

DOWNTOWN
REVITALIZATION &
ECONOMIC
ASSISTANCE FOR
MISSOURI

APRIL 2009

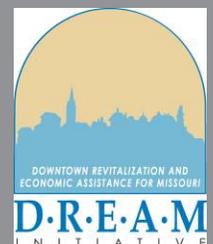
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE REVIEW

FINAL EVALUATION FINDINGS



Excelsior Springs,
Missouri

PGA



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION AND ECONOMIC
ASSISTANCE FOR MISSOURI (DREAM)
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
I. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	I-1
A. Introduction	I-1
B. Executive Summary.....	I-3
II. EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS AND REVITATLIZATION EFFORTS	II-1
A. City of Excelsior Springs.....	II-2
B. Excelsior Springs Area Chamber of Commerce.....	II-2
C. Downtown Excelsior Partnership	II-2
D. Main Action Group for Improvement in the Community	II-3
III. ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATIONS AND REVITALIZATION EFFORTS	III-1
A. Leadership.....	III-1
B. Management Characteristics	III-1
C. Board Attributes	III-1
D. Forming Partnerships	III-2
E. Community Involvement	III-2
F. Funding.....	III-2
G. Organizational Strategic Planning	III-3
H. Project Planning and Facilitation.....	III-3
I. Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion	III-3
J. Residential Development and Neighborhood Revitalization	III-3
K. Downtown Advocacy.....	III-4
L. Real Estate Development Body	III-4

M. District Marketing III-4

N. Special Events Planning III-4

O. Retail/Event Promotions III-4

P. Safety, Security and Beautification III-5

IV. RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCEMENT IV-1

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW ORGANIZATIONS

A. Downtown Excelsior Springs Community Improvement DistrictIV-1

B. Downtown Excelsior Springs Community Development CorporationIV-2

C. Downtown Excelsior Springs Business & Economic Development CommitteeIV-3

D. Excelsior Springs Arts CouncilIV-3

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS

A. Downtown Excelsior PartnershipIV-4

B. City of Excelsior SpringsIV-4

C. Excelsior Springs Area Chamber of CommerceIV-5

V. CONCLUSIONS, IMPLEMENTATION AND FUTURE WORK V-1

APPENDIX

- Attachment 1 – Organizational Assessment Questionnaire
- Attachment 2-A – Existing Downtown Organizational Structure
- Attachment 2-B – Recommended Organizational Structure
- Attachment 3-A – Downtown Organizations and Responsibilities
- Attachment 3-B – Specific Downtown Issues and Responsibilities
- Attachment 4 – The Nature of Organizational Change
- Attachment 5 – Board and Committee Recommendations
- Attachment 6 – Sample Job Description

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. INTRODUCTION

All cities are unique in terms of their physical assets, community resources, history, and sense of place. Many cities also share one common characteristic; downtown decline. The decline of downtowns presents a problem for economic developers, governments, and citizens from small rural communities to large metropolitan areas, as the consequences negatively affect the economic health of the remainder of the city and region. A community's overall economic and social health is influenced by the viability of its downtown. From a social standpoint, downtown embodies the heritage of the community and gives it a sense of identity. Economically, downtown serves as the primary commercial hub where residents can work, shop, and live. A Downtown Revitalization Program encourages a dynamic downtown that features unique retail opportunities, tourist attractions, employment possibilities, social interaction, and recreational outlets to residents and visitors. Downtown revitalization can benefit cities by improving their economic base, fiscal condition, and well-being of residents.

A Downtown Revitalization Program (the "Program") is a community process that requires local champions willing to invest time and effort to make the Program work. A successful Program requires planning and strategic implementation by many organizations, including both a city government that is dedicated to downtown improvements, and active downtown organizations that have broad, community-wide support. The Program involves coordinating a complex but interrelated series of events, the successful coordination of which relies on the cooperation of various community groups.

Successful revitalization depends on a variety of components including:

- Committed leadership
- Broad-based participation
- A shared vision of the future
- Realistic goals and plan of action
- Effective communication
- Management of implementation
- Recognition of efforts
- Use of outside resources

It is important to assess existing downtown organizations, revitalization efforts, the downtown business community, and the community at-large. In evaluating an existing organization the decision must be made whether it is still relevant and can effectively complete downtown revitalization responsibilities. A critical analysis should also be made concerning the need for:

1. Encouraging the sustainability of existing organizations that are effectively carrying out the Downtown Revitalization Program,

2. Revamping, or changing, an existing organization to achieve the objectives of the Downtown Revitalization Program, or
3. Establishing new organizations (sometimes replacing one or more ineffective, existing organizations) to complete the Downtown Revitalization Program.

The preferred action is to encourage the sustainability of existing organizations that are effectively completing the Program. In many instances, however, organizational change may be necessary to meet the evolving roles and responsibilities of an existing organization in response to the progression of revitalization activities in the downtown. In these cases, organizational change is intended to “build organizational capacity.” The “capacity” of an organization includes its financial resources, personnel or staff, volunteer activity, and leadership. A clearly defined mission and strategic plan are necessary for organizations undergoing change as these institutional frameworks guide and serve as a foundation upon which to build capacity.

Setting up new organizations and committees is often a better option than revamping existing ones. A new group may be able to undertake new responsibilities and accomplish new objectives that an existing group with an established agenda cannot. The community can set up a new organization with broad based support, a clearly defined and independent mission, new goals, and an infusion of fresh spirit into the revitalization efforts. A new group can combine all the principles of a successful revitalization organization into one working unit. However, the establishment of new organizations requires additional resources, and the effort must be organized carefully or it may be seen as merely an extension of previous failed efforts by ineffective organizations. Many Programs will have the advantage of building upon previous successes as a result of past efforts.

B. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recommendations noted in this report represent steps to achieve an Organizational Structure which has the components in place to attain sustainability and drive the Downtown Excelsior Springs revitalization well into the future. These recommendations can be implemented in part, or in whole, and there may certainly be other possible scenarios that the City of Excelsior Springs leadership feels are more fitting to its unique circumstances. This report simply represents the most effective solution in PGAV's opinion. Foremost recommendations include:

- **Creation of a Community Development Corporation (CDC)**
This report contemplates that this organization is called Downtown Excelsior Springs Community Development Corporation (DESCDC). The DESCDC will be a multi-bank corporation from which loans and equity can be provided to small businesses or development partners for a number of roles in the revitalization of Downtown Excelsior Springs, including: housing development, commercial real estate development, economic development, and small business development. The formation of DESCDC should be comprised of participating banks and can include local businesses that help fund the organization through donations, grants, and other investment.

- **Formation of a Community Improvement District (CID)**
A CID can be used very effectively for a broad range of development and organizational activities that benefit Downtown. Funds would come from an additional sales tax or property tax. The DREAM Financial Assistance Review will provide specific revenue estimates for the defined DREAM boundary.

It is not unusual that some resistance may occur over the establishment of a financing district in Downtown Excelsior Springs. Any effort to establish a CID must include an adequate community outreach campaign where the benefits of the district are shown to far outweigh projected costs.

An argument that is often voiced by the business community is that increasing the sales tax rate is detrimental to business activity. Excelsior Springs' total sales tax rate ranks in the middle of the DREAM designated cities and any improvements implemented to make the Downtown more friendly to shoppers will more than offset any loss, or perceived loss, of business. With the possible exception of automobiles, the vast majority of consumers typically do not check sales tax rates before buying.

- **Creation of a committee to address the economic development and business needs of Downtown Excelsior Springs.**
This report recommends such a committee be formed by the name "Downtown Excelsior Springs Business and Economic Development Committee" that will unite Downtown's businesses to be responsible for general business development and, more specifically, downtown retail development.

- **Establishment of a local Arts Council to encourage the arts and an artist community in Downtown Excelsior Springs.**

The Excelsior Springs Arts Council, through a promotion of the arts and, particularly, of an artist community can provide a unique aspect to a visitor or resident's experience of Downtown Excelsior Springs. In addition, a local Arts Council would have access to grant programs, offered through the Missouri Arts Council ("MAC"), to manage and offer to local artists or to out-of-town artists to encourage them to perform in or relocate to Excelsior Springs.

In addition to the creation of new committees, there are recommendations which principally involve increasing the administrative and marketing capacity of the existing "organizational structure" to respond to the anticipated growth and development of future economic and social activity in the Downtown Area. The following are priority recommendations for the existing organizations:

- **The Downtown Excelsior Partnership should become the "lead" entity for Downtown revitalization, business, and social activities.**

The DEP should play the lead role in promoting improvements to the Downtown business environment, specifically the retail business climate. The recent steps to implement a full time executive director position for the DEP will provide an institutional capacity to recruit volunteers, and to engage with the City and the Chamber in formulating meaningful, achievable strategic plans, goals, and missions for the Downtown Revitalization Program.

