

Collaborating to create a community-based framework for moving downtown Rochester forward and continue down the path of recovery.

Working Session Initial Feedback; Themes Report

Date; 3/28/2023

Downtown Rochester Task Force: Working Session Themes Report

Background:

The pandemic interrupted many aspects of our lives – changing how and where people work, shop, and conduct other activities. In many cases, downtowns will not return to how they were before the pandemic.

Downtown Rochester, like almost all cities, has suffered because of these disruptions and long-term changes. While several new businesses have opened and many have pivoted, more can be done to help during recovery. The Downtown Rochester Task Force was established to help accelerate Rochester's path forward and build a more resilient downtown.

The goal of the Task Force is to collectively create a community-based action plan that identifies (1) immediate and short-term recommendations, (2) responsible organizations/partners, and (3) timelines associated with each recommended action item.

Process:

The Task Force intentionally took a collaborative approach to build the action plan. A 90-day outline guides the work and includes three phases:

- Phase 1 (February March): Stakeholder engagement to build consensus on key themes/issues.
 - Step completed
- Phase 2 (March April): Determine immediate and short-term action steps and accountability.
 - o In progress, working sessions to be held in April
- Phase 3 (May): Implement immediate and short-term action recommendations.

Four public working sessions, included in Phase 1, were held with the downtown stakeholder community to gather feedback. The sessions were facilitated, and participants were asked four questions:

- Over the last three years, what innovations have you made in your business to be successful?
 Also, what innovations did you encounter in downtown Rochester over the past years?
- In three words or less, describe a thriving downtown
- What is getting in the way, or what should we be doing to ensure we have a thriving downtown?
- What themes are starting to emerge?

All information gathered during these sessions was reviewed and organized into four larger themes. The Task Force will use these themes in the second phase to begin to identify immediate and short-term recommendations from the community's phase one input.

The themes are being shared with the community as a checkpoint and an opportunity to provide additional feedback. After community members review the attached themes, they are asked to complete a short <u>survey</u>.

Once additional feedback is incorporated, and as part of phase two, public working sessions related to each theme will be scheduled in April. During the working sessions, participants and organizations will work together to identify immediate and short-term recommendations. These working sessions will be open to the public and announced in the coming week.

What We learned:

Our stakeholders believe in a downtown that is vibrant, active, safe, and welcoming. Where there are always things to do and see, it is a place to visit, heal, work, live, learn, and play. It is the heartbeat of our city. Downtown should offer a variety of experiences for a variety of users.

All information gathered during the community working sessions was reviewed and organized into four themes.

Downtown Promotion, Activation, and Programming:

- Strengthen promotion, marketing, and communications
- Activate downtown in a variety of ways

Access to Downtown:

- Develop new public parking strategies
- Improve wayfinding
- Address safety concerns
- Mitigate the impact of construction

Barriers to doing Business Downtown:

- Simplify policies and processes improve and streamline
- Decrease costs of conducting business downtown

Downtown Growth:

- Recruitment of new businesses
- Retention of small businesses
- Understand new market demands

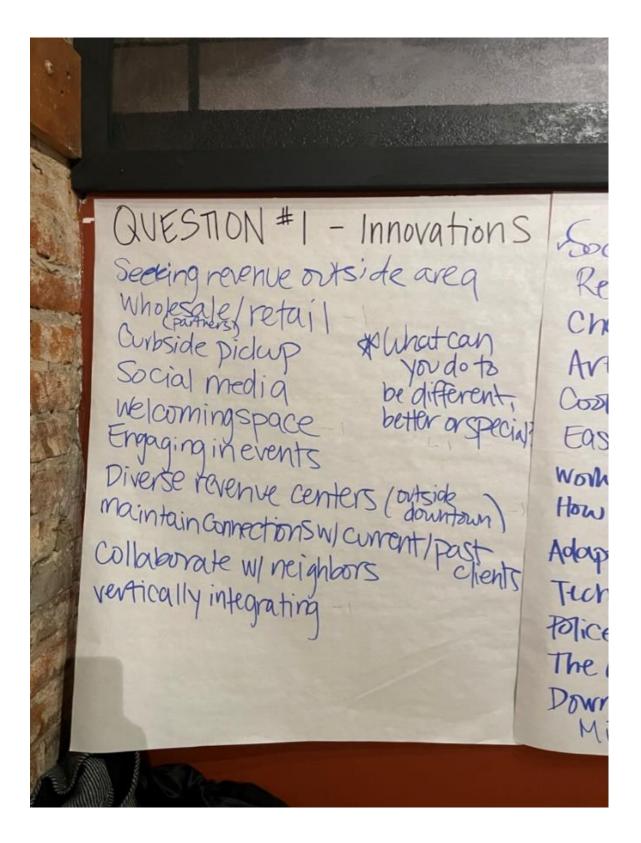
Next Steps:

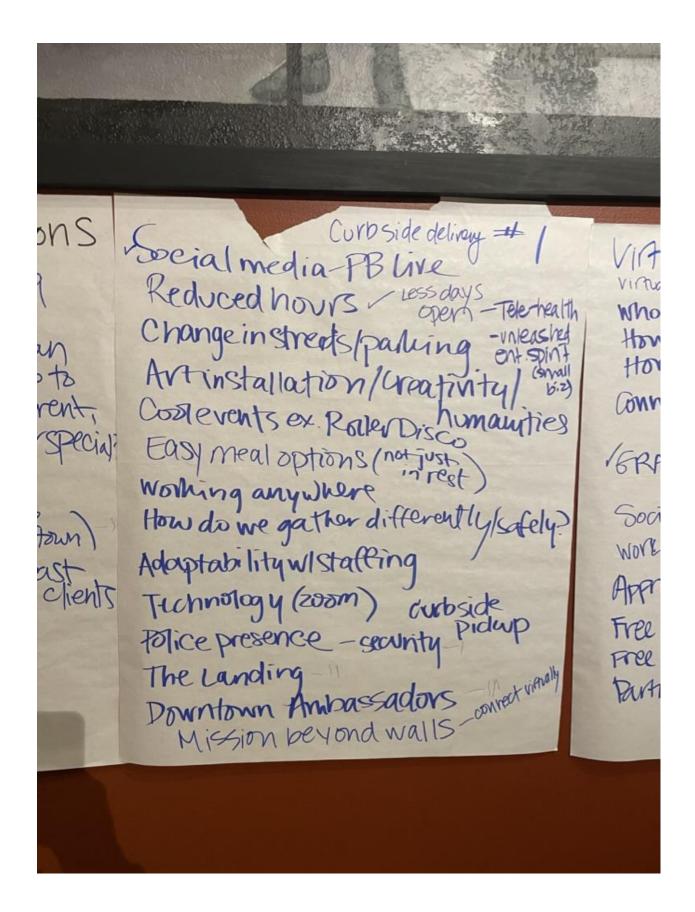
In April, the community will be invited to participate in working sessions designed around each theme. Participants and organizations will work together to identify immediate and short-term recommendations. These working sessions will be open to the public and announced in the coming week. More information will be shared about the schedule of these meetings in the coming weeks.

