Summit Downtown, Inc.
Board of Trustees Meeting
July 29, 2026, 8:00AM
In-Person/Zoom Meeting

Members Present: Mayor Elizabeth Fagan (ZOOM), Karen Schneider, Peter Lloyd, Ray Merritt (ZOOM), Rocco Flores (ZOOM), Kristen Scalia, Annette Dwyer, , Beth Welsh, Leslie Herman (ZOOM), Michelle Kalmanson, Daniela Bilotta Schreier (ZOOM); Staff: Nancy Adams, Wyndham Rothblatt, Marin Mixon.
Members Absent: Tammie Baldwin, Bill Robb, Chantal Landman
Members of the Public: Emi Havas

Karen Schneider called the meeting to order at 8:06am. Karen asked for a motion to approve the June 24th Board of Trustees meeting minutes. Beth motioned for approval, Annette seconded, all approved.

COMMITTEE/PROJECT REPORTS

Financials – Ray
Ray reported the financials look good and we're in good shape. He stated that assets and liabilities are $313, 786. There's $82,000 in deficit in revenue because we haven't yet received any assessment checks from the city and the first two quarters are expected in August and when we get those, we'll be back in positive revenue. Beth motioned the financials be approved, Annette seconded, all approved.

Placer.ai Report - Wyndham
Wyndham gave an overview of Placer reports he ran and distributed to the Board last Friday. (Our subscription expires this Friday and no grants have been available to renew the annual subscription.) Visits downtown are trending down, albeit only slightly, from prior years. Data varies quite a bit by days of the week, also regarding weather which can't be determined in these reports. He was given access a week ago to Placer's new Beta program and has an executive report from that may be accurate but likely not entirely accurate. Peter asked for a report removing the Farmers Market or Sunday from a report of the downtown because the attendance of the Farmers Market skews the data as to how many are visiting downtown. Wyndham will run one removing Sunday to see if that shows some differences. Discussion ensued about getting attendees to the Farmers Market to think about how to get those shoppers downtown after the market and maybe the retailers table could discuss how to get this information to them about what's open downtown on Sundays. Discussion continued noting reasons the Farmers Market shoppers don't go downtown afterwards, including they are laden with bags of fresh produce, dogs, kids, or in a routine where they are just going to the market as their Sunday morning errand, etc. Discussion continued with regard to creating a Summit loyalty program, an app to do that and send push notifications, etc. Placer report attached to these minutes.

Event Updates: Family Fun Night, Street Sounds, World Cup – Wyndham
Street Sounds continues but ends this week. It has really been great and people have come to listen to music and even dancing again, which is great. We are scheduling this for Fridays in the Fall.

World Cup – the final watch party of the final World Cup match was really great and the lot was packed. Thanks to all who volunteered and please mark your calendars for Sept 20th for Arts + Cars. Ray forwarded some contacts at P.A.L. to Nancy so she can share the volunteer sign-up link with them for beer garden volunteers. Karen noted that it doesn't have to be board members who volunteer but members should share the link with others who might be interested.

Sidewalk Sale – preparation of the Sidewalk Sale has been done with graphics and we're ready with ads, street banner and the regular advertising we do for all of our events. Kristen sent out more emails to retailers, so far about 30 have signed up and today is the last day to sign up.

