



DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLAN

CITY OF ROLLA, MISSOURI

APRIL 2014



CITY OF ROLLA



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



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DREAM Initiative Process



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

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

The DREAM Initiative process began with several wide-ranging assessments of existing conditions in Downtown. The information obtained from these assessments was used as the basis for various analyses and recommendations developed in each DREAM task as described in this plan. Several existing documents were reviewed during the DREAM process for the City of Rolla. These documents included projects, ordinances, a 2008 Survey, a 2009 Downtown Plan, a Rolla Arts & Entertainment District Plan, Missouri University of Science & Technology (S&T) campus growth plans, and other existing planning documents. The DREAM Strategic Plan is not intended to replace these efforts, but rather to supplement this planning and function as a resource guide for community leaders as DREAM recommendations and Downtown improvements are implemented. The Strategic Plan provides a multi-year vision promoting innovative and attainable change for Downtown Rolla. Participants of the DREAM process, including numerous citizens, students, Downtown property owners, business owners, civic leaders and City staff, expect the Strategic Plan to be the blueprint that will help continue the transformation of Downtown Rolla into a vibrant area in which people live, play, and work.

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

Goal One: Expand the capabilities of the Rolla Downtown Business Association (RDBA).

The existing group of merchants, property owners, residents, and other individuals that comprise the RDBA have accomplished many Downtown Rolla activities. The City staff has provided guidance and support to the RDBA, primarily through the Community Development Director. While this situation is effective, Downtown interests need to be encouraged to take an active role in Downtown revitalization. The RDBA should continually seek to develop events and programs that provide a benefit to its membership. City staff will be required to provide services elsewhere in the City and Downtown needs a strong core of involved business interests to maintain its activities and programs.

The RDBA should seek to expand its volunteer base and committee structure. There is a level of service provided by the RDBA that Downtown businesses have come to expect. The involved volunteers need to be encouraged and should seek out new members from the community. This strong involvement will help maintain Downtown services through City administration and staff changes, as well as any RDBA Board or staff changes. A good succession plan for RDBA leadership is essential to the group's long-term effectiveness. Additionally, all RDBA staff should seek training opportunities to ensure the group's operations are familiar to a range of individuals.

Similar to the City, the Chamber should continue support the RDBA. The groups could work together to cross-promote membership. Roles and responsibilities may change with the City and Chamber, but the services provided to Downtown Rolla should expand. Periodically, the City, Chamber, and RDBA should consider a retreat or a joint meeting. An impartial facilitator from S&T could help representatives from each group list and divide the services they are providing for Downtown. This session should also include a discussion about services Downtown needs that no group is currently providing.



The RDBA sponsored this welcome sign atop a historic Downtown building..

Other organizational elements regarding funding are included in this Strategic Plan. The potential formation of a Special Business District (SBD) is included in the following goal in this section regarding Downtown funding. Although such funding improves the viability of a Downtown organization, it is possible to proceed with a volunteer board and seek more stable funding for the organization and its programs at a later date.

While overall there are other priorities that will benefit Downtown more immediately and visibly, the potential of Downtown revitalization efforts is expanded greatly through an active organization with engaged volunteers.

Goal Two: Secure a funding mechanism, such as the proposed Special Business District (SBD), for Downtown revitalization.

The DREAM Financial Assistance Review combined with the Organizational Review process and resulted in a Special Business District Study. This Study provided the findings necessary for the City to pass the needed resolution and ordinance to establish the SBD. The budget for the district was estimated at approximately \$30,000 annually and projects included improvements to the Library Plaza, gateway and wayfinding signage, streetscape enhancements, and the establishment of a Downtown façade program and a Farmer’s Market.

Alternatively, the City could pursue a Community Improvement District (CID) for Downtown. A CID will contribute project funding as well as organizational funding. A CID should be established as a political subdivision and be supported by both a property and sales tax. Depending on the structure and the final boundary, preliminary information suggests that a Downtown Rolla CID could generate about \$120,000 - \$180,000 in annual revenue, depending on the tax structure established. This amount would increase as Downtown revitalization efforts, business activity, and property values increase.

The RDBA can provide certain services to the CID on a contractual basis, which will help expand the roles of the RDBA and allow it to better meet Downtown’s needs. This Plan proposes projects such as wayfinding, parking lot improvements, streetscape enhancements, and the Library Plaza that are all CID eligible expenses. Marketing, promotions, and events are also eligible.

The City should continue to meet with the RDBA to pursue a Downtown revitalization funding mechanism. The RDBA will need to promote the mechanisms ability to supply infrastructure funding as well as business support. The RDBA will work to develop broad support for the effort, while the City provides the legal and legislative guidance required. Ample time and resources will be needed to properly promote the benefits and plans of the new mechanism. The RDBA will also need to make sure that all viewpoints are expressed through public input methods that will satisfy the City Council when their support is needed.

Goal Three: Enhance Downtown’s public features.

There are several public aspects of Downtown that the City of Rolla has been working to improve. Future public projects should focus on enhancements to signage, public parking, and utilities.

The City, working with the regional planning commission, has previously developed a concept for seven gateway arches to denote Downtown entryways. While these archways will certainly serve as gateway signage to Downtown, the DREAM Strategic Plan suggests three primary locations as noted on the Sub Area Concept Map on page 27. The City should consider monument-style signage that defines Downtown, rather than a more costly archway. Additionally, there are several key navigation points where improved wayfinding is needed. Due to the rail line and one-way streets in Downtown, wayfinding signage is more important for vehicular navigation and should be a higher priority than the gateway features.



Downtown Rolla is home to the Missouri University of Science and Technology (S&T).

Closely related to wayfinding signage, is the improvement of public parking lots. The City has worked to add and improve public parking lots and this effort should continue. With S&T adjacent to Downtown, parking spaces are a critical land-use element. There are many Downtown lots that are vacant, have minimal building coverage, or have inferior structures. These lots could be converted to parking in key areas. The City should watch for such opportunities and continue to improve the conditions of existing lots.

Another aspect of Downtown Rolla is the overwhelming presence of overhead power lines. The City should work to bury lines, or relocate lines to alleys and back streets, where possible. This is an expensive undertaking. However, the City can obtain some efficiency if utilities are relocated along with large redevelopment projects or public improvements. These relocations, along with the previously mentioned parking improvements and signage, are eligible for SBD or CID funding.

Goal Four: Strengthen existing businesses and improve Downtown products being sold.

Rolla enjoys a healthy mix of businesses, many of which are located Downtown. This business mix includes several industrial businesses that may be in conflict with traditional Downtown retail uses. Downtown does demonstrate some positive retail aspects including a good amount of vehicular traffic and a nearby consumer market. However Downtown businesses primarily compete with businesses in other areas of the City that have better access to highway 63 or Interstate 44. Downtown businesses tend to be at a disadvantage with highway businesses. The students at S&T provide a nearby, steady consumer market for Downtown, but college students do not typically have much disposable income or demand high-quality products.

The City, RDBA, and Chamber should provide added services for Downtown businesses through programs that focus on topics such as improving customer service,

store aesthetics, and product improvement and display. The RDBA should develop seminars to teach businesses how to meet the demand for students, but not neglect higher-quality products that meet unmet retail demand and appeal to other segments of the community.

As the City implements incentives such as the proposed SBD or CID, marketing materials that focus solely on Downtown should be included. The City and RDBA should collaborate to develop a greater variety of stores in Downtown; focusing on the types of retail businesses that demonstrated unmet retail demand in the DREAM Retail Market Analysis. These businesses include stores that provide products in the categories of: Health & Personal Care; Clothing; Miscellaneous Retail; Sporting Goods, Hobbies, & Musical Instruments; Shoes; Jewelry, Luggage, & Leather Goods; Special Food Services; and Home Furnishings. Downtown should focus on attracting these businesses to ground-floor locations along Pine and Rolla Streets. Office and service uses are businesses that should be located on upper-floors and in buildings located on side streets; preserving prime, high-visibility locations for retail uses.

Goal Five: Encourage Appropriate Infill and Adaptive Reuse Development.

As shown on the map on Page 15, there is a building in Downtown on the National Register of Historic Places and the Benton Square area is considered an Arts District. Many other buildings in Downtown Rolla should be preserved using the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. However, there have been several buildings constructed in Downtown Rolla that do not complement the existing historic structures and overall are of a scale more suited to a highway location. Additionally, there are several vacant properties and buildings that were originally an industrial use in Downtown Rolla. The Sub Area Concept Map on Page 27 proposes a redevelopment area between Main and Rolla Streets due to a concentration of buildings with these characteristics. Vacant or underutilized lots and



Examples of existing signage found throughout Rolla.

outdated buildings represent opportunities for potential, innovative developers. The City should seek to attract these developers, but must have some standards in place to ensure appropriate buildings are constructed.

The City and RDBA should work to develop infill and reuse standards. The City will have to allow for innovative ideas regarding the conversions of old industrial buildings, but emphasis should be on the creation of ground-floor retail space.

Goal Six: Improve the connection between the Benton Square area and the Pine Street commercial area.

Due to the rail line and some industrial buildings, the Benton Square area is disconnected from the core commercial area of Downtown Rolla. There are several attractions, including the Ozark Actors Theatre, an art gallery, and several unique shops and restaurants near Benton Square. As the Benton Square area develops, the City should develop ways to better connect these areas. Relocating the rail line and industries is cost prohibitive, but through other improvements and efforts, such as wayfinding signage and the promotion of Downtown as a unified shopping district, the City can encourage pedestrian and vehicular traffic between these areas.

Additionally, the RDBA should encourage businesses in each area to cross-promote themselves with businesses in the other area. Signage is provided throughout Downtown for Benton Square and there are some billboards along Interstate 44 that help to raise the visibility of the area. The RDBA should also seek to hold a few events in the Benton Square area. Downtown Rolla should provide a united front and work to draw customers to the overall area so individual businesses can then get the consumer into their store.

Goal Seven: Pursue the proposed Library Plaza.

The Library Plaza concept shown in the Implementation Section of this plan is an innovative project that can serve as a rallying point for Downtown interests. The plaza will provide a landmark and gathering place for visitors and will become a favorite of local residents. The City and RDBA should continue to work with the Library Board to make this project happen. Many, if not all, of the elements of the Library Plaza concept plan are eligible for funding from the proposed SBD or CID.



Downtown signage along Pine Street, promoting Benton Square.

INTRODUCTION

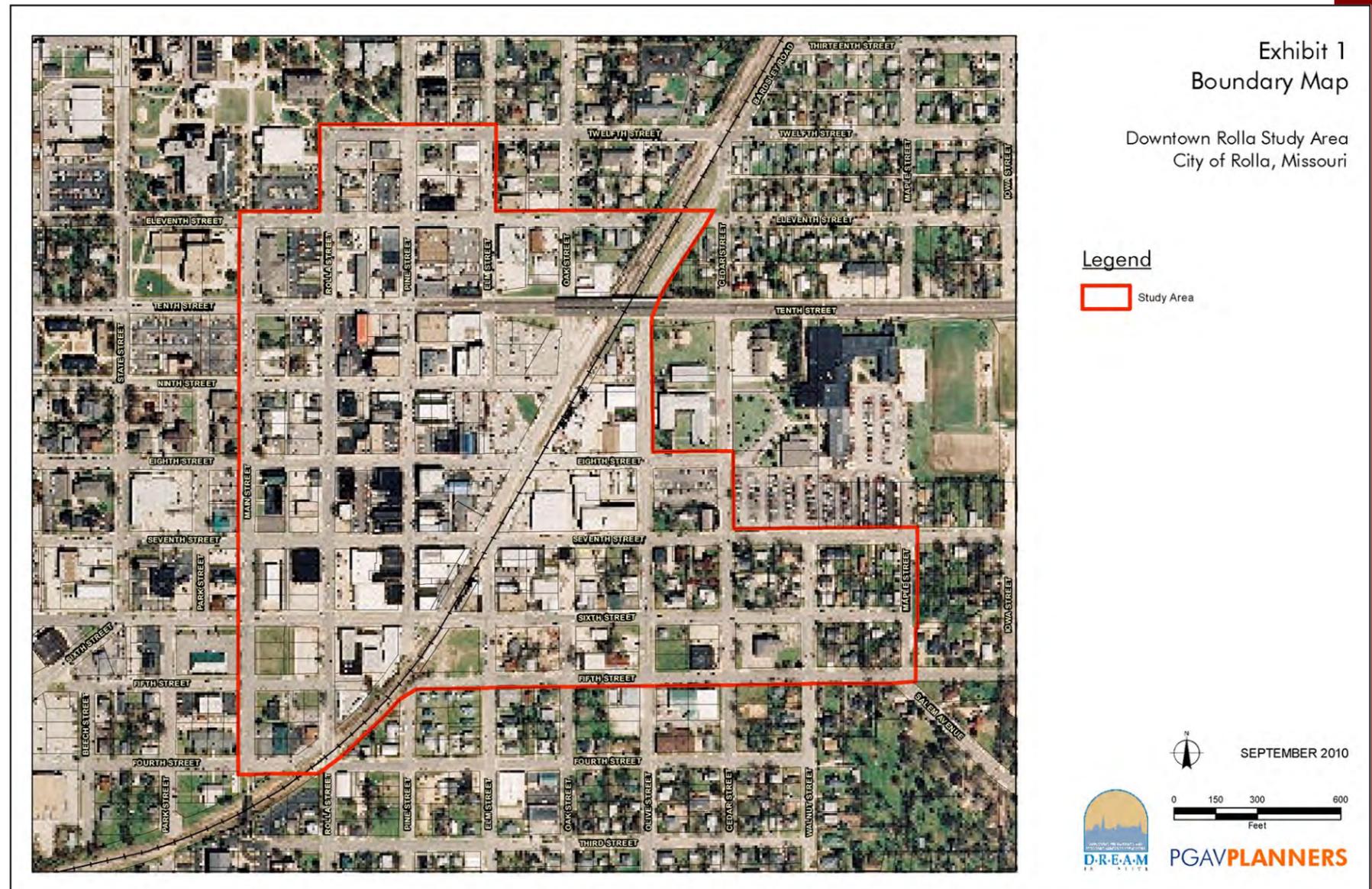
Through a partnership of state agencies that includes; the Missouri Development Finance Board (MDFB), Missouri Department of Economic Development (DED), and the Missouri Housing Development Commission (MHDC), the DREAM Initiative provides downtown-focused planning services over a three-year period to 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 Rolla. 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 initial assessment of the community serves as the foundation for developing the required tasks and analyses.

The City of Rolla was designated as a DREAM community in 2009. The completed tasks for Rolla included:

- Organizational Structure Review (Special Business District Study) (January 2012)
- Map Reference Handbook (September 2010)
- Focus Group Report (June 2011)
- Visitor Survey (December 2011)
- Retail Market Analysis (August 2013)
- Financial Assistance Review (August 2010)
- Marketing Assistance (website) (2013)
- This Downtown Strategic Plan (April 2014)

This strategic plan emphasizes the leveraging of existing local sources, and potential the creation of new funding mechanisms, to obtain additional 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.



Rolla 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 Rolla. Public outreach meetings were also used as a venue to introduce and build support for future planning recommendations.

Interviews with Downtown stakeholders and open discussions with the public revealed a great sense of pride and ownership in Downtown projects and events. Planned projects such as the library improvements and the attraction of recent development activity such as Benton Square were frequently cited as examples of the health of Downtown. The S&T campus was also frequently mentioned due to its location just north and west of the DREAM boundary. Business owners often noted the significant impact the, over 7,600, student market has on their businesses. Downtown boasts strong building architecture, existing streetscape elements, and good business and pedestrian activity, all of which combine to create a vibrant atmosphere. However, these components also present challenges such as those noted during the public outreach meetings.

