

DESIGNWORKSHOP

WHEATON DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC
AND STREETSCAPE PLAN

Wheaton, Illinois

October 2013



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Design Workshop:
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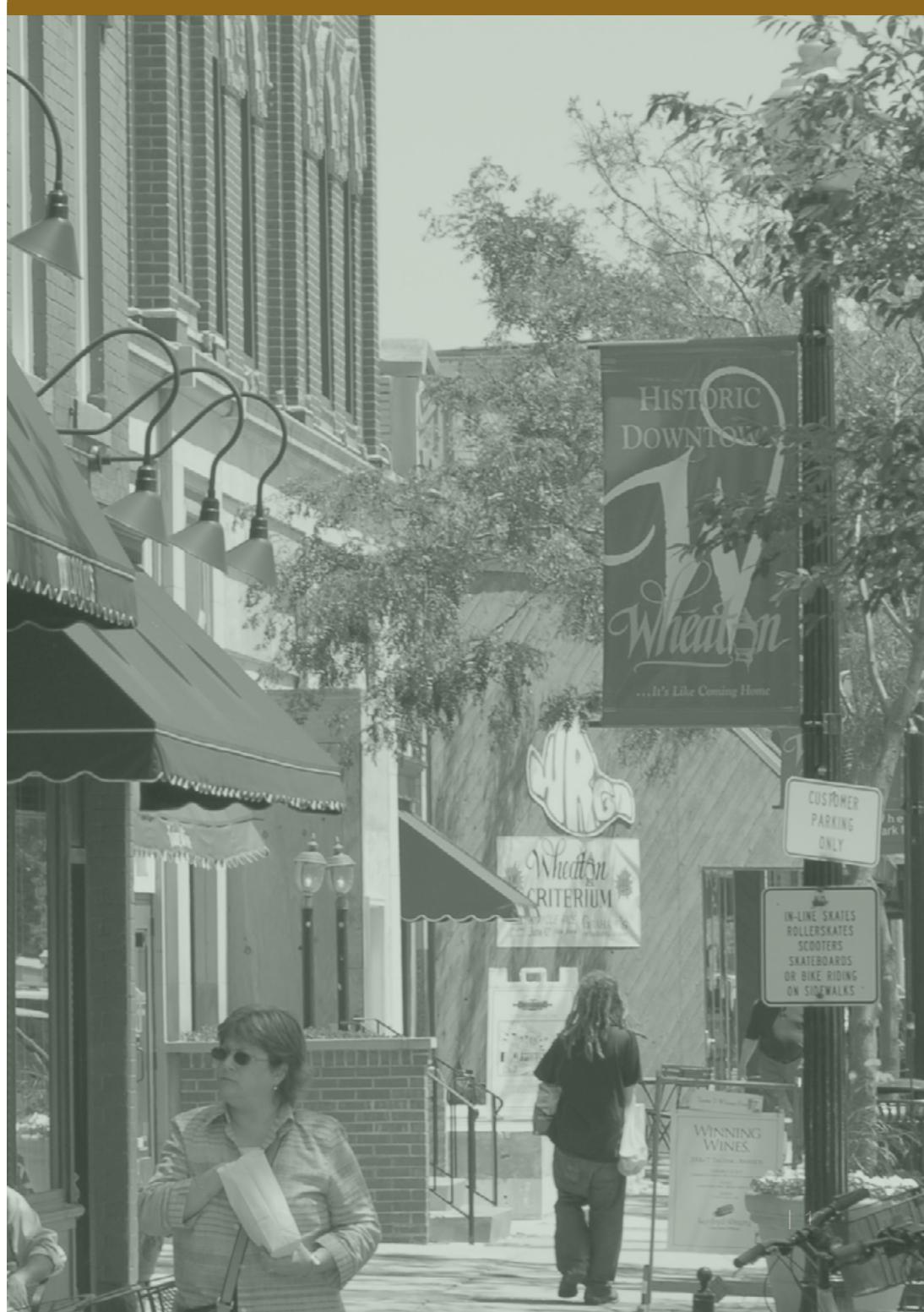
DESIGNWORKSHOP



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The City of Wheaton completed efforts leading to a new Downtown Plan in 2012 and 2013, drawing from a range of technical and professional analyses as well as a comprehensive public outreach effort in which the citizens and stakeholders in the Wheaton community contributed input throughout the process, concerning the future of downtown.

The primary goals of the effort were as follows:

- To articulate an agreed upon Vision for Downtown Wheaton for the next twenty years
- To outline a streetscape plan for Downtown Wheaton that will tie with the agreed upon vision and elevate the success of the district
- To outline associated strategies and policies that the City and the private sector may pursue to implement the ideas outlined in the overall Downtown Plan.

Creating the Vision

The Wheaton City Council, along with City staff and the project team, developed a recommended Vision for Downtown Wheaton over the next twenty years by drawing from the following sources of input::

- Community input provided at a public open house in September 2012, as well as through a follow-up online survey completed by members of the community.
- A market study completed for Downtown Wheaton examining the development potential for residential, retail, and office land uses over the next twenty years.
- A transportation and utility analysis of Downtown Wheaton examining existing conditions and potential necessary improvements to streets and the infrastructure serving the overall downtown district.

The following summarizes the conclusions of each of these elements that contributed to the creation of the new Vision for Downtown Wheaton.

Community Input

The majority of respondents at the community open house in September 2012 and through an associated online version of the survey presented at the open house session perceive Downtown Wheaton as a restaurant-oriented center that competes with other downtowns in the local area. However, they also view Downtown as a retail-oriented center and expressed interest in the district evolving into more of an entertainment and culture-oriented downtown as well. The vision articulated by the public at this stage in the effort supported the creation of a plan to attract a wider variety of businesses and shops to Downtown Wheaton.

In terms of specific ideas to achieve the Vision for Downtown Wheaton, the public supported creating more space for outdoor dining and community events in the district. It also supported efforts designed to bring a wider variety of retailers and restaurants to the district and to provide more convenient parking as key strategies to achieve their vision for the downtown area.

Market Study

An economic analysis of Downtown Wheaton and competing downtowns in the Chicago region revealed the following takeaways that informed the creation of the final vision statement for Downtown.

- Because the vast majority of DuPage County has built-out in terms of traditional suburban growth, Downtown Wheaton cannot rely upon normal population growth in the surrounding areas to drive increased business over time, as is often the case in towns located on the expanding periphery of metropolitan areas. The only way to provide an increased residential base to support retail and dining in Downtown Wheaton would involve promoting the development of a sizeable program of residential development in or near the district. Introducing new residents into the heart of Wheaton would help to drive a portion of retail and office growth in the downtown district over the next 20 years.
- Since the overall suburban market for retail and office uses will likely not grow materially over the next 20 years, the only other way for Downtown Wheaton to grow would involve providing more compelling reasons and amenities to attract visitors and patrons to the district from surrounding suburban areas. Offering a variety of events and improved public and gathering spaces would help enhance the attractiveness of the downtown area in the larger suburban market.
- Overall, the market study projects that Downtown Wheaton has the potential to add a net increase of 80,000 square feet of retail uses, from 50,000 to 75,000 square feet of office uses, and around 1,000 residential units (comprised of apartments, townhomes, and / or condominium units) over the next twenty years. It also suggests that the vast majority of this additional development would occur on the south side of the Union Pacific tracks, where a number of vacant or underutilized parcels are present. New construction of retail and mixed-use space in this part of Downtown would allow local landlords to offer new spaces more geared to larger and perhaps national tenants, as opposed to the often space-constrained spaces found in many of the older buildings on the north side of the tracks. The market study suggests that by offering targeted enhancements in amenities, Downtown Wheaton can attract a critical mass of additional residential, retail, and office space that would help the district capture a larger share of the regional “pie” of demand over the next two decades and therefore support the overall vision for Downtown Wheaton.

Transportation Analysis

The project team completed an analysis of existing and potential transportation conditions in Downtown Wheaton and provided the following conclusions:

- The downtown streets currently accommodate existing traffic adequately. Going forward, the street system should accommodate the projected growth in the downtown district overall.
- The city may wish to explore roadway improvements and traffic signal improvements at the Main and Illinois intersection in order to reduce the potential for traffic delays as redevelopment proceeds in the portion of the downtown area between the Union Pacific tracks and Roosevelt Road.

Utility and Infrastructure Analysis

The project team completed an analysis of the existing infrastructure and utilities in the downtown area and arrived at the following key conclusions.

- In general, utility capacity should not place a major constraint on new development in the downtown area. While the perception of many in the public at the outset of the planning process was that the city would need to spend considerable sums to upgrade infrastructure serving downtown, the analysis revealed that overall, this is not the case. The analysis concluded that the city may wish to upgrade sanitary sewer lines and water mains as development proceeds, however.
- The Downtown area does not suffer from any segments of undersized storm sewer pipes, with the exception of the area of flooding that often occurs along south Main Street. Solving the flooding issue in this area would require a broader, watershed-wide solution. The costs of directly fixing the flooding issue along South Main appear impractical at this time.

Vision Statement

Following the initial analyses outlined above and input from the public and a variety of stakeholders, the City Council arrived at the following Vision Statement for Downtown Wheaton in February 2013:

Elevate the position of Downtown Wheaton as a destination district in the western portion of the Chicago region by pursuing a number of civic improvements and regulatory changes designed to increase the capture rate of retail, office, and residential land uses in the Downtown.

Key Recommendations to Achieve the Vision for Downtown Wheaton

The remainder of the Downtown Plan outlines key catalytic improvements in the downtown district that will help the community achieve its vision over the next two decades, as well as a variety of strategies and improvements that will help the overall Downtown area improve in the coming years. The key recommendations outlined and endorsed by the public as part of this planning effort include the following:

- Catalyst Improvement: Creation of Festival Streets on Liberty, Hale, and Karlskoga Streets: The plan recommends that the city invest in upgrades to streetscape necessary to make these streets operate as “festival” streets that would accommodate improved outdoor dining, host a variety of community festivals and events, provide greatly enhanced community gathering spaces, and attract visitation from surrounding communities. The plan recommends that the city, in completing final design for these festival streets, draw from the best examples of these kinds of streets around the country to create festival streets that will stand out in the Chicago region and the Midwest and help bring increased business and traffic to Downtown Wheaton.
- Catalyst Improvement: Creation of a Central Park, and French Market Upgrades: The plan recommends that the city work to create a central park between Liberty Drive and the Illinois Prairie Path, and between Hale and Cross streets. This central park would help serve as a central gathering place for the community and could include a small amphitheater, an ice skating rink, open park spaces, fountains, and related amenities designed to attract visitors from beyond Wheaton. The eastern portion of this central park, in the block between Main and Cross and north of Liberty, could include the construction of a permanent structure for the French Market. This permanent structure could accommodate market operations on a year round basis and could also provide space for a variety of community events and programs during all four seasons. The French Market is already a substantial draw to Downtown Wheaton on summer Saturday mornings, and this improvement would only enhance the market’s ability to attract patrons from throughout the surrounding suburban region.

- Catalyst Improvement: Enhancements to South Main Street to Facilitate Redevelopment: As an initial catalyst effort, the plan recommends that the City prioritize upgrades to the streetscape amenities along Main Street, from Front Street south to Roosevelt Road, in order to help stimulate and encourage redevelopment on the south side of the tracks, and to take advantage of the area's proximity to the new Mariano's development. Main Street represents the main "front door" into Downtown from the Roosevelt Road corridor, and prioritizing this upgrade could serve as a catalyst for redevelopment in this emerging part of Downtown Wheaton.
- Ongoing Improvement - Upgrades to Streetscapes Throughout Downtown: The plan recommends that the city continue to upgrade streetscapes (including furniture, lighting, street trees, and related improvements) for other streets within downtown. These improvements would likely tie with redevelopment efforts on particular blocks within the downtown district and could proceed over many years on an incremental basis.
- Other Improvements: The downtown plan also calls for a variety of improvements across the entire district designed to increase the marketability and attractiveness of the district. These initiatives range from planning for additional parking facilities across Downtown as redevelopment proceeds, to enhancing access and facilities for bicyclists, to enhancing the alleyways Downtown to facilitate pedestrian movement and outdoor dining. Other potential improvements in the Downtown area include enhancing the Prairie Path as it passes through the district, improving and expanding the roster of events in Downtown Wheaton and improving the program of signage and wayfinding serving the district.

Implementation Strategies

The Downtown Plan also outlines a menu of implementation strategies that the City, along with other players, may use to complete ongoing improvements and facilitate the improved performance of the Downtown district. These strategies include:

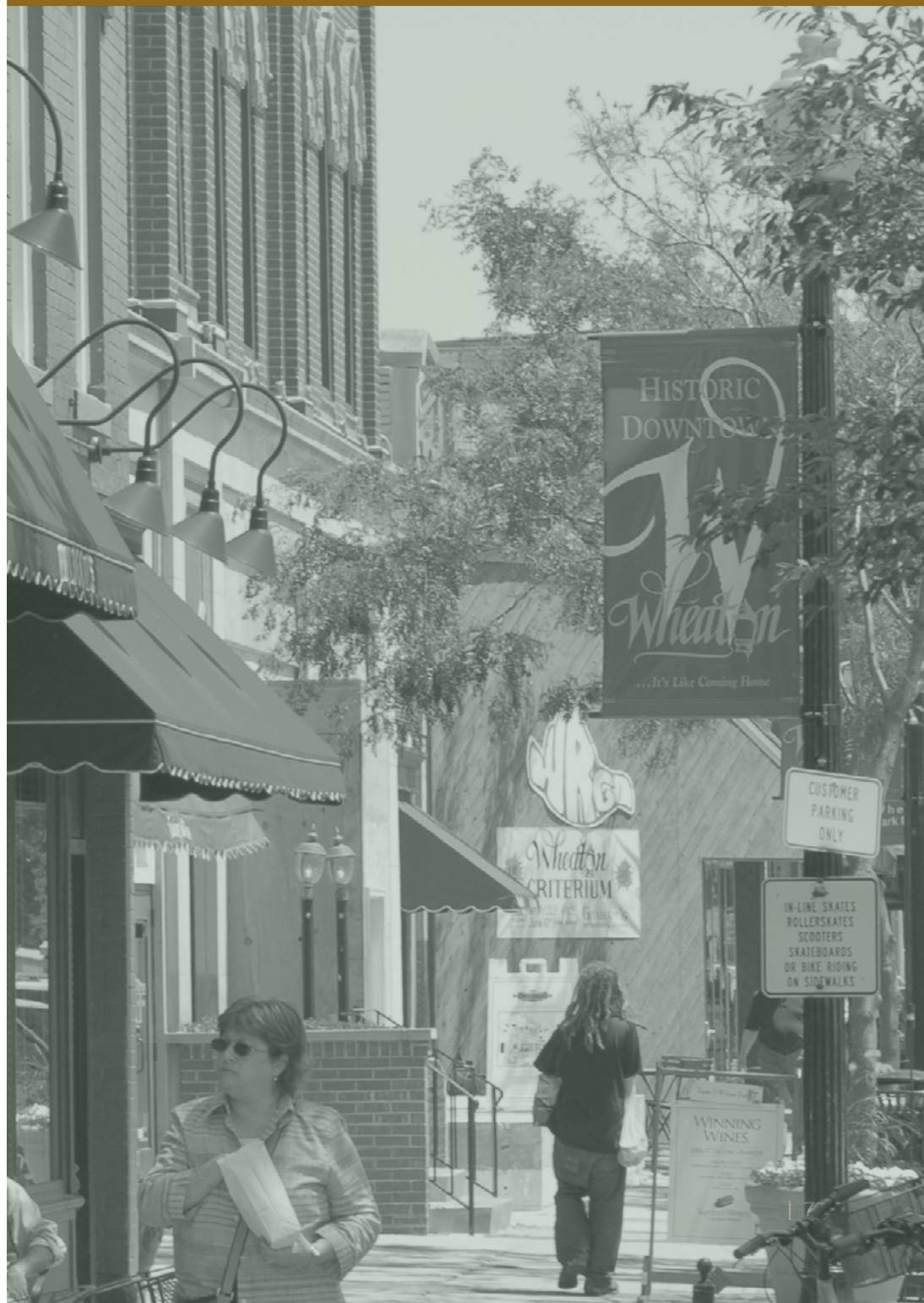
- Exploring various options for financing downtown development, including an expansion of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts
- Inviting development proposals for specific and strategic sites
- Strategically acquiring potential development parcels
- Implementing a targeted retail recruitment program
- Creating a coordinated marketing plan
- Creating a management entity for operations and maintenance
- Implementing necessary zoning changes to promote increased mixed-use redevelopment in Downtown Wheaton, particularly south of the tracks
- Implement changes to parking regulations for areas outside of the core downtown area to promote redevelopment. This may include instituting joint parking strategies in which property owners pay into a common fund to finance future parking facilities, including parking garages.

The total cost of all outlined improvements for Downtown Wheaton identified in this plan is approximately \$64 million in 2012 dollars. However, this cost would be spread over 20 years, and the City may elect to forego completing some of the improvements outlined in the Downtown Plan over time.

Together, the Downtown Plan provides a menu of options for improvement throughout the district that should help the community achieve its vision of a more vibrant downtown that draws from a larger portion of suburban Chicago and represents a stronger heart for the Wheaton community going forward.

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PROJECT BACKGROUND AND PUBLIC PROCESS





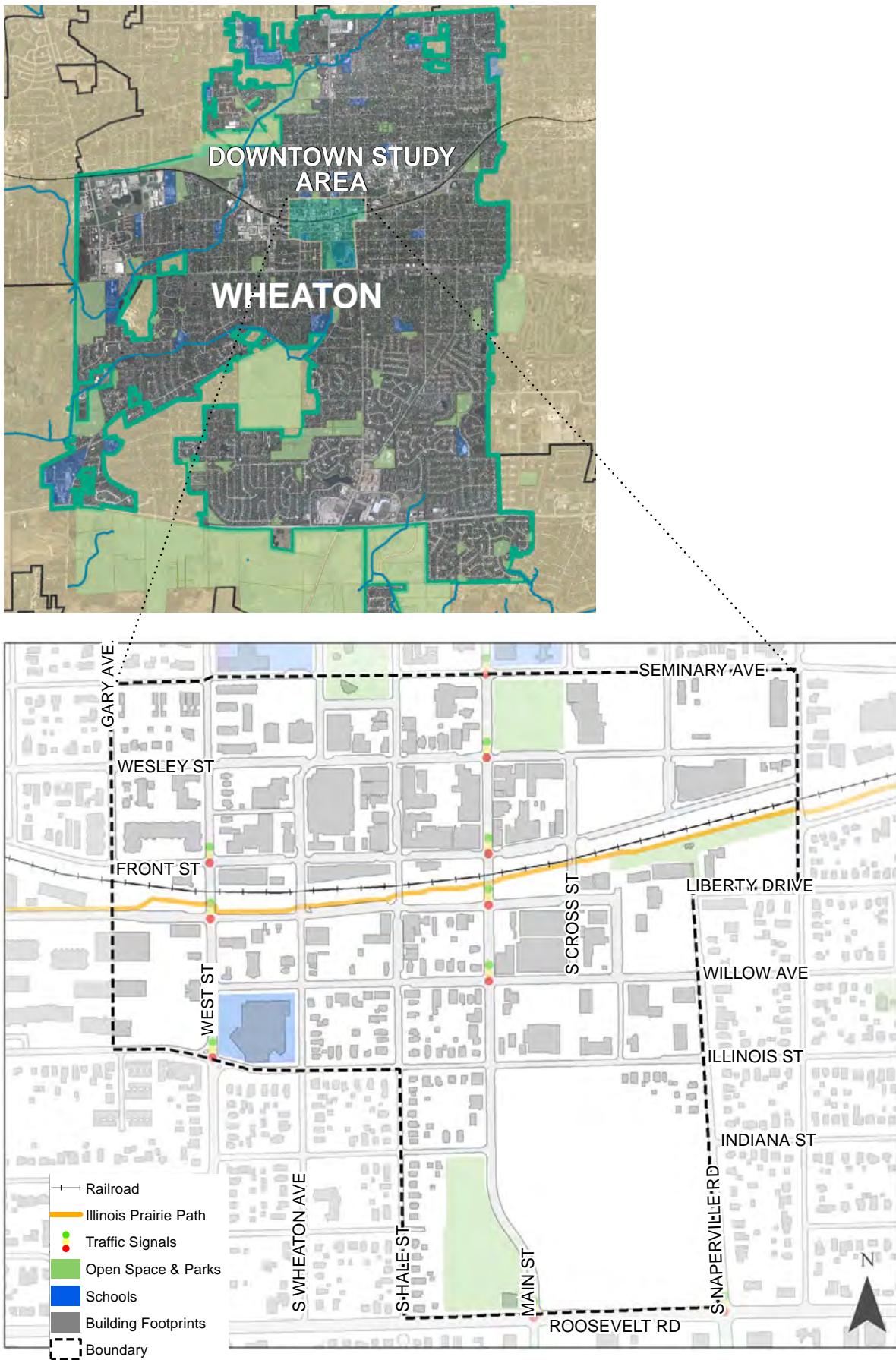
Goals for the Project

The City of Wheaton embarked on an effort to create an updated Streetscape and Strategic Plan for Downtown Wheaton in Summer 2012. This new document represents the next generation of the most recent plan for the downtown district that guided the community over the last twenty years. In turn, this document outlines the community's plans for Downtown Wheaton over the next twenty years, through 2030 and beyond. The objectives of this document and the planning project are as follows:

- To articulate an agreed upon Vision for Downtown Wheaton over the next twenty years
- To outline a streetscape plan for Downtown Wheaton that will tie with the agreed upon vision and elevate the success of the district
- To outline associated strategies and policies that the City and the private sector may pursue to implement the ideas outlined in this Downtown Plan.

The Wheaton City Council served as the Steering Committee to guide this planning process, with leadership from the City staff. This group, along with the consultant team, identified study area boundaries at the beginning of the downtown planning process. The study area covered by this downtown plan is generally bounded by Seminary Avenue on the north, Washington Street and Naperville Road on the east, Roosevelt Road on the south, and Gary Avenue on the west. However, the study area does not include the existing residential neighborhoods between Illinois Street and Roosevelt Road, and to the east of West Street. The downtown study area encompasses the Retail Core Business District and the General Business District zones in the Downtown area, and includes various major institutional users (such as City Hall, the library, and various churches). The study area also includes some of the higher density residential areas of the city, including townhomes and residential towers on the outside edges of the existing downtown area.

Figure 1: Downtown Wheaton Study Area



Description of Previous Planning Efforts

1999 Comprehensive Plan - Key Takeaways

The Downtown Strategic and Streetscape Plan builds on a number of planning and design efforts completed by the City of Wheaton over the last few decades. This section outlines some of the main points of several previous planning efforts as they relate to and impact the current Downtown Plan process. The City of Wheaton completed its most recent Comprehensive Plan, addressing key planning issues throughout the community, in 1999. The plan drafted key community development policies, a comprehensive land use plan, a framework for community character, an identification of key focus areas, and an implementation plan for issues addressing the city as a whole. The following outlines the key takeaways from the document pertaining to the downtown and a key focus area identified in the plan as the “Central Business District”.

Downtown market condition: (1999)

- While retaining its symbolic importance in the community, Downtown is no longer the predominant economic engine of the City. The downtown is in a transition period from a major retail center to a more self-supporting, diverse urban center with a variety of uses – focused on speciality retail, civic, entertainment and services, and not a dominant retailing position.
- Relocation of major employers, the development of Danada East and West, Rice Lake Square and Wheaton Town Square shopping centers, and the opening of the Kohls/Target commercial complex on west Roosevelt Road, combined with the growth of regional centers in Oak Brook, Lombard, Bloomingdale and elsewhere, have altered the economic strength and viability of the central business district.
- Office space in Downtown Wheaton is attractive due to generally lower lease rates. Second and third floor office space rented for \$6 to \$8 per square foot on average. The office market in Downtown is limited more by the availability and quality of space, than the potential demand. Office activity in Downtown Wheaton is hampered by relatively high asking prices for buildings currently on the market. Recent sales activity of buildings in Downtown indicated that the typical purchase price for office space ranged from \$25 - \$50/ sq. ft.

Success within downtown (1999)

- Successes with downtown entertainment activities (restaurants).
- Maintained retail uses through zoning regulations that restrict the conversion of prime ground floor retail space to office uses.
- Successes with the façade improvement loan program.
- Success within the established TIF district (particularly redevelopment projects within the “emerging urban village sub-area” focus area defined in the 1999 Comprehensive Plan Update).

Planning issues affecting downtown (1999)

- Downtown parking is not convenient, which constrains the success of downtown businesses. There is also a lack of convenient and adequate commuter parking.
- One-way streets (in place since the 1950s) can create challenges in finding stores and parking, however it was recommended that the one-way system be maintained for its increased capacity, lower occurrences of traffic conflicts and ability to accommodate angled parking.
- At-grade railroad crossings cause traffic blockage (27 east-bound and 27 west-bound commuter trains per weekday), in addition to access problems for emergency vehicles.
- Potential plans for a new storage depot could reduce the number of trains traveling through the city. Grade-separated crossings are likely unfeasible/cost-prohibitive.

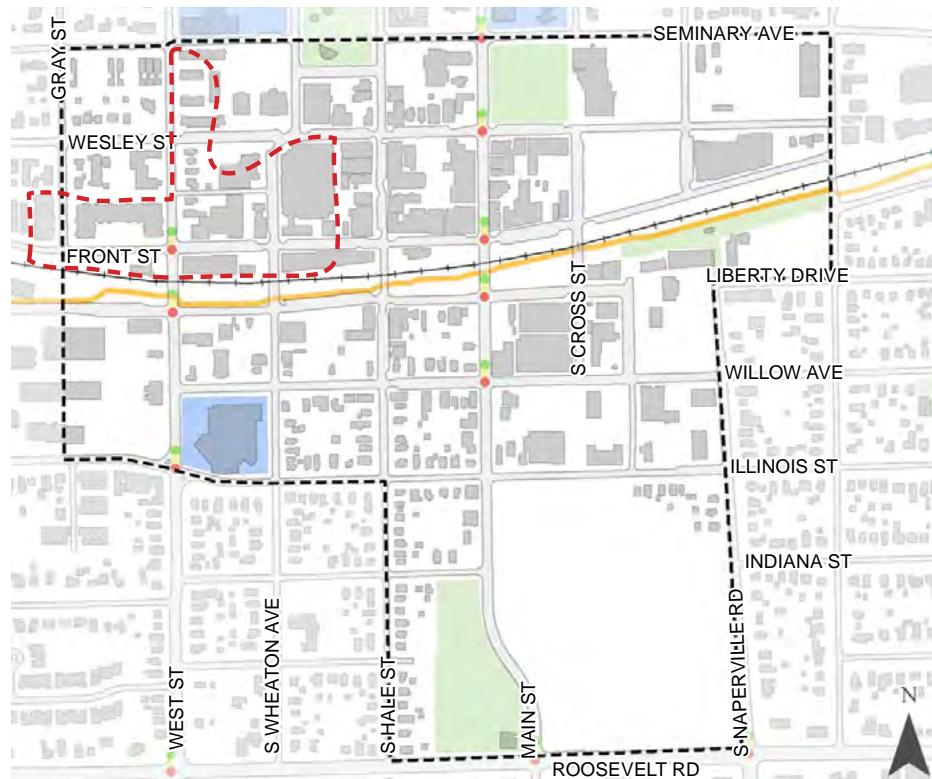
- Infrastructure - The Wheaton Sanitary District, which serves approximately 90 percent of Wheaton's planning area, has sufficient capacity to serve remaining development potential within the City. Operational problems include an old sewer system in poor condition that experiences infiltration of storm water during peak storm periods.
- Parks/Recreation – The goal in 1999 was to promote open space and a pedestrian atmosphere in the downtown business district through the addition of a playground/tot-lot, providing safe pedestrian and bike access, and the addition of a teen facility.
- The pedestrian core environment of downtown faces challenges , as the advanced age of many buildings requires additional maintenance; and vacancies are therefore high, which in turn reduces pedestrian traffic in the area.

Identified improvements / action items related to the downtown

Many of the action items identified in the 1999 Comprehensive Plan pertaining to downtown have been accomplished or are underway (as indicated with a check mark):

- Improve interrelationships between existing uses within the downtown.
- Expand the inventory of available sites for office development - Expand second floor office development opportunities in the central business district through the continued use of mixed use planned development and incentive zoning.
- Strengthen and preserve the central business district as an important focal point for a wide variety of compatible uses uniquely suited to a "central place" location, and which benefit from an interchange of people, ideas, and business.
 - ✓ Additional multiple family development should be encouraged within the Wheaton Central Planning Area.
 - ✓ Retail, restaurant and entertainment activities should be strengthened throughout the downtown/ central business district, especially north of the railroad.
 - ✓ Provide more accessible and usable open spaces, such as "pocket parks" and public plazas that serve as activity places and focal points in the central business district.
 - ✓ Prepare a detailed streetscape plan for the Central Business District. The plan should encompass Main Street from Roosevelt to Seminary and include appropriate "gateway" treatments and signage.
 - ✓ Prepare an overall urban design and pedestrian way plan for the Central Business District.
 - ✓ Continue and expand programs to retain and improve existing businesses.
 - ✓ Extend and enhance downtown character improvements, and identify appropriate forums for public art.
 - ✓ Incorporate business retention programs into the planning and economic development activities of the City, Downtown Wheaton Association (DWA) and the Chamber of Commerce.
 - ✓ Encourage development through financial incentive programs, when appropriate.
 - ✓ Identify niche markets with help from qualified marketing professionals. These niche markets should be the focus of recruitment and a basis for evaluating new uses if the City acquires and redevelops property.
- Develop a program to improve existing properties and businesses in the central business district area. Identify program elements, funding options and explore joint efforts with the DWA.
- Establish a development review process to ensure high quality without ignoring economic realities.
 - ✓ Prepare a report on the historic architectural resources of the Central Area.
 - ✓ Evaluate the creation of an appearance / architectural review commission/committee to provide advisory recommendations for all projects in the central business district area.
- Periodically evaluate the demand and availability of parking spaces in the downtown area for long term commuters and short term shoppers.
 - ✓ Coordinate study efforts with the METRA commuter rail agency to examine forecasted needs and financial assistance.

- ✓ Evaluate the need for additional commuter parking and explore alternative modes of transportation to the train station to increase train use while limiting parking demand.
- ✓ Explore the expansion of the PACE fixed route bus service, and other on-demand public transit services, to reduce the use of private vehicles.
- ✓ Develop a parking management plan to address alternative pricing, time restrictions and other solutions.
- Maintain areas and improve the system of arterial, collector, and minor streets to serve existing businesses and neighborhoods.
 - ✓ Evaluate the potential of directional improvements to enhance wayfinding in the central business district area.
- Development Opportunities
 - ✓ No new large scale multiple family housing is recommended, except for areas within the downtown area.
 - ✓ The need for additional multiple family housing to provide living alternatives for singles, "empty nester" and elderly persons is addressed through the designation of additional multiple family sites for condominium living within the downtown.
 - ✓ The pedestrian core – Landscaping, pedestrian lighting, public art, street furniture and mid-block walkways would strengthen the retail and entertainment environment.
 - ✓ A shared parking facility downtown could serve the demand for additional parking.
- Gateway design improvements for key entrances into downtown.



The Emerging Urban Village sub-area defined in the 1999 Comprehensive Plan Update (noted in red)

Outline of Current Planning Process

The Wheaton Downtown Strategic and Streetscape Plan process involved a multidisciplinary team of experts, as well as participation from community members and stakeholders who shared their ideas and opinions throughout the duration of the project. Four initial analyses, completed during the initial stages of the project, have contributed to and informed the recommendations of the strategic and streetscape plan. These analyses included a market study, a utility evaluation, a traffic evaluation, and a parking evaluation.

Market Study: The Market Study evaluated the economic position of Downtown Wheaton and the types and scale of land uses that will be viable in the future. Key elements of the market study involved analyses of overall demographic and economic conditions and the competitive position of Downtown Wheaton versus those of other nearby downtowns in the Chicago region. The study identified specific areas for growth in terms of residential, office, and retail land uses in the Downtown district and key redevelopment strategies or opportunities in the district over the short term and long term. In tandem with the market study, public meetings focused on creating and confirming a vision for the future goals and overall direction for the Downtown area.

Utility Evaluation: The project team completed an infrastructure analysis involving an inventory and evaluation of existing utilities and infrastructure in the downtown area. The study outlined key recommendations for the City to complete to upgrade critical elements of the Downtown area's infrastructure assets.

Traffic Evaluation: The project team evaluated existing traffic counts and traffic patterns in the downtown area, through field observations and data collections, and identified any potential improvements (including traffic signal improvements or roadway improvements) for the downtown district.

Parking Evaluation: A parking evaluation identified strategies for parking management, largely building on the parking study completed in 2007.

Approach to the Strategic and Streetscape Plan: One of the key elements of the overall Downtown Wheaton Plan involved outlining conceptual recommendations for upgrades to existing streetscape amenities in the district, as well as new improvements geared to elevate the competitive position of Downtown. The project team developed its recommendations based upon input from the public at a series of open houses as well as experience in other downtowns in creating public spaces that maximize the competitive positioning of local businesses and properties. The streetscape recommendations serve to bring the identified vision for Downtown Wheaton to life over the next two decades.



The MindMixer site allowed Wheaton residents to contribute ideas for the future of downtown and provide input concerning the ideas of others.

Community Engagement

The City of Wheaton coordinated public outreach along with the project team to raise awareness about the project and gain input from the broader community concerning elements of the Downtown Wheaton Plan. The City maintained a link from their website entitled “What do you want Downtown Wheaton to be” which included background documents, project updates and materials, and links to online engagement tools including Survey Monkey and Mindmixer. The project team gained valuable input from the broader community through a series of public meetings, one-on-one and small group stakeholder meetings, and online dialogues and surveys including Mindmixer and Survey Monkey.

Stakeholder Meetings

Throughout the planning process, the team held one-on-one work sessions with key stakeholders within Downtown including property owners, business owners, civic leaders, local government officials, developers, the Chamber of Commerce, and special interest groups. Stakeholders provided detailed feedback on design concepts and various policy ideas and recommendations throughout the process. In particular, they provided input concerning the key challenges faced by members of the downtown community in terms of parking requirements and policies, issues with regard to existing zoning, opportunities for soft programming and events, ideas for how to enhance public spaces, and overall strategies to strengthen downtown businesses.

Online Engagement - Mindmixer

The City of Wheaton's website hosted a link to the MindMixer application titled “What do you want Downtown Wheaton to be?”. The online engagement tool allowed members of the public to submit and share ideas concerning how to improve Downtown in an “interactive online town hall” conversation. Participants submitted ideas in response to different topics which were posted to the site and had the opportunity to “second” or support other people’s suggestions and comments or add their own ideas. A total of 184 active participants on Mindmixer weighed in on questions and responded to three instant online polls. The project team posted 17 questions or topics to Mindmixer that generated conversation and dialogue involving 212 distinct ideas for Downtown Wheaton and 301 associated comments regarding these various ideas. The Appendix to this document contains a complete listing of the ideas generated from the Mindmixer website.

Public Open Houses

The project team held four public meetings as part of the Downtown Wheaton planning process. Meetings were held at City Hall and the DuPage County Historical Museum as informal open houses in which attendees had the opportunity to review materials the project team had completed to date addressing existing conditions, comparative studies, and phases of the plan as it evolved from the existing conditions review to preliminary and final recommendations. Each meeting presented the progress the team had made to date, gathered critical feedback to inform the next stage, and addressed the next steps in the planning process. A formal presentation at each meeting was followed by an instant feedback keypad polling session in which participants were presented with questions, with their answers instantly displayed to the audience. Following each meeting the City of Wheaton posted the same questions posed at the public meeting in an online version on the city's website in order to obtain additional input from citizens unable to attend in person. The Appendix contains a summary of the keypad polling, and online polling results from each of the four rounds of public engagement during the project.

Open House 1: September 18, 2012

The first public meeting introduced the project, initial objectives and goals and presented a summary of existing conditions analyses completed to date. The keypad polling session included questions aimed at understanding the public's overall goals and vision for Downtown.

Open House #2 - February 28, 2013

The second public meeting reviewed the findings from the market study and the infrastructure analysis as well as the results from the first public visioning session. Meeting attendees participated in a second round of keypad polling focused on initial impressions regarding potential design ideas and strategies for the downtown, including festival streets and different options for outdoor dining.

Open House #3 – April 4, 2013

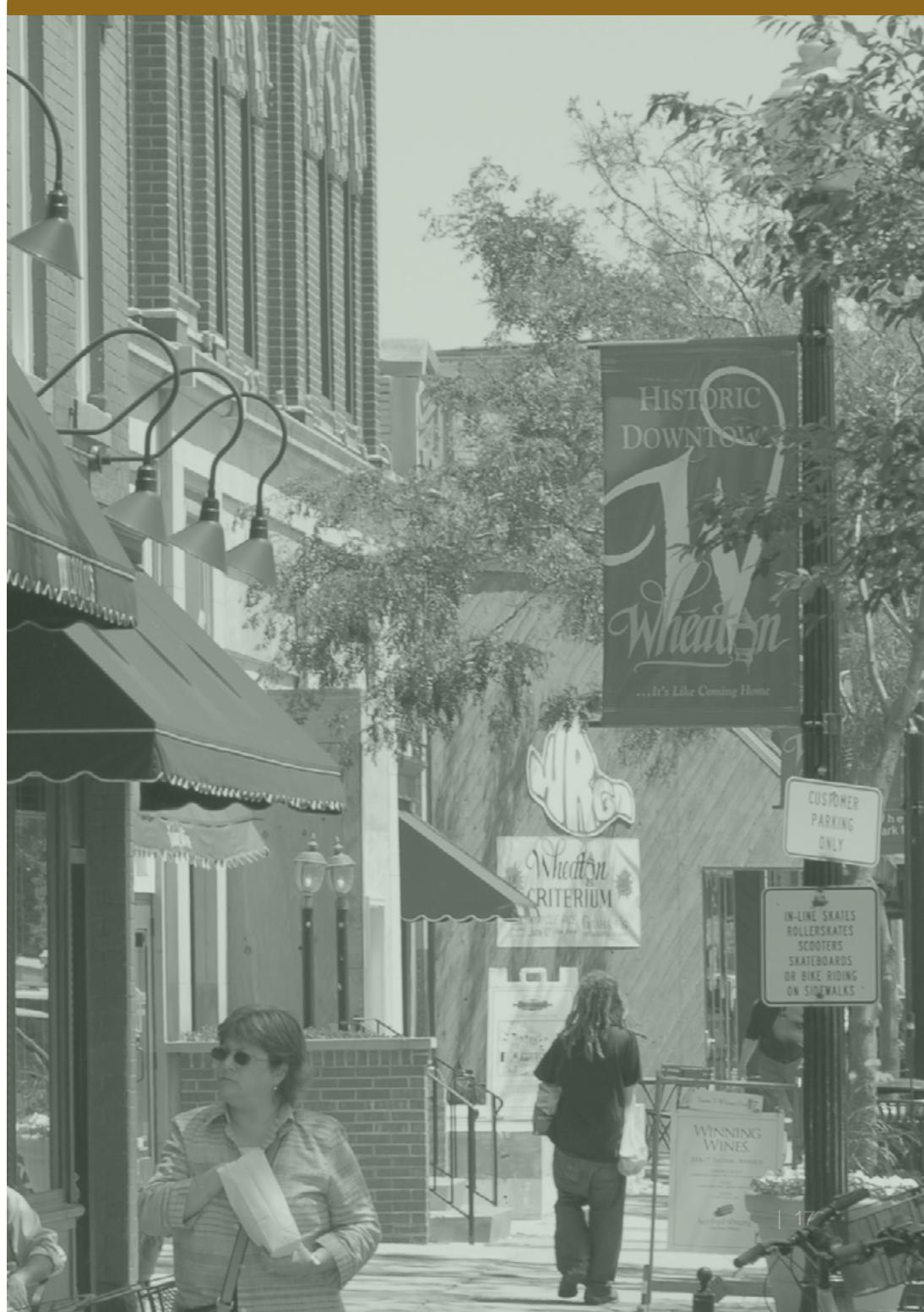
The third public meeting presented a summary of the feedback from the previous two public meetings and online engagement, reviewed draft recommendations, and reviewed streetscape concepts. Meeting attendees participated in a third round of keypad polling focused on understanding the public's priority locations for implementing festival streets, their materials palette preferences for each festival street, priorities for streetscape elements on other non-festival streets, and preferred strategies for moving forward.

Open House #4 – May 29, 2013

The fourth and final public meeting reviewed the recommendations and streetscape plans covered in the Downtown Plan. Keypad polling questions at this final meeting focused in more detail on the prioritization of various improvements around Downtown as well as various implementation tools and strategies for redevelopment in the area over the next several years. Around 90 percent of attendees at the meeting indicated that they were in favor of the City Council adopting the Downtown Plan, as it had been presented in the open house session.

3

VISION FOR DOWNTOWN



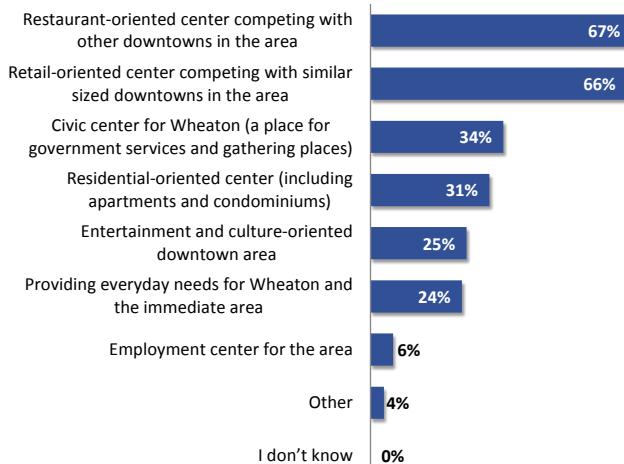
Based upon analysis and conclusions of the project team and input from the broader community at an initial “visioning session” and open house in Fall 2012, the City Council arrived at the following Vision Statement for Downtown Wheaton in February 2013. This Vision Statement helped to guide the creation of preliminary and final recommendations and implementation strategies during the overall planning process.

Elevate the position of Downtown Wheaton as a destination district in the western portion of the Chicago region by pursuing a number of civic improvements and regulatory changes designed to increase the capture rate of retail, office, and residential land uses in the Downtown.

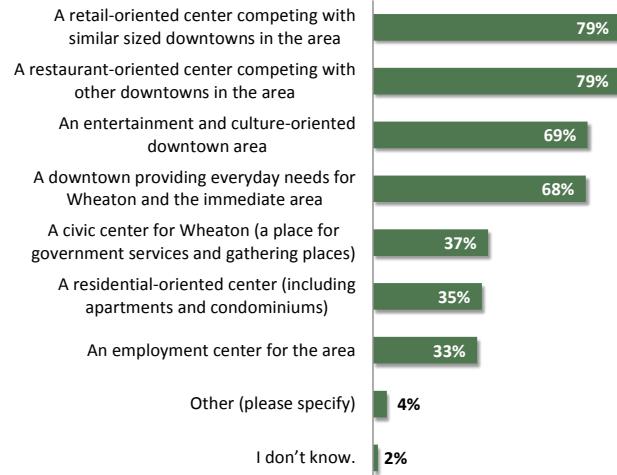
Input from the public at an initial community open house in September 2012, as well as in a follow-up online survey.

I envision Downtown Wheaton as representing the following in the future: (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Overall Strategic Recommendation for Downtown

The overall strategic recommendation for achieving the Vision for Downtown Wheaton involves the following key concepts.

- 1) Actively promoting the redevelopment and expansion of a variety of office, retail, and residential projects in the area between the Union Pacific tracks and Roosevelt Road. This strategy would expand the overall scale of space in Downtown Wheaton, help to leverage the increased business anticipated from the opening of the Mariano's development, and help to create a greater presence for the district on the Roosevelt Road corridor. This strategy should help the Downtown district in offering the types and sizes of spaces that would appeal to new retailers, office tenants, and residents.
- 2) Strategically installing key catalytic streetscape and amenity improvements in the Downtown area, as outlined in the following pages. These key improvements, including "Festival" streets, a central park in the heart of Downtown Wheaton to the south of the Union Pacific tracks, alley enhancements, and overall streetscape improvements throughout the district, should enhance the attractiveness of Downtown Wheaton in the larger suburban marketplace and result in a greater capture rate of economic activity for Downtown businesses.
- 3) Implementation of various policy and regulatory changes, as outlined in subsequent sections, in order to help stimulate greater development and redevelopment in the Downtown Wheaton area. These changes, tied to zoning, parking, and related matters, should make it easier for the private sector to work with the community to create projects that produce strong returns while helping to support the overall Vision for the Downtown district and achieve the stated Vision for Downtown Wheaton.

Catalyst Projects and Initiatives

Festival Streets

Members of the Wheaton community, in the open house sessions and in online survey responses, expressed a desire to create enhanced community gathering places in Downtown Wheaton. At the same time, the project team canvassed examples of downtown revitalizations from around the country to gain ideas concerning how to enhance overall viability for the variety of land uses in the district, including retail, restaurants, office, and residential.

Based upon this research and feedback from the public during the planning process, the Downtown Plan recommends that the community move forward with one or more Festival Streets as a key initiative to spur the ongoing revitalization and growth of the district.

As illustrated on the following pages, communities around the country of various sizes have installed Festival Streets successfully in order to create enhanced public spaces for community interaction and to drive increased commercial activity in downtown areas and related districts. Festival street designs create a “hybrid” street that provides for vehicular movement and for on-street parking and may on occasion be easily closed off and converted into a small piazza or plaza for festivals and functions. Festival streets often do not include formal curbs, and therefore the entire area between buildings on either side of the street may easily convert to a flat open area that may accommodate outdoor dining, free-flowing pedestrian movement, on-street entertainment, and a variety of community events.

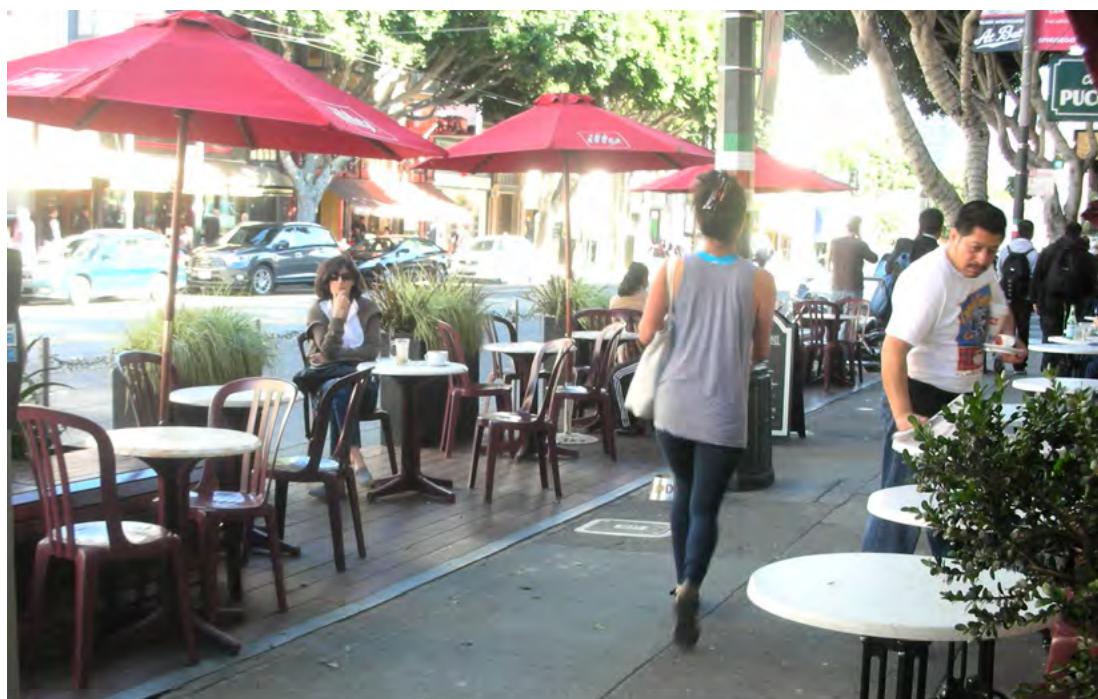
Festival Streets, in particular, enhance and promote outdoor dining and often represent the key “restaurant row” in a given downtown district. The convertible design of the street easily allows restaurants to expand their square footage of dining space, increase the number of patrons served, and to enhance and promote their business at the street level. Outdoor dining strongly contributes to a vibrant street atmosphere, and many of the most notable Festival Street examples from around the country feature a very strong outdoor dining culture.

The “Parklet” Idea

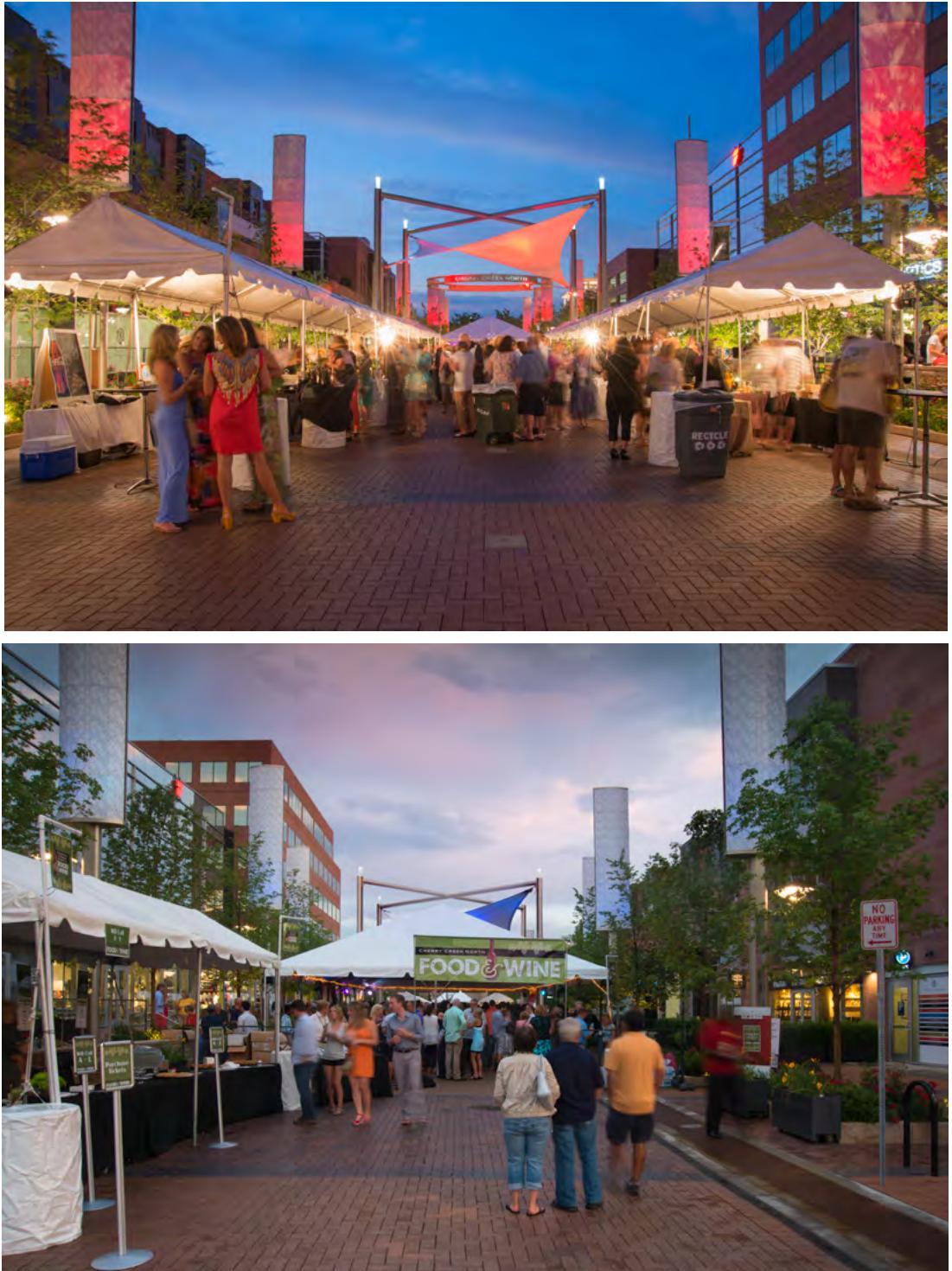
Festival street designs in particular enhance outdoor dining through the implementation of a “flex zone” or “parklet” system. The flex zone, which received strong support from the public during the planning process for Downtown Wheaton, includes a small space that extends from the normal sidewalk into the street in order to provide additional gathering spaces and amenities for outdoor dining. Flex zones are designed to be temporary and cover from two to four parking spaces along the street at a time. They are designed to be easily removed, without causing any damage or permanent changes to the street or sidewalk surfaces. The flex zones would ensure that the areas covering both the street and the sidewalk would remain at the same level, thereby creating a sense that the spaces between buildings is flat and seamless. The pavement surfaces within the flex zones, however, would include different patterns and appearances from those of the automobile travel lanes in order to provide visual cues and delineate the “flex zone” as part of the overall sidewalk zone.

Whereas sidewalks in a downtown district ideally are up to 19 feet in width, from the building to the sidewalk, in order to facilitate outdoor dining, the constrained right of ways of many of the streets in Downtown Wheaton limit the ability to expand sidewalks to facilitate festivals and more outdoor dining. Therefore, the “flex zone” or “parklet” idea fits Downtown Wheaton well, in that it offers another strategy to provide more space for festivals and outdoor dining.

Flex zones are often called “parklets”, and have gained acceptance and success in a number of American cities. In San Francisco, where the parklet idea originated, business owners usually pay the City for a permit and are responsible for the construction of each parklet. Many cities have created step-by-step guidelines to help business owners acquire the proper permits and build parklets on their blocks. Often the permit application requests documentation of support from surrounding business or property owners and the completion of a maintenance plan. As an investment, business owners have found that parklets help to beautify their block and attract more foot traffic to their shops. The Downtown Plan recommends that the City of Wheaton create a similar permit process and guidelines for parklets in the locations identified in this plan.



A “flex zone” or “parklet” system allows restaurants to expand their square footage of dining space.



Festival streets in the Cherry Creek North district in Denver were designed for community gathering spaces and events.

Liberty Drive

Creating a festival street along Liberty Drive, from Hale to Cross, would help to create a central gathering place to serve the south side of Downtown and would help to further redevelopment in the overall area from the Union Pacific tracks down to Roosevelt Road. The festival street design, in concert with the creation of a “central park” and improvements to the French Market between Liberty Drive and the Union Pacific tracks, would help to enhance the “front door” to Downtown Wheaton and therefore help to fulfill the overall vision for Downtown Wheaton gaining business and visitation from surrounding areas. The festival street improvements will create a more prominent and attractive address for properties fronting onto Liberty Drive. Specific festival street improvements will include the addition of seating areas, plantings, street trees, crosswalk improvements and similar improvements including a flattened street curb, the creation of parklet “flex spaces” for outdoor dining, and installation of bollards in order to provide for a seamless surface between the fronts of buildings and the middle of the street.

The public indicated support for a more contemporary style and application of streetscape materials along the Liberty Drive festival street, in contrast to the more historical style that is generally present throughout Downtown Wheaton.



Marion Street in Oak Park and Larimer Street in Denver are successful examples of festival streets.

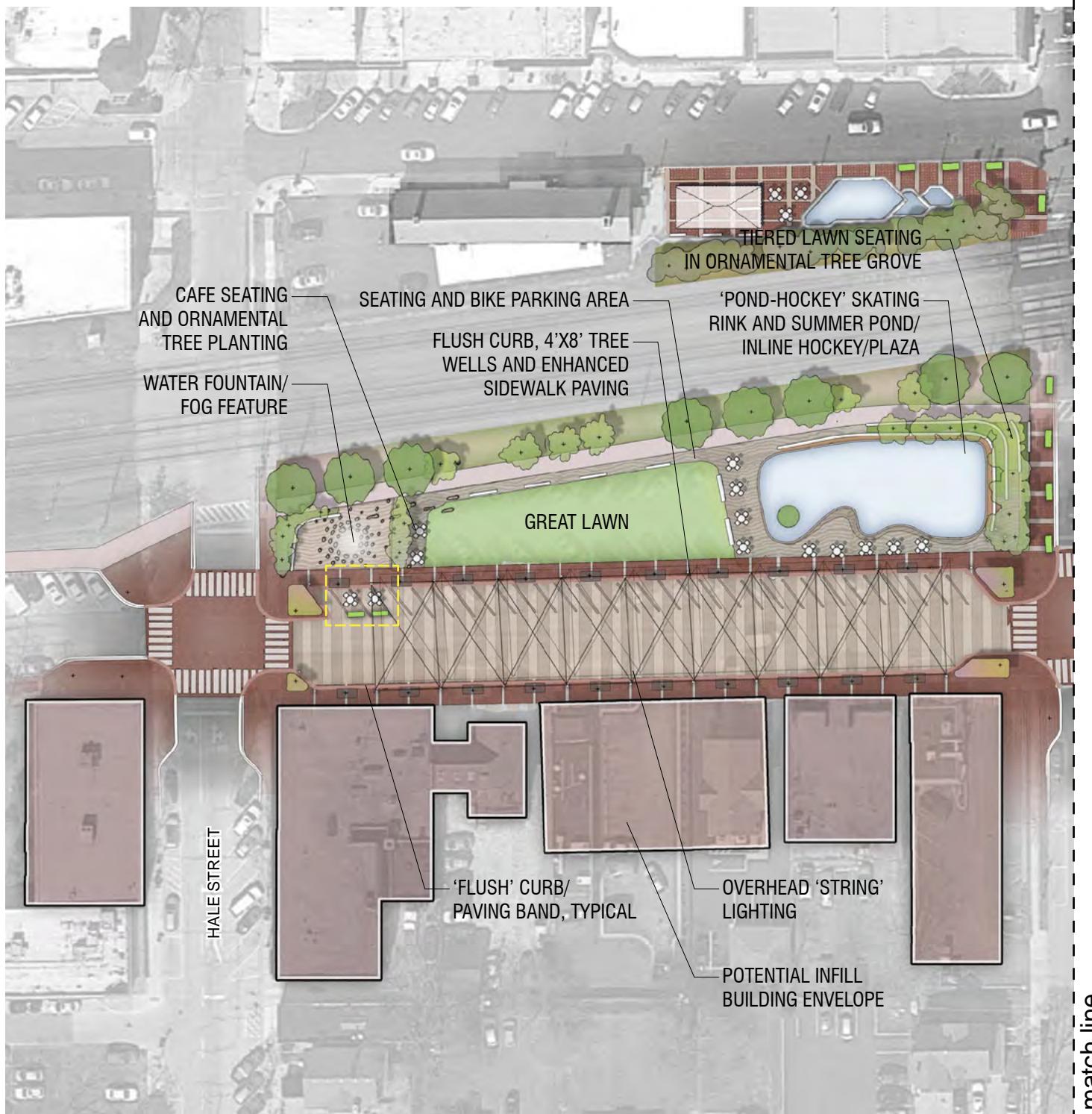
In addition to festival street enhancements along Liberty Drive itself, the overall recommendations for this corridor include the utilization of blank walls along the rear of buildings facing the Union Pacific tracks to project various light and images and thereby add vitality at night. Portable carts, equipped with projectors, would shine lights of various colors and patterns on the backs of buildings. They may “wash” the façade of an adjacent building with colored light, or with a projected graphic. The portable cart may be housed within a “kiosk” like structure at the street level, and the kiosk surface may be used as a downtown “town crier” of sorts, in order to advertise upcoming events and retailers in the downtown area. The projector port can be moved periodically to highlight different facades or parts of buildings along the railroad right of way, or to highlight or project on to blank walls on various downtown streets. The projections may serve as part of a downtown artistic program or may simply provide civic content and messaging or local advertising space, if desired.

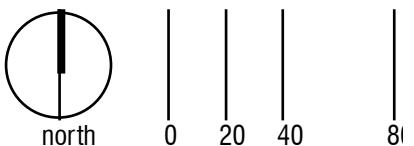
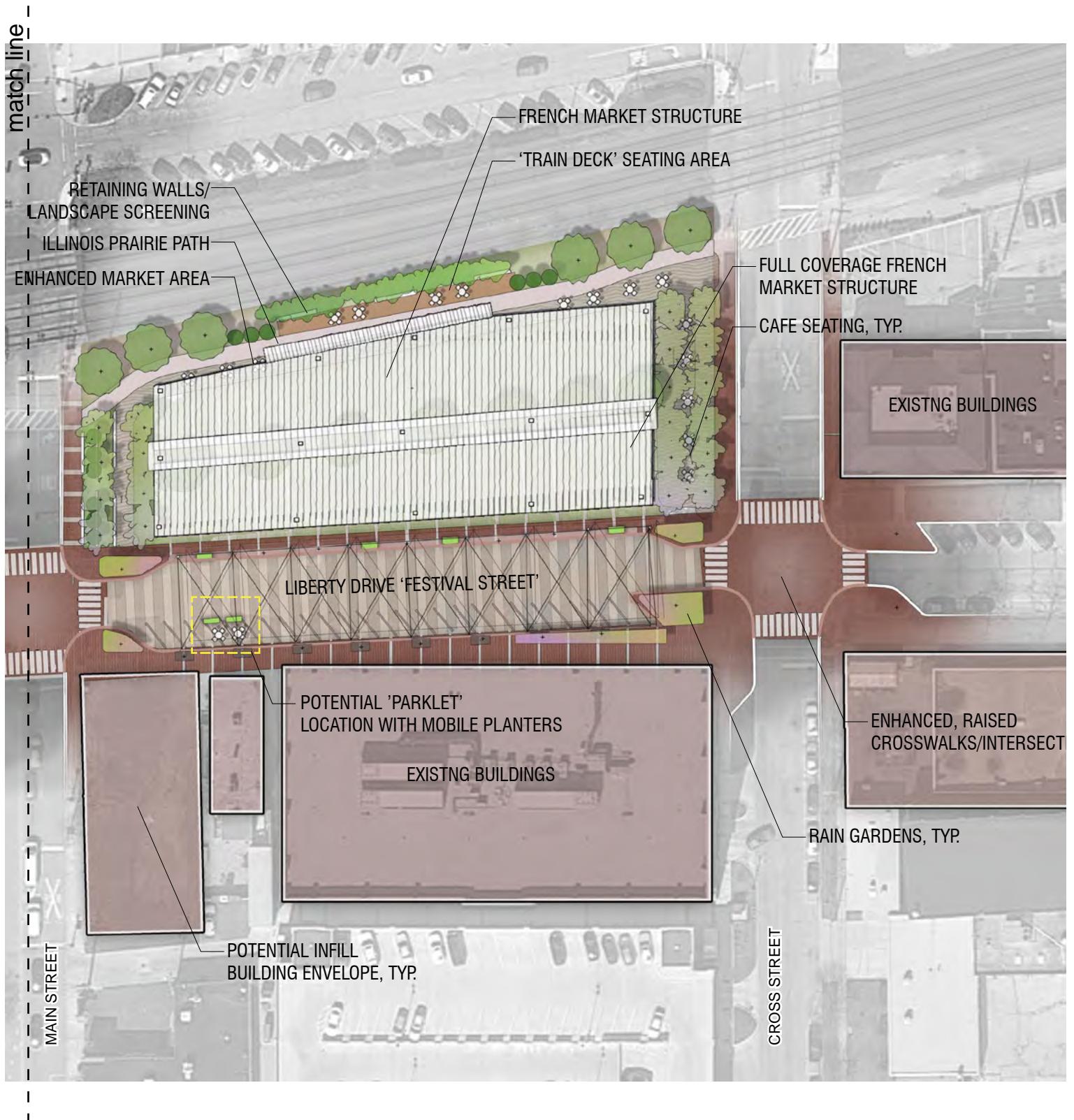
The appropriate image size for projections would be determined by the distance from the projector to the wall in question, often referred to as the “throw ratio”. Throw ratios vary for particular projector models. In the example that follows, the distance from the buildings adjacent to the railroad, to the railroad right of way, is around 15 feet. Given this distance, the image may be projected up to 14 feet high by 18 feet wide. Projected images may be enlarged as this distance increases. In most applications of this strategy, prepped surfaces (on the actual buildings) are not required but may be applied if desired. Property owners would need to be consulted, of course, for permissions in order to execute this lighting strategy.



Example of how images of local events or artwork can be projected to help activate the downtown and attract more visitors.

Festival Street | Liberty Drive





Street Furniture

The public indicated a preference for a more contemporary palette for street furniture on Liberty Drive. The Liberty Drive festival street will serve as the “front door” of Downtown Wheaton. This treatment will create a newer, sleeker look for this portion of Downtown Wheaton, setting the stage for the creation of an enhanced destination dining and shopping district.

Recommended Materials and Furniture Concept Palette - Liberty Drive Festival Street



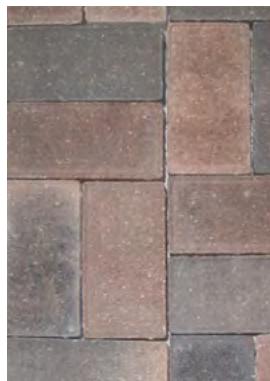
Outdoor Dining



Crosswalk



Trash Receptacles



Porous Pavement (in parking areas)



Bike Parking



Bench



Movable Planter Pots and/or Removable Bollards and Curb Treatment with Truncated Dome



Sidewalk Alternatives



Recommended Materials and Furniture Concept Palette - Liberty Drive Festival Street



Cantenary Lighting System



French Market/Event Structure



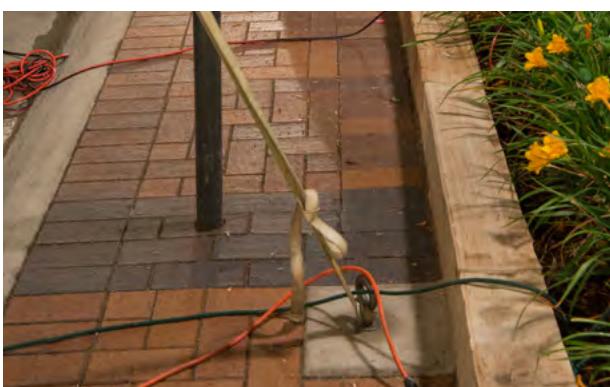
Additional Retail and Services Directory



Decomposed Granite Bike Parking



Tiered Lawn Seating with "Tree Grove"



Tent or Shade Structure Anchor



Water Feature/Pop Jet Fountain



Skating "Pond"



Rain Garden at Bulbouts



Parklet





Concept sketches of Liberty Drive festival street and proposed park. This view is looking to the southwest, with redevelopment on blocks to the south.



View looking east on Liberty Drive at the proposed Central Park during a community event



View looking east on Liberty Drivet at the proposed Central Park

Hale Street

Hale Street already boasts a number of prominent restaurants and the Wheaton Grand Theater and serves as one of the key locations for the Taste of Wheaton festival. It also includes a wider right of way, from building front to building front, compared to the other streets in the older part of the downtown district, to the north of the Union Pacific tracks. Therefore, Hale Street represents a very logical location to introduce a festival street concept over time, to build upon the existing demand for outdoor dining and create a key gathering space in the heart of the historic downtown core area.

The design for Hale Street will include bollards that could easily be removed, allowing the entire street area to convert to outdoor dining or festival space. When the street is not closed to traffic for events, these bollards would separate automobile space from pedestrian space.

In line with input from the public throughout the planning process, the design of the Hale Street festival street would include historic styles that would draw from the historic patterns currently present in streetscape and building features throughout Downtown Wheaton. The lighting design for Hale would include the installation of a "catenary lighting" system, in which lights are strung across the street throughout the year, in order to add a distinctive element to the street's appearance. As illustrated in the diagrams, the festival street design for Hale will engage the Wheaton Grand Theater by providing additional space in front of the theater entrance and providing enhanced planting areas right around the theater and the adjoining pedestrian passageways.



Taste of Wheaton Festival, Hale Street, 2013. The new Festival Street design should help to enhance this and other festivals in the future.



View looking north on Hale Street at the Wheaton Grand Theater

Festival Street | Hale Street

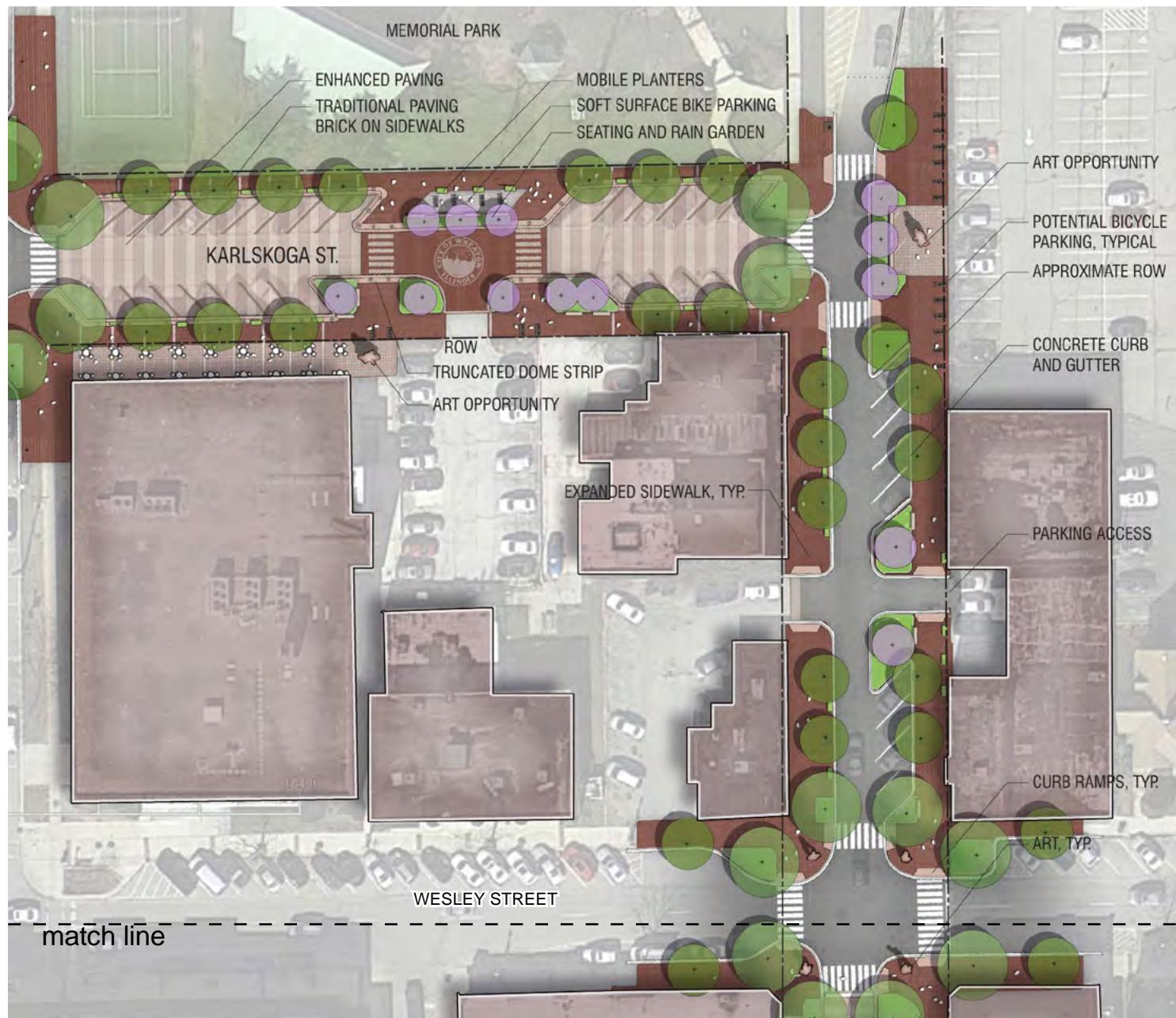


Karlskoga Avenue

The Downtown Plan recommends that the City eventually upgrade this small section of Karlskoga Street, from Wheaton Avenue to Hale, as a festival street in order to provide an enhanced “spill over” space for events held in Memorial Park, such as the Taste of Wheaton. The proposed design would provide a seamless space between the park and the street, through the installation of a flat curb and movable bollards and planters. The design calls for the removal of the existing parking meters and the installation of more street trees. The festival street design would include dimensions geared to accommodate temporary tents for events, and the City should ensure that future enhancements to Karlskoga include the provision of sufficient power supplies to support temporary outdoor entertainment and dining facilities and vendors, as well as overhead lighting.

In addition to supporting the ongoing success of festivals based in the Memorial Park area, a festival street upgrade to Karlskoga could also support the outdoor dining facilities of any restaurants located along the south side of Karlskoga, toward Wesley Street. Because Karlskoga carries very little vehicular traffic normally, the street could easily serve as a beer garden for a nearby establishment in the downtown area, for example.

Festival Street | Karlskoga Avenue + Hale Street



Street Furniture

The public indicated a preference to maintain the historic or Victorian-style street furniture palette for the festival streets in the historic core of downtown (including Hale St. and Karlsgo Ave.)

Recommended Materials and Furniture Concept Palette - Hale and Karlsgo Festival Streets



Bike Parking



Bench



Crosswalk



Outdoor Dining



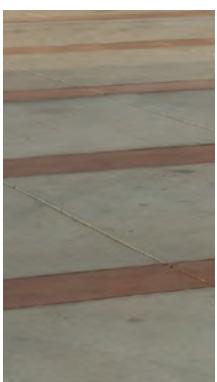
Trash Receptacles



Movable Planter Pots and/or Removable Bollards and Curb Treatment with Truncated Dome



Sidewalk Alternatives



Porous Pavement (in parking)



Rain Garden at Bulbouts



Parklet





Cantenary Lighting System



Overhead Plaza Structure



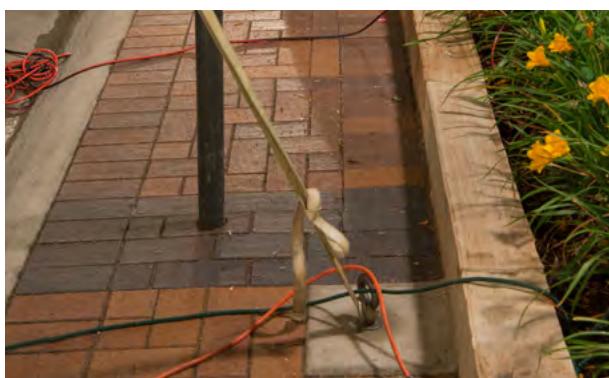
Additional Retail and Services Directory



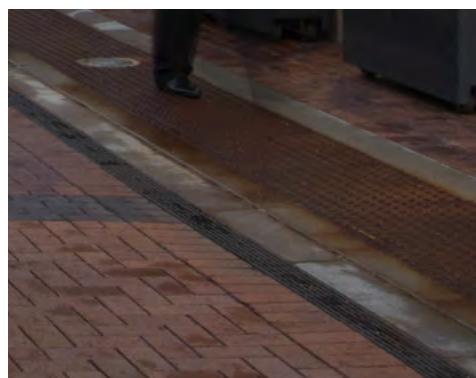
Decomposed Granite Bike Parking



City Logo in Pavement



Tent or Shade Structure Anchor

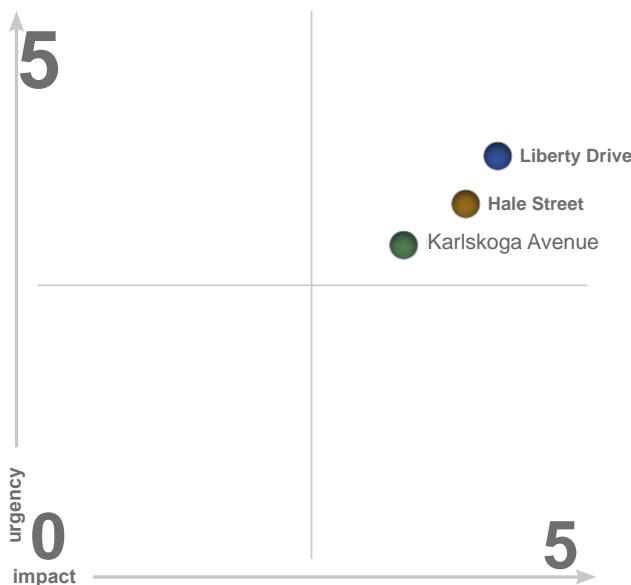


Curb Treatment with Truncated Dome

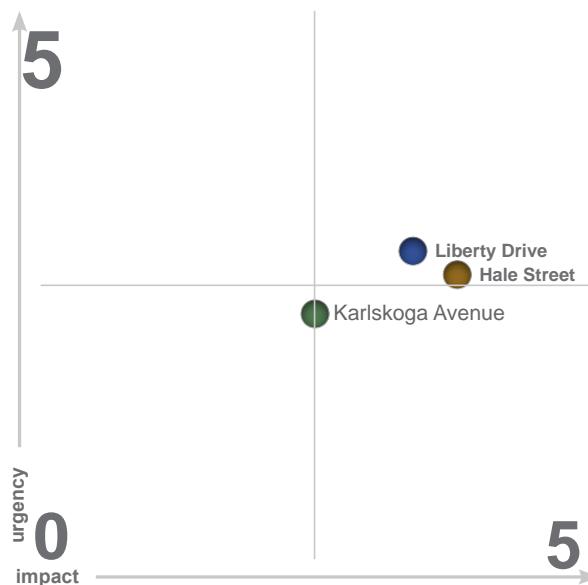
Prioritization of Festival Streets

In order to help prioritize the implementation of the three festival streets, participants in the planning process were asked to rate the perceived IMPACT and URGENCY of implementing the three different festival streets in Downtown Wheaton, using a scale from 1 (equaling the “lowest”) to 5 (equaling the “highest” impact or urgency). As illustrated below, the public generally indicated that improvements to Hale and Liberty would create greater impacts in Downtown Wheaton and perhaps are more urgently needed, compared to the proposed improvements to Karlskoga Avenue.

