

Public Comment Summary Draft Vision Themes and Guiding Principles

Overview and Purpose

The Vision Themes and Guiding Principles are intended to provide a high-level framework for the Downtown Specific Plan. On December 15, 2020, the draft Vision Themes and Guiding Principles were presented to the Advisory Committee during the Advisory Committee Meeting #3. The Vision Themes and Guiding Principles were also posted on the project website. From December 15, 2020 to January 19, 2021 the Vision Themes and Guiding Principles were open for public comment to get additional input and ensure that the Vision Themes and Guiding Principles are consistent with the community's vision for downtown.

100 total comments were submitted. Three comments were labeled as questions, 78 comments were labeled as suggestions, and 19 comments were in response to other comments.

The comments were then tagged into 34 various categories to summarize their sentiment – totaling 165 tags. Note: when applicable some comments received multiple tags to fully capture what was being conveyed.

- Affordable Housing (9)
- Art (11)
- City Responsibility (5)
- Cleanliness (1)
- Collaboration/Partnerships (7)
- Community Engagement (2)
- Diversity (3)
- Events (7)
- Fear of Gentrification (3)
- Inclusive of All (6)
- Landscaping/Streetscape (4)
- Lighting (1)
- Live/Work (1)
- Local Businesses (8)
- Maintain Status-quo (2)
- Mobility (3)
- Nightlife (2)
- Opportunity Sites (2)
- Outdoor Dining (1)
- Pedestrian (3)
- Plaza (1)
- Preservation (1)
- Reduce Traffic on Main Street (1)
- Revitalize Vacant Buildings (6)
- Safety (8)
- Signage/Branding (1)
- Similar Communities to Research (10)
- Sustainability (1)
- TOD (3)
- Unique (2)
- Variety of Uses (11)
- WiFi (2)
- Word Choice (30)
- Youth Programming (6)



The following are the top 5 tags that received the most comments:

1. Variety of Uses - 11 Comments
2. Art – 11 Comments
3. Similar Communities to Research – 10 Comments
4. Affordable Housing – 9 Comments
5. Local Businesses – 8 Comments

Note: A total of 30 comments were tagged “Word Choice”. These comments were reviewed and implemented where appropriate

The topics below emerged as new topics or surfaced as stronger themes as compared to what we have heard previously from stakeholders and the community. This input guided the revisions to the Vision Themes and Guiding Principles.

- **Art** – the presence of art in the downtown emerged as a higher priority than compared to previous input we received to date.
- **Similar Communities to Research** – a total of 10 comments suggested communities to research that model elements of a successful downtown that people would like to see

replicated in Watsonville. Some of these included: Aptos Station, Lodi, Lincoln, and Morgan Hill.

- **Collaboration/Partnerships** – the theme of collaboration and partnerships between community members, organizations, businesses, and the City had a much stronger presence through this feedback than what we have heard to date.
- **Youth Programming** – a total of 6 comments spoke to the need of youth programming in the downtown. This need was also heard at Advisory Committee Meeting #3 and is clearly an interest for the community.

Commenters were also able to “agree” or “disagree” with all comments that were posted. Below is a list of the top comments:

7 agree – 2 disagree

I think it is very important for the City Council and Planning Committee to visit other communities and see what they are doing. For example, look at Lodi and Lincoln. They have cute vintage shops and shows that people come from miles around to go see. There are cute coffee shops, boutiques, and more. Watsonville has so much potential that is wasted. Downtown looks pretty but lacks interest to bring people in.

6 agree – 0 disagree

Small local businesses would work to give Watsonville its small-town charm. Attracting franchises could devalue the charisma of downtown Watsonville

5 agree – 0 disagree

Revitalize the Fox theater as a movie and Live performing arts center