

Vision 2020
DRAFT MEETING NOTES
July 10, 2007

Meeting Participants

Lindsay Ball, Department of Administrative Services (DAS)
Jim Bauer, Willamette University
Suzi Bicknell, Go Downtown Salem
Sam Brentano, Marion County
Chane Griggs, DAS
Robin Harpster, DAS
Tim Klarr, West Salem Business Assn.
Allan Pollock, Transit
Bruce Rogers, City of Salem
Mayor Janet Taylor, City of Salem
Doug Vande Griend, Go Downtown Salem
John Whittington, Transit
Roger Yost, Go Downtown Salem

Staff in Attendance

Bob Wells
Linda Norris
Peter Fernandez
Tim Gerling
Annie Gorski
Glenn Gross
Thom Kaffun
Courtney Knox
Tony Mounts
Barbara Roberts
Klaus Schilde
John Wales

1. Maps on Display

The meeting opened with informal review and discussion of information about the Core Area displayed on maps, including:

- ***Parks, trails and open space.*** The Core Area is home to a variety of open spaces with opportunities for more connections between creeks and the River.
- ***Preservation and redevelopment projects.*** Most recent projects have occurred within the Historic District and north downtown areas.
- ***Traffic and circulation.*** A key feature of the Core is the volume of through traffic: 30,000 vehicles per day pass City Hall on Liberty.
- ***Existing development districts.*** There are six distinct districts in the Core Area, each with unique development characteristics and design principles: Broadway Street, Downtown Historic, Downtown Retail/Office, Riverfront, South Waterfront, Front Street, and Edgewater.
- ***Population, employment and housing.*** There are approximately 30,000 residents living and 33,000 employees working within a half mile of the core.

None of the existing zoning designations in the Core require housing; all districts allow for mix of uses, including housing. Urban Renewal Agency resources have been used in the Core to stimulate housing.

2. Map Discussion Summary

Community Development Director, Vickie Hardin Woods, highlighted key elements of each map and provided a brief overview of general principles for good design in the core area:

- Compact urban form: a lot of density and intensity in a small area

- Activity: density helps to create sensation that there is a lot going on
- Human scale development, including mixed use
- Open space and gathering places
- Walkable connections – ability to see where one is heading and walk there
- Distinctive identity

Tim Gerling, Public Works Department Director, offered additional interpretation of the traffic circulation map: the majority of through traffic connects to Highway 22; local residents shift to Center or other locations to move through the Core faster; changes to one signal or roadway can sometimes have unintended consequences in other locations inside the Core; and narrowing streets to provide parking on one side or both can reduce capacity and slow traffic in the outside lanes.

Participants suggested methods for sharing the maps to encourage a broader discussion about the Core Area's future, including:

- Converting maps to pdf and displaying on the web
- Displaying the maps in vacant store fronts
- Making the maps available in printed form to highlight activity in the core

3. SWOT Interviews

Linda Norris provided an overview of findings from interviews conducted in June with members of the Vision 2020 group, noting a consensus regarding the Core Area's unique strengths and assets.

Suggestions for how to attract residents surrounding the Core Area into the area included extending hours of businesses, developing more destination activities, marketing activities and businesses more effectively to employees in the Core, creating easier wayfinding around the Core, and developing more outdoor café and art offerings in alleys and other unique nooks. The discussion also emphasized a perceived need to balance trees, landscaping and green in downtown with streetscape and the distinctive historic character of the buildings.

4. SWOT Discussion Points

Mayor Janet Taylor led the group in a discussion of follow up questions from the interviews.

- 1. How does a visitor or customer know when they are in the Core Area?*
 - Distinct look and feel (banners, etc.)
 - See people; lots of activity and fun
 - May not need a distinct core
- 2. How can a greater diversity of shopping and restaurants be attracted to serve the downtown core?*
 - Not enough housing, visual appeal
 - Need a common voice
 - More activities after 5 – more restaurants and other activities
 - Means to communicate and connect to people – to material at the Convention Center, large employers

- Extend season to include indoor activities so that there is something to do all twelve months of the year

3. *How can we captivate employees coming into the core to linger and shop?*

- Sell/offer downtown – do we know enough about the mix? The vertical element, too? We need an inventory of assets.
- Family/youth activities – on weekends, too
- Don't forget about West Salem and Edgewater District
- Publicize performing arts; market a community calendar or an email circulation of weekly happenings in the core – make it easy for people to find out what's happening
- A coupon book to attract employees and visitors to core area businesses
- Special ways to encourage Willamette students to become familiar with core businesses (including August orientation)
- Given public perception of parking, distance between locations should be discussed in terms of minutes of walking distance

5. **Vision 2020 Work Plan**

Mayor Janet Taylor provided a brief overview of the Vision 2020 Work Plan. As a result of the discussion, the group agreed to revise the work plan to focus the next meeting's discussion on vehicular and pedestrian circulation, parking and transit. The September meeting's discussion will include: diversity of uses, employment centers and recreation opportunities.

Community Involvement. The group discussed how and when to involve community in the visioning process. Participants were interested in engaging the community sooner and through a variety of outlets, including:

- Forums with employee groups
- Blogs
- Online survey; survey by email to the employees in the core area or via mail inserts with utility bills, City newsletters, etc.
- Wider circulation of community or Conference Center events to Vision 2020 participants

6. **Next Steps**

The next Vision 2020 meeting was tentatively scheduled for August 9, 2007 at 3:30pm at Willamette University.

Other follow up activities include:

- Copies of a cartoon map of downtown Salem will be made available at the next meeting.
- Urban Development Department staff will collaborate with Go Downtown Salem regarding a current downtown building and business inventory