



DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLAN

CITY OF CHILLICOTHE, MISSOURI

JANUARY 2013



CITY OF CHILICOTHE



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



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DREAM Initiative
Process



DREAM Initiative • Downtown Strategic Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of the Downtown Revitalization and Economic Assistance for Missouri (DREAM) Initiative is to develop a strategic plan for Downtown Chillicothe 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 Chillicothe. The process identified critical issues and provided recommendations with the goal of implementing needed policies, adjusting existing revitalization efforts, and developing plans for future improvements and programs.

The DREAM Initiative began with several assessments of conditions in Downtown Chillicothe. The information obtained from these assessments was used as the basis for several analyses and recommendations in each primary DREAM task as they are described in this Strategic Plan.

The DREAM Strategic Plan is not intended to replace previous planning efforts, but rather to supplement existing plans and to function as a resource guide for community leaders as Downtown revitalization efforts progress. The Strategic Plan provides a multi-year vision promoting innovative, positive, and attainable change for Downtown Chillicothe. 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 build upon existing efforts to transform Downtown Chillicothe into a vibrant area in which people live, play and work.

The primary goals are listed in each plan section according to the DREAM Initiative task wherein they were developed, however high priority goals for Downtown Chillicothe, include:

Goal One: Establish a Community Improvement District (CID)

A CID will provide a dedicated and sustainable funding source for Downtown improvements, activities, and programs. Reliable funding has been a concern in the past for both Downtown projects and Main Street Chillicothe (MSC); the lead Downtown Chillicothe

organization. Downtown, like any large shopping district, requires marketing efforts, collaborative promotions, events, public investments, and special services. The City of Chillicothe and its residents and businesses have made investments in Downtown such as Silver Moon Plaza and streetscape improvements. These investments must be supported, maintained, and built upon if Downtown Chillicothe is to fully benefit from them. MSC is in place to champion these and other Downtown efforts. However, a sustainable funding source, such as a CID, is required.

The proposed Downtown Chillicothe CID is discussed in both the Organizational Structure section on Page 7 and in the Financial Mechanisms section on Page 25. As proposed, the CID would be supported by a property and sales tax and could generate an estimated \$150,000 annually. CID funds could also be leveraged to obtain funding from State and Federal programs that would require a local funding match.

Goal Two: Develop and Approve a Local Historic Preservation Ordinance (LHPO)

Downtown Chillicothe has benefitted from many significant investments in its façades. These, typically private, investments have done much to beautify the area. However, there have also been many building façades which have been lost or inappropriately altered. There have also been demolition of some important historical structures due to years of deferred maintenance and too little attention to City codes.

The City has established two historic districts that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. However, with a LHPO, and the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) it will create, the ability to protect Downtown's unique atmosphere will be greatly enhanced, as will the benefits to perseverance-minded property owners. The DREAM Building and Streetscape Design Concepts provide a sample of a Local Historic Preservation Ordinance (LHPO). The City should review this ordinance and work with MSC to develop



Livingston County Courthouse in Downtown Chillicothe.



Chillicothe City Hall

its own ordinance. This important step will reinforce other preservation efforts such as the façade program, walking tours, mural program, and streetscape expansion efforts.

The HPC should initially work toward encouraging historic preservation and promoting Downtown’s heritage. The HPC should also monitor the pulse of Downtown property owners regarding the acceptance of commercial building design guidelines in the historic districts. Developing flexible, yet protective, design guidelines will require significant research and support from the City and MSC. However, it is important that this effort is launched so that some measure of protection is connected to large projects such as the Leeper Building Site discussed in the next goal.

Goal Three: Redevelop the Leeper Building Site

The recently demolished Leeper building has left a significant gap in Downtown. The site is a high-profile location on the northwest corner of the intersection of Webster and Washington Streets. The City should pursue this redevelopment opportunity and seek to find a developer willing to construct a historically sensitive infill building that is several stories tall. The location is ideal for a mixed-use facility with a large restaurant, micro-brewery, or museum on the first floor. Any new building should be built up to the sidewalk line and should be at least two stories tall to match surrounding building heights. Parking should be located in the rear of the building. However, such a development in Downtown Chillicothe will likely require incentives to attract the best development possible.

If such a building development cannot be attracted to this significant site, a park or well-landscaped public parking lot is preferable over infill construction that does not complement other Downtown buildings. A one-story modern building would seriously degrade the historic character of the surrounding blocks and Courthouse Square and should be denied.

Goal Four: Increase Public Investment in Downtown

The City should seek to increase public investment in Downtown by planning to expand the existing streetscape, both geographically and by adding new design elements and pedestrian plazas. Clay, Webster, Locust, and Washington Streets should receive the streetscape treatment along their full lengths within the DREAM Study Area, as well as have overhead power lines relocated underground or to the rear of buildings. Washington Street improvements are particularly important to help join Downtown together across State Highway 65, which presents a pedestrian barrier. The City should also consider adding wayfinding components to the existing streetscape to assist with navigation and identification of the historic districts. The City should pursue opportunities for public art and new signature projects, such as Silver Moon Plaza.

The City and MSC should work together to obtain funding for public enhancements. The proposed CID is a potential source, as is Tax Increment Financing (TIF). Local financing mechanisms can also be leveraged to obtain State or Federal funding for these public projects.

Goal Five: Expand the Façade Grant Program

The City, MSC, and the Chillicothe Development Corporation provide a Historic District Matching Grant Program that property owners use to improve building façades. MSC promotes the program and its Design Committee reviews all applications. Resources should be identified to help support and expand this program. The City’s general fund could provide funding, although the proposed CID may provide a more stable income source. When a stable funding source is developed, the program limits should be expanded to allow for larger, whole-building rehabilitations. The criteria for eligible funding should also be tied to the proposed building design guidelines for projects within the historic districts. MSC should also develop policies to address penalties such as calling the loan or additional interest payments for projects not following the agreed-upon design guidelines.



The Leeper Building—Top: May of 2008. Bottom left: Historic rendition from www.mainstreetchillicothe.com. Bottom right: after demolition.

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.

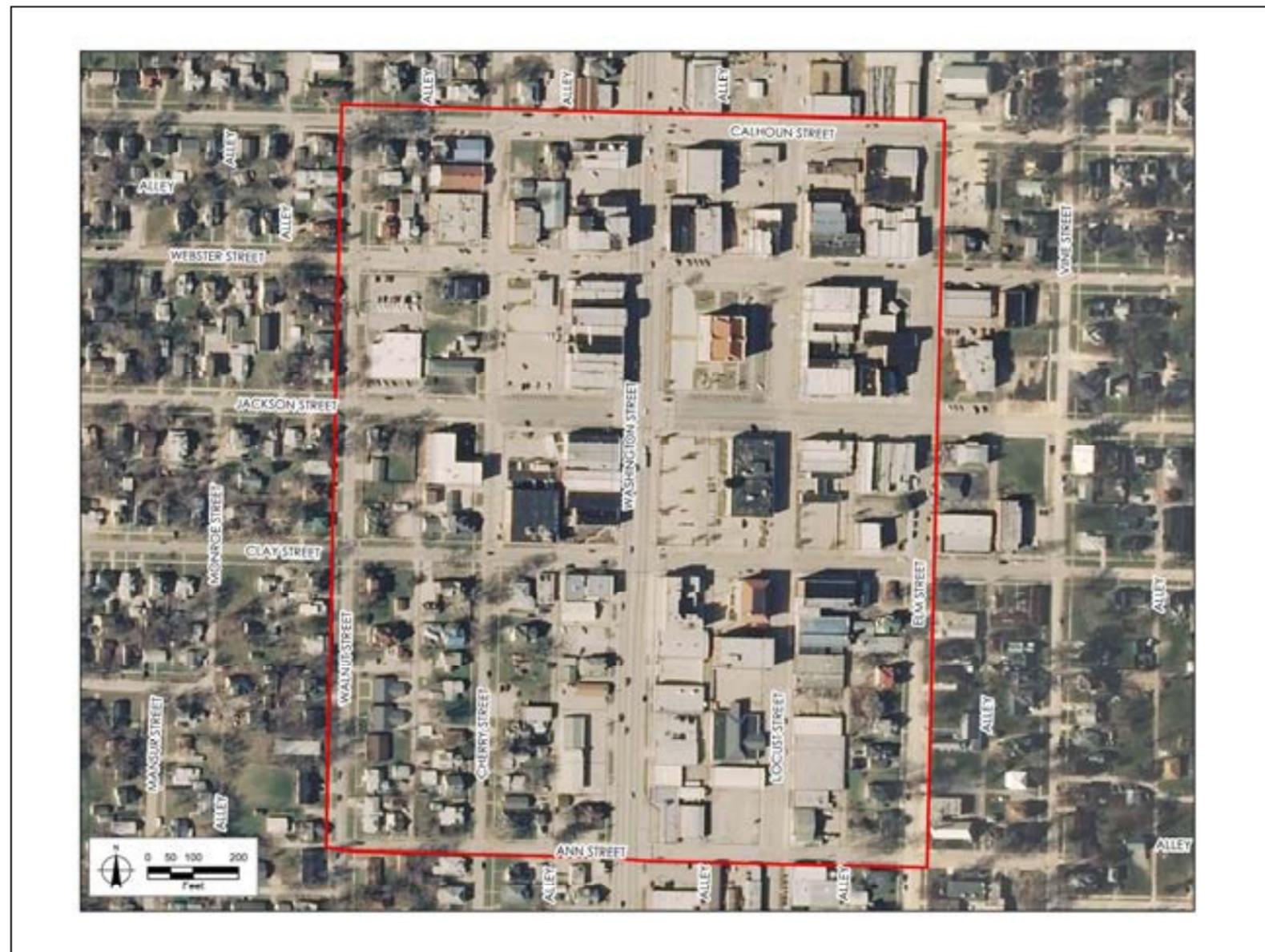
These Missouri State agencies recognize that substantial improvements and investments have already been made in Downtown Chillicothe. The purpose of the DREAM Initiative is to leverage local public and private improvements to sustain revitalization momentum. The goal of the DREAM Initiative is to revitalize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

In Downtown Chillicothe, the work products of the Organizational Structure Review and the Visitor Survey were reduced at the request of the community, to allow for tailoring of other task items to meet specific needs. Issues such as exploration of a Community Improvement District (CID) and work regarding various historic Downtown buildings arose during the DREAM planning process. The completed DREAM tasks resulted in several planning documents that include:

- Map Reference Handbook (November 2009)
- Focus Group Report (April 2008)
- Telephone Survey (December 2008)
- Building and Streetscape Design (August 2012)
- Retail Market Analysis (June 2012)
- Residential Demand Analysis (September 2008)
- Financial Assistance Review (January 2009)
- This Downtown Strategic Plan (January 2013)

Additional DREAM Initiative tasks included a review of the Downtown organizations, marketing assistance, and work in community outreach.

