



Vibrant Downtown Storefronts Workgroup Report

June 1, 2023

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INTRODUCTION

Downtown Minneapolis, like other major downtowns across the nation, has been dramatically affected by the combination of public health and public safety challenges over the past 3+ years during the pandemic and in the aftermath of civil unrest following the murder of George Floyd. Our downtown’s strong foundation and resiliency is showing as important components of the economy are trending in a positive direction. Recent public safety initiatives and reduced crime have bolstered confidence. In turn, a steady increase of office workers, conventions, meetings, sports and entertainment events, and people patronizing dining establishments has been evident over the past year. Residential investment and population growth is also strong. And as these aspects of the downtown economy rebound, related City revenue sources recover and provide important funds for programs and initiatives throughout Minneapolis. Much hard work lies ahead, but overall, our downtown is on the right path. An economically healthy and vibrant downtown is essential to support the City’s well-being, as well as the region and the State. From an equity perspective, a strong downtown revenue base is necessary to prevent a shift in tax burden to residents and businesses throughout the city, and a loss of resources needed to support affordable housing and economic inclusion investments.



Figure 1. Visualization from the first Working Group meeting discussion. Art by Hawwa Youngmark.

One area of concern which merits intentional focus is an increase in vacant storefronts due to the decline in retail activity in the core Central Business District (CBD). There is flourishing retail in other parts of downtown, with the North Loop as the prime example. But the days of Nicollet Mall serving as a regional shopping destination with multiple department stores are long gone. Retail trends continue to challenge brick and mortar businesses, which were exacerbated due to the challenges of the last 3+ years and have taken a toll on the remaining retailers. The resulting lack of storefront vibrancy, especially at the street-level, has an impact on the improved vitality of downtown created by the positive trends noted above. This doesn’t have to be, nor should it be a condition we accept. But we also can’t count on market conditions to self-correct this part of the downtown economy. There is opportunity for reinvention of the storefront experience downtown, primarily at the street, followed by the skyway level. Careful analysis of the current situation and trends, followed by a comprehensive set of public

and private sector actions turn vulnerabilities into assets and drivers of equity as our downtown moves into its next era.

VIBRANT STOREFRONT WORK GROUP

Mayor Jacob Frey announced the Vibrant Storefront Work Group in December 2022. The working group was facilitated by consultant Peter Brown and staffed by Minneapolis' Community Planning and Economic Development Department (CPED), the Minneapolis Downtown Council and Downtown Improvement District (MDC/DID) staff. The project team has facilitated, participated in, and attended: four full work group meetings; four listening sessions with real estate and retail experts, creatives and entrepreneurs, neighbors, and Minneapolis CPED staff; the Twin Cities Business Journal's "Big Think" session; "Lunch with Lisa", and the Minneapolis Foundation/Walker Arts Center's "Abundant Cities" panel discussions. After gathering general information, impressions, and feedback from the earlier meetings, we created two Work Group subcommittees and facilitated two meetings each. The "Right Brain" (creative) subcommittee was tasked with envisioning what downtown can be – the "what;" while the "Left Brain" (analytical) subcommittee identified the conditions required for success – the "how." Together, these subcommittee meetings led from a summary of the issues to a more focused list of potential recommendations in four areas.

The Vibrant Storefronts Working Group examined, among other topics:

- Retail market dynamics
- Storefront space inventory and occupancy
- Policy guidance focused on current and possible expanded future use options
- Barriers to existing retail success
- Opportunities for inclusive economic development focused on available downtown space
- Opportunities to activate ground floor space in new and creative ways
- Shared marketing and brokerage partnerships
- Financial incentives
- Successful models in other downtowns

TELLING THE STORY

What are the current conditions and future opportunities?

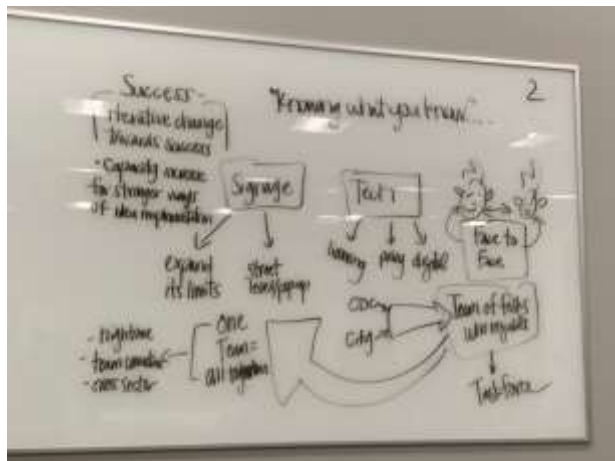
1. What is – no longer acceptable

The current level of vacancies at the street and skyway levels in various parts of downtown, especially in the CBD along Nicollet Mall, detract from desired vibrancy. This isn't a condition our community has to or should accept, nor will market forces alone "self-correct" this aspect of the downtown economy.



