

DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLAN

CITY OF WARRENSBURG, MISSOURI

FEBRUARY 2015



CITY OF WARRENSBURG



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



PLANNING CONSULTANT:



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DREAM Initiative
Process



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

The DREAM planning process reviewed issues related to the function, structure, and image of Downtown Warrensburg. 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 information obtained during DREAM was used as the basis for various analyses and recommendations developed in each task as described in this plan. Several existing documents were reviewed and included projects, proposed ordinances, and other existing planning documents. The DREAM Strategic Plan is not intended to replace these prior efforts, but to supplement this planning and function as a resource guide for community leaders as recommendations and Downtown improvements are implemented. The Strategic Plan provides a multi-year vision promoting innovative, positive, and attainable change for Downtown Warrensburg. 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 Warrensburg 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 Warrensburg include:

Goal One: Improve Collaboration and Communication.

The existing group of merchants, property owners, residents, and other individuals that comprise the leadership of Downtown Warrensburg have accomplished

many projects for Downtown. However, the groups that provide services to Downtown are somewhat fractured. The City provides typical municipal services, the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) works to bring tourism to the City, the Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) provides business services, the Johnson County Economic Development Corporation (JCEDC) provides economic development assistance, and Warrensburg Main Street (WMS) provides Downtown with marketing, business assistance, promotions, and incentives. Additionally the large activity centers such as the University of Central Missouri (UCM) and Whiteman Air Force Base (WAFB) and Union Pacific Railroad (UP) all have significant influence in Downtown Warrensburg.

With all of these groups providing services or interacting with Downtown in some way, it is critical that WMS develops and maintains a strong collaborative effort that improves and coordinates Downtown activity.

WMS has emerged as the primary Downtown group and should continue to work with the Chamber and CVB to promote all Downtown events and ensure Downtown is participating in other City-wide activities. A close relationship is needed to ensure Downtown can serve visitors to the City's attractions and that these visitors know about Downtown. It is important that Downtown merchants and interests understand that the WMS has broad support and is their lead Downtown organization.



The Johnson County Courthouse in Downtown Warrensburg.

Goal Two: Establish a Community Improvement District (CID), or other Downtown Development Incentive.

With WMS improving the collaborative efforts of all Downtown interests, efforts should shift to identifying and obtaining sustainable funding for WMS and other Downtown projects. A CID can contribute to this organizational and project funding. A CID could be supported by both a property and sales tax and, depending on the structure and the final boundary, a Downtown CID could generate over \$150,000 in annual funding for redevelopment activities. This amount would increase as Downtown business activity and property values increase.

WMS can provide certain services to the CID on a contractual basis, which will help expand the roles of the group and allow it to better meet the needs of Downtown. This Strategic Plan proposes projects such as wayfinding and gateway signage, streetscape enhancements, improved pedestrian rail crossing and entryways, and the Events Pavilion. All of these projects, along with Downtown marketing, promotions, and events, are CID eligible expenses.

Any incentive mechanism will require substantial public outreach. The process to implement a CID begins by defining the area, details of the incentive through the drafting of the CID petition, and promotion of the benefits and plans of the incentives.

The Financial Mechanisms section on page 34 provides estimates of the funding that could be provided by the establishment of a CID and also discusses Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and a Local Option Economic Development Sales Tax (EDS).

Goal Three: Improve Signage.

With improved organizational capacity and a funding source, Downtown will need to advance an important successful public project. As noted in the Community Surveys section on page 15 of this Plan, participants of the DREAM Focus Groups, Telephone Survey, and Visitor’s Survey all noted issues with finding public parking. The City has installed directional signage on routes to Downtown. However, several lots would benefit from improvements such as resurfacing, border landscaping, and pedestrian amenities. Other activity centers, such as the Warrensburg Depot, UCM, the Johnson County Courthouse, and future Event Pavilion should be included in wayfinding signage. This public project should be initiated and driven by the City, with significant input from WMS and the CVB regarding location of signs and attraction listings.

Gateway signage to help define Downtown is also a potential public project that the City and WMS could implement along with wayfinding improvements. The vehicular gateway signage proposed at the intersections of North Holden and West North Streets and East Gay and North College Streets should be the top priority for this signage. The pedestrian gateways near the UP rail line should be included in the rail crossing and depot improvement project at a later date.

Funding for signage that impacts Downtown and includes Downtown attractions and can be provided by the proposed CID.

Goal Four: Improve Downtown Building Conditions.

As discussed in the Building Design and Conditions section on page 18, as noted during the Land Use, Buildings, and Infrastructure Survey, and as commented on by participants in the DREAM Community Surveys, Downtown property conditions need improvement.



The University of Central Missouri (UCM) in Warrensburg.

Conditions in 2009 demonstrated poor to fair conditions for most Downtown buildings. With the recent investments in Downtown, such as the Pine Street streetscape, the City of Warrensburg has set an example for Downtown private property owners regarding the maintenance of their buildings. Additionally, responses were received by residents, City leaders, and Downtown property owners during the DREAM process regarding the issue of poor Downtown building conditions. The community seems to desire tighter codes and regulations regarding Downtown building conditions. It is critical that the City works to improve ordinances, codes, and procedures to improve building conditions, give full consideration to incentives to assist Downtown building owners to improve their properties, and consider implementing design standards for Downtown for existing buildings and new construction.

The City staff should continue to diligently inspect Downtown buildings and ensure that existing ordinances and codes are being met. However, the City should also periodically review its codes and ordinances to determine if adjustments are required.

Several of the buildings in Downtown are historic and could be preserved by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. There are currently only a few Downtown buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. However, if the City desired to proceed with developing a Downtown historic district, many properties will contribute to this effort.

There have also been some buildings constructed on vacant lots in Downtown Warrensburg that do not complement the existing historic structures. Additionally, there are some existing vacant properties and buildings that could be redeveloped in the future. While these vacant lots and buildings represent opportunities for development potential, they can also be developed in a manner that is detrimental to existing buildings if the City is lacking development standards to ensure appropriate buildings are constructed.

The City and WMS, building upon the historic district effort, should work to develop Downtown infill and reuse design standards. The City should also allow for innovative ideas regarding the reuse of old buildings, but emphasis should be on ground-floor retail space.

As the City improves these programs and features of Downtown, WMS and the Chamber should work with building owners to connect them to contractors and help them understand the City's expectations. WMS should also host building maintenance seminars and other informative programs.

Goal Five: Strengthen Existing Businesses and Downtown Products Sold.

Warrensburg enjoys a healthy mix of businesses and restaurants, many of which are located Downtown. Downtown demonstrates positive retail aspects including a good amount of vehicular traffic, a nearby consumer market, and drawing power due to other attractions in the region, such as UCM and WAFB. Downtown businesses tend to be at a competitive disadvantage with businesses in other areas of the City. Although UCM provides a large, steady consumer market for Downtown, college students do not typically have much disposable income or demand high-quality products.

The City, WMS, and Chamber should provide added attention to Downtown businesses by developing programs to enhance business aspects such as customer service. WMS should develop seminars to help businesses understand the demands of students, but also not neglect higher-quality products that may meet unmet retail demand and appeal to other segments of the community. Downtown businesses need to know how to meet the needs of the diverse range of existing visitors.

Additionally, a sizeable amount of Warrensburg residents are connected with WAFB. These residents have shown to have a tendency to provide entrepreneurs that may open start-up businesses in Downtown.

As the City implements incentives, marketing materials focused solely on Downtown should be developed to encourage Downtown as a viable business location with economic opportunities.

WMS should also work with the City and JCEDC to develop a variety of stores in Downtown; focusing on the types of retail businesses that demonstrated unmet retail demand found in the Retail Market section on page 31 of this Plan. These businesses include stores that sell products in the categories of: Electronics and Appliances; Health & Personal Care; Clothing; Furniture; Office Supplies, Stationary, and Gifts; Sporting Goods/Hobbies/Musical Instruments; Jewelry, Luggage, and Leather Goods; Other Miscellaneous Goods; Home Furnishings; Shoes; and Specialty Foods. Downtown should focus on attracting these businesses to prime, ground-floor locations along Holden and Pine Streets. Additionally, Warrensburg should consider encouraging office and services businesses for upper-floors and buildings located on side streets; preserving prime, ground-floor locations on main streets for retail uses.

Goal Six: Pursue Rail Crossing/Depot Improvements and Event Pavilion.

With the previous improvements to the streetscape system, and the proposed wayfinding and gateway signage completed, Downtown should focus on the larger projects of the rail crossing/depot area and the Event Pavilion. As the depot is not currently a potential site for the Event Pavilion, It is unlikely these two projects can be combined.

The rail line crossing and depot project is discussed in the Destination Assessment section on page 37. It is important to note that the gateway signage for the pedestrian entryways into Downtown should be included in the rail crossing project, while the vehicular gateway signage is included in the previous Goal Three regarding signage.

The Event Pavilion illustrations are shown in the Implementation section on pages 40 through 42 of this Plan. It should be noted that these illustrations were developed for the Depot parking lot site and will require adjustment for the site that is ultimately decided upon for the project.

Large public projects such as these will become a rallying point for Downtown revitalization. These projects will help solidify WMS as the lead Downtown organization, send a strong signal to developers and businesses regarding the commitment of the City to Downtown, and should be funded by the established incentive mechanism, such as the proposed CID.

Goal Seven: Improve the Visitor's Experience.

Several DREAM tasks, and many of the previously noted goals, are related to the improvement of the Downtown Warrensburg visitor's experience. Improvements to Downtown for visitors also become benefits for other users and are difficult to separate from other aspects of Downtown. Warrensburg has several attractions and activities available on any given weekend and much of this activity is due to UCM. During the public surveying process of DREAM (2009-2011), discussions occurred regarding limited store hours and the ability of Downtown to provide services for UCM events and visitors. As visitors increase, Downtown and its businesses need to be fully prepared to meet their needs; to do this it must be open, easy to find, accessible, safe, and welcoming. WMS should focus on improving the service of Downtown businesses, and the City on public improvements, to accomplish this goal.

WMS should work with the Visitor's Center to periodically survey visitors to the City in an attempt to develop events, businesses, and other services that will draw them to Downtown Warrensburg. Additionally, WMS should disseminate information gathered to Downtown business owners so they can develop promotions to attract visitors into their stores.



Examples of existing streetscape elements along Holden Street in Downtown Warrensburg.

INTRODUCTION

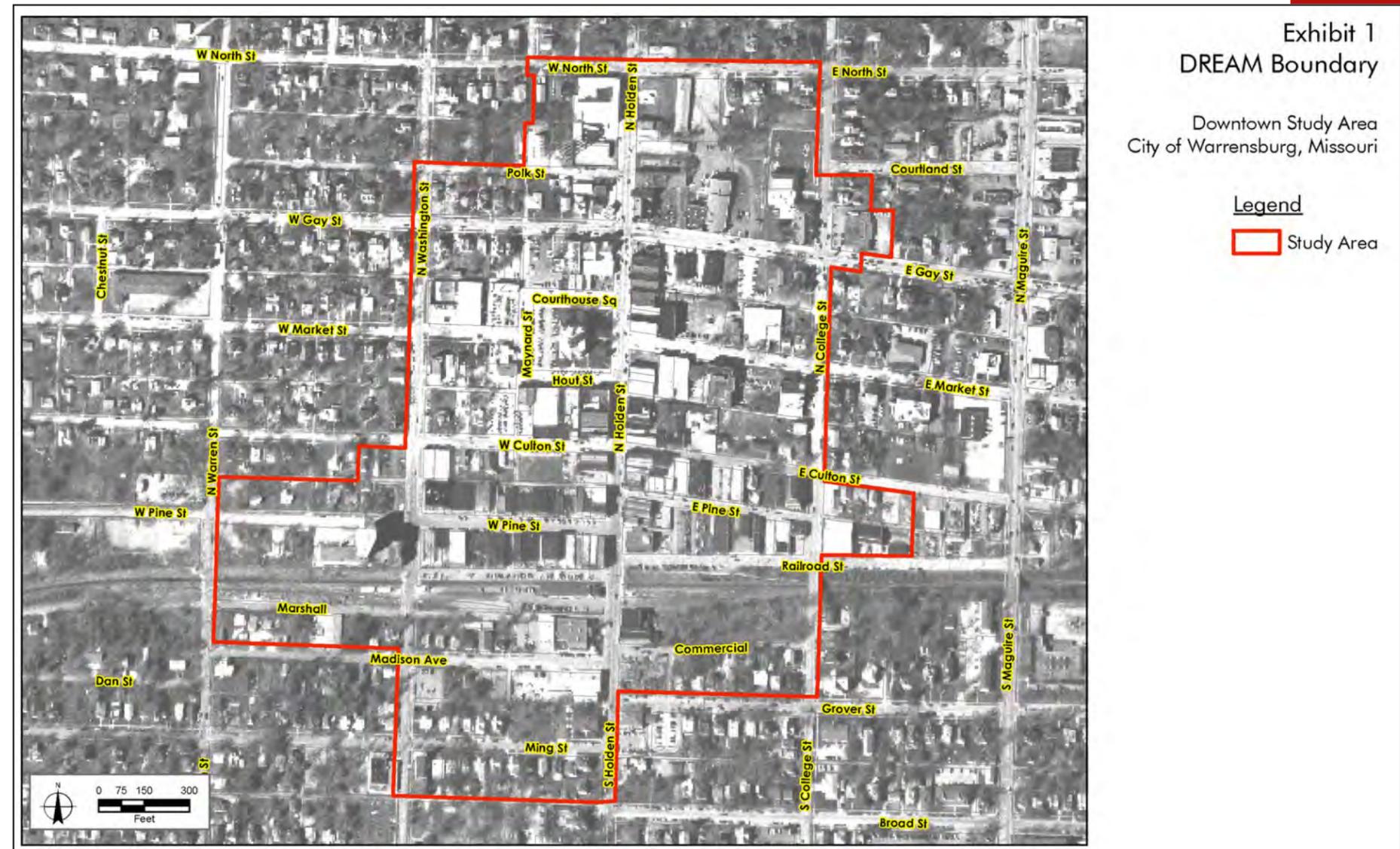
Through a partnership of state agencies that includes; the Missouri Development Finance Board (MDFB), Missouri Department of Economic Development (DED), and the Missouri Housing Development Commission (MHDC), the DREAM Initiative provides downtown-focused planning services over a multi-year period to 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 Warrensburg. The purpose of the DREAM Initiative is to leverage local public and private improvements to sustain revitalization momentum that will put downtown districts 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 Warrensburg was designated as a DREAM community in 2008. The completed tasks for Warrensburg included:

- Organizational Structure Review (April 2012)
- Map Reference Handbook (December 2009)
- Focus Group Report (January 2010)
- Telephone Survey (November 2009)
- Visitor Survey (December 2011)
- Building & Streetscape Concepts (July 2013)
- Retail Market Analysis (July 2013)
- Residential Demand Analysis (August 2010)
- Financial Assistance Review (October 2012)
- Marketing Assistance (no report) (2014)
- This Downtown Strategic Plan (2014)

This strategic plan emphasizes the leveraging of existing local sources, and potentially 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.



Warrensburg 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 Warrensburg. 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 sense of pride in recent Downtown Warrensburg accomplishments such as improvements to the Depot, streetscape, and wayfinding. City leaders noted the University of Central Missouri (UCM) master plan as well. Some Downtown merchants and property owners were concerned about 2012 changes to the liquor code regarding Downtown restaurants. Downtown boasts some strong building architecture, existing streetscape, good business and pedestrian activity, and a strong rental market due to UCM students. All of these aspects combine to create a vibrant Downtown atmosphere. However, these components also present challenges such as those noted during the DREAM public outreach process.

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 Warrensburg through several activities and methods, including:

- **Initial Assessment Meeting**

Warrensburg was designated as a DREAM community in August of 2008, and an Initial Assessment Meeting was held on November 17, 2008. The meeting included representatives from the City, Warrensburg Main Street Inc. (WMS), the Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center, the Johnson County

Missouri Economic Development Corporation (JCEDC), and many business and building owners. 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 the summer and fall of 2009, discussions of Downtown issues and ideas for improvements were facilitated with five focus groups: UCM Students; Newer Residents; Downtown Business Owners and Stakeholders; City Officials, Staff, and Administration; and Long-time Residents. The group facilitators encouraged discussion centered around how Downtown is perceived, used, and challenged. The groups suggested ideas as to what public and private improvements can be made to enhance Downtown Warrensburg.

- **Surveys**

In September of 2009, a telephone survey of residents asked respondents a series of questions about priorities for the improvement of Downtown. The survey tabulated three hundred (300) responses from a randomly selected, statistically representative sample of residents. Over 70% of respondents indicated Downtown was moving in a positive direction, with over 80% indicating they visit Downtown Warrensburg at least once a month. Participants cited a wide variety of items for improvement, with adding new parking spaces or lots, making the area more pedestrian-friendly, moving utilities underground, and improving lighting topping the list. Dining options, clothing, activities for college students, and a bakery were the retail products that residents most wanted to see added to Downtown Warrensburg.

