both in cost and type of food. It's helenas big downside.	7/20/2015 5:39 PM
263	Limited housing, no incentive for walking/biking, walking mall is not bike-friendly and neither are downtown streets, need greater mix of retail, and better nightlife (all we have are bars - no dance venue, and very limited music venues other than Alive at 5).	7/20/2015 4:46 PM
264	The homeless population makes it look less appealing. God's Love being right downtown is a turn off.	7/20/2015 4:13 PM
265	Parking, cost of rental space	7/20/2015 3:45 PM
266	Destruction of a true 19th century mining town.	7/20/2015 3:17 PM
267	connection of the great northern to last chance - better connectivity and access to get to both walking / strolling to shop or enjoy the day.	7/20/2015 2:52 PM
268	Ease of access. More people would visit downtown if it were easier to get to (i.e. public transit.) Also, more events that draw the public downtown are necessary.	7/20/2015 2:06 PM
269	Traffic congestion/parking	7/20/2015 1:49 PM
270	Growth will stay strong as long as business need to accept change and new corporate retail with small business growth. Need to improvement to he the homeless and rough entry of downtown.	7/20/2015 1:33 PM
271	age and condition of old buildings present barriers for redevelopment by driving up build out costs.	7/20/2015 1:21 PM
272	not business friendly --rent very high-too many regulations	7/20/2015 1:20 PM
273	one way traffic, city regulations to opening new businesses, lack of city's support tax-wise and other ways to show that downtown development and new businesses are priority over other areas of helena. This is where their tax base comes from, the heart of the city is the downtown and it needs to be treated that way.	7/20/2015 12:41 PM
274	parking, aging buildings, accessibility	7/20/2015 12:40 PM
275	PARKING!!!! Second is commercial rental space prices. They are said to be very high.	7/20/2015 12:19 PM
276	Attitudes, people at several public meetings express frustrations yet rarely offer solutions. Engage youth and have a brainstorming session, use the tools such as Greening America's Capitols Report and just do it already!	7/20/2015 11:13 AM
277	Health of businesses located downtown	7/20/2015 8:52 AM
278	I believe walkability and sidewalk connection between neighborhoods and downtown and the landscaping including power lines and general storefront appeal are some of the problems with walkability being the biggest issue!	7/20/2015 7:18 AM
279	Leadership	7/19/2015 11:09 PM
280	Can't think of any now	7/19/2015 9:40 PM
281	God's Love is such a great service, but having it downtown is not the best place for it. I would love to see a conversation happen that discusses other locations that could serve our homeless just as well if not better.	7/19/2015 8:59 PM
282	DONT GET RID OF THE WALKING MALL	7/19/2015 8:16 PM
283	Easy parking. More evening activities throughout the whole year	7/19/2015 7:28 PM
284	I've heard that rent is high and desirable buildings are owned by out-of-state companies that charge too much.	7/19/2015 4:44 PM
285	Budget inn	7/19/2015 3:11 PM
286	The only issue I have with downtown is that almost every business closes at 5 pm on weekdays and so early on weekends that there is no reason to stay downtown. If I go have 3 drinks at the brewery, I don't want to stay downtown to hang out on the empty walking mall. Safety and other things are not an issue -- the downtown area is beautiful and could absolutely keep people downtown if there was something to do and businesses just stayed open. Maybe more businesses should be there -- coffee shops that stay open, burrito shops that stay open, places with liquor licenses that cater to younger people who are the life-blood of the Helena area -- why not have a bicycle shop? I also go downtown to get ice cream and walk around, but there's nothing to walk to so we just walk around and look at empty, closed businesses and go home. If those stores were open, I'd walk around inside and my bet is that other people would also.	7/19/2015 12:14 PM
287	Good question! Great Northern developer had a vision and put it in place. Learn from that vision!	7/19/2015 12:11 PM
288	Parking should be free in lots and garages too. Rent is too high and prevents small, local businesses from being there. Hideous urban renewal buildings don't fit.	7/19/2015 11:57 AM

289	State offices taking up storefront space, lack of new residential (affordable), housing, retail stores that aren't open in evenings.	7/19/2015 11:51 AM
290	Need more anchor businesses to drive foot traffic.	7/19/2015 11:01 AM
291	State liquor licensing makes it difficult for new restaurants.	7/19/2015 10:18 AM
292	Lack of excitement over businesses in the walking mall. We need more food options and less empty storefronts	7/19/2015 9:44 AM
293	The business hours are terrible. No Sunday hours or evening hours. Parking is expensive for business owners	7/19/2015 8:11 AM
294	Street parking is too short	7/19/2015 7:25 AM
295	Retail growth is all away from downtown, so there needs to be more or new events/attractions to draw folks downtown.	7/19/2015 7:20 AM
296	I don't understand why the Farmers Market doesn't take place along the Walking Mall, as a way to bring people into the heart of the downtown area without blocking off a street. I think that multi-sector approaches to the downtown area would also create a more vibrant area. I have no idea what the zoning regulations are, but using the empty buildings for business and affordable housing would be a great start. I want the downtown area to also work on bringing businesses in that will stay open past business hours so that I can support businesses after I get off work myself. I would also like to see more life down there on a regular basis, not just in the summer, and if there was a mixture of all these qualities, I would be more likely to spend more time in the downtown area.	7/19/2015 7:11 AM
297	I think downtown has lost its sense of place. There needs to be a better mix of unique retail as well as everyday resources. More business to draw people downtown on a regular basis. Mix daytime activity with after work activity. Better promotion of downtown assets and events. Nobody knows what is going on downtown. Need to foster more entrepreneurs and creativity, and support business that work (restaurants, breweries, retail, commercial). Need to preserve little character that is left in downtown with history buildings. Need to fill vacancies in stores with other things than gift stores. Need to remove walking mall and support vibrant modes of transit and turnover in parking that allows for people and come and go easily. Need to become relevant for locals.	7/19/2015 5:16 AM
298	Parking	7/18/2015 7:34 PM
299	The vision of City Leaders who seem to have no concept of growth. Meanwhile Bozeman and Missoula thrive with downtown activity.	7/18/2015 4:31 PM
300	The walking mall!	7/18/2015 11:43 AM
301	The hours of downtown businesses are very restrictive and make downtown completely useless and unappealing on the weekends and evenings. You cannot go downtown on a weekend for a day of shopping and eating, as most of the stores are not day-to-day shopping items, and both the stores and restaurants have restrictive hours.	7/18/2015 9:40 AM
302	I think space in general is a major aspect of this and the ability to find creative ways to utilize that problem effectively	7/18/2015 8:23 AM
303	Zoning, restrictions on building height, high rent.	7/18/2015 8:13 AM
304	Buildings not staying local when they are bought. Not enough promotion of downtown because it is a little boring	7/18/2015 7:32 AM
305	Parking solution needed for shoppers and workers...including a review of the short length of time allowed in parking spots.	7/17/2015 10:25 PM
306	Too many professional offices at street level, need more retail. Liquor laws inhibit nightlife. Poor taxi/public transportation inhibits nightlife. Need more pedestrian/street traffic drawn by a vibrant retail center. Out of town landlords charging too much rent keeping small creative startups out of downtown.	7/17/2015 8:08 PM
307	Some of the transients make it feel unsafe.	7/17/2015 6:32 PM
308	Real estate prices.	7/17/2015 5:49 PM
309	Sprawl and cheaper alternatives for business development.	7/17/2015 4:35 PM
310	Zoning for downtown needs to acknowledge nearby parking facilities and not require retail businesses to provide on-site parking.	7/17/2015 3:57 PM
311	Displaced School studetns	7/17/2015 3:09 PM
312	I was a person who thought we should open the walking mall to traffic. It still seems an impediment	7/17/2015 3:03 PM
313	Walking mall is in the way.	7/17/2015 2:10 PM
314	The city and the county should provide tax incentives for business to locate in the historic downtown area instead of the valley.	7/17/2015 1:34 PM
315	Get rid of 2 hour parking restrictions, creates a rushed downtown shopping experience	7/17/2015 10:21 AM

316	Leadership without vision.	7/17/2015 10:12 AM
317	Parking on LCGulch needs to be longer than one hour.	7/17/2015 9:46 AM
318	New successful business and development. We need more outside patios to eat and drink. The hustle and bustle of the Big Dipper and Hawthorn is wonderful. Such a great feel. Maybe design requirements for restaurants to add a patio. It might make it easier for them. The Hawthorns is simple but effective. The Windbags is pretty sorry.	7/17/2015 9:44 AM
319	I am truly committed to shopping down town, but it is VERY difficult! Some shops close early while other open at 5 pm. Some are not open on Sundays while others take Monday off. After driving around and around to find parking, it can be so frustrating to finally get to the shop I was trying to get to only to see a sign that says," closed this week for a family vacation". Or "Out until 1:45." After so many frustrated attempts to spend my cash down town, it is quite easy to just pop down to the box stores: free, easy parking within feet of the door; regular hours; cheap goods. I don't want to be a part of what kills our downtown, but the frustration of trying to support it can be unbearable!	7/17/2015 9:33 AM
320	Mercerville—development out at the airport	7/17/2015 9:27 AM
321	The BID hasn't exactly embraced any change. We need key retail downtown that will be anchor tenants. Look to other city's like Eugene, OR. We have studied and studied this but blue prints exist.	7/17/2015 8:42 AM
322	The only impediments are the competition from box stores and the mini malfunction junction. I think people are starting to want to live near stores that they can walk to instead of driving everywhere, so downtown is really at an advantage in this regard. Just get rid of the nasty apartment building on 6th near Rodney and the awful bar on Rodney so that Rodney is safer. Once Rodney street is improved, more people will move to the area. North Main needs to be more pedestrian friendly and needs more greenery like S Last Chance Gulch.	7/17/2015 3:45 AM
323	One major impediment is Helena's big-box-or-bust situation. The northeast and east sides of town are just turning into Anytown, USA. No wonder the Capitol Hill Mall deflated. I think Helena needs to decide how much "growth" is too much! Also, the bar scene is getting to be too much downtown and it isn't as safe as it used to be, so that's a kind of impediment (b/c not every business wants to go in next to a bar). Fixing up more businesses and residential buildings along Rodney street might help set a better image for downtown and make it safer to walk from the Jefferson/Central School neighborhoods to downtown. Speaking of Central, having it empty and languishing is not good!	7/16/2015 10:23 PM
324	The extant downtown one way traffic, mall, & Cruse (the freeway to nowhere we used to laugh) are vestiges of the thankfully never completed bypass that was to cut from I-15 across State street & then on top of LeGrande Cannon Blvd out to Highway 12.	7/16/2015 8:01 PM
325	Willingness to change the way things have been done for the last 30+ years	7/16/2015 5:51 PM
326	Accessibility to the Walking Mall businesses in the winter and the general lack of events and night life downtown.	7/16/2015 5:22 PM
327	Innovation is lacking.	7/16/2015 2:41 PM
328	Aging population. Not enough good jobs for young people out of college. State government mentality is pervasive in Helena. City government a pain to work with on development as opposed to supportive. Not enough good places to eat! Again, look at Bozeman where there are small boutique restaurants on every corner that don't cost an arm and a leg.	7/16/2015 2:17 PM
329	The abysmal parking situation. The ease of growth and development around Custer Avenue and other places compared to downtown.	7/16/2015 12:46 PM
330	Lack of retail/restaurants in storefront properties downtown, liquor license issues.	7/16/2015 10:52 AM
331	Capital investment	7/16/2015 10:37 AM
332	One building is attempting to be a retirement home (the placer) when it is clearly residential for all ages. Also - Downtown Helena needs a music / entertainment venue for PROFESSIONAL acts art and music. Grow up Helena.	7/16/2015 10:24 AM
333	See comment above, find ways for business to hold later hours in an economically sustainable way, giving people a reason to be around after 6pm.	7/16/2015 10:23 AM
334	Artificially low pricing for development on the periphery, with no city programs to offset the cost of downtown development.	7/15/2015 10:50 PM
335	Need to give tax credits in downtown not airport area; encourage bottom floor retail upper floor office/housing; no more parking lots!!; open walking mall to bikes and allow wider use of mall to restaurants and cafes; connect downtown with trails; move farmer's market to walking mall; need to proactively market downtown Helena to outside employers and businesses	7/15/2015 10:36 PM
336	So many different building owners, some living out of town. Not enough recruitment of new retail and restaurants. Non-retail on the ground floor of too many buildings. Negative attitude towards parking issues.	7/15/2015 6:51 PM

Q17 Would you work at a business downtown?

Answered: 638 Skipped: 68



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	89.50% 571
No	10.50% 67
Total	638

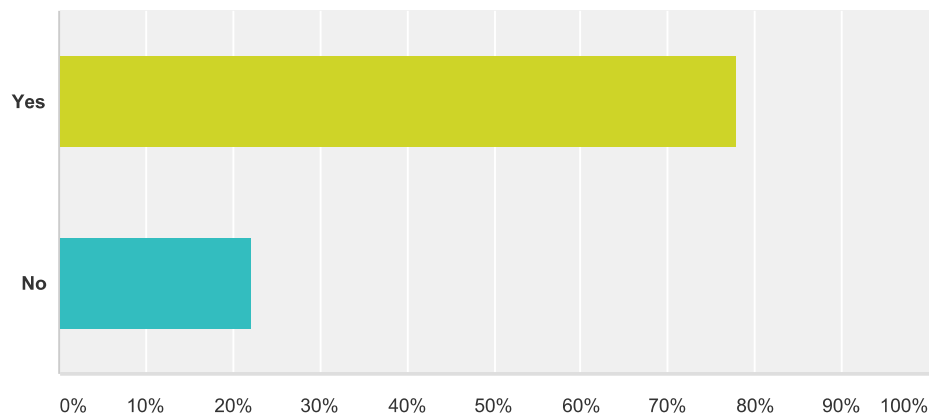
#	Comments:	Date
1	I do	8/28/2015 12:00 PM
2	I have chosen jobs because they are downtown	8/28/2015 10:47 AM
3	If I could afford to park.	8/27/2015 12:02 PM
4	I do.	8/27/2015 11:50 AM
5	I wouldn't want to work anywhere else but in downtown Helena.	8/25/2015 10:22 AM
6	I'm self employed	8/24/2015 6:21 PM
7	Already do	8/24/2015 3:33 PM
8	I currently work downtown	8/24/2015 10:19 AM
9	If it were busier	8/24/2015 9:39 AM
10	I have for 12 yrs	8/24/2015 1:08 AM
11	I used but we had to move out due to lack of parking.	8/23/2015 6:12 PM
12	But parking is an issue	8/23/2015 3:00 PM
13	I do.	8/23/2015 12:10 PM
14	Already do!	8/23/2015 9:53 AM
15	I wouldn't want to pay for parking every day	8/22/2015 6:27 PM
16	I have for 20 years	8/22/2015 2:10 PM
17	I am retired but would have when young	8/22/2015 7:37 AM
18	I do	8/21/2015 6:57 PM
19	Already do!	8/21/2015 2:08 PM

20	If I lived there.	8/20/2015 3:46 PM
21	State employee - not much choice :)	8/20/2015 3:18 PM
22	Always did. Retired now. Still walk downtown a lot.	8/20/2015 9:41 AM
23	I already do and love it!	8/19/2015 8:20 PM
24	already do	8/19/2015 5:32 PM
25	I currently do.	8/19/2015 9:31 AM
26	But my clients constantly complain about what a hassle it is to come downtown for meetings.	8/18/2015 2:26 PM
27	If traffic and parking were improved	8/14/2015 11:24 AM
28	Close to retirement.	8/7/2015 1:40 PM
29	I do.	8/4/2015 3:17 PM
30	I do	8/3/2015 10:56 PM
31	Retired	8/3/2015 6:01 PM
32	I work at the Capitol and don't see that changing.	8/3/2015 3:38 PM
33	Not currently	8/3/2015 2:56 PM
34	If I had to.	8/3/2015 2:14 PM
35	Especially if there were parking spaces	8/1/2015 9:58 AM
36	I already do. The previous question you asked with that option would only allow me to select one not two. But I work and live downtown.	8/1/2015 8:22 AM
37	Parking for employees is a challenge	7/31/2015 11:04 PM
38	I do have a retail business on the Walking Mall. I am here everyday, year round. I love working downtown but it needs to be livelier especially once the tourists are gone.	7/31/2015 1:24 PM
39	retired	7/27/2015 6:40 PM
40	I already do work at a downtown business.	7/27/2015 11:39 AM
41	Retired	7/26/2015 1:21 PM
42	Prefer downtown working locations to any other.	7/24/2015 8:42 AM
43	Not until the business owners commit 100% to solving thier own proplems, after all they bought the property.	7/23/2015 3:07 PM
44	N/a	7/22/2015 9:06 AM
45	I work downtown and have a monthly parking pass, so I do not have to deal with the parking problems that the general public experiences.	7/22/2015 8:35 AM
46	I already do.	7/21/2015 8:09 PM
47	I currently work downtown and love it.	7/21/2015 3:33 PM
48	i have before and would again	7/21/2015 2:32 PM
49	Nope	7/20/2015 9:36 PM
50	Too hard to find parking	7/20/2015 9:02 PM
51	I have for 9 years and LOVE it! Previously located on West Euclid.	7/20/2015 1:23 PM
52	I was down on the ped mall for 10 years - now in the gntc for 12	7/20/2015 12:56 PM
53	retired	7/20/2015 7:21 AM
54	I currently do work downtown	7/19/2015 9:40 PM
55	I did and loved it.	7/19/2015 7:22 AM
56	Already have (and miss that I don't anymore)	7/17/2015 2:11 PM
57	I currently do work downtown	7/17/2015 10:22 AM
58	Trees and general landscape are not inviting for a business	7/16/2015 5:53 PM

59	N/a I do	7/16/2015 2:41 PM
60	I do	7/16/2015 2:18 PM
61	I already do work downtown.	7/16/2015 12:47 PM
62	I do currently work downtown.	7/16/2015 10:26 AM

Q18 Would you locate a business downtown?

Answered: 616 Skipped: 90



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	77.92% 480
No	22.08% 136
Total	616

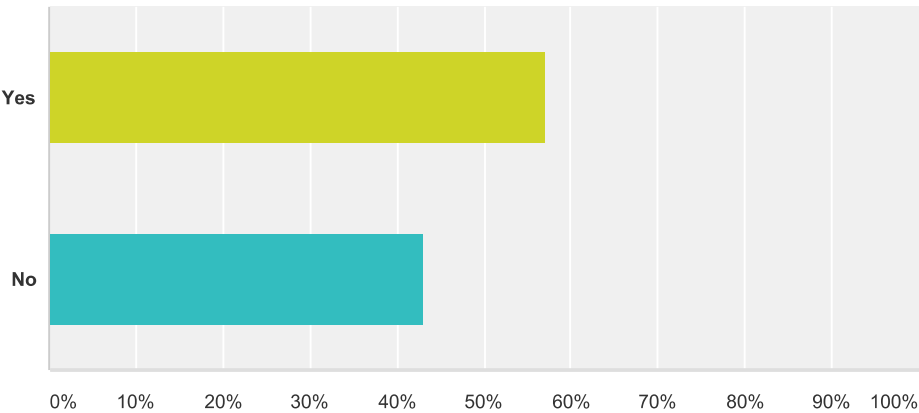
#	Comments:	Date
1	I have in the past	8/28/2015 12:00 PM
2	yes, I would love to open a business downtown someday	8/28/2015 10:47 AM
3	I do.	8/27/2015 11:50 AM
4	Only if it was a tourism industry or retail related	8/25/2015 1:43 PM
5	My business is just outside boundary	8/24/2015 6:21 PM
6	If it were busier	8/24/2015 9:39 AM
7	I chose to 12 yrs ago	8/24/2015 1:08 AM
8	If there were better rental properties and parking	8/23/2015 6:12 PM
9	Depends	8/23/2015 10:28 AM
10	I would locate a retail store or restaurant downtown but office space should be limited to upper levels of buildings downtown.	8/23/2015 9:57 AM
11	People go there for a specific thing. I don't think easy to window shop.	8/21/2015 7:20 PM
12	maybe--depends on type of business	8/21/2015 6:57 PM
13	If I lived there.	8/20/2015 3:46 PM
14	No parking	8/20/2015 7:35 AM
15	have one	8/19/2015 5:32 PM
16	I would locate it because I would much rather be downtown, but my business would probably take a hit due to the walking mall being down there.	8/19/2015 11:23 AM
17	It would depend on the type of business.	8/19/2015 10:32 AM

18	Maybe, a restaurant if so. It is hard to imagine another kind of business besides office space will be successful in that environment	8/19/2015 4:44 AM
19	It depends on the business	8/18/2015 11:27 PM
20	Never again! At least not on the walking mall.	8/18/2015 9:18 PM
21	NA	8/17/2015 2:23 PM
22	Maybe. If more customer, consumer traffic was going into the area. And if it was a bigger draw.	8/16/2015 7:30 AM
23	See 17 above	8/14/2015 11:24 AM
24	i would not start a business in a fascist economy	8/6/2015 6:04 PM
25	if conditions were right	8/6/2015 11:38 AM
26	Not sure as it seems like not that many people are drawn downtown relative to Helena and valley population.	8/4/2015 8:10 PM
27	Not the way it is. My father owns a business and considered relocating. Downtown was not an option.	8/4/2015 3:17 PM
28	Rent it too expensive for the lack of consumer access	8/4/2015 2:08 PM
29	No, I'd locate it where there was traffic to see my store and bring customers by. Advertising only works for the people who already go there.	8/3/2015 11:06 PM
30	NA	8/3/2015 10:17 PM
31	I'm not a business person but I'm a great customer.	8/3/2015 6:50 PM
32	But needs to be of service to those downtown	8/3/2015 6:01 PM
33	N/A	8/3/2015 5:52 PM
34	No good parking for patrons	8/3/2015 3:27 PM
35	Not currently	8/3/2015 2:56 PM
36	Not until more people live there!	8/2/2015 2:02 PM
37	Lack of vibrant, thriving businesses downtown	8/1/2015 9:31 AM
38	I believe in culture creation. Anything to help the downtown vibe!	8/1/2015 8:22 AM
39	Although I would love to be downtown, I would only be able to open a business in my field (healthcare) with designated parking and in an area that is handicapped accessible.	7/31/2015 9:16 PM
40	If the business has an accessible storefront	7/31/2015 9:01 PM
41	I love the atmosphere downtown, it just needs to be enhanced and promoted. I get so many positive comments about downtown from visitors but need more locals coming downtown.	7/31/2015 1:24 PM
42	I am considering moving my business due to the problems downtown.	7/31/2015 10:21 AM
43	retired	7/27/2015 6:40 PM
44	Too difficult for customer traffic flow	7/27/2015 11:41 AM
45	I chose my current office space because it is downtown on the walking mall.	7/27/2015 11:39 AM
46	Not enough people there to warrant the hassle of parking, etc.	7/26/2015 1:21 PM
47	there is so much available space for rent, yet things are run down, unattractive and overpriced I'd probably look somewhere else	7/25/2015 8:44 PM
48	not at this time with the current parking conditions.	7/25/2015 8:42 AM
49	Depends on the type of business	7/24/2015 5:31 PM
50	Maybe. In fact I have one that badly needed would thrive. When I approached city employees i received no help, only yawns??	7/24/2015 4:02 PM
51	Na	7/24/2015 11:21 AM
52	If I was to open a business, yes.	7/24/2015 8:42 AM
53	Not until a sound plan is placed into action that creates a true business loop for the downtown	7/23/2015 3:07 PM
54	Railroad killed business opportunity downtown.	7/22/2015 12:52 PM

55	If I were more entrepreneurial.	7/22/2015 8:25 AM
56	If the state's archaic and protectionist liquor license laws were changed, downtown would instantly double in activity.	7/21/2015 9:55 PM
57	if i had one, but i would want to make sure people who live in the valley to easily access it	7/21/2015 2:32 PM
58	Rent is high for what you get	7/21/2015 12:52 PM
59	In fact I am part of a small non-profit that is looking for affordable rental space. It is not available within the BID.	7/21/2015 10:05 AM
60	Rent is outrageous for small businesses.	7/21/2015 9:21 AM
61	It depends upon the business. I would not locate a major retail shop downtown in its current state.	7/21/2015 8:54 AM
62	I would probably not open a new business downtown. I pay over 1200 for parking 2 cars in parking garage. I had a person at the parking office tell me that was not a lot of money! It sure is to me.	7/21/2015 8:53 AM
63	no parking for customers	7/20/2015 9:02 PM
64	if increase in signage and later hours for other businesses	7/20/2015 1:33 PM
65	no where in town has more pedestrian traffic in a smaller area. Huge for businesses of all kinds.	7/20/2015 1:23 PM
66	not in a business that would be open to retail - but 400 block looks very inviting for a new business	7/20/2015 12:56 PM
67	n/a	7/20/2015 12:53 PM
68	depends on what type of business, it seems any new business has a 1-3 year trial and either makes it or doesnt- regardless of if its on the walking mall or not.	7/20/2015 11:17 AM
69	Given better parking conditions, snow removal and security, yes.	7/19/2015 12:03 PM
70	I am retired and would not own a business.	7/19/2015 7:22 AM
71	Not enough foot traffic and too hard to access	7/18/2015 9:41 AM
72	Many of the buildings are in great need of repair or refreshing.	7/17/2015 5:51 PM
73	If parking was reasonable	7/17/2015 9:44 AM
74	N/a	7/16/2015 2:41 PM
75	I do	7/16/2015 2:18 PM
76	Put a real health conscious food court with a metastasizing juice machine so people can LOOK and FEEL HEALTHY!	7/16/2015 10:26 AM

Q19 Would you live downtown?

Answered: 637 Skipped: 69



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	56.99%363
No	43.01%274
Total	637

#	Comments:	Date
1	Maybe, but we currently live within walking distance of downtown and I love the easy access	8/28/2015 10:47 AM
2	I do.	8/27/2015 11:50 AM
3	My house is just outside boundary	8/24/2015 6:21 PM
4	I live 3 blocks away.	8/24/2015 10:19 AM
5	If it were more fun	8/24/2015 9:39 AM
6	I have for 10 yrs	8/24/2015 1:08 AM
7	Depends	8/23/2015 10:28 AM
8	I wouldn't want to pay for parking	8/22/2015 6:27 PM
9	Wanted to when I was young	8/22/2015 7:37 AM
10	It doesn't seem very safe at night.	8/21/2015 7:20 PM
11	If single or empty nest, I would love a condo flat downtown.	8/21/2015 12:09 PM
12	If housing were not expensive.	8/20/2015 3:46 PM
13	I do.	8/20/2015 3:21 PM
14	I am an aging boomer who wants to live in downtown. The market is not meeting the downtown housing demands of older and younger people. Helena way behind many other communities in the regard. Our demographics, aging retirees and young new service workers, makes more and better downtown mixed use housing a must.	8/20/2015 9:41 AM
15	It is not safe. It's not patrolled. Cars are broken into, bikes and skateboards are major hazards.	8/20/2015 7:35 AM
16	Not at this time as we just moved into our house from South Dakota this summer.	8/20/2015 6:10 AM
17	live close	8/19/2015 5:32 PM
18	I would live within walking distance of downtown	8/19/2015 11:22 AM
19	I like the countryside.	8/19/2015 10:18 AM

20	Way too many people all the time for my liking.	8/19/2015 9:31 AM
21	I love living downtown!	8/18/2015 11:27 PM
22	I live very close to downtown now, in south central.	8/18/2015 9:18 PM
23	Only because I like owning large acreage	8/18/2015 8:40 PM
24	But nearby if right house found	8/18/2015 6:04 PM
25	See 17 above and secure parking to limit vandalism	8/14/2015 11:24 AM
26	Doubtful. Given my experience with the unenforceable noise ordinance I would not want to deal with the potential for non-quiet in downtown. The only apartments I have seen built that are even remotely appealing are those right across from Triple Divide Spirits.	8/8/2015 4:58 PM
27	Just not where I would choose to live	8/7/2015 10:42 AM
28	i DO live downtown and the rent is way too high for this ghetto craphole	8/6/2015 6:04 PM
29	I do live near downtown now.	8/4/2015 8:10 PM
30	Old Placer Hotel is amazing-really says "Helena" to me, even though I haven't lived there.	8/4/2015 3:20 PM
31	Downtown is too confinded and restrictive for my family and pets.	8/4/2015 3:17 PM
32	Parking might be a problem for permanent residents that weren't wealthy.	8/3/2015 11:06 PM
33	We chose to live in an area where we can easily bike/walk to many places, including downtown.	8/3/2015 10:56 PM
34	N/A	8/3/2015 5:52 PM
35	Would need some close-parking (wife and brother are disabled)	8/3/2015 2:35 PM
36	I would live just outside the prescribed downtown area. There are residential areas that border downtown, but it could be a dangerous enterprise to eliminate business space in order to accommodate housing.	8/1/2015 9:58 AM
37	The schools in that area are in poor condition or are about to be consolidated or closed	8/1/2015 9:31 AM
38	I already do.	8/1/2015 8:22 AM
39	There are not enough residential options downtown.	7/31/2015 1:24 PM
40	if there were nice condos on one level or with elevators. Not tiny like Placer.	7/27/2015 6:40 PM
41	I bought a house as close to downtown as I could afford.	7/27/2015 11:39 AM
42	Not until there are more housing possibilities.	7/26/2015 1:21 PM
43	If prices were affordable and there was great open space for my family	7/24/2015 9:22 PM
44	Family too big	7/24/2015 5:31 PM
45	yes, if it was more vibrant (like Missoula) Missoula has way more going on downtown...	7/24/2015 3:35 PM
46	Currently live just outside the BID border	7/24/2015 8:42 AM
47	Not enough parking, don't like living in an urban environment	7/23/2015 3:07 PM
48	Only if developers were supported in their efforts to develop downtown condos, etc.	7/22/2015 3:40 PM
49	Railroad	7/22/2015 12:52 PM
50	I would if I had no children.	7/22/2015 11:49 AM
51	maybe	7/21/2015 10:13 PM
52	This would obviously be much easier when the kids are grown and gone.	7/21/2015 9:55 PM
53	id live close to to visit but the closer you get the worse it seems.	7/21/2015 8:33 PM
54	On problem is the lack of housing in the core of the city; even the Great Northern planned housing but only a limited amount of housing was actually developed there	7/21/2015 4:30 PM
55	I would not choose to move into a neighborhood with no school. I would never intentionally sign my children up for the disaster that is Central Elementary.	7/21/2015 3:41 PM
56	i do	7/21/2015 2:32 PM

57	Only if there was secure off street parking.	7/21/2015 2:02 PM
58	I live in a residential area adjacent to downtown that fills all needs. The only reason I would not live directly downtown is because it offers only apt/condo style living	7/20/2015 10:42 PM
59	no parking Too crowded	7/20/2015 9:02 PM
60	If I was a millennial, I would live downtown.	7/20/2015 4:47 PM
61	No freaking way!	7/20/2015 4:14 PM
62	I own my own home with no plans to re-locate to downtown.	7/20/2015 1:28 PM
63	As I age, condo living becomes more attractive but not if I had to still worry about driving everywhere	7/20/2015 1:23 PM
64	if my life were in a situation that would allow it (i don't see room for camper etc currently :-)	7/20/2015 12:56 PM
65	only because i love the country and have animals	7/20/2015 12:41 PM
66	work with the large employers to make offices in the lower portions and some residential options on the upper floors. THe more we can offer cool housing options the more folks will be downtown and will need goods & services- providing an opportunity to offer those right there...downtown!	7/20/2015 11:17 AM
67	Maybe.	7/20/2015 7:21 AM
68	I do!	7/19/2015 9:40 PM
69	Not sure at this point but maybe as an older retiree	7/19/2015 7:29 PM
70	Too expensive.	7/19/2015 6:42 PM
71	I used to live downtown and loved it - except for the parking.	7/19/2015 4:45 PM
72	I used to live downtown. Lovely for a single person or couple with no kids. Toting groceries these days would be a problem!	7/19/2015 12:03 PM
73	We live a few blocks to the downtown area — we value the "walkability" of our neighborhood.	7/19/2015 11:02 AM
74	Too unsafe and expensive	7/18/2015 9:41 AM
75	Need more downtown housing: mixed use buildings with condos; rowhouses.	7/17/2015 3:58 PM
76	Already do.	7/17/2015 2:11 PM
77	Maybe	7/17/2015 9:27 AM
78	N/a I do	7/16/2015 2:41 PM
79	someday when I build a nice (think Front Street across from the distillery) condo	7/16/2015 2:18 PM
80	I do - but your city fossil fueled leaf blowers literally SUCK and they are too noisy at 8am.	7/16/2015 10:26 AM

Q20 If you have additional comments on any topic, feel free to include them here:

Answered: 134 Skipped: 572

#	Responses	Date
1	Change walking mall to driving/biking! At least most of it.	9/2/2015 2:40 PM
2	There should be a dog park downtown. A safe green way should connect downtown to nearby residential neighborhoods and open lands to the south. Women's Parks should be connected to Front Street with a safe elevated crossing for pedestrians. Front Street should be made an inviting green way as outlines in EPA's Green Capitals concept of "complete and green" streets, as well as exploration of aesthetic water features along the historic creek as also outlined in the report.	9/1/2015 2:20 PM
3	I look forward to seeing the master plan! Thank you for involving the community.	8/28/2015 10:48 AM
4	I feel that Downtown Helena is in a slow state of decline and has been for a long time. And I have little hope that my comments about the homeless shelter will be taken seriously by the engineers and planners who have been hired, as I am sure their focus will be "infrastructure" related. Even though they are from Missoula where the homeless shelter was recently relocated from the downtown core. The north end of the Gulch needs to proudly stand as a welcoming point. Right now, the north end of the Gulch is a deterrent to tourism/business. Have you seen the Roosevelt Arch -- the gateway when you enter Yellowstone? It tells people "you are entering a special place." The "gateway" to Last Chance Gulch does not paint a pretty picture. Fix that area first, and see what a difference it makes. Can you imagine having awesomely touristy retail/entertainment where the Homeless Shelter currently sits....telling people that they are entering a special place? I can imagine it.	8/27/2015 12:04 PM
5	More of an art scene and using visual/performing arts to improve the atmosphere and windows of downtown	8/25/2015 2:23 PM
6	I believe in the walking mall, I feel it isn't very welcoming or alive. With more restaurants allowed to have outdoor seating I am seeing a vitality the whole downtown has been missing.	8/24/2015 6:23 PM
7	It's a great place but needs more TLC. More emphasis on maintenance and security. Needs to be brighter and cleaner looking.	8/24/2015 8:11 AM
8	Again, a while city (and valley) plan is needed. Where is the future growth, where do the schools get built/rebuilt, traffic flow (not just downtown but everywhere), etc.	8/23/2015 10:33 PM
9	Keep Helenas HISTORICAL heritage as the priority!!!	8/23/2015 6:32 PM
10	There needs to be better office space downtown that can accommodate technology and tie new styles with the old for a more contemporary look and feel.	8/23/2015 6:15 PM
11	I would like to see retail business expand or change hours; open on weekends and evenings. Many people cannot shop 8-5 so they take their needs to big box stores after 5pm and Sunday afternoons.	8/23/2015 1:52 PM
12	As someone who works downtown and lives adjacent to downtown, Helena's inability to clear snow is a challenge off and on for half the year. It seems fairly simple to address and would make downtown more accessible for more of the year.	8/23/2015 12:14 PM
13	One last note, leave the Confederate Fountain alone. We know we are not a racist community. We have a beautiful history, let people learn that. If they are curious, they can educate themselves.	8/23/2015 11:06 AM
14	So glad you all are doing this.	8/23/2015 8:50 AM
15	Need more places for toddlers to play	8/23/2015 12:31 AM
16	The BID Board appears to be heavily weighted with Allen Nicholson employees. I really don't think the BID had any business weighing in on the school levy issue	8/22/2015 10:08 PM
17	We need a better parking solution in order to support local small businesses. We also need MUCH better signage off of 15 to downtown.	8/22/2015 9:53 PM
18	Some winter attraction similar to alive at five would be nice.	8/22/2015 9:26 PM
19	If we keep traffic off the walking mall then BIG signs needed at traffic junctions to indicate businesses in vicinity. Also a bike friendly path through downtown is needed.	8/22/2015 9:15 PM

20	Put in a crosswalk from the parking garage on Park Ave. directly across the street to the old IBM building before someone gets killed.	8/22/2015 12:03 PM
21	There are two distinct downtowns, I find myself going to on or the other. Putting the movie theatre downtown is a strang location.	8/22/2015 7:37 AM
22	More places for bikes now cannot ride on mall. Be more tourist friendly with signs.	8/22/2015 7:21 AM
23	In general, there is a young person problem in Helena. They are in many instances out of control, disrespectful and care little for the cost and preservation necessary for this beautiful city area.	8/21/2015 11:15 PM
24	This is great! Helena is becoming a destination for our brews and trails. Don't ignore the impact on Valley zoning and development to downtown, or the inter connectedness of issues (schools, zoning, liquor licensing).	8/21/2015 5:19 PM
25	What happened to the hanging flowers this summer. Not as many as prior years. Looks a little lack luster this summer.	8/21/2015 2:09 PM
26	I am frustrated that we seem to do this fairly often and don't seem to carry the "plan" further after the meetings are over. One hour parking is a frustration, particularly in the winter months when the ice and snow pack between the metered parking and the Gulch can be treacherous. If you actually want people to use businesses downtown. An hour is insufficient for lunch/shopping or hair appt and any other errands. I find it extremely frustrating that the rationale consistently lays blame on employees, yet "punishes" the downtown patrons to try to resolve the problem. I think the walking mall is one of Helena's loveliest assets and that we should make every effort to preserve it.	8/20/2015 4:32 PM
27	Connection, better urban biking and walking amenities, design features and way finding that actually work, less dead space, more retail and other street level activity, less drive through banks facilities, less surface parking on keep downtown corners	8/20/2015 9:44 AM
28	I love the walking mall and generally we love downtown Helena.	8/20/2015 6:11 AM
29	SCHOOLS	8/19/2015 10:35 PM
30	The kids who live it the surrounding neighborhoods need places to hang out, fool around with their scare boards, ride bikes safely -please figure out some way to help them spend more time outdoors!	8/19/2015 8:22 PM
31	we need to educate people in the downtown that we need to work together to accomplish a bigger picture and goals and that it is always about the immediate financial return. property owners need to invest some time and money into making their properties more appealing.	8/19/2015 5:34 PM
32	Please educate the community on the detrimental impacts of walking malls in small towns. Show them that most small communities have gotten rid of them because they realized that they were stifling the success of their downtowns. Cars, pedestrians and bicycles can coexist in the same corridor.	8/19/2015 11:26 AM
33	Thank you!	8/19/2015 7:38 AM
34	Wd need to get more people downtown supporting small businesses!	8/19/2015 4:44 AM
35	Stop alienating youth!!! Welcome them. The Helena Expects Respect campaign is stupid. So is not allowing skateboarding.	8/18/2015 9:19 PM
36	More events in the fall, winter and spring would be great! Music, art, restaurants that stay open late. events that bring people downtown!	8/18/2015 8:43 PM
37	My biggest complaint about downtown is that most business and retail doesn't support evening hours - post work or late evenings. Hard thing to fix through zoning or a master plan though.	8/18/2015 8:42 PM
38	Downtown, including walking mall, needs to be clean, attractive, easy to get around.	8/18/2015 2:31 PM
39	There needs to be bigger box stores on the downtown area to attract more shoppers. The small "specialty" shops just don't cut it for most people. I need a reason to go downtown and spend time. Right now I just go to the movie theater and then leave. The Brewhouse is a great asset but there is really no shopping downtown that you can't get anywhere else in town and the small specialty shops don't appeal to me. And they are overpriced.	8/12/2015 11:56 AM
40	Living downtown would require more convenient access to groceries.	8/8/2015 1:12 PM
41	Hopefully this process/study will focus on the business community of downtown and its success/growth/promotion	8/7/2015 10:09 AM
42	Please connect the trails and walking paths to your downtown wayfinding system. Highlight this asset adjacent to the downtown.	8/5/2015 12:48 PM
43	I am very excited we're working on this since I live and work downtown. I hope we can begin to see improvements and a new trajectory within a year or less. Helena could be so much more!	8/5/2015 9:20 AM
44	Can something be done about the number of people smoking on the walking mall? Can it be smoke free like a park?	8/4/2015 8:11 PM

45	I think Helena has a rich history that is not acknowledged - I would like to see more festivals or presentations dedicated to our mining, ranching, & western heritage. Pow Wows are also very enjoyable.	8/4/2015 6:50 PM
46	Maybe assist ailing businesses when needed somehow? It was really sad when Helena Topicals and Teas had to leave because their rent went up-rent control??...Talk to the long termers like Shalon Hastings and Amy at Lasso the Moon for ideas. And move those offices to a more appropriate locations-not on the first floor!	8/4/2015 3:25 PM
47	I think that the walking mall should be opened up for more traffic, and a parking garage in the library parking lot would be a great addition. I also think that any publications to promote downtown should be given to a local business owner, not someone out of town. If you want us to turn around and shop in town, so should the BID and Chamber. It is insulting to professional designers to see a publication with nothing but canned articles and stats and overused obviously supplied photos then see that it wasn't even produced locally. Maybe you should ask Alan Nicholson how he thinks the South end could be improved as he has greatly improved the GNTC. I love the fact that from mid-town to GNTC is so connected and easy access for families.	8/4/2015 2:13 PM
48	Love downtown and am happy with the progress it's made in the past few years with new shops and the Hawthorne is a major asset in addition to the trail rider.	8/4/2015 11:49 AM
49	I grew up on S Rodney and was saddened with all the things Urban Renewal did to our downtown area. I would just ask that no more of our historic downtown is demolished to build "newer/more modern" buildings.	8/4/2015 11:23 AM
50	I love downtown but am not a fan of the mall. I really think it is and gives a closed door to people. I am a born and raised person here and since the mall went in I only go to businesses on the all area seldom. I love the 400 block and think they are very unique plus it is busy all the time no matter where you go. I upper part could have this if it were open and inviting. I would also like to thank all who are putting this together and hope the efforts put forth will produce a better downtown area for businesses and the public.	8/4/2015 9:36 AM
51	I would love if we had a usable downtown like Missoula! Such a great mix of retail, food and variety of great shops! Their downtown is the place to be and shop and walk!	8/4/2015 8:19 AM
52	I've thought about downtown a lot! I'll try to keep it brief here.... We are a family of four, and most of the money we spend downtown is at restaurants. Taco del Sol, Bert & Ernie's, Toi's Thai, Cafe Zydeco, Park Ave Bakery, Mediterranean Grill, The Parrot, Big Dipper. Lucca's on very special occasions. I would love to see more small, relatively inexpensive restaurants. Some good ethnic restaurants would make me sooo happy. I do some shopping at MT Book and Toy, occasional shopping at the Pan Handler and Lasso the Moon. And I like to take out of town guests to Birds and Beasleys. Other favorites: Big Sky bikes, L&C Library, the thrift shop at the Episcopalian church behind the YWCA. Honestly, though, I do most of my shopping in the valley or online. If you could squeeze a small Target store and a mini Good Samaritan into downtown, I'd be spending some serious dough. Now, if we just had the old trolley running back and forth between the walking mall and the Great Northern, we'd be all set. Thanks so much for listening!!!!	8/3/2015 11:13 PM
53	Help the businesses with more parking; build up to 6 stories; get together instead of Grt. N Ctr and small group advertising.....Make more 30 min in/out spaces.....	8/3/2015 10:22 PM
54	Don't destroy the good things the downtown has going for it. It's unique and special, unlike any other. Encourage variety in new business and promote, promote, promote.	8/3/2015 6:50 PM
55	Why not convert downtown office space to classrooms for Helena College? Why isn't it easier to get from Downtown Helena to Great Northern Town Center?	8/3/2015 4:20 PM
56	Would like more events like Shakespeare in the Parks. Can't handle loud rock music at events. Love the Art Walks, but wish restaurants like the Parrot would be open for them.	8/3/2015 2:38 PM

57	<p>Excluding any of the somewhat condescending remarks below. I believe that the BID should be reorganized in a manner that would function like that of a Home Owners Association. It would be a "Downtown Business Operators/owner Association" (DBOA). When a HOA desires work, amenities, or improvements to be done, they pay for it with funds collected from members and not keep additional taxes added after a specified date. I find it EXTREMELY unfair to the greater community by keeping the "additional" tax monies for "earmarked, AKA BID" funds separate from the City's General Fund. If the BID wants to keep Downtown attractive and place flowers around the BID area, please do so, but do not use funds that would have gone to the General Fund to purchase, say... new fire fighting equipment! Pay for the flowers out of your DBOA funds collected. Additionally, I feel that this "Poll" was written with an agenda in mind. It is certainly not a neutral document. Each question should have had a place for comments and a circle for not applicable or meaningless to me! Please understand, I am not blasting the BID or the work it has done for Helena and the greater metropolitan district. I believe that it is time that businesses, in the BID, now pay and maintain the aesthetics, that add to their bottom line, now be fully paid for THEMSELVES and not subsidized by the already stressed tax base of our great community. Other from above: I will copy comments from above: 5. Relationship with downtown... This is a HORRIBLE self serving question. Relationship!!! Please! 7. Is downtown safe? Not for the tax payers that do not benefit from the missing funds, that should be paid to the general tax base, absconded by the BID! 11. Infrastructure .. I believe that if the BID district wants to be maintained, improved or grow it should but not at a cost to all other tax payers. Or should I say from the absence of tax monies from which the entire city should benefit DIRECTLY! The BID should function under the same terms as a "Home Owners Association" and pay for any special amenities they choose to receive. To be verbose, the BID should do as they choose not CHEATING the general fund from money that should go to the General Fund. 12 Transportation... The "Mini-malfunction Junction" should be made into a turning circle. It would afford traffic a clear path while creating additional space for Art or park space in the center if the new "Circular Drive". Parking: I object to taxpayer funds being used, via bonds, to build structures at which many spaces are "reserved". I am all for monthly passes at a discounted rate to ensure usage. But designated or reserved areas are not acceptable. 13. Economic improvement... "Downtown" needs more residential space. If more people lived downtown it is more likely to become more of a focal point for real activity and business. 14. Land use... I would like to see the "business district" expanded to neighborhoods throughout the city. It would make neighborhoods more vibrant and create "social zones" which, would re-create neighborhoods of the past. There is no place where "neighbors" can congregate or even see each other in their own communities. People don't know each other. Neighbors are not "Neighbors" in the traditional sense. They just happen to live nearby! 15 Streetscape... Maintain the walking mall! 16. What are impediments to downtown growth and redevelopment? ... Lack of residential space in downtown corridor.</p>	8/2/2015 2:10 PM
58	I think it would be nice if the stream running through the walking mall wasn't all dried up.	8/1/2015 3:35 PM
59	Encourage food trucks and outdoor seating for eating.	8/1/2015 10:32 AM
60	Thank you for soliciting input!	8/1/2015 9:59 AM
61	Please reconsider charging Residents as much for parking as businesses. If you live there a discounted rate would be ideal.	8/1/2015 8:24 AM
62	My older, retired parents have stated that if you put in a round-a-bout, they will avoid the entire area like the plague. We all watched as the \$ were poured out like blood during the past 2 bouts of re-dos; for what: for more people to find fewer reasons to go downtown, when so much more could be done with the \$. I haven't visited the library for years, and will not allow my kids there due to the unsavory population in the area. Yes, I have been panhandled several times, and feel unsafe. I don't like to see young people congregate there with no seeming reason. We also dislike attending events where there are so many dogs allowed. In addition, if you've ever attempted to picnic on the grassy places, you'll smell urine everywhere. The kids, when given a choice, do not choose to go downtown, except for icecream.	7/31/2015 9:31 PM
63	We already have a nice downtown that only needs some enhancements and improvements with parking and landscaping. New businesses should be encouraged to move downtown and fill empty spaces. But mostly what is needed is promotion and marketing of the Downtown to give it a positive image so folks just want to come downtown to eat, drink, shop and be entertained. What I hear from local people is "I never come downtown.....not sure why". I do talk to sooo many people because I am a sole proprietor of a small retail shop. I hear it all. Tourists love our downtown, but always ask why it is so quiet and why there are so many empty shop fronts.	7/31/2015 1:24 PM
64	Walking mall should be extended to mini malfunction jct. One way lane of traffic for drop off, pick up and delivery and handicap parking, Trolley from Great northern Center to library.	7/31/2015 10:48 AM
65	Downtown continues to get better and better. We don't need to reinvent the wheel; we just need to keep adding to the good experience people have when they do come downtown.	7/30/2015 5:32 PM

66	It is critical to consider demographic trends when planning for the future of downtown. Nationwide, aging baby boomers and millennials alike are moving downtown. In Helena, I expect that that living downtown could become very desirable for older folks and I hope consideration will be given to creating a place where older folks can get around independently to retail stores and various gathering places (library, coffee shops, parks, etc.) and also to mix with younger folks. Folks need to be able to move about safely on foot, by wheelchair, via public transit, etc. Public transit from downtown to the hospital area might be helpful. We need to consider carefully what niche can be filled in downtown Helena. It is not likely that downtown will really compete with Big Box stores on the edge of town. However, taking into consideration future demographics, it may make sense to provide goods and services targeted particularly to older folks and young millennials who are not able to or not inclined to drive.	7/30/2015 3:31 PM
67	Put condos on the garages on on top of retail stores!	7/27/2015 6:40 PM
68	I had some trouble with the survey in that I kept losing my answers after typing them in so I had to start over a couple times and try to rewrite what I had already written. My answers were probably a little more coherent the first or second time around, but this is the best I can do. Thanks for doing this. I look forward to future opportunities to participate.	7/27/2015 11:42 AM
69	Good Luck! there is a lot of work to be done	7/25/2015 8:45 PM
70	It should be possible to introduce more upscale housing options downtown to balance the existing low-income rentals and subsidized housing.	7/25/2015 10:53 AM
71	The area that Downtwon Helena fills is simply congested and less open than Bozeman.	7/25/2015 8:49 AM
72	I think it is important to find a way to reopen Central School. I think that Helena needs a real downtown school to make living in town more desirable for young families.	7/24/2015 10:42 PM
73	It would be nice if one evening per month or one weekend per month the businesses on the walking mall stayed open later so that working public can shop at these businesses.	7/24/2015 10:33 PM
74	Get rid of the Gold Bar! It is an eyesore and routinely has public disturbance problems. The sidewalks are littered with cigarette butts and vomit from patrons.	7/24/2015 8:07 PM
75	Parking sucks and so does the parking enforcement	7/24/2015 6:41 PM
76	Current businesses downtown are only open while people are at work making it difficult and undesirable to visit. No new growth makes it unattractive. Look at downtown bozeman or missoula, both have a busy downtown due to being open on weekends and new buisnesses.	7/24/2015 5:56 PM
77	Smoking areas and more places for cigarette butts would help with trash issue	7/24/2015 11:53 AM
78	Hard to tell which traffic lanes lead in which direction when arrows are painted on street and therefore covered by the cars ahead of you	7/24/2015 10:57 AM
79	The parking commission needs to improve some of their dilapidated landscaping and old wood barriers around their parking lots.	7/23/2015 10:07 PM
80	Lets pack up the city leaders and take them on a field trip to somewhere nice. You don't need to go further than Bozeman or Whitefish but there are tons of good examples anywhere you travel.	7/23/2015 11:09 AM
81	Helena needs to be made more attractive. Cleaned up. Activities are good, but the downtown looks dirty, as if store owners take no pride in their surroundings. (particularly north of 11th.) And the walking mall needs to be made user friendly. Allow bikes, skateboards, more outdoor dining. The downtown area has great potential, but needs a bit more liveliness.	7/23/2015 10:51 AM
82	It is true that with the success of the Great Northern, Neill Avenue acts somewhat as a barrier between the "south" and "north" downtown districts. It's such a wide road that I feel with some simple striping of parking, bike lanes and travel lanes one could change the "feel" of the road. Long term, some robust improvements at the Fuller and Front street intersections may help[- i.e. raised intersection table, curb bulb-outs, better landscaping, etc. You will not remove the traffic from Neill; it used to be the northern boundary of downtown but now it isn't. It can be tweaked slightly to accommodate the users better.	7/23/2015 9:00 AM
83	Free parking is so limited that I rarely visit more than one business in a day	7/22/2015 8:19 PM
84	The work is never done... so while a plan like this may help it's more about leadership, advocacy, and individual contributions to make downtown a better place to "live, work, play, or invest" - I'm not convinced that the BID assessment is a worthwhile expense (cost v. benefit). I don't see the City favoring downtown over other areas of the City so that too may contribute to its inevitable cycle of decline (before the next wave of urban renewal).	7/22/2015 4:07 PM
85	Downtown is great! More art and culture please.	7/22/2015 2:50 PM
86	Helena needs to bulldoze the monument to the racist traitors of the confederacy. Not rename, but remove!	7/22/2015 12:54 PM

87	Downtown may not entirely be what Helena is but it is how Helena identifies itself. It is all that Helena has in that regard. Unless Downtown is vibrant, Helena has no strong image to tie onto. The city's sense of community depends on that.	7/22/2015 12:37 PM
88	No More Baseball Fields! And why do we need to see murals of Helena while in Helena. The choice in art seems conservative and unimaginative.	7/22/2015 11:55 AM
89	Downtown Helena is a wonderful place to work. I have a monthly parking pass, so do not have to deal with the parking concerns that others face. However, over the years I have had conversations with many area residents who rarely shop downtown during business hours because of the lack of parking in the downtown area. It is not convenient or inviting for a person who lives outside the city limits to ride a bike, or walk to the farmers market, or to shop downtown during business hours. A \$20 parking ticket is a strong disincentive for people to shop and dine in downtown Helena during business hours.	7/22/2015 8:55 AM
90	When are property managers going to realize that if you want to encourage new business growth, you can't require new tenants to pay top dollar for space that is off the main avenue or has been vacant for extended periods of time.	7/22/2015 8:18 AM
91	The best thing that could happen for downtown and for Helena would be to put the Historical Society museum in the Federal Reserve Bank building. This would help connect the Great Northern to the rest of downtown, bring tourists downtown, and make the whole area more lively. The building is well maintained and secure, open floor plan, fantastic views from upstairs, a perfect place for the museum. There is very little Federal Reserve presence here anymore; the state should work with the federal government on a transfer of that building as a new home for the museum.	7/21/2015 9:57 PM
92	Downtown events are great, though parking is a challenge for special events. Bike patrol in contrast to use of patrol cars might be helpful for day to day.	7/21/2015 7:32 PM
93	The media needs to do more positive stories on how we'll downtown businesses are doing. All they ever say is downtown is dead. Alive at Five, the brewery, restaurants, some of Helena's best are in downtown.	7/21/2015 6:23 PM
94	See my previous comments concerning housing. Additionally, while we don't need again to actively oppose development outside of the city core, there needs to be some emphasis on the benefits of the downtown area.	7/21/2015 4:32 PM
95	Helena needs to get behind opening Central School – or get behind closing it. The last two years have destroyed our community and the parent community who fought so hard to get our kids back home are giving up. Helena needs to take responsibility for what is happening at Central and give those children a proper school. They are casualties in a stupid fight that has produced nothing but hard feelings and more despondency.	7/21/2015 3:42 PM
96	Please do NOT change the walking mall! It's growing new businesses, don't ruin that!	7/21/2015 2:39 PM
97	Don't gentrify it.	7/21/2015 2:33 PM
98	When Trees are replaced I feel it would be beneficial to the community to plant fruit bearing varieties. In addition the idea of edible landscaping incorporated with ornamental varieties would help build a more sustainable, hip, and progressive downtown.	7/21/2015 9:25 AM
99	The main downtown area is not well connected to the Great Northern. These two areas need to be better integrated. I would also like to see a lot more energy capture integrated into the downtown, more solar panels and more edible landscapes. The small gardens around are very pretty but these pieces of land could be better used to grow food, fruit trees etc. if we're going to use water we should be eating what grows or donating it.	7/21/2015 8:56 AM
100	In general I think downtown is an inviting area with a good mix of businesses.	7/21/2015 8:28 AM
101	The downtown needs shops and restaurant type business on the ground floor, not professional services. Also, 1-hr parking reduces my ability to remain downtown after meetings or lunch to shop Thanks you. Finally, I would like BID to work w neighborhoods surrounding downtown to consider impacts of downtown development on historic neighborhoods. I leave near downtown and love downtown and I think a plan can work well if there is collaboration. Thank you much	7/21/2015 7:58 AM
102	Keep the walkable and pedestrian only areas! Be more careful with what public statements are made and be stronger marketers of downtown. Encourage residential living that is not only focused on subsidized housing. The more people that live downtown and adjacent to downtown the more vibrant it will be.	7/20/2015 10:48 PM
103	It's too crowded and too many businesses that aren't related to shopping or encouraging people to visit. It's dull down there.	7/20/2015 9:27 PM
104	Great Northern area would be a great area to visit but they are too concerned about getting any tenant in and not the proper tenants. Their care for the area and office buildings has declined over the years.	7/20/2015 3:47 PM
105	Please do not let out of town developers ruin Helena, They can build their crappy buildings near the airport and elsewhere but leave the historic beauty of Helena's downtown alone!	7/20/2015 3:21 PM

106	It's very strange for a downtown to pretty much close after 5 o'clock. Most businesses will close at 5, except for of course the restaurants and bars. If you want a thriving downtown give the people a reason to go there and have businesses stay open later and on weekends.	7/20/2015 2:37 PM
107	Parking needs changes gates should not be closed 24 hours	7/20/2015 1:34 PM
108	love to see Fed Reserve building repurposed and more connection from Great Northern to old Downtown. Think 1st block of walking mall presents real challenges for visitors. Second block dead ends and has better parking so limited income	7/20/2015 1:25 PM
109	Ideas: have an extension of hte rails through downtown with gold brick paths ,or some other indicator, that were labeled with the trail names, so people could begin and end their hikes downtown. Put a large gold pan in the air, off the building, above the actual spot where gold was first discovered. Offer the opportunity for gold panning lessons there, by building a stream of sorts as a tourist attraction. More banners, more flowers, more trees, more green space, more bike lanes, more bike racks, more outdoor eating, more rooftop eating, grocery market downtown,	7/20/2015 12:44 PM
110	I think effort should be put into finding ways to provide free parking in the downtown area. I would like to see consideration given to acquiring city control of all parking space (streets, lots, garages, etc.) in the downtown area and providing it to the public at no cost. This could be paid for with a Downtown Parking Tax District that includes the entire city.	7/20/2015 12:24 PM
111	avoid the bikes on the walking mall discussion- the only way that is valuable is if it is part of a larger plan for all of downtown and nonmotorists.	7/20/2015 11:18 AM
112	I think Downtown has been headed in the right direction and I think it has lots of potential for more growth as well!	7/20/2015 7:21 AM
113	DONT GET RID OF THE WALKING MALL	7/19/2015 8:16 PM
114	I love our downtown. I go there for as many of my purchases as I can	7/19/2015 7:30 PM
115	We need to preserve what we have downtown. Any new buildings need to be in the spirit of what we have and be pedestrian scaled. I don't want more eyesores like the Park Plaza and Arcade Building. Rent and building maintenance need to be affordable for business owners.	7/19/2015 4:46 PM
116	Downtown in Helena and any city for that matter should be a place where you can work, play, live, dine and enjoy life and feel part of a vibrant community. Al8ve@5 brings folks downtown. Farmer's Markey brings folks downtown. Banking brings folks downtown.I law firms bring folks downtown. City and Count governments bring people downtown. A couple hotels and conference centers bring folks downtown. The walking mall should be cleaned daily, like the Great Northern area.	7/19/2015 12:17 PM
117	Please stop the chalk parking people. They are relentless, mess up my tires, and are rude. Put out recycling bins, this isn't the 1980's anymore. Wash the sidewalks (please make the Rialto clean the vomit off the walking mall daily!!!!).	7/19/2015 12:00 PM
118	The presence of small walkable schools is key to promoting our downtown areas and the culture we expect from our town.	7/19/2015 11:03 AM
119	Reach out to young professionals, like Helena Young Professionals, who are investing in Helena. They are the future! Try to understand who lives in Helena. There are more 20s and 30s people than I think most people realize who enjoy Helena's outdoor culture and are looking for vibrant hip places to gather.	7/19/2015 5:18 AM
120	Downtown is dying with horrible parking rules and lack of growth.	7/18/2015 4:32 PM
121	The walking mall has many buildings that have set empty for years, despite new businesses opening elsewhere around town. There should be a focus on retail and dining businesses in that part of the town (not things that don't attract drop in businesses, ie health care or law offices.) Downtown should be retail centered. The town should make an effort to make empty spacss more affordable or more suitable for businesses.	7/17/2015 4:05 PM
122	I am very disappointed with the BID's public stance against the HElena Bond. THat's not good for business.	7/17/2015 3:09 PM
123	Haven't we already done this a couple times before?	7/17/2015 2:12 PM
124	We need more shops that sell more things that people both want and need.....I loved it when the Real Food Store was down town.	7/17/2015 9:34 AM
125	Keep the music festival. Get better bands there and at alive at five.	7/17/2015 9:28 AM
126	The mall should allow reasonable biking and skate boarding. Embrace our biking culture and relieve parking issues. Get more bike racks. Office buildings need to be mixed with retail. Doing something is better than another study.	7/17/2015 8:45 AM

