



CENTER FOCUS

a Vision & Plan for
Downtown Provo

UNFOLDING THE VISION & PLAN



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Downtown Provo





Lewis K Billings, Mayor

DEAR PROVO RESIDENTS,

DOWNTOWN PROVO HAS GAINED A REPUTATION OVER THE YEARS AS ONE OF THE most charming, thriving downtowns in the Intermountain West. The Downtown is unique among our commercial districts for its combination of historic storefronts, tree-lined streets, assortment of restaurants, modern office buildings, and civic institutions. Truly, Downtown Provo stands among Utah's central business districts as a wonderfully distinctive place.

During 2008, Provo has closely examined Downtown's existing strengths and potential opportunities in order to plot a course for the future. Many committed people have devoted their time and wisdom to examining the Downtown with "new eyes," to help us arrive at a vision for what Downtown should be in the future and to plan the steps that will take it there. To those who have contributed to this effort, we express our deep thanks.

We hope this Downtown Strategic Plan document will assist us all to develop a common frame of reference and a common sense of purpose as we shape Downtown Provo's future. We believe the Plan is based on sound, simple principles. As the many stakeholders in the Downtown combine these principles with their own unique talents and experience, Downtown will continue to evolve in exciting ways.

To those who wish to play a role in bringing this Downtown Provo vision to reality, we offer a hand of partnership. Downtowns are complex organisms, and so the strategies to meld the best of Provo's past with the possibilities of the future will involve committed, sustained cooperation among many parties. If you are already a stakeholder in Downtown Provo, we look forward to continuing a productive relationship to implement this Downtown Strategic Plan. If you are con-

templating becoming a Downtown Provo stakeholder, please know that in Downtown Provo you will find great ideas, infectious enthusiasm, and many wonderful people.

Sincerely,

PROVO CITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Mayor Lewis K. Billings, Chief Executive Officer



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DOWNTOWN PROVO

INTRODUCTION

The county seat of Utah County, Provo is located about 45 miles south of Salt Lake City along the Wasatch Front. Provo has grown to a population of over 115,000, making it the third-largest city in Utah.

Provo is an attractive place to live, work, learn, and play. The City offers residents and visitors a mature community with a strong and vibrant economic base, an atmosphere of excellence in learning, remarkably diverse culture, noteworthy historical architecture, and bright, talented, active citizens.

Provo boasts many community assets and strengths, but the most important asset Provo has to offer is its people. Provo has a productive and reliable labor pool which forms the nucleus of Utah Valley's work force. A young, educated

population supported by Brigham Young University brings tremendous potential for innovation and leadership. Provo is also home to an active arts community.

These and other segments of the local population make Provo one of the most desirable and successful cities in Utah and have even brought frequent accolades on a national level. The City has experienced significant growth over the past decade, and with a clear vision for the future, Provo is well positioned to become an even stronger force in Utah County and the Wasatch Front and beyond.

Background Studies Which Preceded Downtown Strategic Plan Preparation

The City of Provo has completed several previous studies to analyze the future capabilities of the Downtown area. This Strategic Plan builds on these prior analyses and their conclusions.

Economics Research Associates Market Analysis (2007)

This study found that demand was solid for housing projects in the Provo Downtown, with broad appeal across many demographic



PROVO DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

1974	Central Business District Plan
1975	Center Street Redesign
1983	Utah County Building
1985	East Bay Development
1986	Pannel Kerr Market Demand Study Excelsior (later Marriott) Hotel
1989-2000	City General Plan Updates
1990	State Courts Building
1991	NuSkin Building Provo Town Square
1995	Conference Center Expansion
1997	Provo Town Center Mall
1999	ASU Urban Design Charette
2001	Downtown Alliance Assessment District
2003	Wikstrom Market Leakage Study
2004	Leinberger Initiative Utah County Health/Justice Building
2005	Block 70 Charette Wells Fargo Center Convention Center and Hotel Feasibility Study
2006	Dan Jones Downtown Survey
2007	ERA Downtown Market Analysis Covey Center for the Arts

groups. It was estimated a demand will exist for as many as 1,060 new Downtown housing units (both rental and owned) during 2006-2015. ERA also estimated that up to 90,000 square feet of new Downtown retail could be supported during this period; up to 33,000 square feet of new Downtown restaurant space – equivalent to about one new major restaurant per year; and 550,000 to 1,380,000 square feet of new Downtown office space, or the equivalent of the office space in eight to 21 Provo Wells Fargo Centers.

Preliminary Downtown Stakeholder Scoping (2007)

Key stakeholders gathered in 2007 to begin to scope out policy points to be addressed in the Downtown Strategic Plan. Areas of focus included encouraging mixed use, enhancing the pedestrian experience, encouragement of historic preservation, beautifying gateways, and developing more housing in the Downtown area.

Dan Jones Downtown Survey (2006)

Dan Jones and Associates surveyed Provo and Utah County residents, as well as BYU Alumni Association officers scattered across the United States, regarding attitudes about living in Provo and especially Downtown Provo. The survey also gathered their impressions on various aspects of the Downtown Provo area. This project found that people felt Downtown Provo would be more appealing with the addition of a few amenities, such as more parking, parks and plazas, festivals, and a farmers' market. People most likely to consider living in the Downtown were profiled to be the young, educated, and among the more affluent. However, fully 38 percent of Provoans said they would consider living in the Downtown Provo area, if the right type of housing were available at a price affordable to them.

“Leinberger Initiative” (2004)

Noted urbanologist Christopher Leinberger visited Provo and offered his impressions. He emphasized that attention to development in the central business district should be prioritized over attention to some other peripheral areas of the City, and that a Strategic Plan with stakeholder involvement was essential. He proposed several studies (including those described above) that should be performed as a preface to the Strategic Plan. Further, he recommended the subsequent development of a West Center Street master plan, as well as a master plan for the future intermodal hub area south of Downtown.



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CENTER FOCUS - A VISION FOR DOWNTOWN PROVO

This Downtown Provo Strategic Plan consists of two main elements intended to guide the evolution of the Downtown through the coming years: first, a general vision for the future, further articulated by objectives divided into four main categories (Cultural Identity, Civic Beauty, Downtown Variety, and Community Connections); and *second, a course of action*, assembled in chart form, outlining many specific actions to be undertaken in fulfillment of the Strategic Plan. Out of the Strategic Plan has grown a five-point vision for Downtown Provo over the next five to ten years:

1. DOWNTOWN'S ROLE AS A CENTER. Downtown Provo will assert its traditional role as the financial, civic, cultural, educational, and hospitality center of Utah County. Growth across the County will lead to new nodes of activity elsewhere for some of these functions. However, Downtown Provo's central location and its existing infrastructure (buildings, streets and utilities, businesses, institutions) will be fully exploited, so that Downtown continues to be the place that people look to as the center of the County.

2. DRAWING PEOPLE DOWNTOWN. In order to continue to fulfill this role, Downtown will continue to attract many more people for a wide range of purposes. Downtown's success as center depends on attracting more people Downtown to work, to reside, to shop, to dine out, to be entertained, and to attend a wide range of special events. Visitors to the area, as well as local university students, will be included among those who discover Downtown to be a unique, fun place to be.

