



DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLAN

CITY OF WEST PLAINS, MISSOURI

JANUARY, 2010



CITY OF WEST PLAINS



DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE
FOR MISSOURI (DREAM) PROGRAM SPONSORS:



PLANNING CONSULTANT:



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DREAM INITIATIVE
PROCESS



DREAM Initiative • Downtown Strategic Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of the Downtown Revitalization and Economic Assistance for Missouri (DREAM) Initiative is to develop and create a planning vision for Downtown West Plains that enhances productive use of existing available resources. Downtown resources include public infrastructure, buildings, and human capacity. The DREAM Initiative seeks to leverage these resources to encourage private investment in the form of Downtown development projects.

The DREAM planning process reviewed numerous issues regarding the function, structure and image of Downtown and provided recommendations to address these issues. The Initiative helped to identify existing opportunities and constraints and develop a plan for future improvements, growth, and sustainability. The process began with several wide-ranging assessments of existing conditions in Downtown West Plains. These assessments provided the foundation for various analyses which followed and their resulting recommendations developed under each DREAM task are described in this report. Existing planning documents, such as the City of West Plains 2003 Comprehensive Land Use Plan, were also reviewed and this resulting Downtown Strategic Plan is intended to supplement existing City-wide planning efforts.

The Downtown Strategic Plan will serve as an implementation resource for West Plains' leaders as improvements are made. The plan provides a five-to-eight year vision promoting creative, positive, and feasible change. Participants of the planning process, including numerous citizens and civic leaders, expect that the DREAM Downtown Strategic Plan will provide the blueprint to transform Downtown into a relevant and vibrant activity center in which to live, play, and work.

The Downtown Strategic Plan describes, in detail, the goals developed throughout the DREAM process and the strategies by which these goals are to be achieved. The goals are noted in each respective chapter. High priority goals for Downtown West Plains include:

Goal One: Energize the leadership of Downtown West Plains, Inc. (DTWP) by conducting a retreat - A Board retreat is necessary for improved operations of the organization. Issues to be discussed should include organizational adjustments, staffing, funding, committees and volunteers. Retreat outcomes should include proposed contracts detailing the relationship between DTWP and the Incubator and a business plan.

Additionally, this process should result in long-term goals for Downtown improvements. Significant results need to be communicated to membership and committees shortly after the retreat. (As of the writing of this plan, there is uncertainty concerning the Executive Director position of DTWP. Sustained funding and support for this staff position should be the main topic of the retreat.)

Goal Two: Establish a Community Improvement District (CID) in Downtown West Plains - A CID will contribute a sustainable funding source for improvements in Downtown. The CID should be established as a political subdivision and be supported by a property and sales tax. A CID will help to solidify Downtown West Plains, Inc. as the lead Downtown organization and provide the ability to contractually deliver needed Downtown services, thereby expanding operations and programming of the group. Funding from that CID will also help pay for the DTWP Executive Director and required staff support.



Downtown West Plains Courthouse Square



Historic Building on West Main Street in Downtown

Goal Three: Develop Seminars to Benefit Existing Downtown West Plains Businesses - Create a Downtown merchant program to help businesses understand how to improve their marketing, customer service, promotions, hours, business and building maintenance, trends, and other topics of interest. Create additional support opportunities by bringing the Downtown together for networking and an understanding of City, Chamber, Incubator, and Downtown West Plains, Inc. services. These seminars can also be used to educate Downtown businesses and property owners about incentive programs for building improvements. This activity will also result in a core group of Downtown business advocates and can also include University students in useful subjects.

Goal Four: Provide a greater measure of control over buildings in Downtown West Plains: - Three important aspects of this goal include establishing building design guidelines, enforcing building and maintenance codes, and establishing residential building inspections. West Plains has a local historic district and should have building design guidelines to assist the property owners within that district. Existing buildings throughout Downtown are showing deferred maintenance, especially on rear façades, and building and maintenance codes are critical to protect these structures.

Residential buildings, specifically rental properties, must be inspected to determine true building conditions and ensure property values and rents are stable. By implementing residential inspections throughout the City, Downtown will benefit by improvement to surrounding structures and along the routes to and from Downtown.

By communicating these aspects and procedures effectively to the Downtown property owners, the City of West Plains will begin to demonstrate an emphasis on the aesthetics of private property. As owners grow to understand this effort, the productive life of Downtown buildings will increase.

Goal Five: Improve Existing Parking Lot Conditions in Downtown West Plains - Public parking lots are often the first destination of a Downtown visitor and as such need to leave a positive impression. Existing lots in Downtown West Plains have a barren and lifeless feel due to lack of landscaping, deferred maintenance, obsolete signage, and excessive pavement. Downtown West Plains also attracts a large number of visitors due to facilities such as the Civic Center and Missouri State University that utilize these unappealing lots. Improvements to existing parking lots should include decorative lighting, new pavement, striping, walkways, green space and attractive landscaping areas. Also clear, decorative, signage that delineates the public lot will provide a welcome environment and establish a positive first impression for visitors.

Goal Six: Establish a Community-wide Wayfinding System to the Benefit of Downtown - West Plains benefits from numerous visitors to several City attractions, but Downtown is not intuitively easy to find from the highway. A clear defined route from activity centers combined with gateway signs will welcome the City's visitors to Downtown. An overall system will consist of trailblazer signs, proximity signs, and district signs as well as the gateway signs. The system should have a focus on aesthetics and a unified theme and may also include the replacement of traffic and directional signs.



Existing Outdoor Café Seating



Rehabilitated Façade of Building on Courthouse Square



Existing Parking Lot Conditions in Downtown

Goal Seven: Develop a Downtown West Plains Website

Website - Create a Downtown-specific website, separate from the City site, to advertise Downtown events, promotions, plans, businesses, and projects. A dynamic and well-constructed website is also an invaluable tool by which DTWP can communicate with residents, businesses, property owners, merchants, and visitors. The existing City site is helpful for residents and official notices, but provides little regarding visitor and business promotion and nothing specifically for the advancement of Downtown.

Goal Eight: Continue Streetscape Phases focusing on Pedestrian Improvements

Pedestrian Improvements - The existing Streetscape should be extended along Broadway and other primary streets. New elements should be added to help establish pedestrian loops with Courthouse Square at the center. Important features along these loops are similar to the rest of the streetscape and include parking, benches, lighting, landscaping, and well maintained occupied buildings. Additionally, a pedestrian connection should be developed between Missouri State University and the Civic Center. This connection should provide plazas and active retail locations that will encourage gathering places.

This goal again speaks to addressing the need for improved parking lots. It is important to understand that every vehicle in a parking lot brings at least one pedestrian into Downtown. Parking lots will benefit from the same enhancements that pedestrians will enjoy throughout Downtown. Plazas at various locations on the parking lots will create welcoming gathering places for the visitor to transition from vehicular to pedestrian travel.

Goal Nine: Improve Downtown West Plains' Arcades

Due to the layout of the Courthouse Square, the arcades are a very unique feature of Downtown. The three remaining Arcades should be enhanced with design elements and decorative fixtures. Each Arcade can develop its own identity, with a focus on retail uses. Luster Arcade should be the main dining and entertainment center due to the large parking lot nearby. The other two Arcades can focus on specialty shops or foods, perhaps as narrowly as antiques or crafts. All of the Arcades should be seasonally decorated, promoted by their respective merchants, and encouraged as meeting places.

Additionally, the missing southwest Arcade should be reestablished. The City should work to attract a developer, but utilize the existing parking lot as an activity center. The lot is ideal for a use such as a Downtown Marketplace, that will not interfere with the eventual goal of attracting a developer to construct a building at this location.

Goal Ten: Develop a Downtown Marketplace

One of the gaps in unmet retail demand is in the category of "grocery stores". A location for a grocer was identified in the Retail Market Analysis, but another step is to establish a regular Downtown Marketplace with a permanent location. The Marketplace could be located in the parking lot where the southwest Arcade would be, but some colorful permanent tents or awnings and clear signage is required to draw people off of the Square. The Marketplace should include locally grown produce and items made by residents. The Marketplace should be held weekly throughout the Summer.



Second Saturday Stroll in Downtown West Plains



Storefront restored to original façade in Elledge Arcade

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Effective planning engages the public and responds. As the accountable authority, local policymakers need to ensure that planning recommendations have been vetted through a process that allowed for adequate input. The DREAM Initiative utilized a comprehensive approach to reach out to local citizens and civic leaders to identify issues regarding Downtown West Plains. This approach provided support for future project identification and policy formulation.

The public outreach component revealed perceptions of Downtown West Plains and helped create a vision for an improved Downtown. Public meetings and surveys were utilized to identify opportunities and constraints. Public outreach activities created opportunities to introduce and build support for DREAM Initiative recommendations.

Discussions with the public and interviews with the Downtown stakeholders indicated a great sense of pride for Downtown West Plains. Local leaders were very involved and supportive of existing revitalization efforts such as the Ozarks Small Business Incubator, streetscape improvements, and numerous building rehabilitations.

After many discussions, it was apparent that issues facing Downtown West Plains had to do with organization and sustainability of Downtown West Plains, Inc. (DTWP), ongoing funding mechanisms, and building and maintenance codes. The public outreach efforts reinforced these as critical issues.

The DREAM Initiative used numerous methods to involve the public and generate proposed solutions for these and other issues. Some of the public engagement methods used were:

- **Initial Assessment Meeting**
Upon being designated a DREAM community, an Initial Assessment Meeting was held on November 13, 2006 at the Ozark Medical Center Foundation community Room located at 401 Washington Avenue. The meeting was well attended by DTWP staff and Board Members, City officials, Downtown property owners, and other interested parties. DTWP provided a presentation and tour of Downtown. State of Missouri personnel were in attendance as were staff members of PGAV. The purpose of this meeting was to identify tasks to be included in the DREAM Initiative contract.
- **Focus Group Meetings**
In the Spring of 2007, four focus groups were conducted with members of the DREAM Committee, Downtown business owners, long-time residents, and newer residents. The session moderator asked general questions about the City of West Plains and specific questions about Downtown that were designed to elicit discussion. Topics of discussion included how Downtown is used, perceived, and challenged. Ideas on how Downtown could be improved were also provided by the groups.
- **Surveys**
In September of 2007, a telephone survey was conducted to solicit feedback from local residents. Three hundred responses were received and some questions built on issues that were discussed in the focus group meetings. Respondents were positive about Downtown, but did indicate areas for improvement such as placing an emphasis on retaining its historic character and improving building façades.



Missouri State University—West Plains Campus

In late 2007 and early 2008 a visitor survey was conducted at various Downtown West Plains locations, including several events at the West Plains Civic Center. Two hundred and seventeen interviews were completed by visitors residing outside of the West Plains zip code. Respondents generally viewed Downtown West Plains as a special event destination and felt benches, green space, and the renovation of historic buildings would make Downtown more appealing.

- **Key Stakeholder Interviews**

Interviews of Downtown stakeholders were held to review issues indicated by business and property owners, developers, City staff and officials, and residents. Throughout the planning process meetings and constant communication occurred with West Plains' leaders, representatives of Missouri State University (MSU), and County officials.

- **West Plains DREAM Committee**

Representatives of local groups including DTWP, the Avenue Theatre, the Ozark Heritage Welcome Center, the Greater West Plains Chamber of Commerce and the City formed the DREAM Committee. The representatives of these groups reported on the progress of the DREAM Initiative to their respective boards and organizations.

- **Task Kickoff Meetings**

Public kickoff meetings were held at the beginning of DREAM tasks which focused on Building and Streetscape Design Guidelines, Destination Assessment, and Marketing. These meetings were attended by various members of the public that were interested or connected to the task topic.

- **Annual Review Meetings**

A public annual review meeting was held on September 22, 2008 and again on May 27, 2009. At both of these meetings members of the DTWP Board, City staff and officials, businesses and property owners, and residents were in attendance.

- **Downtown Strategic Plan Process**

A kickoff meeting for the Downtown Strategic Plan process was also held on May 27, 2009. Preliminary recommendations of the Plan were presented as well as the process and issues that have been identified. A second public meeting was held on November 3, 2009 at which time participants assisted in prioritizing major recommendations of the Strategic Plan.

- **Press Involvement**

At many public meeting members of the local newspaper and other press agencies were in attendance to report on the meeting. Additionally, sample press releases were provided to the City and DTWP to help generate news stories about these meetings and other DREAM tasks. Numerous articles were generated utilizing this method.

- **City Website**

The West Plains City Council also discussed aspects of DREAM tasks and reports. Minutes of some of these City Council meetings can be obtained by visiting the City website at www.westplains.net.



Public Participation at a DREAM Meeting



Participants on a Walking Tour of Downtown West Plains

DREAM Initiative • Downtown Strategic Plan

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The City of West Plains was designated a DREAM Initiative community in the fall of 2006 and executed the Planning Scope of Services contract with the Missouri Development Finance Board in March of 2007. The scheduled completion date for DREAM planning services is in the spring of 2010.

The DREAM Initiative provided immediate benefits to Downtown West Plains through the generation of positive press and by increasing the City's ability to obtain State funding.

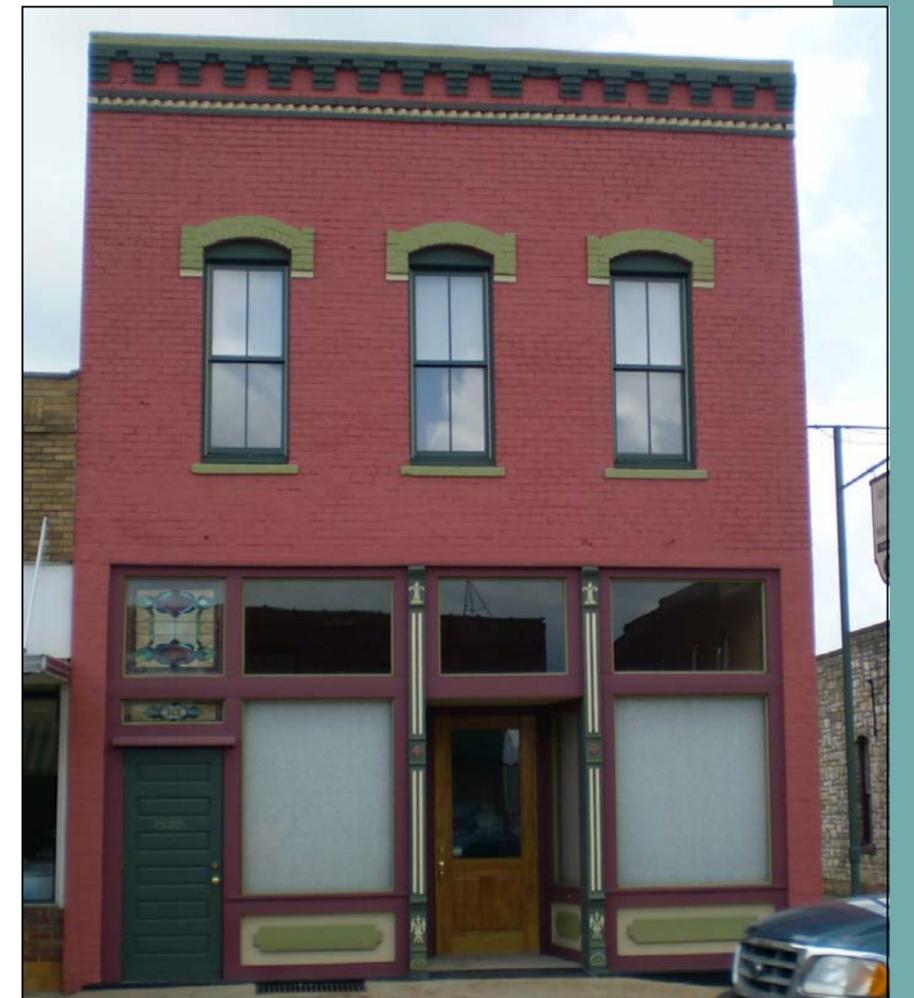
Recent accomplishments in Downtown West Plains include:

- Hired part-time DTWP Executive Director.
- Obtained Home Repair Opportunity (HeRO) Program funding for qualifying residential properties.
- Installed decorative lighting streetscape element along Washington Avenue approach.
- Community Development Block Grant—Revolving Loan Fund Façade Rehabilitation Program.
- Community Development Block Grant—Ozarks Small Business Incubator Building Project.
- Negotiated a quiet zone plan with Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad.
- Initiated BBQ Cook-off benefit for DTWP.