The DREAM Initiative builds on public sentiment to develop sound planning recommendations and strategies that are inspired, and 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 Rolla through several activities and methods, including:

- **Initial Assessment Meeting**
Rolla was designated as a DREAM community in September of 2009, and an Initial Assessment Meeting was held on November 30, 2009. The meeting included representatives from the City staff, the Rolla Downtown Business Association (RDBA), City and

regional elected officials, the Rolla Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center (Chamber), and several businesses. PGAV Planners staff and personnel from the DREAM partner agencies also attended. The City provided a presentation and tour that helped to identify the DREAM planning tasks that would benefit Downtown.

- **Focus Group Meetings**
In 2011, discussions of Downtown issues and ideas for improvements were facilitated with four focus groups: City Residents; S&T Students; Downtown Business Owners; and City Staff. The facilitators of each group encouraged conversation regarding how Downtown Rolla is perceived, used, and challenged. Participants also suggested ideas to enhance Downtown through both public and private improvements.
- **Visitor Survey**
In late 2010 and early 2011, a visitor survey was conducted at various City events and attractions. Volunteers and City staff gathered answers from respondents that did not live in a Rolla zip code; resulting in 147 responses.

The survey indicated that about 80% of respondents had visited Downtown Rolla before, primarily for special events or shopping. Just under half of the visitors surveyed indicated they would be staying overnight in Rolla on their visit.
- **Key Stakeholder Discussions**
Several informal conversations were held with representatives of the City, RDBA, Chamber, S&T, Phelps County, Downtown property and business owners, and other members of the community to discuss issues uncovered during outreach methods. Discussions occurred throughout the DREAM process and helped develop or influence the revitalization strategies in each DREAM task.



Attendees of the DREAM Initial Assessment Meeting tour Downtown Rolla.

- **Public Meetings**

Beginning with a DREAM Kickoff meeting in April of 2009, several public presentations and meetings were held to review progress on the DREAM Initiative work in Rolla. Meetings were publicized in the local newspaper and promoted on the City website. Public meetings included:

- DREAM Kickoff Meeting: April 22, 2010
- Library Plaza/Update Meeting: March 10, 2011
- Financial Tools Workshop: October 14, 2011

- **Websites and Social Media**

The City, RDBA, Chamber, and S&T all have websites or a social media presence through which they have promoted various aspects of the DREAM Initiative or Downtown events. Additionally, the City Council and other City Committees have discussed DREAM documents and some of the minutes of these meetings are available on the City's website.

- **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. 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 efforts.



Title slide from the Rolla DREAM Kickoff Meeting.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

When the City of Rolla was designated a DREAM Initiative community in September of 2009, the DREAM Initiative provided immediate benefits to Downtown. Positive news articles and increased awareness of Downtown Rolla improved the City's ability to obtain State funding. Some recent accomplishments in the DREAM Study Area include:

- Received a \$15,000 USDA grant for a shade structure in the lower City parking lot. The potential uses of this structure are for the Farmer's Market and other festivals.
- Received a \$350,000 Community Development Block Grant for the construction of two parking lots that have provided an estimated 170 new spaces in Downtown. One lot is located at the intersection of 10th & Main Streets and another at the intersection of 6th & Elm.
- Added the *Downtown Days* festival in 2010 to a full calendar of events held in Downtown.
- Introduced several hundred new residents living in the many new and remodeled apartments/buildings. This trend has continued with the construction of several new apartment buildings and the Alumni Center on north Pine Street. Attracted numerous new businesses to provide services to these newly located residents.
- Several major renovations and construction projects have occurred, including renovation of the Benton Square property and the construction of Archer-Elgin Engineering and Surveyors.
- The City of Rolla was successful in obtaining the DREAM designation; a commitment of about \$175,000 from the Missouri Development Finance Board. Rolla leveraged a 20% match over three years to obtain this funding and planning process.



Downtown Rolla is home to numerous events Rolla Summerfest, Farmer's Market,, and Motorcycle Showcase.



The Archer-Elgin Engineering building is an example of recent construction in Downtown Rolla.



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The DREAM Initiative included a review of the organizations with an active interest in Downtown Rolla. The purpose of this task was to understand the roles and responsibilities of these organizations and their impact on Downtown. The recommendations developed from this task became focused on developing a financial tool for Downtown. The City requested that the traditional report format be altered to hold a workshop regarding potential financial tools. The outcome of that workshop was to develop a Special Business District (SBD) Study that the City could use to pursue the implementation of an SBD in the future.

Although the task resulted in the SBD Study, Downtown’s organizations were reviewed for this task. The organizations considered included:

- City of Rolla (City)
- Rolla Downtown Business Association (RDBA)
- Rolla Area Chamber of Commerce
And Visitors Center (Chamber)
- Missouri University of Science and Technology (S&T)
- Phelps County

Strong efforts for Downtown revitalization have been advanced by all of the above groups, as well as other civic clubs. Participants in the DREAM Focus Groups noted that Rolla clubs and organizations are very involved and forward-thinking. Participants also noted the need for a financial mechanism to bolster Downtown development, but felt the City should take the lead to develop such a tool.

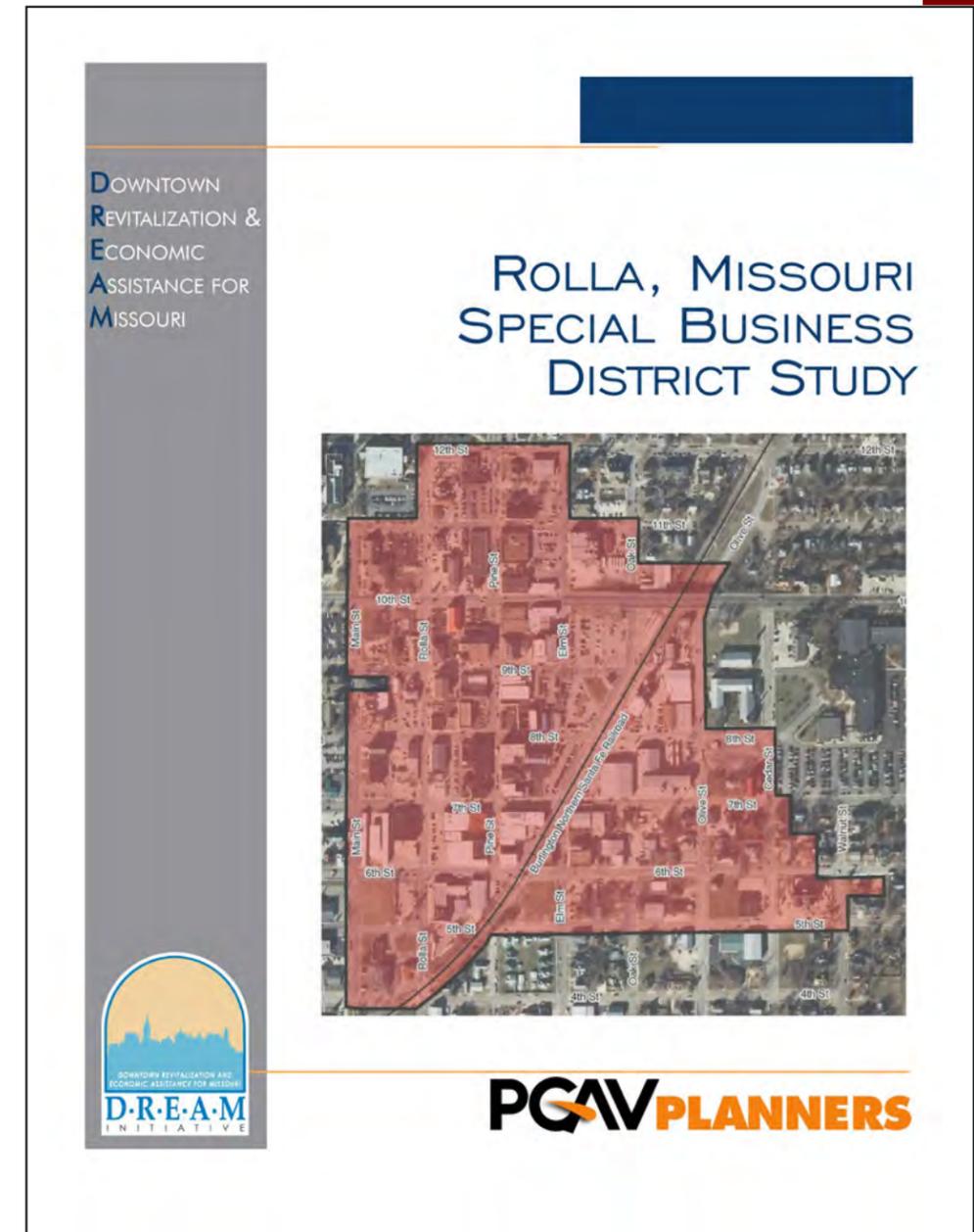
The City and RDBA have worked most closely with Downtown property owners, businesses, and residents. The City has deployed a significant amount of resources to build the streetscape along Pine and 9th Streets, and has made recent improvements to City Hall, the Rolla Public Library, and the Rolla Band Shell and surrounding parks and lots. These public improvements, along with robust encouragement by the RDBA, have resulted in significant private investment to rehabilitate Downtown buildings and open businesses. However, even with this revitalization effort underway, Downtown still has some redevelopment opportunities and could expand its streetscape and organizational capacity.

The SBD report and recommendation developed during this task will be discussed again in the Financial Mechanisms Section on Page 22 of this Plan. The DREAM Initiative also recommends:

- **Expand the leadership and volunteer capacity of the RDBA as the lead Downtown Organization**
The RDBA is a 501(c)6 organization with a Board of Directors comprised of business and property owners, residents, and other interested Downtown parties. The Board meets the first Wednesday of each month and is currently undergoing an evaluation and strategic planning process. The RDBA annual work plan is primarily driven by the staff. The Chamber is also a strong organization in the City of Rolla, with a staff of five. Collaboration between the City, RDBA, and Chamber is quite strong and each group oversees events and programs, which can benefit a Downtown property or business owner. However, only the RDBA provides the sole focus for Downtown.

As the RDBA Board plans for the future, an emphasis should be placed on expanding the volunteer base, energizing the committee structure, and developing staff skills. By developing a healthy staff and volunteer structure, the RDBA will ensure that Downtown revitalization efforts continue regardless of staff, Board, or City personnel changes.

The RDBA Board membership should also consist of representatives of the involved Downtown groups discussed. These representatives, as well as their broader organizations, need to understand their role in participating in the RDBA is to focus attention on Downtown Rolla. The City and Chamber collaboration is critical, but the RDBA Board should work to maintain the Downtown advocacy role of the group. This may require some realignment or separation of priorities and programs.



Cover of Rolla's Special Business District Study.

LAND USE, BUILDINGS & INFRASTRUCTURE SURVEY

The Land Use, Buildings & Infrastructure Survey is an inventory of Downtown Rolla’s existing land use, exterior building conditions, and the condition of public infrastructure. The survey was conducted during the Spring of 2010. Conditions are documented in the *Map Reference Handbook* of September 2010. The 23 maps produced in the report were used throughout the DREAM planning process. Sample maps are shown on this page and on pages 11 through 15. The data collected during the survey helped identify the most pressing issues, physical conditions, and future development opportunities in Downtown. The maintenance of the information gathered for this survey, along with ongoing monitoring, will continue to provide insight for Downtown Rolla.

While the goal of this task was to develop information that would feed into other DREAM Initiative tasks, several conclusions can be drawn from the data displayed in the *Map Reference Handbook*, including:

- The street layout of Rolla is a typical grid pattern. However, the grid pattern has been impacted by the rail line cutting through Downtown from southwest to northeast. This situation has created the need for dead-end streets, overpasses, at-grade crossings, and unique building configurations and also distinctly separates the Pine Street area from the Arts District (Benton Square).
- Pine and Rolla Streets are the primary north and south arteries in Downtown. Pine Street is also the primary access from Interstate 44, via Highway 63, to the north and is the core commercial area. Tenth Street is a primary east and west artery and provides a primary access to the University. Sixth Street also provides an Interstate connection as well as the connection to the Arts District.
- Within the boundary of the DREAM Study Area, Rolla Street is a one-way street carrying traffic to the south and Pine Street is a one-way street carrying traffic to the north. Getting to the DREAM Study Area, Pine Street is two-way, but traffic is diverted off of Pine, the primary retail area, onto Rolla Street at Twelfth Street.
- When combined with the rail line, the one-way streets and dead-ends can make Downtown Rolla difficult to navigate.

- The Missouri University of Science and Technology (S&T) is located to the north and west of the DREAM Study Area, between Downtown and the intersection of Highway 63 and Interstate 44.
- There is some wayfinding signage from Highway 63 and Interstate 44 to Downtown. However, an improved wayfinding signage design is needed in Downtown to help the motorist navigate to various attractions or back to the highways. There are no gateway signs to let visitors know they have arrived in Downtown. There are signs directing motorists to public parking lots.
- Rolla City Hall, the Rolla Library, and other offices are located within the DREAM Study Area. The Phelps County Courthouse is located just to the southwest. Rolla High School is located just to the east.



Rolla General Land Use Map.

- Downtown is home to many office buildings, both public and private; many related to S&T. A couple of the Downtown buildings are several stories high, while most are two-stories high.
- There is a fair amount of public and institutional property in Downtown Rolla. This is a situation that should be monitored to prevent an imbalance of non-tax generating properties.
- There is also a fair amount of industrial property in Downtown along with some sparsely-built, underutilized lots. While these areas may represent redevelopment opportunities, they can also lend an open and vacant feeling to parts of Downtown.
- Building conditions vary, and there are a few completely vacant buildings. Some of the vacancies may be difficult to adapt to a retail or restaurant use. The City may need to consider innovative live/work arrangements or redevelopment for these vacancies.
- As expected with a Downtown having a University nearby, there is a significant amount of rental housing in Downtown Rolla.
- Overall accessibility is good in Downtown. The Streetscape elements include ramps and crosswalks, along with benches, landscaping, pavers, and bicycle racks.
- Overhead utility lines are prevalent, existing on most street frontages in Downtown Rolla.



Downtown Rolla Residential Inventory Map.



