

SUMMARY

Fresh Look Milwaukie: Downtown Road Map Kickoff Event

**April 1st, 2013
5:30 – 7:30pm
10558 SE Main St**

Following is a summary of a kickoff event, featuring both an open house and a workshop group discussion format, held on April 1, 2013, for the *Fresh Look Milwaukie: Downtown Road Map* project. This event was open to the general public, and the purpose was to collect opinions of what people generally felt about the downtown in the areas of improvement, preservation, and value. This collection of opinions from the Kickoff event were intended to inform the ALIGN planning team about what topics to explore throughout the community engagement process. Further, the Kickoff event fostered relationship building between the project team and the Milwaukie community.

Participants

ALIGN Team Present

Ryan Lemay, Project Manager
Carine Arendes, Content Development Lead
Jeffrey Butts, Public Engagement Co-Lead
Erica Smith, Public Engagement Co-Lead
Iren Taran, Production Lead

City of Milwaukie Staff Present

Steve Butler, Interim Community Development Director/Planning Director
Ryan Marquardt, Senior Planner
Li Alligood, Associate Planner
Kari Svanstrom, Associate Planner

Milwaukie Community Participants

Ben Cowan – Milwaukie Downtown Development Association
Bill Corti - Property owner
Bill Monahan – Milwaukie City Manager
Brenna McGill – Community resident
Carmen Meyer - Cha Cha Cha
Charles Maes – Canby Asparagus Farm

Chip Addabbo – Community resident
Cindy Miguel – Island Station NDA
David Aschenbrenner – Hector Campbell NDA & Celebrate Milwaukie
Dion Shepard – Historic Milwaukie NDA
Ed Parecki – Downtown property owner
Eric Perkins – Community resident
Greg “Frank” Hemer – Milwaukie Lumber & Design and Landmarks Committee
Gabe Storm - Planning Commission
Genevieve Joplin – Community resident
Jean Baker – Historic Milwaukie NDA
Jim Karlock – Community resident
Joby Twigg – Community resident
Kathi Schroeder - Library Expansion Task Force
Liam McGill – Community resident
Lisa Batey – Planning Commission
Mark Gamba –City Council
Melanie & Dave Bennett - Community residents
Monty Schroeder – Citizen Utility Advisory Board
Peg Tarbox – Community resident
Ray Peck – Wind Horse Coffee
Rick Wheeler – Roseland Piano Co
Roger Thompson – Riverfront Board
Shalena Havens – Havens Acupuncture
Tad Savinar – Urban Design Consultant
Teri & Paul Graham – Downtown property owners
Val Hubbard - Community resident
Wilda Parks - Planning Commission

Connection to the Project

The kickoff event marked the beginning of a two-month long community engagement process. The project team (the City of Milwaukie and ALIGN Planning) were seeking to get input from as broad and diverse a range of Milwaukie community members as possible. The kickoff event, as well as other informal outreach efforts, will inform a second public event on May 9, 2013.

Purpose and Desired Outcome

The kickoff event had five main objectives:

1. Provide a fun and meaningful opportunity to introduce the project and project team to the community
2. Build a network of engaged stakeholders with the purpose of generating interest in future public engagement activities related to the project.
3. Identify major areas of interest and concern regarding the future of Downtown Milwaukie

4. Solicit input from attendees on how to most effectively contact and engage a broad and diverse range of community member, especially underrepresented groups (i.e. in addition to the “usual suspects”)
5. Facilitate stakeholder prioritization of opportunities for enhancing Downtown Milwaukie.

The desired takeaways from the kickoff event included:

1. Relationship building
2. Developing a list of groups and people to reach out to
3. Visual representation of geographic areas of interest
4. Issue identification and prioritization.

Event Summary

Open House Activities (5:30pm to 6pm)

There were two participatory activities in the beginning of the kickoff event, facilitated by ALIGN planning team members. The first activity involved participants writing down their opinion on stickers which have written on them ‘I Love Milwaukie because...’ The comments received from the stickers are summarized below:

I love downtown Milwaukie because:

- It retains its own identity and has a great transit hub. And Milwaukie Kitchen & Wine!
- I can walk to it. The library is fantastic. First Friday. Farmers Market. A few restaurants.
- It is a wonderful place to be at. Safe. Quiet. And friendly community.
- Small town feel, big city fun!
- Historical Background. Last developmental area w/ view of River. NDA, Council, Business, & citizen devotion to creating a great & prosperous place.
- Please consider limiting buildings to 3 stories. To keep a scale that is both livable & pleasing to the eye.
- It has a ton of potential. I like the scale/ size, transit options (please work to ensure the max line becomes reality) and old-school feel.
- I grew up here!
- Not too close. Not too far.

