

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE REVIEW

EVALUATION FINDINGS AND PRELIMINARY
RECOMMENDATIONS

CITY OF NEOSHO, MISSOURI

August 24, 2007



D·R·E·A·M
I N I T I A T I V E

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SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

All cities are unique in terms of their physical assets, community resources, history, and sense of place. Many cities, however, have shared one characteristic over the last fifty years. That characteristic is the decline of downtown. The decline of downtowns and central business districts has been a problem for economic developers, governments, and citizens from small rural communities to large metropolitan regions alike. The consequence of declining downtowns is a negative effect on the remainder of the city and region. A community's overall health is greatly influenced by the viability of its downtown. From a societal standpoint, downtown embodies the heritage of the community and affords it a sense of identity. A Downtown Revitalization Program encourages a dynamic downtown which 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.

Downtown revitalization is a community process that requires local champions willing to invest time and effort to make the program work. A successful Downtown Revitalization Program requires concerted planning and strategic implementation by many organizations, including a City government dedicated to downtown improvements and active downtown organizations with broad community-wide support. The Revitalization Program involves coordinating a complex but interrelated series of events, relying heavily on the cooperation of various community groups.

Successful revitalization will depend 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 the existing downtown organization, revitalization efforts, the downtown business community, and the community at-large. In evaluating an existing organization or committee the decision must be made whether or not it is still relevant and can effectively complete downtown revitalization responsibilities. A critical analysis should be made as to the need for encouraging the sustainability of existing organizations that are effectively carrying out the Downtown Revitalization Program, revamping an existing organization to achieve the objectives of the Downtown Revitalization Program, or establishing new organizations (sometimes replacing an ineffective existing organization) to completed the Downtown Revitalization Program.

The preferred action is to encourage and sustain an organization that is effectively meeting, or can achieve with additional resources, the Downtown Revitalization Program objectives. In many instances, 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 made to “build organizational capacity”. The “capacity” of an organization may include its financial resources, personnel or staffing, volunteer activity, mission, and Board leadership. The fulcrum necessary to leverage the organization’s capacity is strengthened by a clearly defined mission and strategic plan to guide its limited resources.

Frequently, setting up new organizations and committees is 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 board with broad based support, a clearly defined and independent mission, new goals, and an infusion of fresh spirit of change into the revitalization efforts. A new group can combine all the principles of a successful revitalization organization into one working unit. However, setting up new organizations requires additional resources and must be organized carefully or it may be seen as only an extension of previous failed efforts or ineffective organizations. Many Revitalization Programs will have the advantage of building upon previous successes as a result of past efforts, particularly Main Street.

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. Neosho residents, businesses and political leaders all speak of the importance of a vibrant downtown. And as such there are a number of organizations involved in efforts to revitalize downtown Neosho. To be discussed in Section IV, there is a need to increase and enhance the organizational structure for the anticipated future growth and development of the Downtown Revitalization Program. The following is a description of the organizations impacting Downtown and their current role in supporting the Downtown Revitalization Program.

The Commercial Club of Downtown Neosho was the last successful lead downtown organization and ceased operations nearly 100 years ago. Since that time numerous organizations have attempted to fill the void. Currently there is no lead downtown organization involved in spearheading a Downtown Revitalization Program. The City of Neosho and several specific committees, operating mainly through the Chamber of Commerce including; the Downtown Events Committee, the Economic Development Committee, and the Retail Development Committee are working towards Downtown Revitalization. Providing direct or indirect support to Downtown are the Downtown Historic District, Downtown Merchants Association, and the Neosho Area Business and Industrial Foundation.

A. Neosho Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber is an independent membership-funded organization whose programs involve small business assistance, regional marketing, business advocacy and economic development. The Chamber, under contract to the City, is the lead agency in Neosho's economic development efforts. As the lead agency, the Chamber is charged with business recruitment and retention for the Neosho community. The Chamber of Commerce has taken a proactive role in the efforts to revitalize Downtown and has formed committees towards that end.

