



Legislation Text

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Downtown Strategic Plan Project Update (B)

The Downtown Strategic Plan is a Top Priority for the City Commission as identified in the City Strategic Plan: 2020-2025-2035. A contract authorized by the City Commission with MKSK, in partnership with sub-contractors, Development Strategies and EDA, was executed in November 2020 and co-funded by the GCRA and University of Florida. The Department of Sustainable Development, Division of Economic Opportunity and Special Projects, is the project lead.

On April 8, 2021, the City Commission at a General Policy Committee (GPC) meeting approved the project's Engagement Brief. Since then, the project team has reviewed existing conditions, analyzed previous planning efforts, and engaged with more than 700 voices in the Gainesville community through a variety of tools and mediums, including one public meeting, two presentations to the GCRA Advisory Board, fifteen focus groups, hundreds of online and paper surveys, and dozens of one-one-one meetings with key organizations, community partners and stakeholders, in order to develop a clear understanding of the Gainesville downtown area. MKSK representatives have visited Gainesville three (3) times during this process and as mentioned have been working on the project with local firm EDA.

In April, the project team shared its draft analysis and key ideas for the proposed Downtown Strategic Plan in three public settings, including the 4/19/22 GCRA Advisory Board meeting, a Community Meeting on 4/20/22, and the 4/21/22 City Commission meeting. The draft was generally received with enthusiasm in all forums, and community feedback was collected by staff and MKSK. This feedback has been incorporated into the final document, which will be presented at this meeting for adoption. The Downtown Strategic Plan includes the following five chapters: 1) Introduction, 2) Downtown Today, 3) Community Engagement, 4) 16 Ideas for Downtown GNV, 5) Implementation.

Original Strategic Plan planning contract amount: \$250,000 (\$125,000 GCRA, \$125,000 UF)
Expended to date (7/7/22): \$230,000 (\$115,000 GCRA, \$115,000 UF)

No funds have been allocated for the Plan implementation. However, proposed order of magnitude costs for potential implementation projects are outlined in the implementation matrix.

Recommendation

GCRA Interim Director to GCRA Advisory Board: 1) Hear a presentation. 2) Recommend the City Commission adopt the City of Gainesville Downtown Strategic Plan. 3) Discuss next steps for Plan implementation.