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.



Chillicothe DREAM Study Area.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Effective planning engages in meaningful discussion of important issues with the public. By encouraging and including public responses in the planning process, local officials can better support and initiate the necessary policy changes and projects 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 Chillicothe. The DREAM Initiative included surveys and other public communications. Public outreach was also a venue to introduce and build support for future planning recommendations.

Interviews with Downtown stakeholders and open discussions with the public revealed great pride in Downtown Chillicothe. Strong building architecture, streetscape enhancements, and business and pedestrian activity combine to create a positive atmosphere in Downtown. However, these elements also present challenges to City leaders and must be maintained to maximize their positive traits.

The DREAM Initiative builds on public sentiment to develop sound planning recommendations and strategies that are inspired, and better supported, 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 Chillicothe 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 September 26, 2007. The meeting included representatives from the City, Main Street Chillicothe (MSC), The Chillicothe Community Development Corporation (CDC), the Chillicothe Area Chamber of Commerce (Chamber), along with 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 of Downtown that helped identify issues and the necessary planning tasks.

- **Focus Group Meetings**

In early 2008, discussions of Downtown issues and ideas for improvements were facilitated with four focus groups: Students; City and County officials; Residents; and Business owners.

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 Chillicothe.

- **Telephone Survey**

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. About three-fourths of respondents indicated Chillicothe was moving in a generally positive direction. Participants indicated they visited Downtown Chillicothe quite frequently and for a wide variety of reasons.

- **Key Stakeholder Discussions**

Conversations were held with representatives of the City, MSC, Downtown property and business owners, and other members of the community to discuss issues uncovered during other 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 on May 19, 2008, several public presentations and meetings were held to review progress on the DREAM Initiative work in Chillicothe. Meetings were publicized in the local newspaper and promoted on the City and MSC websites.

- **Press Involvement**

At several of the public meetings, representatives of the local newspaper were in attendance. Additionally, sample press releases were provided to MSC to help generate news stories about upcoming meetings and DREAM tasks.

- **Websites and Social Media**

The City, MSC, CDC, and the Chamber all host websites and/or have a social media presence. All of these sites provide links to each other and the MSC website has a specific page for Chillicothe's DREAM Initiative news.

- **Education and Communication**

The DREAM Initiative process also included seminars to educate and inform the City 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 Chillicothe DREAM Public Meeting.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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

- Continued Accreditation of Main Street Chillicothe (MSC) as a National Main Street Community. MSC continues to competently lead the Downtown Chillicothe revitalization effort.
- Promotion of the Downtown Historic District Matching Grant Façade program. Improvements to numerous buildings in significant areas of Downtown have occurred as a result of this local incentive.
- Construction of Silver Moon Plaza. The Plaza added a significant pedestrian-oriented improvement to Downtown and served as a rallying point for the community to support Downtown.
- A local iron work company that was involved in developing some of the decorative iron used in Silver Moon Plaza has developed a new business line due to the talents discovered in existing employees.
- A café was attracted to Downtown Chillicothe in a location adjacent to Silver Moon Plaza. Inspiration for this café was credited to early illustrations of the Plaza developed under the DREAM Initiative.
- The City of Chillicothe was successful in obtaining the DREAM designations; a commitment of about \$265,000 from the Missouri Development Finance Board. Chillicothe leveraged a 20% match over three years to obtain this funding and planning process.



Silver Moon Plaza: before construction



Silver Moon Plaza: after construction

Task Summaries



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The DREAM Initiative included a review of the organizations with an interest in Downtown Chillicothe. 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 recommendations outlined through the DREAM Initiative.

As the review of Downtown organizations was being conducted, the City and Main Street Chillicothe (MSC) shifted the focus of this task toward developing a Community Improvement District (CID). MSC is a capable organization that has led successful Downtown efforts and the primary focus should be on expanding the organization's support structure, including identifying a sustainable funding source.

The recommendation to form a CID is also noted in the Financial Mechanisms Section on Page 25, where more detail regarding the establishment and funding of a CID is discussed. The proposed CID is included in this section as it provides a level of organizational support from which Downtown Chillicothe could benefit.

Downtown Chillicothe must obtain sufficient resources to be able to implement the recommendations in this Strategic Plan. Federal and State funding is increasingly harder to obtain and will typically require a local funding match. The MSC should continue to work with the City to initiate a Downtown CID. A CID generates funding from sales, property, and other taxes in a specific area for legislatively eligible costs. The use of a CID will provide flexible funding for MSC programs that meet the needs of Downtown. A CID also provides a level of organizational structure as the mechanism is administered by a board of commissioners that are elected by the District or appointed by the City. The City will establish the CID by ordinance, but MSC will need to provide public outreach activities and help obtain signatures for petitions. The City Council will also provide recommendations regarding the CID's annual budget.

The establishment of a Downtown Chillicothe CID will require adequate public outreach and clear communication of the benefits of the added tax. The City and MSC should allow ample time to effectively promote and market the effort. The budget and plan for improvements must be clearly, and enthusiastically, communicated to Downtown property owners and residents. Any perceived loss of business activity will be greatly overcome by the activity from added business variety, services, events, and programs. MSC needs to demonstrate these benefits are possible and dependent upon CID funding.



One of Downtown Chillicothe's murals, a program of Main Street Chillicothe and the Chillicothe Development Corporation.

LAND USE, BUILDINGS, & INFRASTRUCTURE SURVEY

The Land Use, Building and Infrastructure Survey is an inventory of Downtown Chillicothe’s existing land use, exterior building conditions, and the condition of public infrastructure. The survey was conducted in the spring of 2008. Conditions are documented in the *Map Reference Handbook* of November 2009, which contains 26 maps of the Chillicothe DREAM Study Area. The maps included in the 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 Chillicothe. The City and Main Street Chillicothe (MSC) can monitor revitalization progress and identify new development opportunities. While the goal of this task was to develop this information for other DREAM tasks, several conclusions can be drawn from the data presented in the Handbook, including:

- Based on the land uses noted during fieldwork, there is a relatively sparse concentration of retail in Downtown. The primary use seems to be non-retail commercial, with residential uses to the west and south of the DREAM Study Area. Upper floors are primarily commercial uses, with some multi-family dispersed throughout the Area.
- Based on exterior observation, many Downtown buildings are in dilapidated or poor condition. Commercial buildings located on the east side of Locust Street and along Elm Street appeared to be more deteriorated, overall, than buildings in other areas of the DREAM Study Area. In most cases, the poor conditions of buildings appeared to be a result of years of deferred maintenance. The City needs to better monitor these base conditions and should consider adjusting inspection procedures and maintenance and nuisance codes.

- MSC can help the City with any new procedures by promoting the changes and hosting seminars that provide information about the City’s expectations, procedures, design standards, and codes.
- Downtown occupancy is good, although there are many upper floor vacancies.
- There are a few vacant lots, along with several parking lots dispersed throughout the DREAM Study Area. About half of the parking lots are in poor or dilapidated condition. The City should consider the ratio of open space to buildings. Too much open space can make Downtown appear barren and vacant. Some vacant or underutilized lots may represent infill construction opportunities that the City and MSC, along with the CDC, may wish to acquire and prepare for development.
- Overhead utility lines are prominent.
- ADA accessibility features are limited.



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

COMMUNITY SURVEYS

The community survey process was conducted to uncover commonly held perceptions about Downtown. This task gathered data from community leaders, property owners, business people, and residents. Two methods were used to obtain local views, perceptions and interests. First, focus groups were conducted that consisted of key Downtown stakeholders and interested individuals. Following the focus groups, a random-sample telephone survey was conducted of Chillicothe residents. The process and results of each of these methods are summarized below:

- **Focus Group Meetings**

Four separate groups were assembled by the City and Main Street Chillicothe. Impartial facilitators engaged these stakeholders in open discussions regarding Downtown Chillicothe. The groups consisted of Students, City and County Officials, Residents, and Business Owners. 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 indicated that Chillicothe is moving in the right direction. They credited the City’s long-range plan, implemented over a decade ago, as an impetus for this growth. Specific things the groups mentioned that demonstrate this positive direction were the streetscape repairs around the Courthouse, the wall murals, and the YMCA and aquatic center. Participants were also very proud of the recent private rehabilitations that have occurred in Downtown. Some participants described Downtown parking as a “perceived problem” and they noted that many people are unaware of the public parking lots provided and only seek parking on the Square. Participants were unanimous in agreement that Downtown’s one-way streets should be converted to two-way streets. They felt that this traffic adjustment would make Downtown easier to navigate for visitors,

including improving access to parking areas. The group members also felt that business hours are inconvenient for people who have regular weekday employment hours. They felt that expanded evening and weekend hours, including for restaurants, would make Downtown much more pedestrian friendly.

For the complete report, please see the Chillicothe DREAM Focus Group Survey Report dated August 28, 2008.

- **Community Telephone Survey**

In the Summer and Fall of 2008, a telephone survey was conducted to interview a random sample of Chillicothe residents. This type of survey is useful to reach residents who may not attend public meetings or participate in community organizations. Key points from the survey results, include:

- Nearly 85% of respondents indicated they visit Downtown Chillicothe at least once a month. Conducting Business and Shopping were the main reasons respondents gave for visiting Downtown.
- Respondents were asked about a list of 13 Downtown characteristics. Regarding Downtown Chillicothe, at least 60% of respondents felt “excellent” or “good” about most of the items on the list with only dining and entertainment options ranking poorly.
- Nearly 93% of respondents felt that it was important to retain Downtown’s historic character.
- Most respondents placed a high priority on adding dining options (casual and fine) and clothing stores to Downtown.
- When asked about a list of ten potential public improvements for Downtown, no majority of respondents indicated any one item.

Refer to the Chillicothe DREAM Community Telephone Survey Report from December 2008 for the complete responses.

