



The Asheville Downtown Association periodically surveys its members and the community to get feedback on issues and challenges facing downtown. We'll utilize this feedback to formulate the questions included in this survey.

The top issues noted in the survey for maintaining the vibrancy of downtown are: supporting local businesses, safety, more parking/transportation options, maintenance of infrastructure, addressing homelessness and affordable/workforce housing.

Downtown Issues Questionnaire for Asheville City Council Candidates

YOUR NAME Jan Howard Kubiniec

QUESTION: Please tell us why you are running for City Council.

-- I am running for city council because I want to make a positive impact on my longtime town. My late husband came to work for the University of North Carolina - Asheville in the 70's. He purchased our historic home in the Kenilworth community in 1976. Time has brought a lot of change. I want to speak toward smarter, sustainable growth that keeps a community for everyone.

QUESTION: What do you feel are downtown's most pressing challenges?

-- All your top issues are top issues for the entire Asheville area. As the heart of Asheville I think more work needs to go into infrastructure needs including sidewalks. I am a backer of public safety issues and as a former Guardian Ad Litem I am concerned about the homelessness and increasing social issues in downtown. I know there are boards and commissions that address all these. We need to stop the political polarization and get something meaningful done. There is no magic wand on city council but there can be consensus building.

QUESTION: What is the role of downtown in the greater Asheville community?

-- Downtown is face and rhythm of what people think of as Asheville. It is the center of commerce and tourism.

QUESTION: What smart growth strategies and funding mechanisms would you employ to support thoughtful growth in downtown that increases the city's tax base while also maintaining its character?

ISSUE: Supporting local business

QUESTION: What strategies would you employ to ensure the sustainability of small locally owned businesses in downtown?

Supporting local business. I would listen and support what the Downtown Association considers necessary for vibrant local growth. We need a mechanism to spread the wealth locally. Would like to lessen outside corporate growth from exploiting what we/you all built and sustain.

ISSUE: Parking/Transportation

QUESTION: What improvements to our parking, transit system and alternative transportation options would you advocate for to ease pressure on the parking system?

Outside corporate investors need to create parking for their projects. Asheville is so profitable an investment that they will pay. City needs to better maintain the parking decks they have and continue looking for other available parking options. Transportation heavily involves state and federal. I think in the long term I would seek options in satellite parking lots with free shuttle service. Light rail and driverless are very trendy now but I think they are in the distant future and may be a fad. Asheville needs something that is in our technical level to achieve to move large numbers of tourists and local workers in and out of the city.

ISSUE: Safety

QUESTION: How would you work with the police department to ensure adequate resources to maintain public safety? What strategies would you employ to address the concerns regarding policing brought forth during the recent budget conversation?

I have a history of working with enforcement. While enforcement is unpopular it is necessary in some cases. I spoke at council "for" the vote for federal inter jurisdictional task force funds. While it was very unpopular, Kenilworth homes were being broken into and knowing thieves were crossing boundaries with the stolen goods and police were basically unable to pursue across a county boundary. Nobody wants police but someone has to insure the public safety. As all the new highrises are built they will probably bring their own security for their clients and property. But police need support to protect our residents and our tourists downtown.

ISSUE: Infrastructure

QUESTION: Identify your top three downtown infrastructure needs. How would you prioritize funding for these projects and how do you feel infrastructure impacts business success?

ISSUE: Homelessness

QUESTION: What steps would you take to support the Homeless Initiative Advisory Committee's 5-year plan released earlier this year? What other strategies or initiatives would you consider to address homelessness in our community?

I would back any of the Homeless Initiatives Advisory Committee needs. I think the shelters are doing what they can. The greatly increased mental health facilities planned for the new hospital complex should work with the numerous nonprofits that reach out to the homeless. (As I live adjacent to the new hospital complex I tend to follow their direction.) The homeless need the assistance to get to a safe place. Some just want to "hang out" and leave in the fall but that doesn't mean they need to disrupt downtown.

ISSUE: Affordable/Workforce Housing

QUESTION: What is your position on housing diversity in downtown? How would you direct staff to utilize funds from the recently passed Affordable Housing Bond? What other strategies would you like to see our city develop to address the affordability issue?

Yes. We need affordable units to support the people who work and support our downtown. I have deep concerns over where the bond money is going. I want to see it go to the places the people voted for. The city won't even say what happened in their budgeting process. What happens in the bidding and contracts. I am not campaigning about the numerous issues in my own yard but there needs to be transparency. How could they miss 20 million dollars in costs. As yet there are no answers. We need to do better.

What is your 5-year vision for Downtown?

There needs to be less chaos in the major projects. City needs to slow growth so it's compatible, workable, sustainable. There are still old residents here. We need a technical review process that does what the city needs first. We need infrastructure, we need public safety, we need the strength to say "no" to stupid growth. Even more people will flock here if it's sustainable. We need transparency in government.

Any further comments you'd like to include concerning Downtown Asheville?