Appendix:

Images from notes taken at community working sessions.

Fagen Studio Session 2/27/23





Virtual wallung tour Virtual tour (univ) by deplfree Who is my customer? Prots
How do t get to them? Prots realth shed DINT How to streamline? < tours (Small 6.2) Connection to Kathleon Chamber 15 ask for help (legal)

(BRANTS PPP

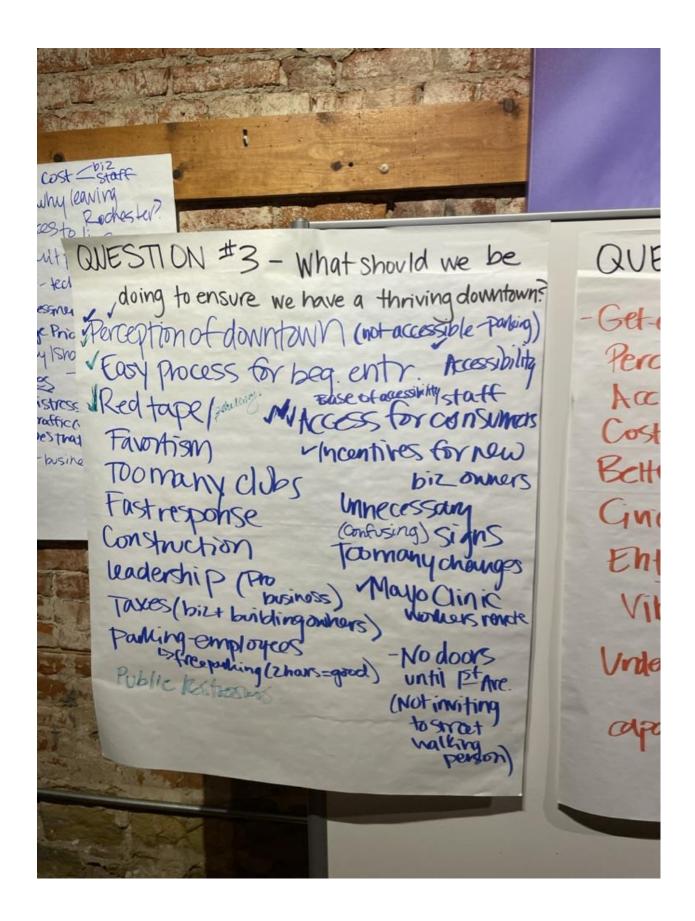
Mob development - Trees Ares M

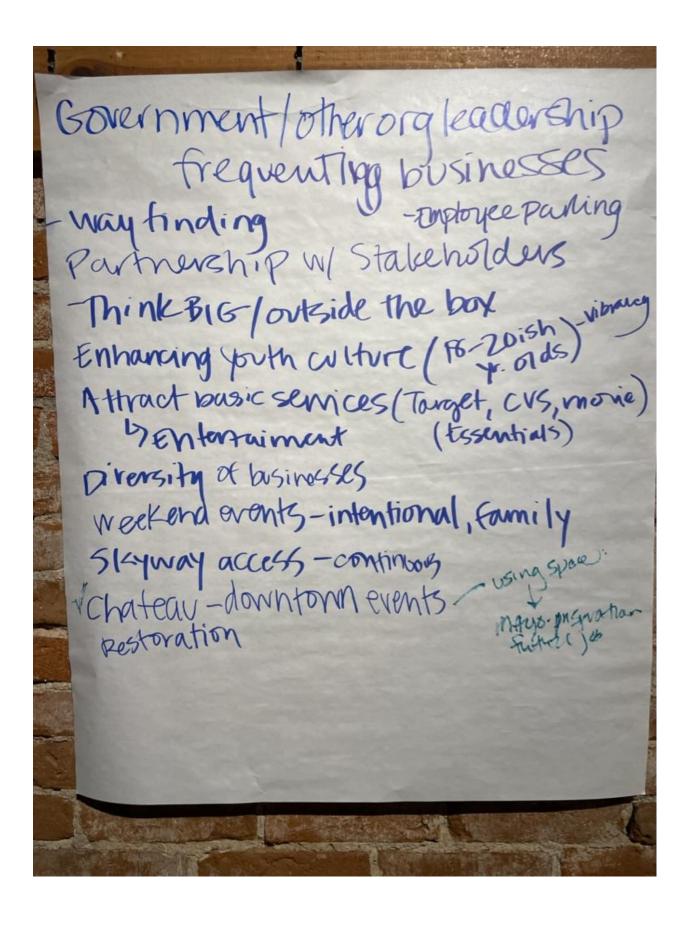
Mob development - Trees Ares M ries Social media work on zoom - trades now alternative Apprentice program Free service Ix a month Partnership (Hilton) creativity