City of West Plains



Streetscape Along Washington Avenue



Rehabilitated Building Façade on Washington Avenue

Accomplishments

TASK SUMMARIES



DREAM Initiative • Downtown Strategic Plan

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The DREAM Initiative conducted a review of organizations involved in Downtown West Plains. The purpose of this task was to understand the roles and responsibilities of these organizations and their relationships to each other. The overall goal of the Organizational Structure Review is to build a sustained Downtown revitalization effort that is supported by an efficient organization, enhanced human capacity, and an improved ability to obtain funding. A broadly-supported, well-funded organizational structure is needed to implement recommendations from the other DREAM tasks.

Organizations reviewed for this task included:

- DTWP
- City of West Plains
- Greater West Plains Chamber of Commerce
- West Plains Economic Development Corporation
- South Central Ozark Council of Governments

The Organizational Structure Review resulted in a plan for restructuring existing entities and the formation of new organizations. Recommendations for improving the organizational structure of Downtown West Plains include:

- **Downtown West Plains, Inc. Retreat**

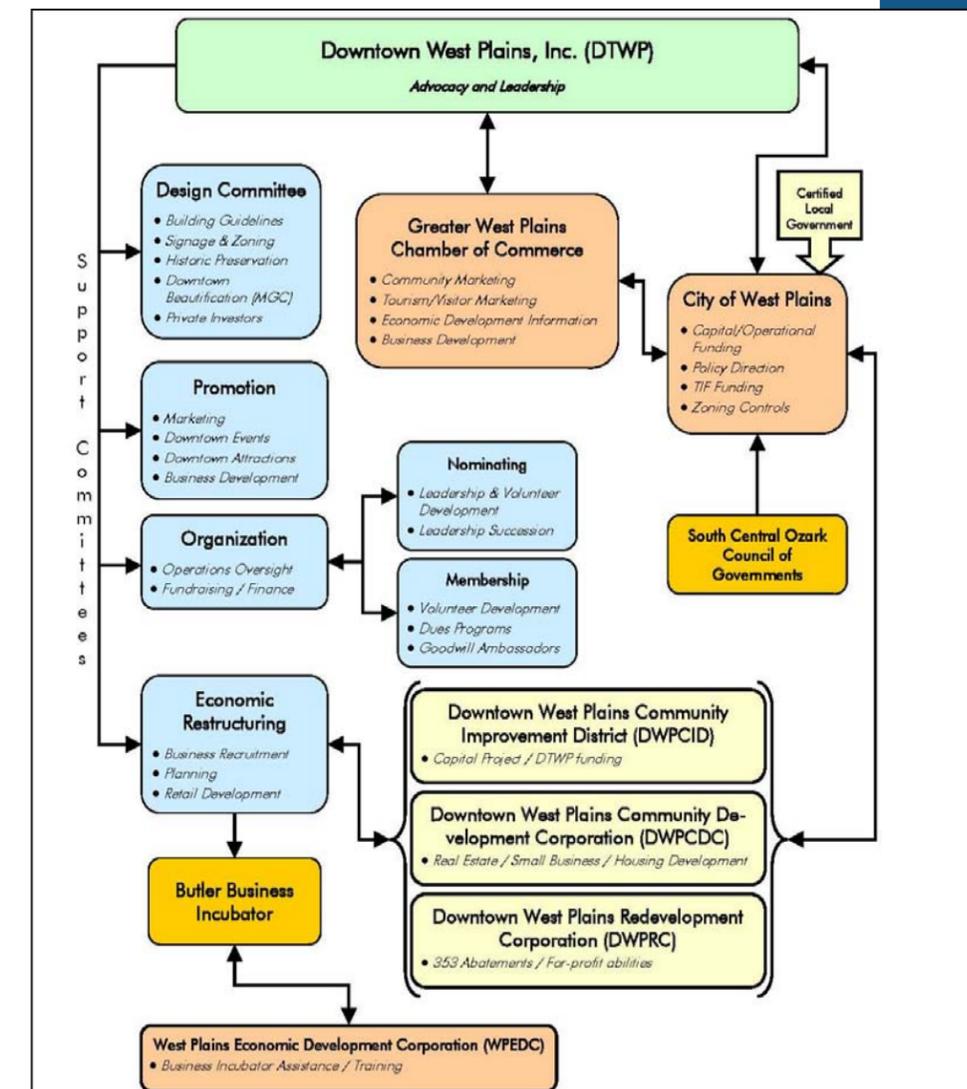
A DTWP Board retreat will provide a concentrated work session aimed at re-energizing the group. DTWP has had issues with obtaining staff and sustained program funding. Existing volunteers are involved and engaged, but many Downtown businesses do not get involved with DTWP initiatives. It is vital that all members of the DTWP Board attend the retreat for the full day, therefore a date must be chosen to which the Board will commit, but as soon as possible. Other attendees can include key

stakeholders such as Downtown business or property owners, City officials and staff, and committee members but these additional members should be limited to defining their role in DTWP. The intent of the retreat is to discuss the organization, not specific Downtown issues. A trained moderator should conduct the retreat. During the retreat a mid-term business plan for Downtown West Plains, Inc. (DTWP) should be developed as well as a long-term plan for Downtown improvements. These plans will help guide the organization and drive the work for all Downtown groups.

Additional topics to be addressed should include:

- Adjustments to organizational documents
- DTWP Director staffing
- DTWP Director responsibilities
- Organizational funding & Establishment of a Community Improvement District (CID)
- Committee goals and assignments
- Volunteer development and succession
- Downtown Safety Walk
- **Downtown West Plains, Inc. Communication**
An effective Board communicates well with all aspects of its organization. DTWP needs to ensure that Board-level information, such as retreat outcomes, are available to all organization members, Downtown merchants, prospective donors and grantors, and the general public. Information can be provided through press releases and newspaper articles after the retreat and then by regular communication methods such as a new Downtown website or newsletter. Important Downtown businesses or donors should receive a higher level of communication, such as interviews or a special event.

City of West Plains



Recommended Downtown Organizational Structure

- **City and County Involvement**

The City of West Plains traditional roles of building code enforcement, zoning conflict resolution, and implementation of design standards needs to expand to include a greater focus on financial assistance. The City has jurisdiction for most public property in Downtown, including the streets, sidewalks, and infrastructure. Unfortunately, City Hall is located outside of Downtown near highway 63. The City needs to demonstrate that the few remaining municipal offices will stay in Downtown to help support Downtown as the core of the City.

The City should continue to pursue Local, State, and Federal funding sources for Downtown infrastructure. The City has provided Downtown with some funding from the Tax Increment Financing District, but this incentive is expiring. Continued use of funding mechanisms and tax revenue will strengthen Downtown and DTWP's programming and sustainability. The City should actively participate in the establishment of a Community Improvement District.

The Howell County Commissioners should also rededicate their support for Downtown West Plains. Important County offices bring residents and visitors into the area and businesses follow this market.

West Plains' local government leaders should seek more investment in Downtown by making improvements to the public realm through infrastructure projects and by considering the area for more office locations. A thriving center of government brings much needed activity.

- **Establish a Downtown Community Improvement District**

A Downtown CID will provide funding for improvements and activities to complement the public improvements implemented by City government. A CID represents an organized group of neighbors desiring to make improvements and solve problems in a defined area. Establishment of a CID requires a petition signed by residents and property owners in the proposed area and a thorough work plan. A Board of Directors is either appointed by the City or elected by the residents and property owners of the District. A CID is a separate entity from the City, but requires that a municipal ordinance be adopted to organize this funding vehicle. The City Council also reviews the CID's annual budget and submits it to the Missouri Department of Economic Development.

DTWP should work closely with the City to lead the effort to establish a CID. A Downtown West Plains CID should be created as a political subdivision, rather than a non-profit corporation and have the ability to receive funding from sales and property taxes. The CID should generally follow the DREAM Initiative boundary. Additionally, it is expected that a CID in West Plains will require an involved public outreach process to gain adequate public support.

For more details regarding the establishment of the proposed West Plains CID, refer to the *DREAM Financial Assistance Review*, March 2009.

To see a full listing of the goals and objectives outlined in the Organizational Structure report please refer to the Implementation Schedule on page 31. These and other recommendations are found in the *West Plains DREAM Organizational Structure Review*, October 2007.



Howell County Courthouse



West Plains Civic Center

DREAM Initiative • Downtown Strategic Plan

LAND USE, BUILDINGS & INFRASTRUCTURE

The DREAM Land Use, Building, and Infrastructure Survey reviewed existing land use and other physical characteristics of property in Downtown West Plains. The Survey also assessed exterior building and public infrastructure conditions. This task resulted in the construction of a Geographic Information System (GIS) database for Downtown and a Map Reference Handbook. These tools provide a benchmark for Downtown West Plains revitalization efforts, identification of potential development opportunities, and spatial analysis for other DREAM tasks.

While the goal of this task was to develop information that would feed into other DREAM Initiative components, recommendations have been developed to address issues revealed during the survey. Additionally the maintenance of this information and the ongoing reassessment will continue to provide insight into Downtown West Plains. Strategies for the City and DTWP to pursue include:

- **Conduct Traffic Study**

A City-wide traffic study focused on the patterns and routes into Downtown would greatly benefit Downtown merchants and other business located in West Plains. Existing patterns tend to route traffic away from and around Downtown and its large attractions. Many key stakeholders noted that Downtown attracts travelers for specific destinations, but not spontaneous visitors. The City should work with DTWP to proceed with a study focused on identifying appealing routes to Downtown. The study is needed for the City to implement the wayfinding system discussed later in this Plan but the two recommendations are closely tied together and may benefit from similar funding sources such as transportation enhancement funding.

- **Reconcile Parcel Data**

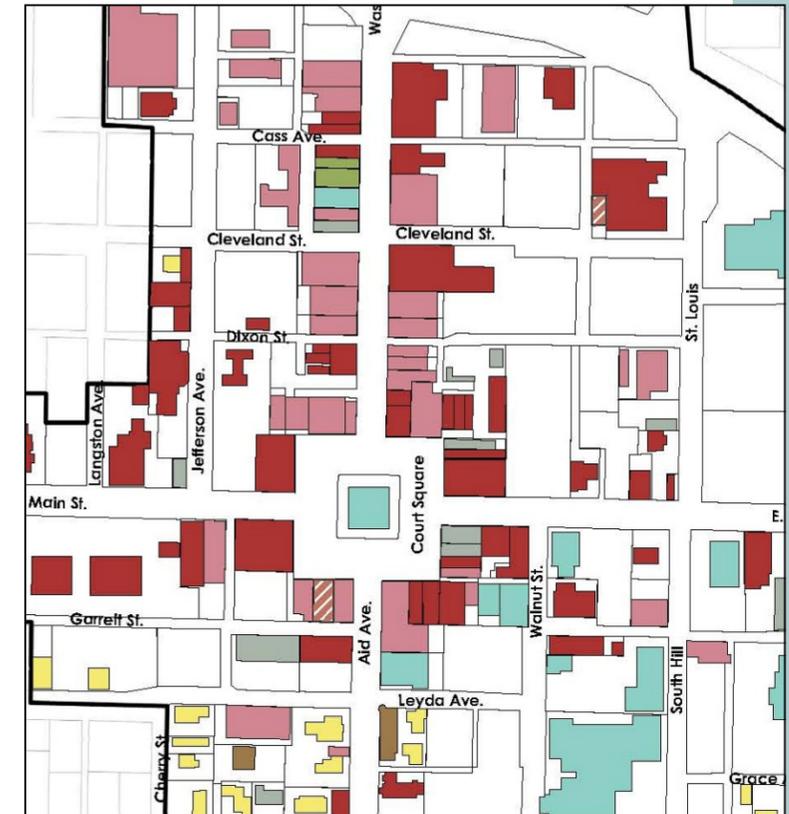
The City and the County, with assistance from DTWP, should work closely to create a process that accounts for parcels within Downtown West Plains. The Howell County Assessor can benefit from an arrangement that periodically surveys and monitors Downtown building improvements. The County can assist in resolving some issues revealed during the Land Use, Building, and Infrastructure Survey, such as parcels unaccounted for and depressed property assessments. DTWP can help promote the importance of cooperating with the Assessor to Downtown property owners and explain the tax cycle. Accurately representing Downtown property values, especially as development occurs and incentive mechanisms are implemented, is an important issue to Downtown West Plains' revitalization efforts.

- **Update Land Use & Zoning GIS Data and Develop Methods to Keep Data Current**

Downtown West Plains, Inc. and the City should regularly conduct a field survey, similar to the DREAM task. The resulting inventory of properties and conditions will prove beneficial in assessing the progress made in Downtown revitalization efforts. The complete field survey should be conducted every two years, but information on commercial vacancies should be maintained as current as possible. The City should seek to enhance its GIS capabilities through staff training and support.

To see a full listing of the goals and objectives outlined in the Land Use, Building & Infrastructure Report please refer to the Implementation Schedule on page 31 and the mapping inventory developed during Survey can be found in the West Plains DREAM *Map Reference Handbook*, August 2008.

City of West Plains



Downtown West Plains 1st Floor Land Use



Historic District & Buildings Listed on the National Register

COMMUNITY SURVEYS

A survey process was conducted to help determine commonly held perceptions, or misperceptions, of the community and to identify important issues regarding Downtown West Plains. The process included conducting focus group sessions, organized by the West Plains DREAM committee, to help uncover topics for investigation. The process continued with a Community Telephone Survey and a Visitor survey, both of which included questions regarding the topics revealed in the focus groups. Individual interviews with key Downtown West Plains stakeholders occurred throughout this process as a way of testing results for validity. This involvement has been invaluable for every aspect of the DREAM Initiative.