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



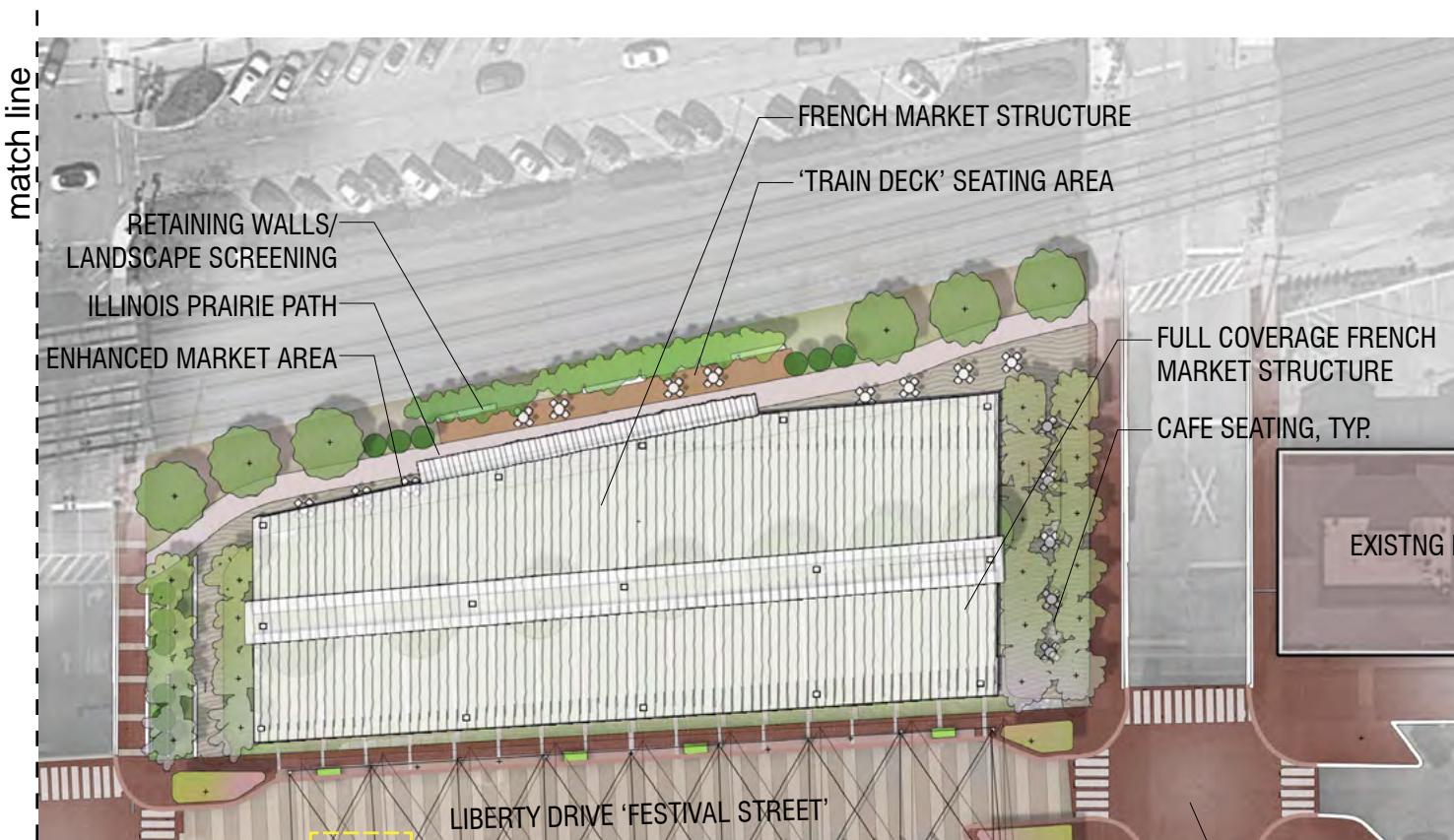
Central Park | Liberty Street



Central Park and French Market Upgrades

In addition to the festival street upgrades along Liberty Drive, the Downtown Plan recommends the installation of a 'Central Park' between Liberty and the Illinois Prairie Path, on the site of an existing employee parking lot. The concept of the Central Park, supported by 71 percent of respondents in the public outreach process, will provide a central gathering place for residents and visitors, provide the foundation for upgrades to the French Market facilities, and will help to bridge the north and south sides of downtown.

The open space-oriented portion of the park, between Main Street and Hale, would include a small ice rink, lawn space, water features, amphitheater space, and various seating areas. Downtowns and shopping districts around the country have successfully leveraged small public skating rinks in order to attract increased business during colder months. The community could leverage the amphitheater space to provide space for performing artists from Wheaton and beyond, particularly during the warmer months, and thereby enhance the vitality of the downtown district. Water features have proven to be popular with families and children and should further enhance the attractiveness of the central park and downtown for these audiences during the warmer months. All of these improvements would tie in with the adjoining Illinois Prairie Path. The presence of this path next to the central park should entice visitors from throughout DuPage County to visit Wheaton by bike and should help enhance Downtown Wheaton's stature as a key gathering place in the western suburban region.





Top: Buffalo, New York market structure
Bottom: Covington, Virginia market structure

Top: Little Rock, Arkansas market structure
Bottom: Overland Park, Kansas market structure

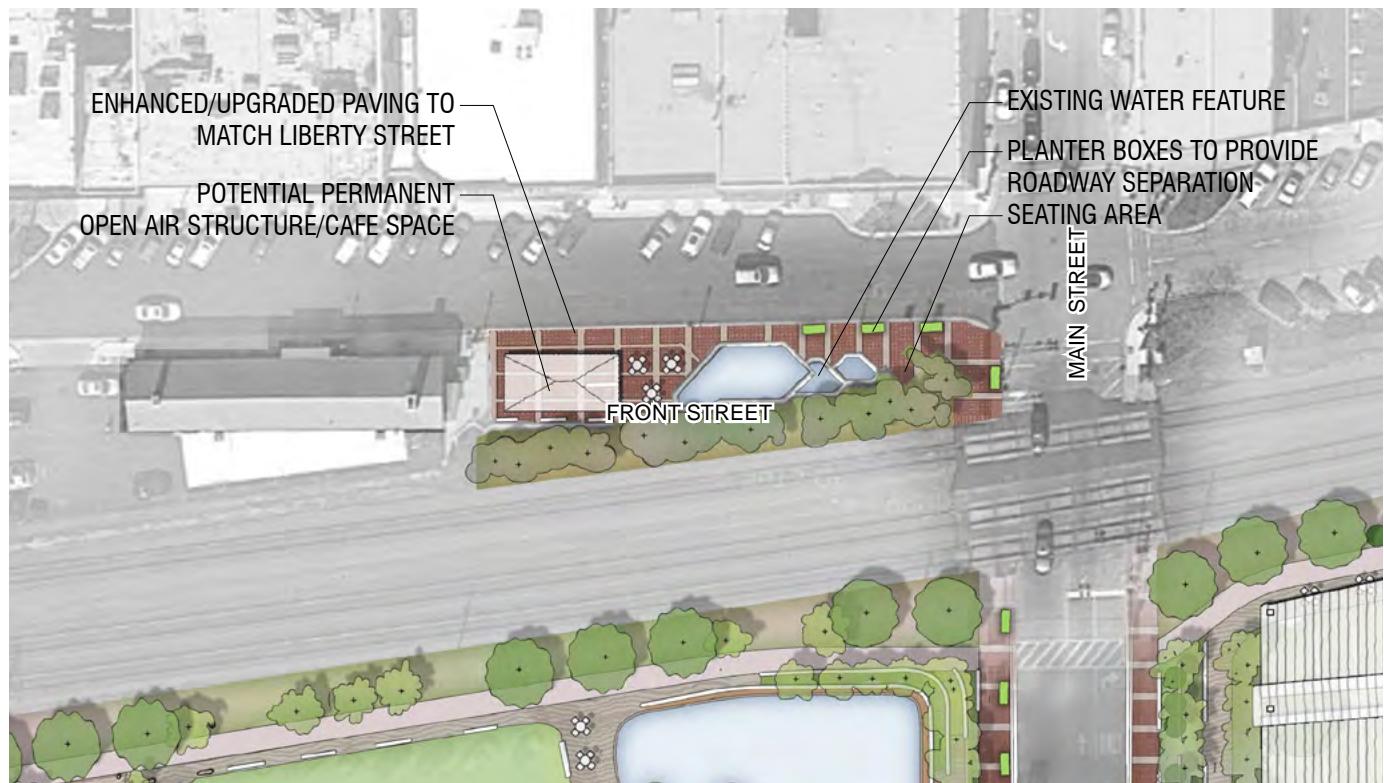


Artistic Rendering of the Potential French Market Permanent Structure in Downtown Wheaton

The eastern portion of the Central Park, between Main Street and Cross Street, would accommodate an expansion of the French Market into a permanent structure that would span the entire area currently covered by a city parking lot. A number of farmers markets throughout the Midwest have grown to eventually include permanent structures that shield vendors and shoppers from the elements and provide a sense of identity for the particular market. Most markets that have completed permanent structures have witnessed increased business and visitor numbers over time.

The permanent structure could include an option to enclose the area, with garage doors or other means, in order to provide indoor space for market activities during the colder months. This strategy would allow the city or the French Market to sponsor holiday markets (Halloween, Christmas, Easter, Valentines Day, etc.) during the colder months. The permanent structure space could also be used for a variety of community gatherings and events unrelated to market activities, throughout the year. The permanent structure for the French Market could create an identifiable icon along the Union Pacific tracks and therefore help to enhance the overall sense of identity for Downtown Wheaton in the minds of residents from nearby communities.

Tied to the strategy for the Central Park and the French Market, the Downtown Plan recommends that the community upgrade the materials and design of the existing Martin Plaza, along the north side of the tracks, and just to the west of Main Street. The city could upgrade the existing water feature at Martin Plaza, and could also consider installing a permanent restroom for the public in the area around Martin Plaza.



Potential improvements to Martin Plaza

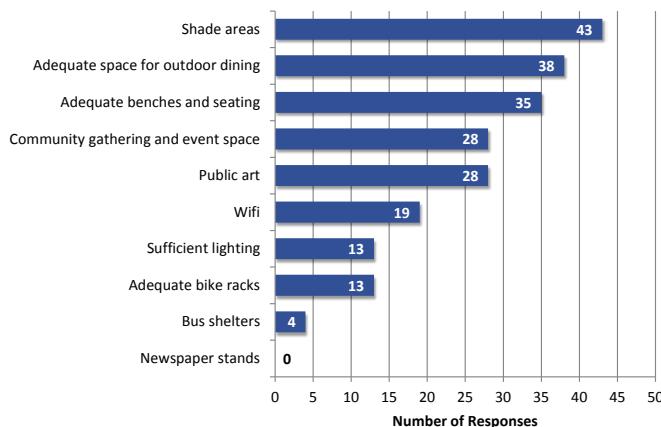
Main Street Upgrades

As redevelopment occurs south of the Union Pacific tracks, and the Liberty Street festival street and park area is constructed, the City should prioritize upgrading the streetscape along Main Street from Roosevelt Road to Front Street. Main Street is the main connection between the existing downtown retail core, the proposed downtown park and festival street improvements, and the parks adjacent to Mariano's.

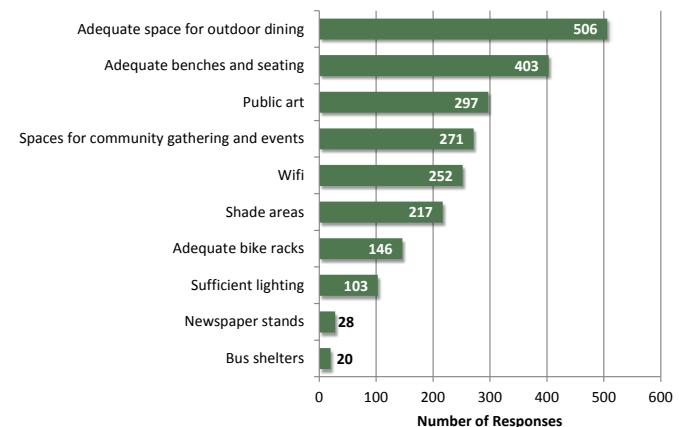
These upgrades would help to create an improved front door for Downtown Wheaton from the Roosevelt Road corridor and thus would help to fulfill the vision of attracting a larger pool of patrons to the downtown from surrounding communities. The enhancements to Main Street should also spur some redevelopment interest for areas to the east and west of Main, and to the south of the tracks.

What is missing from the current design of the streetscape in Downtown Wheaton? (Choose your top three)

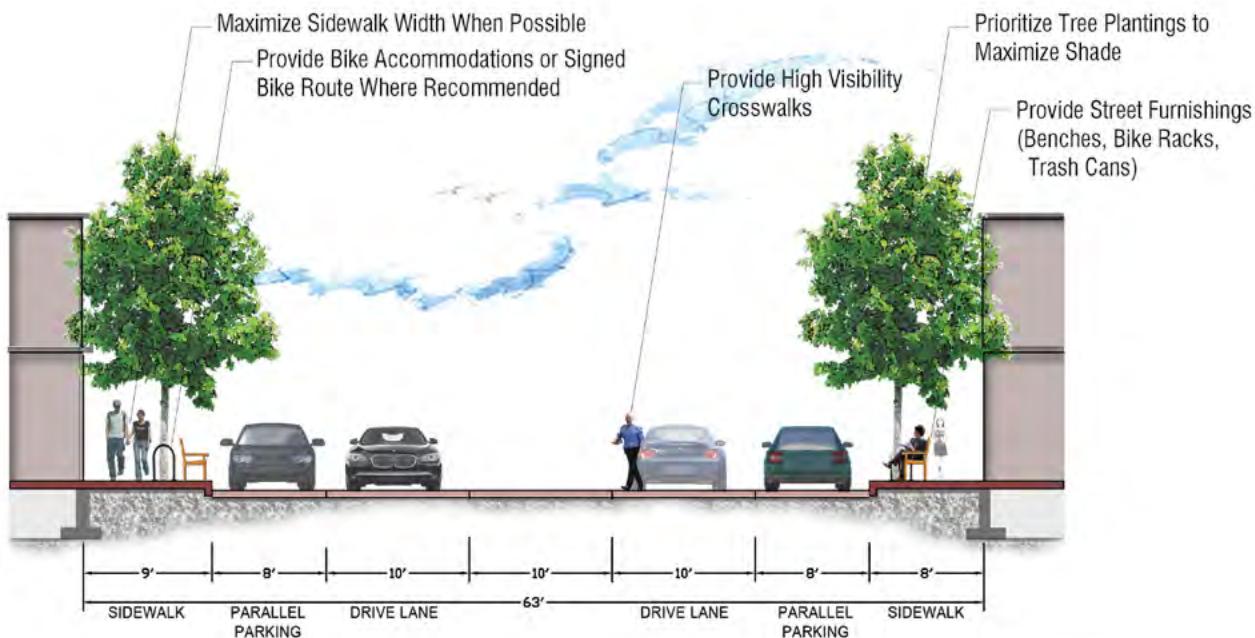
Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



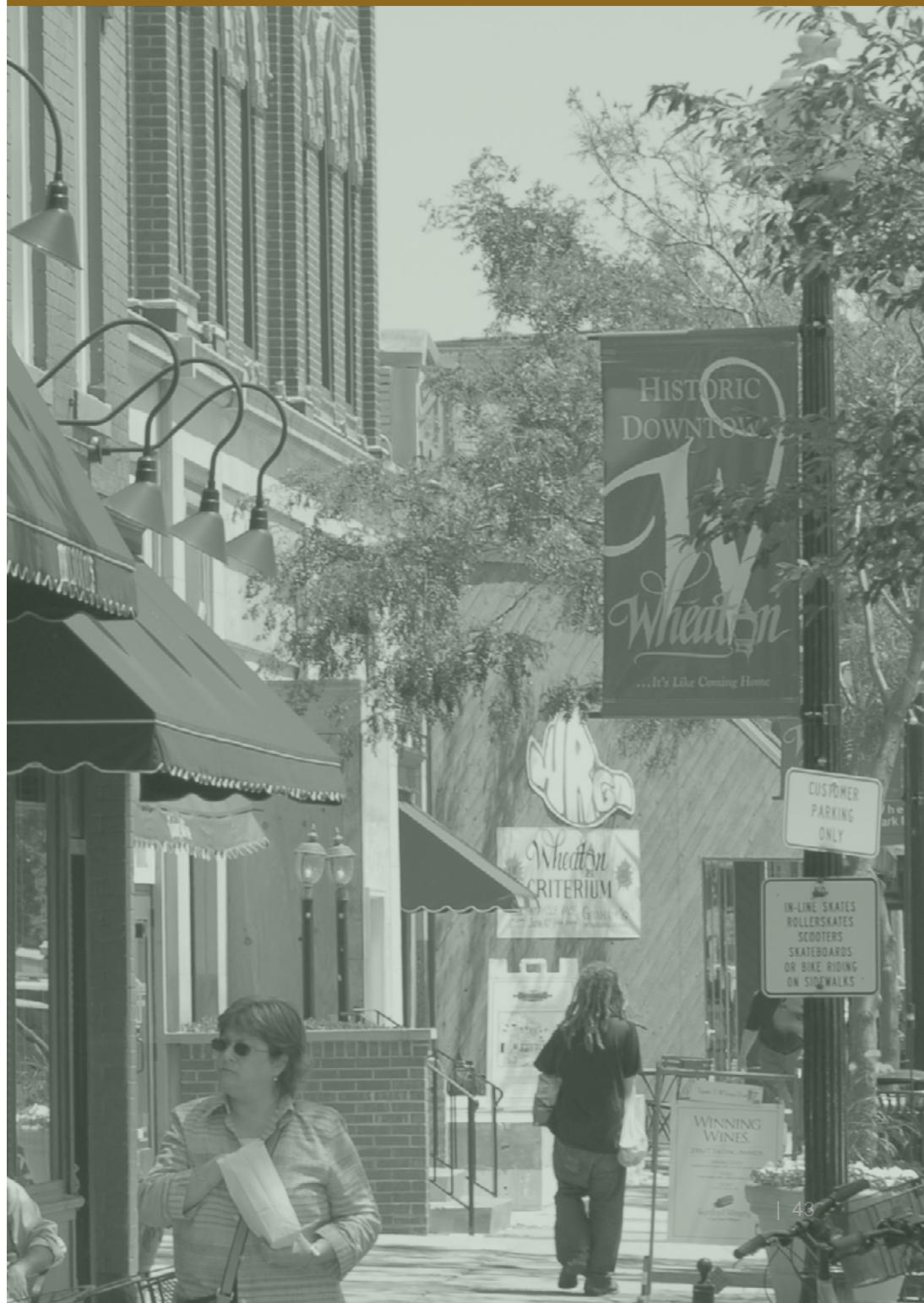
Potential Street Section for Main Street



Main Street



RECOMMENDATIONS/ STRATEGIES BY CATEGORY



While the previous section identified specific major improvements to particular areas within Downtown that would serve as catalytic changes for the area, this section outlines overall recommendations that will benefit the overall Downtown over the next two decades. These recommendations apply to all parts of the district and should help the City and stakeholders in executing the plan recommendations over the short term and long term.

Economic Analysis and Economic Development

In order to understand the current economic and demographic conditions in Downtown Wheaton and to determine the potential viability for a variety of land uses over the short term and long term in the downtown district, the project team conducted a market study addressing residential, retail, entertainment, and office uses. The study involved analysis of demographic and market information from publicly and privately available sources, discussions with brokers, developers, and others involved in the local real estate market, site visits to competing downtown districts in Chicagoland, and research into comparable downtown districts in the Midwest and nationwide. This section provides a summary of the key findings and recommendations of the market study. The complete market study document is provided as an appendix to the Downtown Plan.

Demographics

A key element of the market study involved examining demographic trends and projections concerning population, income, age, and other factors pertaining to Downtown Wheaton and the surrounding areas in DuPage County. This analysis reveals trends impacting the viability of retail, office, residential, and other land uses in the downtown district.

The market study examined demographic trends for trade areas tied to five, 15 and 25 minute drive times from Downtown Wheaton. In general, these drive times represent typical drive time metrics used in completing economic analyses for comparable districts. In general, local retail or entertainment trips would entice someone to normally drive up

Key Demographic Information: 5, 15, and 25 Minute Drive Time Trade Areas, Downtown Wheaton

| 5 Minute Drive Time | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| | 2000 | 2010 | 2015 (Est) |
| Population | 12,904 | 13,241 | 13,327 |
| Households | 4,343 | 4,456 | 4,508 |
| Median Age | 30.5 | 30.3 | 30.4 |
| Median Household Income | \$67,117 | \$81,688 | \$96,217 |

| 15 Minute Drive Time | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| | 2000 | 2010 | 2015 (Est) |
| Population | 281,752 | 291,110 | 291,445 |
| Households | 98,071 | 101,695 | 101,975 |
| Median Age | 33.9 | 35.7 | 36.0 |
| Median Household Income | \$67,334 | \$82,247 | \$93,979 |

| 25 Minute Drive Time | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| | 2000 | 2010 | 2015 (Est) |
| Population | 1,087,145 | 1,140,602 | 1,149,905 |
| Households | 390,770 | 412,162 | 416,023 |
| Median Age | 35.2 | 37.0 | 37.2 |
| Median Household Income | \$66,288 | \$80,994 | \$92,964 |

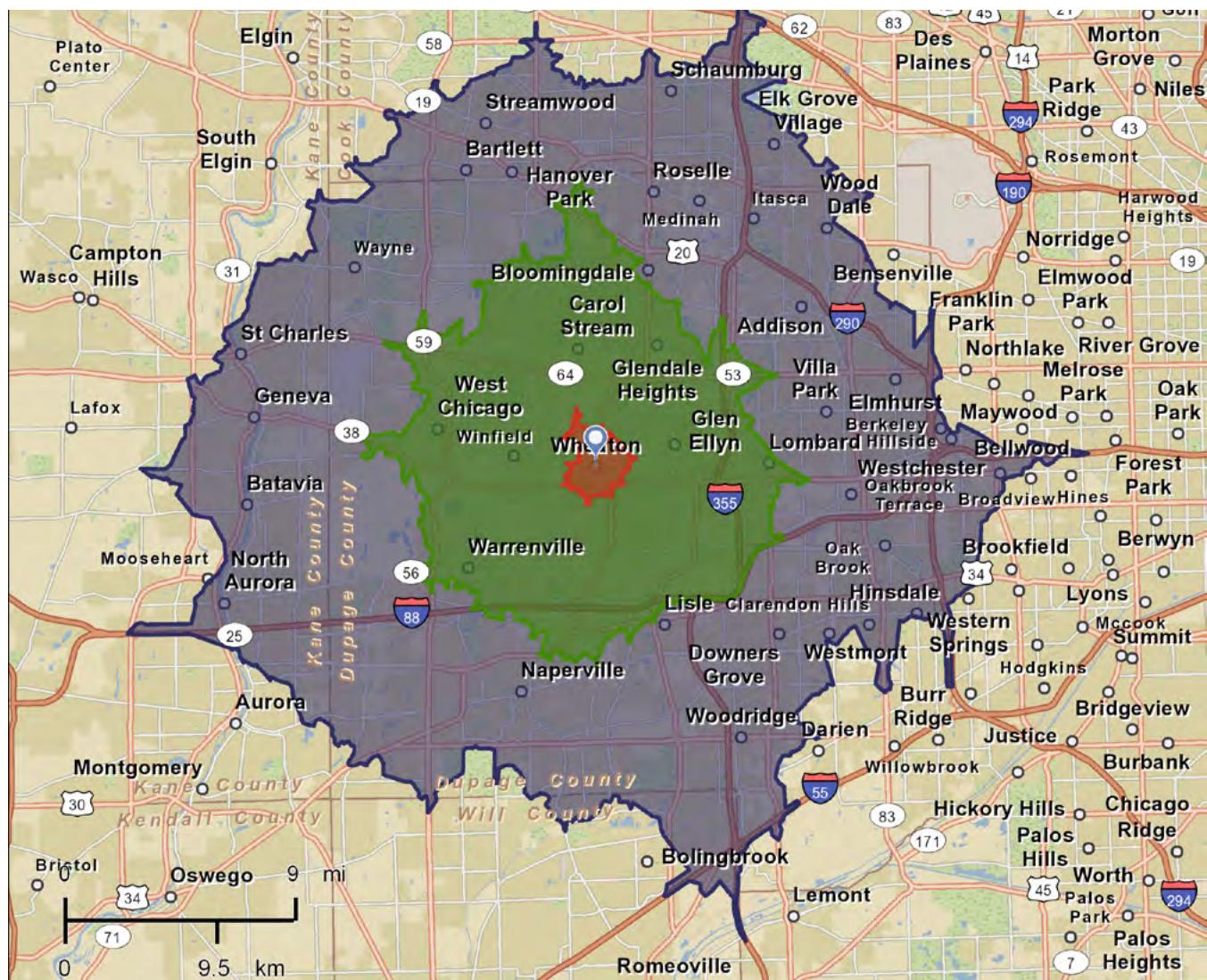
Source: ESRI

to five minutes by car, and that most people will not drive more than 25 minutes to visit a local downtown district on a regular or semi-regular basis. The area within a five minute drive of Downtown Wheaton has essentially remained unchanged in terms of population over the last ten years and will gain fewer than 200 new residents between 2010 and 2015. The area within a 15 minute drive of Downtown gained nearly 10,000 new residents from 2000 to 2010 but will gain fewer than 400 residents from 2010 to 2015. The area within a 25 minute drive of Downtown Wheaton, including a very large portion of the western suburban region, gained over 50,000 new residents from 2000 to 2010 but will gain fewer than 10,000 residents from 2010 to 2015.

In general, while all of the trade areas surrounding Downtown Wheaton report median household incomes that far outpace averages for the Chicago region and Illinois as a whole, the area is largely "built out" and will not gain a material number of new residents for the foreseeable future. Therefore, since the overall trade areas surrounding Downtown Wheaton will likely remain relatively static over the next few decades, the clearest way for Downtown to gain increased business is to increase its capture rate of potential business versus competing downtowns in the area (such as Naperville, Geneva, etc.) as well as a variety of other shopping options (including malls, and other shopping centers in Wheaton and beyond). The other way to stimulate or produce additional demand for goods and services in Downtown Wheaton would be to introduce additional residents in the downtown district through the construction of additional residential units (townhomes, apartments, etc.).



Figure 1: 5, 15, and 25 Minute Drive Time Trade Areas Surrounding Downtown Wheaton. Source: ESRI



In addition, while some of the other downtowns in the area enjoy somewhat better access to local and regional transportation routes (including major boulevards, as well as area freeways and tollways), Downtown Wheaton contends with a somewhat more isolated location in the broader DuPage County and western suburban market. These factors have tended to limit the ability of the downtown district to draw from a larger regional market. Therefore, in order to capture a larger share of the market, Downtown Wheaton must make a concerted effort to create a unique and higher quality experience for visitors and residents alike. Improvements identified as part of the Downtown Plan may in part help the district entice a larger pool of residents in the local market to live in or patronize the downtown district.

Tenant Mix: The market study examined the mix of tenants in Downtown Wheaton versus various other downtowns in the suburban region and arrived at the following takeaways:

- Downtown Wheaton benefits from the presence of a significant pool of professional services offices. These offices help drive traffic, to varying degrees, to the downtown district from local residents.
- Relative to its size as a downtown (compared to larger downtowns such as Naperville and Geneva), Downtown Wheaton has a significant number of eateries, including restaurants, bar / grills, coffee houses, and snack shops. The presence of a number of well-known restaurants already attracts visitors from the surrounding local area.
- Downtown Wheaton contains relatively fewer clothing and apparel stores, and much fewer shoe stores, compared to other downtowns such as Arlington Heights, Geneva, and Naperville.
- While some of the peer downtowns contain entertainment offerings such as theaters, comedy clubs, or piano bars, Downtown Wheaton at present offers few entertainment-specific tenants to attract visitors to the district.
- One of the key differences between Wheaton and the larger downtowns in the area lies in the presence of national versus local tenants. In contrast to local malls, that largely contain national chains, all of the area downtowns mainly host locally or regionally based tenants. However, the downtowns in Naperville, Oak Park, Elmhurst, and Arlington Heights contain a greater share of national versus local tenants, particularly with respect to restaurants and other eateries. National chains account for up to one fifth of the total number of restaurants and eateries in these four downtowns, whereas nationals account for only 12 percent of the total number of establishments in Downtown Wheaton.

Competing Downtowns Near Wheaton

| | Downtown Wheaton | Downtown Arlington Heights | Downtown Downers Grove | Downtown Elmhurst | Downtown Geneva | Downtown Naperville | Downtown Oak Park |
|--|------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Shopping / Retail Total Tenants | 34 | 60 | 65 | 73 | 65 | 120 | 49 |
| National | 1 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 20 | 10 |
| % National | 3% | 13% | 2% | 4% | 2% | 17% | 20% |
| Local | 33 | 52 | 64 | 70 | 64 | 100 | 39 |
| % Local | 97% | 87% | 98% | 96% | 98% | 83% | 80% |
| Food / Beverage Total Tenants | 33 | 38 | 37 | 49 | 37 | 41 | 35 |
| National | 4 | 6 | 2 | 10 | 2 | 15 | 11 |
| % National | 12% | 16% | 5% | 20% | 5% | 37% | 31% |
| Local | 29 | 32 | 35 | 39 | 35 | 26 | 24 |
| % Local | 88% | 84% | 95% | 80% | 95% | 63% | 69% |

Market Recommendations

Based upon the existing conditions analysis and analysis of competing and comparable downtowns locally and nationwide, the market study arrived at the following key findings and recommendations, to inform the larger downtown planning effort.

Note that the demand projections for various land uses are approximate, and relate to the combination of near term and long term estimates of growth. Projections for longer time frames (more than 5 or 10 years out) of course are less definitive and depend on a host of variables that will play out in the coming years. These recommendations are based upon the information gathered from the local market as well as the long term trends in terms of consumer and residential behavior that will continue to impact Wheaton and surrounding communities over the next twenty years.

Summary of recommendations

- Downtown Wheaton should continue to evolve as a sub-regional downtown that draws from its strengths as a small town, family-oriented district. Over the next 20 years, the potential exists, based upon the existing and potential market in the local area, to attract up to an additional 80,000 square feet of retail and entertainment uses, 1,000 residential units, and from 50,000 to 75,000 square feet of office uses.
- Downtown Wheaton should avoid trying to copy its neighbors, trying too much to be like its neighbors, or simply copying a formula from another city or state. Wheaton has a distinct and authentic feel and image, and it should leverage and polish these strengths rather than trying to pursue a model that may not make sense.
- The potential exists to position additional land uses and their demand in the area to the south of the tracks in order to connect and leverage the new Mariano's development on Roosevelt Road. The development of this area should focus on creating a good placemaking strategy and ensuring that the development of this area ties with the overall brand, image, and level of quality associated with the rest of Downtown Wheaton.
- Wheaton should explore additional entertainment offerings, particularly those that would appeal to families and seniors, as other downtowns tend to lack sizeable entertainment tenants and this appears to represent a possible opportunity in the local suburban market.
- Drawing from examples around the country, Wheaton should use the streetscape and strategic plan as a tool to help create better community gathering places for festivals, dining, and overall interaction. Other downtowns have actively and carefully designed for these types of spaces and enjoyed commercial success.
- Wheaton should pursue a strategy of encouraging further residential development in the downtown area in order to support retail land uses and to help encourage the support of a dynamic environment in the downtown district at all hours of the day and at various times during the year.

As a general comment, the recommendations and observations within this report pertain to the projected market and economic conditions in Downtown Wheaton over the next 20 years. The community may take a number of years and several phases to fully evolve over this 20 year window, given the need to find funding for improvements and to plan for development in an orderly manner.

Retail and Entertainment

The downtown area in Wheaton contains approximately 300,000 square feet of space in aggregate, depending on the classification method used. In essence, the downtown area contains significantly less space (for all land uses) compared to downtowns in Naperville and Elmhurst.

All of the trade areas surrounding Wheaton are not expected to materially grow in terms of population over the next few decades. While ESRI projects healthy growth of the already affluent income levels in the local area, one can reasonably assert that incomes may continue to grow relatively slowly over at least the next five to ten years given the slow growth pattern the United States has entered (growth of a few percentage points at most in a given year).

Retail demand is largely impacted and determined by two factors – population, and income. The populations around Wheaton are not expected to grow over the next few decades, and incomes may only modestly grow at a rate above inflation in the future as well. Therefore, based upon the current demographic situation in Wheaton, retail demand would not normally grow in the downtown area.

This situation leaves Wheaton with only two ways to increase the demand for retail in the downtown district. First, it could increase the population immediately surrounding the downtown district by actively pursuing residential growth and development. Traditionally, for example, real estate experts plan for the creation of a new shopping center and a grocery store once a town or a development reaches a critical mass of 10,000 to 12,000 residents. The section follows will address the potential for residential growth. If one were to assume that the Downtown could attract a few thousand additional residential units in aggregate over the next 20 years, this (combined with planned development at Wheaton 121 and the Courthouse project) would translate into a potential increase in the population in the heart of Wheaton of 5,000 to 7,000 residents (assuming a metric of 2 to 2.5 people per household). While this number alone may not support another neighborhood retail center alone, this would represent a sizeable increase in the base of spendable income in the immediate downtown area. At the very least it would help support the existing base of shops and restaurants and would likely support an increase in the overall retail footprint of the downtown area.

The second route to increased demand for retail simply lies in delivering a better experience, better product, and a better mix of shops, restaurants and services compared to competing downtowns. This strategy would involve enhancing the “capture rate” of overall retail spending in Wheaton compared to other downtowns and districts within the local market. This would represent having a “better mousetrap” compared to the neighboring downtowns. Assuming Wheaton completes and executes a carefully crafted strategy to increase visitors and business, the overall retail demand for the district can increase over the next few decades.

Pinpointing an exact square footage of additional supportable retail in the downtown area between now and 2030 is difficult given the timeline and forecast horizon. However, given the market context, the nature of the competing downtowns, and the location and attributes of Downtown Wheaton, it is reasonable to anticipate that the downtown could absorb an additional 80,000 square feet of retail over the next 20 years (note, this would include space beyond the currently planned Mariano's development).

This growth in retail square footage would result from 1) demand for local retail resulting from an increased population / household base in the downtown area over the next few decades as a result of increased residential development, and 2) an improved capture rate for Downtown Wheaton of the larger retail market in the DuPage County area for various types of retail spending. Based upon normal metrics for retail development, this study estimates that around one-half or 40,000 square feet of the additional retail space in Downtown Wheaton could be substantiated by the potential residential growth in the downtown area. The 40,000 square feet total may include dry cleaners, restaurants, convenience retail, and other day-to-day retail that would support residents living within or in close proximity to Downtown Wheaton.

The overall retail market in the "East West" sub-market (including most of DuPage County) includes a total of over 3.5 million square feet of space. Downtown Wheaton currently captures less than 10 percent of the retail market, in this sub-market. An addition of 40,000 square feet of retail would translate into an enhancement of a point or two in terms of the capture rate for Downtown Wheaton of the overall retail market in DuPage County (the East West sub-market). A concerted effort to enhance the marketability of the downtown area, through amenities and marketing strategies, should allow Downtown Wheaton to enhance its capture rate by a few percentage points and therefore help the district add a small amount of additional retail space (regardless of any increases in population in the downtown area).



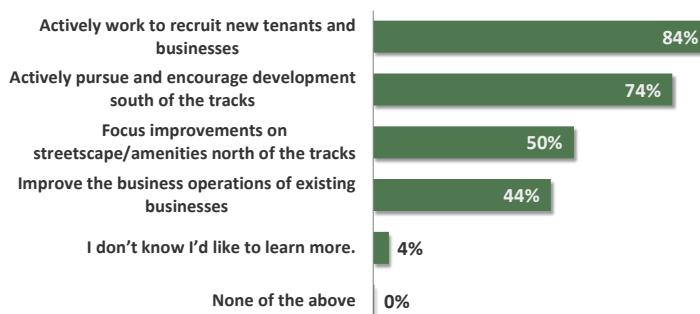
Potential Built-out South of the Union Pacific Railroad Tracks (view looking north)

Importantly, any additional development would likely evolve in phases in the downtown area. In addition, the ability to develop a certain amount of retail may depend on other non-market factors, including the available infrastructure, the available footprints for development, and other factors.

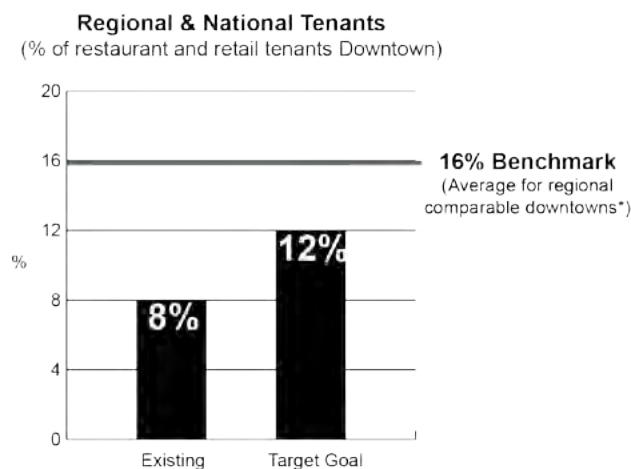
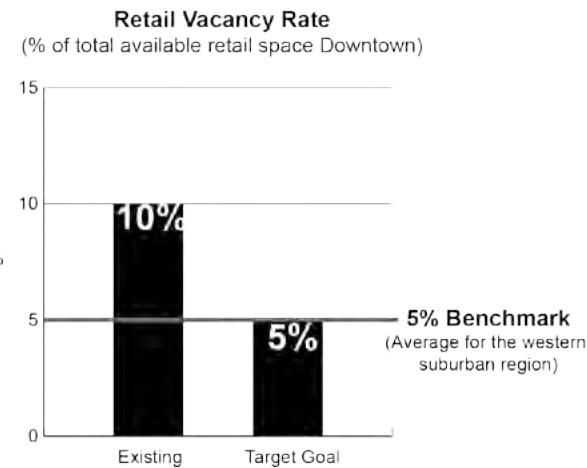
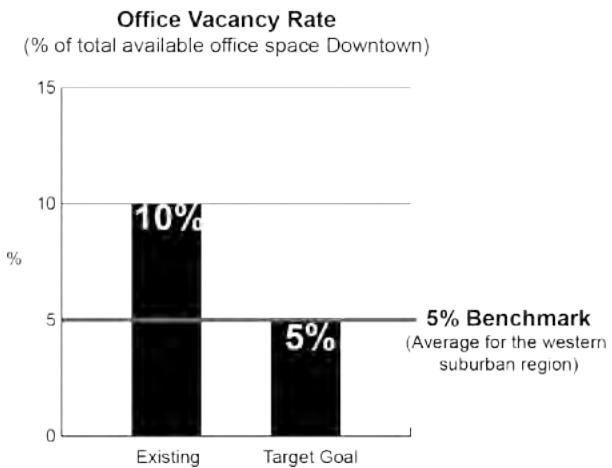
Beyond this macroeconomic projection, this study contains the following recommendations for retail in the Downtown Wheaton area. The market study provides profiles of comparable downtowns and draws lessons learned from these districts to inform recommendations. These comparable downtowns demonstrate similar demographics and market contexts or are competitor downtowns to Wheaton.

- The experience and research of the project team reveals that downtowns should work to include a mixture of some national tenants along with local tenants, in order to increase the diversity of the district and appeal to a wider market. However, given its location and the nature of the district, the study does not anticipate that Wheaton would evolve to include a significant pool of national retailers over the next few decades. While Downtown Naperville has attracted many of the “usual suspects” of national retailers in a lifestyle or destination district (including Gap, Banana Republic, etc.), Downtown Wheaton should pursue a strategy that instead draws from its inherent, small town strengths rather than copying from Naperville. Many examples nationally exist of downtowns that have resisted simply filling their stores with national tenants and instead have cultivated a distinct brand and identity built upon the strength of local tenants. National tenants can and often do pay higher rents and are more credit worthy than local tenants and therefore Wheaton should look to add some degree of national tenants, but civic leaders should be careful to not overemphasize the inclusion of national tenants in the downtown area.
- Downtown Naperville and Town Square Wheaton have the market cornered locally for national name brand clothing and apparel retail outlets. Downtown Wheaton as noted already has a strong pool of local restaurants, but has a relatively weak set of clothing and general retail tenants. Efforts by the City, Downtown Wheaton Association, and other parties going forward should focus on recruiting distinctive tenants that would attract shoppers from throughout the area and help to create a distinct reputation for Downtown Wheaton. For example, the downtown may wish to pursue and focus on photo or art galleries or higher end home furnishings in order to establish a district as a key destination in the suburbs for this type of product. While Wheaton can add more boutiques and clothiers, it may make sense to not concentrate on this segment, as a host of other downtowns as well as various malls (as well as malls that are repositioning into destination or lifestyle centers) will focus on this segment.

I would support the following ideas to improve the competitive position of Downtown Wheaton? (Choose all that apply)



ECONOMIC METRICS:



*Comparable downtowns included: Arlington Heights, Downers Grove, Elmhurst, Geneva, and Oak Park

- While Wheaton has a good roster of existing restaurants, the downtown should focus on making the roster ever better and “polishing the apple” with regard to the mix of restaurants and eateries. Wheaton should explore attracting restaurants or destination eateries that may be unusual or hard to find in the suburbs. Everyone knows Chicago for its neighborhoods of ethnic restaurants. Wheaton could explore, for example, establishing itself as a downtown known for a certain kind or kinds of cuisine.
- As mentioned in the previous sections, Downtown Wheaton should work to help polish and strengthen the brand recognition and image of the district in the minds of people in the area. Using the streetscape plan as a vehicle to identify those improvements that would help to identify this brand or identity would serve as the springboard for an effort over the next several years to bring the identity and brand / image of Downtown into focus in the local marketplace.
- Downtown Wheaton should work with officials at Wheaton College to ensure that the district is fully leveraging the spending power and economic strength of the nearby college. The Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Wheaton Association should work with merchants to ensure that they are offering goods and services that would appeal to the college population. The Downtown should also explore additional programming events in the district throughout the year in order to better integrate the college into the area. For example, allowing or facilitating musical groups from Wheaton College to perform on downtown streets at various times would increase connections between the college and downtown and would also enhance the appeal of the district to shoppers and passersby.
- Downtown Wheaton should work with officials from the French Market to ensure that any upgrades or expansions of the market facilities leverage the appeal of the market as much as possible. Many downtowns around the country have successfully used established farmers markets as a way to drive increased restaurant and retail sales. The city and downtown leaders should make sure that the French Market has visibility in marketing materials and in gateway signage. They should also work with the French Market to integrate programming events (such as live music) with normal market operations. The city should work with the French Market to explore options for year round market sessions or for special markets to be held at key times during the off season (such as during the Holidays).
- Downtown Wheaton should work to strengthen and diversify its line-up of festivals and create great places in the downtown district that naturally attract visitors and residents to spend time in the area. The overall region is growing slowly at best. The route to success entails simply creating a better place that will attract visitors and business. Creating community gathering places, plazas, and festivals and events that appeal to the widest segments of people in the suburbs is key. Wheaton should explore hosting additional festivals in the non-summer months, and it should explore strategies to leverage the power of the French Market and perhaps other public markets to drive business to Wheaton from throughout the county.
- In terms of entertainment uses, very few of the competing downtowns offer distinct entertainment land uses. Wheaton will again boast an entertainment venue upon the completion of renovations to the Wheaton Grand Theater on Hale Street in a few years. The downtown may want to consider attracting other types of entertainment uses not found in competing downtowns, such as comedy clubs, piano bars, family entertainment centers or arcades, or other game oriented venues that attract young adults, families, and in some cases Empty Nesters as well.

Office

Projections of future residential growth and projections of future employment levels in a given community or region inform projections for future office demand in a given market. As mentioned, the population of the trade areas surrounding Downtown Wheaton is unlikely to materially increase over the next twenty years given the built-out nature of the DuPage County and western Cook County markets. With the exception of any additional office demand spurred by the addition of residents (through infill development), population growth will not stimulate additional demand for local serving office uses (doctors offices, insurance, real estate, etc.).

On a broader level, while Chicago will continue to serve as the business capital of the Midwest, the concentrations of employment are beginning to strengthen in the Downtown Chicago market and close-in districts of the City and, if anything, will continue to weaken or remain fairly slow growth-oriented in the dominant suburban markets over the next few decades. Corporate users are often choosing downtown locations if available, and some corporations are commencing a reverse migration back to the core. Whereas Sears fled Downtown Chicago in the 1990s for Hoffman Estates, today corporations are just as likely to move back downtown where they can more readily attract younger workers and enjoy the benefits of transit adjacency, access to leading hotels and restaurants, and other urban amenities. Outer suburbs will continue to likely offer incentive packages to try to lure companies, and this strategy can and often does work in attracting distribution centers, warehouses, back-office operations, and more “commodity” office spaces, but in terms of the types of office that Downtown Wheaton would likely pursue (professional offices or corporate offices), location and the provision of amenities will remain key to decision makers.

As mentioned, Downtown Wheaton is not positioned to secure a significant nucleus of corporate office space to compete with the scale of corporate campuses present in the Oak Brook area or the larger campus complexes along the Tri-State and East-West Tollways. However, Downtown Wheaton, given its access via Metra to Chicago and the potential to create and maintain a distinct place in the suburbs, does have the potential to gain a larger share (or capture rate) of the office market over the next few decades. The existing office market in Downtown Wheaton includes from 150,000 to 200,000 square feet of space at the current time. It is possible for Downtown Wheaton to increase this total by perhaps as much as 50,000 to 75,000 square feet over twenty years. However, doing so would require a careful creation of a brand and image for Downtown Wheaton, active recruitment of new businesses, and patience. Because companies today are using less space per employee, the growth of the office market anywhere will lag the rates seen from the 1950s through the 1990s in most markets. Over time, and through careful and patient execution, Wheaton may be able to increase the overall demand for office space in the district.

Perhaps more important to Wheaton is to play the “flight to quality” game and to ensure that its pool of existing office space presents the best options for prospective tenants. The city should work with other partners to encourage the renovation and positioning of existing space in order to maximize occupancy and maximize the potential lease rates in the existing footprints downtown. By creating a better downtown district overall complemented by great retail, good entertainment, good places to eat and drink, and good gathering places, the overall effort will help the district in providing a “quality” environment for potential office users. By polishing the apple in this way, Downtown Wheaton can compete against other Metra adjacent downtowns and also out-compete local office building offerings in the immediate Wheaton area and in surrounding towns such as Glen Ellyn, Carol Stream, and Winfield.

Residential

The overall residential market in the Chicago region will continue to recover slowly over the next several years, but as mentioned several fundamentals in the American housing market have likely shifted and will change the long term prospects of the housing market over the next two decades. Because the allure of homeownership has waned and younger generations do not view homeownership as necessarily the best investment, the market for rental properties of various forms will remain strong for at least the mid-term if not the long-term. Given the rising cost of fuel and congestion in the region, locations near Metra and other mass transit will continue to attract interest for residential product. The recent trend toward apartment and condominium development in the Metra-served downtowns in the Chicago region will continue. The rate of interest in residential will ebb and flow with the cycles of the broader economy over the course of two decades, but in general downtowns like Wheaton will continue to generate interest, particularly if these downtowns actively cultivate a strong image and brand and create a place that naturally attracts residential interest. Just as Downtown Chicago and nearby districts such as the West Loop, Lincoln Park, etc., with their numerous amenities, stand out as areas of residential and retail growth in the broader region, so too can downtowns such as Wheaton's in the suburbs.

Two key target markets represent likely buyer types for residential product in the Downtown Wheaton area. Empty Nesters, including retiring Baby Boomers, represent the largest target market for apartments, condominiums, and townhomes in the local market. Many of these potential residents already live in single family neighborhoods in the suburbs, and for many the idea of living in the City of Chicago presents too many complications in terms of traffic, crowded conditions, and elevated price points. For those Boomers who want to stay in the Chicago region, enjoy a higher quality of life, and also enjoy all that the city has to offer, a downtown like Wheaton's represents a natural place to live. Empty Nesters renting or buying smaller units can dispense with the headaches of homeownership and maintenance, enjoy access via Metra to all that Chicago has to offer, and closer to home can enjoy the benefits of a thriving downtown in a suburban setting.

A smaller subset of potential residential renters or buyers includes younger professionals, either married or single, in their 20s and early 30s. Families with children are less likely to live in smaller units in the downtown area, but young professionals just starting out or wanting to live in a good district with amenities and access to the City would consider living in Downtown Wheaton. While many companies are moving to the city and many young workers live in places such as Lincoln Park and complete reverse commutes to suburban jobs, for a portion of the younger pool of workers, the prospect of sitting on the Eisenhower or Kennedy expressway to go to a job in Oak Brook, Schaumburg or beyond may prove too daunting. For some of these younger workers, they can "have their cake and eat it too" by living relatively close to suburban jobs in DuPage or western Cook counties and also enjoying the benefits of a nice downtown and access via train directly to Downtown Chicago.

Based upon regional numbers concerning residential units, Downtown Wheaton could attract another 1,000 residential units over the next 20 years, phased over time. The exact mixture of for-rent apartments versus the introduction of for-sale condos or apartments may depend on market and investment conditions in a given year during this time span. Given the framework of the existing downtown, these residential units may more likely fill in south of the tracks. Clustering residential near the Mariano's may represent a good place to create and support a neighborhood-oriented retail cluster along the southern flank of downtown, toward and along Roosevelt Road.

In addition, the market study recommends the following:

- Wheaton, in allowing further residential growth, should be very careful and guiding in ensuring that the residential product, whether for sale or for lease, is of the level of quality in keeping with the image and brand of downtown. A "problem" apartment complex that declines in condition, for example, can bring down the image and viability of an entire downtown. Wheaton should explore residential opportunities but ensure that these developments emphasize Quality over Quantity.
- In keeping with the overall design of the downtown, future residential development should look to provide parking either under or behind the main streets in the downtown district, in order to provide for a better streetscape and urban design framework.
- The city should entertain senior living options, but may wish to more actively pursue projects that market to active adults, rather than assisted living units. Residents living in assisted living quarters are obviously less likely to venture out and spend as much money on eating, drinking, or shopping. The ideal market segment for residential in the area includes couples without kids from 50 to 70 years old with significant disposable income or higher net worth who enjoy active living, getting outside, and enjoying the downtown environment.

Hotel or Lodging

While not discussed in detail in this study, the project team believes the City should explore integrating a hotel in the downtown area. Many comparable downtowns in other parts of the country feature a smaller hotel of higher quality that appeals to visitors seeking out a nice district in which to shop or dine while on vacation or on a business trip. The competing downtowns in the area do not have any hotels and therefore this may represent an untapped market in the western part of the Chicagoland area. Although local road access is not perfectly ideal, Downtown Wheaton is located within a 15 minute drive from many of the key office parks along the East-West Tollway. The access to Metra may also appeal to hotel visitors. A hotel market study completed for the City of Wheaton in 2009 concerning the Hubble School site concluded that traditional, larger format hotels (common along freeways in the Chicagoland market) would not attract sufficient demand in the downtown market (including along Roosevelt Road) given the distance from Downtown Wheaton to major employment centers and expressways / tollways in the region. However, the study did identify some potential for a hotel around Downtown Wheaton that would attract business from extended-stay travelers and social functions in the local area (such as weddings). The study also noted that the presence of Wheaton College would contribute to the viability of a hotel project in the Downtown area. The study concluded that a nationally branded extended stay hotel property (such as a Staybridge Suites or similar) would have the best chance of success in the downtown market. It furthermore noted that non-nationally branded boutique hotels faced the greatest difficulties in terms of staying in business during the Great Recession given the lack of access of these properties to national reservations systems. While this study does not identify the precise recommended size of a prospective hotel in Downtown Wheaton, the project team recommends the city pursue and investigate this real estate opportunity in the downtown area.

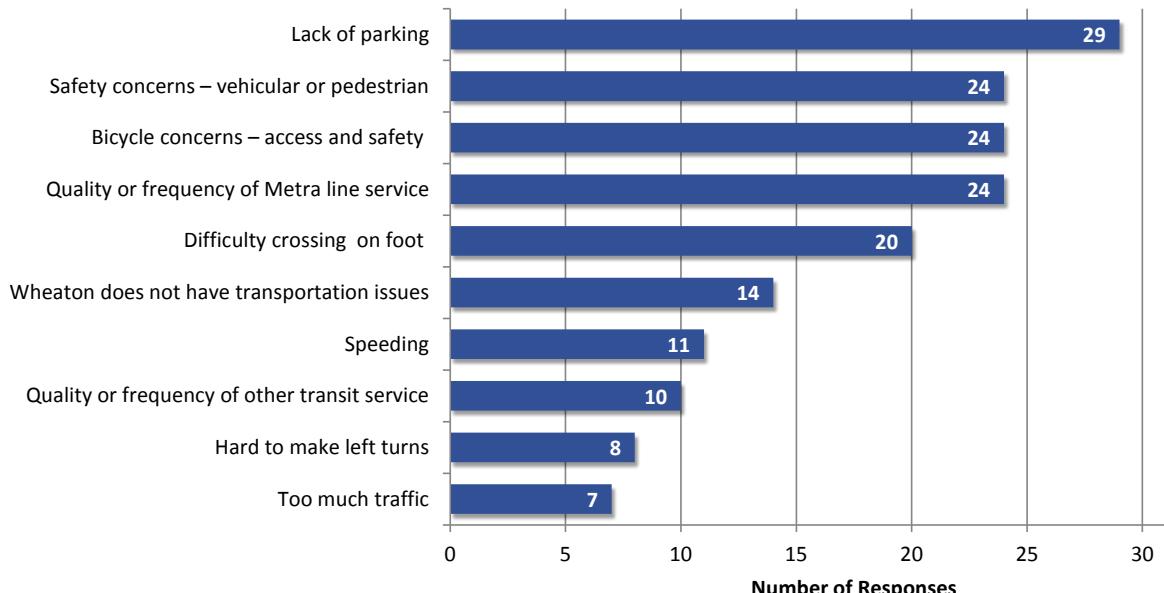
Transportation Network Analysis and Recommendations

Traffic Evaluation

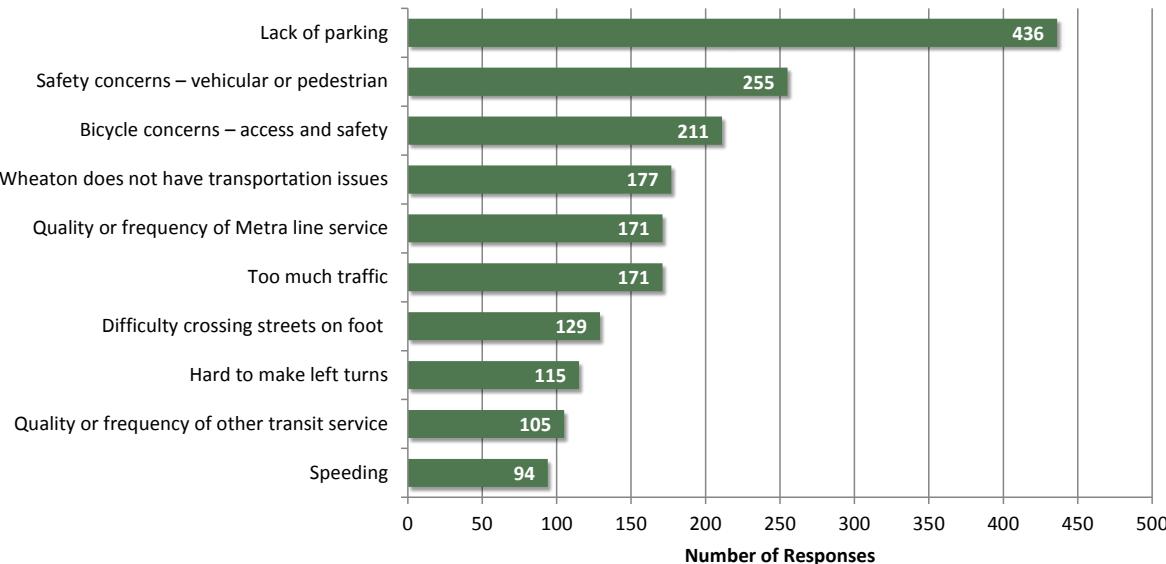
The project team evaluated existing traffic and transportation conditions in the Downtown area through the collection of field count data, field observations, and follow-up analyses. Working with City staff, engineers on the project conducted traffic counts at a sample of intersection locations in Downtown Wheaton. Using the collected data the team determined the degree of delays and the level of service (LOS) for each of the subject intersections. The intersections in the downtown area, based upon the available information, operate at acceptable levels of service. The greatest delay occurs at the intersection of Main Street and Illinois Street, which is a four-way stop sign controlled intersection. One of the more significant traffic issues within the downtown is the disruption to traffic flow that is caused by the existing Union Pacific railroad tracks.

Which transportation issues concern you most in the downtown area? (Choose your top three)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Level of Service

To obtain a more objective and precise picture of traffic conditions, the project team performed traffic counts at various locations on August 28th, 29th, and 30th, 2012. Specifically, engineers conducted counts for two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening at each of the following locations:

- Main Street & Illinois Street
- Illinois Street & West Street
- Liberty Drive & Hale Street
- Wesley Street & Hale Street
- Wesley Street & West Street
- Willow Avenue & Cross Street

The project team selected the traffic count locations in order to provide for a representative sample of traffic patterns and volumes in the downtown area. Using the data collected, the engineers identified traffic counts for the AM and PM peak hours and used this information to determine the level of delay at each location and the level of service (LOS) for the particular intersections.

The project team considered the possibility of converting the existing one-way streets to a two-way orientation. Although some degree of circulation enhancement would result from this modification, there would also be a corresponding increase in overall traffic delay at the traffic signals and stop sign controlled intersections. In addition, two-way streets require a larger footprint. A conversion of the one-way streets would have a negative impact on sidewalk widths and the number of on-street parking spaces. The initial round of public engagement (the public meeting in September 2012 and online survey responses) did not reveal a strong desire to explore conversion of the one-way streets to two-way within the Downtown district.

Figure 2: One-way Streets



As part of the analysis, the project team conducted analyses to determine how various intersections would perform as traffic levels increase. The engineers estimated the percentage of traffic volume increases at the various intersections that would begin to cause excessive delays. The intersection of Main and Illinois would display the most significant changes in delays with increases in traffic volume. During the PM peak, a 10 percent increase in traffic at the intersection would begin to cause excessive traffic delays. Depending on the scale of future redevelopment in the downtown area and in particular to the south of the tracks, the intersection of Main and Illinois may warrant roadway improvements or signalization in order to mitigate traffic delays.

The operation of a facility is based on level of service (LOS) calculations using analytical methods defined in the Transportation Research Board's Highway Capacity Manual (HCM), 2000 Edition. The concept of LOS is defined as a quality measure describing operational conditions within a traffic stream, generally in terms of such service measures as speed and travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, and comfort and convenience.

There are six LOS letter designations, from A to F, with LOS A representing the best operating conditions and LOS F the worst. In general, the various LOS are defined as follows:

- LOS A represents free flow. Individual users are virtually unaffected by the presence of others in the traffic stream. Freedom to select desired speeds and to maneuver within the traffic stream is extremely high. The general level of comfort and convenience provided to the motorist, passenger, or pedestrian is excellent.
- LOS B is in the range of stable flow, but the presence of other users in the traffic stream begins to be noticeable. The freedom to select the desired speed is relatively unaffected, but there is a slight decline in the freedom to maneuver within the traffic stream from LOS A. The level of comfort and convenience provided is somewhat less than at LOS A, because the presence of others in the traffic stream begins to affect individual behavior.

Table 1: Existing Traffic Conditions

| Intersection | Approach | AM Peak Hour | | PM Peak Hour | | Overall LOS (AM/PM) | Overall Delay (s) (AM/PM) |
|------------------------------|----------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| | | LOS | Delay | LOS | Delay | | |
| Main & Illinois ² | NB | B | 13.3 | C | 16.8 | B / C | 14.9 / 21.4 |
| | SB | B | 14.3 | D | 29.3 | | |
| | EB | C | 17.7 | C | 18.1 | | |
| | WB | B | 11.2 | B | 14.4 | | |
| Illinois & West ¹ | NB | B | 14.3 | B | 14.3 | B / B | 17.9 / 18.9 |
| | SB | B | 14.3 | B | 13.8 | | |
| | EB | C | 24.7 | C | 25.9 | | |
| | WB | C | 23.3 | C | 23.5 | | |
| Liberty & Hale ² | NB | A | 8.3 | A | 8.7 | A / A | 8.1 / 8.4 |
| | SB | - | - | - | - | | |
| | EB | A | 8.1 | A | 7.3 | | |
| | WB | A | 7.5 | A | 8 | | |
| Wesley & Hale ² | NB | A | 9.2 | A | 9.2 | A / B | 8.6 / 10.0 |
| | SB | - | - | - | - | | |
| | EB | - | - | - | - | | |
| | WB | A | 8.2 | B | 11.1 | | |
| Wesley & West ² | NB | A | 9.7 | B | 11.2 | A / B | 9.9 / 11.1 |
| | SB | B | 11.1 | B | 12.2 | | |
| | EB | - | - | - | - | | |
| | WB | A | 9.1 | B | 10.5 | | |
| Willow & Cross ² | NB | - | - | - | - | A / A | 8.1 / 9.9 |
| | SB | A | 7.2 | B | 10.6 | | |
| | EB | A | 8.4 | A | 9.6 | | |
| | WB | A | 7.9 | A | 9.6 | | |

¹ Signalized

² All-Way Stop

- LOS C is in the range of stable flow, but marks the beginning of the range of flow in which the operation of individual users becomes significantly affected by interactions with others in the traffic stream. The selection of speed is now affected by the presence of others, and maneuvering within the traffic stream requires vigilance on the part of the user. The general level of comfort and convenience declines at this level.
- LOS D represents high-density, but stable flow. Speed and freedom to maneuver are restricted and the driver or pedestrian experiences a generally poor level of comfort and convenience. Small increases in traffic flow will generally cause operational problems at this level.

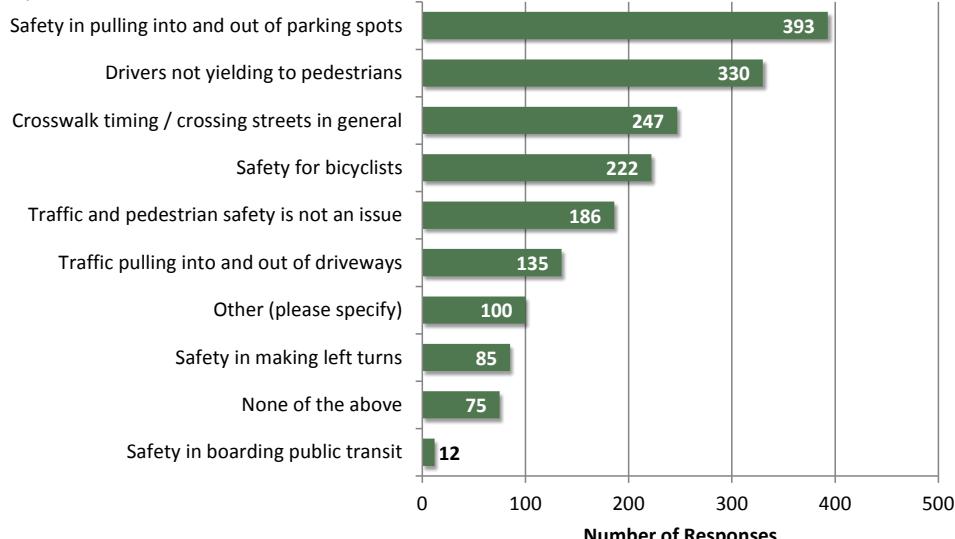
In general, most transportation and municipal agencies in the local area have accepted a LOS D as a minimum operating standard. For purposes of this analysis, a LOS D was assumed to be the threshold of acceptable intersection performance. Based on the analysis of the intersections that were reviewed as part of this study, the intersections within the downtown operate at acceptable levels of service. The highest delay occurs at the intersection of Main Street and Illinois Street, which is a four-way stop controlled intersection. Even at this intersection, the delay is in a range that is considered to be acceptable.

Which traffic and safety issues concern you most in Downtown Wheaton? (Choose your top three)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Transportation Recommendations

- The LOS analyses determined how the various intersections within the downtown area will perform as traffic increases. This analysis estimated the percentage of traffic volume increase that would begin to cause excessive intersection delays. Based upon this analysis, the Downtown Plan recommends that the City explore roadway improvements and traffic signal improvements at the Main and Illinois intersection in order to reduce the potential for delays at this intersection as development proceeds along the south side of the tracks and the overall level of traffic in the downtown area increases over time. The project team determined that significant upgrades to traffic control and roadway widening would not be required elsewhere in the downtown area as development moves forward, based upon the projected increase in development. The planning process did not involve modeling of future traffic conditions, however, and the city should continue to monitor conditions and may need to complete additional traffic analyses as development proceeds over the next one to two decades.
- The project team considered the possibility of converting various existing one-way streets in the downtown area to a two-way orientation. Although proceeding with a two-way orientation on streets such as Wesley and Front would result in some enhancements to circulation throughout the district, it would also produce corresponding increases in traffic delays at traffic signals and at stop sign controlled intersections.
- However, the project team does recommend that the city consider a few select street conversions in the vicinity of the downtown area. In order to better route traffic approaching the downtown area from the northwest, the city should consider converting Gary Avenue to a two-way orientation between Harrison Street and Front Street. This change would allow drivers approaching the heart of Wheaton from the north, on Gary Avenue, to continue directly to the south on Gary toward downtown, rather than having to divert to other streets in order to access the downtown area from the northwest.

Parking Analysis and Recommendations

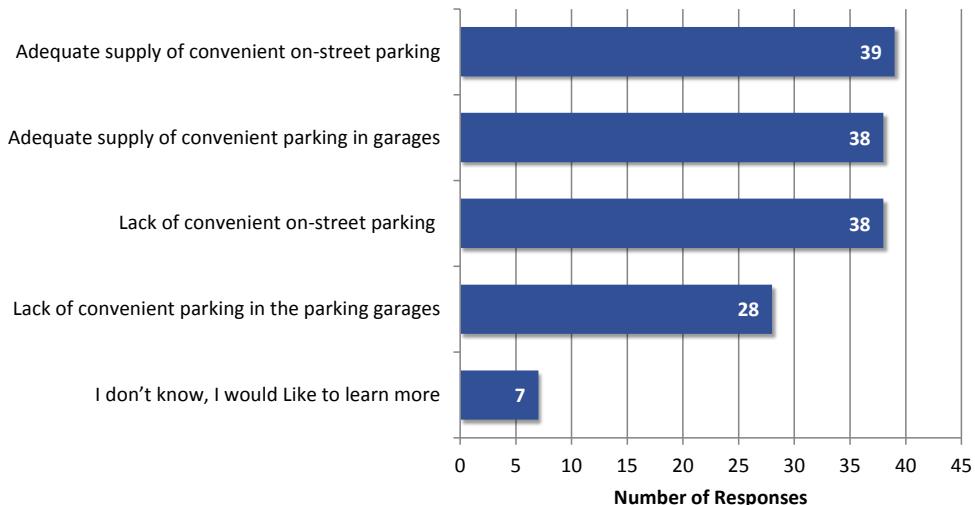
The project team utilized information from previous parking studies and gained input from the community as it developed recommendations for parking for Downtown Wheaton.

According to the Downtown Parking Study completed in 2007, the downtown area included a total of 3,278 parking spaces, and the district reported a peak occupancy rate (representing the highest occupancy rate for downtown parking spots on average, on a daily basis) of 53 percent at that time. In general, the downtown area currently contains sufficient parking inventory to serve existing uses. However, as illustrated by input from the public at the open houses in 2012 and 2013, the issue is that visitors and businesses perceive that the district lacks a sufficient pool of “convenient” parking. In the September public meeting, a sizeable portion of participants indicated that Downtown Wheaton lacked convenient parking in terms of both on-street parking spaces and in terms of parking garage spaces. Several hundred participants in the online version of the survey from September 2012 cited a “lack of convenient on-street parking” as a key issue.

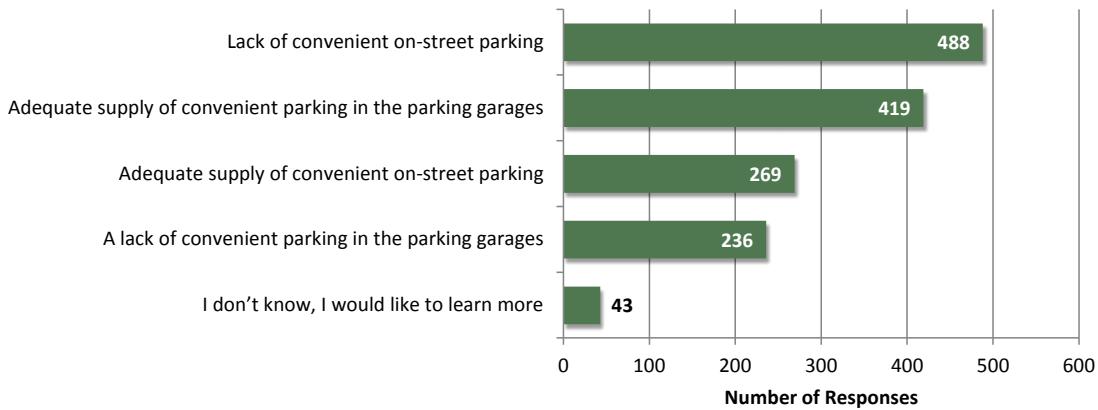
The 2007 parking study compared the existing supply of parking in Downtown Wheaton to estimates of future demand calculated at that time, based upon assumptions that new retail and restaurant uses would open in the district, along with a re-opening of the Wheaton Grand Theater. The study concluded that even with future development, the district would have a 206 parking space surplus on a typical Thursday and a 635 parking space surplus on a typical Saturday.

The following reflects my views concerning the current supply of parking in Downtown Wheaton. There is... (Choose two)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Parking Recommendations

Given that Downtown Wheaton generally has sufficient parking at the current time, the recommendations for parking in the Downtown Plan primarily pertain to managing the existing parking supply in order to maximize the efficiency of use of existing parking, and providing the most convenient inventory of parking for the uses in Downtown that have the greatest need for highly convenient parking.

The community expressed a desire for free parking in Downtown Wheaton, and the project team recommends that all parking in Downtown remain free going forward. Residents in suburban Chicago simply expect free parking as the norm, and maintaining parking meters in the area would only serve to harm the viability of the district.

- Metered parking currently is present on a few streets south of the tracks. The Downtown Plan recommends that these meters be removed, and that the south side of the tracks explore the potential creation of a Special Service Area (SSA) for parking (similar to the one present on the north side of the tracks) to offset the lost revenues from these meters. The SSA could help fund parking enforcement (of time limits and related requirements for parking spaces) as well. The south side could join the SSA present on the north side or form its own SSA.
- In general, the downtown plan recommends that the city work toward ensuring a reasonable level of parking inventory availability (of 5 to 15 percent) at every location so that persons seeking a parking space can reasonably find one. This goal should help to maximize the overall efficiency of the parking system. At the same time, the city and downtown interests should aim to maximize the overall utilization of parking spaces throughout the parking system. Maintaining large numbers of parking spaces that remain unoccupied for significant periods of time represents a wasteful and costly use of land and financial resources.
- While the City should work to provide the most convenient parking possible for the widest net of downtown users, from a planning perspective the community should remember that every parking trip begins and ends with a “pedestrian trip”. To some extent, virtually every driver must walk from their cars to their destination. Downtown Wheaton will not be able to achieve a perfect parking scenario for every user, and in most cases suburban shoppers actually face longer walking times to particular stores when visiting large shopping malls such as Yorktown and Stratford Square than they do when visiting downtowns such as Downtown Wheaton.

A key strategy to provide convenient parking for patrons in the downtown district is to provide the most convenient spots for customers, and to direct employee parking to less convenient spots in the downtown area. Enforcing time limits for on-street parking spaces would help ensure that employees do not take prime parking spaces in front of restaurants or retail businesses, for example. Designating particular floors within parking garages or remote lots for employee parking would ensure that employees have sufficient parking in the downtown area but also help to prevent employees from parking in the more convenient on-street parking spaces during prime business hours.

While Downtown Wheaton currently has an ample supply of parking, visitors to the district are often unaware of the available pool of parking spaces at any given time. The Downtown Plan recommends that the city install digital signage and improved wayfinding signs to guide patrons to the pool of available spots present in the existing parking garages on the north and south sides of the tracks. Downtown Naperville and a number of similar districts around the country have utilized digital signage to alert drivers to the supply of parking in particular locations, and instituting this technology in Wheaton would help to guide patrons to available spaces. This strategy would help to overcome the misperception that Downtown Wheaton “doesn’t have enough parking”.

On-street parking represents the most convenient pool of parking in the downtown area, and the plan recommends the following parking management strategies in order to maximize the efficiency of use of these prime spaces and to maximize the benefits of this convenient parking for the widest audience possible in Downtown Wheaton. On-street parking spaces represent the most important spaces in the parking system due to their close proximity to businesses, high visibility, and ease of entry and exit.

Downtown Wheaton should establish various time limits for the on-street parking spaces, with the time limits depending on the time of day and the location of particular parking stalls. For example, parking spaces located in front of businesses that require or experience greater turnover (such as coffee shops, dry cleaners, or banks) should have shorter parking time limits. Businesses located on the periphery of Downtown Wheaton or that experience less frequent turnover (such as restaurants) may have longer time limits on particular parking spaces. The following rules of thumb should guide the implementation of a timing strategy for the on-street spaces in Downtown Wheaton:

- Shortening the allowable parking duration would result in faster parking turnover. For example, a 30 minute or one hour time limit would result in greater turnover compared to a two-hour or four-hour parking time limit.
- Where time restrictions are in place, the city should implement a graduated system of parking citation fees that would penalize habitual offenders with higher fees. For example, the parking fines could increase by 50 percent for offenders receiving more than three citations in a given month. After five parking tickets, fines could double. At the same time, the parking fine system should not apply unduly onerous or unfairly high parking fines to the occasionally forgetful offender or a first-time offender. Instituting particularly steep parking fines would only dissuade a patron from returning to Downtown Wheaton in the future and could contribute to a reputation for the district in the region as being particularly “tough” on parking. The Downtown Plan recommends that parking citation fees from the district could be placed into a fund to pay for future parking equipment or street improvements.



