



MISSOULA INCLUSIVITY

APPENDIX

Six Pony Hitch

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The purpose of my study was to talk to as many underrepresented people as possible within the timeframe I was given, find the consistencies in what I heard, and share my findings with Dover Kohl and the Downtown Master Plan Steering Committee so that, as they help create a vision for Downtown Missoula, they would have a more representational view of Missoula and its residents.

This Executive Summary is my attempt to summarize the many thoughts and ideas that more than 250 Missoulians were generous enough to share with me. The sections that follow this summary provide a deeper dive pulled from hundreds of hours of transcripts. While this report details the opinions of people from over 30 organizations representing Missoulians whose voices are not typically heard in public process, this report only relates the views of the individuals I spoke with and not all members of their organization. We are all diverse individuals with different opinions and ideas.

The community recommendations in this summary are based solely on the ideas and opinions of the people I interviewed. These recommendations and opinions are not coming from me or Six Pony Hitch. They are taken only from the interviews I conducted, as I was tasked with creating a report solely from the voices of the people I spoke with.

Some of these responses come from my question, “if you had a magic wand and could wave it, what would Downtown Missoula look like.” Dover Kohl and the Steering Committee of the Master Plan are beginning their process with possibilities and then working to see how and if these possibilities can be achieved. Interviewees are very aware of the difficulties in achieving these goals. Their recommendations represent a vision of what Missoula could be if we put aside issues of funding, regulations, and other very real constraints.

In reading through this report, it is important to recognize that, like all communities, there are real differences and tensions based on power structures that are not always obvious to those who have that power. This report outlines the barriers to engagement for those who feel disengaged and disenfranchised from public process as well as some solutions for breaking down those barriers together. It also details the positive and negative aspects of our current situation and lays out a vision for what could be.

If there is one thing I have learned from all my interviews, it is that we are a community that cares for each other. We have problems and issues that need to be addressed, but on the whole we share a deep love for this city and a desire to help one another. Time and again, interviewees said that even though things can be hard, we live in a community where our City officials really care and want to make things better. They appreciate the work done by their City Council representatives and repeatedly mentioned Mayor Engen’s work to bring everyone into the discussion.

“The mayor is everywhere. And he is really easy to talk to. I know if I have a problem, I can go and talk to him and he will try to help.”

If we approach the planning of our collective downtown as an opportunity to start closing gaps, we can truly create a Downtown Missoula for all. In all that we do, we must remember that we are not separate. A downtown that appeals to a wealthy executive can also appeal to a homeless, single mother. A Native student should feel as welcome and engaged as a tourist. Our aging population should be able to enjoy downtown as much as our teenagers and downtown workforce. Instead of planning something for each individual group, we should start from the common threads and weave a Downtown Missoula that truly becomes a place for everyone.

In order to get there, however, we must first take a hard look at our current situation, recognize our differences, and honor the tensions that currently exist.

Engagement in Public Process

People of all ages have a hard time knowing why public issues are important and how the issues relate to them. They don't really understand how local government works and they are very intimidated about participating.

They are also busy raising families, working multiple jobs, dealing with difficult landlords and property managers, trying to find child care, dealing with racism and homophobia, and navigating an improving but still not adequate system of public transportation.

Even so, the number one reason people in Missoula do not engage in public process is because they don't believe their voice matters. Almost everyone I spoke with believes that decisions are made by a privileged few. They are unwilling to jump over all the hurdles to participation (finding child care, getting transportation, getting time off work, sitting through long meetings, feeling out of place, being embarrassed for not having the right clothes, and feeling like their opinions have been dismissed and ignored.)

"I think there needs to be personal invite and outreach and somehow some education about why their voice would be important and what would, what would happen with, if they came to participate, what would that look like? Because workshop, what does that mean? What does that look like? You've kinda got to break it down to what that means and then also make it super user-friendly as far as free parking, and food, and make it very easy access for people, make it very much like a Caras Park event, you know? Something like that, like out to lunch, out to dinner. Say you like out to lunch, you like out to dinner, come to out to MDA workshop, or whatever. Something that can, people can relate it to something that they have touched or felt in our community."

The first step toward changing this dynamic is to pay attention to the voices in this report and to take action on the many observations and recommendations given here. This does not mean picking a few of the easier and obvious suggestions and ignoring the more difficult and systemic issues. The needs summarized in this report call for a concerted effort by planners and decision makers

to embrace the needs of our entire community and to consider those needs within every project. During every aspect of the planning we must ask ourselves:

Is this project physically, financially, socially, and culturally accessible for everyone?

In terms of outreach, the current model of holding events and inviting people to attend isn't working and won't work. Instead, we must begin building long-term relationships and creating open channels for communication. Real outreach is not advertising and social media to get people to a planned event. It is about rethinking the entire process.

"You are trying to organize different events and everybody's trying to create their own things and I keep saying just go to where the people are already meeting, like go to the neighborhood member leadership team where they've invited everyone in the neighborhood already. They've already done a door to door flyer, and people show up. There are places where people are already gathering. [...] We've found that our approach is too academic. It's not a comfortable or familiar space for a lot of the people that we work with. The approach of like, here's this group of experts, they're going to stand up here and talk at you for 20 minutes and then we're going to ask you guys to respond, talk at a table with people you don't know, that's a really hard thing for a lot of people and they have great ideas and they have really important experience to share, but that's not a setting that's going to be comfortable or inviting or where you're going to get a lot out of them. Even if they do show up."

We need to create a process that takes into account the realities of peoples lives.

"I think in creating a venue where if I knew every Thursday there was some kind of activity, a coffee talk, a kitchen conversation, a something at a community center, whatever community center would mean to you, or a third place that you could go and get information out of your community or know that your voice could be heard on a weekly basis, something that's consistent would be really awesome, and that there was an activity involved with it or something, there was some kind of social connectivity piece as well as engagement piece would be really cool I think."

Real engagement will take time and come with trust and a lot of work. There are already groups like Missoula Interfaith Collaborative and Invest Health who are building these networks. Working with them to build more consistent channels for engagement would bring more people into the process in a very real and significant way.

Community Recommendations

- Go to places where people already go and feel comfortable like schools, The Food Bank, neighborhood meetings, UM campus (for students not for rest of population), the senior center, and parks and recreation facilities like Currents and Splash.
- Hold different meetings at different times like late-morning for people with disabilities, middle of the day for seniors, and weekends for working parents.
- Choose places with free and easy parking and where there is a close Mountain Line stop on a route with frequent stops that runs both before and after the event.
- Provide child care and food for attendees.
- Create open and welcoming events that make everyone feel important and valuable. Events should be interactive with multiple ways to engage and guides to help everyone through the process.
- Provide mentors that help people through the process.
- If meetings have to be outside neighborhoods, we need to create consistent transportation that allows people get there.
- Notice and document who does NOT show up and continually work on building those relationships.

Outreach is not advertising. It is a long-term commitment to meeting people where they are, building trust, and constantly working to make it easier for people to engage.

Challenges That Can Become Opportunities

Housing

A lack of housing was mentioned by every single person I spoke with as the biggest challenge facing Missoula right now. It affects everyone in Missoula across all income levels:

“Most young people in Missoula can’t afford a home, possibly because wages are at a standstill, the housing market prices keep increasing, or both. Historically, most people at age 30 own a home and are starting a family, but, in Missoula, it’s become more common for people in their 30’s to still be living with 4-5 roommates, renting homes or moving every year in order to afford rent. Married couples may put off having kids because it’s something they can’t afford, yet. They may also be deterred because child care is expensive. Due to this, people are moving farther outside of the city as well, maybe Clinton or Frenchtown, Hamilton or Hope Valley.”

Older people continue to live in bigger houses. They’d like to downsize and move to Downtown Missoula or somewhere closer but they can’t find affordable housing, even though they have money from the equity in their larger homes.

About a fifth of the students at the University of Montana are non-traditional. They are paying for school themselves and trying to make ends meet. They are also living in places with high-turnover with landlords who are not interested in making improvements and who are taking advantage of young people’s inexperience in tenant rights. Students are cramming into rentals, even renting closets to be able to have a place to live. Student homelessness is a real issue and the food bank at ASUM is vital to many.

Young professionals are living in apartments downtown with shared bathrooms, crumbling infrastructure, dangerous electricity, and scarce heat.

“You pay hundreds of dollars for an apartment but you can’t use the stove because it might catch on fire and there is heat but it is all baseboard heating because the landlords find it cheaper but the apartments are all old and drafty with old windows, so the baseboard heat has to be cranked up. My friend pays over \$300 to Northwestern Energy but you can still see your breath in his apartment.”

Landlords and, especially, property management companies are profiting from this lack of inventory by taking advantage of tenants.

“My husband and I rent a studio. We’ve had several issues. It’s just a slumlord private owner. Five days without plumbing, they expected us to use a five-gallon bucket, which we did because we didn’t have any other option. It’s a house on our street that’s been divided into three apartments and he has a property manager that lives in the other half of the basement. I had to go pound on her door and tell her I was calling a plumber and taking it off the rent. Also, we moved in March 1st and went until May without any heat at all. At that point, my daughter, I had her baby, her newborn, at the house who was freezing. They didn’t care. We didn’t get any heat. We have heat now, but it’s totally inadequate. We have a ceiling that was dripping. I just put a towel underneath it and we walk around it. There is no legal fire escape. There’s no carbon monoxide detector. There’s no ventilation. When I asked for the heat, they said, “we will not be renewing your lease.” Then when we asked for the plumbing, they said, well, we don’t know what you people expect. We’re no longer going to do the 12-month lease, which is supposed to be this coming March. We’re going to go to month to month, which we can legally do with the 30-day notice and we’re going to change it and include fees for maintenance and snow removal and stuff.”

Jordan Lyons at ASUM Legal Services is doing a fantastic job for students with landlord problems. But non-students find that they have nowhere to turn. There are few affordable legal services for tenants

and those that do it are already overwhelmed.