127	While I realize a school is not a business, it does bring people into a neighborhood. When Central was open, we parents used to meet for coffee downtown, or breakfast, or swing by the library after getting kids. If Central does not reopen as a school (and/or if Hawthorne closes), many parents and kids will not be in the downtown area on a daily basis. Schools are key to viability of neighborhoods, even business neighborhoods. Also, the odd little "triangles" that Helena has all over downtown because of streets that meet at less than 90 degrees – what a waste of space. Better to do what Missoula did and close one block of one street (one side of the triangle) and make that space useful and more aesthetically pleasing (like into tiny parks). Also, Helena Ave after the Dept of Labor to mini-malfunction junction needs new sidewalks, trees, and can someone do something better with the dirt parking lot between Helena and LCG? If the Minneapolis Reserve Bank ever leaves, it would be a really cool retail space... One other thing: let's do repair and USE the Civic Center. Too precious to let it fall into disuse and disrepair. Thanks, BID, for this chance to provide input.	7/16/2015 10:33 PM
128	Lifestyle centers are still a major draw in larger urban areas & it's been thrilling to see them emerge esp on the 300 block of Last Chance Gulch with Turman Larison, Painted Pot, Tread. lightly, four0six, MT Book & Toy, etc as they are all businesses about self expression whether you are a runner, hip hop culture person, ceramics lover, etc. consumer or creator of self expression.	7/16/2015 8:05 PM
129	I have lived here for about a year and I have lived in the west coast, Midwest, southwest. Helena is great location etc, however it is time to grow it seems as if it didn't grow with the population we need better eateries more family functions Bozeman basically should be a model for Helena in the future but better	7/16/2015 5:59 PM
130	I wish there was more of a focus to attract and keep young people in Helena. The Downtown area could be so cool but it feels a little geriatric at times.	7/16/2015 5:23 PM
131	Unfortunately, this survey does not ask how the needs of the city connect beyond its borders. Given the recent bond debate in our town, it would have been helpful if your survey also asked our age and connection to school aged children.	7/16/2015 2:44 PM
132	More/better restaurants better parking better flow in fewer bums update architecture continue pole banners/flowers bury power/phone lines run the street cleaners more often	7/16/2015 2:20 PM
133	Additional housing for all sectors that is safe decent and generally considered attractive	7/16/2015 10:39 AM
134	A community needs all ages together to grow undivided and with respect. Right now - it's divided and everyone seems to have a smug look on their face. Also - parking should be free, just monitored for respecting time limits. Bring in music so the kids can dance and the grandparents can smile.	7/16/2015 10:30 AM

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Meeting Record

MEETING DATE: August 12, 2015

PROJECT NAME: Downtown Helena Master Plan

SUBJECT: Stakeholder Meeting

BY: Jeremy Keene

ATTENDEES: Alan Nicholson
Nancy Nicholson
Brent Campbell
Jeremy Keene

- Downtown Plan
 - Issues/concerns/pitfalls?
 - Developers forum
 - Investment Trust
- Issues/Concerns
 - Model cities movement of 1960s – divisive, historic buildings torn down
 - City hasn't committed to Downtown, doesn't see itself as a partner
 - Chamber wants to move out to I-15
 - GNTC – City didn't want to honor agreement to build garage
 - Stagnant tax base
 - Parking doesn't pay for itself – maintenance is being deferred
 - Central School is important
 - GNTC needs housing – only 2 built, 135 entitled
 - SW corner 14th/Front – possible residential development
 - Former state liquor (end of Front Street)
 - Front Street Learning Center – school may want to sell
 - What is the market – housing preference & demand?
 - Can't afford to build
 - Cost to build exceeds rents
 - Can't build at \$250/sf in this market
 - Banks want personal guarantees



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- Building codes – concrete/wood framing techniques used in other places are not allowed here
- Hillside development
- Need to educate on good urban development
 - Consequences of sprawl
 - Economic impact
 - 50s style highway
- Lack of leadership at City/Commission
- County growth policy update
 - County doesn't want to add development standards
 - Eric Griffin – County Administrator
- TIF District Downtown still has debt – what is debt term?
- New market tax credits – refinanced original theater at GNTC
- Brewery hot spot
- Federal Building (Jim Burns, owner) – probably not interested in developing but might sell
- Constitution Park

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Meeting Record

MEETING DATE: August 20, 2015

PROJECT NAME: Downtown Helena Master Plan

SUBJECT: Helena Housing Authority Stakeholder Meeting

BY: Jeremy Keene

ATTENDEES: Leslie Torgerson, Executive Director
Jeremy Keene

- Housing Authority is evaluating property in Downtown and greater Helena for possible sale or redevelopment
 - Edwards 6-plex – possible redevelopment
 - 12 single-family homes
 - 7-story, 76-unit elderly/disabled by Bluestone House
 - “Chicken Coops” Cutler Street – redevelopment
 - CTI (FIC) Building – job training near Bert & Ernies
- Need to identify Housing Authority properties in Downtown
- Housing Study was last updated in 2010
 - Needs have changed
 - Mixed housing/income – what incentives can the City provide?
 - Waiting list has grown
 - Tax credits are very competitive
 - Lack of accessible units
- Specific Projects
 - Just completed Strategic Plan
 - Next steps
 - ID properties/evaluation
 - Physical needs assessment
 - Market assessment

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- Helena Housing Development Corp. (HHDC) is development arm of Housing Authority
 - Road Runner
 - Wilder
- Political climate is a challenge
 - Perception of affordable
 - Problem with gaming the system
- Downtown anchors
 - Need JCPenney Downtown
 - Mount Helena
 - Cathedral
 - Atlas Building – modern/rehabilitated affordable housing (30 units)
 - Placer Condos
 - B&B Market provides limited grocery in Downtown
- Services
 - CTI (Career Training Institute) is Downtown
 - Food Share/Friendship Center in 6th ward
 - Childcare is spread out – big need, affordability
 - God’s Love – Downtown men’s shelter and transitional housing
 - After school care – YMCA near Centennial Park
 - Social Security office is Downtown
- Transportation
 - Affordability
 - Winter conditions
 - Senior/disabled
 - Transit is poor; on-call service and fixed routes

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Meeting Record

MEETING DATE: August 20, 2015

PROJECT NAME: Downtown Helena Master Plan

SUBJECT: Parking Commission Stakeholder Meeting

BY: Jeremy Keene

ATTENDEES: Dave Hewitt, Director
Tim Nickerson, Field Coordinator
Mary, Administration
Jeremy Keene

- Parking Commission is 100% City, self-funded
- Other Studies – 2007 study of GNTC area
- Garages
 - Lease and pay by hour garages – no reserved spaces
 - Jackson Street
 - Won award for street façade
 - Lot is full
 - 15th is lease only (State Fund guaranteed 300-350 spaces); essentially acts like a private lot
 - 6th is fully leased – actually oversold
 - Getchell
 - ~60% full
 - GNTC has contract for theater for 4-hour free parking
 - Set fee increases every 10 years
 - Doesn't cover 100% of fees
- On-street Permit Program
 - Mirror hangers
 - Priced by proximity
 - Group discounts/annual discounts

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- City has relaxed zoning parking requirements for businesses with close proximity to parking structures on a case-by-case basis
- Issues/Concerns
 - Last Chance: 300-500 blocks are posted 1-hour free
 - \$25 fine
 - Prevent “rollers” – employee parking
 - Employees versus shoppers – everybody wants to park right in front
 - 2-hour parking to 1-hour created more turnover, reduced rollers, but now customers are pressured to hurry
 - Metered parking is priced higher as you get closer in
 - Ample parking, just not right outside the front door
 - Late 70’s urban renewal established free parking in core; meters are on external streets
 - Requested City Engineering to look at additional angle parking on Cruse
 - Parking confusion
 - Different time limits
 - Recent sign additions
 - Management is effectively enforced
 - Office uses create more rollers
 - Neighborhood parking
 - Residential areas have yearly permits (\$20/yr)
 - Some residential districts recently went away, as residents were not participating in buying permits
 - Shared Parking
 - Misperception of walking distance from parking
 - Parking map – informational
 - Directions to get to walking mall; wayfinding signs
 - Pay-to-Park App – coming soon
 - Maps
 - Retailers can pay for customers
 - Real time parking
 - Credit card payment is expensive because of security requirements
 - Surface lots are not gated
 - Customers have to find kiosk
 - Queuing
 - Grades
 - “Goldie Coin Program” - \$10 roll for \$8; Downtown members for \$6
 - Pre-printed vouchers – 10% off

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Meeting Record

MEETING DATE: August 25, 2015

PROJECT NAME: Downtown Helena Master Plan

SUBJECT: Stakeholder Meeting – Aizada Imports

BY: Jeremy Keene

ATTENDEES: Paula Halverson
Jeremy Keene

- Aizada Imports: 406-855-1444
- 70-80% of customers are visitors from outside of town
 - Much more dependent on tourism than envisioned
 - Most tourists like the walking mall and Downtown
 - Tour train comes down mall, but doesn't stop; many people come back after the tour
- Marketing
 - A good thing here (Downtown), but it's not being marketed or promoted like it should be
 - Downtown needs a brand/image
 - Promote Helena
 - Downtown Helena, Inc. is understaffed/underfunded (Hailey & Tracy)
 - Birds & Beasleys – Sandy Shull
 - Base Camp – Tim Lynch
 - Shalon Hastings – needs to reach out to other businesses as SC rep
 - Better leadership/communication among businesses
- Location Factors
 - Space was affordable – Carroll owns building
 - Has parking, basement
 - Also considered GNTC
 - Still too many empty businesses
- Other retail needs:

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- Cheap rent
 - More communication/collaboration w/Carroll
- Project Management – property managers, GNTC, others
- Other issues:
 - Safety/security issues are minimal
 - Feel very safe Downtown
 - No problems w/crime, vandalism, shoplifting
 - Parking is not a major issue
 - Internet competition
 - Tourist info – no map or guide
 - First Friday, Christmas events
 - Big Dipper, Hawthorne, Taco del Sol – have extended hours of mall
 - Bicycles on walking mall; Segway tours not allowed
 - Mall activity – food carts, music, arts
- Neighborhood schools – McKinley School in Billings as similar issues with central school
- Who does promotion of tourism?
 - Helena Tourism Alliance
 - Resort Tax
 - Bed Tax

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Meeting Record

MEETING DATE: August 25, 2015

PROJECT NAME: Downtown Helena Master Plan

SUBJECT: Stakeholder Meeting – Treasure State Internet

BY: Jeremy Keene

ATTENDEES: Eric
Matt
Jeremy Keene

- Treasure State Internet: 406-204-4777; sales@TreasureStateInternet.com
- Building a new “last mile” fiber network that will be capable of 500 MBPS to 1 GBPS speeds
- Just received funding for first 100 customers
 - Focusing on SoFi company located near MF Junction on Montana
 - Eventually will extend to downtown
- Other providers:
 - Charter (60 MBPS cable)
 - CenturyLink (10 MBPS DSL)
 - 3 Rivers Com (?? Speed Fiber)
- High speed internet is not readily available
 - Old US West fiber exists but is not connected or in the right locations, nor is old technology likely to be useful
 - Federal Reserve has dedicated line thru Zuma
- City was difficult to work with for permitting fiber build
 - Company had to register as a “telegraph” service to qualify as a utility under city ordinances
 - Company will locate office outside City limits due to building permit difficulties

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Meeting Record

MEETING DATE: September 17, 2015

PROJECT NAME: Downtown Helena Master Plan

SUBJECT: Stakeholder Meeting – Helena Public Schools

BY: Jeremy Keene

ATTENDEES: Kent Kultgen, Superintendent
Jeremy Keene

- School Bond Issue Failed
 - Helped understanding that something needs to be done
 - Retooling for new bond issue next year
 - Build community support through better process
 - Hired survey firm
 - Listening sessions
 - Confusion over what bond would be used for – District needs to do a better job of explaining
 - Working together w/other groups & agencies – everyone on the same page
 - Chamber supported Bond
 - BID did not support Bond
- Central School/Downtown Schools
 - Bond included complete renovation/modernization to keep Central School
 - Why was there confusion that Central could be closed?
 - Demographics
 - Have been done by Cropper – Kent to provide
 - Many kids live in Valley and will need new schools there
 - Downtown demographic tends to have less children
- How to bring people together
 - Facilitated discussion groups
 - Process before decisions
- Properties

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- Alternative School
 - Good location for students
 - Site/facility is small
 - Likely school district will eventually sell property
 - Other similar programs:
 - Access to Success Program (Helena College)
 - PAL
- Bryant School
 - Declining enrollment
 - Considered for closure, but not currently on the block
- Central School
 - Current plan is to keep school open, but needs significant investment
- Coordination between DHMP and school bond effort
 - Integrate Downtown info into school bond process
 - Downtown Plan will be complete prior to decisions about school bond
 - Downtown support could be valuable to school process/success
 - Cross promotion of meetings/events/info

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Meeting Record

MEETING DATE: 11-4-2015

PROJECT NAME: Downtown Helena Master Plan

SUBJECT: Meetings with Developers

BY: Nick Kaufman

What are the barriers to development in Downtown Helena?

- Parking – Perception that there isn't any available parking for new projects
- Historic building - The perception that conversion of historic buildings or the preservation of historic buildings impedes new development
- In Lewis and Clark County, there appear to be a large number of one acre tracts that provide the lots for entry-level housing. This type of lot typically does not have up-front sewer and water costs, curbs, or sidewalks and out competes urban lots in the marketplace.
- High vacancy rates in the downtown
 - Office 21% 2013 up 30%
- Difficulty in recruiting quality tenants
- City politics
- City commissioner uncertainty of zoning and subdivision codes
- There is the perception of a lack of predictability
- Can't force businesses to locate in downtown if it is not market driven

Are there specific codes and policies that make development in Downtown Helena difficult?

- Historic preservation
- Retrofit cost and functional use of historic buildings
- More consistent interpretation of policies

What would you change to make development easier?

- Process of working with planners and developers

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- Streamline the permitting process - provide a single source point for inquiries and permitting BID – Could plan an ombudsman role for permitting downtown projects
- Provide a tool to identify developable space in the downtown
- Lower code requirements
- Recognize the need for an affordable bus downtown
- Conduce a market feasibility assessment

What incentives would you recommend to encourage development?

- Link to economic site
- City help/parking/proactive
- Cost constraints of apartments on commercial
- Spirit of cooperation with city staff
- Provide a vision
- Rising cost of infrastructure and schools
- Control sprawl in the county
- Lack of city/private partnership
 - Provide financial assistance to level the playing field
- Aesthetics of community
 - Improve how the area looks and feels
 - Better signage control
 - Corridors to downtown need to be appealing
 - Costs to residents are lower in the county than costs in the city. Consider leveling the playing field
- Get people involved in making real change
- More people downtown
- Apartments need to be added
- Put apartments on top of buildings
- Parking – compare to Seattle
 - Need close parking
- Provide more parking with a revenue bond or GOB
- Put more residential above
 - Residential condos
 - Placer Hotel as an example
 - Atlas building
 - County residents want to live in the city, cost is a factor
- Historic aspect
 - Some buildings need to be torn down

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- Limited opportunities to build new buildings
- Functional retrofit has cost
- City biggest areas is parks
- Lease – option

Downtown Helena planning process moving forward



MAY 26, 2015 6:37 PM • [AL KNAUBER INDEPENDENT RECORD](#)

A trio of grants and \$8,000 in matching funds provided by the Helena Business Improvement District will pay for a master plan to be created for Helena's downtown.

The Missoula-based WGM Group, which has an office in Helena, was selected from the four teams of consultants considered, said Tracy Reich, the Business Improvement District's executive director.

A fifth team of consultants failed to submit a proposal by the deadline, she added.

Those who sought the contract had to base their work on the \$68,000 that's available to fund the plan's creation, according to the request for proposals.

The timetable in the request for proposals noted that Helena is the only mid-sized or larger Montana city that doesn't have a master plan. The plan is to be completed by December of this year and could be adopted by the city commission in March 2016.

In addition to \$10,000 the Montana Main Street Program provided to the downtown master plan funding, the city of Helena received \$25,000 from a state Department of Commerce Community Development Block Grant.

The Montana Business Assistance Connection applied to the Department of Commerce for a Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund for \$25,000. It will retain \$1,250 for its administrative costs.

Being the low bidder was not a high factor in the selection process, Reich said and explained that the approach proposed by the teams of consultants, their professionalism and experience were the top-rated considerations.

Also submitting bids for the project were teams assembled by Inside Edge Design, KLJ Engineering and SMA Architects, according to an announcement on the selection of the WGM Group.

WGM's approach was well-disciplined, which appealed to the selection committee that consisted of Sharon Haugen, the city's community development director; Brian Obert, executive director of the Montana Business Assistance Connection; Randy Riley, chairman of the Business Improvement District's board of directors and Reich.

"We had great, really qualified teams," Reich said.

Helping WGM to receive the contract was that it proposed to bring in a national retail marketing planner, Reich said.

Joining the WGM team will be Robert J. Gibbs of the Gibbs Planning Group, she said.

According to the [company's website](#), the Gibbs Planning Group has been providing expertise in commercial development and sustainable town planning for more than two decades.

"Since its inception, GPG has been active in developing innovative yet practical methods for applying modern trends in commercial development to more than 500 town centers and historic districts here and abroad," the website said of the company's qualifications.

Jeremy Keene, the principal engineer with the WGM Group, said the primary goal of the master plan will be to help identify what's important to the downtown.

While he sees WGM's role as providing questions and gathering information, "ultimately it will be Helena's plan, Helena's downtown plan."

The way that downtown areas fit into cities is changing, Keene said and explained that nationally more people are choosing to locate in their downtowns and to live there.

City officials and those with the Business Improvement District plan to meet with members of the WGM Group to refine the scope of work, Reich said.

Plans for the public participation portion of the planning process are anticipated to be announced in a week or two, she added.

While interviews are planned with focus groups, individuals and others, three public charrettes will be held that will shape the vision and strategies for the downtown.

One or two more charrettes could be held to address implementation of those plans, Reich said.

While Reich anticipates a clear vision for the downtown will emerge from the process, she said she expects there will be different ways and options to achieve that vision.

A master plan will help guide the downtown in the next five, 10 and 20 years, she said.

The plan will also help the Business Improvement District, whose boundaries include Helena's historic downtown, recruit and retain businesses there, Reich added.

"This plan will really highlight how important the downtown is to the city of Helena," Reich said.

Downtowns are changing and "this document and plan will help us shape that change rather than react to it all the time," she continued.

"This is really a long-term plan. Downtown revitalization is really a long-term plan," she said.



Process to plan for downtown's future begins on Saturday

JULY 16, 2015 6:00 AM • [AL KNAUBER INDEPENDENT RECORD](#)

Those who attend Saturday's Farmers Market or the Symphony Under the Stars that night will be the first to help shape plans for the future of Helena's downtown.

The Helena Business Improvement District in conjunction with the City of Helena is about to begin gathering comments and impressions of Helena as preparation shifts into action on creating a downtown master plan.

Booths will be set up at those events to ask people for their views of the downtown and how they use the downtown, said Tracy Reich, the Business Improvement District's executive director.

While a survey will be offered, people will also have the opportunity to comment, she added.

This will be among the preliminary information gathered in anticipation of more formal sessions where a consultant will ask people for more observations and thoughts about the downtown, she said.

A master plan for Helena's downtown will result from people's comments and not from what the consultant, Missoula-based WGM Group, which also has an office in Helena, thinks is needed, Reich said.

"All ideas are welcome," she added.

The public observations, in addition to comments collected online and from meetings with select groups, will help construct a foundation for a Sept. 2 charrette planned for the Best Western Premier Great Northern Hotel that will be held from 5:30-7 p.m.

Trends in comments are anticipated to come from the first charrette, Reich said, explaining these would help lead to draft strategies for the downtown that are anticipated to result after the second of what could be three charrettes.

More information on the master planning process is available on the Business Improvement District's website at <http://bit.ly/1gALo6O>.

The planning process has been said to last no more than 12 months and would tap existing data on the downtown as well as seek to fill in gap about what's known.

Reich has said that the master plan would look at what the downtown is today and what it might be in five to 20 years from now. That look into the future will come from hearing what those who live here have to say about their city.

While Reich anticipates a clear vision for the downtown will emerge from the process, she said she also expects there will be different ways and options to achieve that vision.



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While Reich anticipates a clear vision for the downtown will emerge from the process, she said she also expects there will be different ways and options to achieve that vision.

WGM Group was selected from four teams of consultants that sought to lead the master planning process.

Those who bid for the project had to submit proposals within the roughly \$68,000 that was available for the work, Reich said previously.

In addition to \$10,000 that the Montana Main Street Program provided toward the downtown master plan, the city of Helena received \$25,000 from a Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development.

The Montana Business Assistance Connection applied to the state Department of Commerce for a Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund for \$25,000. It will retain \$1,250 for its administrative costs.

Being the low bidder was not a high factor in the selection process, Reich said and explained that the approach proposed by the teams of consultants, their professionalism and experience were the top rated considerations.

The request for proposals noted that Helena is the only mid-sized or larger Montana city without a master plan.

Planning for future of downtown Helena resumes Tuesday



OCTOBER 18, 2015 2:30 PM • [AL KNAUBER](#)
INDEPENDENT RECORD

Helena's downtown means many things to many people, and on Tuesday those who care about it will have another opportunity to shape the master plan that will guide its future.

The second charrette in ongoing plans to create a master plan for Helena's downtown will be Tuesday from 5:30-7 p.m. at the Holiday Inn, 22 N. Last Chance Gulch.

The master plan is being assembled by the Helena Business Improvement District and the city of Helena at a cost of \$68,000.

"The community loves their downtown and there are a lot of people that really have a genuine interest in its future," said Tracy Reich, the Business Improvement District's executive director.

"We're building from what we have today, so we're not going to lose what we have but we're building from what we have now," she added.

Reich said the first charrette was attended by some 90 or so people, which was more than anticipated.

That attendance, she continued, demonstrated an interest in the downtown, as did the more than 700 responses that were received to an online survey on the downtown.

Among respondents, nearly 39 percent said they go downtown every day. Better than 83 percent said they were there during business hours and more than 62 percent said they were there in the evening.

While driving to the downtown was the primary mode of transportation for more than nine out of 10 people, the convenience of parking was faulted by better than 55 of the respondents while nearly 30 percent said it was either somewhat convenient or convenient.

"People are invested and engaged," Reich said of interest in the downtown. "They think we have a really great downtown. They just want to see it be vibrant and get better."

While every downtown has something to work with, Helena has significant history and

awesome architecture, Reich said.

“We have a unique, authentic experience. We need to get our voice heard more.”

Part of the second charrette is building on the first one and considering a draft vision statement that was created based on what people have already expressed.

Reich said she expects the draft will be revised during the upcoming charrette, although she declined to discuss the draft language.

“It’s a traditional vision statement that you would see in a business plan or for an organization, but it will be for Downtown Helena,” she said.

Robert Gibbs, a nationally known retail marketing consultant who is doing a portion of the market analysis of the plan, will give an overview of what he’s seen and some of his recommendations.

His presentation will be one of the key pieces of the second charrette that will see the plan continue to advance, Reich said, noting, “It’s a true public planning process.”

A third charrette is being planned for Dec. 8 where a draft master plan may be presented, although the unveiling could be delayed for a while if need be.

“If we need additional time to get everything right, I want to be able to do that versus getting it done on our time frame. I’m pushing quality over quickness,” Reich said.

“Downtown isn’t just about the property owners and the business owners that are in downtown. It is the community’s downtown. It’s the heart and economic driver of a community and we are the capital city as well. We should be very proud of our downtown,” she said.

“And I think putting in a few hours of time to help shape that vision and help shape that long-term plan for how we’re going to grow and change is something that people should be interested in doing.”

“It is everybody’s downtown and they should have a say and be able to have that say,” Reich added.

If you go ...

What: Second charrette of the downtown planning process

When: 5:30-7 p.m. Tuesday

Where: Holiday Inn, 22 N. Last Chance Gulch

Retail guru offers predictions, advice for Helena's downtown



OCTOBER 20, 2015 9:25 PM • [AL KNAUBER](#)
[INDEPENDENT RECORD](#)

Nationally acclaimed urban retail consultant Robert Gibbs told a standing room only audience Tuesday night that Helena is well poised for its downtown retail future.

However, he also cautioned the audience that exceeded the roughly 100 seats set up at the Holiday Inn Conference Center Downtown that there are issues that need to be addressed too.

Mike Dowling, principal of DSA Architects of Helena, who is also a past president of the

Helena Business Improvement District, was impressed by the attendance.

"I think people are just passionate about the downtown and its value to the community," he said.

The Business Improvement District and the city of Helena are working on a master plan for the downtown through an effort led by the WGM Group of Missoula, which also has an office in Helena.

The master plan could be ready for presentation to the city commission by year's end or early 2016, although Tracy Reich, executive director of the Business Improvement District, said she doesn't want to rush the process.

While a third charrette is anticipated on Dec. 8 where a draft master plan may be presented, the unveiling could be delayed for a while if need be.

"If we need additional time to get everything right, I want to be able to do that versus getting it done on our time frame. I'm pushing quality over quickness," Reich said previously.

Those in the audience had an opportunity to consider the issues defined for them by the previous charrette and Gibbs' presentation before working in small groups to formulate ideas.

The information presented by the groups will be used as a vision statement for the downtown if further refined, said Jeremy Keene, the principal engineer with the WGM Group.

After Gibbs' roughly 45-minute presentation that covered trends, timetables and how to plan for the downtown's evolution in the coming decade or so, Gibbs said the top priority problem facing Helena was its graffiti.

"The very first thing would be to clean up the graffiti you have. It's not bad, but you have a couple of graffiti spots; and I would clean those up right away and fix your broken sidewalks," he said.

"The second thing is look at your parking policy," he continued and noted that statistically there are enough parking spaces although he faulted how they're managed.

"It costs the same amount of money to use the parking garage as it does to park at a prime location," Gibbs said. "In fact, your prime locations are free. It should be the other way around. The prime locations should cost more than the parking garage because it's so hard to use the parking garage. It's so inconvenient."

Graffiti, he explained, says that a downtown is neglected and not loved.

"It lowers the expectations," he said of shoppers who, he added, don't see graffiti in shopping centers, their neighborhoods or homes.

"So you should be up to the standards that they're used to spending their time in.

"It creates a perception (and this includes sidewalks, he noted) that it's not cared for, that retailers offer lower quality goods and services ... that shoppers aren't getting good value merchandise, that they're buying out-dated merchandise. So it's a very subtle message. That's why the shopping centers are so well taken care of. That's why Jimmy John's, Subway washes their all-glass surfaces five times a day. ... Shiny clean is important."

Helena's growth in the next five to 10 years will see millennials, people born between the early 1980s and early 2000, but more so will be other groups.

"In your case really there will be a tidal wave of empty nesters and baby boomers coming downtown. I think they're going to want to live downtown. I think they're going to be bored of living in the suburbs in their three- and four-bedrooms homes and their children have moved out and they're going to want to live in a walkable community. We see that all over the place."

Because the strong market demand, he predicted the downtown retail market would see changes in five to 10 years, possibly 15 years.

Changing downtown's retail to fit the new demand would mean a lease-by-lease shift as one property after another changed, he said.

His prediction for Helena's downtown of the future would be one with more restaurants, hopefully a grocery store and more retailers selling apparel and home furnishings. Perhaps a pharmacy too would be among the new retail environment.

"You have a lot of strong retailers now, and I think you'll have even stronger ones," he said.

Another of the challenges facing Helena Gibbs noted is business recruitment. Promoting the city's demographics -- he noted the average household income was \$80,000 and a fourth of residents have a college bachelor's degree -- would aid in attracting new business.

Helena's strong employment and tourism spending that last year countywide amounted to \$117 million are additional points in the city's favor, Gibbs said.

Helena could recruit from towns as far as 80 miles away to consider opening a second or third store here, he added.

Accompanying his view of migration from suburbs and their larger homes to the city's center was a decline in the values of those outlying properties.

"It's projected by 2030 that the large suburban lot home will decrease in value by 35 percent," Gibbs said. "That's the trend. There will be a surplus of about 40 million too many homes in the country.

"The millennials don't want to live in the large lot houses. Last year half the babies were born to single mothers in this country and they're not moving into four-bedroom homes."

Final downtown Helena planning meeting slated for Tuesday



JANUARY 24, 2016 12:00 PM • [AL KNAUBER](#)
[INDEPENDENT RECORD](#)

A consultant's look at Helena's downtown sees the need for dozens of additional stores and restaurants, as part of an ongoing planning process by the Helena Business Improvement District and city of Helena.

And to that end, the final of three charrettes to create a master plan for Helena's downtown will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 26, at the Holiday Inn Downtown from 5:30–8 p.m.

The meeting will feature a presentation by consultants and then seek comments from the audience that will help shape the master plan.

Based on these comments, a draft version of the master plan will be assembled, said Tracy Reich, executive director of the Business Improvement District.

While several strategies have already been identified for the downtown's future, each contains options for implementation, she said.

"This is a chance for the public to make sure the consultants got everything right," and that everything the public wants to see is contained in the master plan, Reich added.

A final draft of the master plan is projected to be ready for presentation to the Business Improvement District board in February, but not likely for the board's meeting earlier in the month.

Once the Business Improvement District approves the document, it will go for planning board review as an amendment to the growth policy that guides development in the city and Lewis and Clark County, Reich said.

If approved as an amendment to the growth policy, she added, it would go to the city commission for approval.

The Business Improvement District will be the leading force to push for the master plan's use, Reich said, and explained "We are going to be the champions to make sure it's implemented."

Reich sees partnerships with city agencies and others as a way to help ensure the master plan doesn't become another document left to sit on a shelf and gather dust.

The first two downtown master plan charrettes proved popular, as the second one in mid-October overfilled the roughly 100 seats.

"I think people are just passionate about the downtown and its value to the community," Mike Dowling, principal of DSA Architects of Helena and a past president of the Business Improvement District, said as the second charrette was held.

Nationally acclaimed urban retail consultant [Robert Gibbs told the standing-room-only audience](#) in October that Helena is well poised for its downtown retail future.

According to Gibbs' retail market study of Helena, the downtown has existing demand for up to 142,900 square feet of new retail development that would produce up to \$41.4 million in sales.

By the year 2020, his analysis noted, that will grow to up to \$46 million in gross sales.

"This new retail demand could be absorbed by existing businesses and/or with the opening of 45 to 60 new stores and restaurants," the report stated.

The boundary of the primary shopping area for the city would equate to a 15-square-mile radius around Helena and represent a 30-minute drive time. The total trade area for Helena extends to just north of Great Falls, Toston, Butte and Lincoln.

An ongoing growth policy update for the Helena Valley area being undertaken by Lewis and Clark County uses a conservative projection, based on two different outlooks, to anticipate 10,000 new residents will move into the Helena Valley in the next 20 years, resulting in 4,000 new residences.

Gibbs' projection for an increase of 500 homes by the year 2020 pushes the total within the primary trade area to 14,000.

According to a news release from the Business Improvement District, Gibbs believes that, in the near future, the quality of downtown will attract people and businesses and further increase demand for goods and services.

"In your case, really, there will be a tidal wave of empty-nesters and baby boomers coming downtown. I think they're going to want to live downtown. I think they're going to be bored of living in the suburbs in their three- and four-bedrooms homes and their children have moved out and they're going to want to live in a walkable community," he said.

If you go ...

What: The last of three charrettes on downtown Helena planning

When: Tuesday, Jan. 26, 5:30-8 p.m.

Where: Holiday Inn Downtown

TWO-WAY TRAFFIC ON THE GULCH?

Designing downtown: Master plan for the heart of Helena nearing completion



JANUARY 28, 2016 6:00 PM • [AL KNAUBER](#)
[INDEPENDENT RECORD](#)

Helena's downtown would see dramatic, although perhaps slow, changes through the master plan that's being prepared.

The downtown's most infamous intersection, known locally as mini malfunction junction, could receive a makeover, and the one-way portion of Last Chance Gulch would return to two-way traffic if these ideas are included in the draft version of the document that's anticipated to be ready later in February.

Allowing bicycles on the walking mall is another change that was suggested during Tuesday night's third and final downtown master plan charrette.

Helena's Business Improvement District and the city of Helena have been holding public meetings that looked at issues and ideas and then visions and opportunities.

The Tuesday night session asked people what among the array of proposals was most supported and least favored. Recommendations included those for parking and regulatory changes aimed at helping the master plan's vision for the downtown to become a reality.

Jeremy Keene, the principal engineer with the WGM Group, said the consultants were poised to recommend Last Chance Gulch, the main street through the city's downtown, be returned to two-way traffic. Currently, a portion of the street as it enters the city's historic downtown accommodates only one-way traffic.

Theirs isn't the first call for two-way traffic on Last Chance Gulch that was evaluated during an Environmental Protection Agency project, Greening of America's Capitals. Completed in 2013, it suggested a pilot project on the street from Neill to Sixth avenues.

The community vision was assembled from more than 800 survey responses and comments at two previous charrettes.

Reshaping the five-point intersection where the one-way traffic on Last Chance Gulch begins was also suggested as an outcome of the Greening of America's Capitals -- a project estimated at between \$4 million and \$5 million.

That same intersection was also proposed for modification by the downtown master

planning process that envisioned closing off the intersection to Helena Avenue traffic while continuing to allow traffic passing through the intersection to turn onto Helena Avenue.

“This is really the key to getting two-way traffic back on the gulch,” Keene said.

Their view of the downtown sees three distinct areas.

Housing, a public market, nonmotorized transportation and a historic walking tour are envisioned for the Fire Tower District, which spans along Cruse Avenue from Sixth Avenue to the Cruse Avenue intersection with Park Avenue.

In the Last Chance Retail District, which would embrace the historic downtown, the five-point intersection would be reshaped, and new housing and space for start-up businesses would be included.

The third district is roughly from Neill Avenue to Lyndale and would see changes including the reconstruction of Front Street, reconfiguring in traffic and gateways to the downtown.

These gateways, said Mike Dowling of Dowling Studio Architects, would give people a sense of having arrived in the downtown.

Tree-lined streets, bike lanes and street lighting would be included.

Extending curbing mid-street to reduce the distance people have to walk to cross the street would also be included, he said.

Linking the three districts together is a key point in the master plan, Dowling added.

Another change consultants offered was to see empty spaces developed to have continuous storefronts to encourage walking.

Adding way-finder tourist information points was recommended, and the importance of having retail shops on the first floor of buildings was noted.

Residential space and offices were recommended for a building’s upper floors.

Based on a study of Helena’s downtown by nationally acclaimed urban retail consultant Robert Gibbs, each parking space is worth \$150,000 annually in sales, Keene said before saying each of the downtown parking spaces needs to be used by 20 vehicles per day.

“Our recommendation is all of your on-street parking should be metered,” he said but added that free 20-minute parking would be included for quick stops.

Having meters will allow the city to price the parking to create the turnover that it wants to see with these spaces, he explained.

Allowing this parking to be paid for with credit cards and cellphones was also proposed, and Keene noted that cellphones would allow payment for additional time to be added without returning to the meter.

Gibbs said in October during his presentation that parking in front of stores should be the city’s most expensive parking.

“It costs the same amount of money to use the parking garage as it does to park at a prime location,” Gibbs said at that time. “In fact, your prime locations are free. It should be the other way around. The prime locations should cost more than the parking garage because it’s so hard to use the parking garage. It’s so inconvenient.”

The consultants suggested having the first hour or two of parking in city garages at no charge.

New housing in the Fire Tower and Last Chance Gulch districts was proposed.

During the second charrette, Gibbs noted that aging baby boomers and those who no longer have children living at home will be leaving their sprawling suburban homes to live downtown where they can walk to obtain goods and services.

Helena’s growth in the next five to 10 years will involve millennials, people born between the early 1980s and early 2000s, moving downtown, but more people from other groups will do more of that, Gibbs had predicted.

Along with housing envisioned along Cruse Avenue was a market of between 20,000 and 30,000 square feet that could be a single store or space for 15 to 20 tenants who have booths.

Helena could have one of the best downtowns in not just the state but the region, said Andrew Hagemeyer, a planner with Land Solutions.

The city’s regulations for development play a significant role in the master plan’s vision for the city, he said and noted that regulatory constraints can prevent the master plan from achieving its guiding principles.

The amount of parking required for a project was noted, and Hagemeyer said developers must either have ample property or negotiate a project’s fate with city officials.

Topping the list of five principles is to have the downtown a place where walking to shops and the library, for example, is convenient.

Gibbs noted the importance of having a downtown with goods and services within a walkable distance and said Helena ranks high for walkability, 90 out of a top score of 100, which would make it appealing to millennials, large corporations and empty-nesters, among others.

“Given your high demographics, given your historic character, that you’re a state capital, all the things that you have going for you, I’m very confident that you have the potential to attract not only really top retailers and restaurants, but you have the opportunity to attract major employment centers and I think housing, although there may be a gap between the cost of building housing and the market rate. But I think you have an opportunity to be a very sustainable downtown,” Gibbs had said.

While comments from Tuesday night’s meeting will help shape the draft master plan that’s presented to the Business Improvement District, once approved by the organization’s board it will be sent to the planning board for review as an amendment to the growth policy that guides city and county development.

If approved as an amendment for that document, she added, it would go to the city

commission for approval.

Erica Laferriere

From: Tracy Reich <treich@helenabid.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2015 10:05 AM
To: Jeremy Keene
Cc: Cindy Kuns; 'Mike Dowling'; 'Andrew Hagemeyer'; Nick Kaufman; Kate Dinsmore
Subject: RE: Hometown

The Upside of Downtown is the Great Northern Town Center's tag line for marketing. They also have banners with that on it which will be replaced with the new banner designs we just installed. I don't think they realize that people interpret it differently than they do - for GNTC, its about geographic location not a reflection of quality. I have mentioned this once before but will mention it again in our marketing committee meeting.

I think Ron's other comment is interesting - I don't quite get it but I'm rather new to the community. I guess I would say the master plan will address the role of downtown in the greater community and how it integrates with the rest of the community and vice versa.

Tracy

Tracy L. Reich
Executive Director
Helena Business Improvement District

treich@helenabid.com

225 Cruse Avenue, Suite B

****Summer Office Hours****

Helena, MT 59601

Mon-Thurs 8 am – 5 pm; Fri 8 am – 3 pm

(PH) 406.447.1535

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www.downtownhelena.com

-----Original Message-----

From: Jeremy Keene [<mailto:JKeene@wgmgroupp.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2015 9:56 AM

To: Tracy L. Reich (treich@helenabid.com)

Cc: Cindy Kuns; 'Mike Dowling'; 'Andrew Hagemeyer'; Nick Kaufman; Kate Dinsmore

Subject: FW: Hometown

FYI, see Ron's comment below. Can someone fill me in on Upside of Downtown?

Is this an organization or campaign?

Cindy, please add Ron to our stakeholder mailing list.

Thanks,

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
WGM Group, Inc

-----Original Message-----

From: rsmerc@mt.net [<mailto:rsmerc@mt.net>]

Sent: Monday, July 20, 2015 8:12 PM

To: Jeremy Keene

Subject: Re: Hometown

We meet on the 6th floor of the Montana Club at 7am. The meeting is covered by Helena Civic TV and is rebroadcast 2 or three times so it gets pretty good coverage. We typically have about 75 people in attendance representing a lot of businesses as well as a good selection of Helena community leaders.

The only AV item we have is a screen so you would have to bring a computer/projector.

The Great Northern sent me a link to the survey and suggested passing it along - I copied it to the HTH message that will go out tomorrow unless that is something you would prefer to wait on until you present.

Two things that bother me:) What the heck is the Upside of Downtown - does not seem friendly to the rest of the Downtown. Also my beef has always been the narrow vision of downtown related to the rest of the Helena business area. Seems to me they cut themselves off from the rest of the city without thinking how many people from "the outside" use one or more of the restaurants, shops, etc. Downtown is very cool but many people have concerns related to how they separate themselves from the greater city of Helena and the surrounding county areas.

Ron Mercer

Erica Laferriere

From: Jeremy Keene
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2015 4:48 PM
To: delee@mt.gov
Cc: Cindy Kuns; Loran Frazier
Subject: FW: Front Street project
Attachments: PI Handout.pdf

Hi Dennis,

The date for the public meeting is September 2nd, 5:30 - 7:00 pm, at the Best Western Great Northern Hotel. This will be the first meeting for the Downtown Master Plan, which will include a discussion of Front Street. See attached for more information.

Thanks,

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
WGM Group, Inc

From: Loran Frazier
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2015 3:08 PM
To: Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmgroup.com>
Subject: FW: Front Street project

From: Lee, Dennis [<mailto:delee@mt.gov>]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2015 1:49 PM
To: Loran Frazier
Subject: RE: Front Street project

Hi Loran, just wondering if you have a date set as yet for the meeting in September? We will definitely have representation at the meeting from Montana State Fund. It has been brought up as a concern whether we would lose a portion of the corner curb/landscape area on the corner of 14th and Front outside our main entrance. It is probably way too early to know what that may look like but just wanted to register the concern. Also, please add Mark Barry, VP of Corporate Support, to your distribution list for this project at: mbarry@mt.gov.

Thanks,
Dennis

From: Loran Frazier [<mailto:lfrazier@wgmgroup.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, July 08, 2015 11:25 AM
To: Lee, Dennis
Subject: RE: Front Street project

Thanks Dennis, so far I have received around 8-10 written comments about the project. It is a little early to summarize all the comments, ut so far no one has supported the creek option, most would prefer the two-way bike option, a couple would like expanded parking, and one commenter did not support any type of bike lane.

We will be holding a public meeting in September, the exact date will be determined.

Loran Frazier, P.E.
Transportation Manager



2905 N Montana Ave, Suite 101
Helena • MT • 59601
E-mail: Lfrazier@wgmggroup.com
406-728-4611 x 111 • FAX: 406-728-2476

<http://www.wgmggroup.com>

From: Lee, Dennis [<mailto:delee@mt.gov>]
Sent: Monday, July 06, 2015 3:22 PM
To: Loran Frazier
Subject: RE: Front Street project

Loran, just checking in with you to check on the latest status update with the project...

Thanks,
Dennis

From: Loran Frazier [<mailto:lfrazier@wgmggroup.com>]
Sent: Friday, June 05, 2015 2:25 PM
To: Lee, Dennis
Subject: RE: Front Street project

Thanks Dennis,

We were looking at 2 to 3 weeks to get comments back. There will be some public meeting opportunities coming up in late summer also. Our goal is to have a decision approved by the City by December.

The project will upgrade the water and storm sewer through Front Street, this work will tear up a good portion of the street. So we are asking what you all would like the street to look like when we re-build it after the utility work.

As for type of feedback, we have shown four options for the street configuration and were wondering which one you all would prefer. Or maybe one we haven't drawn up yet.

Loran Frazier, P.E.
Transportation Manager



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E-mail: Lfrazier@wgmggroup.com
406-728-4611 x 111 • FAX: 406-728-2476

From: Lee, Dennis [<mailto:delee@mt.gov>]
Sent: Friday, June 05, 2015 1:51 PM
To: Loran Frazier
Subject: Front Street project

Hi Loran, I just received a drawing of several proposals for the Front Street upgrade project and just wanted to know what your expectations are for Montana State Fund as far as type of feedback, time frame expected, etc. Also, of the four options shown, which direction would be north or south?

Thanks,
Dennis Lee
Support Services Team Leader
Montana State Fund

Erica Laferriere

From: Jeremy Keene
Sent: Friday, August 21, 2015 12:00 PM
To: Mike Dowling
Cc: Paul Cartwright; Nick Kaufman; Kate Dinsmore; EMAIL FILE BASKET; Tracy L. Reich
Subject: Re: some comments on yesterday's meeting
Attachments: image003.jpg

Great comments, Paul. Thank you.

150326

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 21, 2015, at 11:53 AM, Mike Dowling <mdowling@dsa-mt.com> wrote:

Thanks for your thoughts Paul. I'm sure we'll have a chance to vet them out.

<image003.jpg> DSArchitects
Michael W. Dowling, AIA, NCARB
55 West 14th Street, Suite 103
Helena, MT 59601
mdowling@dsa-mt.com
406 457-5470
406 495-0063 fax

From: Paul Cartwright [<mailto:cartwright@montana.com>]
Sent: Friday, August 21, 2015 11:40 AM
To: Mike Dowling; Jeremy Keene
Subject: some comments on yesterday's meeting

I know these processes can generate more emails than anybody is interested in, but I thought I should at least give you guys some reactions to yesterday's discussion. They are in no particular order.

Paul

I'm a little hesitant to embrace the claim that people move for quality of life not wages. (This is even without trying to explain why people move to Texas.) The implication often is that these are knowledge workers who can work anywhere. To test if this were true in Helena, I'd want to see if the percentage of people with college education has changed significantly over the past decade or two. Of course, it's also possible that too many people, especially younger ones, don't have much career choice wherever they are, so you might as well be struggling to get by someplace where the public amenities are better. I mean, a job at Wal-Mart or Starbucks or, to not pick just on them, almost any other national chain, is mostly not the way to fame and fortune wherever you live, so better you can at least mountain bike after work. That said, one aspect that would make the knowledge worker group worth courting, no matter how many actually are moving to Helena, is if they serve as a catalyst, demanding and patronizing services that make a

town more lively and more livable, even if most other inhabitants only use those services occasionally.

I think we should treat the assertion that most people would miss the downtown more than the Custer-N. Montana retail boxes as a hypothesis. Maybe a healthy downtown is key to the overall success of any urban area, both in terms of economics and quality of life, but there's any number of people who live their lives as if they don't agree. With some it could be a matter of not knowing how the downtown supports the urban area. For others, the "benefits" we're supposing may not be relevant to their lives or even desired.

Downtown, because of local ownership, pedestrian scale, and a mix of uses beyond retail, feels like more of a community to me than, say, the Custer-N. Montana retail complex. But downtowns are not the only way to get that sense of community, or at least a semblance of it. For instance, on those times I've been to Costco, I've been struck by how many of the other customers are greeting and even chatting with friends they run into. Maybe that's enough to satisfy their need for community and public space.

I wonder if some number of local people who support downtown do so for reasons similar to why tourists visit it: it's exotic and fun to experience, even though it's not the way you want to lead your regular life. To take one example, I'm impressed at the number of people who use Farmers Market, but where do they do their real shopping? (A somewhat similar example is the number of people who come in from the Valley at Halloween to Trick or Treat in our old neighborhood because it's more fun to walk around our neighborhood than theirs. More doable, too.)

While there is any number of things we could do to help downtown if we could just wave a wand, we probably should keep to a narrower focus. The process should concentrate on things that we can do, even though that may take laying out a larger vision to give coherence to that list. I see three categories:

1. Things that can be accomplished with a) a plausible amount of public money (most likely from government and/or b) a change in government policy or regs (most likely of the city).
2. Things that can be done through the direction or the coordination of the BID or Downtown Helena.
3. Things that individual property owners must do on their own but will do, or do better, if the report shows how their individual effort can link with others to create a sum larger than its parts.

Erica Laferriere

From: Jeremy Keene
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2015 5:43 PM
To: Cindy Kuns
Cc: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Downtown Living

Helena DMP Comments

050603

From: Tracy Reich [<mailto:treich@helenabid.com>]
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2015 8:19 AM
To: Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmgroup.com>
Cc: 'Andrew Hagemeyer' <landsolutions2@blackfoot.net>; Mike Dowling <mdowling@dsa-mt.com>
Subject: FW: Downtown Living

Hi Jeremy, Andrew and Mike:

Some perceptions from downtown residents that will not be able to attend the first charrette. They have invested significantly in their condo – it could be featured on HGTV it is so well done, contemporary, and utilizes all the space very well. I digress – wanted to pass along their thoughts on downtown residential to be included in the public input.

Tracy

Tracy L. Reich
Executive Director
Helena Business Improvement District
treich@helenabid.com
225 Cruse Avenue, Suite B
Helena, MT 59601
(PH) 406.447.1535
(Fax) 406.447.1533

****Summer Office Hours****
Mon-Thurs 8 am – 5 pm; Fri 8 am – 3 pm



www.downtownhelena.com

From: Pamela Shubert [<mailto:ps918@icloud.com>]
Sent: Saturday, August 22, 2015 3:41 PM
To: treich@helenabid.com
Cc: Lee Shubert <lee@sciarrinolaw.com>
Subject: Downtown Living

Tracy ~

We were glad you were able to visit us in our Placer condo recently. It was nice to see you again and to hear that you were interested in a first-hand look at downtown living in The Placer.

We love living in the “heart of Helena” and are strong supporters of improving the downtown district by offering more housing options to people who will help sustain the theaters, restaurants, and art galleries we enjoy, as well as the many retailers in and around the Gulch.

As we mentioned during your visit, it took us over a year to find a condo that might be suitable for active older residents willing to make a substantial investment in a nice place to live. We didn’t want to take on a huge renovation project, but really felt we had no choice if we wanted to live downtown!

Although we will not be here for the first charrette, we hope others will speak to the need for housing that attracts young professionals and older people who have the means to support the nearby amenities. If subsidized housing and low-income rentals are concentrated in the downtown area, with newer homes developed out in the valley, it’s logical that new amenities will be located outside the central area to provide for the needs of those new homeowners, and downtown Helena will eventually die.

Retailers complain about parking and access to their storefronts because they depend on people driving into town to shop. If more people lived within walking distance, some of these problems would be resolved.

One additional note: We have noticed an increase of skateboarders and of graffiti in the downtown area. Both are signs of disregard for others, and both lead to the perception that downtown is a little unsafe...maybe not a great place to live. Once downtown gets that perception, all the master plans you can muster will not make a difference. You have the opportunity to keep downtown clean and safe while working on plans to move forward. It’s worth the effort.

Thanks ~

Pam and Lee Shubert

Erica Laferriere

From: Jeremy Keene
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2015 8:54 AM
To: Cindy Kuns
Cc: Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: Fwd: Hometown

See Downtown Master Plan comments below
150326

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: <rsmerc@mt.net>
Date: August 25, 2015 at 9:49:49 PM MDT
To: Ron Mercer <rsmerc@mt.net>
Subject: Fw: Hometown

Kent Kultgen, Superintendent of Schools, will be the guest speaker this week. I see Terry Beaver is the only male on the school board these days - good to see the ladies getting involved in the school leadership as it sure is time to get something done with facility improvements. Tough to see how quickly Billings is moving forward with facility development after recently passing a bond when we sit here still apparently somewhat divided as a community on what needs to be done.

09/03- Bryan Mussard from Dillon. He is certified Angus bull breeder; makes a vodka in Dillon called Gorgeous, and just started a cigar company. Bryan is the vice president of Montana Stockgrowers and will be introduced by Joe Dooling.

09/10- RMDC 50th Anniversary

09/17- Jacob Kuntz, Ex. Director, Helena Area Habitat for Humanity

09/24- Tom Evans, President of Carroll College, will also present (first part of meeting).

10/01- Melinda Reed, Director of The Friendship Center, along with Detective Adam Shanks - Helena Police Department.

10/08- Gina West- Humane Society

10/15- City Commission Forum

10/22- Leslie Torgerson, Helena Housing Authority

10/29- Sheriff Dutton and County Commission - Jail bond.

11/05- Shoots Veis - Montana Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers recently completed an assessment of infrastructure in Montana

11/12- Bruce Day, Executive Director Helena Food Share

The clip I send out last week of a drone hitting a jet wingtip was a fake - sorry about that.

Interesting article- <http://www.kxlh.com/story/29827326/st-peters-hospital-paid-ex-ceo-solheim-12m#.VdPqpBS7fV0.mailto>

The sight of a jumbo jet (DC-10) flying very close to mountain tops dropping fire retardant is impressive-
https://m.youtube.com/watch?t=18&feature=youtu.be&v=7QJTXl_5BE

Chuck Butler has taken over the marketing for brick sales for the Old Glory Landmark Committee. Here is a note from Chuck- Commemorative Bricks are available for Old Glory Landmark in Centennial Park. Check out: oldglorylandmark.weebky.com and help keep Helena's community Big Flag Flying! (you will have to copy the link to your browser).

WGM consultants would like to invite you to participate in the first charrette for the Downtown Helena Master Plan process. The meeting is next Wednesday, September 2nd at the Best Western Premier Great Northern Hotel. I think Downtown is fine - hard to feel like the Uptown of Downtown is really connected to the Downtown of Downtown and a good suggestion last week at HTH by Dennis Taylor (former city manager in Helena, Billings and think it was Eugene, Oregon) was to develop a so to speak yellow brick road to better connect them. Both ends have great restaurants, shops, offices, etc. and the walking mall (one of four or five left in the country according to the consultant) is neat - would be nice to get the water running along the sidewalks as that was a nice feature). Very hard to imagine a large retailer would chose a downtown site due to limited front of store parking, availability of land, etc. but who knows. I would think that reviewing a number of previous Downtown planning reports that ranged from better signing, more residential development above existing store-fronts (that is easier to dream about that to do as it will be expensive to redo some of the buildings - too many of the existing apartments have been put into Section 8 housing in my opinion), and many other ideas that have been outlined in several of these studies. I hate the marks the parking folks put on my tires!!! I doubt I could get away with chalking up their office building and tires are important to me and many others. Anyway, look at some of the excellent apartment/living quarters that have already been completed and do more of that, but it will always be a struggle to keep the storefronts full, fix parking so everyone is happy with it (most shoppers do not want to park in a parking garage despite that been a good option) but I feel it is better to work to be part of the full town rather than to think only of the downtown district as that has always been an issue. Well I am retired so it is up to someone else to help figure it out - attend the September 2nd workshop if you want to be part of the planning process. I grew up in Helena when downtown was the place to be - it was a lot of fun!!!

Sounds like complete streets requirements are going to be very spendy - maybe some portions of that program will have to be reconsidered.

The following information is related to expanded requirements that are triggered by street overlays-

Matt Elsaesser sent this blog note related to the recent discussion of requirement to upgrade sidewalks, curbs, ADA access, etc. when a city street is overlaid. There has been recent coverage of ADA requirements being triggered with street resurfacing by the city street department. While the commission began budgeting for the required ADA curbs several years ago, the discussion highlights the lack of curbs, gutters, trees, and sidewalks on many city streets in need of resurfacing. The cost of this additional infrastructure to either the public or individual homeowners will be substantial, especially in neighborhoods largely built without boulevard sidewalks. Such construction will sometimes require the removal of existing landscaping and trees, conflict with residents driveways, and require retaining walls in some areas. Given limited resources in the community, the city should be looking at alternatives, especially where excess right-of-way exists. In the case of Cruse between State and Park, the city could better utilize the excess pavement and park maintained median set aside for the South Helena Bypass. One of the lanes could be re-purposed as an alternative to sidewalks and allow the city to formally establish a safe, accessible park as part of a South Helena Gateway project.

For streets such as Broadway and Winnie, high traffic roads through residential areas, alternatives should be considered. Allowing curbside sidewalks and exploring merging a limited parking lane with an alternative boulevard would be a more cost effective way to meet city code. It would provide community infrastructure and safety benefits without tearing out existing landscaping and conflicting with driveways. To the extent that the city is unlikely to ever need wider roads in some residential neighborhoods, reducing the public right of way would provide residents with more land they could develop while reducing city costs.

A conceptual design provided by Helena's Non-motorized Transportation Engineer for the South Helena Gateway Project, an illustration of alternative boulevards for residential streets, and more details are provided in the following post:

www.MatthewElsaesser.com/2015/08/south-helena-gateway-project-new-trail.html

See you Thursday.

Erica Laferriere

From: Jeremy Keene
Sent: Thursday, September 03, 2015 11:46 AM
To: Paul Cartwright; Mike Dowling
Cc: Kate Dinsmore; Cindy Kuns; Nick Kaufman; Tracy L. Reich (treich@helenabid.com); 'Andrew Hagemeyer'
Subject: RE: thoughts from the charrette

Great comments, Paul. We'll see that these get into the meeting summary. We think Cruse is a big opportunity (public-owned right-of-way and parking lots) that we will be exploring in the next round.

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
WGM Group, Inc

-----Original Message-----

From: Paul Cartwright [<mailto:cartwright@montana.com>]
Sent: Thursday, September 03, 2015 10:45 AM
To: Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmgroupp.com>; Mike Dowling <mdowling@dsa-mt.com>
Subject: thoughts from the charrette

I was at the Walking Mall table last night. Two ideas that were mentioned but maybe I missed on our board were 1) get Google to do a street view of the Walking Mall and 2) develop a downtown app to complement or substitute for more signage. I especially like the Google idea, because these days it seems if you can't see it on your phone, it doesn't exist.

Also, apropos of nothing mentioned last night, what's the chance you could plow Cruse under, making it housing and reconfiguring parking? It's not like it's doing much now other than isolating downtown. Plus, more land on the tax rolls, etc.

Paul Cartwright

Erica Laferriere

From: Erica Laferriere
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:48 AM
To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Steering Committee - Next Steps

150326

Erica Laferriere
Project Assistant

From: Paul Cartwright [<mailto:cartwright@montana.com>]
Sent: Friday, November 27, 2015 3:45 PM
To: melinda@bikewalkmontana.org
Cc: Dennis McCahon; Sumner Sharpe; Jeremy Keene; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland
Subject: Re: Steering Committee - Next Steps

Neat article, Melinda. I lived in Evanston for a while way back when and have visited there in recent years. Quite the change.

