

Plans are nice, action necessary

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Now it is in the hands of enterprisers, entrepreneurs, visionaries, believers, investors, and the like.

Rick Hill unveiled his Downtown Vision Plan to an enthusiastic crowd Wednesday night. In it, his Village Solutions rolled out plans and ideas for upwards to 100 sites for people to live, work, and play in the historic part of town. The work is a culmination of local ideas and input, via special community meetings.

Hill's vision for a vibrant downtown is based on a number of key steps. These include:

- Creating enabling legislation to encourage such development;
- Integration of services, mixed uses where space allows;
- Better organize parking;
- Fill the voids in the urban fabric by constructing appropriate buildings in vacant or underused areas;
- Keep newer structures from trying to mimic historic properties;
- Keep civic operations in the downtown, if and when possible;
- Keep green spaces and small parks in mind;
- Re-think the use of the rear of buildings and alleyways;
- Protect single family homes.

Plans are nice, now there must be a call to action. The fusion of sound ideas with the wherewithal in financing and the backbone to get the job done are paramount. Our financial institutions appear poised to take risks. In the coming months, we need for the plans of individuals and groups to be eloquent and then executed.