3. PRESERVING A SPECIAL PLACE. Downtown will preserve the distinctive character which distinguishes it from other places and which attracts people, at the same time that it grows to accommodate many more people. Center Street in particular will maintain this distinctiveness in the form of a very pedestrian-oriented scale of development, with well-maintained historic buildings, mature and well-tended tree canopy and planting beds, center-median and other angled parking, a variety of unique dining and shopping, along with other features. Over time, many of these same qualities will carry over to adjoining streets. The more intensive office, residential, and other growth necessary to sustain a strong Center-Street-type of environment will take place very close by in the Downtown.

4. ENHANCING DOWNTOWN'S SPECIAL DISTRICTS Downtown's long-standing distinctiveness will be enhanced by new community gathering places, water features, gateways, wayfinding signage, public art, added landscaping, and increased cleanliness and maintenance. Each of these improvements will be added to the Downtown in a very deliberate way calculated to serve its specific function most effectively, and to contribute to the overall function of making Downtown Provo a place where people want to be.

5. GETTING AROUND COMFORTABLY. Downtown will be a pleasant place in which to move around even as more people converge there. Automobiles will be able to move about and park efficiently in the Downtown. Public transit, such as commuter rail, bus rapid transit, and more conventional busses, will add convenient new alternatives for reaching the Downtown. And people on foot and on bicycles will find a Downtown that makes their experience enjoyable.

DOWNTOWN VARIETY

WHERE WE WANT TO BE: Provo's Downtown is multifaceted. It is an active place with people present twenty-four hours a day. Workers, residents, students, shoppers, and visitors mix on busy streets. Business leaders invest time and attention in attracting and growing a healthy mix of shops, restaurants, offices, and convention & lodging facilities in the Downtown.

Because of the proximity to jobs, shopping, entertainment, and culture, Downtown Provo also has a strong demand for housing. In keeping with nationwide trends, housing in urban, walkable areas of the City's core is growing each year. Quality housing of many sizes and forms provides choice to a wide range of households desiring to live in this vibrant district. Home ownership plays a prominent role, and choices also exist for those seeking quality rental housing, including for Provo's large young adult population.

Expanding arts venues and facilities attract more visitors in the evenings and on weekends. The arts community works together to create a hub of activity for performing and visual arts. Recent additions of quality venues in Downtown Provo have helped to raise regional awareness of Provo area cultural events.

A strong symbiotic relationship exists between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. New developments make the most of the evolving public transit system and other ways of getting around.





DOWNTOWN VARIETY OBJECTIVES

GOAL: INCREASE THE DAILY LEVEL AND VARIETY OF DOWNTOWN ACTIVITY, ENCOURAGING A CAREFULLY CRAFTED MIX OF LAND USES AND ACTIVITY CENTERS THAT APPEALS TO MANY DIFFERENT PEOPLE

Provide opportunities for business investment & development growth to increase employment Downtown

In order to provide opportunities for business investment and development growth, developers must provide a variety of office space in Downtown Provo. Having options for both owning and renting office space is critical to attracting a strong mix of businesses. It is also very important to have clarity and predictability in development regulations and in the administration of these regulations, yet at the same time to have some flexibility to work with differing development needs. Stakeholders should work to attract desirable development to Downtown Provo with a well-thought-out arsenal of incentives and public/private partnerships. Widening the economic and employment base for Downtown Provo will benefit the city for the long term. With more people working and living Downtown, more dining, shopping, and recreational opportunities will follow.

Provide adequate and affordable Downtown housing for a range of income levels

Providing attractive, comfortable housing for a range of income levels and life cycle stages helps the Downtown to thrive. By expanding the amount of executive and other housing Downtown and providing new employment centers, Downtown will become a walkable and less automobile-dependent district, a place even more attractive to new businesses. As an example, providing loft housing and particularly artist-specific housing, both rental and owner occupied, will help to add interest and activity. Targeting BYU faculty and married students as prospective residents Downtown will add a stable population demographic to the mix. Nationwide, demographic trends in the last few years have shown increased the demand for housing in well-planned and pedestrian-oriented downtowns. As these trends manifest themselves in Provo, they introduce added opportunities to strengthen the Downtown. By increasing the number and variety of people living in Provo's

Downtown, the Downtown can more fully support successful transit options, thus improving the quality of life for all Provo residents.

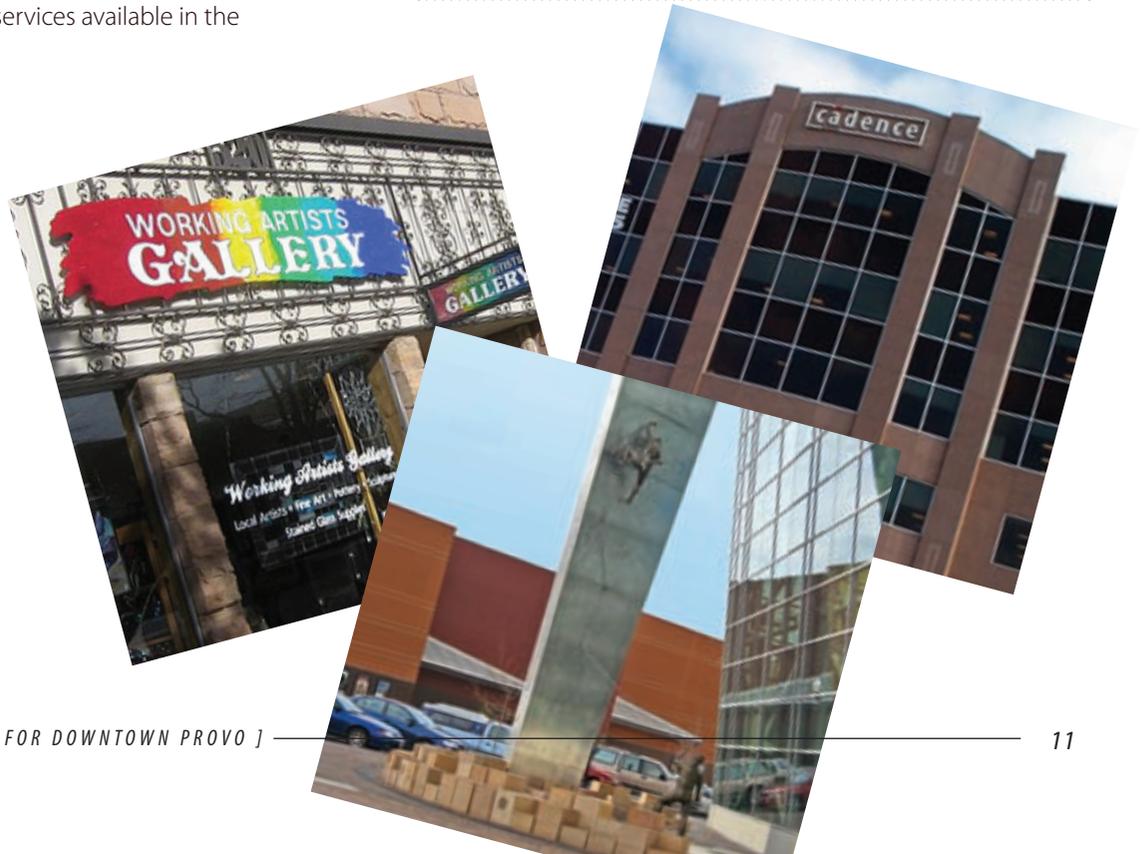


Expand and promote a diversity of dining, retail, and office opportunities within the Downtown district

