



Online Survey

Public Input Summary

Approximately 1,000 people took the Greater Downtown Dayton Plan survey that was available on the Downtown Dayton Partnership's Web site. Hard copies of the survey also were distributed at all public input meetings and to all Dayton Metro Library branch locations.

The survey asked participants to rank the importance of 11 different areas, including:

- Develop a **vibrant urban center** through infrastructure improvements that create a pedestrian-friendly environment
- Establish a nurturing **business environment** that attracts and retains high-value jobs
- Implement a **streetcar system** that is part of a larger, comprehensive transportation system
- Focus on **green and sustainable development** and attract and create green jobs
- Strengthen Greater Downtown Dayton's **arts, entertainment and cultural community**
- Increase and diversify – in style, function and price point – **housing** options
- Take better advantage of the **Great Miami River** as a focus for development
- Create a broad mix of housing, entertainment and cultural opportunities that will help attract and retain **young professionals and college students**
- Ensure Greater Downtown has a **safe, clean and beautiful environment**
- Improve **parking** and related issues to encourage development and growth
- Build Greater Downtown as an **educational center of excellence**

Survey analysis indicates the following:

Areas of Importance

1. The areas that respondents ranked as “extremely important” include:

- Establishing a nurturing **business environment** that attracts and retains high-value jobs: 83.92 percent ranked this as extremely important
- Ensuring the Greater Downtown has a **safe, clean and beautiful environment**: 83.58 percent
- Developing downtown as a **vibrant urban center** through infrastructure improvements that create a pedestrian-friendly environment with connections to downtown hotspots and lively parks/public squares: 72.41 percent

2. In general, all 11 areas of focus were ranked as important. However, there were two areas that received lower rankings.

- Implementing a streetcar system that moves people throughout downtown, connects to institutional anchors and is part of a larger transportation system: 20.13 percent ranked this as “not very important.”
- Focusing on green, sustainable development and attracting/creating green jobs: 11.11 percent ranked this as “not very important.”

3. Respondents were asked to rank their top three priorities. Overall results indicate the top three priorities for all survey respondents are:

- developing a **vibrant urban center**
- establishing a nurturing **business environment**
- ensuring downtown has a **safe, clean & beautiful environment**

4. The areas all survey respondents ranked lower include

- building downtown as an **educational center of excellence**
- implementing a **streetcar system**
- focusing on **green**, sustainable development

Other Findings

1. While they were not ranked as top three priorities, 95 percent of respondents rated the following as “important,” “somewhat important” or “extremely important:”

- attracting and retaining **young professionals**
- strengthening **arts, entertainment and culture**
- increasing and diversifying **housing** options

2. The majority of respondents believe it's important to take better advantage of the **Great Miami River** as a focus for development, entertainment, recreation, housing and community life.
3. Nearly 50 percent of survey respondents come downtown on a **daily** basis.
4. Respondents' ages varied. The largest number of respondents came from the following age groups: 45-54 (26 percent), 55-64 (21 percent) and 25-34 (20 percent).
5. The largest income range was \$75,000-\$99,999 (16.07 percent), followed by \$60-\$74,999 (15.96 percent) and \$100,000-\$149,999 (13.77 percent).
6. Survey respondents primarily came from Dayton and nearby suburbs to the south. The top three zip codes were: 45402 (102 respondents), 45419 (84 respondents) and 45410 (80 respondents).

Open Ended Questions

Respondents had the opportunity to list what they believe downtown Dayton's greatest strengths and weaknesses are. Some respondents also used this area of the survey to list their ideas for improving Greater Downtown Dayton. The following analysis was created after reviewing all these survey responses.

Strengths

1. The majority of the comments about downtown's strengths were related to arts and entertainment, with a majority of those comments indicating this is Greater Downtown Dayton's greatest strength. Respondents pointed to the following as strengths:

RiverScape

Fifth Third Field/Dayton Dragons

Schuster Performing Arts Center

Victoria Theatre

Oregon Arts District

Neon Movies

art galleries and museums

Second Street Public Market

Courthouse Square

various special events and cultural festivals

nightclubs

various arts groups, such as DCDC, DPO, Dayton Opera, Dayton Ballet, etc.

Wright-Dunbar

2. Downtown's unique urban setting, which has an authentic feel and original architecture, was acknowledged as one of downtown's strengths.
3. Downtown's central location, wide streets, affordability and walkability are great assets.
4. Some respondents noted downtown's high office vacancy rate indicates there are lots of opportunities for redevelopment and plenty of office space for new uses.
5. Downtown's beautiful riverfront, parks and bikeways were noted as strengths by many respondents.
6. A handful of people believe unique housing options are downtown's greatest strength. The beautiful historic districts and converted lofts and condos were noted as specific examples.
7. Dayton's rich history, friendly people and dedicated community also were recognized as strengths.

Weaknesses

1. Respondents were most concerned with the current business environment, lack of safety and an environment that is not clean and beautiful.
2. Regarding the downtown business environment, respondents were most concerned about:
 - lack of jobs/businesses
 - poor leadership and vision
 - lack of retail/restaurants to support businesses
 - vacant buildings
 - failure to be part of a broader regional strategy
 - crumbling infrastructure/buildings in need of repair
3. When it comes to safety and cleanliness, respondents were most concerned about:
 - crowds that gather at Third and Main streets
 - panhandlers
 - empty streets/poor lighting that make people feel unsafe
 - perception problems/people who think downtown is unsafe
 - lack of police presence/security
 - lack of streetscape amenities, including flowers, trash cans, benches, etc.

4. Respondents also indicated a need for additional arts and entertainment options, noting:
- not enough nightlife/post-theatre entertainment options
 - few after-work options
 - lack of entertainment amenities that residents and visitors want, such as restaurants, a grocery store, coffee shops, more places to shop, etc.
 - entertainment options that attract a broader spectrum of people, including more family-friendly attractions, venues with lower price points, additional cultural events and more nightlife options for young professionals

5. Poor signage, lighting and connections between key areas of downtown make pedestrians feel unsafe. Respondents noted an overall lack of vibrancy and emptiness after 5 p.m. and on weekends add to this problem.

6. Those respondents who commented on housing as a weakness believe that downtown lacks a variety of options at affordable price points. Many feel the current housing inventory is too expensive for recent college graduates, young professionals and those in the middle class who may want to live in an urban setting.