

# **DOWNTOWN PLAN MEETING PUBLIC 3**

## **COMMENT CARD RESULTS**

NOVEMBER 5, 2008

At the November 5 public meeting, general approaches were presented for each of the themes listed below. Participants were encouraged to record their feedback on comment cards. This is a listing of comments received.

### **THEME: SENSE OF PLACE(S)**

#### **APPROACH A: GATEWAYS & AVENUES**

Any street view that terminates at the Capitol building really works.

East and West Washington Avenues are linear gateways. “Place” occurs along the way, rather than at a point or an intersection.

Should do a round-a-bout at West Washington and Regent/Proudfit.

Why isn't East Washington a major gateway? It has high potential for an entrance stretch (rather than gateway) from Yahara River to Capitol.

Preserve superb old industrial buildings and allow dense development on other lots.

Grand gateways but need to be easy to pass through – car, walking, bike.

Visitor centers.

East Washington – change texture on sidewalks – bike racks.

Blair/John Nolen. Extremely important, now just messy.

Blair lake to lake – create an alley with buildings and plantings.

Murray Street Mall – extend Murray Street pedestrian mall (East Campus Mall) from Lake Monona to Lake Mendota.

James Madison Park – a new shelter and other improvements to the park, redevelopment around the park, can help create a gateway to downtown, sense of place.

King Street avenue missing – bikes and cars.

I think the grid of Wisconsin/Washington/State as primary arteries is important.

Please consider the experience for visitors coming from the airport as a gateway.

### **APPROACH B: NEIGHBORHOODS & DISTRICTS**

King Street has been establishing its own downtown identity.

King Street is a gem, but not because it was planned to be one. It has a charming cohesiveness made possible by the old beautiful buildings and it evolved naturally.

Don't mess too much with State Street beyond recent redo. Don't plan the charm out of the great mix of charming old buildings.

Breakdown looks good.

I support a King Street “entertainment district.” However, we should be careful to maintain and enhance a mixture of uses that will create a vibrant district. Avoid creating an “entertainment ONLY district.”

### **APPROACH C: PUBLIC SPACES / CIVIC BUILDINGS**

Be careful in design of civic buildings. Emphasize pedestrian realm. Include doors and windows at sidewalk level. Avoid blank walls. Civic uses in mixed-use buildings, along the lines of Sequoya Library in Sequoya Commons.

Incent small public spaces in Bassett area.

Kohl Center “ice cube” forecourt bad news – “big chasm”. Warm up (sculpture park, etc.)

Sense of place means public access & environment.

### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

Build densities at rail stops.

Promote more retail use of the 100s of feet of frontage on the Square that is used for banking!  
What a waste of space!

## **THEME: DOWNTOWN WORKING & BUSINESS**

### **APPROACH A: EXPANDED, HOLISTIC DOWNTOWN AS AN ECONOMIC ATTRACTOR**

Lakefront under utilized. Open air markets, ala New Orleans.

Park Street – employee area.

### **APPROACH B: LOCATIONS FOR BASIC EMPLOYMENT GROWTH**

This is where downtown plan and economic development plan need most interaction.

Good start with discussion of basic sector jobs, etc.

### **APPROACH C: A MORE COMPLETE RETAIL ENVIRONMENT**

*[none]*

### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

Seems like the City needs to establish the transportation system/routes first – this will allow business and developers to analyze risk and invest accordingly.

Suggest City find a way to get an area “ready” and marketable for business/job creation by investing in site development (demo, utilities, parking, etc.) Incent investment.

To keep and make sustainable the existing houses downtown can create an attractive and functional traffic area. Houses without this option would provide great space for potential small business and multi-purpose facilities.

Flexible space for small businesses/light industry at Regent Street and West Washington Avenue.

Cluster industries. Example: movie cinema and late night “non-alcohol” eatery.

Use FedEx – light industry, small business, consultants.

If there were a way to bring the rent down it might attract or keep businesses.

More mixed-use!

For employment center in the downtown we need to include East Rail Corridor – a huge potential employment center.

## **THEME: DOWNTOWN LIVING**

### **APPROACH A: RESIDENTIAL CORRIDORS**

Like the residential corridor idea.

Approach A could work in conjunction with Approach B. Otherwise seems placed without reason and if vehicular traffic is not reduced, would not be a good place to live.

Higher density along Bassett, Broom, Bedford is more difficult than east/west streets because Bassett, Bedford and Broom lots back enough depth to build on! Hard to get the density needed compared to lots that are 132 or 165 feet in depth!

This approach feels clunky and like an imposition on the neighborhoods.

### **APPROACH B: COMMUTER RAIL MIXED USE AREAS**

Like the commuter rail approach.

Commuter rail best overall approach.

Approach B liked for practicality – moving new density and encouraging new density – residents and employers paired.

Include East Rail Corridor in the rail mixed-uses with employment.

Require density at potential commuter rail stops.

What is the timetable for approach B?

Yes, downtown plan should envision something new for the triangle: break up the super block, extend Murray Street mall (east campus mall) from Lake Mendota to Lake Monona, buildings oriented to sidewalk and street.

The actual numbers required to make more stations economically efficient are very large I think.

### **APPROACH C: HIGHER DENSITY RESIDENTIAL RING AND BOULEVARDS**

Not in favor of a ring of residential housing areas of the main route to allow expansion.

Approach C may be happening. With a circulator, could work.

If we only redeveloped all of the parking ramps as high-rise buildings we'd have a lot of density.

## **GENERAL COMMENTS**

Student living areas (Mifflin, Bassett) could be restored/fixed. Many houses are falling apart.

