Downtown Strategic Plan

City of Kirksville, Missouri

January 2013

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR MISSOURI

D·R·E·A·M

INITIATIVE

Acknowledgements

City of Kirksville

Downtown Revitalization and Economic Assistance for Missouri (DREAM) Program Sponsors:

Planning Consultant:

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DREAM Initiative Process

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of the Downtown Revitalization and Economic Assistance for Missouri (DREAM) Initiative is to develop a planning vision for Downtown Kirksville that guides future actions and leverages existing resources to obtain additional public and private reinvestment in Downtown.

The DREAM Initiative planning process reviewed numerous issues related to the function, structure, and image of Downtown Kirksville. The process identified recommendations to address critical issues with the goal of implementing needed policies and programs, adjusting existing revitalization efforts, and developing sustainable plans for future improvements.

The DREAM Initiative process began with several wide-ranging assessments of existing conditions in Downtown Kirksville. These assessments were used as the basis for various analyses and recommendations developed in each DREAM task as described in this plan. Existing planning documents, such as the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, 2004 Downtown Design Guidelines, 1999 Downtown Improvement Plan, zoning map, and the Kirksville Tax Increment Financing Redevelopment Plan were reviewed to develop this Downtown Strategic Plan.

The DREAM Strategic Plan is not intended to replace these previous planning efforts, but rather to supplement this planning and function as a resource guide for community leaders as DREAM recommendations and Downtown improvements are implemented. The Strategic Plan provides a multi-year vision promoting innovative, positive, and attainable change for Downtown Kirksville. Participants of the DREAM process, including numerous citizens, Downtown property owners, business owners, civic leaders, and City staff, expect the Strategic Plan to be the blueprint that will help transform Downtown Kirksville into a vibrant area in which people live, play and work.

The Downtown Strategic Plan describes the goals developed through the DREAM Initiative and suggests strategies to achieve those goals, including specific projects and action items. The major goals are listed in each plan section according to the DREAM task wherein they were developed, however high priority goals for Downtown Kirksville include:

Goal One: Develop and Support a Proposed Downtown Organization (DTO) to Spearhead Revitalization Efforts

Kirksville needs a strong organization for implementing Downtown revitalization projects and programs. The Kirksville Downtown Improvement Committee (KDIC) has been this organization, but is currently facing a lack of resources and may disband. A grant that had allowed the group to hire an Executive Director has expired and a recent effort to establish a Community Improvement District (CID) has stalled. The KDIC currently is operating on an all-volunteer basis, but has not been meeting. A Downtown Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district is in place. However, this TIF only funds public infrastructure projects and cannot help with the KDIC. Regardless if the KDIC survives, or if the DTO is newly formed, Downtown needs an organization to drive programs and revitalization projects forward.

A key component of the DTO's support structure is the establishment of a CID or some other form of sustainable funding. Downtown Kirksville has a number of revitalization and improvement projects that require such a funding source for implementation. Federal and State funding sources are becoming increasingly harder to obtain and typically require a local funding match. A CID can support the DTO, projects, and provide local matching funds to leverage greater funding amounts through grants. A CID generates this income stream from sales, property, and other taxes in a specific area for legislatively allowed costs that will improve that area.

The DTO and City should collaborate to establish this important funding source. The DTO should provide the necessary public outreach and help provide details regarding projects, programs, and other operational costs. The CID Plan and Budget, along with other materials required, should clearly provide the benefits that the CID will bring to the area. The DTO will also circulate the required petition, while the City takes the required statutory steps after the petition is successfully completed.

Masonic Temple in Downtown Kirksville.

Kirksville City Hall.

It is estimated that a one-half of one percent (0.50%) sales tax only, political subdivision, Downtown Kirksville CID would generate about $80,000 annually. This amount is expected to increase as Downtown activity improves and may also be bolstered by a property tax levy. A review of the property tax special assessment should also be explored to generate funds for the CID.

Goal Two: Form the University Partnership Committee within the DTO

Truman State University (TSU) and A.T. Still University (ATSU) should continue to play a leading role in Downtown Revitalization, and should increase their involvement in the DTO. The resources and assistance that the Universities can offer to Downtown are immense, and have played an important role Downtown progress to date. The Universities should work with the DTO leaders to form the Committee and recruit members. Representatives from the City, Chamber, and Moberly Area Community College should be involved. The University Partnership Committee should help connect Downtown stakeholders with the schools, to help Downtown better meet the needs of students, faculty, alumni, and staff. This Committee should also be involved in the proposed Downtown branding initiative and the effort to improve off-campus housing.

Goal Three: Brand Downtown Kirksville

In order to compete with the larger retail stores, Downtown needs to present itself as a unified shopping destination. The proposed DTO should work to develop a distinct Downtown brand that reflects the unique character and history of the area. The City should also continue work on public infrastructure improvements, as the existing design of these features is complementary to Downtown's heritage and should reinforce future branding efforts. Once the DTO is formed and has identified stable funding, then advertising campaigns and promotions can be launched that will collectively promote Downtown and further reinforce the brand with images, logos, and key messages. The DTO should also develop a Downtown website and other informative materials that follow the branding.

Goal Four: Establish Gateways to Downtown

The City should design and establish strategically placed gateway monument signs and any required directional signage. This system should help visitors navigate to Downtown, particularly along the circuitous route from highway 63. The signs will also welcome and let the visitor know that they have arrived in Downtown. The design of the signs should reflect the Downtown brand and complement existing public improvements and historic character. Funding for these signs can be provided from the proposed CID. The proposed DTO can help the City obtain local support and contributions for this signage, but the City will need to develop the plans and cost estimates.

Goal Five: Promote Building Rehabilitation

The City should encourage Downtown property owners to rehabilitate their buildings and façades in a historically sensitive manner that complements existing architecture. The City should develop tools such as the Courthouse Square Historic District overlay with design standards and a Façade Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Program to ensure adherence to the design standards.

Creating a historic overlay district with design standards will encourage appropriate rehabilitation of significant properties in Downtown. It is important to involve Downtown owners in the process. The design standards should include those developed in 2004. The proposed DTO could develop methods to communicate with Downtown property owners, contractors, and real estate professionals the history and heritage of Downtown to encourage historical rehabilitations. This is a critical step that is necessary for property owners to accept design guidelines. However, without a DTO, the City will need to establish this communication initially.

Representatives of the City and Kirksville Downtown Improvement Committee, Inc. attend a grand opening and project unveiling.

The existing Façade Rehabilitation Loan program can be expanded by including funding from the proposed CID. The DTO should also seek to leverage CID funds to obtain funding from other sources that can help the façade program. The loan criteria should consider the end users, Downtown business and property owners, to ensure a broad base of participants.

Goal Six: Conduct Parking Study

The City should consider conducting a study of parking availability in Downtown. Community opinions are split regarding parking; some residents feel there isn't enough, while others feel that it is ample, but underutilized. By maintaining ongoing parking data, the City can accurately identify the need for new parking. The DTO could develop programs to encourage employees and store owners to use parking spaces to the side and rear of businesses and residents should be encouraged to use specific lots or spaces on side streets. These activities will help reserve parking on the main streets for Downtown visitors and shoppers.

Goal Seven: Strengthen Downtown's Retail Base

A DTO can develop methods to assist existing Downtown businesses. Several community survey responses indicated that Downtown businesses are not user-friendly. The DTO could host programs designed to help businesses with customer service, retail operations, and product merchandising. The DTO could also work to develop cross-promotion campaigns and events that extend business hours into the evenings. Merchants that are more proficient at these business aspects should be able to increase their sales and store traffic.

The City should work to attract new retail and restaurants to occupy the vacant Downtown locations. The City should initially seek businesses that are showing unmet retail demand as determined by the DREAM Retail Market Analysis. Although, other businesses may be attracted to Downtown locations. The City should always consider how new businesses impact existing merchants.

It may be necessary to develop business incentives to attract new retail to Downtown and to assist in the expansion of existing businesses. The City should work to determine appropriate incentive policies to assist businesses that will create a vibrant retail mix in Downtown. There is no specific solution to the business mix, but the City should monitor the business types to identify any imbalances. For example, Downtown Kirksville currently has significant square footage in use as institutional/governmental offices. This use is important to Downtown. However, these types of offices generate less tax revenue than retail uses. Moving forward, it will be important that these offices do not displace an inordinate amount of retail in Downtown. Additionally, the City should recognize that office workers are a significant market for both existing and potential new Downtown retail businesses. Downtown would benefit greatly from a DTO marketing businesses to the region, as well as, developing promotions and efforts targeted at the Downtown Kirksville worker. Discount cards, Downtown employee "specials", or frequent shopper programs can be an effective way to attract and cultivate this market.

Goal Eight: Continue to Monitor and Improve Housing Stock

The City has worked to improve housing conditions in Kirksville, particularly rental housing frequently occupied by students. The City should continue these efforts as well as working with potential residential developers to identify opportunities for redevelopment and adaptive reuse of existing structures and upper-floors. The City should also review its zoning to ensure that single-family homes are not being converted into multi-family units to meet off-campus housing demands.

The DTO can assist these efforts by working through the proposed University Committee. Downtown Kirksville should form a close relationship with the student affairs offices of the universities. This relationship can help students understand their housing rights and become better tenants.

INTRODUCTION

Through a partnership of state agencies that includes the Missouri Development Finance Board (MDFB), Missouri Department of Economic Development (DED), and the Missouri Housing Development Commission (MHDC), the DREAM Initiative provides downtown-focused planning services over a three-year period to designated Missouri communities. The State partners retained PGAV Planners, a professional planning and design firm headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri, to provide this planning.

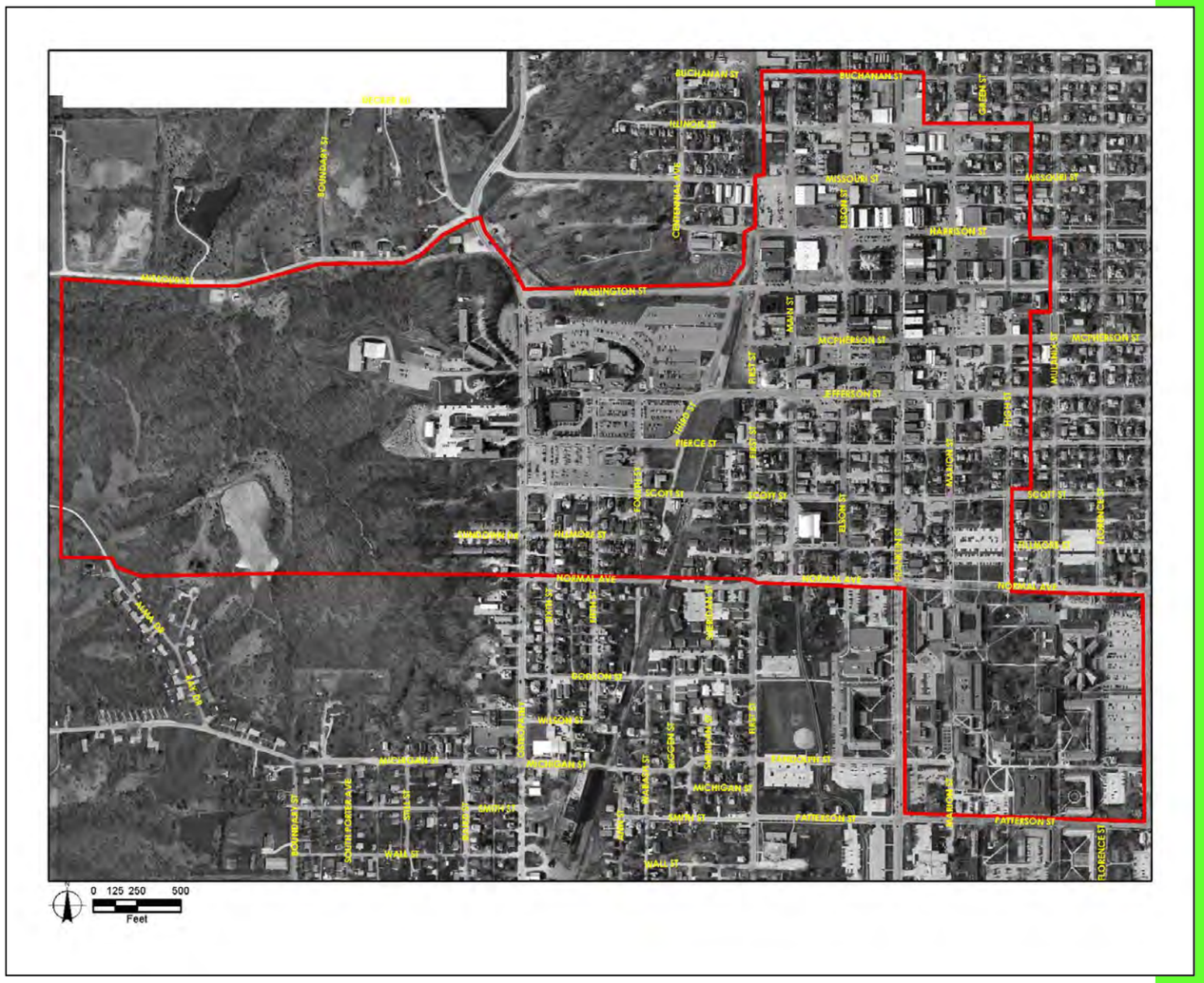
These Missouri State agencies recognize that substantial improvements and investments have already been made in Downtown Kirksville, particularly streetscape improvements. The purpose of the DREAM Initiative is to leverage these local public and private investments to sustain revitalization momentum. The goal of the DREAM Initiative is to revitalize downtown districts and put them back into productive use. The process provides planning assistance that culminates in a Strategic Plan. The DREAM initiative begins with an assessment of the community that serves as the foundation for developing the DREAM tasks and analyses.

The Kirksville DREAM program has resulted in several planning documents and analyses that include:

- Organizational Structure Review
- Land Use, Building & Infrastructure Survey
- Community & Consumer Survey
  - –Focus Groups
  - –Telephone Survey
  - –Visitor Survey
- Building and Streetscape Revitalization Program resulting in a Local Preservation Ordinance
- Retail Market Analysis
- Residential Demand Analysis
- Financial Assistance Review focusing on an effort to establish a Community Improvement District (CID)
- Marketing Assistance that included a Downtown Training Session

Additional DREAM Initiative tasks included work in community outreach and the creation of this Downtown Strategic Plan.