In terms of planning for downtown, the article inspired two thoughts. First, the case for transit in Helena isn't immediately obvious. Evanston has a population density of 9574 people per square mile and sits in a metro area of many millions. Helena has a density of 1,736 people per square mile and sits in a metro of something over 60,000 people. I'll defer to anybody who's actually studied transit, but I don't see how we can count on transit being too much more than a social service, essential for the community but basically a niche transportation alternative. Nonetheless, TOD design may have something to tell us about parking. The city could consider further decreases in on-site parking requirements for multi-family housing that is within walking distance of commercial or employment nodes. Even if Helena lacks the transit to allow many people to choose to be without any car, locations that allow a substantial number of trips to be made on foot don't need the same parking requirements as neighborhoods that are impractical for households without a car. Some percentage of households in those locations could get by with only one vehicle (and some with none). This would apply to the downtown, and to certain other areas of Helena as well.

Paul

On Nov 25, 2015, at 8:26 AM, Melinda Barnes <melinda@bikewalkmontana.org> wrote:

At the last meeting, we had a discussion on parking and how there needs to be 'ample and sufficient parking', whatever that may mean. Well, here is a very interesting article about parking and how one town addressed this, which had a dramatic effect on revitalizing their downtown. It's a lengthy article and the real meat of it begins on page 3 – it's really worth reading. <http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/10/evanston-illinois-what-works->

[213282?o=4](#) Also, I don't think we have really discussed transit which should also be brought into the conversation as a way to make our downtown even more accessible to people.

Also, at the last meeting, it seems like we were supposed to each come up with our top five priorities with this plan in order for us as a group to begin prioritizing the top recommendations. Are we supposed to send this to someone previous to our next meeting or just think about it for our next meeting?

Melinda

Erica Laferriere

From: Jeremy Keene
Sent: Monday, September 28, 2015 2:58 PM
To: Loran Frazier
Cc: EMAIL FILE BASKET; Cindy Kuns
Subject: RE: Front Street Comments

Thanks for passing this along.

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
WGM Group, Inc

150326

From: Loran Frazier
Sent: Monday, September 28, 2015 2:25 PM
To: Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmgroup.com>; Kate Dinsmore <kdinsmore@wgmgroup.com>; rleland@helenamt.gov; phauck@helenamt.gov
Subject: Front Street Comments

Team,
Please read the comments from Deb below. They present a pretty good case for the need of parking.

Loran Frazier, P.E.
Transportation Manager



2905 N Montana Ave, Suite 101
Helena • MT • 59601
E-mail: Lfrazier@wgmgroup.com
406-728-4611 x 111 • FAX: 406-728-2476

<http://www.wgmgroup.com>

From: Chouinard, Deb [<mailto:Dchouinard@mt.gov>]
Sent: Monday, September 28, 2015 1:57 PM
To: Loran Frazier
Cc: Chouinard, Deb
Subject: FW: Parking improvement project

Hello- Here is the information that I had put together for discussion points. I'm not sure that everyone has an idea of how busy our little office is, and how the parking situation could be greatly impacted, depending on the decisions made. Again, please give me a shout if you have any questions, or need clarification on anything. I'll look forward to the meeting on the 20th of October. I appreciate you getting back to me so quickly!

Available Parking

- In our “Job Service” reserved lot, we have 2 handicap accessible spots, 18 regular parking spots, and 2 kind of half spots, suitable for motorcycles, etc.
- There are 9 parking spots behind the building for staff, with 2 unofficial spots along the side of the building.
- Out front, which is the area that would be mostly impacted, we have 1 handicap accessible spot, and 17 angle parking spots down until the metered parking in front of the building next door to us.

Staff Working in our Building

- We have 12 Job Service Staff
- We have 7 staff in a unit that rents from us
- We have 2 Federal staff that have space in our office
- We have 2-3 Experience Works staff that rent space in our office
- We have 2 Work Experience that work in our office

In calculating an average of daily customers in our office, which does not include staff working in the building, as they use other entrances, year to date, we see approximately **335 people per day**.

We also have a wide variety of partners that use our office to meet with their customers on an itinerant basis. These include, the TRIO program, which assists first generation college attendees; Blind and Low Vision Center; Vocational Rehabilitation; Job Corp, Volunteers of America, People’s Law, the Great Falls Vet Center, as well as the employers and other groups that utilize our conference rooms for career fairs, community group meetings, and training sessions.

So, on a day when everyone is at the office, the lot reserved for staff is full, and the private lot for our office is full, which leaves the 17 +1 handicap parking spots for the public. These parking spots out front are public, so folks going to Opportunity Bank, the Federal Reserve, the Vodka bar across the street, the home healthcare facility, Urgent Care, Alive at Five, etc, all utilize those spaces. In addition, we have deliveries, the HATS transportation van that drops off and picks up customers out front, etc. We do have folks, particularly those residing at the pre-release, that ride bicycles to and from our office, and we do have a bike rack out front for their use.

Another concern in the design planning, is to keep in mind the parking needs of a busy office, frequented by predominantly the unemployed, so hopefully there is no plan for metered parking, because that would cause our customers great concern and problems.

Deborah Chouinard, Manager
 Helena Job Service
 715 Front Street
 (406) 447-3202

Erica Laferriere

From: Dennis McCahon <galumphant22@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 12, 2015 5:18 PM
To: Jeremy Keene
Cc: Mike Dowling; jserstad@rmdc.net; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; cartwright@montana.com; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com; Tracy Reich; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; Brian Obert; Andrew Hagemeyer; Cindy Kuns; Loran Frazier; Nick Kaufman; rgibbs@gibbsplanning.com; Kate Dinsmore
Subject: Re: Downtown Master Plan - Steering Committee #3

I'm reviewing the draft Vision Statement and the "Greening Last Chance Gulch" report, and I'll probably have more comments before Friday, but right now I'll address what's on page 39 of the Greening report.

It's certainly right to "improve the pedestrian network to support better use of on-street and off-street parking". We'll walk farther, after all, if the walking is good --or, put another way, we'll walk as far as we're invited to walk. Outlying long-term parking will be used, thereby taking pressure off the curb-side short-term stuff, to the extent that the walk out to it can be made inviting.

But, the invitation must be extended a bit differently to folks for whom parking isn't the issue -- ones who walk from home. In their case the outlying parking is more of a barrier than a destination, and the trick is to cross it from the other side.

We know the importance of having housing downtown, but I think we've tended to undervalue the pedestrian-generating potential of the housing within walking distance to the east and west of downtown -- probably the most densely-populated districts in town. Any "improved pedestrian network" will have to improve linkage to those districts.

For just one example; consider Courthouse Square, up on the edge of one of those populous residential districts (and a center of employment and other pedestrian activity in its own right). Before Urban Renewal, Breckenridge Street ran west from the Square across Warren to Jackson, and was closely paralleled, from Warren to Main, by Grand Street -- so both Breckenridge and Grand were a pedestrian link from the Square to Main. But then Urban Renewal sliced both streets off at Warren, leaving pedestrians a vestige of a link -- a narrow offset stairway and an equally narrow and offset ramp on either side of Cruse, with only a jay-walker's gap between -- to connect the remaining stubs of Breckenridge. The fact that foot traffic has continued to use the corridor, despite the cold shoulder, is shown by the steep eroding trails that have appeared alongside the stairway and the ramp. This corridor demands attention.

Maybe we can gain inspiration from a particularly good bit of post Urban Renewal design up on the other side of the Square. When that stretch of Ewing Street between the Courthouse and the Myrna Loy building was converted from parallel to diagonal parking, the generous bulb-out pedestrian crossing at Breckenridge was placed in precisely the right place to not only connect the Myrna Loy with the Square, but also to better connect the Square to the residential and neighborhood commercial stuff east of the Myrna Loy -- by actually strengthening both the traditional role of Breckenridge as a pedestrian route, and the appeal of that little pedestrian plaza in front of the Courthouse. Additional parking was gained (the original objective), while actually improving upon a pedestrian amenity that dates to 1886. Not bad!

On Fri, Oct 9, 2015 at 3:26 PM, Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmggroup.com> wrote:

Hello Steering Committee Members,

A reminder that our next meeting will be **October 20th at 2:00 pm, location TBD** (please watch for an email next week to confirm – most likely the Placer or Holiday Inn). Charrette #2 will be held the same evening, 5:30 – 7:30 pm, at the Holiday Inn.

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We appreciate your time and input on the plan. Feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
Principal Engineer



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Missoula • MT • 59802
[E-mail: JKeene@wgmggroup.com](mailto:JKeene@wgmggroup.com)
[406-728-4611](tel:406-728-4611) x 131 • FAX: [406-728-2476](tel:406-728-2476)

<http://www.wgmggroup.com>

Erica Laferriere

From: Dennis McCahon <galumphant22@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2015 5:00 PM
To: Jeremy Keene
Cc: Mike Dowling; jserstad@rmdc.net; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; cartwright@montana.com; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com; Tracy Reich; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; Brian Obert; Andrew Hagemeyer; Cindy Kuns; Loran Frazier; Nick Kaufman; rgibbs@gibbsplanning.com; Kate Dinsmore
Subject: Re: Downtown Master Plan - Steering Committee #3

While reviewing the draft Downtown Vision Statement, I like the references (page 1) to the area's "sense of place and historic identity" and the goal (Goal 4) to "Preserve and Enhance Downtown Character" -- that's essential -- and I like the specific treatment of Goal 4 on page 7.

We certainly need a more sophisticated working consensus regarding the weave of downtown's "historic fabric" and whatever it is that evokes that "sense of place".

Such a consensus might then be expressed as a set of "design standards" or "architectural standards" (and I'd love to help work on something like that), but the preparation of such standards can be very tricky.

Often it seems, they miss the point. They get hung up on such things as fussy or old-timey stylistic references or lists of "appropriate" materials, which end up stifling, more than informing, imaginative new design. "Place" has to keep working in new ways if we're to actually keep it alive -- so, how does it work, anyway?

One way to an answer might be to look for common (thereby unifying) elements in how we perceive place. If there's one thing, for example, that Helena's 19th and early 20th Century buildings all have in common it's that they were built when most people, most of the time, got around outdoors on foot. So, they're designed to be perceived (enjoyed) in the out-of-doors by people with a pedestrian's freedom to respond to their outdoor surroundings -- the freedom to be present, in other words. They share what might be called (for lack of a better term) "walking scale". This "scale" works in all sorts of ways -- as many ways as there are aspects of the walking experience, from the purely practical to the purely pleasurable.

It also works independent of style or period (One thing, for example, common to buildings as stylistically different as the Iron Front Building and the Diamond Block is how they meet the sidewalk) and, most important, It can be made to play as well in any present-day style as in any historic one. There's nothing "dated" or "invalid" about walking scale. Pedestrians are the the same as they ever were. We've just tended to neglect them in recent decades.

I think we might identify elements of walking scale well enough to work them into design guidelines -- with the objective of making sure that the invitation to keep walking, and thereby perceive "place", is sustained from one parcel to the next and from one sort of land-use to the next. The measure of success would be not how well downtown's fabric conforms to some particular historic or stylistic image, but how much fun it is to walk around using the place.

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We appreciate your time and input on the plan. Feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Jeremy Keene, P.E.

Principal Engineer



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<http://www.wgmggroup.com>

150326

Erica Laferriere

From: Jeremy Keene
Sent: Friday, October 16, 2015 4:10 PM
To: Sumner Sharpe
Cc: Nick Kaufman; Kate Dinsmore; 'Mike Dowling'; Tracy L. Reich (treich@helenabid.com); EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: RE: Comments on draft vision, goals and strategies
Attachments: Vision Document 10-09-15 DRAFT Sumner Sharpe Comments.pdf

Thanks Sumner. Look forward to discussing these on Tuesday.

I put this into a PDF format, so hopefully it is easier to see your edits. I would encourage you to “reply all” to the committee to share these with the full group.

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
WGM Group, Inc

150326

From: Sumner Sharpe [mailto:mtnutmeg@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2015 2:35 PM
To: Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmggroup.com>
Subject: Comments on draft vision, goals and strategies

Hi Jeremy,
Attached are my comments on the draft.

If this plan is implemented fully, what will Helena's downtown look and feel like in 20, 30 or even 50 years? What is the vision? More of the same but better? Different in places? Totally different?

What strikes me is it is unclear what is meant by downtown. There are two "centers" - one new and one old in the BID area. but the vision and statements don't take clear advantage of everything around it - Myrna Loy, Civic Center, movie theaters, County courthouse, city-county building, cathedral, Reeder's alley, library, state office buildings, etc. This needs to be clear and the BID (client's) boundaries seem inadequate to me.

Downtown is place where people meet/congregate like no other part of the city and region - civic building, state business offices, restaurants, coffee shops, events such as Live at Five, plays in the parks and open spaces, the Saturday market, taverns, wine shops. museums, Cathedral, local and nonprofit agency offices and meeting spaces etc. All of this adds to the uniqueness of what downtown is about.

Downtown is also the historic center of the city as well as a unique regional center. It's different than other retail/office areas that are disconnected. And that's why it is worth supporting and enhancing.

What is needed is to make the area more active, more connected to surrounding facilities and neighborhoods, more and denser housing in the core and nearby, better use of mall space. When you look closely there are other centers outside the BID boundaries and these need to be connected to the core.

Downtown is also a place where the less economically privileged live and get services and nearby are a number of local, county and regional medical and social services. And this is found in downtowns in many other cities.

Finally, it might be helpful to clearly explain what the final plan, documents etc will include. Is it a design plan, transportation plan, land use plan, marketing plan, investment plan, land use plan, policy plan, some combo of these, etc.

I apologize - some of my comments have misspellings and they do not show up in color though it was in color when I made my entries.

I can be reached at 503-803-7676 if you have any questions or want to discuss.

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Downtown Vision

Downtown Helena is the economic, cultural, and social center of the community. The rich history of mining, railroad industry, and agriculture shape a spectacular 19th century downtown that continues to define the identity of Montana's capital city. Residents and visitors enjoy active lifestyles, walkable neighborhoods, and a strong connection to Helena's trails, parks, and outdoor activities. Mild summer evenings and crisp winter days make Downtown Helena a year-round destination for businesses, customers, and residents that are looking for quality of life, history, services, and entertainment in a safe and friendly environment.

The Downtown Helena Master Plan builds on Downtown's past success, leveraging its unique sense of place and historic identity to create new opportunities in a changing marketplace. This includes:

- ✓ creating a high-quality, desirable place to do business, work, and live;
- ✓ connecting Downtown to the community and the outdoor environment;
- ✓ creating strong connections to the capital and government workforce;
- ✓ aligning the plan with foreseeable development opportunities; and,
- ✓ creating a clear path for leadership to successfully implement the plan. [NOT SURE WHERE TO FIND PATH IN THE GOALS AND STRATEGIES](#)

Downtown Goals

Downtown goals were derived from the issues and ideas identified in the public outreach process. These goals represent the big picture guiding principles for the Master Plan and provide a framework for the specific objectives and strategies included.

- Goal 1: Make Downtown a Premier Destination**
- Goal 2: Connect Downtown to the Community**
- Goal 3: Activate Downtown**
- Goal 4: Preserve & Enhance Downtown Character**
- Goal 5: Optimize Parking**

Implementation Strategies

Goal 1: Make Downtown a Premier Destination

Objective: Emphasize Downtown as the historic, cultural, and economic center of the Helena community.

Strategies

- Create a clear, consistent branding strategy A branding strategy was adopted several yaers ago – affirm was hired to come up with a brand.Are you suggesting we di this again?
- Market Downtown outside of Helena What about marketing downtown to folks in the region. Do we know what % of residnets in the region have been downtown in recent years and/or shopped there or came for other reasons?
- Articulate Downtown's competitive advantages Which are?
- Seek "quality of life" businesses and employers Not sure what this means. Downtown has small. unique retail and personal services shops

Objective: Make Downtown easy to find and navigate

Strategies

- Create gateways and wayfinding at key locations
- Extend downtown architecture to define edges and entries ? how far would you extend it and where?
- Provide clear, identifiable routes to key destinations with consistent signs for trails, historically significant locations, historic buildings, street names, etc. (not all of the important “downtown” attractions /locations/destinations are in the BID boundaries)
- Create a single map for downtown wayfinding, parking, and attractions have you seen the parking map that has been developed already? Not sure how useful this has been
- Incorporate technology (Google, GPS navigation, etc.) incorporate in what to do what?

Objective: Make Downtown safe, attractive, and inviting

Strategies

- Update landscaping and public plazas the BID has worked on a landscaping plan already – does it need to be expanded? The mal surface needs attention = looking worn out
- Evaluate park space for appropriate use and function (this ongoing and there many events in differentparks in or near downtown. But there needs to be more dome to use the mall, the entertainment site, etc
- Identify, prioritize, and correct accessibility barriers
- Improve lighting Where? Why?

- Provide security, foot patrols, bike patrols [Is there a safety problem now or just expected in the future? Is there data to show this needed?](#)
- Identify funding for improvements [\(i.e. to make downtown safe, attractive and inviting?\)](#)

Objective: Address deferred maintenance and jurisdictional issues

Strategies

- Identify funding for maintenance [\(set funds aside – maintenance fund is not enough – need funds to rebuild and repair beyond maintenance\)](#)
- Clarify/simplify agency responsibilities [for managing/repairing the mall?](#)

DRAFT

Goal 2: Connect Downtown to the Community

Objective: Focus on Moving People

Strategies

- Define primary pedestrian routes
- Define primary auto/truck routes
- Develop a comprehensive network of bike routes, bike lanes, and separated trails [Greening study did a lot of this](#)
 - Link neighborhoods, employment centers, amenities, and destinations.
 - Connect trails and open space [to downtown?](#)
- Strengthen transit service in Downtown [\(BID boundaries may be too limiting; or how well does the proposed new transit lines serve downtown? Is downtown the center of the transit system? Should it be?\)](#)
 - Special events [better use of transit to support events?](#)
 - Employee bus pass programs
 - Circulator trolley

Objective: Strengthen connection between the Walking Mall and the Great Northern Town Center

Strategies

- Create a continuous downtown streetscape along Last Chance Gulch [How far would this go?](#)
- Address the pedestrian crossing barrier at Neill [Greening study already addressed this](#)
- [Prepare a traffic feasibility study to convert Last Chance Gulch to two-way traffic and simplify the Last Chance/Neill/Cruse/Helena Intersection](#) [More than traffic feasibility study will be needed to address mini malfunction junction](#)
- Evaluate the cost/benefit of a circulator trolley

Objective: Strengthen connection to historic residential neighborhoods

Strategies

- Improve comfort, safety, and accessibility along primary pedestrian routes
- Add buildings along key corridors to eliminate gaps in the urban form where [street-level](#) parking currently exists
- Identify locations and design options for improved pedestrian crossings on major road corridors
- Improve and add additional pedestrian walkways/stairs connecting [adjacent neighborhood residents](#) to Walking Mall/Last Chance Gulch
- Create a functional/architectural connection between Downtown and the historic 6th Ward/Railroad District along Helena Avenue [what do you mean by an architectural](#)

connection? This is way outside the downtown and its environs. Signage to connect the areas might be of value.

DRAFT

Objective: Strengthen connection to Carroll College

Strategies

- Create a new trail connection from Lyndale underpass to campus/dorms
- Improve attractiveness, visibility, and lighting of the Lyndale underpass
- Emphasize pedestrian crossings at Benton, Getchell, and Last Chance intersections

Objective: Strengthen Connections to Capital Area

Strategies

- Establish workforce housing in/near Downtown [What about boomers and retirees looking to downsize?](#)
- Establish transit service between Downtown and Capital [There already are three large state office buildings in downtown - - would it be worth finding out what workd for them and whether they "use" downtown services better to](#)
- Establish bike routes between Downtown and Capital [\(not clear why this would be utlzed for shopping or luncetime.](#)

Goal 3: Activate Downtown

Objective: Provide all amenities and services needed to keep people Downtown

Strategies

- Identify missing services some of these don't make sense unless there are more people and large stores/big boxes would change the character of downtown. Just a wish list.
 - Household/Grocery/Hardware
 - Health/Pharmacy
 - Financial
 - Educational/Schools
 - Recreational/Exercise
 - Entertainment already the entertainment center if you make connections
- Identify missing amenities
- Locate services within easy walking distance of residents and major employers (zone changes to address location?)

Objective: Add new retail in strategic locations

Strategies

- Recruit missing retail types who does this? Have you talked to property owners and realtors who have downtown experience?
- Focus on "experience" not "commodity" explain – not sure what tis means
- Identify retail clusters and corridors good – if you look at the BID boundaries and areas adjacent or nearby, you can I.d. custers and then the challenge is to connect them
- Create land and parking incentives what do you mean by land incentives? What are parking incentives?

Objective: Integrate housing

Strategies

- Add housing options, such as townhomes, lofts, condos, and live/work units
- Construct housing over publicly owned parking and r/w's Why not add commercial and resie ndtial at the ground floor so you don't leave parking at street level – dead space!
- Form housing cooperatives on City-owned land Why just hoisng cooperatives? Why not work with non-profits as well as private developers?

Objective: Attract business incubators and start-ups

Strategies

- Rent subsidies I assume this means public funds would be use for rent subsidies

- Reduced parking requirements [Might work for downtown residential as well](#)
- Tax abatement
- Expedited building permit review

DRAFT

Objective: Encourage ground floor retail

Strategies

- Make Downtown the premier location for Helena retail business (see Goal 1) [It will not nor should downtown try to compete with big box retail. Downtown is unique with its small local businesses](#)
- Provide incentives for redevelopment of inappropriate ground floor uses (i.e. parking garages)
- Make City-owned properties available for retail development [or housing](#)
- Create interim store front displays/art where ground floor office exists [consider having the MT Historical society to set up a satellite location downtown.](#)
- Create temporary pop-up retail spaces (booths, kiosks, food carts/trucks) in public right-of-way's adjacent to inactive ground floor uses

Goal 4: Preserve & Enhance Downtown Character

Objective: Identify eligible properties for listing on National Historic Register

Strategies

- Update the Historic District inventory (last completed over 25 years ago)
- [Protect listed properties from intrusive signs or exterior remodeling – city role needs clarification](#)

Objective: Encourage adaptive use of historic buildings and integration of new buildings into the historic downtown fabric.

Strategies

- Identify historic preservation funding sources
- Establish special Downtown zoning district
 - Building height
 - Parking requirements
 - Setbacks/build-to lines
- Establish Downtown design standards
 - Building form
 - Architectural standards
 - Ground floor use
- Establish Downtown streetscape design standards that compliment historic character, pedestrian environment, and provide a common theme throughout Downtown
 - Street/sidewalk materials
 - Lighting
 - Street trees/landscaping

Goal 5: Optimize Parking

Objective: Make parking convenient

Strategies some of this is going on already – looking at smart phone payment, already have goldies for merchants to use,

- Improve parking wayfinding & information recently labeled parking times on meters that can be read from cars
- Combine pedestrian wayfinding & parking maps
- Access parking from primary auto routes
- Incorporate technology
 - Real-time parking monitoring/availability will this be economical na small city like Helena?
 - Google ??
 - GPS Navigation ??
 - Credit card/smart phone payment
 - Merchant vouchers

Objective: Increase parking utilization

Strategies

- Encourage shared-use parking
- Lease parking for residential nighttime use

Objectives: Simplify parking rules and regulations

Strategies

- Conduct a comprehensive parking study to determine parking supply, demand, and financial performance
- Eliminate on-street permit parking. Move permit parking to the parking structures Some long term permit parking at some distance from the core is available so wouldn't get rid of all of this
- Provide additional free short-term parking (1 hour max) not sure this belongs under this objective
- Allow permits to be used in any downtown parking structure

Erica Laferriere

From: Jeremy Keene
Sent: Sunday, October 18, 2015 3:48 PM
To: Nick Kaufman; Kate Dinsmore
Cc: Cindy Kuns; EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Downtown Master plan Steering Committee Meeting minutes

FYI, great question at the end.

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
WGM Group, Inc

150326

From: Sumner Sharpe [mailto:mtnutmeg@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, October 17, 2015 7:39 PM
To: Tracy Reich <treich@helenabid.com>
Cc: Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmgroup.com>
Subject: Re: Downtown Master plan Steering Committee Meeting minutes

Hi Tracy,

IN my view a vision statement should tell a story of what a place will look and feel like at a future time. It should be easily understood by the community - providing a portrait of what could be. For example, for Battle Ground WA the vision statement took the form of a letter from a grandson to a grandmother who had left town and had not returned to Battle Ground. The letter describes the kind of City 20 years after she left and the grandson invited the grandmother to come visit him and --- here's what she would find and be surprised to find in the town.

Also, a vision statements is about values - in the case of downtown Helena, what's important, what has been retained and how it is better, how valued attributes have been protected (such as historic buildings), how problems have been addressed and how it feels now, etc.

With these concepts, I think a vision statement for downtown Helena and it environs (not just the BID boundary) might include ideas such as: The scale of development and services and shops are different here - unique, small scale, local; downtown continues to be major employment center; a place where people in Helena, their guests, and tourists go to socialize at coffee shops, restaurants of all types and affordability, taverns and wine shops, coffee shops; where tourists come because the area is seen as unique capturing and building on the historical attributes of the Helena where accessible pedestrian, bicycle and transit, and auto connections are safe, easy, and enjoyable and provide connections to adjacent neighborhoods, Reeder Alley, the Myrna Loy/Courthouse area; where parking structures and lots on the main streets do not dominate the landscape; where new buildings fit and are compatible with the historic nature of much of the area; where a diverse array of people of all ages live and there are enough people living in or near downtown to support small grocery and personal service retail activities; where the old and new downtown centers are connected; where people come to enjoy all forms of artistic activities at a variety of venues; where downtown is where transit connections occur; where new buildings become part of the scale and historic fabric of the area and there is a commitment to preserve the historic structures and protect them from intrusive changes. In other words, this is a unique place because the unique attributes have been preserved and added to, resulting in a vibrant, active area, with activities that cannot be found anywhere else in Helena.

Hope this helpful. This my quick take of what a vision statement might include for Helena and I'm sure others may have other thoughts of what downtown Helena should be like in 20 years or so.

A question for workshop could be - If you left Helena and did not come back for twenty years, and you were surprised and delighted about what you found in the downtown and nearby areas and neighborhoods - what would you see and feel?

Sumner

Sumner

On Sat, Oct 17, 2015 at 9:30 AM, Tracy Reich <treich@helenabid.com> wrote:

Hi Sumner,

Great comments, some ahead of where we are at in the process but we'll get there. I wanted to ask you to weigh in on the vision statement at the top of the page as you mentioned "what is the vision". I didn't see any comments on either version. That is the question being answered at this next charrette so input on what that needs to be is very important.

Thanks again. Have a great weekend and see you Tuesday!

Tracy

Tracy L. Reich

Executive Director

Helena Business Improvement District

treich@helenabid.com

225 Cruse Avenue, Suite B

Helena, MT 59601

(PH) [406.447.1535](tel:406.447.1535)

(Fax) [406.447.1533](tel:406.447.1533)



www.downtownhelena.com

From: Sumner Sharpe [mailto:mtnutmeg@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, October 16, 2015 4:58 PM

To: Mike Dowling <mdowling@dsa-mt.com>

Cc: melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; Alan Nicholson <alan@gntc.info>; cartwright@montana.com; epshmt@gmail.com; galumphant22@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com; Tracy Reich <treich@helenabid.com>; Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmggroup.com>; Sharon Haugen <SHaugen@helenamt.gov>

Subject: Re: Downtown Master plan Steering Committee Meeting minutes

The following and attached document are comments on the draft I sent to Jeremy. I also previously responded that the "greening" report comments on transportation should provide a good starting point, but land use, activity centers etc. need to be added to see about the fit with these transportation recommendations.

Hi Jeremy,
Attached are my comments on the draft.

If this plan is implemented fully, what will Helena's downtown look and feel like in 20, 30 or even 50 years? What is the vision? More of the same but better? Different in places? Totally different?

What strikes me is it is unclear what is meant by downtown. There are two "centers" - one new and one old in the BID area. but the vision and statements don't take clear advantage of everything around it - Myrna Loy, Civic Center, movie theaters, County courthouse, city-county building, cathedral, Reeder's alley, library, state office buildings, etc. This needs to be clear and the BID (client's) boundaries seem inadequate to me.

Downtown is place where people meet/congregate like no other part of the city and region - civic building, state business offices, restaurants, coffee shops, events such as Live at Five, plays in the parks and open spaces, the Saturday market, taverns, wine shops. museums, Cathedral, local and nonprofit agency offices and meeting spaces etc. All of this adds to the uniqueness of what downtown is about.

Downtown is also the historic center of the city as well as a unique regional center. It's different than other retail/office areas that are disconnected. And that's why it is worth supporting and enhancing.

What is needed is to make the area more active, more connected to surrounding facilities and neighborhoods, more and denser housing in the core and nearby, better use of mall space. When you look closely there are other centers outside the BID boundaries and these need to be connected to the core.

Downtown is also a place where the less economically privileged live and get services and nearby are a number of local, county and regional medical and social services. And this is found in downtowns in many other cities.

Finally, it might be helpful to clearly explain what the final plan, documents etc will include. Is it a design plan, transportation plan, land use plan, marketing plan, investment plan, land use plan, policy plan, some combo of these, etc.

I apologize - some of my comments have misspellings and they do not show up in color though it was in color when I made my entries.

On Fri, Oct 16, 2015 at 3:43 PM, Mike Dowling <mdowling@dsa-mt.com> wrote:

Steering committee members,

Just a reminder that our next Steering Committee meeting is Tuesday, Oct 20th at 2:00 pm. The location has changed and will be at the Holiday Inn Downtown.

We will be hearing from Gibbs regarding his findings and discussing the evenings Charrette which is at the Holiday Inn as well.

Looking forward to seeing you all on Tuesday.

Mike Dowling



DSArchitects

Michael W. Dowling, AIA, NCARB

55 West 14th Street, Suite 103
Helena, MT 59601
mdowling@dsa-mt.com
[406 457-5470](tel:4064575470)

[406 495-0063](tel:4064950063) fax

From: Mike Dowling [mailto:mdowling@dsa-mt.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2015 10:16 AM
To: 'jserstad@rmdc.net'; 'melinda@bikewalkmontana.org'; 'shalonhastings@hotmail.com'; 'alan@gntc.info'; 'cartwright@montana.com'; 'mtnutmeg@gmail.com'; 'epshmt@gmail.com'; 'galumphant22@gmail.com'; 'sidgodolphin2@gmail.com'; 'lloydaniel@gmail.com'; 'kybaker@carroll.edu'; 'ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com'
Cc: Tracy Reich (treich@helenabid.com); Jeremy Keene (JKeene@wgmgroun.com); 'SHAUGEN@helenamt.gov'
Subject: Downtown Master plan Steering Committee Meeting minutes

Attached are the minutes from our last meeting. We had fairly low attendance. Looking forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting!

Our next meeting is October 20 @ 2:00 pm. Please mark your calendars. Location is the Placer Hotel.

Mike Dowling



DSArchitects

Dowling Studio Architects, PC
Michael W. Dowling, AIA, NCARB

55 West 14th Street, Suite 103
Helena, MT 59601
mdowling@dsa-mt.com
[406 457-5470](tel:4064575470)

[406 495-0063](tel:4064950063) fax



(Like us on Facebook)

Erica Laferriere

From: Paul Cartwright <cartwright@montana.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 18, 2015 2:28 PM
To: Jeremy Keene
Cc: Mike Dowling; jserstad@rmdc.net; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; galumphant22@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com; Tracy Reich; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; Brian Obert; 'Andrew Hagemeyer'; Cindy Kuns; Loran Frazier; Nick Kaufman; rgibbs@gibbsplanning.com; Kate Dinsmore
Subject: Re: Downtown Master Plan - Steering Committee #3

I was out of town for a while, so these comments are a little late. See you Tuesday.

Paul

Comments on Draft Downtown Helena Master Plan

General thoughts

Who is the intended audience of the master plan? I know it's for anybody who's interested, but who do you most want to be convinced by it?

A lot of the suggested strategies sound good and are commendable, but are very unlikely to be viable. I'd lean towards winnowing those out, even though I realize there are advantages to acting as if all things are possible.

p.1 –Emphasize downtown, etc: Why market downtown outside of Helena? If downtown doesn't appeal to locals, then why should outsiders move here? The downtown should have a way of being very responsive to outside inquiries, but I wouldn't bother with a marketing campaign.

p.1 –Make Downtown safe, etc.: Maybe there's a safety problem, but I wasn't aware of it, other than there does seem to be more car accidents than one might expect. Unless there is a significant and demonstrable problem, I wouldn't worry much about increasing an official safety presence. I suspect it wouldn't add much for people who do use downtown and won't convince those who think all downtowns are unsafe. Saying, "it's safe to come downtown because we have lots of cops" is just a variation on telling them "don't think of a white horse;" people immediately think of it anyway. More to the point, "safety concerns" is often code for "people or activities I don't like."

p.1 – Address jurisdictional issues: This is an important one.

p.2 - Focus on moving people: Something's wrong with the way these strategies are broken out. Downtown traffic should move slowly and safely enough such that there's no point in designating primary pedestrian routes vs. primary automobile. Even on through routes (Park, Neill, etc) traffic doesn't move all that fast, and doesn't need to.

The circulator trolley idea is just silly, given Helena's experience with the downtown trolley. While buses can work in small towns, they require a density and activity level we don't have.

p.2 – Strengthen connection etc. – Two-way traffic on the Gulch strikes me as one of the most straightforward solutions to increase activity downtown. The loading zone issue always is brought up as an

objection, but it would be easy to do a quick count of how many businesses actually would be affected and how badly. Businesses like the Windbag seem to have figured out how to make their loading zone arrangement work, so presumably others could as well.

p.2 – Strengthen connections etc – A key strategy should be figuring out how to convert Cruse to usable downtown space.

p.3 – Strengthen connection to Carroll College – The new dorms by the park have done a lot to make that route feel less isolated and safer. Another building with evening uses, say where the satellite dishes are or in the southwest corner of Centennial Park, would add even more to the attractiveness of the connection.

p.4 – Provide all amenities, etc. – Don't bother mentioning things like grocery and hardware for which there are no viable business models for low to moderate density neighborhoods.

p.5 – Attract business incubators and start-ups – Building permit review seems to be a problem for all parts of Helena.

Rather than increase subsidies, how about more emphasis on improving infrastructure. Streets and parking already have been mentioned. Are there data and telecom improvements that would attract business?

I'll also put in a plug for reforming Montana's liquor licensing laws. The downtown could support more restaurants if more licenses were available. (But this is a bigger issue than one might want to tackle in a Master Plan.)

p.7 – Encourage adaptive use, etc. – Design standards that deal with building form make sense, but standards more often seem to be about aesthetics (see, for instance, urban renewal red brick). Still, a design review committee would be a good idea, even if voluntary, to make sure developers have input on how their building will work with the community.

p.8 – Optimize parking – There are any number of parking studies from the 1950's-1970's, leading to urban renewal, which had provision of parking as one of its main purposes. However, whatever the absolute number of parking spaces, the studies always found the downtown a few hundred spaces short. I suspect that's still the case. I don't want to minimize the importance of parking, but a healthy downtown will always be "short".

As for length of on-street parking, I'd be curious to know if shortening the allowed time to one hour increased customer turnover, or just forced employees to sneak out more often to move their cars.

Comments on Greening Last Chance Gulch pp.38-39

-I wonder why they drew a distinction between "enhanced pedestrian circulation" and "complete streets network".

-What would it take to get Peccia/MDT to run the transportation model with Cruse closed from Broadway north, and Jackson reopened from Placer to 11th? With both those changes and Last Chance Gulch made two-way? What you do with Cruse will affect what you can and what you need to do for bikes and peds.

-Bike lanes on Benton between Neill and Euclid seem unlikely without removing the boulevards. I doubt a three-vehicle lane configuration could function adequately during peak hours.

-In general, the Greening concept seemed a touch vague to me. Also, I'd guess at the moment the bigger issue is getting bikes through downtown to the open space trails. Solve that and you'll have a better idea of priorities for improving bike access within downtown.

-I'll second the points about pedestrians that Dennis has made (now and over the years). Pedestrians are not just particularly slow vehicles. They need a porous downtown, with multiple ways to travel, and in addition to concrete and asphalt, they need activity along their travelways.

On Oct 9, 2015, at 3:26 PM, Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmgroup.com> wrote:

Hello Steering Committee Members,

A reminder that our next meeting will be **October 20th at 2:00 pm, location TBD** (please watch for an email next week to confirm – most likely the Placer or Holiday Inn). Charrette #2 will be held the same evening, 5:30 – 7:30 pm, at the Holiday Inn.

Robert Gibbs will be in town to present the market analysis and talk about opportunities for Downtown Helena. We are planning an optional walking tour immediately following the Steering Committee meeting.

In preparation for the meeting, we have two homework assignments for you:

1. Please review the DRAFT Vision Document attached. This lays out the initial vision and strategies as a framework for the plan. It should reflect the things we've talked about and what we heard through the public outreach. Let us know if there's something that we missed! **We would appreciate any comments by Friday, 10/16 to allow time to incorporate before the charrette.**
2. Please review the *Greening Last Chance Gulch* report. There are many common elements between this study and our Downtown Master Plan. In particular, we are interested to know your thoughts about the transportation and bike network concept on pages 38-39. You can download the report here: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/1y04wp7u0pn92p8/Helena%20Greening%20Last%20Chance%20Gulch%20Report.pdf?dl=0>

We appreciate your time and input on the plan. Feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Jeremy Keene, P.E.

Principal Engineer

<image003.jpg>

1111 E. Broadway

Missoula • MT • 59802

E-mail: JKeene@wgmgroup.com

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<http://www.wgmgroup.com>

150326

<Vision Document 10-09-15 DRAFT.docx>

Erica Laferriere

From: Tracy Reich <treich@helenabid.com>
Sent: Monday, October 26, 2015 11:41 AM
To: 'Paul Cartwright'
Cc: 'Dennis McCahon'; Jeremy Keene; 'Mike Dowling'; jserstad@rmdc.net; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; 'Brian Obert'; 'Andrew Hagemeier'; Cindy Kuns; Loran Frazier; Nick Kaufman; rgibbs@gibbsplanning.com; Kate Dinsmore
Subject: RE: questions for Robert Gibbs' report

Hi all,

We'll get Bob to clarify that data on the grocery stores.

I'll double check the source for the 70% but it's based on all sales not just credit card data; it is a statistic that retail marketing firms and organizations like the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC - the leading organization for retail and shopping center development) use. I was just recently at a conference where a different retail consultant used the same statistic. Since it is a nationally gathered number, not sure if it can be translated to a local number but we'll ask.

Great comments for Bob to clarify in the report.

Tracy

Tracy L. Reich
Executive Director
Helena Business Improvement District

treich@helenabid.com
225 Cruse Avenue, Suite B

Helena, MT 59601

(PH) 406.447.1535
(Fax) 406.447.1533

www.downtownhelena.com

-----Original Message-----

From: Paul Cartwright [mailto:cartwright@montana.com]
Sent: Monday, October 26, 2015 11:20 AM
To: Tracy Reich <treich@helenabid.com>
Cc: 'Dennis McCahon' <galumphant22@gmail.com>; 'Jeremy Keene' <JKeene@wgmggroup.com>; 'Mike Dowling' <mdowling@dsa-mt.com>; jserstad@rmdc.net; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; 'Brian Obert'

<bobert@mbac.biz>; 'Andrew Hagemeier' <landsolutions2@blackfoot.net>; 'Cindy Kuns' <CKuns@wgmgroup.com>; 'Loran Frazier' <lfrazier@wgmgroup.com>; 'Nick Kaufman' <NKaufman@wgmgroup.com>; rgibbs@gibbsplanning.com; 'Kate Dinsmore' <kdinsmore@wgmgroup.com>
Subject: Re: questions for Robert Gibbs' report

Thanks. What prompted my question was the idea of 20,000+ ft2 of new grocery space potentially locating downtown. Right now we probably have less than 300,000 ft2 of grocery space in town (Safeway, two Albertsons, Van's, Super 1, Costco, and WalMart plus the smaller stores.). I can believe the Helena is market is about 10% short of grocery space. But if that 20,000+ figure is for Downtown alone and we assume that Downtown captures 5% of the new growth, that implies Helena currently has way less than half of the grocery floor space it could accommodate, which sounds unlikely. So either I misunderstood something, or more clarification is needed.

As for the 70% figure, I'm guessing that's based on the credit card info Robert mentioned. If so, any idea what percentage of transactions are in cash? And can he tell from the credit card data or whatever what the figure is for Helena?

Paul

On Oct 26, 2015, at 9:58 AM, "Tracy Reich" <treich@helenabid.com> wrote:

> Hi Paul and everyone,
>
> The others can chime in but here's my understanding:
>
> The numbers on square footage are for what Downtown should be able to
> capture. We don't have accurate information right now on all of the
> uses of all of the square footage Downtown right now; DHI and HBID are
> partnering with Carroll College to conduct a "census" for that data
> and more but it will most likely not be completed by the time the
> report
is done.
>
> The 70% number is a national number and refers to anytime a purchase
> is made, so transactions. That percentage has grown steadily on a
> national scale over the last decade.
>
> And yes, all of this will be incorporated into his final report that
> will be included in the Master Plan.
>
> Happy Monday everyone!
> Tracy
>
> Tracy L. Reich
> Executive Director
> Helena Business Improvement District
>
> treich@helenabid.com

> 225 Cruse Avenue, Suite B
>

> Helena, MT 59601
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> (PH) 406.447.1535
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>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Paul Cartwright [mailto:cartwright@montana.com]
> Sent: Sunday, October 25, 2015 7:33 PM
> To: Tracy Reich <treich@helenabid.com>
> Cc: 'Dennis McCahon' <galumphant22@gmail.com>; 'Jeremy Keene'
> <JKeene@wgmgroup.com>; 'Mike Dowling' <mdowling@dsa-mt.com>;
> jserstad@rmdc.net; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org;
> shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; mtnutmeg@gmail.com;
> epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com;
> kybaker@carroll.edu; ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com; SHaugen@helenamt.gov;
> 'Brian Obert'
> <bobert@mbac.biz>; 'Andrew Hagemeyer' <landsolutions2@blackfoot.net>;
> 'Cindy Kuns' <CKuns@wgmgroup.com>; 'Loran Frazier'
> <lfrazier@wgmgroup.com>; 'Nick Kaufman' <NKaufman@wgmgroup.com>;
> rgibbs@gibbsplanning.com; 'Kate Dinsmore'
> <kdinsmore@wgmgroup.com>
> Subject: questions for Robert Gibbs' report
>
> I've decided I'm still not clear on Robert's floor space numbers for
> retail and restaurants, whether they're the potential for all of
> Helena, or only the share of new businesses that could be expected to
> open
> in the downtown.
> Some context on the amount of existing retail and restaurant
> floorspace might be useful. Also, some more explanation of the
> statistic that 70% of purchases are made after 5:00. Is that a
> national figure or for Helena or what? What kind of purchases are
> included in that statistic? Is it referring to number of transactions
> or amount of money spent? I hope all this can be included in his
> final
> report. Thanks.
>
> Paul
>
>

Erica Laferriere

From: Jeremy Keene
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2015 11:50 AM
To: Sumner Sharpe
Cc: Tracy L. Reich (treich@helenabid.com); Bob Gibbs (rgibbs@gibbsplanning.com); Nick Kaufman; Kate Dinsmore; 'Mike Dowling'; 'Andrew Hagemeyer'
Subject: FW: FB comments about downtown
Attachments: ATT00001.htm; FB Comments regarding shopping downtown.docx

Thanks Sumner. This is a great dialog and illustrates Bob's point that shopping today is about convenience.

Parking is obviously one of the critical pieces – I'd like to spend some time with our steering committee working on the idea of metered parking. Bob says this is the only way to get effective turnover in your premium parking locations. Meters could also help with the 1 hour time limit – you can park longer but it will cost more.

Here's what's going on in Missoula - they are upgrading to electronic metering, which will allow them to increase the price the longer you stay. First 2 hours are \$1/hour, then it goes up to \$1.50/hour after that. Someone who parks for 8 hours would pay \$18.50 for the day. That's good incentive to use cheaper long-term parking in the garages.

http://missoulain.com/news/local/city-begins-installing-new-digital-parking-meters-in-downtown-missoula/article_38a32e2e-fa6a-5e5d-8b6c-3b7417ceb21b.html

I think we need to look at something like this for Last Chance Gulch, which could also create a revenue stream that goes back to maintenance and beautification.

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
WGM Group, Inc

150326

From: Sumner Sharpe [mailto:mtnutmeg@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2015 11:15 AM
To: Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmggroup.com>
Subject: Fwd: FB comments about downtown

Hi Jeremy,
The attached is interesting and could be helpful. It was passed on to me.

I also have asked the Helena Citizens Council folks to provide their thoughts about downtown in the future and should be able to get these to you soon.

I also talked with a local Realtor who's a strong downtown supporter and he passed on some of the issues as he sees it; and I'll try to summarize his comments and get those to you as well.

Sumner

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Mike Casey <mcasey@trimacgroup.com>
Date: Fri, Oct 30, 2015 at 10:45 AM
Subject: Fwd: FB comments about downtown
To: Sumner Scharpe <mtnutmeg@gmail.com>

FYI

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jill Roberts <thehawthornjill@gmail.com>
Date: October 22, 2015 at 12:47:41 PM MDT
To: Colleen Casey <thehawthorncolleen@gmail.com>
Subject: Fwd: FB comments about downtown

JILL ROBERTS
THE HAWTHORN, BOTTLE SHOP & TASTING ROOM
46 N. LAST CHANCE GULCH, HELENA, MT 59601
C 917-576-6138 thehawthornjill@gmail.com
W 406-282-0111 www.thehawthornwine.com

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Shalon Hastings** <shalonhastings@hotmail.com>
Date: Thu, Oct 22, 2015 at 7:19 AM
Subject: FB comments about downtown
To: Mike Dowling <mdowling@dsa-mt.com>, Haley Miller <hmillier@helenabid.com>, Rick Ahmann <rick.ahmann@windmere.com>, Donna Torgerson <donna.torgerson@edwardjones.com>, Sandy Schull <info@birdsandbeasleys.com>, Khamsin Bailey <khamsin@gntc.info>, Jill Roberts <thehawthornjill@gmail.com>, Brie <paintedpot@msn.com>

Hi All,

I came across this query post on Helena Classifieds a couple weeks ago. It's fairly timely given the presentation that we just had by Robert Gibbs and the master planning that we are currently doing.

I found the comments to be telling of some perceptions that the Helena public outside of downtown have about downtown. The query was posted by a small business next to General Merc on the 400 block of LCG.

While we know some of the perceptions are incorrect the number of same comments indicates that we have an opportunity for improving our message and getting it to a crowd that is still within the Helena area but has not been to downtown for years. Before we try to market to the broader market area I would suggest that we get a message to an audience that is right here within a 5 mile radius.

Speaking of marketing, has DHI been putting posts about upcoming events on

Helena Classifieds FB page? After coming across this goldmine of intel, if you will, I have been attempting to put a different ad on the Helena Classifieds FB page once a week for each of my businesses and to promote Day of the Dead. For each business I have seen additional likes to each business FB page after a post. At the end of the ad I list my hours to indicate that YES, we are open on the weekends. My goal is to do an ad every 4-5 days.

On a side note, I find it interesting that there are several comments about the lack of a store downtown that would provide opportunity for shopping for necessities, i.e. grocery store. This is what Robert Gibbs was saying in his presentation as well. It's intriguing for me as a thought as I continue to lightly consider a market option but it looks like people would be looking for a broader market rather than specialty plus a few basics which is where my interest lies.

Haley, would you mind forwarding this to Tracy & Dave Hewitt for me? I don't have their email addresses. Everyone, please feel free to forward to others that you think might benefit from seeing how Helenans outside of downtown view downtown.

Shalon

Erica Laferriere

From: Jeremy Keene
Sent: Monday, November 02, 2015 1:40 PM
To: Nick Kaufman; Kate Dinsmore
Cc: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Feedback from Mike Casey, Tri-Mac Realty

Helena DMP Comments
150326

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
WGM Group, Inc

From: Sumner Sharpe [<mailto:mtnutmeg@gmail.com>]
Sent: Saturday, October 31, 2015 10:14 AM
To: Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmggroup.com>
Subject: Feedback from Mike Casey, Tri-Mac Realty

Hi Jeremy,
Mike , in addition to running his realty/leasing business, he and his wife are actively involved with downtown businesses and buildings. He approached me at the first public workshops and I followed up to get his comments, as follows:

City leadership's general Indifference about downtown, especially the Mall: graffiti, broken glass in parking structure (Parking Commission responsibility), general overall upkeep leaves a bad impression. City Parks has responsibility for maintaining landscaping but this is not a high city priority. The BID is responsible for cleaning up and this needs attention.

City Leadership: downtown and the mall is not a high City priority and is not recognized as being different from other commercial zones, such as zoning in downtown adds steps that are not appropriate. For example, recent siting of the Montessori school on the mall required a conditional use permit as the city code requires schools to be located at least X feet from a bar, tavern or place serving alcoholic beverages. This makes it difficult to site certain activities downtown. City should get out of the way (Sumner: maybe a separate downtown zone, esp. for the mall area) as it is different from the other commercial areas. "Let stuff happen", recognizing that downtown is by nature and should be recognized as a more diverse place than the other commercial areas/zones.

There is no clear process for getting through the City's approval process. Need a downtown ombudsman - perhaps the BID should do this. Example: wine bar found out about the needs for additional permits after it opened and this could have been explained at the outset of the permitting process.!

Parking costs are a detriment- "cost exceeds benefits". If a business wants to locate downtown and get parking permits in garage for their employees, He estimates the monthly cost/sq.ft. of a parking space exceeds the monthly tax and utility costs. It was one factor in three new office buildings being built outside the mall and provided their own parking. The cost of parking for employees is a detriment and leads to on-street rollover parking.

Walkability in downtown affected by dead spaces.

Erica Laferriere

From: Erica Laferriere
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:49 AM
To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Steering Committee Meeting Notice

150326

Erica Laferriere
Project Assistant

From: Tracy Reich [mailto:treich@helenabid.com]
Sent: Monday, November 09, 2015 3:59 PM
To: 'Schwochert, Ryan'; Erica Laferriere; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; cartwright@montana.com; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epsht@gmail.com; galumphant22@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; rgibbs@gibbsplanning.com
Cc: Jeremy Keene; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman
Subject: RE: Steering Committee Meeting Notice

Hi Ryan,

Thank you for noticing the new banners the Helena Business Improvement District has installed. Street banners are one of the several projects HBID does Downtown.

I will relay your comments regarding Art Walk to Downtown Helena Inc.; they will appreciate hearing your experience. It was a great evening.

We'll definitely keep you in the loop for the next charrette as well as another steering committee meeting.

Tracy
Tracy L. Reich
Executive Director
Helena Business Improvement District
treich@helenabid.com
225 Cruse Avenue, Suite B
Helena, MT 59601
(PH) 406.447.1535
(Fax) 406.447.1533



www.downtownhelena.com

From: Schwochert, Ryan [<mailto:Ryan.Schwochert@dnvgl.com>]

Sent: Monday, November 09, 2015 3:52 PM

To: Erica Laferriere <elaferriere@wgmggroup.com>; treich@helenabid.com; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; cartwright@montana.com; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epsht@gmail.com; galumphant22@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; rgibbs@gibbsplanning.com

Cc: Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmggroup.com>; Kate Dinsmore <kdinsmore@wgmggroup.com>; Nick Kaufman <NKaufman@wgmggroup.com>

Subject: RE: Steering Committee Meeting Notice

Erica,

My supervisor got pulled out of the office for the next two weeks so I am now the acting supervisor for NWE rebate programs and will be unable to attend next week Monday's Steering Committee Meeting due to a scheduling conflict. Please keep me in the loop for the next Charette..already saw some new banners that I suppose the city has put up along the Gulch.

Also do not know if any of you were out for November 7th Fall Art Walk but the turnout was amazing and I met so many people I had never met before. Quite possibly the busiest I have ever seen the Gulch and surrounding 'Downtown' in my short 5 years living here.

Thank you in advance to all those who will make the meeting and I look forward to contributing via email in the meantime,

Ryan Schwochert

From: Erica Laferriere [<mailto:elaferriere@wgmggroup.com>]

Sent: Thursday, November 05, 2015 11:05 AM

To: treich@helenabid.com; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; cartwright@montana.com; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epsht@gmail.com; galumphant22@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; Schwochert, Ryan; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; rgibbs@gibbsplanning.com

Cc: Jeremy Keene; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman

Subject: Steering Committee Meeting Notice

Hello all,

The next Steering Committee Meeting date has been set for **November 16th**. It will be from 2-4 p.m. with an optional workshop from 4-5 p.m., and will be at the Chamber of Commerce building, 225 Cruse Avenue. Attached is the meeting agenda.

Thank you and hope to see you all there

Erica Laferriere

Project Assistant



1111 E. Broadway
Missoula • MT • 59802
E-mail: Elaferrriere@wgmggroup.com
406-728-4611 x 101 • FAX: 406-728-2476

Erica Laferriere

From: Erica Laferriere
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:48 AM
To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: some thoughts about the plan
Attachments: plan comments 11-17-15.docx

150326

Erica Laferriere
Project Assistant

-----Original Message-----

From: Paul Cartwright [<mailto:cartwright@montana.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, November 17, 2015 2:35 PM

To: Jeremy Keene

Cc: treich@helenabid.com; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; galumphant22@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz;

Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere

Subject: some thoughts about the plan

On the assumption that you can't get your ideas shot down unless you put them on paper, here are my thoughts sparked by yesterday's steering committee meeting.

Paul

Some Starting Points for Writing the Downtown Plan

11-17-15

Jeremy is right: the plan has to come together soon, for better or worse. Realizing that this is one of the few opportunities we have to assert our ideas, now that Google has undermined bar bets, here's a whole mess of stuff that clearly falls in either the better or worse category. Maybe some of it and/or your reactions to it should end up in the plan.

General concepts

The plan is actually dealing with two different neighborhoods: the historic downtown and the Great Northern district. The intersection of Sixth and Last Chance Gulch is 3,300 ft from the intersection of 14th and Great Northern Boulevard, over a half mile. (And the library is another quarter mile south of Sixth and Last Chance.) This is too big an area to treat as one neighborhood.

What these two neighborhoods have in common is a traditional urban form, or, if you will, a built environment that runs counter to suburban codes and development practices. Key elements are a greater percentage of the area covered by buildings (and often higher density use as well), buildings oriented to the street and each other, rather than to the parking lot, and buildings and roads spaced with the assumption that pedestrian traffic is important. (These neighborhoods also have a lot of the community's civic institutions, though I'm not sure if that's a function of their urban form or more a historical accident.)

This infrastructure supports a different public and market ecology than other commercial nodes in the city. Some people seek out this out as a preferred lifestyle, others come as occasional "in-town tourists" to get unique experiences or goods.

The built environment that makes a downtown unique to visit is also what many authorities don't like to deal with full-time: it's crowded, by definition short on parking, has too much old stuff (buildings and infrastructure), tolerates lots of people who aren't The Right Kind and so forth. The whole thing just doesn't match current best practices (which naturally represent the immutable culmination of western civilization and professional wisdom). Of course, all those features could be recast as positives, but the fact is the majority of public, professional and financial bureaucracies don't ~~like~~ feel comfortable with downtowns.

The goal of the plan should be to maintain and increase the downtown-ness of the built environment. The plan should aim:

- 1) To persuade retail operations of the benefits of specific areas of the downtown and/or specific ways of building or renovating.
- 2) To convince public and private gatekeepers (aka, regulators and bankers) of how the intent of their standards can still be met substantially even with downtown infrastructure.
- 3) To set general (and maybe specific) forms for infrastructure development in the downtown.

I didn't mention residential or office space users because I think enough are already convinced of the merits of downtown location, assuming the financials pencil (but see point 2 above). I'm open to counter-arguments on that.

I also didn't mention marketing the Helena-area public on the merits of downtown, as a downtown. I think the downtown is too varied to encapsulate in a succinct marketing campaign like you could do for a commercial-residential neighborhood in a big urban area. And I at least don't see much future for an ad campaign based on "vibrant" and "historical". Not much different than being in favor of good stuff and against bad stuff.

Given the current not all that high population density in the surrounding neighborhoods, and the number of people likely to move downtown even under the best scenario, businesses can't depend on pedestrian traffic to keep them alive. Nonetheless, these "local" people are important because they seed the street scene, making it less likely that somebody coming in from other neighborhoods will find totally empty streets. So infrastructure to encourage people to live or walk downtown is still necessary, even if not sufficient, for a healthy downtown.

Specific ideas

In no particular order, here are some specific ideas to illustrate the above concepts (or, if you're so inclined, which demonstrate that those concepts make no sense.) These may be more background for the plan than contents of it.

I wish the old Federal Building was something else. At \$10 million assessed value, it's unlikely to be bought as a tear-down. But something like a college or tech school, which would have more people coming and going during the day, as well as more people available for hanging out between classes, would be nice. Residential would be good, too.

Would the community and funding agencies be interested in moving RMDC to Central School? The buildings are about the same size and the Central location is closer to more clients than the current one. Then could the current Neighborhood Center be remodeled as housing?

The acre or two at Cruse and Park that was supposed to be an overpass should be sold for housing immediately.

That depressed parking lot across from the Iron Front Hotel would be useful for parking on the 400 block, assuming suitable parking could be arranged for the Carriage House Condos (previously Grimes). Yes, there's an argument for more retail in that lot to complete the street front; however, I don't think there's been any commercial activity there since the White Dove Lunch diner was moved in the 1950s, so the block has pretty much adapted to the way it is.

Last Chance Gulch north of Sixth should be converted to two-way traffic. One-way, at least on that stretch, wasn't necessary when it was implemented in the 1950s and it isn't necessary now. The problem with delivery trucks needs to be addressed, but it's been overstated.

Mini-malfuction should be reconfigured. I like the idea of ending Cruse at 11th to make the intersection four legs again. Since Cruse carries maybe 2500 vehicles per day, it's not like you're risking all that much, though getting signaling and stacking right will take some thought. This change also would facilitate redeveloping parts of Cruse further south.

Neill Ave is the seam between the two downtown neighborhoods. While there's lots of talk about the difficulty of crossing Neill, I think the bigger problem is there's nothing particularly interesting to cross to, on either side. The Federal Reserve has downsized significantly and there are rumors about it disappearing completely. It would be nice to repurpose that building as a civic space instead of an office space, in hopes of more public traffic. (Contemporary Art building for the Historical Society, anyone?) I recall a story that the Chamber of Commerce donated some of the land the building sits on, which if true would establish at least a modest claim by the community on the building. On the south side of the street, Hill and Womens parks are pretty but they work against the cohesiveness of the neighborhood. (Remember, even Jane Jacobs doubted the merits of parks in some locations.) Somebody at the charrette suggested turning Hill Park into residential. That (and maybe also adding some market space in place of the radio station?) would put more eyes on the street and on Womens Park, thereby dealing with some of the real or perceived problems there.

Front St. rather than Last Chance Gulch, should be conceived of as the main north-south axis of the Great Northern district. Last Chance Gulch is on the eastern edge of that neighborhood, which is a weird place to put your main axis. Plus that street is developing as an office area. These are needed in a downtown but they don't always lend themselves to being vibrant public space. There's plenty of room for infill development west of Last Chance Gulch. The offices then become the source of customers for retail down below them.

Bike traffic from Centennial Trail/Carroll should be sent down Front, since it's a more direct route, soon (?) to have more activity on it, and ties nicely into Fuller. The traffic on Neill comes in pulses, because of the two nearby lights, so there may be fewer conflicts with crossing there than some anticipate.