2. What was – not our future

Downtown's retail past as a regional shopping destination with multiple department stores in the CBD is not our future or necessary to support renewed vibrancy. The world has changed, but those changes create the opportunity for a vital storefront economy which supports consumer needs and contributes to experiencing downtown as a desirable place to connect with one another and spend time.



3. What can be – it's possible, but we need to act

To start, create the path by considering the factors which have led to this point and create policies and practices in response to both the public and private sectors concerns and interests. Attention should be shown to:

- the flourishing retail in other parts of downtown – North Loop as an example - to nurture and support;
- goods and services that serve residents, visitors, and employees more fully; and
- introducing additional desirable uses to downtown spaces that will complement existing and future retail.

STOREFRONT ECONOMY

What are the current realities shaping our storefront economy?

Many realities and trends are shaping our downtown storefront economy – some at national and international levels and some that are highly local. The shift to online shopping, for example, has affected all storefront retail around the country. Minneapolis’s efforts over the past five decades to create a compact downtown core focused on office uses, which has left the city less resilient than other cities that have more diversified uses downtown in the core CBD. And more recently, the COVID pandemic and the civil protests that followed the murder of George Floyd have reduced downtown’s daytime population and vibrancy as work-from-home has become more common for many private, public, and non-profit organizations. Current realities shaping the Minneapolis downtown core include:

1. Less daytime worker population and buying power.
2. Placing a premium on experience – what draws and keeps people downtown is key.
3. Real and perceived safety is foundational for increased vibrancy.
4. Evolving demographics and heightened importance of belonging and inclusion – we need a downtown for all.
5. Residents and visitors are more important now.
6. Downtown is competing with “low barrier” alternatives, including home and the on-line world.
7. New policy and regulatory approaches, and economic models for space use, must be embraced.
8. Multiple districts and nodes constitute “downtown” now – it is no longer a single, monolithic economy or identity – but do not lose focus on downtown as a whole.

Recommendations to revitalize the downtown storefront economy presented in the next section were fashioned with these influences top of mind.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to maximize the chances of success and efforts in these overlapping areas will require an integrated and cooperative approach among the City’s elected officials and staff; private sector property owners and managers and business owners and operators; and nonprofit and business associations including MDC/DID and Greater Minneapolis Building Owners and Management Association (BOMA). The four areas are:

- A. Desired Uses – *What can it be?*
- B. Regulatory Environment – From Prescriptive to Flexible and Organic
- C. Business Community – Coordination and a “Concierge”/Facilitator Model
- D. Infrastructure – General Support of Downtown Vibrancy

A. Desired Uses – What can it be?

DESCRIPTION

This is the Work Group’s collective vision for the future uses in downtown. What do we want to be? Who do we want to attract downtown? How can we get people to stay downtown, and visit more often? How can we provide a unique experience downtown that people cannot get anywhere else?

The emphasis in this section is on maximizing flexibility and open-mindedness to all kinds of potential uses, far beyond traditional retail and office. The successful reanimation of our downtown streets and storefronts will require cooperation between public, private and non-profit interests and a never-before-seen openness to new ideas and innovative strategies. Traditional retail remains important but can no longer be expected to fill our vacant storefronts. There are many other potential experiential uses that can also fill and activate these spaces.

The intersection of creativity and retail is the outcome of a hopeful rejuvenation of the customer experience. Big retailers have historically dominated the consumer market; however, we have seen that large department stores have not effectively kept up with the changing demands of the marketplace. We saw this in the closing of major department stores stationed on critical intersections and skyway paths in downtown Minneapolis, and in major cities throughout the United States. We see this in the developing appetite for experiential shopping experiences and the increase in active participation in projects like the Chameleon Shoppes and the Dayton’s Project. We must return to activating the inner search for community and individuality as the basis of the human experience. It is essential that as we rebound back to a vibrant Downtown, we center people.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A.1. Identify retail and service needs in downtown – Conduct a market gap analysis to understand specific needs that are not being met in the downtown market. Consider not just the daily needs of employees but refocus consideration and energy around meeting the 24-hour needs of residents who live downtown and visitors. Evaluate what is needed for businesses to be successful.
- A.2. Identify desired uses downtown – Focus on experiential opportunities that capitalize on the unique backdrop that downtown Minneapolis offers. Encourage and support broader non-retail uses that are active and create unique experiences.
 - Minneapolis flair
 - Unique experiences
 - Arts and cultural events, exhibits, and displays
 - Historic significance/interpretation
 - Recreational activities
 - Food and sustainability initiatives (downtown urban farm, for example)

