

Hello,

I would like to thank you again for your interest and participation in the Downtown Safety and Livability Workshop. I also appreciate the insights I received from stakeholders as I prepared for it. GOBHI staff are completing the notes and I will distribute them in early June. I have completed a content analysis of the written comments and other feedback I received regarding the workshop.

The content analysis summary includes:

- There were 223 written comments either related to issues and or solutions
- The comments represent as many as 65 people who attended the workshop
- About half of the comments clustered around themes

The themes include (the descriptions of each theme are not necessarily direct quotes):

- Law enforcement (20):
 - Providing more consequences for criminal activity and inappropriate behavior
 - Available responses are limited due to limitations at the jail (space)
 - There should be laws which prohibit fires
 - Limited resources make it difficult to provide responses
- Bathrooms and or fresh water (16):
 - Improved access to bathrooms and water
 - Self-cleaning bathrooms (technology in use in other locations)
- Housing (16):
 - More affordable housing
 - Transitional housing
 - Supported housing
- Camping (15):
 - Identifying a specific camp site and consequences for people who camp outside of it
 - Monitored camping
- Drugs / addictions (14):
 - Improved access to treatment
 - Treatment alone will not work – people need consequences for behavior and those consequences should include treatment options
 - Treatment in and after jail

- Shelter services (10):
 - Various ideas on the types of shelters – 24/7, low barrier, etc.
 - One comment related to “no shelter”

- Mental health (7):
 - Access to services
 - Crisis responses
 - De-escalation responders
 - Interacting with unstable people is dangerous – need better and quicker responses for people responding to them
 - Mental health issues are not an excuse for threatening behavior. People need to be safe from chronic negative behaviors. They need help with mental health problems, but that need does not mean other people have to tolerate dangerous behaviors

- HOAC and or the new advisory committee (5):
 - Business representation on the new advisory group and as voting members
 - Consumer representation (from lower income population)
 - There were additional comments related to the new advisory group during the workshop. Most comments focused on having additional people from the local business community on the new advisory committee (HOPE / HOME) than are represented in the current draft design

- During the open discussion, workshop participants also talked about the need for a common goal for the community and the need to address this question,

“What is the vision for downtown Corvallis?”

- Remaining comments were related to a variety of thoughts / suggestions including:
 - There is a smaller group of people with chronic negative behaviors
 - Lack of leadership on this issue and no follow through with ideas
 - Create opportunities for improved communication among businesses, employees, homeless populations, and providers
 - Lack of input from employees – did not feel the discussion represented their views
 - Working with ODOT to help with clean up – other partnership with them on responding to homelessness. One comment cited a Portland example
 - Do not allow panhandling
 - Trauma informed care training and services
 - Other needed resources (lockers to keep things in, etc)

In addition, I have received some feedback questioning the inclusion of “housing” in the discussion of downtown safety and livability. Two important views about this:

- Some people in the community view affordable housing as an integral part of the livability conversation
- Longer-term solutions to affordable housing will not address immediate issues related to safety and livability

What happens with all this information?

- The full set of notes will be available in early June
- They will include some recommendations for consideration in moving forward
- City and County officials will review these materials and have an update at the June meeting on “status of homelessness” – date to be determined

In efforts to enhance transparency, I will make available the original notes and the coding used to conduct this summary of comments. Those will be available in mid-June. One exception, I will remove any identifying information or reference to a specific person or place of business.

Please let me know if you have questions or comments. I will be out of the office until June 3rd and have limited if any access to emails during my time away, but I will connect with you upon my return.

I very much enjoyed facilitating this workshop and working with many of you to prepare for it. The workshop was just a step toward addressing homelessness, safety and livability in downtown Corvallis. Our hope is that we can form working groups around two or three of the most promising strategies that would yield near-term results.

There is much work to be done both to address safety and livability and also to create a culture of more inclusive discussions and collective problem solving. Thank you for being part of both those important civic oriented goals.