

THE GREATER DOWNTOWN DAYTON PLAN



Dayton has momentum. It's a community transforming its Greater Downtown into a more thriving city and unique, vibrant place.

*How? By implementing the Greater Downtown Dayton Plan.
Why? Because the health and vitality of the entire Dayton region is inexorably linked to that of Greater Downtown.*

Downtowns fill a special niche: to be places where people have an active, convenient lifestyle. Creating that place is integral to attracting investment, as well as retaining and creating jobs because more businesses are locating and expanding where people want to be — and more of them want to be in vibrant, diverse cities where they can live, work, play and learn within walkable distances. Greater Downtown is the ideal location for such a place.

More than 42,000 people work in Greater Downtown — which includes the central business district and the neighborhoods, businesses and institutions surrounding it — more than 20,000 people live here, approximately 40,000 attend school here and every year, more than 7 million people visit its main attractions. This area already has much of what's in demand today, such as outdoor recreation and entertainment options, access to educational institutions, an extensive transportation network, and a low cost of living and doing business. It has big city advantages and small town conveniences.

The Plan represents a new vision for Dayton's center city that focuses on strengthening connections and creating a downtown attractive to investors, businesses, employees, residents, students and visitors. This vision focuses on the immense potential of Greater Downtown as the turbine for Dayton's regional economy. And it establishes a strategic game plan that numerous public and private organizations and individuals have embraced.

The future belongs to those regions taking urban revitalization seriously. Those are the regions that are and will continue to attract high-value jobs, young professionals, and the businesses and institutions that want to employ them. To accept anything less for Greater Downtown would be selling Dayton's legacy of innovation — and our community — short.



The Future of Greater Downtown Dayton

The Plan outlines several priorities, which were culled from hundreds of recommendations and represent initiatives that truly would be game changers for the urban fabric that is Greater Downtown. They work toward one goal: Create an active, vibrant and diverse downtown that's distinctly Dayton. The Plan also emphasizes redeveloping existing assets, which will put Greater Downtown on a path to becoming a more sustainable community. Below is an overview of the Plan's priority recommendations.



Retain and grow Greater Downtown's workforce to 50,000 by 2020.

Job creation and retention are critical to pumping new life into Greater Downtown. Dayton is fortunate to have a beautiful Main Street lined with architecturally distinct buildings, a variety of public spaces and a waterfront, all of which can be leveraged for future growth.

- > Develop and implement a strategic plan for the state-designated Aerospace Hub, designed to serve as an economic development driver while strengthening and promoting aerospace-related industries.
- > Focus on recruitment and expansion of businesses in targeted growth industries.
- > Reduce downtown's office vacancy rate to one that is equal to the Dayton suburban office market vacancy rate and one that's in line with comparable downtowns. Accomplish this by redeveloping current office space to more productive uses, such as housing, and by aggressive, coordinated recruitment and retention efforts.
- > Develop and deploy a robust broadband network.
- > Create a sustainability action plan to establish Greater Downtown as an environmentally friendly city.
- > Ensure parking solutions are included in all economic development efforts.

KEY PLAN GOALS

Creating a unique, vibrant place

- > 8,000 new jobs
- > 2,500 new housing units
- > top-rated bike friendly city
- > pedestrian-friendly streets and public spaces
- > arts and entertainment collaborative network
- > private/public multi-tiered funding strategy

Create an urban neighborhood with 18-hour-a-day street activity by developing 2,500 new housing units in 10 years.

Housing options must be increased in product style and price point. Downtown already has a strong neighborhood and high occupancy rates, in large part thanks to the active, convenient lifestyle downtown residents enjoy. Additional housing will serve as a catalyst for more development.

- > Establish new financial tools to assist with overall development costs and gap financing.
- > Explore the use of other funding sources, such as tax credits and a development equity fund.
- > Take better advantage of job, enrollment and other growth at area institutions, especially for housing that appeals to students, young professionals and empty-nesters.
- > Build on the strength of the stable, historic neighborhoods surrounding downtown's core.



Establish a network that allows arts, entertainment and cultural assets to function as a comprehensive district.

Greater Downtown has been recognized for the quality of its arts and cultural offerings for a mid-sized city. To allow this community to continue to thrive, partnerships will be strengthened and assets better connected to position and promote downtown as the premier regional destination.

