

## Oak Park - Greater Downtown Master Plan Workshop 3: November 10, 2004 Public Comments Received

### Workshop Summary

November 10, 2004, more than 90 people attended the Oak Park Greater Downtown Master Plan Public Workshop #3, and offered their comments and ideas.

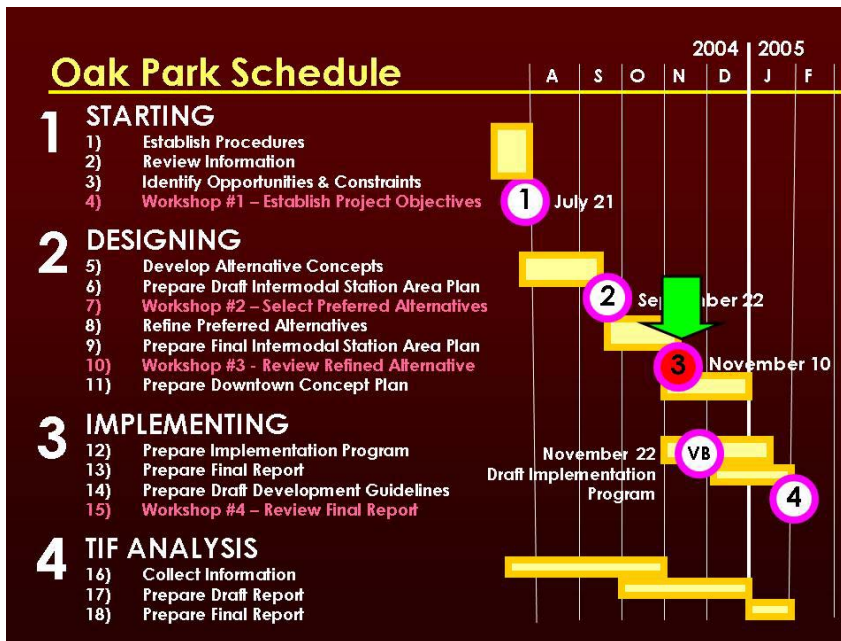
Members of the public, local business people and other stakeholders met at Oak Park-River Forest High School with the Village Board and community development staff to discuss the refined alternative plan for future redevelopment of the greater downtown area.

After a PowerPoint presentation providing background on the project and its progress to date, workshop participants gathered into small groups to discuss the refined alternative plan. Each group then summarized its comments in a report back to the large group.

Each person was asked to complete an individual Response Sheet (illustrated at right); 64 response sheets were received, including two sent in after the meeting. Issues raised most often are listed below (with *number of times mentioned italicized in parentheses*):

### Issues/Comments

- Preserve historic character:
  - Retain historic buildings or facades
  - Limit density/height
- Keep Marion Mall ped only
- Open Marion Mall or open it with conditions
- Like Civic/Founders' Square
- Need Public Restrooms



## Response Sheet

3

Workshop #3  
Village of Oak Park Greater Downtown Master Plan  
November 10, 2004

Land Use/Circulation:			
	Yes	No	Other
1. Public Realm Framework	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Retail/Parking Framework	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Housing Framework	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Street Improvements:			
	Yes	No	Other
4. Lake Street (Harlem to Forest)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Lake Street Civic /Cultural Area (Forest to Oak Park)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Station Street (Lake to North Boulevard)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Westgate (Station Street to Marion)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Marion Street (Lake to North Boulevard)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Oak Park (Lake to Pleasant)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. North & South Boulevards (typical)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Comments:**

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Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

If you need additional time to respond, please return your comments to:  
City of Portland  
828 SW 10th Ave, Suite 4  
Portland, Oregon 97204  
(503) 477-7879 fax (503) 477-7904  
kbr@oak-city.com

# Response Sheet

# TALLY 3

Workshop #3  
Village of Oak Park Greater Downtown Master Plan  
November 10, 2004  
64 Total Response Sheets

## Land Use/Circulation:

	Yes	No	Other
1. Public Realm Framework	49	2	7
2. Retail/Parking Framework	46	7	5
3. Housing Framework	46	11	3

