



**Blueprint Downtown Steering Committee Meeting Agenda
Virtual Only**

March 18, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

Steering Committee Members Present:

Karena Perry, Chair
Betsy Brenneman
Kirby Day
Michael Heumann
Laura Martinson

Ricardo Worl
Patty Ware
Nathaniel Dye
Jill Ramiel
Tahlia Gerger

Steering Committee Members Absent:

Iris Matthews, Daniel Glidmann, Nathaniel Dye

Staff:

Beth McKibben, Project Manager

Assembly Members:

None.

I. Roll Call

Mr. Day filled in as the meeting chair. The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

a. February 17, 2021 DRAFT minutes, Blueprint Downtown Steering Committee Meeting

MOTION: By Ms. Ware to approve, the February 17, 2021 draft minutes. Ms. Martinson seconded.

The motion passed with no objection.

III. Public Participation

None.

IV. Steering Committee Updates

Ms. McKibben said the plan for the next meeting is to look at a more complete Chapter 2, stating that it will probably take more than one meeting. Meanwhile, staff will be refining the bulk of the chapter and implementing significant changes.

Ms. Ware asked what the public comment timeline will look like.

Ms. McKibben said it will likely take place over May or June. The comment review period used to be 30 days, but the current standard of electronic review allows it to be shortened. Since staff cannot hold a large public meeting, they will put together a series of smaller meetings.

Mr. Worl asked what groups would be invited.

Ms. McKibben said they had been considering the Downtown Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Business Association, the Juneau Economic Development Council, the downtown neighborhood association, and the Rotary Clubs, as well as the Central Council Tlingit Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska and the public.

Ms. Brenneman reported that the CBJ Assembly passed the tax abatement for downtown housing, with a few amendments.

Ms. McKibben said the planners met with Scott Ciambor, the CBJ Housing Director, for an overview of the tax abatement. They are investigating other funding sources to promote housing downtown.

Ms. Ramiel reported that the 2021 Main Street convention is virtual, running April 12-14. There is a special rate for civic leaders and municipal employees to attend, in which several Steering Committee members expressed interest. She suggested the Steering Committee write a letter recommending that the Assembly consider attending the convention, and volunteered to draft the letter.

V. Miscellaneous Topic Discussions

Trash and Composting

Ms. McKibben asked the Steering Committee if they liked the actions related to trash and composting from the Focus Group Report.

Mr. Worl agreed that the City needs to work with business owners on the issue. He supported installing recycling bins next to public trashcans. He asked if there is a better process for downtown waste collection than the system currently in place.

Ms. Brenneman asked the Steering Committee members who are downtown business owners for possible solutions.

Mr. Day brought up the issue of enforcement regarding proper trashcans that keep out bears and ravens. He said there is also an issue with ensuring that trash collection happens before 7:30 a.m. to make sure the garbage trucks do not impede traffic.

Ms. McKibben said that the frequency of bags outside of trashcans is an enforcement issue. The other issue is making sure that trash collection and recycling is easily available to downtown business owners.

Ms. Martinson suggested an incentive program, since downtown business owners are not able to take their recycling to the recycling center. She also recommended education, as some business owners do not know how to deal with the specific trash landscape in Juneau. Cost is an issue for business owners as well.

Ms. Ware asked why business owners can't bring their recycling to the recycling center.

Mr. Day said Waste Management requires business owners to have it picked up, as a source of revenue.

Ms. Martinson said business owners are just putting their recycling in the garbage cans. Recycling requires more work and resources.

Ms. McKibben suggested working with the Juneau Commission on Sustainability's solid waste management group.

Ms. Ware said the amount of waste that comes from restaurants and street vendors is overwhelming. An incentive program would allow businesses to make more environmentally conscious choices.

Ms. Brenneman identified the need to address composting, since much of the waste at the dump is food waste.

Ms. Martinson supported the suggestions to place recycling bins next to garbage bins, and suggested supplying water bottle refilling stations.

Ms. Perry reported seeing downtown business owners throw away the belongings of homeless people due to lack of space or lockers in which homeless people can store them. This translates to lack of space in downtown garbage bins. She recommended supplying lockers to the homeless.

Mr. Worl suggested engaging Downtown Business Association or the Rotary Chamber when considering incentives. He recommended a statement affirming that the Steering Committee supports a long-term solution for the dump or the incinerator.

Mr. Day said the Visitor Industry Task Force was working with cruise lines to prevent offloading garbage from cruise ships.

Ms. Brenneman recommended educating tourists about the trash and recycling situation in Juneau.

Mr. Day said the waste company is hesitant to put recycle containers out for the public because recycling abilities are different everywhere you go.

Viewsheds

Ms. McKibben said the Steering Committee never discussed viewsheds. The Steering Committee has endorsed the Willoughby Plan and the Waterfront Plan, both of which have moderate discussion of viewsheds. She asked if they want to add any other recommendations.

