

Downtown Raleigh Economic Development Strategy

Recommendations to Revitalize Fayetteville Street | February 7, 2024

Background

The Downtown Raleigh Alliance is leading development of this strategy that positions Downtown Raleigh for the future. [Interface Studio](#), a Philadelphia-based urban planning and design practice, is conducting this work, which is funded by the American Rescue Plan Act.

The full strategy project kicked off in July 2023. It is studying the downtown **retail and office** markets, seeking **catalytic projects** to inject vitality into downtown, and suggesting ways to boost **minority and women-owned businesses** and enterprises.

The first chapter of the report focuses on Fayetteville Street and the streets around it that made up the original center of Raleigh. Recommendations are driven by both data and people. More than 65 interviews and focus groups gathered input from local residents, business owners, property owners and other stakeholders.

Recommendations

The report paints Fayetteville Street as overlapping mini-districts tied to surrounding streets and uses. Those uses are shopping and dining; city market; neighborhood goods and services; and arts and entertainment. The recommendations are:

1. Develop a streetscape design for Fayetteville Street that offers variations on a theme
2. Build a strong foundation to ensure downtown is clean, safe and vibrant
3. Develop a family-friendly itinerary and route around Fayetteville Street attractions
4. Design and market the downtown core as North Carolina's Main Street
5. Celebrate Raleigh's Black Business District
6. Add more housing on and around Fayetteville Street
7. Use public space to support neighborhood livability
8. Reposition City Plaza as downtown's front porch
9. Grow Raleigh's arts and entertainment district
10. Create a bold connection south of downtown

Next Steps

The Economic Development Strategy process is at the halfway point. These recommendations will be integrated with the overall report, which:

- Creates a retail strategy for downtown
- Examines and positions the downtown office market
- Improves opportunities for minority- and women-owned businesses and enterprises
- Develops the next big ideas for Downtown Raleigh

The community will have more opportunities to contribute to this process through the spring. Work on the study is likely to continue into early summer. [More information, including this report, is available from the DRA website.](#)