## Street Improvements:

4. Lake Street (Harlem to Forest)	52	3	2
5. Lake Street Civic/Cultural Area (Forest to Oak Park)	48	10	4
6. Station Street (Lake to North Boulevard)	40	16	6
7. Westgate (Station Street to Marion)	33	17	5
8. Marion Street (Lake to North Boulevard)	34	20	7
9. Oak Park (Lake to Pleasant)	47	12	0
10. North & South Boulevards (typical)	51	6	2

## Comments:

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Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

If you need additional time to respond, please return your comments to:  
Crandall Arambula  
520 SW Yamhill, Roof Suite 4  
Portland, Oregon 97204  
(503) 417-7879 fax (503) 417-7904  
kbelz@ca-city.com

# Oak Park - Greater Downtown Master Plan

## Workshop 3: November 10, 2004

### Public Comments Received

#### Response Sheet Comments

#### Comments

##### 1. Public Realm Framework

- Physical barriers must separate car space from pedestrian space - curbs or bollards.
- When cars and pedestrians share space the pedestrians lose out - we have many pedestrians with young children and strollers.
- Not sure about increasing width of sidewalks.
- Love the idea of creating European walkers' paradise out of downtown.
- Yes to trees, wider sidewalks and Station Street and Founders' Square.
- Tree grates and snow removal.



Covered Sidewalks

- Covered sidewalks. (See illustration above)
- Please, no solid brick sidewalk street, full street expanse.
- I like developing the alleys for pedestrians.
- It was hard to understand the effect of Public Realm improvements on Lake between Harlem and Forest.

##### 2. Retail/Parking Framework

- Don't want all streets to have parking on them.
- Increase more interesting, varied

retail.

- Concerned about parking & traffic.
- You continue to say our garages are not user friendly. What is wrong with Holley Court? The rest I understand.
- Less dense street parking, alternate sides.
- No parking on streets or **very** limited alternate parking on one side with wider walk on the other side.
- All parking facilities should be at least with one level underground.
- Yes, if six stories only and **NO Whiteco**
- Why doesn't your retail (red) line go to Harlem? (Border's Books & Pier One are key stores.)
- Increasing parking on Lake would seem to increase congestion, no?

##### 3. Housing Framework

- I **really** like the liberal use of mixed use buildings
- Downtown density is important.
- I think residential density should be limited to 3-4 stories in most areas which are commercial in nature.
- Too much density will worsen traffic.
- I don't want density increased.
- Yes, if less than 5 stories.
- CONDOS only. Pretty buildings.
- Housing Framework - be wary of too much density or height. Like housing addition concept for downtown. Creates pedestrian consumers.
- Keep housing buildings less than 7 stories. Keep all buildings less than 7 stories.

##### 4. Lake Street

- What should be done about Harlem/Lake?
- Put in overpass for pedestrians &

bicycles over Harlem from Prairie Way.

- Correct encroachments along Lake St. promenade that hinder walking please.

##### 5. Lake Street Civic/Cultural Area

- Consider cultural center closer to Forest Avenue.
- Cultural Corridor - **connect** to Avenue and Downtown O.P. Need more **detail**.
- Create more continuity of trees & streetscape but not realistic to use private right-of-way.
- Yes, if it doesn't cost too much.
- I like Founders' Square on Lake & Forest.
- A cultural center is a great idea.
- I like the idea of the public square but am concerned that it will not be big enough to function as a cultural/meeting place.
- The square as indicated will be too small to be an effective "civic" square.
- If the open square area is to be effective it must have **clean** restrooms for public use.
- Civic Space must have public bathrooms.
- Civic square Plan should include financial incentive for current businesses (Hobbytown) to relocate within Oak Park.
- Square doesn't seem necessary.
- Love Founders' Square idea.
- Founders' Square is a good idea - but edges need to be defined.
- Put arts center bordering Austin Gardens.
- Show separation between Austin Gardens and new square.
- No civic square needed, Austin Gardens and Scoville Park are close enough, and again where is the money coming from, more taxes?