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

**SECTION III
OVERVIEW OF DATA**

In September 2008, UNICOM•ARC conducted a telephone survey of residents in Chillicothe 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 overall results of every question asked. We give exact wording of each question, editing only some instructions in the interest of space. Each set of responses is sorted by frequency of response where appropriate and the most prevalent response is bolded in each section.

		%
1. Thinking about the Chillicothe, Missouri area, would you say things are moving in the right direction or off track and moving in the wrong direction?	Right direction	76.3%
	Mixed	7.7%
	Wrong direction	13.0%
	Other, don't know	3.0%

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. The first is...

	Mean	very high priority (5)	total high priority (4-5)	3	total low priority (1-2)
		%	%	%	%
3. Repairing major streets	3.97	40.0%	71.5%	16.7%	4.7%
4. Improving emergency services	3.67	33.3%	55.0%	23.0%	8.3%
2. Revitalizing the Chillicothe downtown area	3.59	37.0%	51.3%	29.3%	6.0%
6. Attracting more big box retail development	3.53	37.0%	54.0%	20.7%	12.0%
5. Upgrading parks and recreation facilities	3.29	24.7%	45.3%	25.7%	14.0%

December 2008
82125-03 UNICOM•ARC

Sample results from the Telephone Survey.

BUILDINGS AND STREETScape

Downtown buildings provide historic elements that give Chillicothe a unique identity. The landscaping, streets, lighting, sidewalks, and other public furnishings provide an overall setting for the private property owners. The DREAM Initiative seeks to combine the public and private elements into an intrinsic design that is historically sensitive. Attractive public improvements, such as the existing Downtown streetscape and Silver Moon Plaza, are leveraged to help secure additional private investment.

Downtown Chillicothe has two historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places; the Courthouse Square Historic District and the Chillicothe Commercial Historic District. These designations provide property owners with national recognition, eligibility for tax incentives and other preservation assistance, and help with cultural resource planning. A listing on the National Register does not include any state or federal level preservation limitations. However, the City could bolster its commitment to historic preservation by adopting a local preservation ordinance, appointing a historic preservation committee, and implementing design guidelines for all new construction (including rehabilitation of existing buildings) in the districts.

While historic preservation and streetscape elements play an important role in Downtown revitalization, the City must also work to address the conditions of Downtown buildings through policy and procedure decisions. Some Downtown structures are suffering from years of deferred maintenance. At some point, minor building maintenance issues develop into major repairs. The City needs to work with owners to prevent this situation. Added attention to the maintenance of Downtown Chillicothe buildings will help prevent future demolition casualties, such as the Leeper Building.

Other Downtown buildings have been severely altered or are newer construction that does not complement the character of the surrounding historic buildings. The City should also work to establish procedures that carefully review new construction in Downtown. Illustrations showing suggested improvements to specific Downtown buildings are found on pages 12 to 17 of this Strategic Plan.

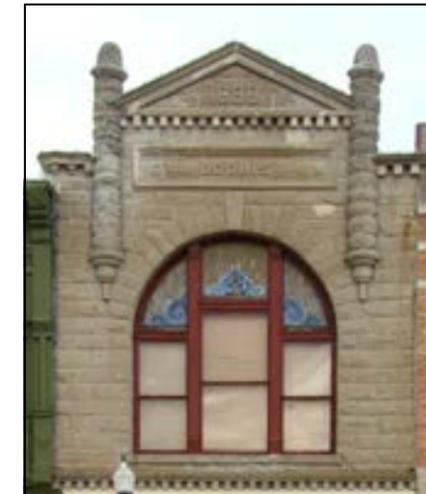
Additionally, the City should work to expand the existing façade matching grant program and establish other funding mechanisms to assist Downtown building owners with improvements. City inspectors and code officials should be well-versed in any Downtown incentives so they can easily suggest potential funding to owners that will help them fix the deficiencies noted in their buildings. Property owners that are not supportive of efforts to improve Downtown buildings, will likely be the owners of the ‘problem’ properties. Years of deferred maintenance, disinvestment, and too little attention paid by the City, have likely developed a feeling of entitlement with these owners and they will need special attention.

Recommendations regarding Downtown Chillicothe buildings and the streetscape, include:

- Refocus Efforts on Historic Preservation**

The City of Chillicothe should continue to encourage a culture of preservation regarding Downtown’s privately-owned buildings. The DREAM Building and Streetscape Design Concepts provide a sample of a Local Historic Preservation Ordinance (LHPO). The City should review this ordinance and work with MSC and the Chillicothe Historic Society to develop its own ordinance. This important step will reinforce other preservation efforts such as the façade program, walking tours, mural program, and streetscape expansion efforts. The City has established two historic districts that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. However, with a LHPO, and the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) it will create, the ability to protect Downtown’s unique atmosphere will be greatly enhanced, as will the benefits to perseverance-minded property owners.

After the LHPO is adopted and the members of the HPC are appointed, the first effort should be to draft the criteria and guidelines that are expected of Downtown property owners. These guidelines should be sensitive of property owner rights, but should also be firm enough to protect significant historic



Examples of historic architecture found in Downtown Chillicothe.

resources. The guidelines should follow the concepts expressed in the DREAM design report and should protect sufficiently against demolition and severe alterations. Additionally, the guidelines should be tied to the façade improvement program. The funding from that mechanism should only be available to projects that meet the design criteria and obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the HPC. As other programs and funding mechanisms are developed for Downtown, they should also require adherence to the design guidelines.

MSC can also work to communicate with Downtown property owners, contractors, and real estate professionals on a regular basis regarding the importance of preservation. MSC can collaborate with the HPC to inform owners of the history and heritage of their property, as well as connect them with reputable and knowledgeable contractors.

- **Expand the Façade Program**

The City, MSC, and the Chillicothe Community Development Corporation (CDC) provide a Historic District Matching Grant Program that property owners use to improve building façades. MSC promotes the program and its Design Committee reviews all applications. The City should add resources to support this program. The City's general fund could provide funding, although the proposed Community Improvement District (CID) may provide a more stable income source. When a stable funding source is developed, the program limits should be expanded to allow for larger, whole-building rehabilitations.

- **Review Inspection Policies, Codes, and Procedures**

The City should consider providing an extra focus on these aspects with regard to Downtown. Downtown has aging buildings that require extra attention through inspections. The City will need to take the lead in reviewing its own codes, policies, and procedures to determine if any adjustments are needed. Too often, code enforcement personnel can

fall into a reactive mode, rather than take a proactive approach. For aged downtown buildings, this can mean the difference between simple maintenance issues or severe structural repairs. Inspections should also include rear elevations and upper floors.

As the City focuses on these codes and practices, MSC can assist by informing the public and property owners about any procedural adjustments and City expectations. MSC should also organize monthly safety walks with the City's code enforcement staff and other City officials. These walks should review outside conditions of buildings and may include assessments of public infrastructure conditions. This type of regular review and assessment of Downtown facilities can help uncover potential problems while they are still minor maintenance issues.

- **Expand the Streetscape as Funding Allows**

Plans for the existing streetscape should include geographic expansion, as well as improved or added design elements. Clay, Webster, Locust, and Washington Streets should receive the streetscape treatment along their full lengths within the DREAM Study Area, as well as have the overhead power lines relocated underground or onto alleyways behind buildings. Washington Street improvements are particularly important to help join Downtown together as State Highway 65 also runs along Washington and presents a pedestrian barrier. The City should also consider adding wayfinding components to the existing streetscape to assist with navigation and identification of the historic districts.

Additionally, the City should pursue opportunities for public art and new signature projects, such as Silver Moon Plaza. More details about the DREAM-inspired Silver Moon Plaza project are on pages 18 to 21.

Downtown Chillicothe's buildings and streetscape are discussed in more detail in the *DREAM Building and Streetscape Concepts* from July 2012.



Façade incentives coupled with simple design standards could enhance this Downtown Chillicothe building greatly.



Examples of existing business signage in Downtown Chillicothe

713 to 707 Locust Street

Existing Conditions.



Encourage removal of oversized signs.

Remove wooden shingled canopy and replace with fabric awning.

Remove metal siding to reveal original building materials.

Expose transoms or install fabric awning.

Remove metal canopy and replace with fabric awning, if desired.

Illustration Showing Suggested Improvements.



Use a paint accent color to highlight architectural details.

Consider streetscape amenities to enhance the storefront.

Add a cornice with a simple design.

Restore upper floor windows.

Consider building lighting.

Install signage of appropriate scale and design in the sign band and over the business entrances.

Restore upper floor access and recessed storefront entryways.

705 to 701 Locust Street

Existing Conditions.



Encourage removal of oversized signs.

Remove metal canopy and replace with fabric awning.

Remove metal siding to reveal original building materials.

Expose transoms or install fabric awning.

Illustration Showing Suggested Improvements.



Restore upper floor windows with new windows of an appropriate style.

Consider building lighting.

Restore recessed storefront.

Encourage display window lettering as a primary signage alternative.

Clean and repair existing façade elements and masonry.

Capitalize on the intricate façade by adding complimentary colors.

Consider streetscape amenities to enhance the storefront.

621 to 617 Locust Street

Existing Conditions.

Remove upper floor window covering.

Remove covering to expose transoms.



Restore upper floor windows.

Remove covering to expose upper floor windows and possible transoms.

Illustration Showing Suggested Improvements.

Restore upper floor windows with new windows of an appropriate style. Conduct research to determine an appropriate window pattern.

Use a paint accent color to highlight architectural details.

Restore transom windows.

Restore recessed storefront and upper floor entrance.



Clean and repair existing façade elements and masonry.

Consider building lighting.

Install a fabric awning if desired.

615 to 611 Locust Street

Existing Conditions.

Remove covering from both buildings to expose upper floor windows and other details.

Restore display window.



Restore upper floor windows.

Remove metal canopy and replace with fabric awning, if desired.

Illustration Showing Suggested Improvements.

Restore upper floor windows on both buildings with new windows of an appropriate style.

Use a paint accent color to highlight architectural details.

Consider streetscape amenities to enhance the storefront.



Add a cornice with a simple design to both buildings.

Consider building lighting.

Restore recessed storefront.

609 to 607 Locust Street

Existing Conditions.

Remove covering to expose upper floor windows and other details.

Do not allow painted wall signs unless historical evidence suggests a ghost sign mural can be reconstructed.

