



Public Engagement Summary

City of Des Moines | South
223rd Green Street Study
Project

Prepared by
KPG Psomas Inc.



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Executive Summary

Overview

The primary goal of the South 223rd Green Street Project is to create an inviting waterfront gateway that better connects the Marine View Drive retail core and residential areas with the Marina and waterfront, while offering an enhanced pedestrian experience along South 223rd to the future Marina Steps, as well as improved stormwater quality in downtown. The initial phase of design includes site analysis to determine the optimal corridor layout, as well as stormwater analysis to determine the potential treatment area, culminating in a 10% preliminary design based on the City's preferred alternative. This will form the basis for the future final design of the corridor.



The City desired the development of the 10% preliminary design to incorporate public feedback on preferred streetscape elements and conceptual themes for the “look and feel” of the corridor. The design consultant, KPG Psomas, developed a public engagement plan to guide that process.

The public engagement campaign began on November 20, 2023 with the launch of the online public survey. The project and survey were promoted through the City web site, project web site, and City social media updates in order to encourage engagement from a wide swath of the community. The online survey was open for public feedback through December 11, 2023 and received a total of 79 responses.

Public comments and design feedback from the online survey were collected and reviewed internally among the design consultant and City staff. The compiled findings and feedback are attached in this report and have been summarized in the following pages. The italicized public comments have not been modified in any way. A few public comments that the design team felt exemplified frequent themes or raised noteworthy points on key issues and design considerations for the project have been highlighted.

Of the three potential design themes shown, respondents to the online survey indicated a preference for the “Waterland City” theme with the “Contemporary Pacific Northwest” theme as a close second. Based on this result, staff and the consultant discussed potentially incorporating elements from the Contemporary Pacific Northwest theme into the Waterland City concept as part of the future final design.

Reoccurring Public Outreach Comments

A review of the public outreach comments revealed several reoccurring themes, which we have summarized below, along with representative comments.

- Many commenters expressed a preference for design themes that maintain a “small town, cozy” feel along the corridor, as well as elements that are reflective of Des Moines’ waterfront location.

“It’s aesthetically pleasing and gives more of a small town, cozy yet artsy feel.”

“Continue to lean into the seaside, Cape Cod aesthetic.”

“Represents a place to relax and enjoy.”

“Cozy, warm, interesting.”

“Will help merge downtown and the waterfront in a way that reflects the natural beauty of the beaches and parks at the marina.”

“Matches the water theme of downtown.”

- Several commenters also expressed a desire to make the corridor more pedestrian -oriented and to improve the pedestrian experience.

“Just make it people friendly. When your streets and buildings are people friendly, they will come. They will look for places to browse, to get food to take and sit down, to look at the view.”

“Do everything you can to relegate cars to second-class status. For too long, pedestrians and bicyclists have played second fiddle to cars. Thus is a chance to stop this silliness.”

“Would like to see more pedestrian amenities and pedestrian path lighting.”

- However, some commenters had concerns that changes to the street could reduce parking options along the corridor. (Note: Only 4 formal parking spaces were removed.)

“Seems we are losing some parking. Hope we make up for it elsewhere.”

“The Green Street Study should be removed from the scope of work. This feature takes up way too much space that can be used in other ways. During specific events, we need as much parking as possible. These designs remove way too much parking that we use on a day to day basis. Incorporating angled parking WITH sidewalks would better suit the needs for the street. Where are we to park during the 4th of July event when the lower parking lot is full? Having the area updated would be amazing, but don’t remove parking.”

“PARKING MATTERS!!!”

- Many commenters expressed interest in the “green” elements of the proposed themes, including additional landscaped areas and improved stormwater treatment.

“Plant as much native vegetation as possible, especially drought resistant and low maintenance options.”

“I’m on the citizen’s advisory board and one thing that I have heard a lot from my neighborhood is that the city should continue to improve its efforts in environmental stewardship and equal access to healthy environments. Many folks I’ve talked to are very excited about this project and the potential it has to achieve a better, more walkable connection between the downtown area and the waterfront while also helping to continue to revitalize downtown. Major elements that I’ve heard people would like to see are lots of larger trees that will help reduce the heat island effect (while also helping to clean runoff) and the inclusion of public electric vehicle chargers. As EVs become much more common, public EV chargers are becoming both a draw for shoppers during the day but also a critical enabling infrastructure for apartment and condo renter/owners who don’t have access to charging in their building. Puget Sound Energy has also just started a new program where they will work with cities to install, maintain and own EV chargers in areas of public parking (PSE | Multifamily charging, I know it says multifamily but in talking with PSE for another project the advisor said this is more or less the same deal/incentives they do for city public installations) which could help cover the cost of adding 2-4 public chargers to the project.”

