

DOWNTOWN SAFETY & SERVICES INITIATIVE

Media Backgrounder Downtown Safety & Services Initiative (DSSI)

Formation of the Downtown Safety & Services Initiative

In response to concerns expressed by community stakeholders regarding the safety and vibrancy of downtown Frederick, the Downtown Safety and Services Initiative was born. It was conceived as a community initiative facilitated by the Ausherman Family Foundation to address these issues. The Downtown Safety & Services Initiative has a strong commitment from the Mayor's office and will be co-led by Peter Couchman (AFF) and Gayon Sampson (Mayor's Office). The Downtown Safety & Services Initiative has significant support from the following:

- *Human service providers*
- *Nonprofit organizations*
- *Residents*
- *Businesses*
- *Faith community members*
- *The Frederick Police Department*
- *Frederick County State's Attorney's Office*
- *Government entities*

Organizational Mission

The Downtown Safety & Services Initiative was conceived to improve the overall Frederick experience for residents, visitors, business owners and human services providers.

The Downtown Safety & Services Initiative has a structural foundation centered around the tenet that each citizen is to be respected, heard, and effectively supported by our city services. We believe that far too often, individuals experiencing homelessness, drug addiction, and mental health issues are grouped together with those conducting illicit activities on our city streets.

The Downtown Safety & Services Initiative has an overarching goal of adding to the vibrancy and excitement of the overall downtown experience, while respecting all residents, as well as guests in our city.

Organizational Structure

The Downtown Safety & Services Initiative is comprised of five committees, as well as a steering committee, for oversight. The committee memberships have been formed to ensure that each one of them has adequate representation from our community stakeholder groups.

Downtown Safety & Services Initiative Committees:

- Ambassador Programs
- Security & Enforcement
- Services & Coordination
- Environmental Design & Programming
- Public Messaging

Committee members include: human service providers, nonprofit organizations, residents, businesses, faith community members, the Frederick Police Department, Frederick County State's Attorney's Office, and government entities.

Downtown Safety & Services Initiative Vision & Goals

The vision of the Downtown Safety & Services Initiative is to provide a downtown and prosperous environment in Frederick that focuses on safety for all, respect for each individual, and vibrancy of the community.

The goals of the Downtown Safety & Services Initiative are to:

- Promote inclusiveness and maintain safety efforts within the community
- Utilize an inclusive approach of inviting input from all stakeholders, in order to enhance the city's safety and vibrancy
- Serve as a vehicle for citizens to provide feedback in a series of public meetings

Expected Improvements

- Support local nonprofits providing critical services to the population in need
- Conceptualize and implement landscape design elements, park activation and programming as positive deterrents to discourage undesirable behaviors in the downtown area

- Investigate and possibly implement ambassador programs that increase beautification, security presence, human services outreach, as well as visitor hospitality
- Establish a network of private & public security cameras; evaluate existing enforcement conditions and recommend legislative changes
- Investigate options for providing and increasing accessibility of services to the downtown area; analyze the current human services provided, the needs of the population, and the coordination of existing and future programs
- Explore a two-fold marketing campaign to 1) discourage panhandling, and 2) educate residents and businesses on the challenges faced by people experiencing homelessness, addiction and mental health issues

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MEDIA INQUIRIES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:

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*Hi-res jpg photos and videos may be found on our website at:

frederickdssi.org/press-room