

CRC Listening Session Results

Session One: Wacouta Ice Cream Social, June 16, 2022

Session Two: Landmark Plaza Pumpkin Decorating September 22, 2022

Session Three: TBD

SESSION ONE: N = 45 surveys

SESSION TWO: N = 61 survey

SESSION THREE: N =

TOTAL ALL SESSIONS = 106 Surveys to date

Page 2	Rating Scale Results All Sessions
Page 3	Content Themes & Sample Comments by Category All Sessions
Page 5	Verbatim Comments by Session

Rating Scale Results ALL SESSIONS: 1 / Strongly Disagree to 5/ Strongly Agree)

- **Downtown St. Paul is a great place to live.**

	Session One	Session Two	Session Three
MEAN	4.1	4.1	

- **Downtown St. Paul provides opportunities for me to live a healthy lifestyle.**

	Session One	Session Two	Session Three
MEAN	4.1	4.0	

- **Downtown St. Paul provides opportunities for arts, entertainment & community connection.**

	Session One	Session Two	Session Three
MEAN	4.5	4.5	

- **I feel connected to the downtown St. Paul community.**

	Session One	Session Two	Session Three
MEAN	3.7	4.2	

- **I can meet my needs with the downtown businesses and services.**

	Session One	Session Two	Session Three
MEAN	3.8	3.9	

- **I feel safe and comfortable living in downtown St. Paul**

	Session One	Session Two	Session Three
MEAN	3.4	3.7	

Generally, respondents positive about living in downtown St. Paul.

Less satisfied with having the business and services they need and concerns about feeling safe and comfortable downtown.

COMMENT THEMES

	Session One	Session Two	Session Three
Business & Services	35	29	
Parks, Walking, Biking Transportation	31	38	
Arts, Culture, Community	22	43	
Safety, Security, Policing, City Leadership	16	27	
Unsheltered, Homeless, At Risk	9	13	
TOTAL	97	130	

- **36% more surveys in session two. 34% more comments.**
- **Significantly higher concentration of comments on arts, culture and community and on safety and security in session two.**
- **New areas of focus – poor maintenance of public spaces and the need for more jobs and employment opportunities.**

SAMPLE COMMENTS BY CATEGORY

- **Businesses and Services**
 - **SESSION ONE**
 - *More affordable retail & grocery, Target, fitness & miss the YMCA, services for seniors*
 - *Find ways to fill up empty storefronts*
 - **SESSION TWO**
 - *Need major infusion of retail and restaurants. Still want a Target if it fits with architecture of the area*
 - *Develop empty spaces*
 - *We want a movie theatre!*
 - *More jobs and economic development are needed*
 - *Miss St. Joe's and Securian*
- **Parks, Walking, Biking, Transportation**
 - **SESSION ONE**
 - *"Tree desert", more flowers & music, clean up the litter and pooh (and "sanitize" the skyway)*
 - *Safe walkability – traffic speed, noise, # of lanes*
 - **SESSION TWO**
 - *TEN comments on maintenance including general cleanliness especially in the skyway, additional street team staffing, and fixing and clearing sidewalks (hold business owners accountable for their related responsibilities).*
 - *More roller skating, ice skating and outdoor activities that appeal to younger residents. Walking groups, biking groups, etc. are needed to build community along with outdoor activity*
 - *We love our parks and the historic architecture of downtown.*
 - *More mention of the skyway (not clean, locked doors, empty spaces, security concerns – one visitor suggested we look to Montreal and Toronto for ideas)*
- **Arts, Culture, Community, Events, Entertainment**
 - **SESSION ONE**
 - *We miss lost artists*
 - *We are grateful for the Saints, the Farmers Market, the Depot, venues re-opening, etc.*
 - *Help us find out about events and ways to connect*
 - **SESSION TWO**

- *Appreciate and want more: plays, music, art spaces, street vendors, a flea market, meet ups, men's groups, live downtown meetings, and ways for residents to connect*
- *Several respondents expressed willingness to volunteer to increase connection and improve downtown*
- **Safety, Security, Policing, Crime, City Leadership**
 - **SESSION ONE**
 - *When we need help, we need it readily available*
 - *We expect some crime but seems like too much now*
 - *Hot spots of concern – the light rail, the Commons, the SA, street drug use, arrests aren't followed with consequences*
 - **SESSION TWO**
 - *Stronger calls for police presence (not just at light rail and trouble spots) and more frequent patrols throughout the day and night related to feeling insecure on the street and in the skyway. Crime, pan-handling, and dark / empty streets are related concerns.*
 - *Linkage stated between homeless population with no where to go and street / skyway public space feeling unwelcoming / unsafe.*
 - *Call for the mayor and elected officials to be present, to experience downtown in person to better understand*
- **Unsheltered, Homeless, At-Risk Residents**
 - **SESSION ONE**
 - *We feel bad. We want to help. How?*
 - *Where are the resources (shelter, mental health, etc.) and how do we get people to them?*
 - **SESSION TWO**
 - *Everyone needs a house, a place to sleep. Also need services, jobs and places to go besides being on the streets.*
 - *Address and provide services for those with drug addiction, mental health concerns, and housing struggles.*

