



Downtown Brantford Improvement Task Force

Public Virtual Town Hall

October 19, 2021





Let's talk about
improving our
downtown

CITY OF
BRANTFORD

Agenda

1. Welcome/Panel introduction – Maria Visocchi
2. Meeting Format – Maria Visocchi
3. Why We're Here – Maria Visocchi
4. Mandate of the Task Force - Marlene Miranda
5. Community Services Working Group – Susan Evenden
6. Economic and Cultural Vitality Working Group – Kevin Finney
7. Safety and Security Working Group – Heidi de Vries
8. Feedback Forum – registered speakers who wish to address the Moderator to provide feedback
9. Closing comments and next steps – Maria Visocchi

Welcome

- This public forum is being held to provide the community an opportunity to share their feedback regarding how to improve the City's downtown with members of the Downtown Brantford Improvement Task Force (DBITF).
- All feedback collected will be shared with the Task Force to help inform development and implementation of an action plan to address current concerns and issues with respect to the city's downtown.
- We respect the community's right to voice any concerns they may have through civil public discourse and understand you may have questions. While the panel

Virtual Meeting Format

- We greatly appreciate the willingness of community members who registered to participate in this public session.
- To ensure the discussion is constructive and productive, we ask participants to use polite and respectful language, and to refrain from the use of any language that is disrespectful or may be considered offensive.
- To ensure all persons who wish to speak have an opportunity to do so one at a time during the open forum period, registrants will be asked to use the raise hand action to alert the Moderator that they wish to ask a question or provide comment.
- Questions raised will be taken back to the related expert organizations and an FAQ in response will be posted publicly.

Why we're here

- Issues of escalating poverty, homelessness, substance use, vandalism, social misbehaviours and crime are on the rise in the city's downtown, across the province, country and other parts of North America.
- These issues are not new nor unique to Brantford, though have been clearly and significantly exacerbated by economic hardships due to the ongoing pandemic.
- Businesses, institutions, residents and Brantford City Council have expressed the need for immediate action to mitigate these issues in the city's downtown.

Task Force Mandate



DBITF Task Force Mandate

- The Council appointed Task Force is a collaborative community forum in which various entities and organizations across all business sectors and community organizations are sharing information and resources to assist in developing an action plan to improve the health and vitality of the downtown.
- Three sub Working Groups of the Task Force are currently working independently to develop short and long-term steps to address challenges in the city's downtown.
- The 3 focus areas of the Working Groups and ultimate action plan are Community Services, Economic and Cultural Vitality and Safety and Security.

Community Services Working Group



Community Services Working Group

- Made up of a collaborative of community agencies and organizations and City staff who focus on the delivery of community services to vulnerable populations.
- This sub working group's objective is to work collectively to provide additional supports to vulnerable and marginalized populations including but not limited to, individuals experiencing homelessness, those with substance use disorders, and those suffering from mental health and addictions.
- Working group will hold specific consultations involving individuals with lived experience
- This information together with the information from other community consultations, review of available services, and needs analysis will be used to develop a prioritized action plan that will be presented to the Task Force

Economic and Cultural Vitality Working Group



Economic and Cultural Vitality Working Group

- Made up of a collaboration of businesses, the downtown neighbourhood association and academic institutions.
- This sub working group's objective is to enhance the vitality of the downtown by expanding business, tourism, arts, culture, music, entertainment and community events to attract more people downtown and ultimately improve the vibrancy of the city's core.
- The group is currently completing a comprehensive community inventory of Downtown initiatives and resources related to Economic Development, Tourism and Community Programming.
- On October 18th, the group also completed a virtual stakeholder engagement workshop where short, medium and long term action items were identified and prioritized that will be integrated into the forthcoming Action Plan.

Safety and Security Working Group



Safety and Security Working Group

- Working collaboratively with safety and security partners to implement actions to address current safety concerns of businesses, residents and visitors.
- The group's objective is to make recommendations to the Task Force on initiatives that enhance current safety and security measures to improve individuals' perceptions of and experiences in the downtown.
- The group is currently completing a comprehensive community inventory of downtown safety and security resources to enhance and strengthen coordination across agencies and organizations; looking into potential avenues to advocate for court process improvements/allocation of additional judicial resources in this region; and also reviewing best practices in other, similarly situated BIAs.

FEEDBACK FORUM



Closing Comments

- We recognize that people feel passionately about these issues and we respect the rights of citizens to voice their opinions.
- Complex issues require a coordinated collective response by all levels of government – no one agency or institution can resolve these challenges alone.
- Together with our community partners, the City is working very hard across the sectors of community services, economic development and safety and security with the common goal of improving the health and vitality of the City's downtown.
- Thank you to all those who participated tonight and watching at home. We are encouraged by the response to the Let's Talk About Improving our Downtown public engagement campaign.

THANK YOU