This strategic plan emphasizes the establishment of new local incentive mechanisms for future implementation, as well as the leveraging of these local sources to obtain funding from State of Missouri and Federal programs. Throughout the DREAM Initiative, ongoing project-specific support was provided by the State Partner Agencies and PGAV Planners.



Kirksville DREAM Study Area.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Effective planning engages in meaningful discussion of important issues with the public. By encouraging and including responses from the public in the planning process, local officials can better support and initiate policy changes and projects that are necessary to drive Downtown revitalization forward. The DREAM Initiative used a comprehensive approach to interact with local citizens and civic leaders. The intent of this public outreach was to uncover issues and perceptions regarding Downtown Kirksville. The planning process included surveys and other communications with the public. Public outreach was also a venue to introduce and build support for recommendations from the Downtown Strategic Plan.

Interviews with Downtown stakeholders and discussions with the public revealed great pride in Kirksville's history and heritage. Strong architectural elements, public improvements, and brick streets combine in Downtown Kirksville to provide an overall atmosphere. However, all of these elements must be maintained to maximize their positive traits.

Many leaders, residents, and businesses have turned their backs on Downtown and do not appear to feel it is relevant in the everyday life of the rest of Kirksville. This situation has eroded the ability of Downtown to draw investors, visitors, and residents. Local leaders, property owners, and business owners have expressed their frustrations regarding the way Downtown is used and perceived and understand the need to make wide-spread changes for the good of Downtown.

The DREAM Initiative builds on public sentiments to develop sound planning recommendations and strategies that are inspired by the public. These actions and projects are outlined in this Downtown Strategic Plan.

The DREAM Initiative solicited public comments and engaged the community regarding Downtown Kirksville through several activities and methods, including:

- Initial Assessment Meeting
  Upon being selected as a DREAM community in August of 2007, an Initial Assessment Meeting was held on October 17, 2007. The meeting included representatives from all aspects of the local government, non-profit sector, business owners, and residents. PGAV Planners staff and personnel from the DREAM State Partner Agencies were also in attendance. The City provided a presentation and tour that helped to identify the DREAM planning tasks that would benefit Downtown Kirksville.

- Focus Group Meetings
  In early 2008, discussions of Downtown issues and ideas for improvements were facilitated with five focus groups: The local TIF Commission Members; New Residents and Students; Downtown Business Owners; Longtime Residents; and City Officials and Administrators.

  The group facilitators encouraged discussion centered around how Downtown is perceived, used, and challenged. The groups suggested ideas as to what public and private improvements can be made to enhance Downtown Kirksville.

- Surveys
  In the summer and fall of 2008, a telephone survey of residents asked respondents a series of questions about priorities for the improvement of Downtown. The survey tabulated three hundred responses from a randomly selected, statistically representative sample of residents. Just over half of respondents felt that Kirksville was moving in a generally positive direction.

  In 2011, a visitor survey was conducted at various City events and locations. Volunteers and City staff gathered information from respondents that did not have a Kirksville zip code; resulting in 134 responses. In general, respondents indicated that they desired more retail and dining variety in Downtown, as well as greater entertainment options.

- **Key Stakeholder Discussions**
  Conversations were held with representatives of the City, the Chamber of Commerce, KDIC, Adair County, the Universities, Downtown property and business owners, and other members of the community to discuss issues uncovered during outreach methods. Discussions occurred throughout the DREAM process and helped develop or influence the revitalization strategies in each DREAM task.

- **Public Meetings**
  Beginning with a DREAM Kickoff meeting in 2008, several public presentations and meetings were held to review progress on the DREAM Initiative work in Kirksville. Meetings were publicized in the local newspaper and promoted on the City website.

- **Press Involvement**
  At several of the public meetings, representatives of the local newspaper, were in attendance. Additionally, press releases were issued by the City to help generate news stories about meetings and DREAM tasks.

- **Websites and Social Media**
  The City of Kirksville, Kirksville Chamber of Commerce, and the Universities all host websites or have a social media presence. The City websites includes a page specifically for DREAM and provides links to all reports, presentations, and media resources. Additionally, the City Council and other City Committees have discussed various aspects of DREAM and some of the minutes of these meetings are available on the City website.

- **Education and Communication**
  The DREAM Initiative process also included seminars to educate and inform the City, KDIC, and Chamber staff and officials on issues pertaining to Downtown revitalization and planning. The seminars were conducted by the State Partner agencies, PGAV Planners, and other entities, such as the State Historic Preservation Office. Leading practitioners and specialists participated in these workshops, which were held in Jefferson City. Seminar topics included organizational structure, adaptive reuse, retail business development, historic preservation, building design and renovation, façade loans and incentive programs and engaging public support and community organizations to lead downtown revitalization.

Presentation title slide from a Kirksville DREAM Public Meeting.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

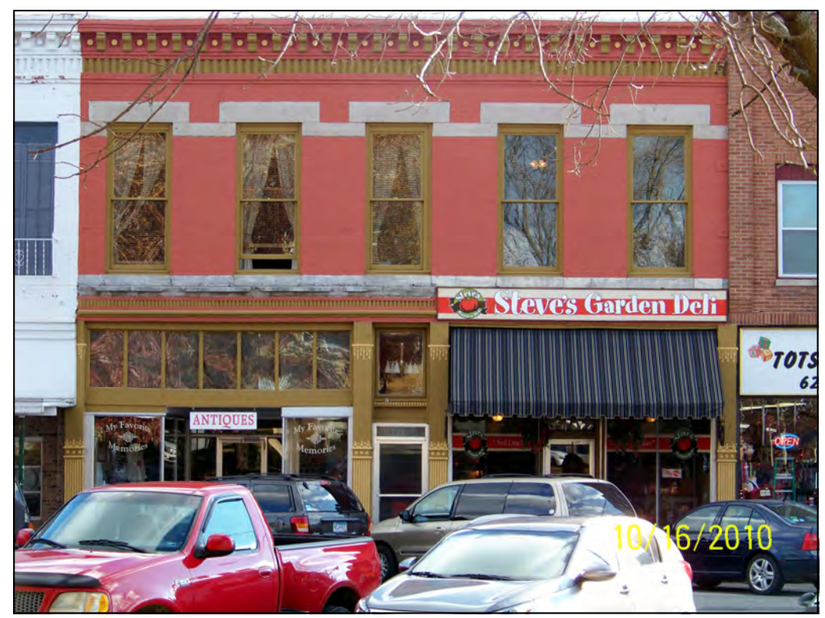
The City of Kirksville was designated a DREAM Initiative community in the late summer of 2007. The planning process commenced in the fall of 2007. The DREAM Initiative provided immediate benefits to Downtown Kirksville through positive news articles and by increasing the City's ability to obtain State funding. Some recent accomplishments in the DREAM Study Area include:

- Downtown Beautification
  Numerous properties in Downtown underwent façade improvements over the course of the program, many of those projects were supported by, and promoted through, DREAM.

- Downtown Wayfinding and Streetscape Improvements
  Improvements to the streetscape and wayfinding systems related to Downtown have reconnected the area to the surrounding community. These improvements occurred during the DREAM program and supported recommendations.

- DREAM
  The City of Kirksville was successful in obtaining the DREAM planning process; a commitment of about $225,000 from the Missouri Development Finance Board. Kirksville leveraged a 20% match over three years to obtain this funding.

An example of a private building improvement in Downtown Kirksville, before unveiling.



After renovation.

Task Summaries

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The DREAM Initiative included a review of the organizations with an interest in Downtown Kirksville. The purpose of this task was to understand the roles and responsibilities of these organizations and their impact on Downtown. The goal was to provide recommendations for how these organizations may be improved or adjusted to ensure that there is an efficient Downtown organization with enhanced capacity that is prepared to implement the projects and goals that emerged through the DREAM Initiative.

Organizations reviewed for this task included:

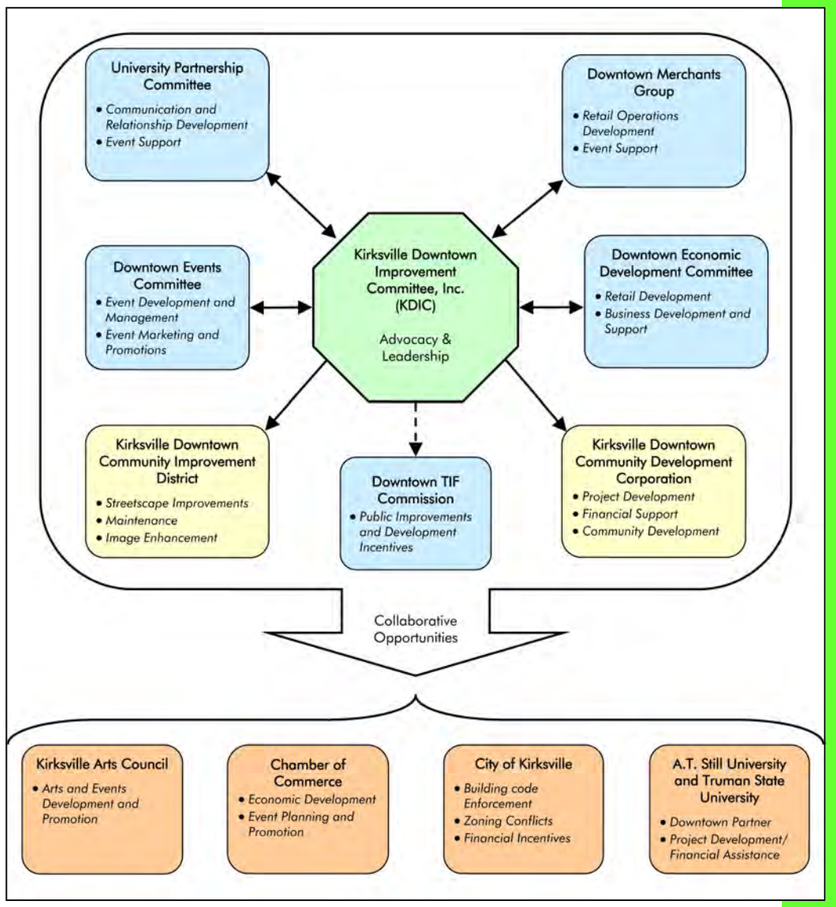
- City of Kirksville
- Kirksville Downtown Improvement Committee, Inc.
- Kirksville Chamber of Commerce
- Truman State University
- A.T. Still University
- Kirksville Arts Association

Downtown Kirksville has many positive attributes and amenities that, when combined, present a great opportunity for Downtown to be a success. These include historic buildings, institutions of higher education, major employers, an existing TIF district dedicated to public infrastructure projects, and a strong history of civic involvement. Existing Downtown revitalization efforts have centered around the recent streetscape improvements connecting the Universities to Downtown. The evolving needs of Downtown require that there be a sustainably funded agency working for the revitalization of Downtown. The Kirksville Downtown Improvement Committee, Inc. (KDIC) was created in 2002. However, the group is currently without leadership and funding, and may cease meeting altogether. This situation will leave Downtown without an organization and the City will need to fulfill many important functions if Downtown revitalization efforts are to progress.

The DREAM *Organizational Structure Review* resulted in recommendations to strengthen the existing organizations as well as the creation of supplementary organizations to provide support and funding. Recommendations identified by this task include the following:

- **Establish a Sustainable Funding Source for a Downtown Organization (DTO)**
  The *Organizational Structure Review* identified the KDIC as the primary leader for Downtown revitalization activities. However, since the report was completed the KDIC may cease meeting. Regardless if the KDIC revives or a new DTO is formed, Downtown requires a well-funded and supported organization in order to maintain a basic level of service and Downtown redevelopment assistance. In the absence of a DTO, the City will need to take on greater roles and revitalization activities. However, there are some activities, such as advocacy for Downtown businesses, that the City may not be able to fulfill. As the DTO engages in added revitalization efforts, the funding source identified will need to grow to help meet the needs of the group and Downtown.

- **Form a Community Improvement District (CID).**
  Downtown will need to identify funding to be able to implement the recommendations in this Strategic Plan. Federal and State funding sources are increasingly harder to obtain and typically require a local funding match. Although a recent attempt was unsuccessful, the City should continue the effort to establish a Downtown CID. A CID generates funds from sales, property, and other taxes in a specific area for legislatively allowed costs. A CID will provide flexible funding to help support activities of the proposed DTO, programs, and projects. Engaged Downtown volunteers are needed to provide the necessary public outreach to establish a CID, while the City should provide clear details for projects proposed under the CID Plan and Budget. Volunteers will circulate the petition and other materials to property owners and the public. The City can then draft the official documents required for the CID. More information on the proposed CID is found in the Financial Mechanisms Section on page 24 of this Strategic Plan.



Recommended downtown organizational structure. The proposed DTO would fill many of the roles that the KDIC had previously filled.

- **Create a University Partnership Committee**
  Truman State University (TSU) and A.T. Still University (ATSU) have been integral to the City of Kirksville and Downtown. The universities should continue to support Downtown revitalization and increase their involvement through the proposed DTO. The resources that TSU and ATSU can bring to Downtown Kirksville include knowledgeable faculty and students, as well as financial support.

  The DTO should work with TSU and ATSU to form a University Partnership Committee. This committee should include representatives from the DTO, City, and Chamber, as well as the universities. The DTO should also encourage involvement from Moberly Area Community College, also located in Kirksville. This committee should be tasked with connecting Downtown stakeholders, businesses, property owners, and developers with the schools to help Downtown better meet the needs of students, visitors, and faculty.

  The 2011 Truman State University Strategic Plan includes a thematic element of *Building Community and Collaboration*. This element of the plan includes strengthening off-campus relationships and other strategies to connect with the community. Downtown should help TSU reach this goal.

- **Develop a Downtown Events Committee**
  The proposed DTO should work to assist and coordinate the promotion of events occurring in Downtown. This committee should collaborate with the Chamber and Kirksville Arts Council to encourage Downtown event development. With a single committee, Downtown and its businesses can better capitalize upon visitors to Downtown. Additionally, the presence of the universities can assist this committee. Students can be drawn-in to help with planning and to volunteer during events. However, the DTO should be careful to balance college-aged attendees with local families and Downtown businesses. An event overly attended by students might discourage other visitors.

- **Downtown Merchants Group**
  A Downtown Merchants Group should be formed in order to promote improvements to the Downtown Kirksville business environment, specifically the retail businesses. The organization can be formed as a separate non-profit group or as a committee under the umbrella of the DTO. Downtown retail and restaurant owners should be tapped for leadership positions. The shops and restaurants in Downtown Kirksville can benefit greatly by establishing programs to improve their retail operations and productivity.

