

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE REVIEW

EVALUATION FINDINGS AND PRELIMINARY
RECOMMENDATIONS

CITY OF WEST PLAINS, MISSOURI

October 19, 2007



D·R·E·A·M
I N I T I A T I V E

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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



MISSOURI HOUSING
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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 a declining downtown 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, 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 Downtown 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, sustainable 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

To ultimately achieve the goal of a successfully revitalized downtown, it is important to assess the existing downtown organization, revitalization efforts, the downtown business community, and the community at-large. This examination begins the process of organizational structure review. Upon analysis, it may be determined that the existing organizational structure is quite adequate to continue the revitalization effort, that the organization will benefit from some minor or limited adjustments, or that some significant changes are required. In any event, during the evaluation of 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 complete 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 an ineffective, existing organization. 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 a new organization(s) requires additional resources and must be organized carefully or it may only be seen as an extension of previous failed efforts or ineffective organizations. Many Downtown Revitalization Programs will have the advantage of building upon previous successes as a result of past and current 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. Through a 1999 Downtown Master Plan and a 2003 Comprehensive Land Use Plan, West Plains' residents, businessmen and officials speak of the need for the Downtown or Midtown area to be unified and attractive as a destination for business, shoppers, and tourists. Downtown West Plains, Inc. is the lead organization for downtown, but receives no small amount of support from the City of West Plains and the Greater West Plains Chamber of Commerce. Secondary support comes from the West Plains Economic Development Corporation and the South Central Council of Governments. The Master Gardeners Club, Harlin Museum, Avenue Theatre, West Plains Arts Council, Missouri State University – West Plains Campus, service clubs, and private, historic-minded property owners all have continued roles to play.

As the lead “non-governmental” organization in the Downtown Revitalization Program, the DREAM Initiative discussed the function of the existing organizational structure with a representative of Downtown West Plains, Inc. within the context of a “Downtown Organizational Assessment Questionnaire.” Additional input from partner organizations was solicited by PGAV and the Program Sponsors when necessary. A copy of the “Downtown Organizational Assessment Questionnaire” is located in the **Appendix as Attachment 1**.

Attachment 2- Existing Organizational Structure, located in the Appendix, depicts the relationship of various organizations impacting the Downtown Revitalization Program. The following is a description of the organization's impacting downtown and their current role in supporting the Downtown Revitalization Program.

Generally speaking, the existing organizational structure has addressed the needs of a healthy emerging revitalization in downtown that has included approximately two dozen building rehabilitations since 1990 that now house uses such as retail, services, restaurants, and residential. West Plains has had a long history of outstanding support for its downtown area. The individuals involved with the current organizational structure initiated a plan in the late 90's and addressed problems such as parking, lighting, utility relocations, and beautification. These improvements were successful in dropping the vacancy rate from 39% to 4% in eight years. Obtaining DREAM designation is another indication of growing success. To be discussed in Section IV, there is a need to solidify, increase, and enhance the organizational structure for the anticipated future growth and development of the Downtown Revitalization Program, but the existing organizational structure and community support provides a strong foundation for future action.

A. Downtown West Plains, Inc. ("DTWP")

Downtown West Plains, Inc. is a 501(c)3 established in 1998 for purposes including:

- 1) Promote the historic preservation and use of the traditional downtown area.
- 2) Take remedial actions to eliminate the physical, economic, and social deterioration of the traditional downtown area.
- 3) To disseminate information of and promote interest in the preservation, history, culture, architecture, and public use of the traditional downtown area.
- 4) To instruct members and the public in those activities such as building rehabilitation and design, economic restructuring, and planning management to foster the preservation, understanding, and appreciation of the traditional downtown area.
- 5) To aid and participate with other organizations and individuals, and entities engaged in similar purposes.
- 6) To solicit and administer funds and gifts in such a manner that will best promote the goals of the corporation.

The bylaws of DTWP are structured in accordance with the National Main Street Program's four-pronged approach and in June of 2006 West Plains became a Main Street Community. DTWP employs one full-time employee, the Project Manager, also referred to as the 'Downtown Director' or just 'Director', who is charged with all administrative, promotional and ongoing duties of the organization and has served on the Greater West Plains Chamber of Commerce. DTWP is currently housed by the Greater West Plains Chamber of Commerce located at 401 Jefferson Avenue and owns the Butler Business Incubator property at the corner of Washington and Broadway. The Board of Directors of DTWP is comprised of twelve (12) members that serve three year staggered terms. The 'Director' is a non-voting member of the Board. As of the end of 2006 Downtown West Plains, Inc. had amassed about \$400,000 in assets and the most recent annual budget was \$32,600. The City directly contributes to the Main Street Director's salary and this contribution amounts to just over 46% of the annual budget. Remaining income is composed of donations, events, and fundraising. Membership dues have been an income source in the past, but have not been a budgeted source recently. DTWP draws on a volunteer base of about thirty members.