“Better drainage and cleaning the water using natural processes.”

“Incorporate sustainability.”

- There was a common desire for safety improvements along the corridor, particularly at the intersection of South 223rd Street and 6th Avenue S.

“The 6th Ave S and 223rd intersection is very dangerous. Many jerks fly right through without stopping and cause accidents, and lots of almost accidents (pedestrians and other cars). Perhaps we need a light here, though unfortunate to have another traffic light, something needs to change - it is too dangerous.”

“Please find a way to make the intersection on 223rd and 6th safer. Lots of people don’t stop at the stop sign. Thank you.”

“Please include speed bumps and/or emphasized stop signs, and pedestrian crossing lights. Cars blow through the stop sign at 223 & 6th all the time and likely will only get worse with more people visiting the area.”

- However, there were also concerns expressed about project funding and priorities.

“Our city is poor. Less fluffy decorative items and more usable infrastructure, including more parking (since the city council is determined to gate and charge for access to the waterfront).”

“Please stop spending on needless projects.”

Project Overview & Goals

The following project overview and goals were conveyed to the public as part of the online survey.

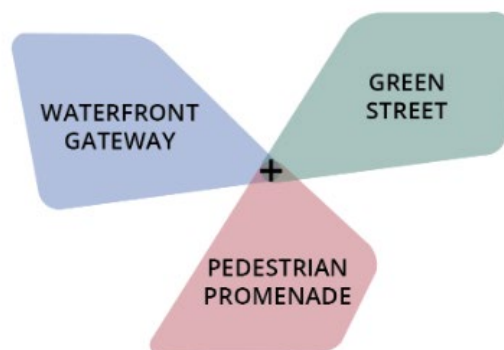
Project Overview

The **South 223rd Green Street Study Project** is part of several larger downtown improvement initiatives to enhance the pedestrian experience for residents and visitors, create a distinctive identity for Des Moines' downtown, better connect the retail and residential core to the waterfront area, and reduce the amount of pollution entering Puget Sound via stormwater runoff.

The City and its consultants (KPG Psomas, Inc.) are currently in the process of researching and identifying preliminary design options for South 223rd Street between Marine View Drive and Cliff Avenue South. The preferred design concept and 10% preliminary design layout will be incorporated into future design phases. Final design and the construction timeline for the project is still to be determined. (For additional information, please visit the City's project website at www.desmoinesgreenstreet.com.)

Public involvement is an important part of the preliminary design process and the City of Des Moines is soliciting community feedback on potential design concepts for the South 223rd Green Street corridor.

Project Goals



The goals of the South 223rd Green Street Study project are to:

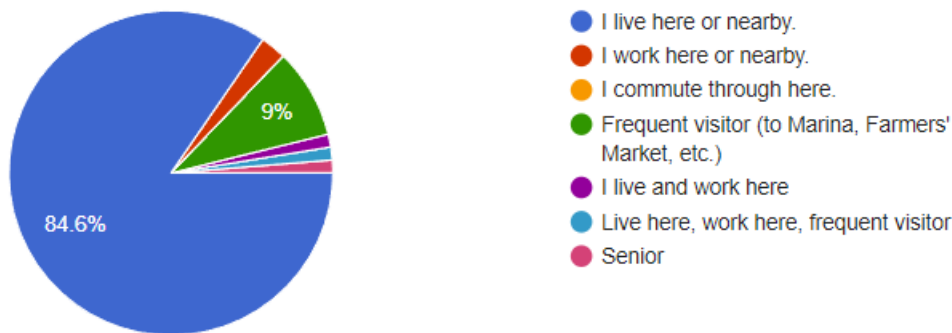
- Create an **inviting waterfront gateway** that better connects the Marine View Drive retail core and residential area with the Marina, Overlook Parks, and waterfront
- Construct a **new pedestrian promenade** with wider sidewalks, improved lighting, and public amenities
- **Improve water quality** through a series of enhancements and landscape, adding new street trees and biodiversity to the South 223rd Street corridor while reducing the amount of pollution and contaminants that enter Puget Sound

Online Survey Public Engagement Profile

At the end of the online survey, the public was asked a few questions pertaining to demographics and their relationship to the project.