  Retailers should modify or expand their product offerings to address the needs of visitors, students, and residents, taking into account products carried at mass merchandisers. Particular attention should be paid to providing unique products and excellent service. Additionally, providing attractive displays and coordinating themes and hours of operation will help create a positive shopping experience. Downtown retailers can also band together to offer business promotions and discounts to area office workers, students, and university staff and faculty.

  The above improvements can be accomplished through a variety of means, including increasing communication, improving product offerings and displays, and coordinating hours and events. The Downtown Merchants Group would be responsible for developing a program to assist in these areas.

To see more information regarding the goals and objectives outlined in the Kirksville *Organizational Structure Review,* refer to the Schedule of Recommendations in this Strategic Plan. Additional recommendations for the establishment of new organizations and for the enhancement of existing groups is found in the May 2010 *Organizational Structure Review*.

ATSU
A.T. STILL UNIVERSITY

Northeast Regional Medical Center

Examples of Kirksville institutions located in and around Downtown.

The 2011 Truman State University Strategic Plan.

LAND USE, BUILDINGS, & INFRASTRUCTURE

The Land Use, Building, and Infrastructure Survey is an inventory of Downtown Kirksville's existing land use, exterior building conditions and the conditions of public infrastructure. The survey was conducted in the Spring of 2008. Conditions are documented in the *Map Reference Handbook* of June 2008, which contains 23 maps of the Kirksville DREAM Study Area. The maps included in the Map Reference Handbook were used throughout the DREAM planning process. The data collected during the survey helped identify the most pressing issues regarding the physical conditions in Downtown and helped to identify future development opportunities.

The maintenance of the information gathered for this survey, along with ongoing reassessment, will continue to provide insight for Downtown Kirksville. The City can monitor progress and identify new opportunities. While the goal of this task was to develop this information for later DREAM tasks, several conclusions can be drawn from the data in the Map Reference Handbook, including:

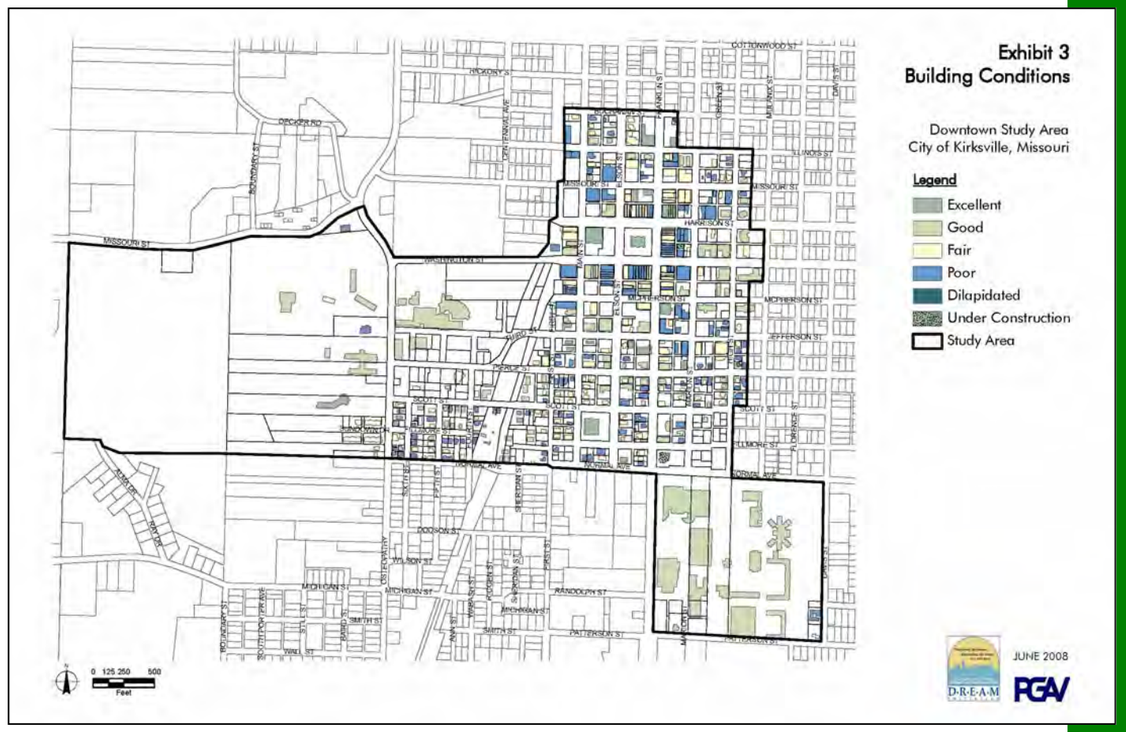
- Using the DREAM information as a baseline, the City should maintain an inventory of field conditions to study changes in land use, building conditions, infrastructure, available parking (on and off-street), residential units, and commercial vacancies. This inventory will prove beneficial in assessing the progress made in Downtown revitalization efforts and should be updated every two years, while the vacancy information should be updated every six months. The City should also keep an inventory of public infrastructure and utilities. These elements will not only assist the City in maintenance issues, but prospective developers as they seek suitable Downtown locations.

- The City should expand the use of its Geographic Information System (GIS) to support Downtown development. The information noted for the Downtown inventory will feed directly into this database and allow the City and DTO to track vacancy information and plan public improvements.

- The City should continue to evaluate public parking lots, assuring that lots are created in strategic locations as needed. The City should also continue to monitor parking supply, demand, and parking management practices. Any future parking lots should be built with design treatments that complement the existing streetscape design. Consistent design elements will provide the user with visual cues as they seek Downtown parking. Wayfinding signage should also help identify the location of public parking lots.

- Due to the Universities, there is a sizeable amount of public/institutional space in the Study Area. Downtown needs a close relationship with the schools, but may wish to monitor the mix of land-uses in Downtown to ensure a sufficient amount of space is dedicated to tax-generating retail uses.

- Based on exterior observation, many Downtown properties are in poor condition. The City should also monitor these conditions and consider adjusting inspection procedures improving the enforcement of maintenance and nuisance codes. The DTO can assist with some voluntary efforts and educational programs, but the City will be the driving force to improve Downtown building conditions.



Kirksville DREAM Map Reference Handbook: Detail of Exhibit 3 Building Conditions.

COMMUNITY SURVEYS

The community survey process was conducted to identify and evaluate commonly held perceptions and beliefs about Downtown. This task gathered information from community leaders, property owners, business people, residents, and visitors. The process used three methods to obtain data regarding local perceptions and interests. First, focus groups were conducted that consisted of key Downtown stakeholders and interested individuals. After that, a random-sample telephone survey was conducted of Kirksville residents. Lastly, a visitor survey was administered by local volunteers at various City events and attractions. The process and results of each method are summarized below:

- Focus Group Meetings
  Five separate groups were conducted to engage stakeholders in open discussion regarding Downtown Kirksville. The groups consisted of The Local TIF Commission, New Residents and Students, Downtown Business Owners, Longtime Residents, and City Officials and Administrators. In each group, participants were asked about their perceptions of Downtown's strengths, challenges, and opportunities. Participants were also asked about their priorities for public improvements and their desires for new businesses, infrastructure, and services.

Most participants felt that Kirksville is generally moving in the right direction, though very slowly. Some participants felt that Kirksville is currently "stagnant," but not without potential. In describing the positive directions, participants mentioned the courthouse revitalization effort, which cleaned up the aesthetics of the square and introduced sidewalks and green space around the courthouse. They also mentioned that at the last election, Kirksville passed three tax increases to support various public services. Several participants felt the passage of these tax increases demonstrates a progressive spirit in Kirksville. Participants tended to agree that Kirksville would move further in a positive direction if it had more small business, more shopping and other retail, and a more productive Downtown.

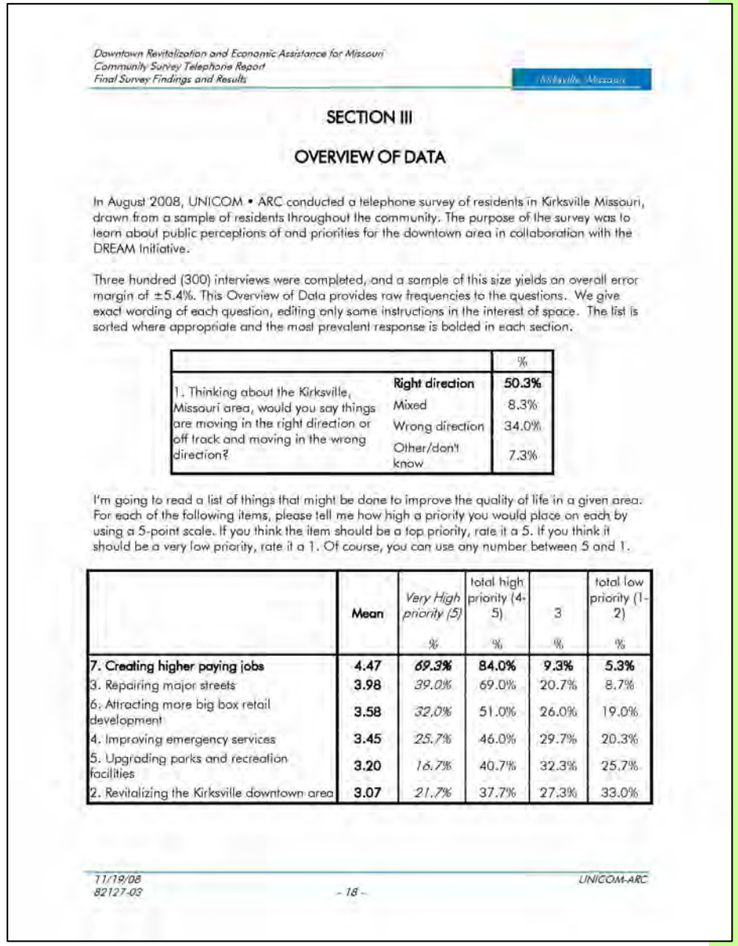
Downtown parking was described by some as a "perceived problem" as they noted that there are ample parking spaces in Downtown. Participants explained that many people do not know about the parking lots on the corners of the Square or perceive them as too far away. Participants also noted that many employees of Downtown businesses take up the prime on-street parking spaces.

The participants suggested that taking down the existing metal awnings on some of the buildings would create a better atmosphere. They felt visitors and pedestrians would be better able to read navigational and storefront signs. In addition, participants felt that improving sidewalks and streets further would help encourage people to walk around Downtown more.

Business hours Downtown, according to participants, are problematic. They noted that many stores are only open from 8:00 or 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM on weekdays, which makes it difficult for people who have jobs with a regular weekday schedule to shop in these businesses. Participants noted that these hours also are inconvenient for students, who may have classes during the day on weekdays, to shop Downtown.

Finally, the cultural split between students and residents is a hindrance to the user-friendliness of Downtown. Students said that they often feel unwelcome or out-of-place in Downtown stores or restaurants, and therefore are reluctant to shop Downtown. Students noted that many Downtown stores are not "geared" toward them. Many students felt that if Downtown businesses were just receptive to students as customers, then students would feel more welcome and would be more likely to come Downtown to shop, eat, and spend time.

For the complete report, please refer to the Kirksville DREAM *Focus Group Report* dated April 14, 2008.



Downtown Revitalization and Economic Assistance for Missouri
Community Survey Telephone Report
Final Survey Findings and Results

SECTION III

OVERVIEW OF DATA

In August 2008, UNICOM • ARC conducted a telephone survey of residents in Kirksville Missouri, drawn from a sample of residents throughout the community. The purpose of the survey was to learn about public perceptions of and priorities for the downtown area in collaboration with the DREAM Initiative.

Three hundred (300) interviews were completed, and a sample of this size yields an overall error margin of ±5.4%. This Overview of Data provides raw frequencies to the questions. We give exact wording of each question, editing only some instructions in the interest of space. The list is sorted where appropriate and the most prevalent response is bolded in each section.

		%
1. Thinking about the Kirksville, Missouri area, would you say things are moving in the right direction or off track and moving in the wrong direction?	**Right direction**	**50.3%**
	Mixed	8.3%
	Wrong direction	34.0%
	Other/don't know	7.3%

I'm going to read a list of things that might be done to improve the quality of life in a given area. For each of the following items, please tell me how high a priority you would place on each by using a 5-point scale. If you think the item should be a top priority, rate it a 5. If you think it should be a very low priority, rate it a 1. Of course, you can use any number between 5 and 1.

	Mean	*Very High priority (5)* %	total high priority (4-5) %	3 %	total low priority (1-2) %
7. Creating higher paying jobs	**4.47**	***69.3%***	**84.0%**	**9.3%**	**5.3%**
3. Repairing major streets	**3.98**	*39.0%*	69.0%	20.7%	8.7%
6. Attracting more big box retail development	**3.58**	*32.0%*	51.0%	26.0%	19.0%
4. Improving emergency services	**3.45**	*25.7%*	46.0%	29.7%	20.3%
5. Upgrading parks and recreation facilities	**3.20**	*16.7%*	40.7%	32.3%	25.7%
2. Revitalizing the Kirksville downtown area	**3.07**	*21.7%*	37.7%	27.3%	33.0%

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Sample results from the 2008 Telephone Survey.

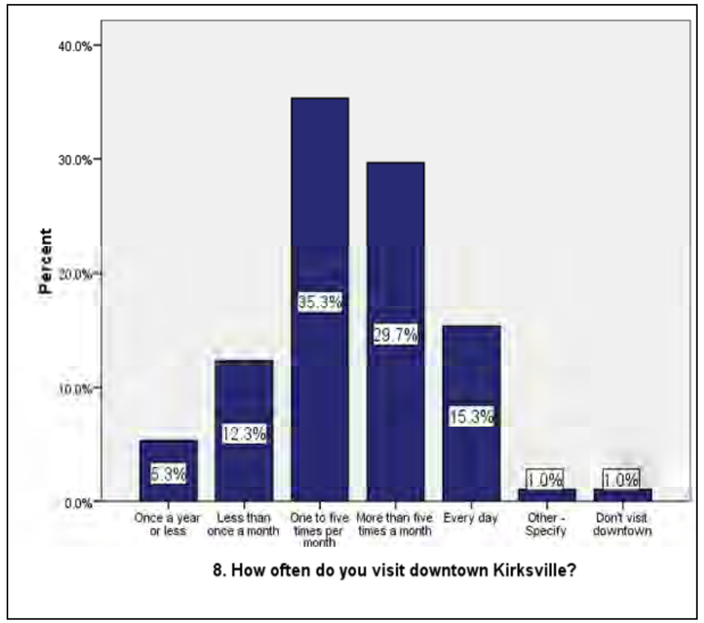
- Telephone Survey
  In the Summer of 2008, a telephone survey was conducted to interview a random sample of Kirksville residents. This type of survey is useful to obtain input from residents who may not attend public meetings or participate in community organizations. Key points from the survey results include:
  - Most respondents indicated that they visit Downtown once a month or more.
  - Over two-thirds of respondents said they most often utilize Downtown for the government or post office, for conducting business, or for dining.
  - A majority of respondents felt "excellent" or "good" about most characteristics of a downtown as they relate to Kirksville.
  - Most respondents placed a priority on adding family or casual dining options, clothing stores, and an ice cream shop/soda fountain Downtown.
  - Among several potential Downtown improvements, a majority of respondents placed a high priority on improving building façades, making Downtown more pedestrian-friendly, adding new parking spaces or lots, and moving utilities underground.
  - The community is split on removing existing metal awnings and canopies from the Downtown buildings and replacing them with individual awnings; about half the respondents are in favor of leaving the canopies as is, while just under two-fifths are in favor of changing them.

