

Phase 1: Open House Results Summary

The following is the summary of responses from the 62 feedback forms completed via hard copy and Survey Monkey at the first of three Open House events held in the *Downtown Salisbury Open House Series on Public Improvements* project. This event attracted nearly 75 residents. The purpose of the Open House series is to consider what public improvements should be made, if any, to ensure the long-term vitality of downtown Salisbury. The Open House, a drop-in event, was held from 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm on June 23, 2016 at The Gateway Building in downtown Salisbury. The Open House boards and additional information can be found on [DSI's website](#).



Open House Findings

The majority of residents described the downtown that can serve them in the future as a vibrant place with:

- parks and greenspace that is walkable and bikeable;
- retail and dining to meet the needs of residents;
- slower traffic and more parking;
- redevelopment, construction, no vacant storefronts, and housing;
- a culturally diverse aesthetic;
- an increased number of diverse events to attract people downtown.

Some concerns expressed included:

- doubts that this process would result in any change;
- safety and increased police presence downtown;
- late night noise;
- a need for public restrooms downtown.

The numbers listed from highest to lowest in the tables below indicate the number of people that mentioned that answer or focus area in their comments. The full list of responses from residents and summary findings can be found in the Appendix starting on page 6.

1. How can Downtown Salisbury:

--Serve you in the future?

--Serve the community in the future?

Summary Findings			
19	Parks/green space/recreation and gathering space/amphitheater/dog friendly	4	Streets & multi-modal transportation
15	Retail, services, and dining options to attract residents	3	Public restrooms
14	Pedestrian and bike friendly/sidewalk improvements	3	Streetscape improvements
12	More events/downtown promotion and advertising	3	Communication and coordination with businesses
10	More parking options	2	Incentives for business
7	Fill vacant storefronts/redevelopment/new construction	2	Cleanliness
7	Safety/police presence	2	Historic preservation
6	Traffic slowing	1	Art
5	Housing	1	Late night noise
5	Minority-owned businesses/culturally diverse aesthetic	1	More effectively retain and attract business
4	Appearance	1	Jobs
4	Extend store hours into evening.	1	Signage

2. What do you think are important criteria for evaluating options for public improvements to downtown? (e.g. cost, traffic impacts, affordability and investment, cost of doing nothing, etc.)

Summary Findings	
12	Cost/Cost vs. benefit/Cost options
12	Traffic impacts/traffic safety
11	Cost of doing nothing
11	Affordability and return on investment
6	Provides sufficient parking
5	Bikeable/walkable/pedestrian friendly
2	Provides public open spaces, park-like settings & public gathering places
2	Accessibility of downtown
2	Diversity of cultural aesthetic & stronger minority business
2	Appeals to young people, millennials and next generation, and families
2	Promotes safety and health of residents
2	Long-term benefits
2	Economic impact/creates jobs

Additional possible evaluation criteria to consider: time constraints, coordination requirements, impact on existing businesses.

3. Comments or questions about the "Downtown Salisbury Open House Series on Public Improvements" process that is underway?

Top Responses by Topic Area
<p><i>Process of Getting Public Input & Venue</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Good forum to see what has been done and what still needs to be done & hearing what other people feel is important." "Plenty of space, warm and welcoming atmosphere." "Like the format a lot - great way to deliver info and seek input in a manner that is time flexible and not-stressful." "Good way to encourage public opinion." "None yet, but this is a good idea." <p><i>Ways to Improve the Process & Attendance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "More maps with types of land use (e.g., GI's color coded with car transits, parking bike, pedestrian green space/etc." "Need more input-advertise more than just paper or flyer-maybe email and churches." "No mention of cultural/ethnic/racial diversity in the process. Cultural diversity should be one of the key goals and a vital part of this process." "Will the times be convenient so that the working Joe can attend?" "If not for this survey, that information (the open house process) would not be known."

Top Responses by Topic Area

Next Steps in the Process & Questions

- "What is next Is there a plan to follow?"
- "How are the result/questions presented to merchant. For informational purposes. How do you plan to make building and business owner comply with changes and held responsible for the outside of their businesses?"
- "Do we have funding/people wanting to invest in these type of projects? Thank you for reaching out to the public. I have seen much improvement- especially lately."
- "Plans/budget for implementation??"
- "How soon will this data be put into a plan and implemented?"

Input on the Downtown Need

- "Open areas - parks, in empty lots. Holiday and Christmas lights outlining downtown buildings ex- Mocksville his would bring in more visitors to shop at that time of year. All improvements posted are doable."
- "It is expensive to live downtown. In the future, will there be cost incentives to live downtown, taxes, etc.?"
- "What activities are underway for our teens and tweens? Reverse mentoring programs offered?"