The goal of this task was similar to the Land Use, Building, and Infrastructure Survey in that the information obtained was utilized throughout the DREAM Initiative planning process for other analyses. It is important that DTWP effectively communicate these and future results to City leaders, committees and boards, and Downtown merchants. Some results from the process and recommendations include:

- **Focus Group Meetings**

Participants were invited to one of four focus groups in the categories of DREAM Committee, Downtown business owners, long-time residents, and newer residents. All groups concurred that West Plains was progressing and has benefited from being the largest City in a sixty mile radius. Participants felt that residents visited Downtown to conduct business or to attend a special event, but shopped outside of Downtown. Participants expressed the view that expanded business hours and improved signage were important issues, along with the perception of a parking problem. Groups agreed public parking lots needed clearer

signage and improved conditions to offset the perceived parking problem. Participants believed independent, unique shops carrying apparel, groceries, specialty foods, art, books, and jewelry would be good additions to Downtown. Residential space, green space, and overall beautification were also reported as Downtown needs. Business owners were cautiously in favor of incentive programs to accomplish Downtown goals.

DTWP should reconvene these focus groups in a few years to help monitor the progression of Downtown's revitalization efforts and determine new issues.

A transcript of comments can be found in the DREAM *Focus Group Survey Report*, October, 2007.

- **Community Telephone Survey**

The Telephone Survey for West Plains gathered three hundred responses drawn from the current estimated population of 11,000 people. This survey sample provides a typical overall error margin of $\pm 5.5\%$.

Overall respondents felt positive about West Plains, but revitalizing Downtown was ranked behind repairing major streets, improving emergency services, upgrading parks, and attracting big box retail. This is likely a representation that most residents live outside of the City center and Downtown has little relevance in their daily lives. However, most respondents indicated they visit Downtown more than once a month. These visits are usually for the Post Office, governmental or other business reasons, and shopping. Younger people tended to visit more often which is a reflection of the presence of Missouri State University. Most respondents



Mixed Use Building on East Main Street



Streetscape & Storefront along Washington Avenue

indicated several Downtown characteristics were “good”, but entertainment options, dining options, and available green space were ranked lowest. Convenient parking was the 4th lowest ranked characteristic, indicating it may be a problem, but there are other concerns.

Convenient business hours tended to be ranked lower for older, wealthier residents. Most respondents felt it was important to retain Downtown’s historic nature. Respondents most wanted to see improvements to pedestrian amenities and building façades, new parking, and underground utilities. “Stricter code enforcement” was ranked second to last indicating that residents do not see the connection between streetscape and building improvements and City maintenance codes. Dining options and apparel were uses ranked the highest priorities for business uses that Downtown should attract. Overwhelmingly “bars and nightclubs” were not an activity that respondents felt Downtown should attract. However younger, wealthier, new residents tended to rank this use as a higher priority. This is an interesting correlation given that overwhelmingly most respondents to the survey have lived in West Plains more than twenty years. This is another indicator of the presence of students from Missouri State University.

DTWP should conduct another resident survey by phone or mail to help assess perceptions of Downtown and its revitalization.

For full responses please see the *DREAM Community Telephone Survey Report*, September, 2007.

- **Visitor Survey**

This survey consisted of a questionnaire completed by visitors to various West Plains attractions that did not reside within the West Plains zip code. Over two hundred responses were received, primarily from attendees of events at the West Plains Civic Center.

Most visitors were repeat visitors and used Downtown for dining, shopping, and business in addition to special events at the Civic Center. Not surprisingly, utilization of the Post Office was infrequent among visitors. Wealthier, older visitors tended to stay overnight in West Plains. Visitors felt Downtown was easy to navigate and business hours were convenient.

Many visitors responded that they didn’t know how convenient shopping hours were, suggesting they don’t patronize Downtown at all before or after their event. This could be an indication of poor wayfinding or promotion to existing visitors. Visitors found parking inconvenient, but wealthier visitors said this less than other income levels. This may suggest that the parking perception issue is primarily centered on day trip visitors related to special events. Visitors felt that more shops and restaurants would increase the likelihood of repeat visits and placed a high priority on the renovation of historic buildings and green space.

DTWP, with the help of the Ozarks Heritage Welcome Center and other City attractions, should continue to survey its visitors.

A full listing of responses can be found in the *Visitor Survey Report*, March 2008.



Local Storefronts on Courthouse Square



Avenue Theatre and Storefronts on Washington Avenue

DREAM Initiative • Downtown Strategic Plan

BUILDING & STREETScape DESIGN

Building Design Guidelines will provide a framework for Downtown West Plains to preserve its existing architectural amenities and historic character, as well as complement maintenance codes and infill construction. The West Plains DREAM Building and Streetscape Design Guidelines concept document discusses the need to recognize and enhance the natural rhythm and building elements of Downtown in the context of the Courthouse Square Historic District. The building guidelines suggest specific recommendations for building treatments along the northeast corner of the square.

The Streetscape component of the document provides design considerations regarding the public aspects of Downtown West Plains. Enhancements to these components, the outdoor living room of Downtown, are critical to demonstrate public support and a decrease of risk to potential private investors. If the City of West Plains doesn't invest in itself, neither will a private investor. Streetscape recommendations include priorities for the expansion of existing streetscape efforts, strengthening the square, wayfinding, and implementation.

Overall the Building and Streetscape Design Guidelines provide direction for public and private construction, including new construction and historic rehabilitation, with an expanded focus on improving the appearance of Downtown West Plains.

Primary recommendations from the DREAM Building and Streetscape Design Guidelines include:

- **Adopt Design Guidelines**

The design guidelines should be adopted by the City Council and tied to Downtown incentive mechanisms and the local preservation ordinance. These guidelines will help maintain the integrity of the historic district and

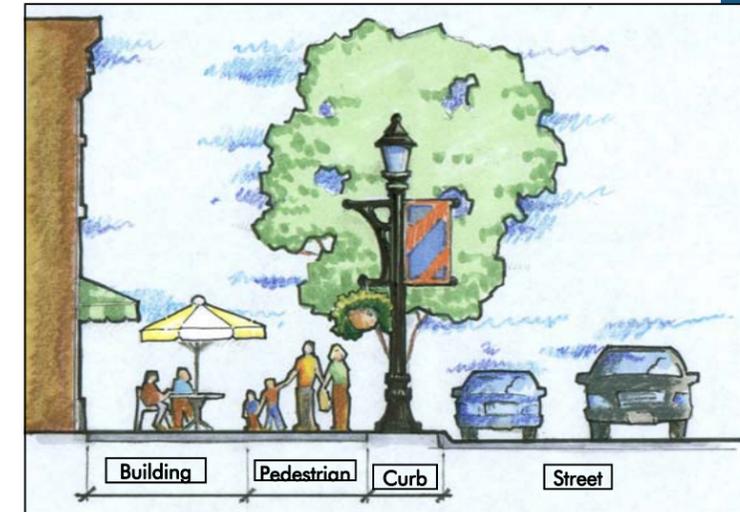
inspire existing property owners to rehabilitate their buildings. The Preservation Commission should be charged with granting certificates of appropriateness, reviewing projects for adherence to the guidelines, and assessing the impact of other City codes on the Courthouse Square Historic District.

This effort should begin immediately and the Design Committee of DTWP can assist the Preservation Commission by suggesting changes to procedures, ordinances, and codes for review by the City's legal counsel. DTWP should champion the guidelines to lessen any property owner resistance. Design guidelines are better accepted by utilizing peer-level promotion of benefits, rather than a local government mandate.

- **Enforce Building & Maintenance Codes**

The City of West Plains must enforce current building and maintenance codes on all Downtown structures in a fair and consistent manner. Existing conditions of some structures, rear facades, and vacant lots are poor. When this situation is allowed to occur, it is a sign of disinvestment in Downtown and triggers uneasiness in pedestrians and visitors. The West Plains code enforcement staff requires broad support from DTWP as well as the City Council to be effective. Additionally, clearly defining the codes and procedures for business and property owners will allow for seamless communication with developers and minimize misinformation during a project cycle. Some specific procedures may be enhanced to streamline development in Downtown regarding the local historic district. The City should work with past developers and DTWP to develop recommendations for changes.

City of West Plains



Building Design Guidelines - Sidewalk Zones



Elevations of Downtown Buildings illustrating Proposed improvements

- **Improve the Aesthetics of Existing Parking Lots**

Parking lots in Downtown West Plains should undergo aesthetic improvements in the same theme as the streetscape. Existing lots are poorly defined and bare with obsolete signage. Public parking is an opportunity for Downtown to make a lasting, positive impression on a visitor. Improvements should include landscaping borders, well-maintained pavement with obvious striping, clear lot signage, and decorative lighting. The City and DTWP should develop parking plans within the streetscape phasing. Improvement funding and ongoing maintenance could come from the proposed Downtown CID.

- **Develop Downtown Pedestrian “Loops”**

Pedestrian “Loops” encourage a continuous trip down one side of the street and back on the other. A pedestrian that has parked on the street tends to feel safe in walking this circuit in one direction and ending up back at their point of origin. This route can be disrupted by service businesses, walled-in or vacant storefronts, or poor sidewalk conditions. The City and DTWP should periodically review Downtown conditions to identify obstacles to pedestrians. These “safety walks” should be conducted by DTWP Design Committee members and include City staff from the departments of code enforcement, planning, streets, police, and fire. City officials, aldermanic committee members, and interested property owners should also attend.

- **Develop University Pedestrian Entryway**

The area between Dixon and Trish Knight Streets serves as the main pedestrian walkway through Downtown for Missouri State University students and visitors. The

University uses the West Plains Civic Center for many events and students and visitors travel between the campus and the center. The University is located to the west of Downtown and the Civic Center to the east.

Zoning and physical streetscape enhancements can encourage pedestrians and improve this entryway. A linear park can be established through existing parking areas. The large open area immediately adjacent to the Civic Center is a redevelopment opportunity that could attract a restaurant and be the anchor of a dining and entertainment district. These streetscape, plaza, and parking lot improvements can be funded by the proposed CID, a new Tax Increment Financing District, or state grants.

- **Enhance the Arcades**

The arcades are a unique design feature of West Plains and can provide a visitor with a memorable high-quality experience. Landscaping, hanging planters, art, and water features can provide distinctive themes for each arcade. Archways over the entrance to the arcades from the square could be permanent fixtures or special event decorations.

Improvements such as these will give each arcade its own identity and business uses can be clustered as noted in the West Plains DREAM Retail Market Analysis. Property owners and businesses along each arcade can support the identity by advertising or promoting the arcade as a group. The business should be encouraged to help maintain the amenities and even compete with the other arcades in areas such as a decorating contest.



Existing Streetscape Elements in Downtown



Existing Conditions of Luster Arcade Entrance from Parking Lot

- **Reconnect or Reconstruct Catron Arcade**

Catron Arcade on the southwest corner of the Courthouse Square has been removed and a parking lot constructed on the previous building site. The walkway from Courthouse Square should be reestablished and the area used and reconnected to the Square. The City should seek to repurpose the parking lot and establish a walkway or some Courthouse Square level platform. This may be an appropriate location for a permanent Marketplace location, but there needs to be activity at the Court Square level. The existing parking lot is difficult to see and activity on it does not provide a draw from the Square. Ideally the entire lot can be a redevelopment area for a use such as a hotel.

West Plains' public atmosphere and historic properties define its identity. The streetscape provides a structure upon which private property owners depend. If the public investment is lacking, it is likely the private involvement is as well. Public infrastructure construction projects are not inexpensive and require a physical improvement plan. An organized plan will strengthen the ability of Downtown to attract investment and remain a vibrant, relevant component of the City.

Existing plans from 1999 and 2003 have met with some success and the City leaders are ready to implement a new set of goals. The City of West Plains and Downtown West Plains, Inc. (DTWP) have been successful in obtaining funding and utilizing various mechanisms for past revitalization efforts including:

- Community Development Block Grants
- Neighborhood Assistance Program Tax Credits
- Tax Increment Financing
- State & Federal Historic Tax Credits

It will be necessary to continue the use of these mechanisms for the benefit of Downtown. Past practices of incentivizing retail development on the outskirts of the City must be reconsidered in the context of the impact to Downtown. For example, the expiring Tax Increment Financing district should be reestablished, but the redevelopment plan should consist of projects that benefit Downtown. Other funding resources should be explored including:

- Community Improvement District
- Neighborhood Preservation Act Tax Credits
- Brownfield Tax Credits
- MIDOC Loan Program/Revolving Loan Fund
- Contribution for Tax Credits
- MoDOT
- Transportation Development District
- DNR/Grants Management Section

State of Missouri financing programs are listed in *Missouri's Economic Development Tool: A Practical Guide to Building a Better Missouri*, published by the Missouri Department of Economic Development and the Missouri Development Finance Board. Refer to www.ded.mo.gov for full report details.

To see a full listing of the goals and objectives outlined in the Streetscape & Building Design Guidelines please refer to the Implementation Schedule on page 32. A full listing of building design guidelines can be located in the *Building & Streetscape Design Guidelines*, October 2008.



Rehabilitated Building on Courthouse Square



Aerial View of Courthouse Square

RETAIL MARKET

Strengthening the retail market of Downtown West Plains provides an opportunity for real and sustainable growth. With improved existing business operations, specific new retail additions, and beautification the Downtown retail market will see a significant increase in activity. To reach full retail potential, vacant first-floor spaces need to be filled with new boutiques, restaurants, and other retail stores.

The DREAM Initiative Retail Market Analysis reviews information about Downtown West Plains, including data from other DREAM tasks. The Analysis then considers trade areas that impact the local retail market and identifies areas of potential unmet retail demand. At the time of the Retail Analysis, it was determined that Downtown contained about 200,000 square feet of first-floor retail space that generated around \$11 million in annual taxable sales. 61,000 square feet of first-floor space was available for additional retail, representing the potential to generate another \$3 million in annual sales. City-wide, West Plains generated about \$110 million in sales of which Downtown captured approximately 10%.

Businesses that can provide retail services that show unmet demand can be considered for attraction or expansion in Downtown. These businesses should show a strong sales potential and are an opportunity for Downtown West Plains to capture more retail spending. However, numerous factors contribute to the success or failure of a business and other enhancements to the overall Downtown retail environment are likely needed. Reenergizing Downtown West Plains' retail sector will be a difficult and lengthy process. To achieve long-term success, merchants will likely need to make adjustments to retail practices. Downtown businesses that are reluctant to adapt to changing market conditions are less likely to succeed.

