

THE CITY OF KEENE



Downtown Revitalization Study

February 12, 2018



McFarland Johnson
Professional Survey | Estimating | P&E | LEED





Downtown Revitalization Study

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1.0 Project Overview

1.1 Overview and Process

The project has presented an opportunity to take a close look at the current economic state of the downtown area within the City of Keene and explore ways that the streetscape could serve to better accommodate a modern downtown serving the needs of the area residents and business owners as well as improvements to the overall circulation of users of the local shops, restaurants, and businesses.

The need to upgrade the underground utilities in the downtown area has afforded the City this opportunity to evaluate the current economic state of the downtown and possible build a downtown for the future. The resulting higher use of the downtown would enhance local wealth and strengthen Keene's overall economic health and opportunities for the region.

The downtown area is the economic engine for the City of Keene. The goal of this study is to provide decision makers with a potential vision for its future, allowing the downtown area to redevelop and expand in a cohesive and consistent manner, while reinforcing the sense of community and economic vibrancy for the benefit of all Keene residents.

The intent of the project was to reach and engage a large audience of downtown users who would then provide general feedback on the downtown area, participate in a 17-question survey, respond to images showing both existing and potential future conditions, and participate in small focus group discussions.

Over 600 people participated in the three-day Downtown Vision Forum, survey, and other questions presented. This public input resulted in the discovery that there is an overarching desire to increase the level of activity in the downtown area by residents, businesses, and visitors.

The community outreach undertaken to generate interest and gain participation from residents, business owners, and visitors was conducted in close coordination with City staff, Mayor and Ad Hoc Downtown Revitalization Committee. A summary of the products and efforts included the follow:

Project Banners: A project banner was prepared and hung in various locations in the downtown area to advertise the project website and survey.

Project Fact Sheet: A Project Fact Sheet was prepared and distributed throughout the City on social media and hard copy. The Fact Sheet included



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salient project information and detailed the opportunities for the public to provide input and participate either in person at the three-day forum and/or electronically.

Website and Social Media: A project website was prepared that included project information, project documents, access to the survey, and links to existing City social media where additional project information was posted. The project website URL is www.revitalizingdowntownkeene.com. The website will remain active and serve as place to post information to the public.

Electronic Survey: The electronic survey was intended to assist in addressing the questions presented by the Ad Hoc Downtown Revitalization Committee. Seventeen targeting questions were presented to the community. The 17 questions developed in consultation with City staff and the Ad Hoc Downtown Revitalization Committee are as follows:

1. What features currently distinguish the downtown from other areas of the City today?
2. Where do you want the downtown look and feel applied?
3. What specific streetscape features do you want to see incorporated into the downtown look?
4. What amenities do you want in your downtown?
5. What do you like about downtown today?
6. What are the challenges to the traveling public today?
7. What opportunities do you think this revitalization project presents?
8. What do you think are the obstacles to economic development in the downtown today?
9. Do you think there is enough street lighting downtown during the evening hours?
10. How long are you willing to walk from your parking space to your destination?
11. Should the downtown area be more friendly for bicyclists?
12. Why do you come downtown?



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13. Why don't you come downtown?
 14. What would encourage you to come downtown?
 15. Would you like more outdoor dining downtown?
 16. Would you like to see more public art downtown?
 17. Please describe yourself

A summary of the survey results is enclosed in Section 2.0. Complete results of the survey are enclosed Appendix B.

Press Release: A press release on the project was issued. The intent of the press release was to further inform the general public on the opportunities to attend the three-day Downtown Vision Forum and provide input through the electronic survey.

The press release resulted in an article being publishing in the Sentinel Source that fostered involvement from a wide audience. In addition, a member of the City staff, Mayor and a member of the consultant team participated in a 50 minute dialogue on Keene Community Radio (WKBK) in mid-September.

Downtown Vision Forum: A three-day Downtown Vision Forum was held on September 25, 26 and 27 in a vacant store located at 41 Central Square. The forum was held for five hours each day as an "open house" format for residents, business owners, and others to attend.

The purpose of the forum was to provide an intimate setting for the public to provide input on various images (such as a downtown area map, images of downtown and images of possible future conditions), interact and discuss their opinions directly with the Consultant Team and City staff.

Each day, two-focus group discussions (1 hour each) were held. The daily topics included:

- Topic 1. Movement of Vehicles, Bicycles, and Pedestrians and Parking
- Topic 2. Public Space Use and Utilization

1.2 Summary of Research on Downtown Best Practices for the 21st Century

The downtown area of any city has an important and unique role in economic and social development. Downtowns can create a critical mass of vibrancy, energy and pride where cultural and civic activities and resident and business activities are concentrated.



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This concentration facilitates business, learning, and cultural exchange. Downtowns also represent the image and character of a city. In today's global economy where shopping habits are transitioning to be Internet-based and competition between municipalities is fierce for jobs and talent, it is critical that each city takes the opportunity to assess their downtowns. As patterns change, downtown visions need to change.

Based upon research by others (published from 2011 to 2017), the following is a summary of eight community "assets" that have been identified as those assets a community needs in order to grow, strengthen and prosper in the 21st Century. Research has found that the presence of these assets is directly connected to economic prosperity. It has been determined that these assets are most effective when combined to match specific and unique community needs.

These specific community assets have also been embraced and supported by Plan New Hampshire (Plan NH). Plan NH's Mission is to foster excellence in planning and design and development of New Hampshire's built environment to support a vision of healthy and vibrant communities in the Granite

These assets were presented at the recent Plan NH conference entitled, *Role of the Built Environment: Community Design in Economic Health and Development* (October 26-27, 2017)

As summary of these assets is as follows:

1.2.1 Physical Design and Walkability

Physical design and walkability is positively correlated with property values, income, educational attainment, employment, and new business starts.

- Many businesses are also increasingly making their expansion, relocation, and new business development decisions based on which communities are most walkable.
- Mixed use, walkable downtown developments generate ten times as much tax revenue per acre, save almost 40 percent on up front infrastructure costs, and result in about 10 percent lower costs for service delivery than sprawl development (Alfonzo, 2015).

1.2.2 Multi-modal Transportation Networks

Multimodal transportation systems that accommodate walkers, bicyclists, bus and rail passengers, and drivers facilitate economic prosperity and growth.



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- Residential property values increase based on proximity to bus or transit stops, to as much as 150 percent (Sohn, 2012).
 - Transit and bicycle infrastructure are also correlated with increased jobs and wages

1.2.3 Environmental Sustainability

Policies and investments that support environmental sustainability positively affect community image and attractiveness, and can increase property values, incomes, and employment levels.

- Parks and trails help attract and retain well-educated professionals and, in turn, influence businesses' decisions on where to locate or expand.
- Seventy percent of communities' green infrastructure assets, such as wetlands, water, or trails, have a positive impact on population, income and employment levels (Adelaja, 2012).

1.2.4 Cultural Economic Development

Arts and cultural amenities improve a community's competitive edge, contribute to a sense of place, and attract visitors, talent, and businesses.

- In Michigan, Grand Rapids' ArtPrize is an example of the connection between arts and economic prosperity. The three-week art competition draws almost half a million visitors each year and generates over \$20 million in economic impact (Watkins, 2014).

1.2.5. Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurial activity, measured through venture capital investment, is positively related to incomes as well as the percentage of adults who are college graduates (Florida, date unknown).

- Entrepreneurship is also positively related to density, bicycling to work, and employment in the arts, thus reinforcing the relationship between the eight assets.
- Growth-oriented entrepreneurial startups, particularly high-tech companies, are generally responsible for most small business new job creation.



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1.2.6 Welcoming

There is generally more venture capital investment in communities with greater diversity and a welcoming culture.

- Studies show that more foreign-born workers in a community is related to increased jobs for U.S. natives (Zavodny, 2011).
- During the 2014–2015 academic year, for every seven international students enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities, three U.S. jobs were created and supported by international student spending on higher education, lodging, entertainment, retail, transportation, telecommunications, and health insurance (National Association of International Educators, 2014).

1.2.7 Education

Improving school quality and test scores is related to increased home values of as much as three percent (Gibbons, 2013)

- Education attainment levels have also been associated with higher wages and below-average unemployment.

1.2.8 Communication and Technology

Communities that more regularly communicate information to their residents and who invest in technology infrastructure (e.g., public Wifi or mobile applications), are improving community attractiveness and related job and business growth.

- Investments in technology, such as high-speed Internet infrastructure, accelerate business development by supporting innovation and entrepreneurialism, expanding existing businesses, and creating e-commerce opportunities (Speedmatters.org)



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2.0 Summary of Survey Results

As described above in Section 1.2, recent research has shown that there are best practices or “assets” that can help drive a downtown to greater prosperity. These eight assets were echoed by much of the public input received throughout this project.

A brief summary of the input received from the 17 question survey follows below. Only the dominant answers are provided here in percentage of the overall responses. The complete survey is enclosed in Appendix B which details all of the additional comments received from the comment box associated with each question. The 17 questions and the dominant answers are as follows:

1. What features currently distinguish the downtown from other areas of the City today?

Wide sidewalks	70.29%
Architectural features	66.67%
Dense urban center with mixed uses	58.10%

2. Where do you want the downtown look and feel applied?

Extend west on West Street	50.50%
Extend east on Roxbury Street	48.29%
Extend east on Marlboro Street	41.65%

Notes on Q2:

Gilbo Avenue was strongly supported in the verbal input received during the three-day forum and in the comment section of the survey.

Refer to Appendix A for a map of the boundaries of the downtown area that reflects the input from the public.

3. What specific streetscape features do you want to see incorporated into the downtown look?

Landscaping	71.26%
Trees	69.29%
Street lighting	62.80%

4. What amenities do you want in your downtown?

Space for cultural events such as outdoor concerts	77.04%
Space for outdoor dining	75.68%



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Space for outdoor markets	74.32%
Green space	72.69%
Public art	69.07%

5. What do you like about downtown today?

Variety of restaurants	74.95%
Outdoor dining	56.26%
Easy to get around	55.30%
Landscaping	54.33%

6. What are the challenges to the traveling public today?

Limited parking	62.22%
Not enough bicycle lanes	41.48%
Traffic congestion at peak hours	39.22%

7. What opportunities do you think this revitalization project presents?

The majority of the comments reflect the opportunity for improvements, modernization, aesthetics, attracting new businesses and similar. Refer to Appendix B for the complete listing of answers.

8. What do you think are the obstacles to economic development in the downtown today?

Rents are too high	57.05%
Parking	56.63%
Not enough public spaces for events	38.74%
Sidewalk width to accommodate ped's and dining	35.16%

9. Do you think there is enough street lighting downtown during the evening hours?

Yes	71.66%
No	28.34

10. How long are you willing to walk from your parking space to your destination?

5 minutes	40.63%
3 minutes	18.55%



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11. Should the downtown area be more friendly for bicyclists?

Yes	73.27%
No	26.73%

12. Why do you come downtown?

Dining, shopping, events, attend a house of worship, socializing, coffee, work, theater and similar. Refer to Appendix B for the complete listing of answers.

13. Why don't you come downtown?

Not enough to do, undesirables, lack of variety in the stores, traffic, parking, and similar. Refer to Appendix B for the complete listing of answers.

14. What would encourage you to come downtown?

Broadband, more events, more outdoor dining, more options of things to do and see, live music, better parking, better diversity of shopping, and similar. Refer to Appendix B for the complete listing of answers.

15. Would you like more outdoor dining downtown?

Yes	66.73%
No opinion	20.15%

16. Would you like to see more public art downtown?

Yes	76.64%
No opinion	17.57%

17. Please describe yourself?

Resident of Keene	65.21%
Visitor of downtown	19.58%



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3.0 Proposed “Experiences” Based upon Public Input

Each of the four proposed “Experiences” outlined below was developed based on the public input received at the three-day Downtown Vision Forum held September 25-27, 2017 as well as public input received from the survey consisting of 17 targeted questions. Over 600 people participated in the forum and survey.

The activities and actions suggested by the public input with the highest level of consensus included:

- increase the amount of public space for cultural events to occur;
- increase the amount of public space for gathering areas to be created;
- add various types of public art (both permanent and temporary displays);
- increase green spaces;
- increase the potential for the occurrence of outdoor dining; and
- provide safer passage, function and use by bicyclists, pedestrians and automobiles.

In order to illustrate what these activities “might” look like (conceptual form) in the downtown area, we have selected four existing streetscapes that have been enhanced with various improvements that reflect the dominant themes discovered from the public input. The four images are described below. The enhanced versions are enclosed at the end of this section.

3.1 Experience A – Social Gathering

Increased social gathering opportunities was one of the primary desires expressed by the public. Places where people can safely sit, talk, read, eat, and simply enjoy the downtown area should be more widespread. The creation of pleasant and safe social gathering places has been successfully used in other cities and towns to draw more people into downtown areas. The proposed view of Experience A is an enhanced frontage of the Hannah Grimes Marketplace and adjacent stores/restaurants.

The enhanced image of Experience A includes the following features:

- Widened sidewalk with premium materials
- Social gathering area/outdoor seating
- Enhanced street lighting
- Enhanced landscaping and greenery
- Parallel parking with a bike lane



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3.2 Experience B – Cultural Events/Public Art

Much of the public expressed that downtown and the City overall was the cultural center of a larger geographic area and increasing the quantity and quality of cultural events and public art was key to a successful future. The proposed view of Experience B is an enhanced frontage of the Colonial Theatre with areas for cultural events and public displays of art.

The enhanced image of Experience B includes the following features:

- Widened sidewalk with premium materials
- Public art display (on temporary racks)
- Enhanced lighting
- Landscaping and greenery
- Parallel parking with a designated bike lane

3.3 Experience C – Pedestrian Mall

The creation of a Downtown Pedestrian Green Space (concept design provided by Mr. Roger Weinreich) was a desire expressed by many. In recent years, downtown areas have evolved into places where people go for the experiences and opportunities for social contact. A factor in the success of many other downtown areas has been an increase in pedestrian areas in all forms. Comfortable walking, sitting and gathering areas along the streetscape is a way to encourage more people to visit downtown. The proposed view of Experience C is a transformation of a portion of Main Street into a pedestrian mall with no vehicle traffic.

The enhance image of Experience C includes to following features:

- Pedestrian Mall
- Café tables and chairs
- Enhanced landscaping and greenery
- Enhanced lighting
- Central Rain Garden

3.4 Experience D – Complete Street

Providing safer passage, function and use by bicyclists, pedestrians and automobiles was a desire of many. A “Complete Street” that provides designated space for all users would draw more people to the activities downtown and address the concern of safe passage. Bicycle accommodation has been successfully used in other downtowns to



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increase the overall draw of the public to downtown areas, including tourists. Wider sidewalks for pedestrians can remove conflicts and accommodate other uses such as gathering areas and outdoor dining. Ensuring that streets and businesses are accessible for all with safe and convenient parking benefits all users. The proposed view of Experience D is a Complete Street version of Main Street.

The enhanced image of Experience D includes the following features:

- Widened sidewalk with premium materials
- Designated bike lanes
- Parallel parking
- Incorporate historic street materials



MAIN STREET

COMMERCIAL STREET

CYPRESS STREET

RAILROAD STREET

CHURCH STREET

GILBO AVENUE

EXPERIENCE A
VIEW LOCATION

N







1 RAISED PLANTER
WITH STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
& INTEGRATED SEATING

2 PEDESTRIAN CONCRETE SIDEWALK
3 ON STREET PARALLEL PARKING

4 DESIGNATED BIKE LANE
5 VEHICULAR TRAVEL LANE

6 OUTDOOR GATHERING AREA
7 NEW STREET TREES

8 PREMIUM PAVING
9 TRASH RECEPTACLE



COMMERCIAL STREET

GILBO AVENUE

EXPERIENCE B
VIEW LOCATION

MAIN STREET

CYPRESS STREET

RAILROAD STREET

CHURCH STREET









- 1 RAISED PLANTER WITH STORMWATER MANAGEMENT & INTEGRATED SEATING
- 2 PEDESTRIAN CONCRETE SIDEWALK
- 3 AREA FOR PUBLIC ART DISPLAY
- 4 PEDESTRIAN CROSSING WITH BUMP-OUT FOR SAFER MOVEMENTS
- 5 TRASH RECEPTACLE
- 6 ON STREET PARALLEL PARKING
- 7 DESIGNATED BIKE LANE
- 8 VEHICULAR TRAVEL LANE
- 9 NEW STREET TREES
- 10 PREMIUM PAVING



COMMERCIAL STREET

GILBO AVENUE

MAIN STREET

EXPERIENCE C
-VIEW LOCATION 1

EXPERIENCE C
-VIEW LOCATION 2

CYPRESS STREET

RAILROAD STREET

CHURCH STREET









- ① RAISED PLANTER WITH STORMWATER MANAGEMENT & INTEGRATED SEATING
- ② CENTRAL RAIN GARDEN
- ④ EMERGENCY ACCESS / LOADING / PEDESTRIAN MALL
- ⑤ STREET FURNITURE ZONE
- ⑦ BIKE RACKS
- ③ POCKET PARK WITH MOVEABLE SEATING
- ⑥ CATENARY LIGHTING
- ⑧ NEW STREET TREES





1 RAISED PLANTER
WITH STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
& INTEGRATED SEATING

2 OPEN LAWN FOR PUBLIC GATHERING
3 CENTRAL RAIN GARDEN

4 EMERGENCY ACCESS
/ LOADING
/ PEDESTRIAN MALL

5 STREET FURNITURE ZONE
6 CATENARY LIGHTING
ABOVE POCKET PARK

7 BIKE RACKS
8 NEW TREES



COMMERCIAL STREET

GILBO AVENUE

MAIN STREET

EXPERIENCE D
VIEW LOCATION

CYPRESS STREET

RAILROAD STREET

CHURCH STREET









- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|--------------------|
| <p>① RAISED PLANTER
WITH STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
& INTEGRATED SEATING</p> | <p>② BENCH SEATING</p> <p>③ HISTORICAL BRICK
SIDEWALK FURNISHING ZONE</p> | <p>④ ON STREET
PARALLEL PARKING</p> <p>⑤ DESIGNATED BIKE LANE</p> | <p>⑥ VEHICULAR
TRAVEL LANE</p> <p>⑦ BIKE RACKS</p> | <p>⑧ PEDESTRIAN CONCRETE
SIDEWALK</p> <p>⑨ PEDESTRIAN CROSSING</p> | <p>⑩ NEW TREES</p> |
|---|---|---|--|--|--------------------|



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APPENDIX A

Map of Downtown Area Boundaries from Public Input

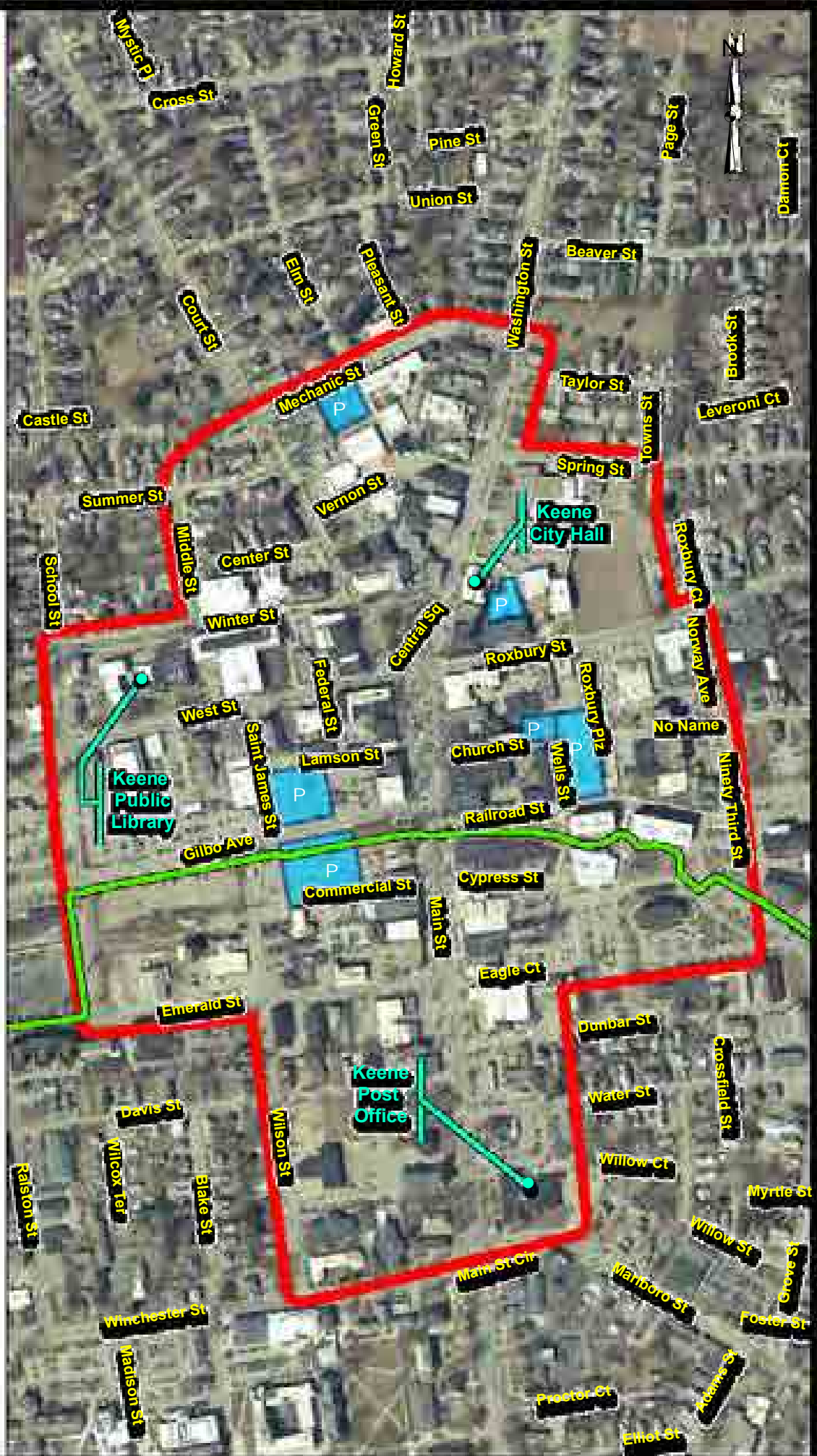


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DOWNTOWN MAP

Legend

- Public Parking
- Downtown Boundary*
- Bike/Pedestrian Trails



* Boundaries based upon public input received.



1 inch = 450 feet

0 225 450





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APPENDIX B

Summary of Public Input

Survey Results and Survey Comments

Summary of Focus Group Discussions

 Topic 1. Movement of Vehicles, Bicycles, Pedestrians and Parking

 Topic 2. Public Space Use and Utilization

Summary of Input on a Desired Business in the Downtown Area

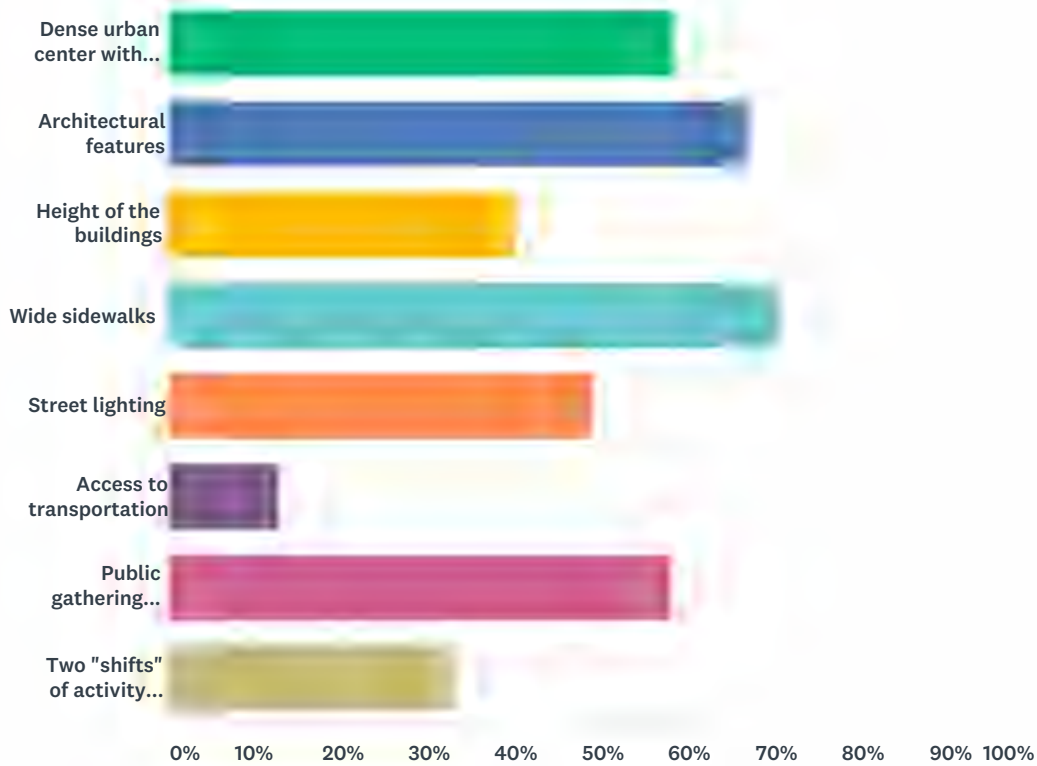
Summary of Input on Photograph Images of the Downtown Area

Summary of Input on Images Showing Other Conditions

Pedestrian Mall Concept by Mr. Roger Weinreich

Q1 What features currently distinguish the downtown from other areas of the City today? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 525 Skipped: 19



ANSWER CHOICES

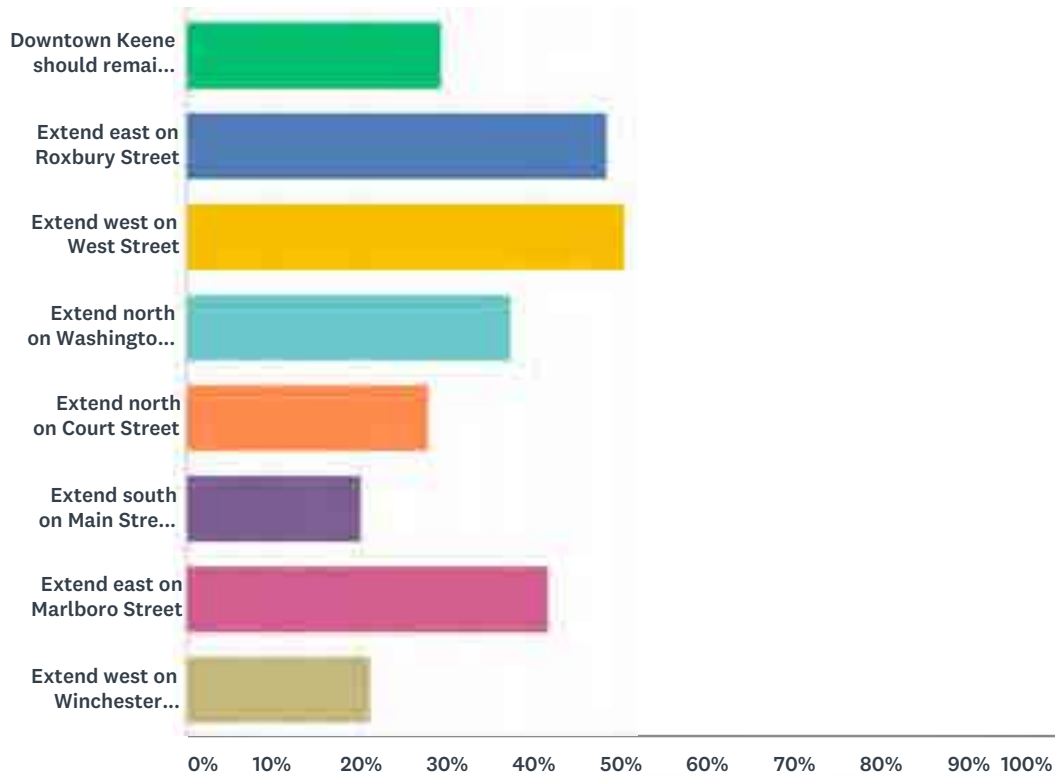
RESPONSES

Dense urban center with mixed uses	58.10%	305
Architectural features	66.67%	350
Height of the buildings	39.81%	209
Wide sidewalks	70.29%	369
Street lighting	48.95%	257
Access to transportation	12.76%	67
Public gathering spaces	57.90%	304
Two "shifts" of activity (day and evening)	32.76%	172

Total Respondents: 525

Q2 Where do you want the downtown look and feel to be applied? (Select all that apply)

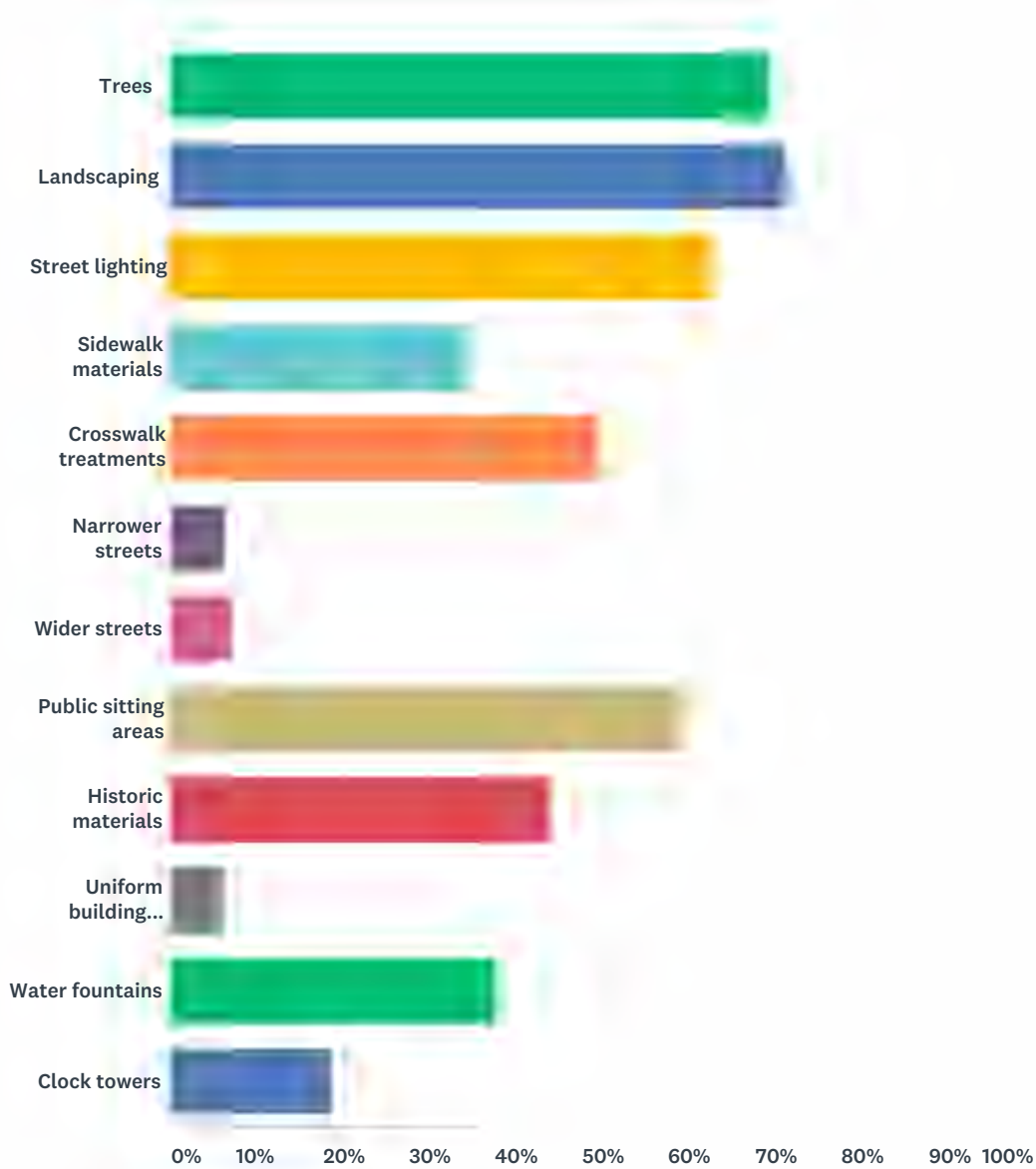
Answered: 497 Skipped: 47



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Downtown Keene should remain as it is today	29.38%	146
Extend east on Roxbury Street	48.29%	240
Extend west on West Street	50.50%	251
Extend north on Washington Street	37.22%	185
Extend north on Court Street	27.77%	138
Extend south on Main Street, past the rotary	20.12%	100
Extend east on Marlboro Street	41.65%	207
Extend west on Winchester Street	21.13%	105
Total Respondents: 497		

Q3 What specific streetscape features do you want to see incorporated into the downtown look? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 508 Skipped: 36



ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

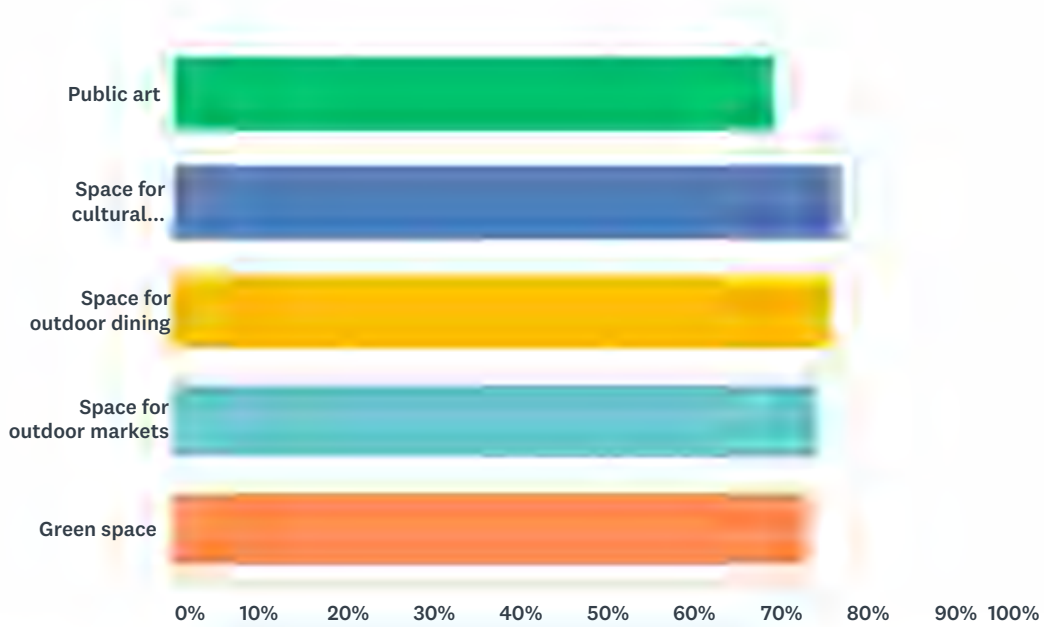
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	COUNT
Trees	69.29%	352
Landscaping	71.26%	362
Street lighting	62.80%	319
Sidewalk materials	34.45%	175
Crosswalk treatments	49.80%	253
Narrower streets	6.30%	32
Wider streets	7.09%	36

Your City, Your Voice, Your Downtown! (Survey Time Estimated at 10 Minutes)

Public sitting areas	59.06%	300
Historic materials	43.90%	223
Uniform building facades	6.10%	31
Water fountains	37.60%	191
Clock towers	18.70%	95
Total Respondents: 508		

Q4 What amenities do you want in your downtown (Select all that apply)

Answered: 514 Skipped: 30



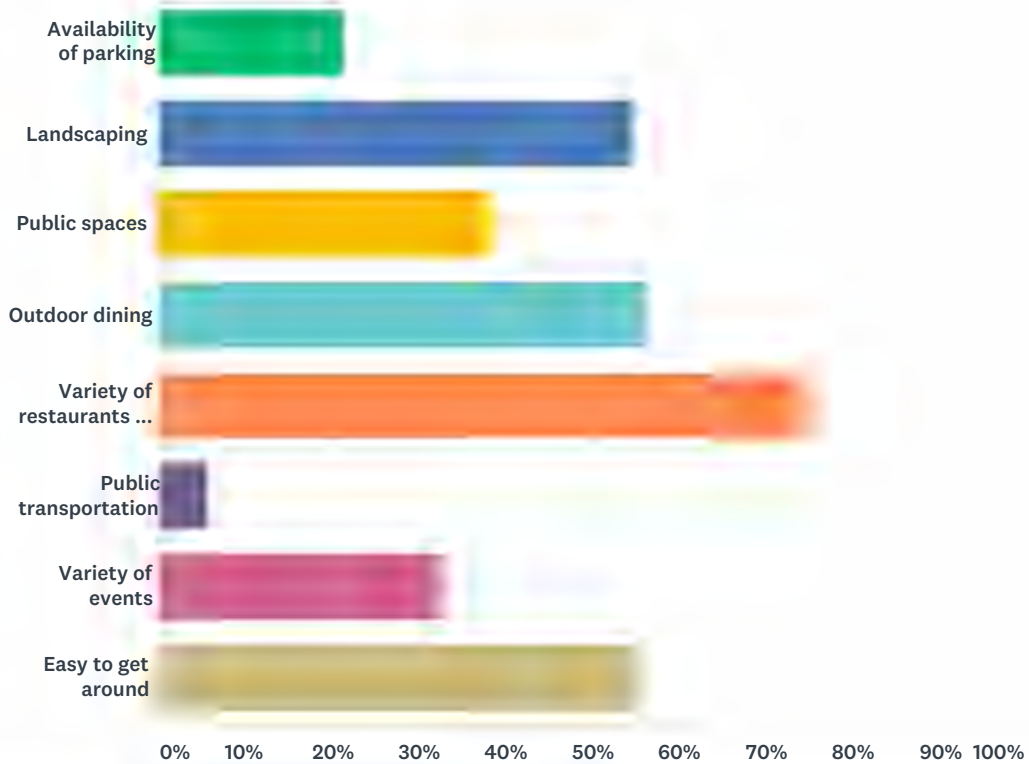
ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

Public art	69.07%	355
Space for cultural activities such as outdoor concerts	77.04%	396
Space for outdoor dining	75.68%	389
Space for outdoor markets	74.32%	382
Green space	72.96%	375
Total Respondents: 514		

Q5 What do you like about downtown today? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 519 Skipped: 25



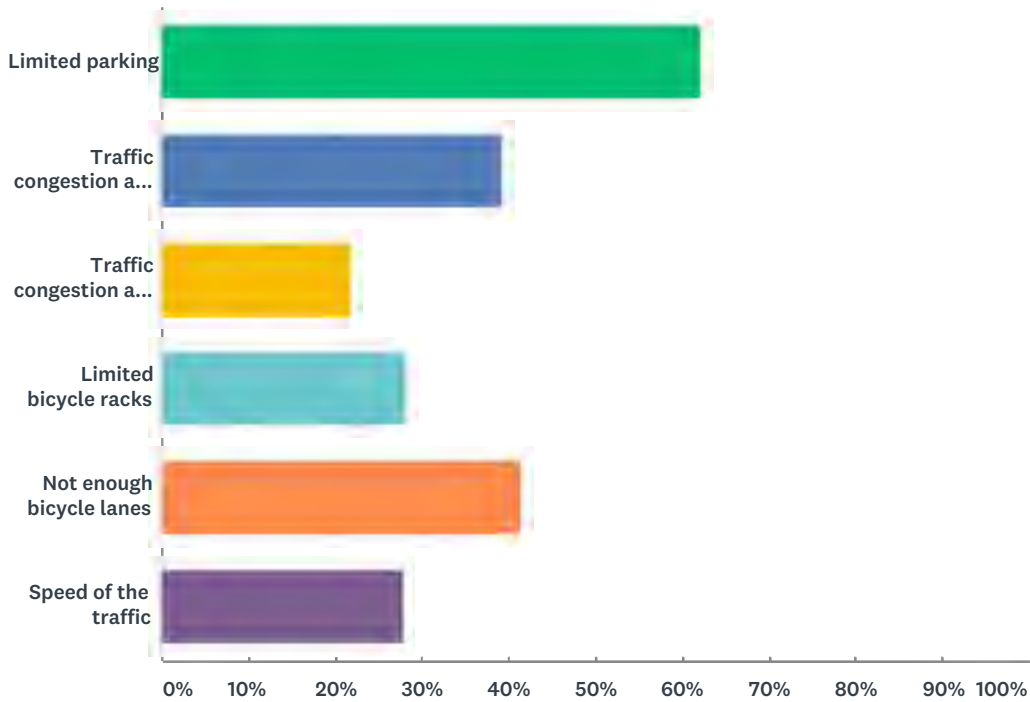
ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

Availability of parking	21.39%	111
Landscaping	54.53%	283
Public spaces	38.34%	199
Outdoor dining	56.26%	292
Variety of restaurants and shops	74.95%	389
Public transportation	5.59%	29
Variety of events	32.56%	169
Easy to get around	55.30%	287
Total Respondents: 519		

Q6 What are the challenges to the traveling public today? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 487 Skipped: 57



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Limited parking	62.22%	303
Traffic congestion at morning and evening commute hours only	39.22%	191
Traffic congestion all day	21.77%	106
Limited bicycle racks	28.13%	137
Not enough bicycle lanes	41.48%	202
Speed of the traffic	27.72%	135
Total Respondents: 487		

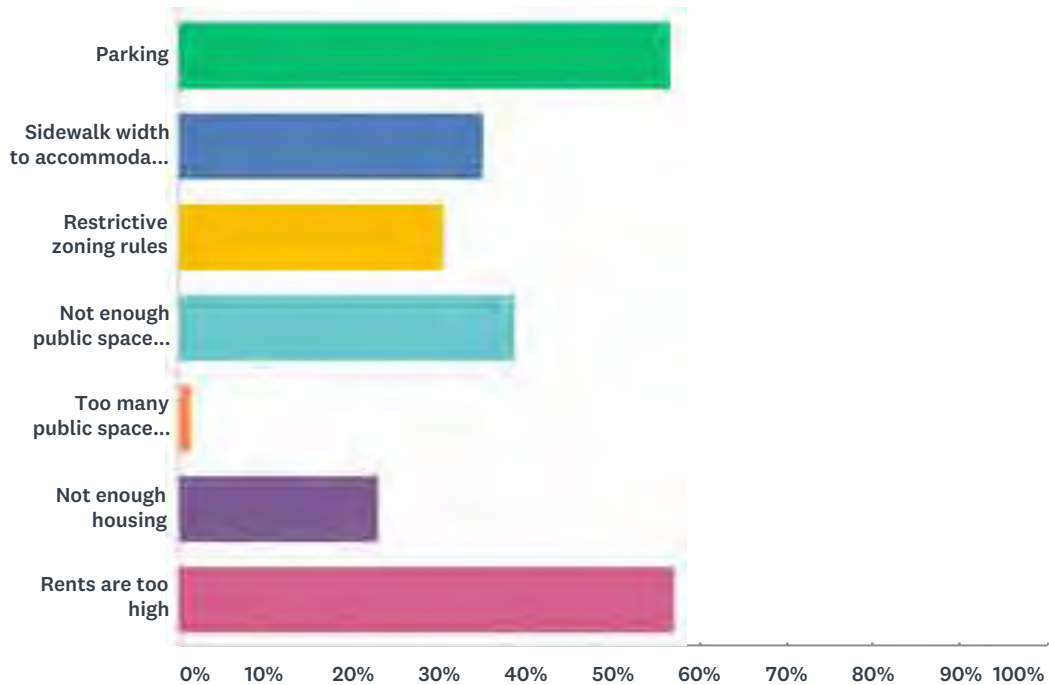
Q7 What opportunities do you think this revitalization project presents?

Answered: 262 Skipped: 282

Go to pages 90-99 for the input received on this question of the survey

Q8 What do you think are the obstacles to economic development in the downtown today? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 475 Skipped: 69



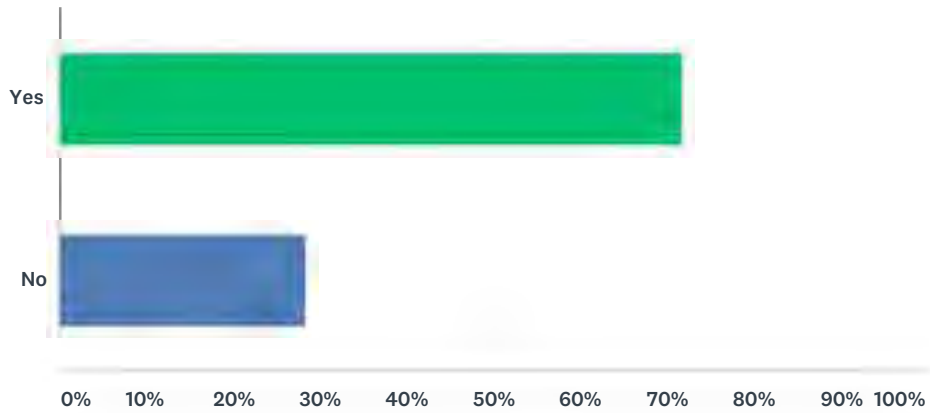
ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

Parking	56.63%	269
Sidewalk width to accommodate pedestrians and outdoor dining	35.16%	167
Restrictive zoning rules	30.53%	145
Not enough public spaces and events	38.74%	184
Too many public spaces and events	1.47%	7
Not enough housing	22.95%	109
Rents are too high	57.05%	271
Total Respondents: 475		

Q9 Do you think there is enough street lighting downtown during the evening hours?

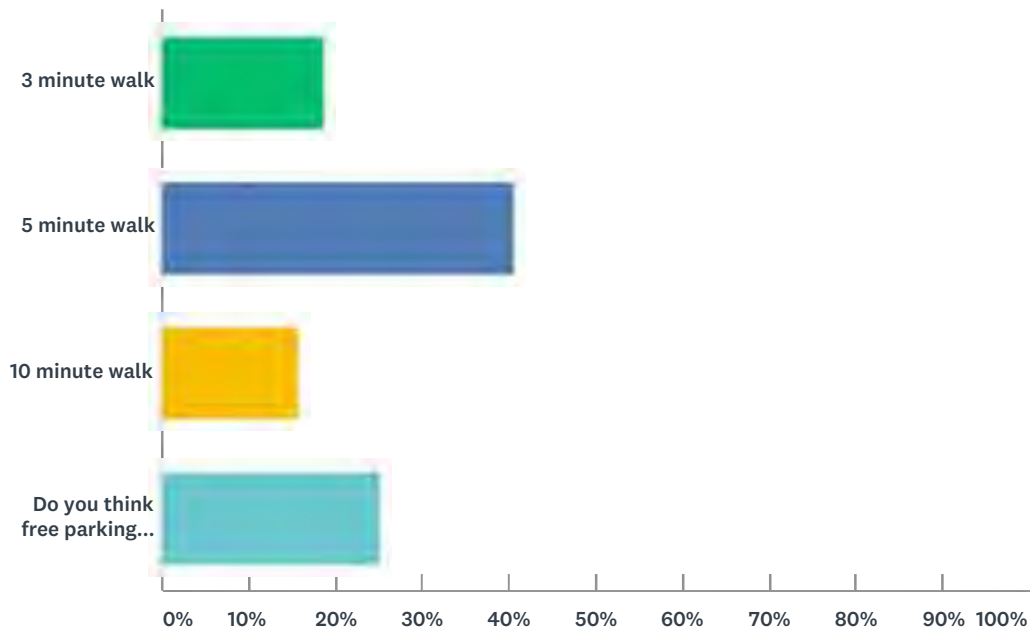
Answered: 501 Skipped: 43



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	71.66%	359
No	28.34%	142
TOTAL		501

Q10 How long are you willing to walk from your parking space to your destination? (Select all that apply)

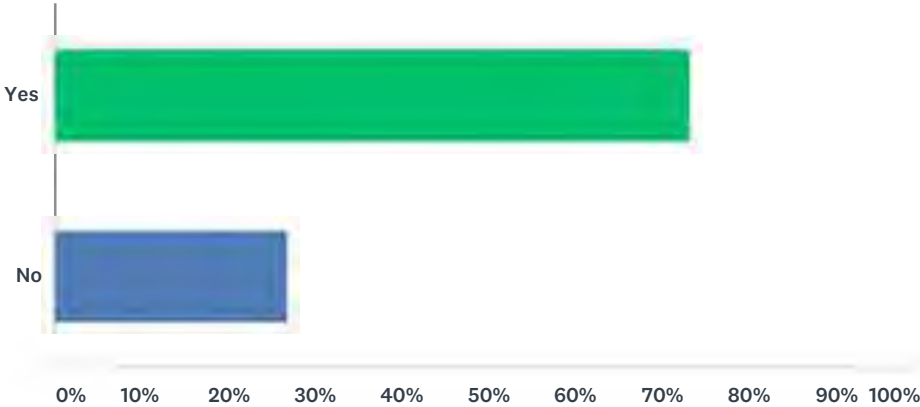
Answered: 512 Skipped: 32



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
3 minute walk	18.55%	95
5 minute walk	40.63%	208
10 minute walk	15.63%	80
Do you think free parking encourages walking further distances?	25.20%	129
TOTAL		512

Q11 Should the downtown area be more friendly for bicyclists?