Although Downtown West Plains, Inc. is based on the Main Street approach, the organization has five standing committees, not four. The 'Organization' function of the Main Street approach has been split. The committees consist of:

- (1) Promotion: "Creating a positive image for downtown by promoting the downtown as an exciting place to live, shop, and invest." This Committee consists of not less than five members serving one-year terms.
- (2) Design: "Improving the appearance of downtown." This Committee consists of not less than five members serving one-year terms.

- (3) Economic Restructuring: Consists of not less than five members serving one-year terms.
- (4) Nominations: Consists of not less than three members serving one-year terms.
- (5) Membership Development: Consists of not less than three members serving one-year terms.

Although these committees are in place, goals and mission statements for them were not provided. These documents will need to be developed, reviewed, and/or altered to align their focus with the goals of the organization and the Main Street approach. In addition the Board of DTWP invokes an Executive Committee when needed and the Board Officers act as a Finance Committee when needed.

DTWP has also led the effort, in partnership with numerous other local and regional organizations to establish a small business incubator by purchasing a vacant furniture store and initiating a renovation project of over \$1 million. The Butler Business Incubator is a progressive and visionary venture that should unite downtown and provide fuel for the emerging revitalization.

DTWP provides the necessary focus and leadership organization for the desired Downtown Revitalization Area organizational structure and has successfully initiated projects such as the Butler Business Incubator. The role of Downtown West Plains, Inc. in the revitalization effort will need to become one of increased leadership, greater collaboration, improved financial sustainability, and dynamic enthusiasm.

Initial organizational issues for DTWP include staffing (as the "Director" position is currently vacant), sustainable operational funding sources, strategic planning, enhancement of leadership role, improved committee resources, and heightening collaborative efforts.

B. City of West Plains ("City")

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. In addition the City owns and operates the West Plains Civic Center which is a significant node of activity for downtown. The City's contributions to the Downtown Revitalization Program were a very positive discussion point during the initial assessment meetings.

The City also provides a solid policy framework to the downtown area by placing renewed emphasis on the special needs of downtown, encouraging private investment, and by providing a staff position dedicated to economic development. The West Plains Economic Developer also serves several Chamber functions and assists with the operation of the West Plains Economic Development Corporation.

Downtown land use issues were addressed in a 2003 Comprehensive Land Use Plan with the establishment of a 'Midtown Planning District'. This plan provides policy direction for the downtown area in the context of city-wide planning, recreation, transportation and financial issues. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan will be updated in the near future.

Recently the City has provided a financial commitment to the downtown by contributing salary funding for DTWP, \$500,000 in Tax Increment Financing funds for streetscape improvements, and has committed another \$224,000 in funds for sidewalk renovations in 2007. Tax Increment Financing District #1 encompasses the Downtown Revitalization Area and generates funding through sales taxes. However the TIF district reaches out tentacles to include other commercial areas that compete with downtown for project funding. A Hotel/Motel tax is also in place with this funding source supporting the West Plains Welcome Center.

Although West Plains has a great history of supporting its downtown, as other areas of the City grow it will be important for City Leaders to be able to continue to justify, sustain, and enhance the support to downtown in the face of possible criticism.

C. Greater West Plains Chamber of Commerce ("Chamber")

The Chamber is an independent, area-wide, membership funded organization whose programs involve small business assistance and creation, marketing, and economic development information. The Chamber has 'coordinated activities to strengthen the business community for over 100 years.' The offices of the Chamber are located in the Northwest corner of the defined Downtown Revitalization Area and also provide a home and clerical support for Downtown West Plains, Inc.

The Chamber recognizes outstanding volunteer efforts through an annual banquet and provides economic and community information, membership event development, tourism promotions, and other services to address topical issues.

The Chamber, like the City, is providing an outstanding service through its in-kind donations to Downtown West Plains, Inc., and must be ready to defend those contributions should criticism arise from the ranks of its members.

D. West Plains Economic Development Corporation ("WPEDC")

The City formed West Plains Economic Development Corporation (WPEDC) is an Industrial Development Corporation formed to provide a method of bond financing for development efforts. The WPEDC focuses on bringing overall industry to West Plains but does not have a specific downtown focus.

E. South Central Ozark Council of Governments (“SCOCOG”)

The SCOCOG is a regional planning commission for the West Plains area and administers critical Community Development Block Grant funded projects that will assist the downtown revitalization; most notably the Butler Business Incubator and a recent façade program.

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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 Downtown Revitalization Program. Enthusiastic Leadership for the Downtown Revitalization Program must also allow for transitioning from individual to individual so momentum can be sustained.