From 2009 to late 2011, a visitor survey was conducted at various City and UCM events, and other attractions. Volunteers and WMS staff gathered answers from respondents outside of the Warrensburg



Attendees of the Warrensburg DREAM Kickoff Meeting.

zip code; resulting in 151 responses. The survey indicated that almost 95% of respondents had visited Downtown prior to this visit. Dining, nightlife/entertainment, shopping, and special events were noted as the top reasons for visiting Downtown. Top improvements desired were renovation of historic buildings, a fountain, and improvements to parking.

- **Key Stakeholder Discussions**

Conversations were held with representatives of the City, WMS, Chamber, Johnson County, JCEDC, UCM, 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 strategies in each DREAM task.

- **Public Meetings**

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

- DREAM Kickoff Meeting: June 9, 2009
- Update Meeting: May 25, 2010
- Design Concepts Kickoff: June 23, 2011
- Design Concepts Presentation: February 27, 2012
- Retail Assessment Presentation: May 14, 2013
- Destination Assessment Kickoff: October 7, 2013

- **Websites and Social Media**

The City, WMS, Chamber, JCEDC, and UCM all host websites or have a social media presence with varying levels of information about the City. These agencies have promoted aspects of Downtown, the DREAM Initiative, or provide links to DREAM reports. The City Council and other City committees have discussed DREAM documents and minutes of these meetings are available on the City website.

- **Education and Communication**

The DREAM Initiative process also included seminars to educate and inform the City staff and leaders 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 Warrensburg Retail Presentation Meeting.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

When the City of Warrensburg was designated a DREAM Initiative community in August of 2008, the DREAM Initiative provided immediate benefits to Downtown. Positive news articles and increased awareness of Downtown Warrensburg improved the City’s ability to obtain State funding. Some recent accomplishments in the DREAM Study Area include:

- Completed the construction of Pine Street streetscape improvements. The total project cost is estimated at \$1,439,688.49.
- Completed the construction of additional streetscape improvements on S. Holden Street from the railroad tracks to Grover Street in 2014 at an estimated cost of \$520,743.70.
- In 2012, WMS launched an annual “Day of Caring” program. The inaugural year mobilized over 75 volunteers that logged over 650 man hours to improve Downtown through cleaning, painting, and installing awnings and equipment screening, primarily to the rear elevations of buildings along Pine Street.
- Established a Downtown Façade Grant program that awarded \$5,835 in the first two years and leveraged \$16,713 in private investment involving six buildings.
- The Farmer’s Market has moved to the Courthouse location. Increased number of vendors from 20 to 32 in two year’s time. Farmers’ Market vendors have reported visitor’s have almost doubled since moving to the Courthouse lawn.
- Since 2011, Downtown has realized over \$7.5 million reinvested and has 20 new businesses. The current vacancy rate is 8%.
- The City adopted a Property Maintenance Code in January of 2014 which applies to both residential and commercial structures, including property in Downtown.
- Demolished three dilapidated houses on W. Pine Street and established a drop-off recycling area in their place.
- Installed signage in all of the free Downtown parking lots to welcome visitors to our free parking. Developed a parking brochure and map to accompany the signage.
- Installed the Pine Street *Downtown Vibrations* public art project in 2013.
- WMS partnered with the City, Downtown Businesses, and Big Brothers Big Sisters to create and/or enhance eight events that bring residents and visitors into Downtown Warrensburg, including:
 - ◊ The WMS Summer Concert Series
 - ◊ WMS Summer Sidewalk Sales
 - ◊ The 4th of July Celebration
 - ◊ Burg Fest
 - ◊ Tailgate With the City
 - ◊ Trick or Treat Downtown
 - ◊ Dickens’ Christmas Living Windows
 - ◊ The First Friday Art Walk
- WMS has documented 10,675 volunteer hours since January of 2011.
- WMS developed the “You Swept Us Away” Award in 2009 and has been recognizing a Downtown business quarterly since 2011 for presenting clean, warm, and welcoming storefronts to the public.
- WMS tracks Downtown properties for-sale or lease and maintains a listing of these properties on the www.locationone.com website.
- The City of Warrensburg was successful in obtaining the DREAM designation; a commitment of about \$250,000 from the Missouri Development Finance Board. Warrensburg leveraged a 20% match over three years to obtain this funding and planning process.



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The DREAM Initiative included a review of the organizations with an active interest in Downtown Warrensburg. The purpose of this task was to understand the roles and responsibilities of these organizations and their impact on Downtown. The recommendations developed from the task consider how these organizations may be improved, adjusted, or complemented to ensure that there is an efficient structure in place to implement the projects and recommendations outlined through the DREAM Initiative.

Organizations, and their subcommittees, reviewed for this task included:

- City of Warrensburg (City)
- Warrensburg Main Street, Inc. (WMS)
- Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce (Chamber)
- Johnson Co. Economic Development Corp. (JCEDC)

Efforts for Downtown revitalization have been advanced by all of the above groups. However, WMS has emerged as the primary Downtown group.

Working together, the City, WMS, and JCEDC have obtained and deployed a significant amount of resources to build the Pine and Holden Street streetscapes, along with several public parking lots.

The Downtown Organization Structure Review resulted in recommendations to enhance existing organizations and to form new organizations primarily for funding purposes. A mechanism such as a Community Improvement District (CID) or a Community Development Corporation (CDC) is critical to continue to fund Downtown projects, as well as the continued support of WMS. Primary Recommendations identified by this task include:

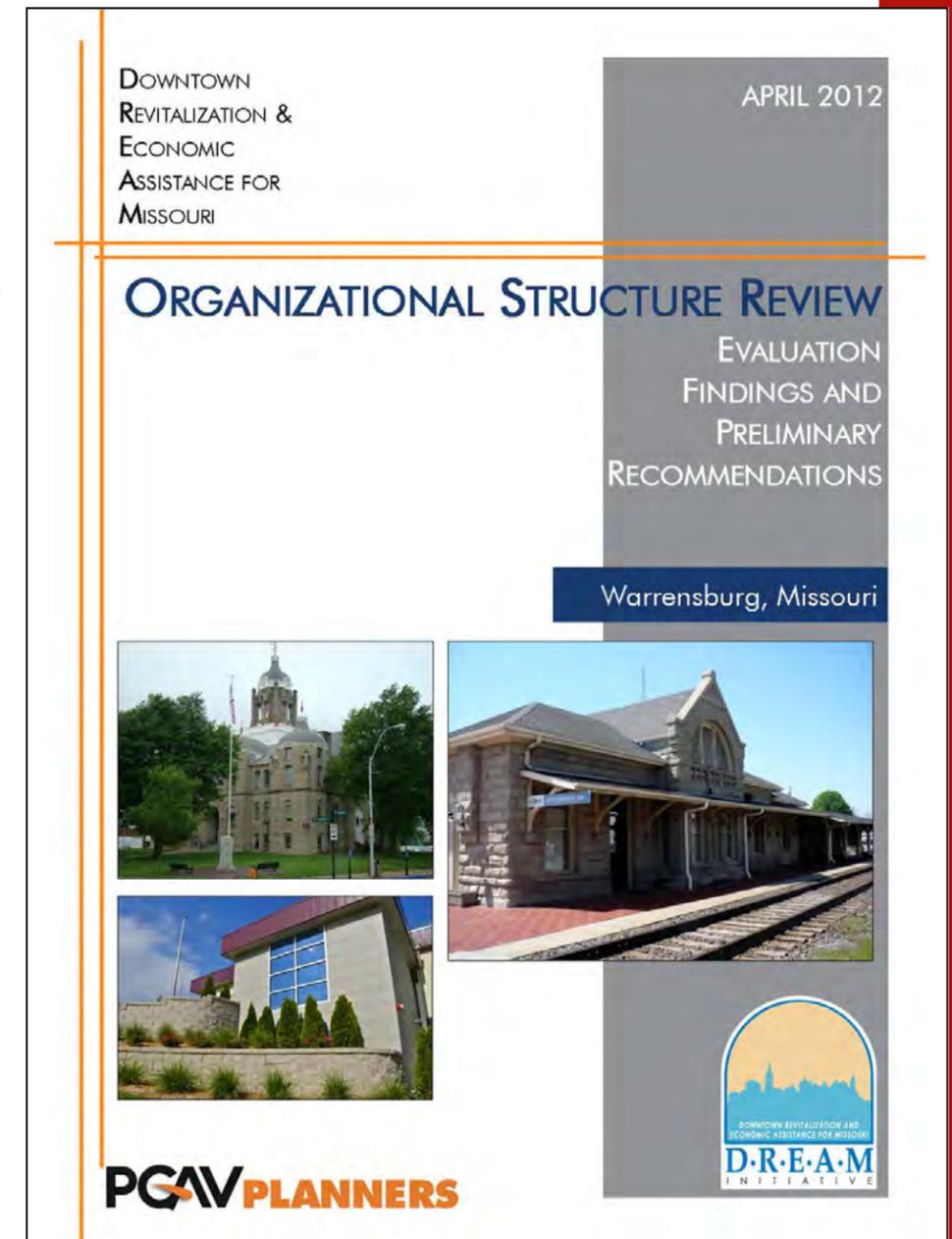
- **Formation of a Downtown Warrensburg Community Improvement District (DWCID)**
Sufficient resources will need to be identified to drive the Downtown revitalization efforts proposed in this plan. Local incentive mechanisms such as a Community Improvement District (CID) are critical to develop direct funding for Downtown projects and

programs and to provide a source of matching funds as the City seeks to obtain State and Federal grants. The City has had some experience with grant funding, but does not have a dedicated funding mechanism in place for Downtown. A Downtown CID would allow for a more flexible income stream and the ability to fund WMS programs, events, and revitalization efforts.

The effort to establish a CID will require robust public outreach to gain support. WMS will be vital for this step. The DWCID will provide flexible funding for Downtown services such as infrastructure, marketing, beautification, business development, promotions, rehabilitation and redevelopment of buildings, and administrative support. Many of these services can and should be provided by WMS, making it the main administrator of the CID redevelopment efforts. Therefore, WMS will also need to be the primary supporter and will need to work tirelessly to promote the benefits of establishing the CID. The City and WMS can jointly develop the CID plan and budget.

The Organizational Structure Review recommends a CID because of the organizational enhancements it can provide. The Warrensburg *Financial Assistance Review*, discussed on page 34, notes that a CID could generate over \$100,000 in sales tax revenue and about another \$50,000 in property tax revenue depending on the final specifics of the district.

- **Monitor the changing atmosphere of Downtown**
The WMS Board membership should consist of representatives of the City, Chamber, and JCEDC, possibly as Ex-Officio members. These representatives, as well as their broader organizations, need to understand their role in participating in WMS is to focus attention on Downtown Warrensburg. Each group involved has a wider service area than just Downtown, and often goals will coincide, but not always. Similarly, WMS business, meetings, and activities need to be respectful of volunteers' time. WMS, working through



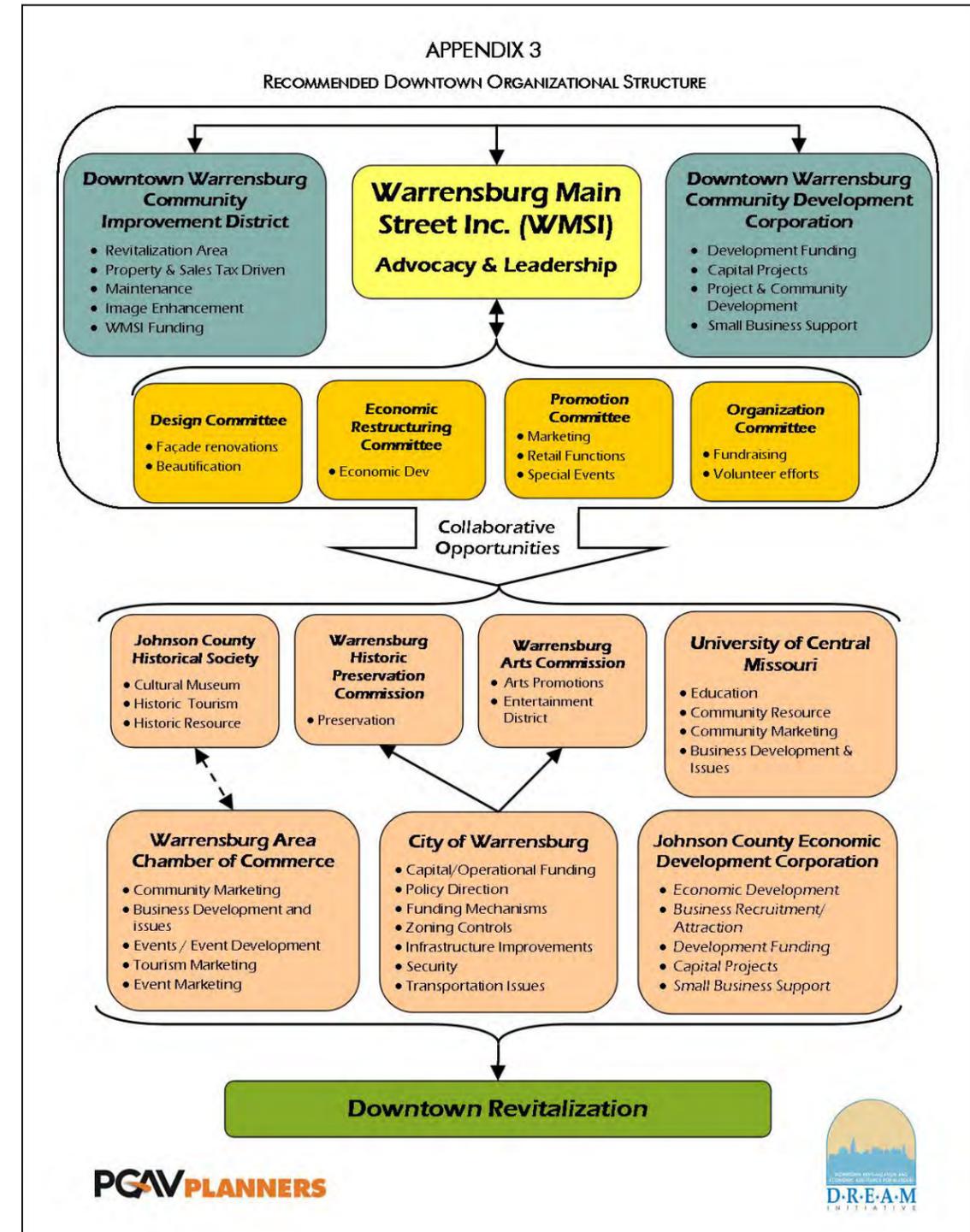
Cover of Warrensburg's *Organizational Structure Review*.

the Main Street Four-point approach, should always consider the motives that drive a given volunteer and work to match that volunteer with the appropriate committee.

During the DREAM process, the organizational structure underwent several changes. The City, WMS, and JCEDC all had significant personnel changes. Recently the Warrensburg Convention and Visitor’s Bureau (CVB) was established, independent of the Chamber of Commerce. Through other efforts such as the formation of the Historic Preservation Commission and the Arts Commission, WMS needs to ensure there is a Downtown Warrensburg focus.

WMS should be the glue that holds all the involved organizations together, at least in the context of providing services for Downtown Warrensburg. The WMS Committees should continue to be a place of interaction for all the various representatives, including UCM and its students. The Organization Committee of WMS should monitor Downtown interests to ensure that all groups have representation somewhere within the committee structure. Disagreements will happen, but WMS should be quick to help resolve such situations to prevent interruptions in revitalization efforts.

To view the full report, see the *Warrensburg Organizational Structure Review, April 2012* and refer to the Schedule of Recommendations on page 43 of this Strategic Plan.



Recommended Organizational Structure for Downtown Warrensburg.

LAND USE, BUILDINGS & INFRASTRUCTURE SURVEY

The Land Use, Buildings & Infrastructure Survey is an inventory of Downtown Warrensburg’s existing land use, exterior building conditions, and the condition of public infrastructure. The survey was conducted during the Spring of 2009. Conditions are documented in the *Map Reference Handbook* of December 2009. The 25 maps produced in the report were used throughout the DREAM planning process. Sample maps are shown on this page and on pages 12 through 14. 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 Warrensburg.

- Building conditions vary greatly. There are some buildings in poor condition, including a concentration along Pine Street. However, there are relatively few vacancies as of the date of this report.
- The upper-floors of the buildings in Downtown Warrensburg are generally in-use as rental units and not vacant. However, the vacancy rate increases during the summer months of the UCM school term.
- Over the years, the City has acquired several properties and substandard buildings to develop the lots into public parking. Recently, a few lots were developed into a drop-off recycling area.