Electronic parking sign in Naperville, IL

- Parking enforcement should be in place no later than 10AM in order to ensure that employees do not park in timed on-street parking spots. Parking enforcement should also be in place from 5 to 7 PM and beyond in order to ensure that convenient spaces remain open or turnover for patrons conducting errands after work or visiting the district for dinner or evening shopping. The number of necessary parking enforcement personnel will depend on the enforcement method and timing chosen by the city going forward. During peak parking times, the plan recommends that the City monitor parking spaces with shorter time limits (two hours or less) at least once every 30 to 60 minutes. The City may consider using vehicle-mounted cameras or other new technologies in order to read license plates in order to track compliance with time limits for parking spaces. Cameras and related technology would reduce the number of personnel required to monitor parking spaces but would require greater upfront investment in equipment and technology.
- Overall, the Downtown Plan recommends that the city establish a target of 85 percent occupancy (equivalent to the presence of roughly one or two available parking spaces per block at any time) for on-street spaces during peak hours.
- The plan recommends that the City, along with downtown organizations, create a Parking Advisory Committee, consisting of stakeholders including business and property owners, employees, and residents. This committee would review public parking occupancy data, conditions, and trends with city officials and provide input regarding any changes or policies tied to parking rates, time limits for particular blocks, and related parking policies in the downtown district.

Unlike on-street parking, off-street parking is usually targeted for drivers willing to accept lower convenience in parking in exchange for longer time limits. Long term parkers including employees and residents often use off-street parking as opposed to on-street parking. In order to encourage greater use of off-street parking and therefore free up more on-street parking spaces for visitors seeking greater convenience, the Downtown Plan recommends the following steps:

- The City should ensure that off-street parking always has longer time limits than those for on-street parking. This would encourage greater use of off-street parking facilities and reduce the prevalence for residents or employees to “cruise” the district looking for on-street parking spaces.
- For areas where off-street parking spaces are in particular under-utilized, the City should increase posted time limits, or do away with daily time limits, in order to fill these under-utilized spaces and thereby increase overall parking occupancy to 90 percent or greater during peak parking periods. This strategy would help to maximize parking utilization while maintaining parking availability for those seeking a space during peak periods.
- The City should create a parking advisory committee consisting of stakeholders including business and property owners, employees, and residents. The role of this advisory committee would be to review public parking occupancy data and conditions with the City and provide input regarding any adjustments to time limits and other parking policies in Downtown Wheaton.
- In line with overall signage and wayfinding recommendations for Downtown, the City should ensure that signage and directions for parking guide drivers to public structures and other off-street parking. This strategy would reduce the tendency of drivers to “cruise” in search of on-street parking as their primary parking option.

Planning for Future Parking Inventory and Facilities

As outlined in the 2007 parking study, Downtown Wheaton currently has sufficient parking on average to serve the various parts of the district, even at peak parking times. However, as downtown development continues, in particular on the south side of the Union Pacific tracks, eventually the district will face the need for additional parking spaces and facilities. The following table outlines the overall additional parking spaces required to accommodate the additional anticipated net increase in development in Downtown Wheaton. The quantities of retail, residential, and office space listed in the table tie directly to the conclusions of the market study for the downtown district over the next twenty years.

| Land Use | Amount | Parking Demand | Projected Demand | Opportunity for Shared Parking? |
|-----------------------------|-------------|----------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| Retail | 80,000 s.f. | 2.5/1,000 s.f. | 200 | Yes |
| Office | 75,000 s.f. | 2.5/1,000 s.f. | 263 | Yes |
| Apartments/Condos/Townhomes | 1,000 units | 1.5/unit | 1,500 | Yes |
| Total | | | 1,963 | |

This table utilizes typical parking demand rate assumptions in calculating the projected parking demand tied to the particular land uses. These demand rates require fewer parking spaces than typical parking requirements for suburban developments because they assume that, to a certain degree, parking may be "shared" between uses within the downtown area. For example, residents living in the downtown area may visit nearby retailers by foot, eliminating the need for a certain number of retail-specific parking spaces. The analysis assumes that a portion of parking spaces used by office employees during the day may be used by retail or restaurant patrons in the downtown area after 5PM.

As illustrated, the anticipated additional square footage and units of retail, office, and residential space projected for Downtown Wheaton over the next twenty years would necessitate an additional 1,963 parking spaces. The following provides additional guidance and suggestions concerning how Downtown Wheaton may proceed to satisfy this additional parking demand over the next two decades.

The City and downtown leaders may reasonably assume, based upon prior practice in Wheaton and other suburban downtowns, that any new apartment or condominium projects would satisfy their internal parking demand through their own facilities, on-site. Providing parking on-site, through surface or garage parking, is essential for apartment or condominium projects to attract new residents, particularly in the suburbs. Failure to provide adequate parking spaces would likely doom most suburban residential developments. The Wheaton 121 apartment project provided sufficient parking spaces within the boundaries of the development, through sub-surface parking located in the middle of the project. The City should reasonably expect that future apartment, townhome, or condominium projects would provide their own parking going forward.

Assuming that residential projects would provide their own parking on-site, the analysis indicates that new development (representing a net increase in retail or office space) would result in demand for an additional 463 parking spaces over the next twenty years. While the project team did not formally complete a site planning exercise for specific blocks or parcels on the south side of the tracks in Downtown Wheaton, it did use some general assumptions to determine the size of parking facilities that could accommodate this future growth in Downtown Wheaton. The project team assumed that typical retail or mixed-use buildings would extend 60 to 70 feet back from the right of way along the various streets on the south side of the tracks (in line with typical development practice in similar downtowns), and that the center portion of the various blocks on the south side could accommodate shared parking facilities for retail and office uses. Using these assumptions, the project team calculated that a parking structure located in the interior of a typical downtown block could accommodate around 70 parking spaces per floor. Furthermore, assuming that a typical parking garage on the south side of Downtown Wheaton would not extend beyond three or four stories in height, it appears that around two new parking garages (each with 200 to 250 parking spaces per garage) would accommodate the anticipated net increase in development (of retail and office) over the next twenty years. This calculation assumes that virtually all of the new, net development square footage would occur on the south side of Downtown Wheaton (where considerable space for new buildings remains).

Timing and Triggers for Parking Garage Construction

A precise “trigger” or calculation that would signal to city leaders or the private sector the necessity of constructing a new parking structure, or a new parking lot, is impossible to pinpoint. However, a few rules of thumb should guide city leaders and the private sector in deciding to move forward with plans for parking expansion as Downtown Wheaton, and in particular the south side of the tracks, continues to redevelop.

The best rule of thumb from other downtown districts around the country is that the community should begin planning for additional parking facilities when the overall utilization of existing parking facilities is either at or above 85 percent. Furthermore, if a new development or series of developments is forecast to produce utilization rates at or above 85 percent going forward, the City and property owners should proactively plan for additional parking facilities before construction of new development properties commences in the downtown area. Parking studies from around the country indicate that an average parking utilization rate of 85 percent will often translate into a parking shortage or a significant reduction in parking convenience during peak parking times. Therefore, the City should actively plan for new parking facilities when the quantity of new development approved would produce parking utilization rates of at least 85 percent. The community may also wish to err on the side of caution and plan for additional parking facilities when the anticipated utilization rate reaches a lower threshold (such as 70 percent).

The average American typically is willing to walk no further than two blocks in an average journey, including within a downtown district. This rule of thumb means that the City should consider parking utilization with regard to future redevelopment for an area within a two block radius of the existing parking facility located at Cross Street and Willow, on the south side of the tracks. This parking facility has accommodated much lower rates of parking utilization since its completion, in contrast to the higher rates of usage for the parking garage on the north side of the tracks. Conversely, the City should analyze parking needs separately for areas located more than two blocks away from the Cross Street parking

garage. The City should analyze the need for an additional parking lot or parking structure serving new developments to the west of Hale Street separately going forward.

In general, given that the existing parking garage located at Cross and Willow has significant capacity, one may reasonably expect that one new parking garage will likely move forward on the south side, serving the area to the west of Hale Street. An additional, second parking garage may locate either in this western portion, to the west of Hale Street, or may serve areas to the east, toward Naperville Road, on the south side of Downtown. Again, the exact location and timing of additional parking facilities will depend on the nature of particular site plans, negotiations with various property owners, and the City going forward.

Implementing New Parking Structures

In an ideal scenario, an entire block on the south side of Downtown would move forward with redevelopment at the same time, allowing for planning for an additional parking structure to move forward in tandem. Retail, office, and other mixed use buildings would flank the street frontages, and the interior portion of the particular block would accommodate a parking structure or additional surface parking spaces. This scenario is more likely in the event a single entity controls an entire block of Downtown. However, in reality a developer may only be able to construct a project on one half or less of a given downtown block. The following outlines some general strategies the City and the private sector could explore to ensure that blocks, particularly on the south side of Downtown Wheaton, would develop with well-integrated and sufficiently sizable parking spaces.

1. In the event a developer controls only a portion of a block that may contain additional parking spaces going forward, the City may attempt to purchase or assemble the remainder of the particular block in order to ensure that space is reserved for the construction of a parking garage or parking space within the block.
2. If the City is unable to control, through options or purchase, the surrounding parcels within a given block, it may simply require that future development of the remainder of the particular block include space for construction of a formal parking garage.
3. As development moves forward within Downtown, and in particular on the south side of the tracks, the City could require that all new developments pay into a SSA to fund future parking structures or parking areas. The City would need to monitor the projected parking utilization as development proceeds, as well as the available funds for future parking facilities, in order to determine the optimum timing to proceed with any future parking construction projects. If in doubt, the City may wish to err on the side of caution and proceed with additional parking facilities for Downtown before the need becomes critical, in order to ensure that the public perceives that parking in Downtown Wheaton is sufficient and convenient.

Modifications to Zoning Regulations

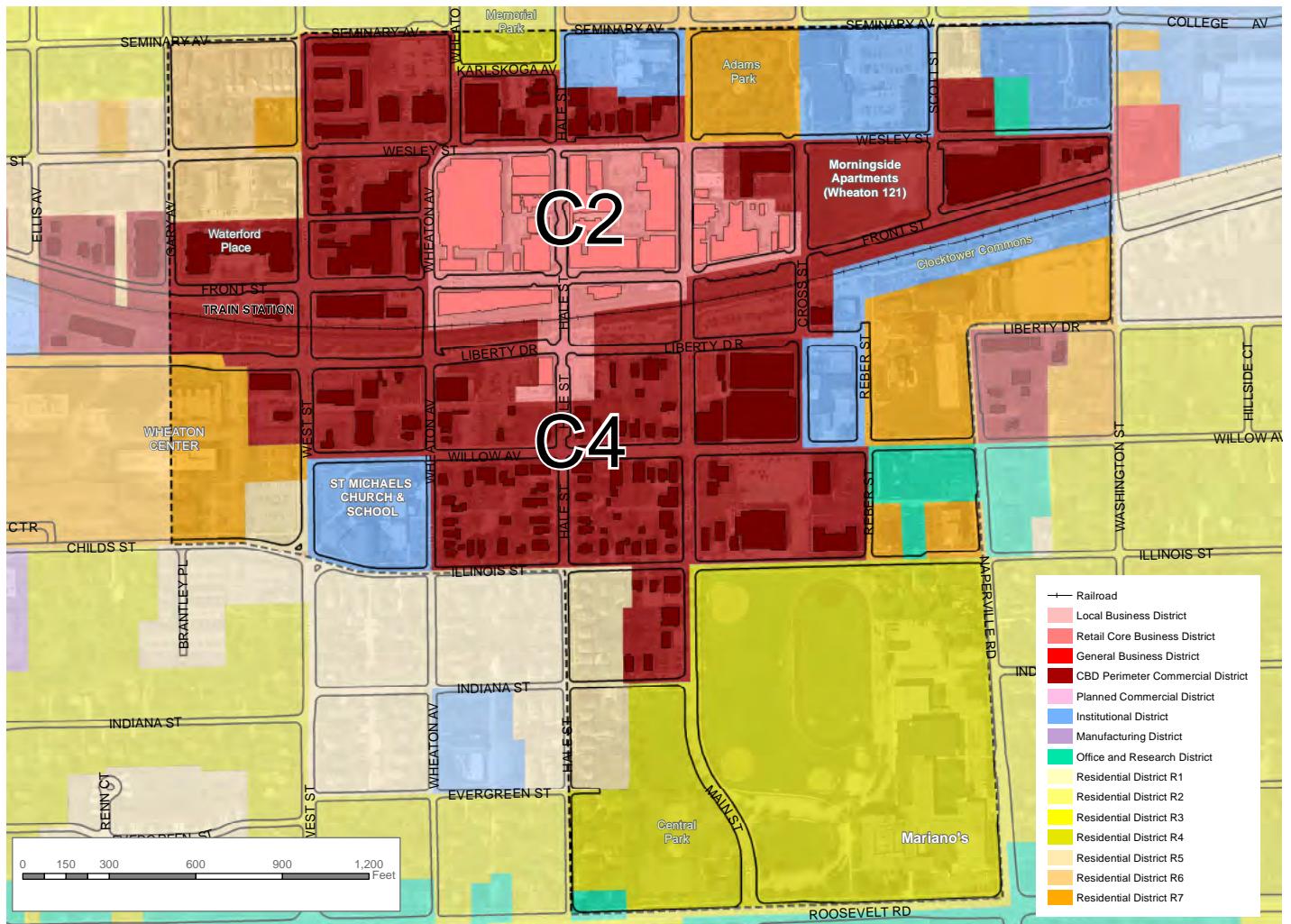
The current zoning in the Downtown Wheaton area include the C-2 zoning classification, covering primarily the older retail core of downtown, on the north side of the tracks, and the C-4 zoning designation, which covers much of the adjacent transitional zones between the retail core and surrounding residential areas. The C-2 zoning classification includes a number of provisions that match with the existing conditions in the older part of downtown. For example, the guidelines for C-2 do not require any setbacks from the street, as most of the buildings in this area front onto sidewalks anyway.

The C-4 designation includes a mixture of zoning requirements, but generally calls for a less urban design condition for the areas to the south of the tracks compared to the design concepts envisioned by the downtown plan. Furthermore, some areas of downtown along Naperville Road and to the west of West Street actually include residential zoning and would not allow mixed-use development to move forward.

To streamline the zoning process in the downtown area, this plan recommends that the downtown study area, outside of the existing C-2 zoning area, be rezoned into a new, comprehensive Downtown Mixed-Use zoning classification that would include the following key provisions. These guidelines will help to support and encourage downtown redevelopment as much as possible, in that they simplify and streamline zoning requirements for various downtown areas and allow developers by right to construct more mixed-use projects, in keeping with the vision for Downtown Wheaton.

Key provisions

- Zero setbacks on buildings in the zoning district, in order to encourage developers to use acreage as efficiently as possible and to create projects that create a more urban environment.
- Permitted uses include residential, office, and retail development by right, including apartments, townhomes, and condominiums
- Height limits of at least five stories
- No requirements to provide parking on site. Instead, property owners would be required to pay in lieu to a common downtown parking fund that would help to locate and secure common parking for various parts of Downtown Wheaton.



Utility Analysis and Recommendations

The project team evaluated the existing conditions and capacities of the utilities in Downtown Wheaton in order to inform the overall planning effort and made general recommendations that will help the downtown move forward with orderly growth in the next two decades in order to achieve the overall Vision for Downtown. The analysis included the gathering of information from available sources including the City of Wheaton, Nicor, Commonwealth Edison, Comcast, Sprint, Verizon and AT&T. The team focused on the feasibility of the various infrastructure systems to serve additional development in the downtown area. The following summarizes the takeaways from the analysis:

Sanitary Sewers:

- The sanitary sewers within the study area generally have sufficient capacity to support additional development. However, the following sewer lines are currently operating beyond their design capacity and may require upgrades as development proceeds:
 - The mainline trunk sewer lines (of 21 to 30 inches in diameter) that run from Liberty Street and Naperville Road to the Roosevelt Road corridor, east of Main Street
 - The sewers along Willow Street (from West Street to Hale Street), and
 - The sewers along Hale and Wheaton (from Liberty Drive to Willow Street)

Water Mains:

- The water mains within Downtown that are less than 10 inches in diameter should be evaluated for replacement if any street reconstruction efforts or significant redevelopment projects in the vicinity move forward.
- The water mains of 4 and 6 inches in diameter should be planned for replacement in conjunction with any street resurfacing or reconstruction efforts in the Downtown area, regardless of whether redevelopment occurs or not.

Storm Sewers:

- Solving the flooding issue near Mariano's would require a broader, watershed-wide solution to stormwater management. The costs of fixing the flooding issue along South Main appear impractical at this time.
- The City should consider the use of green stormwater solutions as a general rule in Downtown Wheaton in order to address stormwater more sustainably and to reduce stormwater runoff into the system. These solutions would include the use of permeable pavements, rain gardens and green roofs in order to reduce the total volume of stormwater runoff and to slow the movement of stormwater to storm sewers and nearby streams.

Natural Gas:

- As the area redevelops and as streets are reconstructed, the utility provider should replace the gas mains with polyethylene lines to reduce the chances of future gas leaks.
- The City should work with the utility to evaluate the status of mainline gas lines as applications for redevelopment come forward. The construction of larger buildings and multi-family structures in the Downtown area could require the upsizing of gas lines in some cases in order to provide sufficient service going forward.

Electric:

- The City and potential developers should explore the potential undergrounding of overhead lines along Illinois Street, Cross Street, and Naperville Road as redevelopment projects move forward along these streets, in particular. While relocating power lines underground carries considerable costs, the strategy can improve the overall aesthetics of Downtown streets and improve the overall image of redevelopment projects.

Lighting:

- Some of the alleyways on the north side of Downtown currently have little or no pedestrian lighting. The City may wish to install upgrades to pedestrian lighting in these locations in order to improve safety and to help facilitate outdoor dining and increased retail activity in the vicinity.
- Throughout Downtown, the City should consider installing LED lighting technologies as redevelopment and streetscape improvements move forward, in order to reduce overall energy costs.

Streetscape Analysis and Recommendations

While the Downtown Plan identifies the installation of Festival Streets on Liberty, Hale, and Karlsgoga, as well as improvements to Main Street from Front Street south to Roosevelt Road, as key catalytic improvements designed to help stimulate redevelopment and achieve the Vision for the district, the plan outlines overall recommendations for streetscapes for the other streets in the area.

Because different streets in the district serve different purposes, the plan classifies the existing network of streets in Downtown Wheaton based upon field observations and input from City staff and the community. The main classifications include:

Festival Streets:

As described earlier, these streets are designed to serve as dynamic public gathering spaces and help facilitate outdoor dining, major events, and overall downtown vitality.

Pedestrian Streets:

These streets within the Downtown area are intended to promote pedestrian travel and overall retail activity. The main Downtown retail streets on the north side of the tracks that will not serve as Festival streets fall under this designation.

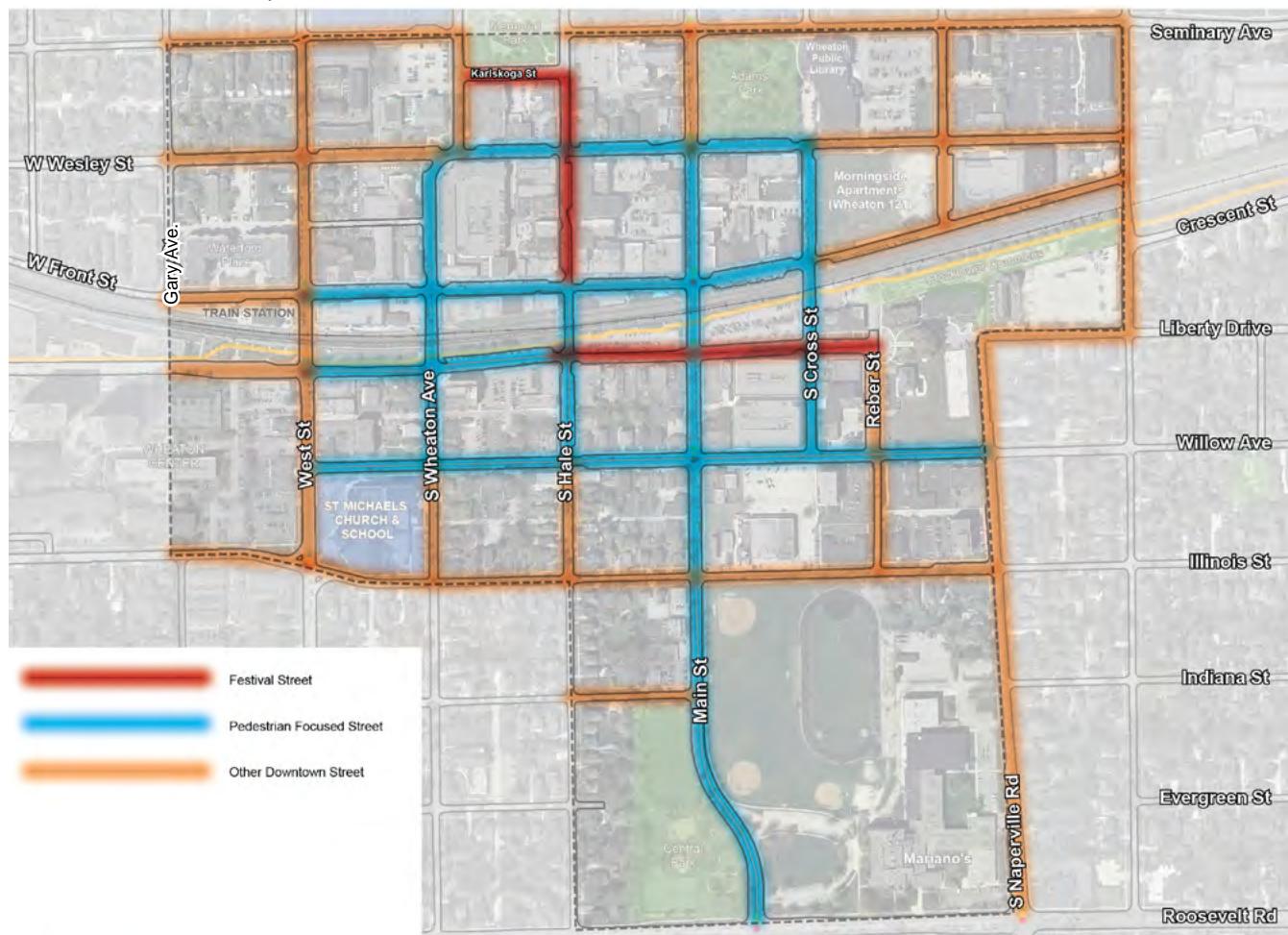
Other Downtown Streets:

These streets serve as transitions from residential areas to the core retail areas of Downtown Wheaton. These streets must safely accommodate pedestrian movement, but their design does not serve the needs of more pedestrian-intensive sidewalk activity associated with retail businesses.

The map provided on the following page designates each street within the Downtown study area according to this classification system.

The Downtown Plan focuses in particular on streetscape design because streets serve as the backbone for a downtown district and serve many functions beyond simply serving as conduits for vehicular traffic. Streets have always represented places within communities where ideas are exchanged and where interactions and enterprise take place. Streets form the structure of local communities, and the landscape areas along city streets typically account for 25 percent of a community's open space inventory, far exceeding the total acreage formally dedicated to parks and public plazas. Given these historical roles of streets, they should serve all modes of travel including pedestrian and bicycle movement, and should accommodate people with disabilities. Over time, streets normally change and adapt to the needs of a community, as downtowns and other districts evolve.

Recommended Streetscape Classifications



Pedestrian Streets:

The streets identified as Pedestrian Streets in Downtown Wheaton serve a variety of retail and office uses in the heart of the district, or are likely to serve this function as redevelopment proceeds and the area south of the tracks continues to grow. These streets will form a core area within Downtown where patrons can move with ease from block to block and can spend time shopping, recreating, or dining during their visit to the area.

The City has installed primarily historical-oriented streetscape fixtures within the main part of Downtown Wheaton in recent years. The public expressed through the planning process a desire to maintain this traditional or historic style going forward for the various pedestrian streets in the district. The following pages outline the recommended styles and palettes for pedestrian streets, in terms of street furniture and related streetscape features.

As the City performs upgrades to pedestrian streets over time, the Downtown Plan recommends a variety of key strategies to improve the functionality of the streetscape.

Upgrades to Street Furnishings (including benches, bike racks, and trash cans):

- As the City conducts upgrades to the pedestrian streets, it should install upgrades to these features in order to ensure that the streetscape does not appear dated over time.

Tree Plantings:

- In cases where existing street trees are failing or street trees are missing, the City should install new tree plantings in order to maximize the overall shaded areas along streets.

Crosswalks

- The City should install more visible crosswalks (through paving patterns) in order to increase safety for pedestrians.

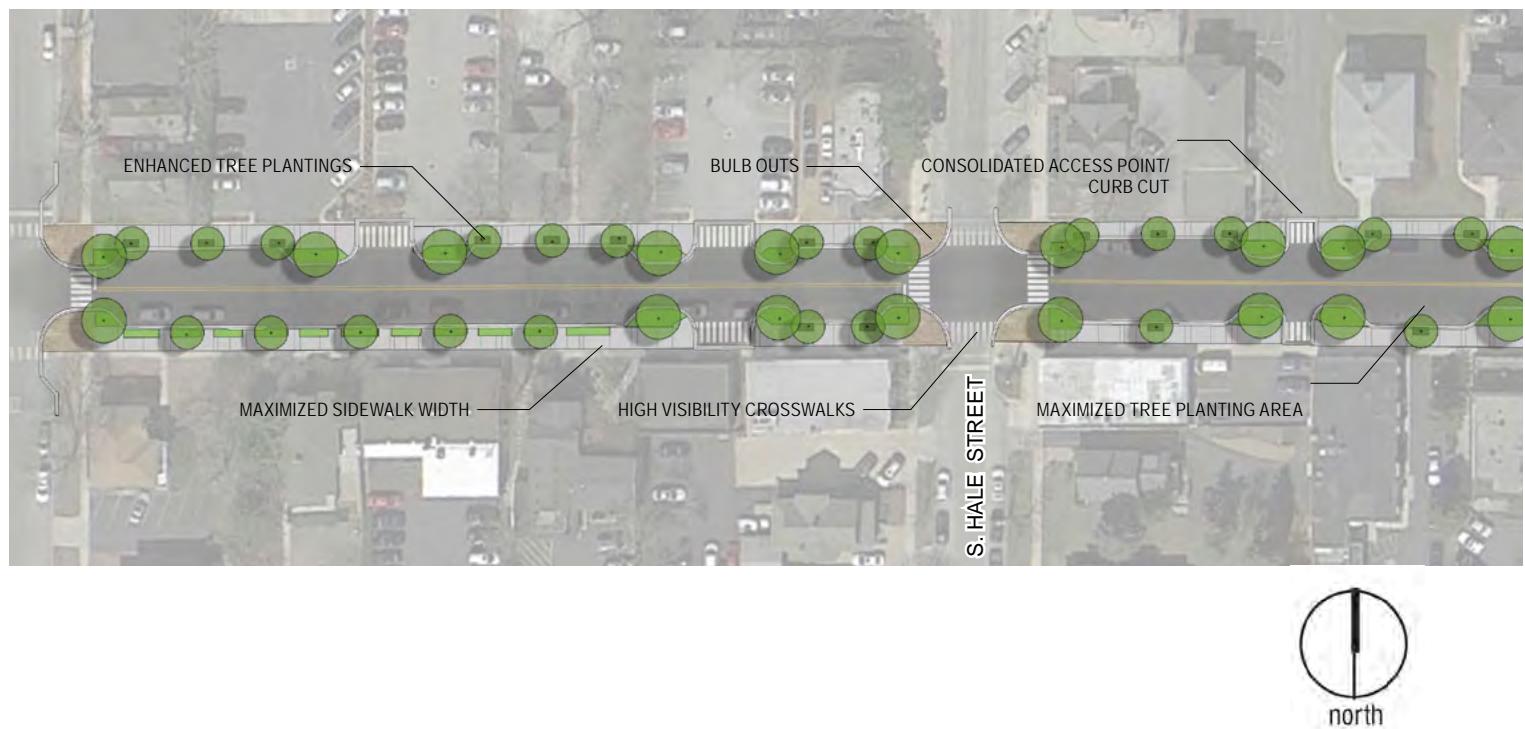
Maximize Sidewalk Width

- The dimensions of most pedestrian streets in the downtown area dictate that it will not be possible to widen sidewalks over time. However, where possible the City may explore opportunities to widen sidewalk widths through curb extensions and related strategies. Wider sidewalks generally support increased retail activity and enhanced outdoor dining.

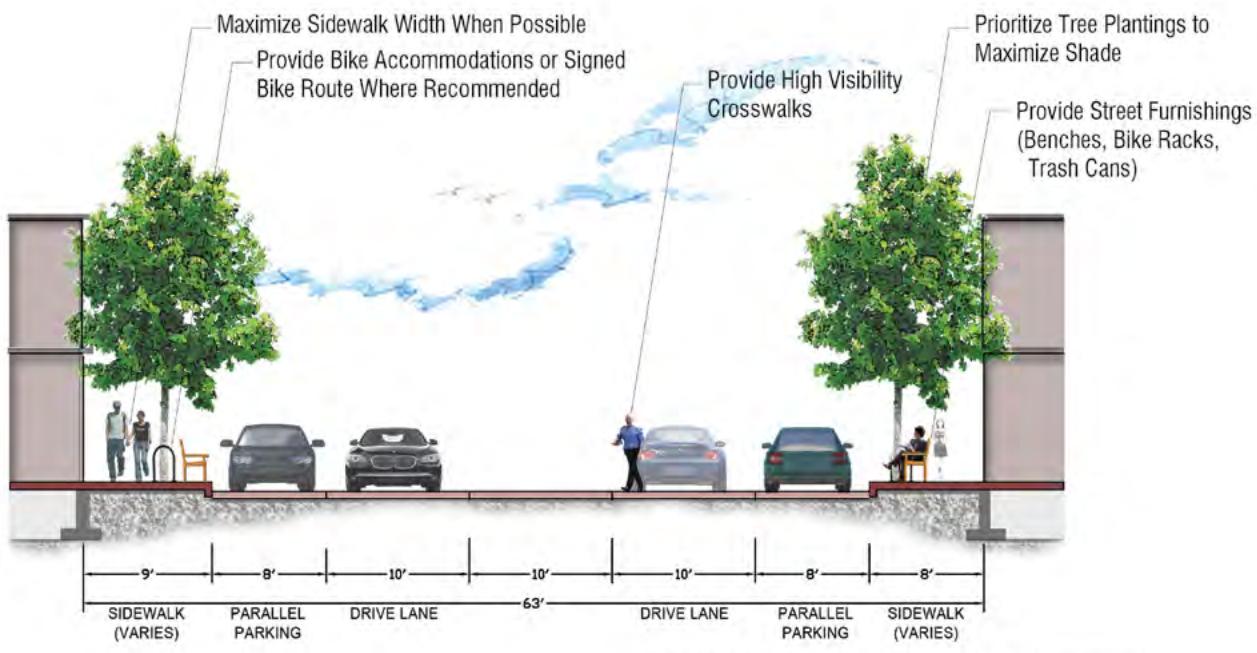
Bike Accommodations

- The City should install additional bike racks where feasible on pedestrian streets over time in order to support and encourage additional bike usage in the community.

Willow Street | Pedestrian Focused Street (prototype)



Example Pedestrian Focused Street



Recommended Materials and Furniture Concept Palette - Pedestrian Focused Streets in Downtown



Bike Parking



Bench



Crosswalk



Outdoor Dining



Sidewalk Alternative - Scored Concrete



Trash Receptacles



Sidewalk Alternative - Scored Colored Concrete



Hanging Planters



Sidewalk Alternative - Scored Concrete with Colored Bands

Recommended Materials and Furniture Concept Palette - Pedestrian Focused Streets in Downtown



Large Tree Growth Areas



Typical Concrete 6" Curb Treatment



Bulb-Out at Pedestrian Crossing



Porous Pavement or Porous Concrete (in parking areas)



Recommendations for All Downtown Streets

The following streetscape recommendations apply to all types of streets within Downtown Wheaton and draw from best practices for street and downtown design from throughout the United States.

Decrease Stormwater Runoff Through Green Technologies:

Most of the surface area in the Downtown area is impervious, meaning that stormwater flows along roadways toward storm inlets and streams, picking up pollutants and sediment along the way. The use of green stormwater techniques would reduce the quantity of stormwater runoff flowing into area streams and collections sites and would also improve overall water quality. The use of permeable paving and installing additional rain gardens and vegetated areas along streets would reduce the overall area of impervious surfaces, thus reducing stormwater runoff. Rain gardens and increased vegetation would help to cleanse stormwater of pollutants in the Downtown area, in particular.

As the City installs rain gardens going forward, the outflow into the storm sewer should be located one inch below the inflow at street grade, and at least two inches above the finished grade of the rain garden itself. This strategy should encourage infiltration of stormwater runoff within the rain garden area. The City should institute proper soil testing in the rain garden area to ensure the system is working properly. In addition, the rain garden should include a subsurface drainage system or a gravel chimney in order to allow for water to percolate into the ground.

Increase Use of Native Planting

Over 75 percent of participants in the planning process supported adopting sustainable landscape standards for Downtown Wheaton going forward, in order to create a more 'green' district. The use of native plants that are non-invasive and appropriate for site conditions will improve the overall landscape performance in the district and reduce costs to the city associated with watering and replanting. Native plants simply require less water, less fertilizer, and less maintenance on average. The suggested planting palette for Downtown Wheaton consists of 100 percent native plant material that is drought tolerant and requires little seasonal maintenance. Native grasses and wildflowers, mixed with a few selected shrubs, will provide the foundation for the planting palette.

Understory and ornamental plantings should consist of three types: Rain gardens; ground plane planting beds and pots; and ornamental hanging pots.

Rain Gardens

The rain garden plants should include water tolerant grasses and wildflowers that have a contemporary color vocabulary. The use of native perennial plants that can tolerate rainfall fluctuations is critical to the success of rain garden systems over time. Examples of plants that have proven successful in rain gardens in the Midwest include rushes, sedges and perennials such as Big Bluestem, Grey Sedge, Palm Sedge, Bottlebrush Grass, Cardinal Flower, Virginia Bluebells, Great Blue Lobelia, Blackeyed Susan, New England Aster and other native Illinois plants. Specific plants should be selected depending on the specific rain garden application and context, including sun/shade conditions and corner sight triangle requirements. Applying one or two of these native plants along a single street corridor can create a very beautiful urban rain garden treatment.

Ground Plane Planting Beds / Pots

Ground plane planting areas that are not rain gardens should consist of native grasses and perennials that have a primary color vocabulary. Each planting area should include a mixture of grasses, perennials, and select placement of shrubs.

Ornamental Hanging Pots

Hanging pots, attached to the existing pedestrian lighting poles, should include plants with a complementary color vocabulary. These hanging pots should be planted with seasonally appropriate annual flowers and vines and should represent the only exceptions to the general rule of using native plant materials within Downtown.

The goal of tree and understory planting within downtown is to provide year-round aesthetic improvements through form, color, and texture while providing a very low maintenance and low-irrigation solution for the City. Because these recommended plant selections are drought tolerant, the City should benefit from reduced irrigation costs. Native grasses should be pruned only once a year in the spring after the last freeze. When grasses go into dormancy the biomass attached to the root stock keeps the healthy root tips from freezing during the winter.

The plan suggests that the City leave 40 percent of the removed grass biomass in the planting bed to degrade and self-mulch the plant material. A similar maintenance strategy should be used for wildflowers and perennials as well. Flowering forbs can be deadheaded throughout the year to provide a boost in the flower production of each plant. A healthy layer of organic mulch should be maintained on top of the plant material. To achieve zero net waste, this can be completed using plant trimmings left in place. To supplement this process, shredded bark mulch can be used and applied at a depth of two inches. A horticulturalist with training in native Illinois plant materials should be consulted on a regular basis to ensure that the city follows proper maintenance strategies.



Example rain garden treatments

Improve the health of street trees

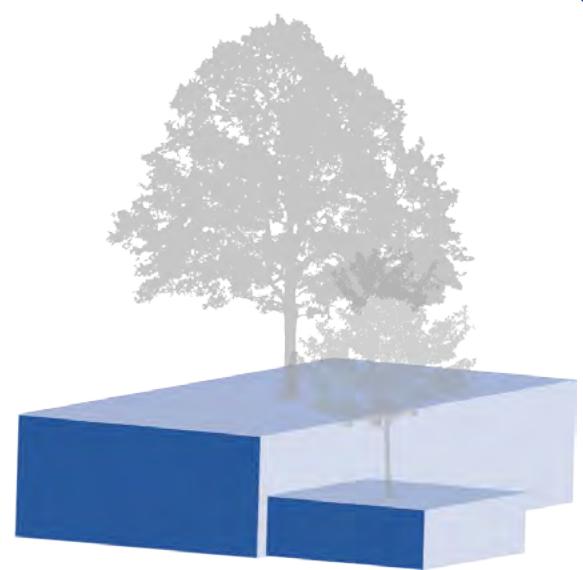
Most successful downtown retail and dining places have a healthy presence of tree canopy. Current trends in design focus on the technical benefits of understory plant material, like reductions in ambient air temperature and the reduction and treatment of urban water runoff. The streetscape planting strategy focuses on both healthy trees and an appropriate understory presence to provide continuity within Downtown. Tree patterning consists of a rhythm (changing elements) and a datum (that which stays the same) as one moves from block to block.

Including practices and materials that enhance the environmental integrity of the downtown will not only contribute to improvements in local and regional ecosystems, but these considerations can also enhance user experiences and have significant energy and monetary implications. A healthy tree can:

- Provide quality oxygen and improve air quality: A typical person consumes about 386 pounds of oxygen per year. A healthy tree produces 260 pounds of oxygen annually. Two healthy downtown trees could provide oxygen for one downtown resident per year!
- Reduce storm water levels and associated treatment costs. The canopy of a healthy street tree absorbs rain, reducing the amount of water that will fall on pavement and which then must be removed by the storm water drainage system.
- Reduce the effects of the urban heat island effect and lower ambient temperatures. Healthy mature tree canopies can reduce air temperatures by about 5° to 10° Fahrenheit.

The streetscape plan recommends improving the overall health of street trees by eliminating the use of tree grates and providing larger tree pits for additional growth area and soil volume to encourage larger, healthier trees. In urban environments, tree soil volume is most commonly the deciding factor of street tree health. Trees within downtown are currently planted in 4 foot by 4 foot tree pits with tree grates creating 123 cubic feet of soil volume. Ideal soil volumes are 1,000 cubic feet.

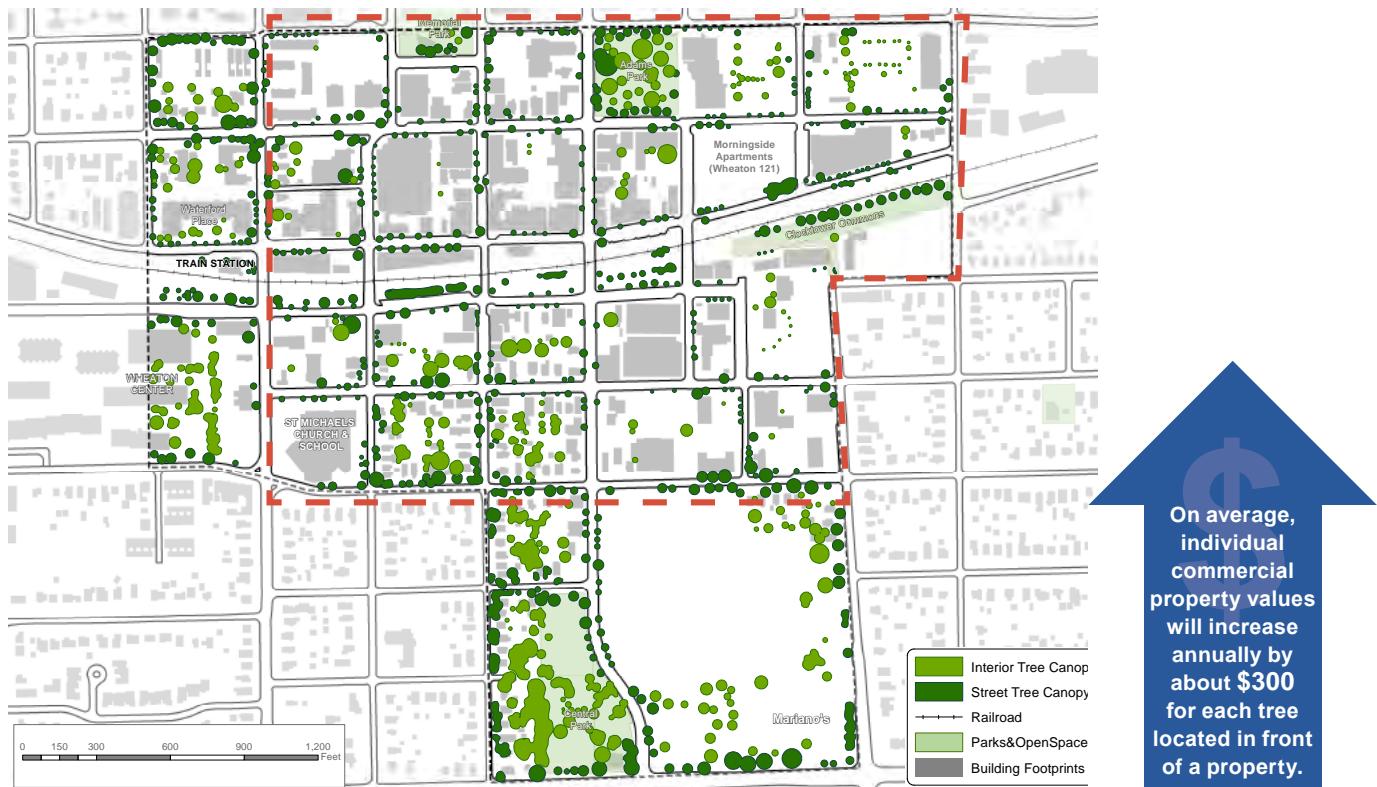
One way to accomplish this in conjunction with larger tree pits is the use of silva cells and suspended paving. Suspended pavement utilizes a structural sound steel frame that is anchored to slabs and supports the above pavers while leaving the soil below untouched. This system is used for newly planted trees and can come in various sizes to fit necessary requirements. These systems can be coupled together to provide a continuous un-compacted soil trench between street trees, allowing trees to share soil. A company that provides these systems is Ironsmith, Inc. Another system that can be used is Silva Cells which is provided by Deep Root, Inc. This system is a modular cage system that can support both concrete and pavers and the full load of cars and trucks. This system can be used in tight areas where the surface material is irregular. For best results these systems should be used in conjunction with proper subsurface drainage and permeable pavers to allow for air and water flow between the soil and the atmosphere. The increased tree canopy and the addition of rain gardens can lower energy costs for heating, cooling and water treatment and has the potential to increase annual property values.



Soil Volume:

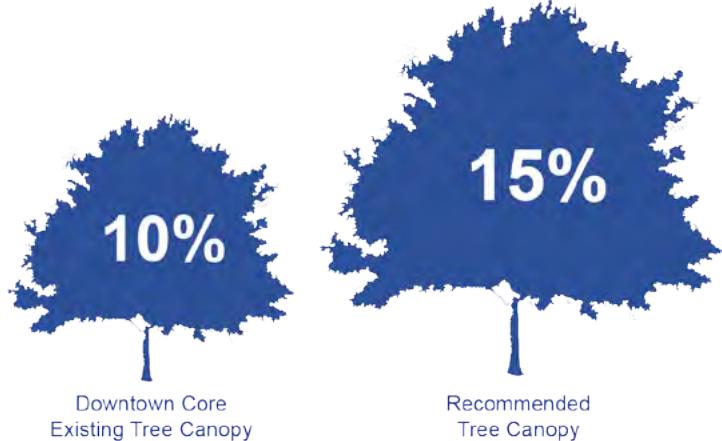
Ideally trees within the downtown should have **1,000** cubic feet of soil volume which provides over **800** times more volume for root growth to support healthy trees than typical 4x4 foot tree pits in many urban environments.

Figure 3: Existing Tree Canopy



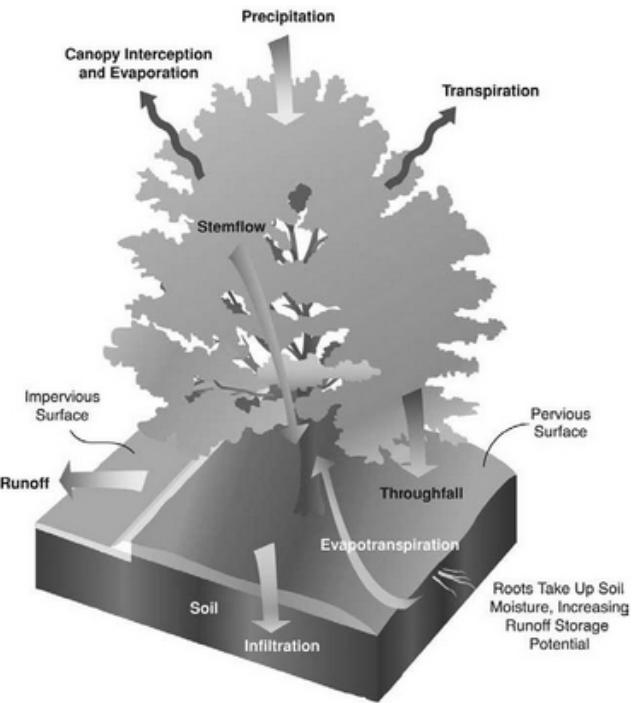
Tree Canopy

The area within the red outline in Figure 3 currently has a tree canopy of 10%. National research suggests that successful downtowns plan for a tree canopy of at least **15%**. An increase in street trees and shaded areas can increase property values, provide for energy savings and improve air quality, as well as help absorb rainfall and reduce stormwater runoff. Healthier and more abundant street trees can improve the overall appearance of downtown.



Annual Benefits of Downtown Street Trees

The online Tree Benefits Calculator provides an estimation of the environmental and economic benefits individual street trees provide based on their location, species, and tree size. The benefits include: stormwater quality and quantity improvements, increases to property values, benefiting both the private and public sectors; energy savings; air quality improvements; and green house gas reduction.



This diagram shows the variety of ways trees help reduce stormwater runoff and improve the quality of runoff through infiltration and absorption. Source: Treebenefits.com

Table 2: Annual tree benefits of existing tree canopy and additional canopy coverage for the Downtown Core study area with an additional 8 percent canopy to reflect the recommended 15 percent tree canopy.

| | Overall Benefits | Stormwater: Annual interception of stormwater runoff (gallons) | Property Value: for a small commercial business, the property value will be raised by this amount per year: | Energy: Kilowatt hours of electricity for cooling and reduced energy use | Reduced consumption of oil or natural gas conserved by each tree. (therms) | Air Quality | CO2: Pounds of reduction in atmospheric carbon. |
|--|------------------|--|---|--|--|----------------|---|
| Existing Tree Canopy Benefits | \$48,019 | 64,6381 | \$10,002 | 72,044 kwh | 9,862 therms | \$3228 | 262,608 |
| Benefits of Additional Coverage | \$3,841 | 51,710 | \$800 | 5,764 kwh | 789 therms | \$258 | 21,009 |
| TOTAL: | \$51,861 | 698,092 | \$10,802 | 77,808 kwh | 10,650 therms | \$3,486 | 28,3617 |

Source: Treebenefits.com

The species selection builds on the location of existing healthy 'approved' street trees. Small areas of consistency in tree species exist within downtown, and mature, healthy trees should be preserved when possible. The proposed tree planting strategy is intended to scale the downtown core by creating visual consistency by street segment. All recommended tree species are native to the Illinois landscape, or are cultivars of native species – all on the City's approved street tree list. The species selected are high branching trees that will not visually block ground floor signage from the sight of potential customers. Trees in this area are to be pruned by a trained arborist to ensure that the central leader does not branch out until achieving a full size of fifteen to eighteen feet. This means that the leafy portion of the tree will be always rest above ground floor signage.

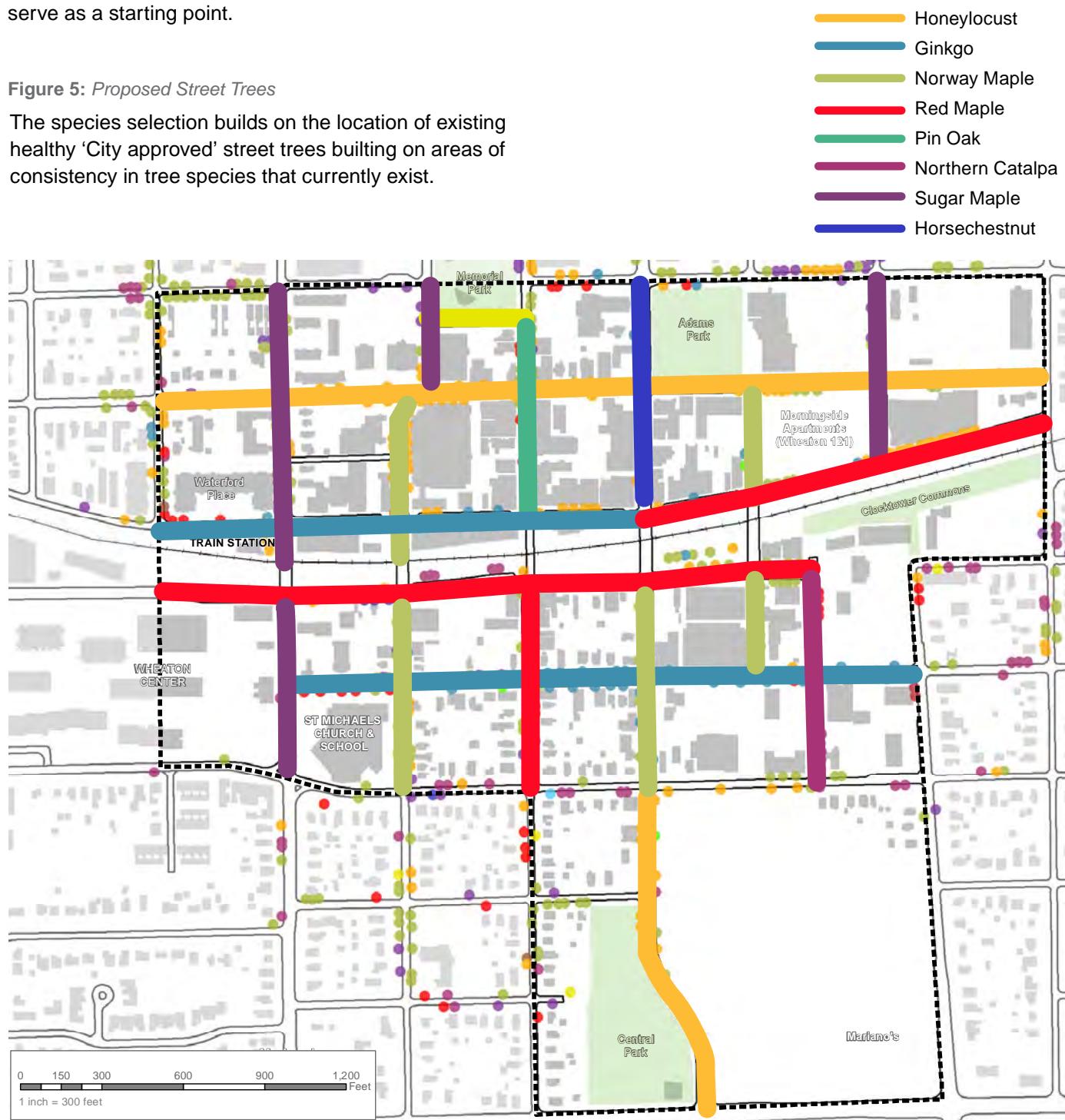
Figure 4: Existing Approved Street Trees



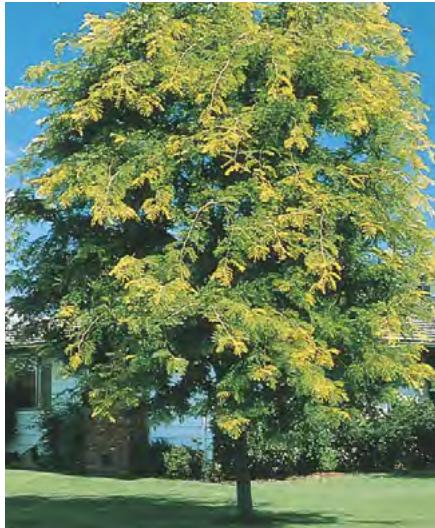
Specifying large species allows for limbing the branches up to avoid vehicular conflict, pedestrian conflict and conflict with viewing signage and businesses. Trees commonly do not reach their largest height in urban environments. The recommended list includes trees that are approved by the City and have proven successful in urban/street tree conditions. In addition, the following pages document alternative perennials that have proven to do well in an urban streetscape locally. Raingarden and bio-swale plant selection should be site and hydrologic specific, however the following pages should serve as a starting point.

Figure 5: Proposed Street Trees

The species selection builds on the location of existing healthy 'City approved' street trees building on areas of consistency in tree species that currently exist.



Recommended Trees (approved City of Wheaton Street Trees)



Honey Locust



Pin Oak



Red Maple



Northern Catalpa



Ginkgo



Redbud



Sugar Maple



Norway Maple

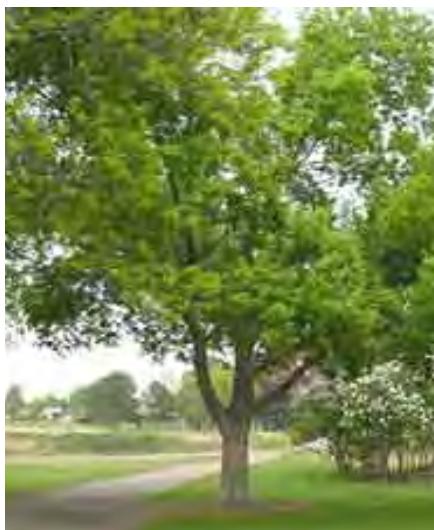
Recommended Trees



Horsechestnut



Northern Catalpa



Common Hackberry

Recommended Plant Palette



Feather Reed Grass



Lesser Calamintha



Burgundy Fireworks



Magnus Purple Coneflower



Johnson's Blue Geranium



Blazing Star



Kit Cat Catmint



Prairie Dropseed



Blue Wonder Catmint



Showy Black-Eyed Susan

Recommended Plant Palette - Rain Gardens



Variegated Sweet Flag



Smooth Penstemon



Prairie Cord Grass



Nodding Pink Onion



Blue Flag Iris



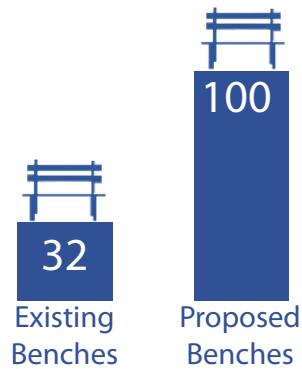
Fox Sedge



Japanese Blood Grass

Seating

Seating is an important part of vibrant public spaces. It allows pedestrians to rest, socialize, read and people-watch. Currently Wheaton has 32 benches with half of these (17) concentrated along Front Street, allowing for about 192 linear feet of seating. As streetscape recommendations are implemented efforts should be made to add an average of 5 benches per block face (100 benches total) on pedestrian focused streets to encourage moments for pause and interaction.

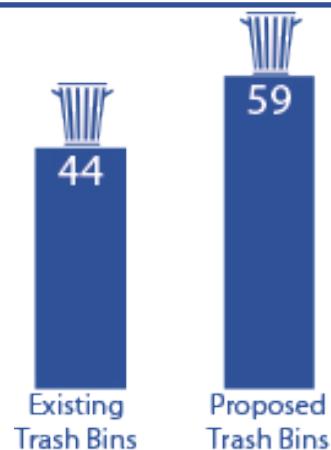


Planter Pots

The planter pots are beneficial in both aesthetics and functionality of the street. They encourage pedestrians to cross at safe locations, and if they are moveable, they allow the streets to be configured as needed. Planters should be focused around seating areas. When applied to the festival streets, the planter pots prevent vehicles from crossing into the pedestrian zones, while providing flexibility for festivals and events. On the festival streets, planters should be placed between street trees and light poles.

Trash Receptacles

Trash bins should be placed on each street corner and mid block at high traffic pedestrian areas as well as within open spaces and plazas. As more people visit downtown it is important that bins are convenient and accessible for people as they walk through downtown or from the Metra station to the restaurants. The trash bins can be durable and reflect the character of the streetscape. In addition, recycling bins can be provided with trash bins. Recycle units can be provided within the same trash bin, allowing the flexibility to provide recycling where needed, with the same aesthetic.



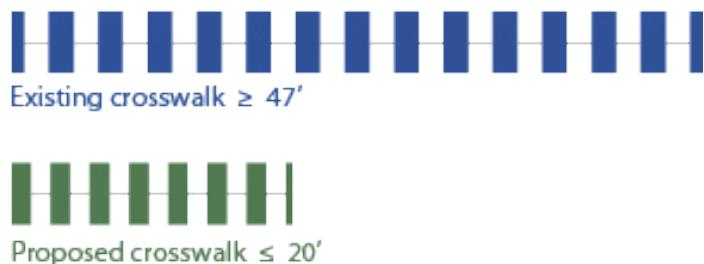
Crosswalk Distance

On the Pedestrian Focused Streets corner bulb-outs reduce the crosswalk distances in the recommended design, creating a safer and more pedestrian-friendly downtown. Bulb-outs are already being utilized to the north of the tracks where there is the most pedestrian traffic, however there are many opportunities to extend this treatment to other parts of the downtown study area. In this example at the intersection of Liberty Drive the existing crossing distance is reduced by **43%** from 47 to 20 feet.

Crosswalk Timing

The standard signal timing for downtown areas is 3.5 feet per second. This plan recommends that downtown signals be set to accommodate crossing speeds of 2.5 feet per second to accommodate the visually impaired and elderly and promote a pedestrian friendly environment

Liberty Drive - Sample Crossing Distance



Maximize sidewalk width

The width of existing sidewalks along the main retail areas within the downtown district varies from 9-10 feet on Front Street to 16 feet along North Hale Street. The right of way within this area has largely been determined due to the historic nature of this area. However, as redevelopment occurs, the design team recommends a minimum of 12 feet for the pedestrian focused streets measured from the front of curb to building face. Ideally, where possible, sidewalks should be 18 feet in width to accommodate outdoor dining space, a clear zone for pedestrians and space for planting and seating amenities. Wider sidewalks also increase the distance between pedestrians and moving vehicles, enhancing real and perceived safety.

Existing Sidewalk Widths

N. Hale Street: 9'



Front Street



Comparable Communities

Main Retail Streets:

| 10' | 12' | 16' | 18' | 20' | 22' |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

| |
|-----------------------------------|
| Oak Park, Lake Street |
| Geneva, 3rd Street |
| Arlington Heights - Dunton Avenue |
| Downers Grove, Main Street |
| Curtis Street |
| Elmhurst, York Street |

12'

Recommended Minimum
Target Sidewalk Widths:



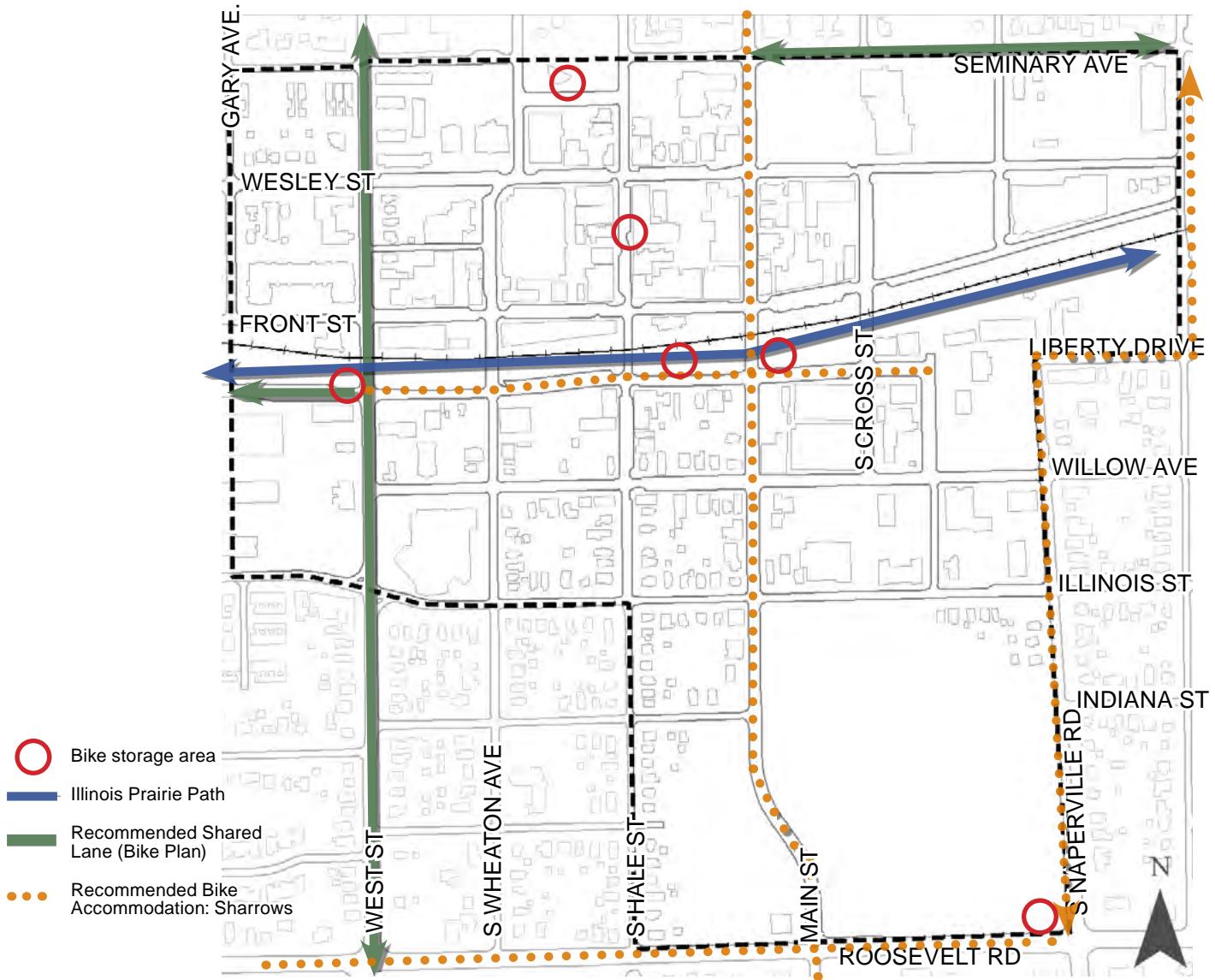
Bike Access and Facilities

The Downtown Plan recommends that the City implement the recommendations of the Wheaton Bicycle Plan as it pertains to the district. Enhancing bicycle access into and around Downtown will only help in bringing more people to the area, thereby helping to achieve the overall vision of a more vibrant and active Downtown.

The Active Transportation Alliance and the City of Wheaton completed the Wheaton Bicycle Plan in September 2011. The plan recommended various routes for Shared Bicycle Lanes and for sharrows (in which markings on the pavement indicate that bicyclists and motorists should share the road). Specifically, the plan recommended Shared Bicycle Lanes along West Street through the entire downtown area, and along Liberty Drive going west from West Street. The Wheaton Bicycle Plan also recommends designating Illinois Street and Main Street in the downtown area as designated bike routes.

The downtown plan recommends supplementing these recommendations with additional bike accommodations on select streets. Specifically, the plan recommends that the City

Figure 6: Existing and Recommended Bike Facilities



extend the sharrow designation along Liberty Drive from West Street east to Main Street, to encourage bicyclists approaching downtown from the west to proceed into the heart of the downtown district. The plan also recommends designating Naperville Road and Washington Street along the eastern edge of the study area as sharrow streets in which motorists would be encouraged to share the road with bicyclists. On these street segments, Marked Shared Lanes (or "Sharrows") would include designations on the pavement that bicyclists and motorists should share the road.

Naperville Road is designated in the bike plan as a prime bicycle route to the south of Roosevelt Road, including the construction of a separated bike path on the side of the road, and the sharrow designation to the north of Roosevelt Road would only encourage bicyclists entering the downtown area from the south to continue to Naperville Road into the heart of the downtown district.

The Bicycle Plan recommends the placement of bike racks within 50 feet of building entrances. If multiple racks are clustered in a visible and signed location they can be sited up to 100 feet from entrances to the destinations being served. Bicycle parking should be located convenient to final destinations and in highly visible areas. There are many styles of bicycle parking racks available, but best practices state that a rack should be securely anchored to the ground and allow both the frame and at least one wheel to be locked to the rack.



Marked Shared Lanes - Signal to drivers to yield to bicyclists and "share the road" on public streets. These markings also indicate to cyclists the appropriate locations and directions to ride on particular streets.



Photo: Eric Schkrut

Signed Routes - Signed bike routes encourage bicycle riding on particular streets and raise awareness to all users of the street that bicycle traffic is accepted and encouraged. A system of bike routes helps cyclists navigate to particular destinations in a community, including downtown districts.

Bike Racks:

The US Green Building Council sets standards for neighborhood development which recommend a minimum of one bicycle parking space per business. For the downtown study area this would equal a minimum of 67 spaces or 34 racks just to accommodate retail and restaurant uses, with additional racks recommended for other commercial and residential units. In the downtown core there are currently only 14 bike racks. The standard U Racks or variations thereof are recommended for the ease of use and bike security, allowing for two contact points between the bike and the rack for ease of locking and stability.



14

Existing capacity for bike parking



67

Proposed capacity for bike parking

Improve lighting coverage and efficiency

Once visitors have arrived downtown, the mission of the lighting is to provide a nighttime ambience that coaxes motorists out of their cars – to shop, to dine, to stay. The landscape must have a high level of aesthetic appeal and proper lighting is essential to achieving this. Components include:

LED fixtures

- As redevelopment and streetscape improvements occur within downtown, LED lighting should be considered in order to reduce energy costs. The alleyways in Downtown Wheaton in particular lack sufficient lighting for pedestrians and would benefit from various ornamental lighting fixtures in order to enhance safety. The current pedestrian scale lights in the downtown district should be refitted with new LED fixture heads.

Architectural Lighting

- Another strategy to improve lighting as well as create a stronger sense of place within the downtown is to implement a downtown architectural lighting master plan to highlight architectural elements on individual buildings. Architectural lighting can spur interest in particular buildings, provide energy savings, reduce lighting pollution, enhance property values and increase activity in the downtown after dark. An architectural lighting master plan is not mandatory but rather could be advisory and completed through public-private investments. Such a document could provide a “toolbox of ideas” for property owners, developers and designers that includes design guidelines coupled with “best practice” photos and lighting techniques that demonstrate how to highlight the architectural composition of buildings. Architectural lighting plans typically identify incentives for property owners to implement the guidelines. Incentives vary but might proceed in the form of rebates tied to demonstrated energy savings or a reduction in property taxes or sales taxes on building materials tied to the completion of particular improvements.

Improved color rendering

- Color Rendering Index (CRI) is a measurement of a light source's ability to render all of the colors in the spectrum accurately (on a scale of 1-100 with 100 being the best). Using high color rendering light sources is essential to make people, art and landscape look attractive. This means lamps with a minimum Color Rendering Index (CRI) of 80 and a preferred CRI of 85 or above should be a standard of the downtown district.

Dark Sky Compliant Fixtures

- International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) is the recognized authority on light pollution. Protecting our environment and night skies from unnecessary light pollution is critical to the economic, cultural, and scientific enjoyment of our living and working environments. It is therefore recommended that Dark-sky compliant fixtures be phased in over time, to limit the light pollution expelled by pedestrian and street lighting. It is recommended that these new fixtures maintain the “historic” character of the existing context.

Dining Alleys

Another favorable concept that can contribute to the downtown identity is designed alley upgrades. Alley upgrades improve the aesthetics and lighting of alleyways to create special, intimate pedestrian spaces. Alleys present great opportunities to create a more vibrant public realm, improve pedestrian connections, and generate new business opportunities. There are many US cities that are recognizing the potential of alleys as inviting public spaces and pedestrian connections capable of attracting activity that is good for the local economy and neighborhood safety. Some cities are including “green” designs which include permeable pavements and landscaping to aid storm water management. Streetscape furnishings, lighting, art and plantings give additional character to alleyways that invite visitors to venture down new paths, creating an element of discovery and expanding the pedestrian network in downtown. The City should work with property owners to actively encourage the use of specific alleyways for commercial uses such as boutiques and restaurants.

The existing passage off of Hale Street between Front Street and Wesley Street could be further enhanced as a green dining alley, building off of the outdoor dining and pedestrian connection that currently exists. In addition, there is potential for upgrades to the existing alley passageways on the block east of Hale Street between Front Street and Wesley Street. These locations should remain closed to automobile access. Mid-block crosswalks are recommended at these locations to provide additional circulation options. Implementation of this concept will require property owners to consider their building and service relationship with these spaces, as well as consideration to accommodate deliveries and dumpsters. The city has already successfully begun to screen dumpsters and upgrade these alleys.

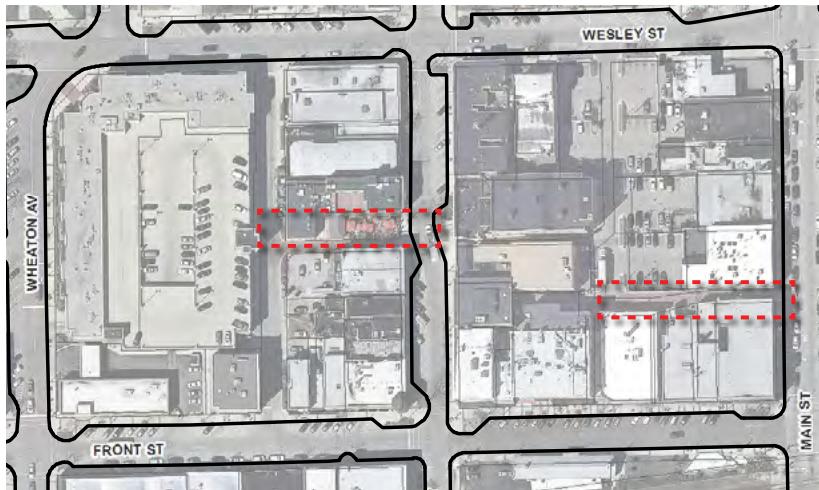
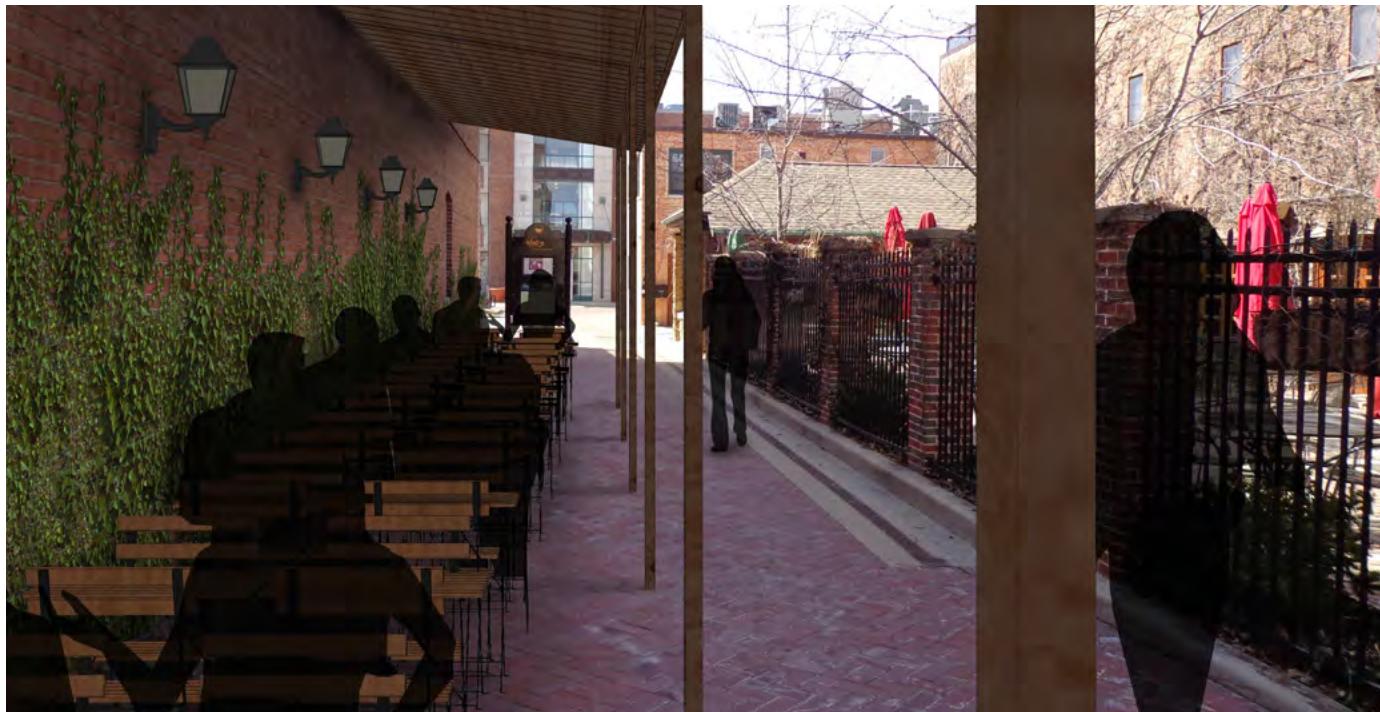


Figure 7: Green dining alley locations



Example of an active alley with access to shops and restaurants



Simulations illustrate the potential for green dining alleys in downtown.

Prairie Path

The Illinois Prairie Path system has eight hundred thousand annual visitors. Additional programmatic elements should be considered along the path, particularly within proximity to downtown shops and the proposed 'Central' park and Metra stop including seating, exercise structures and covered bicycle storage facilities.

Because the path is a key connector within downtown, there needs to be a separation between the bicycle traffic and pedestrian traffic within the downtown. Most traffic on the path is bicyclists, therefore treatment of the path within downtown should physically or visually separate the path for use as a sidewalk versus use as a cycle track.



The Cultural Trail in Indianapolis incorporates signage, wayfinding, seating, and bicycle parking. Source: Sustainable Cities Collective



An example of covered bicycyle parking at transit locations.

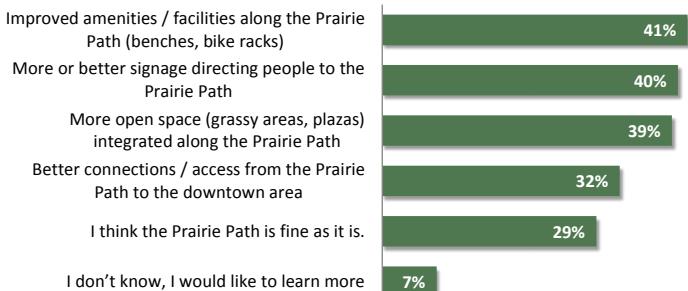
Source: Matt Hobo - Creative Commons

The following reflects my views concerning the Illinois Prairie Path that crosses the Downtown area. I would like to see... (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



The City should explore additional locations where the Prairie Path could more seamlessly connect with the rest of the downtown area, beyond the intersections with the north south streets. For example, the City may look to strengthen or highlight connections between the path and the central park along Liberty Drive in order to strengthen the appeal of both of these key amenities in the downtown area. Additional signage should be provided along the Prairie Path to indicate businesses in the downtown, such as opportunities for shopping, dining and entertainment. Similarly, signage to the Prairie Path should be integrated into the signage within downtown.

The Prairie Path and Wheaton can be marketed as an eco-tourism destination, where you can take the train, get on a bicycle and visit shopping, dining and entertainment venues. A "Prairie Path Station" could be created in a location adjacent to the facility to encourage large scale bicycle commuter usage with covered parking and the ability to lock bikes. This station could provide the opportunity to rent bicycles.

The Prairie Path can also be marketed to runners for training as a major hub for Chicago Marathon training. One particular group is C.A.R.A. (Chicago Area Runners Association) which already uses Caribou Coffee for weekly Saturday morning meeting location due to its proximity to Mile Marker Zero which is one-fourth mile to the west. The association has over 200 members and growing.

