



Make Ogden Downtown Master Plan – Questions and Answers

1. What is the *Make Ogden* Downtown Master Plan, and how were/are citizens involved in its development and implementation?

- After several years of planning, including extensive public input, Ogden City's *Make Ogden* Downtown Master Plan was adopted in 2020 – establishing a 25-year vision to guide growth and development of downtown Ogden.
- The primary purposes of the *Make Ogden* Downtown Master Plan are to increase the City's capacity to build sustainable economic vitality going forward, and to enhance the attractiveness of downtown by increasing the number of jobs, housing options, pedestrian activity, public transportation, one-of-a-kind stores/restaurants/venues, and the overall downtown experience – all powerful economic factors that will improve the lives of residents and bolster the City's financial health and prosperity for generations to come.
- The six tenets of the *Make Ogden* Downtown Master Plan include:
 - Real Estate and Land Use
 - Historic and Cultural Assets
 - Transportation and Mobility
 - Parks and Open Space
 - Social Equity
 - Essential Services

These tenets (all critical for the success of downtown Ogden and focused on simultaneously) will be addressed through an orchestrated effort to promote the infill of the downtown core, preserve and enhance historic assets, attract employment, improve access to social services and amenities, coordinate public transit and open space systems, and provide variety and equity in housing opportunity.

- Currently, Ogden City Community and Economic Development is moving forward with several projects related to "Episode 1" of *Make Ogden*, including the *WonderBlock* Development, plans for an enhanced Union Station and surrounding campus, and a Downtown Parking Management System.
- Regular community events are currently ongoing to update the public on the status of the development activities associated with *Make Ogden*, and to solicit ideas that might improve implementation.

2. How do the downtown enhancements proposed by *Make Ogden* relate to supporting/attracting the economic advantages associated with aerospace and national security related businesses/industries – sometimes referred to as our "defense ecosystem"?

- Ogden City is experiencing a surge of collaboration, innovation, and increased economic opportunity in the aerospace and national security industry. This boom is bringing more growth

in workforce partnerships, thirsty for connection and collaboration – which benefits the overall economic sustainability of the entire community.

- Ogden City Community and Economic Development has been working on “placemaking” improvements, as outlined in *Make Ogden*, intended to cultivate a quality place where businesses and talent want to work and live.
- Ogden’s vibrant downtown, with our unique historical and cultural assets, is an ideal location for the defense tech sector, and is already home to SkiCAMP, a United States Air Force software development factory, Catalyst Campus, and others.
- Such companies and organizations are attracted to our restored historical spaces, and some are seeking new spaces configured for their needs that are close to all the unique amenities offered by downtown Ogden.
- Along with Ogden’s proximity to Hill Air Force Base, Ogden is a prime location for current and future growth in the national security innovation industry. The enhancements described in the *Make Ogden* downtown master plan will further increase our attractiveness for additional growth in this important business sector – as well as a diversity of many other industries.
- Such growth can provide opportunities for existing Ogden businesses and high-quality jobs for residents.

3. How are the plans associated with *Make Ogden* going to make it more affordable to live in and do business in Ogden?

- As with all cities, the costs associated with providing normal city services continue to rise.
- The primary source of revenue to pay for city operating costs is property taxes, along with sales taxes to a lesser degree.
- Unless the city actively works to encourage investment and development of underutilized properties in the areas with the highest potential (like downtown), then existing taxpayers will have the full burden of the increasing costs.
- However, as new development is planned, facilitated and encouraged – such as the development projects proposed in *Make Ogden* – the tax burden can be spread over a larger population and supported by enhanced properties with higher values that previously contributed very little to the city.
- The development of commercial properties in particular contributes a higher share of property taxes – which can reduce the overall tax burden on residential properties.

4. Why is it important that Ogden City be involved in development activities, such as those proposed in the *Make Ogden* downtown master plan?