APPENDIX

**All Open House Responses
June 23, 2016**

1. How can Downtown Salisbury:

- serve you in the future?
- serve the community in the future?

Findings
19 - Parks/green space/recreation and gathering space/amphitheater/dog friendly
15 - Retail, Services and Dining to Attract Residents
14 - Pedestrian and Bike Friendly/Sidewalk improvements
12 - More events/downtown promotion & advertising
10 - Parking
7 - Fill vacant storefronts/Redevelopment/New construction
7 - Safety/police presence
6 - Traffic Slowing
5 - Housing
5 - Minority-owned businesses/culturally diverse aesthetic
4 - Appearance
4 - Extend store hours into evening.
4 - Streets & multi-modal transportation
3 - Public restrooms
3 - Streetscape
3 - Communication and coordination with businesses
2 - Incentives for business
2 - Cleanliness
2 - Historic preservation
1 - Art
1 - Late night noise
1 - More effectively retain and attract business
1 - Jobs
1 - Signage

1. If store fronts are empty, fill them to improve visibility, use artist, non-profits & public perception of prosperity, less pass through traffic or slower attract a wider variety of businesses that appeal to younger children, youth, remote control, RC trucks etc. balance food industry w/other viable business possibilities enlarge gathering areas, better support of special events, especially those at Trolley Barn which brings county and out of town visitors- assist with advertising i.e. festival of Trees, Waterworks Crosby Scholar events longer store hours coupled with special events/maybe weekly
2. Build parks and create green spaces-fastest growing communities were growing because of parks and green spaces
3. More parking, day parking fix sidewalks very uneven review street lighting & landscaping
4. A Gentlemen’s clothing store, more cultural diversity
5. No answer
6. Provide facility for food courts so that people who reside in the downtown area.

**All Open House Responses
June 23, 2016**

7. More free/low cost events and activities for families on a budget...poverty-stricken citizens need cultural enrichment too. Every Friday night should be a "Night Out" (or close) Traffic driver events for merchants
8. Provide more opportunities for businesses with more incentives. Lower rent. More recreational or events for the public/bands, mime, concerts and more diversity in the events
9. Open community spaces, bike lanes, outdoor living. Did I mention bike lanes?
10. More ethnic food choices (Indian Please!) Home for farmer's market-permanent). Maintain rigorous historic preservation standards. Accelerate pedestrian/ bike friendly, infrastructure improvements and more green spaces and street trees.
11. Make connections to municipal services and grants. Provide a gateway to inventory of existing storefront availability.
12. I would put in a rc shop with toy remote control cars.
13. I have participated in meetings with DSL since the early 90s. It is nice to see ideas come to fruition.
JUST KEEP ON
14. Would like to see more police presence. Police on bike, walking etc. Especially in high crime areas. Improve Salisbury driver's ability- too many run red lights and stop signs. They are aggressive to cyclist. Maybe a skate park or pump track near the graffiti board for local kids. GREEN SPACE, GREEN SPACE, GREEN SPACE.
15. Make Fisher St. One way again. In the 100 block east- Two way. Traffic eliminates parking and is a hazard to pedestrian traffic.
16. Un-inhabited buildings need face-lifts. Have owners be responsible for that happening. This would really improve the aesthetics.
17. No answer
18. Community Amphitheater (Like Kannapolis), Parking garage, keep fountain@ Innes & Depot running and maintained for presentation. Ask police to patrol area around fountain to remove street and homeless people-this is a gateway to downtown. They hangout day and night making it feel unsafe for those walking around downtown. Cleaner Parking lots and areas around the train depot. Events bring visitors from out-of-state/town. This area is presenting a poor view of the cleanliness for our city.
19. Complete sidewalk improvements on N. Lee. Put a grocery store Downtown-Not big box. More housing. Public Bathrooms!
20. Hotel- places to stay (BNB), parks, amphitheater, parking, downtown events, grocery store
21. Continue to attract interesting shops restaurant, etc. Reduce or where possible eliminate the "need" to go elsewhere to shop, recreate, etc. Expand green and other gathering and event spaces to attract in town and out- of-town events downtown.
22. First and foremost- visit my store. Not one board member or DSI employee have come in to visit or understand my business. Be on top of their jobs- too much slack (when I first opened, no one advertised as stated in email.) DSI did not help locate building
23. Sponsor more events which bring in people from outside the area of Rowan- the goal being to let them see what could be a good place to live- for ex. Sponsor the Jazz and Blues festival, ethnic minority interest by acknowledging and developing African American history and contribution to Rowan /Salisbury, encouraging a wider world view.
24. Dining places, City information stations, Shopping facilities, living facilities
25. I would like to see more efforts to promote business development and cultural activities for the Black community.