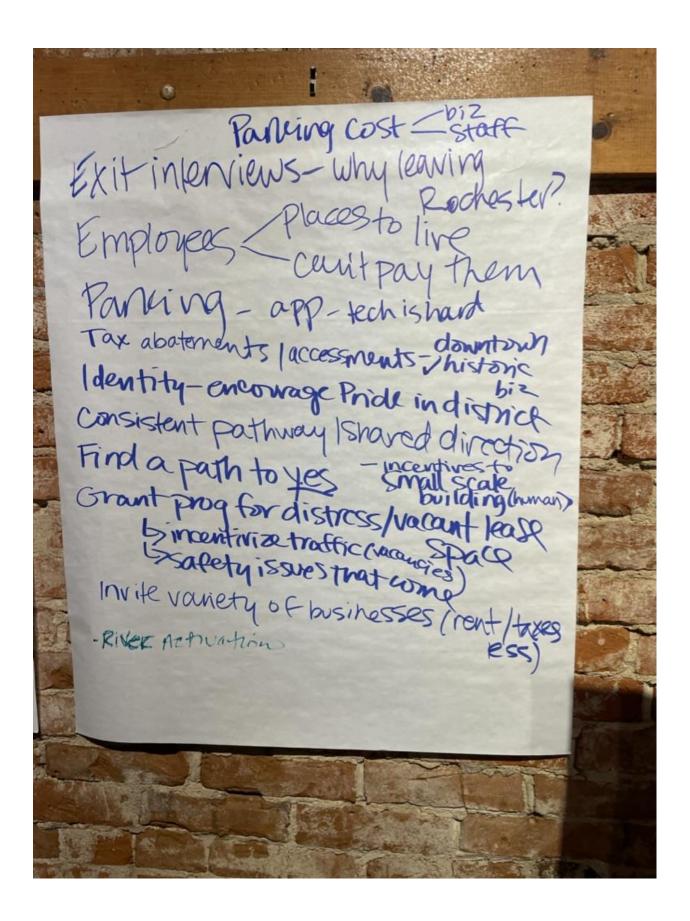
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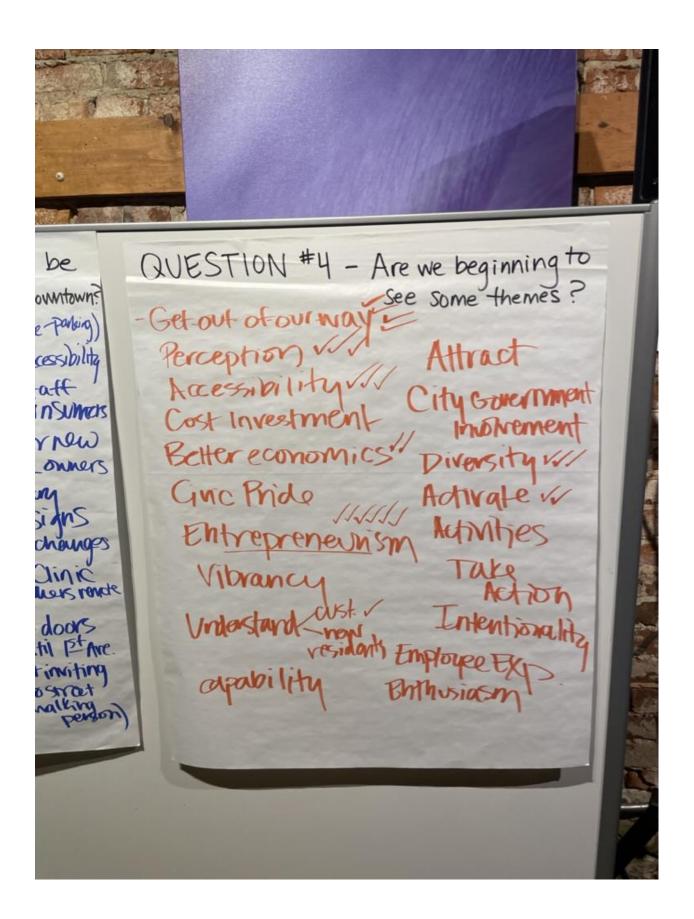
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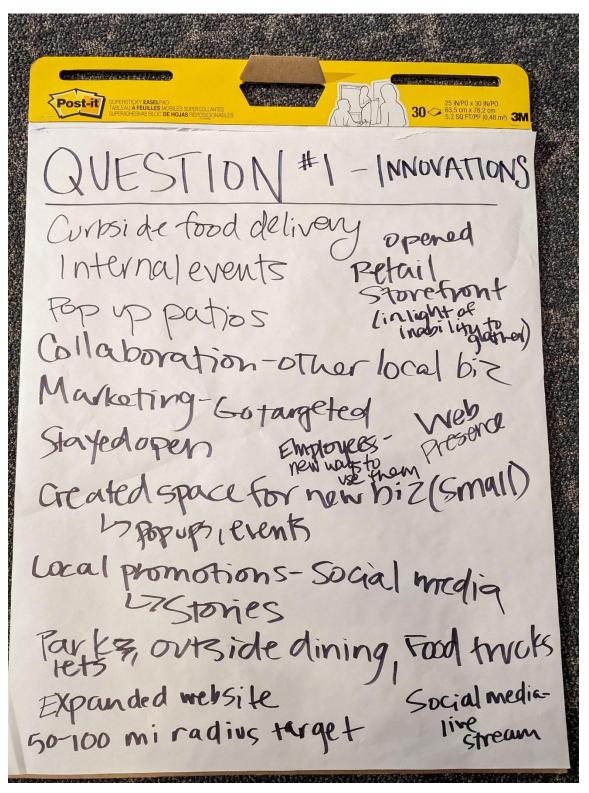
QUESTION #2 - In three words Populated Abuzz downtown. Lowtowes Historic Culture walkability Innovative Diverse We coming Active Exciting. Attractive Green Family Friendly Colorful Artistic Well-lit Tasty Customers Acressible Happy Bustling Inhabitants
Disabilitie Disabilities vibrant tun