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 Warrensburg includes a courthouse square with a one-way street pattern around the courthouse. The street layout is a grid pattern with the east and west entrances to the courthouse square located in the middle of the block. The intersection of Holden and Pine streets is the primary Downtown intersection. A significant amount of vehicular and pedestrian traffic occurs along these streets.
- A rail line runs just south of Pine Street and creates a visual and physical barrier to the southern area of Downtown; an area that includes fewer businesses, but also UCM.
- Downtown is located west of State Highway 13 and South of U.S. Highway 50. Downtown is primarily accessed from Maguire Street (Business Highway 13) to the east along Market, Gay, or North Streets.
- There is a significant amount of public and institutional property in Downtown Warrensburg. This is a situation that should be monitored to prevent an imbalance of non-tax generating properties.



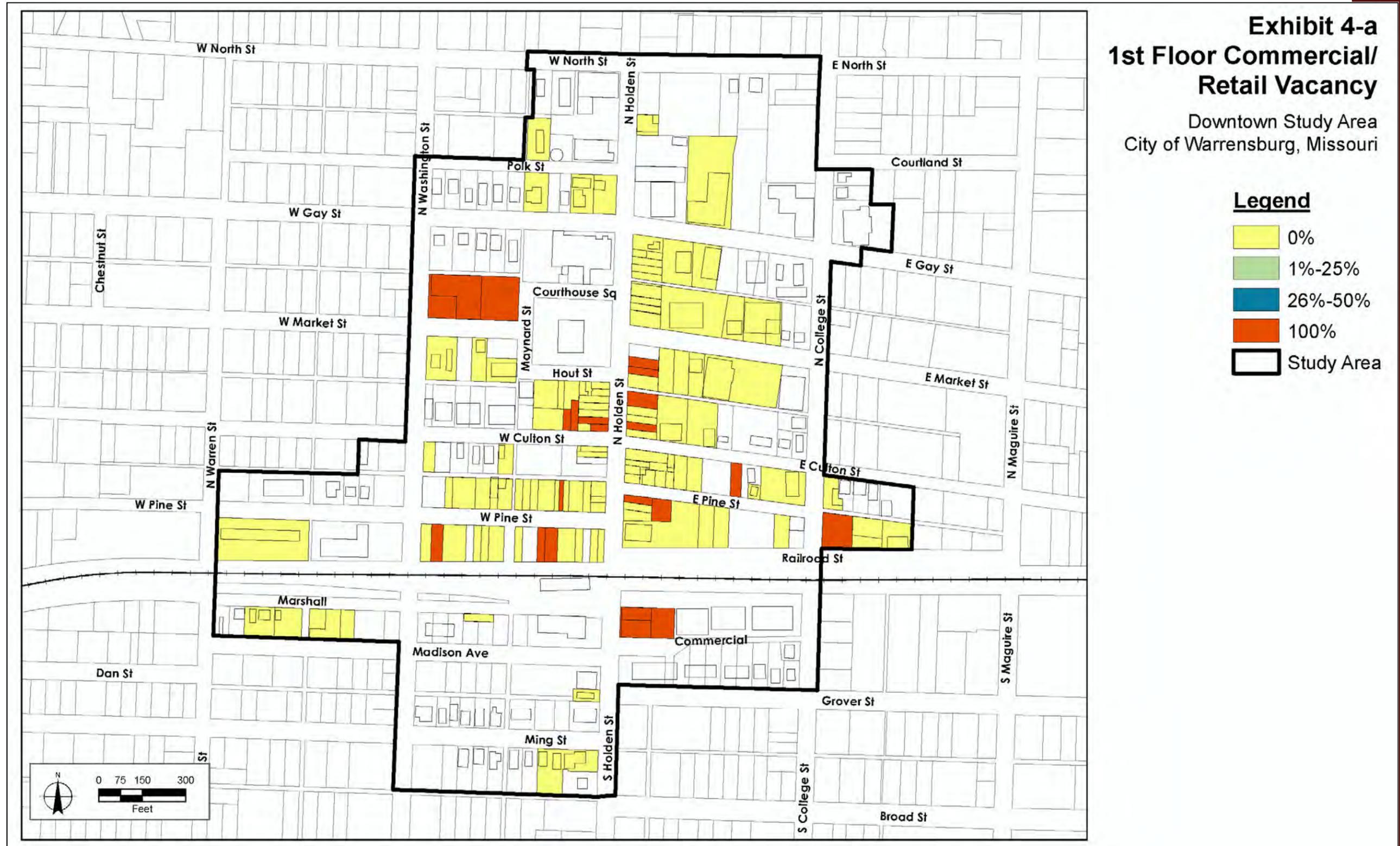
Warrensburg General Land Use Map (Spring 2009).

Exhibit 3 Building Conditions

Downtown Study Area
City of Warrensburg, Missouri



Downtown Warrensburg Building Conditions Map (Spring 2009).



Map of 1st Floor Vacancy in Downtown Warrensburg (Spring 2009).

Exhibit 5-a Residential Inventory & Units

Downtown Study Area
City of Warrensburg, Missouri



Residential inventory map of Downtown Warrensburg (Spring 2009).

COMMUNITY SURVEYS

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

Three methods were used to collect this information; Focus Groups, a Community Telephone Survey, and a Visitor Survey. The process and results of each method are summarized below:

- Focus Groups**
 Five separate focus groups were conducted to engage stakeholders in open discussion regarding Downtown Warrensburg. The groups consisted of UCM students, newer residents, Downtown business owners and stakeholders, City officials, staff, and administration, and long-time residents. 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 improvements and desires for new businesses.

Participants generally agreed that Downtown Warrensburg is moving in the right direction. WMS and the City were credited with successful projects and activities that have improved the aesthetics of Downtown and attracted several new businesses. There was also discussion about the success of the recent efforts to increase enforcement of underage drinking regulations.

Participants’ major concerns included parking, navigation, pedestrian safety, and limited business hours. Parking was also discussed in the context of perception, 2-hour parking, employee parking, resident parking, and accessible parking. A variety of comments noted that navigation and pedestrian safety are directly related to parking issues.

Participants suggested a variety of new businesses for Downtown. These suggestions focused on dining variety, clothing, shoes, a bookstore, a convenience store, organic foods, a butcher shop, an art supply store, and arts and crafts supplies. For restaurant variety, participants suggested fine dining, a wine lounge or beer garden, a late-night diner, an ice cream shop, and a variety of casual dining options. They also suggested that the Downtown restaurants should have later business hours and outdoor seating.

The groups felt that Downtown revitalization efforts should focus on bringing in businesses and entertainment options for the three markets of UCM students, Whiteman Air Force Base families, and Warrensburg residents.

No business owners indicated support for an incentive program funded by an additional tax in Downtown. The owners felt that such an additional tax would drive away business. However, one participant noted that Downtown’s competition (big-box retailers) have used incentives to their advantage and that maybe Downtown should too.

For the complete report, please see the Warrensburg Focus Group Survey Report from January 2010.

Downtown Revitalization and Economic Assistance for Missouri
Focus Group Survey Report
Final Survey Findings and Results

Warrensburg, Missouri

SECTION II

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL MISSOURI STUDENTS DISCUSSION TRANSCRIPT

Moderator: *Tell me a little bit about Warrensburg as a whole.*

Well, I mean, it’s a smaller town. For me, coming from Columbia... I have a lot of friends who come from really small town, but I’m from Columbia, and in Warrensburg, there’s not much to do. Probably 2 or 3 years were a lot of fun, but I’m here for school, and what’s there to do? Go to bars, go to Pine Street, other than that, it’s just kind of a quaint town.

It’s a real college town. I’m from Dallas. When I came here, I had a class of 600 in high school, and if there weren’t a college here, there wouldn’t be much.

I’m from a town of 2100 people, so it’s a little bigger, but I mostly hung out at bars and went to parties, but now that I have a family, there’s really not a lot to do here. We go to Kansas City.

A lot of people my age, we don’t stick around on the weekend. We go to Columbia, Kansas City, a road trip to Chicago...after a couple years, you’re like, “What’s next?” If you want to go out for entertainment, there’s Pine Street.

When I first came here, Pine Street was a lot more fun, but after that whole raid thing, it went downhill.

I could talk for the whole time about Pine Street. I work down there as a bartender and manager, and a year or two ago, there was a club called Club Blue down there, and there was a huge riot, and there was shots fired, I think a lot of people hurt, pepper spray, even friends who were trying to help were pepper sprayed...people hiding in the bar, gunshots, nothing you’d ever think you’d experience here. Nobody was shot, but... that happened a couple years ago, and I could talk about the law. It used to be 21 and older.

I’m under 21, and I can’t go to Pine Street, so there’s nothing to do.

It used to be 18 to go and 21 to drink. Pine Street offers tons of jobs for college students, whether serving or cleaning or whatever. That’s where income comes from. And there’s nobody in there anymore. There used to be 200 people in the tiny bar, and you’d make good money to live, but now there’s nobody there anymore. I have friends his age, and you can’t leave your buddies and go out without them. So you decide to go to house parties. The occupancy in the bars has gone down incredibly.

Last spring, they put it into effect.

There was a lot of underage drinking. You can’t be oblivious to that. But it wasn’t everybody, and I don’t think you can exclude half of the ages in this college to go out and socialize in the only place to socialize in Warrensburg.

January 2010
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UNICOM-ARC

Excerpt of the discussion transcript from the UCM Students Focus Group.

• **Community Telephone Survey**

In September of 2009, a phone survey of land lines was conducted to interview a random sample of Warrensburg residents regarding their perceptions of Downtown. This type of survey is useful to obtain input from residents who may not necessarily attend or participate in a public meeting. Key points from the Community Telephone Survey results, include:

- Over 80% of respondents indicated they visit Downtown at least once a month.
- Downtown is visited by City residents for a wide variety of uses. A majority of respondents indicated they use Downtown for:
 - ◊ Dining
 - ◊ Conducting Business
 - ◊ Government/Post Office
 - ◊ Shopping

UCM, church, entertainment, special events, and outdoor recreation were each selected by fewer than 10% of the respondents.

- Only one characteristic of Downtown Warrensburg was rated poorly by over half of the respondents; entertainment options.
- Almost 90% of respondents felt it was important to retain Downtown’s historic character.
- A majority of the respondents indicated better restaurant variety, clothing stores, activities for college age students, and a bakery as business types they prioritized for Downtown.
- A majority of the respondents indicated adding new parking, improving the pedestrian-friendliness, moving utilities underground, and improving lighting as improvements they prioritized for Downtown.

- Only improved signage, upper-floor residences, and murals were prioritized by less than a third of respondents.
- About 59% of the residents who responded indicated they would be likely to support a sales tax to fund Downtown improvements or economic development projects. The majority of those residents who were likely to support an additional sales tax indicated that a 0.5% tax was favored.

For the complete report, please see the Warrensburg *Community Telephone Survey Report* from November, 2009.

	5 Top priority	Total high priority (4-5)	3	Total low priority (1-2)	Other/don't know
	%	%	%	%	%
50. Adding new parking spaces or lots	33.3%	61.3%	19.3%	19.3%	.0%
53. Making the area more pedestrian-friendly	28.0%	55.0%	26.0%	18.0%	1.0%
49 Moving utilities underground	32.3%	52.3%	20.7%	24.3%	2.7%
48. Improving lighting	25.3%	50.3%	30.0%	17.3%	2.3%
55. Improving building facades	23.0%	49.7%	30.0%	19.7%	.7%
57. Offering public wireless internet access	23.0%	49.7%	25.0%	24.0%	1.3%
56. Keeping streets and sidewalks cleaner	26.0%	49.3%	31.3%	18.3%	1.0%
51. Making alleys more attractive	28.0%	48.7%	25.0%	25.0%	1.3%
47. Adding green space and landscaping such as trees or plantings	22.7%	47.0%	27.7%	25.0%	.3%
54. Improving signage to help people find their way around	14.3%	30.0%	28.3%	40.0%	1.7%
52. Developing second-story residential space	9.3%	25.3%	28.0%	43.7%	3.0%
58. Adding murals to downtown buildings	9.0%	23.0%	26.0%	50.7%	.3%

Sample table from the Warrensburg DREAM *Community Telephone Survey*.

• **Visitor Survey**

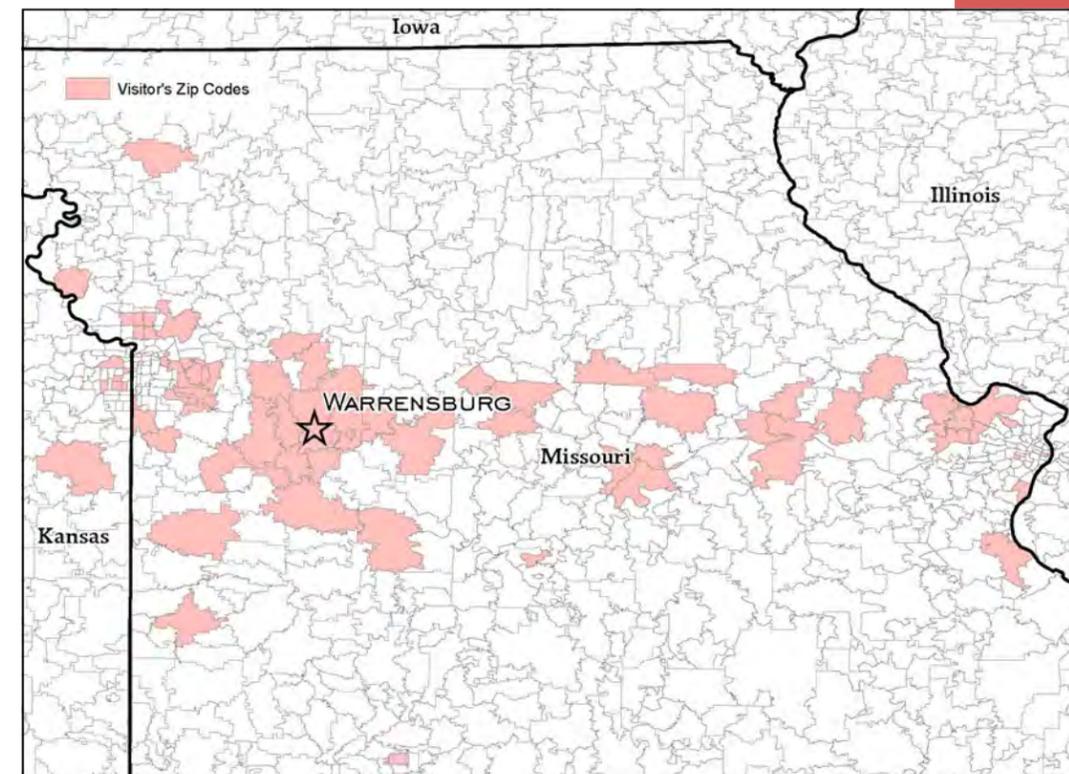
From 2009 to late 2011, a visitor survey was conducted at locations throughout Warrensburg. Visitor responses were collected by local volunteers either with a paper survey or tablet computer. 151 responses were received. The purpose of the survey was to learn about the perception of Downtown Warrensburg and the needs of its visitors. The responses of people residing within the Warrensburg zip code were not tabulated. Key points from the survey include:

- Almost 95% of respondents indicated they had visited Downtown Warrensburg before, with just over 53% indicating they visit Downtown at least once a month.
- Dining, nightlife/entertainment, and shopping were all indicated by more than a third of respondents as reasons for visiting Downtown.
- Less than 45% of respondents indicated they were staying overnight in Warrensburg on this visit.
- Almost 89% of visitors found Downtown easy to navigate. However, less than 42% found Downtown parking convenient.
- Two-thirds of respondents found Downtown business hours convenient, with another 20% indicating they didn't know. This suggests a fair amount of respondents did not use Downtown for shopping or dining.
- Visitors indicated a variety of businesses that they would like to see Downtown, with men's clothing stores and an ice cream shop being identified by more than one fourth of respondents.
- Over one fourth of respondents indicated they would like to see renovation of historic buildings and fountains as physical improvements.

- A key insight into Warrensburg's visitors can also be found by reviewing the map of the respondents' zip codes at right. The pattern demonstrated roughly conforms to the alignment of Interstate 70 in Missouri. This tends to indicate that the visitors were travelling to Warrensburg specifically for a visit, rather than for an event; which tends to have a more concentric pattern. It is likely that most visits to Warrensburg are related to UCM in some way.

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

WMS should consider periodically updating these surveys and reconvening the focus groups. Communication of these results to businesses and community leaders on an ongoing basis is needed to monitor revitalization progress and the changing market attitudes toward Downtown Warrensburg.



Zip code locations of respondents to Warrensburg's visitor survey.

	%
	29.1%
	27.0%
	23.4%
	15.6%
	14.9%
	14.9%
	9.9%
	8.5%
	7.8%
	7.8%
	7.8%
	5.0%
	4.3%
	2.8%

Sample table from the Warrensburg DREAM Visitor Survey.

