

STAFF REPORT

Apex Downtown Master Plan & Parking Study

December 17, 2019 Town Council Meeting



In January 2019, The Town of Apex, with the Stantec Consultant Team, began a public process to develop the *Apex Downtown Master Plan & Parking Study* (Downtown Plan). The Town Council will consider the draft Downtown Plan, hear comments from the public, and make a decision regarding potential plan adoption.

The Downtown Plan is intended to establish strategies and key recommendations to serve as a roadmap towards making downtown Apex a more livable, walkable, and thriving urban place. The plan is intended to be the primary vision-setting and policy-directing strategy to lead the ongoing revitalization of downtown for the next 20 years. In addition to establishing priorities for downtown's future land use and development, housing needs, retail market, public spaces, and parking; the plan is expected to guide real estate and infrastructure investments and planning, programming, and economic development activities going forward. The Downtown Plan addresses the entire area within the Apex Peakway loop, with an emphasis on the core blocks around Salem Street.

The planning process, including establishment of principles, goals, and priority projects was guided by a Steering Committee with representation from:

- Apex Town Council
- Apex Planning Board
- Apex Farmers Market
- Apex Downtown Business Association
- Apex Historical Society
- Downtown developers
- Downtown business owners
- Downtown residents
- Downtown places of worship
- Apex Chamber of Commerce
- Apex Transit Committee
- Apex Public Art Committee
- Apex Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Advisory Commission

In addition to citizen representation on the Steering Committee, the Apex community was engaged through two online surveys (one general, one for the parklet project), a public workshop, the project web page, PeakFest, a week-long charrette, and a public presentation of draft recommendations. Information about the Downtown Plan was distributed through a flyer in utility bills, social media, the Town's website, flyers posted throughout downtown and at places frequently visited by citizens, email notifications, and through support from the Steering Committee. Meetings on specific topics were held with invited participants to gather detailed input for the plan, including: transportation; infrastructure; public safety and accessibility; institutions; retail; restaurants; housing; art and history; and tourism, programming, and public space. Finally, a briefing was held for Town Council midway through the planning process.

The resulting Downtown Plan is attached for consideration. Digital appendices are available online at: <https://www.apexnc.org/DowntownPlan>.

Public Comments:

Staff is recommending some changes to the draft Downtown Plan released for public review on November 15, 2019. Comments received and any recommended changes are described in Attachment 2. Any additional comments received following the preparation of this staff report will be described during the presentation.

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Planning Board Recommendation:

The Planning Board unanimously recommended adoption of the Downtown Plan during their December 9, 2019 meeting.

Staff Recommendation:

Planning staff requests that the Town Council adopt the Downtown Plan, with the changes as recommended by staff.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Draft *Apex Downtown Master Plan & Parking Study*

Attachment 2 – Summary of comments and recommended changes to the public draft