# Oak Park - Greater Downtown Master Plan

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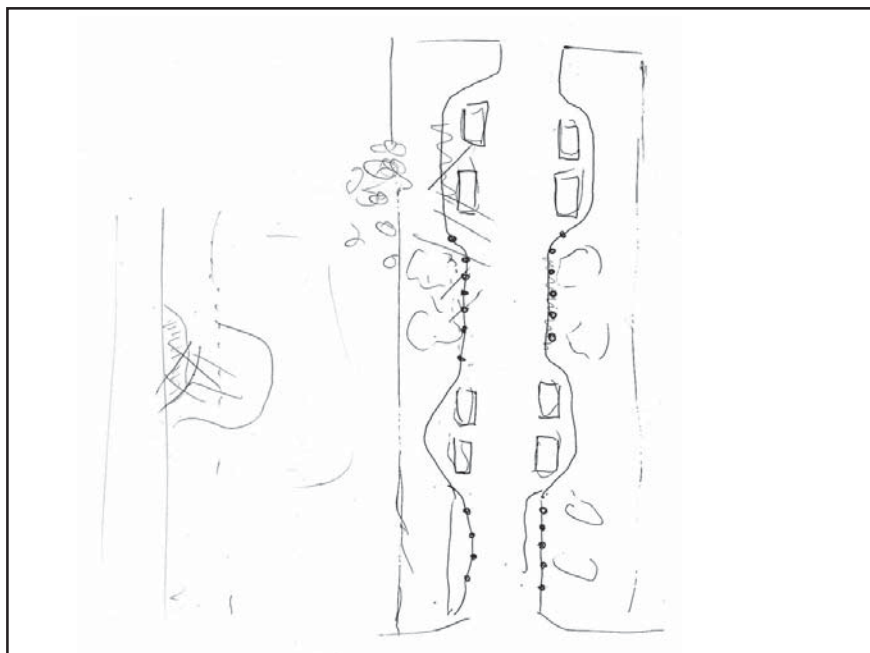
### Public Comments Received

#### Response Sheet Comments (cont'd)

- Do not want Austin Gardens affected. Where is the parking for civic square? Traffic must not be increased on Forest, north of current garage. Which one would we prioritize - order of. What about trash in area from civic square & neighborhood?
- I love the square concept on Lake Street.
- I very much like the Founders' Square idea. I think open areas that are inviting and usable will help the quality of life.
- Civic Center as in Arch. Rpt.

#### 6. Station Street

- I like that there is a focus on the transportation center by creating Station Street. This makes Oak Park much more visitor friendly for those traveling by public transportation.
- Concerned for amount of small retail units, particularly along Station St. which duplicates rental spaces on Marion. Is there demand for this?
- Don't approve of Station Street - would destroy buildings of historical significance.
- Move Station Street west to miss Westgate.
- Move Station Street to just East of Pier One.
- Like the concept of Vista pulling visitors toward retail area, however, wonder if exit from METRA could be shifted to look down Marion.
- I do not want to take down 7 buildings so that Station St. can exist.
- Have concerns with Station, Westgate and Marion streets traffic addition. Will this create more automobile usage in the total Oak Park River Forest area?
- Rethink Metra/CTA entrance vis a



Concept for Station Street Parking

- vis Station Street.
  - Would like more info about which buildings would have to be demolished.
  - The concern is with tearing down so many buildings.
  - Long term not require eminent domain.
  - Improve existing pedestrian passage from Lake Street (Pier One) to Metra Station - thru future parking garage if necessary.
  - Move station entrance to Marion Street. Not a new Station Street.
  - Alternative suggestion for Station Street.
- 7. Westgate**
- I am okay with curbside transition on Station Street and Marion Street as long as bollards are used.
  - Station Street needs serious traffic calming.
  - My concept for Station St. parking is on the reverse side of this page [See Illustration above - Concept for Station Street].
  - Station St. & Marion St. to be limited use auto. Can we do 1/2 of Station St.? Pedestrian/keep the view of Lake St. but not rip down **all** of Westgate-just (1) small portion. Have Downtown Oak Park give Hobby Town a financial incentive to relocate locally (like they did Tasty Dog!) [See Illustration next page - Westgate Diagram]
  - Bollards a **must!**
  - Like curbside "European" idea.
  - Flat streets (no curb) great.
  - Don't see that widening Westgate would be very beneficial and that doing away with pedestrian mall on Marion is of value.
  - Westgate: keep unique character of Oak Park (European feel); try not to knock down buildings - don't make O.P. look like Highland Park.
  - Maintain charm - is there any way to maintain Tudor facade on Westgate with your existing proposal? (Maybe even as the facade for the garage?)
  - Westgate: save - reposition. Link

