



Downtown Fairbanks 2040 Plan: What Will a Successful Product Look Like?

Recommendations from Working Group Regarding the Final Plan, Compiled from Interviews with Working Group Members, December 2020

Lessons from 2008 Vision Fairbanks Effort

The 2008 Vision Fairbanks Plan was unsuccessful because:

- The plan was **controversial**; it did not achieve consensus on difficult topics such as one-way streets, zoning and parking.
- The plan was **too specific**; there were unpopular details in the implementation section that generated opposition and resulted in lack of support for the entire plan.
- The Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Association viewpoints/platforms are not representative of all business owner perspectives; many downtown business owners do not participate in either of these organizations. **Communications and direct outreach to business owners will remain important** for downtown-area projects to be successful.

“The proposed 2008 plan was too prescriptive, too far into the weeds. It was set up for failure. It did not have strong community support for decisions.”

“It got rejected and was shot down because of the level of detail in the implementation plan.”

Look and Feel for 2040 Plan

- The plan should be **simple**, offering broad guidelines and goals for downtown’s future.
- The plan should offer a **clear purpose** and be constructed to directly achieve that purpose.
- Downtown Fairbanks includes a diverse mix of business owners, residents and other constituents. The plan should **reflect this diversity** and be **broadly appealing** to all stakeholders.
- The plan should include a **succinct, short executive summary** highlighting the key topics and plan goals.

“We don’t need to get into the weeds on all of these things.”

“The plan should be a goal document that can be useful for FNSB when they’re writing grants, and it shouldn’t be so specific that it ties hands.”

“The direction the Downtown Plan has been going has been too ambitious and too specific.”

“I’m only interested in the executive summary – if it doesn’t fit on two pages, I’m not interested.”