The DREAM Retail Market Analysis focuses on consumer spending across several retail sectors classified by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Retail sectors identified with unmet demand for Downtown include:

- Grocery Stores
- Specialty Food Stores
- Book, Periodical, & Music Stores
- Office Supplies, Stationery, & Gift Stores
- Full Service Restaurants
- Special Food Service
- Entertainment & Drinking Places

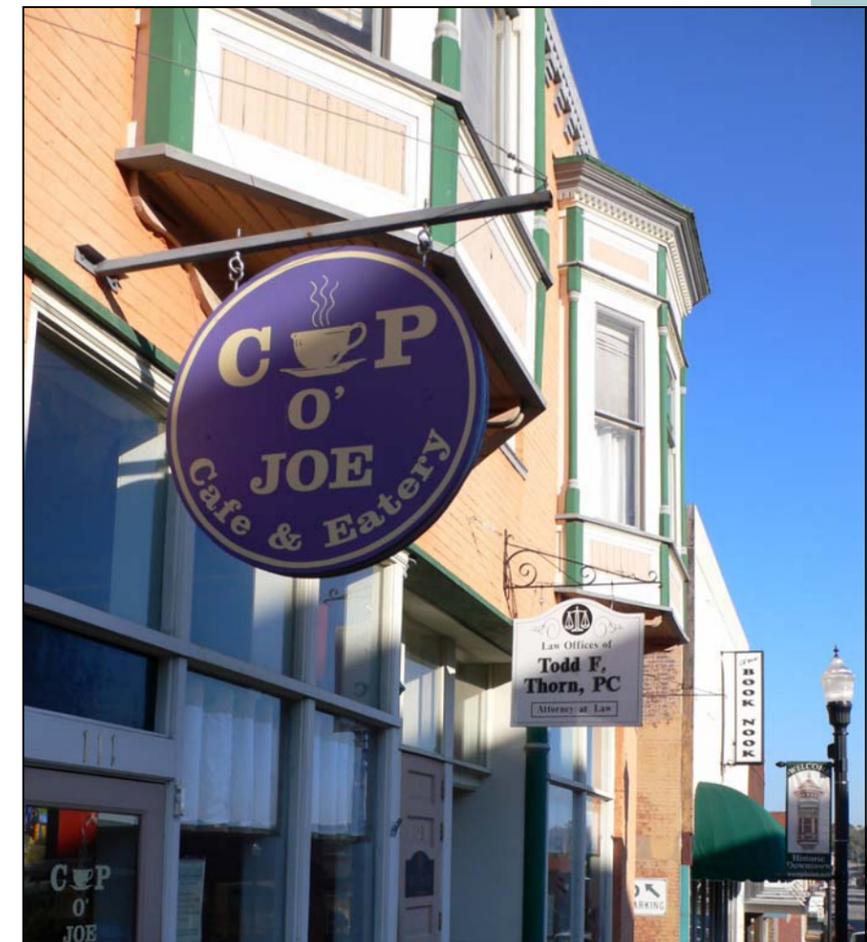
Recommendations to strengthen the Downtown market include:

- **Develop Seminars for Existing Businesses**
An overall merchant education program to address issues of marketing, customer service, business and building maintenance, and other retail practices is potentially more important than the attraction of new businesses. Downtown has a substantial base of retail activity and positive impacts that spur innovation among the merchants can be the best catalyst for broad changes. Clusters of similar anchor businesses, such as restaurants, can be formed to address specific concerns. DTWP can also promote incentive programs for façade improvements at these seminars.

The program of seminars should be organized by DTWP, held at the Ozarks Small Business Incubator, and involve students from MSU and the Small Business & Technology Development Center. DTWP will begin to demonstrate its organizational benefits to Downtown businesses, residents, and potential donors.



Retail Businesses in Downtown West Plains



Existing Retail Signage in Downtown.

- **Encourage Targeted Retail Uses**

DTWP should work with the West Plains Economic Development Department to encourage businesses providing goods and services in the sectors of unmet retail demand. The goal should be to locate these uses and other complementary pedestrian generating activities on the ground floor of all Downtown mixed-use and commercial buildings.

DTWP should initiate a Retail Recruitment Team to help in drawing the appropriate mix of retail uses. This team will identify and encourage prospects for attraction as well as work with existing businesses for potential expansion. A broad-based committee will be able to respond to prospects, generate leads, and assist the City in its overall economic development efforts. This team should develop specific promotion methods through common contacts of the targeted industries such as suppliers, regional chains, and lenders and by marketing in trade publications.

- **Capitalize on Downtown's Daytime Population**

Develop techniques to better serve existing West Plains visitors, workers, MSU—West Plains Campus students, and patrons of the Ozark Heritage Visitor Center. West Plains has a large number of regular visitors that need to know about Downtown beyond the business that they conduct. DTWP can lead efforts to develop marketing materials for each of these segments and should encourage Downtown businesses to develop promotions, discounts, and coupons. These suggestions can be conveyed during the business seminars or in the Downtown newsletter.

- **Identify an Adaptive Re-Use of the Zorn Building**

This stately and unique building needs to be put back into productive use. Ideally a use like a boutique hotel that can utilize the space effectively and generate added pedestrian activity is preferred. The DTWP Economic Restructuring Committee and the City Economic Development Department should meet on a regular basis with current property owner to offer assistance in rehabilitation and discuss future plans for the structure. Due to its unique nature, the potential for historic tax credits and other incentives is great. The property owner will appreciate the assistance in marketing and attracting a tenant that is desired by the City.

Generally, State of Missouri agencies are restricted from providing incentives to retail development, but some projects may fit some programs. Financial resources that may assist in implementing these recommendations include:

- Missouri Division of Tourism
- Missouri Arts Council
- Establishment of an Enhanced Enterprise Zone
- Development Tax Credits
- Community Development Block Grants

State of Missouri financing programs are listed in *Missouri's Economic Development Tool: A Practical Guide to Building a Better Missouri*, published by the Missouri Department of Economic Development and the Missouri Development Finance Board. Refer to www.ded.mo.gov for full report details.

A full listing of retail market recommendations can be found in the Implementation Schedule on page 33 and in the West Plains DREAM *Retail Market Analysis*, July 2009.



Retail Establishments in Downtown West Plains



Zorn Building

DREAM Initiative • Downtown Strategic Plan

HOUSING MARKET

The DREAM Housing Market Analysis provides insight about the supply and demand for housing units among West Plains residential markets. A Residential Demand Analysis was conducted and the results were included with a presentation for the City and DTWP to use to attract new housing developers.

The Residential Demand Analysis estimates potential housing market demand and identifies general strategies to respond to existing and future housing demand. The West Plains Analysis demonstrated that there is not great demand for Downtown housing at this time. Although attraction of new housing will boost the permanent population and help the area thrive, recommendations for Downtown West Plains center upon existing housing market conditions and include:

- **Implement Rental Inspections and Occupancy Permits**
Existing housing stock is adequate to meet residential demand, but a benefit to Downtown's revitalization efforts may be realized by curing deteriorated housing conditions. Routes into Downtown through surrounding residential areas are important and poor maintenance can weigh on Downtown properties. City staff and elected officials should support an inspection program for rental property to ensure high quality housing and improve property values. This procedure doesn't need to address every rental property annually, but at change of occupancy as approved by the occupancy permit.
- **Encourage Property Owners to Maintain Properties**
The City and DTWP should encourage all property owners to maintain their buildings. Meetings about energy efficiency, utility assistance, maintenance funding, and the Home Repair Opportunity Program (HeRO) should be held in West Plains neighborhoods.

The City, by enforcing building codes, will address most problems and can provide residents technical help concerning home improvement and maintenance. The City's Code Enforcement Division can suggest solutions and options to comply with existing City codes.

- **Encourage Rehabilitation to Downtown Buildings**
Continue to encourage rehabilitation of underused Downtown building space through the use of incentives, especially for upper floors. Some existing regulations may require adjustments to assist developers. Existing "rehabilitation-friendly" property owners should be interviewed about their experiences with City processes.

Improved buildings will attract residents and enhance the retail atmosphere. Utilization of the existing Revolving Loan Fund façade program and other incentives will encourage rehabilitation.

Financial resources for these recommendations include:

- Low Income Housing Tax Credits
- State & Federal Historic Tax Credits
- HERO Home Repair Program
- Affordable Housing Assistance Program
- Community Development Block Grants

State of Missouri financing programs are listed in *Missouri's Economic Development Tool: A Practical Guide to Building a Better Missouri*, published by the Missouri Department of Economic Development and the Missouri Development Finance Board. Refer to www.ded.mo.gov for full report details.

The housing recommendations can be found in West Plains' DREAM *Residential Demand Analysis*, November, 2007.

City of West Plains



Rear Façade of Mixed-Use Building off of Courthouse Square



Residential Unit Units on Upper Floor on Washington Avenue



Upper Floor Residential & Well Landscaped Rear Entrance Off of Aid Avenue

FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

The DREAM Financial Assistance Review analyzed several financial mechanisms available to the City of West Plains. The intent of this task is to provide preliminary information for Downtown revitalization projects. Suggested districts and recommendations were evaluated for their ability to impact the Downtown organizational structure and assist with important projects and programs. Financial data sources included the City of West Plains, Howell County, and the Missouri Department of Revenue.

Each mechanism was applied to the data available for the DREAM boundary parcels and projections were developed for the life of the incentive. Assumptions were required and information was also utilized from other DREAM reports. In some cases a hypothetical project was needed to demonstrate the benefits of a resource. It is important to understand that the Financial Assistance Review provides preliminary income and expense projections subject to market conditions, future research, and changes in growth patterns.

For purposes of strategic planning, mechanisms should be pursued by DTWP, but may require significant involvement and adoption by the City government. In these cases DTWP should be the driving force for securing the broad community support that the elected officials will need to proceed.

Recommendations from this task include:

- **Establish a Community Improvement District (CID)**
Establishing a CID has the most potential for creating the greatest financial impact for Downtown. Therefore, the creation of a CID should be the highest priority and first strategy pursued. The Downtown CID can assist DTWP with funding for a wide variety of activities and

projects. It is this feature that makes the CID so important as it will ensure a sustainable funding stream for the organization. This will be a significant step for Downtown West Plains.

A CID plan able to use property or sales tax could generate varying amounts contingent on the rate set in the CID planning process. The Financial Assistance Review estimated potential sales tax revenue that could be generated by Downtown West Plains using financial information from 2009 as a base year.

If a half-cent (0.50%) sales tax was imposed it could potentially generate \$45,978 in 2010, or over \$1 million in a twenty year period. As redevelopment activity grows so would this funding amount. A CID funded by sales tax has the possibility of funding activities such as seasonal banners, cross promotional events for businesses, trash pickup, security, parking improvements, and general beautification. CID revenues could also be used to assist with additional feasibility studies for economic development projects.

Increasing program services and special project funding through a Downtown CID will benefit property owners, business owners, employees, residents, and visitors. These benefits will far outweigh any loss of business due to a slight increase in sales tax.

To see a full listing of the goals and objectives outlined in the Financial Assistance Review report please refer to the Implementation Schedule on page 34. A full breakdown of funding data can be found in the West Plains DREAM *Financial Assistance Review*, March 2009.



Existing Specialty Store in Downtown West Plains



Facade Rehabilitation in Downtown West Plains

DESTINATION ASSESSMENT

The Destination Assessment task of the DREAM Initiative reviewed existing visitation-related assets in Downtown and identified opportunities to enhance these assets. The task included a first hand, unbiased review of the area's attractions, a group meeting with individuals that engage the City's visitors, and follow-up interviews required to probe uncovered issues.

Tourism is an important component of the overall economic picture of a city. Tourism is the action of non-residents visiting the city and spending money at businesses or events. "Heads in Beds" or overnight stays is the ultimate goal for a tourism program as this visitor tends to spend more money in the community. The draw of an area for visitors is discussed in broader geographic terms than just the DREAM boundary. Rarely are visitors drawn to just one attraction, therefore the surrounding area must be considered. Additionally, the reasons why visitors come to a city are varied. The term "tourism" often carries an unwanted connotation. West Plains' Downtown leaders expressed a desire to discourage the "touristy" definition and encourage West Plains as a visitor destination and hub for business, arts, and culture. Downtown West Plains possesses many businesses, institutions, historic sites, and attractions that should allow it to be a central draw for visitors. DTWP and the City should continue support to existing destinations and promote the development of new attractions and events.

Recommendations from the DREAM Destination report include:

- **Establish a Community Wayfinding System**

A City-wide wayfinding system should be established that will consider how to route visitors to Downtown and further enhance their visit by direction to and from clearly marked public parking areas. Once the motorist

parks and becomes a pedestrian, the system will need to warmly welcome the visitor and encourage the exploration of Downtown.

Downtown signage should have the same theme and be complementary to the streetscape. The system should include gateway, trailblazing, and proximity signs as well as street and traffic control signage. DTWP and the City should implement phases of this system as funding allows, but should conduct an inventory of signage and a review of public parking lots immediately.

With the University and Civic Center, Downtown already has a large base of visitors. An effective system will provide useful information to these potential shoppers.

- **Focus Positioning**

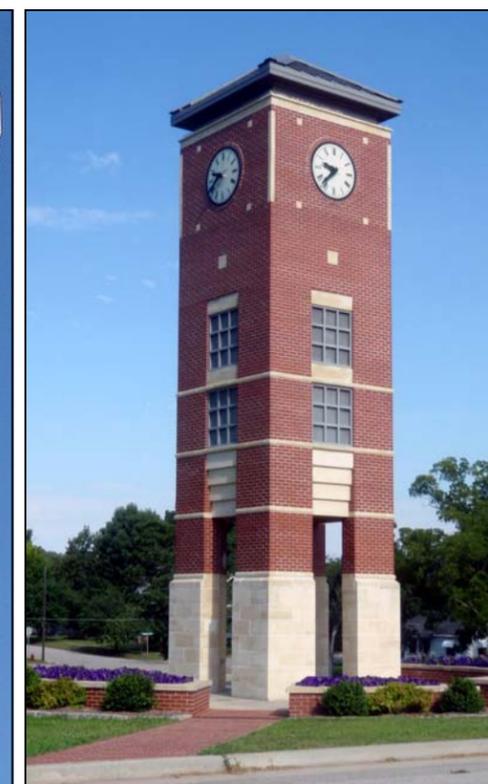
Determine and promote the positioning statement of: "The Center of Ozarks Heritage and Culture". It's important that the positioning statement be supported accurately. Not all "Ozarks" style of businesses would one consider a cultural experience. Art and music of the Ozark way of life is the goal. L.L. Broadfoot sketches at the Harlin Museum are the example.

Current events are aligned with the positioning statement, but DTWP can develop new events and promotions. Downtown merchants should be encouraged to support the positioning statement in their own advertising, but also to participate in cooperative advertising tied to the positioning.

DTWP should lead these efforts and provide focused, concentrated adherence to the positioning statement.



Parade During Second Saturday Stroll on Courthouse Square



Downtown Destinations: The Avenue Theatre on Washington Avenue at left and MSU-West Plains Campus at Right

- **Locate a Visitor Center on Courthouse Square**

Downtown should seek to have its own Visitor Center on Courthouse Square to inform visitors and provide a central gathering point. This Center will be the distribution point for all information and events in Downtown and should be coordinated by DTWP.