Answered: 505 Skipped: 39



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	73.27%	370
No	26.73%	135
TOTAL		505

Q12 Why do you come downtown?Please specify

Answered: 462 Skipped: 82

Go to pages 125-135 for the input received on this question of the survey

Q13 Why don't you come downtown? Please specify

Answered: 362 Skipped: 182

Go to pages 136-144 for the input received on this question of the survey

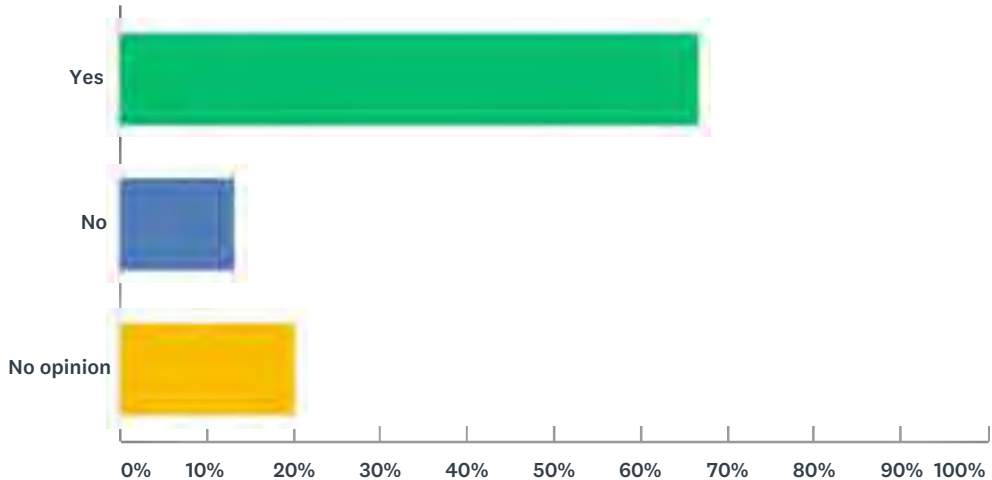
Q14 What would encourage you to come downtown? Please specify

Answered: 377 Skipped: 167

Go to pages 145-154 for the input received on this question of the survey

Q15 Would you like more outdoor dining downtown?

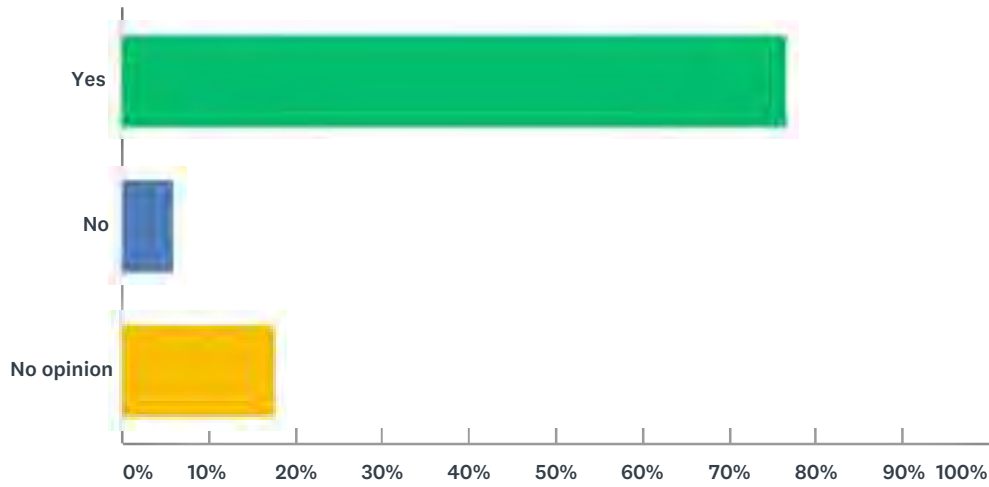
Answered: 526 Skipped: 18



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	66.73%	351
No	13.12%	69
No opinion	20.15%	106
TOTAL		526

Q16 Would you like to see more public art downtown?

Answered: 535 Skipped: 9



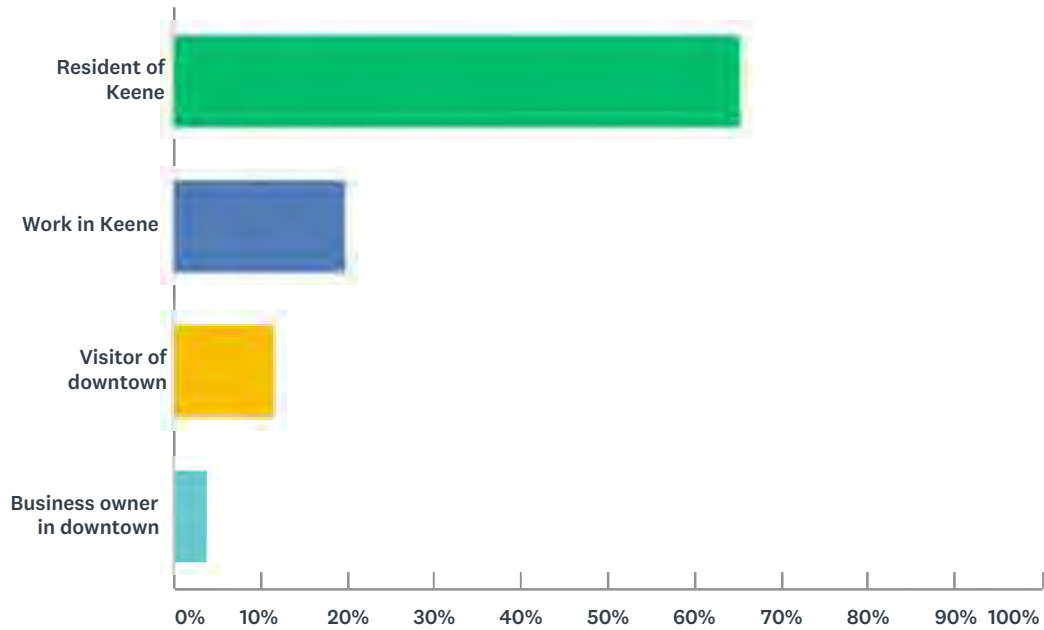
ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

Yes	76.64%	410
No	5.79%	31
No opinion	17.57%	94
TOTAL		535

Q17 Please describe yourself

Answered: 526 Skipped: 18



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Resident of Keene	65.21%	343
Work in Keene	19.58%	103
Visitor of downtown	11.41%	60
Business owner in downtown	3.80%	20
TOTAL		526

Q1: What features currently distinguish the downtown from other areas of the City today?

tree lined center strip

appearance of vitality, scenic Central Square, proximity to Keene State College, variety of eateries, Colonial Theater.

Density of businesses - lots of things in one place. Wide sidewalks with nice trees and landscaping.

Lack of parking

pedestrian friendly. I live downtown. I can walk to my supermarket, restaurants, hobbies, etc.

Bums

Landscaping

It's safer

The city is run down and old looking.....it needs reviving, some modernization.....more shopping options.....better housing options for those working with lower incomes but who do not meet the criteria for actual housing section 8.....keene seems to be open to only local businesses.....expansion of others would bring more people to the city....more people, more money for keene.....it needs more transportation....poor accommodations for those w/o their own wheels....more things to do.....with so little to do in keene, even the residents go out of keene on weekends.....its ok for raising families but needs much work to be invitingas of now, is appealing to the homeless for handouts and shelter.....not good for long term.

literally nothing.

Timeless heritage, old and new.

wild spaces nearby! Ashuelot park and the bike path; bike paths and rail trails in general!

More effort is made downtown to maintain gardens and sidewalk plantings and keep things looking nice.

It's a community of people out strolling and on warm evenings.

Nothing

Q1: What features currently distinguish the downtown from other areas of the City today?

I'm tired of having to dodge the cars, and maneuvering the pitiful bike paths, that are not present, or safe on Keene's streets. Its past time that something be done. I'm tired of reading about one more pedestrian, or another bicyclist being run down , for whatever reasons. If it takes an extra five bucks from every registration to get us decent bike paths along every major road, then so be it. And if it was necessary to have a bike path surcharge as well, that's fine too. Lots of people don't even have cars, you know, so before you start borrowing from Peter again, it's time to start making the roads safe for those of us who can't, or won't, drive a heavy, road busting, polluting vehicle, for whatever reason. Truth is, most car owners, ride bikes, or have kids that do, but would never dream of riding anywhere but the rail trails. Why? Because, The Roads are Unsafe. Our history is filled with instances of publicly funded projects that begin by serving a small population, and later become major commerce engines. Witness rails, roads, and airports. In fact, prior to any of those modern conveyances, the bicyclist unions were the ones to promote tar roads. These smooth hard surfaces, that are so ubiquitous now, were bitterly opposed by the horse drawn carriage crowd. Eventually, the new macadam roads were made, and suddenly, after so many years of fighting for the roads, the bikes found themselves in dusty corners. Improve alternative transportation opportunities, such as improving the sidewalk bike way along upper Court Street, or West Street, or upper Washington street. Those bike provisions have been pitiful, and unsafe for too many years. We bicyclists have put up with the danger posed by traffic, and poor road conditions. Many have paid with their lives. Whatever the reason or source of revenue, the safety of the road must be paramount for alternative transportation.

Street trees and landscaping

I think that our DOWNTOWN is lovely as it is. The renovation done thirty yrs ago was well done.

Volume of pedestrian activity, unique restaurants and shops

Parking where it doesn't belong (median parking)

Business! I.e. When I moved to the area in 2001 I was thrilled by the vibrant business community that I could drive to & park, then walk around. Now it's a wasteland! The more parking you remove those of us who drive into the area will do like we are now doing taking our dollars to Peterborough, Northampton, Brattleboro, etc.

Many crosswalks

The city of Keene has worked hard to keep the look of downtown Keene in control without buildings being too modernized and keeping the traditional New England feel. When you look at most of the businesses downtown...they are not chain stores. The store fronts are welcoming and customer friendly. As you travel out of the downtown area....you start to find the larger stores that are chain stores and do have very bright lights and modern signs, etc....

Warm hometown community feel. Outdoor dining is exceptional in Keene's downtown.

Love it the way it is a mix of old and new and innovative attractions.

distance from Central Square

central downtown - attractive main street - college facilities

Trees and perennial plantings Outside dining opportunities Bike path Farmer's market

Attention and investment in maintaining it's upkeep, plantings, grass, etc.

Charm, friendly feel

Q1: What features currently distinguish the downtown from other areas of the City today?

THE pan handlers are a differentiating factor in a bad way.

Central square

Parking meters!!!!!!!

Some of these are more like things that should be - or should be better - than things that already are. For example: Yes, we have sidewalks, but width varies significantly. Are they wide enough? Probably not. Yes, we have street lighting, but is it good enough? Transportation? Would be nice. Public gathering spaces? Maybe, but should be much better - for example, have spaces that are pre-wired for power, so each festival that happens doesn't have to build it from scratch.

Shops in close proximity to one another. A sense of energy

The gazebo area is nice gathering/focal point. The outdoor dining options are pleasant. The transportation center is handy. If there are plans to build an intermodal center it should stay in the downtown area. The parking can be a bit difficult at times.

Don't know about dense urban- it's a nice town that qualifies as a city. A bunch of mostly attractive low storied buildings set along a wide, originally gracious, Main Street.

Too many people hanging around. At night it does not feel safe.

A place that is still cool, but needs some re-thinking and new ideas

High density of local and small businesses. Walkability between businesses and close proximity to residential neighborhoods.

Clean, nice landscaping and well-maintained. City's ongoing commitment to ensure its visual appeal. Beautiful view looking up Main Street. Lovely focal point--Central Square. Trees

Pan handling. Homeless. Prostitution. Junkies on Benches. Vacant store fronts.

Variety of dining & local merchant options; several of Keene's larger faith communities have their buildings downtown; rail-trail crosses Main St and connects it to RR Square and West St hubs. Central location to meet -formally or informally, for business or recreation - with other residents Even with Rtes 101/9/10 bypass, Main St is often the most direct way to travel to/from many destinations.

Downtown has always been, and continues to be, the HEART of Keene. Sadly, Keene also has a narrow-minded, small-minded, selfish streak of entitled elitists who think they run the town. This is the ignorant mindset that removes benches to punish perceived "misbehavior". Over the years, both Keene as a whole, and the Downtown, have quieted down, cleaned up their act, and become more welcoming. But, retail & office development has occurred outside of both Downtown and the bypass, which draws people and \$\$\$ away from Downtown. Traffic flow into, and around the Downtown, is no better than ever. One must wonder if that was intentional. After all, our "Millionaire Mayor", Kendall Lane, and his brother the (retired) Judge, own the Key Road shopping development, abutting the over-developed bypass area....

This is where Keene's history is and where it's leisure life takes place, dining and shopping mostly.

businesses, more parking

Public art such as the temporary murals.

Q1: What features currently distinguish the downtown from other areas of the City today?

I think there are other parts of the sidewalk downtown that could be widened. I like the look of the downtown lights but I find it very difficult to see at night and the current amount of light they give off is insufficient. We don't have enough access to other types of transportation. We used to have a bus terminal and while there are several taxi services available, there is no central place.

we have more homeless invading our downtown

The approach to Main Street is still reminiscent of a New England community, a very inviting feature. Not having the entry to Keene overrun by strip centers keeps the charm and interest into the downtown area. Local businesses in the downtown have given a vibrant offering to visiting shoppers and business visitors.

Pedestrian friendly - designated walking times at Central Square light. Bike lanes in SOME parts of Washington Street You can now get groceries downtown thanks to the Co-op!!!!!!

The amount of people seen walking and dining outside

beautiful landscaping

Great atmosphere! Very pretty "shaded" streetscape. Love the large trees, plenty of parking..Needs more "anchor stores" that draw people in. Bring the Penny's or Kohl's down there!

Actually recognized crosswalks.

Presence of people, sense of community, loiterers, runners, central rail trail paths, sense of safety, location of bars

Charming shops and local restaurants.

A less positive distinguishing feature for downtown would be the abundance of crosswalks every few feet, causing traffic to jam up because there's one person walking across a crosswalk at a time every few feet. The roadway is also narrow and causes accidents because we're not only watching for pedestrians who don't look before walking, but also watching for cars in a crowded roadway littered with cars parked on the side of the road (sometimes halfway into the road) that you can't see around. There isn't enough room on Main St. to park cars (especially larger vehicles like vans and trucks) AND have larger sidewalks, and still be able to actually drive safely on Main St. Personally, I avoid downtown as much as humanely possible because walking is dangerous. I'm always concerned that me or my kids will get struck by a car who can't see us past the vehicles parked on the sides or blow through the crosswalk because they just stopped for the last 16 in a quarter mile stretch and are fed up with how long it takes to get down Main St. I also try to avoid driving it for the same reason. You never know who is going to run out in front of you or back out in front of you. Never mind cut you off and speed out in front of you. During college and on the weekends/nice days... it could take upwards of 20 minutes just to drive down Main St. and it's certainly not the most relaxing drive.

The area is very convenient for walkers, but parking can be a trial. Its nice to see people of all ages walking throughout the day with or without pets. It would be nice to see more police present after dark, especially at the parking garages. Folks are using them for restrooms and even sleeping behind some vehicles.

no traffic lights

Locally-owned businesses, as opposed to the big box/chain establishments on the outskirts

Neighborhood look and feel. Pedestrian activity, dog walking, biking.

Walkable community engagement that you don't get from strip malls and big mega stores.

Q1: What features currently distinguish the downtown from other areas of the City today?

Shops and restaurants
crosswalks and signs (too many) Trees/ Plantings (a good thing)
restaurants with outdoor seating
Outdoor seating for restaurants.
Bad traffic.
Beautiful greenery, flowers and banners
Main Street is well-landscaped, which makes it attractive for walking.
Density of restaurants, options within walking distance
Vacant storefronts
difficulty finding a parking space
walk-ability
-Housing above storefronts -Ample parking (within walking distance...you might have to walk 100 feet) - Sidewalk dining and drinking -Beautification program
Paid parking
Would be nice if we could attract professional types to live downtown or close to downtown. Much too much focus has been on drawing the wrong crowd downtown. If we want Main St. to thrive we need to attract people who spend money downtown and make it a thriving, attractive place to spend time.
NA
Trees
Walkability.
Several special businesses including coffee shops and restaurants, Toadstool Bookstore, Food Co-op, Hannah Grimes, MoCo Arts, Colonial Theater. Walkability
Landscaping (mulched plantings/flowerbeds) Outdoor dining (during warm weather season)
The crosswalks are not adequately lit. And I do not care what the DOT standard is. As now lit, it is difficult to see people, especially at night, crossing the street wearing dark clothing and most do. You need direct overhead lighting focused directly down onto the crosswalks. Also you have vehicle parking right next to the crosswalks so one cannot see a person about to step into the crosswalk. You need to eliminate those parking spaces for safety reasons. Have some common sense. Just look at the crosswalk on court street, as one is coming around the roundabout headed up court street at night the vehicle lights shine down toward the court house as so people about to walk from the Stage area to the other side are difficult to see. Have some common sense.
problem with pan handling and skateboards and people using vulgar language hanging out on planters in Railroad square
Wide array of different types of people--old, young, college, homeless, etc
General walkability, local shops.
Lack of parking.
More of a focal point of small, local businesses and things to do with marginally more public gathering spaces than other areas of Keene.
tended garden areas along the sidewalks, banners on posts, signage to look before crossing
Local businesses

Q1: What features currently distinguish the downtown from other areas of the City today?

The many restaurants you can choose from, the unique small businesses, and the Colonial theater

Common, church steeple as focal points Broad main street with clear view to above Retention of historic features

street lighting is poor

Pay to park.

Q2. Where do you want the downtown look and feel to be applied?

Church and Water Streets to Carpenter Street

Focus should remain on Main Street/Central square..perhaps extend a block on West, Roxbury, Court and Washington...structures and usage restrict further grown outward..survey leaves our Gilbo Ave and Railroad Street.

I think it depends on the demand for mixed use development. We should expand only if the market is there and new buildings will get tenants. We don't want boarded up storefronts. I don't know the facts on this.

One of these streets needs to be identified for expansion. The ones I marked could all make sense under different scenarios. The issue for development however is foot traffic and parking. The building across from the Court House on Court Street has an empty restaurant space partly due to a lack of parking and foot traffic. Roxbury Street has potential with the new development. West Street is not attractive because of the amount of traffic especially at the stop light. This stop and go traffic causes increased air pollution at that intersection and is bad for restaurants and people who live in the buildings around central square. Washington Street may also have potential with the new development. The large number of apartments going in on Roxbury Street will provide a significant increase in residents with disposable income looking for pleasant places they can walk to for food and beverages. The key to pleasant is to reduce air pollution from vehicles and noise pollution from sirens.

Court and Washington street as they are allow for beautiful residential spaces close to downtown. Would hate to lose those. Same Applies to lower Main Street.

Extend in the most economically and culturally synchronous direction possible. Keene State has offered many events and programs to the public over the years, essentially extending downtown south of the rotary. Community presence at some of these is significant, at others the public seems to have no interest. Developing joint opportunities for marketing and promoting KSC events would be a good way to extend the downtown look and feel further south.

extend all over the town.....

The gathering area at the corner of Main and Railroad st should be revamped - turn it into a small sitting park? Water fountain, plants, benches.... try to discourage the drifters from congregating here.

Not sure if the "downtown look" should extend farther out, but new efforts should be made to improve the appearance of entries into downtown - specifically on Washington Street coming off of Rte 9. I believe that Rte 101 "belongs to the state, but the concrete dividers at stoplight area at Optical Avenue, the stoplight area at Main Street in particular present an awful appearance for Keene with tall weeds growing in the concrete curbs on all of these locations. A few large planters might present a nicer appearance - especially at the vast concrete slabs at Optical intersection. Couldn't the city reach out to local community service organizations and ask them to maintain these areas (and perhaps others) that need constant attention? And what about Gilbo Avenue? One turns off of Main Street onto Gilbo and is met with vast expanses of nothingness but parking lots.

I'm perfectly happy with where the look and feel is applied now, but "...should remain as it is today" isn't as broad as I'm OK with so I didn't select that.

Q2. Where do you want the downtown look and feel to be applied?

We bicyclists have put up with the danger posed by traffic, and poor road conditions. Many have paid with their lives. Whatever the reason or source of revenue, the safety of the road must be paramount for alternative transportation. Have you ever tried to ride your bike on them? Probably not, for, if you did, it would not soon be forgotten. Stretches of upper Court Street, are busy, and a bit narrow. The bike path/sidewalk is in such a condition, that most riders would prefer to ride on the shoulder of the road, which I do as well, although I do not like to do it, because, usually, when I am on that particular stretch, I am pulling my two wheeled trailer, to go to the YMCA. In comparison to the Beautiful Bike Path, the Court Street Section of side walk, is indeed PITIFUL. I have been assured that "complete streets are in the works" which means that when roads are up graded, bicycle and other uses would be included in the planning. I have seen a few paving trucks over the years maintaining the blacktop on Court street, and other streets. Why is it that the cracks and bumps and holes in the sidewalk are not smoothed over? We have a unique privilege of Being one of the only towns in Hilly New England with a nice level playing area. Bicycles have always had a great popularity here in Keene.

I think the priority should be to expand the downtown along Gilbo Ave. and West Street to Ashuelot Street (to connect the Colony Mill and Center at Keene to Main Street for pedestrians and bicyclists). Need to do something on West Street to make it more attractive for people to walk, bike, and drive. Currently, I don't even like driving on that road - too many people run red lights, switch lanes suddenly, and drivers don't yield to people in crosswalks, sometimes when the pedestrian signal says "Walk." Most bicyclists currently ride on the sidewalks, which are too narrow for people walking, let alone sharing with people who bike. West St. is too wide!

Get rid of the college student housing within a 1/2 mile of Main Street

I strongly feel the downtown area is sufficient the way it is. Gilbo Ave. was not mentioned on the list above. Perhaps extending a bit down Gilbo Ave toward what is now a dirt parking area. A parking garage between Lindy's and Syd's carpet would make so much sense. A two - three story parking garage could solve the downtown parking issue. It is in close walking distanceto all of downtown.

Extend down the street Ted's Shoe and Sport and Curry Copy Center and Toadstool are on. That makes the most sense!

street.

extend as long as it doesn't negatively impact already existing main street & businesses.

Island St to 93rd Vernon St to Marlboro St

Don't extend further on Roxbury, West, Washington, Court, Main or Winchester - leave those areas for residential. Part of the beauty of downtown is that is compact & walkable.

Any and all

We as tax payers have spent enough of our money making it look nice for the business owners downtown.

Extend down Gilbo Ave so the Center of Keene can become a more obvious extension of the Main Street feel and potentially increase foot traffic, thus potentially generating more interest in businesses moving back into the Center.

Extend more on water street.

All of the above, to some degree, and at some point in time. In the short term, build out from Main Street, between the circle and the square.

Q2. Where do you want the downtown look and feel to be applied?

I would urge caution when extending to not destroy older and/or historical buildings; especially the grand old houses out Washington, Court, and Main.

I have no idea...would need to know more and see schematics

Expand into Gilbo Ave.

extend west on Gilbo Ave.

Create more pedestrian friendly space by re-routing vehicular traffic around a section of Main Street.

Not sure how one would extend the downtown area on any of these streets. Yes it would be nice I don't see the possibilities without demolition.

How do YOU guys define "downtown look"? This question is too nebulous. Do you have pictures somewhere to illustrate what a downtown look is? Our Keene downtown look is changing, hence this survey. However, there's a lot that's right with the Keene downtown- let's make sure we don't throw the baby out with the bath water. On second look: Now that I've read through this survey, I'm wondering if your overall goal is to shift some of the city attractions/activities to tangential pockets near but not on Main Street?

I feel like we should be focusing our attention to our parks in town and not the "look of main st". None of the parks have CLEAN, working bathrooms. They're always disgusting, locked, or out of order. Spend the money revitalizing the parks for today's youth instead of the "aesthetic" of Main Street.

I'd like downtown to be able to retain the businesses that it keeps losing (Ingenuity Country Store, Kitchen Store, etc) and also get more shopping and dining options downtown. I like events downtown that I can visit and bring the family to without having to be accosted by beggars. I like being able to come and sit out at any one of the dining establishments outside and enjoy our beautiful downtown without having to listen to cursing from the vagrants, watching drug dealers walk around shirtless with their backpacks hanging in railroad square.

You forgot Gilbo Ave which could use some work.

I think east past RR square also has potential, especially for green space as it's a flood zone

Not sure.

Extend in all directions only in terms of landscaping and keeping its visual appeal for the short distances on the central square arterial streets.

"Downtown" is already more than just Main St! But growth opportunities, especially on Marlboro, + revitalization of Roxbury (in progress) Include RR Square, Community Way - good connection via bike/ped path Let's recognize and honor - but not get stuck in the "aesthetic" of 19th-century Main St (especially as related to energy efficiency/renewables)

Downtown is poorly integrated with other parts of Keene, in terms of visual infrastructure, traffic, etc. There's too much "dead space" that is poorly utilized, and too much "green strips" around commercial developments as the result of stupid and outdated zoning rules. Too much of these isolated strips are poorly maintained industrial "greenery"/shrubbery/mulch, which does NOT contribute to the overall esthetic as well as a more comprehensive vision could produce.

west on Gilbo

Q2. Where do you want the downtown look and feel to be applied?

Downtown Keene is dying...why would you extend it's boundaries when we have so many empty storefronts as it is??? You killed Keene when you canceled the Pumpkin Festival. That's what put Keene on the map. Out of state people planned their fall vacations around it... Now all we have are empty store fronts and lots of housing...the Colony Mill Market Place was such a treasure for us...now apartments...such short sightedness on the part of the City Council

Extend west on Gilbo Ave.

Extend west on the Gilbo Ave area.

The College has its older & ugly sides lining either side of Winchester Street. Not sure how they ever got away with that, but Aside from the TDS center, KSC didn't help our town craft a welcoming architectural landscape on this important access wing in and out of Keene. Some of those Winchester St. dorms are now vacant....

Should only be about a block or 2 in any direction off Main

West on Gilbo

Bring everything toward Colony Mill and back past the Marriott Hotel to create a crisis cross effect for development...The parking is there.

Immediately once you pass the old middle school or YMCA there appears to be more petty crime, one feels less safe, there are more mentally ill or addicts wandering the neighborhoods, properties appear run down... it's like night vs day

Fix up Water Street. Eliminate all ugly chain link fences. Make a park setting in area next to Co-op. It's an eyesore.

Expansion in this area could improve what is know an economically depressed area that's attracted a questionable population Address the Keene Post Office noise. Constant trucks 24/7. Loud use of equipment 24/7. Update the fencing surrounding structure.

Parking and crosswalks need to have a makeover before extending anything anywhere.

These are places with quite a few business and I feel that a minor extension would do them good and bring a nice effect to the city.

gilbo ave. if extended

Make use of the mill old buildings behind the co-op.

Our taxes are the highest in the state. We have low incomes here. Stop taxing people to death and spending like this is a town full of 2nd homes and high incomes.

Emerald & Gilbo

Emerald Street, Dunbar Street

Gilbo Avenue could use some glam

With moco being built, the Keene Yoga center and small restaurants the possibility of Roxbury street growing is possible!

Extend west on Gilbo Ave.

Extend West onto Emerald St and Gilbo Ave

The west st corridor is not a pleasant drive from main to park avenue. Shady motel, un maintained houses, poorly timed street lights

Dunbar street Emerald street Gilbo ave

Oddly extending west on Gilbo Ave isn't a choice although it has been discussed at length in the past as a prime area for downtown expansion. It's at the center of Main St., it's wide, and has tracts of undeveloped land. It would be a prime spot for a central parking garage, which downtown needs.

Q2. Where do you want the downtown look and feel to be applied?

North between court and Washington - ward 3

I don't know what you currently have as the definition of downtown. To me downtown goes to School Street on West Street, the College on Main Street, the Court House on Court Street, the old middle school on Washington Street, where the old YMCA was on Roxbury Street.

Extend west on Gilbo Ave and Emerald Street

Only where the old buildings exist.

Much more attention needs to be paid to East and North-Central Keene in the proximity of downtown. Effective expansion of business as well as incentives for professional-type residents (tenants and homeowners) has got to happen.

Marlboro Street could especially benefit from facade improvements, increased mixed-use opportunities, and a continuation of the "Downtown" feel. Marlboro Street serves as a "gateway" for traffic coming from 101, and is unappealing as one enters the City. Features that encourage walk-ability and a cohesive downtown feel.

NA

All crosswalks in the downtown area.

I think If the market supports extension of the Keene downtown look and feel that we should encourage that growth in any direction with consideration taken for local residents and the rule of law.

By "look and feel" in my opinion you will only get that by applying things like mixed use buildings-- commercial/office on the ground floor, with living spaces above, and on-street parking (while at the same time limiting off-street parking).

Extend west on Gilbo Ave.

Extend down Emerald St and Gilbo Ave

If we are to grow, or have funds to revitalize, all of these areas would be great to extend the "downtown look" and include businesses. Would be great to someone better connect KSC with downtown, or at least the "appearance" that it is a long way, according to students.

Roxbury makes sense because of the new Moco

Concentrate on what is already there. you have empty storefronts. Improve the areas that come into the center to make it more welcoming

Washington, Court, south of Rotary should retain residential look/feel

Q3. What specific streetscape features do you want to see incorporated into the downtown look?

sidewalks need to be fixed, specifically the sidewalk at the corner of Main street onto Gilbo Ave. I work on Gilbo Ave and see people trip at least weekly on the uneven and broken sidewalk that has not been fixed in (over) the 5 plus years I have worked here.

Sidewalk on Gilbo Ave, next to Greenwald. I have seen several people fall where there is a tree missing from the sidewalk. Uneven.

Art and sculptures

Pedestrian zones. I have spent a lot of time in Europe and seen the benefit of have streetscapes with no automobiles or highly restricted automobile traffic. Downtown is not to be enjoyed from a car. Rather, it is to be taken in by walking around. To be able to enjoy a meal outside without loud motorcycles or speeding automobiles and smelly trucks would be great. To try this out, the pedestrian zone could be temporary, say from 6PM to 11PM on Fridays and Saturdays for a few weekends. Planning needs to be done on the routing of traffic and good communication in advance of the closure to notify drivers, but I believe downtown could be Keene's living room for just a little while.

Keene needs more restaurants, bars, and cafes and outdoor spaces for seating for these establishments. The current layout of main street is focused on vehicle traffic and parking and this takes up a great deal of space that could be used in other ways to improve public life. The outdoor seating at Marguerites, The Stage, the Coop, Nicola's, Pedraza's, and Brewbakers are all examples of how outdoor seating helps the public. But stop-and-go traffic on the street causes air pollution and the sirens cause noise pollution, diminishing the pleasant experience of the downtown. These two issues, air pollution and noise pollution must be addressed to make the downtown a more pleasant place for people who live, work, and visit here.

Public Art Bike Lanes

Uniform building facades is a terrible idea -they should be outlawed

cobblestone would be unique

worried that we put money into it that the homeless will still deter people

- Water bottle filling stations (not just fountains, which can harbor germs). - I'd like to see fruit trees planted so the homeless can have access to fresh fruit (apples, pears, peaches) - some sort of signage to discourage people from discarding their cigarette "butts" on the sidewalk "the earth is not your ashtray, please use designated receptacles" - I'd like to see green rooftops added to the downtown area to relieve storm water runoff, prevent flooding and pollution

Family and pet friendly Small parks / seating / gathering areas to encourage people to stay downtown and feel comfortable.

green energy, rooftop gardens, flood permeable sidewalks

Maybe some evergreen trees downtown to keep it green during the winter! Also the alley way next to Brewbakers used to be quite charming but now looks soul-less and unattractive now that the tree has been removed and the walkway paved with asphalt. Also the incorporation of vines/trellises would add a lot to general appearances. It would be nice to have more mini festivals (I love music fest!) as well as more civic engagement activities

Q3. What specific streetscape features do you want to see incorporated into the downtown look?

I like the idea of putting some coniferous trees along Main Street among the deciduous trees to provide some color in the Winter. I like the idea of providing plaques or kiosks throughout downtown outlining history of Keene. Would provide some sense of history and industry in Keene's past. (Example of the Blake plaque at rotary near post office - but that is hidden behind a row of hedge!

In my opinion, the "downtown look" is more about consistency in setbacks and planning issues, than in street furniture and decorating issues. I think maintaining (or reestablishing in blocks where it has been lost) the building face is key.

Keep the current fountain and clock, no need to add more.

Bicycle Lanes, especially protected reaching out to connect down to the our wonderful hospital and shopping locations with residential areas.

None of this matters if we feel unsafe coming into town. See comments below.

covered bike racks, more public rest rooms, youth hostel, tiny houses for homeless people

Artwork, sculptures, places for food trucks/food carts and other vendors like farmer's market vendors to set up, areas where people can play music, way finding for people to know where the bike trails are, how to walk to nearby destinations such as Ashuelot River Park, Cheshire Children's Museum, etc.

More public art! More green space! Speed bumps at crossings to FORCE cars to slow down. It's SO hard to see people at the crossings, especially from dusk to dawn.

A fixed and visible market space for farmers market and others, trees that are not gigantic at maturity, displays/fixtures that respect and promote Keene's history, reasonable outdoor music (etc) performance space, nothing electronic

Get rid of the median parking, more police presence downtown

No more spaces for druggies and panhandling, I don't need to feel unsafe or be hassled as I do business in the city. We do as little as possible in Keene these days!

Crosswalk treatments need to include some kind of blinking light or a more lighted area where pedestrians cross. The lights to not need to be as involved as the lights that come on automatically on Winchester St. when the pedestrians approach the crosswalk. Just a simple blinking light on a pole with a push button, or an automatic on/off...to alert drivers. Simple and could saves lives.

Take a look at Kennebunk Maine's downtown. The landscaping, lighting and buildings are all exquisite and it's all been implemented in the last 6 years.

Efficient lighting that doesn't cause light pollution. I want to be able to see the night sky, but the lightning is awful

I don't think any of these need to be added.

more color. brick is stale.

native species of plant life in plant and water friendly settings

Traffic calming, x-walks, islands, bike lanes

Crosswalk paint is dull and worn off

More Art sculptures and murals would be greatly appreciated. What are sidewalk materials?

Public sitting areas that are safe for all.

When restoration on the steeple is complete, we'll have the best clock tower in New Hampshire. I like our landscaping, they do a nice job.

Q3. What specific streetscape features do you want to see incorporated into the downtown look?

Crosswalks could have lights submerged that blink when a pedestrians are on them. Or, alerts, such as the one in front of NGM. Both would help drivers see the pedestrians.

Pedestrian mall between Central Square and Emerald Street. One way traffic loop around downtown to facilitate access. More parking away from mall and public transportation to mall.

Where is this money coming from? Our taxes are too high. Be careful.

why not just paint crosswalks on the pavement? How many times are the tax payers going to have to pay to fix the stupid brick crosswalks that are in place now?

More old fashioned style mixed with some modernness. I love the tree an the high buildings the church. Simply just love the nature of this town its why I keep moving back!

This question (and all of them, to some degree) is pretty vague. Narrower streets? What does that mean? Does that mean less space devoted to vehicular traffic, and more for pedestrians or bicycles? We realize that this process is similar to what happened in Concord (and that some of what happened in Concord may have been based, in part, on what was already in Keene), but let's not limit ourselves to some kind of NH small city template...

Less traffic, although I know this would be the hardest part to transform. But it would be nice for the center to be all pedestrian traffic, outdoor eating, live music, and just be able to walk about like an outdoor plaza/mall.

Accessibility! For both handicapped and any non-motorists. Wider sidewalks, easier entrances to stores and buildings, well marked and policed crossings. Also, more crosswalks on Main beyond the Marlborough St rotary.

Wider sidewalks around Central Square

Edible gardens/container gardens. Partner with Antioch's Community Garden Connections program to make this happen; seems like they could provide materials and educational opportunities to downtown businesses/interested community members.

Removal of panhandlers

What about bicycle rentals?

I love downtown the way it is. The trees, lighting sidewalks that handle a small crowd. Where would more stuff go?

The street lighting is atrocious! The light needs to be diffused down and not broadcast in all directions. On a rainy night it is downright dangerous to cross a street downtown due to the poor visibility.

Careful thought required on type of trees chosen that have the right kind of root structure to thrive in restricted sidewalk planting- get an arborist or tree expert on that. A water fountain-bottle filling station would be great! And a dog bowl drinking fountain too.?? Never, never, never allow a drug paraphernalia and sex toy shop set up on Main Street again. Elsewhere, fine, but if we're family friendly here in Keene, that store in that location made no sense--was just too hard to explain to the kids on our weekend walks or visits downtown.

Look just fine to me

Please take the business owners concerns as it relates to trees. It's very easy to hide them with trees, and the public can't see them....

Public art

Better bike lanes

Public art. And whimsical features. Show some creativity

Q3. What specific streetscape features do you want to see incorporated into the downtown look?

Edible plants.

Flowers. What is meant by sidewalk materials?

Edible landscaping!

We should consider "Back-In" parking. When backing in to a spot in Somerville, Mass, I had to drive past the slot, then back in. On my way past it, I could look in the slot to ensure it is clear. I have situational awareness, so it is pretty safe to back in. When I leave, I just have to drive out and that is safer than backing out. If I don't back in, when I leave I have to back out into what is basically unknown traffic.

Maps, signs and information to enhance and promote pedestrian travel.

Removal of prostitutes, junkies and pan handlers. Vibrant evening activities. Annual events that are not ruined by KSC students and their guests.

Someday a traffic engineer might look at the flow thru Central Square and have some creative suggestions. (For now, what if Winter St switched its one way to enter the Square, rather than have the awkward left turn from the Square to the Libe?) Inviting green, public spaces are definitely an asset: incorporate park/flood storage/ year-round farmer's market home (eg vacant 4 acres between Community Way and Carpenter St)

Regardless of the specific architectural details/infrastructure, there should be a more integrated look and feel to the downtown area. Putting in a bunch of random, "innovative design elements" will only make a cluttered, "too-busy" look.

I would love to have a Welcome Center with public restrooms. if that is too much to ask for, maybe just port-a-potties in the park .

More public art!

More signage for the store's down all the side streets, as well as above/below ground-level businesses, in building's that don't necessarily look like they have other businesses within them. It would also be nice to see some Holiday decorating for major holiday's, such as Christmas/Winter Season, Halloween/Fall/Thanksgiving, Spring, Summer... for example: Christmas lights / designs on buildings (sort of like the giant stars on the buildings in Brattleboro on Main St.), seasonal decorations/flags/plants/etc. Downtown festivals - bring Pumpkinfest back (like how it was in 2004) but have 1 entry location and charge for entry, bring more vendors to downtown, more shopping, etc. Art festivals, cultural festivals, etc.

Downtown, Main street is very pretty as is... Should be maintained. We just need more parking!!!!

more street art and sculpture

More bike racks and dedicated bike lanes.

Public Art instillations. I run Friends of Public Art and would be happy to have projects that coincide with the city of Keene

I want to make sure we keep and expand bicycle stands. I'd like to see more plantings & water fountains. Wider sidewalks.

Concord NH has just completed a sidewalk renovation on Main street which incorporates heating tubes underneath the cement for assisting in ice and snow clearing in winter months. Perhaps that would be an advantageous tool for our Main Street area when sidewalk repairs are done. Winter ice and snow usually cause numerous trips and falls for those attempting to access the retail locations.

Q3. What specific streetscape features do you want to see incorporated into the downtown look?

BIKE Lanes, please and more bike racks along Main ST. There are some, but it's inconsistent. Car-Sharing spots would be grand.

Art, sculptures, fountains

Street lights be retrofitted with a small solar panel and a battery pack in order to reduce electric consumption.

Trim trees on the square. Can't even see the beautiful buildings anymore.

Public sitting areas would be nice as long as well lit at night and airy in daytime. There is an issue with loitering and drug use in areas that aren't very visible.

Public art

Uniform building facades??? Would rather see facade articulation and differentiation combined with 2 stories + (up to 5 in spots).

Outdoor dining

Love all these elements. Any new buildings should have top notch architecture...Like they do in Portsmouth. Anything new is very interesting and blends in well. Set up infrastructure better for outdoor events like music festival, Pumpkin festival..etc. better more friendly electrical connection and small stages throughout.

Replace dated architecture with modern stuff. I have no particular nostalgia for 100+-year-old styles.

More parking

The Keene Yoga center on Roxbury is a great example why streets should be wider- I stop traffic if I park on the street and open my door to get out

All streetlights downtown should be brighter. New light bulbs now are too dim and depressing.

It really looks nice now, keep up with the good work. A lot of weeds growing along some buildings off Main St. Looks horrible.

I'd like to see the Coca Cola advertisement to be refurbished. It feels like a part of the history of this town and I'd hate to see it fade away.

the new white street lighting is atrocious. back to orange please

I just want to see more useful businesses that will be open later and attract people to downtown. Northampton is a good model.

Stop spending money. Downtown is fine.

Sculptural art, and murals -- love the ones that have been appearing so far!

Solar powered street lights

Public Art, no more puddles at the crosswalks!

making it illegal to pan handle so we can add these things.

Less cars, more sidewalk space for walking and for outdoor patio seating.

Garbage cans- it is nearly impossible to find! Credit card parking meters, removing coin operated meters

Less trees to be honest, looks overgrown by Central Square, can't see the features that make it "downtown"

Wider sidewalks with more pedestrian amenities such as benches, fountains, restrooms, sidewalk cafes areas, performance spaces. generally improvements that will make the downtown an inviting space where people will want to get out of their cars

Q3. What specific streetscape features do you want to see incorporated into the downtown look?

I notice that removing the benches just has people sitting on the ground. Not the answer...

This makes me question ideals vs usefulness. Are these things even important?

Increased opportunities for outdoor dining, improved/safer parking on Main Street with a better/more distinct bike lane.

Bicycle stands

bike lanes

Green space with areas for live outdoor entertainment

The current lamp posts don't give off each light to see pedestrians at night. I think the parking on main should only be directly in front of the shops. Take the center median parking out for green space, trees, flowers.

No cars- similar to church st in Burlington VT

Public areas

Full stores with a variety of owners

Slightly brighter sidewalk lighting for a 'safer' nighttime environment. I trust that the city will take a 'complete streets' approach to any renovation and/or expansion of downtown areas.

public parking

Get rid of 1 car lane on each side of main street make side walks useful. Make downtown a place to walk around.

the current trees in the middle along with the light poles are nice, but sometimes it's hard to see pedestrians when they stop in the middle. then they seem to pop out in front of you from 'behind' a pole/tree. especially at night because the lights don't shine down onto the person/area directly underneath them, and the lights aren't a bright, white light, they're sort of muted now from the new bulbs or the glass covers or something.

-Complete Streets (depending on user groups it may be wider or narrower)

Two things need to happen: improve the appearance of Marlboro St. and other streets surrounding the downtown, particularly East and North. And, improve on efforts to attract professionals to work, live, and spend time/money downtown. Too much emphasis over the past 10 years has been on putting all the social services and low-income housing downtown, to the detriment of businesses and residences.

Bike racks

More pedestrian centric

Although public seating and meeting spaces are beneficial, it would need to be managed in a way that mitigates loitering, panhandling, etc.

More places to sit in Railroad Square, more bicycle amenities, a water bottle station, bike lanes, less parking on the street - especially closer to Central Square where drivers back out into traffic from both sides of the road

NA

art should be incorporated in downtown - federal guidelines for cross walks are boring stripes, mix it up a bit and make our cross unique.

Street signs that are more historic and burying utilities.

Shops and maker spaces.

New skate park

Public art; stormwater Low Impact Development (tree box filters)

Q3. What specific streetscape features do you want to see incorporated into the downtown look?

bike lanes. Main street is terrible for biking.

Improved parking spaces, for example Roxbury Street parking could be easily improved around the Keene Yoga Center. In fact I hope parking is improved on Roxbury St. for the new MOCA site as well.

WiFi access. Also public trash/recycling on corners or every several feet for easy disposal of garbage while waking. Water fountains would be fantastic especially ones that promote refilling reusable bottles. Public restroom would be nice but I understand the complexity of such a service. It is just the basic concept that the public should have access to water and a restroom which are very fundamental needs.

Downtown is fine the way it is- LEAVE IT ALONE! Get rid of the BUMS!!!!

No smoking zones

"The look and feel" is generated primarily by the narrower streets, on-street parking, and mixed use buildings. All the other elements aren't necessary, they just serve to "prettify."

More outdoor restaurant seating

Art! A sculpture that it's permanent along with many other types of rotating art installations.

Public Art

More places for people to sit and spend time (besides the benches...more like tables with chairs--places to sit and eat, meet up with folks, play a game of chess, etc). Public water fountains downtown and along the bike path. **Public art, permanent or rotating sculpture or more permanent murals, etc. **BIKE RACKS

It would be great to change the facade of the few buildings on Main St to match the historic look, but preference to extending the downtown as mentioned above.

Parklets

Center islands and more crosswalks, especially further down Main St from KSC to Route 101 - the slowing down of traffic

Way to dark! Public safety is threatened by darkness!

Features that encourage walking and safe cycling

Bike racks

Q4. What amenities do you want in your downtown?

BROADBAND!

Clean, neat public restrooms...

I especially like wide sidewalks with both free public seating and seating for restaurants. It would be nice to have some more public seating in the shade; in the summer there isn't much.

The downtown has a significant parking problem that would best be solved by a multi-level parking garage similar to Portsmouth. The current solution of street parking and ground level parking lots is wasteful and inefficient. It also increases the level of motor vehicle traffic in the downtown which harms air quality. Air quality is more of an issue in Keene because the town is in a valley and air pressure traps particulate in the town increasing the level of PM2.5, especially in winter. You can read more about Keene's air problems here: <http://commons.pacificu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1021&context=ijurca> While the paper focuses on the issue of wood stoves, I think that solving the downtown traffic problem is also an important way we can improve quality of life and public health in Keene. Portsmouth is also a good example of a town with excellent air and noise pollution control which I think contributes in part to the robust services economy in the downtown. Downtown Keene has 18-wheel trucks, ambulances, fire trucks, and police cars all making the downtown experience less pleasant than it might be otherwise.

More convenient parking and a better meter payment system that includes credit & debit cards, and an online payment account. Incorporate and upgrade public access to riverfront areas, green spaces and recreation areas.

entertainment and more shopping options....not locals only.....not everyone is happy with local businesses.....and why they go out of town when they can

Bike lanes!

It'd be great to have some sort of food/craft market.

Food trucks

I think we are bending over for the outside dining - example how Pedrazas is now taking over the walkway outside. It feels like I am walking through a restaurant when I walk by there! Why can't we have some statues/sculptures along Main Street. I can think only of the one at the square. Some cities have had "contests" with sculptors/artists to create art works along a theme (e.g. Bennington, VT has moose sculptures downtown) Couldn't we have owls or some other animals? (Good tie in with Keene State College Owls) I'd like to see the area at RR Square have more green space. Nice big Canadian Hemlocks or something to provide a visual screen. Perhaps sculpt the area a bit to provide some rolling mounds planted with grass and small gardens that local clubs could maintain. It is amazing how a small green swell can change a landscape. Maybe a small pocket park where kids could play while the parents sit and talk.

But not at the expense of buildings. There's plenty of outdoor and green space in New Hampshire. What makes downtown outdoor space appealing is the juxtaposition with buildings and the vibrancy caused by density.

Be very careful about public art, since tastes vary so. Farmers market is good, should be near downtown but not necessarily in downtown.

Dog park

kid-friendly spaces (public fountain / splash area ... ? Kid art display / creation area; ice skating / basketball recreation area); garden spaces

Q4. What amenities do you want in your downtown?

I think with Keene being the hub of Cheshire County, we should have a place or places for ALL wonderful artists AND crafts people throughout the county to have a place to sell their wares. I was hoping the mill would fill up with the artisans not apts. so there would be a central places to go for unique birthday, anniversary, wedding, Christmas, Mothers' and Fathers' Day, graduation, etc gifts. College kids and the public could access these wonderful items that are made right here in Cheshire County!! We need to brag about these talented people and not just have them for a brief weekend show! I live in Westmoreland and do all my shopping in Keene. This would bring people downtown for sure!!!

More room for pedestrians on the sidewalks. The outside dining takes up too much of the sidewalks.

I would love to see the main chunk of main street (between the two rotaries with rotaries remaining functional) have vehicle traffic removed (It is slow to go through anyway in a car, I personally avoid it, a danger to pedestrian traffic and there are plenty of good routes to go around and most of the good parking is not directly on the street anyway) I think this could become a great public space for events, festivals, open markets, the farmers market, and recreation like bikes. Almost all of my good memories and fondness of main street has been during times it has been closed and events like pumpkin fest or the music fest are going on. Events like this are what keep the area going -why not embrace it? Look at places like the Rose Kennedy Greenway or SOWA in Boston, those have worked miracles for retail areas that were struggling prior.

I'd like to offer a grain of an idea to start something else rolling. Let's have a bicycle and Sustainable Energy Fair. We've got a lot going for us in this respect. Many people come to Keene to ride our byways, and the improved bike paths. All over the city, and in the hills around Keene as well. Why not take advantage of this Gourd festival void, to plan a wide ranging bicycle event, really a series of events, to rebuild and recognize our bicycle heritage. At one time in America's history, in fact that of the world, the manufacturing of bicycles and other human powered devices was quite widespread. Right here in Keene, there were several bicycle manufacturers, including Kingsbury toys. This could be a fun event for all Keene, imagine a city- wide bicycle parade, complete with costumed riders, kids of all ages, from all the colleges, all meeting at the Rec center, or Wheelock Park. Events, such as mountain, and jump bike demonstrations, could be held. Don't forget the skateboards and rollerblades as well. They definitely fit into the wheels-sustainability spectrum. There could be a Sustainability Fair at Keene State, maybe. Environmental riding at Antioch, making solar powered rickshaws and recumbent tricycles at the technical school, who knows?

Artwork, sculptures, places for food trucks/food carts and other vendors like farmer's market vendors to set up, areas where people can play music, way finding for people to know where the bike trails are, how to walk to nearby destinations such as Ashuelot River Park, Cheshire Children's Museum, etc.

I wish I could select "public art" and "green space" twice! They both do so much to make a place feel vibrant and welcoming.

ALL of the above. Thank you for asking this question.

Green space is super important and will set Keene apart from other cities. Make "family friendly" more of a priority.

Q4. What amenities do you want in your downtown?

Possibly green space but not at the expense of parking, same for outdoor dining. Many restaurants already have outdoor dining. Sidewalks are plenty wide. More public areas will only encourage more places for people to beg for money. They may be harmless, but it's uncomfortable and makes shoppers avoid an area.

Dog park. Playground/Park for children and families

No bike lane.

We do have all of the above. More green space is always requested by residents.

Definitely a space for concerts similar to Portsmouth, if possible.

keep children in the options list

To some extent, we already have all of these. More green space, even vest-pocket parks (similar to NGM's private park) would provide welcome oases.

