



## Legislation Text

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### Fiscal Note

There is no fiscal impact associated with the acceptance of the Report. Implementing specific recommendations within the Report will require the inclusion of expenditures in future capital and operating budgets, subject to Common Council approval at that time.

### Title

Accepting the report entitled, "Ensuring a Vibrant Downtown Retail Destination: A Retail Assessment and Strategy for Downtown Madison", directing staff to begin implementing key recommendations of the report, and repealing resolution RES-15-00206 (Legislative File # 36697)

### Body

WHEREAS, in 2012 the Common Council adopted the *Downtown Plan* which focused on establishing recommendations to strengthen the downtown economy, ensure a quality urban environment and enhance livability with needed goods and services available downtown, among other major goals; and

WHEREAS, the *Downtown Plan* included a major retail objective to "Enhance the shopping and entertainment choices for Downtown workers, residents and visitors by building on Downtown's strengths as an experience destination offering distinctive shopping options while also expanding the availability for neighborhood-serving retail"; and

WHEREAS, on March 3, 2015, the Common Council adopted resolution RES-15-00206 (Legislative File # 36697) directing staff to develop a plan for the State Street, Capitol Square, King Street area, as well as to consider conducting a market study; and

WHEREAS, in the spring of 2016, the City hired Tangible Consulting Services to conduct a retail and market analysis of the Downtown, focusing on State Street, Capitol Square, King Street, and adjoining areas; and

WHEREAS, Tangible Consulting Services coordinated with City staff, the Downtown Coordinating Committee (DCC) and Madison's Central Business Improvement District Board (BID) throughout the process; and

WHEREAS, the final report entitled "*Ensuring a Vibrant Downtown Retail Destination: A Retail Assessment and Strategy for Downtown Madison*" (the report) identified policies and strategies to: 1) strengthen and support Downtown Madison's retail brand and image, and 2) address the core issues that face the retail district; and

WHEREAS, the report identified the following core issues facing the retail district including: 1) business mix, 2) parking, 3) loitering and panhandling, 4) erosion of storefront density and loss of small spaces, and 5) local businesses vs. national retailers; and

WHEREAS, the report laid out a menu of policies and strategies to address the core issues, including a variety of regulatory, marketing and branding, programming, and implementation steps; and

WHEREAS, the report was presented to members of the DCC and the BID on November 22, 2016, where the DCC voted unanimously to accept the report, and directed staff to begin the process of formal City acceptance, including identifying next steps to implement some of the report's recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the table below lists several higher priority actions from the report, and identifies City agencies

and other partners that could work with interested parties on implementation:

**Core Issues and Recommendations Identified in the Report** (City Agencies + Partners  
*[lead agency listed first]*)

**A. Recommended Strategies to Strengthen and Support Downtown Madison's Retail Brand and Image**

1. Expand area of State Street Business District (EDD, BID, Parks, PD)
2. Attract New Businesses, and support business community (EDD, BID, DMI, GSSBA, CNI)
3. Advance and coordinate marketing of downtown retail areas (BID, DMI, GSSBA)
4. Welcome national retail stores as part of a balanced mix, with efforts not to erode overall density (EDD, PD, BID, DMI, GSSBA)
5. Foster the development of retail that serves everyday household and personal needs (EDD, PD)
6. Organize a business and property owner visitation program (OBR, BID, DMI, GSSBA)
7. Pursue strategies that help business owners buy their buildings