I'm leery of a dedicated pathway for bikes on Front. First there's the expense and the real estate. More to the point, a trip route is only successful as its weakest link. If you have riders who are uncomfortable riding in the kind of traffic likely to be on the street (slow and not all that much) without a separate lane, it's not clear to me how they'll ever get to Front Street from many places in town. There are downtowns with separate bike lanes on their streets but they have tens of thousands of cars per day as well on those streets. Front Street is never going to be like Prospect Park West in Brooklyn. Perhaps a very wide sidewalk would be a better alternative under the circumstances.

Reported bike-car collisions are not all that common in the downtown: the Transportation Plan shows three in three years, with another two sort of near downtown. Safety concerns don't look excessive. That said, those hills into the downtown make amateur bike riders nervous. I'm not sure what could be done to improve safety and/or the feeling of safety (not to mention the uphill pull) but that problem should go on the list.

Signs pointing to the Historic Downtown/Great Northern District should be mandatory on Last Chance Gulch at N. Montana and at Lyndale. Something ought to be done for the east and west traffic as well, though positioning those on Prospect and Euclid/Lyndale will be trickier.

While I recognize the idea of our gold mining history could provide a unifying concept for our downtown, I doubt if many locals know or care about that history. And it's not like we have visible reminders, like they do in Butte.

Parking is always going to be a problem. As soon as you expand it, either more people come because the downtown is worth coming to and parking gets short again, or fewer people come because all downtown has is parking lots. For comparison, the Wal-Mart lot is 500 ft deep, the Home Depot lot is 300 feet deep and the 400 block of Last Chance is almost 500 ft long. If you're pedestrian-oriented, it's harder to get lots of parking downtown as close as at the box stores. And if you're car oriented, with lots of parking, the box stores can do it better (for instance, see urban renewal). A smarter and more immediate goal would be to make the parking process as painless as it can be, with consistent and easy ways of paying. Whether that means credit card or phone, I don't know, but the current methods, especially on the lots, are frustrating.

Would a downtown app, showing parking and stores in any immediate area, be attractive to shoppers? I don't know.

I like Gates' suggestion of expensive street parking and cheap lot and garage parking.

The idea of a uniform central business district zoning code is attractive, especially one that is form-based like Sharon suggested. Other than thinking buildings should be required to sit on the front lot line and encouraged to use zero-lot lines on the sides, I don't have specific suggestions, but others probably do.

Erica Laferriere

From: Erica Laferriere
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:48 AM
To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Steering Committee - Next Steps
Attachments: August.rtf

150326

Erica Laferriere
Project Assistant

From: Dennis McCahon [<mailto:galumphant22@gmail.com>]
Sent: Saturday, November 21, 2015 3:47 PM
To: Sumner Sharpe
Cc: Jeremy Keene; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; cartwright@montana.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland
Subject: Re: Steering Committee - Next Steps

Here are a few more comments on our plan.

On Fri, Nov 20, 2015 at 7:04 PM, Sumner Sharpe <mtnutmeg@gmail.com> wrote:
Dec. 15 at 2pm works for me.
Sumner

On Fri, Nov 20, 2015 at 6:35 PM, Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmggroup.com> wrote:

Hi All,

Following up on our Steering Committee meeting this week:

- Several of you asked to see examples of other Downtown Master Plans to get an idea of what our final product will look like. Here's a link to a number of plans we have looked at (and helped prepare). You'll see that there is no formula – each plan takes on its own unique character depending on the needs and budgets. A couple that we think are similar to what you should expect for Helena are Great Falls, Hamilton, and Kalispell. <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/cb7msig3hb3ejhx/AAANxx-sFNO7Cr6Gz8c7XzBoa?dl=0>
- Next, we'd like to get back together with you **December 15th, 2-4 pm**. Please check your calendars and let us know if that date works. This meeting will be for us to present our draft recommendations for your feedback, so please try to attend.

- We have tentatively scheduled the **final Public Charrette for January 26th**. Our goal is to have a Draft Plan by that time.
- We will also schedule a separate meeting in January to look at design alternatives for Front Street. We'll include the Steering Committee as well as Front Street businesses and landowners.
- Finally, Ed Stevenson informed us that he is unable to continue serving on the Steering Committee due to other commitments. Thanks for your service, Ed, we hope you'll continue to lend your support to the plan in the future.

Wishing all of you a safe and Happy Thanksgiving,

Jeremy

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
Principal Engineer



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Missoula • MT • 59802
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<http://www.wgmggroup.com>

150326

I came away from the November 16th Steering Committee meeting feeling the need to better explain my walking-biking "main street" suggestion.

First though, I agree with almost everything said in Paul Cartwright's e-mail of November 17th; though I have a problem with the first paragraph under his "General concepts" heading. I don't think that the distance from one part of our study area to another, or even from one end of it to the other, makes it too big to treat as one neighborhood; especially in light of the commonalities described in his following paragraphs.

I suppose it depends on one's definition of "neighborhood". I'm thinking in terms of pedestrian circulation and the urban connectivity that only pedestrian circulation can assure. My "neighborhood" is whatever appears to be within an agreeable walk of where I happen to be standing -- and whether it expands or contracts depends less on simple distance than with what I see in front of me. I want it to expand. I want that invitation to keep walking from one sort of land-use to the next. That's connectivity.

We've got the concentration of attractions and the raw proximity patterns needed to make walking around outdoors, throughout our study area, an efficient and useful thing to do; but the trick is to make it a more attractive (enjoyable) thing to do. I can't help but think that we'll walk farther and more often if we can pull that off.

So, I suggested a walking-biking "main street". This would be nothing more than a single corridor, chosen from among many possibilities, which best connects, more-or-less in a line, the following:

- 1) Places where pedestrian traffic already tends to concentrate on a daily basis (Last Chance Gulch, for example, from Placer Street to the Library),
- 2) Places where pedestrian traffic often concentrates for special events (Womens' Park, Pioneer Park, Centennial Park, Last Chance Gulch again, etc.),
- 3) Places where we might expect pedestrian traffic to concentrate, given proximity of attractions, if specific physical links were provided or improved (Lyndale underpass, Neill Avenue crossing at Front Street, points of potential connection to trail system, etc),
- 4) Attractions that can only be appreciated by exercising a pedestrian's freedom to respond, at will, to his or her surroundings (interesting architecture, historic sites, museums, outdoor art, special landscaping features, unique viewpoints, etc.).

The reason for choosing a single corridor is that it'll focus our efforts -- and to choose a corridor which already serves a fair amount of pedestrian traffic and which already includes a big share of the attractions listed above will enable us to make maximum advantage of what's already going for us. We should go first for "low-hanging fruit".

The focused efforts would include (but would certainly not be limited to) the following:

- A) The actual provision and improvement of the physical links mentioned under point (3) above,
- B) The purposeful placement of such amenities as public art and landscaping features (there's a shared interest between artists and pedestrians: Artists want their stuff to be seen, and pedestrians want something to see. Also, urban landscaping only makes sense when it's used to define and shape pedestrian spaces. Trees, for example, are expensive. We can best get our money's worth of enjoyment if the trees are placed where people walk or where we want them to walk),
- C) The promotion of directed guides or "walking tours" for tourists or for anyone else interested in our architecture or history or that "critical mass of shopping and dining in a walkable context".

The objective, and measure of success, would be an increase in pedestrian traffic along the corridor and along routes leading to it -- especially pedestrian "through traffic" from one key point along the corridor to another -- which should be a good thing for anyone who'd benefit from more people walking past the front door.

Finally, I can think of all sorts of good reasons why we should walk more and drive less, running the gamut of the environmental sciences, social sciences and liberal arts -- but the one which seems most apropos is that we simply can't do anything downtown (spend money, that is) until we're there on foot.

Erica Laferriere

From: Erica Laferriere
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:48 AM
To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Steering Committee - Next Steps
Attachments: Downtown Master Plan Comments.docx

Erica Laferriere 150326

Project Assistant

From: Sumner Sharpe [<mailto:mtnutmeg@gmail.com>]
Sent: Sunday, November 22, 2015 7:08 AM
To: Dennis McCahon
Cc: Jeremy Keene; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; cartwright@montana.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland
Subject: Re: Steering Committee - Next Steps

Here are my suggestions for a formatting concept for the plan, based on the characteristics of the downtown area, both inside and outside the BID boundaries.

Sumner

On Sat, Nov 21, 2015 at 3:46 PM, Dennis McCahon <galumphant22@gmail.com> wrote:
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couple that we think are similar to what you should expect for Helena are Great Falls, Hamilton, and Kalispell. <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/cb7msig3hb3ejhx/AAANxx-sFNO7Cr6Gz8c7XzBoa?dl=0>

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Wishing all of you a safe and Happy Thanksgiving,

Jeremy

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
Principal Engineer



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<http://www.wgmggroup.com>

150326

Downtown Master Plan Comments

It seems to me that the word “downtown” to describe what the plan addresses could be misleading. It seems to me there are two or three major perspectives which tend to get mixed together and, at least in my mind, create confusion and make it difficult to focus the plan’s vision and recommended goals and strategies.

1. First of all, the BID’s focus is on what I would call the “ City Center” which includes:
 - a. The historic Last Chance Gulch-centered downtown area and environs;
and
 - b. The Great Northern Town Center and environs.

These two centers create a unique “City Center” with represent attractive and interesting but different eras of “urban” retail, office, and residential areas in close proximity. I suspect there are few other cities of Helena’s size and history which have this combination of city center options.

2. Connectivity between the historic downtown and Great Northern Town Center and future development in the environs that relate to or affect these two activity centers, which are included within the BID boundaries
3. Areas and concerns outside the “City Center” such as: surrounding development and neighborhoods; City-County Building, Reeder’s Alley, the west side of Park Avenue, the Cathedral and Methodist Church, Central school, Carroll College, County Courthouse and Myrna Loy; way-finding signage; and multi-modal connectivity to and from the “Central City” to other parts of Helena.

Note: this is how I see it, and I believe that if you ask citizens and the public about “downtown” they or most would interpret this to mean the historic downtown area (say from mini-malfunction junction south to or past the library, and east and west of Last Chance Gulch. How far east and west may be open to discussion, but

for the plan's purposes this includes the areas surrounding the historic downtown area and environs defined by the BID boundaries.

So with these geographic distinctions in mind, the plan can describe overall goals and strategies, and then more explicitly describe goals and policies that apply to each of the areas.

For example (no priorities meant by this list):

Is parking seen as a problem outside the historic downtown? Does it apply to the Great Northern Town Center? What about parking meters and differential pricing?

Way finding is primarily an issue outside of or on the edges of the "City Center".

A two-way street and a special zoning district for downtown seems to be applicable only in the historic downtown area.

Connectivity between the historic downtown and Great Northern Town Center is within the "City Center", as are new retail activities. consistent street lighting, etc.

Should a marketing coordinator working with potential developers and retailers, if established, only focus on the historic downtown or for the entire City Center/BID area.

Would a public market be considered anywhere in the "City Center" or only within the historic downtown?

Are new housing opportunities is a topic to be proposed in the "City Center" as well as in areas/neighborhoods near to "City Center" .

Filing gaps between buildings seems to be primarily a historic downtown concern; and activating, cleaning up, repairing and maintaining the mall is only in this geographic area.

Bike and pedestrian movement to and within the BID is of concern in all of the geographic areas. (As a side note, I don't feel trying to designate a separate bike path for only part of the area makes sense. Improved bike and pedestrian access and connections, for the most part, will utilize and improve or add on to existing streets, alleys, stairs, etc. through a variety of methods.).

Expanding BID boundaries outside of the "City Center" might also be a consideration.

Finally, I hope the plan will include an implementation strategy which prioritizes these projects and decisions , such as: short term (1-3 years; mid-term (3-5 years); and longer term (5-8 years). For example: Short term could include the most doable catalytic projects and actions, and could include getting started on projects which have a longer time frame. It should also include a delineation of the public, BID/DHI/HPC, and private roles and responsibilities in implementing the plan.

I hope this is helpful and offers some guidance as to how the plan might be structured..

Erica Laferriere

From: Erica Laferriere
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:47 AM
To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Steering Committee - Next Steps

Erica Laferriere
Project Assistant

From: Dennis McCahon [<mailto:galumphant22@gmail.com>]
Sent: Sunday, November 29, 2015 1:24 PM
To: Paul Cartwright
Cc: Melinda Barnes; Sumner Sharpe; Jeremy Keene; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; Alan Nicholson; Ed Stevenson; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; Daniel Lloyd; Kyle Baker; ryan.schwochert@dnvql.com; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; Brian Obert; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; Andrew Hagemeier; Erica Laferriere; Mike Dowling; Tracy Reich; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland
Subject: Re: Steering Committee - Next Steps

Regarding Melinda's question of whether we were supposed to each come up with our list of top five priorities, I don't remember if we were expected to do so or not -- but it's a good idea regardless, so here are mine:

- How do we optimize pedestrian connectivity among the various parts of Downtown and between Downtown and nearby generators of pedestrian traffic?
- How do we make Downtown an all-season, all-weather, weekday-weekend, daytime-evening place to enjoy afoot?
(As I ask this, I'm goaded a bit by our current temperature inversion.)
- Regarding Way-finding for motorists, how do we devise "entrances" to Downtown that are also invitations to park and get out on foot?
- Regarding Cruse Avenue, how do we turn a sow's ear into a silk purse -- for pedestrians and motorists alike?
- Where, and how, do we get more housing Downtown and within walking distance of Downtown?

These five questions are in no particular order, they overlap in all sorts of ways, and each one suggests a number of possible "catalyst projects" and topics of study. They can also be lumped under a single heading question -- How the heck can we together come up with a working consensus regarding Downtown's real, and most immediately potential, strengths as a place to visit and do business? I think we have to venture out afoot to do so, but -- I gladly admit -- that's my bias and my probable blind-spot.

On Fri, Nov 27, 2015 at 3:44 PM, Paul Cartwright <cartwright@montana.com> wrote:
Neat article, Melinda. I lived in Evanston for a while way back when and have visited there in recent years. Quite the change.

In terms of planning for downtown, the article inspired two thoughts. First, the case for transit in Helena isn't immediately obvious. Evanston has a population density of 9574 people per square mile and sits in a metro area of many millions. Helena has a density of 1,736 people per square mile and sits in a metro of something over 60,000 people. I'll defer to anybody who's actually studied transit, but I don't see how we can count on transit being too much more than a social service, essential for the community but basically a niche transportation

alternative. Nonetheless, TOD design may have something to tell us about parking. The city could consider further decreases in on-site parking requirements for multi-family housing that is within walking distance of commercial or employment nodes. Even if Helena lacks the transit to allow many people to choose to be without any car, locations that allow a substantial number of trips to be made on foot don't need the same parking requirements as neighborhoods that are impractical for households without a car. Some percentage of households in those locations could get by with only one vehicle (and some with none). This would apply to the downtown, and to certain other areas of Helena as well.

Paul

On Nov 25, 2015, at 8:26 AM, Melinda Barnes <melinda@bikewalkmontana.org> wrote:

At the last meeting, we had a discussion on parking and how there needs to be 'ample and sufficient parking', whatever that may mean. Well, here is a very interesting article about parking and how one town addressed this, which had a dramatic effect on revitalizing their downtown. It's a lengthy article and the real meat of it begins on page 3 – it's really worth reading. <http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/10/evanston-illinois-what-works-213282?o=4> Also, I don't think we have really discussed transit which should also be brought into the conversation as a way to make our downtown even more accessible to people.

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Melinda

Erica Laferriere

From: Erica Laferriere
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:47 AM
To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Steering Committee - Next Steps

150326

Erica Laferriere
Project Assistant

From: Dennis McCahon [mailto:galumphant22@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, December 06, 2015 4:35 PM
To: Paul Cartwright
Cc: Melinda Barnes; Sumner Sharpe; Jeremy Keene; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; Alan Nicholson; Ed Stevenson; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; Daniel Lloyd; Kyle Baker; ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; Brian Obert; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; Andrew Hagemeister; Erica Laferriere; Mike Dowling; Tracy Reich; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland
Subject: Re: Steering Committee - Next Steps

Let me exercise my pro-pedestrian bias one more time.

I know that most people downtown get there by car, and that they'll keep doing so, but that's no reason not to assign a high priority to figuring out how to strengthen downtown's pedestrian appeal -- especially since it doesn't imply weakening its car appeal. The more appealing it is to walk, in fact, the more efficient use we can make of downtown's limited parking space.

The most compelling reason to think like a pedestrian is that we can't begin to deal productively with downtown's connectivity, character, tourism potential, "street-life" potential, or potential as any sort of cohesive destination until we do so. "Place" isn't a drive-through experience, and at some point we've got to seriously start thinking outside the car.

My suggestion for a pedestrian-bicycle "main street" is an attempt to do so. It's nothing more than the suggestion that we link, in as direct a line as possible, downtown's existing, and most immediately potential, concentrators of pedestrian traffic. At the moment I'm thinking of Front Street, as opposed to Last Chance north of Neill, as the way to link the Great Northern area (along with the Carroll campus and Centennial Park) to the older downtown south of Neill.

From a pedestrian viewpoint, Front offers the most direct shot from the Great Northern Town Center and its Lyndale underpass to the Women's Park area and its link to the 400 Block. It's about as short a route as we can get, and the linkages at either end can be assured by improving access to, and the visual appeal of, the Lyndale underpass and by establishing the Neill crossing as already proposed in the "Greening" study and elsewhere.

Last Chance north of Neill, on the other hand, is a long right-angle jog from the Lyndale underpass, and isn't exactly a straight shot to Women's Park either. The Lyndale-Last Chance intersection, despite its proximity to Memorial Park, is a pedestrian no-man's-land, and it's hard to imagine how it can be made otherwise -- while Little Malfunction Junction, an abrupt north end of walkable downtown now, will remain more of a barrier than a through-way to anybody not in a car.

Last Chance north of Neill will remain "Main Street" for motorists, if for no other reason than that it's part of the arterial network, but unless it becomes a concentrator of pedestrian traffic in its own right (like the 400 and 300 Blocks south of Neill) I don't think we can expect it to function also as Main Street for people on foot. At present it's behaving more as a 1960s-style highway strip than as a traditional pedestrian-friendly Main Street, and seems to be enjoying it. I think that Front has a much better shot at pedestrian-friendliness, due to its connections, and should be encouraged to take it.

Incidentally, and still with pedestrian connectivity in mind, our recent weather offered an opportunity to employ the old walkway-planner's trick of going out after a snowfall to see where the most heavily-used foot trails appear. A few I've noticed are a diagonal across Pioneer Park from the Mall at the southeast corner of the Library to the Park Avenue crossing opposite Reeder's Alley, and a short steep one at the northwest corner of the Post-Office parking lot, made by folks crossing from the Main Street area to the Women's Park area.

Finally, one more spontaneous foot-trail that deserves our attention is the one dropping from the Carroll campus to the Lyndale underpass, across that artificial talus slope behind the TV station. It's well-established and heavily-used, in all seasons, despite nobody's permission, the lack of any sort of formal link to either the campus or Centennial Park walkway system, and its sometimes-tricky footing. It shows, I think, that lots of folks want to walk from the Carroll campus toward downtown, by way of the Lyndale underpass -- what traffic-planners used to call a "desire line". The desires of these intrepid pedestrians, and others like them, deserve our recognition.

On Sun, Nov 29, 2015 at 1:23 PM, Dennis McCahon <galumphant22@gmail.com> wrote:

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Melinda

Erica Laferriere

From: Erica Laferriere
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:47 AM
To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Don't forget - join us next week for "(Re)Building Downtown"

150326

Erica Laferriere
Project Assistant

From: Alan Nicholson [<mailto:alan@gntc.info>]
Sent: Wednesday, December 09, 2015 11:00 PM
To: melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; Alan Nicholson; cartwright@montana.com; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; galumphant22@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz
Cc: Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland
Subject: FW: Don't forget - join us next week for "(Re)Building Downtown"

Folks,

This looks worthwhile. You can join the webinar below.

Alan

From: info=smartgrowthamerica.org@mail.salsalabs.net
[<mailto:info=smartgrowthamerica.org@mail.salsalabs.net>] **On Behalf Of** Chris Zimmerman, Smart Growth America
Sent: Wednesday, December 09, 2015 9:40 AM
To: Alan Nicholson <alan@gntc.info>
Subject: Don't forget - join us next week for "(Re)Building Downtown"

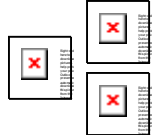


Alan—

Have you registered yet for [the online kickoff](#) of our new guidebook on downtown revitalization?

(Re)Building Downtown: A Guidebook for Revitalization is a forthcoming guide designed to be used by any community, no matter their size, to bring people and businesses back to downtown. It lays out in straightforward language seven main steps communities can take, with specific tasks and ideas to consider along the way.

As part of next week's release, we'll be holding [a kickoff webinar](#) all about downtown revitalization. Join us on Monday, December 14, 2015 at 1:00 PM EST to discuss the strategies outlined in this new guide, hear about cities that are in the midst of revitalization, and ask questions about your own revitalization work:



Reinvesting in downtown can expand economic opportunity, create a culture of engagement among residents, and make your city stand out within the region. It is also an opportunity to improve how your community achieves the triple-bottom-line goals of equity, economy, and environment.

Webinar registrants will be the first to receive the new guide when it comes out. [Register for Monday's kickoff event](#) to learn from and ask questions of our downtown revitalization experts, and to get an advance copy.

Sincerely,

Chris Zimmerman,
Vice President for Economic Development
Smart Growth America



You have received this email from Smart Growth America. [Click here to manage your subscription or unsubscribe.](#)

Erica Laferriere

From: Erica Laferriere
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:47 AM
To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Steering Committee - Next Meeting December 15th
Attachments: Vision Document Alan Dec 2015 DRAFT.docx

150326

Erica Laferriere
Project Assistant

From: Alan Nicholson [mailto:alan@gntc.info]
Sent: Sunday, December 13, 2015 9:41 PM
To: Jeremy Keene; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; cartwright@montana.com; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; galumphant22@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz
Cc: Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland
Subject: RE: Steering Committee - Next Meeting December 15th

Everybody,

I have attached my remarks. I didn't get through the whole plan nor did I really refine my ideas yet. Of course, I borrowed (plagiarized?) freely from everybody who wrote in since our last meeting.

See you tomorrow.

Alan

From: Jeremy Keene [mailto:JKeene@wgmggroup.com]
Sent: Tuesday, December 08, 2015 4:24 PM
To: melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; Alan Nicholson <alan@gntc.info>; cartwright@montana.com; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; galumphant22@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz
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Subject: Steering Committee - Next Meeting December 15th
Importance: High

Hi All,

We will reconvene the Downtown Master Plan Steering Committee next **Tuesday, December 15th, 2:00-4:00 pm, City/County Building Room 426, 316 N Park Ave.** Please note the change of location.

The primary goal of this meeting will be to get feedback on our draft recommendations prior to the public meeting in January. Thanks to those of you who provided comments and suggestions – we will do our best to incorporate those ideas in our recommendations.

An agenda and minutes from the last meeting are attached. We hope you'll be able to attend.

Thanks,

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
WGM Group, Inc

150326

From: Jeremy Keene

Sent: Friday, November 20, 2015 6:36 PM

To: 'melinda@bikewalkmontana.org' <melinda@bikewalkmontana.org>; 'shalonhastings@hotmail.com' <shalonhastings@hotmail.com>; 'alan@gntc.info' <alan@gntc.info>; 'cartwright@montana.com' <cartwright@montana.com>; 'mtnutmeg@gmail.com' <mtnutmeg@gmail.com>; 'epshmt@gmail.com' <epshmt@gmail.com>; 'galumphant22@gmail.com' <galumphant22@gmail.com>; 'sidgodolphin2@gmail.com' <sidgodolphin2@gmail.com>; 'lloydaniel@gmail.com' <lloydaniel@gmail.com>; 'kybaker@carroll.edu' <kybaker@carroll.edu>; 'ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com' <ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com>; 'SHaugen@helenamt.gov' <SHaugen@helenamt.gov>; 'bobert@mbac.biz' <bobert@mbac.biz>
Cc: Kate Dinsmore <kdinsmore@wgmggroup.com>; Nick Kaufman <NKaufman@wgmggroup.com>; 'landsolutions2@blackfoot.net' <landsolutions2@blackfoot.net>; Erica Laferriere <elaferriere@wgmggroup.com>; 'mdowling@dsa-mt.com' <mdowling@dsa-mt.com>; 'treich@helenabid.com' <treich@helenabid.com>; Loran Frazier <lfrazier@wgmggroup.com>; 'Ryan Leland' <RLeland@helenamt.gov>
Subject: Steering Committee - Next Steps

Hi All,

Following up on our Steering Committee meeting this week:

- Several of you asked to see examples of other Downtown Master Plans to get an idea of what our final product will look like. Here's a link to a number of plans we have looked at (and helped prepare). You'll see that there is no formula – each plan takes on its own unique character depending on the needs and budgets. A couple that we think are similar to what you should expect for Helena are Great Falls, Hamilton, and Kalispell. <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/cb7msig3hb3ejhx/AAANxx-sFNO7Cr6Gz8c7XzBoa?dl=0>
- Next, we'd like to get back together with you **December 15th, 2-4 pm**. Please check your calendars and let us know if that date works. This meeting will be for us to present our draft recommendations for your feedback, so please try to attend.
- We have tentatively scheduled the **final Public Charrette for January 26th**. Our goal is to have a Draft Plan by that time.
- We will also schedule a separate meeting in January to look at design alternatives for Front Street. We'll include the Steering Committee as well as Front Street businesses and landowners.
- Finally, Ed Stevenson informed us that he is unable to continue serving on the Steering Committee due to other commitments. Thanks for your service, Ed, we hope you'll continue to lend your support to the plan in the future.

Wishing all of you a safe and Happy Thanksgiving,
Jeremy

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
Principal Engineer



1111 E. Broadway
Missoula • MT • 59802
E-mail: JKeene@wgmggroup.com
406-728-4611 x 131 • FAX: 406-728-2476

<http://www.wgmggroup.com>

150326

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Downtown Vision

Downtown Helena is the economic, cultural, and social center of the community. The rich history of mining, railroad industry, and agriculture shape a spectacular 19th century downtown that continues to define the identity of Montana's capital city. Residents and visitors enjoy active lifestyles, walkable neighborhoods, and a strong connection to Helena's trails, parks, and outdoor activities. Mild summer evenings and crisp winter days make Downtown Helena a year-round destination for businesses, customers, and residents that are looking for quality of life, history, services, and entertainment in a safe and friendly environment.

The Downtown Helena Master Plan builds on Downtown's past success, leveraging its unique sense of place and historic identity to create **and prepare for** new opportunities in a changing marketplace **and provide a clear path for leadership to successfully implement the plan.**

- ✓ ~~creating a high quality, desirable place to do business, work, and live;~~
- ✓ ~~connecting Downtown to the community and the outdoor environment;~~
- ✓ ~~creating strong connections to the capital and government workforce;~~
- ✓ ~~aligning the plan with foreseeable development opportunities; and,~~
- ✓ .

The VISION.

What do each of us hope for and want for our downtown? What is "DOWNTOWN" about.

We see Downtown as the HEART of HELENA serving to strengthen our sense of community and exemplify our shared values.

- **We seek to strengthen the economic base and vitality of Downtown.**
- **We seek to preserve Helena's history while creating 21st Century work, living and open spaces together with contemporary communication infrastructure and services.**
- **We seek to increase our variety of shops, professional services, eating establishments and other businesses while preserving Downtown's unique sense of community, place and historic identity**
- **We seek to encourage and respect pedestrian and biking activity by enhancing interesting routes among and between areas in and accessible from the Downtown while separating them, to the extent possible, from automobiles.**

- We seek to model sustainability of our built infrastructure and our shared values.
- We seek to make the Downtown a healthy and satisfying place to live and work with quality entertainment and worthwhile educational experiences.
- We seek to enhance the opportunity for citizens to pursue active and productive lifestyles through preservation and creation of walkable neighborhoods and strong connections to Helena's trails, parks, and outdoor activities.

Downtown Goals

Downtown goals were derived from the issues and ideas identified in the public outreach process. These goals represent the big picture guiding principles for the Master Plan and provide a framework for the specific objectives and strategies included.

- Goal 1: Make Downtown a Premier Destination**
- Goal 2: Connect Downtown to the Community**
- Goal 3: Activate Downtown**
- Goal 4: Preserve & Enhance Downtown Character**
- Goal 5: Optimize Parking**

We might consider adding to and refining the Goals.
Some strategies may need to be more specific.

Implementation Strategies

Goal 1: Make Downtown a Premier Destination for people living in or near Helena and visitors.

Objective: Emphasize Downtown as the historic, cultural, entertainment, educational and economic center of the Helena community. Include Carroll College

Strategies

- Promote these attributes through signage, social and other media, publications, parades, fairs and regularly scheduled programs and events.
- Create and broadly proclaim a coherent and consistent branding strategy as the “Heart of Helena”
- Strategically market Downtown in and outside of Helena
- Ascertain and articulate Downtown's competitive advantages
- Seek “quality of life” businesses and employers that “fit”.

Objective: Make Downtown easy to find and navigate

Strategies

- Create gateways and wayfinding at key locations
- Extend downtown architecture to define edges and entries
- Provide clear, identifiable and well lit routes to key destinations with consistent signs for trails, historically significant locations, historic buildings, street names, etc.
- Create a single map for downtown wayfinding, parking, and attractions and distribute and display it widely.
- Incorporate technology (Google, GPS navigation, etc.)
- Eliminate one way streets.
-

Objective: Make Downtown safe, attractive, and inviting

Strategies

- Work with the city to make the walking mall safe and attractive.
- Create conifer gardens and “splashy” plant and flower beds.
- Improve and repair building facades. awnings and windows.
- Signs, signs, signs...wayfinding, narrative, storytelling and colorful.
- Encourage street vendors, performers and demonstrations.
- Make intimate spaces, paint wall murals and create interest.
- Lots of banners and flags

- **Bring buildings “outside”**
- Update landscaping and public plazas
- Evaluate park space for appropriate use and function
- Identify, prioritize, and correct accessibility barriers
- Improve lighting **for safety, emphasis, mood, and wayfinding.**
- Provide security, foot patrols, bike patrols
- Identify funding for **improvements such as historic façade restoration, awnings, banners, signs including sidewalk signs and streetscaping.**

Objective: Address deferred maintenance and jurisdictional issues

Strategies

- Identify funding for maintenance
- Clarify/simplify agency responsibilities
- **Create incentives for merchants and buildings to adopt areas and features to maintain and improve.**

Goal 2: Connect Downtown to the Community

Objective: Focus on Moving People

Strategies

- Define **and sign** primary pedestrian **and bike** routes
- Define **and sign** primary auto/truck routes
- **Paint, engrave or inlay sidewalks and streets to show routes.**
- Develop a comprehensive network of bike routes, bike lanes, and separated trails
 - Link neighborhoods, employment centers, amenities, and destinations.
 - Connect trails and open space
- Strengthen transit service in Downtown
 - Special events
 - Employee bus pass programs
 - Circulator trolley

Objective: Strengthen connection between the Walking Mall and the Great Northern Town Center

Strategies

- Create a continuous downtown streetscape along Last Chance **Gulch to 6th and then down Neill and along Front Street.**
- Address the pedestrian crossing barrier at Neill **with a dramatic and obvious solution**
- Prepare a traffic feasibility study to convert Last Chance Gulch to two-way traffic and simplify the Last Chance/Neill/Cruse/Helena Intersection
- Evaluate the cost/benefit of a circulator trolley
- **Consider public and private development of parts of the 2 parks along Front Street and create an exciting path primarily for pedestrian and bike traffic (with an acknowledgement to cars) South along Front Street to 11th.**

Objective: Strengthen connection to historic residential neighborhoods

NEEDS LOTS OF WORK – this is as far as I got.

Strategies

- Improve comfort, safety, and accessibility along primary pedestrian routes
- Add buildings along key corridors to eliminate gaps in the urban form where parking currently exists
- Identify locations and design options for improved pedestrian crossings on major road corridors

- Improve and add additional pedestrian walkways/stairs connecting to Walking Mall/Last Chance Gulch
- Create a functional/architectural connection between Downtown and the historic 6th Ward/Railroad District along Helena Avenue

DRAFT

Objective: Strengthen connection to Carroll College

Strategies

- Create a new trail connection from Lyndale underpass to campus/dorms
- Improve attractiveness, visibility, and lighting of the Lyndale underpass
- Emphasize pedestrian crossings at Benton, Getchell, and Last Chance intersections

Objective: Strengthen Connections to Capital Area

Strategies

- Establish workforce housing in/near Downtown
- Establish transit service between Downtown and Capital
- Establish bike routes between Downtown and Capital

DRAFT

Goal 3: Activate Downtown

Objective: Provide all amenities and services needed to keep people Downtown

Strategies

- Identify missing services
 - Household/Grocery/Hardware
 - Health/Pharmacy
 - Financial
 - Educational/Schools
 - Recreational/Exercise
 - Entertainment
- Identify missing amenities
- Locate services within easy walking distance of residents and major employers

Objective: Add new retail in strategic locations

Strategies

- Recruit missing retail types
- Focus on "experience" not "commodity"
- Identify retail clusters and corridors
- Create land and parking incentives

Objective: Integrate housing

Strategies

- Add housing options, such as townhomes, lofts, condos, and live/work units
- Construct housing over publicly owned parking and r/w's
- Form housing cooperatives on City-owned land

Objective: Attract business incubators and start-ups

Strategies

- Rent subsidies
- Reduced parking requirements
- Tax abatement
- Expedited building permit review

Objective: Encourage ground floor retail

Strategies

- Make Downtown the premier location for Helena retail business (see Goal 1)
- Provide incentives for redevelopment of inappropriate ground floor uses (i.e. parking garages)
- Make City-owned properties available for retail development
- Create interim store front displays/art where ground floor office exists
- Create temporary pop-up retail spaces (booths, kiosks, food carts/trucks) in public right-of-way's adjacent to inactive ground floor uses

DRAFT

Goal 4: Preserve & Enhance Downtown Character

Objective: Identify eligible properties for listing on National Historic Register

Strategies

- Update the Historic District inventory (last completed over 25 years ago)

Objective: Encourage adaptive use of historic buildings and integration of new buildings into the historic downtown fabric.

Strategies

- Identify historic preservation funding sources
- Establish special Downtown zoning district
 - Building height
 - Parking requirements
 - Setbacks/build-to lines
- Establish Downtown design standards
 - Building form
 - Architectural standards
 - Ground floor use
- Establish Downtown streetscape design standards that compliment historic character, pedestrian environment, and provide a common theme throughout Downtown
 - Street/sidewalk materials
 - Lighting
 - Street trees/landscaping

Goal 5: Optimize Parking

Lots more could be done here.

Objective: Make parking convenient

Strategies

- Improve parking wayfinding & information
- Combine pedestrian wayfinding & parking maps
- Access parking from primary auto routes
- Incorporate technology
 - Real-time parking monitoring/availability
 - Google
 - GPS Navigation
 - Credit card/smart phone payment
 - Merchant vouchers

Objective: Increase parking utilization

Strategies

- Encourage shared use parking
- ~~Lease parking for residential nighttime use~~

Objectives: Simplify parking rules and regulations

Strategies

- Conduct a comprehensive parking study to determine parking supply, demand, and financial performance
- Eliminate on-street permit parking. Move permit parking to the parking structures
- Provide additional free short-term parking (1 hour max)???
- Allow permits to be used in any downtown parking structure

Erica Laferriere

From: Erica Laferriere
Sent: Friday, December 18, 2015 4:43 PM
To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Steering Committee - Next Meeting December 15th

150326

Erica Laferriere
Project Assistant

From: Melinda Barnes [mailto:melinda@bikewalkmontana.org]
Sent: Friday, December 18, 2015 12:24 PM
To: 'Dennis McCahon' <galumphant22@gmail.com>; 'Schwochert, Ryan' <Ryan.Schwochert@dnvgl.com>
Cc: Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmggroup.com>; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; cartwright@montana.com; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; Kate Dinsmore <kdinsmore@wgmggroup.com>; Nick Kaufman <NKaufman@wgmggroup.com>; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere <elaferriere@wgmggroup.com>; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier <lfrazier@wgmggroup.com>; 'Ryan Leland' <RLeland@helenamt.gov>
Subject: RE: Steering Committee - Next Meeting December 15th

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Melinda

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Sent: Friday, December 18, 2015 12:09 PM
To: Schwochert, Ryan
Cc: Jeremy Keene; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; cartwright@montana.com; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland
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parking spaces along both sides of the street seem to be regarded as equally available, no matter which lane he's in. So, if he really wants to park in front of his intended destination, the street's one-way status effectively doubles his chance of doing so -- especially given that jay-walking across that narrow street seems seldom to be a problem (I sometimes see almost as many jay-walkers there as I see folks staying on one sidewalk or the other).

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On Tue, Dec 15, 2015 at 2:02 PM, Schwochert, Ryan <Ryan.Schwochert@dnvgl.com> wrote:

Jeremy and Steering Committee,

I apologize for the late notice, however I will not be in attendance for today's meeting. We have several colleagues out sick or on vacation and with yearend fast approaching and the ever volatile nature of our PSC I have been working 60-70 hour weeks, weekends etc.

Again I apologize for my absence and extremely late notice. I had hope to pull off a miracle and I failed.

Be well and Happy Holidays,

Ryan Schwochert

From: Jeremy Keene [mailto:JKeene@wgmgroup.com]
Sent: Tuesday, December 08, 2015 4:24 PM

To: melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; cartwright@montana.com; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; galumphant22@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; Schwochert, Ryan; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz
Cc: Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland
Subject: Steering Committee - Next Meeting December 15th
Importance: High

Hi All,

We will reconvene the Downtown Master Plan Steering Committee next **Tuesday, December 15th, 2:00-4:00 pm, City/County Building Room 426, 316 N Park Ave.** Please note the change of location.

The primary goal of this meeting will be to get feedback on our draft recommendations prior to the public meeting in January. Thanks to those of you who provided comments and suggestions – we will do our best to incorporate those ideas in our recommendations.

An agenda and minutes from the last meeting are attached. We hope you'll be able to attend.

Thanks,

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
WGM Group, Inc

150326

From: Jeremy Keene
Sent: Friday, November 20, 2015 6:36 PM
To: 'melinda@bikewalkmontana.org' <melinda@bikewalkmontana.org>; 'shalonhastings@hotmail.com' <shalonhastings@hotmail.com>; 'alan@gntc.info' <alan@gntc.info>; 'cartwright@montana.com' <cartwright@montana.com>; 'mtnutmeg@gmail.com' <mtnutmeg@gmail.com>; 'epshmt@gmail.com' <epshmt@gmail.com>; 'galumphant22@gmail.com' <galumphant22@gmail.com>; 'sidgodolphin2@gmail.com' <sidgodolphin2@gmail.com>; 'lloydaniel@gmail.com' <lloydaniel@gmail.com>; 'kybaker@carroll.edu' <kybaker@carroll.edu>; 'ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com' <ryan.schwochert@dnvgl.com>; 'SHaugen@helenamt.gov' <SHaugen@helenamt.gov>; 'bobert@mbac.biz' <bobert@mbac.biz>
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<treich@helenabid.com>; Loran Frazier <lfrazier@wgmgroup.com>; 'Ryan Leland' <RLeland@helenamt.gov>

Subject: Steering Committee - Next Steps

Hi All,

Following up on our Steering Committee meeting this week:

- Several of you asked to see examples of other Downtown Master Plans to get an idea of what our final product will look like. Here's a link to a number of plans we have looked at (and helped prepare). You'll see that there is no formula – each plan takes on its own unique character depending on the needs and budgets. A couple that we think are similar to what you should expect for Helena are Great Falls, Hamilton, and Kalispell. <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/cb7msig3hb3ejhx/AAANxx-sFNO7Cr6Gz8c7XzBoa?dl=0>
- Next, we'd like to get back together with you **December 15th, 2-4 pm**. Please check your calendars and let us know if that date works. This meeting will be for us to present our draft recommendations for your feedback, so please try to attend.
- We have tentatively scheduled the **final Public Charrette for January 26th**. Our goal is to have a Draft Plan by that time.
- We will also schedule a separate meeting in January to look at design alternatives for Front Street. We'll include the Steering Committee as well as Front Street businesses and landowners.
- Finally, Ed Stevenson informed us that he is unable to continue serving on the Steering Committee due to other commitments. Thanks for your service, Ed, we hope you'll continue to lend your support to the plan in the future.

Wishing all of you a safe and Happy Thanksgiving,

Jeremy

Jeremy Keene, P.E.

Principal Engineer



1111 E. Broadway
Missoula • MT • 59802
[E-mail: JKeene@wgmgroup.com](mailto:JKeene@wgmgroup.com)
[406-728-4611](tel:406-728-4611) x 131 • FAX: [406-728-2476](tel:406-728-2476)

Erica Laferriere

From: Erica Laferriere
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:46 AM
To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Steering Committee - Next Meeting December 15th

1503
26

Erica Laferriere
Project Assistant

From: Alan Nicholson [mailto:alan@gntc.info]
Sent: Tuesday, December 22, 2015 6:53 AM
To: 'cartwright@montana.com'; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org
Cc: Dennis McCahon; Schwochert, Ryan; Jeremy Keene; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland
Subject: RE: Steering Committee - Next Meeting December 15th

I agree with Paul on this. This has been researched nationwide and is a standard recommendation for downtowns. Alan

From: cartwright@montana.com [mailto:cartwright@montana.com]
Sent: Monday, December 21, 2015 2:06 PM
To: melinda@bikewalkmontana.org
Cc: Dennis McCahon <galumphant22@gmail.com>; Schwochert, Ryan <Ryan.Schwochert@dnvgl.com>; Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmggroup.com>; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; Alan Nicholson <alan@gntc.info>; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; Kate Dinsmore <kdinsmore@wgmggroup.com>; Nick Kaufman <NKaufman@wgmggroup.com>; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere <elaferriere@wgmggroup.com>; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier <lfrazier@wgmggroup.com>; Ryan Leland <RLeland@helenamt.gov>
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The argument for two-way traffic is that it will increase the number of vehicles in the downtown, the variety/purpose of trips through the area and the number of hours during which there is traffic. All of these mean some increase in the number of customers downtown and if you want more, or more vibrant, destinations downtown, you need more customers. More vehicle traffic also reduces the “empty street” feeling that Last Chance suffers during most hours, a feeling that’s hardly attractive to pedestrians. Weirdly enough, less vehicle traffic sometimes can mean less pedestrian traffic.

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So the issue is whether the increase in traffic would improve the downtown substantially more than it would inconvenience it. I hope the experts can come up with whatever arguments there are for or against. But I'd say one of the most exciting blocks in the downtown is the old Eddy's Bakery block. That's a royal mess for vehicles, bikes and pedestrians alike in terms of "smooth, safe flow" and "easy parking" yet an awful lot of folk want to be there. And one of the first two and most successful sidewalk cafes is in that traffic mess. (The other was Bert and Ernie's, in another area with lots of vehicle traffic.)

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Erica Laferriere

From: Erica Laferriere
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:45 AM
To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Parking

150326

Erica Laferriere
Project Assistant

From: Melinda Barnes [mailto:melinda@bikewalkmontana.org]
Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2016 8:50 AM
To: cartwright@montana.com
Cc: 'Dennis McCahon'; 'Schwochert, Ryan'; Jeremy Keene; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; 'Ryan Leland'
Subject: Parking

This is an interesting article just published about how much parking should be provided and the correlation between parking and driving. It kind of ties in with our prior discussion about parking. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/01/15/the-problem-with-parking/?postshare=3981452911555780&tid=ss_tw-bottom

Melinda

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Sent: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:45 AM
To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Parking

150326

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Project Assistant

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Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2016 8:50 AM
To: cartwright@montana.com
Cc: 'Dennis McCahon'; 'Schwochert, Ryan'; Jeremy Keene; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; 'Ryan Leland'
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The problem with too much parking

By **Emily Badger** January 15

It is a firm principle in my household that we will not, under almost any circumstance, get in the car after sundown on Friday or Saturday night. We won't pick you up at the airport, or drive to dinner at your house. We won't *just run out* to the grocery store, or partake of social events unreachable by foot or bike, or a short Uber.

We live off H Street in Washington with its bars and restaurants and performing arts, and if we drive away in the evening, when we get back there will simply be nowhere to park. We would behave, no doubt, a lot differently if parking were not an issue. We would probably take more trips.

Scale up this logic, and it's reasonable to think that parking on a much larger scale induces more driving across cities. But this is an incredibly hard thing to prove: When cities pave more parking lots, does it *make* people drive more? When you're sitting in traffic hemmed in by other cars, is easy parking in part to blame?

ADVERTISING

There's a lot of evidence that the two go hand in hand. Past studies have found that parking availability at home is strongly associated with car ownership and use. And more parking at the office is correlated with more employees driving to work alone. Commuters who work in Manhattan, for instance, are also more likely to drive in when they have parking to return to at night.

It's a provocative argument, though, that parking *causes* driving, and if this were true, a lot of city policies would look sort of backwards. When cities think they're merely accommodating all the driving we do — by, for starters, requiring apartments and businesses to build parking lots — they're actually encouraging that driving in the first place.

"Is there a reason parking could affect driving?" asks Chris McCahill, a senior associate at the State Smart Transportation Initiative in Madison, Wis. He was presenting new research on the question this week at the Transportation Research Board annual meeting in Washington. "On a city-wide scale it does make sense that the overall cost and convenience of parking in that place affects driving habits, as anyone who's lived in a parking-restricted place knows."

Now, McCahill and three researchers at the University of Connecticut, Norman Garrick, Carol Atkinson-Palombo and Adam Polinski, think they've found solid evidence that parking is a "likely cause" of increased driving. Their case

is the strongest yet.

It's based on historic data in nine mid-sized American cities going back to 1960, including parking counts painstakingly tallied in each city [using archival aerial photos](#). The cities, roughly equal in size but with varying auto use, include Albany, N.Y.; Berkeley, Calif.; Cambridge, Ma.; Hartford, Conn.; and Silver Spring.

The researchers found, to begin with, that as these cities added more parking over the years, the share of commuters who drove to work increased. In this chart, as a city goes from having about 20 parking spaces to 50 spaces per 100 people, the share of commuters driving rises from 60 percent to 83 percent:

Now that's just a correlation. To go a step further, the researchers borrow from a criteria in epidemiology used to establish more causal links between, say, smoking and cancer. Parking is not that theoretically different. Does a change in the environment (more parking supply) influence the frequency of an undesirable event (more driving)? As the "dose" of parking goes up, does the likelihood of driving, too?

Epidemiologists would note that the relationship between these two factors is strong (as the above chart demonstrates) and consistent (it recurs in a lot of different cities and at different moments in time). Parking also emerges as a potential *cause* when there are no other clear explanations for an increase in driving.

In [one study](#) led by the University of Pennsylvania's Rachel Weinberger that the authors cite, commuters in the Jackson Heights neighborhood of Queens were more likely to drive to work in the central business district than commuters in Brooklyn's Park Slope. Income levels, car ownership rates, commuting times and transit access would suggest the opposite. But there was another key difference between these two neighborhoods: Commuters in Jackson Heights had a lot more off-street parking to return to when they got home at night.

Epidemiologists would also ask about the sequence of events. A treatment (smoking) must come before an outcome (cancer) and not the other way around. And so we'd expect that more parking would predict more driving, to a stronger degree than driving predicts parking. The researchers find that here as well: Cities where parking increased a lot between 1960 and 1980 saw much larger increases in driving in the following two decades:

Another principle from epidemiology suggests that there should be a clear dose-response curve here — that as the dose of parking goes up, the rate of driving really takes off (we'd expect, for instance, that people who smoke only once or twice would be much less likely to get lung cancer than people who smoke constantly).

This chart shows that as parking in these cities approaches five or six spots per 1,000 square feet of building area, nearly everyone drives:

These are all patterns consistent with a causal relationship. They don't definitely prove one, but the researchers

conclude they amount to "compelling evidence" that more parking is a cause of car use. Not the *only* cause, but a cause. Which, McCahill argues, should be enough to warrant cities reconsidering how they manage this stuff.

Emily Badger is a reporter for Wonkblog covering urban policy. She was previously a staff writer at The Atlantic Cities.

Market Watch

DJIA **0.44%**

NASDAQ **1.52%**

Last Update: 11:24
AM

[Get quote](#)

02/10/2016(DJIA&NASDAQ)

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From: Erica Laferriere
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To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Parking

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Project Assistant

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Keene; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; cartwright@montana.com; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; SHAUGEN@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland

Subject: Re: Steering Committee - Next Meeting December 15th

It seems to be generally accepted that it's a good idea to return two-way traffic to Last Chance Gulch between little malfunction junction and the mall, but before endorsing that idea it might be useful to take a leisurely lunch or coffee break at one of the 400-block eateries and watch how one-way traffic actually behaves there.

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sometimes see almost as many jay-walkers there as I see folks staying on one sidewalk or the other).

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It all works because the traffic there is fairly low-speed, it's seldom bumper-to-bumper, and the street is quite narrow -- and because jay-walking there is easy and casually accepted -- a special case, I suppose, but worth thinking about.

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Erica Laferriere

From: Erica Laferriere
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:45 AM
To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Parking

Erica Laferriere
Project Assistant

From: Dennis McCahon [mailto:galumphant22@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, January 22, 2016 10:04 AM
To: Alan Nicholson
Cc: Sid Godolphin; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; cartwright@montana.com; Schwochert, Ryan; Jeremy Keene; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; Mike Dowling; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland
Subject: Re: Parking

Excellent idea! I want to help. Let me know how.

On Thu, Jan 21, 2016 at 9:27 PM, Alan Nicholson <alan@gntc.info> wrote:

Sid,

This sound like a good idea. I am interested in learning more. Alan

From: Sid Godolphin [mailto:sidgodolphin2@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2016 1:05 PM
To: melinda@bikewalkmontana.org
Cc: cartwright@montana.com; Dennis McCahon <galumphant22@gmail.com>; Schwochert, Ryan <Ryan.Schwochert@dnvgl.com>; Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmggroup.com>; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; Alan Nicholson <alan@gntc.info>; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; Kate Dinsmore <kdinsmore@wgmggroup.com>; Nick Kaufman <NKaufman@wgmggroup.com>; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere <elaferriere@wgmggroup.com>; Mike Dowling <mdowling@dsa-mt.com>; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier <lfrazier@wgmggroup.com>; Ryan Leland <RLeland@helenamt.gov>
Subject: Re: Parking

TO: Master Planning Committee

FROM: Sid Godolphin

RE: Yelowbrickroad/Golddust Trail/CNS

In early January, I met with Krys Holmes of The Myrna Loy Center to discuss the proposed historic trail from Carroll College to Reader's Alley. We discussed her idea of applying for an NEA matching grant for Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects as a possible tie-in to the designated, marked trail we are thinking of designing. For the sake of simplicity, I will refer to the golden pathway we are considering as Central Nervous System (CNS) trail. I described to her our thoughts of having a clearly marked path from Carroll, under the overpass, through GNTC, up Front St, along LCG to terminate at Reader's Alley.

Krys's thought was to highlight historic points, architectural tasty bits, existing works of art, and cultural highlights. To this might be added some new public art projects. We discussed adding some branches to the CNS trail connecting to Holter, Grandstreet, Myrna Loy etc.

I think we both felt that some degree of integration to existing historical or tourist apps made sense as well. Connecting to people through their phones, etc allows people to seek out a higher level of detail at each point.

Our preliminary conclusion is to seek out a grant, administered through the MLC to make this project come alive. We expect to assemble a small group of experts and dilettantes to perform a survey of existing points of interest and preferred location for 3-4 new artworks. This would be an augmentation to a clearly marked trail as contemplated by the Steering Committee.

Your thoughts, please.

On Wed, Jan 20, 2016 at 8:50 AM, Melinda Barnes <melinda@bikewalkmontana.org> wrote:

This is an interesting article just published about how much parking should be provided and the correlation between parking and driving. It kind of ties in with our prior discussion about parking. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/01/15/the-problem-with-parking/?postshare=3981452911555780&tid=ss_tw-bottom

Melinda

From: cartwright@montana.com [mailto:cartwright@montana.com]

Sent: Monday, December 21, 2015 2:06 PM

To: melinda@bikewalkmontana.org

Cc: Dennis McCahon; Schwochert, Ryan; Jeremy Keene; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland

Subject: Re: Steering Committee - Next Meeting December 15th

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So the issue is whether the increase in traffic would improve the downtown substantially more than it would inconvenience it. I hope the experts can come up with whatever arguments there are for or against. But I’d say one of the most exciting blocks in the downtown is the old Eddy’s Bakery block. That’s a royal mess for vehicles, bikes and pedestrians alike in terms of “smooth, safe flow” and “easy parking” yet an awful lot of folk want to be there. And one of the first two and most successful sidewalk cafes is in that traffic mess. (The other was Bert and Ernie’s, in another area with lots of vehicle traffic.)

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P.S. A less discussed benefit to two-way traffic is that it would force some resolution of the Mini-malfunction mess, which could help all modes. My hope is we’d go back to a four-legged intersection there but I don’t know what the highway engineers could tolerate. That solution also would be compatible with converting Cruse to a local street.

On Dec 18, 2015, at 12:23 PM, Melinda Barnes <melinda@bikewalkmontana.org> wrote:

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directional for bicyclists, which is a great concept. There is a perception that more vehicles equals more customers, which studies support otherwise and that increasing foot and bike traffic is what actually increases sales and customers because drivers are just typically driving by without stopping. The slow one-way traffic is part of what makes our downtown unique and safe.

Melinda

From: Dennis McCahon [<mailto:galumphant22@gmail.com>]

Sent: Friday, December 18, 2015 12:09 PM

To: Schwochert, Ryan

Cc: Jeremy

Keene; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; cartwright@montana.com; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloyd.daniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland

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Erica Laferriere

From: Jeremy Keene
Sent: Monday, January 25, 2016 1:21 PM
To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: street trees and accidents
Attachments: MDT fixed object crash summary data 12-4-15.xlsx

150326

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
WGM Group, Inc

-----Original Message-----

From: Paul Cartwright [<mailto:cartwright@montana.com>]
Sent: Monday, January 25, 2016 11:27 AM
To: Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmgroup.com>
Cc: Mike Dowling <mdowling@dsa-mt.com>
Subject: street trees and accidents

You've probably heard a lot of folks talk about the need for street trees. You've probably also heard a lot of highway engineers and Street Department people talk about how dangerous trees are. Growing Friends has been trying to determine how accurate the danger claims are. We suspect those are more a projection of engineers' experience on high speed rural roads than a description of what happens on lower speed urban roads. We've been trying to get the necessary detailed data to do an analysis at least in Helena, looking both at trees in fixed object crashes and trees as an impediment to driver vision. So far MDT has been reluctant to release the data. However, they did give us a voluminous review of the research literature on trees and accidents. There was almost nothing on the effect of trees in the sight distance triangle. The data and research on fixed object crashes tended to the view that urban trees are not that big a problem. That is matched by the summary data MDT gave us on fixed object crashes. I thought that might be of interest and use for you, so here it is.

Paul

Erica Laferriere

From: Tyece Sweat <tsweat@cwg-architects.com>
Sent: Monday, January 25, 2016 2:49 PM
To: Cindy Kuns
Cc: meagan.miller@mail.umhelenas.edu
Subject: DOWNTOWN MASTER CHARRETTE

Hi Cindy,

I am a student at Helena College, and a part of the Interior Design Department at CWG Architects here in town. A classmate of mine, Megan Miller and I have attended the previous Down Town Master Plan Charrettes, and we have been presented with a unique and exciting opportunity. We are entering our final design studio this spring, and the task at hand is to design a space on the Power block. Everything we do will be fictional of course, but we have gone through all of the necessary measures (i.e. consulted structural engineers to find load bearing walls, electricians as well as plumbers to be sure that all electrical and plumbing to be moved is feasible) to be sure everything we do to this building is realistic. If you are familiar with the area, the space is the old Green Iguana building, and the business we have chosen to place in it is a gourmet grocery store/market. We thought it would be a good idea to get the community involved, as a few people from the city have contacted us and intend on using our designs to help market this space. Since the idea of an organic grocery/market was presented by the people in attendance at the charrette, we would love to get their feedback on expectations of such a business in the downtown area. If there is any time for my colleague, Meagan, to address this at the upcoming charrette (I will be unable to attend the final meeting), it would be much appreciated.

Have a wonderful day and thank you.

TYECE SWEAT

Interior Design Dept.

tsweat@cwg-architects.com



Erica Laferriere

From: Miller, Meagan <Meagan.Miller@mail.umhelen.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2016 2:06 PM
To: Jeremy Keene; Cindy Kuns; Tyece Sweat
Subject: Re: DOWNTOWN MASTER CHARRETTE

Hello Jeremy,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the members of the community at the Charrette. Is there a specific time you would like me to address the group? There will also be other Interior Design students at the Charrette, as well my instructor. I also look forward to visiting with the community members during the interactive open house.

Have a great day and thank you!

From: Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmgroup.com>
Sent: Monday, January 25, 2016 4:09 PM
To: Cindy Kuns; Tyece Sweat
Cc: Miller, Meagan; Kate Dinsmore; 'Mike Dowling'
Subject: RE: DOWNTOWN MASTER CHARRETTE

Hello,

We would be happy to have your input on a public market/grocery store in the downtown. This will be one of our recommendations for the plan, but we have not identified a specific location. The second half of the charrette will be an interactive open house which will be a good opportunity to share your ideas with the planning team and get input from the public.

Thanks for your interest,

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
WGM Group, Inc

From: Cindy Kuns
Sent: Monday, January 25, 2016 2:59 PM
To: Tyece Sweat <tsweat@cwg-architects.com>

Cc: meagan.miller@mail.umhelenas.edu

Subject: RE: DOWNTOWN MASTER CHARRETTE

Thanks for your email, Tyece. Unfortunately, I am not directly involved with the agenda for the upcoming charrette, but I can pass your request along to our project manager, Jeremy Keene to get his thoughts.

Cindy Kuns

Project Assistant

WGM Group, Inc.

<http://www.wgmgroup.com>



Engineering, Planning, Surveying in Montana | WGM Group

www.wgmgroup.com

WGM Group, Inc. | 1111 East Broadway | Missoula, MT | 59802 | tel. 406.728.4611 | fax.
406.728.2476

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Erica Laferriere

From: Erica Laferriere
Sent: Monday, February 08, 2016 11:50 AM
To: EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: FW: Parking

Erica Laferriere
Project Assistant

From: Sid Godolphin [mailto:sidgodolphin2@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2016 10:49 AM
To: Melinda Barnes
Cc: cartwright@montana.com; Dennis McCahon; Schwochert, Ryan; Jeremy Keene; shalonthastings@hotmail.com; Alan Nicholson; Sumner Sharpe; Ed Stevenson; Daniel Lloyd; Kyle Baker; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; Brian Obert; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; Mike Dowling; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland
Subject: Re: Parking

I need to amend what I wrote the other day about NEA grant application. Krys and the MLC would not be seeking the grant, but Krys may be willing to help out with a joint effort.

My apologies for misrepresenting her part.

Regards,
Sid Godolphin

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Erica Laferriere

From: Galen McKibben <galen@image-by-design.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 28, 2016 1:14 PM
To: Jeremy Keene; 'Tracy Reich'
Cc: Nick Kaufman; Kate Dinsmore; 'Andrew Hagemeyer'; 'Mike Dowling'; EMAIL FILE BASKET
Subject: RE: Third Planning Charrette

Thank you Jeremy. Certainly, developing downtown is inherently more sustainable than sprawl. One of my concerns, however, is that the plan is so automobile friendly. The number of parking places needed to sustain a prescribed number of square feet of commercial space is an interesting calculation. Making it easier for people to come to downtown in their cars makes commercial sense, of course. I am convinced, however, that somewhere along the line we have to find ways to discourage the one-car-one-person syndrome. I love the bike-friendly aspects of the plan and the emphasis on walkability. Maybe increased cost of parking and development reliable mass transportation with more residential inclusive routes should be considered. I think we all have to start taking more seriously the damage being done to the Earth and the bleak prospects our children and our children's children face if we keep making commercial viability our first and often only measure of success.