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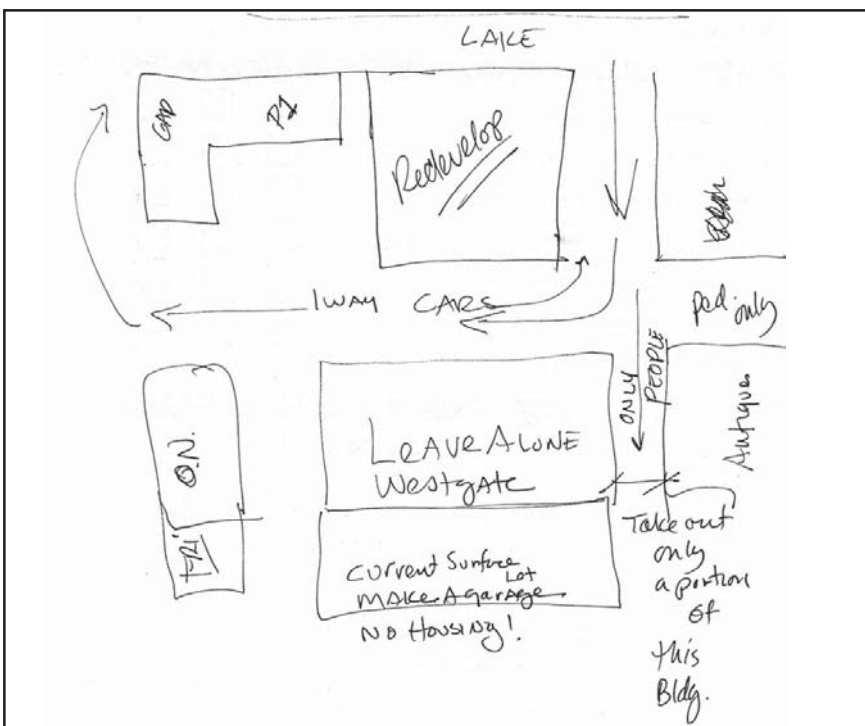
### Public Comments Received

#### Response Sheet Comments (cont'd)

- at Maple for transit.
- Westgate should be preserved, make Westgate two-way.
- Service traffic only.
- Westgate demo is **ok!** The buildings fabric no longer has any hold or charm on the area.
- Service access only.
- To remain mall.
- Retain the Tudor facades on Westgate, regardless of new buildings.
- Make Westgate two-way traffic from Harlem Ave. all the way to Marion St.

#### 8. Marion Street

- I was way against opening up Marion Street Mall. After presentation, I'm okay with it.
- I don't favor opening up Marion St. to traffic.
- I really hate to see the pedestrian "mall" destroyed.
- Don't open Marion.
- With regard to Marion St. closing. Could it be closed at certain times and remain pedestrian in evenings & weekends.
- No opening Marion Mall.
- Open Marion to traffic on high congestion times (maybe close on weekends.)
- Open Marion Street Mall.
- I think opening Marion Street should be one way south (not two way).
- One way north.
- Service access ok.
- To remain mall.
- No Removal of Marion Mall (small, quaint enclave to walk and sit) (money, taxes) **parking** & stores or restaurant (or offices) at corner SW of Harlem & South Blvd. (near L & train stations) should be code red.
- It's ok as is, leave as is.
- Would like to see Marion pedestrian mall retained.
- Car traffic on Station Street would



Westgate Diagram

help N-S traffic - so why open Marion St.? The Marion foot mall is one of our special treasures - it has been used for many special events, but is grossly underutilized. Going back, some 25 years before the street was removed and would tell you that that portion of Marion was a very UGLY street. Car traffic in itself won't necessarily increase retail sales on Marion. The major property investors on Marion own commercial property here but do not live in Oak Park or River Forest! The Founders' Square is a nice idea, a good idea, but not a replacement or a trade-off for the Marion St. foot mall. Don't tell me you will enhance "Quality of Life" by re-streetering Marion Street. If you re-streeter Marion and it doesn't work - we're stuck with it. Remember we paid dearly once to mall Lake St. and then paid again to re-streeter it. The re-streetering worked for Lake St. but that doesn't make it work for

Marion. I was in business at 124 N. Marion for 23 years and have lived in the immediate area for over 60 years. I know the area as well as anyone.

