



DRAFT

DOWNTOWN PLAN
Downtown Living Session Results

On June 26, 2008 members of the community met in the Overture Center to share ideas regarding “Downtown Living”. The meeting attendees formed three groups; each group was asked to answer the following three questions:

- 1) What makes Downtown a desirable location to live?
- 2) What opportunities exist to enhance the Downtown living environment for all who may wish to live here?
- 3) How can your big ideas about “Downtown Living” advance the goal of sustainability?

Below are the groups’ answers for each of the three questions. These comments are taken from flip-chart paper used by the groups as well as comment cards that were filled out individually. The answers are grouped into broad categories. An asterisk denotes comment card comments. Additionally, the groups wrote and drew some of their ideas on maps. Those ideas can be found on the summary maps which are available through the Downtown Plan website.

This information is being provided for informational purposes only and will inform the Downtown Plan during the next steps of the planning process.

1) What makes Downtown a desirable location to live?

UNIQUE AND ATTRACTIVE IDENTITY
Has/had charm
Cosmopolitan
Cosmopolitan*
Vitality
Energy
People/vibrant (2 comments)
Diversity (2 comments)
Diversity* (2 comments)
Outlet for intellectual stimulation
Unique environment
Unique environment*
Unique culture*
Vibe*
Part of community
Living room of the City*
Historic city*
Independent stores
Independent stores*
Local businesses*
More locally owned shops than chains

Retail/State Street
SPECIAL PLACES
State Street (2 comments)
Overture
UW/university events/activities (2 comments)
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT
Architecture
Built environment
Lakes (2 comments)
Big trees*
CULTURE, ENTERTAINMENT, RECREATION
Culture/Cultural Events (2 comments)
Culture* (2 comments)
Concerts on the Square
Entertainment (2 comments)
Entertainment*
Theater*
Nightlife
Nightclubs*
Restaurants/Dining (2 comments)
Cafes
Sports activities (2 comments)
Sports activities*
Easy access to bike paths (2 comments)
Good access to open space, trails, lakes
Access to nature*
Library
Farmer's market (3 comments)
Farmer's market* (2 comments)
ACCESS/TRANSPORTATION TO, FROM, WITHIN
Walk to work
Walkability (2 comments)
Walkability* (2 comments)
Convenient to shopping and work*
Convenient for public services (central library)*
Easy access for residents to amenities
Easy access to amenities if live downtown*
Easy to get around*
Multi-modal transportation
Public transport*
Good transportation links

Central for access to rest of City
Bus hub
State Street-no cars is good
Easy access to community cars (2 comments)
Bike trails/Bikes* (2 comments)
Location* (2 comments)
Traffic* (2 comments)
OPTIONS
Jobs
Good for young people
Educational options
Religious options
Range of housing options
\$20-30K fixer-upper*
MORE IDEAS
Independence*
Get to know businesses*
What's so wonderful about attracting more and more people downtown?

2) What opportunities exist to enhance the Downtown living environment for all who may wish to live here?

HOUSING
More affordable housing needed (2 comments)
Only 6 of 34 listings downtown are under \$200K
Need for more mid-level housing options
Mid-level housing, not condo*
Need housing for all income levels (2 comments)
All income levels*
Housing-all types but more work-force properties
Need balance of rental/owner
Rental and owner*
Rent and own opportunities
Less expensive homes often need lots of repair
Better maintenance of existing properties
Keep housing up to code*
More funding/support for building inspectors
Crack down on owners that illegally destroy historic fabric
Make fine count/deterrent
Keep long-term residents
Need/opportunity to reuse housing where students are vacating (East Johnson/Gorham/Greenbush/Vilas/possible Bassett
MASS TRANSIT