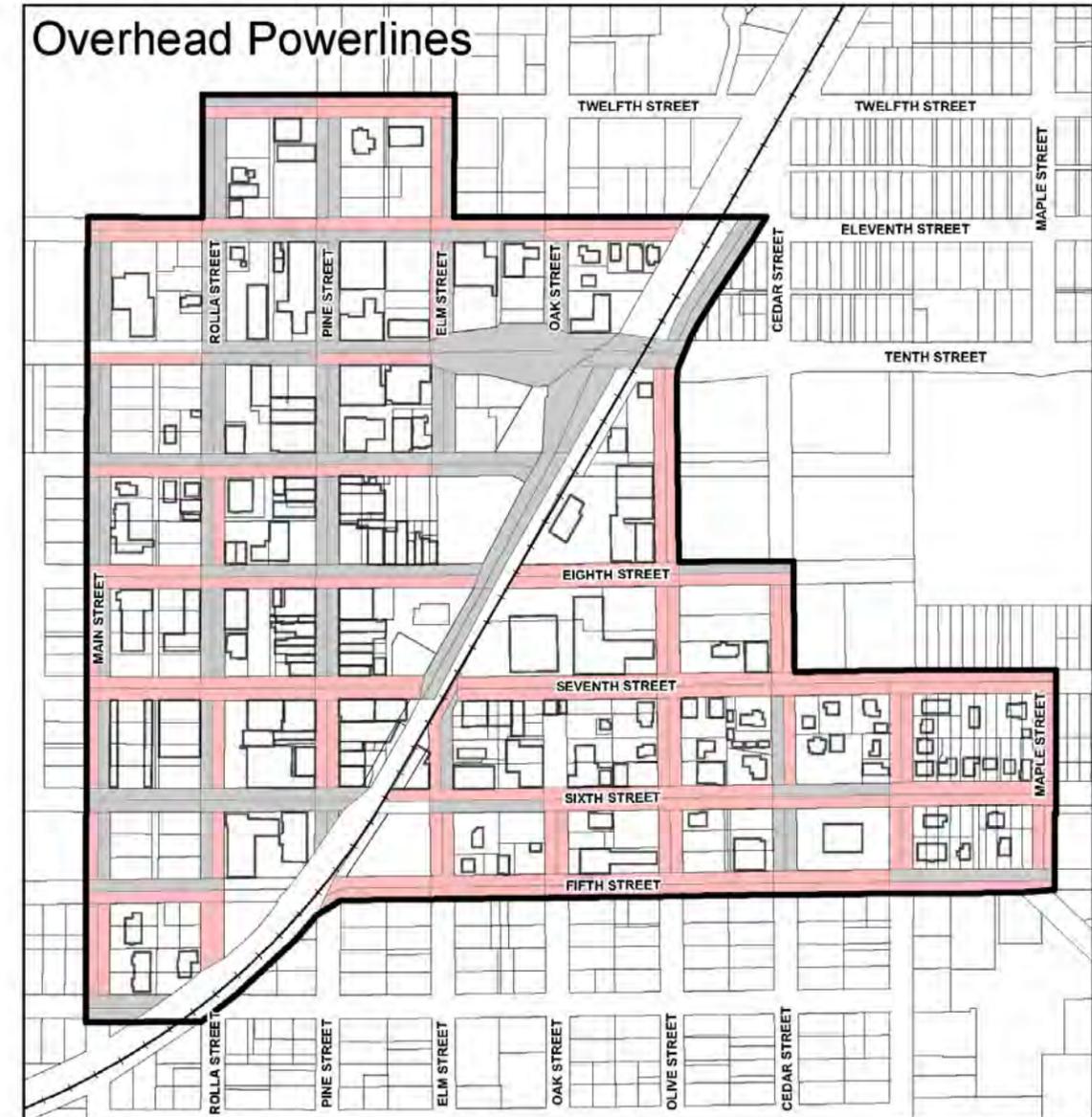
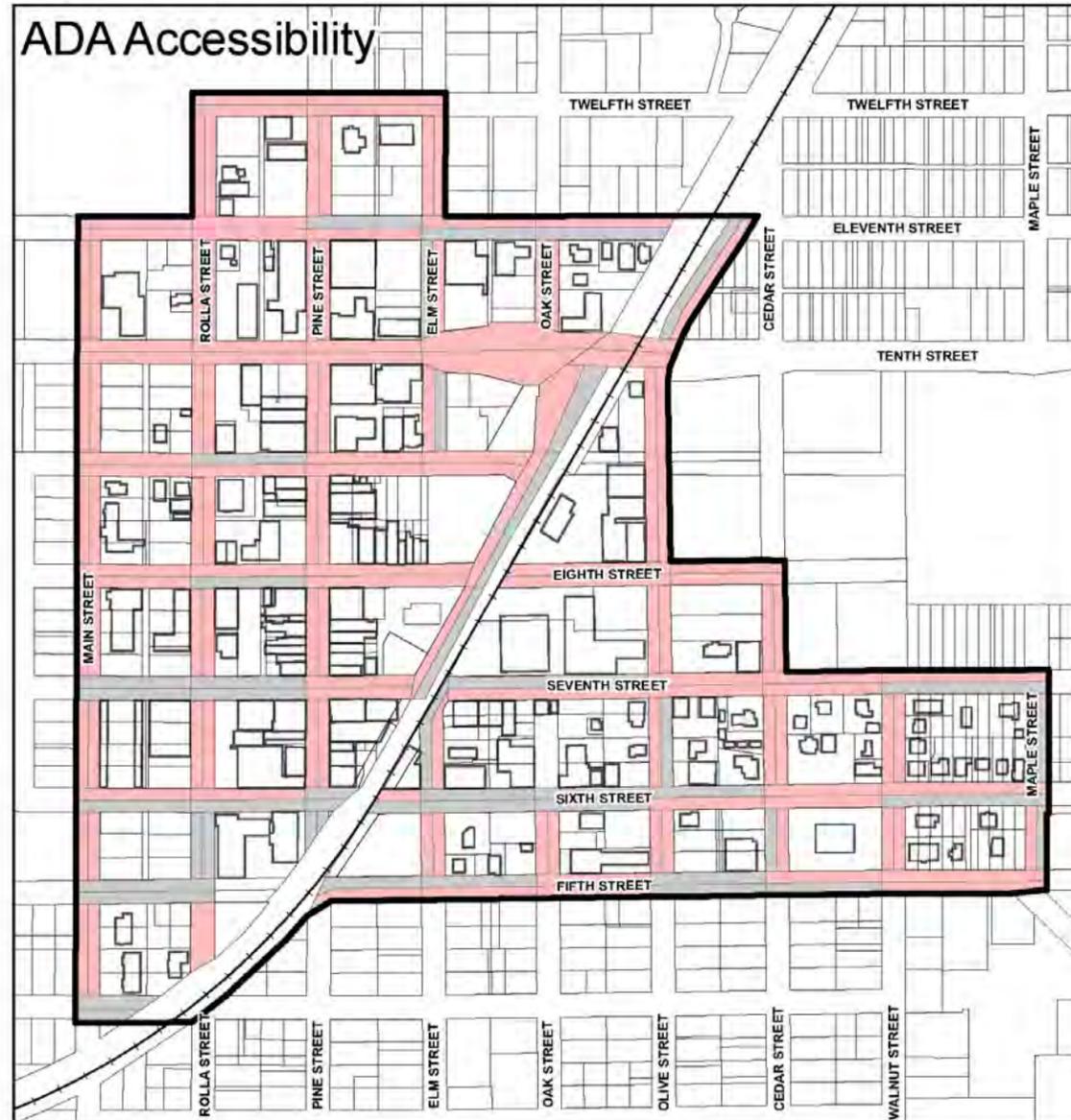
Map of existing land use in Downtown Rolla.

Exhibit 3
Building Conditions

Downtown Rolla Study Area
City of Rolla, Missouri



Map of building conditions in Downtown Rolla.



N
JUNE 2010

0 175 350 700
Feet

Legend

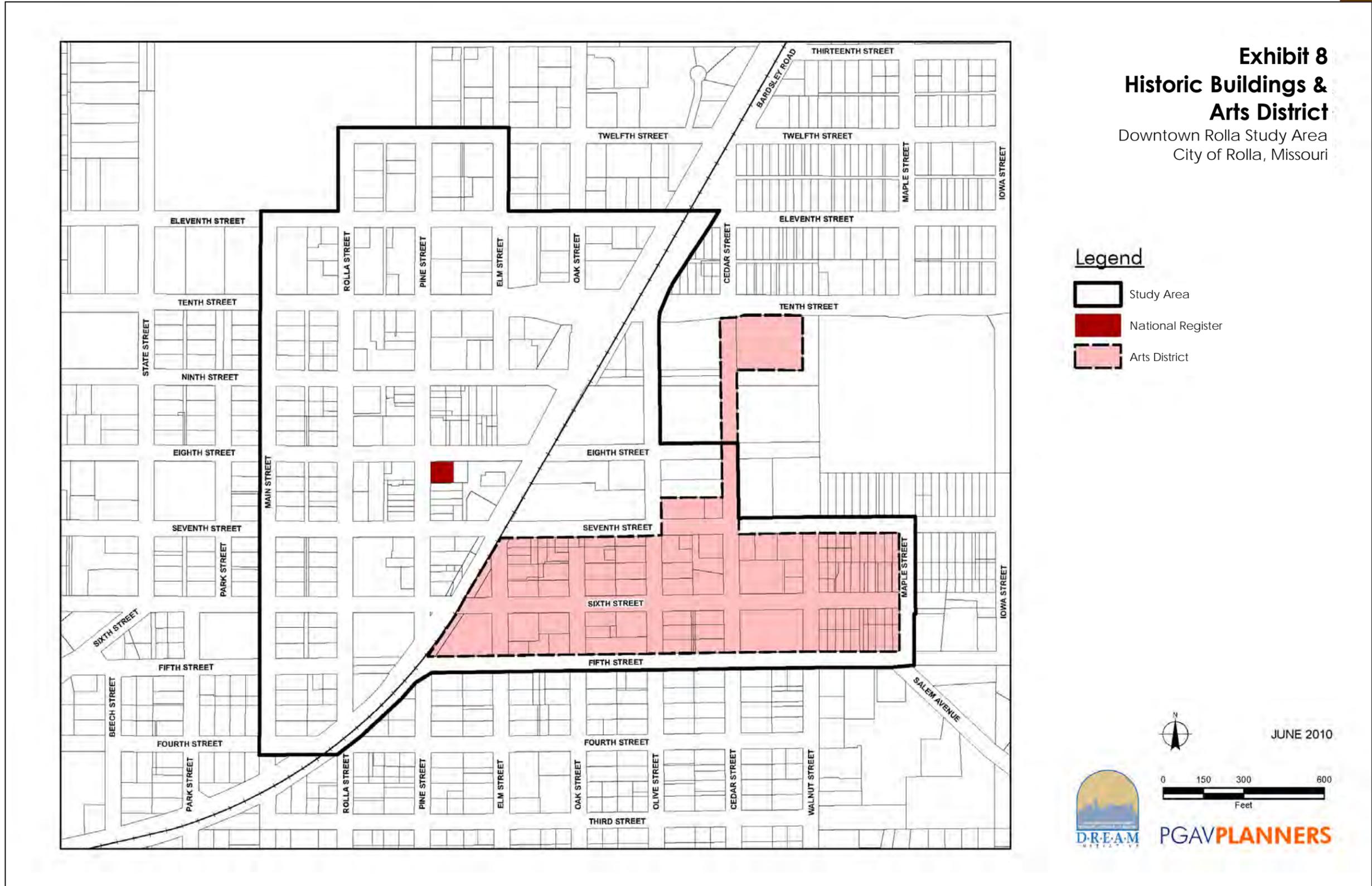
- Study Area
- Accessible Sidewalk and Ramps
- Non Accessible Sidewalk and Ramps

Legend

- Overhead Powerlines
- No Overhead Powerlines

Exhibit 7-c
ADA Accessibility
Overhead Powerlines
Downtown Rolla Study Area
City of Rolla, Missouri

Maps of ADA features and overhead utility line locations in Downtown Rolla.



Map of historic buildings and the Arts District in Downtown Rolla.

COMMUNITY SURVEYS

The Community Survey process was conducted to uncover issues regarding Downtown and learn about the desires and needs of Rolla’s residents and visitors. This task gathered information from community leaders, property and business owners, students, visitors, and residents. The resulting information was used throughout the DREAM process.

Focus Groups and a Visitor Survey were conducted to determine this information. The process and some results of each method are summarized below:

• **Focus Groups**

Four separate focus groups were conducted to engage stakeholders in open discussion regarding Downtown Rolla. The groups consisted of City residents, S&T students, Downtown business owners, and City staff. In each of the groups, discussions included participants’ perceptions of Downtown’s strengths, constraints, and opportunities for development, as well as the groups’ priorities for improvement and desires for new businesses, infrastructure, and services.

Participants generally agreed that Downtown Rolla is moving in the right direction and cited the Benton Square Arts District as evidence of improvement. However some participants felt that Downtown wasn’t moving at all and pointed to vacant storefronts, parking issues, and a lack of a unifying theme. Participants priorities for improvements included adding more retail and entertainment variety, filling vacant spaces, improving and adding parking lots, and adding green spaces and landscaping. Major concerns included the issues of limited business hours, wayfinding signage, and lack of parking.

Participants suggested a variety of new businesses for Downtown. These suggestions focused on entertainment options, dining variety, a bakery/ coffee shop, outdoor seating, sporting goods, vintage clothing, and a grocery store. Participants

felt that new businesses and entertainment needs to have broad appeal to attract residents, visitors, and students. Some of the groups expressed concern regarding the City’s zoning codes unduly restricting Downtown business operations.

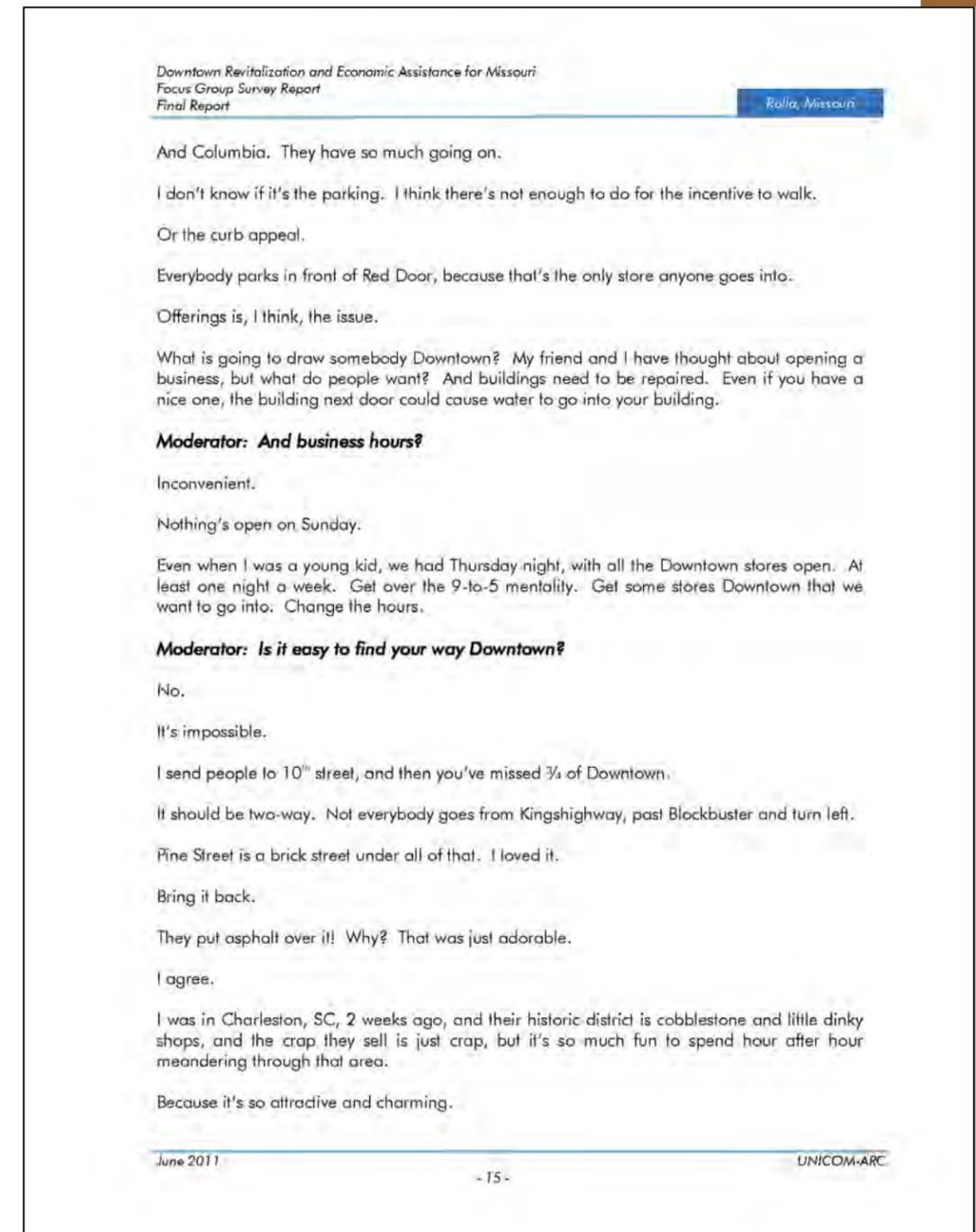
For the complete report, please see the Rolla Focus Group Survey Report from June 2011.