From: Jeremy Keene [<mailto:JKeene@wgmgroup.com>]
Sent: Thursday, January 28, 2016 11:29 AM
To: Tracy Reich <treich@helenabid.com>; 'Galen McKibben' <galen@image-by-design.com>
Cc: Nick Kaufman <NKaufman@wgmgroup.com>; Kate Dinsmore <kdinsmore@wgmgroup.com>; 'Andrew Hagemeyer' <landsolutions2@blackfoot.net>; 'Mike Dowling' <mdowling@dsa-mt.com>; EMAIL FILE BASKET <EMAILFILEBASKET@wgmgroup.com>
Subject: RE: Third Planning Charrette

Thanks Galen, Sustainability is definitely a core element of the plan – developing in downtown is inherently more sustainable than developing outside of town – but we probably should have emphasized that more in our presentation. We'll make sure this comes through in the final plan.

Jeremy Keene, P.E.
WGM Group, Inc

150326

From: Tracy Reich [<mailto:treich@helenabid.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, January 27, 2016 10:04 AM
To: 'Galen McKibben' <galen@image-by-design.com>
Cc: Jeremy Keene <JKeene@wgmgroup.com>
Subject: RE: Third Planning Charrette

Hi Galen,

Thank you for coming last night and thank you for the comments. Sustainability is a key part of the plan which also includes energy efficiency – I believe this addressed in the development and zoning code changes that are being recommended. I'm cc'g our project manager to ensure that is the correct place. While we have operated from the principles of smart growth and sustainability from the beginning, it was not really emphasized last night and in the materials but I want assure you those principles are throughout the document. Reduction of CO2 emissions has not been discussed per se and a great point to bring up. Jeremy – could we take a look at recommendations around this in the plan?

Thanks again Galen – great points!

Tracy

Tracy L. Reich
Executive Director
Helena Business Improvement District
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(Fax) 406.447.1533



www.downtownhelena.com

From: Galen McKibben [<mailto:galen@image-by-design.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, January 27, 2016 9:32 AM
To: treich@helenabid.com
Subject: Third Planning Charrette

Hello Tracy,

I attended the Third Charrette yesterday evening and found it interesting and a little disconcerting that almost no attention was given to issues like energy efficiency, CO² emissions reduction and sustainability. Is there any way those areas of increasing concern in our society can be introduced at this late date?

I recommend the book *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate* by Naomi Klein. While I understand why downtown planning would emphasize commerce I can't understand how, in this period of increasing impact of climate change, the issues related to climate change wouldn't be at the top of list of concerns about the future of Helena.

Please let me know what I could do to help include those issues in continued planning.

Thank you.

Galen McKibben
ImagebyDesign
galen@image-by-design.com
www.image-by-design.com

Erica Laferriere

From: Dennis McCahon <galumphant22@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 11, 2016 12:36 PM
To: Sid Godolphin
Cc: Melinda Barnes; Paul Cartwright; Schwochert, Ryan; Jeremy Keene; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; Alan Nicholson; Sumner Sharpe; Ed Stevenson; Daniel Lloyd; Kyle Baker; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; Brian Obert; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; Andrew Hagemeyer; Erica Laferriere; Mike Dowling; Tracy Reich; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland
Subject: Re: Parking

Regarding: The idea for a designated and marked trail from Reeder's Alley north to the Lyndale underpass highlighting historic, architectural, artistic, cultural (etc.) points of interest ("Yellowbrick Road/ Golddust Trail/ CNS/ Educational Corridor/ Pedestrian Mainstreet"-- whatever, the idea has come up in various forms).

I think we should all start talking about this, from at least two angles:

- Sid's proposal to assemble a group to determine which points of interest should be included;
- The possible role of Front Street, given the planned road-work there and the likelihood that Front would be a key part of the route.

The prospect of Front being torn-up suggests an opportunity to determine how the trail is to be marked on the ground -- colored concrete?, a pattern or recurring symbol of some sort? (If I'm not mistaken, the City has saved and stored the Kessler paving brick from those west-side sidewalks which have been replaced with concrete. Maybe those bricks can play some part. They're certainly a unique -- and quite beautiful -- historic item, and the prospect of their re-use would further interest the local Historical Society and other folks in the project).

Also, the proposal that the Front Street walkway is to be landscaped, to make it a more attractive place to walk, suggests an opportunity to decide how landscaping can be used to define the trail. As I recall, back in the early formative days of the "growing Friends of Helena" group there was some discussion of Helena adopting some specific sort of hardy flowering tree which could be widely planted and become a part of our local identity -- Flowering Crab, I think, was suggested. Maybe this idea could be revived in some form as a way to mark the trail. This might also interest the Growing Friends, and other gardening and urban-beautification folks, in the project.

In any case, I think that the prospect of Front Street work adds a note of urgency to the trail idea; and I also think that the clearer our "vision" of the trail, and the more groups and individuals who share that vision, the better able we'll be to get a grant or other support.

On Tue, Jan 26, 2016 at 10:48 AM, Sid Godolphin <sidgodolphin2@gmail.com> wrote:

I need to amend what I wrote the other day about NEA grant application. Krys and the MLC would not be seeking the grant, but Krys may be willing to help out with a joint effort.

My apologies for misrepresenting her part.

Regards,
Sid Godolphin

On Wed, Jan 20, 2016 at 8:50 AM, Melinda Barnes <melinda@bikewalkmontana.org> wrote:

This is an interesting article just published about how much parking should be provided and the correlation between parking and driving. It kind of ties in with our prior discussion about parking. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/01/15/the-problem-with-parking/?postshare=3981452911555780&tid=ss_tw-bottom

Melinda

From: cartwright@montana.com [mailto:cartwright@montana.com]

Sent: Monday, December 21, 2015 2:06 PM

To: melinda@bikewalkmontana.org

Cc: Dennis McCahon; Schwochert, Ryan; Jeremy Keene; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; SHAugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland

Subject: Re: Steering Committee - Next Meeting December 15th

Dennis and Melinda raise good points about keeping Last Chance one-way but my instinct is still that two-way would net out better for the downtown. Sixty years ago, at the height of suburban dream, the Highway Department made Last Chance one-way to “improve” traffic flow. Like a lot of people back then, I have my doubts.

The argument for two-way traffic is that it will increase the number of vehicles in the downtown, the variety/purpose of trips through the area and the number of hours during which there is traffic. All of these mean some increase in the number of customers downtown and if you want more, or more vibrant, destinations downtown, you need more customers. More vehicle traffic also reduces the “empty street” feeling that Last Chance suffers during most hours, a feeling that’s hardly attractive to pedestrians. Weirdly enough, less vehicle traffic sometimes can mean less pedestrian traffic.

Dennis is right that one-way traffic makes parking easier (though it can be fun to watch people try to parallel park on the left side.) He could also have mentioned that one-way makes deliveries easier. But parallel parking and deliveries are problems other traditional downtowns seem to live with. If parking is easy because there’s not all that much traffic, you either have a downtown that’s not very busy or you have some other kind of neighborhood. Similarly, Melinda is right that making half the street is a dedicated bike path would make biking downtown even easier (though I don’t know what happens with vehicle parking on both sides of the street in that scenario). I hope she can share with us some of those studies she mentioned concerning the impacts of increased vehicle traffic vs. increased bike-ped traffic. Her summary of the studies sounds plausible for some situations but I didn’t think that was generally the case. Separate from that issue, I’m worry that the lane would be empty much of the time, given that few people bike at night or during the winter. As mentioned above, empty streets don’t attract pedestrians

So the issue is whether the increase in traffic would improve the downtown substantially more than it would inconvenience it. I hope the experts can come up with whatever arguments there are for or against. But I’d say one of the most exciting blocks in the downtown is the old Eddy’s Bakery block. That’s a royal mess for vehicles, bikes and pedestrians alike in terms of “smooth, safe flow” and “easy parking” yet an awful lot of

folk want to be there. And one of the first two and most successful sidewalk cafes is in that traffic mess. (The other was Bert and Ernie's, in another area with lots of vehicle traffic.)

Paul

P.S. A less discussed benefit to two-way traffic is that it would force some resolution of the Mini-malfunction mess, which could help all modes. My hope is we'd go back to a four-legged intersection there but I don't know what the highway engineers could tolerate. That solution also would be compatible with converting Cruse to a local street.

On Dec 18, 2015, at 12:23 PM, Melinda Barnes <melinda@bikewalkmontana.org> wrote:

I agree with this and would hate to see Last Chance Gulch go to two-way traffic. There has been much interest by some business owners in making downtown friendlier for bicyclists, in which some of them currently ride on the sidewalk. There is a good recommendation in the transportation plan (CT-5) on page 143 to eliminate one lane of traffic and make it two-directional for bicyclists, which is a great concept. There is a perception that more vehicles equals more customers, which studies support otherwise and that increasing foot and bike traffic is what actually increases sales and customers because drivers are just typically driving by without stopping. The slow one-way traffic is part of what makes our downtown unique and safe.

Melinda

From: Dennis McCahon [<mailto:galumphant22@gmail.com>]

Sent: Friday, December 18, 2015 12:09 PM

To: Schwochert, Ryan

Cc: Jeremy

Keene; melinda@bikewalkmontana.org; shalonhastings@hotmail.com; alan@gntc.info; cartwright@montana.com; mtnutmeg@gmail.com; epshmt@gmail.com; sidgodolphin2@gmail.com; lloydaniel@gmail.com; kybaker@carroll.edu; SHaugen@helenamt.gov; bobert@mbac.biz; Kate Dinsmore; Nick Kaufman; landsolutions2@blackfoot.net; Erica Laferriere; mdowling@dsa-mt.com; treich@helenabid.com; Loran Frazier; Ryan Leland

Subject: Re: Steering Committee - Next Meeting December 15th

It seems to be generally accepted that it's a good idea to return two-way traffic to Last Chance Gulch between little malfunction junction and the mall, but before endorsing that idea it might be useful to take a leisurely lunch or coffee break at one of the 400-block eateries and watch how one-way traffic actually behaves there.

Watching from the No Sweat Cafe, I've noticed the frequency and the ease with which a driver looking for a parking space, if he can't find one alongside his lane, switches to the other lane if he sees one there. In practice, parking spaces along both sides of the street seem to be regarded

as equally available, no matter which lane he's in. So, if he really wants to park in front of his intended destination, the street's one-way status effectively doubles his chance of doing so -- especially given that jay-walking across that narrow street seems seldom to be a problem (I sometimes see almost as many jay-walkers there as I see folks staying on one sidewalk or the other).

This seems to be the most efficient practical utilization of those scarce curb-side parking spaces, if we accept all that lane-changing and jay-walking. We'd lose that efficiency with two-way traffic. I suppose it can be argued that the driver, if he can't find a spot alongside his lane, need only drive on and figure out how to re-enter the block from the other direction, but that's a lot of extra driving-around.

Something else I've noticed there is that the main traffic hold-ups are drivers stopping to back into a parking space, but that the street's one-way status makes it easy, with a glance in the rear-view mirror, to drive around the parker. This might get more complicated if the drive-around lane were for opposing traffic.

It all works because the traffic there is fairly low-speed, it's seldom bumper-to-bumper, and the street is quite narrow -- and because jay-walking there is easy and casually accepted -- a special case, I suppose, but worth thinking about.

While still on the 400-block -- I think it was suggested at one point that the parking lot across from the Iron Front Building might be better utilized if it were accessible from Last Chance -- but I think it's always a bad idea to cut a busy sidewalk with a driving lane, and the grade-separation would suggest either a whole lot of fill, or a space-consuming ramp. What might work very well there, however, is a simple stairway for pedestrians, from the sidewalk down to the parking lot.

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Meeting Record

MEETING DATE: August 20, 2015

PROJECT NAME: Downtown Helena Master Plan

SUBJECT: Steering Committee Meeting #1

BY: Jeremy Keene

ATTENDEES: Sid Godolphin
Dan Lloyd
Paul Cartwright
Dennis McCahon
Sumner Sharpe
Ryan Schwoehert
Melinda Barnes
Ed Stevenson
Kyle Baker
Shalon Hastings
Kathy Brown
Alan Nicholson
Mike Dowling
Tracy Reich
Sharon Haugen
Andrew Hagemeyer
Jeremy Keene

- Study Area – not a defined line/area
- Why is Downtown important?
 - Community events/gatherings
 - Unique, not Target
 - Entertainment – why is Myrna outside downtown?
 - If you had to trade, what would you do without: Downtown or Target?

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- Constraints/Issues
 - Things that are attached to Downtown, but are not connected:
 - Myrna, Carroll College, Courthouse Square, Reeder's Alley
 - Cruse Avenue divides residential neighborhood
 - Strengthen walking and biking connections
 - Wayfinding
 - Providing other opportunities to do things in Downtown
 - Hours of operation
 - Activities/events
 - Landscaping and Public Art define spaces, invite people in; people will walk as far as they are invited to walk
 - BCBS Properties
 - What happens when they move?
 - Opportunities to affect change
 - Capital Transit – should do more about Downtown
 - Residential – Placer is primarily 65+ and some 20-30s without kids; primarily without cars
 - Carroll College students don't walk to Downtown, even though the distance is similar to Missoula's University of Montana
 - Something is missing
 - Tunnel is unattractive (MDT control)
 - Missing sidewalks
 - Minimal connections from new apartments to Park
 - Starbucks at Lyndale/N. Last Chance will change foot traffic pattern
 - GNTC south end is a barrier
 - Neill is a barrier – bulb-outs, bridge
 - Redistribute/consolidate restaurants and retail
 - People walk where there is activity
 - Dead space deters walking
 - Move away from ground floor office
 - Owner occupancy – bought cheap in the 70s, no incentive to change
- Next Steps
 - September 17, 2015 at 2pm
 - Meeting notes and presentation for Committee

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Meeting Record

MEETING DATE: September 17, 2015

PROJECT NAME: Downtown Helena Master Plan

SUBJECT: Steering Committee Meeting #2

BY: Jeremy Keene

ATTENDEES: Sid Godolphin
Dennis McCahon
Sumner Sharpe
Melinda Barnes
Ed Stevenson
Shalon Hastings
Judy Merickel (for Alan Nicholson)
Mike Dowling
Tracy Reich
Sharon Haugen
Jeremy Keene

- Summary of Charrette #1 (These are individual comments from SC members)
 - Consistent brand/story
 - Carroll connections
 - Dead spaces – turning back on mall
 - Useful & enjoyable walking (in addition to safety)
 - What's the big picture? Overall landscape
 - Lack of flow between neighborhoods & downtown
 - Walking mall draws people – it's unique
 - Cruse divides neighborhood (probably most dense neighborhoods in Helena)
 - Street is too wide
 - Narrow sidewalks
 - Blocks are long

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- Attracting more people downtown
 - Focus on people who like to walk
 - Focus on historic character
 - More/larger anchors
 - People attract people
 - More tables, chairs, games, food carts, etc.
 - Better outdoor space
- Mall is physically old, needs updating
- Not enough cover/seasonal space
- Framework Concepts – Information Gathering/Analysis – Ideas
 - Vision
 - Desire outcomes
 - What do you want at the end of the day?
 - What can this plan realistically achieve?
 - Identify a manageable set of steps that can be broadly supported/implemented
 - Initial concepts/themes
 - Land use – Downtown’s identity, and the identity of the greater community, is clearly defined its historic buildings. Preserving downtown’s character, while encouraging adaptive use and integration of new buildings into the historic fabric is a key issue. Encouraging active ground floor use and extending hours of operation are important issues for business health and customer traffic. More housing in the downtown is also desirable, however, the downtown lacks certain services and amenities, such as grocery, pharmacy, and neighborhood schools that are key for housing. A lack of housing options, such as townhomes, lofts, and condos, may also be affecting the ability to attract downtown residents.
 - Ground floor use
 - Services
 - Extended hours
 - Dead spaces – interim store front displays/art
 - City land incentives for redevelopment
 - Integrate housing
 - Incentives
 - New businesses
 - Tax rebates
 - Funding for façade improvements
 - Rent reduction/supplement

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- Sidewalk repair/updates
 - Employers
 - Revolving loan fund
- Regulations
- Public/private partnerships – who are the landowners that could be approached for a discussion?
 - Holiday Inn
 - Arcade
 - Helena Indian Alliance
 - Granite Hartwig building owners (Carroll College)
 - BCBS building owners – Mike Casey
- Transportation – The cost and hassle of parking is a deterrent to visiting, or locating a business, downtown. While there appears to be an adequate supply of parking, there is a clear perception that location, cost, convenience, and time limits are an issue. Downtown also lacks connectivity to the surrounding neighborhoods and Carroll College, especially for bicycles and pedestrians. This is also an issue within downtown between the Walking Mall and the Great Northern Town Center. The lack of connectivity affects the way downtown relates to the rest of the community and the ability to create synergy between different land uses.
 - Parking
 - Connectivity – corridors/links
 - People moving versus cars moving
 - High density neighborhoods close by
 - Walking distances
- Economic/Market – Downtown is important historically, culturally, and economically to the Helena community. However, it lacks visibility and a clear, consistent branding strategy. Loss of business start-ups and major employers is a concern, as is the cost of rent. The fact that downtown is not a through street means that the majority of businesses rely on destination (rather than drive-by) customers, but the downtown lacks the major stores/anchors that would attract a larger volume of customers.
 - Visibility – gateways/wayfinding
 - Branding
 - Anchors
 - Not competing with big box stores
 - What's downtown's competitive advantage?

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- Infrastructure – There is a strong perception that downtown infrastructure – things like streets, sidewalks, and landscaping, as well as, utilities – feels worn out, outdated, and uninviting. This affects first impressions of downtown health and the ability to attract new investment. Maintenance and jurisdictional issues between different City and State agencies affect this as well.
 - Maintenance/updates
 - ADA ramp project
 - BID/private sector?
 - Jurisdiction – how do we clarify/streamline responsibility?
 - Management plan for walking mall
- Next Steps
 - Next charrette: October 20, 2015 at Holiday Inn
 - Next steering committee meeting: October 20, 2015, 2:00 pm at Placer Hotel (to be confirmed by Ed Stevenson)

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Meeting Record

MEETING DATE: October 20, 2015

PROJECT NAME: Downtown Helena Master Plan

SUBJECT: Steering Committee Meeting #3

BY: Kate Dinsmore

ATTENDEES: Sumner Sharpe
Kyle Baker
Shalon Hastings
Alan Nicholson
Paul Cartwright
Ryan Schwoehert
Dennis McCahon
Sharon Haugen
Emily Gluckin (for Melinda Barnes)
Nick Kaufman (WGM Group)
Kate Dinsmore (WGM Group)
Jeremy Keene (WGM Group)
Bob Gibbs (Gibbs Planning Group)
Mike Dowling (DSA Architects)
Tracy Reich

Presentation for Charrette #2 - Focus on vision and opportunities

- Review of assets, issues, ideas, and barriers
- Draft vision and guiding principles
- Conceptual Land Use Framework
 - Create Downtown gateway
 - Strategically locate new retail
 - Strengthen neighborhood connections
 - Preserve and enhance historic character
 - Integrate housing
- Table exercise for charrette
 - What needs to go in the south end of Downtown?
 - Retail anchor at the south end



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- Take the existing building down and build lots of housing
 - In the next ten years, lots of housing is possible for millennials

Robert Gibbs Market Analysis

- 142,900 SF of retail demand in Downtown
 - Capturing retail demand dependent on many factors
 - Business recruitment – need to actively recruit businesses
 - Properties may not be available
 - Tenant improvement allowance
 - Serious challenges
 - Circulation
 - Parking management issues
 - Assets
 - Historic Downtown – great buildings
 - Enough parking although likely mismanaged
 - Two colleges
 - Capital
 - Nice neighborhoods
 - Employment centers
 - Tremendous market but underserving the market
- Downtown Helena can capture \$41M in additional retail sales – current sales are 20% of the national average
 - Grocery stores
 - Full service restaurants
 - Liquor license is \$1M which is artificially suppressing the market
 - Cabaret license in Helena
 - \$5,000-\$20,000
 - Apparel and shoes
 - General merchandise
 - Limited service eating
 - Special food service
- Trade area
 - 190,000 people (large market)
 - 25% have a degree, well-educated demographic
 - high income area - \$81,000 by 2020
- Downtown housing
 - Alan - We need to encourage housing in the Downtown. More concentrated homes in Downtown will result in more shopping trips to Downtown. More homes Downtown means more life on the street.
 - Gibbs – While he would recommend housing Downtown, it's unlikely there could be a large enough increase in the Downtown population to significantly affect retail Downtown
- Retail recruitment and market
 - Retail shops rely on an anchor
 - Anchors bring people Downtown on a regular basis
 - Retail has to look good or it will hurt the other users

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- 50/50/50 rule
 - Retailers are looking for 50,000 people with \$50,000 income or 50,000 cars per day
- Walk score
 - 90 - High score
- Trends and changing shopping habits
 - In 2020, 89% of homes will have no children
 - Most babies were from single mothers
 - Demand for common wall and small lots
 - Millennials want to live Downtown
 - Time is the factor for the millennials
 - 70% of their shopping occurs after 5 pm
 - Life style retail accommodates the shopper that spends twenty minutes after work shopping rather than a three hour social experience
 - The shopper is so busy she will not park and walk a half block to see if the store is open
 - Shoppers want the X factor. It's an emotional tie to the built environment.
 - New towns do not have an X factor so are trying to create X factor through container incubator start-ups
 - Downtown Helena has a lot of X factor
- Parking recommendations
 - Always have parallel parking on the street
 - Allows shopper to see front of store from her car
 - Always put in parking meters to stop employees from parking in front of their own stores
 - Provide free parking ½ block away
 - First two hours of parking in garage should be free
 - Parking is the most important part to getting more market share
 - Estimate meter space will turn over twenty to twenty-five times a day
 - Customers willing to pay a buck an hour if they can park in front of the store
 - One metered space generates \$150,000 in retail sales per year
 - Meters have to cost more than the garage or surface lots
 - Small retailers depend on the shoppers driving by and stopping
 - Have to have parking within sight of the store
- Public markets
 - Helena could probably open a public market
 - Act as a virtual grocery store
 - USDA grant money available
 - 20,000 – 25,000 SF
 - Examples:
 - Charleston, South Carolina - markets become tourist attractions
 - Oxbow Public Market - assembled as a not-for-profit group
 - Pay for the shell and land
 - Use rent to make a profit
 - Columbus, Ohio – North Market

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- Management of Downtown
 - In Petoskey, Michigan, Downtown is managed like a shopping center for marketing
 - Recruit businesses
 - BID can help with visual merchandising - clean up the look of Downtown
 - Store hours
 - Retail is often closed when people are at a restaurant
 - Restaurants add activity but don't necessarily help retail
 - Signage defines good place to shop
 - High standards for architectural and signage standards.
 - Helps to recruit other retailers (standards ensure neighbors will be held to high standards)
 - Converting from one-way street to two-way street increases sales by 20%

Impediments to development within City

- Retail stores investigate to see how easy you are with your codes which influences if they will come to a city
 - Needs to be no harder to build outside the City and ideally easier to build in the City
- Need subsidy to meet market for residential development
 - Very difficult to build in the Downtown with the city requirements
 - It is easier outside the city limits outside the city because you only need to meet sanitary constraints.
 - No building permit is required outside of the
 - Getting rid of the surface water is a big challenge
- Potential to form a task force of developers to bring daylight to the issues
- Lean urbanism – development designed to be just below building code thresholds to reduce costs
- City is willing to work with the developers
 - Zoning commission led discussion but developers didn't participate
 - Need to continue discussion with the City

Urban Retail Institute Links

- http://www.urbanretailinstitute.com/Home_Page.html
- <https://www.facebook.com/UrbanRetailInstitute/>

Walking Mall Tour

- Thoughts and recommendations from Gibbs
 - Signage
 - Fill in with buildings
 - Maintenance – painting
 - Ground floor retail to replace parking
 - Liner retail shops along front of parking and Holiday Inn blank walls
 - Awnings
 - Sidewalks
 - Clear, glass windows

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Next Steps

- Steering Committee Meeting #4, November 17th, 2:00-4:00 pm
 - Charrette #2 Debrief
 - Vision Statement, Framework Concepts, Strategies
- Steering Committee Meeting #5, December 15th, 2:00-4:00 pm
 - Recommendations/Alternatives
- Next charrette: Early January (TBD)



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Meeting Record

MEETING DATE: November 16, 2015

PROJECT NAME: Downtown Helena Master Plan

SUBJECT: Steering Committee Meeting #4

BY: Jeremy Keene

ATTENDEES: Sumner Sharp
Dennis McCahon
Sid Godolphin
Shalon Hasting
Melinda Barnes
Alan Nicholson
Paul Cartwright
Ryan Leland
Tracy Reich
Sharon Haugen
Mike Dowling
Jeremy Keene

1. 2nd Charrette Recap – Steering Committee comments and observations:
 - More affordable eating options
 - Better physical connection between DT and GNTC
 - More/wider variety of retail
 - Metered parking on streets/free parking in garage
 - More vibrant downtown
 - Excitement around plan and downtown – lots of young folks attended Charrette
 - Housing
 - Downtown housing won't sustain downtown retail by itself
 - Need to connect to other neighborhoods
 - Non-motorized connectivity and accessibility
 - Potential for investment
 - North of Neil (Starbucks)
 - Old bus depot

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- Parking structures/lots
- Different perspectives depending on point of view
 - Windshield vs. foot traffic
 - Where “main street” starts
- More everyday retail (i.e. hardware, office supply, pharmacy)
- Bikes on the Walking Mall
- More restaurants
- Incorporate Central into downtown boundary
- Redevelop alternative school property near GNTC
- Parking rates just increased
 - Making garage less expensive than parking on the street
- Parking convenience/perception
- Lack of retail choices
- Everyday needs like grocery, inexpensive clothing
- Timely need
- Headhunter for new business
 - I.e. restaurants
- Biking and walking to offset needs for parking
- Activity on sidewalk is key for business
- Participation of 20-somethings really stands out
- Definitions – Clarify what things mean
 - I.e. trolley, Walking Mall, downtown entrances, etc.
- Do downtowns really have “entrances?”
 - Entrance is more of a visual thing
 - More like centers
- Never going to fix parking
 - Focus on making it as convenient, simple, and painless as possible
- Can’t focus on unrealistic ideas
 - I.e. more parking
 - Focus on what’s possible
 - Signage and appearance/maintenance
 - Two way traffic
 - Faneuill Hall in Boston – Jim Rouse
 - Has no parking, big department stores, but lots of interesting things
 - People will come for worthwhile things
- As a community, we don’t do stuff. Individuals do stuff, but the community doesn’t follow their own plans

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- Rules and regulations that make things harder
 - Fire Marshal
- Adverse behavior (God's Love and others) was strong theme in survey
 - Idle youth
- Why isn't downtown capturing the apparent demand that Gibb's report showed?
 - Critical mass/synergy
 - Retailers have perceptions too – negative impressions
 - Lack of promotion/ambassador to welcome new business
 - Big seasonal swing in retail demand
- Public market
 - Less specific than a grocery store
 - High interest, small business, incubator
 - Publicly owned spaced – need to keep rent cost low
 - USDA grants
 - See uptown Butte market
 - Front St. Market
 - Artistic community needs a place to sell
 - Year – round space
 - Walking Mall, performance space, parks?
 - Burlington, VT
- Must be easier to develop in downtown than outside, or it won't happen

2. Vision/Goals/Strategies

- Who is audience?
 - Policy – city priorities
 - Marketing – business predictability
- “Hang your dreams on the Vision”
 - Physical connection
 - Historic mile
 - Education corridor
 - Bike corridor
 - Public art
 - Carroll to Reeder's Alley, “gold trail,” on capitalizing mining history
- Central city concept
 - Includes what happens around downtown as well
 - Connectivity, neighborhoods, central school, Reeder's

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

3. Land Use and Circulation Concept

- Entertainment Retail is strong on 1st block of Walking Mall
 - Connect to Park Avenue brewery/restaurants?
 - Guidelines/design standards (i.e. sidewalk café, historic buildings)
- North-South connection is important for bikes and peds
 - Front St. is shorter distance from Carroll
 - Continuous walkable corridor
 - Bikes on the mall?
 - Bicycles are allowed on sidewalks, except on the mall
 - Allow on mall, but no designated path
 - Compatible with other uses (i.e. public market)

4. Next steps

- December meeting
- Key plan elements – round robin
- Front Street design meeting

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Meeting Record

MEETING DATE: December 15, 2015

PROJECT NAME: Downtown Helena Master Plan

SUBJECT: Steering Committee Meeting #5

BY: Jeremy Keene

ATTENDEES: Sid Godolphin
Dennis McCahon
Sumner Sharpe
Paul Cartwright
Kyle Baker
Andrew Hagemeyer
Melinda Barnes
Alan Nicholson
Mike Dowling
Tracy Reich
Jeremy Keene

- Smart Growth webinar yesterday
 - Missoula Mayor Engen presented
 - Downtown plans
 - Appeal to larger audience
 - City typically takes a strong role
 - Resources/funds
 - Regulatory authority
 - How do we get the City more involved in the Helena Plan?
 - Someone needs to be in charge of implementing the plan
 - Commissioners need to be invested and prioritize Downtown development rather than supporting moves out of town (i.e. BCBS or the Chamber)
 - Roll out a plan to Commissioner prior to final decisions
 - City Manager is key
 - Create performance measures
 - Demonstrable increase in Downtown tax revenue

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

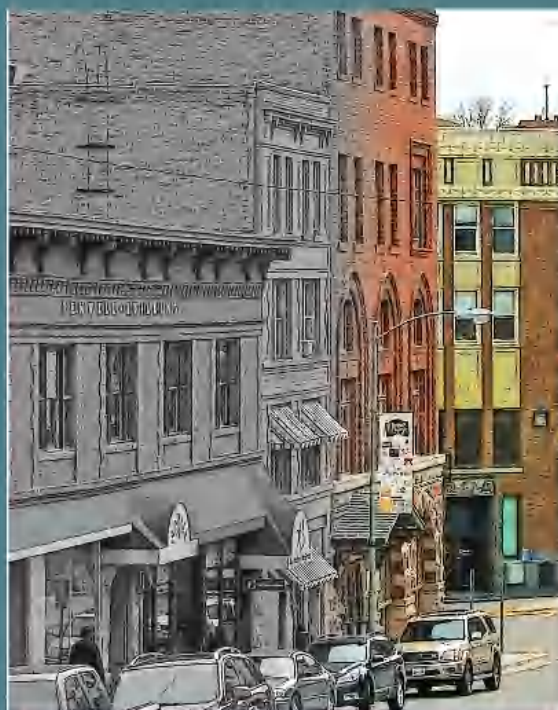
- Land Use Concept
 - Land use descriptions will be articulated in the plan
 - Residential mixed use is appropriate everywhere, but some areas may be more focused toward retail, entertainment, etc.
 - Future use of Federal Reserve building could be public or civic use (i.e. Historical Society)
 - Great Northern has planned housing for 130 units
 - Front Street concept is residential mixed use with some commercial or entertainment uses
 - How does land use concept apply to zoning?
 - Downtown Plan will be adopted as an amendment to the Growth Policy
 - By law, zoning changes must be consistent with the Growth Policy, so the land use concept would influence future zoning changes.
 - What does this gain or cost us?
 - Allows us to focus specific uses (i.e. retail shopping street)
 - Allows us to protect existing uses (i.e. residential uses)
 - Provides design guidance for public improvements (i.e. sidewalks, streets, infrastructure)
 - Don't make land use designations too specific
 - Focus on what we don't want (easier to define) versus what we do want (harder to predict)
- Pedestrian/Bicycle Network
 - Pedestrian walkway needs to follow Front Street rather than Last Chance Gulch
 - Less steep grade
 - Fewer curb cuts/driveways
 - Immediate catalyst opportunity with Front Street project
 - Needs to include bikes
 - "Gold Dust" trail doesn't mean anything
 - Route doesn't need to be themed, just needs good connectivity
 - Hauser one-way needs to be addressed
 - 3-lane Benton with bike lanes or two-way protected bikeway
 - See transportation plan
 - Public Market at Women's Park would be a good attraction on the walking trail
 - Parks is also considering a permanent band shell

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- Visual point of interest at end of Front Street
- Establish active use adjacent to or within park
 - Housing (see concept sketch)
 - School at BCBS? Charter school/college?
- Guiding Principles
 - Guiding principles should be positive, forward looking statements
 - Include something about commerce
 - Downtown is Walkable
 - Downtown is Connected to the Community
 - Pathway/connection to outlying suburban areas
 - Community connections, not just roads
 - Crossroads of community
 - Downtown is a Desirable Place
 - Attract people who come for the unique things only Downtown can offer
 - Promote attractions and conveniences that make Downtown unique
 - “Historic” is confusing with respect to what is “Downtown?”
 - Topography is important element
 - Activate Downtown
 - “New ideas need old buildings” – Jane Jacobs
 - Cruse does not need to be a primary vehicle route, repurpose right-of-way
 - Manage Parking
 - Prefer “Optimize” or “Diversify” parking to meet needs
 - Include bicycle parking

Key Priorities

- Front Street Project
- Cruse Ave Concept
- Rezoning/code updates
- Next Steps:
 - Front Street Focus Group
 - Final Charrette



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN



DSA architects

Gibbs
Planning Group

Charrette #1
September 2, 2015

Open House	5:30 - 5:45 pm
Presentation	5:45 - 6:05 pm
Workshop	6:05 - 6:30 pm
Reporting	6:30 - 6:55 pm
Next Steps	6:55 - 7:00 pm



Charrette #1

September 2, 2015

Open House	5:30 - 5:45 pm
Presentation	5:45 - 6:05 pm
Workshop	6:05 - 6:30 pm
Reporting	6:30 - 6:55 pm
Next Steps	6:55 - 7:00 pm



Why a Downtown Master Plan?

The Downtown Helena Master Plan will be a visioning and guiding document for the management and future growth of Downtown Helena by the Helena Business Improvement District, the City of Helena, and other agencies.

The plan will:

- Provide a tool for guiding downtown economic growth
- Reaffirm the downtown's role in the community
- Guide decision making for public improvements, private investments, and changes to existing zoning codes and regulatory mechanisms

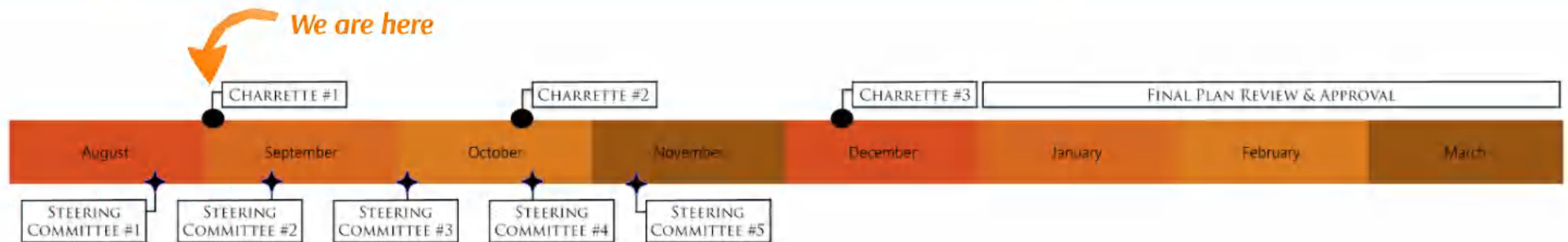


Desired Outcome: A community-based plan that represents the needs and desires of the affected stakeholders

What is the Process?

The Downtown Helena Master Plan will be a visioning and guiding document for the management and future growth of Downtown Helena. This is a community based planning effort where the public will drive the vision and content of the plan. Master planning is an important tool for guiding downtown economic growth.

"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." – Henry Ford



Steering Committee

- Julie Serstad - Rocky Mountain Development
- Melinda Barnes - Bike Walk Montana, downtown
- Sharon Hastings - Taco Del Sol/Hub Coffee
- Alan Matheson - Downtown Helena

Steering Committee

- Julie Serstad - Rocky Mountain Development Council
- Melinda Barnes - Bike Walk Montana, downtown property owner
- Sharon Hastings - Taco Del Sol/Hub Coffee, downtown business owner
- Alan Nicholson - Great Northern Town Center, developer
- Paul Cartwright - Former City commission/downtown advocate
- Sumner Sharpe - Helena Citizens Council
- Ed Stevenson - Downtown resident, building construction
- Dennis McCahon - Downtown historian, public art
- Sid Godolphin - Property owner, downtown redevelopment
- Dan Lloyd - Governors Office of Economic Development
- Kyle Baker - Carroll College
- Ryan Schwoehert - Downtown patron, bike/walk/alternative transportation

Why is Downtown important?

Community Identity

Employment

Local Businesses

Historic Character

Government Services

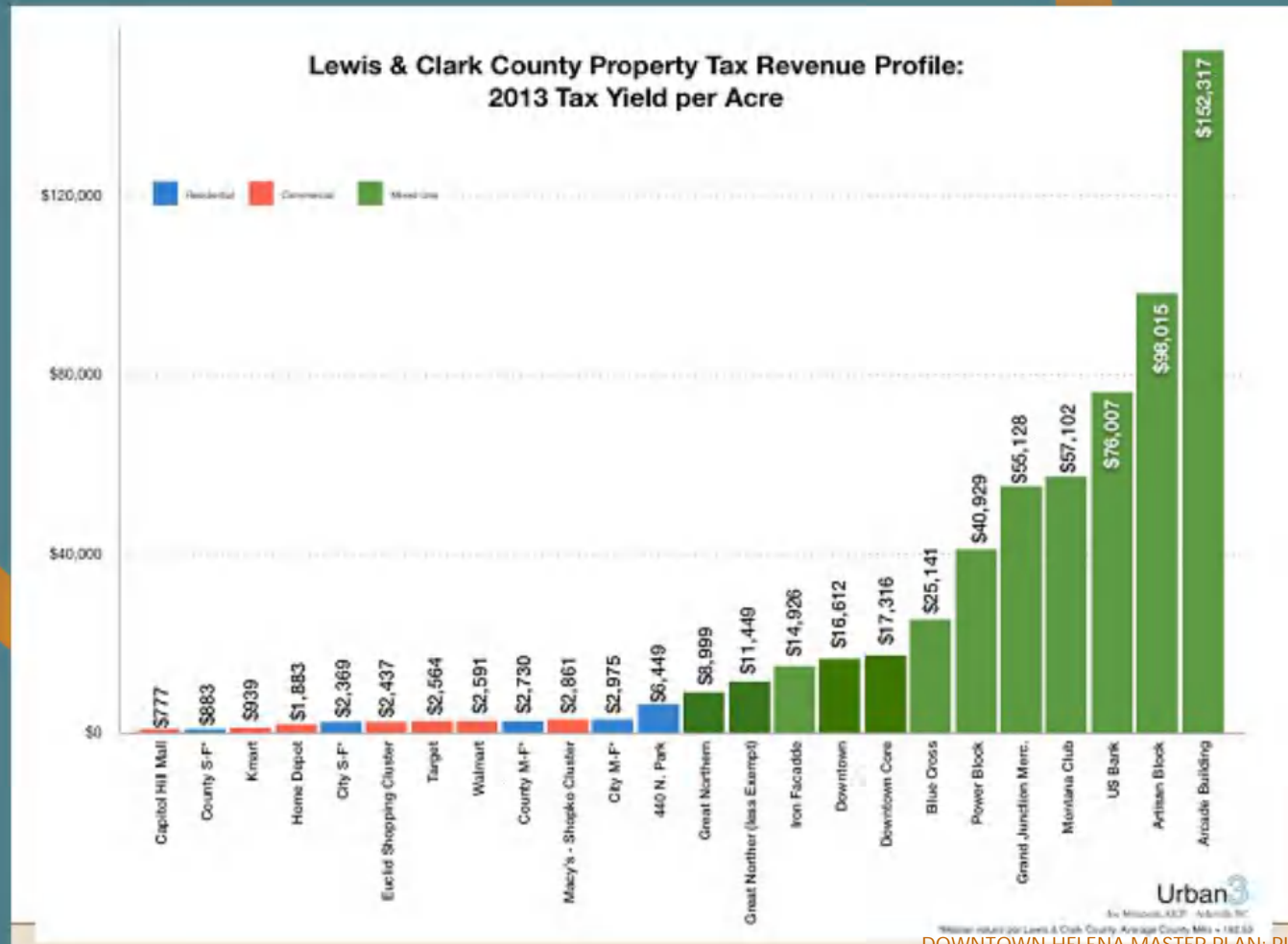
Public & Private Investment

Business Development

Tax Base



Downtown represents a significant portion of Helena's tax base.



Why do we plan?

Change

What's our community goal?

*achievable outcomes
ability to work as a team*



What is changing?



Attracting Talent

Sonoran Institute

Economic Development: Old & New

Then

Attract Businesses from Outside
Bigger is Better (Larger Firms)
“Open for Business”
Incentives & Subsidies
Competition for “the Deal”

Now

Grow jobs from within
Retain/expand existing businesses
Workforce Development
Entrepreneurship/Creativity/Innovation
“Quality of Life” Attracts Talent
Public/Private Partnerships
Regional Cooperation



Sonoran Institute

People on the move
are seeking great
places



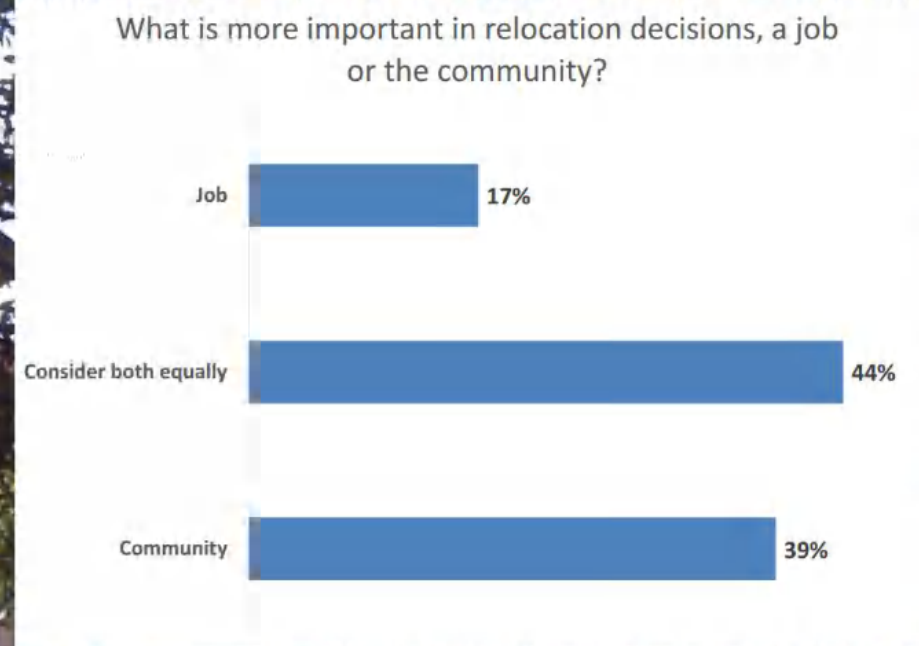
Sonoran Institute

Jobs follow people



Sonoran Institute

Place Value



Sonoran Institute

Quality and character of the community matter



Sonoran Institute

"Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results." — Andrew Carnegie

Success will depend on how well the Helena community works as a team.

Public Outreach

- 225 contacts at five different events
- 8 group presentations
- 5 individual meetings
- 218 Facebook "likes"
- 661 Survey Responses

1,117 Total Contacts



What We Heard

- *75% visit downtown at least once a week.*
- *Most visit during business hours (83%), but many also visit in the evening (63%)*
- *91% drive to downtown, but 44% also walk, and 22% bike. Less than 1% ride the bus.*

What We Heard

- *80% said downtown is a special place and that it represents Helena's unique culture and heritage (somewhat or strongly).*
- *Only 41% agreed that downtown is vibrant, with many people and activities.*
- ***95% said downtown has potential to be more than it currently is (somewhat or strongly agree).***

What We Heard

Top 3 Transportation Issues:

- *Parking (61%)*
- *Bike/Ped Connectivity (51%)*
- *Mini-malfunction Junction (45%)*

Top 3 Economic Issues:

- *Walking Mall (58%)*
- *Business Health (55%)*
- *Retail/Office Mix (55%)*

Top 3 Land Use Issues:

- *Historic Preservation (68%)*
- *New Development (49%)*
- *Parks/Open Space (35%)*
- *Housing (34%)*

Issues

Table Topics

- **Transportation & Connectivity**
- **Walking Mall**
- **Parking**
- **Historic Preservation & Land Use**
- **Marketing, Tourism, & Economic Conditions**
- **Services & Amenities**
- **Front Street & Great Northern Town Center**

Workshop Instructions



Reporting

What do we want to get out of this exercise?

- Prioritize issues & ideas
- Identify the barriers
- Initial vision for the plan

"write on the wall" exercise results

[illegible]

Next Steps

Economic & Market Analysis



Initial Concepts & Strategies



Charrette #2

How can I stay involved?

Connect with us on Facebook:
HelenaDowntownMasterPlan

Send us your comments:



Attend a Steering Committee meeting:
September 17th, 2:00 pm, Chamber
Building

Attend the next Charrette:
October 20th, 5:30 pm, location TBD

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER

Date: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Comments: _____

WGM Group
1111 E. Broadway
Missoula, MT 59802
406.728.4611
jkeene@wgmgroupp.com

Connect

www.downtownhelena.com
www.facebook.com/DowntownHe



Thank You



For more information, visit the project website:
www.downtownhelena.com/about-us/bid/

Connect with us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/DowntownHelenaMasterPlan

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Executive Director
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Contact WGM Group:
Jeremy Keene
Project Manager
jkeene@wgmgroup.com
(406) 728-4611



Downtown Helena Master Plan

Summary of Issues, Ideas, & Barriers

Charrette #1, September 2, 2015

Parking	Issues	Ideas	Barriers
	Cost/hassle of parking is a deterrent	free parking everywhere, paid by a district office of the entire city	management solution: time limit on streets but not garages
		add parking levels to existing parking garages	lack of room for updated equipment
		attractive front and back doors on walking mall to encourage parking in lots on each side	cost of remodeling
		split blocks for walkway - premium parking to stores	money
		angle parking on Cruse	
	Time limits (1-hour is not long enough)	have free lots from 3 pm or 4 pm	cost to change signs
		signage for different types of parking (at mall)	1 hour limit discourages shopping at mall
	Employee parking	Provide designated employee parking	cost of permit with minimum wages
		get employees to park in less used spaces with incentives	
		help employees pay for parking	
	Parking is confusing/hard to find	have every business website mention two parking options	getting everyone to go to website
		do articles in newspaper to educate	not everyone gets the paper
		one and two hour chalk marking is confusing for people	
	Parking utilization (free vs. pay)	use zoning to change/shape business mix, have parking match that mix	property rights

Downtown Helena Master Plan

Summary of Issues, Ideas, & Barriers

Charrette #1, September 2, 2015

Transportation & Connectivity	Issues	Ideas	Barriers
	Bike/ped connectivity	greenway between library and Carroll College (through GNTC)	so much concrete, street crossings
		improve aesthetics	no shared vision for community as a whole
		slow traffic speeds, narrow some roads and travel lanes to improve crossings and safety	community perception that roads are only for cars and resources should be prioritized as such
		pedestrian overpass across Neill Ave	funding
	Bike/ped safety	provide for adequate sidewalks and bike ways (lanes)/10' bike paths	ROW / funding
		educate people who drive/walk/bicycle	leadership, effective messaging, costs
		increase bicycle facilities and ped facilities that provide safety	
	Carroll College connectivity	develop walkways between Carroll College and Lyndale underpass	topographic, jurisdictional
		add interpretive signing	money, assumes people will walk, backlash from business on Last Chance Gulch
	Lack of transit service	fixed bus routes	population base
		trolley on Helena Ave to Depot	
	Great Northern to Walking Mall connectivity	improved pedestrian features on Front St and crossing and Neill Ave	human resources
		improve aesthetics	green infrastructure is new and untested
		improve connections to Courthouse Square	sidewalk policy relies on property owners to volunteer
	Downtown to neighborhood connectivity		Neill Ave is MDT route, city has limited ability to change
		add/connect sidewalks from outlying neighborhoods	
		consider Helena Ave for access to downtown	
	Downtown to trails connectivity	color coded signs in downtown for trail wayfinding	cost and quantity (connecting)
		allow bicycle use of Walking Mall, natural bike route	pedestrian fear
	Downtown to Capital		
	Getting visitors Downtown (finding Downtown)	aesthetic improvement of Lyndale underpass (opportunity for public art)	need to come up with design acceptable to all
		do away with the mindset that downtown starts at the Neill, LCG, 11th, and Helena jct	cost maintenance/funding
		beautify the areas from Euclid/Lyndale LCG-south and get a light at 14th to get to the GNTC	
		cohesive and uniform downtown street 'beautifying'	
	One-way streets / mini-malfunction junction	need wayfinding	
		route some traffic away from mini-malfunction junction	traffic volumes
		signal timing at malfunction junction	

Downtown Helena Master Plan

Summary of Issues, Ideas, & Barriers

Charrette #1, September 2, 2015

Walking Mall	Issues	Ideas	Barriers
	Limited hours of operation	better business hours (evenings/weekends)	lack of business mindset
		incentives for long-time owners to upgrade	money, inconvenience
		design change to improve street level pedestrian use	
		vertical zoning (retail only bottom level)	existing buildings, current use, grandfather these?
		ordinances that encourage retail/restaurants on the street level in order to create vibrancy	landlords want to keep fully rented out? don't want retail renters?
	Lack of exciting stores/anchors	request business plan and license of new businesses	might limit new business recruitment
		street vendors/food carts	city policy
		recruit a large non-traditional store such as Old Navy as anchor, give them incentives	large retail space available, ability to give incentives
		get the 'Penney's' department store back	corporate negotiations
		find two destination spots open to Mall	
		diverse events and programming	lack of promotion
		feature in front of ice cream area around which to congregate/sit	money
	Connectivity	extend Walking Mall to mini-malfunction junction	
		allow all modes of transportation	history of walking mall
		allow a narrow trail for bikes and bike racks	it's called the <i>Walking Mall</i> ... Walking Mall is break in connectivity for bicyclists
		make it easier for bikes/skateboards	perceived bike/ped conflict and youth disrespect
		bike lanes with parking slots for bikes, possible share bike system	
		designated traffic areas monitored by city safety	
	Customer traffic	local currency that is time based - parking commission gold coin	
		allow Segway tours on to Mall	permission from city
		street access- cars/bikes	
		wayfinding signs- business lists of restaurants etc.	too much clutter, sign overload
	Winter conditions	more day to day options to keep people coming back	entrepreneurship
		doors between stores - weather	
	Construction staging	pedestrian cover, walkways, tenting	design and construction funding
		do not allow construction dumpsters on the mall	more difficult for contracting
	Maintenance/landscaping	allow Last Chance Gulch to return to a waterway, dig it up and let it flow	
		public restrooms	
		better garden/landscape feature with public art, cleaner	city support with landscaping, communication with AAs community and gardening group volunteers
		green spaces for people to gather	maintenance
		more color along Walking Mall	small (not large) art historic markers with color
	New building design	visually appealing entrance on 6th and Main	money

Downtown Helena Master Plan

Summary of Issues, Ideas, & Barriers

Charrette #1, September 2, 2015

Historic Preservation & Land Use	Issues	Ideas	Barriers
	Adaptive reuse	more new housing in-fill, convert hist. structure to housing, residents buy things	
		sustainable energy ideas or historic structures	cash for revitalize
		use of IEBC for historic buildings and incentives for development of historic buildings	inconsistent and difficult permit process
		bodega, or similar, people who go downtown are asking for something of this type	
	Preserving character	make historic buildings usable	
		lots of culture and history - we are not telling our story	
		more 'historical' events/activities downtown, ex: Montana historic museum displays/downtown 'location' presentation	
		historic Helena app- visitors download app and it's a talking tour through downtown Helena, invites visitor to go into building to see historic highlights	money, imagination
		preserving character, consistent regulation of signs that meet historic character (solutions 360 does not)	lack of funding for updating buildings
		repurpose central school	
		attract investors	taxes
		require buildings equal to character of downtown	return on investment
	Hillside development	look beyond BID boundaries; Reader's Ally added, add nearby higher diversity housing choices, reuse of older buildings near boundary, repurpose!	cost
		move office/residential upstairs, more store front retail	lack of city commitment to implement a vision and plan for Helena and downtown's role in that vision
		think central city, not just an existing district	lack of public/private partnerships
	Zoning regulations/approval process	buildings need to open to Mall	
		HPC affects city council and commission communication	restructure ordinance
	Transient/homeless/youth conflicts	more housing downtown, people there at night impacts youth and transient use	community reaction
			special interest groups

Downtown Helena Master Plan

Summary of Issues, Ideas, & Barriers

Charrette #1, September 2, 2015

Marketing, Tourism, & Economic Conditions	Issues	Ideas	Barriers
	Rent is a barrier to small business	tax incentive and special improvement grants do attract new business	cost-potential for undesired outcomes
		city gov't to budget money for promotion of business and housing	Business owners and community apathy
		build incentives into attracting startups	funding available for incentives how long does incentive last
		incentivize missing businesses	budget constraints/who pays subsidy
		rent and 1st floor subsidy for retail	available funds
		analysis of what drives prohibitive rent costs (is it tied to city rules/regs that cannot be changed?)	large portion of Helena does not work downtown
	Loss of business start-ups/major employers	marketing organization, marketing fund	
		break down parking barriers to shopping/using downtown Helena	
		develop cooperative plan for rebel hours	Sunday hours, increased business expense for extended hrs.
	Downtown is not a through street	sky bridge to cathedral to city-county building	Parking, GNTC garage after hours? Voice in parking decisions
		better consistency/customer building in greater Helena area	
	Downtown lacks brand/identity (lack of consistent focused voice)	online visualization of downtown-attract tourism to history and unique architecture	cost
		coordination, cooperation of, and realization of roles of city, BID, DHI, Chamber, Helena tourism, Historic society, etc. in the promotion and growth of downtown Helena	public perception
		downtown brand identity is summarized in 2-3 compelling words that couple past (Helena history) with to be created vibrancy	how do you experience?
		tourism campaign to capture drive-by traffic	priorities of each organization, leadership, defining focused message and goals, defining standards for progress
		build momentum to businesses that have extended retail hours	seasonal success-summer vs winter
		"downtown Helena" as brand-rather than fractured brands	need more vision
		downtown 'brand standards' logos, tag lines for businesses to use	need more leadership
		architectural stds / building height	business owners are stubborn / no one's going to tell me what to do
		more public-private commitment to achieving and implementing a vision & plan that is shared	need a single vision
		city staff's commitment to proactively implement a city vision and downtown as a key part of achieving that vision	what is the bigger vision for Helena?
	Downtown is not being promoted	educate 2008 plan and where we are going with this plan	
		better sign ordinance -more attractive	
		the stake holders into a "user group" perhaps an umbrella organization?	numerous stakeholders working independently
		new highway exit signs for downtown direction	decentralized downtown location
		costumed actors depicting historical events	
		move DHI downtown	
	Online/valley competition	tourist info office and gift shop	
		institute a sense of Helena pride in its own citizens	
	Need more activity/events/nightlife	downtown offers what you can't get at home, community and experience cannot be online messaging	
		would love to see the tour train pick up (or at least stop) downtown	
		reconstruct/open more steam and coal tunnels as an attraction	
		fix existing Walking Mall infrastructure- 'stream' down by library- running water	
		more 24 hour activities	
		indoor winter farmers' market	
	wayfinding/labels	Use Hawthorne Bottle Shop as successful business model for developing rest of Walking Mall	
		signing related to colors - tell people to look for certain color	
		create visual "arrival" gateway at the Gulch and Highway 12	

Downtown Helena Master Plan

Summary of Issues, Ideas, & Barriers

Charrette #1, September 2, 2015

Services & Amenities	Issues	Ideas	Barriers
	Downtown feels worn out/outdated/uninviting	fix the obvious: graffiti, trip hazards, glass, garbage, doors	who to call
		Rodney St commercial area should be included in the downtown master plan	downtown master plan seems to be limited to BID boundary
		encourage performing and visual arts, functional art (bike racks/benches), outdoor piano, lights and sound	
		downtown is Helena's cultural center, including Civic Center and Myrna Loy	financial short sightedness/city investment
		coherent signage	money
		plants	
		improve sidewalks, coordinate landscaping, repair, repaint building exteriors	who's responsible, and to what extent can improvement be achieved and/or mandated?
	Housing	make BID a development zone for infill housing/above 1st floors	lack of interest by developers
		more housing options/lofts/townhouses/condos, mixed use buildings with retail and housing above, housing drives other amenities	money
		housing in the surplus properties, constitution, performance	services and cost, and zoning building regulations
			zoning/financing/risk averse
		build over parking lots	need for more parking
			destruction of open space
	ADA accessibility		
	Lack of downtown grocery/pharmacy		
	Lack of neighborhood gathering places		
	Lack of neighborhood schools	reopen central school	
	Lack of focal point	create gathering places as focal points, creek could be a focal point	
	Landscape/beautification	additional interactive features, fountains	lack of space, money
	Restoring the creek		
	Public restrooms		
	Signage		

Downtown Helena Master Plan

Summary of Issues, Ideas, & Barriers

Charrette #1, September 2, 2015

Front Street & Great Northern Town Center	Issues	Ideas	Barriers
	Connectivity between GNTC and historic downtown / bike/ped facilities	bike lanes that are identified in a unique way and run from Centennial through GNTC and Front Street and downtown	
		one continuous sidewalk on Front from 14th to Neill on Front	expense and space for improvement
		connect bike path from Centennial Park to downtown and trails	
		better lighting on Front Street by warehouse buildings	expense and space for improvement
		greenway between Centennial and downtown	
		ped facilities on Front	
	Neill intersection: difficult for pedestrians to cross	narrow the street/driving lane on Neill	
		Neill ped/bike crossing	
	14th intersection-safety: Last Chance Gulch	stoplight at 14th and Main	
	Landscaping/beautification	turn vacant lot by cinema into garden park (like 6th ward)	coordinating business owners
		complete and green streets, trees, bikes, sidewalks	
	Restoring the creek	tourism, gold panning in restored creek	is there water? What would it look like?
		create wetland area/landscaping for storm water collection	safety with open creek bed
	Storm drainage		
	Parking		
	Business access		

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Meeting Record

MEETING DATE: September 2, 2015

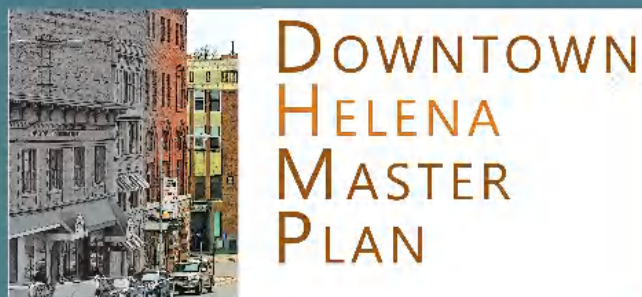
PROJECT NAME: Downtown Helena Master Plan

SUBJECT: Charrette #1 Comments

BY: Kate Dinsmore

- I hope you will look at all of the ideas that were written on the boards and not just the ideas that were verbally presented tonight.
- Thank you all, not enough time, room very loud and crowded, great job, great turn out, lots of great ideas





Charrette #2 Vision & Opportunities
October 20, 2015





DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN



DSA architects

Gibbs
Planning Group

Charrette #2 Vision & Opportunities
October 20, 2015

Introductions

Project Sponsors



Tracy Reich

City of Helena

Sharon Haugen
Ryan Leland



Brian Obert

Montana Department of Commerce

Big Sky Trust Fund

Consultant Team



Jeremy Keene
Nick Kaufman
Kate Dinsmore
Loran Frazier



DSA architects

Mike Dowling



Andrew Hagemeyer

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Robert Gibbs

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Ryan Schwoehert

"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." -- Henry Ford

Tonight's Agenda

Vision & Opportunities

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Charrette #2: Vision & Opportunities

October 20, 2015, 5:30- 7:30 pm, Holiday Inn

Agenda

1. Welcome and Sign-in (5:30 – 5:40pm)
2. Presentation (5:40 – 6:30pm)
 - 1st Charrette Recap
 - What we heard
 - Where we're headed – Draft Vision
 - Market Observations & Opportunities
Robert Gibbs, Gibbs Planning Group
 - Master Plan Framework Presentation
 - Land Use and Circulation Concept
3. Table Exercise (6:30 – 7:15pm)
4. Reporting and Next Steps (7:15 – 7:30pm)

DO YOU WANT TO PROVIDE WRITTEN COMMENTS?