- I do not want cars on Marion.
- I don't favor opening up Marion St. to traffic.
- Please save Marion St.
- Like the plaza at Marion and North Boulevard.
- More restaurants. Make into vibrant pedestrian plaza outdoor restaurant seating, events. Like Founder's Square.

#### 9. Oak Park

- As to Oak Park Ave...don't mess with a good thing.

#### 10. North & South Boulevards

- I love the plans for South Boulevard.
- Need housing instead of office on South Blvd. at Harlem.
- Evergreen trees along tracks so

# Oak Park - Greater Downtown Master Plan

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### Public Comments Received

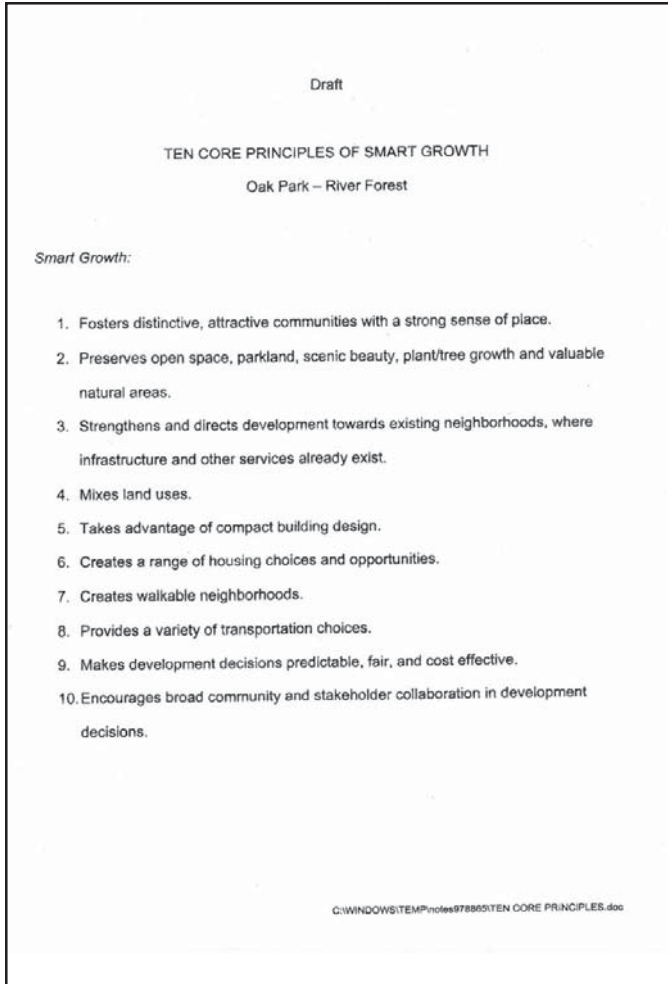
#### Response Sheet Comments (cont'd)