Ms. Ware asked if it is sufficient to say the Steering Committee supports the recommendations of the Willoughby Plan.

Ms. McKibben said yes, and that this is what the plan currently says. There are viewsheds outside of those two planning areas that they did not address. Do they need to go into detail, or just broadly acknowledge that Juneau has many beautiful viewsheds and recommend spending time and effort developing guidelines to protect them?

The Steering Committee agrees to Ms. McKibben's recommendation second suggestion.

Mr. Worl asked if the recommendations in the various plans are consistent.

Ms. McKibben said the recommendations are not detailed, because no ordinances have been passed related to them.

Parking Garages

Ms. McKibben said parking garages are discussed in Appendix A, but some recommendations conflict.

Ms. Ramiel suggested using strong language to recommend against any more surface parking lots in the downtown core. City Manager Rorie Watt has expressed a vision for the State parking garage, which is currently falling apart and is difficult to maintain. The parking garage would be elevated to the height of Calhoun Avenue to bridge the Willoughby district to the downtown core. She asked if the Steering Committee is willing to support this suggestion.

Ms. Ware said she is uncomfortable endorsing this idea, since it requires the demolition of one of the houses on Calhoun Avenue.

Ms. Brenneman asked who owns the hillside on Calhoun Avenue behind Fireweed Place. She thinks that hillside should be turned into a winding parklike switchback that would allow disabled people to ascend the hill.

Mr. Heumann said the Central Council Tlingit Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska owns the hillside.

Ms. Brenneman said she agrees with endorsing more attractive parking structures.

Mr. Day said they could combine the two sentiments to reduce the dominance of parking in downtown while allowing for a car-centric culture for residents who live outside of downtown.

Ms. McKibben clarified that the Steering Committee is not in support of more surface parking, but would recommend investing in parking garages and actions to make Juneau less car-centric

Ms. Martinson emphasized the need to use the current parking structures more efficiently, to keep them well maintained and well lit, and to add bike facilities. Adding awnings over more downtown sidewalks would increase Juneau's walkability, and would add to people's willingness to park farther away from their destination. An employee parking system would keep the garages from filling up with mostly CBJ employees.

Ms. Brenneman said management and enforcement seems to come up in every discussion they have. Long-term parkers are the issue, as well as poorly managed parking garages. She asked if the Title 49 parking discussion would affect their recommendations.

Ms. McKibben said the Assembly asked the Planning Commission to review the standards for off-street parking related to new developments. Title 49 is reviewing the parking code to see if the requirements need to change. Many progressive communities have parking maximums rather than minimums. She does not think that any of their work would reduce the need for parking garages.

Mr. Worl agreed that parking garages need to be safer and cleaner, as many people will not use them because of trash and out of safety concerns.

Mr. Day asked if the 2010 Parking Management Plan included the failed parking meter plan.

Ms. McKibben said that parking meters works, but the plan they used to implement them was not the right one.

Ms. Martinson asked if the parking plans address parking near the downtown high school for teachers and students. She recommended addressing that issue in the plan.

Downtown Circulator

Ms. McKibben said that the last time they discussed the downtown circulator, Mr. Day did not support the recommendations. They had talked about using the existing Capital Transit circulator route rather than recommending another downtown circulator. She asked if the Steering Committee wants to recommend a park-and-ride area outside of the downtown core that people who work downtown can use to take a shuttle or circulator to work.

Ms. Ware said they need to more heavily advertise the Capital Transit downtown circulator. Mr. Heumann agreed.

Mr. Day also agreed that it is not promoted, and asked if it is still in service.

Ms. Perry said people who ride the bus use the circulator frequently. The circulator runs every half hour in the middle of the day, and once an hour in the mornings and evenings. All reports

recommend reversing the frequency of scheduling. The tourists also ride the public buses and use the circulator route often.

Mr. Heumann said the circulator needs an obvious sign on it that advertises a free circulator, and it needs to run continuously.

Mr. Day asked where they could find ridership data. Ms. Perry said the regular bus reports have that information.

Ms. Martinson said a park-and-ride would be helpful if downtown Juneau were more walkable with the ability to get to work without getting drenched.

Mr. Worl wondered if they could use fees as an incentive or disincentive for parking downtown as opposed to a park-and-ride lot.

Ms. Brenneman asked if there is a difference using the Capital Transit circulator during the off-season and during the tourism season. A greater frequency of the buses in the mornings and evenings does not help the tourists.

Mr. Heumann cautioned against supporting the current circulator, because he feels it is dysfunctional. He identified the need to have stronger recommendations about how the circulator should run.

Mr. Day said if you add remote parking, you must add capacity to the circulator.

Ms. McKibben said she would put together some alternative actions. She asked if it is important that the circulator is electric.

The Steering Committee agrees this is a goal to work toward.