The second activity was a mapping exercise, where participants used a sticky dot to mark places on the map they liked or believed were places of potential. Post-it notes were also available to make comments. The results from the map of ‘Places we LIKE’ are summarized below.

'Places we LIKE' – Total of 17 post-its, 20 comments, 23 dots

Some comments include numbers, which reference a sticky dot place on the map, available at: <http://www.ci.milwaukie.or.us/planning/kickoff-event-overview>, and listed below. Numbers not listed were not used.

+ Indicates that another person presented the same response.

1. North Main Village

- It's a great place to live

2. 2025 SE Jefferson St – Havens Acupuncture

- I have worked in Milwaukie for +3yrs, I enjoy the walkability, and that parking is available

3. Painted Lady Coffee House

4. City Parking Lot/Milwaukie Farmers Market

5. McLoughlin Building / Spring Creek Coffee & Deli

6.¹ Wind Horse Coffee

6. Canby Asparagus Farm+

- We love Canby Asparagus Farm - yum!

6, 7, 40, 41. Milwaukie Kitchen & Wine+++

- Great Food! Nice size for small/ or medium size groups - Great Environment

6, 8, 14. Riverfront Park++

- Wherever the playground goes, make it AWESOME! Needs to be a destination for others to bring them downtown
- Biggest destination place in town. Best reason for people using MAX station

10. Milwaukie Lumber

- Milwaukie Lumber significant business that draws customers outside of a 5 mile zone. Well known throughout the Metro/Clackamas region

12, 38. City Hall+

- Old architecture

21, 44, 51. Ledding Library++

- Library is best family destination
- Big tree

¹ Several “6” designations - combination of two “6” stickers placed on the poster (“6” and “9” placed upside down) and one post-it comment referencing “Wind Horse – 6”.

25. Cha Cha Cha!+

- Delicious
- We love Cha-Cha-Cha. Wish they had more space on weekends!

37. Waldorf School

- Old architecture

39. Masonic Lodge

- Old architecture

52. Milwaukie High School

60. McLoughlin Building (10600 SE McLoughlin Blvd)

- How improved the facade of the building, the commitment to the community the owner is

64. Pietro's Pizza+

- Pietro's = yummy + community oriented
- We love Pietro's - very family friendly + affordable

Places with Potential – Total of 28 post-its, 28 comments, 29 dots

Some comments include numbers, which reference a sticky dot place on the map, available at: <http://www.ci.milwaukie.or.us/planning/kickoff-event-overview>, and listed below. Bullets were used for comments without a corresponding number.

+ Indicates that another participant presented the same response.

1. "Chopsticks" building (10800 SE Main St)

- The space is the "center" of downtown retail & underutilized for this purpose

2. Warehouse building on Main St between Washington and Adams (11126 SE Main St)

- The building needs repair; it is what many see driving into Milwaukie. Good to have a cleaner image

3. Northeast corner of 21st & Adams

4. Cash Spot site

5. Parking lot behind Pietro's/Clackamas Community Credit Union and east of Kellogg Bowl (10306 SE Main St)

6, 25, 29. Future light rail station site++

- Such a great opportunity for high ped. Traffic - community bulletin board, coffee shop history, art
- "Grassy Knolls" are cool, but a business with elevator & bathroom is needed