Flush-mounted, externally lighted signs should be used. Encourage the removal of internally lit "box" signs.



All signs should be of an appropriate scale, style, and installed in the sign band, over the primary business entrances.

Remove metal canopy and replace with two fabric awnings, if desired.

Illustration Showing Suggested Improvements.

Restore upper floor windows with new windows of an appropriate scale and style. Conduct research to determine an appropriate window pattern.

Use a paint accent color to highlight architectural details.

Consider streetscape amenities to enhance the storefront.



Add a cornice with a simple design.

Consider building lighting.

Restore upper floor access.

Encourage display window lettering as a primary signage alternative.

605 to 601 Locust Street

Existing Conditions.



All signs should be of an appropriate scale, style, and installed in the sign band, over the primary business entrances. Discourage the use of signs for services or brands to avoid signage clutter.

Consider removing the awnings from this building to reveal the intricate transom windows.

Also consider interior illumination on the transom for an interesting and dramatic evening appearance.

Illustration Showing Suggested Improvements.

Clean and repair existing façade elements and masonry.

Use a paint accent color to highlight architectural details.

Consider building lighting.



Install signage of an appropriate scale and design in the sign band and over the business entrances.

Consider streetscape amenities to enhance the storefront.

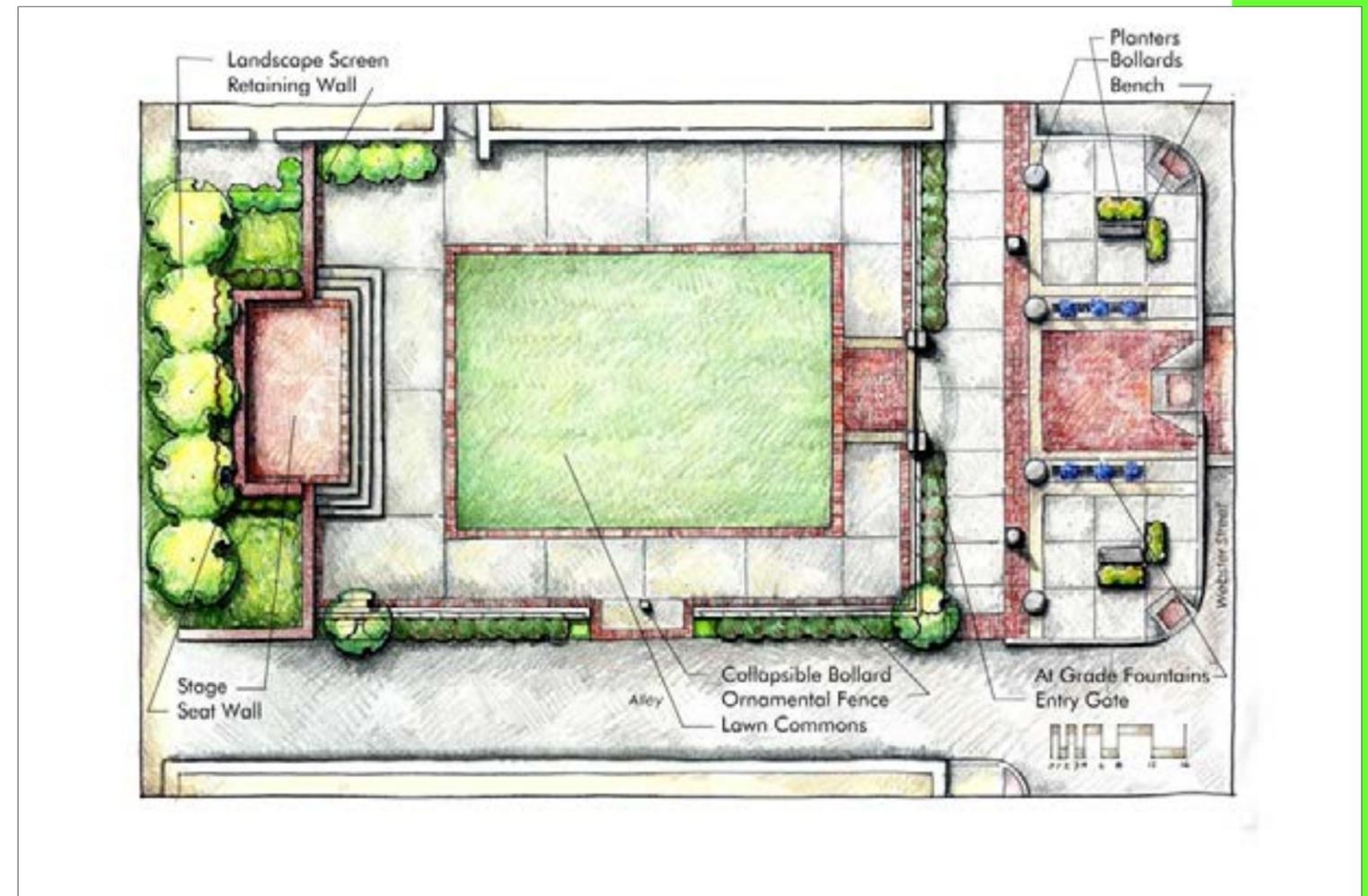
Silver Moon Plaza—Before Construction

- A vacant lot on Webster Street; along the north side of the Livingston County Courthouse Square.
- An eyesore in an otherwise active commercial area. A “missing tooth” along a block of buildings.
- Remnants of previous historic building included foundations, walls, and floors.
- Bordered by public parking on the north, Webster Street on the south, a privately owned building on the east and an alleyway on the west.
- Adjacent building walls were in poor condition. The City was concerned about stability of these structures.



Silver Moon Plaza—Concept

- City had a need for public plaza space.
- Site was donated to Main Street Chillicothe.
- Plaza named after donor's family business.
- Design to reflect the local heritage of the region.
- Site to be kept simple to allow for multiple uses.
- Significant entryway desired to beckon visitors.



Silver Moon Plaza—Illustrations

- Envisioned an active public plaza.
- Main Street Chillicothe used illustrations extensively to solicit funding and in-kind donations for construction.
- Estimated cost of \$500,000. Also received tax credits from Missouri Development Finance Board.
- Construction began in June of 2009.



Silver Moon Plaza—Complete

- Won 2010 Governor’s Conference on Economic Development Redevelopment Award.
- Now an integral part of the community.



RESIDENTIAL MARKET

The residential market surrounding Downtown Chillicothe has a strategic relationship to Downtown. It is from these residences that businesses will draw regular customers and events will obtain attendees. Visitors must also pass through the residential areas to reach Downtown. DREAM provided an opportunity for the Missouri Housing Development Commission (MHDC) to review the residential market demand of the City. Recommendations were then developed to encourage Chillicothe leaders to promote Downtown residential projects that can meet future housing demand. Additional recommendations include encouraging active local builders and developers to produce Downtown housing and adapting upper-floors of commercial buildings for residential uses. Recommendations regarding these and other residential issues for Downtown Chillicothe include:

- **Encourage New, High-Quality Rental Units**
City officials and staff should work with housing developers to create additional Market Rate and Senior Affordable housing in Downtown Chillicothe. The City should use information developed by DREAM to market Downtown opportunities. However, the City must insist on high-quality standards to develop a strong, high-value rental market. Because the quality of these units is critical, marketing efforts should only begin after the City has ensured its code enforcement, procedures, and inspections are adequate.

The residential demand analysis indicated there is potential housing demand for 32 affordable senior units and 10 Market Rate Rental units over the next few years. Family units may not find Downtown living desirable and were not considered by the analysis.

- **Establish Methods to Motivate Local Builders, Contractors, and Developers**
Chillicothe has a concentration of active residential builders and developers that have created a significant number of duplex units throughout the City. MSC should build a working relationship with this group and promote opportunities for Downtown units,

according to the demand noted in the residential analysis. MSC should maintain contact information on Downtown buildings and lots that would make likely residential developments. This group of builders and developers may also spin-off into a subcommittee group of MSC.

- **Encourage Upper-Floor Residential Uses**
Along with the Market Rate and Affordable Senior Rental units, MSC and the City should encourage upper-floor, condominium-type ownership. The ground floor of commercial buildings should always be reserved for retail use, however the upper-floors are typically underutilized as storage space. The conversion of upper-floors into loft-style residential use makes a building more marketable and provides a built-in consumer market for the retail stores on the ground floor. Ownership units are typically better maintained than rental units so it is critical that the City encourage this type of housing to improve building conditions in Downtown.

As the Downtown Chillicothe loft market develops, MSC should continue to promote this housing by hosting Downtown Living tours and continuing to work with the City to develop other Downtown amenities. Many streetscape enhancements and events will add to the appeal of living in Downtown as well as being an attraction for visitors.

More information on the City's housing market can be found in the Chillicothe DREAM Residential Demand Analysis, from September of 2008.



Examples of Downtown Chillicothe buildings with upper-floor living potential.

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 Chillicothe.

Downtown Chillicothe consists of 50 acres with 277,828 square feet of existing first-floor commercial space. This space includes:

- 7,400 square feet of restaurant space
(no vacancy)
- 65,000 square feet of retail space
(3,500 square feet vacant)
- 205,400 square feet of office/service space
(7,700 square feet vacant)

The total amount of first-floor vacancy is about 11,200 square feet and represents a fairly low vacancy rate. The 72,400 square feet of retail/restaurant space is generating about \$3.4 million in annual sales (not including automobiles, gasoline stations, or non-store retailers). The retail analysis estimates average retail sales per square foot at \$42 and average restaurant sales per square feet at \$117. Thus, the 11,200 square feet of vacancy represents about another \$500,000 in additional annual sales for Chillicothe, depending on the mix of retail to restaurant uses.

To analyze retail demand, spending patterns were examined for households in a primary trade area (Chillicothe City limit) and a secondary trade area (households within a 30 minute drive-time of Downtown Chillicothe). Comparing sales data to demand provides a measure of the performance of the Downtown retail sector and identifies unmet demand. Unmet demand is then compared to specific retail categories.