Verbatim Comments Provided SESSION ONE

WHEN YOU RATED SOMETHING A “1” or A “2”, WHAT COULD CHANGE TO MOVE THIS TO A “4” OR “5”?

Comments:

- Over policing, more concerned about “property” than people”
- Not enough help for homeless community
- Need mental health resources!
- Street conditions
- Homeless locations
- Gallery tower – homeless hanging out
- A citizens’ app to help find safety
- More trees and sidewalks
- More retail
- A lot has changes for the good.
- Better dog poop pick up
- IDK
- More community events
- People take information and then nothing happens. People with power and control of downtown need to come together and listen. Get back to grassroots!
- Need a senior program. Needs funding.
- Get the homeless involved, have them paid to clean up the parks.
- Would like resources for homeless people so I could offer help
- More access for biking, avoiding fast 4-lane streets
- More affordable grocery store – L&B is unnecessary to expensive
- There are not many choices for healthy restaurant, fitness center
- There is no activity to meet with people who live in downtown except yoga at Union Depot and Art Crawl
- More Shops and groceries (Kmart/ Target)
- Love art crawl, theaters
- Churches keep me sane
- Perception of safety needs to be addressed. People think it’s unsafe. It’s not.
- The city bring back /bringing back new businesses – most of which have recently left
- When arrest someone prosecute to full extent of the law. They let people go. People are doing drugs on the corner. Need to lay down the law.

- IDK. We are in the capitol. This is where you expect crime. Where it is typically.
- Need somebody ready to help with problems.
- Security
- Security on the green line. Safety issue.
- More police presence

No Response = 26 out of 45

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT WITH THE DOWNTOWN ST. PAUL COMMUNITY WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE?

- Festivals, Taste of Minnesota
- YWCA
- Department store
- More businesses downtown and staying put and attractive for people to spend \$\$
- Community events metroNome Brewery
- Lost a lot of artists
- Historic walking tours
- Parking could be improved
- Volunteer events
- General awareness of groups that exist or opportunities to form groups/ committees
- YMCA
- More socials like this
- Smaller connections at apartments
- IDK
- More community events
- Events like this one
- More retail business
- IDK
- More at Union Depot
- Thanks for connecting us
- Informal music gatherings
- Art workshops
- More community gatherings
- Meet and greet opportunities at local bar
- Reconnect the CRC – not on zoom
- More events especially in public spaces, neighborhood feel
- More retail – businesses with more outdoor public space
- More activities in the parks such as music in Mears
- River View, Union Depot

- One site that connects to all the other sites
- Outdoor sports
- Something free like the music in the park but more focus on interpersonal interaction (music in park the attention is at the performers)
- TV screen at Galtier promoted this event!
- Hotels sponsor community events and restaurants
- Dorothy Day and Higher Ground
- Events like this. Bring back Fourth of July celebration
- St. Paul is opening up concerts and gardens and parks – helps
- More ice cream events, plant exchanges with gardens /Mears
- More interaction with people that is POSITIVE
- More ice cream socials or the like, dog treats?
- More ice cream!
- More retail with parking
- Ice cream social
- More ice cream
- Another YMCA

No Response = 13 out of 45

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE: WHAT CITY OF ST. PAUL DEVELOPMENTS DO YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT?

- Funding for artists
- Reparations
- Prison reform
- Riverfront development – the terrace river
- River, tree planting
- More downtown retail
- Gas station – the SA is not safe!
- Why are so many street-level spaces vacant? What barriers do new businesses face?
- Veterans Memorial event
- New restaurants
- The Downtown Comprehensive Plan – is there one?
- Playgrounds
- Anything
- More restaurants, bars, grocery store, convenience stores
- Bring businesses back
- River Balcony
- Restaurants and retail
- River Balcony

No Response = 29 Of 45

PUBLIC REALM COMMITTEE: DOWNTOWN PARKS- WHAT DO YOU LOVE? WHAT COULD BE BETTER?