The Chamber has many successful and proactive committees, but for the purposes of this report three committees that have direct involvement in Downtown Neosho will be discussed. The Downtown Events Committee, The Economic Development Committee, and the Retail Development Committee are all involved in the revitalization efforts for Downtown Neosho. The Downtown Events committee works to develop, manage, and promote events downtown. The committee meets monthly and focuses on allocating resources to have the highest impact on Downtown. The committee is made up of active citizens as well as downtown retailers. The Economic Development Committee and Retail Development Committee work to bring new business to the Neosho Area, including downtown.

Currently, the only committee with an exclusive focus on downtown is the Downtown Events Committee. The Economic Development and Retail Development Committees include Downtown in consideration with all other areas of the community.

B. City of Neosho

The City has an important role to play in all aspects of revitalization, but particularly: building code enforcement; solving zoning conflicts; financial assistance; and implementing building and streetscape design standards. The City increased its own “organizational capacity” to address Downtown’s unique issues, needs, and the Auditorium Redevelopment Project through the passing of an additional sales tax to support redevelopment construction and a full-time auditorium/downtown events promotion position. With the exception of Auditorium Redevelopment Project, 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 a Downtown’s aged infrastructure.

An important component of Neosho downtown revitalization is the Auditorium Redevelopment Project (“Auditorium”). The redevelopment of the Auditorium has broad community support as evidenced by the passing of the additional sales tax. Neosho has recently hired an “energetic, local person” to work on the revival of the auditorium. Many in Neosho consider the auditorium revival an integral part of downtown revitalization. The Program Sponsors and PGAV consider it very important as well, especially considering the large amount of publicity relating to the passing of the sales tax and high visibility of the auditorium itself. If the auditorium revitalization does not succeed the public may be hesitant to contribute to the larger Downtown Revitalization Program.

C. Downtown Merchants Association (“DMA”)

The DMA is an ad hoc organization comprised of Downtown businesses for the purpose of marketing and promotion of the Downtown area as a destination for commercial activity. The DMA has no staff and relies on volunteers to coordinate and conduct marketing activities. Currently the organization consists of a few very active merchants and is working to include more merchants in its activities and management.

SECTION III

ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATIONS AND REVITALIZATION EFFORTS

Downtown revitalization occurs with numerous entities that band together to reach a common goal. Each of the participating organizations, however, may have a different reason for being involved and fulfill a different purpose. Additionally, each downtown organization will be uniquely developed to address the particular needs of a 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, and 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 and are the champions and defenders of downtown. They must be able to build grassroots community support and form effective public/private partnerships. Leaders are charged with informing and educating the public as well as bringing focus and vision to the organization and Revitalization Program.

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. However, this does not suggest the board should be made up of all similar-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 resulting 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 are not necessarily limited to; local banks, chamber of commerce, City government, downtown businesses, downtown stakeholders, downtown residents, and historic societies and preservation organizations. Board members for all of the downtown organizations

should have a similar make-up in order to ensure continuity in leadership and 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 spur the cycle of sustainable development.

E. Community Involvement

The organization must ensure that citizens and businesses, particularly residents of surrounding neighborhoods have continuous opportunities for input and involvement. Large community events and celebrations are often located in downtown and it is very important to 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 may demand 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 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

Strategic planning is essential for building an organization that will be effective as well as thrive in the future. Successful organizations develop a strong vision and align their resources towards 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 down-

town will be addressed in greater detail in the Downtown Strategic Plan component of the DREAM Initiative.

H. Project Planning and Facilitation

The organization in charge of downtown revitalization spearheads the many various improvement projects. Successful organizations keep a keen eye on 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 the organizations abilities to do so.

I. Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion

Typically efforts of the organization in charge of this activity first focus on retention and expansion of 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 through training, marketing assistance, access to capital, etc. More successful organizations are proactive in retention efforts by tracking lease expirations and acting to limit business losses.

Business attraction and new business development is an important component of a Downtown Revitalization Program, usually a component 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; capital, real estate, 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 constituent's 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/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 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 historical, 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 medium.