Fine the way it is. free 2 hour parking on side streets

I like as it is, more outdoor dining would be clutter. The Pedraza situation was resolved well .

Concerts would be better away from the Common, as traffic interferes. Outdoor dining is nice, but at the moment is too prevalent. A number of people avoid downtown in the evening as they are uncomfortable walking through a "dining room."

City workers do a fine job maintaining and improving landscaping downtown.

Space so the downtown streets do not need to be shut down for events.

more local shops, not just restaurants, if there is nowhere to shop who is going to want to come to the restaurants unless something is happening at the Colonial?

Outdoor dining should not be allowed on PUBLIC sidewalks. You want people to come downtown, get rid of the tables on the taxpayers sidewalks!!!!!!

How about electric charging stations for vehicles? How about free public Wi-Fi? There's a lot to consider.

See previous comments re: Antioch's Community Garden Connections initiative as they would be neat partners and have some support to provide materials and community education on gardens and pollinator habitat options.

It would be nice to have a green space for the farmer's market, complete with tables so people could gather for coffee/lunch

Can we have it all???

A better space for the Farmers Market close to downtown might be good.

Do not take away to the wide sidewalks- also, adding lke lanes will make a tight roadway less navigable

More parking and fewer panhandlers

Better free parking

Less parking on Main St. wider sidewalks

More patios should be dog friendly.

Public restrooms and bicycle racks.

Removal of prostitutes, junkies and pan handlers. Vibrant evening activities. Annual events that are not ruined by KSC students and their guests.

Central Square is probably not the ideal spot for concerts!

The City needs to stop jerking around with the Farmer's Market, and work towards a more attractive, visible, permanent, and maintainable space.

I love the Art Walk and the other art programs available in this wonderful city

Q4. What amenities do you want in your downtown?

ALL of the above if possible! Keene is such a wonderful place but we need to attract more young people to keep it healthy. Concerts, outdoor venues, restaurants, etc will all help that.

A nice spot for the Farmers Market might help... Have you been to the Brattleboro farmers market...? Keene we need a space like that.

Dog Park

Having areas in the downtown that can be utilized for community cultural events is very advantageous. I support protecting those established areas as well as implementing new sites.

I love the planting the city has done recently - THANK YOU. These micro gardens make our downtown even MOE special!! I think we have sufficient space already for downtown concerts, including the area next to the Co-op.

Public rest rooms visitor center open on weekends

All great ideas

Things that would keep it vibrant and alive!

It would be great to have a softball field close to downtown to engage the community. They are a huge part of this community yet all fields are on the outskirts of town or at Wheelock.

I love seeing public arts (such as the murals and works in business windows), things like this give you a sense of the talent in the area and promote a sense of pride for the city. In regards to cultural activities, I think larger gazebos would be appropriate. For bands and such it would make it easier for them to organize themselves and promote more local groups to play in Keene. perhaps a larger gazebo in the area of the Rec Center would be appropriate. The current one is small and looks more like a tractor shed rather than a venue.

Restaurants and shops that will attract people. Also, a public market would be amazing. Look into the public market of Easton, PA. Would be wonderful for Keene.

Parking and streets that are friendly for delivery trucks to encourage more commercial use.

There are great "green spaces" outside of the urban core. Downtown should be about ACTIVE uses.

More space for strolling - make sidewalks wider, add more sidewalks.

Food trucks Dog park

Not much room to work with for green space, but could definitely use a make over and "open" things up a bit

We have such a beautiful downtown with the possibility of so much activity yet our town is so afraid to do things and have events!! We need to go outside the box and add new events. We have the space for it! Let's utilize it

Indoor public space. A hub for all season activities and public gathering.

The more the better

These are important elements in a thriving community. All of these outdoor activities help downtown prosper; when people see other people gathering and having a good time it's like a magnet for more of the same behavior.

public parking

Q4. What amenities do you want in your downtown?

These all sound great. Strongly suggest expanding Carpenter Field to incorporate more athletics facilities next to it (i.e., indoor turf field and running track). Keene High School, KSC, and hundreds of club sports teams sorely need an indoor training and recreation space. And the public could enjoy it as well. Think Keene Ice-type facility adjacent to Carpenter and the B-ball courts. Right now it's acres of wasteland attracting an awful demographic. Baseball/softball, soccer, field hockey, lacrosse, track, etc. really needs this. AND, tournaments bring people to town who spend at local businesses, hotels, restaurants, etc. Great for "Main Street."

The items above and more, such as a store/business unique to Keene (brewery, distillery, etc) could serve as an anchor

NA

Leveling sidewalks in front of Luca's and Fireworks.

New skate park

New shops, restaurants, etc, oh also the ability to recreationally smoke marijuana publicly. Most importantly the skatepark deserves renovating or the addition of a new one the skateboard culture is growing here daily

bike lanes

WiFi... Also perhaps a city app which can be used for city activities such as parking.

We already have all that. This survey and "revitalization" is a complete waste of taxpayers money!!!

No smoking zones

Public bathrooms?

love it all, but limited space in reality.

Dog/people park (the empty, unused dirt lot behind the Chabot oil tower along Gilbo ave would be perfect for a park that's more accessible than Ashuelot, one with tables and gathering spots, and an area perhaps for dogs, etc.). Music and art and gathering spaces (with lower rent!) for such events are what bring people in, and the people coming in will generate more possibilities and need for more businesses. Main Street in downtown is half of what it once was as far as businesses and excitement go.

Night time activities, food carts allowed, bands allowed and family activities.

Areas for food trucks Parklets Outdoor dining space that's not specific to any one business More trash cans Doggie bag stations More benches More art installations Can there be somewhere for arcade games and/or outdoor yard games like cornhole?

Utilize Gilbo avenue for a parking garage and update and expand the skatepark to bring families downtown to use the restaurants and go shopping while thier child is at the skatepark.

Better lighting

Incorporate the bike path into the revitalization plan. There is a large network of trails that are poorly labeled. Keene has the potential to be a popular bike-able city. Investing in signs, and development along the route would be very beneficial to the city.

Q5. What do you like about downtown today?

Central Square is lovely. Improved public transportation and bicycle lanes would help with traffic.

We need buses that go at least till 9:00 pm Parking is horrible

Parking although available always has been and always will be an issue for shoppers as long as it is not free....

Crosswalks make the downtown friendly for pedestrians. Rail trails provide walking and riding access to many parts of the city. The roundabout on Main Street is a good way to limit stop and go traffic. Trees and landscaping are good for shade and air quality and aesthetics. The street lights are aesthetic. There is a pleasant variety of architectural styles that mark the history of the town. The geographical positioning with the church and the town square provide a pleasant sense of orientation and frame. The width of the main street gives a sense of spaciousness.

Main St. is very walkable - would like to see it extend up select streets!

I wish there were more public transportation.

Quintessential New England charm. We're fortunate to still have some economic vitality despite the number of empty store fronts. Local merchants who have made downtown Keene their business home for many years should be applauded.

Wide streets Feels safe

downtown Keene has become crime ridden...drug hangout for many

Walkable

Not enough parking. Poor transportation dept, virtually none.

We used to have a variety of shops... it'd be great to see that happen again.

Public transportation is severely lacking

I like the way the city tries to control the impulses of owners to paint up their storefronts with gaudy colors. I live just past the city square and I enjoy the fact that I can walk anywhere downtown with ease. I am concerned about the impact of the new apartments behind the old junior high on parking and traffic in that area. Spring Street needs to be upgraded concurrent with this project. I hope the city has plans for this area on the "outskirts" of downtown.

I like that we have public transportation, but I don't know if it's good enough to select as something I like.

more jugglers, basking permits

I like that I can walk there from home, and I also like that it is connected to the Cheshire Rail Trail

More bars would have a big opportunity cost

Too bad a variety of shopping has left the area!

I haven't really needed it, so I'm not aware of what the public transportation is.

I more dislike downtown than like.

I love downtown Keene! I grew up in Keene and now live in Swanzey. I love the fact that I know many people who I meet and visit with while there shopping and eating. If there were more places to park....I would bring my business there more often. In today's busy world....I need to shop and eat where I can easily park and get in and out quickly. The comes up often in many conversation with friends and colleagues.

Local/small business focused

Q5. What do you like about downtown today?

Even more events would be wonderful.

It's compact and fairly pedestrian friendly.

More variety in restaurants and shops would be appreciated. "cultural" shops and food choices. Where can one get a good bowl of noodle soup?

new England charm/college town, bike path, food coop, Colonial Theater, Hannah Grimes, Library, coffee shops, bookstore

I would hope those empty stores get tenants, that would be good for everyone.

Dining on Main Street is wonderful, if you don't mind dust and dirt, and like the sound of motorcycles interrupting conversation every three words.

Terrible parking! Need more.

We have a variety of restaurants but not shops

Nothing!! Railroad square is nothing but a hang out for the homeless and druggies.

Easy to navigate for pedestrians.

Again, this is a tricky question. For example: Is there a variety of shops? To some degree, sure. Is there enough variety? Probably not. Is there outdoor dining? Sure, but is there enough of it? Probably not. Is there some nice landscaping? Definitely, but is there enough of it?

While I like the variety of restaurants and shops, downtown needs more variety

Charm. Downtown Keene is charming. It has a small city/ hometown feel. In general the people are friendly, there are things to look at and things to do. LOVE the Art Walk!! And the Colonial! Glad that Ye Goodie Shoppe moved back to Main Street, sadly Handicap accessibility is a real issue there. Sorry to see Dean Easton, Dave Sutherland, and other wonderful store owners throw in the towel. Don't know about rents or ability to earn a decent income through that kind of retail. What public transportation???

It's like I want to say more of all the above

Public places would be nice but currently uncomfortable to spend time there. Railroad Square, as an example, was constructed to provide a nice outdoor space but is now overrun with people who smoke, swear, and are not desirable-looking. Now the feeling is to avoid this location.

Variety of events could be seriously expanded. A monthly event like street fair, cruising through the decades, international festival, sidewalk sales etc...could be easy to implement and bring consistent interest and visitors to downtown.

There are no public transportation spaces, The downtown is designed for cars, not pedestrians or bicyclists.

I avoid downtown because of the junkies, pan handlers etc. Peterborough has everything to offer in terms of shopping and dining without the hassle. If we can take back the downtown from the bad users, Keene has a lot to offer.

Could use better public transportation downtown, for those that need it: "trolley" making a north-south loop on Main St, connecting to east-west circuits on West St-Roxbury and Winchester-Marlboro?? (some downtowns even provide this type of central public transportation free, which decongests traffic and parking) Can we reeducate local residents that having to walk 2-4 blocks from parking to destination is not a hardship? Consider how far residents of metropolitan areas walk to public transportation.

Q5. What do you like about downtown today?

The scrap of a building on Eagle Court should have been razed years ago. "Spectrum" should be encouraged, if not assisted, in finding a new location to park their trucks. That whole area should have been made into a parking lot YEARS ago. That it hasn't, shows the greed and ignorance of TPTB in Keene.

it would help to have a Welcome Center to promote the various events and art promotions

It is NOT easy to get around. That's a joke.

We could use even more variety of shops in downtown.

There are so many restaurants, but we have lost SO many local shops... we need to do something to bring them back! Downtown is dying and we need to help it. Rent / property taxes are out-of-control in most places downtown and local shops (small "mom and pop shops") can't afford to be downtown. Something needs to be done to help. Losing Pumpkinfest was a HUGE loss to downtown and the City as a whole... and the greater County as a whole. We need downtown to be affordable to the businesses and to the consumers, and right now, it's not.

We need more parking...and more free parking weekends. You deter visitors from ever coming back when they are ticketed on lets say the Keene State Parent weekend....we need to support the college, it is one of the only viable work places that residents of Keene have anymore.

Overall in the past few years the varieties of shops downtown have decreased. There were multiple shops that have closed down. Also, main street is not the first option I would think to go to for a "public space." I would be more likely to go to a park.

Nothing it's ridiculous especially parking

I can't understand a common cry of "not enough parking" that is part of the complain-cycle here. But, I've also lived in far larger cities before I moved to Keene. Parking is NOT a Keene problem in my view. Plus, I CHOSE to live close to downtown so that I can get to work, and do my errands ALL without needing a CAR!!

Definitely not availability of parking.

too many stores and restaurants have closed on Main.

There's great parking options. Another garage in the future would be perfect should downtown grow and density increases. We'll need it then and we should be proactive on planning that now. Definitely need more transportation options.

Could always use more events, restaurants, and shops....a high end movie theatre would be a great addition to activity! Bring in the fun!

Parking has been bought out by KSC (behind Marg's) - hope that doesn't continue, colonial location is awesome, great restaurants, dining and bars. If you want to grow it you need more events focused on families and/or adults. Why don't we have an annual event that showcases restaurant talents? Why not a Sunday pumpkin festival? Why not an ice festival? And 5ks? And concerts?

Main St. in general is lacking in so many ways and needs to be overhauled. The restaurants and nightlife seems to be doing well. But that is just about the only thing worthwhile about Main St. and that's just barely enough to make me want to even consider risking accidents to go there.

Not enough variety of shops and restaurants. You have to give people a reason to come downtown.

Q5. What do you like about downtown today?

I know parking is a hot button. We should NOT plan downtown around parking. Let people bitch. A healthy downtown is a walking / biking downtown. A healthy downtown is a PEOPLE downtown, not a cars downtown.

public spaces, pedestrian friendliness, variety of events, and landscaping are weak. Would encourage public policies and facilities which encourage creativity and flexibility to encourage musicians, actors, performers and artists to use downtown as a venue. The City does not have to do it all, but should use policies and resources to encourage the creative arts downtown.

Wide streets, wide sidewalks, the central square with the gazebo.

the rail trail bike/walking trail that goes through town and beyond the co-op

The landscaping downtown is beautiful and well maintained.

I wish public transportation was more available

walkability in all seasons except for winter

Nothing, i always avoid downtown. To many cars. Get rid of the traffic light.

Bring back locals only Pumpkin Festival!!!!

The variety of shops is dwindling, so we need to think about whether other shops should replace them or if restaurants and businesses (i.e., offices, corporations, small businesses) should be encouraged to move in.

NA

Comfortable for foot travel

The Monadnock Food Co-op The Colonial Theater The Farmer's Market

I love the pro-walking and pro-biking nature of it.

It's fine the way it is...leave it alone.

Parking is not a priority. nor should it be in a healthy downtown space. That should be low on the list of priorities. High on the list should be pedestrian mobility--sidewalks, alleys, etc along with ease of use for bicycles (plenty of bike racks!) and bus stops.

walkability

Independent and local

Need more affordable clothing stores downtown.

I like the potential but I don't like the empty store fronts, the loiterers, the drunken college students,

I like the outdoor dining, events, and shops but think there needs to be more of all if those things, especially cute retail shops

We have a beautiful downtown that needs attractions to bring families into the area so we can support our neighbors small business.

Love that Keene is a walkable city! One of our great virtues

I don't think any of these options are applicable at this point in time. There are a couple events throughout the year, but not nearly enough. We need a larger variety of restaurants, more art, easier access to the bike paths, and development on the streets directly off from main street.

Q6. What are the challenges to the traveling public today?

The speed that cars travel down Main Street during busy times of the day can be a bit scary with some of the blind crosswalk entrances. (Blocked by parked cars, etc.) As a driver, I just know to avoid main street during busy times, especially if I am in a hurry, as a walker, the downtown area is less enjoyable when its is filled with speeding cars blaring all kinds of music with the windows down.

BROADBAND

Not enough accessible public transportation

See #5

Frequency of emergency vehicles blaring down Main Street. There needs to be a priority system to determine the level of response. With DiLuzio ambulance service making frequent runs to outlying towns, the public is exposed to high levels of speed and noise as they scream down Main Street. It makes sense to me that they should relocate south of the Main St -Route101 intersection. It is the greatest annoyance I experience on a daily basis when I walk downtown. To me, it is a public health concern, increases blood pressure and is damaging to hearing.

Main Street needs to be reimagined as a town square instead of a traffic route. Make Main Street a challenge to drive so that people who are just passing through with no intent of stopping are encouraged to seek other routes. As it is, crossing Main Street, even with the lights and crosswalks, can be the risk of a lifetime. It's not fun. It's better than it was, certainly, but pedestrians shouldn't have to fear being run down by an inattentive motorist. People need to feel safe.

The most difficult thing is backing out of the angled parking spaces on main st. It's very hard to see traffic and tell when it's safe to leave. I've started parking in the Gilbo St lot instead for that reason.

Downtown Keene has a major issue with noise pollution from ambulances and fire engine horns and sirens. This decreases quality of life and has a negative impact on public health. High noise levels are associated with higher levels of cortisol and other stress hormones that can cause cardiovascular harm. The impact of noise pollution is also financial because it decreases the value of property in those areas impacted by the sirens. Cities in New Hampshire and around the world address noise pollution problems with ordinances to limit the use of sirens in populated areas but this has not happened in Keene.

Limited Commuter parking for those of us who work in town. Can't pay at meters and move the car every 2 hours.

crosswalks. hard on pedestrians and drivers as it's hard to see pedestrians panhandlers. It's the reason why I rarely go downtown anymore.

Ability for elderly to walk around Main St. is excellent in some locations, difficult in others. Motor vehicle traffic seems to get heavier every year. Finding a balance between pedestrian and vehicle use will be key - rethink the north/south bypass.

cross walk safety

we need bike lanes to help the flow of traffic. One bicycle down Main Street causes backup as there is no lane for them currently, thus no space to safely pass

No lane marking northbound on Central square

Gaps in bike path where you have to ride with cars - difficult to do with kids.

For people who walk to get around, there are a few areas where businesses have taken up WAY too much sidewalk.

Q6. What are the challenges to the traveling public today?

parking is not great.....people speed down main street as if a freeway....esp so when KSC is on.....the college kids have no respect for residents and they have better housing options then those who live here year round

BICYCLES that use both streets and sidewalks without care for vehicles, as well as jay walking pedestrians

HATE the new parking meters - difficult to use - not intuitive. Concerns for increasing congestion of parking and driving once the project at the old Middle School is complete. We NEED a yield sign from Roxbury St. into Central Square.

I have lived in metropolitan areas so am immune to the long time residents complaints about parking. There is lots of parking if people just walk a bit. They seem to think that they shouldn't have to walk more than 10 yards to gain entry to a store. I think bicyclists need training on how to ride in town. They expect many courtesies yet flaunt accepted traffic norms like riding through red lights.

I see no particular challenges.

I think it's a great downtown! Sure it is congested, and sometimes you have to lap the block for a parking space. But that traffic slows people down and lets them know they are somewhere. Keeps it from being a thoroughfare.

Main street is incredibly dangerous. It's almost impossible to see pedestrians until they are already in the cross walk, especially when there are a lot of cars parked downtown. This is going to become a bigger problem as you try to scale. Pedestrian bridges are one option, and changing the current parking set would be another.

Bad crosswalks

Traffic is congested, there is no where to sit if you want to (benches have been removed I think to deter homeless?) and when traffic does move people speed and that is problematic for pedestrians

perhaps an off main street bike map, showing ways to avoid traffic while safely traversing Keene

Cars backing out of spaces are dangerous for other drivers and especially for people riding bicycles

YOU NEVER MENTION the possibility of Public Bathrooms or a Welcome Center!! Why NOT?

Traffic speed and dangerous crossings are the biggest problem downtown, and on ALL of Main St. for that matter. I work at the KSC, and I can't tell you how many times I've nearly been run down crossing Main St. Whether drivers are approaching the traffic circle or coming out of it and heading south on Main St. people ARE DRIVING WAY TOO FAST!! Signs DO NOT help. We need speed bumps or some other physical structures that force vehicles to slow down, from the intersection of Main St and 101/9 all the way up to the head of the square. Thanks.

It is not bicycle friendly but bikes can be walked a short distance and there are easy alternative routes for bicyclists

Median parking makes driving difficult

uncontrolled and unenforced violation of pedestrian/cyclist traffic

Lack of parking huge, meters discourage shopping. Raise money another way! People drive way too fast on Main. Blinky crosswalks might help.

Very limited public transportation options

None more than any other city!

Q6. What are the challenges to the traveling public today?

Impede of bicycle riders in traffic. They are unable to maintain flow with traffic or act like they have right of way. Also the road not being straight near the corner news. Hard to see pedestrians. Take away left turns as well. Left turns cause severe congestion. One giant loop so there is no crossing traffic.

The rotary by KSC and the post office..... makes it so much easier to move through traffic toward Central Square. I honestly do not feel there will ever be a way to solve traffic congestion right in downtown....unless the actual common area were to become a rotary with no traffic lights. Doing that might create more problems and accidents. The parking garage off Railroad St. was expected to solve part of the parking issue...but now there are so many reserved spaces....it is difficult to find a space.

I don't see any of those things as a challenge for Keene at this time

Lane distinction going around gazebo specifically. Too often people are in right lane heading towards court st. but want to travel down west st. Many near accidents due to this.

crosswalks are plentiful and can be hazardous

Speed of traffic is a really big problem. I'd like to see Main Street a pedestrian mall, like Burlington VT.

I know that people are going to complain about "Keene's parking problem," but for anyone who has ever lived in a large city (Boston, NYC, etc.) there is no parking problem in Keene. Ditto for traffic congestion problems. It's more important for the small downtown area to be pedestrian friendly rather than automobile friendly.

There should be free parking around the court house - of you are in court or waiting for a hearing to be called you cannot go out and continuously feed the meter

Bums, round about, empty store fronts {this place is a prime example}, parking tickets, 100 nights, heroin epidemic, unruly kids at KSC, poor economy on this side of the state, constant negativity from the city counselors on facebook and in the news paper, left leaning local paper, President bashing time and time again, very little positive attitudes.

What I hear about bike space on the street is good news. Bikes and skateboards on the sidewalk are dangerous. It isn't just young people, a middle aged woman on a razor scooter damn near knocked me over when she came around the corner on the Main Street sidewalk.

Parking is limited somewhat. Reserved parking spaces are plentiful & often not used. Drivers often find that spaces are far away from Main Street. Recommend that the city stop selling spaces - more citizens would come in to the center if they knew parking was easy. No bike lanes combined with vehicle traffic now - should be, with dividers between two modes of travel. Traffic in town is too fast. Suggestion that we put in speed tables [as in Peterborough], have visible signs posted with a companion sign that alerts driver to the speed they are travelling.

Also, much better city transit is needed to ease the number of cars or why not even consider a way to legally use golf cart type (electric only) vehicles to get downtown.

With the library renovation in process, the court house and fire station renovations there is less parking available. Our state is aging and while we need to attract young people you can't forget the older population that already lives here.

Bicycles and skateboards on sidewalks are a catastrophe waiting to happen.

Public transportation that links to other towns

Q6. What are the challenges to the traveling public today?

Crosswalk light is too short for those crossing at Roxbury/West Streets. I have witnessed time and time again people barely able to make it to the center of Main Street, especially for the older folks, before traffic flow starts again. I know this has been an issue for decades!

Not enough times to cross the crosswalk.

Complete Streets. Are we "complying" with the spirit of the idea? What about heated - maybe even covered - walkways?

I do not shop downtown stores because of the parking and traffic. Always difficult to find a Main Street parking spot and if you do, depending on the hour, getting out of it is difficult as traffic rarely stops to let you out. Parking garages are not well lit or busy and make it a safety concern with all the homeless people or addicts loitering around using.

Limited visibility of pedestrian traffic during the evening-lack of lights at crosswalks

People don't understand the traffic flow in the circle, particularly where streets enter w/o traffic signals. Vehicles coming in from Court St rarely stop at all. Additionally, cars drive too quickly up and down main street and stop inconsistently for people in crosswalks, and there are always two or three cars running every red. On the flip side, pedestrians routinely ignore the crossing signals at the head of the square, which is likely a contributing factor to people running lights; and pedestrians jaywalk constantly even though there are numerous crosswalks up and down main street.

Lack of enforcement of pedestrian and bicycle regulations.

I'm surprised more pedestrians aren't injured due to speeding and inattentive drivers. Some crosswalks need greater visibility for both pedestrian and drivers

I avoid driving downtown if I can help it, the traffic combined with a crosswalk every ten yards is too stressful. It's frustrating and even scary to be in the midst of cars jockeying for position in two lanes going to three as we head north to the square, compounded with pedestrians crossing or who look like they're crossing but you're not sure so you stop, and then you see cars that don't stop for them at all! Yikes!

Seriously bike commuting is a positive benefit to the city and those that participate. It's scary riding a bike around in the city.

Carcentric And laziness of people who would park at a mall and walk the length of it, but think 3 minutes from a parking lot to a downtown destination is too much

Walking down Main street and being continually pan-handled. Loitering laws would help this, especially in the courtyard by Local Burger.

Whyyyyy in 2017 are all of the parking meters cash only? Ridiculous.

Volume of traffic. Lack of regional, intermodal, transportation system.

Junkies and pan handlers.

Speed limit through the densest blocks of Main St (Marlboro to Central Square?) should probably be even slower, for safety of pedestrians)

Oddly, lack of parking is only a rare issue. But, what parking there is, is scattered in many small areas.(See ans. 5, above). The City SHOULD HAVE built a parking garage on Gilbo Ave., YEARS ago.... Going back to the original bypass construction, too much City-wide traffic has been funneled Downtown, which increases non local-Downtown traffic, but acts as a deterrent to folks wanting to come Downtown. It makes Downtown *seem* busier than it actually is. For example, too often, there is steady traffic flow along Main St., but MANY empty parking spaces.... The solutions here are better City-wide traffic flow....

i think the flow of traffic seems right but I do not have to commute

Q6. What are the challenges to the traveling public today?

Speed bump are necessary. And please STOP with the rotaries. They're the last thing Keene needs.

No where to park... KYC has no parking and to find a spot on the street is near to impossible. Once MOCO opens, forget it...and the local business's with large nearly empty parking lots threaten to tow you if you park there...

Hard to get across streets with the double lanes and also hard to drive due to all of the sidewalks and pedestrian traffic

scary to cross the street in the majority of downtown

I travel in Keene everyday and do not have any issues. Bike lanes if used should have a physical barrier protecting riders from traffic

We are not adequately served with public transportation outside of Keene, especially BETWEEN towns in the region.

take out the parking spaces on main street and I would even be happy with out any cars on Main st.

Too many crosswalks; too distracting for drivers between rotaries, crosswalks, watching for cars backing out into the road and stop lights. It is too easy to get into an accident on main street

I don't think there IS a parking problem in Keene. I wonder if those complainers just expect that rock-star-right-in-front parking is their right, every time they drive to a destination, or do they expect parking to resemble massive swaths of pavement in huge lots to accommodate their unique needs? Getting to Keene by public transit is a sorry loss of all of us. I wish more folks could get from Boston to Keene in easier and more available ways. (Taking a shuttle by Thomas Trans just isn't viable for most of us) I mourn the loss of what trains USED to bring to this region.

Living downtown personally I would like to see speed limit from the head of the square down to the Barber Street rotary reduced more strongly enforced also 8 noise ordinance in put in place where motorcycles and other loud cars and peeling out and excessive horn use is curbed

Motorists tend to drive too fast on Main street - the entire length from 101 to the square. There is a need for more traffic calming.

Bike lockers would be a cool idea! Rent them out!

I think the basic infrastructure is there. Needs the things above , 4 & 5 etc. , to jazz it up and bring more activity into town.

Overly aggressive parking ticket racket.

Safety of pedestrians is questionable. Those light up crosswalks on West Street and Winchester are genius! Panhandlers, loiterers and addicts are intimidating if not managed. And everything is silo'd feeling. Why don't restaurants or stores ever partner TOGETHER to attract the public?

Too many bikes and skateboards. People who don't make eye contact crossing streets. Loud college kids. New parking meters behind Margarita's don't work properly. They often swallow my quarters.

Outdoor dining at restaurants cause sidewalk congestion, making it harder to walk. The Stage is particularly bad, but Lucas creates a tight corner, and the Cobblestone is often very congested.

Parking needs to be free

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION NEEDED

I often am very nervous to cross the road due to traffic. Often times people do not stop and for pedestrians and I've had many close calls.

Q6. What are the challenges to the traveling public today?

limited public transportation not well understood

Lack of parking is a real problem. Even though I am focused on patronizing local businesses, there are times that I give up circling up and down Main Street and just drive out to one of the chains. Walking from the parking lot behind Lindy's to downtown needs improvement -- it's a narrow sidewalk and difficult for some to navigate.

to fast through main st.

Through traffic should be directed to side streets - through traffic should loop the city. Add parking garages where folks need more parking. Having lots of flat parking lots is UGLY.

-I've never understood why crosswalks go through the center of Keene's traffic circles (not just downtown)- why mix pedestrians with confused drivers? Crosswalks should come before/after circles. -All high-traffic pedestrian crossings in places that are unexpected would benefit from the auto lights when someone is crossing- those are great! -Coin operating parking meters are hugely annoying. Please install a central credit card meter and have pay-and-display. Even better, offer the options to purchase a monthly or annual pay-and-display that can be reloaded online

too many signs which are distracting

limited crosswalks not necessarily where they need to be. The streets are too wide encouraging speeding and are not friendly to pedestrians.

Why not ask how survey participants get around, and then for some of the benefits and challenges of their transportation modes? For myself, car. And convenience. I've considered biking and done a little bit but am nervous biking on the streets. I know with practice I'll feel more comfortable. I'd definitely take a biking in Keene 101 course!

No public transportation

Slow the speed down not eon Main Street! Everyone's in a rush but we need to slow down and enjoy our views

Lack of free parking!!! It seems crazy that everywhere you turn there is metered parking. Even in downtown Chicago you can find FREE on-street parking. My family pays a lot of money in parking tickets at the Keene Public Library every year. How is a parent supposed to have coins (and enough of them) every time they want to go to the library. Forget about needing to keep extremely close track of your meter time because the meter readers stand out there waiting for meters to run out.

Get the parking off Main St. Until i lived here & could walk everywhere I never shopped Main Street because the parking/ traffic is too tight. Also, very few businesses are handicap accessible.

Inattentive or discourteous drivers.

During certain times of the day there is a severe shortage of available parking in the downtown area. The most glaring is 6-8pm when many stores are still open, downtown residents have returned home from work, diners arrive and evening entertainment events get underway. Parking for most downtown residents is a significant problem, especially during the winter months. More downtown housing is being built as we take this survey. People complain about the efficiency of the meter attendants and the added cost of doing business downtown.

Parking is available during the day - but not in the early evening when there are events and busy restaurant

Not maintaining sidewalks in the winter time

Q6. What are the challenges to the traveling public today?

I live on Court St just near the hospital and although the speed limit is 30, people go closer to 40+ and that's incredibly dangerous for residents trying to get in and out of their driveways.

limited parking on main street and off streets. Keene yoga center has very limited parking that is convenient for members

-Ramp up complete streets (bicycle lanes are one consideration--a network of streets with bicycle accommodation will be key) -Lack of community investment in public transportation (according to information from the Census' "On the Map" tool the latest data shows that there are almost 5,000 people that live and work in Keene. With the exception of the bicycling enthusiasts, all of them have to drive downtown for work or shopping. They are the parking "problem" that is often cited. If they have convenient transportation alternatives to get downtown (all seasons transportation) then the parking "problem" will not be perceived as much as a problem. -Continue to improve "wayfinding" particularly signage to available parking -Intermodal Transportation Center needs to be considered -Long term parking needed in downtown Keene for people using intercity bus -Better bus connections to Amtrak service in Brattleboro, MBTA, and major regional airports

Bike lanes will increase congestion, bikes in narrow areas are a danger to the lives of bikers and the emotional and financial wellbeing of drivers.

Generally, compared to many cities I've been to, traffic and temperment of drivers, etc., is pretty good downtown.

To think that people would consider Keene to be congested has not spent time in most other areas. We have a nice balance of busy, but we have to have more reasons for people to come downtown. Keene is too focused on moving cars.

Waves of traffic congestion include lunchtime, when it's often difficult to find on-street parking.

The perpetual clash between bike/ped and vehicle traffic

The biggest challenge in my opinion is the fact that there are two lanes of traffic in each direction, which is dangerous for pedestrians at the crosswalk. Even if cars in the near lane stop for you, cars in the other lane may not see you and don't stop. At night it is especially hard to see pedestrians while driving.

NA

you can't have bike lanes in downtown without rethinking the parking situation - find the land a create pathway system on the backside of buildings and have more paths within the city other than just the rail tail for stronger connectivity Limited parking is only at certain times - parking garage at gilbo ave could really change the landscape of keene

Loud motorcycles revving. My kids are continually covering ears and it is hard to dine outside. Embarrassing when we have visitors to our town.

Loitering bums

Backing out onto Main Street (after parking) is terrible!

Keene needs to be more bike friendly!!!!

This is not a big city and in comparison, the traffic congestion is totally reasonable.

I would like to see a light put it further down town for people to cross over from gilbo, and to those turning into the street that the Spectrum Building is on. I would like to see some sort of park or creative area for children to be added.

Poorly lit crosswalks

Q6. What are the challenges to the traveling public today?

Maybe the lights by the center of town traffic circle may be unnecessary because isn't the point of a traffic circle is to not use traffic lights? Actually, one improvement can be made by perhaps implementing publicly shared bicycles (like Citi bikes in NYC). Also, taxis or ride sharing aren't common.

Paint the crosswalks so drivers can see them the fake brick isn't working and the tiled crosswalks aren't either. Take a look at Stockbridge MA's crosswalks.

Panhandlers. Panhandlers. Traffic congestion. Difficulty backing out of parking spaces on Main St. Panhandlers.

mass transit as well. But the thing is, if more people lived downtown, you'd have more pedestrians.

traffic patterns not clear for visitors.

Taxis are expensive. Not enough public transportation for evening activities.

The "rotary" around central square is not a true rotary and because of the lights, it does not seem to help traffic. Coming from Court Street onto Main Street is especially difficult. When there is a red light, traffic gets backed up and you cannot enter the rotary! I worked on Court Street while living on Main Street for years, and my commute going home was always several minutes longer than my commute to work, simply because of the traffic back up heading from Court St. onto the Main St. rotary.

Limited public transportation options, lack of safety and awareness of bicycle traffic.

Is paid parking really the way to go? How much money does it bring in? How much does it cost for personnel, upkeep and the untold impact of not being a very welcoming approach.

Inconsiderate drivers that don't yield when entering the square.

The rotaries are not bicycle friendly and the sidewalks are off limits. Main Street parking is difficult, especially when pulling out into traffic

Biking is scary I also am very scared as a pedestrian of the way the police fly through Main Street. They don't even slow at crosswalks

The lack of knowledge regarding the crosswalks(people don't know they have to wait at the lights and not wait where there are no lights) and lack of courtesy or knowledge driving around the rotary.

All cross walks should have the flashing lights for when pedestrians are on the crosswalk

Lack of lines/markers around the common to keep people in the proper lanes. Everyday it seems I get cut off or held up by someone that isn't driving where they should be.

Cost of parking in Main St core

Lighting of downtown street crossings!

I know why bikes are not allowed on sidewalks, but I'm terrified to ride on main st. Walking is usually much better.

Q7. What opportunities do you think this revitalization project presents?

A chance to evolve and adapt to the needs of the community.

Attract and retain talented, working citizens.

More property tax paying properties to be constructed.

bringing people and commerce to downtown

there is space for a downtown arena...if there is the public will and funding

Evening entertainment options (more "nice"/semi-upscale f&b options w/music); community-building; community pride -- all attracting and keeping a younger PROFESSIONAL workforce

Make Keene attractive to those who want to ensure the long term vitality of this community. That includes folks who don't live here yet.

I think Keene has the best downtown of any city in the area and we should make the most of it.

Economic development is the biggest opportunity I see if the revitalization project can address some of the issues that I raised. Keene is a beautiful town and with a bit of smart planning could be even more attractive.

Updating the design review standards and incorporating more ART! we'll need it if we claim to be an artsy town...

To be forward-thinking and embrace cutting-edge urban planning ideas, including addressing the opioid addiction issue, safer roads and walkways, and improved public transportation, especially given the aging populace.

Revisit bygone master planning efforts, particularly relating to traffic flow and downtown expansion.

the opportunity to spend money

Economic development

Not sure it's necessary

Keene has a similar feel to the "complete streets" concept, bike lanes would be a huge improvement.

Bringing business back to downtown. More shops!!

More foot traffic for businesses

little to none.....i see the city wanting no change...everything brought before them they turn down if not locals

We need more shops that cater to the local community. we also need a better downtown food culture

I don't think that there's a lot that needs to change.

Wasting tax payers money

It helps maintain the integrity of the traditional Keene downtown look and feel.

Taking a fresh look at what we have, and challenging ourselves to do more/make wise choices

Opportunity to make Keene a more appealing place that our young residents and college students want to stay in when they cross into adulthood. Differentiate Keene from other communities.

green architecture and energy!

Many good things!

A chance to soften the appearance of downtown and make it more family friendly.

to attract more businesses and people for our downtown area

The very process of the exercise engages the public for benefits that are not yet imagined.

An opportunity to think about what has been lost from the past and re-imagine how it could be again. ie/ increasing housing by re-building multi-story buildings on main street?

Q7. What opportunities do you think this revitalization project presents?

Encourage 100% clean energy

More employment for young adults

Bring more and better businesses downtown

I think all of you city employees are amazing and will make it what it should be!

Never enough money

Make the downtown more inviting for families...fewer drug related issues

Add usable, dynamic public spaces; expand "downtown"

See #4 above

Revitalize downtown businesses, encourage brick & mortar spending in age of online shopping

Perhaps a bicycle rodeo, at the rec center, and jump bike demo at the skate park. Mountain Bike challenges with fat tire and mountain bikes at Drummer Hill, and Goose Pond could draw a crowd as well.

Even the Hospitals could get involved with some preventative screenings, the Ambulance crews standing by as well, just in case. Of course, a hybrid bike tour of the bike paths in the area, as well as favorite side streets. Small local sustainable store tours,(there are quite a few). Such diversions as Washington Falls, also known as Beaver Brook Falls, are within riding distance of anywhere. People could guide bicycle tours to Robinhood Park, and on up Water street, to find Chapman road, and views of Monadnock. I could also see them bringing back the Optical avenue Criterion. It would also be nice maybe, to get a "Tour de Monadnock" going, just for fun, touring all the back roads, and small mountains, which offer Monadnock views, in a ring around the mountain.

This is an opportunity to make downtown safe and easy for people to get around who are in wheelchairs or using walkers. We have a lot of older people who like to walk around. Need more accessible storefronts, wider sidewalks, longer walk signals for people crossing the road, and safer crosswalks on West Street especially!

An opportunity to codify the look, feel, and atmosphere of our downtown via city ordinance.

We COULD put our money into a welcoming center which includes public bathrooms.

update but maintain current look

Motivate a healthy sustainable direction and momentum. Look at what trends have doomed other downtowns and avoid them here where they may already be beginning. Prevent more bars.

Nothing

More jobs for locals

Growth, we have the population to put in well known name brand chain stores now. I hate having to drive 2 hours in any direction just to go to a mall.

Bringing in locals and others alike to enjoy and shop the local businesses. Encourage more shops and eateries continuing to make Keene a vibrant center.

Clean up your opiate problem & think about who will come back to shop & dine. We consumers like to feel safe!

Growth and vitality

Restoration of historic elements

Public Art displays. Places to bring children to play.

More people who would find it appealing to actually stop and explore downtown. I've lived here my whole life and downtown is the last place I go because of traffic, parking, limited variety and influx of college kids going to pubs.

Q7. What opportunities do you think this revitalization project presents?

It may urge area residents to shop and dine more in downtown Keene on a regular basis.

Obviously enhance the beauty and appeal, increase commerce, but mostly, we want people that come to school here, to want to stay here. Most do not currently.

I think this can be an opportunity to make the city more friendly to bikers and walkers. Also would allow to attract new local businesses to boost the economy. we don't need fast foods, Walmarts, Sears, or any store like that.

I'm not sure there needs to be a big revitalization project. Spend the money on the services to help the homeless people who constantly loiter on Main Street. Helping them will make downtown much more pleasant for everyone.

growth, attract/ keep younger demographic- retain graduates from colleges in town

A chance to breath new life into downtown. It is very nice now, but I like being proactive now, as opposed to waiting till there are crumbling sidewalks and empty stores

growth for Keene while retaining the character it has taken years to develop

Will hopefully bring residents and visitors to the downtown area to enjoy the restaurants and shops!

More room for bicycles. A more family friendly atmosphere. Walking my kids downtown there are smokers in many places and many poor role models for kids. It would be nice to have more activities going on that promote healthy choices and exciting events for families

More festivals like the Pumpkinfest

I think that, for the most part, the last revitalization project has held up well. There's always room for some fine-tuning, but I don't think that a wholesale change in direction is needed. One opportunity is to work to revitalize Marlboro Street.

Bringing more money into Keene, keeping young artists and educated in the area after they graduate from KSC or Antioch. More opportunities for the Keene community to "meet" each other and know their community members.

attract new businesses to downtown, improve downtown appeal in run down areas and safety for all ages

an opportunity to raise taxes,

To clean up the city and making it more people friendly

Identification of the barriers to keeping businesses downtown, and problem solving to eliminate or reduce those barriers. We have a lot of needed social services downtown, or close to it. While needed, we should look at alternative locations for those services so downtown is not where the people who need those services gather. Hard as it is to talk about that, the reality is that is a barrier to a vibrant downtown.

Too many to mention.

I think this revitalization could really extend downtown's accessibility. In Keene, there aren't a ton of activities for people between the ages of 16 and 21. We can't go to bars, but we don't want to sit at home on a Saturday night. We can pretty much only go to the movies or out to dinner if we want to stay in Keene. I think the store fronts and spaces could really become more targeted toward the youth because adults have a lot offered to them in our city.

More trees and landscaping. We have a beautiful downtown now. Need to preserve it.

better traffic patterns

not sure any ?

Not sure it can change much

Q7. What opportunities do you think this revitalization project presents?

A need for activity i.e. An indoor year round market, a place for artists, music and other entertainment on the street more than just music festival,

A chance to make downtown Keene more of a centerpiece for the whole town. To create a pedestrian friendly zone for gatherings, shopping and dining.

This is a chance for the City to fix the traffic pattern issue on Main Street southbound as it approaches Gilbo Ave with that odd left lane shift that can be quite dangerous with cars parked on the center median side!

A more home like town not city but town that can bring everyone back to gather in treating this town like its their own family.

An opportunity to clean up the downtown area and make it appealing again.

Some unique, out-of-the-box thinking...to make Keene the coolest place you never heard of...
tourism

Revitalization of the Marlborough Street corridor, sprucing up of some of the rundown zones (Roxbury, triangle between Railroad and Water, for end between Gilbo and Winchester)

Bring the community together around positive action for a more sustainable, inclusive future.

A place where people want to be, not just stop for a short time and then move on

Bring back street fair!

Vast

To help solve the parking issues. Perhaps the city could invest more in public transportation and less on parking lots.

Don't know- Already Glad to see the new use for the old Middle School property and the old YMCA gone to make way for new MOCO, etc.

Make downtown a more people friendly place rather than car friendly. Expand into connecting corridors with unique neighborhood identities.

The opportunity to increase our taxes yet again- downtown is just fine the way it is

To spend money we do not have

An opportunity to recruit new and established businesses from other areas. Good public opinion about what the community wants to see.

A way to get everyone involved in the vision for Keene.

the opportunity to bring colorful artwork to the street scape

Attracting new and vibrant businesses.

Financial how are you paying for it without raising property taxes

Simpler road navigation for bike commuting. Not only bike lanes, but less confusing navigation so drivers can be more attentive to the road

Improving Marlboro Street

A chance to re-distinguish Keene as a premier New England destination

Opportunities for jobs and for further beautification of our city

more cultural events, historic learning, dining pleasures

Less vehicle centric more pedestrian and bike friendly approach

be more like Concord downtown!

There is no point in reconstructing downtown unless we change our emphasis on motorized traffic.

City growth

Create a more walkable community and pedestrian friendly downtown.

Q7. What opportunities do you think this revitalization project presents?

Get tough on the junkies, pan handlers and other bad users.

Bring more diversity of retail and dining to downtown (eg Middle Eastern restaurant at ~scale and price of Thai Garden, "five and dime" store with a few basic stationery, hardware items etc that residents and workers downtown might need at ready access)

Well, *SOMEBODY* is making BIG \$\$\$ at the taxpayer's expense....

Important to hear from the actual folks who live here

Opportunity to attract new businesses - local first!

Bringing more successful businesses and consumers and therefore more awareness and hopefully more opportunities for community gatherings

The chance for our community to come together again and be proud of our City and our Downtown.

an opportunity to open the downtown area to more business and more business traffic. Hopefully expanding downtown and ridding of low income housing and other ghetto structures will make Keene appear to be less drug infested and will attract a better class of crowd to the area

I feel that this project could present an opportunity to get both residents and tourists to be more inclined to take day trips to the city. By increasing the esthetics and adding more shops it could become a tourist hot spot, not just from pumpkin fest.

The opportunity for keene to grow in population, culture, and to become one of the preminent art and cultural destinations

to better the town of keene physically and mentally by incorporating more biophelic design in the town structure

I feel like there is many areas that are easy to improve in that will definitely make the difference and I believe the first place to start is with

i think this project presents the opportunity to bring Keene more into the future, make the city more green. We have one of the top sustainable colleges in the US and we should work to bring the city to be as sustainable

Sustainability opportunities, incorporation of solar for street lights and such

To repland the footprint of an already lively downtown core.

more art, culture and opportunity for travelers to spend time in Keene as a hang out place rather than a place where people can just Drink and buy stuff

Tourism, convenience, increased access

The public gets to be part of the process & we can decide as a community what we want our downtown to look like

Fill in some vacant storefronts.

Parking opportunities!

using bikes has a host of advantages beyond health benefits. It also make Keene a global city, resembling large cities all over the world that welcome and accodate pollution-free ways of getting around.

It's an opportunity to assess what works for Keene and what needs to be updated, eliminated, or added.

Reinvent the city and make it more involved with the community and the college

Change the focus of the town to one that is inviting to tourists and people from elsewhere vs a town that is primarily interested in serving itself

It gives the public a voice in how the downtown area may change over the next few years.

Q7. What opportunities do you think this revitalization project presents?

Keene should become a destination spot a place that is known for its incredible downtown Cuisine dining it's more sociable people and the colonial and the upcoming Junior High Ridge reservation of the auditorium become larger event venues. Also the old Methodist Church should be revitalized to become a venue in looking at other cities where they have architecture such this app and they have repurposed the building to be an event venue for intimate concerts for receptions for seminars conferences creating an art gallery creating a social venue

change to stay relevant and notable

Bring more people to the area = better Keene economy

attracting business that will stay and thrive on Main

an opportunity to make downtown more user friendly for visitors

Making the downtown area larger and offer a bigger variety of things to do and places to go to.

Increase our sustainability through increased resiliency as a result of better & proactive planning that supports a mix of uses and transportation options/choices!!!!

To bring it up a notch! It really has a nice atmosphere and the bones are there from the previous improvements.

Modernize, Modernize, Modernize.

To increase the chances people will want to invest in property in the city of Keene

create a more walker friendly downtown, possibly reroute some traffic flow to make portions just for walkers

Bring more folks downtown.

Look at keep a strong downtown appeal.

Make parking less of a hassle and attract more people and businesses

A chance to make a good thing great!

A thriving downtown.

Bringing back a Main St that we can all be proud of! We used to have the biggest Main St in the nation, we should aspire to bring back our bragging rights in one way or another. We lost our record for biggest Main St and we lost our Pumpkin Fest! We need something that can bring back positivity and pride to our community!

Hopefully to continue the regrowth that's been happening downtown already, and encouraging families to come downtown again, where they've been somewhat pushed out by problematic citizens in recent years.

Perhaps a more 'Go Green' approach to the city. The idea of more recycling units on main street sounds great. I often see plastic dumped in normal garbage cans due to the lack of recycling options.

To create a cleaner downtown that has more opportunities available for public events that could drawn in people from other areas. This would help local businesses thrive better. Better landscaping would liven up the area also making it more appealing.

Keene is a great little town but it needs a bit of a jump start to keep young professionals in the area. I think if this revitalization project focuses on the right things, it can add more allure and hopefully life to keep people here. Young professionals travel to other small cities in NH like Manchester and Portsmouth but people from those areas don't generally travel to Keene because there isn't a reason. We should change that.

make Keene a destination

Increased foot traffic

Q7. What opportunities do you think this revitalization project presents?

It would be great to see the city make better use of its history as a mill town, similar to Harrisville or Fall River, but with a commitment to local businesses, a public market that makes use of local farms, and affordable but healthy options for dining.

More events and outside activities.

Bringing more heart back to the heart of Keene :)

to consider spending the money elsewhere

Create more reasons for people to come downtown. Amazon.com won the battle for retail but they still can't deliver a summer concert or a great dinner.

Fantastic opportunity to upgrade / energize / coalesce our brand - Keene is a lively, community centric, healthy, arts oriented place.

Arts & Entertainment District designation would be a huge draw, both artists/arts orgs & businesses.

Making the downtown area more diverse for entertainment, food, and shopping

continue enhancing green spaces, provide additional outdoor spaces for public and restaurants/bars

Opportunity for improvement overall, but also maintaining the look and feel of downtown Keene (keeping that NE look)

serves the downtown merchants

Stop to really look for root causes.

Music Venue / Outdoor sports

Make downtown more pedestrian friendly; even in the winter.

A more charming downtown. An opportunity to rework traffic along the way so that it works well when complete; and so it works well during the construction. As a local going to work, etc. it can be frustrating, especially during construction - even walking normal walking patterns are impeded when sidewalks are closed.

The opportunity to improve an amazing town.

an opportunity to add more diversity to downtown ares

I think this group could really help boost business and encourage more to utilize downtown.

Growth

We have learned much about creating an attractive downtown. We should incorporate those learnings going forward.

A place that invites the residents of Keene to shop , dine and gather for events

Improved traffic flow so the square is more pedestrian and bicycle friendly. Improved parking off the square

"Cleaning up" run down areas; more green space; relocating parking areas and freeing up walking only areas

I'm not sure I understand what you're asking, the phrasing is confusing

to bring the community together, to create more green space that is family friendly

Out of town visitors

Keeping Keene known for its main st

More things to do for younger crowd, younger population, increase in local economy

Q7. What opportunities do you think this revitalization project presents?