• **Visitor Survey**

In late 2010 and early 2011, volunteers and City staff conducted a survey of visitors at locations throughout Rolla. 147 responses were entered either into a tablet computer or a website provided for the volunteers. The purpose of the survey was to learn about the perception of Downtown Rolla and the needs of its visitors. The responses of people residing within the Rolla zip code were not tabulated. Key points from the survey responses, include:

- About 80% of respondents had visited Downtown Rolla before. However, nearly 58% said they visit Downtown less than once a month.
- A majority of respondents indicated they use Downtown for:
 - ◊ Special Events
 - ◊ Dining
 - ◊ Shopping

Outdoor recreation, conducting business, nightlife/entertainment, and government/post office were each selected by fewer than half of the visitors that responded.

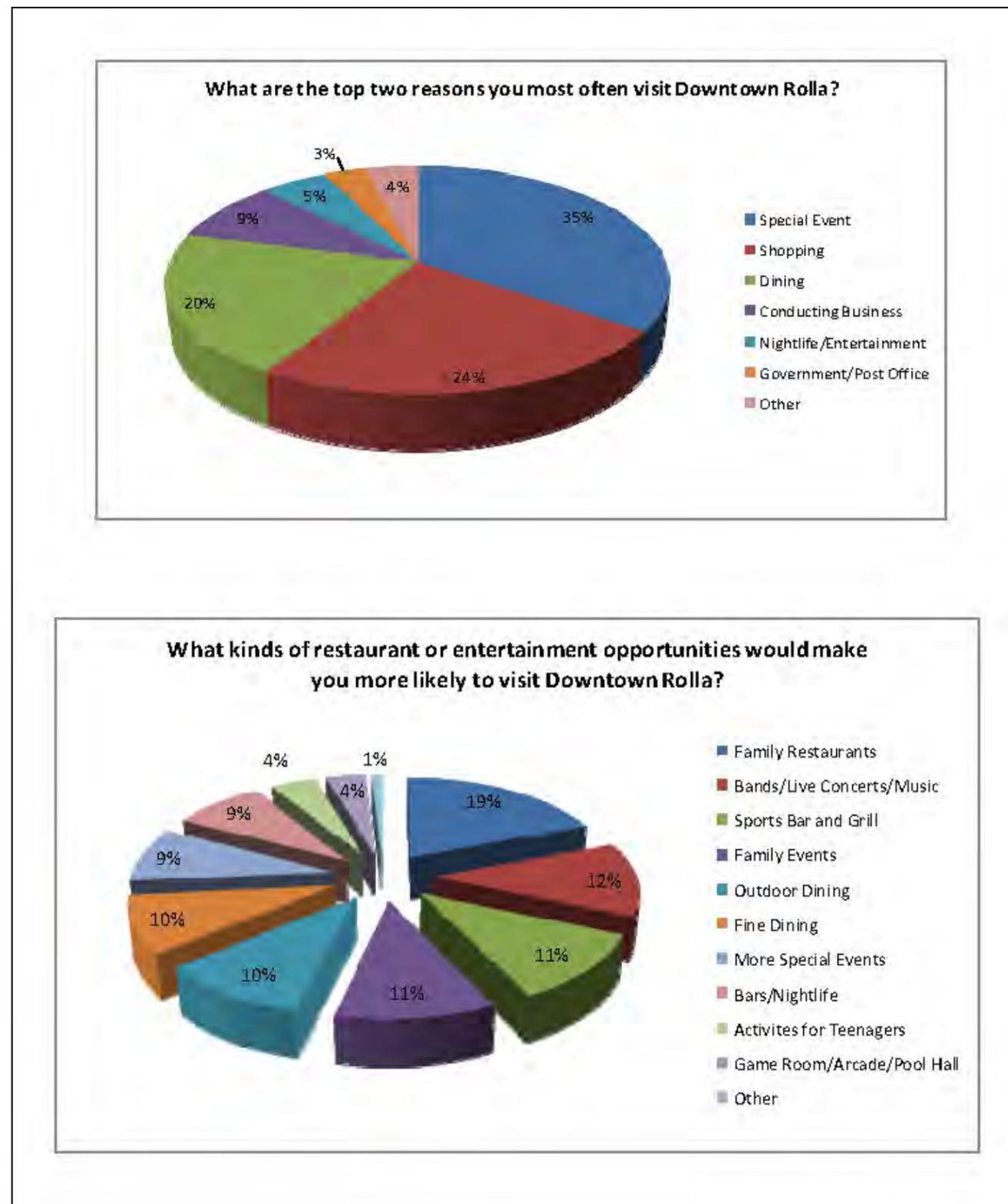


Excerpt of the discussion transcript from the City Residents Focus Group found in the Rolla Focus Group Report.

- Almost half of the respondents (46%) indicated they planned to stay overnight on their visit.
- Over 90% of visitors found Downtown easy to navigate. About 75% found parking convenient. Almost two-thirds found business hours convenient.
- During the daytime hours, over 95% of the respondents felt safe. In the evening, this amount drops to 65%.
- Visitors indicated they felt family restaurants and an ice cream shop would make them more likely to visit Downtown Rolla.
- Nearly half (49%) of the visitors responding indicated that renovation of historic façades would make Downtown Rolla more appealing to visit. More and better parking (29%) and landscaping (27%) followed. All other responses were indicated by no more than 18% of respondents.

For the complete report, please see the Rolla Visitor Survey Report from December 2011.

The RDBA should consider periodically reconvening the Focus Groups and updating the Visitor Survey Report. Additionally, the 2008 Community Survey that the City conducted should be considered for updating. Communication of all survey results to Downtown businesses and community leaders on an ongoing basis is needed to monitor progress and the changing market attitudes toward Downtown Rolla.



Sample charts from the Rolla DREAM Visitor Survey.

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

This section of the Strategic Plan provides recommendations regarding the streetscape, parking areas, utilities, parks, plazas, and other physical public aspects of Downtown Rolla. The intersections, gathering spaces, streets, and sidewalks comprise the outdoor “living room” of Downtown and enhancement to these elements is critical to attract private investors. The City will send a strong message that Downtown is important and holds great potential by improving and maintaining public elements.

This task resulted in a design of a pocket park for the Library along Pine Street. Illustrations of this plan were provided to the City and RDBA, as well as presented to the Library Board. The design is provided in the Implementation Section on page 28 of this plan.

Other recommendations to enhance the overall public environment in Downtown Rolla, include:

- **Coordination of Public Improvements with an Overall, Complementary, Design Theme.** Existing Downtown public improvements, such as the Pine Street streetscape elements are functional and well-designed.

The City should work to expand the existing streetscape design to other streets in Downtown. The east to west connecting streets should now become a focus, particularly Sixth Street to connect Pine Street with the Arts District and Benton Square. The City should also continue to work to improve public parking lots. There are several existing public lots. However, some are in poor condition and most require better pedestrian improvements to connect them to Pine Street.

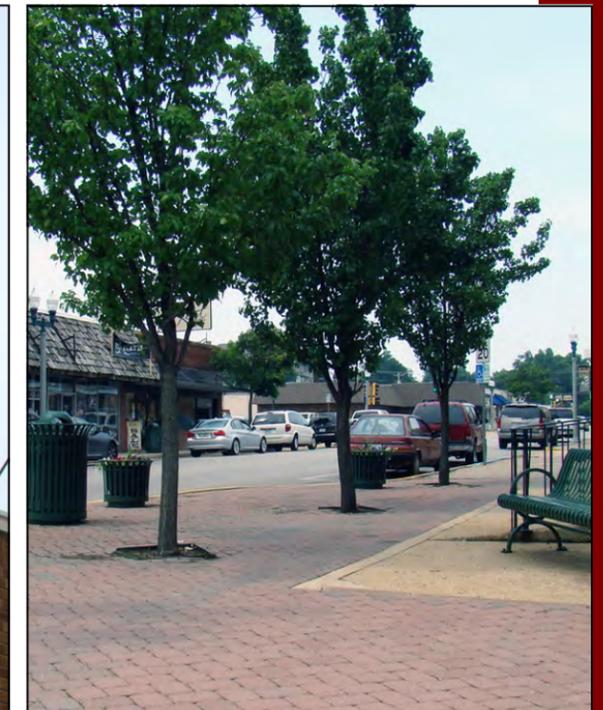
As future public improvements are designed, it is critical that new landscaping, lighting, and fixtures match or complement existing elements. Bicycle racks and pedestrian gathering plazas should be standard streetscape features in Downtown Rolla streetscape expansion plans.

- **Develop Wayfinding Signage**
There are some wayfinding signs throughout Downtown. However, an improved wayfinding signage design and system can help direct the visitor to Downtown attractions, as well as help establish and support the brand of Downtown. Additionally, there are no gateway signs that announce to the traveler that they have arrived in Downtown.

Activity centers such as such as City Hall, The Rolla Band Shell Missouri S&T, Benton Square, the Rolla Public Library, and the attractions in the Arts District could benefit greatly from improved directional signage. The traffic flowing through Downtown to nearby locations such as the Phelps County Courthouse and Rolla High School would also benefit from some wayfinding signage. Effective wayfinding will also improve parking usage, lessen traffic congestion, and welcome visitors. The RDBA should work with the City to design a wayfinding system to include signage from Interstate 44 and Highway 63, gateway signs upon reaching Downtown, and directional signs along major traffic arteries at key intersections. Potential locations for signage are illustrated in the Implementation Section on Page 27.

Funding for wayfinding improvements could be provided by a stable incentive mechanism, such as the proposed SBD. The RDBA and the City should develop the plan and continue to pursue funding sources for future implementation.

Other public infrastructure recommendations can be found in the Schedule of Recommendations on Page 31.



Examples of existing streetscape elements found in Downtown Rolla.

RETAIL MARKET

Retail development is an important and visible component of a successful downtown. The Retail Market Analysis undertaken as part of the DREAM Initiative identified challenges and opportunities for retail development, including an analysis of retail supply and demand in Rolla. The Retail Analysis identified a total of about 498,000 square feet of first-floor commercial space in Downtown Rolla in August of 2013. This space included:

- 12,100 square feet of restaurant (650 vacant)
- 82,100 square feet of retail (9,900 vacant)
- 143,100 square feet of office/svc. (14,750 vacant)
- 52,100 square feet of mixed-use (2,100 vacant)

Of the total occupied space, there is about 83,700 square feet of restaurant or retail space generating about \$8.3 million in sales taxes. Including the existing vacant space and residential uses, and depending on the make-up of the mixed-use space, almost 80% of Downtown space does not generate sales tax. The public/institutional space represents just under 10% of Downtown space that does not generate sales or property tax.

At the time of the Retail Analysis, the existing occupied retail space (not including auto, gasoline, groceries, or non-store retailers) was generating about \$89 in retail sales per square foot and the existing restaurants were generating about \$167 per square foot. Based on this data, if Downtown Rolla could fill the 27,400 square feet of vacancy, it could mean an increase of \$2.5 to \$4.6 million in additional annual sales.

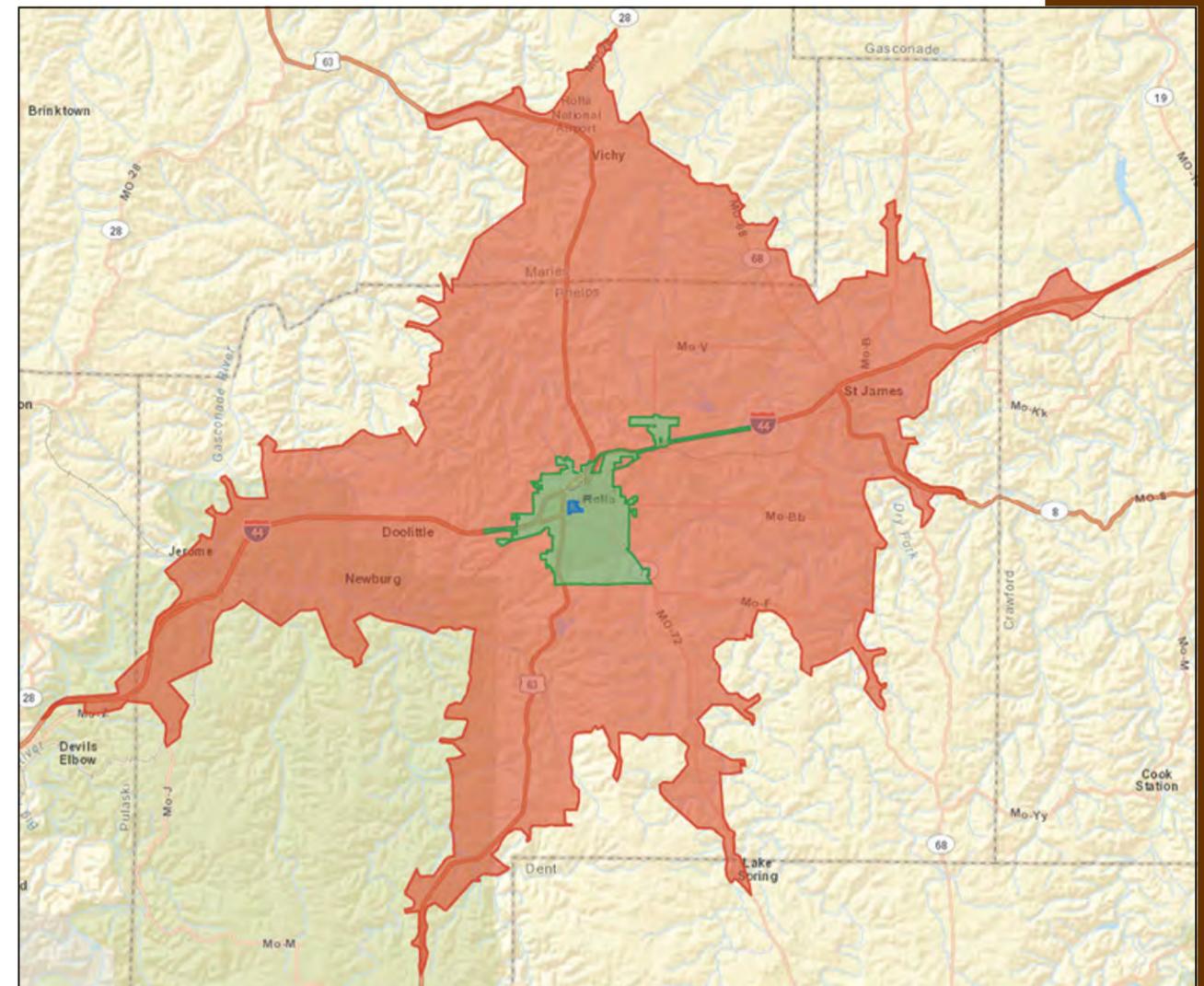
Retail demand is analyzed by examining retail spending data for households in a primary trade area (the City limits of Rolla) and a secondary trade area (households within a 20-minute drive of Downtown Rolla). A map of these trade areas is shown on this page. Comparing sales data to demand data provides a measure of the performance of the Downtown retail sector and identifies unmet retail demand in specific categories of products. Using this methodology, unmet demand was identified across several retail sectors. Downtown leaders could create economic development polices to attract new stores offering these types of products, and/or encourage existing merchants to adapt their stores to add these types of products.