Ms. McKibben said the Steering Committee needs to discuss the recommendation to ban vehicles except a circulator during tourist season in defined downtown areas to allow pedestrians to move more freely and create a plaza atmosphere.

Ms. Ware said they have historically supported short-term street closures, but not long-term closures. The Steering Committee agreed.

Mr. Day said the people working on implementing the Tourism Best Management Practices have been working on reducing the routes that tourist buses take downtown. He is not sure why someone would want to get on a bus at the Mt. Roberts Tramway to take a route with few stops, since downtown is so walkable. If you are going to run the circulator correctly, you need to have appropriate capacity, which adds to downtown congestion.

Ms. Brenneman said this needs to be a free circulator, which is the difference between what the City and what private companies can provide. This is helpful for elderly people.

Mr. Heumann recommended keeping in mind the removal of barriers for people trying to patronize downtown Juneau.

Mr. Day mentioned the recommendation to move the staging area for tourism buses. Nearly all the buses that pick up tourists downtown are staged at the Rock Dump. This means that there would be extra traffic driving through the downtown core.

Ms. Martinson asked if there is a transportation group that studies these problems.

Ms. McKibben said Capital Transit is the one who sets the routing and scheduling. She also knows it has not changed in quite a few years. They could recommend working with Capital Transit to look into transportation issues.

Ms. Perry expressed frustration with the current routing and scheduling of Capital Transit buses. Ms. McKibben said the current schedule could also be improved for the bus drivers. The up-coming new capital transit center would allow for more bathroom breaks for the drivers.

Ms. Brenneman said that moving the tourism staging area would not work any better than the current situation if nothing changes like rezoning the Rock Dump or moving the docks.

Ms. Ramiel said she does not understand why the tourist and resident circulators need to be separate. Mr. Day agreed.

Mr. Heumann said moving tourists out of the downtown is bad for the downtown businesses.

Ms. Martinson said it is better to include the concerns about the shuttle rather than remove the recommendation all together.

Ms. McKibben said they might want to refine the language in the Transportation chapter based on this discussion.

Year-Round and Seasonal Housing

Ms. McKibben said the visioning report is trying to capture the short-term vacation rental market.

Ms. Brenneman said she asked Housing Director Scott Ciambor about the legality of restricting these types of rentals. She identified a need to prioritize year-round residents. She thinks it is possible to address seasonal rental issue for the legislature and seasonal workers, but not with the rising prevalence of short-term vacation rentals downtown.

Ms. Ware asked what it means that the CBJ is not currently regulating vacation rentals.

Ms. McKibben said this means the zoning code had a section for bed-and-breakfasts, but short-term vacation rentals are a newer concept. The zoning ordinance does not have a mechanism to address this. The City also does not have a business license requirement, so the City does not

have a way to track them. A number of short-term vacation rentals pay sales tax, but she is sure many do not.

Ms. Martinson said that Juneau does not have much hotel space, so the community is in danger of becoming overrun by short-term vacation rentals.

Mr. Heumann said it would be helpful to have some context for this issue. Whether or not Juneau restricts these vacation rentals, more housing downtown is needed. Adding affordable housing means also adding some expensive units for which property owners can charge travelers a premium to balance out the costs. He suggested recommending a restriction instead of a ban.

Ms. Ramiel said if Juneau is successful at growing its independent traveler market, someone would build a hotel. She is concerned with the regulation of short-term vacation rentals, since they do not pay into hotel taxes that are used to market Juneau.

Ms. McKibben said she thinks the plan needs to recommend more study of this issue.

Ms. Brenneman disagreed, saying she thinks the recommendations need to be stronger. Unless the issue is addressed quickly, it will create issues for maintaining adequate year-round housing, since property owners can make more money with short-term vacation rentals than long-term rentals.

Mr. Day asked for clarification regarding the intention of the statements about short-term vacation rentals in the recommendation prioritizing year-round housing over seasonal rentals.

Ms. McKibben said cited community impacts of short-term vacation rentals. For example, Mr. Glidmann and his neighbors bought a house in order to prevent it from becoming a constant vacation rental, and so they could rent it out long-term.

Ms. Brenneman suggested a regulation or disincentive in at least part of downtown.

Ms. Martinson said short-term vacation rentals should have to pay the same taxes as hotels. She does not like the idea of telling property owners what they can and cannot do with their investments, but she does think regulation and taxes are a good idea.

Ms. Brenneman supports recommending better enforcement and management for bed-and-breakfasts as well.

VI. Committee Comments

Mr. Day asked if these recommendations would be coming back to the Steering Committee once staff refines them.

Ms. McKibben said she needs to consider the most efficient way to progress.