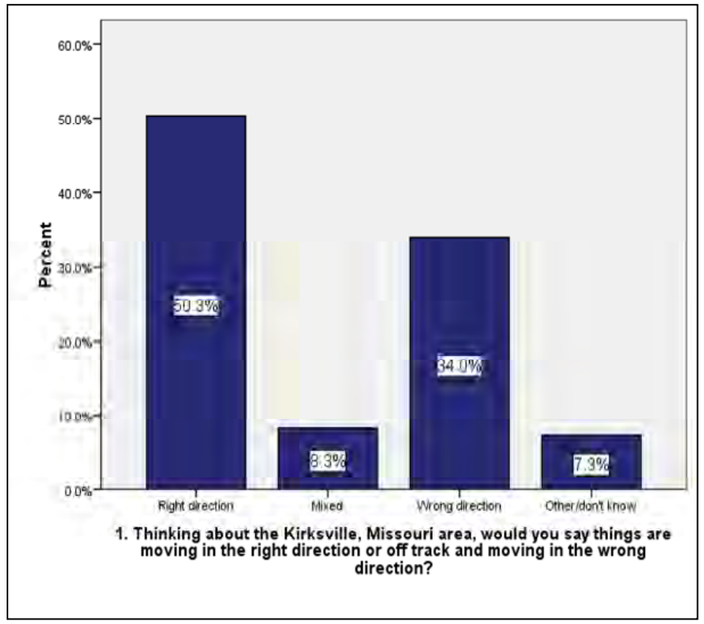
Refer to the Kirksville DREAM *Telephone Survey Report* from November 2008 for the complete responses.

- Visitor Survey
  In 2011, volunteers conducted a survey of visitors at locations throughout the City. 134 visitors were interviewed and their responses entered into either tablet computers or a website provided for the volunteers. The purpose of the survey was to learn about the perception of Downtown Kirksville and the needs of the City's visitors. The responses of people residing within the Kirksville zip code were not tabulated. Key points from the survey results include:
  - Over 85% of respondents said they had visited Downtown Kirksville and nearly 3/4's said they visit at least once a month.
  - 83% of visitors indicated there were staying overnight in Kirksville, but 72% were staying with friends or family.
  - Most visitors felt Downtown was easy to navigate, and that parking was convenient.
  - Less than half of visitors felt business hours were very convenient, but slightly more than half found them somewhat convenient.
  - Nearly 70% of visitors cited that family restaurants would make them more likely to visit Downtown. All other restaurant and entertainment types listed were indicated by less than a fourth of visitors.
  - Visitors also indicated that clothing stores and more shops in general were the two items that would make them more likely to visit Downtown.

For complete responses, please refer to the Kirksville DREAM *Visitor Survey Report* from December 2011.

The proposed DTO should work to periodically update these surveys and communicate the results to local leaders and businesses on an ongoing basis to help monitor progress and changing attitudes toward Downtown Kirksville.





Sample results from the Kirksville Telephone Survey.

BUILDING AND STREETSCAPE REVITALIZATION

The City of Kirksville desired DREAM assistance with encouraging existing buildings and streetscape projects to undergo updated improvements. Some design concepts were developed during this task, but the primary work was to assist in the development of a local historic preservation ordinance for the City to approve. The Courthouse Square Historic District and several other individual properties are currently designated and under the guidance of this ordinance.

The building concepts that resulted were intended to provide the City and DTO with information to encourage the preservation of the character and unique sense of place that exists Downtown. Private property improvements that are based upon appropriate design standards will result in construction that is complementary to the existing buildings and considerate of the heritage of Downtown. Illustrations of how some Downtown buildings can be improved are included on pages 15 to 20 of this Plan.

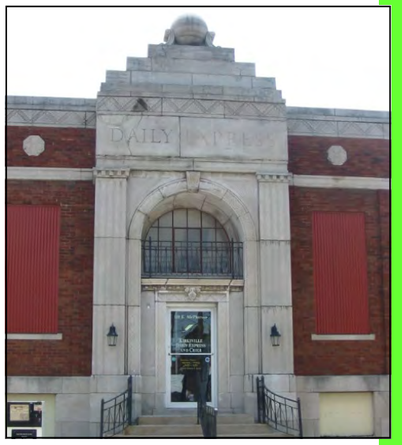
This task also provided some recommendations for appropriate maintenance and rehabilitation of commercial buildings and property, and public improvements. The illustrations provided consider elements such as building façades, materials, signage, outdoor café seating, parking, wayfinding, and site furnishings that add to the aesthetic appearance of Downtown. Some of the recommendations regarding Downtown Kirksville design elements include:

- Establish Gateways to Downtown
  Kirksville is located in Adair County Missouri along U.S. Highway 63 at the intersection of Missouri State Highways 6 and 11. These well-travelled highways all converge on Baltimore Street, several blocks east of Downtown. Several east-west access roads can lead the visitor to Downtown, with the primary routing being along Jefferson Street and then Franklin Street, north to the Courthouse Square.

  With this circuitous routing, Downtown can benefit from strategically placed gateway monument signs. These signs will let visitors know when they have arrived in Downtown and the design should reinforce Downtown Kirksville's character and streetscape amenity design. Gateway signs should be located at key intersections along the main approach, but at the edge of Downtown. The key transportation nodes, shown in the illustration on page 27, are potential locations for these signs, but these locations will require additional signage, or a consolidation of existing signage, to help direct visitors to major attractions, such as governmental offices, TSU, and ATSU.

- Promote Building Rehabilitation
  Downtown Kirksville has numerous buildings with architectural significance and a strong business occupancy rate. The City must work to preserve existing Downtown buildings. Businesses desire affordable, well-maintained spaces and the City can promote tools such as the existing design guidelines of the Courthouse Square Historic District and locally available rehabilitation incentives to keep Downtown properties in good shape. The City should seek to expand the existing Façade Loan Program to help Downtown property owners comply with the design guidelines. Funding for the program could come from local incentives such as those discussed in the Financial Mechanisms section on page 24. The existing TIF District is dedicated solely to public infrastructure projects so it cannot fund building rehabilitations.

  The Façade Loan Program should be marketed to current and prospective property owners and developers. An information packet should be created to increase understanding of appropriate rehabilitations, the benefits of historic preservation, and details on the Façade program requirements. Information regarding State tax credits and other possible incentives should be included in the packet. The City and DTO should maintain a strong relationship with representatives from the various state agencies to obtain this information.



Examples of historic architecture found in Downtown Kirksville.

- **Expand the Existing Streetscape**

  The City has recently begun to implement streetscape improvements, focused on the Courthouse Square, and Franklin and Jefferson Streets. Elements such as lighting, sidewalks, and decorative pavement have been installed. Additionally, the City has worked to remove several metal awnings over the sidewalks around the square. The City should continue these efforts by using funding from the existing Downtown TIF and by following the recommendations in the December 1999 Downtown Improvement Plan and the DREAM Initiative. The Downtown property owners should encourage the City to expand the streetscape both geographically and in the individual components included. Priorities for expanding the streetscape should include Harrison and Missouri Streets due to the fact that these streets frame the square.

  The existing streetscape elements provide a handsome design. However, in some cases, the lack of street trees or landscaping beds cause the improved area to appear too open and barren. The City should incorporate additional amenities such as landscaping, planters, public art, benches, and bicycle racks into its existing improvements and include these elements in future public construction. Ultimately the DTO should take over maintenance of these elements.

  The streetscape plan should also identify improvements to parks, plazas, trails, and bicycle networks. The City should identify these features in, or near, Downtown. Vacant lots or areas of a parking lot that are not suitable for parking can be developed into attractive open spaces with landscaping and other site furnishings. An inventory of park infrastructure (trees, benches, playgrounds, etc.) should be created, along with a catalog of elements that a resident can "purchase" to be installed in the open space or trail corridor. Recognition for their donation should include a plaque installed on the item. The City should also develop a Downtown logo, that supports the Downtown brand, to include on street furnishings.

Existing streetscape elements located at the intersection of Harrison and Elson Streets in Downtown Kirksville.

Examples of customized streetscape elements that Downtown Kirksville could install.

116 - 122 North Franklin Street:

- Remove metal canopies and use canvas or fabric awnings if an awning is desired
- Restore masonry veneer
- Remove covering and restore transoms
- Repair bulkheads and other storefront elements
- Restore upper-floor windows
- Restrict window unit air conditioners to rear elevations
- Install flush-mounted business signage of appropriate scale, design, and lighting within the sign band
- Consider using building lighting to add interest
- Highlight building details with painted accent colors complementary to the building materials
- Streetscape should include street trees, benches, decorative lighting, and planters

Existing Conditions

Illustration Showing Improvements

115 - 117 South Franklin Street:

- Remove metal canopies and use canvas or fabric awnings if an awning is desired
- Restore masonry veneer
- Remove covering and restore transoms
- Repair bulkheads and other storefront elements
- Restore upper-floor windows
- Install flush-mounted business signage of appropriate scale, design, and lighting within the sign band
- Consider using building lighting to add interest
- Highlight building details with painted accent colors complementary to the building materials
- Streetscape should include street trees, benches, decorative lighting, and planters

Existing Conditions

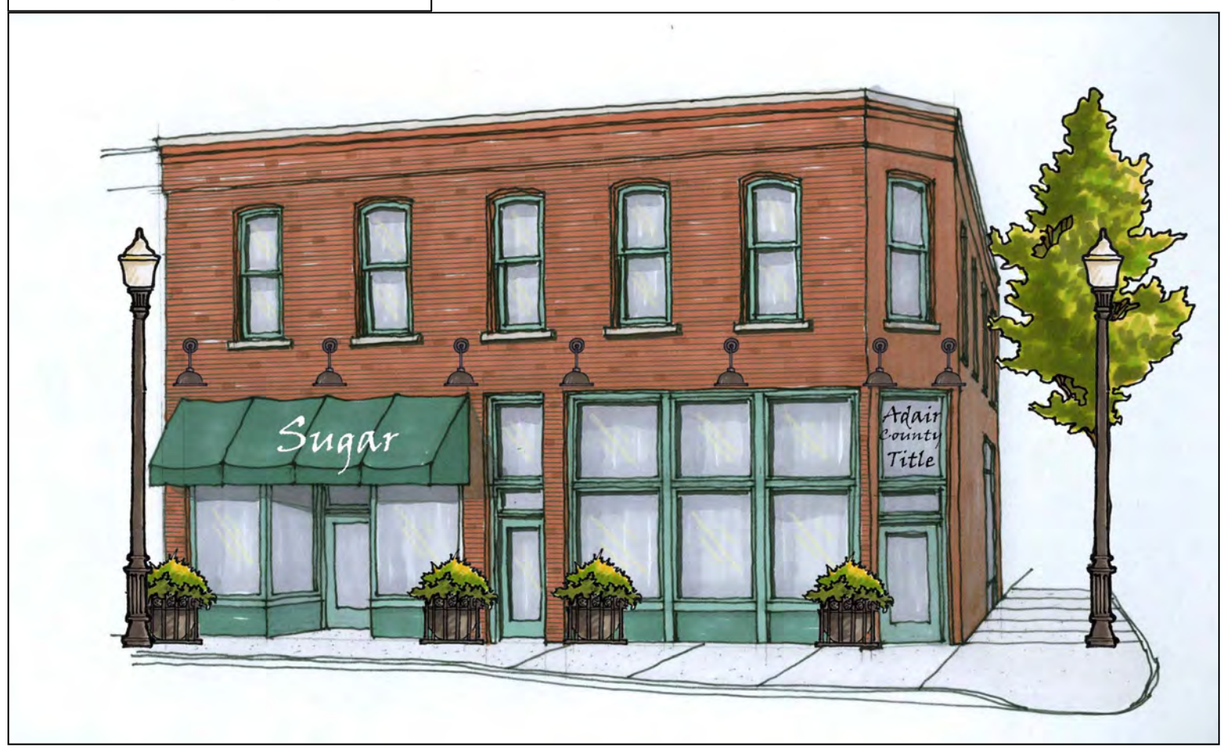
Illustrations Showing Improvements

102 East Washington Street:

- Remove the metal canopy and use canvas or fabric awnings if an awning is desired
- An awning should be installed over the main store entrances to avoid confusing the customer
- Restore masonry veneer
- Remove covering and restore transoms
- Reestablish the corner storefront
- Restore upper-floor windows
- Restrict window unit air conditioners to rear elevations
- Install flush-mounted business signage of appropriate scale, design, and lighting within the sign band
- Business signage can also be printed on canvas awnings
- Consider using building lighting to add interest
- Highlight building details with painted accent colors complementary to the building materials
- Streetscape should include street trees, benches, decorative lighting, and planters

Existing Conditions

Illustrations Showing Improvements



105 - 107 West Washington Street:

- Remove metal canopies and metal cladding on upper-floors
- Restore masonry veneer and details
- Restore display windows
- Repair bulkheads and other storefront elements
- Restore upper-floor windows
- Install flush-mounted business signage of appropriate scale, design, and lighting within the sign band
- Highlight building details with painted accent colors complementary to the building materials
- Streetscape should include street trees, benches, decorative lighting, and planters

Existing Conditions

Illustrations Showing Improvements

104 West Harrison Street:

- Remove metal canopy and use canvas or fabric awnings if an awning is desired
- Restore masonry veneer
- Remove covering and restore transoms
- Repair bulkheads and other storefront elements
- Restore upper-floor windows
- Restrict window unit air conditioners to rear elevations
- Install flush-mounted business signage of appropriate scale, design, and lighting within the sign band
- Highlight building details with painted accent colors complementary to the building materials
- Streetscape should include street trees, benches, decorative lighting, and planters

Existing Conditions

Illustrations Showing Improvements

118 - 122 West Harrison Street:

- Remove metal canopy and metal cladding on upper floor
- Restore masonry veneer
- Restore transoms
- Repair bulkheads and other storefront elements
- Restore upper-floor windows
- Install cornice if required
- Install flush-mounted business signage of appropriate scale, design, and lighting within the sign band
- Consider using building lighting to add interest
- Highlight building details with painted accent colors complementary to the building materials
- Streetscape should include street trees, benches, decorative lighting, and planters

Existing Conditions

Illustrations Showing Improvements

RESIDENTIAL MARKET

The residential market surrounding Downtown Kirksville is strongly impacted by the estimated 6,000 students attending TSU and ATSU. The demand analysis estimates that roughly half of the students live in off-campus housing units. The university students, combined with other Downtown residents, provide a strong consumer market for Downtown businesses and attendees for Downtown's special events. Additionally, visitors pass through residential neighborhoods to reach Downtown Kirksville. The DREAM Initiative recognizes the importance of an active residential market on Downtown and provided an opportunity for the MHDC to conduct a residential demand analysis. Based on this demand analysis, recommendations are provided to help Kirksville leaders promote residential development that can meet future housing demand and improve the existing housing market. Recommendations include:

- **Encourage New, High-Quality, Rental Units**

  City officials and staff should work to identify housing developers that may be interested in existing sites or available buildings. The City, using information and marketing materials provided by the proposed DTO, should encourage these developers to do rental projects in Downtown Kirksville. High-quality apartment rental units are an important part of the real estate market and will serve prospective residents, students, and university faculty. These units will help bring people back Downtown and, if the City insists on high-quality standards, will move the housing cycle toward higher demand and home ownership.

