

Downtown Vision & Action Plan Update

Presented to City Council
June 27, 2023



Background

- Initiated in 2018
- Budget \$130,000
 - Funding partners: City, County, Mountain Line, FDDBA
- Competitive Process
 - RFP issued broadly
 - 20 national firms expressed interest
 - 10 submitted proposals
 - Selection Committee
 - Unanimous
- Contract awarded to Progressive Urban Management Associates (PUMA), Studio Seed and Charlier Associates



Background: Objectives

- Develop a market-based vision through a collaborative process
- Encourage meaningful engagement from a broad variety of stakeholders, including those who may not typically participate in community processes
- Identify economic development opportunities
- Identify opportunities for local business development and support
- Identify zoning impacts
- Identify opportunities for public art and engaging STEAM
- Prioritize buildings, and setting standards, for historic preservation
- Assess public infrastructure needs for walking, cycling, transit
- Explore opportunities for activation of civic and community spaces
- Explore development of in-lieu parking program
- Explore interest with southside property and business owners for Improvement District
- Develop tactical and measurable implementation strategies to support the vision

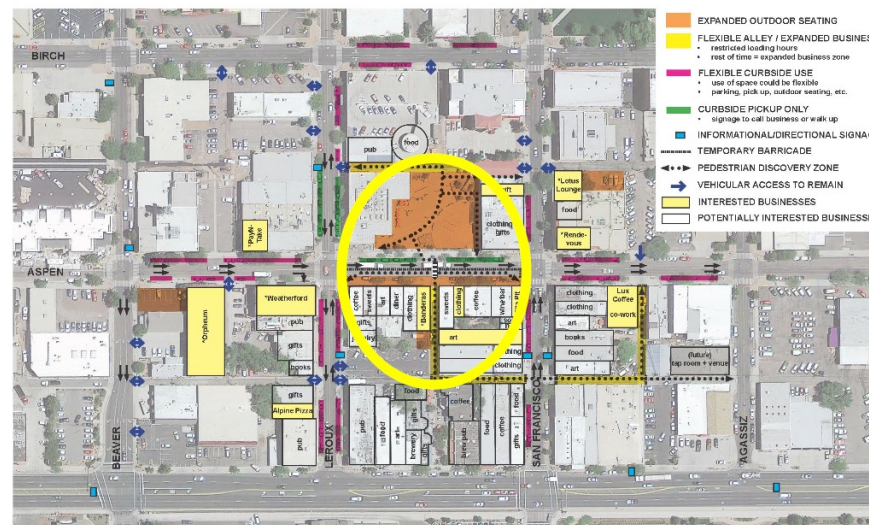
Background: Plan Overview

- Create a “Call to Action” to act boldly and take steps now, collectively, to guide Downtown’s evolution
 - Decisions that happen with us vs. to us
- Review and build upon existing plans
 - Regional Plan, Climate Action, Southside Community Plan, ParkFlag Comprehensive Plan
- Create opportunities for engagement (Advisory Committee, Surveys, Working Groups, Downtown Business & Property Owners, Open Houses, Public Outreach)
- Market Assessment
- Catalytic Project Recommendations
- Implementation and Funding Strategies

Background: COVID

- COVID impacts process
 - Work pivots to focus on economic stability, business support and how to operate safely
- Expanded Use of Rights of Way – extremely successful
 - Being innovative was imperative; had to move quickly
 - Focus was on business survival
 - Plan was bold...many recommendations had never been done before