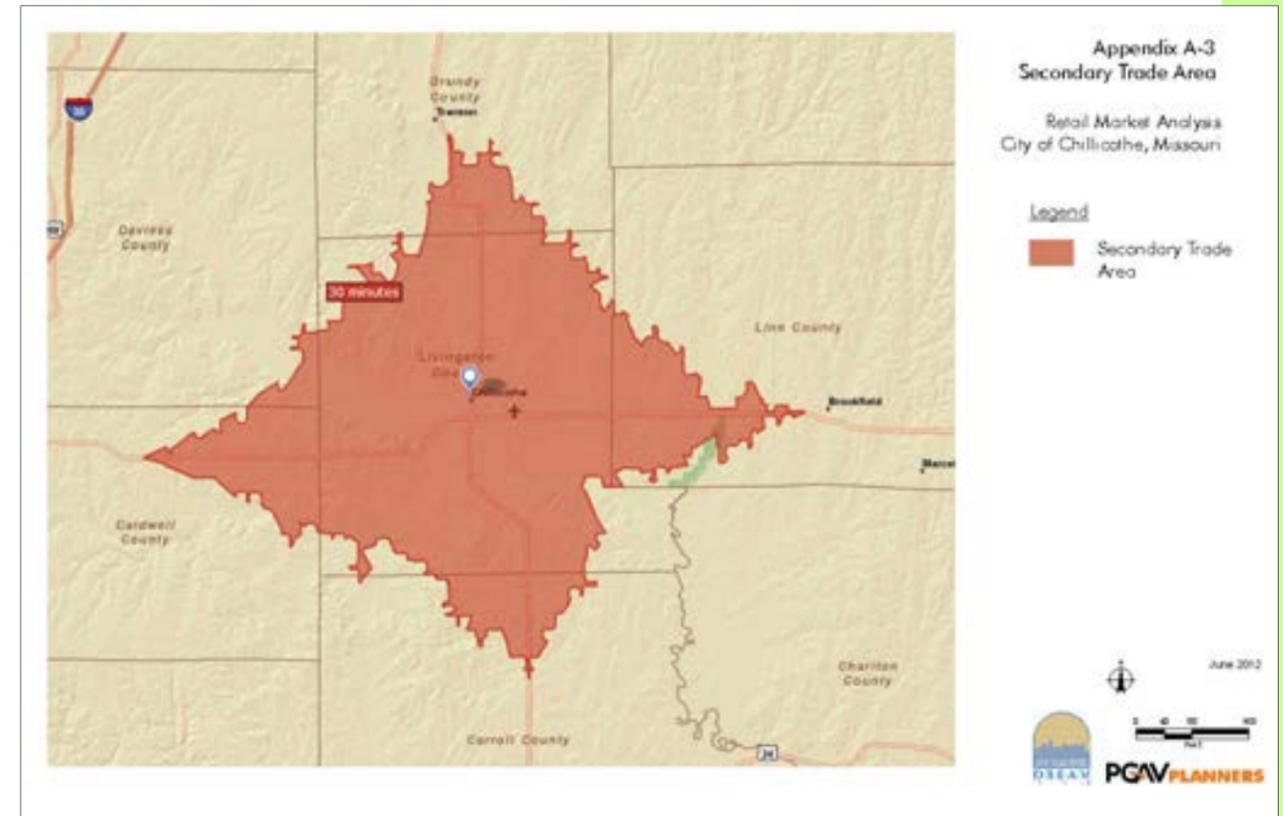
A potential opportunity for Chillicothe is to attract retail stores that can make use of the existing vacant space and offer products that are demonstrating significant unmet demand. Although the vacancies observed during this report were few, they were typically moderately sized storefronts. The average size was just under 1,500 square feet with the largest being about 4,000 and the smallest 300.

The demand analysis estimates that Downtown Chillicothe could support an additional 57,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space by capturing the secondary trades area’s unmet demand in specific retail sectors. This potential exceeds the amount of vacant space available, suggesting that the City should encourage the creation of new retail space; either through new construction or by relocation of non-retail uses to upper-floors and side streets to reserve the prime, first-floor spaces for retail and restaurant uses. As revitalization progresses, the City may wish to be more aggressive in such relocation of non-retail uses.

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

- Electronics & Appliance Stores: \$745,000
- Clothing Stores: \$570,000
- Specialty Food Stores: \$560,000
- Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers: \$270,000
- Health & Personal Care Stores: \$250,000

To complete the analysis, vacant spaces were compared with potential store types. Suggestions for specific stores are made for specific vacant spaces based on factors such as location, size, proximity to similar uses, distance to major activity centers, and condition of the available space. These suggestions provide only one potential solutions that fills Downtown Chillicothe’s vacant space and is most certainly not the only answer or configuration of Downtown merchants.



The Secondary Trade Area considered for the Retail Analysis.

Other retail market recommendations focused on developing a Downtown atmosphere that is friendly and supportive of businesses. An emphasis is provided on collectively marketing and strengthening existing businesses. Recommendations for improving the retail sector of Downtown are found in the Chillicothe DREAM Retail Market Analysis Report from June 2012. Major recommendations include:

- **Develop a Marketing Campaign for Downtown Retail**
After MSC has identified stable funding, programs to market and collectively promote Downtown businesses should be developed. Advertising Downtown overall is an important step for Downtown to become a shopping oriented destination. Downtown promotions will require a high participation rate among businesses, but should boost overall sales. Promotional efforts should target residents of the Secondary Trade Area as defined in the Retail Market Analysis. The proposed CID funding can help support promotions and collaborative advertising.

MSC should also create brochures that highlight the unique experience and retail stores in Downtown. These brochures should be distributed to residents and visitors and inform the public about existing stores, new stores, hours of operation and special events. MSC should also use local newspapers and magazines, websites, radio, television ads and flyers to promote Downtown Chillicothe. Tools such as social media or an electronic newsletter can be extremely efficient to highlight new businesses, projects, and Downtown events.

- **Strengthen Existing Businesses**
MSC should develop topical seminars to help Downtown Chillicothe businesses become more user-friendly. This includes encouraging expanded business hours, improving perceptions of Downtown stores, attracting higher-income shoppers, and providing promotions that build on momentum from special events. Such seminars could be held at the Commerce Center and will also help encourage pride and loyalty in the group. MSC needs to continually demonstrate that it is a vital partner with Downtown businesses.

- **Improve Pedestrian Activity**
Several responses during the community survey task centered on the issue of the lack of pedestrian connectivity across Washington Street. Washington Street is well-travelled thoroughfare. However, there are numerous signalized pedestrian crosswalks. The City should work with the Missouri Department of Transportation on a regular basis to ensure Downtown signals are in good working order and timed correctly to allow good vehicular and pedestrian traffic flow. The City should also ensure that crosswalks are well-marked and that pedestrian rights are adequately protected.

Additionally, MSC can help businesses address this issue by developing shopping events that increase pedestrian activity. Events such as a monthly evening shopping excursion can help add activity throughout Downtown. MSC should make certain that these events provide amenities such as shade tents, entertainment, and music. However, the primary focus should be on getting pedestrians to explore Downtown stores.

- **Increase Available Retail Space**
As noted, Downtown Chillicothe could likely support more retail and restaurant space than is currently vacant. This situation means that the City should work to preserve prime, first-floor locations for retail and to encourage office and service uses to relocate to upper-floors or side streets. Additionally, the City, with help from MSC, should work to get developers interested in mixed-use projects on Downtown vacant lots. Such a project will add retail space and potentially residents or other non-retail commercial uses. The information in the DREAM Retail Market Analysis should provide a basis upon which the City can use to solicit the interest of mixed-use development companies in Downtown Chillicothe opportunities.



A view of the businesses in Downtown Chillicothe

FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

The DREAM Initiative reviewed the funding mechanisms that were available to Downtown Chillicothe 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). As noted in the Organization Structure Section on Page 7, a CID is critical to establish sustainable funding for MSC and Downtown revitalization projects and programs. The intent of reviewing other financial tools is to provide the City with funding options and preliminary financial data necessary, to support the further exploration of these local incentives.

A CID will allow for flexibility in the use of generated funds and adds the important organizational aspects that will help keep MSC as the lead Downtown organization. Other tools, such as a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, a Local Option Economic Development Sales Tax (EDS), historic tax credits, low income tax credits, and participation tax credits, should be pursued along with the CID. This Strategic Plan recommends the City initially focus on the CID, followed by a TIF district. A CID is an additional tax and will generate funding immediately, while TIF is a capturing of future taxes and is, therefore, dependent upon the value of new redevelopment activities. These tools will support Downtown revitalization efforts well into the future.

The recommendation of which financial tools to use is determined, in part, by the nature of the projects to be completed and the willingness of the community to engage in public-private partnerships with incentives. The general goal of the DREAM recommendations is to leverage these locally generated, public, funds to attract private investment that leads to job creation, business growth, and attractive Downtown buildings and spaces. Information regarding a Downtown Chillicothe CID and TIF, includes:

- **Community Improvement District (CID)**
A CID has the potential to provide the most flexible and stable funding for Downtown Chillicothe revitalization projects. The creation of a Downtown CID should be a high-priority for the City to significantly advance MSC and Downtown Chillicothe overall.

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 Chillicothe 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 CID should be used for activities that include:

- Promotion of the area.
- Developing shopping-oriented events.
- District marketing.
- Security.
- Parking Improvements.
- Merchant Training.
- Infrastructure.
- Beautification.
- Redevelopment of buildings.
- Redevelopment of public spaces.
- Administrative Support.

CID funds could also be used for feasibility studies for additional economic development projects. The proposed Downtown CID would also have the ability to contract with MSC to provide administrative and technical services for the CID.

A Downtown Chillicothe CID is proposed to be funded by a one-percent (1.0%) sales tax and an additional one cent (1.0%) property tax assessment. Based on historical sales tax data and property valuations, a Downtown CID of this nature could generate about \$150,000 annually for Downtown activities. This is a significant amount that would help MSC drive several revitalization projects and programs. Funding would also increase as Downtown activity strengthens.

- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF)**

A TIF District leverages future public tax revenues in a specific area that is determined to be “blighted” or a “conservation” area, and that is not expected to develop on its own and to attract new private investment to that area. Property tax, sales tax, and certain other tax revenue from new improvements that occur after establishment of the TIF are paid into a fund to be used by the City to pay eligible project costs. TIF is established in a specific geographic area for a maximum of 23 years. No existing annual revenues generated at the time of TIF establishment are captured for TIF redevelopment purposes.

