



VISION 2020 for DOWNTOWN DENISON



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Vision 2020 for Downtown Denison

On February 18, 2014, a Downtown Visioning Session was hosted for the public by the City's Main Street Advisory Board. The plan is intended to guide the City through the year 2020. Partners in the effort were the Denison Area Chamber of Commerce/Convention & Visitors' Bureau, Denison Development Alliance/Denison Development Foundation, Denison Arts Council, and Downtown Denison Inc. The session was led by Julie Glover, the Economic Development Program Administrator for the City of Denton, Texas. Approximately 90 people attended representing business owners, property owners, potential business owners, interested parties, and community partners. A follow-up survey was conducted to obtain additional information and help prioritize goals. The following information summarizes the input and provides direction for the future.

History:

Denison was founded in 1872 as the connecting point between the Missouri-Kansas-Texas ("Katy") Rail Line and the Texas Central Rail Line. It served as the first rail stop after crossing Oklahoma (Indian Territory) and became one of the South's most important transportation centers. Denison became a fast-paced commercial hub of saloons, hotels, manufacturing plants, banks, and an abundance of entertainment and culture, making it famous as the "jewel at the crossing of a great river."

Denison's historic figures have become heroes to the U.S. and abroad.

- Thomas V. Munson, a world famous local horticulturist in the 1880's, saved the French grape crop from the ruinous phylloxera epidemic by cultivating an immune stock, which saved the world's vineyards from destruction.
- Entering the world as the son of a "Katy" mechanic in a humble part of town, Dwight David Eisenhower was commander of the Allied Forces at Normandy during World War II and President of the United States from 1953-1961.
- Captain Chesley B. (Sully) Sullenberger III became the hero of Flight 1549, when he saved the lives of more than 150 people onboard by safely making an emergency landing on the Hudson River.

Denison has structures of significance that are tourist attractions.

- Denison Dam, located north of Denison, is the structure that created Lake Texoma. The lake is well-known for its fishing, boating and other recreation. Visitors number more than 6 million each year.
- The Red River Railroad Museum located in the old Katy Depot conveys the impact the railroad had in the sculpting of the town. Approximately 1,800 guests visit the facility each year.
- Eisenhower's Birthplace is now a well-visited Texas historic site. Hosting school groups to special events, over 10,000 people visit the world leader's restored birthplace on an annual basis.

Strengths:

Denison is a historical showplace with strong architecture where loft residents enjoy a walkable environment with a variety of green spaces including five park-like areas perfect for walking the dog or enjoying special events. Denison's eclectic downtown spans a thirty-block area and is nothing short of a decorator's dream. Artists enjoy Denison's progressive flair and have woven themselves into the fabric of the culture through their custom textile creations, pottery, metalwork, paintings, and woodwork. The shops are lined with art in decorative settings, studios, galleries, antiques, retro furnishings, specialty retail, a historic theater, and a wine tasting room. The visual and performing arts are also represented in Denison's downtown through concerts, festivals, shows, recording studios, education, and instruction for music and all levels and ages of dance. The Texas Commission on the Arts named Denison one of the state's original Arts & Cultural Districts in 2009.

Comments from 2014 Visioning survey:

"I think Denison is unique (for this area) and friendly. Denison has the potential to be as big as Fredericksburg, in my opinion."

"I bring [guests] downtown to see the unique architecture and explore the many small businesses that line Main."

"I enjoy the mix of activities available downtown. My son likes the batting cages. There are some great boutiques and antique stores. The restaurants are good."

Goals from Visioning Session

In 1989, Denison joined the Texas Main Street Program, expecting to:

- Heighten shopping activity
- Increase capital investment in downtown
- Sharpen public awareness of Denison's rich and varied history and architecture
- Preserve structures of historical significance
- Organize retail merchants efforts
- Rejuvenate the appearance of the central business district
- Develop tourist trade
- Combine all of these efforts into one common effort to restore community pride in the downtown area and, in doing so, improve the downtown economy.

As a result of the February 2014 Visioning process, the stakeholders want to carry on those original ideas and continue to build Denison's legacy as a commercial hub by pursuing the following goals:

- ☆1. Increasing the number of commercial street level occupancies in Downtown Denison by 7% with businesses that promote and reinforce the vision of Denison's Main Street.

[A priority will be placed on restaurants, loft development and entertainment-related businesses.](#)

- ☆ 2. Capitalizing upon the historic significance and beauty of the architecture and improving the visual appeal of the area through the implementation of the “Streetscape Master Plan” which includes the expansion of public art and landscaping, the addition of color, and the continued maintenance of public buildings and communal areas.