BUILDING DESIGN AND CONDITIONS

The historic character of Downtown Warrensburg buildings is a distinctive feature that helps to provide the City with an identity. DREAM planning recommendations seek to leverage this intrinsic character for future revitalization efforts and initiatives.

Historic preservation plays an important role in Downtown revitalization. Downtown Warrensburg includes a few properties that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. While there is no designated historic district, the City is a Certified Local Government and has passed a preservation ordinance and created a Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). The HPC provides guidance to the City regarding historic rehabilitation and successfully listed the Grover Street Victorian Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places in 2012.

Property owners, businesses, students, residents, and visitors have all identified the need to rehabilitate and maintain Downtown Warrensburg's historic façades as a priority, as well as improve existing building conditions overall. The City has worked to remove some buildings that were beyond repair and has identified more possible demolitions. While this is necessary at times, the City must also firmly enforce building standards and insist on quality construction and rehabilitations to prevent historic properties from falling into irreversible structural disrepair.

The DREAM Building and Streetscape Concepts report is intended to inspire Downtown leaders and private property owners to initiate activities that will address building conditions and improve public infrastructure. This section addresses building design; typically regarding private property. The public design aspects of Downtown will be discussed in the Public Infrastructure section on page 29.

The City and Downtown Warrensburg leaders, property owners, and business owners selected specific buildings upon which to focus attention for illustrating building design concepts. The buildings chosen are along the south side of West Pine Street and include the façades along Pine and the rear elevations facing the rail line and depot area. Pages 20 through 28 include illustrations of these buildings.

Recommendations to address issues regarding the condition of Downtown Warrensburg buildings overall, include:

- **Continue to Improve Building Conditions**
The City should work with WMS to continue to improve the process by which historical buildings are rehabilitated. There have been some Downtown Warrensburg buildings demolished and the City should work to ensure that the existing properties are maintained and improved. This will require a balance between economical improvements and maintenance codes.

In 2012, WMS held its first "Day of Caring." Over 75 volunteers logged over 650 hours to improve Downtown Warrensburg buildings through cleaning, painting, and installing awnings and equipment screening. Many of the buildings chosen for DREAM design examples saw improvements; primarily the rear elevations of the buildings along West Pine Street. While the City would focus on improved maintenance enforcement of historic buildings, WMS should continue efforts such as the "Day of Caring." This outstanding program can be critical to help prevent minor issues from becoming major structural repairs. The building illustrations and conditions photos found on pages 20 through 28 demonstrate the improvements that have been made. However, many of these buildings are still in need of repair. Masonry, vacant or broken windows, and unsafe awnings are areas where WMS and the City can collaborate to encourage further improvement.

WMS could also assist the City in these efforts by hosting informational seminars that help connect property owners with reputable contractors and seek to explain the issues and the expectations of the City staff. If the proposed CID or other Downtown incentive mechanism is implemented, WMS should help develop a policy that restricts the funds available for buildings that have a record of outstanding maintenance violations.



Examples of Downtown Warrensburg architectural details.

DREAM Initiative • Downtown Strategic Plan

- **Develop Design Standards for Downtown Buildings**
The City should develop building design standards for Downtown rehabilitations and new infill construction. Some recent new construction has not complemented the historic nature of existing buildings well. Additionally, some signage is excessive and obscures architectural details. There are several Downtown rehabilitations that set a positive example, and the City has attempted to encourage appropriate private construction by adding the historic elements found in the Holden and Pine street streetscapes.

The City may wish to initially make Downtown buildings standards voluntary for existing buildings until such time as a historic district is formed that includes Downtown. However, the City Façade Grant program is partly contingent upon the improvements meeting the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation. With the City having put into place a Certified Local Government and the Historic Preservation Commission, the next steps are to define a Downtown historic district.

The City should review its Downtown zoning classification to determine areas where Downtown issues can be better addressed. Aspects such as business signage, building materials, and building access, along with parking requirements and setbacks, are significantly different for Downtown construction than for highway construction.

The City also has the ability to streamline processes for Downtown redevelopment projects. This would serve to encourage more projects and would help to improve a property owner's profitability by reducing costs associated with, a likely already expensive, building rehabilitation. WMS can help provide the connection between Downtown property owners and the City staff by hosting informational meetings regarding new City procedures and expectations.

- **Develop Incentives for Downtown Property Owners**
The City and WMS should pursue a mechanism such as the proposed CID to develop a funding stream that can be used for private investment and to expand WMS programs. Such a mechanism could lead to the development of a revolving loan fund administered by WMS and be used to attract and assist larger redevelopment projects such as infill opportunities. As the City continues to pursue grant funding, a CID will also provide a stable source for matching funding.

As previously noted, if the proposed CID is implemented for Downtown building improvements, WMS and the City should work to develop a policy that restricts or denies the funds available for inappropriate rehabilitations or for building owners that have a record of outstanding maintenance violations. Additionally, such an incentive policy should require historic rehabilitation projects to have received a Certificate of Appropriateness by the HPC.

More building design concepts based on Downtown Warrensburg buildings are found in the *DREAM Building and Streetscape Concepts* from July 2013.

City of Warrensburg



This recent rehabilitation provides a good example of historically complementary redevelopment in Downtown Warrensburg..

Buildings at 100—112 W. Pine Street (Front)

Historical research of these buildings provide clues to original façade details. While there may not be much architectural detail left once the façade is uncovered, a new building face could help recapture the heritage of the block. The building that houses Club Blue/Warehouse was formerly the Star Theatre.



Conditions.—2010

Remove inappropriate materials to restore upper-façade architecture.

Proposed Improvements.

Restore upper-floor windows to maintain rhythm along the block.

Add vertical elements that help reconnect the upper façade with the street.

Expose transom.

Restrict signage to the sign band.

Conditions.—2014

Buildings at 112—100 W. Pine Street (Rear)

The rear elevation of these buildings are highly visible from the Warrensburg Depot and are separated from the rail line by an alleyway, small parking area, low wall, and chain-link fencing. The businesses in these buildings could benefit from rear entrances that more directly access the off-street parking. Rear entrances should also be used for deliveries and access to upper-floor residences. In general, rear elevations should have screened building systems and attractive entrances.



Recent Improvements (Conditions in 2012) made to buildings at 112—100 W. Pine Street (Rear)

Building systems are now screened from public view.



Although the metal siding was not removed, it was painted a more natural earth tone color.

An awning was installed to clearly indicate a rear entrance.



Building systems are now screened from public view.

Buildings at 116—122 W. Pine Street (Front)

These buildings would greatly benefit from the removal of the imposing wood shingle canopy. This would likely expose transom windows. Other than this removal, the buildings are in fair condition and are primarily in need of professional masonry repair and cleaning.



Conditions.—2010

Remove shingle canopies.

Professionally clean and repair masonry.

Install trapezoidal canvas awnings if needed.
Awnings can also include business signage.

Maintain upper-floor access and storefront elements.

Proposed Improvements.

Use single-window awnings on upper-floor windows.

Consider building lighting and additional upper-façade details to add interest.

Conditions.—2014

Buildings at 122—116 W. Pine Street (Rear)

These buildings are also highly visible from the Warrensburg Depot and are directly in view of the motorist parking in the Depot parking lot. The view from the existing parking is critical as this lot is the proposed location of the Event Pavilion. While some improvements have been made, clearly more repairs are still needed.



Conditions.—2010



Proposed Improvements.

The lower rear elevation of the building should have a consistent material. If rear windows are to be filled-in, the original building material should be used to avoid the 'patch' from being obvious.



Conditions.—2014



Conditions—2013

Awnings installed to clearly indicate rear entrances.

Future masonry work still needed.

Building system screening was installed.

Buildings at 126—134 W. Pine Street (Front)

These buildings have a variety of issues. All have had their storefront altered from their original elements. Removal of inappropriate material and the shingle canopies will help this group. Where possible, the owners of these buildings should restore the display windows. Additionally, streetscape elements can improve the image of the buildings on the street.



Remove shingle canopy.

Remove inappropriate materials to restore upper-façade architecture.

Remove inappropriate business signage.



Install trapezoidal canvas awnings if needed.
Awnings can also include business signage.

Restore display windows and other storefront elements..

Restore transoms and lintels.



Buildings at 134—126 W. Pine Street (Rear)

The rear elevations of these buildings are obscured from the Depot parking lot by mature trees. While well cared for trees can provide an attractive element and buffer, these trees are significantly larger than is typically found in a Downtown environment. It appears there are residences over these buildings and that the alleyway is further separated from the rear of the building by fencing to create a back yard for the tenants.



Conditions.—2010



Proposed Improvements.

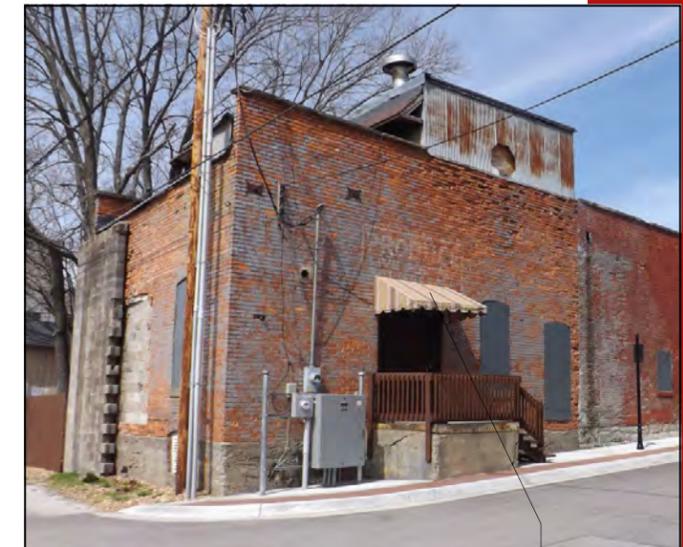
Property owners should consider trimming trees and improving the rear yards.

Install new fencing for the residents' privacy..

Repair masonry of the elevation to protect the structural integrity of the building.



Conditions.—2014



A railing was added to the side elevation and entrance of 126 W. Pine Street in 2013. However, more improvements are needed.

Buildings at 138—146 W. Pine Street (Front)

This block consist of larger buildings with long stretches of wall that do not encourage pedestrian activity. Restored storefronts and additional vertical elements that provide rhythm along the street will improve these properties.



Conditions.—2010

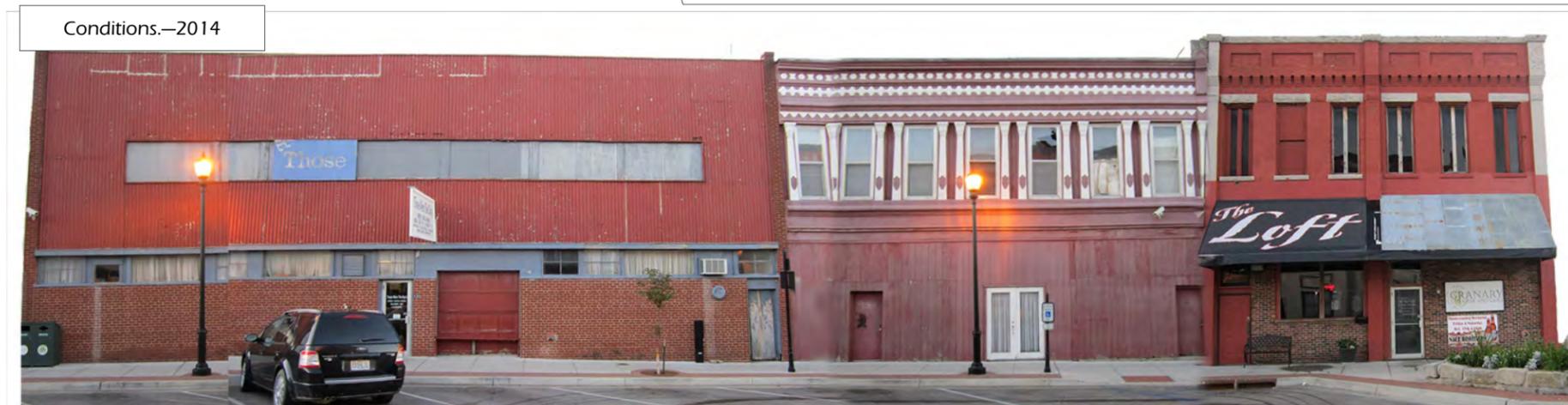
Move signage to the sign band.



Proposed Improvements.

Highlight existing vertical elements.

Restore display windows and other storefront elements..



Conditions.—2014

Add vertical elements and simple architectural details such as medallions to help the building establish rhythm along the street.

Buildings at 146—138 W. Pine Street (Rear)

The rear elevations of these buildings are visible from the far western end of the Depot parking. The alleyway behind the buildings intersects Washington Street at this point.

Conditions.—2010



Remove graffiti and repair masonry.

Proposed Improvements.



Restore upper floor windows.

Screen building systems.

Clearly indicate rear entrances.

Consider a balcony for upper-floor residences.

Conditions.—2014



System screening installed at 146 W. Pine Street.

DREAM Initiative • Downtown Strategic Plan

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

This section of the Strategic Plan provides recommendations regarding the streetscape, parking areas, utilities, and other physical public aspects of Downtown Warrensburg. 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.

Warrensburg has an existing streetscape along sections of S. Holden and W. Pine Streets. The streetscape design includes lighting, decorative signs, a clock, benches, bicycle racks, landscaping, street trees, wayfinding, decorative pavement, pedestrian plazas, utilities, and treatment to existing features such as a the pedestrian alley connecting W. Pine Street with a parking lot along W. Culton Street. In 2012, Phase III was completed along W. Pine Street and was funded, in part, by a Missouri Community Development Block Grant and Missouri Department of Transportation (MODOT) funds. In 2014, Phase IIIB was completed along S. Holden Street and was funded by MODOT and the City of Warrensburg. Downtown promotes this successful project using signage regarding the funding.

Along with the future plans to expand the Downtown streetscape, the City is pursuing plans to locate an Event Pavilion somewhere in Downtown. During the course of the DREAM process, a location for this pavilion was considered next to the existing Warrensburg Train Depot. However, this location may no longer be a potential site and the pavilion may be constructed elsewhere. The concepts for this pavilion are shown in the Implementation Section on pages 40 through 42 of this plan.

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

- **Coordination of Public Improvements with an Overall, Complementary, Design Theme.** Existing Downtown public improvements are functional and well-designed. Any public

improvement will require ongoing maintenance. The City should work to expand the existing design to other streets in Downtown. The City should also expand the streetscape to include S. Washington Street south of the rail line and S. Holden Street south of Grover Street; an important pedestrian access to Downtown for UCM students to the north. As future public improvements are designed, it is critical that new landscaping, lighting, and fixtures match or complement existing elements.

- **Improve Streetscape Elements**

The City has installed directional signage on routes to Downtown, as well as to several public parking lots in Downtown. However, other activity centers such as the Warrensburg Depot, UCM, and the Johnson County Courthouse should be included in existing wayfinding signage. The proposed event pavilion, when constructed, should also be included in the system. Downtown could also benefit from gateway signs that announce to the traveler that they have arrived in Downtown Warrensburg. Additionally, the City may wish to consider district signage; helping to define the Pine Street District or the University District.

Several of the existing street trees have matured and are now blocking business storefronts and signage. Additionally, the rear elevations of buildings that may include a business entrance are hidden by mature trees. The City should monitor, trim, and remove and replace these trees if necessary. Replacement species should allow for easy maintenance and proper root and crown growth.

WMS should work with the City to adjust the Downtown Streetscape elements as needed. A funding mechanism such as the proposed CID could assist in these efforts, as well as for the construction of the Event Pavilion.

More information on public infrastructure is found in the Warrensburg DREAM *Building and Streetscape Concepts* from July 2013.

City of Warrensburg



Examples of existing signage in Warrensburg.

DREAM Initiative • Downtown Strategic Plan

RESIDENTIAL MARKET

The residential market in and surrounding Downtown Warrensburg is strongly impacted by the nearly 13,000 students attending UCM. The demand analysis estimates that about one-third of UCM students are residing in campus-related housing, leaving approximately 8,500 students that commute or live in off-campus housing options; many of which are located in Downtown. UCM students, combined with other residents, provide a strong consumer market for Downtown businesses and a broad base of attendees for Downtown events. Visitors must also pass through the surrounding neighborhoods to reach Downtown Warrensburg. Therefore the conditions of housing units in the City are of great importance to the health of Downtown. A strong residential market will help maintain property values throughout the area.

DREAM provided an opportunity for the Missouri Housing Development Commission (MHDC) to review the residential market demand of the City. Recommendations were then developed to encourage Warrensburg leaders to promote projects that can meet any future housing demand and improve existing housing conditions. Additional recommendations focused on monitoring the amount of units and unit conditions of the Downtown rental market. Warrensburg residential recommendations include:

- **Improve Rental Housing**

The residential demand analysis indicated that there is little demand being demonstrated for market-rate rental housing. There are hundreds of market rate units in Warrensburg and most are likely occupied by young tenant households with no children; UCM students. Another market segment feeding into Warrensburg rental units is employees of various facilities at nearby Whiteman Air Force Base.

