

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK FROM BREAKOUT SESSION DISCUSSIONS

**1. DESIRED LAND USES AND SMALL BUSINESS IMPACT**

**Themes reiterated by the community**

- Existing landmarks such as Chuck Levin's and Marchone's should be preserved
- Maintain economic and ethnic diversity
- Maintain existing small businesses
- Keep the "Main Street" feel with a focus on the human scale for new development
- Attract new "white collar" jobs
- Provide more options for retail and restaurants : size and price point
- Need for anchor uses: Office, Hotel etc.

**Additional input provided by the community**

- Incorporate best aspects of Bethesda, Rockville and Silver Spring without losing Wheaton's unique character
- Leverage the METRO to attract future tenants and anchors
- Provide more housing options such as townhomes and condominiums - not just rental
- Attract Government Agency Offices / Mid-Range Hotel for anchor use
- Existing chains such as the IHOP / Safeway do not threaten small businesses
- Future office workers will create opportunities for local businesses
- Incorporate uses that attract a diverse demographic
- Develop a Theater / Arts District
- Capture COSTCO patrons
- Create a Façade Improvement Program for existing small businesses
- Create a Green Enterprise Zone / Tax Breaks for Green Businesses Program
- Provide Support / Incentives / Incubate / Economic Stability for small businesses
- Consider the disruptive nature of construction on existing business operations
- Provide adequate parking for future uses
- Public Wi-Fi access
- Additional desired uses: Movie Theater, Hardware Store, Office Supply, Community Medical Center, Extended Stay Hotel / Corporate Apartments

## **2. STREETS AND SIDEWALKS**

### **Themes reiterated by the community**

- A “Coordinated” Streetscape
- Bike lanes and pedestrian friendly streets
- Traffic calming and safer pedestrian crossings throughout Wheaton’s New Downtown
- Need wide sidewalks with outdoor dining, benches, trees and human scaled lighting
- Create a landscape buffer between cars and pedestrians
- Improve pedestrian connections to Metro, especially the pedestrian bridge
- Improve access to Metro for people with disabilities, strollers etc.
- More green, less asphalt

### **Additional input provided by the community**

- “Flexible Streetscape”: Use internal streets and sidewalks for dining, concerts and art
- “Sustainable Streetscape”: Bio swales, pervious paving, rain gardens and environmentally sensitive lighting
- “Local Green Streetscape”: Collaborate with Brookside Gardens to create a local plant palette
- “Seasonal Signage”: Banners, Lighting etc.
- Create a safer pedestrian environment at night
- “Signature Lighting Scheme” for Wheaton’s New Downtown
- Improve pedestrian connectivity between the Westfield Mall and Wheaton’s New Downtown
- Improve street crossing across Reddie Drive for improved access to Metro
- Improve ability to penetrate the Triangle for cars and pedestrians
- Improve connectivity between existing garages and the Metro
- Better signage for access to Metro
- Create East-West connections through the Town Square for bikes and pedestrians
- Locate Bikeshare facilities at the Metro, Mall, Library and Wheaton Regional Park
- Provide secure bike storage near Metro
- Provide adequate parking
- Provide well lit paths to and from Metro
- Provide bus stop shelters
- Create a pet friendly streetscape
- Maintain walkability during construction

## **3. TOWN SQUARE AND OPEN SPACE**

### **Themes reiterated by the community**

- An appropriate place for Taste of Wheaton and Farmer’s Market
- Create a heart for the entire community: A Central Town Square

- Unifying, high quality and sustainable landscape features
- Support outdoor concerts / arts / festivals
- A safe place to sit outside and meet people
- Flexible space for a variety of uses
- Promote social interaction
- Pocket parks and landscaped gardens
- More green, less asphalt
- Effective signage
- A Gateway feature at Veirs Mills and Georgia Avenue

#### **Additional input provided by the community**

- “Public Money, Public Space”: Town Square to be accessible to all, including people with disabilities
- Integrate cultural diversity into the Town Square design
- Daytime and Night Time economy and activities (18/7 activity)
- Locate Town Square near Metro
- Connect Town Square to the Westfield Mall
- Businesses should face Town Square
- A model for sustainability
- Create a plaza over the existing Bus Bays (Better than the one at Bethesda)
- Ensure great visibility from surrounding roads towards Town Center
- All new parking should be underground
- Additional desired activities: Ice skating, Shakespeare in the Park, Screen on the Green, Street Vendors, Culinary Classes, Chess Tables, Fireworks
- Seating and design elements that appeal to kids and adults
- More places to sit within the entire community: pocket parks for active and passive spaces
- Improve Metro signage
- Add art to the Metro entrance (Murals, sculptures etc.)
- Implement a Trolley system for easy access to the Town Square

## **4. OVERALL VISION FOR WHEATON’S NEW DOWNTOWN**

### **Themes reiterated by the community**

- Don’t lose Wheaton’s unique character: Keep Wheaton “Funky”
- Don’t become Bethesda, Silver Spring or Rockville
- Lack of cohesiveness: create an identity for Wheaton’s New Downtown
- Keep the small businesses integral to Wheaton’s future, provide affordable commercial rents
- Balancing new development while retaining diversity
- Good transportation system with adequate parking
- A Gateway feature at Veirs Mills and Georgia Avenue
- Higher density, mixed-use close to Metro
- A sustainable place with an emphatic “Green Network”
- A safe, walkable, family friendly place

- A central Town Square
- Better connection between Mall and Town Square
- Sustainability (green roofs, stormwater infiltration, rain gardens etc.)
- A Center for Arts and Entertainment
- Entertainment for youth (theaters, bowling, skating)
- A place to live, work, and play
- A large employer to generate daytime activity
- More activities to draw you in – a destination
- A broader range of restaurants, and businesses
- Late night food and night life

### **Additional input provided by the community**

- Future growth to focus on diversity, combined with Transit Oriented Development
- Incorporate best parts of Bethesda, Rockville and Silver Spring while retaining Wheaton's unique character
- Attract a major public sector employer for "White Collar" jobs
- Create connective tissue or "Capillaries" that strengthen diversity of people and businesses
- Diversity in retail and restaurants: size and price point
- Add some national brand restaurants
- More "Market – Rate" Housing
- More home ownership options: Townhomes, Condominiums – not just rental
- Scale – generally would like 6 story building, not too overwhelming
- Anchors to form "Book Ends" for development
- Architectural diversity – Keep it interesting, not everything the same by using different styles. Vary texture and colors
- Find a way to introduce history/sense of place – perhaps relating to Frank Wheaton and the Civil War
- Public monument to General Wheaton
- Create an exciting and inviting entrance to the Metro
- Minimize loitering near Metro entrances
- Create a new Metro entrance fronting Reddie Drive near Town Square
- Lack of street activity, dark areas and crime inhibit pedestrians
- Provide medical services and doctor's offices
- Provide flexible use, public and private parking , street closings
- Community Recreation Facility including a swimming pool
- Develop a Theater / Arts District
- Amphitheater, flex space
- Pet friendly environment
- Minimum disruption to Metro access and local businesses during construction