

'Walkability' sensible goal downtown

BY THE EDITORIAL BOARD / PUBLISHED: DECEMBER 15, 2018

The ongoing conversion of so much of Scranton's downtown office space into a growing residential neighborhood offers a rare opportunity — the chance to accommodate the development as it occurs.

Much of the conversation in that regard has been around the development of amenities to accommodate residential growth. A few boutique food stores have opened in the downtown, for example, but it still lacks a full-service supermarket.

But Jeff Speck, a city planner and author of "Walkable City: How Downtowns Can Save America, One Step at a Time," says that making downtowns more accommodating can be much simpler.

In a presentation Wednesday at the University of Scranton's Kane Forum, Speck described some relatively simple and low-cost steps that could make the downtown more friendly to pedestrians which, for Scranton, would advance the conversion from a purely business to a residential environment.

He recommends some narrower vehicle lanes to slow speeds, four-way stops at more intersections, automatic rather than push-button pedestrian crossing signals, more

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A city planning expert says that relatively minor changes could make downtown Scranton more walkable. (Times-Tribune File)

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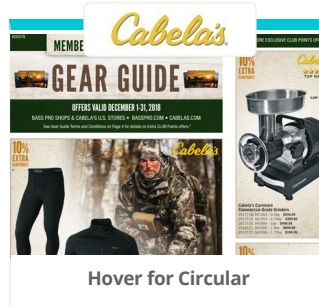


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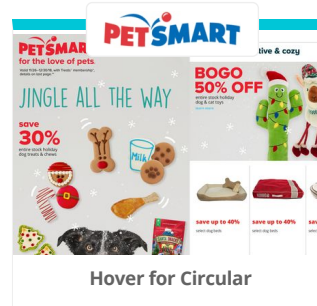
bicycle lanes and a few other devices to enhance the peaceful coexistence of pedestrians and cars.

The Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority already has a fine project under way to connect its heritage trail, along the Lackawanna River, to downtown Scranton.

Safely increasing pedestrian traffic serves a host of interests. The city government seriously should consider ideas like Speck's as the growing residential neighborhood continues to restore downtown vitality.

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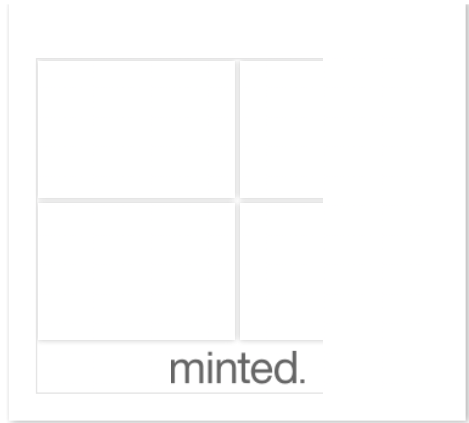


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All municipalities should be looking at doing this.....a balance between commercial and residential development.....way to many million sq foot trucking terminals.....lack of a higher living standard other than Clarksummit

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