- A.3. Start small – Allocate energy and resources towards implementing interventions at focused intersections to maximize success and build momentum. Identify the locations and characteristics of potential nodes of opportunity and provide focused study to identify site-specific opportunities for activation and vibrancy. Node development will be central to the future success of retail and retail innovation. Identifying nodular micro-communities that fuse lively arts and culture experiences with retail is the path to revitalization (see section C for additional detail).
- Conduct individual node studies that identify what is needed and wanted. This may include asset mapping, micro-market analysis, focused infrastructure improvements and an evaluation of techniques to target vibrancy improvements.
 - Partner locally with building owners and businesses within individual nodes to activate space and incubate emerging business models
 - The activation of the identified nodes will attract pacesetter retail outlets. The combination of local experiences and big retail will reboot our downtown economy.
 - Initial attention should be paid to areas where early intervention and activation will have the most opportunity for success. The Warehouse District, with its history as an entertainment node, adjacency to the lively North Loop, and historic buildings more readily converted to residential uses, should be a starting point for additional study and intervention.
- A.4. Embrace innovation - Innovation does not always mean new, it may mean older ideas with a splash of strategic refinement. All sectors need to think about how to support emerging markets.
- Big retail and service retail – Continue to seek opportunities for retail that meets the needs of a 24 hour downtown.
 - Support initiatives like Chameleon Shoppes and its model of bringing Minneapolis BIPOC-owned businesses and other desired uses into the downtown marketplace (See section C for additional detail).
 - Invest in seasonal and pop-up experiential retail (holiday sales, street festivals, etc.)
- A.5. Embrace the seasons – Explore ways to continue promoting Minneapolis as a destination winter city. Plan and encourage events and festivals that highlight downtown, and specifically Nicollet Mall, as the “best winter place in the nation”. Leverage the “Bold North” brand. Create window and light display competitions among property and business owners. Bring holiday activities to Nicollet Mall. Host winter markets on the Mall.
- A.6. Highlight local Minneapolis artists and entrepreneurs – Partner with property owners to infuse vacant spaces with local merchants and artists that represent the diverse demographic of our city through a call for artists and entrepreneurs’ program. Provide technical and business support to emerging artists and businesses to incubate and embrace new ideas.

MEASURING SUCCESS

- Retail: New retail stores open throughout downtown
- Experience: Broadened set of storefront experiences available to residents, visitors, and workers
- Activation: Vacant spaces are activated and inclusive highlighting local artists and entrepreneurs to create a more dynamic, vibrant pedestrian experience

B. Regulatory Environment – From Prescriptive to Flexible and Organic

DESCRIPTION

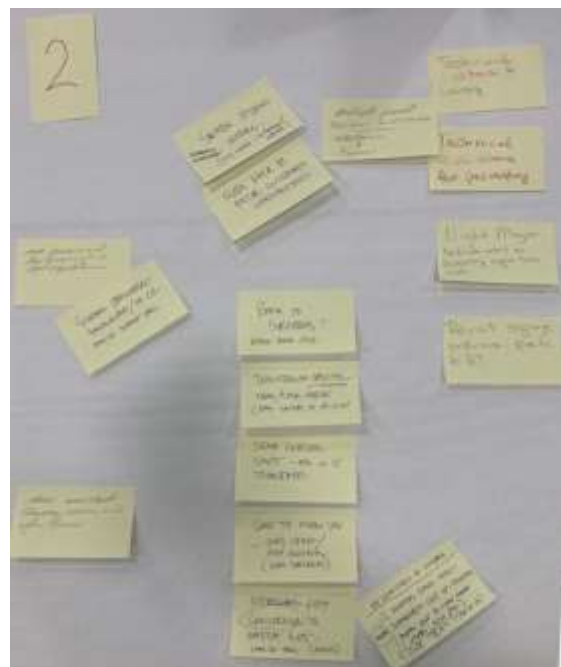
The regulatory environment must support the new vision and desired uses. How can we fine-tune City policies, processes, and culture to reflect the current moment of rapid, fluid, and unpredictable change? How can we increase flexibility of codes and regulations? How can we shift the regulatory culture towards more proactively supporting the business community downtown, which in turn supports the City's tax base?