Having a pet is next to impossible in most situations. The Humane Society has numerous stories of property managers deciding to suddenly change their pet policies. Families who can’t afford to move repeatedly have to give up their beloved pets in an agonizing process.

People are living in illegal and unsafe conditions because they are afraid of retaliation. Many people I spoke with told me they were living with drug users and dealers in their building and even meth labs. They were afraid to call the police because of retaliation from their property managers and their neighbors. And, if you are part of our Native population, you can expect property managers to demand extra deposits and assume that anything that is not working is a result of your negligence.

The people I interviewed all just want safe, affordable housing. They would be happy to live in a tiny apartment if it had a working bathroom and reliable heat.

Another issue driving the lack of supply of housing is the profitability for landlords of renting their spaces as vacation rentals rather than permanent housing. This is especially true in the downtown market.

Community Recommendations

- Housing is, and needs to remain, one of the City of Missoula’s greatest focuses.
- The Downtown Master Plan should include plans to increase housing downtown but also to improve existing spaces.
- We need to increase legal and other services for tenants and consider creating laws and/or better enforcement of existing laws to protect the rights of tenants.
- Vacation rentals are affecting the supply of housing, especially downtown. The new Marriott may alleviate some of this, but the Master Plan should take into account this trend.
- Housing supply is an issue for people of almost all incomes. Increasing the supply of housing at all levels will alleviate some of the pressure on the lowest-income tenants.

Homelessness

Affordable housing would do a lot to alleviate homelessness in Missoula, but we also need to consider one of the biggest needs in our community, housing for people living with addiction. The most at-risk homeless Missoulians are those struggling with substance abuse. The first step in treatment is to help them off the street and into stable housing. Housing with supportive services would help this part of our population, alleviate pressure on social services and law enforcement, and start building a bridge with the most vulnerable parts of our community.

“The homelessness issue downtown is always brought up, it’s a big deal for everybody. It’s a little bit harder for Natives, though, because when we’re going downtown, it’s usually Natives that we’re seeing that are homeless. So [...] that’s our aunts, uncles, cousins [...] it almost makes us stay away, just because, you know, what the general mainstream community might see as a nuisance, we see as like, an absolute tragedy [...] But then the other thing, and I know that this has been said over and over, but we need a wet shelter. When you look at the clientele that are shelter resistant, it is disproportionately Native American, and so our community is the one who could actually benefit from the wet shelter the most.”

Community Recommendations

- We are a community that cares about each other and housing with supportive services needs to be part of our planning for the future.

Protect and Enhance Missoula’s Character

The second most common thread from the interviews was the phrase, “Don’t be Bozeman!” Everyone is afraid that Missoula will grow without direction and lose all of its character. They feel like Bozeman has become a sanitized place for the uber-rich and outsiders.

People love Missoula as it is and, as the mayor said, they want to, “protect and enhance” Missoula, not completely, as another said, “succumb to developers.”

In general:

- People I spoke with like the history and the character of the buildings, the mix of high-end and super-affordable shops.
- They repeatedly mentioned the Hip Strip as the way people would like retail to be north of the river.
- People want to shop with local businesses, but they said they would be okay with more expensive places if they were only a part of the mix and if they conformed to Missoula’s design aesthetic.
- People want diversity in buildings, retail, art, and parks.
- People want to celebrate the river and our parks and trail systems. They love pocket parks, dog-friendly spaces, and a bike and pedestrian friendly Downtown.

Third Spaces

Another common theme in all my interviews was the desire/need for third spaces. These are places separate from work or home where people can go for other social surroundings. A great example of a third space is the new library complex. It was repeatedly mentioned as something people are really excited about, but they see it as more of a space for children.

In the summer, people go outdoors. They hike, bike, float, and recreate in our great outdoor backyard. They also go to Caras Park, the Farmers Market, the People’s Market, Out to Lunch, and all the other great events that happen downtown. But then winter arrives and, suddenly, there is nowhere to go. People become isolated. They get depressed. Suicide rates go up. They start drinking and doing drugs. Partner and child abuse goes up. People feel “trapped” in their homes, which are often unsafe, unheated, and uncomfortable.

Every person I interviewed mentioned the need for a third space in Missoula that is open in all seasons. It is important to note that the features of this third space mentioned by low-income people were exactly the same as those mentioned by students, seniors, and higher-wealth individuals. This is another great example of how we have to start thinking in terms of our commonalities and not our differences.

Community Recommendations

- People had lots of ideas of what a third space would look like (see the detailed list later in this document) but there were a few consistencies:
- Food and Beverages—whether it is food trucks, a food court, or small restaurants, everyone mentioned a place where people can get a diverse selection of food of all price ranges. People are happy having high-end places if there can also be dollar coffee or tacos. They need some places where they can use food stamps.
- Retail—Again, people want a mix of high-end and affordable.
- Local—Everyone wants to give their money to local businesses. Many are willing to have a few chains if the majority of spaces are local.
- Incubator space—Missoula prides itself on its entrepreneurial spirit. The space should allow new businesses and artists to sell their wares.
- Visual and Performing Art—everyone wants a place to go and see art and performances.
- Child care—Parents need some relief in the winter.
- Play Areas—right now the only place to take small children is the train at the mall or Playland and McDonald’s. A third-space downtown would need to accommodate for a children’s play area.
- Indoor/Outdoor—people want to be warm in the winter but outside when the sun comes back. The perfect space would be able to accommodate for the different seasons.
- Free—It is important that people can use the space without having to spend any money.
- Parking—consistently, people mentioned having enough parking attached to this space that they could leave their car as they explored the rest of downtown. They see the space as the hub of Downtown.
- Teens—Interviewees consistently said that there is no place for Missoulians 12-21 to go. This third space should have options for them.

Visitability

Our aging population and people with disabilities are struggling with a host of visitability issues—sidewalks that are too slanted for wheelchairs to not topple over, a lack of curb cuts, stoplights that don’t give enough time to make it across the street safely, mounds of unplowed snow, older buildings impossible to enter in a wheelchair, even the new crossing buttons and posts are placed too far back from the curb and not aligned, and are wreaking havoc on people with visual disabilities.

We need to think beyond conforming to codes and instead build a downtown that actually works for everyone in every season. When we design sidewalks and outdoor cafes, we must think about what it would be like to navigate past tables and dog leashes when using a walker. When we add a trail, we must remember that older people have lost their hearing and can’t hear bikes coming up behind them, so we have to make separate safe spaces for walkers and bikers. Even the smallest curb or mis-angled curb cut is dangerous to people in wheelchairs.

Community Recommendations

- Visitability must be top of mind in every plan from infrastructure to retail. Every plan should have a specific consideration for level of visitability.
- Create a task force of people who will explore these issues deeper and make ongoing recommendations towards a Downtown Missoula Visitability Plan. This task force should be created to review the Downtown Master Plan and provide concrete suggestions for the design and implementation of the plan. Summit Independent Living, Missoula Aging Services, The Rural Institute at the University of Montana, and the Senior Center are great resources with incredibly thoughtful people who are ready to help. Every aspect of this plan should be reviewed by members of these organizations.

Racism & Homophobia

While many people think of Missoula as an inclusive community, there is still a lot of work to be done to address the racism and homophobia that is deeply ingrained in our culture. We have the biggest urban Native population in the state, and still most Natives do not feel comfortable or safe in Downtown Missoula.

In fact, every non-white, non-heterosexual person that I spoke with told me that they try not to go Downtown after 10pm and, especially, not on weekends. They are repeatedly harassed, followed, called names, and even physically threatened or beaten. Native people are watched and followed in stores and, at restaurants, they are usually seated at high-visibility tables so they can be watched by staff. When conflicts arise between people of color and Caucasians, business owners and law enforcement almost always put the blame on the people of color.

This is one of many similar stories that I heard in my interviews:

“I had some friends in town and they wanted to go downtown. My husband and I were like, mmm, we don’t really go downtown, but they really wanted to go so we did it. We chose the Union Club because we thought it was pretty chill and we could play pool. We were playing pool and then some Caucasian students wanted to play and we were cool and let them have the table but then they went away so we started playing again and the woman got really aggressive about it. The woman started being aggressive with my husband and so I was like, hey, that’s my husband, stop it. And she said, ‘stupid Indian.’ And I said, ‘what?’ And she said, ‘stupid Indian.’ And I said, ‘no, you don’t call me that.’ Then the bouncer came over and told us to leave or he would call the cops. I said, ‘you’re saying that like I’m afraid of the cops. I haven’t done anything wrong. If you are going to kick us out, kick them out too.’ Then the guys tried to start a fight with my husband. My husband turned his back so it would be clear he wasn’t the aggressor. And then the manager again threatened to call the cops. He got in our face. Then the cook grabbed the non-Native kids and took them out back and then made us wait until the police came. We said, ‘we didn’t do anything, we’re not the aggressors.’ They held us for 45

minutes. The police came and were like why are you still here? So now I don’t even go there. This is exactly why we don’t go downtown.”

I also heard from members of the LGBTQ community:

“You need to worry. Or like people are worried about their safety based on gender identity and sexuality. There’s certain point at night when I’m like, I’m not going to hold my girlfriend’s hand downtown anymore. People don’t get that. It happens. I hear about it often that people get harassed. People have a reason to, to feel unsafe and to question. I have plenty of examples of people getting mistreated or like hurt. Whether it’s verbally or physically because of their perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. It’s a community wide problem. So, I think visibility is important. But there was a community effort to put in a rainbow crosswalk, but it got vandalized. You know? Over and over and over again. Like it, I mean, it’s very contentious. There’s no gay bar. I mean, so I think it’s left people feeling like is there a space for us? There are queer spaces popping up because it’s like people are demanding to be recognized and seen so it’s like where people are like, ‘Okay. We’re going to take over this space. And this is like our party.’ One just happened this past weekend at Western Cider. And people drove down from all over Montana to come to this.”