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; chambers 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 are very important to fostering an overall sense of community. Involving the community in the Downtown Revitalization Program will also 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. Downtown 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; and

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 downtown 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 the completion of Revitalization Program goals and objectives. Project oversight will be a large component of all downtown revitalization organizations and the success of projects will depend on the organizations' oversight abilities.

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 the 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 downtown shops and restaurants. 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 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 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.

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SECTION IV

RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND ENHANCEMENT

The existing downtown “organizational structure” in West Plains has the basic umbrella agencies and critical relationships in place and has demonstrated a commitment to providing leadership, resources and energy to the City’s emerging Downtown Revitalization Program. The recommendations to be made will focus on strengthening the downtown focus provided by the current “organizational structure” and developing a broader, sustainable support structure to minimize socio-political impacts to the revitalization effort. The existing groups have established a strong foundation for incorporating the elements of successful organizations and revitalization efforts described in Section III into the overall structure. However, there are several elements that are not currently being addressed, or have not been historically needed, which 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 primarily focus 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 3-Recommended Organizational Structure** located in the **Appendix**, depicts the recommended interaction of the various existing and new organizations impacting the Downtown Revitalization Program.

A. Downtown West Plains Community Improvement District (“DWPCID”)

The DWPCID will provide an extra level of public service to the area through an added sales tax. The DWPCID will channel private sector energy towards the solution of public problems. The DWPCID will work with the City to provide increased public financing resources resulting from private investment to meet the comprehensive objectives of the Downtown Revitalization Program. Funds generated by DWPCID should be used to provide district marketing, administrative support, retail promotions, help improve local business practices, assist with Downtown beautification, and encourage redevelopment of buildings.

It is recommended that DWPCID contract with DTWP to provide administrative and technical services for ongoing administration of DWPCID (note this would likely require an increase in staffing at DTWP). Essentially, the funds provided by DWPCID to DTWP will strengthen the capacity of DTWP to expand its marketing and promotion programs and materials, increase Façade Improvement Program funding, and concentrate on retail and business attraction.

The DWPCID 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 by the City 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, and
- Cost estimates of improvements

The petition will also state 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 DTWP and the proposed DWPCDC and DWPRC 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. The DWPCID is recommended to levy an additional property tax only at the moment since the revitalization area is located within Tax Increment Financing District #1 and therefore has a sales tax related funding mechanism already in place. The DWPCID may want to consider shifting to, or supplementing with sales taxes in the future as density builds and the TIF district expires.

The DWPCID, properly managed, should be able to provide sustainable operational funding to DTWP into the future.

B. Downtown West Plains Community Development Corporation (“DWPCDC”)

The DWPCDC will be a downtown based non-profit corporation formed to conduct public benefit projects and other redevelopment activities. The DWPCDC 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. The DWPCDC is organized in the same manner as other non-profits, pursuant to Ch. 355 statutes. Membership of the organization will be made up mainly of participating banks but can include local businesses. Funding for the DWPCDC 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, as well as DTWP.

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 DTWP 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.

C. Downtown West Plains Redevelopment Corporation (“DWPRC”)

The Downtown West Plains Redevelopment Corporation (“DWPRC”) will be a tool for stimulating construction of new housing and commercial development. If a Ch. 353 Redevelopment Area is established the DWPRC would be able to utilize unique financial tools as well as be a driver in property acquisition. The DWPRC will work closely with the DWPCDC in spurring real estate development in downtown. The DWPRC should be organized as a for-profit corporation, with limitations on earnings, pursuant to Ch. 353 statutes. Board members for DWPRC should be represented by board members of DWPCDC, the City, DTWP, and other key stakeholders in downtown. Through the 353 abatements, problem properties should be able to be assembled and long-term asset growth realized for the corporation as the properties are improved. The purchases alone should increase downtown property values which will feed into the abatements and the Community Improvement District.

Having a for-profit corporation operate closely with the non-profits in downtown should also complement all organizations abilities for handling fundraisers, donations, event income, and other unrelated business income.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS

D. Downtown West Plains, Inc. Recommendations

The current staffing of DTWP needs to be addressed immediately. A new Director should be hired and the related staffing should be increased if possible. Ideally DTWP would have its own office, but it is understood that the in-kind commitment from the Chamber of space and support staff cannot be turned down. The organizational capacity of the DTWP is at a critical crossroads and needs to be strengthened with membership development, program administration, organizational strategic planning, committee development, and volunteer recruitment as elevated priorities.

Should the DWPCID recommendation be put in place, it is recommended that DTWP hire a promotions/marketing coordinator to assist the Director. The administration of both the DWPCID and DTWP by the Director should emphasize policy and program development, organizational planning, and project financing administration. A promotions/marketing coordinator will improve coordination among other marketing organizations, the Greater West Plains Chamber of Commerce, the Welcome Center, and the anticipated Marketing Plan to be developed as a part of the DREAM Initiative.