- **The City of Excelsior Springs should build upon existing efforts to revitalize Downtown and continue to aid the Downtown Excelsior Partnership in those endeavors.**

The City is already an effective leader in firmly supporting the organizations working toward Downtown revitalization. It is recommended that the City take the lead initiative, in collaboration with the DEP, Chamber of Commerce, and other key stakeholders, in educating and informing the Downtown community, and community at large, about the benefits of establishing the Downtown Excelsior Springs Community Improvement District and the Downtown Excelsior Springs Business & Economic Development Committee.

- **The Excelsior Springs Area Chamber of Commerce should continue its strong association with the City and DEP and look to support the newly formed Downtown Excelsior Springs Business and Economic Development Committee.**

The Chamber provides a diverse list of programs that can offer multiple benefits to the revitalization of Downtown Excelsior Springs, including tourism and visitor attraction. The Chamber should continue those programs and look to strengthen them whenever possible. At the same time, the Chamber is set up to assist the "Excelsior Springs Area" business community and should not focus exclusively on Downtown. As such, the Chamber should support the Downtown Excelsior Partnership and aid the development of the Downtown Excelsior Springs Business & Economic Development Committee which can provide that singular focus on Downtown revitalization.

SECTION II

EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS AND REVITALIZATION EFFORTS

A prerequisite of DREAM Program selection requires that a city demonstrate broad, community-wide support for the revitalization of Downtown. Excelsior Springs' residents, businesses and political leaders speak of the importance of a vibrant Downtown. These sentiments were clearly illustrated in the Focus Groups conducted in Excelsior Springs on May 29, 2007 which included all the above named groups. While the results of the Focus Groups are not scientific, they can shed light on important issues in the community. Significant findings from the Focus Group Survey Report include:

The groups overwhelmingly felt that downtown Excelsior Springs is headed in the right direction. The redevelopment and revitalization efforts, so far, have been successful, and many participants felt that the community's perception of downtown is slowly changing and becoming more positive. The City has improved the infrastructure and beautified the city within the last ten years, which has prompted more business to come downtown and more tourists to visit Excelsior Springs.

The participants did, however, feel that there are a few areas that Excelsior Springs still needs to address in order to move in the right direction. They mentioned the abandoned buildings, the absentee landlords of some apartment buildings, and the drug rehab center as issues that still need work in order to move Excelsior Springs in a more positive direction.

These findings indicate that participants are interested in returning Downtown Excelsior Springs into the dynamic hub of activity. Additionally, they provide insight into how to achieve that goal. The above comments are a small selection from the Focus Group Report; full transcripts of the Focus Groups are available from the City of Excelsior Springs.

As the lead "non-government" organization in the Downtown Revitalization Program, the DREAM Initiative discussed the function of the existing organizational structural with representatives of the Downtown Excelsior Partnership within the context of an "Organizational Assessment Questionnaire." A copy of the "Organizational Assessment Questionnaire" is located in **Appendix 1**.

Downtown Excelsior Springs benefits from the organizational direction of two principal organizations: Downtown Excelsior Partnership and the City of Excelsior Springs. Providing additional direct or indirect support to Downtown is the Excelsior Springs Area Chamber of Commerce. **Attachment 2- A, Existing Organizational Structure**, located in **Appendix 2**, depicts the relationships of the various organizations participating in the Downtown Revitalization Program. The following is a description of each organization and their current role in supporting the Downtown Revitalization Program.

A. City of Excelsior Springs (“City”)

The City of Excelsior Springs (the “City”) has an important role to play in all aspects of revitalization, but particularly: building code enforcement; zoning conflict resolution; financial assistance; and building and streetscape design standards implementation. The City has made an increased financial commitment to the Downtown Area in support of several capital projects, including the Downtown reconstruction and streetscape project, the Oaks Hotel rehabilitation, new monument and way-finding signage, and the Hall of Waters Cultural Tourism Center, to name a few.

The City’s financial commitment to Downtown fluctuates in response to the City’s budgetary limitations. The City has not placed in service a dedicated tax revenue allocation process for continuous reinvestment in the Downtown as the City must balance community-wide needs with those of Downtown’s aged infrastructure.

B. Excelsior Springs Area Chamber of Commerce (the “Chamber”)

Excelsior Springs Area Chamber of Commerce (the “Chamber”) is an independent, membership-funded organization whose programs involve community marketing, business development and advocacy, tourism and visitor marketing, and special event planning and promotion.

The Chamber’s primary role as it relates to Downtown revitalization is through its efforts to encourage, promote and provide resources for tourism, special events, and economic growth to support a healthy business environment in the City and surrounding area. While a singular focus on the Downtown is not evident within the Chamber mission, their efforts to increase the number of visitors to the area makes a strong contribution to the economic and cultural environment.

C. Downtown Excelsior Partnership (“DEP”)

Established in 2006, the Downtown Excelsior Partnership (“DEP”) is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization comprising three committees: Marketing, Design, and Special Events. DEP has begun to establish itself as a synergizing force for the Downtown economic development and capital improvement activities of the City and the Chamber. Since its inception, DEP has succeeded in acquiring several buildings, obtaining Neighborhood Assistance Program (“NAP”) tax credits and Community Development Block Grant (“CDBG”) funds. In anticipation of receiving CDBG funds and NAP credits, DEP has succeeded in obtaining a line of credit from a local bank with which it has created a revolving loan fund for a variety of civic improvements including building and streetscape improvements.

DEP receives volunteer and capital support from the City and the Chamber. The partnership is staffed, and its activities are carried out, entirely by approximately 30 volunteers, of which 12 are actively involved. As DEP has no dedicated full-time staff at this time, the organization finds it difficult to recruit volunteers; as a result, volunteer involvement is uneven at best.

D. Main Action Group for Improvement in the Community

Established in 1990 as a not-for-profit organization focused on improving the community while focusing the Downtown Excelsior Springs, this organization, while still in existence, is reportedly neither very active nor focused on Downtown.

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SECTION III

ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATIONS AND REVITALIZATION EFFORTS

Downtown revitalization occurs when numerous entities band together to reach a common goal. Each of the participating organizations, however, may serve a different purpose and have a different reason for being involved. Additionally, each downtown organization will be uniquely developed to address the particular needs of a particular community. However, there are common elements among the techniques and services offered by the various downtown organizations that are useful to note including: Leadership, Funding, Strategic Planning, Project Planning and Facilitation, Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion, Downtown Advocacy, Development Body, District Marketing, Special Events Planning, Retail Promotions, Downtown Beautification, Safety, and Security.

A. Leadership

Invariably, leadership is included as one of the most important components of every successful downtown organization. Leaders have a vested interest in championing downtown. They are charged with informing and educating the public as well as bringing focus and vision to the organization and the Revitalization Program. Leaders must also be able to build grassroots community support and form effective public/private partnerships.

B. Management Characteristics

There are different approaches to successful management practices of downtown organizations. Management styles can vary greatly and it is important to match the management style to the particular needs of the downtown organization or revitalization effort. Important skills of successful managers include, speaking effectively to audiences, financial analysis and budgeting, project planning and oversight, situation and political analysis, and bargaining and negotiating expertise. Management approaches can range from being mainly an administrator who makes budgets, hires employees, and enters into contracts to an entrepreneurial approach which emphasizes new service delivery, program design, and developing new sources of revenue.

C. Board Attributes

Boards and committees should be made up of leaders with a unified enthusiasm for the revitalization of downtown. This does not suggest, however, that the board should be made up of like-minded people. It is important that the board represent diverse points of view from the community. The board should encourage discussions and debate differences to strengthen the ultimate decision and resultant outcomes. Additionally, the board should develop goals and clearly identify those responsible for completing them. While there are no set guidelines for the size and make-up of boards it is recommended that boards be limited in size to 7-9 members.

Potential members should be recruited from, but not necessarily limited to local banks, chambers of commerce, city government, downtown businesses, downtown stakeholders, downtown residents, historic societies, and preservation organizations. Board membership for all of the downtown organizations should have a similar make-up in order to ensure continuity in leadership and complementary decision-making across the different organizations.

D. Forming Partnerships

Nearly all successful Downtown Revitalization Programs typically include 3-5 separate organizations that have different purposes and provide different services. It is not as important which organizations handle which services, but that the services are delivered effectively. However, certain types of organizations are structured or chartered to deliver certain types of services or perform certain functions more effectively than others. Healthy partnerships are crucial to starting the revitalization process and building the critical mass needed to catalyze the cycle of sustainable development.

E. Community Involvement

Each organization must ensure that businesses and citizens, particularly residents of surrounding neighborhoods, have continuous opportunities for input and involvement. Large community events and celebrations are often held downtown and are very important in fostering an overall sense of community. Involving the community in the Downtown Revitalization Program will help to foster that sense of community.