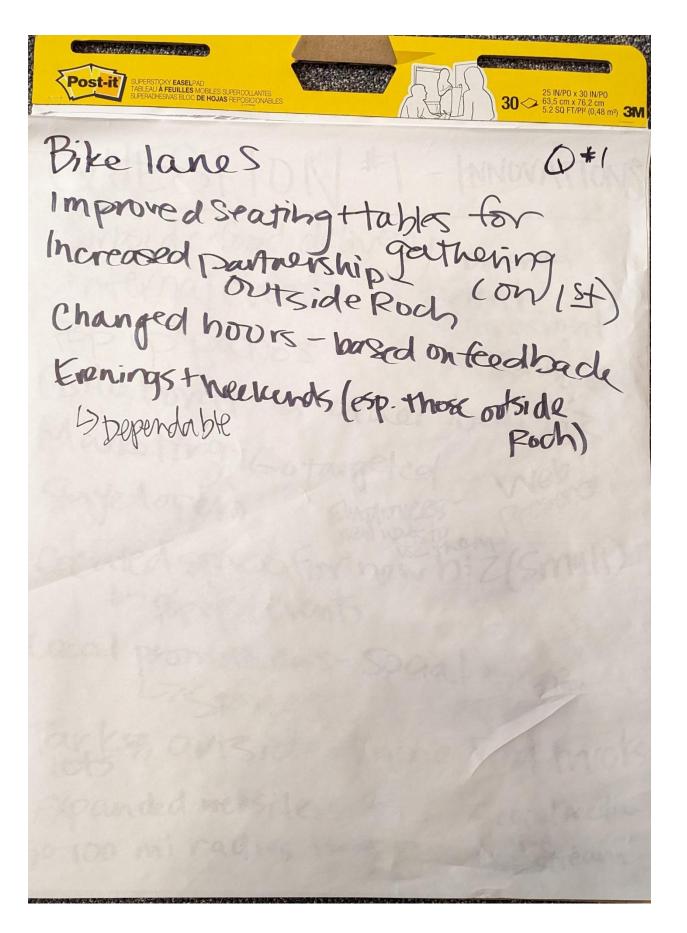


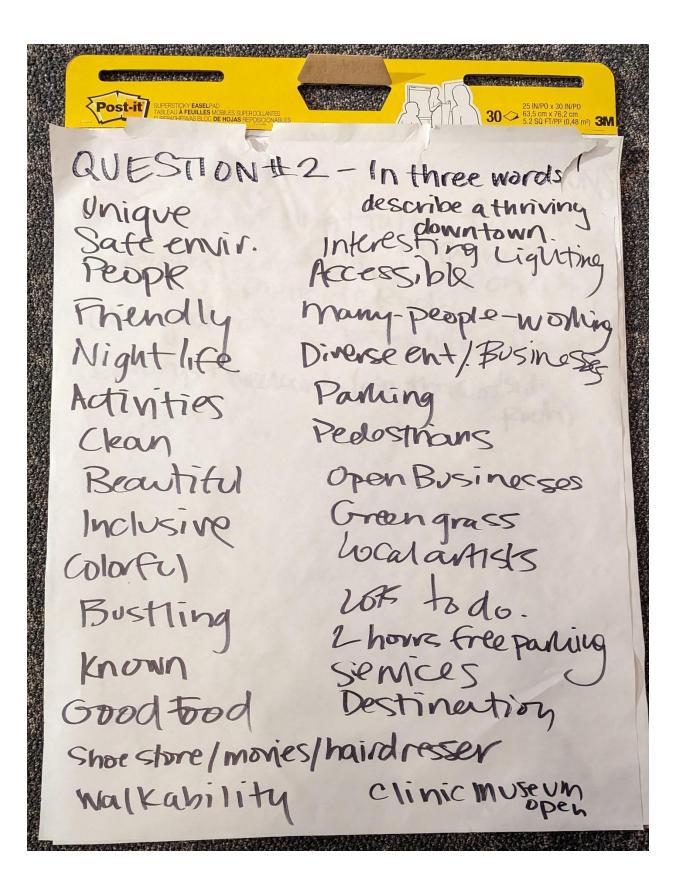


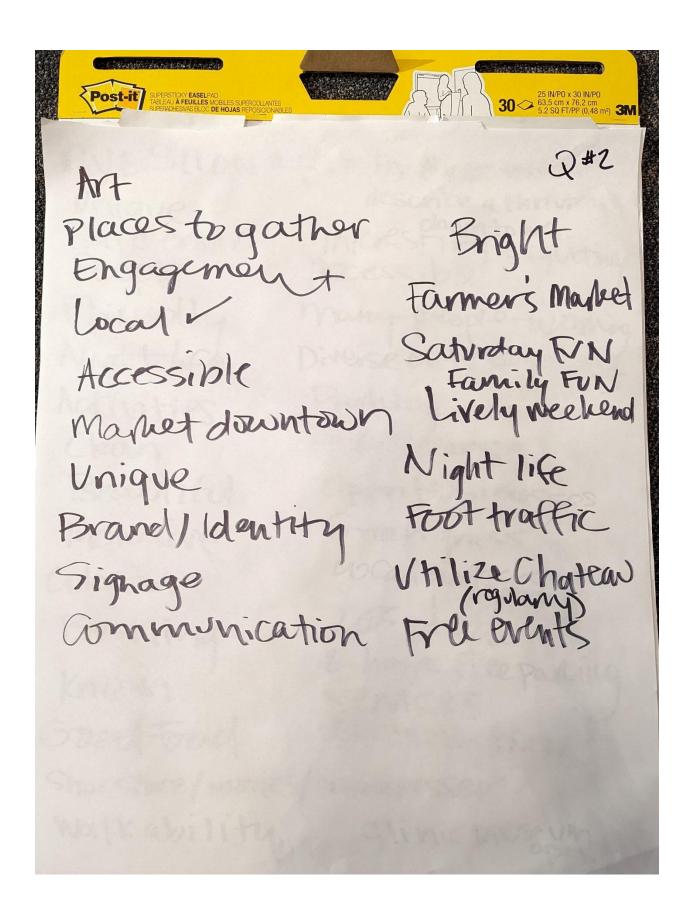


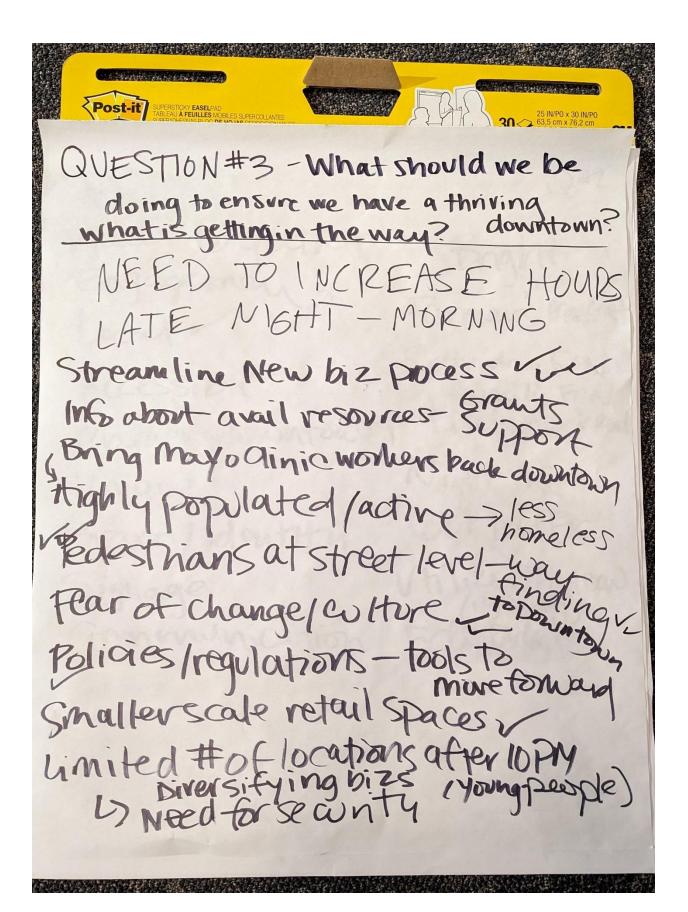


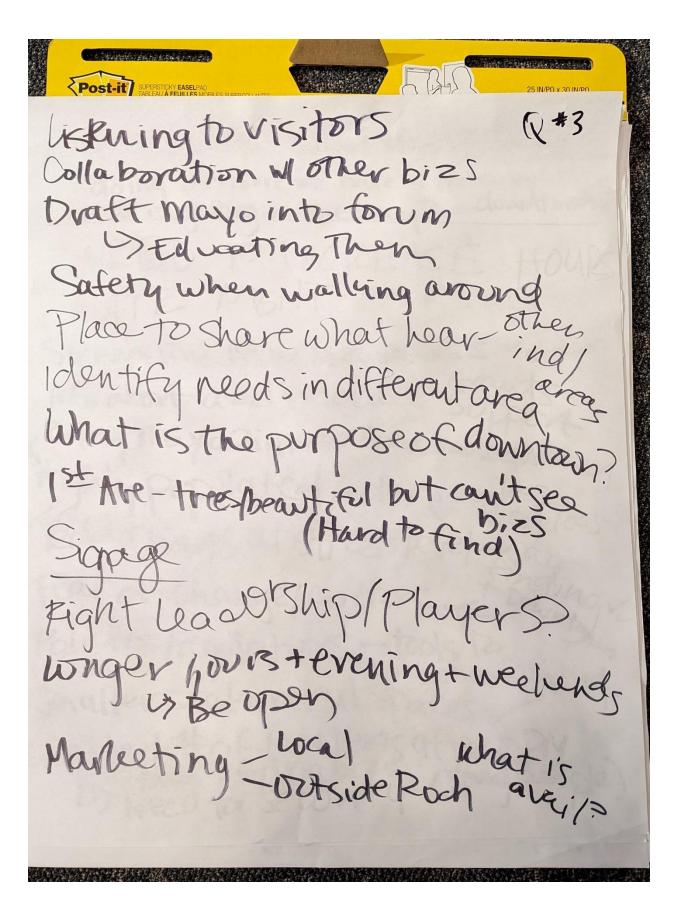