7. City Hall
8. 21st Ave between Jackson and Monroe
9. Parking lot behind Odd Fellows building (10282 SE Main St)
10. Think Soon Deli
11. Canby Asparagus
12. Dogwood Park
- 13, 44, 45, 52. Riverfront Park+++
 - Marina. Public Docks. Outdoor Venue. Make it a destination.
 - Make it an actual park
 - Need to deal with smell to enhance whole waterfront potential. + ped. lighting, etc.
13. Broken Arrow Archery/Post Office site
 - Development
28. Former Graham's Stationary Building (10449 SE Main St)
 - Potential for smaller offices & new services in DT Milwaukie
39. Kellogg Treatment Plan
 - No one will come if it smells like it does
41. North side of Main St between Jackson St and Monroe St (Key Bank and Dark Horse offices)
 - Dead zone with no stores to go into. How about small grocery? (not a convenient store)
42. Building between Chase Bank and Milwaukie Lumber (10962 SE 21st Ave)
48. Kellogg Dam
 - Remove the dam
60. Dark Horse offices at Main and Monroe
 - Need more open office & retail places in lieu of curtained off building fronts
64. City Hall Parking Lot / "Texaco Site"+
 - 4 to 5 story buildings for "living space." Top floor penthouse type spaces
 - I agree - 4 to 5 story - with penthouse restaurant with view over the river
66. Future South downtown with live work space, plaza, restaurants + + + +
67. Main Street
 - Vibrant downtown with 3 story buildings - retail on the ground + office. Residential on 2nd + 3rd floors
69. Kronberg Park
 - Potential gorgeous Park + Salmon filled creek

88. Bernard's Garage (2036 SE Washington St)

- A prime location on the edge of the south downtown redevelopment well suited to upscale lodging or restaurant space to service the influx of visitors via the new Milwaukie light rail. As the current business may lose viability.
- Is downtown Milwaukie a "food desert"? How about Green Zebra Grocery?
- Brewpub! Or other kid-friendly restaurants (w/ play space!)
- Vegetable + Flower stalls at one of the empty buildings
- Some kind of grocery store - make downtown useful! :-)
- A Bakery + a small healthy grocery store!
- Paper/ print store? Notary, sign maker, etc. A local business that other local businesses use!
- I's love to see a creative community space like a dance/ yoga studio? Art classes or music lessons? Anywhere!!

Group Discussions - 6 to 7pm

Steve Butler began gathering the participants and introduced the ALIGN planning team. Ryan Lemay gave an introduction to ALIGN's involvement with the City of Milwaukie and overview of the Kickoff event. Erica Smith followed up by providing directions for the small group discussions.

ALIGN team members, City staff and event participants were divided into three small groups. The ALIGN team members facilitated the discussions while City staff took notes on the flipchart. Each participant was given about 5 minutes each to discuss the following items:

- One thing about the downtown that they like
- One thing that could be improved
- Challenges to making that improvement happen
- One wacky idea that nobody else would think of, to benefit Downtown Milwaukie.

The results of this discussion are summarized below:

+ Indicates that another person presented the same response.

Likes

- Curb ramps
- Access to transit+
- Farmer's Market+
- Close to Portland,
- Small town feel ++++
- All of it

- Progress towards future
- Able to make a difference
- People + potential +++
- Sense of community +
- Walkable
- Natural beauty/ water
- Potential ++ (Boutique, funky, M's living room)
- Scale & size
- Riverfront +
- Food dining choices
- New opportunity+++
- Walkable +
- Library
- Spring at Waldorf & pond
- Traditional + New influx combining
 - Leads to new stuff going un
- Farmer's Market, chances to mingle
- First Friday +
- Sustain activities all week long
- Small town feel
- Trees
- Arts focus
- Historic background
- River view development
- Energy with Council/ Boards/ groups
- Older buildings
- New Business Restaurant
- Restaurants as good event place for medium/ small groups
- Hometown - wants it to be a draw
- Milwaukie Bay

Challenges to Downtown Development

- Regulations - information regarding regulations
- [Lack of] Financial incentives
- Public improvements - who pays?
- Perception regarding lack of parking
- Fair distribution of resources
- Include opinions outside downtown
- Major thoroughfares create barriers to a connected city to attach to
- Lack of destination -> money, lack of incentives, lack of motivation/ momentum

- Recruitment & responsibility
 - Specific anchors + amenities
 - A plan for reinvestment
- Competing interests between NDA, businesses
 - Segmented, need UNIFIED
- Need for neighborhood alliance +
- Need for core value for businesses
 - No shared business strategy
- More variety in ownership
- Remove dam - finish Kronberg park
- Kellogg Treatment Plant - odor
- Parks/ playground plan
- Parking
- Business/ government cooperation
- Allow, not restrict, development not happening because of large landholders
- Comp plan revision