Social change is difficult and takes time but the way to overcome racism and homophobia is to celebrate minorities and their culture and bring them into the mainstream. Missoula took a small step towards this with the Rainbow Crosswalk, and a giant step with the non-discrimination ordinance, but the Downtown Master Plan provides the perfect opportunity to take a hard look at how we can make everyone feel safe and included.

Community Recommendations

- First and foremost, there need to be numerous minority voices at the table. The City, MDA, and every other relevant organization needs to make a concerted effort to hire minorities and to include them on Boards and committees. One Native person is not enough. That one person will feel tokenized and overwhelmed by the weight of being asked to speak for an entire group of people. This needs to be a constant effort to represent all Missoulians.

“I would just make sure that they are heavily involved around that process. Not figureheads, not tokens, but heavily involved. But then also remember that even though CSKT [Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes] is right there, this traditionally was also Blackfeet Territory and Crow Territory.”

- Create a task force of diverse people who will explore these issues deeper and make ongoing recommendations toward a Downtown Missoula Diversity Plan. This task force should be created to review the Downtown Master Plan and provide concrete suggestions for the design and implementation of the plan.
- Create a tribal liaison for the City of Missoula like they have in Portland. (portlandoregon.gov/ogr/article/666865)
- There is definitely a need for more inclusive spaces where minorities feel safe. When considering third spaces, they should be inclusive and welcoming for all.
- A conscious effort to help create visibility and shift the culture for people of color and LGBTQ people is also important. This can be accomplished by:
 - » Creating City signage in both English and Salish (as they have done on the Flathead reservation.) This sends a clear signal that our entire community recognizes Missoula as aboriginal land and values the rich Native history of our community.
 - » Creating a yearly festival of Native culture in conjunction with our Native population. Much like the Celtic Festival, or the Roots Festival, this should be a yearly event where Downtown Missoula welcomes Native people from all over the country, as well as non-Native residents and tourists to learn about Native culture.
 - » Work with Kyiyo Pow Wow to welcome the thousands of people who come from all over Montana every year to participate. Help promote the pow wow to Missoulians.
 - » Create big and small art by local Native artists. The Missoula Art Museum and Public Art Committee are both behind this and are great resources for selecting the art and artists.

- » Create big and small art by and for the LGBTQ community. For example, trans artist Rae Senarighi was born and raised in Missoula and is now creating art on a national stage (raesenarighi.com/netflix-special). Again, MAM and the Public Art Committee would love to help here.
- » Erect public statues of Native figures in history.
- » In every place there is mention of Lewis and Clark, mention the Indigenous history of that place.
- » Create historical signage throughout Downtown Missoula about Native history and culture. The CSKT cultural committee is a great resource. Also, Downtown company Historical Research Associates could be of help.

Safety

Drinking

Downtown Missoula’s culture of drinking adds to the problem of racism and homophobia but affects all segments of the population and is one of the main issues of safety for everyone in Downtown Missoula. Drunk people, mostly students, repeatedly throw racial and homophobic slurs at people, vandalize art and other public property, and even commit acts of violence. Residents of Downtown Missoula told me that they have to deal with loud, obnoxious drunk people smashing bottles, fighting in the streets and alleys, throwing up, breaking things, and driving drunk. Older people told me that they usually aren’t out at bar times but are uncomfortable being downtown after they go to the Children’s Theater or the Symphony or on Grizzly football days when the crowd spills over to downtown.

Community Recommendations

- Alternative spaces—the third space mentioned above would go a long way towards changing the culture of downtown as bars only. Every non-alcohol focused space that comes to downtown gives people options other than drinking.
- Alleys—revamping alleys to be a vibrant part of downtown with spaces other than bars, will help reduce some of the fighting and vomiting that

occurs there now.

- Hydration Stations—a few people mentioned seeing these in other cities where people provide water and Gatorade for people who are walking between bars. The idea is to keep people from becoming too drunk and/or to provide another space for them to go where they can drink water, not alcohol. It seems that alternative spaces, might solve some of this.
- Law Enforcement—people said that they know the police are stretched but think that officers on patrol might help curb some of the bad behavior.

Lighting

Almost everyone I spoke to asked for more lighting downtown. Older people said they don't stay Downtown after dark because it is hard to see. People say better lighting, especially in the alleys will help them feel safer.

Landscaping

People would like tree canopies, which studies have shown, make people calmer. They would also like more open design and landscaping to restrict hidden areas where dangerous things happen.

“Crime prevention design is using landscaping to make our community safer. That’s where you keep bushes trimmed back and how you build your walls so people can’t have hidey holes, for people to do unpleasant behaviors. And so really think about that design to make it very open design and there’s all kinds of models out there for that.”

Police Presence

Many people asked for a greater police presence downtown. This would help the following areas:

- Help with drunk and disorderly people
- Make seniors feel more comfortable
- Make Kiwanis Park safer
- Reduce instances of harassment for people in the LGBTQ community and people of color

Child Care

Child care is almost as difficult to find in Missoula as housing. And infant care is nearly impossible. So many families are unable to find good-paying jobs, engage in public process, have social outlets, go to school, etc. because they cannot find and/or afford child care. This is true across socioeconomic lines.

“You know, another thing that we would be remiss if we didn’t bring up for young families is child care. After housing, child care is the next biggest thing. We hear about a lot of people are putting off having kids, because child care is so expensive, and they’ve heard from their friends, and so they just don’t do it. So, it’s like putting off buying a house and then putting off child care.”

By including options and spaces for child care in our planning, we will open up opportunities for all Missoula families.

Community Recommendations

While everyone mentioned childcare as a problem, the only recommendations to resolve the problem were:

- Transportation—people believe that better transportation options will open up options for child care.
- Include child care facilities in public spaces

Transportation

When Mountain Line began offering free fares, it changed the lives of many Missoulians. Investing in our transportation system seems to be universally recognized as a key to addressing a host of issues within the city. Everyone agrees that Mountain Line is doing an amazing job with the resources they have. Again, community members recognize that their recommendations for transportation are not easy and take funding that is not currently available. Still, they see the possibilities that open up for Missoula with a more robust transit system.

I learned that many Missoulians lives are completely dictated by the availability of public transportation.

A single mom with limited income has a small geographical area in which they have to maneuver. Child care and transportation go hand in hand in creating a geographical barrier.

“A lot of moms want to put their kid in daycare but haven’t found one yet or are on the waiting list. And they can’t use public transportation to go look at the daycares so then they are stuck looking in their surrounding areas for jobs and then they don’t qualify or the gas station is night shift only that’s even secluded. When you can secure child care and you have reliable transportation, you open up your opportunity to look in all of Missoula. If you have child care and transportation down, you’re pretty much set to go beyond your barriers.”

Seniors need parking near their destination, especially in winter when parking lots and sidewalks are icy. However, the focus group at the Senior Center told me that if there was a central, protected (covered) parking lot where people could park and then take a reliable, shuttle that ran every 15 minutes between key places like the Senior Center, Missoula Aging Services, Currents, Providence Hospital/ Western Montana Clinic, and downtown (banks and shopping), that many people would be happy to not drive downtown.

In terms of Mountain Line, many older Missoulians are intimidated by taking the bus. Missoula Aging Services is trying to work with Mountain Line to create a program where volunteer mentors could teach people how to ride the bus and navigate the different routes. They also need a backup plan if things change. Doctor’s appointments are the main destination that seniors worry about. It’s hard to guess how long appointments will take and they often change at the last minute. Fear of being stranded is really high.

Most Missoulians I spoke with would prefer to take public transportation if it was more available. Many people don’t ever come Downtown because they don’t have a car or because they fear that parking is too difficult. They said they would use public transportation but:

- It is not available on Sunday, which is the day they would have time to go Downtown.
- It does not run late so they can’t go after work
- It comes too infrequently. If you miss your bus, you have to wait an hour for the next one.

Downtown workers are also frustrated by the same issues above. In fact, almost everyone I spoke with suggested that they would go downtown with more frequency if riding the bus or trolley was easier. And, almost everyone mentioned more consistent transportation as one of their top three wishes for Downtown Missoula and Missoula in general. When I asked people what Downtown Missoula would look like if they waved their magic wand, many people said an extreme, high-efficient transportation system with buses, trolleys, trains, or shuttles.

The new system of busses only stopping at the transfer station downtown has really affected people with disabilities. It is really hard if you are using a walker, for example, to navigate Downtown Missoula with only one bus stop.

For many, the solution to parking is not having to drive. Designated bike lanes were high on the list for many but for those who just don’t have the time to bike or walk, consistent (every 15 minutes), reliable transportation that runs at all hours was a big desire.

Community Recommendations

- Make transportation options and funding of transportation options a key part of the Downtown Master Plan. Finding ways to expand and improve public transit in Missoula will be a first step in solving many issues including but not limited to:
 - » Parking
 - » Isolation
 - » Lack of job opportunities
 - » Lack of child care opportunities
 - » Segregation of populations
 - » Ease of access for our aging population
 - » Visitability for all of Missoula
 - » Attractiveness to potential employers moving to Missoula
 - » Attractiveness to tourists

Conclusion

Here's the good news: Missoulians love Missoula. We love the sense of community and caring that crosses all demographics. We love the green spaces and the local retailers and artists. We love the Farmers Market and all the events at Caras Park. We want art and music in every form and in every place. We love Missoula—so much so that the biggest fear is that Missoula will lose its character.

Even though we have issues with diversity, we have a concerted community desire to make it a part of our fabric. We have people who rarely or never come downtown but who said they would be open to it if transportation was easier and there were more places for them to go. We have concerns about safety and lighting, and child care and housing but we all want a Missoula where everyone is safe, healthy, and cared for.

If the voices of the people I interviewed are heard and we prove that they matter, we will create a master plan that makes Missoula even more special for all of us.