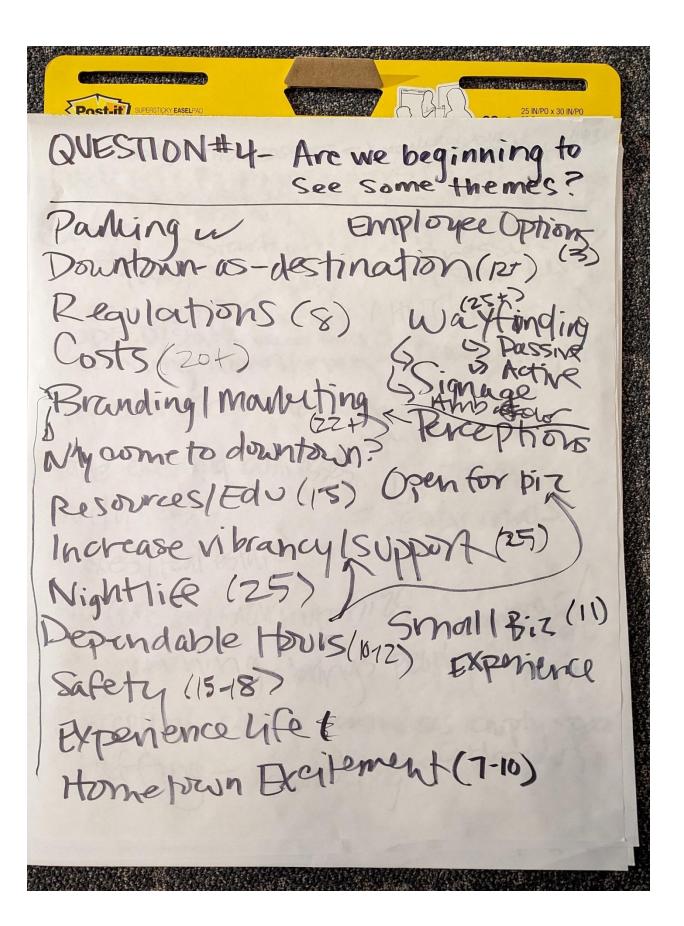






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Programming-brings people (Hipl Perception-closer businesses couply space Ting-marketing Coldoner



