

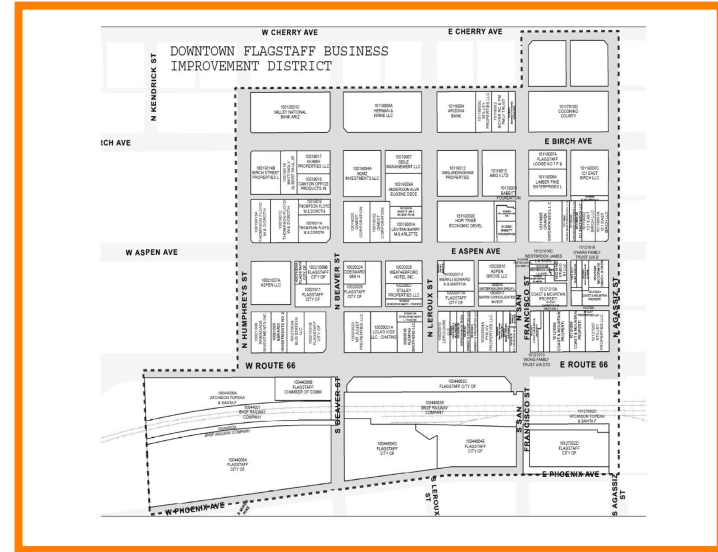
Downtown Vision & Action Plan Update

Presented to the Sustainability Commission
September 28, 2023



Introduction

- FDBIRD
 - Taxing district voted on by property owners to manage increased activity inside a legally defined geographic boundary
 - Helps fund programs and services above and beyond general municipal services
 - In 9 years, property owners have contributed more than \$1.2 million for enhanced services



Introduction

- FDDBA
 - Contracted to manage service delivery in district
 - Clean Team Ambassadors – remove graffiti, sweep sidewalks
 - Promote downtown – no boundaries
 - Support locally-owned businesses
 - Produce events / community building – 15 events in 2018, more than 160 free, family events in 2023
 - Advance walkability, experience
 - Champion downtown as a premier destination to live, spend time & enjoy



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 opportunity sites for housing – tie into CNP, Housing, DCC - resulting in walkable, bikable downtown
- Assess public infrastructure needs for walking, cycling, transit
- Prioritize buildings, and setting standards, for historic preservation
- Identify economic development opportunities
- Identify opportunities for local business development and support
- Identify zoning impacts
- Identify opportunities for public art and engaging STEAM
- 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

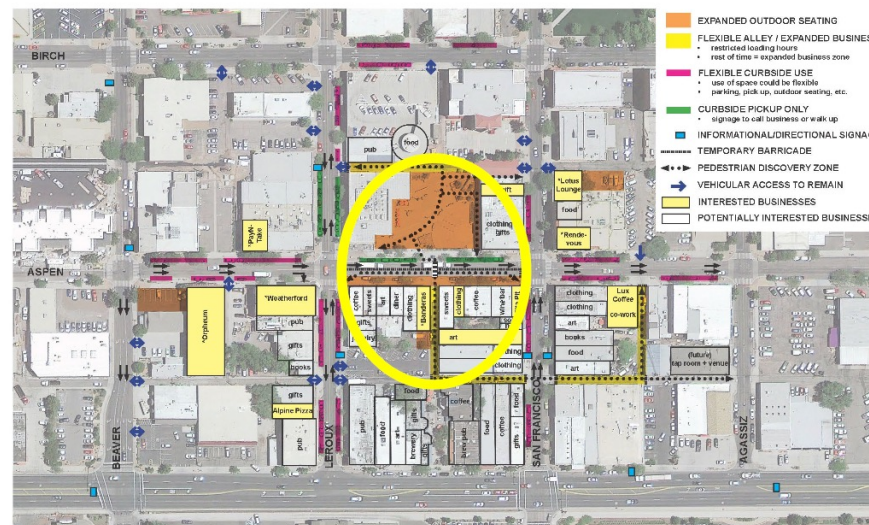
Background: Plan Overview

- 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, Housing Plan, CNP, 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