Marketing Committee Updates – Kristen
Kristen reported on the sidewalk sale a little bit (see above) and then the postcard initiative, which they're going to push into early 2027. The retailers roundtable will be taking on some additional events during the holiday season. She reported that she was told the Executive Committee didn't want to fund the map initiative/printing until the second round so the retailers are funding that on their own and will come back to the board for the second round of printing. Karen explained that the Executive Board didn't say they wouldn't fund it, that's a full-board decision, but that the Executive Board discussed it and wasn't interest in additional funding because they thought it would be more prudent to see how the maps are publicly received before committing assessment dollars to another print run. Annette asked how the support or hesitation of financial support right now from SDI is being received by the retailers. Kristen said she went to a few of the retailers who have been dedicating time and energy to this map project and noted that the retailers are really struggling right now. She said that they understand that with the budget and small staff of SDI, it can't be as nimble in the moment as the retailers can be and they want to do this initiative on their own because they feel it's vitally important for the downtown. They are disappointed from the SDI support standpoint but are happy to carry this out themselves. Additionally, they are willing to do some other initiatives they think are important and if they have to raise funds themselves, they will in order to have the things done they think are important to do. Costs include Graphic design: $6,500–$7,000, Printing through LISS for 7,000 maps: $5,460, Estimated credit card processing fees: $1,000, Total project cost: approximately $12,960–$13,460, Total raised: $13,250. Annette expressed concern about the retailers roundtable, which has been great collaboration, becoming a separate group working **separate** from SDI instead of **with** SDI. Annette made a motion for Board to come up with a sum of money to support this initiative for either second printing or development of a digital map so that the retailer roundtable understands that SDI is supportive and appreciative of the work of the group. Ray noted that there is some skepticism even though appreciative of the efforts, that a printed map will be effective, but rather maybe physical directory or digital bulletin board downtown instead of printed maps would be better. Daniela thinks our social media will need to push this out if we print the maps but increase our social media reach by doing more creative posts to promote the map. Separately, she noted that our social media needs to be more interactive than it has been for our 15,000 plus followers. Leslie mentioned that she likes the idea of a physical directory downtown whether interactive or not. Right now, the retailers will proceed and come back to the Board for a second printing or whatever they need going forward for this project. Peter reemphasized that business is bad and so that's why the retailers got together. Mayor suggested that Kristen reach out to Summit Foundation for a grant.

Design Committee Updates – Annette
Annette updated that there hasn't been a meeting, but she will meet with the Garden Club in the fall. She and Beth will be looking into checking out the trees downtown because there are some that are dying or messy, so she's going to set up a meeting with the City Arborist to talk about a tree plan. Annette did weed Beechwood Rd and Lyric Park and will follow up with Mike Caputo about some potential plantings at Lyric Park. Lastly, she has spoken to our tree well sponsors and is looking into a plaque somewhere downtown instead of one in every single tree well; she's going to meet them in August and make progress on this.

Summit Public Art Updates – Leslie
Everyone is on vacation, so they haven't had a meeting. More updates at next meeting. Mayor mentioned the cool public art installation at the Village Green.

Common Council Updates – Mayor Elizabeth Fagan & Michelle Kalmanson
Mayor noted that Aaron Schrager is working two days a week still, but can be hard to contact, so if there's anything we need help with to let her know so she can follow up. She explained that the downtown traffic lights are being updated and was asked if there can be an outdoor tarp or something for walking at the intersections during construction because the gravel is really hard for ADA access, strollers, etc and that business at one corner location is down because of the project. She's going to follow up.

New Business – Karen
Councilperson Kalmanson mentioned that she's heard that Moms aren't shopping as much anymore downtown and she had an idea to partner with Dept of Comm Programs to provide baby sitters and pizza or something where moms can drop off their kids so moms can go shopping. Discussion ensued and suggestion of the Y or The Connection might be able to provide baby sitting and if the stores can stay open later on a specific day maybe this could be done. Mayor asked if this could be done for the sidewalk sale; it was determined it should stand alone as a separate initiative and it's late to work out an RSVP system etc. for less than a month away event.

Karen asked the Board members if they are available for a September 23rd Board meeting instead of the September 30th scheduled one. The Board members are all available for that change, so Nancy will send an email to the full Board with the change of date.

Public Comment
None.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:34am. The next BOT meeting is at 8AM on **September 23, 2026**, at Lois Schneider Realtor conference room.

Placer.Ai Summary:

Summit Downtown Proposed SID: Visitor Trends, Regional Draw & Strategic Priorities