Visitors love Downtown Denison’s built environment, and softening the streetscape will add the finishing touch.

- ☆ 3. Managing both human and fiscal resources to facilitate the revitalization of Downtown through grants and supplementary funding, the recruitment and development of an engaged volunteer base, and the assistance of a full time staff addition.

This requires teamwork which is “work done by several associates with each doing a part but, all subordinating personal prominence to the efficiency of the whole” according to Wikipedia.

- 4. Maintaining our National Register Historic District status and the historical integrity of Downtown Denison through the development of a greater preservation ethic.
- 5. Increasing the number of visitors to our attractions by 12% through the enhancement of their experience by highlighting our heritage and showcasing our natural and cultural resources.
- 6. Striving to publicize Downtown Denison as an “Event Central” location through an increase in the number of public-partnered events by 4 annually and advertising the availability of venues for private events.
- 7. Adopting a signature for Downtown Denison’s Entertainment District that is easily identifiable, recognizable, and consistent with innovative marketing materials that demonstrate its engaging environment.
- 8. Identifying and planning a method to better utilize all undeveloped or underutilized buildings and public areas in Downtown.
- 9. Ensuring a place for Downtown Denison in the regional economy through the development and growth of new and current regional partners.
- 10. Creating a healthy and engaging living environment that meets the needs of Downtown residents by working with the Downtown Neighborhood Association to hold meetings once quarterly.

- ☆ Goals that will receive priority and will be addressed with primary concern

Relationship to City:

These goals will be linked to the City of Denison's objectives:

1. The City of Denison is financially stable.
2. The City of Denison is a community of excellence, with a high quality of life and an attractive urban landscape.
3. The City of Denison enjoys a utility and infrastructure system that is well maintained and supports community growth.
4. The City of Denison is a community of choice that attracts and retains families, and creates an environment where art, culture, and business thrive.

City's Core Purpose: To responsibly provide municipal services that enhance the quality of life of our citizens, encourage commerce and industry, and promote the health, safety and general welfare of the community.

Vision & Mission Statements:

The revised Vision and Mission Statements for the City of Denison's Main Street Department have been updated to reflect current needs and focus efforts:

Mission of Denison Main Street: The Denison Main Street Program will attain Great American Main Street status utilizing the National Main Street Four Point Approach and harness a cohesive spirit and the power of volunteerism to achieve our objectives of preservation-focused Downtown revitalization so that we will be a pedestrian-friendly regional hub with many diverse activities, an eclectic blend of commerce, and a livable environment.

Our Vision for the future: Historic Downtown Denison is a vibrant shopping and living destination that is a magnet for business, arts, culture, and entertainment.

Major Goals from 2014 Visioning: (Ten Primary goals followed by work plan items)

1. **Increasing the number of commercial street level occupancies in Downtown Denison by 7% with businesses that promote and reinforce the vision of Denison's Main Street.**

- Address occupancy barriers of individual buildings
- Become known as a business friendly Downtown while maintaining the historic integrity of the district and protecting life/safety codes.
- Complete property inventory with all property information readily available including business information, photos, and contacts.
- Complete Texas Treasure Award for businesses over 50 years old
- Develop incubators for food, wine, beer, etc., especially those that interface with Grayson College graduates.
- Develop merchandising team to continue designer window displays that encourage upper window decorating.
- Develop mobile phone and internet infrastructure for the utmost capability and connectivity.
- Develop relationships with property owners, address occupancy barriers of individual buildings, and facilitate building enhancements to secure occupancy.
- Develop support system for business owners and create a sense of one voice and direction (Nurture, strengthen, support, appreciate).
- Educate business owners, realtors, and property owners on ordinances related to Downtown. (Zoning, Certificate of Occupancy, Certificate of Occupancy, Entertainment District, signage)
- Enhance incentive programs for Downtown businesses and properties.
- Establish a business development team for Downtown Denison that provides expertise as needed.
- Facilitate an entrepreneur-friendly environment to recruit and strengthen business owners.
- Recruit businesses for upper stories including high tech entrepreneurs.
- Reinvent Third Thursdays as a way for business owners to socialize.
- Review process for business startups and determine ways to be more business friendly.
- Work with businesses to facilitate and promote extended hours.
- Work with Denison Development Alliance and Denison Development Foundation on business recruitment and retention (address individual inquiries, recruitment of specific types of businesses including eateries).