One thing to improve

- (Potential models/references included Camas, Corvallis, Mississippi Ave)
- Riverfront Park development ++
- "Cute up" downtown buildings +
- Façade/ streetscape improvements
- Lodging options
- Destinations/ draws to DT ++
- Perception? (Commercial RE) ++
 - McLoughlin/ character
- "Sleeping gem"
- Regulations regarding changes
- Need momentum
- "Gateway" of McLoughlin
- Increase number of people living downtown
 - Time is not yet right
- Wrong businesses - no "shops" to bring people here
 - Too many offices & other uses that don't draw people
- Water front boat ramp
- "Dirty" - some buildings, like library, look unkempt
- Access: transportation + business location
- Balance: mix of large & small
- Easier to do business here
 - resource identification
 - balance zoning

- Business alliance that sticks +
 - (city supported) (economic development) & plan
- Lack of anchor business (not convenience) +
 - (grocery) -> repeat visits
- River connection crossing McLoughlin +
- Family friendly
- More community events
- Quality standards for all uses (design)
- Redevelop parking lots

Wacky ideas!

- Tamale Festival ++
- Special events
- Dragon Boat racing
- Log rolling contest
- TriMet passes for North Industrial businesses/employees
- Kronberg [Park] as permaculture park
- Maintenance of Scott Park
- Outdoor fitness/ rock climb, etc.
- "Outdoor games"
- Any sport involving a hill
- Destination park to draw people in
- Dogwoods everywhere/ seasonal celebration
- Riverfront - have a signature events/ use, like dragonboats or pt boat; LCI-15 (landing craft from WWII)
- Blues/ live music - concerts/ festival
- Have uses that draw in boaters/ riverfront users
 - Uses that make people "go to Milwaukie"
- Dark Horse museum
- Open air permanent food market
- High end (wine bar, butcher)
- Milwaukie coming together
- Bigger Milwaukie bikes
- Milwaukie as a bike destination
- Music venues
- Live busking
- Artistic venue - home for local theatre productions
- Comedy club
- Permanent entertainment center
- History museum Downtown

After each person provided their input, the information was then consolidated into five or six themes per group. The initial themes are summarized below:

<u>Initial Themes</u>	
1. Connecting to Riverfront	9. Branding of the Downtown
2. Improve perception of Downtown - beyond McLoughlin a. Commercial Real Estate – Market Position b. Visual	10. Three story buildings, as opposed to six story buildings
3. Drawing people in (lodging, events, etc.)	11. North Clackamas Parks District runs parks
4. Ease of access to information/ assistance with design (user friendliness)	12. Support destination with priority improvements to make city presentable: trash cleanup, building maintenance, sidewalk repair
5. Urban design	13. Business Development /Economic Resource
6. Destination location - shops, events, parks, fitness events	14. Vision/Direction
7. Milwaukie Signature events	15. Balance
8. Property maintenance - promote civic pride/ presentability with list of properties to capture most important work	16. Excitement
17. Accessibility	

Milwaukie Bux Exercise – 7pm to 7:30pm

After the group discussions concluded, ALIGN team members began preparations for the Milwaukie Bux exercise. This exercise provided participants fake money, intended to serve as a mechanism to quantify what each participant finds as a priority as a future project focus.

This exercise was designed to prioritize participant’s opinion, by providing each participant with a total of \$200, one \$100 bill and five \$20 bills. The \$100 bill represented what people felt were the highest priorities. The \$20 bills allowed for flexibility in terms of where participants placed their vote. About 24 people participated in this exercise.

To begin the exercise, each group selected a group member to present the initial themes, where ALIGN team members consolidated any over-arching themes as labels onto clear jars. A total of nine themes were identified, as shown in the table below:

<u>Final Milwaukie Bux Themes</u>	
Resources for Economic Development	Improve Urban Design Elements
Keep Buildings to 3 story height level	Improve Perceptions of Milwaukie
Improve Accessibility, Parking, Walkability and Visibility	Business Development and recruitment - Unified Vision and Direction
Property Maintenance and Services	Milwaukie Signature Events
Connecting Downtown to the Riverfront	

Each label on the jars represented a theme, which the participants would then distribute their \$200 Bux, according to what they value the most. The results are summarized below, based on their percentage of Bux:

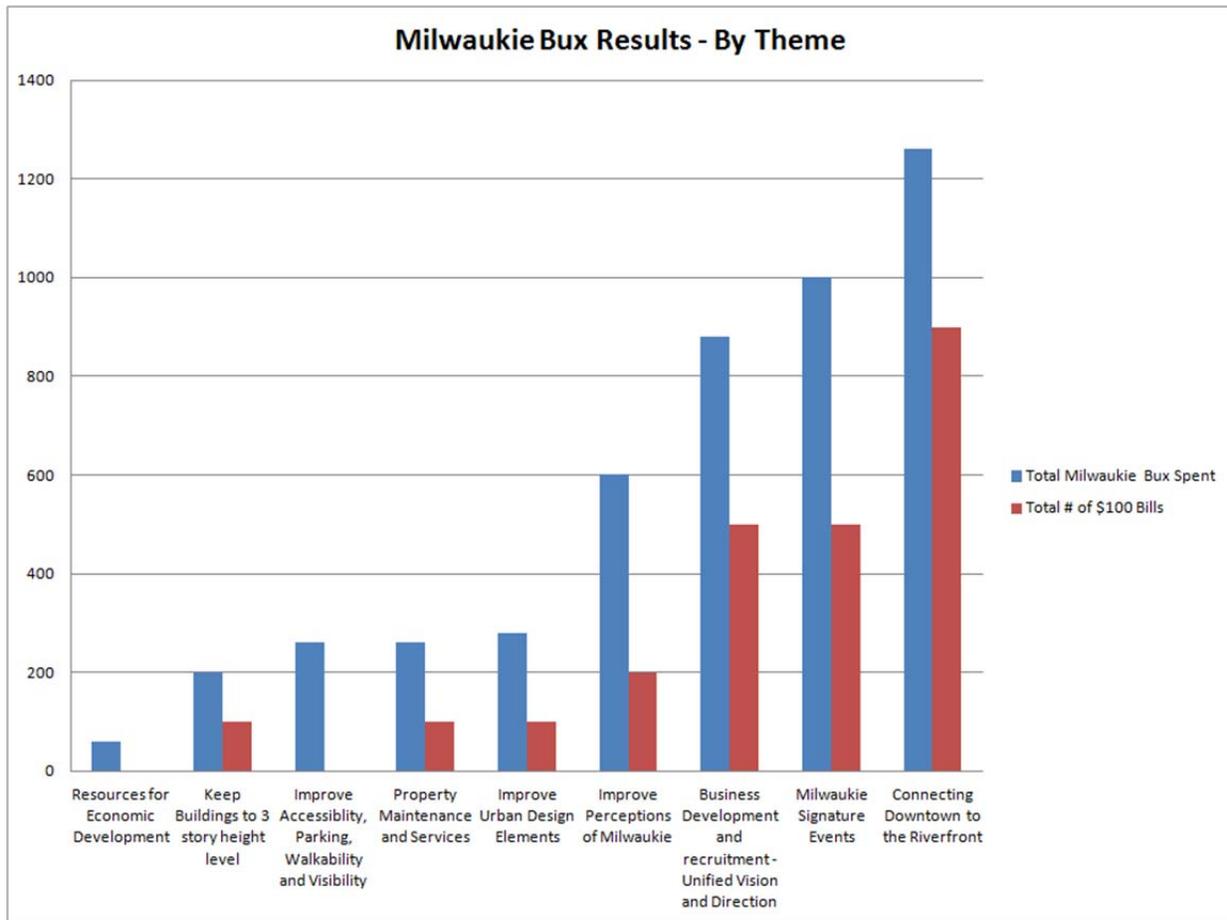
Kickoff Event Milwaukie Bux Results						
Theme	# of 100 Bills	% of \$100	# of 20 Bills	% of \$20	Total \$	% of Total \$
1. Connecting Downtown to the Riverfront	9	38%	18	15%	1260	26%
2. Milwaukie Signature Events	5	21%	25	21%	1000	21%
3. Business Development and recruitment - Unified Vision and Direction	5	21%	19	16%	880	18%
4. Improve Perceptions of Milwaukie	2	8%	20	17%	600	13%
5. Improve Urban Design Elements	1	4%	9	8%	280	6%
6. Property Maintenance and Services	1	4%	8	7%	260	5%
7. Improve Accessibility, Parking, Walkability and Visibility	0	0%	13	11%	260	5%
8. Keep Buildings to 3 story height level	1	4%	5	4%	200	4%
9. Resources for Economic Development	0	0%	3	3%	60	1%
Total	24		120		4800	
<i>Estimated # of Participants</i>	24					

The results have also been ranked by their percentage of bux:

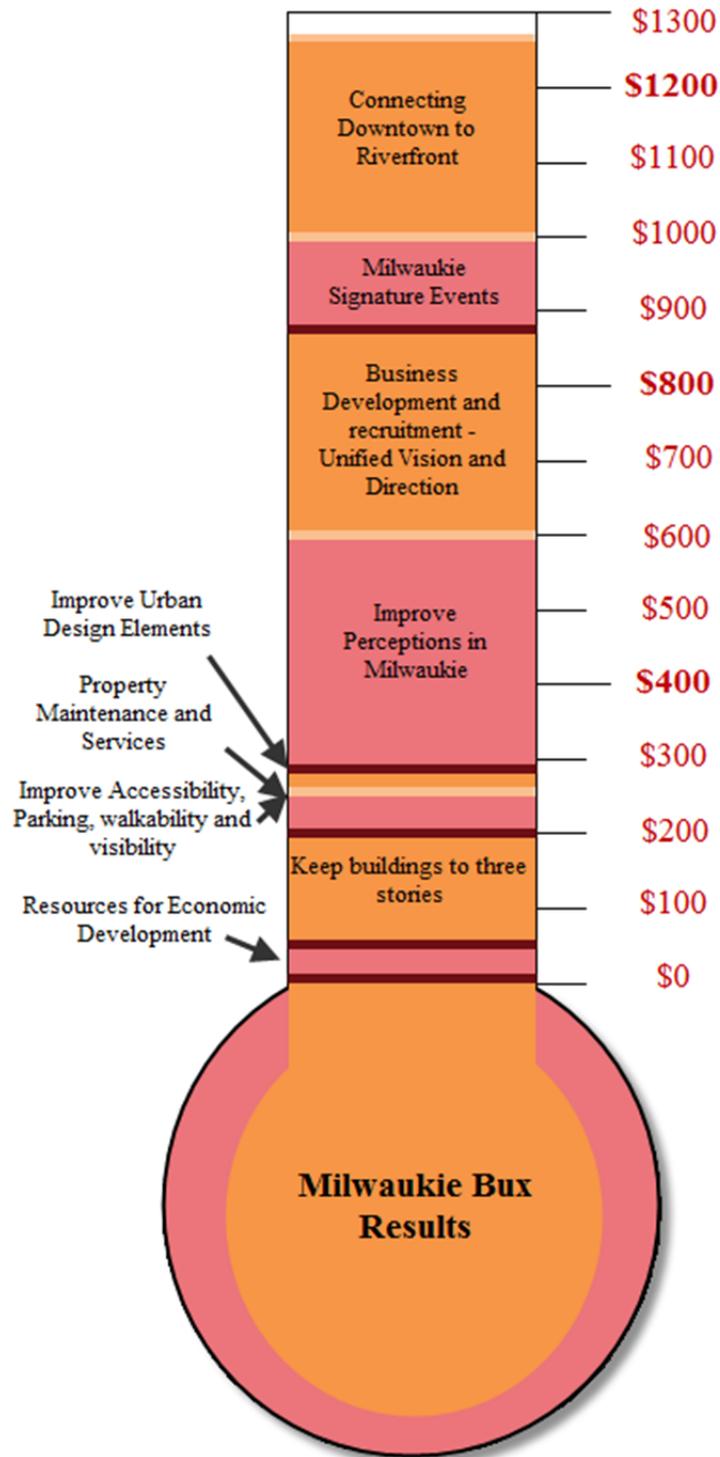
- Overall, the following themes received the most money
 - *Connecting Downtown to the Riverfront - 26% (\$1260)*
 - *Milwaukie Signature events - 21% (\$1000)*
 - *Unified Vision and Direction for Business Development and Recruitment - 18% (\$880)*
- The following three themes were almost equally divided among participants
 - *Improve Accessibility, Parking, Walkability and Visibility - 5% (\$260)*
 - *Improve Property Maintenance and Services - 5% (\$260)*
 - *Improve Urban Design Elements - 6% (\$280)*

The following themes received the most number of \$100 bills, suggesting where the highest priorities of participants lay in relation to the themes. The complete results are illustrated in the graph below.