TIF could be used in two basic situations. The City could use this incentive to assist a large private development project; an especially useful tool if there are extraordinary expenses associated with developing the property such as building demolition, negotiating with multiple property owners, or environmental clean-up. Alternatively, the City could establish a TIF district that would cover a specific geographic area, such as the DREAM Boundary. TIF revenue could fund public infrastructure improvements, façade improvements and other public and private projects in the district.

The DREAM Financial Assistance Review includes revenue projections based on the assumption that a TIF would be established for the DREAM Study Area. Rehabilitation and improvement of private property in the district would gradually increase the equalized assessed valuation of the area and generate more property tax revenue for the TIF fund, in addition to capturing sales tax increment. Since TIF captures incremental revenues, the initial amounts generated for a Downtown district are projected to be minimal. However, with the completion of a few modest projects, the TIF revenue stream for Chillicothe is estimated to generate \$30,000 to \$60,000 annually. If possible, the District should be established before some sizeable projects are initiated, to set the base tax years at lower values.

Implementation of a TIF District in an area with an existing CID, will also require coordination as some of the CID revenues will be captured as TIF funds. This situation can work nicely as the City of Chillicothe transitions from public projects into private incentives.

Detailed statutory requirements and procedures regarding incentive tools available to Chillicothe are provided in the *DREAM Financial Assistance Review January, 2009*.



An example of the promotion of a Downtown project funded with local incentives, from Kirksville, Missouri.

MARKETING

Effective revitalization efforts acknowledge the need to promote Downtown using a coordinated strategy. Marketing efforts involve a variety of methods and a variety of media. Marketing methods such as paid collaborative advertising will help demonstrate that Downtown is a unified shopping district. Utilization of various kinds of traditional media, as well as new media such as internet and social networking, will help ensure Downtown’s marketing messages reach the intended audiences.

MSC should pursue additional marketing efforts that collaboratively advertise Downtown businesses. However, MSC should work with the City to ensure numerous other Downtown aspects are improved before launching a large advertising campaign. It is critical that what MSC chooses to market to the public is actually available in Downtown.

At the request of the City and MSC, DREAM marketing assistance focused on copy and images for a recent mural brochure, new graphic standards for the brochure, and content ported from the existing website into a framework for a new website. Although this effort concluded the marketing task, some general recommendations for MSC have been developed for this Plan. These recommendations include:

- Ongoing Monitoring of Downtown Interests and Promotion of Downtown Successes**
 MSC needs to understand the organizational forces that impact Downtown and maintain its standing as the lead group. The situation has been somewhat unsettled in the past, so MSC should be ready to adjust its roles to better serve Downtown interests. MSC should seek to bring interested groups together, matching their strengths and desired interests to needed Downtown responsibilities. By marketing MSC and Downtown successes to residents, businesses, property owners, and City leaders the importance of the group and Downtown Chillicothe will be underscored. Methods to accomplish this marketing effort include presentations, meetings, media coverage, and face-to-face interviews.

- Finish Improving the Downtown Chillicothe Website**
 MSC maintains a website that is currently being reconstructed. A website is a critical internet marketing tool which presents the first image that many first-time visitors and potential investors will see. The information on a website must be current, accurate, and easy to understand. A website must also be compelling enough to encourage people from far away to want to visit. MSC should continue to devote resources to upgrade, launch, and maintain the current site. The upgrade of the site has received a boost from the DREAM Initiative marketing assistance. The launch should be cross-promoted with Downtown communications and social media. The ongoing maintenance is critical. The current site is outdated with very few changes made on a monthly basis. MSC must have personnel and resources available to keep information current. As new information is developed, such as the recent mural map, it must be added to the site. Additionally, the website should provide an opportunity for visitors to comment and make suggestions. After MSC has obtained feedback from users, the site can be adjusted to allow for a better experience and potentially additional content.
- Develop Signature Events**
 MSC should develop a few signature special events that showcase Downtown and its businesses. There are several events that are held in Downtown, but Downtown is not particularly known for any event or activity. MSC should work to consider the strengths of Downtown and develop an event with the potential to attract statewide attention. Events can be volunteer intensive, but MSC can use its committees for assistance. Any new events should capitalize on existing visitors and help to engage the residents, area students, and business people.



Main Street Chillicothe’s newly developed mural map brochure.

Implementation



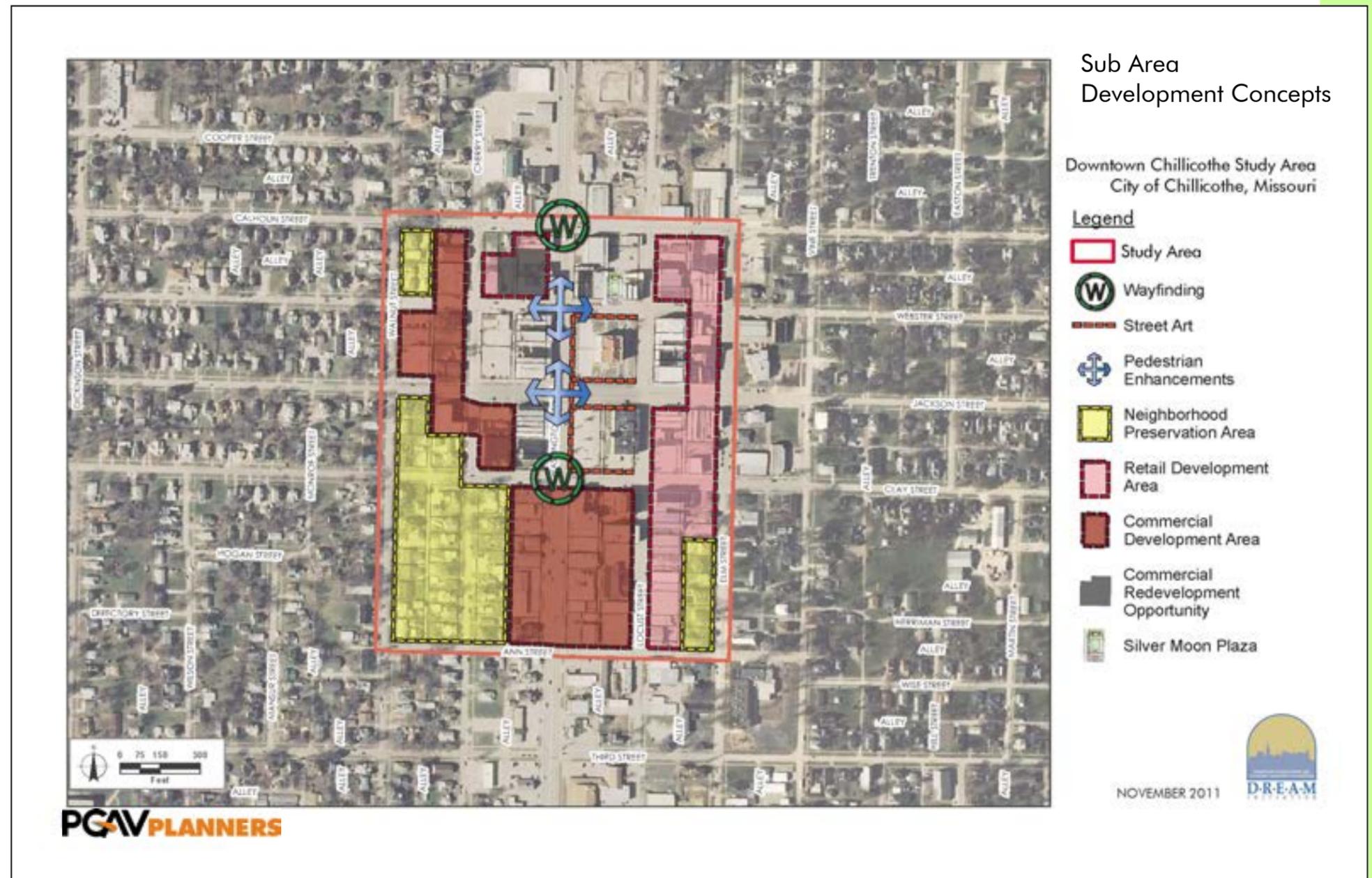
SUB AREA DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

The DREAM Initiative planning process involved a series of analytical and planning activities for Chillicothe that have been outlined in the previous sections of this document. This Downtown Chillicothe 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 is a schedule of recommendations. These recommendations will give community leaders a catalog of action items that will comprise the work agenda for Downtown over the next several years.

Included at right is an illustration that provides the sub area development concepts of the Downtown Chillicothe Strategic Plan. This map demonstrates, in general, the various identities of the neighborhoods that comprise Downtown. The primary retail development area is in the eastern section of the DREAM Study Area along Locust Street. The commercial development area is in the northwest and south-central of the area, with the primary residential areas to be preserved to the southwest. The map shows the commercial core of the Study Area focuses on the courthouse square and depicts improvement concepts that include pedestrian amenities and street art. Pedestrian improvements should include visible crosswalks, benches, street trees, and wayfinding to help tie each side of Washington Street to the other.

The map also shows the recently demolished Leeper building site as a redevelopment opportunity. This property is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Webster and Washington Streets. The City should pursue redeveloping this high-profile corner with a historically sensitive infill building that is several stories tall. If such a building development cannot be attracted to the site, a park or well-landscaped public parking lot is preferable over infill construction that does not complement other Downtown buildings.



SCHEDULE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Schedule of Recommendations located on the following pages organizes the projects and programs in categories that relate to the Chillicothe DREAM Initiative tasks.

These tasks include: Organizational Structure, Land Use, Buildings, & Infrastructure Survey, Community Surveys, Buildings, Public Infrastructure, Residential Market, Retail Market, 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 Chillicothe's needs. In some cases, a particular recommendation must be completed before another can begin.

