

These comments were taken verbatim from notes placed on this board and were not edited or paraphrased by staff.

## 3. Shift to the Center!

### *Realigning priorities, enlivening downtown*

In this scenario, Helena creates an attractive, vibrant, and **irresistible city core** that draws development inward and provides an economic focal point for the entire region. Policies will focus less on joint planning with the County and more on **enhancing** the attraction of the **city center** for housing, employment, culture, and entertainment. It **directs** major local transportation **investment** and infrastructure upgrades to the **benefit of the central city**, resisting pressure to enhance roadway capacity on arterials leading out of town and focusing, instead, on upgrades to the transportation experience within. The **mixed-use** central core will successfully compete with land on the periphery for development of **new housing**, and **downtown retail** will flourish as a result.

#### Comments:

- Promote Renewable energy in Helena
- City should not allow anonymous bidders for public spaces!! We care what happens – even [with] small spaces
- Don't just sell off pocket parks to make \$ (money)
- Set goal of 100% renewable energy for City of Helena \*
- Increase livability walkability multimodal options in the central core. Discourage more growth in the valley.
- Adopt traffic calming policies and reduce speed limits over larger area of Helena \*
- Plan for a sustainable mix of retail, services, and housing so nodes can stand alone and serve residents within walking distance.
- Adopt complete street policy
- Hi all my name is Kelly [note from one of the younger visitors to the studio]
- Go for the best; status quo has no vision for a great Helena!
- Create/plant tree-lined streets w (with) various species.
- Thank you for doing this- Keep the public involved in Helena's future
- Connect neighborhoods, especially downtown. Crossing Benton and Park are dangerous- it's wide and there are few crosswalks except at City Co. bldg. It's a straight shot from Mt. Helena down Clark, Lawrence, etc. and yet no connectivity.
- More housing downtown- use existing bldgs. i.e., I.R., Blue Cross
- This is very important, but we can do more for using and neighborhoods as well. A walkable city.. well maintained.

- Many of Helena's street trees are ash trees and may be endangered by Emerald Ash Borer. Need to start now to aggressively replace and expand trees, especially in neighborhoods without any.
- Need to identify what the "City Core" is, where does it begin and end, Helena is a tough place to identify where downtown is
- Close lot across from Lucca's, make it a market or something – no cars!!
- Emphasize pedestrian links between downtown and nearby residential areas, and between walkable "islands" downtown – New pedestrian infrastructure. \* *agree*
- Keep one-way traffic on Main St. It makes it easier to jaywalk- and jaywalking is good for pedestrian circulation. \*
- Reuse empty buildings e.g. Independent Record, Blue Cross.\* Provide grocery downtown,\* retain parks/open space, affordable housing.
- Strong advocate of a vibrant city center. Invest in the core.
- Incentives for more small businesses to open on the walking mall! *Ditto*
- Our cultural assets are a big part of the local economy – visual and performing arts- history, music, dance, theater, library. Let's have public art throughout Helena! Maybe have a downtown cultural district?
- Look at tax revenue per unit of area, for instance \$/acre, and prioritize high return areas i.e., not big box stores!
- Include some limited on-street parking on walking mall
- Redo buildings and facades on E (east) side of Gulch with Trompe l'oeil (a style of painting in which objects are depicted with photographically realistic detail or to create the optical illusion that the depicted objects exist in three dimensions.) to create better look and feel.
- Lower levels stores. Middle offices, Upper residences, condos
- Walkability and bike-ability need to improve. Invest in 6<sup>th</sup> Ward. Forward thinking City Council, please. Public transit!! Tax rebate for solar. 1 HR (hour) parking inhibits downtown biz [business] & longevity. Helena IR needs to proofread.
- Make some quick hits on walkability - infill gaps in sidewalks that are pervasive in some areas, like E. Broadway.