



Retreat Notice & Agenda
Downtown Vision Ad-Hoc Committee
May 2, 2015
Mesa Arts Center—3rd Floor South Conference Room
8:30-11:30 a.m.

Jo Wilson, Chair
Steve Chucri, Member (**Excused Absence**)
Debby Elliott, Member
Charles Huellmantel, Member
Marco Meraz, Member (**Excused Absence**)
Rich Marchant, Member
Lorenzo Perez, Member

1. Chair's call to order **Approximately 8:40a.m.**
2. Review and take action to approve Downtown Vision Committee minutes from the March 24, 2015 meeting. **Approved**
3. Chair to present purpose/mission of the Downtown Vision Committee for discussion and clarification. **Chair reviewed the original purpose and mission of the Committee... to create a shared vision and broad goals (or priorities) that all stakeholders could accept and follow.**
4. Staff to review the process the Committee has undertaken to get prepared for creating a Shared Downtown Vision. (NLewis described the three main phases of the Committee's work to date: **1) Presentations from stakeholder groups; 2) Broad community outreach (traditional and nontraditional methods) to ensure ample community information and involvement; 3) Committee drafting to create Vision Statement. The Committee is now in Phase 3.**
5. Review of Visuals and Photographs—Committee to identify what photos depict his/her vision of elements of great downtowns.
Committee responses included:
 - **Variety of restaurants that spill outdoors. These activate the area.**
 - **Open plaza and paving—demonstrates investment and care for an area and can help attract others to invest—example Southern Avenue**
 - **Shade structures—need shading that doesn't block retail but creates shade for pedestrians**
 - **Housing that engages the street with on-street parking, shade trees, heritage character. Brownstones and brick sidewalks in addition to high-density development that is colorful and eclectic.**
 - **All great downtowns are safe, have buildings and spaces at right scale, are walkable, diverse and feature art/creative environment. Brownstone flavor.**
 - **Large and small events that serve all audiences—ongoing; sense that something is going on downtown all the time.**

- Environment that ensures security, peace of mind and comfort—examples police bike patrol, being ready for homeless issue
 - Artistic environment very important to great downtowns—architecture, landscape/streetscape, art programs/facilities—love light rail art and colors
 - Storefronts need to be open and visible to the street.
 - Bold, colorful lighting attracts nightlight; adds to sense of comfort/security and helps downtowns pop and feel exciting at night.
 - Scale is a critical component-- Wide sidewalks and narrow streets. Lots of shade. We have the opportunity to fill our spaces to create a walkable and community-focused sense of place.
 - Great downtowns expect quality development; development that ensure the structure, architecture and landscape/streetscape add to what we want Downtown Mesa to become. Need to consider making form-based code a requirement for downtown. Form-based codes inspire quality negotiations and development.
 - Connections to and from downtown are important. Today, it is not an easy experience to connect from freeways to downtown nor is it particularly an aesthetic experience. Need to connect downtown regionally and make it easy for neighbors to get to and from downtown. Feeders and transitions. Consider use of linear parks and multiuse paths.
 - Downtown retail—Mom and Pops/Boutiques; mixed with larger, national chains; and not to forget serving needs of students (24-7 diner, entertainment)
 - Intimate spaces—love spaces with great shade, walking, hear nature, water running, paving materials creative. Relaxing.
6. Chair to lead ‘round robin’ discussion—share one of your five ideas related to DT Mesa Vision or Key Priorities?
- a. Once all ideas are presented, committee to prioritize/categorize ideas.

