

Theme:	Comment Summaries:
Activities for Children	Recommendation to prioritize activities for children in the area.
Arts, Culture, and Tourism	Camden's Downtown revitalization should focus on integrating arts and culture, with opportunities for local artists to contribute to new buildings, murals, and public spaces. The Walter Rand Center could offer a space for performances and artistic expression. Dedicating part of the waterfront to arts, culture, and dining, like boat restaurants, could boost tourism and attract visitors. Strengthening marketing at locations like the South Jersey Port will support local businesses and create a more inviting atmosphere. The Downtown Camden Master Plan should prioritize arts and culture to foster sustainable growth and community identity.
Community Engagement, Communication, and Inclusion	Some residents feel excluded from the planning process, with decisions already made before they are invited to participate. Residents would like a more proactive approach to engage communities, including those in Lanning Square West, and for a clearer mechanism to include their input in shaping the master plan. Several residents did not receive information about the planning meetings, suggesting the creation of a communication committee and outreach efforts to ensure everyone is informed. Maps provided in the planning documents are also hard to read and need improvement. Questions were raised about how public input is tracked, who decides which comments are prioritized, and how those comments are incorporated into the master plan. Concerns about the lack of representation for certain communities (e.g., Lanning Square West) and institutions, like churches, in the planning process. There is also a need for outreach to residential stakeholders, such as those in large apartment complexes, and for more focused discussions on residential housing goals. Residents want clarity on the process, including when key documents (like the vision statement and project goals) will be available for review. There's also interest in understanding the next steps in the planning process and how new input from meetings will be integrated into the final plan.
Downtown Infrastructure and Walkability	Call to address large, unbroken blocks (e.g., near the Camden County office) and implement traffic calming measures to create more pedestrian-friendly spaces and improve traffic flow and improve walkability in Downtown Camden. Suggestions to enhance the transition between Gateway and Downtown, making it easier for employees (e.g., Campbell's and Subaru workers) to walk into downtown by improving walkable pathways. Concern about Market Street becoming a two-way, multi-lane road.
Economic Development and Local Business	Concerns about rising taxes and the impact of tax-free businesses on Camden residents, urging a focus on small and micro businesses. Recommendations for bringing government offices back downtown, extending business hours, and creating a special zone for restaurants with liquor licenses. The need for better representation of minority contractors, local businesses, and churches in the master plan, with calls for a communication committee and steering committee to ensure community voices are heard. Emphasis on local economic opportunities and job creation, especially for Camden residents. Questions about how zoning laws and bureaucratic red tape affect development, including the suggestion of creating a "one-stop shop" for permitting and addressing parking, food insecurity, and space for new businesses. The need to include mixed-use housing in all redevelopment plans. Desire for increased support for small and micro businesses, especially in terms of access to opportunities, resources, and funding. Suggestions for greater collaboration between the planning process and local entrepreneurs, such as food businesses and nonprofit organizations. Calls for a more comprehensive vision to attract tech startups, encourage innovation, and create a vibrant downtown. Recommendations for creating a tech/edutainment corridor near the transportation center, fostering entrepreneurship, and addressing bureaucratic inefficiencies to streamline the development process.
Housing and Development	Strong focus on mixed-use development and market-rate housing as critical to the downtown's success. Concerns about the lack of residential options in the core, especially market-rate housing. Recommendations include revising zoning to allow multi-family units in the downtown core, with particular attention to the Lanning Square area and existing vacant lots. Questions about the future of vacant houses, such as demolition plans and the redevelopment of the Camden County Jail. Interest in transforming underutilized properties, such as the Freedom Mortgage Pavilion, and repurposing spaces for community use. Acknowledgment of the need for affordable housing but also a push for market-rate options to prevent a homogeneous low-income housing market. Concerns about gentrification and displacement, and suggestions for tenant protections and community land trusts to mitigate these risks. Strong desire for more retail spaces, particularly on Market Street, to support the mixed-use development vision. Calls for a more balanced approach to retail, housing, and green space that prioritizes accessibility and vibrancy in the downtown area. Need for spaces like supermarkets and pharmacies as part of the plan. Requests for more public engagement and recognition of local businesses and residents, especially microbusinesses. Emphasis on incorporating community input to prevent displacement, and addressing the needs of marginalized communities in the planning process. Suggestions for streetscape improvements, such as visual cues to narrow one-way streets, and a concern about parking, particularly in relation to new housing developments. Calls for protecting Camden's historical buildings and addressing the city's parking challenges. Concern about the disconnect between the waterfront and the downtown area, with a desire to better leverage the waterfront's potential to support downtown businesses and tourism. A call for development incentives that could attract developers and improve the area's aesthetic and functional connectivity.
Master Plan Process	Questions about the boundaries in the Lanning Square West area, specifically whether they can be adjusted to extend to Line Street instead of Washington Street and Berkeley Street. Concerns about the lack of clear incentives in the master plan to attract developers and institutions. The importance of political will, citing successful examples like Collingswood, and the need to prioritize the retention of local institutions. Questions about the status of the previous Lanning Square and master plans, and the role of eminent domain in the new plan. Concerns about the continuity and updates in the current development plan, which appears similar to plans from 20-25 years ago. Suggestion to incorporate a SWOT analysis to leverage green infrastructure investments (e.g., pocket parks and greening) as part of addressing the city's stormwater issues. Question about whether the new master plan will incorporate content from the existing Cooper Grant Central Waterfront Neighborhood Plan (CGNA) and how it will affect the surrounding neighborhoods.
Sustainability and Innovation	Emphasis on increasing green space, expanding flood protection around the Delaware Riverfront, and addressing flooding issues with improved sewer systems. Additionally, tree canopy expansion, permeable pavement, and incentives for green roofs on new developments are recommended to enhance climate resilience. Suggestion to incorporate smart infrastructure such as sensors for traffic, waste management, and public Wi-Fi zones to modernize Camden's infrastructure and align with future development goals.
Transportation and Connectivity	Address concerns regarding heavy traffic at the amphitheater during concerts and the need for parking improvements, such as lowering meter rates and resolving residential parking issues. Suggestions include exploring small boat dock parking to accommodate waterfront venue traffic and short-term parking for post offices. Calls for the development of the Walter Rand Transportation Center (WRTC) to include office spaces, mixed-use retail, and eateries to enhance accessibility and support commuters. There is a push to integrate local transportation options like a trolley system for better mobility within Camden. Suggestions to improve walkability, particularly by extending street frontage along Market St. and incorporating plans to better connect key roads such as Third Street and Broadway. Emphasis on creating cohesive connections between neighborhoods, especially with the planned bridge to North Camden. Address concerns about the underutilization of Rutgers buildings and entrances, with a suggestion for greater involvement from the university in Camden's revitalization efforts, especially in improving the downtown area and maintaining its properties. Proposals to enhance neighborhood cohesion, including reviewing North Camden's 10-year plan and incorporating ideas such as bike rides or kayaking to connect different areas of the city. Consideration for future uses of the prison site, especially after the bridge to North Camden is completed.