N. Special Events Planning

Through the use of special events downtown organizations build partnerships, fundraise, encourage community involvement, promote downtown, and in particular promote downtown retail. Special events are essential in marketing downtown to residents that no longer viewed 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 included creating and maintaining cleanliness to ensure a positive first impression of downtown for visitors. Other efforts included; store window decoration, building façade improvement, flower boxes, benches, and awnings.

Improving safety for rural communities mainly focuses on pedestrian traffic through crosswalks, speed bumps, and road marking. Increased signage, banners, maps, and improved wayfinding lessen congestion and 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.

SECTION IV

RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT & ENHANCEMENT

Neosho's Downtown "organizational structure" has several entities involved in the City's evolving Downtown Revitalization Program. As such, the current "organizational structure" has established a foundation for incorporating some of the elements of successful organizations and revitalization efforts described in Section III. However, there are a few elements that are not currently being addressed, or have not been historically needed, which may become important features of the Downtown Revitalization Program. The evolving needs of a Downtown Revitalization Program require increased "organizational structure capacity" to address these elements in the future. What is important is that the community has the necessary components; a proactive business community, grassroots support, and a dedicated local government to create the critical mass needed for a successful Revitalization Program. 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.

In addition to these new organizations there will need to be other committees and efforts made. A successful downtown requires an events committee which can be formed by re-vamping the existing downtown events committee. Also, an economic development committee for downtown should be created. All of these organizations and committees will work together, as well as collaborate with many other interested groups, including the Downtown Historic District, local and regional Chambers of Commerce, the City of Neosho, Neosho Area Business and Industrial Foundation, and various State and Federal agencies under the lead Downtown Neosho Alliance. Additionally, the funding necessary to sustain these organizations will be addressed in more detail in the Financial Assessment Review component of the DREAM Initiative.

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

These recommendations and new entities primarily focus on providing Downtown with a unified direction in addition to expanding financial capacity of the Downtown Revitalization Program. A number of new organizations, as illustrated in **Attachment 1 in the Appendix**, with specific purposes, must be pursued in order to better position the Downtown Revitalization Program to incorporate all of the elements of successful organizations and revitalization efforts in Section III. The organizations should include a non-profit corporation leading the effort, providing the downtown community as a whole with advocacy and

leadership. This lead organization will be supported by three additional organizations; 1) a community development corporation whose roles is to spur real estate development as well as provide financial support to the lead organization, 2) a redevelopment corporation to assist in property acquisition and assembly, and 3) a community improvement district to bring the necessary services to downtown, as well as provide financial support to the lead organization. **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.**

A. Downtown Neosho Alliance

The Downtown Neosho Alliance (“Alliance”) should be a private non-profit corporation designed to encourage broad community support as well as lead the Downtown Revitalization Program. The Alliance will be responsible for advocacy on behalf of the downtown community and the promotion of its member’s interests. It will act as the leader of the Downtown Revitalization Program, rallying volunteers, gathering resources, and pressing for progress. In order for the organization to function as intended it will require a full-time manager to oversee operations and if possible a support person to handle administrative duties. The manager of this organization is instrumental to the Downtown Revitalization Program as they will be the point person, community liaison, and motivating force of the Program.

Membership should include a broad array of residents and businesses interested in downtown revitalization. Membership will not be restricted to the Downtown business owners and Downtown residents, but extend to the surrounding neighborhoods. The board of the organization should be made up of both public and private entities. Board make-up should consist of 7 to 13 people drawn from the following organizations; Neosho Redevelopment Corporation, Neosho Community Development Corporation, Neosho Community Improvement District, Downtown Merchants Association, Downtown Neosho Events Committee, Neosho Economic Development Committee, Downtown Historic District, Neosho Arts Council, Neosho Chamber of Commerce, City of Neosho, the Neosho Area Business and Industrial Foundation, and one Downtown Neosho Resident. It is very important that the City is a partner in the Revitalization Program and shares in responsibilities. However, the Revitalization Program must be driven by the private sector, it is their efforts that will ultimately determine its success or failure.

The organization should be formed according to MO Ch. 355 statutes and meet IRS non-profit requirements as well. Funding for the Alliance is available from numerous sources including; grants, membership fees, donations, fundraising, and contracting for services (e.g. from the DNCID). Identification of fee structures for membership-based organizations will be covered in greater detail in the Financial Assistance Review component of the DREAM Initiative.