2. **Capitalizing upon the historic significance and beauty of the architecture and improving the visual appeal of the area through the implementation of the “Streetscape Master Plan” which includes the expansion of public art and landscaping, the addition of color, and the continued maintenance of public buildings and communal areas.**

- Continue financial incentives to encourage development and maintenance of privately owned buildings.
- Determine ways to connect East End of Main to West Side of Austin.
- Develop gateways and themed areas (depot district, touchdown alley, auto row).
- Develop phasing and implementation schedule/plan for Streetscape Master Plan (outdoor sound, musical public art, ADA accessibility).
- Downtown will be well-maintained and attractive (including sidewalks, city properties, and city buildings).
- Enhance the Heritage Park stage with fans and lights.
- Maintain and preserve brick streets that exist on Woodard, Houston, Chestnut, & Burnett.
- Make recycling available to Downtown businesses.
- Promote Denison’s beautiful architecture and hidden spots with photographic opportunities (selfie stations, photographic backdrops, filming locations, etc.)
- Repair water lines throughout Downtown (especially Chestnut).
- Utilize compatible and consistent flags to add color and to determine which businesses are open (Such as Yellow Jacket flags and flags of pre-approved historic colors).

3. Managing both human and fiscal resources to facilitate the revitalization of Downtown through grants and supplementary funding, the recruitment and development of an engaged volunteer base, and the assistance of a full time staff addition.

- Assist Denison Arts Council with leadership development for its board.
- Assist Farmers Market with volunteer development and non-profit status.
- Assist in the development of Friends groups for Downtown Denison Inc., Red River Railroad Museum, and Eisenhower Birthplace to allow them to thrive and host events to promote heritage tourism (churches, individuals, groups).
- Attain Great American Main Street status (designation from National Main Street Center for exemplary achievement).
- Continue development of The Crew (ambassadors to Downtown to welcome visitors, keep Downtown clean, and nurture businesses).
- Continue internship program to facilitate projects that might otherwise require a consultant.
- Determine options for funding projects from outside sources (grants, corporate partners, Public Utility District, philanthropists, fundraising, crowdfunding, etc.).
- Host Volunteer Fair and vendor tables at events to recruit volunteers and develop volunteer appreciation meetings to maximize level of engagement.
- Host volunteer think tank meetings to facilitate focused brainstorming and achievement of goals.
- Obtain adequate staffing and finances for Main Street Department and its related projects.
- Seek volunteers whose interest aligns with the revitalization objectives for Downtown including history, culture, the arts and entertainment.
- Strengthen relationships with local foundations to show gratitude for their support
- Use Four Point Approach and work with and through Downtown Stakeholders group to attain goals.
- Utilize volunteers to fill staffing and event gaps.
- Work on recruiting volunteers from Denison and beyond.

4. Maintaining our National Register District status and the historic integrity of Downtown Denison through the development of a greater preservation ethic.

- Assist with relocation or removal of nuisance birds.
- Continue financial incentives as a means to maintain buildings.
- Develop greater sense of historic preservation ethic regarding maintenance of buildings to prevent any additional building deterioration and subsequent loss of property:
 - Adopt design guidelines.
 - Develop a resource list of skilled laborers.
 - Publish property owner pamphlet, education, Historic Preservation approval, etc.
 - Provide continuing education and training of Historic Preservation Commission and staff, and education for property owners.
- Work with property owners to remove slipcovers on buildings, unveil covered windows, and remove barriers to buildings contributing to National Register district.

5. Increasing the number of visitors to our attractions by 12% through the enhancement of their experience by highlighting our heritage and showcasing our natural and cultural resources.

- Attend regular meetings with lodging partners to increase their awareness of Downtown.
- Develop plans to keep all brochure outlets in the region stocked at all times.
- Enhance directional navigation efforts to guide people Downtown, including entrance designations and directional signage.
- Seek opportunities to develop a museum system for Denison History and a Cultural Arts Center.
- Promote increased heritage tourism that showcases our City of Heroes (sculptures in parks, historic tours through brochures/markers/social media, Veterans oral histories, additional exhibits or enhancement of Eisenhower Birthplace, wine trail featuring T.V. Munson & Grayson Viticulture Center).
- Work with TAPS, Lake Texoma Association, Tanglewood, Choctaw Casino, lodging facilities and other partners to attract people Downtown.

6. Striving to publicize Downtown Denison as an “Event Central” location through an increase in the number of public-partnered events by 4 annually and advertising the availability of venues for private events.