F. Funding

In addition to leadership, adequate funding is one of the most important components of successful Downtown Revitalization Programs. Revitalization Programs cannot be sustained without a stable source of money. The amount of money raised can depend on the depth of the programs and services required for revitalization. Large revitalization programs will not only require local resources and fund-raising efforts, but also may require outside funding sources as well. A major funding component of all successful downtown revitalization efforts is the local government, particularly at the outset of a Revitalization Program. A number of funding sources will be investigated as the DREAM Initiative moves forward including, but not limited to; Community Improvement District tax levies and assessments, Tax Increment Financing, Transportation Development Districts, and many various state tax incentive and grant programs. Utilizing different funding sources is necessary due to use limitations (i.e. some funding mechanisms may not be permitted to be used for operation costs, only for programming or services) of different sources as well as to build a stable and diverse funding structure to ensure sustainability. Different local fundraising activities include: membership donations, fund-raising festival, historic or holiday house tours, in-kind contributions. Outside funding opportunities include: grants, loans, and tax credit programs.

G. Organizational Strategic Planning

Building an effective and sustainable organization requires strategic planning. Successful organizations develop a strong vision and align their resources toward achieving that vision. It is important to establish short-term and long-term goals for the organization. These goals should be specific and measurable and should be reviewed on a regular basis. Strategic planning for the revitalization of downtown will be addressed in greater detail in the Downtown Strategic Plan component of the DREAM Initiative.

H. Project Planning and Facilitation

The organization leading downtown revitalization spearheads the various improvement projects. Successful organizations measure progress by utilizing resources and overcoming obstacles in facilitating completion of Revitalization Program goals and objectives. Project oversight will be a large component of all downtown revitalization organizations; project success depends upon each organization's ability to do so.

I. Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion

Typically efforts of the organization in charge of business attraction, retention and expansion focus first on existing downtown businesses. The organization actively communicates with businesses to help identify needs and resolve problems. Additionally, the organization helps to improve existing business practices with assistance including training, marketing assistance, and access to capital. More successful organizations are proactive in retention efforts by tracking lease expirations and acting to limit business losses.

Business attraction and new business development are important components of a Downtown Revitalization Program, and usually are components of the local chamber of commerce or a downtown support organization. Successful economic development programs understand the market opportunities and have realistic goals. The programs start with providing the basic needs of formation (e.g. capital, real estate, and labor) and foster the ease of establishment. Innovation is crucial in these efforts, for example, retail incubators have been used successfully in developing retail businesses where national recruitment efforts have failed. Retail development will be addressed in much more detail in the Retail Market Analysis component of DREAM Initiative.

J. Residential Development and Neighborhood Revitalization

Development of housing and revitalization of existing neighborhoods is essential to successful Downtown Revitalization Programs. Residents help to provide the demand necessary to support shops and restaurants downtown. Additionally, a vibrant residential component is an integral part of a multifunctional downtown. The vitality of downtowns can be measured by the level of human activity; people on the sidewalks demonstrate a healthy downtown. Housing development will be addressed in much more detail in the Downtown Housing Market Analysis component of the DREAM Initiative.

K. Downtown Advocacy

As a result of downtown decline most downtown communities, residents, and businesses feel neglected and detached from the city government and larger community. A successful Downtown Revitalization Program will help bridge the gap between the downtown community and the rest of the city – most importantly the city government. An influential downtown organization can effectively address its constituents' needs and provide one voice for their concerns and issues.

L. Real Estate Development Body

Successful Revitalization Programs include a real estate development body that encourages private investment in real estate. There are many ways to aid real estate development including land assembly, preparing property for development, financial assistance, and tax incentives. Many successful Revitalization Programs create a catalytic development firm to develop initial projects that market and consumer research shows have potential demand, but at higher than acceptable market risk. Through these initial projects the organization demonstrates to the development community and investors that downtown development is both feasible and profitable.

M. District Marketing

Successful Downtown Revitalization Programs create a new, unified image of downtown that reshapes the perception of downtown into the center of activity. Efforts should focus on developing community pride in the unique physical environment and historic – and present – community culture. Creating a new image or enhancing the existing image of the downtown involves promotional activities that build upon downtown economic and cultural offerings. The key is to create a healthy mix of retail promotions, special events and festivals, public relations, and other marketing media.

N. Special Events Planning

Through the use of special events, downtown organizations build partnerships, raise funds, encourage community involvement, promote downtown, and, in particular, promote downtown retail. Special events are essential in marketing downtown to residents that no longer view downtown as a destination, as well as, to tourists from outside the area.

O. Retail/Event Promotions

Downtown revitalization efforts include many activities to promote the unique mix of retail stores offered. Special shopping events, brochures, and other advertising and marketing media are necessary to encourage the community to support downtown retail.

P. Safety, Security and Beautification

In one fashion or another, every successful Downtown Revitalization Program improves safety, security and the appearance of downtown. Beautification improvements include creating and maintaining cleanliness to ensure a positive first impression of downtown for visitors. Other efforts include store window decoration, building façade improvement, flower boxes, benches, and awnings.

Improving safety for rural communities focuses mainly on pedestrian traffic through crosswalks, speed bumps, and road marking. Improved signage, banners, and maps for improve way-finding, lessen congestion, help in the presentation of downtown, and also make effective marketing tools. Efforts should be made to improve or control parking in order to turn motorists into pedestrians and encourage walking throughout downtown.

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SECTION IV

RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCEMENT

A few active and engaged entities have demonstrated a commitment to providing leadership, resources, and energy to Excelsior Springs' evolving Downtown Revitalization Program. This current "organizational structure" has established a foundation for incorporating the elements of successful organizations and revitalization efforts described in Section III. There are also a few elements that are currently not being addressed, or have not historically been needed, that may become important features of the Downtown Revitalization Program. Evolving needs require increased "organizational structure capacity" to address these elements in the future. In addition, several of the existing organizations could increase their own capacity to support the Downtown Revitalization Program through growth, collaboration, planning, and increased financial resources.

The following recommendations are made in two parts. First, recommendations will be provided for "organizational structure capacity" enhancement through the establishment of new organizations to complement the existing organizational structure. Second, recommendations are suggested for the enhancement of the existing organizational structure capacity, whether it is specific to an organization or to an element of successful revitalization efforts involving several organizations. The funding necessary to sustain these organizations will be addressed in more detail in the Financial Assessment Review component of the DREAM Initiative.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW ORGANIZATIONS

The following recommendations for new organizations focus primarily on increasing the financial capacity of the existing "organizational structure" in order to utilize public funding, attract and leverage private capital, and promote increased economic activity. Board membership for the new organizations should be represented by existing Board Members from other key organizations involved in Downtown in order to ensure continuity of planning, policy, and administration of the Downtown Revitalization Program. **Attachment 2-B, Recommended Organizational Structure**, located in **Appendix A**, depicts the recommended interaction of the various existing and new organizations participating in the Downtown Revitalization Program.

A. Downtown Excelsior Springs Community Improvement District ("DCID")

The Downtown Excelsior Springs Community Improvement District ("DCID") will channel private sector energy toward the solution of public problems in part by providing an extra level of public service and funding to the Downtown Revitalization Program through an added sales or property tax. The funds generated by DCID should be used to assist with Downtown beautification (such as streetscape and parking enhancements), maintenance of critical infrastructure, security, and to encourage the redevelopment and renovation of buildings. A portion of funds should be earmarked to provide district marketing, administrative support, retail promotions, and to help improve local business practices.

To these ends, it is recommended that the DCID contract with the Downtown Excelsior Partnership to provide administrative and technical services for ongoing administration of the DCID. Essentially, the funds provided by DCID to DEP will strengthen the capacity of DEP to expand its marketing and promotion programs, and its ability to concentrate on retail and business attraction. These funds may also make it possible for DEP to supplement a full-time, long-term executive director, which it needs in order to increase its effectiveness.

The DCID can be organized as a non-profit corporation or a political subdivision, however forming a political subdivision is recommended. Forming the CID requires a signed petition submitted by the City that includes:

- Signatures from property owners owning more than 50% of assessed value of real property
- Signatures from 50% per capita of all owners
- Boundaries of the district
- 5-year capital and service plan outlining purpose of district
- Cost estimates of improvements

A political subdivision CID is organized through a petition which states whether the Board is elected or appointed by the ranking city official. The City should retain majority representation on the Board with Downtown property owners, residents, or business owners representing the remaining membership (proposed to include a member or members from the DEP Board, and the Chamber). It is recommended that the Board consist of seven (7) to nine (9) members. A political subdivision CID may be funded by levying a special assessment on real property, charging a fee for business licenses, or charging an additional sales tax. The recommended funding mechanism for the DCID is the additional sales tax.

B. Downtown Excelsior Springs Community Development Corporation (“DESCDC”)

The Downtown Excelsior Springs Community Development Corporation (“DESCDC”) should be a downtown-based, non-profit corporation formed to conduct public benefit projects and other redevelopment activities. The DESCDC, through a provision of loans and equity to small businesses or development partners, can take on many roles in the effort including housing development, commercial real estate development, economic development, and small business development. DESCDC membership should be comprised mainly of participating banks but can include local businesses. Funding for the DESCDC may come through donations, grants, and investment from members. The board should be made up of representatives from the primary bank members, the DCID, the Chamber, DEP, and the City. The DESCDC should be organized in the same manner as other non-profits, pursuant to the Missouri Nonprofit Corporations Act, Chapter 355 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri (2000), as amended.