The City's adopted comprehensive plan, Minneapolis 2040, has [policies](#) intended to 'Strengthen Downtown's position as a regional commercial, cultural and entertainment center that serves residents, employees, and visitors.'

The City Council recently adopted the [Land Use Rezoning Study](#), which included aligning the Minneapolis Zoning Code with the City's Comprehensive Plan, Minneapolis 2040. These recent code amendments divide Downtown into two new zoning districts:

- The DT1 Downtown Center District is established to provide an environment for retail and office activities of citywide and regional significance at the center of downtown. The district also allows entertainment, residential, and public uses, which complete the mixed-use core of the city.
- The DT2 Downtown Destination District is established provide a downtown district where commercial uses are required at the street level of all development in this category to encourage pedestrian activity beyond the typical daytime business hours. Permitted uses reflect the need to serve the most active commercial areas of the city.

Prior to the COVID pandemic, most City business was conducted in-person or over the counter. The City responded to the pandemic by adopting electronic processes and conducting virtual



meetings. Businesspeople and developers have started to come back to meet with City staff in-person to discuss potential projects; however, many choose to meet virtually. Technology and online systems have improved efficiency in some ways, but accessible, in-person technical support is an on-going need for staff and customers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy Changes

- B.1 Evaluate land use regulations - The City should continue to monitor the implementation of the new land use regulations and consider modifications over time as needed to encourage flexibility and allow new and innovative business models. Consult with downtown property/business owners to identify uses that may be desired but are not currently permitted. For example, with the most recent adoption of new citywide land use zoning, the Nicollet Mall Overlay District has been eliminated, in favor of a broader expansion of required street front activation in more areas of downtown, including Nicollet Mall. As part of this change, a broader mix of uses will now be allowed to satisfy the ground floor activation requirements in new buildings.
- B.2 Evaluate sign regulations - Review the current downtown sign regulations and consider changes that would allow more generous and less prescriptive signage
 - Explore ways to incentivize creativity in signage design, materials, construction
 - Reconsider size limitations
 - Consider a greater allowance for dynamic signs
 - Consult with downtown property/business owners on modifications to the city's signage ordinance
- B.3 Focus business towards the street – Seek out ways to incentivize property/business owners to provide greater window transparency and street access. This enhances not only the look of the street but provides a greater sense of perceived safety and makes the pedestrian experience more comfortable.
- B.4 Evaluate licensing regulations – Identify changes that would allow greater flexibility and embrace innovation. Consult with downtown property/business owners to identify opportunities to ease licensing restrictions. Consider a temporary license to allow innovative and emerging business models to launch pilots and demonstrations in vacant downtown spaces on a short-term basis.

Doing Business

- B.5 Lead by example – Public sector should lead by example. Evaluate the policy for the City's hybrid model of working, and how best to combine work-from-home with back-to-the-office.

- B.6 Convey that the City is “Open for Business” – Promote face-to-face meetings to evaluate early projects and simplify processes for small projects, permits, and licenses. This provides a more business-friendly environment and improves the perception that city staff are available and focused on customer support.
- Provide technical assistance for licensing
 - Provide technical assistance for permitting
 - Enhance technological systems and support to facilitate better online customer service
- B.7 Focus on Downtown – Dedicate an internal team to focus on downtown revitalization efforts to support and encourage new businesses. Assign staff within Planning, Small Business Support, and Business Licensing to focus on downtown revitalization.
- B.8 City Ombudsperson – Create a position in CPED that focuses on key geographically focused areas. This position would focus on strategic investments and improvements that would catalyze investment in focused areas throughout the city, with an initial emphasis on downtown revitalization. This position would connect various divisions within CPED and other City departments, and coordinate with external partners to focus resources and energy on the downtown.
- B.9 Lobby the State – Direct the City’s Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) team to lobby the state for loosening up liquor laws around temporary, pop-up and outdoor uses and permits. Explore legislation to allow open containers on Nicollet Mall, or other specific nodes of the City, during defined event periods.

Culture of Service, Collaboration, and Relationship Building

- B.10 Bring the business community and City staff together - Identify, consider, and solve problems while strengthening relationships and ties. Establish a city-business task force to review and make recommendations for changes to processes and regulations.
- B.11 Initiate a culture shift among staff – Embrace innovation and flexibility and continue to proactively seek ways to help the business community in downtown succeed.