With the rental market being so significant to Downtown and the City overall, the collaboration of WMS, the City, and the Chamber should work to maintain good building conditions and strong property values for these properties and owners.

WMS and the Chamber should nurture their existing relationship with the UCM Student Affairs Office to reach Downtown students. WMS can encourage more knowledgeable tenants by including students in Downtown living tours, reaching out to incoming students and their parents, and providing seminars and programs regarding life in Downtown Warrensburg. Better tenants will help, and require, their landlords to maintain their units, which will improve overall building conditions.

- **Develop Senior Affordable Rental Housing**

The demand analysis demonstrates potential demand for about 40 affordable senior households over the next few years. Most of this demand may be met by a housing development occurring north of Highway 50, outside of Downtown. However, the City and WMS should encourage housing developers that may be interested in existing Downtown sites or buildings. New residential units could help meet the senior affordable market. However, the City must insist on high-quality units to develop a vibrant Downtown that meets the needs of many segments and includes a diverse mingling of residents. The City should also encourage innovative living arrangements such as live-work uses and lofts.

The City should not encourage the conversion of large single-family homes into multi-family units, fraternity or sorority houses, or group homes. This type of conversion does not enhance the value of the property and typically leads to inferior rental units.

Complete information on the Warrensburg housing market is found in the *DREAM Residential Demand Analysis* from August 2010.

City of Warrensburg



Examples of the range of housing types and conditions in Downtown Warrensburg.

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 of retail development, including an analysis of retail supply and demand in Warrensburg. The Retail Analysis identified a total of about 354,400 square feet of existing first-floor commercial space in Downtown Warrensburg. This space included:

- 51,800 square feet of restaurant (6,700 vacant)
- 95,600 square feet of retail (20,400 vacant)
- 194,300 square feet of office/svc. (10,000 vacant)
- 12,700 square feet of mixed-use (3,300 vacant)

Of the total occupied space, there is about 129,700 square feet of restaurant, retail, or mixed-use space generating sales taxes. Including the existing vacant space, public/institutional uses, and residential uses, over 75% of Downtown space does not generate sales tax.

At the time of the Retail Analysis, the existing occupied retail space was generating about \$73 in retail sales per square foot and the existing restaurants were generating about \$153 in sales per square foot. Based on this historical data, if Downtown Warrensburg could fill the 40,400 square feet of commercial vacancy, it could mean an increase of \$2.9 to \$6.2 million in additional annual sales.

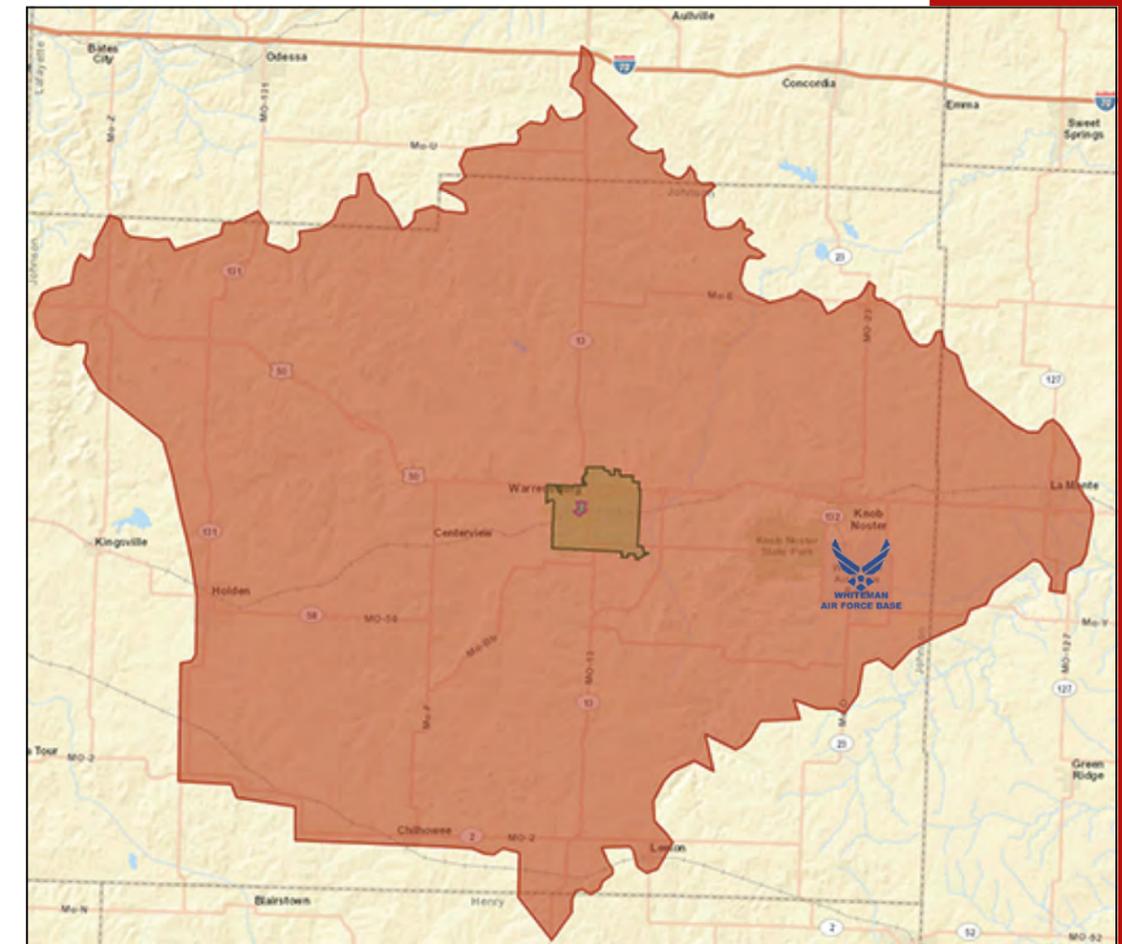
Retail demand is analyzed by examining retail spending data for households in a primary trade area (the City limits of Warrensburg) and a secondary trade area (households within a modified 25-minute drive of Downtown Warrensburg). A map of these trade areas is shown on this page. Comparing sales data to demand data provides a measure of the performance of the Downtown retail sector and identifies unmet retail demand that can be compared to specific categories of retail products. Using this methodology, unmet demand was evaluated to identify potential retail sectors of opportunity. Downtown leaders could create economic development policies to attract new stores offering these types of products, and/or encourage existing merchants to adapt their stores to offer these types of products.

The retail analysis indicates that the amount of unmet retail demand could support an additional 240,000 square feet of retail/restaurant space. This amount of space far surpasses the amount of existing vacancy. The City could encourage some office and service spaces to convert to retail/restaurant uses. The Warrensburg retail market is very cyclical due to the UCM student market segment. It is unlikely that Downtown could meet all of the unmet retail demand being demonstrated by this analysis. However, Downtown should be able to capture a significant amount of retail space. The analysis indicates that unmet retail demand exists for stores providing products in categories that include:

- Electronics and Appliances
- Health & Personal Care
- Clothing
- Furniture
- Office Supplies, Stationary, and Gifts
- Sporting Goods/Hobbies/Musical Instruments
- Jewelry, Luggage, and Leather Goods
- Other Miscellaneous Retailers
- Home Furnishings
- Shoes
- Specialty Foods

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

To complete the retail demand analysis, existing vacant locations were compared with potential store types. The results were illustrated in a Retail Opportunities Map, shown on page 32. 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 Warrensburg 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 development incentives. Downtown is at an intrinsic, competitive disadvantage with the businesses near highways 13 & 50. By developing incentive mechanisms to attract businesses to Downtown, the City can help level the playing field between business locations and build demand for high-quality Downtown property. This will also give the City the ability to help existing businesses expand and rehabilitate their Downtown location, rather than relocate to a bigger location elsewhere in the City. The City should also work to decrease the amount of non-retail space. There are currently many office, service, and other publicly-owned, tax-exempt, properties located in Downtown. The City should monitor this situation and attempt to adjust the Downtown business mix, if possible.

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

- Strengthen Existing Businesses**
 WMS should continue to work with the City and Chamber to provide programs that will help existing businesses better serve their customers. Information and techniques to deal with marketing, products, presentation, displays, customer service and the importance of expanded hours of operation are necessary for businesses to succeed. With already strong occupancy, improving the existing businesses should be Downtown’s top priority.

Many of the existing retailers cater to the UCM student market and this is an effective strategy. However, students are generally not very discerning or demanding regarding their retail purchases. Students are typically concerned only with the cost of a product, but they are more willing to spend money on certain items, such as electronics. Students are also more likely to purchase products on the internet. A Downtown Warrensburg business that relies on the

UCM market too much risks losing appeal to other markets and being unduly affected as its primary customers arrive and leave UCM according to the school term.

WMS should work to encourage merchants to expand their customer base and focus on store aesthetics. Improved retail stores and products will benefit Downtown and all market segments.



The Potential New Retail Map from the Warrensburg Retail Market Analysis.

- **Encourage the Development of Retail Space**

As noted, there is significantly more unmet demand being demonstrated than there is vacant or easily converted retail space in Downtown Warrensburg. There are some properties that are not located in the main traffic areas and there are several buildings that house non-retail, governmental, or institutional uses. There are some lots or substandard buildings that represent opportunities for infill construction.

The City should seek developers willing to rehabilitate existing buildings into mixed-use projects that include some retail space. Through planning and zoning efforts, the City should also encourage office and services uses to occupy locations on side streets or in upper floors; reserving prime ground-floor locations along Holden and Pine Streets for retail uses.

WMS can assist in these important efforts by connecting Downtown property owners with reputable contractors and the appropriate City staff. WMS should maintain communication with the Chamber to identify businesses elsewhere in the City that may need a second location. Downtown should be promoted as an alternative to locating in another City.

- **Cultivate Local Entrepreneurs**

As Downtown works to keep its first-floor locations occupied with retail users, efforts should also be made to identify and assist local entrepreneurs from within the community. Along with Warrensburg residents, a likely source of entrepreneurs may come from the families of service men and women stationed at nearby Whiteman Air Force Base. Military families tend to have stable incomes and may have a family member or members interested in starting a business during their time in Warrensburg.

The collaboration of WMS, the City, and Chamber should consider using entrepreneurial training programs such as Operation Jumpstart (www.operationjumpstart.biz).

WMS also provides a “mobile incubator” program that assists new businesses by taking needed services and knowledge to the business. This program should be expanded and advertised to the region. Other WMS events that provide information about these programs, conducted along with bankers and potential investors, can help expose potential new start-ups.



The view looking east along E. Pine Street in Downtown Warrensburg.



The view looking north along S. Holden Street in Downtown Warrensburg.

FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

Conducted in 2012, based on 2011 real property data and sales tax information, the Financial Assistance Review analyzed several funding mechanisms that are available to Downtown Warrensburg for business development, and public or private investments. The intent of this task was to provide information on funding concepts for potential projects and programs, along with the preliminary financial data to support further exploration of these incentives.

The DREAM Financial Assistance Review is focused on obtaining a stable and flexible funding source for Downtown and WMS as it pursues projects and programs. Potential mechanisms include a Community Improvement District (CID), a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District, and a Local Option Economic Development Sales Tax (EDS), as well as historic tax credits, low income tax credits, and participation tax credits. Each of these programs provides funding for specific types of projects or programs. These limitations must be considered to ensure an appropriate and flexible funding source is implemented; should the City decide to pursue such mechanisms. 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 prioritized 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 is to leverage public funds to attract private investment that leads to job creation, business growth, and an attractive Downtown Warrensburg. Information on a CID, TIF district, and an EDS, includes:

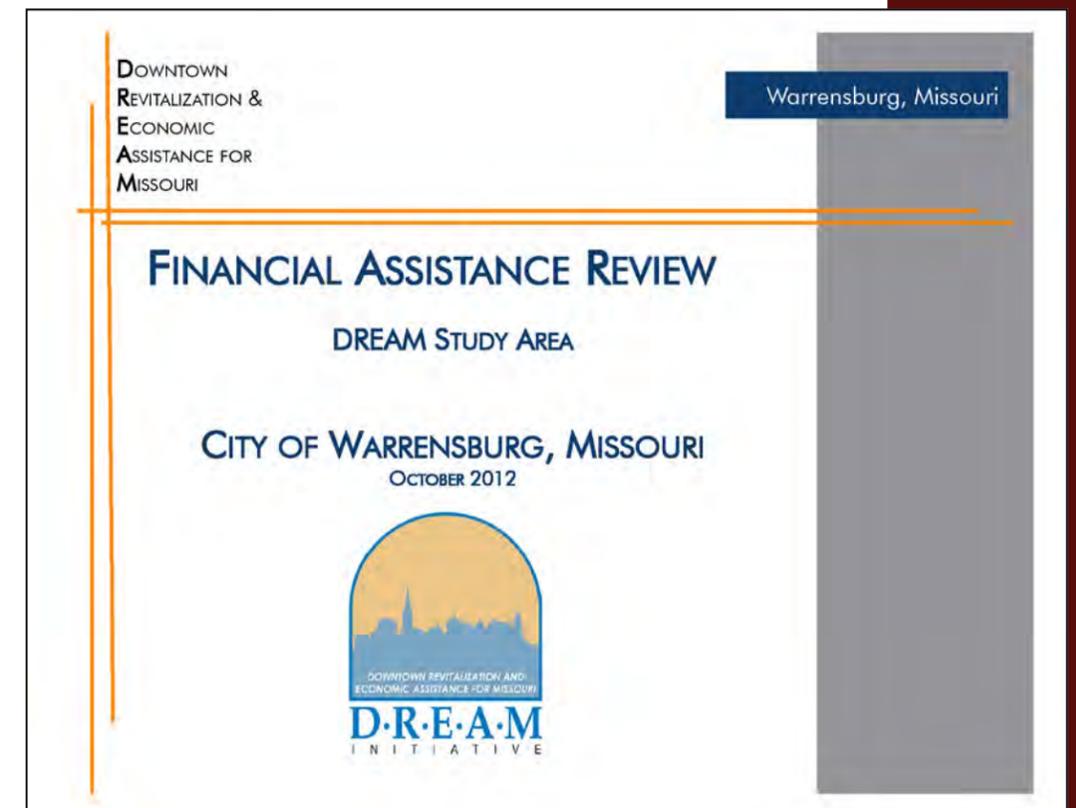
- **Community Improvement District (CID)**
With a CID, the municipality, in cooperation with property owners, can establish an additional sales tax within the District boundary, an additional property tax levy, or some combination of both. The Financial Assistance Review considered a CID for the DREAM 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 may have some overlap with WMS members and should include WMS input. Although a CID effort has recently been attempted, Downtown Warrensburg leaders should not abandon the effort. WMS will need to provide informative public outreach to build support and help 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 \$37,000 annually. A CID also carries an annual administration cost.

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

The City of Warrensburg could use this incentive to assist a large private project; an especially useful tool if there are extraordinary expenses associated with land preparation, environmental clean-up, or assembly. Alternatively, the City could establish a TIF district that would cover a specific geographic area, such as the DREAM Boundary, to fund façade improvements, public infrastructure, and other public and private projects (such as the proposed event



Warrensburg DREAM Financial Assistance Review.

pavilion) throughout that area. The Financial Assistance Review projections are 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 increases. However, the TIF revenue could eventually generate about \$135,000 annually, depending on redevelopment activities.

- **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.