The Steering Committee will discuss the rest of the agenda at the next meeting.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: April 1, 2021, 6 p.m., virtual only

DRAFT



**Blueprint Downtown Steering Committee Meeting Agenda
Zoom Webinar & Telephonic**

April 1, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

Steering Committee Members Present:

Betsy Brenneman
Kirby Day
Daniel Glidmann
Michael Heumann
Laura Martinson

Ricardo Worl
Patty Ware
Nathaniel Dye
Jill Ramiel

Steering Committee Members Absent:

Iris Matthews, Karena Perry, Tahlia Gerger

Staff:

Beth McKibben, Project Manager
Alexandra Pierce, Planning Manager

Assembly Members:

Loren Jones

I. Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. Mr. Day chaired the meeting in Ms. Perry's absence.

II. Approval of Minutes

a. February 25, 2021 DRAFT minutes, Blueprint Downtown Steering Committee Meeting

Ms. Ware drew attention to a typo on page 2, and recommended changing "finding" to "funding." She also recommended amending Mr. Day's statement about Norwegian Cruise Lines not intending to include daycares, beaches, etc. to say that they are not going to fund those potential aspects of the project.

Ms. Brenneman noted that the Focus Report referenced throughout the draft minutes should be the Visioning Report. She also recommended changing the phrase "tourism management bypass" to "Gastineau Avenue/South Franklin Street bypass" on page 7.

MOTION: By Ms. Ware to approve the February 25, 2021 minutes as amended. Ms. Martinson seconded.

The motion passed with no objection.

III. Public Participation

None.

IV. Steering Committee Updates

None.

V. Chapter 2: Implementation

Pages 1 – 2

Ms. McKibben reported she had incorporated the key ideas discussed two meetings ago, as well as reworded the recommendations to make them more active.

Ms. Ware said she liked the idea of using broad themes as organizing principles. Ms. Martinson agreed.

Ms. Brenneman suggested replacing the title of “Implementation” with “Implementing This Plan.” She stated she disliked the interchangeable language, which includes the terms goals, strategies, actions, recommended actions, key ideas, and broad themes. She thinks they need to maintain consistency between terms. She suggested several changes to make the first two paragraphs stronger. She asked if the key ideas could be used to organize the table. Ms. McKibben said she did not think they would be a good organizational framework for the table.

Ms. Brenneman advocated for linguistic consistency between either “key ideas” or “key themes.” Mr. Day advocated for “broad themes” instead.

Pages 3 – 4

Staff asked the Steering Committee to send wordsmithing suggestions via email, and to focus on concepts and big picture ideas. Ms. McKibben said staff are not yet ready to discuss organization.

Ms. Ramiel asked about the possibility of retaining the services of the consultants they had hired previously to finish help finish the document and to make it look polished. Ms. Pierce said that it is a good idea, but that it is not realistic with the current budget situation. She also said that she thinks the document is close to completion. Funding will be going towards graphics and beautification.

Mr. Worl asked if the actions in the table are organized in priority order. Ms. McKibben replied they are in the order in which they appear in the plan, while deleting duplications.

Ms. Ware identified several opportunities to consolidate actions. She said she thinks the action “Develop strategies to address downtown issues” is too vague and all-encompassing.

Ms. Martinson asked what the Top Ten references. Ms. McKibben said these will be the ten most important actions identified by the Steering Committee, once they finish reviewing the actions.

Ms. Brenneman recommended, rather than the current column title "Action/Recommendation," they use either "Actions" or "Recommended Actions." She identified a lack of enforcement actions. She recommended that all actions start with an active verb. She asked what the action "Promote the connections between historic preservation and sustainability" means.

Ms. Pierce said that the most ecologically conscious building is the one that is already built. It is important to include sustainability in the discussion on historic preservation due grant opportunities that are restoration based. She suggested changing "sustainability" to "sustainable construction," or something similar.

Page 5 – 6

Mr. Glidmann asked what a FEMA Certified community is. He expressed concern that some downtown property owners are limited in their construction ability due to FEMA regulations. Staff said the certification does not affect property owners, but does help the City attain funding sources.

Mr. Glidmann disagreed with the conclusion that supporting and encouraging an 18/365 downtown would decrease undesirable behavior.

Ms. Ware identified several opportunities to consolidate actions, as well as some actions that are too detailed for inclusion in the table. Regarding Mr. Glidmann's comment, she recommended amending the action to focus on improving vibrancy and attractiveness of downtown to residents and visitors, rather than decreasing undesirable behavior. Ms. McKibben clarified that the actions related to CPTED concepts are separate due to their disparate intended audiences.

Ms. Ware recommended revising the action "In the immediate term, new development proposals should be encouraged to use CPTED consultations at the planning stages of development" to focus more on incentivizing new development projects rather than encouraging them. For the action "Provide an improved safe campground, which includes services and transportation for the homeless," she recommended changing "homeless" to "unsheltered population."