B. Downtown Neosho Community Development Corporation (“DNCDC”)

The Downtown Neosho Community Development Corporation (“DNCDC”) should be a downtown based non-profit corporation formed to conduct public benefit projects and other redevelopment activities. The DNCDC can take on many roles in the effort including; housing development and commercial real estate development as well as economic development, particularly small business development. Membership of the organization will be made up mainly of participating banks but can include local businesses. Funding for the DNCDC can be through donations, grants, and investment from members. With a multi-bank CDC loans and equity can be provided to small businesses or development partners. The board should be made up of representatives from the primary bank members, Alliance, the Downtown Neosho Community Improvement District, and the City. The DNCDC is organized in the same manner as other non-profits, pursuant to Ch. 355 statutes.

C. Downtown Neosho Redevelopment Corporation (“DNRC”)

The Downtown Neosho Redevelopment Corporation (“DNRC”) will be a tool for stimulating construction of new housing and commercial development. If a Ch. 353 Redevelopment Area is established the DNRC will be able to utilize unique financial tools as well as be a driver in property acquisition. The DNRC will work closely with the DNCDC in spurring real estate development in downtown. The board should be made up of representatives from the DNCDC, Alliance, the Downtown Neosho Community Improvement District, and the City. The DNRC should be organized as a for-profit corporation, with limitations on earnings, pursuant to Ch. 353 statutes.

D. Downtown Neosho Community Improvement District

The Downtown Neosho Community Improvement District (DNCID) will provide an extra level of public service to the area through an added tax, assessment, or fee. The DNCID will channel private sector energy towards the solution of public problems. The DNCID will work with the Alliance and act as the ombudsman between downtown citizens, businesses, daytime workers, stakeholders, and the community at large. Additionally, the organization should provide district marketing, retail promotions, help improve local business practices, and assist with downtown beautification. In order for the organization to function as intended it will require a full-time manager to oversee operations and a support person to handle administrative duties. At the outset the organization can share office space and services with another organization or government entity, but should eventually be self-reliant.

It is recommended that DNCID contract with the Alliance to provide administrative and technical services for ongoing administration of DNCID (note this will require staff time from the Alliance but also provide needed financial support to the Alliance). Essentially, the funds provided by DNCID to the Alliance will strengthen the capacity of the Alliance to expand its marketing and promotion programs and materials, increase funding to support the Downtown capital improvement programs, and concentrate on retail and business attraction.

By using the economic activity created by businesses to generate special district tax revenue in the Downtown Area, this district financing tool will provide a much needed resource

to begin a capital improvement program, strengthen the Alliance's programming and sustainability, and stimulate increased private reinvestment in buildings throughout Downtown. These "small-scale" projects are not easily funded by State and Federal resources, therefore the DNCID provides much needed revenue gap financing to make sure Downtown not only "leaps forward" with "big projects" but also makes incremental improvements on a recurring basis.

The DNCID can be organized as a non-profit corporation or a political subdivision, however forming a political subdivision is recommended as it provides a more stable revenue source. Forming the CID requires a signed petition submitted to the hosting municipality that includes:

- Property owners owning more than 50% of assessed value of real property
- 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 Alliance Board, the DNCDC, and DNRC if possible). It is recommended that the Board consist of seven (7) to nine (9) members. A political subdivision CID may be funded by levying a tax on property, charging a fee for a business license, or charging an additional sales tax.

E. Downtown Neosho Economic Development Committee

A new committee should be formed to specifically address the economic development needs of downtown. This committee should include members from the DNCDC, Alliance, Chamber of Commerce, City of Neosho, and Neosho Area Business and Industrial Foundation. Not only will the committee be responsible for general business development, it will be charged with downtown retail development. Retail development should encompass the majority of the work for the committee as this is the most pressing need for downtown.