- Ogden City has limited growth opportunities as it is geographically surrounded by other communities, which increases the importance of maximizing any vacant or underutilized properties within the city (densifying downtown) to their best use in terms of serving community needs and creating value to help sustain the city economically.
- Most of the properties that the city has purchased (via the city redevelopment agency) are sites that were blighted and had significant barriers to redevelopment, and the likelihood for private investment and development to meet city needs was very limited. Often, the costs for demolition or site remediation discouraged private investment to the level needed, and sites/buildings would otherwise remain neglected and unusable for years.

- In such cases, the city's involvement in improving the sites and preparing for redevelopment projects is the key to creating positive outcomes for the community.
- As an example, Ogden City previously invested in the infrastructure to prepare the current Business Depot Ogden business park, making it attractive for additional private investment. As a result, the entire community now benefits from a significant annual return on that investment that helps support the city overall. Without the city's involvement, the area would likely have only realized a fraction of its potential as a major economic powerhouse that it represents for our entire region.

5. What is the City's perspective on the potential for the implementation of the *Make Ogden* downtown master plan resulting in gentrification of the area?

- Gentrification is usually described as the process of changing the character of an area through the influx of more affluent residents moving in and improving housing and perhaps displacing current inhabitants. It is a common and controversial topic in most cities as there can be positive and negative outcomes that need to be balanced.
- As for the activities envisioned by *Make Ogden*, the increases in new residential units will take place primarily on vacant land. Further, the development of new business sites and enhancements of current historic assets will only increase access to employment opportunities at all levels. And finally, enhanced transportation development in the downtown area will further increase the livability of all residential areas in and adjacent to downtown Ogden.

6. Are energy efficiencies integrated into the *Make Ogden* development plans?

- Yes. For example, one of the development projects in Episode 1 of *Make Ogden* is the *WonderBlock* development, and the mixed-use residential/retail/commercial/hospitality/parking project will include sustainable energy sources, such as solar electricity.
- Additionally, there are certainly efficiencies inherent in the denser multi-family residential development downtown as proposed by *Make Ogden*, versus single-family residential developments.
- Finally, Electric Vehicle charging stations are currently being planned in various locations downtown and will also be included in the new parking structures as proposed in *Make Ogden*.

7. What process does the City Redevelopment Agency use to determine what developer to work with for a development?

- As authorized by Utah State Code 17-C, and by the Ogden City Redevelopment Policy, the city RDA has the option to perform potential developer engagement utilizing one of three different processes:
 - Public Solicitation
 - Direct Negotiation
 - Unsolicited Proposals
- When developers are sought for a particular project via public solicitation, qualifications are described by the city and interested developers can submit application packages that demonstrate how they qualify as the best development partner.

8. Will property taxes for citizens/property owners go up because the City is spending money on development projects related to *Make Ogden*?

- No – property taxes for property owners will not increase due to the City Redevelopment Agency’s investment into development projects, as such projects are not funded by existing property or sales taxes. As new development is increased through redevelopment activities, the city’s overall tax base is strengthened – which can reduce the tax burden on existing residents.
- For example, the bonds (funds borrowed) associated with the City RDA’s investment in the residential/retail/commercial/hospitality elements of the *WonderBlock* development will be paid back over a number of years via the increase in taxable value of the *WonderBlock* development (Tax Increment Financing or TIF), along with some funds from lease revenues from the City’s previous development investment at Business Depot Ogden (BDO).
- Additionally, the revenue bonds associated with the City Municipal Building Authority’s investment in the new parking structures located at *WonderBlock* and the proposed new parking management system downtown, will be paid via the revenue generated from the paid parking system – much of which will be paid by visitors from outside the community.

9. *Make Ogden* proposes dramatically increasing the number of residences downtown. What is the advantage of living in downtown Ogden – such as at *WonderBlock*?