Please feel free to provide written comments to Helena BID and/or the consultant team using the backside of this agenda. Please turn in any written comments at the conclusion of the charrette. Thanks for coming and sharing your input!



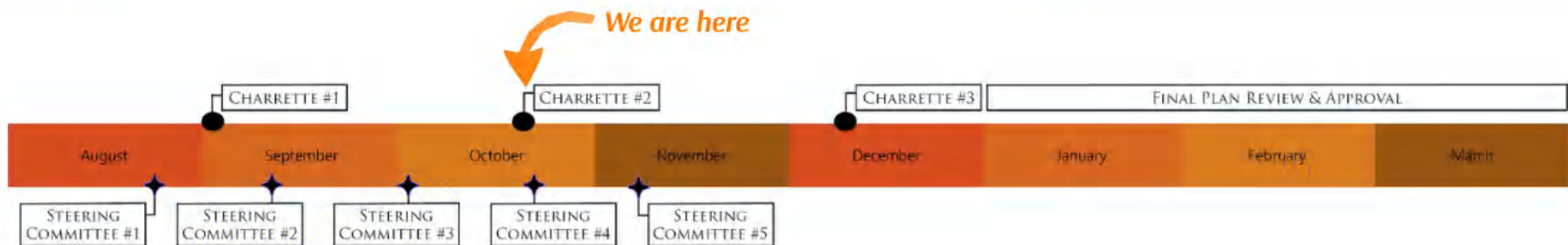
- what we've heard so far
- where we're headed
- what are the opportunities

*Input
&
Feedback*

Where are we in the Process?



The Downtown Master Plan will be a community-based vision and guiding document for the management and future growth of downtown.



Charrette #1 Recap

What does Downtown mean to you?

Assets

Historic buildings
Diverse & vibrant
Entertainment
Employment
Local businesses
Convenient services
Walkable & open space
Community gathering places
Public & Private institutions
Business District
Art District

Barriers

- Cost & Funding
- No Shared Vision
- Rents & Wages
- Leadership & Policy
- Regulations & Approvals
- Lack of Business Mindset
- Topography
- MDT Routes
- Seasonal/Winter Use

Issues

Increasing Impervious Surfaces
Decreasing Visibility & Pedestrian Safety
Lack of Open Space
Decreasing & Increasing
Building
Transitability
Tradition
Mismanaged Marketing
Lack of Shared Vision & Policy
Employment
Seasonal/Weather
Incompatibility

Ideas

- Connect to the Community
- Keep it walking
- Walk and Commerce
- Shared Food/Beverage/Restaurants
- More casual business/office space
- Revitalize buildings
- Regulate building
- Be open to sharing buildings
- Open housing development
- Encourage green building
- Increase & improve infrastructure

Assets

- Historic Buildings
- Arts & Culture
- Entertainment
- Employment
- Local Businesses
- Government Services
- Parks & Open Space
- Community Gathering Places
- Public & Private Investment
- Economic Driver
- Tax Base

Issues

- Preserving Downtown Character
- Business Health & Customer Traffic
- Housing Options
- Services & Amenities
- Parking
- Connectivity
- Visibility
- Inconsistent Marketing
- Loss of Start-ups and Major Employers
- Downtown Anchors
- Maintenance

Ideas

- Connect to the Community
- Simplify Parking
- Bike/Ped Greenway
- Ground-Floor Retail/Restaurants
- Year-round Events/Attractions
- Business Incentives
- Branding Strategy
- Re-purpose Historic Buildings
- More Housing in Downtown
- Gateways & Wayfinding
- Maintain & Replace Infrastructure

Barriers

- Cost & Funding
- No Shared Vision
- Rents & Wages
- Leadership & Policy
- Regulations & Approvals
- Lack of Business Mindset
- Topography
- MDT Routes
- Seasonal/Winter Use



Draft Vision

Downtown Helena is the economic, cultural, and social center of the community. The rich history of mining, railroad industry, and agriculture shape a spectacular 19th century downtown that continues to define the identity of Montana's capital city. Residents and visitors enjoy active lifestyles, walkable neighborhoods, and a strong connection to Helena's trails, parks, and outdoor activities.

Mild summer evenings and crisp winter days make Downtown Helena a year-round destination for businesses, customers, and residents that are looking for quality of life, history, services, and entertainment in a safe and friendly environment.



Guiding Principles

The Downtown Helena Master Plan builds on Downtown's past success, leveraging its unique sense of place and historic identity to create new opportunities in a changing marketplace.

- create a high-quality, desirable place to do business, work, and live
- connect Downtown to the community and the outdoor environment
- create strong connections to the capital and government workforce
- align the plan with foreseeable development opportunities
- create a clear path for leadership to successfully implement the plan

Guiding Principles

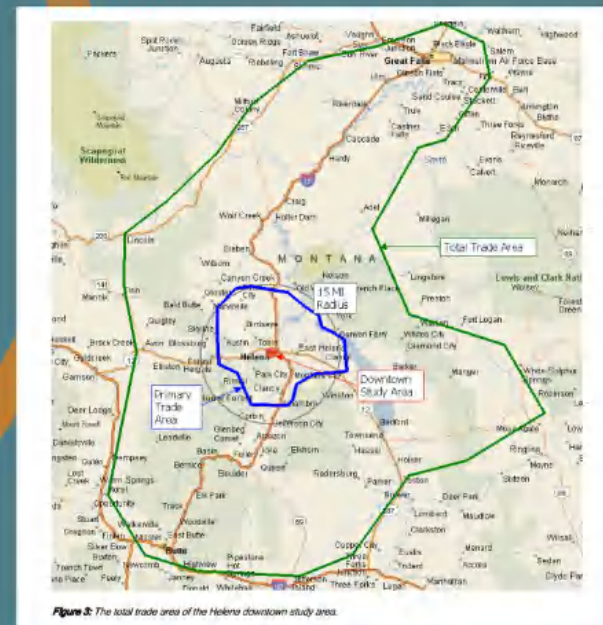
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Downtown Opportunities

Market Observations & Opportunities

Robert Gibbs
Gibbs Planning Group

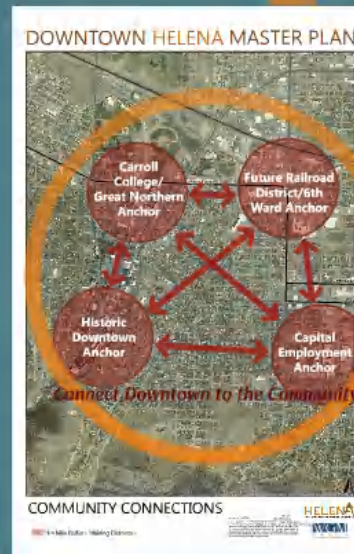


Downtown Opportunities

Initial Land Use & Circulation Concepts

Make Downtown a Premier Destination:

- Attractive & Inviting
- Easy to Find & Navigate
- Amenities & Services
- Convenient Parking
- Walkable





Make Downtown a Premier Destination:

- Attractive & Inviting***
- Easy to Find & Navigate***
- Amenities & Services***
- Convenient Parking***
- Walkable***

The map illustrates the 'Last Chance Gulch Retail' corridor in downtown St. Paul, Minnesota. The central area is labeled 'HISTORIC CENTER' in blue. Surrounding this are several orange 'MIXED USE' zones and green 'CIVIC GREEN' and 'FESTIVAL LAWN' areas. A red line labeled 'LAST CHANCE GULCH RETAIL' runs through the center, connecting to a purple 'EMPLOYMENT ANCHOR' and a red 'DOWNTOWN GATEWAY' area. A dashed blue line with arrows indicates a transit corridor. The map also shows surrounding streets and a 'NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL' area.

Integrate Housing

Create Downtown Gateway

Strategically Locate New Retail

- **Strengthen Neighborhood Connections**

0 250 500 1,000 Feet

October 2015

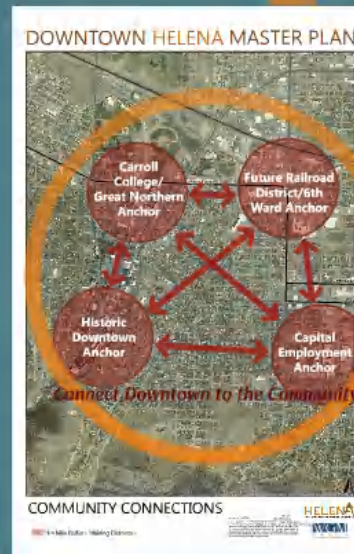
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Use Framework.pdf

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DOWNTOWN

Work with your group to answer the questions below.

What's your vision for Downtown?

Give us your feedback on the draft vision statement below for Downtown Helena for the next 20 years.
Please provide comments or make suggestions to express your vision.

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1 Where's the entrance to Downtown?

How do we make Downtown easy to find?

What are the key characteristics of the entrance?

2 Where's Downtown's main street?



What do you want
Downtown to be 20
years from now?

What's missing
from the Draft
Vision Statement?

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Work with your group to answer the questions below. List your answers on the lines provided and/or draw on the map to illustrate your vision for Downtown.

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How do we make Downtown easy to find?

What are the key characteristics of the entrance?

2 Where's Downtown's main street?

Where's one strategic location for new retail?

What are the key characteristics?

3 How does Downtown connect with the surrounding neighborhoods and open space?

What are the key connections within Downtown?

What are the key characteristics?



4 Where are the focal points?

Where's the center of civic activity?

Where should the community gathering spaces be located?

Where do people go when they go Downtown?

Examples:

- Historic Buildings
- CMTC
- Walking Mall
- Courthouse
- Parks
- Farmers Market

5 What needs to go in the south end of Downtown?

How can this area be activated?

Examples:

- Housing
- Business Incubators
- Startups
- Technology Campus

6 Where does housing go?

Consider connectivity to employment and potential for mixed-use parking.

What are the key characteristics of Downtown's housing?

Example housing types:

- Townhomes
- Lofts
- Live/Work
- Single Family
- Multi-Family

7 Where does employment go?

Consider connectivity to housing, community services, community nodes, and potential for shared workspace.

What are the key characteristics of Downtown employment?

8 What services/amenities are missing in Downtown?

Where would they go?

- Examples of Services:
- Variety of Retail Types
- Government/Industry/Manufacturing
- Health/Pharmacy
- Financial

- Examples of Amenities:
- Recreation/Schools
- Recreation/Exercise
- Entertainment

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POWER ST

HO

HARRISON AVE

HARRISON AVE

MING PL

What are the key characteristics of the entrance?

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MASTER PLAN

Illustrate your vision for Downtown.



4

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Examples:

Historic Buildings

GNTC

Walking Mall

Courthouse

Parks

Farmers Market

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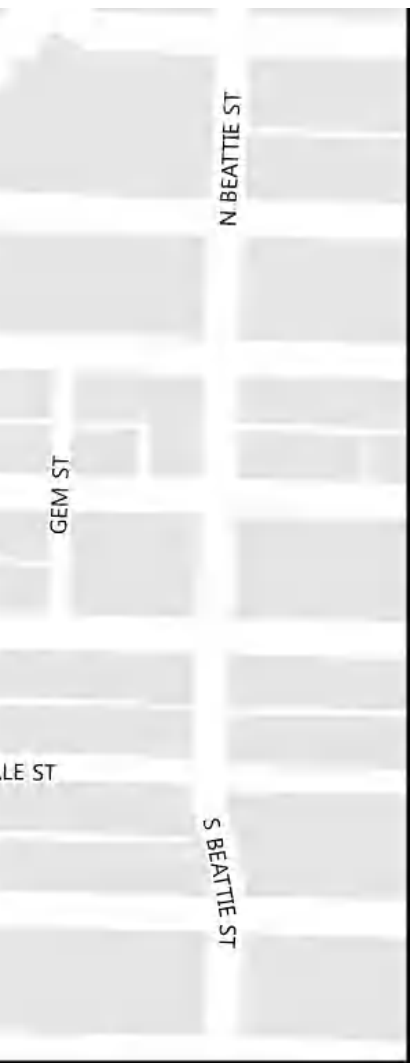
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LE ST

S BEATTIE ST

N BEATTIE ST



300 Feet

7

Where does employment go?

Consider connectivity to housing, connectivity to services, community nodes, and potential for shared-use parking.

What are the key characteristics of Downtown employment?

8

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Examples of Services:

Variety of Retail Types
Household/Grocery/Hardware
Health/Pharmacy
Financial

Examples of Amenities:

Educational/Schools
Recreational/Exercise
Entertainment



Reporting & Next Steps

[illegible]

Send us your comments:

Attend the next Charrette

[illegible]

Thank You



For more information, visit the project website:
www.downtownhelena.com/about-us/bid/

Connect with us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/DowntownHelenaMasterPlan

Contact the Helena BID:
Tracy Reich
Executive Director
treich@helenabid.com
(406) 447-1535

Contact WGM Group:
Jeremy Keene
Project Manager
jkeene@wgmggroup.com
(406) 728-4611

Downtown Helena, Montana Retail Market Analysis



Retail Analysis 2015 Supportable Retail

142,900 (sf) - \$41.4 million in sales

Grocery Stores 27,700 sf



Limited Service Eating 22,200 sf



Apparel & Shoes 17,300 sf



Full Service Restaurants 18,000 sf



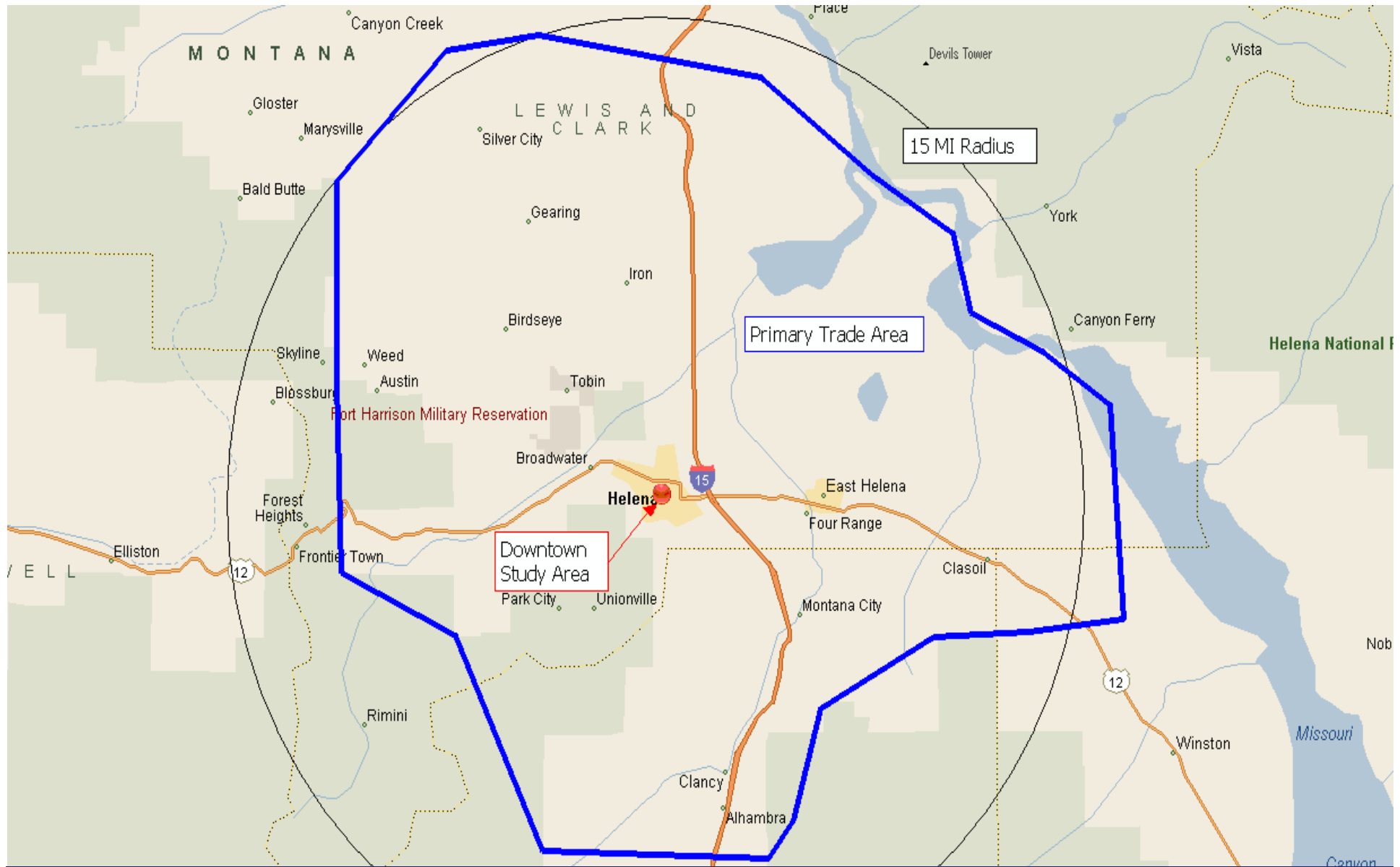
General Merchandise 14,800sf



Special Food Services 8,700 sf

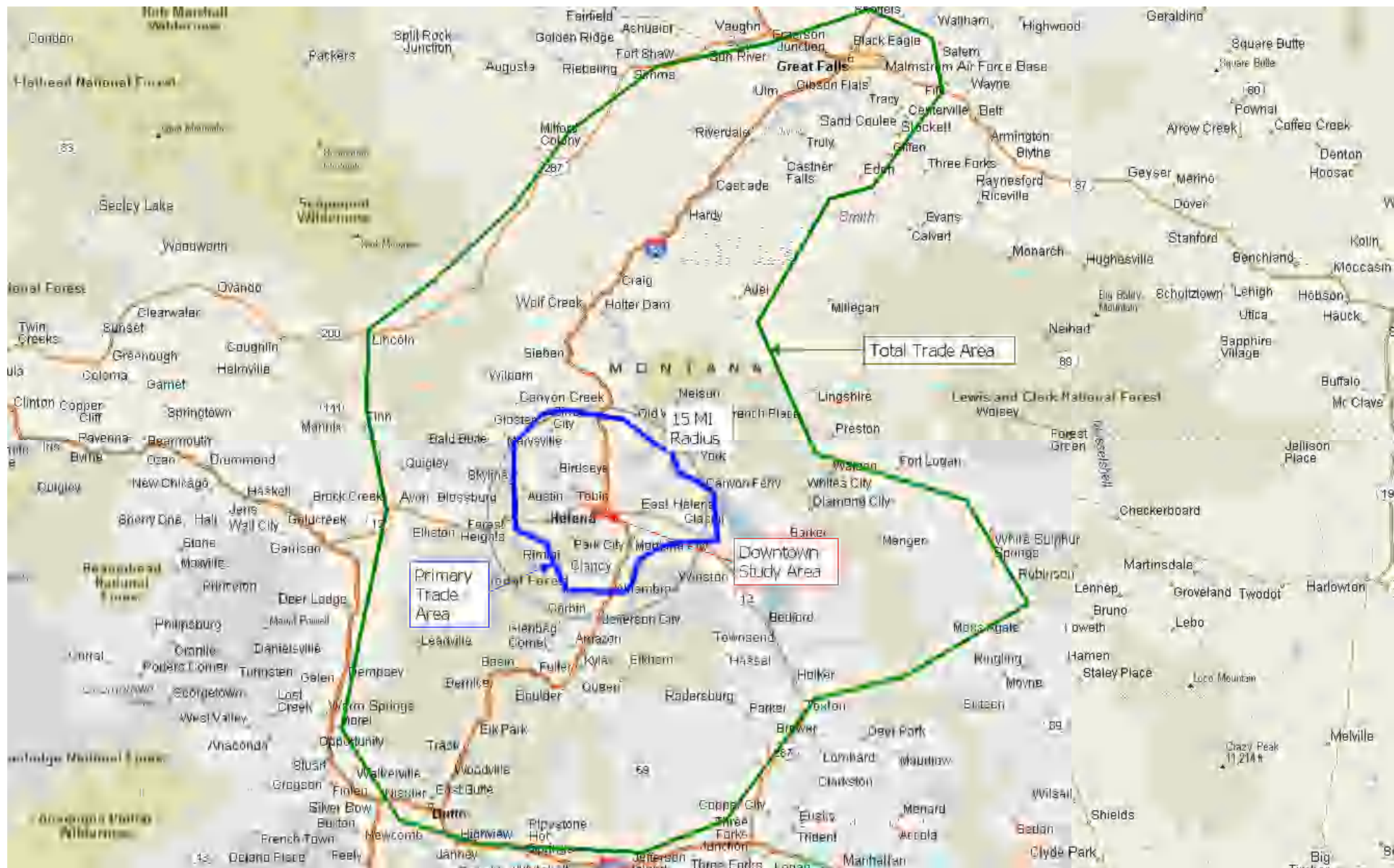
Gibbs Planning Group

Downtown Helena, Montana
Retail Market Study



Gibbs Planning Group

Downtown Helena, Montana Retail Market Study



Gibbs Planning Group

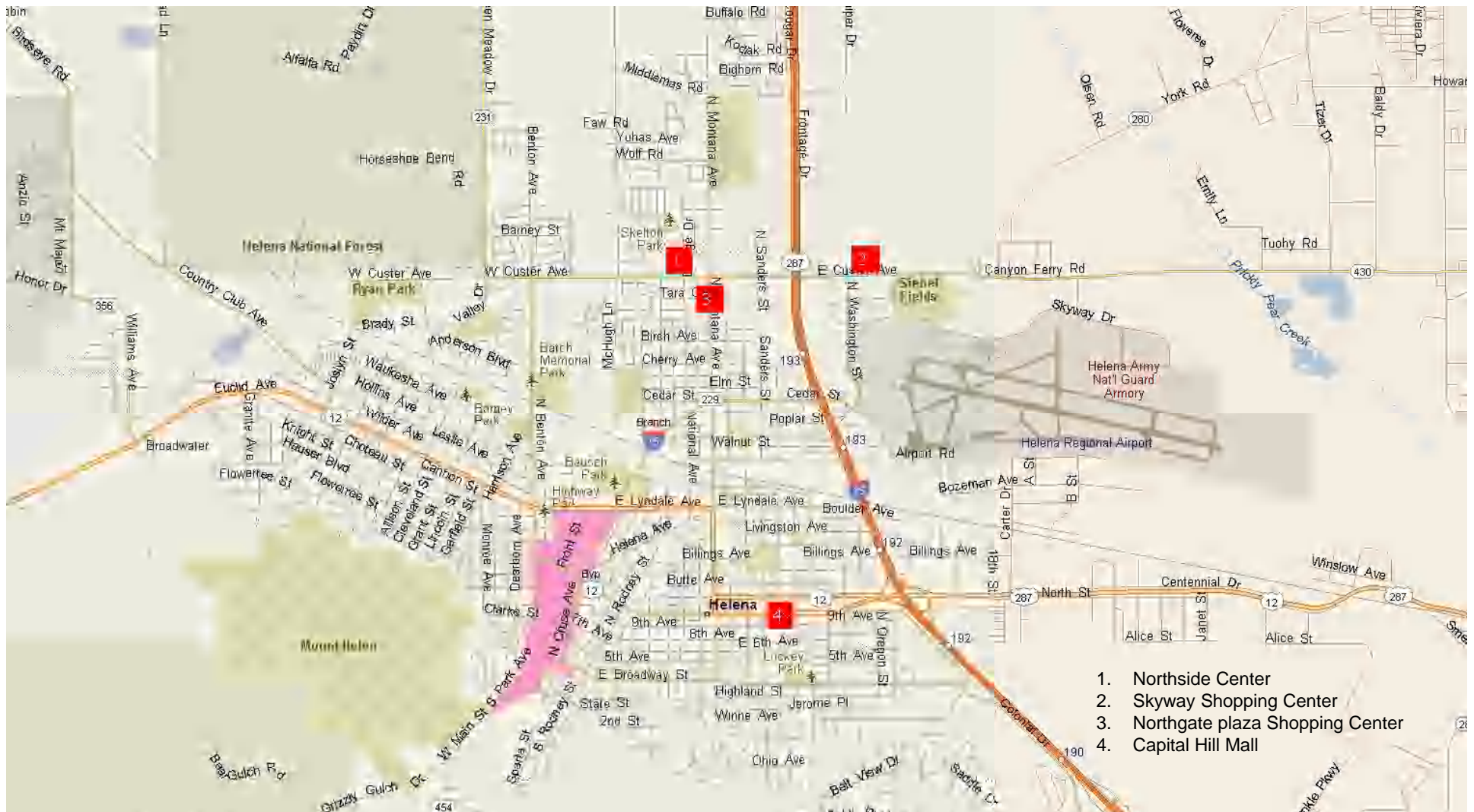
Downtown Helena, Montana Retail Market Study



Gibbs Planning Group

Downtown Helena, Montana Retail Market Study

Shopping Centers & Districts



Gibbs Planning Group

Downtown Helena, Montana Retail Market Study

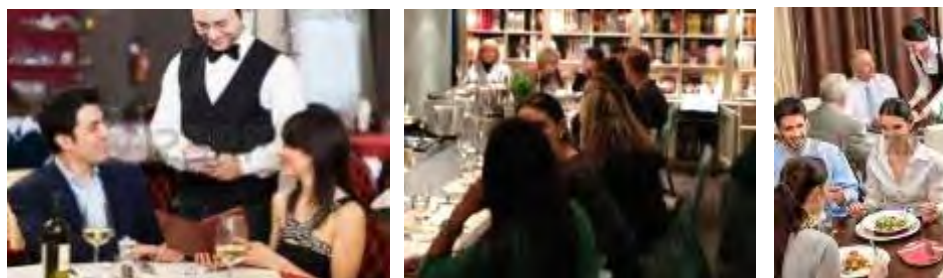
Trade Area Demographic Comparison

<i>Demographic Characteristic</i>	<i>Primary Trade Area</i>	<i>Total Trade Area</i>	<i>State of Montana</i>
2015 Population	67,200	188,400	1,027,700
2015 Households	28,200	80,500	430,600
2020 Population	70,100	193,800	1,073,200
2020 Households	29,500	83,200	452,100
2015-2020 Annual Population Growth Rate	0.85%	0.57%	0.87%
2015-2020 Annual HH Growth Rate	0.95%	0.67%	0.98%
2015 Average Household Income	\$71,100	\$61,300	\$62,300
2015 Median Household Income	\$57,400	\$47,000	\$46,700
2020 Average Household Income	\$81,100	\$69,900	\$71,000
2020 Median Household Income	\$66,600	\$54,300	\$53,900
% Households w. incomes \$75,000 or higher	36.8%	28.3%	28.3%
% Bachelor's Degree	24.5%	19.2%	19.7%
% Graduate or Professional Degree	14.5%	10.3%	9.5%
Average Household Size	2.32	2.27	2.32
Median Age	41.4	41.0	40.6

2015 & 2020 Supportable Retailers

Retail Category	2015 Estimated Retail Sales	2015 Sales/ SF	2015 Estimated Supportable SF	2020 Estimated Retail Sales	2020 Sales/ SF	2020 Estimated Supportable SF	No. of Stores
Retailers							
Apparel Stores	\$3,588,952	\$255	14,070	\$3,921,510	\$265	14,800	7 - 8
Auto Parts Stores	\$237,855	\$205	1,160	\$268,035	\$215	1,250	1
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	\$282,017	\$295	960	\$344,328	\$310	1,110	1
Book & Music Stores	\$528,764	\$210	2,520	\$571,212	\$220	2,600	1
Department Store Merchandise	\$870,384	\$300	2,900	\$1,101,227	\$315	3,500	1 - 2
Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$114,300	\$285	400	\$189,463	\$300	630	1
Florists	\$290,657	\$205	1,420	\$312,012	\$215	1,450	1
General Merchandise Stores	\$4,061,527	\$275	14,770	\$4,677,869	\$290	16,130	5 - 6
Grocery Stores	\$8,441,755	\$305	27,680	\$9,720,776	\$320	30,380	1 - 2
Jewelry Stores	\$619,854	\$325	1,910	\$685,580	\$340	2,020	1 - 2
Lawn & Garden Supply Stores	\$280,773	\$205	1,370	\$304,211	\$215	1,410	1
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$1,751,841	\$250	7,010	\$1,896,222	\$265	7,160	3 - 5
Office Supplies & Gift Stores	\$1,203,938	\$245	4,910	\$1,301,185	\$260	5,000	3 - 4
Shoe Stores	\$842,217	\$265	3,180	\$904,566	\$280	3,230	2 - 3
Specialty Food Stores	\$548,201	\$250	2,190	\$587,912	\$260	2,260	1 - 2
Retailer Totals	\$23,663,036	\$258	86,450	\$26,786,108	\$271	92,930	30 - 40

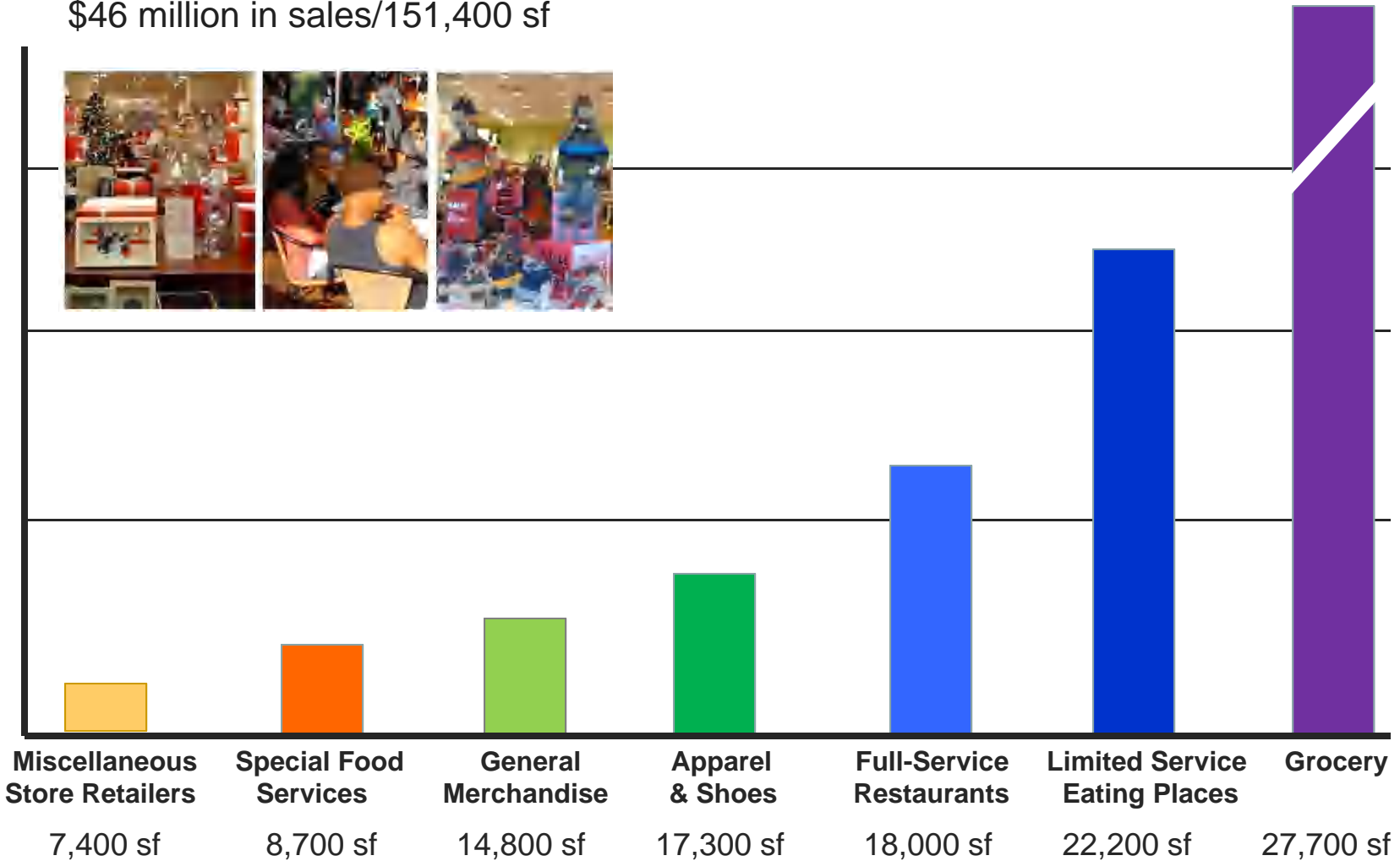
2015 & 2020 Supportable Restaurants



Retail Category	2015 Estimated Retail Sales	2015 Sales/ SF	2015 Estimated Supportable SF	2020 Estimated Retail Sales	2020 Sales/ SF	2020 Estimated Supportable SF	No. of Stores
Retailer Totals	\$23,663,036	\$258	86,450	\$26,786,108	\$271	92,930	30 - 40
Restaurants							
Bars, Breweries & Pubs	\$2,267,459	\$305	7,430	\$2,440,395	\$320	7,630	2 - 3
Full-Service Restaurants	\$5,863,575	\$325	18,040	\$6,405,163	\$340	18,840	3 - 4
Limited-Service Eating Places	\$7,001,096	\$315	22,230	\$7,634,918	\$330	23,140	6 - 8
Special Food Services	\$2,568,338	\$295	8,710	\$2,746,810	\$310	8,860	4 - 5
Restaurant Totals	\$17,700,469	\$310	56,410	\$19,227,286	\$325	58,470	15 - 20
Retailer & Restaurant Totals	\$41,363,505	\$269	142,860	\$46,013,394	\$283	151,400	45 - 60

Supportable Retail by 2020

\$46 million in sales/151,400 sf



Walk Score® 1 - 100 points



Live Where You Love

What's Nearby



View neighborhood restaurants, coffee shops, grocery stores, schools, parks, and more.

Transportation Choices



Get a commute report and see options for getting around by car, bus, bike, and foot.

Local Insight



See what locals are saying, ask questions, browse nearby photos and popular places.



Thank you!



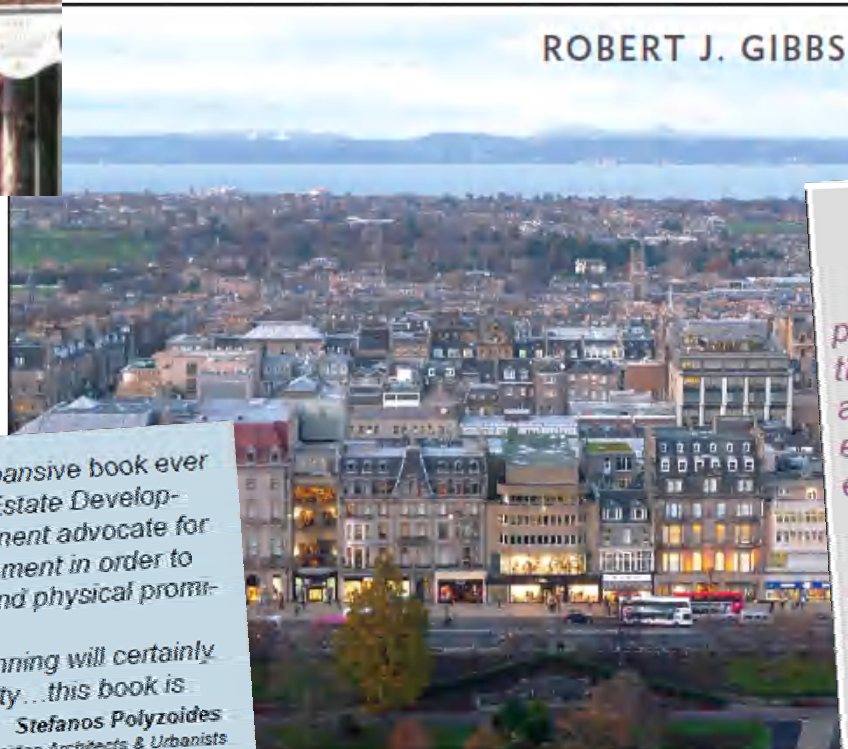
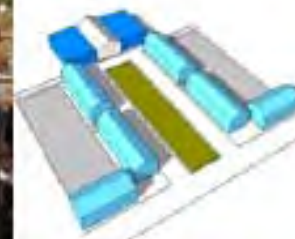
Gibbs Planning Group
Urban Retail Institute
248 642-4800

rgibbs@gibbsplanning.com





ROBERT J. GIBBS



"...the most comprehensive and expansive book ever written on the subject of Retail Real Estate Development. Gibbs is by far the most prominent advocate for reforming retail planning and development in order to return American cities to economic and physical prominence..."

"Gibbs' insights on urban retail planning will certainly improve the quality of your community...this book is essential reading..."

Stefanos Polyzoides
Moule & Polyzoides Architects & Urbanists

"...Extraordinary: Gibbs has popped the hood and taken apart the engine of commercial design and development, showing us each individual part and explaining fit, form and function."

The first time that someone has seamlessly integrated the complex variables of modern retail into the place-making equation..."

Yamir Steiner
Founder, Chief Executive Officer
Steiner + Associates

PRINCIPLES OF URBAN RETAIL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



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- ### How do we make Downtown easy to find?

What are the key characteristics of the entrance?

Where's the strategic location for new retail?

What are the key characteristics?

What are the key connections within Downtown?

What are the key characteristics?



0 200 400 800 Feet



Where's the center of civic activity?

Where should the community gathering spaces be located?

Where do people go when they go Downtown?

How can this area be activated?

Examples:

- Housing
- Business Incubators
- Startups
- Technology Campus

Consider connectivity to employment and potential for shared-use parking.

What are the key characteristics of Downtown housing?

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Examples of Services:	Examples of Amenities:
Variety of Retail Types	Educational/Schools

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- Variety of Retail Types
- Household/Grocery/Hardware
- Health/Pharmacy
- Financial

Examples of Amenities:
Educational/Schools
Recreational/Exercise
Entertainment

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Charrette #2 Map Activity Responses

The second charrette for the Downtown Helena Master Plan was held at the Holiday Inn on October 20, 2015 from 5:30 – 7:00 pm and was attended by over 80 people. Groups were asked to illustrate their vision for Downtown by answering questions and diagramming their ideas on a map. Their responses are below followed by the group maps.

1. Where's the entrance to Downtown?

- Benton and Euclid, Lyndale and Last Chance, E. Lawrence by Cathedral
- Intersection of Lyndale and Last Chance-Gateway local
- Off of Highway 12, sign on Benton and Highway 12
- From 6th street
- From Lyndale
- 11th, North of Last Chance Gulch
- Corner of Last Chance Gulch and Euclid (SW corner)
- Multiple entrances

➤ How do we make downtown easy to find?

- Signage (2)
- Show where to park
- Better signage that would direct traffic
- Signage at Montana
- Archway-Lyndale and Gulch
- Statue-Lyndale and Gulch
- Wayfinding signage
- More lighting for the area at night
- Sign on Benton, sign on Last Chance Gulch
- Better signage from highways
- Visible street numbers
- Acquire property as public gateway display (mini fire tower, etc)
- Another entrance possibility is the corner of N. Park Ave and Neill Ave
- Light poles-consistency
- Downtown directories at fairgrounds, Capitol, etc.

- What are the key characteristics of the entrance?
 - Make it attractive, make it look like an entry
 - Don't have an entrance that dead ends
 - Common logo, i.e. fire tower
 - Historic landmark
 - Historic lighting and signage
 - No parking-need better signs to garage
 - Signage from interstate and from the west
 - Large archway
 - Easy to navigate
 - Signage for retail and anchor
 - Consistency across entrances-similar look and feel
 - Could have matching arches at entrances
 - Make a statement to stand out from surroundings, distinct and characterizing, 'branding'
 - Immediate retail opportunities
 - Open gate entrance feature
 - Streets and access

2. Where's Downtown's main street?

- Benton-Park!
- Where's the strategic location for new retail?
 - Also further up the gulch
 - N. Last Chance to Lyndale
 - 1st floor retail in existing and new office buildings
 - 1st floor parking garages-turn into retail
 - North of mini malfunction-Sportsman and Danzier Point
 - Fuller Avenue
 - 1st block of Walking Mall
 - Medical Arts Building
 - Power Block
 - Walking Mall the whole length of Last Chance
 - Small store: Walking Mall
 - Anywhere Last Chance Gulch

- Fuller Ave
- North end of Last Chance Gulch
- Fill in gaps
- Last Chance Gulch
- 1st floor, tax incentive!
- At entrance (Lyndale towards Neill)
- Cruse Ave
- What are the key characteristics?
 - Mix of uses-retail, office (on 2nd floor), residential (on higher floors)
 - This draws attention into the Historic downtown streets
 - Infill locals
 - Longer hours
 - Consistency in streetscapes-signs, lighting
 - Theme for historic value
 - Good signage and numbering
 - Light pole
 - Individual store fronts
 - Sidewalk cafes
 - Landscape
 - Affordability

3. How does Downtown connect with the surrounding neighborhoods and open space?

- What are the key connections within Downtown?
 - Cruse is like the Great Wall of China-a barrier to downtown. Reduce the barriers for pedestrians
 - Lawrence
 - Broadway, 6th , Cruse, 13th
 - Broadway, 6th, Benton, 11th Ave, South Park, Mt. Helena
 - 11th Ave, Broadway, 6th, W. Lawrence, Benton, Lyndale, Helena Ave: All need signage
 - Neighbors on east and west
 - Trailhead connections at South West end- include more signage
 - Lawrence St, Sixth Ave, the churches, Central school
 - Better pedestrian access
 - Streets, access, sidewalks

- Need to direct bike use
- What are the key characteristics?
 - Get a trolley up and down N. Last Chance
 - Mountain biking; it's all about Downtown
 - Match neighborhood entrance to main entrance
 - Revamp Cruse to not be a barrier-too wide, no store fronts
 - Redevelop Hill and Women's park to accommodate multi residence housing and an open air market

4. Where are the focal points?

- Where's the center of civic activity?
 - Ice cream shop, chess board
 - Library
 - Theater
 - Carousel
 - Cathedral
 - Movies
 - Grand Street and Myrna
 - Historic museum
 - Civic Center, Myrna Loy, library, City/County building
 - City/county building
 - Civic Center/library
 - All over north, central south
- Where should the community gathering spaces be located?
 - Walking Mall, library, museums, all the places in ovals in your map
 - The Shrine should be renovated
 - I'd put it in front of Rialto/Hawthorne, Big Dipper etc.
 - Plaza/known city center/gathering
 - Front Rialto, performance park
 - Near parking
 - Exploration works, science center, carousel
 - All over
 - City/county building
- Where do people go when they go downtown?

- All: Historic building, GNTC, Walking Mall, courthouse, parks, Farmers Market
- Farmers Market, Walking Mall, GNTC, Museums, cultural places, parks
- The Hawthorn
- The movies
- Breweries
- Parks
- Blackfoot, Big Dipper, public market, indoor sports-plex with retail
- All over

5. What needs to go in the south end of Downtown?

- How can this area be activated?
 - More retail and eclectic
 - Tear down old Federal building, or convert to Technology Campus or businessZ incubator
 - Housing/coffee shop/stop-in restaurant/café
 - Bridge pizza
 - Anchor
 - Transportation (trolley)
 - Kid-oriented indoor place
 - Retail and housing
 - Food truck park
 - Free parking supported by city wide tax, and Walking Mall businesses should have inviting rear entrances
 - Housing
 - Gateway dog park for residents and workers
 - Park for bike riders

6. Where does housing go?

- What are the key characteristics of Downtown housing?
 - All: townhomes, lofts, live/work, single family, multi-family
 - 2nd floor and up of retail areas
 - Infill and above street retail
 - Townhomes with underground parking-condos
 - Above retail zones –mixed zoning
 - No real limits

- The Guardian, Iron Front (shared bathrooms)

7. Where does employment go?

- What are the key characteristics of Downtown employment?
 - Diversify private sector
 - 2nd and 3rd floor
 - Myrna open/house, BCBS building
 - At 5:00, they leave-get them to stay!
 - North and south end fill in existing gaps
 - No real limits, case by case
 - Trails
 - Breweries
 - After-work

8. What services/amenities are missing in Downtown?

- Rooftop restaurant and lounges
- Central school
- Grocery
- Health/pharmacy
- Grocery/market/Leslie's hallmark
- Garden center/hardware /drug store
- Department store
- Outdoor seating
- Hardware store, pharmacy, convenience or grocery store
- Better signage/marketing of the mountain biking/hiking
- Grocery store-Trader Joe's, small Whole Foods, pharmacy
- City retail bikes (summer)
- Directory of stores and services with addresses
- Keep public billboards clean and updated
- Advertisements through Groupon (internet)
- Indoor sportsplex
- Internet café
- Better public transportation

- Ice skating rink
- Pedestrian facilities on Last Chance Gulch that improve safety
- Grocery/pharmacy
- Grocery store/market, Trader Joe's
- Public bathrooms in multiple locations
- Hardware
- Year-round child activities
- Neighborhood grocery
- Laundromats
- Public markets
- Where would they go?
 - Market in basement and ground floor of arcade building
 - Revive facade improvement program/grants
 - Design guidelines
 - More public art
 - Historic building signs

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Work with your group to answer the questions below. List your answers on the lines provided and/or draw on the map to illustrate your vision for Downtown.

What's your vision for Downtown?

Give us your feedback on the draft vision statement below for Downtown Helena for the next 20 years. Please provide comments or make suggestions to express your vision.

Downtown Helena is the economic, cultural, and social center of the community. The rich history of mining, railroad industry, and agriculture shape a spectacular 19th century downtown that continues to define the identity of Montana's capital city. Residents and visitors enjoy active lifestyles, walkable neighborhoods, and a strong connection to Helena's trails, parks, and outdoor activities. Mild summer evenings and crisp winter days make Downtown Helena a year-round destination for businesses, customers, and residents that are looking for quality of life, history, services, and entertainment in a safe and friendly environment.

The Downtown Helena Master Plan builds on Downtown's past success, leveraging its unique sense of place and historic identity to create new opportunities in a changing marketplace. This includes:

- creating a high-quality, desirable place to do business, work, and live;
- connecting Downtown to the community and the outdoor environment;
- creating strong connections to the capital and government workforce;
- aligning the plan with foreseeable development opportunities; and,
- creating a clear path for leadership to successfully implement the plan.

1 Where's the entrance to Downtown?

How do we make Downtown easy to find?
1) Benton's Euclid 2) Lyndale's Last Chance
Signage
Street name to PARK

What are the key characteristics of the entrance?
Make it a gateway, make it look like an archway
Don't have an entrance that is a wall

2 Where's Downtown's main street?

Where's the strategic location for new retail?
Benton - PARK
N Last Chance to Lyndale
1st floor Retail in existing main office Bldgs
1st floor parking garages - have to retail

What are the key characteristics?
Mix of Use - Retail/Office/Residential
on 2nd & higher floors

3 How does Downtown connect with the surrounding neighborhoods and open space?

What are the key connections within Downtown?
Use use is like the Great Wall
at China
on Lyndale to Lyndale
Lyndale Reduce the barriers

What are the key characteristics?
Get a Trolley up & down
N Last Chance



4 Where are the focal points?

Where's the center of civic activity?
use Lyndale Ave, Park St

Where should the community gathering spaces be located?
existing mall, library, museums, etc. in old Bldgs in your map
the Square should be renovated

Where do people go when they go Downtown?

Examples:
Historic Buildings
GNTC
Walking Mall
Courthouse
Parks
Farmers Market

5 What needs to go in the south end of Downtown?

How can this area be activated?
More retail = electric
area of former technology campus
old Fed Bldg! or incubator

Examples:
Housing
Business Incubators
Startups
Technology Campus

6 Where does housing go?

Consider connectivity to employment and potential for shared-use parking.

What are the key characteristics of Downtown housing?

Example housing types:
Townhomes
Lofts
Live/Work
Single Family
Multi-Family

7 Where does employment go?

Consider connectivity to housing, connectivity to services, community nodes, and potential for shared-use parking.

What are the key characteristics of Downtown employment?
Diversity
Private sector

8 What services/amenities are missing in Downtown?

Where would they go?
existing restaurants & shops
school

Examples of Services:
Variety of Retail Types
Household/Grocery/Hardware
Health/Pharmacy
Financial

Examples of Amenities:
Educational/Schools
Recreational/Exercise
Entertainment

Work with your group to answer the questions below. List your answers on the lines provided and/or draw on the map to illustrate your vision for Downtown.

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Please provide comments or make suggestions to express your vision.

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- How do we make Downtown easy to find?

What are the key characteristics of the entrance?

Where's the strategic location for new retail?

What are the key characteristics?

What are the key connections within Downtown?

What are the key characteristics?



Where's the center of civic activity?

Where should the community gathering spaces be located?

Where do people go when they go Downtown?

How can this area be activated?

Consider connectivity to employment and potential for shared-use parking.

What are the key characteristics of Downtown housing?

Consider connectivity to housing, connectivity to services, community nodes, and potential for shared-use parking.

What are the key characteristics of Downtown employment?

Where would they go?

Examples of Services:
Variety of Retail Types
Household/Grocery/Hardware
Health/Pharmacy
Financial

Examples of Amenities:
Educational/Schools
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- connecting Downtown to the community and the outdoor environment;
- creating strong connections to the capital and government workforce;
- aligning the plan with foreseeable development opportunities; and,
- creating a clear path for leadership to successfully implement the plan.

Revamp Cruise ^{to make} as barrier - too wide, no street front
redevelop Hill & Wilmont Parks to accommodate
multi-storied housing & an open air
market



0 200 400 800 Feet



blackfoot
big dipper
public market
sandra sports place
with rafter

Examples of Amenities:
Educational/Schools
Recreational/Exercise
Entertainment

10. Downtown Helena Winter Plan: Public

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

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1 Where's the entrance to Downtown?

How do we make Downtown easy to find?

From 6th St. From LYNDALLE
High on Benton - High on Lawrence
11th St. No car lane

What are the key characteristics of the entrance?

No parking - need better signs to manage;
Highway from interstate from the west.
Traffic security.

2 Where's Downtown's main street?

Where's the strategic location for new retail?

Small stores, walking mall; business lawrence street
fuller size;

What are the key characteristics?

Lower hours; consistency in street scene - signs lighting.
Theme for historic values

3 How does Downtown connect with the surrounding neighborhoods and open space?

What are the key connections within Downtown?

11th Ave, Broadway, 6th, W Lawrence;
Benton, Lyndale, Helena Ave.
ALL NEED SIGNAGE

What are the key characteristics?

Mountain biking; it's all downtown



4 Where are the focal points?

Where's the center of civic activity?

Civic Center, MYRNA LOY, ~~REDACTED~~
LIBRARY, CITY COUNTY BUILDING
Where should the community gathering spaces be located? EXPOSITION WORKS
SCIENCE CENTER

Where do people go when they go Downtown?

THE DOWNTOWN
THE MOVIES, BEVERAGES,
CAROUSEL

Examples:

- Historic Buildings
- GNTC
- Walking Mall
- Courthouse
- Parks
- Farmers Market

5 What needs to go in the south end of Downtown?

How can this area be activated?

RETAIL & HOUSING

Examples:

- Housing
- Business Incubators
- Startups
- Technology Campus

6 Where does housing go?

Consider connectivity to employment and potential for shared-use parking.

What are the key characteristics of Downtown housing?

IN FILL & ABOVE STREET RETAIL

Example housing types:

- Townhomes
- Lofts
- Live/Work
- Single Family
- Multi-Family

7 Where does employment go?

Consider connectivity to housing, connectivity to services, community nodes, and potential for shared-use parking.

What are the key characteristics of Downtown employment?

AT 5:00 - THEY LEAVE
GET THEM TO STAY!

8 What services/amenities are missing in Downtown?

Better signage/marketing of the downtown identity

GROCERY STORE - TRADER JOE
SMALL WHOLE FOODS
PHARMACY

Where would they go?

- Examples of Services:
- Variety of Retail Types
 - Household/Grocery/Hardware
 - Health/Pharmacy
 - Financial

- Examples of Amenities:
- Educational/Schools
 - Recreational/Exercise
 - Entertainment

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1 Where's the entrance to Downtown?

How do we make Downtown easy to find?

ARCHWAY - LYNDALE & GULCH
STATUE - LYNDALE & GULCH
WAYFINDING SIGNAGE
MORE LIGHTING FOR THE AREA AT NIGHT

What are the key characteristics of the entrance?

COMMON LOGO I.E. FIRE TOWER
HISTORICAL LANDMARK
HISTORIC LIGHTING AND SIGNAGE

2 Where's Downtown's main street?

Where's the strategic location for new retail?

MEDICAL ARTS BUILDING
POWER BLOCK
WALKING WALL
THE WHOLE LENGTH OF LAST CHANCE

What are the key characteristics?

3 How does Downtown connect with the surrounding neighborhoods and open space?

What are the key connections within Downtown?

BROADWAY, SIXTH BENTON, 11TH AVE.
SOUTH PARK - MT. HELENA

What are the key characteristics?

4 Where are the focal points?

Where's the center of civic activity?

Library, Theater, Courthouse, Museum, Cathedral
Monterey

Where should the community gathering spaces be located?

Monterey

Where do people go when they go Downtown?

Farmers Mkt, Walking Mall, Cafe, Museums + cultural places
park

Examples:

Historic Buildings
GNTC
Walking Mall
Courthouse
Parks
Farmers Market

5 What needs to go in the south end of Downtown?

How can this area be activated?

Anchor, transportation (e.g., trolley), kid-oriented indoor place

Examples:

Housing
Business Incubators
Startups
Technology Campus

6 Where does housing go?

Consider connectivity to employment and potential for shared-use parking.

What are the key characteristics of Downtown housing?

modern + up-to-date amenities (e.g., etc.)

Example housing types:

Townhomes
Lofts
Live/Work
Single Family
Multi-Family

7 Where does employment go?

Consider connectivity to housing, connectivity to services, community nodes, and potential for shared-use parking.

What are the key characteristics of Downtown employment?

More open space, etc., etc.

8 What services/amenities are missing in Downtown?

hardware store, pharmacy, maintenance or grocery store

Where would they go?

Examples of Services:

Variety of Retail Types
Household/Grocery/Hardware
Health/Pharmacy
Financial

Examples of Amenities:

Educational/Schools
Recreational/Exercise
Entertainment



HELENA

WGM GROUP

0 200 400 800 Feet



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1 Where's the entrance to Downtown?

How do we make Downtown easy to find?

Intersection of Lyndale & East Chance - Gateway
a) better signage that would follow direct roads
b) sign on Lyndale & Hwy 101
c) signage @ Montana &

What are the key characteristics of the entrance?

2 Where's Downtown's main street?

Where's the strategic location for new retail?

a) North of Mini Mall location - between & Danzig River
b) Fuller Ave
c) 1st Block of Walking Mall

What are the key characteristics?

a) this draws attention into the Historic downtown from across
b) are in-fill locale.

3 How does Downtown connect with the surrounding neighborhoods and open space?

What are the key connections within Downtown?

Lawrence
Broadway
6th
11th
Crosby

What are the key characteristics?



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Meeting Record

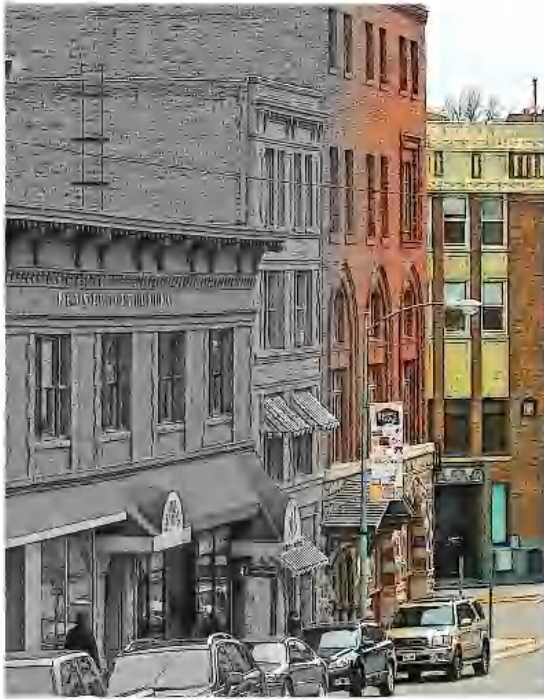
MEETING DATE: October 20, 2015

PROJECT NAME: Downtown Helena Master Plan

SUBJECT: Charrette #2 Comments

BY: Kate Dinsmore

- There should be a **CONSTANT** feature of downtown that can be employed immediately, through all seasons, in between, during, and after any infrastructure morphing that occurs, and that is **CONSTANT** is fresh but changing vegetation. A Downtown freshened by plants, plantings, planters, boxes, hanging pots, window-ledge planters, lightpole décor, etc. is an inexpensive, ever-changing, visually compelling, attractive way to cement the appeal of Downtown to all beholders. It is a short, medium and long term means of attracting people and leaving them with lasting impressions of a compelling historic Downtown with impressive walkability, first-and-last impression charm. Please make a priority of spiffing up Downtown with seasonally changing, classy. Abundant streetscaping, landscaping, etc. The constancy of trees, plants, flowers will help bridge any major changes to street and building infrastructure.
- Need to pay attention to the Native American population! Public/private issues
- ‘Greening America’s Capitals’ concept should be shown for gateway of Last Chance Gulch North, Front Street greenway and south Cruse with city design. Ensure Helena Ave. is not closed by changes to Malfunction Junction. Find out why businesses have so much trouble getting opened. Highlight natural draws like IMBA silver as part of trails. Dog park downtown at Cruse median for workers and residents.
- Upper Last Chance Gulch from Lyndale down to Helena/Neill really mismatches with what’s further down and doesn’t provide a good indicator of what to expect. I say keep walking mall car free by making pedestrian connections to make it more clear. (I feel like I’m sneaking in from fire escapes sometimes.) From a millennial, I can tell you what Helena has (and should be wary of changing up for summery flowers and awnings) is authenticity and that’s something that younger people want.
- Re: Vision Statement I’d love to see some acknowledgement of Downtown as business incubator. The entropy of new small businesses coming and going lends much claim and opportunity to the area.