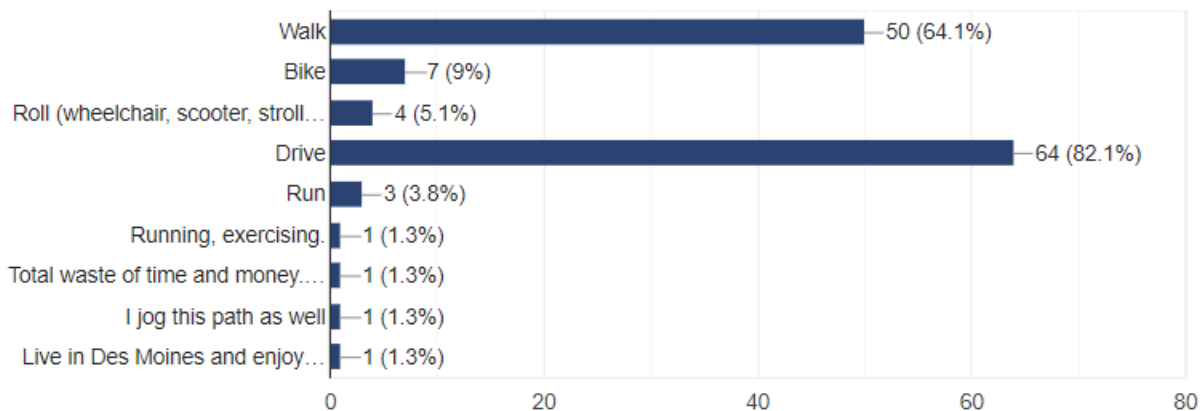
Survey Question: What is your primary connection to South 223rd Street? (78 out of 79 responses)

Most of the public who provided feedback on the online survey live nearby (66 responses) or are frequent visitors (7 responses) to the project area.



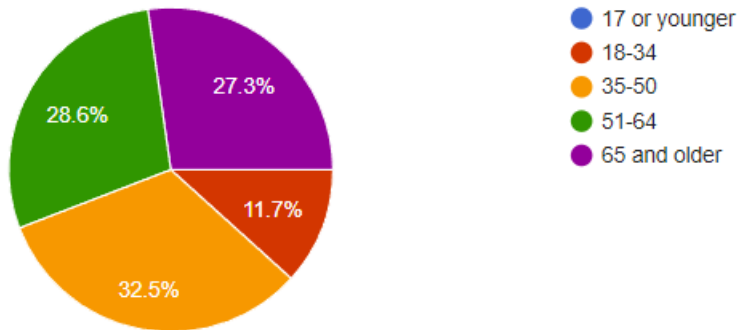
Survey Question: How do you usually travel through South 223rd Street? Select all that apply. (78 out of 79 responses)

Most of the public responded they usually travel on South 223rd Street by driving (82.1% - 64 responses). More than half of respondents also indicated that they travel by walking (64.1% - 50 responses), while less than 10% indicated that they travel through the corridor by bike. The public also provided a few filled in travel modes of their own below.



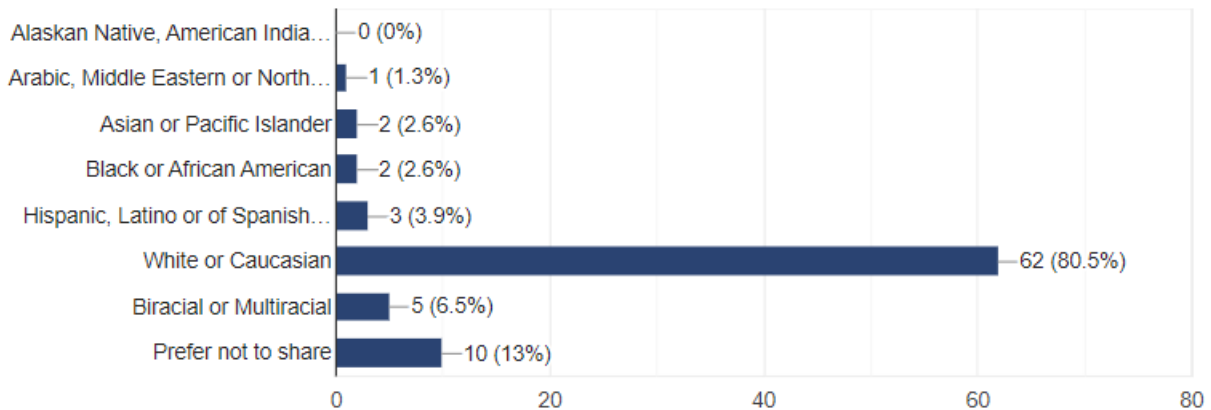
Survey Question: What is your age? (77 out of 79 responses)

A good mix of people of all ages contributed feedback for the online survey with the exception of the 17 or younger age group that had no participation. A majority of the online survey responses came from those ages 35-50 (32.5%), 51-64 (28.6%) and 65 and older (27.3%).



