

Dear DAAC Committee members,

In being asked to submit a short narrative outlining the theory and process behind the concepts we developed as part of the Our Town planning process, I find myself struggling to distill our ideas to fewer than 500 words. While the Our Town planning process provided an outstanding platform for citizens and professionals alike to contribute input on the future of our downtown, I can't help but think, as designers we are doing a bit of a disservice to you, the committee, as well as our community by simply providing the art (drawings) without the science (thinking). I hope that you will please excuse the length and detail of my response below with the understanding that we (Terrain) take our work and the future of Basalt very seriously because we want to help this place realize its natural potential as habitat for the fostering of culture and community.

Below, you will find a numbered list (In no specific order of priority) of thoughts and recommendations, we, as professionals would like to provide for your consideration. My general comment at this point is that it seems the DAAC is overly focused on the Pan & Fork property, just one component of a much larger system. The committee shouldn't really need to figure out exactly what use is going to happen on that property while there are myriad other projects the DAAC should work to achieve consensus on-- projects we should all agree could enhance and reinvigorate downtown regardless of whether you are for or against 'growth.'

1. The Clark's Property-- The building is obsolete and must be razed. Clearly, the owner has shown there are no interested tenants and no compatible uses. The site is vehicle oriented in the heart of downtown. The curb cuts and driveways surrounding make walking or biking through the space dangerous. It is a liability, eyesore, and waste of valuable space. The remaining tenants in the Clark's building are set back from the road behind a sea of asphalt. Ideal retail space should be situated close to the road to take advantage of vehicular and pedestrian traffic and visibility. Our recommendation is that the site becomes mixed retail, office, residential within a roughly 55-75 foot envelope along the road with potential for public parking within the interior block (roughly where the current building sits). Making the current building public parking (structured) eliminates the need to allocate valuable space on other downtown properties for 'on-site' parking. Downtown visitors should park and walk within downtown with some 'teaser parking' left remaining along Midland and other streets. There are also constraints and opportunities attached to the site-- there is approximately a ten foot grade change along Two Rivers frontage. The grade change presents opportunity to provide 'tuck under' parking with a second level serving to complete the street wall on Two Rivers. A road bisecting this grade change would be unwise.

2. Shift 'affordable' (subsidized or not) housing projects from the hinterlands where rural locale necessitates driving (fuel \$\$\$) and added infrastructure, ie parking, driveways, garages (development cost \$\$\$) to downtown where residents can save money by walking to basic services, mass transit, retail, work, etc. Create development incentives for 'attainable' downtown housing by (again) consolidating parking and eliminating infrastructure cost and dead space (on-site parking). The added residents downtown will bring culture and vitality to our streets.

3. Fix public infrastructure--make downtown comfortable and walkable, fix broken curbs, ramps, sidewalks, streetscape, add benches (that are appropriate for downtown), re-align sidewalks, re-align parking, implement a public art program that caters to new, local, burgeoning artists.

4. Focus on creating a draw--Downtown needs a great, permanent public amenity like a skating rink, fire feature, water/play feature, etc. A public amenity can create a draw for visitors to downtown and give them a reason to stay (and visit restaurants, shops, hotel, etc).

5. Consolidate Parks and open space into usable spaces. Right now our town parks and open space system is disjointed and not conducive to active or passive uses. Circulation between spaces is unintelligible.

6. Integrate broader regional connections through downtown, ie trails. We NEED A KICK-BUTT TRAILHEAD near downtown accessing Basalt Mountain--We need to find a way around DOW units. Trailheads are social spaces. We need to integrate recreation into our economic and social framework. (It actually says so on the new monument ;)) Think about downtown as the gift shop and the Frying Pan Valley as the amusement park. We need more people visiting the FPRV and spending money and walking through downtown. Right now we have a few cyclists going up and down the VERY dangerous Frying Pan Road (with no shoulder) mixed with trucks hauling boats and trailers.

7. Variety of live and work spaces--Willits is struggling to lease the cavernous retail and office spaces they've created. A quick

comparison to other vital downtowns shows a broad array of spaces. We need to foster a productive community through the spaces we provide. We need boutique scale retail spaces for entrepreneurs, shared and small office spaces, lots of little nooks and crannies--messiness is good. If we could limit or have some provision in our code to incentivize development of max 25-35 foot width commercial/retail units we could provide more attainable rents which are more attractive to start-ups, small shops, and Heathers or Brick Pony scale restaurateurs.

8. We need a major cultural paradigm shift--start including younger people in planning efforts. I don't skateboard, but I believe it is important to make a place for our kids to play. I don't really make art, but I believe we should celebrate and lift up young or new artists just as much, if not more than those who have arguably already 'made it.' We need to encourage entrepreneurial-ism, art, and civic engagement by setting a tone in the places we create--the canvas for vitality. The key is looking outside our own personal interests. A group can raise half a million dollars in a heartbeat to cover existing tennis courts in the ex-urbs while the skate park disintegrates. We have to look beyond our own personal interests/gains.

9. There is broad consensus showing that both millennials and baby boomers are living smaller, and prefer to walk or bike to work. There is also effort to expand (RFTA) transit service. BRT only works if there is critical density achieved within a walkable distance to stop locations. Its similar to how a central nervous system works--the brain is only useful if it is connected through the fingers (local, neighborhoods, downtowns).

10. Park space isn't very useful (or safe, or affordable) if people don't live near it. You can have the most fabulous park ever designed, but if its on the moon, no one is going to use it (or pay for it, or maintain it). We need to make places for people to live downtown first. There is a huge gap in housing product throughout the valley. There is an opportunity for Basalt to provide 'in between' housing options like pocket neighborhoods, downtown lofts, cottages, and live-work units. Any parks we create are going to be just as empty as our streets are every weekend if we don't have people living downtown first.

The concepts we developed are broad and intentionally devoid of fine detail, but the overarching concepts include;

1. Develop mixed use building envelopes generally along street edges where retailers are afforded high visibility and least amount of impact to the greater site, parking should be situated interior to the block(s).
2. Provide centralized public parking and eliminate need for on-site parking.
3. Consolidate parks and open space into usable units and proportions.
4. Provide river buffer (river building setback) to allow river walk/trail
5. Provide gracious 'breaks' in building envelope to allow welcoming courtyard scale spaces which provide access to the river(s) while activating open space.
6. Put all downtown streets on a diet. Flare corners where pedestrians crossings occur, narrow lanes from 14 foot plus (existing) to 9-12 feet max. Use space gained by narrowing lanes to widen sidewalks, add seating, display art, build water feature, add bicycle lanes, rain gardens, tree plantings, etc.
7. Make specific streets, for example in front of Saxys (Midland Spur) pedestrian oriented through use of curbsless or woonerf style street. Add special paving to slow drivers and blur the boundaries between pedestrian zone and vehicular zone. Add removable bollards at either end of street to provide permanent space for Farmers Market, events.
8. Relocate town hall and Wyly and reclaim Lions Park as downtown central gathering space, integrate with woonerf for a seamless public space appropriate for events while reducing stormwater infrastructure.

Thanks for considering our thoughts and ideas.

Respectfully,



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