



SCOTTSDALE DOWNTOWN PLAN UPDATE “DISTRICTS AND DOWNTOWN BOUNDARIES” DISCUSSION GROUP



DISCUSSION RESULTS

Originally adopted by the City Council in 1984, the existing Downtown Plan still serves as the long-range policy document that guides growth and development decisions for Downtown Scottsdale. Over the past twenty years, the plan has framed public policy and development with regard to Downtown Scottsdale.

The **Downtown Plan Update** will review the 1984 policies and consider Downtown’s future for the next twenty years. Like the City’s General Plan, the Downtown Plan takes a *broad* look at the future, setting *goals and policies* that will shape future Downtown development and investment. In considering the discussion questions, participants were asked to think of them from the “10,000 foot level,” thus establishing the *vision* for the future of Downtown.

CORE QUESTIONS – *Asked of every group*

1. What do you see as the strengths of Downtown Scottsdale – in other words, things you want to keep the same or have maintained?

- Neighborhoods
 - Small neighborhoods should be preserved
 - Adjacent, somewhat affordable, neighborhoods
 - Livable neighborhoods
- Schools
 - Loloma Artist School
 - Culinary Institute
 - Real Estate School
- Recreation
 - Civic Center Park
- Entertainment
 - Downtown is an entertainment hub
- Diversity
 - Broad appeal to different people
 - Canal, Scottsdale and Camelback Intersection [diverse land uses]
 - Mixed Use
 - Diversity of things to do
 - Downtown is for tourists and citizens
- Reputation
 - Internationally known
 - High end
- Character and Identity
 - Unique district identities
 - Small town feel/ friendliness
 - Preserve historic flavor/ character
 - Preserving Main Street that has disappeared in most towns, but not in Scottsdale
- Arts and Culture
 - Art walk
- Circulation
 - Walkable and accessible
 - Trolleys
 - Bikable
 - Public Transit
- People
 - Friendliness
 - Concerned and involved citizens
- Urban Form

- Cohesive center
- Density encourages more pedestrians, which is good for business
- Cohesive city offices and civic buildings at the Civic Center Mall
 - Synergy of services
- Downtown is in constant evolution
 - This creates more sales tax revenue
 - Specialty stores have located Downtown

2. What would you like to see **changed or improved**; what is your vision for the next ten years?

- Wayfinding
 - It is hard to tell someone how to get to the Civic Center Mall
- Boundary
 - Would like to see a buffer area around downtown boundary on maps
- Open Space
 - Need “fresh air zones”
 - Trees, shade, trolley, opens spaces should be connected through Downtown and should serve as a buffer around neighborhoods
 - Need pocket parks
- Access and Circulation
 - Civic Center: No one knows how to get there because it is on edge of downtown. It should be a prominent feature
 - Would like more walkability
 - Traffic is haphazardly planned
 - Need to be pedestrian/ bicycle friendly
- Urban Form
 - Inward building
 - Transition from downtown to adjacent neighborhoods – very sensitive issue
 - Height considerations with surrounding neighborhoods
 - Would like to see fewer height and density restrictions
 - Control height and density; We aren't Phoenix
 - Restore/ protect mountain views
- Connectivity
 - Connect shops to Civic Center Mall
 - Need to create pedestrian linkages using covered walkways
- Entertainment
 - Need activities for families and older citizens
 - Need more events that celebrate heritage
 - Need events that celebrate the desert and canal
- People
 - Need support of residents on edge of downtown

- Parking
 - Need more parking Downtown
- Streetscape and Design
 - Need covered walkways everywhere downtown
 - All power lines should be underground
- Land Use
 - Need convenient services downtown
 - Grocery
 - Dry cleaner
 - Shoe repair

SPECIALIZED QUESTIONS

1. Downtown Scottsdale has been described as a collection of districts. What are the districts you perceive in Downtown? How might these districts change over time?

- This question was not answered by the group because of time constraints. The group will reconvene to answer this question. Date to be determined.

2. Which part of Downtown, if any, do you see as the most suitable place to:

- Stroll?
- Bring children?
- Bring pets?
- Bring out-of-town guests?
- Meet with friends?
- Ride a bike?
- Relax?
- What other uses or attractions should be encouraged in Downtown Scottsdale?