Buses that don't pollute
Cleaner atmosphere
More bus service outside of M-F days/rush hours (2 comments)
Light rail
Commuter rail
Fox cities bus service
Downtown circulator (transportation)
DOWNTOWN RESIDENT SAFETY/HEALTH/SOCIAL SERVICES
Safety important (3 comments)
Better pedestrian lighting
Noise reduction
Less amplified music or decibel maximum ordinance*
Bar time?
There is a need to enforce ordinances on the books*
Chapter 24- "Offenses against peace and quiet"*
Night after night the bars and restaurants ignore the laws and nothing is done. Residents suffer because businesses (bars) are untouchable*
Potential conflicts between young residents and new condo owners must be dealt with
Traffic
Support for/awareness of Tenant Resource Center
Outlaw loitering
Address homeless/mental health situation
his is possibly the problem. We cannot allow dangerous persons to live here, even if they'd like to (vagrants, etc.).*
Child care needed (2 comments)
Childcare*
Grade school
SROs*
OTHER RESIDENT SERVICES/AMENITIES
Retail nodes, more overall (2 comments)
Essential services (cobbler, florist)
More services need to be provided: Create directory of downtown businesses that support downtown living: shoe repair, laundry, grocery, dentists and doctors, etc
Service directory distribution
First run movie theater
Movie theatre needed-on top of parking ramp
Cineplex at State Historical Society*
More small open air theater on Capital Square*
Full grocery store
Dessert/coffee*
Density = retail + services
Keep shops open later
Places until 1 or 2 a.m.*
Late night walking*

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER
New construction fits existing "style"
Infill and redevelopment that fits neighborhood
Ordinance to prohibit combining storefronts on State Street
Allow parcels to be combined and broken up more fluidly*
Some historic buildings are in fine condition and should be maintained, others are in terrible shape with potential structure failure.*
Living with historic buildings, Architecture and where past activities occurred*
Expansion of Historic District – more areas (Bassett, Mansion Hill)
PUBLIC SPACE MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT
Lake policies (restrict fertilizers, etc.)
No diapers
Clean up litter
Clean up graffiti
Parks
Parkland could be enhanced
Opportunity to have more trees/greenspace
Community gardens in parks, all over
More small scale events on the Square*
More tall trees*
More diverse species of trees*
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
More people need to be active/involved
Awareness of safety issues, more community involvement
Reduce neighborhood association influence
Sense of place, ownership
Better City support of neighborhoods in developing neighborhood plans
Better zoning system so developers have clear direction and residents aren't surprised by a building being approved and then swapped in use*
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
More affordable rent for small businesses (State Street)
More small cap TIF
MORE IDEAS
Need SRO too
Less car traffic* (2 comments)
Non-alcohol location*
Walking streets*

3) How can your big ideas about “Downtown Living” advance the goal of sustainability?

HOUSING/LIVE WHERE WORK
If people live closer to work, less driving
Need to help employees stay and grown downtown*
Need for mid-level housing options*
Maintain balance between rental and owners*
Lack of affordability, less expensive homes*
Increased density
Denser development-less car use*
More retail, better shopping (less people need to drive out)
More owner-occupied housing
Sustainability of homes in Bassett*
Need to save current student areas if vacancy increases*
Keep stock up*
GREEN DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, TECHNOLOGIES INCENTIVES
Green energy incentives
Incentives for sustainable remodeling/building?
Green retrofit policies (green roof, etc.)
Green building
City could adopt higher standards for sustainable building
Maintaining houses, the greenest building is one that is already built
Full cut-off lighting
Rehabbing buildings to decent insulation and water use*
MORE IDEAS
Mass transit
Help to diminish car emissions*
Judicious historic preservation
Museum-rooftop events/cinema*
Lighted traffic circle at Blair & Willy Street*
If we are going to sustain downtown as a good residential area, the laws need to be enforced.*
Downtown should NOT be a place to gather! Outlaw loitering!*
Outlaw panhandling!*
Wash/clean streets*
Tall trees shade the concrete-work to lessen urban heat island effect*
Human scale is good but trees should be TALL and have limbs low enough for children to climb*
Problem with Nolen/Willy St. intersection*
Increase job base*
Central Park East area needs employment*