Survey Question: How do you identify? Select all that apply. (77 out of 79 responses)

Of those who elected to share, the majority of respondents identified as White or Caucasian (80.5%). 13% of respondents preferred not to share.



Conceptual Design Elements

The following information regarding potential design elements was included in the online survey for respondents to provide feedback.

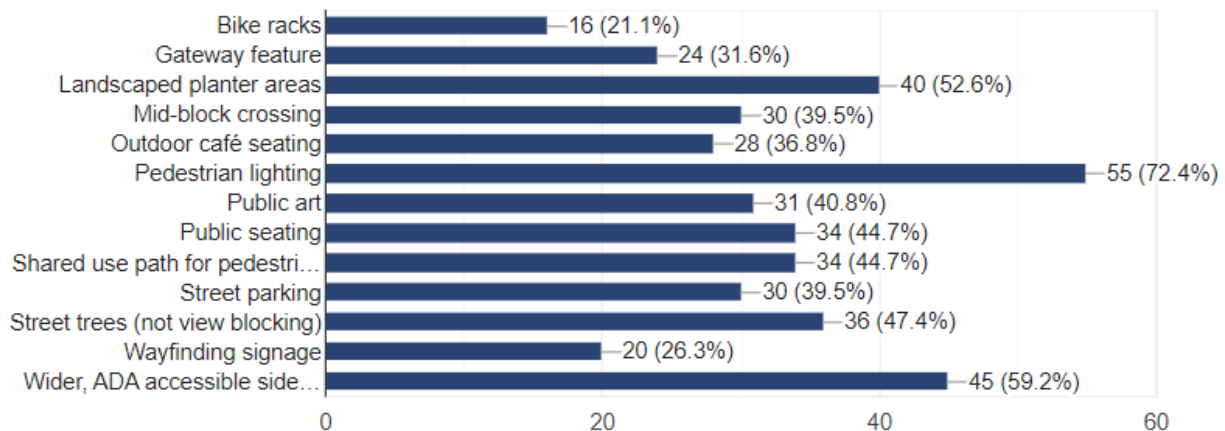
Conceptual Design Elements

South 223rd Street is an important corridor between Downtown Des Moines and the Marina District. The new street design will improve connectivity to the waterfront and enhance the pedestrian experience along the corridor. The project team is working to identify design elements to support those objectives. The following are some of the amenities under consideration as part of the South 223rd Green Street project:

- Wider sidewalks
- Additional public seating
- Landscaped planter areas + street trees
- Pedestrian lighting
- Gateway feature
- Mid-block pedestrian crossing
- Wayfinding signage
- Public art

Survey Question: Which of these proposed design elements do you think will improve safety or the experience along the South 223rd Street corridor (between Marine View Dr. and Cliff Ave.)? (Select all that apply)? (76 out of 79 responses)

The public was offered a list of 13 streetscape elements and asked to select all that apply. Pedestrian lighting (55 selections) was highly preferred, followed by wider ADA accessible sidewalks (45 selections), and landscaped planter areas (40 selections).



Conceptual Themes

As part of the preliminary design process, three unique conceptual design themes were developed to show options for the potential “look and feel” of the future corridor. The online survey included inspiration images, a conceptual layout, and a perspective rendering for each theme. The public was then asked to provide feedback on each theme individually and to rank the three themes in order of preference.

Conceptual Themes

As part of the preliminary design process, the project team is working to develop a conceptual theme that captures the “**look and feel**” of the proposed S 223rd Green Street. Once a conceptual theme is selected, specific details and design elements will be defined as part of the next project phase.

The City of Des Moines would like your input on the proposed themes. Please view the following conceptual themes and let us know your preferences. Please note that the images below are meant to convey a potential “look and feel” and do not represent a final design. The final preferred concept could potentially be a combination of elements from all three.

(see next page for themes)

Concept 1: Downtown Arts & Culture

Concept 1 Inspiration Board: Downtown Arts & Culture

arts inspired
vibrant color palette
playful
engaging

With the renovation of the Des Moines theater as a performing arts venue and the variety of multicultural dining options in Downtown representing the diversity of the Des Moines community, this concept expands on the arts & culture theme with a vibrant palette that is warm and engaging.