- they are masked all year.
  - #1 snow removal.
  - All el & train stations should have **coin operated & timed** toilet facilities.
  - Why? There are sidewalks and flowers and trees.
- Other**
- Good Job!
  - The plans as proposed seem very sound.
  - I like that there is a focus on transportation.
  - Environmental Sustainability: My overall question concerns how to improve the economy of Oak Park and also protect and improve the natural environmental and improve quality of life.
  - Excellent work.
  - Excellent Plan!
  - Revitalization should not have to mean expansion, 7 stories is a highrise by Oak Park terms.
  - Please, of all the things that you do, please make sure that there is some place for Hobbytown USA to go. Every week, it is the fun getaway for people of all ages to enjoy the freedom of the end of school for the week. Hobbytown sells all sorts of gaming material, and offers a gaming night every week. Hobbytown is very important to many people of all ages. Please, PLEASE, create some way for Hobbytown to continue. In case you do tear down Hobbytown have Downtown Oak Park give a financial incentive to relocate locally, like Tasty Dog.
  - I do not understand this response sheet. What are we supposed to respond to? I guessed.
  - Seven stories is too high - how about 5? - don't want the look of a large city.
  - Like the overall plan a lot/
  - concerned about tearing down buildings
  - Keep height below 7 stories.
  - Very little is yes or no; there are parts of both in each plan. I don't like tearing down so many old buildings and I fear the new ones will be cookie-cutter at best as all our recent buildings are. We truly **are unique**, but we won't be when all these generic buildings go up -- and up to 7 stories.
  - Your presentation does not address preserving historic character of limiting height & density or alleviating traffic congestion (especially with all of new proposed housing). These are 3 of the 4 objectives of Oak Park Community as you listed. Need to address zoning to preserve historic small town feel.
  - In tonight's presentation you identified "village objectives" and also "your top issues." They don't match up. Out of the top 4 issues for the community - traffic, historic/small town feel, building height/density, retail - **only retail is addressed**. Nothing in this plan helps traffic (E-W problem), historic/small town feel, or building height/density. If anything, your plan makes it worse (2000 new cars!).
  - Keep all buildings less than 5 stories high. I don't like tearing down old buildings.
  - Yes and No very difficult.
  - CA Consultants were hired out of controversy over old Maple Furrier Building & Whiteco. It is ironic that the plan considers neither.
  - If the facades of the Tudor-style buildings targeted for demolition were utilized in another part of the Village, it would probably be an easier sell.
  - I could live without all of what you're proposing, clever though much of it is.
  - Housing & parking frameworks & ideas regarding new streets - depend on what need to be torn down - I want to do anything other than tearing down.
  - No serious attention to traffic congestion.
  - By withholding zoning changes, you fail to give full picture of proposed changes.
  - Failing to evaluate Whiteco is inconsistent with claim that plan does not contemplate building higher than 7 stories.
  - South Blvd. and Clinton site outside of TIF.
  - Higher density beyond capacity.
  - Curbless streets shoe-horned into narrow spaces. Spokane example looked wide; we have SUVs in town.
  - Please oh please add bike lanes everywhere and make sure to talk about increased bike parking.
  - Yes on everything, but some more important than others.

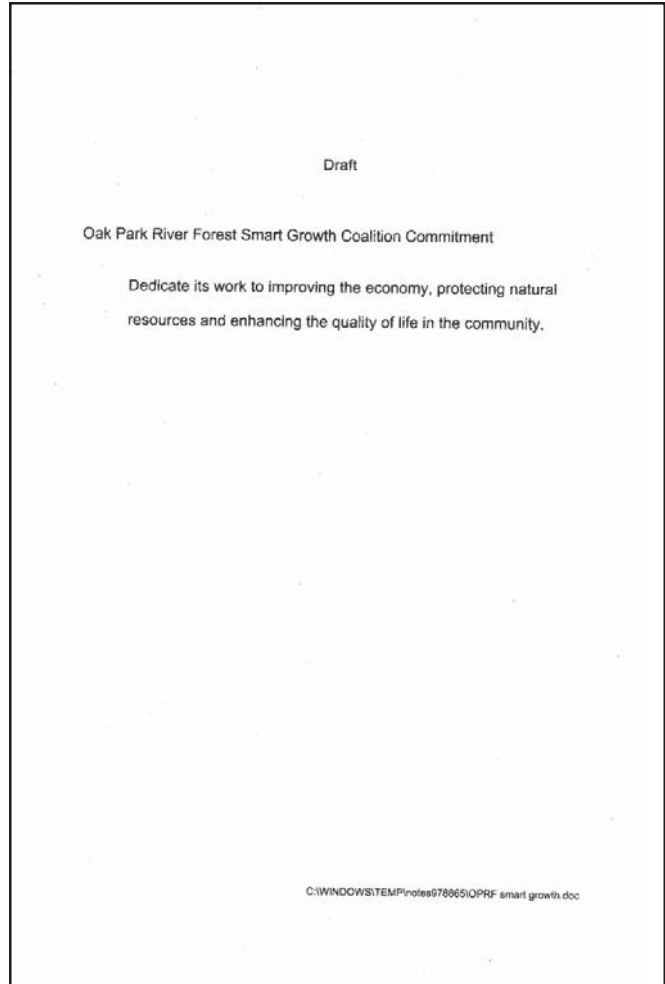
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## Other Comments



Typed Comments - Page 1



Typed Comments - Page 2

### Comments:

Presentations to date have been extremely weak in terms of data submitted in support of recommendations (no traffic analysis, no market data to support amount of retail proposed, no analysis in support of demolishing 9 historic structures) and quality of visuals submitted (flat maps don't provide sense of what this is really going to look like). While there are some good ideas, it's far too early to voting up or down on what appears to be - reading between the lines - final recommendations.

Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Typed Comments Sent via E-mail