The retail analysis indicates that the amount of unmet retail demand could support over 250,000 additional square feet of retail/restaurant space. However, this amount is significantly more than the amount of existing vacancy or that could be readily converted to retail/restaurant use. This situation serves to illustrate that retail demand potential exists for Downtown Rolla businesses to capture. The analysis indicates that this unmet retail demand exists for stores providing products in the categories of:

- Health & Personal Care Items
- Clothing
- Miscellaneous Retail Items
- Sporting Goods/Hobbies/Musical Instruments
- Shoes
- Jewelry, Luggage, and Leather Goods
- Special Food Services
- Home Furnishings

While the Focus Group participants and the Visitor Survey respondents both identified restaurants as one of the most desired businesses, there is little demonstrated unmet demand for this category. There may be opportunities for existing Rolla restaurants to expand or relocate to a Downtown location, but a new restaurant may find the Rolla market difficult to enter.

To complete the retail demand analysis, existing vacant locations were compared with potential store types. The results are illustrated in a Retail Opportunities Map, shown on Page 20. Specific store types were proposed for each vacant location. However, this map provides just one possible solution to fill vacant space and is meant to encourage City leaders to consider the impacts of new businesses as they locate in Downtown.



Downtown Rolla Primary and Secondary Trade Areas.

In addition to recommendations for existing vacant buildings, the DREAM Retail Analysis suggests that there should be a Downtown focus for economic development incentives. Downtown is at a competitive disadvantage with the businesses nearer to Interstate 44. By developing incentive mechanisms to attract businesses to Downtown, the City helps level the playing field between business locations. This will also give the City the ability to help existing businesses expand in Downtown, rather than relocate to a bigger location elsewhere.

As Downtown revitalization occurs and retail demand increases, the City should also work to decrease the amount of non-retail space in prime, first-floor locations. There are currently several industrial, office, and service uses located in Downtown. While these are important businesses and uses, the City should monitor this situation and attempt to adjust the business mix, if possible.

All of the recommendations for improving Downtown Rolla's retail sector are found in the Rolla DREAM Retail Market Analysis Report from August 2013. Primary recommendations include:

- **Strengthen Existing Businesses**

The RDBA should continue to work with the City and Chamber to develop programs that will help existing businesses to better serve their customers. Information and techniques to deal with marketing, products, presentation, displays, customer service and expanded hours of operation are important for businesses to succeed. This strategy should be the first priority for the RDBA, above attraction efforts.

Some of Downtown Rolla's retailers have been in existence for many years and could benefit from networking with other operators, fresh ideas, information regarding the changing markets of Rolla, and a support structure with which to discuss their issues and needs. The RDBA should be involved in all strategies as the lead Downtown organization.

Many Downtown Rolla existing retailers cater to the students of the nearby Missouri University of Science & Technology (S&T). This is an important business strategy, but students are generally not very discerning or demanding regarding their retail purchases. A business that relies on this market too much may suffer from an imbalance of inferior product, lose appeal to other markets, or be inordinately susceptible to the cyclical variations during the school term. Improved retail products and stores will benefit Downtown and all of its markets. The RDBA should encourage merchants to focus on store aesthetics and products that will attract a broad base of customers.



The Retail Opportunities Map from the Rolla Retail Market Analysis.

- **Encourage Spaces Better Suited to Retail Development**

Some of the available properties in Downtown Rolla are not appealing to retail uses or are located away from the main traffic areas. There are also several industrial uses that may conflict with retail stores or restaurants. There are some underutilized lots that could be completely redeveloped.

The City and RDBA should monitor the mix of businesses in Downtown and seek to improve the building stock through inspections and zoning enforcement. By providing a focus on preserving prime, ground-floor spaces on Pine and Rolla Streets for retail and restaurant uses, Downtown Rolla should be able to provide a variety of vibrant activities.

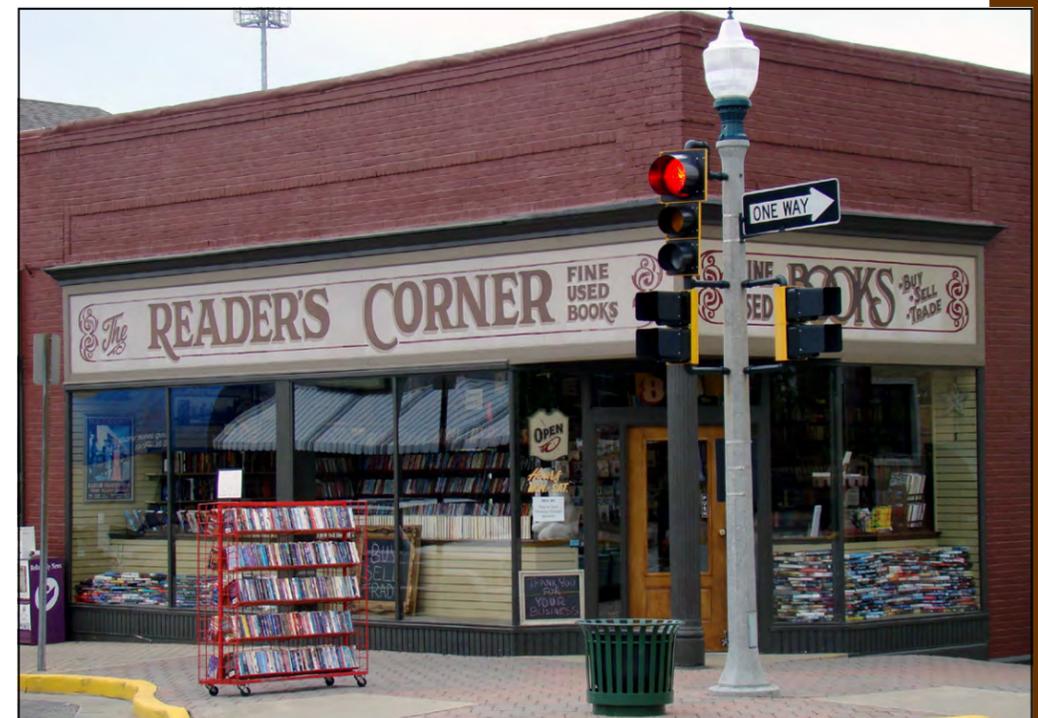
The RDBA can assist by helping to communicate City expectations to Downtown businesses and property owners. A series of seminars could feature City staff members discussing any changes in inspection procedures. The RDBA could also encourage informal meetings between key property owners and City staff to clear-up building issues.

- **Encourage Retail Expansion and Entrepreneurs**

As Downtown leaders work to keep vacant locations occupied, there should also be a focus on identifying and cultivating entrepreneurs from the community. The RDBA and Chamber should consider training programs such as Operation Jumpstart (www.operationjumpstart.com) as well as meetings and events to introduce local bankers and potential investors to new start-up business people.

Variety is a key element for a vibrant Downtown that draws customers. Consumers will travel greater distances for a better variety. Downtown Rolla primarily competes with shopping areas within the City that are located closer to Interstate 44. Downtown can broaden its retail variety by working to address the categories of unmet retail demand noted on page 19. The categories represent an opportunity for existing

merchants to expand their sales floors or add product lines. The RDBA and Chamber should continue to collaborate to provide this encouragement and information to Downtown’s businesses.



Examples of retail uses in Downtown Rolla.

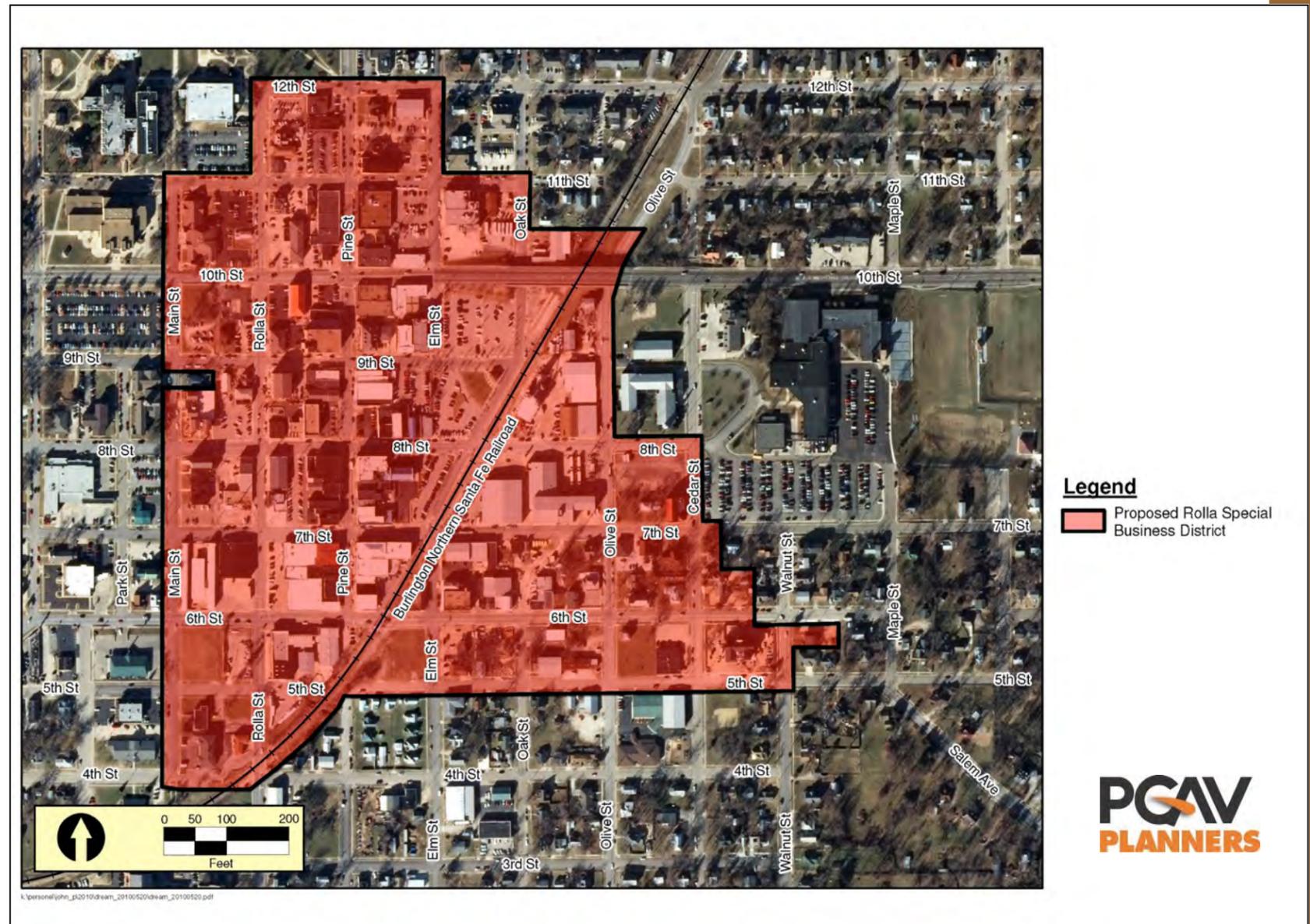
FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

The Financial Assistance Review analyzed several funding mechanisms that are available to Downtown Rolla for business development, and public or private investments. The intent of this DREAM task was to provide information on funding concepts for potential projects and programs, along with the preliminary financial data necessary to support the further exploration of these incentives. The DREAM Financial Assistance Review is focused on obtaining a stable and flexible funding source for the RDBA as it pursues projects and programs for Downtown.

As noted, this task combined with the DREAM Organizational Structure Review and resulted in a Special Business District (SBD) study. The SBD has been the preferred choice of incentive mechanisms by the City and is the focus of this section. However, other potential mechanisms reviewed include a Community Improvement District (CID), Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District, and a Local Option Economic Development Sales Tax (EDS). While the review does not make definitive recommendations about which tools the City should establish, this Strategic Plan acknowledges that some specific funding source or sources should be explored to support ongoing Downtown revitalization efforts.

The decision on which financial tools are to be used is determined, in part, by the nature of potential projects and the willingness of local officials and decision makers to engage in public-private partnerships. Regardless of the specific financing mechanism, the general goal of DREAM recommendations is to leverage public funds to attract private investment that leads to job creation, business growth, and an attractive Downtown. Information on the SBD study, a CID, an EDS, and a TIF includes:

- **Special Business District (SBD)**
The map at right shows the boundary considered in the SBD study initiated by the City. This area is slightly smaller than the DREAM Boundary shown on page 5 and generally removes some of the residential properties along the eastern edge of the DREAM Boundary. The proposed SBD includes about 35



Map of proposed Downtown Rolla Special Business District.

blocks with 75 property owners and about 130 businesses. The SBD study included the statutorily required findings for the establishment of the SBD, including a demonstration of need for the services and promotional efforts proposed.

The proposed SBD considers a real-estate property tax levy of .50 per \$100 of equalized assessed valuation which is projected to generate about \$30,000 annually. This funding is expected to be used for RDBA marketing and economic development activities, the Library Plaza project, Downtown wayfinding signage, streetscape improvements, building façades, and the establishment and improvement of a Farmer’s Market. With the completion of the SBD study in 2010, the City has the information needed to establish this revenue source. The City and RDBA should continue to build the political will needed to establish the SBD as proposed.

- **Community Improvement District (CID)**

With a CID, the municipality, in cooperation with property owners, can establish an additional sales tax within the District boundary, an additional property tax levy, or some combination of both. The Financial Assistance Review considered a CID for the DREAM Boundary as shown on Page 5. The funds generated by a CID may be used for a variety of public facilities or improvements, and programs and services such as, business and tourism promotions, refuse collection, and maintenance of public facilities. A CID forms a new administrative board to oversee the district and has involved establishment procedures. The CID Board should have some overlap with the RDBA Board. The RDBA will also need to provide the necessary public outreach to obtain petition signatures.

Based on historical tax data for Downtown, the Financial Assistance Review estimates that a one percent CID sales tax would generate about \$120,000 annually. The amount of this funding is anticipated to grow as Downtown revitalization efforts increase business density and sales. The CID could also be structured to levy a \$1.00 property tax assessment to generate another \$60,000 annually. A CID also carries an annual administration cost.

- **Local Option Economic Development Sales Tax (EDS)**

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

The Financial Assistance Review projects EDS sales tax revenue for the City of Rolla based on the assumption of a one-half of one percent sales tax, and a structure of not more than 25% for Administration and at least 20% for City-wide economic development activities such as:

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

The remaining 55% could be dedicated to Downtown projects in the areas of:

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



The benefits of any incentive district should be promoted. The above sign is found in the City of Kirksville, Missouri.

Based on historical data, the financial review estimates that Rolla could generate \$1.7 million in total annual tax revenue from an EDS; with potentially up to \$935,000 dedicated to the Downtown economic development activities noted above. This revenue would be expected to grow over time. The City could also borrow against this revenue by issuing bonds to fund a large project.

Raising the City sales tax must be weighed carefully and would require voter approval. The RDBA will need to champion the effort and communicate that the benefits of a more vibrant Downtown with greater retail variety and visitor draw will far outweigh any loss of business due to a higher sales tax rate.