- The high-quality residential apartments at *WonderBlock* will be just south of Historic 25th Street and our unique downtown, one of Ogden’s most interesting and culturally rich areas. One minute you could be biking along the river, and the next minute be meeting friends under the neon dragon on 25th Street. Connected to the heart of the city, *WonderBlock* is a place where mountain and urban living become one – certainly a great place to live!

10. How will *Make Ogden* help attract visitors to Ogden?

- Ogden’s colorful history has shaped our vibrant community and downtown arts and entertainment district, and it has always been known for its access to nearby outdoor assets. *Make Ogden* will add even more options and further support Ogden’s offerings as the place with the best dining, shopping, entertainment and historical assets – where there’s always something new to explore.

11. How does *Make Ogden* support downtown retail?

- Historic 25th Street has long been the center of the city’s downtown experience. And now, there is an opportunity for retailers to become part of Ogden’s next chapter and expand the treasured center of influence in Ogden – and for existing retailers to benefit from the exposure to more visitors, as well as new employees/residents.
- The growth in downtown residences will also expand the customer base for retailers – many living within walking distance of existing businesses.
- Here, visitors (as well as new and existing residents) will experience authentic downtown Ogden while also being surprised by a host of places to shop, dine, and explore – making downtown Ogden even more attractive as a top destination for visitors and shoppers.

12. As part of the *Make Ogden* downtown master plan, there has been a lot of talk recently about one of the first development projects – *WonderBlock*. Why is the *WonderBlock* development considered a better/more resilient project than some previous or potential projects?

- *WonderBlock* is a mixed-use project, not just one product type (like a shopping mall). The mix of uses (residential, retail, office, hospitality) helps to ensure its long-term success and useful life.
- Additionally, the project will add 354 new housing units, helping to respond to the housing shortage in Ogden and across the Wasatch Front. The region’s housing demand is forecast to remain strong, despite potential future economic changes.

13. As *Make Ogden* proposes new residential and commercial development that will bring more people downtown, where is everyone going to park their vehicles?

- During peak parking, about mid-day, there are some facilities or blocks downtown where parking reaches or exceeds the effective capacity threshold (more than 85% -- which negatively impacts accessibility, and some businesses believe the congested parking is hurting their business).
- The City's positive upcoming *Make Ogden* developments – including the *WonderBlock* development, will dramatically add residences/businesses/employees and enhance our overall economic vitality, and will also overwhelm existing parking capacity.
- The redevelopment initiatives associated with the *Make Ogden* Plan will:
 - Reduce existing surface parking,
 - Increase business and residential activities,
 - Increase the existing problem of limited prime retail spaces on 25th Street, and
 - Increase the overall parking demand and need for related new parking structures.

Therefore, the city is developing a parking management strategy that will support planned development downtown and enhance transportation access for visitors, residents and businesses.

- Additional parking structures and investments to improve existing parking facilities are indeed planned as part of the *WonderBlock* development and in support of other downtown developments. Supportive parking structures as recommended in the recent parking study completed by the city, with easy access to pedestrians and residential/commercial/retail areas, are significant investments in the future development of downtown Ogden.
- Structured parking will support a greater density and quality of development throughout downtown, replacing many of the current surface parking lots that consume a significant amount of property with better utilized space that benefits the whole community.
- The web page, www.ogdencity.com/GoParkOgden provides a summary of the work that has been done thus far regarding parking plans, including the recently completed Parking Study, the *Make Ogden* Downtown Master Plan, and a list of Frequently Asked Questions. The site also provides a feedback link for ideas and comments.

14. Where do I find out more information about *Make Ogden*?

- Additional information about *Make Ogden* is available at the web page: www.MakeOgden.com.
 - The web page also provides links to specific projects that are in process or proposed.
 - The “Provide Feedback” link on the web page is an easy way to ask questions/provide input.
- Follow the [Make Ogden Facebook](#) page.
- Participate in a “You Make Ogden” open house event (dates announced on [Make Ogden website](#)).