Plan for a bad weather community "hub". Give a reason and place for people to regularly visit. Shopping and dinner gets stale. Weekly visual art and music opportunities that are not dependent on individual spending money. Give people a positive reason to get out with the community and spending will happen. Right now Keene is rather stale. Art in the park is a nice attempt but it is rather dull and lacks contemporary vision and energy. What can tie the downtown community together besides sales on a weekly or monthly basis?

Poorly worded question... Not sure what this is asking.

Matching downtown amenities to needs

the possibility of providing parking in the downtown area

More enjoyable place to hang out

When I first moved to Keene 20 years ago, downtown had a more eclectic, diverse feel to it. Now there are many unoccupied store fronts and more than enough of the same types of restaurants. It feels as though the town caters to seniors and college students, with nothing to draw in the young but professional 30 somethings. This is an opportunity to redirect the downtown culture to reflect the new, vibrant ideas and outlets for the up and coming future of this community.

Filling more empty store fronts

encourage more small business to come/ lower rents for businesses to be able to afford to open and give it a shot.

-New housing above storefronts, better multimodal transportation improvements, improving the streetscape on West St, Marlboro St, Gilbo Ave and Emerald St

To put increased taxes upon the population.

Bring more professional types to live, work, and entertain downtown. The scale seems to be tipping the wrong way now and has been for too long.

Make it more for multi-modal transportation

Imagining what Keene will be like in the future and making it happen. Keep Keene on the cutting edge with pride in downtown

Increased opportunity for business attraction and retention. Job creation should be primary focus of revitalization efforts.

This is an opportunity to make Main Street more of a public space for events, the farmer's market, public art, etc. Also an opportunity to move some (not all) parking off of Main Street and open up space for bicycle lanes so people do not ride on the sidewalks because they feel safe in the road.

NA

improving railroad square, its tired look needs a major overhaul. expanding the look of downtown north (Washington & court), east (Roxbury), west (west) and south (Marlboro) ALSO - get rid of the old coin meters - PLEASE!!!

The cosmetics of downtown Keene is at a pivotal point. With a few large projects in the works, numerous retail vacancies, and numerous challenges, it feels as though there is no cohesive plan. Without a robust plan that addresses all facets of downtown, and the careful fostering of that plan, Keene is only 5-10 years away from becoming another Claremont or Salem, rather than a Portsmouth or Concord. It's truly a pivotal point, and lack of careful action will most likely take Keene down an undesirable path.

Better economy and quality of life for younger people who want to stay, work and play.

I'd love to see some public murals

Q7. What opportunities do you think this revitalization project presents?

to prepare for both the existing community and point it towards the future.

Bringing in more out of towners

Adding life to dull Keene

Closer look at complete streets. Reclaim empty lot by Whitney Bros/Beaver Brook as a public space (albeit one that can flood from time to time)

None without the taxpayer getting stuck again. Could make the downtown merchants pay for the revitalization

Let's make this city a biking/walking city!

A chance to reduce congestion, and improve the appearance of downtown

Make walking traffic safer and preventing drivers from hitting someone and getting charged for it because of the poor lighting caused by the city not installing better lights.

Modernization and growth

A giant opportunity to throw away thousands of taxpayers money+ make Mayor look good to his country club base.

a fresh look and opportunity to update some green spaces

Good grief, who knows! Costs of these projects!! Yikes!!

It will draw more people to the area during various seasons and boost the local economy.

This project presents the opportunity for Keene residents to have a say in how their community evolves.

a chance to collectively brainstorm a vision

Increase the draw of professionals and doctors to our area, offer youth additional activities and interests, expose more arts and culture and support new and existing local family owned businesses

Ideas from varied perspectives - blank slate thinking.

It's a good opportunity for the downtown area to get a bit of a fresh look and function a little better for the current population.

Opportunity to bring public art into the downtown and improved pedestrian/bike travel

A more beautiful and pleasant downtown area as well as a greater sense of community.

Concert venues, bringing a younger and more progressive population to the area, support and encourage an already strong community

More events that are doable for families

A chance to really examine the changes (most importantly the bad ones) that have occurred downtown and the reasons behind the changes and how to make better ones. A chance to draw in more of the community, enliven the area and make Keene a place that is actually "happening"

more interest for businesses if town loosens restrictions on outdoor dining, signs, etc. If there was more activity at night, downtown, the economic vibrancy might actualize....

Grow the population of the city with middle class and above citizens

It's a chance to bring more businesses downtown.

More attractive architecture and landscaping (such as the look and feel of Keene State's campus)

Improving the built space and bringing in new businesses that will compliment the city

Fill empty store fronts, draw more retailers and restaurants (not more boring financial and oil businesses)

Support of our neighbors small business, attract families looking for a safe place to raise their kids as well as provide families activity

Q7. What opportunities do you think this revitalization project presents?

Viable and diverse businesses that attract different demographics; more green space and sitting areas so that people want to hang out downtown

A wonderful idea to consider public opinion

A chance to bring more interesting places to spend time. Develop small green areas with local food vendors.

Attracting more people to the downtown area will be better for the economy

Thoughtful design and planning

higher taxes

More people enjoy being downtown

Keene has a large portion of the bicycle infrastructure in place. Use it for future development and set a goal to be a sustainable city. This will attract the young population.

Q8. What do you think are the obstacles to economic development in the downtown today?

homeless and panhandlers. empty store fronts

Homeless population increasing; perception that opioid epidemic is affecting safety and comfort of the general population.

Air and noise pollution from vehicle traffic.

Lack of enough access to social services, shelter, food, addiction treatment, etc. - People who fall through the cracks sometimes end up on Main st. and sometimes end up pan handling, which isn't great for local businesses.

chicken and egg sort of situation... more jobs in the area would allow for more people, and perhaps more disposable income to enjoy downtown... revitalizing downtown would bring in more jobs...

Parking directly on Main St. should be limited to allow for more pedestrian and green space. Traffic congestion makes downtown an undesirable place to be during certain hours of the day. Costs for better parking arrangements and traffic flow, still allowing easy access to downtown merchants, is an obstacle.

Bums

Too many large single family homes, not enough small homes/apartments near downtown.

Keene has many issues which will never be fixed.....the city loves to deny just about everything.....the rich in keene run the town...the poor have no say.....and how the rich want it.....not a fan of keene and why prefer to live elsewhere

Homeless and drug issues

Attracting shoppers and patrons other than college students. Rents are way to high for business. I am a photographer who would love to have a rental space but everyone has quoted me prices that are prohibitive to doing so. As I walk around I see the same places for rent still, and I've been here for over 6 months. Apparently they prefer "for rent" signs in the window rather than a new business paying a little less to get started. I would love it if someone would at least negotiate.

Many vacancies currently

The internet makes things so much cheaper for people to buy the same thing. Local businesses have to cover their expenses.

I don't know if this is true, but it seems to me that there is a missed opportunity by the modern one-story commercial buildings. If there were multi-story buildings downtown, compatible with the size and scale of the historic buildings that remain, there would be an opportunity for more housing downtown. I'm sure parking is a perceived problem, but there are huge lots around the downtown that I've never seen full. Maybe some directional signage, and/or notification of what is/could be public parking would be helpful. Especially if you add additional housing downtown.

High taxes. We have the newest police cruisers possible (and a lot of them). New fire trucks. And new stations for both. I support both. But do we really need to scrap police cruisers before they have 20k miles? Even the water dept has shiny new trucks. Good luck getting young professionals to afford rent, and business owners to survive when we spend so much on municipalities.

My husband and I were instrumental on dog park for 7 years. Public opinions never matter sadly. It's what the 'city politics' want that we will get. After 9yrs & \$10000 raised no dog park!

Brattleboro seems to have many more unique local businesses, as does Northampton MA. Those cities are no wealthier, nor better located than Keene. For some reason, we no longer have the kinds of stores that draw shoppers. I hear business owners say that it is mainly the high rent.

Q8. What do you think are the obstacles to economic development in the downtown today?

Shouldn't be "the place" to buy drugs.

Resistance to events like the pumpkin festival that bring families downtown and tourists from around the country. Without events and attractions to bring money into downtown, the reliance on retail is likely to fade and make downtown less attractive to visit. Zoning issues and long time business owners that use political clout to prevent competition also hinders a more diverse and resilient downtown. Food trucks are very popular around the country and Keene's restrictive rules around them prevents them from becoming a thing the visitors and young people would enjoy in our city.

Perhaps a bicycle rodeo, at the rec center, and jump bike demo at the skate park. Mountain Bike challenges with fat tire and mountain bikes at Drummer Hill, and Goose Pond could draw a crowd as well.

Even the Hospitals could get involved with some preventative screenings, the Ambulance crews standing by as well, just in case. Of course, a hybrid bike tour of the bike paths in the area, as well as favorite side streets. Small local sustainable store tours,(there are quite a few). Such diversions as Washington Falls, also known as Beaver Brook Falls, are within riding distance of anywhere. People could guide bicycle tours to Robinhood Park, and on up Water street, to find Chapman road, and views of Monadnock. I could also see them bringing back the Optical avenue Criterion. It would also be nice maybe, to get a "Tour de Monadnock" going, just for fun, touring all the back roads, and small mountains, which offer Monadnock views, in a ring around the mountain.

I don't know what the zoning rules are like downtown. I have heard that it is hard for business owners to pay property taxes and still turn a profit. I think more downtown events, like the pumpkin festival, will help bring tourists and visitors and other foot traffic downtown and help these business owners out. Also, make Main Street more of a destination so there are more things to do. This will draw more people downtown, and make it easier for businesses to succeed.

Vagrancy and loitering which is a big turn off for tourists as well as locals, especially the elderly in the evening and nighttime hours.

Need for low income housing.

unsure

Landlords aren't motivated to quickly fill retail vacancies and their goals are not aligned with community goals.

The City Council and the people who want to keep Keene the same. We need younger blood with ideas to move forward or Keene will die in my life time (34 years old)

High cost of energy. Isolated regionally. Lack of reliable communication tech. (cellular & internet)

Remove angled store front parking. Continue metered parking in center lane. Create free off street parking off Gilbo street, add a garage? Free parking will encourage visitors!

Panhandling & open drug selling & use!

Limited public transportation

Sustainable businesses staying downtown long-term

Keene State has become a very beautiful campus but for economic development that would be of interest to anyone other than KSC it seems like availability of space is limited. The off-campus housing in what used to be family neighborhoods causes problems.

Q8. What do you think are the obstacles to economic development in the downtown today?

Keene is ridiculous. It costs a tremendous amount to survive paying rent/mortgage and utilities. Only miles away the cost of living is almost cut in half. There is also the luxury of not having all the college students in your front yard. The college should be moved and the remaining area where the college currently is renovated into something more involved and inviting to local and traveling people.

I do feel that parking is the number one issue for the city of Keene.

my concern is that retirement, although well deserved, has impacted downtown shops. I love all that Hannah Grimes represents and hope locally sourced support can be expanded.

Not sure

Big-box development and flight of institutions (Middle School, High School, YMCA) from the city core. So glad that MOCO is staying and investing!

high rents due to high taxes?

see #6

Homeless. Panhandlers. General troublemakers.

Masses of people need to use Railroad Square and other public spaces to counteract people who give the downtown a bad reputation.

I'm walking disabled.

You have an element of our community that can be a barrier to a vibrant business destination, which becomes to a barrier to a vibrant downtown for the larger community. Again, difficult to force into the discussion but a reality that should be addressed and dealt with. Provide needed social services, but don't put them in the heart of your community.

Type of parking - should be very close to downtown, in garages. A number of parking lots could be eliminated & the space used for businesses & parks. Sidewalks on West Street could be widened [and street narrowed] so that pedestrians could walk from downtown out as far as the overpass - making those businesses viable. Public spaces - small urban parks dotted throughout the downtown would be delightful.

The City of Keene needs to attract blue/new collar jobs that pay well and then have affordable housing for the workers who fill those jobs.

Wish I could have checked restrictive zoning and city over reach a few more times. Sometimes rules get in the way of common sense.

Not enough public spaces with too many events

MONEY _ where is it coming from. Homeless shelters and pan handlers bothering people as they walk along Main st. Yes - it is a problem. Opioid crisis - drug addicts and dealers in town and there doesn't seem to be a crack down.

Prices too high in the stores. But let's make it beautiful for them with tax payer money.

A combination of a distressed-looking Roxbury Street and Washington Street, along with an increase in panhandling individuals keeps me and my family from frequenting downtown, especially as the sun goes down.

Economic development is a lot broader than this list.

I know numerous architects, engineers, and builders who simply refuse to work on downtown projects because they believe the zoning enforcement is arbitrary and overly onerous. Building codes exist to promote public safety, not to create a revenue stream for the city.

Q8. What do you think are the obstacles to economic development in the downtown today?

Variety of shops and shopping opportunities. Financial advisers and banks don't attract out of town visitors to the downtown. We lost a wonderful art store to a real estate office. Which do you think is more appealing? I believe we need a vision of what type of businesses will benefit the downtown shopping experience. Realtors, banks and financial advisors might be better located on side streets rather than taking up valuable retail space on Main Street. (I know, good luck with this, but it's a thought!)

Rents are way too high due to the College. Landlords are able to take advantage of student housing demand, which raises the rent for average working citizens who are not students.

I can't really say. Not educated enough with downtown issues.

Reputation damage caused by homeless beggars, heroine problems, stupid pumpkin obsessions, and robin hooding morons

Tangled traffic- Main Street is a conduit for impatient commuters heading to the highway. And the fact that more folks are shopping online and not locally

Beggars, vagrants, miscreants, and drug dealers hanging out and frequenting the downtown area.

Not enough living wage jobs

Market rents are creeping down, but building owners have to charge high rent rolls because the real estate taxes on commercial properties are exorbitant.

Panhandlers and addicts, street fights

Not a property owner in Keene so not sure what factors drive rents (high taxes?) but they are too high for the (limited) foot traffic

Rents seem to be high and driving business out.

To chime in on the astronomical rents in the area, unfortunately they make it so this town is more of a party spot than a place for families. Which is a poor image in my book. I'd love to move back to Keene, but due to the rent, and the fact I'm a single mom raising two kids, it's impossible. I need a 3 bedroom. With rent as high as \$650/ per room... Or higher.. I can't afford that. I love this city, my family and friends are here, I love the education system offered, it would be great for my kids. Due to high rent, I can't live here anymore and it's sad. It's sad my kids don't get to have a better opportunity. They do get to live in a house, with a yard, but... I don't even have access to before or after care for them. I don't have access to a pre-K for my 3 year-old. So, my kids don't go to school.

Need a way to help new business set up shop without crippling delays or onerous hurdles. Maybe offer some incentives to help people set up business that will distinguish Keene

Homeless panhandlers are killing business and making it unsafe and uncomfortable to shop downtown

Bolster music life, artistic elements in downtown.

Marketing to bring people in to shop at the stores. Chamber activity? Small, local stores do well but should have someone to market the area to entice people from out of town to shop rather than just eat and go to our many cultural events. Could be because Keene is in the corner of the state without major highway access. That is also a good reason that makes us attractive as a place to live however.. Activities/events are the attractions that will bring them into the shops/restaurants.

Q8. What do you think are the obstacles to economic development in the downtown today?

Something really needs to be done about the volume of people that will harass you for money on Main Street. It makes me want to shop in the other plazas and it has to be driving away tourism. It's worst by local burger and that small park behind central square by the fire department.

Too many homeless/panhandlers harassing people

Traffic.

Not enough assistance and incentives for business development/relocation. Inconsistent regulation and policy.

Taxes are too high. Junkies, pan handlers and other bad actors roaming around downtown. Ineffective city mayor and council.

The City is controlled by an incompetent, crooked, and corrupt "GOOD OL' BOYS network". Retail and commercial development has been favored away from Downtown. For example, when Colony Mill Mall was first being developed, the Downtown merchants opposed it, fearing competition. But, after a few years, they realized that Colony Mill & Downtown were mutual attractions. Then, Monadnock Marketplace, originally planned as an enclosed shopping mall, was vigorously opposed for 20 years. Finally, it became a reality, and much bigger space-wise, than originally planned. And now, a defunct Colony Mill Mall is being repurposed into housing. It would be an amazing thing to see a few "mea culpas" from the guilty, greedy, short-sighted, incompetent local developers. MEDC included. The RR Square development is a convoluted wreck of a maze.

City council

I think that some people see the college citizens as a hindrance to our community. While the students do bring much needed business to our city businesses, sometimes student behaviors and activities are disruptive to families in the area and the city at large.

The panhandling epidemic is also a growing frustration - especially downtown - with people following you and approaching you and aggressively asking for money. The homelessness is also a growing issue, as is the drug epidemic. Rent / property taxes are FAR too high. Losing Pumpkinfest (like it used to be in 2004) was a huge blow to the community and region.

Not enough shops!!!!!!!!!!!!!! We lost the Kitchen Store.... the only one of it's kind in Keene... what a loss. We've lost the Colony Mill... such a sin.

There is not a big enough meeting space in order to hold large events.

We need to have support/space for new business incubation, especially ones that build on our regions strengths (arts, recreation & open space, farms, etc.). Would love to see something like a Green Business Incubator/Hub in one of the larger un/under-utilized buildings near downtown.

I think lack of parking is a misperception and I would like this to be discussed and ways to change this perception should be considered. I hear from many people that there isn't enough downtown parking and yet every time I'm down here, there is always available space. I'd say the one exception is during the evening, when there are multiple events going on. Then there is a lack of easy, convenient Main Street parking but ample in the parking lots.

the people that hang out down there make families not want to

Q8. What do you think are the obstacles to economic development in the downtown today?

The zoning rules that Require minimum parking spaces still baffles me. I don't know what other zoning rules are restrictive....my ignorance. High rents that we can expect from the new downtown living developments, adding to the already high price points of living right in Keene, could mean that only those with capacity to afford to live in downtown Keene could live here. I'm one who would like to live right downtown, and could afford to do so, but the costs of getting a downtown crib may corrupt the mix of incomes that live downtown now and make it more of a boutique zone for folks able to pay high housing costs.

Low wages for retail workers means lack of affordability of housing. Wages need to be raised to attract and keep workers.

Cost of revitalization

Swanzy. Yes, Swanzy. Keep essentials downtown - figure out those incentives and maybe get creative on taxes. Things have to rebalance tax-wise somehow.

I feel it typically is about what the city and community are willing to spend. Anything is possible if folks are willing to invest in it.

Lack of modern rental options. Holding on to super old buildings everywhere is ruining the potential of Keene. Rent options downtown are all dilapidated 100+-year-old buildings. Houses turned into quadplexes that should be duplexes at the most. Apartment complexes on central square that are falling apart and ought to be torn down and replaced entirely. Just a general lack of decent rental inventory and options.

It's a college town with I'm sure, college slumlords. Rent is too high, but owning is the same and subject to tax increases. There seems to be more housing going in targeting college students, hospital staff, or those non-indicative of average salary in this area. Why do we need more luxury rental units? How long is our low income housing list?

Rents are much, much too high. I abandoned a small business project because it would fail given the rents downtown

Young professionals are leaving the area due to lack of employment opportunities and nice, affordable housing. The rental market is very hard because there is a very large focus on senior and affordable housing. This leaves house rentals and there doesn't seem to be any sort of code for landlords which leads to slumlords. Young professionals are forced to face two options: 1. They can buy but a lot of the homes are so rundown and need a lot of work, and employment is limited so buying can be challenging. 2. Rent really rundown houses. If Keene wants to turn itself around it needs to address it's economic viability and career options, clean up the rental market, invest in housing other than affordable and senior, and find reasons to have young professionals stay.

Socioeconomic problems seem to prevent Keene from thriving. Keene could be like a Blueback Square (West Hartford) or a Northampton, but it seems to be held back economically. I'd like to see pubs and taverns on Maine Street as well as more shops that would attract people. Ten Thousand Villages, children's shops, men's clothing stores, more boutique shops for people to peruse. An overpriced furniture store isn't attracting anyone, but the Kitchen Store and the Ingenuity Country Store had late hours and gave people a reason to browse Main Street. There's not much there right now to attract people.

Delivery trucks have a hard time getting in and out.

Panhandling, homeless wandering around. Drug dealing/use

Q8. What do you think are the obstacles to economic development in the downtown today?

rents are too high for families and for businesses that might want to be on central square or Main st. we have many empty buildings and no businesses except for eateries.

Keene needs affordable housing for immigrant families, for young professionals, for creative economy workers. I am so tired of people bitching about parking. We cannot redesign our downtown around parking. Parking must be fit in where and how it can. See Exhibit A - Concord NH.

-We have a lot of the wrong businesses downtown, particularly to attract younger people. Why are there so few higher end cafes, restaurants and bars? Why are there no clothing stores except used clothes? -The chronic loitering along spaces on Main Street makes it unappealing at times to walk around without feeling like you're being leered at by unemployed, middle aged white men. -The coin operated parking meters and the over wrought meter monitors also make it difficult to park and stick around -I have heard rents are too high and controlled by one terrible-to-work with landlord, but that is second hand info as I am not a business owner -Overall, I think the problem with downtown Keene is that it is designed by and for Baby Boomers and Baby Boomer tastes. You have an adversarial relationship with college students and younger professionals who have moved to Keene from other areas, including young professors who have likely experienced a very different - and much more interesting- "college town" before moving here (for example, I have lived in Chapel Hill and Ann Arbor). I moved out from Keene to Chesterfield about 6 years ago, and now primarily spend my time in Brattleboro, Greenfield, MA, and Northampton, MA because they are much more interesting, young feeling towns.

lack of public restrooms and the perception of lack of parking

Funding

The root cause isn't an issue with down town Keene. How many Keene residents can afford to shop at Miranda's, or dine at Luca's? How can Keene provide support to increase the economic means of its residents? This will do the most to maintain and invigorate its downtown.

The City should encourage more restaurants, breweries, etc. to settle downtown. Greater outdoor eating opportunities would help. Many higher income residents travel to Peterborough, Walpole and VT to find interesting places to eat and drink. Keene has much to offer, but can do more to attract higher income families to live here, thereby increasing the tax base. More choices for food, arts, and shopping downtown would help, but most critically, high speed internet access for all city residents and businesses must be part of any economic development strategy.

Tangible support from the City.

Our town needs to be willing to have more events! And have way less zoning rules.

Trying to improve on a basically poor downtown design.

Perception of crime/lack of safety, lack of a variety of stores/venues

Homeless population, these folks need help and it needs to hub near down town but not on the main st

Q8. What do you think are the obstacles to economic development in the downtown today?

Lack of culture. A narrow vision and conservative mindset limit the influx of creative endeavors that could breath life into a sluggish community. Current successes are the local running groups that have grown weekly followers and events that are just starting to gain momentum. The art walk is a good idea but flawed in many ways. Mostly due to its once a year status. The arts, especially visual arts, need to be a staple throughout downtown. The draw and invigorating quality of the arts can not be under estimated. Keene has so much untapped potential.

That most of the properties are owned by the same people and are monopolized. The city council members have an underlying personal agenda and are closed off to change and letting go of control

Let's be honest, it's not easy navigating the building and zoning regulations in Keene. Change of use regulations have the potential to add a prohibitive amount to opening costs. Because of this Downtown has lost quite a bit of it's retail diversity, that's not a good sign for attracting future visitors. Retail is being replaced by service oriented storefronts, which don't add vibrant 'activity' to downtown, and bars, which are willing/able to pay those added costs because of the profits to be made in a college town.

Resistant council

This is a huge problem in this town! Just because college students have parents that can afford over \$1000 a month for a two bedroom slumlord apartment, doesn't mean the actual residents of Keene can! Rent is unreasonable! And maybe if we had more affordable housing options, the homelessness problem wouldn't be getting worse everyday.

Lack of handicap accessibility

-Lack of coherent community vision particularly around multimodal transportation and housing

Professionals are less likely to want to live downtown or near downtown because of the marginal demographic that has moved into these neighborhoods in recent years. On top of that, with fewer off-campus students renting, the effect on their former rental properties is already being seen, where less-than-desirable people filling the space and properties are not being maintained. Much more energy needs to be placed on making these neighborhoods attractive to professionals and others. It's a boon for the neighborhood and certainly for walkable downtown.

I also think the City needs to create a sales and marketing approach to help prospective business owners through the hoops to make it easier to start a business. The perception is we are not friendly in assisting commercial business startups

Lack of quality affordable housing for young professionals is severely impacted by low-quality student rentals. Parking is limited enough for downtown visitors, making it difficult for businesses to locate and secure parking for employees.

Investment!

We need more things to draw people downtown, so families could come here and make it a whole day thing. Railroad Square could have a lot more - tables with chairs, sculptures for kids to climb on, places for outdoor concerts, more wayfinding to help people find other destinations in Keene (in particular the rail trails - I often get questions from people visiting who are lost trying to find the rail trails!), food trucks, lighting (for example, string lights), more landscaping, etc. Also more shops/restaurants and housing downtown.

NA

get rid of the old coin meters - bring keene to 2017, not 1917!!!

Q8. What do you think are the obstacles to economic development in the downtown today?

Undesirables. In just 5-7 years, the optics of the downtown area has become embarrassing. Sorry, but the economic center of a city is no place for copious homeless shelters, section-8 housing, halfway houses and other such drug and alcohol rehab programs.

I wish there were more/better options for loft apartments in town.

The transients loitering in and around Main Street problem is terrible! Needle park (that's my name for it) near the police station is a black mark on the city as well.

We need a music venue that attracts a more diverse crowd, a smaller club for national acts and local musicians.

Panhandlers Visibility of people who appear to be dirty and disheveled, inebriated, drugged and/or mentally ill especially in public sitting areas.

I don't think there are enough family focused areas downtown. The gazebo is usually full of homeless or otherwise intimidating people, and I don't think it is very family friendly.

Not enough modern technology and not enough public events. More art is always great too. Art is inspirational, attracts people, and generally makes people feel better mentally. It is interesting how it can affect a culture and having it in the public eye is vital for shaping the city's culture.

Bums and panhandlers and addicts.

Panhandlers.

Most people that I speak with have bought property outside of Keene due to the high property taxes, even though they would like to live in Keene.

Off (main) street parking could have better directional signage.

I think another obstacle are the shopkeepers. They will say parking should be a priority, when it shouldn't. Again, more mixed use, more pedestrian-focus, those should be the priority.

Not convinced this is due to what Keene is or isn't doing but more of a reflection of the times. That said efforts to improve and sustain downtown is where focus should be.

Taxes. Keene's taxes are crazy. That's why there are so many lovely homes on Court St for sale and rents are so high.

Homeless people, drug dealers, and drug addicts walking and hanging around.

Ummm... loitering, homelessness, drug use and dealing.

We need more regular, well-planned events like the pumpkin festival. We need more spring time events and festivals too. What about outdoor movie nights downtown throughout the summer? I would love to help, but the city makes it really hard to get cool things approved

Outdoor dining is disruptive to people who are out walking!

I try to support downtown businesses that depend on walkers and paid parking

Q9. Do you think there is enough street lighting downtown during the evening hours?

On Main Street, yes -- but not on side streets such as Church St, Railroad St...

I haven't noticed any problems so far.

I think there is on main street and in central square, and down West street. I think the quality of lighting and sidewalks starts to trail off the farther from the core you get.

I don't go downtown after hours---streets are unsafe with all the unsavory characters

Either the lights are not bright enough, or there aren't enough. Many unlit corners, and dimly lit intersections for people/traffic.

not on all streets.....not side streets and alleys

Some side streets need more lighting .. Winter street, Gilbo, emerald, Roxbury

There is always a constant cry that crosswalks need to be improved. I think pedestrians need to be more cautious. Why for example do we need to post signs at crosswalks downtown to tell people to look to their left before entering a crosswalk?! Isn't is common sense and self-preservation instinct to do that? Why do pedestrians just blast out into a crosswalk without properly looking for traffic and expect cars to stop on a dime?

Oh my goodness! Some of your side alleys are so bright I could barely look down them!

Not sure

The street lights are way too dim. It is very difficult as a motorist to see pedestrians.

New street lights should be charming and look old and keep with downtown aesthetic

some spots do get dark, but good for stargazing

Need more lighting at edges of crosswalks

Perhaps more lighting down the side streets.

All crosswalks should be lit more, not just downtown.

Could definitely be more

Crosswalks downtown are dangerous.

It is extremely difficult to see pedestrians in dark clothes trying to cross Main St. Often, I see too many close calls. Brighter lights....or some kind of blinking light on a pole to alert drivers at each crosswalk would help the safety concern.

Yes, but downtown could use more.

On main st yes. On some of the surrounding side streets off of Main st- no.

There are areas on side streets that don't have enough lighting but the Main Street is adequate

...there is lighting downtown that suffices for walking through town BUT low to the ground or on the ground lighting would be welcome at all the crosswalks

More lighting at crosswalks

The added street lighting behind the colonial was unnecessary and an addition to light pollution and the wasted burning of fossil fuels.

Adding ten seconds to crosswalk time wouldn't be too much to ask of drivers waiting at lights.

Low to the ground preferably

Some places yes and others not enough or the wrong kind. Not all of it needs to be overhead, perhaps pedestal lighting would be as good or better and less intrusive.

Are there options to 'light pollution' through lower street lighting fixtures or other methods?

Enough for what purpose(s)...?

Not on side streets off of Main

Limited visibility of pedestrian traffic during the evening-lack of lights at crosswalks

Q9. Do you think there is enough street lighting downtown during the evening hours?

In the immediate downtown, yes, but as soon as people move outside the defined downtown the lighting is very sparse, which makes it difficult to walk to downtown from even short distances away.

I'm actually not entirely sure; would want to have a balance between safety and limiting light pollution
Stay away from the harsh add on lighting. Looks like neon, distracting, more difficult to see.

Really don't know

However, it does seem like once you get onto Roxbury, Marlboro, Winter, Court, Washington, that there are NOT enough lights. Also, behind the Lane block where the parking garage is, and Church street.

I walk downtown in the evening a lot with dogs and family and I find the lighting to be wonderful.

Wrong type. See above

You've got it covered

Not sure

Cannot say No enough!!

There are enough lights but the design of the lights doesn't shed light down where it is needed.

Perhaps some more at crosswalks

Main street is pretty dark. I know that it's ambiance, but it's hard to (a) see pedestrians crossing the street from perspective of driving and (b) dark to walk in general as a pedestrian.

crosswalks don't have enough lighting

The current lighting design was apparently chosen for aesthetics, not functionality.

Don't go downtown at night anymore.

The street lighting is too "cutesy", and not functional enough. The crosswalks are POORLY lighted, and the sidewalks overly lighted, which adds to the crosswalks being hard to see.

It's spotty. Some spaces are okay, some spaces aren't.

the roundabout area and area near the college needs a lot of lighting and more on the side streets directly off main st. The homeless get real sketchy after 9pm. Being a young women in this town it gets really scary because of the nightlife crowds and the homeless.

Its almost there but a few more would be nice, during the late night hours main street still has a large amount of people due to the bars and part of the streets aren't sufficiently lit.

Unsure

sidewalks are poorly lit. Hard to see pedestrians

Better lighting on side streets/alleys off Main St. (perhaps motion sensitive solar).

there is a sound ordinance on Keene's down town for 10 PM which limits lots of opportunity in our town for concerts and cultural events to happen on Friday nights or Saturday Nights. Keene is conducive to Drinking at night and Buying things during the day. I want to see lighting down ally wasy for the mural projects

The existing lights provide very poor lighting and it is a complaint that I hear over and over.

The street lighting is such a contrast to the other visual aspects of Keene. It is so blue that it is distracting, especially when it is raining!

Rarely downtown alone at night, so I believe this is the case.

Pedestrian walkways seem to be dimly lit at night.

Q9. Do you think there is enough street lighting downtown during the evening hours?

On main street there are plenty of lights however just off of it are dark areas
Street lights should be retrofitted with solar panels and 8 reserved power pack in the bottom the base of the to help reduce electric consumption to help reduce the overall electric bill to the city
Also, need more lighting for crosswalks the entire length of Main from 101 to the Square
OK - would be nice to have twinkle lights on trees in median
Don't know, seems ok...Should be done if it's lacking.
To see to walk, as a pedestrian - but not to see pedestrians, as a driver.
cross walks are still very dangerous
Also it's too dim. Christmas lights are a joke. They need to be much brighter.
Only on main street
Change street light to shine on ground to reduce light pollution
white lighting hurts
Crosswalks on lower Main Street have been improved with signage, but cars still travel faster at that end and it's often difficult to see pedestrians starting to cross at night.
Also, we need UP-LIGHTING ... sculptures should be up-lit.
Keene should adopt Dark sky ordinance to minimize light pollution
Don't know - Never come down at night
It depends on the area. on Main Street, yes, but not in some surrounding areas.
The cross walks on Main are difficult to see.
No idea
Don't know
my answer from #3 Slightly brighter sidewalk lighting for a 'safer' nighttime environment.
Cross walks are not safe from evening on
the new light bulbs or lamps are too dim, not a bright, white light
Need better lighting on side streets.
Crosswalks need more lighting, including the waiting areas where pedestrians are often standing in the shadows
NA
however, convert to LED
I do not like the new LED lighting. It's far too stark, and sorely taints the nighttime ambience. There are other LED options that would offer the same safety and efficiency, without egregiously compromising the after-hours aesthetics.
Street lighting is abundant but wish they used something that did not light up the sky.
Generally but there are alley areas that could use attention.
Doesn't need anymore lighting than there already is
Absolutely NOT! It is dangerous to both stupid people who do not bother to look and those who have their headset on and cannot hear the traffic and those who are focused on looking at their cell phones as well as the poor driver who hits someone.
too much light!
I don't know. I do not go to town-town Keene in the evening.
For the most part lighting is good in the downtown, some pedestrian crosswalks would benefit from better lighting.

Q10. How long are you willing to walk from your parking space to your destination?

I lived in a bigger city for a few years and became accustomed to 10-20 minute walks. I have heard complaints from residents that they have to park too far away for dinner/events, I disagree and have found no issue with it.

As little as possible. Winter requires much shorter distances.

yes to question above

Free parking works in other communities across the country.. It is more welcoming in light of the competition from shopping centers on the city's edges...

Out another level or two on the current parking garage - see Portsmouth.

If you make the resource scarce, people will seek replacements. If you eliminate parking on Main Street during certain hours and work with local companies who aren't using their parking lots during those hours, you might be able to solve the parking problem. If downtown is attractive enough, that is, safe and enjoyable, they will come if they are assured of getting a parking space, even if they need to walk 5 minutes back to their car.

I don't care about free parking vs 30 c/hr. However I hate those centralized pay stations; they're slow, inconvenient and unreliable. I prefer normal meters at each space. If we have to pay 5c/hr more to cover the cost of the meters it would be more than worth it to me.

Depends on the season

With Portsmouth as my guide, I think 5-10 minutes of walking is reasonable.

I used to park all the way up Court St. where it was free and walk to my office on the other side of Central Square. Fine with that!

I choose to live close to downtown so that I can walk up to 15 minutes to get anywhere I need to get. I am not the best person to ask about parking.

no

Have been to many other New England town that charge for central, off street parking. The charge is not an issue if downtown is easily accessible. I'd rather pay for a 5 minute walk, than get a 10 minute walk free. I'm 62 years old.

I'm opposed to free parking in the downtown area. If parking is free some will leave their vehicles in the free spaces all day making it difficult for others to reach shops and offices.

Yes

not everyone can walk.....there are the elderly and handicapped people seem to forget about

I live 2 blocks off Central Square, so I don't do much parking.

Free parking encourages ppl to park as long as they want, resulting in even less parking. Paying for parking is great revenue, and we need more of it.

Depends on what I am walking to. Mostly I just walk into downtown. I have no problem walking to a store in town from any parking space in town. I doubt if any parking space in our downtown is more than 5 minutes from virtually ANY store. Bottom line I think people are lazy and any walk is too far for them.

(FYI, this question says select all that apply, but I can't) I think many downtowners are willing to walk. In fact, many probably come to walk. Unless they're just popping in on a quick errand or for a cup of coffee. I do think free parking encourages people to walk. If meters become more expensive and peripheral parking becomes available and free (or notably less expensive) people would have more choice.

Q10. How long are you willing to walk from your parking space to your destination?

Wish you had asked distance, not time. I can walk a quarter mile in 5 minutes, but I hope I usually won't need to. Put parking behind the businesses, with attractive rear entrances.

Yes to the fourth option.

how to keep long termers from hogging free spaces

Yes - have big signs that say "FREE PARKING" or "CHEAP PARKING" with arrows so people know where to park and save money. But then you need to make sure it is safe, easy, and pleasant to walk from the parking area to Main Street. Should be well-lit, have landscaping/street trees, CCTV cameras

Lighting makes this an issue in the evening.

Free parking within a short walking distance frees up downtown metered parking if it is easy and well known and well maintained. Quick, reliable shuttle service with a reasonable user fee is an option, and some creative shuttle ideas could enhance the Keene experience.

I hate parking downtown, and I avoid driving down Main Street whenever possible

Only if panhandling & druggies don't hassle you along the way! I want to feel safe as I walk to my vehicle!

Free parking 15 minutes away won't help and it's not out of laziness, but time and convenience.

The amount of time I am ok with walking depends on my mission. If it's to run in and grab a coffee, I don't want to walk for 10 min. If it's to see a show at The Colonial, I'd be more willing to walk.

If there were more inviting attractions and less college infestation I would walk the whole downtown area with intent to spend actual time and money enjoying it instead of avoiding it. I think paying to park is a must.

It is so difficult to find a space to park in the downtown area. Too many spaces are now reserved. The removal of meters in the large lot behind the Colonial was a mistake. The price of using the meters is too high. This has created more use of my computer and shopping online.

I'm willing to walk a little more, but I'm sure there are any people who can't/won't! Don't give up any parking spaces!

Would not allow more than one answer but yes I do think free parking is incentive to walk further

45 minutes. but the lack of lighting along park ave does not permit me to do that. I'll walk 3 miles each way if it was better lit.

yes free parking is inviting but handicapped parking that is monitored will support the use of downtown by those less able to walk longer distances

I bike/walk downtown so this doesn't really apply to me.

Yes

I don't drive, I live downtown.

Free parking and short distance transport, an open air "trolley" or something to that effect.

Free parking in more distant lots to encourage people who are able to park there. But do not forget seniors and people who cannot walk a distance. Please do not take out parking spaces. You will harm downtown. I saw a post by Terry Clark on backing into spaces to free up more spaces for bicyclist. Hope that is a joke. Do not make this a mall and reroute traffic. Lebanon N.H. Tried that many years ago and it killed their downtown. Updating is fine but don't forget the charm and feel we already have in a quest to modernize.

Q10. How long are you willing to walk from your parking space to your destination?

Get rid of parking meters and parking department.

This is complicated - look no further than Portsmouth. To some degree, it's a cultural thing - people expect to be able to park right in front of the store they need/want to go to

Could not select more than 1 answer to this question. Lighting would need to be adequate, wider sidewalks/walkways, and walking further would increase health benefits. Downfall - not good for those who are handicapped or have medical issues that make it difficult to walk.

Yes I think free parking encourages walking further!

Despite all the complaints about lack of parking, I have never been challenged finding a parking space when I want one.

Yes; other than that, I usually figure a 5 minute walk is quite acceptable

It would depend on whether I were just running errands or parking for an event. Downtown Keene Parking and meters makes it difficult to just 'run in' to a downtown merchant's store.

No idea

How about providing free transportation to the downtown area.

Yes free parking encourages walking further...

yes

Don't care how far I walk

Yes, I think that if there were free parking it would encourage walking further distances.

You cannot select all that apply here. 3 to 5 minutes Max. If we want people to shop downtown, they need easier access to their vehicles for their packages

If parking was free I would walk from wherever I had to.

Please put in free parking! I don't mind the walk. But if I want to study at a coffee shop for a few hours, I have to either illegally park or break the bank.

And I do think outskirts free parking does help

Yes to free parking encouraging walking further distances, but it depends on physical ability.

1 minute

Although that depends on the weather.

It depends on the weather. I hate walking in cold or rainy weather.

In addition to free parking, maps and signs with distances to frequently visited locations (City Hall, Keene State College, bus station, etc.) and improvements of pedestrian crossings may encourage walking.

How about asking "How many passed out junkies and requests for change are you willing to endure between your parking space and destination (if it is still in business)?"

So-called "free parking" becomes more valuable, the farther one has to walk from it. Visitors and tourists frequently put coins in meters after 5pm, and on Sundays. Generally, folks don't mind paying for convenience.

Longer would be fine if it is guaranteed safe

YES! Free parking would undoubtedly encourage walking further distances, in my opinion. Parking enforcement in Keene is awful and tickets are expensive and hard to avoid. Some (not all) of the parking enforcement employees are very unfriendly and do not work with you to resolve the parking situation.

Depends on the weather... mid February vs mid June makes a huge difference

Free parking definitely would encourage more walking!

yes

Q10. How long are you willing to walk from your parking space to your destination?

Yes free parking

I seldom have problems finding parking at all hours

any amount. I don't mind walking long distances.

No, we are not thriving enough as a city right now to be charging and spending money on parking meter updates. Should focus more on getting people here than how much to charge them when they get here.

Yes, I think people would walk more if they had free parking in Keene

More garages?

I would walk further but presently i have mobility limits

I DO THINK free parking means folks will walk....

Yes, I think free parking encourages an attitude of friendliness on the part of shoppers..

Yes

Free parking would encourage walking a farther distance

Free parking doesn't encourage walking. It encourages laziness.

The large parking area between Main st. and the Colony mill is a real plus to all that happens downtown. That should be maintained as new ideas are generated.

The parking situation in Keene is pretty abysmal. There is not enough parking, and what parking there is, is aggressively monetized in a way that seems antithetical to encouraging downtown activity.

I'll walk longer if it's free!!

Fix parking meters that don't work

I walk to all downtown events.

I don't mind walking in good weather but in winter, with kids 5 minutes is tough

I personally choose free parking any chance I get. I don't mind walking to my destination if it means I can safely park my car and my children and I can safely walk to our destination.

Yes. If you can only park in a space for a limited time, and you have a meeting, appointment etc. you want to park as close as you can in case you need to move vehicle or add to meter. If the weather becomes an issue, it's worse. If you buy an antique, art work or even just getting your hair done you have to think strategically!

free long term parking with a short walk. or paid short term parking on street

I also agree that free parking encourages walking farther distances

I can't select all that apply.

What about a people-mover, like in airports?

^^No, I don't think free parking makes a difference

Depends on what I'm doing

can only select one - free parking does encourage walking further.

This section did not allow me to select all. 5 minutes is how willing I am able to walk in a time crunch, but I would walk 10 minutes if needed or not in a time crunch. I also think that free parking encourages walking further. I often will park in specific places that I know costs less per hour regardless of the distance I have to walk to my destination.

Parking Kiosks are hard on young mothers with children and strollers, hard on the elderly and hard on people with physical limitations

Yes it does

Q10. How long are you willing to walk from your parking space to your destination?

If i was younger I wouldn't mind parking 10 minutes away. For elderly people this can be a hardship. I love that people walk downtown Keene as exercise. Free parking further out (5-10 minutes) of downtown would be helpful to ease space for those who need to park close.

Free parking away from downtown would encourage walking

It all depends. If I just want to make a quick stop at one business, I want to park near the store. If I'm staying for an extended period of time, I don't mind walking a longer distance to my destination(s)

YES!!!!!! I would definitely walk further if I could find free parking.

Yes

Parking is not expensive and only hard to find when events are going on. Better signage for visitors would help.

Open to more if the street itself has more to do. Today, I wouldn't walk from the police station to ramuntos which is probably about 10 min but if Marlboro was all shops, accessible, safe, etc., it wouldn't be too bad

Waking any distance is never an issue for our family. I do think it is for many thrust go downtown.

I walk from my house

It depends on the reason for my visit. Quick errands - probably 3 minutes Dinner, movie or event - I would walk 10 minutes I do think free parking would translate to a willingness to walk a further distance.

No -- people need to rethink the need to park so close

Depends on the circumstances. If my hands are full, I can only walk 3 or 5 minutes. If there is snow and ice on the sidewalks and I am forced to cross the street several times because the sidewalk I am on is not walkable, then I can't walk even 3 minutes. In nice weather and when I am not carrying bags, I can walk 10 to 20 minutes. But not everyone will be as mobile as I am. No, I don't think free parking is the deciding factor. I think meters that allow longer parking is more important.

The price of parking seems unfair given the less than desirable parking situation. I'd definitely be willing to walk further if I weren't paying to park. We know that's not going to happen though since you just installed all those new kiosks!

It will not let you "select all that apply" 5 minutes, and yes free parking would.

depends on the day if I am able to spend 10 min walking. somedays you just want to park and run in and get what you need and get out. other times it is wonderful to walk.

Unless you have a mobility disability or you don't know where public parking is located, I don't think there are ever any public walks longer than 5 minutes from a public parking space to any use in the downtown (except perhaps when the Pumpkin Festival was in Keene). This is a false perception. Perhaps someone should do a demonstration project timing walks from vacant spaces at various times of day to downtown destinations in order to clear up this misperception.

Yes, free parking can encourage walking and is more desirable for those physically able to park further away. Could also encourage more visitor spending by not rushing to leave Downtown because meter is about to expire.

Q10. How long are you willing to walk from your parking space to your destination?

I do think free parking will encourage people to walk further distances, but I'm not sure that is the way to go. I think the City is already doing the right thing by making parking on Main St. more expensive the lots on Gilbo St. Perhaps "Parking this way" signs that are prominent and easy to see for people driving would help.

NA

Yes, I think free parking could encourage those who can, to avoid centralized parking.

People should be encouraged to live downtown, so they don't need to use the car for everyday errands.

Seconds

Depending upon how much time I have available.

If there was plenty of free parking further from downtown people would use it and wouldn't mind walking.

I think we need to encourage less driving.

I think someone screwed up this question and placed it as an answer to question 10. I think people try to find free parking as close to their destination as possible and depending on their activity level may or may not walk further distances. It seems apparent to me that our beautiful downtown suffers primarily from lack of available parking in comparison to shopping developments with big free parking lots. I don't think there is any way to change that except to increase any available nearby parking potentials and/or to cater to those who reside and/or work within walking distance to downtown. For example me. I work at KSC and live on Roxbury St. I walk to work almost every day through downtown. And if I don't walk, I ride my bike or drive.

Yes, I would walk further for free parking and more readily go shop and eat downtown. It isn't that I mind paying the meters it is that it adds another layer of complexity, do I have enough change? Will I have to make it back to the meter before I'm done shopping or eating? Etc.

I am handicapped

Yes, free parking does encourage walking further distances. I think walking a few under 10 minutes is very reasonable.

I've lived here for thirty years and never ever had a problem with parking even at Christmas.

Or less Parking meters should remain!!!!

Absolutely.

yes

I'll walk as far as I need to get somewhere.

I would be most willing to walk up to 5 minutes, ideally less than 10 (the survey doesn't allow us to select "all that apply"). And free or cheap parking definitely encourages folks to go further, and also to stay longer.

Yes, I think free parking encourages a longer walking distance to destination.

Free parking on Saturday's and for the farmers market would be great to encourage more downtown life

I walk downtown from home and it takes me less than ten minutes to do it.

Yes

Doesn't allow you to select all that apply!

free parking is the only way i will visit downtown.

Q10. How long are you willing to walk from your parking space to your destination?

You put a question as the last bubble for question 10...You also spelled walker instead of walking. I think free parking is a good idea, possibly a new garage out by the skate park or down near the old manufacturing building past the coop. Put up solar lights along the bike path and it will promote walking by businesses and the use of the path.

Q11. Should the downtown area be more friendly for bicyclists?

Keene has plenty bike path no need to make downtown more dangerous to drive by adding bicycle friendly

Not unless your going to do something about traffic.... Bicyclists seem to think they own the roads and can be a danger to themselves and those around them.

however, use of bicycles and skateboards on sidewalks should be enforced, strictly!

This is not a yes or no answer...bicycling is an important part of the fabric of the city, but recent reconstruction of Washington and Court Streets with bike lanes have not significantly changed bike usage in town...Main Street configuration really doesn't allow for any sort of additional accommodation.

And bicyclists need to understand that they are not pedestrians and need to behave accordingly. Riding on sidewalks endangers their lives as wells as the pedestrians on the sidewalk. When a bicyclist enters a crosswalk at speed, motorists aren't expecting it. How many people need to be hurt or killed before the city decides to enforce the bicycling restrictions downtown. I am an avid bicyclist who rides downtown. If everyone follows the rules, everyone will be happy.

I don't see a lot of people on bicycles, but maybe if we had a bike lane more people would.

If the focus of downtown is changed away from vehicle parking to foot traffic then I think bike lanes would make sense. NYC has found interesting solutions to high speed traffic, parking, and bike lanes and Keene's main street could be used in many different ways. The rail trail project presents a tourist opportunity, especially if there were more reasons to stop and stay here like brew pubs.

Main St. Bike Lanes!

that would encourage people to use their bikes. Right now there is a classic empass between the bikes and either cars, or pedestrians. As a pedestrian I loathe bikes around downtown because they tend to ride on sidewalks, and mow me and my dogs over.

Not a yes or no answer. Bicycles are currently now allowed on downtown sidewalks due to congestion, and I think this should continue. I live next to a recently built bicycle lane that seems to take up quite a bit of road width, and is seldom used (and people to continue to bicycle on sidewalk). I want to see bicycling promoted, but not at the sake of pedestrian or vehicle flow downtown.

only if it can be safely done

Riding on main st is very challenging especially with children, given that bicycles are not allowed on sidewalks

It's scary as a bicyclist!! And there aren't enough bike racks

downtown needs to think about their bicyclists.....cars speed too much on streets .

Absolutely, it is far too dangerous at the moment.

Bicyclists should be banned from downtown.

Bicyclists should not be using sidewalks - sidewalks are for pedestrians, not wheeled vehicles (bikes). There needs to be signage and enforcement. Bicycles on sidewalks are hazardous for pedestrians.

I think it would cause a lot of issues with traffic if we introduced bike lanes.