• **Tax Increment Financing (TIF)**

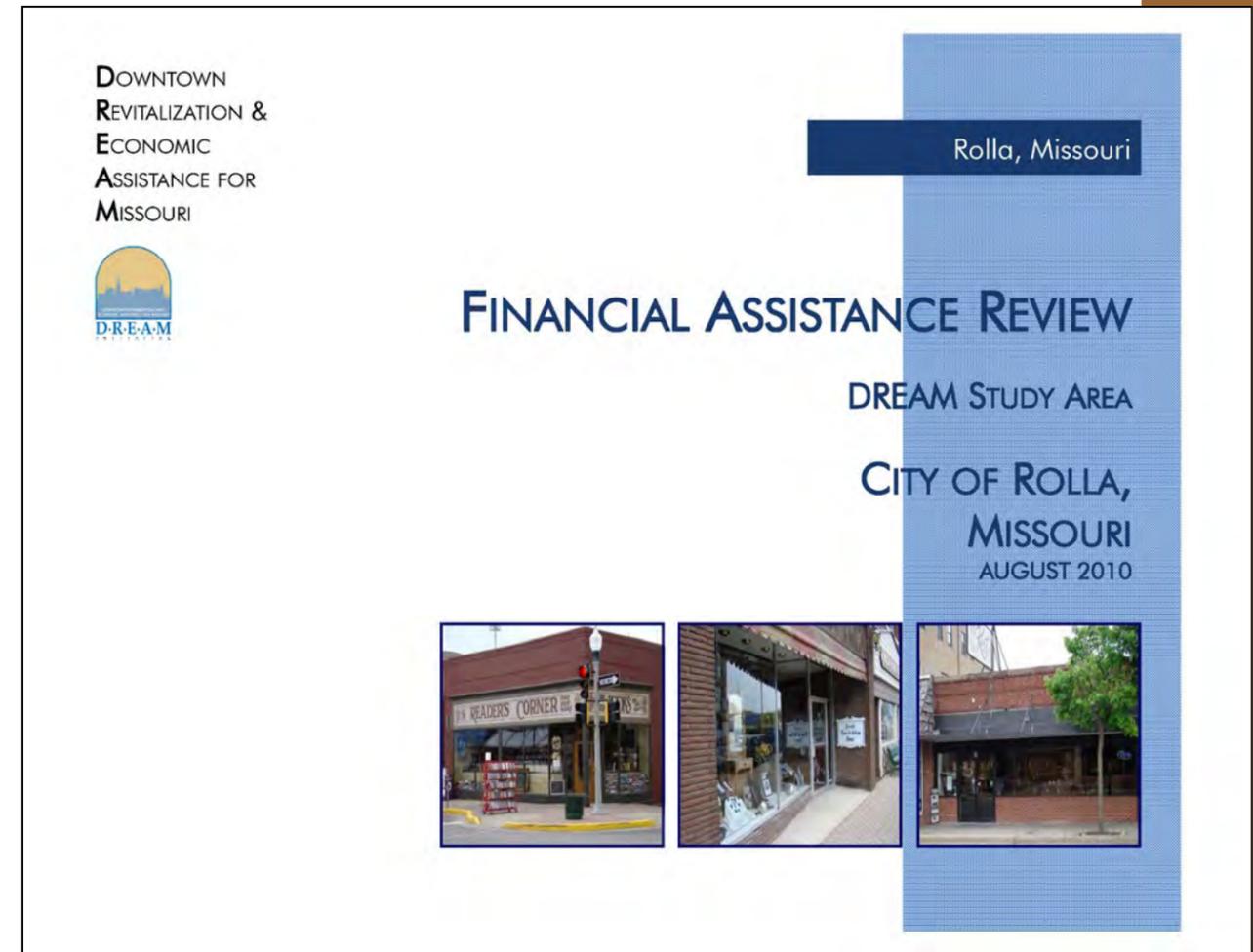
A TIF District leverages future public tax revenues in a specific area that is determined to be “blighted” or a “conservation” area, and that is not expected to develop on its own. In a TIF, property tax, sales tax, and certain other tax revenue from new improvements that occur after establishment the TIF would go into a fund to be used by the City to pay project costs. No existing annual revenues generated at the time of TIF establishment are captured for TIF purposes.

The City of Rolla 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, to fund public infrastructure improvements, façade improvements, and other public and private projects throughout that area. The Financial Assistance Review includes revenue projections based on the assumption that a TIF would be established for the DREAM Boundary area. In this

scenario, renovation and private development would gradually increase the equalized assessed valuation and generate more property tax revenue for the TIF fund, in addition to capturing sales tax increment.

Based on historical tax data for the DREAM Boundary, a TIF district has little ability to generate income until business density and sales in Downtown increase and create the incremental tax revenues. However, the TIF revenue could eventually generate about \$50,000 to \$150,000 annually, depending on redevelopment activities and the structure of the TIF district.

Detailed statutory requirements and procedures regarding incentive tools available to Rolla are provided in the *DREAM Financial Assistance Review* from August 2010.



Cover of *Rolla's Special Business District Study*.

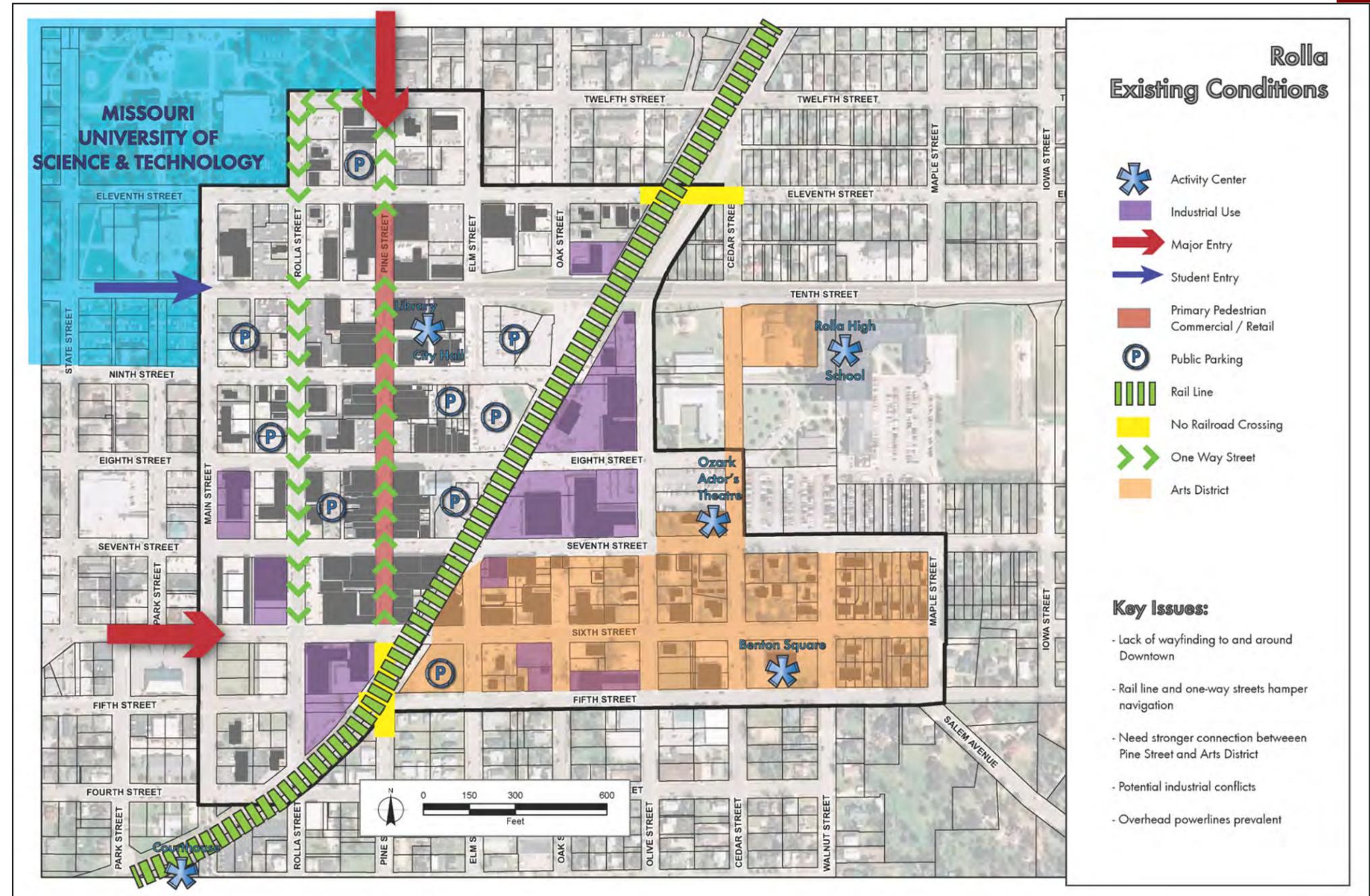


IMPLEMENTATION

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

Included in this section is concept mapping, illustrations for the Library Plaza project, and an implementation schedule. These elements will give community leaders a catalog of action items that should comprise the agenda for Downtown revitalization over the next few years.

One of the steps in developing the Strategic Plan was to prepare an Existing Conditions Map (shown at right) that highlights the location of key features, challenges, and opportunities for Downtown Rolla. Specifically the map denotes the location of activity centers, industrial uses, entryways into Downtown, the primary commercial area, public parking, the rail line, and key street features such as one-way traffic or streets that do not connect due to the rail line. The map also shows the location of Missouri University of Science & Technology, as well as how Benton Square and the Arts District is disconnected from the primary retail area. The map is intended to provide an overall view to help set the planning context for Downtown Rolla and the more detailed set of tasks previously discussed in this Plan.



Map of existing planning conditions in Downtown Rolla.

On page 27 is an illustration that provides the sub area development concepts of the Downtown Rolla Strategic Plan. This map demonstrates, in general terms, the various identities and characteristics of the neighborhoods that comprise Downtown. These sub areas include:

- The primary commercial corridor along Pine and Rolla Streets, north of Sixth Street. This area is the core of the City and embodies the image of Rolla. The preservation and expansion of this area is critical for the success of Downtown. The businesses are primarily commercial and retail. The buildings are typically multi-story buildings that are historic in nature; many in need of maintenance. The markets for the businesses in this area include residents, visitors, Downtown employees, and S&T students, alumni, and visitors.
- A redevelopment area between Rolla and Main Streets, that stretches from the rail line to S&T. This area includes a large amount of land that is vacant, underutilized, inhabited by obsolete or subpar structures, or used as parking. There are also several public and institutional uses in this area that provide employees and activity, but often include sizeable parking lots that are seldom used. The area also provides a transition from the historic Downtown buildings into the S&T campus buildings; including the needed parking lots that serve both the University and Downtown businesses.

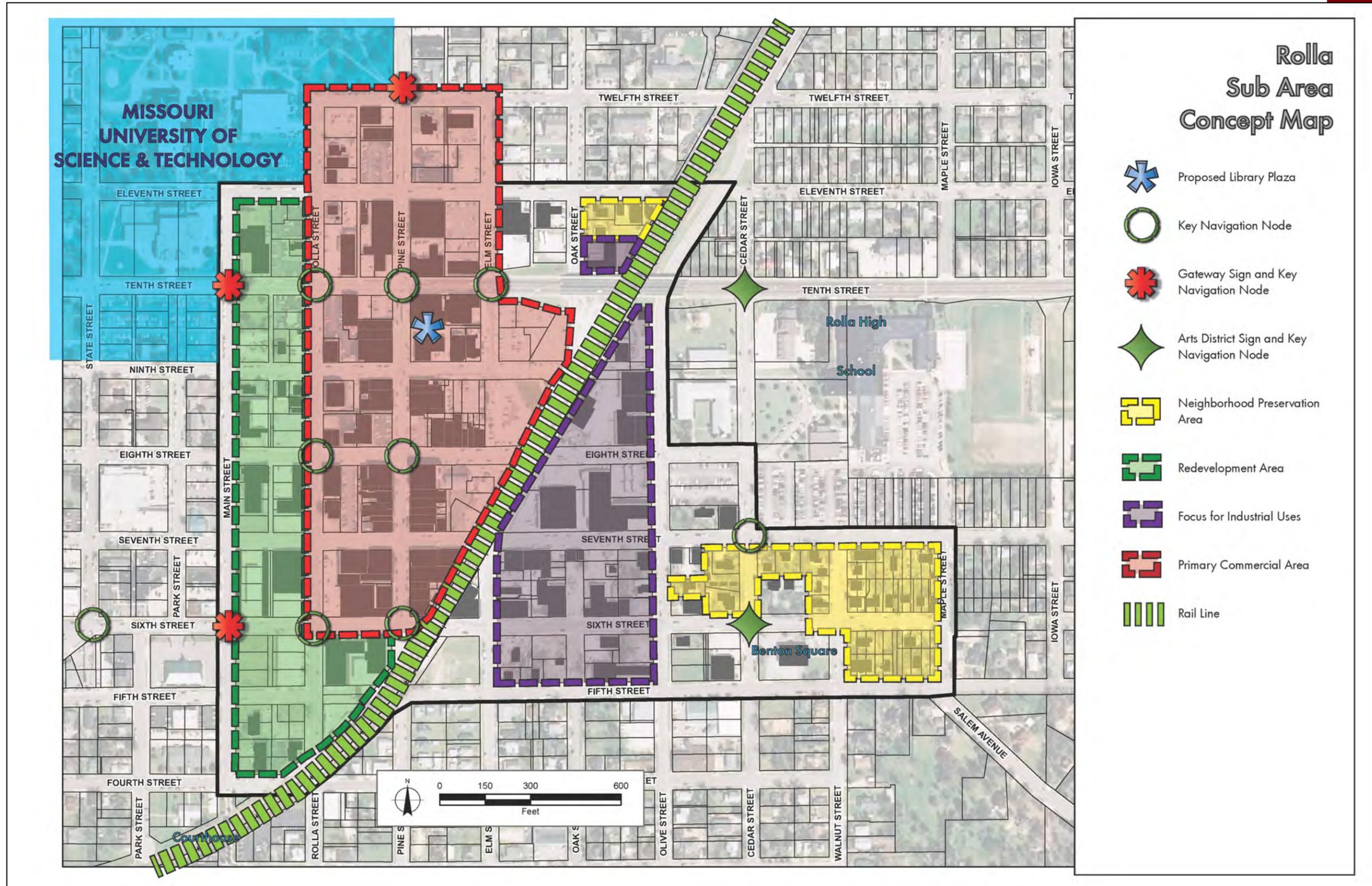
The potential for this area is great, but will likely go unrealized unless the City and RDBA can identify and encourage a developer for a few large projects. Plans should be advanced for infill construction that will provide multi-story, mixed-use buildings set close to the street. The City should encourage architecture and styles that complement the existing buildings along Pine Street. The intent should be for Downtown to develop an east/west connection that helps to draw the S&T campus closer to the core of Downtown. This City and RDBA could also work to establish a development corporation that can assemble this property to help attract an innovative and amenable developer.

- Neighborhood Preservation areas around the Arts District and along Eleventh Street. These preservation areas have been identified due to their existing residential land use and their identification as multi-family districts in the City's zoning code. The smaller area at Oak and Eleventh Streets is anticipated to transition to Community Commercial use, as noted in the City's Future Land Use Plan. The area around Benton Square in the Arts District should be preserved, along with the residential properties just outside the DREAM Boundary.

Residential uses will help support the retail and restaurant businesses in the Commercial Area. However, these neighborhoods are not directly adjacent to the primary commercial area. The Benton Square neighborhood is separated from the primary commercial area by the rail line and the industrial area.

- An existing industrial area, primarily to the southeast of the rail line. As noted, this area separates the Benton Square area from the Downtown commercial core. The buildings located in this area will be difficult to adapt to other uses and the businesses that currently operate in this area are important to the City's economy.

The sub area concept map also shows the location of the proposed Library Plaza, important navigation nodes, and potential wayfinding and gateway signage locations.