Integrating History into the Streetscape

Downtown Wheaton boasts one of the richest histories of any district in the Chicagoland region, and integrating the history of the community in the future design for the area will help in distinguishing Downtown as a unique and destination district. As one of the original communities in DuPage County, Wheaton's history traces to the 1830s. The community was one of the key hotbeds of abolitionist activity prior to and during the Civil War and supported the Underground Railroad. The city has operated as the county seat since the 1860s and as one of the principal commercial centers in DuPage County since the beginning of suburban expansion in the 1950s. Wheaton is the home to a varied set of famous natives and attendees at Wheaton College, including natives Jim and John Belushi, and Wheaton College alumni Wes Craven (famous Hollywood producer), former Speaker of the U.S. House Dennis Hastert of Illinois, and famous evangelist Billy Graham. A 'History Walk' currently exists along the Prairie Path. Building on Wheaton's rich history and this program can make downtown more marketable. This can be accomplished through interpretive signage and public art.

The future design of amenities and streetscape in Downtown Wheaton can effectively draw from this heritage to create a unique look and feel for the district. For example, future streetscape designs could incorporate and expand upon the existing History Walk along the Prairie Path, highlighting key buildings and famous people from Wheaton's past. Future Downtown projects should carefully respect and preserve the historical architecture of buildings in the district as well. Downtown Wheaton should take advantage of this rich heritage and use it as a distinguishing strength in its positioning going forward.

Soft Programming

Enhanced “soft programming” (including events, festivals, and the like) can significantly increase the number of people coming to Downtown Wheaton and thereby help to fulfill the vision of Downtown Wheaton as a key community gathering place for the region. Effective soft programming can provide cultural enhancements, drive increased retail activity, and help to brand the Downtown as a key destination for shopping, dining, entertainment, and culture.

Wheaton provides many well-attended events throughout the year in the downtown area, with most events occurring during the summer months from June through August as outlined in the chart. Fifty percent of respondents during the planning process rated the number of events in Downtown Wheaton as “about right”, but around 40 percent indicated a preference for increasing the number of events in the district. Wheaton provides a wider range of events throughout the calendar year, compared to other downtowns in the area. However, compared to its peer downtowns, Wheaton lacks a significant number of arts and cultural events. To diversify the programming in Downtown Wheaton the community may consider introducing an arts or cultural themed event. In addition, the community may wish to explore opportunities to create more events tied to Wheaton College. Discussions with the college during the planning process indicated that the college would be interested in opportunities to collaborate on events in the downtown area involving the college.

Wheaton Soft Programming

| January | February | March | April | May | June | July | PROGRAM TYPE: |
|-------------------------|-----------|---|----------------|---|--|--|---------------|
| | | Celebrate Spring/ Celebrate Easter | | Memorial Day Parade | Taste of Wheaton, Wheaton Park District & Wheaton | Snapshots of America Independence Day Festival, Wheaton Park District | Music |
| | | | | | Municipal Band Concerts | DuPage County Fair, DuPage County | Food |
| | | | | | | Rockin' for the Troops, Operation Support Our Troops | Culture |
| August | September | October | November | December | Farmer's Market | | Holiday |
| Wheaton Ale Fest | | Downtown Trick-or-Treat | Chili Cook-Off | Dickens of Christmas Celebration & Lighted Holiday Parade | Yes; Saturdays April - November | | Art |
| Municipal Band Concerts | | Pretty in Pink: A Ladies Night out in Downtown Wheaton | | | | | Other |

Signage and Wayfinding

A future comprehensive gateway and wayfinding project for Downtown Wheaton would provide valuable tools to help identify and build a specific and consistent brand. Building on the existing downtown branding strategy will help create a cohesive and consistent system that visitors and residents will recognize. Elements of this brand include district gateways and district wayfinding.

The city should develop a signage and wayfinding plan to:

- Improve directional signage to key destinations within downtown;
- Enhance signage directing people from the Prairie Path to downtown, including signage along the path that points out the businesses downtown including the bike shop, coffee shops, and restaurants;
- Enhance signage directing people from downtown to the Prairie Path (Key destinations along or adjacent to the Prairie Path route should be indicated including retail and dining opportunities, the Central Park, Adams Park and Memorial Park);
- Create more visible signage directing drivers to parking locations within downtown – this signage should indicate that the parking is free;
- Provide signage indicating the number of spaces available in the parking garages. This can be accomplished by installing or retro fitting vehicle loop detectors into new and existing parking garages, similar to the City of Naperville parking garage.
- Provide directional signage to the existing overpass at Wesley Street.

District Wayfinding:

Wayfinding signs in a given area of town, or applied to an entire city, provide a system that helps guide visitors and residents to key destinations, including parks, government centers and other attractions.

Wayfinding encompasses all of the ways in which people orient themselves in unfamiliar or new surroundings and “find their way” from place to place. Programs generally consist of signs, symbols, colors, messages and images. People find their way around a complex or unknown environment by a process known as cognitive mapping — creating a mental image of a place which improves over time. The wayfinding program should be intuitive, easy to grasp quickly and able to cross cultural and language barriers. The outcome of a successful wayfinding sign program enables visitors to easily determine their own experiences by empowering them to make their way through the area with comfort and clarity and without confusion. The best wayfinding programs provide a combination of manufactured, electronic and human elements to create a guided



A street in St. Louis indicates bike right-of-way



A parking sign in Ann Arbor clearly indicates free public parking



A district identity sign in Washington D.C. clearly defines the district

experience for visitors as well as residents. Statistics show that people make their opinions of places in as little as 15 seconds, so a negative first impression can be difficult to overcome.

Wayfinding can be part of the backbone of a community's identity. The visual representation of that identity is the thread of continuity from gateways to corridors to commercial centers to neighborhoods. A successfully designed sign program is not only functional and memorable; it also extends a welcoming gesture to visitors and residents. It reflects the community's values that they care for everyone's comfort and experience.

Wayfinding signs do not advertise specific businesses unless a part of the program includes a business focused directory or smart phone application. They don't add clutter to the streets—they reduce clutter and consolidate information. The signs are not just for the visitor; instead, they identify areas of interest to locals and visitors alike.

Objectives for Identity, Gateway and Wayfinding:

- Create a consistent and controlled design vision communicated through unified and distinctive graphic identity, gateway and wayfinding elements.
- Provide a stronger sense of arrival into the downtown district.
- Facilitate circulation and educate visitors about the destinations, amenities and commercial offerings within downtown.
- Create a system that can be extendible to other areas of the city with a different color and materials palette.
- The design can reflect a balance of local character and civic refinement.
- The signs should be distinctive, and at the same time harmonious with the context and existing signs.
- Signs should be made of high quality, durable and practical materials.



Examples of wayfinding signs that help identify key locations within a community



Existing gateway signage identifying Downtown Wheaton

District Gateways

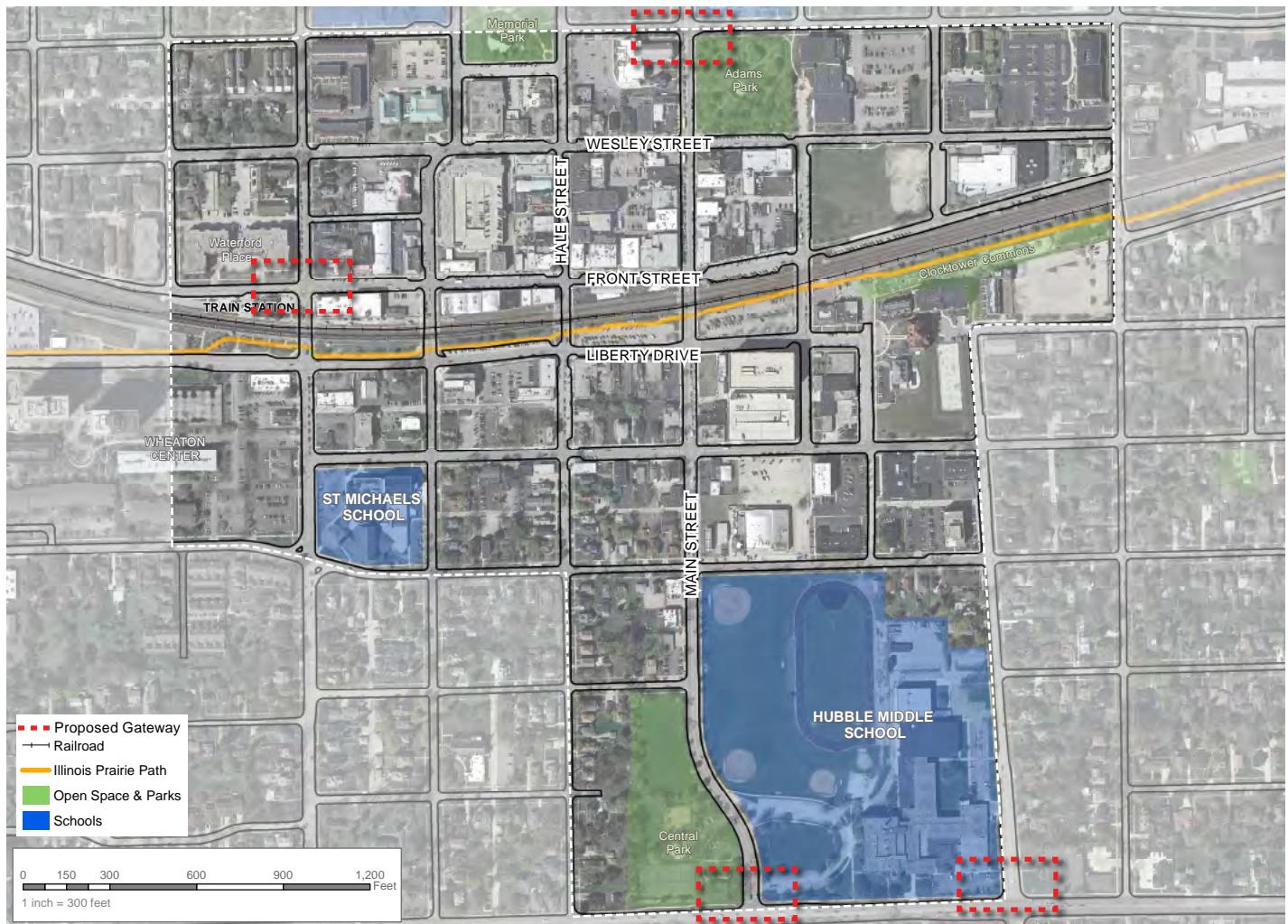
Community Gateways come in many varied forms such as vehicular bridges, overpasses, portals, public art sculptures, traditional monument signs and pedestrian-scaled district markers. They provide a strong sense of arrival and should reflect the inherent character of the place. Gateways can extend the community branding and messaging to be an integral part of a wayfinding system. They are most successful when integrated into the environment and landscape. Correct scale, placement and lighting are important for optimal impact, visibility and legibility.

The district gateways should alert travelers that they are approaching a unique area within the larger city. This can be achieved through gateway markings, district signage, and aesthetic enhancements.

The downtown plan recommends establishing gateways leading into Downtown at the following key locations:

- At the intersection of North Main Street and Seminary Street (adjacent to Adams Park)
- At the intersection of West Street and Front Street (near the train station)
- Roosevelt Road and S. Naperville Road (Mariano's location)
- A gateway monument exists at Roosevelt Road and Main Street
- A gateway sign needs to be located at Gary Ave. and Harrison Ave to point to Downtown Wheaton.

Figure 8: Gateway Locations



District Gateway - Examples



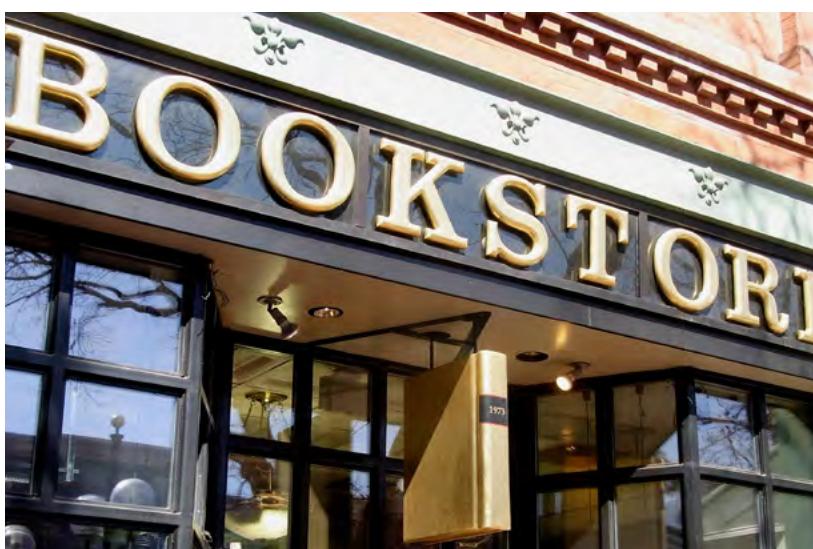
Gateway signage identifying downtown Eagle, Colorado



Gateway signage identifying downtown Willits, California



Gateway signage identifying the historic core of San Diego, California



Modifications to Design Guidelines

The Wheaton Downtown Design Guidelines, completed in 2001, articulated preferred urban design strategies for buildings and streetscapes throughout the district. Importantly, the document earmarked different standards for three sub-areas within downtown:

- Traditional Core Area
- Perimeter Commercial Area
- Residential Conversion Area

The standards for the “traditional core area”, located mainly north of the tracks, create an urban design framework for the “main” part of downtown and articulate fairly urban standards. These standards would work well in any district in which projects include a mixture of retail, residential, and office space, often mixed vertically in a Main Street orientation.

The Downtown Plan does not propose a complete reworking of the design guidelines for Downtown Wheaton. Instead, this document recommends that the entire downtown area be reclassified to use the urban design standards outlined for the Traditional Core Area. Because one of the main goals of the current downtown effort is to extend the downtown development to the south side of the tracks, and extending east and west to West Street and Naperville Road, this part of downtown should have the same urban design standards as the “main” part of downtown. These guidelines would help to articulate how buildings relate to the street, the design of pedestrian areas, and other considerations that will help to create a more urban feel for Downtown Wheaton between the tracks and Roosevelt Road. Simply reclassifying the areas to the south of the tracks from an urban design perspective will help set the foundation for the kinds of buildings and projects that the community expects in this part of Downtown going forward.

District Signage Guidelines

As stated above, the purpose of these recommendations is to encourage innovative, creative, functional and expressive signs that contribute to the visual and experiential vitality of the District. Signage and street graphics within the downtown district are expected to meet or exceed the criteria below:

General Design Notes

- All signage and street graphics are expected to be compatible with and represent an enhancement of the character of the downtown, the architecture of the building to which it is affixed as well as adjacent architecture when considered in terms of placement, design, scale, color, materials and lighting both related to brightness and type of illumination.
- All signage and street graphics are expected to be appropriate to and expressive of the business or activity for which they have been designed.
- All signage and street graphics are expected to be creative and innovative in the use of form, graphic design, dimensionality, scale and iconographic representation. Signage that exhibits high levels of these qualities, executed with high levels of craft and materials are encouraged.
- All signage and street graphics must be installed according to Code requirements and the expectation is that signage in the Downtown will be designed with ease of service and maintenance to ensure longevity and a quality presentation over time.
- Tenants and landlords are encouraged to retain professional assistance in the planning and design of their signage.

Visibility and Legibility Day and Night

A sign can certainly be expressive and artistic, but if it cannot be seen or read by passersby, it will have little positive or material impact on the business it is intended to promote. Poor or illegible typography, the use of dimensional letters where the return is the same color as the face, and the presence of highly reflective materials all can degrade a sign's function.

Placement

Placement so that viewing angles are favorable for pedestrians, vehicles or both should be considered carefully. Placement and design should result in an enhancement of the appearance of the host building.

Signage/Building Relationships

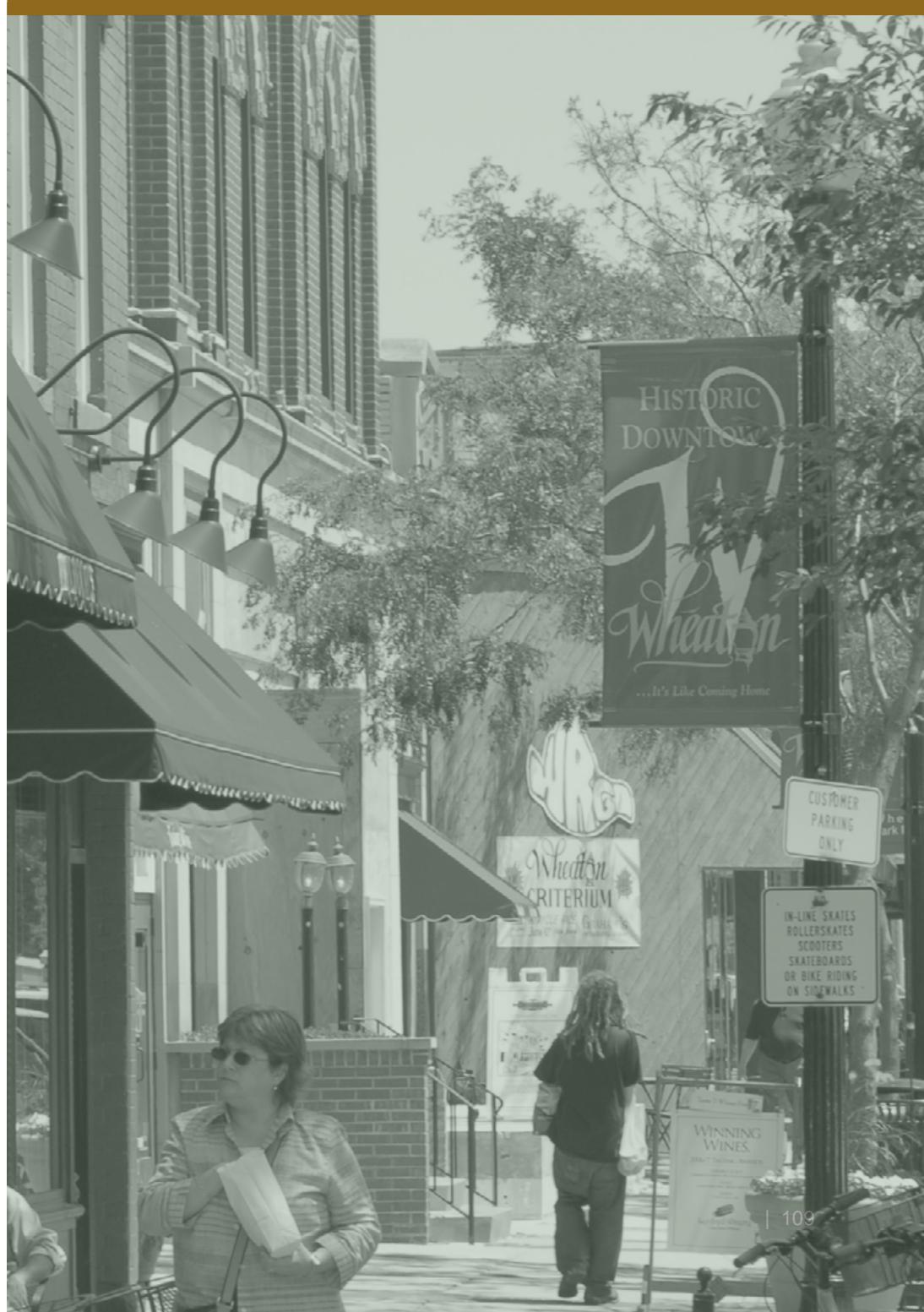
Signage should relate in some way to the host building. Businesses should seek placements or locations for signage that appear to have been designed to receive signage. In creating alignments with architectural features or surfaces, the sign is more likely to "nest" in an appropriate fashion within its architectural context. The line between communicating a sense of Vitality vs. Chaos is often the result of how well or badly this principle is understood.

General Design Notes

- Quality signage is in general characterized by simplicity rather than complexity. When trying to visually communicate quickly as a sign must do, less is more.
- Large letters on a small field do not communicate as well visually as letters sized properly to allow for enough "white space" facilitating legibility.
- Good signage conveys purpose and personality. Great signage strikes a balance in how well it communicates both character and personality of the business or use it is intended to promote.
- Temporary signage, including window banners, sidewalk sandwich boards and other temporary interventions, although occasionally required, can have a down market impact on a downtown district. It is essential that temporary signage (not associated with leasing or the sale of the premises) be managed from a time, scale and placement standpoint, in that order.

5

IMPLEMENTATION



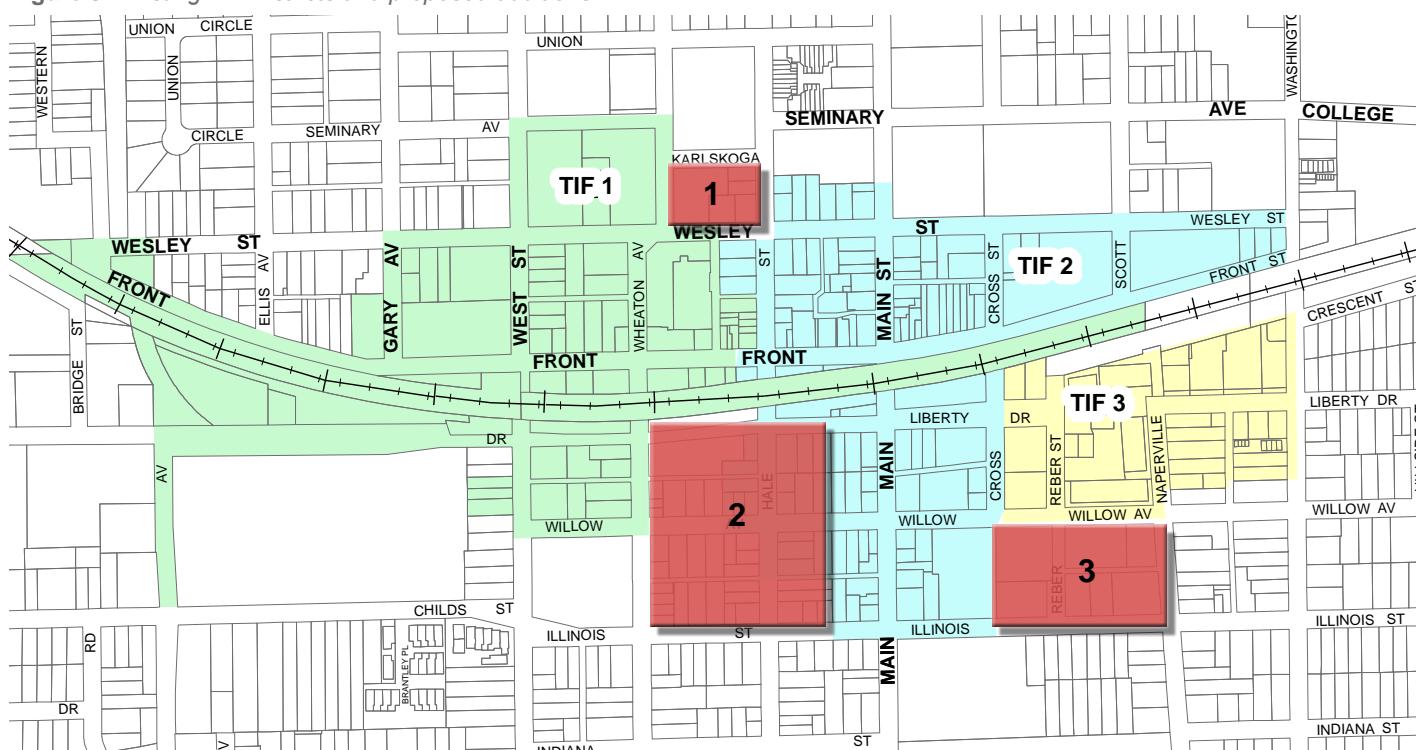
IMPLEMENTATION

The Downtown Strategic and Streetscape Plan document outlines the various overarching recommendations the community may pursue in maintaining and improving the downtown district over the next twenty years, building from the overall vision for Downtown Wheaton. This section discusses how the City and the community-at-large may pursue the various improvements and recommendations for the downtown district, in terms of the prioritization of projects and various financial, procedural, and regulatory tools the City and the private sector may utilize in order to promote improvements in Downtown Wheaton. This document does not suggest that the implementation recommendations will remain fixed. This section outlines a roadmap for the community from which the City Council, City staff, and other community leaders will bring forth formal proposals for action over many years.

District – Wide Implementation Strategies

The downtown plan identifies the following key implementation strategies that the City and the community as a whole should pursue going forward, regardless of the particular stage of improvements at hand. These strategies will help the community advance the goals identified in the downtown plan over both the short-term and long-term and largely will not involve significant expenditures of public funds. Instead, these policy or strategy ideas should guide City actions with regard to economic development and overall implementation of the plan almost immediately.

Figure 9: Existing TIF Districts and proposed additions.



Expand Tax Increment Financing Districts to Cover Additional Downtown Areas

As illustrated in the diagram that follows, the Downtown Wheaton area currently includes three separate Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts. The TIF provisions allow for developers and the City to use part of the anticipated increases in property tax revenues resulting from their projects to fund public infrastructure related to their particular project. However, certain blocks located to the south of the Union Pacific tracks are not currently included in any TIF districts. The City should explore either the expansion of an existing TIF district to include areas within the downtown study area not covered by TIF, or create a new TIF district (or multiple TIF districts) to cover these additional blocks and development parcels. In addition, the City could explore extending the life of the existing TIF districts to additional years in order to fund additional future downtown improvements.

Having a TIF designation in place throughout the downtown district, and in particular for blocks south of the tracks, will help to set the stage for redevelopment. Potential developers would know in advance that TIF incentives could be available for particular properties and this may help provide incentive for them to move forward with redevelopment concepts.

Invite Development Proposals on Strategic Sites

The City should explore issuing formal development requests for proposals for targeted parcels, or groups of parcels, in order to attract interest from the development community and help push the overall redevelopment of Downtown Wheaton forward. The City would need to coordinate with the particular landowners included in a RFP issuance in order to agree on the language and requirements articulated in the RFP document. Importantly, the City should incorporate development and design standards tied to, or in alignment with, the downtown plan into the RFP criteria. The City should consider completing some level of market analysis around the time of RFP issuance in order to ensure that the anticipated development program articulated for the site aligns with current market conditions and therefore would attract greater levels of developer interest. The development RFPs must draw from the goals articulated in this downtown plan and further the redevelopment of Downtown Wheaton in line with the standards and concepts outlined in this document. This strategy will ensure that future redevelopment projects align with the community's long term vision for Downtown Wheaton.

Strategically Acquire Development Parcels

The City has historically not engaged in any land banking of parcels anywhere in the city. However, acquiring targeted properties could help to further redevelopment in the downtown area. The City could acquire parcels as they become available on the market as a first step toward crafting larger redevelopment projects, particularly south of the tracks. The assembling of parcels of sufficient size to launch a feasible project often creates a challenge in redevelopment efforts. While the City should be careful to not extend itself too far financially in acquiring properties, as a public entity the City of Wheaton could help considerably in the land assemblage process. The City should in particular focus on acquiring key parcels around the downtown area that represent corner locations or would likely represent the "missing piece" in a larger redevelopment project involving other land owners. This downtown plan does NOT suggest that the City explore the use of eminent domain to acquire properties. However, where feasible, acquiring key parcels on the open market could further the redevelopment of select parts of Downtown Wheaton considerably.

Implement a Targeted Retail Recruitment Program

Many stakeholders and members of the public expressed support during the planning process for initiatives to create a greater mix of retail businesses in Downtown Wheaton. The Chamber of Commerce, along with Downtown Wheaton Association and the City, should explore instituting a formal retail recruitment program for the district, with the aim of attracting tenants that would fill specific gaps in the current roster of businesses and elevate the competitive position of the area. Many other suburbs around the country have implemented formal recruitment efforts, usually through a seasoned retail broker or recruitment specialist, in order to attract certain types of tenants that had been missing in their local areas. A formal retail recruitment program could target national tenants in particular, or certain types of retailers that would fill specific niches in Downtown Wheaton. The City along with the Chamber and DWA should complete a more specific and detailed tenant analysis before embarking on a formal retail recruitment program for Downtown.

Complete a Coordinated Marketing Plan

The marketing of properties, events, and other elements pertaining to Downtown Wheaton is currently carried out by various parties – including the City of Wheaton, the Wheaton Parks District, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Downtown Wheaton Association. These entities should consider joining forces and coordinating marketing efforts for the downtown district. These entities should hold joint events when possible, market destinations and key retailers in Downtown Wheaton collectively, and work together to craft marketing messages geared to critical demographic groups in the local region (young people, seniors, families, etc.). Pursuing a coordinated marketing plan would allow these entities to increase the visibility of Downtown Wheaton in the Chicago region to a greater extent than having separate entities pursue separate strategies.

Create a Management Entity for Operations and Maintenance

The City of Wheaton currently carries out maintenance for various items in the downtown district, including trash and litter removal, landscaping upkeep, and maintenance of trash containers, benches, and other fixtures. Downtowns around the country have moved in recent years to having a separate entity coordinate management and maintenance in order to ensure that these districts retain their attractiveness and marketability. While the City has done a good job in maintaining fixtures and facilities around the downtown area, the City has to maintain Downtown as one of a myriad of other areas around the city. Creating a separate entity (perhaps coordinated along with the Chamber or the DWA) to lead the maintenance and upkeep around Downtown Wheaton would help ensure that the full attention of this entity would be on the district, and that resources would not be spread across the city. A Business Improvement District (BID) could be formed to carry out these management functions, for example. BIDs in various downtowns concentrate on maintenance and upkeep and also coordinate marketing and business development efforts.

Phasing and Prioritization of Improvements

Based upon input from the public during the project and an analysis on the part of the consultant team and city staff regarding the costs of various public improvement items versus their anticipated returns on investment, this plan recommends that the City of Wheaton proceed with the following major improvements in the following order, to advance Downtown's continued growth over the next two decades.

Phase One – Upgrades to South Main Street / Liberty Drive Festival Street / Central Park

- Timing: 3 – 5 Years
- Estimated Total Cost: \$15.9 Million

As an initial project tied to this Downtown Plan, the City of Wheaton should proceed with upgrades (in terms of streetscape and traffic signals) to Main Street, from Roosevelt Road to the Union Pacific tracks. The City should, at the same time, also complete the Festival Street design for Liberty Drive and the Central Park upgrades outlined in this document, between Hale and Cross Streets. Pursuing this combination of projects as an initial phase of implementation of the Downtown Wheaton Plan would achieve the following objectives:

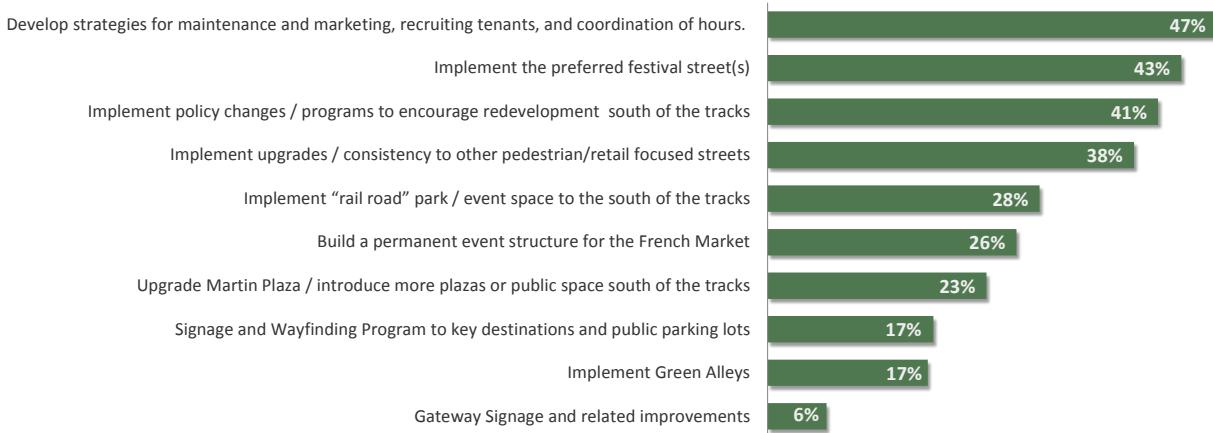
- Upgrading the streetscape along Main from Roosevelt to the Union Pacific tracks would help create a new and more attractive “front door” to Downtown Wheaton from the south, and along the main retail street that connects with Route 38 (Roosevelt Road). Improving this front door would help the downtown district in leveraging the increased traffic resulting from the new Mariano’s development to spur increased retail and restaurant spending in the heart of Downtown Wheaton.
- Similarly, completing the Festival Street improvements along Liberty Drive, tied with the Central Park improvements, would help create a new “front door” for Downtown Wheaton for people traveling through the area via the Metra line. Implementing these improvements along the south side of the tracks may attract additional visitors and business from people who live elsewhere in the area and pass through Wheaton regularly via the Metra line. The Liberty Drive and Central Park improvements would also complement the upgrades to South Main Street and further enhance the perceived “front door” of Downtown Wheaton for those traveling from the south.
- The Central Park and Liberty Drive improvements would include the anticipated upgrades to the French Market and therefore would help to strengthen this key amenity in the downtown area. Constructing a permanent structure for the French Market would allow the community to host additional market sessions during the cold weather months and to host additional events under the structure throughout the year. In this sense, the Central Park and the revamped French Market facilities would serve as a key gathering place in Downtown Wheaton and a potential catalyst for a variety of events that could spur additional revenue throughout the year.
- The combination of the improvements to South Main Street, coupled with the Central Park, Liberty Drive, and French Market improvements, would help to spur overall redevelopment of the area between the Union Pacific tracks and Roosevelt Road. These investments by the City are more likely to stimulate private sector redevelopment including retail, residential, and office projects in this area compared to other potential improvements outlined in this document. While the completion of these improvements will not guarantee that private sector redevelopment will proceed over the next several years, the upgrades to Main, Liberty, and the Central Park should enhance the marketability and property values of adjacent parcels and therefore stimulate developer interest.

Please choose your top 3 overall recommendations for Downtown Wheaton: (Choose your top 3)

Public Meeting Results

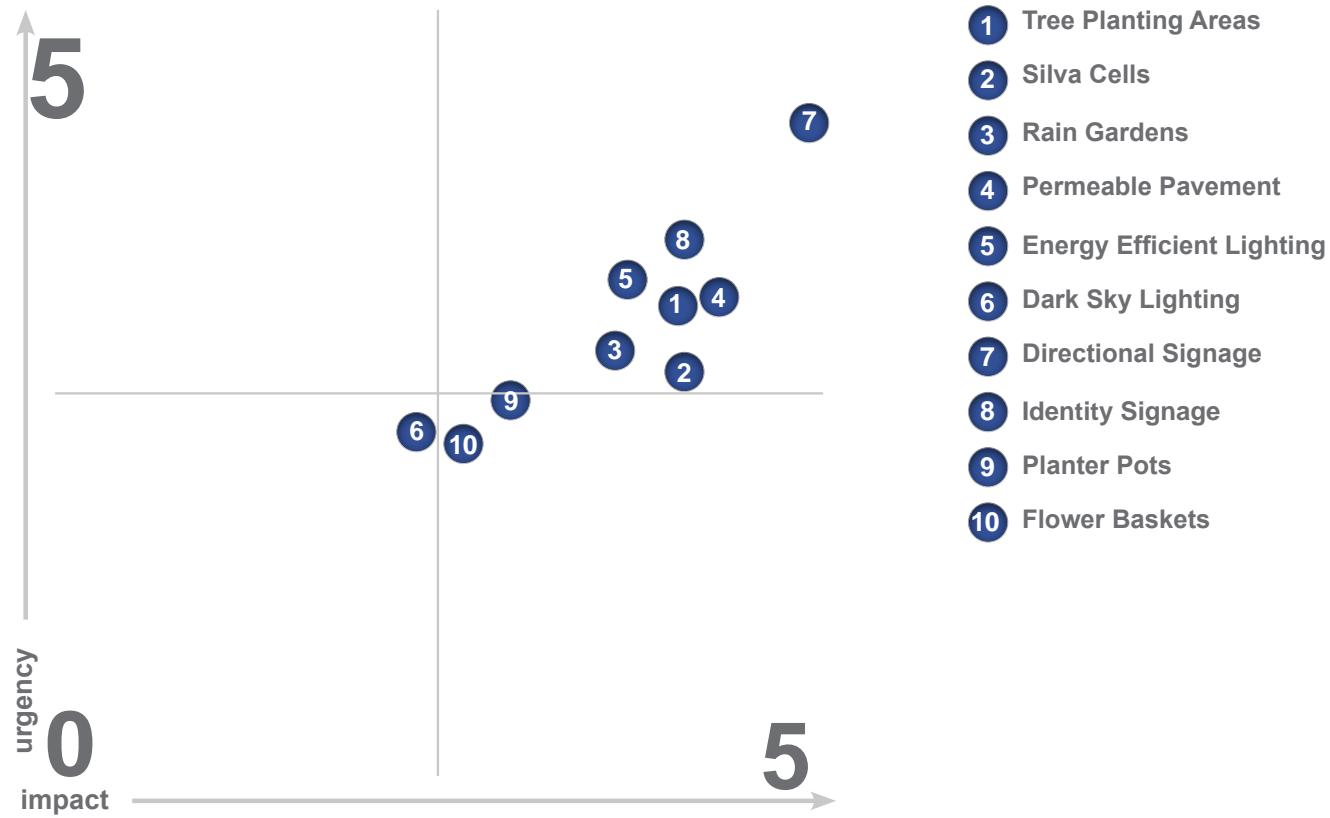


Online Survey Results

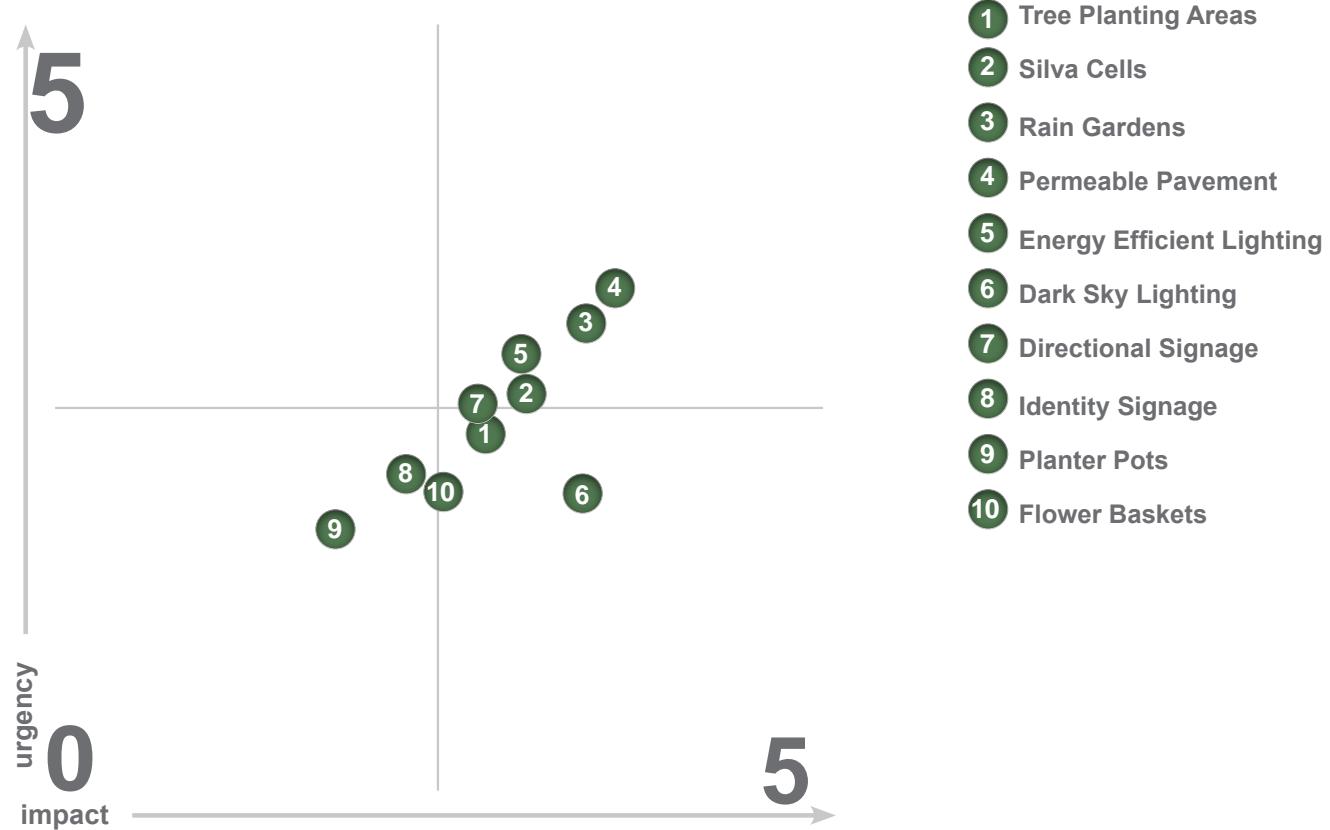


To prioritize streetscape improvements on the pedestrian priority streets identified for downtown, participants were asked to rate the “IMPACT” of each element and the “URGENCY” of implementing them on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 = lowest and 5 = highest.

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Phase Two – Completion of Signage and Gateway Enhancements

- Timing: 3 – 5 Years
- Estimated Total Cost: \$800,000

At generally the same time as it completes improvements to South Main, Liberty Drive, and the Central Park, the City should move forward with district-wide enhancements to signage and gateway monumentation in order to enhance the overall marketability of the Downtown area. Upgrades to signage would include district identity signage (as outlined in this document) as well as signage that would guide visitors to available parking spaces and facilities in the downtown area. Upgrades to gateway signage or monumentation for Downtown Wheaton, at the locations identified in this plan, will enhance the visibility of the downtown district in this part of DuPage County. Specifically, pursuing these improvements as one of the initial stages of implementation would produce the following key benefits to the downtown community.

- Completing enhanced signage and gateway monumentation would help to drive some of the anticipated traffic visiting the new Mariano's development to explore and visit Downtown Wheaton. Completing these improvements in particular on the southern side of Downtown Wheaton would help the district in leveraging the arrival of the Mariano's development in the area.
- The public and elected leaders in Wheaton repeatedly cited parking as one of the key concerns in the downtown area during the planning effort. As mentioned in previous sections, enhancing signage guiding drivers to available parking spots and facilities would help a great deal in maximizing the use of existing parking that serves Downtown. The installation of user-friendly signage related to parking would help a great deal in enhancing the marketability of the downtown area in the broader DuPage County area.
- Enhancing district identity signage for Downtown Wheaton would help in the near term to enhance the visibility and image of the district in the broader DuPage County market. Enhancing the marketing position of the downtown district at this time has particular value, given the anticipated increased traffic at the Mariano's project and the City's ongoing efforts to help spur redevelopment south of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks.

Phase Three – Completion of Hale Street Festival Street Improvements

- Timing: 5 – 10 Years
- Estimated Total Cost: \$4.1 Million

Following the completion of the initial phase of improvements, the City should proceed with the Festival Street upgrades to Hale Street in order to further enhance the position of Hale Street and areas along the north side of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks as key dining and retail locations in the Downtown area, and to further enhance festivals and other programming opportunities in the district. The Hale Street improvements would align well with any planned upgrades to the Wheaton Grand Theater and would help to support the further growth of the Taste of Wheaton and other festivals held throughout the year.

Pursuing this improvement as a second phase of improvements in Downtown Wheaton would achieve the following objectives:

- Completing the Festival Street improvements along Hale Street would help to extend the momentum generated by the initial Festival Street improvements (along Liberty Drive, south of the tracks) farther to the north, into the historic heart of Downtown Wheaton.

- The Hale Street improvements would further support Taste of Wheaton and other festivals in the downtown area.
- The Hale Street festival street improvements would create additional and enhanced space for additional festivals, throughout the year.

Phase Four – Completion of Karlskoga Festival Street Improvements

- Timing: 10 – 15 Years
- Estimated Total Cost: \$2.2 million

The public supported the completion of festival street improvements along Karlskoga Avenue during the planning effort, but also signaled that upgrades on this street should represent a lower priority compared to Hale Street and Liberty Drive. Karlskoga Street has a relatively isolated location relative to the rest of Downtown Wheaton and thus completing improvements on this street should remain a somewhat lower priority over time. However, upgrading Karlskoga as a festival street would help to further enhance the marketability of the Taste of Wheaton and other festivals located at the north end of Downtown Wheaton and would likely help to stimulate further redevelopment in the block located between Karlskoga and Wesley Street.

Phase Five: General Upgrades to Existing Pedestrian Focused Streets to the North of Union Pacific Rail Line

- Timing: 10 – 20 Years
- Estimated Total Cost: \$11.9 million

Beyond the major improvements in Downtown Wheaton outlined in this plan (including festival streets, the Central Park, and South Main upgrades), the City should move forward over time to upgrade the existing streetscape amenities along the downtown or pedestrian-focused streets, to the north of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. These improvements would not involve any substantial changes to the streets themselves, but instead would include upgrades to street furniture, signage, lighting, landscaping, and related amenities. Over time, the City should complete these improvements in order to complement the planned improvements along Hale and Karlskoga and to ensure that the historic core of Downtown Wheaton remains competitive.

Improvements Contingent Upon Redevelopment South of the Railroad Tracks

The public, along with city and elected leaders, identified the promotion of redevelopment south of the tracks as one of the key goals of the downtown planning effort. The improvements identified in Phase One, for South Main, Liberty Drive, and the Central Park, should help tremendously in stimulating further interest in the development community in projects on blocks between the Union Pacific line and Roosevelt Road. Beyond these catalyst projects, the downtown plan identifies the streets in the area for improvement to either pedestrian focused streets or to other downtown streets. These enhancements would include upgrades of streets identified in the plan to meet standards intended to support retail and outdoor dining, including street furniture, street trees, upgraded sidewalks, lighting, signage, and other streetscape elements. All of the streets south of the railroad tracks would, regardless of their classification, eventually receive some level of streetscape improvements, including signage, lighting, and landscape elements.

Given the magnitude of investment anticipated to complete the phases of improvements identified above, the downtown plan assumes the following regarding the various other streets located between the Union Pacific tracks and Roosevelt Road:

- Upgrades to these other streets would not commence until development projects arise on one or more blocks in the area to the south of the railroad tracks.
- The City would lead the completion of upgrades to particular streets in this area, and would complete entire blocks or series of blocks at a time (rather than completing upgrades located adjacent or attached to proposed development projects). This strategy would ensure that particular blocks have a consistent look and feel over time and would avoid a disjointed, piecemeal approach to streetscape implementation in the area.
- The City would coordinate with potential developers, as well as the various other property owners in an area or street section identified for improvements, to explore possible cost sharing arrangements, in order to fund streetscape enhancements. The downtown plan anticipates that private sector redevelopment ideally would help to fund at least part of the streetscape upgrades to the south of the railroad tracks.
- The precise design of particular streets to the south of the railroad tracks would draw from the conceptual design ideas identified and articulated in this document. However, the city, working with the private sector landowners, would need to complete more detailed design for the various streets to the south of the railroad tracks in order to arrive at final design documents.

ADDITIONAL ACTION ITEMS

The following represents specific actions that tie to various recommendations included in this plan document as well as the appropriate general timing for their implementation as well as the likely responsible party (beyond actions tied to the major phases of implementation articulated above). This action item list should help the community in confirming and tracking progress across the various recommendations identified for the downtown plan over the next twenty years.

Action: Implement Green Alleys north of the tracks (including porous paving and development of additional programming or entertainment along these green alleys)

- Responsible Party: City, along with DWA
- Timing: 5 – 10 years

Action: Remove Parking Meters from South of the Tracks (funded by district wide funding provision)

- Responsible Party: City
- Timing: 1 – 3 Years (as soon as possible)

Action: Establish a Fee-in-Lieu Fund for Future Parking Improvements

- Responsible Party: City
- Timing: 1 – 3 Years (as soon as possible)

Action: Designation of bike routes, shared lanes, and bike racks / storage around downtown

- Responsible Party: City
- Timing: 1 – 5 Years

Action: Prairie Path improvements (including signage, exercise facilities, additional connections to downtown locations)

- Responsible Party: City, Illinois Prairie Path Corporation (non-profit entity)
- Timing: 5 – 10 Years

Action: Enhance the History Walk around Downtown Wheaton

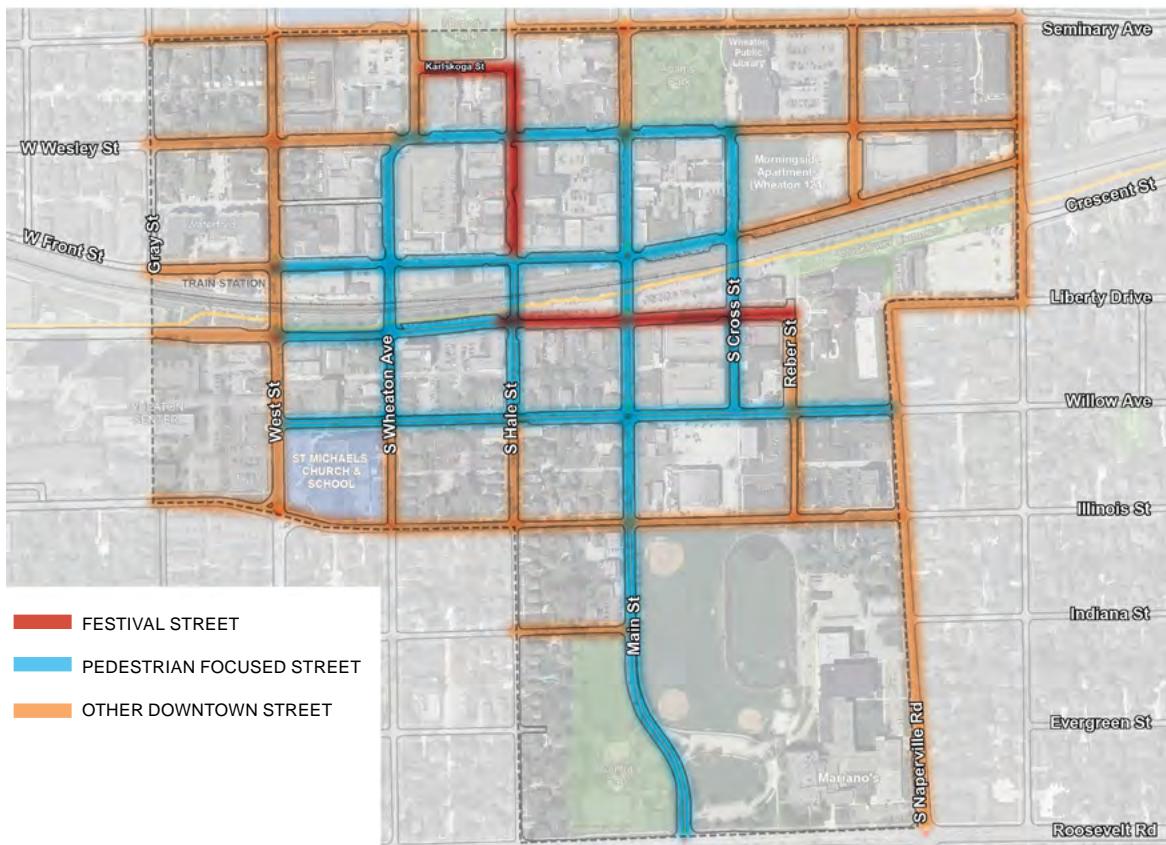
- Responsible Party: City
- Timing: 5 – 10 Years

Action: Explore Expansion of Programming / Festivals in Downtown Wheaton (to include more activities year-round)

- Responsible Parties: City, DWA, Chamber, Parks District
- Timing: 1 – 5 Years

Cost Estimate

Recommended Street Classification

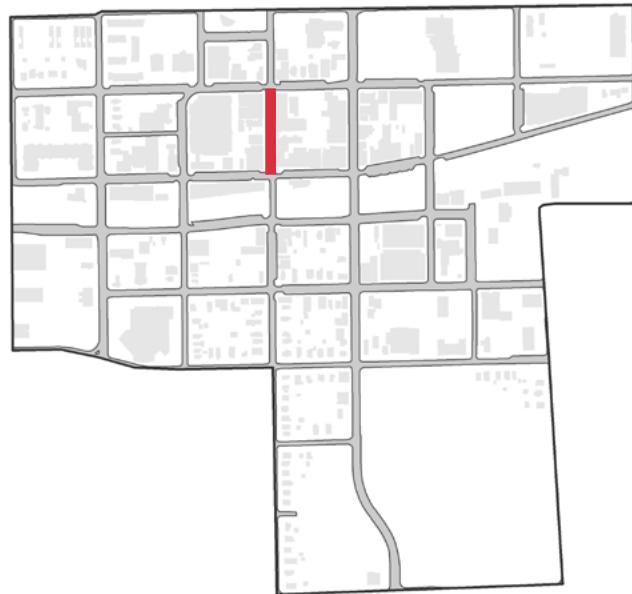


TOTAL ESTIMATED COST

| Improvement | Estimated Cost |
|--|---------------------|
| Festival Streets | |
| Hale Street | \$4,065,045 |
| Liberty Drive | \$5,213,355 |
| Karlskoga | \$2,159,142 |
| Pedestrian Focused Streets | \$25,389,329 |
| Other Downtown Streets | \$11,859,238 |
| Traffic Signal Improvements | \$450,000 |
| Railroad Crossing Improvements (Main/Hale) | \$500,000 |
| Gateway Signage | \$800,000 |
| Central Park | \$2,818,418 |
| French Market Structure | \$300,000 |
| Overhead Lighting on Festival Streets | \$150,000 |
| Contingency (20%) | \$10,740,905 |
| Total Cost | \$64,445,432 |

Cost Estimate - Festival Streets by Segment

| FESTIVAL STREET - N. HALE ST. (Front St. to Wesley St.) | |
|---|--------------------|
| Improvement | Estimated Cost |
| Removal | \$117,899 |
| Pavement | \$1,338,260 |
| Drainage | \$163,095 |
| Lighting | \$131,751 |
| Landscape | \$367,583 |
| Electrical | \$1,581 |
| Utilities | \$74,318 |
| Misc. | \$39,500 |
| Subtotal | \$2,233,988 |
| | |
| Contingency (20%) | \$446,797 |
| Total Cost | \$2,680,786 |



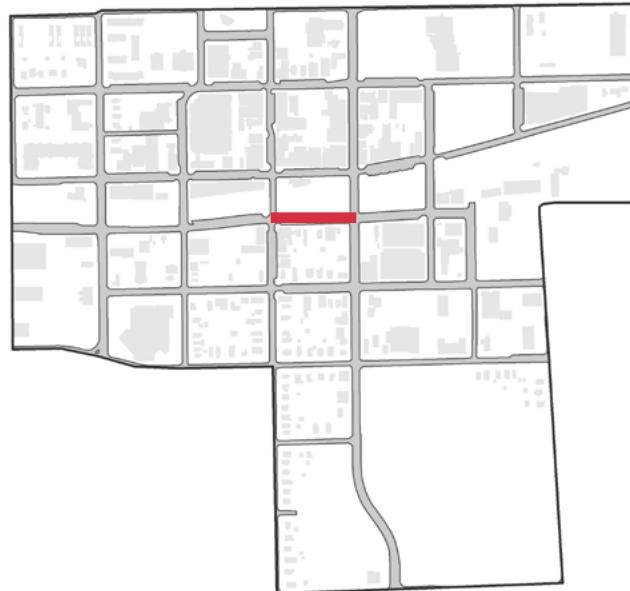
| FESTIVAL STREET - N. HALE ST. (Wesley St. to Karilskoga Ave) | |
|--|--------------------|
| Improvement | Estimated Cost |
| Removal | \$49,847 |
| Pavement | \$628,488 |
| Drainage | \$95,078 |
| Lighting | \$80,664 |
| Landscape | \$218,462 |
| Electrical | \$948 |
| Utilities | \$40,558 |
| Misc. | \$39,500 |
| Subtotal | |
| | |
| Contingency (20%) | \$230,709 |
| Total Cost | \$1,384,258 |



| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| FESTIVAL STREET - KARLSKOGA AVE. (Wheaton Ave. to Hale St.) | |
| Improvement | Estimated Cost |
| Removal | \$75,785 |
| Pavement | \$1,143,397 |
| Drainage | \$128,523 |
| Lighting | \$106,129 |
| Landscape | \$304,684 |
| Electrical | \$1,265 |
| Utilities | |
| Misc. | \$39,500 |
| Subtotal | \$1,799,284 |
| Contingency (20%) | \$359,856 |
| Total Cost | \$2,159,141 |

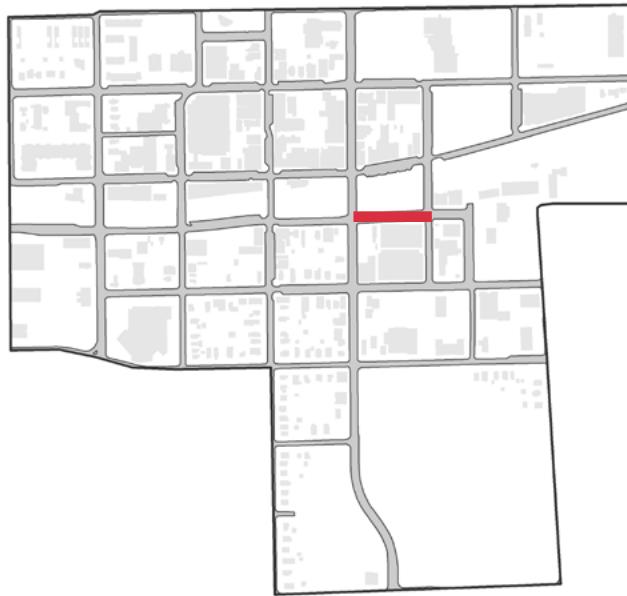


| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| FESTIVAL STREET - LIBERTY DRIVE. (Hale St. to Main St.) | |
| Improvement | Estimated Cost |
| Removal | \$83,843 |
| Pavement | \$1,136,925 |
| Drainage | \$163,012 |
| Lighting | \$131,740 |
| Landscape | \$309,220 |
| Electrical | \$1,581 |
| Utilities | |
| Misc. | \$39,500 |
| Subtotal | \$1,865,822 |
| Contingency (20%) | \$373,164 |
| Total Cost | \$2,238,987 |



Cost Estimate - Festival Streets by Segment

| FESTIVAL STREET - LIBERTY DRIVE. (Main St. to Cross St.) | |
|--|--------------------|
| Improvement | Estimated Cost |
| Removal | \$86,066 |
| Pavement | \$1,384,000 |
| Drainage | \$137,666 |
| Lighting | \$63,400 |
| Landscape | \$218,466 |
| Electrical | \$1,265 |
| Utilities | |
| Misc. | \$39,500 |
| Subtotal | \$1,930,365 |
| Contingency (20%) | \$386,073 |
| Total Cost | \$2,316,438 |



| FESTIVAL STREET - LIBERTY DRIVE. (Cross St. to Reber St.) | |
|---|------------------|
| Improvement | Estimated Cost |
| Removal | \$41,383 |
| Pavement | \$187,050 |
| Drainage | \$81,220 |
| Lighting | \$45,740 |
| Landscape | \$152,432 |
| Electrical | \$948 |
| Utilities | |
| Misc. | \$39,500 |
| Subtotal | \$548,275 |
| Contingency (20%) | \$109,655 |
| Total Cost | \$657,930 |



DESIGNWORKSHOP

WHEATON DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC
AND STREETSCAPE PLAN
APPENDIX: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Wheaton, Illinois

October 2013



Community Engagement:

The City of Wheaton coordinated public outreach along with the project team to raise awareness about the project and gain input from the broader community concerning the Downtown Wheaton Plan. The City maintained a link from their website entitled “What do you want Downtown Wheaton to be?” which included background documents, project updates and materials, as well as links to online engagement tools including Survey Monkey and Mindmixer. The project team gained valuable input from the broader community through a series of public meetings, one-on-one and small group stakeholder meetings, and online dialogues and surveys including Mindmixer and Survey Monkey.

Stakeholder Meetings:

Throughout the planning process, the team held one-on-one work sessions with key stakeholders within downtown including property owners, business owners, civic leaders, local government officials, developers, the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Wheaton Association (DWA), and other special interest groups. At each meeting, the project team provided an overview of the work completed to date and a summary of the feedback provided by the public and the steering committee for the effort. Stakeholders provided detailed feedback concerning design concepts, and new policy ideas and recommendations. Stakeholders also provided feedback on specific recommendations concerning various issues impacting downtown interests including parking requirements and policies, challenges or issues presented by the current zoning classifications, opportunities for soft programming Downtown, ideas for improved public spaces, and overall strategies to strengthen downtown businesses.

Online Engagement - Mindmixer:

The City's website hosted a link to the Mindmixer application which allowed members of the public to submit, share, and “second” or support ideas to improve Downtown Wheaton. Members of the public submitted ideas and responded to specific questions posed on the Mindmixer site about how to improve the Downtown. This appendix contains detailed information and results from public input on the Mindmixer site from throughout the project.

Public Meetings:

The project team and the City conducted a series of four public open houses as part of the Downtown Wheaton planning effort. The meetings, held either at City Hall or the DuPage County Historical Museum, followed similar formats. Each session began with an informal “open house” period during which meeting attendees had the opportunity to review various exhibits concerning existing conditions, various design alternatives, and preferred plans, depending on the stage of the project. Each meeting presented the progress the team had made to date, gathered critical feedback to inform the next stage, and addressed the next steps in the planning process. Each meeting included a formal presentation to the public followed by an instant feedback keypad polling session in which participants provided answers to a variety of questions concerning the Downtown plan. The City posted a link to an online version of each polling session on the City's website, for members of the public unable to attend in person.

This Appendix contains the results of the in-person and online versions of the surveys associated with each of the four public open house sessions in September 2012, February 2013, April 2013, and May 2013, for reference.

Open House #1 - September 18, 2012

The first public meeting introduced the project, initial objectives and goals and discussed the general existing conditions in the downtown area. The goal of this meeting was to gain input from the public concerning the key goals and objectives for the downtown study and input concerning the overall vision for Downtown Wheaton over the next twenty years. Following an initial presentation concerning the project, a total of 85 attendees participated in a keypad polling session that included questions aimed at understanding the community's goals and vision for Downtown Wheaton. An additional 844 people participated in an online version of the keypad polling survey in the weeks following this initial public meeting.

In terms of participation at the meeting and in the online version of the survey questions, this initial round of public engagement included a broad range of constituents including shoppers, attendees at Downtown events, and people who utilize government services in the downtown area. The first meeting and online survey also included a variety of business owners, property owners, and people who work downtown. Most respondents in the keypad polling and online survey (84 percent and 89 percent, respectively), travel to downtown on foot. Fifty four percent and 39 percent of respondents from the in-person and online surveys, respectively, travel to downtown via bicycle, a number significantly higher than the national average. Very few bus riders participated in this round of public engagement, although a sizeable number of participants take Metra commuter rail from the Wheaton station.

Vision:

The majority of participants in September 2012 (62 percent in the keypad survey, and 57 percent online) perceive Downtown Wheaton as a restaurant-oriented center that competes with other downtowns in the local area. However, participants also view the Downtown as a retail-oriented center and expressed interest in the district evolving into an entertainment and culture-oriented downtown as well. The vision articulated by the public also supports the creation of a plan to attract a wider variety of businesses and shops to Downtown Wheaton. Over 50 percent of participants also supported the City of Wheaton prioritizing spending on the downtown district in order to ensure that the area remains one of the community's key assets.

Transportation:

Attendees at the initial public meeting cited a perceived lack of parking, safety concerns for both vehicular and pedestrian movement, and bicycle access and safety as their key transportation concerns in Downtown Wheaton. The specific traffic and safety issues most cited by participants included: safety pulling into and out of parking spots; drivers not yielding to pedestrians; crosswalk timing and safety in crossing streets; and safety for bicyclists. The vast majority of participants at the meeting and online (67 percent and 71 percent, respectively) indicated that the presence of one-way, as opposed to two-way, streets Downtown did not pose any issues or problems.

Streetscape:

The public identified a lack of adequate space for outdoor dining, a lack of adequate benches and seating, and a lack of public art in the overall streetscape within the Downtown area. Furthermore, participants identified the following three areas as key for streetscape improvements:

1. Developing ideas for space for community events and programming such as the French Market and Taste of Wheaton,
2. Improving street trees and landscaping,
3. Creating better and centralized community gathering places (such as Martin Plaza).

In the in-person and online surveys, participants prioritized the installation of sustainable landscaping and providing expanded space for outdoor dining. In general, there was significant interest in adding plaza or community gathering space to the downtown area.

Sidewalks:

The surveys asked the public their opinions concerning the width and quality of sidewalks on the various Downtown streets, including Front Street, Wesley Street, Main Street, Hale Street, and Wheaton Avenue. In general, respondents indicated that sidewalk widths throughout the district were "about right".

Parking:

In regards to parking, the majority of the public responded that there is a lack of convenient on-street parking; however there is adequate parking in garages. The current level of parking enforcement was thought to be about right by the majority of respondents, with less than a quarter believing that the level of parking enforcement was excessive.

Appearance:

Most participants rated the overall appearance of the overall downtown area, the buildings and the streetscape as either "good" or "neutral".

Market:

Respondents indicated that the introduction of a greater variety of retail shops, more convenient parking, and a better overall appearance would lead them to shop or conduct business in Downtown Wheaton more often. In particular, 87 percent of in-person respondents, and 93 percent online, indicated that having a greater variety of shops would in particular encourage a greater level of activity in Downtown Wheaton.

Infrastructure:

Participants cited stormwater management and flooding issues as the most important infrastructure issues to address in the Downtown Plan. This potential improvement ranked as more important than addressing issues with electric lines, the sanitary sewer system, or other "dry utilities" such as cable or fiber optic lines.

Open House #2 - February 28, 2013

The second public meeting reviewed the findings from the market study and the infrastructure analysis as well as the results from the first public visioning session. Meeting attendees participated in a second round of keypad polling focused on initial impressions regarding potential design ideas and strategies for the downtown including festival streets and different options for outdoor dining. There were 30 meeting attendees and 334 people who participated in the online survey which was open from March 1st through April 3, 2013. The results from both the keypad and online survey have been combined in the summary that follows. The responses collected were from a similarly representative group of people to the first round of keypad and survey questions including shoppers, event goers, and those who utilize government services. A total of 33 percent of responses were from individuals who own property in the downtown, but only 6 percent of the responses were from business owners.

Vision:

In regards to the vision presented by the team, almost 80 percent of respondents either strongly or somewhat agreed with the Vision statement to "Elevate the position of Downtown Wheaton as a destination district in the western portion of the Chicago region by pursuing a number of civic improvements and regulatory changes designed to increase the capture rate of retail, office, and residential land uses in the Downtown."

Downtown:

There was significant support behind strategies to improve the competitive position of Downtown Wheaton including actively working to recruit new tenants and businesses (84 percent) and pursuing and encouraging development south of the tracks (74 percent). Fifty six percent of respondents supported increasing funding to restore or renovate building facades to comply with the existing city design guidelines for downtown.

Redevelopment South of the railroad tracks:

Almost 60 percent of respondents supported changing parking requirements for new developments south of the tracks in order to facilitate the creation of new projects. The current regulations require each development project to provide its own parking, thereby limiting the amount of land available for commercial or residential buildings compared to strategies that would encourage district-wide or municipal parking. Furthermore, respondents favored building heights of up to four stories in the area to the south of the tracks in order to support additional redevelopment.

Festival Streets:

The public supported the general concept of festival street concepts and strategies on various streets in Downtown, with strong support for the concept applied to Hale, Karlsgoga, and Front, with slightly less support for the festival street concept along Liberty Drive.

Outdoor Dining:

A majority of participants supported implementing “parklets”, or the seasonal use of parking spaces in front of restaurants during the warmer months of the year, in order to provide additional space for outdoor dining. Nearly half of participants also favored installing permanent sidewalk bulb-outs at key locations to accommodate outdoor dining. Smaller percentages of respondents favored outdoor dining on the alleys running behind several of the streets in the northern, core area of Downtown Wheaton.

Streetscape:

The majority of public responses, 59 percent, supported maintaining the traditional style of furnishings for streetscape features. There was general support (50 percent or more) for a number of sustainable streetscape strategies including adopting sustainable landscape standards for public landscapes, implementing standards for permeable pavement and recycled content, implementing outdoor lighting efficiency standards, implementing green alley design standards, and using solar or other alternative energy sources for street features. A significant majority (74 percent) favored adopting sustainable landscape standards for public landscapes.

Parking Downtown:

The majority of respondents supported each of the potential parking strategies for the Downtown core including: construction of additional city-owned parking lots (61 percent), requiring new development to contribute to a parking fund (54 percent), and improving signage and wayfinding to guide visitors to parking lots (53 percent). When asked what location was most appropriate for an additional parking garage downtown, the response with greatest support was the block bounded by Liberty Drive, Willow Avenue, Hale Street and Main Street, to the south of the railroad tracks.

Events / Programming:

Fifty percent of respondents felt that the number of soft programming activities or events in the downtown area was “about right”, with about 40 percent responding that there is currently not enough programming or events downtown. Respondents supported the introduction of additional vendors and better restrooms to improve the French Market. In addition, 42 percent of respondents supported extending the market to take place year-round, and 41 percent of respondents favored constructing a permanent structure for the French Market.

Prairie Path / Central Park Improvements:

Similar to the response in the first round of questions, respondents in the second round supported installing enhanced signage and wayfinding to and from the Prairie Path, as well as additional seating areas along the path. Sixty five percent of responses supported developing a park concept along the south side of the Metra Tracks, adjacent to the Prairie Path. Respondents also favored providing different options for this park space including natural features, elevating the park over the parking deck, and integrating restaurant sites into the park design. A total of 30 percent of respondents preferred to keep the existing parking lots between Liberty Drive and the Metra tracks and not pursue the “central park” option.

Open House #3 – April 4, 2013

The third public meeting presented a summary of the feedback from the previous two public meetings and online engagement; reviewed draft recommendations; and reviewed streetscape concepts. Meeting attendees participated in a third round of keypad polling focused on understanding the public's priority locations for implementing festival streets, their materials palette preferences for each festival street, priorities for streetscape elements on other non-festival streets, as well as preferred strategies for moving forward with implementation. There were 26 meeting attendees and 163 people who participated in the online survey from April 4th to May 9th, 2013. The responses collected were from a similarly representative group of people to the other two rounds of keypad and survey questions including shoppers, event goers, and those who utilize government services. A total of 42 percent of keypad and 40 percent of online responses were from individuals who own property in the downtown, and 19 percent of keypad and 4 percent of online responses were from business owners.

Festival Streets:

Based on the combined rating of impact and urgency, Liberty Drive and Hale Street were the priority festival streets for implementation in both the keypad and online surveys, with Karlsgo receiving less overall support for the festival street concept. Palette A, representing more traditional or historic streetscape features, was the preferred palette choice for all three proposed festival streets (Hale Street, Karlsgo Street, and Liberty Drive). Additional improvements for the festival streets that the public prioritized included permeable paving or green stormwater strategies, silva cell planting areas for healthier street trees, and rain gardens.

Streetscape Enhancements:

Meeting attendees and online participants were asked to rate the perceived impact and urgency for different streetscape elements to be implemented on the pedestrian priority streets within the downtown to help the consultant team prioritize improvements. The public's top two improvements they felt would have the most impact and urgency were tree permeable paving and rain gardens. The other items rated in order of priority include: energy efficient lighting, silva cells, directional signage, tree planting areas, dark sky lighting, identity signage, flower baskets, and planter pots.

Central Park:

As reflected in the combined results from in-person and online polling, for the central park concept participants favored the ideas of installing permeable parking spaces (that could be used for events) and constructing a permanent structure for the French Market that could provide additional and covered parking spaces during non-event periods. Both of these strategies emphasize keeping as many parking spaces as possible, rather than converting these spaces to parks or open space.

Prioritization:

The combined results from keypad and online responses, the top three priorities for the downtown plan included 1) Developing Strategies for maintenance and marketing, recruiting tenants, and coordinating hours amongst businesses (44 percent of total respondents choice); 2) Implementing the preferred festival streets, beginning with Hale Street and Liberty Drive (43 percent of total respondents choice); and 3) Implementing policy changes or programs to encourage redevelopment south of the railroad tracks (38 percent of total respondents choice). The two items that fell to the bottom of the list of potential improvements included gateway signage enhancements and the green alley improvements.

Strategies:

From the combined results from keypad and online responses showed support from over 50 percent of respondents for the following three strategies: 1. Having the City coordinate streetscape improvements tied to redevelopment (67 percent); 2. Having the City update zoning to encourage more flexibility and mixed uses (65 percent); and 3. Modifying the parking regulations south of the tracks to facilitate development (54 percent).

Creative Lighting:

Both keypad and online responses showed support for a lighting program including work from local artists, historical images, or advertisements for local events to be projected on buildings adjacent to the Metra line.

Gateway Style:

The majority of respondents preferred a gateway entry plaque similar to the existing monumentation at Roosevelt Road and Main Street.

Open House #4 – May 29th, 2013

The fourth public meeting presented a summary of the feedback from the public meeting held in April and the online engagement results, reviewed recommendations, and reviewed streetscape plans for festival streets and pedestrian/retail oriented streets. Meeting attendees participated in a final round of keypad polling focused on prioritizing strategies and recommendations, and their level of support for the Downtown Plan. There were 19 meeting attendees and 188 people who participated in the online survey from May 29th to July 2nd 2013. The responses collected were from a similarly representative group of people to the other rounds of keypad and survey questions including shoppers, event goers, and those who utilize government services. There was a slightly lower response from property owners with about 29 percent of the keypad and online responses from individuals who own property in the downtown, and 23 percent of keypad and online responses from business owners.

Prioritizing Strategies:

There was relatively strong support for the City Council to adopt the Downtown Plan outline with the major concepts and strategies highlighted during the meeting. From the keypad and online survey, 61 percent of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the City Council adopting the plan. The top three overall recommendations for Downtown Wheaton included:

4. Developing economic development strategies for maintenance and marketing, recruiting tenants, and coordinating business hours.
5. Implementing policy changes/programs to encourage redevelopment south of the tracks.
6. Implementing upgrades and applying a consistent treatment to streets classified as “pedestrian / retail focused”

Strategies such as implementing green alleys, introducing a new signage and wayfinding program, and installing gateway singage were towards the bottom of people's priorities for overall recommendations for the downtown district. There was support from the public for proceeding with festival street construction with Liberty Street as the first priority, with Karlskoga and Hale Street as the second priorities.

Parking Strategies:

The public was generally supportive of the parking strategies presented during the meeting including improving signage and wayfinding to direct people to parking facilities, requiring developers to contribute toward municipal parking facilities, revising zoning and regulations to encourage shared parking and implementing various time limits for customer on-street parking.

Redevelopment:

The three top strategies to encourage redevelopment south of the rail road tracks, receiving support from over 50 percent of participants at the public meeting and the online survey (including those who chose “all of the above”), included: actively marketing the downtown plan to potential developers (receiving 88 percent support); streamlining the approval process for new development south of the tracks (receiving 67 percent support); and providing tax incentives to developers (receiving 50 percent support).

Streetscape Strategies South of the Railroad Tracks:

The majority of participants were in support of the streetscape concept that was presented for the Pedestrian / Retail Focused Streets, including Main Street. The concept featured a street furniture, style and materials designed to strengthen the historic character of the downtown core. Participants preferred either the concrete with colored bands or colored scored concrete to the option for grey concrete for the pedestrian / retail focused streets. For Willow Street 67 percent of the participants supported the streetscape concept shown at the meeting with a similar material palette featuring either concrete with colored bands or colored scored concrete.

STREET FURNITURE PALETTE – LIBERTY DRIVE



Benefits: Capitalizes on opportunities to create a more contemporary feel for the proposed infill areas along Liberty Drive.

STREET FURNITURE PALETTE – PEDESTRIAN / RETAIL FOCUSED STREETS



Benefits: Strengthens the historic character of the downtown core.