  The demand analysis indicated housing demand for 82 market rate rental units and 30 affordable senior housing units. The analysis also found demand for 33 affordable family units, however the Traveler's Hotel development is expected to meet this demand.

- **Improve Off-Campus Student Housing**

  The City and DTO should work with the Student Affairs offices at TSU and ATSU. Through an improved relationship between the universities and the DTO University Partnership Committee, as proposed on page 9, Downtown can benefit from better off-campus renters as well as rental property and landlords. The DTO can develop Downtown living tours, new student familiarization meetings, and seminars for property owners that may have available upper-floor space.

  Other improvements to Downtown amenities such as police enforcement, lighting, the business mix, building conditions, events, and the streetscape will encourage new Downtown residents and appeal to the students.

- **Review Zoning**

  A common issue in communities with significant off-campus student housing is that the single-family housing stock is pressured to convert into multi-family units. Often the single-family properties are larger, stately homes whose value is negatively impacted by such a use conversion. The City should consider the effect of allowing a large single-family home to be converted into multi-family use, and determine if existing codes are allowing or encouraging this situation. Downtown Kirksville can be negatively affected by declining property values in the surrounding residential areas, therefore it is important that these homes are also improved along with Downtown commercial buildings.

- **Develop Upper-Floor Residential Space**

  The DTO and the City should identify unused or under-utilized upper-floor space in Downtown Kirksville that has the potential for conversion into high-quality residential units. Adapting this space for housing units in Downtown Kirksville will help maintain the historic character of existing buildings, provide a safer and more vibrant atmosphere, and encourage a consumer market for local businesses.

More information can be found in the Kirksville DREAM *Residential Demand Analysis*, dated August 26, 2009.

A Downtown Kirksville commercial property with upper-floor housing.

An example of single-family rental space in Downtown Kirksville.

RETAIL MARKET

Retail development is an important component of a successful downtown. The Retail Market Analysis undertaken as part of the DREAM Initiative identified challenges and opportunities for retail development, including a detailed analysis of retail supply and demand in Kirksville.

Downtown Kirksville consists of 300 acres of land with about 430,000 square feet of existing first-floor commercial space. This space includes:

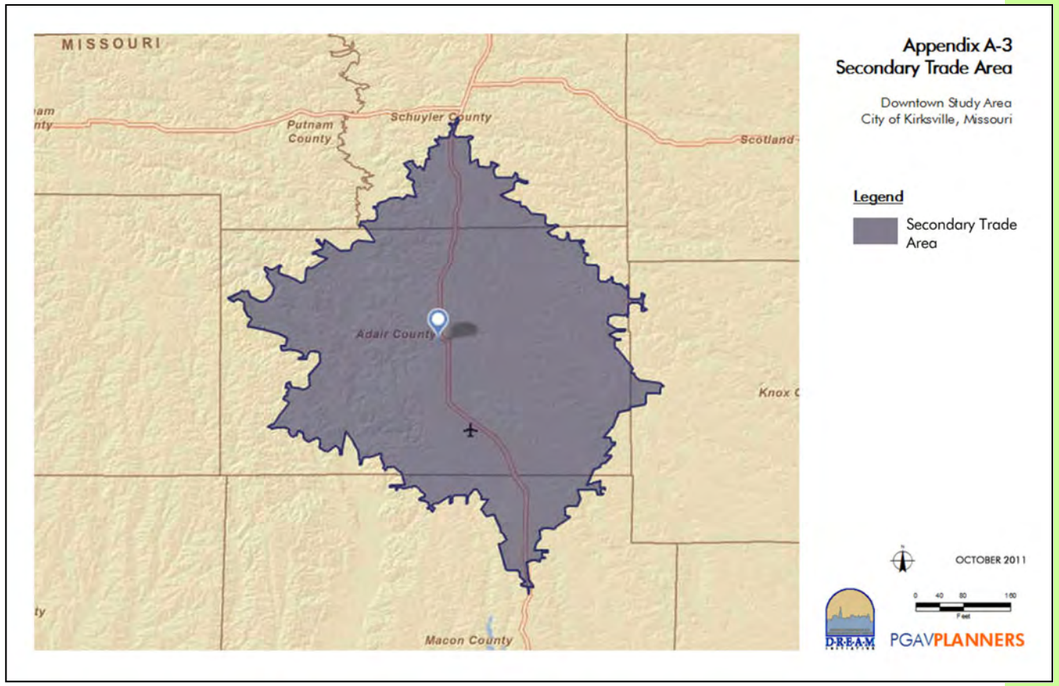
- 50,300 square feet of restaurant space
  (10,400 square feet vacant)
- 120,500 square feet of retail space
  (2,900 square feet vacant)
- 260,400 square feet of office/service space
  (57,800 square feet vacant)

The total amount of the first-floor vacant space is about 71,100 square feet and represents the existing opportunity for Downtown to expand its retail base. The retail analysis conservatively estimates average retail sales per square foot at $69 and average restaurant sales per square foot at $132. Depending on the types of businesses attracted, or that expand, the vacant first-floor space of 71,100 square feet represents an additional $5 to $9 million in annual sales to the City of Kirksville.

To analyze retail demand, spending patterns were examined for households in a primary trade area (the City limits of Kirksville) and a secondary trade area (households within a 30-minute drive of Downtown Kirksville; particularly along the highway 63 corridor). Comparing sales data to demand provides a measure of the performance of the Downtown retail sector and identifies unmet retail demand. Unmet demand is then compared to categories of retail products.

A potential opportunity for Kirksville is to attract retail stores that can make use of the existing vacant properties in Downtown. The vacant Downtown Kirksville space observed during this analysis was typically a moderately-sized storefront. The average size of the vacancies was about 3,500 square feet with the largest being 12,500 and the smallest being 400.

The Analysis estimates that Downtown Kirksville could support an additional 120,400 square feet of restaurant and retail space by capturing the secondary trade area's unmet demand in specific retail sectors. This amount exceeds the existing vacant space, indicating that the City may wish to encourage office and service uses to occupy upper-floor or side -street locations to reserve the ground-floor space for retail and restaurant uses. As revitalization continues and retail demand increases, the City may wish to be more aggressive to decrease the amount of non-retail space in the prime retail locations.



The Secondary Trade Area considered for the Retail Analysis..

The retail categories showing unmet demand represent opportunities for the City to attract new stores, but also for existing merchants to expand their floor area or add new product lines. The categories demonstrating the highest unmet retail demand (the best opportunities), include:

- Electronics and Appliance Stores: $1.3 Million
- Specialty Food Stores: $1.1 Million
- Health and Personal Care Stores: $800,000
- Clothing Stores: $600,000

The retail category "Grocery Stores" also demonstrated unmet retail demand of about $500,000. This, combined with that of "Specialty Food Stores" represents a total of about $1.7 Million in lost food sales for the secondary trade area. With a fairly captive and significant student market, a smaller-sized grocery store, offering fresh produce and specialty items may find success in Downtown Kirksville. This type of store could also be offered in combination with a coffee shop or restaurant.

Downtown Kirksville has significant unmet potential and a collection of positive factors that include a good stock of commercial buildings, a nearby student population, regional attractions, and nearby major employers. Retail market recommendations developed during the Retail Market Analysis are focused on helping Downtown fully capitalize on these existing positive factors. Primary recommendations include:

- Strengthen Existing Businesses

  The proposed DTO should develop efforts designed to improve existing businesses. Several community survey responses indicated that Downtown businesses needed to improve their stores to become more user-friendly. By encouraging existing stores to work on customer service, expanded business hours, and cross-promotion of each other and Kirksville attractions, Downtown will improve its ability to serve its retail consumers. The DTO should address these topics, as well as business operations, product differentiation and presentation, and window displays, through a series of seminars for Downtown Kirksville merchants. Funds from the proposed Community Improvement District can be used to support this training program.

- Create a Downtown Business Attraction Program

  Encourage retail uses on the ground floor of all mixed-use and commercial buildings. In the short term, it is important for the committee to focus on filling Downtown vacancies with retail stores. In the long term, focus should shift to creating the right mix of retail stores. The proposed DTO should assist the City with the effort to recruit new businesses by using retail market information and developing a Business Attraction Program. The Program should include:

  – Goals for attracting targeted retail stores and filling vacant first-floor spaces
  – Information on financial incentives to assist with the start-up of new businesses and improvements to qualifying Downtown buildings
  – Pertinent information regarding the Downtown retail and real-estate markets

The DTO should also work with the City to improve aspects of the development process. The City could streamline its processes to encourage businesses in the targeted retail categories to locate in Downtown. The DTO members should also try to be knowledgeable and help walk businesses through the City procedures.

- Develop a Marketing Campaign for Downtown Retail

  Once stable funding is identified, the proposed DTO should develop programs to market and promote Downtown businesses collectively. Downtown advertising will help send the message that Downtown is a destination, while promotions that involve a high participation rate among Downtown businesses will help boost sales. The proposed CID could help fund advertising, promotions, and special events that impact Downtown Kirksville.

  The DTO should develop an electronic newsletter that highlights the unique experience and retail stores in Downtown. This newsletter should be emailed to residents, students, and visitors and a few printed copies should be available at high-traffic Downtown locations. The newsletter should include information about existing stores, new stores, hours of operation, public improvements and special events.

  The DTO will also need to develop other brochures and work with local newspapers, radio, and potentially television stations to promote Downtown. The DTO should be able to obtain a good amount of free press coverage regarding positive Downtown stories. However, in the long-term, the DTO should consider retaining a professional advertising service to ensure the broadest and most effective coverage.

  Other promotions and events should focus on attracting existing Kirksville visitors to Downtown. While residents of the City will be attracted, Downtown could build many shopping-type events aimed at introducing Downtown to the student population, parents, alumni, and university faculty and staff.

A view of Downtown Kirksville's historic business district

FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

The DREAM Initiative reviewed several funding mechanisms that are available to Downtown Kirksville to encourage business development, and public or private investments. The community requested that this review and information focus upon the effort to establish a Community Improvement District (CID). While the CID effort was unsuccessful, establishing a Downtown Kirksville CID remains as a high-priority recommendation. The intent of reviewing available financial tools is to provide the City with funding concepts, along with the preliminary financial data necessary, to support the further exploration of these incentives. Additionally, the City of Kirksville has already used Tax Increment Financing (TIIF) in Downtown. This existing TIF and its impact on potential new incentives, was also reviewed.

As noted in the Organizational Structure Section on page 8, Downtown should initially consider the establishment of a CID. This incentive will allow for flexibility in the use of the generated funds and adds the important organizational aspects that will help solidify the proposed DTO as the lead Downtown organization.

The newly formed DTO should also pursue other funding sources and seek to leverage local money to obtain State or Federal grants. Other tools, such as a Local Option Economic Development Sales Tax (EDS), historic tax credits, low income tax credits, and participation tax credits, should be pursued after a sustainable sources such as the CID is in place. This Strategic Plan recommends that, after the CID, the City consider an EDS. These tools, combined with the existing TIF, will provide support to Downtown revitalization efforts well into the future. The decision on which financial tools are to be used is determined, in part, by the nature of the revitalization projects and the willingness of local officials to engage in public-private partnerships.

Regardless of the specific financing mechanism, the general goal of the DREAM financial recommendations is to leverage public funds to attract private investment that leads to job creation, business growth, and attractive Downtown buildings and public spaces. Information regarding the establishment of a CID and EDS, includes:

- Community Improvement District (CID)

  A Community Improvement District has the potential to have the most impact for funding Downtown Kirksville revitalization projects. The creation of a Downtown CID should be a high-priority for the City. The breadth and variety of activities that can be funded by a CID provides an opportunity for significant advancement of Downtown Kirksville.

  A CID is a geographically defined area used to finance projects that benefit the public and the District. A CID is governed by a board of directors that may be appointed by the City or elected by the residents and property owners within the district. A CID is created through a petition signed by property owners with more than 50 percent of the assessed value of the real property, and more than 50 percent per capita of all owners of real property within the proposed CID. The petition will include all details of what the proposed CID will undertake for the next five years. After a series of public hearings, the plan is voted on by the Kirksville City Council and approved by ordinance. The plan includes these components:
  - Purpose of the CID
  - Programs and services to be provided
  - Estimated costs of programs and services
  - Budget, including proposed revenue sources

  The actual funding mechanisms—sales taxes, property taxes, business license fees or other fees—must be approved by the residents of the proposed district in an official election, requiring a majority to pass. The CID formation process is thorough with many opportunities for public input.