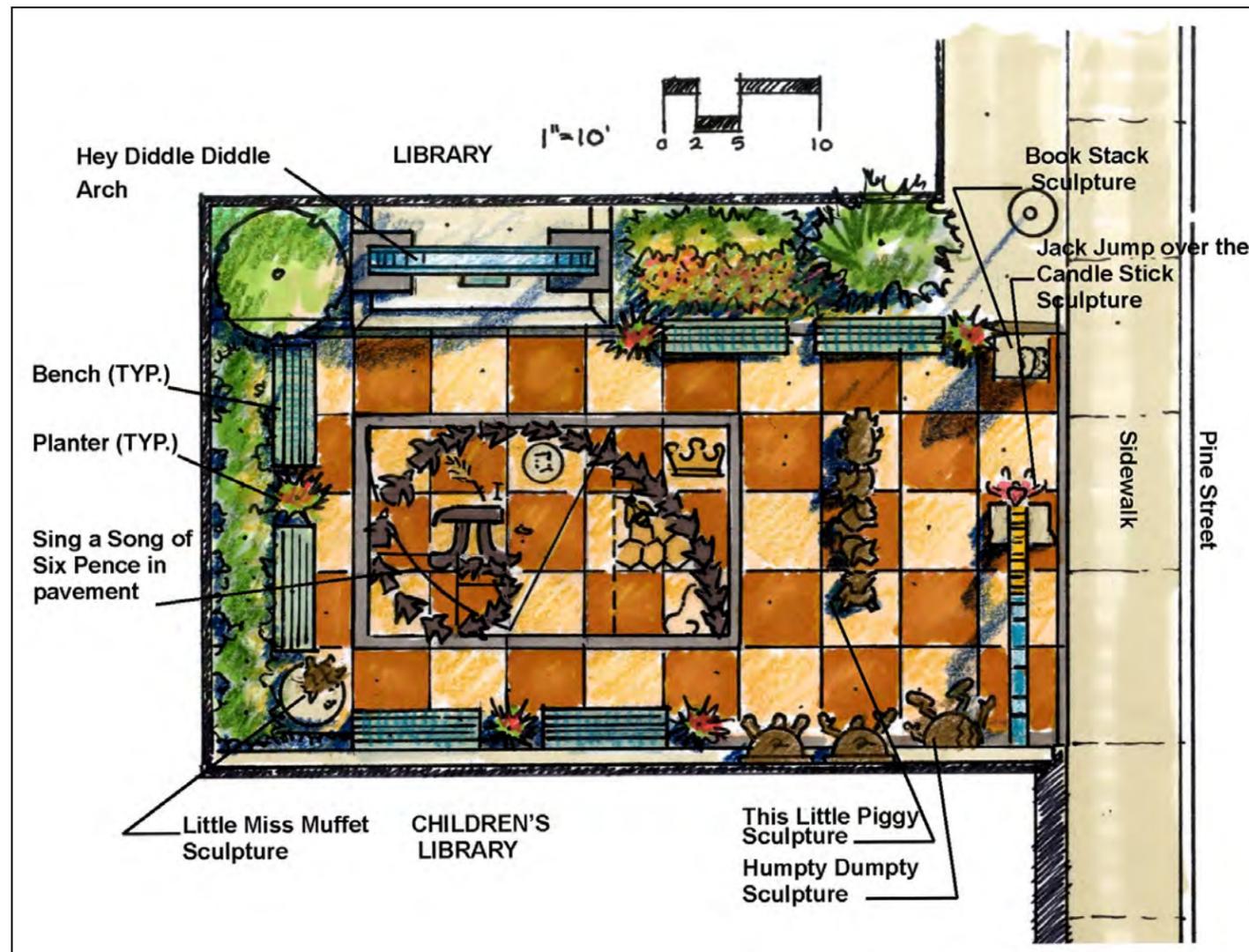
LIBRARY PLAZA

The DREAM program in Rolla resulted in a design concept for a small Downtown lot located on Pine Street, between the Main Library and the Children’s Library (as noted on the Sub Area Concept Map on Page 27). Several illustrations and preliminary cost estimates of this concept were developed and presented to the City and Library Board. The project is estimated to cost \$150,000, depending on utility work and site drainage required. A photo of the existing conditions at the site is shown at right and concept illustrations are shown below.

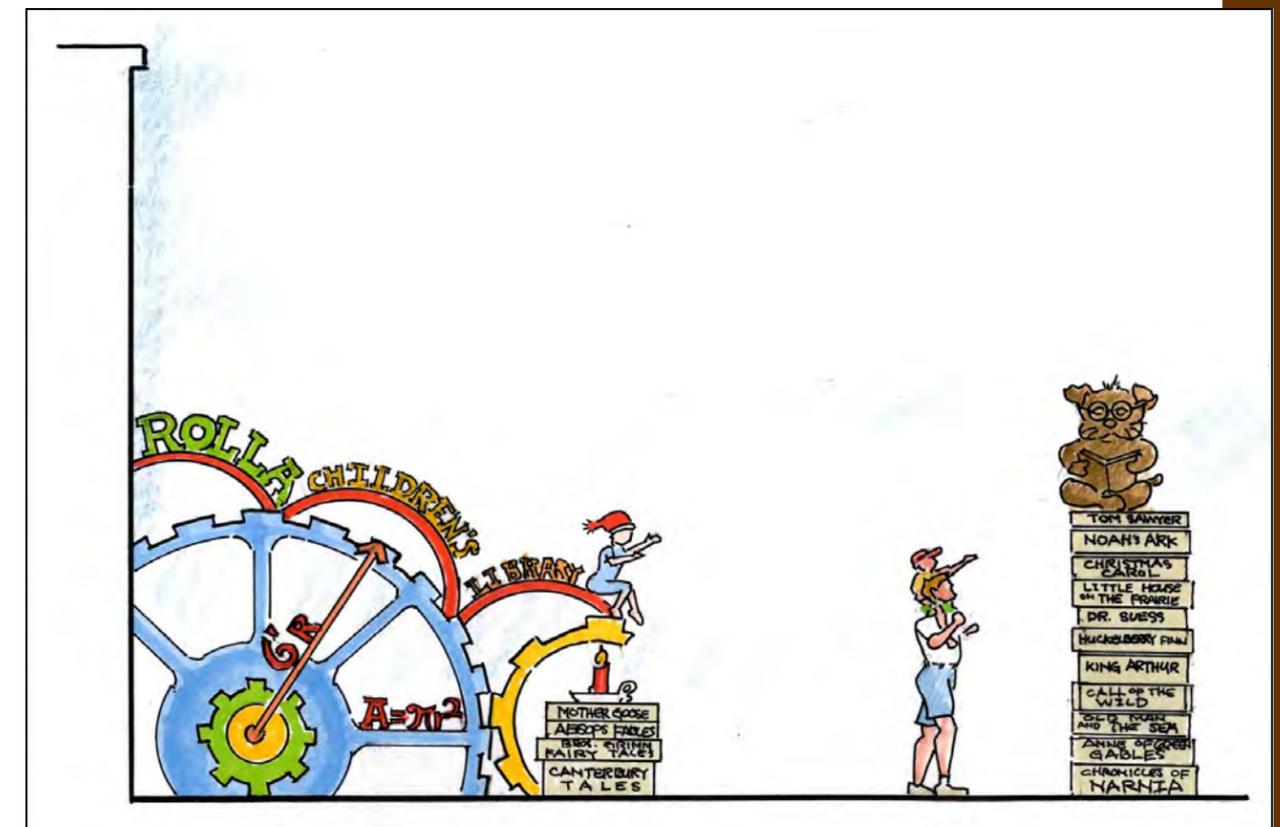
The City and RDBA have sought grant funding and should continue to pursue this project. This type of public art can provide an important rallying project for Downtown and will become a popular meeting place for visitors and residents.



Conditions of the proposed site for the Library Plaza along Pine Street in Downtown Rolla.



Proposed Library Plaza site plan above; proposed entryway elevation at right.



SCHEDULE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

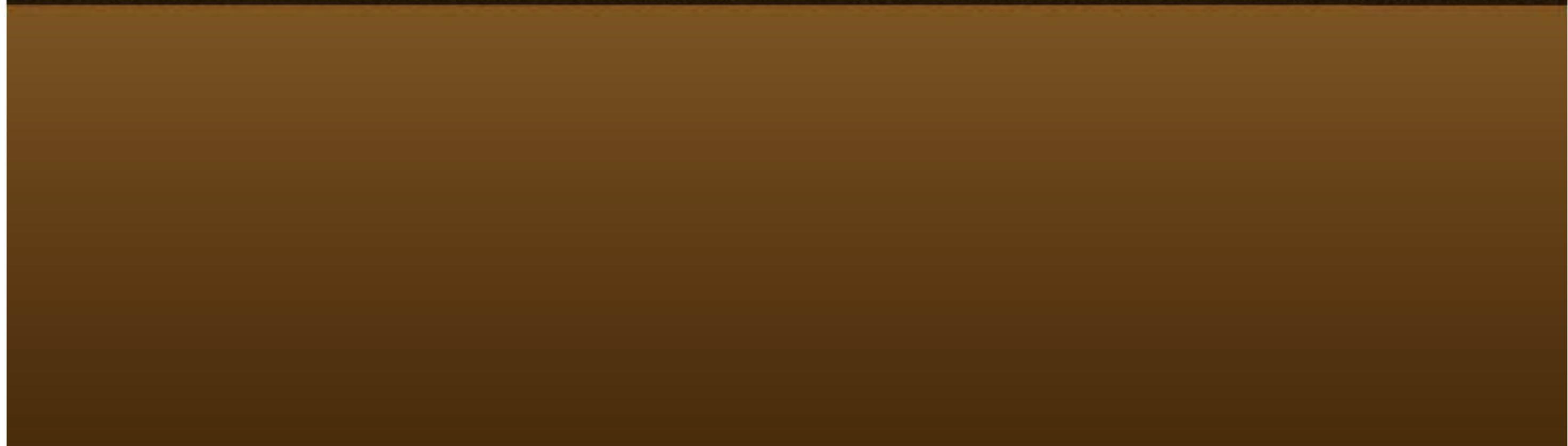
Organizational Structure						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
1 Hold a Downtown Rolla retreat or joint meeting.	All groups should periodically get together to discuss the services they are each providing for Downtown, the services they think Downtown needs that are not being provided, and the services they would each like to provide. The case for Main Street revitalization needs to be the focus of this meeting/all day retreat. The City can start this process, but make it clear that leadership needs to emerge from the RDBA.	City	Rolla Downtown Business District (RDBA), Chamber, etc.	3rd Quarter 2014	The RDBA has been in operation for years. This is not the establishment of a new group, but rather an adjustment of necessary roles regarding Downtown and a show of support. The point of the retreat should be to refine the RDBA mission, work plan, and volunteer capacity. An impartial facilitator from S&T could be employed to help conduct this meeting.	
2 Create a joint RDBA - Chamber leadership development program.	The collaboration of the City, RDBA, and Chamber should ensure that leaders are cultivated from the ranks of the organizations. A once-a-week program that discusses each group and the efforts of Downtown Revitalization should be held by the RDBA. In this way, new leaders will emerge and volunteer interest will increase.	RDBA	City and Chamber	1st Quarter 2015	This program should use speakers from the City and Chamber, as well as an introduction and conclusion speaker from the RDBA. The topics in this strategic plan should be woven into the program. Other interests from the community could be invited, but the focus should remain on developing leaders and volunteers for RDBA.	
3 Energize the RDBA Committees.	The leadership of the RDBA should determine committee changes or adjustments to the bylaws after the joint meeting with the city and Chamber. Meeting outcomes also need to be shared with the rest of the membership and may be a chance to ask for volunteers to participate in said committees.	RDBA		4th Quarter 2014	The RDBA should always try to match interests and skills with appropriate committees. Volunteers need to have a meaningful task in which they believe. One RDBA Committee should be to study and advance a Downtown incentive mechanism.	
4 Hold Downtown incentives meetings to explore and advance a tool such as the proposed Special Business District (SBD) or a Community Improvement District (CID).	The implementation of a SBD or CID is also a financial mechanism recommendation, but is included here due to its impact on the RDBA. It is critical that Downtown identify and develop a sustainable funding source that the RDBA can access for public projects and services.	RDBA	City	1st Quarter 2015	City involvement in these meetings is critical to show support, but the Downtown businesses and interests may be more accepting of the incentive with RDBA being the primary promoter of its benefits. The City will eventually be required to provide legal and implementation steps, but RDBA is the face of the effort.	
5 Promote the benefits and projects that a proposed incentive mechanism will provide.	The effort to establish a Downtown incentive will require outreach and promotion to the property owners and residents. All voices must be given time to speak and concerns should be addressed.	RDBA		All of 2015 if necessary	Establishment of an incentive should provide for a reasonable amount of public discourse. This will require time and assistance from Downtown's supporters. The effort to educate and promote the need of a Downtown incentive may be the most crucial activity in the establishment process.	
6 Periodically review responsibilities of the RDBA, and other organizations that provide delivery of services to Downtown and its businesses, residents, and visitors.	There are several organizations with an interest in Downtown or that provide an activity or event in Downtown. With a strong RDBA, these groups should discuss how best to provide their services to Downtown businesses, residents, property owners, and visitors.	RDBA	City, Chamber, and any Downtown group	Ongoing	The RDBA should coordinate meetings that bring these groups together to discuss Downtown issues and resources. Membership supported groups, such as the RDBA and Chamber, should understand that a level of services to all Downtown businesses and interests is required, regardless of their membership status. Other topics for this meeting might include membership policies, City responses to Downtown issues, and identification of coming events.	
7 Develop clear RDBA leadership succession plans.	The RDBA should be developing its future leaders, through the leadership program noted above. However, the group also needs to encourage staff training and involvement to ensure that other levels of leadership are maintained as necessary.	RDBA		Ongoing	The RDBA Executive Director and other staff should jointly work on projects and seek training opportunities whenever possible. Staff should work closely with committees to better understand the groups activities.	
Land Use, Buildings & Infrastructure Survey						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
8 The City should monitor the amount of public and institutional property in Downtown.	To prevent an overabundance of non-tax generating parcels, the City should encourage mixed-use redevelopment of property, instead of allowing conversion to public or institutional uses.	City		NOW	The City should keep a close watch on this situation. The University and Downtown churches will have a tendency to expand.	
9 The City should attract and encourage developers willing to tackle innovative adaptive reuse projects, upper-floor residential spaces, and infill development.	The City should aggressively search for these developers. There may be local firms or people capable of carrying out innovative construction, but the City will likely need to seek these firms and should develop marketing to showcase specific opportunities in Downtown.	City	RDBA	NOW	The City should include a representative of the RDBA in discussions with potential Downtown developers. Additionally, infill standards are needed to ensure high-quality, multi-story, mixed-use buildings are constructed.	
10 Maintain Information Regarding Downtown Development Sites and Vacant Buildings.	New private investors will be interested in vacancies, contact information, and planned projects. It is important for the RDBA to develop this inventory, with help from the City to maintain the information for Downtown and tie it to available GIS data and websites.	RDBA	City	3rd Quarter 2015	The City likely maintains this information, while the RDBA should remain focused on Downtown vacancies and sites. The RDBA may be able to develop a closer relationship with property owners that the City. A simple listing of size, location, and contact information can be provided on websites and social media. Information must be kept current and the sites and buildings somewhat 'qualified' that they are, indeed, for-sale or lease. These functions should be assigned to an RDBA committee. Committee members that will work with the City to handle prospects should be chosen carefully.	
11 Monitor building and infrastructure conditions.	The City should build upon the DREAM mapping to monitor the physical conditions of private property and public infrastructure. Building, parking lot, and street complaints should be tracked and mapped to determine areas that require priority improvements and buildings that require improvements and buildings that require a more aggressive approach by City code officials.	City		NOW	Mapping tools of these types can be invaluable to City Staff and allow a more efficient use of their time and the City's limited resources.	
12 Improve wayfinding.	This recommendation is discussed in the public infrastructure section as well. Initial visits to Downtown Rolla can be complicated by one-way streets and the rail line.	City	RDBA	NOW	It is critical for parking, navigation, congestion, and businesses that visitors and customers can find their way easily to and from Downtown parking lots, the primary commercial area, and the Benton Square Arts District. These aspects will reduce issues and conflicts with residential uses, as well as improve the image of Downtown.	
13 Encourage the development of infill building design standards.	Downtown Rolla has an Arts District, but no registered historic district and only one Downtown property listed on the National Register of Historic Places. There are many opportunities for infill development or redevelopment. The buildings that may be built or that may replace existing deteriorated properties should adhere to some infill guidelines to prevent poor or inappropriate construction that detracts from the historic nature of Downtown. The City should work with the RDBA to research and explore some infill construction standards that will complement existing buildings. This is a critical step to take before any future construction occurs.	City	RDBA	NOW	The City should review the guidelines required by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. These Standards would be applicable if the City formed a historic district. However, such an effort will need initiation by the City and promotion by the RDBA. The goal should be to make new construction complement existing buildings, not to build historic replicas.	
14 Promote the benefits and procedures of historic rehabilitation and property maintenance.	The RDBA should promote historic rehabilitation. This effort should include pointing out the benefits of a historic property and conducting research for property owners.	RDBA		NOW	Eventually, this effort should develop support for a historic district and design standards. Downtown property owners need to understand the merits of a historic building.	
15 Encourage innovative adaptive reuse.	The City should review its building and zoning procedures to ensure flexibility in buildings for reuse. Many Downtown Rolla buildings were built for industrial uses and may require innovation and flexibility to allow the property to be reused.	City		Ongoing	This effort will be critical as the City improves inspections and attempts to improve building conditions. Similarly, it will be important to develop an incentive to help property owners.	
16 Develop incentives for Downtown façades and other private building improvements.	Related to the Financial Mechanism recommendations, the proposed SBD or CID could include a facade improvement program. Incentives should only be provided on the condition that improvement meet established design standards.	City	RDBA	After an incentive is established	The City must work to ensure that private buildings are maintained to attract new businesses and private investment. A program can begin with the facade which is part of the public good. However, other faces of the building must be considered. The RDBA should be heavily involved to develop the incentives and help administer/promote involvement in the program.	