F. Neosho Arts Council

The formation of an arts council, while not a direct driver in the Downtown Revitalization Program, can provide additional support to the Downtown Revitalization Program. Therefore it is recommended that the Neosho Arts Council be formed. Arts councils work to enrich, enhance and nurture communities through Arts programs. These programs and their outcomes are often effective economic development partners. Not only can an Arts Council improve the quality of life for the community it can add to the unique sense of place which is inherent in a successful Downtown. The Missouri Arts Council and the Missouri Association of Community Arts Agencies are charged with developing Arts Councils and will be a valuable resource.

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 the Alliance and its partner organizations. 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.

G. Downtown Neosho Events Committee

The Downtown Neosho Events Committee should continue downtown event marketing, development, and promotions, as well as, be responsible for auditorium promotions and event planning. The current Events Committee should be revamped to include leadership from the new downtown organizations. It should be a collaboration of the Chamber of Commerce, the Alliance, City of Neosho, and the Auditorium. The downtown auditorium manager should be the leader of this committee and the overall downtown Events Promotion effort working closely with the Alliance.

H. City of Neosho

The City of Neosho is an essential component of a successful Downtown Revitalization Program. City involvement illustrates 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; 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 Neosho Community Improvement District and the Alliance.

I. Downtown Merchants Association (“DMA”)

The Downtown Merchants Association should play a larger role in promoting improvements to the Downtown business environment, specifically the retail business climate.

One step that the DMA can take to improve their standing would be to organize the effort into a non-profit corporation. Once organized the DMA can more effectively become the “lead” entity for the downtown merchants. Additionally, this role will help the organization to recruit additional members and therefore become more representative of the Downtown retail community.

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. Preliminary recommendations of the responsibilities and roles of the various downtown organizations and committees are listed in the **Appendix as Attachments 2-A and 2-B**.

The strength of Downtown Revitalization Programs is realized through unified collaborative action of the organizations toward agreed upon Revitalization Program goals and objectives. The leadership of the Board 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 recruit resources. Board make-up 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.