- Inch 2 very
QUESTION#1 Over the last 3 years,
-what innovations have you done in your business to be successful?
business to be successful?
- What innovations did yovencounter in downtown Rochester?
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Working morocally vs. outside
Working more locally-law artists V parading dwelling & meet the needs
Adapting to adverse circumstances
tagning to solverse specific
1/kline Bearings.
Utilizing new Hech to meet w/ Clients
Leveragion PDA
1 1 1 1 1 1 1 Calendar & Social media
Collaborating w/ biz not downtown of Rent liency Downtown
Rent liency Donntown
Late hands for the
wages, benefits - microscientice
vavering parmit is to employment
wages, benefits-increase/entice vowering sample is to employment schange requirements

Innovations QUESTION # 1 Cont. Econnerce 9 Cross Function-cross training wit Maximize efficiencies todam Connections W/ Mayo - food industry Outdoor events partnership Impresement fideshaning prog Bile lanes Community policing Donntown cleanup crew More downtown living

QUESTION#2- In three wordsescribe a thirting donn Small, original bizs Well marked, barnier f Panung yday living needs ,

QUESTION#3 - What should we be doing to ensure we have attriving wnatis getting in the onstruction (timing) 4 more prosed TV Regu Affordable Downtown Living Micromanage - Leadership (Political) - Young businessowners (marson) SElected of teaders (welcoming vibe) is DMC - Favortism - because of connection -- Lack of events_attract diverse.

nightlife (concorts) - Thnoration/hew ideas events ~ -parling employees donnton - Occupany cost

Process speed-marketplace Chemits Good= 2 hr + free parling (maketing Workfrom home-barrier Patients
Accept demographic 20-40 yrolds Perception ~ myths of unsafe + inconvenient Tax incentive/relief 5 fill vacantspace-could assist Competing areas are more accessible? Continue to make affordable Transportation Good iF bus doesn't miss Broddway
Accessibility to biz workplaces Transpurency/Comm re: City owned properties

5 to Developers moyo Clinic re: People in at home. Host meetings (Worle From) Downtown Suseofchateau

QUESTION#4- Are we beginning to see some themes? Transpurency Safety Regulation & Parking Accessibility Livability pestination/ Fees/Costs Fairness mage/Brander Growth Incentives/ Diversity/Inchairity Nightlife (south) Identity-mertange

Virtual Session 3/14/23

YouTube Video: here

Chat Record

10:07:21 From Casey Mcgregor to Everyone:

With this being recorded will it be available to others later?

10:14:24 From Destination Medical Center to Everyone:

HI Casey - Data and information gathered from all 4 seasons will be shared publicly once compiled - including this video.

10:18:06 From Brenda Kardock to Everyone:

At the Foundation, we created a totally virtual event very quickly and did several more entertaining interactive sessions. I feel our practice sessions really helped with this.

The Library's delivery of materials from curbside, to parking garage, to service windows was pretty amazing. Loved the outdoor dining, but the restaurants who created complete meal pickup for holidays was very cool.

10:19:16 From JIM MINER to Everyone:

Outdoor dining is great, however many curbside parking spots have been eliminated over the past several years.

10:20:17 From Walter Hanson to Everyone:

1)Broadened our marketing efforts to the Retail Trade area. 2)Expanding and trying to establish more cohesive Hours, i.e. evenings and weekends. 3)Expanded our Website to include classes.

10:22:38 From Leslie McGillivray-Rivas to Everyone:

I pivoted from being a daily driver, to being a transit user, to being an active pedestrian. Then pivoted again and became a remote worker. Became an advocate and joined the Pedestrian and Bicycle advisory committee for the city of Rochester.

10:23:18 From Danielle Teal to Everyone:

I would also add, I was impressed with the community engagement from restaurants like Victoria's. The provided meals to families in need - as a consumer, that really made me aware of how compassionate this business was and compelled me to support more as well.

10:23:42 From Scarlet Tippetts to Everyone:

Reacted to "I pivoted from being..." with 🌕



10:24:52 From Brent Fisher to Everyone:

People / Purpose / Convenience

10:24:52 From Scott Joseph to Everyone:

People Trees Activity

10:25:05 From Walter Hanson to Everyone:

Unique, friendly and inviting

10:25:06 From Erik Noonan (he/him) to Everyone:

Accessible, walkable, budget-inclusive

10:25:11 From Jabra Kawas to Everyone:

Safe. Traffic.

10:25:14 From Anna Argo to Everyone:

engagement, businesses, culture

10:25:16 From Danielle Teal to Everyone:

Connection. Activated. Menu of options (i.e. family, individual, etc target audience) okay so that's more than 3 words. :)

10:25:20 From Brenda Kardock to Everyone:

Energetic, Gathering, Harmonious

10:25:25 From Marty Walsh to Everyone:

Entrepreneurial, Artistic, Pedestrian

10:25:28 From Leslie McGillivray-Rivas to Everyone:

People/commerce/neighbors

10:25:41 From University Square - Room 348 to Everyone:

active/walkable/night life

10:25:41 From Heather Barness to Everyone:

Active, Diverse, Beautiful

10:25:48 From Jay Stoyles to Everyone:

Many Events

10:26:22 From Jay Stoyles to Everyone:

Safe

10:26:29 From Scarlet Tippetts to Everyone:

inclusive

10:26:40 From Walter Hanson to Everyone:

unique identiy

10:26:46 From JIM MINER to Everyone:

inovaive

10:26:49 From Daniel Dogo-Esekie to Everyone:

Entertainment

10:27:04 From L Zastrow to Everyone:

Organic/community/vibrant

10:27:05 From Scarlet Tippetts to Everyone:

accessible

10:28:15 From Daniel Dogo-Esekie to Everyone:

Encourage enhanced mixed use buildings. Have more people live downtown

10:29:02 From Casey Mcgregor to Everyone:

Nightlife, music, dancing, bans,

10:29:05 From Walter Hanson to Everyone:

Develop a Brand for Downtown and market it to our customers and potential customers across multiple media. Downtown right now lacks a Brand and Brand Image.