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN



DSAarchitects



Charrette #3
Refined Goals & Strategies
January 26, 2016

Introductions

Project Sponsors



Tracy Reich, Executive Director

Board of Trustees

Randy Riley, Chair

Al Roy

Bill Crane

Mark Roylance

Judy Merickel

Rex Seeley

Kathleen Harrington

Andres Haladay



Brian Obert, Director

City of Helena

James E. Smith, Mayor

Ron Alles, City Manager

Sharon Haugen, Community Development Director

Ryan Leland, City Engineer

City Commission

Dan Ellison

Andres Haladay

Robert Farris-Olsen

Ed Noonan

Montana Department of Commerce

Big Sky Trust Fund

Consultant Team



Jeremy Keene

Nick Kaufman

Kate Dinsmore

Loran Frazier



Mike Dowling



Andrew Hagemeyer



Robert Gibbs

Steering Committee

Melinda Barnes

Shalon Hastings

Alan Nicholson

Paul Cartwright

Sumner Sharpe

Ed Stevenson

Dennis McCahon

Sid Godolphin

Dan Lloyd

Kyle Baker

Ryan Schwoehert

*"Coming together is a beginning.
Keeping together is progress. Working
together is success." -- Henry Ford*

Imagination



Enlighten

Clarify

Focus



Vision & Excitement

Tonight's Agenda

- Recap of Previous Charrettes
- Plan Overview
- Plan Recommendations
- Next Steps
- Interactive Exercise

Comments & Discussion

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Charrette #3: Refined Goals & Strategies

January 26, 2015
5:30-8:00 pm
Holiday Inn

Agenda

1. Welcome and Open House (5:30 – 6:00pm)
2. Presentation (6:00 – 7:00pm)
 - Recap of Charrette #1 & Charrette #2
 - Plan Overview
 - Plan Recommendations
 - Next Steps
3. Interactive Exercise, Comments, & Discussion (7:00 – 8:00pm)

DO YOU WANT TO PROVIDE WRITTEN COMMENTS?
Please feel free to provide written comments to Helena BID and/or the consultants team using the backside of this agenda. Please turn in any written comments at the conclusion of the charrette. Thanks for coming and sharing your input!



Land Solutions, Inc.

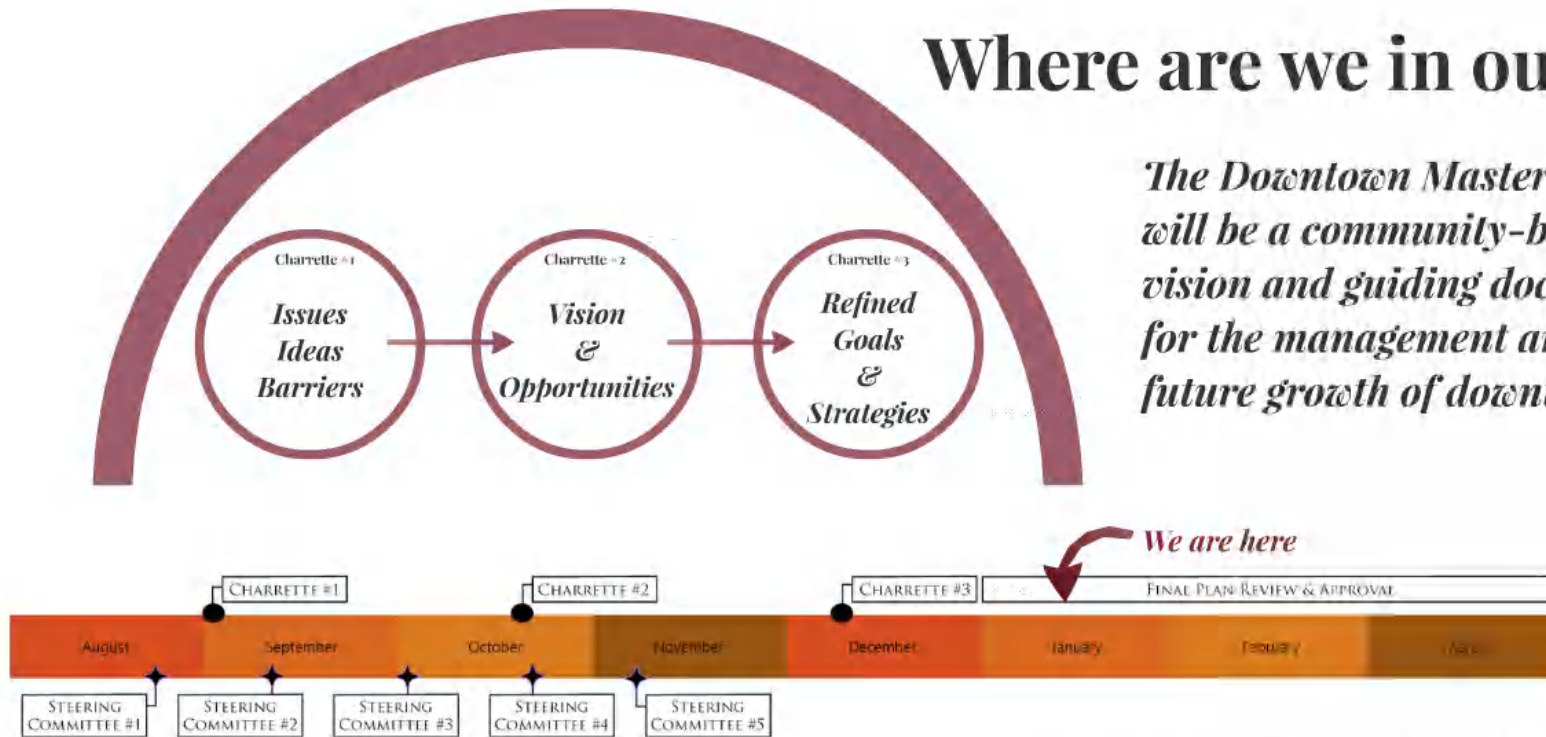


Gibbs



Where are we in our Story?

The Downtown Master Plan will be a community-based vision and guiding document for the management and future growth of downtown.



The Master Plan is an exciting glimpse into the future of Downtown Helena, where energy is captured to achieve the best potential for this magnificent place.

Charrette #1 Recap

Collective Thinking

Realize

Assets

- Historic Buildings
- Arts & Culture
- Entertainment
- Employment
- Local Businesses
- Government Services
- Parks & Open Space
- Community Gathering Places
- Public & Private Investment
- Economic Driver
- Tax Base

Capture

Inform



Recognize

Issues

- Preserving Downtown Character
- Business Health & Customer Traffic
- Housing Options
- Services & Amenities
- Parking
- Connectivity
- Visibility
- Inconsistent Marketing
- Loss of Start-ups and Major Employers
- Downtown Anchors
- Maintenance

Understand

Barriers

- Cost & Funding
- No Shared Vision
- Rents & Wages
- Leadership & Policy
- Regulations & Approvals
- Lack of Business Mindset
- Topography
- MDT Routes
- Seasonal/Winter Use

Identify

Ideas

- Connect to the Community
- Simplify Parking
- Bike/Ped Greenway
- Ground-Floor Retail Restaurants
- Year-round Events/Attractions
- Business Incentives
- Branding Strategy
- Re-purpose Historic Buildings
- More Housing in Downtown
- Gateways & Wayfinding
- Maintain & Replace Infrastructure



Charrette #2 Recap

Vision & Opportunities



*"You are underserving
the market potential,"
- Robert Gibbs*

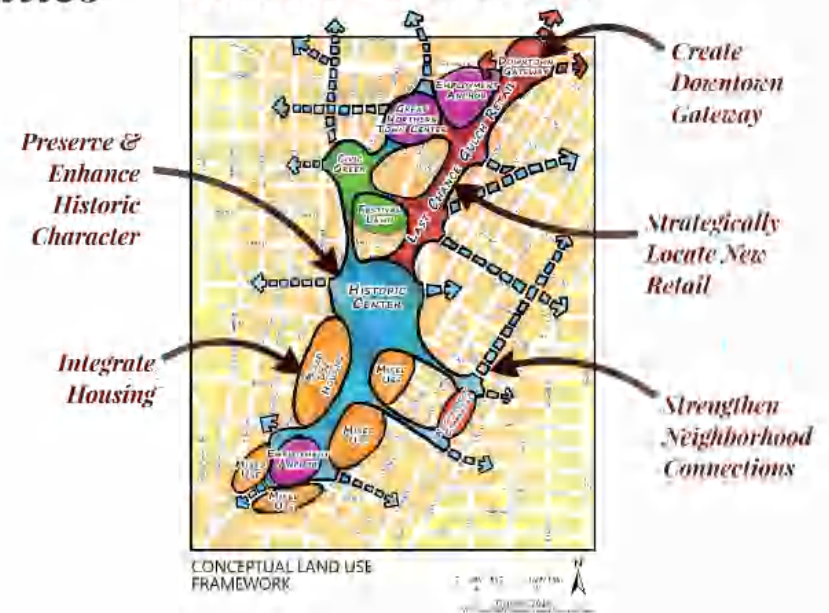
Helena has an extensive trade area, with a large, high-income, well-educated population.

Downtown has demand for up to 142,900 square feet of new retail development (45-60 new stores and restaurants).

Helena is well-poised for downtown success, but there are issues to be addressed.



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

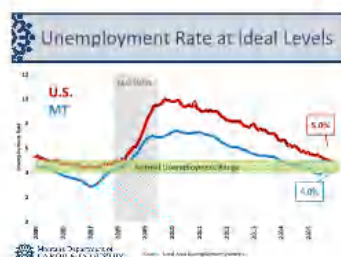
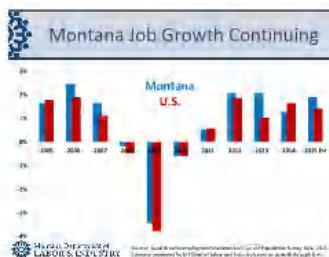
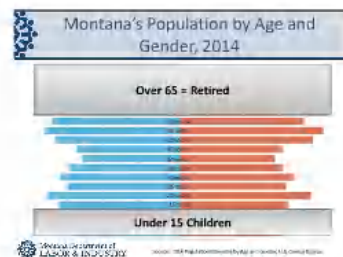


Aesthetics & Maintenance
Parking Management
Business Access & Visibility
Branding & Marketing



Branding & Marketing

- What you have
- Who wants it
- What are we doing





Montana's Population by Age and Gender, 2014

Over 65 = Retired



Under 15 Children

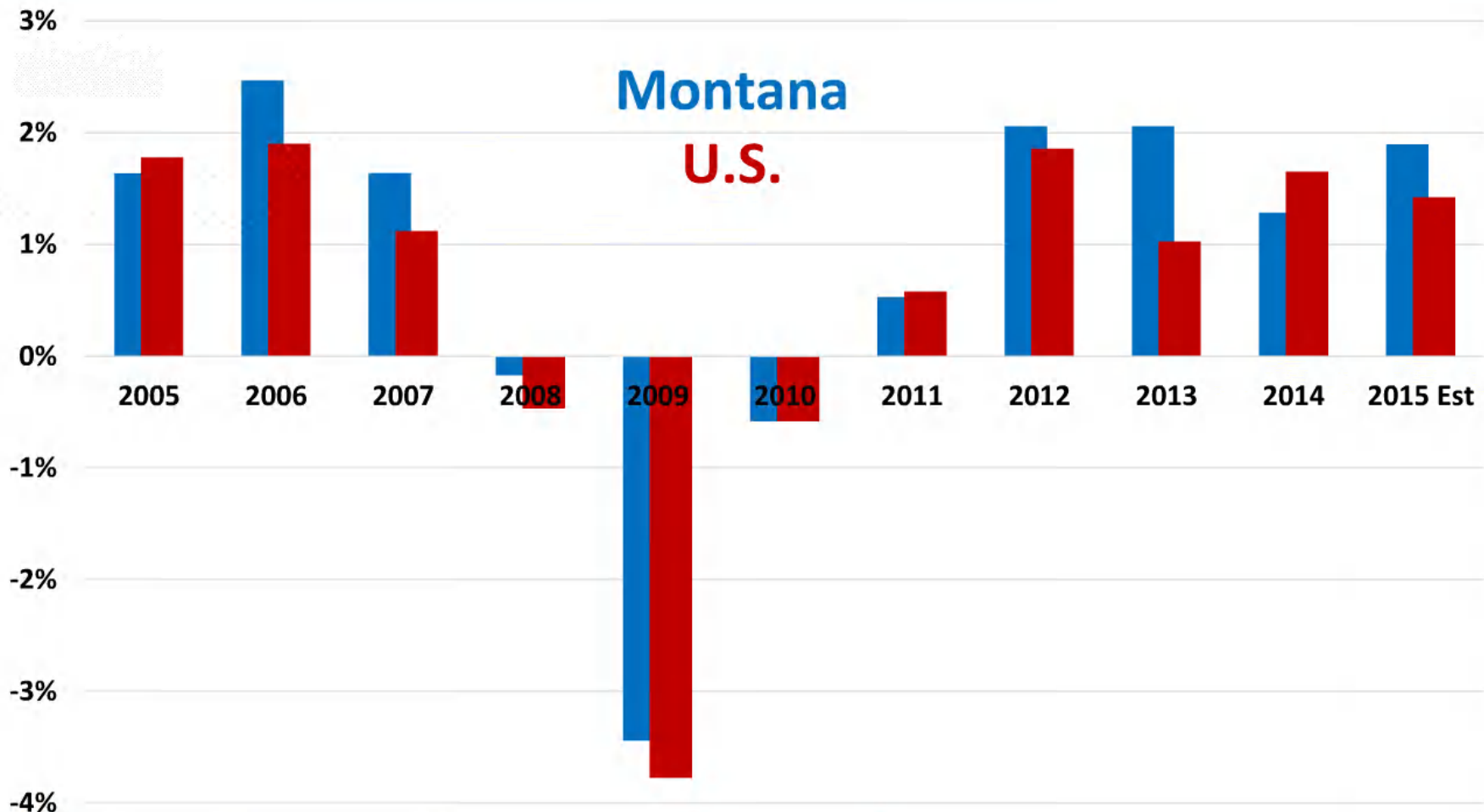


Montana Department of
LABOR & INDUSTRY

Source: 2014 Population Estimates by Age and Gender, U.S. Census Bureau



Montana Job Growth Continuing

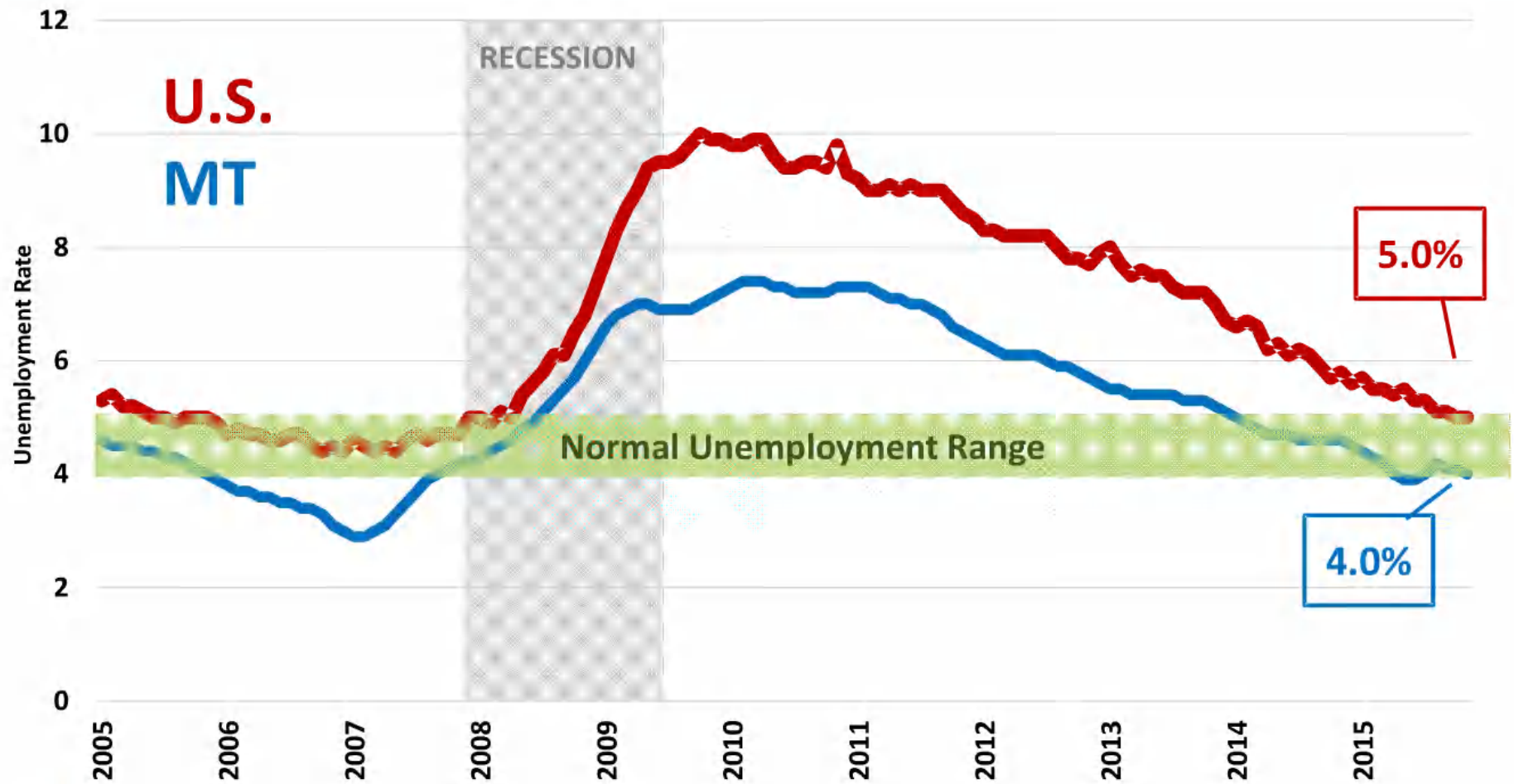


Montana Department of
LABOR & INDUSTRY

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics and Current Population Survey, BLS. 2015 Estimate generated by MT Dept of Labor and Industry based on growth through Nov.

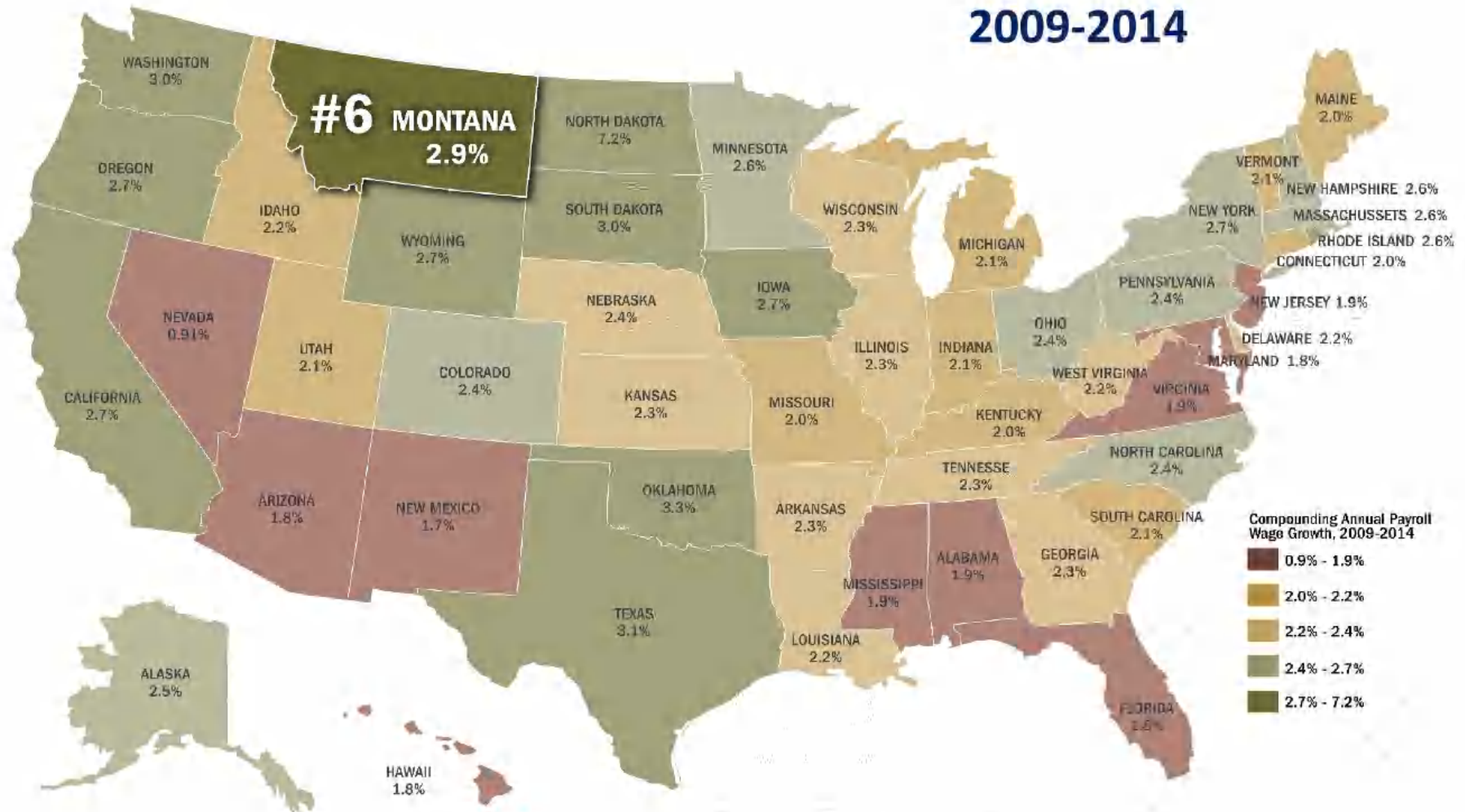


Unemployment Rate at Ideal Levels



6TH FASTEST WAGE GROWTH OVER FIVE YEARS

2009-2014



Source: Research and Analysis Bureau, Montana Department of Labor & Industry using Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2009-2014



Quality and character of the community matter





Vision & Guiding Principles

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN



VICINITY MAP

Downtown Vision

The Heart of Helena

With a rich history and spectacular 19th century architecture, Downtown Helena is the economic, cultural, and social center of Montana's capital city. A stable economy, active lifestyles, independent retail, and a strong connection to trails, parks, and outdoor activities make Downtown Helena a year-round destination for businesses, residents, and tourists.



Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles for Downtown Helena were developed based on input from community members, businesses, downtown organizations, city staff, and other affected stakeholders. These principles provide the basic foundation for decision-making throughout the Plan.



Downtown is Walkable

One of Downtown's most important assets is the concentration of goods and services within easy walking distance. Above all else, walking in downtown must be comfortable, efficient, interesting, and safe.



Downtown is Connected to the Community

As the heart of the City, Downtown must have strong connections with other important community centers and destinations including nearby residential neighborhoods, schools, Carroll College, the Capital Area, the Railroad District, the hospital, and parks and open spaces.



Downtown is a Desirable Place to Live, Work, Learn, and Do Business

Downtown must provide a unique, high-quality environment that attracts a wide variety of visitors, residents, and businesses that benefit from the location and convenience of being downtown.



Downtown is Alive

Downtown must be a vibrant, year-round destination for business and activity throughout the day and evening hours, including residential housing, arts and entertainment, events and activities.



Downtown is Convenient

To be competitive in a changing marketplace, Downtown must have convenient access, circulation, parking, and every-day services that allow people to easily visit and stay Downtown.



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Downtown Vision

The Heart of Helena

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Downtown must be a vibrant, year-round destination for business and activity throughout the day and evening hours, including residential housing, arts and entertainment, events and activities.



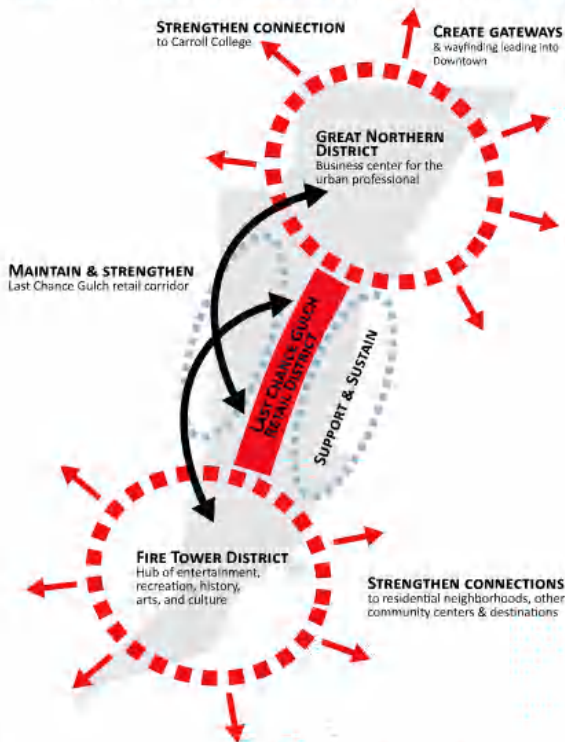
Downtown is Convenient

To be competitive in a changing marketplace, Downtown must have convenient access, circulation, parking, and every-day services that allow people to easily visit and stay Downtown.

Plan Overview

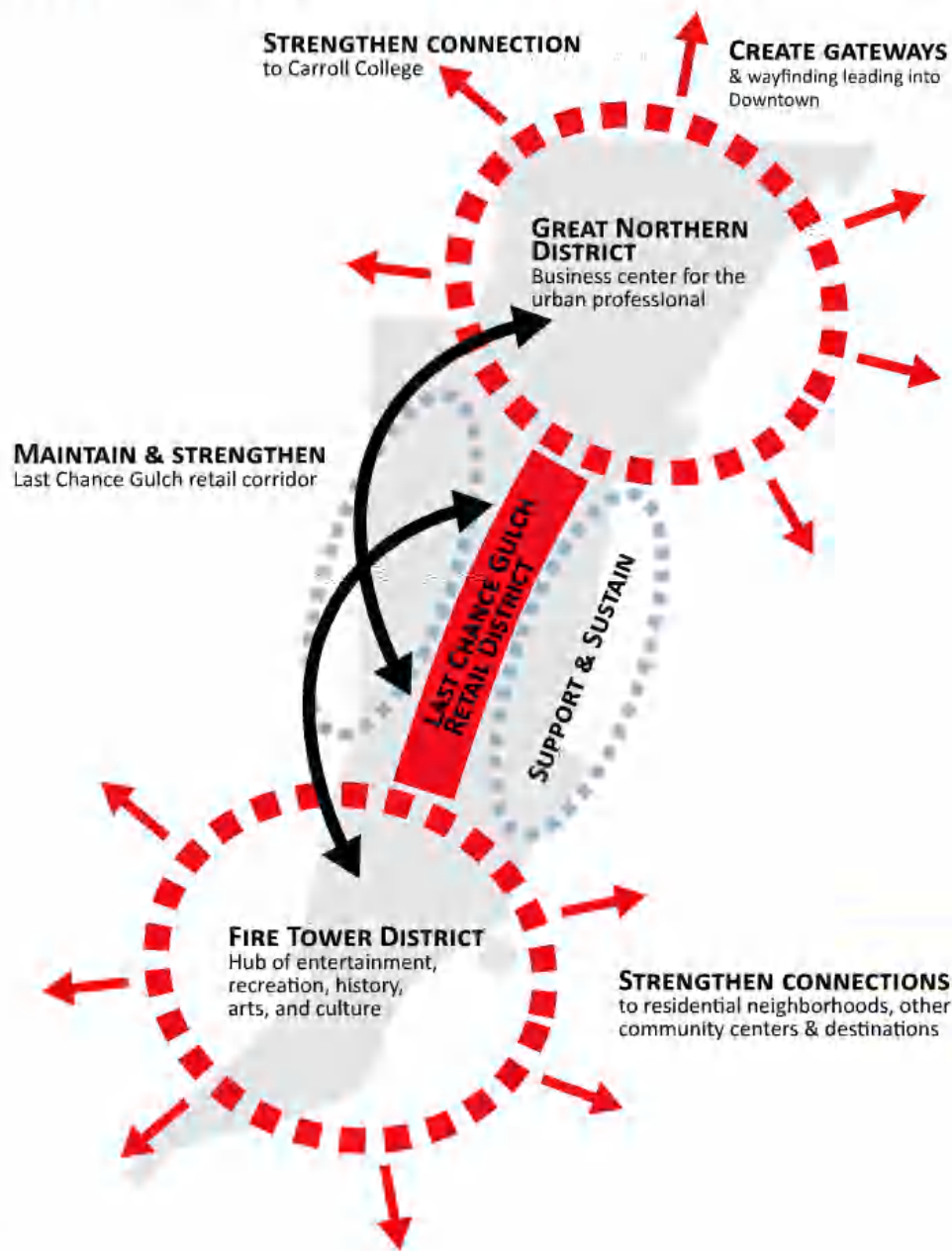
The Master Plan integrates a diverse range of policy actions, physical projects, and marketing steps to support the Guiding Principles for Downtown Helena.

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

The Master Plan integrates a diverse set of policy actions, physical projects, and marketing steps to support the Guiding Principles for Downtown Helena.



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN



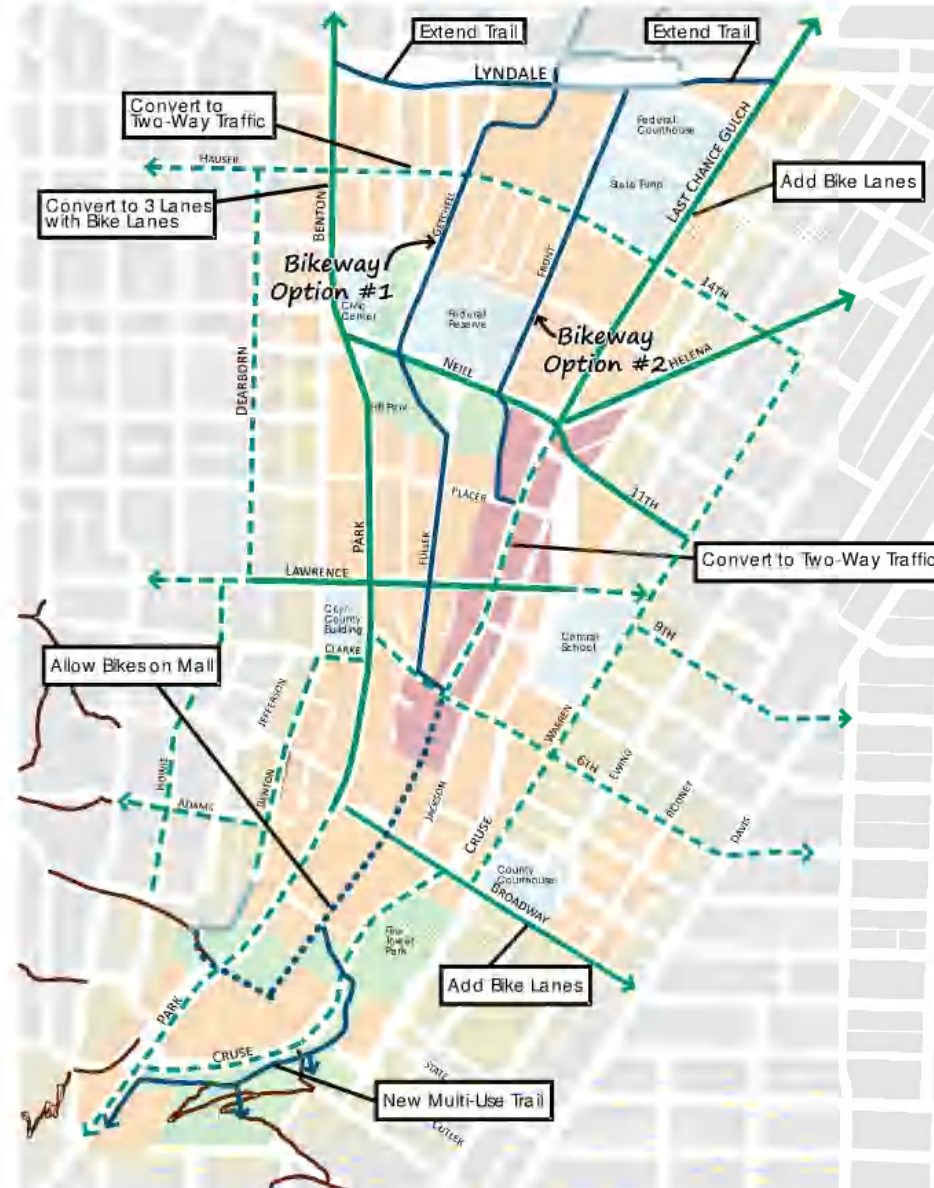
PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

- Pedestrian Crossing Improvements
- Historic Walking Tour
- Pedestrian Walkway/Stairway Improvements
- Existing Trail
- Existing Multi-Use Trail
- - - - Existing Sidewalk/Walkway

0 250 500 1,000 Feet



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN



PROPOSED BICYCLE CIRCULATION

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Bike Route | Slow/Dismount Zone |
| Bike Lane | Existing Multi-Use Trail |
| Multi-Use Trail or Protected Bikeway | Existing Trail |




0 250 500 1,000 Feet



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN



PROPOSED VEHICLE CIRCULATION

-  Primary Vehicle Access
-  Future Traffic Signal
-  Existing Traffic Signal

0 250 500 1,000 Feet



Plan Recommendations

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Land Use Framework



Fire Tower District



Great Northern District



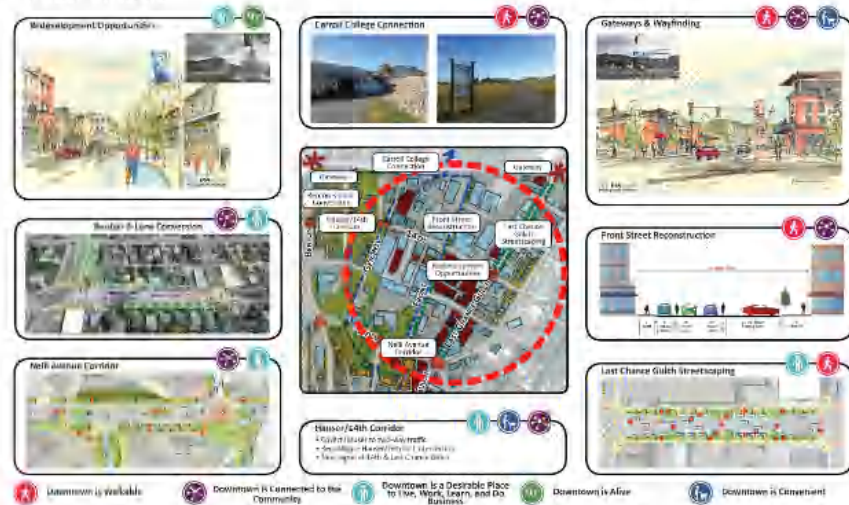
Last Chance Gulch Retail District



Great Northern District



GREAT NORTHERN DISTRICT Plan Recommendations





GREAT NORTHERN DISTRICT

BUSINESS CENTER
FOR THE URBAN PROFESSIONAL



GREAT NORTHERN DISTRICT

Plan Recommendations

Redevelopment Opportunities



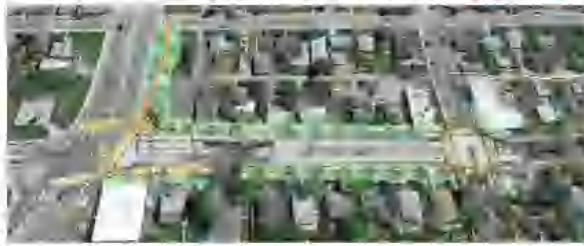
Carroll College Connection



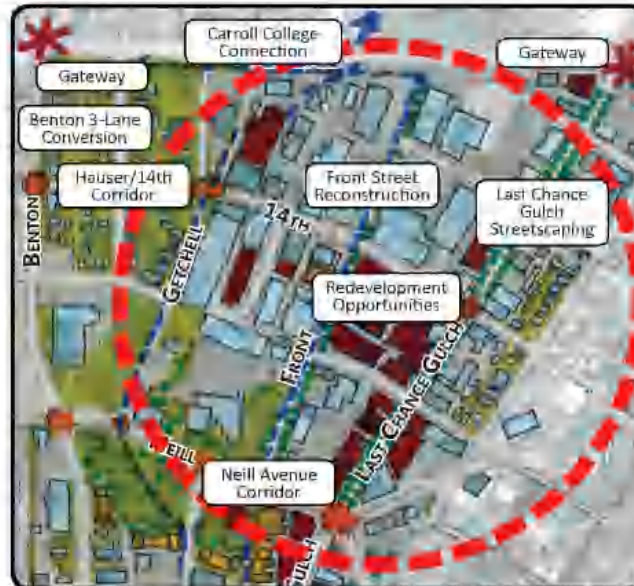
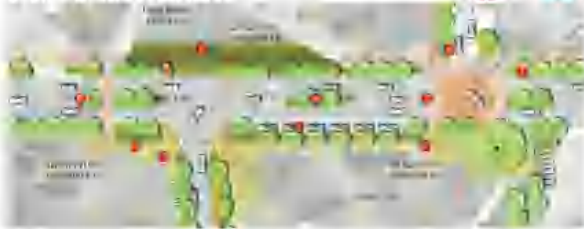
Gateways & Wayfinding



Benton 3-Lane Conversion



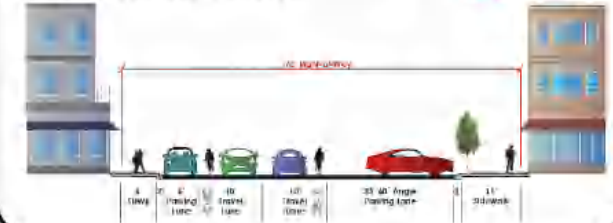
Neill Avenue Corridor



Hauser/14th Corridor

- Convert Hauser to two-way traffic
- Reconfigure Hauser/Getchell Intersection
- New signal at 14th & Last Chance Gulch

Front Street Reconstruction



Last Chance Gulch Streetscaping



Downtown is Walkable



Downtown is Connected to the Community



Downtown is a Desirable Place to Live, Work, Learn, and Do Business



Downtown is Alive



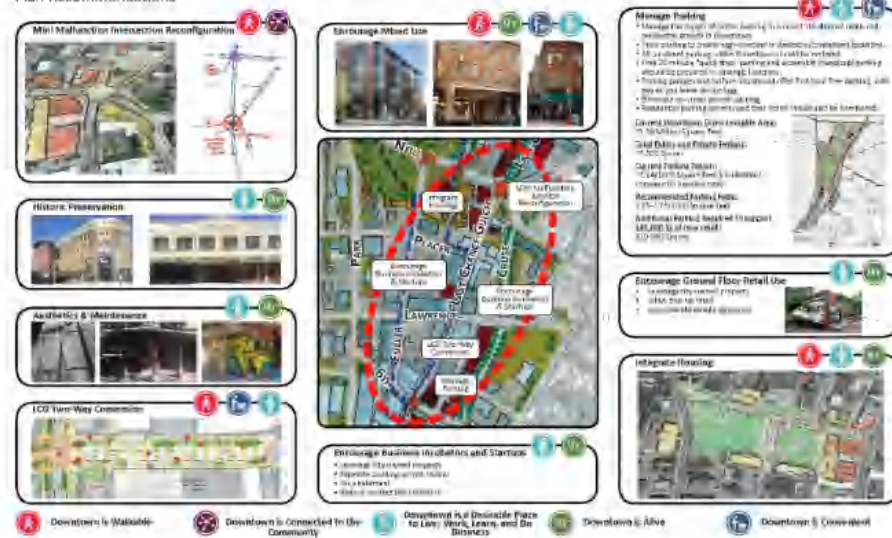
Downtown is Convenient

Last Chance Gulch Retail District



LAST CHANCE GULCH RETAIL DISTRICT

Plan Recommendations





Wayfinding & Tourist Information



Upper Level Office/Residential



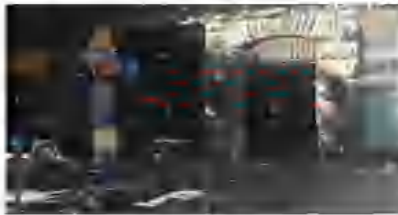
Active Ground Floor Retail



**High Ceilings/
Large Windows/
Transparency**



Continuous Storefronts



Shared-Use Bike Lanes



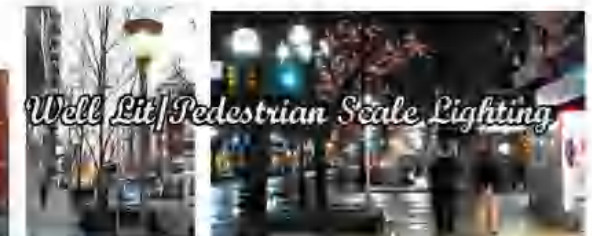
**Convenient, Nearby
Long-Term Parking**



Low-Speed Two-Way Traffic



Zero Setback



Well Lit/Pedestrian Scale Lighting



Short-Term On-Street Parallel Parking



Street Trees/Furniture



Wide Sidewalks



Well Maintained/High Quality

LAST CHANCE GULCH RETAIL DISTRICT

A TRADITIONAL, HISTORIC DOWNTOWN SHOPPING STREET WITH
APPEAL FOR BOTH TOURISTS AND LOCAL RESIDENTS ALIKE

LAST CHANCE GULCH RETAIL DISTRICT

Plan Recommendations

Mini Malfunction Intersection Reconfiguration



Historic Preservation



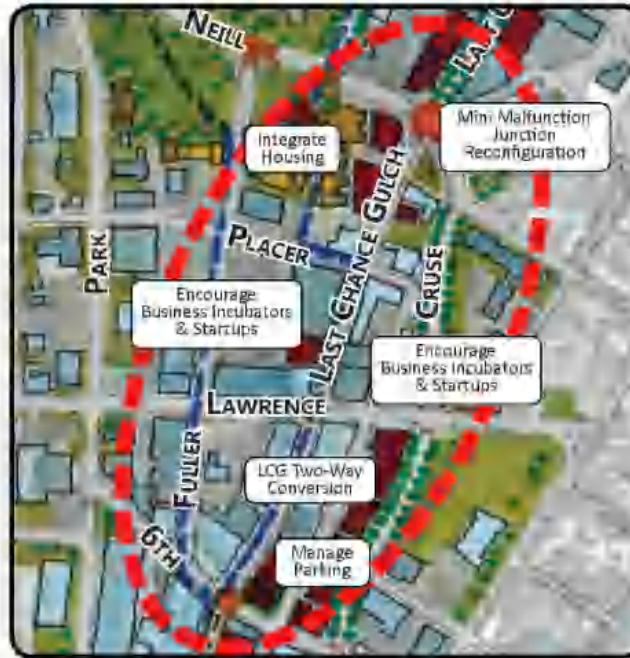
Aesthetics & Maintenance



LCG Two-Way Conversion



Encourage Mixed Use



Encourage Business Incubators and Startups

- Leverage city-owned property
- Expedite building permit review
- Tax abatement
- Reduce parking requirements

Manage Parking

- Manage the supply of public parking to support the desired retail and residential growth in Downtown.
- Price parking to create high-turnover in desirable/convenient locations.
- All on-street parking within Downtown should be metered.
- Free 20-minute "quick stop" parking and accessible (handicap) parking should be provided in strategic locations.
- Parking garages and surface lots should offer first hour free parking, with pay-as-you-leave technology.
- Eliminate on-street permit parking.
- Residential parking permits and time limits should also be eliminated.

Current Downtown Gross Leasable Area:

13.34 Million Square Feet

Total Public and Private Parking:

17,500 Spaces

Current Parking Ratio:

2.24/1,000 Square Feet (residential/commercial blended rate)

Recommended Parking Ratio:

2.25-2.75/1,000 Square Feet

Additional Parking Required to support 142,000 SF of new retail: 320-390 Spaces



Encourage Ground Floor Retail Use

- Leverage city-owned property
- Allow pop-up retail
- Incorporate design standards



Integrate Housing



Downtown is Walkable



Downtown is Connected to the Community



Downtown is a Desirable Place to Live, Work, Learn, and Do Business



Downtown is Alive



Downtown is Convenient

Fire Tower District



FIRE TOWER DISTRICT Plan Recommendations





Public Market



Gathering Places



Outdoor Seating



Trails & Open Space



**Restaurants
Bars
Breweries**

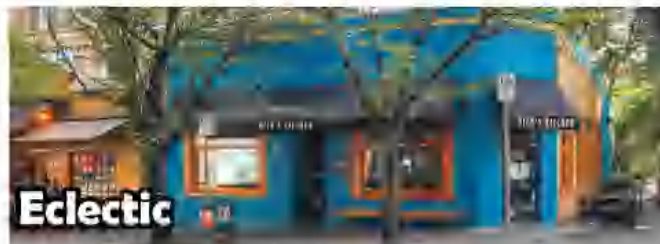


Employment

FIRE TOWER DISTRICT

HUB OF ENTERTAINMENT, RECREATION,
HISTORY, ARTS, AND CULTURE

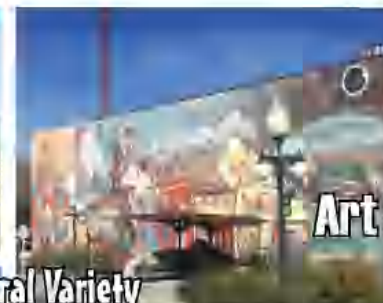
THE FIRE TOWER DISTRICT
IS A VIBRANT
COMMUNITY
WITH A
DIVERSE
MIX OF
HOUSING,
BUSINESS,
AND
RECREATION.



Eclectic



Architectural Variety



Art & History



Performance Arts



Active Lifestyle Retail



Townhomes, Condos, Apartments

FIRE TOWER DISTRICT

Plan Recommendations

Housing

Cruse Avenue Housing



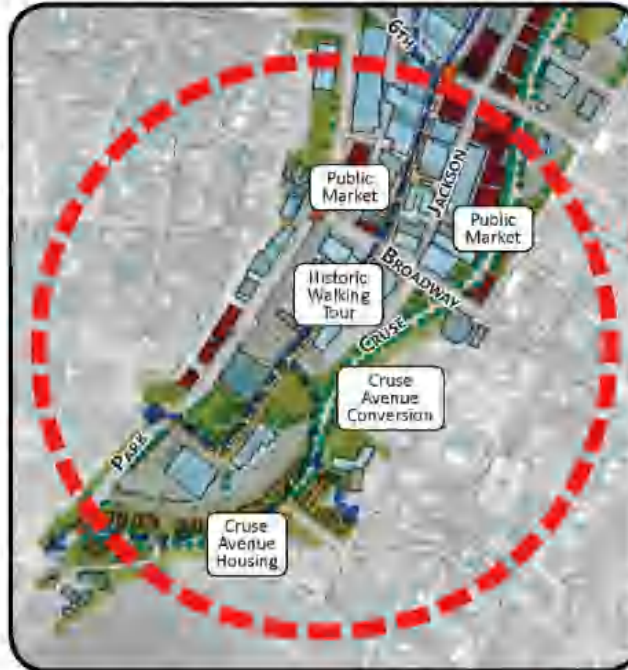
Public Market

- + Prominent, convenient location
- + 20,000 - 30,000 SF
- + 15 - 20 tenants (1,000 - 2,000 SF/tenant)
- + Fully enclosed, climate controlled
- + Ground floor access
- + Historic/civic-type building



Transit

- Circulator trolley
- Establish transit services between Downtown and Capital
- Employee bus pass system
- Transfer center/hub



Non-Motorized/Trail Connections

- Connect to Park
- Connect to trailheads
- New multi-use trail along Cruse
- Allow bikes on Walking Mall
- Connect to Reeder's Alley & Mount Helena Park



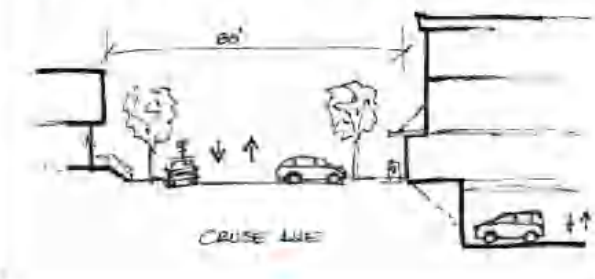
Historic Walking Tour

- Connect points of interest, public art, and other pedestrian attractions
- Paint, engrave, or inlay sidewalks and streets to show pedestrian routes
- Integrate technology & apps



Cruse Avenue Conversion

- Leverage city-owned property
- Explore public market & mixed-use housing
- Provide structured parking below



Downtown is Walkable



Downtown is Connected to the Community



Downtown is a Desirable Place to Live, Work, Learn, and Do Business



Downtown is Alive



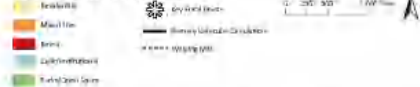
Downtown is Convenient

Land Use Framework

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN



LAND USE FRAMEWORK



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN



EXISTING ZONING

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT CODE

- CONCEPTS**
- Consolidated Code: One vision for all of downtown with three sub-districts.
 - Forward Focused: Anticipates development.
 - Enables and Facilitates: A tool for reaching our vision.
 - Emphasize Physical Character: Re-emphasize regulation of use.
 - Rethink Parking: Parking as a public good, not a design constraint.

GREAT NORTHERN DISTRICT
Business Center for the urban professional

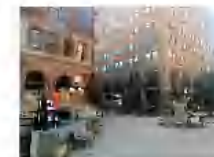
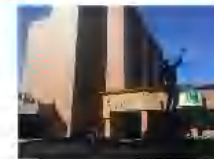
- GREAT NORTHERN DISTRICT**
- Professional modern environment
 - Ground floor offices/retail
 - Incorporate public outdoor spaces
 - Flexible building size and design

LAST CHANCE GULCH RETAIL DISTRICT
Continuous building heritage on street

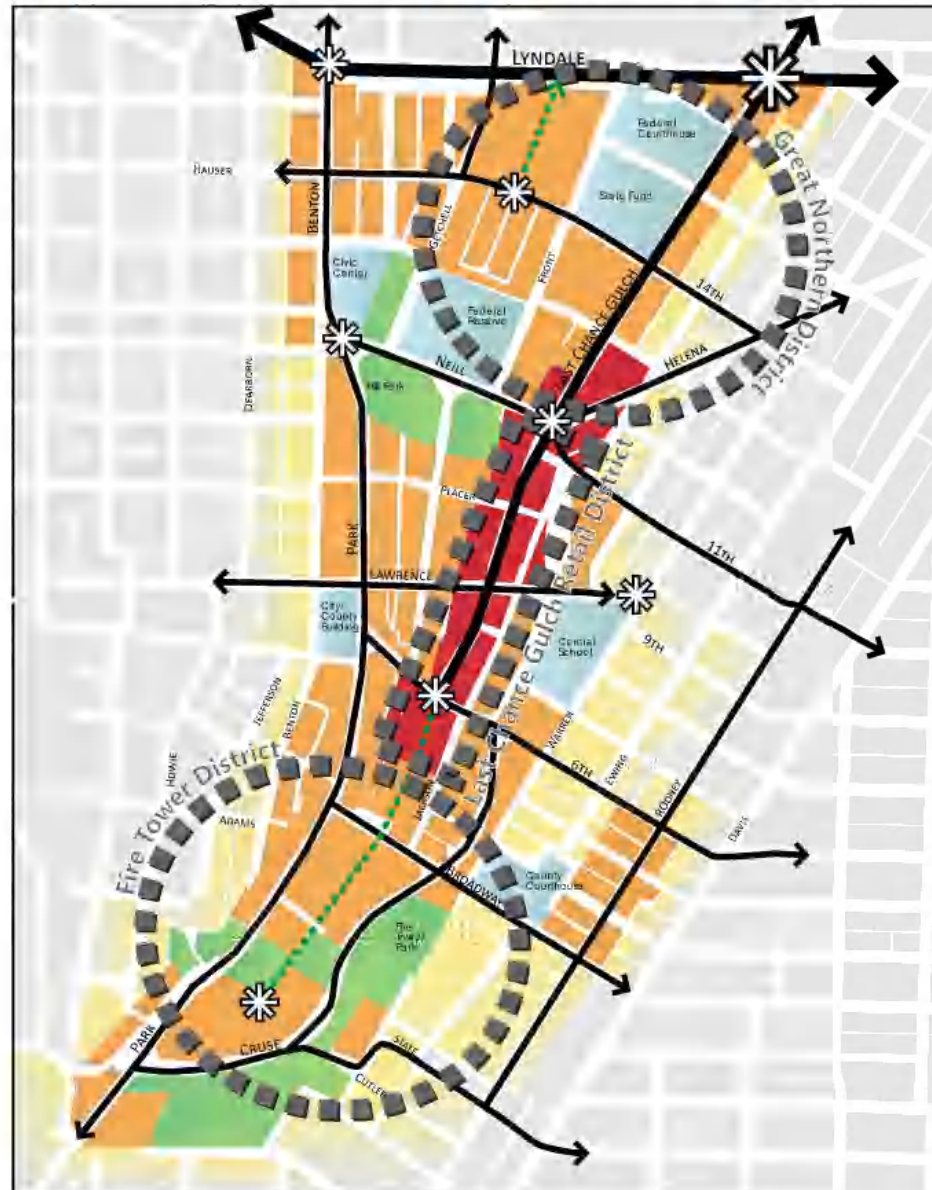
- LAST CHANCE GULCH RETAIL DISTRICT**
- Buildings designed to pedestrian scale
 - Maintain high visibility to street
 - Allow floor commercial

FIRE TOWER DISTRICT
Hub of entertainment, recreation, history, arts, and culture

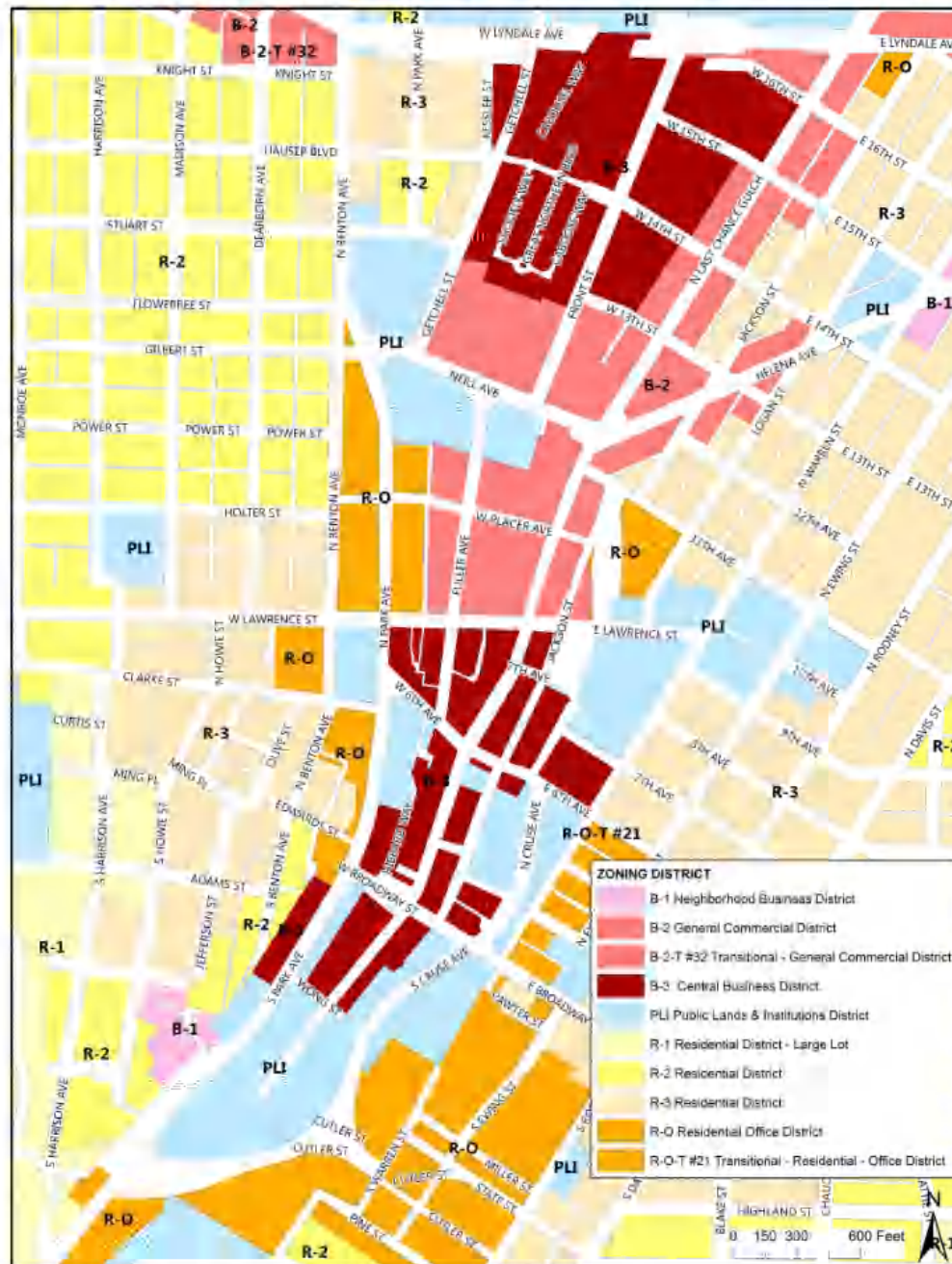
- FIRE TOWER DISTRICT**
- Building scale related to surrounding environment
 - Public outdoor gathering spaces such as sidewalk cafes
 - Variety/flexibility in design
 - Wide range of use