The Downtown Center could be a kiosk, but a manned site would be preferred. If the Harlin Museum were to have a presence on Courthouse Square, the two functions could be complementary. Potentially the Ozark Small Business Incubator Building might also serve as a location. With DTWP maintaining a Downtown Visitor Center, the existing Ozark Heritage Visitor Center on highway 63 can focus on regional attractions and refer interested visitors to the Downtown location. The two centers should work very closely with each other.

- **Establish a Downtown Marketplace**

A Downtown Marketplace should not just be a Farmer's Market. The Marketplace should provide produce, art, and crafts made by West Plains area residents. Such a Marketplace will be of interest to visitors and residents alike and will colorfully demonstrate the local flavor of the City.

There is a current "Farmer's Market" located outside of the DREAM Boundary. If this group can be moved to one of the Downtown parking lots it can serve as a base for the Marketplace. Added activity such as music once a month should be included. DTWP should have some control over the wares made available at the Marketplace to ensure a high-quality experience, rather than a flea market. There are several parking lots that could support this effort and some potential buildings. A permanent location for the Marketplace would ensure longevity.

Financial resources for implementing the recommendations of this task summary include:

- Missouri Arts Council
- Missouri Tourism
- Community Development Block Grant
- MoDOT
- Contributions for Tax Credits
- Foundation grants

State of Missouri financing programs are listed in *Missouri's Economic Development Tool: A Practical Guide to Building a Better Missouri*, published by the Missouri Department of Economic Development and the Missouri Development Finance Board. Refer to www.ded.mo.gov for full report details.

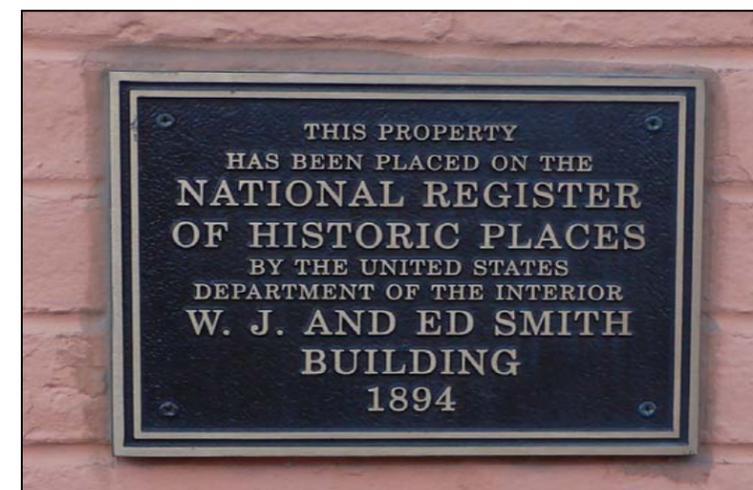
To see other strategies from the destination task please refer to the Implementation Schedule on page 34. For a full listing of destination recommendations, refer to West Plains' DREAM *Destination Assessment*, April, 2008.



Harlin Museum



The West Plains Opera House & Adjacent Retail Businesses



National Register Plaque

DREAM Initiative • Downtown Strategic Plan

MARKETING

The DREAM Marketing Plan gives West Plains a resource to guide efforts to retain, attract, and expand businesses and encourage visitors. The marketing plan provides recommendations to enhance the image of Downtown as it is communicated to the target markets of customers, investors, businesses, and residents. The goal of the marketing plan is to transform the perception of Downtown to an exciting place to live, conduct business, or visit. This perception will be based on reality as new businesses open, projects are constructed, events are held, and more residents and visitors are attracted.

The DREAM Marketing Plan identified objectives including monitoring the changing market, attracting more visitors, adjusting Downtown's image, and capitalizing on Downtown's unique features. The Marketing Plan also provides recommendations to achieve these objectives including:

- **Develop a Downtown West Plains Website**

Develop a dedicated Downtown website. A site is needed that reflects the image of DTWP as the lead Downtown organization and is focused on the promotion of businesses and activities in Downtown West Plains. The site will provide a virtual home for all things involving Downtown and should include information about festivals, shops and events. The Downtown website should provide links to the City website concerning vacancies, redevelopment and housing opportunities, special projects, and historic building codes that will interest the development community.

DTWP will need to regularly update the website as it will become a tool for visitors and residents alike. Links to other social networking services will provide a broader internet presence as well.

- **Develop a Downtown Specific Newsletter**

Existing residents and businesses need to know about the successes of Downtown so they can spread the word to their family and friends. DTWP should develop a newsletter to communicate with residents. A quarterly publication would allow DTWP to promote upcoming events, projects, plans and promotions. Readers should be directed to the Downtown website and encouraged to pass the newsletter on to a friend. The newsletter should be distributed by hardcopy to businesses and available as a download link on the website.

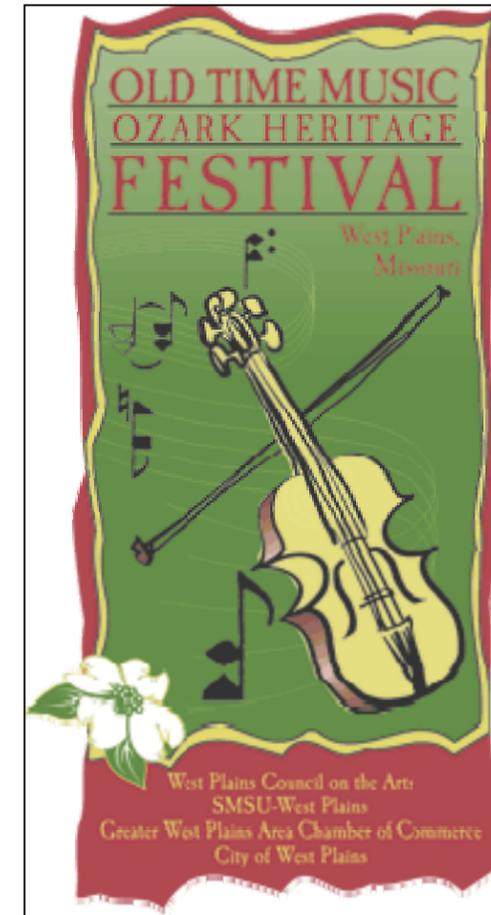
Alternatively adapt the existing City newsletter to include a Downtown column is a possibility.

- **Expand Downtown's Appeal as a Destination**

Develop compelling events to be held in Downtown that will support West Plains' positioning statement and develop its branding. The idea of Ozark Heritage and Culture can be woven into events. Nearly any aspect that celebrates the region's heritage can be applied, but music, art, and history are top priorities to develop into high-quality events.

DTWP should work with the Chamber of Commerce to establish new events. The Chamber may also be receptive to rebranding some of its events and moving them Downtown. Depending on the event specifics, Missouri Tourism funding may be available.

More marketing strategies can be found in the Implementation Schedule on page 35. To see a full listing of the objectives and recommendations, please see the West Plains DREAM Marketing Plan, April 2009.



Advertisement for Old Time Music Festival



Bike Club in West Plains

PLAN
ILLUSTRATIONS



DREAM Initiative • Downtown Strategic Plan

City of West Plains

IMPLEMENTATION

Included in this section are illustrations of Downtown West Plains existing conditions and strategic plan concepts resulting from the DREAM Initiative.

This section also includes some special projects and development opportunities that implement several of the recommendations of various DREAM tasks. Some aspects of these projects have been noted earlier in this plan. These projects are implementable and the City or DTWP may have already taken initial steps such as funding applications.

Lastly, this section includes the full implementation plan schedule listing all of the recommendations from all DREAM Initiative tasks and an illustrative timeline of the major recommendations.

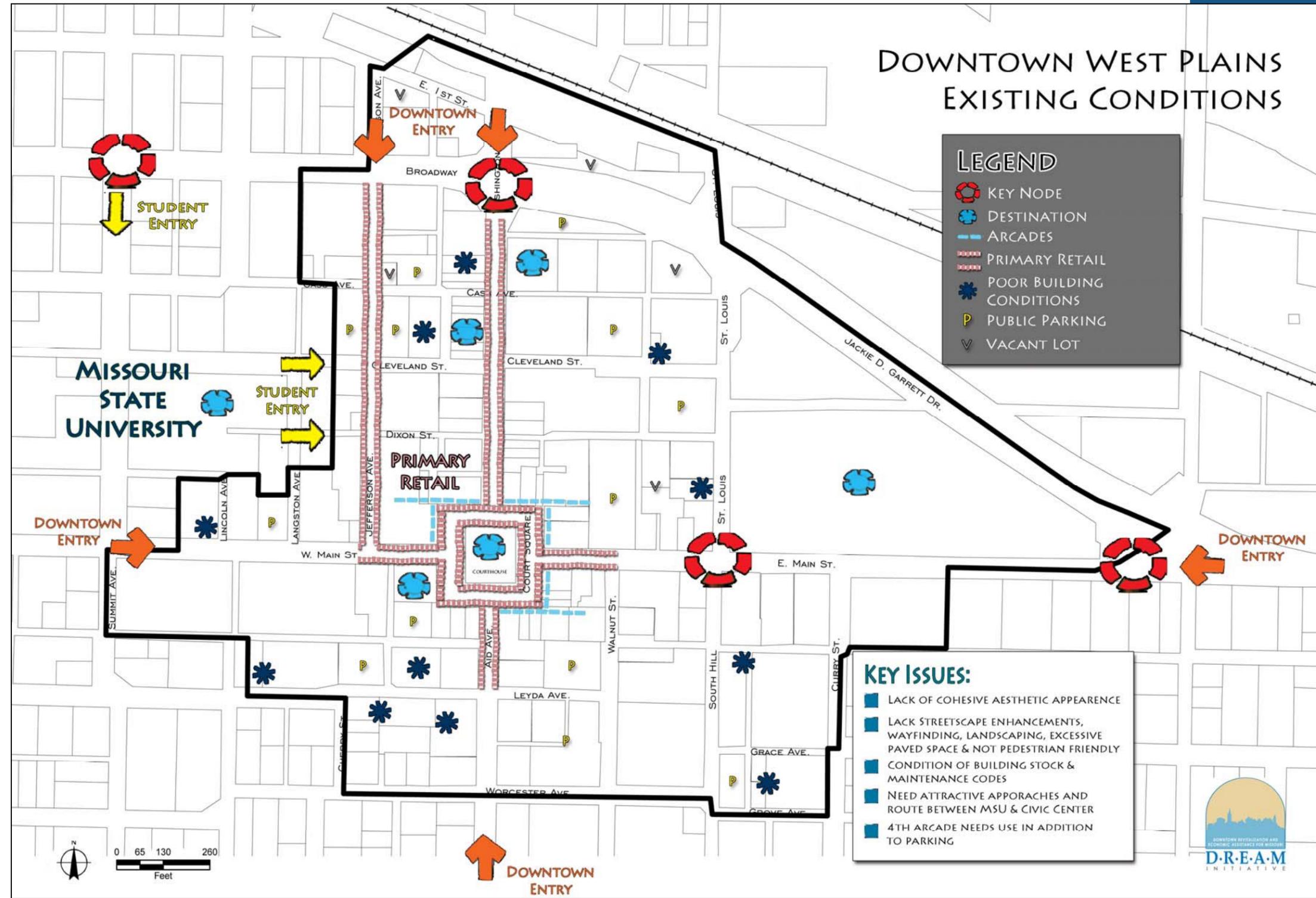


Critical Downtown Organizations required for Implementation of the DREAM Strategic Plan

Existing Conditions:

The illustration on this page depicts the existing conditions of Downtown West Plains, including vehicular and pedestrian entryways, vacant lots, key transportation nodes, destination centers, parking, and the primary retail area.

The existing physical characteristics currently create a lifeless atmosphere in Downtown with poor signage and several dilapidated buildings.

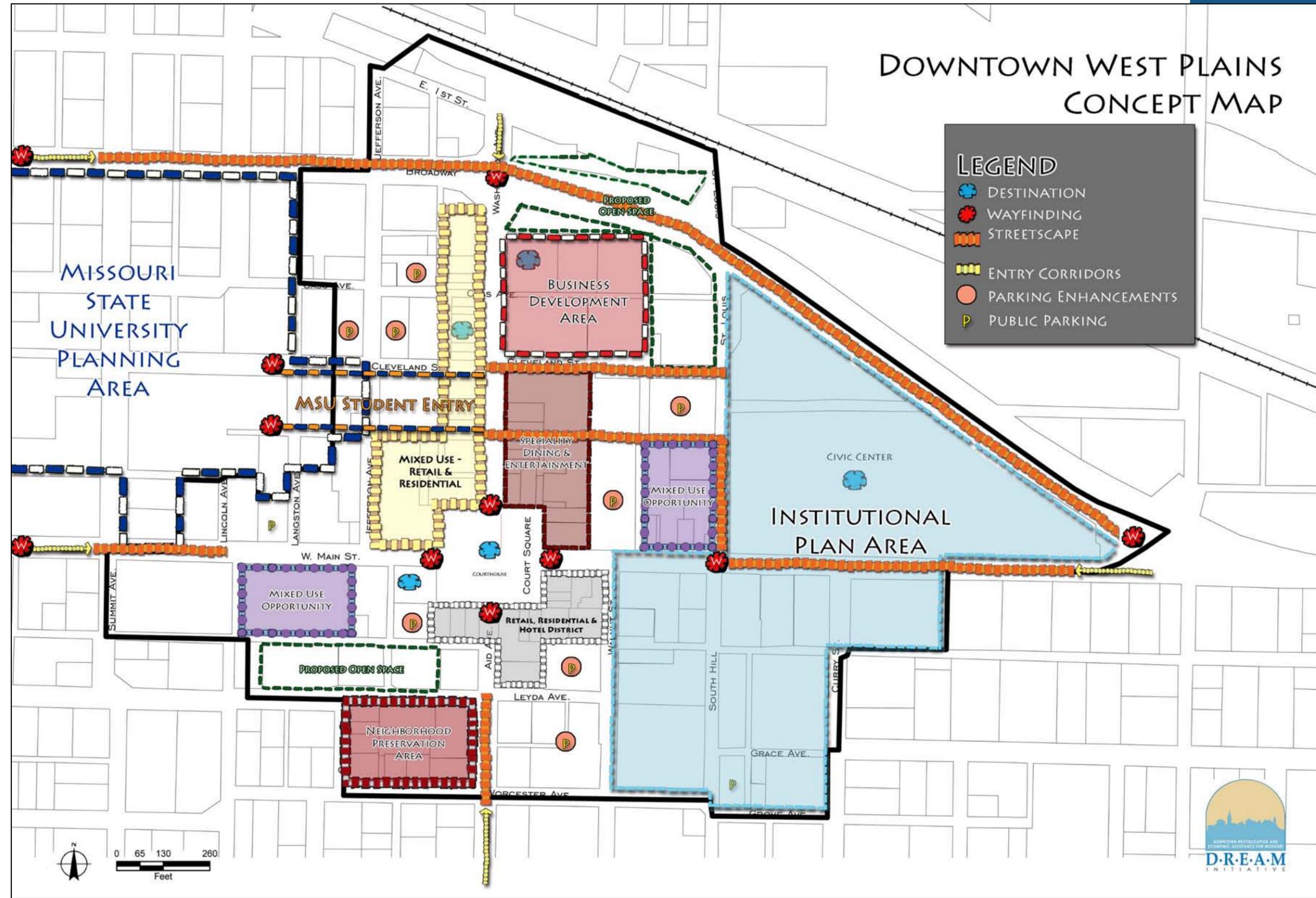


Concept Plan:

The illustration on this page depicts the concepts of the strategic plan for Downtown West Plains. The plan is conceptual in nature and each component will require additional public engagement, market studies, and technical assistance.