10:30:16 From Heather Barness to Everyone:

Getting in the way - the misconception that downtown has "nothing" going on and/or is not safe. Should be doing - more activities at different times i.e. at night, at morning/more family friendly, etc. and more and more marketing about that i.e. surrounding towns, NE Iowa, etc.

10:30:17 From Anna Argo to Everyone:

+1 on parking being difficult and/or expensive which can be a barrier to accessing downtown activities

10:30:28 From Scott Joseph to Everyone:

Daily, quality events at the Chateau Theater, 30 minutes of free paring at meters, consistent streetscape with lots of greenery and one streetlight design, wayfinding signs, drinking fountains, bathrooms

10:32:13 From JIM MINER to Everyone:

The market whatever is proposed may not support the activity or desired outcome In other words, private enterprise may not see enough mass of people to support the desired outcome. If there is money to be made, there will be a business that will try. No profit, no business or activity.

10:32:21 From JP to Everyone:

Welcoming national brands, later retail/shopping hours. after 6 pm the only thing is eating and drinking.

10:33:15 From Kelly Rae Kirkpatrick to Everyone:

There is free parking in the public ramps and at parking meters after 5pm. And on weekends. The Civic Center ramp has free parking when in and out in under an hour.

10:33:40 From Danielle Teal to Everyone:

Additional feedback: use Café Aqui and Sargents as inspiration, create a work space downtown with lots of plants and coffee. It's packed every day at Sargents. Brilliant concept, accessible getting to it, etc.

10:33:42 From Scarlet Tippetts to Everyone:

+1 on Marty's comment about activating vacant spaces with temporary pop-ups...and encouraging people (even non-businesses such as a club) to come up with an idea that someone can help them implement

10:34:17 From Daniel Dogo-Esekie to Everyone:

Think outside the box when it comes to accessibility to and from downtown - think people movers to decompress lack of parking downtown. Invest in elevated train or long bus that will make a loop around Rochester to remote parking location.

10:35:17 From Walter Hanson to Everyone:

Work with Mayo and other employers do something to bring more workers back downtown

10:35:29 From Danielle Teal to Everyone:

Final comment on this: true affordable housing. downtown apartment complexes price out folks from living downtown. We need to consider livable wage and what's truly affordable - especially if we want folks downtown.

10:35:50 From Danielle Teal to Everyone:

Yes, Leslie +1

10:35:59 From Daniel Dogo-Esekie to Everyone:

Build a stadium close to downtown, bring franchise sporting teams - Basketball, Hockey, Baseball etc, to Rochester.

10:36:22 From Scarlet Tippetts to Everyone:

something to draw people to downtown in the evening that is different than a bar (such as a small, cheap-seats movie theater).

10:36:51 From Danielle Teal to Everyone:

+1 Daniel, I would ride a bus/train to get downtown, especially if it looks and it's often

10:37:10 From Danielle Teal to Everyone:

*loops

10:37:19 From Brent Fisher to Everyone:

Great idea on the fitness trail...

10:38:14 From Casey Mcgregor to Everyone:

Communication to the public is very difficult. No ones fault, with more technology there is more calendars websites etc.. everyone is on different apps, ages brackets choose different social media. How to get a just 1 calendar and the public to know that calendar exists. How to communicate these days is a challenge.. its like there is to many options.

10:38:40 From Scarlet Tippetts to Everyone:

One innovation I'm appreciative of is Gifts Rochester now Neighborly Gifts which was founded in early days of the pandemic -- allows remote workers such as myself a chance to shop locally since I no longer get to come to Rochester or go downtown as often (this may have been captured previously by Jamie Rothe).

10:39:15 From Brent Fisher to Everyone:

Having each of the high schools do their Homecoming parades dntn would be cool (this coming from past Century parent & future Mayo parent):)

10:39:57 From Danielle Teal to Everyone:

Yes, Erik!! +1 that comment

10:40:25 From Marty Walsh to Everyone:

Many locations seem very large for a brand new business to open.

10:40:26 From University Square - Room 348 to Everyone:

Hundreds of college aged 18, 19 and 20 year olds looking for reasons to stay IN Rochester on the weekends.

10:41:12 From Walter Hanson to Everyone:

Small businesses need to have a way to work together more so we can develop more cohesive hours so people can depend on things being open when they come down for dinner, etc.

10:42:06 From Scarlet Tippetts to Everyone:

I agree with Casey about a calendar for ALL events taking place in the downtown area. This is getting better but I often hear people say they wish they had known about an event before it's over and it's reported in the news.

10:42:14 From Brenda Kardock to Everyone:

I miss the downtown farmers market. I wonder if a valet parking option might help for events downtown? It was a no-brainer in Los Angeles, but I wonder if folks here would be willing to hand the keys to their car off? I echo what Casey said about a central calendar and what Walter said about unified hours.

10:42:42 From Marty Walsh to Everyone:

Agree with Walter. Successful National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street type programs spend 40-50% of staff time visiting with existing businesses to build soft coordination of hours and identify issues and opportunities before they become problems or it's too late.

10:42:49 From Walter Hanson to Everyone:

We have worked long term on changing Broadway from a through fare to a city street 2 lane.

10:42:50 From Casey Mcgregor to Everyone:

Reacted to "I agree with Casey a..." with 👍

10:42:51 From Erik Noonan (he/him) to Everyone:

-Lack of comfortable 'third places' that aren't transactional. Dog Parks, kids play areas near parentally engaging areas, aka reasons to stay downtown after or before dinner.

-Regulations prohibiting small format businesses

-Car centricity: over 1/3rd of off street space downtown is parking, our mainstreet is uncomfortable for anyone outside a car. This makes the space less enjoyable to spend time in and less accessible for folks with disabilities.

-Lack of non-rental homes, condos, townhouses + Housing affordability generally

10:42:53 From Danielle Teal to Everyone:

+4 on the calendar mention from Casey (integrating into one solid events calendar)

10:42:56 From Marty Walsh to Everyone:

New Build Single Family Homes near downtown would be a huge win.