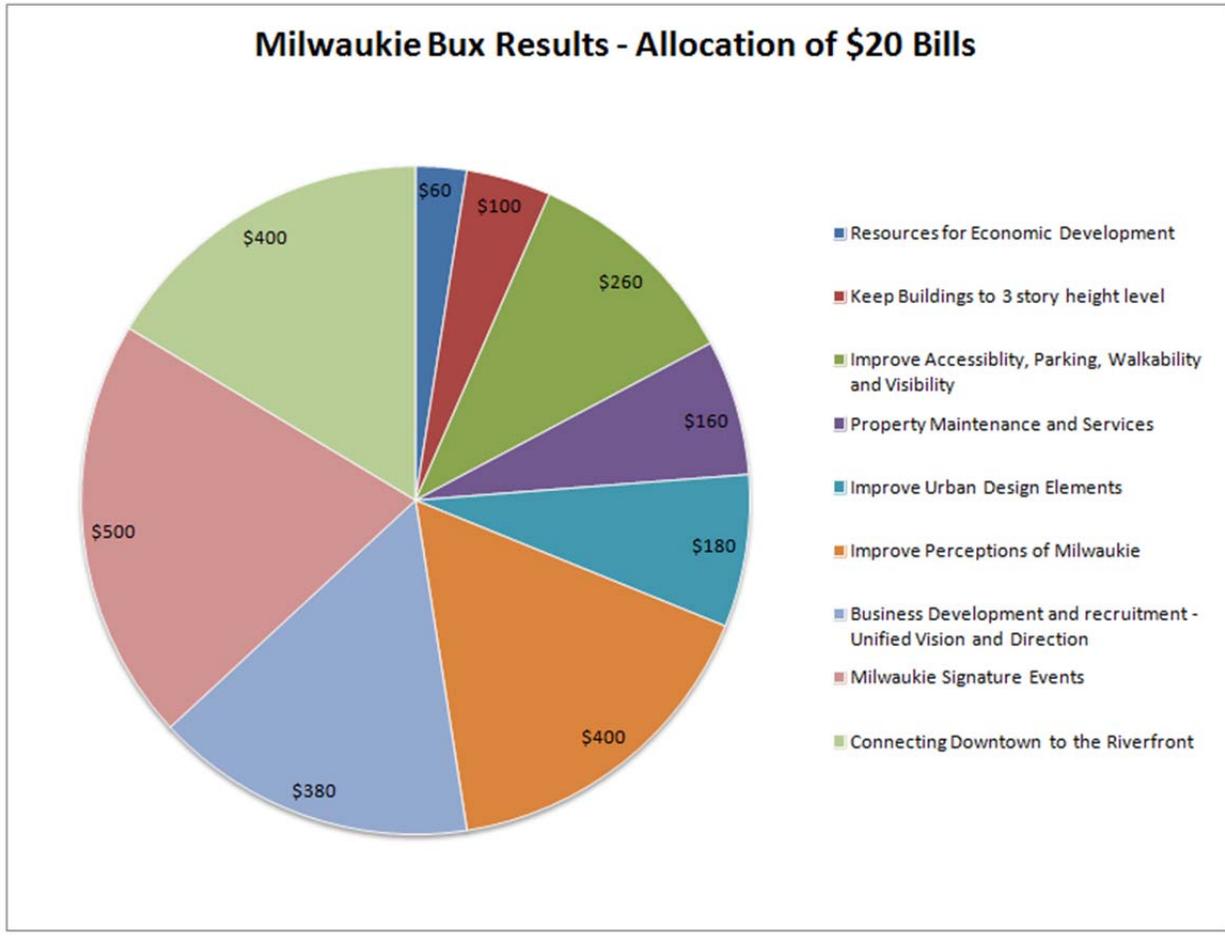
- The themes with the most percentage of \$100 bills:
 - *Connecting Downtown to Riverfront - 38%*
 - *Unified Vision and Direction for Business Development and Recruitment - 21%*
 - *Milwaukie signature events - 21%*



The graphic on the following page illustrates the level of priority for each theme, based on the total amount of Milwaukie Bux:



Participants also were given \$20 bills, to be dispersed however they please. Interestingly, the themes that were in the top three in terms of overall Bux spent and in terms of \$100 bills, were also among the top choices for the \$20 bills. The results are summarized in the graph, on the following page.