With increased funding and proper staffing, the DTWP will be able to allocate resources towards its mission. The DTWP currently conducts a strategic retreat in January of every year, but when the new Director is hired a strategic planning retreat should be initiated immediately to review DTWP's goals and objectives, provide organizational and program management measures, and establish a process for encouraging board members and committee representatives to clearly define their roles as volunteers and stewards of DTWP and its programs. Committee goal development and the decision to remain as a Main Street Community should be prominent issues discussed at the first retreat for the new Director.

The new Director will need to establish and enhance downtown "partnerships" through increased membership recruitment (including businesses outside of downtown); regularly scheduled participation at Chamber and City meetings and one-on-one meetings with developers, prospective business owners and property owners. Membership dues may need to be implemented to assist in the ongoing financial stability of DTWP. The DTWP may be able to coordinate these dues with the Greater West Plains Chamber of Commerce to increase participation in both groups.

The DTWP Director, board members, and volunteers need to increase the efficiency of fundraising and sponsorship activities. These activities fuel the Membership and Nominating Committees, but fewer, more successful events in concert with, instead of in competition with, other groups could realize more fundraising potential for all groups.

The Promotion and Design Committees appear to have at least rudimentary mission statements and the Design Committee in particular has been operating well with the City to provide guidelines for numerous recent property renovations. The Promotion Commit-

tee should seek to develop new events for downtown in addition to continued support for the Second Saturday Stroll. The Promotions Committee should review the schedules of nearby venues such as the Civic Center, Missouri State University, and the Ozark Medical Center to develop events that can capitalize on activities already occurring. Most importantly the Promotion Committee needs to develop a relationship with and educate the Welcome Center.

With proper goals and support the Economic Restructuring Committee has the opportunity to build on recent private investment efforts and quickly branch off into business recruitment. Many of the tools and planning outcomes of the DREAM initiative (i.e. Housing Market Study, Retail Market Study, and Financial Assistance Evaluation) can be used by the Economic Restructuring Committee to assist in developer and private investor recruitment.

A consistent effort to broaden volunteer recruitment needs to be made. The DTWP "core" volunteers are effective and enthusiastic. However, there is a limitation to the number of volunteer hours this limited group can donate. An expanded volunteer pool will increase DTWP's capacity for events, programs and policy influence, as well as strengthen the connection of the community to the downtown area.

DTWP should also maintain a strong connection to the West Plains Campus of Missouri State University (MSU). MSU could be a source of interns for DTWP or provide access to training programs for downtown businesses.

DTWP should work with the City to painstakingly document and benchmark all improvements in the Downtown Revitalization Area. Benchmarking is a often misunderstood and overlooked process, but can be invaluable when programs are under fire. A formal, measured process is needed. This tool should keep the downtown in political favor.

E. City of West Plains Recommendations

City services are one of the essential elements for a successful Downtown Revitalization Program. The financial commitment by the City to support capital improvement projects should continue and exceed the current level of activity if possible. The City's recent commitments through TIF funding have provided downtown with a solid core of improvements on which to build. The pedestrian plan to connect the University and the Civic Center is an innovative project that is indicative of the kind of plans for which the DREAM Initiative was created. Large-scale capital and infrastructure projects such as this can be critical to the future of downtown. However, with only 10 years remaining on the Tax Increment Financing District #1 that takes in the Downtown Revitalization Area and competition for that funding in other commercial nodes, plans need to be laid now for the installation of a special taxing district for continued funding of capital projects downtown.

It is recommended that the City take the lead initiative, in partnership with DTWP, in educating and informing the downtown community about the benefits of establishing the

Downtown West Plains Community Improvement District. 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 continue the City's capital improvement program, strengthen DTWP's programming and sustainability, and maintain private investment in buildings throughout downtown. These "small-scale" projects are not easily funded by State and Federal resources, therefore the DWPCID 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 City should consider applying for Certified Local Government (CLG) status. Either the local historical society could be challenged to take up this charge or the City could form a preservation agency. By obtaining CLG status the City will be opening new doors to grant opportunities for itself as well as private developers and property owners. CLG status will also provide access to technical expertise on preservation standards and strengthen preservation efforts.

The City should maintain involvement in all aspects of the Downtown Revitalization Area through staffing, policy leadership, and political involvements.

F. Greater West Plains Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber should be involved in the Downtown Revitalization Area, encourage DTWP events, and offer as much assistance as its membership will allow. "A rising tide lifts all boats"...if the downtown business community of West Plains remains strong, the entire community is improved.

The Chamber could step in with small benefits to members of DTWP through dues sharing, merchant to merchant discounts, hosting fundraisers, or matching donations.