See above.....I think bicyclists should be required to receive some training in common sense riding in town. Too many times I have experienced inane moves by bicyclists ahead of me that are dangerous or bikes that streak up the right side of traffic faster than cars are moving. They don't seem to think that cars turning right don't expect them to come blazing up from the rear.

It's about right as is.

Q11. Should the downtown area be more friendly for bicyclists?

Seems like it's already pretty bike friendly.

Yes! But many bikers would be glad to stay off Main St if there were a good parallel route.

Yes please. I see many people bicycling on the sidewalk (although illegal) due to unsafe riding along Main Street. Protected bike lanes are great. I've ridden on them in many cities and they are wonderful. It would do so much for other problems....parking traffic congestion.

No!

Bicyclists should be encourage to walk their bikes on the sidewalks.

allow polite riding on sidewalks, or paint lanes, or have one way streets with dedicated bike lanes

Keene is missing out on a huge opportunity to bring people via Cheshire Rail Trail to Main Street - can't bike along Main Street safely, and no good places to store a bike where it won't get wet in the rain.

Of course it should. There should be actual, physical bike lanes. I know this is difficult because of cost and physical space, but let's stay in line with how other cities are trending.

To do so would come with too high a price (monetary and impact on vehicular traffic). There are easy cycling routes/bike paths that avoid main street and central square.

But also not everyone rides a bike, there are those of us who drive into Keene. If you expect your City to survive on just your residents going to the businesses, then they will not survive. Oh yeah, most haven't!

It would help if they had their own bike lane.

Already good

They should have to be outside the downtown roads and sidewalks. Private bike racks should be behind buildings or off to the side. Or an alternative is make the bike route parallel the sidewalk and not be in the or next to the traffic street. They do not stay in their lanes as it is and do not maintain flow with traffic.

It should....but how? With the parking space set up in front of the Main St. businesses...it would be difficult to create a safe space for traveling bicyclists unless the city makes the sidewalks more narrow...then creates a travel lane in front of the parked cars for bicyclists. It is so unsafe for the bicyclists to be moving behind the parked cars with the drivers attempting to back out.

I think to encourage more bicyclists is to welcome more accidents including MV's. I don't agree with that.

More places to safely store bikes while shopping downtown if this was your mode of transportation. No bike lane on main st.

I don't have a strong opinion about this

only if they follow the rules of the road and signal their intention.

YES, YES, YES

The bike trail and bike lanes are great. Main Street can be a bit dicey with cars backing into traffic, but at least traffic moves pretty slowly. The best would be a European-style bike lane between parking spaces and the sidewalks (just for Main St. from the Square to Winchester St.), but probably not realistic given space constraints.

Only for street, not sidewalks.

Friendly to bicyclists that stay on bike paths and roads--and off sidewalks.

Q11. Should the downtown area be more friendly for bicyclists?

Some provisions should be made for bicyclist. However this is N.H. And There are minimal cyclist for a number of months. I do not want to have the city get so excited about being progressive and bike friendly you forget that the largest majority of our citizens are not using bikes.

Yes but off the sidewalks!

Traffic is already rough with all the pedestrian crosswalks (people tend to jump out, so you're constantly scanning!). Maybe develop a bike-free Main Street, but install bike paths that flow behind the businesses with bike racks for parking.

In Including skaters, rollerblades. All of that should deserve a chance to ride again.

Sure, but also more friendly to pedestrians, and those on unicycles.

I can never find a safe place to lock up and leave my bike if I go into a store or restaurant. Riding my bike downtown is nerve racking with no bike lane and cars pulling out in front of you so often.

Yes, but with the continued restriction against riding bikes on the sidewalks.

Regulations are not enforced. Seems like a bicycle friendly environment, at the expense of others.

As long as the bicyclists obey all the traffic laws.

It is fine. It needs to be more friendly to people walking...they shouldn't have to worry about be approached and made to feel uncomfortable by people begging for money.

Yes, I am a bicyclist and I definitely appreciate the bike lanes on Washington Street! Thank you City Council!

Yes, but we should study the amount of cyclists coming through downtown in any given day. We may honestly be making too much of a big deal out creating infrastructure for cycling downtown.

Very few people actually cycle to downtown, because we draw from a wide geographic area

Bike path is good but limited

One car lane in each direction on Main St.

How to bike around a rotary? Can bikes cross at crosswalks? I only bike downtown at night (after 8PM) because there is less traffic.

Maybe more racks?

I ride downtown regularly. As long as cyclist are willing to obey the traffic laws it is a very friendly place to ride.

The current parking-in spaces are very dangerous for pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

With no biking on sidewalks downtown and cars backing out of Main St parking, need an alternative north-south bikeway.

Keene has exactly *2* qualities which make it bicycle-friendly. It's small & flat. Generally, Keene is NOT bicycle-friendly, despite the PR spin from City mucky-mucks. The streets are poorly maintained, and too rarely swept.

Very hard to get around downtown area because of limited bike paths

Bikers need to learn to follow rules. To many bikes on sidewalks.

I am a cyclist and I think the downtown area is dangerous. I don't see the sharrows as a way of increasing safety but rather will make it more dangerous. I think bicyclists should get off their bikes and walk them on the sidewalk through downtown.

Too much happening already! The Larry thing we need is something else to have to look out for

I say this only because it will make driving much more difficult

Q11. Should the downtown area be more friendly for bicyclists?

I have observed a MARKED INCREASE in the past 2 years of bicyclists riding on sidewalks and obstructing safe pedestrian mobility. I thought that bicycles were supposed to be restricted to the roadway - has this been reversed or is this the result of lack of enforcement?

Keene-area drivers are okay in sharing the road, but I can tell it doesn't really want to. Other cities where I've lived embrace the benefits of hearty bike-friendly streets, and it shows. Boston, Washington DC, and Portland are reaching for their full potential by advocating for more bike lanes and amenities.

Adding a bike lane would be very helpful, and encourage more people to come downtown, and reduce parking limitation. Right now, it is dangerous to ride a bike on the streets downtown, and riding on sidewalks isn't allowed. This makes it very difficult to ride a bike downtown.

Bicycle riding should be enforced on the streets not the sidewalks I find it very dangerous and very rude of a lot of cyclists who ride on the sidewalks and then ride the opposite direction
too many bicyclists use the sidewalks. Bike lanes are needed in the road.

I find bicyclists ride on the sidewalks which they shouldn't if there is little kids are elderly walking.

Resounding yes!

I'm mixed on this as its hard to fit it into all that is happening and adds to confusion when walking about. Should be thought about but maybe out of Main st area.

We have plenty of rail trails for cyclists - no

They are already too dangerous.

I was a bike commuter for years. The stretch downtown is not that long. Either ride on the road and obey traffic laws, or walk your bike on the sidewalk. The bikers themselves are who makes that section "not bike friendly"

If the streets are safer for bicyclists, then they will not be on the sidewalks (which they are also NOT supposed to be doing) If there is a more safe environment for them, it will promote usage of roads.

Just stop spending money

Yes -- but there are too many of them riding on the sidewalks, along with skateboarders

Bike path on the sidewalk rather than road due to people pulling in and out of parking spaces

Of course it should.

Don't want to sound like a jerk, but doesn't seem like that many residents utilize bicycles like other cities. Don't see much of a presence for concern in making it "more" bike friendly. It's okay the way it is for what we have.

No, until bike riders are more educated and get off the sidewalks!

As it is they are riding on the sidewalks...

Please allow bicycling on sidewalks or provide a suitable land for bicyclists that are afraid of traffic. The way it is now, it is dangerous for anyone to ride in the streets except for the most courageous!

I would bike downtown if I thought it was safe

We should be doing all that we can to make Keene a more bike friendly, pedestrian friendly city.

But not biking on sidewalks.

yes yes

I believe that the downtown area is currently friendly for bicyclists.

Q11. Should the downtown area be more friendly for bicyclists?

No, as a biker why would i want ride downtown. If i did i would use the road or walk it on the sidewalk. No necessary changes needed

I guess so but I also really don't care.

I believe bicycles should be encouraged but I don't see a safe way to add bicycles to the busy mix.

please DON'T make a bicycle lane on main street

Absolutely! One less car is one less car. A greener, healthier economy should be a vital foundation of the fabric of Keene.

Focus should be on pedestrian friendliness rather than bikes.

I don't blame people for riding on the sidewalks - I would never ride in the street! Too many cars backing out, sometimes from both sides.

NA

however you only have one trail that runs through at mid point and you can't ride on the sidewalks and novice cyclist are not riding on the roads. think about making an alternative trail system behind the street scape

We have children and we rarely dare ride in the road or even the bike Lanes. People in vehicles are hostile to bicyclists and officers are sometimes less then friendly if you ride your bike on any sidewalks. I know the law forbids biking on sidewalks.

The Cheshire rail trail just peters out into parking lots around the Center of Keene. Its not easy to figure out where it picks up again. Maybe better signage would help.

They get in the way

dangerous to ride in traffic but illegal to ride on the side walk.

Yes! Yes! Yes!

I want to say yes as I occasionally ride my bike from home to work through downtown and my preferred way is not to ride on Main St because of traffic congestion in two driving lanes and angled parking making it too harrowing to consider. However, it's easy to ride across Main St at the bicycle path crossing and keep safely to the back streets. I can't see how it could be made more bicycle friendly without aggravating auto traffic. I would rather not aggravate drivers as I can understand what their frustration is as well.

Eliminate their use on main street

Although I think it is already bicycle friendly. Perhaps more bike racks or perhaps publicly shared bicycles (like Citi bikes in NYC) would be a way to promote bicycles in Keene.

The sidewalks need to be seriously patrolled to keep bikers and skateboarders off! the police dept. morale is at a all time low- do something about that- instead of fixing something that isn't broken.

Only if the bicyclists obey the rules of the road. Many times I've nearly hit a bicyclist who has ignored a red light or has swerved in and out of traffic or ot going too fast.

Safety!!!

This will be hard to accomplish due to traffic congestion. The larger issue with bicyclists is when they do not follow traffic rules and go shooting across a cross walk.

Bicycles on the sidewalks are dangerous.

I don't cycle downtown

A plan for bicyclists very important to encourage more usage as this is where most growing cities are headed.

Family biking is hard to do in the street.

Q11. Should the downtown area be more friendly for bicyclists?

Bikes on the street. Not on the sidewalk.

Yes! I don't bike much but I would bike downtown if it was safer

Yes, if it is an attempt to limit car traffic.

Bikes should be walked in core downtown.

Bicyclist should not be riding downtown! Give them places to Park at the edge of the downtown . If you don't want motorized vehicles on the Bike/walking paths for safety reasons Bikes should be kept off main street downtown for safety of bikers!

Lanes marked on main st if possible

Q12. Why do you come downtown?

Restaurants, coffee shops, candy, comic book store.

restaurants and shops

Eat, shop, socialize

Dining, Shows, used to come for Shopping but that is more limited now

dine, shop, events

I work here

Restaurant

work downtown, dining, walks

Eat, theater, shop, work in that order

I walk downtown almost everyday to shop at the Coop

I work downtown; I come down at night for dining/entertainment options

The vibe. There is an energy to be enjoyed.

Whenever I want a coffee or a meal or just to get out of the house. 90% of the restaurants I go to are

dinner

I live and work in downtown Keene.

Work, Fun

I own property

dining

Where else would I go? The local merchants - I like that there are no chain retailers/restaurants (other than Subway) on Main St

for a walk, to enjoy the ambience, to grab dinner, to shop, to hang out with friends, for special events

work meetings, entertainment, dining

walk during lunch hour

Event participation, shop, worship, drive to work and home takes me through downtown daily.

My office is downtown

Shop, restaurants

events, dining, church, great place to walk

dining, shopping, walking

work, walk

Shopping, dining. A night out

Dining

For the restaurants, live music, and events or a walk and sit by the fountain.

Shopping and appointments

Coop, coffee shops, events, Scores Running Club

Work, shopping, dining, leisure

Usually to eat, sometimes to hang with friends (usually while eating)

only when i need to, not a fan

I mostly don't. i only go downtown if guests are in town.

Restaurants

Socializing, dining, some shopping.

variety of reasons

Walk, shop, eat and have a good time.

Dinner, walk around, shop, work in coffee shops, meetings

Q12. Why do you come downtown?

to shop, get a coffee or breakfast, sometimes to go for a stroll.

Shops, dining, coffee, meeting friends, attend shows, supporting my local economy.

To dine, walk and shop

Yoga, shopping, dinner

to shop, to walk, to eat and drink coffee and meet friends; because i love the energy and atmosphere!

Restaurants/coffee shops and consignment stores

Usually for dining. Seldom for shopping. Not many stores downtown that sell what I want.

restaurants, library, a few shops

Restaurants, shopping

Meetings of non-profits, work, grocery, restaurants, banking

Mostly to eat. Sometimes for music or just to walk around (and shop) when family/friends are visiting.

church at KUUC, food co-op, restaurants, events on square, Ted's

Shopping and restaurants

Coffee and beer

Restaurants

My family and I like to walk to downtown using the bike path

Shops and events.

To eat, drink, shop for groceries

I live there and I love the restaurants and the people.

Shop & eat

Currently, to go to church and occasionally to eat out. Also to buy clothes at Miller Bros. because that is a unique store that offers goods and services not available elsewhere.

events - dining - shopping

work during the day and frequently in the evenings for dinner or events

Restaurants, shops, library

To walk and browse

Shopping, Eating, & Events, just to hang out

socializing

Mostly to walk for exercise, to eat at a restaurant, to shop for a gift, or go to the Food Co-op to meet someone.

Food, shopping, banking and socializing.

Variety of shops, dining and landscaping

Shopping, dining, banking, and events at the Colonial

to shop or participate in public events.

To eat, shop and the co-op, and to shop at other stores.

dine, shop and just to walk

Work, gathering with friends and family

Restaurants

Dining and shopping

Food

Theatre and restaurants

Shopping, eating, events

Primeroast and Local Burger and The Stage

Q12. Why do you come downtown?

Shop and dine, but not many store to shop in anymore.

Work and shop

Restaurants and shops

for shopping, food, coffee

Work, only work. Side street to blue seal feed.

To shop and to dine.

Shopping, family time, restaurants

Shopping and dining.

To eat, walk around, get haircut, to eat, food is important, we need more food diversity.

Work, recreation

For everything. The shops, the bars and restaurants, the scene itself.

Mostly for lunch after church and some shopping.

Shop, eat, cultural events (colonial theater, music festival)

Entertainment, restaurants, the colonial

Get coffee, eating out, taking a walk

I show it off, to friends and family from away and I like a cold adult beverage on a nice night

work

No big box stores;

Some shopping but mostly restaurants

to walk, shop, go to the Colonial or to eat

Lunch, meet friends, coffee, shopping

Coffee at Prime Roast, restaurants, movie theatre, Monadnock Coop, shops

Stores and restaurants. Farmers market or a bike ride with the kids

Eating

Because it's where the there is in Keene!

Colony Mill doesn't have shops

Food, bars. I wish there were more music venues.

casual dining, food coop, Colonial movies/entertainment, gift shopping

Bars, restaurants, coffee shops, colonial theatre

City Hall, shopping

Food, concerts, shopping

Dining. Bars. Colonial.

Dining, entertainment, events, shopping

Dining, walking, COOP shopping

Residence

To eat and drink at bars

To eat. Some limited shopping opportunities

I live downtown & I like the energy.

Specialty shopping, events, occasional dining.

I come downtown not only because I work in downtown, but I also like the idea of supporting local businesses and being immersed in the community.

Shopping, dining, church and just to walk

Usually to walk around, go to the library, or go to the coffee shops.

Lovely walk. Window shop. Restaurants.

Brewbaker coffee, banking, walks, events, socializing.

Q12. Why do you come downtown?

shop

restaurants, events

live downtown

Restaurants

Eat. Hair appts, Otherwise I don't. Too

To eat out, walk around and enjoy the space

To work

Activity, eating, entertainment, cafe

Don't

Shopping, dining and events

Shopping, eating, and enjoying the warmth of downtown Keene.

work, dining

Either to go to cumbies. Or just to look at the buildings and trees and remembering my childhood when I went to Keene middle school when it was on Washington st. I always went down town with my friends and hung out at the common or the skate park.

dine, shop, play

Mostly for dining and quick local shopping.

movies, restaurants

work, dining, entertainment

I work here. And occasionally to eat or go to a show.

Dining, walking

I don't. I only drive through to get to one of the main arteries

Shopping, dining, and socializing

Businesses, events, general busy atmosphere.

Dining

to shop local or eat at a restaurant

Stores, dining, arts

Shop, go to restaurant

Restaurants, ice cream, walking dogs

To work and play.

Eat, exercise and shop

Eat and shop

work and shopping

To work, shop and play

restaurants mainly

Library, Timoleons, the Stage and other restaurants, bike path, Farmers Market, shopping Good Fortune, The Works, Toadstool, ice cream shop, Amicci's, church, dentist, senior center, historical society, college events, colonial theatre events, and much more

Work right off from it on west street, lunch, dinner, a couple of shops

Dining, entertainment, services

Mostly food. sometimes shopping.

Dinner

Food

Restaurants, services (hair salon), theater

Eat, exercise, shop & entertainment

Q12. Why do you come downtown?

Walk, eat, get coffee

Shop and eat

To shop and dine and enjoy community events.

Mornings and early afternoon

I work downtown

I am a building owner and a business owner downtown.

For specialty needs.

Usually for a restaurant meal or show at the Colonial

Work, food, shopping

I love the old architecture and I like individual businesses with a personality

ENTERTAINMENT AND SOME SHOPPING

To shop, drink, and eat

Mingle, eat, theatre, and a few stores.

To buy coffee from Prime Roast and to walk the dog.

Studying and shopping

Restaurants and scenery

To work primarily; other times for film and other performance events

Food

Restaurants and bars.

Work, play, eat, love

eat, shop, walk

To dine and shop

Commute to work, eat out, beer, dancing

Eat, Shop, Socialize, Drink, Enjoy occasional events.

For lunch/dinner.

people watch, love the busy feeling, shopping, work, entertainment (colonial theater events)

Local stores and restaurants

Entertainment and community

I don't anymore

I usually don't

Restaurants, show to visiting friends

coop

Usually to eat. Sometimes to shop, walk the dogs or cycle.

Eating out

shopping, social, events, dining

Usually to eat or get coffee

Entertainment, dining, social functions.

Restaurants, events and shopping

Work obligations, shopping, dining, medical services.

I used to come downtown for dining, shops and shows. Now, I try to avoid it.

Meetings, church, dining, The Colonial, Co-op, limited other retail (how many jewelry stores and boutiques can downtown support??)

I was born here. Downtown is where it's at, where it's happening. I know many of the merchants. I have business downtown. I eat, drink, and recreate Downtown.

Dining

Q12. Why do you come downtown?

work, restaurants, shop

work, recreation/dining, co-op, and service businesses

multiple reasons shopping, dining, events

It's the only downtown for miles. Nothing else is in the area, so this is it.

work, leisure activities

To shop and eat

Shop, walk, eat, stop at Cumberland Farms, have coffee at the coffee shops, attend events at the Colonial, attend events at Keene State

Work, eat

Walk, Eat, Drink

Shopping, eating, entertainment, health (martial arts, yoga), etc.

Shops, Restaurants, KYC and church

Shopping, eating, and the bars

To walk around and go into shops. Also, to get food occasionally and go to the bars.

Food and drinks

to shop, eat, and meet friends

socialize, eat, drink

usually to hit bars but its also a great place to get food

the variety of shops and restaurants

Coffee, one of my jobs, and church

restaurants

Have to

work, food. walk

work and go to restaurants

Dining & socializing , events & festivals, meetings

Banking, eating, walking my dog

to shop, entertainment, commuting

I come down to go to City Hall, the Post Office or to meet a friend(or friends) for coffee, lunch or dinner

Work, coffee

Work and shopping

Bagels

I love the old buildings, some need a face lift though

Dining, Colonial

I don't

I like to support our local merchants & economy.

Food & fun!

So many reasons - I'm committed to commuting without a car, so most of my errands I do right downtown, The Co-op is a HUGE reason that I am downtown so frequently, but so is the Colonial, City Hall, banking, etc.

To visit restaurants, shop, see friends, see concerts

Exercise, get tea and coffee, shop for art supplies, go to church

Shopping and dining

Food and night life

Work/eat/drink/social gatherings if available

Q12. Why do you come downtown?

The shops and restaurants only

to hangout with friends and to buy things

There are great restaurants

Hair salon, good fortune.

eat, shop, services, vitality

Food or work

restaurants, The Colonial

meals, shopping

Shopping and eat.

to work/ to shop/I refer ALL visitors (personal and tourists) to our downtown

Restaurants and to shop in unique stores

Restaurants and shopping

Dining

Wine, beer, food & friends!!

Community

Shop and dine

Dining, shopping, coffee, festivals, a show.

Dining, Entertainment, Work

Mostly for the sake of dining, drinks, and exercise.

Food, events, scenic view while I sip coffee, TOADSTOOL!

many reasons, eat, social, shopping, events

Fun. Shopping. Dining. Eating

Dinner and colonial theatre. Shopping

Walk, enjoy the restaurants, shops, and events

to visit restaurants

Eat

Shop and eat

To eat, shop, and worship

Great coffee, some wonderful shops

Church

Food. Drink. Shop.

Restaurants and night life, usually. My hair stylist is also on Main St.

Mainly to walk and enjoy the shops, occasionally to eat.

coffee, restaurants, shopping

I live downtown.

The shops and restaurants

shopping/restaurants

Coffee, food, art supplies, church, MoCo

atmosphere. run into people. shopping

Restaurants

Shops and restaurants.

Restaurant, coffee and leisurely walks

I love the small homegrown shops and eateries, scenery, people watching

I don't every often

I rarely go downtown anymore due to aggressive pan handlers

Q12. Why do you come downtown?

Local businesses and restaurants

dining, shopping, hairdresser, theatre, walking, events, coffee

Food and drinks, Toadstool, synergy

walks, meals, entertainment, shopping

Dining. Specifically the Stage.

Eat and entertainment

work

Walk my dog, enjoy restaurants, enjoy buzz of downtown.

Vibrant social scene. Community engagement. Shopping, eating, drinking, theatre, yoga.

Dining and entertainment

Prime Roast, Hannah Grimes, Fireworks, Brewtopia, the Works, and the Food co-op

work, dining, shopping

Walk around with kids, visit stores but not much buying unfortunately

dining, walking, events, library, have a beer, shop a bit.

Errands

Dine, shop, events

Shop Drink

shop, buy lunch

Dining/theatre

Work

Stores, restaurants, people. It's a great downtown and I want to come more often.

Eating out, picking up food, work, shopping occasionally.

To eat, and drink.

Work, shopping, entertainment

Shopping, dining, feel a part of the community. That's where everything's happening. I love running into people I know.

Shop

Mostly to go out to dinner or brunch

Haircuts and food.

To shop locally

to work and paly

To walk, drink prime roast coffee, see people I know, relax, eat dinner and shop

For cultural events, for dining, for shopping, to go for a nice walk

shopping

Dinning

Haircut, library, dining, medical, entertainment

to shop and dine

I often walk downtown for meals. Dinner, ice cream, etc.

Coffee shops, grocery store (co-op)

the co-op, coffee, to meet up with friends, to walk/bike the rail trail, special events, to purchase gifts

Restaurants, public venue's

Music and food

Restaurants, Hannah grimes, the colonial

to eat

Q12. Why do you come downtown?

Something to do

To enjoy the community. To walk. We often drive to Brattleboro to see the regular rotation of art that is on display. We always stop in shops and restaurants when we visit. Once you have been to the Keene shops, there is very little culture to soak in unless you want to sit in the theatre for a show. Walking around, viewing new works of art or local music without having to spend on everything is our main draw to Brattleboro.

Restaurants

Work, entertainment, social gathering

Eat, drink, meet

Entertainment, dining and clothes and shoe shopping

shop, eat, work, visit the library (if you consider that downtown; I do)

Rarely, but to eat outside

To work, to walk, to dine, to have a drink with friends.

Walking, restaurants, the Colonial, Moco, food coop.

1 or 2 specific stores

Shop, eat, walk around, socialize, events.

to pick up candy at Ye Goodie or coffee beans at Prime Roast, sometimes to just walk around. i used to go into the card store before it left. my kids enjoy yolo once in while. I go to shows occasionally at the Colonial or grab a delicious coffee at Brewbakers. i take classes at Keene Yoga Center

Eating, events and entertainment

Only to Teds and the library

restaurants and walking and the co-op grocery.

Shop at the coop, work on Adams Street, pick up farm share at Keene state.

Daytime, work, lunch, evening, events

Restaurants, social, shopping

Work

Eat at restaurants, go shopping, go for a walk or a bike ride, farmer's market

na

Restaurant, outside events, shopping

eat and shop

Dining, socializing, shopping, barber services.

Co-op, restaurants, Primeroast, bars, a nice walk.

Its a nice place

Outdoor dining. Bars. Feeling of community.

I do a small amount of shopping in downtown and a few restaurants in the evening

Very lively

to dine, to shop

Food, gas, skating.

Dining and entertainment

Restaurants and shops.

Specific events (Art Walk, Pumpkin Fest, Music fest and Colonial events) and businesses, especially coffee shops, food co-op, bank, Thai Garden and Toadstool

Dining

Like to shop

Q12. Why do you come downtown?

to walk, also enjoy places like the common where there are benches to sit and relax

restaurants

I travel to and from work everyday through downtown and take advantage of shopping (especially the Coop) and dining often. Also, the Colonial Theater and farmer's market..

To shop, and to take my kids for a walk

To shop and eat

Usually just passing through or to visit an eatery.

I live close, it's walkable, and has a great variety of business

To buy stuff duh.

Only to go to the Apothecary or to buy an occasional gift. The reason being is because of the Panhandlers.

Outdoor Dining

work, recreation, dining

To eat

Pay taxes at City Hall, Kristin's, Athen's, Post Office, Library. In general I avoid the downtown!

To walk around the shops. I miss Your Kitchen Store.

I people-watch, eat there, I go to the library, I go the Colonial, banking etc

Shop, Dining, Walking

food and services.

Eat, shop, and entertainment

browse, coffee or coop

Coffee shops, restraunts and to feel a sense of community

I enjoy walking around downtown

Feeling of community.

I love the community feel. My family likes walking around the area, browsing shops, stopping to dine outside and people watch

Work, bars

Food

To socialize

See community members, get awesome coffee

Not for much anymore

work, shopping on occasion, the bank, occasionally to eat or go to the bar

atmosphere, food

Shopping and dining

Work

Shopping at the Coop. Work at Hannah Grimes.

Shopping and eating at restaurants

Dinner, groceries, coffee, walking, running, biking, gift shopping

Shop, window shop, food, MoCo

Shops, restaurants, and the rare events that happen

To eat, shop, watch my son at the skate park

Visit certain restaurants; coffee; walk around and window shop

Dining, overall public vibe

work, shopping

Dining

Q12. Why do you come downtown?

Good coffee and pretty trees.

Work

To eat in the local restaurants

Shop, eat, meet friends, attend meetings

Dine

To live and work!

Bars/Restaurants and Stores

To meet new people

eat.

Food

Q13. Why don't you come downtown?

Not enough to do when visiting downtown.

parking

Traffic, dearth of parking

We don't just walk downtown anymore due to increased begging

too many unsavory people on drugs or asking for money

Degenerates hanging out

Parking

Don't need to

Not enough good dining/entertainment options. Same ol' same ol'

Obnoxious, loud vehicles and motorcycles who drive too fast.

mostly I don't come if it's raining or if it's rush hour.

parking

Air pollution and noise pollution are the two biggest factors that negatively impact life in downtown Keene.

Its a 30 min commute from home

Too many bums/panhandlers and homeless. Not enough retail. Stores not open in the evening

people walking around with no shirts, smoking cigarettes, swearing. It is like walking into an ashtray when I ever I go downtown. People sitting on steps of businesses smoking.

parking

panhandlers

I shy away from major crowds and vehicle congestion periods.

parking

Parking can be a challenge if there is an event

Bums

Avoid during traffic peak times.

Unless I need to be there I avoid the traffic of downtown. Too congested!

Poor access from West Keene where I live

Limited business hours discourage me sometimes

Shops close early. It gets dark on West street and I worry about my safety

town is scummy, people look dirty....nothing to do.

There is nothing affordable, food is boring and overpriced, nothing interesting or unique, no legitimate retailers with clothing or everyday purchases at an affordable price. Generally boring and expensive, and geared for people over 50.

N/A

parking

Traffic and loiterers

Sometimes the railroad square activity with rough residents is a deterrent

Parking

smoking

Working the night shift

I do. But I think that more and more people are turned off by the panhandlers and other people who hang around public spaces and curse and are loud.

not enough shops, the panhandlers

Parking

Q13. Why don't you come downtown?

NO REASON

I don't do any of my "real" shopping downtown because I don't feel like there's good access to basics/necessities. Groceries, hardware, etc.

On street parking difficult during the day

College kids

Parking

Busy times.

I avoid it for running and biking, and errands when I can

Too loud!

I don't feel safe or comfortable being downtown because of those who have been encouraged to come to the city to use/abuse our social services. Though we must help residents of Cheshire County, we have created a situation where many come from out of state and create an unpleasant downtown atmosphere. The 100 Nights Shelter is chaotic and overwhelmed, and is not serving the population it intends to well, and is creating safety issues for those who wish to shop and dine downtown. Please work on getting a permanent police presence in town, even if it is just a small booth in Railroad Sq.

not the idyllic place it was - not that long ago

We do, but wish that public spaces weren't so consistently occupied by people loitering / panhandling

no where to hang out other than railroad sq. which is full of undesirable peoples

avoid riding bike on main st too dangerous

When I need to go shopping for anything other than a gift.

n/a

Traffic

n/a

Night life is too raucous and sometimes dangerous.

Way to busy

Parking, other drivers, pedestrians, the college, the bars

Limited shopping

Lack of variety of stores/things to do

Panhandling, open drug use, stores we shopped closed, parking horrid!

Parking is a pain most of the time unless I'm there before 10 am

Pumpkin Festival. It turned into a honkey tonk and was crowded.

College students, bicyclists, no variety, too many bars not enough of anything else.

Parking is a problem.

May not have what's i need.

Harassment by people asking for money

Rowdy college crowd in evening

Shops have been closing up.

Nothing specific to the downtown, it's simply too far from where I live to regularly attend (30-35 mins or so)

Sometimes I know I won't have enough time to get in and out quickly. Traffic congestion and lack of parking can be an issue during peak times.

Parking traffic on main st

I do come downtown but sometimes I don't have change to pay the meters

Q13. Why don't you come downtown?

Sometimes the traffic deters me, but it's really not that bad

no reason as nothing is going on of interest

Hours things close. Not always easy to navigate

NAwhen I am downtown, I appreciate the police presence and law enforcement

Traffic. I always feel bad making four lanes of traffic wait so I can cross the street. Honestly, sometimes I avoid doing downtown because of that. Or I drive (which is really sad). But downtown is not all that pedestrian friendly, which seems strange given all the sidewalks and crossings.

Panhandlers, railroad square has a lot of smokers just hanging out at it and my kids inhale the smoke and swear which is poor modeling to kids

I do come -- every day!

A lot of loud car traffic.

limited shopping options

congestion in the street from pedestrians, cars backing out. businesses seem to be closing

Too formal

Undesirables make it miserable and uncertain

parking

Nothing prevents me from coming downtown

Too many panhandlers

It can be difficult to navigate traffic

Need more core businesses, hardware stores etc.....

Parking is AWFUL.

Undesirables acting out and begging,.

Too many panhandlers and bad behavior.

Many of the shops are specialty types. Hannah grimes for example. I love to look at their products but have no need to purchase it

traffic

pan handlers, drugged out zombies

Parking

Too diff to navigate with traffic but mostly parking issues and pay for parking

Late night college crowd, some sketchy people

Not enough shops to browse in

Time and not enough shops

Over priced stores and have to pay for parking

Loitering adults and teens. Panhandling.

Panhandlers and excessively drunk individuals

too many homeless people, vagrants, addicts

I work allot.

N/A

The parking is terrible, and there are parts of Main street where pedestrians are hidden.

parking, lack of friendliness

parking is a hassle, panhandlers

The compelling reasons are not that compelling.

traffic

Traffic - I take side roads around the city center whenever possible

Q13. Why don't you come downtown?

Weekday evenings downtown is mostly devoid, with most businesses closed, and the sidewalks pulated by drunk college students and homeless people with nowhere safe to go.

Panhandlers

food shopping,

Panhandlers and punks

Can't find what I need, especially groceries, even though I do a lot of shopping at the co-op. Traffic/parking is sometimes a hassle, so I go to a place where there is easy parking and less traffic.

Parking, nowhere to just sit and relax.

no reason.

N/A but all the empty buildings makes it less inviting

Dislike being harassed for money

Sometimes not friendly

parking

Too many homeless people hanging around certain areas, college kids flooding coffee shops when they're here, quality of stores and places to eat has decreased, hard to walk on sidewalks that are covered in plants and tables (such as Pedrazas), would probably avoid driving through it more if they add bike lanes and make the streets more narrow

Hassle to get in and out. Would be nice to have some alternate traffic flow.

Parking mostly but also being constantly asked for money

Not enough good places to eat or shop

Lack of lighting and parking

Very few retail stores, parking

Time/traffic

Parking

Beggars, vagrants, miscreants, and drug dealers hanging out and frequenting the downtown area.

mid afternoon through rush hour

Traffic, lack of parking, waiting to back out of parking spots on main st. I miss main st when it was the widest main st in the world

N/a

Traffic and parking.

Lack of parking

Too many empty or uninteresting (banks, insurance etc) storefronts

I do.

There are too many restaurants. As it is, the only thing to do in downtown areas is to eat.

Juggalos and homeless people panhandling

Peak congested streets and scary bike commuting

I avoid the sketchy area next to Local Burger

Too far from where I live

Crappy parking

Traffic is a hassle, crosswalks are dangerous, parking too hard to find.

not enough shops/restaurants

restaurants in other parts of town

Panhandlers. It's not safe

Q13. Why don't you come downtown?

Trying not to spend money. Not enough to do at night other than drink, Not always interested in this.

Miss The Kitchen Store. Clothing not what I wear. Could use a shop like The Black Swan in Peterborough which I love.

homeless people hanging out

The people hanging out in a negative way in our public spaces.

Not much to do or not aware of activities going on

The stores I like all went out of business

No parking/too much traffic

too dominated by cars. four lanes of traffic is too much

N/A

Traffic and lack of convenient parking

certain congregations of people, parking, stores closing

Parking is too expensive, and the meters are cash only.

Parking is a hassle at certain times

Junkies, pan handlers and other bad actors.

Only when I need the river, the woods, or Wal-Mart.

Traffic

panhandling

i do come

I don't really like walking alone with my kids, because we get approached by people asking for money every time.

restricted business hours, parking, traffic congestion

Often not enough variety of shops and restaurants

Pumpkin festival. I live close to downtown, work close to downtown, and walk or drive into downtown all the time. But for years before it was cancelled, I would leave the city completely for Pumpkin Festival.

Parking

Lack of shops (and diversity of shops) to "poke around" in and shop at

Parking, nothing new and exciting going on...

People can't handle there alcohol and its gets really terrify to be out here

There are large amounts of beggars on the streets sometimes. Also, it can be scary to walk around at night by yourself if you're a young woman.

Sometimes an uninviting crowd

the walk, the parking tickets, the congestion, and I wish there was more open green spaces

shopping

Wish there was more public events going on

I enjoy going downtown, but it would be nice for more availability for outdoor activities

Loud sometimes, expensive business

limited parking

Parking. Punks. And bikes

don't want to pay to park

there is nothing for me to do. Luckily the Hive at hannah Grimes exists for more opportunity to get out. I do not like the college culture that has taken over our main street after 9 PM

parking,

Q13. Why don't you come downtown?

I don't like to spend money on meters.

Parking is terrible, will drive through if no open spots we keep driving

Traffic - i hate driving on main street

Congestion, not enough outdoor activities

If I can go elsewhere and avoid panhandlers, I likely do, particularly if I am alone (female).

the kind of people that hang out down there i do not want around my children

I live downtown

this does not apply to me. We moved to Keene b/c we love the downtown soooo much

it's too difficult to bike.

I come downtown almost every day!

A bit of a walk from the college so it isn't always worth it for the prices of everything

Too little to do in downtown area

Long walk from my dorm on campus

Parking is a pain

N/A

most shopping - too difficult and spread out

congestion, beggars, tweekers

depending upon time of day - parking, pan handlers

too busy

lack of shopping, parking

Because I'm tired. Or I'm going somewhere else that has different things than our downtown.

I come all the time

Too many shops closing down.

parking, the lotto guy, limited affordable shopping options

If traffic is bad

traffic, lack of good parking, noisy at times

College kids too noisy

Homeless asking for money. Invading my space

Traffic at busy times of the day. Panhandlers/homeless, especially when 100 Nights is open in the winter

wonder there are not more accidents there. It is one thing to mark the lanes for traffic and crosswalks, it is quite another to maintain them. The city of Keene does a poor job of this. You have to repaint more often. Look at the current condition of the lane makers. The ones in the rotary are completely gone and so are the crosswalks.

Parking

Parking tickets or no parking. Many businesses that I used to frequent at gone

Parking is too expensive

Too crowded. College students too rowdy.

It's unsafe. I used to walk Main St. and enjoy relaxing in the circle with my family. Now, it's too loud, chaotic and full of drugs and homelessness. It's unsafe and scary for my children. We now go out of town to enjoy parks, walking and hiking.

Parking is at times a hassle, and it can be frustrating to pay to park for just a few minutes. It's not a great area if you're just running a quick errand

not enough variety of restaurants or shopping

People I know have issues w/ parking.

Q13. Why don't you come downtown?

The junkies begging for money

near by parking

NA

Limited parking, traffic

Not enough to do. People loiter at railroad square. Feels a bit depressed these days.

Parking problems

Busy lack of small business now have to go elsewhere to get small unique gifts

Parking

See #12

Parking and traffic

insufficient parking, cost of parking, panhandlers, Jehovah's Witnesses and street people hanging out in Railroad Square, religious concerts in the Square

Selection of night life/entertainment

time constraints

Not "kid friendly".

Parking

nothing to do or see but eat.

Too many cars. Too many unrented storefronts.

College kids take over I need the evening

Those are the only businesses that interest me

to avoid traffic if there is something going on that I am not attending

I avoid traffic whenever I can

\$\$\$

Too many trashy people

pan handlers

parking

Too expensive

Lazy

Traffic, panhandlers, pedestrians - they have a right to cross the street but also have an obligation to look before doing so and give cars an opportunity to stop.

I don't come downtown because of its congestion, and at night when I cannot see pedestrians.

Crowds.

too busy with traffic

no enough parking/ places to eat

Not enough restaurant/bar options.

As of late I have been avoiding downtown due to the panhandling and the feeling of not feeling safe; drug dealing, etc.

I come downtown daily

parking

Panhandlers/vagrants , noise from motor vehicles, lack of diversity in stores

I do

Too much traffic, no place to park on main street,

I shop online!

no money to put in the meters, can't find parking

Q13. Why don't you come downtown?

Not enough street lighting at night from residential side streets where I live

N/A

Only when we know it will be crowded, especially drinking related parking

Nothing to do, no shops

Stale. Little of cultural excitement. Limited. Too conservative. Not as fun or family friendly as Brattleboro. Not much to do with children besides eat.

Bums, lack of stores, congestion

College kids

Basic needs

parking, not nearly as many stores as previously,

Noise from cars, makes it unpleasant.

There's very few decent places to shop for anyone under the age of 50. I would love to enjoy the public spaces with my child but most of those are littered with cigarette butts, syringes and the junkies who for some reason feel quite welcome to be disgusting in broad daylight.

parking, stores too expensive or can find same things in an easier location

Panhandlers, smoking, vomit on sidewalks.

the panhandling has gotten more intrusive as i just want to walk or grab what I want/need without being asked for \$.

I actually don't go to the stores very often, because they are more boutique stores than stores for daily needs (food, hardware, etc)

Parking, desired objects spread through many stores, parking free at markets and desired object are more likely to be together in one store.

Vehicular traffic

Store I am looking for isn't there, restaurants all closed on Monday, no venues for music or dancing

na

Panhandler's, homeless congregating in certain areas

Loud

Lack of diversity.

Parking costs

Parking

We avoid times when crowds are there

Bums and the police

Iffy crowds

parking hassles and street people

Sometimes avoid it because it's a pain to back out of parking onto Main St at certain times of day.

Do not like paying for parking

I don't like being exposed to panhandlers or people who appear to be dirty and disheveled, inebriated, drugged and/or mentally ill especially in public sitting areas.

Not enough for my kids to do.

parking, loss of retail shops

I don't need to buy anything....

Panhandlers. And too problematic backing out of parking spaces.

Q13. Why don't you come downtown?

too many vulgar people hanging around and hitting up for money

To shop due to the limited variety of stores.

Often lack of easy parking and panhandlers...shopping not of interest

Traffic between 3:00pm and 6:00pm. It is horrible. Also, lack of parking. The group of people at Railroad Park...

I avoid downtown during peak traffic

However, I don't go downtown as much as I used to, only because we recently moved to West Keene; prior to that we lived off Linden Street, so walking Downtown was very convenient.

PARKING

quick stops, ease of in and out.

Traffic

not enough variety of interesting shops

I'll loop once looking for parking, then leave

I love coming downtown! But my friends that do not cute traffic and parking as two big issues that keep them away.

Kind if boring, shops are touristy, restaurants aren't great

Lack of retail stores and events

People who beg for money etc

Having to pay for parking

Parking,. Less shops to shop in for every day stuff

not much to do anymore, lack of bicycle accessibility, the disappearance of most of my favorite stores (or any interesting stores)

Homeless people, drug dealers, drug addicts hanging around

People asking for money. Homeless that make me great for safety.

Types of people who hang out downtown all day such as panhandlers, rude drunks, drug-addicts

Sketchy people

Parking, not as much shopping as there used to be

Lack of retailers, lack of events

Limited choices that get old quick, not enough entertainment. live music venue like Harl

Never a reason

traffic

Not enough businesses/establishments that interest me.

Parking, unsavory people hanging out

The people that like to "hang" in Central And Railroad Square! It discourages families from walking the streets of downtown.

High cost to park conveniently

Harassment by the homeless!

Traffic/Parking

The junkies and destructive college students

parking

Panhandling, not enough food options, expensive parking meters, traffic congestion

Q14. What would encourage you to come downtown?

Evening music in a smaller environment, more shops for gift shopping.
more and less expensive parking
Broadband
cleaning up the riff raff
Less degenerates
Having stores open beyond 6:00 pm..... Only restaurants are open
More good dining/entertainment options
Less traffic. More outdoor seating in summer at restaurants and in parks.
Everything I just said.
I always come for fun events that are family-friendly
Easier parking. More retail. Stores open into the evenings
higher end shopping, less services that are taking up retail space, less tattoo parlors and bars
I don't need much encouraging
more convenient parking
more of a police presence and no panhandlers
Easier access - off-street parking and parallel drives to downtown. I use the west side streets of School, Gilbo and Emerald during busier hours. Roads of similar designs on the east side, that connect to off street parking would be great.
a variety of shops that are easily accessible
more events - art
I already do
More parking
Fewer bums
Improved police presence to discourage vagrants, etc... and a bike lane, more bike racks and seating. Restrooms an issue with children.
Better parking, more shops, more variety.
Better bike lanes. 2 improve congestion/traffic light timing on West St.
More small, local businesses. A permanent farmer's market working with the coop
More green space/public seating!!
things to do.....nicer affect instead of low class druggies hanging around
More student bars
Eclectic food. (the spice chambers is a start). affordable shops and food. interesting and/or affordable retailers geared to 20-35 year olds
N/A
events
Better parking
Better traffic glow.
More events, music, more outdid gathering spaces, more boutiques
More accessible parking
More green spaces!
More outdoor festivals
I think we need more outdoor venues for music performances or
more shops, and no panhandlers
More shopping variety, better parking
I think its pretty good. I always love live music. Maybe more of that?

Q14. What would encourage you to come downtown?

No on street parking, maybe a parking garage or two, free of charge

Live music

No meters

Safe bicycling.

better flow of traffic, pedestrian bridges, bike lanes

More music!

Less noise

Feeling safer: Those who hang downtown and ask for money -- esp those who are clearly intoxicated -- make me nervous about shopping in town. The shelter was intended to offer temporary help to the area's homeless population but it is not equipped to deal with the real issues: substance abuse and mental illness. And it requires nothing of those it serves-- they are not required to be sober, or to be looking for work or a place to live. The same people are there night after night, abusing alcohol and drugs, and creating an unsafe and unpleasant downtown environment.

safe to walk around at all hours

More events

More shops, more restaurants, kid-friendly public spaces

See # 4 above

events, live music, food trucks, open markets, art shows, CULTURE!!!

More retail options, more food options, more things to do, more events.

n/a

More public art and outdoor dining

More local businesses, more green space, safer bike lanes and safer crosswalks.

n/a

Safer at night, more family friendly and less focused on a single age group.

Maybe if people cared more and people that r riding bikes and walkers respected cars and not be looking to get hit

An open Main Street with minimal parking

More outdoor dining and interesting retail

If we had more options for food/shopping

More events, shops and restaurants

Diversity in shopping, no panhandling, no needles or open drug use, feeling safe, better parking

More shops to actually shop in, meaning not a gas company etc.

Music, beautiful outdoor spaces, destinations to bring children

More stores, maybe more attractions at the theater, outdoor dining, live music or art.

More parking availability

More events, culturally speaking, music and a venue

Safety for walkers, spaces to hang out, concert venues.

Outdoor concerts, art fair, downtown farmer's market

Even more shops/businesses/cafes/bars/restaurants that are unique to Keene.

Maybe more dining but I think it's prob a good number and variety. Concerts? Perhaps.

More parking

Easier bike access

more and diverse shops and activities

Q14. What would encourage you to come downtown?

Less unruly behavior. Not from college kids but other demographics

good weather

If Main Street were a pedestrian mall. If there were more opportunities for coffee and dining outside.

More festivals

Before the co-op, I would've said a grocery store. Some more greenspace would be nice (see comment above). The little pathway between Railroad Sq. and the Co-op is very welcome. Preserving or developing other precious small green spaces like that (Butterfly Park!) would be great.

more events that offer an array of cultural interests appeal to wide variety of ages and people grow our revenue here

More live music/comedy/art spaces/ things to do at night besides go to a bar.

More outdoor dining and free parking

Free parking

Public events

better biking access

More variety in shopping -

Music events

More restaurant choices, even though there are already a good amount. More entertainment

Restaurants and local shops

Filled storefronts, balance between tourist and resident business.

If there was more parking and more to do other than grab dinner during the evening, I would be downtown more often than I am now.

Less vicious parking-meter enforcement.

Need to clean out the bums who are literally just looking for a handout and help those that are looking for help. The first set have actually sworn at my wife and thrown away food she offered when they said they were hungry, they only wanted money for booze or drugs.

More small events such as the summer band concerts, music festival, Art walk, etc. Not The Mega events
Like The Pumpkin Fest

Better traffic patterns

more parking and less people with no purpose bothering me.

Live music and outdoor spaces

Free parking and more spaces

More outdoor dining, art, a brewery, dog park, more events

More local shops

More shops, activity

With the stores there now, nothing.

More open green spaces to have picnics or gatherings. Better variety of stores. More local goods.

Pumpkin festival. Just like the old days with music, art, even just snow fall at 4 am in the morning when its empty.

Clearer visibility, better parking

better parking, food trucks

more parking, an outdoor concert venue like in Lowell, Mass.

A vibe...

Q14. What would encourage you to come downtown?

better parking

Less traffic, more adult and kid friendly activity like concerts, outdoor eating, pedestrian only walking events, outdoor seating, bike lanes.

More events, more outdoor seating/dining, more businesses (which comes from lower rent!) activities like the Art Walk

More variety of shops.

see 17.

More events, public green space and free parking

More shopping, fewer bars, more small community (non pumpkin related) events. Sidewalk sales etc...

More outdoor eating

More KPD

less parking hassle

More of the feel downtown used to be - local shops and restaurants, could sit around railroad square without people being a problem, when things were "quieter" in that area

lower parking rates

An evolving, changing dynamic. Ability for shops and restaurants to do more outside their spaces. Green spaces, easier walking. Water for kids.

Retail stores and parking

Events

Already do

More free parking, less miscreants hanging out and selling drugs, more restaurants and cheaper rents to keep businesses.

More variety of shops and more community activities

relevant shops and dining

Better parking, less panhandlers bothering shoppers, etc.

More Restaurants, shops. Less non-retail store fronts.

Free parking.

More parking and safer streets

More and better shopping; encourage more quality retail

More diverse shops

FEWER BUMS

More diverse and exciting shopping experience and more out door dining options

More events. Better shops. Fewer loiterers.

Better diversity in shopping options

Less congested streets

Safety measures

My office is already on Main St.

More shopping choices.

Less traffic, free parking garage

More music.

more variety of restaurants/shops/ activity

If my office was located downtown.

better lighting and more open spaces for walking

Q14. What would encourage you to come downtown?

Relocating 100 nights. Harsher penalties for panhandlers

More music, arts, dancing, free activities. Closing the street to automobiles on a more consistent basis. This would allow more space for outdoor activities and events. Close parking could be available for those who need it on side streets.

Not sure.

get rid of the vagrants

A wider variety of businesses.

More affordable shopping

Events, art, music, sales

fewer cars

see comments about regular, small scale local events. Trying to bring the pumpkin festival back is a mistake of epic proportion. Run away from that. Small, events. The music festival, snow and ice festival etc...are perfect examples of how things should be run.

Better traffic, more calibrated traffic lighting

more local shops, more parking, bicycle racks, areas to sit

free parking

More events like the pumpkin festival

Making it so we are not accosted by junkies, pan handlers or bad actors.

Less "territoriality" of parking: eg I feel guilty if I park to shop at the Co-op, and then run over to the Main St bank for a few minutes

Better, more positive, more welcoming "spin" and "hype" from City spokespersons. Too many folks like to rag on Downtown. It's cleaner and better than many want to admit. The recent "downtown is failing with drunks, homeless", etc., is lame, and distressing. And untrue.

