



DNA WEST PALM BEACH

DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Subject: Key Considerations Before Adoption of the Downtown Master Plan Update

Dear Commissioner Fox,

5/31/2026

On behalf of the Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA) board and members, we would like to provide you some feedback regarding the proposed Downtown Master Plan Update (DMPU) and respectfully ask the City Commission **to defer voting on the proposed DMPU**.

The DNA Board has participated extensively in the public engagement process, attending presentations by the planning team, meeting with stakeholders, and gathering input from residents. While there is broad support for a vibrant, walkable, and growing downtown, resident concerns have compelled us to urge postponing the vote. The proposed changes will have long-term implications and we need to understand their practical impacts before major policy decisions are made.

Specifically, we believe it is important that pending traffic and mobility studies be completed and publicly reviewed prior to adoption. In addition, we encourage the City to evaluate whether the current analysis adequately addresses the cumulative impacts of increased density on:

- **Transportation and traffic flow**
- **Parking demand and availability**
- **Water and wastewater capacity**
- **Stormwater management and flooding resilience**
- **Electrical and utility infrastructure**
- **Sanitation and garbage collection services**
- **Emergency vehicle access and response times**
- **Hurricane preparedness and evacuation planning**

Perhaps some of these studies are already done or in process. If so, sharing the analysis and recommendations would help to increase confidence in the plan.

Residents are concerned that infrastructure expansion may not be keeping pace with the level of density being contemplated. Understanding these impacts beforehand will help ensure that future growth remains sustainable.

Traffic and parking remain among the most frequently cited concerns of downtown residents. The proposed 25% reduction in minimum parking requirements has generated significant concern because many residents believe it will not reduce car ownership, but instead shift parking demand onto public streets, city garages, valet operations, and surrounding neighborhoods, potentially worsening congestion and parking challenges.

While the City seeks to encourage alternative transportation, downtown does not yet have the transit infrastructure found in larger urban centers. Most residents continue to rely on personal vehicles for work, family responsibilities, healthcare, shopping, and regional travel.

Members support continued investment in mobility alternatives, including shared vehicle programs, enhanced transit options, and improved bicycle and micromobility infrastructure. However, these alternatives should complement existing transportation needs until they are proven viable and widely adopted.

The DNA also encourages the City to place greater emphasis on the operational impacts of new development. Deliveries, contractors, valet operations, rideshare activity, and waste collection already contribute to congestion downtown. Future developments should be designed to accommodate these activities on-site whenever possible, minimizing reliance on public streets and reducing impacts on traffic flow.

Related to this, residents have also noted the importance of preserving and utilizing downtown's alley network. Alleys were originally intended to support deliveries, waste collection, service access, and emergency response. In some locations, alley access has been reduced or eliminated through redevelopment, limiting opportunities to move these activities off primary streets.

Finally, we want to emphasize that the DNA generally supports thoughtful growth, enhanced walkability, improved public spaces, and investments that strengthen downtown's future. Our concerns are not about growth itself, but about ensuring that growth remains balanced, data-driven, and supported by the infrastructure necessary to serve both current and future residents.

The DNA is also continuing to gather resident feedback regarding traffic, parking, density, infrastructure, mobility, and overall quality-of-life issues. We believe this input can provide valuable real-world perspective from those who live downtown every day and will be directly affected by these decisions.

Thank you again for engaging residents throughout this process and for considering our feedback.

Sincerely,

Sitima Fowler

President

West Palm Beach Downtown Neighborhood Association