Ms. Martinson suggested changing State jobs to all jobs in the actions where it is referenced. She is of the opinion that they should be trying to keep all jobs in Juneau, including private sector jobs.

Ms. Brenneman stated she is uncomfortable with the recommendation to continue funding and otherwise supporting the Alaska Committee. She disagreed with Ms. Martinson, saying she

believes it is important to identify State jobs specifically. For the CPTED actions, she recommended combining all three actions and using the word “require” rather than “incentivize” for implementing CPTED principles in new construction.

Regarding the action “Support and expand events that bring visitors to the Downtown,” Mr. Day recommended replacing “visitors” with a term or phrase that includes people who live in the Valley.

Pages 7 – 8

Mr. Glidmann reported the State of Alaska is mandating a 20% reduction in lease space, which means relocating about 25% of the State workforce to working from home. This will have an impact on commercial real estate, as well as an increase potential areas of support for the people working from home. Ms. Ramiel said this is an opportunity to press for more downtown housing, since people working from home will likely want easy access to their community during their breaks and time off.

Ms. McKibben said staff will incorporate telecommuting into the plan document.

Ms. Ware identified several opportunities to consolidate actions, as well as some actions that are too detailed for inclusion in the table. She recommended including metrics in several actions to increase specificity. She said that the action “Undertake a market study to determine what types of businesses are needed downtown” is too vague to be meaningful.

Ms. Brenneman suggested incorporating the State lease information in the action regarding State workers. Regarding the action “Seek and assemble resources, including housing fund resources, to coordinate restoration for housing above the retail level within historic buildings,” she recommended removing “above the retail level” and to talk about incentivizing historic restoration for the whole building. She recommended changing the action “Implement a blighted properties ordinance to encourage owners to fix downtown buildings” to read “Implement and enforce.” Regarding the action referencing the 12-year tax abatement program, she stated that it should be more clear that this is the housing tax abatement. She disagreed with Ms. Ware about combining actions 42 and 43, because one focuses on electric vehicles and one focuses on district heating.

Pages 9 – 10

Mr. Glidmann said the action related to food security does not seem to be downtown-specific. He recommended adding a health security initiative to go with the food security initiative, due to the uncertainty of the future health landscape.

Regarding actions related to street reconstruction, Ms. Ramiel stated she would like to see specific language that recommends against street reconstruction that degrades neighborhood character. Mr. Day said he thinks that is what the entire document is trying to address.

Ms. Pierce said she thinks they can edit the relevant actions to incorporate Ms. Ramiel's concerns and to advocate incorporating public art.

Regarding the action recommending the relocation of City Hall, Mr. Worl said it could be helpful to expand or offer an explanation about the reasons behind this action. The idea is to open up City Hall's current location for something community-oriented. He also recommended including the intended relocation site. Ms. Pierce said the top of the Downtown Transit Center is the planned site.

Ms. Ware identified duplicated actions and suggested rewording several actions for greater specificity. Ms. McKibben cautioned that sometimes strong language is off-putting to policy makers; it may need to be changed to softer wording. Ms. Ware said she would prefer to have stronger language at the offset so that policy makers can soften as needed.

Ms. Martinson suggested that the action related to acknowledging Juneau's seasonal nature should incorporate legislative housing. She agreed with Ms. Ramiel's comments about incorporating character into street reconstruction, and stated she thinks businesses should be consulted prior to reconstruction due to the economic effects of extended street closures.

Ms. Brenneman recommended incorporating rental rates in the market study action. Rental rates limit the types of businesses that can survive downtown. Ms. Martinson disagreed, saying the demand is what is dictating the rental rates.

Ms. Ramiel said that the Main Street report from the consultants recommended a market gap study. Regarding construction-related street closures, she noted that there are many ways to market that the affected shops are still open for business.

Ms. Brenneman asked if the City Hall relocation to the site above the Downtown Transportation Center would intrude on Telephone Hill. Staff said they are unsure, as the planning process is still in the early stages.

Ms. Brenneman made several rewriting suggestions to incorporate stronger language.

Pages 11 – 12

Ms. Ware identified duplicated actions and made rewording recommendations to include stronger language.

Mr. Worl asked what minimizing the footprint of vendors entails in the action related to centralizing management of vendors. Ms. McKibben said that better management is needed to avoid food carts expanding into larger parts of the parks in which they are located.

Ms. Brenneman identified duplicative actions and suggested rewording for stronger language. She said she does not remember the Steering Committee discussing neighborhood associations, although she did not necessarily recommend removing the related action.

Ms. Pierce said there was a neighborhood association focus group during the focus group process. Staff said other cities have used these organizations more than CBJ does, and identified the potential to strengthen neighborhoods through these associations.

Ms. Ramiel stated she supports the benefits of neighborhood associations. A way to create a collective voice for everyone living in the downtown core would be useful. She asked if this is something the City could help organize. Staff stated they are unsure. The Steering Committee committed to discuss this recommendation further at a later date.