- Address any necessary updates to Entertainment District Ordinance (alcoholic beverages, 24/7/365 availability, merchandise on sidewalk).
- Assist Rialto ownership to determine ways to integrate property as a vital element of Downtown Denison.
- Continue to post all Downtown events on free websites and social media throughout the State and region.
- Coordinate decoration of buildings and Heritage Park during events to celebrate holiday seasons.
- Develop City support for events and affordability by exploring the utilization of highly trained volunteers to help event organizers and city to cut costs.
- Maximize benefit of Entertainment District and Arts & Cultural District designations.
- Promote Downtown as “Event Central” with venues for special events—public/private, indoor/outdoor.
 - Promote Library’s Special Events on Downtown calendar (free comic book day, book signings).
 - Work with Parks and Recreation for outdoor movies, kite festival, etc.
- Work with Lake Texoma tourism and recreation and Oklahoma casinos to maximize guest experience in region.

7. Adopting a signature for Downtown Denison’s Entertainment District that is easily identifiable, recognizable, and consistent with innovative marketing materials that demonstrate its engaging environment.

- Communicate successes including reinvestment numbers, new businesses, expansions, employees, etc.
- Continue public relations efforts with all media outlets and expand these efforts regionally.
- Determine need for mini-directories/maps for Downtown businesses.
- Develop guidelines for filming in Denison.
- Develop photographic scenes that promote Downtown Denison’s photogenic hot spots.
- Develop storylines and character actors which depict our local history.
- Establish Downtown Denison as player in the development of entertainers.
- Maximize individual and coordinated social media presence for Downtown Denison & its businesses.
- Promote access to information about individual businesses through Denison Live.
- Promote Denison as an area for college students from North Texas & Southern Oklahoma to gather for entertainment.
- Promote photography, videos, movies, and music production in Downtown.
- Utilize college and high school students to develop YouTube videos.

8. Identifying and planning a method to better utilize buildings undeveloped or underutilized building and public areas in Downtown.

- Complete design and construction of the Pocket Park.
- Determine best use for area formerly occupied by Katy Antiques buildings.
- Enforce ordinances relating to Downtown (no storage on first floors, signage, insurance on file for use of sidewalks, historic preservation, etc.).
- Ensure future City Hall and offices remain in Downtown.
- Facilitate outdoor dining and vending guidelines.
- Manage parking to leave streetside parking spaces available for customers.
- Organize efforts to develop Master Plan for 700 Block of Main.
- Reroute truck traffic around Downtown.
- Review zoning definitions and ordinances as necessary to determine suitability for Downtown Denison.
- Encourage high-tech improvements and recruitment of tech-related businesses and residents employed in this industry.

9. Ensuring a place for Downtown Denison in the regional economy through the development and growth of new and current regional partners.

- Address upcoming changes and growth and their potential effect on Downtown (Schuler, 691/75, Choctaw, etc.).
- Ensure Downtown Denison continues to house important governmental facilities, churches, grocery stores, etc.
- Restore community pride in Downtown Denison.

10. Creating a healthy and engaging living environment that meets the needs of Downtown residents by working with the Downtown Neighborhood Association to hold meetings once quarterly.

- Communicate between partners to find a common Downtown vision and continue Downtown Neighborhood Association quarterly meetings
- Continue to encourage loft development in upper stories.
- Facilitate Downtown grocery store's sustainability in Downtown Denison.
- Facilitate healthy lifestyles Downtown through exercise opportunities, education, walkability, etc.
- Strengthen support structure of Downtown Neighborhood Association.

Summary of Major Findings from the Visioning Survey

Question 1: How often do you come Downtown?

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1. 1 – 4 days each week | 37% (30) |
| 2. 5 – 7 days each week | 28.4% (23) |
| 3. At least once each month | 23.5% (19) |
| 4. Only for special events
and activities | 7.4% (6) |
| 5. Once every two months | 3.7% (3) |

Question 2: What relationship do you have with Downtown? Select all that apply.

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------|
| 1. I shop downtown | 70% (56) |
| 2. I attend events downtown | 66.3% (53) |
| 3. I work downtown | 23.8% (19) |
| 4. I own a business downtown | 18.8% (15) |
| 5. I live downtown | 15% (12) |

Question 3: Do you bring out-of-town guests downtown when they come to visit you?

- | | |
|------|-------|
| Yes- | 76.9% |
| No- | 23.1% |

Question 4: Why or why not (in reference to question 3)?