  Funds generated by a Downtown Kirkville CID should be used to provide seasonal banners, cross-promotional events for businesses, district marketing, administrative support, security, parking improvements, event promotions, merchant training, infrastructure, beautification, and redevelopment of buildings and

Downtown Kirksville has installed signage to promote the benefits of the existing Downtown TIF.

public places. CID funds could also be used for feasibility studies for revitalization projects. The proposed Downtown CID would also have the ability to contract with the DTO to provide administrative and technical services for the CID, but this will require appropriate and trained DTO staff.

A political subdivision CID, as proposed and as pursued in 2012, considered a half-cent (0.50%) sales tax only. Based on historical sales tax generation data, a Downtown CID could generate about $80,000 annually for Downtown activities. This is a significant amount that would help solidify the proposed DTO and would increase as Downtown activity improves.

- Local Option Economic Development Sales Tax (EDS)

An EDS is an additional sales tax, up to one-half of one percent, imposed by cities in the State of Missouri to fund economic development initiatives. This tax requires voter approval by referendum. An EDS is relevant to downtown revitalization because the statute provides the municipality with broad discretion in the use of revenues beyond limits on administrative spending and certain other requirements. Establishing this tax can allow for allocating a portion of the revenue to assist in Downtown Kirksville revitalization efforts and support other economic development projects throughout the City.

The proposed EDS for Kirksville is based on the assumption of a one-half of one percent sales tax, and a structure of not more than 25% of the revenues for Administration and at least 20% for City-wide economic development activities such as:

- Land Acquisition
- Infrastructure for industrial or business parks
- Extension of streets
- Public Facilities directly related to economic development and job creation
- Providing matching dollars for state or federal grants

Some, or all, of the remaining 55% could be dedicated to Downtown projects in the areas of:

- Marketing
- Providing grants or loans to companies for job training, equipment acquisition, site development, and infrastructure
- Training programs to prepare workers for advanced technologies and high skill jobs
- Legal and accounting expenses directly associated with the economic development planning and preparation process

This revenue source would also be expected to grow over time and the City could also borrow against this revenue by issuing bonds to fund a large project.

Raising the sales tax in the City must be weighed carefully and would require voter approval. It is important that volunteers and property owners in support of a DTO communicate that the benefits of a more vibrant Downtown with greater retail variety and visitor draw will far outweigh any loss of business due to a higher sales tax rate. The EDS is an ideal tool to fund ongoing Downtown revitalization efforts and will refocus attention on the core of the City. By following the recommendations in this Strategic Plan, the entire City will take ownership in Downtown improvements.

MARKETING

Effective revitalization efforts will promote Downtown within a coordinated strategy. Downtown marketing must use a variety of methods and media to communicate with the desired consumer markets. Methods such as paid collaborative advertising will present Downtown Kirksville as a unified shopping district. By using various traditional media, as well as new media such as the internet and social networking, Downtown can ensure its marketing messages reach the intended audiences.

The proposed DTO should consider launching formal marketing plans after stable funding has been identified and obtained. Downtown Kirksville does need its own marketing strategies, but the proposed DTO must be secured as the lead organization. Marketing requires a long-term plan that should be led by a committee of the DTO, not the City.

At the request of the City, DREAM marketing assistance focused on providing the Downtown merchants with a training session to enhance their individual ability to promote their stores and products. In June of 2012, this training was provided to a group of business people from throughout the City of Kirksville. Although this effort concluded the marketing task, some general recommendations for the proposed DTO Marketing Committee have been developed for this Strategic Plan. These recommendations include:

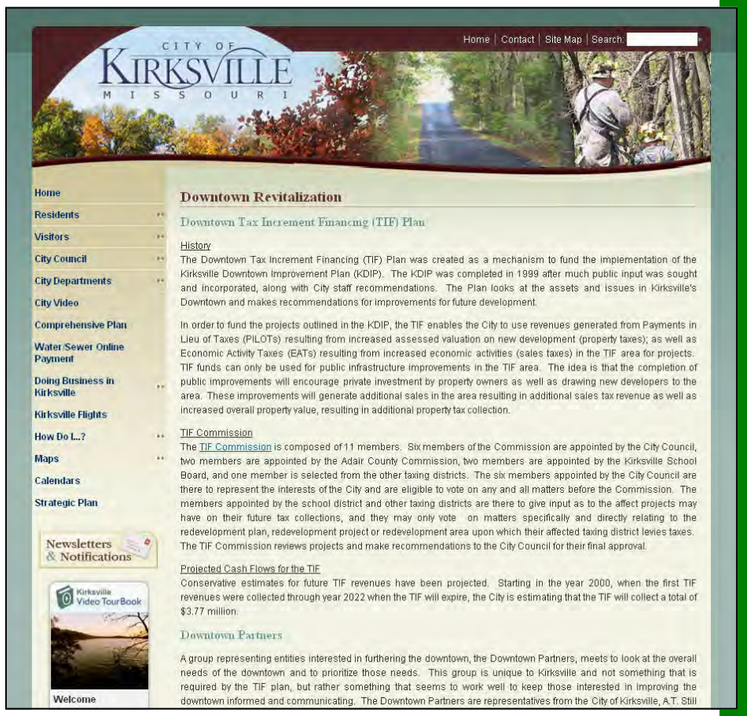
- **Improve Downtown Kirksville's Web Presence**

  The City of Kirksville's website, www.kirksvillecity.com provides pages dedicated to Downtown Revitalization and the DREAM Initiative. However, these pages are found a few menu selections after the front page in the *Economic and Community Development* Department link. KDIC is mentioned on the City's pages, but does not maintain its own website. The Kirksville Chamber of Commerce maintains a well-designed website at www.kirksvillechamber.com. The Chamber promotes numerous City businesses and maintains important information such as a Calendar of Events, but nothing specific to Downtown. The Kirksville Tourism Group maintains a website at www.visitkirksville.com, focused on attracting visitors to the Kirksville region. The website has information on area events and attractions and provide several itinerary tours that include businesses in Downtown. However, there is no "Downtown Kirksville" tour or page specifically regarding visiting Downtown as a destination itself. TSU and ATSU both have richly developed websites and both promote the City of Kirksville, but nothing focused on Downtown Kirksville or its businesses.

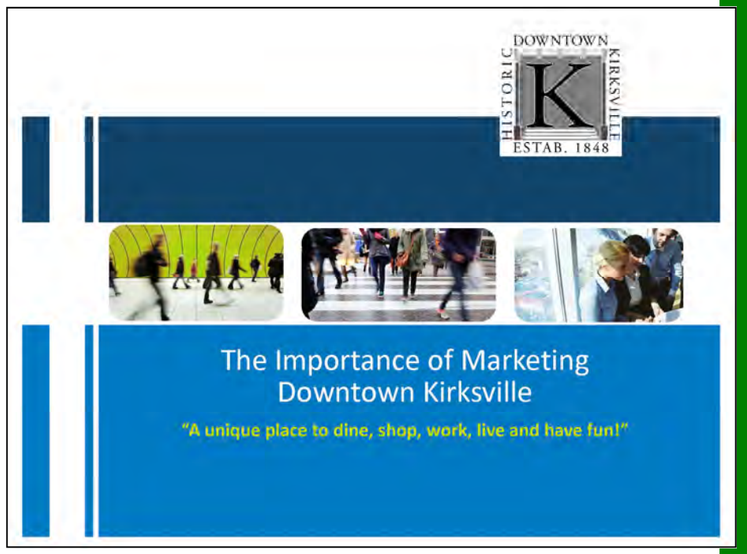
  Once the proposed DTO has solidified its funding situation, the group should develop a website to promote the group and Downtown as a unified shopping destination. The site should link to all of the above sites and include information about festivals, businesses, shops, entertainment, and improvement projects. The site should also include information about the DTO, redevelopment and retail opportunities, Downtown incentive programs, and design guidelines. Some of this information is maintained on the City site and can simply be linked to that page. Downtown residential information can also be included, both as a service to existing residents and to attract new residents. The website should also have a link to social websites including You Tube, MySpace, Twitter and Facebook, which will assist in accessing a younger population demographic.

- **Establish a Distinct Downtown Brand**

  The DTO must take the lead to develop a distinct brand for Downtown Kirksville to adopt. There is currently no consistent and exciting image being projected about Downtown. Improvements such as the proposed websites, design standards, streetscape improvements, and wayfinding will help define Downtown Kirksville as a physical, geographical area. Without a DTO, the City must work to energize the merchants and Downtown volunteers to reinforce the brand by using the developed images, logos, and messages in all Downtown activities and materials.



The City of Kirksville website provides a "Downtown Revitalization" webpage.



The cover page of the training materials provided for Kirksville merchants.

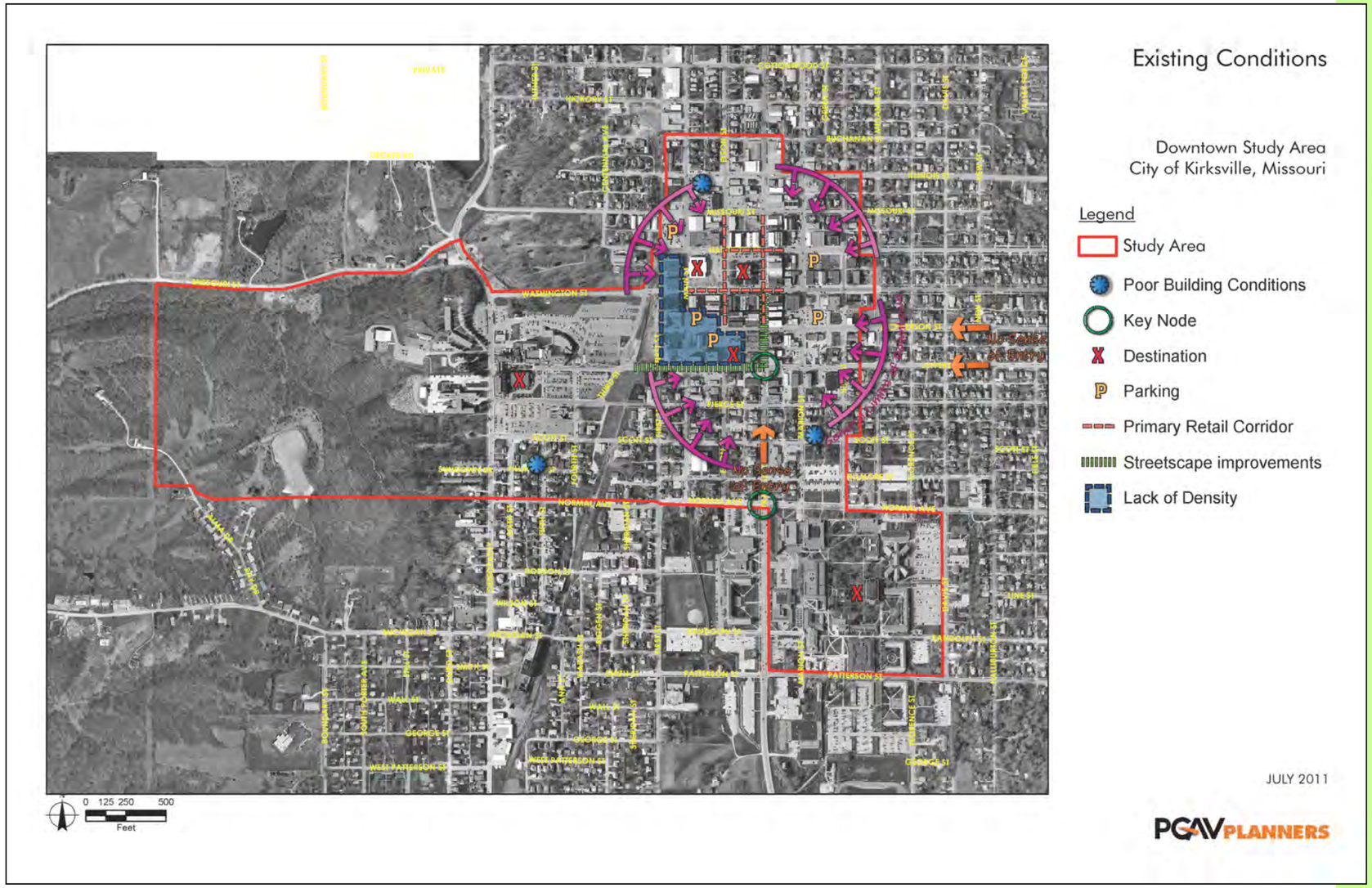
Implementation

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The DREAM Initiative planning process involved a series of analytical and planning activities for Kirksville that have been outlined in the previous sections of this document. This Downtown Kirksville Strategic Plan ties together all of the recommendations from the various planning components with a set of key goals that will drive Downtown revitalization.