Wrap up - 7:30

After the exercise was completed, Jeffrey Butts tallied up the results and presented the counts to the participants. The results were reported out to the participants, and the event officially concluded. Some participants remained after the event to share thoughts with ALIGN team members and City staff. Comment cards, which listed the same four questions from the group discussion, were collected as participants left the event, and the results are summarized in the following pages:

Comment Card Results:

I heart Milwaukie ...	One wacky idea	Other questions or comments
It has a ton of potential. I like the scale/size, transit options (please work to ensure the MAX line becomes a reality) and old-school feel.		
Farmer's Market	A walking map of businesses and historical facts of the area	
Historic, small town vibe / neighborhood		

I heart Milwaukie ...	One wacky idea	Other questions or comments
	No car pedestrian path	
I love first Friday's and farmer's market-brings community feel - one of too few whole community events.	Make a destination playground to bring people/ families in. Needs to be different - water feature to play in, great play structure. It's worth the money and will bring revenue	We need a grocery store and more useful retail. Also a family-friendly brew pub
Big trees, small town feel. growing business	Dark Horse museums on ground floor. Permaculture park at Kronberg Park.	Salt and Straw [ice cream store], Green Zebra [grocery store], cherry trees, dragon boaters - what do they need?
It retains its identity as a downtown and is a great transit hub	Move the historical society into a downtown space and celebrate and publicize, more often, the significant history of the City. Milwaukie is as old as Portland and extremely important in the history of the region	
I can walk to it	Get rid of Foxy's and other lottery/convenience stores in favor of groceries	
It's my town	Live music on the riverfront. Rock. Not blues or mellow smooth jazz. ha.	
Historical background, crusty old dude picking cherries, development with river view, 4 to 5 story building with penthouse, business/NDA/council/citizen devotion. Dove and Long holding	Have either a professional "lumberjack" competition or any sport that uses hills i.e. soapbox allergy professional tour stop, street sleds (something on late night/Sunday AM ESPN)	

One thing to improve ...	Why hasn't the improvement happened?
Redeveloping some of the empty parking lots; moving Dark Horse into one office building so the storefronts could be used for actual retail; encouraging more activity after 5pm: grocery, live music venue, theatre, art galleries	Ownership of property in the hands of a few, economics, desire to maintain status quo. But, admittedly, I just moved here from Portland and am not familiar with all of the dynamics involved.
I think light rail will be a huge improvement - I'd like to see businesses that bring people at least once per week - dance class, art class, creative community	Economy and struggles of opening a small business. Are there funds available for Main Street?
more retail, grocery	economics - start up
a mini-supermarket	
Needs a playground	\$ / planning timeline
Remove dam and build Kronberg [Park]	\$

One thing to improve ...	Why hasn't the improvement happened?
Lack's vibrancy - need to open up under-utilized storefronts to create a place people want to visit, live, play	Lack of incentive for property owners and money
I don't have much to walk to. Sidewalks, McLoughlin knowing what's there, food/grocery, anchor is offices, riverfront	Our anchor is not a retail space, it's an office
Business cohesion, business development coming from business groups	Lack of sustainable businesses
Parking, business/government cooperation, allowing development to "happen" instead of restricting it.	Reputation or outside perceived view of Milwaukie. Large land holders "not in the real estate business"

Outcome of the Event

The kickoff event brought many different opinions together regarding the key strengths and barriers to achieving a vibrant downtown. Through the exercises and group discussions, we heard that the key strengths of Downtown Milwaukie include:

- People love downtown Milwaukie because of its small town scale and the potential to develop into a sustainable center.
- Riverfront Park is a significant part of the downtown and enjoyed by many throughout the year. However, the potential to utilize the riverfront has yet to be realized, due to the separation presented by McLoughlin Boulevard.

However, we also heard that there are barriers to achieving a vibrant downtown. Participants identified two primary issues: lack of attractions in Milwaukie, and lack of a unified vision and direction for downtown. Outside of the occasional events, downtown Milwaukie is not portrayed as a destination. People often visit the downtown for short-term activities, such as dining at the local restaurants, and leave shortly thereafter.

The highest priorities identified by attendees suggest that Milwaukie needs to better connect the downtown with the riverfront; draw people from out of town with signature events; and downtown businesses need to improve recruitment and development by forming a unified vision and direction.

Although participants agreed on barriers to a vibrant downtown, they did not agree on how exactly to address these barriers. For example, one proposed method to support business owners was to provide more resources for economic development, yet this theme received the lowest amount of Milwaukie Bux. In contrast, a unified business vision and direction received the 3rd highest amount of Milwaukie Bux. This divergence on the exact measures of overcoming identified barriers will serve as a basis for discussion during future engagement efforts with the Milwaukie community.

The themes identified by community members during this event provided the ALIGN team members with insights into downtown Milwaukie, as well as a set of key topics for further discussion.