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Percentage of respondents who spoke of shopping
Respondents mentioned the following items in
their responses: shops, stores, vendors, galleries, art,
antiques, collectibles, and to eat | 46.5% |
| 2. Percentage who spoke of showing
off downtown to their guests | 18.9% |
| 3. Percentage who spoke of events and activities | 10.3% |
| 4. Suggestions | |
| i. "I enjoy the mix of activities downtown. My son likes the batting cages.
There are some great boutiques and antique stores. The restaurants are
good. We need more quality shops and destinations. More landscaped and
artistic accents would be nice." | |
| ii. "We live downtown and this is our neighborhood. We want to see it more
inviting with a park-like feeling." | |

Question 5: Would any of these bring you downtown more often? Please select those that would, and rank them, with 1 being the think most attractive to you.

Attraction item	Percentage of 81 that say it would	Percentage of 81 that rank the item as the most attractive on the list
Places to eat	85.1%	49.3%
Events and activities	66.6%	25.9%
Specialty shops	65.4%	27.1%
Nightlife	49.3%	19.7%
Family fun opportunities	48.1%	19.7%
Extended hours for business	45.6%	18.5%

Question 6: How do you receive information about downtown? Select all that apply.

Top four means:

1. Facebook pages of Denison Main Street or DenisonLive.com 72.2% (57)
2. By word of mouth 67.1% (53)
3. Through individual businesses' Facebook posts 50.6% (40)
4. Through television 43% (34)

Question 7: What can be done to improve our current efforts to showcase Denison as a city of heroes? Please rank the items in order according to their effectiveness, with 1 being the most effective.

Items ranked by effectiveness	Percentage that rank the item as most effective
Post more signs that display historical facts, stories, and pictures.	45.5%
Commemorate historical buildings with plaques on facades.	34.1%
Host thematic walking tours and character depictions.	30.3%
Establish permanent outdoor exhibits or sculptures.	29.1%
Advertise more about our heritage through media outlets.	26.5%
Host more events that showcase historical figures and their stories.	21.5%
Organize volunteer groups to help make historical exhibits more impressive.	18.9%
Other	10.1%

A. Ideas

1. "Create settings where people can take pictures with the heroes and pictures or replicas of other unique Denison assets."
2. "Attract more, higher quality restaurants."
3. "Have billboards on Hwy 75 to direct people to downtown to showcase Eisenhower Birthplace, Munson and Sullenberger. Rename Heritage Park as Sullenberger Park with a statue and ask Sullenberger to help promote Denison."

Question 8: What can be done to enrich our visitors' experiences with an appealing environment. Please rank these items to tell us what you think will be the most important, with 1 being the most.

Enhancements	Percentage who ranked it as the most important to our goal
Public art, including interactive musical instruments	37.5%
A splash pad (concrete pad with fountains shooting upward) for kids to play on during the summer	32.5%
Play areas for children	31.25%
An outdoor sound system that plays ambient music throughout the district	27.5%
Dog-friendly accommodations like watering stations, pet rest stops, and others	23.75%
Mini-stages that allow for sidewalk performances	16.25%
Other	10%

Comments:

1. "WiFi throughout downtown. Digital walking tours on the App mentioned in #7"
2. "Shade."
3. "I think cleanliness is important."
4. "We used to have a system that played music at Christmas."
5. "Outdoor seating, tables for eating or stopping to rest and take in the sights."

Question 9: Please rank the following items according to what you think will enhance pedestrian safety for families, with 1 being the most effective.

A.

Items to enhance pedestrian safety	Percentage who rank it as most effective
Keep flashing traffic lights on Main Street	46.75%
Replace flashing traffic lights with stop signs	27.27%
Enhance ADA Accessibility	23.37%
Add protected mid-block crossings with flashing lights	16.8%

Question 10: Please indicate which of the following you think should be considered for providing funding for downtown events and initiatives.

Funding method	Percentage those chose it over others
Community Development Block Grant Funding	56.9%
Access to Rural Capital Grants	23.1%
Public Improvement District (levies an additional tax for the benefit of the district)	20%

Question 11: Downtown Denison is an entertainment district. Please rank the following by which you think will maximize the benefits of this designation, with 1 being the most effective.

Opportunities	Percentage that ranked it as most effective
Market our public and private events spaces to attract more special events.	58%
Host mini-events on the East side of Austin Avenue.	23.4%
Give pedestrians the opportunity to openly carry alcohol 7 days a week instead of only at special events.	17.2%
Allow people to openly carry spirits in the Entertainment District (We currently allow people to openly carry beer and wine.)	17.2%

Question 12: The ambience of the streetscape helps us attract visitors. Please rank the following in order of importance, with 1 being the most important.

