

## Experience today

### **May 4, 2004 –**

- Sports; shopping; dining; ‘playing’ with out-of-town visitors—taking them to Fountain Square.
- Atmosphere very cold; barren.
- Claustrophobic (closed in by buildings).
- Klutzy and somewhat inaccessible.
- Disconnected.
- Free speech place.
- People and activities.
- Oktoberfest—exciting and happy when it’s mobbed with people—good feeling then, not sad.
- Memories: “I used to go shopping down there all the time; I never go downtown now. I go out of town to shop.”
- Schubert Theatre, movie theaters, restaurants, shopping, other activities and opportunities—more significant than the actual fountain or square.
- “If I didn’t work downtown, I wouldn’t go there at all.”
- Have to go to Newport or neighborhoods for movies.
- Fountain Square by itself will not draw people down there; it’s the festivals and activities and shopping that attract people.

### **May 5, 2004 –**

- Fountain; Fountain and public space; place for meeting other people; Rock Bottom Brewery Vibrant during the day; pretty dead at night.
- Might get harassed. Went to Tall Stacks and was approached by very threatening guys on the Square—DCI guys weren’t there at night.
- Hard edges.
- Small & few trees.
- Cut off from stores & shops & traffic.
- Bad sight lines.
- Only sense of ambience is fountain itself. Not a good feeling in other parts of the square. Stage is not functional; sound bad. Hard to see them; nowhere to hang banners.
- Plastic chairs and tables look a little tacky and unattractive. Wrought iron or more attractive furniture would be preferable.
- “Fare on the Square” tacky and generic food vendor.
- No shade, too hot to sit on granite.

### **May 6, 2004 -**

- Vibrant and full of people the 3 days I was there this week.
- I find the stage very forbidding; it’s a wall.
- No coffee shops to sit and enjoy the square.
- Coming through from 6<sup>th</sup> Street, you’d never know the Square was ahead.
- The elevators are filthy, foreboding, and frightening. And slow.
- Improve the Square so you can see across it, especially at night.
- Stairwells smell like urine. I

- go out of my way to go through the Square but the garage on the north side infringes on the Square; removes it from theatre district.
- It lacks personality.
- It needs greenery.
- It's all concrete.
- There's too much junk—pots, etc. Need more open space, not junk.
- It's the only successful public space in downtown Cincinnati.
- Had a negative experience at night and decided to stay away.
- No one stays in the Square area; need retail to make people linger.
- Fountain Square has activity at lunch-time; good for people-watching.
- If stage is replaced, keep public forum place. It's a great place for any activity, like rallies.
- Like café idea.
- Elevators are hard to find and scary to use.
- Design is very hard-edged. There are dead-ends and pits that are frightening.
- Fountain is best thing about square—focal point and attracts children.
- It's a great human touch.
- Chasing pigeons is fun for young children.
- Skywalk is unfortunate; don't like shadows cast.
- Likes skywalk.
- Need more retail.
- Only public soap box we have—very important.
- Like decoration at holiday times; increase it.
- Skywalk system provides competitive advantage for convention businesses; secure and good for weather.
- Skywalk impedes view of retail that's available.
- Skywalk by 5/3 works but not one by Westin—eyesore.
- Better exit and entrance needed to Walnut Street near 6<sup>th</sup> Street; it's dark.

**May 11, 2004 –**

- I left my office in Erlanger KY at 5:59 and made it in 10 minutes, including parking; Fountain Square is accessible. When you get to the square, you can't find your way around; there's no smooth path.
- I work at Liberty & Vine, and I'd love to come down for lunch, shopping, or music, but there is no easy way to get downtown from the edge of downtown [OTR].
- I was here on Saturday and there was a man on the stage with a microphone telling everyone they were going to go to hell.
- I was coming back from the Aronoff in the evening after midnight; it's deserted and quiet. You wonder where the light is and where the security is after hours.
- As a single 30-something, I don't know about anything exciting that is happening here that would appeal to me.
- 90% of the time it is empty and there is no activity.
- Lack of planned activities that are well executed. We need to cooperate with other people to get more things happening.

- When you park in the garage, you don't necessarily go through the square. There's nothing especially hospitable to sit down for, except the square.
- On evenings and weekends there are not enough musical acts, e.g. after ball game. Instead hear street ministers or experience unruly youth. I'd like to walk to a movie from the square.
- Public restrooms need to be improved.
- Hot in summer and cold in winter with hard surfaces; needs park atmosphere.
- Stairwells are treated as public restrooms.
- Architecture of square is off-putting with Stalinesque stage; could be more inviting.
- Went to Banker's Club for lunch on Mother's Day and children enjoyed square. Today only one elevator is working in garage and it skipped this level. Weather is a detriment; you really want to use skywalk. Wind has always blown through. I enjoy lunch in good weather; that is important to keep.
- Police on horseback are a good experience.
- As resident and worker, I enjoy square as a concept but it feels disjointed, too many levels. Expand it, make it more open.
- How are we going to engage our young people's voice in this process and in programming?
- One of the important functions is the place for large bodies of people to gather; architecture should still allow that.
- I like the wall for sitting.
- I grew up in Cincinnati, and I was always very proud of Fountain Square. When I was married 10 years ago, it was very important to have my picture taken there. My husband didn't understand it. How do we convey that to tourists?
- City has a lot of rules and regulations about programming that prohibits spontaneity. How can we open it up for more frequent use?
- Needs better access; 40-50 years ago it was too small, but greener and easy to get to from every direction.
- Skywalk seems useless entity that takes up space.
- Look at family-friendly activities and stores as well as transportation to events around Cincinnati, i.e., from ball park to Union Terminal.
- Arrange seating for participation, interaction, and introductions.
- Generate activity via restaurants, etc. around square that attract visitors, not banks.
- One problem is lack of access to arts district on 6 Street (Aronoff)—dark and claustrophobic tunnel now. Bring arts onto the square.
- 5/3 Bank and Rock Bottom Brewery have wretched signs, undignified and too commercial.
- I'd love to see Fountain Square non-smoking.
- I'd like to see a movie theater on the square.
- Now that I live downtown, it's rare that I go to the square. On Sunday evening I go to Newport for dinner.
- Why didn't we have this meeting on the square? More businesses, cafes, Internet access; bring old and young, families, broad range of groups—not just downtown workers.

- Parking 2 hours for \$1 is fantastic for businesses downtown; improve garage facility, including restrooms. It's convenient now to do business, but when there is an event, I have to shut down. Plan surrounding businesses to match types of events planned for the square.