EXAMPLES:



SEATING



PAVING



LANDSCAPE



ART ELEMENTS



Downtown Arts & Culture Conceptual Layout

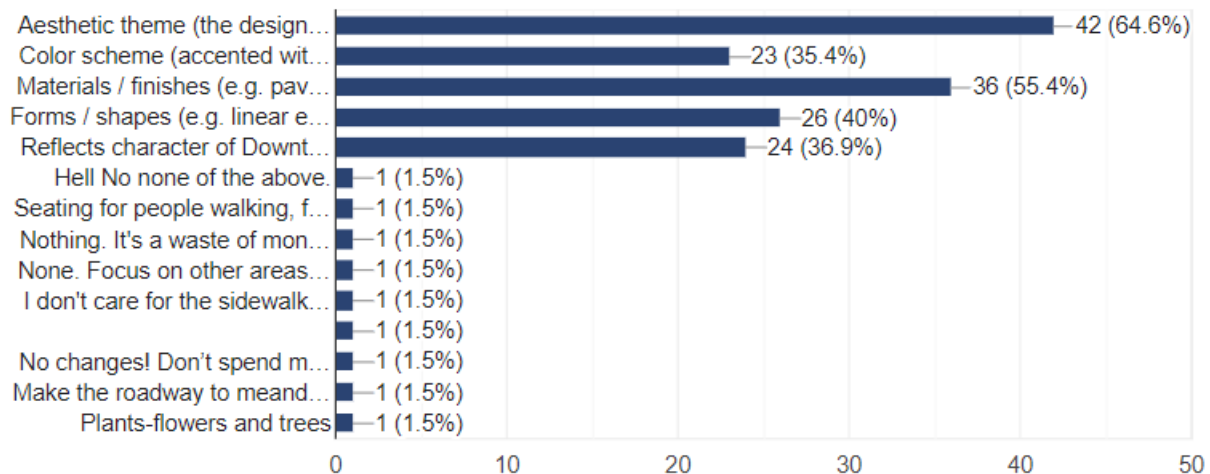
(click [here](#) for enlarged view)





Survey Question: What about this concept do you like? Select all that apply. (65 out of 79 responses)

Most of the public liked the aesthetic theme (42 selections) of this concept, as well as the materials/finishes (36 selections).



Concept 2: Waterland City

Concept 2 Inspiration Board: Waterland City

marine inspired
cool color palette
inviting
relaxing

Inspired by the Des Moines "Waterland City" motto and existing urban design elements along the S 216th Street corridor and recently constructed Marina bulkhead, this concept uses a cool color palette and marine motif to emphasize the South 223rd Street connection to the Marina and Puget Sound.



EXAMPLES:



SEATING



PAVING



LANDSCAPE



ART ELEMENTS



Waterland City Conceptual Layout

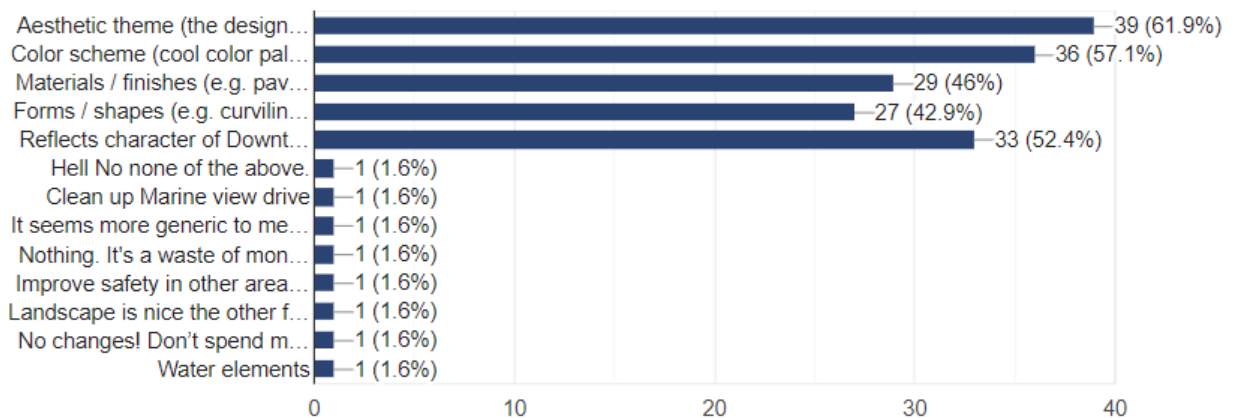
(Click [here](#) for enlarged view)





Survey Question: What about this concept do you like? Select all that apply. (63 out of 79 responses)

Most of the public liked the aesthetic theme (39 selections) of this concept, as well as the color scheme (36 selections).