People are attracted to downtowns because of the quality of the experience. By developing an atmosphere of unique dining and shopping experiences, Downtown Provo can assert itself more firmly as a cultural center of Utah County. The Buy Local First movement continues to gain momentum across the nation with advocacy of local dining, retail, and service establishments, and Provo should promote this. Downtown Provo's unique sense of place largely traces back to its historic roots. Provo should enhance this Downtown character, particularly on Center Street and adjoining areas of University Avenue, by restoring landmark buildings and facades, adding new buildings consistent with the scale, placement, and other key features of the historic facades (without copying 19th-century architectural styling), and by promoting judicious use of signage. Additionally, Downtown leaders should recruit quality dining and retail tenants in order to expand the choices of goods and services available in the Downtown.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- Increase availability and variety of Downtown housing
- Attract additional dining, specialty retail, and office tenants Downtown
- Develop a new Downtown convention center and hotels
- Ensure that the new Downtown housing complements existing housing and neighborhoods
- Review, update, and enforce development codes







CENTER FOCUS VISION

WHERE WE WANT TO BE: Provo's Downtown is a place of beauty. Streetscape improvements make the Downtown an enjoyable place to live, work, shop, stroll, and visit. Trees and benches frame the sidewalks, improving the Downtown experience for residents and visitors. With Center Street firmly established as a great pedestrian-scaled street, Provo City prioritizes streetscape improvements on other streets in the Downtown, broadening the "walkable" district. Such streetscape improvements help extend the hours that the Downtown is active, making a great place for early morning walkers, mid-day window shoppers, and evening diners. New, carefully-designed gathering places in the

Downtown encourage participation in public events and provide Provo a "living room" where the City can gather to celebrate.

Art and other notable features dot the Downtown's public realm, expressing the personality and history of the City.

The Downtown business district has well-defined edges, and gateway features announce entrance into the heart of the City. Small details throughout the Downtown work together to express the pride that city residents have in their public places.

CIVIC BEAUTY

CIVIC BEAUTY OBJECTIVES

GOAL: IMPROVE THE PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF THE DOWNTOWN TO ATTRACT PEOPLE TO AN ENJOYABLE URBAN EXPERIENCE NOT FOUND ELSEWHERE IN UTAH COUNTY

Promote streetscape beautification efforts throughout Downtown

Street improvements are essential to creating a lively, cohesive, pedestrian-friendly experience. Increasing the number of street trees in Downtown Provo and continuing to train up the tree canopy will provide shade for pedestrians, slow street traffic, and create a more pleasant pedestrian atmosphere. Other types of landscaping including planters, community gardens, and green spaces, each in the appropriate location, can also have a positive impact on Downtown. Quality plantings project a well-cared-for image and define the character of a district.

A well-lit Downtown contributes to a secure, inviting environment. Installing decorative street lighting and increasing the power supply along key Downtown roadways such as 100 South, 200 South, and University Avenue will help to extend Downtown activity into the evening.



Expand opportunities for community gathering throughout Downtown

Provo residents have expressed the desire for more public green space and plazas Downtown. These should include venues for outdoor performances, community fairs, outdoor movies, and brown bag lunch music series. Water features should also play a prominent role. The location and design of community gathering venues should fulfill identified needs for specific kinds of gatherings. A venue designed for a farmer's market would be an asset to Downtown Provo.

Carefully-conceived pedestrian malls can be great places for people to gather and connect. Such spaces need not involve the permanent closure of streets to automobiles, but could involve curb modifications and the use of movable or temporary bollards to block vehicle traffic for special events. Widening or "bulbing" of sidewalks on one side of the street could also allow for small pedestrian plazas and promenades. The City also should revise land use regulations to encourage sidewalk dining and outdoor displays of merchandise.

Enhance the appearance and function of Provo's gateways

Establishing gateways into Provo and its Downtown will help visitors to realize they are entering a special place and thereby will enhance their overall experience in the City. Beautifying the entrances to Provo begins with installation of consistent landscaping, signage, street furnishings, lighting, and possibly entry monuments (arches, etc.). These distinctive elements visually tie gateways and Downtown together.



Promote and provide for the inclusion of public art throughout Downtown



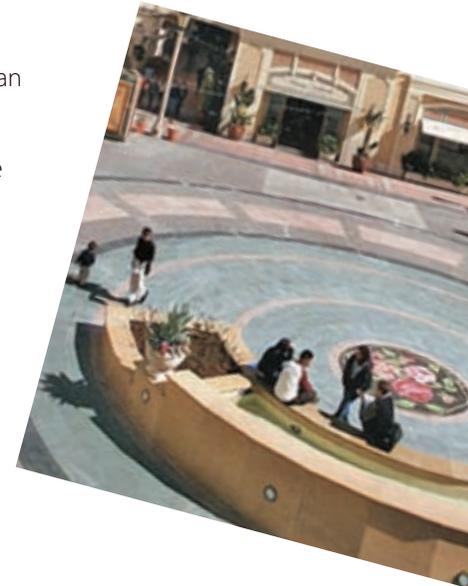
A well-coordinated collection of public art throughout Downtown will provide personality and excitement for people of all ages. Support and expansion of the Sculpting Civic Pride program will cultivate interest and beauty while promoting the work of local artists. City regulations need to be revised to allow for artists, sidewalk displays, street performers, etc. "Green Art", e.g., decorative plant displays, sculpted shrubberies, water features, eco-art, xerigarden displays or other landscape elements, could add a valuable dimension.

Youth art programs may offer special opportunities to decorate street features such as fire hydrants, trash receptacles, and recycling receptacles, and to create themed sculpture.

Modes of entry into the Downtown are another important aspect of enhanced gateways. The City should advocate for and provide convenient transit service along key corridors into the Downtown. In addition, the establishment of an Intermodal Center along the new commuter rail line near 600 S. and 100 W. will foster this ideal. Because the gateways are so crucial to first impressions of the City, redevelopment of blighted properties at these gateway points deserves special attention.

Ensure transit station and corridor designs enhance and contribute to the quality, appearance and character of Provo

Transit stations and transit corridors can provide focal points for celebrating the City's heritage and character. The City should ensure that public art is a component of transit station and corridor designs. Even the design of transit station shelters and other fixtures can contribute to the urban experience.



