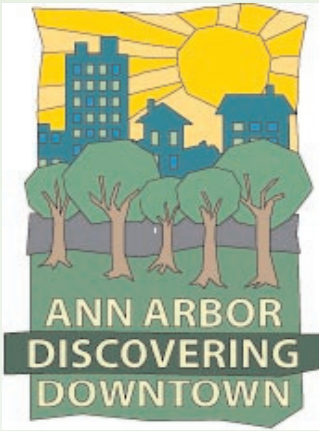


A²D² Project Updates



Realizing the vision for Downtown Ann Arbor

Volume 1

December 2007

Ann Arbor Discovering Downtown (A2D2) was initiated by City Council to implement the Recommended Vision and Policy Framework for Downtown, better known as the "Calthorpe Report."

High priority projects:

- * Create special overlay zoning for the downtown that identifies areas of similar character
- * Incorporate a set of essential design guidelines
- * Streamline the development proposal process
- * Work with the Historic District Commission to clarify criteria for development
- * Pursue a comprehensive parking strategy for the downtown

Visit our Web site

To learn more about the A2D2 project visit:

www.a2gov.org/a2d2

Zoning , design guideline recommendations approved

A final draft of the downtown design guidelines was released in early October and presented to City Council at a working session on Oct. 8. On Oct. 15, City Council approved the recommendations of both the Downtown Zoning and Design Guideline Advisory Committees. These recommendations call for rezoning downtown properties into two newly created districts and adopting a design review process for downtown projects undergoing site plan review.

Next steps: Council requested that City Planning Commission initiate supporting amendments to the master plan and city codes to implement the recommendations. Work on these changes will begin in December 2007.

Leadership team forms for parking, transportation follow-up

On Nov. 5, the A2D2 Steering Committee convened the Transportation Leadership team to lead the effort to implement strategies for downtown parking and transportation. In addition to the A2D2 Steering Committee, the team includes representatives of the Downtown Development Authority, Ann Arbor Transportation Authority and Ann Arbor Area Chamber of Commerce. In addition, other important transportation stakeholders, such as the University of Michigan and the Washtenaw Area Transportation Study participated in the discussion.

The leadership team discussed opportunities and priorities in the following areas:

- * Express commuter service
- * Intercept park & ride
- * Fixed route bus service upgrades
- * Parking supply increases
- * Commuter choice options

The team recognized that employment forecasts are a key driver of transportation demand. To get a better handle on future demand, the team directed staff to coordinate with the Chamber of Commerce and Washtenaw County to explore a study of city and county economic futures.

Next steps: Based on discussion at this meeting, the representatives committed to go back to their respective organizations and incorporate elements of the A2D2 implementation into their work plans.

Historic preservation guidelines move forward

The State Historic Preservation Office reviewed the historic district design guidelines and recommended some minor changes to the document, including adding a section on architectural styles. Over the next few months, the consultant for A2D2 downtown design guidelines, Winter & Company, will create graphics for the historic guidelines document and will format the document to be compatible with the downtown design guidelines, including revising the section on infill construction. The revised document will then be sent back to the State Historic Preservation Office for review.

Streamlining the development process continues

The City's new development process software system, Trak-It, was installed in September. The Planning and Development Services Unit is now completing the conversion of data from existing sources into Trak-It. Staff will begin system testing and training in mid-December. The target "go-live" date for use by permit applicants is April 18, 2008.