Pumpkin feast

more events

secure well-lit parking, WiFi access, art, music

clear and more specific advertising of special events

Events, particularly family and child friendly. Shops some at kids would be nice, too.

more family friendly activities, better shopping - right now it's too specialized, etc.

Outdoor spaces to gather

More events

More parking

More events being held downtown, more shops, more diversity in the shops that are there/not there

More parking or free parking hours, more/better shops

deals at the bar

More shops, also more control over beggars not being allowed to sit on a bench asking for spare change all day.

Friendly green spaces and seating

more events, cheaper prices, free parking, outdoor dining

cheaper clothing stores that accomerndate a younger style

More events, mainly outdoor activities

more outdoor spaces

Cheaper and more variety of businesses

Free parking been here almost 50 yrs

Q14. What would encourage you to come downtown?

free parking

More public art, events, more diverse and affordable restaurants.

more infrastructure to our bike path with solar lighting

Free parking, outside events

Free parking, outside events

Parking spots, more outside activities

Better traffic flow

Cleaning up and increasing outdoor activities, more lighting at night

More visible police patrols (increased safety), particularly at night (but not exclusively).

more police around and less drug addicts

Less bicycle traffic on sidewalks, more cultural events.

Parking, more outside dining

Making it easier for bicyclists. More shops and restaurants

Add more public art or easy to access art viewing.

More public events

Live music, public venues, more art, food trucks, first Fridays, less traffic on weekend evenings (see Austin tax as extreme example of how to change)

More free public events or large gatherings with food and activities in town

if there were nicer places for people to hangout

A more elegant upscale downtown that encourages more upscale evening life not just bars. A wider variety of shopping downtown for men and children

An easier parking arrangement, a park or playground

The real pumpkin festival returning like it always had been!

more public space, a walking street, more limited traffic

More parking and more food establishments

easier access to shopping

more occupancy of shops and restaurants, less sketchy people

more live music, ice cream/food carts

events, festivals, sales

General store

More festivals, more restaurants, better retail variety.

More arts related activities

outdoor performances

All of the items I mentioned above.

knowing the lotto guy wouldn't harass me every time I walked by.

A punch card that a bunch of restaurants buy into... after X amount of money... free set app or meal

walk areas, no traffic

A community event or sale

Panhandlers and cursing homeless under control. More sidewalk space to walk around outdoor dining, and smoking ban on downtown sidewalks, it is horrible in places like outside the Cobblestone.

Q14. What would encourage you to come downtown?

A friendlier place. Sometimes the business owners and the police make one feel they are not wanted. The attitude is, just leave your money and go home. This is especially true for people without cars (cyclists and pedestrians). Try cycling through town and see how many angry motorists there are that complain about you riding on "their" streets. I saw a business owner the other day arguing with a group of cyclists about where they left their bikes (no bike racks in the area). The comment I heard from the cyclists as they left the area was "So much for friendly Keene". All were from out of town (Massachusetts). What chance that they will come back? There is an attitude that if you don't look and act like me (i.e. business people and police) then they don't want you around. Note that making Keene a more inviting place does not mean spending more money.

More businesses and shopping and restaurants. Free parking

Free parking on Main St

I don't like seeing homeless and their outstretched hands.

Free parking

More space. More choices. Less college nonsense

Reducing unmonitored crosswalks to only a few and encouraging people to use the once with tragic monitoring for their safety and the safety of the drivers. Enforce the laws and make sure jaywalkers are held accountable for causing safety hazards for drivers. Parking needs to be downsized and/or regulated. Large trucks (bed that are longer than the average 6ft, full cabs with long beds or that have large tires and sit above and beyond the height of an average vehicle, for example) should be prohibited from parking on Main St. as it causes safety issues when we cannot see past their vehicle with reasonable sight of oncoming traffic and when their vehicle sits out into the road, causing other drivers to have to swerve into another lane to avoid their vehicle or causing traffic to back up because they can't get around said vehicle.

more variety

More public events such as The Pumpkin Festival

Events, art galleries,

free ice cream

New restaurants, free parking, more parking

More variety of restaurants and shops. A playground near railroad square. A public market that sells food from local farms and has food stands that use local resources.

Events

More shops

Parking

More parking, a variety of shops. There are already too many restaurants in Keene. We need more clothing and specialty stores

More parking

less of what I don't like ;-)

Live music/DJ venue for dancing

more shopping and dining variety

more family-oriented events and activities

More parking, especially closer to stores and restaurants. More variety of smaller and different restaurants. Unique shops.

if we had more shops.

Q14. What would encourage you to come downtown?

Not enough free stuff to do (buskers, concerts in churches at lunchtime, etc.) More local shopping, like Hannah Grimes Marketplace.

More art & music. Outdoor dining (even in rain or cold - like Europe. Just provide heaters and blankets like they do).

More live entertainment

Better restaurants, bars, and businesses

lower prices, but that's all I have :)

restrooms, more music art and events

Events

\$\$\$

get rid of the trash

Get the homeless away from public areas

more outdoor activities; variety of events

Street music

Maybe a monthly event such as Peterborough's First Fridays with arts events and stores open later.

More streamlined driving and parking. Pedestrian caution when using crosswalks. More restaurants with outdoor dining. More restaurant and bar patios that welcome dogs.

A nearby, family-friendly park.

Less expensive convenient parking

New restaurants and shops

Higher end dinner choices.

More police presence, more outdoor events (like Church St. in Burlington), more shops like the old days.

I'd stay downtown longer if events were taking place

Quieter streets, safer feel, more diversity in stores

Events in the square like music

less congestion

More restaurants

free parking, a small park... the Butterfly Park and Wheelock Park are just a little too far out of downtown

Lighting from side streets, more varied/ affordable shops, get rid of parking on Main

More live entertainment like music

Fewer bars

events, like the huge sidewalk sale in the 80s

Shops, outdoor space for lounging

Culture. It's shouldn't be all about sales. Focus on monthly art displays interspersed throughout venues. But not like the art walk. The art walk is shallow. Music that isn't just in bars. Where can a family go for cultural opportunities downtown? Extending downtown for more enticing walks would be a great step.

More shopping

More things to do farther from the college

Additional destination stores

parking

Outdoor eating/sidewalk shopping

Q14. What would encourage you to come downtown?

Art spaces, live music venues, better shopping, more dining options (how many Mexican places does one town need?!)

More stores filled. Less pan handlers asking for money. Less stores that sell equipment for smoking marijuana.

idk

Events, retail stores, winter outdoor fire pits, parks

more shops that have specialty items such as coffee shop and candy shop. more small independent shops, healthy areas for exercise and health promotion for self

Diversity of restaurants and entertainment (more than the Colonial Theatre) Some new indoor live music venues are needed.

Free parking

More music (i.e., nowhere to sit, have a drink and listen to a band, whether it's jazz, classical, folk, you name it. Fritz's was the last place to go and hear small music groups, etc.

Bike ones and bike racks

Public art, particularly kinetic art, even more dining opportunities

free parking, cultural events

I would go downtown more often if there were venues for music, dancing, or more outdoor events like the Keene Music Festival. Also, it would be great if the farmer's market were on Main Street where more people could see it!

na

More variety for shopping

events

More restaurants

If I had a job there.

More bike lanes. More public transport. More outdoor dining areas.

better parking

New skate park/chain stores

More retail

More exciting stores or food places

Police presence

more shops

More dining options

Free parking

bike lanes, music

Healthy, vibrant events similarly to Art Walk, Keene Music Festival, Monadnock Film Festival, farmer's market. Not too big events like the grossly over-attended, crowded Pumpkin Festival.

More family friendly areas

more shopping options, I miss the Kitchen Store, the Yarn store, Ingenuity, Hallmark. We need to attract more small independent shops.

WiFi, public events, bars and restaurants, art, ease of transportation and getting around

a hardware store, Aubuchon's was a great loss

Less Panhandlers. Ease with traffic.

More Summer music/concerts

atmosphere

Q14. What would encourage you to come downtown?

More variety of stores, more parking, more events

Easy safe parking...and leaving parking spot...cars, bikes...good grief...more interesting shopping

Performance art. Food festivals. Available parking.

less cigarette smoke

Maybe an express bus from west Keene

PARKING

Keep the eating, shopping, and entertainment good

more fun stores, eclectic another kitchen shop or more upscale little shops, more food choices

Options for youth/teens, more art/sculpture, more shops, live music (which doesn't include Friday night religious stuff on the common!)

Evening public transportation. Farm to table restaurants featuring local products.

I love the community events, keep up the good work!

New restaurants and variety if shops

Less financial offices. More music, art, and public events. Better location for farmers market!

More boutiques, more events and festivals

Stores open later, free parking, more community and public events

More free parking

more interesting businesses, more bike racks, more parking, music events, art events, social gatherings and activities, free or cheap public events (group yoga, concerts, open mics, movie nights, paint nites, potlucks or special food events, etc)

more night activity, later hours, more family weekend events

Family friendly street events

Feeling safe and being left alone.

More shopping and dining opportunities

Police on foot, street musicians, a really good donut shop, a movie house

More shops

Community events, more retailers, more dining, more benches, dog friendly

Live music, more choices

More diverse businesses and public events

Cultural events

better traffic flows, people that don't just walk out in front of you

Lunchtime events/concerts

Outdoor seating with space.

More family friendly events-

More dining!

More public events

free parking

A brewery with good food and outdoor dining. Public art. Bike path destinations.

Q15. Would you like more outdoor dining downtown?

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Q16. Would you like to see more public art downtown?

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Q17. Please describe yourself?

side note: why are we hiring a consultant? waste of money when locals, residents and business owners are very capable of doing this and finding solutions. Perhaps if the city stopped wasting taxpayers money on consultants more would move to the area.

And former business owner in downtown...The city has a vital downtown...it does not have a strong, well-directed organization to encourage, organize and direct the business- and activity-oriented activities that draw people...The City Council isn't really pro-business, in spite of their own opinion otherwise,..hasn't been for 50 years, the Chamber of Commerce doesn't appear to have downtown as part of their mission as reflected by the lack of retail representation on their board. And, unfortunately, without a strong, motivating leader who can unite the wide variety of businesses and owner in downtown..it will continue to be like trying to herd cats.

Resident of Keene, downtown business owner (professional services)

I am self-employed, live in Chesterfield, grew up in downtown and I find myself downtown at least three times a week during the day and once on weekends, usually in the evening.

I live about a half mile from downtown so I can walk here. I intentionally bought a house near the downtown.

I live downtown and own a business downtown and have done so for the past 7 years. The best thing the town did to address the issues I raised was getting rid of the air raid siren in Central Square. That was a huge blessing and it is also nice that the emergency vehicles do not use sirens late at night. At one point a few years ago I was tracking sirens in downtown and counted as many as 5-10 emergency vehicle siren incidents every day. The easiest way to estimate how many times emergency vehicle sirens are used downtown is to use the SWNH fire and emergency dispatch logs. You can find them on Twitter at @Firemutualaid. During certain times of day, each one of those Tweets is a siren.

Work & Visit.

Q17. Please describe yourself?

I am born and raised in Keene NH. I have worked in the Colony Mill when it was mostly retail back in the 90's, and other downtown retail businesses. I do not like to shop downtown anymore, I find it really hard not to be approached by people wanting money, smokers walking by as you are trying to dine outside. I have been to other downtown's where smoking is discouraged, just like it is at Cheshire Medical. Other downtown's don't allow men to walk around with their shirts off, they have an no shirt ordinance. There are way to many bars, tattoo studios and boring services that have taken up the retail space downtown. I would like to see higher end shopping, more dining options and outside dining. I also have seen over the years auto part stores double and don't know how we can support these kinds of stores. Bringing in a Kay's Jeweler and a Yankee Candle only takes away from the downtown, and honestly you can buy a lot of these items at Target, Pier One and Bed Bath and Beyond. I feel like you can't find a shop anymore where you can get a nice wedding gift, and get it wrapped. Keene has changed a lot, and so much that we have considered moving to Woodstock or Manchester VT. There needs to be more food to table restaurants that focus on our farmers. The fact that our farmers market is located where it is prevents our family from attending as it is near too much traffic and it isn't in a contained area. The Walpole Creamery that is near the bar is a horrible location, as you are trying to be there with your family, you have people drinking, smoking and swearing. The ice cream is great, but the location is bad. There is no fencing on the sidewalk near the road, there is only a rope with some stakes. This is not ideal for families with young children. It is not a family friendly place that I want to go to anymore. I am 46 years old, I have only lived out of the area for a couple of years so I have seen things come and go.

I am not impressed with where things are going, and I do appreciate this survey as it is a forum for people to have their voice heard, so thank you. I feel like the City of Keene has strict zoning laws but when it comes to downtown they leave it up to the renters, who are really looking to fill the space, and I get that. Places like Nantucket have reinforcements on the property owners of the building so that they have to adhere to a certain look, feel of what goes in that space. It helps cut down on constant fluctuation of renters coming and going. It also helps with what kind of clientele it attracts. I am not saying you can't have some of that but three tattoo studios in one downtown area is over the top, having seven bars in one downtown is way too much. Thanks for listening.

I live in Surry

Live and work in Keene, both close to downtown.

Resident, worker, active community members, son and father of other Keene residents.

Live in Marlborough, but I work in Keene.

I own a home close to downtown. I live and work in Keene.

does it really matter?.....if u want to improve Keene why care who has an opinion.....its not a place we like to go since there's nothing to do,.....not everyone wants art or museums etc...some people like downright fun things to do.....and Keene offers little.....besides local businesses and eateries....just know if residents leave your town and go elsewhere, its not so great as you think and if others as my family only go there when we need to go.....nothing is there. you need to update it.....Nashua has it about right.....take it from there.....get off this cloud u all think it has to remain the way it was 40 years ago.....its 2017....people change, places do too and what younger adults want

Q17. Please describe yourself?

I guess the 3 day forum was mentioned in the Sentinel but I missed it. Only saw sign on Main Street announcing it so I went to a discussion Wednesday. Why didn't the city publicize this more in flyers or emails from city counselors. I think this is a great opportunity for citizens to provide impact -- I wonder what percent of our residents participated?

Resident of Roxbury, NH., active in community affairs in multiple ways

I live in a neighboring town. So I'm a visitor, but a pretty frequent one.

Resident of Keene, work in Keene, visit downtown, own a business just outside of downtown. It only lets me select one.

Business owner in Fitzwilliam

Honestly, trees and lighting and all don't matter if we can't get a handle on the folks who are coming into town to hang out, fight with one another, and beg for money. My concern is that there doesn't seem to be a strategic plan of any kind to manage this population. Why is the homeless shelter downtown? Homeless numbers have dropped dramatically in recent years, and yet Keene's "homeless" population has increased. This is in large part because these folks have drug and mental health issues first -- homelessness is a secondary issue. And the shelter does nothing to help them change their behaviors and improve their lives. In fact, they enable them to continue. Keene has a big heart, and we are being taken advantage of.

I was raised in surrounding town, went to school & worked & lived there afterwards, have since moved to Vermont but still visit often.

thanks for doing what you do

I live within walking distance of the downtown and walk there regularly

Residents of Chesterfield Heights, daily visitors to Keene.

Local resident since 1986. Employee of the college since 2007. Thank you for this survey.

Live in Swanzey but you shouldn't limit yourselves because our dollars have left, we shop exclusively now elsewhere. And rarely go to the three mentioned places above you found spots to replace them. Also, we would have family & friends & business associates stay exclusively in Keene we now have them stay in B&Bs elsewhere. You lost thousands of dollars monthly from hotel stays & all that goes with it. Our guests got fed up with the crap of being hassled as they walked back to their hotel. It's out of control!

Retired. I have children who bring my grandchildren to visit. I have family members who love to come to Keene from CT and elsewhere because they love Keene, too.

I have lived in the area my entire life. I have rented in Keene many times until purchasing a house in Marlow. This is home and I think change would benefit this area by boosting economic downfall and invite more people to stop and explore.

Live just outside of Keene....but very loyal to Keene after growing up and working in Keene.

Sister of Main Street Business Owner and previous resident of Keene. Mother of Keene resident, and local family of 46 yrs.

I'm a frequent downtown goer who lives just outside Keene now, but has lived in the area for life

I am an 11 month resident who loves being in Keene and all that downtown offers Parking near places I go is greatly appreciated-library, town hall, etc Eating downtown is very enjoyable and rarely have I been Unable to find a parking spot

Grew up there

Live in Walpole

Q17. Please describe yourself?

I am a student at Antioch University, and I work downtown and also sit on a city-college commission sub group.

I live within walking distance of downtown.

Resident until recently. Moved outside city limits in pursuit of quiet lifestyle--away from "live free or die" motorcyclists that have taken over the city. Keene is still my hub city.

Problem with downtown sidewalk dining is sometimes the restaurant staff and diners forget it is a sidewalk and not the property of the restaurant. Can be narrow to push a stroller or wheelchair.

Young family with dog

I own a business on lower main street. What is the city doing to spruce up our area?

I was born and raised in Keene, but currently live in Concord. I moved because the city has overall been going down the drain.

If you look at thriving, mixed population cities such as Boston and perhaps Burlington, Vermont, there is an 'auto free' zone. Church Street in Burlington, Faneuil Hall Marketplace in Boston. If this were the case in Keene, we would attract tourists again. If we removed the center parking median and replaced the pavement with brick or pavers, we could create this. Landscaped areas with benches, water fountains, charging stations with free Wi-Fi---people would be willing to park in a garage and walk to this area. We could even have street vendors and food trucks. Burlington is dog-friendly; stores have water bowls out, there are poop bag receptacles, etc. Keene could achieve this. The money lost from the meters could be made up by the garage(s).

Resident of the Maple Acres neighborhood for many years. Keene needs to figure out ways for our taxes to stop increasing, to stop making this town look like complete fools focused on pumpkins rather than problems. We have real issues in this city yet what do we make the news for? Really bad PR relates to this recent pumpkin debacle. Incredibly foolish to even open that can of worms. Time to reconsider my upcoming vote...time for a change of leadership

We love living in Keene!

Don't lose your downtown because your cheap Keene. It is an economic engine and investment is a good bet.

lived here for 28 years, I think the downtown is beautiful and safe but could always be better, concerned about the loss of some stores recently and would love to see more variety of restaurants. (Brattleboro always seems to have lots of fun restaurants and we have just a few. Hours are limited on some too.

We own a business in Keene, but it's not downtown.

graduate student

I live and work in Keene

What is this not multiple answers? Why are Keene resident, Keene business owner and works in Keene mutually exclusive responses? Keene resident and works in Keene.

Engaged community member!

Born, live, work in Keene. Downtown DAILY, at ALL hours. Put BACK *ALL* the *BENCHES*!....

I am involved in several community organizations and would advocate more access to a restroom when it is needed.

I am a resident of Keene, I've attended KSC and Antioch (Graduated in 2007 and 2016 respectively), and am also a small business owner in downtown Keene.

Q17. Please describe yourself?

Used to own a rental property in Keene, but we sold it because we felt Keene is dying. There is going to be a glut of rentals for Keene State students with all the new dorms, colony mill and off campus apartments being built... and of course, KSC enrollment is down...why, because the locals trash these kids, many of whom are our children. Don't bite the hand that feeds you as they say.

student

I am a young woman who is a senior in college at Keene State. I live on Pearl street so I walk to and from campus fairly often.

Student

student at Keene State College

student at Keene state college

Student of Keene

resident and student

I grew up in Keene but now live in Swanzey. I love the downtown area of Keene.

I work at W.S. Badger and have Formed a non profit in Keene calles Friends of Public Art. I absolutely want a more vibrant down town where we can spend more time enjoying the out doors rather than a consumer main street. we need a main street that encourages family and ounger generations to enjoy our down town for other reasons. maybe a sculpture park? Bike commuter hub? More public art ect.

I'm also a City Councilor.

Former resident of Keene , participating vendor in a local retail operation.

I live in Keene. I work at KSC, and I am proud to be a citizen of Keene.

Keene State College Student

Keene State College student

I think something like horse and carriage who downtown who downtown or bicycle carriages for romantic rides especially on big event nights

I live in Keene, specifically purchased my house so I am walking distance to downtown. I work PT in downtown Keene (until last year FT), I dine, do my banking and shopping in downtown as well as my entertainment - the theater, festivals. Occasionally my exercise route is through downtown.

I am a Landscape Architect who worked on the last large renovation plans in the "80s". Live in Harrisville. Doug Miller: cell 429-1383.

I both live and work downtown.

31 y.o. Resident and homeowner in East Keene

Could Farmers Market ever be moved to an area without a parking lot so it would be cooler and perhaps grow larger? The pavement makes it so hot.

I'm a previous resident of Keene. I moved to a neighboring town due to the chaos that comes from living so close to downtown. I also work 2 jobs in Keene and actively attend community events.

Officially a resident of Swanzey, grew up a mile away from downtown, work in Keene, love love love the city.

It's a very quaint picturesque town. Let's keep it that way. Street sweepers cleaning up parking areas would be wonderful. Weeds and trash on side streets off of Main need to be dealt with. A few "loiterers" during the day hanging out in doorways could be asked to move along instead of asking for money from walkers or people going to work.

Q17. Please describe yourself?

Please do NOT raise property taxes to pay for this!

I also work in Keene.

born and raised in Keene even though I live out of town now this is still my city.

I live in Keene. I work in Keene. I am considering opening a downtown business. For this, I need an attractive affordable location / space.

I have family in Keene and visit/stay often.

Former resident

I live and work in Keene. 25 years old, male

parent, business owner, teacher, comes into Keene 3-5 times a week.

I also work in Keene

25 years, moved here after college for a job

Grew up in Keene. Lived in other states for a decade before returning for my career. Long time resident.

Resident and business owner and visitor of downtown

I've lived here since I was 12 - when Colony Mill was a mall and you could buy records at The Music Shop and hair dye from What's Next and go have some soup at Kristens Bakery in the food court. What do kids these days have to do in town? It's no wonder more and more people are turning to drugs because Keene offers nothing new or exciting. Even with my toddler I feel like I have very few options because most of the parks I go to have junkies drinking alcohol on the park benches. We need to be considering the younger residents of this town - when all these city council members eventually drink themselves to death, there will be a new era to take over. Let's make it an era of change, progression and innovation! Thanks.

I am a resident and I work in Keene.

resident of Marlborough NH but I spend a great deal of time in Keene NH

Work and live in Keene near the downtown

Keene has a great vibe, and this effort is important to keep people invested in downtown. Keene has done a lot, and it could do more. After retirement I would consider moving downtown if the amenities to support the type of lifestyle I want to lead are available.

Former resident of Keene and employee. Left Keene for stronger economic opportunities. Would return if Keene's job market strengthens.

This question would not let me check all that apply. I also work in Keene and visit downtown.

NA

I live just outside of Keene now but was a Keene resident for many years.

Resident and visitor - can't select more than one option here

Work from home often and live .5 miles from the common. I would like to add that when a round about is out on lower main street that a statue of Jonathan Daniels be erected in the center and a large entryway be put over the end of main street such as they have at KSC's entry to Appian Way. Thanks for all you do.

Retired from Keene School District. Keene needs to think more about its people and less about corporations and businesses. (such as the airport)

#17 would only allow me to select one option. i am also a frequent downtown visitor

Check all that apply doesn't work. I am both a resident of Keene (near downtown on Roxbury St.) and I work in Keene (also near downtown at KSC). I travel through and experience downtown Keene everyday.

Q17. Please describe yourself?

I live next to downtown=30 yrs. I work close to downtown and travel thru downtown at least 4X per day. ENOUGH with downtown. Fix the sidewalks and streets in the adjoining neighborhoods. IT's in the Master Plan- look it up.

yes to top three but form only allowed one check

Please note that while downtown should be beefed up with more mixed-use development, I think there are two other "downtowns" in Keene that should also be nurtured, the one in the Park Ave/Summit Rd/Maple Ave, and the one at the intersection of Court Street and Maple Ave. We shouldn't develop Main street while ignoring these areas. Those areas could use some downtown "look-and-feel" improvements.

resident work in Keene business owner on gilbo ave

I own a house and business in Keene.

Reside and work in Keene

The sidewalks seem plenty wide for outdoor dining and pedestrians. Is there a way to have more events, these could actually make money for the town... a regular summer festival... take the interest of the pumpkin festival and have a nice fair in the summer, with fewer students in the area. Use the empty spaces downtown for displays from the College and City or historical, etc. etc. Also could be temporarily and easily set up for other meetings... meeting space is a premium!

I thought you were going to ask for suggestions for businesses we would like to see. So I will put that here: a really good donut shop <http://www.revolutiondonuts.com/> a creperie, a brew pub, but most of all a movie house with a lounge/bar

I live and own a small business in Keene

Doesn't allow you to check all that apply!

I work in Keene, own a business on Marlboro Street, and decided to go back to Keene State as a non-traditional student.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

09/25/17

Movement of vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians and parking

- Starts at Square ends at Roundabout at Winchester
 - 1/8th of a mile to East and West
 - To Grove Street to the East
- North to Mechanic Street
- West to Colony Mill
 - South to Keene State
- Potentially North to Union Street
- Bring big box retailer downtown
 - Target, Walmart, etc.
- No shopping currently downtown
- Retail rent control for businesses
- No social exterior gathering spaces
- High property taxes
- More family friendly events
- 5 & 10 store
- Children's museum?
- Art Shows/Gallery
- More culture
- Free Wi-Fi
- Main Street people walking
- Bike safety/education
 - Cycle track
- Bad lighting
- Pedestrian safety
- Accessibility into stores/street
- Tax incentives?
- Lots of existing parking
- Main circle too vehicular traffic orientated
- More entertainment
- Better Pedestrian walking
- Zoning parking times
- Parking signage
- Art/Murals
- Skate Park/covered
- Driving across Main Street difficult
- Park within one block of destination
- Confusing pedestrian crossings at circle
- Dark sky lighting
- Dog park
- Public restrooms
- Public transportation stops
- Traffic calming

- Bike racks

09/26/17

- Square to Marlboro Street, Vernon
- West to Railroad Street
- North to Mechanic
- Is Beaver Brook/Redevelopment the east boundary?
- College is not downtown
- West to Wilson Street
- Colony Mill not downtown
- Parking fees/free parking zones/monthly parking pass
- Provisions for bicycling
- Parking fines
- Free parking on Saturday to encourage more visitors downtown
- Build parking garage on open lots close to Main Street
- Not enough parking on Main Street
- If parking garages built, make other lots public open space
- No more reserved parking spaces
- Don't need to park right outside store you're visiting
- Better public transportation
- Better directional signage
- Have turn right on red at square
- Adjust timing on pedestrian crossings
- No jay walking
- Remove cyclists from sidewalks
- Improve crossings for pedestrians
- Limit space for outdoor dining
- Remove some on-street parking for dining
- Not easy to cycle downtown
- Cycle track
- Conflicts exist between cars & bikes
- Hard to see pedestrians when driving at night
- Higher buildings downtown
- Good scale on Main Street
- More small urban parks
- Walkable greenway
- Outdoor seating a plus
- Wider sidewalks
- Better connection to downtown
- Great trails
- Outdoor dining next to buildings
- More mixed use zoning

09/27/17

- Uses we want:
 - Restaurant/Retail/Bars
 - Children's Museum (Family Interactive)
 - "Destination" Places
 - Kitchen Store
 - Hardware Store
 - Co-op, Great Benefit
 - Trader Joe's
 - Outdoor seating, especially at lunch
 - Access to Bike Paths/Signage
 - Bike! Downtown-YES!
 - Gathering Spaces/Places
 - Bookstore/Coffee Shop! At the Center
 - Food Trucks!!
- Mix of Uses? (on streets)
- Sidewalk more important (1)
- Main Street should be safer (1111)
- Priority is to get people downtown & spend money
- Less Parking on Main Street
- Tori: More Ashtrays

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

09/25/17

Public Space Use and Utilization

- Welcome center
- Bathrooms
- Pedestrian only marketplace
 - Burlington
- Permeable paving
- Pedestrian & Bike safety
- Labeled trash cans
- Concrete seating unfordable
- Gathering/benches/group
- Site amenities related to history of area
- Artistic Crosswalks
- Motion sensor lights
- Native plantings
- Traditional light fixtures
- Rain garden planters/stormwater management
- Education on climate change

- Simple signage
 - Pedestrians & Vehicles
 - Less clutter
- Historical references
 - Signage
 - Design in sidewalks
- Safer pedestrian crossings
 - Bump-outs/Public Art
- Granite within streetscape
- Map kiosk with historical references
- Railroad/glass blowing
- More bike racks
- Healthy tree growth – Silva Cell
- Large Platform seating/performance space

9/26/17 – Discussion occurred on the Roger Weinreich concept

09/27/17

- Aesthetic is quite nice
- Seating/gathering spaces – NOT enough currently
- More enforcement needed/foot traffic by PD
- Need small group activities/seating
 - With private space too
- Art-focused buildings/space
 - Artist-community set up
- Multi-use space for creating of/selling products
- Carpenter Field needs to be connected downtown
 - Increase uses their/add facilities
- Beaver Brook bi-secting feature
- Railroad Land: Needs a better connection to downtown
 - Underutilized
 - Part of downtown, yes!
- Town “vibe” ends to early
- Art ‘round town
- 101 to Marlboro – vegetation problem
- Route 101 entry to town
 - Needs Care
- Needs signage on 101 (Keene is fabulous)
- Central Square – needs better seating
 - Concerts
 - Water bottle filler
- Median on Main
 - Benches – yes, add some

- Possible – replace Deciduous with Evergreen Trees
- Maintain trees & excellence of greenery

Hardscape

- Don't remove benches in winter
 - Or change bench-type
- Berm with grass!
- Bikes: Keene working on this?
 - Few bike racks, currently
 - Need education bicycle Mayor
- Trash cans
 - Need one on Washington Street (By Cemetery)
- Need public restrooms
- Need: Inter-city bus stop needed
- Lighting
 - Crosswalks not lit well
 - Uplight sculptures (esp. in Central Square)
- Face Brick – bad! (in front of City Hall)
- Need to foster the authenticity of Keene, not add generic features
- Animal Art – Kids can climb on
- Piano on street (Littleton)
- Land use code update – in progress

D/T Resident Concerns: Hears construction all day
Emergency Vehicles – Too Noise

QUESTION POSED AT THE 3-DAY FORUM:

**IF YOU COULD ADD ONE NEW BUSINESS DOWNTOWN,
WHAT WOULD IT BE?**

Dance Clothes Store (MoCo students – hard to size on line) with new building
Craft Brewery and Pub
Bring back Hallmark!
Children's Store?
Toy Store
Cat Café ! check
Renovate Skatepark*** Check Check
A micro Trader Joe's
Public Parking Garage *
Yes, a real one – a serious one
Another one?
YES
Shoe Store – Not running shoes
A bike shop/bike rental
Good Idea
😊 I second that!
A store like Macro Polo in Portsmouth
How I miss a downtown Hardware Store!
Ditto
S.B. of W. on Maine Street 😊
Ditto, Aubuchon is missed
Art Gallery
Art Gallery Co-op – large enough for booths for variety of art/artists with a single point of sale
Renovation of the Skatepark
More co-working space; expand on options of current Maker-Space (“Make It So”) 😊
Middle-eastern restaurant! Check
Liquor Store closer to downtown and the east side
Also Grocery Stores on the east side
Latin Dance Studio – please!!!
All MADE IN U.S.A. stuff – from sportswear to kids' toys, etc.
Arcade/Fun Place for kids to be. Check, Check, Check, Check
Small music venue for various genres
Yes! Music Venue that isn't a bar, specifically

Photograph A



THOUGHTS?

Parking

First Night – bring back 1st night!

Getting people outdoors

Well maintained

Great job moving snow except side street sidewalks i.e. St. James Street

Difficult to get to meters/sidewalks but always clear streets!

Definitely bring back 1st night!

Winter Parking can be tough

Thanks for plowing Rail Trails all Winter! Great Job!

More Festivals!

Warm place to meet at night (not a bar)

Pedestrian signage by KSC needs to be removed – hazard for plows. College student should know how to safely cross

Glad for the care/limit salt use

Welcome to New Hampshire! Check

Good job Keene

Good work cleaning streets

That I'm grateful for our Public Works Team!!

"Snow.Shmoh" – That's a plow" And the City plows my sidewalk!! Thank you

City does a good job plowing – thanks!

Thanks! If you don't add granite curbing to more spaces, it will be easier to plow.

Hard to find parking while living downtown in winter but glad they plow!

Everything looks in place

Holiday lights in trees

Small Christmas trees, light and decorations around outside of Rotary (Competition between businesses. Awards given).

Lights on crosswalks or lighted crosswalks

Very costly to plow Main Street why bother??

Love to see more lights on posts, trees, etc.

Agree – Keep Central Square

Add more evergreens for winter

The downtown looks good.

Photograph B



THOUGHTS?

Bringing the community together

More Concerts!

Develop community event spaces not surrounded by traffic on all sides! RR Square Plaza by Co-op – or
car-free Main Street

Yes!!

Should be used for all public speakers on both sides of the aisle

Beautiful Photo – very New Englandy

Love it! More outdoor concerts on center Square

More Community activities, base some around the environment/health

Pumpkin Fest

List is Community

Love it

Would like more notice beforehand

I love it illuminated during the holidays – thanks to whoever does this and pays for the juice to churn the
lights

Leave the tree and decorations up until spring.

Is this sarcastic? Down by Valentine's Day please!

No, I love seeing color there during drab/dark February

Love this celebration – total community.

Bring back first night with indoor venues for performances – that was cool

More warning when events happen but glad the community can come together.

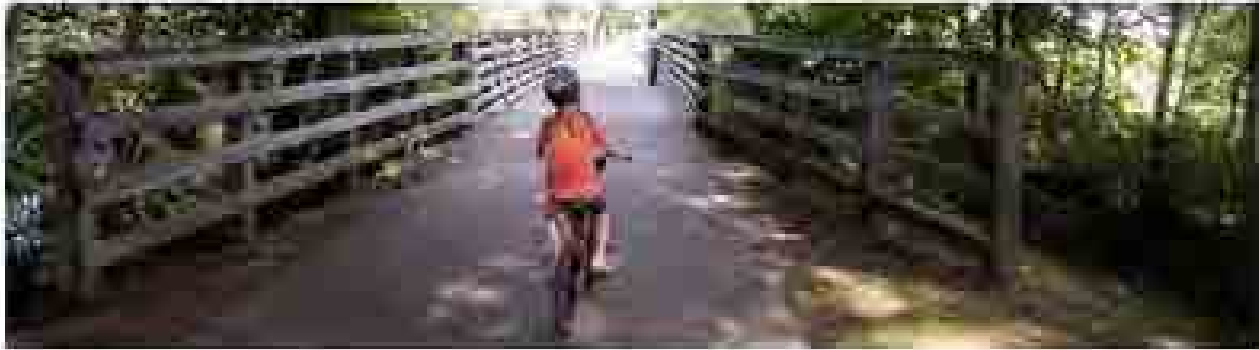
Weight limit of Gazebo?

Maybe make it bigger?

Like the gathering area...maybe should be large so it can hold more people

More Downtown Event's. Which are better coordinated, advertised and ALL inclusive!
One of our favorite family events would love more downtown events!
Encourage community gathering/pride/events through well-designed and beautiful public spaces.
People gather at the head of the square – public space

Photograph C



THOUGHTS?

Under marketed asset
Bike/run/walk trails
Youth activities/family activities
Welcoming to all ages
Fix some of the wood
Bridge under 101 (campus to Martell Ct) in terrible shape
Need north-south bike route out of Main Street traffic
If it's there it must be well maintained and well lit!!
Trash cans please! Yes!
More/expanded pedestrian/bike paths through downtown.
Expanded ped/bike paths up Washington/Court Streets
More lighting
Bike lane on West Surry (12A)
Better crosswalk lighting
Need to label bike paths.
They are there and Keene has potential to bring bicycle tourism here. There are just not enough signs to find trails.
Make it all connect
Bike racks!
New Orleans Mardi Gras
Keene's greatest asset
Better lighting on bike path, where bike path crosses road – "stop" or other signage.
More bike paths = Economic development
Some lights on path
Some garbage cans to encourage less littering
Trees along bike path to provide better demarcation
Find a way to get through downtown bike lanes. Check
No motorized vehicles
More needed
Solar lights along the paths – welcome. Check
Bike paths are great. Not on Main Street. I will run them down in a car. As a pedestrian, I don't like being surprised by a bike on the road or sidewalk.
Lights would be a nice addition in the dark areas – thanks for plowing.
Hard to find where to bike downtown and dangerous on side of roads.

Great bike path – keep it updated
Add trail maps. Check
Add distance markers
Add sculpture! ***
Interpretive signage (ecology, history)
Flowers? Color? This looks bland
Yes, the bridge of Flowers is a favorite. Something along those lines.
Bike trails are so clean. We love that.
Need to integrate our complete streets plan with separate grade paths to complete our network
Keep promoting and building places to bike and walk safely and peacefully!
Light up more of the bike path for safe night walks
Add historic markets
Bike paths ☺

Photograph D



THOUGHTS?

Long waits for pedestrians and vehicles
Historic look
Tree lined
Pedestrians walk anywhere they wish and they are not students.
Bikers seldom obey traffic lights!!
AMEN!!
Traffic patterns around Central Square are awkward
Don't try to turn Keene into Bourbon Street with all Bars and Restaurants
Put cameras on lights at Town Square. Too many people run deep red lights
Keene needs to be ready for 100% clean energy!

Crosswalk placement at Winchester Street/Main Street in dangerous places as are others on Winchester Street

Cover facades of 1960s looking buildings on main Street – they don't fit in!

Very confusing for tourists.

Ordinance for offensive facades

Please please no more Phat anything!!

Quaint New England

Better directional

All good – pretty picture

Free parking! Yes!

Diagonal crossing (save a corner)

Better coordination between pedestrian crossing and traffic flow

Get rid of pedestrian crossing walk/don't walk signal on Island-to-Anthony Toepfer(?) walk, replace with "Yield to Pedestrian" sign like the rest of Main, etc.

Good! Building owners respect tradition.

No more turnarounds – use rotaries at each end of Main

Thank goodness for walk/don't walk signals to get across this massive spread of traffic and asphalt

Pedestrians rule in Keene. 😊

Great historic architecture – and some more modern buildings

Like the historic, industrialist buildings. Should keep that look

Love the historic value of the streets

Yellow building is obnoxious

Need two lanes coming in to the Square from Court Street

Downtown is beautiful

More art!

More artists and musicians' spaces

Yes more art!

Need dedicated space for bikes in downtown that links to the complete streets plans

Downtown is beautiful and clean would love more bike friendly

Historic facades and buildings are unique and give Keene a special identity

Utilize free space to establish welcome center with bathroom facilities

More affordable restaurants serving more low cal foods.

Photograph E



THOUGHTS?

Welcoming

Well-maintained

Great job with flowers – have KSC – City Planting partnership!

Peaceful/safe city

Appealing and historic public space. Incorporate historic photos?

Somehow have designated smoking areas so it'll be friendlier for everyone.

Always nicely kept, surrounding streets, not so much

Flowers are always lovely downtown

Greenery is important and beautiful. Dodging traffic for the gazebo is not.

What are you afraid of?

More benches. Check

+1 When Keene is blooming it's gorgeous.

+2 Beautiful!

More people participating. Example: School Childre

+1 Peace Post – granite column

My tax \$ at work and I love it!!

This is what visitors (and residents!) love about Keene – well worth whatever the cost is to keep downtown beautiful

Love Christmas lights during Christmas and the Christmas Tree!

Landscaping of plants and flowers good

Vertical gardens/planters. Less space, less soil, more SF for chairs/benches

Love this idea

Creative benches

Broken tile mosaic concrete benches, durable and attractive

Maybe community gardens on vertical use of space and agriculture!

Need spaces to sit and enjoy the downtown and eat lunch!
Keep the benches. Don't remove them "as punishment"

Photograph F



THOUGHTS?

Conflict of walkway and table seating

I like tables on sidewalks and think plenty of room!!

Good to eat outside

Half of year when outside dining not an option. Could raised garden beds be sunken "rain gardens?"
decrease load on storm-water system. ☺

I have a concern about beer advertisements on table umbrellas – yuk!

Outside dining majorly RESTRICTS accessibility

Sidewalk too small for both greenspace and outdoor dining here. Maybe a way to expand seating area
without losing vegetation.

Better to have seating in a patio away from noisy traffic (like Ramunto's) behind the business with nice
lighting and planters.

Lack of outdoor seating in downtown. Need a variety of tree species for it to be sustainable. Emerald ash
borer is coming!

Look at Burlington, VT

Rope off restaurant al Fresco dining areas

+2 A good balance – maybe widen sidewalk – more opportunity for biz. To al Fresco. Yes

+1 Good Balance

Save the plant life and trees

Limit width of dining areas so pedestrians can stroll comfortably

Better lighting

Lots of dogs downtown (lots of dog poop)

Wider sidewalks

Love the plantings! City does a great job maintaining there.

An opportunity for additional outdoor seating

Love this! Eliminate cigarette death machines.
Keep the large trees
Love the landscape
Use stone instead of mulch
Standardized small posts and chain to help prevent walking through landscape areas.
More art!
Love our landscaping!
Green space and well landscaped spaces in downtown are VITAL!
Keep landscapes but add more indigenous plants.

Photograph G



THOUGHTS?

Arts and culture on Maine Street
Fall colors attracting people downtown
Good entertainment
Colonial a great community asset; community attendance at KSC events variable
Another venue for smaller (acoustic) events eg folk music, chamber music?
I second this
SOOO liberal. Never show any Dinesh D'Souza films or still waiting for American Sniper or The
Passion of Christ or Team America, etc.
Love the Colonial
Events matter – make Keene a destination
Where will people park when new 130 apts. Are open on Sprint Street?!

Intersection of Washington/Spring Street is already difficult to navigate – Remove another parking spot on Washington so people can see traffic coming south on Washington. Not to mention bike riders who ride in the wrong direction (N to S) on this street!!!

Seems Colonial repeats their performances year after year. Love the space! Can they sell reduced tix's day of show. Standing room?

Beer Gardens

More family friendly events with cheaper prices to allow families to afford.

Colonial is a gem. Which they would allow smaller acts

Great venue

Excellent community venue!

Kids shows/concerts

The community needs to do all it can to support this treasure!

Never been but very eye-catching

This is the best! I saw this come back to life – fab for live events, movies, celebrations, local theater and cartoons!

The theater is a really cool landmark...should be kept

Like the vintage theater look

Better marking for the Colonial

Art is good for business

Historic landmark...where is the Historic market?

More things (like the Colonial) for night time activity and spaces to encourage activated streetscape

Ditto! Family activities

More music. A 150-seat venue!

The Colonial needs a new SOUND System. Have it tested for clarity.

Photograph H



THOUGHTS?

Activity center like Brattleboro that uses it as a winter Farmers Market

Regular music groups on weekends downtown

Draw more shops – got enough restaurants

Strolling police

Creative seating with more, not less, benches

Agreed

A smoke free downtown!!

Water for dogs

Octoberfest

More music, greet space. Check Check Check Check

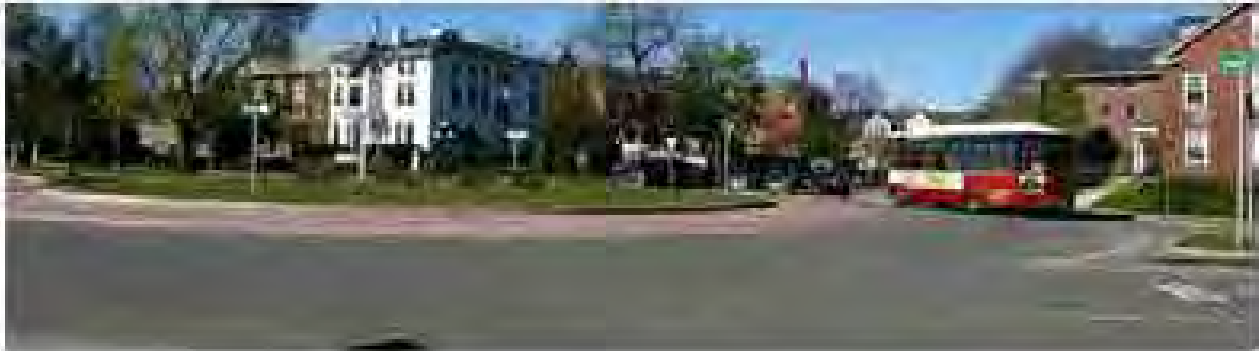
More events. Check Check

Would be nice to have another park as well. Not in the middle of traffic – Perhaps a park in front of the former high/junior school on Washington Street.

Yes! Great idea

Kudos – well maintained
 Centerpiece of the city – glad that it's so well maintained
 AOW = Mila (4 years old) says she loves dancing to the music. 😊
 Would I be stepping on any toes to say I love fountains, but this one is so... 1960s. could it be redone?
 More running water?
 Keep large green spaces – Ditto
 Enjoy the small little park area
 Create a downtown controlled dog park.
 Yes!
 More art
 More coordinated events downtown! More music and art!!
 Beautiful large trees both in square and along main street make downtown a truly special place.
 Keep trees and green spaces!
 Local bands
 Larger assembly space for public gatherings/events
 Love the ability to gather in the center of our lovely city. "Be the Light" was amazing

Photograph 1



THOUGHTS?

Town – Gown Link
 Good Trolley – haven't seen trolley for some time...discontinued?
 No students – attract KSC students on to Main Street
 We need way to "decrease" perception that KSC is far from downtown.
 Trolleys (at least hybrid, if not electric) doing a main Street circuit and West Street, Winchester/Marlboro
 Street circuits would help decongest Maine Street, alleviate parking!! Yes!!
 Bus Routes take too long/shorten each route please. Yes, Yes
 Anyways to improve public transportation are good
 Aging population – need to get downtown without cars
 Downtown medians should be extended a little further down South main Street
 Safety and Beauty!
 How to negotiate roundabout on a bike
 Pumpkinfest!
 Move crosswalks closest to roundabout
 Much better than traffic lights
 "Entitled" crossers not looking
 I love entitled crossers! More of them!!
 True – maybe a reminder sign but still driver responsibility
 Perhaps the white striped roadway from Water Street N around the Square?
 But crosswalks should be moved back away from traffic circle. Check, Agree

Sign on S main emphasizing NO LEFT FROM RIGHT LANE.
It's risky being a pedestrian here. No matter the day or hour. Still, I like it more than a traffic signal!
Traffic circles are an improvement – crosswalks right at Circle are tricky thought!
Dotted lines to indicate 2 lanes for those that don't understand rotaries.
Traffic circles are the best! Parents from CT and NY are forced to slow down.
Like the gardens in roundabout

Art! ***

Sculpture! ***

Roundabout facilitates traffic in an effective and attractive manner but there is a need for improved bicycle safety along Main Street

Use art to fill negative space and make less yard work

More of a bigger entrance to the downtown, emphasize Keene more, welcoming people

Clearer crossing signs/markers

Move crosswalks away from rotary

A lane to do a U-Turn, before reaching the Roundabout, when coming from downtown

Photograph J



THOUGHTS?

Good meet up place

Encourage the use of human/solar powered vehicles/rickshaw

Create a special lane for it

Connect 2017 event in November

Sponsored by the Hannah Grimes Center for Entrepreneurship

“Main Street 2.0”

How to bike through downtown?

Close off downtown once a month

Better road visuals

Love the pedestrian signals....

My fair city 😊

Gorgeous ❤️

Right turn on red signals!

YES!

Pedestrian lights showing amount of time to cross street

Clearer signs for left/rotary turns, lane designations

Right for Court Street. Left West Street/Main Street

The left arrow/rotary lane is a little funky – better signage would help

Agree

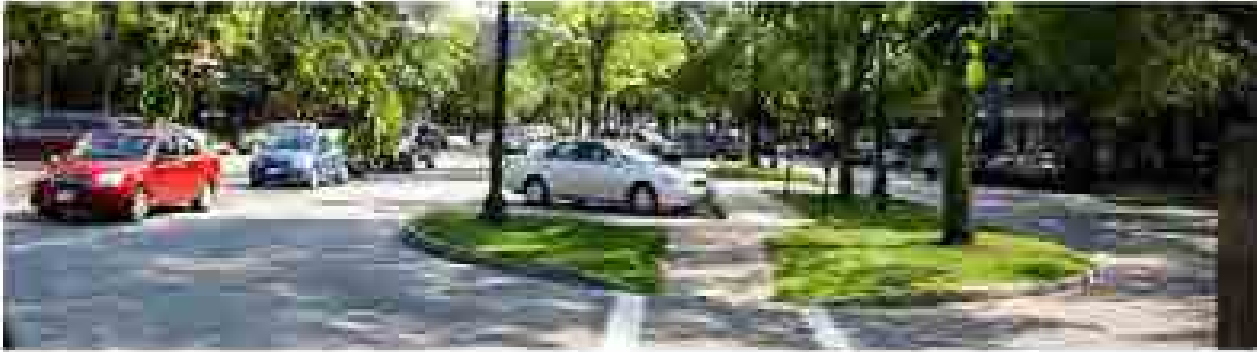
Yay

Add information areas for historical pieces

More interpretive signage (historical, regional)

Keep Parish Shoe sign – Yes!!
Include better directions to make rotary easier
No stoplights in rotary
New sidewalks near court house need fixing
Art!
Nice trees
Ditto!! And interesting storefronts – historic character
Light up cross walks in all downtown!
Reconfiguration of roundabout
It doesn't fit the definition of roundabout

Photograph K

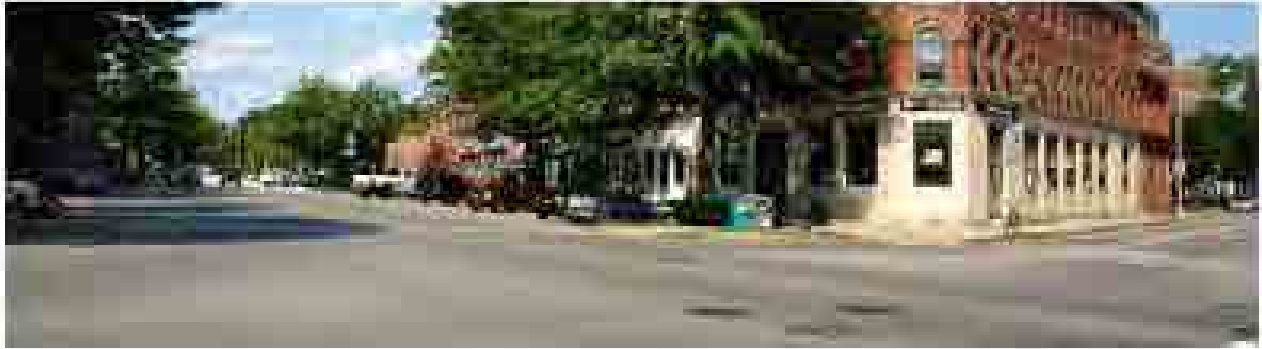


THOUGHTS?