PRIORITY ACTIONS

- Plan for Downtown gathering places
- Beautify gateways to Provo and the Downtown
- Increase attention to cleaning and maintenance
- Communicate the Downtown Strategic Plan as a common vision for the future
- Develop an interactive water feature
- Emphasize redevelopment of high-profile gateway locations
- Provide art and beautification with public transit development





WHERE WE WANT TO BE: Downtown Provo is the heart of the community. It is home to many cultural venues and activity centers. Events and performances raise the profile of Downtown as a center for arts and entertainment. Working to include all of the City's residents and visitors, Downtown is a lively place, filled with many activities to attract all segments of the population, including all age and ethnic groups.

Furthermore, the community cares about Downtown Provo and keeping it a safe place well-integrated with surrounding neighborhoods. With a legacy of historic buildings, Downtown includes key structures that evoke Provo's history. Working with other governing bodies, Provo strives to make the Downtown environment an attractive and enriching place to be.

CULTURAL IDENTITY

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CULTURAL IDENTITY OBJECTIVES

GOAL: RAISE THE PROFILE OF DOWNTOWN PROVO AS THE HEART OF THE CITY

Promote and increase dynamic arts events and performances throughout Downtown

As a city diverse with culture and arts, Provo continues to be a prime gathering place for all of Utah County. To establish Downtown as a center of the arts, the staging of a wide range of events, including events reflecting the community's ethnic diversity, is crucial. Stepped-up promotion of events and performances via target articles, podcasts, word of mouth, etc. facilitates this, as does donor sponsorship of the arts. Outreach and public school performances, as well as holiday, historic, public interest and other cultural events, should occur in Downtown whenever possible. Particular potential for an arts district exists around the Covey Center for the Arts.

Increase university student activities Downtown, and provide student opportunities and internships

Students are an active, vibrant core demographic of Provo City. They present huge potential for economic and social impact in the Downtown. To tap into this potential, Downtown will benefit from providing employment opportunities and internships that target college-age



young adults. Other programs including service opportunities, student showcases, arts/cultural events, and other outreach to/inclusion of this age group will contribute to increasing student activity levels. Promoting Downtown events with students in mind and creating more student-oriented activity venues will attract greater student events, as has happened in many other university cities. Introducing more housing Downtown will also bring young adults to live in the Downtown area, encouraging them to become active members of the Downtown Provo community.

Encourage property maintenance and pride within neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown

As Downtown Provo evolves, both homeowner residents and landlords of Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods have a great opportunity to show pride in their communities and maintain the value of their property through property maintenance and beautification. Neighborhood programs can help facilitate and encourage these values. The City should emphasize efforts to

redevelop declining and underutilized residential areas. This can be aided by offering effective incentives for revitalized and new infill housing in and near the Downtown. Existing City housing policies and development codes should be updated to reflect current trends and needs.

Promote and enhance a secure environment in the Downtown

Along with preventing crime, carrying out neighborhood watch programs can help improve cleanliness, appearance, and the general feeling of security in Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. Crime can be controlled by applying CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) principles throughout Downtown. Immediate removal of graffiti through a 24 hour hotline and implementing a mural program in frequently tagged areas will assist these efforts. Over time, these efforts will contribute to improving community perceptions of Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.

Preserve and maintain historic buildings and historic building scale in key Downtown locations

As Downtown Provo continues to evolve, it is vital to preserve and promote the City's heritage by maintaining historic buildings and historic building scale in key areas. The City should employ all available State and Federal incentives to encourage preservation of historic buildings' architectural integrity, in both commercial and residential structures. In addition, Provo should examine its local preservation tools/incentives for encouraging façade maintenance and renovation and ensure that these are effective. The City should consider vacancy disincentives. Great urban design and architecture can be promoted by designing new buildings that complement but do not copy existing historic building styles. With these means in place for preserving and complementing historic fabric, the community should focus on the restoration of a few iconic historic structures as a catalyst to the preservation of other historic buildings and the creation of new infill development.

Encourage sustainable design and practices

Instilling an ethic for efficient use of resources greatly benefits a community. Providing well-thought-out public amenities as well as special sustainability-oriented events encourages environmental stewardship among residents of a city. The need for street widening should be minimized by updating local zoning and transportation policies to promote alternatives to continued increase in automobile traffic. Tree planting is an easy way to contribute to the overall health and beautification of the landscape.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- **Bring about more and better cultural events**
- **Promote home ownership and maintenance in and near Downtown**
- **Increase attractions catering to the young adult market**
- **Increase employment and internship opportunities for college-age students**
- **Eliminate graffiti as soon as it appears**
- **Encourage historic preservation, consider vacancy disincentives**
- **Use development standards to promote great design**
- **Provide high-quality public amenities**

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

WHERE WE WANT TO BE: A key to any downtown is its connectivity to the surrounding community and regional context. Highly-connected places enable the efficient movement of people and information and, thereby, of commerce. Increasing the number and types of connections makes Downtown Provo more attractive as a great place to live, work, play, and do business.

Downtown Provo streets are interesting places and are accommodating to a full range of transportation modes, particularly pedestrians. Provo's Center Street, along with other adjoining streets, has benefited from major investment in the quality of its streetscape, and Downtown stands foremost in the minds of many Utah Valley residents as a great walkable district.

A quality system of bikeways and secure bike parking encourages people to consider cycling as an inexpensive, healthy, and fashionable form of transportation in the central city.

Proximity to busses, commuter rail, and bus rapid transit also has driven private and public investment in Provo's Downtown, as transit has in other cities across the region.

Automobile traffic flow is coordinated and efficient. Both on- and off-street parking facilities are clearly identified, easily accessed, and correctly priced so that Downtown visitors always have confidence that parking is available and that they understand their parking options.

Provo's Downtown is not far from the Provo Airport, just a few miles west of the City's center. With excellent connections to Downtown, the Airport has continued to expand and helps to attract a wide variety of commerce from across the region and country.





COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS OBJECTIVES

GOAL: PLAN FOR CONNECTIVITY FOR ALL MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

Enhance and improve vehicular traffic movement, safety, and access into Downtown

Vehicular traffic and access into Downtown, as well as pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular safety, can be enhanced through implementation of “street calming” measures, especially along University Avenue and Center Street. Landscaped medians along University Avenue and West Center Street between Downtown and Interstate 15 should receive particular attention.

Over the years, the City has considered several methods for relieving traffic congestion on Center Street through the central business district. This is an issue that the City should continue to review in search of a solution (or set of solutions) as Downtown growth further exacerbates the congestion problem. At the same time, however, the City and other Downtown stakeholders need to bear in mind that the key to Downtown’s future vitality lies largely in attracting more people to Center Street and the surrounding area. Therefore, efforts to relieve congestion need to take great care not to stifle activity in this crucial district of the City.

Establish a coordinated plan for parking, and raise awareness of parking opportunities Downtown

Visitors, residents, and Downtown workers should clearly understand what parking facilities are available Downtown. This can be aided by improved signage and wayfinding elements. The City and the business community should work toward expanding parking opportunities, including the development of

community parking structures and vertical parking systems, as well as considering valet parking Downtown. Careful planning of a coherent, coordinated parking fee system that includes both on-street and off-street parking will foster the most efficient use of parking space. Paid on-street parking may even help to generate funds for Downtown beautification.