10:43:13 From Daniel Dogo-Esekie to Everyone:

Use the old K-Mart lot to build a Huge Ferris Wheel like and other fun rides like you would see in London, UK; link to the Soldiers Field to create an downtown entertainment/shopping/eating/dancing/fun district!

10:43:16 From Leslie McGillivray-Rivas to Everyone:

I find the parking solution for me is solved when I have given myself enough time to get from point A to Point B. Is the struggle of people stating they don't have access to parking also due to time constraints? Or struggling with mobility?

10:44:15 From Scarlet Tippetts to Everyone:

training/classes would be helpful for items like the Lime Scooters...a "How to use/Navigate 101" class would have been helpful to make people more comfortable using them...set them up in a parking lot a could of times in the summer and invite people to come learn how to use them

10:44:27 From L Zastrow to Everyone:

+1 for quality interactive and public art!

10:45:48 From Walter Hanson to Everyone:

Parking is a perception and not a reality. We have more empty spaces in our ramps than ever before. The meters have been set to ensure that we have turnover.

10:46:55 From Erik Noonan (he/him) to Everyone:

+1 to Marty Walsh's points about institutional support coaching for new business startups

10:46:58 From Leslie McGillivray-Rivas to Everyone:

The beauty of Living in Rochester in it's location is the accessibility to the natural beauty of our Olmsted County parks (Olmsted county parks commissioner) and natural resource areas. The connections with trails is getting better for bikes/pedestrians but could improve.

10:46:58 From JIM MINER to Everyone:

How much should a subsidy be that will make a business work?

10:47:03 From Danielle Teal to Everyone:

+1 Marty

10:48:13 From Brenda Kardock to Everyone:

I think people don't know WHICH garage to park in sometimes, and agree it's perception. People need to feel more comfortable knowing where they are going... how to get there, how long they can stay, when it's free etc.

10:48:23 From Danielle Teal to Everyone:

That's okay, Daniel! We got you:)

10:48:37 From Scarlet Tippetts to Everyone:

Accessibility for community members -- who are not a business -- to be part of the downtown infrastructure such as a local artist would be able to show their work (through an approval process) at a local restaurant or retail business for a contracted period of time with the option for people to contact the artist to purchase their work (not a transaction handled by the business itself).

10:48:50 From Casey Mcgregor to Everyone:

How to engage seniors.. I was visiting the Waters and some I think are really board... getting retirement communities to do a van to downtown and have early bird Tuesday with the businesses and restaurants

10:49:07 From L Zastrow to Everyone:

+1 for Zoey's idea of popups for variety's sake with priority give to folks who DON'T already have a business or art downtown.

10:49:34 From Marty Walsh to Everyone:

Agree to expanding the urban fabric of downtown. It pays by far the most taxes per acre, and the expensive rent shows there is demand. The best way to meet demand and to lower prices is add supply.

10:50:28 From Brent Fisher to Everyone:

Purpose

10:50:31 From Anna Argo to Everyone:

access

10:50:33 From Jabra Kawas to Everyone:

Growth.

10:50:36 From Danielle Teal to Everyone:

Activation

10:50:37 From Marty Walsh to Everyone:

finding new direction

10:50:37 From JIM MINER to Everyone:

"cost to cure"

10:50:41 From Scott Joseph to Everyone:

more daily activity choices

10:50:42 From University Square - Room 348 to Everyone:

activity

10:50:54 From Leslie McGillivray-Rivas to Everyone:

Adapt

10:51:01 From Erik Noonan (he/him) to Everyone:

'Lowered-barriers-to-entry'

10:51:06 From Marty Walsh to Everyone:

Activation

10:51:06 From Danielle Teal to Everyone:

+1 access

10:51:10 From Casey Mcgregor to Everyone:

Entertainment/nightlife past 10pm

10:51:26 From Jay Stoyles to Everyone:

Safety

10:51:32 From Leslie McGillivray-Rivas to Everyone:

Resilience

10:51:46 From University Square - Room 348 to Everyone:

youth culture

10:51:46 From Scarlet Tippetts to Everyone:

accessibility

10:51:49 From L Zastrow to Everyone:

+1 nightilfe

10:51:51 From Walter Hanson to Everyone:

Work with MAYO to turn the existing Chateau into a Mayo Museum. You can easily add 3 more floors. The museum is a great way to attract people, especially patients. The focus would be more on the future of what Mayo sees as its future.

10:51:56 From Danielle Teal to Everyone:

Support (for businesses downtown)

10:51:57 From Scarlet Tippetts to Everyone:

+1 nighlife

10:52:01 From Daniel Dogo-Esekie to Everyone:

Vibrant

10:52:12 From Walter Hanson to Everyone:

Brand

10:52:12 From Leslie McGillivray-Rivas to Everyone:

Fellowship

10:52:22 From Scarlet Tippetts to Everyone:

professional help

10:52:26 From Daniel Dogo-Esekie to Everyone:

Entrepreneural

10:52:40 From Jay Stoyles to Everyone:

More choice

10:52:50 From Walter Hanson to Everyone:

cohesive effort

10:53:00 From Daniel Dogo-Esekie to Everyone:

Walkable

10:53:06 From Erik Noonan (he/him) to Everyone:

People centered

10:53:17 From Scarlet Tippetts to Everyone:

+1 to Marty Walsh's points about institutional support coaching for new business startups

10:53:56 From Leslie McGillivray-Rivas to Everyone:

Positivity

10:54:15 From Danielle Teal to Everyone:

Thanks for the opportunity to share (and providing alternative modes like virtual)

10:54:29 From Leslie McGillivray-Rivas to Everyone:

What Danielle said

10:54:36 From KAAL TV to Everyone:

When will this recording be available to the public?

10:55:30 From Kelly Rae Kirkpatrick (Ward 4) to Everyone:

Incredible work! Thank you so much for making this meeting process come together. I appreciate everyone's comments and engagement in our downtown!

10:55:48 From Destination Medical Center to Everyone:

@KAAL TV - this recording and all other data will be shared once complied. Thank you - DMC