MEASURING SUCCESS

- Signage: City staff, in cooperation with property and business owners, will study and propose for city council action an amended Signage Ordinance by the spring of 2024.
- Ombudsperson: Reporting lines are in place and regular meetings occur between the Small Business Team leadership and the Business community’s independent facilitator.
- Relationships: City staff and other key CPED staff and downtown property owners and businesspeople know one another, work together, and know who to call.

- Doing Business: One year from now, several items on the business community’s list of challenges they face working with the City have been resolved and deleted (and been replaced by new issues/items).
- State and liquor: IGR and business community lobbyists together begin lobbying for legislative changes during the spring 2024 legislative session.

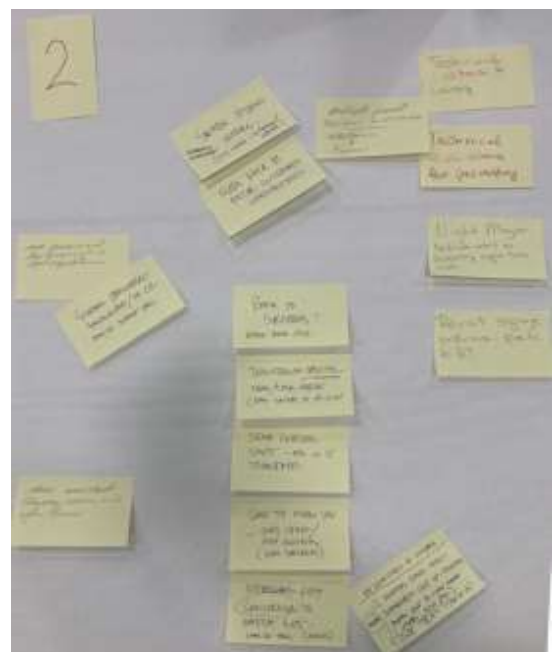


Chameleon Shoppes Holiday Market at the Young Quinlan building, 9th and Nicollet.

C. Business Community – Coordination and a “Concierge”/Facilitator Model

DESCRIPTION

The regulatory environment must support the new vision and desired uses. How can we fine-tune City policies, processes, and culture to reflect the current moment of rapid, fluid, and unpredictable change? How can we increase flexibility of codes and regulations? How can we shift the regulatory culture towards more proactively supporting the business community downtown, which in turn supports the City’s tax base?



The business community must help lead the effort to attract the desired retail and other uses and create new experiences in partnership with the City. How can the business community and the MDC/DID play a leadership role in centralizing private sector efforts to attract new uses? How can they concentrate efforts geographically to maximize impacts? How can the business community attract more resources to support these efforts and who can contribute? What is the role of the city, the philanthropic sector, and private business in providing resources?

RECOMMENDATIONS

Retail and Vibrant Storefront Advocacy and Support

- C.1. Create an independent facilitator/concierge role through MDC/DID
 - Be the keeper of knowledge, such as vacant spaces and opportunities.
 - Match building owners with potential businesses, entrepreneurs, and artists.
 - Assist in site selection and activation of nodes, spaces, and the public realm.
 - Serve as private sector ombudsperson with link to proposed city ombudsperson (see B.8).
 - Identify and direct funds for new economic models (e.g., Chameleon Shoppes) and tenant space improvements.
- C.2. Bring the business community and city staff together - Form a regular “problem solving” table to bring together public and private actors around specific issues and to enhance a shared understanding of conditions (See recommendation B.9).
- C.3. Build support – Create a coalition among interested and cooperative downtown property owners and managers

Organize Creative Core Taskforce

- C.4. Reimagine events, arts, activation in vacant spaces.
- C.5. Coordinate between building owners, the City’s Department of Arts and Culture, and artists/creatives.
- C.6. Call for creative proposals – design challenge (See Recommendation A.6)

Manage and Transform Physical Spaces

- C.7. Know what space is available – Maintain an updated space inventory in partnership with building owners and managers. Create and maintain a current “opportunity map” which rates priority locations by feasibility for action.

Adopt a New Economic Model with City Financial Support

C.8. Invest:

- Beginning in the second half of 2023, invest \$75,000, in partnership with MDC/DID, for a total of \$150,000 to begin to support this work. Funds will be used to:
 1. The Chameleon Shoppes program bringing Minneapolis BIPOC entrepreneurs into the downtown market will be expanded and strengthened with additional training and supports;
 2. Work in partnership with the City Office of Arts and Culture and other community organizations to introduce cultural and arts-based uses to downtown spaces will commence;
 3. Communications between stakeholders (e.g., building owner and managers, brokers, city planning officials, creative community agencies) will be organized;
 4. Specific tools identified (e.g., space inventory, node analysis, market analysis) will be started.