Promote and expand transit service and ridership within and connecting to Downtown Provo

The City and transit providers should promote public awareness of all current and future transit opportunities (commuter rail, bus rapid transit, bus, etc.). Establishing a free-fare zone could be a valuable way of drawing people Downtown. Transit should be regarded as a type of gateway to Downtown Provo from adjacent places. There should be focus on advocating for the development of the intermodal hub facilities at the proposed site of the UTA FrontRunner commuter rail station just south of Downtown. It is vital that transit connections between the intermodal hub, the Downtown, and other key nodes of activity in Provo be in place and well established when the FrontRunner system reaches Provo as anticipated in 2012-2013. Bus rapid transit holds great promise for providing such connections.

Improve the walkability of Downtown

Walkable neighborhoods are receiving increased recognition as an element of successful communities. People want easy access to services and goods without having to travel far. Downtown can expect absorption of 540 to 1,410 dwellings by the year 2025. The City should encourage development of new housing, particularly

Downtown and in a new transit corridor connecting BYU, Downtown, and Provo's new commuter rail station-intermodal hub. All new development, as well as change to existing development, should incorporate pedestrian-friendly, including disability-friendly, urban design and architecture.

Improve the bikeability of Downtown

Provo City should develop a well-thought-out bicycle plan. This should incorporate the current Dasani bicycle program or similar bicycle-sharing program. By installing bicycle racks at strategic locations Downtown, the City can help support the ever-growing bicycle culture. The community should consider incentives to businesses for encouraging their employees to bicycle to work. Increasing the number of people biking to Downtown will translate directly into cost savings via reduced demand for parking facilities. Weather-protected storage for bicycles at the intermodal hub and transit stations, as well as other types of facilities catering to bicycles, will enhance the connectivity to and from transit stations.

Draw on the Provo Airport as a Downtown enhancement

Connections between the airport and Downtown should be advanced through improved transit, taxis, shuttles, and management of vehicular traffic. Increasing this access will benefit both the Downtown Provo community and visitors' experience. Impact on Downtown success should weigh in all decisions involving Airport planning and development. People in surrounding communities will be drawn to the Provo Airport by developing quality facilities in and around the Airport as well as by cultivating Provo's hospitality industry.

Improve long-distance train and bus service in Downtown Provo

The current Amtrak passenger train service provides an alternative mode of transport to and from Provo. Reducing train noise and train blockage of City streets, as well as expanding and improving the passenger train service, will greatly enhance the environment in the Downtown and in surrounding neighborhoods. Provo City should work to establish such a quiet zone along the rail corridor.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- **Mandate pedestrian-friendly design**
- **Optimize both on- and off-street parking**
- **Create a bicycle plan for Downtown**
- **Plan for transit-oriented development in and around main transit facilities**
- **Establish train whistle quiet zones**
- **Maximize the public transit system connecting Downtown to other key activity centers**

IMPLEMENTATION

THE PROVO DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLAN was created by a very grass-roots, active stakeholder group working through a facilitated planning process. This plan is the product of a collaboration among more than 80 Downtown stakeholders to brainstorm ideas for Downtown and organize them into four Vision Elements, subsequent Objectives, and Strategies. The stakeholders have also begun to forge the working relationships needed to implement these Strategies. The Objectives articulated in this Plan, and the specific Strategies and Actions for implementing them, come directly from stakeholders' discussions and sifting of ideas about the future of Downtown Provo. (See the section of this report on "Process.")

A companion document to this Plan outlines in a series of tables the specific Objectives, Strategies, and Action Items established for Downtown Provo. The subsequent work of an Implementation Committee, four Stakeholder Action Groups, and numerous project Champions to bring the Plan to fruition will be based on these tables. The Strategies are organized into four tables, one for each of the Four Vision Elements (Downtown Variety, Civic Beauty, Cultural Identity, Community Connections). For each Vision Element in the tables, there are several specific Objectives, and under each Objective, several unique Strategies and Action Items for implementation. These tables also prioritize the Strategies and set out a general schedule for each Action Item under each Strategy.

Champions

For Plan implementation to have the greatest prospect for success, it is crucial to identify and recruit someone to lead on each Strategy or individual Action Item who has passion for that item. In some cases this passion may be related to one's job responsibilities, but in many cases it will be simply the result of a personal interest or even a personal sense of mission. People champion causes for which they have passion.

The implementation of this Strategic Plan will center on committing, coordinating, and afterward acknowledging the work of a cadre of "Champions" who will marshal the resources needed for each Strategy or Action Item. The Champions will coordinate with an organizational structure of Stakeholder Action Groups and an overall Implementation Committee, but the Champions and the other community stakeholders they recruit will be given charge over their specific Strategies or Action Items. If the Champions fail to perform, Plan objectives will not be met. If a Champion cannot be found for a Strategy or Action Item, that will indicate that the item is not the priority first thought, or perhaps that the item needs to be modified.

The contributions of these Champions and the people they in turn recruit may be as basic as a business owner painting her building or contacting an acquaintance about starting a new restaurant

Downtown, or a resident working through his child's school to undertake a Downtown arts activity.

Implementation Committee

The Implementation Committee, to be recommended by the Chief Executive Officer of the Provo City Redevelopment Agency (RDA), will be a group of representatives from primary Downtown stakeholder interests. The Implementation Committee will consist of:

- Chairs of the four Stakeholder Action Groups
- Representatives of the Provo City departments
- Representative of the Provo City Redevelopment Agency
- Representative of the Provo Downtown Business Alliance
- Representatives of other main interests most directly responsible for Plan implementation, such as developers, Downtown businesses, BYU, the arts community, hospitality/entertainment interests, or the Municipal Council

The Implementation Committee will meet as needed and will receive day-to-day administrative support from the RDA. During initial implementation stages, the Committee likely will meet each month.

Their responsibilities will be as follows:

- Coordinate and manage the Downtown Strategic Plan, maintaining the overall Vision and Objectives.
- Monitor and evaluate progress in carrying out the Plan.

- Oversee and coordinate among the four Stakeholder Action Groups.
- Estimate the overall needs for resources to accomplish the various Action items, and provide direction in the allocation of resources among Action Items.
- Sort among competing priorities and conflicting activities.
- Assist the Stakeholder Action Groups in recruiting and providing guidance to the Champions.
- Communicate Plan implementation activities among Downtown stakeholders and organizations.
- Give recognition to people and groups as they accomplish Objectives, Strategies, and Action Items.