Aspects of this overall concept include:

- A) Expansion of the streetscape
- B) MSU / East west pedestrian walkway
- C) Parking lot improvements
- D) Wayfinding
- E) Development Opportunities
- F) Open space enhancement



Special Projects and Development Opportunities:

Special projects are primarily publicly funded. They involve a wide range of interested organizations and require broad based volunteer support. Although the City will install and maintain any physical features of these projects, it will be imperative that DTWP and the Chamber are supportive of the efforts.

In contrast, development opportunities are areas to which the City and DTWP should seek to steer private projects. These projects include vacant or underutilized lots for new, complementary construction as well as existing building rehabilitation. The private sector will be encouraged by public investment.

These projects and opportunities include:

- **Adopt an Institutional Plan Area Zoning Classification**

As shown on the Concept Plan on page 25, a large amount of open land exists around the Civic Center. This area is characterized by Governmental and Church uses on large tracts of property used for parking. Some small businesses and a few residences are found in between these uses. Many businesses are located in poor quality buildings and most residences are connected to a church.

Planning and Zoning can put into play a district to develop a better environment for these institutional uses. The area should encourage harmonious uses and enhanced parking areas, while discouraging smaller lots and buildings. Use regulation can control the businesses and parking and landscaping regulations can improve the barren, open conditions of the area. Other aspects such as lighting, lot sizes, and setbacks should also be specified as they are markedly different from other Downtown areas. Shared parking areas can also be implemented to reduce the need for every institution to expand their lots.

- **BNSF Railroad Separation & Closure Plan**

The City should cooperate with the Missouri Department of Transportation (MODOT) and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF) to implement the final report and recommendations noted in the agreed upon separation and closure plan. Complying with the at-grade closure recommendations and other criteria will allow BNSF to establish a quiet zone for Downtown West Plains that will reduce the amount of noise from the rail line. The quiet zone is important to avoid disruption of the Downtown shopper’s experience. It is a small improvement that will be noticed, but visitors will not know why something is different. The Plan can dramatically improve Downtown's atmosphere, as well as surrounding residential areas.

- **Parking Lot Expansions / Improvements**

In addition to the needs for aesthetic enhancement noted earlier, some parking could be expanded. As shown in the illustration on page 28, the City should seek to acquire some structures located on the lots behind the primary retail along Washington Avenue. These parking areas can be expanded and the areas near Broadway could attract redevelopment. Attractive office buildings could replace the low-quality structures that currently exist.

All of these lots should receive landscaping treatment, new pavement, and be designed for the pedestrian. It is important to understand how visitors travel to these lots and that every parking space brings at least one pedestrian into the lot. Therefore small plazas, paths, and shade are important to encourage the visitor. Rear façade entrances for the Washington Avenue businesses can also develop vibrant outdoor spaces for gathering or eating.



Collaboration with the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad is important for Downtown West Plains



Proposed Institutional Plan Area

The configuration of these lots should be considered. The lots to the east should be carefully planned to discourage the nearby semi-trailer business from using them as truck parking. Additionally, lots near this business may benefit from added landscaping as screening.

- **Grizzly Way**

As shown on Page 28, Dixon Street can be transformed into a pedestrian way for special occasions. Temporary bollards restricting vehicular traffic can be put into place to encourage students and MSU—West Plains Campus visitors to utilize the pathway as their primary route between the College and Civic Center. This feature could be named “Grizzly Way” to relate more closely with the University and be accepted by the students.

Physical improvements can reflect the enhancements to the parking lots. Brick pavement, crosswalks, landscaping, and lighting along with signage will develop the pathway as a gathering spot. Additionally, businesses that could benefit from the student demographic should be encouraged to locate along this corridor. As the area grows, the parking to the immediate west of the Civic Center may come under pressure to develop. This area could serve nicely as an entertainment and dining area as noted on the overall concept plan.

Plazas will need to be developed along Dixon Street that will encourage meeting places. A plaza in the parking lot across from the Putnam Student Center will be the initial Grizzly Way stop as visitors leave the University. Then the area behind the retail locations on the east side of Washington Avenue is perfect for an outdoor café setting. Ideally a grocer or restaurant can be located in the nearby

Richards Brothers Buildings to operate this café. And then a small plaza across from the Civic Center can anchor Grizzly Way on the east end. If access to the parking lots during large events becomes an issue, the temporary bollards could be placed on Dixon Street at locations that would still allow vehicular access to the parking lots. As the idea of “Grizzly Way” grows, the City may consider dedicating Dixon Street to pedestrian traffic on a permanent basis. A traffic study should be completed if this is to be considered.

Funding for “Grizzly Way” improvements has been sought and the City and DTWP should continue to pursue this project. The University may also become a partner in the effort if proper plans can be demonstrated.

- **Luster Arcade**

Page 29 illustrates potential improvements to Luster Arcade. This arcade has perhaps the greatest potential for impact due to the large parking lot to the east. Although the design elements shown in the illustrations can be applied to the other arcades as well.

Existing Courthouse Square streetscape improvements are oriented toward the street. These features should be reinstalled to focus on the retail stores and the arcade. In addition to permanent design elements, landscaping, and new pavement Luster Arcade should be decorated and promoted as the entertainment arcade. Eating and drinking places should be encouraged to cluster in this arcade and have evening hours. As businesses populate the arcade, an archway could be constructed and banners installed to designate the arcade as the festival area.

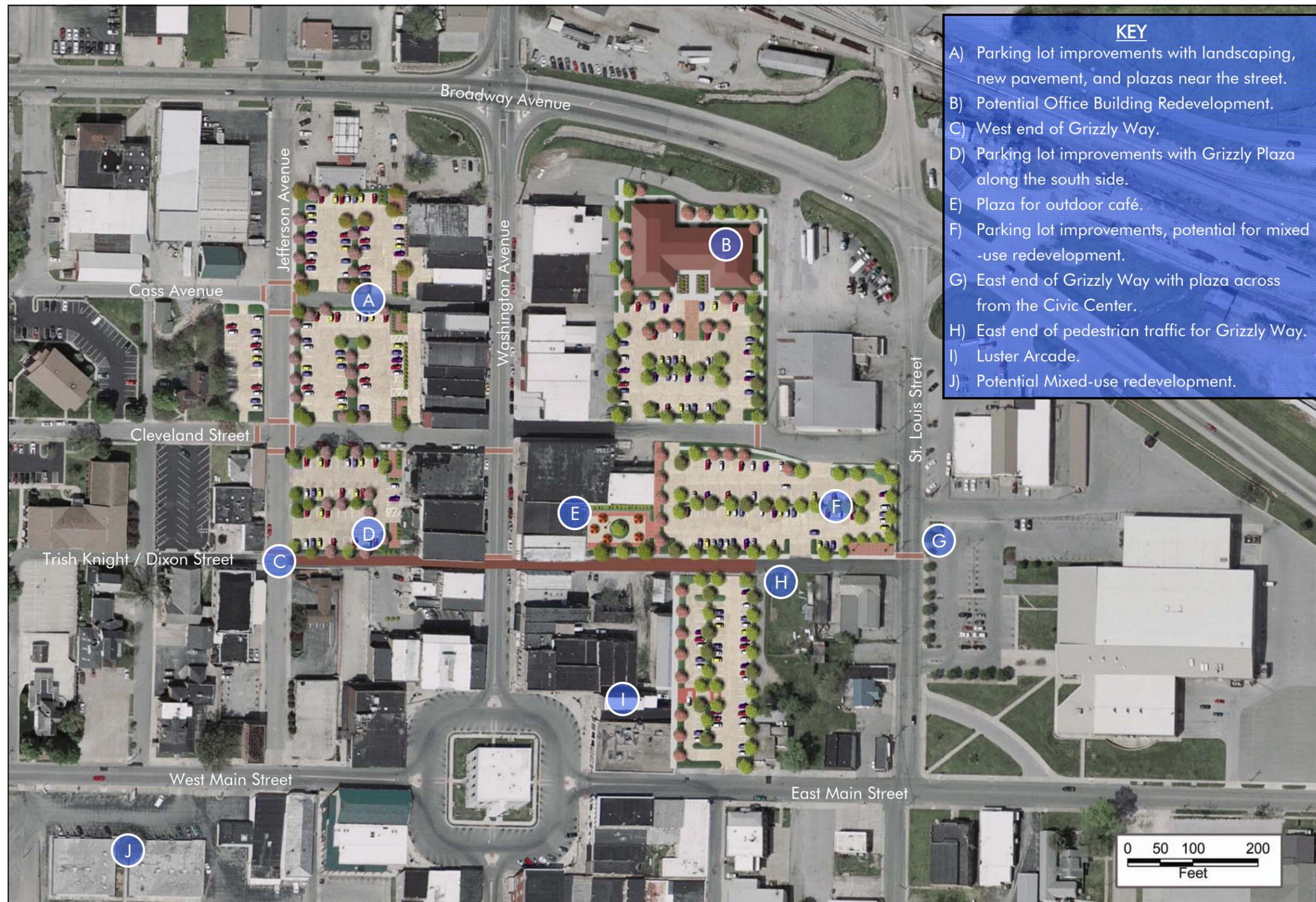


Existing Streetscape Improvements on along the Square



Illustration of Restored Storefront and Streetscape

Special Projects and Development Opportunities





Potential Improvements of the View from Luster Arcade



Potential Improvements of the Luster Arcade View from the Parking Lot

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

The implementation schedule located on the following pages compartmentalizes the projects and programs in categories that relate to the DREAM Initiative Tasks.

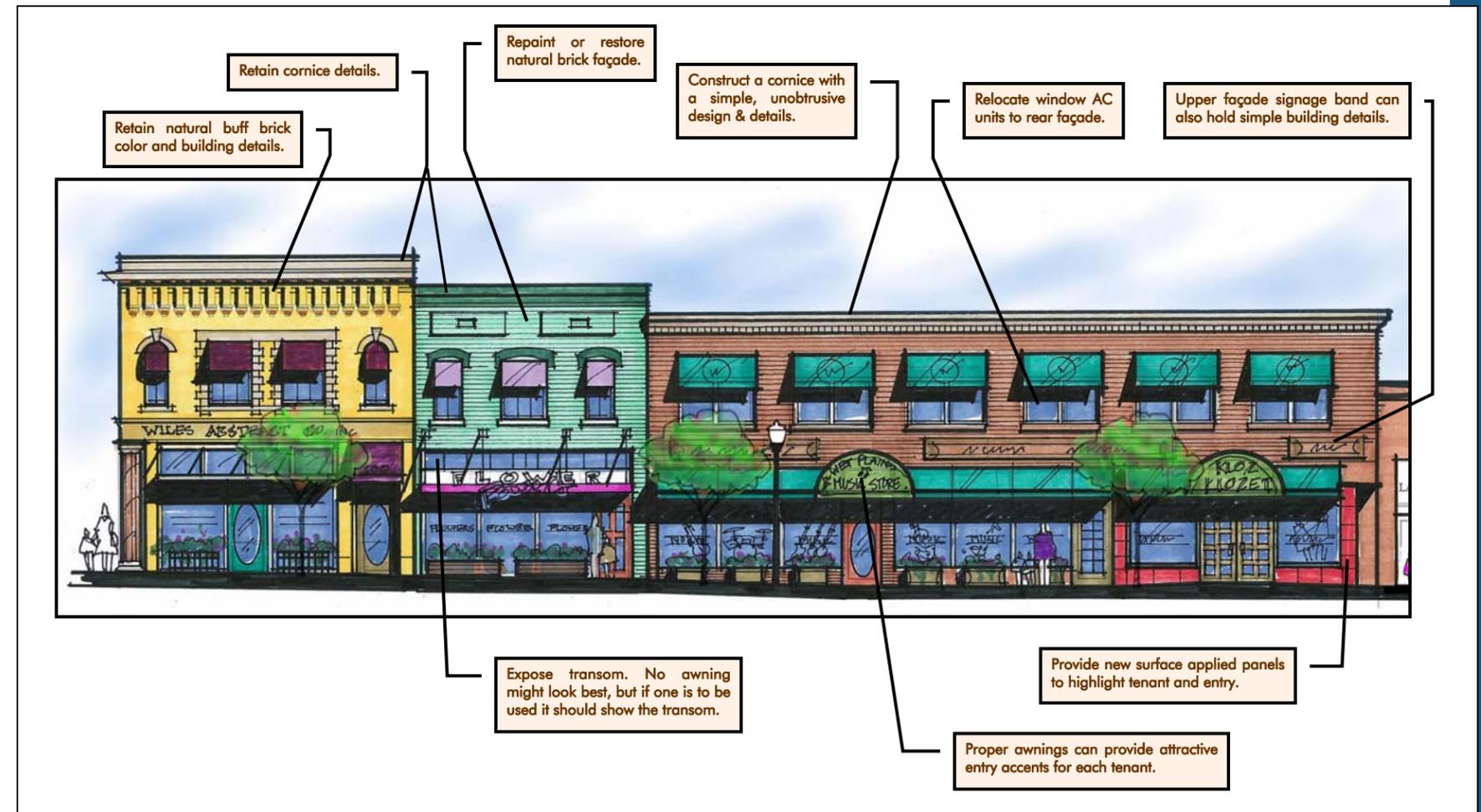
These include: Organizational Structure, Land Use, Building & Infrastructure, Community Surveys, Building and Streetscape Design, Retail Market, Housing Market, Financial Mechanisms, Destination Assessment, Marketing, and Special Projects.

Each project and program is listed by objective, description, responsible party, support groups, starting timeframe, and tools, techniques, and resources. Each of these aspects is proposed and, for planning purposes, has been considered in the context of their relationship to each other. In some cases, a particular project must be completed before another can begin.

The timeline is based on the prioritization of the projects and their importance to Downtown West Plains.



