

THE COMMITTEE'S CHARGE

The City Council created the Downtown Exploratory Committee (DEC) to function in an advisory capacity to the Council regarding improvements for the downtown of Fond du Lac and to present recommendations for improvements to the Council.

The DEC shall explore, study and investigate all aspects of potential improvements to the Downtown. Its scope of study is intentionally broad, encompassing all forms of building, park and public space occupancy and all forms of activity, including, but not limited to: public events, public/private ownership and potential commercial development. The DEC will present a written report to the City Council that encompasses its recommendations, the expected outcomes of implementing those expectations and its rationale for the recommendations it makes. Simply put, the committee's report must answer this question:

- How can the Downtown of Fond du Lac be better?

RATIONALE

Why has the City Council taken this initiative?

- Ultimately, you will inform a vision for the Downtown's future and a strategy for achieving that vision. In general, the Council seeks a vibrant Downtown, one attracting more local citizens and visitors, more investment, more development, more occupancy and more excitement than it does today.

BACKGROUND

How can the Downtown of Fond du Lac be better? That being the primary question, there are other questions you should answer in the process of answering the primary one. For example:

- What is a successful downtown?
- How should a community define success for its downtown?
- How should a community measure its success, or the progress toward it?

Guard against assumptions that might lead to the premature discarding of an idea. So long as ideas you generate comply with the law, there is no limit to what the committee may consider.

Like most Downtowns, Fond du Lac's is a complex environment influenced by a wide variety of interests, supporters, detractors, rules, laws and traditions. You will find it helpful to understand the environment you've been asked to improve.

- The Downtown's boundaries currently encompass a variety of public, private and public/private/personal uses and spaces. Understand how a Business Improvement District (BID), like the one in Fond du Lac, operates, generates revenue and governs itself. Also, seek to understand the implications of historical properties as they pertain to the Downtown.
- Consider whether the geographic boundary of the BID and the Downtown, at least the way people perceive it as a place, are the same or different and whether it matters. If it

does appear to matter, determine why it does. At the very least define what you believe the Downtown to be to focus your analysis.

- Consider other community's successes, brainstorm ideas, explore how ideas could positively impact the community and evaluate how downtown-focused initiatives in other cities affected their communities. Seek best practices and pursue new ideas.
- Also, seek to understand what initiatives, improvements or changes are being planned for implementation by the City or the DFP to avoid expending thought and effort working on an idea that's already been considered and approved. Examples include the DFP's market analysis, the City's Capital Improvement Plan and ideas coming from the City's Art Board, to name a few.
- Note the word, 'improvement,' used throughout this document means many things. In the context of the committee's study, an improvement could mean the preservation, addition or elimination of something or anything. The point is not to limit your analysis only to what presently exists or what is being done.

Substantial effort and resources have been committed to the Downtown over the years and during that time, many lessons learned. Consider familiarizing yourself with the information associated with those efforts: Here are just a few examples of resources to assist your research:

- UW Extension Local Government Center: <http://lgc.uwex.edu/cpd/bidpage/bid.html>
- DFP Downtown Development Plan: http://www.downtownfdl.com/dfp/sft422/337116b_adopted_downtown_plan_2010_02_10.pdf
- DFP Downtown Land Use Plan: http://www.downtownfdl.com/dfp/sft422/dt_landuseplan.pdf
- Arts and Entertainment District Vision Plan: <http://www.downtownfdl.com/dfp/sft422/aepowerpointrevised.pdf>
- Wisconsin State Statute, 66.1109 Business improvement districts: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/66/XI/1109>
- Wisconsin Main Street Community Program: <http://www.downtownfonddulac.com/dfp/mainstreet.html>
- Historic Preservation in Fond du Lac: <https://www.fdl.wi.gov/departments.iml?DeptID=10&DeptPage=102>

COMMITTEE OPERATON/FACILITATION

The Council expects the DEC to operate independently and as such the City Council, DFP board, City and DFP staffs will not directly involve themselves in the committee's work, except at the request of the committee. However, the following guidelines apply to the DEC:

- As a committee created and appointed by the Fond du Lac City Council, this advisory Committee must operate within the view of "the Public Eye." All of its meetings must be open to the public and it will not have the option of an "Executive Session."

Parliamentary procedures must guide all discussions and deliberations, although the committee has the latitude to define the parliamentary procedures it needs to function effectively.

- Open meetings and open records statutes apply to the DEC. Public notification of meetings and publication of an agenda are required as is taking of minutes at each meeting. The DEC should consult the City Attorney when any uncertainty exists.
- Except for its first meeting, the organizational meeting, the DEC must provide for audience comment at its meetings and should aggressively pursue other means for engaging with the public.
- The committee will establish a regular meeting place and time to provide predictability for the public. It should meet at least monthly having held its organizational meeting no later than March 31, 2016. The City Clerk will coordinate the scheduling and meeting location of the first meeting with the committee members.
- As it is for the City Council, a quorum for the DEC is a simple majority of its membership and recommendations may be approved by a majority of members voting.
- The committee will choose its own leadership: Once organized, it may operate on its own and with assistance from City and Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership (DFP) Staff and any other sources of expertise when needed. Since this committee is larger than normal, the appointment of an outside facilitator to help keep it on track could be an alternative the committee considers. If the DEC does request the services of an outside facilitator, any costs associated with this request must be submitted to the City Manager for consideration and a recommendation to the Council.
- Its existence is temporary and it will be disbanded at a time to be determined by the Council.
- It is prohibited from committing City resources for any purpose and it has no decision making authority, except for determining its meeting schedule, its recommendations and the contents of its final report to the City Council.
- It should rely upon the City and DFP Staff for information and advice, but it may not exercise direction or supervision of City employees or Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership employees. Also, the DEC should coordinate any engagements or conversations involving State or other regulatory agencies with City Staff.
- Committee members should anticipate significant interest in its operations from the public and from the press. Therefore, the committee members should determine how the DEC will interact with the public and the press before, after and between meetings.
- As with other boards, commissions and committees of the City Council, the City Clerk will record the minutes of DEC meetings and publish them via the City's Online Agenda portal at: <https://www.fdl.wi.gov/general-information.Impl?DeptID=6>.

STAFF COORDINATION

The DEC's work will often depend upon interaction with and support from the City and DFP Staffs. You can expect a member of the following departments to attend your meetings: Public Works, Community Development, the City Attorney and the City Clerk. They will assist you in acquiring information and documentation.

- In support of the committee, the City Staff will create a web-based repository for all the materials used or produced by the committee. This web page will also provide continuous access to any member of the public to those materials.

DELIVERABLES

- The DEC will provide an interim oral report of its operations and progress to the City Council no later than July 29, 2016 at a regularly scheduled Council meeting. The DEC chairperson and the City Manager will coordinate the scheduling of this requirement.
- Any time prior to, but no later than December 5, 2016, the DEC will draft and submit a preliminary written report to the City Council containing its findings, recommendations and any other information it deems appropriate for the Council to consider. Anticipate participation in the City Council meeting scheduled for December 14, 2016. Unless the schedule changes, the Committee will be providing a presentation summarizing its report during that meeting.