Stakeholder Action Groups

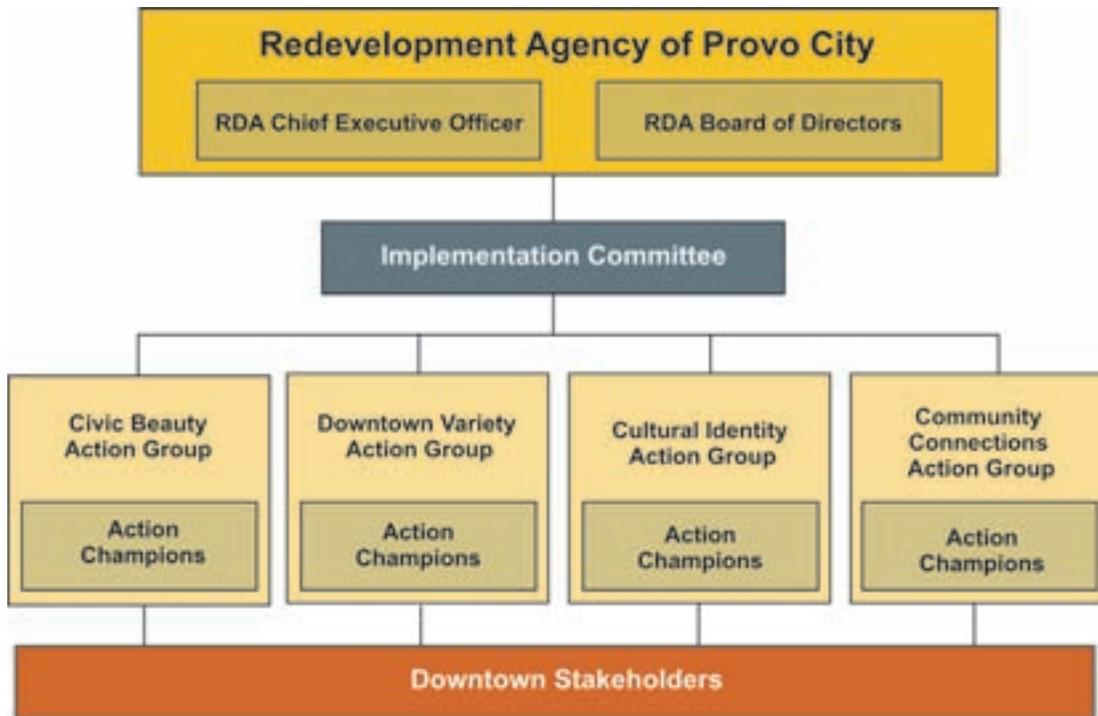
The role of the four Stakeholder Action Groups, each of which will be sized to match the number and complexity of Strategies they are working on, will be to lead in carrying out the Strategies and Action Items in the four Vision Elements of the Plan matrix. Representation on each Stakeholder Action Group should include at least one or two members of the Implementation Committee and all of the Champions working on that Group's Strategies. The Stakeholder Action Groups will be headed by members of the Implementation Committee. Each Group will coordinate with and report to the Implementation Committee in working on that Group's Strategies. Each Group will have an assigned staff coordinator to advise and support the Group.

Case Example

To illustrate how Plan implementation could go forward on one Strategy, consider the Strategy “Promote an ongoing Downtown clean-up campaign”, under the Civic Beauty Vision Element. This would begin by the Implementation Committee identifying and designating a Champion for this cause – a person with the needed leadership skills, who is committed to Downtown Provo, and who feels strongly that Downtown success depends heavily on maintaining a tidy appearance in the Downtown. This Champion likely would organize a small committee of like-minded people to brainstorm on how to carry out a sustained clean-up effort. It may be important to include someone skilled in public communications, and maybe someone from an existing institution with the capacity to carry out a sustained clean-up effort.

This Champion would participate with the Civic Beauty Stakeholder Action Group, keeping the Group apprised of her committee’s work and seeking their support. Even if this Champion and her committee devised a way to carry out the campaign strictly with volunteers, they may conclude that they need funding for trash collecting equipment or for printing of promotional materials. Such a request would reach the Implementation Committee, which would consider it in the context of others’ funding requests and try to find an appropriate source of funds.

For this type of ongoing project, the Champion and her committee may very well continue with the project well beyond the initial start-up phase. However, for purposes of tracking Strategic Plan progress, the Strategy could be considered completed once the clean-up campaign is up and running consistently.



IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

RESOURCES FOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION: In order to address the ambitious lists of Objectives, Strategies, and Actions which make up this Downtown Strategic Plan, the Provo community will need to draw from a wide range of resources. Because resources will always be in short supply, it is necessary to prioritize among many competing priorities – both among competing priorities within the Downtown, and among needs in the general community versus in the Downtown. This allocation of scarce resources requires a thoughtful, disciplined approach to insure that all resources are used to the best advantage of the community.

For the most part, resources needed for Strategic Plan implementation fall into two categories: **volunteerism** and **funding**.

Much good can be accomplished in Downtown Provo through the efforts of **volunteers** who are passionate about particular aspects of the Strategic Plan and are motivated primarily by a desire to make the community better. As was stated in the preceding section, success in implementing this Strategic Plan will rely on having a cadre of Champions step forward to organize the work on individual Strategies or Action Items. People skilled in organizing and leading groups, in overcoming obstacles, and in some cases in raising funds to bring about change are essential if this Plan is to bear fruit.

Funding may be divided into categories of capital funding (e.g., the means for obtaining land and of constructing buildings or other physical improvements), staff funding, and other administrative funding. Some of this Plan's needs for resources fall into categories closely associated with certain governmental services, but others go beyond the scope of what government (particularly local

government) traditionally does and therefore must rely on private-sector funding. Furthermore, even in those aspects of this Plan where local government agencies have traditionally worked, available resources are insufficient to meet all the identified needs. Consequently, the fulfillment of this Downtown Strategic Plan will rely heavily on finding creative ways to draw upon funding from all available resources.

This Strategic Plan should draw on the following sources of funding to carry out its Objectives:

Special Improvement Districts

Special Improvement Districts (SIDs) are often formed to finance infrastructure improvements which are unique to a particular geographic area – whether the improvements be special street lighting, paving, planters, or other features. It is typical to establish an SID whose boundaries match the area to receive the improvements, then issue bonds to finance the improvements, then service the principle and interest payments on the bonds through a special assessment on the properties in the SID. SIDs are formed by a city under procedures outlined in State law, with the consent or endorsement of the majority of property owners within the SID boundaries.

Downtown Strategic Plan Strategies which may be particularly suited to an SID include special street lighting, landscaping improvements, sidewalk replacement, perhaps new outdoor gathering places/parks, community gateway improvements, and bicycle facilities.

Special Service Districts and Business Improvement Districts (BID)

Utah law provides for a variety of special districts to be created through which groups of property owners may organize to assess themselves for special services they would like to have performed. Sometimes these districts are used to fund the ongoing operating and maintenance costs, or a portion of such costs, associated with special street lighting or other infrastructure improvements. From 2001 to 2007, the Provo Downtown Business Alliance's operations were funded primarily with an annual BID assessment on Downtown properties.