C. Downtown Excelsior Springs Business & Economic Development Committee

A new committee should be formed to specifically address the economic development needs of Downtown. This can be accomplished, initially, as a sub-committee of the City or the Chamber to ensure early vitality, although that is certainly not required. This committee should include members from the City of Excelsior Springs, Chamber of Commerce, DEP, and the DESCDC. The priorities of the committee will be to act as the liaison between all parties responsible for Downtown business development, retail attraction, and business support.

D. Excelsior Springs Arts Council

The encouragement of the arts and, particularly, of an artist community can provide a unique aspect to a visitor or resident's experience of Downtown Excelsior Springs. The establishment of a local Arts Council would provide a local organization through which grant programs, offered through the Missouri Arts Council ("MAC"), can be managed and offered to local artists or to out-of-town artists to encourage them to perform in or relocate to Excelsior Springs. The MAC, through its Community Arts Program ("CAP"), provides funding to community arts councils. To be eligible for CAP funding, an organization must maintain basic eligibility requirements as follows:

- Offer programs in more than one, MAC-funded arts discipline and/or offer arts services and foster the long-term cultural development of the community
- Only one organization per community may apply
- Must be a non-profit organization and either an Arts Council or a unit of local government
- Members of governing board must be elected or appointed by others than existing board members

An Excelsior Springs Arts Council could be established in one of two ways; as either a stand-alone, non-profit, Arts Council, or as an Advisory Board to the Downtown Excelsior Springs Community Improvement District ("DCID"). Established as an Arts Council, the organization would have to meet the eligibility criteria outlined briefly above. Established as an Advisory Board to the DCID, the organization can be established via an administrative action by the Board of the DCID. As part of DCID, the Arts Board would also have access to DCID funds with which to fund activities and add to any grant funds the organization might receive via the MAC.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS

The following existing organization recommendations focus principally on increasing the administrative and marketing capacity of the existing "organizational structure" to respond to the anticipated growth and development of future economic and social activity in the Downtown Area. PGAV and the DREAM Program Sponsors recognize the importance of identifying resources to increase the financial capability and ensure long-term sustainability of DEP, the Chamber, and the City. As previously noted, the funding necessary to sustain these organizations will be addressed in more detail in the Financial Assessment Review component of the DREAM Initiative.

A. Downtown Excelsior Partnership (“DEP”) Recommendations

With its three-pronged committee approach to organization and Downtown action and with little resources, DEP has accomplished much and has set a good foundation for the Downtown Revitalization Program. The primary area where DEP needs assistance is in sustainable funding. The City recently applied, and was awarded a Community Development Block Grant to help pay for two years salary for a full-time executive director position to facilitate the work of DEP. The DCID recommendation, should it be put in place, could provide some additional financial relief to DEP, and would potentially allow it to sustain the executive director position beyond the two years. With this position, the DEP will have the institutional capacity to recruit volunteers, and to engage with the City and the Chamber in formulating meaningful, achievable strategic plans, goals, and missions for the Downtown Revitalization Program. The administration of both the DEP and DCID by DEP’s executive director should emphasize the development and financing of promotion, business attraction and retention, and building rehabilitation program administration.

The Executive Director will be able to allocate resources toward the goals and objectives of DEP. Annual strategic planning by DEP, in concert with the City and the Chamber, should be established. Providing DEP with a full-time executive director will increase DEP’s organizational capacity and its ability to enhance Downtown business recruitment and expansion through one-on-one meetings with developers (in or out of area), prospective business owners and property owners. Increased funding and staffing will allow DEP to take an active and direct role in the ongoing development and execution of the Downtown Revitalization Program.

B. City of Excelsior Springs Recommendations

The City of Excelsior Springs is an essential component of a successful Downtown Revitalization Program. City involvement emphasizes local government commitment and increases the likelihood of broad citizen participation. The City should assist in the development of all necessary political subdivisions and districts as well as participate in the appropriate boards. However, efforts should be made to avoid politicizing the Revitalization Program. The City will have an important role to play in all aspects of revitalization but particularly in building code enforcement, solving zoning conflicts, financial assistance, and implementing building and streetscape design standards.

The financial commitment by the City to support capital improvement projects should continue and exceed the current level of activity. The City’s recent commitments have leveraged significant Public and Private resources, and this practice is the most effective means for accomplishing large-scale capital and infrastructure projects. However, the local resources of the City must be distributed throughout the community and other financial resources should be considered. It is recommended that the City take the lead initiative, in collaboration with key stakeholders, in educating and informing the Downtown community, and community at large, about the benefits of establishing the Downtown Excelsior Springs Community Improvement District and the Downtown Excelsior Springs Business & Economic Development Committee.

C. Excelsior Springs Area Chamber of Commerce Recommendations

Excelsior Springs has a proud history as a major national and international tourist destination for its mineral springs. Excelsior Springs is also in the position of having a unique natural, cultural, and historic asset with which it might attract a number of new and unique visitors to the area, thus contributing to the economic and cultural environment. The Chamber is currently a strong advocate in the promotion of Excelsior Springs to increase the number of visitors to the area. These efforts should continue and even be strengthened when possible. Projects that the Chamber can work collectively with the DEP and the City on include:

- Supporting groups visiting Excelsior Springs by offering assistance in the areas of event planning, special functions, and appreciation activities;
- Marketing and promotion of the Excelsior Springs Area and encouraging visitors to select Excelsior Springs as their destination; and
- Special projects to enhance the Excelsior Springs Area as a visitor destination.

The Chamber's role as the broader community representative requires a wider mission, goals, and objective that impede the ongoing development of the specific expertise and capacity necessary for the unique issues faced in Downtown's revitalization. As such, the Chamber recognizes that a "downtown specific" organizational structure to which the Chamber provides support rather than the primary role is necessary. Within this context, it is recommended that the Chamber assist and continue to support the Downtown Excelsior Partnership. The Chamber shall assist the DEP in several ways, including: the Chamber's active community marketing program, tourism and visitor attraction, special events promotion, and networking opportunities, all of which will be increasingly important to the success of Downtown's revitalization as business growth occurs. Identifying future opportunities to deliver these resources to the DEP, and to encourage Downtown businesses to take advantage of the Chamber's business support services, can be further developed through the creation of the Downtown Excelsior Springs Business & Economic Development Committee. Collaboration between the Chamber, the City, and the DEP will result in better chances of success within the context of the overall Downtown revitalization effort.

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SECTION V

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLEMENTATION AND FUTURE WORK

The interaction of the various organizations and the assigned roles and responsibilities of each particular organization will remain dynamic as progress is made. Initial roles and responsibilities will change as goals are met, projects are completed, new issues arise, and organizations accept more responsibility. Suggested recommendations of the responsibilities and roles of the various downtown organizations and committees are listed in the **Appendix as Attachments 3-A and 3-B**.

The strength of the Downtown Revitalization Program is realized through unified collaborative action of the organizations toward agreed upon Program goals and objectives. The leadership of the Boards of Directors of individual downtown organizations controls, in great part, the amount of collaboration between them. In order to attain a high level of cooperation, and agreement in goals and objectives, the boards should contain the same make-up (i.e. for the most part, the same people should serve on the various boards). Not only does this ensure intra-organizational cooperation it ensures control of the process among the key stakeholders: City government, Downtown businesses, and Downtown residents. It also makes best use of limited board recruitment resources. Board composition should include a majority of private or Downtown interests with public entity participation making up the minority. This helps to make certain that a Downtown focus will be kept, and that the private sector is driving the effort.

Cooperation extends beyond Downtown to organizations that impact Downtown through their own broader efforts and activities in the City and Clay County. Ongoing dialogue and recurring information sharing ensures that Downtown's "partner" organizations contribute to the overall success of the Downtown Revitalization Program. Additional work may include development of organizational goals, bylaws, mission, vision, etc. for the entities involved in Downtown. Assistance in evaluating these organizational guidelines can be found in two documents provided in the **Appendix as Attachment 4 and Attachment 5**.

This process can be very exciting and should not get politicized or hijacked for the grandstanding of any individual organization or project. A new Community Improvement District and Community Development Corporation will each need strong leadership to ensure this doesn't occur. A sample job description for an executive director of the VSA is included in the **Appendix as Attachment 6**.

Future DREAM Initiative work will assist in development and improvement of the various funding components, market analysis, and overall strategy development. Formation of these downtown organizations is a primary step toward the development of a comprehensive Downtown Revitalization Program.

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APPENDIX

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Attachment 1

Downtown Organizational Assessment Questionnaire

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ATTACHMENT 1

Community Characteristics

1. Was there a Downtown Organization previously that is no longer functioning or no longer exists?
 - a. If so, please explain.
2. Is there a large amount of conflict in the community (downtown and at-large) about downtown revitalization?
3. Is there strong private business interest in downtown revitalization?
 - a. If so what businesses?
4. Is there strong private citizen interest in downtown revitalization?
 - a. In the downtown community?
 - b. In the community at-large?