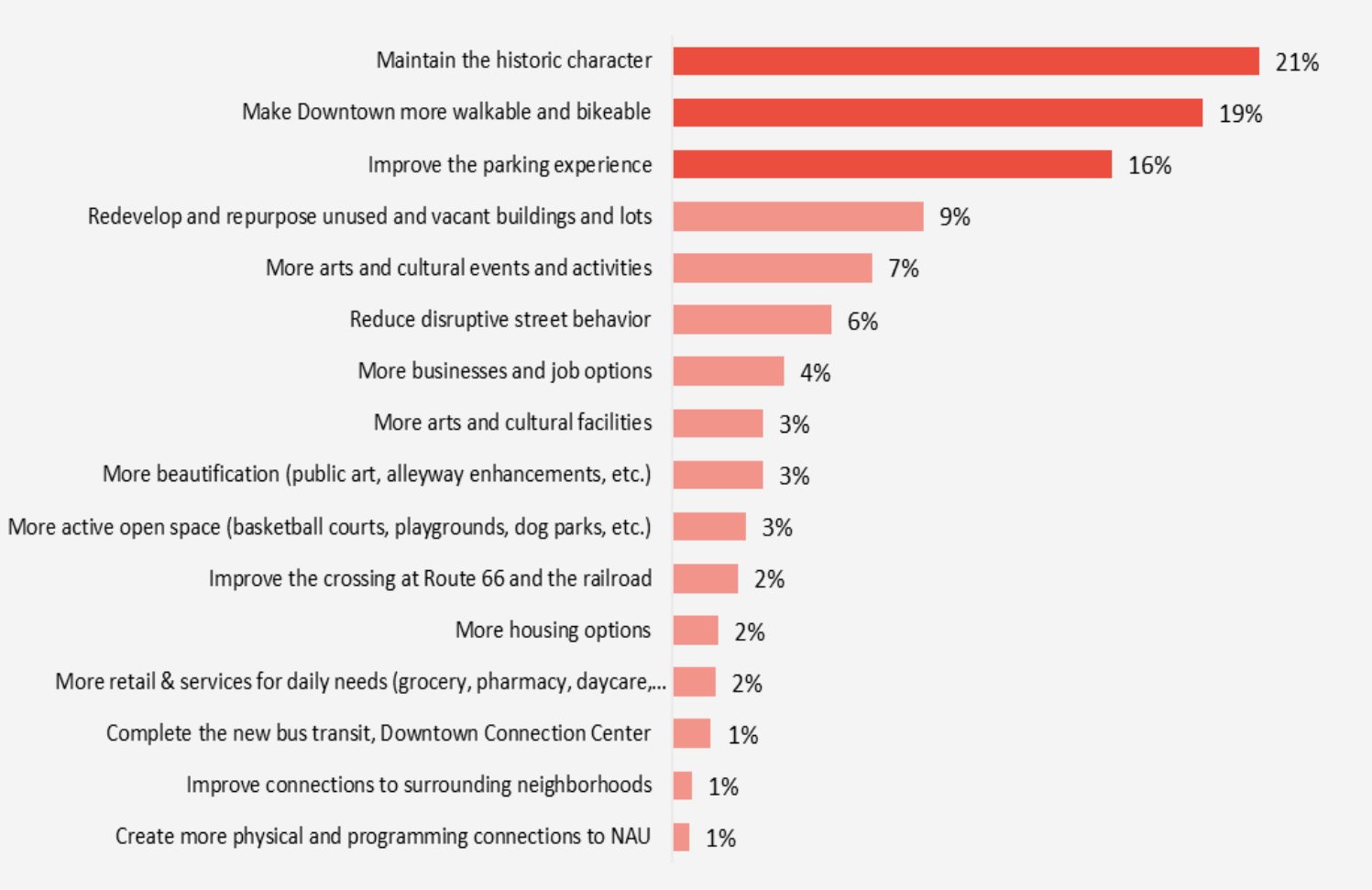
Background: COVID

- 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:



ONLINE SURVEY SUMMARY *(1,239 responses)*

The common themes and highest rated priorities for improving Downtown Flagstaff were:

- #1** Maintain Historic Character
- #2** Make downtown more walkable and bikeable
- #3** Redevelop and repurpose unused and vacant buildings and lots
- #4** Provide additional beautification (public art, alleyway enhancements, streetscape)
- #5** Improve the parking experience