G. West Plains Economic Development Corporation

WPEDC has contributed to the Butler Incubator and it will be important to the downtown revitalization effort for WPEDC to remain involved. The incubator could be a source of future projects for the WPEDC and the WPEDC could take the time with fledgling companies to help mold them into successful applicants.

In addition, WPEDC should have community-wide business contacts that could be coordinated and shared with the incubator initially. This may allow for cluster or supply chain start-ups in the incubator. The WPEDC can bring many important programs to the Butler Business Incubator by sharing the expertise of larger businesses with those just starting out. While the WPEDC certainly has a broader economic development reach, the connection with the downtown issues through the incubator should be adequate.

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. Current roles and responsibilities will change as goals are met, projects are completed, new issues arise, and organizations redefine goals and objectives. **Attachment 4-A – Downtown Organizations and Responsibilities** is located in the **Appendix**, as is **Attachment 4-B – Specific Downtown Issues and Responsibilities**.

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, unless noted in the recommendations. This helps to make certain that a downtown focus will be kept, and that the private sector is driving the effort.

Initially, DTWP needs to bring on-board its new Project Manager/Director and charge this individual with reviewing the by-laws and mission with the purpose of synchronization and eventual publication to the membership. A sample job description for the position can be found in the **Appendix as Attachment 5**. Once up to speed, the DTWP can turn to committee realignment and goal setting, membership dues development, and securing multi-year funding commitments. Then special “Formation Committees” can be developed for the purpose of guiding the other organizational start-ups. Additional work will include development of further organizational goals, bylaws, mission, vision, etc. for the various organizations and committees. Assistance in evaluating these aspects can be found in the **Appendix as Attachment 6**.

Cooperation extends beyond downtown to organizations that impact downtown through their own broader efforts and activities in the City and County. Ongoing dialogue and recurring information sharing ensures that downtown’s “partner” organizations contribute to the overall success of the Downtown Revitalization Program.

Future DREAM Initiative work will assist in development and improvement of the various funding components, market analysis, and overall strategy development.

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APPENDIX

Attachment 1

Downtown Organizational Assessment Questionnaire

Attachment 1

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 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?

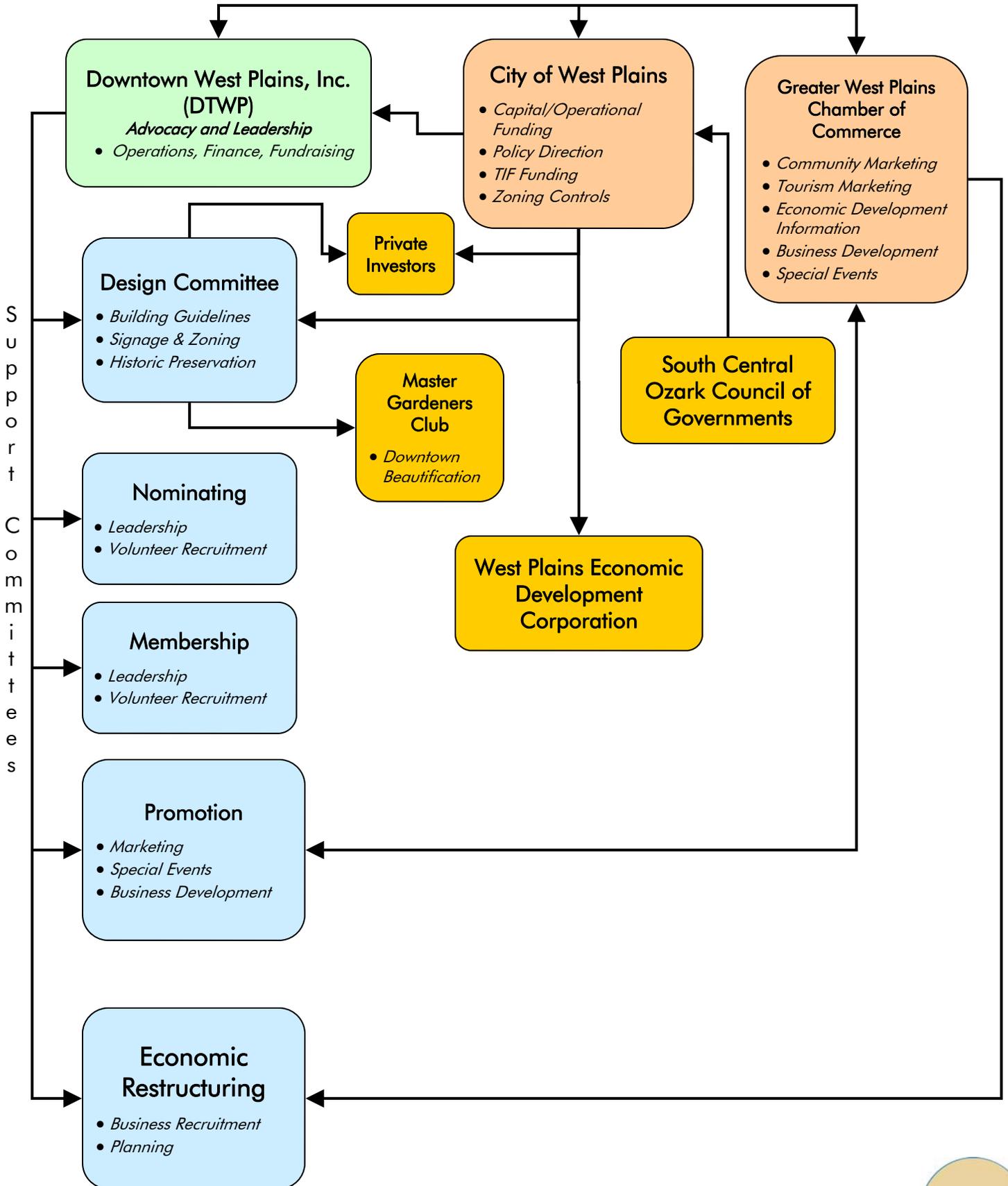
98. Does the organization network at the regional, state, national levels?