Increased Downtown cleaning, maintenance of wayfinding signs and kiosks, parking districts, Downtown promotional events (including some arts and cultural events), a Local First campaign, hiring of a business recruiter, graffiti removal, and Downtown branding activities are some of this Strategic Plan's Strategies for which special districts could be employed.

City General Fund and Capital Improvement Fund Revenues

The Municipal Council exercises discretion in the budgeting of City monies for a wide range of services and activities. However, for the most part these funds are committed to paying for City-wide services or types of capital projects which recur year after year. Consequently, they are not available for new purposes without decreasing the quality of some other service the City is already providing.

On a limited basis, certain Strategic Plan actions may be able to

utilize the time and talents of City staff on special projects without requiring a major, permanent reallocation of City resources to a new mission. Some Plan actions may even fit within the normal scope of work of some City departments. Examples may include Downtown zoning enforcement, traffic and parking enforcement, some cleaning/maintenance, collaboration with other governmental entities and private groups to bring about Downtown progress (including administrative support to the overall Strategic Plan implementation), preparation of the various narrow-focus plans and policies called for in the Strategic Plan, revision and administration of development codes, efforts toward train whistle "quiet zones", support of cultural events and festivals, graffiti removal, public safety efforts, and others.

City Enterprise Funds

Provo City carries out several functions which operate somewhat like private businesses, in that a user fee is charged for a service and the fees essentially cover the costs of the service. These tend to be services offered City-wide, for which it is possible to clearly identify the service user and how much of the service they are using (such as water or electricity). Occasionally the missions associated with these enterprise funds may intersect with Downtown strategies and actions. Upsizing of water, sewer, or electrical lines to serve new office and residential buildings Downtown (the costs of which would ultimately be borne by the developers of these buildings or their eventual utility-using tenants) would fall into this category.

User Fees

Some City operations which are not enterprise funds may nonetheless charge individual users for services they provide. This

happens commonly with the use of some parks and recreation facilities and attendance at some City-sponsored cultural events. User fees may be employed to offset the costs of some such events called for in the Strategic Plan.

Projects Undertaken by Other Governmental Entities

To the extent that the State of Utah, Utah County, the Utah Transit Authority, Provo City School District, and other levels of government have responsibility for certain services and facilities, their interests will sometimes intersect with Downtown priorities. Two major Downtown streets, 500 West and University Avenue, are State highways, and Interstate 15 is also a State responsibility. Consequently, in situations where the State of Utah is making decisions regarding the future of these roads it is vitally important for the City to state its interests clearly. The extension of UTA's commuter rail service to Provo, as well as the proposed bus rapid transit (BRT) service and continuing conventional bus service, also have huge potential for influencing the character of Downtown Provo and thus must include active local involvement in their planning and execution.

Future additions to State courts buildings, public school programs and school building decisions, County development of a Utah County Convention Center in the Downtown, and numerous other actions by public entities all will bring institutions into the Downtown which are important to achieving Downtown Variety, Civic Beauty, and Cultural Identity. Champions working on Plan items which relate to these kinds of projects need to ensure that Downtown Objectives are accounted for with such projects.

Federal and State Grants

There may be opportunities to obtain help from other levels of government for specific Plan actions. The City has had some success in the past in obtaining Federal help with Downtown parking structures, and this may continue on a limited basis in the future. The City also receives Federal grants focused mainly on addressing housing and other needs of low and moderate-income households, and these funds likely will continue to help maintain and enhance the historic neighborhoods surrounding the Downtown. Lesser portions of these grants are also sometimes used to counteract Downtown decline, particularly in the form of infrastructure improvements and property acquisition for redevelopment.

New Private Development

Downtown Provo's ultimate success will be measured largely through its ability to attract high-quality private investment. Just having new buildings develop can in some ways carry out certain key strategies for improved Downtown activity and variety. Yet the manner in which this new investment is deployed will be just as important. High-quality and well-maintained landscaping, well-designed new outdoor gathering places, and building designs which are both sustainable and complementary of the traditional, unique Center Street core are among the Strategies that new private-sector development will be counted on to fulfill.

Re-Use and Maintenance of Existing Private Development

So much of what makes Downtown Provo a unique, interesting district among all the business districts in Utah is attributable to Downtown's decades-old buildings and the businesses which

occupy them – and the residential areas that surround the business district. These should be recognized as resources to be marshaled in fulfilling the Strategic Plan, and still more private investment must be added to them to enhance their quality. Government does not have all the resources necessary to fulfill all Plan objectives (nor would that be desirable even if it were possible). Just as new private development is crucial to Downtown success, so also is investment in the maintenance and imaginative re-use of existing buildings by their private-sector owners and tenants a necessary key to achieving the Downtown Vision.

Tax Increment Financing

The Utah Legislature has provided localities the ability to direct property tax revenues generated by new development to help cover the extraordinary costs of that new development. This tool, tax increment financing (TIF), is administered through “community development and renewal agencies”, such as the Provo City Redevelopment Agency. With the consent of other property taxing entities (school district, county, water conservancy district), the Redevelopment Agency may establish project areas in which to use the TIF tool. TIF is most appropriately used to fill financing gaps between the cost of doing a development downtown versus sprawling it across cheaper, undeveloped land in a suburban setting. In Downtown Provo, it has most often taken the form of assisting with the extraordinary costs of site acquisition and parking structures.

Much of Downtown Provo is in the Central Business District (CBD) Redevelopment Project Area, which was created many years ago. By this means, the Redevelopment Agency has been able to help with the extraordinary Downtown development costs of the Marriott Hotel, NuSkin, the Wells Fargo Center, and other projects.

Following the 2015 tax year, the CBD Project Area will expire.

Another project area exists generally along University Avenue from 100 South to 920 South, and this one can remain in place through 2025.

There is potential for creating new tax increment project areas in the Downtown area, as the need arises. In 2007, the Redevelopment Agency created a new project area specifically to assist with the extraordinary costs of the new Zions Bank Financial Center (200 North at University Avenue). With agreement to participate by the various property taxing entities, other such single-project areas may be possible.

Donors

Certain actions called out in this Plan lend themselves particularly well to funding by private donors. Water features, outdoor gathering places, public art, and maybe gateway features can be difficult for local government to fund, but are great rallying opportunities for large and small donors. “Buying” a paving brick which memorializes a person’s name in a new plaza or walkway has become a popular way to attract many small donors to participate in a large project and can help to build community interest and ownership in changes taking place in a downtown.

Foundations

A variety of private foundations exist which seek projects to fund that help to carry out their particular priorities. As fundraising proceeds for Downtown Provo projects, the Champions who take on those projects should systematically survey foundations to identify those that may be oriented to Downtown Provo Objectives.

PROCESS

THIS DOWNTOWN PROVO STRATEGIC PLAN'S OVERALL PLANNING PHILOSOPHY is rooted in the concept of asset-based community development (ABCD). The ABCD planning approach positively affirms and builds upon the remarkable work already going on in Downtown Provo. Asset-based community development acknowledges and embraces strong democratic traditions of community organizing, neighborhood planning, and cooperation to achieve shared ideals. The ABCD process can be defined by three simple, interrelated characteristics:

1. Asset-Based

As the name suggests, the ABCD approach is asset-based. That is, the process starts with identifying the strengths present in the community, the capacities of the community's residents and workers, and the associational and institutional base of the area -- not with focusing on what is absent, or what is problematic, or what the community is lacking.