- In 2024, invest an allocation of \$750,000 annually to support the revitalization of downtown Minneapolis. Funds will support:
 1. Call for artist and emerging business program (See Recommendation A.6)
 2. Supporting an independent facilitator position with MDC/DID (See Recommendation C.1)
 3. Other programs to incentivize activation of vacant spaces
 4. Node studies to provide detailed evaluation of specific nodes within downtown upon which to focus resources and programs (See Recommendation A.3)
 5. Implementation of Nodal-focused physical improvements and programming

C.9. Incentivize activation – Recognize that providing lower cost and more flexible leases to emerging businesses and artists has a financial impact, and that the current financial structure incentivizes building owners to keep spaces vacant as opposed to filling them at reduced rents. Incentivize active, non-revenue (or reduced revenue) uses of space as an alternative to vacancies.

- Explore legislation to adjust assessment practices.
- Explore funding opportunities and programs to incentivize activation of spaces.

C.10. Seek resources – Identify more significant, longer term finance options for space and building conversions as market changes dictate (e.g., Tax Increment Financing, state historic tax credits, bond financing).

MEASURING SUCCESS

- Occupancy: Decreased vacant spaces identified in the updated space inventory.

- Street Life: Increased pedestrian traffic as measured by hand counts, automated counting systems, and cell phone usage trends.
- Safety: improvement in real and perceived public safety.
- Implementation of node-specific improvements.

D. Infrastructure – General support of Downtown Vibrancy

DESCRIPTION

There are other important issues that must be addressed if we are to succeed in attracting the desired uses, loosening the regulatory environment, and centralizing and concentrating the efforts of the business community. Skyway operations, public safety, increased service and improved safety in public transit, and public realm/right-of-way uses must be improved as well.

The topics cited below are subject to work by other parties in other forums but are important to highlight in relation to the work of the Vibrant Storefronts Working Group because of their impact on the success of recommendations highlighted in Sections A, B, and C.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- D.1 Encourage “back to work” policies – Mayor can encourage public and private employers to maximize back-to-work initiatives and office occupancy.
 - Ensure regular communication with employers to understand and address challenges they face in this area.

- D.2 Continue to focus on public safety – Build-back the strength of Minneapolis Police Department as a trusted law enforcement agency, and integrate non-policing strategies (e.g., community outreach, embedded social workers, use of technology) to improve the real and perceived safety of downtown.
 - MPD and business community continue to collaborate to combat retail theft, both organized theft and opportunistic shoplifting.
 - Work with building owners and managers to implement CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) strategies such as window transparency and more doors open to the street.

- D.3 Leverage technology – Drive branding and communication

- Use QR Codes, installation of digital kiosks, on-line event calendar, and future development of a downtown Minneapolis app to improve branding, communications, and wayfinding.
 - Provide a regular program for marketing downtown-centered events and activities.

- D.4 Support nighttime economy initiatives – Recognize the social, cultural, and economic needs of a 24-hour city.
 - Continue to develop and promote Warehouse District Live – a new activity to enhance vibrancy and safety in the Warehouse District
 - Create a new “Nighttime Economy Director” role, following the model set by other major cities to drive economic development in the hospitality and entertainment sectors, and determine where that position should be housed.

- D.5 Promotional parking program – On selected days, offer free or reduced parking in conjunction with planned events and activities.

- D.6 Improve street and skyway level wayfinding – Meet Minneapolis is planning on kicking off a tourism master plan that will likely include a call for comprehensive wayfinding at the street level.
 - Improve Skyway wayfinding through updated maps, use of technology.
 - Improve Street-to-Skyway business wayfinding by providing signage to indicate what businesses are in the skyway, from the street level.

- D.7 Restore skyway hours and consistency – Work with public and private skyway owners and managers.
 - Restore weekday and weekend hours specified in the Skyway Guidelines and incorporated in City ordinance (Chapter 550, Article XV, Skyways).
 - Create, promote, and clearly communicate known walking routes through the skyway – perhaps selectively at first to prioritize primary routes, as skyway traffic returns.

- D.8 Evaluate the future of Nicollet Mall as a pedestrian-only zone - Explore alternative options for transit service elsewhere through downtown. Engage stakeholders to understand full range of impacts.
 - Consider consolidation of northern most block (3rd Street to Washington), joining RBC Gateway Plaza and Cancer Survivors Park as a demonstration project.