**All Open House Responses
June 23, 2016**

26. Continue to expand arts, culture and things of interest for young professionals, young families and college students.
27. Make sidewalks more usable for people who are handicapped, slow down traffic. Scooters don't make it well over cobblestone and broken walks. We need ramps
28. Additional parking; bring business to empty building
29. We need more job/employment opportunities; need to attract and retain companies, small business. More ethnic restaurants, vegan, culture, arts chain stores and grocery downtown (trader Joes, etc). Market as destination, bedroom community. Bike trails/loop/bike stores.
30. Would like the old mill near downtown to be made in to more national cemetery. Make the old car dealership a park. We need a park.
31. Increase retail, Increase living units
32. No answer
33. cycling safety; lanes; signs public awareness
34. More greenspace/outdoor space; greenway for pedestrians/bikes; shops open later; affordable living condos; conservation of older buildings
35. Dog friendly, alfresco dining, more shade, less traffic-like no large trucks, round-a-bout at square for better traffic flow more downtown living, reduce crime, increase parking- maybe a deck. Get landlord to improve their buildings or sell them.
36. Looking forward to more local businesses moving in; bicycle and pedestrian friendly infrastructure; social events to draw outsiders.
37. I would love an amphitheater for public events
38. I think if you are going to invite people downtown, there should be public restrooms.
39. Provide pedestrian friendly & bicycle friendly city; need- bike lanes, walkable sidewalks, slow traffic; better parking for residents; make building owners maintain building to be presentable from the street.
40. Do something with the Public input
41. Maintain streets, sidewalks, and parking areas.
42. More night life with better atmosphere towards the end of the day. All main shops on main street close at 5pm. Include some fun, free outdoor activities; shops could promote them. Ample seating for public outside gathering there and cool art pieces.

**All Open House Responses
June 23, 2016**

2. What do you think are important criteria for evaluating options for public improvements for downtown?
(e.g., cost, traffic impacts, affordability and investment, cost of doing nothing, etc.)

Findings
12- Cost/ Cost vs. benefit/Cost options
11- Cost of doing nothing
12 - Traffic impacts/traffic safety
11 - Affordability and return on investment
6 - Provides sufficient parking
5 - Bikeable/walkable/pedestrian friendly
2 - Provides public open spaces, park-like settings & public gathering places
2 - Accessibility of downtown
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2 - Promotes safety and health of residents
2 - Long-term benefits
2- Economic impact/creates jobs
Others (1 response each)
• Infrastructure cost vs. value
• Contribution to vibrant downtown
• Livability
• Sustainability
• Value
• Handicapped accessibility
• Supports small/local/unique businesses
• Downtown living
• Benefits the maximum number of citizens and businesses
• Impacts on the "least of us"
• Not so many stop lights
• Public and private investment
• Ongoing planning/downtown master plan
• Cost of not acknowledging and supporting majority-minority population
• Participation and use of downtown facilities and programs
• Tax credits for business to come and historic renovation grants
• Supporting and improving farmers market
• Promote investment
• Well thought out
• Public restrooms
• Aesthetic value
• Location
• Corporate franchise participation in Salisbury

**All Open House Responses
June 23, 2016**

(Question 2, continued)

1. traffic impact, the bike shop is an excellent example of a business that has wide appeal
2. Cost of doing nothing
3. Affordability vs. Return, investment incentives
4. All the above
5. Bike Ability, public gathering space (farmers market
6. Make the downtown walker friendly. People should be able to walk to places of service i.e. food markets, doctor's office. Etc.
7. Does a maximum number citizen, and/or merchants benefit? How (insert decision here) affect the least of us? Livability
8. Traffic impacts, foot traffic also. Having the mean also to have more parking and ways to get customers in and out. Parking is a must-accessibility
9. Safe traffic impacts.
10. Does it fit with long range planning? Does it make sense for the return? Do we support small, local and unique businesses and the jobs they create?
11. Creating a vibrant downtown, living units downtown. This will require more public open spaces-park-like settings
12. Not putting so many stop lights
13. I think it is important to push for less traffic oriented space and more pedestrian friendly. We'll need a parking deck eventually.
14. No Answer
15. No answer
16. No answer
17. I think the cost of doing nothing will be severe for the city
18. No answer
19. All of the Above
20. need more government money to make downtown projects work. Recycling downtown.
21. Include cost of doing nothing! Traffic/parking
22. Every one complains of parking, however my customers haven't had any issues. Instead of talking about improvements, change etc. Make it happen! Stop spending money on events that aren't profitable. Fill empty spaces, if not tax.
23. Cost of doing nothing!! Cost of being limited to white interest only! Cost of not acknowledging and supporting your majority-minority population. Cost of course- but if that's the stumbling block thing outside the box!
24. All of the above
25. I believe that each of the above items are significant factors but participation and use of downtown facilities and programs is as critical a determinant
26. Think long term and evaluate over long-term. It takes time!
27. Evaluate cost and needs of people of handicapped
28. Cost is a factor in these improvements
29. Provide tax credit for business to come and historic renovation grants. Cost of doing nothing and keep it "as is" is driving me out of this town.
30. Traffic impact (need walkable and slower streets- one lane on both sides of main. Investment