The Financial Assistance Review projects EDS sales tax revenue for the City of Warrensburg 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/business parks
- Extension of streets
- Public Facilities directly related to economic development and job creation
- Matching dollars for state or federal grants

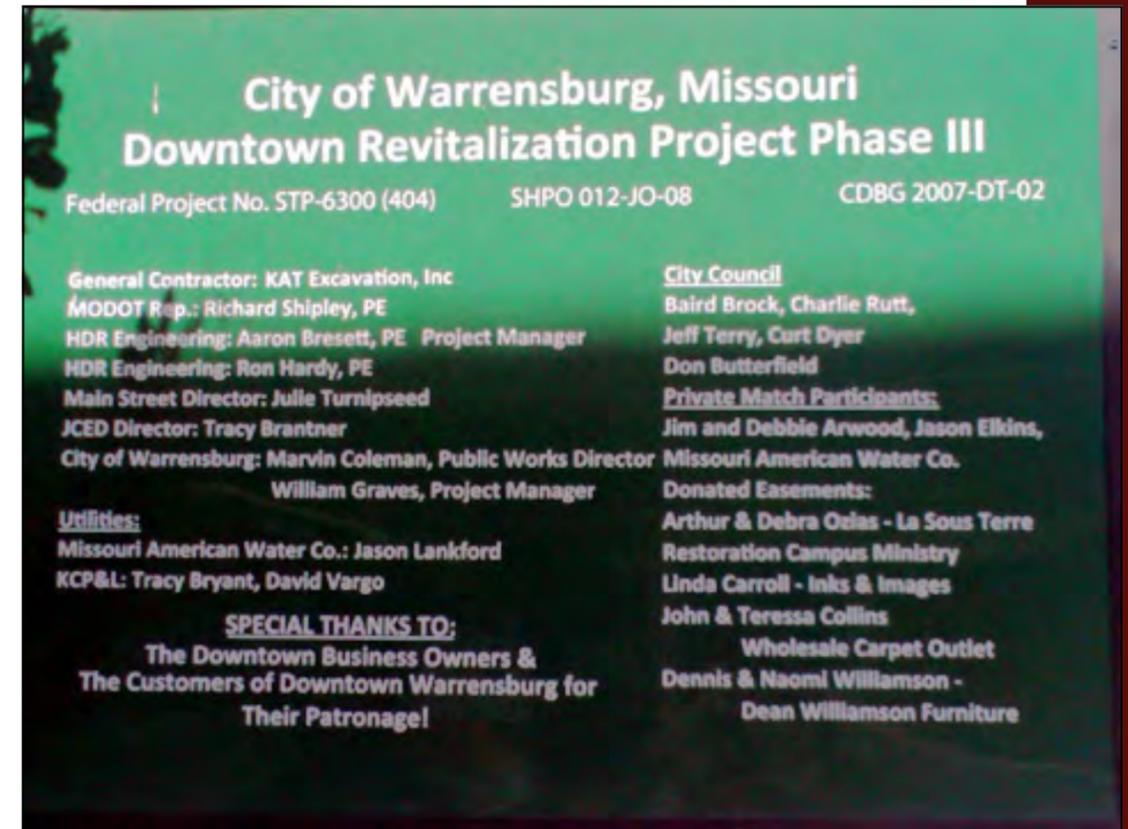
The remaining 55% could be dedicated to Downtown projects in the areas of:

- 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

Based on historical data, the financial review estimates that Warrensburg could generate \$1.3 million in total annual tax revenue from an EDS; with potentially up to \$730,000 annually dedicated to Downtown economic development activities. 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. As indicated in the Community Surveys section on page 15, most participants in the Focus Groups indicated there was little support for a new tax to assist Downtown. However, there was considerably more support found during the Community Telephone Survey where almost 60% of respondents indicated support for Downtown incentives. WMS will need to effectively champion any new effort. It must be clearly communicated 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.

Detailed statutory requirements and procedures regarding incentive tools available to Warrensburg are provided in the DREAM Financial Assistance Review from October 2012.



The above sign identifies the funding for Pine Street project in Downtown Warrensburg.

DESTINATION ASSESSMENT

The City of Warrensburg is currently a destination for visitors of a number of attractions. Downtown is a primary destination due to attractions such as UCM, the Johnson County Courthouse, Warrensburg Depot, and numerous events. Downtown Warrensburg also has established visitor support service businesses with various restaurants and shops. Building on these existing resources, Downtown Warrensburg should be able to better capitalize on existing visitors and to attract more visitors. However, the tourism market should be constantly monitored. In the past, the Visitors Center and Chamber had worked to establish a positive perception in the minds of the City’s visitors. The goal of WMS in this context should now be to continue work with the CVB to help bolster that image, while drawing upon the visitor market that has developed in the City overall.

With Downtown fairly well-prepared to receive and serve visitors, DREAM Destination Assessment recommendations focus primarily on improving the collaboration between the groups that interact with the visitor market, capitalizing on existing visitors, and physical improvements. Additionally, some recommendations that would impact Downtown as a destination, such as improvements to building conditions, are included in other DREAM Initiative tasks and have already been discussed in this Plan. The primary recommendations from the DREAM *Destination Assessment* from March 2014, include:

- **Improve Collaboration**

During the course of the Destination Assessment, the consultant team noted some disconnection and/or miscommunication regarding some Downtown events. There also appeared to be a fair level of disinterest regarding DREAM meetings. WMS should continue to work with the Chamber and CVB to promote all Downtown events and ensure Downtown is participating in other City-wide activities. A close relationship is needed to ensure Downtown can serve visitors to the City’s attractions and that these visitors know about Downtown. This will also require that WMS maintain ties with agencies such as the Student Affairs Office at UCM and WAFB.

- **Capitalize on Existing Visitors**

WMS, along with the Chamber and CVB, should continue to work to understand the existing visitors to the City and region. During the Destination Assessment Kickoff Meeting, various representatives from agencies or local businesses were in attendance, including:

- Warrensburg Main Street, Inc.
- The City of Warrensburg
- Warrensburg Tourism Director
- Knob Noster State Park
- Johnson County Historical Society
- Convention & Tourism Board
- Comfort Inn

These groups and others interact with a significant number of City visitors, primarily attending an event related to UCM. UCM provides a significant amount of visibility for, and internet awareness, of Warrensburg. Attendees at the Destination Kickoff meeting estimated that UCM draws possibly twenty-times more visitors than all other Downtown attractions combined. This illustrates the importance of WMS maintaining a close relationship with various UCM offices and work to connect Downtown businesses with UCM visitors, students, and staff.

Other events and attractions should not be neglected, but the amount of visitors that can be reached through UCM merits a special focus and provides an efficient marketing outlet for Downtown.

- **Install Gateway Signage**

Downtown Warrensburg has existing wayfinding signage. However, to help Downtown define its boundaries, gateway signs are needed. These signs should be substantial, attractive, and located at key entryways to Downtown.



The Amtrak platform and signage at the Downtown Warrensburg Depot.

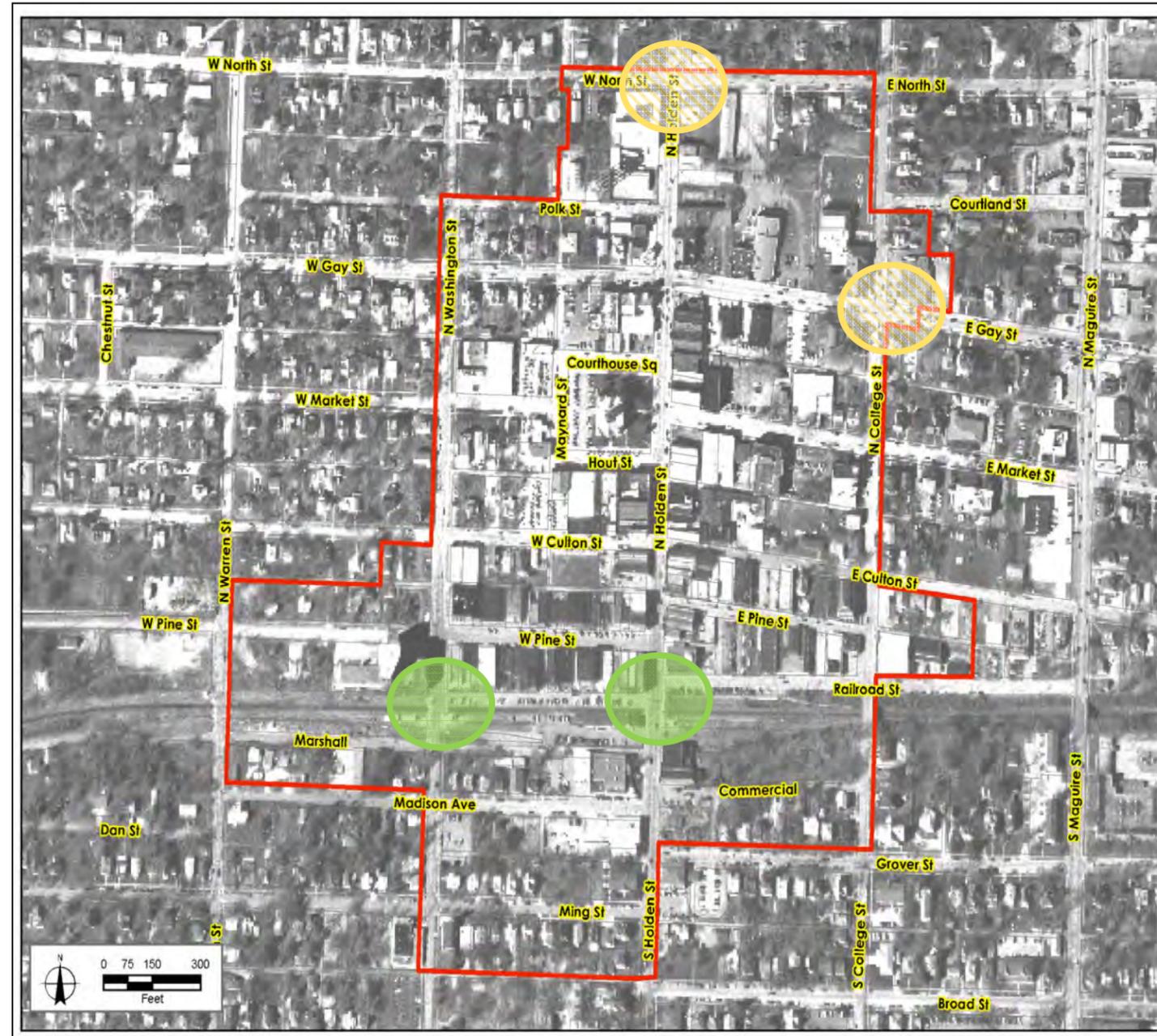
The City should work to implement the recommendations to establish gateways for vehicles entering Downtown from the north and east, as well as pedestrian gateways oriented toward students walking into Downtown from the south. The map on this page suggests the location of these gateway signs and the following recommendation is closely related to the pedestrian gateways.

• **Enhance Rail Crossings and Depot Area**

As noted, UCM is a major activity generator for Downtown Warrensburg, providing a sizeable student population and attracting numerous visitors throughout the year to its events. However, the Union Pacific (UP) rail line separates UCM and its students and visitors from Downtown. This situation results in a significant number of pedestrian crossings over the rail line, primarily at South Washington and South Holden Streets.

The City has worked well with UP in the past and should maintain a close relationship to assist in collaboration on future projects. Warrensburg is a “Train Town USA”, a registry maintained by UP that commemorates the company’s 150-year history across the country. The safety of pedestrians is a top-priority for the City, UCM, Downtown, and UP. A project such as pedestrian gateway improvements is a perfect joint project to bring all groups together.

As noted previously in the Public Infrastructure section on page 29, the depot has been considered as a location for the Events Pavilion concept (later discussed and illustrated in the Implementation section on pages 40 through 42) The pavilion project could also be an opportunity on which the City, Downtown, and UP can collaborate. However, if the location is unacceptable to UP as an Events Pavilion, (as it currently is) upgrades to the depot grounds and parking lot area could still be pursued and will help tie the area together for the benefit of pedestrians and Downtown.



Proposed vehicular gateway sign locations indicated in yellow, “pedestrian” gateway signs are shown in green.

With these ambitious improvements, and a concerted effort to enhance the connection between UCM and Downtown, events held both at UCM and in Downtown will improve the visitor drawing power of Warrensburg tremendously.

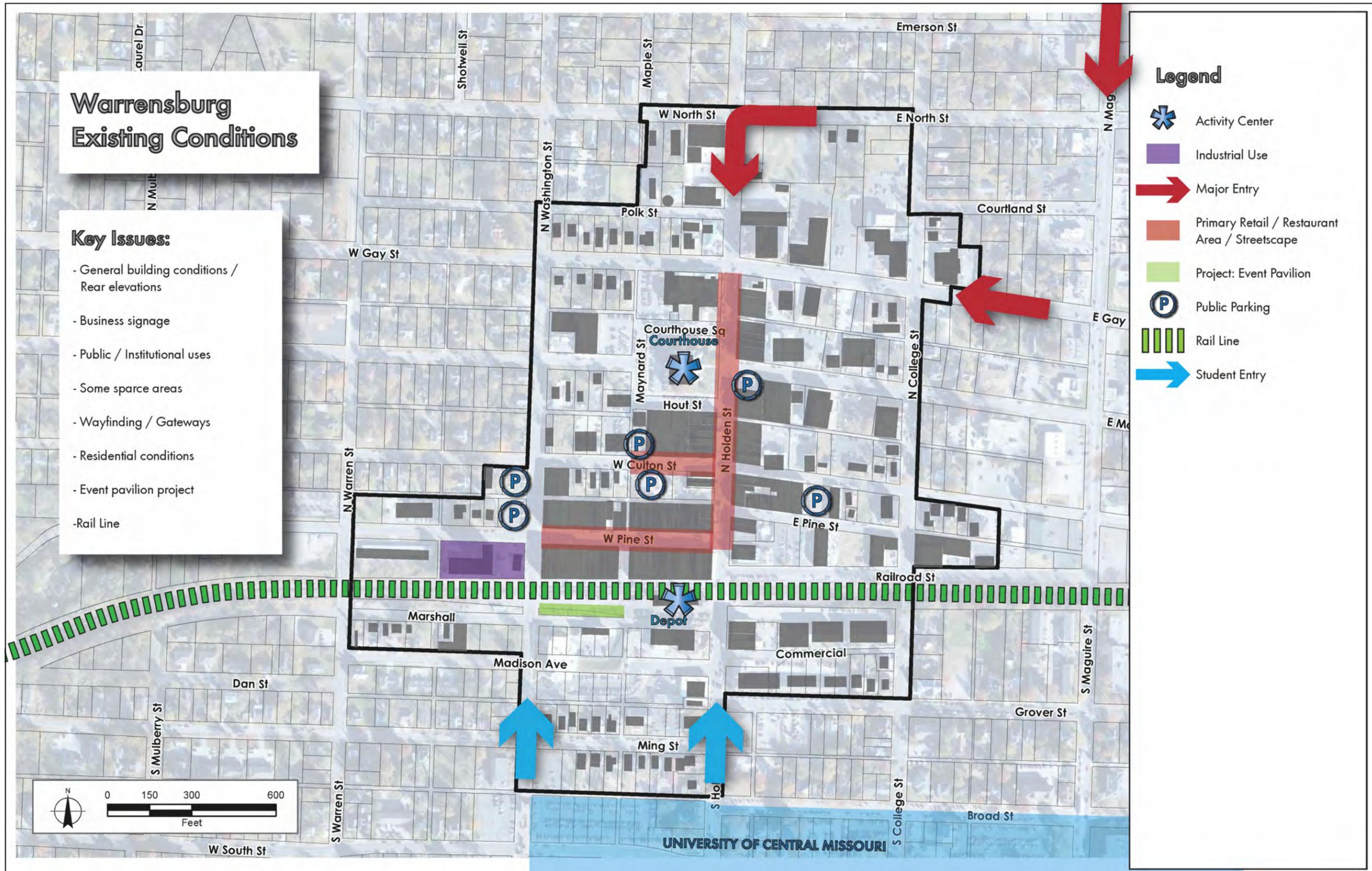


IMPLEMENTATION

The DREAM Initiative planning process involved a series of analytical and planning activities for Warrensburg that have been outlined in the previous sections of this document. This Downtown Warrensburg 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.