Executive Summary for the SDI Board of Trustees | January 2019 – December 2025

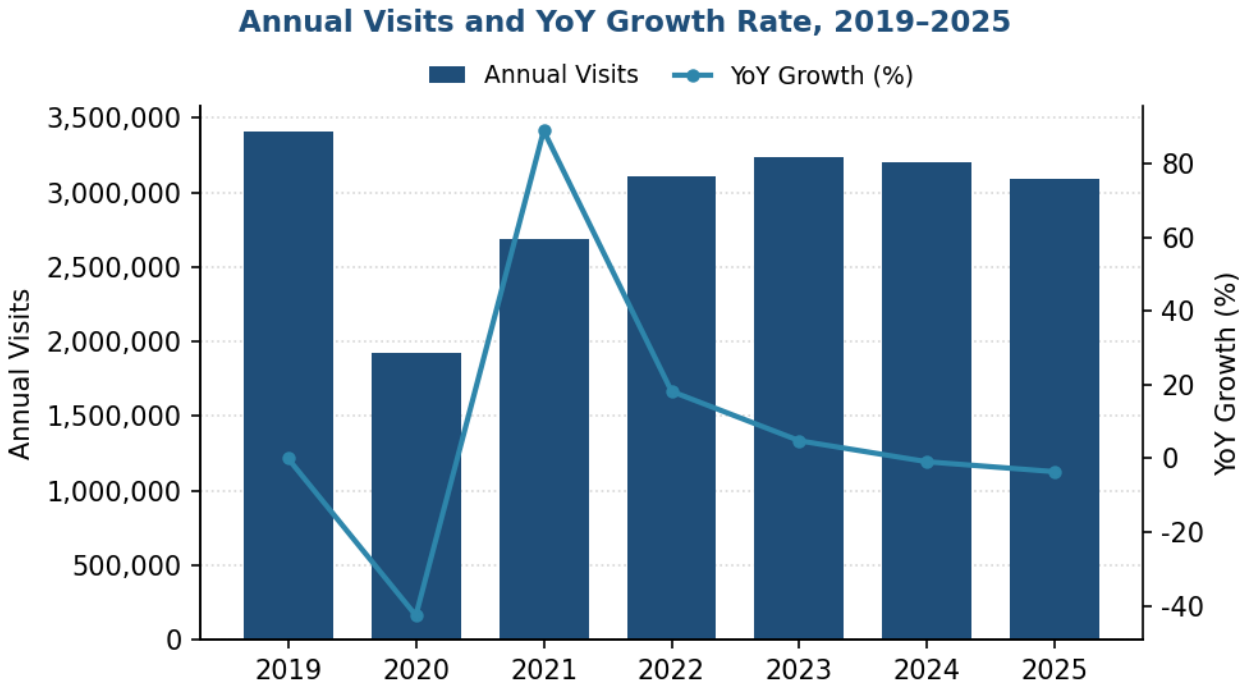
Broad Summary: Since 2019, Summit Downtown has expanded its regional reach, with the share of visitors coming from outside the local area increasing from approximately 66% to 72%. While total annual visitation remains slightly below pre-pandemic levels, the district has strengthened its appeal as a regional destination.

The greatest opportunity for future growth is the 26–39 age group, which visits downtown at lower rates than expected based on the surrounding trade area. Closing this 5–7 percentage point gap would be the most effective strategy for restoring—and exceeding—the district's 2019 peak visitation.

Annual Visits Continue to Recover but Remain Below 2019 Levels

- **2019 Annual Visits: 3.41 million** (pre-pandemic baseline)
- **2023 Annual Visits: 3.24 million** (post-pandemic peak)
- **2025 Annual Visits: 3.09 million**
- **2025 Year-over-Year Change: -3.6%**

Annual visits dropped sharply during the pandemic, falling from **3.41 million in 2019** to **1.93 million in 2020**. Since then, visitation has steadily recovered, reaching **3.24 million in 2023** before declining slightly to **3.20 million in 2024** and **3.09 million in 2025**. Although downtown Summit has made significant progress, annual visitation remains below pre-pandemic levels. Preliminary data through mid-2026 indicates this trend is continuing.



Regional Draw Continues to Grow

Summit Downtown is attracting a larger share of visitors from outside the local area. While Summit residents (ZIP code 07901) continue to be an important customer base, their share of visits has declined from approximately **41% in 2019** to **40% in 2025**, meaning more visitors are coming from surrounding communities.

Using SDI's broader definition of local versus non-local visitors, the share of non-local visits has increased from approximately **66% in 2019** to **72% in recent years**. This confirms that Summit Downtown has become a stronger regional destination.

This trend supports the proposed SID expansion by demonstrating that downtown serves not only Summit residents but also attracts visitors from across the region. The consistency of visitor patterns over the past several years indicates that this regional draw is stable and long-term, making continued investment in marketing, events, and downtown improvements an important strategy for sustaining economic growth.

