Virtual Community Workshop #1 | July 14, 2020

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I. Workshop Overview

Summary
The first Virtual Community Workshop in the Imagine Downtown Kansas City 2030 Strategic Plan project effort was hosted by the Downtown Council of Kansas City (DTC) and facilitated by the MIG Team (Project Consultants). This workshop was envisioned as the “Community Launch Event” and was conducted online using Zoom. The event hosted 165 participants who were asked to register in advance of the workshop. The workshop was advertised through a series e-blasts and social media posts to draw a wide and diverse audience (a pre-meeting survey was also provided to gather a profile of the participants ahead of the workshop).

The goals of the workshop were to provide information on the project objectives and the Project Team; describe the existing context of Downtown Kansas City and future opportunities and challenges; and host an interactive brainstorming session with guided facilitation and live recording. Findings from the virtual community workshop provided valuable input on areas of improvement and opportunities to leverage in the Downtown, critical to formulating the foundational framework for the plan’s vision, goals and strategies.

Participation
Total Participants: 165

Hosts and Facilitators:
DTC - Bill Dietrich, Ann Holliday, Julie Pierce, Sr. Vice President, Henderson Engineers and Downtown Council Chair
MIG - Jamillah Jordan, Chris Beynon, Kate Joncas
CityFi - Ashley Hand
Confluence - Chris Cline, Matt Evett, Marshall Allen
EPS - Andrew Knudtson
Parson + Associates - Jason Parson, Erin Barham, Taylor Rippe

Workshop Agenda

I. Welcome and Opening Remarks
Downtown Kansas City leadership representatives kicked-off the workshop with opening remarks and a welcoming message to all participants.

II. Zoom Polling Session
Jamillah Jordan (MIG) shared a live polling session using Zoom’s polling feature. In addition to gathering feedback from participants, the poll was designed to set a tone for the workshop and encourage attendees to think about Downtown ahead of more detailed presentations and discussions.

III. Imagine Downtown KC: Goals & Timeline
Kate Joncas (MIG) and Jamillah Jordan outlined the Imagine Downtown KC 2030 Strategic Plan objectives, goals, timelines, and project team. Planned and anticipated community engagement activities were also previewed and participants were shown other methods to stay involved in to the process and future events.

IV. Presentation: Shaping Our Future - Opportunities, Issues & Trends in Downtown KC
Chris Beynon (MIG) delivered a presentation on assets, opportunities, and challenges facing Downtown KC. The presentation also highlighted cultural richness of Kansas City, the Downtown’s momentum, urban trends, complications from the COVID-19 pandemic, and opportunities to heal the wounds of historic racial injustice and inequity.

V. Breakout Group Discussions & Report Back
Meeting participants were placed into random groups of 6-10 people with a designated facilitator and recorder from the project team. Facilitators led guided discussion around a set of questions designed to stimulate constructive conversation and fresh ideas for Downtown. Responses were recorded during the breakout groups and facilitators presented key ideas and themes from the discussions in a report back session when the breakout groups reconvened.

VI. Workshop Close and Next Steps
The team presented closing remarks, thanked participants and outlined upcoming project engagement events and work products.
II. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Julie Pierce of the Downtown Council Executive Committee, Mayor Quinton Lucas, and 4th District Councilman Eric Bunch delivered opening remarks to launch the community workshop. Their comments highlighted the importance of this planning process to Downtown’s future. Additionally, they encouraged the Downtown community and other adjacent neighborhoods to engage throughout the planning process, conveying the importance of the engagement effort and its impact on the outcome of the Imagine Downtown KC 2030 Strategic Plan.

Following the opening statements, Jamillah Jordan (MIG) provided an agenda overview.
III. Zoom Polling Session

Following the Opening Remarks, Jamillah Jordan launched a Zoom Polling Session to engage participants from the start of the workshop. Participants were asked three polling questions:

1. What district do you represent (live or work)?
2. Which category describes the organization/agency/community group that you represent today?
3. In good...and tough times, how do you find your joy in Downtown KC?

Votes were submitted and participants were able to see their responses immediately following each question. Participants that selected “other” were able to submit their answers through Zoom’s chat tool.

Screenshots from the Zoom live polling session, demonstrating the results tab of the first two questions of the series.
IV. Imagine Downtown KC: Goals & Timeline

Next, Jamillah Jordan and Kate Joncas delivered a presentation detailing the Imagine Downtown KC purpose, goals and timeline. This presentation also highlighted the importance and value of having a Downtown strategic plan to guide investment and align with community interests.