PEDESTRIAN / RETAIL FOCUSED STREETS – MATERIAL ALTERNATIVES



Concrete with Colored Bands

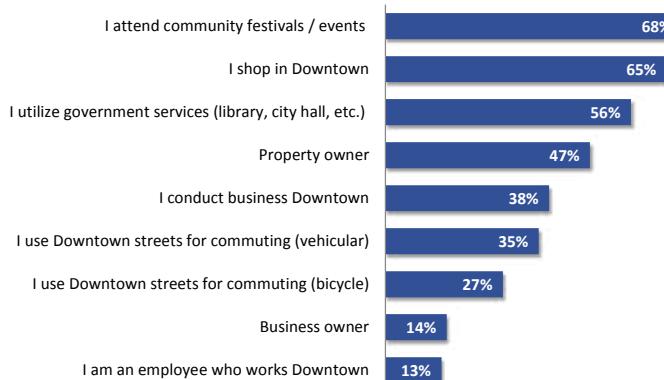
Colored Scored Concrete

Grey Concrete

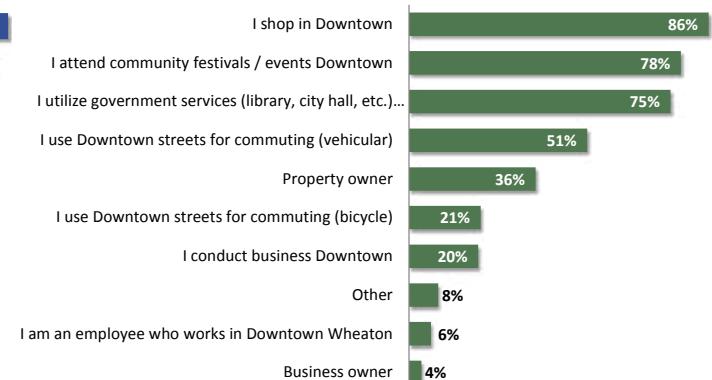
Round 1 Feedback Results

1. My connection to Downtown Wheaton is the following: (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results

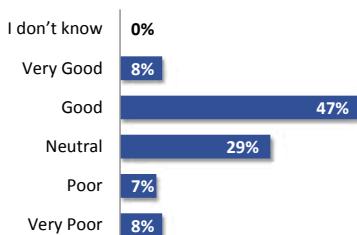


| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|
| I attend community festivals / events | 58 | 68% |
| I shop in Downtown | 55 | 65% |
| I utilize government services (library, city hall, etc.) | 48 | 56% |
| Property owner | 40 | 47% |
| I conduct business Downtown | 32 | 38% |
| I use Downtown streets for commuting (vehicular) | 30 | 35% |
| I use Downtown streets for commuting (bicycle) | 23 | 27% |
| Business owner | 12 | 14% |
| I am an employee who works Downtown | 11 | 13% |

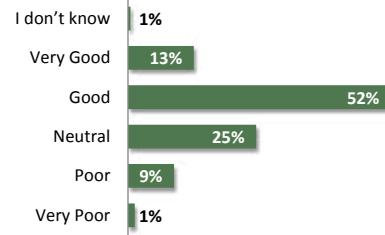
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|---|----------------|------------------|
| I shop in Downtown | 720 | 86% |
| I attend community festivals / events | 653 | 78% |
| Downtown | 628 | 75% |
| I utilize government services (library, city hall, etc.) Downtown | 428 | 51% |
| I use Downtown streets for commuting (vehicular) | 304 | 36% |
| Property owner | 172 | 21% |
| I use Downtown streets for commuting (bicycle) | 166 | 20% |
| I conduct business Downtown | 70 | 8% |
| Other | 53 | 6% |
| I am an employee who works in Downtown Wheaton | 30 | 4% |
| Business owner | | |

2. How would you rate the overall appearance of the downtown area today? (Choose one)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results

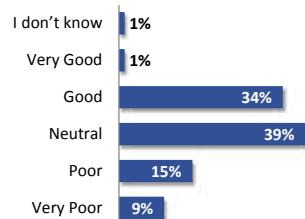


| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Very Poor | 7 | 8% |
| Poor | 6 | 7% |
| Neutral | 25 | 29% |
| Good | 40 | 47% |
| Very Good | 7 | 8% |
| I don't know | 0 | 0% |

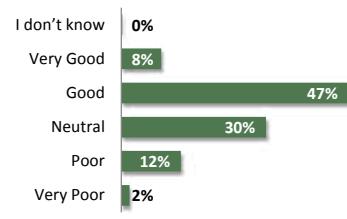
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Very Poor | 11 | 1% |
| Poor | 73 | 9% |
| Neutral | 211 | 25% |
| Good | 433 | 52% |
| Very Good | 108 | 13% |
| I don't know | 4 | 1% |

3. How would you rate the appearance of the buildings in the downtown area today? (Choose one)

Public Meeting Results



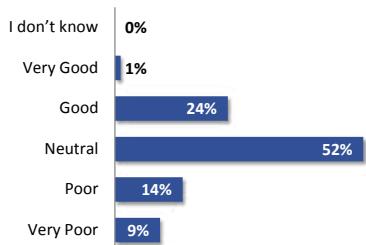
Online Survey Results



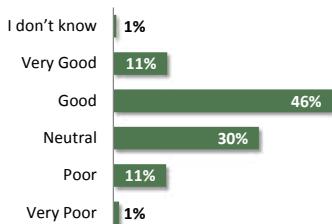
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent | Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Very Poor | 7 | 8% | Very Poor | 14 | 2% |
| Poor | 6 | 7% | Poor | 104 | 12% |
| Neutral | 25 | 29% | Neutral | 253 | 30% |
| Good | 40 | 47% | Good | 398 | 47% |
| Very Good | 7 | 8% | Very Good | 70 | 8% |
| I don't know | 0 | 0% | I don't know | 2 | 0% |

4. How would you rate the appearance of the streetscape in the downtown area today? (Choose one)

Public Meeting Results



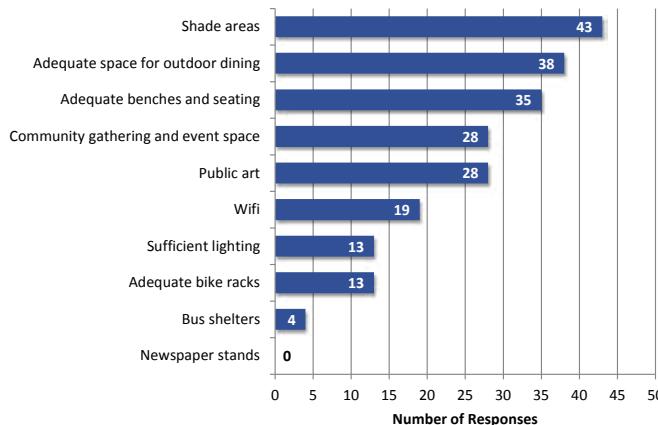
Online Survey Results



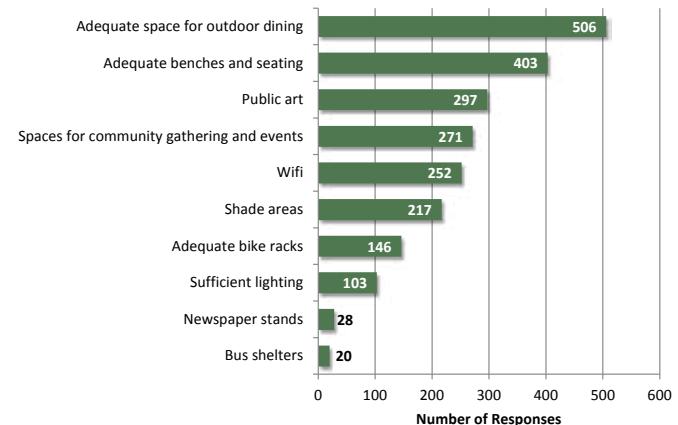
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent | Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Very Poor | 8 | 9% | Very Poor | 10 | 1% |
| Poor | 12 | 14% | Poor | 92 | 11% |
| Neutral | 44 | 52% | Neutral | 254 | 30% |
| Good | 20 | 24% | Good | 382 | 46% |
| Very Good | 1 | 1% | Very Good | 94 | 11% |
| I don't know | 0 | 0% | I don't know | 5 | 1% |

5. What is missing from the current design of the streetscape in Downtown Wheaton? (Choose your top three)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results

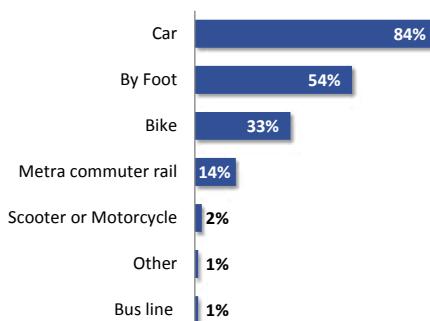


| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Shade areas | 43 | 51% |
| Adequate space for outdoor dining | 38 | 45% |
| Adequate benches and seating | 35 | 41% |
| Public art | 28 | 33% |
| Community gathering and event space | 28 | 33% |
| Wifi | 19 | 22% |
| Adequate bike racks | 13 | 15% |
| Sufficient lighting | 13 | 15% |
| Bus shelters | 4 | 5% |
| Newspaper stands | 0 | 0% |

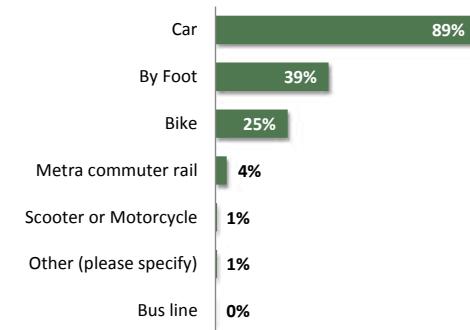
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|---|----------------|------------------|
| Adequate space for outdoor dining | 506 | 64% |
| Adequate benches and seating | 403 | 51% |
| Public art | 297 | 38% |
| Spaces for community gathering and events | 271 | 34% |
| Wifi | 252 | 32% |
| Shade areas | 217 | 28% |
| Adequate bike racks | 146 | 19% |
| Sufficient lighting | 103 | 13% |
| Newspaper stands | 28 | 4% |
| Bus shelters | 20 | 3% |

6. My primary mode of travel to the Downtown area is: (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results

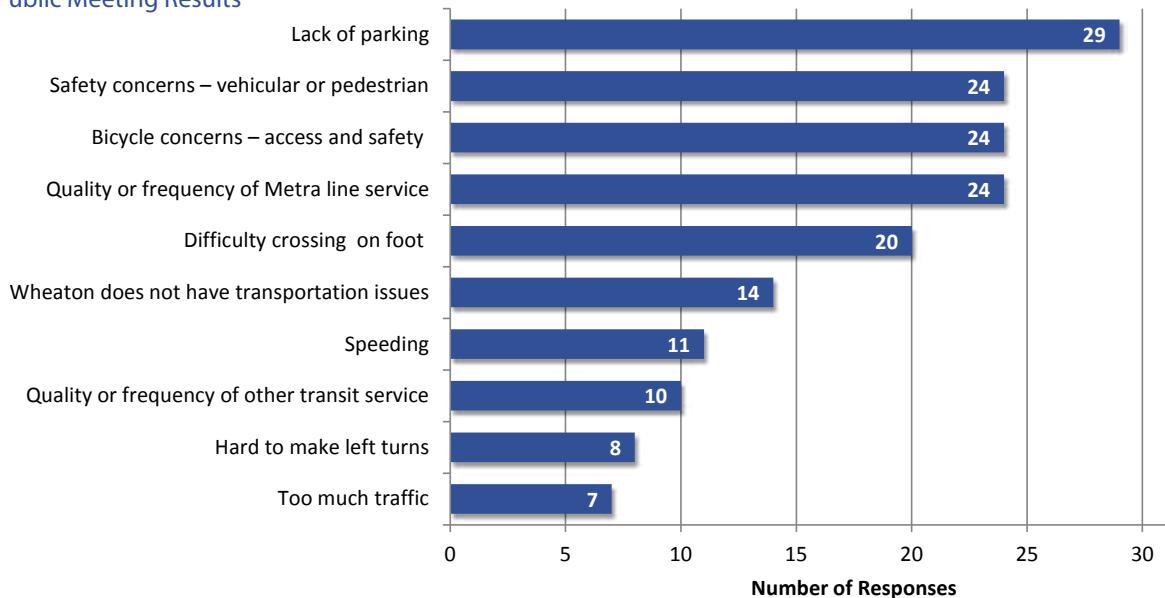


| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants |
|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Car | 71 | 84% |
| By Foot | 46 | 54% |
| Bike | 28 | 33% |
| Metra commuter rail | 12 | 14% |
| Scooter or Motorcycle | 2 | 2% |
| Bus line | 1 | 1% |
| Other | 1 | 1% |

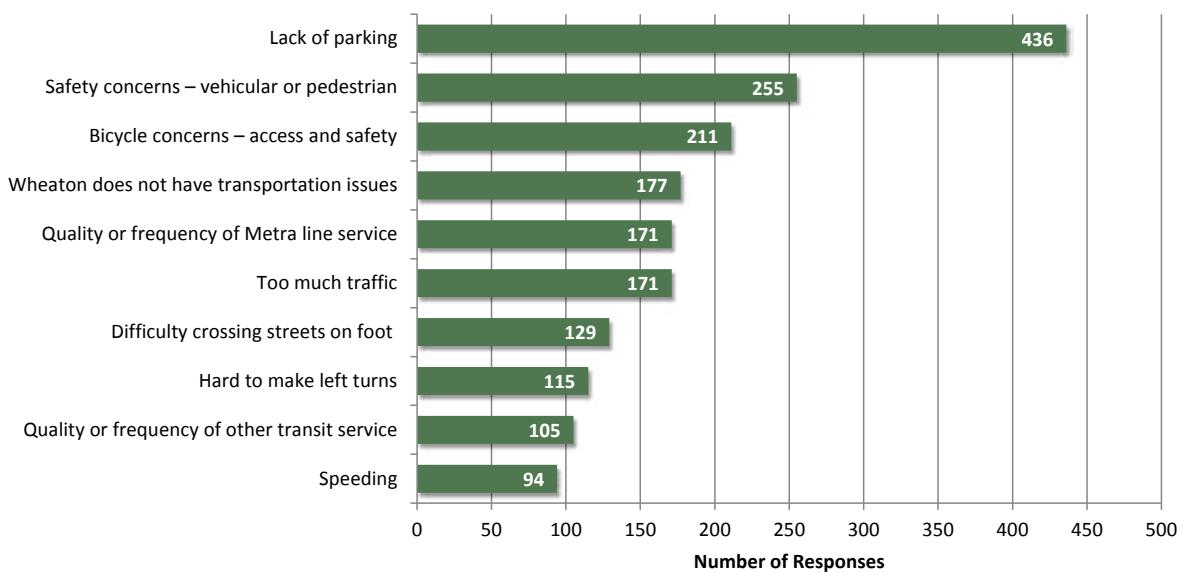
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Car | 746 | 89% |
| By Foot | 323 | 39% |
| Bike | 207 | 25% |
| Metra commuter rail | 33 | 4% |
| Scooter or Motorcycle | 5 | 1% |
| Other (please specify) | 5 | 1% |
| Bus line | 2 | 0% |

7. Which transportation issues concern you most in the downtown area? (Choose your top three)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Public Meeting Results

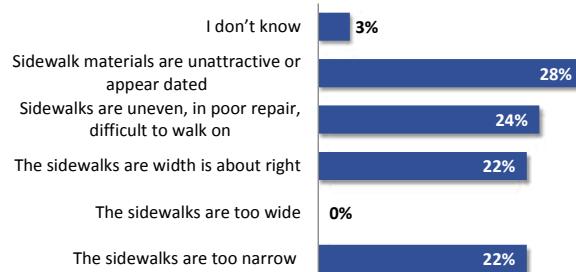
| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Lack of parking | 29 | 34% |
| Quality or frequency of Metra line service | 24 | 28% |
| Bicycle concerns – access and safety | 24 | 28% |
| Safety concerns – vehicular or pedestrian | 24 | 28% |
| Difficulty crossing on foot | 20 | 24% |
| Wheaton does not have transportation issues | 14 | 16% |
| Speeding | 11 | 13% |
| Quality or frequency of other transit service | 10 | 12% |
| Hard to make left turns | 8 | 9% |
| Too much traffic | 7 | 8% |

Online Survey Results

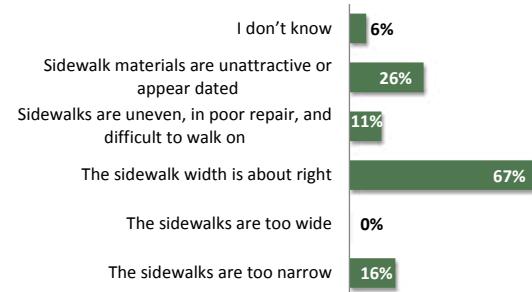
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|---|----------------|------------------|
| Speeding | 94 | 11% |
| Quality or frequency of other transit service | 105 | 13% |
| Hard to make left turns | 115 | 14% |
| Difficulty crossing streets on foot | 129 | 16% |
| Too much traffic | 171 | 21% |
| Quality or frequency of Metra line service | 171 | 21% |
| Wheaton does not have transportation issues | 177 | 22% |
| Bicycle concerns – access and safety | 211 | 26% |
| Safety concerns – vehicular or pedestrian | 255 | 31% |
| Lack of parking | 436 | 53% |

8. The following reflects my opinion regarding sidewalks on Front Street: (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Answer Options

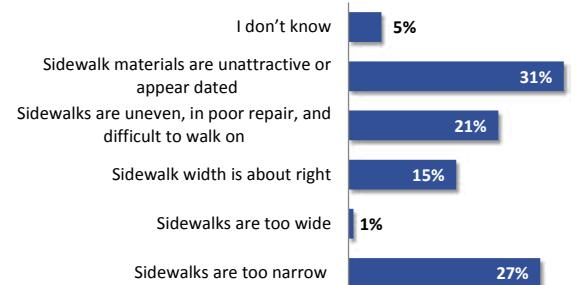
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|--|----------------|------------------|
| The sidewalks are too narrow | 33 | 22% |
| The sidewalks are too wide | 0 | 0% |
| The sidewalks are width is about right | 33 | 22% |
| Sidewalks are uneven, in poor repair, and difficult to walk on | 35 | 24% |
| Sidewalk materials are unattractive or appear dated | 42 | 28% |
| I don't know | 5 | 3% |

Answer Options

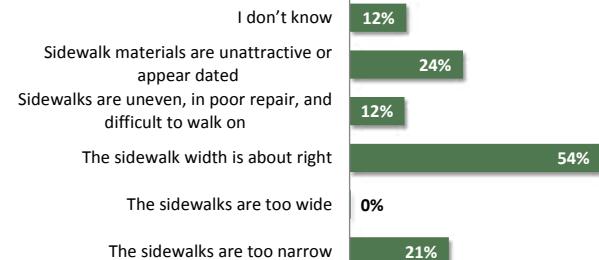
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|--|----------------|------------------|
| The sidewalks are too narrow | 135 | 16% |
| The sidewalks are too wide | 1 | 0% |
| The sidewalk width is about right | 550 | 67% |
| Sidewalks are uneven, in poor repair, and difficult to walk on | 94 | 11% |
| Sidewalk materials are unattractive or appear dated | 217 | 26% |
| I don't know | 49 | 6% |

9. The following reflects my opinion regarding sidewalks on Wesley Street: (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Answer Options

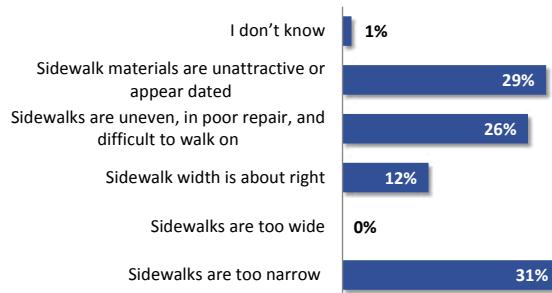
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|--|----------------|------------------|
| Sidewalks are too narrow | 41 | 27% |
| Sidewalks are too wide | 1 | 1% |
| Sidewalk width is about right | 23 | 15% |
| Sidewalks are uneven, in poor repair, and difficult to walk on | 32 | 21% |
| Sidewalk materials are unattractive or appear dated | 46 | 31% |
| I don't know | 7 | 5% |

Answer Options

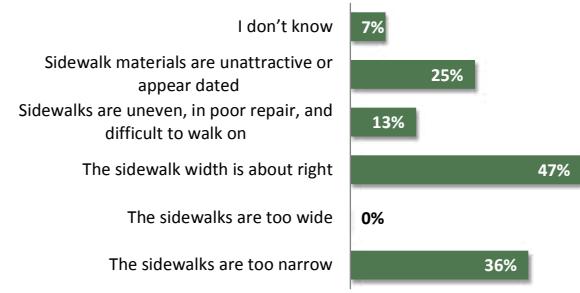
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|--|----------------|------------------|
| The sidewalks are too narrow | 172 | 21% |
| The sidewalks are too wide | 2 | 0% |
| The sidewalk width is about right | 436 | 54% |
| Sidewalks are uneven, in poor repair, and difficult to walk on | 95 | 12% |
| Sidewalk materials are unattractive or appear dated | 196 | 24% |
| I don't know | 98 | 12% |

10. The following reflects my opinion regarding sidewalks on Main Street: (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



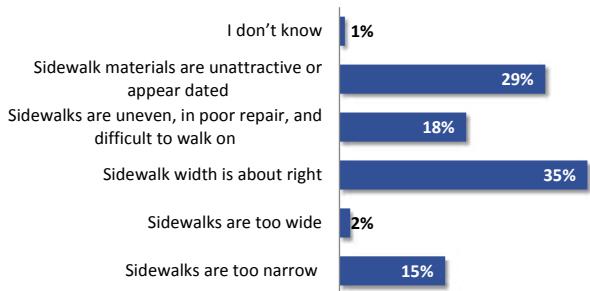
Online Survey Results



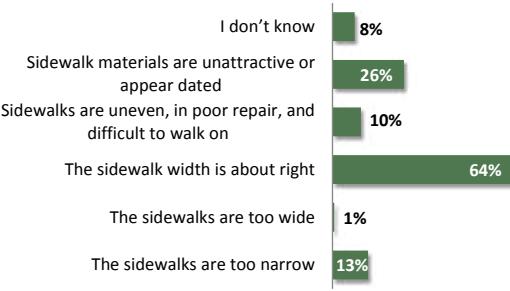
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent | Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|--|----------------|------------------|--|----------------|------------------|
| Sidewalks are too narrow | 48 | 31% | The sidewalks are too narrow | 292 | 36% |
| Sidewalks are too wide | 0 | 0% | The sidewalks are too wide | 1 | 0% |
| Sidewalk width is about right | 19 | 12% | The sidewalk width is about right | 380 | 47% |
| Sidewalks are uneven, in poor repair, and difficult to walk on | 41 | 26% | Sidewalks are uneven, in poor repair, and difficult to walk on | 108 | 13% |
| Sidewalk materials are unattractive or appear dated | 45 | 29% | Sidewalk materials are unattractive or appear dated | 205 | 25% |
| I don't know | 2 | 1% | I don't know | 58 | 7% |

11. The following reflects my opinion regarding sidewalks on Hale Street: (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



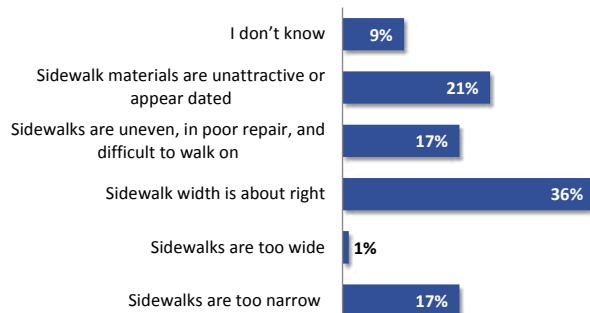
Online Survey Results



| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent | Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|--|----------------|------------------|--|----------------|------------------|
| Sidewalks are too narrow | 20 | 15% | The sidewalks are too narrow | 103 | 13% |
| Sidewalks are too wide | 2 | 2% | The sidewalks are too wide | 5 | 1% |
| Sidewalk width is about right | 47 | 35% | The sidewalk width is about right | 521 | 64% |
| Sidewalks are uneven, in poor repair, and difficult to walk on | 24 | 18% | Sidewalks are uneven, in poor repair, and difficult to walk on | 82 | 10% |
| Sidewalk materials are unattractive or appear dated | 39 | 29% | Sidewalk materials are unattractive or appear dated | 206 | 26% |
| I don't know | 1 | 1% | I don't know | 64 | 8% |

12. The following reflects my opinion regarding sidewalks on Wheaton Avenue: (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results

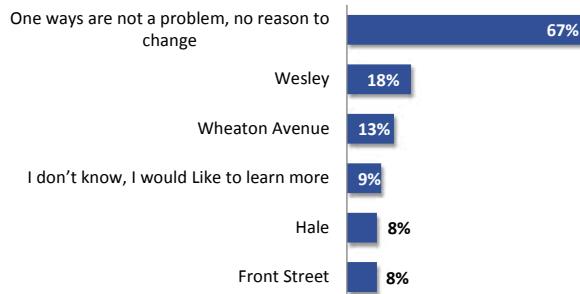


| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|--|----------------|------------------|
| Sidewalks are too narrow | 19 | 17% |
| Sidewalks are too wide | 1 | 1% |
| Sidewalk width is about right | 41 | 36% |
| Sidewalks are uneven, in poor repair, and difficult to walk on | 19 | 17% |
| Sidewalk materials are unattractive or appear dated | 24 | 21% |
| I don't know | 10 | 9% |

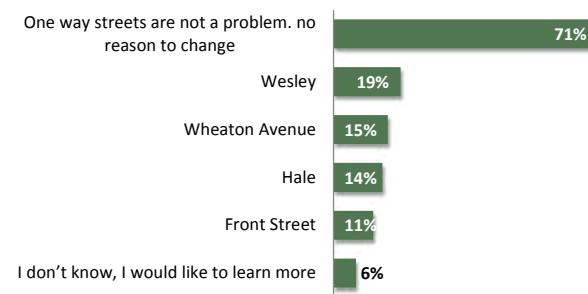
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|--|----------------|------------------|
| The sidewalks are too narrow | 76 | 10% |
| The sidewalks are too wide | 2 | 0% |
| The sidewalk width is about right | 518 | 66% |
| Sidewalks are uneven, in poor repair, and difficult to walk on | 55 | 7% |
| Sidewalk materials are unattractive or appear dated | 124 | 16% |
| I don't know, I would like to learn more | 122 | 16% |

13. I would be in favor of converting the following one-way streets in Downtown Wheaton to two-way: (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results

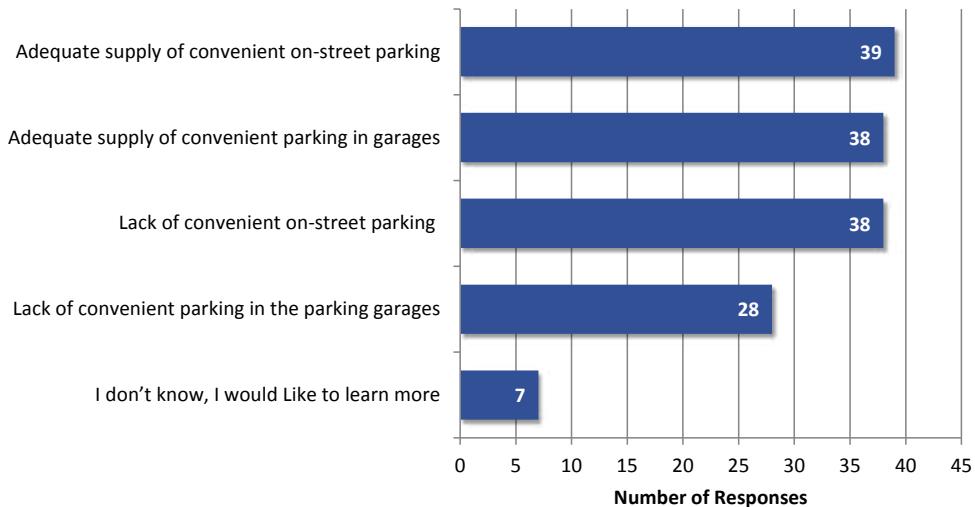


| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| One ways are not a problem, no reason to change | 57 | 67% |
| Wesley | 15 | 18% |
| Wheaton Avenue | 11 | 13% |
| I don't know, I would like to learn more | 8 | 9% |
| Front Street | 7 | 8% |
| Hale | 7 | 8% |

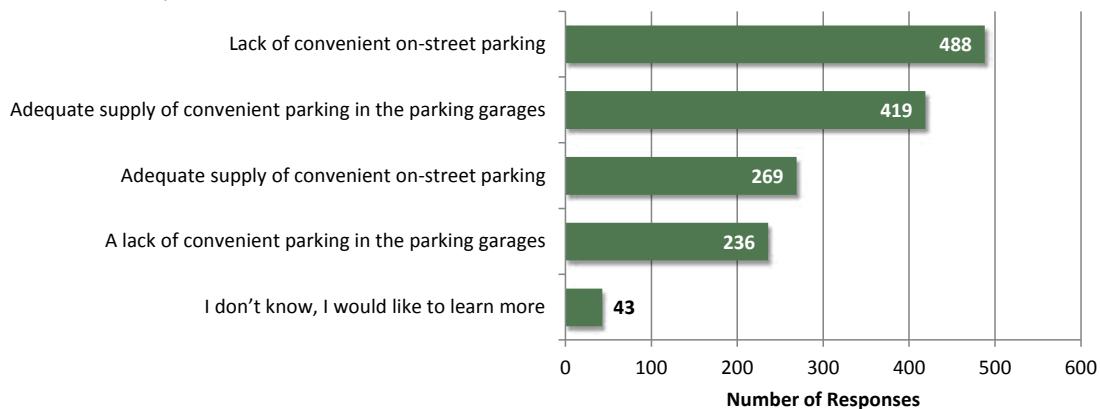
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|--|----------------|------------------|
| One way streets are not a problem. no reason to change | 589 | 71% |
| Wesley | 153 | 19% |
| Wheaton Avenue | 124 | 15% |
| Hale | 112 | 14% |
| Front Street | 91 | 11% |
| I don't know, I would like to learn more | 51 | 6% |

14. The following reflects my views concerning the current supply of parking in Downtown Wheaton. There is... (Choose two)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Public Meeting Results

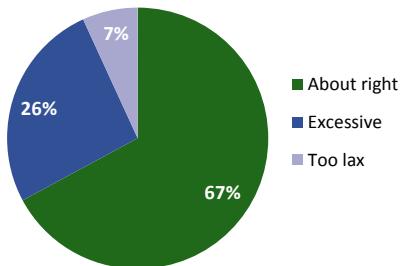
| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Adequate supply of convenient on-street parking | 39 | 46% |
| Lack of convenient on-street parking | 38 | 45% |
| Adequate supply of convenient parking in garages | 38 | 45% |
| Lack of convenient parking in the parking garages | 28 | 33% |
| I don't know, I would Like to learn more | 7 | 8% |

Online Survey Results

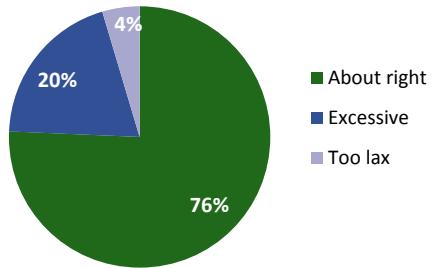
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|--|----------------|------------------|
| Lack of convenient on-street parking | 488 | 60% |
| Adequate supply of convenient parking in the parking garages | 419 | 52% |
| Adequate supply of convenient on-street parking | 269 | 33% |
| A lack of convenient parking in the parking garages | 236 | 29% |
| I don't know, I would like to learn more | 43 | 5% |

15. How would you rate the current level of parking enforcement in Downtown Wheaton? (Choose one)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Answer Options

- About right
- Excessive
- Too lax

Response Count **Response Percent**

| Response | Count | Percent |
|-------------|-------|---------|
| About right | 49 | 67% |
| Excessive | 19 | 26% |
| Too lax | 5 | 7% |

Answer Options

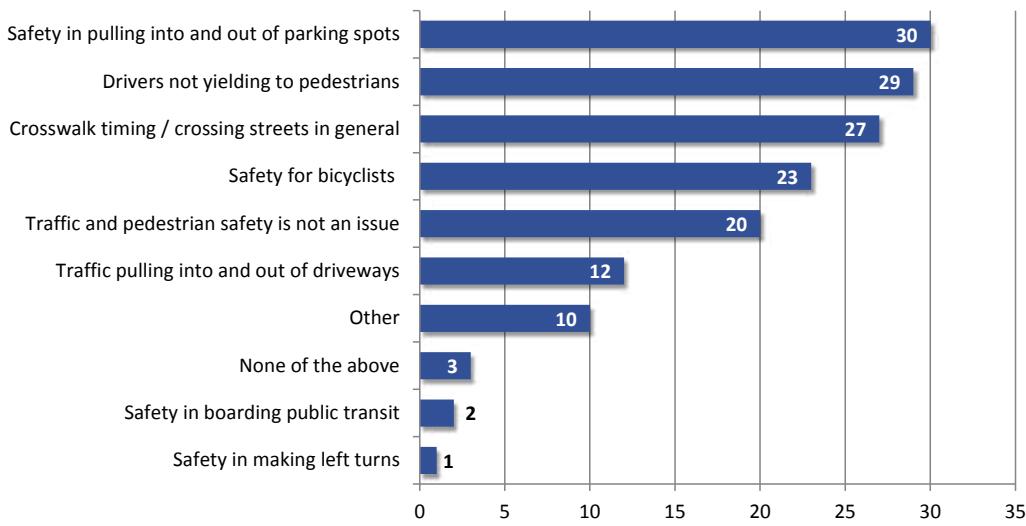
- About right
- Excessive
- Too lax

Response Count **Response Percent**

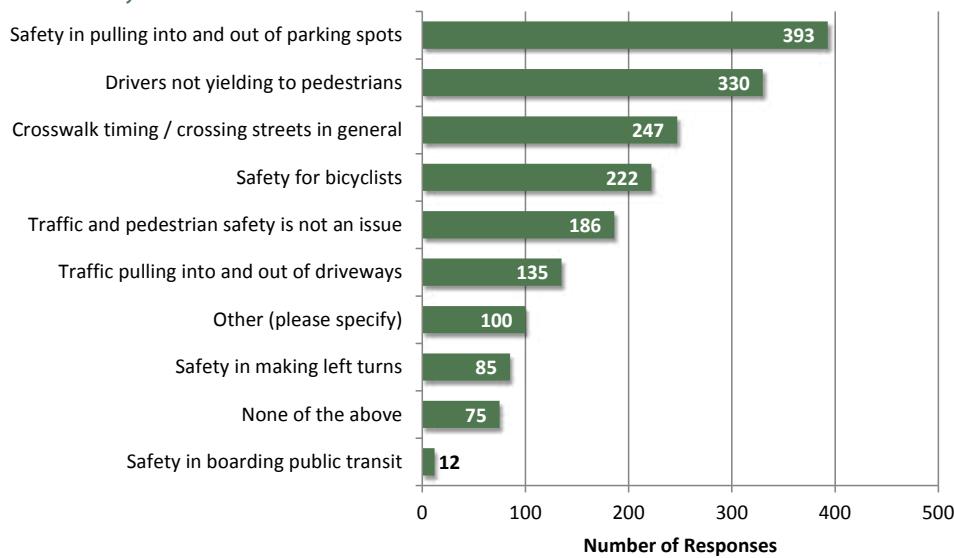
| Response | Count | Percent |
|-------------|-------|---------|
| About right | 586 | 76% |
| Excessive | 153 | 20% |
| Too lax | 36 | 5% |

16. Which traffic and safety issues concern you most in Downtown Wheaton? (Choose your top three)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



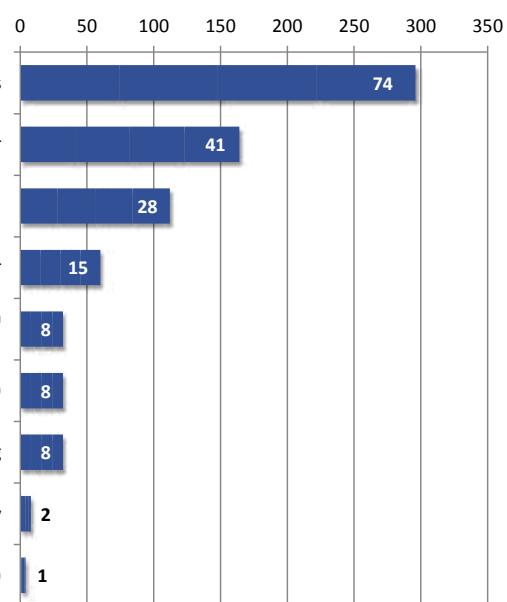
Public Meeting Results

Online Survey Results

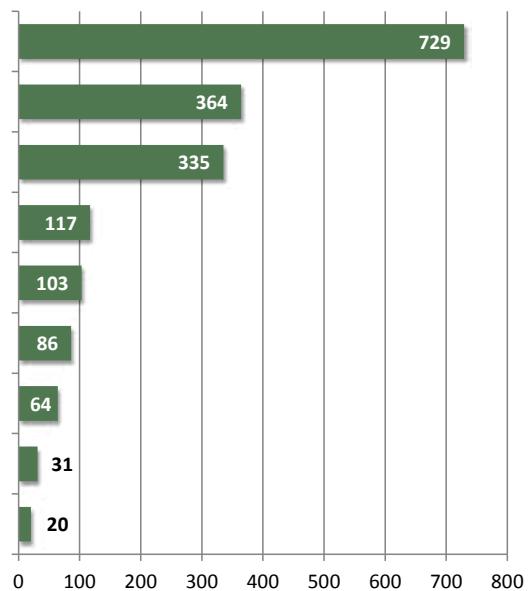
| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants | Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|---|----------------|------------------|
| Safety in pulling into and out of parking spots | 30 | 35% | Safety in pulling into and out of parking spots | 393 | 49% |
| Drivers not yielding to pedestrians | 29 | 34% | Drivers not yielding to pedestrians | 330 | 41% |
| Crosswalk timing / crossing streets in general | 27 | 32% | Crosswalk timing / crossing streets in general | 247 | 30% |
| Safety for bicyclists | 23 | 27% | Safety for bicyclists | 222 | 27% |
| Traffic and pedestrian safety is not an issue | 20 | 24% | Traffic and pedestrian safety is not an issue | 186 | 23% |
| Traffic pulling into and out of driveways | 12 | 14% | Traffic pulling into and out of driveways | 135 | 17% |
| Other | 10 | 12% | Other (please specify) | 100 | 12% |
| None of the above | 3 | 4% | Safety in making left turns | 85 | 10% |
| Safety in boarding public transit | 2 | 2% | None of the above | 75 | 9% |
| Safety in making left turns | 1 | 1% | Safety in boarding public transit | 12 | 1% |

17. I would shop or conduct business in Downtown Wheaton more often if...(Choose your top three)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Public Meeting Results

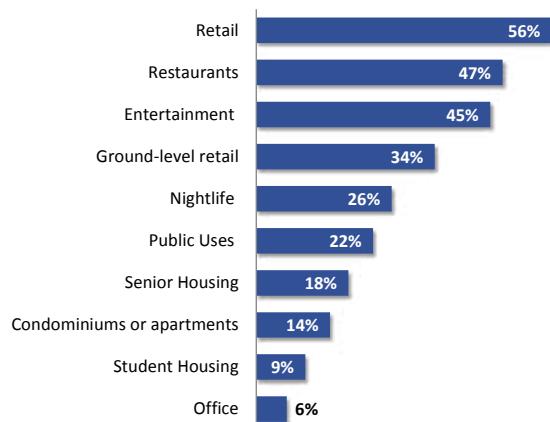
| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Downtown featured greater variety of retail shops | 74 | 87% |
| Better overall appearance of Downtown streets | 41 | 48% |
| More convenient parking was available | 28 | 33% |
| Other | 15 | 18% |
| It was easier and safer to walk to Downtown / within Downtown | 8 | 9% |
| Downtown had better bike facilities (bike storage, etc.) | 8 | 9% |
| Streets and sidewalks had better lighting | 8 | 9% |
| Streets and sidewalks were less noisy | 2 | 2% |
| Downtown had better transit service (Metra / Pace) | 1 | 1% |

Online Survey Results

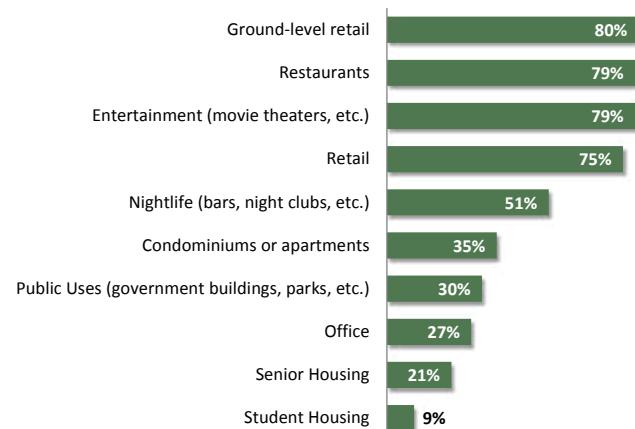
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|---|----------------|------------------|
| Downtown featured greater variety of retail shops | 729 | 93% |
| More convenient parking was available | 364 | 46% |
| The overall appearance of Downtown streets was better | 335 | 43% |
| Other (please specify) | 117 | 15% |
| Downtown had better bike facilities (bike storage, etc.) | 103 | 13% |
| It was easier and safer to walk to Downtown and within Downtown | 86 | 11% |
| The streets and sidewalks had better lighting | 64 | 8% |
| The streets and sidewalks were less noisy | 31 | 4% |
| Downtown had better transit service (Metra, and Pace) | 20 | 3% |

18. I would be in favor of the following types of land use in the Downtown Wheaton area: (Check all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results

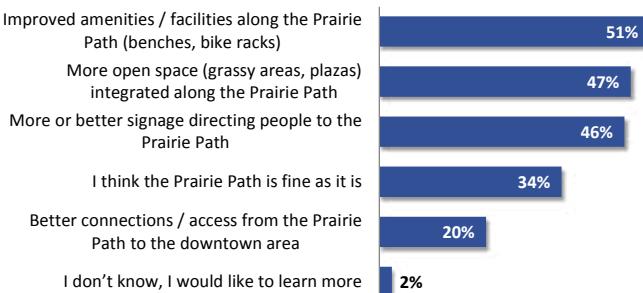


| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants |
|----------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Retail | 48 | 56% |
| Restaurants | 40 | 47% |
| Entertainment | 38 | 45% |
| Ground-level retail | 29 | 34% |
| Nightlife | 22 | 26% |
| Public Uses | 19 | 22% |
| Senior Housing | 15 | 18% |
| Condominiums or apartments | 12 | 14% |
| Student Housing | 8 | 9% |
| Office | 5 | 6% |

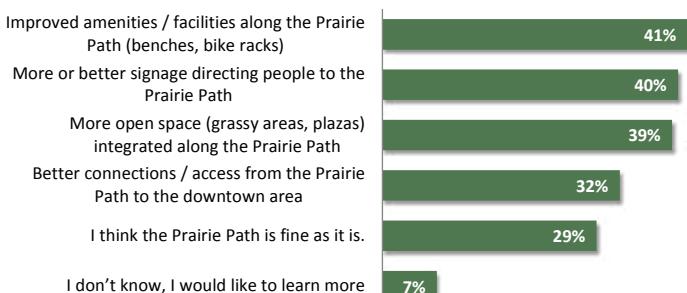
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|---|----------------|------------------|
| Ground-level retail | 662 | 80% |
| Entertainment (movie theaters, etc.) | 653 | 79% |
| Restaurants | 653 | 79% |
| Retail | 621 | 75% |
| Nightlife (bars, night clubs, etc.) | 426 | 51% |
| Condominiums or apartments | 289 | 35% |
| Public Uses (government buildings, parks, etc.) | 250 | 30% |
| Office | 222 | 27% |
| Senior Housing | 170 | 21% |
| Student Housing | 71 | 9% |

19. The following reflects my views concerning the Illinois Prairie Path that crosses the Downtown area. I would like to see... (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results

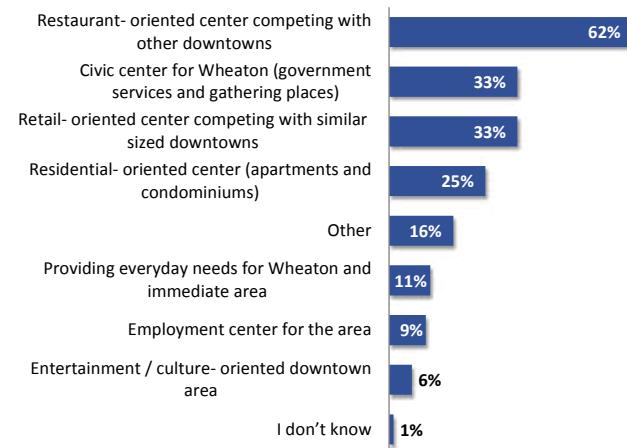


| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|
| Improved amenities / facilities along the Prairie Path (benches, bike racks) | 43 | 51% |
| More open space (grassy areas, plazas) integrated along the Prairie Path | 40 | 47% |
| More or better signage directing people to the Prairie Path | 39 | 46% |
| I think the Prairie Path is fine as it is | 29 | 34% |
| Better connections / access from the Prairie Path to the downtown area | 17 | 20% |
| I don't know, I would like to learn more | 2 | 2% |

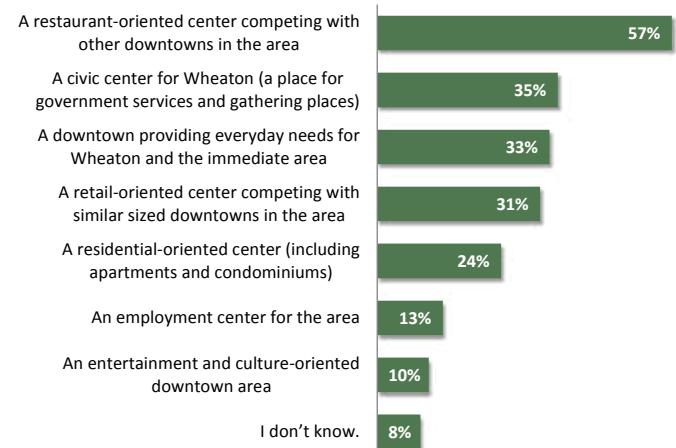
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|--|----------------|------------------|
| Improved amenities / facilities along the Prairie Path (benches, bike racks) | 332 | 41% |
| More or better signage directing people to the Prairie Path | 321 | 40% |
| More open space (grassy areas, plazas) integrated along the Prairie Path | 315 | 39% |
| Better connections / access from the Prairie Path to the downtown area | 258 | 32% |
| I think the Prairie Path is fine as it is. | 233 | 29% |
| I don't know, I would like to learn more | 59 | 7% |

20. I currently perceive Downtown Wheaton as representing the following: (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



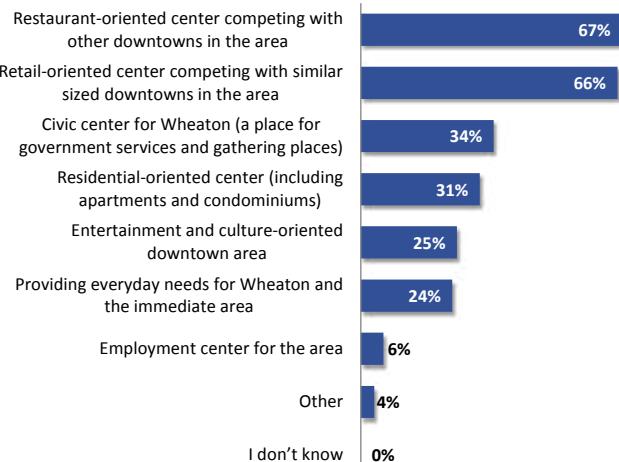
Online Survey Results



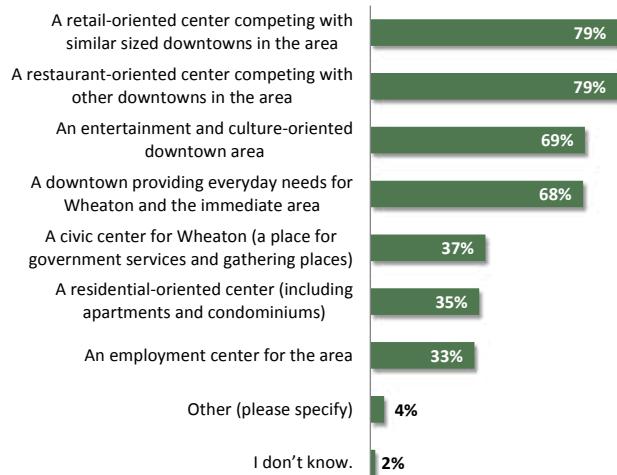
| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants | Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|---|----------------|------------------|
| Restaurant-oriented center competing with other downtowns | 53 | 62% | A restaurant-oriented center competing with other downtowns in the area | 427 | 57% |
| Retail-oriented center competing with similar sized downtowns | 28 | 33% | A civic center for Wheaton (a place for government services and gathering places) | 262 | 35% |
| Civic center for Wheaton (government services and gathering places) | 28 | 33% | A downtown providing everyday needs for Wheaton and the immediate area | 250 | 33% |
| Residential-oriented center (apartments and condominiums) | 21 | 25% | A retail-oriented center competing with similar sized downtowns in the area | 236 | 31% |
| Other | 14 | 16% | A residential-oriented center (including apartments and condominiums) | 180 | 24% |
| Providing everyday needs for Wheaton and immediate area | 9 | 11% | Other (please specify) | 119 | 16% |
| Employment center for the area | 8 | 9% | An employment center for the area | 95 | 13% |
| Entertainment / culture-oriented downtown area | 5 | 6% | An entertainment and culture-oriented downtown area | 75 | 10% |
| I don't know | 1 | 1% | I don't know. | 63 | 8% |

21. I envision Downtown Wheaton as representing the following in the future: (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



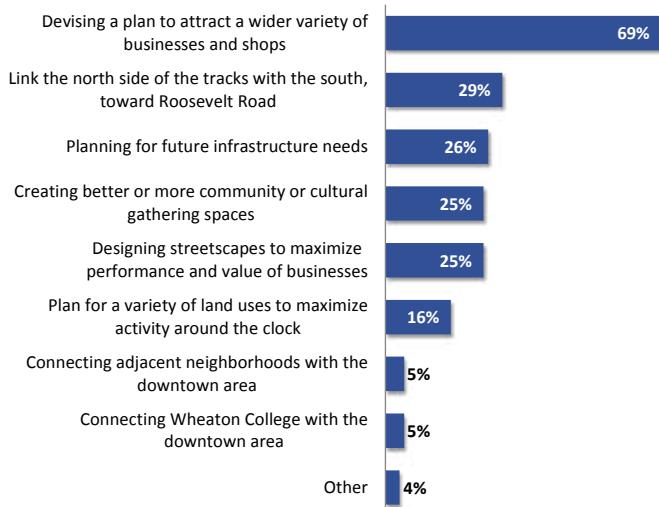
Online Survey Results



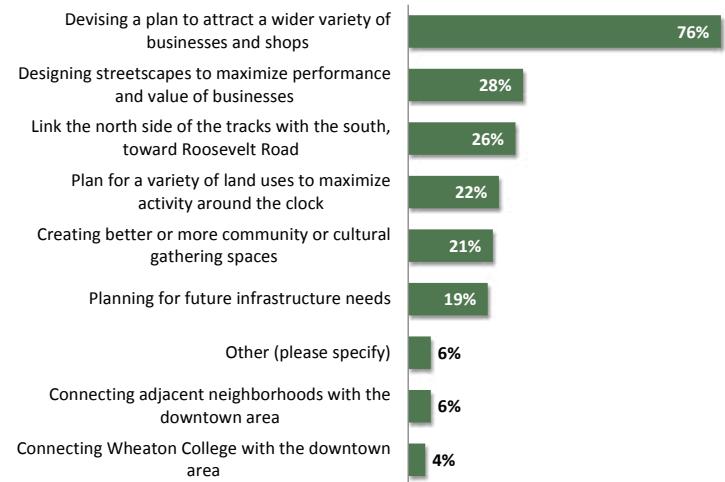
| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants | Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|---|----------------|------------------|
| Restaurant-oriented center competing with other downtowns in the area | 57 | 67% | A retail-oriented center competing with similar sized downtowns in the area | 649 | 79% |
| Retail-oriented center competing with similar sized downtowns in the area | 56 | 66% | A restaurant-oriented center competing with other downtowns in the area | 648 | 79% |
| Civic center for Wheaton (a place for government services and gathering places) | 29 | 34% | An entertainment and culture-oriented downtown area | 563 | 69% |
| Residential-oriented center (including apartments and condominiums) | 26 | 31% | A downtown providing everyday needs for Wheaton and the immediate area | 558 | 68% |
| Entertainment and culture-oriented downtown area | 21 | 25% | A civic center for Wheaton (a place for government services and gathering places) | 301 | 37% |
| Providing everyday needs for Wheaton and the immediate area | 20 | 24% | A residential-oriented center (including apartments and condominiums) | 285 | 35% |
| Employment center for the area | 5 | 6% | An employment center for the area | 273 | 33% |
| Other | 3 | 4% | Other (please specify) | 36 | 4% |
| I don't know | 0 | 0% | I don't know. | 12 | 2% |

22. I believe the key goals for the Downtown Strategic Plan should include the following: (Choose your top two)

Public Meeting Results



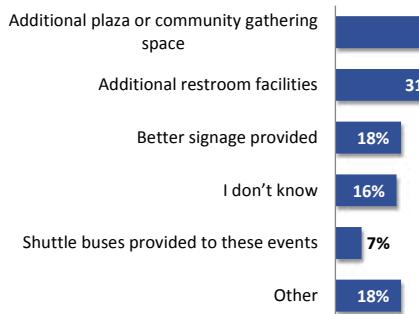
Online Survey Results



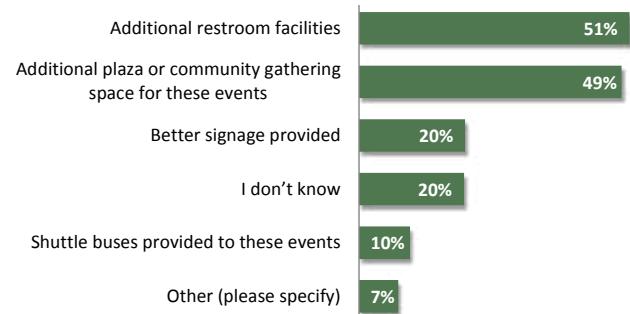
| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants | Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|---|----------------|------------------|
| Devising a plan to attract a wider variety of businesses and shops | 59 | 69% | Devising a plan to attract a wider variety of businesses and shops | 621 | 76% |
| Link the north side of the tracks with the south, toward Roosevelt Road | 25 | 29% | Designing streetscapes to maximize performance and value of businesses | 228 | 28% |
| Planning for future infrastructure needs | 22 | 26% | Link the north side of the tracks with the south, toward Roosevelt Road | 213 | 26% |
| Designing streetscapes to maximize performance and value of businesses | 21 | 25% | Plan for a variety of land uses to maximize activity around the clock | 180 | 22% |
| Creating better or more community or cultural gathering spaces | 21 | 25% | Creating better or more community or cultural gathering spaces | 168 | 21% |
| Plan for a variety of land uses to maximize activity around the clock | 14 | 16% | Planning for future infrastructure needs | 158 | 19% |
| Connecting Wheaton College with the downtown area | 4 | 5% | Connecting adjacent neighborhoods with the downtown area | 45 | 6% |
| Connecting adjacent neighborhoods with the downtown area | 4 | 5% | Other (please specify) | 45 | 6% |
| Other | 3 | 4% | Connecting Wheaton College with the downtown area | 34 | 4% |

23. The following reflects my views concerning the current resources / assets in Downtown dedicated to events or programming (such as the French Market, parades, band events, etc.). I would like to see... (Select all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



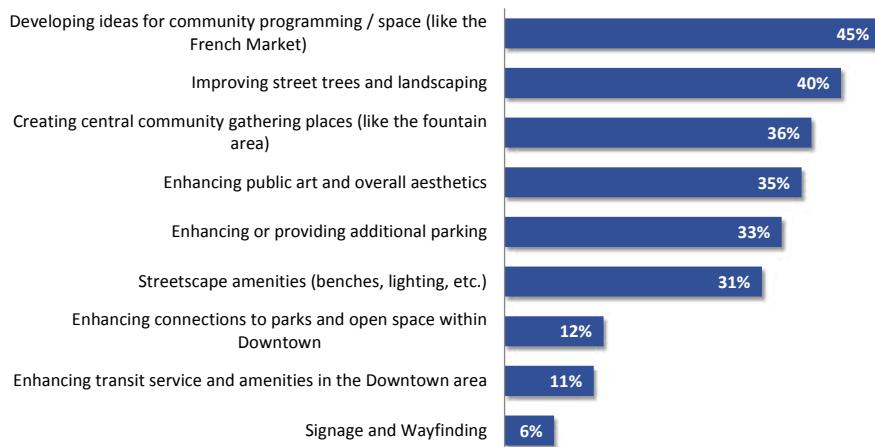
Online Survey Results



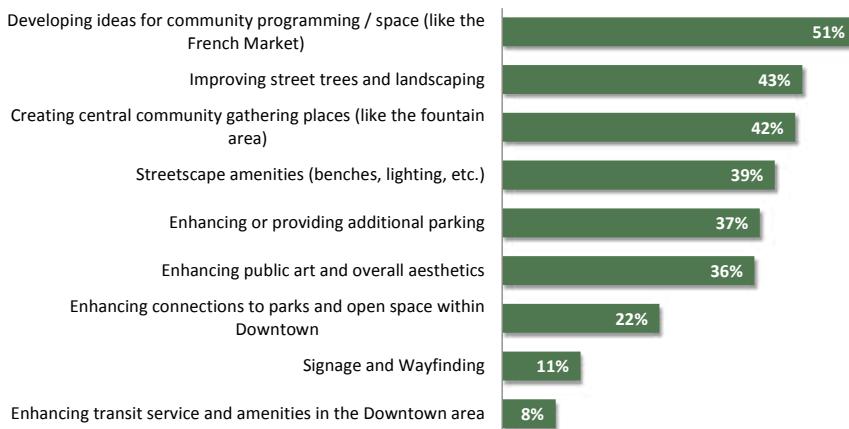
| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants | Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|--|----------------|------------------|
| Additional plaza or community gathering space | 49 | 58% | Additional restroom facilities | 373 | 51% |
| Additional restroom facilities | 26 | 31% | Additional plaza or community gathering space for these events | 362 | 49% |
| Other | 15 | 18% | Better signage provided | 146 | 20% |
| Better signage provided | 15 | 18% | I don't know | 145 | 20% |
| I don't know | 14 | 16% | Shuttle buses provided to these events | 70 | 10% |
| Shuttle buses provided to these events | 6 | 7% | Other (please specify) | 54 | 7% |

24. With respect to streetscape, I would favor the planning effort focusing attention on the following areas: (Choose your top three)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Public Meeting Results

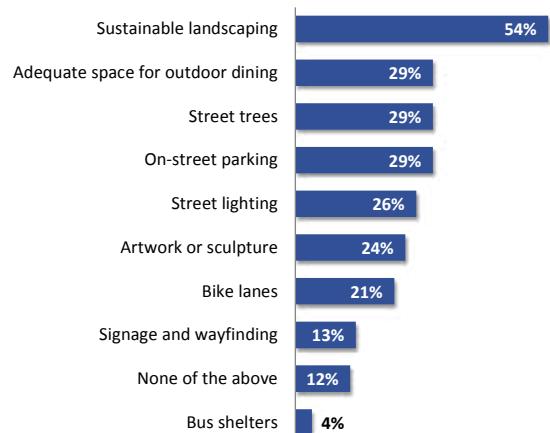
| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Developing ideas for community programming / space (like the French Market) | 38 | 45% |
| Improving street trees and landscaping | 34 | 40% |
| Creating central community gathering places (like the fountain area) | 31 | 36% |
| Enhancing public art and overall aesthetics | 30 | 35% |
| Enhancing or providing additional parking | 28 | 33% |
| Streetscape amenities (benches, lighting, etc.) | 26 | 31% |
| Enhancing connections to parks and open space within Downtown | 10 | 12% |
| Enhancing transit service and amenities in the Downtown area | 9 | 11% |
| Signage and Wayfinding | 5 | 6% |

Online Survey Results

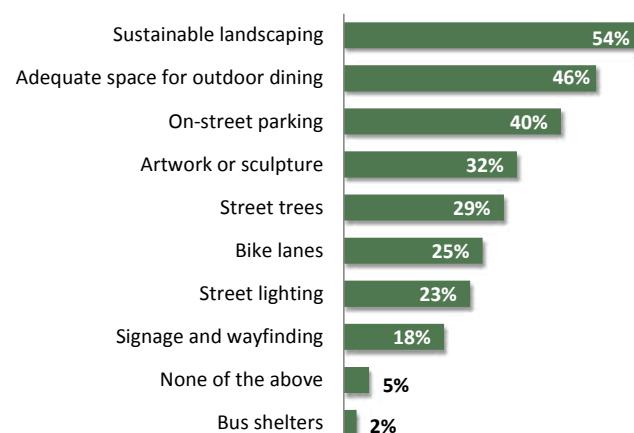
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|---|----------------|------------------|
| Developing ideas for community programming / space (like the French Market) | 399 | 51% |
| Improving street trees and landscaping | 338 | 43% |
| Creating central community gathering places (like the fountain area) | 330 | 42% |
| Streetscape amenities (benches, lighting, etc.) | 307 | 39% |
| Enhancing or providing additional parking | 290 | 37% |
| Enhancing public art and overall aesthetics | 284 | 36% |
| Enhancing connections to parks and open space within Downtown | 177 | 22% |
| Signage and Wayfinding | 88 | 11% |
| Enhancing transit service and amenities in the Downtown area | 60 | 8% |

25. What would you prioritize for streetscape / transportation improvements in Downtown Wheaton given limited funding? (Choose your top three)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Answer Options

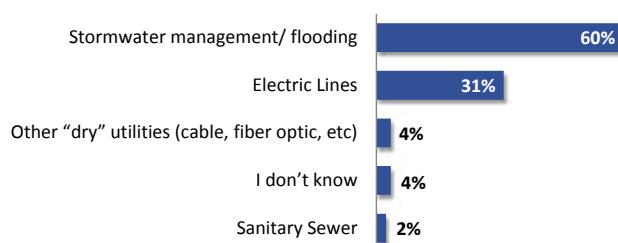
| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Sustainable landscaping | 46 | 54% |
| On-street parking | 25 | 29% |
| Street trees | 25 | 29% |
| Adequate space for outdoor dining | 25 | 29% |
| Street lighting | 22 | 26% |
| Artwork or sculpture | 20 | 24% |
| Bike lanes | 18 | 21% |
| Signage and wayfinding | 11 | 13% |
| None of the above | 10 | 12% |
| Bus shelters | 3 | 4% |

Answer Options

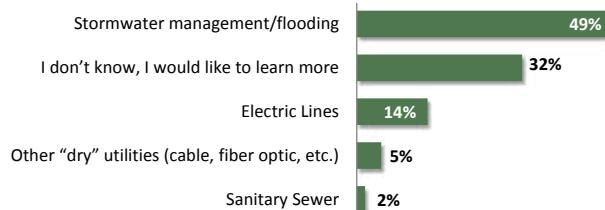
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|---|----------------|------------------|
| Sustainable landscaping | 425 | 54% |
| Providing adequate space for outdoor dining | 367 | 46% |
| On-street parking | 316 | 40% |
| Artwork or sculpture | 252 | 32% |
| Street trees | 233 | 29% |
| Bike lanes | 202 | 25% |
| Street lighting | 184 | 23% |
| Signage and wayfinding | 146 | 18% |
| None of the above | 37 | 5% |
| Bus shelters | 19 | 2% |

26. I believe the most important infrastructure issue to address in the Downtown Plan is the following: (Choose one)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Answer Options

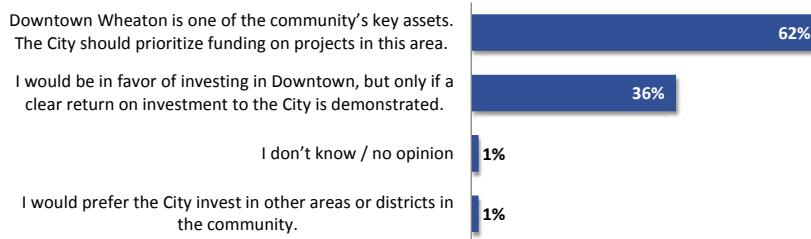
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|---|----------------|------------------|
| Stormwater management/ flooding | 51 | 60% |
| Electric Lines | 26 | 31% |
| Other "dry" utilities (cable, fiber optic, etc) | 3 | 4% |
| I don't know | 3 | 4% |
| Sanitary Sewer | 2 | 2% |

Answer Options

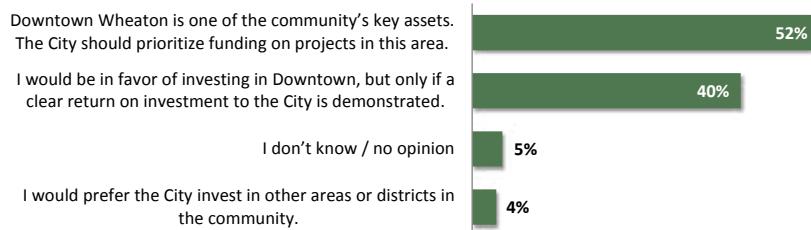
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|--|----------------|------------------|
| Stormwater management/flooding | 375 | 49% |
| I don't know, I would like to learn more | 242 | 32% |
| Electric Lines | 104 | 14% |
| Other "dry" utilities (cable, fiber optic, etc.) | 36 | 5% |
| Sanitary Sewer | 12 | 2% |

27. The following reflects my view concerning the City of Wheaton providing funding for or investing in the downtown area (through public financing or public / private partnerships): (Choose one)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Public Meeting Results

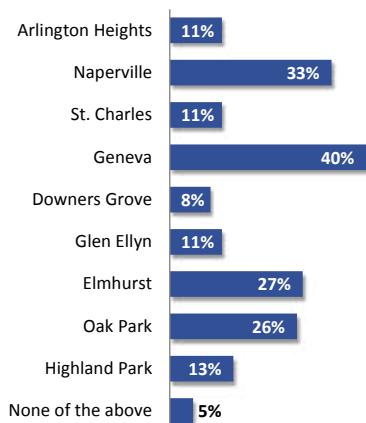
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|---|----------------|------------------|
| Downtown Wheaton is one of the community's key assets. The City should prioritize funding on projects in this area. | 48 | 62% |
| I would be in favor of investing in Downtown, but only if a clear return on investment to the City is demonstrated. | 28 | 36% |
| I would prefer the City invest in other areas or districts in the community. | 1 | 1% |
| I don't know / no opinion | 1 | 1% |

Online Survey Results

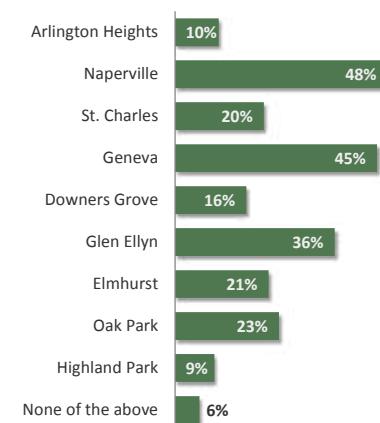
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|---|----------------|------------------|
| Downtown Wheaton is one of the community's key assets. The City should prioritize funding on projects in this area. | 422 | 52% |
| I would be in favor of investing in Downtown, but only if a clear return on investment to the City is demonstrated. | 327 | 40% |
| I don't know / no opinion | 37 | 5% |
| I would prefer the City invest in other areas or districts in the community. | 29 | 4% |

28. I envision Downtown Wheaton evolving to most closely resemble the following downtowns, in terms of mix of tenants: (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



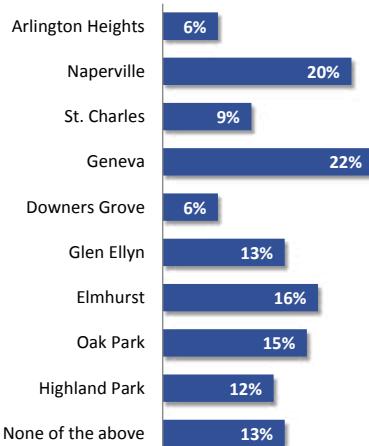
Online Survey Results



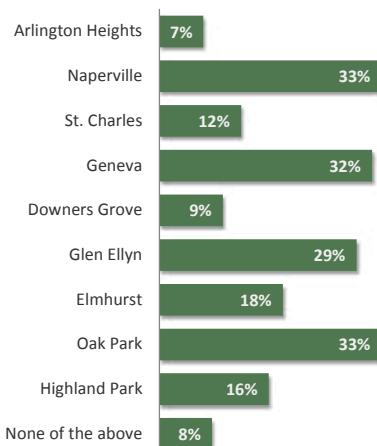
| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants | Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|-------------------|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Arlington Heights | 9 | 11% | Arlington Heights | 76 | 10% |
| Naperville | 28 | 33% | Naperville | 371 | 48% |
| St. Charles | 9 | 11% | St. Charles | 155 | 20% |
| Geneva | 34 | 40% | Geneva | 352 | 45% |
| Downers Grove | 7 | 8% | Downers Grove | 124 | 16% |
| Glen Ellyn | 9 | 11% | Glen Ellyn | 278 | 36% |
| Elmhurst | 23 | 27% | Elmhurst | 163 | 21% |
| Oak Park | 22 | 26% | Oak Park | 181 | 23% |
| Highland Park | 11 | 13% | Highland Park | 68 | 9% |
| None of the above | 4 | 5% | None of the above | 43 | 6% |

29. I envision Downtown Wheaton evolving to most closely resemble the following downtowns, in terms of mix of streetscape: (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Answer Options

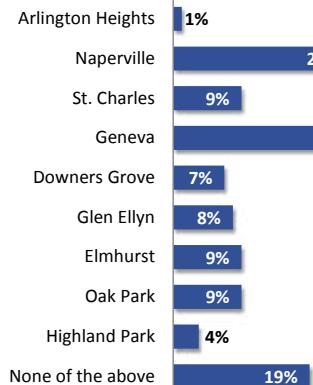
| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants |
|-------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Arlington Heights | 5 | 6% |
| Naperville | 17 | 20% |
| St. Charles | 8 | 9% |
| Geneva | 19 | 22% |
| Downers Grove | 5 | 6% |
| Glen Ellyn | 11 | 13% |
| Elmhurst | 14 | 16% |
| Oak Park | 13 | 15% |
| Highland Park | 10 | 12% |
| None of the above | 11 | 13% |

Answer Options

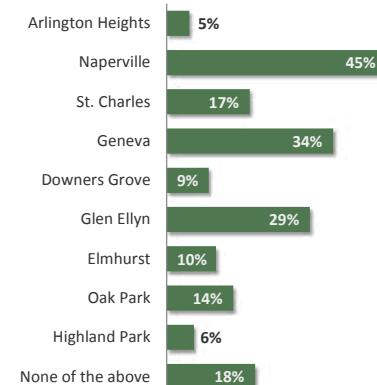
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|-------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Arlington Heights | 49 | 7% |
| Naperville | 248 | 33% |
| St. Charles | 91 | 12% |
| Geneva | 237 | 32% |
| Downers Grove | 71 | 9% |
| Glen Ellyn | 220 | 29% |
| Elmhurst | 138 | 18% |
| Oak Park | 248 | 33% |
| Highland Park | 122 | 16% |
| None of the above | 59 | 8% |

30. I envision Downtown Wheaton evolving to most closely resemble the following downtowns, in terms of community events or programming: (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Answer Options

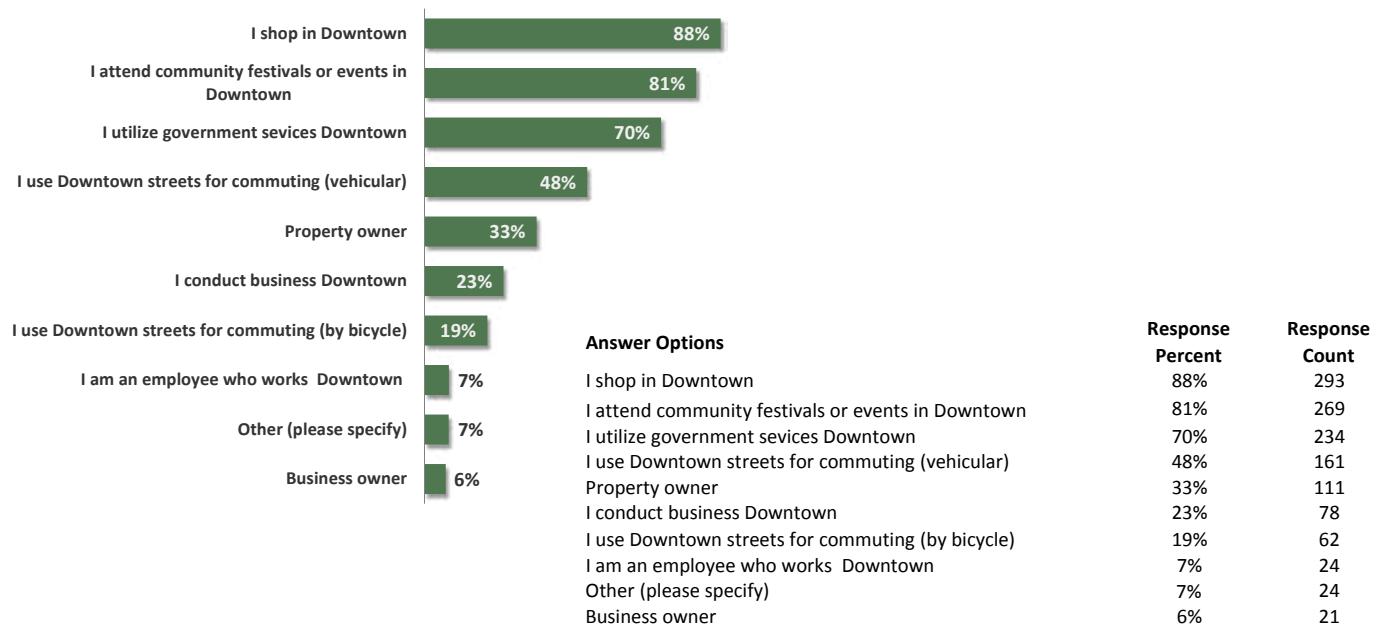
| Answer Options | Response Count | Percent of Participants |
|-------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Arlington Heights | 1 | 1% |
| Naperville | 21 | 25% |
| St. Charles | 8 | 9% |
| Geneva | 25 | 29% |
| Downers Grove | 6 | 7% |
| Glen Ellyn | 7 | 8% |
| Elmhurst | 8 | 9% |
| Oak Park | 8 | 9% |
| Highland Park | 3 | 4% |
| None of the above | 16 | 19% |

Answer Options

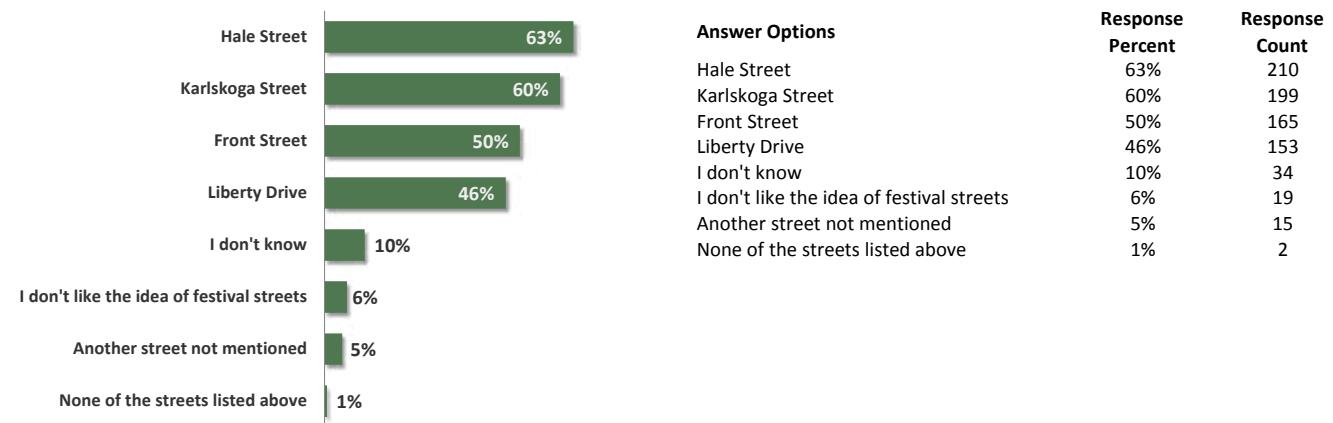
| Answer Options | Response Count | Response Percent |
|-------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Arlington Heights | 33 | 5% |
| Naperville | 316 | 45% |
| St. Charles | 119 | 17% |
| Geneva | 239 | 34% |
| Downers Grove | 60 | 9% |
| Glen Ellyn | 206 | 29% |
| Elmhurst | 71 | 10% |
| Oak Park | 96 | 14% |
| Highland Park | 39 | 6% |
| None of the above | 127 | 18% |