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

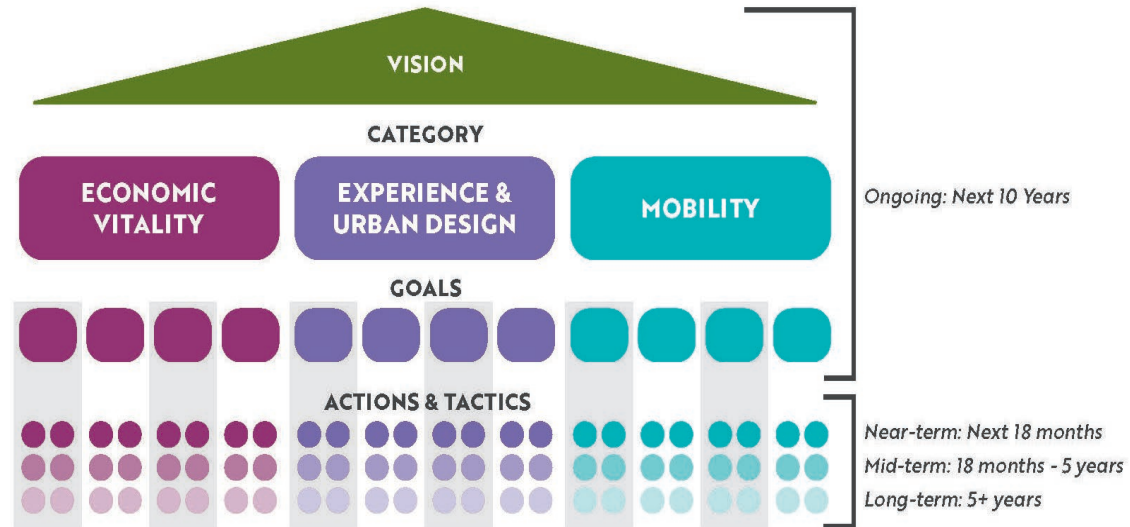
VISION

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

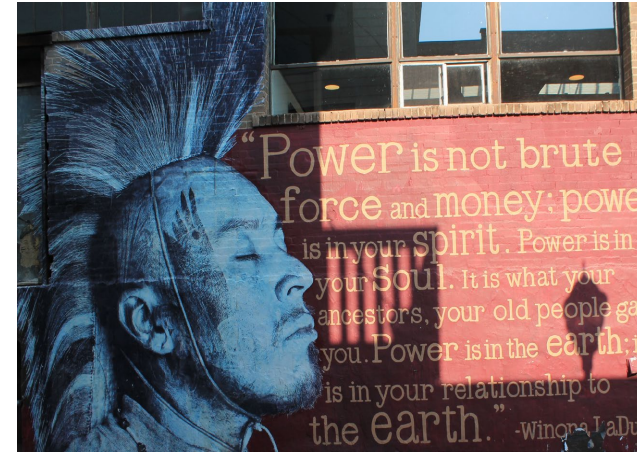
ACTION PLAN

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

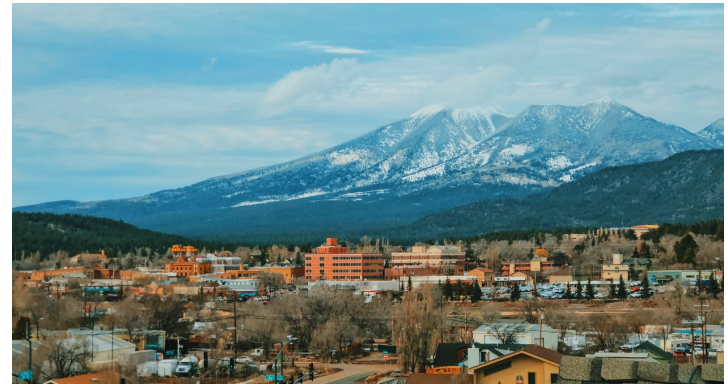
- ❑ Enhance downtown to be more walkable
- ❑ Improve parking management
- ❑ Improve public transit access
- ❑ Improve bicycle access and circulation
- ❑ Manage curb space allocation and use



Boulder, CO

IMPLEMENTATION & FUNDING STRATEGIES

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



NEXT STEPS

Now

Seek feedback / revisions from City and County partners, community organizations, public

October 2023

Council Work Session

November 2023

City Council Final Plan Approval