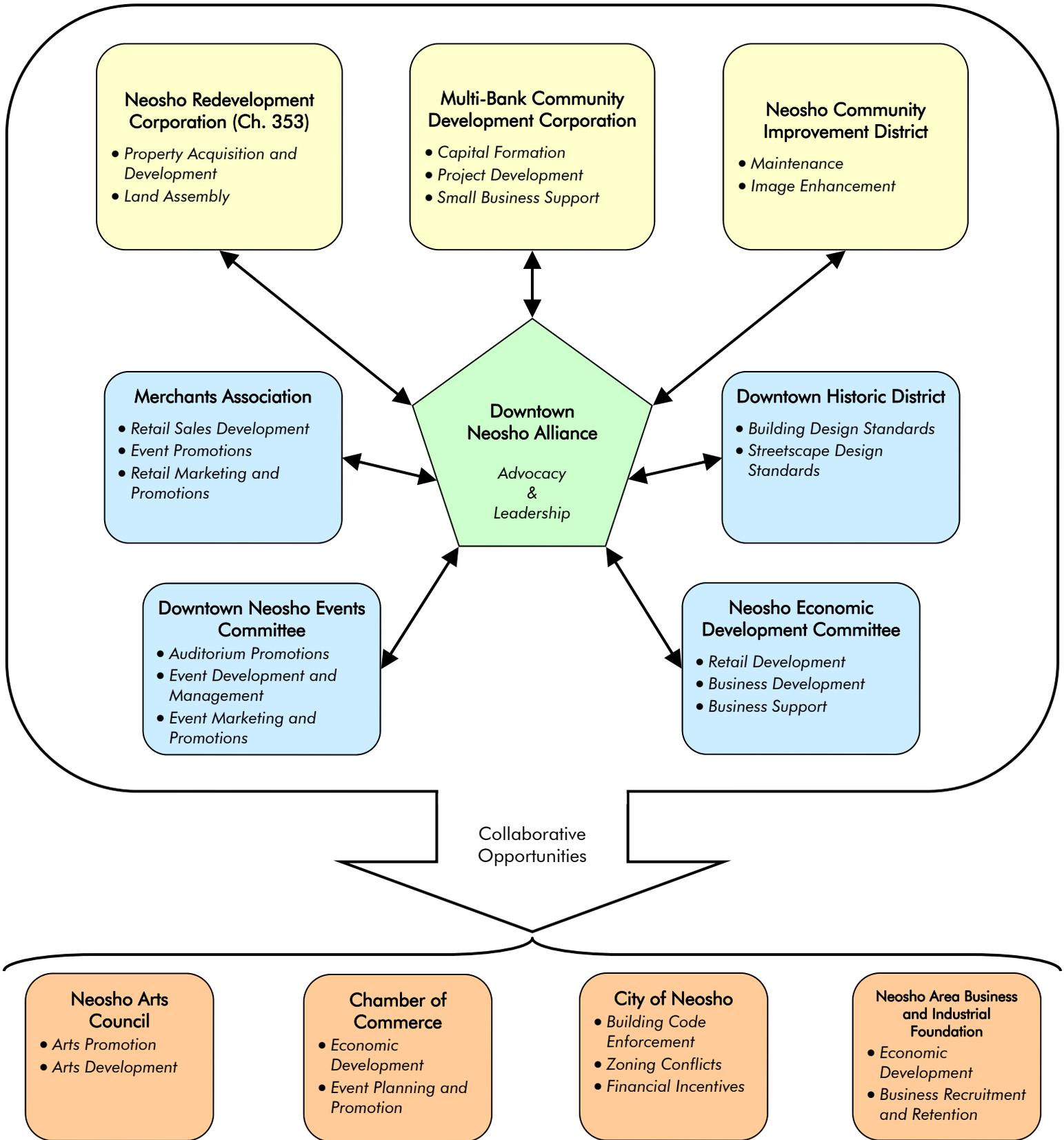
The next step towards implementation of the Revitalization Program begins with gathering willing and appropriate participants to organize the Downtown Neosho Alliance. The Alliance will be the lead downtown revitalization organization and once formed can then assist with the development and creation of the supporting organizations and committees. A sample job description for the Executive Director position leading the Downtown Neosho Alliance can be found in the **Appendix as Attachment 3**. Additionally, after creating the Board of Directors for the Alliance the foundation will be laid for the remaining boards. As soon as the Alliance is formed attention should be turned to the creation of the supporting organizations and committees. Special "Formation Committees" can be developed for this sole purpose. Additional work will include development of organizational goals, bylaws, mission, vision, etc. for the various organizations and committees. Assistance in evaluating these goals, bylaws, mission, vision, etc. can be found in the **Appendix as Attachment 4**. 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 the first step towards the development of a comprehensive Downtown Revitalization Program.

APPENDIX

Attachment 1

Organizational Structure Flow Chart

EXHIBIT I
RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



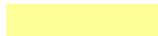
Attachment 2-A

Downtown Organizations and Responsibilities

Specific Downtown Issues and Responsibilities

	Downtown Neosho Alliance	Neosho Community Improvement District	Neosho Community Development Corporation	Neosho Redevelopment Corporation	Downtown Neosho Events Committee	Neosho Economic Development Committee	Merchants Association	City of Neosho	Neosho Arts Council	Chamber of Commerce	Neosho Area Bus. And Industrial Foundation	Downtown Historic District
Building Design Standards	Essential Participant	Essential Participant					Support Responsibility	Essential Participant				Essential Participant
Streetscape Design Standards	Essential Participant	Essential Participant					Support Responsibility	Essential Participant				Essential Participant
City Hall Renovation	Support Responsibility							Essential Participant				Support Responsibility
Auditorium Event Planning	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility			Essential Participant		Support Responsibility	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility		
Railroad Noise Abatement	Essential Participant	Essential Participant					Support Responsibility	Essential Participant				
Parking Lot Renovations	Essential Participant	Essential Participant					Support Responsibility	Essential Participant				
Wayfinding Improvements	Essential Participant	Essential Participant					Support Responsibility	Essential Participant		Support Responsibility		
Downtown Parks	Essential Participant				Essential Participant		Support Responsibility	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility
Industrial Conflict	Essential Participant					Essential Participant		Essential Participant		Essential Participant	Essential Participant	
Pedestrian Improvements	Essential Participant	Essential Participant					Support Responsibility	Essential Participant		Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility
Housing Stock Improvements	Essential Participant		Essential Participant	Essential Participant				Support Responsibility				Essential Participant
Façade Improvements	Support Responsibility	Essential Participant					Essential Participant	Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility		Essential Participant
Building Code Enforcements	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility			Support Responsibility	Essential Participant		Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility

 Essential Participant

 Support Responsibility

Attachment 2-B

Specific Downtown Issues and Responsibilities

Downtown Organizations and Responsibilities												
Elements of a Successful Organization	Downtown Neosho Alliance	Neosho Community Improvement District	Neosho Community Development Corporation	Neosho Redevelopment Corporation	Downtown Neosho Events Committee	Neosho Economic Development Committee	Merchants Association	City of Neosho	Neosho Arts Council	Chamber of Commerce	Neosho Area Bus. And Industrial Foundation	Downtown Historic District
Leadership	Essential Participant							Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility		
Management Characteristics	Essential Participant	Essential Participant										
Board Attributes	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant								
Forming Partnerships	Essential Participant				Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility				Support Responsibility		
Community Involvement	Essential Participant			Support Responsibility	Essential Participant				Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility		
Alliance Funding	Essential Participant	Essential Participant		Essential Participant				Essential Participant				
Organizational Strategic Planning	Essential Participant	Essential Participant						Support Responsibility				
Project Planning and Facilitation	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility	Essential Participant		Support Responsibility		Essential Participant			Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility
Business Attraction, Retention, and Expansion		Essential Participant	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility		Essential Participant		Essential Participant		Support Responsibility	Essential Participant	
Residential Development & Neighborhood Revitalization	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility	Essential Participant	Essential Participant		Support Responsibility		Essential Participant				
Downtown Advocacy	Essential Participant	Essential Participant				Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility					Support Responsibility
Real Estate Development Body	Support Responsibility		Essential Participant	Essential Participant							Support Responsibility	
Direct Marketing	Support Responsibility	Essential Participant			Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility			
Special Events Planning	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility			Essential Participant		Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility		Support Responsibility
Retail and Event Promotions		Essential Participant			Essential Participant		Essential Participant		Support Responsibility	Support Responsibility		
Safety, Security, and Beautification	Support Responsibility	Essential Participant					Support Responsibility	Essential Participant	Support Responsibility			Support Responsibility

 Essential Participant

 Support Responsibility

Attachment 3

Sample Job Description

Sample Job Description

Downtown Neosho Alliance Executive Director

Position Overview

The Executive Director position requires an energetic, results-oriented professional eager to be the champion of Downtown Neosho. 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, 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 word processing and spreadsheet applications

Attachment 4

Organizational Assessment Questionnaire & Notes

Downtown Organizational Assessment Questionnaire

This is a process to help the community evaluate the effectiveness of existing downtown organizations as well as get an understanding of important factors when considering forming a new downtown organization. It is important for the downtown community to look at its own organizations to determine how it might improve some of its functions, just as it is important to gauge the interest of the community in downtown revitalization. It is beneficial to have many perspectives on how these organizations function. Encourage participants to express their viewpoint even if they are the only one with that perspective or it may seem unpopular.

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, Vision, Etc.

19. Is there a straightforward and up-to-date written mission statement?

20. Is there a strategic plan being utilized?
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 a process for setting/renewing goals?
25. Are short term (1 to 3 years) objectives understood and agreed upon by their respective committees/boards?
26. Are long term (3 years+) objectives understood and agreed upon by their respective committees/boards?
27. Are the bylaws current and functional?
28. Do the bylaws contain language requiring short and long term planning for the committees/boards?
29. Does the organization periodically assess its:
 - a. Mission, goals and strategic plan?
 - b. Committee structure and performance?
 - c. Board membership and participation?
 - d. General membership participation?
 - e. Follow through on commitments?
 - f. Budget and goal setting process?
 - g. 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:
 - h. The board
 - i. The officers
 - j. Executive director
 - k. The committees
 - l. Specific individuals
 - m. The membership
 - n. 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 organization's 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?