Method

Between the months of October and March, I interviewed over 250 Missoulians either individually or in focus groups. I asked six questions:

1. What are the barriers to participating in public processes in Missoula?
2. Beyond that are there any specific barriers relating to the Downtown Master Plan?
3. How could these barriers be overcome?
4. What is currently working about Downtown Missoula?
5. What is currently not working about Downtown Missoula?
6. If you had a magic wand and waved it, what would your perfect Downtown Missoula look like?

I contacted directors of over 30 groups working with a wide array of Missoulians and asked if they could help me put together focus groups. Sometimes they could. Other times they were too busy and asked if I could meet with them and/or their teams. In these cases, they gave me their personal feedback as well as what information they could about the populations they serve.

Groups Interviewed

- ASUM Renter Center
- City of Missoula—Office of Housing and Community Development
- Families First Children’s Museum Missoula
- Food Bank
- Forward Montana
- Hip Strip Business Owners
- Home Resource
- Homeword
- Housing Group
- Humane Society of Western Montana
- Jeannette Rankin Peace Center
- Missoula Aging Services
- Missoula Art Museum
- Missoula County Public Schools
- Missoula Housing Authority
- Missoula Interfaith Collaborative

- Missoula Invest Health/Missoula County Health Department
- Missoula Parks and Recreation
- Missoula Urban Indian Health Center
- Montana Representative House District 95
- Mountain Home
- Mountain Line
- Native Community Leader Focus Group
- Neighborworks Montana
- North Missoula Community Development Corporation
- Payne Native American Center/UM native focus group
- Public Arts Committee
- Senior Center
- SpectrUM Discovery Center
- Summit Independent Living
- YWCA

I interviewed groups both before and after the week of design workshops. Those interviewed after had specific comments about the Downtown Master Plan process, which are included in this final report.

The ideas and findings in this report do not represent my personal opinion or that of Six Pony Hitch. In many cases, the opinions presented do not accurately represent what is actually occurring but rather what people interviewed perceive to be occurring. It is important not to dismiss erroneous perceptions but to examine them as opportunities to improve processes and/or communication.

Barriers to Engagement in Public Process

Individual Situations

- People don't know why it matters.
- People don't feel like they will be heard and/or their voices don't matter.
- Even if they are heard, they don't feel like their needs/opinions will be considered.
- Most events are held in places where people feel uncomfortable (the DoubleTree was cited multiple times).
- Child care is difficult to find.
- Events are usually during working hours or when people are just getting off work.
- People are working multiple jobs, possibly trying to attend many other events, and have limited time.
- Some people have so many meetings already, they can't make it to them all.
- Students are only here for a portion of the year.
- People aren't always interested in what is being discussed.
- Most of the people who come are upset, having opinions far to one side or another.
- People don't feel like they are leaders or volunteers—they need to be invited to participate.
- Being engaged requires a lot of effort.
- It's hard to do something new.
- In winter, people don't want to deal with the dark, cold, and ice.
- There are too many meetings for other things going on.

Marginalization/Intimidation

- People are intimidated by the government system and unsure if they will understand everything being discussed (bureaucratic, confusing, and foreign jargon).
- People feel like their voice isn't being heard.
- People don't trust the process.
- Many groups don't feel like they are invited to a seat at the table or are even consulted, and if they are, that it is as an afterthought.

- It can feel like it's always the same groups or individuals attending these meetings and only their input is recognized, not a true reflection of the whole community.
- People are unsure of how casual or formal to dress for these events in order to be taken seriously.
- Minority populations are disenfranchised and are less likely to participate.
- People don't feel invited to the discussion.
- Groups are feeling marginalized by processes because their ideas and goals don't exactly fit what's feasible or possible.
- People feel like development is happening without their input.
- The thought of going to the government when you need help with a problem is not something that young people have grown up thinking.
- Young people feel that what is being discussed at city council meetings doesn't pertain to them.
- People don't feel like their voice is strong enough.
- It can be hard to get noticed in meetings.
- People aren't comfortable going to meetings.
 - » There is an implied hierarchy and a need to be outgoing to speak up.
 - » When people are uncomfortable, they won't give real feedback.

Housing

- People are nervous to talk about housing.
- They are afraid of retribution from their landlords, property managers, and/or neighbors if they tell the truth of their conditions:
 - » Their living conditions don't meet health standards.
 - » Their neighbors are using drugs or even dealing drugs.

Aging Population Specifics

- They don't know that they can influence outcomes—they've been around longer so are even more convinced they don't have a voice.
- Access to meetings is hard—they need to be held in accessible buildings (easy parking, no stairs, room for walkers and wheelchairs).
- Evening meetings are hard.
- It's easier for them to come for a meal and then stay for an activity.
- The Senior Center is a social network, which is hard to interrupt.
- It's hard to gather a group to talk about a process.
- Seniors have more parking needs, especially in winter.
- Computer surveys don't work for seniors.
- Seniors often have hearing issues—it's necessary to engage with them in small groups.
- Social media and digital doesn't work for seniors.
- They feel removed in general—if they've never been involved in planning, they don't know they belong.
- They are afraid they won't have anything to say.
- They are afraid others will know more than them.
- They are not familiar with the process.

Communication

- People don't know when and where meetings are happening.
- There is no infrastructure for people to know how to engage effectively.
- There is no central location to get information.
- People don't know who plays what role and where to jump in—there are lots of groups (Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Association, etc.) involved, and it's hard to know who does what.
- People don't know how to address barriers.
 - » When someone encounters a barrier, they reach out to a city department or downtown organization but are often told "it's not my responsibility" and get the run-around.

- » There is confusion among downtown entities as to who handles what sort of issues and how changes need to be addressed.
- There is disconnect between people and what they need to understand in order to participate (e.g. clear and simple information on budget spending).
- There is a lack of access to information and a lack of education on how to access it.
- If you don't go downtown or participate in downtown groups, it is hard to get information on what downtown offers.
- No compelling reason to go downtown has been offered.
- People's perceptions of how policy works stops them from acting—some think they shouldn't contribute because the policy is already done and written, which isn't the case. Make sure the correct information is out there.

Physical Difficulties

- Seating can be uncomfortable for long periods of time (different sizes and abilities).
- Transportation to and from meetings for people without vehicles is difficult (hours and frequency of bus service).
- Parking at meeting locations can be difficult.

Potential Solutions to Engagement Barriers

- Work with groups already doing the work—Missoula Interfaith Collaborative consistently comes up.
 - » Host events at organizations—for example, Mountain Home staff will host events at the facility, and residents will participate.
 - ◊ When they host events, it is typically run with staff and clients going into the meeting area to talk about what they hope to get out of it, breaking off into small groups, then coming back as a team 2–3 weeks later to talk about how it was and what their role as a group is to plan accordingly on what needs to happen next.
- Bring more diversity to the table. There needs to be more diverse representation in all City and government groups.
- Offer incentives.
- Provide child care.
- Coordinate carpooling.
- Improve Mountain Line service.
 - » More bus lines
 - » Consistent service (every 15 minutes)
 - » Later night service
 - » Service on weekends
 - » Peer-to-peer transit training, especially for seniors
- Hold regular open meetings with policy makers in order to foster infrastructure change.
- Get more neighborhood watches and councils involved.
- Put a lot of work into the current plan, so we don't have to redo it in five years.
- Personalize policy changes to make them more real.
- Reach out to groups and ask them to send out information.
- Make meetings consistent (e.g. every Thursday at a “third place”).
- Have realistic goals.
- Host pop-up design labs at markets and public events year-round, allowing people to come and go as they please.
- Meet in comfortable, easy places for public engagement.
- Hold meetings for a specific project.
- Provide information through nontraditional allies, such as school resource rooms.
- Have student positions or young committee members/delegates (e.g. the Election Advisory Committee).
- Get young people involved in city and council election outreach.
 - » This could be participating in voter guides and candidate forms.
 - » When attention is turned to these types of events, it's important to get people involved and then encourage them afterwards to stay involved, possibly at a different level.
- Have the mayor or elected officials sit in on student council meetings to make young people feel like they are being heard.
- Have a table at places like on campus or at the food bank to allow for important relationship building within the community and open-ended conversations.
- Ask people to participate—some people just don't do it because they haven't been asked.

General Engagement

- Focus on getting people involved when interest in politics is high (around elections, voting periods).
- Provide information or trainings to help people feel more comfortable speaking in public.
- Have a design process that includes authentic decision making.
- To empower Missoulians, build a stronger civil sector that actually has power.
- Identify people who already have a self-interest or a stake in downtown and conduct engagement with them, which is low-hanging fruit for increasing involvement.
- Provide a clear process for people to see their efforts, demonstrate to them that what they say matters and can create change.

- Work with Forward Montana to provide young people with information and tools in order for them to feel comfortable speaking in front of others at meetings.
 - » Young people are concerned with looking foolish on a public stage, but local government training programs like what City Council members are working on, help give them a voice.
 - » Missoula has a weird and vibrant culture, a lot because of the young people that live here, which has helped create access points for hearing from young people and students.
- Whenever possible, let people know about events by word-of-mouth because it builds trust.
- Go through established networks (e.g. Interfaith Collaborative, Food Bank, Urban Indian Health Center, etc.).
- Distribute flyers in neighborhoods you want to reach with specific event information:
 - » Who the event is for
 - » Why it matters
 - » Transportation options
 - » Parking information
 - » Childcare options
 - » Venue
- Print surveys on paper so people can give written answers.
- Go table to table and help fill out forms at the Senior Center so participants can hear and understand.
- Engage people through recreation—use the wide range of people who engage with parks and recreation for outreach.
- Look at states that have the greatest poverty and what they are doing (e.g. Louisiana or Mississippi).
- Be more aware of broader context (e.g. open space may be contrary to affordable housing).
- Be more culturally sensitive with language:
 - » Add Spanish to signage.
 - » Add Salish to signage.
 - » Cast a wider net for feedback when you advertise through social media (not everyone has computers, but most everyone has a phone).
 - » Canvassing is great because it takes the message to the people and lets them know it's important that they comment – at least people have been asked.
 - » Mailers can get people's attention.