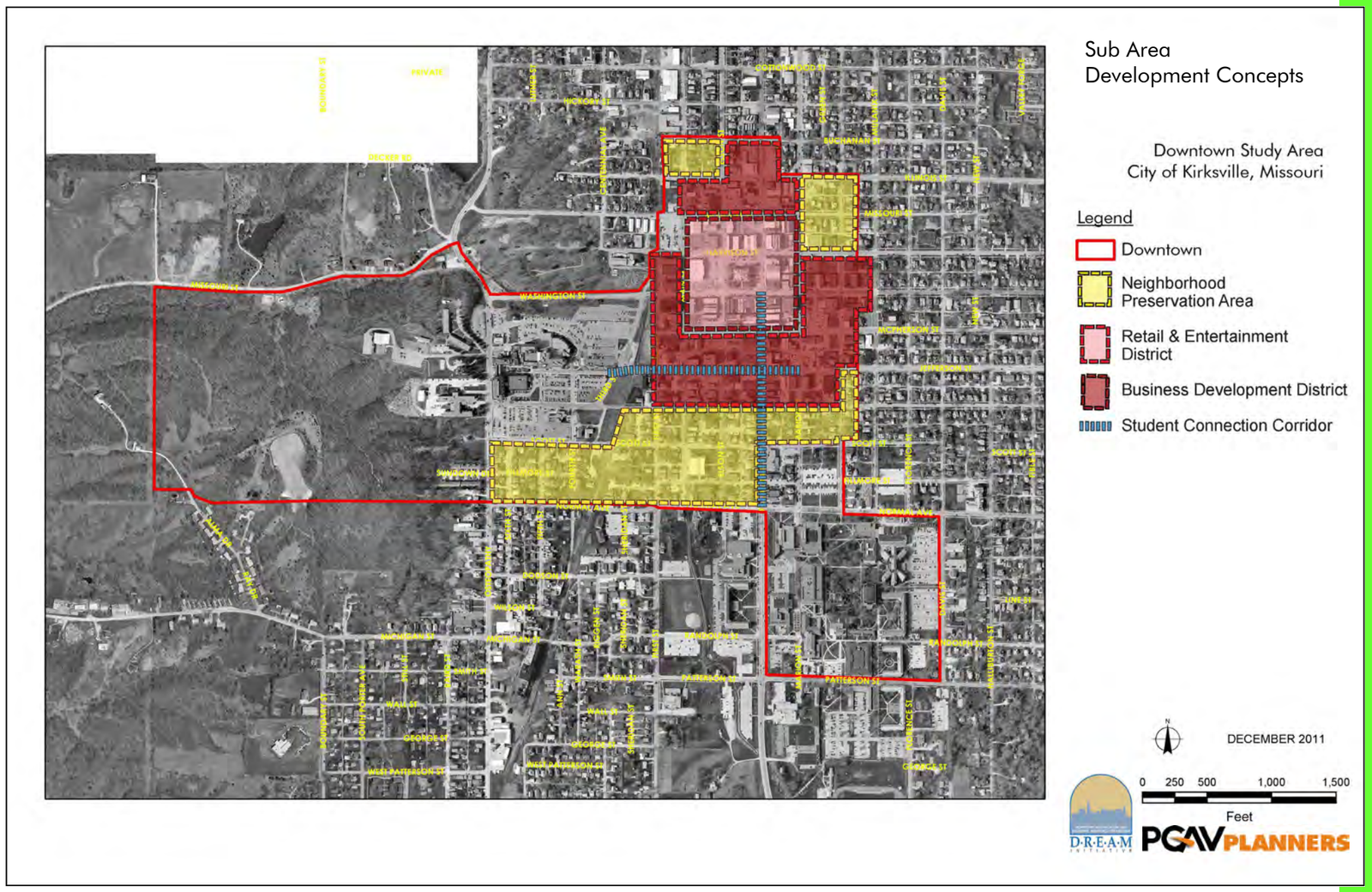
Included in this section are illustrations and an implementation schedule. These elements will give community leaders a catalog of action items that will comprise the agenda for Downtown over the next several years.

One of the steps in developing the Strategic Plan was to prepare an Existing Conditions Map (shown at right) that highlights the location of key features, challenges, and opportunities in Downtown Kirksville. Specifically the map denotes the location of destinations, key transportation nodes, entry routes, the main retail area, and other elements. The map also shows the concept of Downtown Kirksville lacking a strong entry corridor and definition, as well as areas of low density and poor building conditions. The map is intended to provide a "big picture" view to help set the planning context for Downtown Kirksville and the more detailed set of DREAM tasks previously discussed in this Plan.



SUB AREA DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

At right is an illustration that provides the sub area development concepts of the Downtown Kirksville Strategic Plan. This map demonstrates, in general terms, the various identities of the neighborhoods that comprise Downtown. The primary retail and entertainment sector is surrounding by the business district and the residential areas. Also shown are the primary corridors that connect Truman State University and A.T. Still University to Downtown. These distinct elements of Downtown can be encouraged and supported.



SCHEDULE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The schedule located on the following pages organizes the projects and programs in categories that relate to the Kirksville DREAM Initiative tasks.

These tasks include: Organizational Structure, Land Use & Building Survey, Community Surveys, Public Infrastructure, Buildings, Retail Market Analysis, Residential Market Analysis, Financial Mechanisms, and Marketing.

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

It is not expected that the City or proposed DTO would be able to implement all of these projects in the timeframe of this Strategic Plan. Initially, resources will be scarce and Downtown leaders may encounter resistance to their attempts to increase dedicated Downtown resources or implement financial mechanisms. Any such resistance will lengthen the time period required for the completions of the proposed public projects.

Organizational Structure

	Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources
1	Develop a lead Downtown Organization (DTO).	Downtown Kirksville requires a strong organization to move revitalization projects forward. Recently the KDIC has lost its executive director and may cease meeting. All of the involved Downtown groups (the City, the Chamber of Commerce, Truman State University (TSU), A.T. Still University (ATSU)) need to reconsider and increase their support of the KDIC. If the KDIC is no longer acceptable for some reason, a new organization may be formed. Regardless, Downtown Kirksville requires its own group.	KDIC/DTO	City, Chamber, TSU, ATSU	NOW	The KDIC needs to promote itself as the lead Downtown group or help form the DTO. This means that the Board should promote every activity and success so that the community and other leaders understand the importance of the group. The Board should seek ways to help the business community and residents so that the KDIC truly is indispensable to Downtown. The Board can also seek grant funding and assist the City in communicating information to Downtown property owners, businesses, and residents. Assistance from the universities is critical.
2	Establish a Downtown Community Improvement District (CID) Committee.	Establish a broadly supported committee to begin working with the City to renew the effort to establish a Downtown Kirksville CID. This committee should also include representatives from TSU and ATSU. The Universities are greatly impacted by the health of Downtown Kirksville and have been largely responsible for improvement to date. Downtown should leverage the resources of TSU and ATSU to its fullest extent to obtain greater funding, volunteers, and assistance.	KDIC/DTO	City, TSU, ATSU	NOW	A recent effort to establish a CID was unsuccessful. However, the DTO must have a dedicated income source. The DTO needs to work closely with its members and the City to clearly communicate the issues of Downtown and how the CID, through the KDIC can address them.
3	Begin the effort to establish the Downtown CID.	Once the CID committee has developed the required plan and budget for the CID, the KDIC should continue to promote the effort to ensure its success. The DTO should have developed a clear plan for the promotion of the program and should understand the steps required.	DTO	City	3rd Quarter 2013	Ample time must be allowed for promotion to the community. It is estimated that a one-half of one percent CID sales tax would generate $80,000 annually. The DTO needs to promote how this added tax will benefit Downtown. All viewpoints should be represented at the required public hearing before the Council votes to form the CID. However, after Council approval, the DTO still needs to communicate with the voters so the CID can pass the sales tax.
4	Form a University Partnership Committee.	As noted, the Universities have, and continue to, play a major role in the revitalization efforts of Downtown Kirksville. The Universities promote Kirksville through their marketing efforts. The DTO should formalize these relationships through a committee that includes the City and Moberly Area Community College (MACC). This Committee can also help address student housing issues.	DTO	TSU, ATSU, MACC	NOW	The DTO should help focus the resources that these schools have to offer on Downtown. Students can offer innovative solutions to many Downtown challenges, while the leadership of the schools can provide important advocacy and high-level board functions. It may be necessary to develop this committee before other efforts so that the DTO has the support to form the CID.
5	Hire an Executive Director for the DTO.	Successful Downtown revitalization requires the appropriate personnel to drive the effort forward. The DTO should be professionally led by a director once the CID is established.	DTO		2nd Quarter 2014	The current KDIC structure is volunteer-only. This situation is typically not sufficient to conduct the numerous recommendations developed during the DREAM Initiative. Until funding is obtained, the DTO is limited in its ability to implement improvements and programs.
6	Establish a Downtown Events Committee.	As the support for the DTO builds, the group should form a Downtown Events Committee to develop signature events for Downtown, provide business promotion activities, assist with existing events, and market Downtown events overall.	DTO	Chamber, Kirksville Arts Association	2nd Quarter 2014	This Committee will be under the umbrella of the DTO and should include representatives from groups that are currently hosting events in Downtown. The intent is not to replace existing events or groups, but to enhance them and collectively promote them. Eventually, with enough support to the DTO, this Committee should become the marketing arm for Downtown.
7	Involve students in DTO Committees and initiatives.	Students will provide innovative ideas and a volunteer base that the Downtown can use. However, they must be encouraged and kept motivated. Students also provide a base for event attendance. Students could also be involved in helping to brand Downtown Kirksville as proposed in the Marketing Section of this Plan.	DTO	TSU, ATSU, MACC	3rd Quarter 2013	The DTO should develop a plan to build a culture that involves the Kirksville student sector. Involvement on the Committees is a first step, but the DTO should seek to connect with students and staff in particular disciplines. For example, business students could assist with Downtown business seminars or help the City develop business incentive policies.
8	Form a Downtown Merchants Group.	The Downtown Merchants Group should be formed in order to promote improvements to the Downtown business environment, specifically the retail business climate. Downtown Kirksville retailers need to be brought together so they can address common issues and improve their service, and their sales, to the area's consumers.	DTO	Chamber	4th Quarter 2013	The group can be a separate non-profit or a committee under the umbrella of the DTO depending on the size of commitment and interest among retail and restaurant owners. The existing Retail Merchant Committee of the Chamber can be a starting point for establishing this committee. However, it is important that this committee is limited to Downtown stores, and therefore may not be appropriate as a Committee under the Chamber umbrella. The group will be stronger than any individual business would be and should help support the DTO, provide input into work plans that affect Downtown, and attend City meetings regarding Downtown issues.
9	Maintain the City's Involvement and Commitment to Downtown Revitalization.	The City of Kirksville has made several public investments in Downtown and is continuing efforts to expand the streetscape improvements. Additionally, the City is responsible for code enforcement, public safety, building inspections, and other public services; all of which must be maintained at acceptable levels for Downtown to thrive.	City		NOW	The City needs to continue to send the message to existing businesses and potential investors that Downtown is a vibrant area that City officials support. By continuing to invest in the streetscape, seasonal banners, assisting with business issues, and guiding property owners during historic rehabilitations, the City gains a positive image among owners, businesses, developers, and contractors. The City should support the establishment of new incentives and the ongoing use of the TIF program.
10	From a Downtown Economic Development Committee.	Another subcommittee of the DTO, this group should be formed to help the City staff work with potential prospects or expansions in Downtown. In some cases, this group may be more effective than the City. Often a potential investor wants to speak with fellow business people and the DTO can arrange these testimonials.	DTO	City	4th Quarter 2014	The DTO should carefully consider the composition of this Committee. Members should be upbeat and positive, yet honest in their comments about Downtown. The City should encourage Downtown business leads to contact this Committee. The group should eventually implement a retention campaign when business activity and DTO resources allow.
11	Enhance and Collaborate with the Kirksville Arts Association (KAA).	The KAA is a non-profit arts group that operates the Kirksville Arts Center at 117 S. Franklin Street, 1 block south of the Courthouse Square. The group and center are a tremendous benefit to Downtown Kirksville.	DTO	KAA	NOW	The leadership of the DTO should look for ways to collaborate with the KAA on events, student activities, and other promotions that can appeal to residents and Downtown businesses. The KAA should be invited to provide representation on DTO committees, and vice-versa.
12	Establish a Downtown Community Development Corporation (CDC)	A Downtown Kirksville CDC could be an alternative to generate funding and provide land development activity. The CDC would be a non-profit corporation designed to channel private sector funding into projects having a public benefit in Downtown.	DTO		As required	The CDC can take on housing, commercial real estate, and small business development. Membership would come from local businesses such as banks. Funding sources should consist of donations, grants, and investment income from development property.

Land Use & Building Survey

	Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources
13	Maintain information regarding Downtown vacancies, building conditions, and infrastructure.	Potential Downtown investors and developers will require basic information. The City should monitor buildings and infrastructure conditions.	City		NOW	A simple listing of size, location and current contact information can be provided on existing websites and the proposed Downtown website. Additionally, redevelopment opportunities should be rotated through a highlight column on websites and in the proposed electronic newsletter. The information developed through the DREAM initiative should serve as a baseline.
14	Monitor Downtown land-use.	The City should develop the necessary tools, such as a Geographic Information System (GIS) to review how land use trends change over time in Downtown. This information is critical to future zoning policy, procedures, and incentives.	City		Ongoing	GIS will likely be used city-wide. The City may be able to get assistance from TSU or Adair County to develop the required data. Other aspects of Downtown, such as building conditions, could also be monitored to ensure that property is inspected on a regular basis.
15	Conduct a parking inventory, leading into a parking use study.	The City should conduct an off-street and parking lot inventory to help identify any parking issues in Downtown. Due to the proximity of the schools, this information should be monitored to keep ahead of changing enrollment trends. This recommendation may lead to a parking use study.	City		Ongoing	The City can use this data to identify parking trends and develop programs to encourage Downtown employees and residents to avoid prime spaces; reserving them for shoppers.

Community Surveys

	Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources
16	Reconvene DREAM Focus Groups.	The original DREAM Focus Groups included representatives from the Downtown TIF Commission, new residents and students, Downtown business owners, longtime residents, and city officials and administrators. It is important that these people remain engaged by Downtown and are supportive of revitalization efforts.	DTO		1st Quarter 2014	By reconvening the groups after 6 years, the DTO can monitor changes in perceptions and also build new momentum for Downtown and the group. The DTO should look for an impartial party, perhaps a marketing student at TSU, that can facilitate the sessions and encourage discussion.
17	Conduct regular surveys of graduating TSU and ATSU students.	The City of Kirksville, and Downtown in particular, should have great interest in the students experience while at TSU or ATSU. Attitudes in this market segment can change rapidly and Downtown should attempt to monitor how it is being perceived by the students.	DTO	TSU, ATSU	Ongoing	The DTO should work closely with the universities Student Affairs offices to connect with graduates. An alternative effort could include online surveys if the DTO can establish the proposed Downtown website.
18	Conduct telephone/web survey.	The DTO should review the DREAM phone survey and consider resurveying City residents.	DTO		1st Quarter 2017	An alternative, and more cost effective approach, is to include web survey links in the proposed electronic newsletter and the proposed Downtown website. The timeframe proposed is about 8 years removed from the DREAM survey. The DTO may need to use a phone bank and survey firm to reach the quota limits required for a random sample.
19	Conduct a visitor survey.	The DTO should consider conducting a visitor survey, similar to the DREAM survey, at large attractions and events in the City. The survey should be about Downtown, but may be conducted at any location in the City.	DTO		1st Quarter 2019	Volunteers should be able to gather this information. Input from residents should be captured in the phone or web surveys, not the visitor survey.
20	Communicate all survey results to Downtown groups, leaders, and businesses.	The knowledge gained through survey tools is useless if Downtown is not informed and encouraged to adapt to changing conditions. A DTO is needed to review and interpret all results to present them to appropriate audiences such as businesses, attractions, property owners, and potential Downtown investors. Additionally, the Chamber may be interested in any city-wide data gathered.	DTO	Chamber	Ongoing	The DTO and Chamber should hold joint meetings or seminars to discuss survey results with the public. The groups may also wish to adjust their events, or encourage other event organizers to adjust events, based on information obtained.