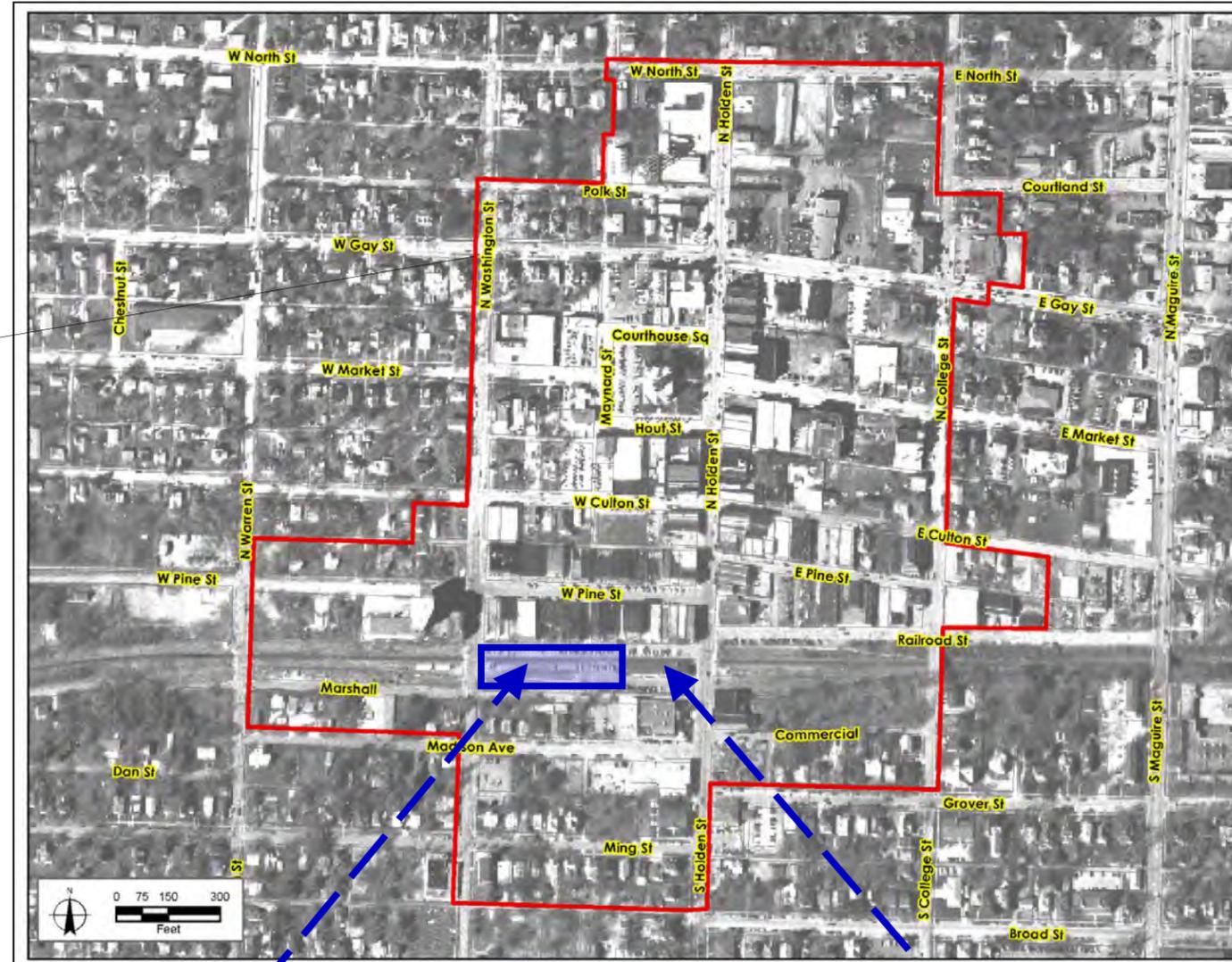
Included in this section is an existing conditions map, illustrations for the Downtown Events Pavilion concept, and an implementation schedule.

It is important to note that, although the Downtown Events Pavilion is illustrated on the Warrensburg Depot parking lot near the Union Pacific rail line, that location is not an option at this time. The pavilion concept could be located on another Downtown site, but will require a layout that is specific to the chosen site.



Event Pavilion Concept:

DREAM Boundary.



Proposed Site.



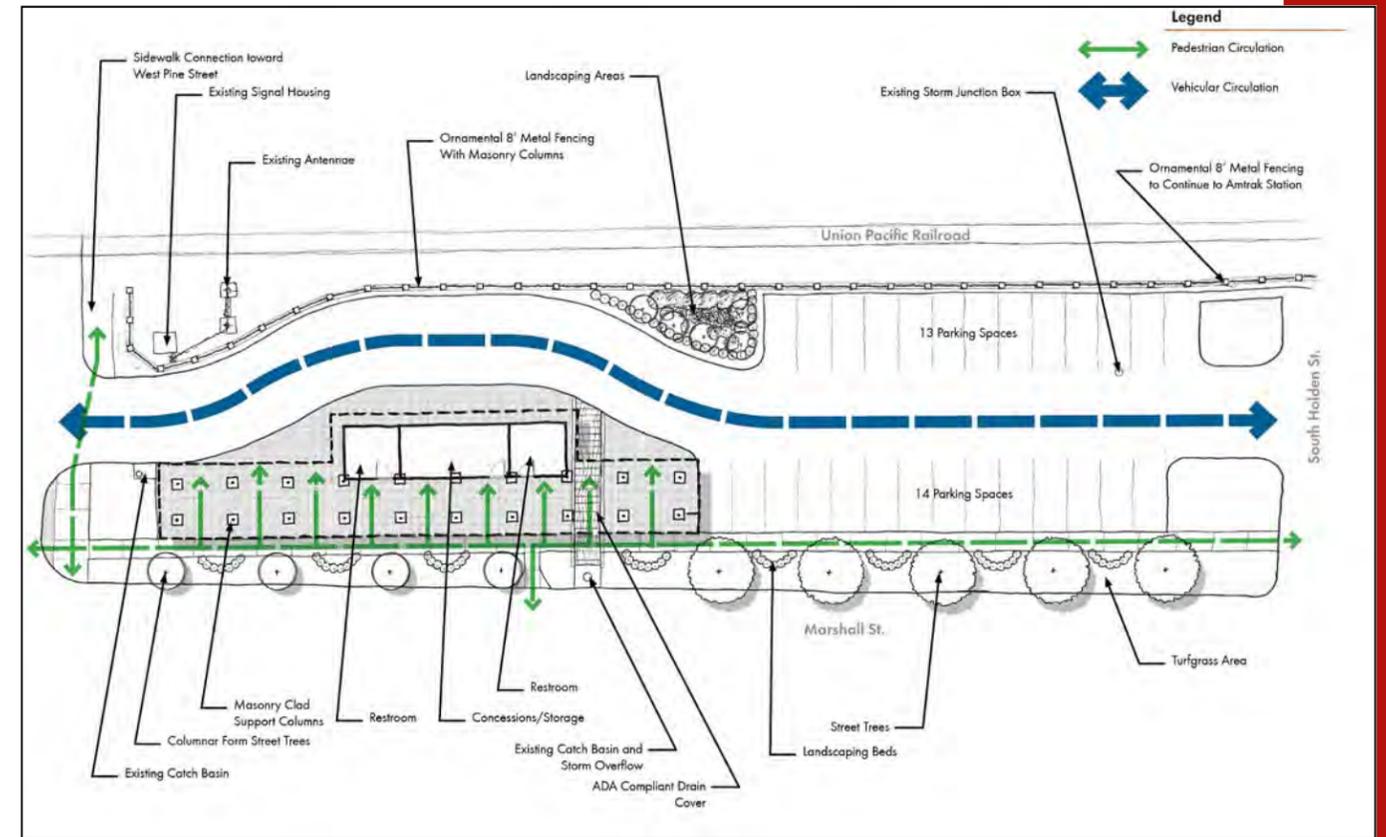
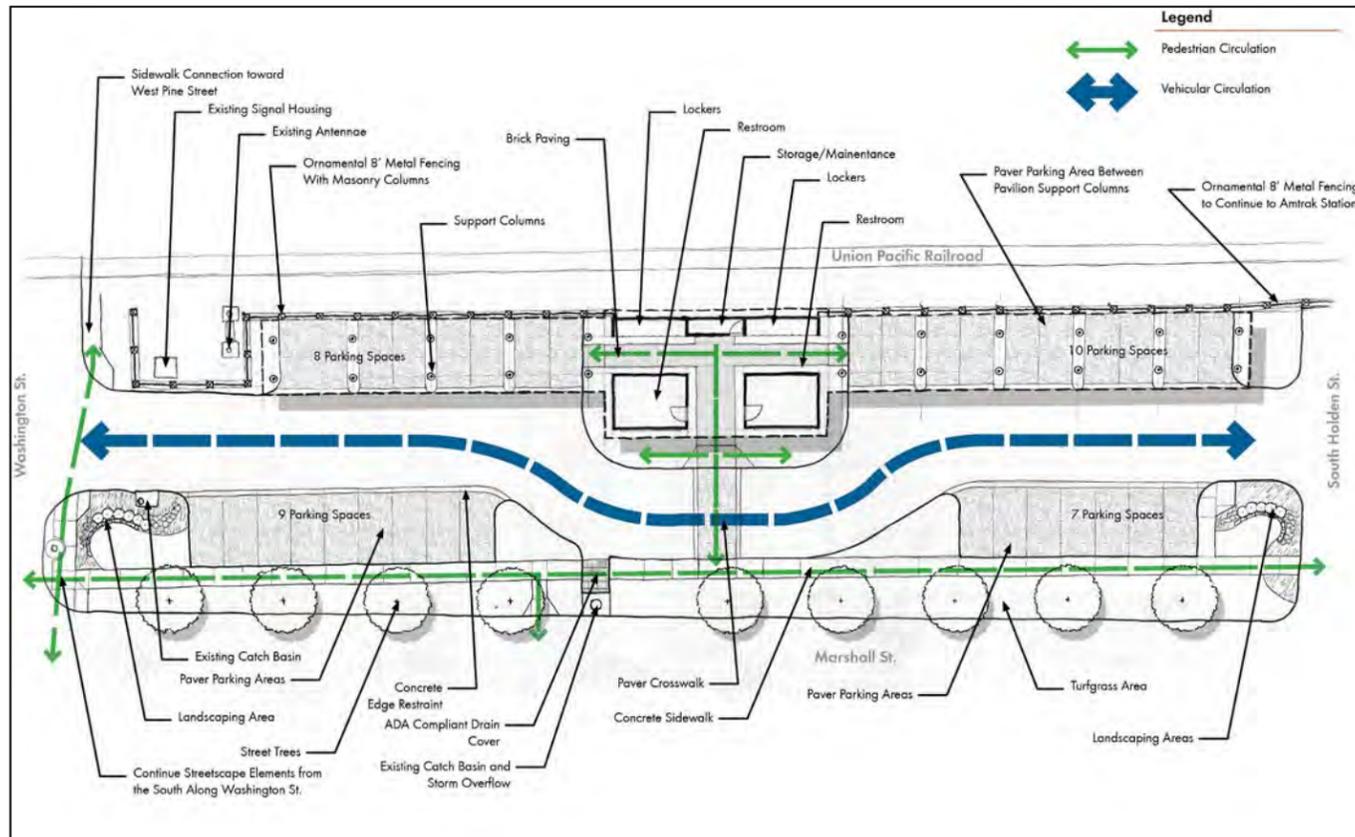
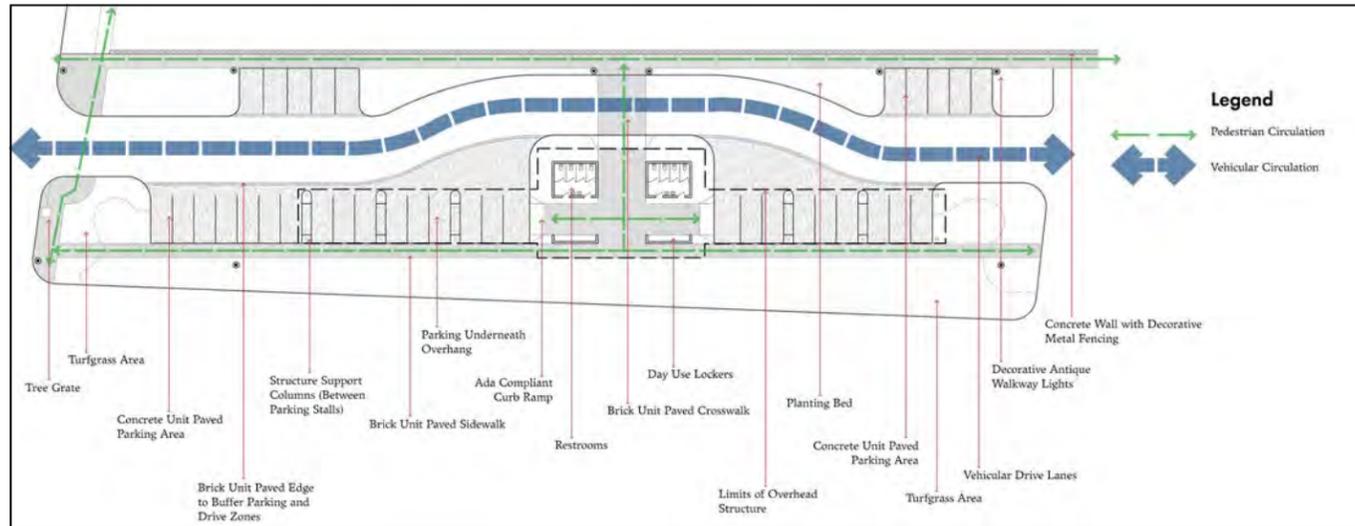
Existing Depot.



DREAM Initiative • Downtown Strategic Plan

Event Pavilion Concept: Can be adjusted to fit future site when identified.

Potential Site Layouts.



Event Pavilion Concept: Can be adjusted to fit future site when identified.

Conceptual perspective view.



Organizational Structure

Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources
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1	Hold a Downtown Warrensburg retreat or joint meeting.	All groups need to be brought 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. WMS should start the process but it is important that support comes from the City, Chamber, CVB, and other Downtown interests.	WMS	City, Chamber, Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Johnson County Economic Development Corp., etc.	NOW	WMS has been in operation for years, but may need an adjustment of necessary roles regarding Downtown and a show of support from other groups. The point of the retreat should be to refine WMS's mission, but within the context of other groups providing Downtown services.
2	Develop a Downtown Warrensburg work plan.	Led by WMS, Downtown should develop a work plan after the joint meeting is held and Downtown services are determined. This plan is meant to focus all groups efforts for the coming year, regarding Downtown activities. If a service is needed that no group is providing, it is critical that it is included in WMS's plans even if funding is not expected to be readily available. WMS is the "go to" group for Downtown.	WMS	City, Chamber, Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Johnson County Economic Development Corp., etc.	1st Quarter 2015	Broad representation is needed as this work plan is not for any one group, but for Downtown. The recommendations in this Strategic Plan should serve as a guide.
3	Maintain broad representation on all WMS committees, including the large activity generators of the University of Missouri (UCM) and Whiteman Air Force Base (WAFB).	The leadership of WMS should determine any committee changes or adjustments. It is critical that all viewpoints and groups are invited to serve on appropriate committees. Similarly, WMS leaders may need to assess their involvement on City-wide committees so that other groups are supported in-turn by WMS.	WMS		1st Quarter 2015	The group should try to match interests and skills with appropriate committees, using the current Main Street Structure. Volunteers need to have a meaningful task in which they believe.
4	Hold a meeting regarding Downtown incentive use and potential changes or new mechanisms	The implementation of a CID is also a financial mechanism recommendation, but is included here due to its impact on the Downtown organization. It is critical that Downtown identify and develop a sustainable funding source that WMS can access for public projects and services.	City	WMS	2nd Quarter 2015	WMS can start these discussions, but any new mechanism will need to be approved by the City. The effort will require thorough knowledge to successfully implement and the City and WMS should collaborate to develop Downtown incentives.
5	Promote the benefits and projects that a proposed CID will provide.	The CID effort will require outreach and promotion to the Downtown property owners and residents. All voices must be given time to speak and concerns should be addressed. The Johnson County Economic Development Corporation may be able to assist WMS with economic development impacts and information regarding the proposed CID.	WMS	Johnson County Economic Development Corp.	All of 2015 if necessary	This effort should provide for a reasonable public discourse. This will require adequate time and assistance from Downtown supporters.
6	Periodically review responsibilities of WMS, and other involved organizations, regarding the efficient 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 WMS, these groups should discuss how best to provide their services to Downtown businesses, residents, property owners, and visitors. WMS should lead this effort to keep the focus on Downtown Warrensburg.	WMS	City, Chamber, Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Johnson County Economic Development Corp., etc.	Ongoing	WMS should coordinate meetings that brings these groups together, discusses issues that are identified in Downtown, and seeks to apply each group's resources to the appropriate issues. Other topics should include City response to Downtown issues, assistance to Downtown businesses, and identification of coming events. Such a meeting could be an annual work meeting.

Land Use, Buildings & Infrastructure Survey

Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources
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7	The City should monitor the amount of public and institutional property in Downtown.	To prevent an overabundance on non-tax generating property, the City may need to aggressively encourage mixed-use redevelopment of vacant and underused property so that ground-floor retail space is added to Downtown where possible.	City		NOW	The City should keep a close watch on this situation. The City has obtained funding for public aspects of Downtown and it time to attract private, tax-generating, development.
8	Monitor building and infrastructure conditions.	The City should build upon the DREAM mapping to monitor the physical conditions of property and public infrastructure. Building and street complaints should be tracked and mapped to determine areas that require priority improvements and buildings that require a more aggressive approach by City code officials.	City		Ongoing	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. Businesses and property change hands quickly in Warrensburg's brisk real-estate market and the City should be diligent in its inspections and oversight of the process.
9	The City should attract and encourage developers willing to tackle innovative rehabilitation projects.	The City should aggressively search for these developers. There may be local firms or people capable of carrying out historically sensitive rehabilitation construction, but the City will likely need to seek these firms and should develop marketing to showcase specific opportunities in Downtown.	City	WMS, Historic Preservation Commission	Ongoing	The City should include a representative of the WMS 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 WMS to develop this inventory, with help from the City to maintain the information for Downtown and tie it to available GIS data and websites.	WMS	City, Johnson County Economic Development Corp.	3rd Quarter 2015	This recommendation will be useful to the City and Johnson County Economic Development Corporation. The City should help maintain the information, while WMS gathers it. This is a task for the Economic Restructuring Committee. A simple listing of size, location, and contact information can be provided on websites and social media. All information must be kept current and the sites and buildings somewhat 'qualified' that they are, indeed, for-sale or lease.