Round 2 Feedback Results (Keypad + Online Combined)

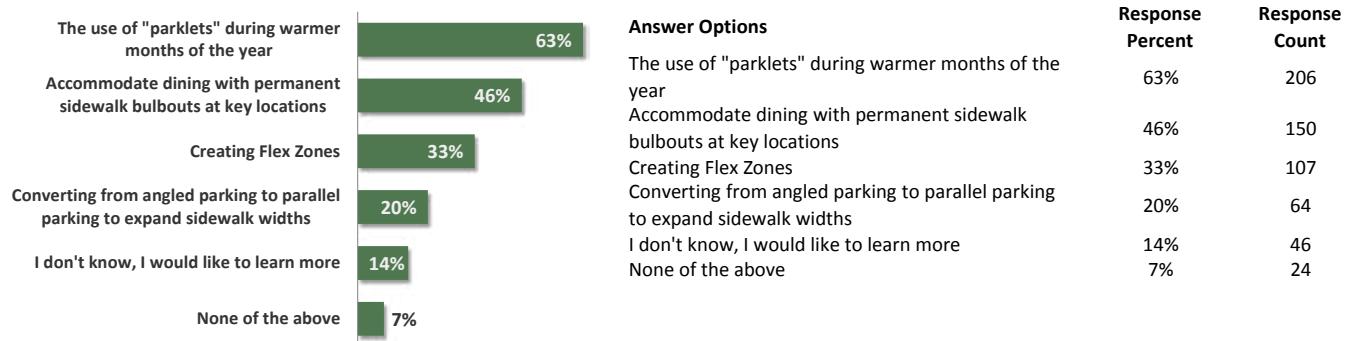
1. My connection to Downtown Wheaton is the following: (Choose all that apply)



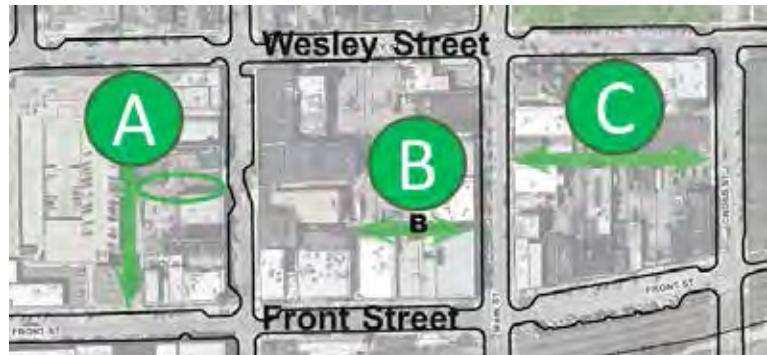
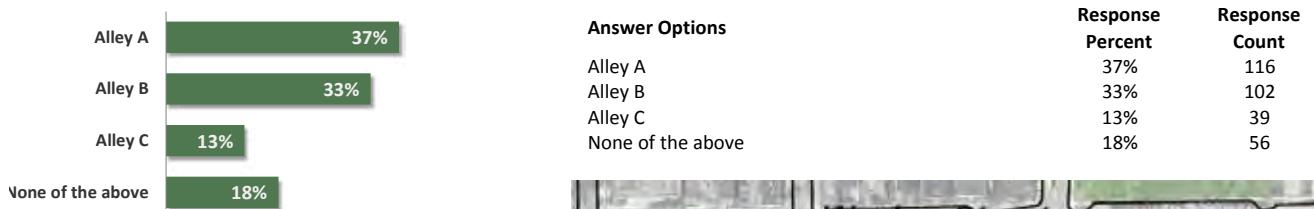
2. Given the background information about festival streets, I would be in favor of pursuing festival street concepts on the following streets (Choose up to 4 responses)



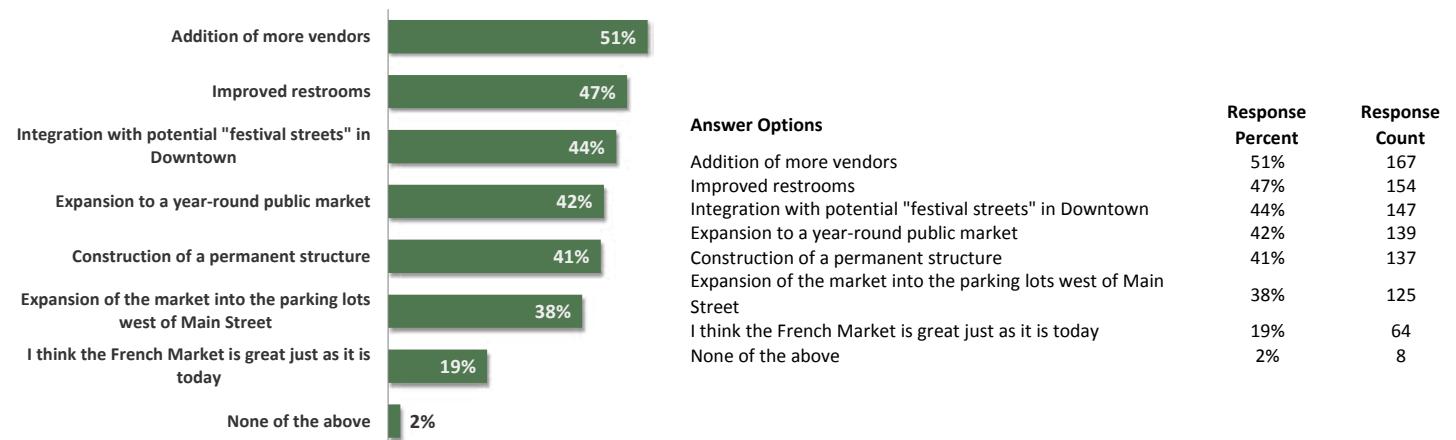
3. Which of the following options for increasing outdoor dining opportunities do you favor? (Choose all that apply)



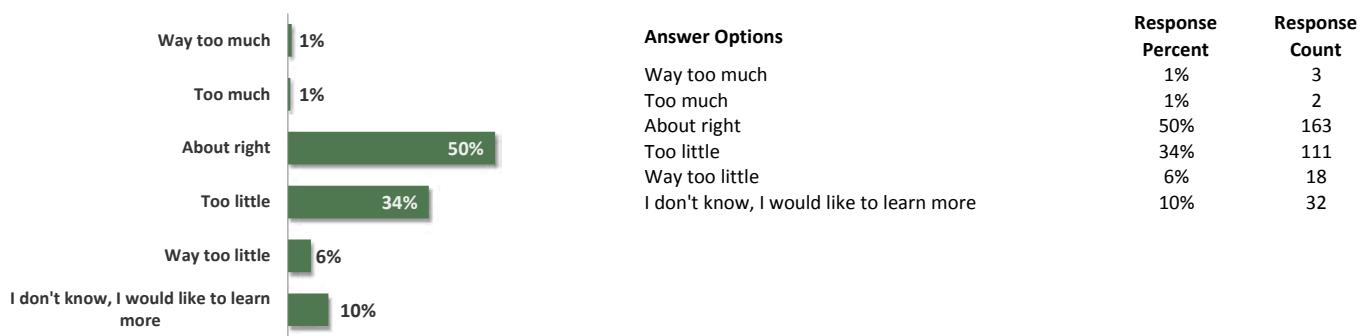
4. I am in favor of "dining alleys" in the locations shown on the diagram (Choose one)



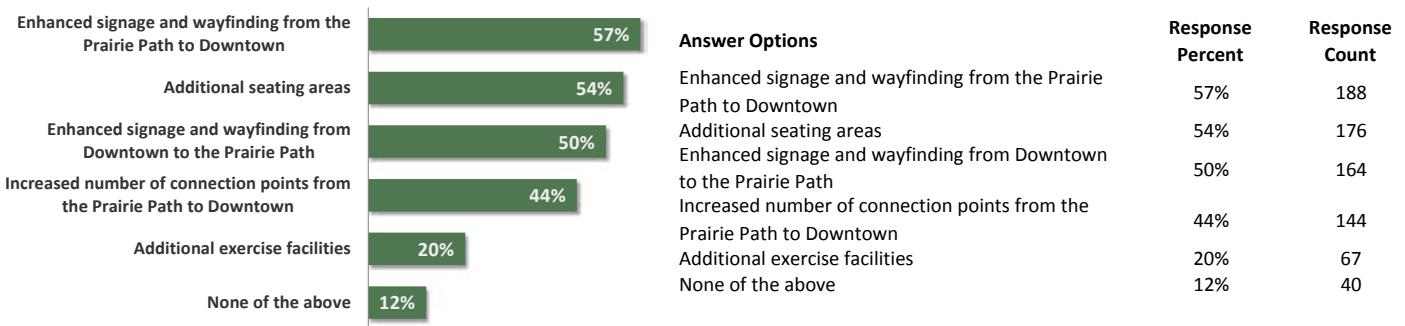
5. I would be in favor of the following improvement(s) to enhance the French Market: (Choose all that apply)



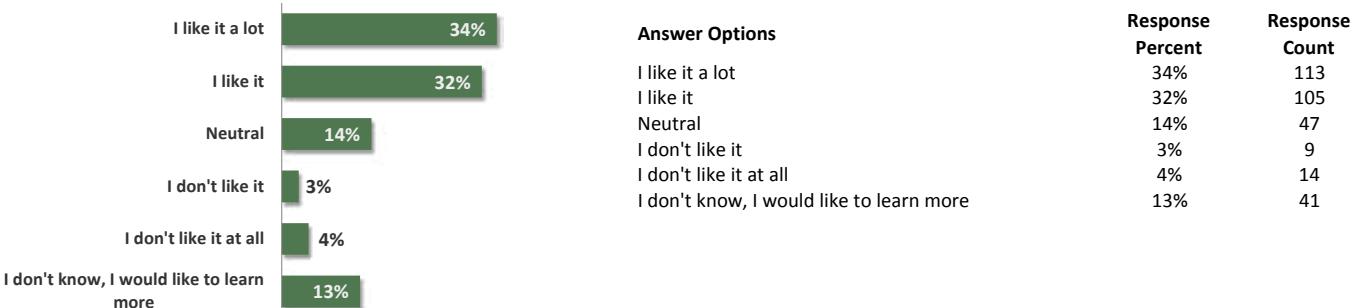
6. Do you feel that the number of “soft programming” activities or events in Downtown Wheaton is: (Choose 1)



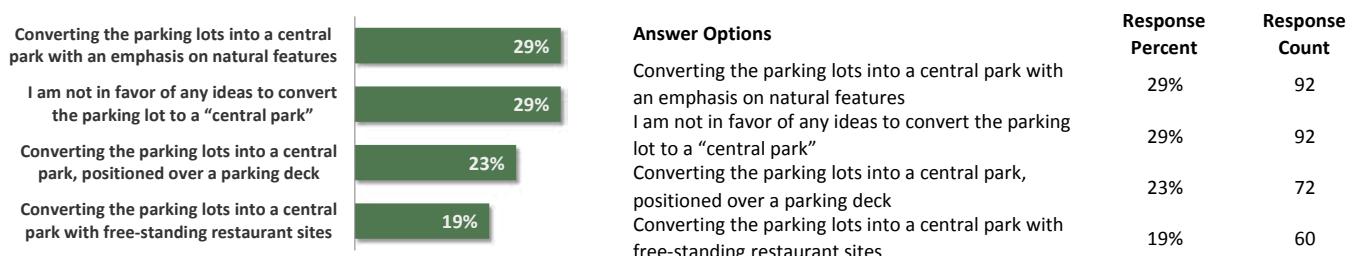
7. I would be in favor of the following improvements to the Prairie Path through Downtown: (Choose all that apply)



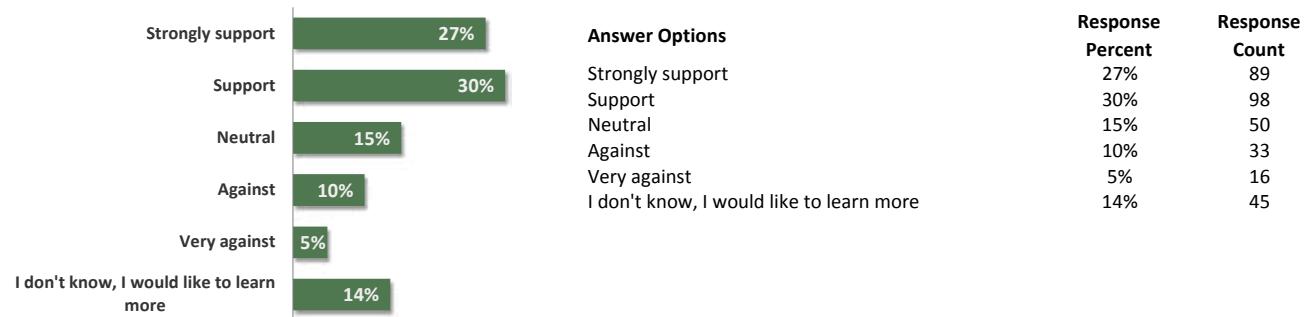
8. Do you like the concept of a “Green Loop” around Downtown Wheaton, connecting to the Prairie Path? (Choose one)



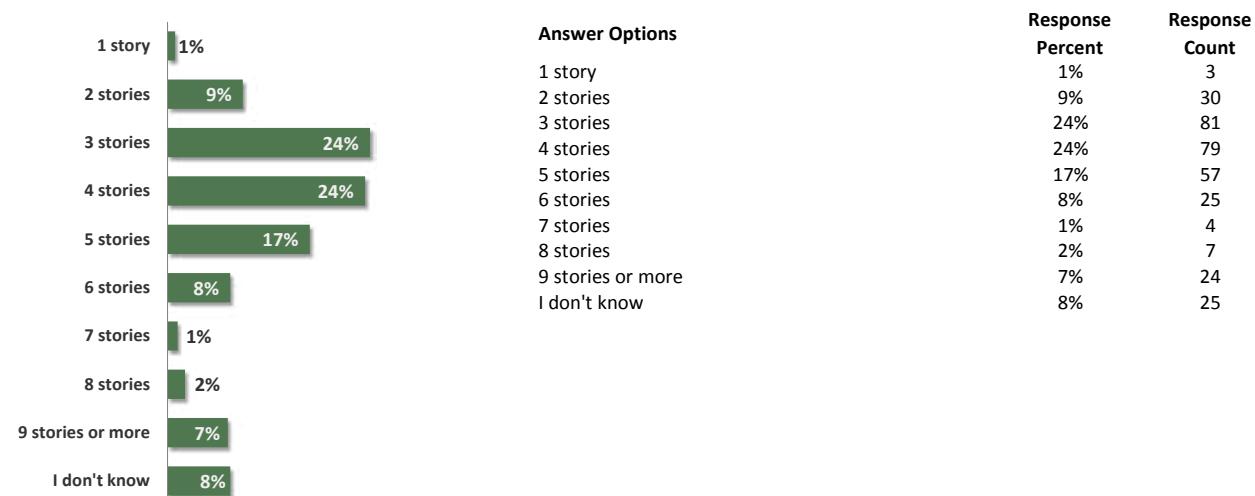
9. In order to create a linear “central park” along the south side of the Metra tracks and adjacent to the Prairie Path, I would favor: (Choose 1)



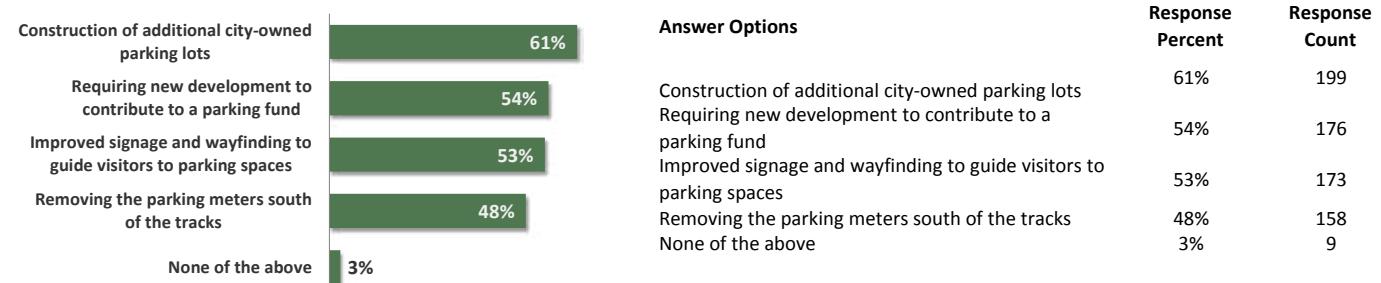
10. Parking requirements south of the tracks make it difficult to encourage higher density development. Developers are required to provide a certain number of parking spaces for each building - and this limits the amount of land that can be dedicated to buildings for commercial or residential uses. Do you support updating the parking requirements south of the tracks to support greater densities of land uses and redevelopment? (Choose 1)



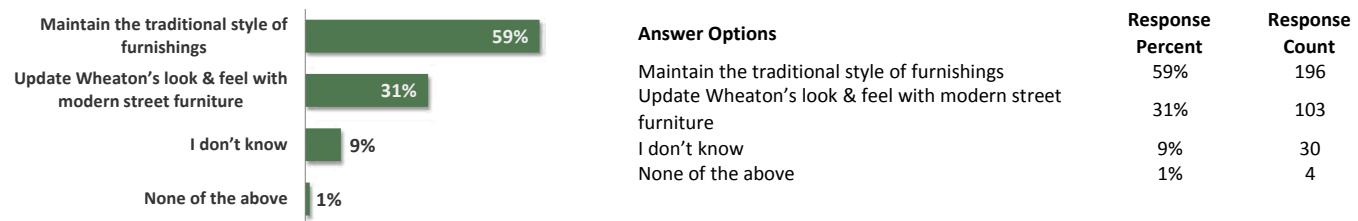
11. Regarding future development south of the tracks, I would be in favor of building heights up to: (Choose 1)



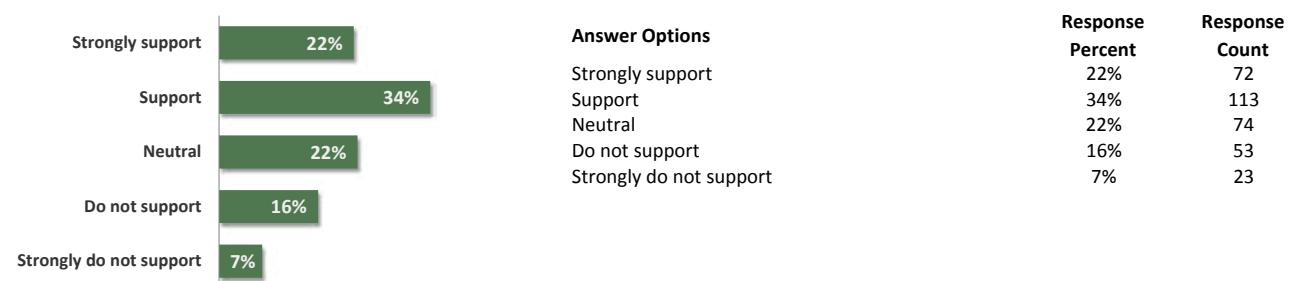
12. I would be in favor of providing for enhanced parking downtown through the following strategies: (Choose all that apply)



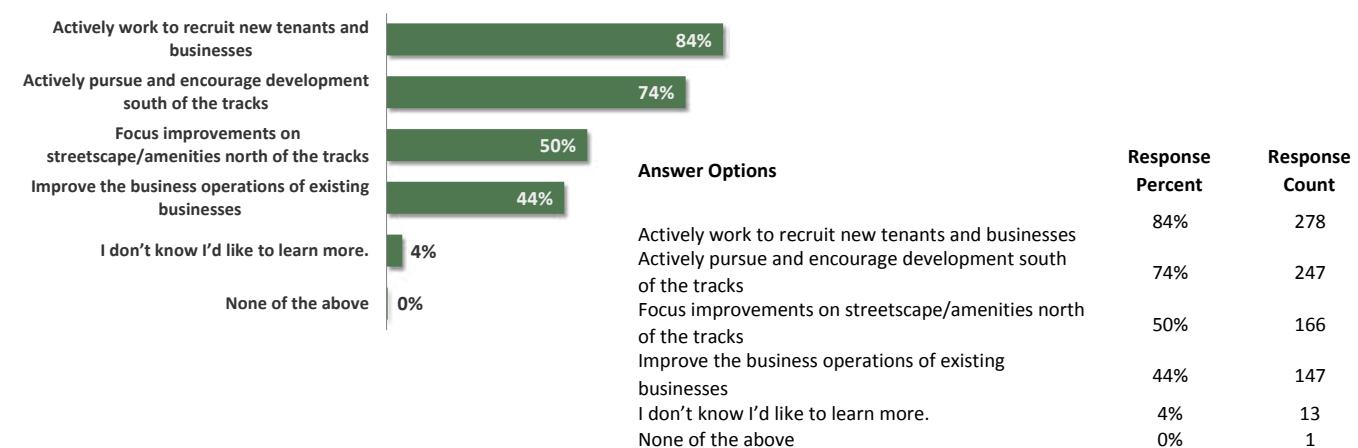
13. What style of streetscape features (Benches, Receptacles, Bike Racks, etc.) would you support in Downtown Wheaton? (Choose 1)



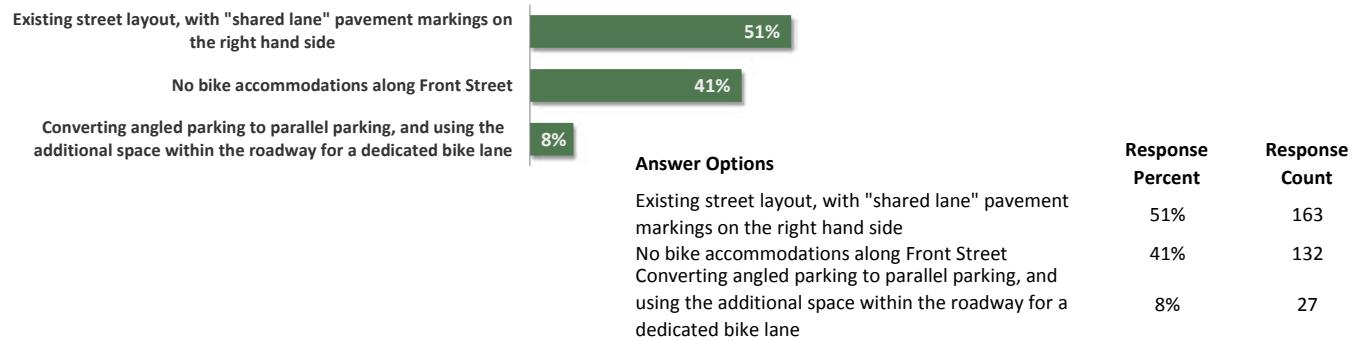
14. I would support increasing funding to restore or renovate building facades to comply with existing city design guidelines for Downtown (Choose one)



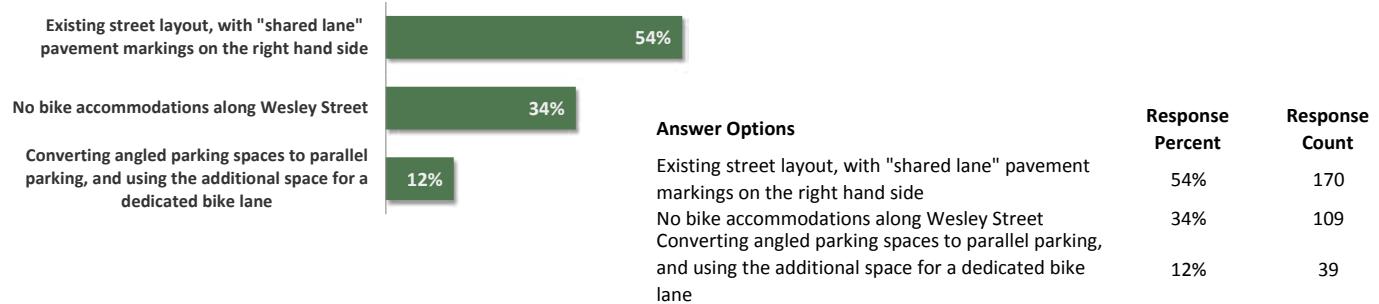
15. I would support the following ideas to improve the competitive position of Downtown Wheaton? (Choose all that apply)



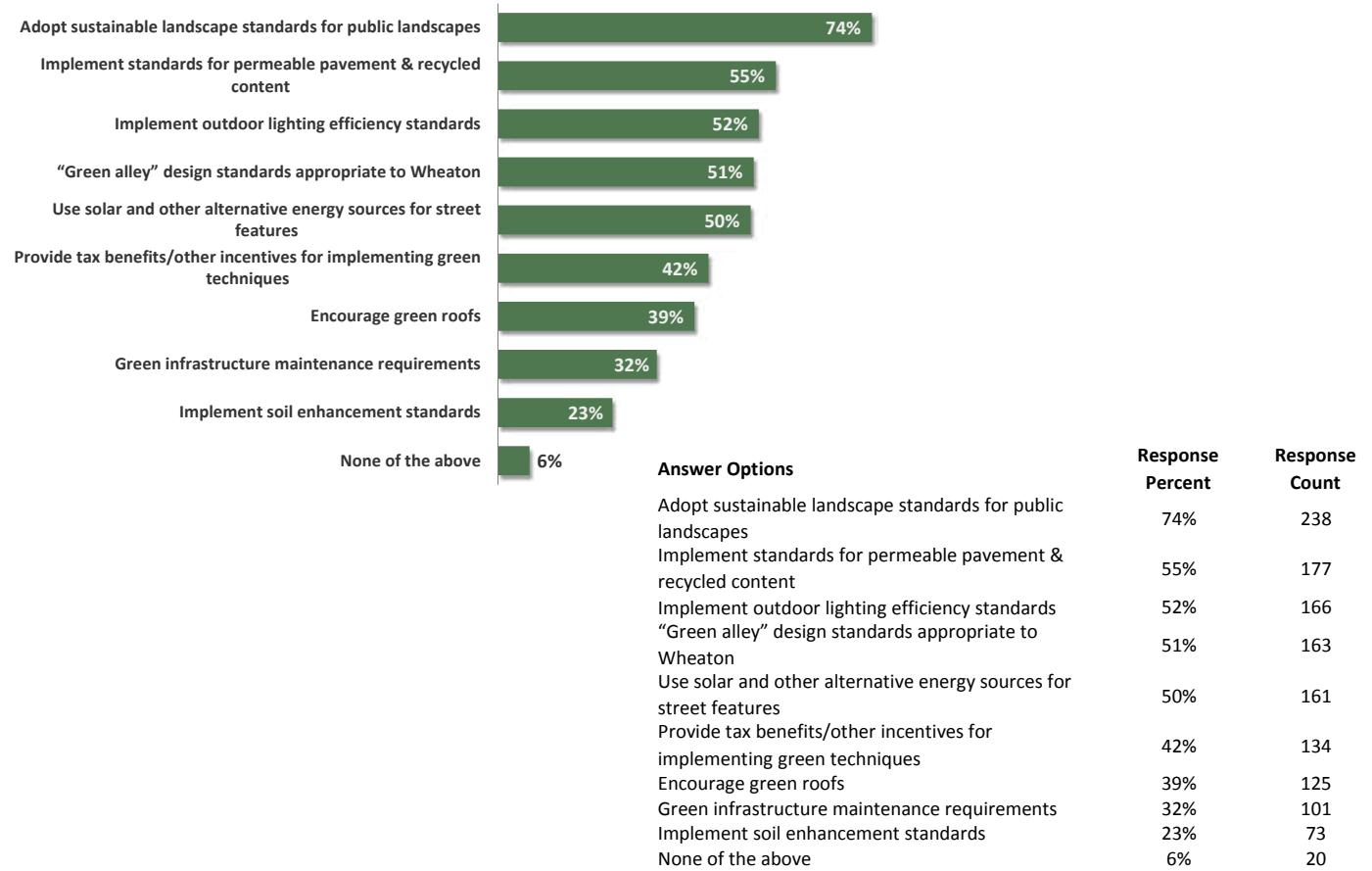
16. In order to accommodate bicyclists' safely (within the roadway rather than on sidewalks) and to facilitate travel through the heart of downtown, I am in favor of implementing the following strategies for East-West Bicycle travel on Front Street: (Choose 1)



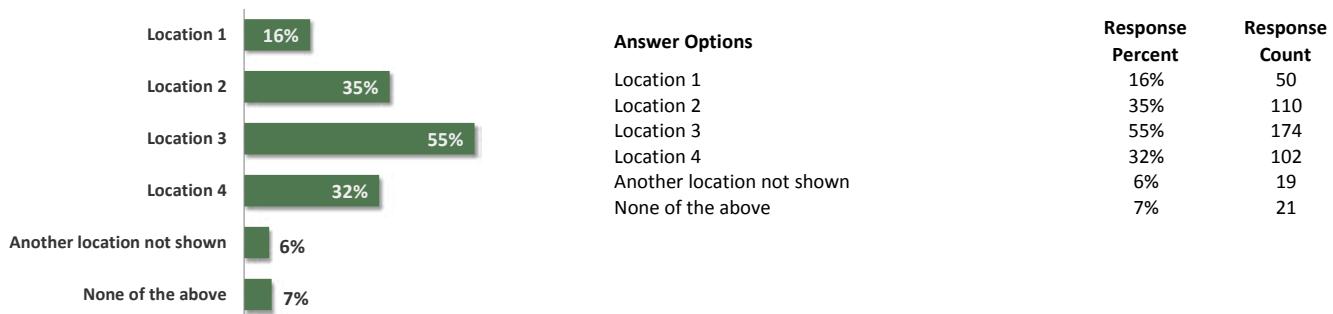
17. In order to accommodate bicyclists' safely (within the roadway rather than on sidewalks) and to facilitate travel through the heart of downtown, I am in favor of implementing the following strategies for East-West Bicycle travel on Wesley Street: (Choose 1)



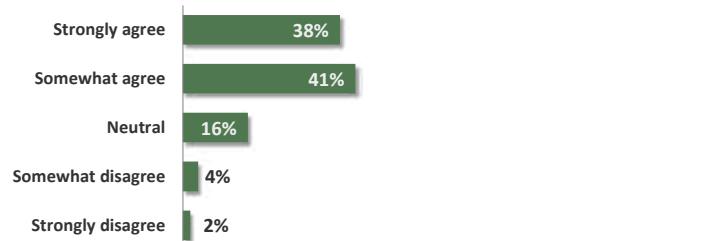
18. Citizens have identified sustainable landscaping as a key priority. Which of the following sustainable recommendations would you favor for Downtown? (Choose all that apply)



19. Which location is most appropriate to pursue an additional parking garage in downtown? (Choose top 2)



20. I generally agree with the vision statement for Downtown Wheaton as outlined in the presentation: (Choose 1)

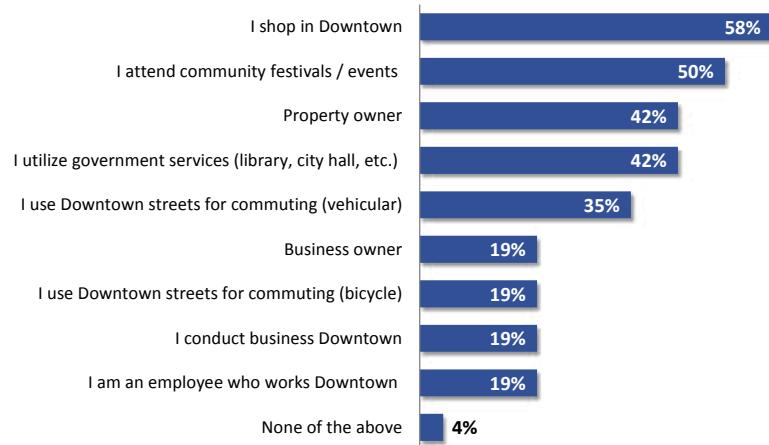


| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Strongly agree | 38% | 123 |
| Somewhat agree | 41% | 135 |
| Neutral | 16% | 51 |
| Somewhat disagree | 4% | 12 |
| Strongly disagree | 2% | 6 |

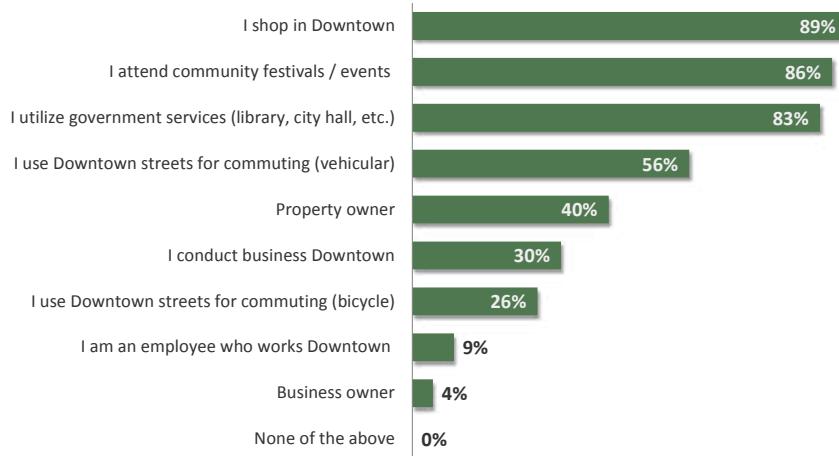
Round 3 Feedback Results

1.) My connection to Downtown Wheaton is the following: (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Public Meeting Results

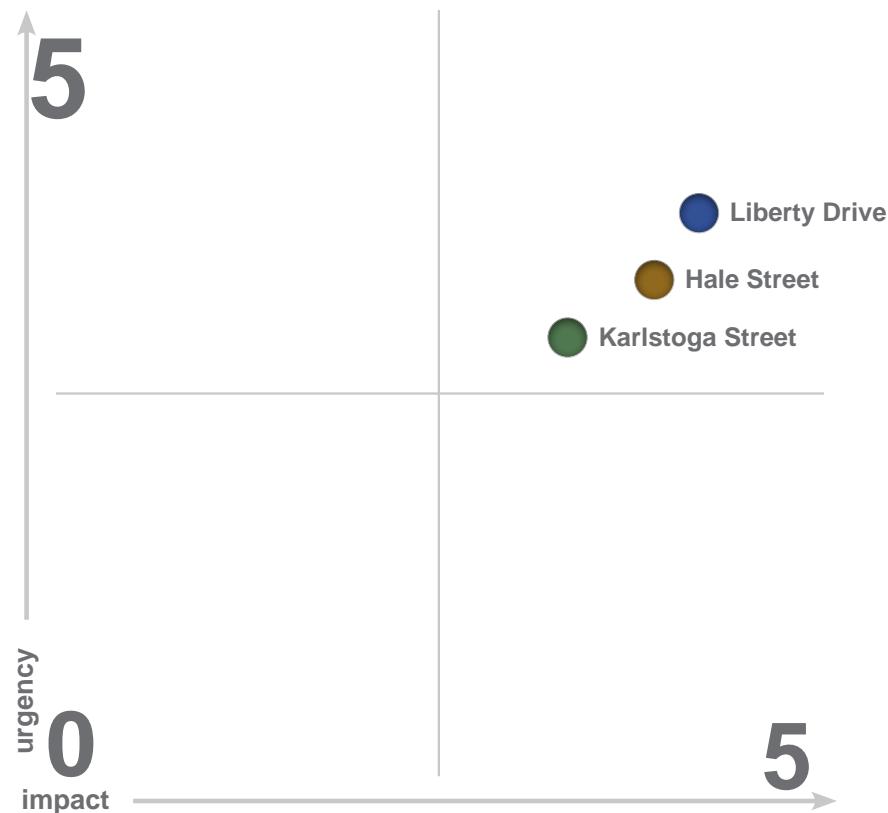
| | Responses | |
|--|-----------|-------|
| | Percent | Count |
| I shop in Downtown | 58% | 15 |
| I attend community festivals / events | 50% | 13 |
| Property owner | 42% | 11 |
| I utilize government services (library, city hall, etc.) | 42% | 11 |
| I use Downtown streets for commuting (vehicular) | 35% | 9 |
| Business owner | 19% | 5 |
| I use Downtown streets for commuting (bicycle) | 19% | 5 |
| I conduct business Downtown | 19% | 5 |
| I am an employee who works Downtown | 19% | 5 |
| None of the above | 4% | 1 |

Online Survey Results

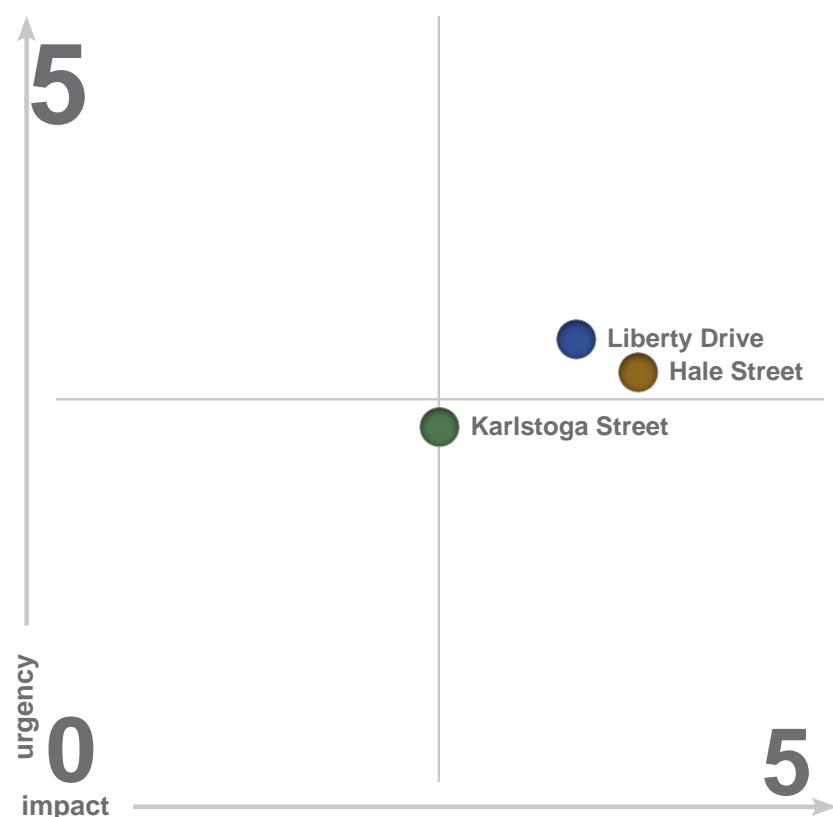
| | Answer Options | |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| | Response Percent | Response Count |
| I shop in Downtown | 89% | 146 |
| I attend community festivals / events | 86% | 141 |
| I utilize government services (library, city hall, etc.) | 83% | 137 |
| I use Downtown streets for commuting (vehicular) | 56% | 93 |
| Property owner | 40% | 66 |
| I conduct business Downtown | 30% | 50 |
| I use Downtown streets for commuting (bicycle) | 26% | 42 |
| I am an employee who works Downtown | 9% | 14 |
| Business owner | 4% | 7 |
| None of the above | 0% | 0 |

2 - 7.) To prioritize the implementation of the festival streets, participants were asked to rate the “IMPACT” they felt the changes to each street would have and the “URGENCY” of implementing each proposed festival street on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 = lowest and 5 = highest.

Public Meeting Results



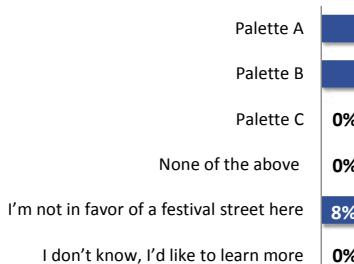
Online Survey Results



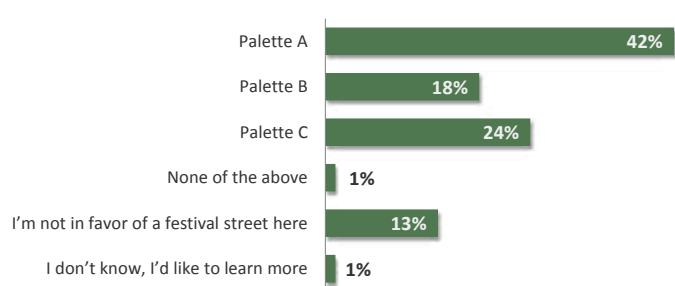
| | Palette A | Palette B | Palette C |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Crosswalk |  |  |  |
| Paving |  |  |  |
| Planting Edge Treatment |  |  |  |
| Lighting |  |  |  |
| Benches |  |  |  |
| Trash / Recycling |  |  |  |
| Bike Racks |  |  |  |

8.) Which option do you prefer for the overall materials palette (including paving, site furniture, lighting, signage, etc.) to complement the festival street concept on HALE STREET? (Choose 1)

Public Meeting Results



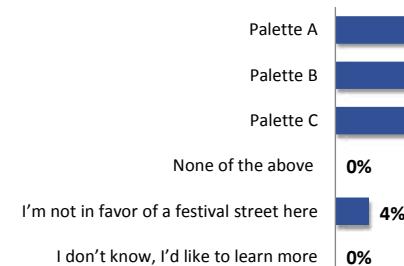
Online Survey Results



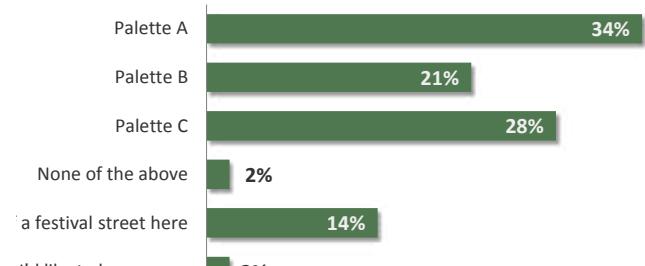
| | Responses | | Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
|--|-----------|-------|---|---------------------|-------------------|
| | Percent | Count | | | |
| Palette A | 60% | 15 | Palette A | 42% | 68 |
| Palette B | 32% | 8 | Palette B | 18% | 30 |
| Palette C | 0% | 0 | Palette C | 24% | 40 |
| None of the above | 0% | 0 | None of the above | 1% | 2 |
| I'm not in favor of a festival street here | 8% | 2 | I'm not in favor of a festival street on Hale | 13% | 22 |
| I don't know, I'd like to learn more | 0% | 0 | I don't know, I'd like to learn more | 1% | 2 |

9.) Which option do you prefer for the overall materials palette (including paving, site furniture, lighting, signage, etc.) to complement the festival street concept on KARLSKOGA STREET? (Choose 1)

Public Meeting Results



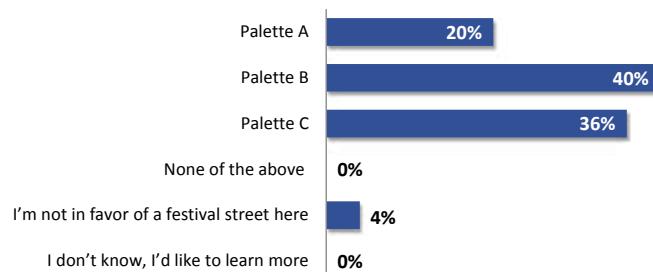
Online Survey Results



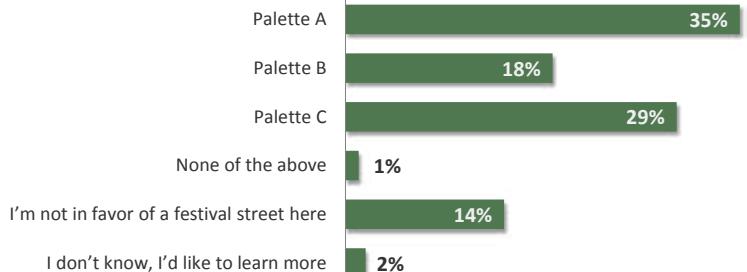
| | Responses | | Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
|--|-----------|-------|---|---------------------|-------------------|
| | Percent | Count | | | |
| Palette A | 44% | 11 | Palette A | 34% | 56 |
| Palette B | 36% | 9 | Palette B | 21% | 34 |
| Palette C | 16% | 4 | Palette C | 28% | 45 |
| None of the above | 0% | 0 | None of the above | 2% | 3 |
| I'm not in favor of a festival street here | 4% | 1 | I'm not in favor of a festival street on Karlskoga Street | 14% | 22 |
| I don't know, I'd like to learn more | 0% | 0 | I don't know, I'd like to learn more | 2% | 3 |

10.) Which option do you prefer for the overall materials palette (including paving, site furniture, lighting, signage, etc.) to complement the festival street concept on LIBERTY DRIVE? (Choose 1)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results

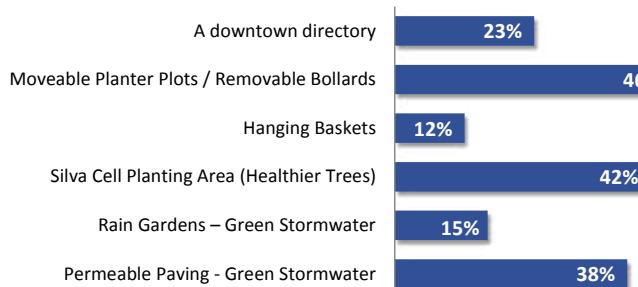


| | Responses | |
|--|-----------|-------|
| | Percent | Count |
| Palette A | 20% | 5 |
| Palette B | 40% | 10 |
| Palette C | 36% | 9 |
| None of the above | 0% | 0 |
| I'm not in favor of a festival street here | 4% | 1 |
| I don't know, I'd like to learn more | 0% | 0 |

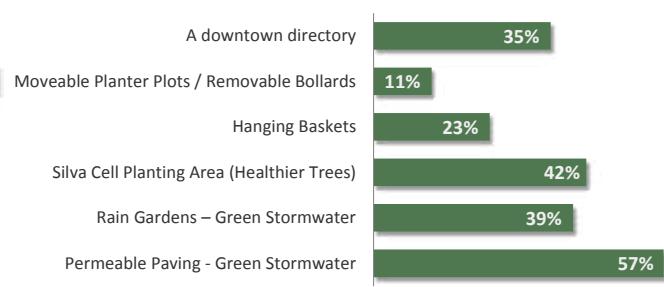
| | Answer Options | Response | Response |
|--|--|----------|----------|
| | | Percent | Count |
| Palette A | Palette A | 35% | 57 |
| Palette B | Palette B | 18% | 30 |
| Palette C | Palette C | 29% | 48 |
| None of the above | None of the above | 1% | 2 |
| I'm not in favor of a festival street here | I'm not in favor of a festival street on Liberty | 14% | 23 |
| I don't know, I'd like to learn more | I don't know, I'd like to learn more | 2% | 3 |

11.) What 2 strategies would you prioritize for additional improvements on the festival streets downtown? (Choose 2)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results

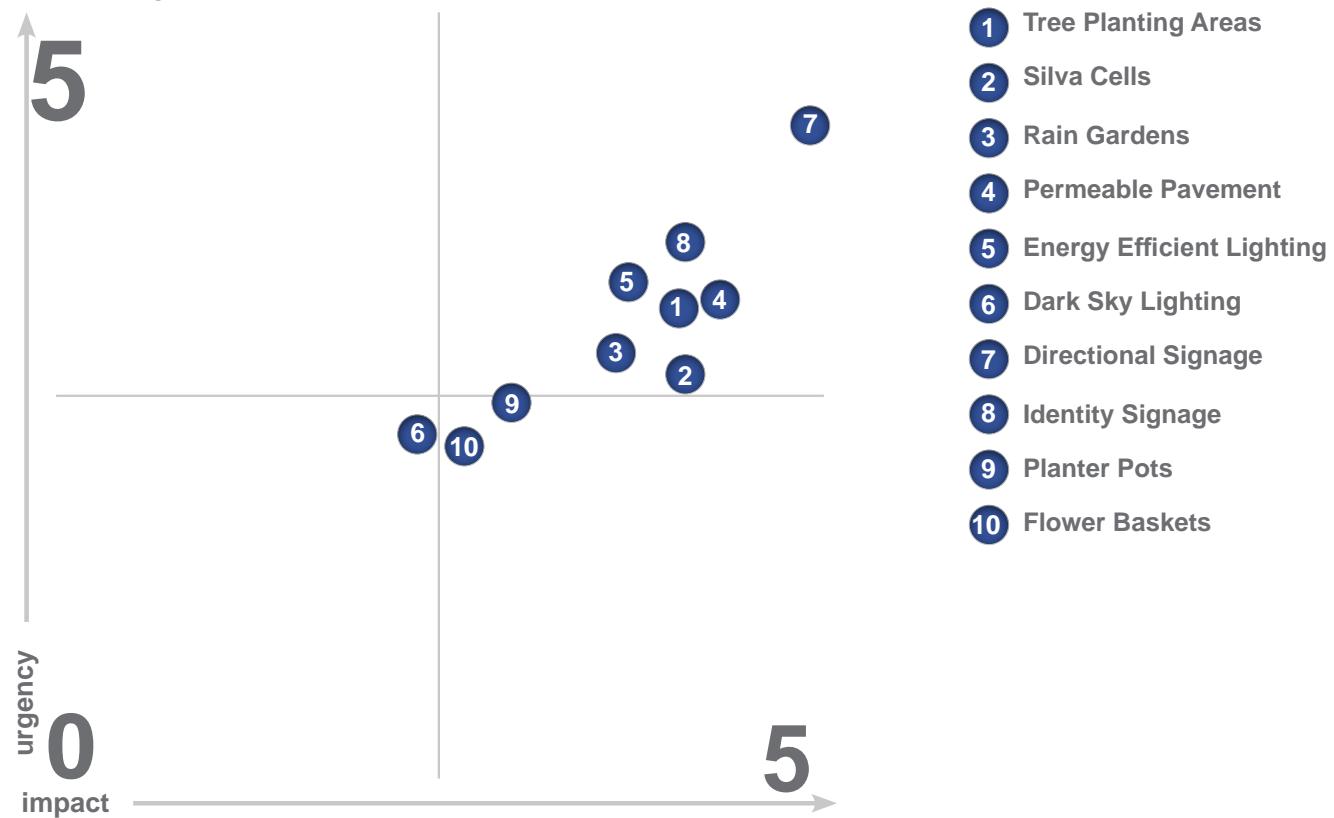


| | Responses | |
|---|-----------|-------|
| | Percent | Count |
| A downtown directory | 23% | 6 |
| Moveable Planter Plots / Removable Bollards | 46% | 12 |
| Hanging Baskets | 12% | 3 |
| Silva Cell Planting Area (Healthier Trees) | 42% | 11 |
| Rain Gardens – Green Stormwater | 15% | 4 |
| Permeable Paving - Green Stormwater | 38% | 10 |

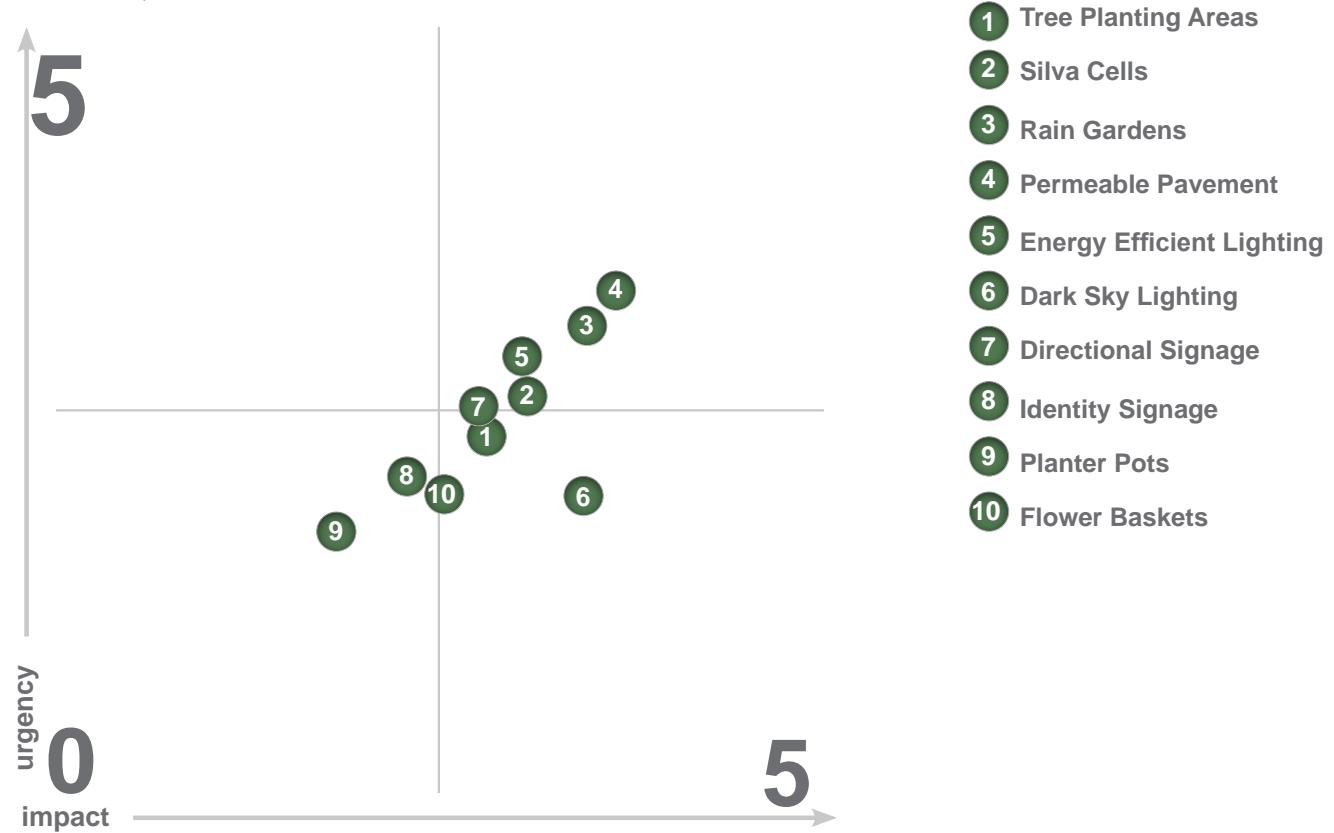
| | Answer Options | Response | Response |
|---|---|----------|----------|
| | | Percent | Count |
| A downtown directory | A downtown directory | 35% | 55 |
| Moveable Planter Plots / Removable Bollards | Moveable Planter Plots / Removable Bollards | 11% | 18 |
| Hanging Baskets | Hanging Baskets | 23% | 36 |
| Silva Cell Planting Area (Healthier Trees) | Silva Cell Planting Area (Healthier Trees) | 42% | 66 |
| Rain Gardens – Green Stormwater | Rain Gardens – Green Stormwater | 39% | 62 |
| Permeable Paving - Green Stormwater | Permeable Paving - Green Stormwater | 57% | 90 |

12 - 31.) To prioritize streetscape improvements on the pedestrian priority streets identified for downtown, participants were asked to rate the “IMPACT” of each element and the “URGENCY” of implementing them on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 = lowest and 5 = highest.

Public Meeting Results

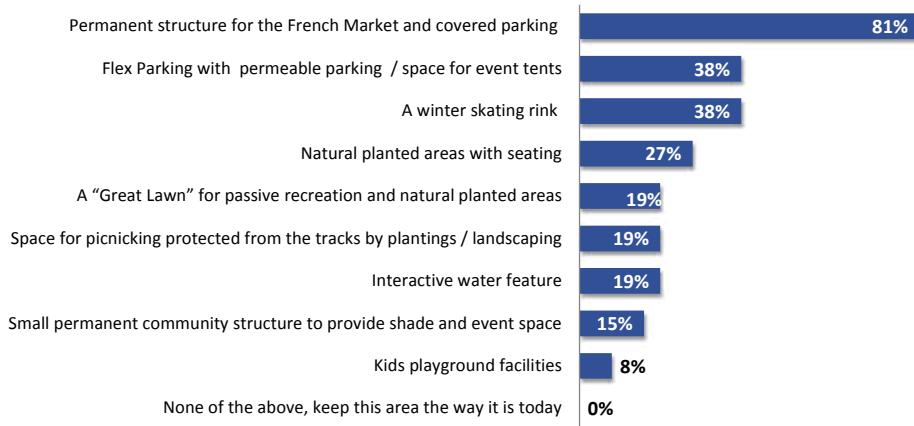


Online Survey Results

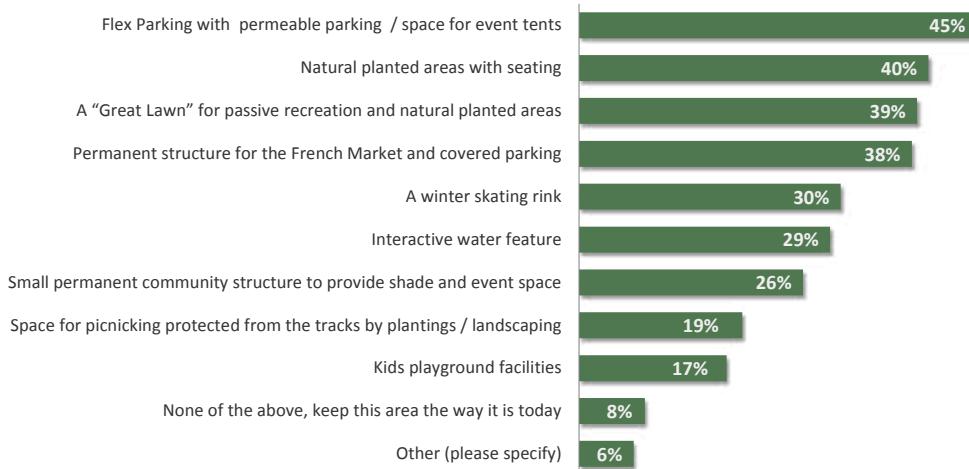


32.) I like the following elements the most for the potential “central park” along the south side of the Metra tracks, from Hale east to Cross Street: (Choose your top 3)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Public Meeting Results

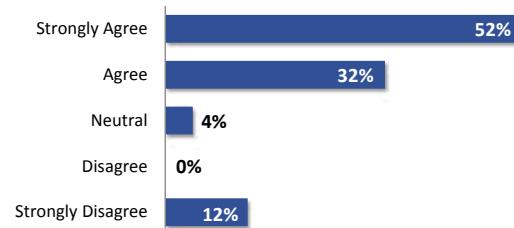
| | Responses Percent | Responses Count |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|
| Permanent structure for the French Market and covered parking | 30% | 21 |
| Flex Parking with permeable parking / space for event tents | 14% | 10 |
| A winter skating rink | 14% | 10 |
| Natural planted areas with seating | 10% | 7 |
| A “Great Lawn” for passive recreation and natural planted areas | 7% | 5 |
| Space for picnicking protected from the tracks by plantings / landscaping | 7% | 5 |
| Interactive water feature | 7% | 5 |
| Small permanent community structure to provide shade and event space | 6% | 4 |
| Kids playground facilities | 3% | 2 |
| None of the above, keep this area the way it is today | 0% | 0 |

Online Survey Results

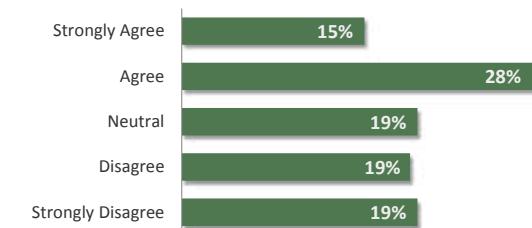
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|
| Flex Parking with permeable parking / space for event tents | 45% | 73 |
| Natural planted areas with seating | 40% | 64 |
| A “Great Lawn” for passive recreation and natural planted areas | 39% | 62 |
| Permanent structure for the French Market and covered parking | 38% | 61 |
| A winter skating rink | 30% | 48 |
| Interactive water feature | 29% | 46 |
| Small permanent community structure to provide shade and event space | 26% | 41 |
| Space for picnicking protected from the tracks by plantings / landscaping | 19% | 30 |
| Kids playground facilities | 17% | 27 |
| None of the above, keep this area the way it is today | 8% | 12 |
| Other (please specify) | 6% | 10 |

33.) I would support a lighting program work from local artists, historical images, or advertisements for local events would be projected on buildings adjacent to the Metra line. (Choose 1)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



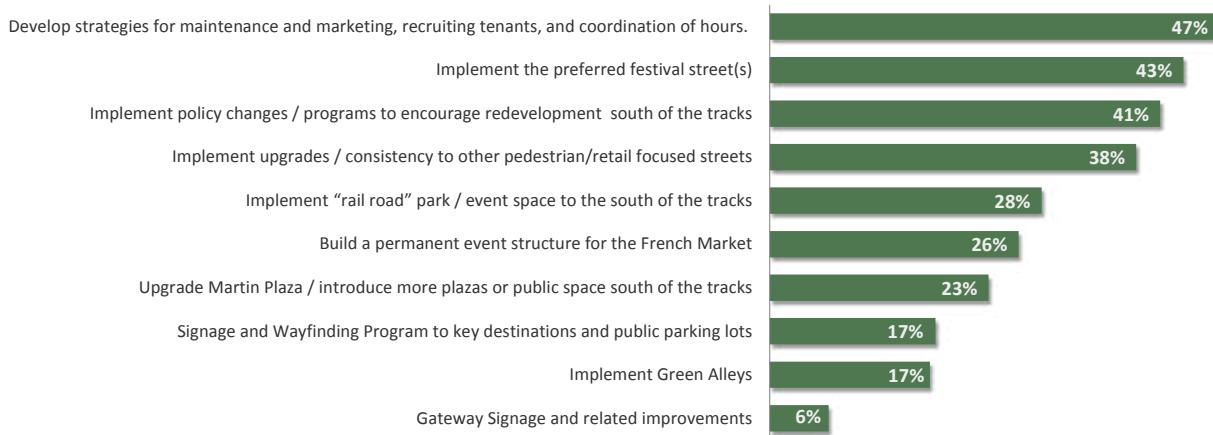
| | Responses | | Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
|-------------------|-----------|-------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| | Percent | Count | | | |
| Strongly Agree | 52% | 13 | Strongly Agree | 15% | 24 |
| Agree | 32% | 8 | Agree | 28% | 46 |
| Neutral | 4% | 1 | Neutral | 19% | 31 |
| Disagree | 0% | 0 | Disagree | 19% | 30 |
| Strongly Disagree | 12% | 3 | Strongly Disagree | 19% | 31 |

34.) Please choose your top 3 overall recommendations for Downtown Wheaton: (Choose your top 3)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results

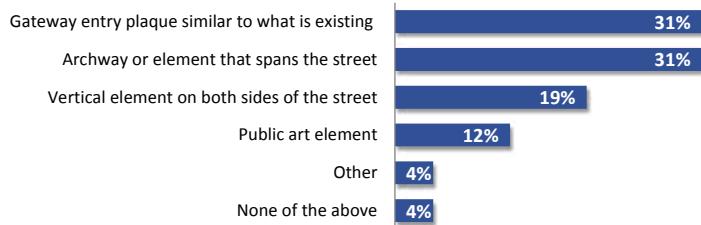


Public Meeting Results

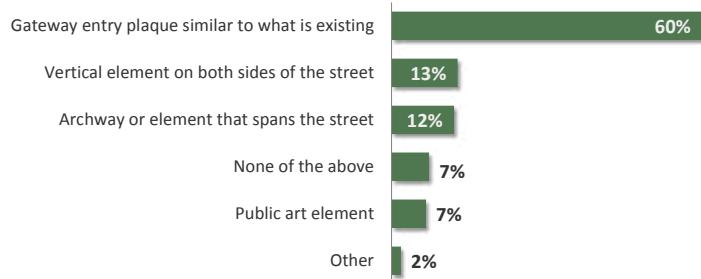
| | Responses Percent | Responses Count | Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
|--|----------------------|--------------------|--|---------------------|-------------------|
| Build a permanent event structure for the French Market | 54% | 14 | Develop strategies for maintenance and marketing, recruiting tenants, and coordination of hours. | 47% | 76 |
| Implement the preferred festival street(s) | 46% | 12 | Implement the preferred festival street(s) | 43% | 70 |
| Signage and Wayfinding Program to key destinations and public parking lots | 31% | 8 | Implement policy changes / programs to encourage redevelopment south of the tracks | 41% | 66 |
| Develop strategies for maintenance and marketing, recruiting tenants, and coordination of hours. | 31% | 8 | Implement upgrades / consistency to other pedestrian/retail focused streets | 38% | 62 |
| Implement "rail road" park / event space to the south of the tracks | 23% | 6 | Implement "rail road" park / event space to the south of the tracks | 28% | 46 |
| Implement policy changes / programs to encourage redevelopment south of the tracks | 23% | 6 | Build a permanent event structure for the French Market | 26% | 42 |
| Implement upgrades / consistency to other pedestrian/retail focused streets | 12% | 3 | Upgrade Martin Plaza / introduce more plazas or public space south of the tracks | 23% | 37 |
| Gateway Signage and related improvements | 12% | 3 | Signage and Wayfinding Program to key destinations and public parking lots | 17% | 28 |
| Upgrade Martin Plaza / introduce more plazas or public space south of the tracks | 12% | 3 | Implement Green Alleys | 17% | 27 |
| Implement Green Alleys | 8% | 2 | Gateway Signage and related improvements | 6% | 10 |

35.) What is your preferred gateway marking style for key locations approaching Downtown Wheaton? (Choose 1)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Public Meeting Results

| | Responses | |
|--|-----------|-------|
| | Percent | Count |

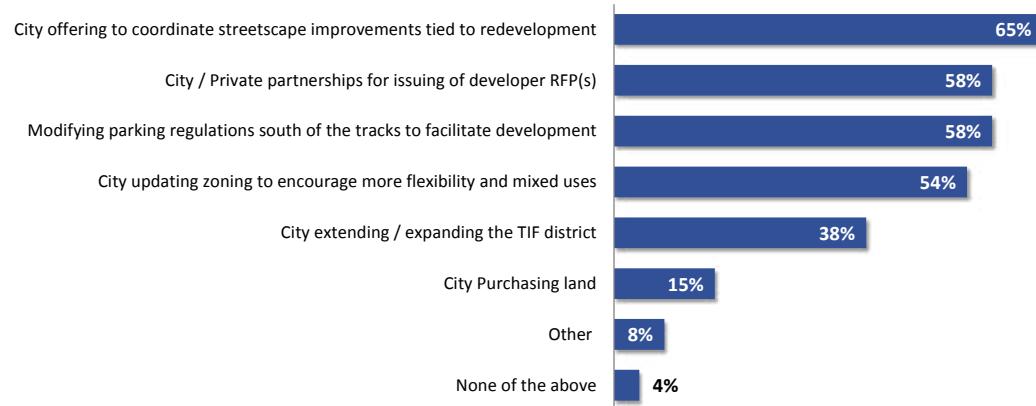
| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| Gateway entry plaque similar to what is existing | 31% | 8 |
| Archway or element that spans the street | 31% | 8 |
| Vertical element on both sides of the street | 19% | 5 |
| Public art element | 12% | 3 |
| Other | 4% | 1 |
| None of the above | 4% | 1 |

Online Survey Results

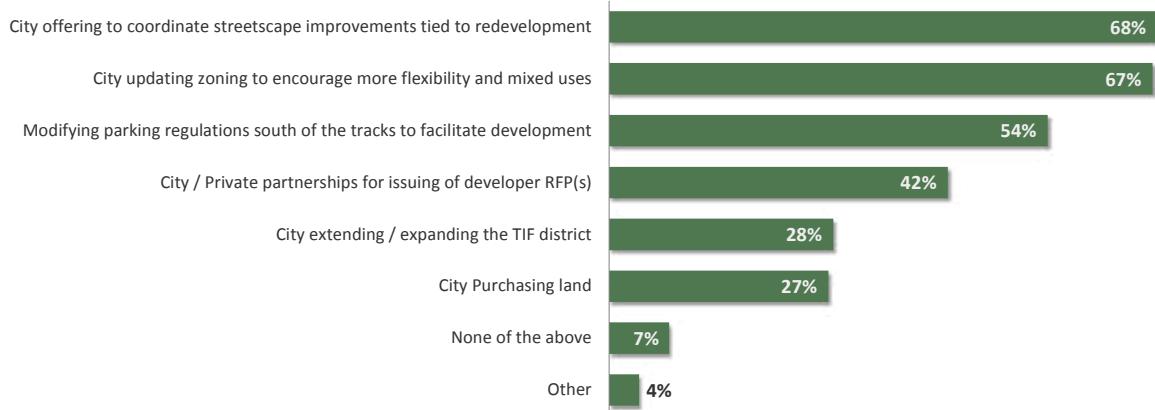
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
|--|---------------------|-------------------|
| Gateway entry plaque similar to what is existing | 60% | 99 |
| Vertical element on both sides of the street | 13% | 21 |
| Archway or element that spans the street | 12% | 20 |
| None of the above | 7% | 12 |
| Public art element | 7% | 11 |
| Other | 2% | 3 |

36.) I would be in favor of the following strategies to implement changes in Downtown Wheaton: (Choose all that apply)

Public Meeting Results



Online Survey Results



Public Meeting Results

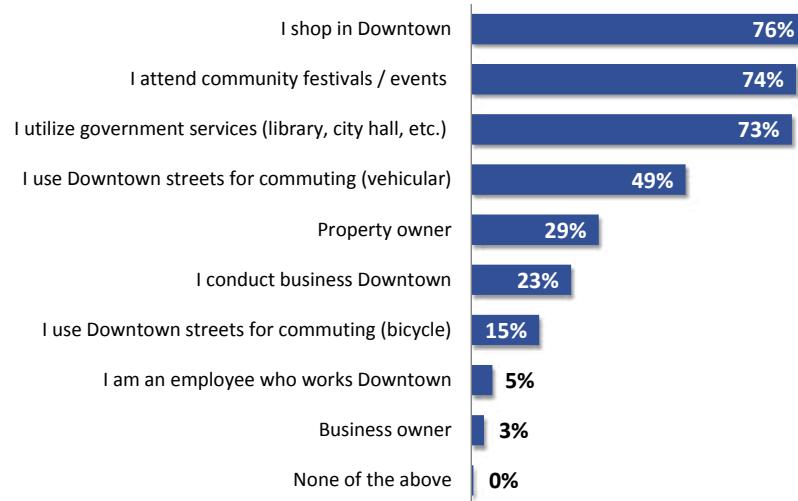
| | Responses Percent | Responses Count | |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|--|
| City offering to coordinate streetscape improvements tied to redevelopment | 65% | 17 | |
| City / Private partnerships for issuing of developer RFP(s) | 58% | 15 | |
| Modifying parking regulations south of the tracks to facilitate development | 58% | 15 | |
| City updating zoning to encourage more flexibility and mixed uses | 54% | 14 | |
| City extending / expanding the TIF district | 38% | 10 | |
| City Purchasing land | 15% | 4 | |
| Other | 8% | 2 | |
| None of the above | 4% | 1 | |

Online Survey Results

| | Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
|---|---|---------------------|-------------------|
| City offering to coordinate streetscape improvements tied to redevelopment | City offering to coordinate streetscape improvements tied to redevelopment | 68% | 110 |
| City updating zoning to encourage more flexibility and mixed uses | City updating zoning to encourage more flexibility and mixed uses | 67% | 109 |
| Modifying parking regulations south of the tracks to facilitate development | Modifying parking regulations south of the tracks to facilitate development | 54% | 88 |
| City / Private partnerships for issuing of developer RFP(s) | City / Private partnerships for issuing of developer RFP(s) | 42% | 68 |
| City extending / expanding the TIF district | City extending / expanding the TIF district | 28% | 45 |
| City Purchasing land | City Purchasing land | 27% | 44 |
| None of the above | None of the above | 7% | 12 |
| Other | Other | 4% | 6 |

Round 4 Feedback Results (Keypad + Online Combined)

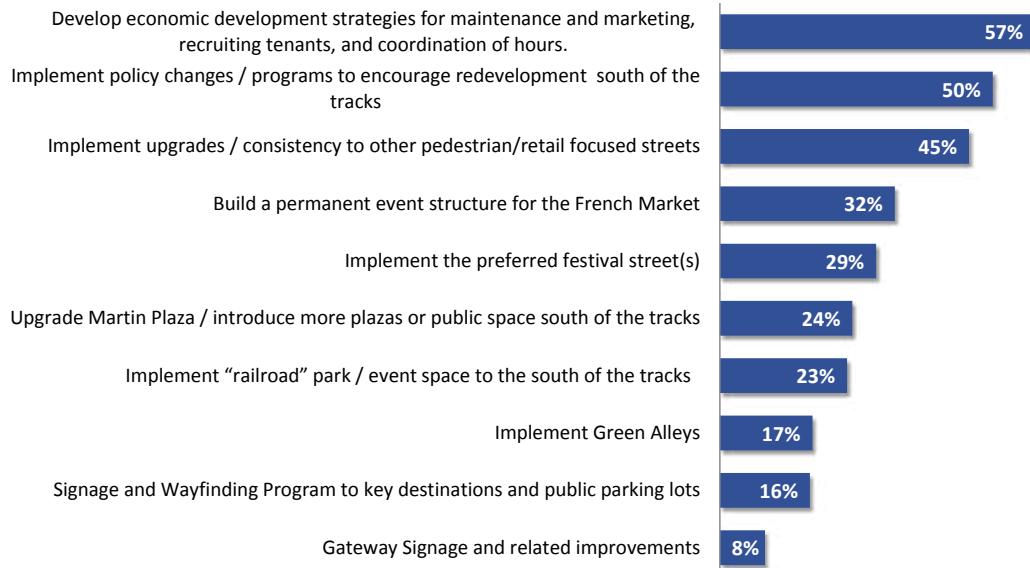
1. My connection to Downtown Wheaton is the following: (Choose all that apply)



I shop in Downtown
 I attend community festivals / events
 I utilize government services (library, city hall, etc.)
 I use Downtown streets for commuting (vehicular)
 Property owner
 I conduct business Downtown
 I use Downtown streets for commuting (bicycle)
 I am an employee who works Downtown
 Business owner
 None of the above

| | Keypad | | Survey | | Total Percent |
|--|---------|-------|---------|-------|------------------|
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | |
| I shop in Downtown | 11% | 2 | 83% | 156 | 76% |
| I attend community festivals / events | 5% | 1 | 81% | 152 | 74% |
| I utilize government services (library, city hall, etc.) | 58% | 11 | 75% | 140 | 73% |
| I use Downtown streets for commuting (vehicular) | 0% | 0 | 54% | 101 | 49% |
| Property owner | 5% | 1 | 32% | 59 | 29% |
| I conduct business Downtown | 11% | 2 | 24% | 45 | 23% |
| I use Downtown streets for commuting (bicycle) | 0% | 0 | 17% | 32 | 15% |
| I am an employee who works Downtown | 11% | 2 | 4% | 8 | 5% |
| Business owner | 0% | 0 | 3% | 6 | 3% |
| None of the above | 0% | 0 | 1% | 1 | 0% |