Adults Ages 26–39 Represent the Greatest Growth Opportunity

The largest opportunity to increase visitation is among **adults ages 26–39**, who visit downtown at lower rates than expected based on the surrounding population.

- **Ages 30–34:** 4.2% of visitors vs. 9.3% of the trade area population

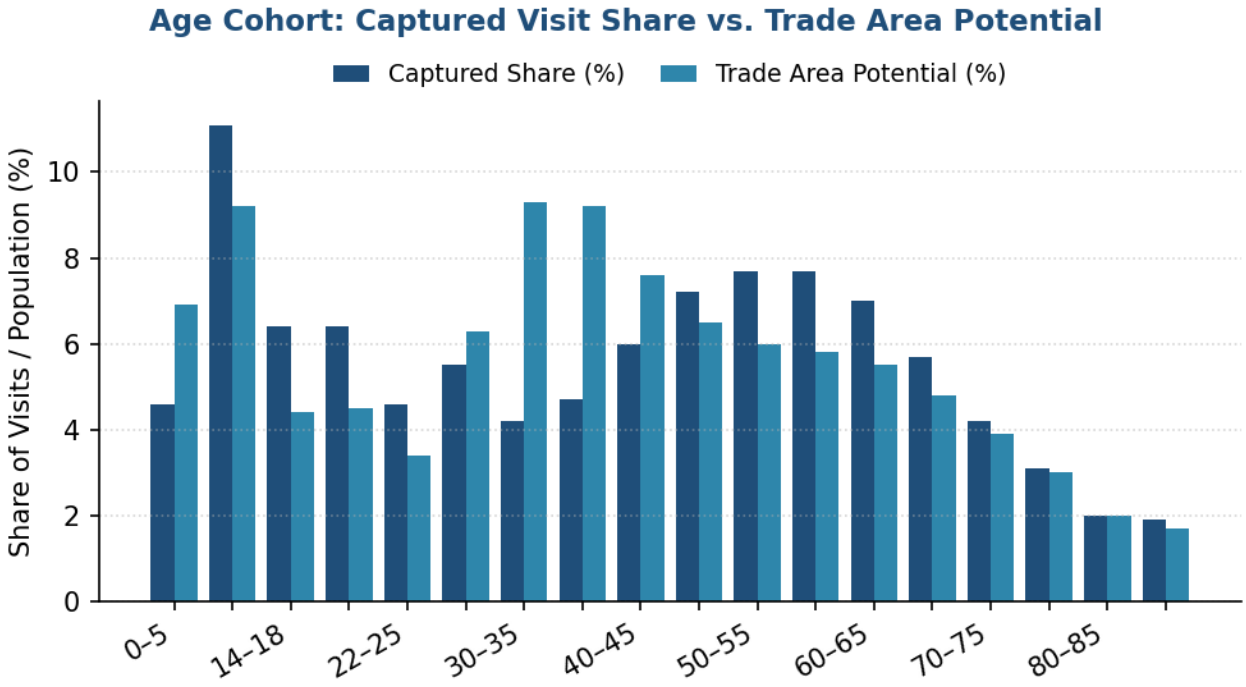
- **Ages 35–39:** 4.7% of visitors vs. 9.2% of the trade area population
- **Ages 25–29:** Also slightly underrepresented

In contrast, **families, children, teens, and adults age 40 and older** visit downtown at higher-than-expected rates. This indicates that Summit Downtown already performs well with these groups, while attracting more visitors in the 26–39 age range represents the greatest opportunity for future growth.

High-Income Visitors Are Already a Strength

Summit Downtown already attracts a strong share of **high-income households**. Nearly **49% of visitors** have household incomes of **$200,000 or more**, compared with **35%** of the surrounding trade area.

This shows that income is **not** a barrier to attracting visitors. Instead, the greatest opportunity is to offer more events, programming, and experiences (in store and public spaces) that appeal to **adults ages 26–39**, a life stage that is currently underrepresented despite its strong purchasing power.