**B. Recommended Strategies to Address the Core Issues that Face the Retail District**

1. *Business Mix, Retail Vibrancy, Footprint and Density Strategies*
  - a. Extend existing retail store presence into public areas (sidewalks, plazas, Capitol Square, etc.) (PD, EDD, Parks, TE)
  - b. Support and maintain existing façade and retail grant programs, utilize public financing tools to put local businesses on an equal playing field with national retailers in new development (EDD, PD)
  - c. Distribute food carts in public areas along State Street (EDD, Parks, PD)
  - d. Introduce micro-retail formats / retail laboratory to promote new retail businesses (TE, Parks, PD)
  - e. Explore regulatory standards for storefront density and/or retail and food/beverage mix (PD, EDD, Mayor's Office)
2. *Parking and Transportation Strategies*
  - a. Evaluate internet information and parking facilities from a user experience perspective (TE, IT, BID)
  - b. Develop a Downtown parking app (BID, DMI, TE)
  - c. Consider a parking discount program for retail shoppers (BID, GSSBA, TE)
  - d. Increase access to bicycle parking (TE, Parks, PD)
  - e. Coordinate enforcement of delivery services on State Street (MPD, BID, EDD)
  - f. Coordinate with Small Starts Bus Rapid Transit Study and Downtown bus service needs (PD, Metro, TE)
  - g. Improve wayfinding and information on parking availability (BID, DMI, TE)
3. *Loitering, Panhandling and Downtown Homeless Strategies*
  - a. Coordinate with the new Downtown day shelter for additional support services (CDD, Dane County, Social Service Providers)
  - b. Provide long and short term housing opportunities, including housing first, better shelter options (CDA, CDD, EDD, PD)
  - c. Provide a visible police presence (MPD)
  - d. Utilize and activate public spaces (BID, PD, EDD)
  - e. Connect with homeless individuals through personal communication (CDD, MPD, Community Partners)
4. *Physical Design / Public Rights-of-Way Strategies*
  - a. Widen the sidewalk pedestrian zone (PD, ED, TE)
  - b. Consider the use of historic preservation tools to preserve historic buildings, in coordination with City's Preservation Plan to preserve historic buildings and help property owners take advantage of potential tax credits (PD)
  - c. Refurbish, maintain and enliven bus stops, street furnishings (Parks, PD)

Agencies: PD= Planning Division; EDD= Economic Development Division; CDD= Office of Community Development; TE= Traffic Engineering Division; IT= Information Technology; Parks = Parks/Mall Maintenance; MPD= Madison Police Department

Partnerships: BID= Business Improvement District; DMI= Downtown Madison, Inc.; GSSBA= Greater State Street Business Association; CNI= Capitol Neighborhoods, Inc

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the report entitled *Ensuring a Vibrant Downtown Retail Destination: A Retail Assessment and Strategy for Downtown Madison*, is hereby accepted; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in 2017, City departments and divisions will work with partners identified in the table above to focus efforts on a few key recommendations that can have an immediate impact on core issues identified in the report; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in 2017, the Planning Division will work with the Economic Development Division to start a vending program at the top of State Street that expands upon the existing vending opportunities, introduces new micro-retail formats, and increases opportunities for existing businesses to expand their presence at the top of State Street; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in 2017, the Economic Development Division will continue to support the Façade and Retail Grant Programs, and will work with downtown businesses, retailers, property owners, and advocates such as the BID, Greater State Street Business Association (GSSBA) and Downtown Madison Inc. (DMI), to organize a business and property owner visitation program, as well as support efforts to attract new retailers to downtown Madison; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in 2017, the Economic Development Division will explore opportunities for retail education programs, business training and other outreach to help grow and support a new generation of downtown retailers through partnerships with downtown business advocates and organizations such as Urban League, Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Madison Collage, and others on; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in 2017, the Planning, Community and Economic Development Department will explore regulatory standards, programs and policies to maintain a balanced business mix of retail, service, restaurant, and bar/tavern uses in the downtown, including, but not limited to zoning, establishment size, density, hours of operation, and alcohol license limitations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in 2017, the Community Development Division will expand its street outreach teams to the downtown homeless population, and work with other social service providers and homeless advocates to understand and define acceptable behaviors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in 2017, the Madison Police Department will continue to have a visible police presence at the top of State Street, will work with the Community Development Division on their efforts to define and reach out and support efforts to improve behavioral issues, and will work with the BID, GSSBA, DMI and others to educate delivery drivers on hours and limits of deliveries on State Street; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in 2017, the Parking Utility will work with the BID, DMI, GSSBA or others wishing to use the City's available open source data to create mobile apps for parking availability and/or wayfinding, as well as educate and provide assistance to groups wanting to take advantage of existing pre-paid parking voucher/coupon programs to support retailers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in 2017 and 2018, the Parking Utility will continue its modernization, lighting upgrades and automatic payment systems updates in public parking structures to allow for more

flexibility, and better user experience; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in 2017, the Parks Division/Mall Concourse Maintenance staff will work with the Planning and Traffic Engineering Divisions to refurbish or replace aging street furniture, add additional bicycle parking where possible, and continue their efforts for extra cleaning and support of programming activities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in 2017, City agencies will continue to support the BID in its programming plans and activities in the Downtown; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in 2017, the Planning Division will begin work on the Historic Preservation Plan, which will address Downtown historic properties; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that additional recommendations made in the table above and the report should be considered in the future and may be included as part of other implementation efforts; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that resolution RES-15-00206 (Legislative File # 36697) is hereby repealed and replaced by this resolution.