Concept 3: Contemporary Pacific Northwest

Concept 3 Inspiration Board: Contemporary Pacific Northwest

PNW inspired
neutral color
palette
welcoming

Interpreting the Pacific Northwest coastal theme with a contemporary Downtown flair, this concept utilizes natural materials and nature-inspired art elements to reflect the local geography and character of Des Moines' Puget Sound location.



EXAMPLES:



SEATING



PAVING



LANDSCAPE

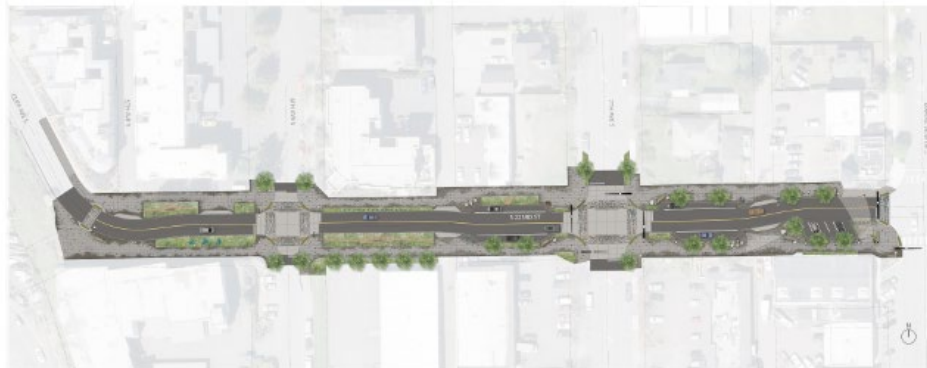


ART ELEMENTS



Contemporary Pacific Northwest Conceptual Layout

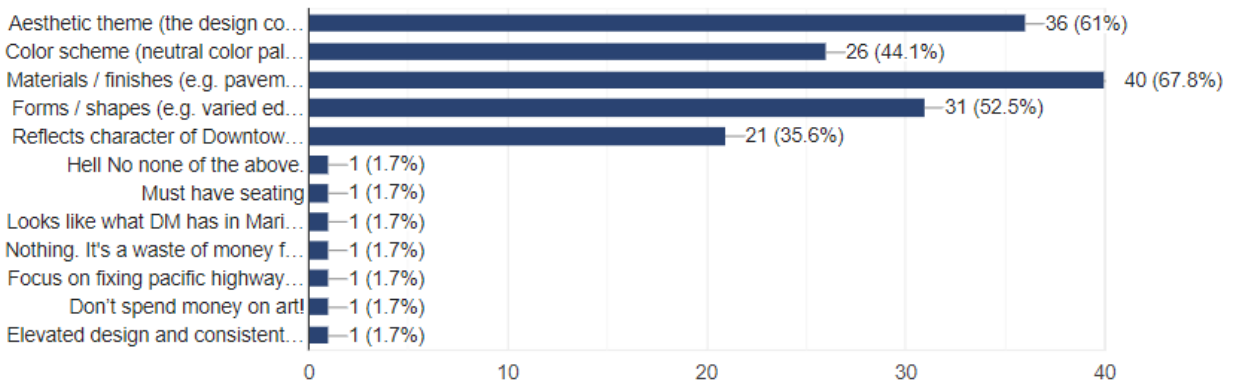
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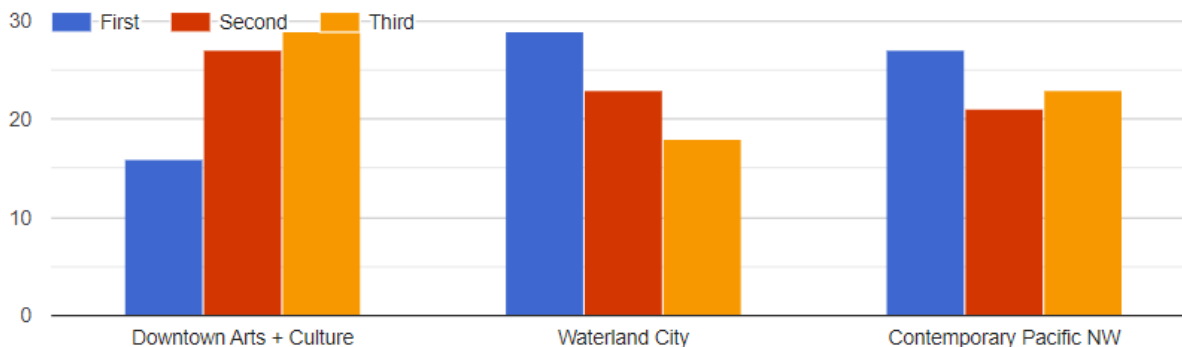
Survey Question: What about this concept do you like? Select all that apply. (59 out of 79 responses)

Most of the public liked the materials/finishes (40 selections) of this concept, as well as the aesthetic scheme (36 selections).