2. Internally-Focused

Because this community development process is asset-based, it is by necessity also internally-focused. That is, the process concentrates first of all upon the agenda-building and problem-solving capacities of local people, local institutions, and pre-existing relationships. This intense and self-conscious internal focus is not intended to minimize either the role external forces have played in leading up to present-day challenges, nor the role that outside resources should play in community progress. Rather, this strong internal focus is intended simply to emphasize the primacy of local definition, creativity, hope, control, and investment.

3. Relationship-Driven

If a community development process is to be asset-based and internally-focused, then in important ways it also will need to be relationship-driven. Thus, one of the central challenges for asset-based community developers is to constantly cultivate the relationships among local residents, local associations and local institutions, starting with the plan formulation stage and continuing through implementation. Some of the most important elements of this Downtown planning effort are the relationship links that have been identified, and will continue to be forged, to bring about progress. Members of a community can accomplish more when they coordinate and work together toward common objectives than when they scatter in separate directions.

There tends to be an inverse correlation between a community's size and the natural strength of its interpersonal relationships. As Provo grows in size, the relationships among its stakeholder groups are a growing challenge to maintain. In order for community-building to progress, relationships need to be consciously, proactively strengthened and new connections forged. For community builders who are focused on tapping into assets, reinforcing these local relationships offers the most promising route toward successful community development. The action-oriented structure of this Strategic Plan is intended to foster relationships among the various stakeholders and interest groups and identify opportunities for collaboration and cooperation.

From February through April 2008, the Provo Downtown Strategic Plan began to take form via a series of public workshops. Following the asset-based community development project philosophy, these

workshops were designed to focus on extracting ideas from an invited group of Downtown stakeholders and the general public to create a Strategic Plan that meets all three principles of a successful ABCD process: asset-based, internally-focused, and relationship-driven. Each workshop had a specific goal and end product:

Workshop #1: Identify and Map Community Assets

Workshop participants identified a number of strengths and opportunities in Downtown Provo that could be built upon in the Strategic Plan. Participants put forward ideas they have observed from other cities, as well as those things they felt are already working best in Downtown Provo, to be considered in formulating a general vision for Downtown Provo.

Workshop #2: Identify Local Resources and Interests

Workshop participants identified the capacities and interests of local organizations and interest groups. A relationship mapping exercise demonstrated the intertwined nature of communities and the various perspectives held by different stakeholders. A number of common interests and goals were identified, and these formed the basis of preliminary relationship and strategy identification.

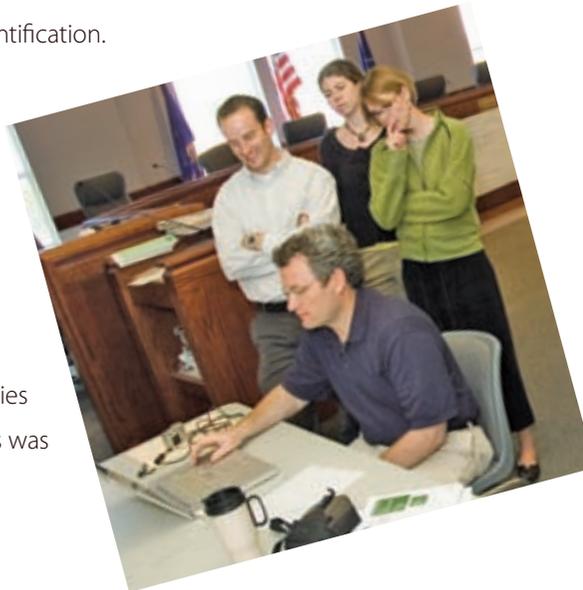
Workshop #3: Formulate Key Planning Objectives and Strategies; Identify and Build Lasting Community Relationships

Workshop participants identified principal Objectives to articulate a Downtown Provo Vision and developed sets of specific Strategies for implementation of the Vision. Identifying opportunities for collaboration and joint participation on Strategies was also a focus of this workshop.

Workshop #4: Develop and Carry Out the Plan

Workshop participants refined the Strategies of the Strategic Plan, prioritized actions, and established target schedules for completion of Action Items. Finally, participants were asked to volunteer for continued participation in implementing the Downtown Strategic Plan, either as a Stakeholder Action Group member or as a Champion/Downtown stakeholder participant on certain Strategies or Action Items.

A final Strategy refinement session was held in early May with an invited group of Downtown stakeholders representing interests expected to be most integrally involved in Plan implementation (e.g., business owners, property owners, Downtown Alliance, developers, neighborhood organizations, government). The main purpose of this session was to ensure that the Strategies and Action Items identified in the Plan were feasible and implementable. A similar workshop also was held with the Provo Municipal Council.



CONTRIBUTORS

MAYOR

Lewis K Billings

CITY COUNCIL

David Acheson	Provo City Council
Cindy Clark	Provo City Council
Cynthia Dayton	Provo City Council
Sherrie Hall Everett	Provo City Council
Midge Johnson	Provo City Council
Cindy Richards	Provo City Council
George Stewart	Provo City Council
Steve Turley	Provo City Council

CITY STAFF

Helen Anderson	Provo City Mayor's Office
Leland Gamette	Provo Economic Development Dept.
Paul Glauser	Provo Redevelopment Agency
Terry Ann Harward	Provo City Council Office
Dixon Holmes	Provo Economic Development Dept.
Brent Wilde	Provo Community Development Dept.

WORKSHOP ATTENDEES

Brad Barber	Jake Haws	Ryan Neely
Bob Allen	Dann Hone	Taylor Oldroyd
Kathryn S. Allen	Emily Hudson	Maht Paulos
Kim Anderson	Bill Hulterstrom	Brandon Plene
Bryce Armstrong	Annalisa Jensen	Laura Riddle
Walter Balinski	Richard Jensen	Trenton Robertson
Bill Bancroft	Phil Johnson	Wayne Ross
John Belvedere	Shirl Johnson	John Rowe
Scott Bingham	Mary Kawakami	Ross Selmon
John Bonnet	Paul Kawakami	Oliver Smith Callis
Richard Borget	Judy Kelsch	Raquel Smith Callis
Dee Bradford	Kyle Kinateder	Alex Stefanciw
Brian Chapman	Rick Kinateder	Ken Stika
Char Colman	Susan Krueger-Barber	Tony Thomas
Brenda Dutson	Barber	Joel R. Wallin
Chad Eccles	Jessica Lono	Kelly Ward
Trevor Feller	Ron Madsen	Sharlene Wilde
Rob Fetzer	Darin H. Mangum	Carol Wilson
Gary Garrett	Melanie McCoard	Scott Windhorst
Cameron Gunter	Marsha LcLean	Judson Witham
Stephen Hales	Tosh Metzger	





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