Top feeder ZIPs are concentrated in the immediate western NJ suburbs, with Chatham, Short Hills, and New Providence leading consistently

Rank	Zip Code	Town	Total Visits All Years	Avg Monthly Share
1	07901	Summit, NJ (Home)	7,000,715	41.4%
2	07928	Chatham, NJ	1,258,287	7.3%
3	07078	Short Hills, NJ	1,216,867	7.1%
4	07974	New Providence, NJ	1,042,043	6.0%
5	07081	Springfield, NJ	668,001	3.9%
6	07922	Berkeley Heights, NJ	592,664	3.4%
7	07090	Westfield, NJ	538,109	3.1%
8	07960	Morristown, NJ	430,003	2.5%
9	07039	Livingston, NJ	423,846	2.5%
10	07940	Madison, NJ	422,945	2.5%
11	07040	Maplewood, NJ	396,767	2.3%
12	07083	Union, NJ	391,397	2.3%
13	07092	Mountainside, NJ	388,719	2.3%
14	07041	Millburn, NJ	334,020	1.9%
15	07920	Basking Ridge, NJ	324,647	1.8%
16	07059	Warren, NJ	248,151	1.4%
17	07052	West Orange, NJ	241,136	1.4%
18	07076	Scotch Plains, NJ	230,781	1.4%
19	07079	South Orange, NJ	223,430	1.3%
20	07932	Florham Park, NJ	166,561	1.0%

Source: Placer.ai foot traffic data, January 2019 – June 2026. Total visits summed across all available months.

Visitor Base Is Strong and Consistent

Most visitors to Summit Downtown come from communities within **10–15 miles**, primarily in **Union, Morris, and Essex counties**.

The top three non-Summit ZIP codes—**Chatham (07928), Short Hills (07078), and New Providence (07974)**—have consistently been the largest sources of visitors over the past **90 months**.

This consistency shows that Summit Downtown has a stable regional customer base, providing a strong foundation for expanded marketing, events, and programming aimed at attracting even more visitors from these nearby communities.

Five Strategic Priorities to Attract More 26–39-Year-Old Visitors

Summit Downtown already attracts high-income households, families, and visitors from across the region. The greatest opportunity is to increase visits from adults ages **26–39** while continuing to serve existing customers. Both **SDI and individual businesses** have a role to play.

1. **Create experiences that appeal to young professionals and young families.** Expand evening and weekend events such as outdoor dining, fitness classes, pop-up markets, live music, and family-friendly activities. Retailers and restaurants can support these efforts with extended hours, special promotions, themed events, and in-store experiences.

2. **Focus marketing on nearby communities.** Increase outreach to the top feeder communities—**Chatham, Short Hills, and New Providence**—through targeted advertising, partnerships, and promotions that encourage repeat visits.

3. **Build on Summit's appeal to high-income shoppers.** Since Summit already attracts affluent visitors, the opportunity is to offer experiences that resonate with younger adults, including curated shopping events, chef-driven dining, wellness activities, and unique retail experiences.

4. **Continue investing in family programming.** Signature events like the Farmers Market and Family Fun Night are important because they attract families whose parents fall within the 30–45 age group, helping grow this key audience.

5. **Set a measurable growth goal.** Use the 2019 visitation level of **3.41 million annual visits** as a benchmark, with increasing visitation among the 26–39 age group serving as a key measure of success

Risks to Future Growth

- **Declining visitation:** Visitor numbers have continued to trend downward in 2026. Reversing this trend will require both **SDI and businesses** to invest in new events, promotions, and experiences that encourage more frequent visits.
- **Not adapting to changing customer preferences:** Attracting adults ages **26–39** will require retailers and restaurants to meet their expectations by offering later shopping hours, evening promotions, special events, outdoor experiences, and a more active downtown after traditional business hours—while continuing to serve existing customers.

- **Relying on the same customer base:** Many visitors come from Chatham, Short Hills, and New Providence. Businesses can help expand Summit Downtown's reach by marketing to new audiences, collaborating on promotions, and creating reasons for first-time visitors to return.
- **Missing the opportunity:** Competing downtowns are actively attracting younger shoppers and diners. Businesses that embrace new programming, extended hours, and collaborative marketing will be better positioned to capture this growing market and strengthen downtown Summit as a regional destination.