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN



DOW
RECOM



EXISTING ZONING

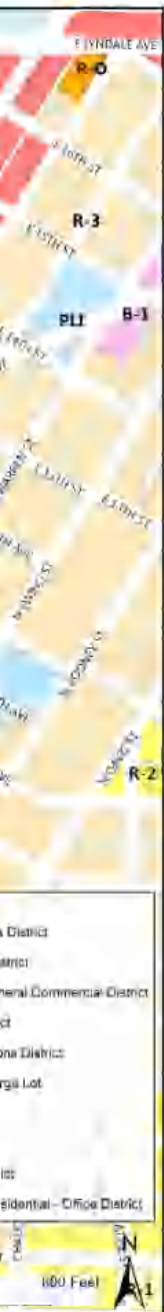
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PROJECT: 100226
FILE: Zoning
PATH: G:\Projects\100226\GIS\ANSP\Zoning.yxd

```



- Consolidation
One district with three schools
- Forward thinking
Anticipate the future
- Enabler
A tool for change
- Emphasis on
De-emphasize the traditional
- Rethink
Parking design



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT CODE

CONCEPTS

- Consolidated Code
One district for all of downtown with three sub-districts
- Forward Focused
Anticipates development
- Enabler and Facilitator
A tool for reaching our vision
- Emphasize Physical Character
De-emphasize regulation of use
- Rethink Parking
Parking as a public good, not a design constraint

GREAT NORTHERN DISTRICT

Business center for the urban professional

GREAT NORTHERN DISTRICT

- Professional, modern environment
- Ground floor office/retail
- Incorporate public outdoor spaces
- Flexible building size and design

LAST CHANCE GULCH RETAIL DISTRICT

LAST CHANCE GULCH RETAIL DISTRICT

- Continuous building frontage on streets
- Buildings designed to pedestrian scale
- Maintain high visibility to street
- First floor commercial

FIRE TOWER DISTRICT

Hub of entertainment, recreation, history, arts, and culture

FIRE TOWER DISTRICT

- Building scale related to surrounding environment
- Public outdoor gathering spaces such as sidewalk cafes
- Variety/flexibility in design
- Wide range of use

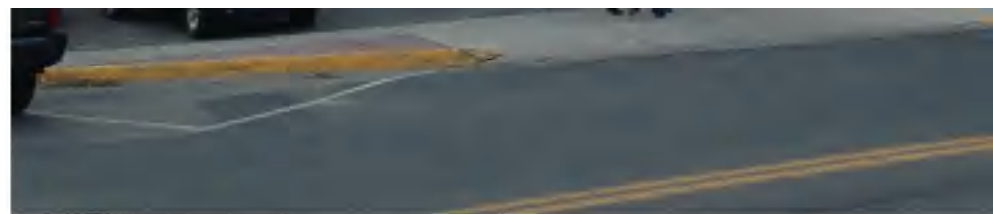
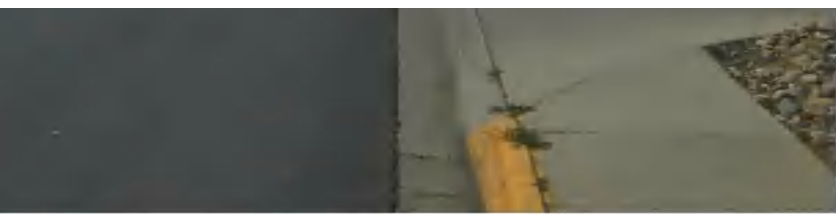




Google earth
© 2016 Google











Plan Recommendations

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Land Use Framework



Fire Tower District



Great Northern District



Last Chance Gulch Retail District





Implementation & Next Steps

The final Master Plan will be written based on comments and input received tonight.

The Plan will be reviewed and adopted by the HBID, Planning Board, and City Commission as an amendment to the Growth Policy.

The Master Plan will be available at
[**www.downtownhelena.com**](http://www.downtownhelena.com)

Additional Public Meetings:

**Helena Business Improvement District
Board Meeting - March, 2016**

**City-County Consolidated Planning
Board Meeting - March, 2016**

**Helena City Commission
Meeting - April, 2016**

How can I stay involved?

*Connect with us on Facebook:
HelenaDowntownMasterPlan*

Send us your comments: →

*Attend the HBID, Planning Board,
and City Commission meetings*

**DOWNTOWN HELENA
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Please use this sheet to provide comments on the Master Plan that's on your mind. Thanks for participating!

Send us your comments:

COMMENT SHEET

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. A vertical red margin line runs down the left side of the page. The top-left corner of the paper is folded over, revealing a brownish-orange surface underneath. The paper appears to be part of a binder or folder.



Activity Instructions

Circulate to each station

Ask questions & give feedback



Place up to 3 green sticky dots on the projects or actions that should be a priority



Place up to 3 red sticky dots on the projects that are **not** beneficial or feasible

As you leave, "write on the wall":

What project or action would have the biggest impact on Downtown Helena?

Thank You



For more information, visit the project website:
www.downtownhelena.com/about-us/bid/

Connect with us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/DowntownHelenaMasterPlan

Contact the Helena BID:
Tracy Reich
Executive Director
treich@helenabid.com
(406) 447-1535

Contact WGM Group:
Jeremy Keene
Project Manager
jkeene@wgmgroupp.com
(406) 728-4611

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Meeting Record

MEETING DATE: January 26, 2016

PROJECT NAME: Downtown Helena Master Plan

SUBJECT: Charrette #3 Comments & Sticky Dot Exercise Results

BY: Kate Dinsmore

- More consideration for residential parking, for example, “the Placer.”
- We need a leader to make this happen.
 - How is it going to work?
 - We keep talking, but no action.
- Don’t forget affordable housing for average income working people. The employees might also want to live downtown.
- Great job!
- I love the focus on vibrant, walkable districts.
- I think you are spot on with parking, but it will be a hard sell.
- Love the idea of fixing Cruse and the other too wide streets. Also the Neill/Fuller intersection should be made narrower.
- I have mixed feelings on cutting off Helena Ave. Feel like it is a good connector – especially to 6th Ward District/mid-town.
- I like the focus on making it easier for new businesses to come in.
- I think more attention needs to be paid to the issues related to global warming – ways to discourage travel; emphasis on sustainability and decreased CO2 pollution.
- Where does the downtown parking end? I’m on Howie and don’t have a garage and I worry about how far up the business district will move.
- How have schools been figured in? Are the anticipated residents not families?
- Please provide affordable housing. Front St housing is high end and I don’t know if they are occupied.
- Pedestrian scale planning to make downtown streets and businesses more interesting is a necessity. Slowing traffic will make a more pedestrian and bike friendly downtown. This will increase the retail use of downtown.
- Metered parking to sell the most convenient parking to the highest bidders is a good idea. Provide lower cost parking on the fringes to allow for long-term employee parking.

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

- Front St improvements are going to be important to connect Centennial Trail to the downtown. Make sure Front St is a safe route for all bikes (kids included) and walkers to get into downtown. They also need a safe crossing at Neill and through the Women's park area.
- I'd like to see the historical aspect of downtown enhanced and promoted more.
- Indoor market.
- Residential areas.
- Bigger parks.
- Places for teenagers to go.
- Connection of districts.
- Residential component is huge.
- Great idea of connectivity within area.
- Look at Indianapolis.
- Creating and branding downtown districts is brilliant. Love the 'Fire Tower District.' Gives a rather dead place some life by just naming it.
- Two-way traffic on Gulch is a must! I work in the 400 block and walk every day.
- Housing is a great idea. Let's do it!
- How to get past the conservatism of the city engineers, and building?
- In order to make this plan get off the ground, here are my questions:
 - What needs to develop first?
 - Downtown surrounding living?
 - Develop public markets?
 - Parking in surrounding?
 - What is the order to ensure success and make sure things keep moving rather than stop and start?
 - If there is current demand for 143,000 sq. ft., are there investors lined up to develop the space?
 - Is the City ready to kick in the funding if we can't get school bonds passed?
- My husband and I feel strongly that limited/controlled vehicular access should be included up the (now) Walking Mall. One only needs to observe what happens on a Friday night, or any night, downtown to see that the vitality is on Park Ave because people can find a place to park in and access business. Please don't go decades without realizing this needs to happen. Just drive to Bozeman or Dillon and you'll see how a Montana downtown works. Don't doom us to another architectural concept that robs local businesses of an equal playing field. A well-planned mix of pedestrian and vehicle pull outs/in would keep cars from dominating.
- Helena does have a great historic walking tour. Search "Helena Walking Tour" on the Apple store or Google Play. You can also print it at helenamt.com.
- We should have been allowed more green dots! Not many implementation measure/recommendations I would not want to see pursued. I don't totally agree with the reconfiguration proposed for mini-malfunction, but am on board with the need for a

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

change! I also think we have more surface parking than needed at this point, so I feel like maybe the projections for additional parking might be high? Regardless, I like the housing proposals around Women's Park, along Cruse Ave, and the focus on building on the positive and moving away from the status quo. AND we need form based integration code that encourages economic opportunities and a walkable environment for our community. Excited to see all the participation, thank you for your work!

- I believe metered parking anywhere downtown is a mistake. Meters only create a greater contrast to free parking at box stores. Counting all street parking and all parking garages and public lots, it seems there is plenty of parking, if people wanted to use it. People often do NOT want to use it because of the hassle of 'feeding a meter!' I have long proposed (even at one of your previous Charrettes) that ALL parking in the downtown area should be free. It should be paid for with a city wide parking fee attached to all property taxes. Another concern is the fact that employees often park in front of their own retail store. It seems incredible that store owners and managers cannot police their own employees. If this is truly the case, it leaves one of two options. One: Form a volunteer 'Parking Police' group from store owners and managers to simply observe and report any employee parking to the group which should result in contact with the employer of the offending employee. Two: Place parking meters in front of all stores, but allow free parking in all garages, lots and streets, not in front of a retail store. Another issue is the connection between Great Northern and the Historic Downtown. I have no specific suggestion but it needs to be MUCH more direct and convenient than I see in any of your proposals. – Paula Pacini 443-7730
- Biggest issues: getting the City on board to support new directions and think creatively about money/financing, initiatives, code changes, dealing with MDT, thinking 'urban,' not suburban.
- Montana Wilderness Association (owns the Bluestone building) is interested in landscaping its property adjacent to the Fire Tower and somehow combine into existing 'unofficial' social trails that go across the property from LCG (people come up the hill east toward the Fire Tower and on the property adjacent to the hi-rise housing). Why not make a green area and trail to include this portion that is underutilized and looks awful? This would connect LCG to Cruse and beyond and make the Fire Tower more accessible. It is our symbol, but no one can get to it! The National Register sign for the Fire Tower is currently accessible only via the parking lot of the apartment building located on Ewing – who knows how to get there if you're a tourist? Residents don't even know how to access it.
- Managing parking is one of the most important items to implement.
- Integrating mixed use should be a priority as well.
- Infilling at the south end of the Walking Mall, library, and old federal building area should be a focus.

DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Fire Tower District Comments

- No above ground parking
- Senior housing
- Add cars to Walking Mall
- Underground parking go into mountain
- Issues with bikes/skateboards
 - Needs enforcement or designated lane
 - Police walking/biking patrol
- Need better connection to Walking Mall from the back side of buildings between Broadway and 6th – possibly back doors to buildings or directional signage from parking garages
- Public Market at Park and Broadway location of historic Marlow Theater – could be called the Marlow Market
- Future uses for the old Federal Building (Cruse and Park) – market or housing?
- Trees at 6th and Cruse block visibility and connection from parking garage to building on 6th and Jackson
- Pedestrian connection with courthouse area

Last Chance Gulch District Comments

- All night diner for students and seniors
- No space available in Jackson Garage for Placer residents
- Address sidewalks on 14B between Helena and Last Chance Gulch
- Consider snow storage with zero setbacks
- I support housing with the caveat that we reuse existing structures, not tear down.

Sticky Dot Exercise

Mini-Malfunction Junction Improvements: **21 Green 3 Red**

Concepts for Development Code: **18 Green**

Public Market: **18 Green 1 Red**

Cruse Avenue Conversion: **17 Green**

Fire Tower Cruse Avenue Housing: **12 Green 1 Red**

Carroll College Connection: **9 Green**

Manage Parking: **8 Green**

Historic Preservation: **7 Green**

Last Chance Gulch Streetscaping: **7 Green**

Gateways and Wayfinding: **6 Green**

Neill Avenue Corridor: **5 Green**

Non-Motorized/Trail Connections: **5 Green**

Neill/Front Intersection Improvements: **3 Green**

Last Chance Gulch Retail District Development Code: **3 Green**

Fire Tower District Image Board: **1 Green**



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

Historic Walking Tour: **2 Green**

Great Northern Redevelopment Opportunities: **2 Green**

Front Street Reconstruction: **1 Green**

Fire Tower District Development Code: **2 Green**

Aesthetics & Maintenance: **1 Green**

Encourage Business Incubators and Startups: **1 Green**

Great Northern District Development Code: **1 Green**

Encourage Mixed Use: **1 Green**

New Traffic Signal at LCG/14th: **1 Green**

Curb Bulbouts & Crossing Improvements at Lawrence/Cruse and 6th/Cruse: **1 Green**

Pedestrian Connection across Cruse between 6th and Broadway: **1 Green**

Integrate Housing (Women's Park Housing): **11 Green 12 Red**

Convert Last Chance Gulch to Two-Way Traffic: **5 Green 6 Red**

Benton Avenue – Convert to 3 Lanes with Bike Lanes: **4 Green 5 Red**

Allow Bikes on Mall: **4 Green 4 Red**

Future Traffic Signal at Benton/14th: **1 Red**

Transit: **1 Green 3 Red**

Residential parking permits and time limits should be eliminated: **3 Red**

Existing Zoning: **11 Red**

Front Street Matrix

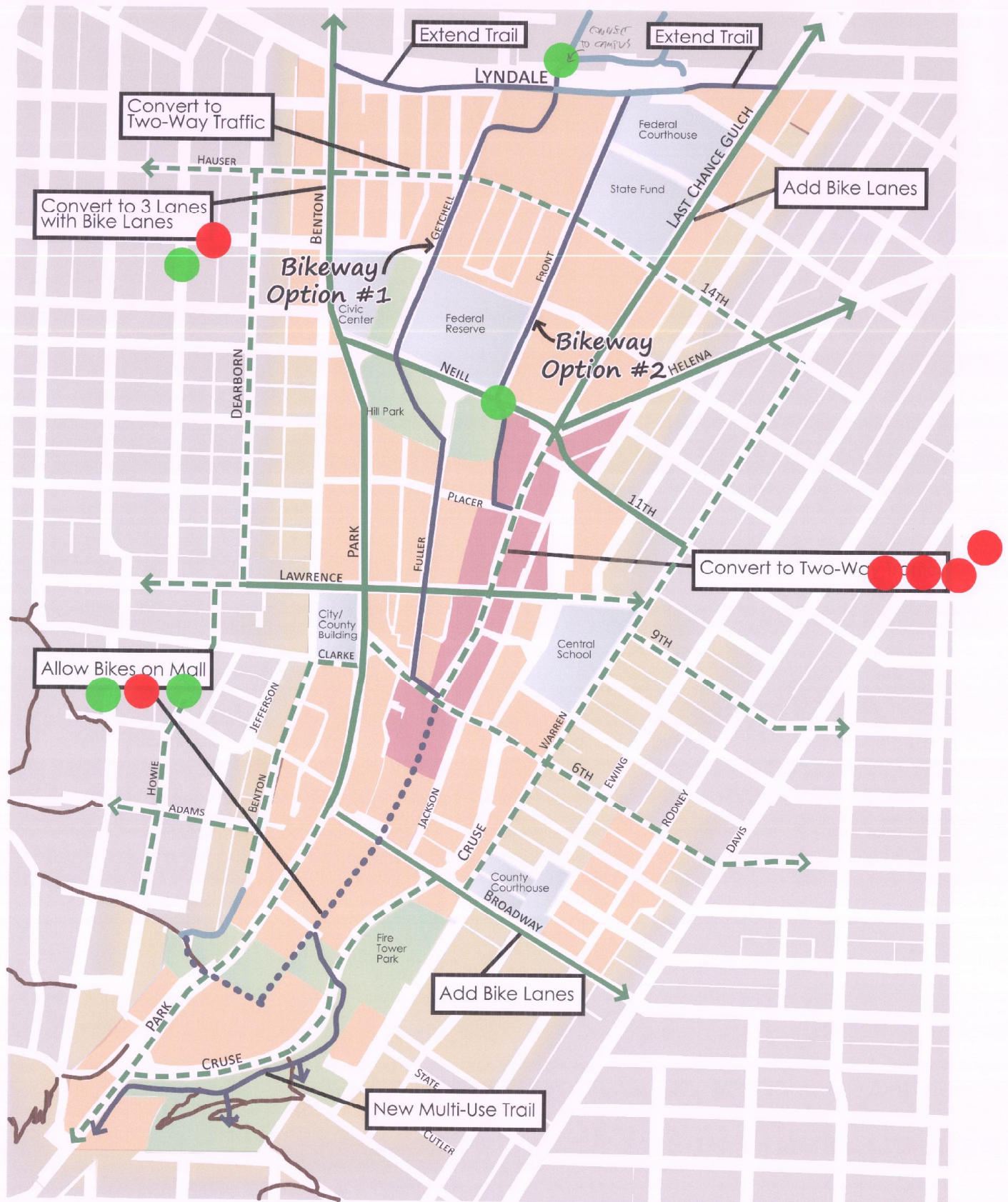
Protected Bikeway: **8 Green 1 Red**

Multi-Use Path: **1 Green 4 Red**

Existing Plus: **8 Red**



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN



PROPOSED BICYCLE CIRCULATION

- Bike Route
- Bike Lane
- Multi-Use Trail or Protected Bikeway
- Slow/Dismount Zone
- Existing Multi-Use Trail
- Existing Trail

0 250 500 1,000 Feet

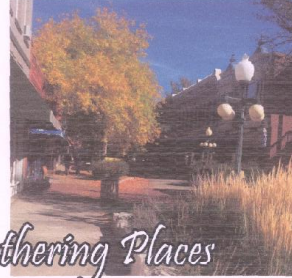




Public Market



Gathering Places



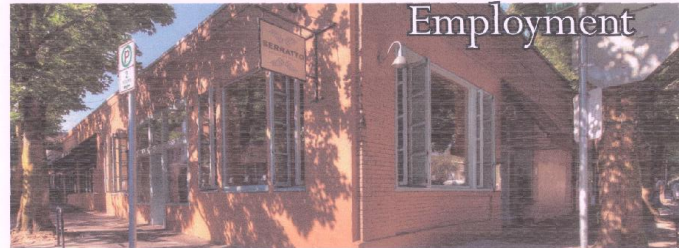
Outdoor Seating



Trails & Open Space



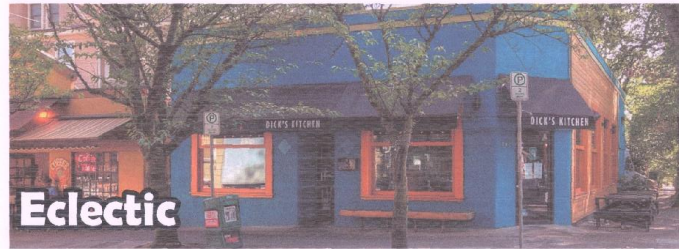
*Restaurants
Bars
Breweries*



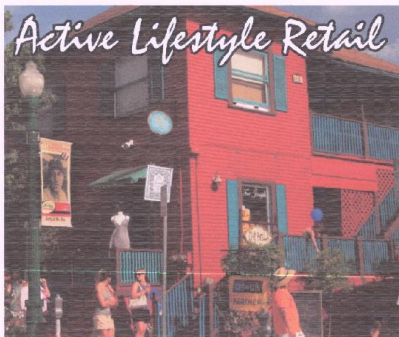
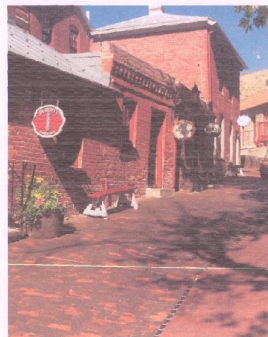
Employment

FIRE TOWER DISTRICT

HUB OF ENTERTAINMENT, RECREATION,
HISTORY, ARTS, AND CULTURE



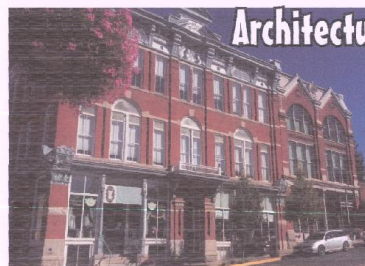
Eclectic



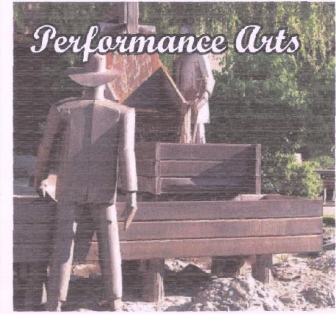
Active Lifestyle Retail



Architectural Variety



Art & History



Performance Arts



Townhomes, Condos, Apartments



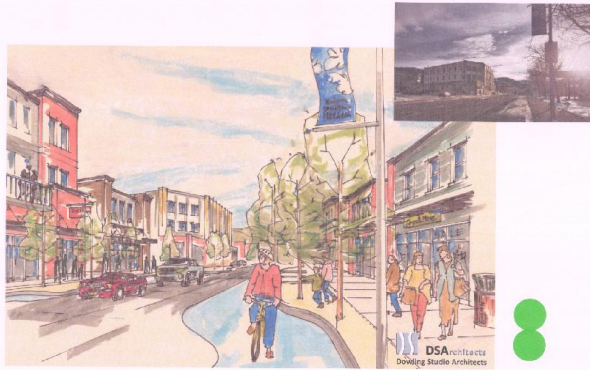
Front Street Improvements Project



GREAT NORTHERN DISTRICT

Plan Recommendations

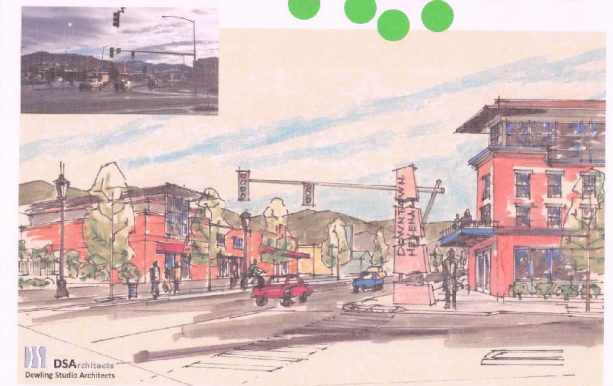
Redevelopment Opportunities



Carroll College Connection



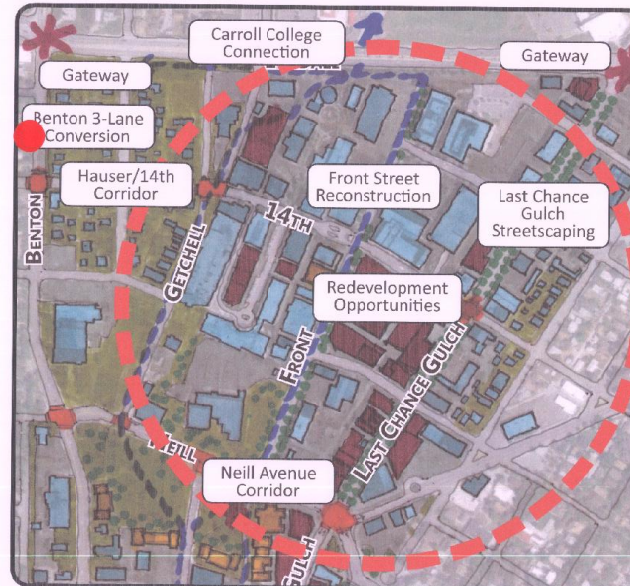
Gateways & Wayfinding



Benton 3-Lane Conversion



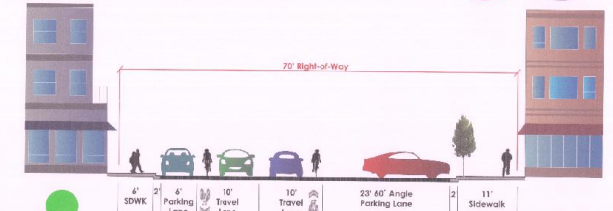
Neill Avenue Corridor



Hauser/14th Corridor

- Covert Hauser to two-way traffic
- Reconfigure Hauser/Getchell Intersection
- New signal at 14th & Last Chance Gulch

Front Street Reconstruction



Last Chance Gulch Streetscaping



Downtown is Walkable



Downtown is Connected to the Community



Downtown is a Desirable Place to Live, Work, Learn, and Do Business



Downtown is Alive

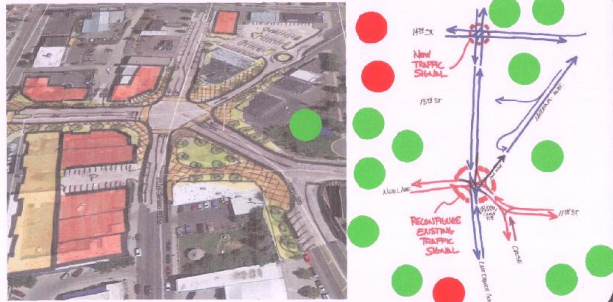


Downtown is Convenient

LAST CHANCE GULCH RETAIL DISTRICT

Plan Recommendations

Mini Malfunction Intersection Reconfiguration



Historic Preservation



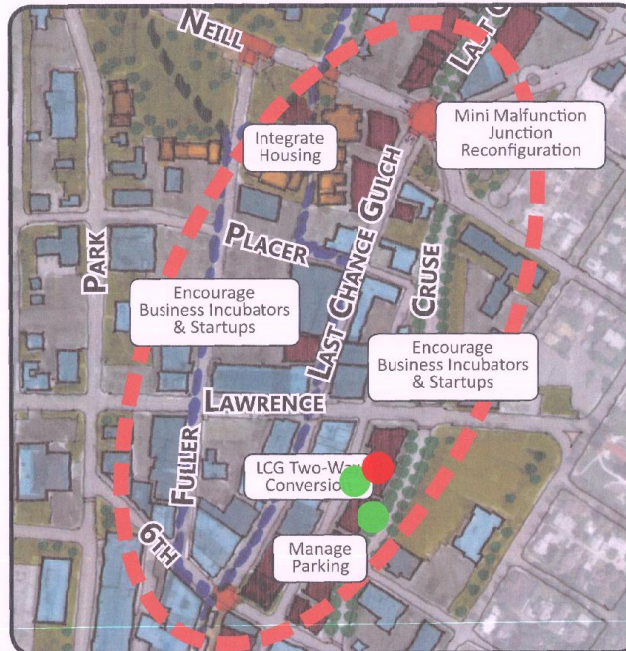
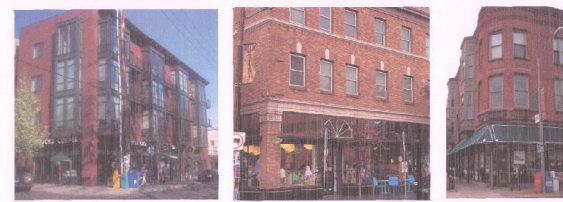
Aesthetics & Maintenance



LCG Two-Way Conversion



Encourage Mixed Use



Encourage Business Incubators and Startups

- Leverage city-owned property
- Expedite building permit review
- Tax abatement
- Reduce parking requirements

Manage Parking

- Manage the supply of public parking to support the desired retail and residential growth in Downtown.
- Price parking to create high-turnover in desirable/convenient locations.
- All on-street parking within Downtown should be metered.
- Free 20-minute "quick stop" parking and accessible (handicap) parking should be provided in strategic locations.
- Parking garages and surface lots should offer first hour free parking, with pay as you leave technology.
- Eliminate on-street permit parking.
- Residential parking permits and time limits should also be eliminated.

Current Downtown Gross Leasable Area:

~3.36 Million Square Feet

Total Public and Private Parking:

~7,500 Spaces

Current Parking Ratio:

~2.24/1000 Square Feet (residential/commercial blended rate)

Recommended Parking Ratio:

2.25-2.75/1000 Square Feet

Additional Parking Required to support 142,000 SF of new retail:

320-390 Spaces



Encourage Ground Floor Retail Use

- Leverage city-owned property
- Allow pop-up retail
- Incorporate design standards



Integrate Housing



Downtown is Walkable



Downtown is Connected to the Community



Downtown is a Desirable Place to Live, Work, Learn, and Do Business

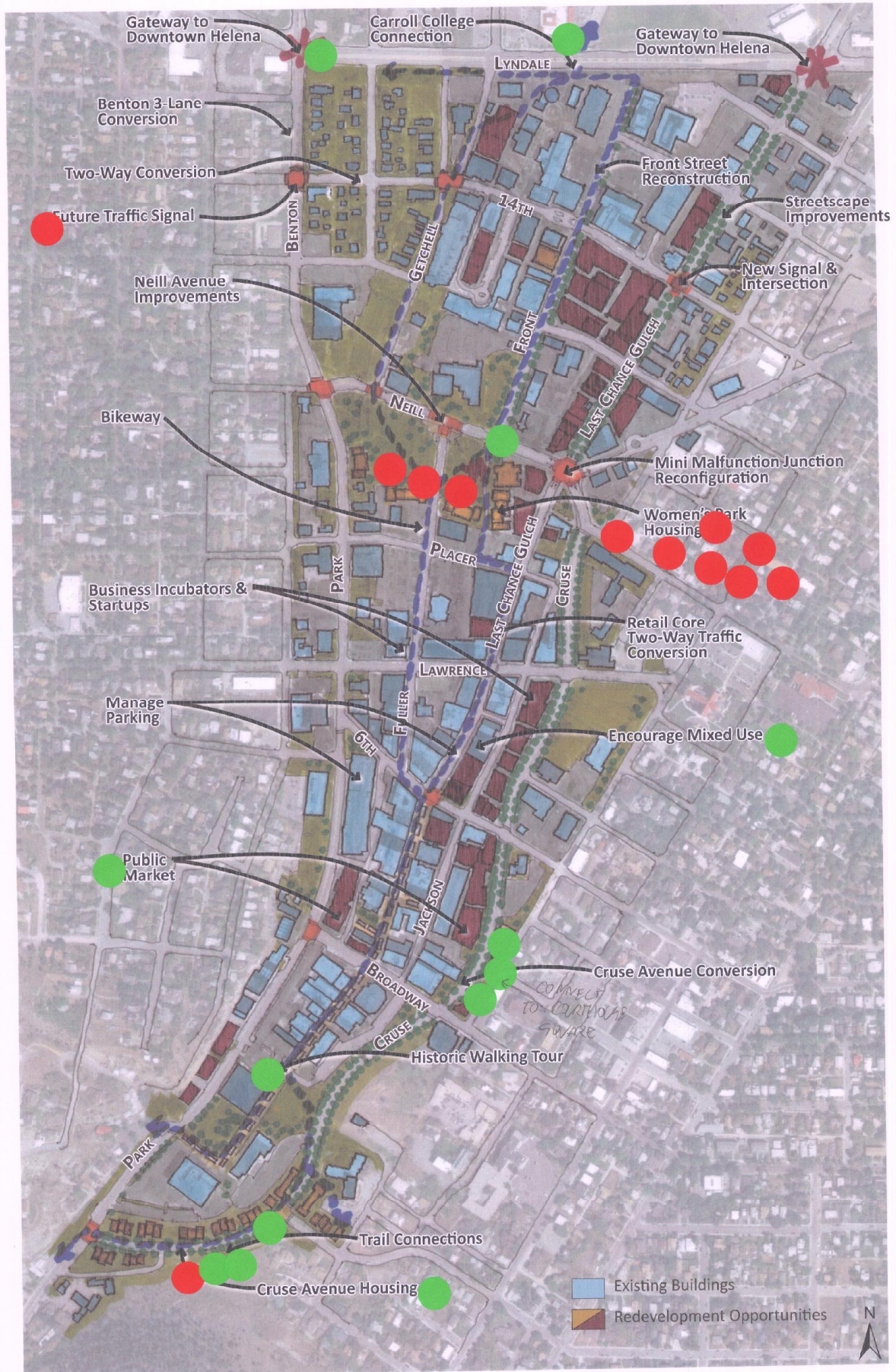


Downtown is Alive



Downtown is Convenient

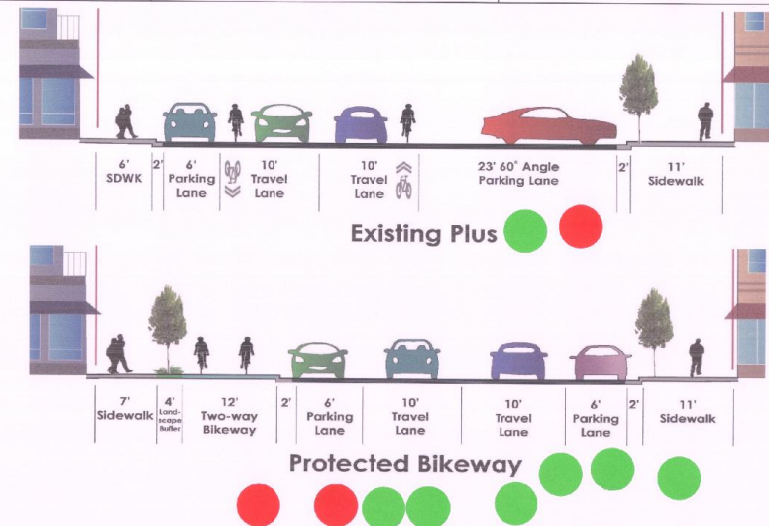
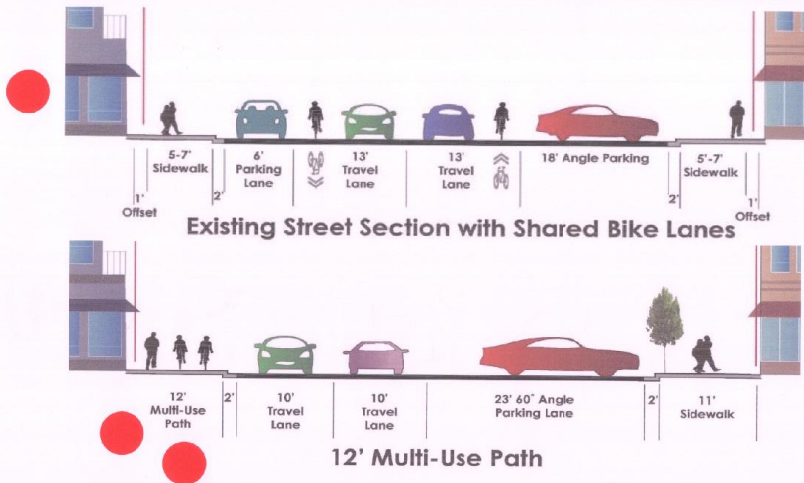
DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN



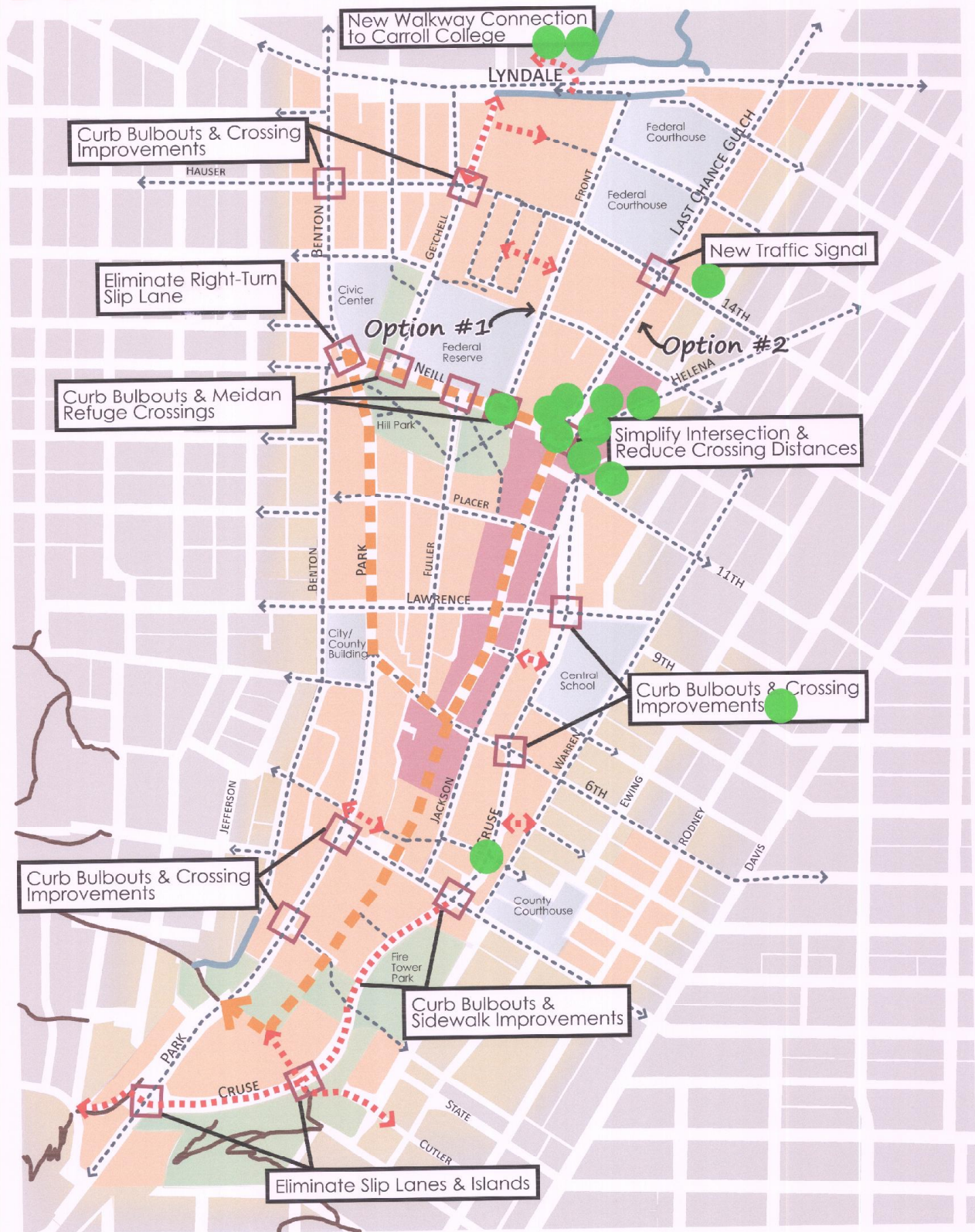
Helena Front Street Preliminary Engineering Report Project Matrix



<div> <p>Ranking Criteria</p> <p>Meets Evaluation Criteria → Does Not Meet Evaluation Criteria</p> <p>PRELIMINARY</p> </div>		Alternatives			
		Existing	Existing Plus	Multi-Use Path	Protected Bikeway
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace utilities Sharrows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace utilities Streetscape enhancements Sharrows Angle parking on east side Parallel parking on west side Bulbouts Neill intersection improvements Street trees on east side 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace utilities Multi-use path on west side of street for two-way bicycle traffic and pedestrians Angle parking on east side Bulbouts Neill intersection improvements Street trees on east side 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace utilities Two-way bikeway on west side of street Bike lane raised next to sidewalk Parallel parking on east and west side Bulbouts Neill intersection improvements Street trees
Evaluation Criteria		Existing	Existing Plus	Multi-Use Path	Protected Bikeway
1 Business Access		4	4	2	3
2 Parking (# of spaces)	(90)	4	4	2	1
3 Pedestrian Safety/Circulation		1	4	2	3
4 Bicycle Safety/Circulation		1	2	3	4
5 Vehicle Safety/Circulation		2	3	3	2
6 Landscape/Streetscape Improvements		1	3	2	4
7 Drainage		0	3	2	3
8 Snow Storage		1	2	1	2
9 Cost		4	3	2	1
10 Maintenance		3	2	2	1
Total Score		21	30	21	24



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN



PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

- Pedestrian Crossing Improvements
- Historic Walking Tour
- Pedestrian Walkway/Stairway Improvements
- Existing Trail
- Existing Multi-Use Trail
- Existing Sidewalk/Walkway

0 250 500 1,000 Feet



DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT CODE

CONCEPTS

- Consolidated Code
One district for all of downtown with three sub-districts
- Forward Focused
Anticipates development
- Enabler and Facilitator
A tool for reaching our vision
- Emphasize Physical Character
De-emphasize regulation of use
- Rethink Parking
Parking as a public good, not a design constraint

All of the above

GREAT NORTHERN DISTRICT

Business center for the urban professional

GREAT NORTHERN DISTRICT

- Professional, modern environment
- Ground floor office/retail
- Incorporate public outdoor spaces
- Flexible building size and design

LAST CHANCE GULCH RETAIL DISTRICT

LAST CHANCE GULCH RETAIL DISTRICT

- Continuous building frontage on streets
- Buildings designed to pedestrian scale
- Maintain high visibility to street
- First floor commercial

FIRE TOWER DISTRICT

Hub of entertainment, recreation, history, arts, and culture

FIRE TOWER DISTRICT

- Building scale related to surrounding environment
- Public outdoor gathering spaces such as sidewalk cafes
- Variety/flexibility in design
- Wide range of use

ZONING DISTRICT

- B-1 Neighborhood Business District
- B-2 General Commercial District
- B-2-T #32 Transitional - General Commercial District
- B-3 Central Business District
- PLI Public Lands & Institutions District
- R-1 Residential District - Large Lot
- R-2 Residential District
- R-3 Residential District
- R-O Residential Office District
- R-O-T #21 Transitional - Residential - Office District

Legend
 covering commercial corridor
 which is the
 main focus of the
 plan

0 150 300 600 Feet

Map showing various streets including Harrison Ave, Madison Ave, Stuart St, Flowerree St, Gilbert St, Power St, Holter St, W Lawrence St, Clarke St, Curtis St, Ming Pl, S Harrison Ave, S Howie St, Adams St, Jefferson St, S Benton Ave, S Park Ave, Wong St, Cutler St, S Warren St, Pine St, S Ewing St, State St, S Da..., Highland St, Chauc..., and S...

Map showing various zoning districts including B-2, B-2-T #32, B-3, B-1, PLI, R-2, R-3, R-O, and R-O-T #21.

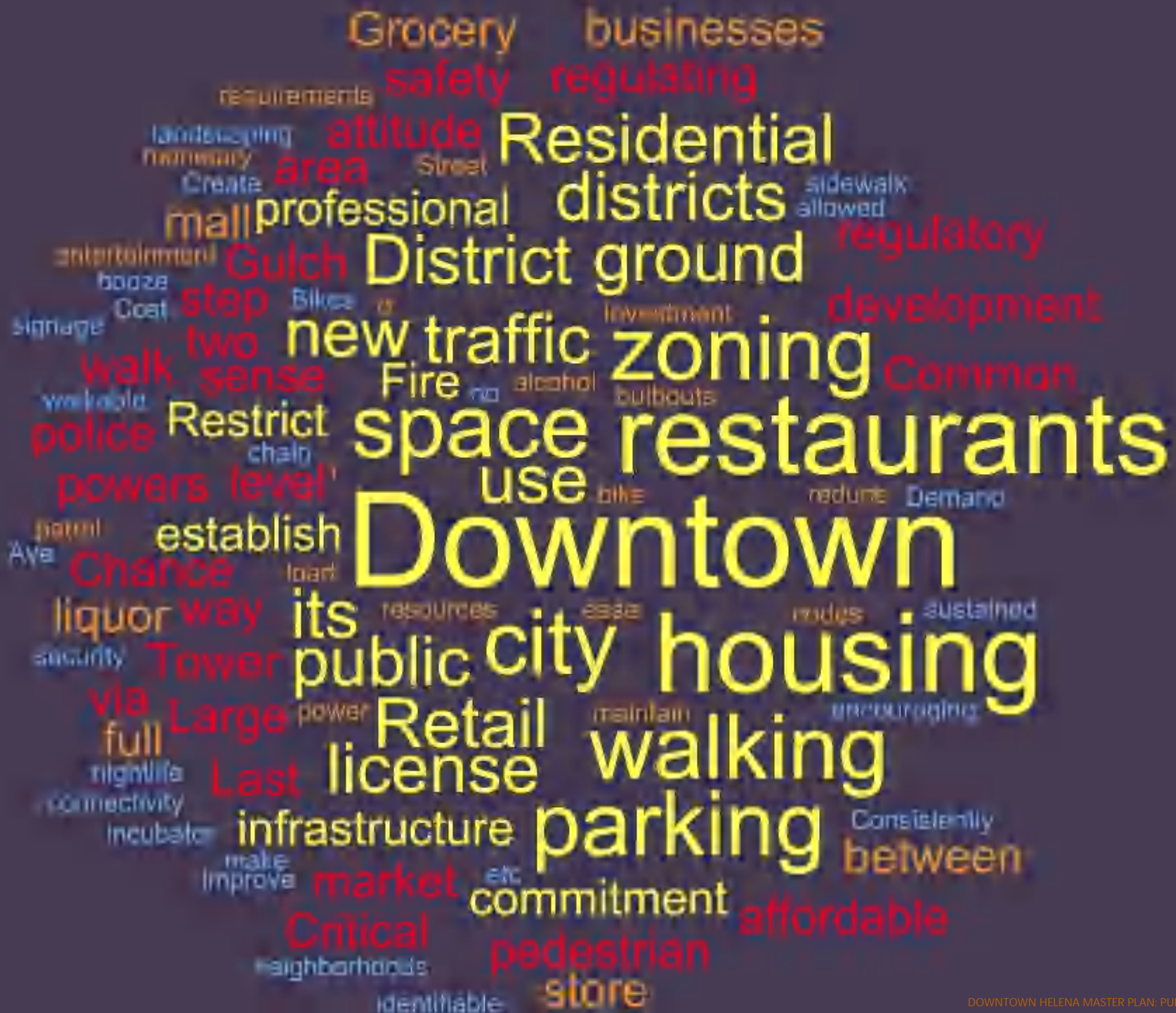
EXISTING ZONING

PROJECT: 150326 BY: MG/sma
FILE: Zoning REVIEWED: JWK
DATE: 11/6/2015
PATH: W:\Projects\150326\GIS\MXD\Zoning.mxd

Disclaimer: This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as such. WGM Group does not guarantee the accuracy, current status, or completeness of the material contained herein and is not responsible for any misuse or misrepresentation of this information or its derivatives. This map is a graphic representation and is to be used for general planning purposes only.

HELENA
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

WGM
GROUP





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Helena, MT 59601

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Thursday, March 26, 2015

Downtown Master Plan Request For Proposals Released

The Helena Business Improvement District in partnership with the City of Helena issued a request for proposals (RFP) for a consultant or team of consultants to conduct a master planning process for Downtown Helena.

What is it about downtowns you've visited that makes them memorable? How did that community achieve their vision? The Master Plan will be a visioning and guiding document for the management and future growth of Downtown Helena by the Helena Business Improvement District, the City of Helena, and other agencies. Master planning is an important tool for guiding downtown economic growth.

Other Montana communities have completed master plans that have spurred economic growth in their downtowns such as Bozeman, Missoula, Kalispell, and most recently Hamilton. "The City of Hamilton adopted its Downtown Master Plan in June of 2014, and the Hamilton Downtown Association has taken the lead in its implementation. The completed Master Plan included prioritized action items, and a timeline for their implementation. This has been extremely useful to me, as the HDA Coordinator, in showing us where to focus our energy. The action items also identify whether there are policy implications for the City Council, and who should take the lead on them. A clear master plan, with thorough public involvement (surveys, public meetings, focus groups), has been very beneficial, and it's a reference upon which I draw regularly," said Russ Lawrence, Coordinator of the Hamilton Downtown Association. "Having a Master Plan for Downtown Missoula has been an extraordinary tool for guiding the decision

making of all parties vested in our downtown,” said Linda McCarthy, Director of the Downtown Missoula Partnership. “It guides goal setting and allocation of resources for our downtown organizations, and it has put our municipalities, developers and stakeholders on the same page in terms of our future. The Missoula Downtown Master Plan is some of the best work we have done for our community.”

“We are excited to launch this process,” said Tracy Reich, Executive Director of the Helena Business Improvement District. “Bringing the public together with Downtown stakeholders to create a vision for downtown and then putting together strategies to accomplish that vision is a vital tool for Downtown and the Business Improvement District. It’s important that the citizens of Helena have a say in what their downtown will look like in 5, 10, 20 years and understand the processes that will take place to achieve that vision.”

The City of Helena is partnering with the HBID to create the plan. The City Community Development Department will be the lead for the City on the project. “The City is excited to partner with the Helena BID on this master plan project,” said Sharon Haugen, Community Development Director. “The process represented in the RFP will provide the City, the BID and others a blueprint for moving forward to creating a stronger and more vibrant downtown, will help inform the City on what changes may be needed in our ordinances and regulations to have achieve that vision. It will also help identify the many partners who have an interest in the downtown area.”

Why create a master plan? Nick Kalogeresis, Vice President of the Lakota Group and former Program Officer for the national Trust Main Street Center, recently wrote in the *Main Street News*, “A downtown master plan is one of the most important sustainability documents a Main Street community can have as it reaffirms the downtown’s role as the economic, cultural, and social center of the community. Downtown master plans have long been developed and adopted by Main Street programs and municipalities to guide decision making for public improvements, private investments, and changes to existing zoning codes and regulatory mechanisms.”

He continues to say, “These plans often have specific elements related to streetscape improvements, open space and parks, historic preservation, land-use and development

opportunities, transportation and parking, and governmental and cultural facilities. Downtown master plans can also address sustainability concerns such as the reuse of historic buildings and existing infrastructure, the mixture of commercial and residential land uses to encourage pedestrian activity and less reliance on autos, and the guidance of development and reuse of vacant parcels and land inside, rather than outside, the downtown area.”

Initial funding from the Montana Main Street Program grant program and the Helena Business Improvement District has been secured; additional funding is in process. Consultant submissions are due April 20th. A selection committee consisting of representatives from the Helena Business Improvement District, the City of Helena Community Development Department and the Montana Business Assistance Connection will interview finalists and select a consultant or team of consultants in early May.

For more information, contact Tracy Reich at treich@helenabid.com or 406-447-1535.

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Friday, May 8, 2015

Downtown Master Plan Consulting Team Selected

The Helena Business Improvement District in partnership with the City of Helena has selected a team of consultants lead by WGM Group to lead the master planning process for Downtown Helena.

WGM Group's team was selected from a pool of four teams of consultants. In addition to the team lead by WGM Group, teams from Inside Edge Design LLC, KLJ Engineering, and SMA Architects were also considered. In addition to submitting written proposals, each team made a one hour presentation of their qualifications to the selection committee. "We were really impressed with the quality of the proposals and presentations," said Randy Riley, Board Chair of the Helena Business Improvement District. "You could tell each team had been thoughtful in putting together the expertise that would deliver a very high quality plan for Downtown Helena. The teams embraced the need for the process to be community driven and the passion for Downtown Helena was very evident. This is an exciting project and we are looking forward to working with WGM Group."

"Downtown Helena is a special place, and we are excited to be part of planning its future," said Jeremy Keene, Principal Engineer for WGM Group. "We have a great opportunity to bring people together around a plan that makes downtown an asset for the entire community."

The Master Plan will be a visioning and guiding document for the management and future growth of Downtown Helena by the Helena Business Improvement District, the City of Helena, and other agencies. This will be a community based planning effort where the public

will drive the vision and content of the plan. “We are excited to launch this process,” said Tracy Reich, Executive Director of the Helena Business Improvement District. “Bringing the public together with Downtown stakeholders to create a vision for Downtown and then putting together strategies to accomplish that vision is a vital tool for the City, the Business Improvement District, and other Downtown stakeholders. It’s important that the citizens of Helena have a say in what their downtown will look like in 5, 10, 20 years and understand the processes that will take place to achieve that vision.”

Master planning is an important tool for guiding downtown economic growth. Other Montana communities have completed master plans that have spurred economic growth in their downtowns such as Bozeman, Missoula, Kalispell, and most recently Hamilton.

“The City of Hamilton adopted its Downtown Master Plan in June of 2014, and the Hamilton Downtown Association has taken the lead in its implementation,” said Russ Lawrence, Coordinator of the Hamilton Downtown Association. “The completed Master Plan included prioritized action items, and a timeline for their implementation. This has been *extremely* useful to me, as the HDA Coordinator, in showing us where to focus our energy. The action items also identify whether there are policy implications for the City Council, and who should take the lead on them. A clear master plan, with thorough public involvement (surveys, public meetings, focus groups), has been very beneficial, and it's a reference upon which I draw regularly.”

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He continues to say, “These plans often have specific elements related to streetscape improvements, open space and parks, historic preservation, land-use and development opportunities, transportation and parking, and governmental and cultural facilities. Downtown master plans can also address sustainability concerns such as the reuse of historic buildings and existing infrastructure, the mixture of commercial and residential land uses to encourage pedestrian activity and less reliance on autos, and the guidance of development and reuse of vacant parcels and land inside, rather than outside, the downtown area.”

Initial funding from the Montana Main Street Program grant program, the Helena Business Improvement District and the Big Sky Trust Fund has been secured; additional funding is in process.

For more information, contact Tracy Reich at treich@helenabid.com or 406-447-1535.

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Monday, August 17, 2015

Downtown Master Plan Public Charrettes Scheduled

Still time to fill out a survey!

Join the Helena Business Improvement District, the City of Helena, WGM Group, Land Solutions, and DSA Architects for the first public charrette for the Downtown Master Planning process Wednesday September 2nd from 5:30- 7:00 pm at the Best Western Premier Great Northern Hotel located at 835 Great Northern Boulevard.

The first charrette's content is being formed from the results of a public engagement survey being conducted through August 25th. The survey link or a hard copy of the survey may be found on the Downtown Helena website www.downtownhelena.com/about-us/bid. The survey explores people's opinions and usage of downtown currently and asks for opinions on things they would like to see remain or improve. Additional outreach is also being conducted at the August 12th Alive @ Five, the August 22nd Farmer's Market, and to many organizations and groups in Helena between now and August 25th.

"We've had a great response to the survey. It's clear that Helena believes Downtown is a special place and can play an important part in Helena's future. The first charrette will focus on how Downtown fits in the greater community – what's Downtown's role, how does it contribute to the economy, and how do we leverage Downtown's assets to benefit all of Helena's citizens?" Said Jeremy Keene, Project Manager with WGM Group.

Attendees of the charrette will help shape the preliminary strategies; this work will also continue with the second charrette where the initial market analysis will be discussed and draft

strategies formulated. The second charrette is scheduled for October 20th and the third charrette for December 8. Time and location will be announced soon.

What is a charrette? A charrette is an intensive planning session where citizens, designers and others collaborate on a vision for development, in this case the future of Downtown Helena. It provides a forum for ideas and offers the unique advantage of giving immediate feedback to the consultants. More importantly, it allows everyone who participates to be a mutual author of the plan.

The Downtown Helena Master Plan will be a visioning and guiding document for the management and future growth of Downtown Helena by the Helena Business Improvement District, the City of Helena, and other agencies. This is a community based planning effort where the public will drive the vision and content of the plan. Master planning is an important tool for guiding downtown economic growth. Other Montana communities have completed master plans that have spurred economic growth in their downtowns such as Bozeman, Missoula, Kalispell, and most recently Hamilton.

For more information, contact Tracy Reich at treich@helenabid.com, 406-447-1535 or Jeremy Keene at jkeene@wgmggroup.com, 406-728-4611.

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Tuesday, December 1, 2015

Downtown Master Plan Charrette #3 Scheduled for January 26th

The third charrette for the Downtown Master Plan process has been moved to January 26, 2016. Time and location are yet to be determined.

"We have had such great input and engagement by the public, the consultants and steering committee need more time to synthesize the data into goals and objectives," said Tracy Reich, Executive Director of the Helena Business Improvement District. "We want to ensure we have a quality product that captures the public's vision for downtown and creates a implementable plan for achieving that vision."

Over 180 people have attend the first two charrettes and over 700 people filled out surveys. In addition, presentations have been made and interviews conducted with another 20 entities. The first charrette reviewed the information gathered from the survey and outreach efforts. Participants offered ideas, barriers and solutions based on that initial data. The second charrette included a presentation by Robert Gibbs on his initial retail market analysis for Downtown. Participants reviewed the progress from the first charrette and worked on additional ideas and direction based on work to date. WGM Group will present the draft goals and strategies at the third charrette.

Master planning is an important tool for guiding downtown economic growth. Other Montana communities have completed master plans that have spurred economic growth in their downtowns such as Bozeman, Missoula, Kalispell, and most recently Hamilton. Helena is the largest city in the State without a downtown master plan.

For more information, contact Tracy Reich at treich@helenabid.com or 406-447-1535.

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Wednesday January 20, 2016

FINAL DOWNTOWN HELENA MASTER PLAN CHARRETTE SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 26TH

The Helena Business Improvement District, in collaboration with the City of Helena and Montana Business Assistance Connection, will host the third and final charrette for the Downtown Master Plan on January 26th from 5:30 - 8 pm at the Holiday Inn Downtown. The agenda starts with an open house followed by a presentation by the consulting team and concludes with an interactive exercise to get feedback on the plan recommendations.

HBID is also pleased to release Robert Gibbs' final marketing report. In October, Robert Gibbs, of the Gibbs Planning Group, provided an optimistic initial assessment of the economic opportunities available to Downtown Helena. His final report is available at <https://downtownhelena.com/dhibid/bid/>. Gibbs maintains his optimistic outlook – Helena has an extensive trade area, with a large, high-income, well-educated population. His analysis indicates that Downtown Helena currently has demand for up to 142,900 square feet of new retail development (45-60 new stores and restaurants). "You are underserving the market potential," Gibbs said.

Gibbs also believes that, in the near future, the quality of Downtown will attract people and businesses that will further increase demand for goods and services. "In your case, really, there will be a tidal wave of empty nesters and baby boomers coming downtown. I think they're going to want to live downtown. I think they're going to be bored of living in the suburbs in their three- and four-bedrooms homes and their children have moved out and they're going to want to live in a walkable community." "You already have the hard stuff," Gibbs said, referring to the historic buildings, parking structures and major employers already present in Downtown. "What you need to do now is focus on the details." In traditional downtowns, city halls, courthouses, libraries, post offices, and churches serve as noncommercial "community anchors" that bring pedestrian and vehicular traffic downtown. These, in turn, create demand for retailers, offices, and hotels. Residential housing located near employment and

shopping destinations completes the range of land uses that create a demand for each other by being located within a compact, walkable environment.

Shifts in transportation, beginning in the 1950's, eroded the traditional downtown environment. But trends are changing. "Time is the new luxury", Gibbs writes in his book, *Principles of Urban Retail Planning and Development*. The modern shopper is focused on convenience – being able to get what they want, when they want it.

These factors give Downtown the unique advantage of offering the ability to locate goods, services, employment, housing, and entertainment within convenient proximity. Adding the intangible "X-Factor" of hip architecture, arts, and culture, Helena is well-poised for downtown success, but there are issues to be addressed.

Providing a high-quality experience is essential to attracting shoppers and residents to downtown. Little things, like graffiti or poorly maintained sidewalks, detract from the value of being downtown. "It lowers the expectations," Gibbs explained. It creates a perception that Downtown is not cared for, that retailers offer lower quality goods and services, that shoppers aren't getting good value merchandise.

Parking is also a critical issue. Statistically there are enough parking spaces in Downtown, but management of those spaces could be improved to maximize benefit. "It costs the same amount of money to use the parking garage as it does to park at a prime location," Gibbs said. "In fact, your prime locations are free. It should be the other way around. The prime locations should cost more than the parking garage."

Other key issues include providing basic services, like a grocery store or public market, to make living downtown more convenient. According to Gibbs, seventy percent of shopping occurs after five pm and only nine percent of income goes to entertainment or apparel. Providing basic services and extended business hours, allows people to stay downtown to meet their essential needs.

The Downtown Master Plan will incorporate Gibbs' recommendations to create a guiding document for the management and future growth of Downtown Helena.

For more information, contact Tracy Reich at treich@helenabid.com or 406-447-1535.



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Tuesday, March 1, 2016

Final Draft Downtown Master Plan Available for Comment

The Helena Business Improvement District, the City of Helena, WGM Group, Land Solutions, and DSA Architects are pleased to release the final draft Downtown Master Plan document for review and comment. Comments are due by March 15th to Jeremy Keene at jkeene@wgmgroup.com.

The draft plan is available on the Helena Business Improvement District (HBID) website <https://downtownhelena.com/dhibid/bid>. A link is also available on the Downtown Helena Master Plan Facebook page. Hard copies of the plan are available for review at the Lewis & Clark Library, 120 S. Last Chance Gulch, and the HBID/Downtown Helena office at 318 Fuller Avenue. The planning process has had significant public input with over 1700 individual contacts.

The next steps are for the Helena Business Improvement District Board of Trustees to approve the plan at their March 22nd Board meeting. The plan will be presented to the City/County Planning Board for consideration as an amendment to the growth policy and will be presented to the City Commission for adoption. HBID will be stewarding the plan's implementation.

For more information, contact Tracy Reich at treich@helenabid.com, 406-447-1535 or Jeremy Keene at jkeene@wgmgroup.com, 406-728-4611.

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