

Downtown Development Strategies Project

Key Findings

Modify downtown zoning to encourage better developments downtown

- In new buildings require retail on the first floor to make downtown more pedestrian-friendly and provide more opportunities for new downtown retail.
- Respect the adjacent historic neighborhoods. Concentrate high-density projects in the center of downtown, away from the downtown edges.
- Set minimum and maximum building height limits. Set forward design guidelines to encourage high quality and attractive projects.
- Create flexible zoning to encourage changes in building use over time.

Encourage more diverse housing opportunities downtown

- Encourage a range of projects that target different income levels, age groups, and type of housing, including rental and ownership properties.
- Establish definitions for affordability, and short/long term goals for each level and kind of affordability.
- Require all new residential developments to include affordable housing or provide in-lieu payments to the City.

Bring back downtown grocery stores – strengthen our independent small retailers

- Establish programs to enhance small merchants' ability to find private capital financing sources and provide technical assistance where needed.
- Provide tenant improvement assistance for ground floor grocery stores.
- Assist in the creation of small business start-ups.

Create an Allen Creek Greenway

- Study and pursue the final Allen Creek Greenway Taskforce recommendations
- Design a central Town Square, and create better bike/pedestrian connections to the Huron River Greenway.

Make downtown more pedestrian/bike/transit friendly

- Create gateways into downtown
- Install improvements including improved transit shelters, human-scale street lights, bulb-outs and other traffic calming elements
- Improve bike access into and through the downtown
- Eliminate parking requirements for new downtown projects, provide incentives for developers who provide their own parking, and require that parking be unbundled from residential sales and rentals
- Encourage car-sharing and parking space-sharing.

Historic Ann Arbor is important - preserve significant historic buildings