Organization Characteristics

5. Is there an organization that is leading efforts towards downtown revitalization? *If there are multiple organizations LEADING efforts please complete all questions for each.*
6. Name of organization.
7. What type of organization is it (non-profit, for-profit, chamber of commerce, political subdivision, etc.)?
8. What year was the organization established?
9. How many full time employees does it have?
10. How many part time employees does it have?
11. How many volunteers does it have?
12. Where is the organization located?
13. What type of physical facilities does the organization have?
14. Roughly, how many city blocks does the organization cover/represent?
15. Note significant organizational accomplishments.
16. Note significant organizational failures.

17. Note significant organizational challenges.

18. To what extent is the organization involved in providing the following services:

- a. Capital Improvements (installing pedestrian-scale lighting and street furniture; planting trees and shrubbery)
- b. Consumer Marketing (producing festivals and events; coordinating sales promotions; producing maps and newsletters)
- c. Economic Development (offering incentives to new and expanding businesses)
- d. Maintenance (removing litter and graffiti, washing sidewalks, trimming trees)
- e. Parking and Transportation (managing public parking, maintaining transit shelters)
- f. Policy Advocacy (promoting public policies to the community; lobbying the government on behalf of business interests)
- g. Public Space Regulation (managing sidewalk vending; controlling vehicle loading)
- h. Security (providing supplementary security guards, working with city police force)
- i. Social Services (aiding low income, providing job training, supplying youth services)
- j. Any other services not mentioned

Mission, Purpose, Goals, Etc.

19. Is there a clearly written, updated mission statement?

20. Is there a strategic plan?

21. Are the goals of the organization written, agreed upon, and clear to all?

22. Currently, what are the goals of the organization?

23. Are the goals achievable?

24. Is there an annual process for setting/renewing goals?

25. Does the board/steering committee agree on what it should accomplish in the short term (2 years)?

26. Does the board steering committee agree on what it should accomplish in the long term (3-10 years)?
27. Are the organizations bylaws up to date?
28. Is there a mechanism requiring short and long term planning for the board and its committees?
29. Does the organization periodically assess its:
- k. Mission, goals and strategic plan?
 - l. Committee structure and performance?
 - m. Board membership and participation?
 - n. General membership participation?
 - o. Follow through on commitments?
 - p. Budget and goal setting process?
 - q. Role in the community?

Internal Organization Assessment – Committees

30. How many committees are there involved in your organizations activities?
31. What type of activities do the committees conduct?
32. Do committees have a clear statement of purpose?
33. Do committees have clear written goals and objectives?
34. Do the committees function?
35. Do the committees have specific roles and responsibilities that all members of the organization understand?
36. Is the committee structure and membership make-up reviewed annually for relevancy?

Internal Organization Assessment – Board

37. How many members are on the governing board?
38. Does the organization's board currently have committed and active members?
39. Does the organization's board currently have enough people to carry out its purposes and goals?

40. Do board members have diverse downtown/community interests and perspectives?
41. Do board members have the right mix of skills to lead and direct?
42. Does the organization have a system for recruiting board members for specific needs?
43. Do terms of office provide for stable yet renewing leadership?
44. Does the organization have an orientation session for new board members?
45. Does the organization's board have a drop-out or non-attendance problem?
46. Do board members trust each other?
47. Do board members get along well with each other?
48. Do board members avoid conflicts of interest?
49. Do board members act as a team and work together?
50. Do board members enjoy the organizations meetings and activities?
51. Are board members talents being fully utilized?
52. Are board members individual contributions recognized?
53. Are board members collective efforts acknowledged?
54. Are board members able to help the board and its committees examine and improve its processes?

Internal Organization Assessment – Membership

55. Does the organization currently have committed and active members?
56. Does the organization's membership base have diverse downtown/community interests and perspectives
57. Is the organization's membership base growing, shrinking, stable?
58. Does the organization currently have enough people to carry out its purposes and goals?

59. Does the organization have sufficient skills and diverse community interests and perspectives?
60. Does the organization have a system for recruiting members for specific needs?
61. Does the organization have an orientation session for new members?
62. Does the organization have a drop-out problem?
63. Are general member's talents being fully utilized?
64. Are general member's individual contributions recognized?
65. Are general member's collective efforts acknowledged?

Leadership Characteristics and Effectiveness

66. Are board decisions usually made by:
- r. The board
 - s. The officers
 - t. Executive director
 - u. The committees
 - v. Specific individuals
 - w. The membership
 - x. Combination of above
67. Does the leadership of the board and its committees effectively encourage different points of view in discussions?
68. Does the leadership of the board and its committees effectively minimize personality differences?
69. Does the leadership of the board and its committees effectively deal with power struggles and hidden agendas?
70. Does the leadership of the board and its committees encourage teamwork?
71. Does the leadership of the board and its committees instill enthusiasm for work to be accomplished?

72. Does the leadership of the board and its committees identify and celebrate milestones?
73. Has the board clearly identified its roles and responsibilities as a board?
74. Has the board clearly identified the roles and responsibilities of the executive director, and his/her relationship to the entire board?
75. Has the board developed a means for minimizing the communication of conflicting board members' expectations to the executive director?
76. Has the board established a process for obtaining staff input for board decision making?
77. Do board and committee meetings have agendas and are they announced in advance of the meeting?
78. Do board and committee meetings follow these agendas?
79. Do board and committee meetings proceed efficiently and effectively?
80. Do board and committee meetings have minutes prepared and distributed in a timely manner?
81. Does the leadership ensure that action goes forward in an orderly manner by seeing to it that decisions are actually made?
82. Does the leadership see to it that all members understand that decision?
83. Does the leadership see to it that someone takes responsibility?
84. Does the leadership see to it that those persons clearly understand their assignments and specific tasks?
85. Does the leadership see to it that visible results occur?
86. Does the leadership see to it that results are reported to the group?
87. Has the organization established standards of performance or benchmarks from which to evaluate outcomes? If so, please identify and explain those that apply:
 - a. Crime Rates
 - b. Taxable retail sales
 - c. Number of jobs created
 - d. Pedestrian/visitor counts

- e. Lease rates
- f. Customer attitude survey
- g. Occupancy rate
- h. Business license revenue
- i. Population
- j. Change in tax base
- k. Value of real property investment
- l. Population density
- m. Other

Fiscal Resources

88. Approximately what is the organizations annual budget?

89. Which of the following are sources of funding for your organization (estimate percentage of total budget for each)?

- a. Special tax assessment on property and/or business
- b. Bonds (public or private)
- c. Voluntary donations
- d. In-Kind contributions
- e. City general tax revenues
- f. Subsidies or grants from Federal Gov't
- g. Subsidies or grants from State Gov't
- h. Sale of goods or services