What do we want for Downtown Mesa

- Connect on an emotional level (want to be there; my go-to place)
- Needs to be inclusive and diverse—something for everyone.
- Eclectic and diverse blend of old and new (housing, retail, architecture, streetscape)
- Build on creative environment initiated by Mesa Arts Center, museums. Art is the base/foundation for our downtown. Creative environment should inspire creative buildings. Art in public spaces. Artistic landscaping and streetscaping. Creative use of color. Move away from concrete sidewalks to a combination of designed/eclectic pavement and brick sidewalks.
- Present a sense of arrival to Downtown. Linear park connections, pathways, signage and wayfinding.
- Ensure connections from hotels to downtown—uses to invite hotel guests into downtown.
- Demand quality development by using tools like ‘required’ form-based code.
- Variety of retail establishments, i.e. high-end shops, mom/pop boutiques, national chains.
- Heritage is celebrated and shared (example—signs on buildings in downtown Chandler; removing colonnades to unearth historic features where reasonable)
- Comfortable and eclectic landscaping, shade structures and streetscape. (color, interesting shade, interesting use of pavement, brick sidewalks)
- Variety of eating options, day and night—outdoor dining, destination restaurants, 24-7 diner for students, coffee/café shops, bakery, ice cream .

- Support existing and increasing student populations—services they need such as late-night gathering locations to study and collaborate, entertainment options.
- Inclusivity—downtown has something for everyone. Diversity is everywhere.
- Connected public spaces... help make arrival to Downtown attractive and seamless. Linear parks and spaces can become development opportunities. Consider using series of paseos and alleys to connect to downtown

[15-MINUTE BREAK]

7. Chair to lead committee discussion related to:
 - a. Are there common themes here? Key words that jump out to us for DT Vision and Priorities?
 - b. Is there anything missing?
 - c. Any key tasks/actions in the Central Main Plan that needs to be reflected?
 - d. Is there anything in those photographs that needs to be reflected here?

Vision Words Identified:

Sense of Arrival
 Heritage
 Connectivity
 Inclusivity/Diversity
 Compelling
 Vibrant
 Creative/Artistic
 Intimate Public Spaces
 Strong Sense of Place
 Vibe/Hip/Weird
 Eclectic
 Comfortable/Inviting
 Walkability
 Destination
 Active
 Gathering Space/Leisure/Hang Out
 Expectation of quality
 Authentic
 Unique
 Innovative
 Entertainment
 Nightlife
 Dynamic
 Progressive

Priorities:

Housing/Residential Variety (brownstones, multifamily)
Mix of Retail (high-end, mom & pop, national, student oriented/need)
Require use of Form-based Code in Downtown
Bold lighting—help to activate nightlife
Police presence/Bike patrol—stay ahead of growth
Refresh streetscape (hardscape and landscape)
(Colonnades, brick sidewalks, add color and artistry)
Artistic elements—development and services
Shade structures
Linear parks—to connect people from all directions to Downtown
Intimate public spaces
Festivals/Community Events large and small
Outdoor restaurants
Great streets and wide sidewalks
Reaffirm and implement priorities of Central Main Plan
New Wayfinding/Signage
Accessible and safe parking (well lit, connect to Main, easy to find)
Consider community parking district in lieu of parking credits for developer

8. Next steps reviewed:

- a. Committee member(s) volunteer to draft Vision statement and priorities?
(Volunteer to provide to Natalie Lewis by May 18. Staff to email draft to committee. (No “reply to all” emails—open meeting law reminder)
Committee Member Lorenzo Perez to draft vision statement and priorities. Committee Member Huellmantel to assist and to find visuals that represent the Committee’s ideas.
- b. Committee comments to staff only May 18-28
- c. Staff sends final draft shared with committee by June 1. **Final Meeting of Committee June 9th, 3 p.m. at Mesa Art Center 3rd Floor South Conference Room.**
- d. June 15th Council presentation—Starts at 3:30 or 4 p.m. City Council Lower Chambers, 57 E. 1st Street
- e. Chair to lead committee discussion related to recommendation for checks and balances—maintain the momentum and collaboration.
Committee recommended a DT Resource Team be assembled that includes staff and members of DT Vision Committee to serve as a sounding board on key development and redevelopment projects

downtown. The Resource Team would meet approximately quarterly or as needed.

9. Items from citizens present **None**

10. Adjourn meeting **Approx. 11:30 a.m.**

Committee members will attend either in person or by telephone conference call. City Council members may elect to attend the meeting for their own information, not for purposes of any legal action nor decision making by the Council. The City is committed to making its public meetings accessible to persons with disabilities. For special accommodations, please contact the City Manager's Office at 480-644-3333 at least two business days before the meeting.