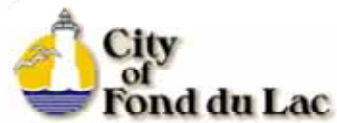


Downtown Exploratory Committee: Update to City Council

August 24, 2016



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.

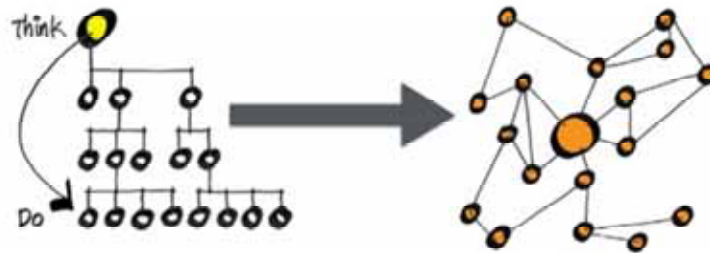
The DEC shall explore, study and investigate all aspects of potential improvements to the Downtown. Its scope of study is intentionally broad, encompassing all forms of building, park and public space occupancy and all forms of activity, including, but not limited to: public events, public/private ownership 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?



We began by trying to better understand the charge: broadly exploring issues in the Downtown, including the work of the Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership but not limiting ourselves to their work necessarily.

DEC Challenge: How to Have Impact in a Network



We have realized that this is a complicated task you've given us.

The City is not the only actor in charge of Downtown: property owners, business owners, residents all impact what happens there. There is also a non-profit, funded in part by the City, that works full time for the improvement of the Downtown.

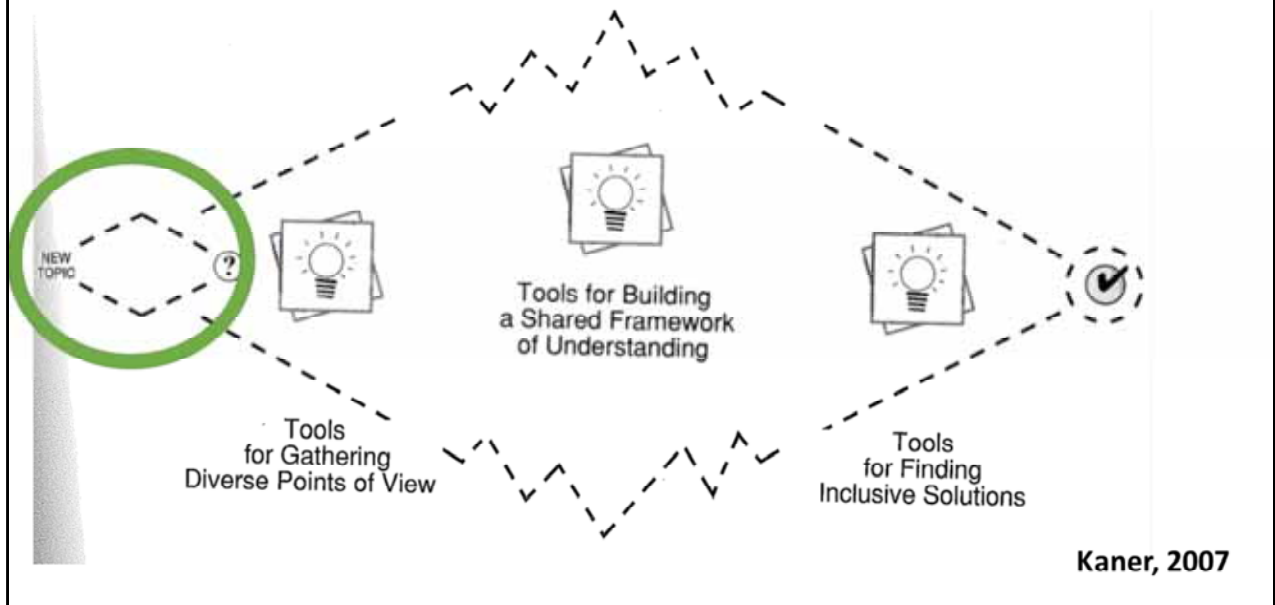
This diagram is from the Strategic Doing framework. The Lakeside Park Exploratory Committee is an example of a visioning process that matched the diagram on the left. The City is the main decision-maker about what happens there.