90. What fundraising activities does the organization undertake?

91. Are the organization's resources sufficient to achieve its goals?

92. Are the organization's resources being used effectively?

93. Is the organization driven primarily by its:

- a. Budget
- b. Goals/strategic plan
- c. Outside factors

Community Networking and Coalition Building

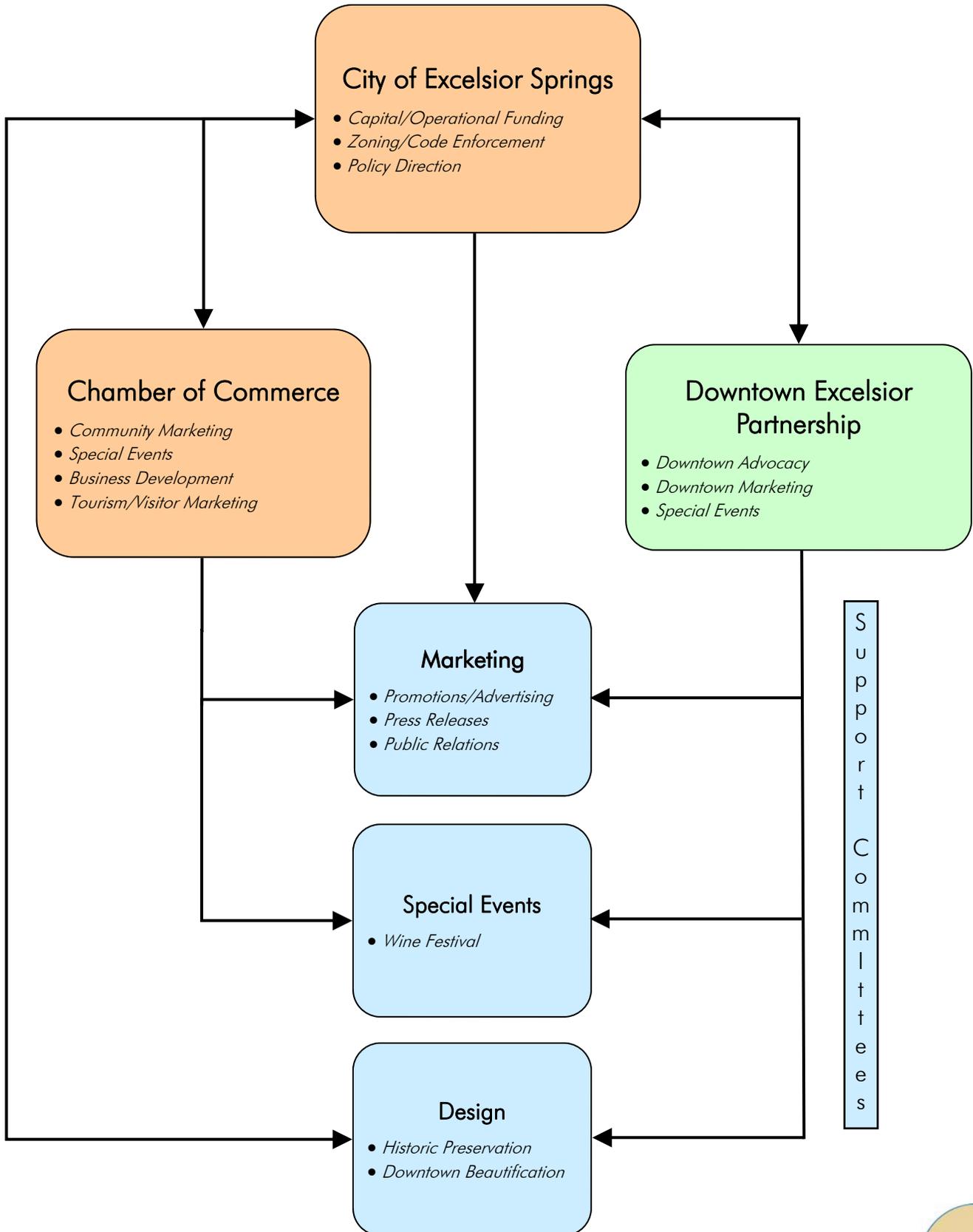
94. Does the organization relate to other community groups and governmental units through ongoing, working relationships?
95. What types of other community groups and governmental units does the organization work with?
- a. Municipality
 - b. Community Improvement District
 - c. Business Associations
 - d. Chamber of Commerce
 - e. Economic Development Organization
 - f. Visitor or tourism association
 - g. Service Club
 - h. Environmental Groups
 - i. Historic Preservation of Conservation Groups
 - j. Historical/Heritage Society
 - k. Museum
 - l. Churches/Places of faith
 - m. Schools/Colleges/Universities
 - n. Horticulture Organizations
 - o. Arts and Culture Groups
 - p. Senior Groups
 - q. Youth Centers/Groups
96. Does the organization seek out new relationships and build coalitions of mutual interest?
97. Does the organization have input into public policy?
98. Does the organization network at the regional, state, national levels?

Attachment 2-A

Existing Downtown Organizational Structure

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ATTACHMENT 2A
EXISTING DOWNTOWN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

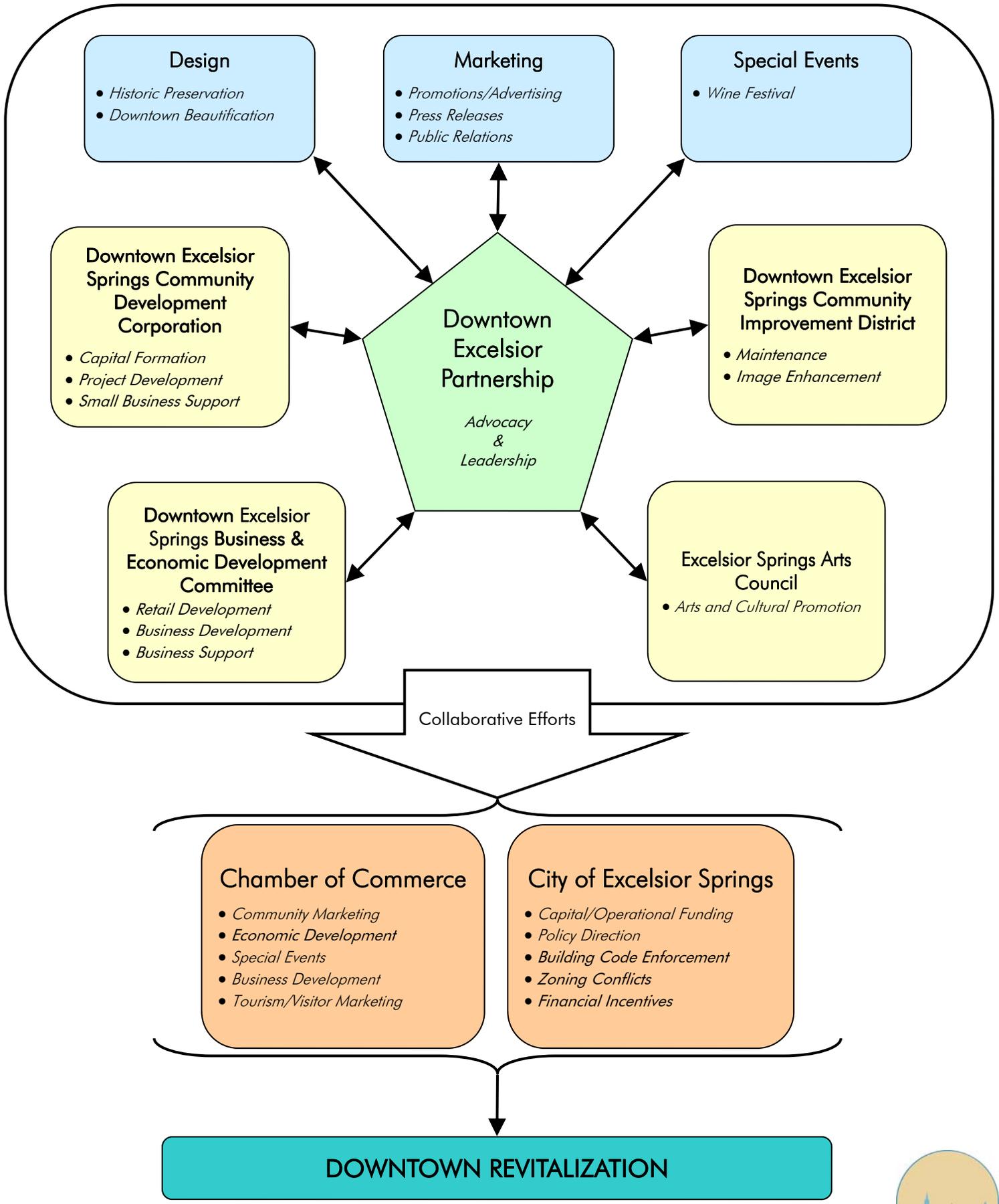


Attachment 2-B

Recommended Downtown Organizational Structure

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RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



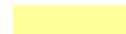
Attachment 3-A

Downtown Organizations and Responsibilities

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Downtown Organizations and Responsibilities							
Elements of a Successful Organization	Downtown Excelsior Partnership	Downtown Excelsior Springs Community Improvement District	City of Excelsior Springs	Downtown Excelsior Springs Community Development Corporation	Excelsior Springs Area Chamber of Commerce	Excelsior Springs Art Council	Downtown Excelsior Springs Business & Economic Development Committee
Leadership	Essential Participant		Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility
Management Characteristics	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility		
Board Attributes	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant		Essential Participant
Forming Partnerships	Essential Participant		Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility		Essential Participant
Community Involvement	Essential Participant		Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility
Coalition Funding	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant		Support Responsibility		
Organizational Strategic Planning	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility				
Project Planning and Facilitation	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility			
Business Attraction, Retention, and Expansion	Support Responsibility	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility	Essential Participant		Essential Participant
Residential Development & Neighborhood Revitalization	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility	Essential Participant	Essential Participant			
Downtown Advocacy	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility		Essential Participant
Real Estate Development Body	Support Responsibility			Essential Participant			Support Responsibility
Direct Marketing	Support Responsibility	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility
Special Events Planning	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility	
Retail and Event Promotions	Support Responsibility	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility
Safety, Security, and Beautification	Support Responsibility	Essential Participant	Essential Participant			Support Responsibility	

 Essential Participant

 Support Responsibility

Attachment 3-B

Specific Downtown Issues and Responsibilities

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Specific Downtown Issues and Responsibilities

	Downtown Excelsior Springs Partnership	Downtown Excelsior Springs Community Improvement District	City of Excelsior Springs	Downtown Excelsior Springs Community Development Corporation	Excelsior Springs Area Chamber of Commerce	Excelsior Springs Art Council	Downtown Excelsior Springs Business & Economic Development Committee
Building Design Standards	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant				Support Responsibility
Streetscape Design Standards	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant			Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility
Visitor Center	Essential Participant		Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility
Land Use Conflict	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant				Essential Participant
Public Facility Improvements	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant				
Coalition Funding	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility	Essential Participant		
Downtown Parks	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant			Support Responsibility	
Pedestrian Improvements	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility			
Housing Stock Improvements	Essential Participant		Support Responsibility	Essential Participant			
Façade Improvements	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility
Building Code Enforcements	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility			Support Responsibility