Organizational Structure						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
1 Establish a committee of Main Street Chillicothe (MSC) to lead the Downtown Community Improvement District (CID) research and promotion effort.	Any CID effort will require adequate support from the City and property owners. MSC should begin gathering supporters and prepare plans to conduct the needed public outreach. MSC should be integral in budget and planning efforts regarding the CID and should also help obtain the petition signatures upon which the City will act to establish the CID.	MSC	City, other support wherever possible	NOW	This recommendation is critical to the ongoing support of MSC and Downtown projects. Lines of communication must remain open and the mechanism continually researched and discussed. The MSC committee should have regular meetings and face-to-face interviews with supporters, new property owners, and important leaders.	
2 Begin the effort to establish the Downtown CID.	Once the CID Committee has developed the plan, budget, and public outreach materials, MSC should officially begin the process with the City.	MSC	City	4th Quarter 2013	It is estimated that the CID proposed would generate about \$150,000 annually. MSC needs to constantly promote how this funding will be spent. All viewpoints need to be considered and opponents should be invited to the required public meetings. After the Council approves the CID, MSC will need to continue public outreach efforts with the voters so the CID can pass the required taxes.	
3 Maintain MSC as the lead Downtown organization.	Downtown Chillicothe requires a strong organization to move revitalization projects forward. Downtown is the core of the City and focused support from the City government and the Chamber of Commerce is warranted. However, MSC must continually demonstrate its importance and should seek innovative ways to serve and enhance Downtown.	MSC	City, other support wherever possible	Ongoing	MSC should monitor its support structure and consider important relationships required to move forward with revitalization activities. MSC should also develop a Chillicothe leadership program to encourage the future leaders of the City and help them understand the importance of Downtown.	

Land Use, Buildings, & Infrastructure Survey						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
4 Increase retail spaces.	The mapping data show a sparse concentration of retail use in Downtown. The Retail Market data show that Downtown could likely support more retail and restaurant uses than current vacant space would allow. The City should work to increase the amount of retail space in the core of the City.	City		NOW	The City should review its zoning codes relevant to Downtown to determine if non-retail uses are excessively allowed. Adjustments to encourage offices and services to locate (or relocate) on upper floors or side streets will reserve prime first-floor space for retail uses.	
5 Monitor the ratio and condition of vacant lots and parking lots.	The mapping data also show that several parking lots are in poor condition and there are a few vacant lots. With the demolition of the Leeper building, another vacant lot has been created at a key Downtown intersection. The City should seek to decrease the amount of vacant lots and improve the conditions in parking lots.	City	Chillicothe Development Corporation (CDC)	NOW	Too much open space leads to a Downtown environment that has little shade and feels barren. The City can improve conditions on parking lots by adopting surface requirements. The City and CDC should work to acquire vacant lots or attract interested developers that will construct complementary projects.	
6 Maintain information regarding Downtown vacancies, building conditions, and infrastructure.	Potential Downtown investors and developers will require basic information that MSC can compile and have available in many formats. MSC should maintain vacancy and contact information, while the City has access to building and infrastructure conditions.	MSC	City	NOW	The county assessor can provide important information from their website. Additionally, sites like www.locationone.com can help Chillicothe reach interested investors. MSC should provide the listing and contact information on its website. The City maintained information is important to prioritize future infrastructure projects.	

Community Surveys						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
7 Reconvene DREAM focus groups.	The original DREAM Focus Groups included students, local officials, residents, and business owners. It is important that people interested in Downtown are kept engaged in meaningful revitalization work and are encouraged to remain supportive of efforts.	MSC		2nd Quarter 2014	By reconvening the groups after approximately a five-year time frame, MSC can help identify recent successes and disappointments regarding Downtown revitalization projects. MSC can also begin to rebuild momentum by getting participants to consider future projects and initiatives. However, MSC should seek an impartial facilitator for all group sessions to encourage frank conversation.	
8 Conduct a telephone/web survey.	MSC should review the DREAM phone survey and consider resurveying City residents. Web surveys can be a useful tool for gathering similar information in an affordable way, however the accuracy is potentially degraded.	MSC		4th Quarter 2016	Utilize the Community Telephone Survey questionnaire, update for relevancy and conduct a web survey. Benchmark similar questions from the previous survey to gauge progress and perception trends.	
9 Conduct a visitor survey.	MSC, with the help of the Chamber, should conduct a visitor survey over the course of several months. Volunteers will be needed to staff events and attractions to administer the survey. It is important to know the perceptions of the City from a visitor viewpoint.	MSC	Chamber	2nd Quarter 2013	The survey should be collected throughout the City and have some questions about the City in general. However, several questions should focus on Downtown attractions and businesses. Input from residents should be captured in the Telephone/Web Survey, not the visitor survey.	
10 Communicate all survey results to Downtown groups, leaders, and businesses.	The insight gained from survey tools is useless if Downtown is not informed and encouraged to adapt to changing conditions. MSC should be the reviewer and interpret results to present them to the appropriate Downtown audiences. Additionally, the Chamber may be interested in any city-wide data obtained.	MSC	Chamber	Ongoing	MSC and the Chamber can host joint meetings to discuss the results. The groups may also wish to present the data at their event planning meetings to adjust events based on the information obtained.	

Buildings						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
11 Develop a Local Historic Preservation Ordinance (LHPO).	Downtown Chillicothe has two historic districts on the National Register of Historic Places; The Courthouse Square Historic District and the Commercial Historic District. However, the City does not have a LHPO. The DREAM Building and Streetscape Design Concepts provide a sample LHPO that the City should review to develop their own ordinance.	City		NOW	Without an LHPO, the City has no Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to review construction activity. The qualities of the historic districts are not protected and the merits of historically sensitive and complementary rehabilitations are not promoted.	
12 Appoint the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC).	The LHPO will provide direction for establishing an HPC. The City should appoint members to the HPC that are knowledgeable about various preservation aspects.	City		3rd Quarter 2013	The HPC will review construction plans and apply specific criteria to determine if it is appropriate in the historic districts. The HPC should also work with MSC to promote the heritage of Downtown through various activities such as the mural program. The HPC should become a very involved and important Downtown commission.	
13 Promote historic preservation.	MSC provides several existing activities that promote the heritage of Downtown such as the façade and mural programs. Indirectly, these activities promote historic preservation. MSC should collaborate with the proposed HPC to promote the tax credits available for historic properties and to encourage positive rehabilitations.	MSC	City, through the HPC	4th Quarter 2013	Other activities might include working with the CDC to directly purchase historic assets, developing Downtown historic building tours, and hosting seminars with reputable contractors and property owners.	
14 Establish Downtown commercial building design guidelines.	The HPC will initially work on promotion of historic preservation benefits, but should monitor the pulse of Downtown property owners to eventually move to establish design guidelines within the historic districts.	HPC		When possible	Design guidelines should be modeled on concepts provided by the DREAM program. Guidelines need not be mandatory. An active HPC could be successful in getting property owners to voluntarily adhere to some basic methods.	
15 Develop policies for Downtown incentives that tie funding opportunities to historic design guidelines.	The CDC has developed, and MSC administers, a matching grant program that property owners can use to improve their façades. The City and MSC should collaborate to ensure that incentives are only provided for Downtown projects that adhere to the established design guidelines. This applies to public infrastructure as well.	MSC	City	NOW	Any incentive should be conditional upon such guidelines. Any project should be critically review for its impact upon existing Downtown assets. New construct must be complementary in design to existing historic structures.	
16 Redevelop the Leeper site.	The recently demolished Leeper building site is a redevelopment opportunity. This property is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Webster and Washington Streets; a prime Downtown location. The City should work with the CDC and MSC to pursue redeveloping this high-profile corner with a historically sensitive infill building that is several stories tall. A mixed-use building with a restaurant use on the ground floor and offices or residences above would be an ideal fit for the location.	City	MSC, CDC	After infill design guidelines are adopted	Any new building should be at least two stories to match surrounding building heights. If such a building development cannot be attracted to the site, a park or well-landscaped public parking lot is preferable over infill construction that does not complement other Downtown buildings. The City will likely need to use incentives to attract proper development at this site.	
17 Review inspection policies, building codes, and City procedures regarding the maintenance of Downtown buildings.	The City should review its codes and procedures to provide an extra measure of attention to Downtown properties. Downtown buildings are the oldest in the City and require special attention through inspections. Minor maintenance issues must be addressed, not covered-up, before they become major structural problems or life-safety concerns. Buildings like the Leeper building were allowed to deteriorate, in part, due to the inattention of the City as well as the property owner.	City	MSC	2nd Quarter 2014	MSC can assist the City by informing the Downtown property owners of any procedural adjustments and helping to communicate City expectations. MSC should also organize monthly walks with City officials and staff to review building and infrastructure conditions in Downtown. A proactive and positive relationship between the City and property owners must be cultivated and MSC can make that happen.	
18 Pursue opportunities to rehabilitate properties as they arise.	There are some vacancies in Downtown Chillicothe, but few entirely vacant buildings. However, many buildings are underutilized with vacant upper floors and office or service locations occupying the prime, first-floor retail space. There are also a few vacant lots in Downtown. The CDC is the development mechanism for Chillicothe and should be prepared to move on opportunities to rehabilitate properties or redevelop lots.	CDC		Ongoing	It is critical that the CDC maintains resources necessary to act on opportunities. Support from the City, other agencies, businesses, and individuals is needed to ensure these resources. The CDC should be actively recruiting members and soliciting donations. Additionally, the CDC should be prepared to seek grant funding when needed. The CDC should have close ties to the property owners and can accomplish this by forming a meeting group to help address their concerns about Downtown.	
19 Develop procedures for the ongoing surveying of historical Downtown resources.	Such a survey should be an ongoing process that is needed to update the application for the historic districts on file with the National Registry of Historic Places. MSC should work with the HPC to periodically record the conditions of the districts and the buildings within. The survey should be revised every few years.	MSC	HPC	Ongoing	This task is important and can be a promotional effort for historic preservation. For example, MSC has followed the Leeper demolition and obtained photos and video before the building was taken down. These resources will be important for future generations. A system should be implemented to regularly document all Downtown buildings in the historic districts.	