Event Planning

- Hold events at places where people already are (e.g. the Food Bank, schools, the art museum, or community centers).
- Provide childcare.
- Offer incentives for attendees (e.g. free food, parking vouchers, MDA gift cards, Secret Seconds gift cards, etc.).
- Make events accessible for all (including disabled and elderly) in all spaces.
 - » Hold events during public transportation hours.
 - » Provide transportation buddies to help people take transit.
 - » Hold events on weekends when there is more likelihood of time and childcare.
 - » Hold events later in the morning so people with disabilities have time to get there.
 - » Hold events between 10:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., which is the best time for seniors.
- Have simple and clear wins/actions that happen quickly and are visible to help build trust and engagement.

Event Outreach

- Always start with why people’s voices matter.
- Always make the goal of the event clear.
- Make personal invitations and have one-on-one interactions.
 - » Put people on Mountain Line buses with iPads.
 - » Go to the Senior Center and go table to table.
 - » Hold focus groups and/or multiple meetings rather than one big meeting.
- Relate the event to something the community already likes (e.g. Out to Lunch).
- Provide a wide range of ways for people to provide feedback (e.g. online surveys, notecards to fill out, mailers, door-to-door engagement).
- Promote the event on social media (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter) but not ONLY on social media.
- Encourage people to bring others with them to events.
- Work with minority groups to develop interest and encourage attendance.
- Send information to people at home with a way to reply easily.
- Raise awareness that students are a part of the community and, though there’s turnover with individuals, students will always be a part of the population so their voice is important.
 - » Put posters up in residence halls.
 - » Place articles in the UM newsletter.
 - » Share through social media channels.
 - » Pay students for their time, or offer free food.
 - » Offer extra credit through community planning or sociology classes.
 - » Involve students in organizing the process.
- Outline what will be discussed in layman’s terms.
- Allow people to provide feedback electronically at different agencies and remotely (similar to Senior Center request for a paper survey).
- Encourage elected officials (mayor, etc.) to interact with the community at events.

At the Event

- Welcome everyone when they walk in the door.
- Make it easy to understand where to go and what to do.
- Use name tags, which are very important as an equalizer.
- Make time for introductions.
- Have small group or partner options.
- Make sure every voice is heard.
- Establish an expectation of brevity so everyone can provide input instead of a few who monopolize the conversation.
- Engage people as leaders and decision makers through proper infrastructure.
- Do not use jargon.
- Do not make long presentations.
- Do not approach presentations academically, which is not comfortable or familiar to people.
- Take metrics on what populations are represented so you can reach out to those that are not.

Event Follow Up

- Follow-up with attendee input afterward.
- Show people the next step in the process, so they see where their input is going.
- Make all information transparent and public.

Downtown

Reasons to go downtown

- Dine out at the great diversity of restaurants
- Visit the markets or events
- Go shopping
- See a show at the Wilma or the Roxy
- Meet someone
- Socialize, mostly in summer
- People watch

Things people like about downtown

People love that downtown is walkable. They are hungry for third places and appreciate the ones that exist.

- Places
 - » New library complex
 - » Caras Park and the X's in general as gathering spaces
 - » Art Museum
 - » Carousel
 - » Dragon's Hollow
 - » Brennan's Wave
 - » Skate park
 - » The new Saw Mill development
 - » Many people like the new Marriott downtown.
 - ◇ They see it as bringing in a lot of retail and activity to downtown.
 - ◇ Since the building was abandoned for so long and nothing was working, it's nice to see something there.
 - » Everyone loves the Farmers Market, young and old alike (veggies are more expensive, but activities are enjoyable).
 - » ROAM is going to keep downtown active in terms of the younger generation being there and going in the shops/cafes.
- Cultural
 - » Diversity—second most mentioned thing. However, minorities do not share this opinion.
 - » Welcoming community. Citizens strongly identify with Missoula.
 - » Welcoming to refugees
- Family-friendly
- Empower Montana is doing good work.
- Liberal-leaning community
- Lots of Character
- Culture of caring
- Green Spaces
 - » People feel like ROAM might make Kiwanis Park safer.
 - » Everyone loves the river trails—although they want the trails to connect all the way.
- Events
 - » Free events like Sunday Streets, First Friday, First Night, Out to Lunch, Parade of Lights, Downtown Tonight, Celtic Fest and events at Caras Park are hugely popular.
- Shopping/Restaurants/Entertainment
 - » Farmers Market
 - » People's Market
 - » Diversity of restaurant options
 - » Shopping on the Hip Strip
 - ◇ People like that it is still funky
 - ◇ Affordable
 - ◇ Friendly
 - ◇ Can talk to the owners
 - ◇ Love the sense of community
 - ◇ More diverse mix of customers
 - ◇ Not as many complaints about parking
- Senior Center
 - » Members of the Senior Center love their parking lot and find the center to be a great hub
 - » Members of the Senior Center also really enjoy:
 - ◇ The Missoula Symphony especially the concert at the park
 - ◇ The Children's Theater which is easily accessible

- Bike/Walk
 - » Bike lanes are loved (but they could be improved in certain areas).
 - » The streets are pedestrian friendly but could be more so.
- Parking
 - » New meters are nice in that you can pay from your phone.
- Art
 - » There is a good representation of artwork (through sculptures, galleries, street art) that adds to the visual character.
 - » People love the rainbow sidewalk and want more projects like this
 - » There is strong support of the local artist community.
 - » There is a great art scene
 - » The Art Museum is a big draw.
 - » Art programs are always full—there is big interest.
 - ◇ The Missoula Art Museum does teen Wednesday night classes.
 - ◇ Public television does a lot for kids.
 - ◇ Public Arts does camps for kids up to 16.
 - ◇ Fine arts studio takes in a couple of kids—private art classes are available.
 - » Artists have lots of opportunities.
 - » The community values art and artists.
 - » Murals are making alleys more beautiful.
- Transportation
 - » Fare-free bus service is the number one favorite thing.
 - » Everyone loves the lines that come every 15 minutes.
- Social
 - » Panhandling, or aggressive panhandling, has been reduced.
 - » There is a healthy non-profit sector.
- History
 - » Old architecture and historic buildings are valued by all.
- Other
 - » People love the flags.
 - » Blinking crosswalk lights are helpful.
 - » The City Council academy is well-loved but not well-known.
 - » Mayor Engen does a great job of being everywhere and is really good at keeping open-ended conversations with citizens.
- Students Love
 - » Sunbathing by the river
 - » Logjam concerts
 - » Mo Club
 - » Outdoor sports (rock climbing and paddleboarding)
 - » Brennan’s Wave
 - » Roxy
 - » Five on Black

Things people would like to improve about downtown

- Don't have enough people from different minority classes working for the city
- Don't have enough minority representation in government, on boards, MDA, business groups
- Safety
 - » Gays and lesbians are harassed
 - » Native people are harassed
 - » Art is vandalized
 - » Native people are treated poorly in expensive shops, so they prefer to shop at stores on Reserve.
 - » Drug activity by Kiwanis Park
 - » Not safe to send kids out on their own
 - » Segregation and racist and homophobic attacks at night, mostly by drunk people
 - » Loud, especially on the weekends, with drunk people thinking it's ok to drive or smash bottles
 - » Older people won't go downtown after dark
 - » Bicycles on the sidewalk are a big issue for seniors
 - » Seniors need sidewalks and trails with separate pedestrian and bike lanes. You lose hearing and peripheral vision as you age. Many stop walking the river trail because of safety issues. Or they only walk if they walk in groups for safety.
 - ◇ Too dark, not enough lighting
 - ◇ Bar crowd is aggressive
 - » Alt-right groups have been appearing.
 - » Residents around The Palace don't always feel safe around their building.
 - » Alleys aren't friendly.
- Racism/Homophobia
 - » Native people are followed and watched in retail stores.
 - » Native people are openly harassed at all times of the day but especially at night.
 - » White people, usually students, start trouble with Native people, and then business owners often blame the Native people, kick them out of establishments, and call the police. The white instigators usually are not held responsible.
 - » Native people are often carefully seated in restaurants and bars so that they can be watched (it is assumed they will not pay their bill).
 - » Missoula's Native population is rarely represented on boards, associations, government, or other decision-making bodies.
 - » Property Management Companies often demand larger deposits from Native people and are less responsive to their requests for maintenance.
- Housing
 - » Not affordable, doesn't reflect the cost of living and wages
 - » There is a laundry list of problems with landlords:
 - ◇ Landlords/property managers won't do maintenance and usually retaliate when asked to do so.
 - ◇ Landlords/property managers don't provide heat and usually retaliate when asked to do so.
 - ◇ Landlords/property managers put in baseboard heating which makes electric bills prohibitively high.
 - ◇ Landlords/property managers retaliate if tenants complain about anything, including neighbors who are cooking meth.
 - ◇ Property management companies often discriminate against minorities, especially our native population.
 - » There is no compensation or replacement when affordable housing is torn down and new developments are built (e.g. new library complex).