Well maintained roads
Parking – assessment of parking...staff/personnel costs vs income vs image and friendly factor!!
Designate some spaces on Main Street for compact cars only: often (at PM rush hour!) long-bed pickup trucks in median spaces become bottlenecks.
Too many cars/exhaust
More for your money parking meters
Need parking garages behind the businesses – close, easy entry, attractive (as in Grand Junction, Colorado)
Bike racks!
Street fair!
No parking spots on median strip
Keep median, lose a lane north and south
Keep as is w/pedestrian reminder to look
No parking meter payment on Saturdays! 😊
Parking garage in downtown on Gilbo
Keep some median, eliminate parking, add bike lanes, keep sidewalk
Love it! Very intimate
Eliminate turnaround cut-through
Love the median – trees add so much, calms traffic, provides useful parking
Def. keep parking spots on Main Street! Also have more lights on crosswalks
The parking is really awful on Main Street...it's hard to get in and out
The crosswalks are hard to see for drivers
Crosswalk light signals need to be adjusted. Longer walk times. All need working sound and signal
More efficient parking
Light crosswalks for better pedestrian visibility
Easy access public parking, unmetered, to attract customers to downtown businesses

No parking
Opportunity for bicycle lanes separated from traffic?
Big trees lining the center of the street mitigates negative visual impact of vehicles parking. There is need
for improved pedestrian safety crossing Main
Light up crosswalks. Keep trees! They keep a part of our towns historical features
No parking on Main Street. Make it green space and widen sidewalks along store fronts.
Add bike lanes

Photograph L



THOUGHTS?

Sidewalk shrinks in Roxbury – Guess I shouldn't walk there
Emerald Street needs total refurb!
Address the environ. Remediation issues and plant trees!
Encourage patronage/events to businesses off of Main Street
"Get off Main Street" vs Downtown biz group/events
Roxbury Street should be a continuation of Main Street as well as Marlboro, Gilbo and Emerald.
Pumpkinfest
Crosswalks should be easier to identify to avoid slammed brakes
When events on Central Square possible traffic detours with traffic directed by police.
A bit of a traffic free for au. Traffic calm by expanding Central Square
Just paint...directional info on road -> etc.
Especially Northbound Main – Rox/Wash, Court/Winter, West/S Main for the 3 lanes right to left.
Color on corner (bottom half) makes building look work, stained.
UPS delivery truck parks at crosswalk on Wash, slowing Main Street flow. Better system needed. (During
rush hour)
Create more green space and make it easier to get to green space in rotary
Longer signals for pedestrians
Ditto!
What a great place/opportunity for painted bike lanes and car lanes, too. Many drivers merge and shift
lanes here...makes it hazardous
Put lines on two lane roundabout
Designated traffic lanes from Main to Washington Street on rotary
Creative cross walks
Need more space and infrastructure for active streetscape – like benches, outdoor dining, green space,
sculpture, etc. ***
Make this rotary bike friendly and designate lanes
Hold pedestrian/bike only days!
More street art.

Photograph M



THOUGHTS?

Great clock – art – sense of history/historic
Awnings with signage on building with lighting required above
Vintage look to the City
A spot where you get asked for money

Beautiful ❤️
Street fairs!

Love Main Street plants/flower. Possibly more benches.
Less parking = wider sidewalk.

More utilization of underused parking lots
Less parking to ease congestion
(I disagree)

Sunday close main for pedestrians

How about parking garages and remove some of the asphalt lots for parks, buildings, etc.

Make all parking meters for everyone
No more “reserved for...” spaces

Would entice more people to come down and find spaces available.

Wider sidewalks when stairs to building bumps out. Would cause for better circulation

The clock is a cool object that should be kept

Absolutely agree!

More handicap accessible storefronts designed in an aesthetically appealing way. Great opportunity for sculpture and art along streetscape.

Love this clock! And our store fronts.

PAVING



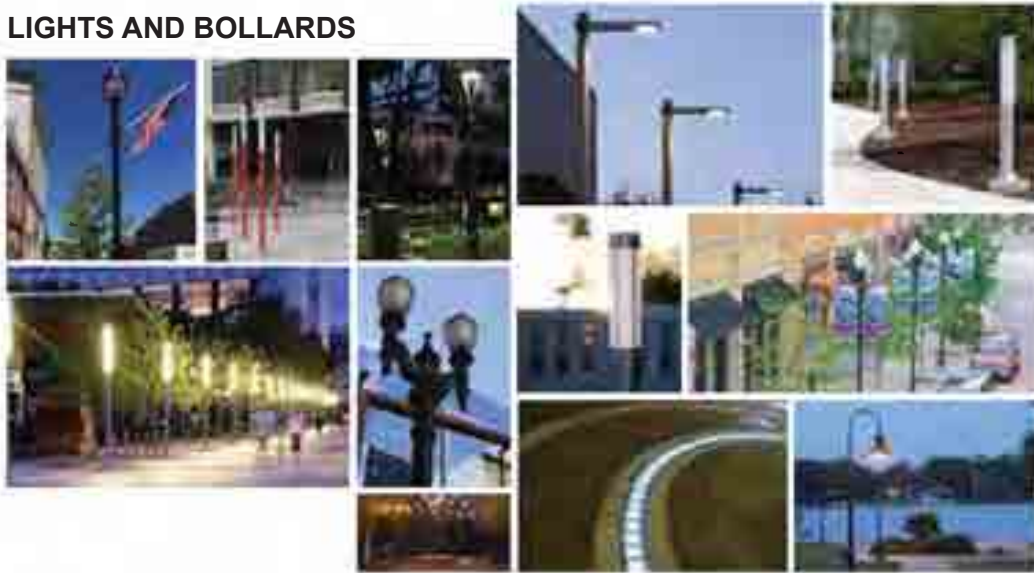
SEATING



BIKE RACKS AND TRASH RECEPTACLES



LIGHTS AND BOLLARDS

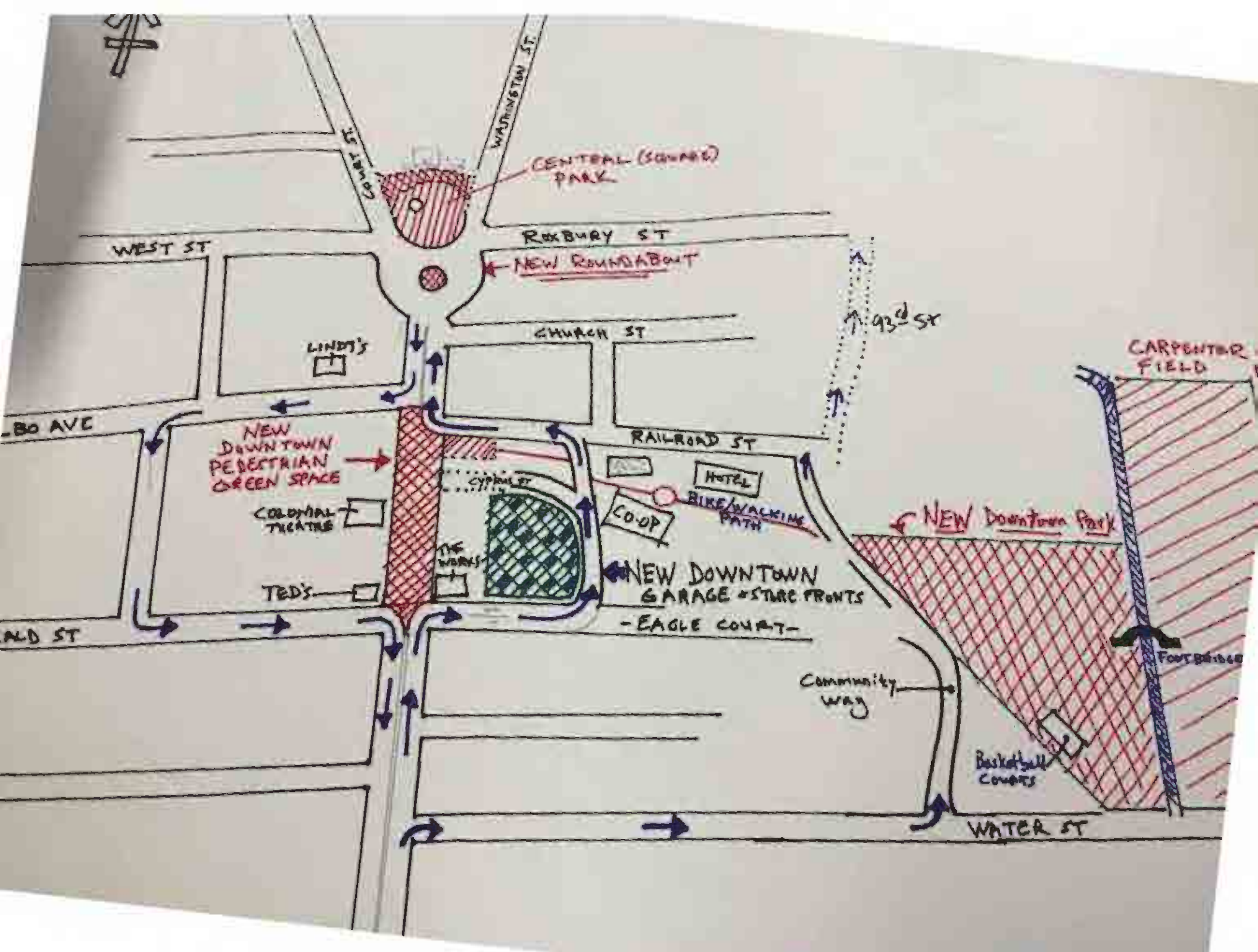


SOCIAL GATHERING AND DINING



PLANTING





CENTRAL (SQUARE) PARK

ROXBURY ST

NEW ROUNDABOUT

CHURCH ST

93rd ST

CARPENTER FIELD

NEW DOWNTOWN PEDESTRIAN GREEN SPACE

COLONIAL THEATRE

TED'S

CYPRESS ST

THE WORKS

HOTEL

CO-OP

BIKE/WALKING PATH

NEW DOWNTOWN GARAGE + STORE FRONTS

-EAGLE COURT-

NEW DOWNTOWN PARK

Footbridge

Community way

Basketball Courts

WATER ST



Downtown Revitalization Study

APPENDIX C

Information on Other Successful Communities



Smart Growth America
Making Neighborhoods Great Together



(Re)Building Downtown A Guidebook for Revitalization



About this guide

(Re)Building Downtown: A Guidebook for Revitalization is a resource for local elected officials who want to re-invigorate and strengthen neighborhood centers of economy, culture, and history through a smart growth approach to development.

This guidebook can be used as a stand-alone resource. Smart Growth America is also available to help your community use this process. Visit smartgrowthamerica.org/rebuilding-downtown to learn more about our consulting services.

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Published December 2015

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Smart Growth America is the only national organization dedicated to researching, advocating for, and leading coalitions to bring better development to more communities nationwide. From providing more sidewalks to ensuring more homes are built near public transportation or that productive farms remain a part of our communities, smart growth helps make sure people across the nation can live in great neighborhoods.

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Introduction

Downtowns, Main Streets, and city centers across the country are witnessing a renaissance. As more Americans chose the convenience and connectivity of walkable neighborhoods, communities are seeing new businesses, restaurants, and shops open in areas that were formerly vacant or economically distressed.

This movement presents an economic opportunity for communities. Creating a vibrant, walkable neighborhood can help attract and retain talented people and the companies that want to hire them. It can expand economic opportunity within your community, and create a culture of engagement. It can help your region grow without compromising open land or working farms. It can also make your town or city stand out within your region as a destination to shop, dine, visit, move to, or invest. It's a chance to celebrate your community's diverse history, create new opportunities for long-time neighborhood residents, and to achieve the triple-bottom line of a more equitable community, stronger economy, and protected environment.

If your town or city already has a Main Street or neighborhood business district waiting for reinvestment, fantastic. You have great context for the strategies outlined in this guidebook. If your community does not have this kind of place, don't despair. These strategies can also be applied to places like suburban shopping centers, former industrial parks, or other underused places with the potential for redevelopment. Each is an opportunity to create a long-term, resilient, economic asset for your community.

(Re)Building Downtown: A Guidebook for Revitalization is a resource for local elected officials who want to re-invigorate and strengthen neighborhood centers of economy, culture, and history through a smart growth approach to development.

This guide uses Smart Growth America's seven-step approach to downtown redevelopment:

- 1. Understand your community**
- 2. Create an attractive, walkable place**
- 3. Diversify economic uses**
- 4. Plan for equity**
- 5. Improve government regulations and processes**
- 6. Finance projects**
- 7. Establish on-going place management**

These seven steps are fundamental to fostering a successful downtown district. Your community may decide to use some or all of them, depending on where you are in the (re)building process. This guidebook will discuss each of the above steps in detail, and provide specific ways for communities to implement each.

Any community, of any size can use this approach. Through public engagement, strategic planning, public commitment, and ongoing support, you can create a place that unites your community, attracts visitors, and supports businesses for years to come.



STEP 1

Understand your community

The first step in any revitalization process is to understand your community's context. First, look at the past. What is your community's history and heritage? What assets drew your city's founders to create your town in the first place?

Next, look at who you are now. What is the demographic makeup of your town right now? What are your assets? What have you lost? What do you need that you don't have?

Finally, ask what your community wants to become. What is the vision for your town? What kind of place do you want to pass on to your grandchildren? Who do you want to be in your town 10 years from now? And what is your unique potential moving forward?

This first section is designed to help you find answers to these questions. Doing so will help you understand what your community values, and help bring people together around the idea of revitalization. As those projects advance, understanding your community's values will also help you talk about your work in successful ways. The following section outlines how to find answers to all of these questions.

Strategy 1: Engage community members

Revitalizing a downtown is about bringing people together, and it's best to do that from the very beginning. Bring together everyone with a vested interest in downtown to gain a complete understanding of what your community hopes to get out of revitalization. This might reveal perspectives you did not realize before, or assets you weren't aware of. It will also help create built-in support for the project moving forward, and will give your project staying power.

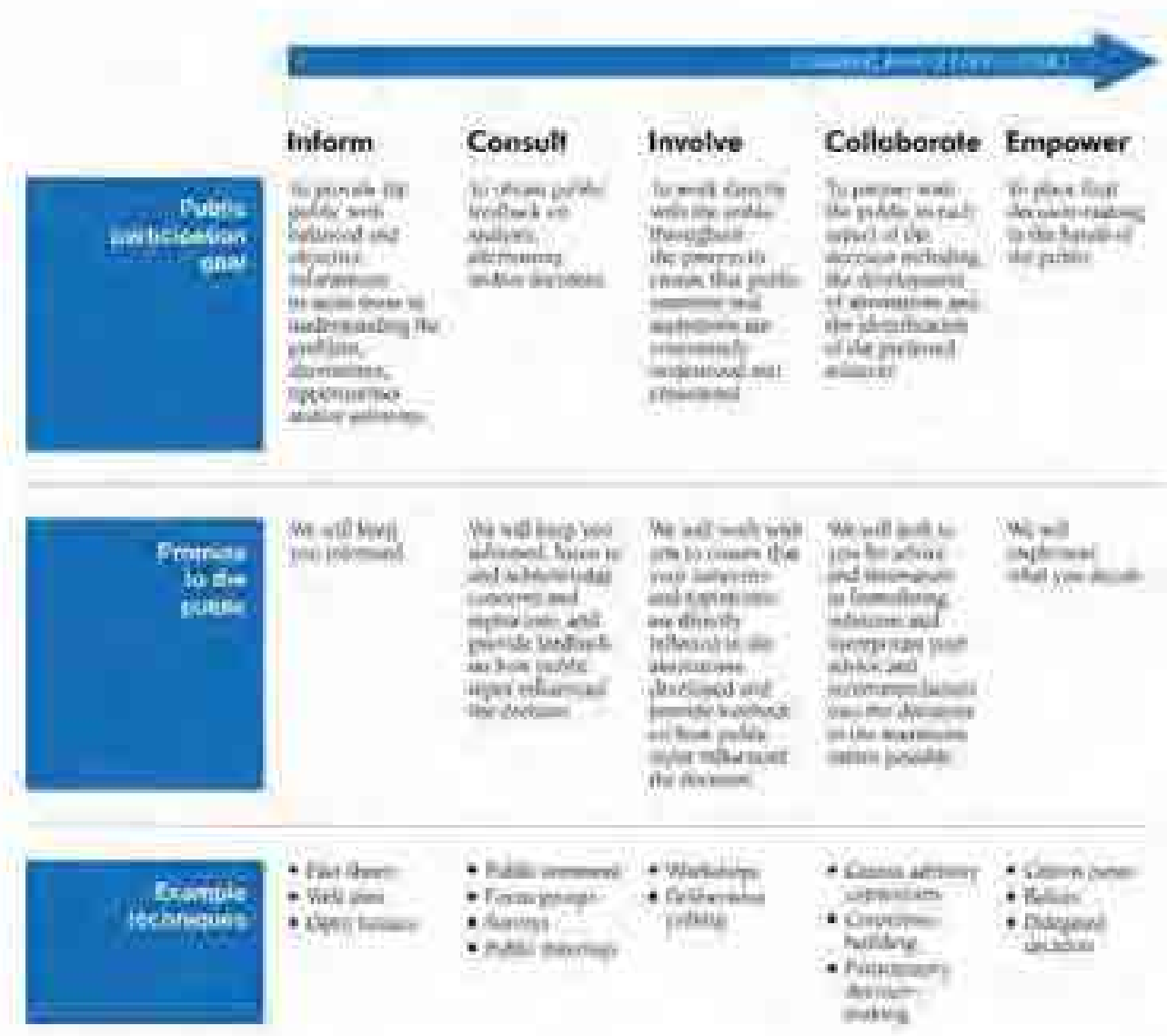
Before anything else, assign someone to lead this fundamental component of your revitalization work:

- **Designate a senior-level staff member to serve as liaison** to all stakeholders involved in or affected by the revitalization process.
- **Designate a staff member to convene and coordinate department heads.** Ideally, create a new senior-level position on your staff with the authority to convene and coordinate department heads, and commit to actions on behalf of the City. Once you have designated one person in charge of engaging community members, that person should begin a comprehensive public engagement process.

FIGURE 1

Spectrum of public participation

Adapted from the International Association for Public Participation.



This leader will be responsible for making sure everyone in your community is part of the (re) building downtown process. Anyone who is interested in downtown's revitalization should be able to weigh in on the process (not a specific outcome). At a minimum, that means asking for input from current residents, community groups, and business owners, as well as investors, developers, and any major institutions like universities, hospitals, and military bases. Each of these groups will come to the table with concerns, mistrusts, and prejudices. Your role as a public leader is to facilitate dialogue between each of these groups in a focused and sustained way.

Start by working with existing "civic infrastructure"—neighborhood associations, charitable organizations, faith-based groups, and other community groups. These groups are often uniquely situated to bring together many members of the community. An elected official can be very effective as a convener: things that may have been regarded as hard or impossible suddenly become possible when people realize an elected leader has a strong commitment to their issue. A passionate leader or group of leaders can also act as a champion for the project more broadly, and attract new people from the community or the region to join the effort.

You can start engaging these groups in a number of ways. The International Association of Public Participation provides a very useful categorization of approaches that helps to elicit the goals of engagement (see Figure 1 on page 3). Before beginning an engagement process, you should carefully consider where on this spectrum you intend your effort to be.

A sincere commitment on the part of public officials can play a huge role in this process's success or failure. Bringing everyone to the table should not be a hollow gesture, or merely a way to check a box. (As you start, ask yourself, "Am I prepared for the outcome of the public engagement process to materially change the program we intend to pursue?") This is a genuine way to make your project stronger and more effective. Your aim should be to create a stable, ongoing partnership between public staff, business leaders, neighborhood advocates, and landowners or developers. Here are a few ways to do that:

- **Bring in the business community.** Create a partnership or association of local businesses and landowners. At the beginning, bring these people together to collect their ideas and identify their priorities. Eventually, this group might sponsor festivals or streetscape improvements. Establish regular communication between downtown business owners and city staff.
- **Partner with community organizers.** Community-based non-profits, civic organizations, churches, social groups, business owners, etc. can help bring diverse community interests to the development table. Ask these groups about the challenges their community members are facing.
- **Collect public feedback.** Create a wide array of ways for residents to weigh in on this process. Public meetings, polls and surveys, and online crowdsourcing platforms are three good ways to start. Think creatively about the people in your community and how to bring them together.
- **Get input from long-term residents as early as possible.** Allow long-term residents to weigh in at the earliest possible stage of the project. Conduct surveys and hold charrettes or community meetings to learn what long-term residents want to preserve about their neighborhood, what they would like to change, and what they want to gain

from new development. Understanding their needs and concerns will make the project stronger and help earn their buy-in from the start. Read more about this in Step 4 starting on page 21.

- **Expect disagreements—and have a strategy for how to handle them.** Neighborhood changes can stir racial and socioeconomic tensions that go far broader and deeper than any one community. When local change rubs against this nerve, tensions can flare quickly. These conflicts are deep and important, and should not be ignored. Handling them successfully requires a history of trust as well as a more formal approach to conflict resolution. The best strategies seek to build trust early and resolve tensions before they become entrenched battles.¹
- **Commit to ongoing engagement.** Engage with residents in an ongoing way, and give them regular, recurring opportunities to understand what’s happening and to voice their concerns. Being consistent and predictable with this process will help build trust between the government, developers, businesses, and residents. Hold community meetings and information sessions at several different times and locations, and create a mailing list and send project updates by email. Also consider starting social media channels for the project and encourage community members to follow and share their thoughts online. Project-sponsored gatherings like block parties, festivals, and other community events are another good way to make the project visible. These events can also remind a neighborhood that it is, in fact, a community. These are also good opportunities to highlight local businesses and attract people to see the new progress.
- **Create a mechanism or schedule for ongoing engagement activities,** and communicate about the process throughout the year. Be sure that this commitment includes a plan for digital outreach and social media.
- **Come together around shared values.** For all the differences we see across communities, there are certain universal desires – basic safety, opportunities for kids, and convenient access to needed amenities – which will pull together disparate parties. Create a narrative for this project that everyone in the community can share. In public events, in branding, and in project plans, emphasize your community’s history and character, and how this will create positive community change. Focus on the values that residents want to see in their community moving forward. Local mores and norms help guide and protect a community, but a shared identity also offers an invitation to newcomers.



A community planning session for the EnLiVen Lathrup Community Development Project in Lathrup Village, MI.

¹ With thanks to Brown, S. (2014, July). “Beyond Gentrification: Strategies for Guiding the Conversation and Redirecting the Outcomes of Community Transition.” Harvard’s Joint Center for Housing Studies. Available at http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/jchs.harvard.edu/files/w14-12_brown.pdf.

Strategy 2: Do research

Once you have collected feedback from your community, it's a good time to do your background research. Community feedback is a great opportunity to understand your community from an anecdotal perspective, but there are a variety of data sets and tools available to comprehend your community from a quantitative standpoint. Your research will also help identify the feasibility of the various components of your redevelopment plan.

- **Perform a market study.** An analysis of the current and potential inventory of housing, retail, and office space will help you determine what the real estate market is and what it could be. The study can help you determine the surpluses and shortages of uses in the market.
- **Gather demographic information.** Sources like the U.S. Census (including the American Community Survey and LEHD), and commercially available services can provide valuable information about your city and region's population. Key demographic indicators to examine include ages, income levels, housing values, unemployment rates, gender, household sizes, and other demographic categories. This information can provide surprising insights into your community's needs.
- **Conduct a survey.** By conducting a survey residents, citizens, and other stakeholders can provide opinions in a format that allows the researcher to interpret the results in a quantitative manner.
- **Complete a fiscal impact study.** The analysis allows local governments to understand the amount of tax revenue, jobs, and other benefits a project will generate while simultaneously taking into account the cost to provide services such as sewer, water, roads, schools, etc. To be most useful, the study should incorporate an analysis of the net impact over time of the pattern of development on the municipal budget.

Strategy 3: Specify goals and make a plan to achieve them

Once you have gathered community feedback and researched the feasibility of redevelopment, the third step is to create a strategic plan. This plan will frame and guide the process for revitalizing your downtown.

This process should start by bringing together a select advisory group which includes representatives from neighborhood groups, retailers, investors, developers, property owners, churches, the mayor, and key city councilors, the heads of select city departments, non-profit organizations, artists, homeless advocates, and others. The group should be relatively small (no more than 25 individuals) in order to both build a sense of trust and cohesion and, ultimately, to ensure the process stays focused on results. It is also crucial that the individuals be people who are interested in successful solutions, not narrow political gain. This group should be select but it should not be secret: consider allowing community members to observe meetings and/or provide copies of the group's materials publicly.

One potential way to structure the work of this group is to schedule two one-day sessions, a month apart, to create the strategic plan. Before the first day, assemble a briefing book with the

findings of your public outreach and feasibility study. The first day will be used to introduce the group to one another, to understand the contents of the briefing book, and to lay out the possible options for your strategic plan (below).

In the second meeting, you should lead participants to discuss and ideally agree on the general and specific items most appropriate for your downtown. Here are some of the things that conversation should include:

- **Community vision.** Based on your public engagement work from Step 1: Strategy 1 on page 2, articulate your community’s goals and vision for revitalization.
- **Neighborhood character.** Define the boundaries of downtown and where the focus of your work will be. You might also outline things like how dense that area should be, and how it should relate to the immediate surrounding neighborhoods.
- **Housing.** What kinds of housing should be available downtown? Consider including a wide array of housing types, with some areas of moderate or high density, at both market rate and affordable levels. Be sure that any housing options you include are legally allowed. Read more about this in Step 4 starting on page 21 and Step 5 starting on page 25.
- **Retail.** What type of retail options should be downtown? Consider a mix of types, including entertainment (movies, restaurants, night clubs); specialty retail (clothing, furniture, and other boutique stores); regional retail (department stores and major chains); and local-serving retail (grocery stores, drugstores, dry cleaners, etc.) A mix of retail types can give a neighborhood critical mass, identity, and a reason for people to live there. The precise elements and proportions will of course depend in part on the scale of your particular downtown. Read more about this in Step 3 starting on page 16.
- **Business recruitment.** How will your city recruit new businesses downtown? Plan to include both “export” businesses—those that sell goods and services to customers outside your area—and regional-serving companies. Business recruitment usually occurs later in the revitalization process, after a critical mass of urban entertainment and housing has been established.

Below: Residents of Macon, GA show their support for the Macon Action Plan.



- **Culture.** What unique cultural facilities could be enhanced, moved, or created downtown? This can include things like arenas, stadiums, performing arts centers, museums, historic sites and buildings, and other attractions. This can help attract visitors from around the region to your downtown, who can in turn support local businesses.
- **Public infrastructure.** What public infrastructure would need to change as part of this project? Focus on essential issues like water and sewer, structured parking, and enhanced security and cleanliness, among others. Parks and open space, and, when appropriate, opportunities for waterfront development, should also be included. Read more about this in Step 2 starting on page 9.
- **Community involvement.** Map out your plan to make sure citizens have continuous opportunities for input and involvement in the revitalization process. Read more about this in Step 1: Strategy 1 on page 5.
- **Marketing.** How will you market downtown to residents and businesses? If you plan to draw people downtown with events, plan how you will market those as well. If residents currently have a negative view of downtown, you will need to work hard to change their perceptions. This is also an important part of attracting the investment community. Read more on this in Step 7 starting on page 30.
- **Support needs.** Will the city government be able to do this revitalization work alone, or will you need external support? Consider creating a business improvement district or a transportation management organization, as well as temporary task forces, a parking authority, an arts' coordinating group, and others.
- **Phases.** It is not possible to do all this all at once, so establish phases for your revitalization work. Focus on doing catalytic projects first—those that will motivate future changes to follow. This approach can help community members see progress underway, and remind project champions of the end vision you are working toward.

The outcomes of this conversation should form the basis of your strategic plan. At the end of the second day, determine together the immediate next steps for formalizing the plan and its implementation, including who will be responsible for those next steps and when they should be accomplished. The plan should be summarized in writing very quickly after the second meeting and distributed for comments. Final plans are usually only 10 to 15 pages long and should be sent out to politicians and citizens as part of the marketing and community involvement strategies.

Then it's time to implement your plan. The remainder of this document outlines some of the most important aspects of that. Consider how to integrate this work into existing city processes, and schedule regular check-in meetings to make sure you are meeting the goals and deadlines laid out by the plan.



Gardiner, ME



Ithaca, NY

STEP 2

Create an attractive, walkable place

Once you have a strategic plan in place, it's time to put that plan into action and change the built environment. This second step involves five strategies: make the area clean and safe; activate empty spaces in the short term; facilitate redevelopment in the long term; improve public spaces; and provide multiple transportation options.

Strategy 1: Make the area clean and safe

Making downtown feel safe is the first order of business for any revitalization work. Without a baseline atmosphere of safety, all other downtown amenities or services will struggle. A place must not only be safe objectively but also feel safe subjectively. Cleanliness—streets that are generally free of litter and graffiti—is closely related, as it affects both the aesthetic impression of a place as well as perceptions of personal safety.

If crime or cleanliness is a problem in your downtown, take all necessary steps to address it:

- **Conduct a safety assessment** and work with local businesses to identify areas in particular need of attention.
- **Establish a visible security presence in the neighborhood.** Partner with the local police force to have officers dedicated to the area in squad cars as well as on foot or bike patrols. Consider whether an additional private security effort would be appropriate.
- **Establish city trash and street cleaning level of service**, and coordinate any private cleanliness efforts with city agencies. In some cases, crime or cleanliness may not be as much of a problem as public perceptions of the neighborhood.

- **Create a Business Improvement District (BID).** A BID, usually funded by a tax or levy on businesses within a set area, provides a range of services to promote and enhance the neighborhood, including cleaning streets, providing security, making capital improvements and streetscape enhancements, and marketing. BIDs are often the organization primarily responsible for a downtown’s revitalization, and their responsibilities can include much more than just safety and cleanliness. We talk about them more in Step 7 on page 30.
- **Create a team of street ambassadors.** Street ambassadors act as a concierge to assist visitors, field questions and provide motorist assistance, offer first aid, help homeless in the neighborhood, and pick up trash. This is often something a BID is responsible for.

Strategy 2: Beautify public spaces

Beautiful public spaces give visitors and residents a place to sit, relax, people-watch, and enjoy the neighborhood—a simple way to encourage people to spend more time downtown. Public spaces should be well maintained and attractive, and provide a central focus for gatherings.

Some things other communities have used to improve their public spaces:

- **Invest in the streetscape.** Repair broken sidewalks, and consider adding features like street benches, planters, bike racks, trees with a healthy canopy, and tree boxes. Make sure the arrangement of windows and doors favors pedestrians and is not dominated by sides of buildings, or parking structures.
- **Create outdoor lighting geared towards pedestrians.** Put in ample lighting designed for people walking, rather than automobile traffic.
- **Establish a façade improvement program.** Provide financial incentives to businesses and property owners to upgrade and visually improve building exteriors. Façades are usually privately owned and are not public spaces strictly speaking, but they have a significant impact on the look and feel of a public space.

Below: Street ambassadors in Washington, DC (left) and Missoula, MT (right).



- **Install water features.** Water features can act like a centerpiece of an area. Classic fountains can provide a beautiful, decorative gathering place. Interactive fountains can give families with children a great opportunity to come out and play.
- **Develop a downtown arts district** and organize related programming like art gallery openings or “First Fridays”, art markets, or performance festivals. Arts districts often are organized in the form of a non-profit with a paid staff that works to create programming and events on a regular basis throughout the district. Tax incentives can be targeted towards arts industries to attract artists to the districts.
- **Install public art.** Public art installations are another way to add interest, create a focal area, and give people a reason to visit a neighborhood. Partner with a local arts organization or hold a competition to solicit pieces.
- **Create easy to use maps and directions on prominent signs.** Install eye-catching and easy-to-use signs that direct visitors to popular locations. This should include both “trail blazing” (which guide motorists to an area) and “wayfinding” (which help pedestrians find their way within the area).

Strategy 3: Activate empty spaces in the short term

Which comes first: great shops or lots of people? In most cases, the two build off one another. You can help get that process started by filling in empty lots and vacant storefronts. This creates a virtuous cycle in which a more interesting, complete walking experience draws more pedestrian traffic, which helps to support on-street businesses, which draws more pedestrians, and so on. On the other hand, gaps or voids along the sidewalk that interrupt the continuity of experience discourage pedestrian participation and undermine downtown vitality.

Focus on each block one at a time, and aim to create a continuous “wall” of shops and activated spaces. Ideally, work to get a minimum of two to four complete, activated blocks together.

Ultimately your goal will be to fill these spaces with permanent shops, offices, or restaurants. In the interim, here are some ideas for ways to activate the empty spaces:

- **Create a visitors center.** If your downtown has vacant storefronts, consider leasing one in the heart of downtown and transforming it into a welcoming, engaging visitors center.

Left: “Flourish,” a public art piece in downtown Evanston, IL. Right: Pedestrian lighting in downtown Charlottesville, VA.



- **Create “pop-up” shops.** A great way to fill empty storefronts is to invite local existing businesses, manufacturers, crafters, makers, artisans, or other entrepreneurs to open a temporary pop-up shop. These flexible spaces allow business owners to experiment in a new location without the high up-front costs of building out a new retail space. Do everything you can to make securing the space and permitting its use easy and affordable.
- **Allow for interim uses of vacant lots.** Temporary uses can serve as a great interim measure for vacant lots downtown. For example, seasonal cafés or restaurants in the summer, or holiday markets in the winter. The City may lease the lot from the landowner, if necessary. Be sure City regulations allow for this use.
- **Establish a farmers’ market.** Weekly markets give people a reason to come downtown regularly and support small, independent businesses.
- **Bring in food trucks.** Mobile cart and food truck eateries can bring a critical mass of people to places they might not have been before, and also show the potential for revitalized economic activity in an area.
- **Invite artists to create installations.** Work with a local artists’ alliance to create public artworks in vacant spaces. Artworks that include light elements are particularly engaging after dark.
- **Install outdoor kiosks.** Use them as an information desk for visitors, or rent them out to entrepreneurs selling souvenirs, jewelry, artwork, etc.

No matter what you decide, appoint a member of staff to maintain this effort, give it an ongoing presence, and promote the temporary uses.

Strategy 4: Facilitate redevelopment in the long term

As the interim uses discussed above begin to draw people to downtown, it will be easier for residents and developers to see the potential for revitalization. Leverage that potential into long-term redevelopment projects with some of the following strategies.

Left: A holiday pop-up shop in Hagerstown, MD. Right: Window installations in a former department store in downtown Missoula, MT.



- **Eliminate regulatory barriers to redevelopment.** First and foremost, make sure city regulations are not inhibiting growth downtown. Modernize outdated zoning and building regulations, and make sure new regulations support your community’s revitalization plans. Specifically, make sure codes allow for and encourage: reuse of existing structures; strategic infill construction; mixed uses; higher density development.
- **Create more flexible zoning code definitions of building use.** Explore mixed-use zoning that allows retail and residential. Consider form-based codes that use physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the code. Examine parking requirements attached with existing zoning. These changes can make it easier, faster, and less expensive for developers to build downtown.
- **Waive local development fees.** Consider waiving fees associated with building construction or redevelopment in your neighborhood of focus.
- **Support redevelopment with grants or loans.** Establish a pre-development grant or low-interest loan program to complete financial and architectural feasibility studies, design development studies, prospective appraisals or historic tax credit qualification.
- **Apply for redevelopment grants from your state.** State economic development agencies often make funding available for brownfields remediation, infill development, and renovation of old or blighted structures.
- **Make underutilized public land available for private sector development.** If there is underutilized, publicly owned land within the revitalization district, consider selling or ground-leasing it to make it available to private developers. Former industrial sites, factories, empty public buildings, vacant, or other blighted buildings are often excellent candidates for redevelopment.
- **Identify land owners of large parcels.** Pursue public private partnerships with land owners of large parcels that may be unused. Develop partnerships for the property to facilitate redevelopment with experienced developers.



A historic building rennovated into lofts above ground-floor retail space in Cleveland, OH’s Gordon Square Arts District.

Strategy 5: Provide multiple transportation options

Don’t just move people through downtown: give them easy, safe, convenient ways to get to and move within downtown. Three major elements of a transportation system encourage people to come downtown and keeps them coming back: parking, transit, and streets designed to make

walking and biking safe and convenient.

Parking

Parking is an expensive use of valuable real estate. And though it is an important feature that supports the livelihood of any downtown, it should be used strategically. Parking options should allow people to park once and then walk to multiple destinations, and ideally multiple people throughout the day should use each space. Successful parking strategies come in a variety of forms.

- **Create shared parking.** “Shared parking” refers to parking spaces that multiple people use throughout the course of the day and week. As office users leave their parking spaces at the end of the workday, for example, evening entertainment users can use those same spaces to see a performance or go out to dinner. This strategy provides an adequate number of spaces but not so much that there is an excess supply.
- **Rethink parking minimums.** Many zoning codes require a minimum number of parking spaces for each use. An apartment building might require 1.5 parking spaces for each unit built, for example. The result can be overbuilt parking garages that increase project costs for developers, regardless of whether there is demand for these spaces. By adjusting parking requirements to better align with demand, cities can reduce construction costs for developers and avoid a glut of empty parking that can make downtown feel empty. Some successful places are actually replacing parking minimums with parking maximums.
- **Develop a parking authority.** A centralized parking operator can make sure parking is used as efficiently as possible by enforcing parking restrictions and working with local businesses to evaluate the needs and limitations of downtown parking. Taxes and revenue generated through parking fees can go to a revolving loan fund that supports downtown businesses or public improvements.

It is important to get the amount of parking right. Too much parking is a waste of a scarce resource, and vacant spaces can signal a lack of activity. Too little (or not enough in the right places) and people will consider a trip downtown too frustrating. Experiment, collect data, and adjust your parking strategy accordingly.

Transit

Think of public transportation in the same way you think of great shops, beautiful park space, or five-star restaurants: an important amenity that can help attract new residents, employers, and visitors. Small towns and even rural areas can use this strategy to catalyze private investment and improve connections between people and jobs.



One of Washington, DC's Circulator buses.

- **Develop a circulator bus system.** Circulator buses provide frequent, convenient service between popular destinations around town. Typically, an urban circulator operates within a closed loop, usually three miles or shorter in length. They run frequently, are easy to use and affordable, and have distinct branding that associates them with downtown.

Cities often partner with private transit operators to manage the system.

- **Connect existing regional hubs.** Regional hubs like airports, universities, hospital centers, and military bases can provide a steady stream of visitors. Help bring those people downtown by providing convenient transit service from those hubs.
- **Improve users' experience on transit.** Transit systems need to be high quality to attract riders and keep them returning. Stops and stations should be well lit, inviting, clean, and well maintained. Some cities have even partnered with artists to create installations that serve double-duty as public art and bus stop facilities.
- **Give transit priority on roadways.** Create dedicated bus lanes, preferred signaling, or other priority options to keep transit trips convenient and efficient.
- **Capture the value of real estate near transit.** Real estate near transit stops is nearly always in-demand, and it's often owned by a government entity or transit agency. "Joint development" is one way to make the most of this valuable asset. Usually the public agency partners with a private developer to develop the land and share the proceeds. The construction process can enhance infrastructure or create new facilities, and the resulting development can create a long-term revenue stream for the city or agency while also boosting ridership rates.

Streets that are safe and convenient for people walking and biking

Take a walk along your Main Street. Are the sidewalks wide and inviting, or narrow and cramped? Is crossing the street easy or treacherous? Is the street safe for people riding bicycles or taking the bus? What about children, older adults, or people in wheelchairs—will they find the street welcoming or challenging?

Vibrant downtowns are almost always places where walking is comfortable and safe, and how streets are designed and built can have a huge impact on that. We call this using a "Complete Streets" approach. Here's how to put that approach into action:

- **Pass a Complete Streets policy.** A Complete Streets policy is a city's formal commitment that future transportation projects will take into account the needs of everyone using the road. These policies direct transportation planners and engineers to routinely design and operate the entire right-of-way to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation.
- **Create an implementation plan.** Smart Growth America's National Complete Streets Coalition has a wealth of documents on how to implement a Complete Streets policy and change the way your streets are designed and built. Bring a Complete Streets workshop to your community or view all the resources on our website at www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets.



Complete Streets features like crosswalks and pedestrian islands in Cleveland, OH.



Chandler, AZ

STEP 3

Diversify the downtown economy

Diversifying the types of activities in your downtown gives people many reasons to come to the neighborhood. Economic development professionals talk about creating an “18-hour” place—that is, a neighborhood bustling with activities in the morning, afternoon, and evening, seven days a week. To do that, focus on jobs, housing, and retail. Promote employment downtown and work to support a diversified economy. Build new housing options downtown, including housing for low-income families and homes at a variety of price points. And come up with a strategy for supporting retail that includes everyday errands as well as major shopping destinations.

Strategy 1: Promote employment downtown

Jobs are the engine of most downtowns. Workers are usually the majority of customers for local business as well as the most common riders of transit and patrons of cultural activities. Here are some ways to promote a diverse range of employment opportunities for workers at all salary levels.

- **Show employers that you are working to create a more walkable downtown.** Many businesses seek downtown locations for the business advantages these locations provide (see Smart Growth America’s 2015 report *Core Values: Why American Companies are Moving Downtown* for more about this). Make it clear to companies in the area that you are actively working to make downtown a walkable, vibrant neighborhood—and give them an opportunity to get in on the ground floor.
- **Locate government offices and facilities** in the neighborhoods where you want to encourage investment, jobs, and activity. Government offices can stabilize a stagnant or declining neighborhood by providing a daytime population.
- **Create incentives for employers to move downtown.** Proactively reach out to

businesses that would be a good fit for your downtown, and provide services to facilitate their search for the perfect office space. Streamline permitting processes, if possible, and provide an ombudsman to help relocating businesses easily navigate local regulations.

- **Work to attract companies in specific sectors.** Many industries thrive in “clusters,” benefitting from access to a pool of skilled workers and supporting businesses. Consider cultivating a business cluster by seeking out businesses in a specific industry. Provide grants and industry-specific supports to attract those companies, and show your ability to attract and train workers with the necessary skills. This strategy is most successful when based on an industry cluster your area already has to some extent, or other assets that suggest a potential competitive edge.
- **Encourage small businesses to open downtown.** Create a homegrown economy by welcoming entrepreneurs and small business owners. Finding affordable space can be especially tough for businesses that need small offices or retail shops with easy access to larger tenants. Work with state and non-profit small business development agencies in your area to provide information and matchmaking services that help management companies fill available space. Consider working with building owners to negotiate lower rents for promising new businesses, or using vacant storefronts as pop-up spaces for entrepreneurs that need visibility. Establish a loan fund to provide targeted loans to businesses considering moving downtown.
- **Create co-working spaces or shared office spaces.** Co-working or shared office spaces can help fledgling companies, freelancers, and entrepreneurs find a home in underutilized vacant office space. Co-working spaces most obviously meet the needs of smaller proprietors and start-ups, but increasingly larger businesses are also using these spaces to take advantage of the connections and information shared there. These locations are also ideal for business incubators that help new and startup companies develop by providing services such as management training.
- **Partner with local universities and community colleges** to create training programs in industries you want to cultivate. Encourage institutions to create a downtown satellite campus presence that offers classes, and/or student housing options.
- **Consider working with or establishing a non-profit, community economic development partnership** to facilitate collaboration between major institutions/technical schools and the business community in order to coordinate workforce training and business development needs in service of community goals for economic development.



Market Square in Pittsburgh, PA helps the lunch time crowd get up from their desks with cafe seating. The Square is also a space for evening events.

Strategy 2: Build new homes downtown

Workers provide the pulse of downtown between 9 and 5. Creating the option for people to live downtown as well means people will be there around the clock to keep the place hopping. And market demand is so high for homes in walkable neighborhoods that not creating them is a missed opportunity. Here are some ways to create or improve housing options downtown.

- **Permit downtown housing through zoning changes.** Many single-use zoning codes outlawed housing in central-business districts, and may have banned the types of neighborhood-serving retail that residents need. Review your codes to make sure they permit residential development in a variety of densities from single-family townhouses to apartment buildings.
- **Mix uses vertically.** Whether your downtown includes three-story walk-ups or high-rise towers, permit and encourage buildings with retail or commercial space located below housing.
- **Provide homeownership grants.** Incentivize new downtown residents by providing grants that assist with closing costs or down payments.
- **Leverage historic resources.** Communities lucky enough to have 19th and early 20th century warehouses close to downtown have the ideal infrastructure for residential infill due to floor plans that are conducive to residential or even office redevelopment. Often historic buildings were clustered in industrial districts that can provide a unique urban experience often with prime locations adjacent to downtown.
- **“Adaptive reuse” can apply to office buildings, too.** Find existing buildings where converting from office to residential use make sense. Evaluate your current mix of uses and vacancy rates, and you may find that some buildings intended for office space could be better positioned as a residential conversion. Changes to your zoning and building codes may be necessary to pursue this tactic.

We talk more about creating housing downtown in Step 4 on page 21.

Left: Park Forest, IL built 69 single family homes within walking distance to downtown on the footprint of the former Goldblatts Department Store. Right: Toole Crossing in Missoula, MT, will offer condos above street-level commercial space.



Strategy 3: Create a diverse retail and business environment

Once you have people living and working downtown, give them great places to eat, drink, shop, and explore. Consider a full range of business types, including multiple types of retail. Identify locations that will serve businesses based on their different needs—some will want foot traffic, some will want freight access, and some will want proximity to other businesses, for example. Here are some ways to create a diverse retail and business environment.

- **Create a strategy for diverse retail.** When it comes to downtown development, there are three general types of retail: those that meet people’s everyday needs (pharmacies and dry cleaners, for example), those that draw on a regional market (such as major shopping destinations), and those that are a unique destination (a sports stadium or major cultural complex). Each of these types of retail has a distinct economic development profile, and brings or keeps people downtown at different times of the day and of the year. They also each require different infrastructure, parking strategies, and promotional programs. Develop a strategy to attract different types of retail to the most appropriate locations based on these needs and intended economic outcomes.
- **Develop relationships with commercial retail brokers.** These professionals have contacts with local, regional, and national retailers and can help recruit retailers to your downtown.
- **Concentrate retail in a walkable area.** Foot traffic is a downtown shopping district’s biggest competitive advantage for local and small businesses. Concentrate retail shops in a walkable district to generate this traffic, and diversify retail types (see the point above) to support foot traffic at different times of the day. Perform pedestrian traffic counts at key intersections to use that as a marketing tool to strengthen your recruitment strategy. Retailers like to be located together. Create a retail cluster by working with property owners and retailers to achieve a continuous retail experience.
- **Identify and market vacant properties.** Compile an inventory of vacant properties that can be marketed towards retailers. Modern retailers have specific requirements for the layouts of their stores and given these constraints, being familiar with building inventories can help guide retailers to the right property.
- **Encourage people to stay downtown once they’re there.** Do you have a performance space or sports venue that already draws people downtown? Come up with ways to encourage people to stay downtown once they’re there. Examples of easy ways to do this are distributing maps of what’s nearby or running restaurant promotions.



Walkable retail in Ithaca, NY.

- **Promote periodic and seasonal markets.** Farmers markets, flea markets, and seasonal markets provide novelty that attracts people downtown when they might otherwise stay home. Markets also create an opportunity to showcase permanent businesses and create a focus for promotional efforts that identify downtown as an exciting, rewarding shopping destination.
- **Build a “Shop Local” campaign.** Small, locally owned and operated businesses are an essential element to your downtown’s authentic sense of place. Organize campaigns and promotions to highlight these businesses and provide visibility during times of the year when shoppers may gravitate towards larger retailers (e.g., Christmas or back-to-school).
- **Maintain “pop-up” locations to grow local start-ups and experiment with retail formats.** As downtown values escalate, smaller businesses can find it difficult to locate affordable space, and small retailers such as artisan boutiques, may find it difficult to generate enough income from sales to justify a permanent storefront. Pop-up shops generate interest among shoppers while giving entrepreneurs the chance to test the waters or reach new customers. This strategy can be particularly useful in areas with several vacant storefronts.



Shoppers and vendors at Local First Milwaukee’s 2015 Buy Local gift fair.



STEP 4

Build in equity

The best revitalization work brings new people and energy downtown—and makes sure the people already living there also benefit from these improvements. This means creating jobs at all skill and salary levels, keeping existing homes affordable (both rental and ownership), and creating new homes at a variety of price points.

Strategy 1: Incorporate affordable housing strategies early

If you are at the beginning of your revitalization work, affordable housing might seem like the last thing you need to worry about. But at the beginning—when development plans are still flexible and real estate values are lower than they are likely to be after revitalization—is exactly the time to lay the groundwork for long-term housing affordability.

Making downtown an affordable place to live means creating homes at a variety of price points in addition to programs that support low-income residents. These strategies can support higher occupancy rates downtown and also reduce the likelihood of foreclosures that can lead to properties sitting vacant and blighted. It can also help workers at all income levels live near their jobs, and in doing so help companies downtown attract and retain employees.

Several policy tools, described below, can help communities preserve affordability. Some of these policies require legislative action; local groups acting independently can implement others. Some may already exist in the community, but may be poorly enforced or underutilized. Here are three different ways to keep the neighborhood affordable while still allowing property values to rise.