The community engagement strategy was highlighted as an integral part of the planning process and the Project Team demonstrated how engagement will continue to be conducted through digital and other creative methods.

Community Engagement
- Residents
- Families
- Community Advocates and Organizations
- Business and Employees
- Civic and Corporate Leaders
- Regional Stakeholders
V. Presentation: Shaping Our Future - Opportunities, Issues & Trends in Downtown KC

Chris Beynon delivered a presentation designed to spark thinking and ideas for the breakout group discussion. The presentation called attention to some of the assets and opportunities of Downtown Kansas City; areas for potential improvement; urban trends; and impacts of COVID-19 on the Downtown environment and economy. The Black Lives Matter movement and social equity concerns were key topics of the presentation.

The presentation also emphasized that a major focus of this process is to identify projects, programs, policies and strategies to realize the community’s vision for the coming years and decades.

Exhibits from this page are snapshots from the presentation.
### Strengths
- Culture in the Downtown: It is a hidden gem. It is the center of the metropolitan region for culture, sports, events, history, architecture and historic preservation.
- Plenty of space for infill and revitalization, addition of new greenspaces and increasing density with housing, generating opportunities for revenue.
- Streetcar connectivity to other regions; opportunities to leverage further for economic growth/development. The Streetcar is a symbol for Downtown.
- Entrepreneurial spirit, and presence of young adults that want to take part and invest.

### Challenges
- Lack of balance in: diversity and affordable housing; services for visitors and residents; employment; investment.
- Lack of connectivity for: greenspaces; between east-west neighborhoods; walkability; public transit.
- Parking lot signage legibility for easier access and use.
- Needs better basic infrastructure.

### 1 - What are the key **strengths** and **challenges** of Downtown Kansas City?

### 2 - Given COVID-19, what are the **near-term opportunities** for Downtown Kansas City’s recovery?
- Repurpose ROW, parking lots and empty spaces for public use, outdoor dining, pedestrian and bike corridors. Make the public realm more welcoming and inclusive. Think of long term/permanent closure of some streets for pedestrian and bicycle use.
- Better connect the different parts of the city. Improve the streetcar. Curbside management (rideshare, Uber, Amazon delivery): Make it easier to pick up and move around without a car.
- People have more time and flexibility and more desire to discover places in the city that they don’t know about. Self guided tours to learn about history, architecture, music culture, sports.
- Identify shovel-ready projects to incentivize cities to remain “open”. Policies to allow for “pop-ups” and short-term solutions to be implemented. Address needs of homeless and transient population. Prioritize the right development to stitch together Downtown neighborhoods.
- People are working remotely and moving from more expensive cities to live in KC. Foster connectivity. Public internet in public places, work collaboratively, connecting Black-owned business
- Adopt innovations in sanitation in a COVID/Post-COVID world to make sure places are sanitary.

### 3 - What most **excites you about the future** of Downtown Kansas City?
- Streetcar expansion, connection to the adjacent neighborhoods, connections to east and west neighborhoods and to the Riverfront. Make Downtown more walkable.
- Continuous investment in the arts and neighborhoods. Bring music back and have more time/activities outdoors.
- Potential for Downtown baseball; ballpark coming in would be catalyst for activity and enrichment.
- More collaboration with community organizations and underrepresented groups. More inclusive with neighborhood associations.
- Build a cluster of innovation for the medical institutions. Support smart cities, small businesses and start ups.
- “Downtown Sells the City!” Position 2026 - KC should be a destination City. Let’s host the World Cup! Embrace the tourism and destination component.
- Let’s focus on the fundamentals: security, infrastructure, vitality, walkability. Not just big ideas.
- Unique neighborhoods and different flavors should be celebrated.
VII. Workshop Close and Next Steps

Following the Breakout Group Discussion and Report Back, Jamillah Jordan delivered closing statements and expressed thanks to the attendees for their participation and contributions in the workshop. Jamillah then summarized Next Steps to outline future engagement events and upcoming work products in the planning process.

Participants were also provided with various resources for staying involved and up-to-date with project developments, including through the project website and social media. A post-workshop survey was also promoted to allow participants to leave feedback and comment on the workshop content and experience.

Virtual Community Workshop #1 concluded following these final remarks.

Stay Involved!

- Sign up for the project mailing list
- Connect via social media
- Take our website polls
- Stay tuned for the next community workshop
- Connect via email: imagine@downtownkc.org

#ImagineDowntownKC

Next Steps

- Ongoing Community Engagement Activities
- Draft Vision, Goals, Principles
- Market Analysis
- Initial Catalytic Projects and Strategies