Public Infrastructure

	Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources
21	Coordinate public improvements with the overall Downtown design theme and existing historic character.	City officials and staff should develop public improvement projects and planning efforts in concert with the DTO to ensure Downtown infrastructure supports the Downtown brand.	City	DTO	NOW	The City should seek the input of the DTO when formed, and by extension TSU, ATSU, and the KAA, during the design of Downtown projects. The City should continue to install improvements that goes beyond utilitarian facilities to develop 'great spaces' with all future projects.
22	Continue to expand the existing streetscape.	The City should continue to expand streetscape elements that are coordinated with existing public projects, as noted above. The existing streetscape is well-designed and should support a Downtown theme and provide a setting complementary to historic Downtown buildings. These improvements can be funded by the existing TIF funds, or by the proposed CID.	City	TIF Commission, Proposed CID	Ongoing	The City should expand the streetscape elements along primary approaches to Downtown, such as Franklin, Jefferson, Harrison, and Missouri Streets. Additionally, elements should be added to the streetscape. Parks, plazas, trails, bicycle racks, landscaping, trees, benches, and public art will all provide a welcome place for pedestrians to gather. These elements will require maintenance and the City will have to police the areas to prevent vandalism. However the atmosphere without these components is barren and lifeless.
23	Develop wayfinding elements, with a priority on gateway signage to help define Downtown.	There is currently no clear point at which the visitors knows they have arrived in Downtown Kirksville. The routing from Highway 63 to Downtown is also not particularly obvious. The City should pursue an overall wayfinding system that reinforces the brand of Downtown Kirksville. Signage could be funded from the existing TIF or from the proposed CID.	City	TIF Commission, Proposed CID	2nd Quarter 2014	The City should prioritize the elements to be included. The directional signage required for routing traffic from other parts of the City to Downtown may have a different design feel as this signage is more oriented for faster vehicular traffic. The Downtown Gateway signs should reinforce the Downtown brand and be sensitive to the existing building architecture and feel of Downtown. The City should begin to include this signage in streetscape projects and identify property for acquisition at the desired gateway locations. Gateway signs could be combined with park and plaza areas, as well as with informational signage such as a community marquee.
24	Develop a catalog of donatable streetscape elements.	The DTO should develop a catalog for individuals and groups to 'purchase' an element and have their message or name inscribed on a plaque. This will help the City expand the public elements in Downtown and will help instill a sense of community pride.	DTO	City	1st Quarter 2015	The City should approve of the catalog items and may need to limit the numbers of elements 'for sale'. The City would install the component, along with the plaque regarding the donor. The DTO will communicate the specifics of the program to the community and seek donations. Potential elements should include benches, trees, planters, pavers, fountains, and public art.
25	Improve parking lots.	If the proposed parking inventory leads to the conclusion that more parking is required, the City should develop lots that are complementary with the streetscape and overall design theme. Additionally, the City should seek to improve existing parking lots. A well-design and attractive parking lot includes pedestrian plazas, landscaping, well-defined borders, signage, and clear, safe pathways to Downtown attractions.	City		1st Quarter 2016	These improvements could be funded by the existing TIF or the proposed CID.
26	Bury overhead electric lines.	In many areas of Downtown, utility lines are already underground. The City should review the areas where the lines are not yet buried and pursue this relocation.	City		As Needed	The lines should be relocated as the sidewalk or streets are improved for efficiency of installation. The existing TIF or proposed CID could fund these projects.
27	Properly maintain all public infrastructure.	Downtown revitalization efforts require an ongoing commitment and significant public investment. These improvements will serve as a catalyst for private investment, but only if well-maintained. In this way, a positive message is sent that the City is supportive of Downtown.	City	DTO	Ongoing	The City could benefit from DTO involvement in identifying maintenance issues. The City and members of the DTO should review future infrastructure projects and take quarterly 'safety walks' around Downtown to note areas that require attention. The City will maintain all infrastructure not visible, but could gain some valuable volunteer eyes for above ground elements.
28	Continue to promote infrastructure projects that have been provided by the existing TIF district funds.	The City, through the TIF Commission, posts signage to let the public know that a project was funded by TIF funds. This promotional effort can also be funded by the TIF.	City		Ongoing	This is an excellent and innovative practice that should continue so that the residents and visitors to Downtown know the benefits of a mechanism such as the TIF. If the proposed CID is implemented, a similar method should be used to promote CID-funded projects.

Buildings

	Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources
29	Develop an historic overlay district that expands the use of the design guidelines developed in 2004 for the Courthouse Square Historic District.	The City has these guidelines in place and should attempt to expand their use through a zoning overlay. The City will need to promote the benefits of historic building rehabilitation in Downtown commercial properties.	City		NOW	The City should pursue these zoning changes immediately to preserve Downtown's historic character. A DTO could offer support for this effort among its members and donors. However the City will have to go it alone.
30	Develop a façade rehabilitation loan fund program.	A loan program could be developed using City funds or the proposed CID funds. The existing TIF funds are not available for private projects, only public infrastructure. A facade loan program is a loan and the property owner will need to demonstrate credit-worthiness, equity, and other criteria the City may require. The City should also connect this incentive with the policies to be developed, as per the following recommendation.	City		2nd Quarter 2014	The City should pursue these zoning changes immediately to preserve Downtown's historic character. A DTO could develop support for this effort among its members and donors. However, the City will have to go it alone. A priority target for a façade should be to remove inappropriate materials, such as metal.
31	Adopt incentive policies to encourage building rehabilitation.	The City should use incentives to support public projects that complement the design theme and private projects that adhere to the proposed zoning overlay/design guidelines. There is no bigger 'black eye' for these programs than to use tax revenues in an inappropriate and unsightly manner.	City		NOW	The City is not bound to use incentive funds just because they exist. All economic development agreements should include performance measures and the projects should be reviewed and approved by City staff. By adopting clear instructions on incentive use, the City Council provides support to Staff and sends a message to developers that high-quality improvements are required...or funding is not available. At present, the City restricts the use of the funds generated by the existing TIF for public infrastructure projects only. This is, perhaps, too restrictive.
32	Develop seminar programs and events to promote the history of Downtown and encourage building rehabilitation.	The proposed DTO, once formed, can develop several methods to communicate City policies and expectations regarding Downtown buildings. Additionally, the group can connect property owners with knowledgeable contractors to promote positive building rehabilitations.	DTO		Ongoing	The DTO could launch a regular series of meetings to understand property owner's concerns.

Retail Market

	Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources
33	Develop seminars for existing Downtown businesses.	Several community survey responses discussed how Downtown Kirksville businesses were not friendly, did not have appealing products, or were not open convenient hours. The Downtown merchants should be encouraged to adjust their stores to better suit the needs of the surrounding market.	DTO		NOW	The DTO could launch a series of programs designed to improve Downtown Kirksville businesses. Topics should include customer service, business operations, product differentiation and presentation, window displays, and promotions. The DTO could also develop a monthly shopping night to encourage businesses to stay open later and encourage stores to cross-promote each other. These programs can be funded by the proposed CID, but should be economical to provide.
34	Encourage Existing Retail Expansion.	Existing Downtown stores should consider adapting their product lines or expanding their store space to meet the categories that are demonstrating unmet retail demand. The categories of Electronics and Appliance stores, Specialty Food stores, Health & Personal Care stores, and Clothing stores all demonstrate significant unmet demand and could be added to existing stores.	DTO		NOW	The DTO should provide information from the DREAM Retail Demand Analysis during the seminars noted above. The DTO can also develop specific marketing and promotion strategies to promote stores selling these products. Integration with the City's attraction efforts is critical, but existing businesses should remain a top priority.
35	Create a Downtown Kirksville Business Development Packet.	The City, supported by the Chamber, should assemble the information needed for business attraction into an easily distributable package. This information will be important to attract business on a city-wide basis, but the proposed DTO can provide information specific to Downtown. The packet can also be integrated with the proposed Downtown website and specific information developed into an electronic format to be emailed to prospects.	City	Chamber	3rd Quarter 2013	The packet should also be easily reproduced, but as the proposed DTO gains momentum and resources, the production quality should improve. Information regarding available buildings and sites, contact information, City processes, and incentives should be included. Other specific information that might be of interested to the Downtown target business categories can be easily added. All information must be kept current, so specific volunteers or City staff must periodically review and update the packet.
36	Increase Available Retail Space	Downtown Kirksville currently has a mix of businesses, but it is important that a balance be maintained that includes plenty of retail stores. This effort can be more aggressively pursued if existing vacant spaces are filled and more space is required.	City		As Needed	After vacant spaces are more fully occupied, the City should consider zoning adjustments to reserve prime ground-floor spaces for retail use. The City should encourage the relocation of office and service uses to upper-floors or side streets. This should also be connected to the façade programs or other business incentives so the City is not funding an inappropriate use in the main retail area.
37	Increase Marketing & Collectively Market Downtown Retailers.	After the DTO has obtained stable funding, collective marketing of Downtown businesses should occur. This marketing should also reinforce the Downtown brand.	DTO		After CID	The CID will be required so that a long-term campaign can be developed. Downtown retailers should be approached to participate, but if they do not, Downtown must still be marketed as a unique shopping destination. Brochures, maps, a directory, press advertising, social media, and other techniques should all be considered. Other marketing steps, such as the website improvements, are discussed in the Marketing section of this Plan.
38	Create Downtown events that are shopping-oriented.	The DTO, through the proposed Events Committee, should develop promotional events designed to boost Downtown sales. Merchants should be involved, however some will feel that they see no benefit to the event. The benefit is that people will see their store, so they should be encouraged to develop their display windows for the event.	DTO		2nd Quarter 2016	The DTO should launch this effort going into the Christmas season. Events such as the previously mentioned evening shopping night, are included, but the DTO might also consider a business expo to introduce students to Downtown, sidewalk sales, storefront display contests, or a Downtown scavenger hunt event at an existing festival.
39	Consider business development incentives.	The City should develop policies to use existing TIF funds or the proposed CID funds for a loan program, similar to the façade rehabilitation program, to assist business start-ups in Downtown.	City		After CID	The program should focus on the retail areas demonstrating unmet retail demand and should involve an equity match from the owner. The intent of the loan should not be to provide all the funding necessary, but to bridge a gap the start-up has between a required amount and the conventional funding that a local bank is willing to provide.

Residential Market

	Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources
40	Develop information and marketing materials for potential residential developers.	The City should work to attract high-quality rental projects in Downtown. The DREAM residential demand analysis indicates potential housing demand for 82 market rate units and 30 affordable senior units over the next few years. These markets should be targeted for attraction to Downtown buildings and properties.	City	DTO, TSU, ATSU	NOW	The universities can also provide important information and insight into future off-campus housing demand. High-quality residential units in Downtown provide more "feet on the street" and give an important boost to the local consumer market.
41	Develop promotional events to encourage Downtown living.	A DTO could create events such as familiarization meetings, apartment tours, and landlord/student seminars that are designed to promote living in Downtown Kirksville.	DTO		3rd Quarter 2015	The proposed CID could assist with this effort. Improvements to Downtown amenities are important to promote so potential residents know that Downtown is vibrant and on the upswing.
42	Encourage innovative building re-use that includes upper-floor residential uses, but are complementary to existing architectural building designs.	There are several vacant buildings in which high-quality loft-style units could be created. The owners of these buildings will require assistance from the City and encouragement from the DTO to adapt these upper-floors to residential spaces.	City	DTO	Ongoing	The City should ensure that its codes do not present obstacles to innovative ideas, nor penalize owners of historic property. Units must be safe and building codes must be followed, but City staff and DTO volunteers should work closely with owners that are interested.
43	Review zoning codes to ensure that single-family to multi-family conversion is not encouraged.	Downtown Kirksville has many large single-family homes in the surrounding neighborhoods. Owners of these homes may be pressured by the residential market, particularly in a community with higher education facilities, to convert these into multi-family units. Often this conversion is not a positive factor on the home's property value.	City		Ongoing	The City should periodically review zoning to ensure that these types of conversion are not occurring. They can be a positive factor and help address residential demand, but often they are poor conversions.
44	Maintain close connections with the student housing market.	The DTO, through the proposed University Partnership Committee, should build strong ties with the TSU and ATSU Student Affairs Committees.	DTO		NOW	This relationship will help students find better housing by helping them be better tenants. A DTO could consider seminars regarding renter rights and responsibilities.

Financial Mechanisms

	Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources
45	Establish the Downtown CID via City ordinance and initiate the municipal election for funding sources.	The CID requires the council action after the petition is submitted. The election afterward is for the funding sources for the CID.	City	KDIC/DTO, TSU, ATSU, Chamber	2nd Quarter 2014	The effort must have broad support to be successful.
46	Consider the adoption of a Local Option Economic Development Sales Tax (EDS).	An EDS can be an alternative to a CID, but is an additional tax levy on city-wide sales. The tax can be structured to provide funding for certain economic development activities in Downtown.	City	DTO	If Needed	The uses for an EDS are not as flexible as those of a CID.
47	Continue implementation of the existing TIF redevelopment plan and project following the 1999 Downtown Improvement Plan and the DREAM recommendations.	The existing TIF has funded numerous Downtown projects and the City is making great progress on the TIF Plan. However, the TIF funds are restricted to public infrastructure projects only. This requires that another source be identified, such as the proposed CID, to assist private development and building rehabilitation.	City		Ongoing	The promotion of TIF funded projects should continue. The City currently provides signage that denotes the projects and discusses future plans openly with the public. These are positive elements that should continue and will help generate future support.

Marketing

	Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources
48	Develop Downtown Kirksville's brand.	As noted, Downtown Kirksville needs a stronger identity. Many public improvements are planned that can support this identity. The brand will be at the base of many future initiatives, but will require acceptance from the community, City leaders, and businesses.	City	DTO when formed	NOW	The City needs to step in with the absence of a DTO and begin branding exercises and develop support for the chosen brand. Marketing students from TSU may be a source of assistance.
49	Improve Downtown Kirksville's Internet presence.	At the very least, Downtown should have a more richly developed page on the City of Kirksville's website. However, the preferred recommendation is to develop a DTO website as the organizational effort and funding allow. The site is important to communicate a great amount of information about Downtown, as well as the DTO and its members.	DTO	City	After CID	The proposed CID could be used as a funding source. However, it is not enough to just create the website. The information must be kept current and the site must be promoted and cross-linked to other media such as social networking tools.

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