 Essential Participant

 Support Responsibility

Attachment 4

The Nature of Organizational Change

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ATTACHMENT 4

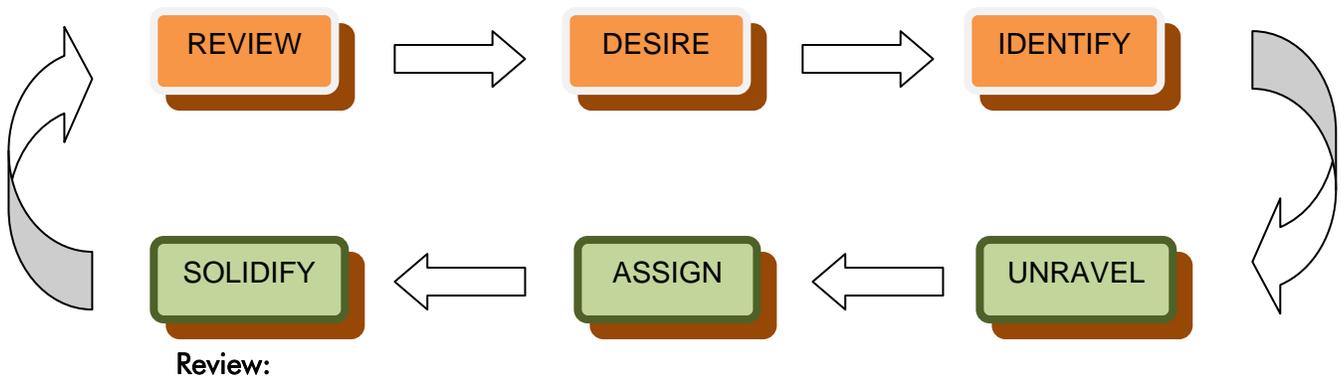
The Nature of Organizational Change

There is constant pressure on organizations to adapt to the changing conditions of their marketplace. This pressure may be external or may come from within, but cannot be avoided. The challenge for downtown revitalization oriented organizations is adapting to these pressures while maintaining the work program required for revitalization advancement.

Each group involved with the downtown will have a unique set of factors that will drive its changes and each group will also respond in its own way. Effective leadership will be required to guide the groups to a harmonious and effective solution.

Attributes of Change:

- Change is inevitable and does not discriminate
- Organizations that prepare for change will change more smoothly
- *Micro Changes* are focused on the individual and are common
- *Organizational Changes* are throughout the structure and involve reassignment of roles, reporting, and responsibilities
- *Macro Changes* are shifts of a complete and total nature
- Some changes will be more than one of the above
- Change is a process whereby the leadership of the organization desires to change, identifies the changes, unravels the old ways, assign the groups the new roles and responsibilities, and allow the structure to solidify before further review



The review step is the component where the pressures for change are monitored and recorded. This step needs to be well documented to provide the necessary reasons for changes made in later steps. This step is an honest look at the successes, and consequences, of the current organization. As the review data is analyzed, any desires to change will become clear.

Desire:

Desire is absolutely critical to effect change. From within the groups a champion or sponsor should emerge that will publicly support the effort and commit resources and attention to seeing the change through. This individual or group should work to unite the affected organizations and demonstrate the shared reasons and vision for the change.

Identify:

It is important, at this point to move into the identification step. Too often groups jump into action without proper planning and at the earliest scrutiny these actions fall apart as they have no substantive planning methodology to support them. Commitments should be obtained from the organizations and downtown stakeholders as the shared vision emerges.

It is also important to learn the motives of the key stakeholders, interested volunteers, and potential opponents to the change effort.

Unravel:

This will be a difficult task, but careful attention to the details involved in the earlier steps should help the effort.

The personal benefits of the changes, ("What's in it for Me?"), will need attention and promotion. On an individual level, the support for the changes will be decided by how difficult it will be to resist the changes. This is an important consideration.

The new roles and responsibilities must be very clear. Communication and understanding must occur effectively and timely. There will be a tendency to shift any responsibility for failures onto the new structure and this must be overcome.

Assign:

As new tasks and roles are assigned, distrust will grow. There will be questions by the individuals who desire to be the victims of the changes rather than participants. The leaders of the change effort and the champion group or individual, will come under scrutiny. The leaders will have to communicate clearly and honestly. The leaders cannot take the oppositions comments personally but should instead continue to promote the reasons why the change is important to the downtown.

Active volunteers that demonstrate the initiative to help guide the change should be encouraged. These individuals can be the examples for others to enhance their support and will have the ability to infuse the organization with their own opportunities for growth and development.

Solidify:

As the new roles and responsibilities are adapted to, an environment of trust must be built, both among the organizations and with the public. This will take time. It is critical that all groups present full support for all the other groups. Conflicts will occur, but should be discussed as objectively as possible at Board Meetings. Conflict needs to be managed in a constructive way. Avoidance or denial of the issue is not constructive and only bolsters the dissent.

Some groups will feel they need to fight for their very existence, when what they are being asked to do is to play a different role in downtown. Potentially that role could be more important than the current role, but that will depend on the desire of that group to be involved in the changes needed.

These issues may not be apparent at first. The structure will need some time to develop and the leadership must pay careful attention to address the problems that arise. Swift action may mean the difference between a total loss of support or just a needed review meeting.

As the structure stabilizes, it will be important to have honest, ongoing review sessions. This review may lead to new changes.

Change will create conflict. The leaders involved need to enter the process with the knowledge that most people will resist it, that any that support it are involved because of their own motives, and that the leadership itself will come under scrutiny. If the change is based on a solid review of existing conditions, related to the core values and efforts of the downtown revitalization efforts, and is promoting personal benefits to the involved organizations and individuals it stands a better chance at being an effective change.

There will be barriers to change. New responsibilities must not only be taught, but constantly reinforced and the individuals involved held accountable. Those resistant to changes may simply attempt to ignore the new structure and hope it goes away. Leadership must be focused on the long-term vision and willing to take on the responsibilities of leading the changes. Expectations must also be realistic and flexible.

Specific Roles for Downtown Organizational Structure Change:

There are a few roles that are typical in downtown organizational structures. Some groups or individuals will fall into more than one role. Everyone involved should seek to understand their responsibilities.

Cities tend to be sponsors as they are given legislative power over the geography of the downtown. A City government must understand the needs of downtown to effect any changes in its organizational structure. A County Commission may play a part in being a sponsor.

It is possible that a Chamber of Commerce will be strong enough to play a sponsor role. This will come about only if the City Government has relinquished its role in downtown and this is not an effective structure.

SPONSORS

This group has the power to influence the change to occur. It provides support, resources, and legitimacy.

The Champion of the change effort will likely come from this group.

The downtown organizational model has at its core a facilitation group responsible for the Downtown Revitalization effort, and is therefore responsible for any organizational structure changes required to sustain the revitalization effort.

In addition to the recommended 'umbrella' organization, other groups such as City Council Committees, Chamber Boards, Incentive Districts, and others may fill facilitator roles.

FACILITATORS

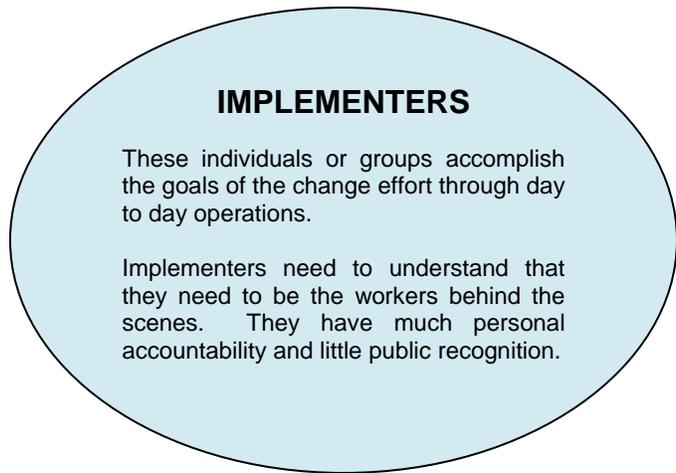
The individual/s responsible for causing the required work programs to be adopted that will affect the changes.

The umbrella downtown oriented non-profit recommended organization is in this group.

The implementers are the groups or people who actually conduct the effort of change. In a downtown this will likely be a City Staff person such as an Administrator, Planner, or a Development Director.