Public Infrastructure						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
20	Unite both sides of Washington Street.	Washington Street also carries State Highway 5 through Downtown Chillicothe. This north/south traffic artery creates a barrier that makes it difficult for pedestrians to cross. The City should work to improve the Washington Street streetscape with elements that calm the traffic and visually unite the east side with the west side.	City	MSC	3rd Quarter 2014	After a mechanism such as the CID is implemented, the City should have these improvements designed and the construction costs earmarked from the CID funds. Design elements such as mid-block crosswalks, street trees, landscaping islands, and lighting should be prevalent in the plans and 'connect' from one side of the street to the other. They should not end at the street, but continue on the other side.
21	Expand the streetscape both geographically and with added design components.	As funding allows, the City should seek to expand the streetscape, particularly along Clay, Webster, Locust, and Washington Streets. The City should also consider adding new design elements to include trees, planters, and benches along each block. Bicycle racks should be included periodically.	City		Ongoing	These site furnishings are important to encourage Downtown pedestrians. Proper maintenance is key. Poorly maintained furnishings send a message of neglect and inattention and may make the pedestrian feel unsafe.
22	Add public art.	Around the Courthouse, the City should install public art to help identify the center of Chillicothe. The City is no stranger to public art, having a very successful mural program and elements of Silver Moon Plaza such as fountains and bollards. The other three streets of the Courthouse should have similar artful treatments.	City	MSC	3rd Quarter 2015	Some furnishings, such as bicycle racks, can also double as art. Many companies can help develop a streetscape along a block and funding should come from the proposed CID and be leveraged against grant opportunities.
23	Develop a wayfinding system.	The City should also develop a wayfinding system to direct visitors to Downtown and around Downtown. Such as system should also use historic district identification signage to promote the two districts.	City		1st Quarter 2017	This is also a CID eligible expense. Signage should be intuitive in Downtown, perhaps using a color coding system for each district. Primary activity centers and public parking lots in each district should be inventoried and listed on the signs. Signs should be visible from each public parking lot to encourage pedestrians.
24	Improve public parking lots.	The City should increase maintenance of the Downtown public parking lots and reconstruct any that are in dilapidated condition. Resurfacing, restriping, establishing landscaping borders and pedestrian areas, and adding clear signage are critical elements for a public parking lot. The City should focus on these aspects.	City		Ongoing	This should be an ongoing effort, but after the CID is in place, the City can make a push to do several lots in a construction season. The lots should not just be functional, but decorative and considered as part of the streetscape of Downtown.
25	Relocate overhead power lines.	The City should work to relocate the Chillicothe Municipal Utilities (CMU) overhead power lines in Downtown underground or to the rear of buildings in alleyways.	City	CMU	When possible	Well-planned and phased improvements will allow for this relocation. Funding can come from the proposed CID and other sources as available.
26	Develop more signature projects such as Silver Moon Plaza.	Silver Moon Plaza has been a great boon to Downtown. The community of Chillicothe has shown a tremendous ability to complete such an ambitious project. MSC should consider the next project on which these considerable resources should be focused.	MSC		NOW	Potential projects include the previously noted public art. Funding could be obtained from the CID, but MSC needs to develop a project to keep the volunteers and donors engaged now. The actual establishment of the CID could also be a project and will help the previous efforts to fully blossom.
Residential Market Analysis						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
27	Develop informational materials to encourage new, high-quality rental units.	The City and MSC should work to attract high-quality rental projects in Downtown. The DREAM Residential Analysis indicates potential housing demand for 32 senior affordable units and 10 market rate rental units over the next few years.	MSC	City	NOW	Filling this demand and gaining more residents can provide more "feet on the street" and gives a boost to the local consumer market.
28	Form a committee for local residential builders, contractors, real-estate professionals, and developers.	There is a concentration of local businesses that have been involved in developing housing nearby Downtown. MSC should try to harness this group and use them to help promote Downtown opportunities, address housing development issues, and develop ways to boost future Downtown housing demand.	MSC		NOW	This could be a committee of MSC focused on residential development. There may be representatives of this group already active in MSC or in Downtown in other ways.
29	Encourage the use of upper floor commercial building space for residential use.	There is significant and underutilized upper-floor space in Downtown Chillicothe. MSC should work to encourage residential demand for this space.	MSC		4th Quarter 2013	MSC could host Downtown Living tours and should maintain a close relationship with Downtown property owners. MSC should also play an advocacy role in working with the City to allow owners to better use upper-floors.

Retail Market Analysis						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
30 Encourage Targeted Retail Uses	Some specific retail categories are demonstrating unmet retail demand in Downtown Chillicothe. Businesses that can open in vacant spaces or existing stores that can expand their floor area or add products can help to meet this demand. The City and MSC should narrow Downtown economic development efforts on these categories.	City	MSC	Ongoing	These categories include products sold in: electronics and appliance stores; clothing stores; specialty food stores; miscellaneous retailers; and health & personal care stores. Attracting businesses that meet this demand will begin to adjust the business mix and lessen the number of first-floor non-retail spaces. MSC should also seek to educate landlords and existing businesses regarding these opportunities.	
31 Continue to market the Historic District Matching Grant Program for façade improvements.	This important program was initiated by the CDC and is administered by MSC. Recommendations to expand its resources are found in the Financial Mechanisms section, but MSC should continue effective promotion of the program.	MSC		Ongoing	MSC should include this program in seminar agendas and could also hold workshops specifically to assist applicants and promote greater participation in Downtown.	
32 Market Downtown as a unified shopping destination.	This recommendation could also be included in the marketing section. However the inclusion as a retail effort is significant in that Downtown Chillicothe and its leaders need to begin considering the area as a unified destination. If a similar sized shopping center were built anywhere else in the City, it would have a manager (or a team of managers) and benefit from professional marketing efforts. MSC needs to fulfill the role of Downtown's property manager and promoter.	MSC		3rd Quarter 2014	After the CID has been established, this campaign should be launched to include collaborative advertising, promotions, and brochures. Other communication methods such as social networking and the MSC website should also be improved. Collective marketing is a cost effective approach.	
33 Develop seminars to strengthen existing businesses.	MSC should develop a merchant education program to address issues of marketing, customer service, business hours, business and building maintenance, retail opportunities, cross-promotion methods, and trends.	MSC		NOW	Clusters of similar Downtown businesses such as restaurants should be brought together to present specific topics. All meetings should be held at the Commerce Center. Other efforts should include improving perceptions of Downtown stores, attracting higher-income shoppers, and developing special event promotions. Such a seminar series could be funded with the CID.	
34 Increase pedestrian activity.	Improvements to the streetscape, the addition of wayfinding, and enhanced parking lots should help boost overall Downtown activity. MSC should also continue to develop shopping-oriented events to get potential customers into Downtown.	MSC		NOW	Events that close off the Courthouse Square may not initially result in increased business for Downtown stores. However, if MSC can develop an event that encourages attendees to visit a number of shops for a prize, the event could get people into stores. Merchants also need to understand that event attendees may return later to visit a store that they found interesting.	
35 Increase available retail space.	As noted in the land-use survey and the Retail Analysis, Downtown vacancy rates are low. Additionally, the amount of retail space in relation to overall total space is also fairly low. This indicates a potential imbalance between the amount of retail and office/services uses.	City		Ongoing	As noted, the City should work to encourage these uses to locate or relocate to upper-floors or side streets; reserving prime, first-floor locations for retail uses.	
36 Create a Downtown business development package of materials.	MSC and the Chamber should work to develop a standard package of information that will provide important information for incoming businesses.	Chamber	MSC		MSC should provide Downtown-specific information, however the Chamber will want to include information on sites city-wide. The City will need to provide information as well.	
Financial Mechanisms						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
37 Establish a Community Improvement District (CID).	As noted in Organizational Structure, a Community Improvement District will provide MSC with sustainable funding for improvements and programming. The City will initiate this incentive and pass the appropriate ordinances, but MSC will be instrumental in providing the needed public outreach.	City	MSC	1st Quarter 2014	It is estimated that the CID proposed would generate about \$150,000 annually. MSC needs to constantly promote how this funding will be spent. All viewpoints need to be considered and opponents should be invited to the required public meetings. After the Council approves the CID, MSC will need to continue public outreach efforts with the voters so the CID can pass the required taxes.	
38 Expand resources to the existing Historic District Matching Grant Program for façade improvements.	The promotion of this program should continue to be handled by MSC, but the CDC and the City should work to obtain increased funding so the program can fund larger projects as needed.	CDC	City	Ongoing	The City could provide general funds, the CDC should seek multi-year donations, and the CID funds could also support the program. Additionally, the CDC should try to leverage these funds for grant purposes.	
39 Develop a business development loan program to complement the Historic District Matching Grants for façade improvements.	The CDC should lead efforts with the City and MSC to develop a business development loan program to assist incoming businesses. The façade program assists the owner of the property, but with a small loan program for businesses, Downtown Chillicothe can make new start-ups feel welcome and build goodwill and loyalty.	CDC	City, MSC	3rd Quarter 2017	CID funding could be used along with CDC member donations. The program should provide a loan and very low interest and will require some administrative work, as well as involvement from local banks. Specific criteria might include a cap on the percentage of the loan to the entire project as well as the credit-worthiness of the borrower.	
40 Establish a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District.	The City should examine the possibility of creating a TIF District in Downtown as a means of supporting/promoting redevelopment efforts. Revenues generated could be used for variety of purposes including public infrastructure improvements, site preparation, and rehabilitation of existing buildings.	City		After a few CID successes	A public education campaign about the benefits of a Downtown TIF should be the first step towards implementation. Once projects are identified the TIF, follow statutory procedures to implement the TIF. Successful CID projects should be used to demonstrate the need and benefit for Downtown incentives.	
41 Promote projects completed with incentive funding.	Somewhat related to marketing, the City should develop a policy to provide signage that indicates an improvement that was funded by the CID or TIF.	City		Ongoing	Funding for this signage can come from the CID or TIF. This effort will be critical to keep the public informed regarding the activities that Downtown incentives provide.	

Marketing						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
42 Continue Downtown Chillicothe website improvements.	The DREAM initiative marketing task provided several content improvements for the reconstruction of the MSC site. The website must be kept current and the effort to improve it continued.	MSC		NOW	The City and CDC should help with the funding necessary for this reconstruction. However, MSC must budget suitable financial resources and personnel to keep the site current in the future. Eventually, CID funding could provide some assistance.	
43 Promote Downtown successes.	MSC needs to conduct a community engagement campaign aimed at existing residents and businesses to enhance and build future support for Downtown and for MSC as the lead Downtown organization providing revitalization efforts.	MSC		NOW	Stories to promote should include Silver Moon Plaza, but also the mural program, streetscape improvements, and façade rehabilitation projects. There should be an ongoing list of projects about which MSC can write press releases and feature on its newly rebuilt website.	
44 Develop a signature event.	Events can be resource intensive, but also expose Downtown and its businesses to larger amounts of people than normal. Downtown Chillicothe should work to be known for a particular event. This "hook" should have full support from MSC.	MSC	Chamber	NOW	Other annual events should still be promoted and held, but should help build up to the signature event. Events can be more successful in a series. Regardless, events to require time to build. The Chamber should support this effort and can assist in the planning for the Downtown signature event.	

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