EXPANDED USE OF PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY



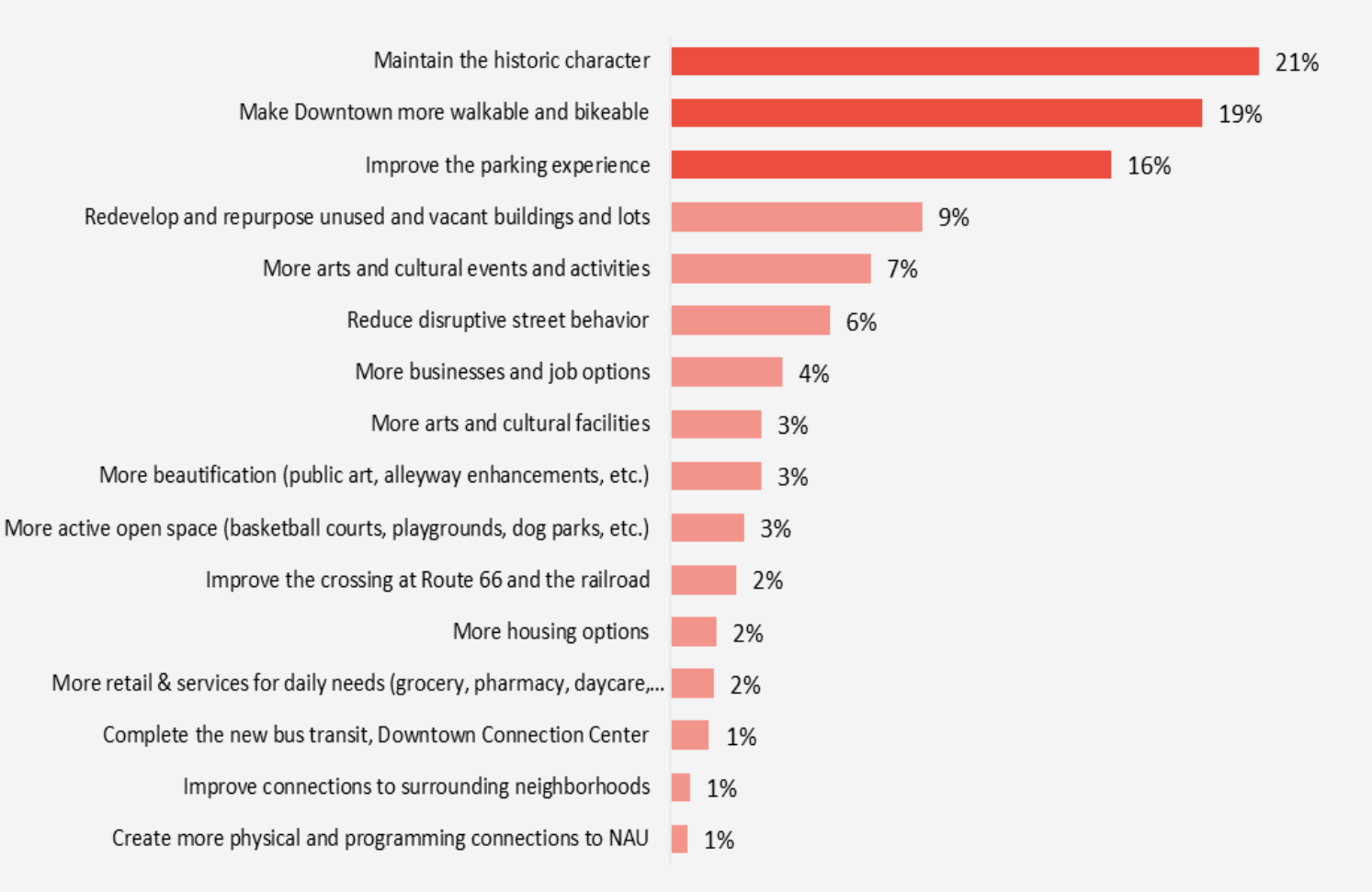
Background: COVID

- Results
 - Aspen Alley closure / pedestrian activation
 - Expansion of outdoor dining into Aspen
 - Gazebos and added seating at Heritage Square
 - Formation of EUROW, collaborative team that continues to meet
 - Suspension of paid parking and installed pickup zones



ONLINE SURVEY SUMMARY *(1,239 responses)*

Choose the one action from the list of 16 that will be most important to achieve their vision for Downtown:



KEY POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Promote Downtown Flagstaff to be the **hub of economic activity and innovation** for the region.
- ❑ **Preserve and protect the historic core** of Downtown Flagstaff to strengthen its identity and overall vitality.
- ❑ **Implement the City's Climate Action Plan** by encouraging a compact and mixed-use downtown, offering walkable/rollable, bikeable, and sustainable lifestyle options.
- ❑ **Allow for change, including gentle density** that features mixed-use residential development at a variety of price points around the periphery of the historic core.
- ❑ **Encourage local arts, culture and Native expression** to flourish throughout downtown.
- ❑ Create a **downtown experience that welcomes and celebrates everyone** that has been part of Flagstaff's past, present and future.