- » Affordable housing is limited, difficult to find, and the application process is costly.
- » In addition, there is a convoluted process to be selected for affordable housing (coordinated entry system).
- » Many landlords don't allow pets, even therapy animals, and there are expensive non-refundable deposits for them.
- » Some landlords/property managers change pet policies on current tenants so they have to give up their pets to shelters.
- » A lot of empty buildings or lots are going unused for housing (private property issues or cost of property).
- » It's expensive and time intensive for non-profits to plan affordable housing (testing and assessments).
- » Children are greatly affected by their home situation, seen specifically at school:
 - ◊ If where they live is run-down, no heating, and/or no electricity, they don't come to school to learn necessarily. They'll come to get a meal, get warm and maybe clean up in the restroom.
- » Many buildings don't have elevators or escalators (inaccessible for people to live or visit).
- » Housing is not close to services (laundry mats, day cares, hospitals, schools).
- » The current wait for affordable housing is 4-8 years.
- » Housing isn't affordable, and students are getting priced out of the University district.
- » Some mixed-use buildings are funky and sketchy.
- » Safe communities are important. They need to be structurally sound (currently stairs are unsteady, electrical is dangerous). Laundry and utilities should be included in rent. Appliances should work. Heat is currently expensive and not adequate.
- » Often times there is a stress to just sign a lease if something is available.
- » Application fees hurt young people.
- » Permitting is too hard, too expensive.
- » Putting in sewer and water is expensive.
- » Parking and park requirements are also difficult.
- » Affordable housing is important, but so is housing at all levels. It's good to have a mix of incomes in every neighborhood.
- » "Housing studies are required for new projects but there is no capacity for them and they are unnecessary. We know what the issues are."
- » Should be able to renovate existing buildings (push back from owners on this)—particularly the units above The Rhino and Missoula Club
- » Finding space downtown for housing—constrained by where you could put housing
- » Broadway corridor has a lot of opportunities for housing.
 - ◊ West Broadway towards Russell, old motels are prime places for housing but the land is very expensive
 - ◊ Not so much room in the east, as Missoula College takes up a lot of space
- » Airbnb's are typically housing that people aren't living in anyways, because they are too expensive to rent.
 - ◊ If lots of places downtown, like over The Rhino and Missoula Club, turn into Airbnb's, that could create a housing issue downtown.
- » Owners of existing housing don't want to spend money to restore.
- » Land costs are too high for development projects even by non-profits.
- » There's a limited number of resources for non-profits.
- » Construction costs are really high.
- » The design guideline process is lengthy and not applicable to real-life situations (hinder building of affordable housing by trying to limit buildings like the Verizon building)—Title 20
- » Too many strings involved in acquiring federal dollars for projects

- Parking
 - » Parking is limited and expensive.
 - » People want to be able to park right in front of their destination.
 - » Road maintenance makes it difficult to get around, especially in winter without 4-wheel-drive.
 - » There are not enough handicapped spaces (not to code).
 - » Snow is plowed into handicapped spaces.
 - » Students
 - ◇ Parking on campus is expensive and restrictive.
 - ◇ It is difficult to find spots.
 - » Permit parking restrictions on residential streets around campus are problematic. They stay empty throughout the day, and you can't pay to park there.
 - » Current Parking meters/stations are really hard for the aging population. They find it confusing and difficult. They are intimidated to try the app.
 - » People park on the Hip Strip for free and then go downtown BUT if the Hip Strip is metered, it will just move parking into the neighborhoods. Need another solution.
 - » Seniors would rather not drive downtown. Intimidated by parking and traffic.
 - » Seniors are afraid of parking garages, pillars, spaces too close together, hard to see, bad lighting, no elevators.
- Traffic
 - » So many construction projects at once make it difficult to commute (traffic increasing).
 - » Bikers and pedestrians are afraid of big trucks and aggressive drivers.
 - » It's dangerous how bike lanes intermix with traffic in some areas.
 - » Pedestrian safety is an issue, not looking before crossing the street.
- Transportation
 - » Transfers by bus can take a long time as well as travel times in general.
 - » Bus system has improved but needs to have more stops downtown and go more frequently.
 - » There is not enough money to support more frequent bus routes.
 - » Bus service in certain areas is challenging.
 - » The transfer station can sometimes feel dangerous, not welcoming.
 - » There is not enough cover or room to sit at most bus stops.
 - » Almost all Mountain Line stops downtown were eliminated, except the transfer station. This makes it difficult for anyone who wants to access downtown but can't walk long distances. People using walkers have an especially difficult time.
 - » Many people don't even know what is downtown because they find it too hard to get there.
 - » Buses take too long and are not frequent enough.
 - » Seniors need more frequent routes—last minute doctor appointments, etc.
- Plowing
 - » Curb cuts are not plowed.
 - » Snow is plowed into curb cuts.
 - » Snow is plowed into accessible parking spaces.
 - » Snow is plowed into the center of the street making giant mounds that cannot be crossed by wheelchairs, walkers, etc.
- Accessibility Issues
 - » New crossing buttons and posts are too far back from the curb and not aligned, which throws off orientation for people with visual disabilities.
 - » Some curb cuts are not compliant. You have to back up so you don't flip in a wheelchair.
 - » Jury boxes at the courthouses are inaccessible for people in chairs.

- » Roundabouts are unsafe for pedestrians with visual disabilities and guide animals, they get their cues from cars starting and stopping, which is harder to identify at roundabouts.
- » Crosswalk timings are bad.
- » There are no curb cut near Elks Club, El Cazador, etc.
- » Curb cuts get really bad after you get past the Poverello Center.
- » Access to the Farmers Market under the Higgins bridge and to Caras Park is difficult, and will be made more difficult with the elimination of stairs that will not be replaced with a ramp or elevator.
- » Potholes
- » Wavy roads (crown of roads too steep)
- » Sidewalks near the Poverello Center are so slanted that someone in a wheelchair can't use them.
- » Merchants having sandwich boards, wares or tables outside on the sidewalk can block access for disabled people.
- » Stairs from the bridge are dangerous for service animals.
- » Outdoor seating blocks safe paths for disabled people.
- » The curb on Front Street by the Elks Club has no curb cut because of the shooting range in the basement. The curb is too high.
- » The shoe scraper outside the front door of City Council Chambers should be removed. The door is not reachable with it bolted down on the sidewalk
- » There needs to be better signage (farther in advance) for which lane you can turn left or go straight on Higgins from Broadway to Railroad (where it's been decreased to one lane). There is a similar problem on Orange Street.
- » It is hard to get to the crosswalk button on West Broadway and California because the light pole is raised up; it's hard to reach.
- » "There should be accessible bus shelters so folks with mobility challenges do not have to wait for the bus in inclement conditions. Traditional installs do not have enough clearance between the front of the bus shelter and the curb (usually the minimum 36 inches). This causes an issue where an individual in a walker or wheelchair can dump a wheel off the curb trying to get into the bus shelter. Such an event would dump them INTO traffic. Rotating the shelter 90 degrees and potentially adding a parabolic safety mirror can resolve this access issue."
- » "There needs to be a partnering program to teach older adults how to utilize transportation services (all kinds). This is particularly important for those individuals that may have recently lost their capacity to drive. The Senior Center operates a nutritional program that serves lunch. Many of the participants drive. They come for a healthful meal as well as socialization. If they lose their capacity to drive, they lose the meal and the socialization. We need early intervention to ensure members of the community become familiar with transportation options—preferably before they are needed."
- » Access to services: "The Community Center discussion has expanded to identify a network of neighborhood centers with a central hub at McCormick Park. This fits the Missoula Senior Center model well. If participants can feel comfortable coming to a neighborhood facility that is in a network with others it will expand their opportunities. This is an issue that spans age groups. We need a community structure that supports this network and the ability to move between the facilities. Note that many of these neighborhood community centers or service centers (e.g. Library) already reside in the Downtown Planning Area or are adjacent to it."
- » Transportation options: "We need to continue to expand transportation options that offer an alternative to an individual owning their own vehicle for in-town services. Expanding the availability of buses and shortening the interval between buses are key. I became a dedicated user of the bus system when it went to a

15-minute interval in my neighborhood. I no longer had to think about scheduling—it gives me much more flexibility. I would also like to see an Uber- or Lyft-like service for seniors or individuals who have mobility challenges. Other communities I am familiar with have county or city dedicated services that can be scheduled. We have the bus services, but I am more familiar with accessible vans being used for this type of service where the fee is subsidized. Just need more creativity in connecting people with services and places. All of this helps to counter social isolation. We need to make it almost as easy (or easier) than using your own vehicle.”

- » Sidewalk curbs (monolithic curbside sidewalks – bad year-round, not ADA accessible)
- » Time allowed to cross the street is way too short for disabled and older adults.
- » Crossings are not well-lit.
- Communication
 - » Communication between downtown and Hip Strip could be better.
- Cultural
 - » There is no reference to aboriginal land downtown.
 - » There is a lack of native presence in committees and leadership organizations.
 - » People don’t know about the native cultures—no information is available.
- Infrastructure
 - » There is no bridge between UM and Missoula college, so it takes a long time to travel between them.
 - » Icicles on Orange Street tunnel are large and dangerous to cars and pedestrians.
 - » No third places—these are so crucial in the winter.
 - » Cement centers with reflectors on the North side are dangerous because there’s not enough room for a car and bike.
 - » Caras Park pavilion needs to be replaced, pavers are about to be replaced, don’t have the right electrical cords for events, bathrooms are inadequate.
- Art
 - » There is no housing for artists.
 - » It’s difficult to get studio space.
 - » There is no place for artists to sell their work except high-end galleries or Made Fair.
 - » First Fridays
 - ◇ They have become difficult to navigate. People, especially tourists, don’t know where to go.
 - ◇ The amount and quality of food has decreased.
 - ◇ Space
 - ◇ Artists are unsure where to begin or how to find spaces to show their art.
 - ◇ Some locations are totally unknown or don’t seem accessible to the public (i.e. venue down alley by Sushi Hana).
 - ◇ Artists (particularly new ones) have a hard time finding accessible, affordable space.
 - » Youth
 - ◇ Need more programs because current ones are full
 - ◇ Not a lot of age-appropriate shows for young children
 - ◇ Not possible for parents to drop off kids because of times of classes and camps
 - » There needs to be better integration for the whole artist community (dance, music, painting)
 - » There is no central way for artists to discover these spaces and not a lot of communication between arts organizations.
 - » There is no “Welcome to Missoula” sign—another good opportunity for artist involvement.
- Youth
 - » There is nothing for kids ages 12-21 to do.
- Parks
 - » Need to focus on more than just Caras, look at entire string of parks
 - » Have been trying to get 12- to 14-foot esplanade along the river, something like how Portland used to feel

