**YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL (YAC) MEETING**

**March 13, 2024**

**YAC Meeting Agenda:**

The meeting agenda included a presentation from Lisa Porras, Planning Manager, and the consultant team, WRT, and focused on the streetscape design and programming concepts for the Downtown Specific Plan Area; followed by a discussion, group activity, and a visual reference survey to understand Youth Advisory Committee’s expectations from the Downtown Specific Plan. This meeting provided the city staff and the consultant team with a list of programs and public space design elements to consider in the Downtown Specific Plan Area.

A group of people looking at a large paper on a table

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The feedback from the Youth Advisory Council is summarized below.

**YAC Group Activity and Input**

**Program Elements:**The YAC recommended the following program elements for the Laurel Street blocks: 600, 700, and 800, and for Wheeler Plaza and Harrington Park.

* Roller and ice-staking rinks
* Pop-up snack stalls that allow businesses to rotate weekly
* Food trucks
* Street festival area
* Mini golf as an entertainment option
* Bowling alley, arcade, or similar fun activity
* Designated informal eating area
* Permanent art display boxes for the community to display art as a rotating activity
* Movie theatre

**Public Space Design Elements:** to improve the quality of public space through design.

* Include shade-giving canopy trees near Wheeler Plaza
* The idea of “groves” is preferred
* Enhance Harrington Park and provide better visibility from the street to add a safety component
* Explore alleyway lighting as a design element
* Introduce benches along the street and in the plazas
* Introduce informal gathering areas

**Infrastructure Elements:**

Introduce drinking water fountains and water bottle filling stations

* Include the storm/rain gardens in the street design for a sustainable and resilient downtown
* Provide trash bins with segregated recycle and compost cans
* Introduce an EV charging facility integrated with parking
* Provide permanent public restrooms

**Parking:**

* Increase parking visibility with digital signage indicating available spaces
* Introduce parking meters/pick-up zones in the alley adjacent to Wheeler Plaza
* Create drop-off/pick-up or 10-minute parking zones on Laurel Street, near Starbucks
* Introduce a new name for Wheeler Plaza
* Explore the feasibility of a parking garage
* Overall, introduce time restrictions for parking along Laurel Street so that the customers as well as employees do not occupy the parking spots for a longer time
* Include ADA parking spaces

**Downtown Business Strategy:** The members suggested the following strategies to make the downtown businesses more diverse, affordable, and well spread out across the three blocks of Laurel Street (600, 700, and 800).

* Encourage establishments/stores selling office supplies/stationery
* Encourage addition of popular retail stores like Lululemon
* Promote affordable small businesses and diverse food options, for instance, invite specific businesses like Jamba Juice and Baskin Robbins to provide cheaper quick-eat options
* Consider incentivizing stores to set up businesses in the 800 block to have a more even spread of businesses in the three downtown blocks
* Suggest adding teenage-friendly clothing stores that are fun and engaging

**Visual Preference Survey**

The YAC members participated in the visual preference survey by placing a colored stickers on the programs they preferred or supported in the downtown area. The categories programs that were included in the survey were:

* Children and youth programs
* Food and beverage/ pop-up market
* Pedestrian-oriented programs
* Event day programs
* Infrastructure and amenities

The exercise concluded with the following understanding:

* The YAC members prefer play facilities, interactive paving patterns, and interactive sculpture as programs for children and youth. An outdoor climbing wall was not preferred as a program to introduce in the Specific Plan area.
* From the food and beverages standpoint, the YAC members prefer programs such as food trucks, micro-retail facilities, outdoor dining along wide sidewalks, and pop-up markets.
* Regarding the pedestrian-oriented programs, the YAC members prefer the programs including the groves with seating, multi-purpose plaza spaces, and the family seating area. The bike dismount zone was not a preferred programming concept for YAC.
* For the event day programs, the YAC members prefer an introduction to the performance area consisting of a stage, movie screen, and associated seating area. The members also prefer the seasonal ice staking rink and art display zones.
* From the infrastructure standpoint, the YAC members prefer drinking water fountains, restrooms, and green infrastructure elements.

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A poster with images of people walking

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*YAC Committee Members participating in the group activity.*