MEASURING SUCCESS

- Activity: Increase in employees returning to work downtown and increased street life
- Public Safety: Increase in real and perceived public safety downtown
- Theft: Reduction in retail theft and related growth in new retail uses
- Skyways: Clear routes through the Skyway with dependable hours of operation

NEXT STEPS

These four areas of recommendations overlap and depend upon one another to ensure the successful revitalization of our downtown storefront environment. To attract the maximum possible range of desired uses, the City’s regulatory environment must be open, flexible, and capable of moving quickly and decisively if we are to exploit all potential opportunities. The City and CPED staff must reconsider everything from the Signage Ordinance to its current staffing model, its post pandemic hybrid work model, and how it will collaborate more effectively with key interests in the downtown core.

Similarly, the private business community must use its knowledge and relationships to help match uses, spaces, and resources in ways that the City cannot. The MDC/DID is the clear candidate to serve in this “concierge”/facilitator role and as the keeper of knowledge and relationships between potential uses, buildings, owners, and spaces (in cooperation with BOMA), and geographic locations – or “nodes.”

The work outlined in Sections A, B, C, and D will play out over several years, but to start down the road to a revitalized downtown storefront economy, the following immediate steps can and should be acted upon in the second half of 2023:

- The City and the business community must together develop and institutionalize a clear communications pipeline, with matching “ombuds” on both the public and private sides to align the best private sector ideas with the City’s policies, and vice versa.
- The City’s Small Business Team will continue to serve as the public end of this pipeline and the MDC/DID should more formally serve as the private end.
- The Downtown Council and the City should jointly commit \$150,000 to launch the “concierge”/facilitator role and initial activities.
- For all of this to work, City leadership must direct CPED leadership and staff to evaluate and recommend new policies while also shifting to an even more proactive and business friendly culture than already exists. This may include initiatives and organizational changes that focus on building strong face-to-face relationships with property owners and managers, business owners and operators, and other downtown interests, and a specific focus on the downtown CBD.
- Establish a city-business task force to review and make recommendations for changes to processes and regulations.
- The policy changes outlined in Section B (signage regulations, zoning requirements) should be enacted.
- The Mayor should convene key staff from City departments and private businesses to assess the status of issues identified in Section D, with particular attention to public safety and skyway wayfinding and hours.

APPENDICIES

A. Work Group Roster

Name	Firm
Work Group Members	
Cramer, Steve, Co-chair	CEO, Minneapolis Downtown Council/MDID
Grier, Gabrielle, Co-chair	CIO, African-American Leadership Forum
Anderson, Sarah	BOMA
Berthume, Mich	Daytons
Borst, Jeff	Ryan Companies
David Fhima	Fhima's
John Frey	Ward 7 Resident
Goodman, Lisa	Minneapolis City Council Member, Ward 7
Hicks, JoAnna	Element Commercial RE
Jacobs, Jeremy	Colliers
Johnson, Jeff	Minneapolis Convention Center
Kelly, Mitch	The Engine is Red
Kohlenberger, Don	Hightower Ventures
Kolar, Deb	Accesso/IDS
McGrann, Meghan	Ward 7 Resident and Retail Consultant
Nerenhausen, Mark	Hennepin Theater Trust
Newberg, Sam	JLL
Nicoll, Emily	CBRE
Rainville, Michael	Minneapolis City Council Member, Ward 3
Reed, Jarrett	Target Corporation
Russell, Todd	Russell Co.
Rybak, RT	Minneapolis Foundation
Swindler, Dana	Martin Patrick 3
Tamburino, Joe	DMNA Board and Attorney
Taris, Mary	Strive Publishing
Tennant, Melvin	Meet Minneapolis
Weinhagen, Jonathan	MPLS Chamber of Commerce
White, Bob	Hubert White Men's Store
Woolsey, Brian	Monarch CRE
Project Team	
McMahan, Meg	CPED - Planning Director
Brennan, Andrea	CPED - Director
Brown, Peter	Consultant
Crandall, Peter	CPED - Planning
Fabunmi, Rebecca	Mayor's Dir. of ED, Policy, Incl.
Fitzgerald, Shannon	MDID/Chameleon Shoppes
Hansen, Erik	CPED - Economic Development
Mercer, Miles	CPED - Economic Development
Middag, Lisa	MDC/MDID - Nicollet Mall Activation
Poor, Steve	CPED - Development Services
Sether, Shanna	CPED - Planning
Shardlow, Ben	MDC/MDID - Urban Design