Ms., Brenneman recommended explaining “the power of ten” in the action in which it is referenced. She suggested an action to study the effects of providing seating downtown. She recommending adding permitting to the actions related to centralizing management of vendors.

Page 13

Regarding the actions related to cruise ship schedules, Ms. Ware recommended identifying who is responsible for scheduling. She asked if the Commercial Use Regulation referenced in one of the actions is new. Ms. Pierce replied that it is, and that Parks and Recreation has taken over permitting for commercial tour groups in parks.

Ms. Ware recommended moving the free wi-fi away from Marine Park. Ms. Pierce said that this solution was implemented to avoid excess congregation inside the downtown library.

Ms. Brenneman said she remembered that the Steering Committee had discussed limiting the wi-fi signal to the base of the library. Staff will look into past discussions, and the Steering Committee will discuss the issue further at a later date.

Mr. Worl asked if this project would be eligible to use cruise tax funds. Staff said it may be possible.

Ms. Brenneman said she does not agree with the recommendation for another cruise ship dock. Regarding the actions related to cruise ship scheduling, she recommended rewording to emphasize the need for the City’s involvement in the process. The action related to providing public restrooms should include language regarding enforcement and monitoring. Ms. Brenneman identified duplicative actions.

Mr. Day suggested removing the action “Scheduling of docks should stagger arrival and departure times to disperse impacts” because it is already occurring in cruise ship scheduling.

Ms. Brenneman said she does not agree with the actions recommending implementing whole plans because the Steering Committee disagrees with some of the recommendations in other plans.

Ms. McKibben clarified that the Steering Committee did recommend full implementation of the Willoughby Plan, the Harbors Management Plan, the Waterfront Management Plan, and the Historic Preservation Plan with one exception. The Housing Action Plan is borough-wide, so a downtown-specific plan does not necessarily need or want to endorse the whole plan.

VI. Committee Comments

Ms. McKibben said that the Steering Committee will continue to discuss the implementation table at the next meeting.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: April 15, 2021, 6 p.m., Zoom Webinar & Telephonic

DRAFT



**Blueprint Downtown Steering Committee Meeting Agenda
Zoom Webinar & Telephonic**

April 15, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

Steering Committee Members Present:

Karena Perry, Chair
Betsy Brenneman
Kirby Day
Daniel Glidmann

Laura Martinson
Patty Ware
Iris Matthews

Steering Committee Members Absent:

Michael Heumann, Ricardo Worl, Nathaniel Dye, Jill Ramiel, Tahlia Gerger

Staff:

Alexandra Pierce, Planning Manager

Assembly Members:

None

I. Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

a. March 18, 2021 DRAFT minutes, Blueprint Downtown Steering Committee Meeting

Ms. Brenneman asked for clarification regarding the sentence, "Ms. McKibben said the visioning report is trying to capture the short-term vacation rental market."

Ms. Ware said that she assumed this is referencing how CBJ is not currently regulating vacation rentals. Several Steering Committee members agreed that they did not think the visioning report was trying to capture the short-term rental market. Ms. Pierce referenced the visioning report directly. Due to the lack of clarity of intent, Mr. Day suggested waiting until the Steering Committee is able to talk with Ms. McKibben about the matter before approving the minutes.

MOTION: By Mr. Day to delay approving the March 18, 2021 minutes until the next Steering Committee meeting. Mr. Glidmann seconded.

The motion passed with no objection.

III. Public Participation

None.

IV. Steering Committee Updates

Ms. Pierce presented to the Assembly on the permitting process for the Norwegian Cruise Line dock. The Assembly wants additional public process to amend Long Range Waterfront Plan.

Ms. Martinson asked if the Blueprint Downtown recommendations would be included in the review process. Ms. Pierce said even if the plan is not yet adopted by that point, the recommendations will be available for review.

V. Chapter 2: Implementation

Ms. Brenneman said she supported organizing the table by time frame. She also said she feels that some important actions are missing.

Ms. Matthews said she felt overwhelmed by the amount of actions, and asked whether all of them will be included. Ms. Pierce said that duplicates will be removed. She asked the Steering Committee to focus on content and readability.

Pages 13 – 14

Mr. Day asked if the trails referenced in the action to “identify complete connections between existing trail networks” are CBJ trails. Ms. Pierce said some are State trails.

Regarding the action to evaluate pool programming, Ms. Matthews said she did not think that pools were a large topic of Steering Committee discussion. Ms. Pierce said that the Committee discussed this issue before Ms. Matthews joined. Ms. Matthews recommended identifying specific trail connections in the previously referenced action.

Ms. Ware identified actions to consolidate. She agreed with Ms. Matthews that she did not think the Steering Committee conversation about pools rose to the level of recommendation. She recommended simplifying the action related to a comprehensive study of the South Franklin/Marine Way corridor.