In the case of the Downtown, the environment looks more like the diagram on the right. There are many stakeholders who have jurisdiction over different parts of the downtown, and they don't necessarily report to each other. The City is one, but it isn't the only one and won't be able to implement everything on it's own.

We see our work as setting a framework for future improvement.

Hopefully the Council will endorse it, and then everyone who sees a role for themselves in it can help make it happen: the DFP, service clubs, business owners, etc.

Committee Process Overview



With our facilitator from UW-Extension, we are following the process outlined here.

Starting in the green circle, we spent the first meetings building our strength as a group, an understanding of the current situation, and work already taking place here.



OPERATING AGREEMENTS:

- Respect each other.
- Speak one at a time.
- Be open and authentic with your opinions.
- Have enthusiasm for what we're doing.
- Come prepared for meetings.
- Everyone participates and helps each other participate.
- When it's decided, it's decided.

UW
Extension
Fond du Lac County

"Tools" by Paul
Downey on
[flickr.com](https://www.flickr.com/photos/pdowney/)

We've agreed to use these guidelines as our basis for how we work together.



April

- Committee Members Beliefs About Downtown
- Starting Points of Interest
- Resources Members Would Like
 - Data & Reports
 - Frameworks & Processes
 - Knowledgeable People & Organizations
- This process will be a success if...
 - Desired outcomes of the committee's work
 - Potential ways to measure progress in years to come

"The Start" by Oscar Rethwill on flickr.com

In April we focused on committee members' opinions and existing knowledge. What do we think are the major issues and challenges?



May

May

- Downtown Overview with
 - **Amy Hansen**, Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership
 - **Dyann Benson**, City of Fond du Lac
- How can DEC best contribute to the success and improvement of the Downtown?



Submitted Photo in Fond du Lac Reporter, 2.16.15

In May we invited Amy Hansen and Dyann Benson to share how the Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership and the City work together in the downtown. We thought about how DEC can best contribute to the situation.

June

Discussion with

- **Darin Wasniewski**, Downtown Development Program Manager, *Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation*
- 4 members of the **Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership Board of Directors**



In June, we invited Darin Wasniewski to tell us about the WI Main Street Program: what it means that Fond du Lac is a part of that and to get his perspective on how Fond du Lac sits amongst the other Main Street Communities in the state.

We also invited 4 members of the Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership board to share the local perspective they have about the program here: what's working well, what challenges they have.

July: Framing the Issues in More Detail



Issue Theme	Framed as a Question
Promote & Foster Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we make downtown a destination?
Define, Create, & Build Landmarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you promote the Downtown to new and different audiences? • How do we promote the Downtown as a Historic destination? • How to make the downtown more welcoming (24/7)?
Promote Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the crime rate for downtown in the daytime and nighttime? • Why isn't there more nightlife after 10pm? (<i>events listing? DFP calendar?</i>) • How to get more positive media coverage? • How do we make downtown appealing to get community involvement, a truly welcoming community?
Create Gathering Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we utilize downtown parks? (<i>Riverwalk area too?</i>) • Why aren't people using parks now? (<i>vandalism?</i>) • How can we create more outdoor dining space?
Implement Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What to do with all the vacant properties? • What type of retail and activities would bring you downtown?

In July we began to define the issues in more detail: asking them as specific Powerful Questions. This was our first attempt at it, so this will be refined before you see it again.

At the next meeting, we'll begin developing responses to these questions, which will become the basis for the recommendations we give you in December.

Downtown Exploratory Committee Timeline



Here is a timeline of our work, with the green star showing where we are now.



Photo Credit: BK on Flickr.com