Community Surveys						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
11 Work to improve the user-friendliness of Downtown.	Some elements of the user-friendliness of Downtown was noted by focus group participants and telephone and visitor survey respondents. The City and WMS will need to collaborate on initiatives and projects that address these issues. Several other recommendations will overlay this effort.	WMS, City	Chamber, Convention and Visitor's Bureau	Ongoing	Specific concerns included parking, navigation, pedestrian safety, business hours, utility relocations, and lighting. The City should review the issues related to public infrastructure and determine if action is needed. WMS needs to address the issues with businesses. Recommendations for both the City and WMS are found in the appropriate sections of this plan and schedule. WMS should also work to encourage property owners, the Chamber, and CVB to assist where applicable.	
12 Periodically conduct a visitor's survey.	WMS needs to monitor and understand the visitor markets to which Downtown appeals. The City, CVB, and Chamber all can benefit from understanding the overall Warrensburg visitor market.	WMS	City, Chamber, Convention and Visitor's Bureau	4th Quarter 2015	Such a survey instrument should be coordinate by WMS and administered by volunteers at City-wide events and attractions. There should be some specific questions about Downtown, but the other groups may have other questions they would like to ask. Responses by people with a Warrensburg zip code should be tabulated separately.	
13 Develop a survey instrument for outgoing UCM seniors.	Downtown should have great interest in how Downtown is perceived by UCM students. Attitudes in this market segment can change rapidly and Downtown should attempt to keep up.	WMS		Ongoing	WMS should work closely with the Student Affairs office of UCM to connect with graduates and promote Downtown to all students. Online surveys and social networking tools could also be developed to maintain this connection.	
14 Reconvene/expand the DREAM Focus Groups	The groups included UCM students; newer residents; Downtown business owners and stakeholders; city officials, staff, and administration; and long-time residents. It is critical to revitalization efforts that these interested individuals are given future opportunities to volunteer and connect with Downtown activities.	WMS		1st 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.	
15 Periodically conduct telephone or web survey of residents.	Revise the 2009 DREAM telephone survey questions regarding Downtown and conduct another survey to monitor changing attitudes of residents. This survey is for residents only and attempts to present a cross-section of various demographic aspects of the community through quota responses. Alternatively, a web survey could be developed.	WMS	City, Chamber.	3rd Quarter 2015	WMS can follow the format previously used, but using a surveying firm and phone bank may 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 Warrensburg's businesses as they seek to understand their consumers.	
16 Communicate all survey results to Downtown groups, leaders, and businesses	WMS 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.	WMS	City, Chamber.	Ongoing	WMS 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.	

Building Design and Conditions						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
17 Review City building codes, ordinances, and inspection procedures regarding Downtown buildings.	The City has worked to remove some buildings that were beyond repair and has identified more possible demolitions. While this is necessary at times, the City should also firmly enforce its codes and ordinances to prevent maintenance issues from becoming significant structural repairs.	City	WMS	NOW	WMS can assist the City with suggestions to codes and procedures and will help be the interface between the City and Downtown property owners. Educational seminars and activities such as the "Day of Caring" to improve Downtown properties should be developed and continued. WMS can also help identify common maintenance issues, but actual policy changes are controlled by the City. It will also be important to develop an incentive to help Downtown property owners.	
18 Promote the benefits and procedures of historic rehabilitation and property maintenance.	WMS and the HPC should collaborate on ways to promote historic rehabilitation. This effort should include pointing out the benefits of a historic property and conducting research for property owners.	WMS	HPC	Ongoing	Eventually, this effort should develop support for design standards. However the groups should be involved on an ongoing basis for research and programs such as the building improvement recognition program.	
19 Develop Downtown building design standards.	The City is a Certified Local Government and has formed a Historic Preservation Commission and one historic district to date. These are important first steps to preserving historic buildings. However, the next step is to implement building design standards in Downtown.	City	WMS, Historic Preservation Commission	1st Quarter 2016	The City should review the guidelines required by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation for applicability in Downtown. WMS and the Historic Preservation Commission can provide suggestions for improvements and help Downtown property owners understand the value to historically rehabilitating their property. The goal is not to create a replica, but to redevelop buildings in a context that is sensitive to nearby historic properties.	
20 Review sign regulations, regarding Downtown businesses and buildings.	Another review that the City needs to conduct. There is some evidence of excessive signage that has been allowed. The City needs to determine if the existing sign code is too lax for the Downtown environment.	City		NOW	A balance needs to be found between business desires and aesthetics for Downtown. WMS may be able to assist, but will likely need to remain neutral. This step is critical, however, and the City should begin this review immediately.	
21 Include new City procedures and policies in a seminar program designed to educate property owners regarding Building maintenance, contractors, and City expectations.	As noted in other entries, WMS should provide the buffer between the City Staff and Downtown property and business owners. It is important to convey the City's expectations, particularly with new procedures.	WMS		1st Quarter 2015	This program can start soon to help WMS solidify itself as the lead Downtown organization. These seminar topics can also be included with the customer service topics in the retail section.	
22 Develop a building improvement recognition program.	WMS can develop this program to thank and publicly recognize property owners who do an outstanding job rehabilitating their property.	WMS	Historic Preservation Commission	1st Quarter 2017	This is a good program for an annual meeting. There should be some eligibility criteria regarding incentives used and adherence to any design standards. A building that did not adhere to standards, should not be incentivized nor receive recognition. The Historic Preservation Commission should be involved with this program.	

Public Infrastructure						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
23	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 WMS and the Historic Preservation Commission. New streetscape elements should complement or match existing pieces.	City	WMS, Historic Preservation Commission	Ongoing	The City should seek the input of these groups during Downtown project design, and continue to install elements to develop 'great spaces'. Coordination of all future public improvements is critical.
24	Improve wayfinding signage.	This streetscape element can help with parking and traffic. There are attractive existing wayfinding signs. However, there are some gaps in the directed routes to Downtown. Additionally the signage could be expanded to include other attractions.	City		3rd Quarter 2016	This project should be eligible for funding from an incentive, such as the proposed CID.
25	Establish vehicular gateway signage.	This signage will help define Downtown Warrensburg and could be located at the intersections of North Holden and West North Streets and at the intersection of East Gay and North College Streets. This signage should be substantial and announce that a traveler has arrived in Downtown.	City	WMS	1st Quarter 2017	WMS should help with the design of these gateways. This signage could also include the wayfinding elements and perhaps an event listing and landscaping. Could be funded by proposed CID. Pedestrian gateway signage near the rail line to the south is listed as a separate recommendation.
26	Establish pedestrian gateway signage.	This project helps define Downtown to the south, primarily for pedestrians from UCM along Holden and Washington Streets. This project could be included in the overall improvement of the rail crossings, which is included in the Other Projects section of this table.	City	WMS	3rd Quarter 2017	Again, WMS should help with design and the funding may come from the proposed CID.
27	Improve public parking lot conditions.	An issue voiced by participants in the DREAM community survey work. Some indicated navigation to parking, some desired added parking, and some commented on the convenience of parking. If the City can improve the quality of parking lots and other amenities for pedestrians, people may be more likely to use the existing lots.	City		2nd Quarter 2015	The City should put forth aggressive lot improvement projects during the summers. These projects are eligible for incentive funding and should include landscaping within the areas to 'soften' the impact of the impervious pavement. Pedestrian safety and lighting were specific concerns and should be address in relation to parking areas.
28	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	WMS	Ongoing	The City and WMS will provide ongoing projects and funding mechanisms to encourage investment in Downtown buildings. WMS should mobilize volunteers to help the City maintain aspects of Downtown such as landscaping and to help identify issues.

Residential Market						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
29	Continue to inspect and monitor rental housing to improve unit conditions.	Due to the student market at UCM and, to a lesser extent, WAFB families, the rental market in Downtown is brisk. The City has had to develop procedures to maintain quality units and should continue to be diligent in this regard.	City		Ongoing	In the case of residential property, the City can work with the local housing authority, landlords, UCM, and other groups to improve the rental inspection procedures.
30	Develop maintenance and contractor education programs for local landlords and residential property owners to encourage improved housing conditions.	A similar program for commercial property and business owners is recommended. A residential program needs to come from the City, but the WMS can assist.	City	WMS	3rd Quarter 2016	WMS can encourage participation, but the primary responsibility in dealing with residents rests with the City.
31	Work with the UCM student affairs office to develop information, educational programs, tours, and advocacy help to assist students living off-campus.	Again, similar to WMS work regarding Downtown overall, better tenants can be developed; which will lead to better housing conditions. WMS could also invite students to tour Downtown living spaces.	WMS		3rd Quarter 2016	As some off-campus housing will occur in other areas of the City, it is to Downtown's benefit to develop a strong relationship with incoming students as soon as possible. These types of programs and tours should be oriented toward new students and WMS can promote and help arrange aspects of the tours and meetings.
32	Seek opportunities for the development of new, high-quality, senior affordable rental units in Downtown.	The City should work to identify developers that may be interested in existing sites or buildings for apartments and lofts for senior affordable developments. WMS can assist with gathering information and providing marketing assistance for these potential investors.	City	WMS	Ongoing	The residential demand analysis projects unmet housing demand for affordable senior rental units over the next few years. Other rental markets do not show demand due to the housing market being driven by the UCM student population.
33	Review zoning codes to consider if multi-family is an acceptable use in large houses that were originally used as single-family.	There are some stately single-family houses near Downtown Warrensburg. It was noted that there are a few large houses that have been converted to multi-family units or fraternity/sorority houses. These conversions do not typically have a positive effect on property values. The City should consider the codes that allow these situations to occur and determine if this should be allowed to continue.	City		NOW	The City can adjust its zoning, which may cause some vacancies initially, to protect these properties and create opportunities for home ownership.

Retail Market						
Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources	
34	Attract businesses to Downtown Warrensburg 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 Warrensburg trade area. Businesses that open or expand their product lines to include these categories make good targets for attraction to available spaces. The City, WMS, and Johnson County Economic Development Corporation should refine economic development efforts for Downtown to businesses in these categories.	City	WMS, Johnson County Economic Development Corp.	Ongoing	The businesses suggested for recruitment may be relocations from other areas within the City. The Economic Restructuring Committee of WMS can develop a retail recruitment team to search for businesses in these categories, generate the lead, and make contact with the prospect. The business categories are found on page 31 of this plan.
35	Work to strengthen Downtown businesses by encouraging the creation of a user-friendly atmosphere for all visitors.	Downtown merchants need to be reminded that they inhabit the core of the City and represent an important aspect of the community. They also need to remember that the UCM student population is critical for their well-being, but also not the only consumer market. WMS can help prepare Downtown's businesses to be the best ambassadors to visitors as possible.	WMS		1st Quarter 2015	WMS should continue programs that deliver important information to Downtown businesses regarding issues such as customer service, expanded business hours, retail marketing, store layout, and product care and placement. Merchants should be encouraged to improve their products.
36	Cultivate local entrepreneurs.	This is another potential use for Downtown locations. Downtown could serve as an incubator for businesses starting out. Many of these entrepreneurs come from a family stationed at WAFB and WMS should develop ways to assist these start-ups.	WMS	Johnson County Economic Development Corp.	1st Quarter 2015	WMS could partner with the Johnson County Economic Development Corporation to offer seminars for business start-ups. Ideal partners or sponsors for these sessions would be the local banks.
37	Develop Downtown, business-oriented promotions to strengthen existing businesses.	WMS should continue to host festivals and provide promotions and marketing to attract attention for Downtown.	WMS		Ongoing	Other promotions might include a sidewalk sale or a Farmer's Market; and could be held at the proposed Event Pavilion.
38	Understand Warrensburg'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 WMS to help its members understand the information that is available and what it means to their store.	WMS		Ongoing	A robust seminar program will take time to start. WMS should be distributing the information collected through the DREAM process and searching for new and updated data.
39	Market Downtown businesses as a unified shopping district to Warrensburg visitors.	As WMS identifies funding, its Marketing Committee should fully step into the role of the Downtown champion and develop advertising campaigns and other techniques to market Downtown just as any mall or shopping center would market itself.	WMS		3rd Quarter 2016	This activity will be a highly visible program that WMS needs to activate and operate successfully. Funding can be provided from the proposed CID, with cooperative advertising support from the merchants. This step is critical for Downtown to become known as a district and shopping destination. Advertising can be expensive and inefficient, so this effort must be well planned.

Financial Mechanisms

Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources
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40	Establish a Downtown Community Improvement District (CID).	As noted in the Organizational Structure recommendations, a CID will provide sustainable funding for improvements and WMS programming. The City will ultimately approve this incentive and pass the appropriate ordinances, but WMS will be needed to provide public outreach and other decisions. The revenues generated can also be used for public improvements, property acquisition, etc.	City, WMS		As needed	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 over \$150,000 annually. The process should allow for proper outreach to communicate the benefits and plans of the CID to residents and merchants; a critical step.
41	Establish a Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) or Local Option Economic Development Sales Tax (EDS) in the City.	The City should consider a TIF or an EDS if the CID effort is not practical. The funding generated by these incentives is not as flexible as a CID.	City	WMS	As needed	A TIF or EDS is discussed in this Plan on page 34. WMS should assist with communicating information about any Downtown incentive mechanism.
42	Continue to promote projects that have been completed with grants or incentive funding.	Downtown needs to promote its successes. The City has done this with signage regarding projects such as the Pine Street streetscape and should continue to do so if a CID or other incentive mechanism is implemented.	City		As needed	These are expenses that could be paid by the incentive mechanisms.
43	Leverage local funds to obtain State and Federal funding for projects.	All Downtown groups should remain vigilant regarding the leveraging of local sources of money, such as the proposed CID, TIF, or EDS, for State or Federal funding.	City, WMS, Chamber, Johnson County Economic Development Corp.		Ongoing	As State and Federal funding declines, Downtown will need to rely on local funding sources. However, the City should still 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.

Destination Assessment

Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources
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44	Capitalize on existing visitors to the City's attractions.	With the number of existing visitors to City attractions, Downtown should seek ways to attract and serve these visitors in Downtown. Restaurant and bar services are adequate. However, marketing of other businesses is required.	WMS		Ongoing	Similar to retail strengthening, WMS should work to market Downtown as an overall destination. WMS can cultivate the relationship between UCM and Downtown and expand events that promote Downtown. Another strategy may be to align Downtown events with other large events in the City.
45	Continue to develop Downtown events.	Most Downtown Warrensburg events are related in some way to UCM. While this is an effective strategy and there are some events that are unrelated to UCM, WMS should work to make certain there is a broad variety of events available in Downtown.	WMS		Ongoing	The Promotions committee of WMS has done an effective job in this regard to date and should continue to review events and seek to establish new events. Events can be resource intensive so they require careful consideration, adequate marketing, and volunteer assistance to establish.
46	Develop a single calendar of events for Downtown activities.	This is one strategy that will also help address improved communication and collaboration in Downtown Warrensburg. A single calendar that lists all UCM, Downtown, and other City events could be provided on the WMS or City website.	CVB	WMS, City	Ongoing	This calendar will only be as effective as the information that it provides. There should be one organization and committee in charge of updating the listings. There may be ways to develop it so that groups can add their own events, but someone should have review responsibilities and an annual contact with major groups providing events should still be made. The CVB should be aware of all events in the Warrensburg region and this calendar can help.

Other

Objectives	Project/Program/Action Item	Responsible Party	Support Groups	Time Frame	Tools, Techniques & Resources
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47	Improve rail crossings/depot area.	This project will improve the rail crossing and help connect Downtown to the south; the location of City Hall, the Amtrak Depot, and UCM. Enhancements to pedestrian safety at this entryway will encourage exploration of Downtown by the visitors of the City's largest attraction; UCM.	City	Union Pacific, UCM, WMS	3rd Quarter 2017	This project could be phased to include the gateway signage as noted above. However, ideally safety measures such as fencing and swing gates will be installed before added activity is promoted. UP should be fully behind improvements to pedestrian safety and, along with UCM, will be a valuable partner in this effort. Additionally, WMS should assist the City with design elements.
48	Construct Event Pavilion on a Downtown site.	This concept was expressed in various discussions with Downtown leaders. Downtown Warrensburg host several events and needs a dedicated location for events. The Courthouse Square seems like a possible venue and some events are held there, but restaurants, bars, and shops are clustered closer to Pine Street. A previously proposed location has been the depot area across the UP rail line from Pine Street.	City	WMS	Ongoing	As the depot site is currently not a possibility, the City and WMS should continue to seek a location. Various areas have been considered including buildings that are facing imminent demolition. The location and specifics of the site chosen will determine the layout and may result in a concept significantly different from the illustrations developed for this Plan.
49	Relocate or bury overhead power lines.	This is a large 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 and some above ground utility boxes. The City should develop a relocation schedule and work toward these goals after a funding source is in place.	City		Ongoing	This is an ambitious and lengthy project for the City. However, the impact will be significant.



PGA PLANNERS