Ms. Matthews suggested identifying which constructions the Steering Committee most wants to promote.

Ms. Brenneman suggested possible consolidation of trail-related actions. She identified Christopher Trail as particularly in need of improvement. Ms. Pierce said staff were trying to capture that need by talking about the connections between existing trail networks.

Ms. Brenneman said she disagreed with the recommendation to evaluate whether or not to retain the Augustus Brown pool. Ms. Pierce said, at the time of discussion, the Steering Committee did not have strong feelings about the downtown pool. She suggested making a formal decision regarding the recommendation.

Ms. Matthews suggested recognizing the Augustus Brown pool as an important amenity for downtown. The Steering Committee agreed.

Pages 15 – 16

Regarding the actions related to traffic calming, Mr. Day recommended allocating passenger fees to install temporary speed bumps on Basin Road.

Mr. Glidmann recommended removing the action related to the reconstruction of Capital Avenue, as the project is already under way.

Ms. Ware said she thought the action “Work with DOT&PF on developing implementation plan based on study results and recommendations” is vague and confusing; she recommended removing it. She suggested combining the actions related to traffic calming.

Ms. Matthews said she thought the action related to shared space concepts should be more specific. She agreed that it should be combined with the action to monitor and enforce speed limits in the study area.

Ms. Martinson suggested presenting the most detailed traffic calming action in a different way. She said that the action related to reducing demand from peak single occupancy vehicles through the implementation of a travel demand management program seems to be a main priority for the Steering Committee.

Ms. Brenneman asked how the Capital Avenue action reduces pedestrian and vehicle conflicts. Ms. Pierce reassured her that they are not recommending removing housing. Ms. Brenneman expressed dissatisfaction with the term “shared space concepts.” She made suggestions for ways that detailed sections of the traffic calming action could be incorporated into other actions. She disagreed that traffic-calming measures on Willoughby Avenue and Egan Drive are necessary. She said she thinks they should wait to reassess speed limits until Juneau has a normal tourist season by which to judge.

Regarding traffic calming on Willoughby Avenue, Ms. Ware said that people drive too quickly for the comfort of pedestrians trying to cross the road and use the bus stops. She expressed concerns about tourists coming from the State museum and travelling through that area.

Ms. Brenneman said that traffic-calming measures often complicate snow clearing. She is hesitant to recommend building anything in that area due to the already limited space. Ms. Pierce said traffic-calming measures usually utilize physical design. Ms. Martinson suggested an action that recommends the City engineers find the best way to tackle the issue.

Ms. Matthews said the action related to developing “Complete Streets” design standards is a much more complete recommendation for prioritizing pedestrians in the Willoughby District.

Pages 17 – 18

Mr. Day suggested combining actions related to maintained landscapes and traffic calming. He said that the new crosswalk across Egan Drive connecting Glacier Avenue with the Seawalk is dangerous to use, as drivers are not yet used to expecting pedestrians and cyclists in the roadway. DOT&PF will not be lowering the speed limit despite this. He asked for clarification regarding the action to allow use of space in CBJ tour bus staging areas for off-peak loading zones.

Ms. Pierce said this probably references use by other businesses, such as for deliveries. Ms. Martinson said none of the tour bus zones would work for that purpose. Mr. Day suggested removing the action.

Mr. Glidmann agreed that it is likely someone will eventually be hit at the new crosswalk across Egan Drive. He is in favor of an action addressing this issue. Ms. Ware suggested upgrading the lights at the crosswalk. She reported that a woman was hit using that crosswalk and had to be airlifted to Seattle to receive medical attention.

Ms. Ware suggested consolidating the recommendations regarding Egan Drive. She expressed uncertainty that the Steering Committee definitively supported the action recommending construction of a new parking structure.

Ms. Pierce asked the Steering Committee if they think it is worth creating another structure with potential management issues for increased development in the Aak'w Kwaan area.

Ms. Martinson asked if the plan addresses safety in the sections mentioning parking structures. Mr. Glidmann said the Steering Committee was generally in favor of constructing new parking structures in the vicinity, such as in an area where there is already surface parking. He is of the opinion that a parking structure in the Aak'w Kwaan District would positively influence existing parking structures and parking management downtown.

Ms. Matthews said she thinks there is a conflict between the actions that recommend parking structures and ones that recommend expanding on-street parking. Ms. Pierce said on-street parking encourages traffic to move slower, so it may be more related to traffic calming. She suggested deleting the action because the issue is addressed elsewhere.

Regarding the action to reallocate on-street parking space on Glacier Avenue for cycle lanes, Ms. Martinson said this would exacerbate the current parking shortage in that area.