Attachment 2

Existing Downtown Organizational Structure

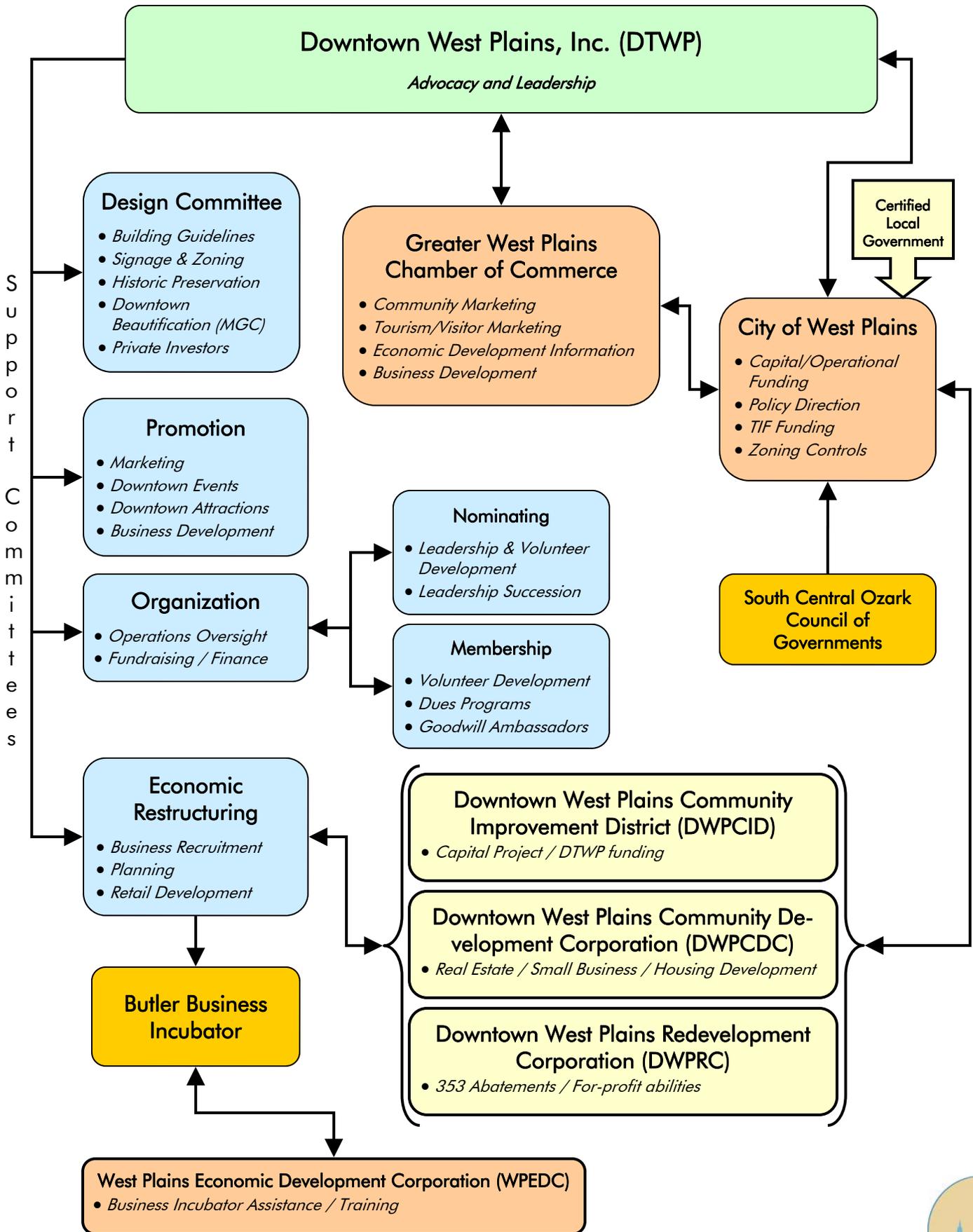
ATTACHMENT 2

EXISTING DOWNTOWN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



Attachment 3

Recommended Downtown Organizational Structure



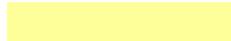
Attachment 4-A

Downtown Organizations and Responsibilities

Attachment 4-A - Downtown Organizations and Responsibilities

Elements of a Successful Organization	Existing Organizations			Recommended Organizations or Changes			
	Downtown West Plains, Inc.	Greater West Plains Chamber of Commerce	West Plains Economic Development Corporation	Downtown West Plains, Inc.	Downtown West Plains Community Improvement District	Downtown West Plains Community Development Corporation	Downtown West Plains Redevelopment Corporation
Leadership	Essential Participant	Essential Participant		Essential Participant			
Management Characteristics	Essential Participant			Essential Participant	Essential Participant		Essential Participant
Board Attributes	Essential Participant			Essential Participant		Support Participant	Essential Participant
Forming Partnerships	Essential Participant	Essential Participant		Essential Participant		Support Participant	Support Participant
Community Involvement	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Support Participant	Essential Participant		Support Participant	Support Participant
Organization Funding	Support Participant	Essential Participant		Essential Participant	Essential Participant		
Organizational Strategic Planning	Essential Participant	Support Participant		Essential Participant	Essential Participant		
Project Planning and Facilitation	Essential Participant	Support Participant	Support Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant
Business Attraction, Retention, and Expansion	Support Participant	Essential Participant	Support Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant		
Residential Development and Neighborhood Revitalization				Support Participant	Support Participant	Essential Participant	Essential Participant
Downtown Advocacy	Essential Participant	Essential Participant		Essential Participant	Essential Participant		
Real Estate Development Body	Essential Participant		Essential Participant	Support Participant		Essential Participant	Essential Participant
Direct Marketing	Support Participant	Essential Participant		Support Participant	Essential Participant		
