

**Chris Kershner**  
**Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce**  
**Testimony Before the City of Dayton Commission**  
**May 7, 2025**

Mayor Mims and Members of the Commission,

Downtown safety and security have reached a critical tipping point—one that directly affects not only our downtown business community, but also the perception of downtown among employees, residents, clients, and customers.

Our businesses have made substantial investments to bring people back to work, attract new residents, and draw customers into first-floor spaces. These businesses are not just generating economic activity—they are shaping the future of their industries right here in Dayton. Their employees and owners pay City of Dayton income taxes and contribute daily to the city's economic vibrancy.

As a regional chamber of commerce serving 14 counties, we understand one fundamental truth: we cannot have a strong region without a strong core. And make no mistake—the strength of that core hinges on the safety and security of our downtown.

To that end, we urge the City to prioritize an increased police presence downtown. A visible, consistent law enforcement presence will have a direct impact on improving safety and addressing the criminal activity our businesses are confronting. These businesses are investing millions of dollars because they believe in the future of our downtown and our community—and they deserve to see that belief reciprocated with meaningful public investment.

I want to commend the City of Dayton for recognizing this urgent need and moving forward with action to bring a police station back to our downtown core. The location at 101 S. St. Clair Street is strategically positioned: just two blocks from the Jefferson Street RTA hub entrance, two-tenths of a mile from the Oregon District, and four-tenths of a mile from both Courthouse Square and Riverscape Metro Park. I want to be clear, we have a downtown safety issue today and it must be addressed immediately through swift action and leadership. We do not have luxury of waiting.

This new downtown station represents more than a building—it represents a commitment. It means a police station with 40 officers on foot and bike patrols, police cruisers circulating, and a visible presence that gives our business community and the public confidence in their safety.

I respectfully urge the Commission to continue investing in the safety, security, and success of downtown Dayton by supporting the return of a downtown police station. Together, we can ensure that our core remains vibrant, strong, and safe—for everyone.

Thank you