



Downtown Plan Choices Workshop #2

March 2, 2016 | Summary

| Workshop Overview

This workshop brought stakeholder groups together to discuss choices for the downtown area and provide feedback about the direction of the Options and Choices phase of the Downtown Plan. The workshop focused on three key choices in the downtown area:

- Supporting Future Investment in Downtown
- Climate Action Plan Implementation
- Growth and Density

Approximately 55 residents, working group members, business owners and employees, design professionals, and property owners attended the event. Attendees provided feedback via sticky notes on boards around the room and on written comment cards. After small-group facilitated discussion on each topic, individual feedback was collected through keypad polling. Below is a brief summary of the feedback received for each of the three topics.



| Supporting Future Downtown Investment – *Which community goals are most important to encourage in the downtown area?*

- Keypad polling: mixed-use buildings, affordable housing, and sustainable design/green building were the most important community goals to prioritize
- Multiple written comments discussed the difference between “housing affordability” and “affordable housing” – both important, but separate issues
- Most common tradeoff mentioned was cost of development vs. affordability
- Several comments suggested that increased density could help achieve community goals for affordability, mixed use, etc.
- Also multiple comments suggesting that open space/public space is an important goal that should be encouraged in new downtown development



Downtown Plan Choices Workshop #2

March 2, 2016 | Summary

CAP Implementation - *Which Climate Action Plan strategies should be prioritized in the downtown area?*

- Increased transit, cycling, and walking options was the most popular keypad polling option, followed by solar/renewable energy production and compact, higher density land use patterns
- Written comments suggested incentives for buildings incorporating green roofs and solar/renewable energy production
- Several comments mentioned the high cost of water for new development
- Emphasis on increasing energy efficiency in existing buildings; tradeoff/tension identified between energy retrofits and historic preservation goals
- Multiple written comments identified a desire to increase rooftop solar power generation downtown; some suggested solar panels as a requirement on new buildings
- Additional recycling and composting programs was the least popular keypad polling option; though several written comments requested curbside composting programs

Growth and Density – *Long-standing policies call for greater density and building height downtown. How should this vision be realized?*

- This session had multiple keypad polling questions:
 - Attendees were asked how they felt about downtown buildings constructed over the last 20 years. Answers varied widely, but the most frequently selected options were “built with high quality materials” and “not tall enough”
 - A question about how buildings should transition from the historic core revealed that attendees want buildings to step down, either to the existing height or the permitted height of the adjacent area. They also want buildings to match the style, articulation, and materials of adjacent buildings
 - When asked about overall downtown development, attendees most frequently chose the option, “let architects be creative and determine suitability on a case-by-case basis.” Other popular options were setting standards for the quality of materials and setting more specific height limits based on Character Districts
- Written comments emphasized ground-floor character and the pedestrian experience of larger buildings, including landscaping, stepbacks, and public spaces
- Differing opinions – some desire more density, others are concerned about the impacts of growth and height
- Concern about transitions from larger buildings downtown to residential areas and to historic core
- Several written comments mentioned the need for architectural variety, thoughtful design, and creativity with new development