Survey Question: Please rank the themes above in order of preference.

Most of the public ranked the Waterland City theme as their first choice, followed closely by the Contemporary Pacific Northwest theme.



Survey Question: What appeals to you most about your preferred conceptual theme for Downtown? (58 out of 79 responses)

Hell No. Who's bone head idea is this. Hell No.

Beachy themed and the same as 216th, we can add some more color through like the mosaic at the new marina parking lot

Natural materials and nature inspired design

Neutral colors

None, much too busy many unnecessary features please just keep it simple.

Art elements and pacing choices

Downtown needs gentrification now!

Blends in best.

Water elements, seating

It's aesthetically pleasing and gives more of a small town, cozy yet artsy feel

I like the warmth of brick and interesting patterns on the sidewalks.

Continue to lean into the seaside, Cape Cod aesthetic

In general, just upgrading the downtown experience. Hopefully this would increase development,

Visual Interest

Softer, warmer tones combined with curvilinear elements.

Fits the way I visualize Des Moines

I like the theme and nature-based aesthetics, but I like the warmth of the downtown arts and culture best too. I like the warm palette; maybe with more emphasis on wood elements and palates.

Nothing

Set theme for city

Cozy, warm, interesting

Matches maritime theme. Water to marina

Matches the water theme of downtown

Looks like what DM has already implemented in certain areas

I like the tile elements are nice, I do not like the pointed white seating it looks very cold and does not fit the theme.

Forms / shapes (e.g. curvilinear edges/materials and patterns)

Tie in to the natural land

Warm and looks like more shops would be at the marina

Represents a place to relax and enjoy.

Artistic vibe

It fits where we want to go.

Themes that reflect a Des Moines waterland

Color palette, overall design concept

Nothing! Des Moines leaders should remember we are more than downtown.

Natural elements

It's the least kitschy

It seems more water focused.

Simple yet artistic

Nothing!

Seems to reflect DM. Colors and softer feel, not harsh

Fits the vibe of DM

Color scheme based upon the area and this being a gateway to the marina.

Waterland City fits a distinct theme for Des Moines that differentiates it from other parts of the PNW.

It's representative of the PNW region and is more timeless than a theme that can become outdated in a few years.

Everything

Everything

The art

Unique materials and accent colors, landscaping. I want pedestrians to feel invited and supported, not as an annoying thing in the way of vehicles.

More pedestrian-friendly and accessible

Softer enhanced look

Less is more

Reflects broader environment

Look and feel - we are a gem and the upscale modern PNW conveys this - its transforms us into mini-upscale city that could!

well the street lighting might be nice if the current utilities are dropped underground on 223rd and Cliff Ave . looking forward to a green belt and wider sidewalks too.

Not sure

gathering motivated

Its inviting

Builds on other improvements already made at the marina. I love the lights/posts added at marina and would love to see the same incorporates in this project.

Will help merge downtown and the waterfront in a way that reflects the natural beauty of the beaches and parks at the marina.

Additional Public Feedback

Survey Question: Do you have additional thoughts on the South 223rd Green Street Study Project or ideas you'd like to see incorporated? (48 out of 79 responses)

No

Yes, total waste of fucking money.

The 6th Ave S and 223rd intersection is very dangerous. Many jerks fly right through without stopping and cause accidents, and lots of almost accidents (pedestrians and other cars). Perhaps we need a light here, though unfortunate to have another traffic light, something needs to change - it is too dangerous.

Please find a way to make the intersection on 223rd and 6th safer. Lots of people don't stop at the stop sign. Thank you

223rd needs help all the way up to 24th. Spread the love.

Yeah move it to kdmr

Keep it simple please we don't need all the extras. The landscaping is nice.

Paid parking on side feeding streets with ADA accessible sidewalks to 223rd. The biggest problem with the side streets is no continuous pedestrian safe access whatsoever without walking in the streets.

