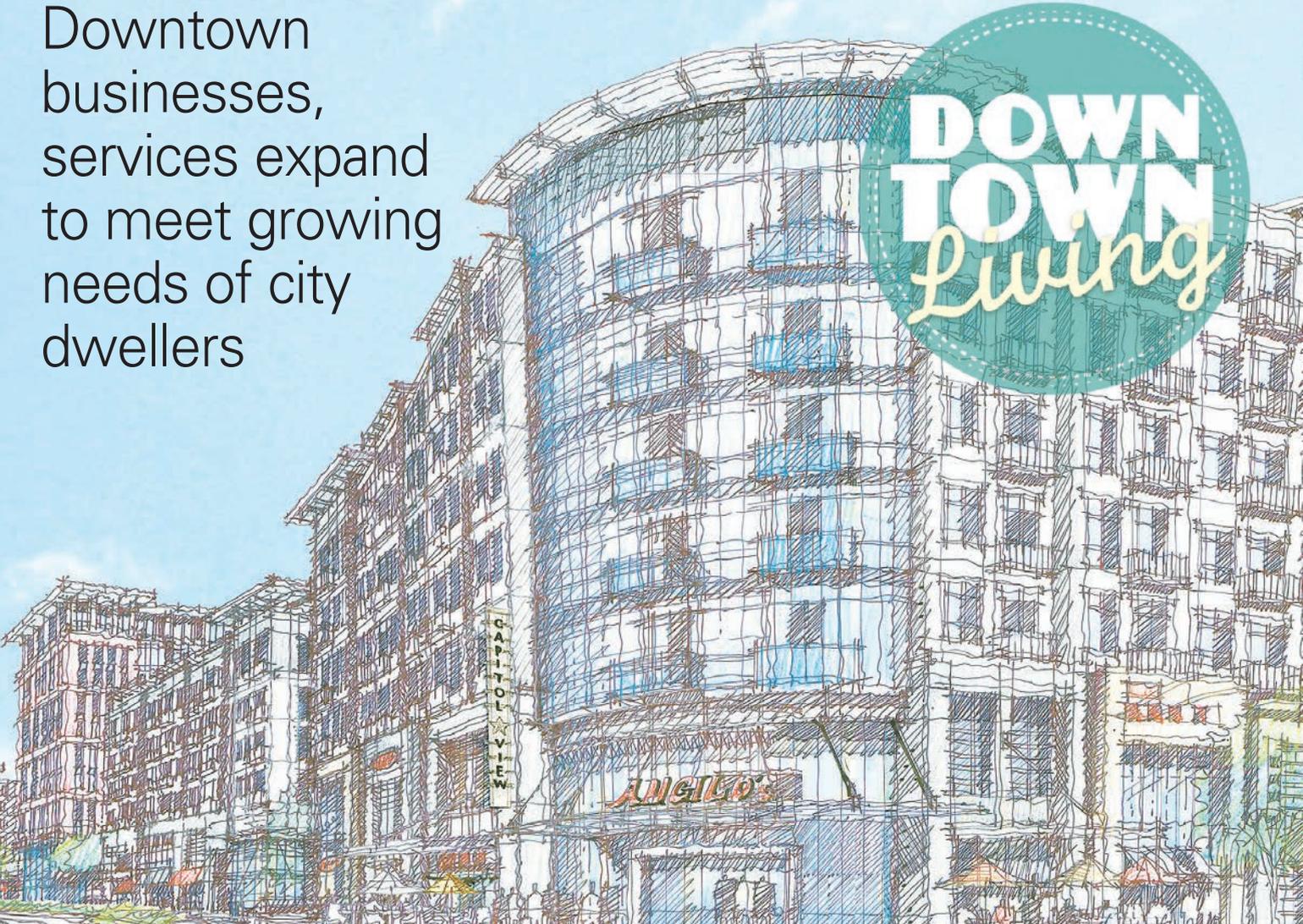


The urban lifestyle

Downtown businesses, services expand to meet growing needs of city dwellers



DOWNTOWN
Living

This rendering shows what developers envision for Capitol View, a proposed mixed-use development planned for the corner of 11th and Charlotte in the North Gulch of downtown Nashville. SUBMITTED / COOPER CARRY INC.

If you prefer biking to sitting in traffic, walking to the grocery instead of driving to it, or strolling down the street to grab dinner instead of fighting downtown traffic, the urban lifestyle would probably suit you.

And if that's true, you're not alone. According to Tamara Dickson, vice president for economic development at the Nashville Downtown Partnership, Music City is experiencing a growing resurgence in downtown living.

BACK TO THE CITY

"There's been a fundamental shift in people wanting to move back to the city in the last decade," says Dickson.

And that shift has brought a wealth of living options to the city's urban landscape, along with a vibrant community of

restaurants, shops and clubs.