- » Idea for Caras to think more of design at Splash, only frozen, when new pavilion is up, put a sliding feature in and an entrance through the carousel. Possibility for a “frozen river” of ice for people to skate on
- » Diversity at Splash
- » Tree canopy has a positive effect on health and crime
- » Want to put a row of exercise equipment up along the river on the east side of Bess Reed Park, so people can do a circuit and walk the trail system (discussed with Innovate UM). Trying to create some of these spaces out by Fort Missoula.
- » Having parks brings people closer together, makes them neighbors and in turn makes areas safer
- Homelessness
 - » Homelessness is a problem, especially among the native community—we should be taking care of our neighbors
 - » There is no housing with supportive services. This would go a long way toward helping end homelessness.
 - » Homeless people harassing others and shouting deters people from downtown.
 - » There is a big problem with homeless students. The food bank at the University is very busy.
 - » Police harass homeless people, mostly natives for sleeping downtown.
- Drinking
 - » There are too many bars.
 - » There are not enough sober spaces.
 - » Most of the best play areas are in breweries, which shouldn't be the case.
 - » There are lots of drunk people downtown, especially at night, and especially after football games.
 - » Police don't respond to noise complaints or drunk complaints from residents.
 - » Drunk people break things at night, throw up in streets, and harass people.
- Shopping/Restaurants/Entertainment
 - » The city is becoming gentrified.
 - » There are not enough local businesses.
 - » There are not enough affordable options.
 - » Coffee Shops are more expensive downtown.
 - » Places are not friendly to non-white people.
- Business
 - » Office spaces are too expensive to rent.
 - » Non-profits can't afford to be downtown.
 - » Wages have not kept up with the rising cost of living.
 - » The area is becoming more and more crowded. Tourism crowds in the summer are not sustainable and hard on local service industry workers.
 - » There is consistent turnover of stores.
 - » There are too many breweries and distilleries.
 - » There are too many dispensaries.
- Winter
 - » People don't want to go outside in winter
 - » No place to hang out inside in winter
 - » People feel isolated which leads to drinking, depression, suicide, abuse, etc.
 - » Too dangerous for older people
 - » Difficult for people with disabilities

- Bikers/Pedestrians
 - » So many people mentioned fear of distracted (texting, etc.) drivers.
 - » Pedestrians just cross, assuming drivers will stop.
 - » The city doesn't plow the bike lanes.
 - » Turning on Ryman has bad visibility and is dangerous.
 - » Slant parking is dangerous for getting hit.
 - » West Broadway is better, but the turn from Main onto Orange is unsafe.
 - » Mixing bike and walking access is dangerous for seniors.
 - » Bikers on the sidewalks are dangerous.
 - » Outdoor dining can make passage difficult for people with disabilities.
 - » People sitting outside with dogs on long leashes are dangerous for seniors and people with disabilities.
- Bureaucracy
 - » People don't know who plays what role and where to jump in. There are lots of groups (Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Association) involved and it's hard to know who does what.
 - » People don't know how to address barriers. When someone encounters a barrier, they reach out to a city department or downtown organization but are often told that it's "not my responsibility" and get the run around. There is confusion among downtown entities as to who handles what sort of issues and how changes need to be addressed.
- Pets
 - » The stairs that lead from Higgins bridge to Caras park need to be changed because the grating is dangerous for pets and is bad for their paw pads.
 - » People are not allowed to tie up pets outside stores but also not allowed to bring them inside.
 - » Not everyone follows the on-leash rule while downtown, which can create a dangerous environment.
 - » Walking pathways next to the water are difficult to access with pets.
 - » Pet-friendly housing is expensive and difficult to find (breed restrictions, non-refundable deposits).
 - » Water pathways for walking dogs are difficult to access.
- Zoning
 - » There is a perception that developers get preferential treatment in zoning.

Dream Downtown

More affordable housing

- Close to bus lines
- More daycares
- More laundromats
- Grocery store
- Play areas
- Accessible/visit-able
- A centralized application system for people looking and applying for housing
- Incentives for developers to build affordable housing, make it a requirement of any new development
- Clear process for addressing issues
- Short to no-wait
- Turn current affordable multi-family housing into co-ops or shared equity ownership, in order to have local control/ownership
- More mixed-use housing (commercial, work, live spaces)
- More buildings like Roam
 - » Combinations of retail, housing, satellite medical clinics
- More developments that are within range of schools, parks, clinics for both adults and children (Northside development by Lowell school as a good example)
- Bring services to neighborhoods that need them and concentrate them there
- Neighborhoods even in downtown
- Green space with new housing
- Existing buildings rehabbed
- Different design codes for affordable housing

Third Places

- A free, accessible place for people to gather, especially somewhere indoors in winter
 - » Could include:
 - ◇ Food and drink
 - ◇ Indoor Farmers Market
 - ◇ Indoor People's Market
 - ◇ An ice rink
 - ◇ Community garden
 - ◇ Music
 - ◇ Art
 - ◇ Play areas
 - ◇ Gathering spaces
 - ◇ Performance areas
- A vibrant senior center, accessibility for all age groups
- An indoor space like Chelsea Market, with food and art vendors
- Third Places that come to where the people are, not that people have to come downtown to meet (like the new library complex)
- A fun outdoor, winter space for community gathering, where people don't have to pay to participate
- Maybe the transfer center can be more of a community center
- Should include art, some experience piece
- Access to it with food stamps
- Not merchandise based
- Something like the train in the mall – free play area
- Something for everyone in Missoula, all socio-economic groups
- Rooftop outdoor movie theater
- Big Art
- Performance Spaces
- Think about them as both indoor and outdoor (year-round) and accessible
- Gymnasiums, meetings rooms, inter-generational programs, multi-cultural programs, dance, and food

- Something similar to market/co-op in Beaverton, OR—nice, kind of warehouse-y, garage doors that open out to food carts and a large lawn. Cornhole, Ladder ball, traditional games and activities
- Can we do something like this year-round and show a range of diversity?
- Also include a business incubator—dedicate space to businesses/co-ops, where we can help, and support people get help starting their small business or trade production
- Like Farmers Market—can go but don't have to pay
- Food Court
- Easy to Park—can park there and then go other places downtown

Safety

- Older people would like to see a patrol person
- More lighting
- Landscaping for anti-crime
- Some way to call for help
- Addressing the drunk people issue downtown
- Water stations for drinkers

Green Spaces

- Connecting trails (e.g. UM all the way to Caras)
- More access to the Clark Fork river
- Another river wave
- A walking bridge on the west side of town (by Imagine Nation Brewery)
- Open spaces as opposed to multi-purpose parks
- Walking gardens or an arboretum
- Prescription trails to encourage people to be more active (a one-mile loop through downtown)
 - » In every neighborhood or a loop downtown, one mile of connectivity for ALL people (disabled, families, elderly) with signs that say “anti-depressant” under images of bikers or walkers.
- Build a 12-14 foot esplanade along the river, something like how Portland used to feel—Parks & Rec working on this
- Better tree canopy (has positive effect on

reducing crime and improving health)

- Caras to think more of design at Splash, only frozen, when new pavilion is up, put a sliding feature in and an entrance through the carousel. Possibility for a “frozen river” of ice for people to skate on
- Want to put a row of exercise equipment up along the river on the east side of Bess Reed Park, so people can do a circuit and walk the trail system (discussed with Innovate UM). Trying to create some of these spaces out by Fort Missoula.
- Botanical garden (throw-back to orchards that used to be along river)
- Green Ways program: identify a series of neighborhood streets that are relatively connected and parallel arterials and you make minor changes (turning some signs to determine where stops are, giving pedestrians and cyclists right of way, and reprioritizing power outs) to them so that they are more accessible in biking and walking. They are trying to make a grid system throughout the city, that connects everyone, no matter their socioeconomic status.
- Public right of way and valuable green spaces; gardens, orchards, pollinator spaces, pocket parks, crowning roads into boulevards and water the trees and have a sidewalk that's separated or if it's too narrow, make sure there are multiple crossings for access, tree canopy to help with climate issues.
- More spaces to play and live, both youth and adults
- Green canopied, low emphasis on cars, high emphasis on humans...
- We need to rebuild the downtown park and trail system (a lot of it) because it was state of the art in the '80s but we want to create more spaces in parks where people are gathering.
- Build a frozen river instead of a skating rink so everyone can participate and tourists will come

Infrastructure

- Lighting, lighting and lighting
- Gender neutral bathrooms and changing tables in every bathroom
- Expedited permit process incentives to private builders for making homes visit-able
- City-wide fiber-optic internet
- Crime prevention design
- Development like what is happening at the north end of Higgins carried out
- Mixed-use developments
 - » A percentage of this should be affordable
- Local, not boutique
- Better road conditions (fix potholes)
- Redesign of Broadway and Russell
- Invest in neighborhoods (sidewalks, plowing)
- Wider streets and bike lanes
- More parking lots and lights
- Better plowing
 - » Snow plow bike lanes and curb cuts in winter
- Wider sidewalks
- MDA or BID or MIA money to spruce up the front of buildings and signage, small garden spaces
- Every other street is closed to car traffic because now we have plenty of parking by bus, pedestrian and ADA ability and we reduce the cost by half to maintain things

Child care

- More and free or affordable child care
 - » Early Headstart is amazing
 - » More actual places where you can take your kid

Design

- Maintain the feel of Missoula in new buildings (not the Verizon building on Broadway.
- Everyone hates that)
- Incorporate tribal history
- Incorporate more history (white) and keep old architecture
- Don't look homogenous like Bozeman
- Keep it “funky” but not “hokey”

History

- Tour of underground Missoula (all the tunnels downtown)
- Botanical Garden reminiscent of the orchards that used to be on river and why we are named the Garden City
- Preserving historic buildings, quirky Missoula vibe, “relationship between the physical and human infrastructure”
- Teach about Missoula being on aboriginal land
- More history of Missoula (tribal and other) downtown