Help current residents stay in the neighborhood

- **Provide homeownership counseling and assistance.** The best time for low- and moderate-income individuals to purchase property is right at the beginning of a neighborhood transition. As home values rise, low-income families will likely be unable to purchase and may also find it more difficult to rent. Those who own homes at the beginning of the rise, however, are not only spared from the price increase but can also benefit from significant increases in home equity.
- **Allow for principal resident tax abatements.** To help homeowners deal with large assessment increases on their principal residence, governments can establish income-based credits that reduce homeowner tax liability. Tax abatement policies are most frequently offered for elderly residents who live on fixed incomes, but have also been developed for low-income residents and for those who invest in remodeling and rehabilitation.
- **Provide tenants the opportunity to purchase.** Opportunity to purchase can be crucial when owners of low-rent apartment buildings look to sell their buildings for conversion to higher income producing properties.
- **Create energy efficiency and maintenance programs.** Provide free or reduced grants, loans, and services to qualified families for energy conservation and home repair measures. Weatherization programs can come through the city or a partnership with local utility companies. Necessary home repair programs can also help elderly homeowners correct serious home repair deficiencies.

Create new homes at a variety of sizes and price points

- **Review and update zoning codes.** If your city's zoning codes currently restrict development to single-family homes in one neighborhood and multifamily homes in another, consider changing them to encourage diverse home types. Be sure your codes allow for mixed-use development—where buildings may have some combination of retail, offices, and housing—and consider increasing density allowances in some areas of the downtown core.
- **Develop mixed-use, mixed-income, higher-density buildings.** There may be statewide programs available that encourage local governments to do this. Tie density-based incentives to inclusion of affordable units. Require or incentivize two- and three-bedroom units to accommodate families.

Create below-market-rate housing

- **Set goals for committed affordable housing units.** Set a quantitative goal or target for the number of affordable homes to build in the area, as well as the price-diversity mix you want to achieve.
- **Incentivize affordable units through density bonuses.** Consider offering an increase in density to developers who include affordable units in their multifamily construction.

- **Consider adopting an inclusionary zoning ordinance.** Inclusionary zoning ordinances require or encourage a given share of new market-rate residential construction to be affordable by people with low to moderate incomes for sale or rental for a set period of time.
- **Facilitate use of the federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program.** LIHTC is perhaps the most important resource for creating affordable housing in the United States today. Make sure your jurisdiction has the capacity to take maximum advantage of the program by collaborating with state agencies that administer allocations at the local level. Position your housing department or agency to serve as a facilitator for affordable housing developers to access the tax credit process.
- **Create a local affordable housing fund.** An affordable housing fund or similar type of revolving loan fund can help homebuilders finance construction or renovation of low-income housing. The fund can serve as a source of bridge loans and can leverage LIHTC and conventional loans to make projects with rent restrictions economically viable. The fund can also be used to help non-profits with pre-development costs. Funding can come from real estate transfer and interest-related fees and taxes, or developer contributions associated with project approvals, general fund contributions, or some combination.
- **Consider other federal programs.** Other programs from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development may benefit your community, including the HOME Program, the Self-help Homeownership Opportunity Program, the Choice Neighborhood program, and Community Development Block Grant funding.



Below-market-rate homes at Indianapolis' The Braxton at Lugar Tower are close to downtown and connected to public transit.

Strategy 2: Foster economic opportunity

Income and wealth inequality threatens the potential and well-being not only of the most vulnerable residents; it places everyone's economic future at risk. A growing body of research shows that greater equality brings about more robust economic growth for everyone.²

Foster economic opportunity at all income levels by supporting small and locally owned businesses, supporting job training, and better connecting low-income residents to jobs. Here are a few ways to do that.

² Pastor, M. and Benner, C. (2008). "Been Down So Long: Weak-Market Cities and Regional Equity Retooling for Growth." *Retooling for Growth: Building a 21st Century Economy in America's Older Industrial Areas*. Brookings Institution Press.

- **Offer discounted rents to independent and minority-owned businesses.** As new retail spaces are created, consider partnering with developers to provide discounted leases for independent and/or minority-owned businesses.
- **Protect existing small businesses.** Existing small businesses and ethnic shops are part of the neighborhood's identity and serve a clear market need. Work with business owners and landlords to protect these contributing members of the community.
- **Work with local and minority-owned construction companies.** Community revitalization often comes with significant construction projects. Make sure those jobs benefit your community members by requiring opportunities for minority- and women-owned businesses and contractors. Work with trade schools and community colleges to identify apprenticeship programs for the building trades industry.
- **Support entrepreneurship.** Create homegrown economic drivers by supporting entrepreneurship downtown. Consider creating flexible workspaces, tax incentives for independent businesses or new businesses establishing a presence in targeted locations, or an investment fund for entrepreneurs.
- **Create job-training opportunities.** Recruit new companies that will do job training, or partner with local or state job support agencies.
- **Connect people to jobs.** Do you need a car to get around in your region? If so, low-income workers might have a hard time simply getting to work. Create or improve public transportation services between job centers and downtown residential neighborhoods.



The owners of Lee's Flowers on U St. NW in Washington, DC.



Pasadena, CA

STEP 5

Improve government regulations and processes

Improve public processes to facilitate the outcomes you want. First, make sure government regulations and procedures do not stand in the way of downtown revitalization goals. Even better, create new programs or assign staff to support the work moving forward.

Consider changes to local zoning, development codes, and related ordinances. Rather than having rigid regulations that require businesses to request cumbersome exemptions, make codes simpler and more flexible.

Also consider improving the process for things like permits, site planning, and inspections. Improving these processes can reduce time and cost for developers and businesses, and ultimately encourage new projects. Ask current business owners what regulations are most inhibiting, and consider how to modify those regulations while still maintaining the city's obligation to public health and safety.

Strategy 1: Improve public processes and regulations

- **Look for ways to improve permitting processes.** Explore the potential for process re-engineering, so that post-approval permitting does not slow implementation of development projects. Consider how you could improve the process for small business owners as well.
- **Update zoning codes to allow and encourage the type of development you want.** Consider implementing a form-based code or similar approach, which can make the zoning process more predictable for developers and community members alike.
- **Update ordinances.** Make sure your city is not needlessly prohibiting activities that

could contribute to revitalization and a vibrant downtown environment, like expanding the allowable uses of sidewalks, alleys, other public spaces for café seating, and recreational or entertainment venues.

- **Identify existing public initiatives that could support revitalization.** Integrate building reuse as a goal in other policy initiatives and reforms, such as zoning code updates, building code reforms, parking policy changes, transit-oriented development guidelines and climate adaptation plans.

Strategy 2: Make life easier for businesses and developers

- **Create a guidebook for small business owners** with clear, simple explanations of how to navigate the permitting and regulation process.
- **Create a guidebook for developers.** Give developers or other potential investors an overview of government-offered or supported incentives for investing downtown, including things like facade improvement loans, tax abatements, opportunities like historic and New Market tax credits, additional security, trash removal for businesses, etc.
- **Create a business concierge service.** Make it as easy as possible for businesses to understand and navigate the permitting process. Assign a clear point of contact for business owners to talk to, and have that person act as a concierge to help make sure the City meets businesses' needs as efficiently as possible.



San Francisco created a “Parklet-o-matic” flowchart to help people navigate the the city’s approval process for temporary parks.



New York, NY

STEP 6

Finance projects

Revitalizing downtowns is about creating a durable economic asset for your community, and those kinds of assets require investment. Most successful revitalization projects involve both public and private investment—public investment usually comes first, and is best used as a catalyst for private investment. Public investment demonstrates to investors and potential partners the city’s commitment to redevelopment. This section outlines innovative strategies to fund redevelopment projects and attract private investment.

Strategy 1: Think creatively about funding

Public investment shows potential partners that the city is committed to redevelopment—but finding public resources for that investment can be challenging. Think creatively about where to find the money to start your redevelopment. Here are some ideas to consider.

- **Corporate donors.** Private companies are often willing to contribute to revitalization efforts, but lack models of what to do and how to engage in partnerships with the public sector. Approach companies with a specific project in mind, and a clear way for them to get involved. Some examples include selling naming rights to buildings or public spaces, or recruiting them to sponsor specific events, projects, or programs.
- **Foundation donations.** Local or state foundations often have an interest in downtown redevelopment. Consider foundations that work in equity, environment, public health, or the arts.
- **Explore state and federal grant funding and tax credits.** Make sure all options for state and federal grant funding have been exhaustively reviewed. Some possible tax credits include state and federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits, which provide equity

investments in eligible historic buildings; New Markets Tax Credits, which incentivize commercial projects in targeted low-income communities; brownfield tax credits, which incentivize the remediation and redevelopment of former industrial and contaminated sites; HUD’s Neighborhood Stabilization Program, which helps with the purchase and redevelopment of foreclosed homes; and the Community Reinvestment Act, which encourages financial institutions to meet the credit needs of the communities they serve.

- **Public-private partnerships.** Public-private partnerships, or “P3s,” have become an essential financing mechanism for many revitalization projects. In P3 agreements for development or redevelopment, the public entity usually provides some combination of tax incentives, infrastructure investments, financing assistance, or public land or other assets. The private entity contributes capital investments, commits to providing jobs, contributes development expertise, and should assume most of the financial risk for the ultimate project outcomes. These agreements can have short life spans covering only the construction period for the project, or longer life spans covering debt repayment or long-term operating agreements.
- **Create tax incentives.** Tax incentives can be used to attract business and industry, and to encourage quality development of all kinds. These can come in the form of property and income tax abatements, and can encourage everything from commercial building rehabilitation to new residential development to traditional industrial and manufacturing spaces.

Strategy 2: Use value capture

Redevelopment adds value to properties within—and near—the revitalizing district. “Value capture” refers to a variety of mechanisms that derive revenue from the resulting growth in land value. These mechanisms essentially recoup value from the private sector and reinvest it back into the revitalizing district. Here are a few value capture mechanisms to consider.

- **Create a special assessment district.** Special assessment districts are areas where a tax is assessed against parcels that have been identified as receiving a direct and unique benefit as a result of a public project. Assessment districts are commonly used to fund the development of sewer, water, utilities, streets, transit, and other public services.
- **Inclusionary zoning.** As described in Step 4, incorporating affordable housing is a critical component of any redevelopment. Inclusionary zoning requires developers to leverage some of the profits from market rate housing to pay for affordable units. In some cases developers can receive a density bonus in exchange for creating affordable units.
- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF).** Under a TIF, a local government typically issues bonds to pay for infrastructure improvements, brownfield remediation, or other upfront public costs that are critical to the success of a redevelopment project. The bonds are used to pay for the improvements and tax revenues from the increased property value of the development cover the debt service. TIFs can stimulate private investment by providing developers financing for the infrastructure needed to support a proposed development that may not be feasible otherwise.

Strategy 3: Create an entity for catalytic investment

In some cases revitalizing cities or towns have difficulty attracting private developers. In these situations a local catalytic development company can be formed to undertake the projects that are deemed to have too much risk by traditional developers. A catalytic developer can undertake complete projects from beginning to end or engage in activities that make development more attractive, such as assembling land for construction or financing gaps between conventional financing and the required investment for the project.

Strategy 4: Leverage public investments

Even if there are no new sources of funding available, there is still all of the money already being spent on capital improvement and infrastructure projects that can be leveraged for downtown revitalization. Roads and sidewalks, schools, libraries, and municipal buildings are all examples of investments that can support redevelopment if made strategically. For example, building a new municipal building? Locate it within your redevelopment district rather than on the edge of town. Many of the strategies outlined in Step 5 also work towards leveraging public investments.



STEP 7

Establish on-going place management

Once buildings are renovated, new homes are built, and new businesses move in along Main Street, it's important to have a long-term steward for the neighborhood. Much like a house that needs regular upkeep, a downtown needs continual investment, maintenance, and on-going management to keep it vibrant.

That means giving people reasons to come downtown again and again. It means creating a culture of hospitality for companies, and continuously pursuing and promoting redevelopment. It means hosting events in public spaces, and inviting new people and businesses to come downtown who have never been before.

To do this, bring together government leaders, business owners, neighborhood representatives, landowners, and real estate developers to create a formal, long-term stewardship organization. Could an existing community organization take on this work? If not, consider creating an entity like a Business Improvement District or a Main Street group. Here are some of the ongoing things that entity should be responsible for.

- **Manage the day-to-day needs of the neighborhood**, from trash pickup and street cleaning to graffiti removal and changing streetlights.
- **Market downtown to potential investors**, both from within the region and from outside of it, and create a culture of hospitality for companies.
- **Program public spaces** to bring residents to the neighborhood throughout the day, week, month, and year.
- **Pursue and promote redevelopment opportunities.** Work with business owners, developers, and interested companies to help downtown continue to grow.

- **Regularly convene key stakeholders.** Bring together landowners, business owners, and developers at regular intervals to discuss needs, address problems, and strategize for future growth. Consider inviting business development staff from other towns, the county, or the state, and aim to think expansively about how downtown can become even better—now and in the future.
- **Assess performance.** Keep track of how the neighborhood does over time. Are there vacancies and business closings, or new tenants and new construction? The steward should compile data that measures the outcomes, progress, and goals of downtown over a short-term, mid-term, and long-term basis, and work continuously to improve that performance.

Conclusion

Downtown revitalization is much more than making physical improvements; it's about bringing people together. Vibrant downtowns, Main Streets, and city centers give people reasons to come to a neighborhood and to return over and over again. Attractive public spaces can help individuals connect with each other, business owners, and the broader community. This process can strengthen and diversify a local economy and expand employment opportunities for people of all income levels.

Though it may be difficult to look at a downtown full of vacant storefronts and see anything other than challenges, those empty and underused areas can be untapped potential for reinvigorating communities and expanding economic opportunity. Through public engagement, strategic planning, public commitment, and ongoing support, you can foster neighborhood centers of economy, culture, and history.

This guide is designed to give local leaders an approachable framework—and concrete next steps—to realize your community's vision of a vibrant downtown. Whether your town or city is looking to reinvest in an already existing neighborhood business district, or wants to transform an underused area into an attractive public space, the strategies outlined here are applicable to communities of any and all sizes.

Communities in all stages of the (re)building process can use this guidebook as a stand-alone resource. Smart Growth America is also available to help your community implement these strategies. Visit smartgrowthamerica.org/rebuilding-downtown to learn more.



Smart Growth America is the only national organization dedicated to researching, advocating for, and leading coalitions to bring better development to more communities nationwide. From providing more sidewalks to ensuring more homes are built near public transportation or that productive farms remain a part of our communities, smart growth helps make sure people across the nation can live in great neighborhoods. Learn more about our work at smartgrowthamerica.org.

The Experiment of American Pedestrian Malls:
*Trends Analysis, Necessary Indicators for Success
and Recommendations for Fresno's Fulton Mall*

**FRESNO
FUTURE**

Cole E. Judge

This research paper is a unique contribution for the Fresno Future Conference put on by Dr. Kharbawy at Fresno State University and has not been published elsewhere.

**Strong Cities, Strong Communities
Downtown Fresno Partnership
559-490-9966**

10/11/2013

Abstract

This report is intended for the Downtown Fresno Partnership and its stakeholders to analyze the trends of American pedestrian malls over the last 50+ years to help inform the future of Downtown Fresno's Fulton Mall corridor. The report distinguishes between pedestrian malls and transit/pedestrian malls, taking specific interest in the purely pedestrian malls that were installed in the 1950s and 1960s. Some of the key findings from our research analysis include:

- Pedestrian malls in the United States have an 89% rate of failure. Most have been removed or repurposed. Only 11% have been successful.
- Of the 11% successful pedestrian malls, 80% are in areas with populations under 100,000.
- Certain indicators need to be present for a pedestrian mall to be successful in the United States: near or attached to a major anchor such as a university, situated in close proximity to a beach, designed to be a short length in terms of blocks, in a town/city with a population under 100,000, and/or located in a major tourist location such as Las Vegas or New Orleans.
- Cities that have embraced the Main Street and Complete Streets models have experienced turn-arounds in their downtowns with more investment, higher occupancy rates and more pedestrian traffic.

Recommendations moving forward include adapting a main street approach to revitalization given that Fresno lacks the necessary indicators of success for an American pedestrian mall. The economic importance of the downtown area can greatly be enhanced by incorporating "complete streets" and "main street" design elements. The American pedestrian mall, including Fresno's Fulton Mall, is by most accounts a failed experiment that, left alone, will continue to deteriorate.

Like the approximate 170 other U.S. cities that have changed or removed their pedestrian malls, Downtown Buffalo is currently in the process of removing its failed pedestrian mall.

Photo by Elliott Balch.



I. Introduction and Methodology

This report covers the history of American pedestrian mall, analyzes the research of existing and removed pedestrian malls and posits how the City of Fresno can learn from the experience of other cities and the trends-analysis that emerges from the best practices research.

Urban designer, Jessica Schmidt, defines pedestrian malls as being “characterized as a number of blocks of public downtown streets designated for pedestrian-only use and closed to vehicular traffic.”ⁱ In this report, pedestrian malls are defined as “successful” when they represent a thriving retail corridor with low vacancy rates, high pedestrian traffic levels and a utilized mix of businesses and uses. Successful pedestrian malls are considered to be economically viable. In this report, “struggling” pedestrian malls are defined as pedestrian malls that are in the process of being removed or are being considered to be removed; where there are low vacancy rates, low pedestrian traffic levels and/or a low business mix; and that are not significant economic generators. “Removed” pedestrian malls are the malls that have been taken out and returned to a street and thus were not successful. “Transit Malls” are those corridors that may commonly be referred to as pedestrian malls, but are actually multi-modal, allowing buses, trolleys, or taxis along with pedestrians. Examples of transit malls include Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis, State Street in Madison and 16th Street Mall in Denver. Excluded in this analysis are the few pedestrian malls that are small pedestrian plazas that exist off of a main street, those that are embedded in college campuses, those that are enclosed shopping malls, those that are actually parks and those that are non-retail alleyways.

Data was collected by researching news articles, calling city representatives, conducting in-person interviews, reading literature available on the area and/or pedestrian mall, reading professional studies and even visiting some of the cities. This report is particularly interested in pedestrian malls that were constructed around the 1960s and 1970s on corridors that were formerly streets as those are most applicable to the challenge facing Fresno. The report makes an effort to be objective, even though the definitions of “successful” and “struggling” are confined to the ones laid out in this report. We hope to have explained the reasoning behind the labels and hope that this report can assist the City of Fresno and other cities that have struggling pedestrian malls.

II. History

As a response to the suburban, white flight that occurred in many inner cities in the 1960s and 1970s, cities were open to try various urban renewal strategies to bring economic development back into the core of the city. Suburban shopping malls were becoming popular and drawing shoppers out of the downtown. In an effort to draw them back, planners embarked on the experiment of the American pedestrian mall.

Approximately 200 pedestrian malls were installed during this time period. The first one to go in was in Kalamazoo, Michigan and designed by planner and architect, Victor Gruen. Gruen, hailed as inventor of the modern shopping mall, designed many of the nation’s indoor malls and outdoor pedestrian malls.ⁱⁱ

The pedestrian mall took several architectural and landscape elements from the suburban shopping center such as fountains, lighting, etc. It also aimed to provide the shopper with an “enclosed” experience, cut off from the area around it with design elements included to provide a pleasant environment where the shopper would want to stay, meander and shop more. Scott Doyon of Placemakers.com describes the problem with providing this type of enclosed in an American downtown that had been designed for automobile traffic:

“The problem was that we had relinquished our streets to the automobile, relegating all other users to second or third class status. We had taken the complexity of the public realm and dumbed it down into a single-use car sewer. Cars good, walking bad. So how did we try to fix that? By doing the exact same thing, except in reverse. This time it was cars bad, walking good, which presents a similar set of problems because community doesn’t thrive in all-or-nothing extremes of complexity reduction.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Planners tried competing with suburban shopping malls by recreating those suburban elements in urban areas and while the first few years of novelty may have been a success in some areas, the verdict has been overwhelming in terms of how the experiment of the pedestrian mall fared.

A representative of the City of Lake Charles’ Downtown Development Authority acknowledges that installing pedestrian malls may have actually had the opposite effect and encouraged the flight to suburbia: “What the pedestrian mall effort did was to speed up the flight as the concept totally disrupted access to and from downtown.”^{iv}

III. Struggling and Unsuccessful Pedestrian Malls

Installing an isolated suburban shopping center in the middle of an urban area ultimately proved to be unsuccessful in the United States and most of the malls have been removed or repurposed. The Community Land Use and Economics Group, LLC (CLUE Group) a downtown economic development and historic preservation consulting firm, acknowledges that “most communities found, however, that their new pedestrian malls hurt downtown business, rather than boosting it.”^v The CLUE Group reported that by 2005, fewer than two dozen downtown pedestrian malls remained in the United States.^{vi} In 2008, the Downtown Memphis Commission reported that 85% of the original 200 U.S. pedestrian malls had been reopened to traffic, including malls in cities such as Baltimore, Chicago, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, Pasadena, Burbank, Kalamazoo, Raleigh, Portland Oregon, Little Rock and Tampa.^{vii} By the mid-1980s, most communities that installed pedestrian malls have now removed them completely or partially.^{viii}

Our research validates these statistics, finding that of the approximately 200 pedestrian malls to go in, 89% are removed, struggling or combined with transit, giving American pedestrian malls an 11% success rate.

Table 1: Pedestrian Mall Success Rates in the United States

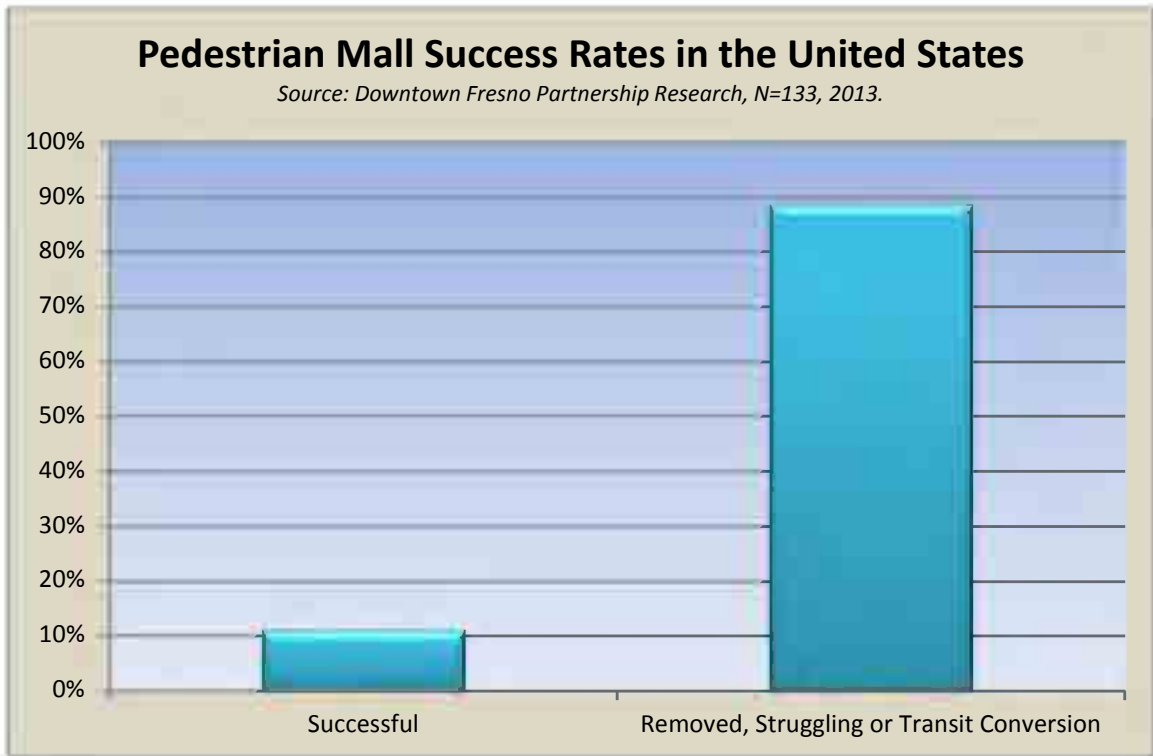
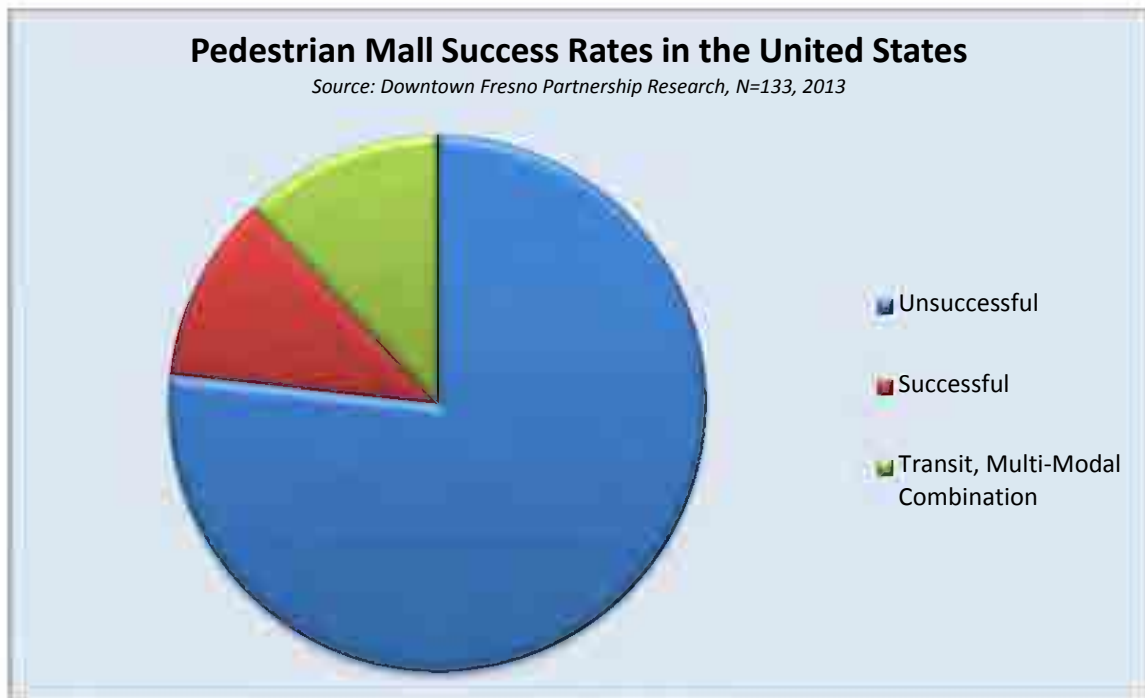


Table 2: Pedestrian Mall Success Rates in the United States, Separating out Transit



In 2008, The Memphis Center City Commission found that when a downtown street gets closed to traffic:

- Vacancy rates along the mall increase and retail mix deteriorates.
- The retail focus shifts from “comparison and destination goods/services,” such as department stores and high-end retail, to convenience stores.
- The mall becomes an “uncomfortable and threatening environment” attracting “loiterers and transients.”^{ix}

The problems of pedestrian malls include a deteriorated retail mix, lack of visibility and access for retail, an uncomfortable and threatening environment, an area that attracts loiterers, disrupted neighborhood traffic flows and a fear of crime.^x In Kalamazoo, a library researcher wrote of other problems including “the lack of convenient parking, the exposure of shoppers to bad weather, public perceptions on crime and less shopping diversity.”^{xi} In *Governing*, senior editor Tod Newcombe wrote, “Many of the pedestrian malls were ill-planned and had little purpose. Because so few people lived downtown, the malls became lifeless after work, attracting crime and loiterers, rather than large crowds.”^{xii} Pedestrian malls experience a general isolation, including a lack of eyes on the street for perceived safety and comfort, lack of visibility amongst landscaping and difficulties of parking and access. In summation, the Memphis report concluded that “in most cases pedestrian malls in North America have experienced negative economic results from the original conversion.”^{xiii}

Memphis is a city with a pedestrian-transit mall and has done extensive research on pedestrian malls in other cities. Jeff Sanford of the Memphis Center City Commission stated, “We still have a seven-block-long pedestrian and transportation mall... No question in my mind: if we had it to do over again, we wouldn’t have done it... The lesson in my opinion is: don’t create pedestrian only streets!”^{xiv} Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown concurs with his statement in the *Buffalo News* in July 2013 that prohibiting cars from the street “essentially killed retail in downtown Buffalo.”^{xv}

Table 3: Unsuccessful Pedestrian Malls in the United States

Unsuccessful Pedestrian Malls: Struggling or Removed (Reopened to Traffic)			
State	Mall Name	City	Type of Mall
Arkansas	Main Street Mall	Little Rock	Removed
Arizona	Pedestrian Mall	Yuma	Removed
California	Downtown Mall	Riverside	Removed
California	Fulton Mall	Fresno	Struggling
California	Golden Mall	Burbank	Removed
California	Plaza Park Mall	Oxnard	Removed
California	Pomona Mall	Pomona	Partially Removed
California	Redding Mall	Redding	Struggling
California	Redlands Mall	Redlands	Removed
California	Santa Cruz Pacific Garden Mall	Santa Cruz	Partially Removed
Connecticut	Captain’s Walk	New London	Removed

Connecticut	Pratt Street	Hartford	Removed
Delaware	Market Street Mall	Wilmington	Removed
District of Columbia	Liberty Place/Gallery Place	Washington	Removed
Florida	Franklin Mall	Tampa	Partially Removed
Florida	Las Olas Boulevard	Fort Lauderdale	Removed
Georgia	Downtown Mall	Toccoa	Removed
Hawaii	Fort Street Mall	Honolulu	Struggling
Illinois	Downtown Mall	Centralia	Removed
Illinois	Downtown Plaza	Freeport	Removed
Illinois	Landmark Mall	Decatur	Removed
Illinois	Neil street	Champaign	Removed
Illinois	Oak Park Village Mall	Oak Park	Partially Removed
Illinois	Old Capitol Plaza	Springfield	Pedestrian
Illinois	State Street Mall	Chicago	Removed
Illinois	State Street Mall	Rockford	Removed
Illinois	Vermilion Park Mall	Danville	Removed
Indiana	Franklin Square Mall	Michigan City	Repurposed
Indiana	Main Street Walkway	Evansville	Removed
Indiana	The Promenade	Richmond	Removed
Indiana	Michigan Street	South Bend	Removed
Indiana	Walnut Plaza	Muncie	Removed
Iowa	Pedestrian Mall	Ottumwa	Removed
Iowa	Jefferson Street Mall	Burlington	Removed
Iowa	Town Clock Plaza	Dubuque	Removed
Kansas	Atchison Mall	Atchison	Struggling
Kansas	Maple Street	Kansas City	Removed
Kansas	Parsons Plaza	Parsons	Removed
Kentucky	River City Mall	Louisville	Removed
Kentucky	St. Clair Mall	Frankfort	Removed
Kentucky	Old Town Plaza	Covington	Removed
Louisiana	Downtown Mall	Lake Charles	Removed
Maryland	Downtown Place	Salisbury	Removed
Maryland	Lexington Mall	Baltimore	Removed
Maryland	Old Town Mall	Baltimore	Removed
Massachusetts	Downtown Crossing	Boston	Struggling
Michigan	Macomb Place	Mount Clemens	Removed
Michigan	Market Street Mall	Kalamazoo	Pedestrian
Michigan	Michigan Mall	Battle Creek	Removed
Michigan	Monroe Mall	Grand Rapids	Removed
Michigan	Pearl Street	Grand Rapids	Unsuccessful
Michigan	Progress Place	Jackson	Unsuccessful
Michigan	Washington Square	Lansing	Removed
Minnesota	Levee Plaza	Winona	Removed

Minnesota	Mall Germain	St. Cloud	Removed
Mississippi	Main Street Mall	Vicksburg	Removed
Missouri	Pedestrian Mall	Springfield	Removed
Missouri	Pedestrian Mall	St. Joseph	Unsuccessful
Missouri	Main Street	Saint Charles	Removed
Missouri	North 14th Street Pedestrian Mall	Saint Louis	Unsuccessful
Montana	Last Chance Mall	Helena	Removed
New Hampshire	Vaughn Street Mall	Portsmouth	Unsuccessful
New Jersey	Trenton Commons	Trenton	Removed
New Mexico	4th Street Mall	Albuquerque	Struggling
New Mexico	Downtown Mall	Las Cruces	Removed
New York	Ithaca Commons	Ithaca	Struggling
New York	Pedestrian Mall	Freeport	Removed
New York	Buffalo Place Main Street Mall	Buffalo	Struggling
New York	Main Street Mall	Poughkeepsie	Removed
New York	State Street Mall	Auburn	Removed
North Carolina	Downtown Greenville Mall	Greenville	Unsuccessful
North Carolina	Downtown Walkway	Winston-Salem	Removed
North Carolina	Fayetteville St	Raleigh	Removed
North Carolina	Franklin Commons	Fayetteville	Removed
North Dakota	Pedestrian Mall	Fargo	Removed
Ohio	Pedestrian Mall	Ashtabula	Removed
Ohio	Middletown Mall	Middletown	Unsuccessful
Ohio	Youngstown Federal Plaza	Youngstown	Unsuccessful
Oklahoma	Main Street Mall	Tulsa	Unsuccessful
Oregon	City Center Mall	Coos Bay	Removed
Oregon	Eugene Mall	Eugene	Unsuccessful
Pennsylvania	Center City Mall	Williamsport	Unsuccessful
Pennsylvania	Centre Street Mall	Pottsville	Repurposed
Pennsylvania	Downtown Mall	Erie	Removed
Pennsylvania	Maplewood Mall	Philadelphia	Unsuccessful
Pennsylvania	Penn Square	Reading	Removed
Pennsylvania	Carnegie Ped Mall	Carnegie	Removed
Pennsylvania	West Allegheny Ped Mall	West Allegheny	Removed
Pennsylvania	Wyoming Avenue Mini-Mall	Scranton	Removed
Rhode Island	Westminster Mall	Providence	Removed
South Carolina	Main Street	Rock Hill	Removed
South Carolina	Coffee Street Mall	Greenville	Removed
South Carolina	Main Street Mall	Spartanburg	Removed
South Dakota	Pedestrian Mall	Sioux Falls	Removed
Texas	Akard Street Mall	Dallas	Partially Removed
Texas	Austin Avenue Mall	Waco	Removed
Washington	Broadway Plaza	Tacoma	Removed

Washington	Occidental Mall	Seattle	Removed
West Virginia	Pedestrian Mall	Huntington	Removed
Wisconsin	Forest Home Avenue Mall	Milwaukee	Removed
Wisconsin	Plaza 8/Harbor Center	Sheboygan	Removed

IV. The Main Street Approach

Once cities and downtowns removed their pedestrian mall and restored it to a main street, there is almost always immediate success. Even the very first pedestrian mall to be installed in the United States realized it needed to be removed to restore vibrancy to the community (Kalamazoo in 1998). The City of Buffalo and the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority report that, “90% of cities see significant improvements in occupancy rates, retail sales, property values, and private sector investment in the downtown area when streets are restored.”^{xvi}



Photo of Burbank’s Successful Main Street after Pedestrian Mall Removal.

Photo by Elliott Balch.

Examples of successful mall removals:

- South Bend, Indiana’s downtown experienced a 20% increase in retail sales when Michigan Street was reopened to vehicular traffic.^{xvii}

- Burlington, Iowa's Jefferson Street's ground-floor vacancies dropped from 80% to 20% once the two blocks were reopened to cars in 1990 and continued to drop to 0% within 2 years of opening.^{xviii}
- Louisville, Kentucky's mall reopened and vacancy rates decreased from 80% to 50% and property values increased within one year of reopening.^{xix}
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania's mall reopened in 2000 and rents that were \$25 per square foot became \$65 per square foot and they experienced higher end national chains moving in such as Sephora, H&M and West Elm.^{xx}
- Raleigh, North Carolina reopened Fayetteville Street and experienced \$1 billion in public and private investments within the first 6 months of opening the mall to traffic and \$3.5 billion in the first three years.^{xxi}
- Covington, Kentucky's Old Town Plaza reopened and retailers immediately reported year-over-year sales gains of 30%.^{xxii}
- Eugene, Oregon's City Center Mall's vacancy rate went from 25% to 6% in four years.^{xxiii}
- Oak Park, Illinois' Lake Street's sales went up 15-20% and vacancy rates dropped from 25% to 5%.^{xxiv}
- Pittsburg, Pennsylvania's East Liberty Mall's vacancy rates dropped from 60% to having 200 new businesses on that stretch with \$80 million in investment in the first 10 years of opening.^{xxv}
- Poughkeepsie, New York's pedestrian mall's vacancy rate decreased from 31% to 10% once the mall was opened.^{xxvi}
- Waco, Texas' Austin Avenue's ground floor vacancy dropped from 80% to 40% after reopening to a street.^{xxvii}
- Burbank, California's Golden Mall went from having very high vacancies to 0-1% vacancy with a mix of local and national restaurants and shops.^{xxviii}
- Oxnard, California's Plaza Park Mall gained 14 new businesses, 6 business expansions and 4 major business renovations within the first year of reopening.^{xxix}
- Chicago, Illinois' State Street Mall's retail vacancy rate dropped to 1.8% in the first 8 months of opening, whereas in the 1970s, all but 2 department stores had closed along the Mall. From 1997 to 1998, rents have risen to \$32.02 per square foot, an 18% increase over a year, 1,000 apartments were created and traffic has returned to the roadway, knitting State Street back into the thriving downtown loop district, which has an estimated 500,000 daytime workers.^{xxx}

- Richmond, Indiana's Promenade has experienced 22 new businesses, 4 business expansions, 71 new downtown jobs, 17 façade rehabs, and 4 downtown second-story rehabs. The vacancy rate dropped from 28% to less than 3% within 18 months of opening.^{xxxix}
- Louisville, Kentucky's River City Mall's vacancy rate dropped from 80% to 50% within one year, and experience increased property values.^{xxxix}
- Kalamazoo, Michigan's Market Street Mall had three major projects under development within the first 2 years of opening and in 2011 had a 0% vacancy rate.^{xxxix}
- Grand Rapids, Michigan's Monroe Mall had 76 vacant storefronts in 1991 and after the mall reopened in 1997, they were all occupied.^{xxxix}
- Providence, Rhode Island's Westminster Mall experienced over \$1.5 billion in public and private funding into downtown after reopening.^{xxxix}

Fayetteville Street in Raleigh North Carolina set forth several objectives to restore their main street and make a positive transition from pedestrian mall to a quality, accessible place by:

- Creating a level of beauty, ambiance, and uniqueness appropriate to the importance of the street.
- Establishing a comfortable and safe environment.
- Providing continuous visual interest at street level.
- Blurring the line between public and private realms.
- Making the street feel populated.
- Catalyzing activity for at least 18 hours of every day.
- Allowing for the natural diversity of the private realm.
- Creating an environment in which high quality shops and restaurants can succeed.
- Using the public realm to unify the overall composition of the street.
- Highlighting public/civic buildings to punctuate the street and provide a sense of permanence.
- Accommodating diversity and create a street for all citizens by incorporating universal design.
- Stimulating economic development and revitalization of the parcels fronting Fayetteville Street.^{xxxix}

In somewhat of an ironic role reversal, the Main Street approach has become so successful in terms of placemaking and economic development that even suburban shopping malls are modeling themselves after urban main streets to attract customers. The data show that the main street approach restores vibrancy to an urban area and can be utilized as a successful tool in reshaping struggling or unsuccessful urban pedestrian malls.

V. Transit-Combination Pedestrian Malls

Several pedestrian malls have evolved into or started out as corridors that allow for both pedestrians and some type of transit, such as light rail, bus, trolley, or even taxi. The multi-modal component in these spaces have allowed for greater economic viability of the area, greater access and connections, less confusion and actually, more pedestrian traffic. By combining various modes of transportation, these spaces allow for greater access, connections, eyes on the street, and choice for the user. Some of the popular transit-pedestrian malls include Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis, State Street Mall in Madison and Denver's 16th Street Mall.

This hybrid approach allows for a pedestrian-dominated space, while incorporating the vital elements of access and connectivity with the rest of the urban grid. This approach requires partnership with local transit organizations, taxi companies, downtown organizations, and other stakeholders. Management of the district can often include a budget to cover maintenance, operations and repairs for the transit-pedestrian mall. Often, these are expensive endeavors. For example, the Downtown Denver Partnership estimated that repairing one street of granite pavers would cost about \$16 million.^{xxxvii}



*Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, Minnesota Transit-Pedestrian Mall
Photo by Elliott Balch*

Table 4: Transit-Pedestrian Mall Combinations in the United States

Transit-Pedestrian Mall Combinations			
State	Mall Name	City	Combination
California	Downtown Mall	Sacramento	Light Rail
California	Parkway Mall	Napa	Transit
Colorado	16th Street Mall	Denver	Transit
Iowa	Walnut Street	Des Moines	Transit
Massachusetts	Essex Mall	Salem	Trolley
Minnesota	Nicollet Mall	Minneapolis	Transit, Bicycle
New Jersey	Washington Street Mall	Cape May	Trolley
New York	Fulton Street Mall	New York City (Brooklyn)	Transit
Oregon	Portland Transit Mall	Portland	Transit
Pennsylvania	Chestnut Street Transitway	Philadelphia	Transit
Pennsylvania	Downtown Canopy and Mall	Wilkes-Barre	Transit
Pennsylvania	East Liberty Mall	Pittsburgh	Transit
Pennsylvania	Gay Street Mall	West Chester	Transit
Pennsylvania	Hamilton Mall	Allentown	Transit
Tennessee	Main Street Mall/Mid-America Mall	Memphis	Trolley
Wisconsin	State Street Mall	Madison	Taxi, Transit

VI. Successful Pedestrian-Only Malls

Successful pedestrian malls are not the norm. Doyon states that, “The ones that work are the exception, not the rule, and they require some particular characteristics to flourish: high levels of tourist traffic occurring for reasons other than the mall is one; large populations of pedestrians (such as universities or dense downtown housing) in close, walkable proximity is another.”^{xxxviii} Dave Feehan of the International Downtown Association continues this point by stating, “Most have failed and been removed. Reasons include lack of maintenance, management, and marketing; fear of crime; the movement of retail to the suburbs; poor design; and Americans’ desire to “park in front of the store.” However, some well managed and well maintained examples continue to survive and in some cases thrive.... One factor seems to help significantly: the presence of a major university in close proximity.”^{xxxix}

Successful pedestrian malls appear to have a formula for success. Analysis of the 11% of pedestrian malls that are considered to be successful reveals that certain indicators need to be present for a pedestrian mall to be successful in the United States. These indicators are: located near or attached to a major anchor such as a university, situated in close proximity to a beach, designed to be a short length in terms of blocks, in a town/city with a population under 100,000, and/or located in a major tourist location such as Las Vegas or New Orleans.

- **Universities:** The CLUE Group notes that in almost all instances, these successful malls are in downtowns housing or abutting universities, hospitals or other large institutional

users – places like Boulder, Colorado (University of Colorado) or Burlington, Vermont (University of Vermont) – whose students, employees and visitors provide a significant concentration of daily customers for these districts' businesses.^{xi}

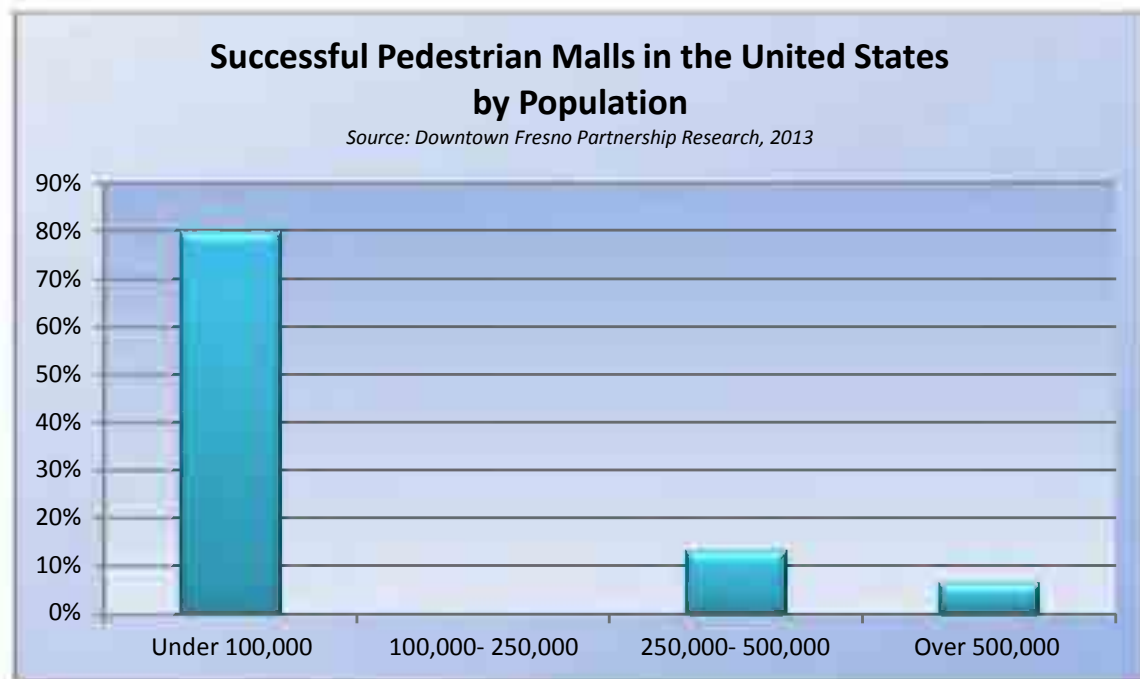
- **Beaches:** Miami Beach, Santa Monica, Newport Beach, New Bedford and Newburyport's pedestrian malls are all located directly adjacent to the beach or coast.
- **Short Lengths:** With the exception of Miami Beach's Lincoln Road Mall, most successful pedestrian malls range from 1-4 blocks in length.
- **High Tourism:** Cities such as New Orleans, Las Vegas and even Cumberland (home to the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad which attracts up to 49,000 passengers a year; and home to the Great Allegheny Passage attracting 100,000 visitors a year) have a dedicated tourist base to frequent their pedestrian malls. It should also be noted that New Orleans' most famous street, Bourbon Street, is not a pedestrian mall.
- **Populations under 100,000:** Only 11% of all American pedestrian malls are considered successful. Of these 11% successful pedestrian malls, 80% are in areas with populations under 100,000. Besides Las Vegas (which we would consider an outlier), there are no successful pedestrian malls in cities over 500,000.

Other research notes that pedestrian malls are successful when it “does not impact high levels of vehicular traffic.”^{xli}



Miami's Successful Pedestrian Mall by the Beach
Photo by Elliott Balch.

Table 5: Successful Pedestrian Malls in the United States by Population



The Memphis Center City Commission found that successful malls like the Pearl Street Mall in Boulder include:

- Varied mix of active uses and activities
- A large population of “captive” users (downtown residents and workers)
 - The journal, *Governing*, posited that Cities without downtown residential population can hold pedestrian-only events, but cannot sustain a pedestrian mall.^{xiii}
- Efficient public transit
- Heavily programmed activities
- Incorporation of efficient public transit
- Strong anchors that draw pedestrians
- Centralized, coordinated retail management
 - Management of the space is crucial. The DOWNCITY Partnership in Providence, Rhode Island stated that “Pedestrian malls only succeed as part of a comprehensive retail strategy that includes a well-planned parking and mass transit system that reinforces the pedestrian mall. Also, centralized or coordinated retail management (CRM) is essential for most communities to

stabilize downtown shopping. This approach employs development strategies, management strategies, and promotions strategies and must have a sound organization strategy as its underpinning” (IDA, 2002).

- Located in a college town or near a college neighborhood
- Well-planned and extensive parking adjacent to the mall
- Located in an area of high tourism
- Frequent and thorough upgrades of the pedestrian mall.^{xliii}

Table 4: Successful Pedestrian Malls in the United States

Successful Pedestrian Malls in the United States					
State	Pedestrian Mall	City	Population	Mall Length	Indicator
California	Third Street Promenade	Santa Monica	90,377	3 blocks	Beach
Colorado	Pearl Street Mall	Boulder	98,889	4 blocks	University
Florida	Lincoln Road Mall	Miami Beach	90,588	8 blocks	Beach
Iowa	Pedestrian Mall	Iowa City	68,947	4 blocks	University
Louisiana	Exchange Place	New Orleans	360,740	1 block	High Tourism
Louisiana	Fulton Street	New Orleans	360,740	1 block	High Tourism
Maryland	Downtown Cumberland Mall	Cumberland	20,739	3 blocks	High Tourism
Massachusetts	Front Street	New Bedford	95,183	3 blocks	Beach
Massachusetts	Inn Street Mall	Newburyport	17,552	1 block	Beach
Nevada	Fremont Street Experience	Las Vegas	589,317	5 blocks	High Tourism
New Hampshire	Downtown Mall	Lebanon	13,120	1 block	University
New York	Jay Street Pedestrian Walkway	Schenectady	66,273	1 block	University
Rhode Island	Long Wharf Mall	Newport	24,034	1 block	Beach
Vermont	Church Street Marketplace	Burlington	39,522	4 blocks	University
Virginia	Main Street Downtown Mall	Charlottesville	40,482	8 blocks	University

VII. Recommendations

The Fulton Mall is currently operating at 6% of its economic potential, historic buildings are decaying, and it is no longer a space of economic or civic viability.^{xiv} The region of Fresno has lost the downtown economic engine. With just an 11% success rate of pedestrian malls that require certain indicators (none of which Fresno has), a pedestrian mall in the middle of a downtown urban area does not meet the criteria to be successful or economically viable.

Based on the findings in this report, we recommend the main street and complete street approaches, reopening the mall to vehicular traffic, restoring a multi-modal space that is welcoming to pedestrians, bicyclists, transit and automobiles. Multi-modal, complete streets organized under a main street model have proven to boost the economic viability of the former pedestrian mall space. Doyon makes the case for complete streets, noting that “when any one class of user dominates the public realm, we all suffer.”^{xiv} We recommend creating partnerships between stakeholders, engaging downtown property owners and business and communicating with the entire public community of Fresno as downtown’s success affects the entire region.



***Successful removal of Kalamazoo's Pedestrian Mall into a Main Street
Photo by Elliott Balch***

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