Civic Monument Sign Located along Highway 63 to the East of Downtown



Design Guideline for Downtown West Plains Buildings

Organizational Structure Strategies

Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Start Date	Tools, Techniques & Resources
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	Concentrated work session to re-energize the group. Should be a day long event, perhaps hosted by the University. Ideally there is a location available in Downtown, but if Board Members are too close to their businesses or homes, they will be less likely to stay. It is absolutely CRITICAL that all Board Members attend the entire time. Board effectiveness is closely related to organizational effectiveness.				
1	Downtown West Plains, Inc. (DTWP) Retreat. TOPICS FOR RETREAT: Any adjustments to bylaws, mission statement, or overall goals DTWP Director responsibilities Multi-year organizational funding discussion to include a CID Lunch Brainstorming activities for mid-term business plan or other interactive segment Committee assignments and committee goals Volunteer development and succession plans End the day with a "Safety Walk" type of tour through Downtown	DTWP	City & Chamber	Q1 2010	The retreat could be conducted by a third party although there may be an opportunity for the University to assist, perhaps as a student project. An impartial facilitator is important if there is conflict and consensus is needed. Development of a mid-term business plan for DTWP, Inc. and a process for updating this plan should be drafted by the Director after the retreat.
2	DTWP Communication	DTWP	City & Chamber	Q1 2010	Press releases and newspaper articles for main changes, Individual interviews for important Downtown businesses, special event for past and future donors.
3	Ozarks Small Business Incubator Support to DTWP	DTWP	City & Chamber	Q1 2010	Local legal counsel and accountants should be used to review contracts.
4	Establish West Plains Community Improvement District Formation / Outreach Process	City	DTWP	Q1 2010	Outreach aspect will be critical as incentive mechanisms are under scrutiny in West Plains. It is also critical that the CID includes members from various civic groups and public agencies to provide a broad-based support structure and be more accepting to the public.

Land Use & Building Survey

Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Start Date	Tools, Techniques & Resources
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5	Conduct Traffic Study	City	County	Q4 2010	The impact of this study will guide development of the City. The study should consider large attractions, built shopping areas, business routing, and wayfinding options for highway 63.
6	Reconcile Parcel Data	City/County	DTWP	Ongoing	The City and County Assessor should work closely to resolve the issues with parcels that are unaccounted for and depressed property assessments. Addressing the property values of Downtown properties is an important issue to the health of Downtown. DTWP should assist the Assessor and City.
7	Update Land Use & Zoning GIS Data	City/DTWP	County	Ongoing	City and County Staff should interact to blend existing information and information developed through the DREAM process. Both agencies can benefit from one another. Every two years the field survey should be repeated and commercial vacancies should be updated every 6 months.
8	Develop Regular Survey Methods to Keep Mapping and GIS Data Current	City	County	Ongoing	City and County Staff should work to canvas the entire City and incorporate elements such as the traffic study plans. Staff can also work with DTWP volunteers to keep information current and seek to add layers of information as needed.

Community Surveys

Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Start Date	Tools, Techniques & Resources
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9	Continue Visitor Surveys	DTWP	Chamber with input from Ozark Heritage Welcome Center	Ongoing	The surveys used in the DREAM Initiative could be repeated or used as a template. Press releases should be periodically issued to discuss the results and value of the surveys.
10	Reconvene Focus Groups	DTWP	Chamber	Q4 2012	The groups used in the DREAM program can be tapped again or new groups formed. DTWP should remain flexible and invite those that can bring lively conversation on Downtown issues. City staff or recorder methods could be provided to develop the transcript.
11	Conduct Community Survey	DTWP	Chamber	Q2 2013	The surveys used in the DREAM Initiative could be repeated or used as a template. Press releases should be used to notify residents when the survey is starting and of the results.
12	Keep City Leaders and Downtown Businesses Aware of Survey Results	DTWP	Chamber	Ongoing	Highlights of results can be made available on the Downtown website and in the newsletter. Potentially business seminars can also be held to teach businesses how to adapt and interpret the data.

City - City of West Plains
DTWP - Downtown West Plains, Inc.
County - Butler County, Missouri

Chamber - Greater West Plains Chamber of Commerce
Downtown CID - Future Community Improvement District
MSU - Missouri State University

Building & Streetscape Design Guidelines

Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Start Date	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
13 Adopt Design Guidelines	The historic district should be kept intact and the City will need to strongly support adherence to guidelines that improve the district. Downtown zoning codes should also be reviewed to determine if detrimental uses and regulations are impacting the district.	City	DTWP Design Committee	Q1 2010	There is the potential to implement design guidelines through the local preservation ordinance. The local preservation commission can be charged with granting certificates of appropriateness and reviewing every project needed a building permit.	
14 Develop Downtown Pedestrian "Loops"	Pedestrian "Loops" encourage a continuous trip down one side of the street and back on the other. The pedestrian feels safe in walking this circuit back to their point of origin. In Downtown, these routes must not be broken by service businesses, vacant storefronts, or poor sidewalk conditions.	City	DTWP Design Committee	Q4 2010	Review Downtown conditions on a regular basis via "Safety Walks". Identify obstacles to pedestrians and rectify immediately. This regular review will ensure that important infrastructure projects are prioritized correctly.	
15 Develop University Pedestrian Entryway	The area between Cleveland and Trish Knight Streets serves as the main pedestrian walkway through Downtown for MSU Students. The University utilizes the Civic Center for many events and students travel between the campus and the center.	City	DTWP Design Committee / Downtown CID	Q2 2011	Zoning and physical streetscape enhancements can encourage and improve this entryway. A linear park like path can be established through the parking areas and the area immediately adjacent to the Civic Center is a redevelopment opportunity that could attract a restaurant. Both Cleveland and Trish Knight should see improvements that can be funded by the CID or new TIF District. It is also important to note that public parking will be improved due to these pathways.	
16 Enhance the Arcades	The arcades are a unique design feature of West Plains. Each arcade should be developed with its own identity. As noted, uses can be clustered, but other amenities are needed. Landscaping, water features, and banners can set each arcade apart.	City	DTWP Design Committee	Q1 2010	This initiative can started immediately with landscaping elements. Property owners and businesses along each arcade should be assembled and encouraged to get involved. Elements such as art, sculptures, and fountains can be coordinated to give an identity to each arcade.	
17 Reconstruct the Missing Fourth Arcade	The Southwest arcade has been removed and a parking lot built. The walkway from Court Square should be reestablished and the area used and reconnected to the Square.	City	DTWP	Q3 2012	The City should seek to repurpose the parking lot, establish a walkway or some Court Square level platform. This may be an appropriate location for a permanent Marketplace location, but there needs to be activity at the Court Square level. The existing parking lot is depressed and activity is not visible from the Square. Ideally the entire lot can be a redevelopment area for a use such as a hotel.	
18 Improve the Aesthetics of Existing Parking Lots	Existing lots are adequate, but leave a barren and lifeless feel. Additionally it is unclear where public parking exists due to inadequate signage, obsolete signage, and unclearly delineated property lines. Existing parking lots are often the first impression a visitor has of a community.	City	Downtown CID	Q2 2011	Improvements should include the removal of old signage. New, welcoming, well maintained signage is required. Landscaping will make the visitor feel Downtown is vibrant and warm. Lighting must be adequate but not overpowering. All pavement and surfacing must be well maintained. Attractive low fencing or walls will indicate the limits of the parking lot. These improvements are critical for a good impression. CID and TIF funding could be utilized.	
19 Improve Parking and Signage System	Currently public lots and on-street parking has on-street time limits being enforced. Signage for this system is poor to non-existent.	City		Q3 2010	The City should review the benefits and costs associated with the parking system. Off-street lots should be clearly marked and any time limits indicated. The City may wish to reconsider on-street parking limits and attempt to get employees to park in the available lots.	
20 Enforce Building and Maintenance Codes	The City must enforce current building and maintenance codes on a fair and consistent basis for all structures. The commercial market is strong in Downtown West Plains, but maintenance of many building side and rear facades is being deferred.	City	DTWP & Chamber	Ongoing	Specific Downtown building and maintenance codes may be developed for the local historic district. The code should be enforced by the City and supported by the City Council. The City procedures need to be clearly defined and communicated to property owners.	
21 Establish gateways to Downtown	Along with the wayfinding plan, Gateways into Downtown need enhancement. The existing Downtown West Plains Signs are set too far back from the street and are not noticed. Additionally buildings near the main gateway at Washington & Broadway are deteriorated. Secondary gateways could be considered at West Main & Summit and East Main & Broadway.	City	Downtown CID	Q4 2013	These area can be made into grander pedestrian plazas. A larger, more eye catching welcome sign closer to the street, perhaps as an archway across Washington Avenue. Again, CID and TIF funding could be utilized.	
22 Develop and encourage the Court Square Historic District	Information on the details of the historic district need to be produced and distributed to the community and visitors. The colorful history of West Plains needs telling.	City Historic Preservation Commission	DTWP	Q2 2010	The Court Square District is eligible for various state and federal funds related to historic preservation. Promotional materials may be eligible as well. The City should work to elevate the awareness of West Plains history by helping to fund these efforts.	
23 Encourage Outdoor Restaurant Seating	Attractive outdoor seating provides a vibrant welcoming atmosphere. Locations will vary, but where space is available this should be allowed and encouraged.	City	DTWP	Ongoing	The City zoning code may require adjustment as the outdoor seating must have restrictions. The cafes should only be located in areas adjacent to the restaurant and with adequate space available. Other considerations include City enforcement, health department regulations, storage, and design standards for furnishings.	
24 "Outstanding Building" Recognition	Develop a program to identify and recognize outstanding properties that were rehabilitated appropriately.		DTWP Design Committee	Q1 2010	Property receiving this designation should have followed the design guidelines in place. Recognition for the property owner in the press and at dinner events or functions is critical. Additionally the owner could be presented with framed before and after photographs, or perhaps a sketch of the restored property along with some research of the building. None of these activities would be very costly and they will promote a high amount of goodwill.	
25 Streetscape Phases	Lighting has been installed as an existing component, other elements should be put in alongside the lighting. Some existing concerns are that the benches installed should face the retail stores and instead, face the street. More decorative elements are needed, particularly on Court Square.	City	Downtown CID	Q1 2011	Split overall improvements into components and start a project at a time; areas of concentration should be the arcades and the parking areas. Landscaping should be a high priority. Permanent street trees are needed as well as pits swales in the parking areas. West Plains can handle the removal of several parking spots for landscaping.	
26 Streetscape Donor program	Establish a program where businesses, groups, and individuals can 'buy' components of the streetscape and have their name on a plaque		DTWP Design Committee	City	Q2 2010	Once the designs are determined, a catalog should be developed. All donations should be made to DTWP and the City should purchase and install the elements. The program will require marketing to existing residents through the website and newsletter.
27 "Adopt - a - Spot" Program	Develop a program for ongoing, contractual, volunteer maintenance of areas throughout Downtown in return for signs or recognition of the volunteers. Groups wanting to give back to the City can be identified and spots assigned.		DTWP Design Committee	City	Q2 2010	A potential group to accept and lead this challenge would be the Master Gardener's Club. The Club could identify areas they felt they could landscape and care for with the materials purchased by the City or DTWP. Deadlines should be set for the planting and the Club members could oversee the groups as they work. Then periodic maintenance would be required, although watering should occur on a regular basis by the City to ensure landscaping isn't neglected.

Retail Market Analysis						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Start Date	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
28 Develop Seminars for Existing Businesses	Develop a merchant education program to address issues of marketing, customer service, business and building maintenance, retail opportunities, trends, etc. Seminars could be held at the Ozarks Small Business Incubator and MSU Small Business & Technology Development Center could assist.	DTWP Economic Restructuring Committee	Chamber	Q2 2010	General business issues such as marketing, customer service, and store display and design should be provided as well as more detailed assistance. Clusters of similar Downtown businesses such as restaurants should be brought together to present specific topics. This is a critical outreach step for DTWP to provide benefits to its businesses.	
29 Capitalize on Downtown's Daytime Population	Develop techniques to better serve existing West Plains visitors, workers, MSU students, and patrons of the Ozark Heritage Visitor Center	DTWP Economic Restructuring Committee	Chamber	Ongoing	West Plains already has a number of regular visitors that need to know that there are things to do Downtown. Suggestions for Downtown merchants can be conveyed during seminars and include promotions such as lunch specials, repeat visit discounts, and ticket stub coupons.	
30 Identify an Adaptive Re-Use of the Zorn Building	This stately and unique building needs to be put back into use. A use like a boutique hotel can utilize the space effectively and be a great Downtown asset.	DTWP Economic Restructuring Committee	City	Q2 2010	Work with current property owner to assist in rehabilitation. Potential for historic tax credits and other incentives due to unique and historic nature of the building. Assistance in marketing and attracting a desired business should also be offered.	
31 Encourage Targeted Retail Uses	Work with the City Economic Development Department to target "Grocery Stores", "Full-Service Eating Places", "Specialty Food Stores", "Book, Periodical, & Music Stores", and "Office Supplies, Stationary, and Gift Stores" for attraction Downtown.	City	DTWP Economic Restructuring Committee	Q2 2010	The City and DTWP should weave the identified categories into planning efforts. Research into these categories and a strong focus on the needs of an incoming business of these types will prepare the City for success. Additionally, targeted marketing can be initiated by identifying trade publications, suppliers, and a network of regional stores and lenders.	
32 Cluster Uses in Various Areas & Arcades	As noted on the Strategic Plan Concept Map, opportunities exist for the City to generally zone and encourage certain uses in certain areas. The arcades can be developed into categories such as "shoppers", "Entertainment", and "Food".	City	DTWP	Q1 2010	Planning and Zoning can accomplish this over time. Encouragement through incentives can assist as well. Businesses will naturally want to be near similar activity. Service uses should not be encouraged in these areas, but steered toward upper floors or side streets.	
33 Encourage Existing Merchants to Expand Product Lines	Downtown merchants may be able to strengthen their sales base by expanding their products offered in the targeted categories.	DTWP Economic Restructuring Committee	Chamber	Q3 2010	The categories targeted can be provided to the merchants through a seminar and the newsletter along with ideas on how to market the additional product. Testimonials should be obtained from businesses that meet with success.	
34 Create a Retail Recruitment Team	Pull together Downtown Leaders to review and survey available properties, provide connections to local agents and bankers, provide information to prospects, and profile successful Downtown projects. The team should maintain Downtown 1st floor vacancy information and make recommendations to the City Economic Development Department concerning non-retail complementary uses.	DTWP Economic Restructuring Committee	City	Q1 2010	Initial projects should include identifying and contacting regional businesses that may be ready to expand to a second location, assisting local entrepreneurs with start-up education, and keeping positive business information in vacant Downtown windows. Available Downtown retail space should be included on the website.	