"Every year there are more people living downtown. The more people, the more amenities," says Dickson.

Why the appeal? According to Dickson, there are a few reasons. The urban environment. The excitement of the city. Being near dining, entertainment and shopping opportunities.

"It's the whole urban experience — being able to walk out your door and have everything at your fingertips," says Dickson.

RETAIL, RESTAURANTS & MORE

If you live in the heart of Music City, you definitely have options — lots of them.

Take The Gulch, for example. This former railroad yard has

been transformed into Nashville's urban hotspot. Properties like Velocity, Terrazzo, Encore and the Viridian offer the ultimate digs for downtown living. And with the tremendous growth here, there's always something to do or some place to go. Shop at Two Old Hippies, Apricot Lane or Urban Outfitters. Work out at Barry's Bootcamp or chill out at Sanctuary for Yoga. Meet friends for drinks at Bar Louie or The Pub Nashville. Walk over to Whiskey Kitchen or Sambuca for dinner. If you feel like getting your art on, stroll on down to the Frist Center for the Visual Arts. Head down to the Tennessee Performing Arts Center for a ballet performance or to the Schermerhorn for a musical event.

Andrea Champion, communications director for the Nashville Downtown Partnership, notes that downtown not only has more restaurants but that many of them are locally owned. Among them: Etch, The Southern, Puckett's (5th and Church) and The Farm House.

Another important component of a downtown community is the neighborhood grocery store. There was a time when the downtown core was bereft of this necessity. But that has changed, too, says Champion.

"In 2007, the H.G. Hill Urban Market opened in The Viridian, and the Turnip Truck Urban Fare opened in 2010," says Champion.

And The Gulch is set to get another grocery store sometime in 2016. The new Capitol View project proposed for a 32-acre site at 11th Avenue and Charlotte is expected to bring grocery, restaurant, retail and office space, as well as hotel rooms and apartments. Co-developers Boyle Nashville and Northwestern Mutual have indicated plans to connect the new project with the city's bikeway/greenway system, making it easy to access areas like the Bicentennial Mall, the Farmers Market and the city's new ballpark.

GETTING AROUND

If you live downtown, whether you own a car or not, there's really no need to drive yourself anywhere. And, as Dickson points out, most urban dwellers don't want to.

"Most people who move downtown want that urban lifestyle and they want to be able to walk to these places," says Champion.

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TOP TO BOTTOM: Saint Añejo is just one of the newer restaurants in The Gulch.

Urban dwellers can shop for groceries and fresh produce at Turnip Truck Urban Fare.

The Pub Nashville is located on 11th Avenue in The Gulch. TENNESSEAN FILE PHOTOS





Nashville's Gulch area continues to grow with more condos, retail space and restaurants. FILE / TENNESSEAN



Twelve Twelve, a new condo community, is located at 12th and Laurel in The Gulch. RENDERING COURTESY OF HASTINGS ARCHITECTURE ASSOCIATES

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And if you have a car when you move downtown, there's a good chance you won't keep it.

"Many downtown residents choose to get rid of their cars once they move downtown, because they have alternate transportation options," says Dickson.

Dickson cites multiple modes of transportation options in the downtown area, from B-cycle (a bicycle sharing program) and Enterprise CarShare to the Music City Circuit (buses and vans that circulate the downtown area offering free rides).

In addition, Lyft and Uber, the latest innovations in ride-share services, have established a presence in Music City.

DON'T FORGET THE MUSIC

In addition to retail and restaurants, downtown Music City has a wealth of — surprise — music hotspots. Nashville has been getting national notice for its music scene — and it's much more than country music that is thriving in Guitar Town; Music City's burgeoning pop scene recently led The Atlantic to dub Nashville the "Silicon Valley of the music business." The publication cited the city's transformation from "country music

outpost" to a major player in the world of commercial music. Venerable music venues like 3rd and Lindsley and The Station Inn provide unforgettable entertainment. And don't forget the historic Ryman Auditorium, which *Rolling Stone* named #4 on their 2013 list of "Best Music Venues."

OFFICE SPACE

If you're looking to set up shop, office space in The Gulch is plentiful right now. And Dickson points out that Gulch Crossing, which is set to open in 2015, will add another 205,000 square feet of office and retail space.

Speaking of the office: Did you know that Forbes.com ranks Nashville fifth among its "Best Places for Business and Careers"? And 16th for job growth? And second among "Best Big Cities for Jobs"?

Dickson, for one, is excited about the future of Nashville's downtown core.

"Downtown Nashville is becoming a true urban city," says Dickson. "In the next five to 10 years, it will be a true 24/7 city.

These are just some of the reasons to consider living in the heart of Music City. Another reason: The view's not bad either.

— Diane Hughes, Tennessean Custom Publications