- Better upkeep in parks
- Parks are good
- “Jane’s walks”, sacred walks
- Need public restroom
- Mears park safety, more lighting
- Trees – replant our boulevards
- Less trash in the park, more trash receptacles, more playgrounds
- Parks are great
- Better maintenance
- Plant herbs and edible greens
- Specified dog park
- Love well maintained, trees, sit and relax
- Glad police no longer park in Mears. Do not recommend this!
- More skyways to connect buildings
- Pedro Park
- Police Security protection
- Love Mears Park
- I am concerned about maintenance of facilities. Many require repair.
- Better litter control but many volunteers do help
- Beautiful, ask who owns “accidental park”
- Sufficient
- Favorite is Rice Park, Wacouta Commons too
- The music and flowers

No Response = 23 of 45

OTHER COMMENTS:

- (DT is) walkable, lively, diverse. Can drive less
- (DT positive) Saints, farmers market
- (DT positive) farmers market, Pedro Park
- We need a Target
- (DT is) walkable, pedestrian
- Miss the YMCA
- Artists are gone
- Y should open up
- The Y closed

- (DT positive) skyway walks Thursdays, Facebook, volunteer clean ups
- Need a Target
- Need places for Metro Mobility to park
- Need senior program
- No retail
- Love the art crawl, theatre
- More shops and groceries
- St. Paul was a 5, now a 2.5
- Need renewable energy
- Supplement downtown with Costco and Amazon
- Light rail. No ownership of light rail. Central station light rail drug criminal hangout
- Little libraries – need more
- Saint Paul is special because of its history and architecture have been preserved
- Clean up skyway – sanitize
- Open up banking
- Saint Paul is safer than downtown MPS
- We live in a tree desert.
- Retail (small shops) and a Target
- Better / reduce traffic noise, fewer cars, slower speeds
- Pedestrian safety if not good downtown. Better markings, no right turn on red
- Minority owned restaurants or coffee shops. Our spaces are “white spaces”
- More access for biking, avoiding fast 4 lane streets
- One issue with living in downtown I’d like the community to address is trash and dog waste
- I want to be able to get all my needs by just walking around downtown – just like any other downtown of a big city. And I want to feel safe using public transportation or walking at night.
- Creators Cup is a good resource
- Small business crawl promoting downtown businesses, St. Peter and Fifth Street retail.
- Happy hours and Sunday brunches
- History Theatre should market to downtown St. Paul residents
- Better cross pollination between businesses / venues and residents
- More retail.
- More information about events.

No Response = 32 of 45

Will you come to our next event?

- YES = 28
- MAYBE = 13
- NO =1
- NR =3

HOW CAN WE MAKE OUR NEXT LISTENING EVENT BETTER?

- Entertainment, jump house for kids
- Ice water, dog treats
- More events like this
- Keep up the good work!
- Alcohol, beer garden, and perhaps some music
- Bonfire sounds great
- Better PR. I live in Lowertown Loft and there is a poster about this event in a very bad location. Also, I can't find it online
- Perfect ice cream. Bring dog treats and a water bowl
- Ice cream, gin or bourbon? Napkins.
- Do outdoors

No Response = 34 of 45

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT THE CRC &/OR WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

N= 13

(Provided name and contact information which will not be included in the report and will be forwarded to Jon)

Verbatim Comments Provided SESSION TWO

What could change to make your ratings more positive?

- More activities like today's. I need to see more people outdoors socializing to feel more comfortable being out.
- It's nice to see people out and enjoying. Should be more of it.
- Very positive. Just love to support those who need help. Who are homeless, addicted.
- Goods and services
- More festivals, events in the park
- More access for the homeless
- Current state of roads
- More safety measures (skyway police force for example)
- Improvement cleanliness...
 - Increases patrols
 - Residential improvement District
 - A huge introduction of additional retail to meet needs of residents – necessities AND lifestyle / the arts
- Learn more about events in the area
- Make it safer
- Help for the homeless people
- More jobs
- I want everyone to be housed!
- Nothing
- Crime problems
 - Need a gym
 - Needs retail – major
- Roller skating
- More presence of the SPPD and the Street Team
- More retail
 - More residents to populate the skyways and the streets
 - Return of downtown workers to populate the skyways and streets
 - More active outreach to unhoused people
- Better management of homeless population – constant nuisance, approached for money as a single person, constant presence is a form of harassment.
- Love Rice Park, Library, Ordway, Grille
 - Sidewalks falling apart, not kept up