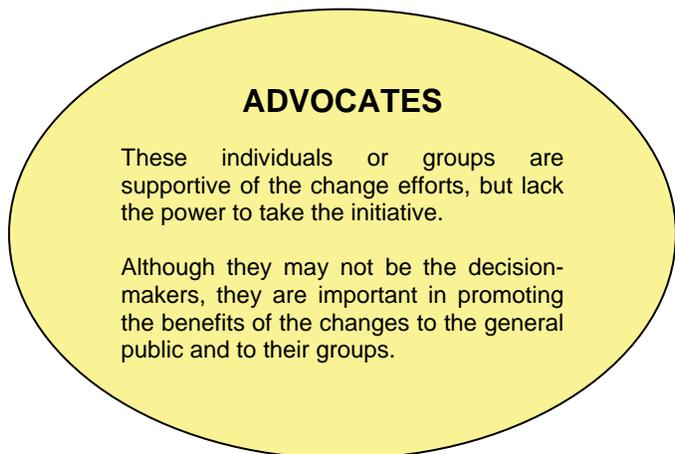
Executive Directors, Presidents of the Chamber, and Committee Chairs will also help to fill this role. There should be many implementers.

These individuals will also be the analysts as to the effectiveness of the changes occurring. It is critical that these implementers are honest about their reviews as they report to the sponsors and facilitators.



Advocates to downtown changes can be identified throughout the organizational structure and will be helpful in sustaining a broad base of support and momentum.

Business and property owners, periphery organizations such as libraries and museums, newspapers, school boards, colleges, and other City Departments are examples of advocates.



Effective leadership and desire will need to be in place at all levels of a downtown's organizational structure to adjust roles and responsibilities among groups and individuals. Knowing the process and traits of organizational changes should help those leaders bring about a smoother transition to a more effective structure. The rural downtowns of today face so many challenges, that an ineffective leadership structure can be disastrous.

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Attachment 5

Board and Committee Recommendations

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ATTACHMENT 5

BOARD AND COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

GENERAL OPERATING RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Boards and committees should annually review their mission statement to make sure that it clearly states what their mission is in 25 words or less, is clearly written in easy to understand language, and is something that is easy to articulate.**

Far too often mission statements are written in a clumsy fashion, often in legal language, and are of very little use to the organization. Frequently mission statements are filed away with the bylaws and are seldom used. The purpose of a clearly written, updated mission statement is to be able to have an organization use it in its public relations, in its communication with its board and its committees, and with the public in every way that it can.

- **The board of an organization should also carefully review the existing committee structure and membership to see if all committees are necessary, properly staffed, oriented on group goals, and supplied with the proper organizational resources.**

Any new goals required to attain the mission may mean that new committees need to be established.

- **Boards and committees should also annually review, establish, and publish their goals for the future.**

The board needs to establish both short-term goals (one or two years in length) and long-term goals (three to five years in length or more) for itself. A strategic planning committee should be established with members from the board and/or with each of the organization's committees for the purpose of establishing these sets of goals. Committees should meet to form their own goals so that their actions will complement the Board or other Committee's actions.

A voluntary community organization, board, or committee needs to be able to transfer its goals from board to board, from year to year. There is a tendency to rely on the leadership, enthusiasm, or charisma of a president or chair and achieve only the individual goals set for that year. Then, under a new president, the organization shifts in a different direction.

Leaders have difficulty in mobilizing a community organization around goals articulated by one or some of its members. It is much more effective when a group sits down at least once a year and articulates and votes on their goals together. Group goals can then be carried forward year after year regardless of who the office holders are.

Often the goals of an organization are implied or assumed but are not explicitly written and clear. Goals also need to be written in terms that are clear, measurable, and objective so that it is more readily obvious when and if the goals are being accomplished (Example: To raise \$5,000 for capital improvements within twelve months).

- **Boards and committees need to indeed be functioning, meeting regularly, communicating with other committees and carrying through with goals and objectives.**

When a given committee is working in cooperation with another committee it must be clearly understood by all members and the Board which one of the committees is the lead committee and which one is the support committee. Many organizations get into difficulty because they have not clearly established which of several committees is taking the lead in monitoring the progress on a given organizational goal.

- **Effective leadership does not happen by accident, but must be identified, recruited, and developed.**

Constant communication and involvement with all members will usually offer clues to where the leadership potential lies in an organization. Leadership positions require delicate handling. If the leadership position of a board or committee has a one-year term of office it may result in revolving door leadership. On the other hand long terms with officers staying in the position too long do not allow for the fresh input of new officers.

Usually leaders are of the minority group that does the majority of the work. Leaders need to be challenged, empowered, and recognized constantly. A good leader usually walks a fine line between productivity and 'burnout'.

Leaders must be able to properly deal with power struggles in the open and be effective in getting hidden agendas on the table so that they can be dealt with at the board meetings. A meeting is the proper place for power struggles and hidden agendas to be dealt with rather than either before or after the board meetings are over. A leader can't just run an agenda, but has to be able to make difficult decisions.

- **A board and committee should follow its leader, but be diverse enough in its composition to effectively consider a broad selection of alternative ideas.**

The board itself should represent diverse points of view from the community and represent diverse geographical representation of the municipality. The board should encourage different points of view in discussion. Without debate decisions may represent superficial agreement rather than having covered the more difficult and underlying issues.

- **Agree to disagree - It is expected that people will have different ideas and conflict with each other from time to time, but it is important that board members basically get along well with each other in spite of their differences.**

It is natural for board or committee members to have different points of view and therefore conflicts, but the organization must make sure that people are not voting on their own self interests, but for the good of the group. Conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived, must be minimized and avoided if possible. The integrity of the voting members of a board or committee is called into question where clearly they would benefit from the vote, but are not being up-front about their stake in the matter. A policy for handling such matters should be developed.

- **Board and committee members must set an example for other members by being active and engaged to drive the organization forward.**

Most volunteer work occurs between the meetings. Members who agree to serve in a leadership capacity have to understand and encourage this behavior.

Agendas and minutes are important communication tools to capture the actions that occur at meetings. It is important that decisions made at meetings are really understood by all of the members and responsibilities are understood for given tasks.

A process should be developed whereby results of activities are reported, whether positive or negative, and the board or committee can then apply further consideration, action, or reassignment of tasks if necessary.

- **It is important that efforts are made to fully utilize both board members' and general membership's talents.**

It is rare that an organization fully capitalizes on the talents of its members. An effective system for recruiting volunteers for specific needs must be developed. Often in volunteer organizations there is a tendency to 'settle' for the warm body that will take on a task, when a volunteer more suited to the task may go overlooked. It can be difficult to express that a volunteer isn't 'right' for a certain job, but sometimes productivity can be added by subtraction. Again, constant communication with members is critical.

- **Respect the volunteers time.**

Due to the nature of a volunteer organization, where people are giving up their time to work on matters of mutual concern, it is important that everyone is able to enjoy the work in which they are involved. Satisfaction of a job well done is often their only paycheck. Acknowledgment for contributions plays an important role in volunteer work, especially in view of the fact that these are principally activities being undertaken by people apart from their paid employment. Those involved in the process are motivated by emotion, passion, financial returns and many other unique and personal reasons. Contributions should be verbally acknowledged during meetings and, from time to time, in the organization's newsletter, press release, or at the annual meeting.

Meetings can, and should be, fun! Organizations with participants that do not enjoy their meetings have greater problems with attendance, retention, and task accomplishment.

Community organizations are dependent on many people acting together to be effective and suffer more difficulties when only a few people are, or are thought to be, responsible for leading the community organization in its efforts to accomplish its mission.

Attachment 6

Sample Job Description

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ATTACHMENT 6

DOWNTOWN EXCELSIOR PARTNERSHIP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

Position Overview

The Executive Director position requires an energetic, results-oriented professional eager to be the champion of Downtown Excelsior Springs. The position will assume an increasingly responsible leadership and management role in the downtown organization which will lead the Downtown Revitalization Program. The ideal candidate will have the ability to manage complex projects, resolve issues, and work effectively with volunteers, public entities, private entities and a diverse group of stakeholders.

Primary Duties and Responsibilities

Leadership

- Charged with informing and educating the public through local media and marketing
- Bring focus and vision to the organization and Revitalization Program
- Ensure citizens and businesses have opportunities for input and involvement
- Form partnerships with the community and public and private enterprises in order to achieve revitalization goals
- Build grassroots community support as well as form effective public/private partnerships

Downtown Advocate

- Act effectively as a downtown advocate, representing downtown in a variety of situations and addressing needs of constituents
- Facilitate communication and contacts between downtown stakeholders and government officials
- Respond to requests from businesses, citizens and media

Organizational and Project Planning

- Responsible for aligning organizational resources towards achieving Revitalization Program Vision
- Take lead in strategic planning of the downtown organization as well as the overall Downtown Revitalization Program
- Utilize resources and overcome obstacles in facilitating completion of goals and objectives

Management

- Assume a variety of administrative and operational duties including staff supervision, budget preparation, grant application and administration, developing and implementing work programs, and evaluating and entering into contracts for services
- Attend all board and committee meetings as well as appropriate government meetings

Job Requirements

- Creative, entrepreneurial self-starter, capable of working independently
- Diplomatic, able to work with a variety of people
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Five or more years experience in one or more of the following areas: architecture, business administration, downtown management, economic development, finance, historic preservation, planning, public administration, public relations
- Excellent organizational and administrative skills
- Strong computer skills, particularly internet, email, word processing and spreadsheet applications