**All Open House Responses
June 23, 2016**

31. Acceptance by citizens of changes
32. There is nothing fun to keep our youth engaged. Downtown needs to bring education and exciting and fun things for our youth. More department stores- shouldn't have to go out of town to shop. A community park would be nice. Follow the Birkdale Village model.
33. e visitor friendly as well as local. Your social media, FB and website are wonderful. As a recent transplant to Salisbury, this has been so helpful
34. More family oriented
35. We can't do *nothing*- we must keep moving forward
36. Smart spending into existing buildings such as moderate upgrades. Traffic calming bike lanes, highlighted crosswalks, sidewalks vending.
37. cost, economic impact, sustainability
38. Make the "square" 4 blocks downtown a walking mall. Make one-way streets going around the mall. Provide a trolley car for use. Build parking decks, getting old Belks bldg. behind plaza, into farmers mkt. area.
39. So many evaluations and meeting have already been done. Salisbury needs to provide now! The old term "shit or get off the pot" comes to mind! We need action not talk and Michael Young does not own Salisbury so why are we allowing him to hold up the progress with this whining?
40. Affordability- Bring millennial and the next generation downtown; Amenities- Greenspaces, grocery, walkability; Traffic- traffic calming-let vehicle traffic see downtown; Code Enforcement- Get ON the property owner that allow buildings to deteriorate. COST-Of-DOING-NOTHING!!! AMEN!
41. It is important to gain input for making guidelines for the future.
42. No answer

**All Open House Responses
June 23, 2016**

3. Comments or questions about the "Downtown Salisbury Open House Series on Public Improvements" process that is underway?

Responses by Topics:
<p><i>Process of Getting Public Input & Venue</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Good forum to see what has been done and what still needs to be done & hearing what other people feel is important." • "Very good." • "It's a great start." • "KUDOS! Great Idea, Keep it up" • "Much needed." • "Plenty of space, warm and welcoming atmosphere." • "I look forward to participating as I can." • "Like the format a lot- great way to deliver info and seek input in a manner that is time flexible and not-stressful." • "Spend too much." • "Good way to encourage public opinion." • "None yet, but this is a good idea." • "I like the idea and I will promote the concept!" • "Soooo glad this is happening!" • "Need online form where people log in for suggestions- not just a gripe venue." • "Great initiative!" • "Great way to get the community on the same page with social upgrades." • "Input is important." • "Good job. Keep it up." • "It's a great start. It also leaves a great come-back for people who will complain about what steps are taken - they didn't attend the Open House Series. Keep up the good work!" • "Great to allow for anyone to provide input." • "We are excited that the issues are being heard and there is enthusiasm to create a better/more popular downtown." • "Always a good idea to get input." • "What process, the one with the hidden agenda that was already decided?" <p><i>Ways to Improve the Process & Attendance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "More maps with types of land use (e.g. GI's color coded with car transits, parking bike, pedestrian green space/etc." • "Need more input-advertise more than just paper or flyer-maybe email and churches." • "No mention of cultural/ethnic/racial diversity in the process. Cultural diversity should be one of the key goals and a vital part of this process." • "Will the times be convenient so that the working Joe can attend?" • "If not for this survey, that information (the open house process) would not be known."

**All Open House Responses
June 23, 2016**

- "It seems poorly advertised. I own property and a business in the downtown MSD and barely heard about it myself. I can see how others feel left-out, as if the Open House isn't that "open" after all."
- "New Sarum at every event!!"