Special Events Planning	Support Participant	Essential Participant		Essential Participant	Support Participant		Support Participant
Retail and Event Promotions	Essential Participant	Essential Participant		Support Participant	Essential Participant		Support Participant
Safety, Security, and Beautification	Support Participant	Support Participant		Support Participant	Essential Participant		

 Essential Participant

 Support Participant



Attachment 4-B

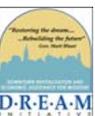
Specific Downtown Issues and Responsibilities

Attachment 4-B - Specific Downtown Issues and Responsibilities

	Downtown West Plains, Inc.	Downtown West Plains Community Development Corporation	Downtown West Plains Community Improvement District	Downtown West Plains Redevelopment Corporaion	West Plains Economic Development Corporation	City of West Plains	Greater West Plains Chamber of Commerce	Promotion Committee	Design Committee	Economic Restructuring Committee
Building Design Standards										
Building Code Enforcement										
Entryway Design Standards										
Wayfinding Improvements										
Retail Attraction										
Retail Promotions										
Merchant Education										
Commercial Property Acquisitions										
Commercial Property Renovations										
Façade Improvements (Revolving Loan Fund)										
Parking Lot Improvements										
Pedestrian Improvements										
Downtown Branding										
Downtown Event Development										
Tourism Marketing										
Housing Stock Improvements										

 Essential Participant

 Support Responsibility



Attachment 5

Sample Job Description

Attachment 5

Sample Job Description

Downtown West Plains, Inc. **Executive Director**

Position Overview

The Executive Director position requires an energetic, results-oriented professional eager to be the champion of Downtown West Plains. 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 the 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, grant application and administration, 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

Attachment 6

Board and Committee Recommendations

Attachment 6

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 all discussion. Without debate decisions may represent superficial agreement rather than having covered the more difficult, important, 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.