- > Develop comprehensive promotions and a coordinated marketing strategy.
- > Enhance community spaces through public art and programming.
- > Create better physical connections between Greater Downtown's arts, entertainment and cultural assets.
- > Use the variety of unique and affordable spaces available in Greater Downtown for arts, entertainment and cultural purposes.



Animate Greater Downtown's river recreation corridor.

Greater Downtown has become the nexus of a 98-mile recreation and entertainment district along the Great Miami and Mad rivers. By building on existing strengths, exciting activities that offer a variety of river experiences can be created. A vibrant, active river corridor can become a new main avenue through the city as it becomes a destination for thousands of Daytonians.

- > Implement such projects as low dam removal to make the rivers more attractive and usable for people both on and off the water, while encouraging more people to use the rivers for recreation and relaxation.
- > Examine the feasibility of developing an outdoor urban recreation destination, which might include such features as a skate and mountain bike skills park.
- > Strengthen the cycling culture in Dayton, recently named a bronze-level Bike Friendly Community, by adding more bike lanes to streets, growing the downtown bike hub, and improving infrastructure to enhance safety and make streets more bike-friendly.



Develop livable streets, parks and public spaces that convey a unique sense of place.

Attractive, user-friendly spaces are attractive to people and improve their quality of life. Where people want to be, investment follows. Designing an urban environment that provides opportunities for rich, memorable and engaging experiences will ensure Greater Downtown remains desirable for the long term.

- > Improve connections between downtown hotspots through such projects as streetscaping and lighting.
- > Use visual connections, such as wayfinding, to boost connectivity.
- > Enhance public spaces through capital improvements and coordinated programming.
- > Design the Greater Downtown environment to reflect the City's newly adopted Livable Streets Policy.



Pursue transportation-related projects that encourage development.

Enhancing streets, sidewalks and public transit is key to creating a Greater Downtown where it's easy for all citizens to have an active lifestyle and access to jobs and amenities. Transportation projects can do much toward creating vibrant, walkable communities while also improving the environment and quality of life.

- > Create more attractive gateways and corridors into Greater Downtown.
- > Improve streets and sidewalks for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists and transit users.
- > Advocate for the development of a state-wide high-speed rail corridor, including a Dayton stop.
- > Examine the feasibility of establishing an urban streetcar that provides connectivity while driving economic development along its route.

Implementation & Funding

The Greater Downtown Dayton Plan might be “finished,” but the work to renew Greater Downtown Dayton is only now beginning.

Implementation teams have been formed to begin actively implementing the Plan’s strategies. Each team is being led by a private sector champion, all passionate and committed leaders in their fields, along with public sector partners, to spearhead momentum in key areas. A Greater Downtown Dayton Plan Community Council is providing oversight and progress reports to the public.

Already, much has been accomplished. Currently, hundreds of millions of dollars worth of public and private projects are underway, and even more in funding has been secured for projects that will begin in 2011 and beyond. These investments include infrastructure improvements, housing and office projects, capital improvements and expansions, and others that correspond with the strategies outlined in the Plan.

Especially in these difficult economic times, funding the Plan’s core strategies will be a tremendous undertaking. However, we can not wait to move forward with this Plan. Greater Downtown simply is too important to the City and region. Greater Downtown must be well positioned for recovery and have a roadmap to ensure our community’s future is a bright one.

A **multi-pronged funding strategy** will be used to implement the priority recommendations. Potential funding sources will be analyzed on a project-by-project basis and aggressively sought. Implementation teams will work with experts in both public and private funding mechanisms, developing creative funding strategies to leverage dollars. A **Greater Downtown Dayton Plan Fund** has been established at The Dayton Foundation, allowing individuals, families, private companies and others to contribute to strengthening our Greater Downtown.



For more information, complete recommendations, renderings, maps and more visit downtowndayton.org/plan or call the **Downtown Dayton Partnership** at 937-224-1518 or **City of Dayton** at 937-333-3634.

The Greater Downtown Dayton Plan would not be possible without the time, energy and creativity of those Dayton Originals who believe in Greater Downtown’s future: the hundreds of volunteers who served on committees, the hundreds of community members who contributed their input, and the public and private sector leaders who guided the Plan’s development. We also thank the following organizations and businesses for their financial support:

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