Housing Market Analysis						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Start Date	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
35 Implement Residential Inspections and Rental Occupancy Permits	Existing housing stock is adequate to meet demand, but a benefit to revitalization effort may be realized by curing deteriorated conditions, thereby improving property values and the tax base	City	City of West Plains Housing Authority	Q2 2010	City staff and elected officials should develop an inspection program to ensure quality of housing and improve property values. Such a procedure need not inspect every rental property annually, but on change of occupancy as tied to the occupancy permit.	
36 Encourage Property Owners to Maintain their Property	Create a positive Downtown living atmosphere by encouraging residents to make efficient residential improvements that reduce costs of energy, living, and commuting.	DTWP	City	Ongoing	Educate and empower Downtown residents by hosting meetings, developing educational seminars, encouraging neighborhood watch programs, and providing information concerning home maintenance funding.	
37 Encourage Rehabilitation to Downtown Buildings	Continue to encourage rehabilitation of underused building space in Downtown through the use of incentives, especially for the upper floors. Some regulations may require adjustments to assist developers.	City	DTWP Design Committee	Ongoing	Improved buildings will attract residents. Utilization of the existing Revolving Loan Fund and other incentives will encourage rehabilitation. Existing "rehabilitation-friendly" property owners should be interviewed about their experiences with City processes.	
38 Enhance the quality of Downtown living and the demand for Downtown housing	Other amenities such as streetscape elements, maintenance procedures, parks, plazas, and events are very visible, important to residents, and portray a vibrant and positive image about living in Downtown.	DTWP Promotions Committee	City	Ongoing	An important work aspect of DTWP and the Downtown CID funding should be programs that address this initiative. Assistant for acquisition of key properties, donations for streetscape expansion, and fundraising events are ongoing efforts.	
39 Attract New Residential Developments	Develop a residential plan, to include marketing that promotes high-quality loft developments and seeks to seize opportunities near Downtown for larger residential developments.	DTWP	City	Q3 2011	The Residential Demand Analysis noted that there is not great demand at the present time for Downtown housing. As demand grows, the City should seek opportunities to capture the residential demand for Downtown.	

Financial Assistance						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Start Date	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
40	Establish a Community Improvement District	A CID can capture funding from property taxes and sales taxes for use of a wide variety of Downtown services that DTWP can provide instead of the City. This ongoing funding source is critical.	City	DTWP	Q4 2010	City and DTWP have identified the CID boundary. Outreach and educational meetings, a budget, a steering committee, and potential board members should be identified. The benefits of the CID need to be clearly and consistently communicated by the property owners peers. The CID should be a political subdivision.
41	Consider Establishing a Downtown Tax Increment Financing District	Review necessity as existing TIF is expiring.	City	DTWP	Q2 2012	A TIF that is focused on Downtown and provides funding for physical improvements should be developed. This TIF boundary should be structured to ensure that development on the periphery of Downtown generates funding to improve Downtown.
42	Identify New Funding Sources for the Existing Façade Rehabilitation Program	Develop sustainable sources of funding to enhance the existing loan program.	City	DTWP Design Committee	Q3 2013	Consider sources such as fees or origination points, as well as funding through grants or tax credits. Other option include investments from banks and ultimately support from the Downtown CDC should it be formed.

Destination Assessment						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Start Date	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
43	Focus Positioning	Determine and promote the positioning statement of: "The Center of Ozarks Heritage and Culture". It's important that the positioning statement be supported accurately. Not all "Ozarks" style of businesses would one consider a cultural experience. Art and music of the Ozark way of life is the goal. L.L. Broadfoot sketches at the Harlin Museum are the example.	DTWP Promotions Committee	Chamber	Q1 2010	Current events are aligned with the positioning statement, but new events can be developed. Merchants should be encouraged through the seminar program and advertising campaigns should reflect the statement.
44	Develop a Community-Wide Wayfinding Plan	A City-wide wayfinding plan should consider how to route visitors to Downtown and then enhance the visit by clear direction to clearly marked parking areas, wayfinding signage in Downtown should all have the same 'theme' and be complementary to the streetscape elements	City	DTWP	Q2 2011	The plan should deal with the gateway signs, trailblazing signs, and proximity signs as well as street and traffic control signs. Implementation of the wayfinding plan can occur in phases as funding sources allow.
45	Locate a Visitor Center on Courthouse Square	Downtown should seek to have its own Visitor Center on the square to give visitors a central gathering point. A Downtown center can be helpful to the existing Ozark Heritage Visitor Center by coordinating and maintaining information provided at that location.	DTWP	City	Q1 2012	This could be a kiosk, or perhaps a manned site if other visitor amenities and the Harlin Museum were to have a presence on the square as well. Potentially the Ozark Small Business Incubator Building might also serve as a location.
46	Establish a Downtown Marketplace	Not just a "Farmer's Market" such an aspect could accurately provide produce, art, and crafts made by the current West Plains area residents and support the position statement. The Marketplace will be of interest to visitors and residents alike.	DTWP	City	Q1 2011	There is a current "Farmer's Market" located outside of the Downtown. If this group can be moved to one of the Downtown parking lots it can be a base for the Marketplace. Added activity such as music once a month should be included. DTWP should have some control over the wares made available at the Marketplace to ensure a high-quality experience, rather than a flea market. There are several parking lots that could support this effort and some potential buildings. A permanent location for the Marketplace would ensure longevity.
47	Develop Downtown Lodging	Locations should be identified and critiqued as potential lodging sites. It may be possible to interest hotel developers in property near the Civic Center or University while surrounding large single-family homes may be opportunities to encouraged Bed & Breakfasts.	DTWP Economic Restructuring Committee	City	Q4 2010	This is an aspect lacking in Downtown West Plains. The Zorn building is one possible location, but others may exist. DTWP and the City should work to attract this use.
48	Provide Valet Parking	Choose some special nights to provide valet parking to visitors of Downtown. Attendees to the event or just to shop could arrive in the square and get out at a clearly marked drop off location, likely near one of the arcades.	Downtown CID	DTWP	Q1 2011	This ideas should be tested during holiday events. If successful, eventual programming of monthly or during certain events can be a function provided by the CID.

Marketing Strategies						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Start Date	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
49	Develop a Downtown West Plains Website	Currently there is a City website only. DTWP should have a site dedicated to the Downtown.	DTWP Promotions Committee		Q3 2010	Such a site is integral to Downtown activities. Visitors and residents will use the site and connections will be needed to the City, Chamber, and regional sites. The site will require regular maintenance.
50	Develop a Downtown Specific Newsletter	Existing residents and businesses need to know about the successes of Downtown so they can spread the word to their family and friends. Alternatively adapt the existing City newsletter to include a Downtown column.	DTWP	City & Chamber	Q3 2010	Events, plans, projects, and special promotions should be included and readers should be directed to the Downtown website. The Newsletter should be delivered by hardcopy to Downtown businesses and mailed to residents. The Downtown website should also have a link to download the newsletter.
51	Expand Downtown's Appeal as a Destination	Develop compelling and appropriate events to be held in the Downtown that will support West Plains' positioning and develop its branding. Seek to add new events and aspects to existing events.	DTWP Promotions Committee	Chamber	Ongoing	Current events fit into the Ozark Culture well. It will be important that events are of a high-quality. Nearly any aspect that celebrates the regions heritage can be applied, but music, art, and history are top priorities. Depending on the event, Missouri Tourism funding may be available.
52	Utilize surveys and Downtown West Plains Website to Understand the Needs of Downtown West Plains' Visitors	Create regular survey tools on the website to allow for survey submission and tracking of information requests and views	DTWP		Q1 2011	Such dynamic tools will allow the site to be fresh and adapt to provide the information people are seeking. This can also be a method of "visitor or phone surveying" but locations of submitters cannot be verified, and therefore responses gathered this way must be kept separate from other survey techniques.
53	Create Downtown Specific Business Directory Promotional Brochure	This directory is need to guide visitors to businesses. Retailers, specifically unique to West Plains, should have prominent advertising positions and services such as financial and insurance businesses should have smaller and less prominent ads. A map should also be included relating the Downtown to the rest of West Plains.	DTWP Promotions Committee	Chamber	Q1 2011	The directory should be distributed throughout activity centers in West Plain's and the surrounding area as production runs permit. This will be an important piece for the retailers to support.
54	Create Downtown Specific Calendar of Events Promotional Brochure	There is an existing listing of Downtown events that is not well produced and not online. The goal is to demonstrate a vibrant Downtown and a high quality production piece will be important to distribute with other materials and electronically.	DTWP Promotions Committee	Chamber	Q1 2011	All events that attract people into Downtown should be listed, regardless of the group, charitable or non-charitable nature, or audience of the event. The calendar should be distributed throughout activity centers in West Plain's and the surrounding area similar to other materials, but it is important to develop an email listing and send the calendar electronically. People will forward the calendar on to their contacts if events are of interest to them.
55	Business Advertising	Develop coordinated advertising campaigns to promote the Downtown as a whole in order to compete in the retail market. Campaigns should support the positioning statement.	DTWP Promotions Committee	Chamber	Q2 2011	Campaign suggestions include "Downtown; You Missed It!" and "Top 10 things to do in West Plains". Funding for advertising materials can be obtained from the CID and various other methods as well as local businesses.
56	Enhance Promotional Activities by Downtown West Plains, Inc.	Prepare Downtown for major events and the holiday season by coordinating advertising.	DTWP Promotions Committee	Chamber	Q1 2011	Launch a "Shop West Plains First" campaign and a "Downtown West Plains Pride" effort to enhance existing businesses. Downtown's anchor businesses should be identified and their shops reviewed before events for suggested improvements. Additionally all businesses should be notified of coming events through the newsletter so they can prepare for visitors.

Special Projects						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Start Date	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
57	Develop the Institutional Planning Area	A large amount of land exists around the Civic Center to the East of Court Square. This area is characterized by Governmental and Church uses on large tracts of property used for parking. Some small businesses and a few residences are found in between the church uses. Many of these businesses and residences are unsightly.	City	DTWP	Q1 2011	Planning and Zoning can put into play a district to develop a better environment for these institutional uses. Use regulation can control the businesses and parking and landscaping regulations can improve the barren, open conditions of the area. Shared parking areas between uses may make some large blocks available for redevelopment, such as for a hotel. Lighting and building setbacks are markedly different in this area as well.
58	BNSF Railroad Separation and Closure Plan	Work with MODOT and BNSF to implement the final report and recommendations noted in the approved separation and closure plan that will meet 'quiet zone' criteria.	City		Ongoing	The quiet zone is important to avoid a disruption of the shoppers experience. It is a small improvement that will be noticed, but visitors will not know why something is different. The City-wide plan can dramatically improve Downtown's atmosphere, as well as the surrounding area.
59	Parking Lot Expansions/Improvements	In addition to enhancing the existing parking lots, the City should be prepared to acquire some of the low quality structures located on or near existing lots in order to expand the parking lot.	City	Downtown CID	Q3 2014	Although this recommendation will remove taxable property, these poor structures will be replaced with high quality parking facilities that will enhance surrounding values of more substantial buildings. This is an effort that needs to be well planned.
60	Grizzly Way	As the physical improvements that establish the University Pedestrian Entryway occur, there are other actions required to initiate "Grizzly Way". The City will need to provide police enforcement and public works support, MSU and DTWP will need to promote the area, DTWP will need to help decorate.	DTWP	City & Chamber with input from MSU	Q4 2012	This joint effort should determine when the "Way" is put into place...ie. Friday nights, etc. Businesses along the corridor should also be drawn in as volunteers and encouraged to decorate and stay open later to serve the pedestrians. Additionally, the area could be used for other events such as an art fair or the music festival.
61	Luster Arcade	Luster Arcade should be the focus of the initial Enhance the Arcades effort and should go beyond décor and landscaping. As businesses populate the Arcade and the City improves the parking lot, the Arcade itself needs to set an impressive example for the square. Pavement, benches, landscaping, lighting, and special features will need to be added.	City	Downtown CID and Design Committee of DTWP	Q2 2012	After the parking is improved and the Arcades have received some extra attention for a couple of years, the physical work should begin.

TASK

2010

2011

2012

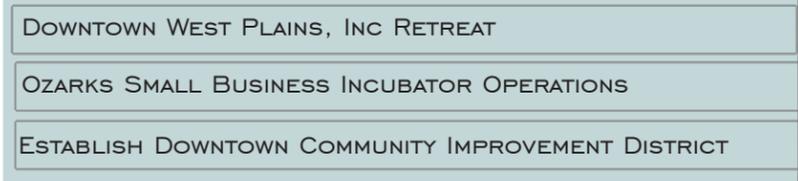
2013

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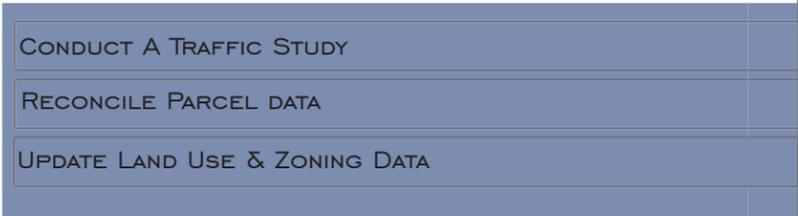
2015

Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4

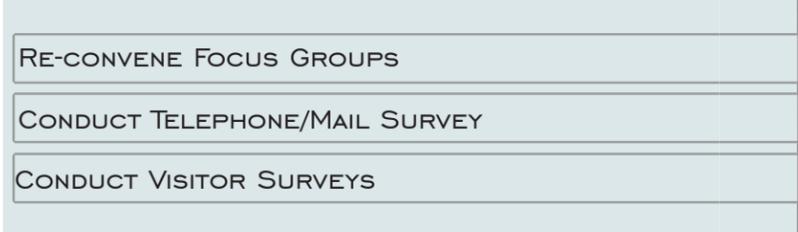
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



LAND USE, BUILDINGS & INFRASTRUCTURE



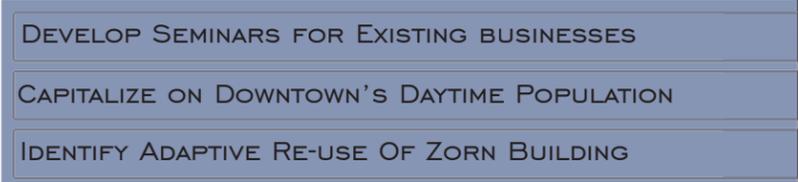
COMMUNITY SURVEY



STREETScape & BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES



RETAIL MARKET



TASK

HOUSING MARKET

- IMPLEMENT RESIDENTIAL INSPECTIONS & RENTAL OCCUPANCY PERMITS
- ENCOURAGE IMPROVEMENTS & MAINTENANCE OF PROPERTY
- ATTRACT NEW RESIDENTIAL UNITS

FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

- ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
- IDENTIFY FUNDING FOR FACADE REHABILITATION PROGRAM
- ESTABLISH A TAX INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICT

DESTINATION ASSESSMENT

- FOCUS POSITIONING
- ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY WAYFINDING PLAN
- LOCATE A VISITOR CENTER ON COURTHOUSE SQUARE
- ESTABLISH A DOWNTOWN MARKETPLACE

MARKETING

- DEVELOP A DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC NEWSLETTER
- EXPAND DOWNTOWN'S APPEAL AS A DESTINATION
- DEVELOP A DOWNTOWN WEST PLAINS WEBSITE
- ENHANCE PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES BY DOWNTOWN WEST PLAINS INC.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- DEVELOP THE INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AREA
- BSNF RAILROAD SEPARATION & CLOSURE PLAN
- GRIZZLY WAY