MARKET ASSESSMENT

Four main topic areas with strengths &

vulnerabilities of each:

LIVE

WORK

SHOP & DINE

VISIT AND STAY

Peer City Comparisons

CITYWIDE

Population Growth (2010-19)	Bend 24%	Ft. Collins 17%	Flagstaff 14%	Missoula 12%	Bellingham 12%	Boulder 10%	Corvallis 8%
Housing Density (units/square mile)	Boulder 1,810	Corvallis 1,742	Bellingham 1,340	Bend 1,308	Ft. Collins 1,219	Missoula 1,190	Flagstaff 447
Housing & Transportation Costs (Share of Income)	Boulder 44%	Ft. Collins 48%	Bellingham 51%	Corvallis 52%	Missoula 53%	Bend 56%	Flagstaff 56%

DOWNTOWN

Downtown Employment	Ft. Collins 12,449	Boulder 11,348	Missoula 10,465	Bellingham 7,242	Flagstaff 4,819	Corvallis 4,691	Bend 4,269
Employment Density (workers/acre)	Boulder 81	Missoula 55	Ft. Collins 40	Bellingham 39	Bend 37	Corvallis 37	Flagstaff 27
Knowledge Sector Share of Jobs	Missoula 53%	Bend 40%	Bellingham 37%	Boulder 27%	Corvallis 25%	Flagstaff 22%	Ft. Collins 19%

- Assessment of the relevant real estate sector's conditions, strengths, and vulnerabilities.
- Downtown is one of the most productive and valuable neighborhoods of the community.
- Downtown's proportion of total assessed value is within, but on the low end of, the typical range for downtowns nationally (approximately 4-10%).

MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

TOPICS	OPPORTUNITIES
LIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional housing at all price points• Focus on gentle density to provide more affordability
WORK	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional downtown employment and commercial office space• Attract and retain NAU graduates
SHOP & DINE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Retail businesses that help serve resident's daily needs (groceries, drugstore, hardware, etc.)• Encourage existing businesses to expand hours of operation
VISIT AND STAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expand arts & culture downtown (i.e. Center for the Arts)• Build on "lunar legacy" with Lowell Observatory

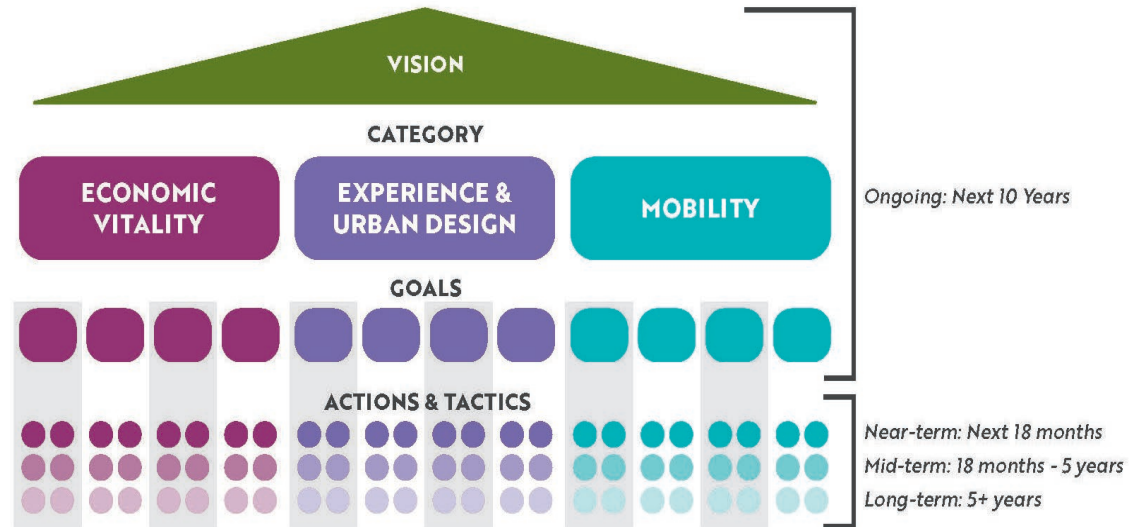
VISION

The vision for downtown is to enhance and create a downtown that is:

- Vibrant
- Walkable/rollable
- Historic and Adaptable
- Thriving
- Welcoming and Inclusive, and;
- Accessible to All

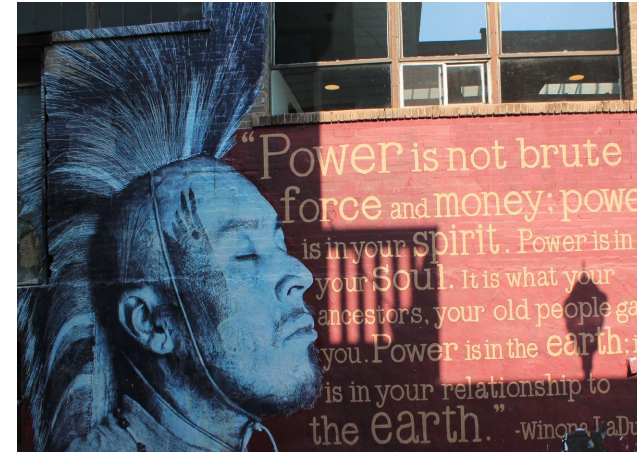
ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan is constructed as follows:



ACTION PLAN | ECONOMIC VITALITY GOALS

- ❑ **Position Downtown as a premier destination for investment**
- ❑ **Bring more jobs into downtown**
- ❑ **Cultivate local arts and culture as foundational to downtown**
- ❑ **Bolster downtown's storefront economy**
- ❑ **Create a larger, and more diverse, residential base in downtown**



Louisville, CO

ACTION PLAN | CATALYTIC PROJECTS

- ❑ Coconino County Properties
- ❑ Former City Courthouse block
- ❑ Leroux Festival Street
- ❑ Eastside Gateway
- ❑ Birch Avenue Banks Redevelopment
- ❑ Alley Activation Program
- ❑ Cottage Avenue Infill Redevelopment
- ❑ Heritage Square Activation
- ❑ Gateways, Streetscape, and Wayfinding
- ❑ Downtown Connection Center



ACTION PLAN | DOWNTOWN EXPERIENCE GOALS

- ❑ Preserve the historic character and charm of downtown.
- ❑ Direct new growth responsibly and in a way that adds to the vibrancy of downtown.
- ❑ Activate downtown in creative ways that attract locals as well as visitors.
- ❑ Enhance the downtown experience by implementing gateway features, streetscape enhancements, signage and wayfinding, and public art to create a sense of arrival and direction.
- ❑ Embrace sustainability as a core value in how downtown is managed, improved, and developed.



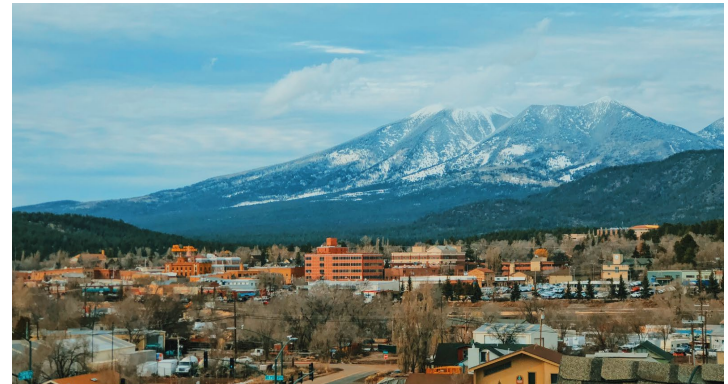
ACTION PLAN | MOBILITY GOALS

- ❑ Enhance downtown to be more walkable
- ❑ Improve parking management
- ❑ Improve public transit access
- ❑ Improve bicycle access and circulation
- ❑ Manage curb space allocation and use



IMPLEMENTATION & FUNDING STRATEGIES

- ❑ Recommendations Sequencing
- ❑ Roles, Responsibilities & Partnerships
- ❑ Funding Sources
- ❑ Measuring Progress



NEXT STEPS

Now

Seek feedback / revisions from City and County partners and Advisory Committee members

Summer

Conduct Public Outreach

September 2023

City Council Final Plan Adoption