More parking

Just make it people friendly. When your streets and buildings are people friendly, they will come. They will look for places to browse, to get food to take and sit down, to look at the view.

Make sure the Lighthouse Lounge is a feature. Don't over do the art to make it crowded/over saturated. Keep it simple.

I wish undergrounding the power line on Cliff Avenue that is currently obstructing the sidewalk to the beach park could be included.

Any and all revitalization is welcome

Do everything you can to relegate cars to second-class status. For too long, pedestrians and bicyclists have played second fiddle to cars. Thus is a chance to stop this silliness.

I love this project. Have fun with it. Put hidden easter egg type elements that the kids can search for. Like the light rail project has a carved marble Chinese takeout box at one of the stations. It's small and not highlighted, but it always brings me joy.

Dedicated bike lanes

Let's get it going

PARKING MATTERS!!!

Safety

We have a teen driving a motorized wheelchair and he loves coming to the Marina, we can walk from our house so we would love safer ADA access to the waterfront.

No

Seems we are losing some parking. Hope we make up for it elsewhere

I'm concerned about safety and the traffic and the construction

Big archway on marine view and 223rd that says waterfront or water land or something massive so everyone knows that's the route to the water

Better drainage and cleaning the water using natural processes.

Pedestrian friendly, thematic, and open

Would like to see more pedestrian amenities and pedestrian path lighting

223rd is fine. Focus efforts in other areas to attract people to come here.

Our city is poor. Less fluffy decorative items and more usable infrastructure, including more parking (since the city council is determined to gate and charge for access to the waterfront).

not at this time

Please stop spending on needless projects

The Green Street Study should be removed from the scope of work. This feature takes up way to much space that can be used in other ways. During specific events, we need as much parking as possible. These designs remove way to much parking that we use on a day to day basis. Incorporating angled parking WITH sidewalks would better suite the needs for the street. Where are we to park during the 4th of July event when the lower parking lot is full? Having the area updated would be amazing, but don't remove parking.

This is a great opportunity to begin a business signage campaign where all businesses can begin to have signage that will be cohesive for the downtown area. You see this in other destination cities in Washington, like Poulsbo, Port Townsend, Leavenworth and LaConner.

Plant as much native vegetation as possible, especially drought resistant and low maintenance options.

Incorporate sustainability

I don't see much here about innovative stormwater stuff, I'd like to see artistic stormwater mitigation elements - like they have in Belltown.

Incorporate wider sidewalk down Cliff Avenue

Soften the look by not having lineal lines, curve sidewalks and planting areas to soften the look. Trees will help to reduce the harshness.

I'd like to see money before sending and paying for all concept drawings

Consideration should include maintenance requirements so as to keep the project at a high quality appearance for a long period of time.

Please include speed bumps and/or emphasized stop signs, and pedestrian crossing lights. Cars blow through the stop sign at 223 & 6th all the time and likely will only get worse with more people visiting the area

please did not put bench seating in front of condo units west of 6th Ave on south side of 223rd . doing that would reduce privacy for the condo owners and create more nuisance .there already is an ongoing issue with music , litter, and smoking because of the seating at overlook park . this would add to that issue. thank you .

seating area on this street is typically used by the homeless, which I have seen using drugs more than one occasion. Suggest to have high police visibility.

I love this project and feel the look/style of the marina should be carried up the street. I love the idea of incorporating art into the pavement/brick and other aesthetically pleasing elements like planters, light posts that will last for many years to come. Although the natural elements in the contemporary design are nice, I worry they will not hold up. Another piece of inspiration for the aesthetic of this project should be the Des Moines marina sign currently viewable from the water.

I'm on the citizen's advisory board and one thing that I have heard a lot from my neighborhood is that the city should continue to improve its efforts in environmental stewardship and equal access to healthy environments. Many folks I've talked to are very excited about this project and the potential it has to achieve a better, more walkable connection between the downtown area and the waterfront while also helping to continue to revitalize downtown. Major elements that I've heard people would like to see are lots of larger trees that will help reduce the heat island effect (while also helping to clean runoff) and the inclusion of public electric vehicle chargers. As EVs become much more common, public EV chargers are becoming both a draw for shoppers during the day but also a critical enabling infrastructure for apartment and condo renter/owners who don't have access to charging in their building. Puget Sound Energy has also just started a new program where they will work with cities to install, maintain and own EV chargers in areas of public parking (PSE | Multifamily charging, I know it says multifamily but in talking with PSE for another project the advisor said this is more or less the same deal/incentives they do for city public installations) which could help cover the cost of adding 2-4 public chargers to the project.