Community Surveys						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
17 Work to improve the user-friendliness of Downtown.	The improvements needed to Downtown noted by focus group participants included Better Retail and Entertainment Variety, Less Vacancies, Improved and Additional Parking Lots, and Green Spaces and Landscaping. These elements work together to provide a more welcome atmosphere. The City and RDBA will need to collaborate on initiatives and projects that address these issues. Several other recommendations will overlay this effort.	City and/or RDBA	Chamber, etc.	NOW	Other concerns included business hours and wayfinding. The City should tackle the issues of public infrastructure and economic development. The RDBA can work to address the issues with businesses and should collaborate heavily with the City and Chamber to help attract retail and entertainment options. The RDBA should also work to mobilize volunteers to address landscaping maintenance, once the City has installed or approved landscaping beds and planters.	
18 Periodically conduct a visitor survey, with a component based on outgoing S&T seniors.	The City of Rolla, and Downtown in particular, should have great interest in the students experience while at S&T. Attitudes in this market segment can change rapidly and Downtown should attempt to monitor how it is being perceived by the students.	RDBA	City	Ongoing	The RDBA should work closely with the universities Student Affairs office to connect with graduates. An alternative effort could include online surveys if the RDBA can establish such a survey on its website. Other visitors should be surveyed as well, but students of S&T should be maintained as a separate data set.	
19 Reconvene the DREAM Focus Groups	The groups included Downtown business owners; city staff; city residents; and S&T Students. It is critical to revitalization efforts that these interested individuals are given future opportunities to volunteer and connect with Downtown activities.	RDBA		2nd Quarter 2015	By planning a 5-year follow-up schedule, the groups can discuss achievements since the DREAM program began and note challenges for the future. An outside, impartial facilitator to conduct the sessions, is best so individuals will feel free to speak about any topic.	
20 Conduct telephone or web survey of residents.	This survey is for residents only and should attempt to present a cross-section of various demographic aspects of the community through quota responses. Alternatively, a web survey could be developed.	RDBA	City, Chamber.	3rd Quarter 2015	The RDBA could develop the survey, but using a surveying firm and phone bank may also be required. Therefore an internet survey may be a more efficient route. The Chamber or City may wish to participate if some questions are expanded to include the community as a whole. The survey can be of interest to all of Rolla's businesses as they seek to understand their largest consumer market; local residents.	
21 Communicate all survey results to Downtown groups, leaders, and businesses	The RDBA will need to understand the survey results and encourage appropriate actions by Downtown businesses and leaders. Any city-wide results will also be of interest to the Chamber and City.	RDBA	City, Chamber.	Ongoing	The RDBA and the Chamber can hold joint seminars or brainstorming sessions when significant amounts of information become available. It is critical that this information find its way to businesses that can capitalize on the results.	
Public Infrastructure						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
22 Coordinate public improvements with the overall Downtown design and historic character.	City officials and staff should develop public projects and planning efforts in concert with the RDBA. As the City continues with streetscape and other Downtown improvements, the input of the RDBA and adherence to already established design elements is critical.	City	RDBA	Ongoing	The City should seek input during Downtown project design, and attempt to move beyond installation of utilitarian only facilities to develop 'great spaces'. This coordination of all future public improvements is important and coordination will also give the RDBA time to notify Downtown property owners when City projects begin near their buildings.	
23 Develop wayfinding signage.	This streetscape element can help with parking and traffic. The signage should be expanded to include parking areas and other attractions, as well as Downtown gateway signs.	City	RDBA	1st Quarter 2016 or after incentive has been formed	This project is eligible for funding from the proposed incentive mechanisms. The City should also pursue signage to Downtown from the Interstate 44 exit.	
24 Improve public parking lot conditions, add parking lots.	An issue voiced by participants in the DREAM community survey work included parking availability. If the City can continue to improve the quality of parking lots and other service areas for pedestrians, people may be more likely to use the existing lots. Parking is a critical issue with S&T students. The City should be prepared to act on opportunities to establish new lots.	City		Ongoing	The City should seek opportunities to add parking if property becomes available. These projects could be eligible for SBD and CID funding and should include landscaping within the areas to 'soften' the impact of the impervious pavement. S&T engineering students may take an interest in design better parking lots.	
25 Maintain all public infrastructure, property, and facilities that provide a support structure for Downtown buildings.	Downtown revitalization efforts require significant public investments that serve as a catalyst for private involvement. The City needs to constantly send the message to the private sector that the City is supportive of a Downtown investment.	City	RDBA	Ongoing	The City and RDBA will provide ongoing projects and funding mechanisms to encourage investment in Downtown buildings. The RDBA should be able to mobilize volunteers to help the City maintain aspects of Downtown such as landscaping.	
26 Develop plans to reduce, bury, or relocate overhead power lines.	This is an ambitious project that, based on numerous comments and discussions throughout the DREAM process, the City should pursue. There are a significant amount of overhead power lines in Downtown. The City should develop a relocation schedule and work toward these goals.	City		Ongoing	This is an ambitious and lengthy project for the City. However, the impact will be large and an incentive such as the proposed SBD or CID can help defray the cost.	
27 Connect Benton Square with Pine Street.	Through the other public infrastructure elements noted, the City can enhance this connection. Wayfinding to and from Benton Square and Pine Street can greatly improve. Additionally, businesses in each area should promote the other area.	City	RDBA	3rd Quarter 2015	The City should focus on the public improvements, but the RDBA can begin working with businesses in each area to unite Downtown. Promotions and events that occur in each area, or perhaps simultaneously in each area, will help visitors understand Downtown is a unified shopping area.	

Retail Market						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
28 Strengthen existing businesses.	The RDBA should develop a full slate of programs and seminars to help improve existing businesses. This is an important activity that should be a higher priority than new business attraction. The Chamber may be interested to provide these services to any City business, but the RDBA should maintain a focus on Downtown.	RDBA	Chamber	3rd Quarter 2014	The RDBA Director is very experienced with retail businesses and has much knowledge to provide. Other experts should also be sought and some topics will bear repeating.	
29 Attract businesses to Downtown that provide products and services that can meet future unmet retail demand.	Specific retail categories, as identified in the DREAM Retail Market Analysis task, have demonstrated the potential to generate retail demand for the Downtown Rolla trade area. Businesses that open or expand their product lines to include these categories make good targets for attraction to available Downtown buildings. The City and RDBA should refine their economic development efforts for Downtown to businesses in these categories.	City	RDBA	NOW	The businesses suggested for recruitment may be relocations from other areas within the City. The RDBA can develop a retail recruitment team to search for businesses in these categories, generate the lead, and make contact with the prospect. Categories include: Health and Personal Care, Clothing, Miscellaneous Retail, Sporting Goods/Hobbies/Musical Instruments, Shoes, Jewelry, Luggage, and Leather Goods, Specialty Foods, and Home Furnishings.	
30 Encourage existing retailers to improve their product lines.	Along with helping to meet some unmet demand as noted above, existing retailers should be encouraged to provide products to other markets than the S&T students.	RDBA		3rd Quarter 2014	The S&T student market is critical for Downtown Rolla businesses. However, students do not typically have great amounts of expendable income and do not often require quality products. If the RDBA can encourage businesses to market to a balanced market, sales per square foot should increase and Downtown will become known for more than just "College"-type stores.	
31 Continually encourage Downtown businesses to adopt a user-friendly atmosphere that will encourage shoppers and patrons.	Downtown merchants need to be reminded that they inhabit the core of the City and represent an important aspect of the community. The RDBA can help prepare Downtown's businesses to be the best ambassadors to visitors as possible. Business issues that are common to other merchants in Rolla or the region can be addressed, so the Chamber may be involved depending on the topics.	RDBA	Chamber	3rd Quarter 2014	As noted, the RDBA should develop a program of seminars for Downtown businesses. These seminars can also deliver important information regarding customer service, expanded business hours, parking location and regulations, store layout, and product care and placement. The focus needs to be on Downtown stores as much as possible.	
32 Develop Downtown, business-oriented promotions to strengthen existing businesses.	The RDBA should provide an effort should to host festivals during large regional events in the hopes of attracting attention for Downtown. Downtown revitalization cannot hinge on events alone, and events are resource intensive, but they also raise the visibility of the area greatly.	RDBA		After an incentive is established	The RDBA can best address this effort. Many events are currently held and the Downtown champion must ensure that Downtown businesses are drawing visitors from those events.	
33 Encourage infill retail development and adaptive reuse development to increase retail space available.	The City and RDBA can collaborate to improve the buildings in Downtown Rolla for retail uses. Some buildings will require innovative reuse strategies.	City	RDBA	Ongoing	The City should be flexible with permitting requirements and the RDBA should help owners navigate City processes.	
34 Develop incentives for Downtown businesses.	Related to other recommendations. It is important that the City develop an incentive that will be attractive for businesses to use.	City		NOW	Numerous retailers have been incentivized elsewhere in the City; primarily near Interstate 44. The City cannot afford to turn its back on Downtown.	
35 Cultivate local entrepreneurs.	This is another potential use for Downtown locations. Downtown could serve as an incubator for businesses starting out.	RDBA		1st Quarter 2017	College towns often have a wealth of young students with entrepreneurial ideas. The RDBA could eventually offer seminars for business start-ups. Ideal partners or sponsors for these sessions would be the local banks and S&T.	
36 Understand Rolla's visitor markets and help Downtown businesses adapt to better meet visitors needs.	Related to the visitor survey recommendation in the Community Survey section, it is important for the RDBA to help its members understand the information that is available and what it means to their store.	RDBA		Ongoing	A robust seminar program will take time to start. The RDBA should be distributing the information collected through the DREAM process and searching for new and updated data.	
37 Market Downtown businesses as a unified shopping district to Farmington visitors.	The RDBA can develop advertising campaigns to market Downtown, just as any mall or shopping center would market itself. This is also related to the cross-promotion of Benton Square and Pine Street.	RDBA		3rd Quarter 2017	This activity will be a highly visible program that the RDBA needs to activate and operate successfully. Funding can be provided from a local mechanism such as a CID, with cooperative advertising support from the merchants. This step is critical for Downtown to become known as a shopping destination and more than a support area for S&T students. Advertising can be expensive, so RDBA resources must be well positioned to launch this effort.	

Financial Mechanisms						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
38 Establish the proposed Special Business District (SBD).	As noted in the Organizational Structure recommendations, a SBD will provide Downtown with funding for projects. The City will initiate this incentive and pass the appropriate ordinances, but the RDBA will be instrumental in providing public outreach.	City	RDBA	Begin as guided by City	The proposed SBD could generate about \$30,000 annually for a variety of projects. The DREAM program provided the needed survey and the City just needs to act to implement this incentive.	
39 Establish a Downtown Community Improvement District (CID).	As noted in the Organizational Structure recommendations, a CID will provide the RDBA with sustainable funding for improvements and programming. The City will initiate this incentive and pass the appropriate ordinances, but the RDBA will be instrumental in providing the needed public outreach. The revenues generated can also be used for public improvements, property acquisition, etc.	City	RDBA	Begin as guided by City	A CID can capture funding from property and sales taxes for a variety of services and projects. A CID with sales and property tax could generate \$180,000 annually. The process should begin as guided by the City, but will need to allow for proper outreach to communicate the benefits of the CID plan to local residents and merchants; a critical step.	
40 Establish a Local Option Economic Development Sales Tax (EDS) in the City.	The City should consider an EDS of up to one-half of one percent to assist in Economic Development city-wide and dedicate a portion specifically to Downtown Economic Development efforts. Although this effort may be considered in place of the SBD or CID, the funding generated is not as flexible.	City	RDBA	Begin as guided by City	The proposed structure of an EDS dedicated to Downtown Economic Development could generate significant revenue annually. The City can conduct economic development activities in other areas of the community and still provide marketing, grants, and training for Downtown businesses. The RDBA should assist with communicating information about the tax and specifically that there is no lack of business from an additional city-wide sales tax and that the benefits far outweigh any perceived drawbacks.	
41 Promote Downtown projects that have been completed with incentive mechanisms funding.	Downtown needs to promote its successes. The City should allow for information to be compiled by the RDBA regarding funding for the public improvements to date. The RDBA is an advocate for Downtown and should provide flyers and potentially signage when the City, or business or property owner, makes an investment.	RDBA	City	Ongoing	These are expenses that could be paid by the incentive mechanisms.	
42 Leverage local funds to obtain State and Federal funding for projects.	The City and RDBA should remain vigilant regarding the leveraging of local sources of money, such as the proposed SBD, CID, or EDS, for State or Federal funding.	City	RDBA	Ongoing	As State and Federal funding declines, Downtown will need to rely on local funding sources. The City should apply for any program into which projects and plans may fit. Plans are critical and if the City can show that the projects address a local need, grant opportunities should occur.	

Other						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
43 Pursue the proposed Library Plaza project.	This project will provide a gathering place along Pine Street for visitors and a pocket park for library patrons. This is a major public improvement that will require proper maintenance. However, the positive benefits are numerous.	City	RDBA	1st Quarter 2016	The City should continue to work with the RDBA to develop the project with the Library Board. To complete the project, it will need broad public support and likely an incentive mechanism. However, it is possible that spread over a few budget years, the project could proceed.	



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