Streetscape elements	Percentage that rank it as most important for attracting visitors
Continue to improve the appearance of buildings (i.e. facades, window displays, upper stories).	67.9%
Maintain the brick streets.	65.4%
Focus on quality business signs.	30.8%
Develop a pocket park to provide a relaxation point.	29.6%

Question 13: Please rank the following methods of transportation according to which you think would help more people come downtown, with 1 being the most helpful.

Method of transportation	Percentage that ranked it as the most helpful for bringing people downtown
Designate Parking for Events with Shuttle to Destination	41.7%
Work with Choctaw Casino and local lodging to shuttle people to downtown	39.2%
Create bicycle paths and post signs to protect cyclists.	30.3%
Enhance existing TAPS shuttle opportunities	29.1%

Question 14: The Texas Department of Transportation and budgeting limit our ability to post signs, so please help our Downtown focus its resources by checking the options you think are the most important.

Options for signs	Percentage that chose it as the most important
Gateway designations for districts	54.79%
Billboard signs in the Metroplex	39.73%
Local billboards	28.77%

Question 15: Please rank the holiday activities by their effectiveness in bringing more people downtown, with 1 being the most effective.

Holiday attractions	Percentage that rank it as the most effective in bringing people downtown
Putting Christmas lights on all the buildings	54.32%
Host a winter carnival (outdoor ice rink, snow hill, activities for children, etc.)	45.67%
Set up a community Christmas tree in Heritage Park	44.44%
Organize caroling and street performances	40.7%
Invite choirs and set up nativity scenes downtown during the Christmas season	38.2%
Organize horse and buggy rides	35.8%

Question 16: What other Downtown Denison issues or concerns are important to you that you believe should be considered. Please explain in detail.

Categories of suggestions	Percentage of comments that fall into each category
Advocating small businesses	19.44%
Restoring the downtown area	16.67%
Pursuing certain projects	16.67%
Advertising	16.67%
Providing more entertainment	8.33%
Improving parking	5.56%
Public safety concerns	5.56%
Creating informative maps	5.56%
Uncategorized	5.56%

- “Locally owned businesses bring more to the economy than a "town center, big box store" and the city should be doing more to support its entrepreneurs. I also think building owners should have regulations/rules that must be upheld for the upkeep of their buildings and facades. I think bringing more large events to downtown would be helpful as well.”
- “Variation in shops. More restaurants.”
- “The stores we need to add are those that will allow people to stay and shop in Denison, keeping our tax dollars here and encouraging others to come here and shop. In addition to restaurants we need general department stores, men’s and women’s clothing.”
- “Stop destruction of historical buildings.”
- “Brick streets need maintenance. There are special grants that would help restore the original streets.”
- “We need to complete catalyst projects like the pocket park and we should work on small projects such as transforming Burnett into Touchdown Alley at football games or promoting historical walking and driving tours. I feel the city needs to ramp up efforts and create a Minimum Property Standard for the downtown core as well as enforcing zoning restrictions to help prevent people from living in the ground floor in a business district.”
- “Housing close to downtown need to be cleaned up!”
- “Want cohesiveness.”
- “Hopefully we can set up scenic settings around downtown during every season...not just Christmas. Maybe have a place at the pocket park that is known for having awesome seasonal decorations to encourage photo opportunities for parents taking photos of their children, professional photographers, amateur photographers, students, tourists, etc. taking pics for life events or simply during a stroll downtown.”
- “Landscaping and trees to provide shade for visitors and softness to the landscape”
- “Promote downtown as recycle friendly. Recycle trash cans in the park.”

- “Walking and/or driving tours - Self-guided with a brochure/map and even guided tours on special occasions.”
- “The arts are making Denison a much cooler place and local artists and artisans really add to the spirit.”
- “The Texoma Trade Days is experiencing a lot of visitors! The time is now to plan and implement a way to funnel the people from Loy Lake to the downtown area to spend their money. People want to relax and eat or be entertained after being out at the arena- what can we give them? This is a fruit to be picked!”
- “Events or fundraisers geared to attract different special groups such as bikers, emergency services, active military and veterans, sports minded etc.”
- “Focus on musical heritage.”
- “Live music year round always brings people to the area.”
- “There are some safety concerns about area homeless people in the alleys around businesses at night.”
- “I think there should be a map strictly with shopping, entertainment, and eating only!”