Arts

- A Performing Arts center
- More art education programs
- More public (free) art
- More public (free) music
- Winter venues
- More diversity in representation
- Artist housing
- Affordable art studios
- A place for artists to sell their work
- Arts have a seat at the decision tables
- Art corridor up and down Higgins
- More space for public art
- More education programs on native art
- Need for an Arts District Hub (central location to direct people to the hot spots and art in Missoula)—potentially a location that already exists, like the ZACC

- Generalized flyers with information on all events going on First Fridays
- Opportunities for pop-up shows in vacant spaces
 - » Like what students did when The Missoula Food Bank closed on 3rd St
- An arts district would be beneficial (as discussed when Dover/Kohl was in town)
- Good display of spirit of artists
- Murals, big sculptures, funky lighting in unexpected areas (history of neon lighting)
- More Native artists represented
- Big art
- Murals
- Open site where people can do performances and installations without a lot of red tape
- World-renowned artists coming to Missoula
- Projection and video capabilities
- Traveling art pieces
- More acknowledgement that this is Salish land
- Recognize that Missoula is the heart of Contemporary Ceramics in the United States
- Better signage to art institutions and galleries
- Better signage on streets
- More coordination between artists and businesses
- Better public transportation to art
- Opportunities for professional development for artists
- Entrepreneurial programs for artists

Youth

- More events, places, activities for 13- to 20-year-olds
- One day camp options, similar to what Unparalleled Movement is already doing
- High-quality, low-cost childcare options

Cultural

- Celebration of the tribal culture
- LGBTQ community spaces
- More LGBTQ representation
- More Native representation
- A cultural event that is native-led and based
- Greater community effort to support minorities
- Preserve diversity and inclusivity, a cultural shift
- Foster more platforms for exchanges between native and non-native groups

Sustainable

- Zero-waste stations and better recycling, focus on green energy
- Reusable, interchangeable containers for all downtown establishments
 - » Cleaning and wash stations for these
- Solar compactors and more trash cans
- Requirements for recycling and sustainability, specifically for companies downtown
- Initiatives to encourage people to move away from single-use plastics
- Interchangeable containers for all restaurants

Social

- Housing First options
- More sober spaces
- Walk-in mental health centers for people in crisis
- Drinking
 - » Hydration Stations to encourage people to drink smarter and make better transportation choices
 - » Possibly a Drunk Bus or more options like Lyft
 - » No more drinking establishments
 - » More activities that don't involve alcohol
- Neighborhoods should flow into downtown organically
- More services for people
- More dignity for people living without homes, taking care of our neighbors—no one should be dying in the cold

Business/Shopping/Entertainment

- Consider converting old buildings into fun businesses/lodging like the McMenamins chain in Oregon
- Affordable and diverse restaurant options
- Emphasis on supporting local businesses and not corporations, although having more large companies wouldn't be so bad
- Affordable grocery stores and coffee shops
- Work towards improving jobs already here (wage increases) instead of focusing on only bringing in new jobs (especially for service positions)
- No high-tech takeover, such as a Google mountain headquarters
- Funky shops, dive-bars, places with character

Pets

- Restaurants/Brew Pubs where it's possible to sit outside with your dog (spaces like this exist in Portland and Whitefish)
- Access to river
- New stairs from bridge
- Design stairs without grates
- Pocket parks with dog bags

Other

- An enterprise campus that provides services, restaurants, job trainings
- More courses/trainings for people to learn how to make their own beer, cider, cheese, etc.
- Work towards an energetic downtown, "busy but with a purpose"
- Create an "established infrastructure for engaging primary institutions and leaders that have an interest in downtown, who can do their own engagement in people's interest and bring people into the decision making."
- Keep downtown fun, not static
- Motivate people to walk and bike
- A vibrant place, businesses and organizations and people active in the community
- No vacant buildings
- More support for what is already working in town

and trying to replicate that

- Give people living wages, in terms of employers (salaries) and also giving better and more access to benefits (to get their basic needs taken care of)

Transportation

- Public transport that runs more frequently, with more stops downtown, and to trailheads, outdoor events
- Service that runs later in the evenings and on Sundays
- Electric buses
- Service outskirts of town, Rattlesnake area
- More stops for disabled people
- People want more trolleys
- More frequent
- More consistent
- Extreme transportation system, high efficiency, that anyone could use
- Trip Training
- Public Transportation to trail heads
- More transportation to Currents
- Transportation plays a large role in making housing affordable for people—great green ways, great trail system, enough Mountain Line, enough extended routes and enough hours in enough days.
- Have to stop thinking about moving vehicles—have to think about bus, cargo and human beings. Very interconnected.

Parking

- Vouchers for businesses to give to their customers
- Free parking
- Eliminate need for parking with better transportation options
- Garage parking on hip-strip
- More park and rides
- Get rid of those difficult meters

Town and Gown

- Make it easier to get between downtown and UM campus
- More places to go and activities to do near campus (especially for game days)
- Integration between the college and public libraries
- Help students learn about security and food security
- Make it easy to get back and forth between downtown and campus
- Kiwanis Park and weird one-way streets by the Madison Bridge
- Should be friendlier, especially for people who are new here

Senior Center/Missoula Aging Services

- Protected Parking—could be underground
- Preserve ability to be dropped off right in front of Senior Center
- Park and Ride
- Consistent shuttle between Senior Center, Missoula Aging Services, Currents, Providence Hospital/Western Montana Clinic/Downtown banks etc and back to Senior Center
- More bike parking
- More pocket parks
- Keep historic character
- Encourage diversity
- Keep some affordable housing
- More opportunity spaces downtown – for entrepreneurs to try things out
- More places to go in the winter
- Accessibility
- More public transportation or paths to public trails.
- Expanded transportation options
- More access for our aging and disabled populations
- Americans with Disabilities (ADA) (PROWAG) accessible parking spaces (biggest barrier)
 - » 27 more spots required for accessible spaces

- Curb cuts
- Better designed street crossings
- Free disability parking
- Cover potholes
- Make all buildings and housing accessible and visit-able including public housing
- No more townhomes
- Clear process for addressing issues
- Accessible bus shelters
- Teaching people to utilize transportation options
- Better access to services

Pedestrians

- Parking outside of downtown with a path to walk downtown: create a walking mall, like in Helena
- Safer sidewalks (wider and no bikes)

Feedback on Downtown Master Plan process to date

- Most people liked the drop-in design set up.
- Having it at The Public house where people could wander in anytime seemed to work really well.
- The last event at the Wilma was very well attended.
- It would have been beneficial to have a younger crowd at events—there were a lot of middle-aged, older people.
 - » The 20-40 age group would have been particularly helpful. They are the ones who have an interest in what’s going on in local politics, but they don’t have a lot of experience in engagement.
 - » This group typically doesn’t read papers, they use Facebook and Instagram.
 - » Outreach efforts need to appeal to their sense of environmental concerns and need for some place affordable to live.
- The option of giving comments online should be advertised on Facebook and Instagram.
- The real-time voting tools were a hit.
- Many people were frustrated that the discussion/ideas did not move beyond Higgins, which was a stated objective.
 - » All ideas presented were either downtown off Higgins or Hip Strip down Higgins.
 - » There was no representation of North side neighborhoods or the Broadway corridor.
- Hip Strip stakeholders were very upset about invite-only meetings related to Hip Strip.
 - » They think that back-door deals are being made.
 - » They are worried that they are going to be evicted from their businesses and apartments in the Penwell building.
 - » Having three tables instead of one at the DoubleTree felt “divisive” to these stakeholders.
 - » This audience wants to preserve affordable housing that already exists, and they feel like the ideas they saw on Hip Strip in the Dover Kohl presentation went against the stated objective of affordable housing.
 - » They feel like there is a disconnect with what is happening with the Higgins bridge plan and what is happening with the master plan.
 - » They are concerned about the turn-off onto 6th street because it is a state highway. They would like to know if there is a way to reconfigure it or separate it?
 - » They also wonder why bike lanes have to be on Higgins—can’t they be on Gerald with a bridge across the river?
- Some people are afraid that Dover Kohl/Steering Committee is not listening.
 - » Multiple people stated that ideas from the design workshop at the DoubleTree were not incorporated in the ideas presented at the Wilma.
 - » Many people stated that designs presented in meetings early in the week at the Public House were not changed by end of week even after receiving feedback.
 - » It is a common perception that Dover Kohl already has ideas of what they want to do and don’t care what Missoulians actually think.
 - » There is frustration that ideas from the DoubleTree and Public House are not all represented on the MindMixer site.
 - » There is frustration that there is no talk of keeping current affordable housing.

- There are mixed feelings on the MindMixer site.
 - » Some people like the ability to be specific online.
 - » Login is difficult and a barrier for many, especially the senior population.
 - » In general, the senior population finds MindMixer difficult to use, even after being able to log in.
- People want more ways to participate.
 - » The Senior Center asked for a printed survey they could write on.
 - » The Hip Strip wants open meetings.
- Cultural insensitivity came up in many conversations.
 - » Why was the only native-oriented design not accurate to local tribes?
 - » Why was it hidden under a bridge?
 - » Native history and art should be woven throughout downtown.
- Senior Center/Missoula Aging Services
 - » People are afraid of losing their parking lot without a replacement.
 - » The model of a three-lane road with a bike lane would restrict crucial front-door access to the Senior Center.
 - » People are afraid the Senior Center will be moved—they emphasized the importance of a community center in the Hip Strip neighborhood and the importance of the space—many people rent it affordably.
 - » The current trolley is not easily accessible for seniors and people with disabilities—they liked the idea Dover Kohl showed of a lower trolley.
- People love the idea of Big Art, but the Public Art Committee needs to be involved in the vision and process.
- DoubleTree was not a good environment for people to feel included—they had to be assertive to get to the table and make comments.
- The presentation at The Wilma was interesting and people learned a lot.
- There is general dislike for an ice rink at Caras Park—it would be better to put it by Currents.
- It's good to be thinking about building in the parking lots.
- How might Ubers and self-driving cars affect parking in the future? What sort of long-term planning do we need to think about?