- This question was not answered by the group because of time constraints. The group will reconvene to answer this question. Date to be determined

3. On the one hand, some people would like to see each Downtown district take on a more district identity, while others would like to have Downtown become a more unified identity and feel like a “cohesive whole.” Should these views be reconciled as part of the plan update?

- “We want to be different”
- Mountain views are important but are being blocked by recent developments
- Density should be consistent
- Keep neighborhoods livable
- Ability to change is important
 - Older districts pushed for many changes
- Linkage problems among the districts
- Do current districts make sense for the future?
- Code Enforcement – everyone should take care of their side of the street
 - Existing policies may need to change for streetscaping

4. How might signage, architecture, and other features be used to differentiate the districts? Unify the districts?

- This question was not answered by the group because of time constraints. The group will reconvene to answer this question. Date to be determined

5. The Downtown planning area has a council adopted boundary dating from the adoption of the plan in 1984. Do you see this boundary changing at all as the plan is updated?

- Boundaries will evolve over time
- We need to figure out the allowable changes to the boundaries
 - What is the highest and best use?
- Pocket parks can help create the boundary
- “Downtown is big enough as is.”
 - “There are enough opportunities within the boundary now.”
- “Why is Sunflower area not included [in the Downtown boundary]?”
 - “If it is included, we may lose the grocery store”
 - Maybe some flexibility could be used in boundary on southwest corner of Miller and Camelback Roads
- Southern part, near Osborn and Drinkwater, of Downtown is a gateway and could be considered as part of the boundary
- A “Southbridge-size” area at the southern edge of Downtown would be ok to expand the boundary to
 - Don’t want to see Mill Avenue there
- Boundary should be expanded in a controlled way—not arbitrary
- Would not like to see the boundary expand south on Scottsdale Road [outside of the current Downtown Boundary]

6. What types of development do you think would be appropriate for the edges of the Downtown area (i.e., along the boundaries of the planning area)?

- Whatever comes out of the plan [involving development types], need to stick to it
- Need transition pocket parks adjacent to downtown between neighborhoods
- People who live in area should have more weight [in decisions] than investors
- Area around downtown should not have such a great height difference with Downtown
 - Find a middle ground
 - 3, 4, or 5 story area near 1-story residential area may be ok
- PUD is appropriate south of Earll and Scottsdale Road
- Protect surrounding neighborhoods

7. Now, having considered and discussed a number of issues, any other thoughts on what the vision for Downtown Scottsdale should include?

- Downtown's strength is the districts – they can be destinations
 - Canal district is new since '84 plan
- “I am not in favor of wholesale expansion of downtown”
 - Look at the borders – how far do we want to go?
- Keep Downtown the same size, but...
 - Consider expanding the boundary on the Southwest corner of Miller and Camelback Roads
 - Consider only some parcels [for inclusion in the Downtown Boundary]
 - Do not encroach on established neighborhoods
- Boundary should only be revised when General Plan is revised
- Downtown has many amenities and it should be used to its maximum
- Allow some more height and density [within Downtown]
- Look at boundary expansion parcel by parcel
- We don't want to be Phoenix
- We need cohesion among the districts
- Property owners south of Earll to Roosevelt should have some ability to be downtown
- Can't be an arbitrary boundary
- “Our differences are our strengths”
 - Have old with new
- Have mixed uses
- Practice moderation when it comes to bars
- Preserve Old Town
- “Scottsdale is a great city and with thoughtful planning, it will be even better”
- Address how much residential we have
- Wouldn't like to see boundary expand
- Pedestrian linkages are important
- Need to buffer surrounding neighborhoods from downtown

- “I will support nothing over 7 stories”
- Increase downtown parking requirements
- “No creeping”
 - Stick to boundary once it is created
 - Need transitions from Downtown to livable neighborhoods
- Need to be pedestrian/ bike friendly
- Some density is ok, but...
 - City services suffer if there is too much
 - Anything above 8 stories is not viable
- “I like the districts as they are”
- 3-5 stories is optimal
- Like Downtown boundary now
 - Expansion should be case-by-case only
- Need more educational assets downtown