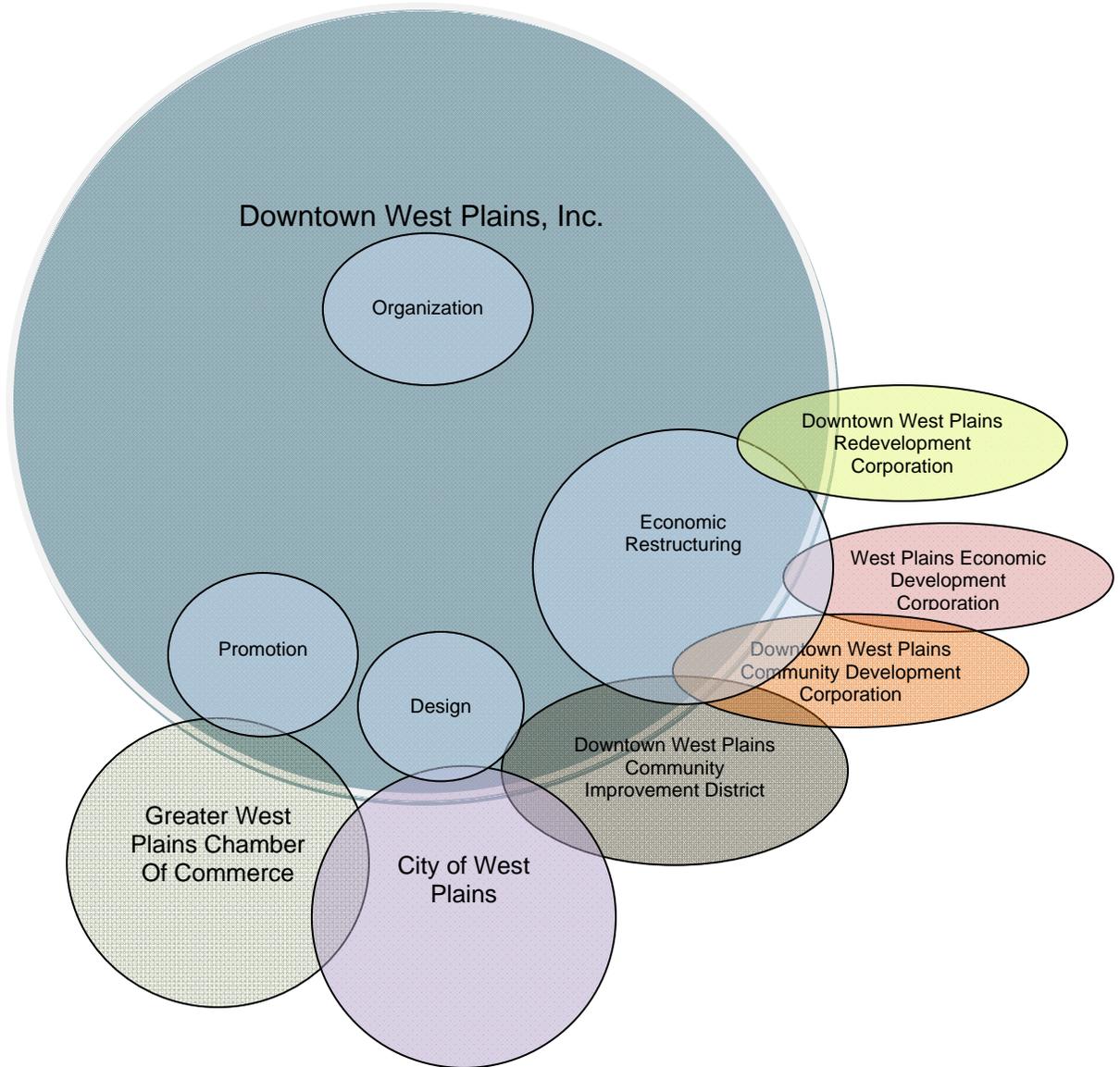
Meetings can, and should be, fun! Organizations with participants that do not enjoy their meetings have greater problems with attendance, retention, and task accomplishment.

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.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WEST PLAINS:

- **West Plains Organizational Relationships:**

The individuals that serve on the various organizations proposed for West Plains should have the following relationships if possible:



- **Staffing Issues Addressed Immediately:**
 - Hire of new Director for DTWP
 - A part-time or temporary position could suffice
 - Needs to eventually be full-time committed position
 - Must have full support

- **New Director Tasks:**
 - Search for foundation type operating grants
 - Review Bylaws, Mission Statement, and Goals
 - Schedule a DTWP Retreat
 - Communicate & implement Retreat outcomes

- **Retreat Outcomes:**
 - Adjustment / reestablishment of Bylaws, Mission Statement, and Goals
 - Plan for committee goals, adjustments, and volunteerism
 - Plan for membership dues and multi-year donation commitments

- **Formation Committees:**
 - Work on CID initially, meet with City and assist to promote this mechanism to the downtown property owners
 - The DWPRC could be next priority to get the for-profit mechanism in place to assist with fundraising events
 - Lastly would be to approach the local banks to find support for forming the DWPCDC

- **Ongoing:**
 - Continue funding search to maximize resources
 - Use the successes of the Incubator to maintain momentum
 - Seek new projects to generate other successes
 - Enhance collaborative efforts to implement other DREAM components effectively