A²D² Project Updates

Public input opportunities planned in May

In preparation for making recommendations to City Council in June, the A2D2 project leads and advisory committees will be seeking comments on their preliminary recommendations throughout May. All members of the public are encouraged to attend the following meetings to learn more and express their opinions. The information from these meetings will also be available on www.a2gov.org/A2D2, along with ways to comment, such as A2D2Feedback@a2gov.org.

PROJECT	INPUT OPPORTUNITIES
Overlay Zoning	Workshop on Downtown Zoning Scenarios: Wednesday, May 2, at 7 p.m. (Conor O'Neill's Celtic Room, 318 S. Main). Workshop on Downtown Zoning Scenarios: Friday, May 4, at 12 p.m. (DDA Conference Room, 150 S. Fifth Avenue).
Design Guidelines	Wednesday, May 30, Urban Design Workshop (downtown location to be determined).
Historic Preservation	Public Hearing on Historic Preservation Criteria: Thursday, May 10 at 8:30 pm (Council Chambers, City Hall). Public Meeting on Historic Preservation Criteria: Wednesday, May 23 at 7:30 pm (Bach School Multipurpose Room, 600 W. Jefferson).
Parking	Policy Maker Meeting on Comprehensive Parking Strategy: Wednesday, May 9 at 6:30 pm (Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Avenue). Open House on Comprehensive Parking Strategy: Thursday, May 10 at 6 p.m. (Community High School Media Center, 401 N. Division).

OF INTEREST...

Wayfinding public meeting planned later this month

Wayfinding is a system of providing information that makes it easy for first time visitors to get to where they want to go comfortably. Much of this information comes from vehicular and pedestrian signage that leads people into town, then downtown, then to his/her destination in addition to the parking they may need during their stay.

The Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has hired consultants to help design a wayfinding program for downtown Ann Arbor. Please join us **Tuesday, April 24 from 7 to 9 p.m. at the DDA office, 150 S. Fifth Avenue, Suite 301** to provide input on the development of this wayfinding system, including what signs may look like, what destinations should be included on the signage and where these signs should be located. For more information, please contact **Susan Pollay** at 734.944.6697 or spollay@a2dda.org.

Comprehensive Parking Strategy

Public meetings garner input about policy options

The project team facilitated a series of public meetings in late March to seek input for the development of parking/transportation policy options. These meetings consisted of a workshop attended by policy makers from City Council, Planning Commission, the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority, and the Downtown Development Authority, a public open house and series of four focus groups. In related news, the City of Ann Arbor will kick off an update to the citywide transportation plan with public meeting sessions on Monday, April 23 at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. at Huron High School. The Transportation Plan will build on previous recommendations for an effective multi-modal transportation system and incorporate the results of the comprehensive parking strategy discussion into the planning process.

Next steps: The consultant for the project, Nelson/Nygaard, will take this feedback and draft a set of parking and transportation policies, to be discussed at a second round of public meetings in May.

To learn more, contact **Eli Cooper** at 734.996.3026 or ecooper@a2gov.org.

ANN ARBOR DISCOVERING DOWNTOWN

Realizing the vision for Downtown Ann Arbor

Volume 1 April 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."

In the first phase of A2D2, the following high priority projects are underway:

* 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

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

A2D2 Steering Committee meeting April 23 at 5:30 p.m. (6th floor conference room, City Hall).

To submit a comment or ask a question, e-mail: **a2d2feedback@a2gov.org** or visit **www.a2gov.org/a2d2**

Streamline Development Process

Steering committee to review goals, objectives

The advisory committee met in early April to review goals, objective and strategies for improving the development review process. The primary goal identified is reducing the time it takes to successfully complete the development process.

Objectives identified to meet this goal are: improving communication; clarifying and simplifying the process to make it more predictable; and reducing the costs of the process. A variety of strategies have been identified, including process 'mapping' and full implementation of the new development software package that is being recommended.

Next steps: The A2D2 Steering Committee will review the draft goals, objectives and strategies at its meeting on April 23.

For information, contact **Mark Lloyd** at 734.994.2800 or mlloyd@a2gov.org.

Clarify Historic Preservation Criteria

City Council approved code revisions

On March 19, the Ann Arbor City Council approved revisions to Chapter 8 and Chapter 103 - the city codes that guide historic preservation. The new code language went into effect on April 4.

The Historic Preservation Criteria Advisory Committee met in early March to review draft historic preservation design guidelines, which will supplement the code language in making determinations about individual projects. Later in March, the advisory committee met in a joint meeting with the Urban Design Guidelines advisory committee to discuss the shared concerns of both groups. Of particular interest was whether there should be additional or special design standards for projects adjacent to historic districts.

Next steps: Later this month, the Historic Preservation Criteria Advisory Committee will complete its review of the design guidelines and prepare them for public comment in May. The consultant will also begin the process of classifying structures in the downtown historic districts as either contributing or non-contributing, consistent with state law and the new ordinance.

For information, contact **Kristine Kidorf** at 734.996.3008 or kmkidorf@a2gov.org.

Implement Urban Design Guidelines

Committee to identify design character areas for workshop

In March, City Council approved hiring the Winter & Company and RACESTUDIO design team to conduct the public outreach process for the urban design guidelines project.

The consultant team was selected by a team of city staff and steering and advisory committee members in large part due to their success in conducting similar design projects in other university cities. The team will work with the advisory committee throughout April to identify design character areas in preparation for a design workshop at the end of May.

Next steps: Coy Vaughn, project lead for the Urban Design Guidelines project, will continue with the project in a consulting role as he leaves the City's employment to become superintendent of parks for Washtenaw County. Wendy Rampson will join Coy and Winter|RACESTUDIO in moving the project forward.

To learn more, contact **Wendy Rampson** at 734.994.2802 or e-mail wrampson@a2gov.org.

Create Overlay Zoning

DZAC to meet April 11 to discuss potential district zoning changes

Discussion at the March meetings of the Downtown Zoning Advisory Committee centered on the use of floor area premiums to forward city goals for the downtown. The committee identified five premium incentives for further study: on-site affordable housing, residential use, on-site parking (in excess of the requirements), energy efficiency and transferred development rights from properties in floodplains or historic districts.

The committee also discussed possible zoning strategies to ensure that retail or active commercial uses are provided at the street level of buildings.

In related news, City Council approved a study of sanitary sewer flows and capacity in the downtown area. This study will begin in April, which will allow data to be captured about the impact of spring rainfall infiltration. Results from the study will help determine if the capacity of downtown sewers can be expanded through strategies used in other parts of the city, such as footing drain disconnects.

Next steps: The DZAC will meet on April 11 to develop zoning scenarios for review and comment by the public in meetings scheduled for May 2 and May 4 (*please see lead article*).

The scenarios will identify potential changes to zoning districts, use regulations, and floor area limitations. The committee will discuss whether or not to include setback and building form requirements in the scenarios, or whether present them as part of the urban design workshop on May 30.

For information, contact **Wendy Rampson** at 734.994.2802 or wrampson@a2gov.org.

For a schedule of upcoming A2D2 Advisory Committee Meetings and project updates, go to:

www.a2gov.org/a2d2