



Realizing the vision for Downtown Ann Arbor

Volume 1

March 2007

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

Mark your calendar!

Downtown Zoning: March 21, 4:30 pm (6th Floor Conference Room, City Hall).

Joint Historic Preservation/Design Guidelines: March 22, 5 p.m. (6th Floor Conference Room, City Hall).

Policy maker meeting on parking policy: March 28, 6:30 p.m. (Downtown Library).

Resident open house on parking policy: March 29, 6-9 p.m. (Council Chambers, City Hall).

A2D2 Steering Committee: March 30, 8 a.m. (6th floor Conference Room, City Hall).

Go to:

www.a2gov.org/a2d2

A²D² Project Updates

Comprehensive Parking Strategy

Parking study reveals usage, trends downtown

The Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority (DDA) commissioned a comprehensive downtown parking study from Nelson/Nygaard & Associates in the fall of 2006 to amass data about current and future parking supply and demand.

In the first phase of the project, the consultants collected information about downtown land use and employment; employee travel characteristics; inventories of public, private and University of Michigan parking; and survey results of patron perceptions.

In February, the Phase I final report was released (view the complete report at www.a2gov.org/a2d2/projects/parking.html). Some findings include:

* Overall, the downtown parking supply is sufficient to meet current demand. An average daytime demand of 84 percent shows a parking supply that is being optimally used.

* From the weekday peak, parking demand drops 34 percent on weekday evenings, and 24 percent on Friday nights: 4,660 vehicles are parked on a typical weekday at midday, 2,690 cars on a weekday evening, 3,296 on a typical Friday. These are fairly modest drops for a CBD,

DID YOU KNOW?



Employment: In 2000, approximately half of all employment within the City of Ann Arbor was located in an area encompassing downtown and the Central Campus area - all within a radius of a ten minute walk to the heart of the downtown.



Commuting: Approximately 65 percent of downtown district employees drive solo to work. Of the remainder, nearly 19 percent walk to work. Downtown employees use transit six times the Michigan average, and they bike to work more than two times more than the city average.



Parking Spaces: The DDA parking system consists of approximately 1,100 on-street metered spaces and 4,700 off-street spaces, for a total of 5,800 public parking spaces.

In addition to public parking, there are approximately 3,200 parking spaces contained in private parking lots throughout the downtown.

Source: Ann Arbor Downtown Parking Study - Phase I Report.

reflecting a healthy nighttime economy Downtown.

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Create Overlay Zoning

Zoning focuses on building scale and form

The Downtown Zoning Advisory Committee (DZAC) met in a joint meeting with the Urban Design Guidelines Advisory Committee in mid-February. The committees agreed that the following design elements were best addressed in the Overlay Zoning project to achieve desired building form in the downtown: setbacks, massing, height, parking, footprint and open space.

Next steps: The DZAC will meet twice in March. At the March 7 meeting, the Committee will discuss potential changes to the floor area premiums for downtown development, exemption of structured parking from floor area limitations, and changes to use restrictions. At the March 21 meeting, the agenda will focus on building form regulations, such as street-level and upper-story setbacks, height and solar access.

To learn more, call **Wendy Rampson** 734.994.2802 or wrampson@a2gov.org.

Streamline Development Process

Vendor review complete, negotiations soon

In February, the Development Process Advisory Committee (DPAC) members met individually with project lead Mark Lloyd to discuss issues raised in earlier committee meetings.

The committee has recognized that the development process involves more than obtaining approval by the City Planning Commission and City Council: it also involves other administrative review, approval and inspection services.

Follow-up vendor demonstrations were conducted to test development soft-

ware capabilities by the preferred vendor. These additional demonstrations resulted in completing the vendor review. Contract negotiations and City Council approval will be forthcoming.

Next steps:

At its March meeting, the DPAC will finalize the goals, objectives and strategies for the Development Process project and review the submittal requirements for different types of plans.

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

Clarify Historic Preservation Criteria

Review of guidelines continues this month

In February, the Historic Preservation Criteria Advisory Committee reviewed approximately six sections of the historic district design guidelines and provided comments to staff to be incorporated in the draft document. City Council held the first reading on the revised Chapters 8 and 103 on Feb. 5.

Next steps:

The public hearing on amendments to Chapters 8 and 103 was held at the City Council meeting on March 5. Action on the amendments is scheduled for March 19. The complete draft of the proposed amendments may be found at www.a2gov.org/projects/historic.html. During March the Historic Preservation Criteria Advisory Committee will continue to review and comment on sections of the historic district design guidelines, and will hold a joint meeting with the Design Guidelines Advisory Committee on March 22.

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

Implement Urban Design Guidelines

Urban Design group recommends consultant

Four design firms submitted proposals to facilitate the public participation process for development of urban design guidelines. An interview team comprised of representatives of the Urban Design Guidelines Advisory Committee (UDGAC), Steering Committee and city staff selected the team of Winter & Company and RACESTUDIO as the most qualified. Action on the contract will be scheduled for City Council review in mid-March.

The UDGAC met in a joint meeting with the Downtown Zoning Advisory Committee in mid-February. The committees agreed that the following elements were best addressed in the Urban Design Guidelines project: exterior materials, windows, facade rhythm, street level elements, solar access, fenestration, service areas, rooftop and mechanical equipment, signage and graphics.

Next steps:

UDGAC will hold a joint meeting with the Historic Preservation Criteria Advisory Committee on March 22 to coordinate work on design guidelines for historic districts in the downtown. For additional information, call **Coy Vaughn** at 734.997.1516 or cvaughn@a2gov.org.

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* Daytime off-street utilization is much higher than on-street. Policies aimed at preserving on-street spaces (monthly permits, time limits at meters) appear to be effective.

* Weekday midday on-street availability is over 30 percent. There are areas of on-street midday shortages which may create perception of weekday parking shortages.

* Weekday off-street demand is especially high in the west section of downtown. Wait lists at Ann/Ashley and 4th/William are significantly longer than other facilities, and they have two of the three highest daytime occupancy averages among facilities offering permits.

* Weekday demand is driven by location. Evening demand is driven by location and desire for on-street spaces due in part to the great variation in price (e.g. free vs. \$4.40 for an evening of parking).

* 30 and 60 minute meters are underutilized.

* The consultant projects there will be an added demand for 50 to 100 new parking permits every year for the next 5 to 10 years and recommends strategies for addressing this demand should be a top planning priority.

Next steps:

Between March and June, the consultant will continue with the next phases of the study:

Phase II - Reach consensus on downtown parking goals. City Council, Planning Commission, DDA, and AATA will meet on March 28 to identify goals to be addressed within a comprehensive parking strategy for the City.

A resident workshop will be held on March 29 to get feedback on parking policies.

Phase III - Draft parking policy options. The project leads and the A2D2 Steering Committee will work with the consultant to take feedback collected in Phase II to draft policies for parking demand and supply to support future downtown development; parking system management; and additional downtown commuter options.

Phase IV - Develop policy for adoption. The consultant will develop recommended policy and ordinance changes for City Council action.

To learn more, call **Eli Cooper** 734.996.3027 or ecooper@a2gov.org.