Need to have a simple traffic-ped-bus (wider route) corridor to allow east of movement around the city.

Let's have a discussion about building heights.

Need to think about greenspace. More people means more green space.

Encourage density while protecting popular views of the Capitol.

Fill in center of block with underground parking and high-rise [buildings] – keep historic houses on street.

Why not double the density between Blair Street and Regent/Proudfit. Would create more walkable neighborhoods, better bus usage, higher tax base, better land use, etc. Actually triple or quadruple would be better!

Put retail on the ground floor frontage of all city parking ramps. And put housing on top of ramps!

## **THEME: MOVING AROUND**

### **APPROACH A: TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY, TO, FROM AND THROUGH**

Non-stop shuttle buses from suburban park & ride lots to downtown. These can be “trailer” buses, which offer more capacity.

Green median on West Washington (similar to East Washington).

Current bus system seems too complicated.

Keep the one-way streets.

Johnson, University and other one-way streets should remain one-ways.

Bus schedule not good for people who work irregular hours.

Make buses run from all neighboring suburbs of Madison to attract and make the Madison community more accessible and “welcoming” to more people.

Promote commuter rail (or any linear system) to and through downtown.

Bus use downtown is pathetic!

Most important at present: preferred commuter rail, improved bike paths.

Linear – light rail. Extending to suburbs would thin out traffic congestion.

John Nolen and Blair intersection is a dangerous intersection for all commuters.

Wayfinding signage and maps, color-coded.

A tour bus holding area that might be at a “remote” location with shuttles ferrying people to and from their destinations in the downtown. This holding area might be fully equipped with comfort and commercial facilities such as various entry points on East. Washington, Park Street, John Nolen, University Avenue. Or something totally centralized and yet unobtrusive, attractive, functional.

Blair @ John Nolen/Williamson/Wilson - extremely critical gateway traditional entry to Madison - trains/boats/cars.

“Private” community cars for access by business - dedicated parking for these.

“Compass” directions.

Streetscape enhancements “a la” State.

## **APPROACH B: TRANSPORTATION CIRCULATION, AROUND DOWNTOWN**

Would like to see better bike path system from Monona to Mendota and visa versa.

Not only north/south bike routes, but diagonally (e.g. Blair and John Nolen to State Street area) is awkward around Square or Broom Street by bike.

Make direct paths around main or heavy populated areas so that the other bus routes can continue on their own route without having to stop on “State “Street” or other streets that are very busy.

Madison needs a streetcar system in a figure 8 covering a slightly expanded central area (Blair to UW Hospital).

Devise a better bus system just for the immediate downtown area. More buses, more routes, smaller buses run more often.

I like the dedicated bus routes down State Street and the Square also the bike routes, the more the better.

Connect the lakes on Blair Street – may need pedestrian bike bridge to cross over East Washington.

West Washington at Regent at bike path and commuter rail: Put in green station/rest stop, bikes can rest, stop on rail, green, relaxing, nature inviting, park-like, gateway.

Cabs (electric).

## **GENERAL COMMENTS**

Do install wayfinding signs.

Charging stations for NEVs downtown – parking ramps, parking meters-maybe in conjunction with solar canopies.

## **THEME: RECREATION, CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT**

### **APPROACH A: DISTRICTS**

Work with the potential areas that already exist along Mendota and Monona areas rather than the Kohl Center area.

In these districts development and the good ideas outlined here do not need to be mutually exclusive. We should find a way to bang ideas together with public and private initiatives.

Make the Square a place for displaying and selling Wisconsin products. Kohler store, Trek store, Schwinn store, Famous Footwear, etc.

I really like the boat house/boat slips in the parks.

Support developing community-minded activities in upper State Street, e.g. movie theater, community theater, meeting rooms for community activities that are more affordable for middle-income families.

Looks great! Just need more restrooms for concerts on the Square!

### **APPROACH B: EXPANDING RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

We (the BID) have heard that boaters would like public docking near downtown so they can visit, go out to dinner, etc. Both lakes.

Why does any city with so much lake frontage not have a large marina? Boats drive residency.

Multi-use venue at Turville Point – move the Mallards downtown.

I like the idea of adding more recreation by Olin Park. It will create more demand and sense of place for activities at Alliant Energy Center.

For the long-term, consider a publicly owned arts incubator in the Mansion Hill, Langdon Street, lake front area. Place it in an historic building not feasible for residential use.

Return Langdon Street area to its 1900s look.

“Lake access” sometimes carries the notion of more commercial use of the lakeshore with restaurants and such. I hope we find a way of distinguishing between simply providing access to walk along and the idea of “commercializing” the lakeshore. I can support the former and not the latter.

Lake access seems to go in direction of parks, pedestrian themes. Such can accommodate existing residential – limit commercial. Intention of lake access defined as “parks-docking.”

Create urban spaces with access and enhanced experience with the lake.

Boardwalk connecting James Madison Park and the UW campus could reduce downtown pedestrian traffic and danger.

Dog parks – necessary for attracting creative young people.

Lake access from Memorial Union to James Madison Park. Lights and large enough for police car.

No to the park on Mifflin/Bedford area. Keep park on the lakes.

Want a way to walk along lake – but need to consider safety.

Need to add underground hidden parking if further development of James Madison.

Lake access. Grant Park. Segue bike patrol along lake. Peace Park – put in business – make concession stands.

Improve water access to pedestrians through existing parks and improvements of them (expansion). Boat access not as much need.

## **GENERAL COMMENTS**

*[none]*