Next Steps in the Process & Questions

- "What is next Is there a plan to follow?"
- "How are the result/questions presented to merchant. For informational purposes. How do you plan to make building and business owner comply with changes and held responsible for the outside of their businesses?"
- "Do we have funding/people wanting to invest in these type of projects? Thank you for reaching out to the public. I have seen much improvement- especially lately."
- "Will the input actually be utilized to serve the community as a whole instead of the chosen few?"
- "Plans/budget for implementation??"
- "How soon will this data be put into a plan and implemented?"
- "We keep rehashing the same things. Took 30 years to get Wayfinding Signage. Would like to see more implementation and less talk before I die. Start with the small inexpensive things."
- "You've been collecting information. What have you done based on issues brought up at focus groups?"

Input on the Downtown Need

- "Open areas- parks, in empty lots. Holiday and Christmas lights outlining downtown buildings ex- Mocksville his would bring in more visitors to shop at that time of year. All improvements posted are doable."
- "It is expensive to live downtown. In the future, will there be cost incentives to live downtown, taxes, etc.?"
- "What activities are underway for our teens and tweens? Reverse mentoring programs offered?"

1. Good forum to see what has been done and what still needs to be done & hearing what other people feel is important
2. What is next Is there a plan to follow?
3. Very good
4. It's a great start
5. More maps with types of land use (e.g. GI's color coded with car transits, parking bike, pedestrian green space/etc.
6. No Answer
7. KUDOS! Great Idea, Keep it up!
8. Need more input-advertise more than just paper or flyer-maybe email and churches
9. Much needed
10. New Sarum at every event!!
11. Plenty of space, warm and welcoming atmosphere.

**All Open House Responses
June 23, 2016**

12. No answer
13. I look forward to participating as I can.
14. No Answer
15. No Answer
16. Open areas- parks, in empty lots. Holiday and Christmas lights outlining downtown buildings ex- Mocksville his would bring in more visitors to shop at that time of year. All improvements posted are doable.
17. No answer
18. No answer
19. No answer
20. No answer
21. Like the format a lot- great way to deliver info and seek input in a manner that is time flexible and not-stressful
22. Spend too much
23. Good way to encourage public opinion
24. None yet, but this is a good idea
25. I like the idea and I will promote the concept!
26. Soooo glad this is happening!
27. No answer
28. How are the result/questions presented to merchant. For informational purposes. How do you plan to make building and business owner comply with changes and held responsible for the outside of their businesses?
29. Need on line form where people log in for suggestions- not just a gripe venue.
30. No answer
31. No answer
32. Great initiative!
33. No answer
34. Do we have funding/people wanting to invest in these type of projects? Thank you for reaching out to the public. I have seen much improvement- especially lately
35. No answer
36. Great wat to get the community on the same page with social upgrades.
37. No answer
38. Don't know
39. NO answer
40. Plans/budget for implementation??
41. Input is important.
42. IDK

**All Open House Responses
June 23, 2016**

**4. Comments or questions about anything else related to this process or event
(e.g., marketing, communications, what's next, etc.)?**

1. No answer
2. No answer
3. Invite potential clients
4. How can partnership be developed with the city.
5. No Answer
6. No Answer
7. This process never ends. Check out the Malcolm Baldrige Award.
8. No Answer
9. Thanks
10. No Answer
11. More direct questions about what people want in Downtown Salisbury
12. No answer
13. No answer
14. No answer
15. No Answer
16. No answer
17. Look into putting Trader Joes in the old Winn Dixie on S. Main St. next to Elks Lodge
18. No answer
19. No answer
20. Need to market downtown restaurants /stores to entire county
21. Challenging topics- wish you well on it! Please continue to include such a wide range of people and organizations, ideas and perspectives!
22. DSI spends too much time taking sides-pleasing one business and not another. Several merchants feel this is going to be throwing in the wind and looked over.
23. No Answer
24. No answer
25. Let's attempt to get a group of participants from the grassroots to further this effort.
26. Glad to help
27. Lots of roots and trees and crashed wheelchairs though into road. Restore ghost signs on buildings to original look.
28. No answer
29. Or DSI is overworked, understaffed and underpaid. Then have done great things for this city but seem to get very little help.
30. Make downtown bigger (grow MSD), need parks, need more people living here, more play for the kids, need bike-streets/ walking streets
31. Downtown Salisbury is great but it can be even better. It will take time and money to reach the destination but its reachable.
32. No answer

**All Open House Responses
June 23, 2016**

33. Has consideration ever been presented of having a paid marketing person to help small business owners? This expense, unfortunately is often overlooked by small business due to expense. This person should consider the aesthetic cohesiveness of Main St., signage, landscape, etc.
34. What's next?
35. No Answer
36. Salisbury has a great potential with community events and having residents come out and draw in outside tourism
37. I think it's awesome to get public input
38. Use the old ice house for a zip line to go down parallel with railroad tracks
39. No answer
40. NO answer