- Street safe, not skyway
- Don't allow panhandling
- St. Paul Hotel locked doors
- Better communication about stuff – need a newsletter for residents, banners
 - More shade Pedro Park
 - Not sure about safety
 - Wabasha needs more stores, restaurants
 - Need more stores since pandemic
- Keep it up!!
- More parks
- Outdoor music May – October
- Moved downtown from Woodbury. More restaurants like Black Dog, River Pizza, Lost Fox
- Greater presence city officials
- More visibility of downtown elected officials
- Clean and beautify the city
- Events should be better
- More concerts, events, street vendors, flea market at Landmark
- Crime is a problem. A piano play / tellydale rescheduled. Needs to be more outrage.
- Lunds is a great asset, love everything about it
- Love the history, architecture, preservations, 50 years
 - Homeless folks can be a problem
 - Public spaces, maintaining is a problem on landmark plaza
 - Crime car jacking
- Architecture – pretty place
 - Like the winter carnival
 - Need to bring back ice skating, great for kids
- Connected to the arts
 - Thursday History Theatre preview
 - Biking
 - I live in the Gallery. Has vacant store fronts, residential orphans, put some beds in the store fronts
 - Some convenient stores are essential, especially drug store
 - Closure of St. Joe's was horrible
 - Look too inward, come to outside
- Maybe more events where people can participate
- More music venues
- Entertainment like restaurants open more days
- Skyway is not reliable to be open and are dirty many areas
- More late-night security presence at places other than bus stops /train stations

- **Gone downhill since pandemic**
 - **Condition of the skyway**
 - **Some businesses don't clear sidewalks**
 - **Poor property maintenance**
 - **Need more events on the street**
 - **CRC should sponsor monthly HH**
 - **Are businesses being inspected and cited – need enforcement of security**
- **More illumination, it's so dark**
- **Eliminate the housing of drug dealers in "affordable buildings"**
- **Organize meet ups for socializing**
- **Better services for the homeless in downtown**
- **Bit more diversity**
- **Crime is picking up. Glad to see a larger police presence but more is always needed.**
- **More restaurants**
- **Commotion, traffic, sirens**
 - **More police presence!**
- **Don't feel as safe**
 - **Light rail problem – patrol needed**
- **Add stores to shop beyond Lunds**
- **Add another park like Mears**
- **So friendly!**

What opportunities to connect with the downtown community would you like to see?

- **A variety to appeal to different groups especially newcomers like me**
- **Community outreach to the struggling, homeless, addicted, mental health conditions.**
- **More music in the park. Including Pedro Park**
- **Farmers markets and music festivals**
- **Love live music**
- **More workplace, more business, more arts space**
- **More art events for example music and dance art related events and even a flea market**
- **Outdoor activities**
- **Housing for the homeless**
- **More plays**
- **Informal gathering**
- **Keep up the live music**
- **More winter activities for children**
- **Pizza by the slice with wine**

- Skating
- People wig out too much
- I'm introverted – ok to do more, I may not participate
- More events. They are so much fun
- More music
- Volunteer for library, maybe Mears
- Events will return eventually
- Arts are special
- Scooters appeal to the younger demographic
- Target if in keeping with the architecture
- Lightrail needs work
- Meet ups would be great
- Need to see more lunch out. Miss lunch times i.e., at the Meritage
- Work downtown at the science museum
 - More restaurants open for lunch
- Upset that Spire moved.
 - 17 W. Exchange is a former medical building, it is now derelict. Develop something, open services.
 - Downtown complicated ownership, de facto ownership
- Men's group outings
- Police presence, more public services IN PERSON
- I wish there was a Target downtown
- Looking forward to the holidays in the park
- A visitor surprised to find so little street life. She wonders if the skyways hurt. Says to look at Toronto and Montreal as models.
- More jobs
 - More events
- Social events
 - Discussion groups

Other comments:

- Lowertown is a great neighborhood
- More of these events
- Make these events less costly to hold. Have a city approved security list
- Willing to volunteer
- Love is the way
- Movies or movie theatre
- Walking groups
 - Biking groups

- Regular semi-organized happy hours
- Opportunity to rendezvous with neighbors at music events
- Revive the downtown live meetings
- Appreciate parks – often hampered by homelessness
- Love bike trails
- Physical health – good job
- Love sayings/ poems in sidewalks
- More development
- Used to live in lowertown
- Christmas decorations, Euro decorations
- More events, festivals, attractions
- Obviously, Mayor Carter doesn't walk around town after 5 p.m.
- City Council doesn't know reality of our town
- I'm happy here
- Lessen issues with train and others hanging around streets doing nothing
 - Don't like all the bike lanes. Less parking. 10th and Minnesota.

There were also seven general POSITIVE / I love downtown St. Paul kind of comments!!!

How can we make our next listening event better?

- 10/10, amazing.
- Have water
- It's good. No changes
- My listener was terrific
- Add music
- More
- Soda available
- More advertisement
- Advertise more

Would you like to be on the CapitolRiver Council email list?

Yes responses: 24 (almost 40% of respondents!)