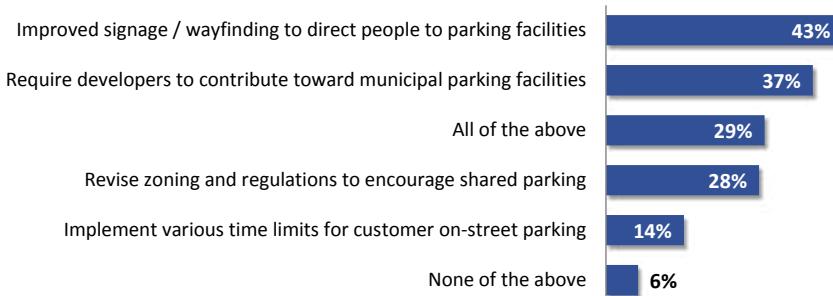
2. Please Choose your top 3 overall recommendations for Downtown Wheaton: (Choose your top 3)



Develop economic development strategies for maintenance and marketing, recruiting tenants, and coordination of hours.
 Implement policy changes / programs to encourage redevelopment south of the tracks
 Implement upgrades / consistency to other pedestrian/retail focused streets
 Build a permanent event structure for the French Market
 Implement the preferred festival street(s)
 Upgrade Martin Plaza / introduce more plazas or public space south of the tracks
 Implement "railroad" park / event space to the south of the tracks
 Implement Green Alleys
 Signage and Wayfinding Program to key destinations and public parking lots
 Gateway Signage and related improvements

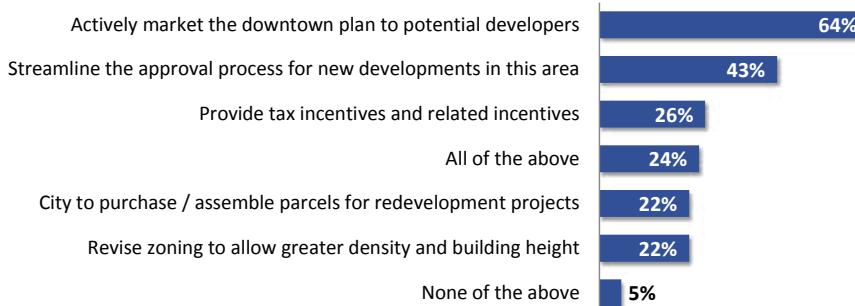
| Keypad Percent | Keypad Count | Survey | | Total Percent |
|-------------------|-----------------|---------|-------|------------------|
| | | Percent | Count | |
| 0 | 9 | 59% | 110 | 57% |
| 0 | 4 | 53% | 99 | 50% |
| 0 | 3 | 48% | 91 | 45% |
| 1 | 12 | 29% | 54 | 32% |
| 1 | 11 | 26% | 48 | 29% |
| 0 | 5 | 24% | 45 | 24% |
| 0 | 7 | 22% | 41 | 23% |
| 0 | 3 | 17% | 32 | 17% |
| 0 | 1 | 18% | 33 | 16% |
| 0 | 2 | 8% | 15 | 8% |

3. I would be in favor of the following strategies for parking in downtown: (Choose all that apply)



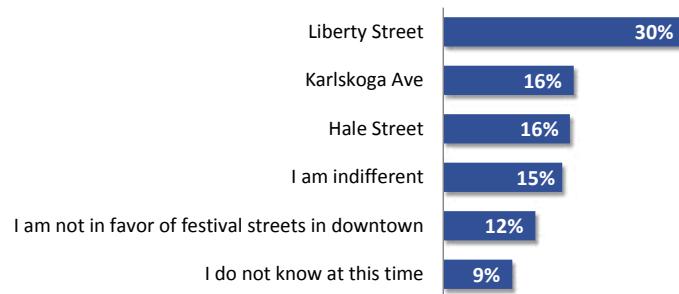
| | Keypad | | Survey | | Total Percent |
|--|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------------|
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | |
| Improved signage / wayfinding to direct people to parking facilities | 16% | 3 | 48% | 85 | 43% |
| Require developers to contribute toward municipal parking facilities | 11% | 2 | 42% | 75 | 37% |
| All of the above | 26% | 5 | 30% | 54 | 29% |
| Revise zoning and regulations to encourage shared parking | 37% | 7 | 28% | 50 | 28% |
| Implement various time limits for customer on-street parking | 16% | 3 | 15% | 26 | 14% |
| None of the above | 0% | 0 | 7% | 12 | 6% |

4. I would be in favor of the following strategies to encourage redevelopment opportunities south of the rail road tracks: (Choose all that apply)



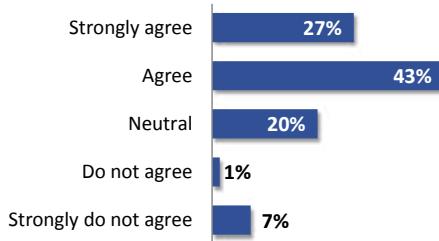
| | Keypad | | Survey | | Total Percent |
|---|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------------|
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | |
| Actively market the downtown plan to potential developers | 58% | 11 | 66% | 121 | 64% |
| Streamline the approval process for new developments in this area | 0% | 0 | 48% | 89 | 43% |
| Provide tax incentives and related incentives | 16% | 3 | 27% | 50 | 26% |
| All of the above | 21% | 4 | 25% | 46 | 24% |
| City to purchase / assemble parcels for redevelopment projects | 5% | 1 | 24% | 44 | 22% |
| Revise zoning to allow greater density and building height | 0% | 0 | 25% | 45 | 22% |
| None of the above | 5% | 1 | 5% | 10 | 5% |

5. I would be in favor of proceeding with construction of the following festival street first: (Select one)



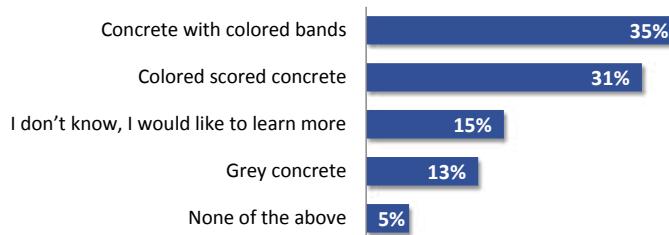
| | Keypad | | Survey | | Total Percent |
|---|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------------|
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | |
| Liberty Street | 70% | 14 | 27% | 49 | 30% |
| Karlskoga Ave | 5% | 1 | 18% | 33 | 16% |
| Hale Street | 20% | 4 | 16% | 29 | 16% |
| I am indifferent | 5% | 1 | 16% | 30 | 15% |
| I am not in favor of festival streets in downtown | 0% | 0 | 13% | 24 | 12% |
| I do not know at this time | 0% | 0 | 10% | 18 | 9% |

6. I am in favor of the streetscape concept for Main Street (south of tracks) as depicted: (Select one)



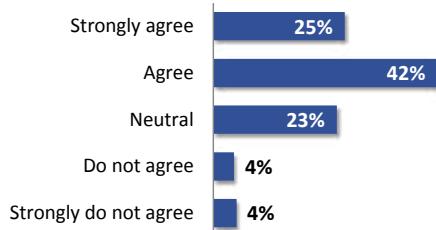
| | Keypad | | Survey | | Total Percent |
|-----------------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------------|
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | |
| Strongly agree | 45% | 9 | 25% | 46 | 27% |
| Agree | 40% | 8 | 45% | 82 | 43% |
| Neutral | 15% | 3 | 21% | 38 | 20% |
| Do not agree | 0% | 0 | 2% | 3 | 1% |
| Strongly do not agree | 0% | 0 | 8% | 15 | 7% |

7. I am in favor of the following material palette for Main Street (south of tracks): (Select one)



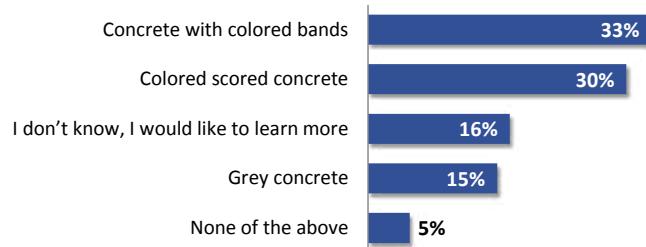
| | Keypad | | Survey | | Total Percent |
|--|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------------|
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | |
| Concrete with colored bands | 40% | 8 | 35% | 65 | 35% |
| Colored scored concrete | 35% | 7 | 31% | 57 | 31% |
| I don't know, I would like to learn more | 10% | 2 | 16% | 30 | 15% |
| Grey concrete | 15% | 3 | 12% | 23 | 13% |
| None of the above | 0% | 0 | 5% | 10 | 5% |

8. I am in favor of the streetscape concept for Willow Street and similar retail streets south of the tracks (as depicted): (Select one)



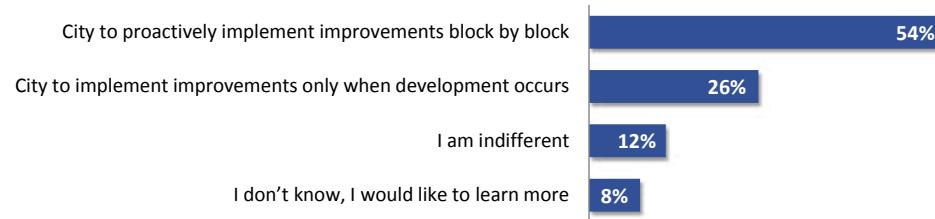
| | Keypad | | Survey | | Total Percent |
|-----------------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------------|
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | |
| Strongly agree | 50% | 10 | 22% | 41 | 25% |
| Agree | 35% | 7 | 44% | 80 | 42% |
| Neutral | 15% | 3 | 25% | 45 | 23% |
| Do not agree | 0% | 0 | 4% | 8 | 4% |
| Strongly do not agree | 0% | 0 | 5% | 9 | 4% |

9. I am in favor of the following material palette for Willow Street and other Retail Streets (south of tracks): (Select one)



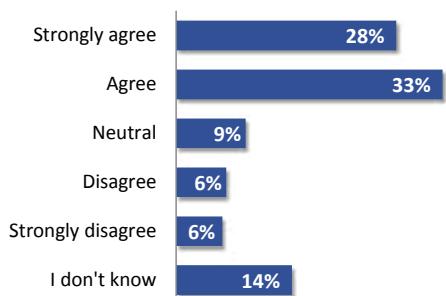
| | Keypad | | Survey | | Total Percent |
|--|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------------|
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | |
| Concrete with colored bands | 40% | 8 | 32% | 60 | 33% |
| Colored scored concrete | 30% | 6 | 30% | 56 | 30% |
| I don't know, I would like to learn more | 5% | 1 | 18% | 33 | 16% |
| Grey concrete | 25% | 5 | 14% | 26 | 15% |
| None of the above | 0% | 0 | 5% | 10 | 5% |

10. I would be in favor of the following strategy to implement streetscape improvements on streets south of the tracks (Select one)



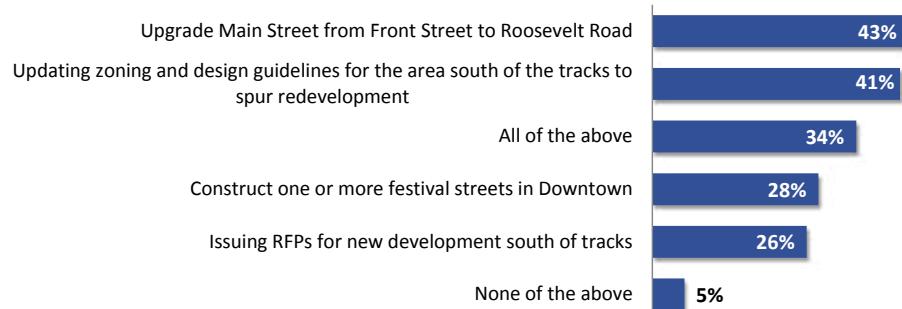
| | Keypad | | Survey | | Total Percent |
|---|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------------|
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | |
| City to proactively implement improvements block by block | 45% | 9 | 56% | 103 | 54% |
| City to implement improvements only when development occurs | 40% | 8 | 24% | 45 | 26% |
| I am indifferent | 5% | 1 | 12% | 23 | 12% |
| I don't know, I would like to learn more | 10% | 2 | 8% | 14 | 8% |

11. I would be in favor of the City Council adopting the Downtown Plan, as outlined during this meeting:



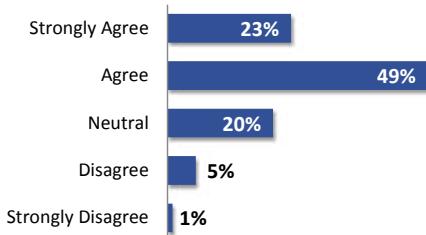
| | Keypad | | Survey | | Total Percent |
|-------------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|------------------|
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | |
| Strongly agree | 65% | 13 | 25% | 44 | 28% |
| Agree | 25% | 5 | 36% | 64 | 33% |
| Neutral | 5% | 1 | 10% | 17 | 9% |
| Disagree | 5% | 1 | 7% | 12 | 6% |
| Strongly disagree | 0% | 0 | 7% | 12 | 6% |
| I don't know | n/a | n/a | 17% | 30 | 14% |

12. I would be in favor of the following as “next steps” for Downtown implementation (Choose all that apply):



| | Keypad | | Survey | | Total Percent |
|--|---------|-------|---------|-------|------------------|
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | |
| Upgrade Main Street from Front Street to Roosevelt Road | 15% | 3 | 46% | 85 | 43% |
| Updating zoning and design guidelines for the area south of the tracks to spur redevelopment | 0% | 0 | 46% | 85 | 41% |
| All of the above | 55% | 11 | 32% | 59 | 34% |
| Construct one or more festival streets in Downtown | 25% | 5 | 28% | 52 | 28% |
| Issuing RFPs for new development south of tracks | 5% | 1 | 28% | 52 | 26% |
| None of the above | 0% | 0 | 6% | 11 | 5% |

13. I have found the public process used to develop this Downtown Plan to be useful and constructive (Choose one):



| | Keypad | | Survey | | Total Percent |
|-------------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------------|
| | Percent | Count | Percent | Count | |
| Strongly Agree | 30% | 6 | 23% | 42 | 23% |
| Agree | 45% | 9 | 50% | 92 | 49% |
| Neutral | 20% | 4 | 20% | 37 | 20% |
| Disagree | 5% | 1 | 6% | 10 | 5% |
| Strongly Disagree | 0% | 0 | 1% | 2 | 1% |

MindMixer:

The City of Wheaton's website hosted a link to the MindMixer application titled "What do you want Downtown Wheaton to be?" The online engagement tool allowed members of the public to submit and share ideas concerning how to improve Downtown in an "interactive online town hall" conversation. Participants submitted ideas in response to different topics which were posted to the site and had the opportunity to "second" or support other people's suggestions, comment or add their own ideas. There were 184 active participants that weighed in on questions and responded to three instant online polls. Seventeen questions or topics were posted to generate conversation which helped prompt 212 ideas and 301 comments on the ideas posted. The most popular ideas (with five or more people supporting them over the course of the planning process) are highlighted in the following tables.



184 Active Participants

1,500 Visitors

19,692 Page Views

212 Ideas

301 Comments

46.3 Average Participant Age

How MindMixer works:

- 1. General TOPICS are Posted on Wheaton's MindMixer website**
- 2. Community Members CREATE AN ACCOUNT**
- 3. Community Members post their IDEAS and COMMENTS**
- 4. Others have the opportunity to SECOND an idea they like or comment on other's suggestions**

Instant Poll 1:

I would prioritize the following Festival Street for design and construction going forward:

| | |
|--|---------|
| Hale Street (from Front Street to Karlskoga Ave) | 5 votes |
| Karlskoga Avenue (between Wheaton and Hale) | 3 votes |
| Liberty Street (between Cross and Hale) | 8 votes |

| Comments |
|--|
| I would also like to see festivals all year. Wheaton is a fabulous city and people outside the city need to experience it. |
| Like the idea of more festivals and summer activities. Like Downtown Iowa City, IA, I would like to see a pedestrian only street to promote summer festivals, entertainment, shopping, and lunch/dining. |

Instant Poll 2:

Besides the potential Festival Streets, which of the other streets in the downtown area would you prioritize for various streetscape / design improvements (including trees, benches, planting, etc)

| | |
|-----------------|---------|
| Main Street | 3 votes |
| Cross Street | 1 vote |
| Wheaton Ave | 0 votes |
| Wesley Street | 0 votes |
| Front Street | 3 votes |
| Willow Street | 3 votes |
| Illinois Street | 2 votes |

| Comments |
|--|
| Hale Street needs major construction work in and of itself after using it all summer long last year to detour and major railroad work needs to be done on the tracks of West Street where a track piece tends to stick out whenever traffic passes through |

STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS: WHAT IDEAS DO YOU HAVE TO IMPROVE THE LOOK AND FEEL OF THE STREETS THAT RUN THROUGH AND NEAR DOWNTOWN WHEATON?

| Idea Title | Seconds | Idea Summary |
|--|---------|---|
| Idea for Front Street between Hale and Cross | 0 | <p>I apologize for the long link address below, but I do not believe it is completely necessary to have traffic going down all of front street. This is a picture of downtown Boulder, Co, and I really like how people are able to gather around the downtown area. It would be nice if the fountains were updated and that section of street was closed off to traffic.</p> <p>http://www.geckoscolorado.com/images/Boulder-downtown-byJasonRogers.jpg</p> |
| | | <p>As a resident who lives just off Manchester Road, Front Street is the main route into downtown when we come across the bridge and into downtown Wheaton. It seems to me that closing Front Street to motor vehicle traffic would prompt people to go around downtown, not come into it. Perhaps there is another less trafficked street that could be better utilized as a pedestrian mall?</p> |
| | | <p>Having a pedestrian mall means you'll need an equal number of parking spots within a block or so. Do you think the businesses on Front would like this idea?</p> |
| | | <p>I keep thinking of Warrenville, which took their busiest street and turned it into a dead-end street. It didn't help the businesses at all!</p> |
| | | <p>Consider renovating the plaza and removing the existing fountain to provide considerably more seating. Having water is nice, but it could be scaled down tremendously. Maybe a small water feature in the center of this long rectangular space. Introduce trees for shade.</p> |
| | | <p>This is a nice idea, but the shops do not stay open late. I get off of work and come downtown and all the shops are closing up. Why close the street off if nothing is open. Seems like a waste of money.</p> |
| | | <p>Pedestrian malls don't work if there aren't people visiting the downtown area to begin with. Remember when State Street downtown was closed off to traffic and used as a ped zone? Look how that turned out. The people that *do* want to shop just find it harder to get to the stores so they shop elsewhere, and the zone becomes a ghost town.</p> |
| | | <p>European towns have naturally figured out the way to do this and that's by making a town square or marketplace that is the focal point of the community. Here's an example:</p> <p>http://duden.de/_media/_full/M/Marktplatz-201020409250.jpg</p> <p>People naturally gather in cafes and public spaces in the area. You also use the space for festivals (instead of hosting it in a park blocks away, like we do for Taste, separating the festival from the merchants). It becomes the heart of your city. THEN you build ped-zones that feed into this square and let businesses grow outward from that center.</p> |
| | | <p>Could this happen in Wheaton? Not a chance.</p> |
| | | <p>I may have mentioned that I haven't intricately observed pedestrian behavior in my previous post. However, I have taken notice of the pedestrians that are there during my visits.</p> |
| | | <p>There are dozens of people at Shane's Deli on a nice spring day, and not all of them drove there. I know there a more-or-less constant stream of people going between the downtown fountain, Starbucks and La Spiata, as well as the yogurt place (and to a lesser extent, the ice cream place) when it gets hot out.</p> |
| | | <p>Might I suggest that the reason that State Street failed was because in the 1970s, the Loop emptied out at 5:00 pm on the weekdays, and was virtually abandoned by weekends? In 2010, that neighborhood increased to 17,000 people from 6,900 in 2000. If the State Street experiment were to be repeated today, I believe you would see different results.</p> |
| | | <p>There are already pedestrians and residents walking around in downtown Wheaton. The idea is to better accommodate existing needs.</p> |
| | | <p>I agree that the goal would be eliminating pass through traffic without deterring destination traffic. It's great having this type of forum where everyone can throw out ideas.</p> |
| | | <p>I like this idea. To help with traffic flow, do you think eliminating the one way streets would help?</p> |
| | | <p>Renovate, yes. But... kids like fountains. And I think part of the idea behind revitalizing downtown Wheaton is: the more kids, the more vitality, the better off the area is!</p> |
| | | <p>What about installing water features that kids can run through, play in, maybe even getting a little wet?</p> |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Closing off this block for a pedestrian mall, with outdoor seating is a great idea. The existing brick paving and the fountain on the south side of the street would really emphasize the experience. | | |
| In the spirit of generating ideas: What if all of Front Street was a pedestrian mall from West St. to Main St.? You could dead-end Wheaton and Hale Streets or keep the north south circulation. | | |
| Front Street could be a strong downtown experience from West Street to Main Street with the Metra station as an anchor. | | |
| I haven't been to downtown Wheaton often enough to observe pedestrian traffic patterns. I like this idea, but I would want to be absolutely certain that the vehicle traffic being removed is majority pass-through, not destination traffic. | | |
| With that said... it would make the traffic lights a lot more bearable in downtown Wheaton. | | |
| I agree, pedestrian-only zones would be a great addition to Wheaton, and it would positively contribute to the friendly feeling of this community. | | |
| Pedestrian only zones allow people to gather, shop, etc. without worrying about cars. It would also allow a larger space (more customers) for outdoor dining which would be wonderful in the summer months. | | |
| Look to the old movies | 0 | We should look to some old movies and photos of the 50s and 60s when downtown retail, restaurants, movie were popular. If we can recreate that feel - it will generate more traffic into our downtown. As more and more retail moves out of Wheaton - people have less reason to head to the downtown area. Having more places for young people will pull in visitors (bookstore, an ice cream soda shop where friends can gather, etc.) It has to be about more than just the roads. We need to create a destination. Look at Hudson, OH for a great example of a thriving mid-west downtown destination. |
| I do agree about having enough of a retail mix to make the downtown a destination. | | |
| Wider sidewalks and More Outdoor Seating | 0 | I think wider sidewalks would promote foot traffic to downtown businesses. Also, outdoor seating, like additional benches, would be a positive for this town as well. |
| A specific way to implement this might be to reduce Front Street to one lane, allowing the wider sidewalks, etc. to be accomplished. | | |
| Expand landscaping along Downtown Prairie Path | 0 | Enhance landscaping along the Prairie Path as it passes through downtown. A minimum five foot buffer area on either side of the path would be ideal. Extents would be from West Street to Reber Street. |
| Go greener overall | 0 | More: native trees/shade, native flowers/grasses, bike parking, recycle bins, use CFLs and promote their use, water fountains, benches, maybe one green event on Front Street every weekend or one weekend a month Some cool ideas here: http://www.greenerblocks.com/schedule-saturday-april-28/ |
| I love this, and absolutely agree!! We have so many opportunities to really make Wheaton shine as a green community, but I don't see us going anywhere with them! The green spaces we have should be incorporating edible/sustainable landscaping too. | | |
| Also: Green roofs, permeable paving, (some) streets designed for all users and not primarily for cars. In terms of organizational change... what about a Downtown Green Business Working Group that can pool resources to save money on things that make sense, like more efficient heating/cooling technologies and insulation to reduce energy costs? | | |
| Allow downtown shops and restaurants to amortize tree and shrubbery planting with tax credits over a five year time frame. | | |
| Garden with Edibles | 0 | I would like to see the plantings downtown be edible, and used by the restaurants. This is more sustainable and would be a fun "selling point" as Wheaton goes green! |
| Renovate Fountain Plaza | 0 | Renovate plaza on southwest corner of Main and Front Street. Possible renovations would include eliminating the fountain to make room for more seating. |
| I think its a great idea to renovate the plaza, but definitely keep some sort of water feature for the children and create additional seating for the parents to make it a place to linger. This would be a great place to utilize greener paving techniques and increase in-ground planting beds to mitigate runoff. | | |
| I would add that something like a little 'stream' where they could float boats without getting totally soaked (some kids dislike all the splashing), set somewhat apart from the chaos of a splash pad, would be nice too. | | |
| Like pop jets for kids to play in, plaza space when turned off. | | |

FRENCH MARKET: WHAT IDEAS DO YOU HAVE TO IMPROVE THE FACILITIES AND AMENITIES PROVIDED FOR THE FRENCH MARKET IN WHEATON?

| Idea Title | Seconds | Idea Summary |
|--|---------|---|
| More Local and Organic Choices | 0 | I'd like to see umbrella tables set up for people who want to sit and enjoy food they purchased at the French Market. |
| Build a covered area for the french market | 0 | Build a "warehouse" type building that is basically just a structure with big doors/gates that can be opened in the spring/summer/autumn. This way the French market can possibly also exist in the winter. Make it a permanent part of Wheaton in a clean and structured way that invite more vendors and guest. |
| | | There are a number of shops in old houses along Front Street between the bridge and the train station. Maybe we need to look at expanding downtown, not just giving a facelift to the few blocks that are currently the heart of downtown. |
| | | a covered area would be nice, I don't like to go in the rain. It also needs wider isles and MUCH more seating and recycle/garbage cans. |
| | | I suppose the village could create a "covered parking area" and charge a premium to park in it (hail proof! snow proof!). |

IMPROVING WHEATON'S RETAIL COMPETITIVENESS: WHAT IDEAS DO YOU HAVE OVERALL TO IMPROVE THE MIX OF TENANTS IN DOWNTOWN WHEATON AND TO IMPROVE THE RETAIL VITALITY IN THE DISTRICT?

| Idea Title | Seconds | Idea Summary |
|--|---------|--|
| Add small destination shops, cheese shop, bakery, antique shops, | 0 | Let's have more outdoor dining, bookstores etc. We need people to have a reason to come to downtown Wheaton. |
| | | Maybe the village board would like to create a "special independent zone" for cheese shops or bakeries, but I think that's impossible to manage fairly. |
| | | The quaintness of these old towns are not only their beauty, but also the unique small and independent shops they offer. That is what would make me want to spend my money downtown wheaton. |
| | | The shop space is there. Small independent bookstores are now a rarity, and I've heard similar remarks about bakeries. But small shops would work well with the spaces that are empty. |
| Add national chains | 0 | More national chains, however small, will improve the respectability of the downtown area. Restaurants alone are not enough! Small merchants alone are not enough! |
| | | I like this idea. National chains know enough about the market they're entering so that they'll be a more constant presence in the community, instead of turning over routinely. |
| | | Me, personally... I'm thinking of fast casual places like Meatheads or Tom and Eddie's (burgers) or something similarly upscale-ish. I like McDonald's but we're aiming a bit higher here. |
| | | Not only national chains, how about a bookstore, toy store, card shop, antique shops, a bakery, gourmet food shop...There are so many types of stores that Wheaton is missing in their downtown!!! |

CONNECTING THE MARIANO'S DEVELOPMENT WITH THE HEART OF DOWNTOWN: WHAT IDEAS DO YOU HAVE FOR ENHANCING CONNECTIONS FROM MARIANO'S TO THE REST OF DOWNTOWN AND TO ENCOURAGE MARIANO'S SHOPPERS TO STAY AND SPEND MONEY IN DOWNTOWN WHEATON?

| Idea Title | Seconds | Idea Summary |
|--|---------|--|
| Beautification | 0 | Connect Mariano's via pretty landscaping to the rest of downtown. Like a walkway that's visually appealing or a direct bikepath that's pretty to ride through. |
| 1st Make entrance to Downtown Wheaton BEAUTIFUL ! Two corners of parking lots and a third of commercial building is NOT attractive ! 2nd Create an art piece of large size to anchor the remaining corner so all passing on Roosevelt or South Main know they have arrive at entrance ! (This has been recommended many times in past.) Trees planted at parking lot and lower area will not be noticed until 2040 ! 3rd Minimize Mariano's signs. | | |
| I'd like to suggest a semi-circular Welcome to Wheaton gateway arch somewhere between Mariano's and the tracks on the south end of Main St. | | |
| more mixed use. retail with residential | 0 | Take a look at Geneva near station. Have some retail with residential above and still created attractive open spaces. |
| Current properties from Illinois to Liberty need a major upgrade | 0 | Unless places like the Marathon, Nancy's Pizza, the cleaners, and other are upgraded, it will feel disconnected and unwelcoming to go from Mariano's to downtown. A unified store front that ties into the older charm and character of downtown is a must. |
| It would help to eliminate the parking meters in business areas south of the tracks. I just keep on driving to get to a parking garage or street parking where there is not a meter. | | |
| not a medical building at old jewel | 0 | Reported that medical building will take former jewel property. That would be inconsistent and bad planning/ design. Don't need more large parking lots. Don't need more buildings that empty out after 5pm. Will continue to have ghost town from Roosevelt to tracks. |
| How about retail/restaurants on the first floor, then parking spaces on the next couple floors up, then the med offices on the upper most floors to follow? Could this satisfy everyone? | | |
| I disagree. For all intents and purposes, it's a good thing to have professionals based in (and contributing their dollars to) Wheaton's downtown area. | | |
| Not to mention - have you noticed that nothing's been developed at that site in 2-3 years? That's a lot of lost revenue! | | |
| I disagree. You need a variety of professional offices downtown. Medical services in central downtown will improve other retail options. While they may empty at 5 pm, small clinics and dentists may stay open on Saturdays. | | |
| Draw a straight line from Mariano's to downtown, then develop | 0 | <p>I've attached an image. It's a straight line from what I presume will be the front door to Mariano's to my interpretation of downtown (Front @ Main Street.)</p> <p>If Wheaton really, really wants to encourage people to come to Mariano's, then walk to downtown Wheaton (which is 1/2 mile away), you'll have to reorient development around a pedestrian plaza that follows that line.</p> <p>This doesn't seem very feasible, but lucky for Wheaton, there's already *nothing there*. Okay, there's a cleaners, an auto repair store, a Marathon, a plumbing and A/C joint. None of these are pedestrian-inviting.</p> <p>There <i>*is*</i> a Nancy's Pizza, which would benefit from such a pedestrian-oriented plaza.</p> |

| CONVENIENT PARKING DOWNTOWN: WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS OR IDEAS CONCERNING THE CURRENT SUPPLY OF PARKING IN DOWNTOWN WHEATON? | | |
|--|---------|---|
| Idea Title | Seconds | Idea Summary |
| Parking Garages Near Metra | 0 | <p>Additional parking structures by the Metra station in downtown Wheaton would encourage more people to grab dinner or drinks in downtown Wheaton after work.</p> <p>I don't think it works this way, unfortunately.</p> <p>I was listening to a podcast just this week regarding parking at commuter metra rail stations. Obscure, I know.</p> <p>The guest said that research shows that people have roughly a 5-minute "walking shed"; that is to say, anything that takes further than 5 minutes to walk to, people don't worry about it.</p> <p>A side effect is that if you can see your car from the train station, that's where people will go. Not to the restaurants and bars located beyond parking. People will walk to their cars and drive off to Danada Square, or Naperville, or home, or wherever commuters go to eat.</p> <p>This is why it's so important to do more in-your-face things, like making commuters walk past downtown to get to their cars, instead of just making it easier to treat downtown Wheaton as a place to store a car during the daytime.</p> |
| Increase visibility of parking signs | | |
| <p>0</p> <p>Increase visibility of parking lot directional signs and signs at parking garage entrances</p> <p>Getting to the parking garages and lots could be delineated in a stronger fashion, especially for someone unfamiliar to the area. Existing signs could be slightly larger with contrasting backgrounds. New signs could be added at parking garage entrances.</p> <p>The challenge here is not to be too prominent either.</p> | | |
| As much as I like my idea of defaulting streets to pass parking garages, I also would not mind a well-designed overhead sign. | | |
| Restructure streets to create a more natural "flow" to parking | 0 | <p>There's already plenty of parking structures in the Wheaton downtown area. Even during special events.</p> <p>As a Carol Stream resident, I have found that the pressing issue is: I can't find them.</p> <p>Do people know about the parking garage at Wheaton / Front / Wesley Streets? I didn't notice the signs until a couple of years ago.</p> <p>What about the little lot behind Mai Thai? Or the large garage at Liberty / Cross / Willow?</p> <p>You can knock out two birds with one stone by making the default traffic patterns pass these structures. For example, make it so traffic on Wesley *must* turn right to continue on Wesley, or they will end up on the alleyway that passes the multi-story parking garage.</p> <p>In addition to making parking easier to find, this slows down traffic and helps pedestrians cross this busy street much more easily.</p> |
| More handicap parking | 0 | It is very hard to find handicap parking around downtown area. |

IDEAS FOR REDEVELOPMENT SOUTH OF THE RAIL ROAD TRACKS: WHAT IDEAS DO YOU HAVE FOR THE CITY TO WORK WITH OR ENCOURAGE PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS TO REDEVELOP SOME OR ALL OF THE BLOCKS SOUTH OF THE TRACKS?

| Idea Title | Seconds | Idea Summary |
|--|---------|--|
| Clean up buildings | 0 | offer an incentive or some type of help to encourage business owners to clean up the look of their buildings. |
| More restaurants | 0 | I think a lot of people go downtown to eat - I know of no restaurants on the south side, so I don't bother to venture over there since it offers little that appeals to me (except for the vintage shops). |
| More landscaping | 0 | The south side just doesn't seem as pretty as the north side. Can't put my finger on what it is, but the first thing that comes to mind is that it doesn't look inviting to shoppers. |
| I agree with this idea. This could also be combined with the ideas to make the downtown greener by constructing edible landscaping, for example. | | |
| And most of the street parking there is metered. | | |
| Flooding south of tracks | 0 | Some of the private owners are going to need assistance with re-grading of their property because of continued flooding otherwise we are going to lose those stores. |

FESTIVAL STREET IDEAS FOR HALE, LIBERTY AND KARLSKOGA: WHAT IDEAS DO YOU HAVE TO IMPROVE THE POTENTIAL DESIGNS SHOWN BY DESIGN WORKSHOP FOR THESE STREETS? WHAT TYPES OF AMENITIES OR FACILITIES WOULD YOU IN PARTICULAR LIKE TO SEE ON THE FESTIVAL STREETS?

| Idea Title | Seconds | Idea Summary |
|--|---------|--|
| Public Restrooms | 0 | If you are going to build or redesign the streets/parking lots for festival use then I highly recommend you consider building public restrooms. |
| Play/Water Area for Children | 0 | Sculptures to climb on, water splashing out of the ground. Young and old alike could enjoy this and it would promote downtown business. If there is a free activity for people to enjoy, they will spend money on food and other items at nearby businesses. |
| I think this is a great idea! With so many families in Wheaton with younger children, free kid-friendly entertainment would attract a lot of people and help promote the downtown businesses. I think Hale would be a perfect street to close off and implement the fountains and sculptures as it would connect the fountain on Front St. to Memorial Park, both of which families enjoy. | | |
| I LOVE this! Where we moved from in KC there were a lot of spray parks and they were very popular. Packed all summer long. It would for sure bring a lot of business to Downtown Wheaton. | | |

PROPOSED CENTRAL PARK BETWEEN LIBERTY DRIVE AND THE METRA TRACKS: HOW WOULD YOU DESIGN A FUTURE SPACE FOR THE FRENCH MARKET IN THE BLOCK BETWEEN MAIN AND CROSS? WHAT TYPES OF FACILITIES WOULD YOU PREFER IN THE CENTRAL PARK AREA?

| Idea Title | Seconds | Idea Summary |
|---|---------|--|
| permanent covered structure for the French market | 0 | It would be nice to have a covered structure for the French market as well as for festival use. The area should include seating (benches, picnic tables, etc). There should also be public restrooms available. |
| Coordinate a "sister neighborhood" with a Chi city neighborhood | 0 | "Market" to a city neighborhood (specifically Bucktown/Logan Square or Wicker Park) that already has the "feel" and retail experience that Wheaton is trying to create. Encourage festival participation from similar vendors and retailers with incentives of some kind. (e.g. Wheaton Arts Fest... sister festival to the Bucktown Arts Fest., etc.) Encourage attendance from the young families currently living in those locations. |
| Keep the shops open late, lots of Fests and have local Wheaton food showcased. Taste of Wheaton only attracts outside vendors for food. So many great restaurants in Wheaton. Make Wheaton restaurants the showcase food vendors. | | |

DOWNTOWN WHEATON STREETS: WHICH STREETS IN PARTICULAR DO YOU BELIEVE WOULD BENEFIT THE MOST FROM STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS (IMPROVED SEATING, LIGHTING, STREET TREES, AND SIGNAGE)?

| Idea Title | Seconds | Idea Summary |
|-----------------------------|---------|---|
| Hale Street Pedestrian Mall | 18 | <p>Closing Hale Street to traffic between Front and Wesley and replacing it with a brick pedestrian throughway with benches and trees would create a central location for the community to gather and create a more friendly consumer shopping/restaurant experience. Restaurants could expand their outdoor seating into the pedestrian area, offering a better view than the parking garage. Parking for these restaurants should be no issue with the garage so close.</p> <p>Iowa City provides a perfect example of creating a downtown destination through the use of a Pedestrian Mall. Re-zoning Hale St. as such would bring more of an incentive for business owners to revitalize unused spaces, such as the Wheaton Grand, as they would be located near a more notable destination. Additionally, this space would provide a much more central and eye appealing location for vendors from the French Market/Farmers Market as well as provide a great location for flow over traffic from Memorial Park events (Cream of Wheaton, etc) and carnivals across the tracks.</p> |
| | | <p>Wonderful idea. Last night at the visionary meeting they had a beautiful picture of a water area in downtown Kansas City. Small jets of water squirted out of the ground, with lights below, making this a piece of art that is also entertainment. I think something like this could be implemented in an area that was closed off, like Hale Street. There are so many children in Wheaton, and people of all ages could enjoy the water and have a safe place to congregate and relax.</p> |
| | | <p>I'd be curious to hear feedback from the businesses on Hale. There are other businesses besides restaurants on Hale. This kind of project would be something to be sure of, because it will be a major expense to create, and if at a later point, folks want to undo it, that is expensive, too. (Sorry to be negative, but the Chicago State Street mall lingers in my mind.)</p> |
| | | <p>Those living in Wheaton would know about this change quickly enough, but people driving in from other towns will think that Main St. is downtown, and not realize that the key zone (in this scenario) is Hale. We'd need good signage.</p> |
| | | <p>How full is the parking garage in the evenings? On Saturdays it always seems nearly full.</p> |
| | | <p>I like this idea. The thing I think about Downtown Wheaton is that there's no shortage of streets. I would support this idea even if it meant keeping the parking spots in front of the businesses, but preventing traffic from going through on Hale by building out a pair of smallish cul-de-sacs at the mid-block.</p> |
| | | <p>I could not agree more. As a former resident of Iowa City, I think this is a great idea. The pedestrian mall there truly is a central area for commerce, provides a great location for people to gather, community events to take place, is really pleasing to look at, and is a point of pride for residents. If done properly, I can picture Hale street having a similar vibe and being a benefit to local businesses.</p> |
| | | <p>Your initial hurdle is public push-back from traffic flow perspective and restaurant owner concerns, but if Wheaton is willing to put the time and effort into making a legitimate positive change downtown these are easy hurdles to overcome.</p> |
| | | <p>If restaurant owners along Hale are highly integrated in the planning process a pedestrian mall will have its best shot at success - in Iowa City (a town with similar winters to Wheaton) a restaurant's biggest draw during the summer months is its outdoor seating. Look at Ivy and the draw of their outdoor area, as well as Genghis Grill even willing to expand into an unsightly alleyway for outdoor seating. Considering the number of restaurants along this road (Il Sgno, Ivy, Muldoons, Cellar Bistro, Egglectic), properly engaging these owners they will likely lead to profit for all. Do this, and perhaps the Wheaton Grand looks enticing and profitable that entrepreneur with a large brewery/restaurant idea...</p> |
| | | <p>Good idea on pedestrian mall and especially the brewery! Wheaton can't be afraid anymore of calling a bar a bar, a pub a pub and a brewery a brewery. We are all responsible adults. I would still like to see the theater remain a theater. We need entertainment. We need to get behind the theater and have a specific plan for its development. I think the last referendum was poorly executed (and even then the numbers for support were pretty strong). The referendum lacked specificity regarding the use of public funds and specificity regarding a plan. Don't give up on the theater - especially if it is part of an overall redevelopment strategy for the town. Downers Grove made it work. Elmhurst made it work. The Arcada is St. Charles works. Heck, even the beat up little Glen is beloved.</p> |
| | | <p>Great idea!</p> |

Your initial hurdle is public push-back from traffic flow perspective and restaurant owner concerns, but if Wheaton is willing to put the time and effort into making a legitimate positive on the community these are easy hurdles to overcome.

If restaurant owners along Hale are highly integrated in the planning process a pedestrian mall will be the most successful - in Iowa City (a town with similar winters to Wheaton) a restaurant's biggest draw during the summer months is its outdoor seating. Look at Ivy and the draw of their outdoor area, as well as Genghis Grill even willing to expand into an unsightly alleyway for outdoor seating. Considering the number of restaurants along this road (Il Sgno, Iby, Muldoons, Cellar Bistro, Egglectic), if you engage these owners they will see the profit in an idea like this. Do this, and perhaps the Wheaton Grand looks enticing and profitable that entrepreneur with a large brewery/restaurant idea...

I agree we need more pedestrian friendly areas in downtown.

Great idea! Something like a town square IN TOWN!

I imagine this could be very difficult to implement, but I love this idea.

Some of neatest places I've been are the Altstadts in German cities (Bremen is my favorite)

I love the feel of pedestrian traffic only. It creates a great community vibe.

Lighted Trees 5 Now I don't want to step on Christmas (sorry the Holidays), but I really love when the trees are lit up during the Yuletide season. I would love to have them on all year round. It brings a real warmth to the downtown area.

I think this is a very good idea, should be relatively inexpensive, done in a "green" manner for those who choose to complain, but should be something that can be implemented quickly to show Wheaton is active and not fading away due to the souring economy

Remove Traffic Signals on Main Street 5 The trains that travel through downtown Wheaton negatively affect the traffic signals on Main Street so that traffic does not move efficiently. I suggest that we replace the traffic signals with 4 way stop signs at Wesley/Main, Front/Main, and Liberty/Main. Glen Ellyn does not have traffic lights at the train tracks.

I'm sure the reason the lights are there is because of the volume of cars going through the intersection. Also I wonder what the behavior of cars would be when the lights started flashing red.

The alternative is multiple Glen-Ellyn-style 3-way stops, where traffic coming over the tracks does not have to stop on the other side. Again, there may be too many cars for this to work.

This idea was tried by accident over the summer when the lights were changed to flashing reds during one of the parades, I think. It absolutely improved that intersection's flow, especially with trains!

I agree this can be an issue. I'm not sure what the solution is, but I bet the city traffic engineer could suggest something or explain why we have the lights.

diversity of businesses 4 consider the following businesses:
1. gourmet grocery store. For example, Foodstuffs is very common in the northern suburbs, it has a small bakery, deli, fruit, bakery, hard to find items etc. Even though there are grocery stores in town, it makes the town more walkable and increases foot traffic for other businesses.
2. Paper Source - closest one is in Oakbrook I believe
3. Bookstore with a cafe - For example, Barbara's books (I think Burr Ridge is the closest one)
4. Italian type cafe - need more places to congregate, not just for having formal meals.
5. sporting goods store that is a little more trendy. For example, Uncle Dans (popular in city and outlying suburbs), Patagonia, Title Nine, Lululemon...
6. Neighborhood toy store, that stocks quality toys, educational material etc. Closest one is in Downers Grove I believe.
7. Restaurant/cafe offering vegetarian cuisine, fresh smoothies, juice bar.

Interesting suggestions, because some of these existed in downtown Wheaton 15-20 years ago--Doenges paper & office supply in what's now Ivy's, a toy store on Hale in what I think is now the Paper House.

For specialty grocery, let's see how Mariano's plays out. There's also a Whole Foods in Wheaton, and a Trader Joe's in Glen Ellyn. That might be sufficient for the Glen Ellyn-Wheaton area.

Independent bookstores are struggling across the country. The closest ones (without a cafe) is The Bookstore in downtown Glen Ellyn and Anderson's in Naperville and Downers Grove.

For Italian-type cafe, do you think La Spiazza isn't one? They serve light meals there.

Sporting goods stores take a lot of space. Where would you put one? Why would people do that downtown when there's a sporting goods store in Danada East?

For a place that stocks some educational toys, there's also Anderson's Bookstore in Naperville.

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Study downtown Naperville | 3 | It's working, my friends! |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------------|

Naperville is also more than double the population of Wheaton, and attracts folks from neighboring towns who have little in their own towns. (think: Lisle) Naperville's downtown has lots of parking that is throughout the downtown area, and North Central's new performing arts center is on one edge of downtown Naperville, with a parking garage next to it.

How could we apply these concepts?

Naperville is a bustling city, attracting locals and visitors. There are open parking lots, boutiques with unusual wares, high-end stores - and a nightlife! I wholeheartedly agree that we need to revamp our city, which is sluggish and tired in feel and look.

| | | |
|--------------------|---|--|
| Look to Naperville | 3 | I met a young couple that wants to move from Naperville TO Wheaton because they feel downtown Naperville is just "big chain stores!" I totally agree that we need more stores and a much greater variety, but there is something to be said for the individuality of small town businesses. Think La Spiazza v. Starbucks! It's great that we have both! |
|--------------------|---|--|

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Fix the sidewalk! Everywhere. | 2 | I know it's always an ongoing effort to keep up with repairing sidewalks, but one of the first things I took notice of when I moved here, is how bad of shape the city's sidewalks are in. Let's fix 'em and not just patch them. |
|-------------------------------|---|---|

I totally agree, but at least the city has begun a sidewalk replacement program that is slowly working its way across the city.

The program requires owner's buy in (with obvious conditions as well), which I think honestly, is a good idea. We may treat and "police" our own stretch of Wheaton better if we choose to put out money where our feet are.

I think you may be getting two different programs confused. One is for new sidewalks and the other is to replace existing sidewalks.

<http://www.wheaton.il.us/news/pressreleases/detail.aspx?id=7154>

<http://www.wheaton.il.us/news/pressreleases/detail.aspx?id=7305>

thanks for the sleuth work! keep up the good work Wheaton.

Maybe need iPasses at each railroad crossing. No wait that's a horrible idea... ;)

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Prevent Injured Pedestrians | 2 | Put a two way stop sign in the alley between Hale Street and the public parking garage, where the parking garage pedestrian exit is. Then people won't have to fear for their lives when cars use the alley as a through street. There are tiny signs that say yield to pedestrians, but these are just invitations to a lawsuit because nobody can see or read them. Coming out of the parking garage should not have to be dangerous. |
|-----------------------------|---|---|

| | | |
|-------------|---|--|
| Walk Signal | 2 | The stop light by downtown Starbucks is a challenge - I believe the Walk light is on for approximately 3 seconds before it changes to "Don't Walk". During French Market we have many out of towners with extra pedestrian flow. Can this signal be extended for safety? |
|-------------|---|--|

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Provide Honorary Secondary Street Signs | 1 | Provide secondary street signs honoring City of Wheaton historical people or events. Examples could be Billy Graham, Red Grange, Gary, Wheaton brothers, Quincy Adams and so on. |
|---|---|--|

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| OVERPASS ON THE TRAIN TRACK-Wheaton Station? | 1 | The parking lots for the commuters to Chicago are on the opposite side. This forces many commuters to take a chance and cross the track when the gate is already going down. Having a Overpass will definitely eliminate this problem. |
|--|---|--|

Or how about an underpass?

Thank you- Underpass will work just as fine. Hope to see comments from other commuters about Overpass/Underpass!

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Preferred parking for Eco-friendly cars | 0 | Consider adding preferred parking spaces for Eco-friendly cars. Other cities in the area have this in their parking garages. |
| Gateway to/from Downtown Wheaton | 0 | Eliminate the Main Street stop sign beside Central Park and the Traffic Light at next corner North. Mark each side street with stop signs and cross traffic does not stop. This indicates City of Wheaton welcomes residents and visitors rather than how much can we abuse drivers before reaching downtown. (Understanding the railroad traffic lights are needed to meet Federal Railroad Regulations.) |
| Generally, stop signs are added when there have been a number of collisions at an intersection. With the closing of Hubble, those stop signs might be reconsidered, but as someone who has tried to cross Main at those intersections, I'll tell you that it's hard without a stop sign. | | |
| Clean the Storm Sewer Mains | 0 | 1990s saw high prices for winter ice melting salt. One const savings was spreading sand on snow and ice to provide traction. That sand now is in downtown Wheaton storm sewers and creek by Kelly Park where the storm sewers drain. Any accumulation in sewers or creeks limit the amount of water carried away with flooding - as everyone has notice we have flooding on both sides of Roosevelt on Main Street. Dredging the creek of accumulated sand and cleaning the sewers will restore the sewers to greatest ability to handle stormwater. Nothing speaks louder than several days per year detouring 'Entrance to Wheaton' due to street flooding ! |
| Causeway for Main Street | 0 | Raise Main Street to 1 foot above 500 year flood plan by supporting on concrete piers. The minor displacement of flood plain can be compensated by enlarging planned retention area in north east corner of Central Park - approximately where old Hubble track and football/soccer field is located today. This provides an always open gateway into Downtown Wheaton even during periodic 500 year storms. |
| Trying to visualize the location of the water retention area you propose. Where is it in relation to those fields that the Park District will continue to use? | | |
| How Many Traffic Lights ? | 0 | Travel North and South on North Main Street includes clockworks timed traffic lights at Wesley and College. Do either or both of these lights help manage the minor flow from side street better than side street stop signs could. Consider cleaning up traffic flow and rewarding residents and visitors to Downtown Wheaton |
| Eliminate Eyesores | 0 | Vine tasting business across Hale Street from Egg'lectic Cafe added off white cardboard looking entrance doorway out onto Hale Street sidewalk several years ago. Store front South before Joe's Stride-Rite shoes has been a destruction in progress for five years. How do the great businesses on Hale Street stomach these slum looks? |
| Tree Panting Improvements | 0 | New trees must consider several things in Wheaton's 'Tree America' membership of more than 15 years. Tree types should be coordinated with 'Trees for next 500 years' work done jointly by Mayor's Environmental Commission and Wheaton Parks District arborist. The second in streetscape would be to include water saving pavers in the adjacent street to support the tree root growth. |
| Commutator's Announcements Downtown | 0 | Metra commutator train station at west end of downtown includes an announcement system for incoming trains. Extending this to track adjacent street of railroad tracks where hundreds park each workday allows their understand as well as other residents downtown. |
| Solar Cells for White Noise | 0 | Downtown has many quiet moments BUT there are noisy times that keep shoppers away. Compared to Oakbrook Mall downtown Wheaton has noisy times. Evaluate solar panel powered white noise generator speakers along the sidewalk to maintain quiet. These can be controlled by local electronics to adjust to ambient sounds and increase/decrease volume. Only needed in the business hours. |
| 20 mph downtown speed limit | 0 | This is a shared mixed space for cars and pedestrians, and the speed limit should reflect this. People will walk between cars to get to the ice cream shop, or the yogurt place. They'll cross midblock to get to Starbucks or the knitting place. This is going to happen. So in addition to redesigning the street to accommodate this, cars should slow down too. |
| Street lights. | 0 | The street lights in downtown Wheaton really mess up the flow of traffic. Perhaps cars crossing the tracks at Main Street should not be allowed. Everyone should cross at Hale or Cross Street, that way the light would always be green at Main Street for those going west to east through downtown. As it is now you have to race to get through the light otherwise you sit for a lengthy time. There would be no car back-ups going through town because of a train. |

Instant Poll 3:

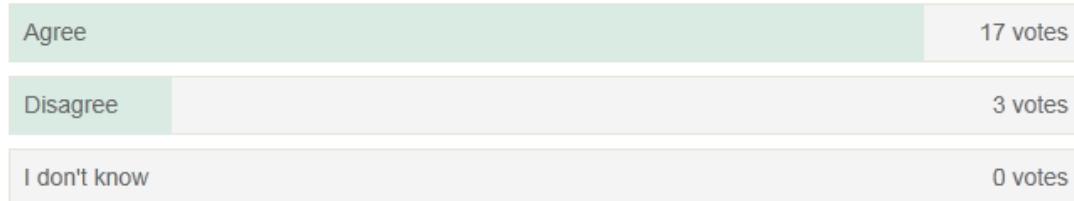
Do you agree with the vision for Downtown Wheaton?

The City Council discussed the following vision for Downtown Wheaton's future:

"Elevate the position of Downtown Wheaton as a destination district in the western portion of the Chicago region by pursuing a number of civic improvements and regulatory changes designed to increase the capture rate of retail, office, and residential land uses in the Downtown."

A sampling of the strategies to achieve the Vision include: utilizing festival street concepts on targeted streets, enhancing the French Market, improving the Prairie Path, upgrading the streetscape, exploring land use and parking strategies south of the Union Pacific rail road tracks, and enhancing "soft programming" options in the downtown.

What ideas do you have to implement the recommended vision for Downtown Wheaton.



COMMENTS:

| Idea Title | Seconds | Idea Summary |
|------------|---------|---|
| | | Of all that's been discussed here, I recently encountered 2 retailers with interesting perspectives. |
| | | One was a woman was starting a retail business in Elmhurst. As we talked, she said she had looked at retail space in Wheaton, but that the rents for available spaces were very high. She found cheaper retail space in downtown Elmhurst. |
| | | The other was a longtime retailer in Glen Ellyn. She and I talked about how downtown Glen Ellyn is coming back. She mentioned that Glen Ellyn residents have long had a "buy local" mind set, realizing that buying in town helps get sales tax money to their town and school district. |
| | | City Council can't address the first observation, but they can promote the second one. Other towns are promoting "Shop your hometown", and we can too. |
| | | I would add...About a year ago I looked into moving my business into a store space in Wheaton and decided against it due to the high rent, and extra taxes and fees associated with being in Downtown Wheaton. What can be done to draw and keep local businesses to downtown Wheaton rather than sending the business owners (and their clients) elsewhere? |
| | | We're planning to open an organic bakery/restaurant in the next few years, and Geneva looks like the place to be, rather than Wheaton, unfortunately. We go to so many downtown areas in the surrounding area- Winfield, Geneva, Glen Ellyn... same for libraries. We live in Wheaton itself, but it has not been a welcoming community the way the others have :(|
| | | We're planning to open an organic bakery/restaurant in the next few years, and Geneva looks like the place to be, rather than Wheaton, unfortunately. We go to so many downtown areas in the surrounding area- Winfield, Geneva, Glen Ellyn... same for libraries. We live in Wheaton itself, but it has not been a welcoming community the way the others have :(|
| | | Shops need to stay open later. Friday nights in the summer months is when most people come to Downtown Wheaton. Foot traffic to these shops would help their businesses thrive if they were open when the people came around. |
| | | This should be broken up into separate topics. |
| | | "utilizing festival street concepts on targeted streets" - I wasn't sure what this meant. A google search didn't help me. Then I watched the Streetfilms video: (http://www.streetfilms.org/portland-or-festival-streets/). I'm all for this! |
| | | "improving the Prairie Path" - The Prairie Path has a genuine identity crisis in downtown Wheaton. Some people want to pass through just for a workout. Slow pedestrians, slow dog walkers and faster bicyclists share the same space, which isn't altogether wide. It's worse when the French Market is running. Space needs to be found to separate these disparate uses. (http://goo.gl/maps/7uO24) |
| | | "exploring land use and parking strategies south of the Union Pacific rail road tracks" - the denser, the better! What response have other suburbs and their developers had to building residential units upwards? Can retirees retire-in-place in downtown condo-like developments? |

The sampling of strategies above seem positive to me. I would emphasize decisions that make Wheaton unique rather than chained or franchised. I would support independent local businesses, green initiatives, and the like. I would look at Geneva's Green Market as an excellent example of a unique farmers market. I would avoid box stores that drive out smaller businesses.

We need to look to suburbs like Geneva, with their green initiatives and support of small businesses rather than to Naperville, in my opinion.

Geneva is nice to walk around too, nice green space but it too has lost some wonderfull local shops that I used to shop at.

40+% of residents are dog owners. If we could accommodate them downtown, then downtown Wheaton would be more of a destination for them. Outdoor seating allows a dog owner to enjoy cafe offerings. Naperville even provides water bowls and fountains for dogs and even pickup bags. There are now residents living in the downtown area who are dog owners. Maybe there are park areas that could be fenced with pick nick like seating as a dog park exercise area. I could even drive to the area with my dog and socialize with these people. It would attract people to the downtown area. I also think the location of the police station was a mistake. It is inconvenient for people to get to. It doesn't serve as an attraction. And the workers there are away from the local restaurants and businesses. Traffic whether it be by foot, car, and any way to attract people to the downtown on a regular basis will reinvigorate the downtown area.

This is true, great idea!

Maria A9, how were you able to shop at Mariano's? All I see is an empty lot. What made your visit unique?

Mariano's Fresh Market is a chain owned by Roundy's Supermarkets. They have over 150 stores in the Midwest and are expanding all over the Chicago area.

Having one Starbucks in downtown Wheaton doesn't make the district overrun with chains. In fact, it's probably the one thing that draws people downtown at various times in the day.

Wheaton should maintain its uniqueness and avoid mass chain stores/restaurants! The fewer mass chains the better. If you want chains you can go to any mall or the next town! If we are going to have "chains" pick more unique ones. Mariano's is the perfect example...very unique! There is not another one around for MILES!

Why should Wheaton's village board be involved in picking businesses at all? Obviously offensive businesses (think: strip clubs) should be screened out, but any successful business in Wheaton would benefit everyone.

I would have to agree that downtown Naperville is much more vibrant and it would be nice if Wheaton felt that way. It is a shame we are losing Paper House, I could always find what I was looking for there, they are not like a BIG BOX store. I also would like to see more nature and green space. Some type a store that specializes in recycling items, environmental products, demonstrations, would be nice.

Downtown Naperville has "The Apple Store" and some other very large retailers that keep the people coming, Wheaton doesn't. Also Naperville spent huge \$ renovating old buildings to bring in business, where Wheaton's store's smell of mold and mildew and keep raising the rents.

I believe the best way to make Wheaton a destination district is to attract desirable stores & businesses in addition to the current restaurants. If in order to attract new businesses, we must consolidate store fronts or expand small locations, the city must do it! Empty store fronts only send a failed message of defeat which we cannot accept! I think residents want a vibrant downtown area similar to Naperville on a lesser scale. In the past, national chains have been very reluctant to come into the area, but the city must try a new approach, any effort, to bring new life to an aging downtown. Restaurants, festivals, & car shows alone are not enough.

I would like to see more festivals and events scheduled during the winter months. It seems like we have a wealth of programs to choose from in the summer, but after the Chili Cook-off (which I love!), there isn't much to do until spring rolls around.

In regards to improving the Prairie Path, I think it would be nice to have some sort of lighting along the path to allow for its use at night. There are many winter nights that I'd like to take a walk along the path, but choose not to because it's very dim.

Development of the old Wheaton downtown has two disadvantages working against it. First is the non-ease of vehicular traffic. The roads from the north and the south are congested two lane streets which make it extremely difficult to drive to the old downtown and out again for a shopping trip. Without improvement, there will never be interest on the part of the major retail chains to bring stores to downtown. The second disadvantage is that the old downtown does not have the critical mass of stores and space. For instance, although it is not convenient to drive to Naperville's downtown, the city does have many more blocks of stores and restaurants than is available in Wheaton's downtown. The space available is sufficient to draw many people to visit and shop and therefore draws the major retail chains to place stores in Naperville's downtown section. Wheaton does not have the same critical mass and I can't see it ever obtaining it. Therefore, funds spent may be funds wasted.

It is not that hard to drive into downtown Wheaton. We're talking about a significant part of the population that spends a good deal of time waiting. Waiting for trains, waiting on the train, or stuck in traffic on the Eisenhower to get to the city.

At worst, sans train, it might take me 10 minutes to get from Geneva Road to Roosevelt Road through downtown Wheaton.

Agree on the critical mass issue, which is why in a past topic I've suggested densifying to "Wheaton Center" levels in more places downtown.

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| More to do on weekends | 16 | Here's the main problem I see. People love to go out to dinner and then afterward, be able to walk around and go in shops. All the shops in downtown Wheaton close SUPER early. Before most people even get off from work! Shops should be encouraged to stay open later, even if it is just on Friday and Saturday nights. It would make going to downtown Wheaton much more appealing. Also, having fun little places to go to eat, other than expensive restaurants would be nice... a fondue dessert shop, a specialty cake/cupcake shop could be fun, etc. Somewhere people would get excited to go. |
| I agree that having additional restaurant options for a quick and inexpensive meal would be a great addition downtown. Other than ice-cream no options exist for a quick bite to eat. I hear Bricks is coming which will be a nice compliment to the existing restaurants. | | |
| A lot of suburbs have shops that close around dinner time, except for Thursdays. Try it some Thursday evening, and look around to see how many shoppers there are. | | |
| For a business to be open on Friday and Saturday nights, there has to be an economic incentive to do so. Shops exist to make money! | | |
| I really like the idea of a dessert destination serving fondue, cupcakes, etc., that would cater to families as well as couples out on a date and/or ladies out on a girls' night. Something similar to Le Chocolat in downtown Naperville or A Taste of Heaven in Andersonville (Chicago) would be fantastic. | | |
| Yes!! | | |
| A Taste of Heaven in Wheaton would be AMAZING. Yum! | | |
| Yes!!! | | |
| I would like to see Wheaton try to implement some of these ideas sooner than 25 years from now | | |
| Does wheaton have a great bakery? | | |
| The answer sadly is No! :(| | |
| It used to. | | |
| A more modern downtown keeping historic feel like Oak Park | 15 | I love the charm of downtown Wheaton, especially the locally owned restaurants and shops; however, I feel like we are missing a few of the hip/modern restaurant and bar chains that other downtown areas have. It would also be nice if downtown Wheaton could be more of a destination rather than going to a restaurant to eat and then leaving the downtown area. Specifically, it would be nice to have more casual restaurants (lunch spots) and some upscale bars, etc. It would be great to get a Pret-a-manager (sandwich shop like in Oak Park), perhaps a Potbelly, maybe an upscale bar comparable to a Bar Louie or piano bar where people can go after dinner. It would also be nice if the downtown theatre were utilized more. Anyway, the locally owned stores and restaurants are great, but not all of them thrive, so it would be nice to see some well proven franchise chains come in, too. |
| Would love to see a Barnes and Noble or other such well-stocked bookstore!! | | |
| Downtown Glen Ellyn had a jazz bar/restaurant that closed, although I don't know why. | | |
| As for Potbelly's, there's already one in south Wheaton, and another one on Roosevelt in Glen Ellyn. A Quizno's on Main Street closed within the last 2 years. | | |
| The downtown movie theater would need millions to be restored. Google "Wheaton Grand Theater" to get some idea of what's been at play there. I was inside it about 10 years ago, and it was in a poor condition then, although you could see how beautiful it had been. | | |
| Yes, I agree we have a surplus of Potbelly's in Wheaton but I just think we need a few more places suitable for lunch in Wheaton that are family-friendly or good for meet ups to make the downtown more of a destination during the day or weekends for shopping, etc. Shane's Deli is the only one I can think of and although the decor is 'historic', its not exactly what I had in mind and Quizno's isn't exactly a suitable lunch spot for meeting up with friends, etc... its too fast foodie. Something a little more cozy would be great! | | |
| I also like the Piano Bar idea as well as the jazz club. Good input! | | |
| I like the idea of the piano bar. Maybe it could double as a jazz club ("Green Mill West :) | | |
| Yes! Green Mill - awesome. | | |
| I like the idea of a piano bar (maybe also serves as jazz club; like: "Green Mill West" :) | | |
| Re-open the theater | 15 | If you rebuild it, they will come. |

Could the Wheaton Park District take it over and offer plays, productions etc? On the weekends offer movies. Perhaps classics and new movies? As a kid I loved walking downtown with my friends, grabbing something to eat and enjoying a movie. There is something about seeing a movie/production in a theater.

Forgive me for repeating one of my points from another thread.

The downtown movie theater would need millions to be restored. Google "Wheaton Grand Theater" to get some idea of what's been at play there. I was inside it about 10 years ago, and it was in a poor condition then, although you could see how beautiful it had been.

Movie theaters throughout the country are now investing in new technology for showing digital films. Within the next 6 months, that will be the only format for new movies, and according to news stories, that costs theaters another \$50K or so.

If you really want to fix up Wheaton Grand, then work to find the funding!

I would love to see it become a movie theater again -- someplace I could walk to with my son to see a matinee or go on a date night with my husband.

Film Festival - Naperville Film Festival - www.napervillefilmfest.org. Why can't we do this???? Reopen the theater.

This is a great idea. I would add that there should be a specific reason for the theater. Given the close proximity to other theaters that show mainstream movies and that today some theaters are struggling to keep afloat, I think finding a niche in the theater world is necessary. For example, the Wheaton theater could show short films, films from local directors, or independent films.

Sure - perhaps study how the theater in Downers Grove operates. They have the same issue. I was there for a movie a couple months ago - The Artist - and it seemed to me they have a strong community group that helps with the theater. By the way the theater was packed. I also think that a theater in town has a different draw than a megaplex strip mall theater. Namely, a town with places to eat and other attractions to walk to - community - which is clearly lacking at the megaplex. Maybe take a look at the Music Box in Chicago. Perhaps it's live theater that will be the focus. In any event, if we miss this opportunity to develop this theater and make it a showcase for our town, I think we will come to regret it.

Sam has a good point about niche marketing for Wheaton Grand. Producing live theater would be challenging--just ask Wheaton Drama, a few doors away--and I wonder if the parking nearby would be sufficient to support the cars that would come....

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| Downtown shopping that is unique, practical, and attractive | 13 | <p>Foot traffic into downtown Wheaton should nicely support a small grocery, one, perhaps, that emphasizes fresh, healthful, local choices.</p> <p>What about a small "variety" store that would fulfill our needs for those little items that we need everyday and for which a drive to a shopping center is time consuming and energy inefficient?</p> |
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More unique shops would be great. I really enjoyed the couple of gift/fine art shops that were in Wheaton. There is always a need for items for the home and / or gifts to be purchased for friends and family.

A small variety store would be a really good idea, if... parking were improved. It's a pain to have to circle the block, or park several blocks away, when you need to run in and purchase a quick item.

This is true, however, Mariano's going to be coming to downtown Wheaton in a year... I have heard it is going to be great. But I agree that a small variety store would be nice too. I love just walking to downtown to get things done rather than piling everyone in the car.

Agreed. My family gladly walks to downtown Wheaton to conduct business rather than hoping in a car and battling traffic. We would love more reasons to walk to shopping rather than having to drive.

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| Reopen the Theater | 13 | It would be nice to have the historic movie theater reopened for movies and/or other entertainment options. |
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I'd love to see an art house theater concept--bringing us first-run independent films that are off the radar of big blockbuster Hollywood. A brew and view would also be awesome there, but I'm sure half of conservative Wheaton would stroke out over that.

This is a great idea. I would add that there should be a specific reason for the theater. Given the close proximity to other theaters that show mainstream movies and that today some theaters are struggling to keep afloat, I think finding a niche in the theater world is necessary. For example, the Wheaton theater could show short films, films from local directors, or independent films.

Agreed. Few towns have this type of unique asset. Downers Grove, Glen Ellyn, Elmhurst, St. Charles - Highland Park is underway in its plan to rehabilitate their downtown movie theater. Wheaton wants to have a draw to the downtown - open this theater! It's puzzling that a 1920's, national historic registered building sits idle. It's a gem. We have got to find a way as a community to save and use this little theater.

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| Pedestrian Friendly Destination | 12 | <p>I'd love to see it become more pedestrian friendly by widening the sidewalks on both sides of the road taking it down to one lane of traffic or even a pedestrian mall. I would add a row of shops backing up to the railroad tracks to minimize the train presence and sound, but still embracing the train near the intersections, not forget the heritage and significance the train route has played in Wheaton's history.</p> <p>I have only been there once, but have never forgotten the beauty of the lights draping Larmier Square in Denver. A similar execution in Wheaton would add to the beauty at night and bring a cozier feel to the downtown where people would stroll through while they are shopping and dining.</p> <p>With the widened sidewalks the French Market could be relocated to line both sides of the downtown street(s) drawing pedestrians in and encouraging them to also shop the brick and mortar stores that have anchored Wheaton's downtown economy for so many years.</p> <p>The restaurants in the downtown could also use the widened sidewalks to support more outdoor dining allowing more people to arrive downtown. In addition, the movie theater would be a great place to revive to entice couples to dine out close to home and catch a movie afterward. Maybe the niche would be to show old classic movies and make the entire experience seem like you are stepping back in time whether it be with an old soda fountain or snacks being sold by an old fashioned "cigarette girl."</p> <p>And finally, I would give the downtown a title marking it as a destination so when you saying you are going to "[insert name here]" people know where you are going. This would be similar to the title "Town Square."</p> |
| This is a great idea and vision for downtown! It's more unique and could well help define why people would want to come, and stay awhile, to Wheaton. A walking pedestrian mall approach also provides opportunities for special events, music and can help small business owners set up mini-kiosks (goods, services, food, drink) that don't carry the overhead of a full fledged shop. Parking is still a challenge, of course. Maybe small hop on/hop off shuttles? | | |
| Widening the sidewalks would be wonderful. I've enjoyed dining outside Wok-N-Fire and Harbor Express because they have the room for it, but that's the only location with wide sidewalks. During Wheaton events, people forget that there are places to visit there because the sidewalks aren't consistently wide. | | |
| Extremely similar to what I am thinking with Broadway Plaza in Walnut Creek, California. | | |
| Not sure what is the Brand/what emotions it evokes? | 11 | <p>When you talk to people about neighboring towns, you tend to get similar responses. Naperville is "hopping", "has a vibrant downtown". Geneva is "great", "quaint", "unique character". Glen Ellyn is "sophisticated (also have heard snooty). Not sure what Wheaton is. Have heard "small town", "Mayberry", etc. I think we should play up that image, but in a 21st century way. Merge the old and new. A big, vibrant down town that has locally made foods, craftsmen, artists. Wheaton should be synonymous with Americana and Midwest values.</p> |
| I, too, wonder what the brand is. It may be rumor, but I've heard that, at one point, a large, very popular restaurant was interested in locating in the downtown area, but it was turned down because it was a "chain," and Wheaton wanted only mom & pop stores. That restaurant went to Naperville. If that's false, I apologize, but if it's true, why are we bothering with this whole exercise? Why hire urban planners to ensure Wheaton stays a sleepy small town? If we are seriously looking to revitalize (or rather, vitalize) Wheaton, then lets bring in the business that will draw people to the small businesses. Resuscitate the theater, get rid of the extraneous medical building that's supposed to take over the Jewel property (doesn't Wheaton have enough medical buildings yet?), add some popular restaurants and stores, add some parking garages so people have a place to put their cars while they shop/dine, and let's move forward. And stop worrying about how wide the sidewalks are! | | |
| This is totally my favorite idea! Wheaton is what I always call "pleasantville" it's just so cute and small town and definitely "Mayberry." Locally made foods, craftsmen, artists, etc... a place where you can get awesome unique gifts for people. More places like Naperville has... the Chocolate shop, a fondue dessert shop, a cupcake shop... things like that. Places where people love to just go on a Friday night when they don't JUST want to go out to an expensive restaurant. | | |
| Bring back the Fall Festival! | 11 | <p>The Fall Festival was a fun activity once the weather got cooler. Other area towns have some sort of festival in the Fall, and I think it would be a popular event.</p> <p>Also, add a sandwich shop like Subway or Jimmy John's and a quick breakfast place like Panera to the downtown.</p> |
| Pumpkin festival to coincide with the downtown trick or treating. Agreed we need a fall festival of some sort. | | |

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| Repair fountain / create new fountain, plaza / Hubble statue | 8 | The fountain on Front Street is long overdue for a redesign. Also, why not incorporate a new plaza / fountain at the gateway off Roosevelt. Can some of the brick from the Hubble demolition be used to create a plaza. Why not have a statue of Hubble - a notable scientist who lived in Wheaton? Hubble Plaza? I would like to see some more public art work, too. |
| I agree cleaning up the downtown area would go a long way to enhancing the inner beauty of Wheaton. There is old gum all over the sidewalks, it is disgusting. There has to be a way of cleaning it up. Improving the fountain area is a great idea. | | |
| The fountain and the seating area near it. The seating/open area is filthy and neglected. A clean, inviting and updated space would draw more people to enjoy the area. | | |
| Great idea about re-purposing materials... and maybe use brick to pave Front St. with actual bricks, not stamped concrete. | | |
| Changes | 8 | Unfortunately for downtown, Wheaton put all its eggs in the Danada basket with regards to shopping a long time ago. As a result, downtown has been relegated to a place of second choice or worse for residents. The overall look is tired and needs updating in critical areas. The fountain area is an outdated example of what should be a center or focal point. We need a grocery again as well as a pharmacy especially with all the new residential construction that has/is going on. Some of the commercial buildings are in need of major face lifting. The historic aspect needs to be kept while introducing more contemporary structures. |
| Agreed. That's why the initial focus for the town should be more residential (grocery/pharmacy)and entertainment - event, and restaurant type of development. Retail would hopefully follow the crowd. I think people get tired of driving from shop to shop and would like a town to walk around and the community it creates. Strip malls are a bit soulless. | | |
| Make downtown a destination | 7 | <p>http://www.yelp.com/biz_photos/3PjvqpwuKrdsv4A4vEEm_A?select=nfqM3_5t4LRYVnregBZsJQ#jO4EFzqQ8BhutKvKivF-JQ</p> <p>Broadway Plaza in Walnut Creek, CA is a good vision for Wheaton. The demographic is very similar to Wheaton, it's extremely pedestrian friendly, great shopping, but still somewhat modern small town feel. Maybe not an exact copy, but a version of it would work in Wheaton.</p> |
| Wheaton has some great places to eat these days, but not much to keep you downtown after dinner is over. We need some venue for shows/ the arts. | | |
| Downtown Pharmacy | 7 | We need one and one that is easily accessible. |
| I agree with the pharmacy idea definitely. I also think some sort of athletic store or running store would do great in downtown Wheaton. Every little downtown area seems to have one, but we don't. | | |
| Empty-nest housing w/ decent price, size - walk to everything | 7 | There are many townhomes/condos already, but many are very expensive, too small, or are on multiple levels. We live in Wheaton and would love to move to downtown once we downsize from our house, into something reasonably priced (incl assoc. fees), and still have good living space and on one level as we age. We want an active lifestyle close to everything...lots of walking in an "urban" environment...grocery, drugstore, library, restaurants/bars, parks, train, coffee shop/bakery. There are some, but not enough housing options now that fit that bill in downtown Wheaton, and the aging population is going to be looking for this type of living in this type of environment. |
| Connect Cosley Zoo / Lincoln Marsh to each other and town. | 7 | Cosley Zoo is isolated. For the most part Wheaton residents can't walk or ride a bike to the Zoo. Could the Prairie Path be connected to the Zoo so residents and visitors could bike/walk to the Zoo, marsh and Town? While these attractions might be outside the town proper, it might be a good idea to incorporate them into the plans and make them an asset of the town. Maybe add information on kiosks about these attractions and the fact they are so close? |
| I would also like a connection to Cosley and the Prairie Path from Northside Park for those that live east of Gary. In addition, SIDEWALKS that connect from town to the zoo would be beneficial as Gary is such a busy street. | | |
| And also make it accessible from Northside Park... | | |

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| Make Illinois Prairie Path a Wheaton destination | 7 | We have a wonderful asset that is not being used to its potential. Wheaton is the hub of the Illinois Prairie Path as it branches off into three different directions, but that hub is hidden between an unsightly parking deck for the apartment buildings and a storage facility. We need to make this gateway to the path more obvious. There needs to be upgrades to the path going south - it's barely a gravel path. The path going east is also confusing. Perhaps stripe or widen the sidewalk. Some nice signs about what's available in the downtown for path users? Better restrooms. Bike racks. Parking for path users who come on the weekends. Hundreds of people along with running clubs use the path everyday. Seems like a no brainer to highlight and advertise this wonderful asset as a reason to visit Wheaton. |
| The Prairie Path is a significantly under utilized asset for Wheaton! It threads through downtown and connects us to other communities. How about leveraging the Path to help make Wheaton a "destination stop" that supports economic development and draws people downtown? We need only to look to Naperville for some ideas about how to incorporate a city asset (in their case, Riverwalk) and make it a defining, vital part of the heart of the city! | | |
| How about an annual Illinois Prairie Path day when Wheaton celebrates the path's founders, history, etc. As the hub, Wheaton has a great opportunity to take ownership of the path and help shape its use and future. | | |
| Shopping | 6 | I miss the clothing shops that used to be downtown. I'd like to see less expensive restaurants and more shopping options. |
| ummm...how about making the shopping we already have accessible to those of us who work for a living? My Saturdays are taken by kids sporting events. Sunday morning is church and the rest of the day is shopping...but not in downtown Wheaton because everything is closed! I want to shop local. If I need to buy my kids a pair of shoes, I'd much rather get them at our own StrideRite store. The addition of cute boutique stores for women has been great, but they are rarely open when I'm available to shop. So rather than grabbing my wallet and walking into town, I hop in the car and drive elsewhere. | | |
| Rather than focus on a specific type of shop (e.g. clothing) how about we consider ways to entice development of interesting, and affordable, options for shopping downtown? How about a fair trade shop (e.g. Ten Thousand Villages), to compliment the new food market that's going to replace the Hubble School? How about a few "pop up" stores where the goods and focus of the shop change periodically? This could also offer an affordable way to introduce the public to local or regional artists of all types of media while stimulating interest about "what's new" in downtown Wheaton. | | |
| There are a very limited number of women's (as well as men's) shops in the downtown area. I think having more privately owned boutique shops would give visitors more options than what we presently have. | | |
| I disagree with adding women's or men's clothing shops - they are small in inventory and limiting in sizes and styles, but a specialty clothing store is a good idea. | | |
| I think more clothing shops is a great idea. I feel like the amount of restaurants is just right though... no more no less. Kids clothes would be nice and maternity clothes (since it seems like there are a lot of pregnant women in Wheaton). | | |
| we do have a very nice maternity shop in the baby shop on Wesley Street. | | |
| Paddle Boats | 6 | Though technically not in the downtown area, it would be nice to have paddle boats/ canoes/kayaks available at Northside Park. I may be not up to speed on the history if it once was available or the good reasons why it isn't offered, but I would love to see that. Of course I don't think the lake could support a lot of water traffic... |
| Great outdoor activity for families! | | |
| Piano lounge | 6 | Love the idea! |
| Bring back "Cream of Wheaton" name instead of Taste of Wheaton. | 6 | I know it might seem to be a small change but Cream of Wheaton was unique in a goofy, nice way. Every town has a "taste." Why did we get rid of the old name? Did the town get sued by the cereal company? I say embrace the little quirky things that give us identity (and a warm nutritious way to start the day off right). |
| Get rid of shaker style awnings and roofs | 5 | Who decided that the town should look like an English village from the 1600's? We have some beautiful brick buildings from the 1800's and early 1900's covered with the shaker style tiles. It looks like some developers are removing it and restoring buildings. Keep it up. |
| Bring Downtown up to date. | 5 | Despite the view of the beautiful downtown being blocked by the behemoth office building coming in from the south, Downtown Wheaton could be a destination. We need more updated shops and restaurants. We don't need old abandoned dirty storefronts and yarn shops. Naperville really has done it right, that is why it is so busy there. We have potential please listen to the people! |

I'll also add the following comment: How many hair salons are needed in this town? I think Wheaton has the most hair salons per capita in the nation! How about opening up a small convenience store, dog groomer, or a pack and mail place? We can also use a home accessory stores similar to a Crate and Barrel (but privately owned). There are an over abundance of thrift shops and salons.