Ms. Matthews left for a conflicting meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Ms. Brenneman identified duplicative actions to consolidate. Regarding the action recommending to provide crosswalks between harbors, she asked if this meant providing crosswalks to harbors rather than between. Ms. Pierce said she thinks this is an opportunity to make a decision: should they recommend traffic calming on Egan Drive between 10th Street and

Norway Point? Ms. Brenneman said better connections to the harbors, such as street crossings, are needed. Ms. Pierce recommended changing the action to recommend implementing Docks and Harbors plans in order to increase connectivity to harbors.

Ms. Brenneman asked for clarification regarding the action recommending a new crossing on West 12th Street, as well as the action referencing “walking buses.” Regarding on-street parking spaces on Glacier Avenue, she stated there is an issue with snow removal and biking near the high school. Parking along the schools needs to be reconsidered. She also said she would like to see a cycle lane. She recommended consolidation of several actions.

Pages 19 – 20

Mr. Day identified duplicative actions. He asked how on-street electric vehicle charging stations would be provided in residential areas. Ms. Pierce said that this would be on the side of the street for downtown areas where residents lack garages.

Ms. Ware recommended consolidation of parking management actions. She identified actions that are too detailed for a reference table.

Regarding the action related to parking data, Ms. Martinson said that former planner Mr. Tim Felstead had mentioned that the current parking data is already accurate. She suggested recommending implementing the existing data.

Pages 21 – 22

Mr. Day stated he thinks the Rock Dump should be renamed regardless if it is rezoned. The action to actively pursue deep-water port alternatives to the Rock Dump needs to be examined in conjunction with a second crossing. He identified several actions that are duplicative, as well as some that have already been completed.

Ms. Martinson said the deep-water port and second crossing should be identified as high priorities.

Mr. Glidmann disagreed that deep-water port alternatives and a second crossing should be inherently linked, due to the conclusions of the most recent study of potential sites for a second crossing. This study concluded that a second crossing would be most advantageous close to the existing bridge, in order to provide an alternative route in the event of failure of the existing bridge.

Ms. Brenneman questioned whether the study’s conclusions are still correct due to population increases. She stated she does not think recommending renaming the Rock Dump is a priority. She identified opportunities for action consolidation, as well as actions that are too specific.

Ms. Perry said she thinks the actions related to bike lockers could be combined.

Pages 23 – 24

Mr. Day agreed with Ms. Pierce's edit removing specificity from the action related to the circulator. He identified actions that are no longer relevant for deletion. He suggested combining the actions related to bus stops and shelters. He also suggested combining the actions related to snow removal.

Mr. Glidmann disagreed that bus shelters should be required to have three sides due to the issue of unsheltered people using them as makeshift homes. He would like to see bus stops become as minimal as possible. Ms. Perry said it is impossible to wait for a bus in some weather unless there are three sides to a bus stop. She suggested bus stops with no sides and a heated roof as an alternative.

Ms. Ware and Ms. Martinson identified opportunities for consolidation.

Ms. Brenneman said the issue of bus shelters goes back to the issue of addressing homelessness. She identified the need for better enforcement. She does not think the solution is to take away what is good for citizens and not confront the issue of homelessness.

Mr. Glidmann agreed, but reminded the Steering Committee that enforcement is not possible as it is illegal to remove someone from public property. Mr. Day mentioned the waiting area at the downtown transit center and the Seawalk as two areas that unsheltered populations utilize in a sometimes-disruptive manner.

Ms. Martinson agreed that they should not recommend removing services that citizens utilize in order to dodge an issue. She suggested addressing homelessness in the section of the plan that talks about downtown safety. Ms. Brenneman said she does not think any of the items in the table directly address homelessness, and expressed concern that this will cause people to discount the plan. Ms. Ware disagreed, and gave an example of an action that directly addresses the issue.

Ms. Brenneman suggested combining the actions related to snow clearing, and said that clearing snow is an issue in many more places than bus shelters. She identified the need for increased enforcement if property owners are to be held responsible for snow clearing, or for CBJ to clear the sidewalks if not.

Ms. Pierce suggested replacing the disparate actions related to snow clearing with one strong, forceful recommendation to prioritize snow clearing to improve pedestrianization and transit access.

VI. Rock Dump

This discussion topic was delayed until the next Steering Committee meeting due to lack of time.

VII. Committee Comments

Mr. Glidmann emphasized the need for compassion when talking about the unsheltered population. He said that, in his experience, some of them chose to live where they do on the streets because they have a social network. He identified an absence of compassion as a root issue, and said that it is sometimes necessary to compromise our lifestyle to accommodate people who chose not to live in traditional housing arrangements.

Ms. Brenneman agreed, saying the Steering Committee often talks about the problems but has yet to identify many solutions.

Ms. Ware emphasized the need to include the unsheltered population in their discussions. Ms. Martinson agreed. Ms. Brenneman suggested devoting part of an upcoming meeting to discussing the issue with people who are more familiar with the issues.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: To be determined.