B. Meetings and Listening Sessions

Meeting	Date	Venue
Mayor's Announcement	12/14/22	Young Quinlan
Work Group #1	1/19/23	Hennepin Theater Trust
Lunch With Lisa	2/22/23	St. Thomas U.
TCB Monthly Focus Group	3/1/23	Minneapolis Club, 2nd Floor
Listening Session #1 - RE/Retail	3/2/23	MDC
Listening Session #2 - Creatives	3/8/23	PSB
Abundant Cities - Evolving Downtowns	3/15/23	Walker Arts Center
Listening Session #3 - Residents	3/16/23	Zoom
Work Group #2	3/23/23	IDS
Left Brain #1	3/28/23	Zoom
Right Brain #1	3/30/23	Zoom
Left Brain #2	4/6/23	Zoom
Right Brain #2	4/11/23	Zoom
Abundant Cities - Inclusive Cities	4/12/23	Walker Arts Center
Staff Team Listening Session - CPED/MDC	4/13	PSB Conference Room 300
Mayor Check-in at mid-point	4/20/23	Mayor's Office
Work Group #3	4/27/23	IDS
Abundant Cities - Building Common Ground	5/17/23	Walker Arts Center
Work Group #4	5/18/23	IDS

C. Creative Language

Narrative Notes: We understand that it is not necessarily our job as the creative committee to decipher whether a particular idea is valid. It is more our responsibility to consider the perimeters, intersections of possibility, and the overall relationships needed for creative opportunities to flourish.

We understand that creative ideas always come in abundance! We are interested in knowing are if there are commonalities within the context of creativity that promote strong cases for investment. Essentially, is it possible for us to reposition ‘old things’ in new places? This question is true when considering the arrangement of *who* is collaborating for *what* reasons, earmarking *where* the best places are for deep investment, and the value-add for cultural expansion in what we create.

Below are a set of phrases and values that were derived from our creative subcommittee meetings over the last two months.

Common Words Used/Values		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration • Resiliency • Ecosystem • Interplay • Adaptation • Equity • Fluidity • Engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Realities • Mixed Support • Perceptions of Safety • Broker Communication • Everything New • Creative x Design • Accessibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young People • Families • Interconnectivity • Identity • Regular Experiences • Not just an event • Spaces for everyone • Visitor Experiences and Events

New Buzz Phrasing to Consider		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Edges of Retail” • “Experiential Entertainment” • “Big Retail” • “Cultural Rehab” • “Leisure as Experience” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Geographic Identity” • “Eatertainment” • Matrix vs Reality • Micro-networks • Micro-Market • Customer Relevance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively Activated • Experiences of Vacancy • Node Strategy • Edu-tainment • Arts at the Center • Human Centered Design Cultural Experiences

D. Media and Links

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Grabar, Henry. [“Why the dream of turning empty offices into housing is a bust,”](#) in *Slate*, 12/12/22.

Hall, Meghan. [“IKEA Kicks off Construction of New Retail Center in San Francisco’s South of Market Neighborhood,”](#) in *The Registry: Bay Area Real Estate*, 3/1/22.

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PROGRAMS AND PROPOSALS IN OTHER CITIES

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[Chicago Revitalize LaSalle Program](#). Office to residential conversion program.

New York City Planning, Office Adaptive Reuse Task Force, [“New York City Office Adaptive Reuse Study,”](#) January 2023.

[Lower Manhattan Cultural Council](#). Program to match up artists and entrepreneurs with the millions of SF of commercial space then vacant in the aftermath of 9/11. LMCC established

strong relationships with building owners who saw it as a benefit to provide free space for artists and entrepreneurs for temporary periods of time. This was hugely innovative and incredibly successful in terms of bringing vibrancy to the street, but it stopped short of providing any permanent spaces for creative entrepreneurs to do their thing.

[Tacoma Spaceworks](#). This nonprofit identifies building owners who are willing to carve out spaces in their buildings for entrepreneurs and start-up “maker” businesses and gives them technical assistance and grants for a 3-year period to “launch” their new initiative.

WEBSITES, WEBINARS, OTHER INFO

[The Volcker Alliance](#) and [Penn Institute for Urban Research \(IUR\)](#) have collaborated to produce a series of very good and timely series of one-hour webinar panel discussions with leading experts about the challenges cities are facing in the post-pandemic/post-civil protest era:

[“Special Briefing: Vulnerable Cities Facing Work from Home Realities”](#)

[“Special Briefing: Big Cities, Big Challenges”](#)

[“Special Briefing: The Future of Downtowns”](#)

[“Special Briefing: 2023 Outlook for States and Cities”](#)

[“Special Briefing: Revitalizing Downtowns by Turning Offices into Homes”](#)

[“Special Briefing: State and Local Budgets in Uncertain Times”](#)

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