I would love a small home goods and fresh furniture store.

<http://sucasa-furniture.com/>

I agree with Nancy and Shane. A Home Goods store would be very beneficial.

There was recently a dog groomer on Main, just south of the tracks. In the past 2 years, 2 home accessory stores on Main closed (JB Winterberry and its 2 extra shops, one of which sold furniture, plus the country-oriented store).

It makes me nervous to hear suggestions of categories when stores of that type have recently closed.

Clean up the alley adjacent to the downtown parking garage 5 Make it look inviting. Eliminate the dumpsters - especially those by the eating areas of the restaurants. Move the parking spots into the garage. (Let the owners have reserved spots). Use landscaping to hide the electrical boxes.

"The Lumber Yard" 4 I don't think we are ready for it yet, but somewhere down the line, it may cool to take the old FE Wheaton location below the train overpass bridge and turn it into a trendy design area. Maybe it would have loft apartments, design and architectural firms, some cool restaurants, boutiques and art galleries.

Agreed. Evanston has retail and business not only in its central downtown but spread through out its neighborhood. I also agree that we need to address the town first but plans should be drawn up for that space. Also, I don't know what influence we have over the county, but I heard mentioned that the county fair grounds should be moved to a more rural (open space) part of the county. I think that's a good idea. Wheaton has some 20% of its area as public/church land which is not taxable. We can no longer afford it. Let the land go to private development.

That is a nice chunk of property for redevelopment, but I think you're right that it is probably a ways off.

Model Wheaton after other successful downtown cities 4 What downtowns do we like to visit? Why? Find out and start to model our city after the pioneers. It's great to have new ideas but let's start with the right blueprint for an exciting and profitable downtown.

Elmhurst has a downtown that truly generates foot traffic on BOTH sides of the tracks, with a good mix of restaurants, retail, & entertainment. Their downtown has a much lower vacancy rate than many other suburbs, and that is mostly true for their other business districts (Butterfield near York, Spring Road, Vallette and York).

They also have a college near their downtown. Their population is smaller than Wheaton. If they can make it work in a smaller town, then we could probably emulate them and it would work here, too.

You are right! Elmhurst, Evanston, Oak Park, Glen Elyn, Naperville, Batavia, Geneva ...

Downtown 4 A movie theater where our kids can watch a movie and hang out on a Saturday and where our families have a place to watch a movie in town. A hot dog place, where again, our pre-teens and teenagers want to be. Right now we have "nicer" restaurants and an pricey (yet good) deli. What about attracting young families and our teens? LaGrange, Oak Park, Glen Ellyn, Elmhurst streets are always busy with a good mix of families and teens.

I feel these options would also assist in drawing in the Wheaton College students as well.

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| Downtown Stores | 4 | <p>One way to bring more businesses and traffic is bring in an established company. I provided a list of stores and restaurants that I think is needed and would do well in Wheaton.</p> <p>Parking should not be a problem. With the 2 parking garages there is space. I believe there is not enough signage for patrons to know where to park. (1 way streets and trains will always be a negative)</p> <p>There still is always a need for the start up business. Winterberries was a great loss. We do not need anymore salons.</p> <p>Build a walking tunnel so shoppers can get their items from the French Market and then walk north for some further shopping.</p> <p>Anthropologie - Housewares & Home, Women's Apparel; Apple Store - Electronics Francesca's Collections - Specialty, Women's Apparel; bebe - Apparel Bose - Music, Books & Entertainment, Technology & Electronics; Build-A-Bear Workshop - Specialty, Toys & Hobbies; Forever 21- Apparel; Hanna Andersson - Children's Apparel; Land of Nod, The Housewares & Home; Michael Kors - Accessories, Shoes, Women's Apparel; Origins - Bath & Beauty; Paper Source - Cards & Gifts; REI - Apparel and Sporting Wear</p> <p>Dining Ideas - Restaurants and Eateries Cheesecake Factory, Corner Bakery Café, Francesca's, Maggiano's Little Italy, Zoup</p> |
| Naperville is succeeding and Wheaton isn't. I will always support the start up business first but we need more foot traffic. One way is bringing a store that people are familiar with. Independent businesses do not have the money to spend on advertising that the chain businesses do. | | |
| These retail stores are all great but seem very 'downtown Naperville' to me. I dont think Wheaton could sustain most of them, we dont have the traffic that Naperville does and I'm actually glad about that... I like the cozy/hometown feel of our downtown. I think our biggest problem is that the downtown is too "hodge podge" right now... too many of the same things like salons and resale shops. | | |
| I agree with these different businesses doing well here... (not sure about Bebe though), an Ann Taylor Loft would do GREAT in Wheaton I think. I think a Cheesecake Factory might be a little "big" for Wheaton though.... Francesca's restaurant would be excellent though! | | |
| More festivals,shops,restaurants,reopen theater | 3 | <p>Reopening the theater, encouraging more shops and restaurants to come in would help bring in tax revenue. Create it into a good, pedestrian friendly town. Festivals like the Chili Cookoff and the Ale Fest are a great start. More festivals in the park bring friends and neighbors together without having to drive and find parking. I envision a great City where people really want to stay and enjoy!</p> |
| Strict Codes Regarding Building & Sidewalk Maintenance | 2 | <p>I would like to see the City become more strict on maintenance of buildings, commercial entrances and sidewalks in front of buildings and in the city's open spaces. Many of the commercial establishments are not externally well maintained, have dirty and uninviting entryways, and have black gook (assuming gum?) all over the sidewalks in front of the establishment. Strict codes and steep fines for not adhering to the codes would go a long way toward improving the look and feel of downtown.</p> |
| I think a lot of that black that you see on the sidewalks is from trashcans and the dirt that they pick up from restaurant kitchen floors. I used to work at a Subway and our sidewalk where we'd take the trash had black patches and tracks. Disgusting. | | |
| Carnagie-like Deli | 2 | Would Love One |
| Build on what we have | 2 | <p>There are some things downtown Wheaton has going for it, however they are not capitalized on. Besides many of the current restaurants, downtown has two places that draw people from other areas, the Toms Price furniture store and the Illinois Secretary of State office. Both places would seem to bring people from other areas into downtown. However the cityscape around these places is less than desireable. Improve the surroundings around these places, new sidewalks, landscape, etc. Pleasent surroundings may cause people that visit these businesses to come back and enjoy the various restaurants later in the evening.</p> <p>Re-landscape Adams Park. The park looks overgrown and not very appealing to those that drive by on Main Street. Open up the park more. Provide a visual connection to the library from Main Street through the park. Large paths and less bushes.</p> |
| Agree with Shane. Improving tie-in of Secy of State office to downtown would be easier than Toms-Price, which is a couple of blocks east of the edge of downtown. | | |
| I agree with the beautification suggestions and feel that those two locations are in need of extra efforts. I disagree with the suggestion of re-landscaping of Adams Park suggestion though. When you're in the park, it's gorgeous and the bushes help to keep car noise out and creates a tranquil environment. | | |

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| Historical Walking Tours - Church Buildings! | 2 | When I moved into Wheaton I was told that I moved to a town that has more churches per capita than any other place on the planet. Not sure if that is completely true, but why not have walking tours of some of the local historic churches (and/or churches with architectural interest) in and around the town. I have driven by a few churches in town that already advertise tours. We could have trained volunteers and the money generated by tickets could go to PADS or some other similar organization. |
| Train themed restaurant into the old station / train store | 2 | I think it's the old train station - there's a hair place and a yogurt shop now in the building. Can we coax a train themed restaurant into the building? A "Two Toots" perhaps? We are a train town. There has to be ways to use that as an asset. Get the model train store located on Irving Park road - American's Best to move into town. Move the model train club to a more visible location. I think it's still in the basement of the DuPage History Museum. |
| Better Lighting | 2 | Improve lighting in commuter parking lot. |
| Tonight's Vision Session | 1 | <p>I was a bit discouraged to be one of the very few folks in the 30 something age bracket. No disrespect to my older brothers and sisters, I just thought there would have been more folks around my age as well (especially seeing the demographic of Wheaton displayed on a board in the room as the median age is 37.5)</p> <p>I walked away very encouraged though. It was so great to sit in that historic place and imagine. Imagine what Wheaton could do to "polish the apple" that is our downtown. I really hope in this process we find that which captures the strengths of the area, brings in freshness, but not at the expense of losing ourselves to the lifeless suburbia that is running so rampant.</p> <p>I'd love to engage this with you all. What makes downtown Wheaton great philosophically?</p> |
| Better traffic flow | 1 | Time traffic lights better so cars are not idling so long, mark bike routes and add bike racks, use "All Way" pedestrian crossing signals at busy intersections. |
| More Illinois Prairie Landscaping | 1 | We are the prairie state - right? Easier to maintain. Beautiful - and in keeping with the state's heritage. Plus we are the hub of the prairie path! |
| Free Shuttle from Du Page Courthouse / County Complex | 1 | Not sure if a shuttle would be effective, but I am curious to know how many people work at this complex and how many of them go to the downtown for lunch or for a drink after work? How can Wheaton encourage county employees to head to the town? Can Wheaton attract more law offices to locate in the town? Can Wheaton create some signage or landscaping near the county complex to let visitors know the town is a short hop over the bridge? |
| Develop Dupage County fairground | 1 | I don't know what influence we have over the county, but I heard mentioned that the county fairgrounds should be moved to a more rural (open space) part of the county. I think that's a good idea. Wheaton has some 20% of its area as public /church land which is not taxable. We can no longer afford it. Let the land go to private development. |
| How about a railway museum? | | |
| Downtown Art | 1 | Solicit artists and sculptors to submit designs for permanent structure or art for downtown. This could be incorporated in Gamon fountain and seating area just west of fountain as image of downtown Wheaton. Kohler invites visiting artists to create their ideas in almost any material including ceramic. The winners are displayed in area next to downtown air museum. |
| Should consider my friend David. He has real visionary ideas about public art artistcenergies.com | | |
| Modernize Gamon Fountain | 1 | Update the fountain with water patterns and children's water play area in seating area west of fountain. Water patterns can include slug smooth water lofting overhead to funnels like Coke Cola museum in Atlanta or pulsed like Bloomingdale shopping center food court. Add a metal sculpture for Wheaton signature piece. |
| Arch of Wheaton | 1 | Develop or have artists propose an arch for entering Wheaton. The arch would be meaningful over Main Street or over the 3 railroad tracks near Main Street. |

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| Small Town Charm | 1 | <p>Many of us love Wheaton because it has something special that all of the other towns and suburbs can never offer- it has character, heart, and represents why small towns and communities make up what's really good about America. When I look at the beautiful homes, churches, and the families that inhabit them and make up this community, I am so grateful that our history has been preserved and our character remains unique.</p> <p>Downtown Wheaton holds so much promise as a revived reflection of our hometown while at the same time preserving its history. When I walk into downtown Wheaton, I would like to see all of its storefronts thriving with small businesses (not chain stores). I want to find central gathering points for the community- both spaces and opportunities to know our neighbors more. I'd like to see the charm of what is old-fashioned be retained and enlivened with streetscapes that reflect our history and character, and where people can gather in outdoor spaces that are enhanced by trees, creative plantings and green space. I'd like to see downtown Wheaton transform into a gathering place for our community- not simply enhancing its appearance but becoming the heart of a charming town that brings us together.</p> |
| Utilize parks more | 1 | <p>Adams Park would be a great place for holding a weekly Summer jazz-concert or other music, like a mini Ravinia. Place white lights down the paths, in the trees. It could be called something like "Jazz/Music in the Dark at Adams Park". Maybe even hold one formal event like a "Dancing in the Dark at Adams Park". You could even set up a table with wine, chocolates, coffee or tea...from local places like Lynfred, Serene Teaz, Graham's, etc.</p> <p>Not sure if this was ever done...but what about showing movies at Memorial Park, outside in the Summer.</p> |
| Holiday Events | 0 | <p>I hope there'll be an end to utilizing carriage horses for "quaint" transportation during the winter holidays. Let's not force horses any more to pull carriages around our city streets. Many neighboring communities are dropping the practice. Let's follow suit.</p> <p>I am against using animals for our "entertainment," especially when it involves abuse, and yes, I consider forcing horses to pull carriages in extreme conditions a form of abuse.</p> <p>Labor is a part of life for those who need it to survive, and to equate the work we do at the office or for our families to the physical labor (and yes, it's often abuse and even cruelty) we force upon some animals is far from logical. No animals have to suffer for the pleasure or whim or even the existence of humans. There are alternatives and we should feel obligated to consider them. If we're of a higher order (and that's sometimes questionable, the way we treat each other), we should value their lives as well as ours.</p> <p>Read "A Pleasurable Kingdom" by Jonathan Balcombe. You'd be surprised to learn how complex animals truly are.</p> <p>So would you draw the line at just horses who don't enjoy labor?</p> <p>What about the all the animals at the Cosley Zoo?</p> <p>What about the milk we drink from laboring dairy cows, the beef/chicken/fish we eat?</p> <p>Are they also in the queue to be liberated from having to labor or even die for our gain?</p> <p>Yes we need to treat creatures with respect and dignity (and a lot of agribusiness does not), but it's a bit naïve to anthropomorphize horses saying that our modern mindset has no room to ride them or to put them to work because they don't enjoy it. Heck I don't enjoy work all the time, I metaphorically get my head pulled to the left and right, get whipped with words and often carry heavy loads (sometimes other people's too). And yet labor is part of life.</p> <p>Thanks for keeping the conversation interesting...</p> <p>No, horses were not made to do labor. I guess I shouldn't be surprised by those who believe animals actually enjoy having their heads being pulled to the left and right through their bridles, whipped, forced to pull heavy loads, and stand in the cold, recognizing the quaintness of it all. Other communities are enlightened and end this practice. Wheaton remains in the dark ages.</p> <p>I was just informed by the leader of the horses that "this is what we were made to do and holidays are our favorite times to do it...especially Christmas" They apparently are offended that anyone would think they were unable to rise to the occasion and could be so unenlightened.</p> <p>Those horses are hired by a professional and well-vetted company by the Downtown Wheaton Association. The "quaint" aspect is enjoyed by hundreds of families every holiday season.</p> <p>Is it the poop that you don't like? Is it cruel for the horses? Is nobody riding them? Just curious on the seemingly "bah humbug" statement...</p> <p>Having horses pull carriages in extreme weather, on snowy or icy streets, for hours at a time without adequate rest or shelter is cruel for the horses. I don't understand Jeff P6's comment. I'm against the use of forced labor from horses as "entertainment" - as are many of our surrounding, more enlightened communities.</p> |

I'm guessing my comment got edited. My first point was questioning the horse do-do (can I use that word Mr. Editor?) Sound like you have more of an issue with the treatment of the horses. I understand your concern. I only assume you know the working conditions that a unforced horse should labor in and that Wheaton is not following these? Or maybe horses should be free from doing any labor for mankind?

Are you, Wendy, suggesting, that horses know the difference between "entertainment work" and "work work." Have you discussed it with them? I'm serious. This is the strangest thing I've ever heard. Horses were made for labor. Quite frankly, horses are very stubborn creatures... if they don't want to pull the carriage, they won't. And also, they get hot very easily, so they probably enjoy working in cooler temperatures. Also, they are kept in barns in the middle of winter without heat... and they have for hundreds or even thousands of years, so I'm sure the horses are just fine. They would say otherwise. I've been around a lot of horses.

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| Prevent Dead Pedestrians | 0 | Put a two way stop sign in the alley between Hale Street and the public parking garage, where the parking garage pedestrian exit is. Then people won't have to fear for their lives when cars use the alley as a through street. There are tiny signs that say yield to pedestrians, but these are just invitations to a lawsuit because nobody can see or read them. Coming out of the parking garage should not have to be dangerous. |
| UPDATE!! | 0 | Downtown Wheaton is a very pretty area (despite the huge building blocking the view coming in from the south) we need updated relevant stores and business to bring people in. Sorry, but Naperville has it right, hands down. No more yarn stores or empty dirty storefronts. We did good restaurants and shops. |
| Pavers the Way | 0 | Eliminate downtown business area concrete sidewalks replacing with pavers purchased and personalized by resident supporter of Wheaton downtown. |
| Celebrate 150 years of railroad town/city | 0 | Wheaton chose 150 years ago to bring a railroad to what is now downtown. Celebrate and dedicate downtown to this idea. While Columbus, IN and Washington DC celebrate architecture; Cincinnati, St. Louis and Naperville celebrate their river; but Wheaton is missing celebrating their railroads. |
| 150 years of Wheaton Railroading | 0 | Understand there are 3 railroad stations existing in Wheaton, where is that reflected in downtown? Current technology allows displays, photo posters - WWSHS's Tiger, projected images like Chicago lake front and see through posters like used in WPD Community Center all that could display the train heritage of Wheaton. |
| Kiosks return to downtown Wheaton | 0 | During past decade kiosks were removed from downtown that included CDT television and public bulletin boards for notices. Replace with modern technology of touch screen for information, help and suggestions (like this). These can also display upon push request the channel 10 information created in studio of City Communication building. |
| Railroad Pedestrian Underpass | 0 | Install along downtown, perhaps just east of railroad station #3 (current station) an underpass similar to recently completed underpass next to Billy Graham center. This recently completed underpass has yet to have the finishing sidewalk entrances opened. |
| Celebrate Railroad Heritage | 0 | Include an actual or reproduction of early railroad passenger car as a self-propelled on tires, street certified for pick-up and drop-offs downtown. With Wheaton Railroad identification include in all suburban parades using Wheaton specific riders such as 'STARS' young people. |
| Wheaton Railroad Models | 0 | Supporting Wheaton's railroading heritage display models in store windows. These would be part of model railroad located in lower level of Adams Library (DuPage Historical Society building). The model(s) would be circulated among businesses and could be tied into 'Glancer' to have residents find their current downtown business location. |
| Banners of Wheaton Railroads | 0 | Include in seasonal banners displayed on downtown utility poles a tribute to 150+ years of Wheaton railroading. |
| Historical Railroad Downtown Theme | 0 | 1850s and later the steam locomotives were recognized by their smoke stacks - tall to carry smoke over the trailing cars and passengers. With the many downtown Wheaton light and utility poles black sheet metal smoke stack replica can establish and carry the railroad theme for all of Downtown Wheaton! |
| Ditch the Drunks | 0 | The annual beer fest is a disgrace. Requiring the CERT (Citizens Emergency Response Team) to police an event proves the dumb idea. The CERT does an excellent job given the 'how many beer varieties can I drink without passing out or being arrested leaving Heritage Park or on streets or driving home'. Next downtown will be hosting other exhibitionist for even greater 'Examiner' type news reporting. Can't zoning cancel anything once started when it goes overboard? Improve Wheaton don't disgrace! |

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| Share Ideas to Foster More Ideas | 0 | <p>Publish each and every suggestion in all local papers include Herald. Being public information submitted to municipal government they can create more resident, neighborhood, community and business interests.</p> <p>Creating new ideas from a wide range of sources are seeds to grow branch ideas and grow the best ideas yet !</p> |
| Public Service Announcements on Channel 10 in business windows | 0 | <p>Using broadcast power of channel 10 and Wheaton Communication video studio develop business ads and play PSA from non-profits. These would be displayed in idle store windows as an improvement to dirty front of former businesses. Remainder of window would be covered with one of City of Wheaton department information sheets prepared on 6 foot wide printer by up to 100 foot long color plotter in Communications Building Computer Technology area. Displays would be an investment in Downtown Wheaton Improvements, say 32 to 40 inch LCD flat screen digital televisions that are bargain priced currently.</p> |
| Build Supporters for Downtown Wheaton | 0 | <p>At 9/18/2012 meeting have Downtown Wheaton decals for all attending. Provide to join up supporters to long term improvements to downtown. If cost is an issue, suggest covering cost of buying stickers. If duplication of businesses' stickers, alter or cut that part from decal. Expect those attending will display on their vehicles or front doors.</p> |
| 200 Keypads for 9/18/2012 Meeting | 0 | <p>These 200 keypads being used tonight for residents and business inputs should be used in all City of Wheaton Public meetings. Just vision the many hours wasted with one after another presenting 'their' ideas and tens of others supporting or ready to throw rotten fruit in the assembly. Simple readout on the Council desk could show the reactions immediately.</p> |
| Art Work at South Gateway | 0 | <p>Turning off of Roosevelt road onto Main Street, the west side is notable and has been used for 5 years as the bulletin board for Wheaton Park District. Looks like a fresh food market may replace the sold WPD Administration building.</p> <p>That visible location in the utility easement makes a perfect location for a piece of art - sculpture, metal, fountain, or stonework. All would see and can be coordinated with existing gateway walls.</p> <p>Attached photo show west gateway way and 3 traffic cones where the WPD electronic bulletin board was located until this month.</p> |
| Model Downtown in City Hall Gamon Room | 0 | <p>Many times in City Government downtown is discussed and decided based on 2D drawings and or photos. A 3D model in same or larger scale than model train layout of Wheaton in lower level of DuPage Historical Society building. Proposals viewed in 3D model area can easily be envisioned by everyone involved !</p> |
| <p>How about building it in Google Earth using their 3D Sketchup tools? Ask for volunteers or hire college kids / interns to do it: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMLmfrRsu6M</p> <p>Then everyone could use it, not just people visiting City Hall.</p> | | |
| Holidays/Fests Expanded | 0 | <p>I would like to see Dickens of a Christmas expanded...more like Chicago's KindleMarket, featuring local food booths, Christmas music, etc. It seems that people come for the parade but then there isn't a lot to do after. It is nice that places like Serene Teaz and coffee houses are open...but what about food booths from local places offering chili, soup (warm-up items), etc. Ivy's would be a great spot, outside in their garden to grill some food and play Christmas music.</p> <p>Speaking of the holidays, what if you asked stores to decorate their windows for the holiday season (with a possible incentive/contest) to create special windows like downtown Chicago. Not only would it encourage foot traffic but would make it a nice Christmas destination.</p> <p>In keeping with more fests...what about Apple, Strawberry or Chocolate Fests or a more expanded Oktoberfest...in the car show location, with local food vendors, music, etc. Long-grove seems to have great success with these.</p> |

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: WHAT IDEAS DO YOU HAVE TO IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE OF DOWNTOWN WHEATON?

| Idea Title | Seconds | Idea Summary |
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| Better Shopping Variety | 16 | I think Downtown Wheaton has excellent food. What's missing is entertainment and shopping for before and after dinner. |
| | | And perhaps stores that carry something other than clothing and housewares. A bookstore might seem outdated these days, but a good bookstore with a café would be a terrific draw, especially given that we've lost Borders and Barnes & Noble in the last few years. Anderson's has a lot of success in Naperville. |
| | | I am disappointed by the choice of new shops in downtown Wheaton. There are three hair salons (maybe more), and numerous second-hand shops. What we need is more upscale shopping and antique shops. Something people can do while they are waiting to eat. We cannot compete with Glen Ellyn, which has numerous creative shops (culinary shops, antique, upscale clothing, house goods, etc.). Three or four resale shops is two or three too many. |
| | | Does city/state economic development law allow a municipality to regulate the number of businesses within a category-- ie hair salons and resale shops? We need a variety of retail establishments that sell things that people actually need. I like the variety store/grocery store concept, but hope it is economically viable. Also need a place for lunch that would appeal to "foodies" but less upscale than the other fine restaurants we have downtown. |
| | | I think that the city can reach out to chains that they would like to promote the city to and encourage them. |
| | | Totally agree! It would be nice to have more affordable boutique stores than the outdated resale shops. |
| | | 3 separate women's boutiques have opened in downtown Wheaton over the past 2 years. What is needed is a men's and women's clothing store and/or an upscale athletic/outfitters store. |
| | | Totally agree. It would be nice to have more affordable boutique stores than the outdated resale shops. |
| multiple things to do | 12 | People coming to Wheaton should have multiple things to do. High end restaurants with good food, fashionable shops. nice bars or ice cream shop,etc.. including parking for cars and bicycles. I found out that after eating a good dinner, there was not much to do or see! |
| | | I agree that there needs to more places to go to on a Friday night. The biggest problem that I see with many of the places in Wheaton is that they are just too small to be lively. There are great wine bars and few coffee shops, but it would be great if there was a like business that could be more expansive and result in much more opportunity to socialize with others who come in the establishment. Right now, all the places are so small that you can really only socialize with the people you come with. They are not designed for mingling. |
| | | I also have heard those comments. I also have friends come into town and ask me what's up with the cool little movie theater and why it's not being restored and used. |
| | | I was walking around downtown Wheaton this past Friday night and overheard the following comments from a group of twenty-something year olds. |
| | | "Hmmm, this actually is a cute downtown. Wow, what a cute store. Oh..it's closed." |
| | | This was at 6:30 on a Friday evening. There's plenty of foot traffic downtown on Thursday and Friday evenings, but the opportunity for additional business is being lost on many. |
| Night Life - Entertainment | 12 | With all the restaurants that are in downtown, I wish there were places to go after dinner. Maybe a small comedy club, piano bar, movie theatre.... |
| | | I fully agree that a place to go after dinner is needed. Muldoons is wonderful, but another option would be welcomed. I love the beer garden idea, but an establishment that has a welcoming and open interior is key as well, given our cold weather 9 months out of the year. |
| | | Would love a movie theater!! |
| | | I think Wheaton could really benefit from a beer garden. We could bring in local beer from Two Brothers and Solemn Oath (Naperville) while providing a social area for young adults to hang out after dinner. There could also be an opportunity for local bands/comedians to come and entertain. Or there could be flat screens for fan to watch Saturday college football. |
| | | I think somehow tucking it back behind the shops of Main, Front and Hale could be cool. Have a secret entrance from the popcorn shop. But look out for the Stonecutters... |
| | | Great idea! |
| | | I love this idea and fully agree. |

I'll snowball onto this idea by opening up the old movie theater on Hale street and making it into a live entertainment venue, similar to the Cascada in St. Charles. Bringing in tribute bands, or even the real deal, in addition to maybe some Second City Troupes would definitely be a great idea to help not only bring in additional revenue for the town, but also support the existing businesses around it. Perhaps businesses would stay open later if this were to happen.

A piano bar would be so much fun!

Open the movie theater! Encourage live music venues to open. Bring unique festivals and 5k - 10k to town. The Ale Fest is a good start. Shops need to be open later - agreed. I lived in Chicago and loved the fact I could go to a diner in the evening. Can we get Egglectic to stay open? How about a Lucky Strike - bowling and pool tables, etc. Open up the history museum to music, lecture series. Seems like that cool old building isn't being used for much of anything.

I agree with the DuPage museum idea. I think using that room upstairs would be a great way to bring community together.

Allow developers in to renovate the old movie theater. That would add some nice charm to the downtown area.

I think a real emphasis on leaving shops open later would help. I've tried to go to the bakery and bike shop after work and found them closed. I wish that Harbor Express would stay open for dinner and on the weekends! I'd spend more money on the stores currently in downtown Wheaton, if they'd just stay open past 6 PM.

I think this is a huge contributing factor as well, to a lower than possible downtown population

We need a live music venue! Not of the coffee shop singer songwriter type since that is already possible at some places.

Of course the obvious solution is the Wheaton theater and I know that's a project that is much talked about already.

Remember True Tunes anyone. Something like this on a bit larger scale...

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| Less Salons - more variety | 12 | I would love to see a consistent look for the downtown area. Awnings, store fronts etc all with an "Updated" facade. Outdoor dining, bookstore and newer clothing stores along with a bakery would be ideal. |
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I think the town should decide on how many type of places should be allowed. Too many places creates less business for the ones that have been here for a long time. We don't need that many salons on every corner. It would be nice to have a variety of places. I remember when there was an old fashion candy store. Probably then the candy was ton cheaper. But it was a fun place.

The number of salons is crazy! And they are about to open a new one. I don't get it...

You might think it's crazy... but in the long-term the market decides how many to keep open.

Maybe there's a great demand for salons in the Wheaton area. (I wouldn't doubt it.) Maybe one salon does nails much better, and another does pedicures better. Maybe 20-somethings flock to one, 30-somethings to another, and 40-somethings to another, and 50-somethings to yet another.

Giant red flags start waving around in my head whenever someone proposes to artificially limit the amount of businesses that are set up in a community.

Why not have some type of architectural contest ?

I do think that there is definitely a disproportionate amount of salons. Maybe there is a need, but it seems kind of ridiculous to me.

I would disagree with "consistent look" if you mean all store fronts having the same or similar facade. I think what makes Wheaton great, is that if you drive through the city, the are few if even any streets which have the copy paste homes that are so prevalent in today's "modern" suburb. I'd love to maintain this feel of uniqueness in the downtown district. My preference would be a fresh version of a old European city.

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| Summer Concert Series | 10 | Why rush after work to: arrange childcare, pack the car up and waste 2 hours of our evening travelling to & from Ravinia or Millennium Park? Though there will always be good shows to catch there, I think we should have more musical offerings at Memorial Park during the summer season. The Municipal Band is great, but that's one night... I'd love to see this great outdoor venue optimized for the Ravinia type evening. Bring your blankets and wine and sit back to some nice jazz or blues or folk. Maybe the occasional more rockin' artist (but I don't think that'll go over too well with the neighbors and/or is conducive to the chill factor) |
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One more thought: Who will pay for such concerts?

Ravinia charges, even for the lawn seats. Millennium charges for the seats, but the lawn is free.

Wheaton Municipal Band is funded by the city (and your tax dollars), Wheaton Band Festival is funded by donations and business sponsorships. Wheaton Park District runs some kid-oriented concerts there.

If you add more concerts, who will pay the performers and for the promotion of the concerts?

Great idea. Wheaton has this excellent space but it is used too infrequently. I like the idea of a summer jazz series or festival. How about outdoor movie once in a while? Get rid of the tennis courts next to the band shell. Perhaps locating those courts next to the band shell made sense at some point, but the space could be better used - a small pavilion for refreshments to be used for the concerts and other park events?

I agree about the tennis courts.

Other town's park districts offer outdoor movies. I think WPD only offers outdoor movies at the local pools.

Part of the building where the washrooms are located has been used for some simple refreshments. Folks can also buy snacks throughout downtown.

If this idea goes very, very big, then we'll encounter parking issues, but the Thursday night concert-goers seem to have it worked out.

Love the jazz series idea. Perhaps talk to the Wheaton Band Festival (that's not the Municipal Band people, BTW) and get their thoughts on how to start up?

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| shamelessly steal good ideas from nearby towns | 9 | Geneva has unique character/architecture that is consistent in its downtown (even the new developments). Naperville doesn't. Instead it is successful by having a mix of national chains which draw people and local shops that carry unique items (as well as bars and restaurants). |
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Can't remember the population of Geneva, but Naperville is more than twice the population of Wheaton, has business parks (supports the lunch restaurants) and is richer, too. Being just like Naperville is not an easy job for Wheaton.

What IS a more comparable is Elmhurst. Population is smaller than Wheaton, and again, there are business park(s). It has a walkable downtown with variety. Downtown is near the tracks, and really exists on both sides of the tracks. There are few vacancies. How did they get to that point?

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| Winter Festival | 9 | A suggestion for entertainment, have a "Christkindlmarket" (like they have in Chicago) the weekend of the Christmas Parade. Have it where the French Market is, so it is able to be seen by passengers on the Metra. |
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I think this idea is outstanding! I try to buy all my Christmas presents locally, and this would be a great venue for people who want to buy their Christmas presents all in one place....plus help local businesses!

Great idea - maybe they can approach the people who run French Market and they will take it on.

Great idea!

Im in LOVE with this idea!

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| Wheaton's White Elephant | 8 | Ok first off, no disrespect intended here but, I'll say it, this place has got to go... Do people shop here? I never see people go in or come out. Most of my friends who visit will ask, "what's with the creepy shop from the 60's with all the sports paraphernalia?" Can anyone even recall what this place is named? I looked the other and I do not remember. There is a small sign tucked under the foreboding awning. This is such prime real estate that, in my opinion is being under-utilized. But like I opined in another post, I don't think the answer is to put a big retail chain store there. Thoughts? [END RANT] |
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I think Wheaton should turn this place into a (possibly) 2 level small health foods store. A Trader Joe's isn't that big to being with and I think it would be perfect. All the traffic would definitely get it noticed and with the French Market on Saturdays, they could somehow contribute to help out the locals. Maybe even buying from the locals to supply Wheaton with locally grown foods. It wouldn't have to be a Trader Joe's, even some sort of co-op would be great. As long as it would stick to reasonable prices I think it is definitely a win.

I like it. Bring back the general store!

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| <p>Several years ago, the city tried to claim this lot under eminent domain. Sandberg took them to court and he won. A downtown business owner told me "I would not rent space from Sandberg. He does not maintain his properties."</p> | | |
| <p>The man that owns this shop, has been asked to sell, but he is wealthy and doesn't care if no one buys anything. He doesn't want to lose the property. He also owns a bunch of empty stores in downtown Wheaton as well, but he won't let anyone use them. It's unfortunate that he is being like this since he is really bringing downtown Wheaton down. But no one can force him out, he owns the property.</p> | | |
| <p>Sandberg's Store for Big and Tall? I believe he owns quite a few of the buildings. I agree that this is a waste of prime space, but the city can't just kick him out.</p> | | |
| Shared/Rental Office Space | 7 | How about a space where you could rent a desk for a day or hour? A place where you could meet clients, get out of your home office, or maybe avoid the commute downtown and make the most out of a work from home day. A place with more privacy than the local Starbucks or Caribou. |
| Face lift to buildings and book store (i.e. like Anderson's) | 6 | A good number of the buildings downtown look like they are right out of the 60's - not in a good, nostalgic way but in a tired, dated way. It would be great to see these get a face lift and for a bookstore (like Anderson's in Naperville) and some destination stores (i.e. American Eagle) to move in. |
| <p>Love the idea of having destination stores! Totally good idea! And a face lift would definitely be nice. A place to be proud to bring out of town guests.</p> | | |
| <p>I think a good book store would be great, but having an anchor store like AE, to me, seems like a bad idea. Though I'm sure it would drive higher revenue and foot traffic, i don't think having these kind of stores fits with the vision/vibe of the downtown. It work for Naperville because it's larger but with such limited space I don't think it's a good use of the space. Look, mos of us have cars, if we need to shop for this kind of stuff, driving to Oakbrook or Carol Stream isn't that far to have all of that stuff. It seems from the ideas here on this site and my opinion as well, that folks want a good place to eat (which is pretty much covered) and then a nice place to go before or afterwards to enjoy some activity. Perusing the aisles of a Old Navy doesn't quite seem like "a night downtown"</p> | | |
| <p>sorry to be so snarky... :)</p> | | |
| Gourmet food store and a bookstore | 5 | Overall we need more diversity in our shopping district. Restaurants are great but we need shopping too! |
| <p>Bookstores are wonderful, but that's a risky business at this time, especially for independent bookstores. Its market is rapidly changing. Who ever thought that Borders would go under?</p> | | |
| <p>But I agree with your general point, that Wheaton could use variety in the downtown.</p> | | |
| <p>We need to survey what types of shops our residents would patronize. I don't think we need more shoe or clothing stores. Do we want to go "up-scale" with unusual boutiques or even stores similar to Crate & Barrel and Barnes & Noble, (a la Naperville) or do we want to preserve a home-town feel, with stores selling more of the basic necessities (pharmacy, convenience store, etc), but then again, parking is a pain. We'd need open lot parking so patrons could make quick stops rather than have to circle the block or park blocks away in the garage. We don't have a supermarket in the area, and that's a problem too (not for the immediate downtown area, but definitely accessible to nearby residents.)</p> | | |
| <p>There will be a supermarket soon, on Roosevelt Rd. Pharmacy, Bakery, bookstore are all good suggestions.</p> | | |
| A Kitchen Store! | 5 | Glen Ellyn has an adorable kitchen store called Marcel's that offers kitchen accessories. They even have their own kitchen where they offer classes. This would be a great way for people to meet and have a good time. |
| <p>I've been in that store, and it's big and very nice. Downtown Naperville has a few of those kitchen supply stores, too. I think Bleu Olive is offering cooking classes.</p> | | |
| A Greener, More Sustainable Wheaton | 4 | I think that an emphasis on sustainability would help Wheaton businesses look better and save them money. I know of two energy efficiency firms that Wheaton hosts, and since it's still a rapidly-growing field (they're both hiring), a city-wide effort to be greener could bring in more of that type of business. |
| Outdoor Lifestyle Apparel Store | 4 | I went to school at the University of Iowa and there was an Active Endeavor's right in the heart of Iowa City. It was a great outdoor apparel store offering shoes, jackets, shorts, pants, shirts and gear. They feature brands such as NorthFace, Patagonia, Columbia, TOMS, and Mountain Hard Wear. This business opportunity would definitely be something different and it isn't exclusive to one hobby like a running store or bicycle shop. |
| Court the College Community | 3 | Wheaton college enrolls 2,500 students. What would bring more of them into the downtown area for entertainment or to run errands? What stores or shops would cause them to spend more time downtown? |

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| Plan events to cater to Parent's weekend. And don't forget IIT and COD, and DePaul! | | |
| Electronics store, Apple Store, affordable dining options. | | |
| We need a drug store in the downtown! | 3 | I really wish that Walgreens would consider opening a store in the downtown district. County Farm and Roosevelt??? C'mon. We need a store downtown. |
| Wheaton Market!! | 3 | We have the French Market in the summer . . but why not a permanent, vibrant and bustling full time market?? To get the needed scale, the city could re-purpose the vacant Jewel/Osco building or perhaps that empty lot west of Tom's Price? Butchers, bakers, florists, candy makers, small eateries, fresh veggies & fruit -- all the time! Downtown Metra Market (Oglivie Station), Philadelphia's Reading Terminal and Cleveland's West Side Market offer some ideas. They make a great destination and offer more options for shoppers and curiosity seekers alike! We don't need to replace the French Market -- we can augment it! |
| There is a much more stripped down market in the winter at the train station. We could definitely use a more substantial offering though. We'll have to see how Mariano' Fresh Market will serve the grocery needs of the community. (though not a direct replacement for those of us who like the local/fresh/organic/vibe of the French Market) | | |
| Great idea, but, both of those locations are already in use. Construction has already begun on an apartment building in the empty lot and the Jewel-Osco is supposed to be torn down and with a medical building taking it's place. | | |
| Let Capitalism Work | 3 | Reduce the amount of regulation and fees to open a business. Create a business friendly environment not regulated by small town government officials that are trying to create a panacea and instead allow people to open viable businesses not dependent on approval by anyone but the landlord. It amazes me that every step taken to improve downtown results in businesses leaving for other parts. |
| Pure market capitalism - hasn't done much good to make downtown Wheaton a thriving economic engine thus far. Government can partner with business. Reasonable regulation. Reasonable joint development in areas where it is needed. Take for example the grocery store being built at Roosevelt and Naperville. School district put the land back on the tax rolls, park district and developer worked together for a multi-use project. This idea isn't socialism. It's common sense. | | |
| I suppose I could have stated my thoughts better. Generally I'm all for smaller government and less regulation, but there are cases where I think regulation is good idea. Personally I think there are some businesses that don't belong in downtown Wheaton. Regulation is the only way to keep them out. Several comments under "economic development" talk about too many one type of business and attracting another. Regulations are needed to do that. If the City wants to redevelop anything, they are going to need a set of laws and regulations to work under. Not all government is bad. | | |
| Rudolph seems a little rough around the edges, but right on cowboy. Saddle up partner, giddy up!!! | | |
| Yes, less regulation/ More pawn shops & cash for gold. (Not sure I totally agree with this comment) | | |
| Frankly sir, I agree with Rudolf R | | |
| No disrespect, but I couldn't agree more with Rudolf R. | | |
| Kind Sirs, I know Rudolph R. I served with Rudolph R. And, Kind Sirs, you are NO Rudolph R | | |
| Despite the spelling, this person is right on. Economics 101. Rudolf R for Mayor. | | |
| I think this is a great idea! I think this guys really gets it | | |
| Rita's Italian Ice | 2 | Add a Rita's! This is a franchise, so a franchisee would be needed but I couldn't resist adding it as an idea here. My wife and I are from the East Coast and Rita's are everywhere and always extremely popular. http://www.ritasice.com/ |
| Yes yes yes! Love Rita's! | | |
| Redevelop old Jewel | 2 | Has there been any talk about what the old Jewel site will/ should become? |
| First I understand Jewel keeps ownership to assure another market is blocked - guess Marios 500 feet west checkmates that! Second even if the WWII design building was bulldozed the lot has little attractive features - 500 year flood plain (ever other year or more often) licks at rear of lot until the stormwater sewerage mess is cleared by Wheaton Engineering. Third the new stormwater storage or detention pond for former Central Park modifications will be just 100 feet south of lot - oh sure no mosquitoes will breed there ? | | |
| already happening... | | |
| http://wheaton.patch.com/articles/construction-at-former-jewel-property-could-begin-in-early-2013 | | |
| A medical office building is not a leisure activity, but those who go there and work there might patronize eateries downtown, which is very good. If they build it, a first-floor pharmacy would be a good idea. | | |

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| Wheaton Theater | 2 | Develop the Wheaton Theater. We have this great old historic building, it should not be wasted. Shows, lectures, plays, fund raisers. Could even put a little restaurant inside. Couldn't the playhouse next door somehow be combined with it, like the Paramount in Aurora. We need someone with a plan and a vision. |
| There are other posts on this topic here, explaining why this is doubtful. Or Google "Wheaton Grand Theater" to understand the concepts in play. That building needs millions of \$ worth of work to be viable. | | |
| Richard, there are at least 2 other towns nearby with historical movie theaters which still show movies--Elmhurst and Downers Grove. (And then there was the DuPage Theater in Lombard, which was knocked down because no one had the money to restore it.) There are other historic theaters such as Rialto and Paramount. | | |
| It's a challenge for sure. How did other towns restore other historic theaters? Are there government redevelopment funds? Can we entice a corporate sponsor? BP? United? Give them some sort of naming rights? Entice local Wheaton elites to help restore theater? What about the company that operates the Downers Grove theater? What would it take to make them interested? What's the cost if nothing is done? Is there a cost to the local business as the building deteriorates? Will there be a public cost to demolition? Have we really exhausted all avenues to restore this building? | | |
| Agreed. The theater is our best asset. How many towns have a 1920s historic movie theater? The community needs to come together to get this gem up and running. | | |
| Recruit Microsoft Retail Store | 1 | Need more hip, national retailers downtown that can bring more foot traffic. Wheaton has great demographics. Microsoft is aggressively opening retail stores to compete against Apple. Try to recruit them. |
| An Apple Store (sorry, PC lovers) would bring a lot more traffic - should definitely not be excluded. | | |
| I would agree that we should recruit some high profile stores. I don't think we need to exclude Apple. If someone bigs wants to come, welcome them! The amount of sales tax revenue would be highly desirable. | | |
| Donuts!!! | 1 | So I work right around the block from the Doughnut Vault and this place is always hopping. [Full disclosure, I've never actually been there or even bought a doughnut from there myself. But I have eaten them, they are delicious, just not \$3 a doughnut delicious for my budget.] Now with that aside I think someone should definitely bring a doughnut shop similar to Vault. A locally owned shop that would be conveniently be located by the train station; maybe take over the service station that doesn't appear to be in service. And hopefully have I Have A Bean supply the coffee. It would be a bit more upscale but not break the bank trendy. Think, I would grab coffee and a doughnut every day before hitting the train. |
| Improve Halloween Festivities | 1 | Advertise the downtown trick or treating better. Have pumpkin decoration in the park. Perhaps a little kids costume parade. How about a Wheaton Pumpkin 5K in the morning to benefit? Bring in a Halloween themed band at the band shell "Monster Mash." If the theater was up and running there could be monster movies. Maybe the local playhouse could have Charlie Browns The Great Pumpkin. Look through the local paper - all the towns around us are competing for those Halloween dollars. We need to up our game. People downtown with their kids? They go have lunch, maybe some popcorn at the Popcorn Shop, etc. It becomes a regular event. |
| Celebrate Businesses | 1 | Each week or month celebrate a Wheaton downtown business with proclamation, public recognition, public connections, hupla, banners, search lights, bargains and memorials. |
| Downtown Market | 1 | Develop one of the many idle buildings into a small market able to serve the walking downtown residents. Locations to develop include; abandon movie theater, 1st floor of 5 story mortgage closing building, unused clock tower lots/parking lot, idle Wheaton Historical Center, closed Jewel by commendation or idle storefront by Paper House. |
| Take a look at the Jewel that was built in Arlington Heights to accommodate the residents when they updated/expanded their downtown in the late '90s. I lived in AH but worked in the city and would stop at the Jewel (which was right next to the train station) on my way home. | | |
| Critique Businesses | 1 | Critique downtown businesses recently or now leaving Wheaton. Determine the keys to their leaving ? Was the assessor's tax rate and calculation of business value too high ? Are equal businesses' taxes same or were theirs arbitrated or adjusted unfairly. Has the landlord raised lease rate beyond what the businesses model can tolerate ? What was wrong with this location ? Believe the business owners and managers would be only to happy to have City of Wheaton understand their concerns ? |
| Drug Store Downtown | 1 | Promote a CVS or Walgreens mini-drugstore like 1st floor of CDH outpatient wing. This would provide walk to, take-away for downtown shoppers and visitors. Locate along Main, Front, or Hale nearby other businesses with many patrons. |

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| Sweet Tomatoes - Healthy Foods | 1 | <p>Offer Sweet Tomatoes Ron's TV location for center-of-town eatery. Sweet Tomatoes had plan and lot in Danada area but deal fell through with corporate re-organization 4 years ago. Wheaton remains in center of their location and was justified 4 years ago. What better than a healthy choice drawing customers to center of Wheaton ?</p> |
| Quiet Horns in middle of night - Real Estate Values | 1 | <p>Post solar powered signs along railroad right of way to inform locomotive engineers that Wheaton and the 973 condos along the tracks is a 'Quiet Zone' and no horns are to be blown between midnight and 4 am. Understand the engineers like to signal their relatives of their passing through but really 'Stuff a cork in it!'</p> <p>National railroad laws:</p> <p>eCFR Title 49: Transportation as of August 30, 2012 Part 222 Use of locomotive horns at public highway-rail Section 222.42 How does this rule affect quiet zones Paragraph 222.9 Definitions</p> <p>Intermediate Partial Quiet Zone means a segment of a rail line within which is situated one or a number of consecutive public highway-rail grade crossings at which State statutes or local ordinances restricted the routine sounding of locomotive horns for a specified period of time during the evening or nighttime hours, or at which locomotive horns did not sound due to formal or informal agreements between the community and the railroad or railroads for a specified period of time during the evening and/or nighttime hours, and at which such statutes, ordinances or agreements were in place and enforced or observed as of December 18, 2003, but not as of October 9, 1996.</p> <p>http://www.up.com/aboutup/contact/index.htm http://www.uprr.com/reus/roadxing/industry/process/horn_quiet.shtml http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=4605589c825f318c7661b3318a3d7312&rgn=div5&view=text&node=49:4.1.1.17&idno=49</p> |
| Densify, densify, densify | 1 | <p>The easiest way to improve general economic performance in a city is to add more people. Since Wheaton doesn't have any greenspace to build out anymore, the next option is to build up.</p> <p>In order for *that* to work, steps should be taken to achieve this goal, and some of them might seem radical.</p> <p>* Abolish zoning restrictions on the height of buildings, possibly outside of a (very) small area where you want to keep a certain "historical feel". Let the market decide how tall buildings should be, especially considering all of downtown Wheaton is within walking distance to a major train station.</p> <p>* Abolish parking *minimums*. Let the market decide how many parking spaces its tenants need. Younger buyers might not own cars, or may elect to use services such as ZipCar or iGo to get around.</p> <p>I've read about a particularly stubborn property owner that won't let proper redevelopment on Main Street take place. There isn't a fixed amount of "space" in the downtown area; Wheaton can, and should, encourage other developers to build up and create new ground-floor commercial space with the other properties that are near downtown. If that other guy wants to let his property go to economic waste, let him; and let the market bring other developers to other properties, for Wheaton's profit.</p> |
| | | <p>Let the market decide in it's purist sense hasn't helped downtown Wheaton thrive much. Government (European socialist alert) can be a partner with business and can help create the conditions for private sector growth. That's what this website is fostering - right? Agree wholeheartedly that we need density but if it is unrestrained we might not like the results. Then what? Then the government will be responsible for cleaning up the mess.</p> |
| | | <p>Although I understand that government could be a partner for growth, I think it's important to look at the limitations that it imposes.</p> <p>In particular, if the limitations are called for by only the people that will be immediately affected by whatever changes downtown, I want to review the limitations, because what makes downtown Wheaton more prosperous *will* make the town better for the 80-85% of people that don't live near downtown Wheaton.</p> <p>There have already been steps, however halting, towards making downtown Wheaton more dense. There are new townhomes to the north of downtown, along West Street. There's new office space where the Wok n' Fire is. The courthouse is being turned into housing (for seniors, granted, but it's still a population base.)</p> <p>And population is what is needed in the suburb to sustain the kind of businesses people on this forum seem to want. Most of the rest of the suburbs, as-is, only have enough people to support Wal-Marts!</p> |

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| Move the Metra Station | 0 | <p>Relocate the Metra Station to the old site on Front between Hale and Main. Put more commuter parking nearby. Add a pedestrian underpass.</p> <p>Let's put more foot traffic downtown and the retailers, cafes, and restaurants will follow.</p> <p>I'm pained when I see a train load of commuters disembark in a retail lite area that is West and Liberty rather than at Hale and Front with a dozen or more retail outlets.</p> <p>And yes, I do know there is a newish retail complex anchored by Caribou at West and Front but for whatever reason that building is oriented toward Front Street instead of fronting the train station.</p> <p>Expensive approach? Yes. But the potential rewards are great.</p> |
| 225 W. Welsey St... What the heck goes on here? | 0 | I have passed by this building walking about town many times and one day finally realized I have no idea what goes on in there. What is this building used for? It looks vacant. I'm sure there are endless opportunities of re-purposing it... |
| Development Needs Traffic | 0 | To improve the economic development you need more people travelling though the area. Connect Naperville Road to Main Street someplace south of the RR tracks with a sweeping curve. This makes Main Street a major thoroughfare connecting Naperville Road to Schmale. The added traffic would likely bring more business to the area. |
| Yoga Studio | 0 | I think a yoga studio would be a great fit. It could appeal both to residents and bring in non-residents, who might stick around for some shopping after their classes. |
| More than just beautiful sidewalks | 0 | I recently took the on-line survey. It seemed to me that the survey dealt heavily with sidewalks. I agree that Wheaton needs to aesthetically improve sidewalks, but there wasn't much in the survey to address entertainment. I am not sure that sidewalks alone draw people to a town. I lived in Chicago and while they did improve sidewalks, the draw was the culture, restaurants and entertainment the city had to offer. Although there were a number of entries on this site regarding the Wheaton Grand Theater, I didn't see one mention of it in the on-line survey. Has the economic development committee thrown in the towel on the theater? |
| Judging from the town hall meeting last month, it sounds like the vision of the redevelopment is more geared toward the look and feel of the downtown area (streetscape). Though all the ideas of what kind of businesses should come to the area are valuable and great to dream about, I think that's more in the hands of folks (investors) willing to start them. Doesn't sound like there's a lot of public \$ to throw at building business. That being said, I agree with the group that if there was public \$ available, throw it at the theater! It could be such a draw. (My opinion though is a theater and not movie house) | | |
| Of course too, there are policies and incentives that hinder or can help facilitate other to come and start shop. So maybe these issue of policy & incentive should also be paramount in the re-visioning. | | |
| Sponsor Downtown Areas | 0 | Have City of Wheaton Council members adopt a downtown area or street as parent/supporter/ reporter of positives and concerns. |
| Condemn Idle Buildings | 0 | Using ordinances (develop as needed) and public law rid the downtown blight. Stages maybe notices read in Council, 2nd reading and passing declaring public nuisances of eye sores. Where required tear down to grade level for redevelopment. |
| Calliope Downtown Performances | 0 | Purchase an air powered Calliope as attraction to Downtown Wheaton. Like Naperville's Bell Tower, regular scheduled performances can include guest performances by Professional Musicians as well as Music Students from Wheaton and other colleges. Like Naperville the keyboard and unit will require facilities and security. http://www.haskey.com/johnh/calliope/index.html |
| Interesting idea. | | |
| Pharmacy Dispensary @ Town Center | 0 | Contract with InstyMeds.com to place a stand alone dispensing machine in downtown Wheaton. These vending machines are contacted by physicians and prescriptions to dispense medicines. Closest is at East Danada Cadence Convenient Care Clinic - too far for downtown resident walking. |

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| Exercise for Downtown Employees | 0 | Retail employees have long hours, many hours on their feet with little exercise. Include in businesses small exercise areas, such as treadmill, stair-master, bicycle, or elliptical. These include fold-up models when idle for remainder of the day occupy only a few square feet. Public offices like the auditors have included this in the employees benefits and are rewarded with better health and attendance. In downtown businesses with one employee this could be in area allowing viewing of the door or business counter. Some adjacent businesses could share this small valuable asset. No customer wants their business people aging without chance of exercise! |
| furniture store! | 0 | I think we need a furniture store that both white and black people can shop at |
| Liquor store | 0 | There is no where walking distance of the Wheaton Metra station to buy liquor. I would like to buy a beer for my train ride! |
| More, casual eating options | 0 | What about a deli/sandwich shop that would be open until 9 or 10. Most restaurants that are open later are on the higher end. It would be nice to have another casual place to eat out that would be open late, especially during the week. |
| A Bed & Breakfast | 0 | I feel downtown Wheaton would be perfect for a Bed & Breakfast. With Wheaton's charm and beautiful, historic homes...it would provide a great destination for a one- or two-night getaway. You'd get new people (spending money)...plus it would also provide Wheaton residents a place they could recommend to their out-of-town, overnight guests (which would also keep them in the area for dining, etc.) |

| BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS: HOW COULD DOWNTOWN BE MORE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FRIENDLY? | | |
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| Idea Title | Seconds | Idea Summary |
| Bike lanes | 11 | With all the bikers in the area, it would be nice if the streets had bike lanes. |
| Cycle tracks (bike lanes separated from motorized traffic by a row of parked cars, or another buffer) would work well, but I'm not sure if most streets in the area have the space for this. | | |
| Make sure downtown grocery store is pedestrian / bike friendly. | 8 | I am concerned the grocery store being built at the gateway to the town will abandon a city-scape look in favor of a suburban style strip mall - blah. Hey, Town square is nice for a strip mall but not for the old downtown area. Hide the parking and landscape it so folks will want to bike and walk to the store. |
| Prairie Path signage & South Spur upgrade | 7 | <p>Riding along the path in the downtown area could be slightly confusing to those new to the path or not from out parts. This is especially true at the split of the north & south spurs. Maybe consider more (clearer) signage that directs riders along the path. Also it may be beneficial to have the bike path lines or symbols painted on the sidewalk as an added help and reminder to foot traffic that it is a shared pathway.</p> <p>The south spur connector from Liberty to Roosevelt is not laid out well and could use a more dedicated sidewalk/path that is conducive to bicycles.</p> <p>And while I'm at it, since this hub is mile marker 0, maybe have more prominence about this somehow.</p> |
| There is much that I would change if I had an unlimited budget. | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * That's a busy parking garage in rush hour, I imagine. * The signs explicitly encourage riding on the sidewalk, which is bad. * There is a great deal of automobile traffic, and a less-than-ideal amount of facilities for pedestrians (bulb-outs, refuge islands, things that force cars to slow down on Liberty Drive) * There <i>*is*</i> a lot of pedestrian traffic, since there's a 15+ story residential tower at this location. * The Prairie Path is disjointed at the train station; it's too easy to lose the path. | | |
| Unfortunately Liberty is the most direct way between mile zero and downtown, so perhaps this is the place to try out a modern cycle track? | | |
| It would be nice if there were more trees or landscaping in this area. It's just not a pleasant part of the path to walk/ride on and gives a bad impression of our town. | | |
| I second the comment about highlighting what is available downtown. | | |
| Yes!!! Wheaton is the hub of the Illinois Prairie Path, but that hub is hidden between an unsightly parking deck for the apartment buildings and a storage facility. We need to make this gateway to the path more obvious. There needs to be upgrades to the path going south - it's barely a gravel path. The path going east is also confusing. Perhaps stripe or widen the sidewalk. Some nice signs about what's available in the downtown for path users? Better restrooms. Bike racks. Hundreds plus use the path everyday. Seems like a no brainer to highlight and advertise this wonderful asset as a reason to visit Wheaton. | | |
| Pedestrian and Bike traffic | 7 | The Illinois Prairie path is a overlooked amenity in the western communities, generating a lot of recreational traffic. Downtown Wheaton should embrace this feature (our riverwalk) and provide places for users to stop and get off the bike and use our downtown retailers. This could be accomplished in multiple locations and designed and public plazas. |
| Improve network of bike paths to access downtown and IPP from all parts of Wheaton. | | |
| pedestrian walkway over the railroad tracks | 6 | Connect the north and south sides of downtown with a pedestrian overpass walkway. Can be sponsored by businesses and beautified by local non-profit. On each end of walkway, create open spaces with benches/kiosks. |
| Bike Racks | 5 | Where have all the bike racks gone? There use to be one in front of the popular Starbucks on Main st. Inquired where it was months ago and they were "checking into it". Still isn't back. With the many people riding to the French Market along the Prairie Path - why aren't there the most bike racks along the Prairie Path? |
| Agreed. We need more bike racks throughout the town. My family took bikes to Front Street to eat and there was no rack. We locked them up against poles which blocked pedestrian traffic a bit. In addition to some racks around the town, have part of the parking lots dedicated to bikes (and mopeds?). The two parking decks in town should have sheltered racks. Make it nice, too -visible from the street, lighted, separate marked entrance. | | |

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| Can bike racks or other improvements be funded through something similar to the parking improvements required when a property is redeveloped. | | |
| We just rode to the French Market this weekend and searched all over for a bike rack. We ended up just chaining them all together on the sidewalk in front of Wok on Fire. Great question! | | |
| Covered / Weather protected bike parking | 2 | Additional bike parking near the train stations would be helpful especially if it's covered or somehow protected from the weather. |
| I think where ever we have parking, it needs to be secure. Especially with all the stolen bikes reported in the Chicagoland area as of late. | | |
| Include current technology warning lights for bike riders. | 0 | Two Prairie Path crossing of busy Downtown Wheaton Streets. One with traffic light one with stop signs. Assuming no vehicle driver ever wants to hurt any bike rider, add stop lights on path approaches to warn of vehicles approaching intersection. Secondly bike owners should be required by Wheaton Ordinance to have blinking LED lights on front and rear as all times for safety from vehicles and approaching pedestrians. This is like the passenger vehicles the last decade including an always on headlight whenever motor is on. Again assuming neither pedestrian nor rider wants injury because bikes, vehicles and pedestrians travel at widely varied speeds. |
| If Wheaton doesn't have a bike headlight ordinance like this already (similar to this Chicago ordinance: http://chicagobikelaw.blogspot.com/2007/09/headlights-and-law.html) I'd be really surprised. | | |
| Rear reflectors are required by the CPSC and are, I believe, suitable enough for the suburbs. | | |
| Pavers and Pavers | 0 | Water saving paver alley beside Egg Harbor on Hale Street has sunk. Brick paver crosswalk on Hale is great look. Use pavers but specify 18 deep soil preparation/ compaction for pavers to be driven upon. |

| GATEWAYS: WHAT IDEAS DO YOU HAVE TO IMPROVE THE GATEWAYS AND SENSE OF ARRIVAL INTO DOWNTOWN WHEATON? | | |
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| Idea Title | Seconds | Idea Summary |
| Pedestrian underpass | 8 | I have no idea why this was never built when the city rebuilt the train station, but a pedestrian underpass would be a nice added benefit for commuters. |
| It is questionable whether downtown Wheaton can ever be viable without a underpass for cars, considering the freight train situation. We need to study other communities with train traffic and viable downtown areas and see what solutions they have found. | | |
| Great idea! An alternative (and perhaps lower cost) idea would be to create a stairway from the already existing overpass to the prairie trail. In this way, commuters could cross over the bridge from the distant parking lot and my not need to walk as far. | | |
| Gateway needs to be a destination | 7 | The opportunity is probably now lost with the Mariano's parking lot but it would have been nice to have a water feature and outdoor performance area surrounded by walking paths and outdoor dining. |
| It's a little crazy to have a gateway that is blocks from downtown, with open space on one side. | | |
| Perhaps a gateway would spur growth of downtown south of the tracks | | |
| Add Gateways to North, East, and West sides of Downtown Wheaton | 5 | Each corner of Downtown Wheaton should have its own Gateway. A kiosk or sign with a map showing destinations and brochure/map for pedestrians at each Gateway/Parking area and the train station. Allow advertising from downtown businesses and announcements of upcoming events. For drivers, directional signs are needed to entice people to turn off of Roosevelt or Geneva Road as well as to identify parking. |
| This is outstanding advice | | |

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| Grand Entrance | 5 | <p>I agree with Tony O, it would be a nice addition to turn the north side football field area into a destination with a water feature and outdoor performance area, understanding that the football field may need to stay intact since there are limited amounts of open areas for our local leagues to play.</p> <p>In the winter, the Park District could create a large ice skating rink to draw people into downtown and potentially downtown shops could provide vending where someone could get a hot chocolate, popcorn or other winter treats. It would be great to people to somehow link this area to the north side of the tracks by hardscaping the terrain to flow into downtown enticing people to utilize this area then stroll downtown.</p> <p>The entry to downtown, at the corner of Roosevelt and Main, needs to be more prominent. Currently you could drive by and never notice it. I would suggest an arching gateway over the road, making the pedestrian crosswalks out of brick and constructing some sort of hardscape on each corner of the intersection that catches people's attention, yet clearly defines the north side as the entrance to the city. I would suggest having the streets constructed of "cobblestone" with lamp posts matching those lining the downtown streets. It needs to be well lit and provide a sense of allure persuading people to follow the path to downtown Wheaton.</p> |
| I like the idea of ice skating! | | |
| I truly believe that the proposed improvements to the former Hubble School site will be a fine new south gateway to Downtown Wheaton. | | |
| Naperville Road Connection | 5 | <p>Naperville road heading north should some how be connected to main street without needing to make several turns. A nice sweeping curve taking Naperville Road north through Illinois St and Willow.</p> <p>This connection may provide a little more traffic down main street and increase the exposure to the downtown area. If done correctly this might be a much better connection to Roosevelt road than the current Main street/Roosevelt intersection.</p> |
| View From the Tracks | 3 | <p>I was walking through downtown Wheaton last night and was noticing the condition of the backs of the buildings north of the tracks. The view from the tracks might be the only might be all that some individuals and commuters see of downtown Wheaton. This has an effect on their perception of the town and could affect future shopping or dining out decisions. It would be nice to see the backs of those buildings cleaned up, repaired, and possibly even used for the advertising of local events.</p> |
| Capture the recreation users | 2 | <p>As the Hubble site is redeveloped there needs to be a defined focus on the linkages and connections from the new development to the downtown. There needs to be a emphasis on connecting the recreational users in the redevelopment to the downtown using the recreation as a catalyst to economic development.</p> |
| Train Overpass | 2 | <p>I know the project would be expensive, but city priorities could be shifted to create a more inviting and safe environment. The train issues keep me from visiting downtown.</p> |
| Signage ('to downtown) along College Ave., Washington St. | 1 | <p>Development of vacancies on College Avenue and Washington St. (where old book store is), and added signage directing people to downtown Wheaton along College Ave and Washington.</p> |
| Gateway to the City | 0 | <p>The least expensive idea probably would be to have some major signage at our city limits and then work toward downtown signage. It is hard to tell even where our downtown is located when you enter the city limits.</p> |

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| More shelters by the train tracks at Wheaton Station! | 0 | <p>The new Metra station downtown is nice, when it's open -- and when it's properly heated or cooled -- Unfortunately the station is closed more than it's open. So, it's nice to have a main station, and it makes sense not to staff it when there are limited commuters during the day, can we make the experience better? Trains pick up and drop off passengers well before and beyond the station AND on both the north and south sides of the tracks. Despite the volume of Metra passengers arriving and departing from Wheaton Station, there are only a couple of tiny partially covered shelters (one east of the station on the north side of the tracks and one slightly west of the station on the south side of the tracks). It would be great to have more covered shelters (or perhaps a long covered shelter one each side of the tracks, similar to the one on the south side of the tracks at College Avenue) to support the volume of passengers, demonstrate Wheaton's "we care about you spirit" and help protect all from the elements as we take advantage of the convenience of having a main train line right downtown!</p> <p>A simple long shed roof along each side of the track, much of the length of a typical train would be fantastic! The link below shows a bare bones idea from another city -- and it's not aesthetically uplifting -- but if we're crunching nickels and pennies . . .</p> |
| Only 1 Gateway to Downtown Wheaton ? | 0 | Great Gateway to Wheaton at Main and Roosevelt. What about Main and Geneva ? Would the new construction over stormwater creek into Northside Park on North Main be too far from Carol Stream for another Gateway ? How about the new bridge beside Public Works for another ? |
| Rise Above Flooding | 0 | Contract or purchase a WWII duck to rescue and transport people during the periodic stormwater flooding of South and North Main Street. These duck are used in Boston as tourist attractions and could in Wheaton be used in parades. With several stormwater basins within greater Wheaton area can be used in rescue and utility work. Prevents complete closure of Main Street during these community emergencies. |
| 250 Trains per day average is a fact | 0 | Plan how to enhance downtown based on complete cutoff of north/south 250 times per day by trains. Never at good time, never spaced out, always requiring added travel time in going to/away from downtown Wheaton. This brings vehicle and pedestrian movement to halt until passed. Some freight trains park west of city and some park east of city with very slow startup through downtown. Sizable number are the commuter trains needed for many residents and Wyoming low sulfur coal trains (50 year contract) needed for Chicago power generation |

| ONE-WAY STREETS: WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS OR IDEAS CONCERNING THE ONE-WAY STREETS IN DOWNTOWN WHEATON? | | |
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| Seconds | Idea Summary | Comments |
| Inconvenient and a Hassle | 5 | If the one-way street is only one block long, it's not really a problem. But when there are a series of blocks that are one-way, and the store you want to visit is on one of them, it's a hassle figuring out where to "hit" the one way street to be sure your store is ahead of you, down the block. I do not like one-way streets at all. It becomes a maze just north of downtown. |
| Leave It The Way It Is | 5 | Considering the biggest problem is bringing additional revenue and businesses into the area, one way streets should be on the bottom of the list. |
| agreed and it's probably safer having traffic flowing one way through downtown...esp. if we are looking to attract more and more people. | | |
| Might Not be a Priority But... | 3 | On several occasions I've noticed cars going the wrong way down the one way streets. It probably shouldn't be a huge priority, but they seem to be confusing for visitors to downtown Wheaton. Somehow signage needs to be improved. |
| There is a notable lack of "wrong way" and "do not enter" signs if you try to go the wrong direction on one of these streets. The last time I was there, I witnessed a car going the wrong way down Hale. It was up by Shane's, so it wasn't a big deal. It's not too hard to imagine a car going the wrong way onto the railroad tracks, however, and being struck by a train as result. (There is no gate if you go the "wrong way" down a one-way street onto the railroad tracks. There are warning lights, but elderly drivers have been known to be confused / ignore them.) | | |
| I did this a few times when I first got to Wheaton. Agreed things could be made more clear. | | |
| One way streets | 1 | I don't think the one way streets have negative effect and do work fine in the downtown area. I think in determining the street directions and type of parking I would consider the pedestrian space higher. We need to have as much room in front of the stores as possible. So I would not make any changes to direction or parking orientation if it does not increase or maintain the sidewalk widths. |
| Non-Gateway Traffic Lights | 0 | North/South traffic lights on Main and Naperville Roads crossing Roosevelt prevent easy travel to/from downtown Wheaton. During busy times the signal control have built in timers of 3-4 minutes before even checking if north/south traffic has fallen to sleep waiting for change. (same lights at 5-6 a.m. are very responsive to north/south.) The other noted result in the Roosevelt traffic blocks these intersections because the lights almost never change to allow north/south permission. |

| PARKING: WHAT IDEAS DO YOU HAVE TO ENHANCE THE SUPPLY OF CONVENIENT PARKING? | | |
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| Idea Title | Seconds | Comments |
| Better Signage | 3 | Are there any signs directing visitors to the parking garage? |
| diagonal parking on Front Street | 2 | why aren't there yellow lines on the curb on Front Street between Hale and Main Street to designate parking spaces? Many spaces are lost because cars are parked far apart from each other because there are no lines to define where the parking spaces could be. I realize having yellow lines on the cobblestone might not look good but the yellow lines could be painted on the curb to act as a parking space guideline. |
| Cut the cobble stone and install bricks/stone of a different color to designate parking spaces. | | |
| "If you build it, they will come" | 2 | <p>Sensing from last night vision session, I gathered that parking is high up on the list of things to consider in the 20 year plan (the specific sub-categories on this forum are obviously the focus of this plan, which again became very apparent at the meeting, so let's weigh in on these, I'll spend less time talking about horses :) And it was also referenced several times that we'd be working with a limited budget depending of course on public and/or private \$\$\$.</p> <p>That being said, I think the focus should weigh much less on parking, provided that any changes to streets and considering the added retail that's desired, is accommodated for. I know accessibility is a major consideration, but if we use our limited resources to parking issues and only nominally improve the reason people are coming to park, is it worth it? "Come to Wheaton, we have nice parking." Not exactly what we want our elevator speech to be ;) Ok - taking one step down from my soapbox...</p> <p>If we add to a thriving downtown community full of great offerings of goods & services with an environment (streetscape) that is welcoming and promotes people to spend time on these streets and spaces, then I believe people would be willing to walk the extra mile.</p> <p>I realize that parking is an important aspect so I'm not suggesting to not improve it, I am just voting that it be placed lower on the priority [disclosure, I live close to the downtown, so I don't drive much to the area]</p> |
| Parallel Parking | 1 | I would rather see the downtown diagonal parking eliminated and replaced with parallel parking. Narrowing the streets and widening the sidewalks would draw in more pedestrian traffic. There are plenty of spaces in parking garages and public lots to park. |
| Disagree. Parking garages are not too close to active businesses, and only the locals know how to find them. Parking lots are few and small. | | |
| If the vacancies in downtown were filled with active businesses, we would not have enough parking. | | |
| Additional and stylish ramp | 1 | Needs to be incorporated into the surface lot behind the stores bordered by Front, Main and Hale Streets. If that happens, I believe our downtown shopping and entertainment district will be strengthened. My personal opinion.. Main Street between Front and Wesley streets needs major revitalization. |
| I agree some surface parking should be converted to ramps/ garages. That particular space is a little tight and I'm not sure it is viable there. | | |
| Agree that Main needs revitalizing. Challenge is that a number of those properties are owned by the same person who seems satisfied with the status quo. | | |
| Get Rid of the Coin Meters | 1 | There are not a lot of coin meters in downtown, but to have them with free parking within a block or so does not make sense. Limit the parking to 3-4 hours in those spots, if you are worried about commuters trying to use them. |
| Agreed. Who has coins with them? Also everyone knows that Wheaton parking enforcement is always on the job. | | |

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| Better Use of Current Parking Garages | 1 | I don't think we're using our current parking garages well. The Willow Avenue garage always has 15-20 spaces on the top floor, but they're not handing out any more passes to that garage. Also, the elevator should be better maintained, because it's been vandalized a few times and I know of once incident when someone was stuck inside it and couldn't get help. |
| Public parking areas | 1 | <p>The dominance of public parking lots along the railroad track for commuters is important, however these fill up during the day and are not usable by the businesses in downtown.</p> <p>The aesthetics and function of these public lots along the rail needs to be improved as well. We need to find additional benefit in them as they are central to the community. The lot east of Main street is the home to the French Market, a highly successful weekly event. This lot should be redesigned to be a plaza that allows car to park in it vs. the other way around.</p> |
| Add Parking Garages with at least 6 hour parking options | 0 | <p>Add a parking garage at the library and village hall. Need longer term parking options for 6 hours for visitors (not permit parking) to encourage people to stay in downtown for the day. 3 hours is not enough as it limits people to a luncheon or spa visit or some window shopping. But doesn't allow people to make a day of it.</p> <p>Also, parking garages could be free and meter parking on streets can be increased. This may encourage people to use garages.</p> <p>Or charge a nominal flat rate for garage parking like \$1. Other cities like Elmhurst and Hinsdale do this. Hinsdale has a special shoppers garage for 6 hours. Pre-paid parking passes could be sold for frequent visitors.</p> |
| There is a large piece of concrete jungle just east of the old courthouse which used to be a parking lot for commuters and downtown visitors. Why isn't this being utilized for parking any longer? The land has been sitting vacant for years and now being taken over with weeds and an eyesore off of Washington St. Can't this piece of land be repaired and made into a parking lot again? | | |
| Replace coin meters | 0 | Replace the coin meters with pay and display type meters that allow for more cars in the same amount of space, and don't require someone to empty the coins as often. |
| Add Parking off Washington St. | 0 | <p>There is a very large parcel of cemented, empty, weed growing land adjacent to the old courthouse, next to the Com Ed equipment and Washington St. Why can't we use this space for either downtown parking, commuter parking or both?</p> <p>It's an eyesore and parking is really needed in the downtown area.</p> |
| Free valet parking | 0 | Hire people to park cars for free so people don't have to keep driving around looking for a parking spot. No tipping allowed! |