



Cars make their way through downtown Fairfield, Wednesday. A consultant estimates it would cost \$49.1 million to put the "Heart of Fairfield" plan in place. (Aaron Rosenblatt/Daily Republic)

## **Consultant: Heart of Fairfield plan would cost \$49.1M to put in place**

By [Ryan McCarthy](#) February, 2017

FAIRFIELD — Putting in place the Heart of Fairfield plan for downtown will cost \$49.1 million, a consultant's report estimates.

The cost, in the public review draft plan released Monday, includes \$1.2 million in spending through 2021 and \$44.3 million through 2040.

Ongoing costs total \$3.5 million.

Roadway, pedestrian and bicycle improvements total \$33.8 million and represent most of the costs.

The report states that as new projects are developed the city will receive new tax revenues that can be used to help pay for improvements.

Fairfield collects impact fees from developers and the city can consider updating the fee program to provide special fees downtown, according to the report.

The Davis office of Berkeley-based MIG Architects prepared the \$807,500 plan and environmental impact report for downtown Fairfield, including land between Highway 12 and Kentucky Street as well as the County Justice Center and Pennsylvania Avenue.

The City Council in 2014 approved the contract with MIG for the Heart of Fairfield plan.

Culminating nearly three years of planing, the document states strategies and actions “over the next 24 years and beyond” are included in the plan. The vision for downtown Fairfield is “the place where residents, workers, visitors, tourists and people from all over Fairfield and the region come to meet, gather, thrive and celebrate community milestones.”

Cornelius Wood, a resident of East Tennessee Street who has lived in Fairfield since 1966, said Wednesday that he remembers downtown when it was flourishing.

“The mall did the downtown in,” said Wood, 79.

He had said in November at a meeting that residential building outside the center of the city has helped lead to problems for Fairfield’s core and that the city is “collapsing in the middle.”

“Nobody’s ever going to build down there as long as they can build cheaply on the outside,” Wood said Wednesday.

If city officials consider the Heart of Fairfield plan and put the interests of downtown first, Wood said, the plan “might do us some good.”

Strategies in the draft plan include addressing “the perception of an overconcentration of social services agencies located downtown.”

Findings of a survey completed by 63 people at the farmers market or online include dealing with crime and social issues, along with repair of rundown properties, as the two top ways to improve West Texas Street.

The Heart of Fairfield plan states that its success does not depend on every item in the long-term plan being completed by 2040.

A Planning Commission public hearing for comments on the draft Heart of Fairfield plan and environmental impact report is tentatively scheduled March 8.

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